

**An Archaeological Evaluation on
land to the rear of 5 Melton Road,
Whissendine, Rutland.
NGR: SK 8251 1432**

Andrew Hyam
September 2006

Planning Application Ref: OUT/2001/0327

Client: Mr C. Underwood

Checked by Project Manager

Signed: **Date:**.....

Name:

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Archaeological Services**
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**An Archaeological Evaluation on land to the rear of 5 Melton Road,
Whissendine, Rutland. NGR: SK 8251 1432**

Andrew Hyam

Summary

A small scale evaluation was undertaken for Mr C. Underwood by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on the 1st of July 2006. The purpose of the work was to excavate two evaluation trenches in advance of a new bungalow on land to the rear of number 5 Melton Road, planning application: OUT/2001/0327. The site is located within the historic settlement core of Whissendine village and within an area of archaeological potential. In view of this the proposed building works were seen as being likely to uncover and disturb any surviving archaeological deposits and features.

The two trenches, one measuring 6.5m long and the other 15m long, were excavated down to the natural substrate of pale grey brown silty clay through approximately 0.4m of topsoil and subsoil.

Two north to south linear features were observed along with a potential pit and a single posthole. Sherds of late 5th or early 6th century Saxon and 11th or 12th century Saxo-Norman pottery were recovered from these features. The finds represent more evidence of early Saxon activity in the locality and the early origins of Whissendine village.

Records will be deposited with Rutland County Council, Accession number RT04.2006

1. Introduction

The village of Whissendine, Rutland lies midway between the towns of Melton Mowbray and Oakham and approximately 30km to the east of Leicester (fig. 1). Whissendine is a relatively long village set on both sides of a shallow north to south oriented valley. The church is located on the west facing slope with the proposed development site being located on the east facing slope (NGR SK8251 1432) (fig. 2). It lies on the northern side of Melton Road and on the eastern corner of Walton Close. The front of the site, to the south of Number 5, slopes down onto the road at approximately 125m OD (fig. 3). To the rear of Number 5 the ground slopes gently upwards to the northwest before dropping down approximately 0.5m towards a small grassed area forming the northern border of the site. The proposed development area is mostly lawn with trees and shrubs forming the boundaries with neighbouring properties (plate 1). A very faint earthwork bank runs across the northwest corner of the site.

In view of the potential for uncovering archaeological deposits the planning authority, Melton Borough Council requested archaeological attendance during the work to ensure that any affected deposits were recognised and adequately recorded.

The proposed development work is for the erection of a single storey dwelling and associated garage although the actual location within the development site is yet to be finalised exactly. Although the actual area covered by the building work will probably remain the same it is possible that the bungalow may be located to the east of the site rather than the west as originally planned. In view of this, at the clients request, the archaeological attendance was initially to include exploratory works in the form of two trenches, covering just over 25m², located to cover the footprint of both the bungalow and garage whatever the final decision may be (fig 4).

2. Background

The earliest documented records for the village of Whissendine are from the Domesday Book of 1086 when 27 villagers and 7 smallholders are recorded (Morris, 1980). Place-name evidence indicates a Saxon origin with a settlement by a stream valley (dene) belonging to Hwicce or Wic (Mills 1998).

Earlier archaeological excavations close to the proposed development site revealed occupation evidence from the Iron Age, Saxon, medieval and post medieval periods (Browning. forthcoming). The church, as mentioned, lies on the opposite west facing slope of the valley either side of the brook with manor farm and earthworks belonging to the medieval manor close by. In many cases the historic village core is normally close to these two important structures but in the case of Whissendine it appears to have developed along an east to west axis. Because of this and from the recent excavation results it was considered that the works would be likely to expose more surviving archaeological evidence of settlement activity.

Prior to redevelopment the site had been used as a lawned garden with tarmac access along the eastern edge of the site and a new unmetalled entrance to the west. Examination of the 1888 Ordnance Survey map indicates that the site appears to have remained undeveloped for at least the last hundred years.

3. Archaeological Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent, date range and significance of any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed ground works.
- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

4. Methodology

Both trenches were excavated using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket attached to the back actor. All topsoil and subsoil was removed in spits under archaeological supervision. The exposed natural substratum

was inspected for any archaeological features or deposits and the spoil checked for unstratified finds.

All archaeological deposits were excavated and recorded by notes and sketches using the standard ULAS pro-forma recording forms. Plans and sections of the deposits were also made at the appropriate scales. Digital colour photographs were taken throughout the work.

All work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

5. Results

Stratigraphy

Trench 1

Trench 1, in the southwestern corner of the site, was located to target the southern corner of the proposed bungalow, or the garage if the plans are adjusted. It followed an east to west alignment and measured 6.5m long and 1.5m wide narrowing down to 0.9m at the eastern end.

The topsoil (1) consisted of a friable dark grey brown slightly silty sandy clay with frequent sub angular pebbles and having a depth of between 0.21m and 0.33m. Beneath this was a thin layer of dark orangey grey subsoil (2) of silty sandy clay. The combined depths of topsoil and subsoil varied between 0.32m and 0.42m and covered an orangey brown silty natural clay containing many small flecks of chalk.

Trench 2

Trench 2, running in a northwest to southeasterly direction across the centre of the site, was located to cover the remaining part of the proposed bungalow and the garage. It also ran across the shallow earthwork seen in the northwest corner. The trench was 15m long and 1.4m wide and contained the same topsoil, subsoil and natural as noted in Trench 1. The trench depth varied between 0.33m and 0.4m from ground level to the top of natural.

Archaeological deposits

Trench 1

The main feature in this trench was a narrow linear feature [4] running on an approximately north to south alignment. It was filled with a silty clay of mid brown appearance with occasional greenish yellow mottles of clay (3). The feature was 0.8m wide and around 0.15m deep with fairly shallow sides and a flat base (plate 2). A single body sherd of 11th-13th century Fine Stamford ware pottery with external sooting was recovered from this fill along with a small amount of degraded and unidentifiable animal bone.

At the western end of the trench was a large flat block of ironstone (9) which had traces of mortar still adhering to it and some smaller stones appearing in the side of the section. It was not clear if this was a block of displaced masonry or the remains of a wall heading west, out of the trench, towards the property next door. No trace of a foundation or robber trench could be seen within Trench 1.

No other archaeological features were observed in this trench.

Trench 2

Three archaeological features were observed within Trench 2. The most substantial of these was a north to south aligned linear feature [8] towards the western end of the trench. This feature contained a dark brownish grey friable slightly silty clay (7) (plate 3). With a width of 1.4m and a depth of 0.4m it was a reasonably substantial feature and contained a number of dateable sherds of pottery. One sherd of late 5th or early 6th century Saxon pottery with quartz and red ironstone inclusions and four sherds of similarly dated pottery with sandy and calcareous inclusions were recovered from this fill. In addition to this a slightly later 11th or 12th century Lincoln Shelly ware body sherd was also recovered from fill (7).

Cut by linear feature [8] was an apparently shallow pit feature [11] of which only a small part extended into the trench. This feature had a similar fill to (7) but contained a higher proportion of charcoal (10). A single body sherd from a small 5th or 6th century Saxon carinated vessel with inscribed decoration was found within this fill. Fill (10) also contained a number of badly abraded animal bones making identification very difficult but from their size were judged to be most likely from sheep.

At the eastern end of the trench were the heavily truncated remains of a single flat bottomed post hole [6] measuring around 0.5m in diameter and 0.05m in depth. It contained a mid grey silty clay fill (5) with one body sherd of Fine Stamford ware similar to that found in linear feature [4]. No other post holes were observed within the trench.

A small amount of residual post medieval brick fragments were observed in the subsoil and probably come from the same period as the surrounding houses.

6. Discussion

It is possible that the two ditches form early property boundaries heading northwards from what is now the Melton Road. No evidence for the cause of the earthwork was noted although linear [8] is located near to its base. Unfortunately the limited amount of pottery recovered from the features gives only an indication of the probable dates of each feature. The linear feature [4] and possible pit [11] appear to be the earliest evidence for occupation with the later linear [8] belonging to the medieval period.

As with all trenches it can be difficult to identify structures in such a narrow area. The single posthole could be part of a larger group or just an isolated feature.

Despite the limited information the results obtained from this work do help increase our knowledge of the Saxon origins of Whissendine village especially when combined with other recent archaeological work nearby. In particular the 5th-6th century pottery is very rare and potentially suggests that the site is of significance.

The absence of any later finds until the post medieval period indicate that the site has remained relatively undeveloped since medieval times.

7. Archive

The archive consists of site notes, sketches and photographs to be held either by Rutland County Museum or Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team under accession number RT04.2006

8. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of The Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

9. Bibliography

EDINA/Digimap. <http://edina.ac.uk/digimap>

Mills, A.D. 1998 "Whissendine" A Dictionary of British Place-Names. A. D. Mills. Oxford University Press, 2003. Oxford Reference Online. Oxford University Press. Leicester University. 6 January 2005

Morris, J., (ed.) 1980 Domesday Book 29 Rutland, Phillimore and Co. Ltd.

10. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken by A R Hyam. The project was managed by Dr P Clay.

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Appendix 1. Figures and Plates

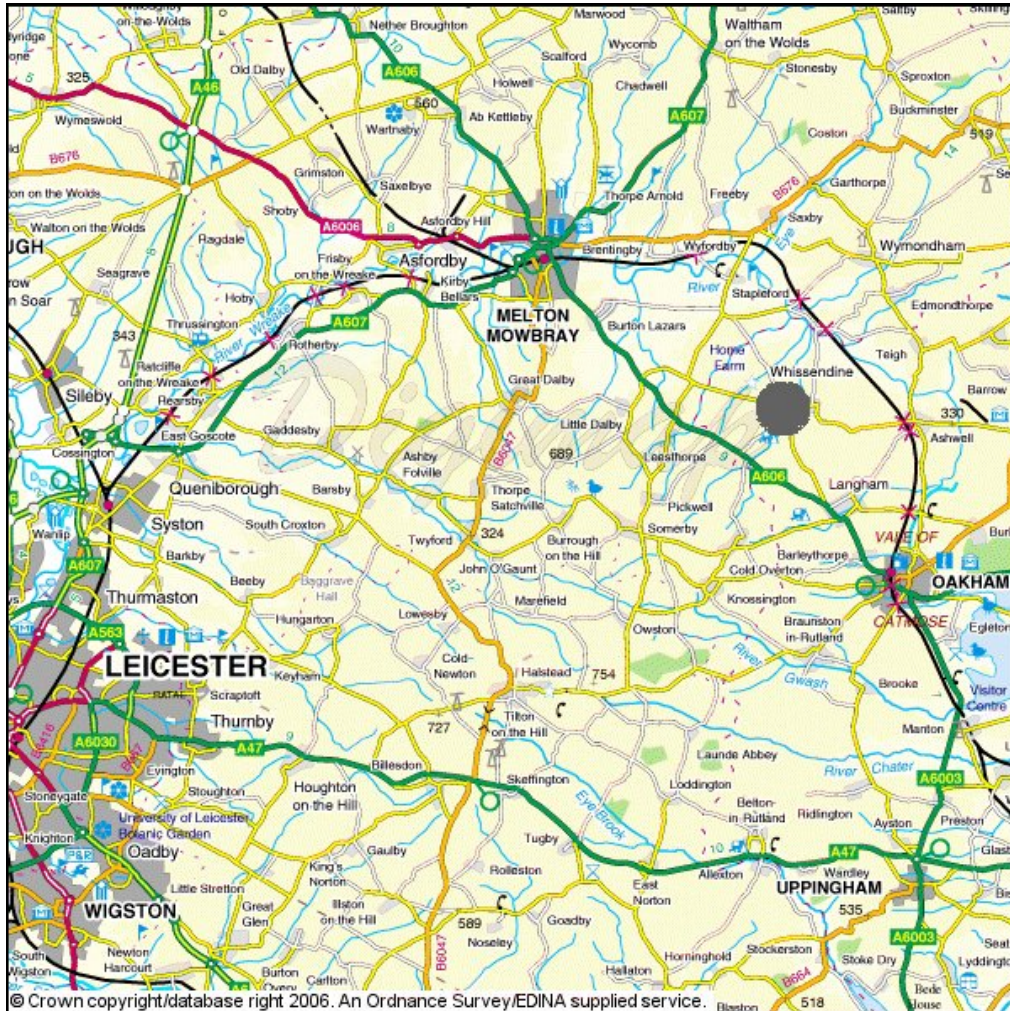


Figure 1: Location Plan. Whissendine as shaded circle.

Source: Ordnance Survey/EDINA

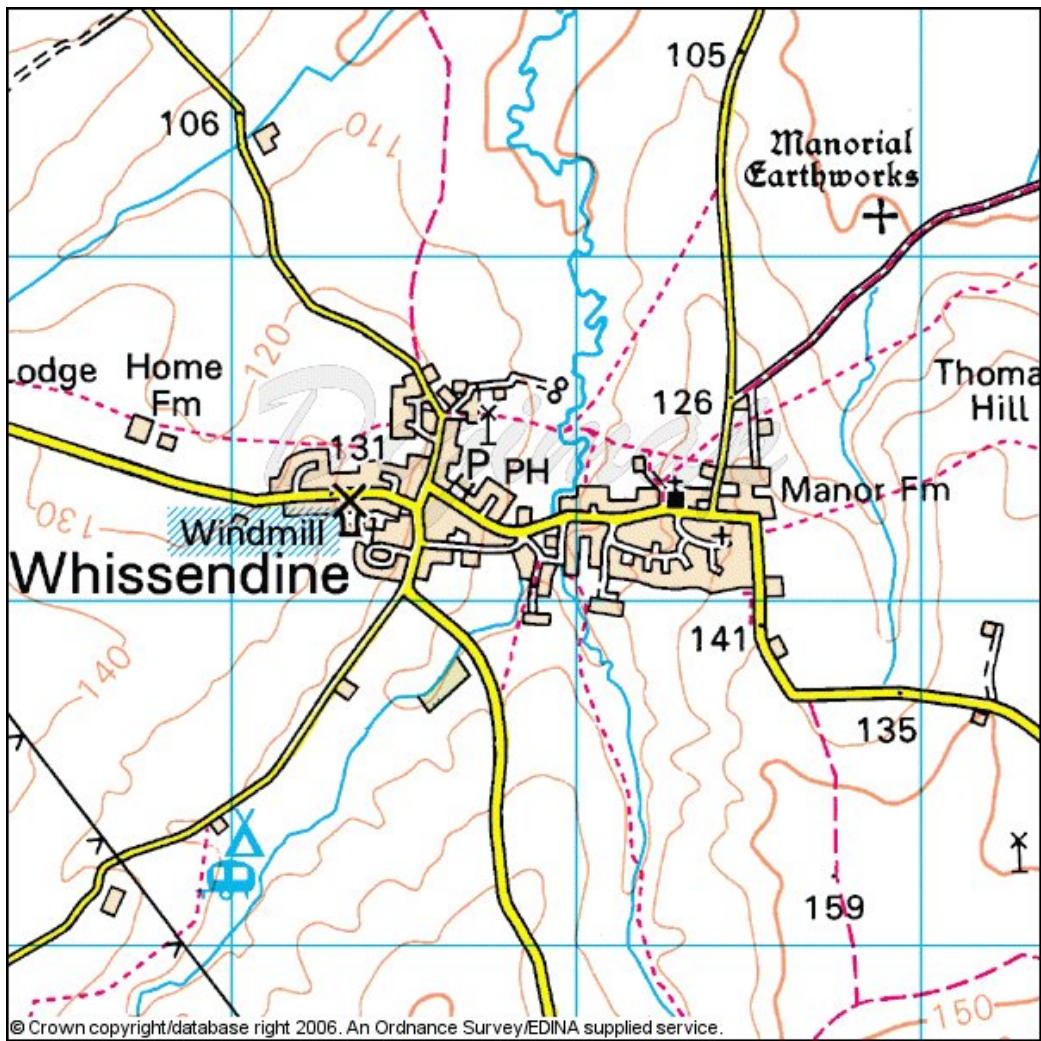


Fig. 2: Whissendine village.
Source: Ordnance Survey/EDINA

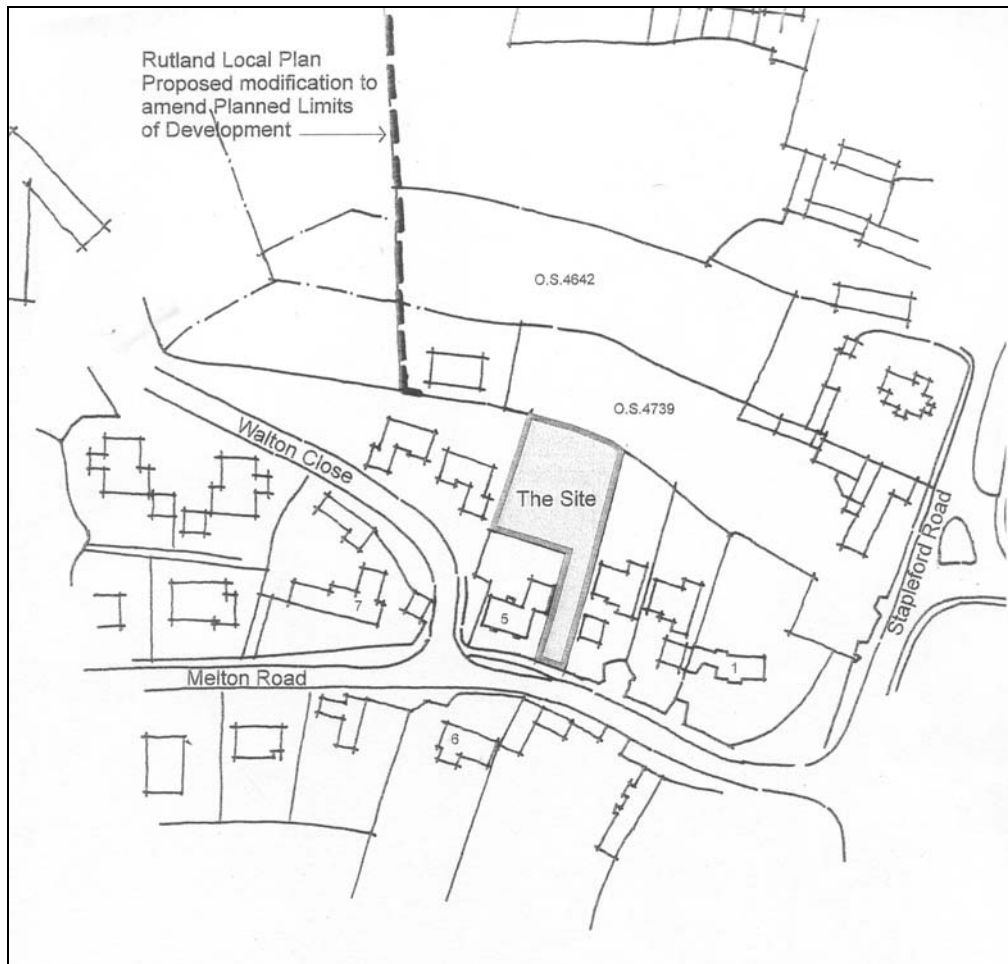


Figure 3: Site location.
Source: Inglewood designs, drawing ref: UN.01.01

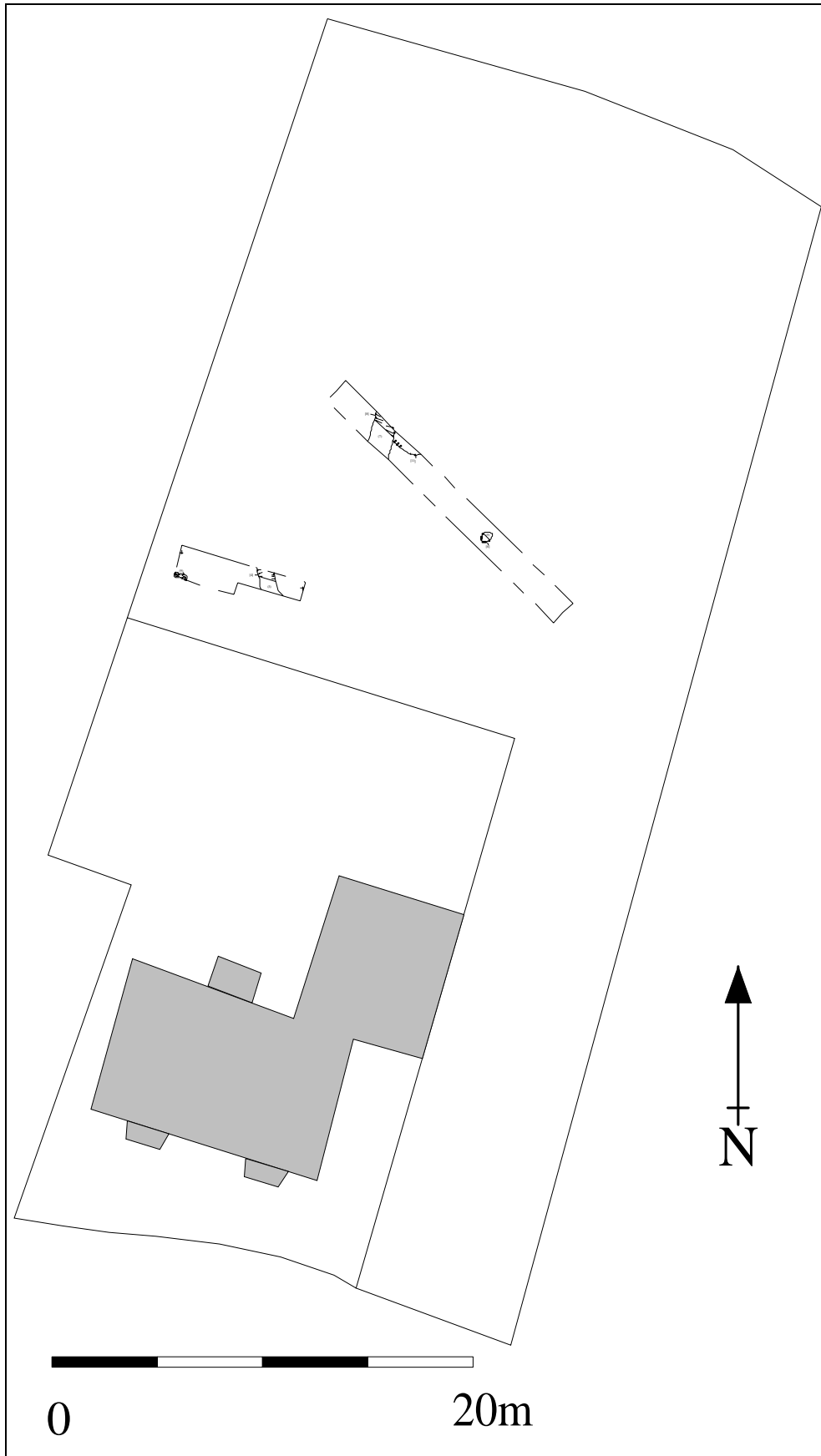


Figure.4: Development area and trench locations.

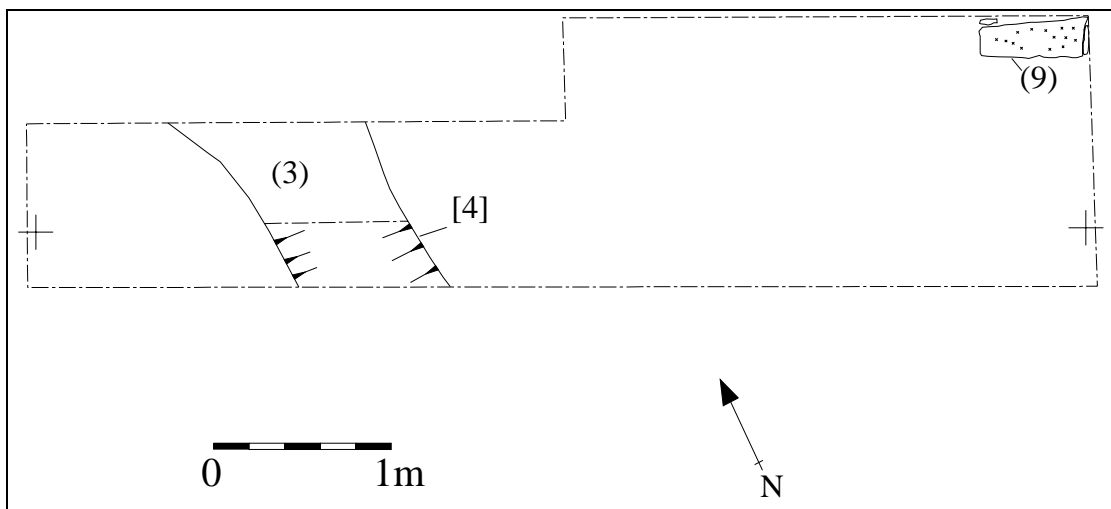


Figure 5: Trench 1 plan.

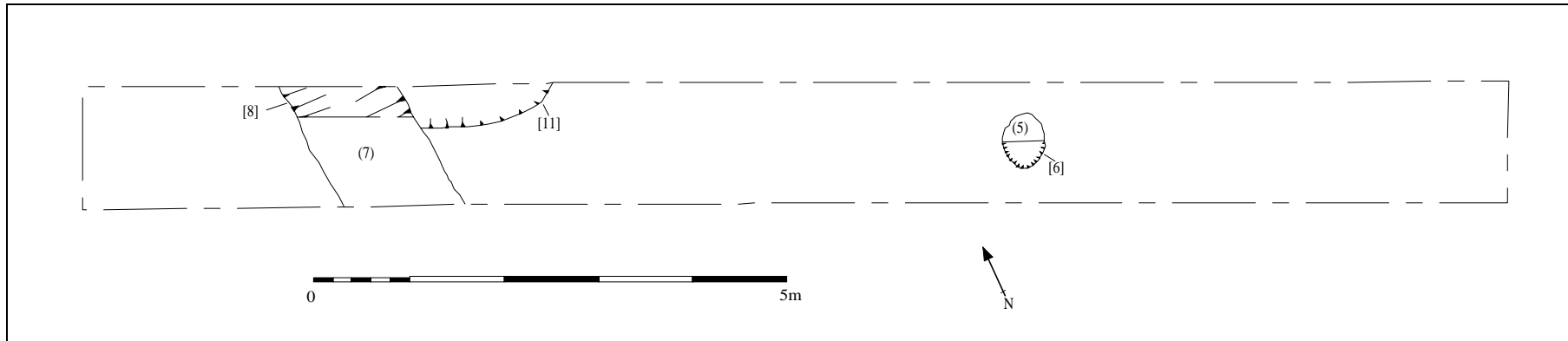


Figure 6: Trench 2 plan

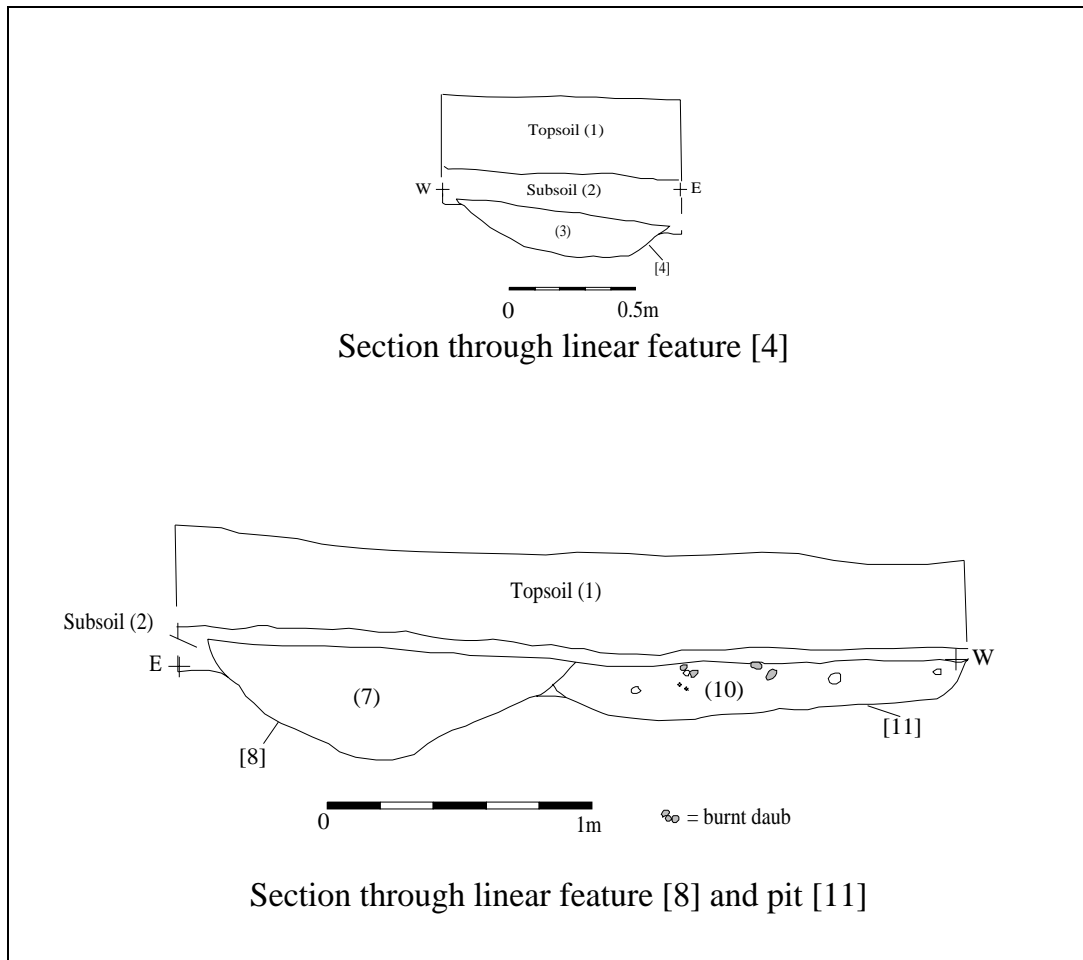


Figure 7: Sections



Plate 1. Proposed development site looking south



Plate 2. Section through linear feature [4]



Plate 3. Section through linear feature [8] on left and pit [11]

Appendix 2. The Pottery

D. Sawday

The early Saxon pottery, six fragments, weighing forty five grams, and the Saxo Norman pottery, three fragments, weighing sixteen grams, was examined under a binocular microscope and catalogued with reference to the ULAS fabric series (Blinkhorn 1999), (Davies and Sawday 1999). The results are shown below, (Table 1). Fragments of post medieval or modern coarse building material, probably brick, and animal bone were also present

Fabric/Ware	Sherd Nos.	Weight Grams	Average Sherd Weight
Early Saxon			
SX – Saxon ware/ red ironstone	1	26	
SX – Saxon ware/quartz/?shell	5	19	
Sub Total	6	45	7.5
Saxo Norman			
ST2 – Fine Stamford ware	2	11	
LI - Lincoln Shelly ware	1	5	
Sub Total	3	16	5.3
Totals	9	61	

Table 1: The early Saxon and Saxo Norman pottery totals by fabric sherd numbers and weight (grams)

Pottery of a similar date range has been recorded during previous excavations in the village. This assemblage, though small, provides yet more evidence of early Saxon activity in the area, and points to the late Saxon origins of what was to become the medieval village of Whissendine.

Bibliography

Blinkhorn, P., 1999. 'The Saxon Pottery' in S. Davies and D. Sawday 1999, 165.

Davies, S., and Sawday, D., 1999. 'The Post Roman Pottery and Tile' in A. Connor and R. Buckley, 1999, 165-213.

Site/Parish: 5 Melton Road, Whissendine, Rutland Accession No/ Doc Ref: RT04 2006/whissendine3.doc Material: pottery & misc. finds Site Type: village core	Submitter: A. Hyam Identifier: D. Sawday Date of Id: 4.09.06 Method of Recovery:
---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------	-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------

Context	Fabric/ware	Sherd nos.	Weight grams	Comments
POT				
3 [4]	ST2 – Fine Stamford ware	1	7	Body sherd, sooted externally, c.1050-1200
5 [6] – Tr 2	ST2	1	4	Body sherd sooted externally, c.1050-1200
7 [8] – Tr 2	SX – Saxon ware	1	26	Body sherd, quartz & red ironstone inclusions, abraded, oxidised exterior, reduced internally, late 5 th – 6 th C AD.
7 [8] – Tr 2	LI – Lincoln Shelly ware	1	5	Body sherd, ?11 th – 12 th C.
7 [8] – Tr 2	SX	4	9	Small sandy fragments, with calcareous inclusions ? late 5 th – 6 th C AD
10 [11]	SX	1	10	Body sherd from a small carinated vessel, reduced throughout with patchy oxidation on exterior. Roughly inscribed horizontal lines and some possible cross hatching on the exterior, sandy fabric with ?calcareous inclusions, late 5 th – 6 th C AD.
BONE				
3 [4]	Animal Bone	1		
10 [11]	Animal Bone	10		

Appendix 3 ULAS specification.

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological evaluation (exploratory works)

5, Melton Road, Whissendine, Rutland SK 825 143

P.A. 2001/0327/0; RES2004/0684/MS

For: Mr Colin Underwood

1. Definition and scope of the specification

1.1 This specification is for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching for land at 5, Melton Road, Whissendine, Rutland (SK 825 143) for Mr Colin Underwood (P.A 2001/0327/9; RES2004/0684/MS).

1.2 It addresses the requirements of condition 1 of the approval of reserved matters under the 1990 Town and County Planning Act and follows Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning), para.30.

1.3 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* and the *Guidelines and procedures for archaeological work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicestershire County Council).

2. Background

2.1. The area is currently a garden within which it is proposed to erect a single dwelling. Leicestershire County Council as advisors to the planning authority have requested a programme of archaeological work comprising trial trenching to further elucidate the archaeological potential and, if necessary, formulate a mitigation strategy (brief for archaeological evaluation of land at Dairy Farm, Manton, Rutland (LCC 5.1.2006)

2.2. The application area is within the historic core of Whissendine. Iron Age and medieval remains have been located immediately to the east on Stapleford Road (Browning 2004).

3. Objectives

3.1 The objective of the archaeological work is to ascertain whether any significant archaeological remains are present within the area to be developed. If identified a sufficient sample to establish their extent, date, quality, character, form and potential including environmental data will be recorded.

4 General Methodology

4.1 All work will follow the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Code of Conduct* and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations*.

4.2 Staffing, recording systems, Health and Safety provisions and insurance details are provided.

4.3 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the sites from the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are being met and professional standards are being maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with representatives of Rutland County Council and Leicestershire County Council. The strategy will be reviewed in the light of the quality of the archaeological resource as revealed at different stages of the fieldwork.

4.4 Trial trenching

4.4.1 Trial trenching totalling *c.* 45 sq metres will be undertaken providing a *c.* 5 % sample of the *c.* 875 sq. m. area (Fig. 1). This will comprise one 30m x 1.5m trench. The location may be varied according to any constraints on the availability of the area for trenching.

4.4.2 The topsoil and overburden will be removed in spits by machine with toothless ditching bucket (or similar) under full supervision, until archaeological deposits or undisturbed substrata are encountered.

4.4.3 The location of the trenches will be surveyed using a Total Station Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) linked to a hand held computer.

4.4.4 Any archaeological deposits located will be hand cleaned. Samples of any archaeological deposits located will be hand excavated and planned as appropriate to addressing the aims and objectives of the evaluation.. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans will be tied into the National Grid using an Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM).

4.4.5. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer. Deposits which may provide radiocarbon dating evidence will be sampled.

4.4.6 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.4.7 Any human remains encountered will only be removed under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The developers, Leicestershire County Council and the coroner will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.5 Mitigation Strategy

4.5.1 Depending on the results of the exploratory works and following consultation with the planning authority, the LCC Planning Archaeologist and the developer, a mitigation strategy may need to be formulated.

5 Recording Systems

5.1 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto prepared pro-forma recording sheets.

5.2 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map, enlarged to 1:500 (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at 1:200 (or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated.

5.3 Some record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made on drawing film, related to the OS grid and at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Elevations and sections of individual layers of features should be drawn where possible. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans.

5.4 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include digital, black and white prints and colour transparencies, as appropriate, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation undertaken.

5.5 This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the excavation.

5.6 All site records and finds will be kept securely.

6 Report and Archive

6.1 A report on the fieldwork will be provided following analysis of the records and materials.

6.2. The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in the 'Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage' (UKIC 1990), and Standards in the Museum care of archaeological collections (MGC 1992) and 'Guidelines for the preparation of site archives and assessments for all finds (other than fired clay objects) (RFG/FRG 1993) will be presented to Rutland County Museums within six months of the completion of post-fieldwork analysis. This archive will include all written, disk-based, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

7. Timetable and staffing

7.1. The trial trenching will be undertaken over one day and can commence on 01.07.2006.

8. Health and Safety

8.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and uses the ULAS Safety Manual (2001) as its Health and Safety Manual with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate. An initial risks assessment is included in the appendix. This will be revised as appropriate following the commencement of fieldwork.

9. Insurance

9.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

10. Bibliography

Browning, J, 2003 *An archaeological desk-based assessment for land at Dairy Farm, Manton, Rutland (SK 882 047)* ULAS Report 2005-166

MAP 2, *The management of archaeological projects* 2nd edition English Heritage 1991

MGC 1992, *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission)

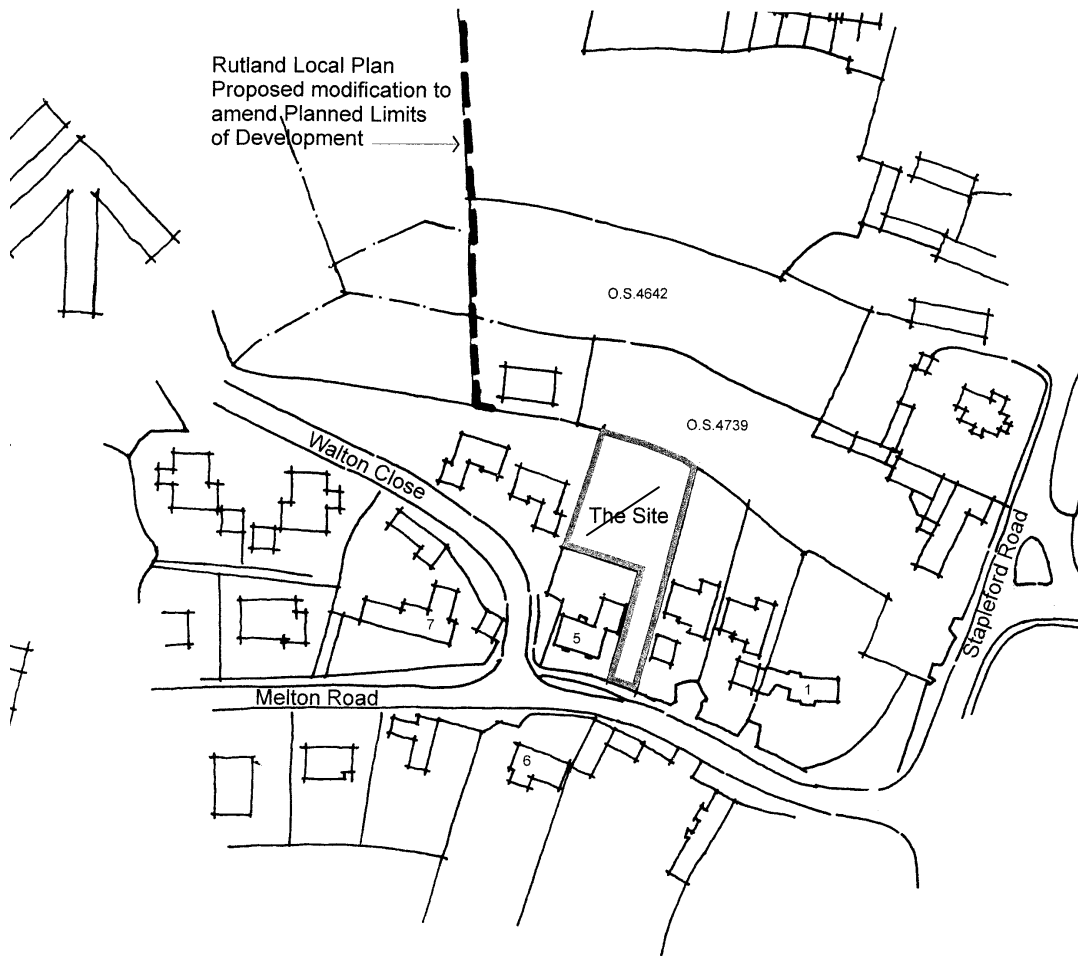
RFG/FRG 1993, *Guidelines for the preparation of site archives* (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700)

SMA 1993, *Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

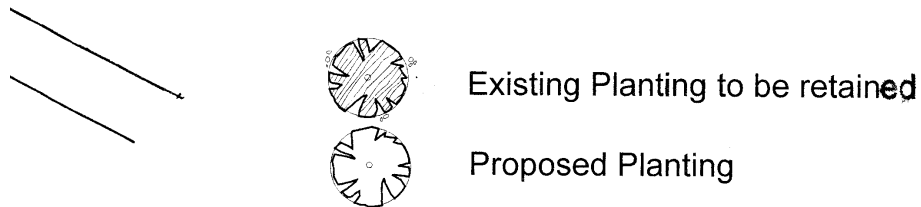
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12.06.2006



Location Plan 1:1250



to the North of 5 Melton Road, Whissendine
with. Drawing Ref :UN.01.01 Sheet 1 of 2. **Inglewood Design**

Figure 1. Location of the proposed development area showing proposed location of trench

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

5, Melton Road, Whissendine, Rutland SK 825 143

P.A. 2004/0684/9

For: Mr Colin Underwood

1. Nature of the work

1.1 This statement is for trial trenching. It will be revised following the commencement of operations when the extent of risks can be assessed in full.

1.2 The work will involve machine-dug trial trenching during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be *c.* 0.2-0.5m. This will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers manual, as revised in 1997, together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines, including the following.

HSE Construction Information Sheet CS8 Safety in excavations.

HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)143 (L): Getting to grips with manual handling.

HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)145 (L): Watch Your back.

CIRIA R97 Trenching practice.

CIRIA TN95 Proprietary Trench Support Systems.

HSE Guidance Note HS(G) 47 Avoiding danger to underground services. HSE Guidance Note GS7 Accidents to children on construction sites

1.3 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation. All work will adhere to the company's health and safety policy.

2 Risks Assessment

2.1 Working within an excavation.

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces deeper than 1.2m. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. A member of staff qualified in First Aid will be present at all times. First aid kit, vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 Working with plant.

Precautions. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. No examination of the area of stripping will take place until machines have vacated area. Observation of machines will be maintained during hand excavation.

2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.

Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Vialls disease or similar.

2.4 Working with chemicals.

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

2.5 Other risks

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.

2.6 No other constraints are recognised over the nature of the soil, water, type of excavation, proximity of structures, sources of vibration and contamination.

12.06.2006