



East Midlands Gateway: Kegworth Bypass Leicestershire

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation



Planning Ref: TR050002
Accession Number: X.A168.2013
Ref: 102971.01
March 2017



East Midlands Gateway: Kegworth Bypass Leicestershire

Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

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March 2017

102971



Quality Assurance

Project Code	102971	Accession Code	X.A168.2013	Client Ref.	
Planning Application Ref.	TR050002	Ordnance Survey (OS) national grid reference (NGR)	448100, 326000 to 448490, 325940		

Version	Status*	Prepared by	Checked and Approved By	Approver's Signature	Date
v01	I	PMRD & SP	APN		24/03/2017
File:	S:\PROJECTS\102971_Reports				
v02	E	PMRD	APN		27/03/2017
File:	S:\PROJECTS\102971_Reports				
File:					
File:					
File:					

* I = Internal Draft; E = External Draft; F = Final

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Roxhill (Kegworth) Ltd to carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation on land to the south of Kegworth, running from NGR 448100, 326000 to 448490, 325940. The work was undertaken as part of the proposed A6 Kegworth bypass road scheme, which forms part of the East Midlands Gateway strategic rail freight interchange development.

The archaeological evaluation followed on from an earlier phase of geophysical survey and trench evaluation. It was designed to supplement the results of those investigations and so better characterise the archaeological component of the road scheme corridor. During the work which forms the subject of this report, ten trenches measuring around 25 m in length were excavated along a 400 m-long stretch of the proposed road scheme. The trenches focussed on an area of Iron Age features discovered during the earlier work.

Five of the ten trenches were archaeologically blank; three trenches encountered ditched boundaries and pit-like *maculae* containing Middle–Late Iron Age pottery, and two trenches contained artefactually sterile features.

The confirmed archaeological features from all phases of investigation were found scattered along a 300 m-length of the proposed bypass route, seemingly with three separate foci. The results may represent the remains of an enclosure or portion of field system dating to the Middle–Late Iron Age. The Site lies within the East Midlands claylands, which have been found to contain extensive remnants of Iron Age enclosure and settlement, with the current remains adding to the local evidence for such activity. The evaluation has, however, provided no indication that the Site is of any enhanced palaeoenvironmental significance.

The local soils do not appear particularly receptive to geophysical survey: there was a generally low degree of concordance between the magnetometer data and the below-ground archaeology as revealed in the trenches.

It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service. The Council has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under the accession code X.A168.2013. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.



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Acknowledgements

The archaeological evaluation was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Roxhill (Kegworth) Ltd. The assistance of Sally Dicks is gratefully acknowledged in this regard.

Thanks are extended to Richard Clark, Principal Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, who provided curatorial support and guidance.

Stuart Pierson directed the fieldwork and was assisted by Callum Bruce, Otis Gilbert and Michael Keech. Patrick Daniel and Stuart Pierson produced this report. Illustrations were prepared by Nancy Dixon. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Andrew Norton.

The pottery and animal bone were assessed by Lorraine Mephram. The environmental samples were processed by Liz Chambers and assessed by Inés López-Dóriga.

Thanks are also due to Ian McKenzie, Land Agent with Fisher German, for arranging access.



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Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

- 1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of Roxhill (Kegworth) Ltd to carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation on land to the south of Kegworth, running from NGR 448100, 326000 to 448490, 325940 (Figure 1), hereafter 'the Site'. The work was undertaken as part of the proposed A6 Kegworth bypass road scheme forming part of the development of the East Midlands Gateway strategic rail freight interchange.
- 1.1.2 A Development Consent Order (DCO) was obtained for the East Midlands Gateway strategic rail freight interchange and associated highways works in January 2016.
- 1.1.3 The archaeological investigations reported on in this document occurred in early 2017, and so represents a supplementary phase of investigation to the initial trenching programme, which occurred in September 2014 (Wessex Archaeology 2015), prior to the granting of the DCO. The 2017 evaluation trenching occurred in response to a Schedule of Works as set out in Requirement 13 of the DCO (Planning Inspectorate 2016).
- 1.1.4 The 2017 evaluation trenching was carried out in accordance with an agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; Wessex Archaeology 2016a) which outlined how the archaeological requirements of the work would be met.
- 1.1.5 Following discussions between Leicestershire County Council (LCC) and Sally Dicks (CgMs), ten additional trenches were proposed, to further investigate the results of the previous evaluation and geophysical survey (Wessex Archaeology 2014 and 2015), and inform the nature of further mitigation (if required) ahead of construction of the proposed A6 Kegworth Bypass.

1.2 Site location and topography

- 1.2.1 The Site occupies a 400 m-long section of the proposed A6 Kegworth bypass, and is contained within a single arable field. The Site is located to the south of Kegworth and is bordered to the west by Whatton Road, to the north by housing on Thomas Road and Roberts Close, to the east by open farmland and houses accessible from New Brickyard Lane, and to the south by a thick hedgerow containing a small stream which flows eastwards into the River Soar, which lies some 850 m to the east of the Site.
- 1.2.2 The field within which the evaluation trenches were dug contains a photovoltaic solar array in its south-western corner.
- 1.2.3 A stub of hedgerow extending into the field from the west coincides with a more continuous boundary marked on the First Edition 25" Ordnance Survey map of 1884, which also shows other field boundaries, now entirely erased, running across the Site.

- 1.2.4 The Site is generally level, and occupies part of the summit plateau of a low eminence set within a broader undulating landscape, which descends to the Soar/Trent confluence to the north.
- 1.2.5 The Site is located at approximately 70 m above Ordnance Datum.
- 1.2.6 The underlying geology comprises Triassic sedimentary bedrock, namely Siltstone and Sandstone of the Gunthorpe and Diseworth members. This is overlain in places by Diamicton till (BGS 2017). Modern soils are characterised as moderately to highly fertile slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (Cranfield n.d.).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Historical background summary

- 2.1.1 This section summarises the historical and archaeological background of the broader East Midlands Gateway development site, as presented in the desk-based assessment for that project (CgMs 2013).
- 2.1.2 Relatively numerous records of prehistoric material are noted in the vicinity. A loose concentration of Mesolithic activity appears to exist north of the Site, with Neolithic material also noted. Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano-British remains all exist in the general area, as well as a 3rd to 4th century villa. Early and Middle-Saxon pottery is known from the western side of the Soar valley.
- 2.1.3 Kegworth, Lockington and Hemington date from the Late Saxon period. The settlements lie some distance beyond the Site, and it is likely that the Site formed part of the medieval open fields of Kegworth. Lockington's open fields were enclosed in the early 17th century, and those of Kegworth and Hemington were enclosed in the late 18th century. The Site remained in agricultural use throughout the industrial and modern periods, although infrastructure relating to the World War II Castle Donington airport lies within its boundaries.

2.2 Geophysical survey

- 2.2.1 The East Midlands Gateway development area was subject to geophysical survey (Wessex Archaeology 2014). Within the site that forms the subject of this report, few geophysical anomalies of confirmed or possible archaeological origin were recorded, with these dispersed and lacking any regular pattern.

2.3 Evaluation

- 2.3.1 Twenty archaeological trial trenches were dug along the proposed course of the A6 Kegworth bypass in 2014. Few remains were noted, but a small concentration of archaeological features was present in trench 20, none of which directly corresponded with geophysical anomalies but did lie in the general vicinity of the geophysical anomalies of highest potential. Pottery recovered from the features probably dates to the Middle–Late Iron Age.
- 2.3.2 A north-east to south-west aligned ditch crossed the northern end of trench 20, and proved to be 0.73 m wide by just 0.08 m deep; it contained a brown silty clay fill from which pottery of uncertain but possibly prehistoric date was recovered. A pit and a pit/ditch terminal lay a short way to the south-west. These were both around 1.3 m in diameter by 0.2 m deep. Both contained a brown silty clay from which fire-cracked 'pot boiler' stones were recovered, with Iron Age pottery also present. The final feature recorded with trench 20 was a north-

south aligned ditch crossing the middle of the trench. Upon excavation the feature proved to be 0.3 m wide by 0.09 m deep; it contained an artefactually sterile brown silty clay fill.

- 2.3.3 Following the identification of the archaeological remains in trench 20 two further trenches were opened, one to the south (trench 98) and one to the north (trench 99) in order to delimit the extent of the remains. Both trenches were archaeologically blank, suggesting that the area of archaeological activity revealed in trench 20 was relatively discrete.
- 2.3.4 The investigations which form the subject of this report sought to better establish the archaeological potential of the area around trench 20.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

3.1.1 The aim of the evaluation was to further characterise (nature, date, complexity and extent) the archaeological features and deposits identified by geophysical survey, and identify any features not revealed by the survey.

3.1.2 The objectives of the project were:

- *to record, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains observed;*
- *to provide sufficient information to enable an informed decision to be made about the need for additional archaeological mitigation;*
- *to make available the results of the work.*

3.1.3 The general products and tasks that were undertaken included:

- *providing further information on the archaeological potential of the Site to enable the archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed;*
- *assisting with the formulation of a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains;*
- *production of a Site archive.*

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

3.2.1 The work was carried out in accordance with the approved WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2016a) and Wessex Archaeology and industry standards and guidelines (CIfA 2014a and b).

3.2.2 Fieldwork occurred between 20th February and 1st March 2017.

Trial trenching

3.2.3 Ten trenches measuring between 25 m and 30 m in length and c. 2 m wide were excavated as shown in Figure 1.

Machine excavation

3.2.4 Excavation of trenches was undertaken using a 14-ton tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket under the direct supervision of a suitably qualified archaeologist. Machining ceased at the first archaeological horizon or the level of natural geology, whichever was reached first.

Hand excavation

- 3.2.5 Any archaeological features and deposits were cleaned as necessary to allow inspection and to define their extent. Archaeological features were hand excavated, with care taken not to compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits, which may have been deemed suitable for preservation by record or preservation *in-situ*.

Recording

- 3.2.6 All deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording sheets and a continuous unique numbering system.
- 3.2.7 To avoid work on the current Site duplicating trench/context numbers etc generated during archaeological work elsewhere within the wider East Midlands Gateway development area (where trenches have been numbered in the 1–340 range), trench numbering on the current Site commenced at 341. As per standard practice, excavated stratigraphic units were individually numbered and recorded, with the trench number forming the prefix for the context number. Hence, contexts 34100–34199 were reserved for use within Trench 341, contexts 34200–34299 were allocated to Trench 342 etc. An unused trench number from the earlier trenching programme, 206, was also utilised during the current work.
- 3.2.8 Evaluation trenches and excavated deposits were located by means of an RTK GPS system and tied in to the OS grid with a tolerance of better than + or – 100 mm. All deposits had spot heights recorded in relation to Ordnance Datum, correct to two decimal places.
- 3.2.9 A photographic record was maintained using high specification digital photographic equipment supplemented with 35 mm monochrome film, where required.

Monitoring

- 3.2.10 An on-site monitoring visit occurred on 27th February 2017 with Richard Clark, Principal Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, and Sally Dicks of CgMs in attendance. During the meeting the fieldwork methodology was amended in response to the on-going results.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 Regularly spaced linear features filled with pale brown sandy material were noted in a number of trenches. Interpreted as furrows arising from ridge-and-furrow cultivation, examples were formally investigated and recorded in trenches 343 and 344 (see below).
- 4.1.2 Discounting the furrows, confirmed or potential archaeological remains were recorded in five of the ten trenches, whereas trenches 206, 342, 343, 344 and 345 proved to be archaeologically blank.
- 4.1.3 Iron Age pottery was recovered from features in trenches 341, 347 and 349, with undated features of possible archaeological origin also present within these trenches.
- 4.1.4 Trenches 346 and 348 contained only undated features.

4.2 Deposit sequence

- 4.2.1 The natural substrate presented as a compact orange/brown sandy clay with greenish stone fragments, thought to represent the eroded surface of the sedimentary bedrock. This was encountered at between 0.33 m and 0.6 m below the current ground surface. A

subsoil/interface layer was recorded in all trenches, with this typically occurring as an orange/brown silty or sandy clay and between 0.05 m and 0.23 m thick. A dark brown modern agricultural ploughsoil (0.22–0.43 m thick) sealed all of the trenches (Pl. 1).

4.3 Trench 341

- 4.3.1 Trench 341 was positioned to intercept a short north–south aligned geophysical anomaly of possible archaeological origin (Fig. 2).
- 4.3.2 A probable ditch corresponding with the geophysical anomaly was duly exposed crossing the trench, with a boundary running on a perpendicular alignment subsequently exposed when the trench was widened. The north–south ditch was numbered 34107. It was 1 m wide by 0.6 m deep (Pl. 2). Two fills were recorded: a basal brown sandy clay overlain by a darker, greyer sandier deposit, which was found to contain three sherds of Middle–Late Iron Age rock-tempered pottery.
- 4.3.3 An ill-defined pit, numbered 34110, was recorded cutting the ditch on its eastern side. This measured 1 m in diameter and was 0.45 m deep. It contained a dark grey basal deposit, capped by brownish grey clay upper fill. It is possible that pit 34110, rather than being a discrete feature, was part of ditch 34107.
- 4.3.4 A north-west to south-east aligned feature was seen crossing the base of the trench some 2 m to the west of ditch 34107. Numbered 34104 this measured 1.15 m wide by 0.33 m deep. Like ditch 34107, this feature also contained two fills: a brown clay overlain by an orange brown sandy clay. No finds were recorded.

4.4 Trenches 343 and 344

- 4.4.1 Each of these trenches contained three linear features crossing them on an east-north-east to west-south-west alignment. The features were regularly spaced at c. 6 m intervals and each contained a pale brown clayish sand fill. Two of the six were excavated. Hand-excavation of the northernmost features in trench 343 and 344, numbered 34304 and 34404, revealed them to be just 0.06 m and 0.04 m deep respectively. A sherd of post-medieval Midlands Purple ware was recovered from furrow 34304.
- 4.4.2 These features were interpreted during the fieldwork as furrows arising from ridge-and-furrow cultivation.
- 4.4.3 In further support of this interpretation, the furrows run parallel with ‘ploughing’ anomalies recorded during the geophysical survey (Fig. 1), and also match the alignment of a now-erased east–west field boundary marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (and visible within the geophysical data) lying just beyond the northern end of trench 343.

4.5 Trench 346

- 4.5.1 Trench 346 did not have any defined geophysical target.
- 4.5.2 A linear feature crossed the northern end of the trench on a north-east to south-west alignment. Numbered 34608, it was ill-defined in plan and section and contained a pale yellowish brown clayish fill. It measured approximately 0.9 m wide by 0.51 m deep (Fig. 3; Pl. 3). No finds were recovered and its archaeological provenance is doubtful.
- 4.5.3 Two postholes, set some 4 m apart, were recorded in the central part of the trench close to its western edge. Numbered 34604 and 34606, these measured approximately 0.3 m in diameter and 0.11 m and 0.04 m deep respectively. No finds were recovered from their grey clay fills, although charcoal was noted in posthole 34604 (Pl. 4). A well-preserved

assemblage of cereal grains, dominated by hulled barley grains with some naked wheat and a possible oat grain, was also found in the environmental sample taken from this feature. The composition of the cereal assemblage suggests an early medieval or later date.

- 4.5.4 It is possible that postholes 34604 and 34606 represent root disturbance related to a north-north-west to south-south-east aligned field boundary, shown lying immediately to the west of trench 346 on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (but since erased).
- 4.5.5 Four furrows were also recorded crossing trench 346 on an east-north-east to west-south-west alignment.

4.6 Trench 347

- 4.6.1 Trench 347 was positioned to intercept a short linear anomaly of possible archaeological origin, although in the event no corresponding buried remains were apparent (Fig. 3).
- 4.6.2 Two pits or ditch terminals were investigated in trench 347, with both extending from the northern trench wall.
- 4.6.3 The westernmost feature, numbered 34704, was 2.8 m wide and had a visible 'length' of 1.2 m. Excavation established the feature was 0.3 m deep with a shallow, concave profile found to contain a single, artefactually sterile fill of dark orange brown sandy clay.
- 4.6.4 Approximately 1.5 m to the east lay feature 34706. The archaeological provenance of this was immediately apparent, as numerous large fragments of coarse black pottery were visible on its surface (Pl. 5). Feature 34706 was 3 m wide and had a visible 'length' of 0.6 m. Upon excavation, the feature was found to be 0.5 m deep and have a bowl-shaped profile. Two fills were recorded: the lower was a mid-orange brown clay, artefactually sterile apart from a small scrap of possibly intrusive metal. The upper fill was similar in texture to the lower, but darker coloured. This pottery within this deposit (128 fragments/4839 g), 34707, consisted of sandy/rock- and rock-tempered ware of Middle–Late Iron Age date. This material represents approximately three-quarters of the entire pottery assemblage from the evaluation. A further quantity of rock-tempered Iron Age pottery (38 fragments/1246 g) was collected from the subsoil in the vicinity of pit/ditch terminal 34706.
- 4.6.5 The two pits or ditch terminals investigated in trench 347 had generated no corresponding anomalies within the geophysical data.
- 4.6.6 Two further pits or ditch terminals were present extending from the southern trench wall, although these were not investigated.

4.7 Trench 348

- 4.7.1 Trench 348 tested a geophysically blank area to the east and north of trenches 346 and 347 respectively.
- 4.7.2 A single pit or ditch terminal was recorded, extending for 0.96 m from the southern trench wall. The feature, numbered 34804, was 2.47 m wide and 0.41 m deep, with a well-defined terminal (Fig. 4). It contained a single artefactually sterile fill of mid-reddish brown sandy clay.

4.8 Trench 349

- 4.8.1 Trench 349 was the most easterly of the evaluation trenches and was positioned to intercept a right-angled geophysical anomaly of possible archaeological origin (Fig. 1). A corresponding ditch was duly exposed in trench 349 (Fig. 4; Pl. 6).

- 4.8.2 A sondage was excavated across the north-east to south-west aligned portion of the ditch. Numbered 34908, the feature was 2.3 m wide by at least 0.45 m deep—excavation of the feature could not be completed due to water ingress. A single fill of mid- to dark grey silty clay was recorded; this deposit returned an assemblage of later prehistoric pottery with some sherds conjoining to form most of the profile of a Scored ware bowl dating from the Middle–Late Iron Age. Eighty-one fragments of animal bone, including sheep/goat and pig, were also recovered from ditch 34908. This was the only evaluated feature to contain animal bone.
- 4.8.3 A possible north-west to south-east aligned return of the ditch was visible running along the south-western wall of the trench.
- 4.8.4 A pit located in the south-eastern corner of the trench was investigated. This had a diameter of approximately 1 m, although its far edge extended beyond the trench wall. The feature, numbered 34907, was 0.52 m deep, with a steep-sided, flat-bottomed profile. A single sherd of Middle–Late Iron Age pottery was recovered from its mid-brownish grey sandy silt fill.
- 4.8.5 A third feature was dug and recorded in trench 349. This lay on the northern edge of ditch 34908. Numbered 34904, it was sub-circular in plan, with a diameter of approximately 0.8 m. Excavation found it to be 0.25 m deep with an irregular, sloping base. No finds were recovered from its single fill of mid-reddish grey silty sand. Feature 34908 is thought to represent a tree throw or similar. Three other *maculae* were observed close by, but not investigated. These four features correspond with the position of a discrete geophysical anomaly of possible archaeological origin.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Introduction

- 5.1.1 The evaluation produced a small assemblage of finds, consisting largely of pottery; quantities by context are presented in Table 1. With the exception of one post-medieval pottery sherd, datable finds are all late prehistoric. Finds derived from contexts (subsoil layers and feature fills) in four of the trenches excavated (Trenches 341, 343, 347 and 349).

5.2 Pottery

- 5.2.1 Pottery provides the only dating evidence for the Site. The assemblage amounts to 208 sherds (6935 g), of which one sherd is post-medieval, and the remainder late prehistoric. The pottery was recovered from seven contexts across four trenches (one subsoil context and five features), and this includes one large group comprising approximately three-quarters of the entire assemblage (128 sherds from pit/ditch terminal 34706).
- 5.2.2 The condition of the assemblage is fair to good; there are several sets of conjoining sherds (on old breaks), and in general edges are relatively unabraded. Mean sherd weight is 33 g, suggesting that the larger context groups at least have not suffered from extensive reworking.

Iron Age

- 5.2.3 Three fabric types are represented here, and have been assigned to fabric codes following the University of Leicester fabric type series (eg, Marsden 1998; 2000; 2009): sandy fabrics, containing fine to medium quartz grains (fabric Q1); fabrics containing crushed igneous rock fragments (fabric R1); and fabrics containing a mixture of quartz grains and rock fragments (R2). The rocks are likely to be granodiorites from the Mountsorrel area, which outcrop to the south-east of the Site. Table 2 gives the breakdown of pottery by context.

- 5.2.4 Rim sherds present in subsoil 34701, and features 34706 and 34909, indicate a maximum of 12 vessels. The rims from 34701 and 34706 (in fabrics R1 and R2) appear to belong to convex or weakly shouldered vessels with thickened, sometimes flattened rims. Sherds from ditch 34908 (in fabric Q1) conjoin to form most of the profile of a convex bowl with inturned rim. The latter vessel is scored, and a significant proportion of other sherds are also scored. Bases are flat, and are pinched out at the circumference.
- 5.2.5 Based on the fabric types, vessel forms and the presence of scored wares, this small group can be dated to the Middle to Late Iron Age (5th or 4th century to 1st century BC). The fabric proportions (predominantly granitic rock-tempered with a small proportion of sandy wares) is similar to that encountered on other Iron Age sites in the Soar valley, such as Wanlip, Elms Farm, Humberstone and Hallam Fields, Birstall, and these sites also provide parallels for the vessel forms seen here (Marsden 1998; 2009), along with Enderby (Elsdon 2000).
- 5.2.6 The Iron Age pottery provides the dating evidence for pit/ditch terminal 34706 and ditch 34909. Pottery from other features (ditch 34107 and pit 34907) occurred in insufficient quantities to supply a firm date.

Post-medieval

- 5.2.7 One sherd of Midlands Purple ware, from a shallow, straight-sided dish, came from furrow 34304 in Trench 343.

5.3 Animal bone

- 5.3.1 Animal bone totalling 81 fragments was recovered from one context: the secondary fill of ditch 34908. This group is fragmentary (including both old and new breaks), but otherwise is in reasonably good condition. Species represented include pig (mandible), sheep/goat, including immature individuals (teeth, horn core, radius, metacarpal) and cattle (vertebra and humerus).

5.4 Other finds

- 5.4.1 A tiny scrap of metal (17 x 2 x 0.5 mm), probably iron, was retrieved from a sieved soil sample taken from the lower fill of pit/ditch terminal 34706. This is of unknown function, but is presumed to be of Iron Age date on the basis of the pottery from this feature, although the intrusion of such a small scrap (possibly during the process of excavation) cannot be entirely ruled out.
- 5.4.2 A piece of unworked sedimentary stone appears to have been burnt.

Table 1: All finds by context (number/weight in grammes)

Context	Feature	Animal Bone	Pottery	Other Finds
34109	Ditch 34107		3/22	
34305	Furrow 34304		1/52	
34701	Subsoil		38/1246	
34702	Subsoil		13/400	
34707	Pit/ ditch terminal 34706		128/4839	
34906	Pit 34906		1/7	
34907	Ditch 34908	54/629	22/321	1 stone
34909	Ditch 34908	27/39	2/48	
<i>Total</i>		<i>81/668</i>	<i>208/6935</i>	

Table 2: Pottery by context

Context	Feature	Ware type	Date	No.	Wt. (g)	Additional Comments
34109	Ditch 34107	Rock-tempered ware	MLIA	3	22	
34305	Furrow 34304	Midlands Purple ware	PMED	1	52	Straight-sided dish; internal glaze splash
34702	Subsoil	Rock-tempered ware	MLIA	13	400	
34701	Subsoil	Rock-tempered ware	MLIA	38	1246	
34707	Pit/ditch terminal 34706	Sandy/rock-tempered ware	MLIA	45	1162	rims from max 2 vessels (weakly shouldered with thickened rims); some sherds scored
34707	Pit/ditch terminal 34706	Rock-tempered ware	MLIA	83	3677	rims from max 8 vessels (convex or weakly shouldered with thickened, slightly flattened rims); some sherds scored
34906	Pit 34907	Sandy ware	MLIA	1	7	
34909	Ditch 34908	Rock-tempered ware	MLIA	7	38	
34909	Ditch 34908	Sandy ware	MLIA	17	331	3 sherds conjoin to form near-complete profile, convex bowl with inturned, simple rim, scored (cross-hatched)

6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 A total of seven bulk samples were taken from pits, postholes, a ditch and a possible tree-throw, and were processed for the recovery and assessment of environmental remains. The size of the samples varied between 2 litres and 40 litres, with an average of approximately 18 litres.

6.1.2 The bulk samples break down into the following phase groups:

Table 3: Sample provenance summary

Area	No of samples	Volume (litres)	Feature types
Tr 346	2	12	Postholes
Tr 347	2	60	Pits
Tr 349	3	54	Pit, ditch, tree-throw
Totals	7	126	

6.2 Aims and methods

6.2.1 The samples were taken in order to evaluate the quality of plant remains preserved at the Site and provide archaeobotanical data for wider research frameworks.

6.2.2 The bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2 mm and 1 mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned using a stereo incident light microscopy at magnifications of up to x40 using a Leica MS5 microscope for the identification of environmental remains. Different bioturbation indicators were considered, including the percentage of roots, the abundance of modern seeds and

the presence of mycorrhizal fungi sclerotia (eg, *Cenococcum geophilum*) and animal remains which would not be preserved unless anoxic conditions were detected, such as earthworm eggs and insects. The preservation and nature of the charred plant and wood charcoal remains, as well as the presence/absence of other environmental remains such as molluscs, animal bone and insects (if anoxic conditions for their preservation are present), is recorded in Table 4.

- 6.2.3 Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997) for wild plants, and traditional nomenclature, as provided by Zohary and Hopf (2000, Tables 3, page 28 and 5, page 65), for cereals. Abundance of remains is qualitatively quantified (A*** = exceptional, A** = 100+, A* = 30-99, A = >10, B = 9-5, C = <5) as an estimation of the minimum number of individuals and not the number of remains per taxa. The results have been summarised in the ArboDat database (Kreuz *et al.* 2002).

6.3 Results

- 6.3.1 Environmental material was restricted to charred plant remains and wood charcoal fragments. Some insects were identified but considered intrusive due to the lack of conditions which would allow for the preservation of insects. The fragment of iron from feature 34706 was recovered in one of the flots.

Charred plant remains

- 6.3.2 The flots were generally small and, in many instances, there were high numbers of roots and modern seeds that may be indicative of stratigraphic movement and the possibility of contamination by later intrusive elements. Charred material was recovered in varying degrees of preservation.
- 6.3.3 A well-preserved assemblage composed mostly of cereal grains, dominated by hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare* subsp. *vulgare*) grains with some naked wheat (*Triticum aestivum/turgidum*) and a possible oat (*Avena* sp.) grain has been recovered from a posthole 34604 in Trench 346. Other posthole 34606 in the same trench has not provided any identifiable plant material but this might be a sampling bias (sample volume was 2 l.). The absence of bioturbation proxies suggests this rich assemblage is probably not intrusive despite its relatively good preservation.
- 6.3.4 The assemblages from Trench 347 are poorly preserved and restricted to a few wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains and chaff (glume bases), and a few possible weed (Chenopodiaceae, Poaceae) seeds.
- 6.3.5 The ditch 34908 in Trench 349 has provided a poor assemblage of charred plant remains, with a naked wheat (*Triticum aestivum/turgidum*) rachis segment and a legume (Viciaeae) seed. The good preservation of the cereal chaff is suggestive of intrusion. No plant remains have been recovered from the possible tree-throw 34904.

Wood charcoal

- 6.3.6 Wood charcoal fragments from mature wood were noted from the flots of the bulk samples in very small amounts.

6.4 Discussion and further potential

Charred plant remains

- 6.4.1 The charred plant assemblages recovered so far require no further analysis. Most of the assemblages have little archaeobotanical potential. However, the assemblage from 34604

suggests the existence of crop processing activities in the area, characteristic of a domestic settlement which has so far not been identified. The absence of any by-products such as chaff or weed seeds in this assemblage suggest this might be a stored product. The presence of naked wheat and a possible domestic oat (cf. *Avena* sp.) grain suggests this activity might be early medieval or later in date.

- 6.4.2 The remainder of the assemblages are consistent with an Iron Age chronology, as suggested by the pottery, but they are so restricted that little meaningful information can be obtained from them, other than to confirm cereal (possibly hulled wheat) cultivation in the period.

Wood charcoal

- 6.4.3 The wood charcoal has no potential for further analysis.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1 General

- 7.1.1 The results from the 2017 evaluation trenching on the A6 Kegworth bypass build on the results of the previous geophysical and trial trench investigations, and have provided further information on the extent and character of its archaeological landscape.
- 7.1.2 A dispersed array of ditched boundaries and pit-like features has been found, extending along a 300 m-length of the proposed bypass route. The remains possibly represent an enclosure or portion of field system dating to the Middle–Late Iron Age (5th/4th century–1st century BC). Three foci may be discerned on the Site: firstly, around trench 341, then approximately 165 m to the east around trench 20, and finally over 50 m to the east again, around trenches 347 and 348. Due to the patchiness of the geophysical response and the relatively large distances between the confirmed archaeological remains, no overall pattern or grand organisational scheme can be discerned in the remains, which currently present as a somewhat piecemeal scatter.
- 7.1.3 The Site lies within the East Midlands claylands, which have been found to contain extensive remnants of Iron Age enclosure and settlement (Clay 2002; Willis 2006). The remains from the current Site add to the local evidence for such activity with perhaps eight Iron Age enclosures or fragments of field system already identified within the wider East Midlands Gateway development area (Wessex Archaeology 2015 and 2016b). One of these, (corresponding with ‘Areas 6 and 27’ in the vicinity of King Street Plantation, NGR 446860 327170) occupies a similar topographic position to the remains on the current Site, which appear focussed on a low plateau. This would suggest that the efficient drainage was a concern, with activity here perhaps intensifying in the winter months, when lower-lying areas, particularly on the floor of the Trent Valley, may have been too wet for occupation.
- 7.1.4 The remains on the current Site also share a typical characteristic of the other East Midlands Gateway Iron Age sites, in that there is little or no indication of earlier activity, and no evidence of continuity into the Romano-British period. These were not long-lived sites. The caveat that this interim interpretation is based on largely negative dating evidence and the very limited glimpse of the ancient land surface offered by the narrow evaluation trenches must be borne in mind, however.
- 7.1.5 The excavated remains in trench 341 appear to represent a continuation of features exposed and recorded during archaeological mitigation works related to the construction of the photovoltaic solar array located in the south-western corner of the field that the Site is

contained within (Richard Clark, pers. comm.). The edge of the solar array lays some 20 m to the south of trench 341.

- 7.1.6 There is no indication that the Site is of any special palaeoenvironmental significance. One feature contained a well-preserved assemblage composed mostly of cereal grains. The feature is undated, however (although it seemingly post-dates the Site's Iron Age phase), and its significance is uncertain. The archaeobotanical value of the confirmed Iron Age deposits does not extend beyond confirming cereal cultivation during the period.
- 7.1.7 The soils within this part of the Site appear less receptive to geophysical survey than other parts of the wider East Midlands Gateway development area, where a generally high degree of concordance has been noted between the magnetometer data and the below-ground archaeology (Wessex Archaeology 2015 and 2016b).

7.2 Conclusions

- 7.2.1 The evaluation trenching has largely succeeded in meeting its aims and objectives. The form, character and extent of the archaeology within the proposed development area are now better understood. The date of the remains has been confirmed or established so far as the presence of datable artefacts allows, although their general paucity means it has not been possible to establish a definitive chronology. Nevertheless, the principal archaeological period represented within the Site has been determined. The conclusions of the 2014 evaluation have been generally supported.
- 7.2.2 Overall, the results are of sufficient quality to enable an informed mitigation strategy to be drawn up if required. This will set out how the effects of the scheme on the archaeological resource should be managed. The details of this will be agreed between the client and Historic and Natural Environment Team of Leicestershire County Council. Further method statements/WSIs will set out the aims, scope and methodology of future work.

8 STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

- 8.1.1 It is recommended that the project archive resulting from the excavation be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service. The Council has agreed in principle to accept the project archive on completion of the project, under the accession code X.A168.2013. Deposition of any finds with the Museum will only be carried out with the full agreement of the landowner.

8.2 Preparation of archive

- 8.2.1 The complete site archive, which will include paper records, photographic records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Leicestershire County Council Museums Service, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014c; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).
- 8.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code (102971/ X.A168.2013), and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:
- *one cardboard boxes or airtight plastic boxes of artefacts & ecofacts, ordered by material type;*
 - *one file/document case of paper records & A3/A4 graphics.*



8.3 Selection policy

- 8.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows the guidelines set out in Selection, Retention and Dispersal (SMA 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. In this instance, one fragment of burnt, unworked stone has been discarded. It is recommended that the remainder of the finds (Iron Age pottery and animal bone) are retained *in toto*.
- 8.3.2 The discard of environmental remains and samples follows nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1993; 1995; English Heritage 2011).

8.4 Security copy

- 8.4.1 In line with current best practice (eg, Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

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10 APPENDICES

10.1 Appendix 1: Context descriptions by trench

Trench 206	Trench Dimensions: 27.5 m x 1.8 m x 0.33 m					
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
20601	topsoil	Dark brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0–0.28
20602	Subsoil	Medium orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.28–0.33
20603	Natural	Dark orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.33+

Trench 341	Trench Dimensions: 22 m x 4.5 m x 0.34 m					
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34101	topsoil	Dark brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0–0.26
34102	Subsoil	Brown orange sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.26–0.34
34103	Natural	Rusty orange sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.34+
34105	Fill	Mid brown clayey sand	34104	Ditch	NW-SE Linear ditch, shallow.	0.34-0.64
34106	Fill	Orange brown sandy clay	34104	Ditch	NW-SE Linear ditch, shallow.	0.34-0.64
34108	Primary fill	Dark reddish brown silty sand, primary fill of ditch	34107	Ditch	N-S linear ditch. Steep sloped sides.	0.34-1.02
34109	Secondary fill	Dark brownish grey silty sand. Secondary fill of ditch	34107	Ditch	N-S linear ditch. Steep sloped sides.	0.34-0.68
34111	Tertiary fill	Very dark brownish grey sandy silt. Tertiary fill of pit	34110	Pit	Circular pit with concave profile. Moderate slopes, flat base. Cuts 34108, 34109	0.34-0.80
34112	Fill	Dark brownish grey silty sand. Contains irregular patches of natural.	34110	Pit	Circular pit with concave profile. Moderate slopes, flat base. Cuts 34108, 34109	0.34-0.76

Trench 342	Trench Dimensions: 25 m x 1.8 m x 0.34 m					
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34201	topsoil	Dark brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0-0.22
34202	Subsoil	Medium orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.22-.034
34203	Natural	Light orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.34+



Trench 343						
Trench Dimensions: 24.5 m x 1.8 m x 0.4 m						
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34301	topsoil	Light brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0–0.29
34302	Subsoil	Mid orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.29-0.4
34303	Natural	Light orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.40 +
34305	Secondary fill	Pale sandy brown clayish sand	34305	Furrow	NE-SW linear, concave profile. Shallow and flat	0.40-0.46

Trench 344						
Trench Dimensions: 24. m x 1.8 m x 0.36 m						
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34401	topsoil	Dark brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0–0.3
34402	Subsoil	Orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.3-0.36
34403	Natural	Light orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.36+
34405	Secondary fill	Pale sandy brown clayey sand.	34404	Furrow	NE-SW linear, concave profile. Shallow and flat. Possibly a furrow	0.36-0.4

Trench 345						
Trench Dimensions: 24.5 m x 1.8 m x 0.4 5m						
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34501	topsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0–0.32
34502	Subsoil	Dark orange brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.32-0.45
34503	Natural	Mid orange brown silty clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.45+

Trench 346						
Trench Dimensions: 25 m x 1.8 m x 0.52 m						
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34601	topsoil	Mid brown sandy clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0–0.35
34602	Subsoil	Mid orange brown silty clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.35-0.52
34603	Natural	Mid red brown silty clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.52+



34605	Fill	Brown Grey Black Mottle clayey sand. High amounts of charcoal, possibly from post burning.	34604	Posthole	Circular, concave profile. Steep slope, flat base.	0.52-0.63
34607	Fill	Grey brown clayey sand.	34606	Posthole	Circular, concave profile, shallow and flat.	0.52-0.56
34609	Secondary fill	Pale yellow brown clayey sand. Lower fill of ditch.	34608	Ditch	N-S linear ditch, concave profile. Moderate slope with irregular base.	0.52-0.80
34610	Secondary fill	Mid brown sandy clay with pale brown mottle. Upper fill of ditch.	34608	Ditch	N-S linear ditch, concave profile. Moderate slope with irregular base.	0.80-1.10

Trench 347						
Trench Dimensions: 24.5 m x 1.8 m x 0.6 m						
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34701	topsoil	Dark brown silty clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0-0.37
34702	Subsoil	Mid brown silty clay.	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.37-0.6
34703	Natural	Mid orange brown sandy clay.	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.60+
34705	Secondary fill	Dark orange brown sandy clay.	34704	Pit/ditch terminal	Sub oval pit. Concave profile with gradual slopes.	0.60-0.80
34707	Fill	Dark orange brown clayey sand.	34706	Pit/ditch terminal	Sub oval pit. Concave profile with gradual slopes.	0.40-0.65
34708	Fill	Mid orange brown clayey sand.	34706	Pit/ditch terminal	Sub oval pit. Concave profile with gradual slopes.	0.65-0.85

Trench 348						
Trench Dimensions: 27.5 m x 1.8 m x 0.4 5m						
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34801	topsoil	Dark brown silty clay.	N/A	N/A	N/A	0-0.31
34802	Subsoil	Mid orange brown silty clay.	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.31-0.45
34803	Natural	Mid red brown silty clay.	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.45+
34805	Secondary fill	Mid reddish brown silty sand with greyish mottling.	34804	Pit/ditch terminal	E-W sub circular ditch terminus. Concave profile with steep slope	0.45-0.86

Trench 349						
Trench Dimensions: 24 m x 1.8 m x 0.6 m						
Deposit	Deposit Category	Deposit Descript.	In Cut	Cut Category	Cut Description	Depth (m)
34901	topsoil	Dark brown silty clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0-0.43
34902	Subsoil	Mid orange brown silty clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.43-0.6



34903	Natural	Red brown silty clay	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.60+
34905	Secondary fill	Mid reddish grey silty sand.	34904	Tree throw	Irregular shape and profile.	0.60-0.85
34906	Fill	Mid brownish grey sandy silt, moderately compact.	34907	Pit	Oval, concave profile with steep side slopes.	0.60-1.12
34909	Secondary fill	Mid to dark grey silty clay.	34908	Ditch	NE-SW sub linear ditch, convex profile with steep sides.	0.60-1.12

10.2 Appendix 2: OASIS form

OASIS ID: wessexar1-280105

Project details

Project name	East Midlands Gateway: Kegworth Bypass Leicestershire. Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology carried out a programme of archaeological evaluation on land to the south of Kegworth as part of the proposed A6 Kegworth bypass road scheme, which forms part of the East Midlands Gateway strategic rail freight interchange development. Ten trenches measuring between 25 m and 30 m in length were excavated along a 400 m-long section of the proposed road scheme corridor. The trenches focussed on an area of Iron Age features discovered during earlier geophysical survey and trial trenching. Five of the ten trenches were archaeologically blank; three trenches encountered ditched boundaries and pit-like maculae containing Middle-Late Iron Age pottery, and two trenches contained artefactually sterile features. The confirmed archaeological features were found scattered along a 300 m-length of the proposed bypass route, seemingly with three separate foci. The results may represent the remains of an enclosure or portion of field system dating to the Middle-Late Iron Age. The Site lies within the East Midlands claylands, which have been found to contain extensive remnants of Iron Age enclosure and settlement, with the current remains adding to the local evidence for such activity. The local soils do not appear particularly receptive to geophysical survey: there was a generally low degree of concordance between the magnetometer data and the below-ground archaeology as revealed in the trenches.
Project dates	Start: 20-02-2017 End: 01-03-2017
Previous/future work	Yes / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	102971 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	TR050002 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Monument type	PIT Middle Iron Age
Monument type	DITCH Middle Iron Age
Significant Finds	POT Middle Iron Age
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Extensive green field commercial development (e.g. shopping centre, business park, science park, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location



Country	England
Site location	LEICESTERSHIRE NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE KEGWORTH East Midlands Gateway: Kegworth Bypass
Postcode	DE74 2HT
Study area	3.65 Hectares
Site coordinates	SK 481 260 52.829046839408 -1.286013154161 52 49 44 N 001 17 09 W Line
Site coordinates	SK 484 259 52.828120989777 -1.281575224482 52 49 41 N 001 16 53 W Line
Height OD / Depth	Min: 65.35m Max: 72.77m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	with advice from County Archaeologist
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	Andrew Norton
Project supervisor	Stuart Pierson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Roxhill (Kegworth) Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museums Service
Physical Archive ID	X.A168.2013
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museums Service
Digital Archive ID	X.A168.2013
Digital Contents	"Stratigraphic", "Survey"
Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography"
Paper Archive recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museums Service
Paper Archive ID	X.A168.2013
Paper Contents	"Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Plan", "Section"

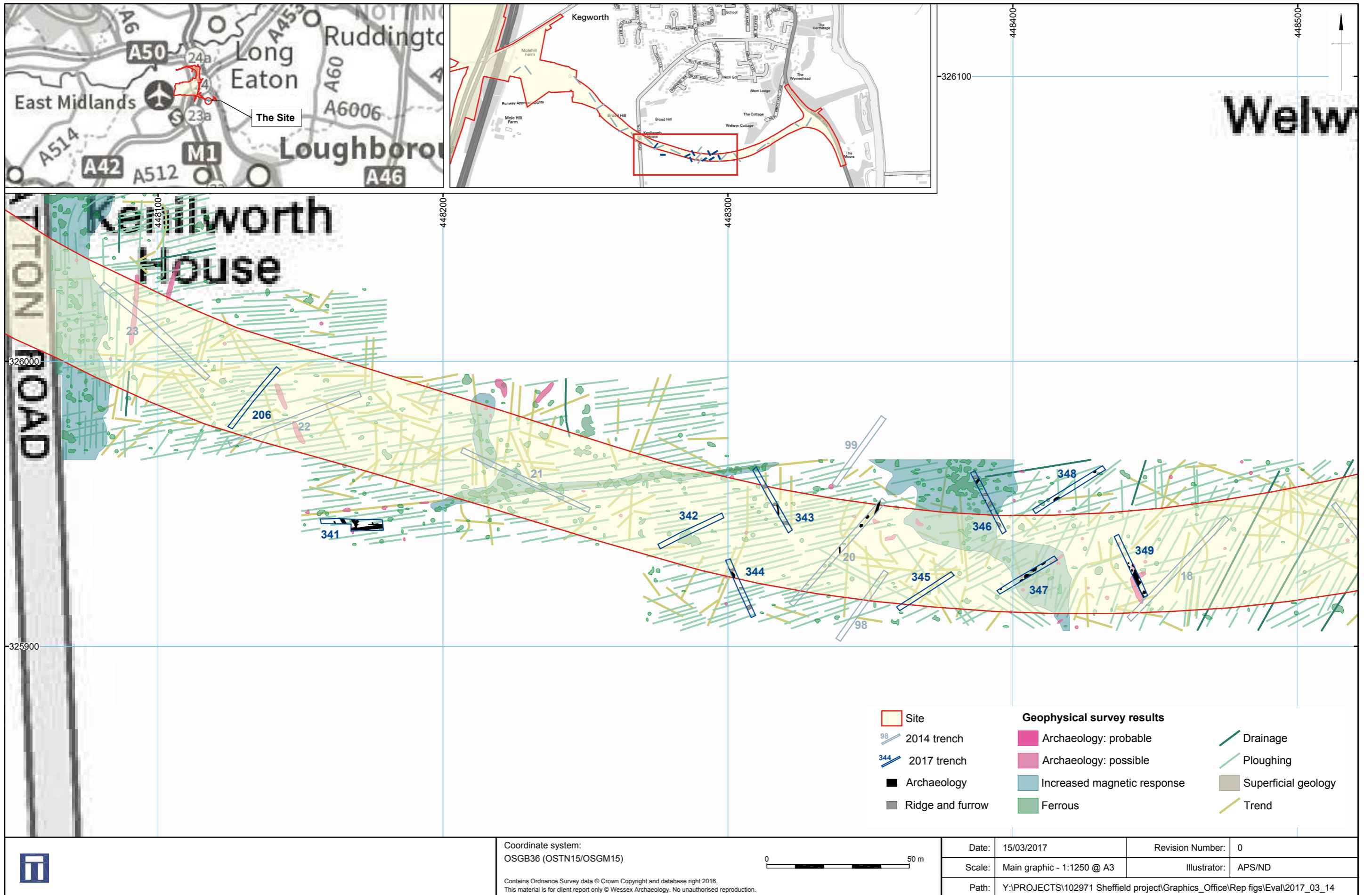
Project bibliography

1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	East Midlands Gateway: Kegworth Bypass, Leicestershire. Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Daniel, P. and Pierson, S.

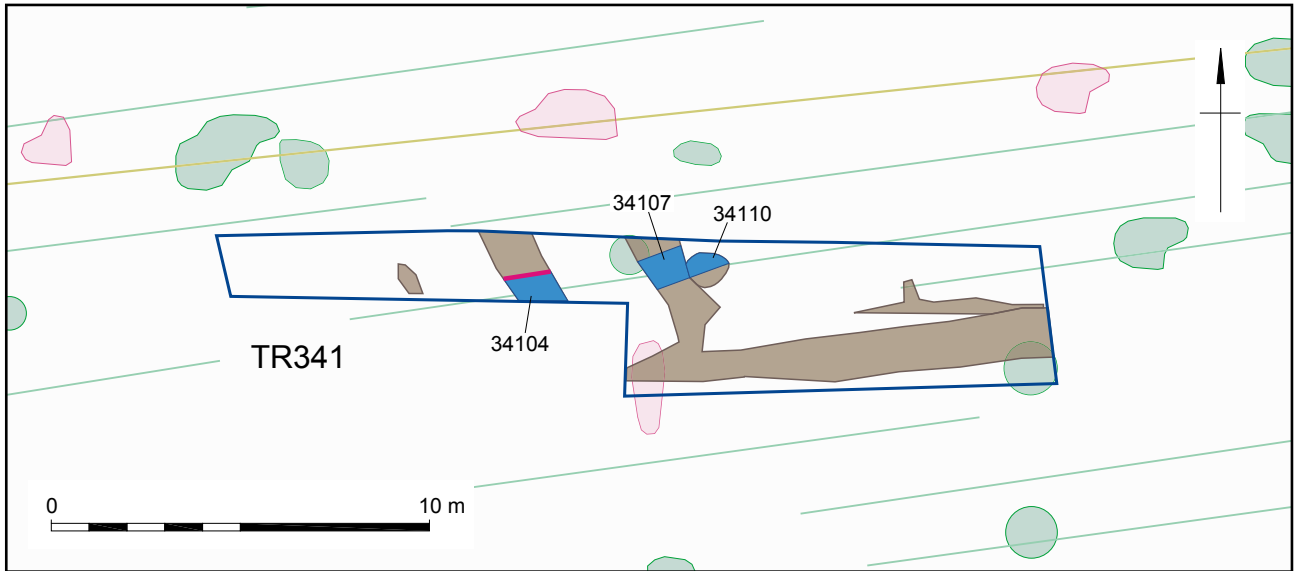


Other bibliographic details	102971
Date	2017
Issuer or publisher	Wessex Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Sheffield
Description	c. 30 page A4 comb-bound report with colour plates and figures
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Entered by	Patrick Daniel (p.daniel@wessexarch.co.uk)
Entered on	22 March 2017



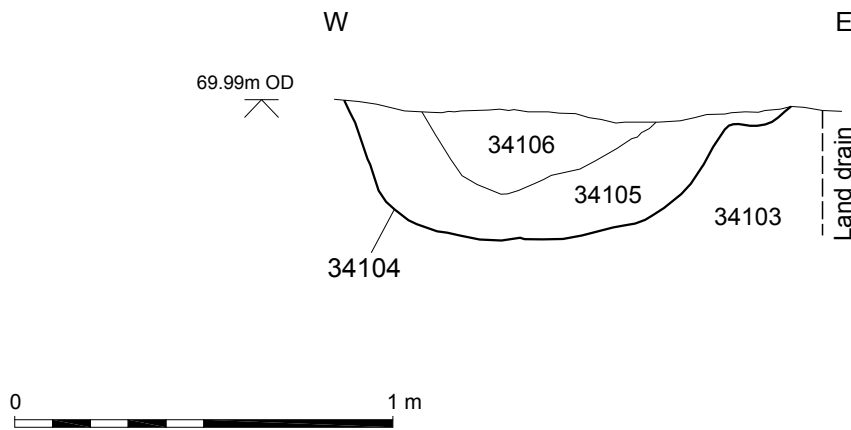
Location of Site

Figure 1



- | | | |
|--------------|-----------------------------------|---------------------|
| Trench | Geophysical survey results | Drainage |
| Archaeology | Archaeology: probable | Ploughing |
| Slot | Archaeology: possible | Superficial geology |
| Section line | Increased magnetic response | Trend |
| | Ferrous | |

South facing section of ditch 34104



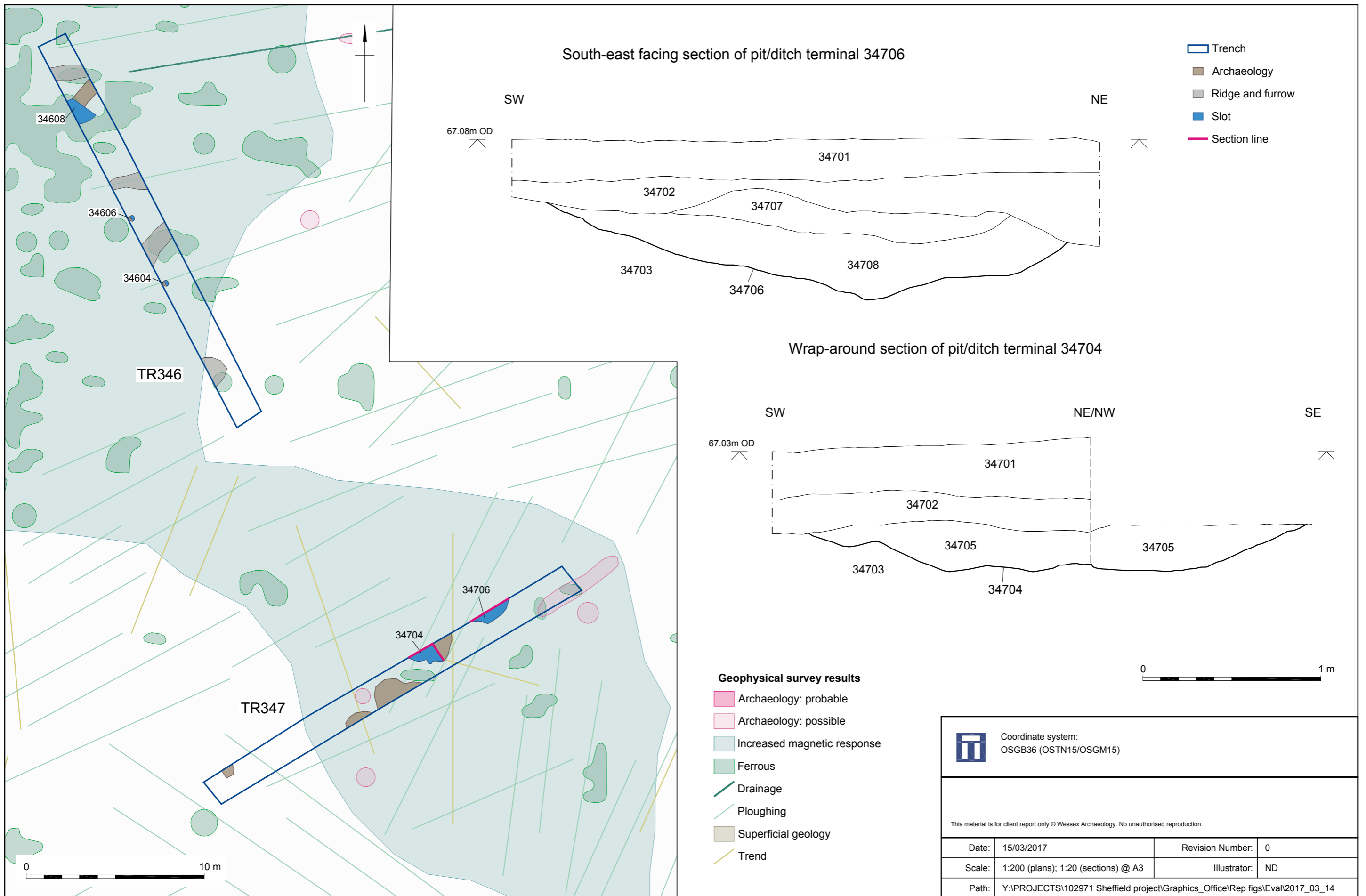
Coordinate system:
OSGB36
(OSTN15/OSGM15)

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Date:	15/03/2017	Revision Number:	0
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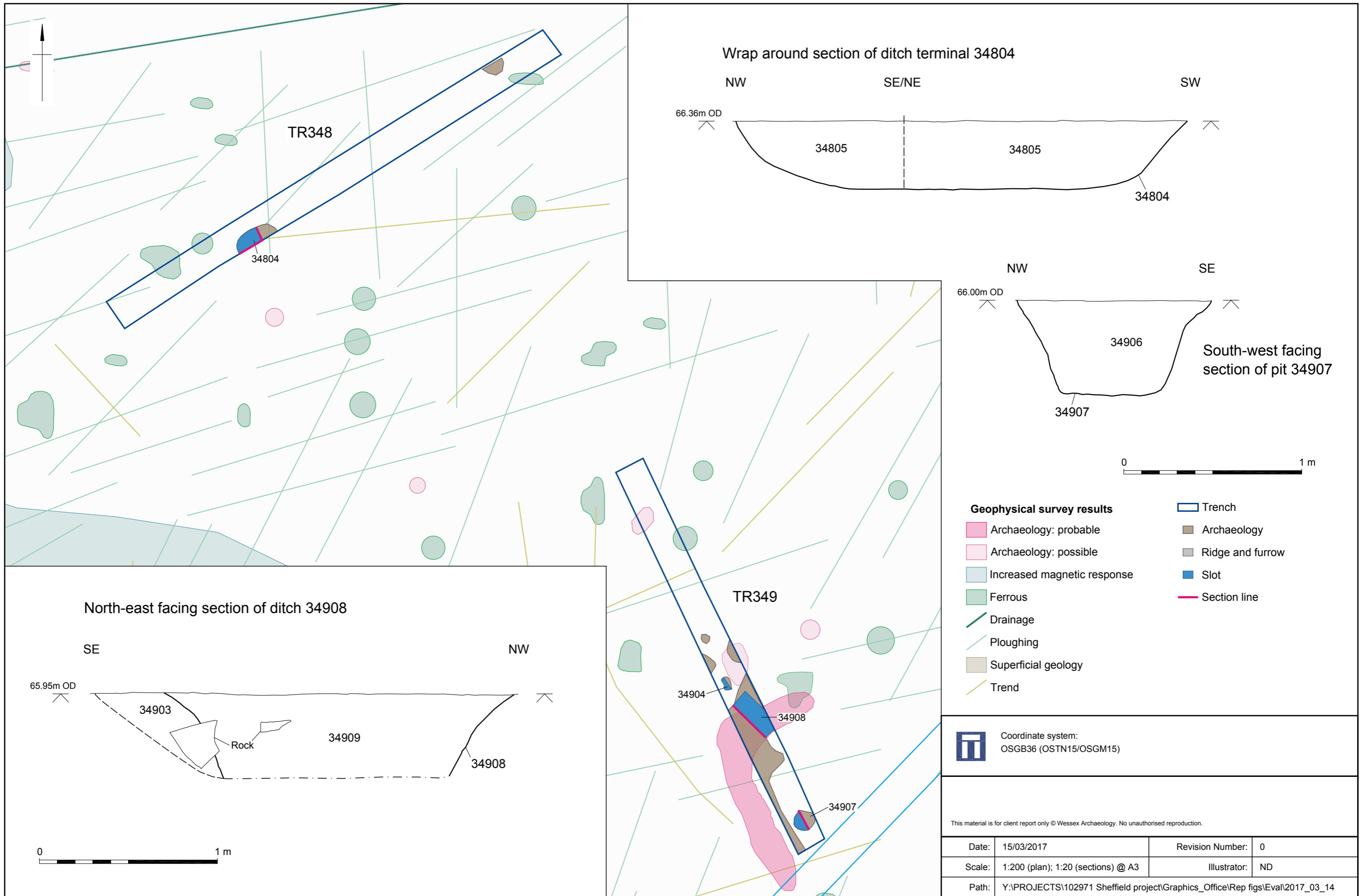
Trench 341: plan and section

Figure 2



Trenches 346 and 347: plans and sections

Figure 3



Trenches 348 and 349: plans and sections

Figure 4



Plate 1: Typical soil profile



Plate 2: Ditch 34107 and feature 34110, north-facing section



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Plate 3: Feature 34608, north-east facing section



Plate 4: Posthole 34604, north-east facing section

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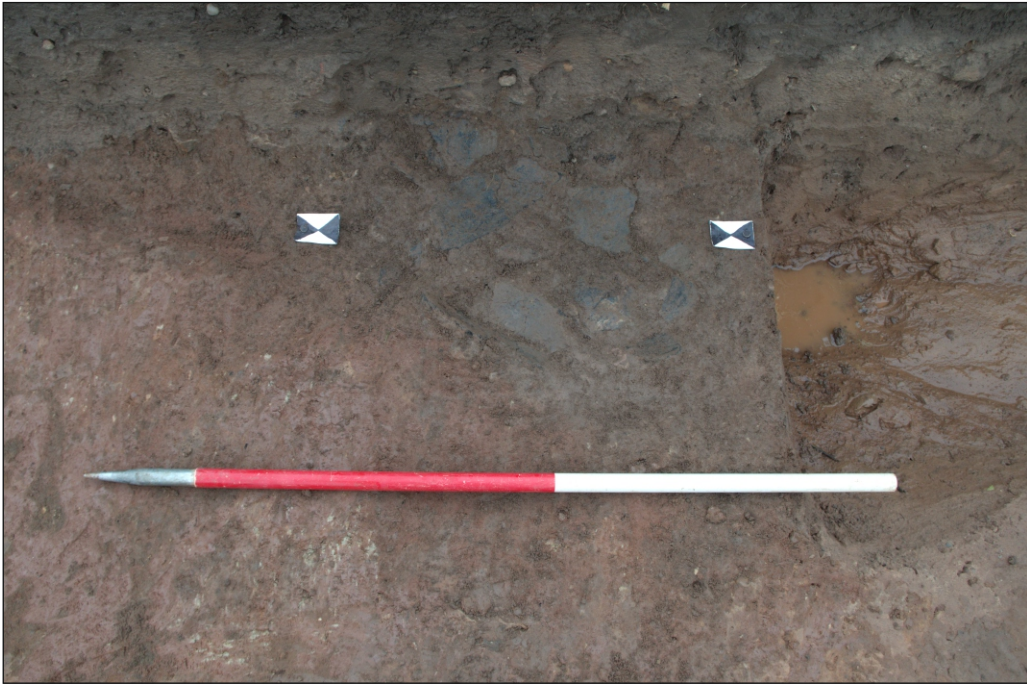



Plate 5: Pottery on surface of pit/ditch terminal 34706



Plate 6: Trench 349 from the north-west, ditch 34908 visible at far end

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