An Archaeological Field Evaluation at Rothley Lodge Farm, Leicester Road, Rothley, Leicestershire. (SK 592 140)

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An Archaeological Field Evaluation at Rothley Lodge Farm, Leicester Road, Rothley, Leicestershire. (SK 592 140)

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching for Rosemound Developments Limited at the site of Rothley Lodge Farm, Leicester Road, Rothley, Leicestershire in advance of the proposed construction of five buildings for business, general industrial and warehousing with associated servicing, parking and landscaping. The site lies in an area identified as having moderate to high archaeological potential. The evaluation revealed a number of archaeological features dating from the Neolithic to the Early Bronze Age, including pits containing worked flint and pottery. Other linear features were discovered, which may date from a later period. The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services with accession number X.A240.2004.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching for Rosemound Developments Limited at the site of Rothley Lodge Farm, Leicester Road, Rothley, Leicestershire in advance of the development of the proposed construction of five buildings for business, general industrial and warehousing with associated servicing, parking and landscaping (planning application No. 00/2268/2). The land currently consists of disused farmland, which is divided into four fields, separated by hedges and footpaths (Figure 2).

Countryside Planning and Management, on behalf of Aldwych Developments Limited, had undertaken a desk-based assessment for the proposed development area (CPM 1997). This indicated that various prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval finds have been previously located in the vicinity. This assessment also recorded that remnants of medieval ridge and furrow had been recorded in the central and southern portions of the development area. These findings led to an archaeological fieldwork survey, including geophysical survey and fieldwalking, carried out by ULAS in January 1998 for Shire Properties Limited (Butler 1988; and Butler and Browning 1998).

The geophysical survey located a few anomalies that may have had archaeological origins. Areas of medieval ploughing remains and possible building debris were also discovered. The fieldwalking survey recovered a small quantity of worked flint, scattered throughout the four field areas. A few sherds of medieval pottery were also recovered.

A ‘Brief’ was prepared by Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services as archaeological advisors to the planning authority (17.2.2004, hereinafter ‘the brief’; Appendix 2). This requested an archaeological evaluation and an earthwork survey of

the proposed development site prior to construction. The work followed the Design Specification for Archaeological Work (Appendix 4: ULAS project number 05/537).

Site Location and Geology

The site is located 300m south east of Mountsorrel, just to the east of the A6 between Loughborough and Leicester (Figure 1). The area covers approximately 20ha. and consists of disused, or set aside, agricultural fields. At the time of the evaluation the fields were very overgrown with self-seeded crops, mainly wheat and rape, mixed with a large quantity of weeds and wild flowers.

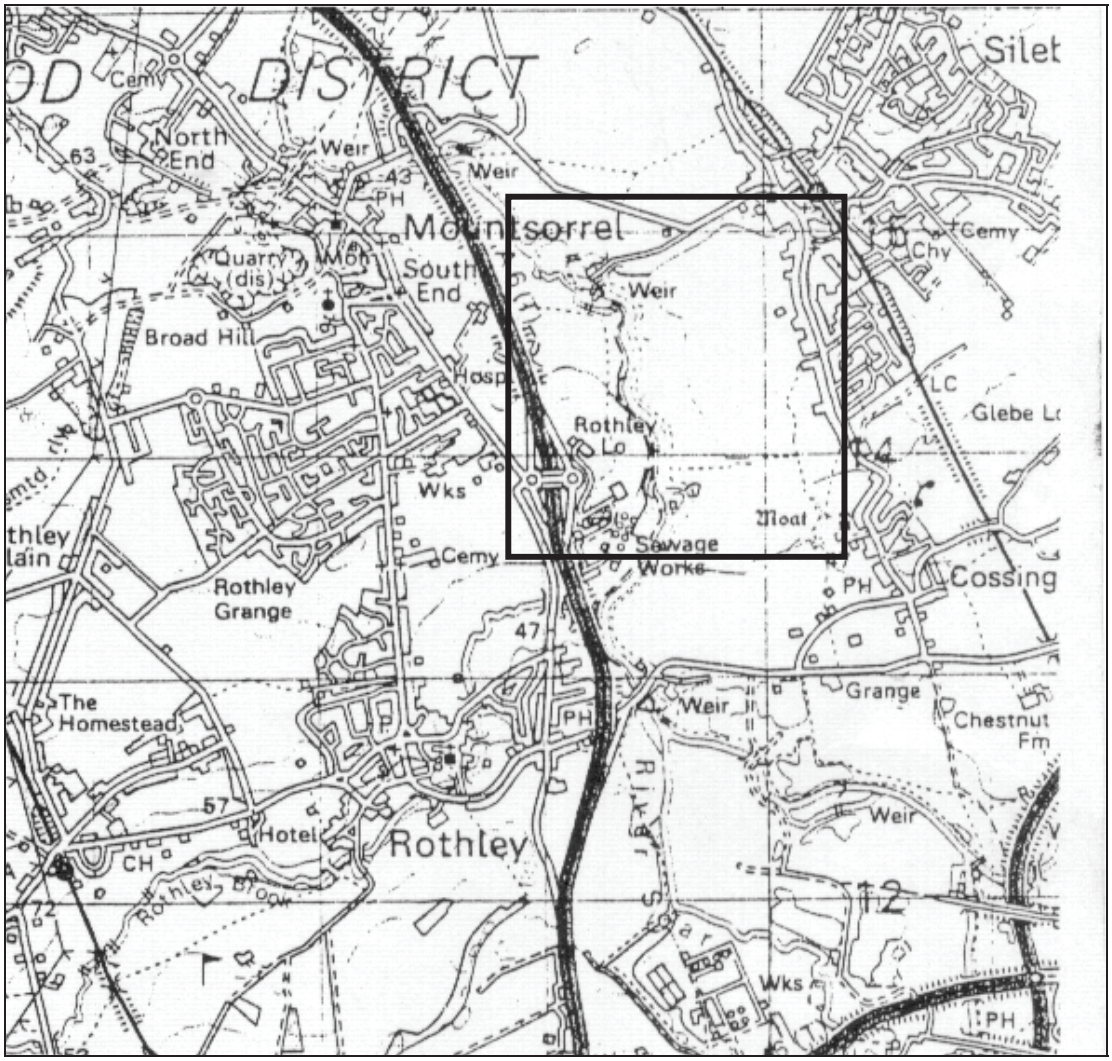

Figure 1: Site Location. Scale 1:50 000

The fields are partly bounded by the River Soar to the east and by the A6 to the west. The demolished farm buildings are situated at the top of the site at a height of *c.*61m

OD. From this point the land falls away to the north and east to *c.*44m OD along the banks of the Soar.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 156 indicates that the underlying geology consists of bands of glacial sands and gravels at the highest point of the site with Mercia Mudstone Group clays, river gravel and alluvium towards the bottom of the site.

Aims and Methods

The aim of the evaluation was to establish the presence or absence of archaeological deposits and, if present, determine their extent, character, date and quality of preservation. This would allow the Planning Archaeologist to assess the potential impact of the proposed development upon any archaeological remains.

All work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations.* The evaluation adhered to the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Manager's (SCAUM) Health and Safety Manual and ULAS's Health and Safety Guidelines (2001) and Health and Safety Policy (2001). The recording followed the ULAS Field Recording Manual.

A design specification for evaluation was agreed between ULAS and the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council and proposed an earthwork survey prior to any intrusive fieldwork followed by the excavation and examination of twenty five 30x1.6m trial trenches, equating to a 2% sample of the site, targeting areas which yielded apparent concentrations of worked flint.

It was proposed to locate the trenches mainly southeast to northwest across the site in order to follow the ridges of the ridge and furrow. The placing of the trenches was limited slightly by an electricity pylon traversing the site from east to west across fields 1 and 2 and by a gas pipeline running across fields 3 and 4 along a similar alignment.

Twenty six trenches were excavated, with extra trenches 25 and 26 being an attempt to define the extent of the archaeology discovered. Trench 10 was double the normal size in order to expose more archaeology in an area of dense activity (bringing the total trench area to *c.*48 square metres). This trench was 45m long with two adjoining smaller trenches of 9m (trench 10a) and 8m (trench 10b). All other trenches were approximately 30m long, except trench 24, which was foreshortened due to its proximity to a footpath (figure 3).

Trench 8 was aligned northeast to southwest in order to try and locate the ridge and furrow. As this did not succeed less attention was paid to the trenches alignment from this point on. All the trenches were 1.6m wide.

The trenches were excavated by a JCB 3CX using a toothless ditching bucket under the constant supervision of a member of ULAS. The trenches were excavated to the

top of the natural geological substrata or to the top of archaeological deposits, whichever was encountered first.

The features discovered during the evaluation were sample excavated. Pit features were half sectioned and 'linear' features had small sections cut through them. Feature (41)[47] was fully excavated after being half sectioned. Features that produced good examples of datable pottery or flint during the initial strip were targeted, alongside good examples of the larger linear features and the small postholes.

Historical and Archaeological Background

Countryside Planning and Management (CPM 1997) produced a desk-based assessment for the study area. This highlighted the potential for prehistoric remains in view of a scatter of worked flint material within the area (SMR 51 SE AK). Flint scatters have been recorded by local voluntary groups and by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants during fieldwalking and site visits. A local antiquarian is also believed to have discovered a flint scraper and a blade in 1923. Flint material was also discovered by CPM during their visit in 1997.

Geophysical survey by ULAS (Butler 1998) and fieldwalking (Browning and Butler 1998) identified possible archaeological features, scatters of flint and medieval and post-medieval pottery and medieval ridge and furrow field systems.

Results

Earthwork Survey

It was apparent after the initial walkover of the site on 22nd September 2004 that little or no evidence for ridge and furrow field systems remained extant. Their apparent absence led to the repositioning of trench 8 in order to observe the ridge and furrow in section. Evidence could neither be found for them in this trench nor throughout the subsequent evaluation as a whole. It was therefore concluded that in the six years since the previous surveys of this area, all trace of the medieval field system has been eradicated by ploughing.

Evaluation

Trenches 1-8

Trenches 1-6 were placed at the top of the hill of field 2, with 7 and 8 placed further down slope some distance from the electricity cable, which crosses fields 1 and 2 (figure 3). Throughout trenches 1-8 the topsoil consisted of dark yellowish brown sandy silt with frequent small and medium, sub-rounded and occasionally sub-angular stones. Below this lay the natural substrata of sand and gravel with occasional patches of red clay with little evidence of subsoil, except for a thin layer of silty subsoil in trenches 4 and 5.

In all cases, unless otherwise indicated, the base of the trench also represents the top of the natural substrata and is measured from the top to the base as an overall depth. Topsoil and subsoil depths refer to the thickness of the layer.

Trench 1

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Ground OD: 62.64m

Interval	**0m SE**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**29.8m NW**
Topsoil Depth	0.36m	0.34m	0.35m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.39m
Base of Trench	0.36m	0.44m	0.40m	0.30m	0.35m	0.32m	0.40m

A large modern feature packed with clay was uncovered in this trench. No archaeological features or finds were discovered.

Trench 2

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: Down slightly to NW
Ground OD: 62.20m (SE) 61.22m (NW)

Interval	**0m SE**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**28m NW**
Topsoil Depth	0.50m	0.50m	0.48m	0.56m	0.60m	0.70m	0.65m
Base of Trench	0.53m	0.50m	0.58m	0.60m	0.70m	0.80m	0.67m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 3

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Ground OD: 61.08m (SE) 60.61m (NW)

Interval	**0m**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**30.9m**

	SE						NW
Topsoil Depth	0.46m	0.40m	0.50m	0.40m	0.50m	0.50m	0.60m
Base of Trench	0.50m	0.50m	0.54m	0.46m	0.50m	0.53m	0.65m

Apart from one piece of flint recovered from the topsoil no archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 4

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: Down slightly to NW
Ground OD: 60.63m (SE) 59.69 (NW)

Interval	**0m SE**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**31.5m NW**
Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.26m	0.30m	0.30m	0.35m	0.30m	0.40m
Subsoil Depth*		0.34m	0.20m	0.25m	0.10m	0.15m	0.10m
Base of trench	0.30m	0.60m	0.50m	0.55m	0.45m	0.45m	0.50m

***Subsoil not visible throughout entire length of trench**

Apart from one piece of flint recovered from the topsoil no archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 5

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: Down slightly to NW
Ground OD: 59.53m (SE) 57.38 (NW)

Interval	**0m SE**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**29.6m NW**
Topsoil depth	0.40m	0.40m	0.35m	0.28m	0.30m	0.25m	0.30m
Subsoil Depth	0.05m	0.10m	0.13m	0.12m	0.08m	0.03m	0.05m
Base of trench	0.45m	0.50m	0.48m	0.42m	0.38m	0.28m	0.35m

A flint knife was recovered from the topsoil (figure 8a), but no archaeological features were discovered in this trench.

Trench 6

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: Down to NW
Ground OD: 58.30m(SE) 56.28 (NW)

Interval	0m SE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30.2m NW
Topsoil depth	0.40m	0.35m	0.30m	0.20m	0.25m	0.35m	0.40m
Subsoil Depth*	0.05m						
Base of trench	0.45m	0.45m	0.30m	0.25m	0.25m	0.40m	0.55m

***Only visible at SE end**

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 7

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: Down to NW
Ground OD: 59.04m (SE) 58.19(NW)

Interval	0m SE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29.3m NW
Topsoil depth	0.25m	0.32m	0.28m	0.30m	0.28m	0.28m	0.34m
Base of trench	0.30m	0.38m	0.32m	0.30m	0.30m	0.28m	0.40m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 8

Field: 2
Orientation: NE-SW
Slope: Down to NE
Ground OD: 58.04m (SW) 56.19(NE)

Interval	0m SW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m NE
Topsoil depth	0.25m	0.28m	0.24m	0.28m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m
Base of trench	0.25m	0.30m	0.24m	0.28m	0.30m	0.32m	0.30m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench. Some faint plough marks could be seen running NW-SE across the NE end of the trench.

Trenches 9-11

Trenches 9-11 were placed towards the northern corner of field 2, fairly close to one another near the point where field 2 flattens out towards the eastern hedge (figure 3). The topsoil in trenches 9-11 was very similar to that encountered in trenches 1-8, consisting of dark yellowish brown sandy silt. However, throughout trenches 9-11 beneath the topsoil there was a thick layer of reddish brown sandy silt or clayey silt, containing occasional sub-rounded pebbles. This was most likely a layer of colluvium, built up at the lower part of the field due to ploughing and natural soil slippage. For the most part this layer had preserved the features beneath it, with the exception of features (17)[55], (18), (19)[53] and (20)[54], which were cut into it. The substrata in these trenches varied from red and light greenish blue Mercia Mudstone Group clay to sand and gravel. In one section of trench 10b there was a large patch of pale brownish yellow silty clay, which mingled with the silty subsoil slightly. This was a natural spread and may have been deposited by glacial action in one event or by river action over some time.

Trench 9 (figure 4)

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: Down very slight to NW
Contexts: (1), (2), (3), (4).

Unexcavated features were not issued cut numbers.

Interval	0m SE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30.2m NW
Ground OD	50.10m	49.74m	49.41m		49.17m		48.54m
Topsoil depth	0.34m	0.40m	0.37m	0.40m	0.40m	0.30m	0.30m
Subsoil Depth			0.45m	0.80m	0.58m	0.55m	0.30m
Base of trench	0.40m	0.60m	0.90m	1.25m	1m	0.90m	0.75m

This trench contained four fairly distinct features, which appeared to run east-west in a linear formation across the trench (figure 4). For the most part the fills consisted of reddish brown silt, which were fairly clear against the natural Mercia Mudstone Group clay. A flint core was recovered from this trench but was not associated with any of the features.

Trench 10 (figure 6)

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Contexts: (5)[58], (6), (7)[50], (8)[49], (9), (10)[59], (11)[59], (12)[51], (13), (14), (15), (16)[57], (17)[55], (18), (19)[53], (20)[54], (21), (22), (23), (24), (25), (33), (34){59]. (56).

Unexcavated features were not issued cut numbers.

Interval	0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	40m	45m
Ground OD	49.00 m	48.81 m		48.75m	48.50 m	48.47 m		48.26 m		48.19 m
Topsoil Depth	0.33m	0.31m	0.32 m	0.29 m	0.28m	0.27m	0.29 m	0.33m	0.30 m	0.25m
Subsoil Depth	0.48m	0.44m	0.35 m	0.44 m*	0.49m *	0.40m *	0.88 m	0.46m *	0.51 m	Slope
Top of Natural	0.82m	0.75m	0.67 m	0.70 m			1.07 m		0.81 m	"
Base of Trench					0.77m *	0.67m *		0.79m *		"

*Between 16-25m the trench was excavated to where the features were present, therefore the subsoil depth measurements throughout this section (and at the 35m interval) are not indicative of the actual depth of this horizon. To facilitate ingress, the ditching bucket graded the NW end of the trench. It was not possible to record the depths here properly.

This trench contained many features. These included a series of apparently linear and curvilinear features ((5)[58], (10)[59], (14), (15), (16)[57]), which lay across the trench on a similar alignment to those in trench 9. In some cases these may represent the continuation of those features (figure 6). Feature (5)[58] was excavated and revealed an odd cut [58] with a vertical NW side. The fill (5) was a mid-brown with lighter yellow highlights. Feature (16)[57] consisted of a cut [57] with a steep northern edge and a shallower southern side. The fill (16) consisted of a mid greyish brown sandy silt with some medium sized stones. A change in the fill on the features' southern side may represent a recut, but the edge was very indistinct. Four flints were retrieved from the fill (16).

Feature (10)[59] was the most substantial of all the linear features excavated and consisted of a steep sided cut [59] with a fill of mid orangey brown sandy silt with

small traces of clay (10). Another feature (34) appeared to cut into the feature and may have been visible in section. The feature's fill was somewhat vague and further investigation revealed that the feature may have been overcut or contained a further very sandy fill. Flint artefacts, including a fine horseshoe scraper (figure 8a), were recovered from (10) and the surface above unexcavated feature (14).

Features such as (24) and (25), along with the possibly related feature (32) in trench 10a, appear to form part of an enclosure, but are rather vague (figure 6).

The trench also contains a series of circular features, which appear to be pits, postholes or stakeholes. Excavation of these features revealed some good results. Feature (8)[49] was a small nearly vertically sided stakehole with a dark brownish grey clayey silt fill (8). This feature contained a considerable amount of burnt bone five pieces of flint and three sherds of Early Bronze Age pottery. The fill (8) was sampled and has potential to be proven to be a small cremation, rather than a simple stakehole. A similar feature (7)[50] was also excavated but proved very insubstantial.

Many of the pits within trench 10 were excavated. Features (11)[52], (12)[51] and (13), which formed a small group, seemed all to contain the same mid greyish brown clayey silt fill ((11) and (12)). By and large they appeared as shallow and insubstantial hollows but the fills (11) and (12) did contain flint.

By far the most interesting features of trench 10 were the larger pits (17)[55], (18) and (19)[53]. These formed a small group toward the middle of the trench, apparently running in a north-south line across the trench. Along with a similar feature towards the NW end of the trench (20)[54}, these features were cut into the colluvium subsoil, and not into the natural as was the case with all the other excavated features. The features (17)[55] and (19)[53] were fairly steep sided and deep (around 0.30m). Both features contained dark brown clayey silt fills ((17) and (19)) and had traces of charcoal within. Feature (19)[53] had been recut at some point with the main fill (19) replacing the slightly lighter original fill (56), which also contained possible Early Bronze Age pottery. Early Bronze Age Beaker pottery and flint were also recovered from fill (17) and (19).

Traces of charcoal, pottery, flint and bone were also recovered from the fill (20) of feature (20)[54], including a heavily calcined scraper (figure 8a) and many sherds of Early Bronze Age pottery. This feature may be related to nearby features (33) and (24) in some way and may have been cut into one or both of these. This feature was also sampled and may yield evidence of foodstuffs or a cremation.

The rest of the features within the trench consisted of rather indistinct silty features, which for the most part may be natural in origin, although some of the pit like hollows may be similar to features such as (11)[52] and (12)[51].

Trench 10a (figure 6)

Field: 2
Orientation: NE-SW
Slope: No
Ground OD: 48.46m SW

Contexts: (26), (27), (28), (29), (32), (35), (36).

Features not excavated were not issued with cut numbers.

Interval	**0m**	**5m**	**9m**
Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.33m	0.30m
Subsoil depth	0.60m	0.55m	0.51m
Base of trench	0.90m	0.88m	0.81m

Feature (32) is most likely the continuation of features (24) and (25), however time constraints meant that these features were not explored. The rest of the features within this trench were very indistinct and contained very silty fills.

Trench 10b (figure 6)

Field: 2
Orientation: NE-SW
Slope: No
Ground OD: 48.47m SW
Contexts: (30), (31)

Interval	**0m**	**4m**	**8m**
Topsoil depth	0.31m	0.26m	0.30m
Subsoil depth	0.72m	0.54m	0.53m
Base of trench	1.03m	0.80m	0.83m

The features within this trench were somewhat indistinct and were not explored. However, a small box section was placed up against the NW baulk where the trench joins trench 10 (figure 6) in an attempt to clarify the relationship between the silty colluvium and the brownish yellow silty clay at the NE end of the trench. This revealed that the natural yellow silty clay merged with the silty colluvium at this point and was likely to be a natural deposit. Beneath the two layers were sand and gravel sub-strata.

Trench 11

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Ground OD: 48.01m SE
Contexts: (37)

Interval	**0m SE**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**29.6m NW**
Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.25m	0.35m	0.30m	0.35m
Subsoil Depth	0.70m	0.60m	0.66m	0.55m	0.55m	0.06m	0.20m

Base of trench	1.30m	1.20m	1m	0.80m	0.90m	0.36m	0.55m

The only feature in this trench consists of a apparent linear feature, which has a very indistinct silty fill (37). This is most likely a natural feature.

Trenches 12-14

These trenches were placed in the south-eastern corner of field 2 close to the entrance to field 1. The topsoil consisted of dark yellowish or reddish grey sandy silt. A similar colluvium subsoil to that in trenches 9-11 lay under this and was very thick in places The natural sub-strata consisted of sand with patches of clay. These trenches were deep and the water table was encountered at around 1.1m, which made the trenches difficult to record.

Trench 12

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Ground OD: 48.02m SE

Interval	**0m SE**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**28.6m NW**
Topsoil depth	0.40m	0.40m	0.30m	0.30m	0.40m	0.20m	0.20m
Subsoil Depth	0.80m	0.50m	0.60m	0.65m	0.70m	0.70m	0.40m
Base of trench	1.40m	1.50m	1m	0.90m	1.40m	1.20m	slope

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 13

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Ground OD: 46.50m SE

Interval	**0m SE**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**32m NW**

Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.25m	0.25m	0.25m
Subsoil depth	0.70m	0.80m	0.30m	0.40m	0.40m	0.50m	0.50m
Top of natural			0.60m	0.50m	0.50m	1m	
Base of trench	1m	1.2m	1.1m	1.1m	0.90m	1.30m	

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench. Hit the water table at 1m.

Trench 14

Field: 2
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Ground OD: 46.01m SE
Contexts: (42)

This trench proved difficult to record as the water table was reached at a depth of 1m and the base of the trench soon filled with water. The sides of the trench were very unstable and would collapse without warning. With this in mind the trench was backfilled within a short period of being excavated. The trench was between 0.90m and 1.1m deep and contained one small feature (42), which was a sub-oval pit approximately 0.30m in diameter. This feature yielded one piece of Neolithic pottery.

Trenches 15-19

These trenches were placed as a small group in the northern corner of field 1. The topsoil consisted of dark yellowish brown silt overlying an orangey brown sandy silt colluvium subsoil. The substrata consisted of bands of red and light greenish blue Mercia Mudstone Group clay and sand and gravel.

Trench 15 (figure 5)

Field: 1
Orientation: N-S
Slope: Down to north
Contexts: (38), (39)[46], (40)[45].

Interval	**0m N**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**32m**
Ground OD	44.90m			45.42m			46.41m
Topsoil depth	0.28m	0.28m	0.23m	0.25m	0.25m	0.30m	0.30m
Subsoil depth	0.60m	0.60m	0.36m	0.45m	0.30m	0.40m	0.50m

Base of trench	0.90m	0.90m	0.70m	0.70m	0.70m	0.80m	0.80m

Feature (38), which ran east-west along this trench and consisted of large pieces of granite was revealed to be a substantial drain. Feature (39)[46] was a pit with a shallow NE side and a deeper SW side. The fill (39) consisted of a pale brownish grey sandy silt with rare rounded stones and contained three pieces of Neolithic Impressed Ware and three pieces of flint. Its form may suggest that it is some kind of post-hole from which the fill has spread outwards. Feature (40)[45] is a more substantial pit with a high burnt stone content. This was partly truncated by the machine but the remaining depth was around 0.20m and consists of a dark brown clayey silt with patches of lighter fill within (40). The fill also contained a flint core. The cut [45] is uneven with quite diffuse edges. This feature contained some pieces of flint.

Trench 16

Field: 1
Orientation: E-W
Slope: Down slightly to east
Contexts: (41)[47]

Interval	**0m W**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**32m E**
Ground OD	49.29m			49.03m			48.36m
Topsoil depth	0.24m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.40m	0.30m
Subsoil depth	0.35m	0.50m	0.50m	0.50m	0.60m	0.60m	0.60m
Base of trench	0.60m	0.80m	0.80m	0.88m	0.84m	1m	1.10m

The solitary feature with this trench yielded some of the most significant results of the evaluation. Feature (41)[47] was a largish round pit with steep sides and base [47] with a dark brownish grey clayey sand fill (41), which contained a considerable amount of Neolithic Impressed Ware pottery, dating from the mid to late Neolithic. Flint was also found with this fill, along with charcoal and hazelnuts. This fill was sampled and should give some good environmental data.

Trench 17

Field: 1
Orientation: N-S
Slope: Down to north
Ground OD: 51.17m (N) and 53.14m (S)

Interval	**0m N**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**29m S**
Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.30m	0.22m	0.25m	0.27m	0.30m	0.32m
Subsoil			0.10m	0.10m			0.10m

Depth							
Base of trench	0.50m	0.45m	0.40m	0.35m	0.40m	0.30m	0.42m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 18

Field: 1
Orientation: E-W
Slope: Down to east
Contexts: (43), (44)[60]

Interval	**0m W**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**32m E**
Ground OD	49.37m			50.42m			52.76m
Topsoil depth	0.25m	0.32m	0.30m	0.20m	0.20m	0.30m	0.30m
Subsoil depth	0.08m	0.10m	0.10m	0.04m			
Base of trench	0.36m	0.42m	0.50m	0.24m	0.30m	0.36m	0.40m

The features in this trench both appeared very similar and so only one was excavated. Both features were partially obscured by the baulk of the trench, but (44)[60] appeared to be a reasonably substantial pit with fairly steep sides [60] containing a fill of pale orangey grey clayey silt with some large stones. Flint was recovered during the excavation.

Trench 19

Field: 1
Orientation: NNE-SSW
Slope: Down to north

Interval	**0mNNE**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**29.2mSSW**
Ground OD	50.32mm						52.49m
Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.35m	0.35m	0.25m	0.30m	0.25m	0.30m
Subsoil depth		0.30m	0.05m	0.10m		0.10m	0.05m
Base of trench	0.45m	0.65m	0.45m	0.35m	0.45m	0.35m	0.35m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trenches 20-24

Trenches 20-21 were placed just within field 4 close to the hedge that separates it from field 2 (figure 3). Trenches 22-24 were placed in field 3 close to the western hedge and away from the electricity and gas services, which cross the fields close to the boundary path between fields 3 and 4. The topsoil in this area was brown silt with reddish brown silt subsoil where visible. The natural substrata for the most part was clayey sand and red Mercia Mudstone Group clay, except for the SW end of trench 21 and trench 24, which was sand and gravel.

Trench 20

Field: 4
Orientation: N-S
Slope: No
Ground OD: 44.96m

Interval	0m S	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	28m N
Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.30m	0.40m	0.30m	0.30m	0.37m	0.30m
Subsoil depth	0.30m	0.30m	0.25m	0.30m	0.20m	0.10m	0.10m
Base of trench	0.80m	0.70m	0.90m	0.80m	0.66m	0.60m	0.40m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 21

Field: 4
Orientation: ENE-WSW
Slope: No
Ground OD: 45.37m

Interval	0m WSW	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29.6m ENE
Topsoil depth	0.22m	0.32m	0.32m	0.34m	0.30m	0.33m	0.28m
Subsoil depth	0.25m	0.27m	0.30m	0.35m	0.37m	0.30m	0.20m
Base of trench	0.70m	0.70m	0.80m	0.80m	0.80m	0.72m	0.50m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 22

Field: 3
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Ground OD: 46.09m

Interval	0m SE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30.6m NW
Topsoil depth	0.28m	0.28m	0.25m	0.30m	0.20m	0.22m	0.20m
Subsoil depth	0.32m	0.28m	0.15m	0.25m	0.30m	0.15m	0.30m
Base of trench	0.60m	0.70m	0.70m	0.70m	0.65m	0.50m	0.50m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 23

Field: 3
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: No
Ground OD: 46.37m

Interval	0m SE	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m NW
Topsoil depth	0.22m	0.30m	0.30m	0.24m	0.30m	0.28m	0.28m
Subsoil depth	0.25m	0.45m	0.30m	0.30m	0.30m	0.35m	0.25m
Base of trench	0.47m	0.45m	0.60m	0.54m	0.60m	0.64m	0.60m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 24

Field: 3
Orientation: NE-SW
Slope: Slightly down to east
Ground OD: 46.23m

Interval	0m SW	5m	10m	15m	20m	24m NE

Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.21m	0.32m	0.35m	0.30m	0.40m
Subsoil depth	0.10m	0.02m	0.02m		0.05m	
Base of trench	0.40m	0.30m	0.34m	0.35m	0.56m	0.40m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trenches 25 and 26

The two trenches were placed close to trenches 16 and 18 in field 1, but further south east in an attempt to follow the contours of the slope, in order to determine the extent of the archaeology in this area. The topsoil, subsoil and natural substrata were very similar to the other trenches in this field. The subsoil was very patchy in places.

Trench 25

Field: 1
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: Slopes across the trench to the NE
Ground OD: 51m

Interval	**0m NW**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**31m SW**
Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.30m	0.25m	0.26m	0.30m	0.30m	0.20m
Subsoil depth							0.12m
Base of trench	0.40m	0.35m	0.25m	0.35m	0.45m	0.32m	0.32m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Trench 26

Field: 1
Orientation: NW-SE
Slope: Slightly down to NW
Ground OD: 50.27m

Interval	**0m NW**	**5m**	**10m**	**15m**	**20m**	**25m**	**29m SE**
Topsoil depth	0.34m	0.28m	0.37m	0.30m	0.31m	0.30m	0.32m
Subsoil		0.16m	0.04m		0.28m	0.10m	0.30m

depth							
Base of trench	0.34m	0.44m	0.41m	0.30m	0.60m	0.40m	0.62m

No archaeological features or finds were discovered in this trench.

Conclusion

The archaeological evidence for human activity in the development area uncovered during this evaluation from the Neolithic and early Bronze Age is significant. Although the flint artefact evidence appears to be spread throughout the area, the evaluation has revealed that the focus of human activity seems to be the bottom of the slope, around a present day height of between 48m and 53m. This is not to say that the upper part of the site was never settled, as ploughing in such a thin topsoil may have removed evidence anyway and it may well be that the colluvium which has spread over the bottom of fields 1 and 2 may have preserved the archaeology better in these areas.

It is likely that the area presently occupied by fields 3 and 4 was too close to the river, and therefore prone to flooding in ancient times, as well it may be today. The clayey sand in evidence from trenches 20-23 is most likely alluvial. It is possible that the human activity in the development area during the Neolithic and early Bronze Age extended across the area at the base of the hill. Except for the small (unexcavated) pit in trench 14 (42) there is little evidence of activity from trenches 12-14. However, as they lie at a slightly lower height (*c.*44-46m) it is possible that these trenches were placed slightly too low in the field to catch the focus of the archaeology in this part of the field.

The fact that there appears to be features cut into the colluvium in trench 10 (17)[55], (18), (19)[53] and (20)[54] is significant and suggests two possible phases of human activity and further work may reveal some stratigraphy, particularly as feature (20)[54] appears to be related to the nearby features in trench 10a in some way. Although the subsoil appears to be one horizon, the fact that the features are cut into this layer suggests that there may be a possibility of a buried soil.

The lack of evidence from the area around trenches 12-14, appears to point to the human activity being from two disparate areas, with the Neolithic activity concentrated in field 1 (and maybe just inside field 2 as evidenced from (42)) and the Early Bronze Age activity in field 2. Whether the events are continuous with the human activity shifting focus over time or whether the two different groups of archaeological evidence are from two separate events will only be answered by excavation.

Many of the linear features that were excavated, contain fills that are difficult to assess and understand. These may be natural features such as tree throws, and the flint flakes found within them may well be residual, although there is no reason to dismiss large tree throws, as may easily have been utilised by humans as shelters. Feature

(10)[59] has a particularly fine flint artefact (figure 8a). Some of the smaller narrower gulley-like features appear to more closely associated with the Early Bronze Age pits and may point to a more settled period of human activity. It is a matter of debate whether the farmers of this period were sedentary enough for the construction of field systems that may involve the excavation of drainage ditches or boundaries, although there is evidence from areas such as Gibbet Moor (Ainsworth 2001). Further work would be necessary in order to clarify the relationship between the pits and the linear features.

Neolithic Impressed Ware (formerly Peterborough Ware) has been found from other archaeological sites throughout the East Midland region, such as Ecton, Northamptonshire (Moore and Williams 1975), which are associated with shallow hollows and flint, and Langford, Nottinghamshire (Holt *et al.* 2001) where pits were discovered with hazelnut shells (Snelling and Rackham 2001) during an evaluation centred around a road widening scheme across the A46 Fosse Way.

Further work in the areas highlighted by this evaluation may answer some of these questions. Features such as the pits discovered in fields 1 and 2 are rare and Neolithic pottery of the standard recovered from pit (41)[47] is very rare and the site as a whole has major significance for Neolithic and Early Bronze Age archaeology. The discovery of plant and hazelnut remains within the fill of this feature may well be of major importance for environmental data and dating evidence.

By and large the Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age evidence is limited to pits and hearths with little evidence for structural survival. However, the presence of a possible stakehole [49] and a posthole [46] associated with Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age pottery and flint in trenches 10 and 15 is again unusual and worthy of note.

Late Neolithic-Early Bronze Age settlement evidence is of regional and national importance (Clay 1999; 2001) and the archaeological deposits at Rothley are of considerable significance.

Archive

The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services with accession number X.A240.2004 and consists of the following:

4 sheets of perma-trace with drawings and sections

27 Trench sheets

101 colour slides

3 contact sheets of B&W prints

3 sets of B & W negatives

45 context sheets

1 box of finds

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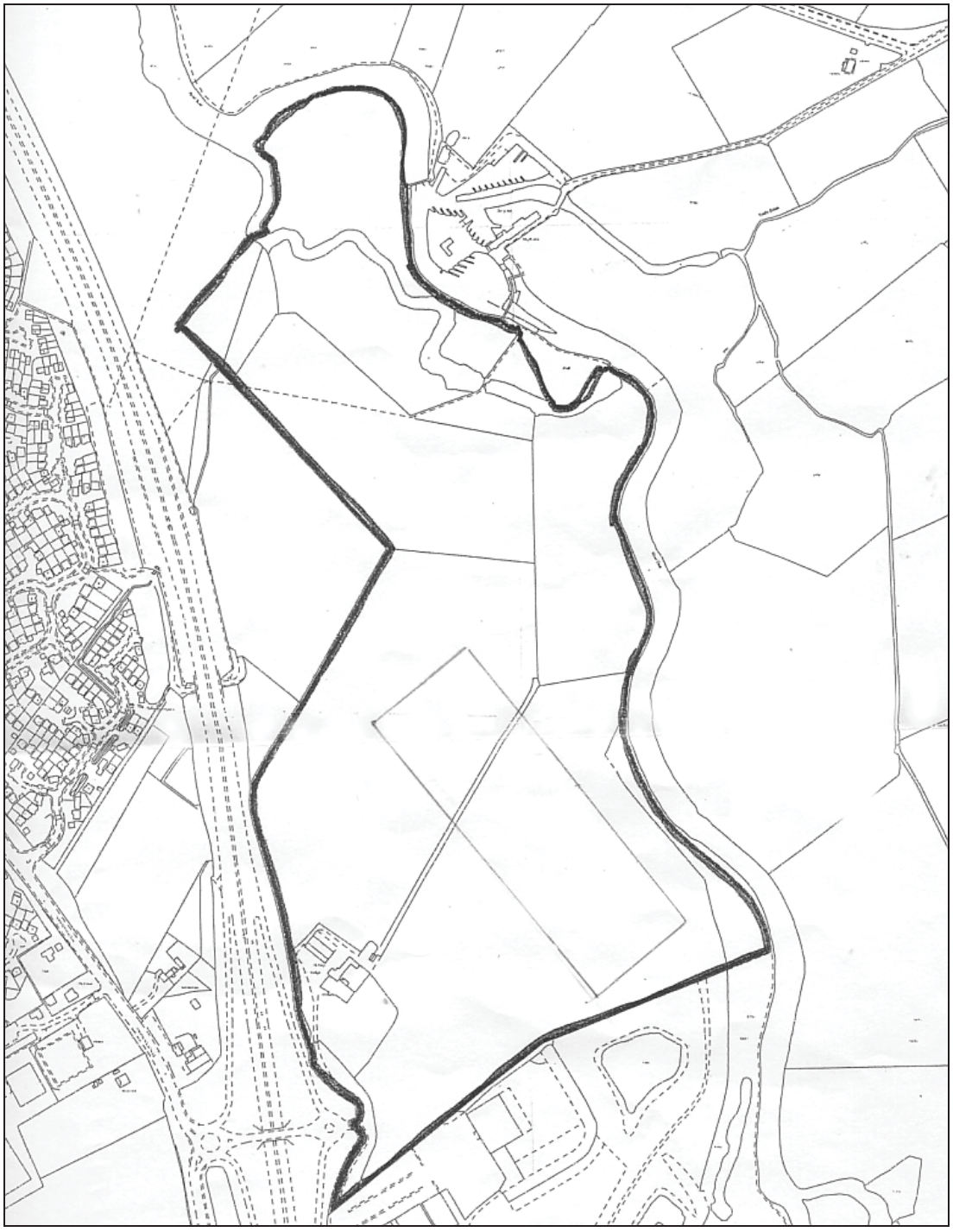
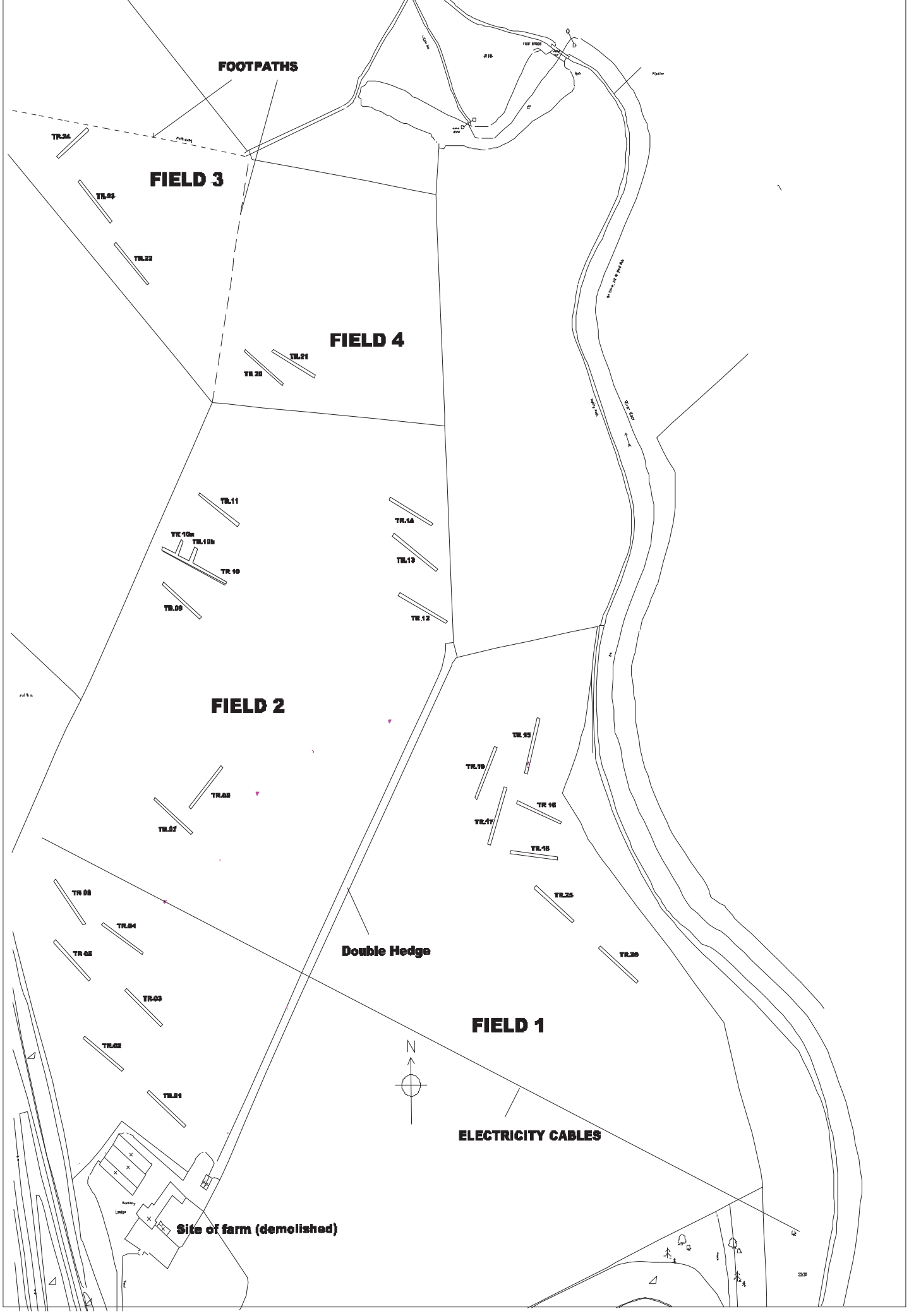


Figure 2: Map of development area (highlighted). Derived from map supplied by developer


FOOTPATHS
FIELD 3
FIELD 4
FIELD 2
FIELD 1
Double Hedge
ELECTRICITY CABLES
Site of farm (demolished)
N
TR.24
TR.23
TR.22
TR.21
TR.20
TR.11
TR.10a
TR.10b
TR.10
TR.09
TR.14
TR.13
TR.12
TR.08
TR.07
TR.06
TR.04
TR.05
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TR.15
TR.25
TR.26
0
50
100
Metres

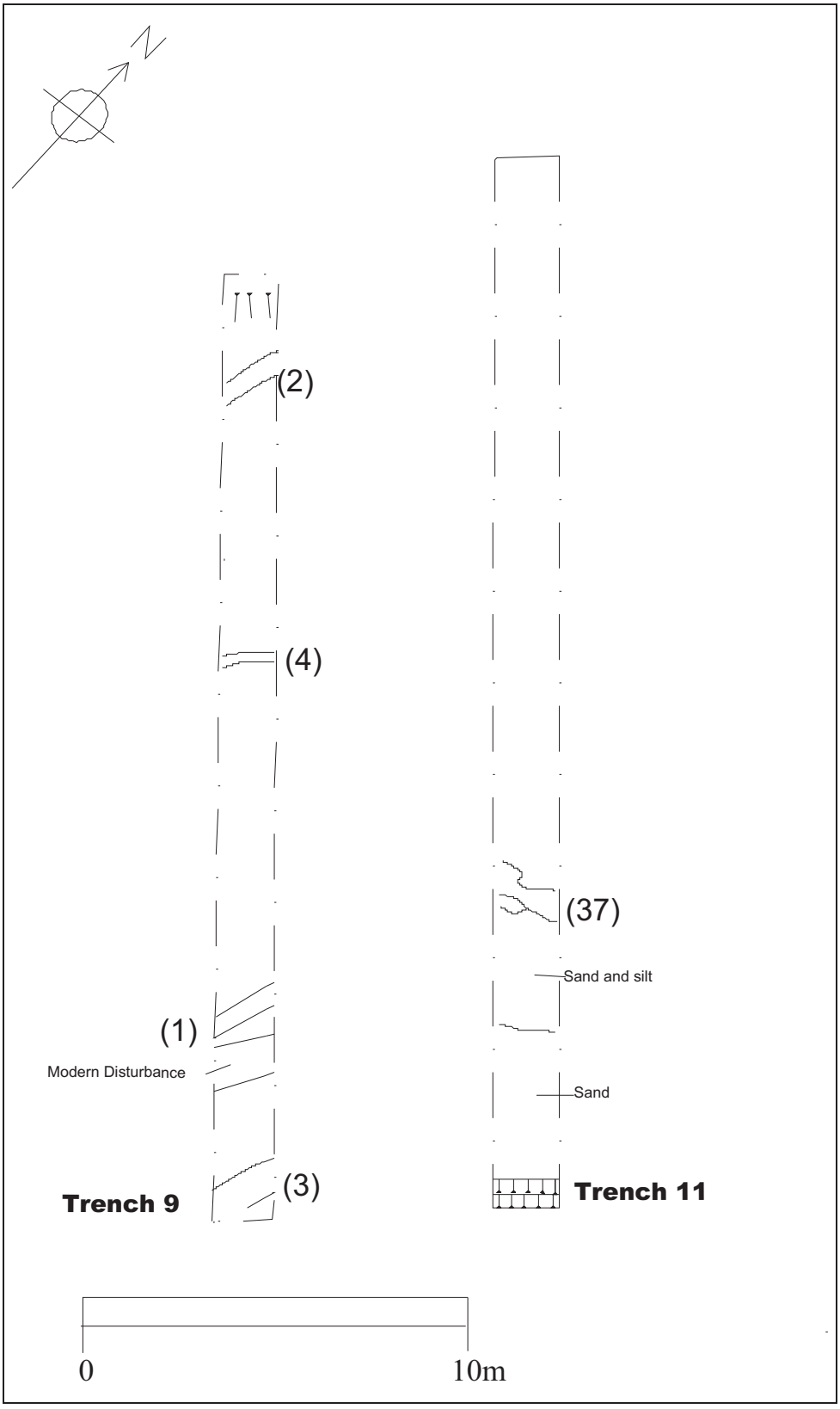


Figure 4: Plans of trenches 9 & 11 showing features within

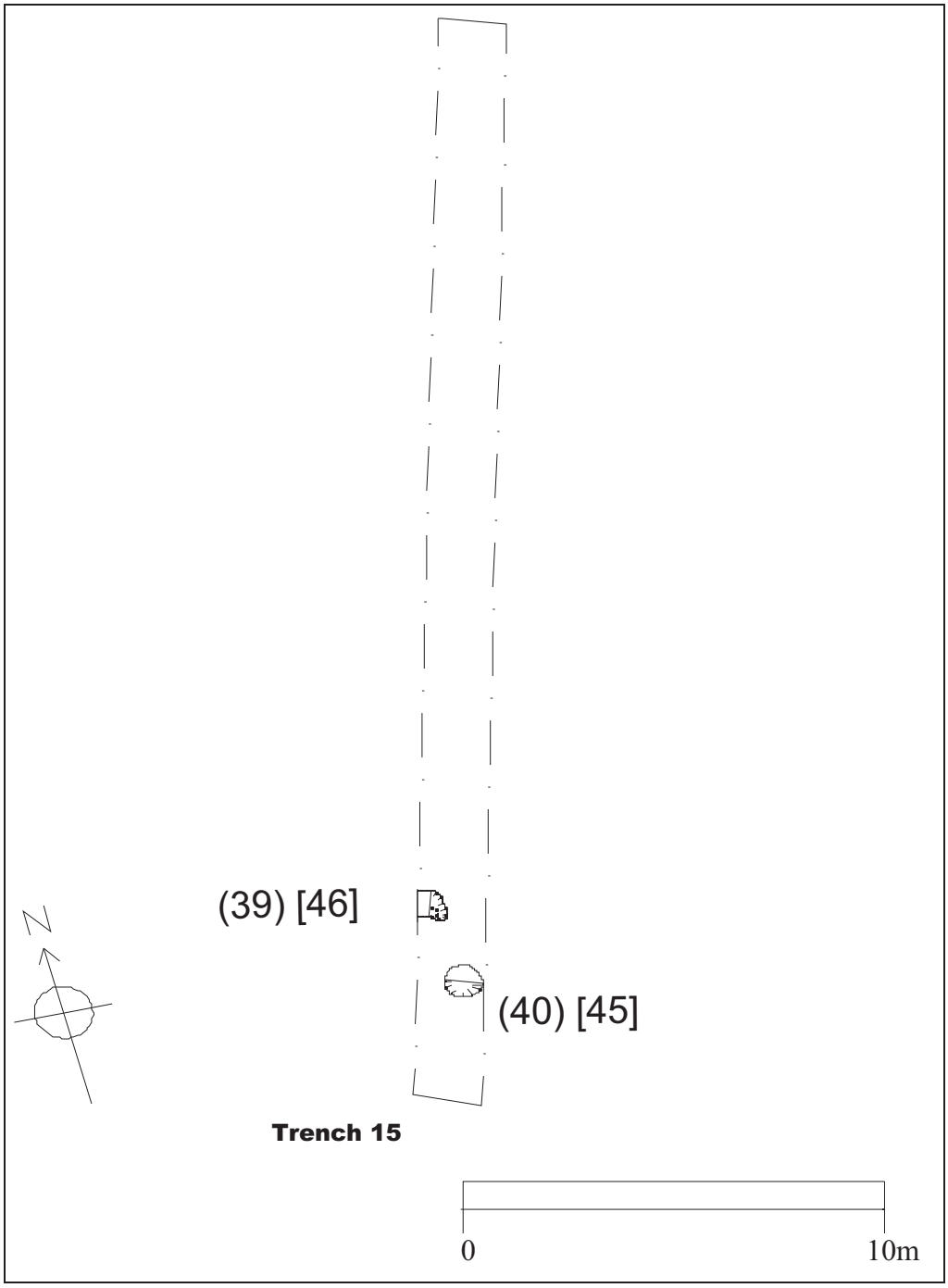


Figure 5: Plans of trench 15 showing features within

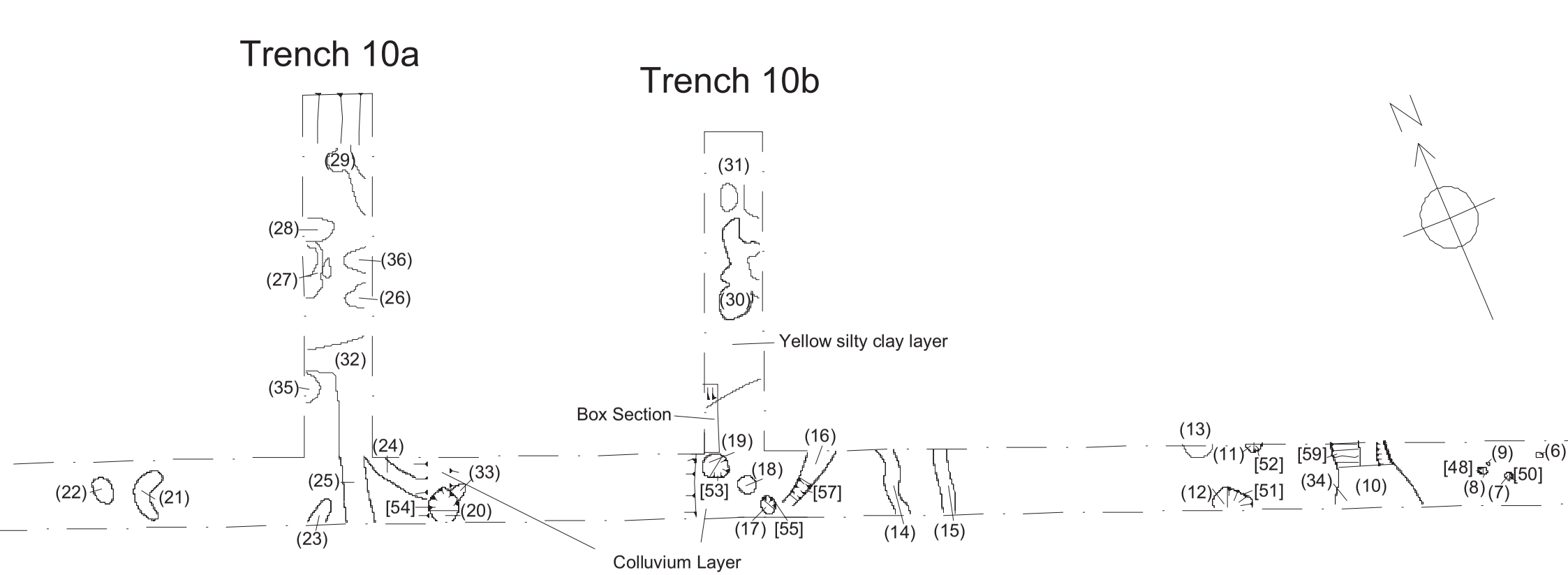
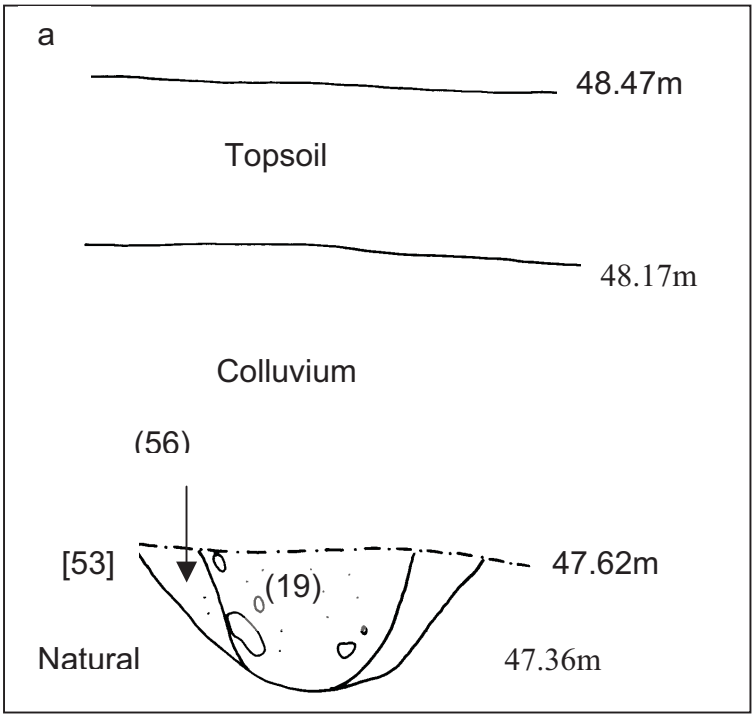


Figure 6: Trenches 10, 10a and 10b showing features.



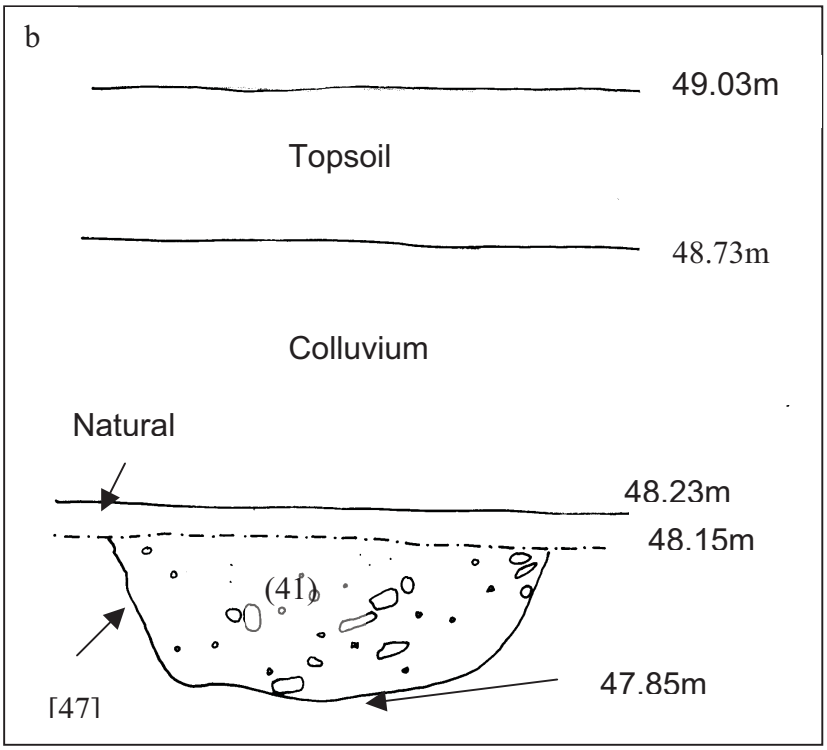


Figure7: Features showing sequence and relative levels.
a: Trench 10 feature (19)(56)[53]
b: Trench 16 feature (41)[47]

Figure 8a: Flints from evaluation. From Left to Right: Tr.10, (10): Horseshoe scraper Tr.10, (20): Heavily clacined end scraper. Tr.5 (U/S): Plano-convex knife.
Figure 8b: Trench 15 (41): Neolithic vessel 3

Figure 9: Pottery from Evaluation: Tr. 16 (41): Neolithic vessel 1.

APPENDIX 1: The lithics

Lynden Cooper and Matt Parker

Description

The study group comprises 88 pieces of worked flint. The majority is till flint, probably of local origin, with the exception of a horseshoe scraper and a flake, both of Wolds flint. Forty five pieces were stratified including three groups from pits with ceramic associations - two Peterborough ware contexts (39 & 41) and a possible Beaker pottery context (20). The unstratified pieces were recovered from spoil heaps or during stripping and could have been derived from topsoil, colluvium and/or an undifferentiated buried soil.

The horseshoe scraper (context 10) was of an exceptional size and of pinkish-grey, matt flint of Wolds type. Usually, artefacts of this material quickly develop soil polish, but this example remains very fresh. Horseshoe scrapers generally have a Late Neolithic currency, often found with Grooved ware pottery.

The material from the Peterborough ware contexts is minimal but very fresh and is likely to be a contemporary deposit. The material from the pit with possible Beaker pottery includes four heavily calcined pieces, one of which is an end scraper.

The unstratified material includes a fragment of a Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age plano-convex knife made from a distinctive black flint, possibly an exotic item. The piece shows soil polish and plough damage. However, many of the other unstratified pieces are in very good condition suggesting that some may have been preserved beneath colluvium.

Discussion

The discovery of stratified Late Neolithic lithics in association with rich ceramic groups is at least of regional significance. Although the recovered material is sparse there is great potential for the recovery of more material from further features *and* in situ scatters on a preserved land surface. The value of such sites, eg at Willington (Beamish 2001) and the Eton Rowing Lake (Allen 1998), is that they preserve the range of contemporary depositional practices and reflect the diversity of activities undertaken at the site.

It has been argued that the predicative nature of the local raw materials means that typo-technological comparison with southern English lithics is not possible (Young and Bevan 2000), though this does not seem to be the case at Eye Kettleby (Cooper forthcoming). A sealed lithic assemblage with ceramic association provides fresh data for the typo-technological characterisation of lithic assemblages in the region, allowing comparisons with national trends.

The material is not patinated and seems very fresh presenting great potential for functional analysis; both typological and macroscopic wear study. Furthermore,

microwear analysis could augment such study and also provide taphonomic understanding.

The use of non-local material is of some interest. Questions of regional flint trade/exchange have been posed for the Neolithic assemblages at Eye Kettleby and Syston, and the Rothley material may allow further consideration of this research theme, one highlighted by Clay (2001) as of significance for the East Midlands.

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Catalogue

Trench	Context	Type	Notes
3	u/s	Flake	
4	u/s	Blade	Plough damaged?
5	u/s	Knife	Plano-convex Knife
9	u/s	Core?	
10	u/s	Flake	
10	u/s	Flake	
10	u/s	Flake	
10	u/s	Flake	
10	u/s	Flake	
10	u/s	Flake	
10	u/s	Flake	
10	u/s	Chip	
10	u/s	Chip	
10	u/s	Chip	
10	u/s	Chip	
10	u/s	Chip	
10	u/s	Chip	
10	u/s	Core?	
10	u/s	Shatter	
10	u/s	Shatter	Recovered from Subsoil
11	u/s	Shatter	
12	u/s	Struck Frag	Patinated
13	u/s	Struck Frag	

13	u/s	Flake	
13	u/s	Chip	
14	u/s	Blade	Slightly calcined
14	u/s	Flake	Retouched edge?
14	u/s	Flake	
14	u/s	Flake	
14	u/s	Flake	
14	u/s	Flake	
14	u/s	Flake	
14	u/s	Chip	
15	u/s	Core?	
15	u/s	Flake	
15	u/s	Flake	
15	u/s	Flake	
15	u/s	Flake	
16	u/s	Flake	
16	u/s	Flake	
17	u/s	Chip	Calcined
18	u/s	Flake	
22	u/s	Flake	
10	8	Chip	
10	8	Chip	Calcined
10	8	Chip	Calcined
10	8	Flake	Calcined
10	8	Flake	Calcined
10	10	Scraper	Horseshoe scraper, wolds flint
10	10	Flake	Use-wear/retouch?
10	10	Struck Frag	
10	11	Flake	
10	12	Shatter	
10	12	Flake	
10	12	Flake	
10	12	Flake	
10	12	Flake	
10	14	Flake	
10	16	Chip	
10	16	Chip	
10	16	Blade	Slightly patinated
10	16	Core?	Slightly patinated
10	16	Flake	
10	17	Flake	
10	17	Chip	
10	17	Core?	
10	19	Flake	Wolds flint?
10	20	Scraper	End Scaper, heavily calcined
10	20	Shatter	Heavily calcined
10	20	Shatter	Heavily calcined
10	20	Shatter	Heavily calcined
10	20	Chip	
10	20	Chip	
10	20	Flake	

10	20	Flake	Slightly patinated
15	39	Flake	
15	39	Flake	
15	39	Flake/Core	
15	40	Core?	
16	41	Chip	
16	41	Chip	
16	41	Shatter	
16	41	Flake	
17	44	Core?	
17	44	Chip	
17	44	Chip	
17	44	Flake	Slightly calcined
10	56	Flake	

APPENDIX 2: The Pottery

Nicholas J. Cooper

Summary

Fifty sherds of Early Bronze Age and thirty sherds of Neolithic pottery were retrieved from the site and their identifications are summarised below. This is followed by a more detailed description of the vessels identified in each period accompanied by photographs. Context (41) containing six Neolithic impressed ware bowls is a particularly significant find and their association with organic materials suitable for radiocarbon dating should be highlighted.

XA240.2004 Rothley.Neolithic and Early Broze Age pottery								
Trench	**Cut**	**Context**	**Fabric**	**Form**	**Sherds**	**Weight**	**Date**	**Comment**
10		8	shell/mudstone	beaker?	3	4	EBA	same as EBA Vessel 1
10		20	shell/mudstone	beaker	30	86	EBA	EBA Vessel 1
10		20	shell/fine sand	beaker?	2	24	EBA	EBA Vessel 2
10		20	shell/fine sand	food vessel?	4	10	EBA	EBA Vessel 3
10		20	shell/fine sand	misc	4	4	EBA?	
10		56	shell/fine sand	shallow bowl	3	10	EBA?	EBA Vessel 4
10		56	shell/fine sand	misc	4	4	EBA?	
Total					**50**	**142**		
14		42	R1	misc	1	6	Neolithic	
15		39	Q2	impressed	3	14	Neolithic	Neo Vessel 7
16		41	R1	impressed bowl	8	178	Neolithic	Neo Vessel 1
16		41	Q2	impressed bowl	3	26	Neolithic	Neo Vessel 2
16		41	R1	impressed bowl	1	40	Neolithic	Neo Vessel 3
16		41	Q2	impressed bowl	3	166	Neolithic	Neo Vessel 4
16		41	R1	impressed bowl	10	222	Neolithic	Neo Vessel 5

16		41	R1	impressed bowl	1	32	Neolithic	Neo Vessel 6
Total					**30**	**684**		

Neolithic Impressed Ware (formerly Peterborough ware)

Context (41) cut 47 in Trench 16, produced, alongside a small assemblage of struck flint, twenty-six sherds of impressed decorated pottery belonging to six vessels, three of which appear to take the form of bowls with a sharp carination below the neck constriction and an angular rim. The fourth, fifth and sixth, comprise only body sherds, but all are impressed decorated over their entire surface, and would be consistent with classification as impressed wares within the broad Peterborough ware tradition of the south of Britain. It has been recognised through calibrating the impressed ware typologies against radiocarbon dates that the tradition was fully established by *c*. 3000BC with associated dates spanning the period *c*.3600 BC to 2500 BC (Gibson 2002, 80 and fig. 38).

Note of use of fabric codes:
All of the Neolithic material described below is made in fabrics incorporating large angular rock inclusions (up to 7mm), which are also found in pottery of Bronze and Iron Age date in the county. The source of these opening materials has been the subject of recent study (Knight, Marsden and Carney 2003), which has pinpointed the granodiorite outcrops of the Mountsorrel (Charnwood) district. However, whilst much of the material is clearly granitic, some appears to be purely white or grey quartz (which may well derive from the granite) found alongside other angular pebble fragments which may be flint and in some cases haematite. For this reason a distinction has been made between two fabrics; R1 which is *predominantly* granitic (granodiorite) in character with large plates of biotite mica present, and Q2 which is predominantly quartz tempered.

Neo Vessel 1
Eight sherds (178g), five of which are joining, belong to this vessel. The shoulder, neck and parts of the body survive. The diameter of the vessel is 250mm across the shoulder. The form is an open bowl but the shallowness is difficult to assess for the remaining pieces. The fabric fits into Type Q2 with abundant poorly sorted, angular fragments of white or grey quartz and possibly flint ranging from 1 to5mm. The rock inclusions do not appear to be granitic as no biotite mica is present but may derive from the crushing of pebbles. The fabric is similar to that from other sites in the north of the county (e.g. Willington). The decoration is consistently executed with the same tool on all parts of the vessel. The motif might be described as tadpole-shaped with a rounded head perhaps where a round ended stick or bone is first impressed and then dragged downwards with a sweeping movement. The external surface is decorated with horizontal bands of this motif, set vertically, from the top of the shoulder downwards with no spacing. The internal surface of the neck has a single band. The only other form of decoration is a line of faint diagonal slashes on the outside of the neck.

Neo Vessel 2
Three rim sherds survive (26g). The diameter of the vessel is about 200mm. The outer surface of the flange is decorated with two horizontal bands of diagonally incised fingernail impressions. The flange protrudes on the inside edge of the rim to form a slight lid-seating. The inside of the neck flares outwards but is not decorated. The fabric into the R1 (formerly RQ1) category with inclusions of granitic rock (granodiorite) in the range 1-3mm with occasional large flakes of biotite mica of 1mm separated from the rock mass. The fabric is typical of local production from the northern part of the county close to Mountsorrel and other Charnwood outcrops and is used in prehistoric pot making right through to the Iron Age.

Neo Vessel 3
A single, very well preserved rim sherd survives (40g). The vessel diameter is 220mm. The rim form is the same as that for vessel 2 as is the fabric, R1. The sherd is oxidised to a pinky-orange throughout. The external surface of the rim flange is decorated with horizontal rows of oblique short slashes arranged in a herringbone fashion astride the bead with a band of vertical slashes and diagonal slashes below separated by single incised horizontal lines of the same thickness. The concave external surface of the neck is decorated with herringbone slashes. The out-curving internal surface of neck is decorated with a series of concentric arcs formed from paired incised lines. Linear incised decoration of this kind appears to be unusual amongst vessels in the Peterborough ware tradition.

Neo Vessel 4
This vessel is represented by three body sherds (166g) in the form of a steep-sided, coil-built bowl of about 250mm diameter and at least 150mm height. The fabric is Q2 with large angular quartz inclusions of up to 7mm. The decoration has the appearance of 'crochet', with double rows of circular impressions separated by flat ridges, evenly spaced across the entire external surface.

Neo Vessel 5
These ten decorated sherds (222g), four of which join, come from a bowl of about 200mm in diameter and at least 150mm in height. The fabric is R1 with large granitic inclusions up to 7mm. The decoration is similar to vessel 4, comprising single rows of circular stab marks evenly spaced across the entire external surface.

Neo Vessel 6
This vessel, is represented by a single sherd (32g) in fabric R1, with predominantly granitic inclusions up to 7mm and occasional large flakes of biotite mica up to 2mm. The vessel is about 220mm in diameter. The decoration is similar to vessel 1 with rows of s-shaped impressions across the entire surface. The sherd is oxidised throughout.

Neo Vessel 7
From context (39) came three joining sherds in fabric Q2, decorated with imitation 'basketry' impressions.

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Context (20) produced, alongside a group of fresh and calcined struck flint flakes and tools, seventeen diagnostic sherds belonging to three separate vessels, two with flat bases and steep sides, which may be beakers, whilst the third may be a food vessel fragment or grooved ware. The fourth is a shallow bowl. Although further work will be required to parallel these vessels, they are likely to date to the centuries either side of *c*. 2000 BC. The comparatively fine fabric (fine shell, sand and mudstone) used for these delicate vessels is atypical of the bulk of domestic wares of this date (which will be predominantly rock tempered) and it may be possible that they derive from outside the immediate region.

EBA Vessel 1
Eight decorated sherds, plus at least 13 undiagnostic fragments (86g), belong to the base and lower body of a thin-bodied vessel with a flat base and steep sides resembling a beaker. The diameter of the base is 90mm and maximum preserved height is 55mm. The thickness of the base is 3mm; thickness of the walls is up to 5mm. The vessel is coil built in a fine, slightly sandy fabric, tempered predominantly with subrounded and subangular particles of soft ferruginous material (mudstone or clay pellets?) (<2mm) and fine shell (<2mm), the latter evidenced by plate-like voids on the surfaces of the vessel. The external surface is oxidised to pinky orange, with a thick reduced core. The internal and external surfaces of the sherds have been abraded, and the leaching of the shell might also suggest water logging. Decoration on the external surface is still detectable and comprises a band of horizontally, but unevenly, incised lines set in parallel about 3-5mm apart, the band starting between 15 and 25mm from the base. On two sherds there are a total of ten faintly incised vertical notches (finger nail impressions?) set immediately below the lowest horizontal line. A further three sherds, possibly from the same vessel came from context (8) in the same trench.

The remains of beakers from the county are extremely rare with a handful of example coming from controlled excavation in recent decades (e.g. Smeeton Westerby). The decoration described here does not conform to any parallels known locally.

EBA Vessel 2
Two, joining sherds (24g), from the flat base of a vessel with steep sides. Diameter of the base is 180mm with a thickness of 8mm. The wall thickness is 6mm. The fabric is fine, with moderate white mica (<0.1mm) and abundant fine shell (< 2mm) again evidenced by plate-like voids. The external surface and margin is oxidised to a grey brown, with a dark grey core.

EBA Vessel 3
Four body sherds (10g) with a similarly micaceous shelly fabric to vessel 2. It appears to be coil built with a diameter of 280mm. It is decorated with two or three parallel grooves of 3mm width s and set 3mm apart.

EBA Vessel 4
Three rim sherds (10g) from a shallow bowl of 160mm diameter. The rim is flattened and slightly inward sloping, with incised herringbone decoration on the upper surface. The external surface also appears to have incised decoration but is not preserved well.

References

Gibson, A.M., 2002 *Prehistoric Pottery in Britain and Ireland*. Stroud Tempus.
Knight, D ., Marsden, P. and Carney, J. 2003 'Local or non-local? Prehistoric granodiorite-tempered pottery in the East Midlands' in A.M. Gibson (ed) *Prehistoric Pottery: People, Pattern and Purpose*, BAR international series 1156, 111-125.

APPENDIX 3: The Brief

APPENDIX 4: DESIGN SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL EARTHWORK SURVEY AND TRIAL TRENCHING