

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
Denbydale, Wigston,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 617 985

Adam Clapton



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For: Jelsons Ltd

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An Archaeological Evaluation at Denbydale, Wigston, Leicestershire

Summary

An archaeological field evaluation was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land at Denbydale, Wigston in Leicestershire.

The work was commissioned in advance of a potential residential development by Jelsons Ltd.

The site consisted of a 2.3 hectare arable field on the edge of Wigston Magna. A desk-based assessment and geophysical survey have previously been undertaken which identified archaeological potential and located anomalies, some of possible archaeological origin.

Seventeen trenches were excavated across the area of proposed development with archaeological features in 12 of the 17 trenches. Features included gullies, ditches, postholes and pits with diagnostic sherds of pottery indicating late 1st-2nd century Roman in date.

The archive for this site will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums with accession number X.A52.2018.

Introduction

Outline planning permission is being sought for a residential development on the eastern edge of Wigston, Leicestershire (SK 617 985). The Principal Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council as advisor to the planning authority has requested a programme of archaeological work to evaluate the location of the proposed development.

This report represents the programme of archaeological trial trenching that was undertaken in May 2018. It follows a desk-based assessment (Hunt 2017), geophysical survey (Sumo Survey 2017) and a strategy of work set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Evaluation (Score 2017).

The work involved the machine excavation of 17, 30m long trial trenches, where constraints allowed, throughout the proposed development area. Trenches were focused on areas containing anomalies possibly associated with archaeological remains identified during the geophysical survey as well as 'blank' areas.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG March 2012). All archaeological work was in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct (2014a) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014b).

Site Description, Topography and Geology

The proposed site consists of a sub-rectangular parcel of arable land of around 2.3 hectares, aligned north-east to south-west, which lies at the edge of Wigston Magna (Figures 1 and 2). Residential housing forms the western and southern boundaries, with agricultural land to the north and east. Access into the field is via Denbydale, which lies to the north-west of the site.

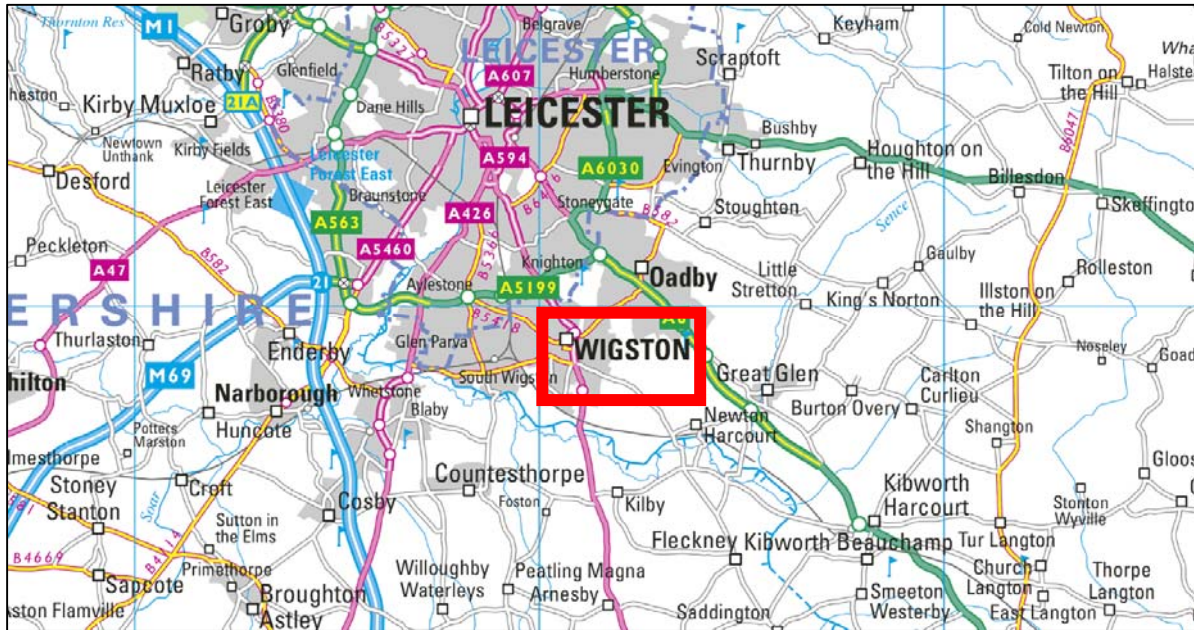


Figure 1: Site location

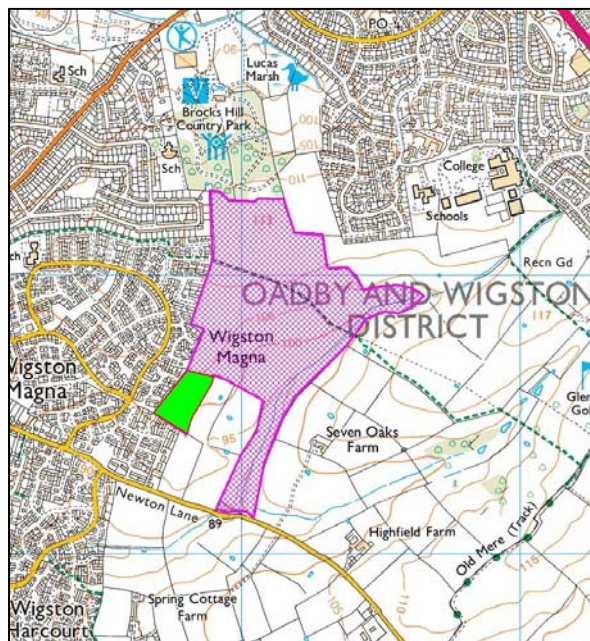


Figure 2: Area of assessment shown in green (provided by client)

The land is mostly flat with a fall to the east. It lies at a height of around 100m aOD (Figure 3). The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology is likely to be Blue Lias formation mudstone overlain by Oadby Member Diamicton.



Figure 3: Development area looking east

Archaeological and Historical background

An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment has already been prepared (Hunt 2017). The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland indicates that the site lies outside the medieval core of the village of Wigston Magna and outside the Conservation Areas of the modern town. Mapping suggests it has been fields since the 19th century.

There are known prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains in the area, mainly findspots for artefacts including Bronze Age pottery and flint, an Iron Age quern, Roman coins and pottery and medieval metalwork.

A Geophysical Survey was undertaken (Sumo Survey 2017) which identified an area of possible settlement activity, comprising rectilinear enclosures and linear anomalies as well as a possible trackway. Extensive ridge and furrow was also identified truncating the archaeological deposits (Figure 4).

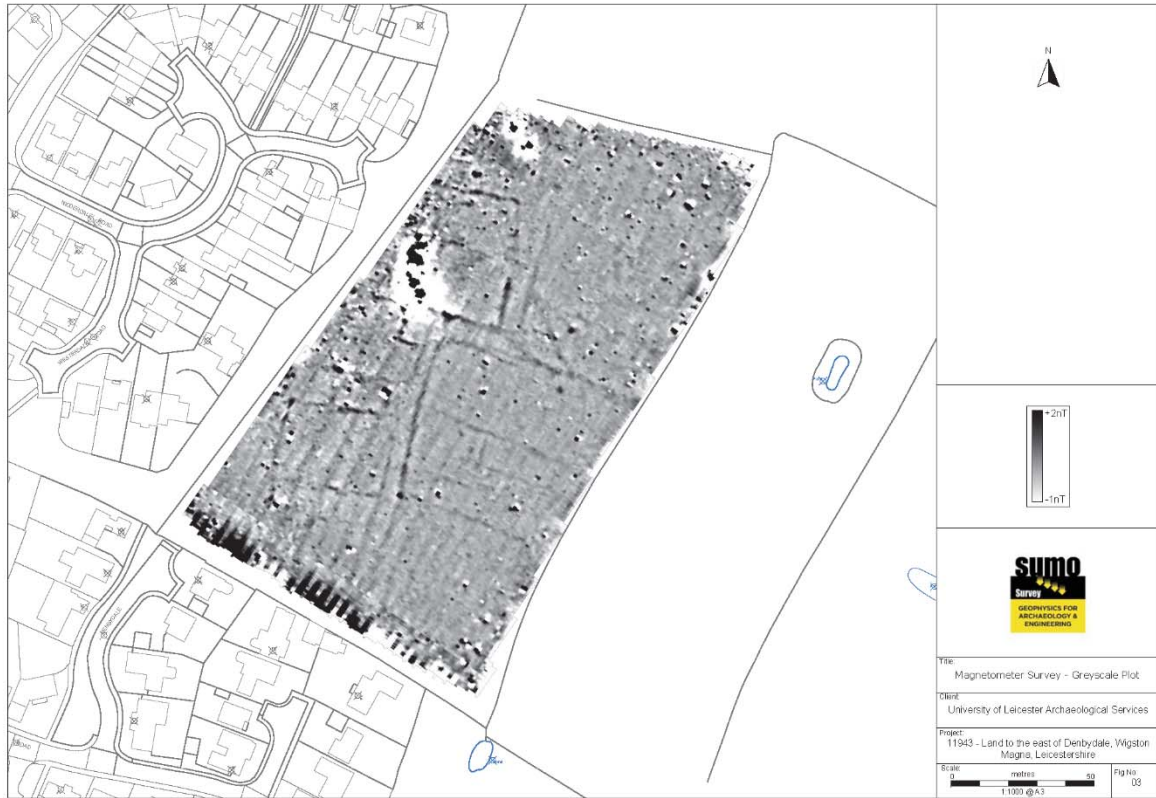


Figure 4: Geophysical greyscale and interpreted data (from Sumo 2017)

Archaeological Aims and Objectives

The main objectives of the archaeological work were as follows:

- 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 was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, and significance of the heritage assets within their local and regional context in order to formulate a mitigation strategy to address the impacts of the proposed development on cultural heritage.

All work conforms to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). It has been designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national standards and guidelines including:

Methodology

A total of 17, 30m long and 1.8m wide trenches were excavated across the development area based on a sampling strategy of 3.5%. The archaeological evaluation targeted geophysical anomalies and provided a representative sample across the site. The trench locations are shown in Figure 5

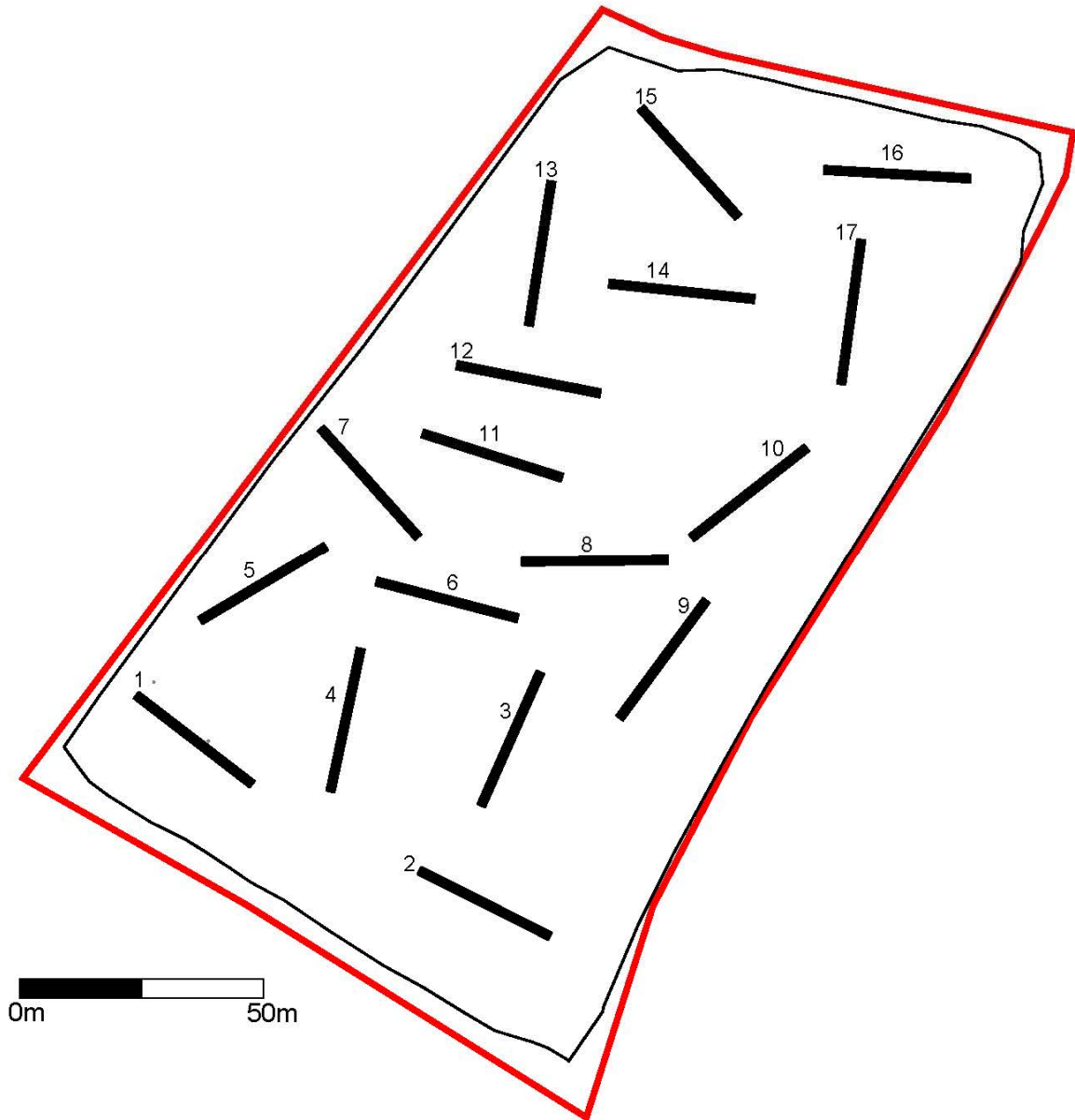


Figure 5: Trench locations

A 16 ton 360 mechanical excavator was used to excavate the trenches using a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately and excavation ceased at undisturbed natural deposits.

The trenches were recorded at an appropriate scale by measured drawing and photography and were GPS-located to Ordnance Survey National Grid.

A photographic record, utilising high resolution digital data capture, was maintained during the course of the fieldwork and included:

- the site prior to commencement of fieldwork;
- the site during work, showing specific stages of fieldwork.

Upon completion of the evaluation trenching, the excavated trenches were backfilled and well compacted.

Results

Seventeen trenches were excavated across the area of proposed development. The topsoil consisted of a mid-brown, friable silty loam with occasional pebbles, charcoal flecks, natural flints and modern debris inclusions. Subsoil where present consisted of a mid-light orangey brown silty clay of firm compaction with small stone and natural flint inclusions. The natural sub-strata was a yellowy orange clay with occasional small chalk and natural flint inclusions. Occasional sandy gravel bands were also recorded. Archaeological features were encountered in 12 of the 17 trenches (Figure 6). These were trenches 1, 3-7, and 9-14.

All trenches measured 1.8m in width and 30m in length and all measurements were taken from the top of the trench.

Trench No.	Orientation	Min. Depth	Max. Depth	Description
1	SE-NW	0.35m	0.47m	2 postholes excavated [1] [3], evidence of furrows
2	SE-NW	0.41m	0.54m	Negative trench, evidence of furrows
3	NNE-SSW	0.32m	0.49m	3 linears excavated [11] [15] [17]. Two postholes excavated [9] [13]. Evidence of furrows and plough scars
4	NNE-SSW	0.28m	0.43m	3 linears excavated [5] [7] [72]. Evidence of field drain
5	NE-SW	0.22m	0.46m	3 linears excavated [19] [49] [61]. Evidence of furrows and field drains
6	SE-NW	0.3m	0.6m	3 linears excavated [24] [26] [29]. Evidence of furrows
7	SE-NW	0.32m	0.45m	1 pit excavated [32] [35]. Two linears excavated [43] [55]. Evidence of furrows and field drain
8	E-W	0.38m	0.52m	Negative trench, evidence of furrows
9	NE-SW	0.38m	0.55m	1 linear excavated [21], evidence of field drain
10	NE-SW	0.44m	0.46m	2 linears excavated [37] [39], possible gravel surface (42). Evidence of furrows and field drain
11	E-W	0.36m	0.44m	4 linears excavated [45] [52] [57].[64] Evidence of furrows and plough scars
12	SE-NW	0.33m	0.70m	1 posthole excavated [59]. Evidence of furrows
13	NE-SW	0.23m	0.47m	2 linears excavated [67] [74]. Evidence and furrows and field drain
14	E-W	0.31m	0.47m	2 linears excavated [69] [76], Evidence of furrows
15	SE-NW	0.27m	0.44m	Negative trench, evidence of furrows and plough scars
16	SE-NW	0.27m	0.39m	Negative trench, evidence of furrows and plough scars

17	NE-SW	0.3m	0.39m	Negative trench, evidence of furrows and plough scars
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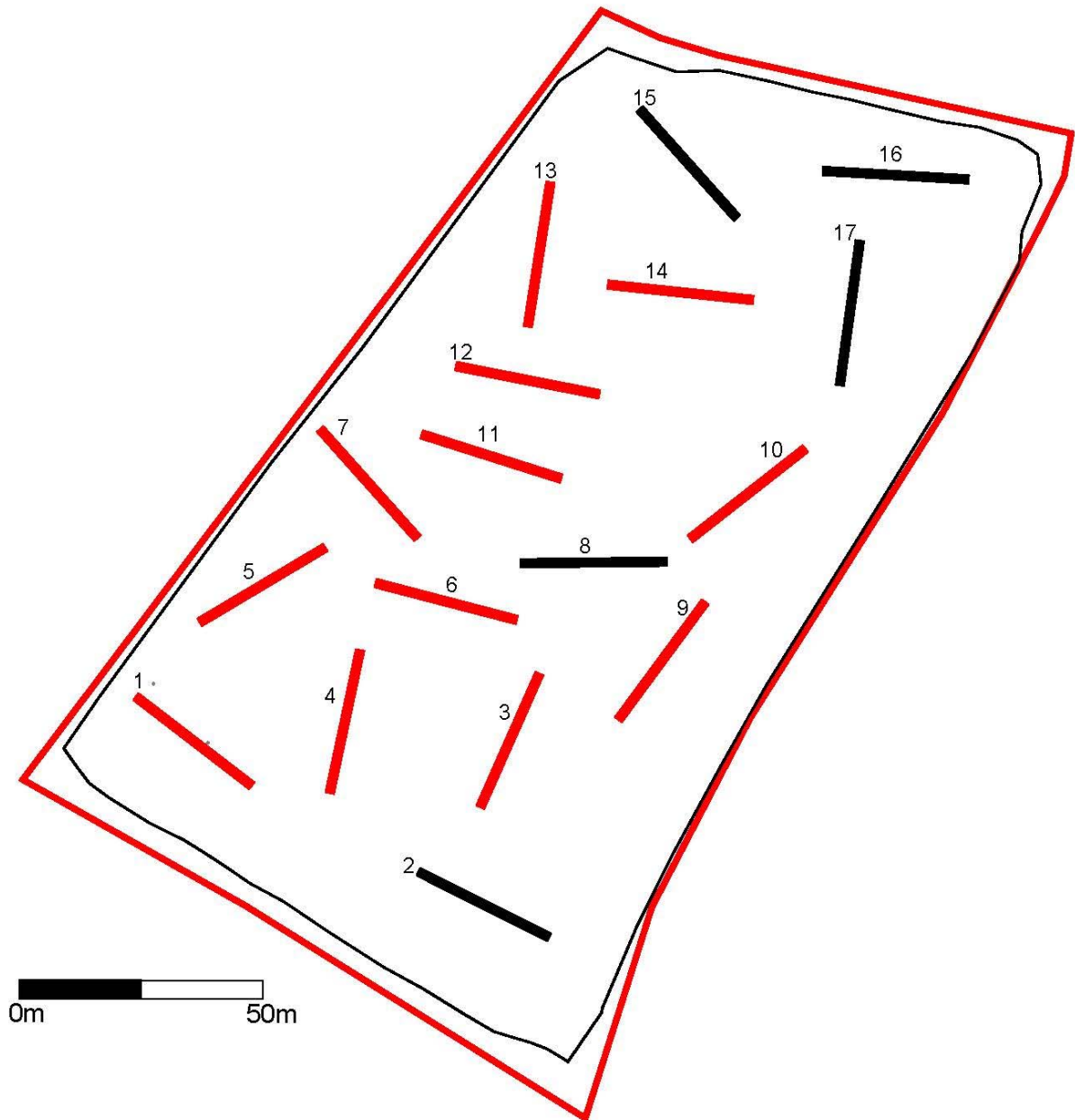


Figure 6: Negative trenches shown in black and trenches containing archaeology shown in red

Trench 1

Two archaeological features were observed in this trench (Figures 7 and 9). A posthole feature (Figure 8) was observed at 11.14m from the south-east end of the trench. It had a sub-circular cut [1] and measured 0.4m in diameter and 0.14m in depth. It had a shallow-moderate sloping profile with concave smooth base. It contained a single fill (2) consisting of an orangey grey sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks and small grit inclusions. Roman pottery dating to the mid-late 1st or 2nd century was recovered from this fill. A second posthole feature [3] (Figure 8) was observed at 1.4m from the north-west end of the trench. It was circular in plan measuring 0.4m in diameter and 0.15m in depth. It had moderately sloping sides with a concave smooth base. It contained a single fill (4) consisting of a light brownish orange sandy silt with occasional small pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill.



Figure 7: Trench 1 looking south-east (1m scale)



Figure 8: Posthole [1] looking south (0.5m scale) and posthole [3] looking north (0.3m scale)

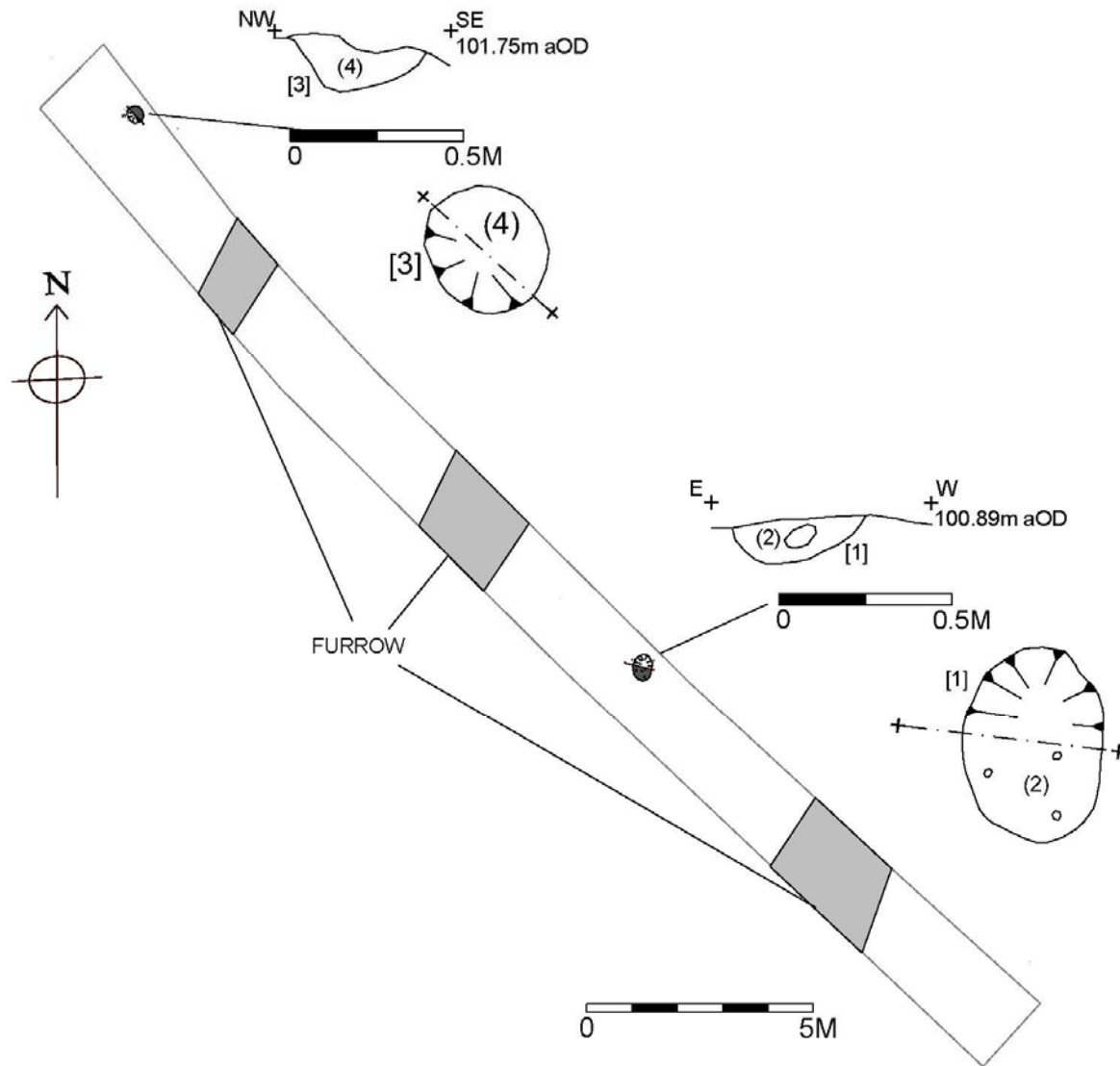


Figure 9: Trench 1 plans and sections

Trench 3

Five archaeological features were observed in this trench (Figures 10 and 13). Towards the north-east end of the trench a gully [15] was observed running roughly east to west. It had a V-shaped profile and measured 0.4m in width and 0.16m in depth. It contained a single fill consisting of a mid-orangey brown sandy clay with small pebble and natural flint inclusions (Figure 11). No finds were recovered from the fill.

At 13.8m from the north-east end of the trench a posthole [9] was observed. It was circular in plan and measured 0.62m in diameter and 0.08m in depth. It had shallow sloping sides with a concave base. The fill (10) consisted of an orangey brown sandy clay with small natural flint and gravel inclusions (Figure 11). No finds were recovered from the fill.



Figure 10: Trench 3 looking south-west (1m scale)

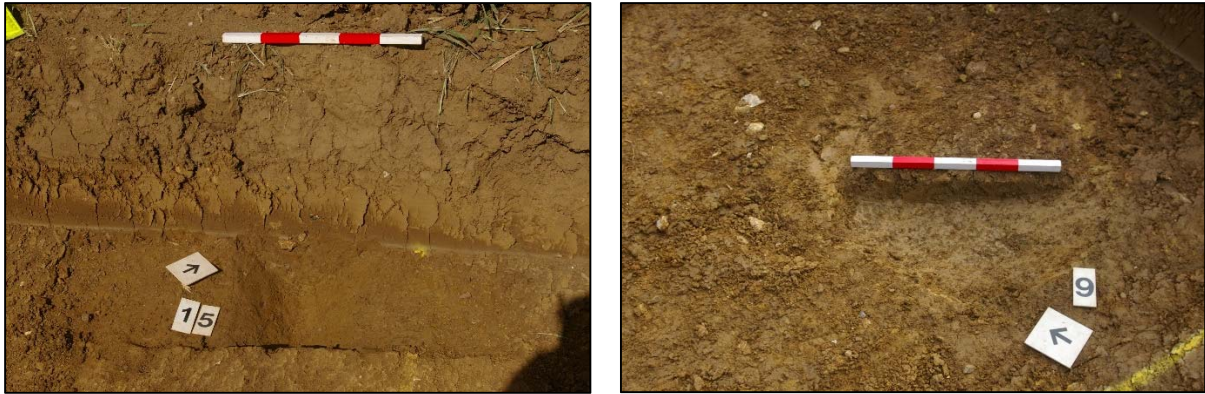


Figure 11: Gully [15] looking north-west and posthole [9] looking north-east (0.5m scale)

Immediately to the south of [9] a ditch [17] was observed running south-east to north-west across the trench. It measured 0.95m in width and 0.25m in depth with a V-shaped profile and narrow base. The fill (18) consisted of orangey grey silty clay with small natural flint inclusions and chalk flecks (Figure 12). A small amount of environmental data was recovered from samples and bone was also recovered.

At the south-west end of the trench a possible gully terminus was observed, running north-east to south-west. Its cut [11] appeared shallow with concave sides and base, measuring 0.7m in width and 0.08m in depth. It contained a single fill (12) consisting of an orangey grey silty clay with small flint inclusions. No finds were recovered. This feature appeared truncated by a later posthole feature [13]. It was circular in plan with moderately sloping concave sides and base, measuring 0.25m in diameter and 0.1m in depth. The fill (14) was sterile and consisted of an orangey grey silty clay with small flint inclusions (Figure 12). No finds were recovered.



Figure 12: Ditch [17] looking south-east (1m scale) and Gully [11] with posthole [13] looking south-west (0.3m and 0.5m scales)

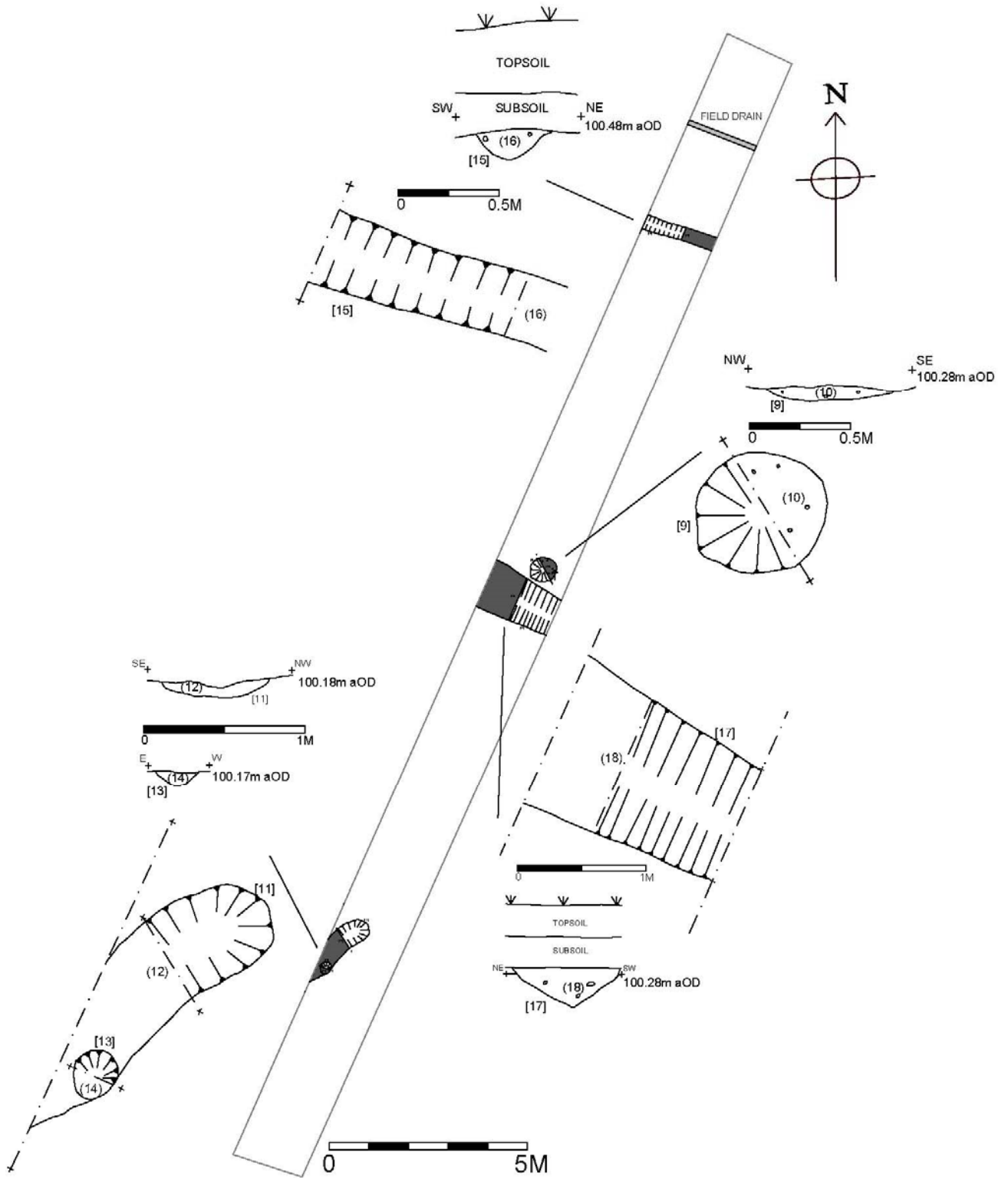


Figure 13: Trench 3 plans and sections

Trench 4

Three features were observed in this trench (Figures 14 and 17). At the south-west end of the trench a gully was observed running east-south-east to west-north-west [7] (Figure 15). It measured 0.4m in width and 0.2m in depth with moderately steep sloping sides and a concave base. It contained a single fill (8) consisting of an orangey grey sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks, medium sub rounded cobbles and small flint fragments. Heat cracked stones were also recorded. No finds were recovered from this fill.

Running across the centre of the trench from east-south east to west-north west a second gully was observed [5] (Figure 15). It measured 0.45m in width and 0.15m in depth with shallow sloping sides and smooth concave base. The fill (6) consisted of a greyish orange sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks, chalk and grit inclusions. Three sherds of pottery (19g) were recovered indicating a mid-1st to 2nd century Roman date.



Figure 14: Trench 4 looking south-west (1m scale)



Figure 15: Gully [7] looking east-south east and gully [5] looking west-north west (0.5m scale)

Immediately to the north-east of [5] a third gully was observed running east to west across the trench [72] (Figure 16). It measured 0.5m in width and 0.20m in depth with moderately sloping concave sides and smooth concave base. It contained a single fill (73) consisting of a mid-yellowish brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks and small sub rounded pebbles. No finds were recovered from this fill.



Figure 16: Gully [72] looking east (0.5m scale)

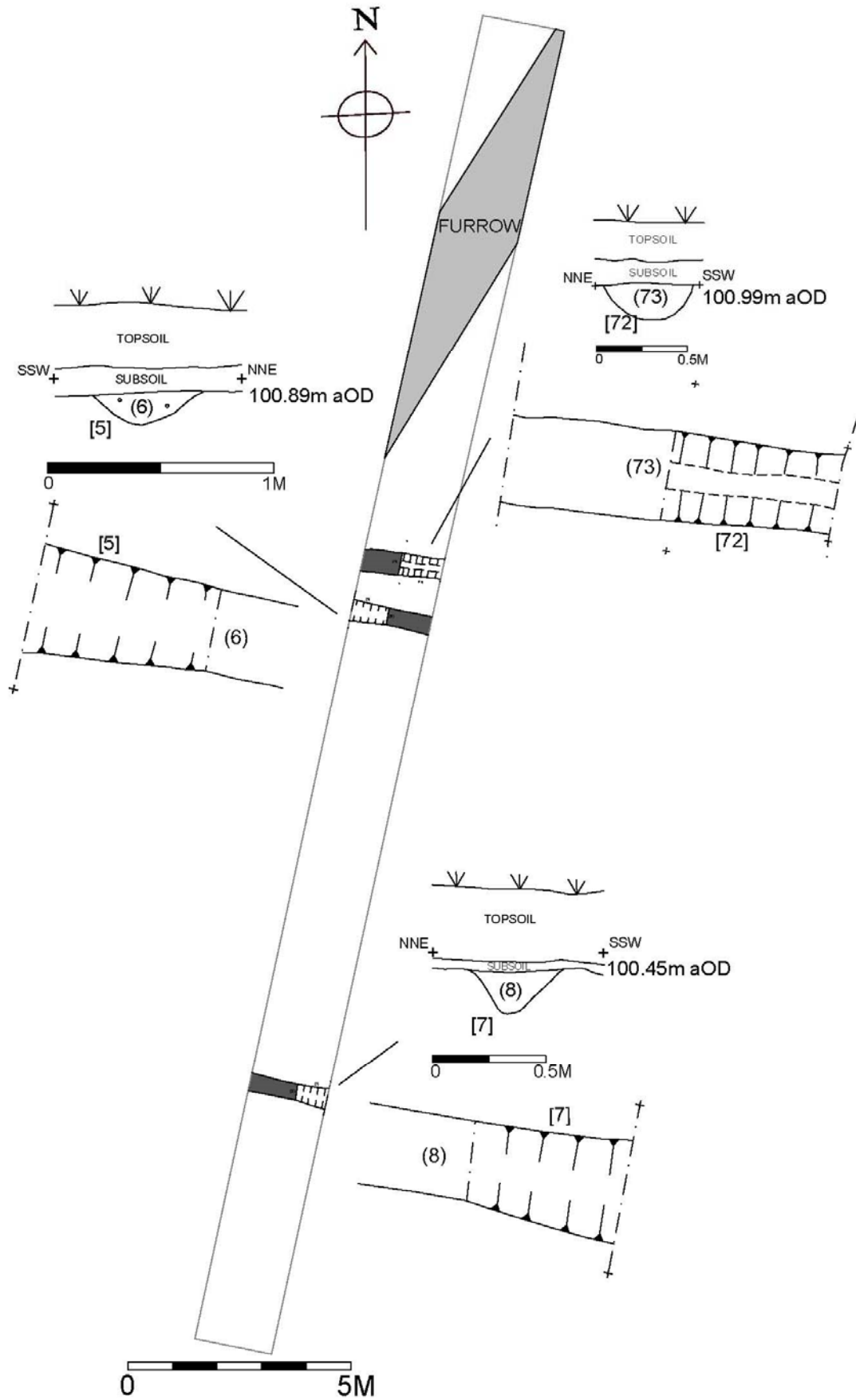


Figure 17: Trench 4 plans and sections

Trench 5

Three archaeological features were observed in this trench (Figures 18 and 21). At 6m from the north-east end of the trench a ditch was noted running south-east to north-west [61] (Figure 19). It had a V-shaped profile with narrow base measuring 0.8m in width and 0.45m in depth. The lower fill (62) consisted of a greyish orange silty clay with occasional small stone and chalk inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. The upper fill (63) consisted of a dark grey silty clay with common charcoal flecks, occasional chalk flecks and some small stone inclusions. Environmental samples yielded evidence of cereal grains and glume base fragments. At 11m to the south-west another ditch [49] was observed running roughly north to south across the trench (Figure 19). This appeared to be a return of ditch [61] (seen to the north-east) as indicated on the geophysical survey. It had a V-shaped profile with a narrow base measuring 1.55m in width and 0.47m in depth. The lower fill (50) consisted of a mid-orangy brown silty clay with small stone, gravel and flint inclusions. Two pottery sherds were recovered indicating a mid-1st-2nd century Roman date and animal bone was also recovered from this fill. The upper fill (51) consisted of a mid-dark orangy brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks, chalk fragments, flint and stone inclusions. A good amount of Roman pottery was recovered indicating a 1st-2nd century date as well as animal bone.



Figure 18: Trench 5 looking south-west (1m scale)

Immediately to the south-west of [49] a ditch was observed running south-east to north-west across the trench [19] (Figure 20). It measured 3.6m in width and 0.48m in depth with shallow sloping sides and roughly flat base. The lower fill (31) consisted of a mid-orangy brown silty clay with small stone, chalk and flint inclusions. Roman pottery dating from the 1st-2nd century was recovered from this fill as well as animal bone. The upper fill (20) consisted of a dark orangy brown silty clay with small stone and flint inclusions. A good amount of pottery was

recovered from this fill indicating a late 1st - 2nd century Roman date. Animal bone was also recovered from this fill. Ditch [49] appeared to truncate the north eastern edge of [19], which was also truncated by a modern field drain running east to west.

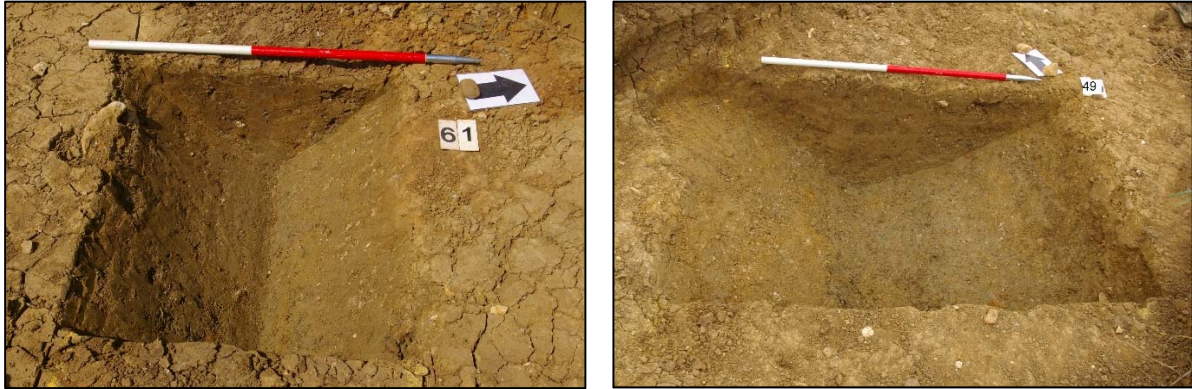


Figure 19: Ditch [61] looking west-north west (1m scale) and ditch [49] looking north (1m scale)



Figure 20: Ditch [19] looking south-east (x2 1m scale)

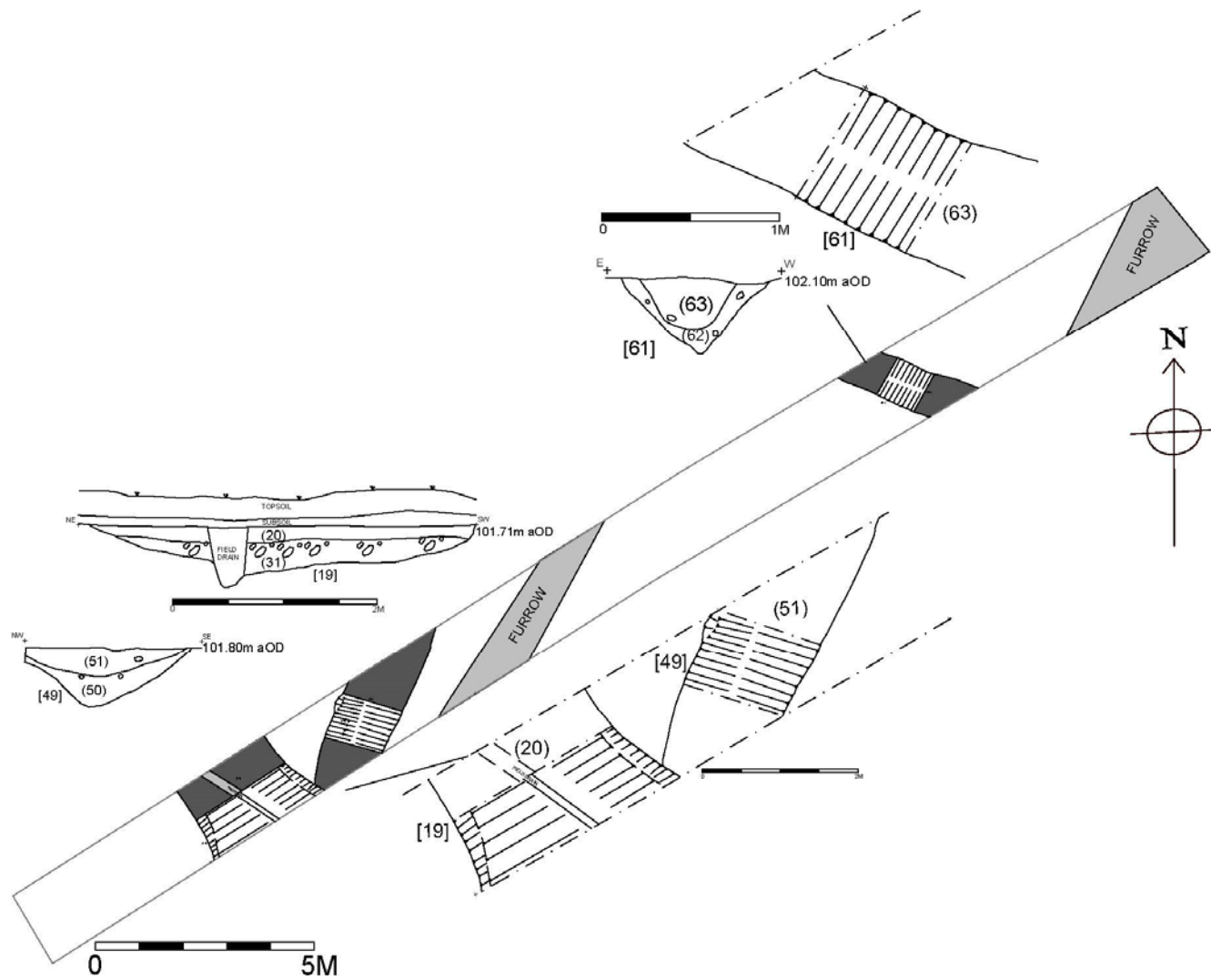


Figure 21: Trench 5 plans and sections

Trench 6

Three linear features were identified in this trench (Figures 22 and 25). Part of a ditch feature [24] was observed running north-east to south-west. This was heavily truncated by a later ditch [26] and a modern furrow (Figure 23). Although mostly lost, it appeared to have a flat smooth base and was up to 0.35m in depth. A single fill (25) could be seen consisting of a mid-light yellowish brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks, occasional chalk flecks and occasional small stone and flint inclusions. No pottery was recovered from this fill. This was truncated by ditch [26] which ran north to south across the trench. It had moderately sloping straight sides with a smooth concave base and measured 1.85m in width and 0.54m in depth. The lower fill (27) consisted of a mid-dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and rare small angular-rounded pebble inclusions. Four sherds (17g) of pottery was recovered indicating a late 1st-2nd century Roman date. Fired clay was also recovered. The upper fill (28) consisted of a mid-yellowish brown silty clay with occasional small-medium angular-rounded stone inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks. Heat cracked pebbles were also recorded. Late 1st-2nd century Roman pottery was recovered along with fired clay and animal bone.



Figure 22: Trench 6 looking north-west



Figure 23: Ditch cuts [24] and [26] looking south-west (2m scale)

Approximately 4m to the north-west of [26] a further ditch feature [29] was observed running north-east to south-west. Again this was heavily truncated on its south-east side by a modern furrow (Figure 24). Its profile appeared V-shaped with moderately sloping sides and a narrow concave base, measuring 1.3m+ in width and 0.35m in depth. Its fill (30) consisted of a mid-yellowish brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks and occasional small-medium angular-rounded stone inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill.



Figure 24: Ditch [29] looking south-west (1m scale)

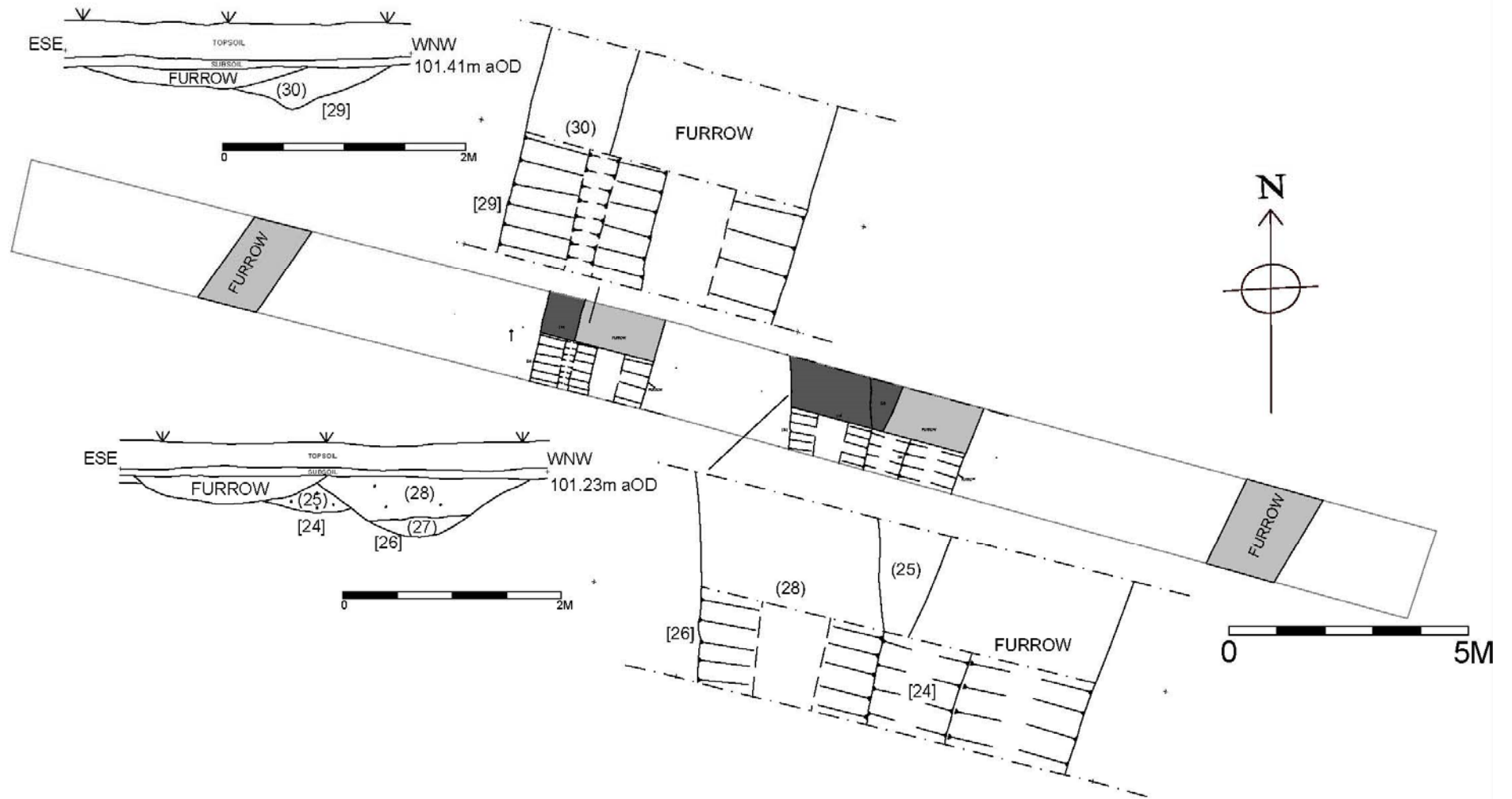


Figure 25: Trench 6 plans and sections

Trench 7

Four archaeological features were observed in this trench (Figures 26 and 29). At 5.5m from the north-west end of the trench a pit feature was observed (Figure 27). It consisted of a sub circular cut [32] measuring 1.5m in diameter and 0.35m in depth with steep sloping sides breaking to a smooth flat base. The lower fill (33) consisted of a mid-greyish orange silty sand with occasional flint, grit and pebble inclusions. No finds were recorded from this fill. The upper fill (34) consisted of a mid-greyish brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks and small pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. On the southern edge of [32] a short gully was observed. It measured 0.45m in length, 0.3m in width and 0.1m in depth. It had a V-shaped profile with narrow base. The fill (36) consisted of a greyish-brown sandy loam with occasional charcoal flecks and pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. Fill (36) appeared the same as pit fill (34).



Figure 26: Trench 7 looking north-west



Figure 27: Pit [32] and small gully feature [35] looking north-west (1m scale)

At 12.5m from the north-west end of the trench a gully [43] running east to west was observed (Figure 28). It had moderately sloping sides with a concave base and measured 0.5m in width and 0.15m in depth. It contained a single fill (44) consisting of a greyish brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and flint inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill.

At 3.5m from the south-east end of the trench a ditch was observed meandering roughly east to west across the trench [55] (Figure 28). It had moderately sloping sides with concave base and measured 1.45m in width and 0.35m in depth. The fill (56) consisted of a mid-brownish orange sandy clay with flint and grit inclusions. Two sherds of late 1st-2nd century Roman pottery were recovered from this fill. Animal bone was also recovered.



Figure 28: Gully [43] and ditch [55] looking north-east (1m scale)

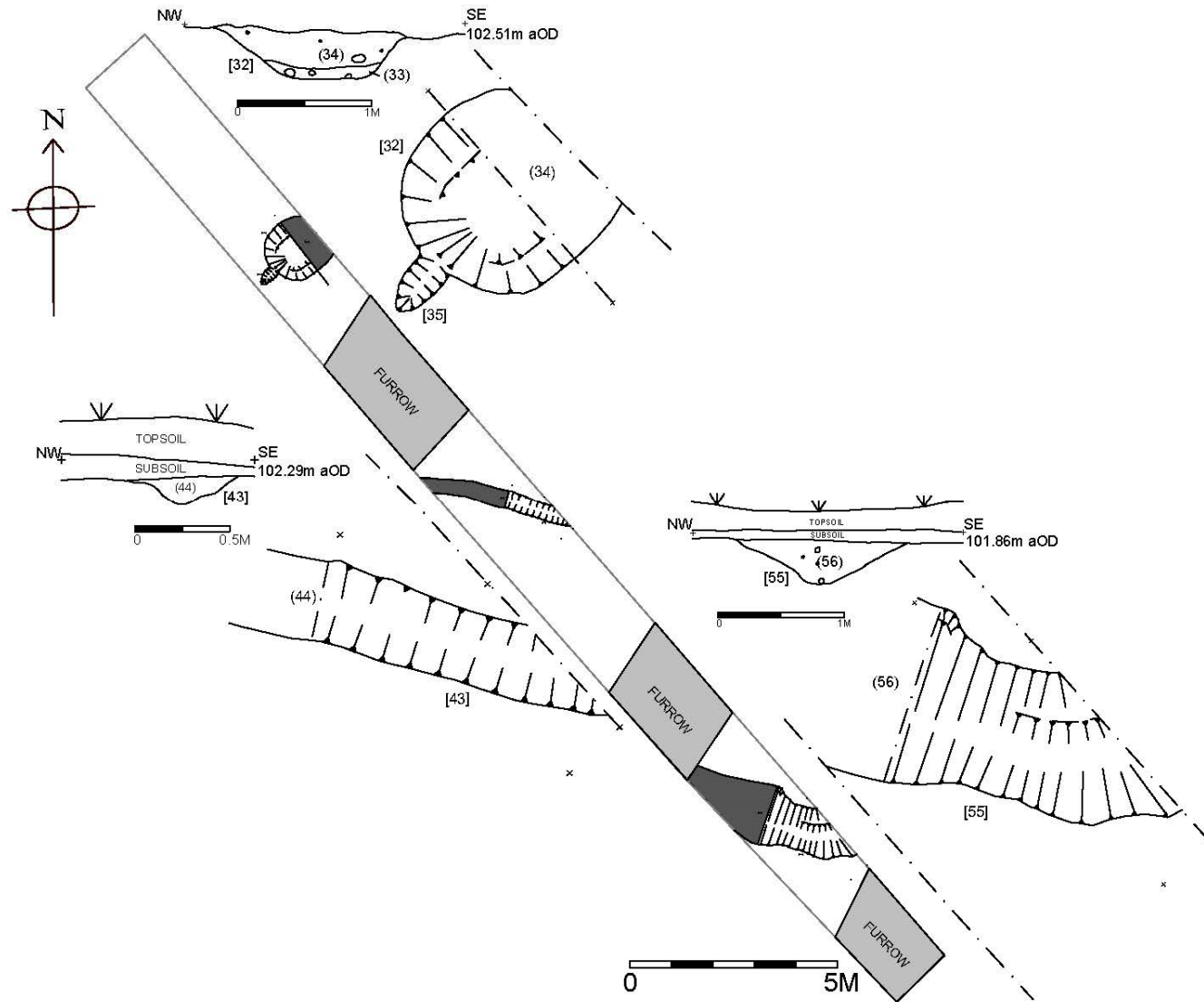


Figure 29: Trench 7 plans and sections

Trench 9

Two archaeological features were observed in this trench (Figures 30 and 32). At 7.6m from the south-west end of the trench a ditch [21] was observed running south-east to north-west (Figure 31). It had steep sloping sides breaking to a narrow concave base and measured 0.65m in width and 0.42m in depth. The lower fill (22) consisted of mid brown silty clay with occasional pebbles, flints and grit inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. The upper fill (23) consisted of a mid-brown sandy clay with occasional pebble and grit inclusions. Environmental evidence was also recorded from samples taken of this fill.



Figure 30: Trench 9 looking south-west (1m scale)

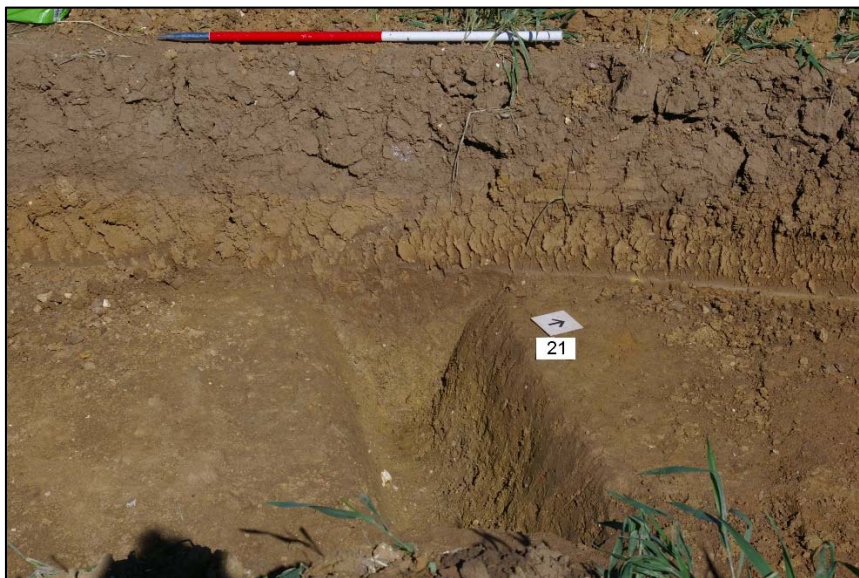


Figure 31: Ditch [21] looking north-west (1m scale)

A further ditch was observed at 11.5m from the north-east end of the trench, running south-east to north-west. This was heavily truncated by a modern field drain and was therefore not excavated.

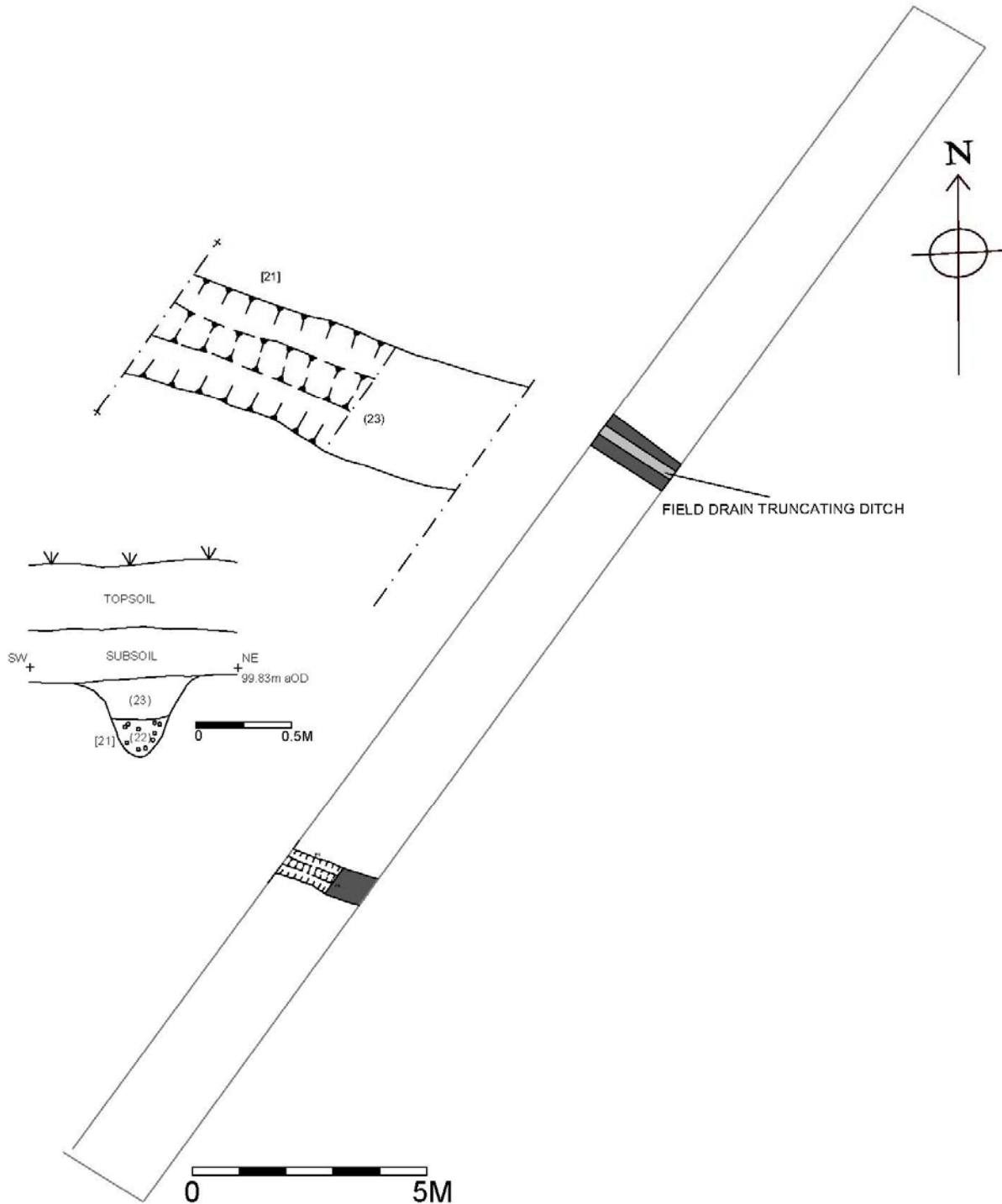


Figure 32: Trench 9 plans and section

Trench 10

Three archaeological features were observed in this trench, all interacting at around 8m from the south-west end of the trench (Figures 33-36). The earliest feature appeared to be a ditch [37] running south-east to north-west across the trench. It had a V-shaped profile with narrow concave base measuring 0.47m in width and 0.34m in depth. The fill (38) consisted of a mid-dark yellowish brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks and occasional small angular-rounded stone inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. Overlaying this appeared to be a gravel surface/deposit (42) which ran roughly north to south across the trench. It appeared linear, measuring 2.8m in width and up to 0.15m in depth. It consisted of a mixture of small-medium angular-rounded gravels, pebbles and natural flints with a silty clay matrix. Its north-east half appeared to sit directly on the clay substratum with its south-west edge sitting over fill (38). No finds were recovered from (42). Truncating (42) was a further ditch [39] running parallel immediately to the south-west of [37]. It had moderately sloping irregular-straight sides with a concave base measuring 1.8m in width and 0.5m in depth. The lower fill (40) consisted of a light brownish yellow silty clay with rare small gravels and natural flint inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. The upper fill (41) consisted of a mid-dark greyish brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks and occasional small-medium angular-rounded pebbles. No finds were recovered from this fill.



Figure 33: Trench 10 looking south-west (1m scale)



Figure 34: Ditches [37] [39] and surface (42) looking north-east (2m scale)



Figure 35: Ditches [37] [39] and surface (42) looking south (2m scale)

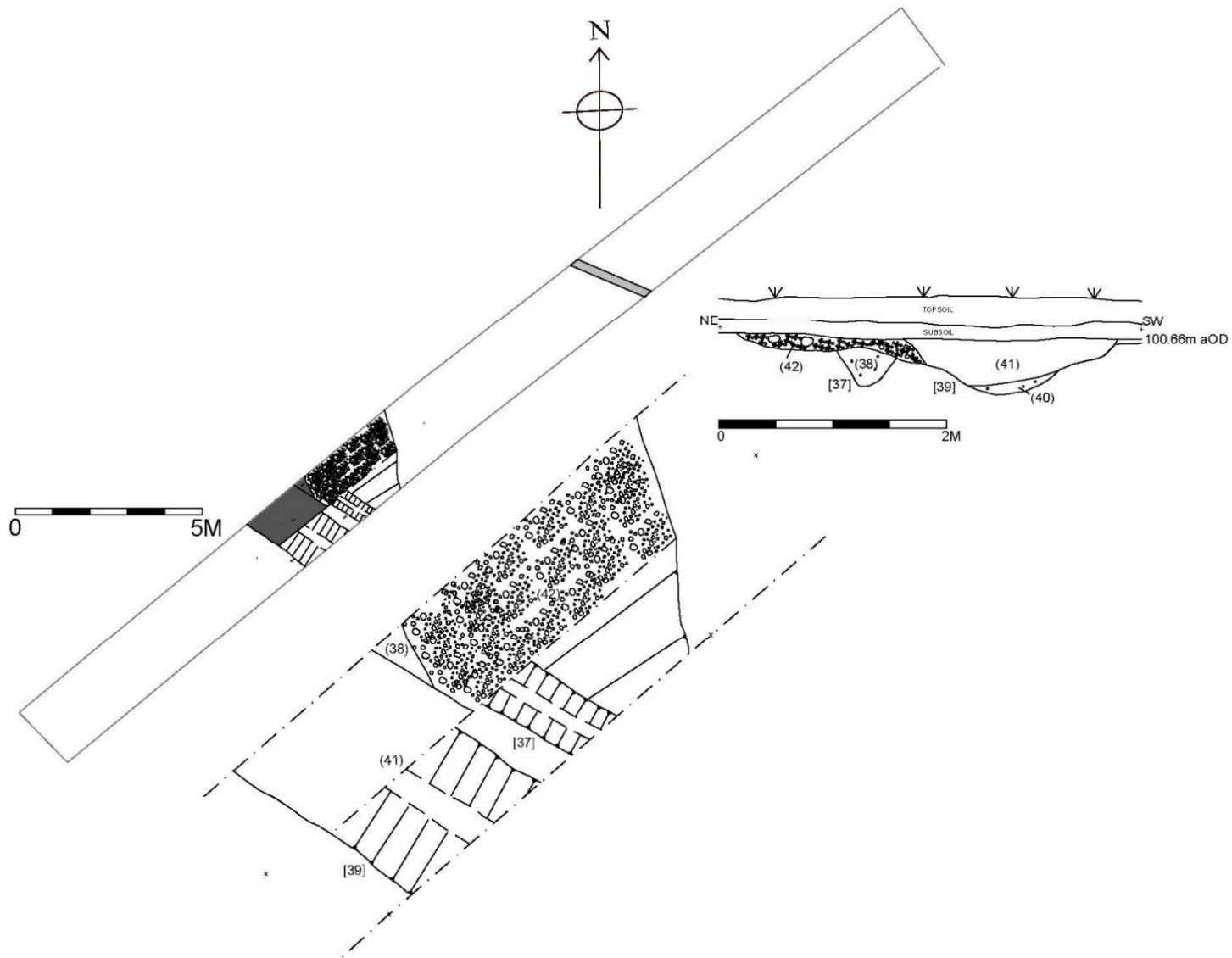


Figure 36: Trench 10 plans and section

Trench 11

Four archaeological features were observed in this trench (Figures 37 and 40). At 2.3m from the north-west end of the trench a ditch [45] was observed running north-east to south-west across the trench. A modern furrow appeared to truncate its south-east edge (Figure 38). It had a V-shaped profile with a narrow base and measured 0.95m+ in width and 0.7m in depth. The bottom fill (46) consisted of a mid-yellowish grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and small angular-rounded pebble inclusions. Thirty sherds (312g) of pottery were recovered from this fill indicating a mid-1st-2nd century Roman date. Animal bone was also recovered from this fill. Overlaying this was a mid-dark brownish grey silty clay (47) with common charcoal flecks and common small-medium sub rounded pebbles. Seventy-four sherds (636g) of mid-1st-2nd century Roman pottery was recovered from this fill along with, bone and ceramic building material (CBM). Environmental samples also yielded positive results from this fill. The upper fill (48) consisted of a mid-yellowish grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and occasional medium-large sub rounded pebble inclusions. Six sherds (183g) of Roman pottery dating from the mid-1st-2nd century were recovered, along with CBM. In total over half the total pottery assemblage, 110 sherds (1.187kg) was recovered from ditch [45].



Figure 37: Trench 11 looking south-east (1m scale)

A second ditch [64] was observed at 12m from the north-west edge of the trench (Figure 38). Again it was partially truncated by a modern furrow on its north-west edge. It ran north-east to south-west across the trench and had moderate sloping straight sides breaking to a smooth flat base, measuring 1.25m+ in width and 0.55m in depth. The lower fill (65) consisted of a mid-brownish yellow silty clay with rare charcoal flecks and occasional small angular-rounded pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. The upper fill (66) consisted of a mid-greyish brown silty clay with occasional small-medium angular-rounded pebble inclusions and rare charcoal flecks. A single sherd of 2nd century Roman pottery was recovered along with animal bone. Ditch [64] is probably the same ditch as [29] seen in Trench 6.



Figure 38: Ditches [45] and [64] looking north-east (1m and 0.5m scales)

A third ditch [52] was seen running north-east to south-west at 12.5m from the south-east end of the trench (Figure 39). It had moderately sloping straight sides breaking to a smooth concave base and measured 1.78m in width and 0.5m in depth. The lower fill (53) consisted of a mid-yellowish brown silty clay with rare charcoal flecks and rare small angular-rounded pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill. The upper fill (54) consisted of a mid-brownish grey silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small-medium sub rounded stones. Two sherds of late 1st-2nd century Roman pottery and animal bone were recovered from this fill. Ditch [52] is probably the same ditch as [24] seen in trench 6. To the east of this a fourth ditch [57] could be seen running north-east to south-west. It was heavily truncated by a modern furrow within the trench. The remaining profile had concave shallow sloping sides breaking to a flat base measuring 0.8m+ in width and 0.2m in depth. It contained a single fill (58) consisting of a mid-yellowish brown silty clay with occasional small angular-rounded stone inclusions. Two sherds of late 1st-2nd century Roman pottery were recovered from this fill.



Figure 39: Ditch [52] looking north-east (1m and 0.5m scale) and ditch [57] looking north-west (1m scale)

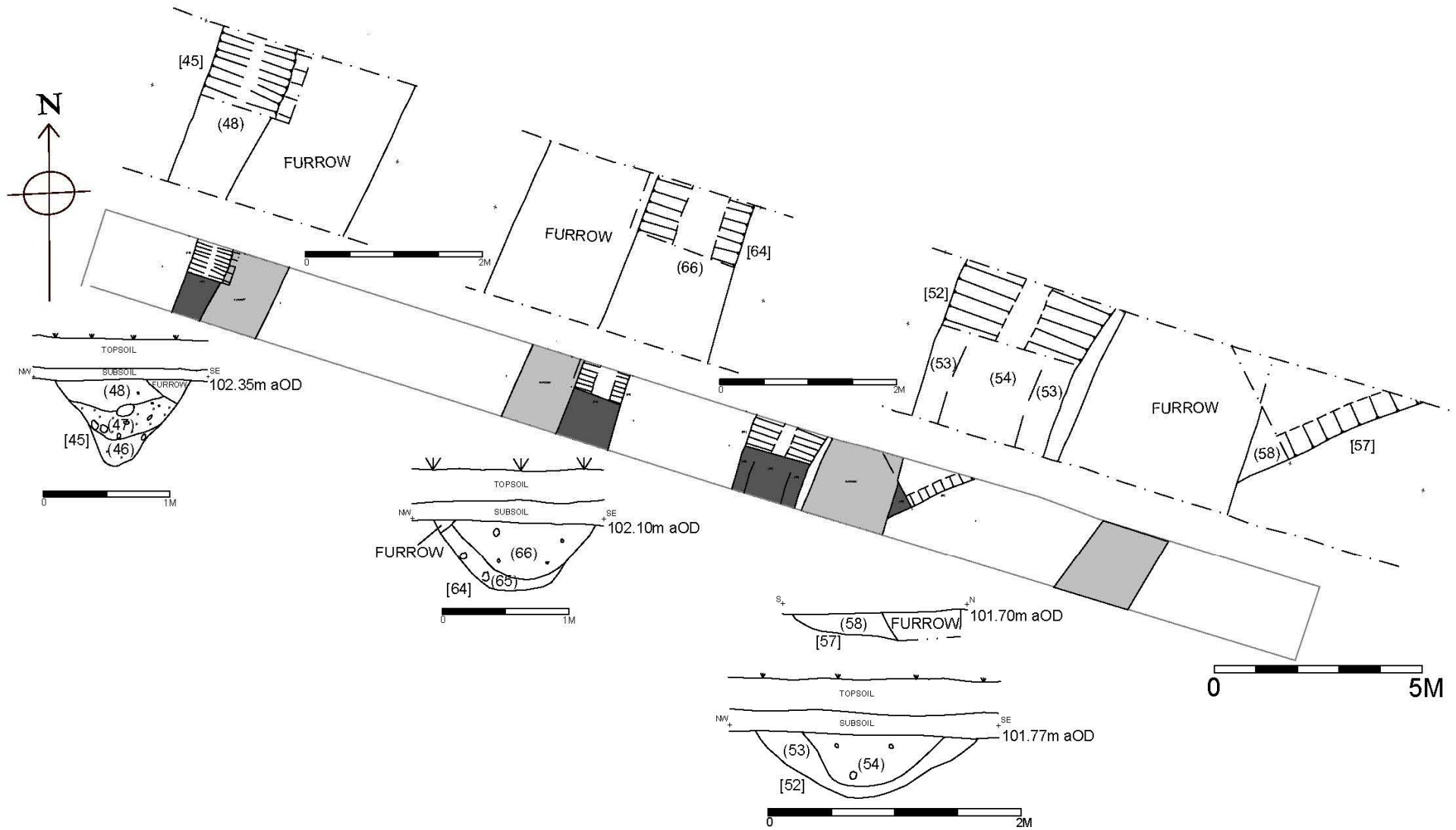


Figure 40: Trench 11 plans and sections

Trench 12

At 4.7m from the south-east end of the trench a posthole feature [59] was observed (Figures 41-43). This appeared circular in plan with shallow sloping sides and concave base, measuring 0.45m in diameter and 0.08m in depth. It had a single fill (60) consisting of a dark brown silty clay with grit and small pebble inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill.



Figure 41: Trench 12 looking north-west (1m scale)



Figure 42: Posthole [59] looking north-north east (0.5m scale)

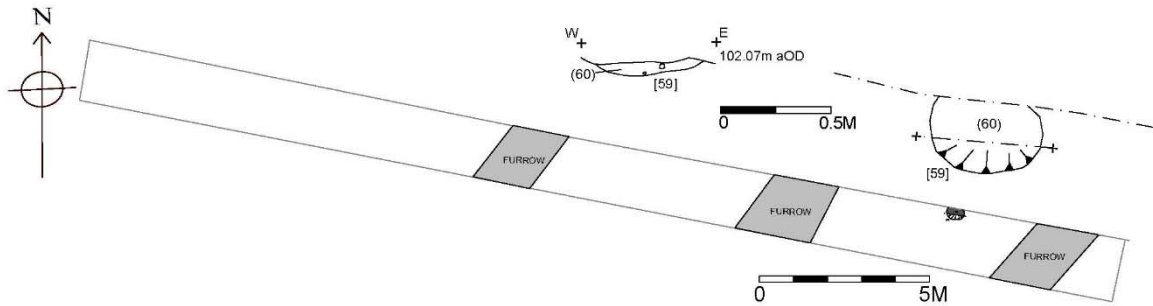


Figure 43: Trench 12 plans and sections

Trench 13

Two archaeological features were observed in this trench (Figures 44 and 46). At 7m from the north north-east end of the trench a ditch [67] was observed running east to west across the trench (Figure 45). It measured 1.2m in width and 0.55m in depth with a V-shaped profile and narrow concave base. The fill (68) consisted of a mid-orangey brown sandy clay with rare large sub rounded cobbles, occasional flints and small grit inclusions. A single sherd of late 1st-2nd century Roman pottery and animal bone were recovered. Environmental samples taken from the fill yielded minimal results.

At 7.5m from the south south-west end of the trench a probable wide shallow linear feature [74] was observed running roughly east to west across the trench (Figure 45). This appeared heavily truncated by both a modern furrow and field drain within the trench. It had shallow sloping sides breaking to a roughly flat base and measured 3.15m in width and 0.15m in depth. The fill (75) consisted of a dark brownish grey silty clay with common charcoal flecks and occasional flint inclusions. Heat cracked stones were also recorded within the fill. Twenty-two sherds (151g) of Roman pottery dating from the late 1st-2nd century were recovered from the fill. Animal bone was also present in this fill.



Figure 44: Trench 13 looking south-south east (1m scale)



Figure 45: Ditch [67] and linear [74] looking west (1m and 2m scale)

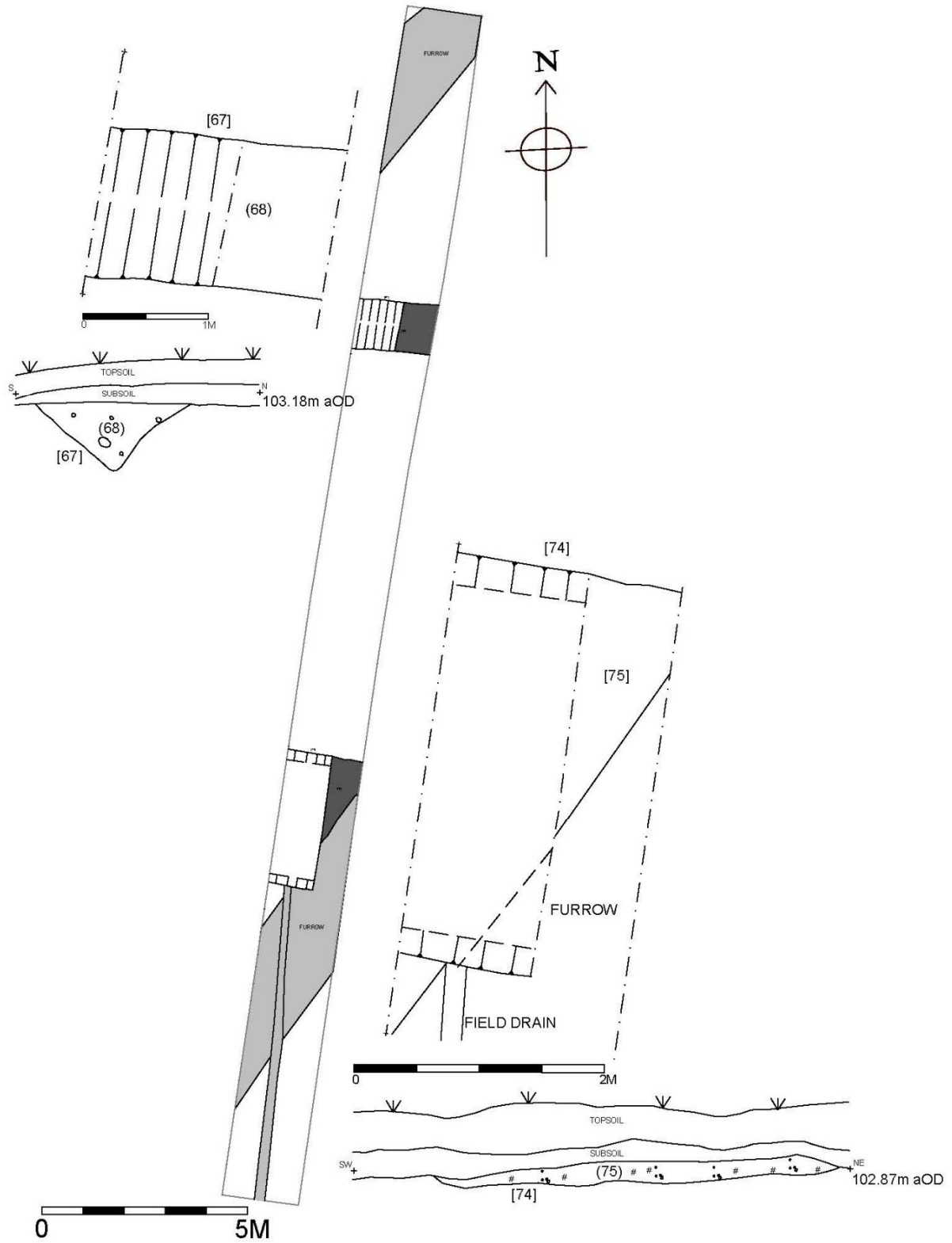


Figure 46: Trench 13 plans and sections

Trench 14

Two archaeological features were observed in this trench (Figures 47 and 49). Running north to south across the centre of the trench a ditch was recorded [69] (Figure 48). It measured 1.85m in width and 0.67m in depth and had a V-shaped profile with narrow concave base. The lower fill (70) consisted of a blueish grey silty clay with occasional chalk inclusions, large stone inclusions and charcoal flecks. No finds were recovered from this fill. The upper fill (71) consisted of an orangey grey silty clay with occasional stone, flint and chalk inclusions. No finds were recovered from this fill.

A second ditch [76] was recorded running roughly north-east to south-west across the trench at 4m from its west end (Figure 48). It had a V-shaped profile with narrow base and measured 1.3m in width and 0.6m in depth. The lower fill (77) consisted of an orangey grey gravelly sand with common gravels, occasional small stone and chalk inclusions and occasional charcoal flecks. No finds were recovered from this fill. The upper fill (78) consisted of an orangey brown silty clay with occasional stone and chalk inclusions. Four sherds of late 1st-2nd century Roman pottery was recovered from this fill. This ditch appeared to be a return of ditch [67] seen in Trench 13.



Figure 47: Trench 14 looking west (1m scale)



Figure 48: Ditch [69] looking north (1m scale) and ditch [76] looking north-east (1m scale)

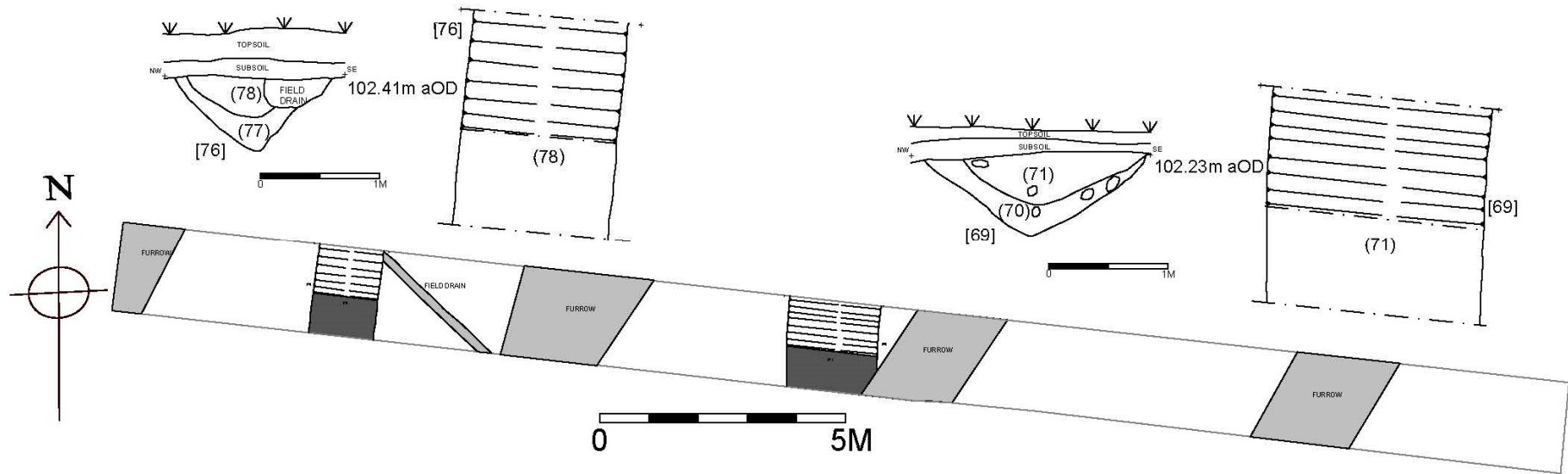


Figure 49: Trench 14 plans and sections

The Pottery - Elizabeth Johnson

Assemblage Size and Condition

An assemblage comprising 221 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 1.907kg with an EVEs value of 3.965, was retrieved from the evaluation excavations. Pottery was retrieved from 18 contexts. Much of the material is in fairly good condition, although most surfaces are abraded and there are some fragmentary vessels present. This is reflected in the overall average sherd weight of 8.6g. In addition, one sherd (22g) of re-deposited pottery was recovered close to Trench 4.

Methodology

The pottery was examined in hand specimen using a binocular microscope at x15 magnification and classified using the Leicestershire fabric series for Roman pottery as summarised below (Pollard 1994).

Table 1: Summarised Roman pottery fabric series.

CG1A	Shell-tempered wares.	MO6	Nene Valley mortaria.
GW	Grey sandy wares.	C2NV	Nene Valley colour-coated wares.
OW	Oxidised sandy wares.	BB1	Black Burnished wares.
WW	White sandy wares.	CGSam	Central Gaulish samian wares.

Quantification was by sherd count, weight (grams) and estimated vessel equivalents (EVEs based on rim values). Vessel forms were assigned where diagnostic sherds allowed, using the Leicestershire Museums form series and other published typologies. The dataset was recorded and analysed within an Excel workbook, which comprises the archive record.

Trenches 1 and 4

Twenty-four sherds (26g) of pottery from a single vessel were recovered from a posthole [1] (2) within Trench 1. The shell-tempered ware jar is very fragmentary and abraded, and could date to the mid-late 1st century or 2nd century.

Three sherds (19g) of pottery were retrieved from a gully [5] (6) within Trench 4, comprising Black Burnished ware and grey ware. The two grey ware body sherds are both from jars, including one with a cordon dating within the 2nd century. The Black Burnished ware sherd is also most likely from a jar, though it is very small and can only be dated from c.AD120 onwards.

Trench 5

Pottery was recovered from two ditches within Trench 5. Twenty-three sherds (127g) were recovered from [19] (20), comprising oxidised, grey and shell-tempered wares, along with a

samian ware dish. The samian dish is a Drag.18/31 from Central Gaul, and dates to the first half of the 2nd century (Webster 1996, 32-35). The rest of the pottery comprises jars and bowls, including a grey ware jar with cavetto rim and a jar or bowl with a cordon. All the pottery could date within the 2nd century.

A second ditch, [49] (50) (51), produced 18 sherds (298g) of pottery. Most of the material (16 sherds, 285g) was recovered from the upper fill (51). The majority of the vessels are grey ware jars and bowls, including an s-shaped necked jar, plain rimmed dish, a cordoned jar and a jar or bowl with a girth groove. Two of the grey ware sherds are comparable to Northamptonshire/Upper Nene Valley grey wares dating to the late 1st-2nd century. The remaining material comprises a complete rim and neck from a white ware flagon, and a sherd from a Nene Valley colour-coated ware beaker with roulette decoration. The beaker is the latest datable sherd as it is unlikely to date much before the later 2nd century, and these vessels are generally given a late 2nd-early 3rd century date (Howe *et al* 1980; Perrin 1999, 87). However, everything else in this group could easily date within the 2nd century and a later 2nd century date overall is possible. The lower fill (50) produced two sherds (13g) of pottery, comprising a shell-tempered ware jar, and an oxidised ware s-shaped necked jar dating to the late 1st-2nd century.

Trenches 6 and 7

Eight sherds (67g) of pottery were recovered from a ditch [26] (27) within Trench 6. A Drag.18/31 samian ware dish from Central Gaul dates to the first half of the 2nd century; the micaceous fabric indicating it comes from Lezoux. A mortarium from the Nene Valley is also present, however, the sherd is undiagnostic and abraded therefore a date from the mid-2nd century onwards is all that can be given. The remaining material comprises a shell-tempered ware jar or bowl and grey ware jars or bowls dating from the late 1st-2nd century onwards.

Ditch [55] (56) within Trench 7 produced two small sherds (8g) of pottery, consisting of a white ware flagon and grey ware jar. The sherds are not closely datable, however a late 1st-2nd century date is most likely.

Trench 11

Over half the total pottery assemblage was recovered from four ditches in Trench 11, totalling 116 sherds weighing 1.187kg and with an EVEs value of 2.34. The pottery is generally in good condition, even though most surfaces are abraded, which is reflected in the slightly higher average sherd weight of 10.2g.

Almost all the material from this trench was found in ditch [45] (46) (47) (48), from which 110 sherds weighing 1.131kg with an EVEs value of 2.215 were recovered. The bottom fill (46) revealed 30 sherds (312g) of pottery comprising a shell-tempered ware jar, an oxidised ware jar or bowl and grey ware jars including an s-shaped necked jar dating to the late 1st-2nd century. Overlying this, 74 sherds (636g) of pottery were recovered from (47), comprising a range of oxidised, grey and shell-tempered wares. The grey wares include an s-shaped necked jar that joins the vessel in (46). The remaining grey wares include a very coarse and fragmentary jar with a rounded out-curved rim, body sherds from jars or bowls and a second jar with rounded out-curved rim. A shell-tempered ware ledge rim jar dates from the mid-late 1st century to the mid-2nd century and matches the shell-tempered ware body sherds from (46). Likewise, an oxidised ware bowl with a ledge rim matches body sherds from (46). There is

also a fine oxidised ware bowl with low carination, upright walls and a slightly everted bead rim dating to the late 1st-2nd century. A further six sherds (183g) of pottery were recovered from (48), including shell-tempered ware body sherds matching the vessel from (46) and (47), and a small sherd from the very coarse grey ware jar in (47). The remaining material comprises a large shell-tempered ware storage jar rim and two other grey ware jars or bowl. All the pottery from [45] most likely dates within the 2nd century.

Small quantities of pottery were recovered from three other ditches. Ditch [52] (54) revealed three sherds (40g) of grey ware including an everted rim jar dating from the later 1st century to the middle of the 2nd century. Ditch [57] (58) produced two sherds (10g) from a grey ware jar or bowl, also dating to the late 1st-2nd century. One sherd (6g) from a Black Burnished ware bowl base was recovered from ditch [64] (66). This vessel would not date before *c.*AD120, but could still easily date within the 2nd century. With no rim or decoration present, it is not possible to give a more precise date (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991).

Trenches 13 and 14

Pottery was recovered from two ditches within Trench 13. A single sherd (11g) from a grey ware jar base was found in ditch [67] (68). The vessel is not closely datable, dating from the late 1st-2nd century onwards. A larger group of pottery comprising 22 sherds (151g) was retrieved from [74] (75). Most of the vessels are grey ware jars or bowls, including an s-shaped necked jar, a jar with a squared out-curved rim and an everted rim jar. These forms suggest a date within the 2nd century. The remaining material comprises an oxidised ware jar base and a Black burnished ware body sherd, probably from a jar. The Black Burnished ware dates from *c.*AD120 onwards, but probably within the 2nd century given the rest of the pottery from this context. Finally, four sherds (13g) from an oxidised ware jar dating to the late 1st-2nd century were recovered from ditch [76] (78) within Trench 14.

Discussion

Overall, the assemblage suggests activity from the later 1st century and through the 2nd century. The latest datable vessel is the Nene Valley colour-coated ware beaker, however this need not necessarily date beyond the late 2nd century.

The majority of the pottery is most likely locally made, with grey and oxidised sandy wares the most prevalent fabrics along with some shell-tempered wares. However, a small quantity of the grey ware is probably from a Northamptonshire source and is comparable to grey wares found at Waterfield Place in Market Harborough and Mawsley in Northamptonshire (Johnson 2012, 2015). There are many kiln sites in Northamptonshire producing grey wares from the later 1st century onwards, such as Ecton, Mears Ashby, Weston Favell and Little Billing (Johnston 1969), and any could be the source. This suggests pottery was available from sources in Northamptonshire to the south as well as local Leicestershire sources during the 2nd century, before the dominance of regional pottery industries such as those of the Lower Nene Valley. The other regional wares present are found throughout Leicestershire and include the mortarium and colour-coated ware beaker from the Lower Nene Valley, along with a small quantity of Black Burnished ware and white ware. Northamptonshire and Mancetter-Hartshill are the most common sources of white wares in Leicestershire, with Northamptonshire perhaps a more likely source for this site given its location. In addition to regional wares, two imported Central Gaulish samian ware dishes are also present. In this respect, the range and variety of

fabrics present indicates access to a market place where both regional and continental imports were available as well as local wares. The character of the assemblage suggests occupation activity in the vicinity.

Table 2: Summarised Pottery Catalogue

Tr	Cut	Cont	Fabric	Form	Shds	Wgt (g)	Diam (cm)	EVEs	Dating
1	1	2	MO6	Jar/bowl	24	26			mid1st-2ndC
4	5	6	BB1	Jar	1	1			c.AD120+
4	5	6	GW	Jar	2	18			2ndC+
5	19	20	OW	Jar	12	43			late1st-2ndC+
5	19	20	CGSam	Dish	5	44	14	0.075	early-mid2ndC
5	19	20	GW	Jar	2	24			2ndC+
5	19	20	GW	Jar	1	9			2ndC+
6	26	27	GW	Jar/bowl	3	6			late1st-2ndC+
6	26	27	GW	Jar/bowl	1	11			2ndC+
6	26	28	MO6	Mortarium	1	31			mid2ndC+
6	26	28	CGSam	Dish	1	5			early-mid2ndC
6	26	28	CG1A	Jar/bowl	1	6			mid1st-2ndC
6	26	28	GW	Jar/bowl	1	8			late1st-2ndC+
5	19	31	GW	Jar/bowl	1	3			late1st-2ndC+
5	19	31	CG1A	Jar/bowl	2	4			mid1st-2ndC
11	45	46	CG1A	Jar	4	54			mid1st-2ndC
11	45	46	OW	Jar/bowl	4	40			late1st-2ndC+
11	45	46	GW	Jar	9	93			late1st-2ndC+
11	45	46	GW	Jar	1	9			2ndC+
11	45	46	GW	Jar	12	116	12	0.45	late1st-2ndC
11	45	47	GW	Jar	7	52	12	0.225	late1st-2ndC
11	45	47	GW	Jar	19	55	16	0.18	2ndC+
11	45	47	CG1A	Jar	20	187	17	0.22	mid1st-mid2ndC
11	45	47	OW	Bowl	8	188	26	0.23	late1st-2ndC
11	45	47	OW	Bowl	3	55	10.5	0.425	late1st-2ndC
11	45	47	OW	Jar/bowl	2	4			late1st-2ndC
11	45	47	GW	Jar	14	85	12	0.375	late1st-2ndC

Tr	Cut	Cont	Fabric	Form	Shds	Wgt (g)	Diam (cm)	EVEs	Dating
11	45	47	GW	Jar/bowl	1	10			late 1st-2ndC
11	45	48	CG1A	Jar	1	144	36	0.11	mid 1st-mid 2ndC
11	45	48	CG1A	Jar	2	18			mid 1st-mid 2ndC
11	45	48	GW	Jar	1	3			2ndC+
11	45	48	GW	Jar	2	18			late 1st-2ndC
5	49	50	CG1A	Jar	1	11			mid 1st-mid 2ndC
5	49	50	OW	Jar	1	2	14	0.05	late 1st-2ndC
5	49	51	WW	Flagon	1	182	6.6	1.00	late 1st-2ndC
5	49	51	C2NV	Beaker	1	3			late 2nd-early 3rdC
5	49	51	GW	Jar	3	15	15	0.125	late 1st-2ndC
5	49	51	GW	Jar	3	55			late 1st-2ndC
5	49	51	GW	Dish	3	12	22	0.075	2ndC+
5	49	51	GW	Jar	1	2			late 1st-2ndC
5	49	51	GW	Jar/bowl	1	3			2ndC+
5	49	51	GW	Jar	1	10			late 1st-2ndC
5	49	51	GW	Jar/bowl	1	2			late 1st-2ndC+
5	49	51	GW	Jar/bowl	1	1			late 1st-2ndC+
11	52	54	GW	Jar	1	6	12	0.125	late 1st-mid 2ndC
11	52	54	GW	Jar/bowl	1	18			late 1st-2ndC+
11	52	54	GW	Jar/bowl	1	16			late 1st-2ndC+
7	55	56	WW	Flagon	1	3			late 1st-2ndC
7	55	56	GW	Jar	1	5			late 1st-2ndC+
11	57	58	GW	Jar/bowl	2	10			late 1st-2ndC+
11	64	66	BB1	Bowl	1	6			c.AD120+
13	67	68	GW	Jar	1	11			late 1st-2ndC+
13	74	75	OW	Jar	1	33			late 1st-2ndC+
13	74	75	GW	Jar/bowl	5	36	28	0.1	late 1st-2ndC+
13	74	75	GW	Jar	3	12	14	0.1	late 1st-2ndC+
13	74	75	GW	Jar	1	7	10	0.1	late 1st-mid 2ndC
13	74	75	BB1	Jar	1	2			c.AD120+
13	74	75	GW	Jar	1	6			late 1st-2ndC

Tr	Cut	Cont	Fabric	Form	Shds	Wgt (g)	Diam (cm)	EVEs	Dating
13	74	75	GW	Jar/bowl	2	3			late1st-2ndC+
13	74	75	GW	Jar/bowl	4	25			late1st-2ndC+
13	74	75	GW	Jar/bowl	4	27			late1st-2ndC+
14	76	78	OW	Jar	4	13			late1st-2ndC

Roman Ceramic Tile - *Nicholas J. Cooper*

A total of seven fragments (550g) of Roman were recovered during the trial trenching from contexts [26] (28) in Trench 6 and [45] (48) in Trench 11, in both cases associated with Roman pottery of 2nd-century date. Two fragments, one from a wall tile (170g) and one from a flanged *tegula* roof tile (60g) came from (28). Five fragments (320g) of tegulae were recovered from (48). The low average fragment weight of 79g and the abraded nature of the surfaces suggests re-use or deposition of material at some distance from the location of the stone-founded building of which they one formed a part. Their presence indicates the existence of Roman stone-founded buildings in the vicinity, and further work would help to elucidate the nature of these structures.

Roman Bone knife handle *Nicholas J. Cooper*

Trench 11 Sf1, [45] (46). A fragment from a rectangular plate of bone with a plano-convex section, decorated with a band of incised lattice at the hilt end of the handle, on the external (convex) surface. The partial remains of a rivet hole on the midline, indicates the method of attachment. The fragment was part of a two piece handle from a small iron knife, with a scale tang which would have been decorated a bone plate on each side. Estimated width of handle 20mm.

A similar example comes from 2nd-century levels on the Blakerne Gate site in Colchester (Crummy 1983, 110, fig.111.2935), and given the 2nd-century date of the pottery from the present context, it will be of similar date. Though fragmentary, occurrences of such items are relatively unusual on rural sites and indicates that further work would yield an interesting assemblage of objects with which to equip the inhabitants of this settlement.

Prehistoric Flint *Lynden P. Cooper*

Two pieces were recovered during the trial trenching, namely a notched flake from [5] (6) in Trench 4 and a secondary flake from [19] (20) in Trench 5. They are manufactured from till-derived flint pebbles and date broadly to the Neolithic or Bronze Age. They are residual in these contexts but indicative of the prehistoric activity of this date in the area.

The Charred Plant Remains - Adam Santer and Rachel Small

Introduction

During an archaeological evaluation at Denbydale, Wigston, Leicestershire six bulk soil samples (numbered 1 to 6) were taken and processed for the analysis of charred plant remains. These were from the fills (47), (63), (66), (68), (18) and (23) of ditches [45], [61], [64], [67], [17] and [21] respectively. These dated to the early-mid Roman period (1st to 2nd century AD). The analysis of the charred plant remains recovered from the samples is presented here, together with a discussion of what this can potentially tell us about past diet, crop husbandry strategies and environment at the site.

Methodology

The samples consisted of a mostly mid orange/brown silty clay and were processed in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm sieve. The flotation fractions (flots) were sorted for plant remains and other artefacts under an x10-40 stereo microscope. The residues were air dried and the fractions over 4mm were sorted in their entirety whilst the fraction under 4mm were only sorted for plant remains. Plant remains were identified by comparison to modern reference material available at ULAS and their names and habitats follow Stace (1991). Each whole grain or those representing over 60% of the specimen was counted as one; for chaff, each glume base and culm node was counted as one; and, for seeds each fragment was counted as one.

Results

All of the samples contained charred plant remains. Five of the samples had a low density of remains (under 5 items per litre) and one had a medium density (5 items per litre). Sample 1 contained the most plant remains at 5 items per litre and it was from the fill (47) of the Roman ditch [45] located within trench 11.

In most cases the charred plant remains were very fragmentary and distorted from burning at high temperatures and this hindered identification to species. Only nine specimens could be identified to species out of the total of 195 which equates to just 4.62%.

Three samples had over 50 items which is the minimum considered reliable to interpret the crop processing stage represented (pers. comm. Monckton 2015). These were dominated by wheat glume bases and grains and wild seeds were found in smaller numbers. Each category of plant remains will now be discussed in more detail.

Grains

Due to their fragmentary and poorly preserved nature none of the cereal grains could be identified to species with any degree of confidence. A possible barley (CF *Hordeum vulgare* L.) grain was found in sample 1 but the specimen was very poorly preserved. It was therefore, impossible to tell whether or not the grain was of a 'twisted' type which would be indicative of six-rowed barley. No signs of germination were noted.

Chaff

Wheat glume base fragments were common in samples 1, 2 and 3. They were found in smaller numbers in sample 5 and 6. It was possible to identify two as spelt wheat (*Triticum spelta* L.) in sample 1. Sample 1 also contained a single lemma base from an oat (*Avena* sp.), however, it was too abraded to determine whether it was wild or cultivated. A straw culm node was also found in sample 1 and 6.

Wild seeds

Sample 1 contained the majority of the wild seeds found in the assemblage. Corncockle (*Agrostemma githago* L.) which is a weed commonly found in cereal fields and redshank (*Polygonum persicaria* L.) a weed commonly found in hoed fields were present. Other wild seeds which grow in a variety of environments included sedge (*Carex* spp.), goosefoots (*Chenopodium* spp.), buttercup (*Ranunculus* spp.), dock (*Rumex* spp.) and knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare* L.). A possible vetch (CF *Lathyrus* spp.), some small grass seeds (Poaceae) and an indeterminate weed seed were also found.

Table 3: The charred plant remains found in samples 1-6

Sample	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Context	47	63	66	68	18	23	
Cut	45	61	64	67	17	21	
Feature type	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	Ditch	
Date	2nd c. Rom	1st/2nd c. Rom	2nd c. Rom	1st/2nd c. Rom	Unknown	Unknown	
Trench	11	5	11	13	3	9	
Grain							
CF. <i>Hordeum vulgare</i> L.	1						CF. Barley
Cereal	2	4		2		1	Indeterminate cereal grain
Chaff							
<i>Avena</i> sp. lemma base	1				1		Oat lemma base
<i>Triticum spelta</i> L. glume base	2						Spelt glume base
<i>Triticum</i> spp. base fragments	44	57	46		3	6	Glume base fragments
Straw culm node	1					1	Straw culm node
Wild seeds							
<i>Agrostemma githago</i> L.	3				1		Corncockle
<i>Carex</i> sp.	1						Sedge
<i>Chenopodium</i> sp.	3	1	1		1		Goosefoots
CF. <i>Lathyrus</i> sp.	1	1	1				CF. Vetchling
Poaceae (small)	1	1					Small grass
<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.			1				Buttercup
<i>Rumex</i> sp.	1						Dock
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L.	1						Knotgrass
<i>Polygonum persicaria</i> L.	3						Redshank
Indeterminate seed			1				Indeterminate seed
Total	65	64	50	2	6	8	
Soil volume (L)	13	15	16	8	17	17	
% Analysed	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	
Items per litre	5	4.26	3.12	0.25	0.35	0.47	

Charcoal

Charcoal fragments were found in all of the samples but very few pieces measured over 2mm in diameter (under 10 items). These were of poor preservation and therefore it is not recommended they are studied further or suggested for radiocarbon analysis.

Artefacts from the residues

A small number of finds were recovered from the over 4mm fractions in samples 1, 2, 3, 5 and 6. Sample 1 contained nine pot sherds, thirty seven small fragments of pottery and two bone fragments. Sample 2 contained an iron hobnail, five bone fragments and a mammal tooth. Sample 3 contained a single piece of charcoal. Sample 5 contained four fragments of animal tooth. Sample 6 contained a single fragment of pottery. The animal bone is discussed in the relevant specialist report, however, the other artefacts were not deemed worthy of further work.

Discussion

Six bulk soil samples were taken from Denbydale, Wigston, Leicestershire and analysed. The samples contained a low to medium density of charred plant remains and the highest density was present in sample 1 at five items per litre. The specimens were heavily distorted and fragmentary from burning at high temperatures which hindered the identification process.

It was possible to identify barley, oat and wheat including spelt. Wheat appeared to be the dominant crop at the site and this is typical of the period. Barley and oat may represent smaller contributions to diet or contaminants of the wheat field. There is evidence for processing wheat at the site because the samples with over 50 remains were dominated by wheat glume bases. These are generally removed during coarse sieving, a later stage in processing the grain for consumption. This would have taken place on a day to day basis in the Roman period in the household context. The residue from coarse sieving may have been burnt on a hearth as tinder. This ash from the hearth would have been formally deposited and/or would have formed a general scatter across the site collecting in the open features such as ditches.

A similar ratio of glume bases to cereal grains was also found at a Late Iron Age and Roman settlement at Heybridge, Essex (Monckton 2000). These sites are generally typical of rural east midlands sites dating to this period.

Statement of potential

The preservation of the remains was poor, however, large enough sample sizes were achieved for interpretations regarding diet, crop husbandry strategies and diet at the site to be drawn. Therefore, if further excavation is undertaken at the site or in the near vicinity it is recommended that a suitable sampling strategy is implemented.

The animal bones - *Joseph Bartholomew*

Introduction

A small animal bone assemblage was collected by hand (172 fragments) and from environmental samples (12 fragments) during an evaluation at Denbydale, Wigston, Leicestershire. Animal bones were recovered from 13 contexts which were comprised of ditches and linear features. All contexts were dated to the Early Roman period (mid-2nd century A.D.).

Methods

The bones were identified through comparison to reference material held at the University of Leicester and recorded in a catalogue separating those recovered by hand excavation (table 1) and those from sample environmental samples (table 2). Condition was scored using Harland et al.'s (2003) scale.

Results (hand collected)

The majority of bone recovered was described as being in 'poor' condition, with 156 fragments (91%) being recorded with flaking covering a minimum of 50% of the bones surface. Root etching was also noted on a large quantity of these fragments. The majority of bone described as 'fair' (9%) was recovered from contexts 46 and 50, with only localised areas of flaking.

Fragmentation of the assemblage was notable across the majority of contexts, with some modern damage identifiable through the presence of fresh breaks in the surface of bones. Within the assemblage of 172 fragments, 55 fragments were identified to element or species. In several instances, the reassembling of joining fragments allowed for the reduction of 23 fragments to 8 specimens, resulting in a total of 40 identified specimens. The remainder of this report will refer to the number of *specimens*.

Only a minority of specimens could be identified to species (25%), with sheep/goat, cattle and horse being the only identified species. The representation of each species was not equal, with cattle only contributing a single specimen (10%) to the number of identified specimens (NISP) whilst sheep/goat and horse totalled 6 (50%) and 4 (40%) of specimens respectively. Due to the heavy fragmentation and otherwise poor preservation of the assemblage, no separation of sheep or goat specimens could be made. Each species was represented by only a limited range of elements, with 4 (80%) of sheep/goat specimens identified from teeth. Similarly, teeth composed a large percentage of identified cattle (100%) and horse (25%) specimens. Such a tooth dominated NISP (60%) is characteristic of poorly preserved assemblages and may indicate disturbance. Though identification to species was not possible, the assemblage otherwise represents a range of elements including long bones, scapulae and irregular bones such the cranium and mandible.

Potential butchery marks were noted on two specimens; cuts on the midshaft of one small mammal metatarsal (50) and a clean break on medium mammal pelvis indicative of chopping (51).

No pathology, burning or gnawing was identified on any specimen in the assemblage.

Results (environmental samples)

Animal bones were recovered from residue coarse fractions (>4mm). This included 12 fragments of bone, of which 7 were identifiable to element, and 1 was speciated as sheep goat

(a single incisor). In a similar manner to the larger assemblage, preservation was poor and fragmentation frequent. No pathology, burning or gnawing was identified on any specimen from the residue coarse fractions.

Discussion

The assemblage is mostly comprised of domestic refuse including food waste. The presence of non-meat bearing elements including metapodials, phalanges and cranial fragments indicate that the deposits are not purely food waste and are likely to be the result of general waste disposal from multiple domestic activities within the surrounding contexts. The poor preservation of the assemblage indicates most bones had a degree of exposure before burial, further supporting an interpretation for waste discard. All contexts have been dated to the 2nd century A.D., suggesting all material relates to a single phase of activity.

Material recovered from sample residue was minimal, with the recovery of additional teeth being the most notable aspect. The preservation and fragmentation were in keeping with the larger assemblage, with the fragmentation of generally robust elements such as teeth.

Statement of Potential

No further work is required on the assemblage under study. Should further excavation work be carried out at the site, further bone recovery should be expected, with study of a larger assemblage potentially revealing patterns of animal management and consumption. Whilst preservation will likely be poor, contexts around cut 49 should be expected to generate better quality material. Should more teeth be recovered, dental wear analysis may allow for the generation of mortality profiles for recorded taxa. Additionally, sampling would allow for a more detailed investigation of animal exploitation at the site, with further environmental evidence being an area of particular interest in the east Midlands regional research framework (see Monckton 2006).

Table 4: *Material recovered during excavation*

Context	Cut	Date	Element	Taxon	Fragments	Preservation	Comment
18	17	2 nd c. A.D.	Long Bone	Medium Mammal	4	3-4	Shaft fragments
18	17	2 nd c. A.D.	Indet.		25	3-4	Fragments
20	19	2 nd c. A.D.	Scapula	Medium Mammal	2	3-4	Fragments
20	19	2 nd c. A.D.	Scapula	Large Mammal	3	3-4	Fragments
20	19	2 nd c. A.D.	Flat Bone	Medium Mammal	5	3-4	Fragments
20	19	2 nd c. A.D.	Indet.		19	3-4	Fragments
20	19	2 nd c. A.D.	Long Bone	Large Mammal	12	3-4	Shaft fragments
28	26	2 nd c. A.D.	M1/2	Sheep/goat	4	3-4	1 tooth, heavy dental wear
31	19	2 nd c. A.D.	dp3	Horse	1	3-4	Heavy dental wear

46	45	2 nd c. A.D.	Loose Teeth	Sheep/goat	4	2	M1/2 (3, moderate dental wear) and dp3 (1, heavy dental wear)
46	45	2 nd c. A.D.	Mandible	Medium Mammal	4	2	Fragments
48	45	2 nd c. A.D.	Femur	Large Mammal	2	3-4	Proximal articulation and shaft fragments
48	45	2 nd c. A.D.	M1	Sheep/goat	1	2	Moderate dental wear
48	45	2 nd c. A.D.	Indet.		5	3-4	Bone fragments
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Metatarsal	Small Mammal	2	2	Potential butchery: cut marks
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Metacarpal	Large Mammal	1	2	Proximal articulation
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Distal Phalanx	Horse	1	2	Complete
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Medial Phalanx	Horse	1	2	Complete
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Proximal Phalanx	Medium Mammal	1	2	Proximal articulation unfused.
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Astragalus	Medium Mammal	1	2	Complete
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Flat Bone	Large Mammal	1	3-4	Shaft fragment
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Long Bone	Large Mammal	7	3-4	Shaft fragments
50	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Femur	Horse	6	3-4	Distal fragments
51	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Pelvis	Medium Mammal	1	3-4	Potential butchery: chop marks
51	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Humerus	Medium Mammal	1	3-4	Proximal articulation fragment
51	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Rib	Large Mammal	4	3-4	Shaft fragments
51	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Indet.	Medium Mammal	4	3-4	Fragments
51	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Indet.	Large Mammal	5	3-4	Long bone shaft fragments
51	48	2 nd c. A.D.	Scapula	Medium Mammal	2	3-4	Fragmentary
51	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Calcaneum	Medium Mammal	1	3-4	Proximal epiphysis unfused
51	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Medial Phalanx	Medium Mammal	1	3-4	Complete
51	49	2 nd c. A.D.	Molar (M1)	Cattle	1	3-4	Heavy dental wear
54	52	2 nd c. A.D.	Molar	Large Mammal	2	4	Wear Indet.
54	52	2 nd c. A.D.	Mandible	Large Mammal	4	3-4	Fragments
54	52	2 nd c. A.D.	Cranial Bone		2	3-4	Fragments
54	52	2 nd c. A.D.	Flat Bone		13	3-4	Fragments
54	52	2 nd c. A.D.	Indet.		1	4	Fragment
54	52	2 nd c. A.D.	Tibia	Medium Mammal	1	3-4	Shaft fragment
56	-	2 nd c. A.D.	Humerus	Large Mammal	3	3-4	Shaft fragments

66	64	2 nd c. A.D.	Humerus	Small Mammal	1	3-4	Shaft fragment
68	67	2 nd c. A.D.	Indet.		11	3-4	Fragments
68	67	2 nd c. A.D.	Mandible	Sheep/goat	2	3-4	4 teeth in mandible: P4, M1/ M2 (2) M3. Moderate dental wear
75	74	2 nd c. A.D.	Molar (M1)	Sheep/goat	1	2	Moderate dental wear
Total					172		

Table 5: *Material recovered from residue*

Sample	Part	Context	Cut	Date	Element	Taxon	Fragts	Preservation	Comment
2	1/2	63	61	2 nd Century A.D.	Incisor	Sheep/ goat	1	3-4	Heavy dental wear
2	2/2	63	61	2 nd Century A.D.	Indet.		5	3-4	Fragments
5	2/2	18	17	2 nd Century A.D.	Molar		6	3-4	One tooth.
Total							12		

Discussions and Conclusions

University of Leicester Archaeological Services carried out an archaeological evaluation at Denbydale, Wigston, Leicestershire. The work involved the machine excavation of 17, 30m long trial trenches located throughout the development area focusing on areas containing anomalies possibly associated with archaeological remains identified following the geophysical survey.

The topsoil and subsoil where present appeared consistent across the study area, with the natural substratum consisting of predominantly yellow-orange clay with occasional small chalk and natural flint inclusions. Occasional sandy gravel bands were also recorded.

Ridge and furrow was recorded in the majority of trenches excavated representing agricultural farming and ploughing from the medieval period through to the present day. In many trenches this could be seen truncating archaeological deposits. The presence of ridge and furrow could also be seen on the geophysical survey. Field drains were also present in several trenches.

Archaeological deposits were encountered in 12 of the 17 trenches. These were Trenches 1, 3-7 and 9-14. The features represented gullies, ditches, postholes and pits (Figure 50).

Ditch cuts recorded in trenches confirmed the presence of a series of enclosure ditches of a mid-1st century to 2nd century Roman date, as initially indicated on the geophysical survey. As a result further Roman deposits are likely within the development area. The gravel spread (42) in Trench 10 perhaps indicates the presence of a possible trackway associated with the enclosures. Similarly parallel ditches excavated in Trenches 6 and 11 could suggest a track or routeway associated with movement between enclosures. Evidence of intercutting features in Trenches 5, 6 and 10 may also suggest more than one phase of Roman activity in the development area. It is noted that the majority of the pottery assemblage originates from features in Trenches 5, 11 and 13 on the western side of the development area and it may be that these ditches are associated with or close to domestic settlement areas. The presence of tegulae and wall tile suggests the existence of Roman stone-founded buildings in the vicinity although their abraded nature might indicate they are not immediately close by. Features central and on the eastern half of the development area in comparison yielded far less material culture, perhaps suggesting the enclosure systems moving east are more likely to be associated with livestock and/or agriculture.

Despite no clear indications on the geophysical survey, additional linear features were identified in Trenches 3, 4, 5 and 7 with further discrete features (postholes or pits) in Trenches 1, 3, 7 and 12. This appears to indicate a more dense spread of archaeological deposits than initially shown on the geophysical survey.

Trench 2 in the southern corner of the development area yielded no archaeological deposits with trenches 15-17 on the north-eastern boundary of the development area also yielding no archaeological features. This could suggest that the ditches in Trenches 13 and 14 represent the northernmost boundary of the activity. Despite this a good portion of the development area appears to contain archaeological deposits of Roman origin.



Figure 50: Archaeological features (red) overlain geophysical interpretation (Purple/blue)

The environmental data found that wheat including spelt appears to have been the dominant crop (typical for this period) with evidence for cereal processing, with smaller amounts of barley and oats. The assemblage is fairly typical of an Early Roman settlement and suggests potential for further environmental data from the features.

Despite the presence of some animal bone within the finds assemblage, it was noted that preservation was particularly poor due to the poor soil conditions. Sheep/got, cattle and horse were identified and butchery marks were seen on two bones. The assemblage is fairly typical of domestic refuse. The decorated bone fragment is an unusual find on a rural site.

It is also clear that truncation of archaeological deposits due to ploughing and irrigation (field drains) has taken place across the majority of the development area, shown through consistent ridge and furrow recorded in the trenches.

Archive

The site archive will be held by *Leicestershire Museums Service*, under accession no. X.A52.2018.

The site archive consists of:

- 1 Unbound A4 copy of this report
- 17 A4 Trench recording sheets
- 2 A4 Photo record sheets
- A4 Colour digital contact print 1 CD of digital photos
- Drawing Sheets and Indices
- Context Sheets and Indices

Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work through the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course.

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Oasis Data

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-318299
	Project Name	An Archaeological Evaluation at Denbydale, Wigston
	Start/end dates of field work	08-05-18 – 21-05-18
	Previous/Future Work	unknown
	Project Type	Evaluation
	Site Status	None
	Current Land Use	Arable
	Monument Type/Period	Roman
	Significant Finds/Period	Roman
	Development Type	Residential
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF
	Position in the Planning Process	Pre Planning
	Planning Ref.	-
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	Denbydale, Wigston
	Study Area	2.3 ha
	Site Coordinates	SK 617 985
	Height OD	99aOD-102aOD
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS
	Project Originator Brief	Local Planning Authority (CDC)
	Project Originator Design	ULAS
	Project Manager	Vicki Score
	Project Director/Supervisor	Adam Clapton
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Developer – Jelsons Ltd

PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
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	ID (Acc. No.)	X.A52.2018	X.A52.2018	X.A52.2018
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