UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER
Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Field Evaluation and Metal Detector Survey on Land at The White Swan Public House, 47 High Street, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire

NGR: SP 3972 9737

Stephen Baker

ULAS Report No 2020-100

Site Name: The White Swan Public House, 47 High Street, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire

Grid Ref: SP 3972 9737

Author: Stephen Baker

Client: Everards Brewery Ltd

Planning Ref. N/A

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OASIS RECORD

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	Significant Finds/Period	None		
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	Position in the Planning Process	Pre-App		
	Planning Ref.	N/A		
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	Site Address/Postcode	The White Swan Public House, 47 High Street, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire		
	Study Area	4995 square metres		
	Site Coordinates	SP 3972 9737		
	Height OD	106m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	**Organisation**	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	ULAS		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	John Thomas		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Stephen Baker		
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(SP 3972 9737)

Stephen Baker

Summary

This document is a fieldwork report for an archaeological trial trench evaluation and metal detector survey carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) and Ambion Historical and Archaeological Research Group on land at The White Swan Public House, 47 High Street, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire (SP3972 9737), in advance of residential development.

Eight trenches were opened on the site, positioned to target the footprints of the proposed new buildings, an access road and car parking area. These revealed two shallow undated depressions filled with subsoils, and one yielding animal bone and flint flakes. Other geological features were identified, possibly associated with standing water or water borne deposits. Evidence of possible ridge and furrow survived to the west of the site. Because of the proximity of the site to the Bosworth Battlefield, a systematic metal detector survey was undertaken across the area, and on any top and subsoils excavated, but this yielded no significant finds. The central development area was subject to significant modern ground consolidation and dumping of building rubbish.

The archive for the site will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums under accession number XA53.2020.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were contracted by the client, Everards Brewery Ltd, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation and metal detector survey on land at The White Swan Public House, 47 High Street, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire (SP 3972 9737) The fieldwork was carried out between 30th June and 1st July 2020.

The pre-application work was required by the Planning Authority following advice from Leicestershire County Council in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, MHCLG 2019). All work was undertaken as per the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (LaCombe, 2020).

The development involves the construction of residential dwellings, an access road and car parking. The work was intended to provide a preliminary indication 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.

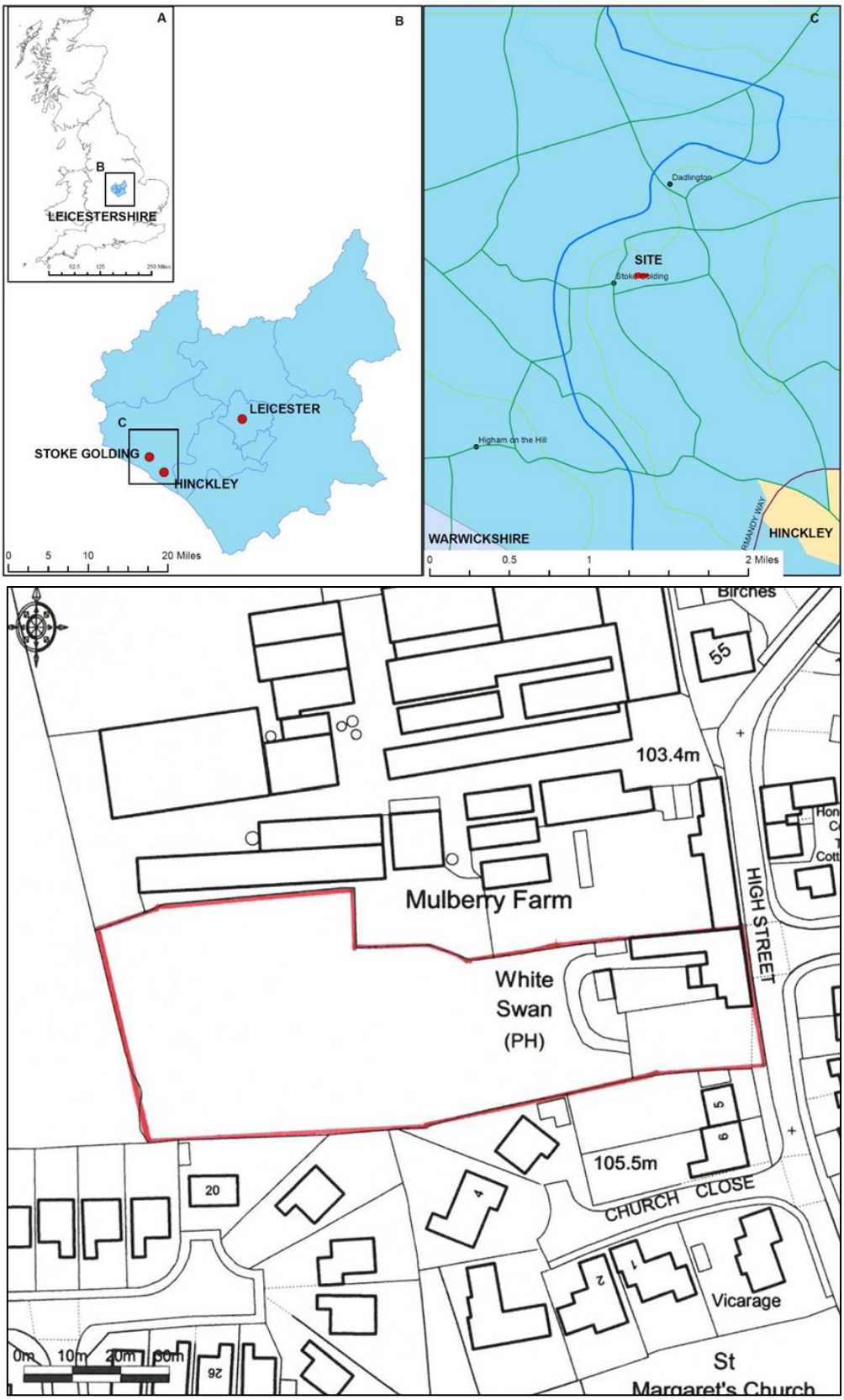

Figure 1: Site location: UK (a), county (b), local (c)
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Figure 2: Proposed development (plan supplied by client)

Location and Geology (Figure 1 and 2)

Stoke Golding lies 15 miles south-west of Leicester and 3 miles north-west of Hinckley, in the Hinckley and Bosworth district of Leicestershire.

Planning permission is being sought for a residential development and the Planning Archaeologist as advisor to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council has therefore requested an archaeological field evaluation and survey. This comprised a phased programme of archaeological work commencing with a systematic metal-detector survey followed by trial trenching to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on any buried archaeology and produce a mitigation strategy for the site.

The assessment area consisted of the White Swan public house, car park and beer garden, with some adjacent outhouses and a garage, plus an area of rough grassland to the west. The site rose from the road to the west, but then fell to the west at the rear of the site. It lay at an average height of around 105m aOD and covered a total of 4995 square metres.

The British Geological Survey website indicated that the underlying geology consisted of Oadby Member Diamicton overlying Gunthorpe Member Mudstone.

Historical and Archaeological Background (summarised from Hunt 2018)

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland indicated that there were no known archaeological remains within the assessment area itself. The following information is taken from the Desk Based Assessment that has previously been prepared for the project (Hunt, 2019).

There are no Scheduled Monuments within the proposed area for development. The nearest Scheduled Monument is the 'Hlaew' and medieval farmstead that lies around 300m south of the assessment area.

No other designated heritage assets (World Heritage Sites or Listed Buildings) are located within the site. However, the registered battlefield of Bosworth Field lies to the north-west of the assessment area. The western part of the assessment area is shown on the Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland as lying just within the extent of the battlefield.

There are a number of known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the assessment area. A summary of these within a 1km radius of the assessment area is described below. The HER reference numbers are shown in bold in the text.

A small amount of prehistoric flint was discovered at 17a Park Lodge, 20m south of the assessment area (**MLE20476**). A flint knife, a scraper and a flake were found at 31 Hinckley Road, 340m south-east of the site (**MLE9174**). Another small amount of flint was discovered south of The Courtyard, 400m south- west of the assessment area (**MLE20477**). A further small assemblage of flint was discovered 740m south-west of the site, east of Higham Lane (**MLE20471**). A fieldwalking survey undertaken by Hinckley Archaeological Society between 2006 and 2008, at Millfield Farm, 640m south-west of the assessment area, yielded around 300 pieces of flint, dating from the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Early Bronze Age periods (**MLE20294; MLE20295**).

Roman pottery has been retrieved during excavations at 17 Station Road, 240m south of the assessment area (**MLE20475**). Another group of pottery sherds has been found 400m to the south-west of the assessment area south of The Courtyard **(MLE20478)**.

Fieldwalking undertaken at Millfield Farm and Higham Lane (see above) yielded Roman pottery sherds (**MLE20291**; **MLE20472**), and a further sherd was found at 3 Church Close, 60m south of the assessment area (**MLE8504**). A Roman brooch was found during metal detecting east of Dadlington House Farm, 1km north of the assessment area (**MLE20612**).

Archaeological work on a site at 17 Station Road, around 230m to the south of the assessment area, revealed an Anglo-Saxon site, including ditches, gullies, the foundations of a stone wall and a silver penny dated to AD 959-975 (**MLE16635**). Around 300m south of the assessment area is the Scheduled Monument of a 'Hlaew' and medieval farmstead. The Hlaew is an Anglo-Saxon burial mound, and this is situated within a rectangular earthwork. It is no longer visible at ground level but survives as a buried feature with a 3m wide ditch encircling. The mound

was partially excavated in the 1930s and pottery, including part of a hanging bowl were discovered, providing an approximate 7th century date (**MLE2903**).

The ferrule of an Anglo-Saxon spearhead was found at Crown Hill, 250m west of the assessment area (**MLE9171**). Pottery from the same period was found whilst fieldwalking near to The Courtyard, 420m south-west of the site (**MLE20480**).

The site lies within the medieval settlement core of Stoke Golding, derived from early maps of the village (**MLE2908**).

The small 13th century church of St. Margaret, along with its burial ground, lies 100m south of the assessment area (**MLE12170** & **MLE21736**).

The scheduled monument at 'The Moats', which lies 300m south of the site (see **MLE2903** above) is largely medieval in date, consisting of a medieval moated farmstead with the remains of building platforms and terraces, the main farmstead complex and ponds (**MLE2905**).

Recent archaeological work undertaken by ULAS at Laburnum Cottage, 240m south- east of the assessment area revealed former medieval plot boundaries of 12th-14th century date (**MLE23399**).

There are several known sites and findspots of medieval date in the village including medieval remains at 16 Station Road (**MLE16036**) and at Dormer Cottage, 200m south of the assessment area (**MLE21734**). A belt fitting and a possible saddle pommel were retrieved from Crown Hill (**MLE9172** & **MLE9173**), a flask from west of Ivy House Farm, 200m north of the site (**MLE6793**), and medieval pottery from Millfield Farm (**MLE20293**) and east of Higham Lane (**MLE20473**).

Ridge and furrow earthworks are located 750m east of the site (**MLE21977**).

The ponds within the scheduled monument of 'The Moats' (see above) are most likely post-medieval in date (**MLE2904**).

The Anglo-Saxon burial mound described above was retained as a prospect mound and used during the post-medieval period. There is a further prospect mound 130m to the south of the assessment area (**MLE2907**).

An early post-medieval house once stood at Park House, Main Street, 260m south of the site. The current house there seems to contain elements of this early building (**MLE17662**). The remains of a post-medieval barn and ditch lie nearby (**MLE20060** & **MLE21734**).

There is a Cold War Royal Observer Corps monitoring post located 700m south of the assessment area. This still contained some fittings and furniture when last inspected but is now sealed (**MLE16015**).

While none of these records relate directly to the development area, archaeology nearby suggests that there is the possibility for archaeology to be present on the site.

There are two Conservation Areas in the village; Stoke Golding Conservation Area and the Ashby Canal Conservation Area. The assessment area lies within the former.

There are a number of listed and other historic buildings in the village. The most notable is the 13th century Grade I listed church of St. Margaret, which lies 100m to the south of the assessment area (see above). Pevsner described it in great detail and calls it 'one of the most beautiful churches in Leicestershire' (Pevsner 1984) (**MLE21736**).

The closest listed building to the site is the Grade II listed early 18th century house at The Birches, High Street, which lies 75m north of the assessment area (**MLE13095**).

Archaeological Objectives

The overall aim of the investigation was to provide evidence to aid understanding the nature, date, function, and character of the archaeological remains at the site in their cultural and environmental setting, and to preserve it by record.

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits.
- To establish the eco-factual 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.

The results of the evaluation provide information in order for the local planning authority to make informed recommendations and to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy for the proposed development.

Research Objectives

While the nature, extent and quality of archaeological remains within the areas of investigation for the project remained unknown until archaeological work was undertaken, it was possible to determine some initial objectives derived from *East Midlands Heritage* research agenda (Cooper 2006, Knight *et al*. 2012, https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/). The site's location inside the historic village core suggested that there was potential for archaeological deposits from the medieval period onwards. The finds spots and HER records also suggested that there was some potential for archaeological deposits of Iron Age and Roman origin. The evaluation therefore had the potential to contribute to the following research aims.

Prehistoric

- Can we further refine lithic artefact chronologies within the region? (3.1.3)

- What may analyses of surface lithic scatters teach us about developing settlement patterns in the region? (3.5.4)

Romano-British

- What resources moved in and out of the region during this period? (5.6.1)

Medieval

- How can we elucidate further the development of nucleated villages, and in particular the contribution of the Danelaw to changes in village morphology? (7.2.1)

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

- What can environmental remains teach us about diet and living conditions in urban, rural and coastal communities? (7.7.4)

These research aims were identified based on the current state of knowledge within the area of the scheme. The research aims were re-assessed and updated during the course of the fieldwork.

Methodology

Prior to any machining of the trial trenches, general photographs of the site were taken. Eight trenches (five 15m and three 20m long) (Figure 4) were positioned to target the planned building footprints, access road and car parking area, using a Topcon Hyper SR FC5000 GPS. They were excavated in level spits, where possible, using a JCB mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket (Figure 3).

Figure 3: Machining Trench 1, looking south-east

The trenches were examined for archaeological deposits or finds by hand cleaning and tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid by GPS. They were typically backfilled and levelled at the end of recording, with approval from the Leicestershire County Council Planning Archaeologist. One trench (Trench 2) was opened, recorded and backfilled in succession due to its substantial depth.

Each trench was subject to systematic non-discriminatory mode metal detecting of the top and subsoils, as were the separated spoil heaps.

The work followed the approved WSI (ULAS 2020) and adhered to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2020).

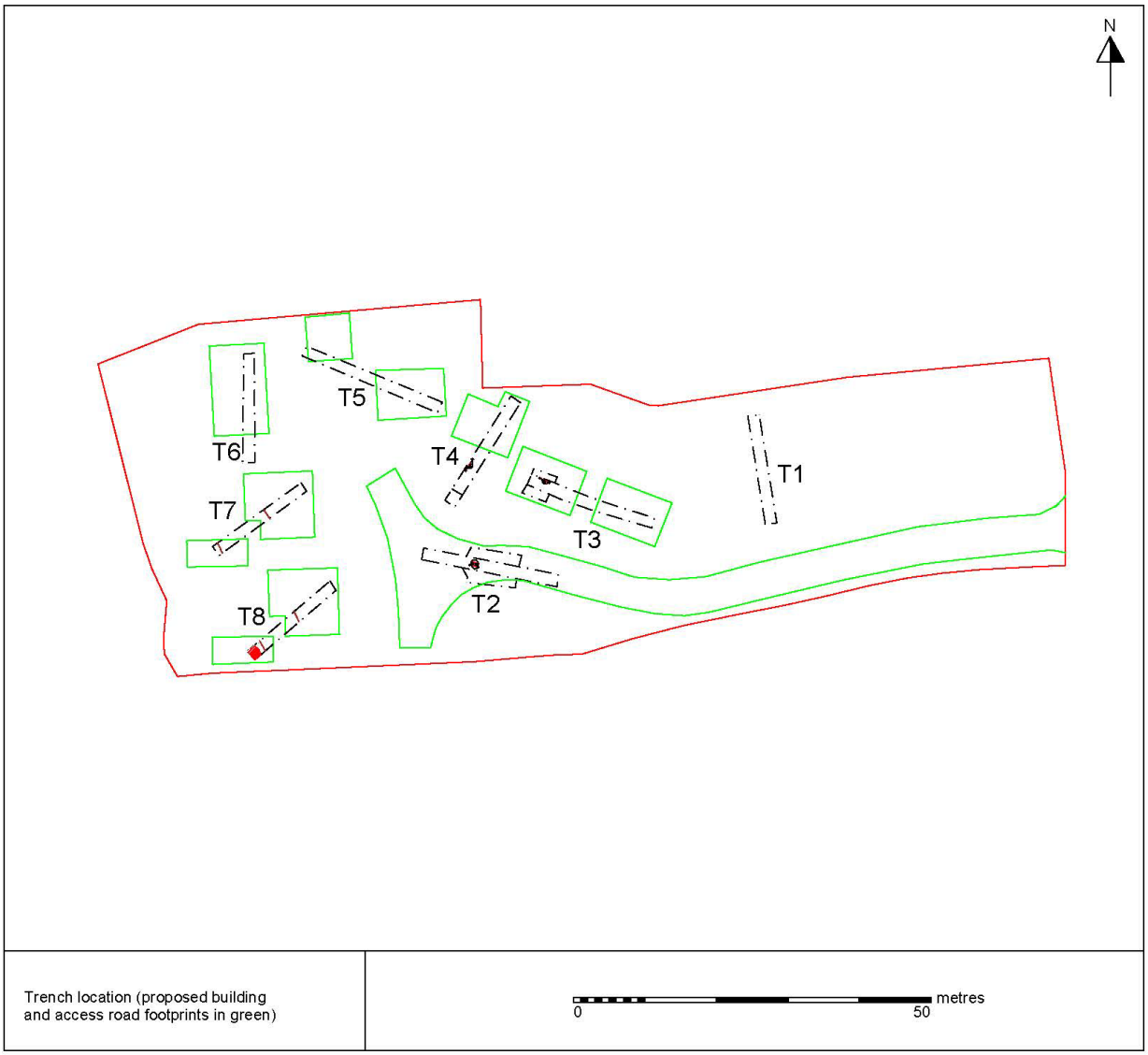

Figure 4: Trench location

Results (Table 1)

Eight trenches were excavated within the development area down to an archaeological horizon or the natural substratum; typically consisting of mixed red brown sand and clay gravels.

Table 1: Trench data

TRENCH	ORIENTATION	LENGTH AND WIDTH (m)	TOPSOIL THICKNESS(m)	SUBSOIL THICKNESS(m)	ARCHAEOLOGY DESCRIPTION	TRENCH DEPTH(m)
1	N - S	14.8 x 1.6	0.07 – 0.37	0.11 – 0.21	No archaeological deposits	0.11 – 0.63
2	E - W	18.5 x 106	0.19 – 0.23# (made grd 1.0 – 1.34)*	0.24 – 0.62 -	Pit? [02], made ground	1.65 – 2.73
3	WNW - ESE	18 x 1.6	0.14 – 0.31# (made grd 0.78 – 1.27)*	0.05 – 0.32	Geological feature? [04], made ground	0.99 – 1.97
4	N - S	15 x 1.6	0.17 – 0.28# (made grd 0.6 – 0.92)*	0.05 – 0.29	Poss' pit [06], made ground	1.0 – 1.58
5	NW – SE	20.2 x 106	0.1 – 0.24	0.09 – 0.29	No archaeological deposits	0.34 – 0.49
6	NNW - SSE	14 x 1.6	0.07 – 0.29	0.26 – 0.42	No archaeological deposits	0.55 – 0.68
7	NE - SW	14.5 x 1.6	0.13 – 0.28	0.1 – 0.22	No archaeological deposits	0.26 – 0.65
8	ENE WSW	14.5 x 1.6	0.07 – 0.13	0.05 – 0.13	No archaeological deposits	0.18 – 0.28

(* modern made ground above buried topsoil; # buried topsoil)

Trenches 1, 5 and 6

Trenches 1, 5 and 6 were stripped of a relatively consistent dark-brown grey sandy silt topsoil and mid-light orange brown sandy silt subsoil, down to an underlying mixed substratum of compacted red sand and clay localised gravels. They were devoid of archaeological deposits. Trench 1 (Figure 5) was positioned in the east of the site across the area of proposed car parking. The natural substratum was reached at 106.97m aOD. A circular anomaly was investigated and deemed to be a shallow depression filled with subsoil. Trench 5 was slightly

repositioned to the south-west after the removal of some mature vegetation and recorded natural substratum at 105.98m aOD. The topsoil observed within Trench 6 contained notably more modern building debris and it was unclear to what extent this had disturbed the subsoil. Natural was observed at 104.06m aOD.

Figure 5: Trench 1, looking north

Trench 2, 3 and 4

Trenches 2, 3 and 4 were positioned in the central area of the site over proposed building footprints and on visibly slightly raised ground. On excavation this proved to be due to a widespread and substantial levelled dump of modern building material, suspected of deriving from the construction of the adjacent existing residential properties. This made ground, typically a mixed brown grey silty clay matrix with substantial pockets of redeposited natural clays, contained metal waste in the form of girders, scaffolding, scrap, plastics, timbers and cement, deposited directly upon the original topsoil.

Figure 6: Trench 2, looking east

Trench 2 (Figure 6, Figure 7)

Trench 2 was positioned along the proposed access road. The modern made ground in this area was between 1.07 – 1.34m thick. The height of the buried topsoil appeared to indicate that this part of the site may have been a natural depression and an alluvium deposit was observed beneath the topsoil. The depth of the trench meant that steps were excavated to enable the safe investigation of a sub-circular anomaly. This proved to be a possible pit **[02]** (Figure 8), *c*.0.88m in diameter and *c*.0.23m deep, cutting the natural gravel substratum (105.61m aOD). The sides and central base of this feature were concave. Its single mid-brown grey silty clay fill **(01)**, containing small-large sub-rounded and rounded stone, yielded a shaft of cattle femur and two unworked flint flakes of Neolithic or Bronze Age date. The finds were recovered from the spoil set aside after initial investigation of the feature at the base of the trench by machine. As a result of this the trench was stepped to allow for access for hand cleaning and recording.

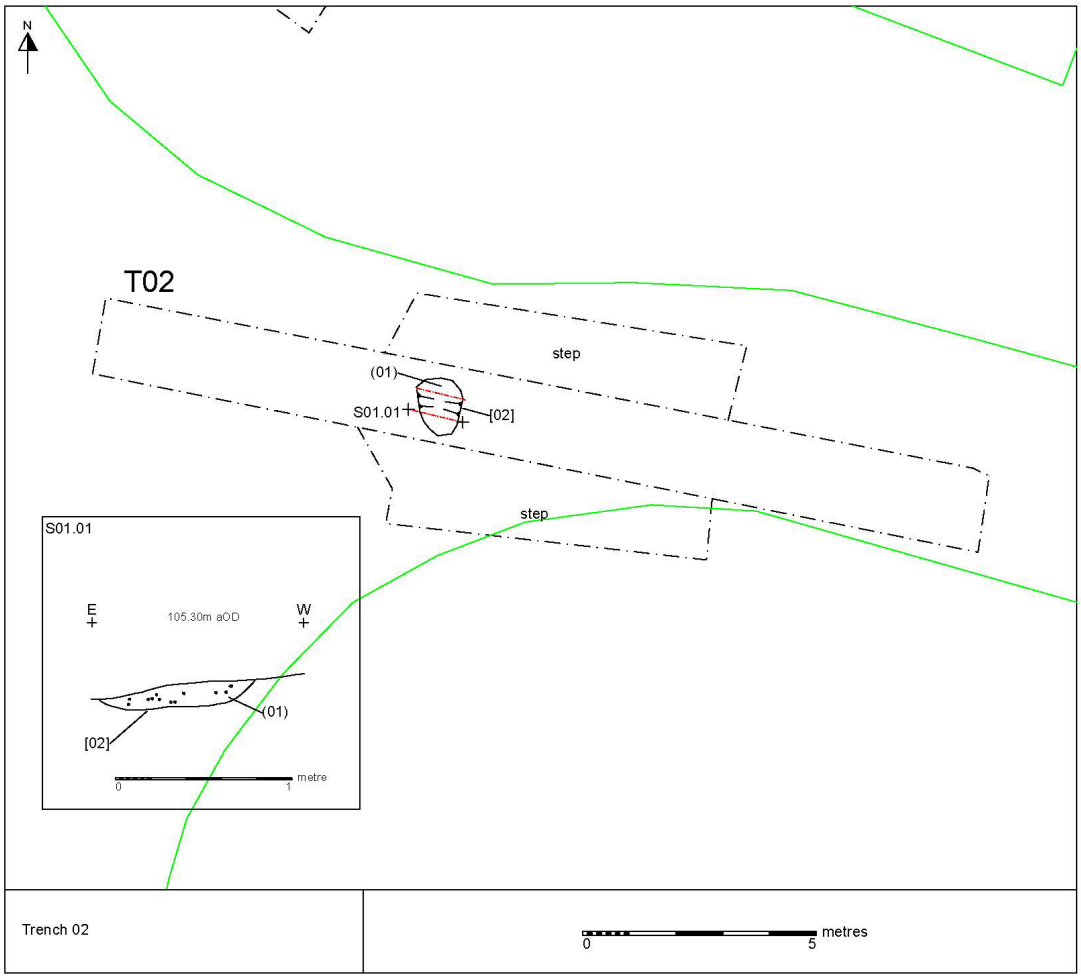

Figure 7: Trench 2 plan and Pit [02] section

Figure 8: Pit [02], Trench 2, looking south

Trench 3 (Figure 9, Figure 10)

Modern made ground was between 0.47 – 1.27m thick, increasing generally from the west to the east end. Alluvium deposits were also observed beneath the topsoil and an incomplete feature was investigated in the west end cutting the natural substratum (105.62m aOD). This possible pit **[04]** (Figure 11**)** had concave, albeit irregular sides and a concave, central base. It was *c*.0.86m in diameter and *c*.0.18m deep. It was difficult to distinguish the cut in section beneath the topsoil and single mid-brown grey clay silt fill **(03)**, with frequent small – moderate rounded stones and natural flint may represent a natural deposit in a shallow depression. It was devoid of finds.

Figure 9: Trench 3, looking east

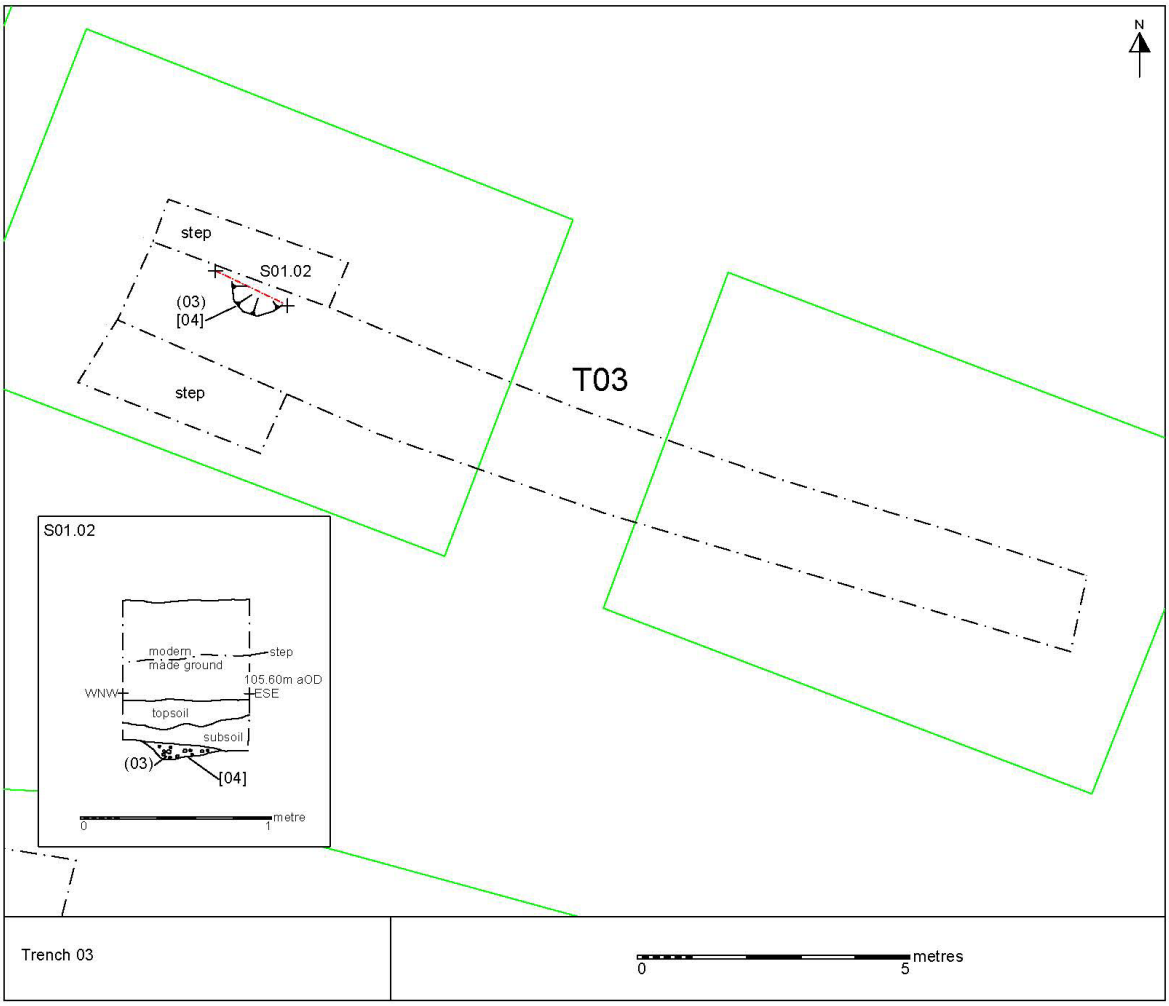

Figure 10: Trench 3 plan and Pit [04] section

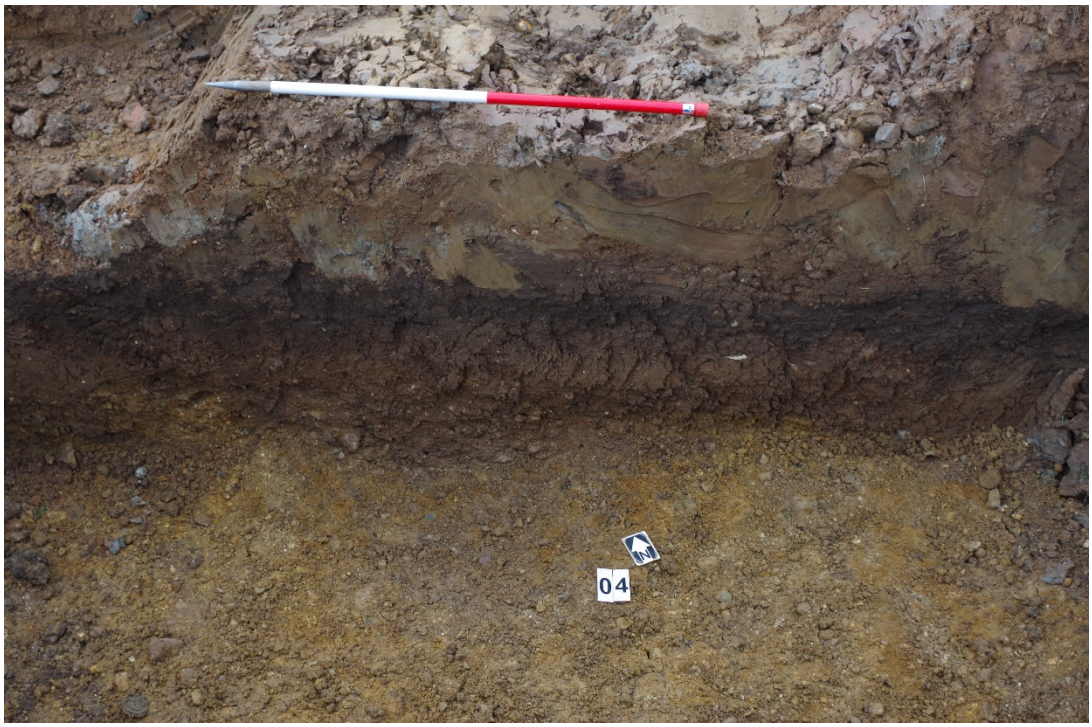

Figure 11: Pit [04], Trench 4, looking north

Trench 4 (Figure 12, Figure 13)

Positioned to the edge of the raised central area, the modern made ground was less substantial and between 0.6 – 0.92m thick. A comparable and relatively consistent buried topsoil was underlain by a subsoil and a dark grey alluvium clay deposit at the south end of the trench. Immediately to the north of this possible pit **[06]** (Figure 14) was investigated and recorded. The feature was incomplete with concave sides and concave central base. In had a depth of *c*.0.32m and diameter of c.1.91m. Singe mid-brown grey clay silt fill **(05)**, containing frequent small-medium sub-rounded stones and sub-angular natural flint, was devoid of finds. It was similar to the pit recorded within Trench 3. Natural substratum was observed from a height of 105.68m aOD.

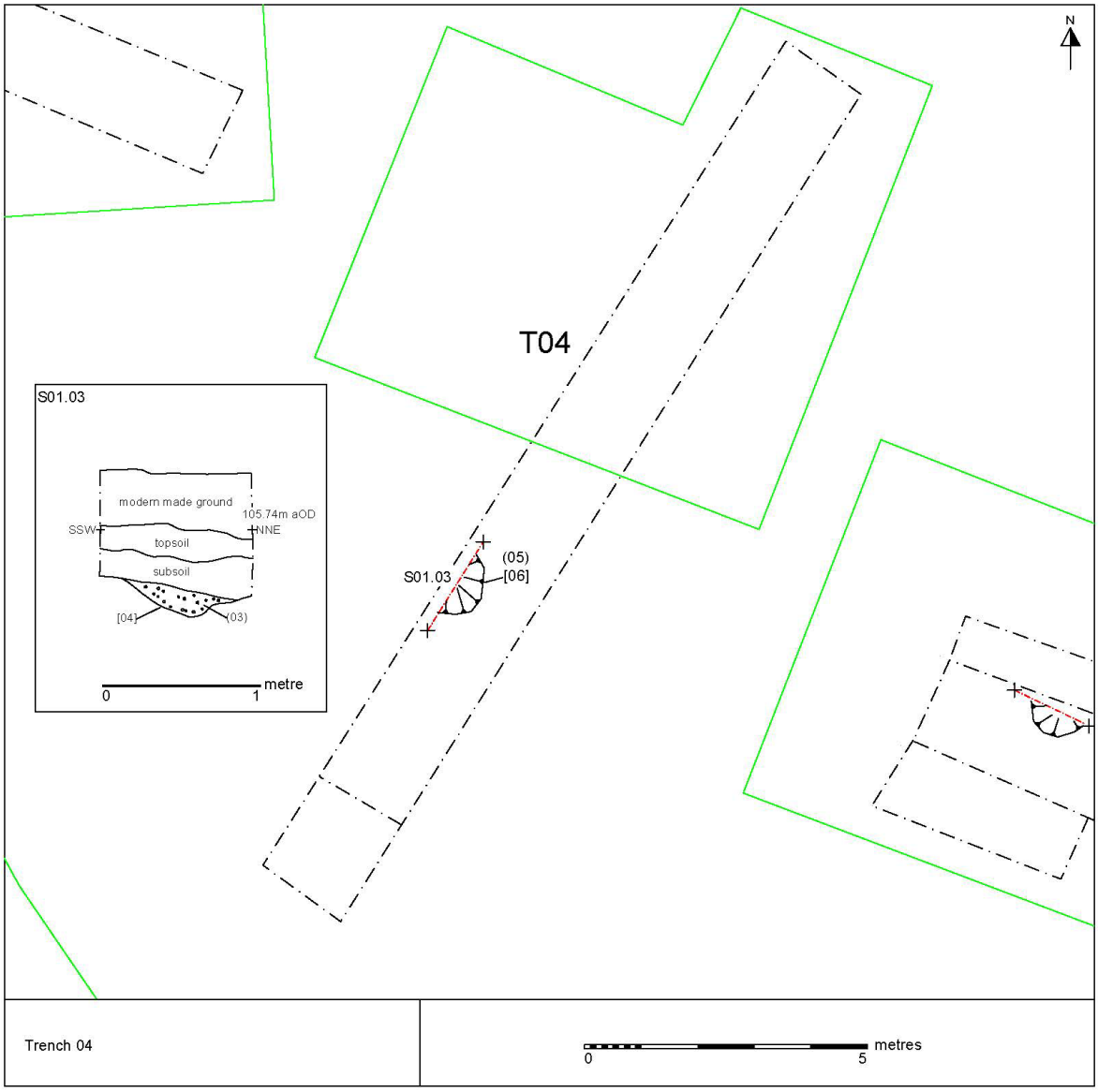

Figure 12: Trench 4 plan and Pit [04] section

Figure 13: Trench 4, looking north

Figure 14: Pit [06], Trench 4, looking west

Trench 7 and 8 (Figure 16)

Parallel trenches 7 and 8 were positioned across building footprints in the south-west of the proposed development area and outside the area subject to dumping. The removal of consistent top and subsoils revealed comparable compacted sand and clay gravels from a height of 105.49m aOD (Trench 6) and 106.24m aOD (Trench 7). Depressions in the substratum in both trenches appeared to correspond and possibly represent evidence, albeit tentative, for agricultural furrows orientated north-west by south-east (Figure 15). The west end of Trench 8 was subject to modern truncation, represented by a deposit containing modern CBM, plastics and glass fragments. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed.

Figure 15: Trench 7, looking west

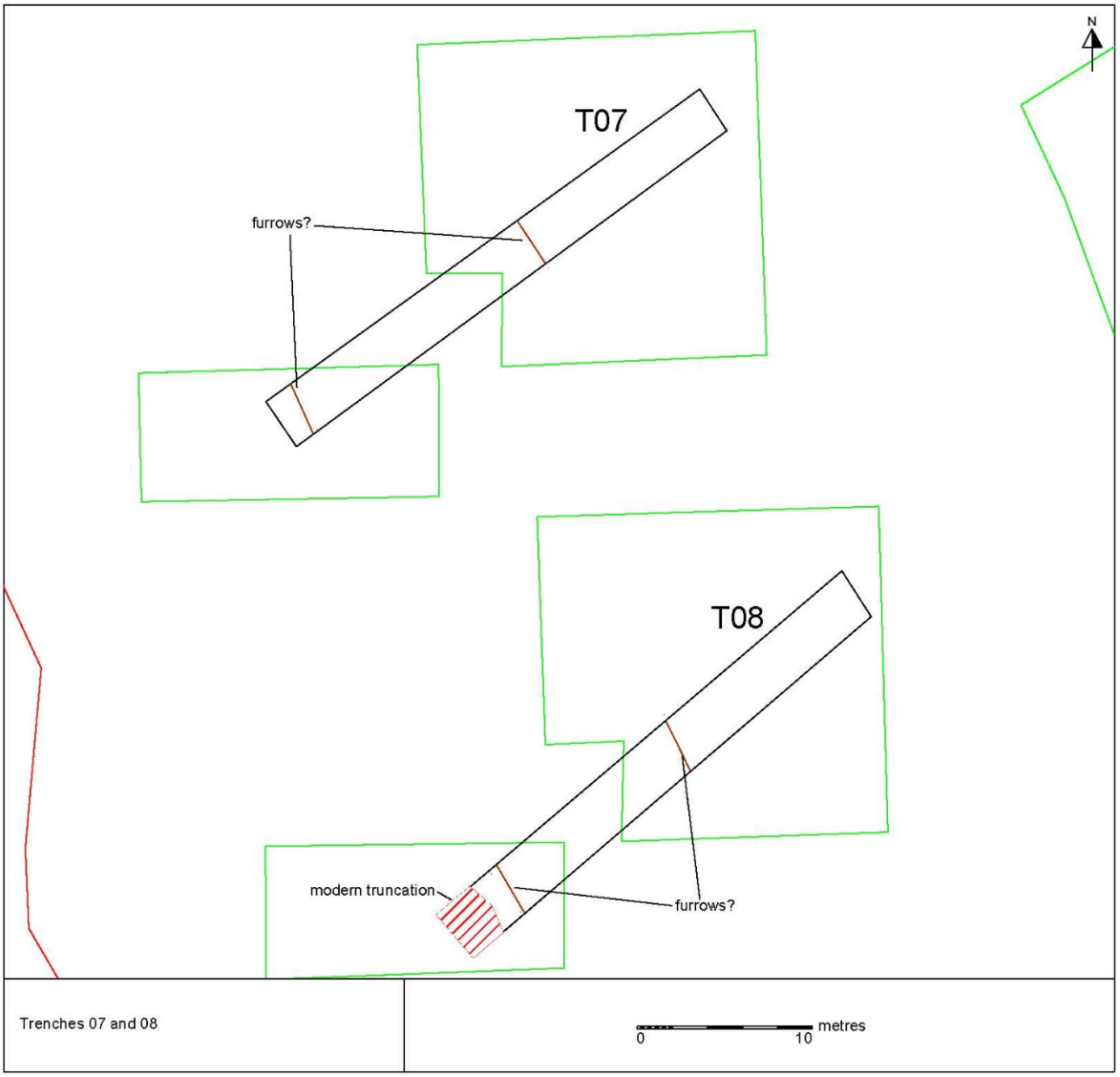

Figure 16: Trenches 7 and 8 plan

On-site Metal Detecting

The success of the systematic metal detecting of the trenches inbetween machine spit removal and of the top and subsoil thereafter was significantly limited due to the quantities of modern metallic debris within the topsoil and contained within the modern made ground. Most of the finds recovered were of scrap metal and implements such as tent pegs (Figure 17), suggesting that the land had been used as a campsite (see Appendix I)

Figure 17: Metallic debris from metal detecting

Discussion and Conclusion

The program of trial trenching revealed significant information about the proposed development area but only scant indication of archaeological remains. Either side of a conspicuously higher central area the trenches were relatively shallow with a suggestion of evidence possible furrows in Trenches 7 and 8, representing past agricultural activity on the periphery of the village. The isolated discrete features observed within Trenches 2, 3 and 4 were comparable, not only in size and depth and association with alluvial type deposits in a previously lower area of the site, but also in their somewhat tentative interpretation as representing archaeology. The finds recovered from Pit [02] corroborate this, although these were recovered during machining. The presence of modern overburden dumped across the central area of the proposed development did not appear to have disturbed the buried topsoil horizon but was a significant constraint to the systematic metal detector survey of the trenches and spoil heaps. The level of the buried topsoil recorded beneath this made ground suggested that the central part of the site was in a former depression, perhaps shedding light on the presence of deeper alluvium and waterborne deposits here. It seems likely that further remains may survive across the development area.

Archive and publication

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums with accession number XA53.2020 and consists of the following:

1 unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report No. 2020-100)
1 context index sheet

6 context record sheets
1 drawing index sheet
1 A3 permatrace drawing sheet
1 photo index sheet
2 colour contact sheets of digital photographs
1 CD containing a copy of this report, 44 digital photographs and 8 digital trench recording sheets
1 finds checklist with 1 bag of finds (animal bone, flint).

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.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like thank Everards Brewery Ltd for their help and co-operation with the project. Stephen Baker and Joseph Bartholomew carried out the fieldwork for ULAS. The Metal Detecting Survey was undertaken by Ambion Historical and Archaeological Research Group. The project was managed by John Thomas and monitored by Planning Archaeologists for Leicestershire County Council.

Appendix I: The Finds

The Flint – Identified by Nicholas J. Cooper

A secondary and a tertiary flake in a grey flint were recovered from pit (1) [2] indicating a broad Neolithic or Bronze Age date (see below).

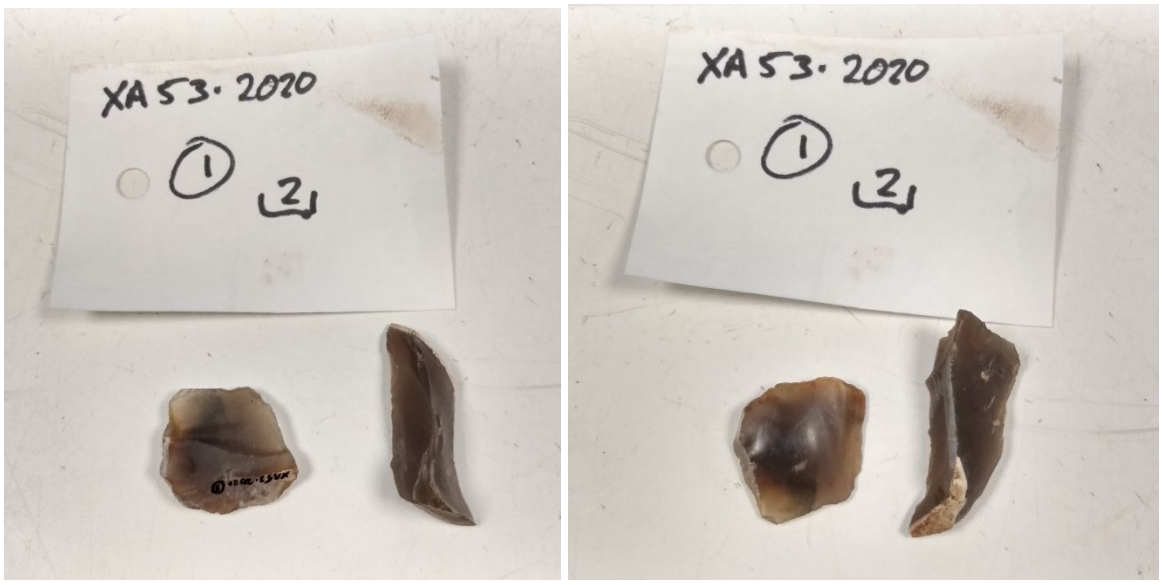

Figure 18: The flint flakes from Pit [2]

The Animal Bone – Identified by Rachel Small

A shaft fragment of a cattle femur was recovered from (1) [2].

Appendix II: Metal Detecting Survey

The White Swan Public House, Stoke Golding Carried out by members of AHARG (Ambion Historical and Archaeological Research Group) 13/06/2020

AHARG were approached by John Thomas of ULAS (University of Leicester Archaeological Services) and were asked to undertake a metal detecting survey of a proposed small housing development to the rear of the White Swan public house and due to the proximity of the site to the Bosworth Battlefield there was a requirement for an intensive metal detecting survey before any trial trenching was undertaken.

The area to be surveyed was just under 1 acre at 0.9697acre.
The history of the site is not fully known, but local history suggests that the area was at least partially an allotment at some point after the end of the Second World War.
In more recent times the site had been used every November for a large charity bonfire and fireworks display.

At the time of the survey, the area was a grass paddock which had only been mown for the first time in nine months, 3 days before the survey was carried out. The grass had not been removed but had been mulched.

There was a post and rope fence running approximately 1/3 of the way down across the field with a large modern beacon brazier next to it. Along most of the northern boundary was a dense mass of vegetation. Along the west boundary there was overhanging trees and some scrub. Most of the south boundary was clear to the boundary fence. There is a rough tarmac track in the eastern part of the survey area; along with a number of picnic tables (Figure 18)

Figure 18: Proposed development area, looking west

The survey was carried out after overnight heavy rain, but in hot sunny weather.

The survey was carried out on a systematic 2.5meter grid. This was laid out in an approximate north / south direction. The first transect was on the west boundary, the last near the eastern boundary.
The survey was carried out by two experienced metal detectorists who are part of a small team of detectorists who have over 25 years of experience working on Bosworth Battlefield.

Due to the encroaching vegetation and other obstacles mentioned above, not all of the 0.9697acre area was able to be covered.
The total amount of the area surveyed was actually 0.7221acre (Figure).

Figure 20: Metal Detecting Assessment area

The results of the survey were very disappointing.
There was a huge amount of 'noise' suggesting a large number of items, however these were all found to be rubbish. The pieces ranged from drinks cans to scrap pieces of iron. By far the largest number of items dug, was foil. Nothing of any historical interest was found.

The interpretation of the rubbish scatter is that every year after the bonfire, the resulting pile of debris is spread over the surrounding grass. Mowing then spreads this debris further afield.

The recommendation to see if there is any historical material in this area using metal detectors, would be to strip off the top 100mm of soil and then re survey the remaining ground.

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