

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Amber Valley Crematorium, Derby Road,
Alfreton, Derbyshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by David Platt

Site Code: DRA11/114

(SK 4057 5425)

**Amber Valley Crematorium, Derby Road,
Alfreton, Derbyshire**

An Archaeological Evaluation

For Memoria Ltd

by David Platt

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code DRA 11/114

January 2014

Summary

Site name: Amber Valley Crematorium, Derby Road, Alfreton, Derbyshire

Grid reference: SK 4057 5425

Site activity: Archaeological evaluation

Date and duration of project: 13-15th January 2014

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: David Platt

Site code: DRA11/114

Area of site: c. 0.8ha evaluated within overall site area of c. 3ha

Summary of results: A single gully of post-medieval date was found. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Derby Museum and Art Gallery in due course

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 31.01.14 Steve Preston ✓ 24.01.14

Amber Valley Crematorium, Derby Road, Alfreton, Derbyshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by David Platt

Report 11/114

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Derby Road, Alfreton, Derbyshire (SK4057 5425) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Michael Hackney on behalf of Memoria Ltd, The Pool House, Bicester Road, Stratton Audley, Oxfordshire OX27 9BS.

Planning permission (app AVA/2011/1199) has been gained from Amber Valley District Council for the site to be developed as a crematorium and memorial park. The consent has been gained on appeal (APP/M1005/A/12/2188880) with a condition (16) which requires a programme of archaeological works to establish extent of any existing archaeological deposits. It is possible that the development area may contain archaeological deposits and in order to provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site so as to mitigate the effects of the development, a field evaluation by way of machine trenching has been requested.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Steve Baker, Derby and Derbyshire Development Control Archaeologist, of Derbyshire County Council, the archaeological adviser to Amber Valley District Council. The fieldwork was undertaken by David Platt and Lizzi Lewins on 13-15th January 2014 and the site code is DRA11/114. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Derby Museum and Art Gallery in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on a roughly rectangular land parcel, currently used as a paddock, located on the east side of the B6179 (Derby Road) and *c.*500m south-west of the centre of Alfreton. The underlying geology is recorded as Carboniferous mudstone of marine band clay (BGS 1993) and this was observed in the trenches as a pale yellowish grey clay with occasional mudstone inclusions. The overall site area is *c.* 3ha (Fig. 2). The site is on a slope rising from 117m above Ordnance Datum at its western extent, to 138m in the east with a slight plateau in

the south-east corner. The eastern portion of the site has been open cast mined for coal and subsequently reinstated.

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of the site has been considered in a desk-based assessment (Mundin 2011). In summary, the archaeology of the area has been little investigated, however field survey (fieldwalking) in the southern part of the Amber Valley has, in part, enabled the apparent paucity of finds or sites recorded in the HER to be recognized as more likely to result from a lack of opportunity for systematic study than a real absence, as a range of prehistoric, Roman and medieval finds and sites have been recorded (Cowell 1981). The site itself has also been subject to geophysical survey (Marsh 2012) which revealed few, if any, anomalies of archaeological interest.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project were;

To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site.

To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present.

It was proposed to dig 6 trenches all 1.6m wide and 25m long. The trenches were targeted to examine the footprints of the proposed buildings and burial grounds as well as the anomalies identified via geophysics but avoiding the area that has been mined. A contingency of 15m length of trench was included within the proposal should this be required to clarify the initial findings. This was done using a 360° machine under constant archaeological supervision. All spoil heaps were monitored for finds.

Results

All trenches were dug in their intended locations (Fig. 3; Pl. 6) and were eventually 1.9m wide. They ranged in length from 23m to 26m and in depth from 0.42m to 0.60m. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Fig. 4; Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned SW–NE and was 26m long and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.28m of mid brown grey silty clay subsoil overlying natural geology. A gully (1) was recorded which was 0.39m wide and 0.12m deep and filled with a single fill (52) which consisted of a dark brown grey silty clay with occasional small stone inclusions (Pl. 2) This contained two sherds of late post-medieval pottery (both glazed), c.30 fragments of coal, a piece of coke, two fragments of clear window glass, three fragments of ceramic building material, three fragments of fired clay and one fragment of slag. A single piece of clay tobacco pipe stem was also recovered, the bore was 4/64ths which indicates a post medieval to modern date of c. 1782 – 1930.

Trench 2 (Pl. 3)

Trench 2 was aligned NW–SE and was 26m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.14m of topsoil and 0.28m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned nearly N–S and was 25m long and 0.56m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.19m of topsoil and 0.37m of subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned SSW–NNE and was 23m long and 0.45m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.25m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 5 (Pl. 4)

Trench 5 was aligned NW–SE and was 25m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil and 0.29m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Trench 6 (Pl. 5)

Trench 6 was aligned SSW–NNE and was 23m long and 0.60m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.30m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Finds

Pottery

Two sherds of late post-medieval pottery were recovered from the soil sample from gully 1 (deposit 52). One was a small sherd (2g) of brown-glazed red earthenware, the other was a minute sherd (<1g) of creamware with a blue glaze or transfer print.

Glass

Two fragments of clear window glass (4g) were recovered from gully 1 (52).

Clay Pipe

A single piece of clay pipe stem measuring 2.9cm in length and slightly ovoid in section was recovered from 1 (52). The bore was 4-64 which indicated a post medieval to modern date of 1782 – 1932.

Brick or tile and fired clay

Three fragments of fragmented ceramic building material and three fragments of non-descript fired clay were recovered from gully1 (52).

Other finds

Also from gully1 (52) were recovered c.30 fragments of coal, and a piece of coke.

Conclusion

Despite the archaeological potential of the site no archaeological features nor artefacts of archaeological interest were revealed. Of the possible features located in the geophysical survey one turned out to be a gully of post medieval date. A second linear anomaly located in the geophysical survey was not identified archaeologically. It is therefore concluded that the development site has no archaeological potential.

References

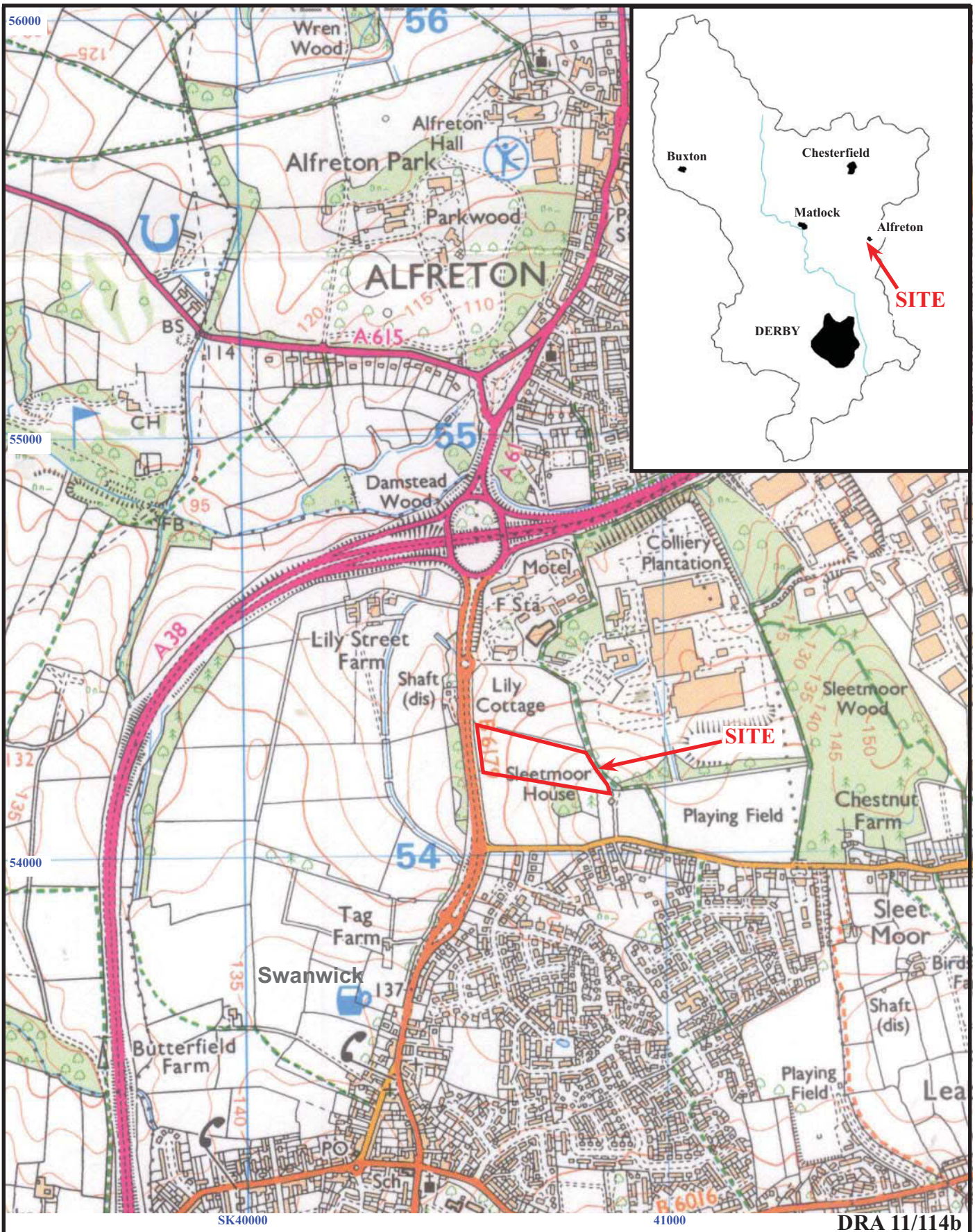
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- Mundin, A , 2011, 'Proposed Amber Valley Crematorium and Memorial Park, Derby Road, Alfreton, Derbyshire', Thames Valley Archaeological Services unpubl rep 11/114, Reading
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	26	1.9	0.48	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.48m subsoil; 0.48m+ natural geology. Gully 1 [Pls 1 and 2]
2	26	1.9	0.42	0–0.14m topsoil; 0.14-0.42m subsoil; 0.42m+ natural geology. [Pl. 3]
3	25	1.9	0.56	0–0.19m topsoil; 0.19-0.56m subsoil; 0.56m+ natural geology.
4	23	1.9	0.45	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.45m subsoil; 0.45m+ natural geology.
5	25	1.9	0.52	0–0.23m topsoil; 0.23-0.52m subsoil; 0.52m+ natural geology. [Pl. 4]
6	23	1.9	0.60	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.50m subsoil; 0.50m+ natural geology. [Pl. 5]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	1	52	Gully	Post Medieval	Pottery, coke, Clay Pipe

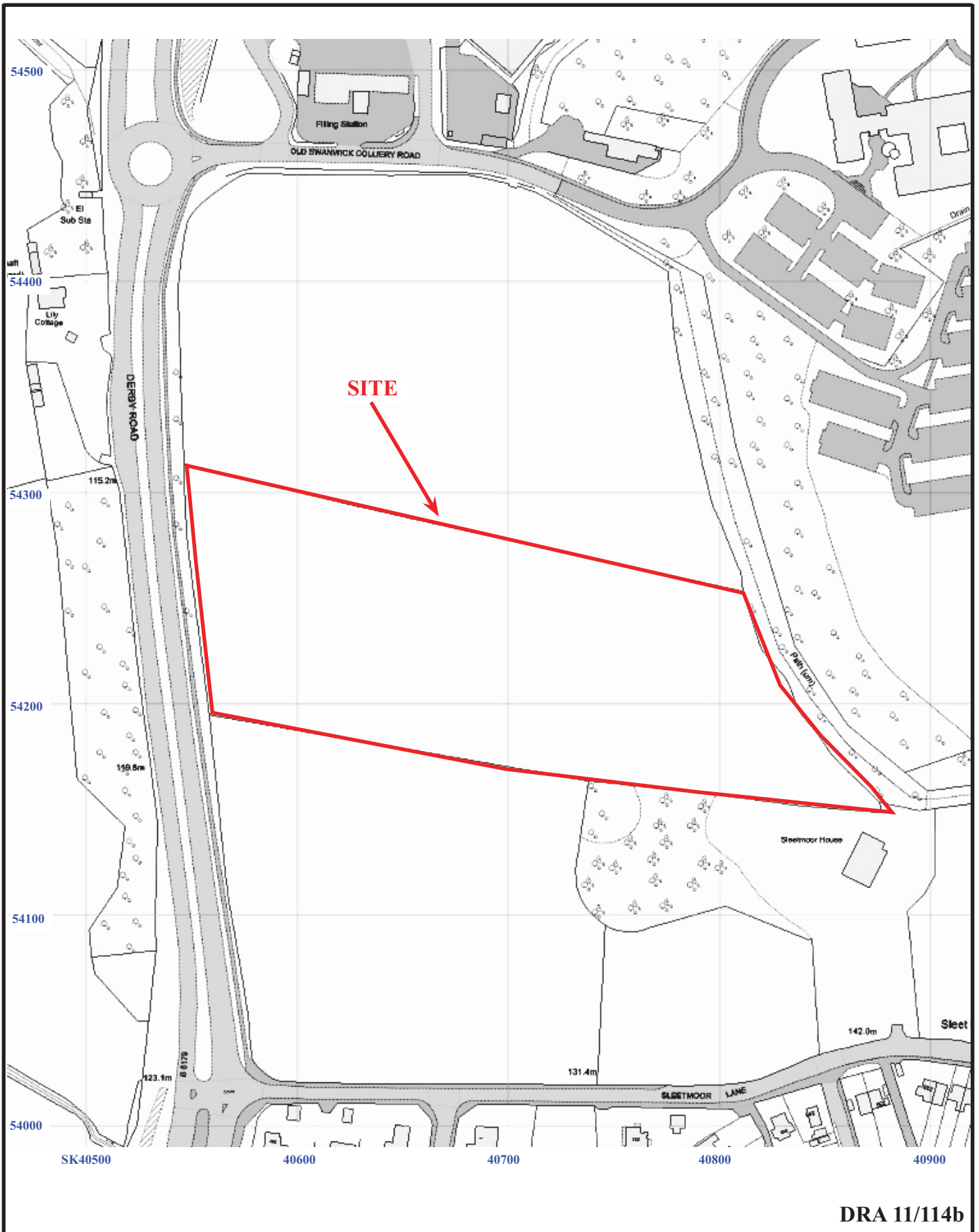


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Figure 1. Location of site within Alfreton and Derbyshire

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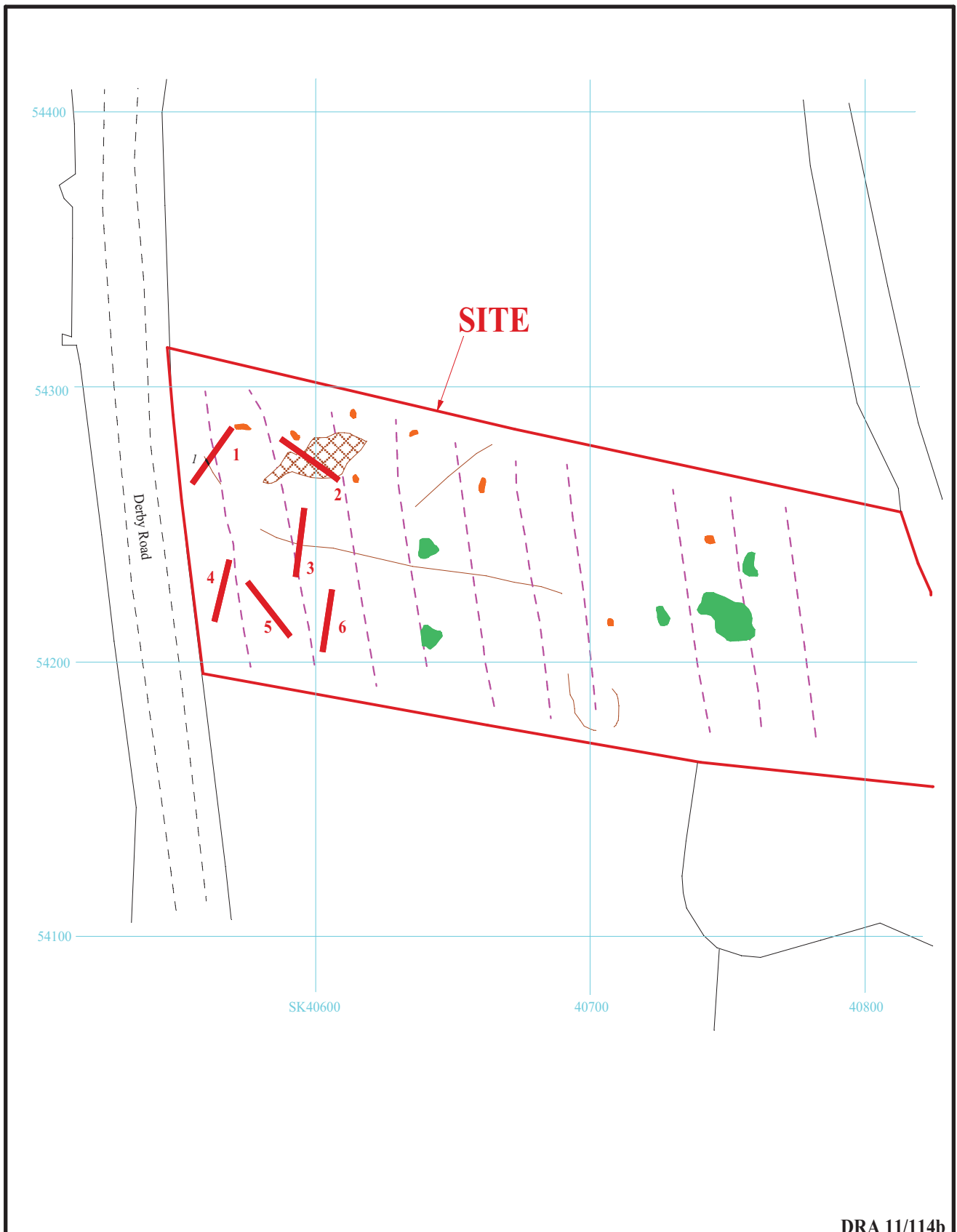


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Figure 2. Current site.

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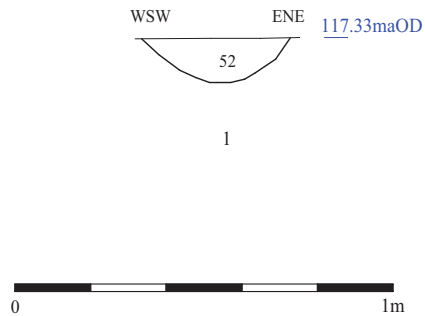
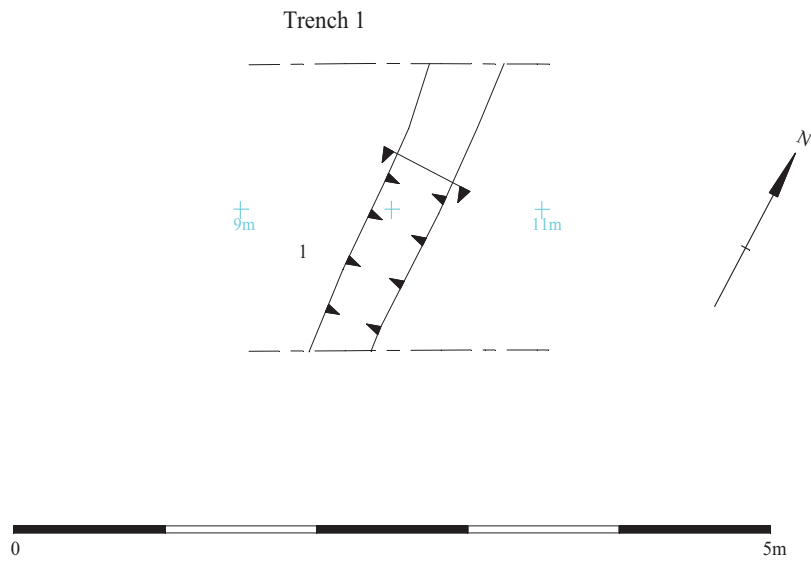
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Figure 3. Location of trenches in relation to geophysical anomalies.



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Figure 4. Detail from Trench 1.

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking north, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 1, gully 1, looking west, Scales: 0.5m and 0.1m.

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Plates 1 - 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 2, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 5, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m , vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 3 - 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 6, looking north west, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 6. General view of site looking north west

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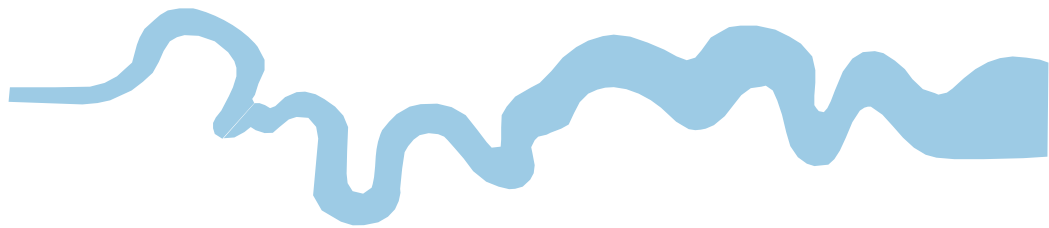
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Plates 5 - 6.**

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late -----	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle -----	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early -----	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





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