



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation on land off Benefield Road, Glapthorn,
Northamptonshire, PE85BQ**

NGR: TL 01893 90479

Claire Brown



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**For: Mr Andrew Pick
Planning Authority: East Northamptonshire Council
Planning Ref: 18/01496/FUL**

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation for land off Benefield Road, Glapthorn, Northamptonshire, PE85BQ (NGR: TL01893 90479), on behalf Mr Andrew Pick.

Four trenches were excavated to evaluate an area in advance of a proposed residential development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. The archaeological work was carried out from the 27th November -30th November 2018.

The trenches revealed evidence of large sub-rectangular pits and linear features which produced pottery of mainly early to mid-medieval date, as well as a large quantity of iron working slag. Most of the features were recorded in the southern half of the field closest to the road. The evidence suggests some form of industrial activity on or near the site apparently earlier and unrelated to the late medieval/early modern period pottery industry in the village.

The site archive will be held by ULAS under Event Number ENN10927 until storage is available in Northamptonshire.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Andrew Pick to carry out an archaeological field evaluation on land at off Benefield Road, Glapthorn, Northamptonshire, PE85BQ (Fig. 1).

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, this document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation. The fieldwork was undertaken as a condition of planning permission for the construction of two cottage style dwellings on the site (18/01496/FUL; Condition No 16). This is an initial phase of work intended to identify the character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains could be assessed by the Planning Authority and a mitigation strategy developed.

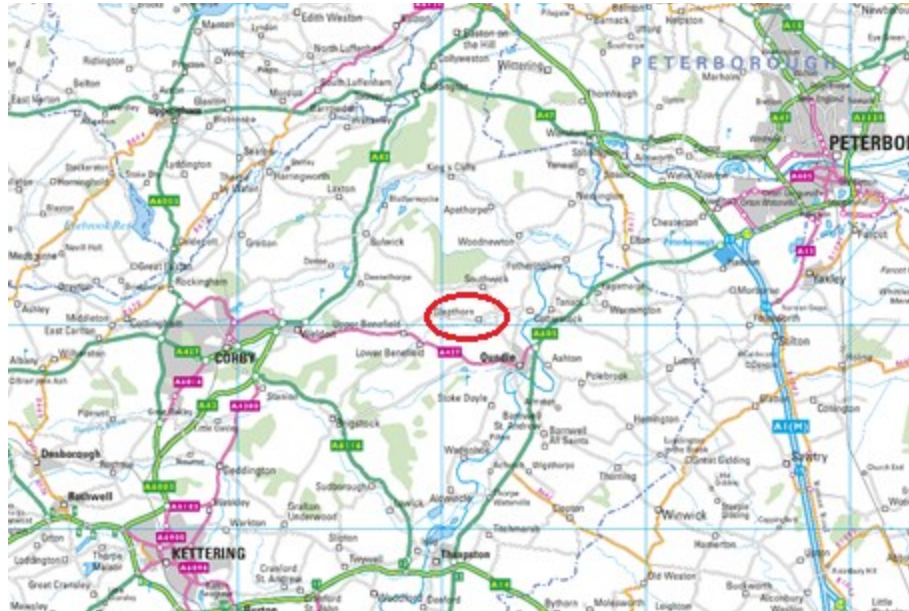


Figure 1: Site location (shown in red). Scale 1: 50 000

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Location and Geology

Glapthorn lies in the north-east of the county, approximately 25km west of Peterborough. The site lies on the east edge of the village, south of Benefield Road (Fig. 2) and is bounded by residential development to the east, allotment gardens to the south-west and residential gardens to the east. The proposed area for development was a small field of scrubby pasture bounded to the west along the road by small trees and overgrown hedging with a steep grassy bank down to the road. The development area is approximately 0.1 ha in size and lies at a height of approximately 47m aOD.

The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology consists of Blisworth Limestone Formation. There are no superficial deposits recorded.

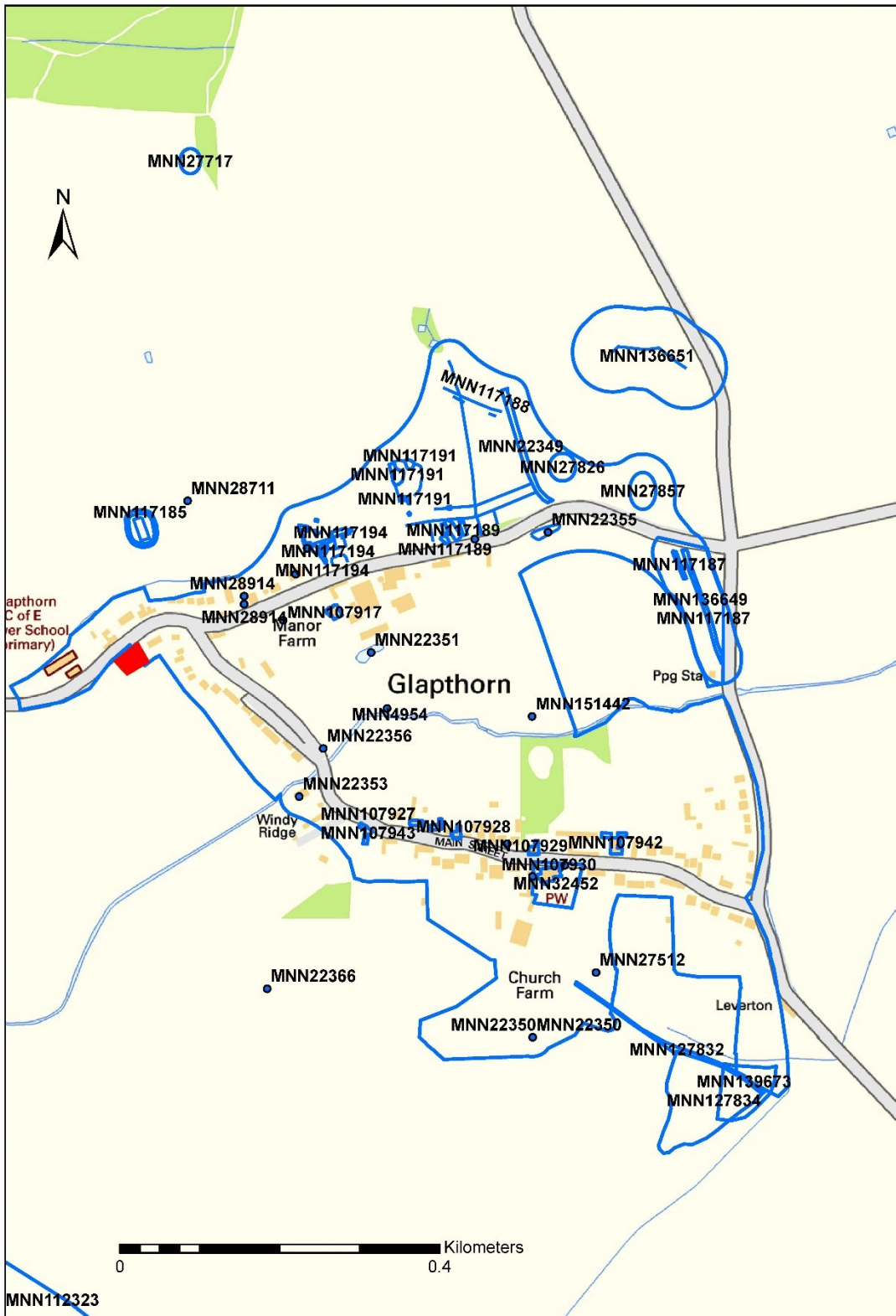


Figure 3: Her plan for Glapthorn showing archaeological sites. Site outlined in red.



Figure 4: HER Plan for Glapthorn showing Listed Buildings.

Archaeological Objectives

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits.
- To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
- To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to assess the impact of the proposed development on cultural heritage and to help formulate a mitigation strategy
- To record any archaeological deposits and produce an archive and report of any results.
- To produce an archive and report any results.

The results of the evaluation will provide information in order for the local planning authority to make informed recommendations and to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy for the proposed development. While the nature, extent and quality of archaeological remains within the areas of investigation for the project were unknown until archaeological work was undertaken, some initial objectives were derived from East Midlands Heritage research agenda (Cooper 2006, Knight *et al.* 2012). The HER suggested that there was potential for archaeological deposits from the Roman late medieval and post-medieval periods. The evaluation had the potential to contribute to the following research aims: accessible online.

- Research Objectives 5.4, Roman rural settlement patterns and landscapes and 5.5 , the Roman agricultural economy.
- Research Objectives 7.2 Medieval rural settlement development, 7.6 Medieval Industry and trade and 7.7 Medieval agrarian landscape and food-producing economy.
- Research Objective 8.3 Post medieval agricultural landscapes and the food producing economy, 8.4 Rural settlement patterns and building traditions.

Methodology

All work followed the Written Scheme of Investigation (ULAS 2018) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) Code of Conduct (2014a) and adhered to their Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2014b). An event number was obtained prior to commencement of the project and used to identify all records and artefacts. The work was undertaken in November 2018 and followed a strategy for the work devised by ULAS, which was set out in Written Scheme of Investigation for Land east of allotments, Benefield Road, Glapthorn, Northamptonshire, PE85BQ (LaCombe, 2018).

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) Code of Conduct and adhered to their Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2014).

Prior to any machining general photographs of the site areas were taken. The programme of work consisted of the excavation of two trenches measuring 10m x 1.6m and two trenches measuring 15m x 1.6m which were distributed to target the areas that will be most disturbed by building works (Fig. 5).

Excavation was carried out with a machine appropriate for the work (JCB 3CX fitted with 1.6m flat bladed ditching bucket) to expose the underlying strata. The machine did not track over

any surfaces until the archaeologist had inspected and cleared the area. Topsoil and overburden were removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision. The trenches were excavated down to the top of natural undisturbed ground. All excavation by machine was undertaken with a view to avoid damage to archaeological deposits or features which appear worthy of preservation *in situ* or more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation.

The ULAS recording manual was used as a guide for all recording. Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed were entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. Relative spot heights were taken as appropriate. At least one longitudinal face of each trench was recorded. Trench locations were recorded by an appropriate method and then be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The trenches were then backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation.

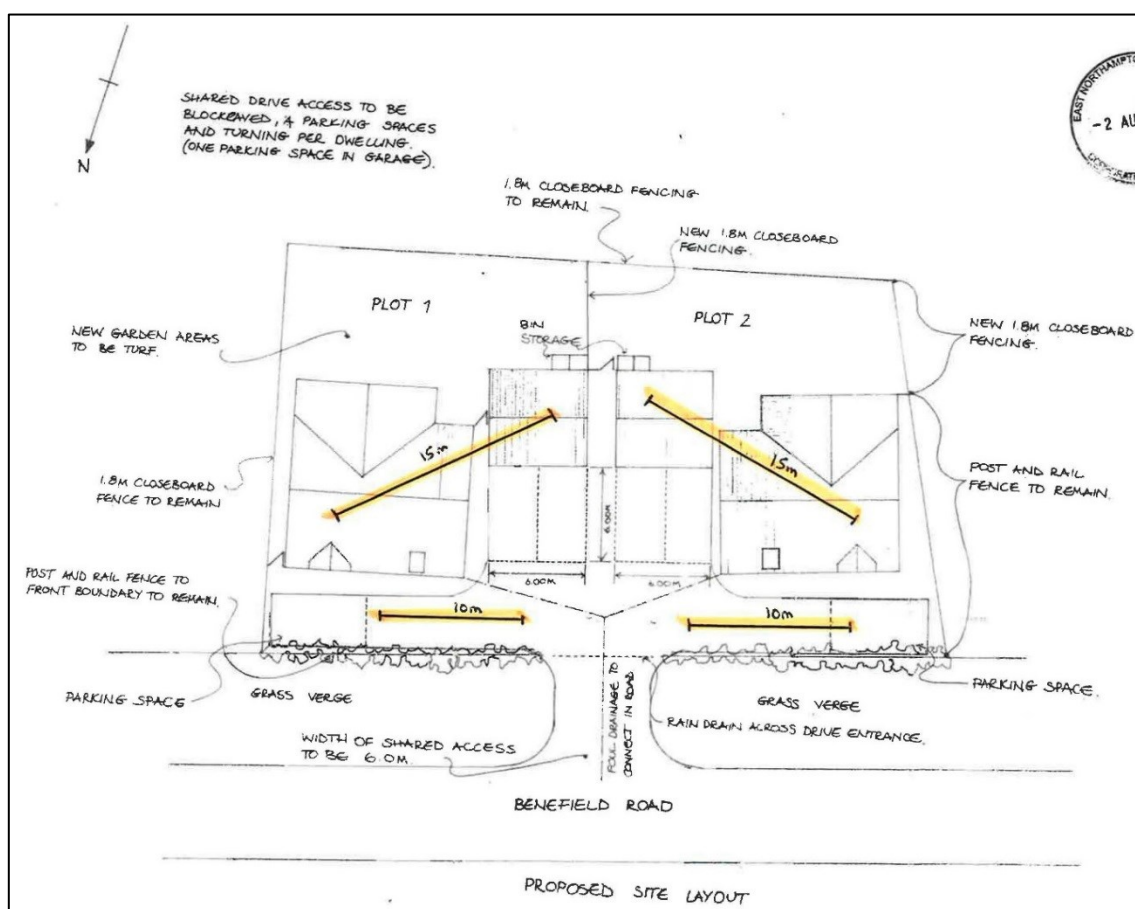


Figure 5: Proposed trench plan overlain on the proposed development. From the WSI - plan provided by client. (Note - North arrow slightly misaligned).

Results

The four trenches were excavated between 27th and 29th November 2018 (Figs 6-7). The weather was variable and conditions for the excavation were reasonable and occasionally wet. Trench locations were measured in to target the location of the buildings.

The topsoil was consistent across the site and consisted of a dark-brown, silty-clay which contained <10% fragments of limestone, sandstone, chalk and ironstone. The subsoil was also consistent across the site and consisted of a light yellow-brown silty sandy clay, also containing <10% fragments of limestone, sandstone, chalk and ironstone. The natural substratum was a creamy yellow sandy clay with occasional patches of layered, split sandstone.

Table 1: Trench Summary

Trench	Orientation	Min. Depth	Max. Depth	Length of Trench	Comments
1	NNE-SSW	0.40m	0.65m	10.00m	Three large rectilinear features, [103], [105] and [107]
2	NNW-SSE	0.45m	0.60m	15.00m	Gully terminus [205], post hole [203] and small pit [207]
3	NNE-SSW	0.35m	0.60m	10.00m	Two probable large pits, [303], and [307] and one small pit [305]
4	NE - SW	0.40m	0.47m	15.00m	One large rectilinear pit feature [405] and a smaller possible pit [403]

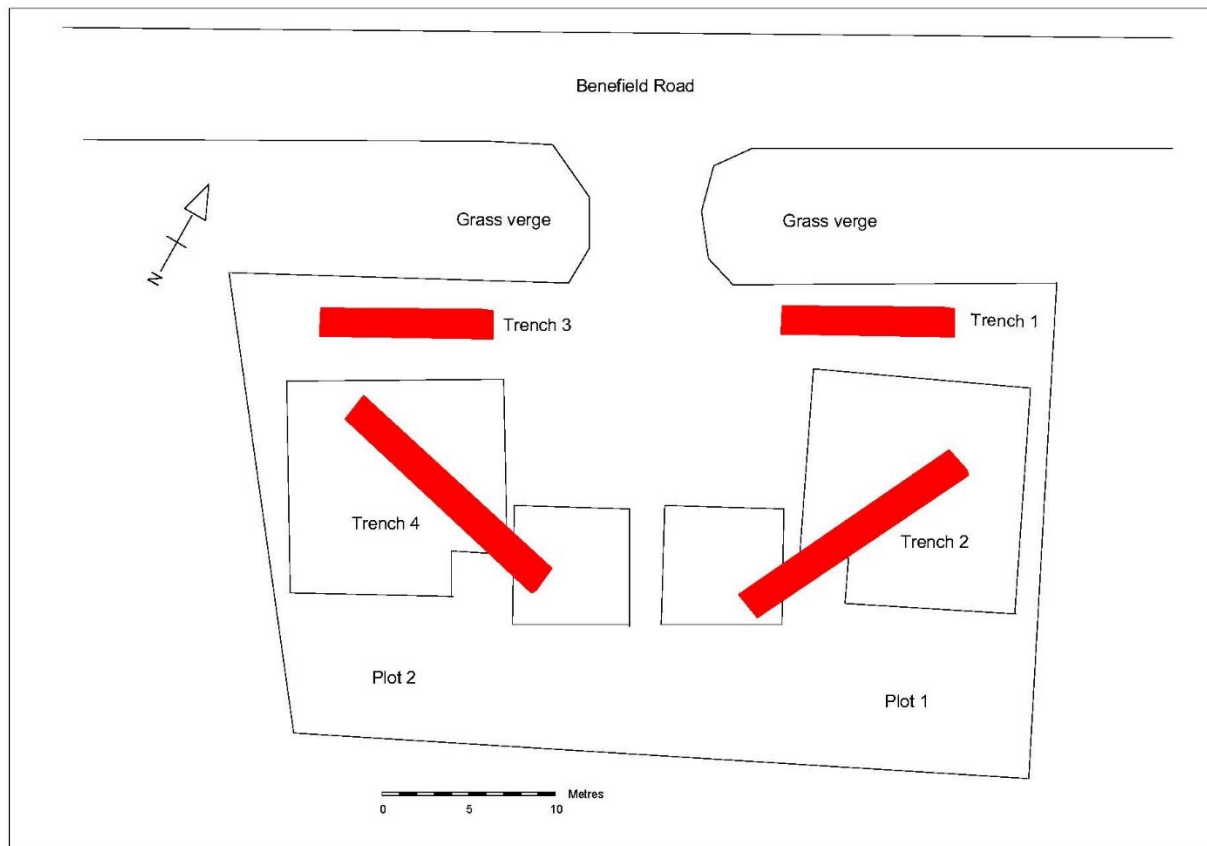


Figure 6: Final location of trenches

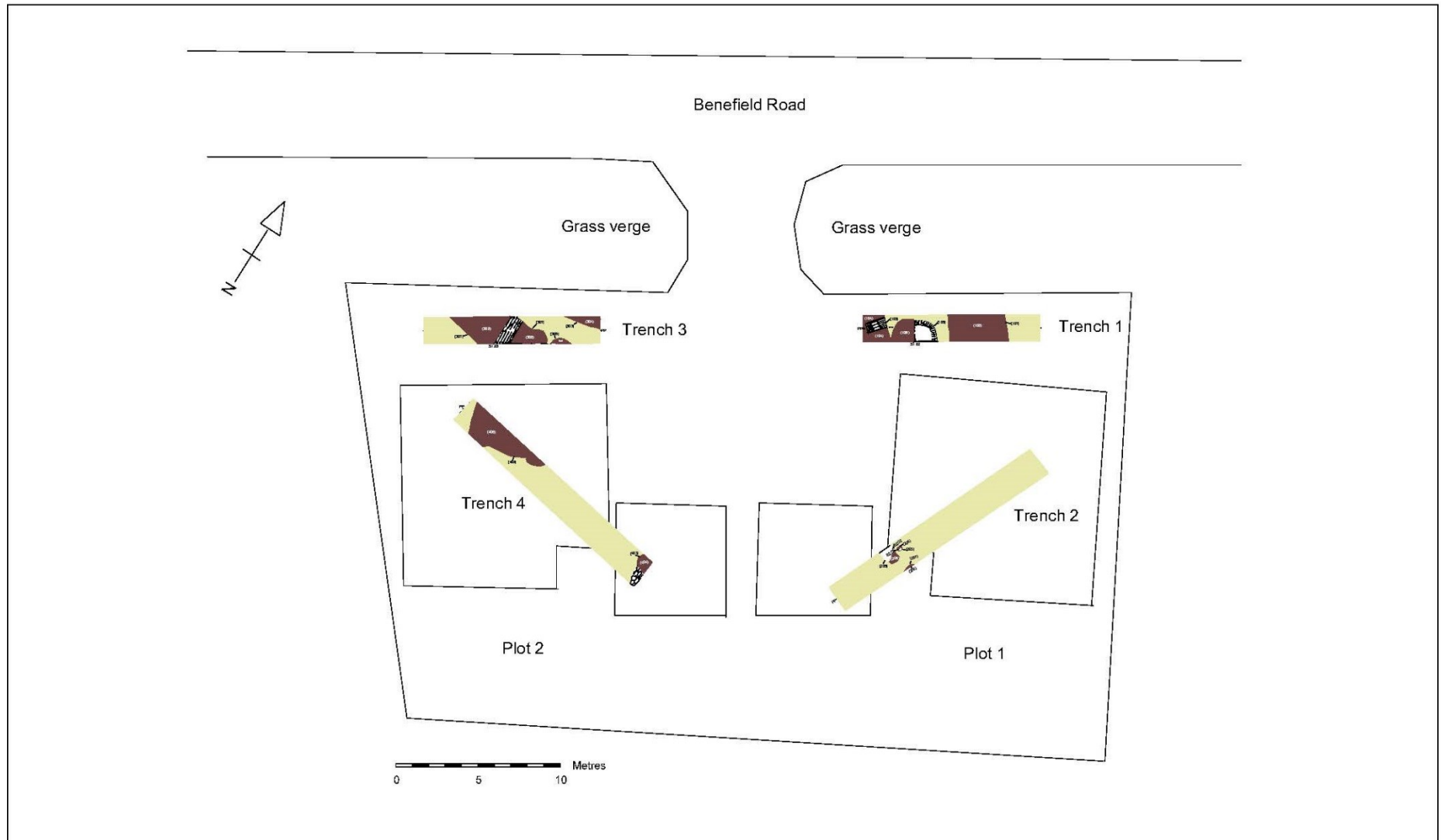


Figure 7: Trench plans showing features

Trench 1

Trench 1 ran parallel to the Benefield Road along the western margin of the site (Fig. 6). It was orientated roughly east – west and was the southernmost trench on the proposed development site lying west of the existing pond. The natural substratum was observed at depths between 0.40m and 0.6m. Within the trench three large features were recorded clearly visible against the yellow clay natural substratum (Figs 8-9). The fill of each was a rich dark brown silty clay.

Feature [103] lay at the southern end of the trench continuing beneath the section. A slot was opened into it, 1.20m wide and 0.60m deep; however it was not fully excavated due to health and safety concerns (Figs 9-10). The fill comprised dark brown silty clay with small and medium sized limestone stones and was disturbed by roots of vegetation and nearby trees. It contained mainly early to mid-medieval pottery, the majority of which was Lyveden-Stanion ware, 1150-1400, and a few sherds of later medieval/early modern period pottery 1450-1650. It also contained iron tap slag.



Figure 8: Trench 1, Post-excavation, looking north-east. Scale 1m

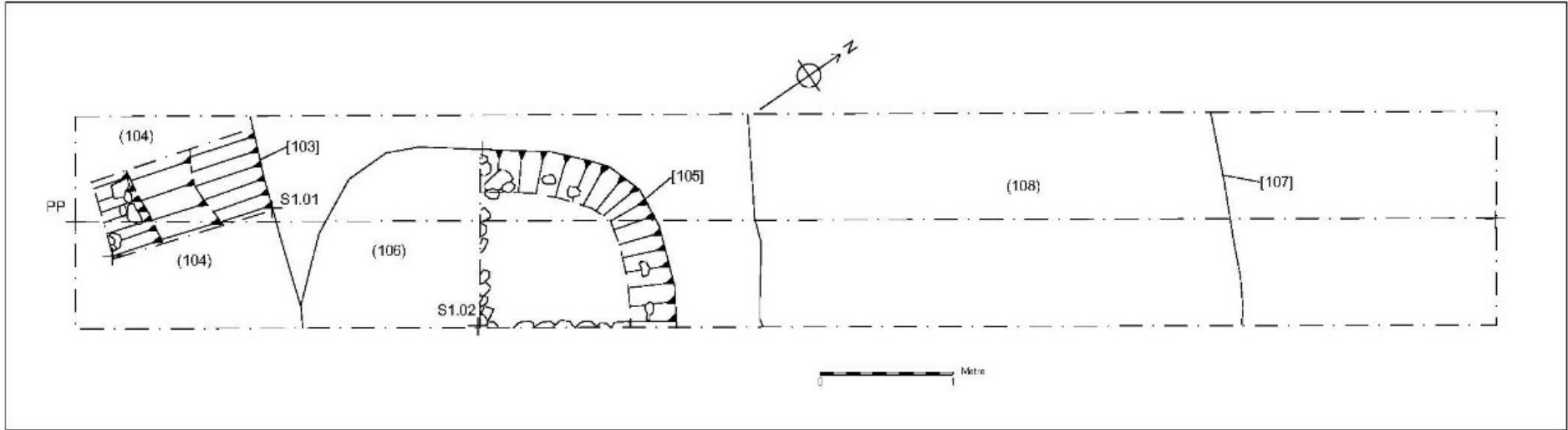


Figure 9: Plan of features in Trench 1



Figure 10: Pit feature [103] running under the trench edge, partially excavated, west-facing section, scale 1m

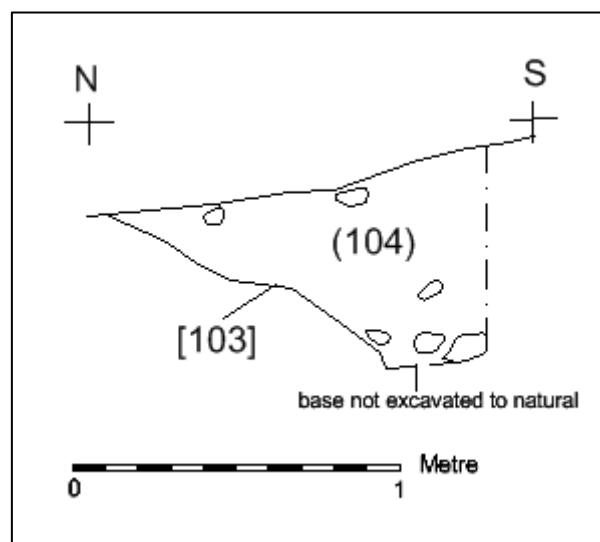


Figure 11: West-facing section of pit [103]

Also in Trench 1 was a sub-rectangular pit [105]. It was 2.70m wide, more than 1m in length and the quarter section that was excavated was 1.40m wide and 0.20m depth (Figs 12-13). It also contained mainly Lyveden-Stanion ware, 1150-1400 and a small amount of Iron tap slag, in a mid-brown fill that came down onto a layer of loose limestone before reaching bedrock.



Figure 12: West-facing quarter section of pit [105], showing bedrock at the base. Scale 1m

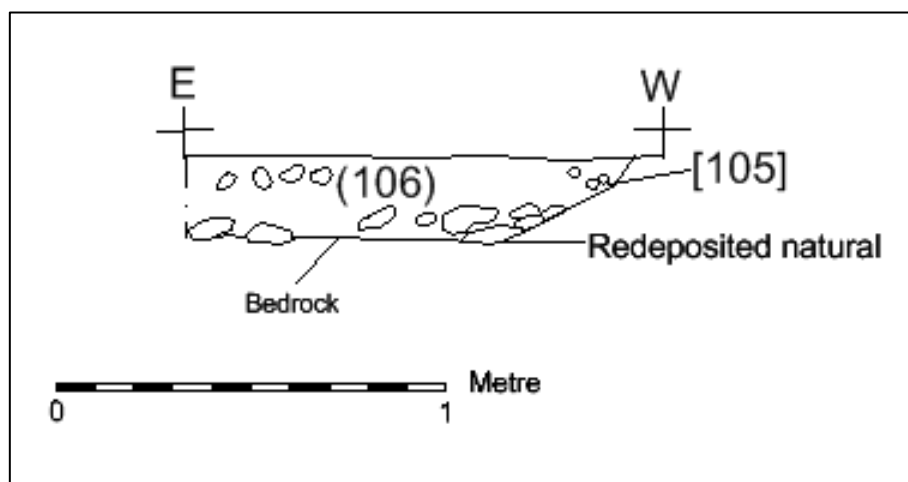


Figure 13: North facing quarter section of pit [105]

The third feature in Trench 1 was a 3.20m wide linear feature [107] running approximately east-west across the northern end of the trench, possibly another rectilinear pit. It was unexcavated but the fill was mid brown and surface finds also included Lyveden-Stanion ware and tap slag (Fig. 7).

Trench 2

Trench 2 was orientated north-east to south-west across the proposed house and garage in plot 1 (Fig. 5) and produced evidence of three features, a posthole, [203], a gully terminus [205] and the edge of a probable pit [207] (Figs 14-15). The natural was a yellow sandy clay and the fill of the features was uniformly mid-brown silty sandy clay containing small fragments of chalk and limestone with occasional degraded ironstone.



Figure 14: Trench 2, looking north-west.

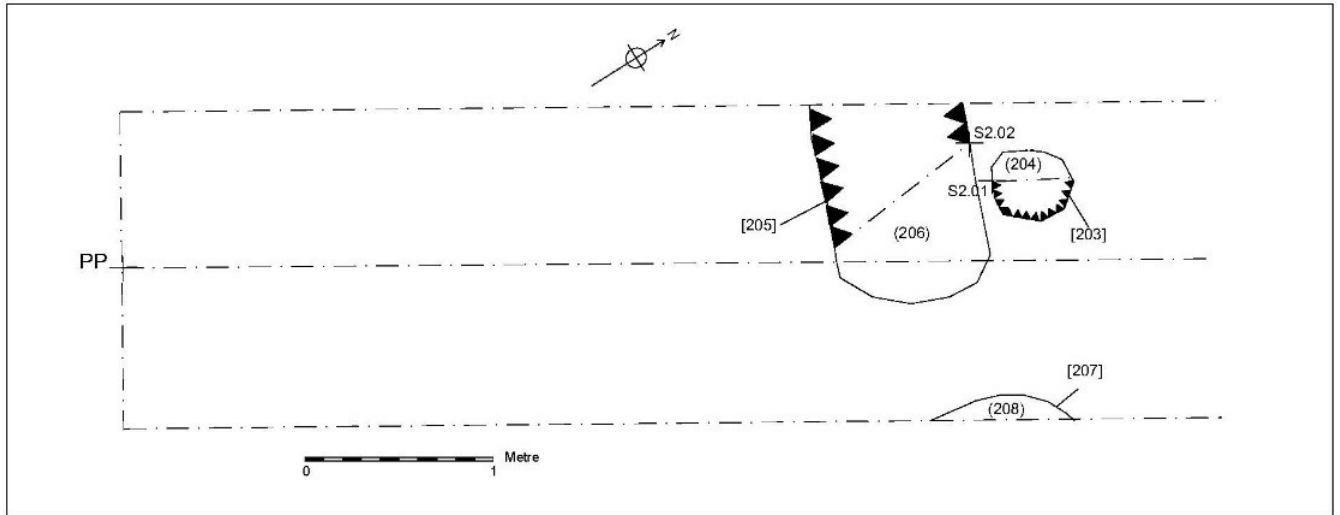


Figure 15: Features in Trench 2. Scale 1m

The post hole [203] was very shallow (0.10m deep), 0.50m in diameter and contained a few pieces of iron tap slag (Figs 16-17)



Figure 16: East-facing section of post hole [203] in Trench 2. Scale 0.5m

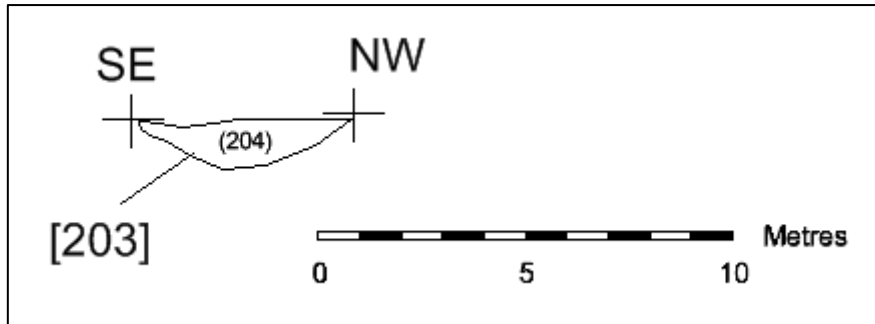


Figure 17: East-facing section of post hole [203]

The adjacent gully terminus [205] was similarly shallow (0.10m deep) and 0.78m wide (Figs 16-17). The fill contained one abraded fragment of Iron-Age shelly ware pottery and a few sherds of Lyveden-Stanion ware as well as iron tap slag. Both the gully terminus and the post hole may have been truncated by the digging of the trench, as they were subsequently visible in section (Figs 18-19).



Figure 18: South-facing section of gully terminus [205]

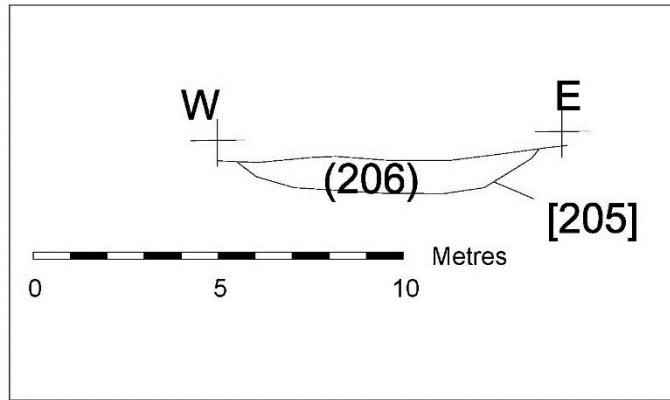


Figure 19: South-facing section of gully terminus [205]



Figure 20: East-facing trench section showing post hole [203] and gully terminus [205] and the probable depth of the original gully. Scale 0.5m

The third feature, unexcavated, in Trench 2 was the edge of a probable pit in the eastern edge of the trench, opposite to [203] and [205] (Fig. 18).

Trench 3

Trench 3 was orientated, like Trench 1, parallel to the road and running along the western edge of the site (Fig. 5). The natural was more sandy here than elsewhere on the site, and there were well dispersed small to medium lumps of limestone in the natural and considerable rooting activity from the nearby hedges and trees. The fills of the features were uniformly mid-brown, friable silty sandy clay, similar to that in Trenches 1 and 2 although in addition it was very rich in iron tap slag.

There were three features in the trench: the edge of a probable rectilinear pit [303], a smaller pit – 1.30m in diameter, (305) – both continuing outside the trench and unexcavated, and a larger linear feature/rectilinear pit (307) 3.55m in width (Figs 21-22).



Figure 21: Trench 3, looking north/north-east. Scale 1m

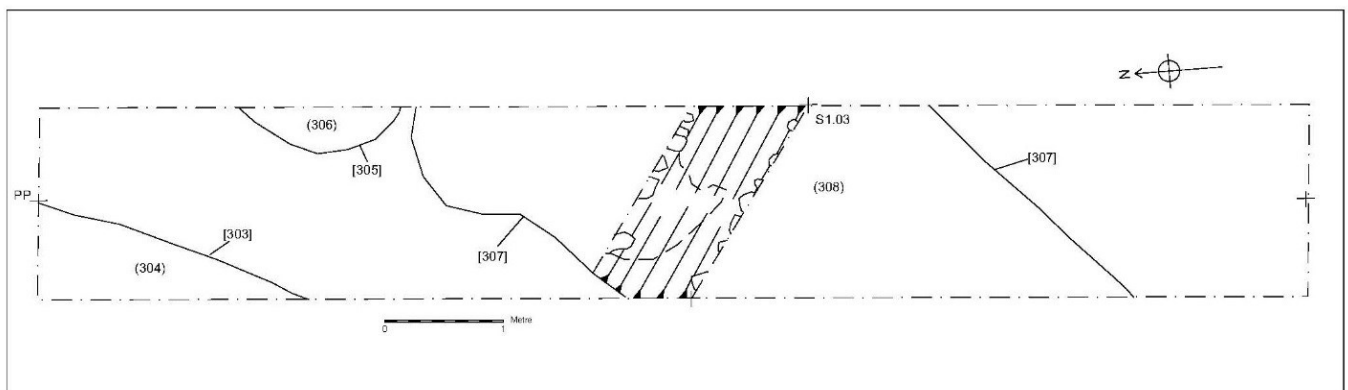


Figure 22: Plan of features in Trench 3

A 0.85m slot was excavated from pit (307) across its width within the trench, although it was wider than the trench itself on its west side (Figs 23 – 24). It was 0.50m deep at its deepest point and contained medieval pot with a date range of 1150-1550 as well as >10% limestone in loose layers, one just above the base and one 0.30m above that. It also contained very large amounts of iron tap slag (11,160g) and had a beaten/trampled clay floor surface, broken in places (Fig. 25)



Figure 23: Excavated slot taken out of pit [307] showing the beaten earth floor surface to the right of the picture. Scale 1m

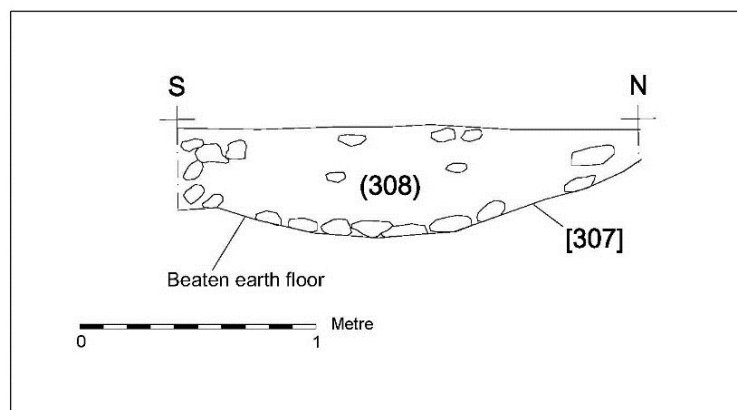


Figure 24: Section of pit [307]



Figure 25: Trench section showing pit [307] with stone layers at base of pit and 0.30m from base of pit.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was a 15m trench orientated east to west across the proposed footprint of the house and garage in plot 2 (Fig. 5). The natural substrata in Trench 4 was a light yellow clay and the two features uncovered contained a limestone rich mid-brown silty sandy clay fill (Figs 26-27). The largest feature was a rectilinear pit [405], over 2m in width and more than 4m in length which was not excavated but which had a lambs jaw and assorted bones lying in its upper surface as well as iron tap slag. The second possible feature, not excavated, was an area of fill approximately 1m adjacent to an area of naturally occurring sandstone/limestone slabs [403]. It had indeterminate edges but was possible the corner of another pit, and the surface fill contained a Stamford ware base of early medieval date, 1100-1200AD.



Figure 26: Trench 4, Post-excitation, looking east. Scale 1m

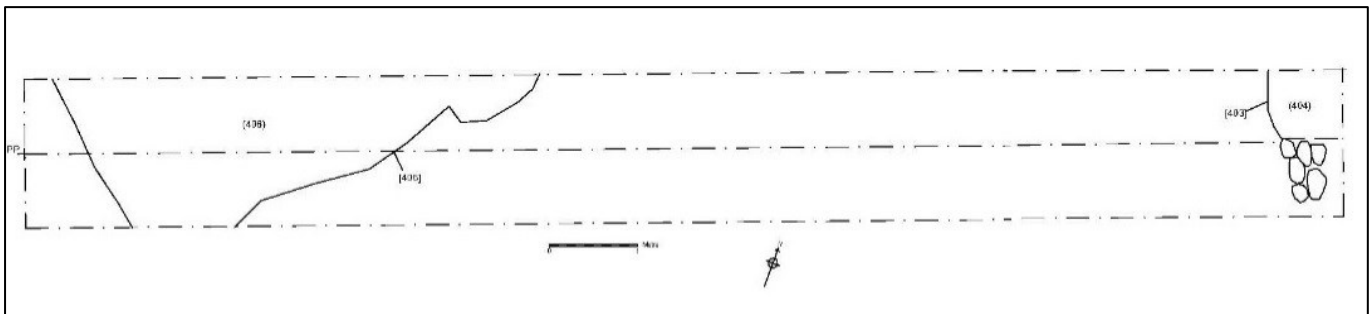


Figure 27: Plan of Trench 4. Scale 1m

The Ceramic Finds - Deborah Sawday

The assemblage was made up of 64 pottery sherds, weighing 480grams, two brick fragments, weighing 118 grams and part of a clay tobacco pipe stem. One of the sherds, weighing five grams in a shelly ware fabric, and evidently residual in context 206, is thought to be later Iron Age or Roman (N. Cooper, pers. com). The remaining sherds are medieval or early post medieval in date.

Condition

The medieval and later pottery was abraded and fragmented, with few joining sherds and an average weight of only 7.5 grams.

Methodology

The pottery was examined under an x20 binocular microscope and catalogued with reference to current guidelines (MPRG 1998, MPRG 2016) and the Northampton fabric series (Blinkhorn 1996). Vessel forms and co-joining sherds have been noted; the results are shown below (tables 1 and 2).

Table 2: The pottery site totals by fabric number and weight (grams).

Fabric	No.	Gr.	Approximate Date range
Late Iron Age/early Roman			
Shell Tempered	1	5	
Site Total	1	5	
Medieval			
F205 – Stamford ware	1	19	c.1100-1200+
F330 – Coarse Shelly ware	4	19	c.1100-c.1400
F319 – Stanion Lyveden A ware	48	290	c.1150-1400
F320 – Lyveden/Stanion B ware	6	64	c.1250-1400
F401 – Glapthorn ware	2	56	c.1450-c.1550
F346 – Bourne (fabric D)	2	27	c.1450-1650
Site Total	63	475	

Discussion

The sherds of Stamford ware in context 404, dated from the 12th or early to mid-13th century. In the absence of later wares in contexts 106, 108, and 206, the Stanion Lyveden A wares could also date from the mid-12th or 13th centuries. The Bourne D ware in contexts 104 and 308 suggests a terminal date from the mid to later 15th to the 16th if not the 17th century. Both contexts also produced post medieval or modern finds; the former a clay tobacco pipe stem and the latter two fragments of brick.

Conclusion

The medieval and later assemblage is of interest as it is close to the site of a late 15th century medieval pottery and tile kiln and workshop at Leacroft, in association with a quarry dating to the 13th - 14th centuries and a, malting oven of slightly later date. Another late 15th century pottery and tile kiln and outbuildings have also been recorded on Gypsy Lane to the east. The pottery confirms that further activity took place in the locality during the medieval period and later, but the small size of the assemblage means that the dating evidence must be treated with some caution.

The medieval and early post-medieval pottery fabrics are typical of the locality; Stamford, Lyveden Stanion and Bourne were major centres of pottery production at this time. The presence of two sherds of sandy Glapthorn ware is also of some interest, neither sherd was heavily reduced, and may be early in the sequence, which the author has noted from her own reference collection, also produced reduced sandy wares in the Midland Purple tradition.

Table 3: The pottery and miscellaneous finds by context, fabric, number and weight (grams).

Context	Fabric/ware	No	Gr	Comments
POT				
104	F330	4	19	Misc. body/base
104	F319	28	156	Base, body and jar rim fragments
104	F320	4	22	Two glazed one with white clay strip
104	F401	1	20	Flat base fragment, oxidised surfaces, grey core
104	F346	2	56	Join, sooted externally and internally.
106	F319	12	71	2 joining sherds from an internally thumbbed jar rim, one externally thumbbed bowl rim, plus misc.
108	F319	2	5	Body
206	Shell tempered	1	5	Abraded body
206	F319	3	34	Thumbbed bowl rim (McCarthy & Brooks 1988, fig.172.1032), misc. body.
308	F319	3	24	Bowl and ?jar rim frags, plus misc.
308	F320	2	42	Twisted and glazed jug rod handle, body with white clay and glaze decoration.
308	F401	1	7	Body
404	F205	1	19	Convex base, lead glazed externally.
MISC				
104	Earthenware	2	118	?brick – post medieval/modern
308	China clay	1		Tobacco pipe stem – post medieval/modern

The Industrial Residues – *Heidi Addison*

The evaluation produced a total of 12,415g of iron tap slag using the bloomery process to extract iron from ore. The residues were collected from five contexts (104), (106), (108), (206) and (308). The most significant quantity (11,160g) was retrieved from pit [307] (308), which also contained pottery and ceramics ranging from the twelfth century to the modern period.

Description of smelting evidence

All of the material has an identical composition, density and morphology, being dark grey to black, heavy and having a ‘lava flow’ appearance on the upper surfaces, signifying its fluid state (Historic England 2015, 23). Once released from the furnace tapping arch, the slag solidifies quickly before the ripples unfold. The tapping arch facility was used during the Iron Age, though more extensively by the Romans (Paynter 2007, 206). The blast furnace gradually replaced the bloomery process and given a sixteenth century cut-off date, though it did continue in some places for longer (Historic England 2015, 17).

Statement of potential

The evaluation has yielded significant evidence for iron smelting. Further fieldwork is likely to recover further evidence for this activity and produce an assemblage with greater research value.

Conclusion

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 27th-30th November 2018 by University of Leicester Archaeological services on behalf of Andrew Pick in advance of a proposed residential development. Four trenches were excavated which revealed a number of large features, and a few smaller pit/post hole features containing mainly early to mid- medieval pottery and iron tap slag. The slag was particularly concentrated in the fill of pit [307] which in addition had a stamped earth floor surface suggesting that it could be a possible structure. The area was clearly in use during the medieval period but although there was a large amount of iron slag in the fills of the excavated features it was not clear if it was contemporaneous with the pottery, since there was no burning or heat affected material evident on the site, and it may be material brought in to fill in the pits from a metal working area nearby.

As noted above, the bloomery metal working process was in operation from the Iron Age until the 16th century and dating the iron slag in the absence of in-situ burning and other iron smelting related evidence is difficult. The pottery found is largely locally made but there is little 'Glaphorn Ware' for which the village was known in the 16th century. Instead the pottery is earlier, suggesting that if the pits were related to clay extraction it was for an earlier pottery/tile industry outside the village rather than the local 16th century industry.

Archive

The site archive will be held by ULAS until it can be deposited with Northamptonshire Museums Service under Event No. ENN109272.

The archive contains:

- 1 x A4 report
- 1 x Trench summary index sheet
- 4 x Trench recording sheets
- 1 x Digital photo index
- 1 x Digital photo sheet

Publication

University of Leicester Archaeological Services supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. The online OASIS form (Appendix 1) shall be completed detailing the results of the evaluation and once the report has become a public document following its incorporation into the Historic Environment Record it shall be placed on the website.

Acknowledgements

The project was managed by John Thomas, the fieldwork was directed by Claire Brown. Thanks go to Titch Robertson, for operating the machinery.

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Appendix 1: OASIS data entry

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1- 36629		
	Project Name	An Archaeological Evaluation on land off Benefield Road, Glapthorn, Northamptonshire		
	Start/end dates of field work	Start: 27 th -30 th November 2018		
	Previous/Future Work	No/ Not known		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Pasture		
	Monument Type/Period	Medieval industry		
	Significant Finds/Period	Pottery Slag		
	Development Type	Residential		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
	Planning Ref.	18/01496/FUL		
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	Land off Benefield Road, Glapthorn, Northamptonshire. PE85BQ		
	Study Area	0.1 Hectares		
	Site Coordinates	TL 01893 90479		
	Depth	Min: 47aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	J. Thomas		
	Project Director/Supervisor	C Brown		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Andrew Pick		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient		Northamptonshire museums service	Northamptonshire museums service
	ID (Acc. No.)	ENN109272	ENN109272	ENN109272
	Contents	Medieval pottery Iron Tap Slag		Trench recording sheets, photo record sheets, general notes, unpublished report
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	An Archaeological Evaluation on land off Benefield Road, Glapthorn, Northamptonshire		
	Author	C.Brown		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2018-204		
	Date	2018		
	Publisher/Place	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	Description	Developer Report A4 pdf		



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