



Leicester Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire

Assessment Report





**LEICESTER ROAD,
COUNTESTHORPE, LEICESTERSHIRE**

Archaeological Assessment Report

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land off Leicester Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire, as a condition of planning permission (09/0293/1/OX) for housing development. The site (NGR SP 5840 9605) is located within two pasture fields containing substantial earthwork features representing medieval ridge and furrow field systems. Previous archaeological investigations have comprised a desk-based assessment and geophysical survey, which identified several geophysical anomalies on the Site.

Evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of 18 trial trenches combining randomly located trenches and trenches targeted on geophysical anomalies. Subsequent mitigation excavation comprised a strip and record excavation of some 2,500m² centred on the location of two urned cremation burials uncovered in the south-east of the Site during the evaluation phase. Fieldwork was undertaken between 31st August - 7th September (evaluation) and 12th - 22nd October 2010 (mitigation).

The investigations revealed the remains of three urns, all heavily truncated as a result of medieval and later agricultural land-uses. Two of the urns contained the cremated human remains of two individuals, one adult male and a sub-adult. A third urn was so badly truncated that only the base of the vessel survived. The vessels were all probably of Early Bronze Age date, in the Collared Urn tradition typically dating from c. 2200 – 1400 BC. No other features such as a ring ditch were identified and the absence of settlement evidence suggests the Site may have lain within a liminal area reserved for funerary and ritual activity.

The only other archaeological feature to contain dateable artefactual material was a large oval pit that appeared to have originally contained a large upright timber post, which had probably decomposed *in-situ*. At the base of the post pit were worked flint tools, diagnostic of the late Mesolithic and early Neolithic period (c. 5000 – 3500 BC), and a large broken stone object worn smooth by grinding cereal grain or polishing activities. A series of undated features including several small discrete pits, a larger pit and a possible ditch appeared to form no regular pattern and their function cannot be determined from the excavated evidence.

The Bronze Age urned cremation burials are of local to regional significance and offer some potential to contribute towards current regional research objectives. A limited programme of analysis of the cremated bone and targeted radiocarbon dating is proposed. It is proposed that the results of the fieldwork and these additional analyses should be synthesised in an illustrated note to be prepared for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*. The project archive is currently stored at the Sheffield offices of Wessex Archaeology. The archive will be deposited in due course with Leicestershire Museums under the Accession Code X.A137.2010.

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The report was compiled by Neil Dransfield with the assistance of Lorraine Mephram and Matt Leivers (finds) and Jacqueline I. McKinley (human bone). The environmental samples were processed by Nadine Ross and were assessed by Sarah F. Wyles. Illustrations and plates were prepared by Chris Breeden. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Richard O'Neill and Chris Moore.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting (hereafter 'the Client') to carry out a scheme of archaeological evaluation and mitigation at Leicester Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire (hereafter 'the Site'). The Site is proposed for development to provide 180 houses. Planning permission was granted on appeal, subject to a condition requiring subject to a condition requiring further archaeological evaluation (application ref. 09/0293/1/OX).

1.1.2 Desk-based assessment (CgMs 2008) identified a low archaeological potential across the Site. Subsequent geophysical survey (Stratascan 2009) of the area of proposed housing revealed the extensive remains of ridge and furrow and three linear anomalies of possible archaeological origin.

1.1.3 The specification for further evaluation by trial trenching was established by CgMs (2010) in consultation with the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council ('the Curator'). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) setting out the methodology for the archaeological evaluation was prepared by Wessex Archaeology (2010a) and approved by the Curator, prior to the commencement of work.

1.1.4 Evaluation trial trenching was undertaken by Wessex Archaeology between 31st August and September 7th 2010. Based on the results of the evaluation trenching and the discovery of a number of possible cremation burials, the scope of further archaeological mitigation was defined in a WSI for a programme of Strip and Record prepared by Wessex Archaeology (2010b) and approved by the Curator, prior to the commencement of work. Mitigation excavations were completed between the 12th and 25th October 2010.

1.1.5 In accordance with the WSI for the mitigation excavations (Wessex Archaeology 2010b) this report presents the results of both the evaluation and mitigation phases of the archaeological work.

1.2 The Site, location and geology

1.2.1 The Site is located at Leicester Road, Countesthorpe, Leicestershire, at grid reference SP 5840 9605 (**Figure 1**). It has an area of 10.42ha and is bounded by Leicester Road to the east, agricultural land to the north, a residential development to the south and a disused railway line to the west.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the area is chalky till. The Site is relatively flat, sloping down gently from approximately 92m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) at its western boundary, to approximately 85m aOD at its north-eastern boundary. The total development site comprises two hedged fields, both currently under pasture. The western field contains the surviving earthwork remains of medieval ridge and furrow and is crossed by a public footpath

and public bridleway. The desk-based assessment (CgMs 2008) notes the presence in of a number of farm outbuildings in the eastern field.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The archaeological background of the Site was considered in detail in an archaeological desk based assessment (CgMs 2008). The summary results of the desk-based assessment are repeated here for completeness.

2.2 Desk-based assessment

Prehistoric

2.2.1 The earliest indication of activity in the area is provided by the record of a Mesolithic serrated flint blade found at Station Road, Countesthorpe, approximately 550m south of the Site, along with an early Bronze Age thumb-nail scraper. A late Bronze Age bronze spearhead is recorded approximately 500m north-west of the Site.

Romano-British (AD 43-410)

2.2.2 Although the probable Roman road linking Leicester and Lutterworth passes approximately 1.9km west of the Site, there is only one record of Roman remains from the study area, a Roman openwork ornament, possibly a buckle plate, found 100m east of the Site.

Anglo-Saxon

2.2.3 The route followed by Leicester Road is considered to be Saxon in origin, and the findspot of a sixth century coin 450m south of the Site may indicate limited Saxon activity in the area. However, Countesthorpe is not recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086.

Medieval (1066-1499)

2.2.4 The earliest documentary reference to the settlement appears to date from the early thirteenth century, when *Torp* was noted. By 1242 the settlement was recorded as *Cuntastorp*, referring to the fact that it was assigned in dower to the Countesses of Leicester.

2.2.5 At its closest, the Site lies approximately 200m north of the northern boundary of the deduced extent of the medieval village. Traces of medieval open-field agriculture in the form of ridge and furrow survive within the western portion of the site, indicating that it formed part of the village's open fields during the medieval period.

Post-medieval (1500-1800) and Modern (1801 to date)

2.2.6 The Site remained part of the open fields until enclosure in 1766, and has remained in agricultural use since that date.

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 Evaluation

3.1.1 The aims of the evaluation were to provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains that may survive; and to assess the potential of archaeological features and deposits that may survive.

3.1.2 The objectives of the evaluation were:

- To determine or confirm the general nature and significance of any remains present;
- To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains, by means of artefactual or other evidence;
- To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any remains;
- To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains;
- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present;
- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of any artefactual evidence present; and
- To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeo-environmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

3.2 Mitigation

3.2.1 The aims of the Strip and Record programme were to mitigate the impact of development through detailed archaeological investigation and recording.

3.2.2 The objectives of the Strip and record programme were:

- To establish the extent of buried archaeological remains within the development area and whether the cremations are part of a more extensive archaeological site;
- To record in detail all archaeological remains present within the excavated area;
- To record and retrieve artefactual and environmental evidence;
- To analyse the site records, finds and any other evidence in order to interpret the date and nature of human activity at the Site;
- To consider the archaeology of the Site within its local, regional or national context, as appropriate;
- To prepare a report that shall be submitted to Leicestershire County Council to be made available for public access; and
- To produce a site archive for deposition with the Leicestershire County Council Museum Service.

3.2.3 The investigations also sought to address, where possible, relevant parts of the draft 'Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands' (Knight *et al.* 2010), in particular:

- To maximise the potential of scientific dating methods and pottery sequences in order to refine the regional chronological framework (Items 3.1, 4.1);
- To refine our knowledge of the selective use of different landscape zones for ritual, agriculture and other activities (Item 3.4);
- To characterise ephemeral features and understand temporal variability in settlement patterns (Items 3.5, 4.2, 4.3.);
- To refine our knowledge of burials, associated artefact assemblages and the construction (or not) of monuments (Items 3.6, 4.7);
- To make data available for population studies such as status variations and population mobility (Items 3.8, 4.10); and
- To identify raw material resources and exchange networks (Items 3.9, 4.9).

4 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 The separate WSIs for the archaeological investigation set out in full the methodologies to be employed by Wessex Archaeology during each phase of the investigations. The strategy and methods used are summarised below.

4.2 Evaluation strategy

4.2.1 A 2% sample of the 1,280m² of the Site proposed for residential development was evaluated by trial trenching (**Figure 2**). A total of eighteen evaluation trenches was excavated in accordance with the Specification (CgMs 2010) and Written Scheme of Investigation (Wessex Archaeology 2010). Trenches were located to provide good coverage of the development area and to target three linear features of possible archaeological origin identified by the geophysical survey (Stratascan 2009). The discovery of two urned cremation burials, of probable Bronze Age date, prompted further mitigation excavation.

4.3 Mitigation strategy

4.3.1 A total area of 2,500m² (50m x 50m), approximately centred on the urned cremation burials in Trenches 16 and 17, was stripped by mechanical excavator (**Figures 2 and 3**), removing the top and sub-soil overburden down to the natural deposits. Archaeological remains that were encountered were hand cleaned and half sectioned in the first instance and recorded in accordance with current industry best practice (IfA 2008). Full excavation of features was undertaken in most cases and appropriate soil samples were taken to establish palaeo-environmental conditions, recover material suitable for C14 dating and to establish the presence/absence of burnt human remains.

4.4 Methods

Mechanical excavation

4.4.1 Topsoil and modern overburden were removed using an appropriate backhoe excavator fitted with a toothless bucket, working under the continuous direct supervision of a suitably experienced archaeologist. Topsoil and modern overburden were removed in a series of level spits

down to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon. Spoil was stockpiled adjacent to and at a safe distance from trial trenches/excavated areas.

Hand excavation

- 4.4.2 All excavation and recording was undertaken by qualified archaeologists employed by Wessex Archaeology. All archaeological remains encountered were recorded, and where appropriate excavated in accordance with current industry best practice (IfA 2008). Features of whatever origin requiring clarification were cleaned by hand and recorded in plan at an appropriate scale. Sufficient of the features located were investigated by hand in order to fulfil the aims of the evaluation and mitigation phases of the project (3.1 and 3.2 above).

Recording

- 4.4.3 All archaeological features and deposits encountered during the evaluation and mitigation phases of the project were recorded by Wessex Archaeology using *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system. Plans at appropriate scales were prepared, showing the areas investigated and their relation to more permanent topographical features, and the location of contexts observed and recorded in the course of the investigations.
- 4.4.4 A representative section of each evaluation trench was recorded at an appropriate scale. Other plans, sections and elevations of archaeological features and deposits were drawn as necessary at 1:10, 1:20 and 1:50 as appropriate and made in pencil on permanent drafting film.
- 4.4.5 The spot height of all principal features and levels was calculated in metres relative to Ordnance Datum, correct to two decimal places. Plans, sections and elevations were annotated with spot heights as appropriate.
- 4.4.6 Photographs were taken as necessary to produce a photographic record consisting of monochrome prints and colour transparencies. Digital images were taken to support report preparation.
- #### *Finds and environmental samples*
- 4.4.7 Finds were treated in accordance with the relevant guidance (UKIC 1990; Walker 1990), except as noted below.
- 4.4.8 All artefacts from excavated contexts were retained, except those from features or deposits of obviously modern date. All retained artefacts were washed, weighed, counted and identified.
- 4.4.9 Bulk environmental soil samples for plant macro fossils, small animal bones and other small artefacts were taken from appropriate sealed and dateable archaeological contexts. Soil samples were processed by flotation and scanned to assess the environmental potential of deposits, with the residues and sieved fractions recorded and retained with the project archive.
- 4.4.10 A Ministry of Justice licence was obtained for the removal of the potential cremations and all excavation and recording was carried out in accordance with the conditions of this licence.

5 RESULTS

5.1 Evaluation Trenching

5.1.1 Trenches 1, 3-7, 9-12, 14 and 15 contained no archaeological features or deposits and are not discussed further here.

Trench 2

5.1.2 Trench 2 was targeted on two geophysical anomalies (**Figure 2**). Only the more northern discrete positive anomaly was identified. This proved to be a probable tree-throw hole **1003** measuring 1.74m x 1.62m x 0.4m deep. The fill **1004** contained a large quantity of charcoal (see Section 7.3.1 below), perhaps suggesting burning during tree clearance.

Trench 8

5.1.3 A shallow depression **1030** was noted running along the northern edge of Trench 8 towards the western end (**Figure 2**). The depression measured 6m in length, extending into the northern trench edge. The depression measured 0.17m deep and was filled by a sandy clay **1031** containing a high degree of brick rubble, probably accounting for the magnetic disturbance encountered here in the geophysical survey (Stratascan 2009).

Trench 13

5.1.4 A linear ditch **1059** measuring 9.5m long by 0.5m wide was uncovered in the south-eastern end of Trench 13 (**Figure 2**). The ditch was aligned SE-NW and clearly cut through the silts filling the medieval furrows, giving a post-medieval *terminus post quem*. The feature measured 0.3m deep with straight, steep sides leading to a flattish base. The primary fill **1060** was a 0.17m thick deposit of fine sandy clay along the south-western edge. This was overlain by a 0.13m thick layer of mid-orangey brown, clayey sand **1061**.

Trenches 16 and 17

5.1.5 The most significant archaeological remains found during the evaluation were confined to the south-eastern part of the Site, close to the junction of Ladbrooke Grove and Leicester Road (**Figures 2-3**), where two possible cremation burials were identified near the intersection of Trenches 16 and 17. Both vessels contained cremated bone and had been heavily truncated and damaged by previous land usage (**Plates 1 and 2**). The vessels are discussed in more detail below (Section 5.2.4).

5.2 Strip and Record

5.2.1 The mitigation phase subsequently investigated a total area of 2,500m² (50m x 50m) approximately centred on Trenches 16 and 17. Archaeological features within this area, including those within Trenches 16 and 17, can be tentatively assigned to three broad phases of activity; these are discussed below.

Phase 1

5.2.2 The potentially earliest datable feature uncovered during the mitigation phase was a sub-circular post pit **2006**, measuring 2.05m x 1.78m x 1.02m deep (**Figures 3-4**), with an oval shallow scoop 0.7m x 0.6m x 0.15m deep within the centre of the base. Set to the south-western edge of this shallow

scoop was a large fragment of worked stone **2031** (Object Number 4; Section 6.4 below), which has been interpreted as a structured deposition, possibly serving also as a leverage base for post erection.

- 5.2.3 The pit contained two distinct fills (**Figure 4**). The primary post packing **2025** was a fairly homogeneous deposit of mottled grey/orangey brown friable sandy clay. Worked flints were recovered from the base of this deposit near the western edge, immediately to the west of the worked stone **2031**. Three of these flints have been tentatively dated on technological grounds to the late Mesolithic or early Neolithic period (Section 6.3.2 below). The secondary post pipe fill **2026** comprised a dark greyish brown sandy clay (**Figure 4**). Both fills were extensively sampled for palaeo-environmental assessment. Fragments of charred plant remains in the primary fill **2025** (**Section 7**), typical of assemblages of Prehistoric / Roman date and Saxon / medieval date, may indicate a potential mixing or contamination of deposits within the pit. The limited quantities of charred remains recovered suggests that the feature may have been peripheral to domestic activity and settlement in the area.
- 5.2.4 A small squared post-hole/pit **2027** measuring 0.55m square x 0.25m deep later truncated the upper fill and western edge of the post pit **2006** (**Figure 4**).

Phase 2

- 5.2.5 Two urned cremation burials (**1037** and **1057**) and a third possible cremation vessel (**2019**) were identified and excavated during the evaluation and mitigation phases of the project (**Figure 3, Plates 1 and 2**). The urns were all located on the ridges of the medieval ridge and furrow landscape and were heavily truncated, presumably as a result of agricultural cultivation from the medieval period onwards. The urns have been dated on fabric grounds to the Early Bronze Age, probably part of the “Collared Urn” tradition typically dating to c. 2200 to 1400 BC.
- 5.2.6 The better preserved of the urns **1037** (**Plate 1**) was identified within a heavily truncated cut **1036** measuring 0.40m in diameter. The urn itself (Object Number 1) measured 0.22m in diameter and survived to 0.07m in height and appeared to be set level on a bedding of stones and silt **1038**. Analysis of the cremated bone in fill **1039** indicates that this was probably the burial of a large robust adult, possibly male.
- 5.2.7 The second urn **1057** (**Plate 2**) was located 0.45m to the immediate east of urn **1037** (**Figure 3**). The urn **1057** (Object Number 2) measured 0.16m in diameter and was severely truncated, surviving to a height of only 0.03m. Analysis of the fill **1058** suggests that this was the burial of a sub-adult/adult.
- 5.2.8 A third urn **2019** (**Figure 3**) was located 13.2m to the south-east of the previous two urns. The urn (Object Number 3) had suffered severe post depositional damage, leaving only fragments of the base of the vessel (**Plate 3**). No human remains were recovered from the re-deposited natural fill **2020**.
- 5.2.9 Patches of highly compacted sandy clay (**2037, 2039 & 2041**) apparently forming a linear feature close to the urns **1037** and **1057** (**Figure 3**) contained patches of charcoal within the compacted material. Excavation

concluded that the feature was of natural origin, possibly the remnants of a burnt hedge line. Although undated, the feature is tentatively assigned to Phase 2 due to its proximity to the urns and the presence of charcoal.

Undated Features

- 5.2.10 A total of nine small negative features (**1055, 2012, 2014, 2016, 2021, 2023, 2029, 2032 & 2035**) were uncovered during the investigations (**Figure 3**). The features ranged in size from 0.2m diameter to 0.64m diameter. The majority of fills (**Appendix 2**) appeared to contain a high concentration of charcoal and were therefore sampled for the presence of human remains and for environmental analysis (Section 7 below). None of the samples contained cremated human remains and they show a low potential to recover environmental information. The features cannot be conclusively dated, although they did appear to pre-date the medieval ridge and furrow. There appeared to be no pattern in the placement of the features and their function remains uncertain.
- 5.2.11 A larger pit **2043** measuring 0.92m x 0.65m x 0.31 deep (**Figure 3**) also contained a high percentage of charcoal in its upper fill **2045**. A small number of hazelnut shell fragments and hawthorn stone fragments along with large charcoal fragments were recovered from the pit (Section 7). The pit also appeared to pre-date the medieval ridge and furrow although no dateable evidence was recovered from the feature. The function of the pit is unclear from the excavated evidence.
- 5.2.12 A heavily truncated linear feature **2011** (**Figure 3**), probably a ditch, was also uncovered. The feature measured 13.7m in length, up to 1.05m in width and 0.10m in depth. The feature appeared to have an eastern terminus but was truncated to the west. No dateable evidence was recovered from the feature; however it predated the medieval ridge and furrow.

Trench 18

- 5.2.13 A linear feature **1068** aligned ENE-WSW, probably the base of a medieval furrow, traversed the western side of the trench. The feature measured 6m in length, 0.3m in width and up to 0.18m in depth.

6 FINDS

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Of most interest amongst the finds from the Site are human remains and associated pottery from three possible prehistoric cremation graves. Apart from these, only small quantities of material were recovered, largely of post-medieval date but with some prehistoric items.
- 6.1.2 All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and the results are presented in **Appendix 3** and discussed below.

6.2 Pottery

Urns

- 6.2.1 Sherds from three vessels (Object Numbers 1-3) were recovered, from features **1036, 1055** and **2018** respectively, which were presumed on

excavation to be the remnants of cremation urns. All the vessels had been heavily truncated, and in each case only the base survived. All three vessels are in similar coarse, grog-tempered fabrics, and there is no sign of any decoration, although this would not in any case be expected on the lower part of the vessels. Despite the absence of diagnostic features these vessels can be dated on fabric grounds as Bronze Age, probably belonging to the Collared Urn ceramic tradition.

Other pottery

- 6.2.2 Five further sherds were recovered. All are of post-medieval date and comprise coarse earthenwares – three redwares, one white-firing Midlands Yellow ware, and one Staffordshire-type marbled slipware.

6.3 Worked Flint

- 6.3.1 The small number of pieces of worked flint comprises six waste flakes (two of them bladelike) and one core. All pieces are in relatively fresh condition; the core is partially patinated.

- 6.3.2 The two bladelike flakes (both from post-pit **2006**) were both removed from a blade core, and both are retouched, although in one case the retouch seems to have had the effect of blunting rather than sharpening the edge. This object may have been utilised as a fabricator. On the second piece the retouch has occurred after the original striking, removing the patina. The core also came from **2006** and, together, these three pieces could be dated on technological grounds to the Late Mesolithic or Early Neolithic. The fourth piece from this context is an undiagnostic flake.

- 6.3.3 The three other pieces of worked flint, which came from subsoil in Trenches 1 and 5, and from ditch **2007**, are all undiagnostic (and hence undateable) flakes.

6.4 Stone

- 6.4.1 A single large object of worked stone (Object Number 4) was recovered, from deposit **2031**. This is in a fine-grained sandstone. The object appears to be incomplete; the upper surface is dished, the surface worn smooth through use, while the underside has been deliberately flattened and smoothed. Possible uses for this object include as a quern for grinding corn, or for general polishing/rubbing. This object is not morphologically dateable, but its presence at the base of pit **2006**, which contained Mesolithic/Early Neolithic flint, suggests that it could also be of early prehistoric date.

7 CREMATED BONE

7.1 Methods

- 7.1.1 Cremated bone from contexts representing the remains of two Early Bronze Age urned burials was subject to a rapid scan to assess the condition of the bone, demographic data and the presence of pathological lesions. The cremated bone was weighed by context (**Table 1**). Assessments of age and sex were based on standard methodologies (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000).

Context	Cut	Quantification	Age/Sex	Pathology
1039	1036	300g	Adult >25 yr. ??male.	enthesophytes – femur shaft
1058	-	31g.	subadult/adult >13 yr.	

Table 1: Summary of results from scan of human bone

7.2 Results

7.2.1 A summary of the results is presented in **Table 1**. The remains of both burials had been subject to extensive disturbance in antiquity (medieval agriculture), which had removed all except the lowest 0.07-0.10m depth of the deposits. What had probably comprised a third burial (grave 2018) within this small group had been reduced to the vessel base only, the fill having been removed in its entirety. In both cases the bone was evident at surface level and an unknown quantity of material has undoubtedly been lost, although the bone in such deposits was commonly no more than 0.15m in depth.

7.2.2 Most of the bone is in fairly good visual condition, but some is slightly worn in appearance and there is very little trabecular bone in either deposit; the latter is the first to be lost in adverse burial environments (McKinley 1997, 245; Nielsen-Marsh *et al.* 2000). These observations are commensurate with the observed levels of disturbance and deposits made within an acidic burial environment (silty clay).

7.2.3 A minimum of two individuals are represented, one from each of the burials. The remains from burial 1039 indicate a large, robust individual with marked muscle attachments. Slight enthesophytes (new bone) were observed on the dorsal attachment sites of the femur shaft.

7.2.4 Most of the bone is white in colour, indicative of a high level of oxidation, but some slight colour variations (black/blue) were observed in some of the long bone shafts from 1039, indicative of incomplete oxidation.

7.2.5 Singletons and small groups of burial remains are a common feature of the prehistoric landscape and are likely to have been made in a liminal area, but close to the settlement from which the individuals derived.

8 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

8.1 Introduction

Environmental samples taken

8.1.1 Thirteen bulk samples were taken from a range of features (**Table 2**), particularly those associated with possible cremation related deposits, and processed for the recovery of potential human remains and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoals.

8.1.2 The bulk samples break down into the following groups:

Area	No of samples	Volume (litres)	Feature types
Trench 2	1	18	Tree-throw hole

Area	No of samples	Volume (litres)	Feature types
Trench 16	1	10	Urned cremation
Trench 17	1	14	Urned cremation
Mitigation	10	82	?Cremation related pits, pit, post pit, natural feature
Totals	13	124	

Table 2: Sample provenance summary

8.2 Charred Plant Remains

8.2.1 Bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 4 mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>4 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. Flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and the presence of charred remains quantified (**Appendix 4**) to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997).

8.2.2 The flots varied in size with between 15-75% rooty material and occasionally contained modern seeds which together are indicative of potential stratigraphic movement and hence the possibility of contamination by later intrusive elements. Charred material comprised varying degrees of preservation.

8.2.3 The small quantities of cereal remains recovered from these samples were generally indeterminate grain fragments. Those observed in post pit **2006** possibly included grain fragments both of free-threshing wheat (*Triticum turgidum/aestivum*) and hulled wheat, emmer or spelt (*Triticum diccicum/spelta*). A few weed seeds, including seeds of vetch/wild pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.) were also recorded within post pit **2006**. A small number of hazelnut (*Corylus avellana*) shell fragments and hawthorn (*Crataegus monogyna*) stone fragments were retrieved from pit **2043**.

8.2.4 The plant remains assemblages are too small to provide any clear indication of the date of the features. Free-threshing wheat became common within the Saxon and medieval periods (Greig 1991), while hulled wheat is typical of plant assemblages of Prehistoric and Roman date. Given the very small number of remains present in pit **2006** the possibility that there may be some mixing with later intrusive elements is a consideration. At the very least the remains provide an indication of domestic activities and settlement in the vicinity, although it is possible that the features are peripheral to such activity.

8.3 Wood Charcoal

8.3.1 Wood charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in **Appendix 4**. The majority of the wood charcoal fragments retrieved of >4 mm were mature wood pieces. Large quantities of wood charcoal fragments were recovered from tree-throw hole **1003**, pit **2043** and post pit **2006**.

9 DISCUSSION

9.1 Summary

- 9.1.1 The most significant archaeological remains found during the investigations were confined to the south-eastern part of the Site, where two Bronze Age urned cremation burials were initially identified in two evaluation trenches, prompting further mitigation excavation works. A further possible cremation vessel was subsequently recovered nearby.
- 9.1.2 The earliest phase of activity was represented by a single feature, a large post pit which appeared to have originally contained a large upright timber post, which had probably decomposed *in-situ*. At the base of the post pit were worked flint tools, diagnostic of the late Mesolithic and early Neolithic period (c. 5000 – 3500 BC) and a large broken stone which had been worn by either grinding cereal grain or other polishing activities. The presence of small quantities of charred grain fragments typical of assemblages of both Prehistoric/Roman, and Saxon/medieval date, suggests the fill of the feature may have been contaminated by later intrusive activity.
- 9.1.3 A second phase of activity was represented by the deposition of three vessels, probably belonging to the Collared Urn tradition, typically of Early Bronze Age date (c. 2200 – 1400 BC). Two of the vessels contained cremated human remains. No other features, such as a ring ditch, that could be directly associated with the vessels were identified. The two urned cremation burials appeared to be located close together and all the vessels were found on a natural ridge which traversed the eastern extent of the Site from north to south. It is not clear from the excavated evidence whether the burials formed part of isolated barrow groups, were part of a wider cremation cemetery which had later been significantly disturbed, or represent isolated or singleton burials. The absence of any definitive evidence for settlement on the Site suggests this may have been a liminal area reserved for funerary and ritual activity.
- 9.1.4 A series of undated features, including several small discrete pits, a larger pit and a possible ditch, were all located in the mitigation area. The discrete features appeared to form no regular pattern and their function could not be determined from the excavated evidence.
- 9.1.5 The results of the evaluation and mitigation works showed a limited correlation with the geophysical survey results (Stratascan 2009). Archaeological deposits and features were few in number and where identified were generally poorly preserved, having been truncated by medieval ridge and furrow field systems and by more recent activity. Archaeological features were generally only identified on the medieval ridge tops.
- 9.1.6 The archaeology uncovered can be characterised as of local to regional significance. Prehistoric features and associated material evidence, including Collared Urns, are relatively common in the region (Clay 1999 and 2001). Mesolithic and Early Bronze Age find spots have also been recovered in the vicinity of the Site (Section 2.1.1 above). The evidence recovered from the current works will, at the very least, add to the known corpus of prehistoric information for the area.

9.2 Statement of Potential

General

9.2.1 The archaeological evidence recovered from the evaluation and mitigation, although of limited scale, has some potential to contribute towards the following elements of the current regional research agenda (Knight *et al.* 2010):

- To maximise the potential of scientific dating methods and pottery sequences in order to refine the regional chronological framework (Items 3.1, 4.1);
- To refine our knowledge of the selective use of different landscape zones for ritual, agriculture and other activities (Item 3.4);
- To refine our knowledge of burials, associated artefact assemblages and the construction (or not) of monuments (Items 3.6, 4.7); and
- To make data available for population studies such as status variations and population mobility (Items 3.8, 4.10).

9.2.2 The following categories of material offer specific potential to inform understanding of the site and address the research agenda items identified above.

Cremated bone

9.2.3 Further analysis of the cremated human remains in **1039** and **1058** has the potential to provide more detailed demographic data with regard to the age and sex of the individuals represented. A more detailed examination may also reveal other pathological lesions. A standard record of data pertaining to pyre technology and cremation ritual will provide some indications on these areas of research and allow comparisons with contemporaneous burial remains, though the disturbed nature of the deposit will exercise limitations.

Charred plant remains

9.2.4 There is no potential for any detailed analysis of the charred plant remains due to the paucity of the remains recovered.

Wood charcoal

9.2.5 There is some potential for the analysis of the wood charcoal from the tree-throw hole **1033** and pits **2006** and **2043** to provide information on the species composition, management and exploitation of the local woodland resource. However, of these features, only **2006** contained diagnostic artefactual material and there is evidence that the primary fill **2025** of this feature may have been contaminated by later intrusive activity.

Radiocarbon Dating

9.2.6 While the samples from the urns and cremation related deposits contain little charcoal, dating of the cremated bone from the urned burials **1037** and **1057** could refine the chronological framework for this activity. However, the potential for dating material from feature **1055**, which may have been associated with the cremations, is very low.

9.2.7 The charcoal-filled small pits within the mitigation area are generally of very low archaeological potential: although the charcoal itself from pit **2029**

(deposit **2030**), could be dated, this is not associated with cremated bone or other archaeological material.

- 9.2.8 Similarly, dating of the charcoal within tree-throw **1003** would not significantly add to our understanding of the Site in the absence of other material of archaeological interest within the feature.

10 RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Introduction

10.1.1 The Bronze Age urned cremation burials are of local to regional significance and add to the known corpus of prehistoric information for the area. Dating of the burials and/or any associated deposits offers the potential to contribute towards current regional research objectives (Knight *et al.* 2010) with regard to refinement of the regional chronological framework (Items 3.1, 4.1); knowledge of the selective use of different landscape zones for ritual, agriculture and other activities (Item 3.4); knowledge of burials, associated artefact assemblages and the construction (or not) of monuments (Items 3.6, 4.7); and to make data available for population studies such as status variations and population mobility (Items 3.8, 4.10).

10.1.2 Additional analysis of the cremated remains together with a limited programme of targeted radiocarbon dating is therefore proposed. Limited analysis of the wood charcoal from selected features may also be considered, subject to successful radiocarbon dating.

10.1.3 Given the local and regional significance of the evidence recovered from the site it is proposed to submit a publication note with illustrations to the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*. This is likely to be 1500-2000 words maximum (5-6 pages of text) with 2 pages of illustrations (site and feature location plan, section of post pit, plates of cremations and radiocarbon results).

10.2 Updated project aims

10.2.1 Taking account of the current research agenda for the East Midlands (Knight *et al.* 2010), the following research aims and questions may be suggested.

- Aim 1: To establish or confirm chronological and demographic frameworks for deposition of the cremated remains
- Aim 2: To establish or confirm the relationship of the cremated remains to other features and deposits
- Aim 3: To publish a note reporting the results of the fieldwork and analyses and to deposit the project archive

10.3 Proposals for further analysis

Cremated remains

10.3.1 Analysis of the cremated bone will follow the writer's standard procedure (McKinley 1994, 5-6; 2004). All unsorted <4mm residues will be subject to a rapid scan to extract any identifiable material, osseous or artefactual.

10.3.2 Taphonomic factors potentially affecting differential bone preservation will be assessed. The age of individuals will be assessed using standard methodologies (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000). Sex will be ascertained from the sexually dimorphic traits of the skeleton (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Gejvall 1981). Pathological lesions will be recorded in text and via digital photography.

Charred plant remains

10.3.3 No further work is proposed on the plant remains recovered.

Wood charcoal

10.3.4 It is proposed that no further work is carried out on the wood charcoal from these samples unless the material from tree-throw hole **1003**, pit **2043** or post pit **2006** becomes dated or is associated with cremation related deposits or other material of significant archaeological interest.

Radiocarbon dating

10.3.5 It is proposed that suitable fragments of cremated bone recovered from the urned cremation burials **1037** and **1057** are radiocarbon dated.

10.3.6 The potential mixing or cross contamination of seed material from the post pit **2006** suggests also that the charcoal from this deposit may also be mixed, negating the value of further analysis. Nevertheless, a date may be useful in determining the contemporaneity or otherwise of the feature with the urned cremation burials.

11 ARCHIVE DEPOSITION, STORAGE AND CURATION

11.1 Museum

11.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the evaluation and mitigation works is deposited with Leicestershire Museums. The Museum has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under the Accession Code **X.A137.2010**. Deposition of the finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

11.2 Conservation

11.2.1 No conservation requirements have been identified in respect of any of the materials recovered from the Site.

11.3 Storage

11.3.1 The finds are currently stored in perforated polythene bags in cardboard or airtight plastic boxes, ordered by material type, following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990).

11.4 Discard policy

11.4.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact categories which are not considered to

warrant any future analysis. The discarding of any other artefacts will be carried out only with the complete agreement of Leicestershire Museums.

- 11.4.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows the guidelines laid out in Wessex Archaeology's Archive and Dispersal Policy for Environmental Remains and Samples. The archive policy conforms with nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2002) and is available upon request.

11.5 Archive

- 11.5.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics and artefacts, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Leicestershire Museums, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (Walker 1990; SMA 1995; Richards and Robinson 2000; Brown 2007).
- 11.5.2 All archive elements are marked with site codes 75390 and 75391, and a full index has been prepared. The contents of the archive are summarised at Appendix 1.

11.6 Copyright

- 11.6.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by the Wessex Archaeology Ltd under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved. The recipient Museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profitmaking and conforms to the Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003.
- 11.6.2 This report, and the archive generally, may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (e.g. Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which we are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of the report.

11.7 Security Copy

- 11.7.1 In line with current best practice, on completion of the project a security copy of the paper records will be prepared, in the form of microfilm. The master jackets and one diazo copy of the microfilm will be submitted to the National Monuments Record (English Heritage), a second diazo copy will be deposited with the paper records, and a third diazo copy will be retained by Wessex Archaeology.

12 RESOURCES AND PROGRAMME

12.1 Named project team

12.1.1 The proposed project team is presented below. The team consists of internal Wessex Archaeology staff: Wessex Archaeology reserves the right to replace any member of the named team at its discretion. The project will be managed by Richard O'Neill BA MIfA. Chris Moore MIfA, Regional Manager (Sheffield), will provide project quality monitoring. Karen Walker BA MA MIfA FSA, Operations Principal with responsibility for post-excavation services, will provide academic quality monitoring.

Name	Position	Role
Richard O'Neill BA MIfA	Senior Project Manager	Project Manager and co-author
Alistair Barclay BSc PhD MIfA	Senior Post-excavation Manager	Contributing author
Jacqueline I. McKinley BTEch FSA MIfA	Senior Osteo-Archaeologist	Contributing author (human remains)
Ken Lymer Dip. Graphic Design BSc MA PhD	Illustrator	Graphics
Justin Wiles BA	Archaeologist (Supervisor)	Findings and archive co-ordinator

12.2 Task list

12.2.1 An outline task list for the proposed analysis and publication programme is presented below.

Task No.	Task	Aim No.	Est. Time (days)	Staffing
1	Project management			
1.1	Project management		0.5	RJO
2	Analysis tasks			
2.1	Human bone analysis	1	1	JIM
2.2	Submission/analysis of radiocarbon dates	1; 2	0.5	AB
3	Research tasks			
3.1	Dating (3 of)	1; 2	-	external
4	Preparation of publication text and figures			
4.1	Preparation of primary text	3	1	AB, RJO
4.2	Preparation of illustrations and plates	3	1	KL
5	Publication			
5.1	Journal submission	3	0.25	JPG
6	Archive preparation and deposition			
6.1	Preparation of archive material	3	0.5	JW
6.2	Deposition	3	0.5	JW
	Total person days		5.25	

12.3 Management structure

- 12.3.1 The project team will be lead by an experienced Project Manager, who will assume ultimate responsibility for the implementation and execution of the project, and the achievement of performance targets (academic, budgetary or scheduled).
- 12.3.2 The Project Manager will define and control the scope and form of the post-excavation programme and will have a major input into the writing of the publication report. The Project Manager may delegate specific aspects of the project to other key staff, who will both supervise others and have a direct input into the compilation of the report. They may also undertake direct liaison with external consultants and specialists who are contributing to the publication report, and the museum named as the recipient of the project archive.

12.4 Performance monitoring and quality standards

- 12.4.1 The Project Manager is assisted by the Operations Principal, who will help to ensure that the report meets internal quality standards as defined in Wessex Archaeology's guidelines. The overall progress and quality will be monitored internally by the Regional Manager (Sheffield), Chris Moore.
- 12.4.2 Communication between all team members will be facilitated by project meetings at key points during the project.
- 12.4.3 In addition to internal monitoring and checking, quality standards will be maintained by internal and/or external academic advisers, as appropriate. These referees will appraise the academic quality of the report prior to the submission of a draft publication text to the Curator for approval on behalf of the local planning authority.

12.5 Programme

- 12.5.1 The analysis programme will commence immediately on approval of the proposals by the Curator. Subject to instruction by the Client, it is anticipated that a **draft publication text and illustrations** would be available by the end of **April 2011**. Subject to approval by the Curator, it is anticipated that the finalised text and illustrations can be submitted to the Editor of the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* by the same date; subject to acceptance by the Editor it is anticipated that the article would be published in the 2011 or 2012 volume of the Journal.
- 12.5.2 The finds and archive will be prepared and deposited with the Museum on completion of the analysis programme; it is anticipated that this will take place by the end of **June 2011**. The Curator will be informed when the archive has been deposited.

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14 APPENDIX 1: ARCHIVE INDEX

Countesthorpe 75390			
File No.	Details	Format	No. Sheets
1	Index to Archive	A4	1
1	Client Report	A4	1 report
1	Written Scheme of Investigation	A4	14
1	Day Record	A4	1
1	Day Book (photocopy)	A4	1
1	Trench Records	A4	16
1	Context Register	A4	3
1	Context Records	A4	20
1	Graphics Register	A4	2
1	Photographic Register	A4	7
1	B/W contact sheets	A4	4
1	B/W negatives	A4	4
1	Colour slides	A4	8
1	Photo CDs	A4	3
1	Graphic Register	A4	2
1	Site Graphics	A4	13
2	Site Graphics	A3	8
1	Environmental Sample Register & Records	A4	4
1	Object Register & Records	A4	1

Countesthorpe 75391			
File No.	Details	Format	No. Sheets
1	Index to Archive	A4	1
1	Client Report	A4	1 report
1	Written Scheme of Investigation	A4	17
1	Risk Assessment	A4	10
1	Day Record	A4	1
1	License to Remove Human Bone	A4	2
1	Day Book (photocopy)	A4	2
1	Context Register	A4	2
1	Context Records	A4	46
1	Graphics Register	A4	2
1	Site Graphics	A4	12
2	Site Graphics	A3	3
1	Photographic Register	A4	4
1	B/W contact sheets	A4	2
1	B/W negatives	A4	2
1	Colour slides	A4	4
1	Photo CDs	A4	2
1	Environmental Sample Register & Records	A4	11
1	Object Register & Records	A4	1

15 APPENDIX 2: TRENCH SUMMARY TABLES

Trench 1	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 1.9m
Context		Depth (m)
1005	Topsoil dark greyish brown sandy loam.	0 - 0.08/0.27
1006	Subsoil dark orangey brown sandy silt.	0.18/0.27 – 0.48/0.68
1007	Natural light brown sandy clay.	0.48/0.68 – 0.9/1.1
1008	Natural mottled grey clay with sandy patches throughout deposit.	0.9/1.1 – 1.9
1009	Natural brown tenacious clay.	1.9+
1010	0.42m wide land drain cut extending across width of trench.	0.65
1011	0.06m wide ceramic field drain within orange brown sandy clay fill.	0.65

Trench 2	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 1.8m
Context		Depth (m)
1000	Natural boulder clay.	0.4/5 +
1001	Subsoil dark yellow sandy silt.	0.2/3 – 0.4/5
1002	Topsoil dark grey brown silt-loam	0 – 0.2/3
1003	Irregular shaped tree-throw hole cut into natural (1000).	0.4
1004	Fill of 1003. Contains burnt material, sample number 11.	0.4

Trench 3	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.5m
Context		Depth (m)
1012	Natural yellow / orange brown sandy clay with flint & pebble inclusions	0.4/5 +
1013	Subsoil mid yellow sandy silt.	0.25 – 0.4
1014	Topsoil dark brown loam	0 – 0.25

Trench 4	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.5m
Context		Depth (m)
1015	Natural yellow / orange brown sandy clay with flint & pebble inclusions.	0.35 +
1016	Subsoil mid yellow sandy silt.	0.25 – 0.4
1017	Topsoil dark brown loam.	0 – 0.25

The two areas of weak positive anomaly located within this trench (Stratascan 2009) were not detectable archaeologically.

Trench 5	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.46m
Context		Depth (m)
1024	Topsoil mid grey brown silty sand.	0 – 0.2
1025	Subsoil mid orange brown sandy silt with pronounced ridge & furrow undulations in upper surface. Worked flint recovered.	0.2 – 0.46
1026	Natural mid orange brown sandy clay.	0.46 +

Trench 6	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.45m
Context		Depth (m)
1027	Topsoil mid grey brown loam.	0 – 0.15/28
1028	Subsoil mid orange brown silty sand with pronounced ridge & furrow undulations in upper surface.	0.15/28 – 0.35/45
1029	Natural mid orange brown sandy clay.	0.35 – 0.45+

The discrete positive anomaly located within this trench appeared to match an area with a heavy flint gravel in the upper surface of the natural.

Trench 7	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.60m
Context		Depth (m)
1018	Natural dark yellow brown sandy clay.	0.45 – 0.60
1019	Subsoil sandy silt with occasional rounded 0.05m pebbles.	0.25 - .045
1020	Topsoil dark grey brown loam.	0 – 0.25
1035	Natural mixed (gleyed) orange/grey sandy clay with occasional med-large rounded pebbles.	0.60 +

The positive anomaly with associated negative response (ferrous object) located within this trench was identified as a horse shoe on the upper surface of deposit 1018. This 0.2m thick natural deposit 1018 was machined away to reveal a natural boulder clay 1035 beneath.

Trench 8	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.55m
Context		Depth (m)
1021	Natural brown yellow sandy clay.	0.55 +
1022	Subsoil yellow orange sandy clay.	0.35 – 0.55
1023	Topsoil dark grey brown loam containing brick rubble to western half of trench.	0 – 0.35
1030	Shallow scoop in northern edge of trench.	0.55 – 0.62
1031	Sandy clay fill of 1030.	0.55 – 0.62

Trench 9	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.4m
Context		Depth (m)
1032	Topsoil light grey brown fine sandy silt, humic with roots. Contained post-medieval white and creamware pottery.	0 – 0.27
1033	Subsoil mid yellow brown sandy clay.	0.27 – 0.38
1034	Natural light yellow brown sandy clay with patches of rounded pebbles.	0.38 – 0.4 +

Trench 10	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.36m
Context		Depth (m)
1043	Topsoil mid grey brown clayey silt containing rare post-medieval white and creamwares.	0 – 0.28
1044	Subsoil mid yellow brown sandy clay.	0.28 – 0.36
1045	Natural boulder clay light yellow brown sandy clay.	0.36 +

Trench 11	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.38m
Context		Depth (m)
1046	Topsoil mid yellow brown fine sandy silt.	0 – 0.12
1047	Subsoil light greyish brown silty clay.	0.12 – 0.38
1048	Natural boulder clay in trench 11.	0.38 +

The positive linear anomaly located within this trench (Figure 2) was not detectable archaeologically.

Trench 12	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.44m
Context		Depth (m)
1049	Topsoil mid grey brown sandy silt. Post-medieval whitewares, glass and "Asiatic Peasants" transfer wares discarded on site.	0 – 0.12
1050	Subsoil light grey brown sandy clay.	0.12 – 0.36
1051	Natural light yellow brown sandy clay with occasional medium – large rounded pebbles.	0.36 – 0.44

Trench 13	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.33m
Context		Depth (m)
1052	Topsoil mid grey brown sandy silt.	0 – 0.12
1053	Subsoil mid yellow brown sandy clay.	0.12 – 0.33
1054	Natural in trench 13.	0.33 +
1059	SE-NW aligned ditch. Probably post ridge and furrow.	0.33 – 0.63
1060	Primary ditch fill.	0.46 – 0.63
1061	Upper ditch fill.	0.33 – 0.46

See Section 5.2.5 above for Ditch 1059 description. The positive linear anomaly identified by Stratascan (2009) (Figure 2) was not detectable archaeologically.

Trench 14	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.3m
Context		Depth (m)
1062	Topsoil mid grey brown sandy silt.	0 – 0.12
1063	Subsoil mid yellow grey/brown sandy clay.	0.12 – 0.3
1064	Natural mid yellow brown silty clay.	0.3 +

Trench 15	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.35m
Context		Depth (m)
1065	Topsoil mid grey brown clayey silt.	0 – 0.15
1066	Subsoil mid yellow brown clayey silt.	0.15 – 0.28
1067	Natural yellow brown silty clay.	0.28/35 +

The two positive linear anomalies identified by Stratascan (2009) (Figure 2) were not detectable archaeologically.

Trench 16/17	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.57m
Context		Depth (m)
1036	Cut for urn 1037. Diffuse edge.	0.37 – 0.47
1037	Urn, Object Number 1.	0.37 – 0.47
1038	Backfill around urn.	0.37 – 0.47
1039	Fill of urn 1037.	0.37 – +?
1040	Topsoil mid brown clayey silt. Contained 19 th /20 th Century ceramics discarded on Site	0 – 0.32
1041	Subsoil light yellow brown clayey silt.	0.32 – 0.57
1042	Natural light reddish yellow silty clay.	0.57 +
1055	Cut for probable post.	0.37 – 0.49
1056	Fill of probable post.	0.37 – 0.49
1057	Urn, object number 2.	0.37 – 0.41
1058	Fill of urn (1057).	0.37 – 0.41

NB: As Trenches 16 & 17 formed a T-shape, the formation of natural, sub and topsoil were recorded as one.
 See Section 5.2.4 above for full discussion of the urns 1037 & 1057 and probable post 1055.
 The positive linear anomaly detected by Stratascan (2009) (Figure 2) was not detectable archaeologically.

Trench 18	Description	Dimensions: 40x2m Max Depth: 0.48m
Context		Depth (m)
1068	Base of probable medieval furrow cut in trench 18.	0.3 – 0.48
1069	Sandy silt fill of 1068.	0.3 – 0.48
1070	Subsoil mid orangey brown sandy silt.	0.25 – 0.30
1071	Topsoil mid grey brown loam.	0 – 0.25
1072	Natural in Trench 18.	0.3 +

Mitigation Strip & Record Context Checklist	
Context	Description
2000	E-W land drain cut
2001	Sandy loam topsoil over site.
2002	Subsoil over site.
2003	Natural boulder clay across site.
2004	19thC land drain runs E-W.
2005	Backfill of land drain 2000.
2006	Large post pit
2007	Central slot through E-W ditch 2011, unknown use.
2008	Silty clay fill of ditch 2007.
2009	Cut of ditch 2011 terminus. Truncated by medieval ploughing. Unknown use. Part of 2011
2010	Silty clay fill of ditch 2009.
2011	Group Number for E/W ditch

Mitigation Strip & Record Context Checklist	
Context	Description
2012	Small circular cut with high charcoal fill.
2013	Fill of 2012 with high charcoal content. Sample 1.
2014	Small circular cut with high charcoal fill.
2015	Fill of 2014 with high charcoal content. Sample 2.
2016	Shallow bowl shaped base of pit/post. Heavily truncated by medieval and later ploughing.
2017	Charcoal & burnt clay fill of 2016. Sample 3.
2018	Small circular cut containing urn base.
2019	Truncated base of ceramic vessel with burnt material within cut 2018. Object number 3.
2020	Re-deposited natural packed around cremation pot [2019].
2021	Small shallow bowl shaped pit.
2022	Charred organic material and burnt clay fill of 2021, no evidence of human bone. Sample 5.
2023	Shallow sub-circular pit.
2024	Silty clay with charcoal and burnt clay. Fill of 2023. Sample 4.
2025	Possible post packing. Fill of 2006. Sample 8.
2026	Possible post pipe fill. Fill of 2006. Sample 9.
2027	Small sub-square pit/post.
2028	Fill of post/small pit 2027, sandy clay.
2029	Small circular cut with 2% charcoal fill.
2030	Fill of 2029. Sample number 10.
2031	Quern/grinding/polishing stone in 2006 used as possible leverage base for post erection. Object Number 4.
2032	Circular posthole.
2033	Packing in post 2032.
2034	Post pipe fill of 2032.
2035	Sub-circular concave natural feature.
2036	Silty clay fill of natural feature 2035.
2037	Irregular charcoal patch.
2038	Fill of [2037].
2039	Irregular charcoal patch.
2040	Fill of [2039].
2041	Natural feature.
2042	Deposit of <i>in-situ</i> root burning. Sample 7.
2043	Possible sub-circular pit.
2044	Silty clay fill of 2043.
2045	Contains burnt organic material. Fill of 2043. Sample 6.

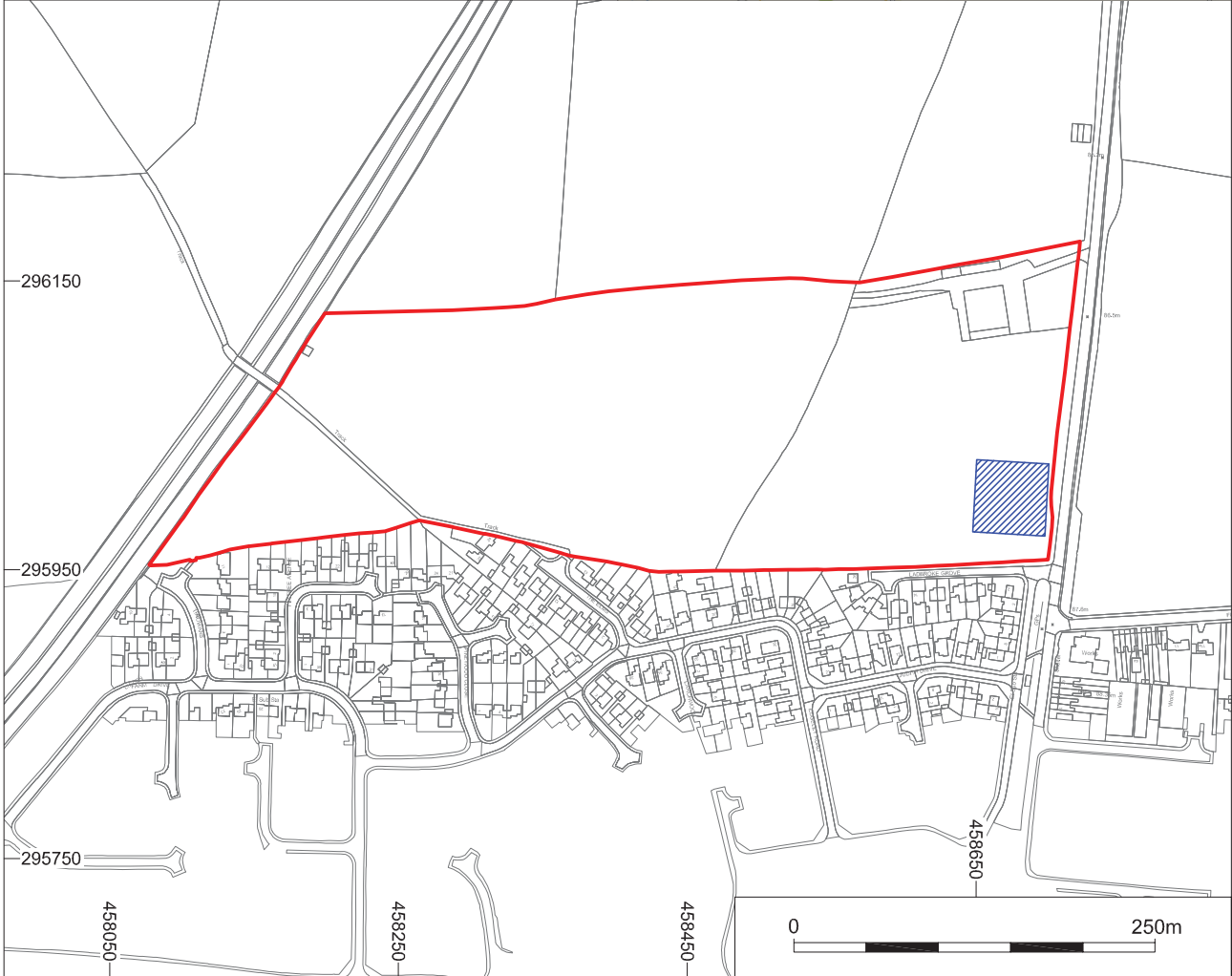
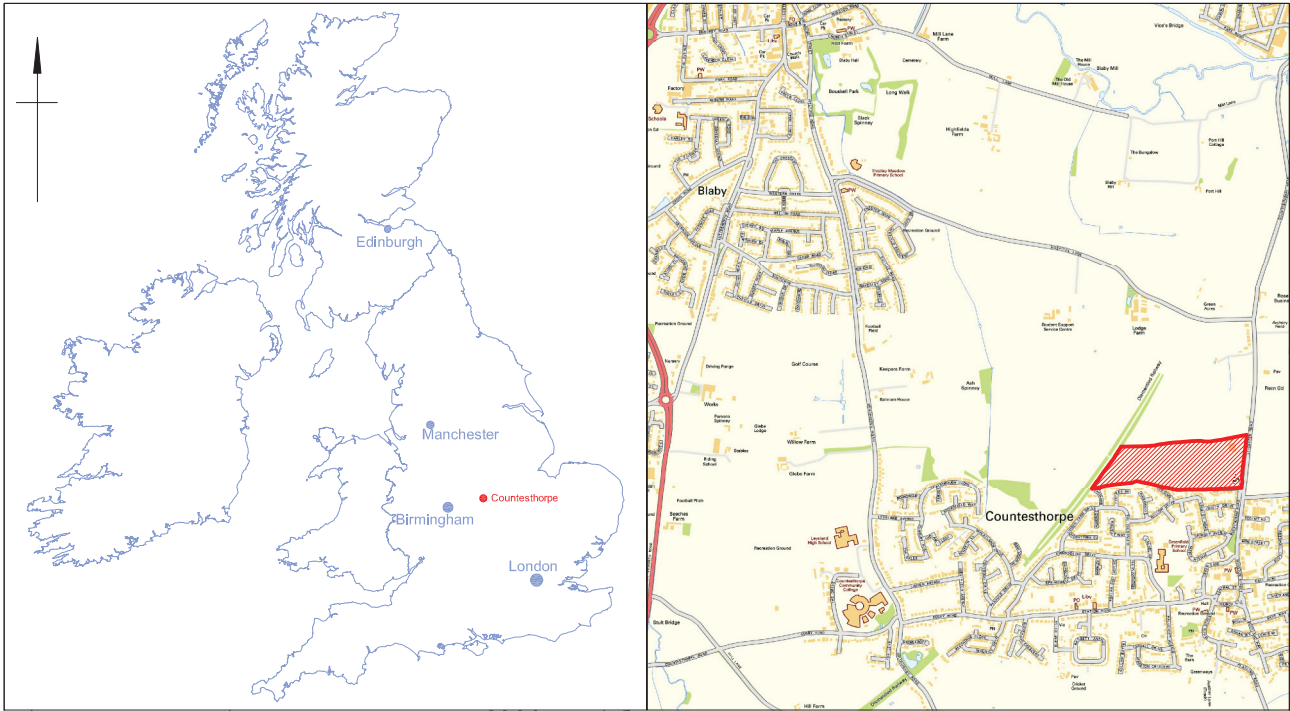
16 APPENDIX 3: FINDS SUMMARY BY CONTEXT

Context	Human bone	Animal Bone	Worked Flint	Pottery	Stone
1006			1/1		
1017				1/60	
1025			1/4		
1031				1/20	
1037				54/812	
1038				14/100	
1039	300				
1047				2/64	
1050				1/12	
1059				19/461	
1058	31				
2008			1/14		
2019				11/40	
2025		4/4	4/52		
2026		3/1			
2031					1
2045					
TOTAL	331	7/5	7/71	103/1569	1

17 APPENDIX 4: ASSESSMENT OF THE PLANT REMAINS AND CHARCOAL

Samples				Flot								
Feature	Context	Sam ple	Vol. Ltrs	Flot (ml)	% roots	Charred Plant Remains				Charcoal >4/2mm	Other	Analysis
						Grain	Chaff	Other	Comments			
Trench 2 Tree-throw hole												
1003	1004	11	18	425	20	-	-	-	-	120/100 ml	-	?C
Trench 16 – Prehistoric Urned cremation												
1036	1038	12	10	130	75	-	-	-	-	2/8 ml	-	
Trench 17 - ?Cremation related pit												
1055	1056	13	14	10	75	C	-	-	Indet. grain frag	5/5 ml	-	
Mitigation Area												
?Cremation related pits												
2012	2013	1	3	40	25	-	-	-	-	2/6 ml	-	
2014	2015	2	0.5	10	25	-	-	-	-	1/2 ml	-	
2016	2017	3	1.5	10	20	C	-	-	Indet. grain frags	2/2 ml	-	
2023	2024	4	1	10	35	-	-	-	-	1/3 ml	-	
2021	2022	5	1	5	35	-	-	-	-	0/1 ml	-	
2029	2030	10	5	90	30	-	-	-	-	10/30 ml	-	
Pit												
2043	2045	6	14	425	35	C	-	B	Indet. grain frags, <i>Crataegus</i> stone frags, <i>Corylus avellana</i> shell frags	50/100 ml	-	?C
Post pit												
2006	2025	8	30	60	30	C	-	-	?F-t and ?Hulled wheat grain frags	10/5 ml	-	
	2026	9	23	250	30	-	-	C	<i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i>	40/20 ml	-	?C
Natural feature												
2041	2042	7	3	120	15	-	-	-	-	8/25 ml	coal	

Key: A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30-99, A = >10, B = 9-5, C = <5. Analysis: C = Charcoal



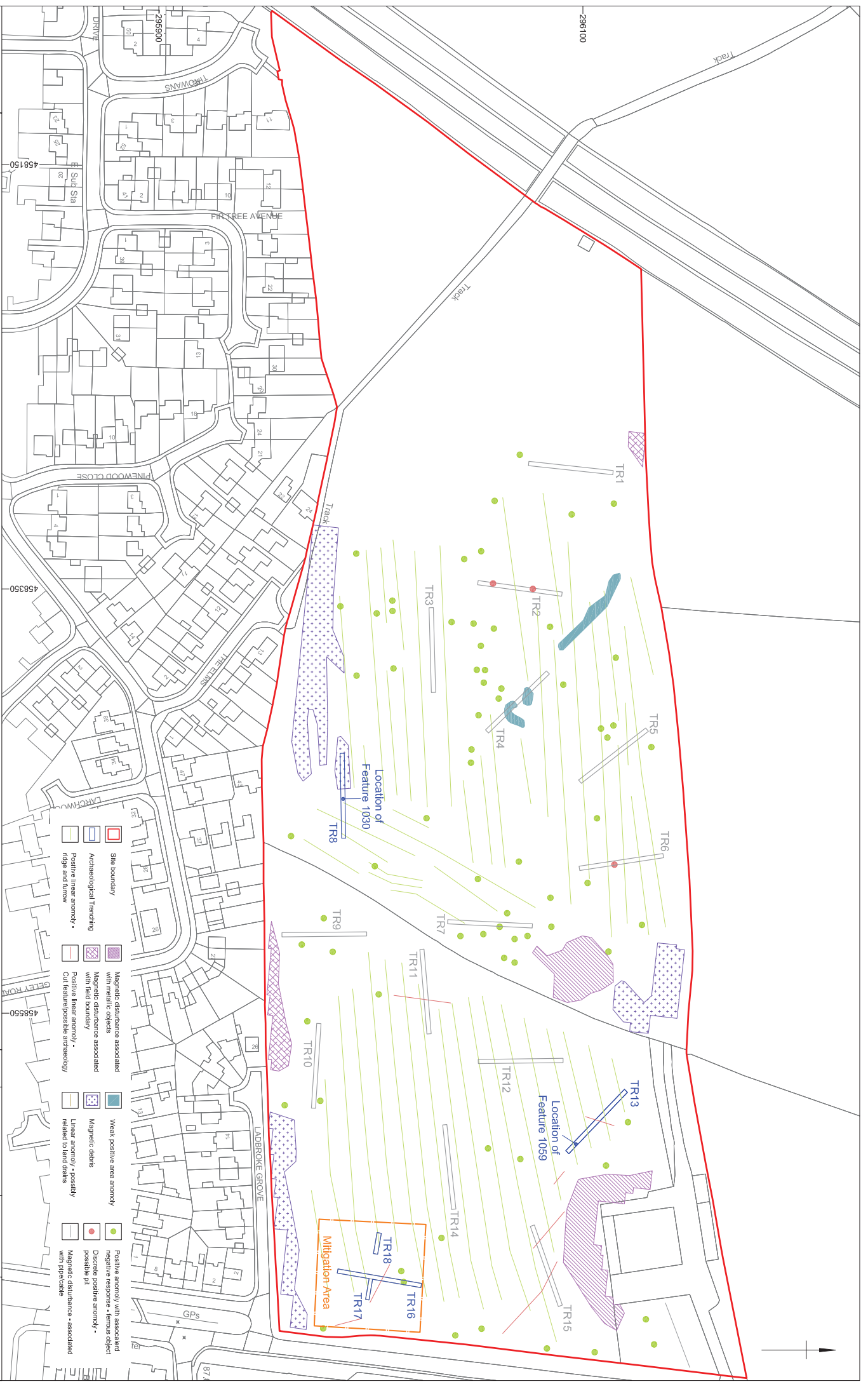
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Site location

Figure 1

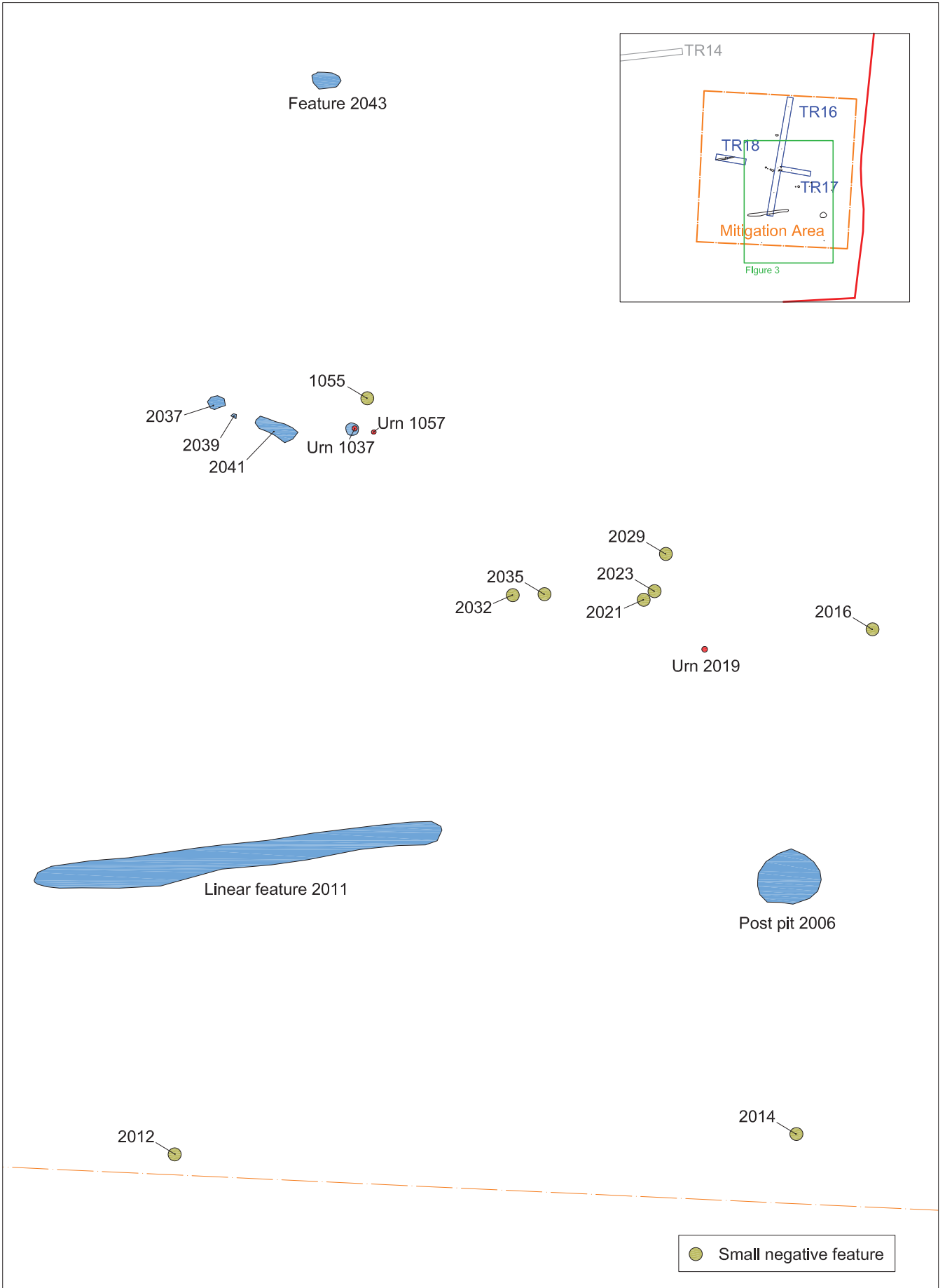


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- | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|
| | Site boundary | | Magnetic disturbance associated with metallic objects |
| | Archaeological Trenching | | Magnetic disturbance associated with field boundary |
| | Positive linear anomaly - ridge and furrow | | Cut feature/possible archaeology |
| | Weak positive area anomaly | | Positive anomaly with associated negative response - ferrous object |
| | Magnetic debris | | Discrete positive anomaly - possible pit |
| | Linear anomaly - possibly related to land drains | | Magnetic disturbance - associated with pipe/cable |

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Plan shot of post pit 2006, facing north



Oblique shot of post pit 2006, facing north-east

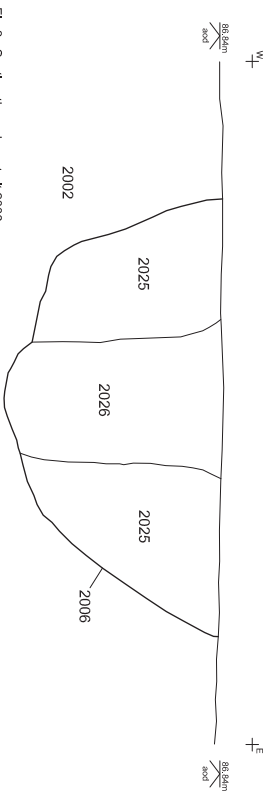


Fig 3a Section through post pit 2006

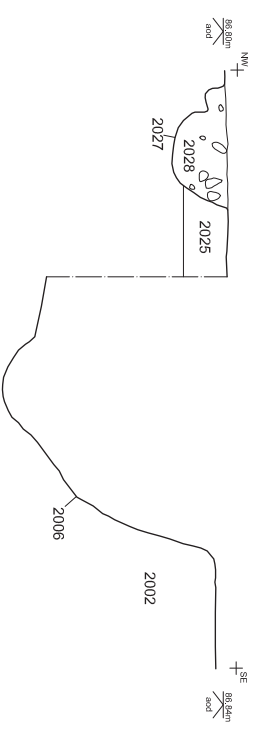


Fig 3b Section & Profile through feature 2027 & post pit 2006

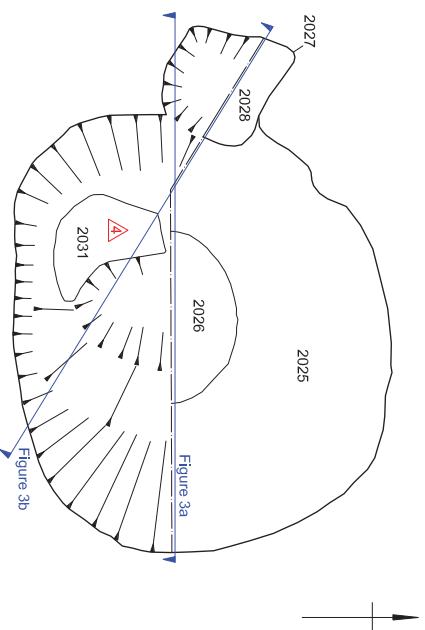


Fig 3c Plan of feature 2027 & post pit 2006



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Plate 1: Urned burial 1037 uncovered in Trench 16, facing east (75390 location)



Plate 2: Urned burial 1057 uncovered in Trench 17, facing south (75390 location)

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Plate 3: Heavily truncated urn 2019 uncovered during mitigation, facing south (75391 location)

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