



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LEICESTER**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological  
Evaluation on Land  
adjacent to Stygate  
Lane, Pickwell,  
Leicestershire  
NGR: SK 79989 12166**

Wayne Jarvis



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**An Archaeological Evaluation on Land adjacent  
to Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire  
NGR: SK 79989 12166**

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**For: Intelligent Environment Ltd.**

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**An Archaeological Evaluation on Land adjacent  
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Wayne Jarvis

**Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation was carried out in February 2017 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of Intelligent Environment Ltd. on land adjacent to Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire. The fieldwork was undertaken as part of a pre-planning enquiry for a proposed bio-digester and access road. The scheme of archaeological evaluation took the form of 39 trial trenches excavated down to archaeological deposits or natural ground.*

*The evaluation revealed archaeological activity in two areas, at the east of site close to the A606 along the proposed access road, and in the west of the site within the main proposed digester site itself. In the former area, Iron Age activity including a roundhouse and several other features was exposed. Just to the east of this was a concentration of Roman material and several stone structures which are likely to form part of a range of buildings of a villa complex. In the west of the proposed site further evidence was produced of another area of Iron Age activity with two ditches producing occupation material.*

*The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A8.2017.*

**Introduction**

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire, NGR: SK 79989 12166 on behalf of Intelligent Environment Ltd. As part of a pre-planning enquiry the Leicestershire County Council Principal Planning Archaeologist as advisor to the planning authority has requested a programme of archaeological work. This comprised a scheme of archaeological evaluation in order to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area. If such archaeological remains were present the field evaluation would define their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enable an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

## **Site Description, Topography and Geology**

The main proposed development site comprises a field west of Northfield Farm, and the line of the proposed haul road across five further fields to the east before joining Cold Overton Lane adjacent to the A606 (SK 81359 12703, Figure 2). The site is enclosed by native hedging and trees along its boundaries. The total area within the proposed development is *c.* 7.05ha.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 171 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Marlestone Rock Bed. However on site examination of the clay substratum suggests that it may in fact be Whitby mudstone formation. The proposed development is on a south sloping valley side with the ground height dropping from 160 to 130m aOD. On a local landscape scale, the ground is quite undulating, with a series of broadly north-west to south-east valleys between which were small plateaus giving the landscape a somewhat corrugated appearance.

## **Archaeological and Historical Background**

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (Figure 3) includes three sites in the vicinity which may be impacted on by the haul road as follows: MLE5888: Monument: Roman villa north of Northfield Farm: A villa was discovered here in the 1990s. The scatters of material located several discrete buildings. Finds included coins, brooches, furniture fittings, tile and pottery. MLE8620: Find Spot: Anglo-Saxon mount from north of Northfield Farm: An Anglo-Saxon mount with four attachment rivets cast into the back of the piece was found here in the 1990s. The front has a close decorative parallel to the disc from a great square headed brooch. MLE18381: Find Spot: Bronze Age spearhead from north of Northfield Farm: A fragment of a looped Bronze Age spearhead was found here in the 1990s.





Figure 1: Site location

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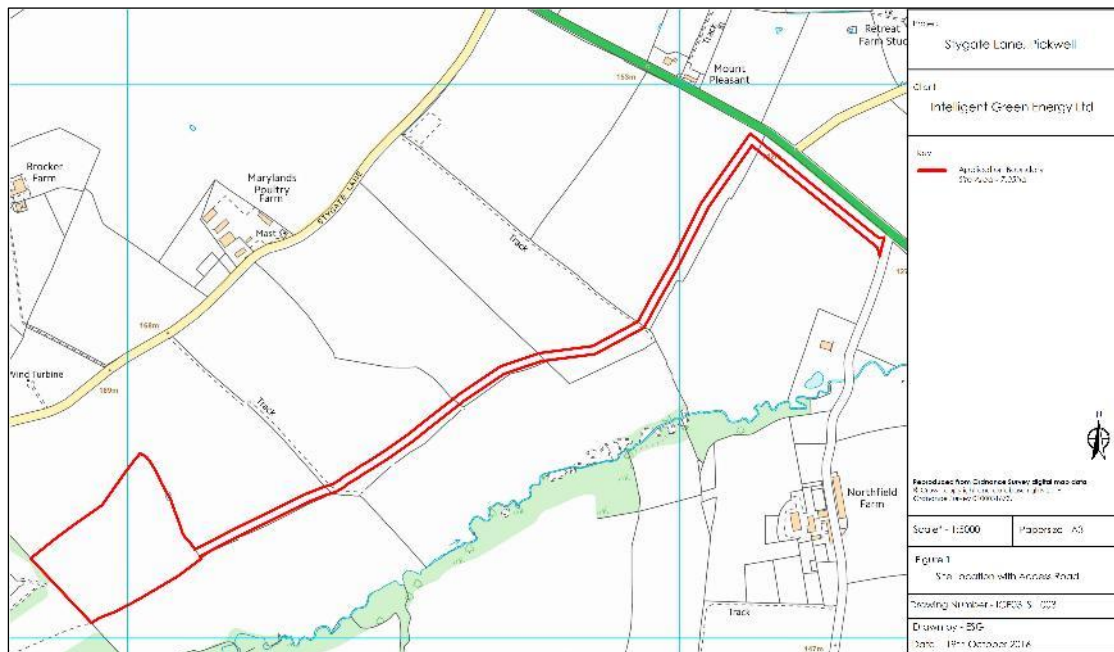


Figure 2: Development area and proposed route of the of the haul road

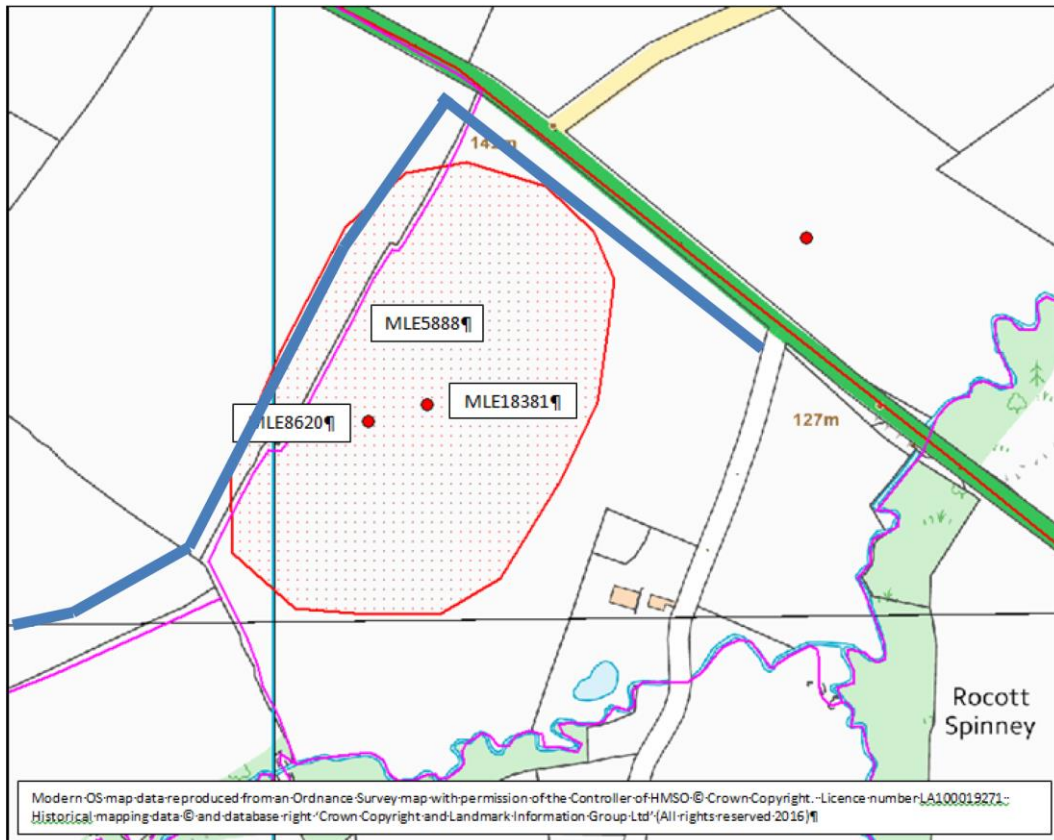


Figure 3: General location of previous findspots from HER (cf. Figure 4)

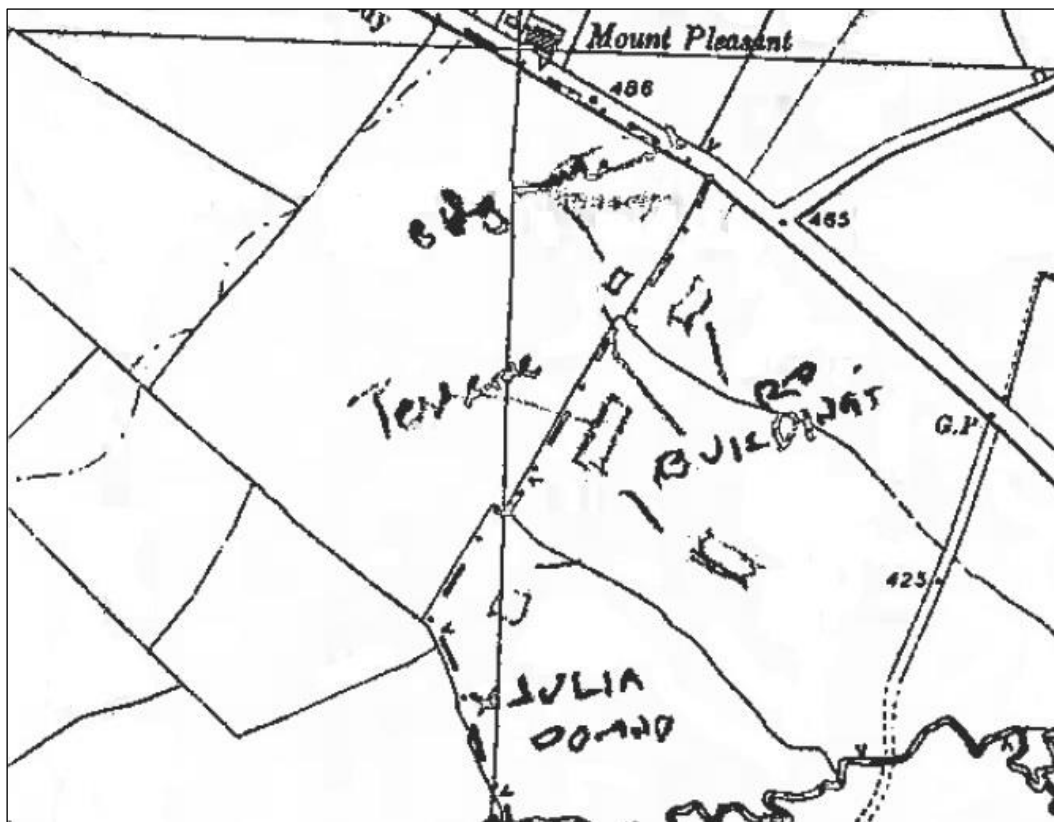


Figure 4: Raw fieldwalked data (from HER 'blue sheet')



## **Aims and Objectives**

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape.
- To recover artefacts and ecofacts to compare with other assemblages and results
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project aims, the principal objective of the recording is to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, and significance of the heritage assets within their local and regional context.

### ***Draft Research Themes***

While the nature, extent and quality of archaeological remains within the areas of investigation for the project remain unknown until archaeological work is undertaken, it is possible to determine some initial objectives derived from *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight *et al.* 2012) and *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006).

The *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) identified the archaeological evaluation as having the potential to contribute to the following research aims:-

#### *The Neolithic-Bronze Age (Clay 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)*

The find spot of a Bronze Age spearhead mount may indicate the presence of a settlement or cemetery of this period. The evaluation may contribute to our understanding of the development of Bronze Age occupation sites and / or burial practices

#### *The Roman Period (Taylor 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)*

There is a Roman site close to the study area. The evaluation may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman and Roman-Saxon transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy.

#### *The Anglo-Saxon period (Vince 2006, Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)*

The find spot of an Anglo Saxon mount may indicate the presence of a Saxon settlement or cemetery. The evaluation may contribute to our understanding of the development of Saxon occupation sites and / or burial practices.

## Methodology

The WSI (Clay 2017) approved by the County Planning Archaeologist on behalf of the planning authority, who also monitored the fieldwork, required an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching in order to determine the presence/absence, character and extent of archaeological remains.

Excavation was undertaken using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.9m toothless ditching bucket, with topsoil and overburden removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision. These deposits were removed until archaeological levels were reached or natural undisturbed ground. Trenches were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and then were backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation.

All archaeological work was undertaken following the approved design specification (Clay 2017), and in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014), and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation and Archaeological excavations* (2014).

## Results

The trench siting was varied slightly in agreement with the Planning Archaeologist to clarify initial trenching results and provide an indication of the spread of the archaeology, and to minimise access issues as a Public Footpath ran through the main proposed bio-digester area. Thirty-nine trenches were excavated, all being 30m long apart from Trenches 30 and 36 which were 20m long. The latter two were added to clarify archaeology in the initial trenching. The updated trench plans are shown in Figure 5, and Figure 6.

The majority of the trenches were negative. Occasional very shallow furrows were observed with little apparent pattern across the proposed site area. It is likely that the majority of these agricultural features have been ploughed out as the ones that did survive were so shallow (typically less than 0.15m deep). Trenches 1, 2, 5, 11, 12, 31, 32, and 33 exposed plough furrows (20% of the trenches).

Three areas of archaeological features were identified, the south-east field, the north-east field and the west field:-

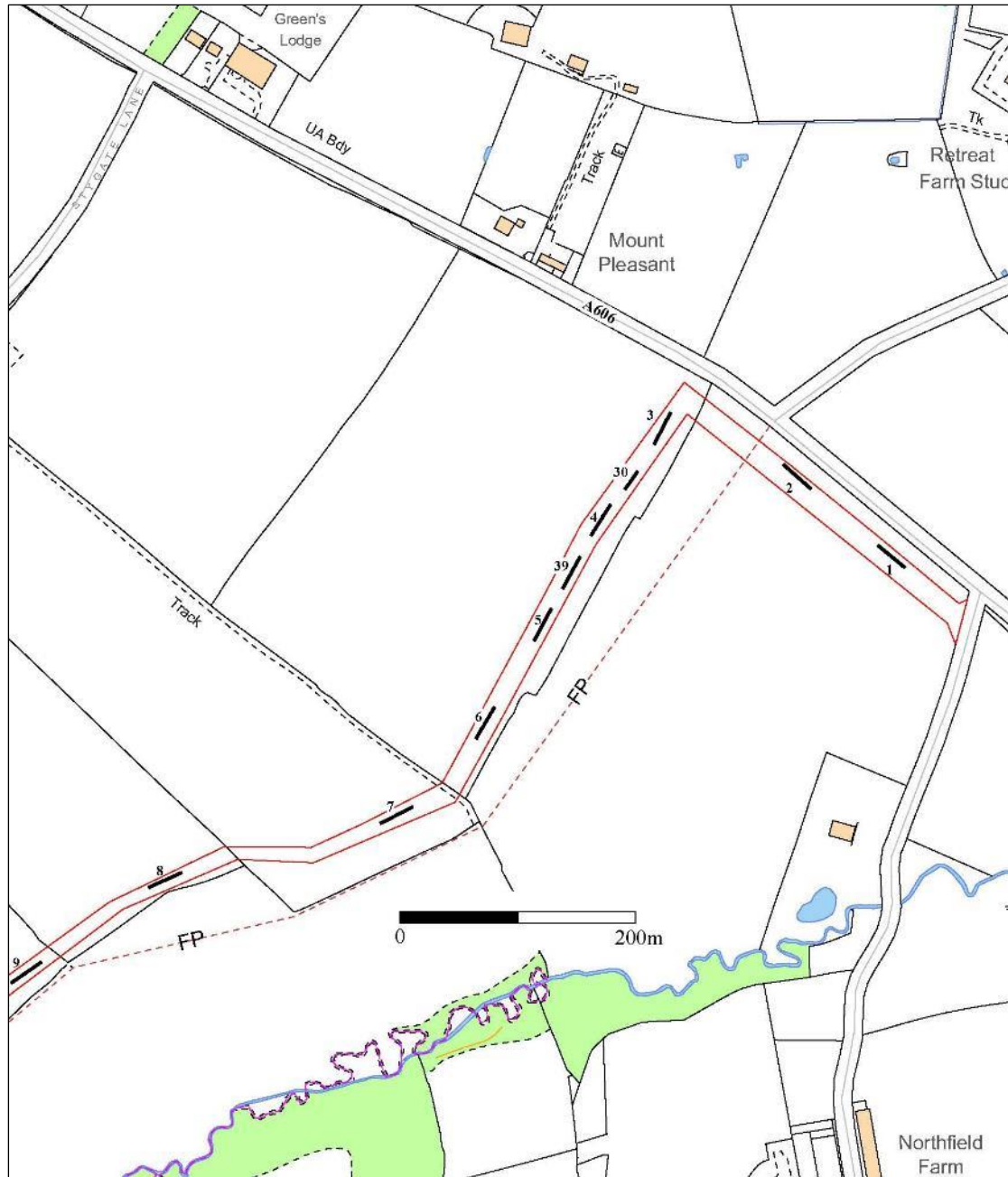


Figure 5: Trench locations (East area)

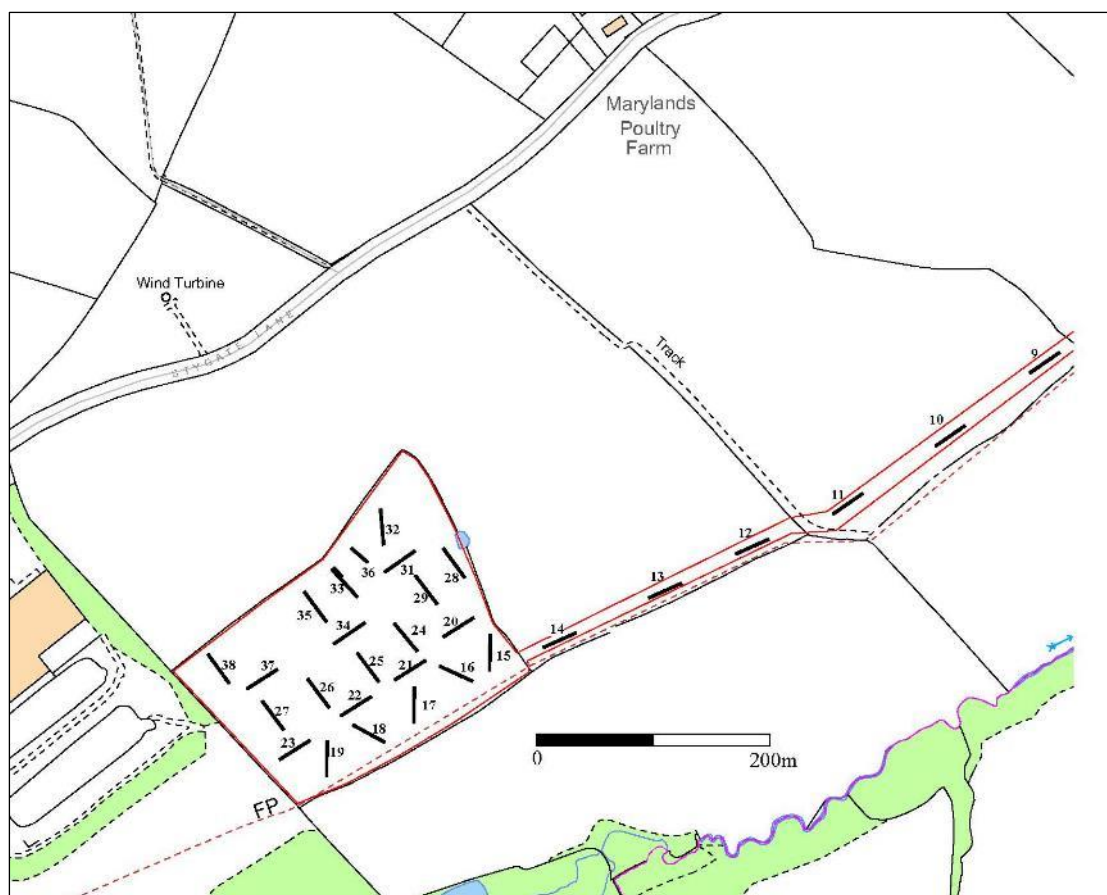


Figure 6: Trench locations (West area)

**South-Eastern field (Figure 5, Figure 7)**

Trench 1 exposed a single feature of uncertain date, [3] (4). This was a gully running north-west to south-east which was more than 3.5m long, had a width of 0.8m, and a depth of 0.17m. The fill context (4) was a sterile mid yellowish brown silty-clay. The gully was most probably cut by an adjacent plough furrow, the latter running on a different axis (north-east to south-west). Trench 2 to the north exposed a substantial ditch [7] but this was seen to cut the subsoil and is therefore most likely of quite recent date. The feature also ran north-east to south-west, and was probably a field boundary ditch. It measured 1.9m wide at the top, crossed the trench at a perpendicular angle (hence >1.9m wide), and with a depth of 0.5m, with a recut showing [9] (10). The fills (8) and (10) were mid yellowish to orangey brown silty-clays. Below this ditch feature an ephemeral furrow was also observed, [5], indicating an earlier agricultural phase. The fill of this (6) was a mid yellow brown clay-silt.



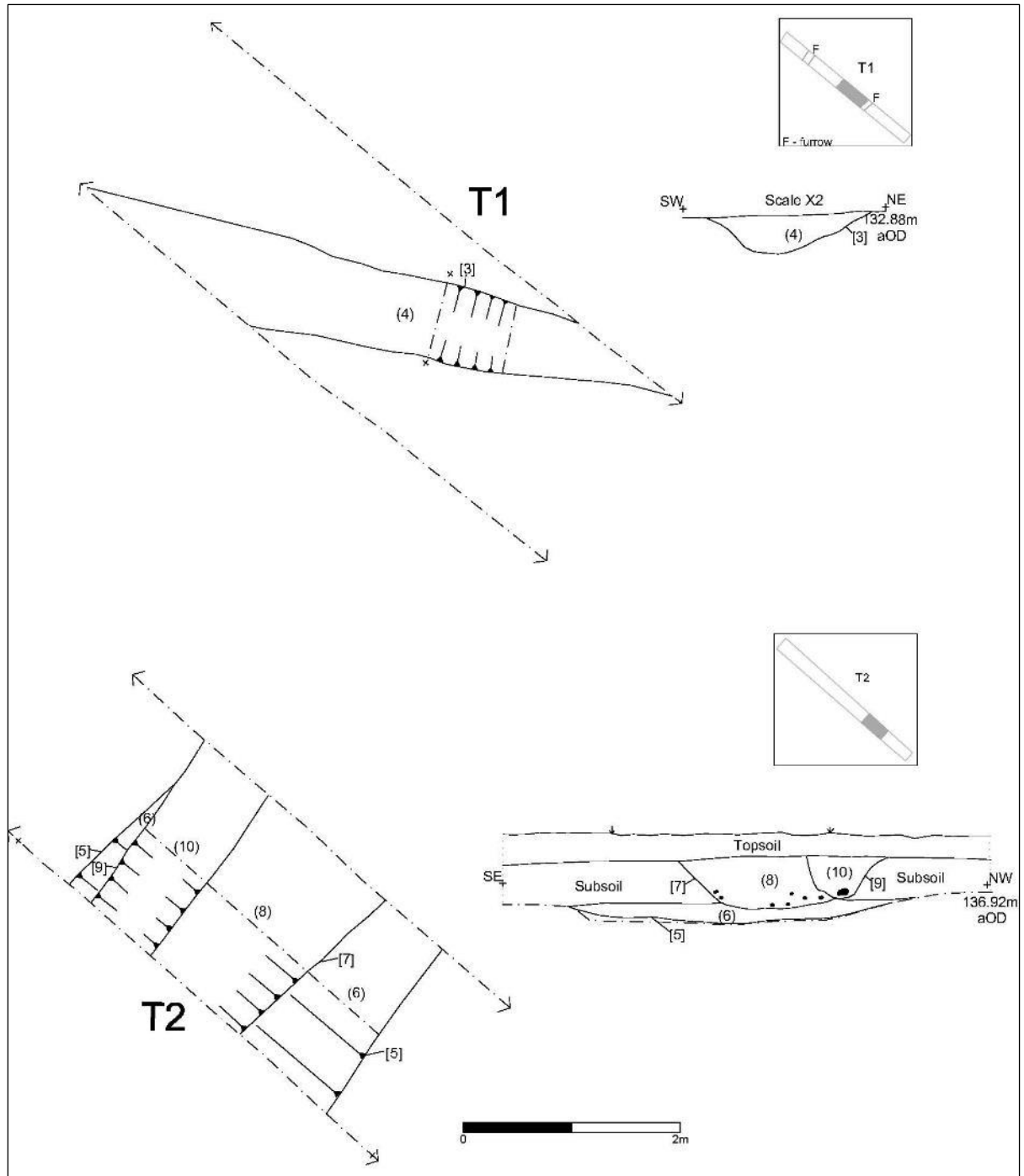


Figure 7: Trenches 1 and 2 features



Figure 8: Trench 1 gully [3]



Figure 9: Trench 2 features

### North-Eastern field

A series of features was identified here in consecutive trenches (Trenches 4, 5, 30 and 39, see

Figure 10). The eastern two trenches in this group (Trenches 4 and 30) exposed Roman deposits. In Trench 4 was an infilled hollow, clearly a continuation of a feature that extends further into the field to the south and is probably glacial in origin. The infill of this feature in Trench 4 (15) was an orangey brown slightly sandy-clay which produced a sizeable assemblage of Roman pottery and building materials. Forty-seven sherds of pottery indicate a relatively tight and early date in the early-middle 2nd century A.D. The presence of tile of both imbrex and tegula form is also indicative of a relatively high status building. Due to the amount of material produced in this deposit and as the trench was flooding it was left in situ, but an auger survey was carried out to ascertain its depth and whether the infilled hollow held waterlogged deposits of Roman (or later) date. The auger coring indicated that context (15) was between 0.52m and 0.65m deep, straight on to the natural clay substratum with no evidence of waterlogged organic material. The presence of so much Roman material here indicated that further features were likely to be present close by, so a further trench (Trench 30) was excavated to the east – upslope from the infilled hollow. This trench was located where a walkover had indicated a concentration of building materials (B.M.) in the ploughsoil (see Figure 10 for spread of material). Trench 30 exposed a series of features.

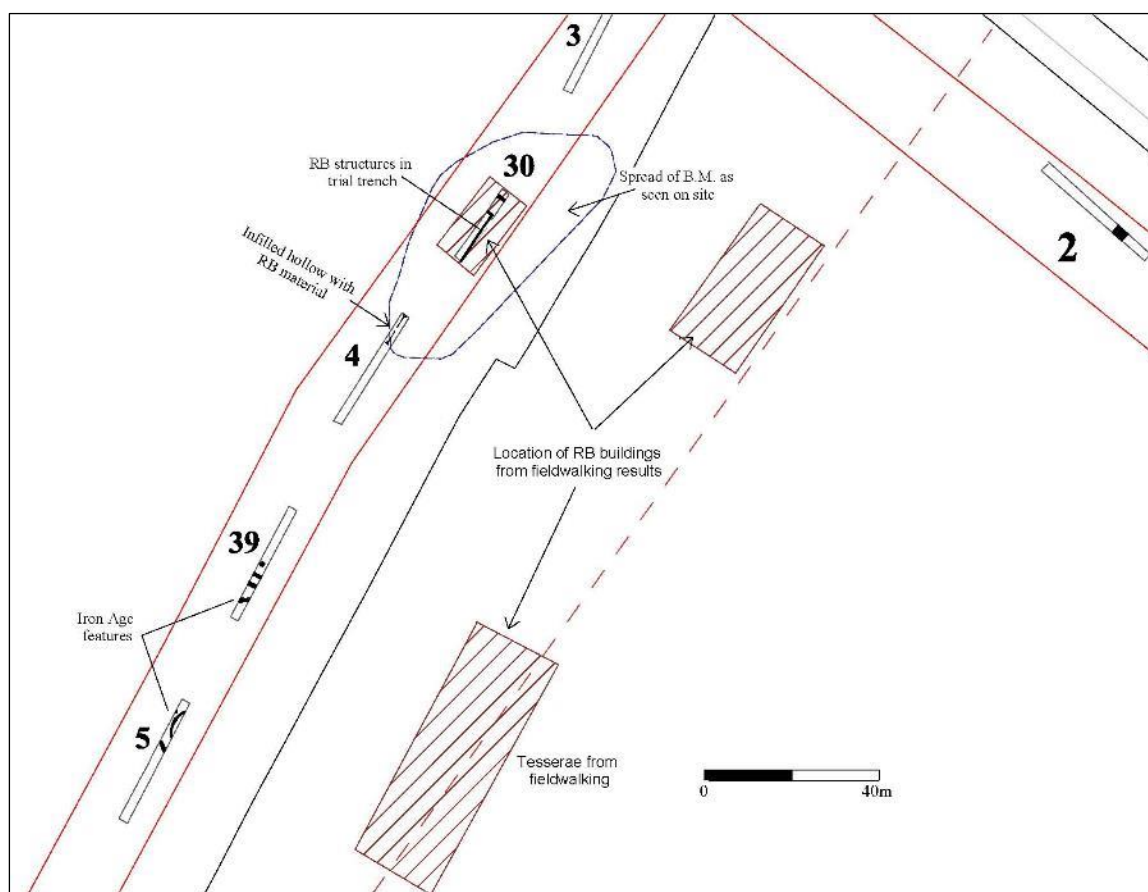


Figure 10: North-East field, areas of interest



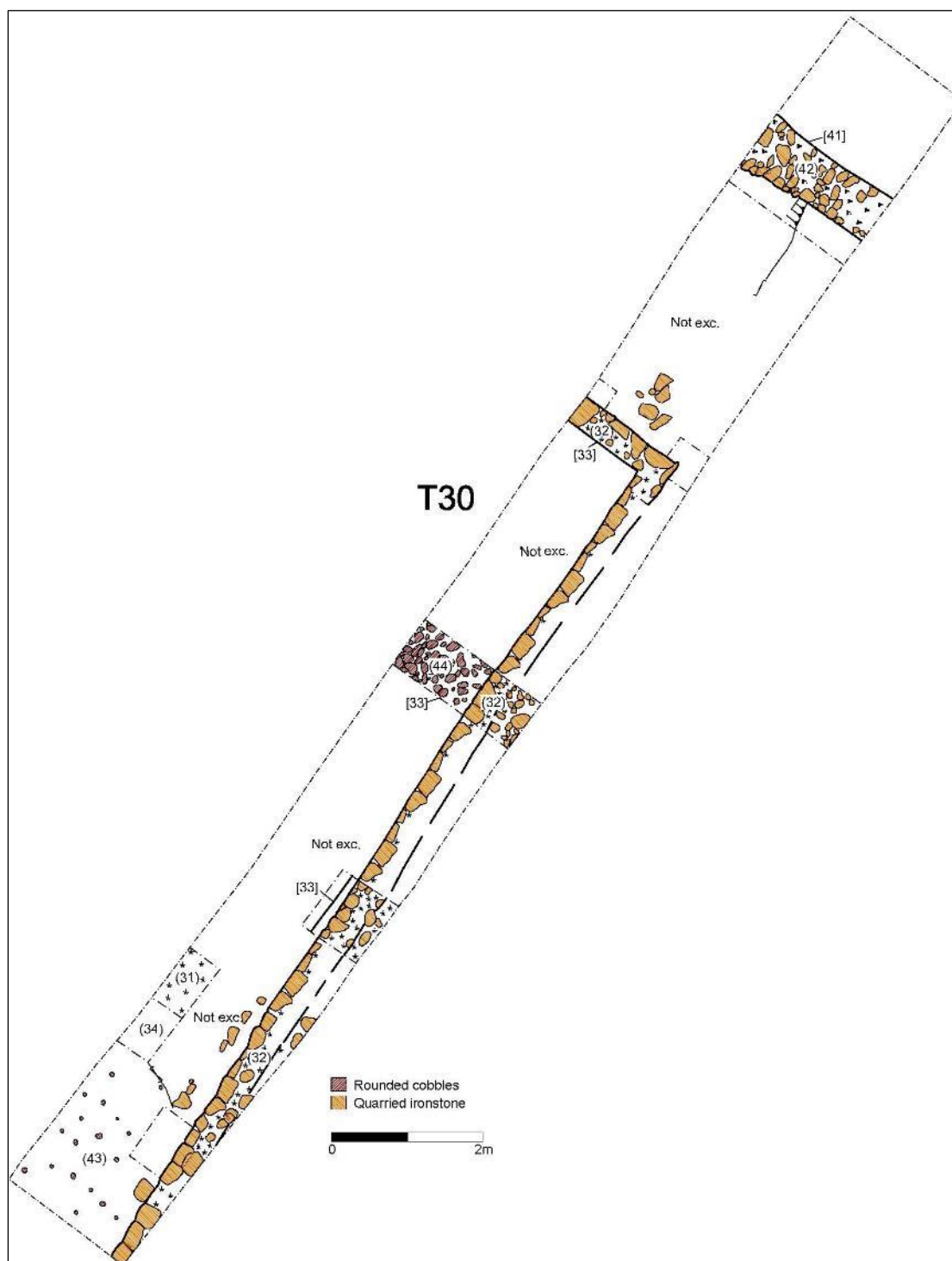


Figure 11: Trench 30 features

The main feature was the south-eastern corner of a substantial building. The south wall (32) ran for 12.8m on a north-east to south-west axis (Figure 12). It had a return wall at the east end which was more than 1.5m long (Figure 13). Where exposed fully the wall was 0.45m wide. It was constructed of quarried Northampton Sand ironstone and bonded with a lime mortar. The mortared structure sat on a lower course of clay bonded ironstone footings. The north ‘inner’ edge of the south wall was exposed but no internal return walls were identified. Several sondages were excavated against the internal face of the wall to remove overburden



(see Figure 11). A possible construction cut for the wall-line [33] was identified from which a sherd of 2nd century pottery was recovered. Against this a series of occupation deposits was uncovered. In addition, a metallised surface of large rounded cobbles was exposed within the building (44). At the west end of the trench further loose cobbles were exposed (43) probably the same surface but here very disturbed by ploughing. External to the wall-line (i.e. to its south) was further ironstone but its context could not be ascertained; it is possible that this ironstone could well be tumble rather than further *in situ* material. Five sherds of 2nd century pottery were recovered from this trench, along with further tegula and imbrex fragments, and several iron carpentry nails.

To the east of the main structure was a further wall, running parallel to it and crossing the trench. This was a slightly different build and may have been a precinct or boundary wall. This feature [41] was more than 1.9m long, 0.8m wide and several courses deep of ironstone, but clay bonded rather than mortared.



Figure 12: South wall (32) of Roman structure, and internal metallised surface (44) to north, Trench 30



Figure 13: East wall (32) of Roman structure, Trench 30

The presence of these structures matches very closely to the proposed location, orientation and layout of a building as indicated by the interpretive plan on the fieldwalked ‘blue sheet’ (cf. Figure 10). This suggests also that the location of other structures as indicated from the fieldwalking results is quite accurate so some faith can be put in the location of further stone structures been as mapped on this figure. Obviously earthen features will not show in the same manner.

To the south-west Trenches 5 and 39 exposed a series of features of mid-late Iron Age date (Figure 14). In Trench 39 three near parallel ditches were identified which ran approximately north-west to south-east. The central ditch was not excavated. The west ditch [35] (36),(37) was *c.* 1.04m wide and 0.55m deep with a steep profile (Figure 14). The primary fill (36) was a light grey brown clay while the secondary fill (37) was a dark grey brown clay-silt. The feature produced 16 sherds of Iron Age pottery with



some suggestion of a transitional rather than mid-late Iron Age date (N. Cooper below). The surface of the easternmost of the three ditches [31] (30) produced two sherds from a beaded rim vessel of 2nd century date, but was not excavated further. To the east of these ditches was a shallow pit [39] (40). This measured *c.*0.9m across with a shallow profile and a depth of 0.33m. Two sherds of mid-late Iron Age material were recovered from the fill (40), which was a dark brownish orange silty-clay.

Trench 5 (Figure 17) to the south-west again, exposed an Iron Age ring gully. The arc of which [11] would suggest a circular structure 10.5m in diameter presumably a roundhouse. The gully itself was up to 0.6m wide, with a quite shallow profile and a depth of 0.2m. The fill (12=13) consisted of a mid grey sandy-clay with occasional heat cracked stones. Five sherds of pottery were recovered, including scored ware and some beaded rims - perhaps indicating a later Iron Age to transitional date. Just north of the ring gully was a shallow feature, probably a hearth, [29] (28) which contained burnt clay in an orangey brown clay. The feature had scorched edges and measured 0.36m across and 0.08m deep. South of the ring gully was a relatively substantial ditch [16], with a post-hole [18] in the butt-end. The ditch measured more than 2.4m long, was 0.8m wide and up to 0.22m deep. Fill (17) was a mid grey brown clay-silt. The post-hole [18] was 0.3m across and with a depth of 0.29m, its fill (19) being a mid grey brown clay-silt with packing stones up to 0.2m across. No further features were found west of ditch [16] within trench 5, so it is possible that this was an enclosure ditch around the roundhouse activity.

The group of features in Trenches 4, 5, 30 and 39 was on a relatively large plateau of land, beyond which the ground falls to the south and west where it was presumably much more prone to flooding.

The rest of the trenches along the proposed access road (Trenches 6 to 14) were negative, with only occasional ploughed out furrows surviving and land drains being observed.

## **West Field**

The majority of the trenches within the proposed bio-digester area in the west field were also negative. However Trench 33 exposed two features (

Figure 22). A substantial ditch running broadly north-east to south-west was excavated, [22] (21), 1.3m wide, near V-shaped and 0.62m deep. The fill was a reddish flecked greyish yellow clay with frequent cobbles some of which were clearly heat cracked. It produced 10 sherds of scored ware of mid-late Iron Age date. North of this was another linear feature, a comparatively shallow gully with butt ends after a length of 4.4m. It measured up to 0.89m wide and 0.22m deep. The fill (23) was a dark brownish orange sandy-clay with frequent heat cracked stones, and with seven sherds of Iron Age pottery being recovered from it. Further heat cracked stone was observed in the topsoil, clearly the feature having been plough damaged and truncated. Fill (23) also produced residues from smithing activity. A further trench (Trench 36) was added between Trench 33 and negative Trench 32, to ascertain if other features were in this area. This exposed a continuation of ditch [22], indicating that the ditch is on a broad curve with the visible part being the south-east arc of a larger enclosure that potentially continues to the north and into the next field outside the proposed development. This area is on a relatively prominent plateau with the ground falling away to south, west and east.







Figure 15: Ditch [35] in Trench 39



Figure 16: Pit [39] in Trench 39

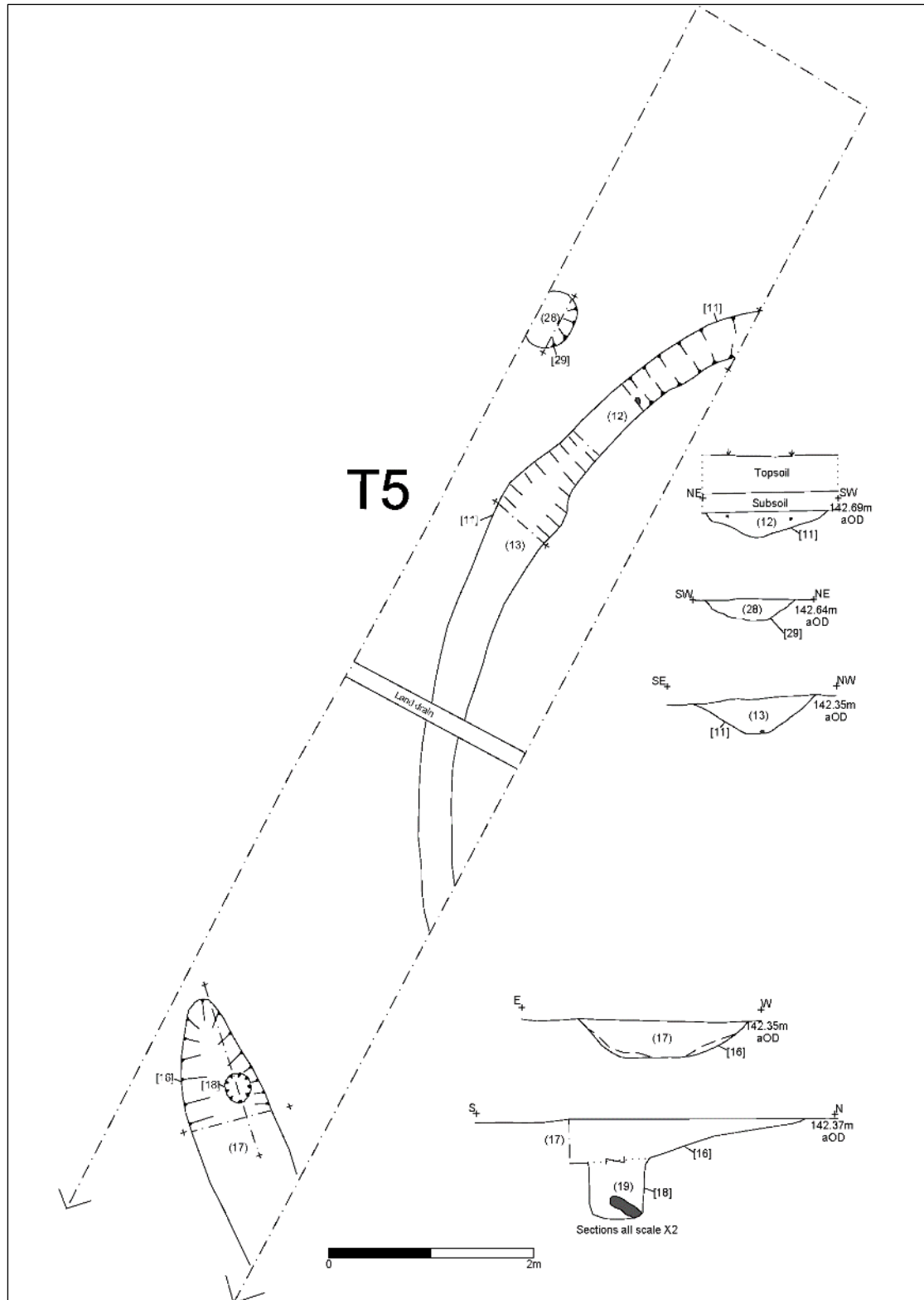


Figure 17: Trench 5 features





Figure 18: Iron Age ring gully [11] in Trench 5





Figure 19: Features [16] and [18] in Trench 5



Figure 20: Hearth like feature [29] in Trench 5



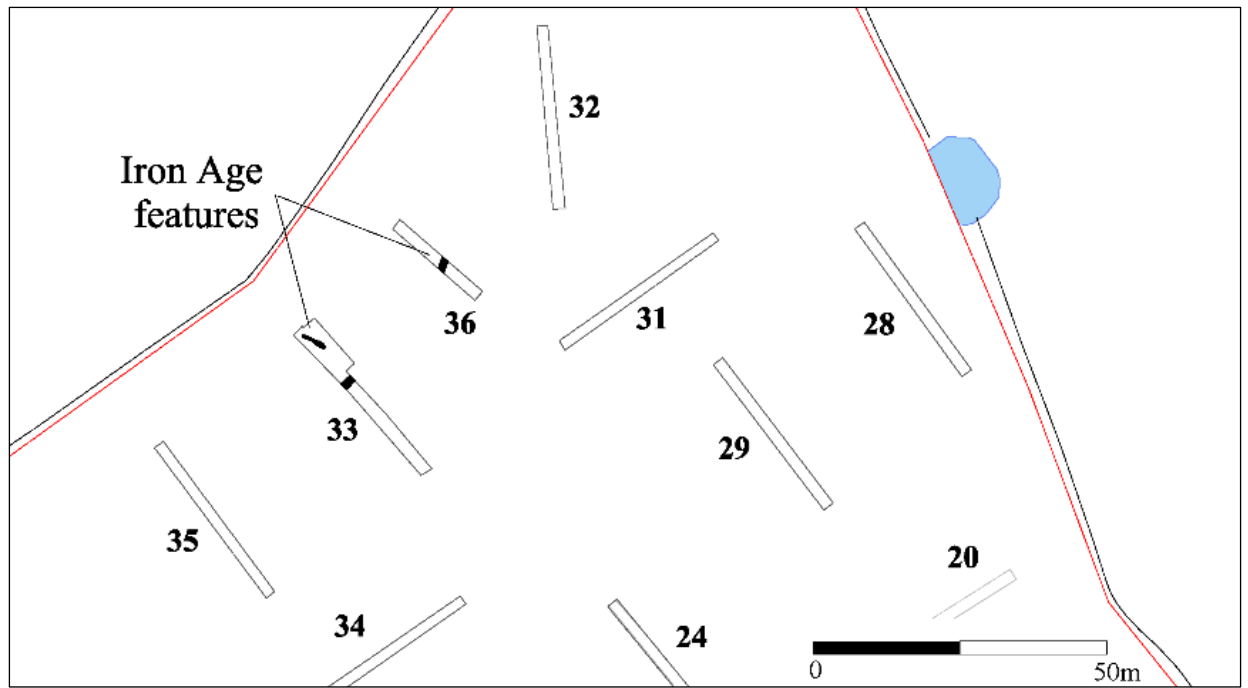


Figure 21: Features in main area (west field)

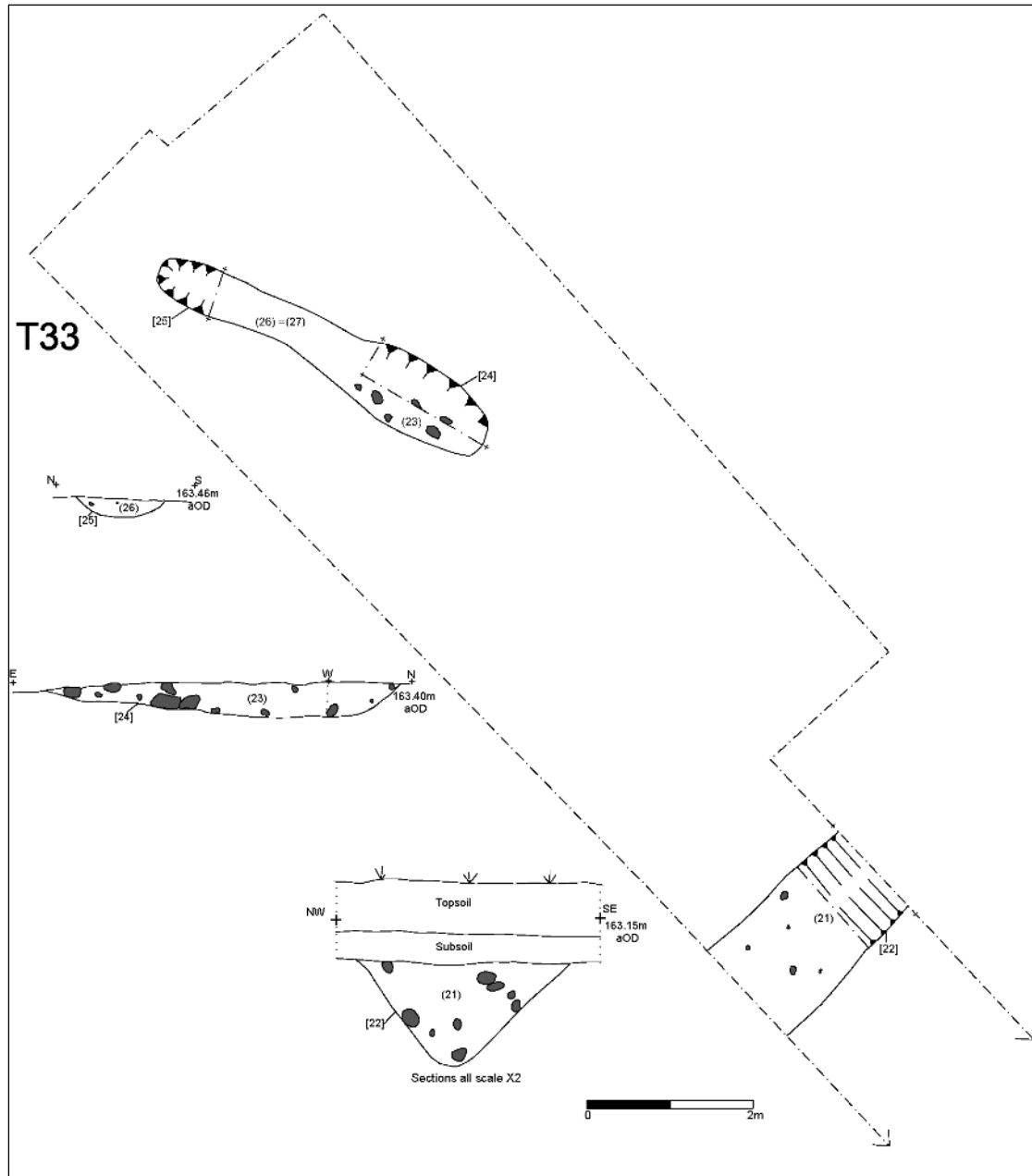


Figure 22: Trench 33 features



Figure 23: Ditch 22 in Trench 33



Figure 24: Gully [24] in Trench 33, during excavation. N.b. heat cracked stones





Figure 25: Gully 25 in Trench 33, during excavation (cont'd.)

### **Alternative Haul Road**

*Tim Higgins*

Further evaluation was undertaken in April 2017 to evaluate an alternative route for the haul road in the light of the positive results from the initial route. Eight additional trenches were opened along the line of the revised haul road. The trench siting was varied slightly to avoid any damage to the current crop.

Trenches 40, 41, 42, and 43 located in the north-eastern section of the alternative route were negative. A series of ceramic land drains were observed within trenches 41, 42 and 43 running in a north-west to south-east direction and appear to be respecting and running in parallel with the current field boundaries. It is likely that the majority of these land drains have been ploughed out as the ones that did survive were shallow (typically less than 0.30m deep).

The remaining four trenches 44, 45 and 47 located in the south-western section of the alternative route contained a light scatter of archaeological features. While Trench 46 was found to be negative the north-eastern trench in this group (Trench 44) exposed a Roman ditch within the north-eastern section of the trench. A substantial ditch running broadly north-west to south-east was excavated, [60]. This feature measured 1.28m wide and 0.51m deep and generally had 'V' shaped profile. The primary fill (61) was a pale yellowish brown clay with occasional charcoal flecks. An overlying was a secondary fill (62) that comprised dark grey silty clay that was dirty in appearance with frequent charcoal flecks. It produced four abraded Roman pottery sherds dated between about AD 50 and 80.

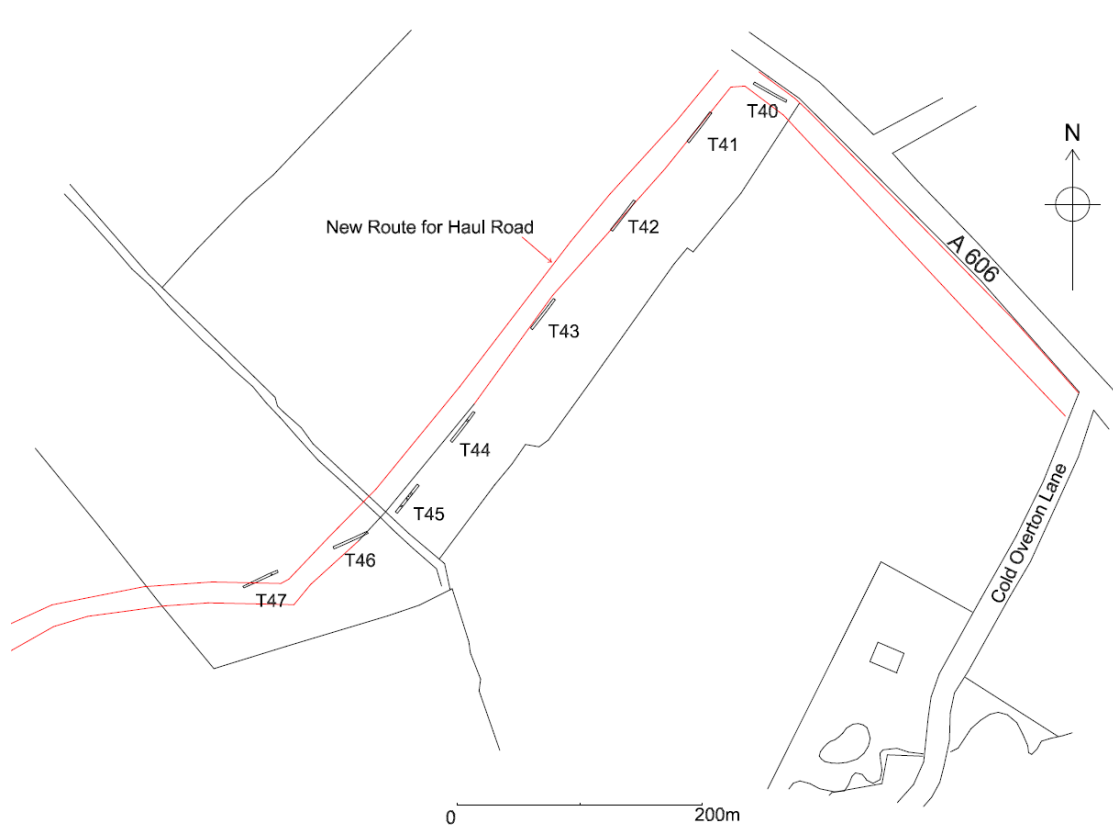


Figure 26 Alternative haul road route showing location of the excavated trenches

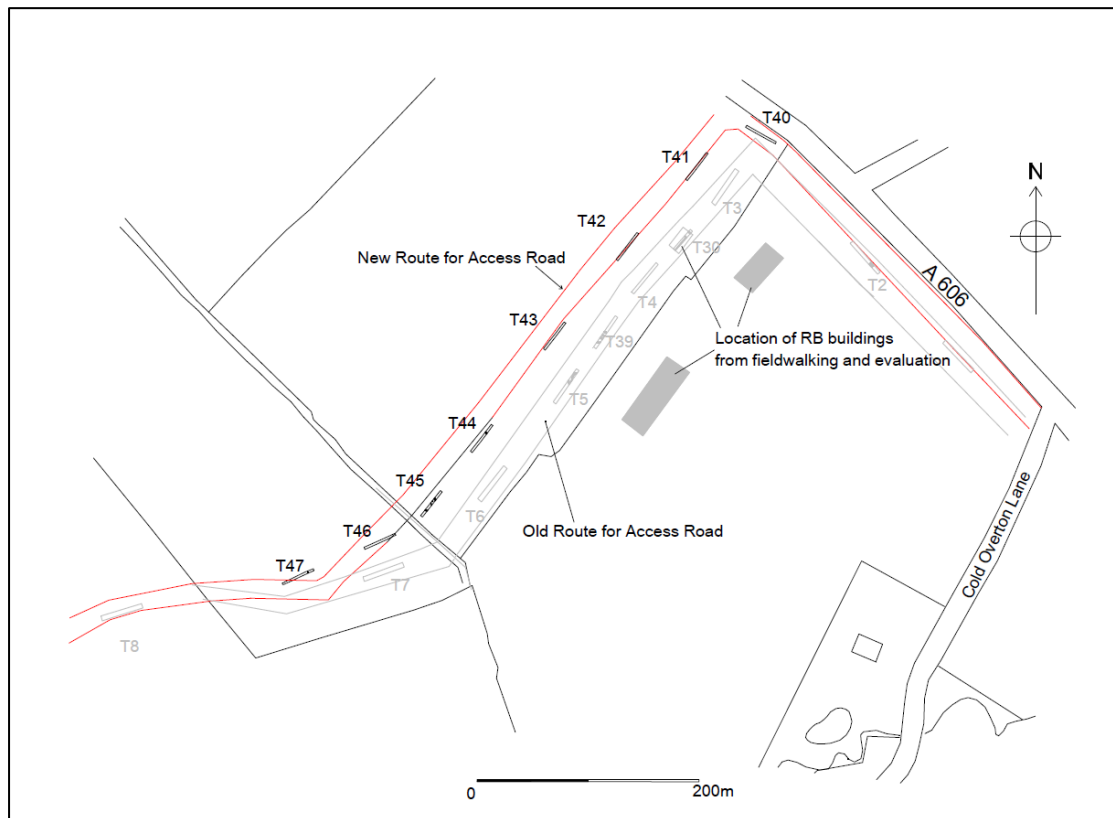


Figure 26 New access road and location of the excavated trenches and previous evaluation trenches



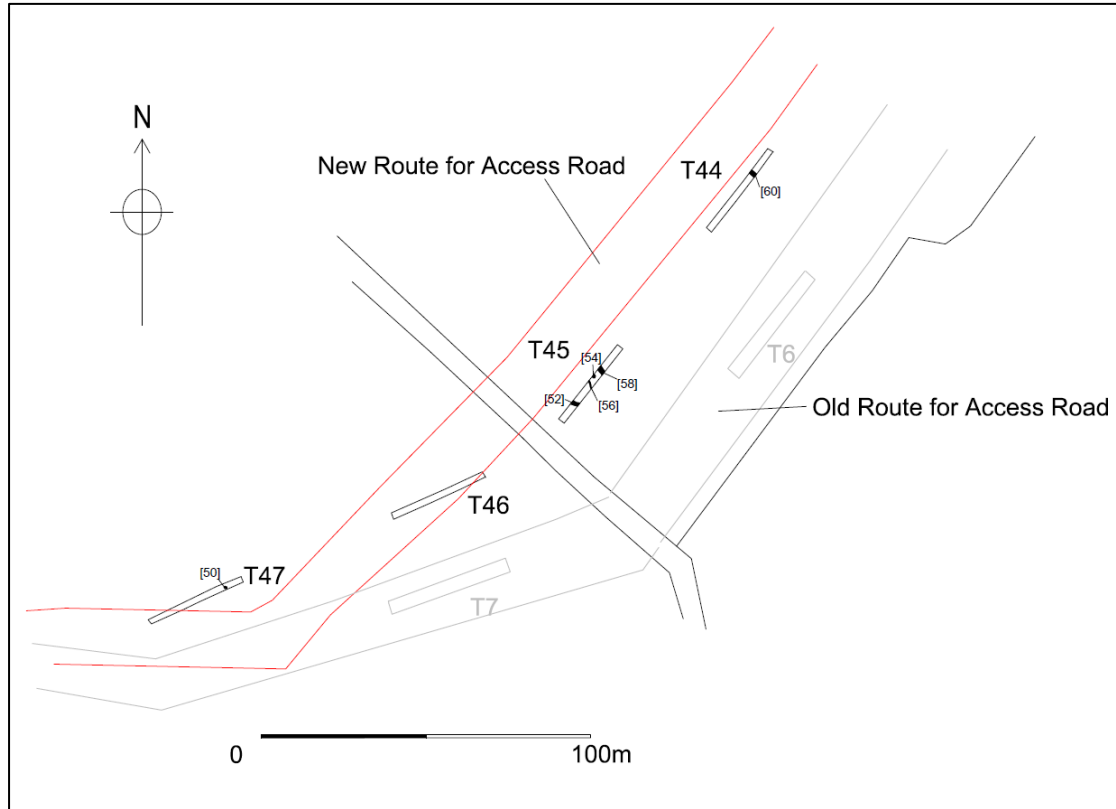


Figure 27 Trenches 44, 45 and 47 containing archaeological features

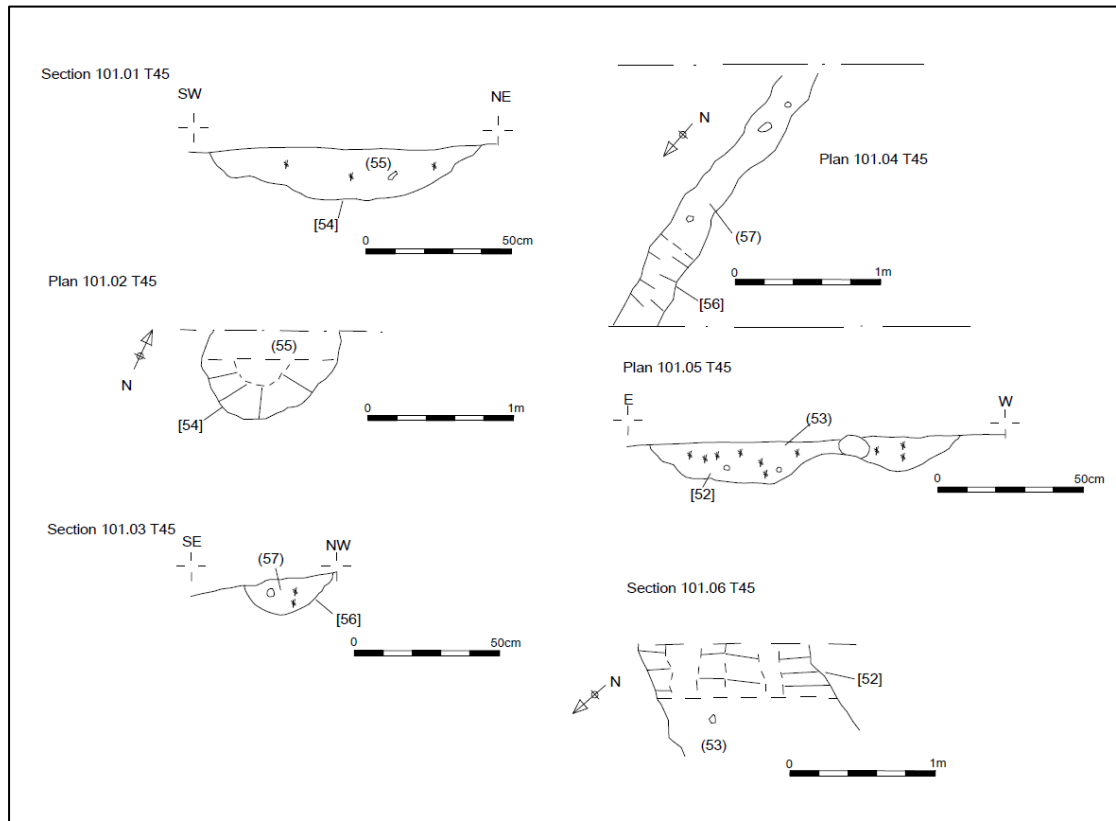


Figure 28 Features excavated in Trench 45

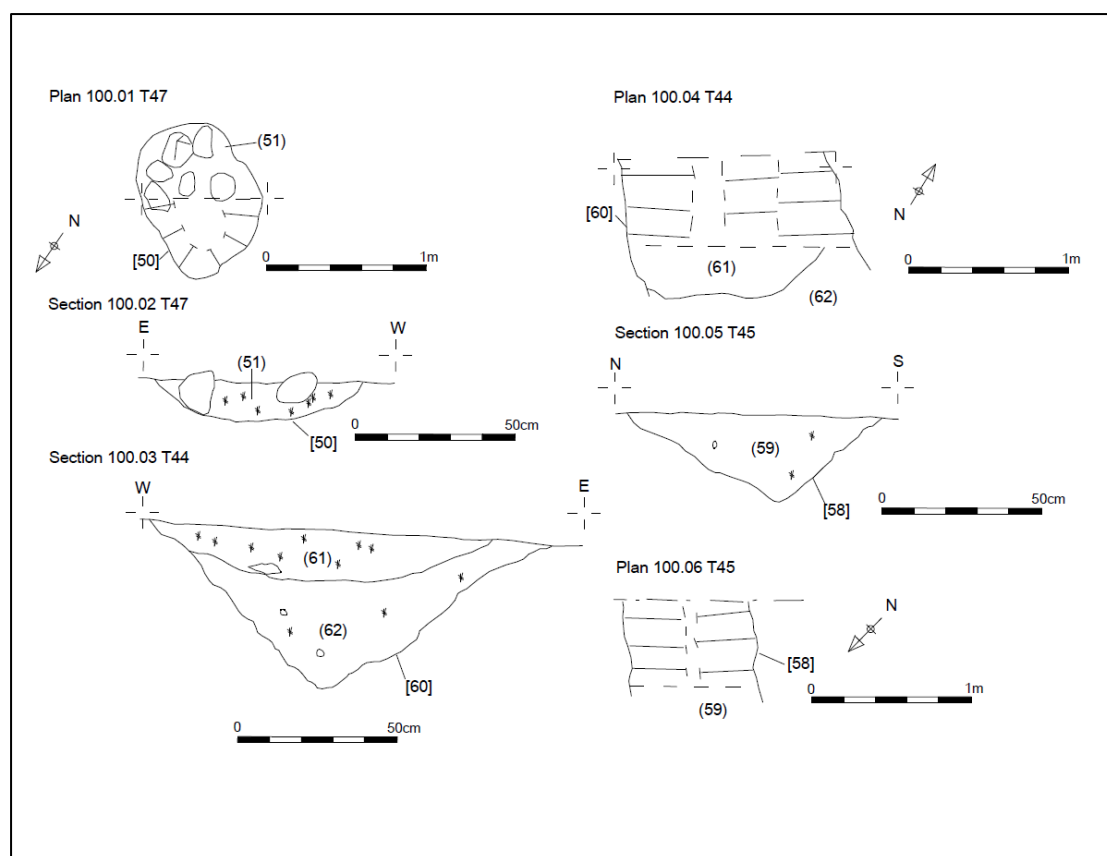


Figure 29 Features excavated in Trenches 44 and 47

South-west along the haul road route Trench 45 contained further four features. Another substantial ditch [58] was found within the north-eastern half of the trench. This ditch was again aligned approximately north-west to south east with 'V' shaped profile that measured 0.80m wide and 0.25m deep. This feature contained a single fill (59) that comprised a pale yellowish brown clay that was fairly clean sterile. Towards the centre a single pit [54] was observed running north-west under the trench baulk. The feature appear to irregular oval shape with gradual sloping sides and had diameter of 0.48m with shallow depth of 0.20m. The pit contained pale yellowish grey brown clay (55) mixed with a rare charcoal fleck. A single gully [56] was also observed towards the centre of the trench and comprised a narrow slightly curving linear feature. This shallow feature had gradual sloping sides and rounded base, which measured 0.30m wide and 0.12m deep. The fill (57) comprised pale grey brown clay mixed with occasional small charcoal fleck. At southwestern end another shallow ditch [52] was encountered. This feature had gradual sloping sides and undulating rounded base which perhaps suggested a recut. The feature measured 1.00m wide and 0.15m deep and contained mixed fill (53) consisting of dark greyish brown clay mixed frequent charcoal flecks. A single Roman pottery sherd was retrieved from this fill was dated to the middle 1st century AD.

The final trench 47 was located towards south-western end of the access road route revealed a single feature. The feature appeared to be the remnants of hearth [50] and was located at the northern end of the trench. The feature was irregular oval with gradual sloping sides and rounded base. It measured 0.95m long, 0.68m wide and 0.12m deep. The fill (51) was dark grey silty clay mixed with several large heat cracked pebbles and stones placed within it. It also contained a late Iron Age or early Roman fired clay loom weight and a fragment

of burnt daub. Samples taken from the fill included cereal grains that probably represents waste from processing grain for consumption.



Figure 30 Trench 44 Ditch [60]



Figure 31 Trench 45 Pit [54] looking north-east





Figure 32 Trench 45 Gully [56] looking south



Figure 33 Trench 45 Ditch [52] looking south-east

## **The Iron Age and Roman Pottery, Building Materials and Other Finds**

*Nicholas J. Cooper*

### ***Introduction***



The evaluation produced small stratified assemblages of mid-late Iron Age pottery (46 sherds), Roman pottery (54 sherds), Roman roof tile (21 fragments), fired clay (290g), ironworking residues (280g) and a single unstratified prehistoric flint.

### **Methodology**

The pottery has been analysed by fabric and form according to the Leicestershire Prehistoric (Table 1) and Roman Fabric Series (Marsden 2011; Pollard 1994) and quantified by sherd count, weight and EVEs. The entire quantified record is held in archive on a Microsoft Excel workbook, from which the tabulated data are derived (Tables 2-5).

Table 1 Descriptions of Iron Age fabrics occurring at Pickwell (from Marsden 2011).

<b>Fabric</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b><i>Sandy</i></b> Q1 <i>Quartz sand</i>	Common to abundant sub-rounded to rounded quartz sand (0.25–1mm)
<b><i>Shell-tempered</i></b> S1 <i>Shell</i> S2 <i>Sandy fabric with shell</i>	Moderate to very common shell or plate-like voids (1–5mm) As S1, but common to very common sub-rounded to rounded quartz sand (0.25–1mm)
<b><i>Grog</i></b> G1 <i>with shell &amp; sand</i> G2 <i>Grog with sand</i>	Similar to S2 with common sub-angular grog (0.5-2mm) Similar to Q1 with common sub-angular grog (0.5-2mm)

### **The Iron Age Pottery**

The assemblage comprises 46 sherds weighing 283g and with an EVEs value of 0.35 and the full quantified record is tabulated below (Table 2). The average sherd weight of 6g indicates a fragmentary assemblage exacerbated by the fact that the shell-tempered fabrics are leached. However, one profile of a globular vessel with a flared rim came from (37) and three other rim sherds from (13) and (23), as well as scored sherds from a number of contexts help to clarify the dating of the group. The occurrence of scored decoration would place the assemblage within the East Midlands scored ware tradition dating to the 4th century BC to the mid-1st century AD (Elsdon 1992a). However, none of the rims preserved are typical of scored ware vessels and do not have scored decoration. Two are flared and two are beaded, and similar to vessels from the latest phase at Grove Farm Enderby (Elsdon 1992b, 51, fig.29.Ph.5.78, 86-91) indicating a transitional Roman date toward the middle of the 1st century AD. The majority of the vessels were manufactured using fossil shell as the dominant opening material (Fabric S1 and S2) as would be expected in this part of the county, although fabric incorporating combinations of shell, grog, sand and ferruginous pellets (Fabrics G1, G2, Q1 and Q1fe) are also present.

Table 2 Quantified record of Iron Age Pottery

<b>IRON AGE POTTERY FROM PICKWELL XA8.2017</b>								
<b>Cont</b>	<b>Fabric</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Rim/Part</b>	<b>Dec</b>	<b>Sherds</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>EVEs</b>	<b>Diam</b>
12	G1	jar	body	scored	2	24		
13	G2	jar	bead rim		1	13	0.09	140

13	S1	jar	bead rim		2	7	0.03	180
21	S2	jar	body	scored	10	25		
23	Q1 fe	jar	body	scored	2	35		
23	S1	jar	base		4	7		
23	Q1	bowl?	flared rim		1	2	0.07	100
27	S1	misc	body	scored	6	20		
37	S1	jar	flared rim	smoothed	14	130	0.16	150
37	S2	misc	body	scored	1	6		
37	Q1	jar	shoulder	scored	1	9		
40	S1	misc	body		2	4		
<b>Total</b>					<b>46</b>	<b>282</b>	<b>0.35</b>	

### *The Roman Pottery*

A total of 54 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 543g and with an EVEs value of 0.99, was recovered from four contexts. Almost without exception, the pottery is heavily abraded and the fairly low average sherd weight of 10g indicates a disturbed or exposed assemblage, although there are joining sherds and vessel profiles preserved despite this.

The full quantified record is presented below (Table 3).

Table 3: Quantified record of Roman pottery

<b>ROMAN POTTERY PICKWELL XA8.2017</b>									
<b>Cont</b>	<b>Fabric</b>	<b>Form</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Rim/part</b>	<b>Sherds</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>EVEs</b>	<b>Diam</b>	<b>Date</b>
15	CG Sam	Cup	Form 27	profile	1	30	0.31	90	E-M2nd
15	CG Sam	Cup	Form 35	profile	3	15	0.13	100	L1st-M2nd
15	CG Sam	dish	Form 18/31	base	1	115			120-150
15	C12 CG	Beaker	Form 64	body	2	7			100-150
15	OW2	misc	misc	body	1	1			L1st-2nd
15	WW2	flagon	misc	body	17	39			L1st-2nd
15	BB1	Bowl	HB Type 39	flanged	2	20	0.08	160	120-160
15	GW3	jar	rusticated	body	10	95			E2nd
15	GW1	bowl	?flanged	base	5	100			2nd+
15	GW5	dish	dog dish	bead rim	2	10	0.07	200	2nd+
15	GW5	jar	necked	bead rim	1	5	0.07	140	2nd+
15	CG1B	jar	necked	sq bead	2	10	0.1	140	2nd+
30	OW5	jar	necked	bead rim	2	21	0.13	190	2nd+
32	CG1B	jar	necked	sq bead	1	30	0.1	180	2nd+
38	OW5	jar	misc	body	3	30			2nd+
38	C2NV	beaker	bag-shaped	base	1	15			L2nd
53	GT2	jar	Form 18 or 18a	body	1	10			Mid 1st
60	SG Sam	dish	Form 18 or 18a	base	4	18	0.42		L2nd
<b>Total</b>					<b>63</b>	<b>571</b>	<b>1.41</b>		

## Results

The majority of the assemblage comes from layer (15) which infilled a hollow just to the west of the villa building, and the material and their dating would indicate a rural settlement of relatively high status in the early to middle decades of the 2nd century. Seven of the 47 sherds from (15) belong to four imported fine ware vessels from Central Gaul (15% by sherd count and 36% by weight). Three are samian ware comprising cup Forms 27 and 35 and dish form 18/31, the last in the distinctive micaceous fabric of Lezoux. The fourth vessel is a truly unusual occurrence in Britain, being a conical beaker from Central Gaul of samian Form 64 with moulded figural decoration and an abraded black colour-coating. Webster states that the samian form does occur with a black rather than a red coating (1996, 58, fig.52) and therefore can be classified as a Central Gaulish colour-coated ware (Fabric C12 CG) as recognised by Symonds when looking at examples from Lezoux itself (Symonds 1992, 10, fig.2 Group no.37). The group also includes sherds from the body of a fine white ware flagon (Fabric WW2) and the rim of a flanged bowl in south-east Dorset BB1 (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991, Type 39) dating to the middle decades of the 2nd century, which is, again, a relatively unusual occurrence in this rural location, away from Leicester, at this date. The last vessel of note from (15) is a necked jar with a squared bead rim in Harrold shell-tempered ware from Bedfordshire (Fabric CG1B). The rest of the group comprises jars and bowls/dishes in grey and oxidised wares (Fabrics GW and OW) also dating broadly to the early to middle 2nd century.

The pottery from contexts (30), (32) and (38) is not as closely datable, but does not contradict the overall 2nd-century dating, the most diagnostic vessel being the pedestal base of a small bag-shaped beaker in Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware (Fabric C2NV) (Howe *et al.* 1980 no.44) dating to the later 2nd century.

Four abraded but joining rim sherds (18g, 0.42 EVEs) from a south Gaulish samian ware dish of Form 18 or 18R were recovered from ditch fill [60] (61) in Trench 44. The dish had a diameter of 130mm and was manufactured at La Graufesenque between about AD 50 and 80 (Webster 1996, 35).

A single body sherd (10g) in a fine grog-tempered fabric with some quartz sand inclusions (Fabric GT2), was recovered from ditch fill [52] (53) in Trench 45. It was probably from a 'Belgic'-style jar, dating to a little before or after the Conquest between about AD 40 to 60.

## Roman Tile

A total of 21 fragments of Roman tile weighing nearly 3kg was recovered from two contexts (15) and (38) associated with the demolition of the putative villa building in the middle of the 2nd century. The average fragment weight of 143g is relatively high and is coupled with the fact that all the tile could be attributed to type. The quantified record by count and weight (no corners were preserved) is presented below (Table 4). Samples of diagnostic fragments have been retained in the archive.

Table 4 Quantified record of Roman roof tile

Roman CBM Pickwell XA8.2017						
Cut	Context	Type	Count	Weight	Retained	Comment
14	15	Tegula	10	1700	sample	
14	15	Imbrex	4	395	sample	

	38	Tegula	6	790	sample	nail hole
	38	Imbrex	1	105	sample	
<b>Total</b>			<b>21</b>	<b>2990</b>		

Both contexts contained examples of tegula and imbrex roof tiles, all of which were manufactured in a sandy oxidised fabric. Whilst the assemblage indicates the location of a stone-founded building, the lack of box flue tiles would argue against the presence of underfloor heating systems within it.

### ***Triangular Loom weight***

Context also [50] (51) in Trench 47 produced a complete triangular loom weight (1.962kg) manufactured from fired clay, with sides of 180mm and a thickness of 65mm. Two perforations (15mm diameter) are preserved across two of the vertices and the third is damaged. One triangular surface is smooth and coated in soot deposits, suggesting incorporation into a hearth structure. The other surface is eroded. Warp weighted looms using triangular weights are late Iron Age in date, but evidence from Empingham in Rutland suggests they continued in use in rural areas during the early Roman period (Fraser 2000, 115, fig.55.44-45).

### ***Fired clay***

A total of seven fragments (290g) of fired clay was recovered from two contexts (28) and (37), the latter containing late Iron Age pottery. The full record is tabulated below (Table 5). Samples have been retained in the archive.

Table 5 Quantified record of fired clay

<b>Roman CBM Pickwell XA8.2017</b>				
<b>Context</b>	<b>Count</b>	<b>Weight</b>	<b>Retained</b>	<b>Comment</b>
28	3	15	sample	
37	4	275	kept	flat edges
51	1	60	kept	
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>350</b>		

The three fragments from (28) are small and amorphous, but two from (37) have pre-formed shape, indicating that they come from buildings or structures within building. One has a convex surface and the other two flat surfaces at right angles.

The fill of hearth or pit [50] (51) in Trench 47 produced a fragment of burnt daub (60g) with part of a cylindrical wattle impression through it, deriving from a wattle and daub structure, destroyed by fire in the vicinity.

### ***Iron nails***

The remains of three handmade iron nails of Roman date were recovered, unstratified, from Trench 30, belonging to Manning's (1985) Type 1b with a flat round head and tapering square-sectioned shaft. One is almost complete with a length of 65mm. These



are standard carpentry nails equivalent to the modern two and four inch nail, and could have been used to suspend the tegula roof tile which has a hole in.

### ***Ironworking residues***

Seven fragments (280g) of vitrified clay hearth lining with iron silicate (fayalite) attached were recovered from (23), a context containing late Iron Age pottery. The residues result from iron smithing (rather than smelting) activity in the vicinity.

### ***Prehistoric worked flint***

A single core made from a red-orange flint pebble with part of the cortex preserved was recovered unstratified. The removals are of a bladelet technology, perhaps suggesting a Mesolithic date for the flint.

## **The Charred Plant Remains**

*Rachel Small*

### ***Introduction***

During the evaluation, three bulk samples were taken from three ditches [16], [24] and [35] all of Iron Age date. The results of the analysis of the charred plant remains recovered from these samples are presented and what this can tell us of about the diet, crop husbandry strategies and environment at the site is discussed.

### ***Methodology***

Samples were a silty clay and all parts were processed in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm mesh sieve. The flotation fractions (flots) were transferred into plastic boxes and left to air dry before being sorted for plant remains using a x10-40 stereo microscope. All the residues were air dried and the fractions over 4mm were sorted in their entirety whilst the fractions under 4mm were only scanned for remains but presence was noted. Plant remains were identified by comparison to modern reference material available at ULAS and names follow Stace (1991).

### ***Results***

Sample 102 (53), [52], contained approximately 80 specimens, which was equivalent to 13 items per litre (a moderate density; Table 7).

The only other charred plant remain present was a vetch (*Vicia* sp.) cotyledon in sample 1 and this was only identifiable by gross morphology. Charcoal fragments greater than 2mm in length were rare to common (10 – 50 items) in samples, however, these were not identified to species. The samples did show signs of disturbance as they contained modern rootlets, seeds and insect casing. Two of the samples (100 and 101) did not contain any charred plant remains (Table 6).

Table 6: remains present in samples.

Sample No.	Context	Cut	Volume (L)	Notes
1	23	24	17	Modern roots common and seeds rare.
2	17	16	17	1 x <i>Vicia</i> sp. Charcoal common. Modern roots common and seeds rare.
3	37		17	Charcoal rare. Modern roots, seeds and insect casing rare.
100	51	50	9	No plant remains, modern roots common, charcoal rare.
101	61	60	8	No plant remains, modern roots and charcoal common.
102	53	52	6	Plant remains present (see table 2). Charcoal and modern roots common.

Table 7: charred plant remains present in sample 102.

<b>Sample 102 (53)[52]</b>		
<b>Grains</b>		
<i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	6	Barley
<i>Triticum</i> sp. glume wheat	9	Glume wheat
Cereal	29	Cereal
<b>Chaff</b>		
<i>Triticum</i> sp. glume base	19	Wheat glume base
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. glume base	2	Spelt wheat glume base
<b>Wild seeds</b>		
<i>Chenopodium</i> sp.	6	Goosefoot
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i> (L.) Sch. Bip.	5	Scentless mayweed
Poaceae (large)	2	Grass (large)
<b>Total</b>		
<b>Volume of sample (L)</b>		78
<b>% of flot analysed</b>		6
<b>Items per litre</b>		100
<b>Items per litre</b>		13

### Discussion

Cereal grains were most common in sample 102 (53), [52] and 44 specimens were present (table 2). These were however, very poorly preserved – very little of the outer surface (epidermis) remained and the specimens were only identifiable by gross morphology (Hubbard and Azm's 1990 stage 5). It was possible to identify a small number as barley (*Hordeum vulgare* L.) and glume wheat (*Triticum* spp.). Glume bases were common (21) and it was possible to identify two as spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta*

L.). A smaller number of wild seeds were also identified including goosefoots (*Chenopodium* spp.), scentless mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum* (L.) Sch. Bip.), and large grass (Poaceae). The first two are classified as weeds of arable/disturbed land.

Sample 102 (53), [52] probably represents waste from processing grain for consumption (glume bases and wild seeds) and food spillage (grains). Grain would have been taken out of storage and prepared on a day to day basis in the Roman period for consumption.

During first phase work three bulk samples were taken from Iron Age ditches, and only one charred plant remain was recovered - a poorly preserved vetch (*Vicia* sp.) seed. Combining the results from both phases, preservation at the site can be considered very poor and density of remains low/moderate, both factors limiting conclusions drawn. The potential for informative analysis of plant remains from the site can therefore be considered low/medium.

## Conclusions

The evaluation revealed archaeological activity in two areas of the proposed site. At both the east of site close to the A606 along the proposed access road, and in the west of site within the main proposed bio-digester site itself features were exposed. In the former area, Iron Age activity including a roundhouse and several other features was exposed. The dating suggests a later Iron Age/transitional presence with activity perhaps as late as the 1st century AD. Just to the east of this was a concentration of Roman material, and a stone building with further stone structures which are likely to form part of a range of buildings of a villa complex. The dating evidence here indicates Roman activity in the early-mid 2nd century, and the structural evidence confirms the presence of villa type buildings. This is significant as this is quite an early date for a villa complex, and there is the possibility of continued occupation in this area from the Iron Age into the Roman period. In the field to the south of this area two undated linear features were also observed. The fieldwalked results indicate further Roman buildings from a spread of tile and other material in the vicinity of the proposed development stone, one with a tessellated pavement. These stone buildings are outside the line of the proposed access road, although it is of course possible that other earthen features will survive.

The majority of the trenches within the alternative haul road in the west field were negative. However Trenches 44, 45 and 46 produced light scatter of either late Iron Age or early Roman features (Figure 26).

These new features were located approximately 100m from the proposed location of Roman Villa complex. They were also sited on ground generally falling away to the north-west. This would suggest that location of the new access road is placed within an area that is peripheral to the Roman site.

In the west of the proposed site further evidence for Iron Age activity was exposed, in the form of a probable enclosure and a gully, both of which produced occupation material and evidence for industrial activity (smithing).

The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A8.2017.

## Archive and Publications

The site archive (X.A8 2017), consisting of paper and photographic records, will be housed with Leicestershire County Council.

The documentary archive consists of:

- Context, drawing, trench and photographic record indices
- 33 context record sheets
- 129 digital photographs – contact prints and on compact disc.
- 4 x A3, 2 x A2 drawing sheets

A version of the excavation summary (see above) will appear in due course in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.

## Acknowledgements

Wayne Jarvis of ULAS undertook the archaeological evaluation with assistance from Andrew Hyam, Claire LaCombe, and Chris Naisbitt on behalf of Intelligent Environment Ltd. The Phase 2 alternative access road evaluation in April 2017 was directed by Tim Higgins. The project was managed by Patrick Clay. I am also grateful to the Senior Planning Archaeologist Richard Clark for on-site discussions.

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17.03.2017



## OASIS Data Entry

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>OASIS ID</b>			
	<b>Project Name</b>	Land adjacent to Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	16-01-2017 - 01-02-2017		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	No		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Evaluation		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	arable		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	Iron Age areas X2, Roman buildings		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	Iron Age and Roman pottery, Roman CBM		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Bio-digester plant and access road		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Pre planning enquiry		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>			
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	Land adjacent to Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire,		
	<b>Study Area</b>	7.05ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 79989 12166		
	<b>Height OD</b>	130 to 160 m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Patrick Clay		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Wayne Jarvis		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Intelligent Environment Ltd.		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	ULAS	ULAS	ULAS
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>	X.A8 2017	X.A8 2017	X.A8 2017
	<b>Contents</b>	Pottery, CBM, Fe Nails , Flint	Photos	Site records Field notes Plans
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	<b>Title</b>	<i>An Archaeological Evaluation on Land adjacent to Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire</i>		
	<b>Author</b>	Jarvis, W.		
	<b>Other bibliographic details</b>	ULAS Report No 2017-033		
	<b>Date</b>	2017		
	<b>Publisher/Place</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	<b>Description</b>	Developer Report A4 pdf		

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>Oasis No</b>	universi1-		
	<b>Project Name</b>	An Archaeological Evaluation Land at Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Somerby, Leicestershire Phase 2.		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	24-05-2017 - 26-05-2017		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	Fieldwalking Geophysical Survey Evaluation		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Evaluation		
	<b>Site Status</b>	Arable		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Arable		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	None		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	None		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Residential		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Planning Condition		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>	Planning Ref: 13/00780/OUTM		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Somerby, Leicestershire		
	<b>Study Area</b>	7.05 ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 79989 12166		
	<b>Height OD</b>	130 to 160m AOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Patrick Clay		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Tim Higgins		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Williams Homes		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	LCC Mus Service	LCC Mus Service	LCC Mus Service
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>	X.A8.2017	X.A8.2017	X.A8.2017
	<b>Contents</b>	Pottery, CBM	Photos	Evaluation records Field Notes
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	<b>Title</b>	An Archaeological Evaluationon Land adjacent to Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire		
	<b>Author</b>	Higgins, T.		
	<b>Other bibliographic details</b>	ULAS Report No 2017-033		
	<b>Date</b>	24/05/2017 to 26/05/2017		
	<b>Publisher/Place</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	<b>Description</b>	Developer Report A4 pdf		

## Publication

A report on the site results will be published in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

## Appendix 1. Trench Details

Tr No	Co ords (SK)	Area	Features, notes
1	8130112760	Access Road	Gully [3]
2	8122112825	Access Road	Ditch & furrow [5] [7] [9]
3	8111012872	Access Road	
4	8105712798	Access Road	RB material (14) in channel [15]
5	8101012708	Access Road	IA features/transitional [11] [16] [18] [29]
6	8096212621	Access Road	
7	8088612543	Access Road	
8	8068912487	Access Road	
9	8057212409	Access Road	
10	8049112347	Access Road	
11	8040312288	Access Road	
12	8032012251	Access Road	
13	8024612214	Access Road	
14	8015612172	Access Road	
15	8009712162	Main Area	
16	8006812143	Main Area	
17	8003212115	Main Area	
18	7999312092	Main Area	
19	7995712071	Main Area	
20	8005812175	Main Area	
21	8001612138	Main Area	
22	7997012105	Main Area	
23	7991612068	Main Area	
24	8001512188	Main Area	
25	7998212158	Main Area	
26	7994012135	Main Area	
27	7990212114	Main Area	
28	8005512250	Main Area	
29	8003212225	Main Area	
30	8108612829	Access Road	Roman structures [33] [41] (31) (34) (43) (44). Nb 20m
31	8000512232	Main Area	
32	7999012276	Main Area	
33	7996512234	Main Area	IA features [22] [24]=[25]
34	7996012170	Main Area	
35	7993012210	Main Area	
36	7998412245	Main Area	IA feature (not exc., =[22]). Nb 20m
37	7988812128	Main Area	
38	7985212155	Main Area	
39	8103512750	Access Road	IA features/Transitional [31] [35] [39]

## Appendix 2. Context Index

Context	Cut	Area	Description
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1	-	All	Gen no. for topsoil
2	-	All	Gen no. for subsoil
3	3	T1	Gully cut
4	3	T1	Gully fill
5	5	T2	Ditch cut
6	5	T2	Ditch fill
7	7	T2	Ditch cut
8	7	T2	Ditch fill
9	9	T2	Ditch cut
10	9	T2	Ditch fill
11	11	T5	Gully cut
12	11	T5	Gully fill
13	11	T5	Gully fill
14	14	T4	Layer with RB demo
15	14	T4	Not used (was a cut for 14)
16	16	T5	Butt end linear cut
17	16	T5	Linear fill
18	18	T5	Posthole cut
19	18	T5	Posthole fill
20	-	T36	Ditch fill (not exc.)
21	22	T33	Ditch fill
22	22	T33	Ditch cut
23	24	T33	Gully fill
24	24	T33	Gully cut
25	25	T33	Linear cut
26	25	T33	Linear fill
27	25	T33	Gully fill
28	29	T5	Scoop/hearth fill
29	29	T5	Scoop/hearth cut
30	31	T39	Ditch fill (not exc.)
31	31	T39	Ditch cut (not exc.)
32	33	T30	Wall-line build (main structure)
33	33	T30	Wall construction cut (main structure)
34	-	T30	Mortar layer
35	35	T39	Ditch cut
36	35	T39	Ditch fill
37	35	T39	Ditch fill
38	-	T30	Cleaning layer
39	39	T39	Pit cut
40	39	T39	Pit fill
41	-	T30	Wall-line cut ('precinct wall')
42	41	T30	Wall build ('precinct wall')
43	-	T30	Disturbed metalling
44	-	T30	In situ metalling





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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

