

**Archaeological Evaluation on Land at  
Mill Road, Rearsby,  
Leicestershire (SK 647 144)**

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**Contents**

<b>1</b>	Summary	1
<b>2</b>	Introduction	1
<b>3</b>	Site Background	2
<b>4</b>	Methodology	3
<b>5</b>	Results	5
<b>6</b>	Discussion	16
<b>7</b>	Conclusion	16
<b>8</b>	Archive	17
<b>9</b>	Acknowledgements	17
<b>10</b>	Bibliography	17
<b>11</b>	Appendices	18
11.1	Appendix 1.	17
11.2	Appendix 2. Design Specification	17

**Figures**

Fig.1	Site location. Scale 1:50000	2
Fig.2	Location of development area supplied by the developer (scale unknown)	3
Fig.3	Trench Location plan.	4
Fig.4	Plan and sections of trench 6	7
Fig.5	Plan and section of Archaeology in Trench 8	9
Fig.6	Plan of trench 11	13
Fig.7	Plan of trench 12	14
Fig.8	Post excavation photograph of trench 12. North facing.	15

## **Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Mill Road, Rearsby, Leicestershire**

**(SK 647 144)**

**Greg Farnworth-Jones**

### **1. Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at Mill Road, Rearsby, Leicestershire (SK 647 144) on the 10th-17th July 2007. This work was in advance of the proposed residential development of 30 new dwellings and the conversion of farm buildings to form 6 dwellings plus access. This work was carried out on behalf of JS Bloor (Measham) Ltd. by University of Leicester Archaeological Services. A total of twelve evaluation trenches were excavated which revealed four pits of Late/post-medieval date, two ditches of possible medieval date, two linear features, one of which could be prehistoric in date, a medieval posthole and evidence of two medieval sand quarry pits. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services Section, accession number X.A99.2007.*

### **2. Introduction**

**2.1** This document constitutes the second stage of archaeological assessment to have been carried out on land at Mill Road, Rearsby, Leicestershire (SK 647 144). The archaeological assessment was undertaken on behalf of JS Bloor (Measham) Ltd. by University of Leicester Archaeological Services.

**2.2** JS Bloor (Measham) Ltd. propose to develop an area of c.1.8 ha of land at Mill Road, Rearsby, Leicestershire (SK 647 144) to the development of 30 new residential dwellings and the conversion of farm buildings to form 6 dwellings plus access. The Senior Planning Archaeologist of the Historic and Natural Environment Team of Leicestershire County Council, in his capacity as archaeological adviser to the planning authority, requested that a preliminary archaeological assessment of the site area be carried out. The assessment was to be undertaken in two stages, the first an archaeological desk-based assessment, which was previously carried out by ULAS (George, 2005), and a second stage of archaeological trial trench evaluation following the results of the desk-based assessment.

**2.3** The desk-based assessment indicated that the site is located within the SMR site of the historic core of the medieval village of Rearsby, although none of the development area fronts on to a known medieval street. Various medieval sites and post-medieval sites are located relatively close to the development site. There is therefore some potential for finds or deposits of a medieval date within the proposed development area.

**2.4** Map evidence indicates that the site has seen little development in the 19th and mid-20th century other than the farm barn buildings. Therefore if present, archaeological remains are likely to be relatively well preserved and close to the surface.

2.5 In summary, the area has some potential for containing archaeological remains of a medieval or post-medieval date and unknown potential for remains of earlier periods.

### 3. Site Background

3.1 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 156 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of sands and gravels. The proposed development area is fairly flat at a height of *c.*56m OD.

3.2 The development area consists of an area of *c.* 1.8 ha, within which is proposed the residential development of 30 new dwellings and the conversion of farm buildings to form 6 dwellings plus access.

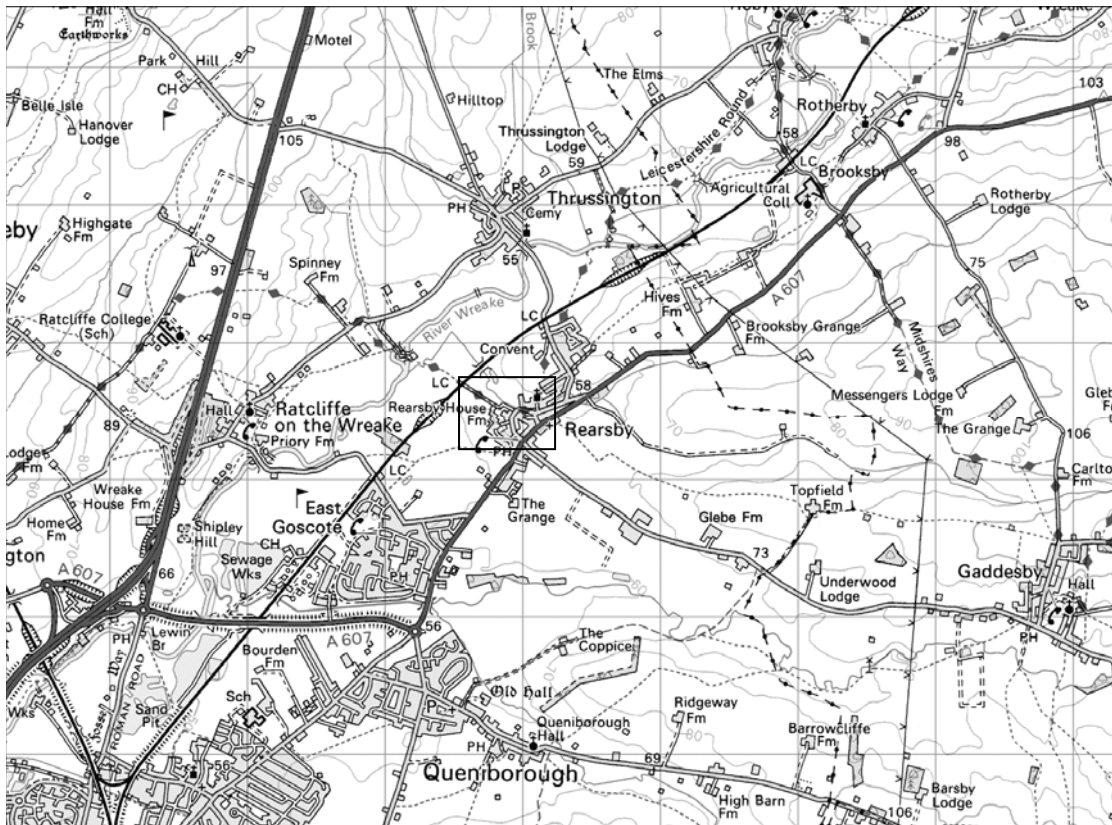


Fig. 1. Site location Scale 1:50000

Reproduced from the Landranger 129 Nottingham and Loughborough area 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 2002. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002186.

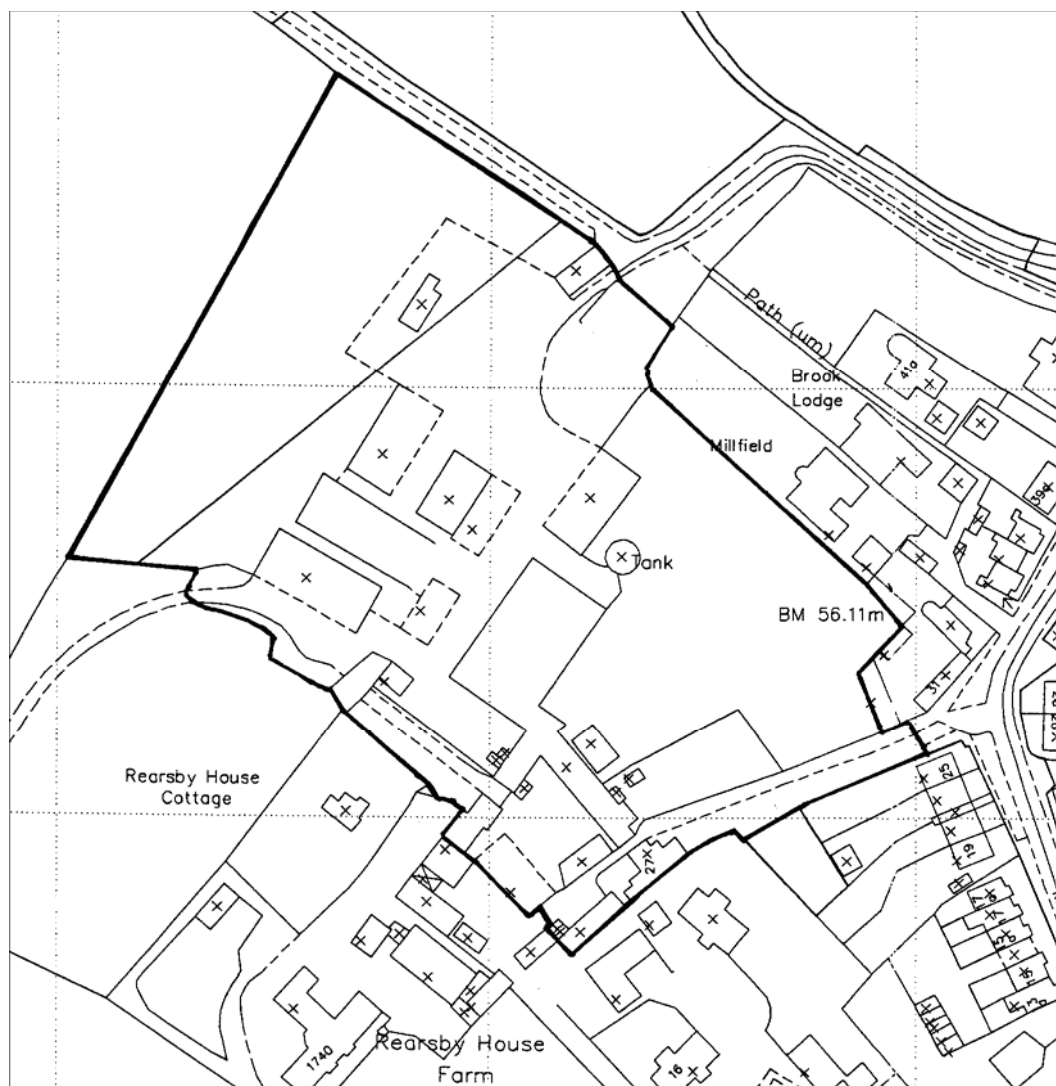


Fig. 2. Location of the development area supplied by developer (Scale unknown)

#### 4. Methodology

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

4.2 The main objectives of the evaluation were:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
2. To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
3. To produce an archive and report of any results.

4.3 The Senior Planning Archaeologist had requested that a c. 5 % sample of the area affected by ground works (c.0.95 ha.) where new buildings are proposed. The work followed the *Design Specification for Archaeological work* approved by the

Senior Planning Archaeologist as advisor to the planning authority (Clay, 2006). This comprised eight 30m x 1.6m trenches and four 15m x 1.6m trench totalling c.480 sq m. The exact location was defined by constraints of the area for trenching.

**4.4** Topsoil/modern overburden was removed in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision, down to the uppermost archaeological deposits by JCB 3C using a toothless ditching bucket. Trenches were excavated to a width of 1.6m.

**4.5** Trenches were examined by appropriate hand cleaning. Any archaeological deposits or significant natural deposits were planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans have been tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Spot heights were taken as appropriate.

**4.6** Sections were drawn as appropriate, including records of at least one longitudinal face of each trench.

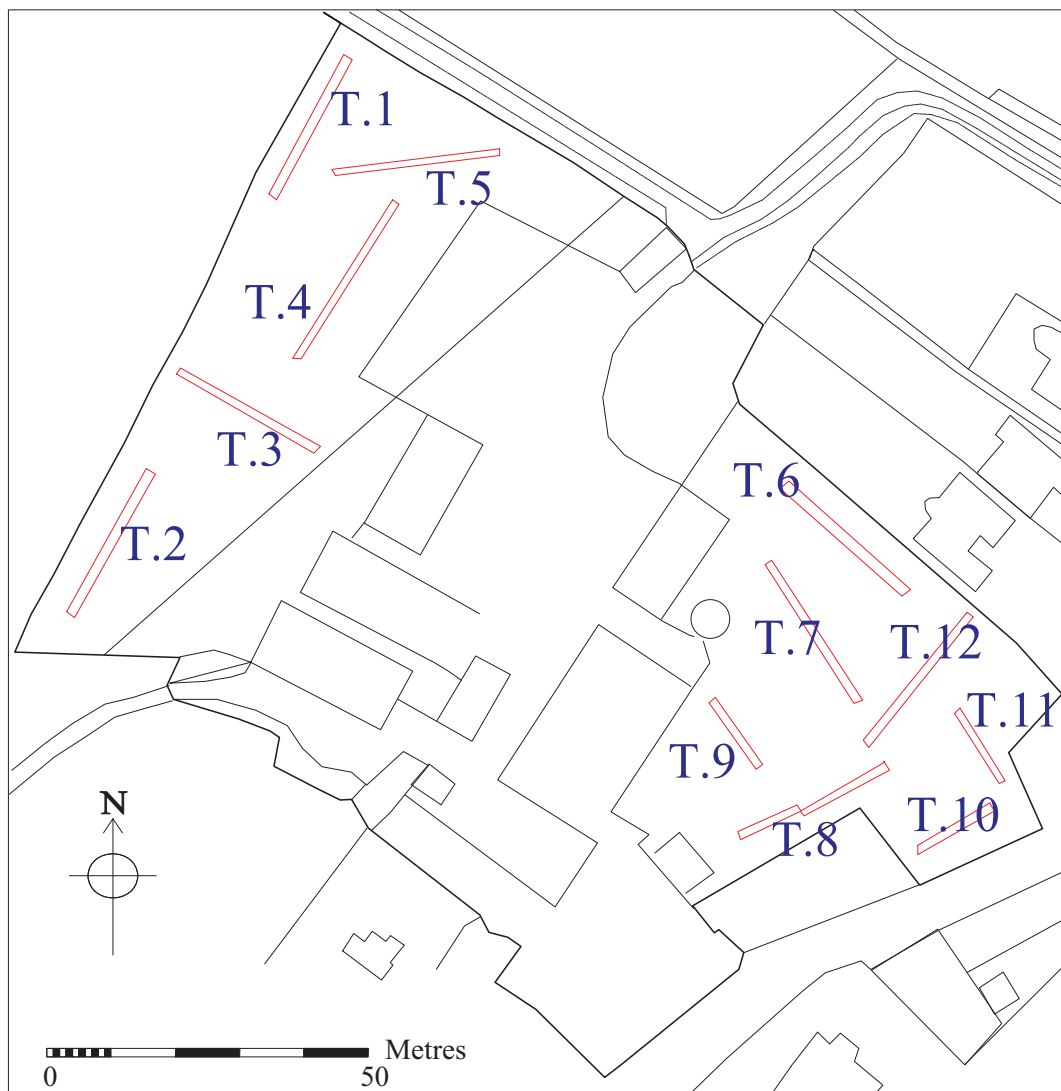


Figure 3 Trench Location Plan

## 5. Results

### 5.1 Trench 1

#### Trench 1 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	27.45m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	43.92sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.55.7m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	Not Reached.

Trench one was located in the northwest corner of the site, orientated southwest-northeast (Fig.3). Initial machining revealed made up ground layers which were very mixed, consisting of dark silt and clay, down to the depth of c.1.3m, at which the natural substratum was not reached. The mixed make up layers covered the entire length of the trench. No archaeology was present in trench 1. Trench 1 was therefore negative.

### 5.2 Trench 2

#### Trench 2 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	29.82m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	47.7sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.55.52m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	c.55.58m OD

Trench 2 was located to the south-west of trench 1 in the south-western corner of the site, orientated northeast-southwest (fig.3). Initial machining revealed loose grey brown silt clay topsoil (001), to a depth of c.0.31m. Further machining revealed firm orange brown sandy clay subsoil (002), to a depth of c.0.25m. At a depth of c.0.56m natural was reached which consisted of red brown clay and orange brown sandy clay (20/80). No archaeology finds or features were observed in trench 2.

### 5.3 Trench 3

#### Trench 3 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	32m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	51.2sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.55.52m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	c.55.58m OD

Trench 3 was located to the northwest of trench 2, orientated northwest-southeast (fig.3). Initial machining revealed, to a depth of c.0.3m, loose topsoil (001) which consisted of grey brown silt clay (40/60), with occasional sub-rounded stones (0.005-0.1m < 5%). Further machining revealed firm orange brown sandy clay subsoil (002),

(30/70), with occasional stones to a depth of *c.*0.25m. This layer was peeled back to reveal red natural layers consisting of red brown clay, and orange brown sandy clay, (20/80). Two tree throws and a modern service trench were observed in trench 3 however no archaeological features were located. Trench 3 was therefore negative.

#### **5.4 Trench 4**

##### **Trench 4 Details**

<i>Length of Trench</i>	30m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	48sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 54.91m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 55.16m OD

Trench 4 was located to the northwest of trench 3, orientated southwest-northeast (fig.3). Initial machining revealed to a depth of *c.*0.3m topsoil (001) which was the same as the topsoil layer observed in trenches 2-3. After continued machining a firm orange brown, clay sand (30/70) subsoil layer (002), to a further depth of *c.*0.7m was encountered. This revealed red brown clay and orange brown sandy clay (40/60) natural. No archaeological finds or features were observed during machine excavation in trench 4. Therefore results of trench 4 were negative.

#### **5.5 Trench 5**

##### **Trench 5 Details**

<i>Length of Trench</i>	30m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	48sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 54.81m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 54.91m OD

Trench 5 was located to the north of trench 4 and was orientated east-west (fig.3). Initial machining revealed, to a depth of *c.*0.3m, loose topsoil (001) which consisted of grey brown silt clay (40/60), with occasional sub-rounded stones (0.005-0.1m < 5%). Further machining revealed firm mid-brown sandy clay subsoil (002), (30/70), with occasional stones to a depth of *c.*1.2m. The natural substratum was reached at a depth of *c.*1.3m and consisted of orange brown clay. No archaeological finds or features were located in trench 5.



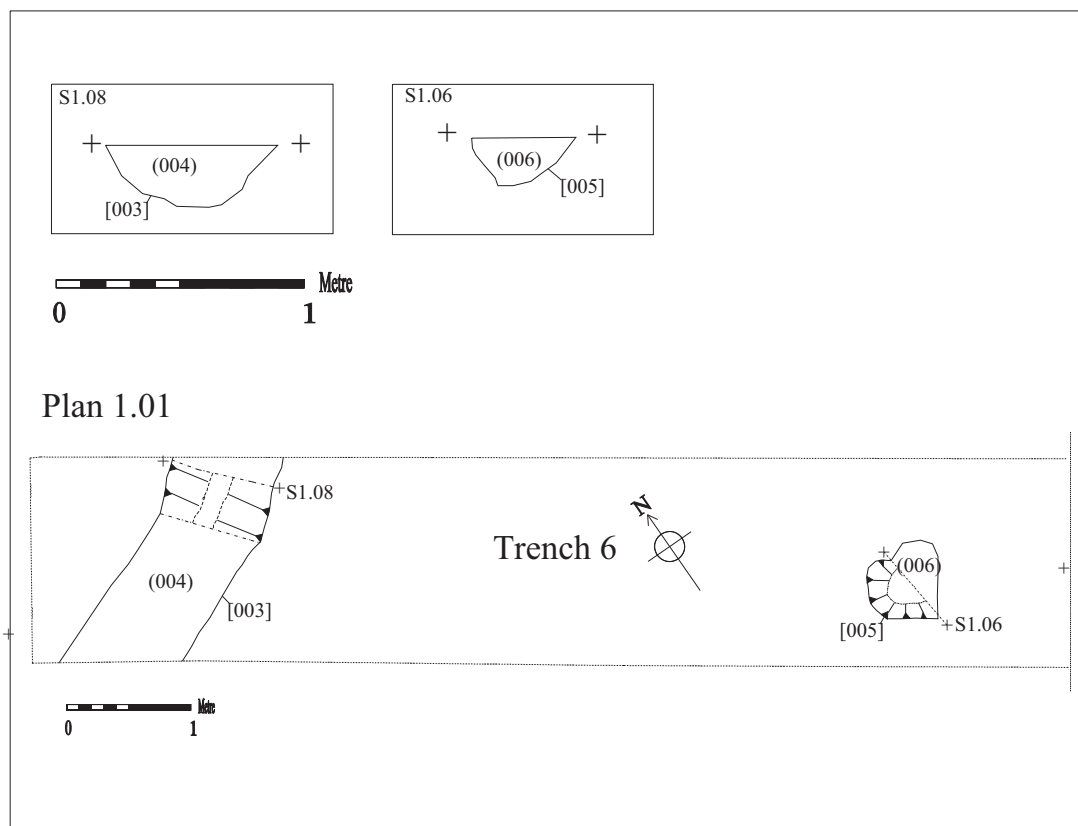


Figure 4 Plan of Trench 6

## 5.6 Trench 6

### Trench 6 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	28.5m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	45.6sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.55.01m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	c.1m OD

Trench 6 was located on the western side of the site, in the northwest corner of the paddock, orientated northwest-southeast (fig.3). Initial machining revealed, to a depth of c.0.56m, loose topsoil (001) which consisted of grey brown clay silt (40/60). Further machining revealed the natural substratum which consisted of orange brown clay sandy subsoil (002), (30/70), to a depth of c.0.4m.

At c.0.2m from the northern end of trench 6 was located a possible boundary ditch (004), [003], running east-west, which measured c.2.2m (excavated length), c.0.83m wide and 0.3m deep (fig.4). The fill (004) consisted of mid grey brown silt (30/70), with no coarse components, and no finds.

At 6.2m from the northern end of trench 6 was located a small irregular heart-shaped pit (006), [05], measuring 0.5m in diameter, and *c.*0.3m in depth (fig.4). The fill (006) was the same as fill (004), but contained no finds.

At the southern end of trench 6 a large tree throw and two house drains were observed. No other archaeological finds or features were observed in trench 6.

## 5.7 Trench 7

### Trench 7 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	29.64m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	47.42sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 55.17m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 55.11m OD

Trench 7 was located to the southwest of trench 6 and was orientated northwest-south-east (fig.3). Initial machining revealed loose grey brown topsoil (001), with clay silt consistence (30/70), to a depth of *c.*0.6m, which contained occasional small rounded stones, <3%. After continued machining a firm orange brown, clay sand (30/70) subsoil layer (002), to a further depth of *c.*0.4m was encountered. This was peeled back to reveal, at a depth of *c.*1m, the natural substratum which consisted of brown orange, clay sand (20/80). No archaeological finds or features were encountered during the machining of trench 7. Trench 7 was therefore negative.

## 5.8 Trench 8

### Trench 8 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	30.5m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	48.8sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 55.11m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	<i>c.</i> 55.21m OD

Trench 8 was located to the south of trench 9, orientated northeast-southwest (fig.3). Initial machining revealed loose grey brown topsoil (001), with clay silt consistence (30/70), to a depth of *c.*0.6m, which contained occasional small rounded stones, <3%. At 4m from the northern end of the trench however, the topsoil dropped off to a depth of >1.2m. At 16m from the northern end of the trench, the topsoil depth reduced significantly back up to *c.*0.6m. It soon became apparent that this disparity was caused by sand quarrying. After continued machining a firm orange brown, clay sand (30/70) subsoil layer (002), to a further depth of *c.*0.3m was encountered. This was peeled back to reveal, at a depth of *c.*0.9m, the natural substratum which consisted of yellow sand. As mentioned above large quarried sand pits were evidenced during machining.

At a distance of 15.49m from the northern end of trench 11, was located a small ditch (018), [017], measuring 3.5m long (excavated length), 0.7m wide and 0.3m in depth (fig.5). The orientation of the ditch was approximately north-south. The ditch fill (018) consisted of brown grey clay silt (30/70); firm to loose and contained some moderately sorted rounded and sub-rounded stones (0.01m-0.1m) <3%. The fill did not however contain any finds. Ditch (018), [17], was truncated by a modern field drain running east-west. No other archaeological finds or features were located during the excavation of trench 8.

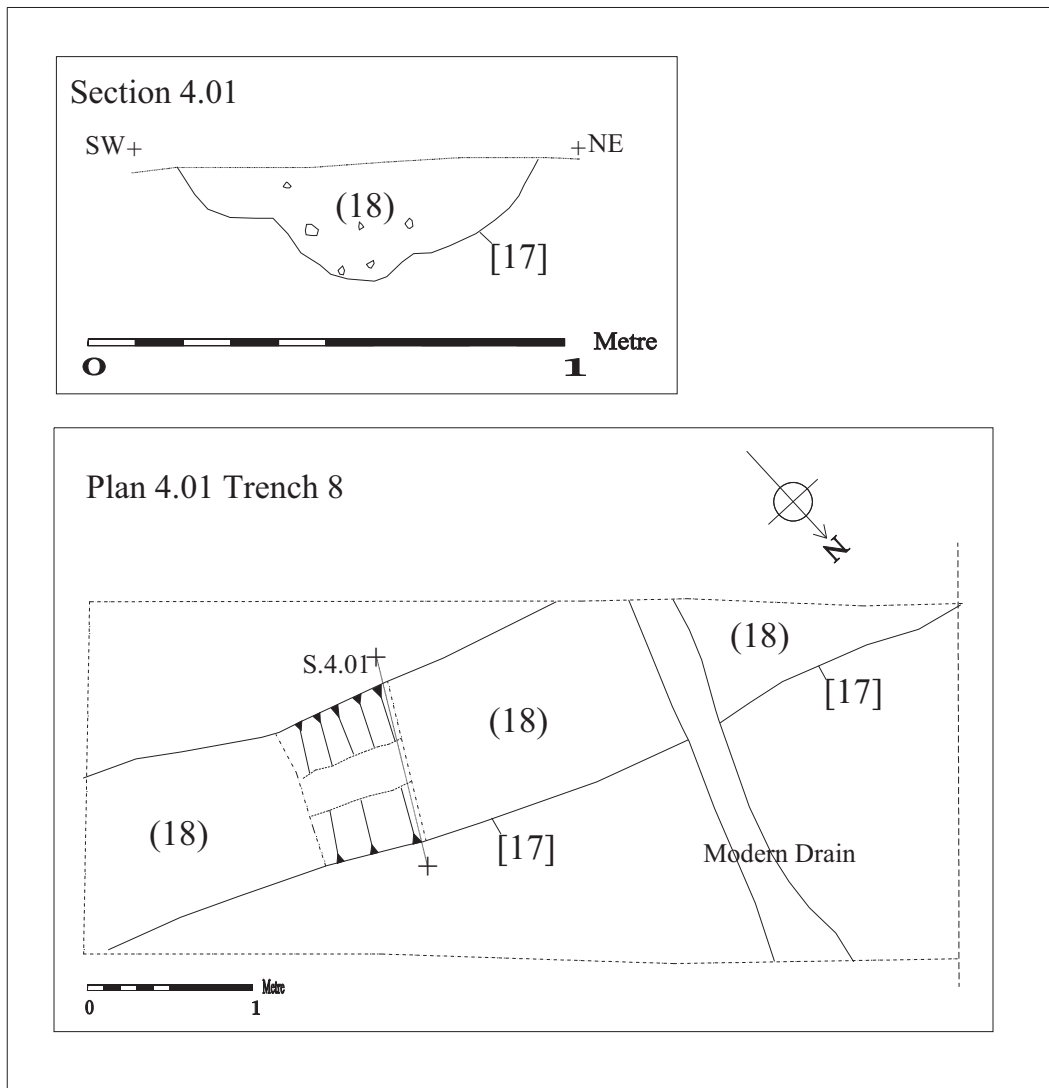


Figure 5 Plan and section of Archaeology in Trench 8

## 5.9 Trench 9

### Trench 9 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	15.33m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	24.5sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.55.06m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	c.55.22m OD

Trench 9 was located to the northwest of trench 10, orientated northwest-southeast (fig.3). Trench 9 was the first of the smaller 15m trenches. Initial machining revealed loose grey brown topsoil (001), with clay silt consistence (30/70), to a depth of c.0.6m, which contained occasional small rounded stones, <3%. After continued machining a firm orange brown, clay sand (30/70) subsoil layer (002), to a further depth of c.0.4m was encountered. This was peeled back to reveal, at a depth of c.1m, the natural substratum which consisted of brown orange, clay sand (20/80). Two modern field drains were observed in trench 9 however, no archaeological finds or features were encountered during the machining. Trench 9 was therefore negative.

## 5.10 Trench 10

### Trench 10 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	14.78m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	23.65sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.54.91m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	c.55.22m OD

Trench 10 was located to the east of trench 8, situated in the south western corner of the site orientated northeast-southwest. Initial machining revealed loose grey brown topsoil (001), with clay silt consistence (30/70), to a depth of c.0.3m, which contained occasional small rounded stones, <3%. After continued machining a firm orange brown, clay sand (30/70) subsoil layer (002), to a further depth of c.0.6m was encountered. This was peeled back to reveal, at a depth of c.0.9m, the natural substratum which consisted of yellow sand.

Located at 9.6m from the south western end of trench 10, evidence of quarrying activity was encountered, as here the topsoil dropped to a depth of c.1.08m, below the top of undisturbed sand natural. It was clear that the sand had been extracted in a similar fashion to the quarrying observed in trench 8.

## 5.11 Trench 11

### Trench 11 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	15.9m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	25.44sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.55.24m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	c.55.11m OD

Trench 11 was located to the north of trench 10, orientated northwest-south-east (fig.3). Initial machining revealed loose grey brown topsoil (001), with clay silt consistence (30/70), to a depth of c.0.6m, which contained occasional small rounded stones, <3%. After continued machining a firm orange brown, clay sand (30/70) subsoil layer (002), to a further depth of c.0.4m was encountered. This was peeled back to reveal, at a depth of c.1m, the natural substratum which consisted of brown orange, clay sand (20/80).

At 8m from the south-eastern end of trench 11 was located a linear feature, or gully [014], (013), orientated northwest-southeast and butt-ending at northern end (fig.6). Gully [014] measured 5.04m in length, 0.66m (max.), 0.47m (min.) in width, with a depth of 0.36m (max.), 0.15m (min). Excavation revealed that the cut for the gully [014] possessed a sharp break of slope with a concave base. The gully fill (013) consisted of a mixed loose brown clay silt (20/80) and orange brown clay sand (30/70). No finds were uncovered in (013) and the southern end of the gully had been truncated by the machining.

At 11.72m from the south-eastern end of trench 11 was located a small circular post-hole [015], (016), which measured 0.2m in diameter, and 0.08m in depth (fig.6). The sides had a sharp break of slope and the base was concave. The post-hole fill (016) consisted of loose, orange brown clay sand (30/70) and contained a sherd of of ST3 – Coarse Stamford ware (late 9<sup>th</sup> – mid 11th C). The post-hole [015], (016) was located next to gully [014], only 0.08m separating the two features.

## 5.12 Trench 12

### Trench 12 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	20.4m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	32.64sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.56.11m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.55.1m OD
<i>Top of Natural (m OD)</i>	c.55.21m OD

Trench 12 was located to the west of trench 11 and was orientated northeast-southwest (fig.3). Initial machining revealed loose grey brown topsoil layer (001),

with clay silt consistence (30/70), to a depth of *c.*0.6m, which contained occasional small rounded stones, <3%. After continued machining a firm orange brown, clay sand (30/70) subsoil layer (002), to a further depth of *c.*0.3m was encountered. This was peeled back to reveal, at a depth of *c.*0.9m, the natural substratum which consisted of brown orange, clay sand (20/80).

Excavation revealed three archaeological features within trench 12 [009], [01] and [020], (fig.7). Located at 7.33m from the northern end of the trench and cut into the natural, was an arc shaped gully feature (010), [009], which measured 11m (excavated length), *c.*0.43m in width and *c.*0.3m deep (fig.7). The cut [009] had fairly steep rounded sides, with a concave base, whilst the fill (010) consisted of very soft, mid greyish brown sandy silt (40/60), with charcoal flecks <1%. The only find contained within the fill was a solitary flint flake which had been struck, with evidence of secondary working (Sawday, 2007).

Located at 10.28m from the northern edge of trench 12 and cutting gully (010) was a pit [011], (012), (fig.7) measuring 1.5m (excavated length), 0.7m wide and 0.45m deep (fig.7). The fill (012) consisted of soft dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional sandstone pebbles and charcoal flecks. Within the deposit two sherds of medieval pottery were recovered, which included a sherd of Potters Marston ware (*c.*1100-*c.*1300) and a sherd of Coarse Shelley ware (*c.*1100-*c.*1400?) (Sawday, 2007).

Pit [020] also cut gully (010) and was located at the southern end of trench 12 (fig.7). It was irregular in shape and measured 1.4m in diameter and was excavated to a depth of 0.7m. The fill (021) consisted of dark greyish brown sandy silt with occasional rounded stones and was similar to fill (012). Pit fill (021) also contained large quantities of animal bone, although no pottery was recovered.

# Plan 1.03 Trench 11

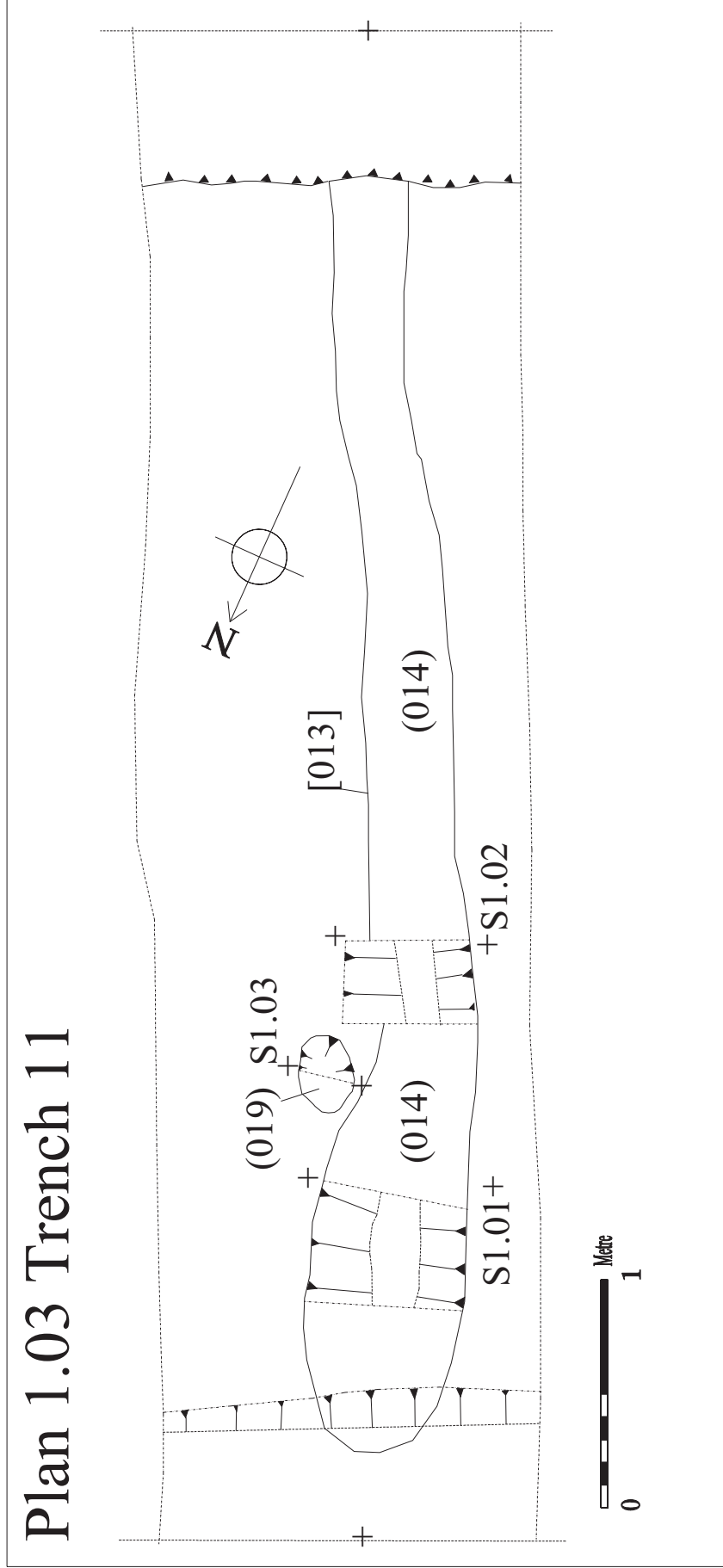


Figure 6 Plan of Trench 11

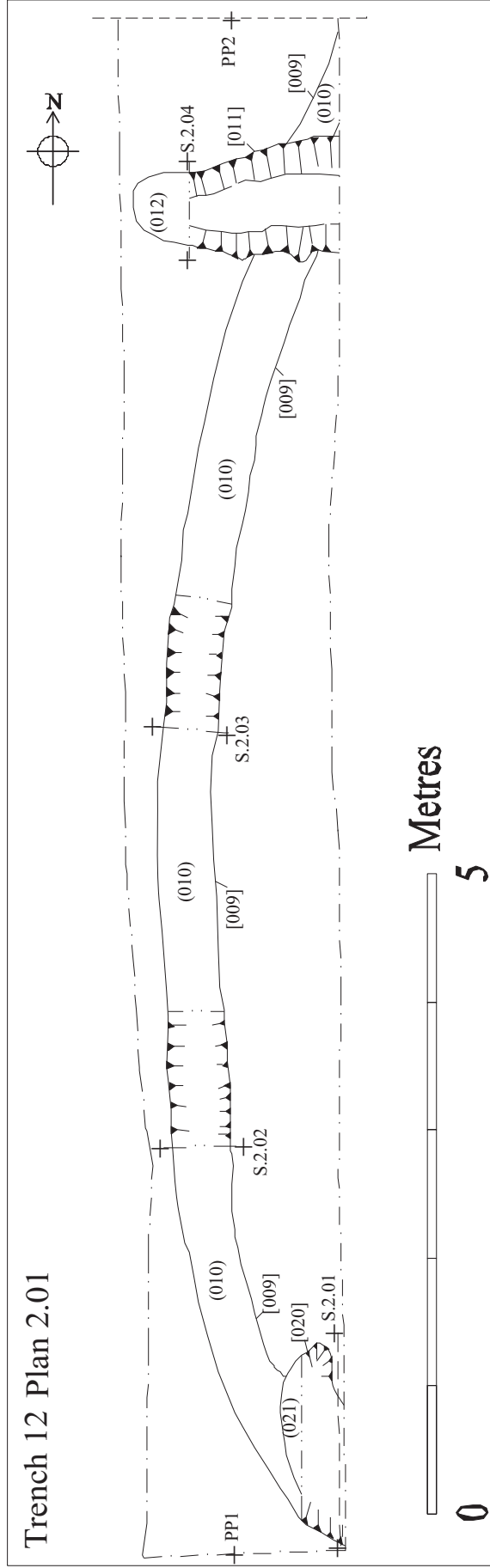


Figure 7 Plan of Trench 12





**Figure 8. Post excavation photograph of trench 12. (North-Facing).**

## **6. Discussion**

### **6.1 Prehistoric**

6.1.1 The flint flake found in gully fill (010) in trench twelve will have had origins in the prehistoric period. It is therefore possible that the gully [009] itself may also be prehistoric in date.

### **6.2 Medieval**

6.2.1 The ditch [003] in trench six may possibly date from this period, although there were no finds. Ditch [003] was possibly a field boundary or enclosure ditch indicating that the site may have been used for agricultural purposes during the medieval period. This assumption would be reasonable due to the location of the site with its proximity to the medieval core of Rearsby. Trench eight also contained a possible boundary ditch [017], which may date to the medieval period. Pit [005], also found in trench six contained a similar fill to ditch [003] and may also be medieval in date.

6.2.2 Trench eleven contained a gully [013] with associated post-hole [015], both of which may date to the medieval period. Post-hole [015] contained one small sherd of ST3 – Coarse Stamford ware (late 9<sup>th</sup> – mid 11th C), which strongly indicates a medieval date. The sherd had been knife trimmed externally, and possessed a convex base. It is possible that these features are in some way associated with livestock herding/enclosure.

6.2.3 Trenches eight and ten both contained evidence of sand quarrying where the natural sand had been extracted. The quarrying of building materials is likely to reflect the close proximity of buildings and therefore settlement of this period.

6.3.1 Pit [011] in trench twelve contained medieval pottery and can be assigned to the medieval period.

## **7. Conclusion**

7.1 The archaeology at Rearsby Home Farm, off Mill Lane Rearsby, shows evidence of land use activity from the prehistoric period through to the medieval and post-medieval periods.

7.2 There is evidence for prehistoric activity with the gully which contained the flint flake in trench twelve.

7.3 From the medieval period the two potential boundary ditches located in trenches six and eight suggest evidence of land division in the medieval period and may indicate agricultural land-use in the area outside the village core. The gully and associated post-hole in trench eleven both appear to be medieval in date and may possibly represent evidence of livestock enclosure. One of the pits [009], in trench twelve contained medieval pottery and cut the earlier prehistoric gully, whilst pit [020] also appeared to be medieval in origin.

7.4 There is evidence for medieval sand quarrying in trenches eight and ten. The quarry pits themselves suggest that buildings were being constructed relatively close by. Such conclusions are can be corroborated due to the proximity of the medieval village core.

## 8. Archive

8.1 The site archive (X.A99.2007) consisting of permatrace drawings, paper records, black and white slides and colour digital photographs will be housed with Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services Section.

## 9. Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the clients, JS Bloor (Measham) Ltd., for their assistance and co-operation on site. Patrick Clay, who managed the project and the fieldwork was carried out by the author with the assistance of Dan Prior, all of ULAS.

## 10. Bibliography

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George, S., 2005 *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment for proposed residential development on land at Home Farm, Mill Road, Leicestershire (SK 647 144)* ULAS Ref. 2005-023

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22.08.2007

## 11. Appendices

### 11.1 Appendix 1 – The finds

APPENDIX: The pottery and flint from Home Farm, Mill Lane, Rearsby  
D. Sawday

The stratified pottery, 3 sherds, weighing 56 grams, was examined under a binocular microscope and catalogued with reference to the ULAS fabric series (Davies and Sawday 1999). The results are shown below, with the proviso that two of the sherds from contexts [15] and [11] could, conceivably, be earlier.

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Connor, A., and Buckley, R.. *Roman and Medieval Occupation in Causeway Lane, Leicester*, Leicester Archaeology Mon. **5**.

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

Site/Parish: Home farm, Mill Lane, Rearsby, Leics. Accession No/ Doc Ref: XA99 207/rearsby2.doc 0 Material: pottery & flint Site Type: village core	Submitter: G. Jones Identifier: D. Sawday Date of Id: 23.8.2007 Method of Recovery: evaluation Job No. 05604
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Context	Fabric/ware	Sherd nos.	Weight grams	Comments
POT				
TR11 [15] (14)	ST3 – Coarse Stamford ware	1	15	Knife trimmed externally, convex base, late 9 <sup>th</sup> – mid 11th C
TR 12 (12)	PM – Potters Marston	1	7	c.1100-c.1300
TR12 [11] (12)	CS – Coarse Shelly ware	1	34	c.1100-c.1400?
FLINT				
TR 12 [9] (10)	Flint	1		Struck, with evidence of secondary working

## 11.2 *Appendix 2 – Design Specification*

### UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

#### Design Specification for archaeological work

*Site: Mill Road, Rearsby, Leicestershire.*

*NGR: SK 647 144*

*Client: JS Bloor (Measham) Ltd*

*Planning Authority: Charnwood Borough Council*

*Planning Application Number: 06/2928/2*

#### 1 Introduction

##### 1.1 *Definition and scope of the specification*

This document is a design specification for an initial phase of archaeological field evaluation (AFE) at the above site, in accordance with DOE Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning, para.30). The fieldwork specified below is intended to provide preliminary indications of character and extent of any buried archaeological remains in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority.

- 1.2 The definition of archaeological field evaluation, taken from the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance: for Archaeological Field Evaluation (IFA S&G: AFE) is a limited programme of non-intrusive and/ or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

#### 2. Background

##### 2.1 *Context of the Project*

- 2.1 The proposed development site is located off Mill Road, Rearsby (fig.1). It consists of an area of c.1.8 ha., centred on SK 647 144 in Charnwood District at a height of c.80metres.
- 2.2 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 156 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of sand and gravels. The site lies at a height of c.56 m O.D.

##### 2.3 *Planning Background*

- 2.3.1 The application is for the residential development of 30 new dwellings and the conversion of farm buildings to form 6 dwellings plus access. A desk-based assessment identified that the area is located within the historic core of Rearsby (ULAS Report).

#### 3. Archaeological Objectives

- 3.1 The main objectives of the evaluation will be:
- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.

- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
  - To produce an archive and report of any results.
- 3.2 Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation is to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.
- 3.3 Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area.

#### **4. Methodology**

##### **4.1 *General Methodology and Standards***

- 4.1.1 All work will follow the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1999).
- 4.1.2 Staffing, recording systems, health and safety provisions and insurance details are included below.
- 4.1.3 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site by the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are met and professional standards are maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with the Senior Planning Archaeologist the Planning authority and the Client.

##### **4.2 *Trial Trenching Methodology***

- 4.2.1 Prior to any machining of trial trenches general photographs of the site areas will be taken. A Cat scanner will be employed to attempt to locate underlying services.
- 4.2.2 Topsoil/modern overburden will be removed in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision, down to the uppermost archaeological deposits by JCB 3C or equivalent using a toothless ditching bucket. Trenches will be excavated to a width of 1.5m and down to the top of archaeological deposits.
- 4.2.3 The trenches will be backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation.
- 4.2.4 The application area covers *c.* 0.95 ha. A *c.* 5% sample of the area of impact is proposed, the equivalent of eight 30m x 1.6m trenches and four 15m x 1.6m trench totaling *c.* 480 sq m. (Fig 1). The exact location of the trenches may need to be modified depending on constraints on site.
- 4.2.5 Trenches will be examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located will be planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans will be tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.
- 4.2.6 Sections of any excavated archaeological features will be drawn at an appropriate scale. At least one longitudinal face of each trench will be recorded. All sections will be levelled and tied to the Ordnance Survey Datum, or a permanent fixed bench mark.
- 4.2.7 Trench locations will be recorded using an electronic distance measurer. These will then be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.
- 4.2.8 Any human remains will initially be left *in situ* and will only be removed if necessary for their protection, under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations.

##### **4.3 *Recording Systems***

- 4.3.1 The ULAS recording manual will be used as a guide for all recording.
- 4.3.2 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.
- 4.3.3 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a

trench plan at appropriate scale, which will show the location of the areas investigated in relationship to the investigation area and OS grid.

- 4.3.4 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made. Sections including the half-sections of individual layers of features will be drawn as necessary, typically at a scale of 1:10. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be recorded.
- 4.3.5 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.
- 4.3.6 This record will be compiled and checked during the course of the excavations.

## **5. Finds and Samples**

- 5.1 The IFA *Guidelines for Finds Work* will be adhered to.
- 5.2 Before commencing work on the site, a Site code/Accession number will be agreed with the Planning Archaeologist that will be used to identify all records and finds from the site.
- 5.3 During the fieldwork, different sampling strategies may be employed according to the perceived importance of the strata under investigation. Close attention will always be given to sampling for date, structure and environment. If significant archaeological features are sample excavated, the environmental sampling strategy is likely to include the following:
- i. A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.
  - ii. Any buried soils or well sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.
  - iii. Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located.
  - iv. Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated and datable. Consultation with the specialist will be undertaken.
- 5.4 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording with the approval of the Senior Planning Archaeologist. The IFA *Guidelines for Finds Work* will be adhered to.
- 5.5 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner. Where appropriate they will be cleaned, marked and receive remedial conservation in accordance with recognised best-practice. This will include the site code number, finds number and context number. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self sealing plastic bags, again marked with site code, finds and context numbers and boxed by material in standard storage boxes (340mm x 270mm x 195mm). All materials will be fully labelled, catalogued and stored in appropriate containers.

## **6. Report and Archive**

- 6.1 The full report in A4 format will usually follow within eight weeks of the completion of the fieldwork and copies will be dispatched to the Client, Senior Planning Archaeologist; SMR and Local Planning Authority.
- 6.2 The report will include consideration of:-
- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the evaluation.
  - The nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any structural, artefactual and environmental material uncovered.
  - The anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits.
  - The anticipated archaeological impact of the current proposals.
  - Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
  - Summary.
  - The location and size of the archive.

- A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the potential of the archive for further analysis leading to full publication, following guidelines laid down in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage).
- 6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in *The Guidelines For The Preparation Of Excavation Archives For Long-Term Storage* (UKIC 1990), and *Standards In The Museum: Care Of Archaeological Collections* (MGC 1992) and *Guidelines for the Preparation of Site Archives and Assessments for all Finds* (other than fired clay objects) (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993) will usually be presented to within six months of the completion of fieldwork. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

## **7 Publication and Dissemination of Results**

- 7.1 A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*. A larger report will be submitted for inclusion if the results of the evaluation warrant it.

## **8. Acknowledgement and Publicity**

- 8.1 ULAS shall acknowledge the contribution of the Client in any displays, broadcasts or publications relating to the site or in which the report may be included.
- 8.2 ULAS and the Client shall each ensure that a senior employee shall be responsible for dealing with any enquiries received from press, television and any other broadcasting media and members of the public. All enquiries made to ULAS shall be directed to the Client for comment.

## **9. Copyright**

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

## **10. Timetable**

- 10.1 The evaluation is scheduled to start in May/June .2007 with two staff. Further staff will be added if archaeological remains are discovered.
- 10.2 The report will be ready within three weeks of the completion of fieldwork. The on-site director/supervisor will carry out the post-excavation work, with time allocated within the costing of the project for analysis of any artefacts found on the site by the relevant in-house specialists at ULAS.

## **11. Health and Safety**

- 11.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Archaeological Services Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety manual with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is attached as Appendix 1. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate. The HSE has determined that archaeological investigations are exempt from CDM regulations.
- 11.2 A Risks assessment will be completed prior to work commencing on-site, and updated as necessary during the site works.

## **12. Insurance**

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



**13. Monitoring arrangements**

- 13.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and Planning Archaeologist subject to the health and safety requirements of the site. At least one weeks notice will be given to the LCCHS Senior Planning Archaeologist before the commencement of the archaeological evaluation in order that monitoring arrangements can be made.
- 13.2 All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the IFA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*.
- 13.3 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

**14. Contingencies and unforeseen circumstances**

- 14.1 In the event that unforeseen archaeological discoveries are made during the project, ULAS shall inform the site agent/project manager, Client and the Planning Archaeologist and Planning Authority and prepare a short written statement with plan detailing the archaeological evidence. Following assessment of the archaeological remains by the Planning Archaeologist, ULAS shall, if required, implement an amended scheme of investigation on behalf of the client as appropriate.

**15. Bibliography**

- MAP 2            The management of archaeological projects 2nd edition English Heritage 1991
- MGC 1992       Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections 1992 (Museums and Galleries Commission)
- RFG/FRG 1993   Guidelines for the preparation of site archives (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993)
- SMA 1993       Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 1993 (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

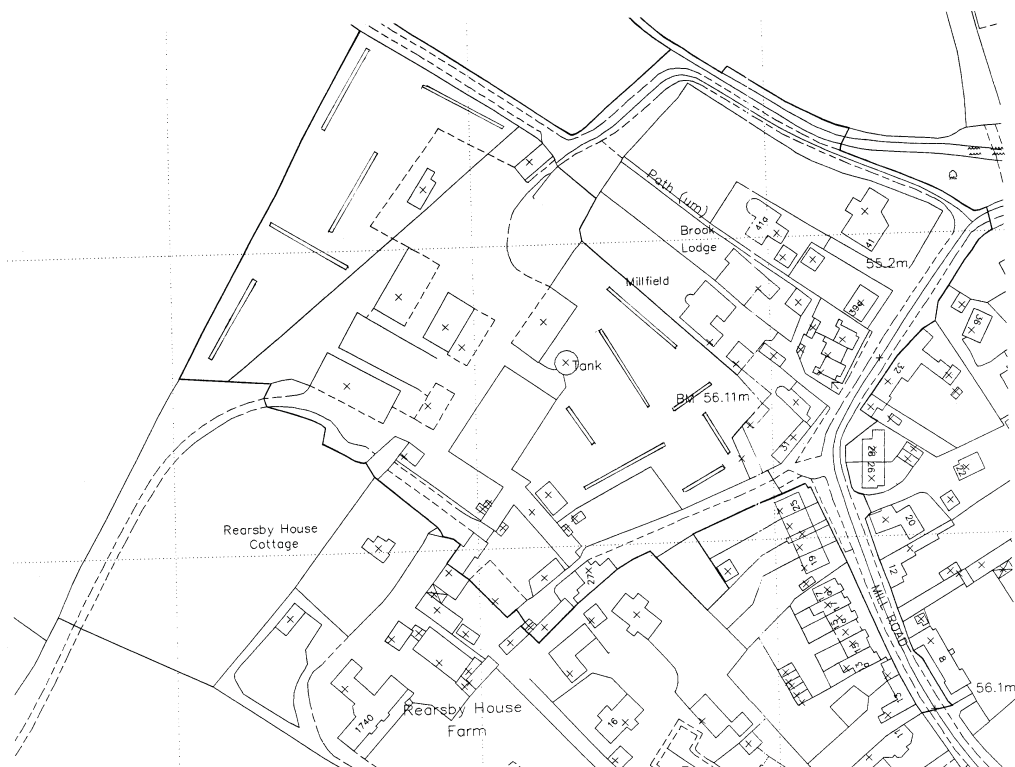
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**Fig 1 Proposed trench plan**

## APPENDIX 1

### **Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement**

A risks assessment will be produced by on-site staff, which will be updated and amended during the course of the evaluation.

#### **1. Nature of the work**

##### **1.1** Brief description of the work involved e.g.

The work will involve machine excavation by JCB 3C or equivalent during daylight hours to reveal underlying archaeological deposits. Overall depth is likely to be *c.* 0.5 m with possible features excavated to a depth of another 1m. Trenches will not be excavated to a depth exceeding 1.2m. Spoil will be stockpiled no less than 1.5 m from the edge of the excavation, the topsoil and subsoil being kept separate. Remaining works will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. Deeper features will be fenced with lamp irons and hazard tape. Three staff will be used on the evaluation.

#### **2 Risks Assessment**

##### **2.1** *Working on an excavation site.*

Precautions. Trenches to not be excavated to a depth exceeding 1.2m. Spoil will be kept 1.5m away from the edge of the excavated area to prevent falls of loose debris. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn when

working in deeper sections or with plant. First aid kit to be kept in site accommodation/vehicle. Vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 ***Working with plant.***

Precautions. Archaeologists experienced in working with machines will supervise topsoil stripping at all times. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. Machine driver to be suitably qualified and insured. If services or wells are encountered machining will be halted until extent has been established by hand excavation or areas where it is safe to machine have been established. Overhead power lines are present to the south of the areas to be evaluated. The machine will maintain a distance of at least 10 m to the north of the powerlines.

2.3 ***Working within areas prone to waterlogging.***

If waterlogging occurs on site preventing work continuing it is proposed to excavate a sump, suitably fenced and clearly marked to enable the water to drain away. If this is insufficient a pump will be used. The sump will be covered when not in use and backfilled if no longer required. Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Wiels disease or similar.

2.4 ***Working with chemicals.***

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

2.5 ***Other risks***

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