



**An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at De Verdon Road, Lutterworth,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SP 53338 84236

Nathan Flavell



**ULAS Report No 2019-146
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Site Name: De Verdon Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire

Grid Ref: SP 53338 84236

Author: Nathan Flavell

Client: ECUS / Willmott Dixon

Planning Ref. HPK/2014/0665

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OASIS RECORD

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1- 371993		
	Project Name	De Verdon Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire		
	Start/end dates	23-09-2019 – 08-10-2019		
	Previous/Future Work	DBA (ECUS)		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Former allotments		
	Monument Type/Period	Neolithic, Roman, post-medieval		
	Significant Finds/Period	Pottery, flint, bone		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
	Planning Ref.	HPK/2014/0665		
PROJECT LOCATION	County	Leicestershire		
	Site Address/Postcode	De Verdon Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire LE17 4QP		
	Study Area	2.22 ha		
	Site Coordinates	SP 53338 84236		
	Height OD	119-121m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Harborough District Council		
	Project Design Originator	ECUS		
	Project Manager	John Thomas		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Nathan Flavell		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	ECUS & Willmott Dixon		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	LCC Museum service	LCC Museum service	LCC Museum service
	ID (Acc. No.)	X.A84.2019	X.A84.2019	X.A84.2019
	Contents	Pottery, flint, environmental remains	Photographs	Report/ Photo Record/ Trench Sheets, Context sheets/ Drawing records
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	Description	Developer Report A4 pdf		
	Title	An archaeological field evaluation on land off De Verdon Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire		
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An Archaeological Field Evaluation on Land off De Verdon Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire

Nathan Flavell

Summary

This document is a fieldwork report for an archaeological trial trench evaluation, carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at the former allotment off De Verdon Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 53338 84236) in advance of the construction of a residential development.

A total of seventeen trenches were excavated across the site revealing a Neolithic pit, three features with Roman pottery, a series of undated linear features, and furrows.

The archive for the site will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number X.A84.2019.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by ECUS Ltd for Willmott Dixon to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on former allotments off De Verdon Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 53338 84236; Fig. 1). The work was carried out from 23rd September to 8th October 2019.

The work was carried out to provide preliminary indications of the character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority. Planning permission is being sought for the proposed residential development of the site. The Planning Archaeologist as advisor to Harborough District Council has requested an archaeological field evaluation (HPK/2014/0665) to inform the planning decision. This is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, MHCLG 2018).

Location and Geology

The site is situated off De Verdon Road within the south-western suburbs of Lutterworth, approximately 620 m from the historic core of the town. The site encompasses an irregular shaped area of land measuring to approximately 2.22 ha. The land is currently occupied by allotment gardens which were created in the 1980s. The site is bound by Coventry Road to the north and residential buildings to the west, east and south. The land is relatively flat sitting at a height of 121 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) with a gentle decline to a height of 119 m aOD towards the south of the site.

The British Geological Survey website indicates the bedrock geology has been recorded as mudstone, siltstone, limestone and sandstone from the Lias Group. Superficial deposits are recorded as glacial sand and gravel.

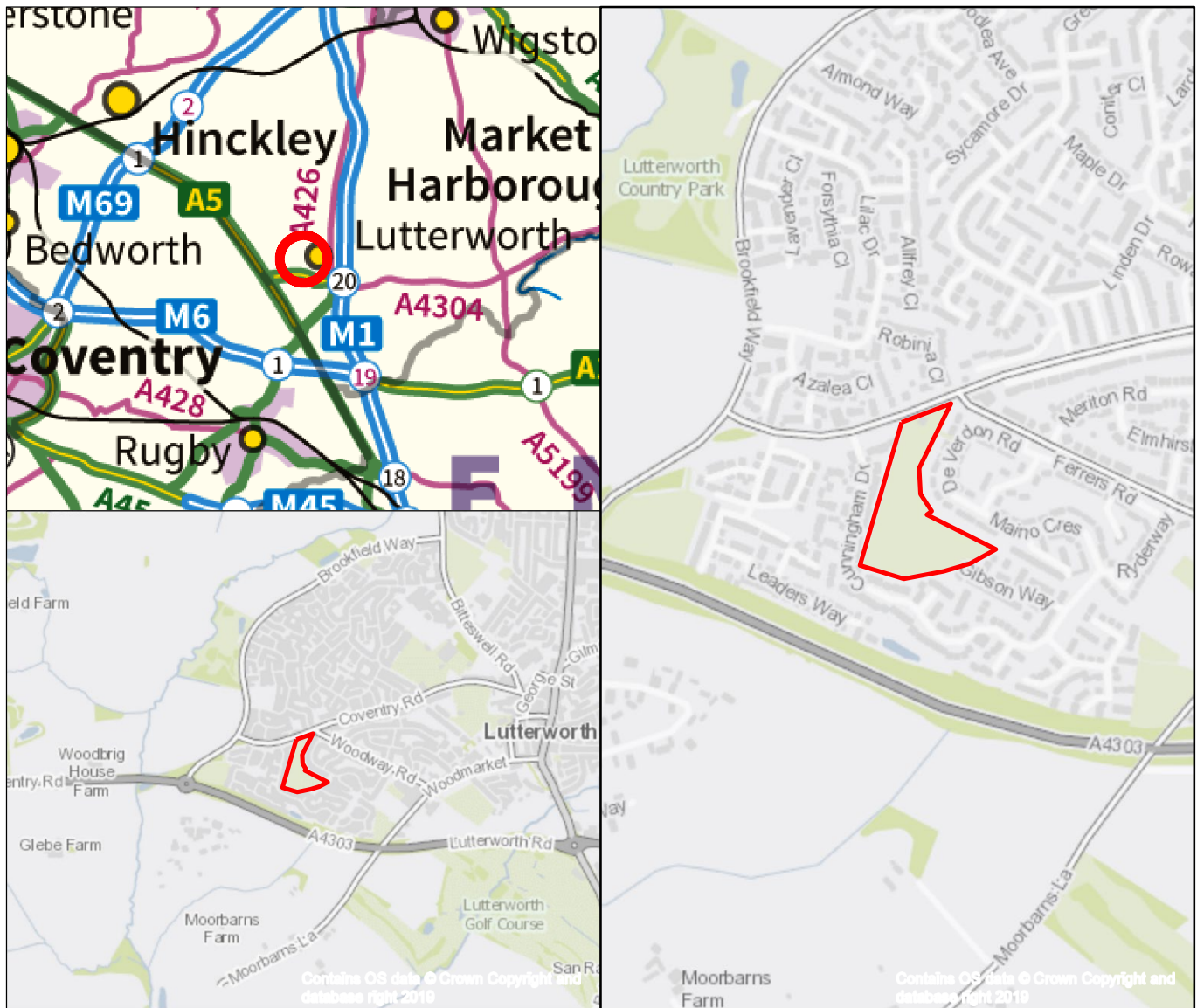


Figure 1: Site Location (provided by client)
Contains Ordnance Survey Data
Contains OS data © Crown copyright [and database right] 2019

Historical and Archaeological Background

The following summary is based upon a desk-based assessment of the site undertaken by Ecus Ltd in August 2019.

Prehistoric

The LHER returned several records of prehistoric activity within the 750 m study area, many of which are situated within a close proximity to the site. A fieldwalking survey was conducted across two adjacent fields approximately 12 m (**ELE4028**) and 180 m (**ELE4031**) north of the site. The investigation resulted in the identification of prehistoric flint comprising blades, cores, flakes, burnt flint, scrapers and a barbed and tanged arrowhead. There are also records of flint having been discovered, scattered across the study area, with dates estimated to range between the early Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. Further evidence for prehistoric activity within the study area includes a cropmark which has been interpreted as a possible Bronze Age barrow.

Roman

Following a geophysical survey (**ELE8425**) and trial trenching (**ELE7778**), an excavation (**ELE9186**) was conducted on Leader's Farm approximately 100 m west of the site boundary. The previous evaluation had identified two areas containing significant archaeological evidence dating to the Iron Age and Romano-British periods, comprising a probable roundhouse, enclosures and ditches. The subsequent excavation revealed two significant phases of occupation, the first dating to the Iron Age. The second significant phase of occupation identified by the excavation dated to the Romano-British period.

To the south of the identified Roman field system and Iron Age settlement, was a second field system with the traces of a timber structure, thought to be related to either the Roman or Iron Age settlement (**ELE9186**).

The surrounding landscape also contained two further possible Romano-British sites. The first site was identified during field walking which recovered a rim of mortarium (Roman container for grinding) and 'several lumps of opus signinum' (Roman building material) indicating the presence of a possible villa site. The second site was identified as a possible domestic structure with an associated enclosure (Morris 2014).

Within the study area, Romano-British pottery has been found in three areas; to the north of the identified field system and within the extent of the former medieval historic core of the settlement. One of these locations also discovered a single sherd of Iron Age pottery. There has also been several records of Romano-British material recorded by the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS 2019).

Medieval

The settlement of Lutterworth is considered to have started as a Saxon settlement. The Lutterworth Conservation Area is largely based upon this original medieval settlement core. Evidence for medieval occupation in the medieval town came from archaeological investigation in 2016 at Wyclif House on St Mary's Road which recovered 19 sherds of medieval pottery amongst a mixture of medieval and post-medieval material.

The site is situated approximately 700 m west of the medieval settlement core. During the medieval period, the area to the west of the settlement was used for agricultural purposes. Evidence of ridge and furrow has been identified in aerial photography, both adjacent to the

housing estate on Cunningham Drive, approximately 100 m south-east of the site and in proximity to a sub-rectangular enclosure near the western boundary of the study area.

Evidence of rural medieval activity within the study area came from test pitting at a recreation ground on Coventry Road in 2015 which recorded 14 sherds of medieval pottery amongst medieval and post-medieval activity. Further evidence was returned in the form of an isolated medieval tile.

Post-medieval-modern

At the time of the 1790 Enclosure Map the site is shown as two fields. By the nineteenth century expansion and redevelopment of areas occurs in the medieval core of the settlement. This redevelopment saw the construction of houses such as Lutterworth Hall (Grade II Listed, **NHLE: 1292775**), Hythe House (Grade II Listed, **NHLE: 1209177**) and 70 Woodmarket (Grade II Listed, **NHLE: 1211278**).

Archaeological test pitting at St Mary's Road returned evidence of the post-medieval and early modern occupation in the town in the form of 65 sherds of post-medieval pottery, 46 sherds of nineteenth to twentieth century pottery, 51 pieces of clay pipe and a large amount of bone and building material. Further evidence of similar post-medieval materials was recorded during test pitting at Coventry Road.

There had been no discernible changes to the site or the main core of Lutterworth by the time of the 1904 OS map. In the subsequent years, the settlement began to expand northwards from the historic core. As part of this expansion, a house was built in 1930 by Peter Rourke for a George Spencer, approximately 680 m north east from the site, and is now used as the Sixth Form of the Grammar School.

By the time of the 1964 OS map, the town had expanded to the west and north through the construction of new residential estates and roads. By this time, the current shape of the site had been established due to the construction of the residential estate to its east lining De Verdon Road. The site remained unchanged until the publication of the 1991 OS map which shows the site as allotment gardens situated on the western edge of the settlement. More recently housing has been constructed to the west and south of the site enclosing it on all sides.

Archaeological Objectives

The specific aims of the evaluation were to:

- to identify and record any archaeological deposits, structures or built fabric within the identified areas of interest;
- to determine the extent, condition, character, significance and date of any encountered or exposed archaeological remains;
- to accurately record the location and stratigraphy of areas excavated during groundworks;
- to recover artefacts disturbed by the site works;
- to recover samples from sealed waterlogged contexts for environmental processing;
- to prepare a comprehensive record and report of archaeological observations during the site work; and
- to identify mitigation strategies to ensure the recording, preservation or

management of archaeological remains within the site.

The objectives of the project were:

- to preserve through record any archaeological remains impacted by the proposed works and;
- to contribute to the understanding of the pre-industrial landscape at De Verdon Road with particular focus on its role within the wider context of known prehistoric to early-medieval activity.

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area, the results of which will provide information for the local planning authority to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy.

Research Objectives

While the nature, extent and quality of archaeological remains within the areas of investigation for the project remain unknown until archaeological work is undertaken, it is possible to determine some initial objectives derived from *East Midlands Heritage* research agenda (Cooper 2006, Knight *et al.* 2012). The site's location just outside the historic village core suggests that there is potential for archaeological deposits from the medieval period onwards. The finds spots and HER records also suggest that there is some potential for archaeological deposits of prehistoric, Bronze Age and Roman origin. The evaluation therefore has the potential to contribute to the following research aims.

Prehistoric and Bronze Age

How may we characterise more effectively the frequently ephemeral structural traces that might relate to settlement activity? (3.5.1)

What may analyses of lithic scatters teach us about developing settlement patterns in the region? (3.5.3)

Romano-British

How did the Conquest impact upon rural settlements and landscapes? (5.4.1)

How did field and boundary systems relate to earlier systems of land allotment, and how did these boundary networks develop over time? (5.4.4)

Medieval

How can we shed further light upon the origin and development of dispersed hamlets and farms in champion and pastoral areas? (7.2.2)

Methodology

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (rev. October 2019) in accordance with their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field*

Evaluation (rev. 2014b). The archaeological work followed the *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Archaeological Evaluation* prepared by ULAS and agreed with the Leicestershire County Council Planning Archaeologist (August 2019). The work was monitored by the client and the Leicestershire County Council Planning Archaeologist.

An accession number (X.A84.2019) was obtained prior to commencement of the project and used to identify all records.

A total of 16, 30m trenches were proposed in order to provide efficient coverage of the site (Fig. 2). The trench plan was revised to avoid a live water pipe, with a 17th trench added at the request of the County Archaeologist (Fig. 3)

Trenches were measured in using DGPS. The excavation of the trenches was carried out using a 360 tracked excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide ditching bucket under constant supervision by an experienced archaeologist.

Trenches were excavated to the level of the natural sub-stratum or to archaeological layers, whichever the higher in the sequence. All archaeological work was undertaken as specified within the WSI. The trenches were verbally signed off by the Planning Archaeologist before being backfilled by machine.

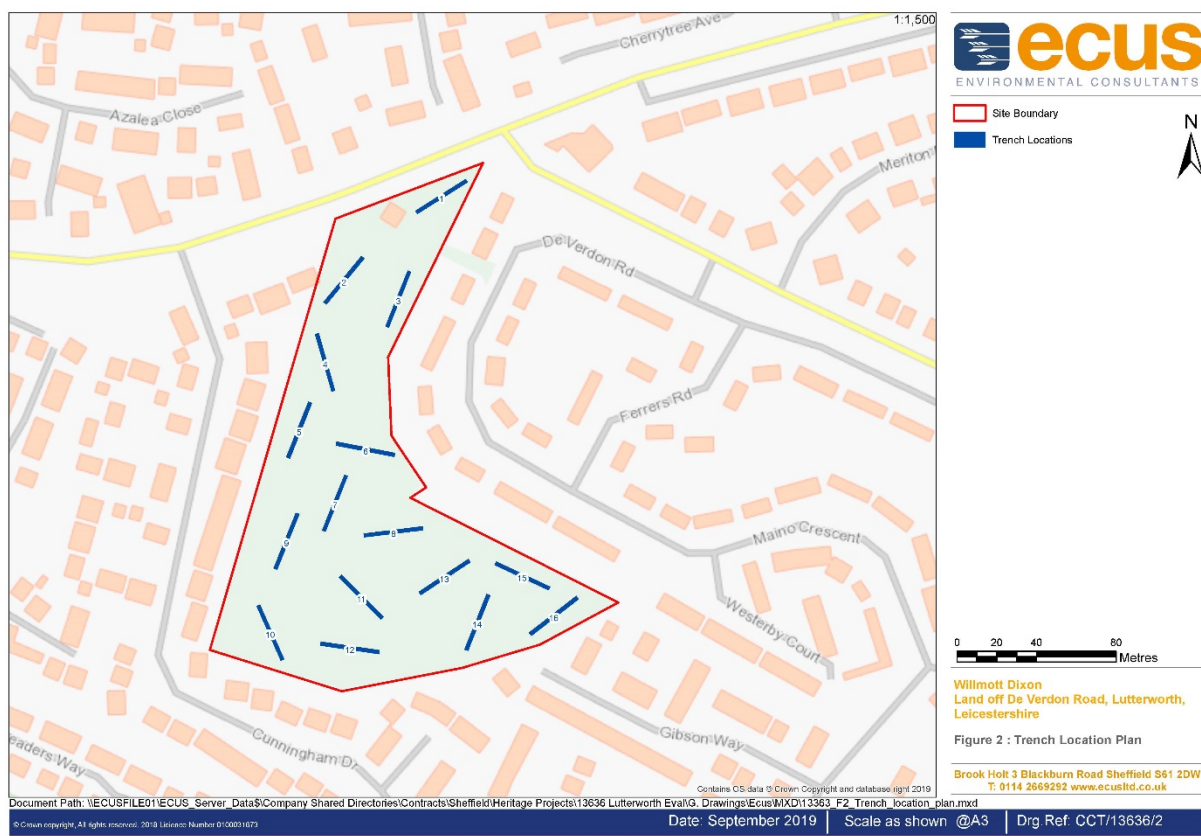


Figure 2: Original trench plan (provided by client)

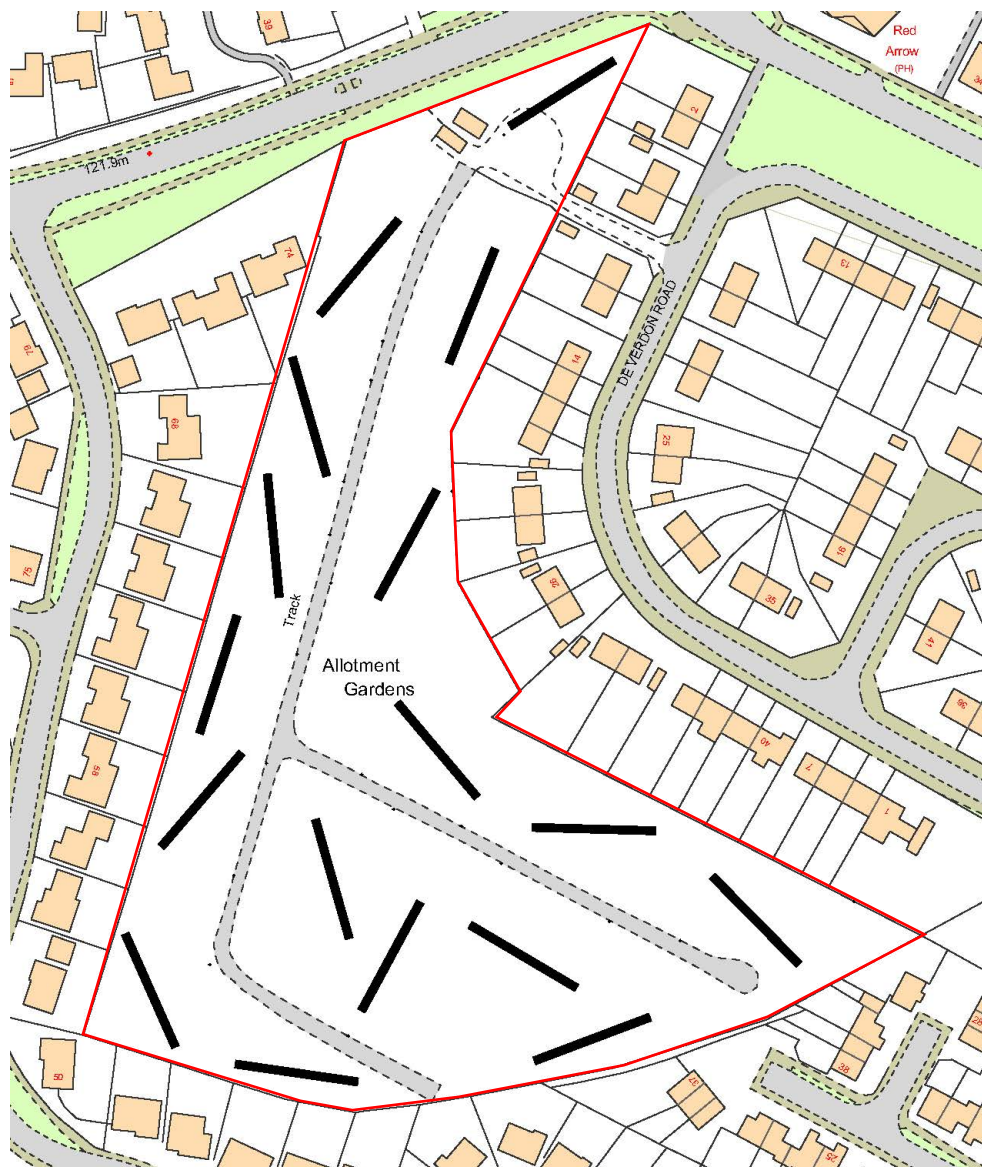


Figure 3: Revised trench plan

Results

Trenches 1-5, 7-9, 11, 14 and 17 contained archaeology (Fig. 4). Trenches 12-16 contained furrows, and Trenches 6 and 10 had no archaeological features. The natural subsoil varied between mixed orange- brown pebbly sand in the west of the site and yellow-orange clay in the east of the site. Subsoil was orange-brown clay sand with pebble inclusions. Topsoil was a consistent dark brown sandy loam across the area.

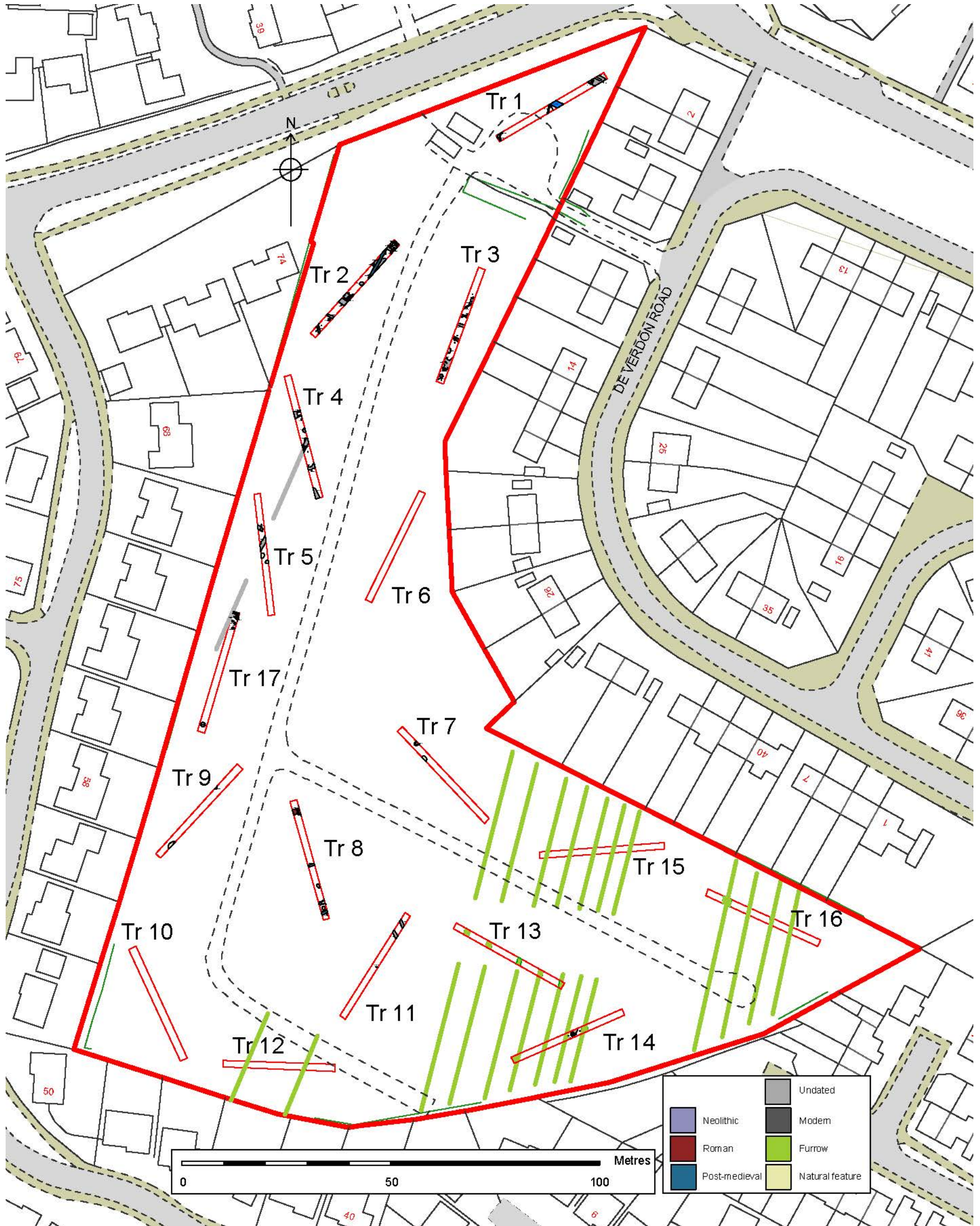


Figure 4: Site plan showing locations of all archaeological features and furrows

Trench 1

Trench 1 measured 29.9m x 1.6m, and was aligned northeast to southwest (Figs. 5 & 7). Some of the archaeological features in the trench were not able to be excavated due to adverse weather conditions and a constant water level that did not dissipate (Fig. 6). The natural substratum consisted of light yellow-brown sand clay and blue-grey sandy patches at a depth of between 0.64m – 1.12m below ground level. Cut into this at the northeast end appeared to be a series of ditches. Ditches [111] and [115] were parallel aligned northwest-southeast. Ditch [111] was 1.6m filled by (112), orange-grey-brown silty sand. It was only partially excavated due to the trench depth (Fig. 8). A possible gully [113] was located in-between both of these features and had a similar fill.

Near the middle of the trench was gully [118], aligned northeast-southwest approx. 0.5m wide, filled by (117) red-brown silty sand. At the southwest end of the trench were two possible gullies, [120] and [122]. These three features were all underwater the day after the trench was excavated and so could not be investigated.

Subsoil was 0.25m-0.79 thick. Topsoil was 0.2m thick at the southwest end of the trench. The rest was removed and replaced with a layer of hardcore for parking.

OD Height: 121.82m	(SW) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29.9m (NE)
Hardcore Depth	0.45	0.24	0.36	0.3	0.34	0.37	0.41
Buried Topsoil Depth	0.2	0.22	-	-	-	-	-
Subsoil Depth	0.25	0.32	0.43	0.34	0.38	0.59	0.79
Depth of Natural	0.9	0.78	0.79	0.64	0.72	0.96	1.2
Base of Trench	0.98	0.81	0.82	0.68	0.77	1.03	1.31



Figure 5: Trench 1 looking northeast



Figure 6: Trench 1 looking northeast and flooded

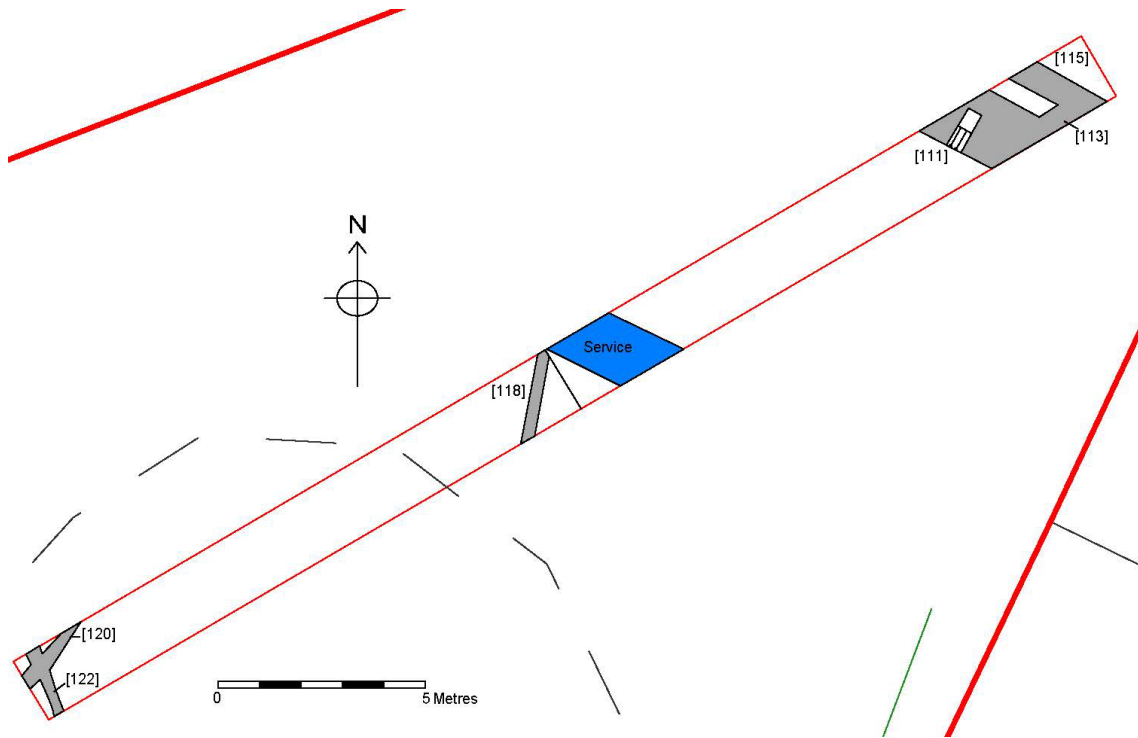


Figure 7: Trench 1 plan



Figure 8: Ditch [111] northwest

Trench 2

Trench 2 measured 30m x 1.6m, and was aligned northeast to southwest (Figs. 9 & 10). The natural substratum was yellow-brown sand with pebble inclusions at a depth of between 0.44m-0.55m below ground level. Cut into this at the northeast end was gully [5], aligned northwest-southeast with a steep concave profile, 0.7m wide, 0.3m deep (Figs. 11 & 12). It was filled by (6), mid brown sandy silt with infrequent pebble inclusions. This appeared to truncate a possible gully [3] that would have terminated, with a possible northeast-southwest alignment. It was filled by (4), mid orange-brown silty sand with infrequent pebble inclusions.

There were two further gullies at this end of the trench, [71] aligned northwest-southeast, 0.3m wide. Gully [73] was perpendicular to this, aligned approximately north-south, 0.3m wide. Both were filled by orange-brown silty sand.

Near to this was a possible post-medieval ditch [63] aligned north-south, 0.5m wide. Two parallel gullies, [65] and [67] crossed this ditch, both aligned east-west, 0.3m and 0.5m wide. Both were filled by grey-brown silty sand. Southwest of ditch [63] was a possibly gully terminus [61]. It was 0.7m wide, filled by (62), mid grey-brown silty sand with occasional pebbles.

Near the middle of the trench was a series of gullies (Figs. 13 & 14). The earliest appeared to be [55], aligned northeast-southwest, with a shallow concave profile, 0.4m wide, 0.08m deep. It was filled by (56), mid grey-brown silty clay with occasional pebbles. It seemed to be cut by gully [9], aligned east-west with a shallow concave profile, 0.7m wide, 0.16m deep. It was filled by (10), mid grey-brown silty sand. Parallel to this was a gully [11], on the same alignment and similar profile, 0.6m wider, 0.15m deep. The fill, (12) was mid grey brown silty clay. Parallel to this on the same alignment was [59], 1.2m wide, and might be another pair of smaller gullies.

Further southwest was gully [57], aligned northwest-southeast, 0.6m wide. It was filled by (58), mid grey-brown silty sand. Next to this was pit [13] (Figs. 15 & 16). It was circular in plan with a shallow concave profile, 0.5m in diameter, 0.08m deep, probably very truncated. It was filled by (14), orange-brown silty sand.

At the southwest end of the trench was a north-south aligned ditch [36] (Figs. 17 & 18). It had a steep concave profile, 0.5m wide, 0.34m deep. It was filled by (35), red-brown clay sand with occasional pebbles and was cut through the subsoil so may be part of a post medieval boundary system contemporary with ditch [63].

Subsoil was c0.2m thick. Topsoil was c0.3m thick

OD Height: 121.34m	(SE) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (SW)
Topsoil Depth	0.32	0.28	0.29	0.24	0.28	0.3	0.32
Subsoil Depth	0.23	0.21	0.22	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.12
Depth of Natural	0.55	0.49	0.51	0.49	0.52	0.53	0.44
Base of Trench	0.61	0.58	0.58	0.57	0.61	0.64	0.52



Figure 9: Trench 2 looking southwest

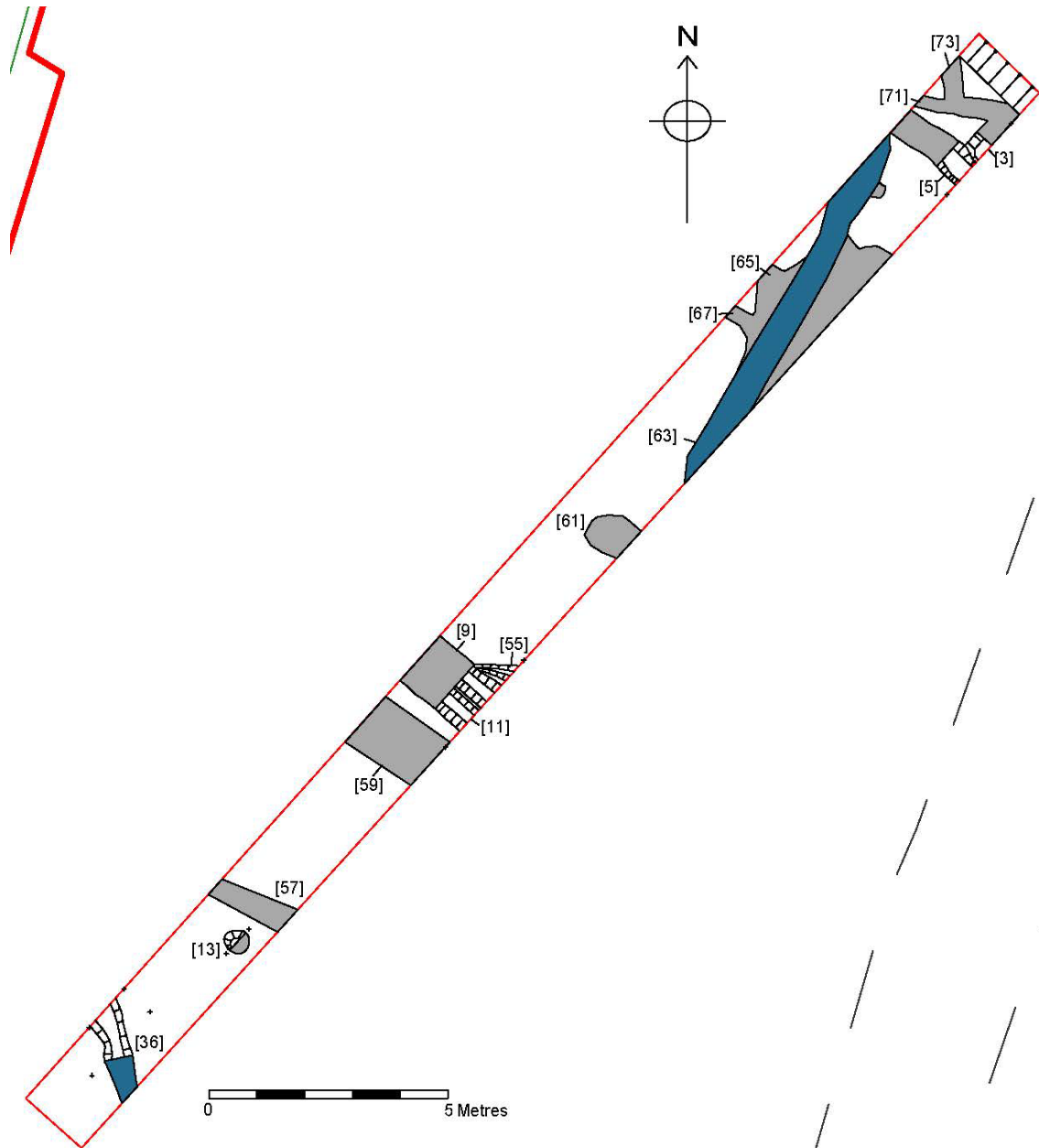


Figure 10: Trench 2 plan



Figure 11: Gullies [3] & [5] looking southeast

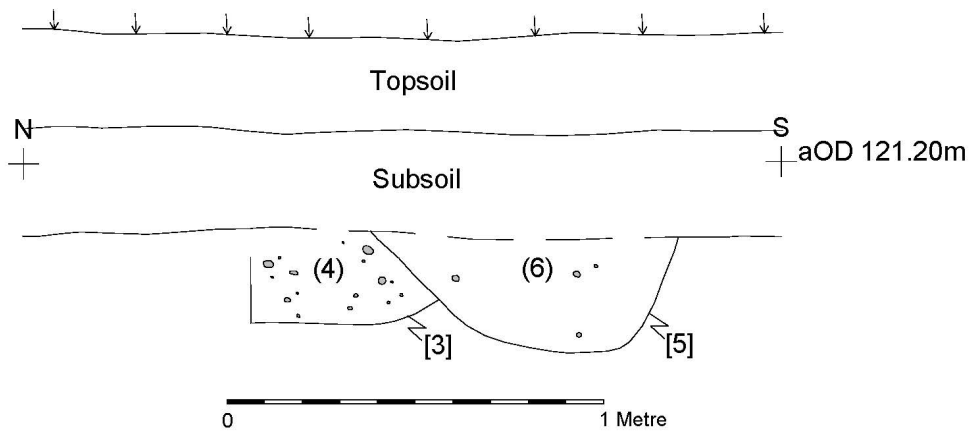


Figure 12: Gullies [3] & [5] section



Figure 13: Gullies [9], [11] and [55] looking southeast

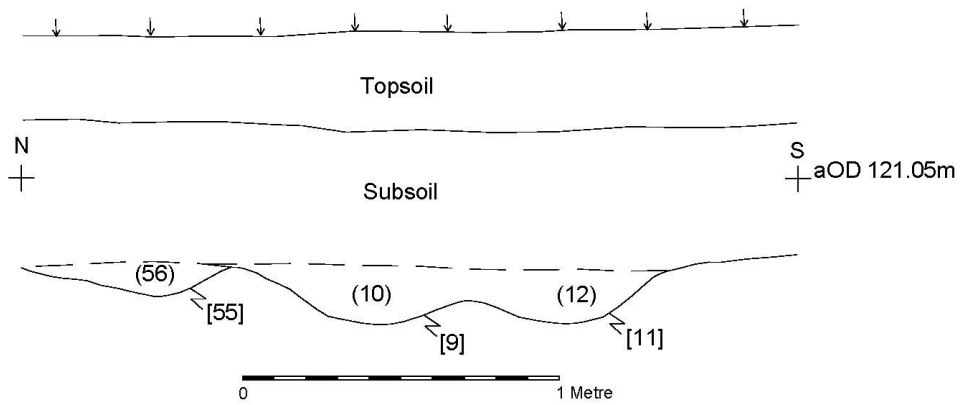


Figure 14: Gullies [9], [11] and [55] section



Figure 15: Pit [13] looking southeast

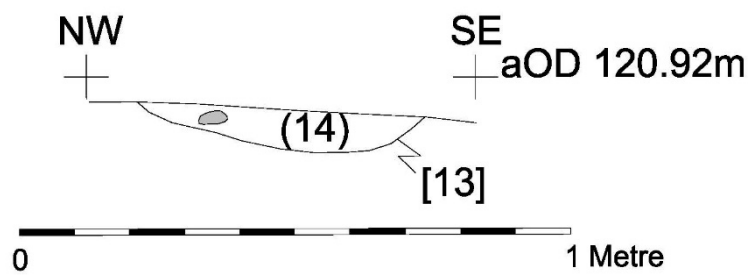


Figure 16: Pit [13] section



Figure 17: Ditch [36] looking northwest

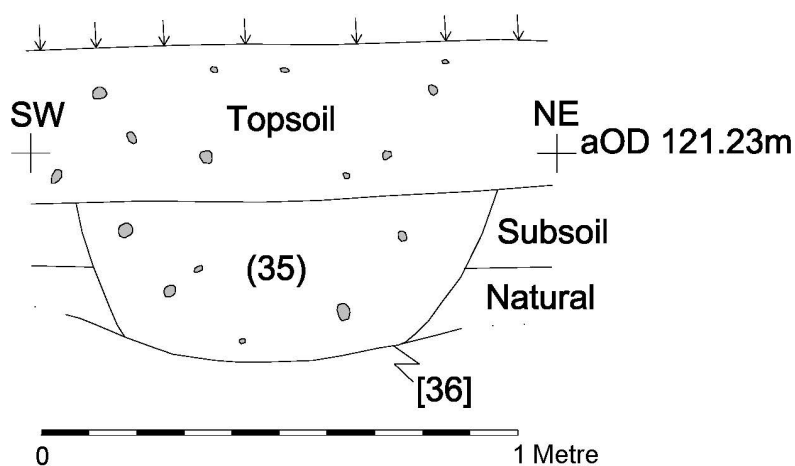


Figure 18: Ditch [36] section

Trench 3

Trench 3 measured 29m x 1.6m, and was aligned northeast to southwest (Figs. 19 & 20). The natural substratum was mixed orange-brown pebbly sand at a depth of between 0.43m – 0.66m below ground level. Near the northeast end of the trench was a possible gully terminus [37] (Figs. 21 & 22). It was aligned east-west with a moderate profile, 0.35m wide, 0.07m deep. It was filled by (38), dark grey-brown silty sand. Next to this was a similar gully terminus or threthrow [39], 0.45m wide. Cut into this was a possible drain, [41] aligned northeast-southwest, 0.2m wide.

Near the middle of the trench was gully [45], aligned northwest-southeast 0.3m wide with a possible pit or larger gully terminus at the end of it [43]. Both these were filled by mid grey-brown silty sand. Parallel to this was another gully on the same alignment, [49], 0.5m wide. It was filled by (50) mid grey-brown silty sand.

To the southwest of this was gully [19], aligned northwest-southeast with a steep v-shaped profile, 0.5m wide (Figs. 23 & 24). This was filled by (20) mid grey-brown silty sand with occasional pebble inclusions. The fill contained two fragments of 1st-2nd Century Roman pottery.

Next to this was pit [23] with a steep straight profile, 1.25m wide, 0.36m deep (Figs. 25 & 26). It was filled by (24) light grey-brown silty sand with occasional pebble inclusions containing a single sherd of 1st-2nd Century Roman pottery.

Near the southwest end of the trench were two parallel gullies, [51] and [53], aligned northwest-southeast, 0.75m and 0.5m wide. These intersected with ditch [33], which was aligned northeast-southwest with a steep v-shaped profile, 0.9m wide, 0.4m deep (Figs. 27 & 28). It was filled by (34), mid grey-brown silty sand with occasional pebbles. This appeared to form an entrance with ditch terminus [31] (Fig. 29), which was aligned northeast-southwest but may be turning. It had a step straight profile, 0.65m wide, 0.25m deep. It was filled by (32), mid grey-brown silty sand (Figs. 30 & 31).

These were covered by subsoil, 0.12m-0.36m thick. Topsoil was 0.3m-0.4m thick.

OD Height: 121.59m	(NE) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (SW)
Topsoil Depth	0.36	0.4	0.36	0.33	0.3	0.34	0.3
Subsoil Depth	0.27	0.13	0.12	0.12	0.13	0.22	0.36
Depth of Natural	0.64	0.53	0.48	0.45	0.43	0.56	0.66
Base of Trench	0.78	0.66	0.6	0.5	0.51	0.69	0.83



Figure 19: Trench 3 looking northeast

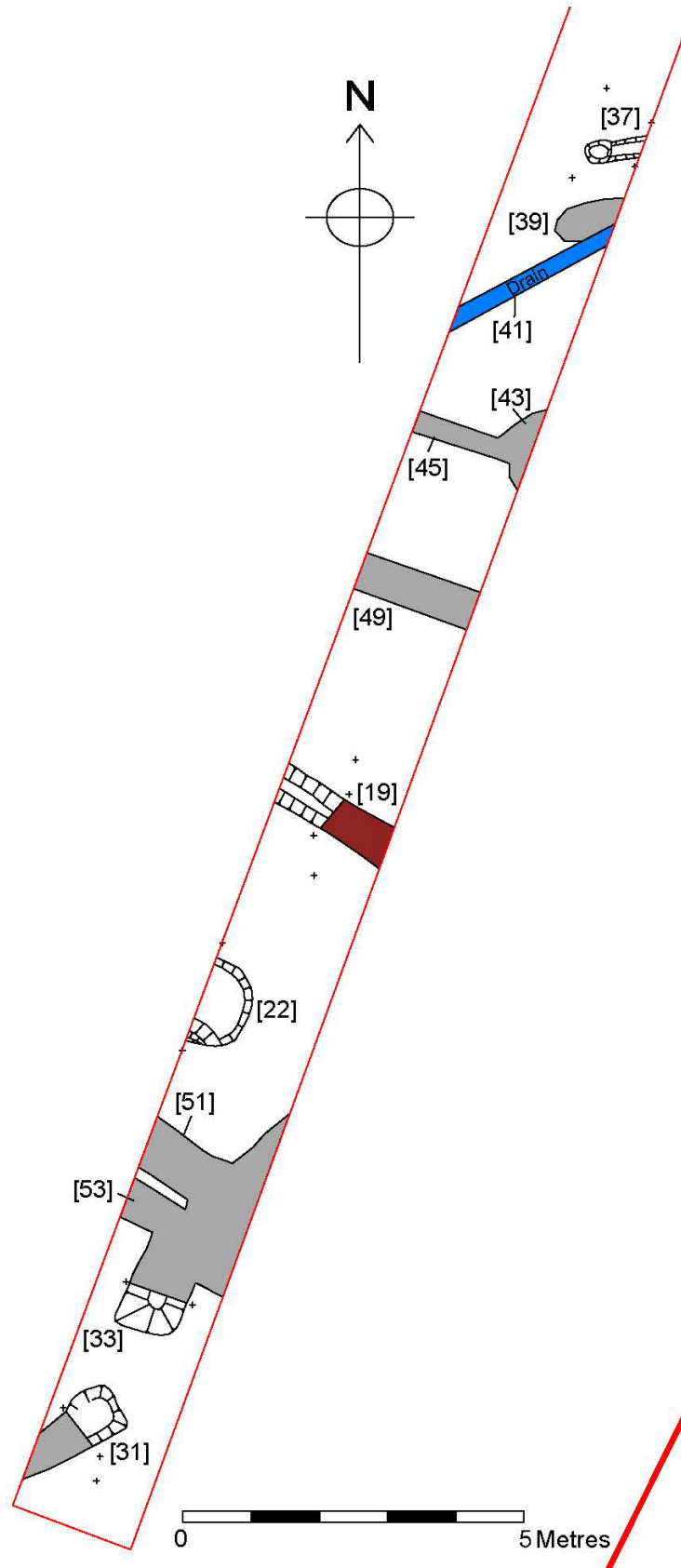


Figure 20: Trench 3 plan



Figure 21: Gully [37] looking east

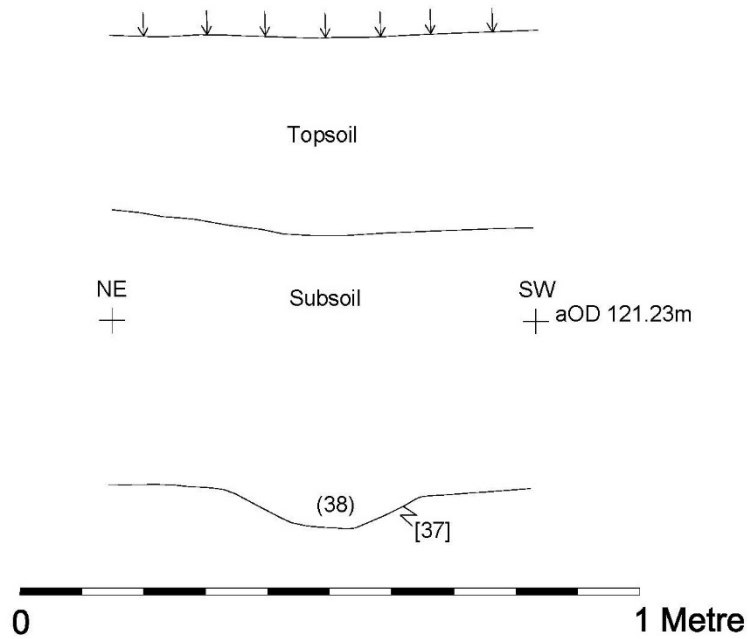


Figure 22: Gully [37] section



Figure 23: Gully [19] looking northwest

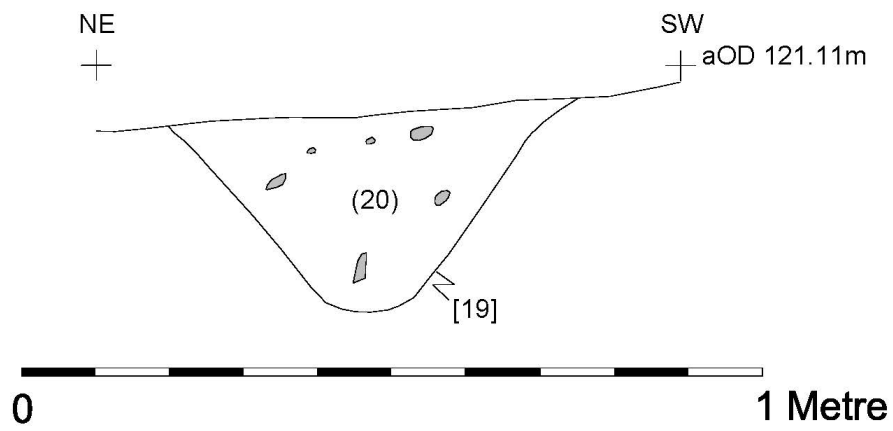


Figure 24: Gully [19] section



Figure 25: Pit [23] looking northwest

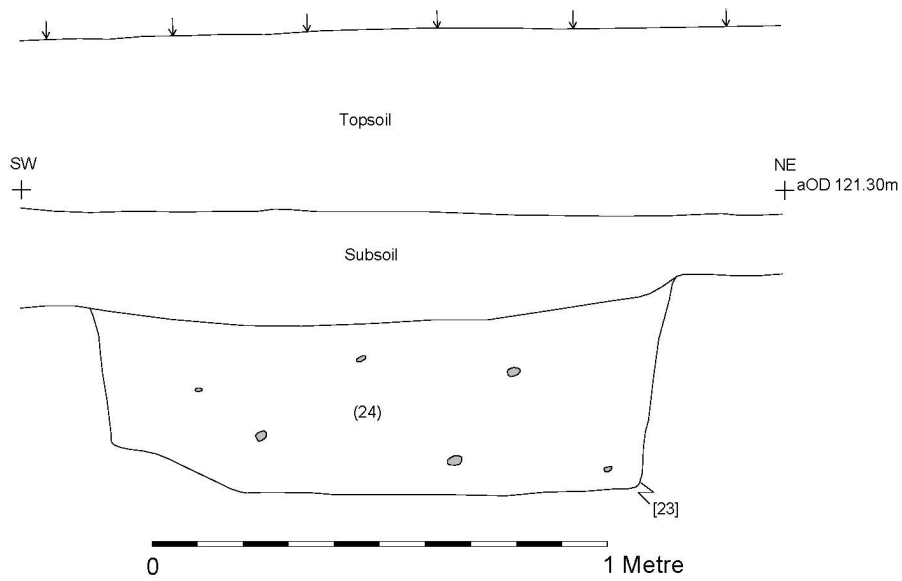


Figure 26: Pit [23] section



Figure 27: Ditch [33] looking northeast

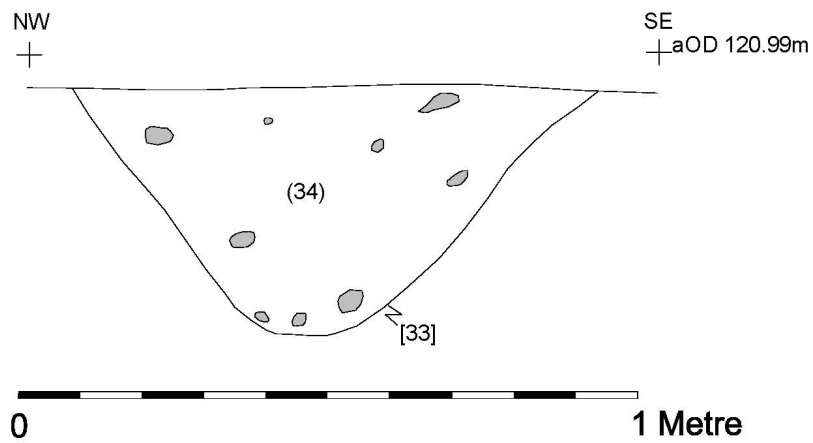


Figure 28: Ditch [33] section



Figure 29: Ditches [31] & [33] looking northeast



Figure 30: Ditch terminus [31] looking southwest

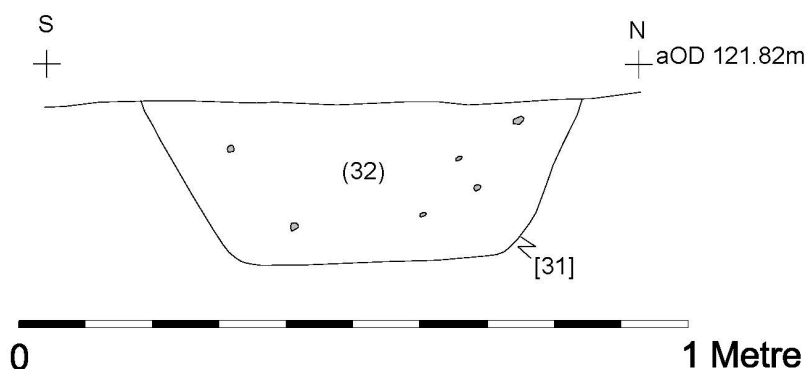


Figure 31: Ditch [31] section

Trench 4

Trench 4 measured 30.25m x 1.6m, and was aligned northwest-southeast (Figs. 32 & 33). The natural substratum was the same as in trench 2, at a depth of between 0.42m – 0.52m below ground level. Cut into this near the northwest end of the trench was a northeast-southwest aligned ditch [15], with a moderate profile, 1.3m wide, and 0.2m deep (Figs. 34 & 35). It was filled by (16), mixed red-brown silty sand with occasional pebbles. This had a tapering shape to it in plan so could possibly be a treethrow or two features. Near this was a pit or ditch terminus [79], 1m wide. It was filled by (78) mixed red-brown silty sand.

Next to this was a northeast-southwest aligned ditch [7], with a steep v-shaped profile, 0.9m, 0.44m deep (Figs. 36 & 37). The lowest fill (69) was orange-brown silty sand with frequent pebble inclusions, 0.18m thick. This was covered by (8) mid brown sandy silt with occasional pebbles, 0.26m thick. This ditch would appear to continue into trenches 5 and 17.

Near the southeast end of the trench was a pair of gullies crossing one another. Gully [83] was aligned northeast-southwest, 0.5m wide and appeared to terminate to the southwest. Gully [85] was aligned approximately east-west, 0.6m wide. At the very southeast end of the trench was a potential linear feature [87].

Two modern post holes, [75] and [77] were noted, [75] truncated ditch [7]. Subsoil was 0.14m-0.23m thick. Topsoil was 0.26m-0.29m thick.

OD Height: 121.20m	(NW) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (SE)
Topsoil Depth	0.28	0.29	0.28	0.27	0.28	0.26	0.28
Subsoil Depth	0.14	0.19	0.16	0.23	0.21	0.19	0.24
Depth of Natural	0.42	0.48	0.44	0.5	0.49	0.45	0.52
Base of Trench	0.41	0.59	0.49	0.58	0.57	0.51	0.58



Figure 32: Trench 4 looking northwest

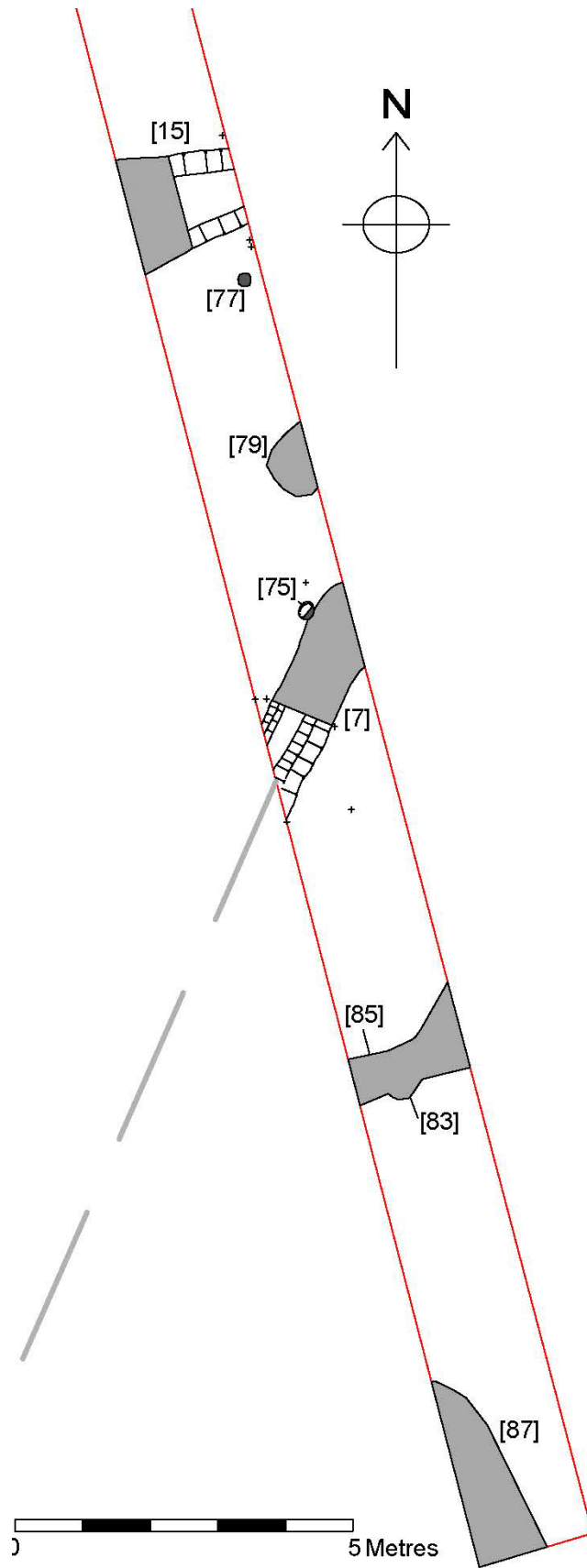


Figure 33: Trench 4 plan



Figure 34: Ditch [15] looking northeast

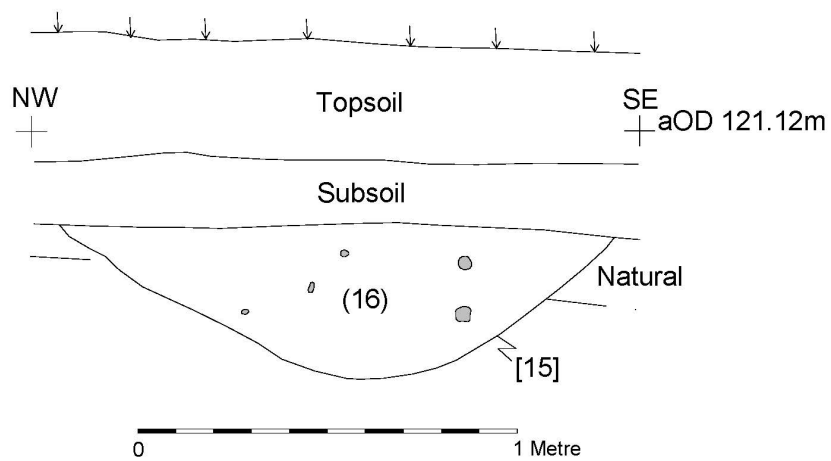


Figure 35: Ditch [15] section



Figure 36: Ditch [7] looking west

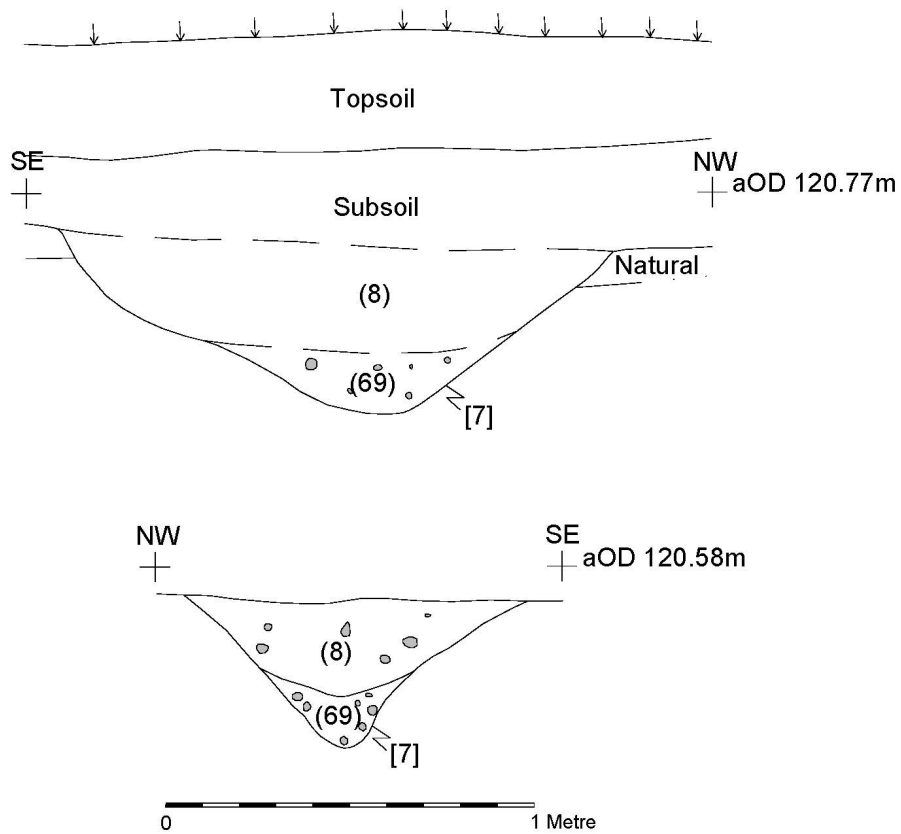


Figure 37: Ditch [7] sections

Trench 5

Trench 5 measured 29.5m x 1.6m, and was aligned northwest to southeast (Figs. 38 & 39). The natural substratum consisted was the same as trench 2 at a depth of between 0.44m – 0.62m below ground level. Cut into this was the same ditch [7] as observed in trench 4. Perpendicular to this and possibly forming an entrance was gully terminus [17]. It was aligned northwest-southeast, with a moderate profile, 0.7m wide, 0.18m deep. It was filled by (18), orange-brown silty sand with frequent pebbles (Figs. 40 & 41). Subsoil was 0.16m-0.28m thick. Topsoil was 0.28m-0.35m thick.

OD Height: 120.97m	(N) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (S)
Topsoil Depth	0.29	0.28	0.32	0.32	0.28	0.33	0.35
Subsoil Depth	0.18	0.16	0.19	0.27	0.27	0.28	0.27
Depth of Natural	0.47	0.44	0.51	0.59	0.55	0.61	0.62
Base of Trench	0.51	0.52	0.63	0.66	0.64	0.74	0.74



Figure 38: Trench 5 looking north

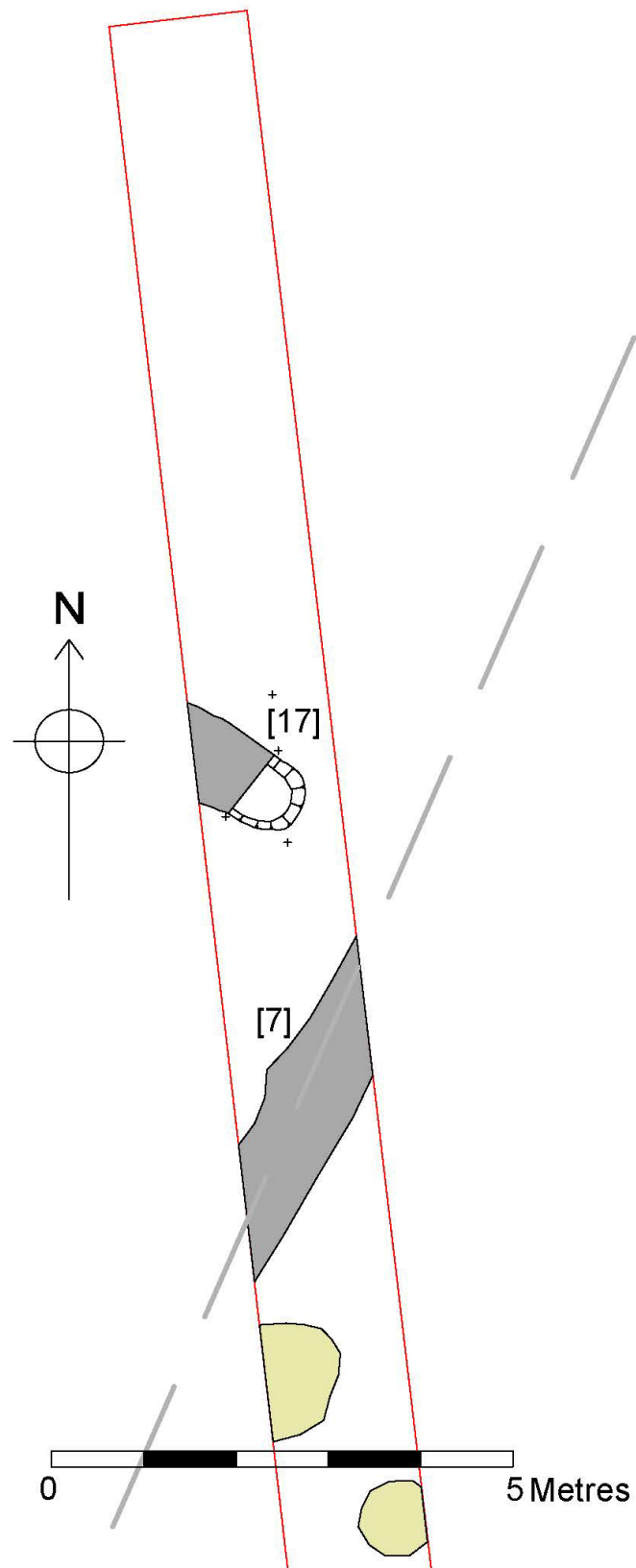


Figure 39: Trench 5 plan



Figure 40: Gully terminus [17] looking northwest

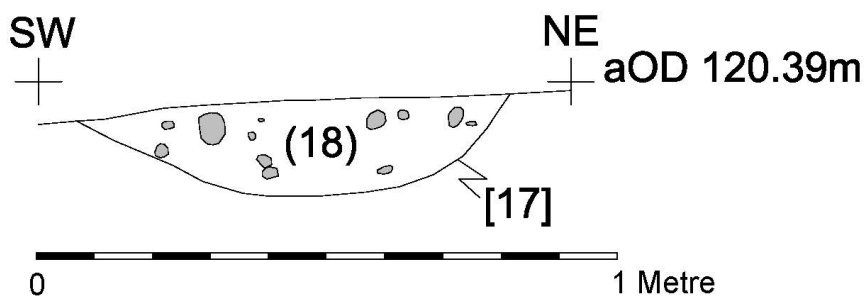


Figure 41: Gully [17] section

Trench 6

Trench 6 measured 29m x 1.6m, and was aligned northeast to southwest (Fig. 42). The natural substratum was the same as trench 3 at a depth of between 0.39m – 0.51m below ground level. Subsoil was between 0.1m-0.2m. Topsoil was 0.2m-0.36m thick.

OD Height: 121.30m	(NE) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (SW)
Topsoil Depth	0.26	0.3	0.36	0.3	0.36	0.2	0.25
Subsoil Depth	0.19	0.2	0.15	0.13	0.1	0.19	0.19
Depth of Natural	0.45	0.5	0.51	0.43	0.46	0.39	0.44
Base of Trench	0.55	0.6	0.6	0.6	0.57	0.43	0.52



Figure 42: Trench 6 looking northeast

Trench 7

Trench 7 measured 30m x 1.6m, and was aligned northwest to southeast (Figs. 43 & 44). The natural substratum was the same as trench 3 at a depth of between 0.43m – 0.65m below ground level. Cut into this was a possible ditch terminus or treethrow [103], (Figs. 45 & 46). It had an irregularly shaped profile, 0.97m wide, 0.3m deep. It was filled by (104), mid orange-brown sandy silty with occasional pebbles. Above this was subsoil 0.19m-0.26m. Topsoil was 0.2m-0.4m thick.

OD Height: 120.94m	(NW) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (SE)
Topsoil Depth	0.4	0.32	0.2	0.3	0.3	0.37	0.28
Subsoil Depth	0.25	0.22	0.23	0.22	0.19	0.22	0.26
Depth of Natural	0.65	0.54	0.43	0.52	0.49	0.59	0.54
Base of Trench	0.8	0.7	0.54	0.68	0.6	0.7	0.7



Figure 43: Trench 7 looking southeast

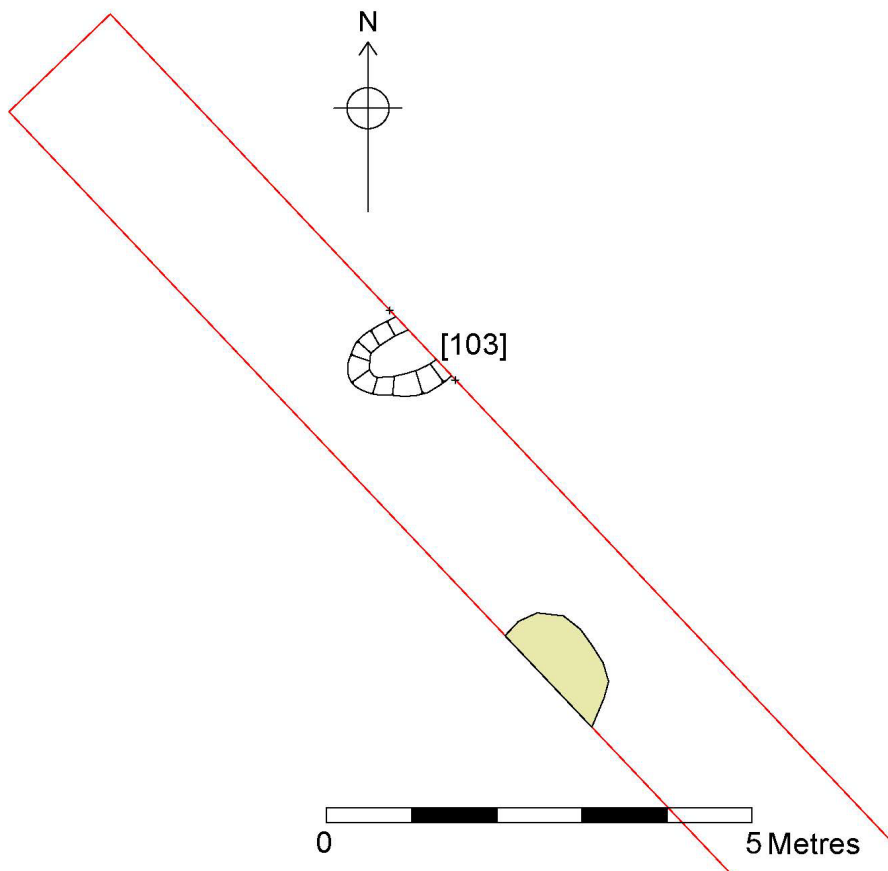


Figure 44: Trench 7 plan



Figure 45: Feature [103] looking northeast

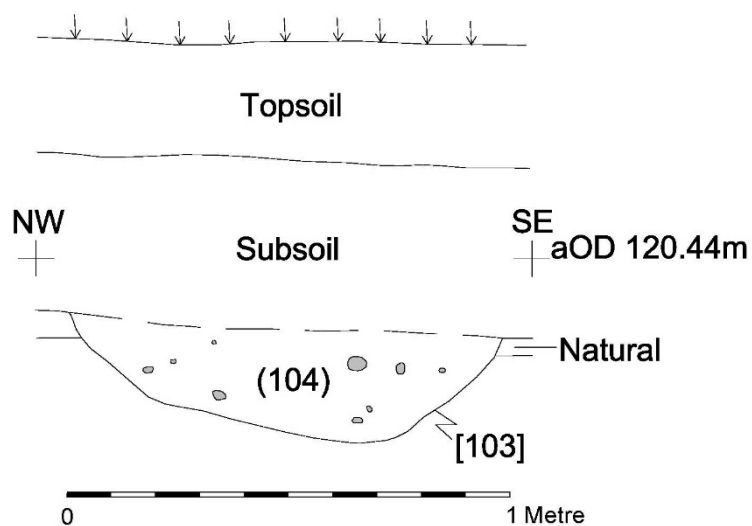


Figure 46: Feature [103] section

Trench 8

Trench 1 measured 29.5m x 1.6m, and was aligned northwest to southeast (Figs. 47 & 48). The natural substratum was orange pebbly sand at a depth of between 0.38m – 0.57m below ground level. Cut into northwest end was ditch [92] aligned northeast-southwest, with a steep concave profile, 2.1m wide, 0.74m deep. The lowest fill (91) was orange-red-brown silty sand with

occasional pebbles 0.3m thick and contained a single sherd of 1st-2nd Century Roman pottery. The fill above this (90) was orange brown silty sand with frequent pebbles 0.22m thick. (Figs. 49 & 50).

Further along the trench were three gullies, [94], [96] and [98] that appeared to be the remnants of post-medieval gullies they there wasn't much depth to them. Gully [94] was aligned northeast-southwest, 0.5m wide. Gully [96] was on the same alignment with a shallow U-shaped profile, 1.2m wide, 0.3m deep and might taper into a terminus. It was filled by (95) brown-red silty sand with occasional pebbles (Figs. 51 & 52). Gully [98] was aligned northeast-southwest, 0.6m wide with a single fragment of late 17th Century stoneware in the fill. Cut into this was a modern post hole [100]. Subsoil 0.12m-0.22m. Topsoil was 0.21m-0.38m thick.

OD Height: 120.33m	(NW) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (SE)
Topsoil Depth	0.35	0.21	0.26	0.28	0.3	0.28	0.38
Subsoil Depth	0.22	0.19	0.12	0.12	0.15	0.19	-
Depth of Natural	0.57	0.4	0.38	0.4	0.45	0.47	0.38
Base of Trench	0.8	0.51	0.47	0.49	0.5	0.58	0.46



Figure 47: Trench 8 looking southeast

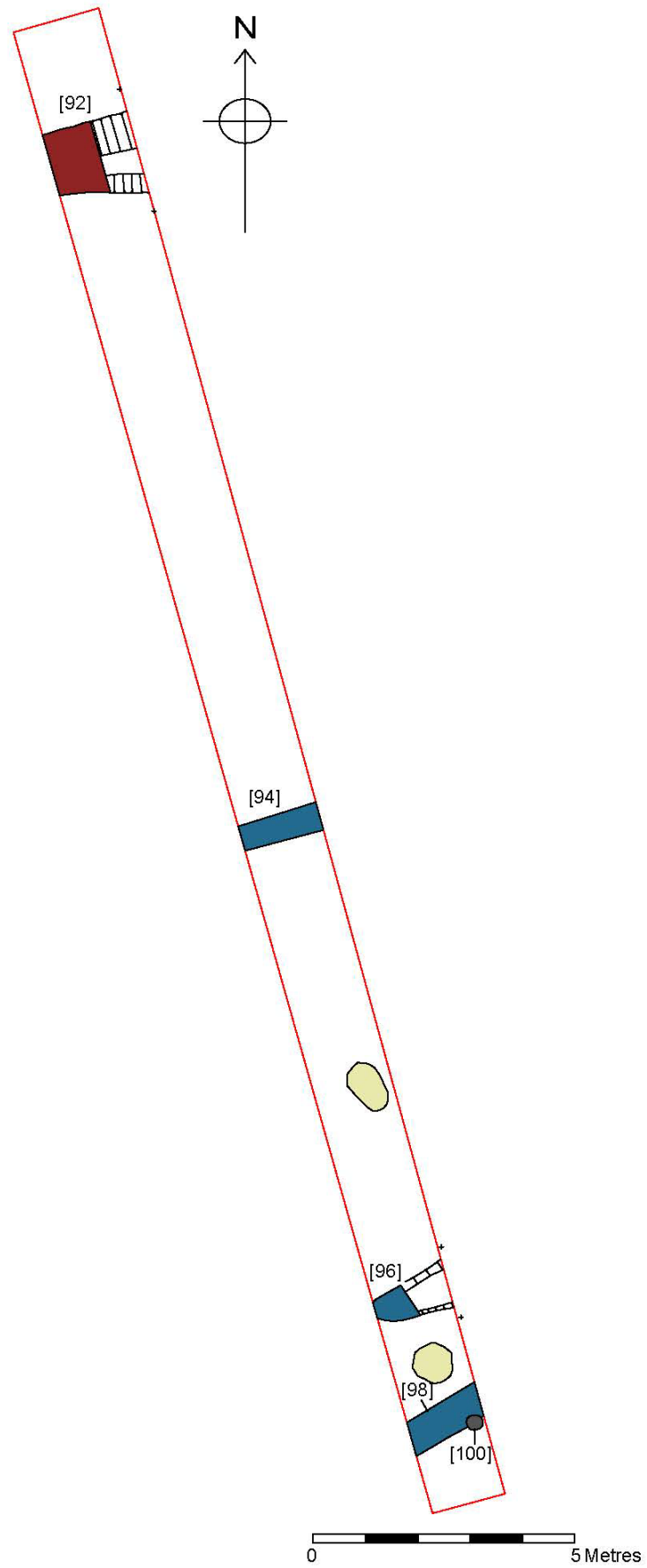


Figure 48: Trench 8 plan



Figure 49: Ditch [92] looking northeast

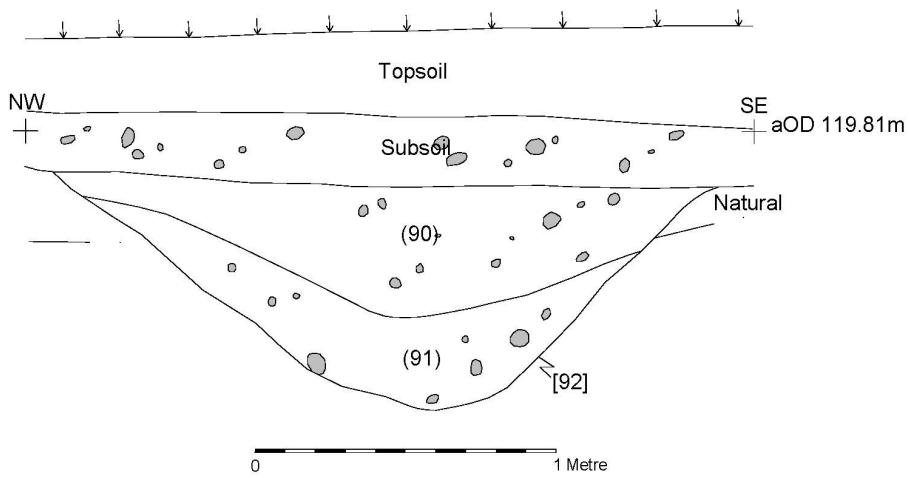


Figure 50: Ditch [92] section



Figure 51: Gully [96] looking northeast

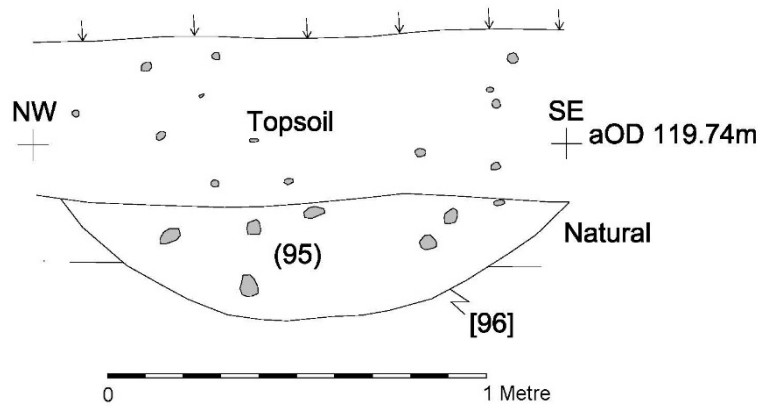


Figure 52: Gully [96] section

Trench 9

Trench 9 measured 29.2m x 1.6m, and was aligned northeast to southwest (Figs.53 & 54). The natural substratum was the same as trench 2 at a depth of between 0.52m – 0.68m below ground level. Cut into this was a possible pit [88], (Figs.55 & 56). It had a shallow profile, 0.58m wide, 0.12m deep. It was filled by (89) light grey-brown silty sand

Subsoil 0.12m-0.22m. Topsoil was 0.21m-0.35m thick.

OD Height: 120.30m	(NE) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (SW)
Topsoil Depth	0.32	0.3	0.31	0.28	0.27	0.32	0.28
Subsoil Depth	0.36	0.35	0.21	0.24	0.25	0.31	0.24
Depth of Natural	0.68	0.65	0.52	0.52	0.52	0.63	0.52
Base of Trench	0.79	0.76	0.61	0.56	0.61	0.71	0.59



Figure 53: Trench 9 looking northeast

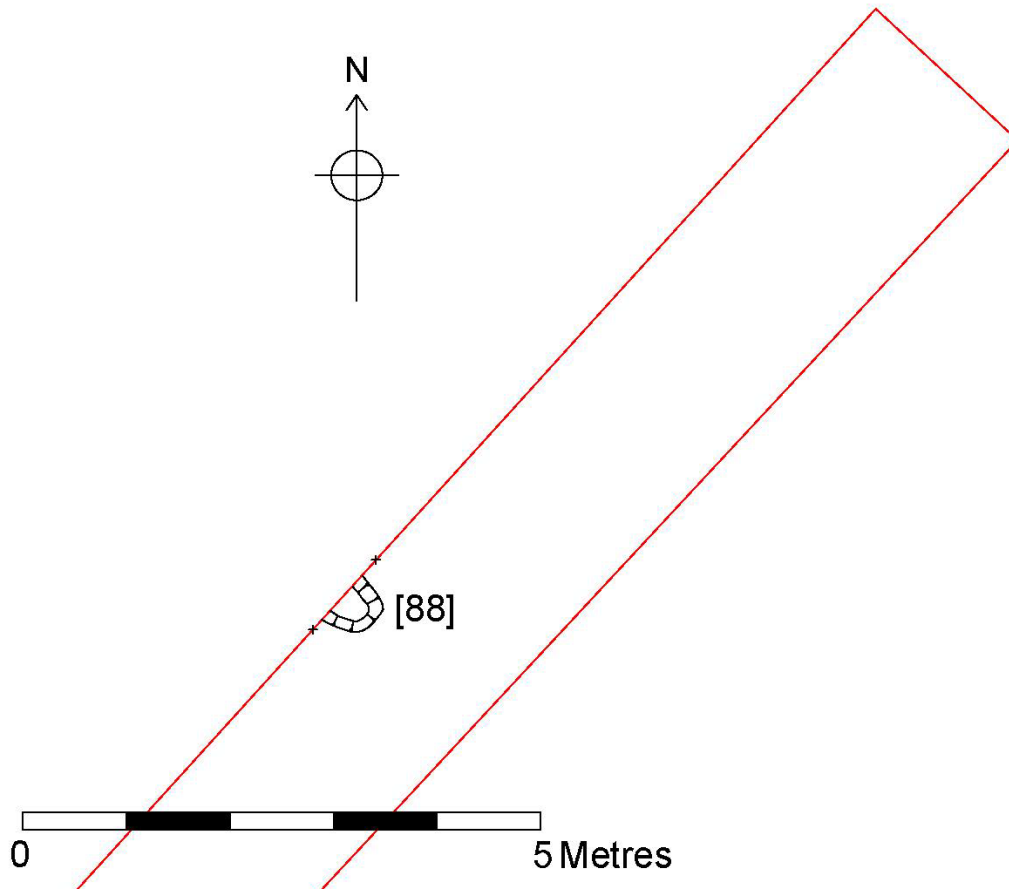


Figure 54: Trench 9 plan



Figure 55: Feature [88] looking northwest

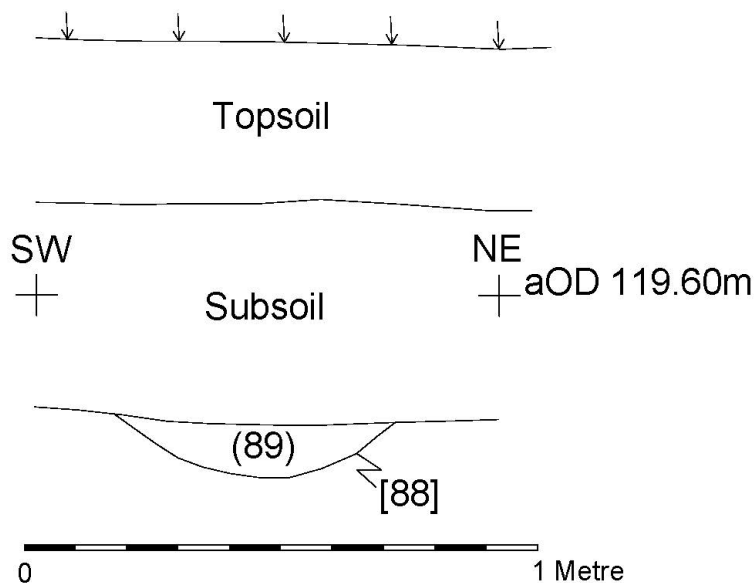


Figure 56: Feature [88] section

Trench 10

Trench 10 measured 29.6m x 1.6m, and was aligned northwest to southeast (Fig. 57). The natural substratum was the same as trench 2at a depth of between 0.48m – 0.62m below ground level. Subsoil was 0.22m-0.22m. Topsoil was 0.25m-0.36m thick.

OD Height: 118.99m	(NW) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (SE)
Topsoil Depth	0.34	0.26	0.34	0.34	0.36	0.29	0.25
Subsoil Depth	0.28	0.52	0.22	0.22	0.23	0.32	0.23
Depth of Natural	0.62	0.78	0.56	0.56	0.59	0.61	0.48
Base of Trench	0.84	0.83	0.74	0.71	0.78	0.72	0.58



Figure 57: Trench 10 looking northwest

Trench 11

Trench 11 measured 29m x 1.6m, and was aligned northeast to southwest (Figs. 58 & 59). The natural substratum was the same as trench 8 at a depth of between 0.35m – 0.5m below ground level. Cut into this was a post hole [102], (Figs. 60 & 61). It was circular in plan with a moderate profile and a slanted base, 0.2m diameter, 0.13m deep. It was filled by (101), red-brown silty sand.

At the northeast end of the trench were two parallel linears, [108] and [110], both aligned northwest-southeast. Both had a similar shallow profile, 0.6m wide and 0.2m deep. They were filled by mid orange-brown silty sand similar to subsoil. These could possibly be part of a later set of furrows.

Subsoil was 0.1m-0.15m where evident, which might be the remnants of more furrows. Topsoil was 0.28m-0.38m thick.

OD Height: m	(NE) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (SW)
Topsoil Depth	0.35	0.38	0.34	0.35	0.28	0.38	0.32
Subsoil Depth	0.15	-	0.1	-	0.1	0.12	-
Depth of Natural	0.5	0.4	0.44	0.35	0.38	0.5	0.32
Base of Trench	0.51	0.4	0.44	0.4	0.43	0.5	0.52



Figure 58: Trench 11 looking southwest

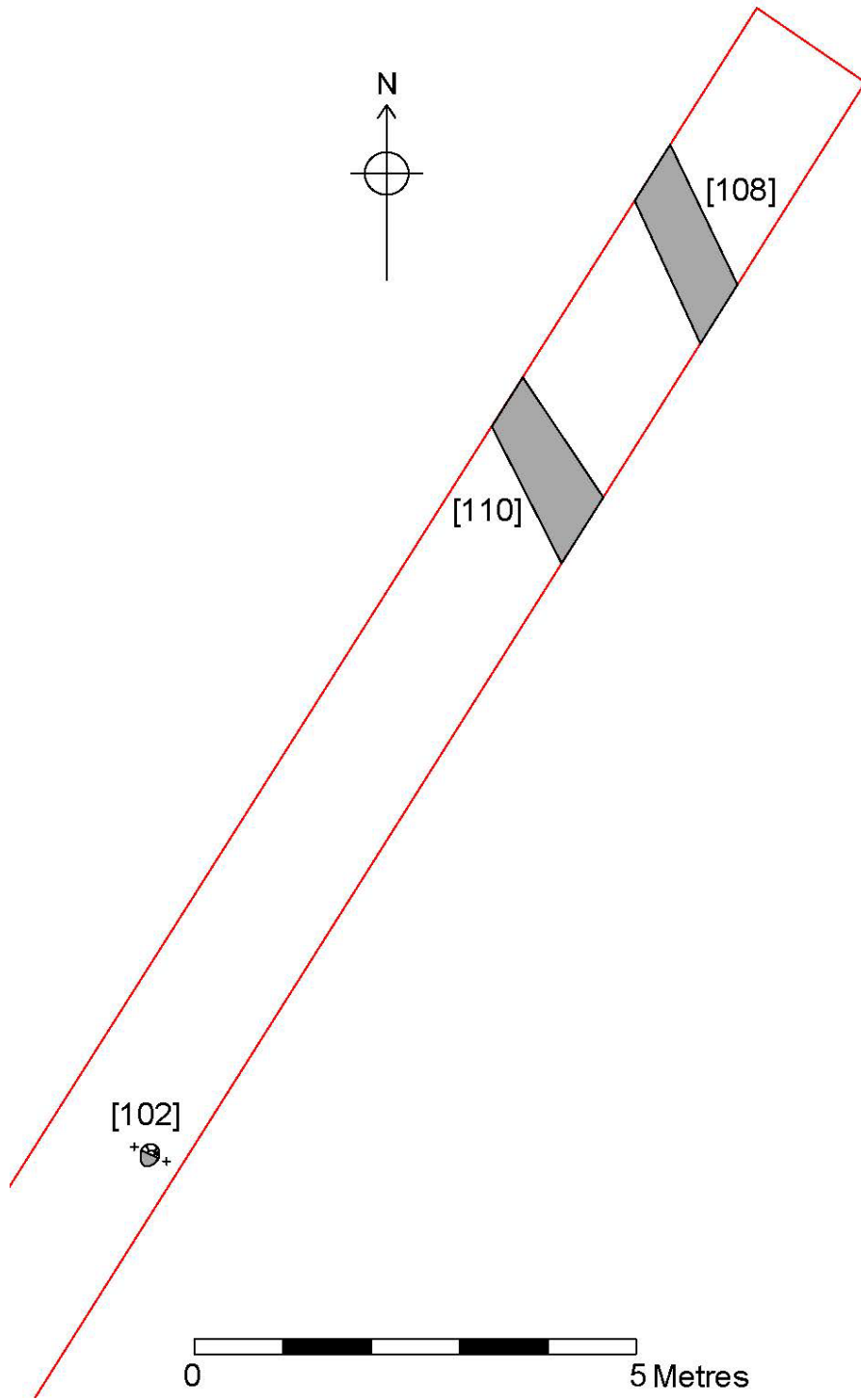


Figure 59: Trench 11 plan



Figure 60: Post hole [102] looking southwest

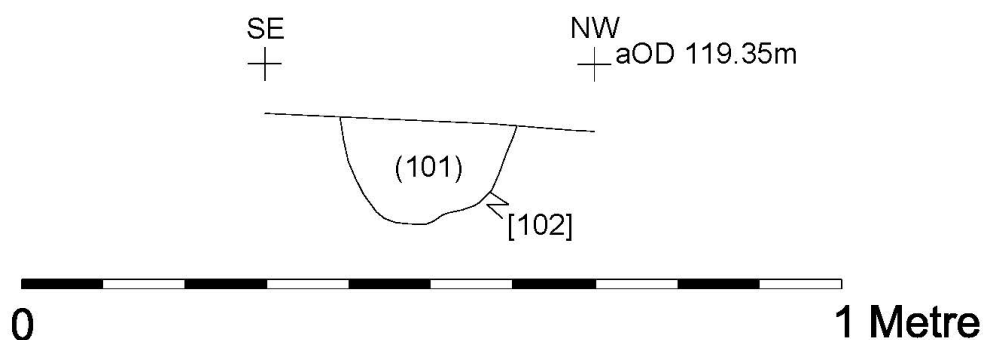


Figure 61: post hole [102] section

Trench 12

Trench 12 measured 27m x 1.6m, and was aligned east to west (Fig. 62). The natural substratum was the same as trench 2 at a depth of between 0.38m – 0.59m below ground level. Cut into this appeared to be remnants of furrow ploughing. Subsoil was 0.13m-0.28m thick. Topsoil was 0.23m-0.33m thick.

OD Height: 120.02m	(W) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m (E)	
Topsoil Depth	0.31	0.32	0.26	0.23	0.25	0.33	
Subsoil Depth	0.28	0.26	0.15	0.17	0.13	0.19	
Depth of Natural	0.59	0.58	0.41	0.4	0.38	0.52	
Base of Trench	0.63	0.65	0.44	0.46	0.41	0.57	



Figure 62: Trench 12 looking west

Trench 13

Trench 13 measured 29.5m x 1.6m, and was aligned northwest to southeast (Fig. 63). The natural substratum consisted of yellow-orange clay at a depth of between 0.23m – 0.45m below ground level. There was a series of five furrows evident within the bottom of the trench at regular intervals, aligned northeast-southwest. Subsoil was 0.1m thick where evident. Topsoil was 0.25m-0.38m thick.

OD Height: 119.89m	(NW) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (SE)
Topsoil Depth	0.38	0.31	0.23	0.26	0.25	0.4	0.35
Subsoil Depth	-	-	-	-	0.1	-	0.1
Depth of Natural	0.38	0.31	0.23	0.26	0.35	0.4	0.45
Base of Trench	0.38	0.31	0.28	0.3	0.37	0.42	0.48



Figure 63: Trench 13 looking southeast

Trench 14

Trench 14 measured 29m x 1.6m, and was aligned northeast to southwest (Figs. 64 & 65). The natural substratum consisted of mixed orange sandy clay and manganese mottled orange-grey clay at a depth of between 0.47m – 0.7m below ground level. There was a ditch terminus [105] near the middle of the trench aligned roughly northeast-southwest with steep sloping sides, 1m wide, 0.48m deep. It was filled by (106) red-grey silty sand some pebble and charcoal inclusions (Figs. 66 & 67).

Two furrows were noted on the same alignment as trench 13. Subsoil was 0.08m-0.3m thick. Topsoil was 0.3m-0.44m thick.

OD Height: 119.37m	(SW) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (NE)
Topsoil Depth	0.32	0.3	0.3	0.36	0.31	0.35	0.44
Subsoil Depth	0.1	0.08	0.16	0.17	0.3	0.14	0.12
Depth of Natural	0.42	0.38	0.46	0.53	0.61	0.49	0.56
Base of Trench	0.48	0.42	0.61	0.61	0.63	0.87	0.94



Figure 64: Trench 14 looking northeast

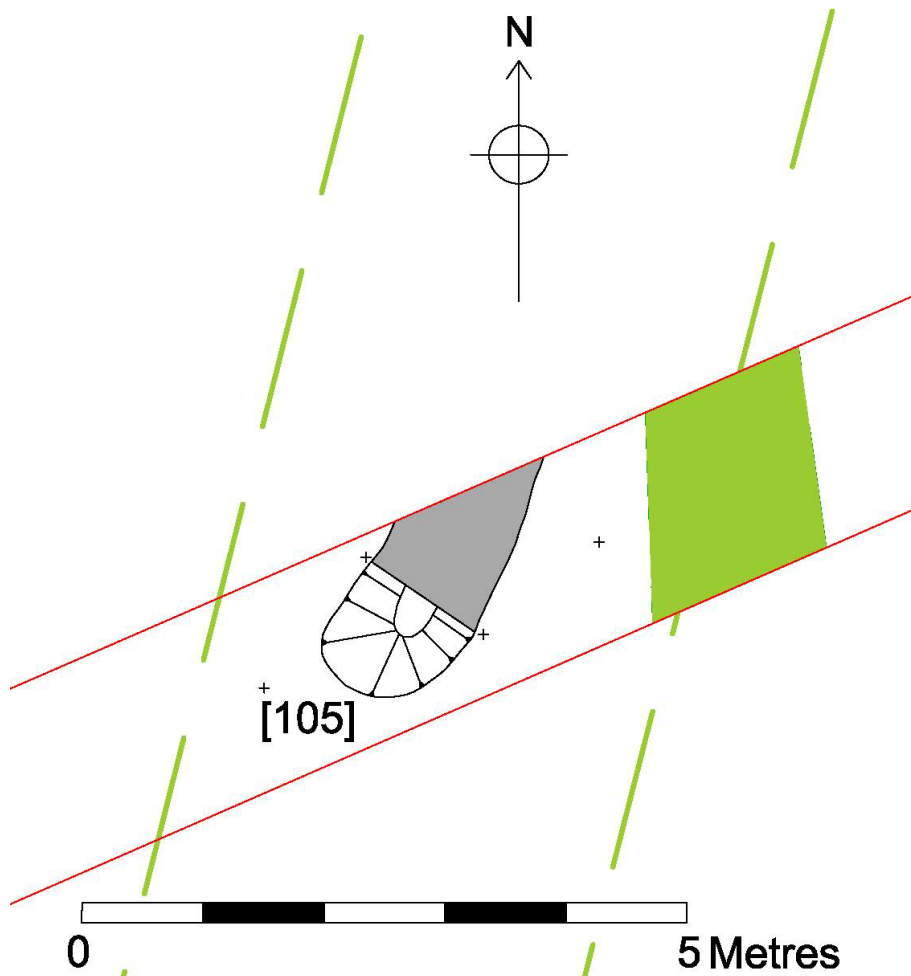


Figure 65: Trench 14 plan



Figure 66: Ditch terminus [105] looking northeast

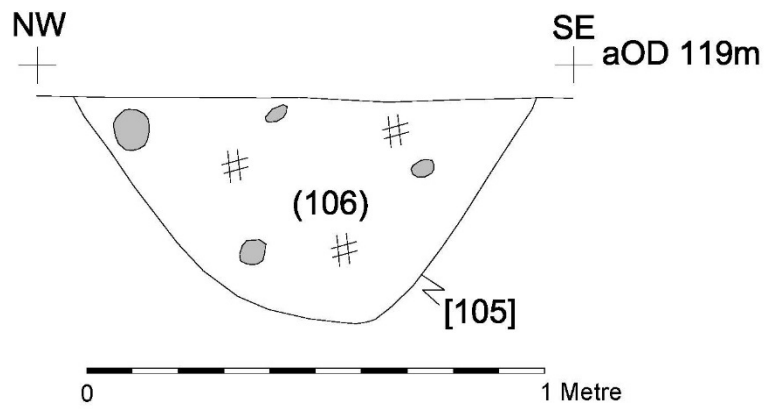


Figure 67: Ditch [105] section

Trench 15

Trench 15 measured 30m x 1.6m, and was aligned east to west (Fig. 68). The natural substratum consisted of mixed orange sandy clay at a depth of between 0.39m – 0.62m below ground level. Remnants of two furrows on the same alignment as those in trench 13 were noted. Subsoil was 0.12m-0.26m. Topsoil was 0.26m-0.4m thick.

OD Height: 120.26m	(W) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (E)
Topsoil Depth	0.26	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.36	0.36	0.38
Subsoil Depth	0.13	0.12	0.18	0.13	0.2	0.26	0.14
Depth of Natural	0.39	0.42	0.48	0.53	0.56	0.52	0.52
Base of Trench	0.49	0.5	0.63	0.62	0.66	0.72	0.6



Figure 68: Trench 15 looking east

Trench 16

Trench 16 measured 29.3m x 1.6m, and was aligned northwest to southeast (Fig. 69). The natural substratum consisted of brown-orange clay with flint and pebble inclusions at a depth of between 0.32m – 0.55m below ground level. Four furrows were noted on the same alignment as in other trenches. Subsoil was 0.1m-0.36m. Topsoil was 0.21m-0.36m thick.

OD Height: 120.06m	(NW) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m (SE)
Topsoil Depth	0.24	0.31	0.24	0.36	0.21	0.29	0.28
Subsoil Depth	0.16	0.1	0.2	-	0.11	0.26	0.2
Depth of Natural	0.4	0.41	0.44	0.36	0.32	0.55	0.48
Base of Trench	0.5	0.44	0.49	0.46	0.41	0.57	0.55



Figure 69: Trench 16 looking southeast

Trench 17

Trench 17 measured 30.2m x 1.6m, and was aligned northeast to southwest (Figs. 70 & 71). The natural substratum consisted of mixed orange sandy clay and manganese mottled orange-grey clay at a depth of between 0.47m – 0.7m below ground level. At the southwest end of the trench was a pit [1]. It was circular in plan, with straight vertical sides, 1.02m diameter, 0.22m deep. It was filled by (2), dark grey-brown silty sand with small pebble inclusions that contained many fragments of Late Neolithic Grooved Ware pottery representing approximately

8 individual vessels, flint waste flakes and an environmental assemblage rich in charred hazel nut shells (Figs. 72 & 73).

At the other end of the trench appeared to be the same ditch [7] crossing northwest-southeast ditch [21], which was 0.84m wide, filled by (22), dark red-brown silty sand with occasional pebbles (Figs. 74 & 75).

A series of three post holes was next to this, [25], [27] and [29]. All were circular in plan with slightly irregular profiles, 0.36m-0.5m in diameter, ranging from 0.08m-0.14m deep. All were filled by a similar fill of dark red-brown silty sand (Figs. 76 & 77).

Subsoil was 0.14m-0.49m thick. Topsoil was 0.28m-0.36m thick.

OD Height: 120.89m	(NE) 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m (SW)
Topsoil Depth	0.36	0.32	0.29	0.36	0.28	0.31	0.31
Subsoil Depth	0.36	0.39	0.49	0.35	0.24	0.14	0.27
Depth of Natural	0.72	0.71	0.78	0.71	0.52	0.45	0.58
Base of Trench	0.8	0.76	0.88	0.77	0.57	0.53	0.6



Figure 70: Trench 17 looking northeast

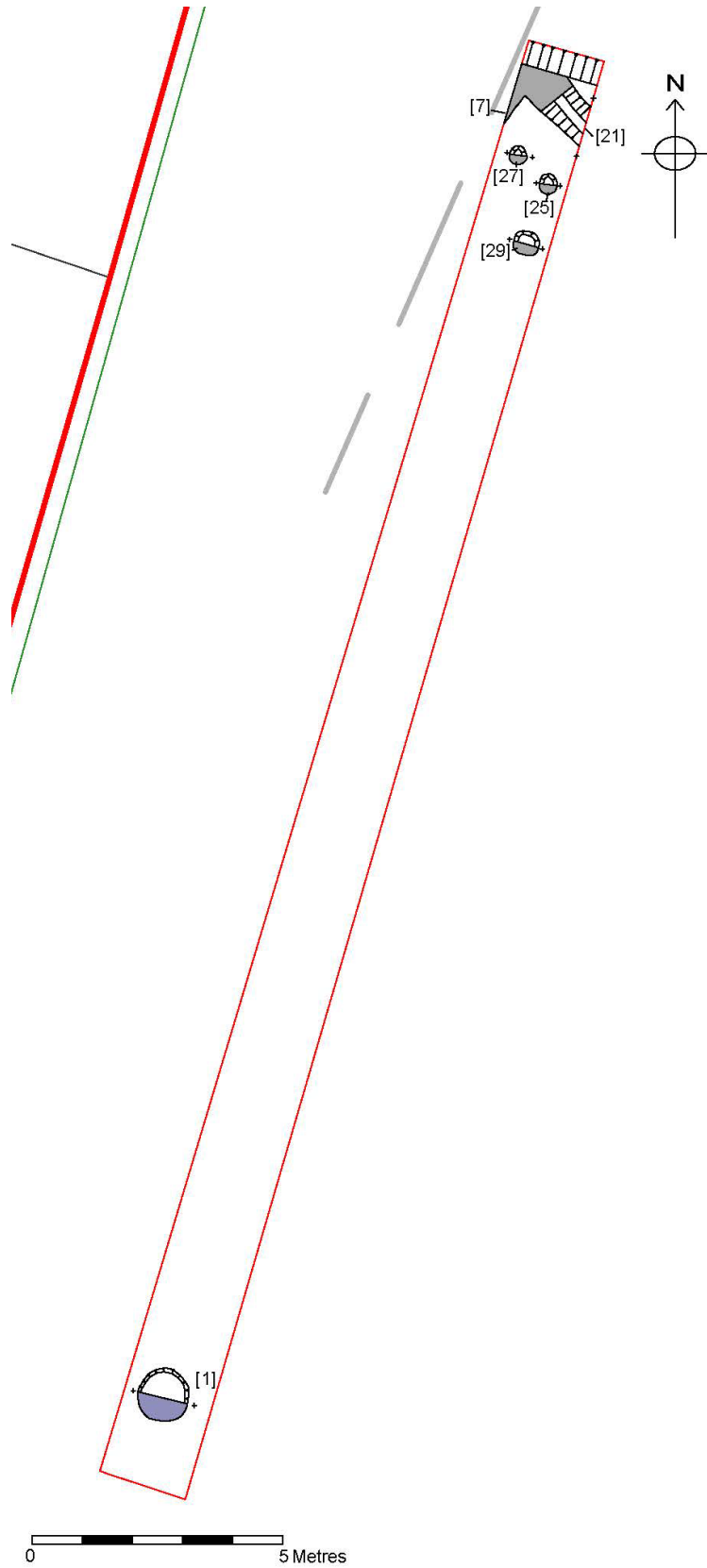


Figure 71: Trench 17 plan



Figure 72: Pit [1] looking southwest

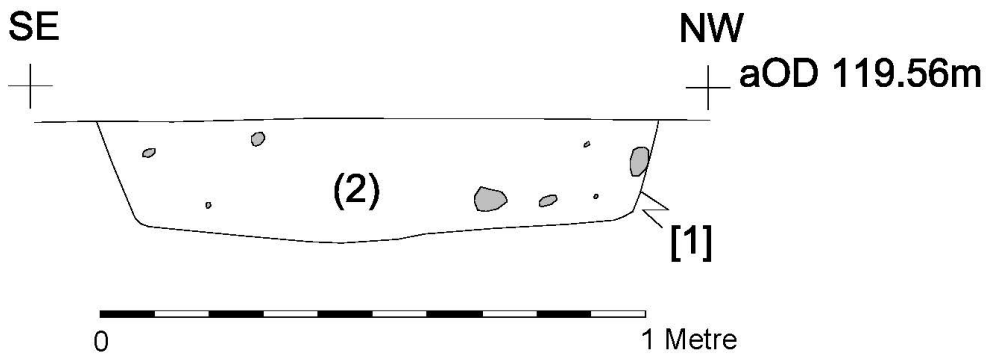


Figure 73: Pit [1] section



Figure 74: Ditch [21] looking southeast

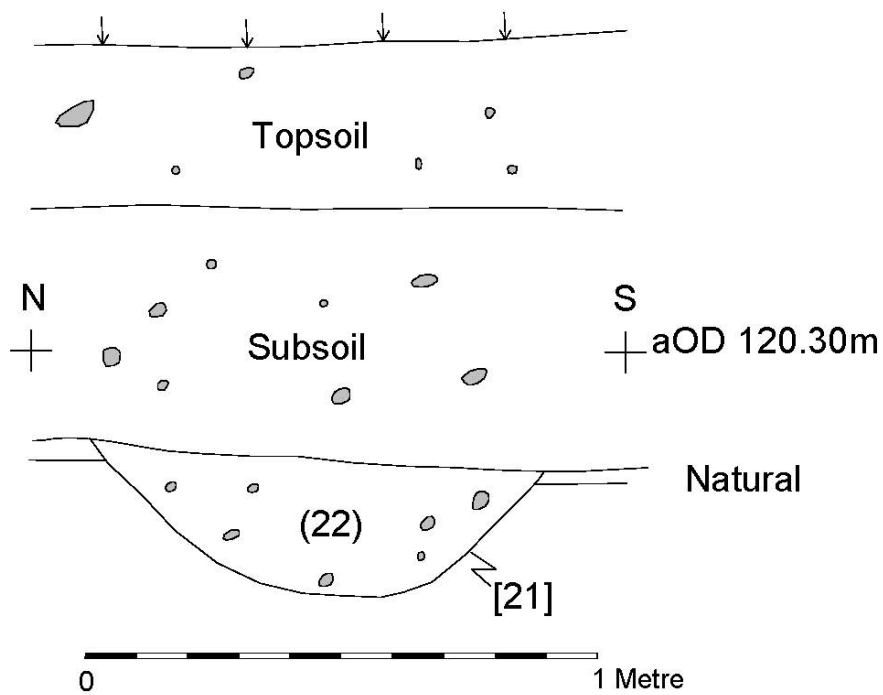


Figure 75: Ditch [21] section



Figure 76: Post holes [25], [27] and [29] looking southwest

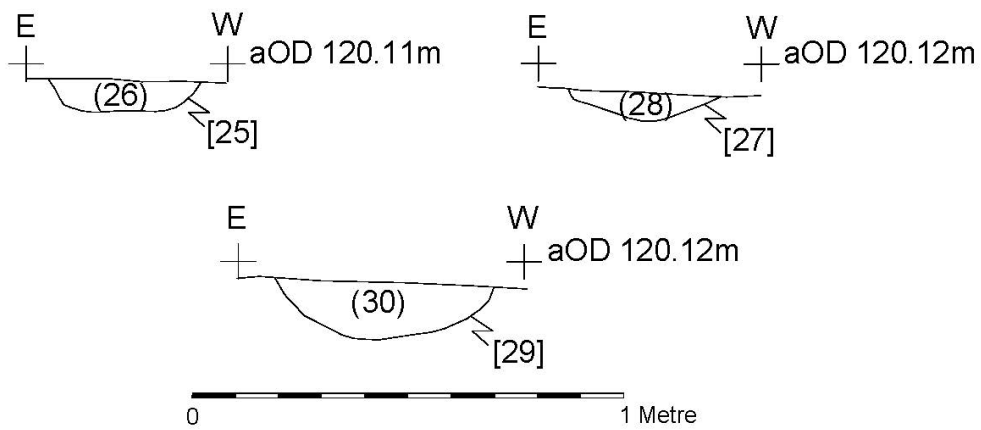


Figure 77: Post hole sections

The Lithics – Lynden Cooper

Introduction and overview

A collection of 25 lithics were retrieved from four contexts with nineteen recovered from a single pit fill (2). The latter feature included an assemblage of Late Neolithic Grooved Ware. The flint and ceramic groups were assessed during the excavation stage after being highlighted by the field staff. Full excavation and bulk recovery of the fill for sieving was recommended. Sieving produced 13 chips at 2mm fraction and 67 pieces in total: chips, flakes and flake fragments at 4mm fraction.

The Late Neolithic pit group

The Late Neolithic pit [1] contained three 2ry flakes, seven 3ry flakes, ten flake fragments and a very small core-tool. The raw material was a dark brown (black on thick pieces), semi-translucent flint of East England origin. Small patches of thin cortex and patinated natural scars were present but the relative lack of cortex suggested that chalk derived nodules had been subject to primary knapping elsewhere. The micro-debitage indicated working of flint and possibly retouching of tools. Two of the larger flakes have modified and worn edges probably resulting from a cutting function. The other flakes also presented long sharp edges that probably indicate a likely cutting function. The small core was pyramidal and the flakes were of a very small size, unlikely to have been used as implements. The core had a length of abrupt retouch on one side and denticulated edge on another side.

Statement of potential

This small but coherent pit group represents rare evidence for an episode of flint working, including micro-debitage from the retouching of tool edges, and is deserving of further analysis, whether or not further evidence is found during subsequent field work.

The Late Neolithic Grooved Ware pottery – Nicholas J. Cooper

Introduction

A total of 41 sherds (427g) were recovered from Pit [1] (2) in Trench 17, primarily during hand excavation but with 15 small sherds (30g) also recovered from coarse fraction sorting of the bulk soil samples. The assemblage has been classified according to the Leicestershire Prehistoric Pottery fabric series (Marsden 2011, 62) and quantified by sherd count and weight (g).

Analysis by fabric and decoration

The quantified record by fabric and decoration is presented below (Table 1)

Table 1 Quantified record of the Grooved Ware pottery

Late Neolithic Grooved Ware from Lutterworth X.A84.2019								
Tr	Cut	Cont	Fabric	Dec	Sherds	Wght	Diam	Comment
17	1	2	Q1	Ribbed/oblique incised	6	30	200	Vessel 1 Durrington Walls
17	1	2	Q1	Oblique incised int/ext	18	35		Vessel 2 Durrington Walls
17	1	2	Q1	Oblique incised	3	16		Vessel 3 Durrington Walls
17	1	2	Q1	Fine incised overlapping	4	57		Vessel 4 some shell

17	1	2	S2	Vertical rib from base	6	64	140	Vessel 5 carbonised residue
17	1	2	Q1		1	147	120	Vessel 6 thick base
17	1	2	Q1	curving parallel incised	1	45	200	Vessel 7 thick body
17	1	2	S2	horizontal fingernail lines	2	33		Vessel 8
Total					41	427		Average sherd wght 10g

The partial remains of eight vessels has been identified, three of which (1, 2 and 4) have joining sherds. The average sherd weight of 10g is relatively high considering it includes material from samples, but whilst the surface condition of Vessels 1 and 2 is good, the remainder show signs of abrasion. The vessels have been handmade in a fine, rounded quartz sand-tempered fabric (Q1) which occasionally also contains shell inclusions (S2), which have leached out, leaving plate-like voids. The fabrics are similar to those used across the county at this time.

Vessels 1-3 clearly belong to the Durrington Walls style, characterised by infilled zones of parallel grooves abutting obliquely and, in the case of Vessel 1, separated by applied vertical strips (Manby 1999, Table.6.2). Vessel 2 is notable in having bands of oblique grooves zig-zagging around the smoothed internal surface suggesting a wide or shallow bowl, similar to examples from Grimes Graves, Norfolk (Brindley 1999, 140. Illus 14.2, 1-2, Horizon 1). Vessel 3 is rather abraded to be certain of the design but clearly has abutting bands of grooved infill.

Vessel 4 is decorated with single fine striations running vertically down the body, angled obliquely so that they overlap randomly. Vessel 5 is abraded but clearly decorated with an applied vertical rib coming up from the base (which would place it in the Durrington Walls style), and has carbonised residue around the internal surface. Vessel 6 is a base, the edges of which have been damaged but was probably about 120mm in diameter. Vessel 7 is decorated with widely spaced but parallel curving grooves on large thick-bodied pot, with a girth of at least 200mm. Vessel 8 is heavily abraded but the parallel groove appear to be formed from continuous fingernail impressions running horizontally around the pot. These motifs are all broadly associated with the Durrington Walls style.

Discussion

This small and fragmentary group of Grooved Ware represents a significant addition to the corpus of Late Neolithic ceramics from the county. Alongside the assemblage of 74 sherds from Husbands Bosworth (Percival in prep) these two groups from the south of the county are the largest to be predominantly in the Durrington Walls style. Other occurrences in this style lie in the northern half of the county at Kirby Muxloe, Syston, Wanlip, Castle Donington, and Queniborough (Gibson 2011, 20). The assemblage helps to redress the imbalance created by the recent publication of the large groups in the Clacton/Woodlands style from the Rothley Temple Grange and Rothley Lodge sites (Cooper 2015 and 2016 respectively) and earlier from Braunstone (Albone 1999, 224).

Statement of potential

The Rothley Lodge assemblage was dated by two radiocarbon determinations of 2814-2579 and 2849-2780 cal BC (68% probability SUERC-62381; 61190), which were obtained from carbonised residues on two Grooved Ware sherds (Cooper 2016, 42). The Grooved Ware sequence is currently considered to span the period *c.* 2900-2100 BC (Garwood 1999, 152) with the Rothley groups lying early in that range. The Durrington Walls style is generally considered to be later in the sequence, but we don't have any radiocarbon dating for the material in the county. The Lutterworth pit group, with associated flint knapping debris and hazelnut shell (and carbonised residue on Vessel 5) presents an opportunity to gain secure radiocarbon

dating. As the sites at Rothley have previously demonstrated, stripping areas around Neolithic features have produced remarkable results, and Lutterworth presents another such opportunity which, if taken, is likely to add significantly to our baseline data about this period at the local and regional level.

The Roman Pottery – *Nicholas J. Cooper*

Description and analysis

Four abraded sherds of Roman pottery were recovered during the evaluation. The material has been classified using the Leicestershire Roman pottery form and fabric series (Pollard 1994, 114) and quantified by sherd count and weight. Two joining sherds (11g) from a jar in a fine oxidised fabric (OW2) came from [19] (20); they both have a black, carbonised deposit on the external surface. A single sherd (21g) from the shoulder of a jar with a horizontal rib, again manufactured in OW2 came from [23] (24). Lastly a very small and abraded sherd (1g) in shell-tempered ware fabric CG1A came from (91). Overall, an early Roman date of mid-1st century to early 2nd century is likely for the material, although the degree of abrasion suggests that it may have resulted from secondary deposition of manuring debris at some distance from the focus of activity, presumably the settlement at Leaders Farm.

The Post Medieval Pottery - *Deborah Sawday*

A fragment of Salt Glazed Stoneware, SW5 in the ULAS fabric series (Sawday 2009), weighing 24 grams, was recovered from the backfill of the gully, context (97). The sherd is part of the shoulder of a jug or possibly a globular mug, and has a mottled brown and black glaze on the exterior and is unglazed on the interior. The grey sandy fabric suggests that this is an English rather than a Rhenish stoneware; a similar vessel made at Fulham (Oswold 1982, fig.3) dates from about 1675.

The Animal Bone – *William Johnson*

A single small splinter of bone (weighing < 1g) was recovered from the Late Neolithic pit [1] (2), and is the only bone from the entire site. It is too small to judge whether it is either human or animal; this has been discarded.

The Charred Environmental Remains – *Adam Santer*

Introduction

During an archaeological evaluation at De Verdon Road, Lutterworth, Leicestershire, a bulk soil sample was taken for the analysis of charred plant remains. The sample was taken from the fill (2) of pit [1]. The pit was spot-dated to the Late Neolithic period and one-hundred percent of the feature was sampled and processed. The analysis of the environmental remains are 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 sample consisted mostly of a mid-orange/brown silty sand and was processed in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm sieve. The flotation fraction (flot) was

sorted for plant remains and other artefacts under an x10-40 stereo microscope. The residues were air dried and the fractions >4mm and 2-4mm were sorted in their entirety whilst the fraction under 2mm was not sorted at all (due to time and budget constraints). Plant remains were identified by comparison to modern reference material available at ULAS and their names follow Stace (1991).

Results

Charred plant remains

The sample contained a medium density of charred plant remains (8.63 items per litre). This consisted mostly of hazelnut shell fragments (*Corylus avellana* L.) of varying sizes. Six hundred and eighty-one hazelnut shell fragments were found in varying sizes and in excellent states of preservation. The only other plant remain type found was a single indeterminate cereal grain which was too poorly preserved and fragmentary to identify to genus.

Charcoal

The sample contained a high abundance of charcoal fragments. The charcoal was well preserved and many fragments measured >2mm in diameter. This would allow for identification to species at a later date should this be required.

Table 1: The charred plant remains found in the sample

Sample	1	
Context	2	
Cut	1	
Feature type	Pit	
Date	Late Neolithic	
Cereal		
Indeterminate cereal grain	1	Indeterminate cereal grain
Nuts		
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L. nut shell fragments	681	Hazelnut shell fragments
Total	682	
Soil volume (L)	79	
% Analysed	100%	
Items per litre	8.63	

Discussion

Hazelnut shell is found frequently amongst charred assemblages of Neolithic plant remains in the British Isles; and it is not unusual to find them in greater numbers than cereal grains (Bishop et al 2009, and for examples see Worley et al 2019, and Monckton 2005). They appear as a waste products of food foraged from woodland and/or scrub (see Monckton 1998). It has been argued that the deposition of burnt nut shell in the Neolithic period held ceremonial importance (see Robinson 2000, cited in Monckton 2005). This would need to be explored further.

It is very problematic to use counts or even combined weights of hazelnut shell fragments to establish a minimum number of individuals present (see Berihuete Azorín and Antolín 2012). Time is needed to measure the diameter of individual nut shells against available experimental data and even this is not a conclusive method as varying sizes of nuts and the shrinkage of shells which occurs as a result of charring must all be taken into account (see *ibid*).

Conclusion and statement of potential

The charring of hazelnut shell could be the result of accidental burning during roasting prior to consumption (see Bishop 2019). It is probable that the nut shells present in the De Verdon Road pit when combined represent a small pile of nuts which were gathered in order to temporarily sustain an individual or a small family unit. If the nut shells were burned deliberately as fuel (which is often a suggested route of entry, see Bishop et al 2009) then it is probable that the nuts were consumed while undertaking daily tasks in front of a hearth or bonfire and the remaining shells were used as fuel or kindling. The charred remains would have entered the pit during the deposition of domestic waste (such as ash, charcoal and pottery etc.).

The lack of identifiable cereal grains and the total absence of wild seeds recovered means that it was not possible to make any conclusions about crop husbandry. The one cereal grain that was found could be intrusive. An abundance of modern rootlets and weed seeds is indicative of disturbance to the contexts through bioturbation.

The abundance of charred hazelnut shell and >2mm charcoal means that there is ample material suitable for radiocarbon dating. If radiocarbon dating is desired it is recommended that hazelnut shell fragments are submitted for this rather than charred wood in order to avoid the dating of long-lived wood species or mixed assemblages (see Monckton 2003).

The abundance of charcoal suitable for identification is useful in terms of building a broader picture of the wood environment of Neolithic Leicestershire by collecting data. Changes in the wood environment have been previously noted (i.e. the decline of lime and evidence for woodland clearance, see Monckton 2003). It would be of value to find consistency (or otherwise) in new sites in Leicestershire and add to the regional dataset.

Any future work in the area should adopt a suitable sampling strategy as to obtain more evidence of gathered dietary resources and wood use; but also to find evidence of early cereal cultivation and crop husbandry through the recovery of wild plant remains as well as cereals. Plant remains are normally found in low densities in sites from this period, so it is recommended that a minimum of 50 litres of soil is taken from all of the features sampled; with a view to sorting all of the flotation fractions and heavy residues in full (see *ibid*). Pollen cores should also be taken in order to find further evidence of woodland clearance (see *ibid*). The lack of published environmental work from this period is a noted issue (see *ibid*), so any results obtained from future work should be made accessible.

Discussion & Conclusion

The trenching revealed archaeological features across eleven of the seventeen excavated trenches, with a concentration along the eastern and southern sides of the area.

The majority of the finds came from a single pit [1] which contained a rare assemblage of Grooved Ware pottery and flint dating to the Neolithic period. Features from this period are scarce in the county, the closest being Husband's Bosworth which is in the vicinity. This small and fragmentary group of Grooved Ware represents a significant addition to the corpus of Late Neolithic ceramics from the county. It is unknown if the pit is in isolation but further excavation could produce more features from the same period, thereby providing a more informed context for the assemblage.

While the series of gullies and possible pits would mostly appear to be undated at this time, three did produce Roman pottery from the 1st-2nd Century. With the Leaders Farm excavation

of 2013 (Morris 2014) only 100m to the west it would seem likely that some of these features could be the continuation of a wider Iron Age or Roman field system landscape (Fig. 79). The terminals of at least one enclosure were found in Trench 3, while the density and complexity of features in Trench 2 highlight the potential for several phases of boundary activity, as was revealed at the nearby Leaders Farm excavation.

Several parallel gullies which may be post-medieval in nature in trenches 8 and 11, could represent medieval or early post medieval boundaries before larger enclosures.

The ditches [111] and [115] in trench 1 may represent part of the long rectangular boundary on the 1790 enclosure map labelled 109 (Fig. 78). Furrows in trenches 13-16, seem to be parallel with field boundaries on 1790 enclosure map and 1885 OS map. Those in trench 14 might be of a different alignment reflecting the old boundary division of the 1790 enclosure map.

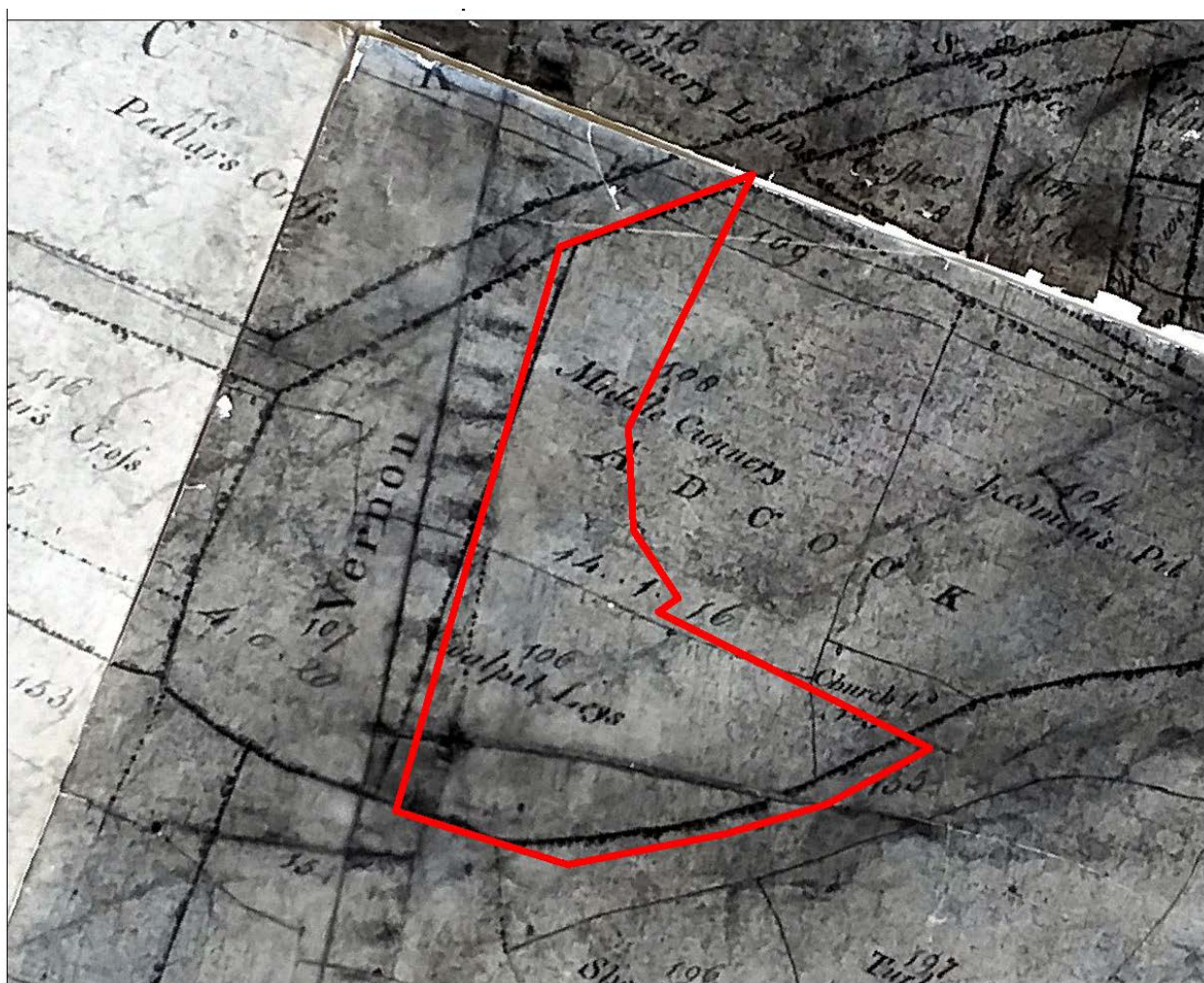


Figure 78: 1790 Enclosure map



Figure 79: Leaders Farm & Allotment sites

Archive and publication

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number X.A84.2019 and consists of the following:

- 1 Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report No. 2019-146)
- 17 Trench recording sheets
- 3 Context index sheet
- 1 Drawing index
- 2 Drawing record sheets
- 4 Permatrace drawing sheets
- 120 Context sheets
- 1 Sample index
- 2 Photo Record sheets
- 4 Contact sheets of digital photographs
- 1 CD containing a copy of this report and the digital photographs
- 1 Plan showing trench locations
- 1 Finds checklist with associated finds and environmental material.

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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