A Contour Survey and Archaeological Evaluation of Birchover Quarry, Matlock.



Excavation of a test pit at Birchover Quarry.

ARS Ltd Report 2007/73 June 2008

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Archaeological Research Services Ltd

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November and December 2007 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Birhchover Stone Ltd to undertake an archaeological contour survey and evaluation of land which is the subject of a proposed extension to Birchover Quarry (SK 24436255) (Phase I). The work was carried out during November and December 2007. A Desk-Based Assessment had been undertaken by Trent and Peak Archaeological Unit (March 2007) which asserted that the land which is the subject of the proposed extension was probably a Post-Medieval intake from the Moor.

Further to the original archaeological evaluation a decision was made to implement a tree screening programme across an area of land to the east of the proposed extension. As a result, a further archaeological evaluation was undertaken on this land during May 2008 (Phase II).

Birchover Quarry lies immediately to the south of Stanton Moor, a scheduled ancient monument due to the rich evidence of Bronze Age funerary and ceremonial monuments identified.

No features of archaeological significance or buried land surfaces were identified as a result of this programme of work

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In November and December 2007 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Birchover Stone Ltd to undertake an archaeological contour survey and evaluation of land which was proposed to be an extension of Birchover Quarry (Fig. 1). A Desk- Based Assessment has been undertaken by Trent and Peak Archaeology Unit (2007) which asserted that the land of the proposed extension was probably a Post-Medieval intake from the Moor (Fig. 1). The work was carried out prior to a proposed 1 ha extension to the quarry and included a three stage process which was intended to assess the presence, nature, horizontal extent and depth of potential archaeological remains in the proposed extraction/storage area.

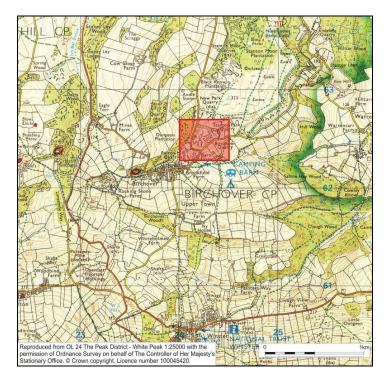


Fig. 1 Site location

2. LOCATION AND GEOLOGY

- 2.1 Birchover Quarry is located approximately six miles from Matlock, immediately south of Stanton Moor. The proposed area of extraction is centred on SK 24436255, lying within the parish of Stanton.
- 2.2 Stanton Moor is situated on a large natural outcrop of sandstone which rises above the Rivers Derwent, Wye and Lathkill. The solid geology of the site consists of sandstone that makes up part of the Millstone Grit Group (Aitkinhead, N. 2002).

3. BACKGROUND

Stanton Moor has widespread evidence of Bronze Age burial and ceremonial monuments including ring cairns, barrows and four Bronze Age stone circles, of which the best known is Nine Ladies. The field which is the subject of the proposed extension of the quarry is part of a group of fields that may represent post-medieval encroachment, or intakes, of the moorland for pasture (Guilbert, 2007, 5). The field does not appear on the Stanton Enclosure Award of 1819 which suggests that the intakes were created sometime later possible between 1820 and 1864 (Guilbert, 2007, 5).

PHASE I

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 A grid was laid out at 10m intervals over the extraction area, which is 0.88ha in extent (Fig.2). Spot heights were recorded on a 2m grid over the area (c.2, 200 points) using an EDM and from the recorded data a location plan was drawn which included contours to OD values at suitable intervals to depict the detailed topography.
- 4.2 Five test pits, measuring 1m x 1m, were selected to include the range of topographical locations present within the extraction area. The five pits were excavated by hand to the first natural horizon beneath which no archaeological deposits would be found. Excavation was in 5cm spits and finds were to be attributed to spit, and stratigraphic unit. Soil was broken down sufficiently to allow recovery of artefacts that could have been less than 1cm in diameter. Following the discovery of any artefacts within a pit, and if the nature of the subsoil permitted, a 25% sample of the subsequently excavated material in that pit was sieved through a 7mm mesh. On the completion of the excavation of each pit, at least one section was recorded by photograph and a drawing at a scale of 1:10.
- 4.3 All five pits were left open until inspected by the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority. At this point the number of further test pits and their location were determined by the Senior Conservation Archaeologist.

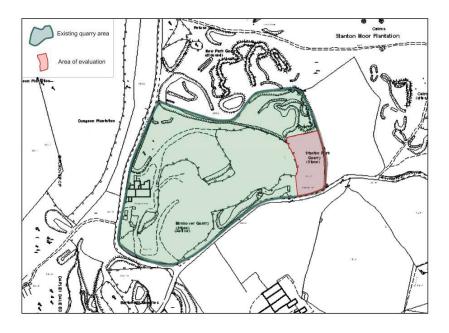


Fig. 2 Plan of the site showing the proposed extension area to be evaluated.

3. **RESULTS**

3.1 Contour Survey

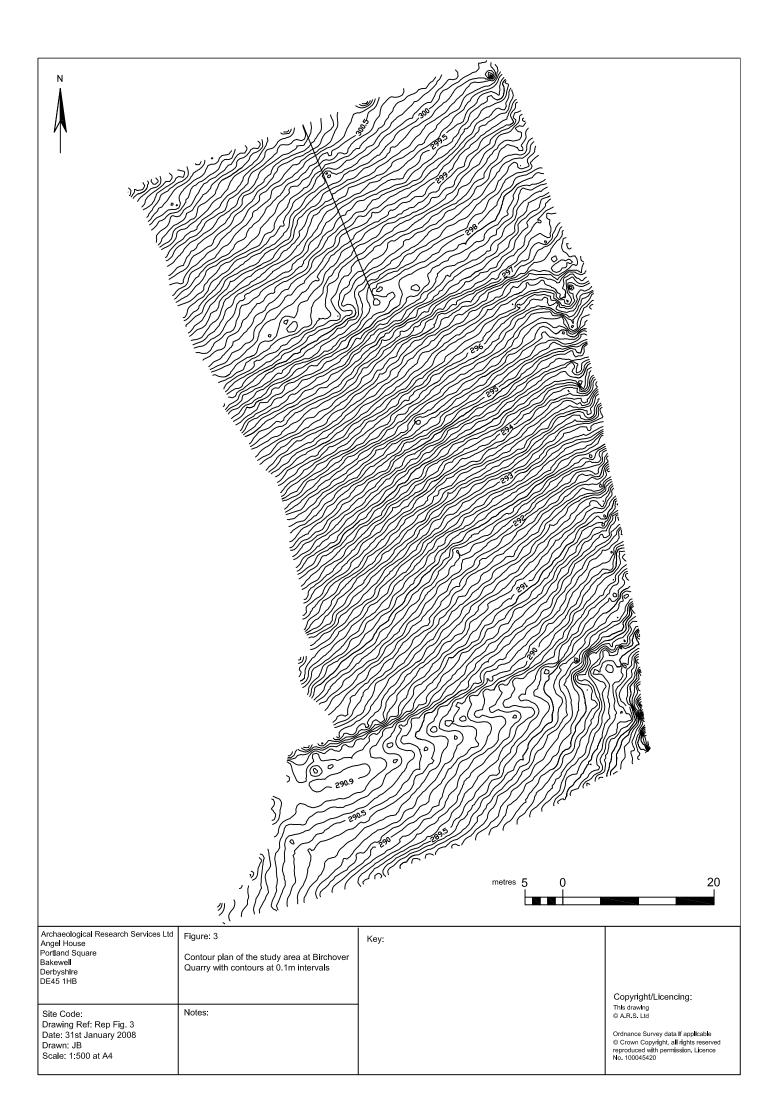
- 3.1.1 The contour survey revealed the remains of two walls and a small building (Fig. 3) which were already known. One wall ran on a north south alignment down the eastern extent of the site, representing the field's old boundary wall. The building, described in the Desk-Based Assessment (Guilbert, 2007, 6), is positioned 27m south along this wall from its northern end at the top of the slope. The second wall runs in to the field from this building on an east west alignment. These structural remains represent old boundary walls and possibly a barn or byre (Guilbert, 2007, 6).
- 3.1.2 The contour survey also identified a ridge at the base of the slope where the site flattens out towards the road. Five test pits were excavated where the slope flattens out no archaeological remains were identified. It is believed that this area of the field represents the remains of a 1950s -60s spoil heap from quarrying activity around this time (Guilbert, 2007, 1). The regular tight banding in the contour survey found across the site has been interpreted as the remains of plough patterning. This is confirmed with the discovery of a plough mark found on a boulder within Test Pit 5D.

3.2 Test Pits

3.2.1 The first five test pits were opened by hand and the spoil was sieved for small finds. Each pit was located on a plan, drawn and recorded. There were no archaeological features, deposits, buried land surfaces or small finds located within the five pits. After consultation with the Senior Conservation

Archaeologist at the Peak District National Park Authority the decision was made to excavate a further 25 pits at regular intervals across the site. Due to the natural slope of the hillside it was decided that the more level ground at the top of the hill would be more likely to reveal archaeological features, and as a result the pits were concentrated in this area (Fig. 4).

3.2.2 The stratigraphy of the test pits did not vary significantly. The topsoil was mainly a fine, mid brown (10YR 4/3) sandy soil with a maximum thickness of 0.5m at the south of the site where it was deepest. The topsoil had sandstone inclusions throughout. The subsoil consisted of a mixture of the natural sand (004) and the topsoil (001) and had a maximum thickness of 0.1m. The natural alluvium consisted of a fine, brown mottled (7.5YR 4/6) sand (003) that had large sandstone blocks within it (Fig. 5), and an orange sand (5YR 5/8) that was compacted with sandstone inclusions (004) (Fig. 6). Both contexts (003) and (004) were found across the site.



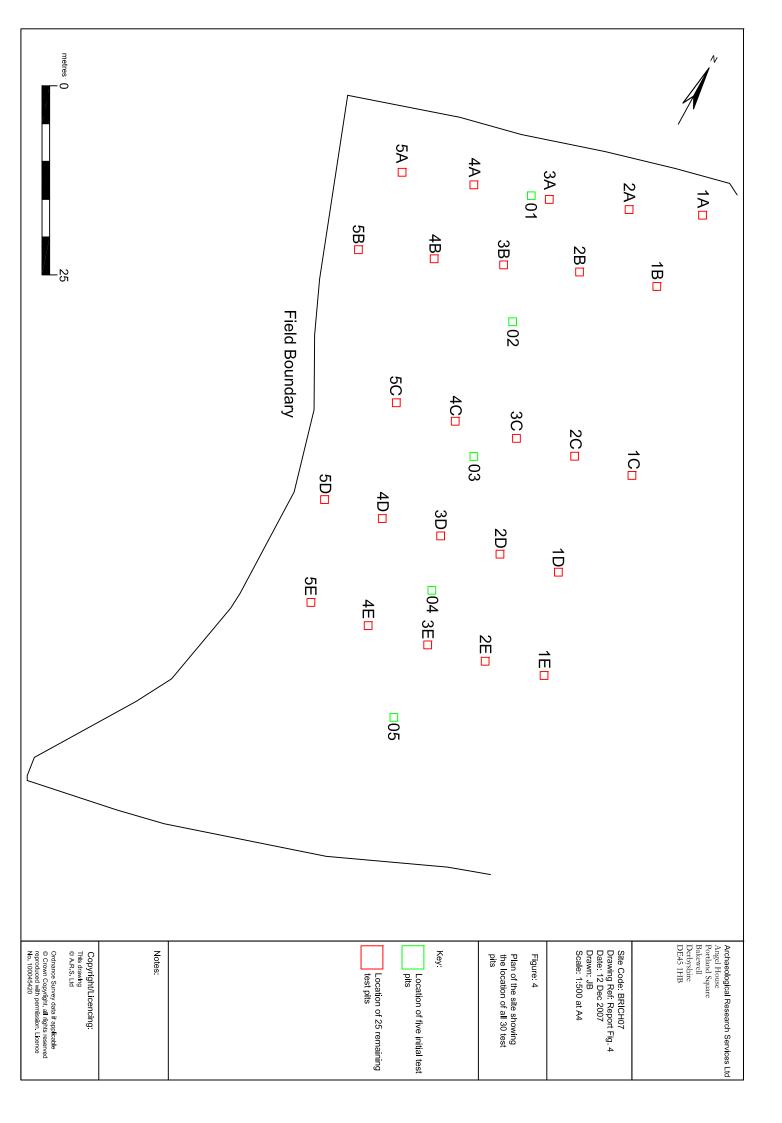




Fig. 5 Test Pit 01, looking north west. (Scale: 1m).



Fig. 6 Test Pit 3C, looking north. (Scale: 1m).

3.2.3 The test pit bases varied from being level with no sandstone inclusions to being uneven and predominately made up of large to medium sized sandstone blocks (Figs. 7 and 8). The natural deposits in the pits that contained sandstone blocks had often become discoloured from the stones causing dark patches within it.



Fig. 7 Test Pit 5A showing the uneven sandstone base, looking north west. (Scale: 1m).



Fig. 8 Test Pit 1A showing the size of the sandstone blocks, looking north west. (Scale: 1m).

3.2.4 The sandstone blocks uncovered in test pit 02 are probably the remains of a wall that runs on an east west alignment directly south of the test pit. The wall was picked up on the contour survey and probably represents the remains of a stone built farm structure (Figs. 9 and 3).



Fig. 9 Test pit 05. (Scale: 1m)

PHASE II

4. INTRODUCTION

4.1 As part of the proposed extension of Birchover Quarry, Derbyshire a tree screening programme is to be undertaken on land to the east of the proposed development. In May 2008 Archaeological Research Services Ltd were commissioned by Birchover Stone Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation of land which was proposed as the screening area (Fig. 10). The Peak District National Park Authority required an archaeological evaluation process to assess the presence, nature, horizontal extent and depth of potential archaeological remains in the proposed screening area.

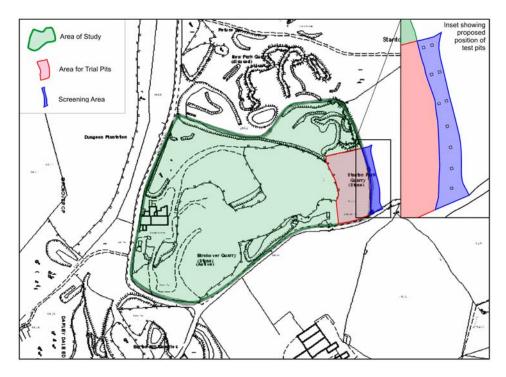
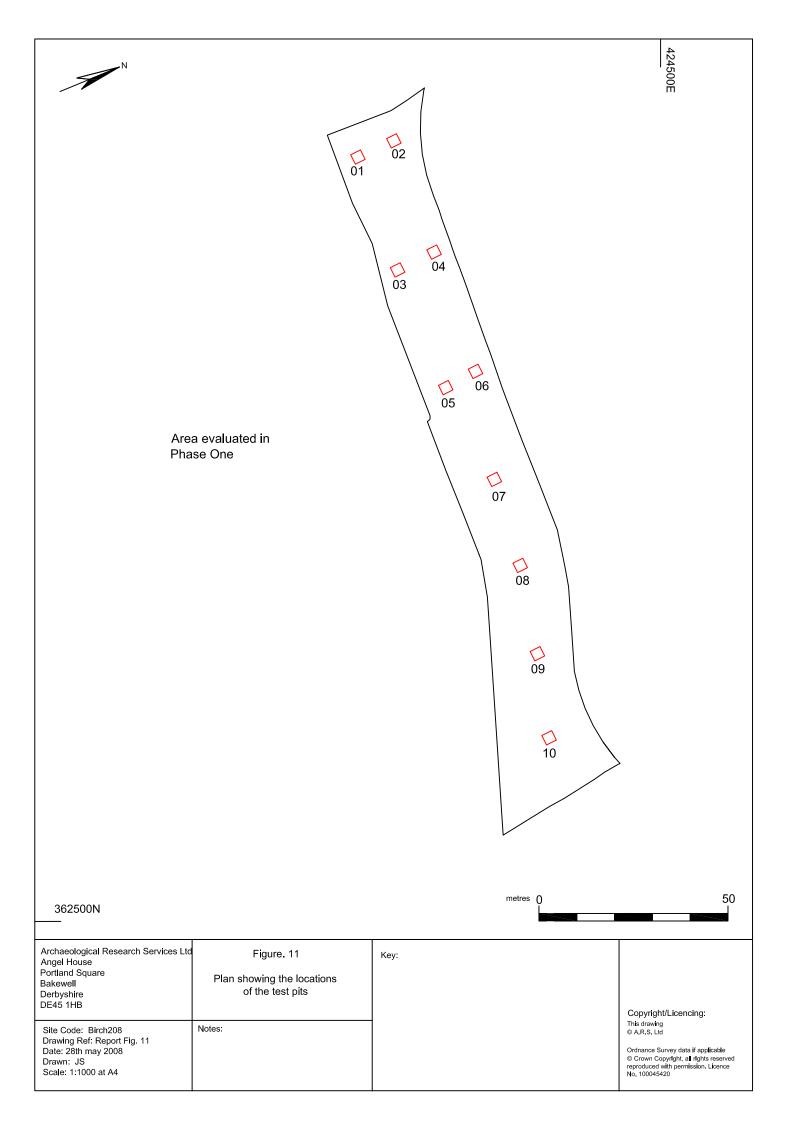


Fig. 10 Plan of the site showing the area to be evaluated as part of the screening programme.

5. METHODOLGY

- 5.1 A series of ten test pits which measured 1m x 1m were excavated over the proposed screening area which ran along the east side of the area originally evaluated in Phase One. The position of the pits was agreed in advance with the senior conservation archaeologist of the Peak District National Park Authority (Figs. 10 and 11).
- 5.2 The test pits were excavated by hand to the first natural horizon beneath which no archaeological deposits would be found. Excavation was in 5cm spits with any finds being attributed to spit and stratigraphic unit. The soil was broken down sufficiently to allow recovery of artefacts smaller than 1cm in diameter by sieving 100% of all excavated material from the pits through a 7mm mesh. On the completion of the excavation of each pit, at least one section was recorded by photograph and a drawing at a scale of 1:10.
- 5.3 The test pits were left open to be inspected by the Senior Conservation Archaeologist for the Peak District National Park Authority.



6. **RESULTS**

6.1 The stratigraphy of the ten test pits was consistent with the results obtained in Phase One. Below the turf the topsoil (001) was mainly a fine, mid brown (10YR 4/3) sandy soil with a maximum thickness of 0.48m at the south of the site where it was deepest (TP10). The topsoil was found to contain modern pottery sherds, two clay pipe stems, glass and metal items such as nails. The topsoil overlay the natural sand (002) which had sandstone inclusions throughout. The sand was mottled in colour (7.5YR 3/4 -10YR 4/4) and had dark patches due to staining from the sandstone (Fig. 12). The sandstone bedrock (003) was encountered in test pits 5 & 6.



Fig. 12 Test pit 02 showing the natural sand (002) (Scale: 1m).

6.2 Test pit 01 was found to contain a steep sided hollow (004) that measured 0.42m x 0.83m x 0.55m. The area did not appear to be a cut feature as it did not contain a separate fill but contained topsoil (001). The test pit did not reveal the full size of the hollow which is believed to be a stone hollow from quarrying activity, possibly for a nearby wall (Fig. 13).



Fig. 13 Test pit 01 showing the stone hollow (004), looking south.

6.3 Large sandstone blocks (003) found within the natural sand (002) were uncovered in test pits 03, 04 and 06 (Figs. 14 and 15). The blocks in test pit 03 were found to have been cut by earlier plough activity (Fig. 14).



Fig. 14 Sandstone blocks in test pit 03 found to have plough marks. (Scale: 1m)



Fig. 15 Sandstone blocks in test pit 04. (Scale: 1m)

6.4 An outcrop of sandstone was revealed in test pits 05 and 07, approximately 0.15m below the surface of the ground (Fig. 16).



Fig. 16 Sandstone bedrock in test pit 05. (Scale: 1m)

7. CONCLUSION

The site occupies a sloping field on the southern extent of Stanton Moor which is an area known for Bronze Age activity. The field is part of a group of fields that probably represents encroachment of the moor for pasture in post-medieval times. The contour survey and test pitting in phases I and II did not reveal any significant archaeological features or artefacts. Because of this and the nature of the sloping ground it is considered that the chance of discovering any archaeological remains within the development area is low. It is not recommended that any further archaeological mitigation work be undertaken.

8. PUBLICITY, CONFIDENTIALITY AND COPYRIGHT

- 8.1. Any publicity will be handled by the client.
- 8.2. Archaeological Research Services Ltd will retain the copyright of all documentary and photographic material under the Copyright, Designs and Patent Act (1988).

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9.1 All statements and opinions contained within this report arising from the works undertaken are offered in good faith and compiled according to professional standards. No responsibility can be accepted by the author/s of the report for any errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by any third party, or for loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in any such report(s), howsoever such facts and opinions may have been derived.

10. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

10.1. Archaeological Research Services Ltd would like to thank all those involved in this project, in particular Nigel Morton of Birchover Stone Ltd, James Cuthbert of Glentoal Associates Ltd and Sarah Whiteley at the Peak District National Park Authority.

11. **REFERENCES**

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APPENDIX I: RESULTS OF THE TEST PITS FROM PHASES I AND II.

PHASE I

Test	Geology	Measurements	Description
Pit	0 2010 8)		- totak non
No.			
01	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.54m	Stoney, sandy brown earth overlying sandy colluvium. Medium, angular sandstone blocks within topsoil. Colluvium patchy and mottled in colour due to staining from sandstone causing dark patches. Large angular stones within natural colluvium.
02	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.59m	Stoney, brown topsoil directly overlying sandy colluvium. Colluvium patchy and mottled in colour due to staining from sandstone causing dark patches. Large angular stones within natural colluvium. The sandstone blocks are likely to be associated with the wall running E/W directly to the south of the test pit. The wall is associated with a stone built structure to the east of the site.
03	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.35m	Sandy, brown earth overlying a lens of mixed topsoil and natural sand. Directly below is natural sandstone colluvium with angular sandstone blocks.
04	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.52m	A stoney, sandy brown earth which grades in to a natural sand below. A 0.1m lens interface between topsoil and natural sand exists where (001) and (004) mix and grade together. No sandstone blocks in the topsoil, unlike other test pits.
05	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.55	A very sandy topsoil with large sandstone block inclusions. This sits directly above the natural sand which is very compacted. The sandstone blocks are pressing in to the top layer of the natural sand.
1A	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.41m	Mid-brown sandy loose topsoil becomes sandier at 0.2m before natural sand at 0.24m. Occasional medium, sub- rounded sandstone cobbles in the topsoil.
2A	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.5m	Dark brown sandy topsoil overlays natural sandstone blocks at east of pit and lens of friable sandstone at the west. All overlaying natural orange sand which is heavily stained from sandstone blocks.
3A	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.39m	Fine, dark brown sandy topsoil with occasional sandstone pebbles sits above large sub-angular sandstone blocks up to 0.6m x0.4m.
4A	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.51m	Fine, sandy brown topsoil below which are large sandstone blocks. Blocks are very weathered and sit above the natural sand.
5A	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.38m	Fine, dark brown sandy topsoil with small pebble inclusions overlying compact orange sand and natural sandstone blocks. Sub-angular 0.12m x 0.8m x 0.6m to 0.28m x 0.2m 0.11m.
1B	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.46m	Grey brown, fine sandy topsoil overlays natural sand. Some black weathering of the natural deposit, occasional sub-

			angular medium sandstone cobbles.
2B	Sandstone	1m x 1m x 0.44m	Grey brown, fine sandy topsoil 0.39m deep overlays natural
	Colluvium		sandstone blocks and sand. Patches of pink sand (008) apparent in topsoil. Sandstone blocks range from 0.15m x 0.14m x 0.11m to 0.45m x 0.18m x 0.15m.
3B	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.42m	Dark, grey brown topsoil overlies natural sand. Sand is weathered black in places with moderate, large, sub-angluar sandstone blocks (0.45m x 0.26m) lining the base of the pit.
4B	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.31m	Sandy mid-brown topsoil overlaying even, homogenous orange sand.
5B	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.42m	Sandy brown topsoil overlays natural orange sand which is weathered and disturbed by root action. Occasional large, angular sandstone blocks up to 0.3m wide.
1C	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.45m	Fine, sandy brown topsoil overlays compacted sand. Base of pit is uneven with occasional moderate angular cobbles 0.08m x 0.18m.
2C	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.31m	Mid brown topsoil overlies natural sand (with degraded black areas). Sand has occasional, medium, sub-angular cobbles (0.1m x 0.7m).
3C	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.26m	Brown, sandy topsoil overlies yellow natural sand. Even base with few inclusions.
4C	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.19m	Shallow layer of topsoil overlies natural sand with occasional large rounded sandstone boulders.
5C	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.26m	Shallow mid-brown topsoil overlies mottled pink and orange natural sand. Base of pit slopes with the hillside.
1D	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.26m	Shallow mid-brown topsoil overlies mottled pink and orange natural sand. Base of pit slopes with the hillside.
2D	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.28m	Shallow mid-brown topsoil overlies mottled pink and orange natural sand. Base of pit slopes with the hillside and natural surface is uneven. Small hollows and rises in surface.
3D	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.22m	Shallow mid-brown topsoil overlies mottled pink and orange natural sand. Base of pit slopes with the hillside. Single sandstone block in natural surface (0.27m x 0.16m x 0.09m).
4D	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.3m	Fine, sandy brown topsoil with small patches of fine, dry sandy earth. Overlays natural sand stained brown from topsoil giving mottled appearance. No sandstone inclusions.
5D	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.3m	A thin layer of pink sand (008) overlays the topsoil which has possibly been redeposited. Topsoil overlays natural sand with occasional large sub-angular cobbles and one large boulder with visible plough marks.
1E	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.35	Mid-brown stony topsoil contained small amounts of blue and white and red and black ceramic, probably 19 th century. Overlays natural sand fairly even base.
2E	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.4m	Fine, sandy earth overlays topsoil to a depth of 0.26m. Topsoil overlays natural sand. No sandstone inclusions.
3E	Sandstone	1m x 1m x 0.32m	Mid-brown stony sandy soil overlies orange sand with two

	Colluvium		large boulders at the base.
4E	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.46m	Lens of silty sand 0.07m thick overlies topsoil in west and south section. Topsoil then overlays natural sand. Pockets of fine dry earth seen in northern section. Hollow which maybe a pit in n-w of test pit. No finds in hollow.
5E	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.42m	Topsoil over natural sand. North section of pit collection of large angular stone cobbles.

PHASE II

Test Pit No.	Geology	Measurements	Description
01	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.42m	Fine, sandy mid brown topsoil overlays natural sand, this is compact with dark brown patches giving a mottled form. The mottling is a result of staining from the sandstone inclusions. A hallow to the south east was filled by the mid brown topsoil. Find found within 3 spit levels.
02	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.58m	Fine, sandy mid brown topsoil with small patches of fine, dry sandy earth overlays natural sand and sandstone blocks, the sand is compact with dark brown patches giving a mottled form. Pottery and glass in the turf layer with pottery and nails found at 200 to 250mm depth
03	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.17m	Fine, sandy mid brown topsoil overlays large angular sandstone blocks, probably the natural substratum. Plough marks running downslope were evident in the sandstone block. Small finds in the turf layer.
04	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.30m	Two large irregular sandstone blocks with an exposed maximum size of 0.7m x 0.6m x 0.24m. These were overlain by the mid brown topsoil and are merged into the natural sand deposit. Finds in an upper and lowest spit layers
05	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.15m	Shallow pit of fine, sandy mid brown topsoil which overlies the natural sandstone bedrock. No finds
06	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.30m	Fine, sandy mid brown topsoil overlays large angular colluvial block and natural bedrock. Finds in three spit layers.
07	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.23m	Shallow pit of fine, sandy mid brown topsoil which overlies the natural sandstone bedrock. Small angular blocks and pebbles overlay the bedrock and found in the topsoil. Glass and pottery found in 2 spit layers
08	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.39m	Fine, sandy mid brown topsoil with finds collected from 4 spit layers overlays homogeneous dark orange brown natural sand.
09	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.28m	Fine, sandy mid brown topsoil with finds collected from 3 spit layers overlays homogeneous dark orange brown natural sand.
10	Sandstone Colluvium	1m x 1m x 0.42m	Loose peaty top soil infested with bracken roots overlaid dark orange brown natural sand. Three pieces of pottery found.

APPENDIX II: CONTEXT REGISTERS

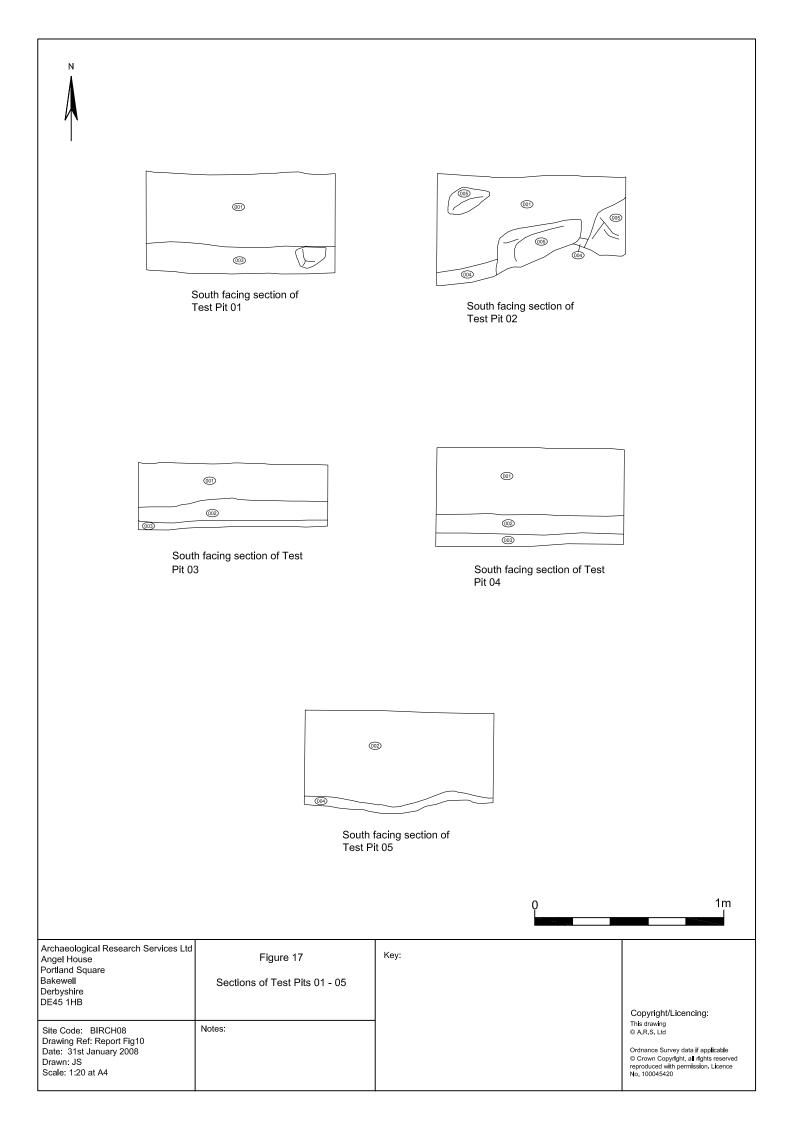
PHASE I

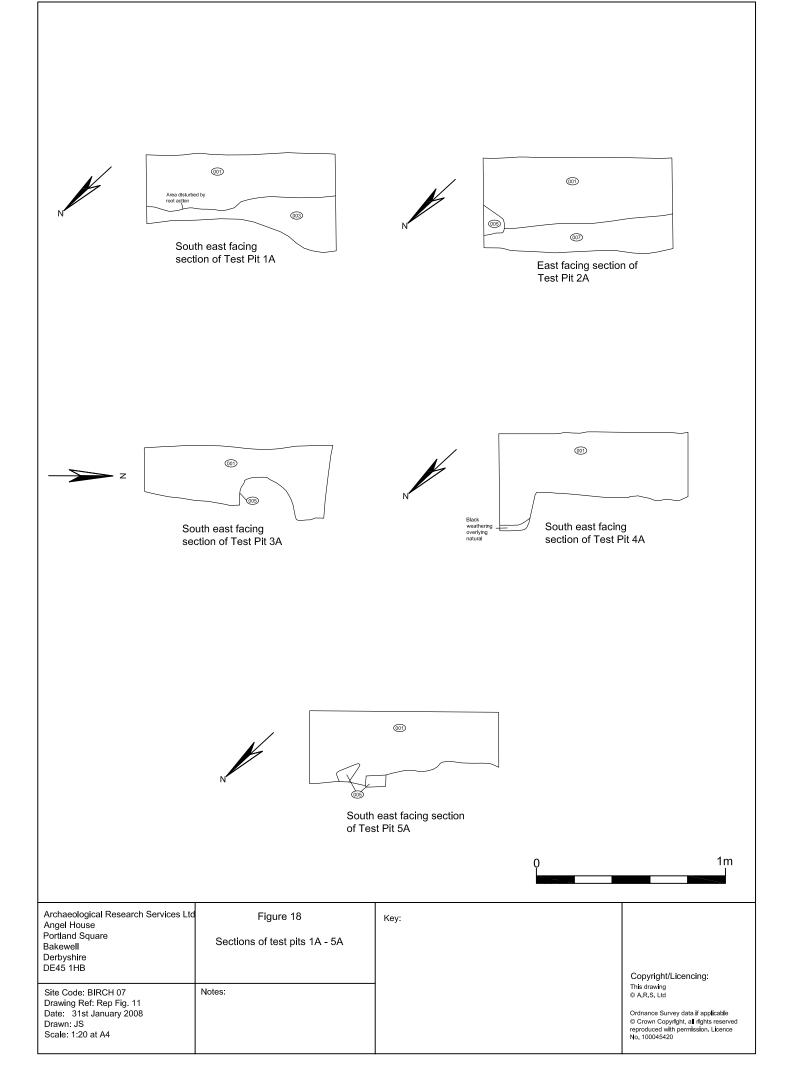
Context No.	Location	Description
001	Across site	Topsoil – 7.5YR 3/1. Deposit deepest at south of site. Sandy earth
		with sandstone inclusions. Loosely compacted. Clay pipe fragment
		and modern pottery in TP4.
002	Across site	Subsoil -7.5 YR 4/4. A lens of natural below the topsoil is a mix of
		natural sand and topsoil. Gradually grades in to natural sand.
003	Across site	Natural sand – 7.5YR 4/6. Mottled in colour due to staining from
		stones. Loosely compacted. Large sandstone blocks set in to top
		layer of the deposit.
004	Across site	Natural sand – 7.5YR 5/6. A very fine but compacted sand below
		the topsoil. Contains large and medium sandstone blocks sitting on
		the surface and pressed in to the top level.
005	TP 02	Large sandstone blocks in the topsoil of TP 02. Probably associated
		with the stone wall immediately to the south of the pit running east
		west.
006	TP 01	Topsoil – 10YR 4/6. Fine sandy soil
007	TP 2A	Layer of friable sandstone below topsoil (001) and overlaying heavily
		stained natural sand.
008	TP 5D	Lens of pink sand. 10R 5/6.very fine silt sand visible above the
		topsoil in TP 5D.
009	Various across	Fine dry topsoil (pockets). 5YR 3/1. Deposit intermittent patches
	each test pit	within topsoil.

PHASE II

Context No.	Location	Munsell No.	Description	
001	Across the site	10YR 4/3	A fine mid brown topsoil across the site, which was loosely compacted, and contained a small amount of sandstone cobbles and pebbles. The depth of the topsoil varied in the test pits across the site.	
002	Across the site	7.5YR 3/4 - 10YR 4/4 ,4/2 ,3/6	Natural sand which is heavily mottled in certain areas due to sandstone staining. Loosely compacted, thin layer overlays a natural bedrock outcrop in the centre of the field.	
003	TP 3 & 4		Large angular colluvial boulders on a terrace area to the north of the site. The boulders had evidence of plough marks which ran downslope.	
004	TP 1		Stone hollow located in trench 1, it had a fill of topsoil. The full dimensions were unknown as it was only partially revealed by the test pit. Possible indication of earlier quarrying	
005	TP 5 & 6	10YR 6/6	Sandstone bedrock which outcrops in the centre of the field below the terrace were TP 3 & 4 were positioned.	

APPENDIX III – SECTION DRAWINGS OF THE TEST PITS (PHASE I AND II)





N			
South of Tes	(6) east facing section t Pit 4A	Geo Geo South east facing se of Test Pit 2B	ection
Sour	th east facing ion of Test Pit 3B	Sandstone boulder South east facin of Test Pit 4B	ng section
	S	outh east facing section f Test Pit 5B 0	1m
Archaeological Research Services Ltd Angel House Portland Square Bakewell Derbyshire DE45 1HB Site Code: BIRCH 07 Drawing Ref: Rep Fig.12 Date: 31st January 2008 Drawn: JS Scale: 1:20 at A4	Figure 19 Sections of test pits 1B - 5B Notes:	Key:	Copyright/Licencing: This drawing © A.R.S. Ltd Ordnance Survey data if applicable © Crown Copyright, all rights reserved reproduced with permission. Licence No. 100045420

