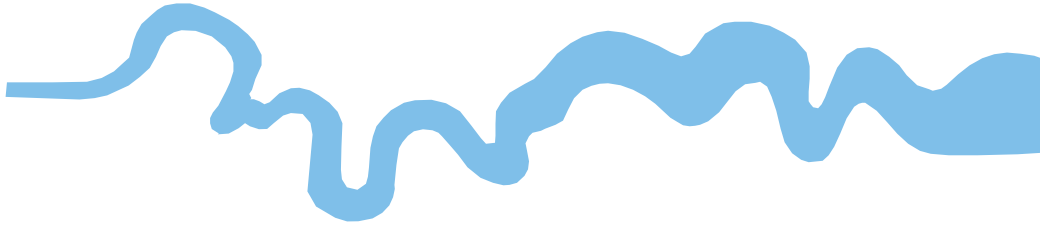


**T V A S**



**EAST MIDLANDS**

**Land off Mill Lane,  
Cottesmore, Rutland**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

**by Stacey Smith and Steve Ford**

**Site Code: MLC23/11**

**(SK 9024 1403)**

# **Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore, Rutland**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for William Davis Limited**

by Stacey Smith and Steve Ford  
TVAS East Midlands

Site Code MLC 23/11

**February 2023**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore, Rutland

**Grid reference:** SK 9024 1403

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 25th-26th January 2023

**Project coordinator:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Steve Ford

**Site code:** MLC 23/11

**Area of site:** 4.6ha

**Summary of results:** A single gully of Roman or possibly later date was identified in the south west corner of the proposal site. A few sherds of Roman or Medieval date were also found in root holes nearby in the same trench. Elsewhere on the main body of the proposal site, the trenching only revealed agricultural ridge and furrow and numerous stone land drains. A single struck flint along with a small number of sherds of late post-medieval 'china' were noted on some of the spoil heaps. On the basis of these results the majority site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at TVAS East Midlands, Wellingborough and will be deposited with Rutland Museum and in due course.

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Preston ✓ 22.02.23
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# Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore, Rutland An Archaeological Evaluation

by Stacey Smith and Steve Ford

**Report 23/11**

## **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at land at Mill Lane, Cottesmore, Rutland (SK 9024 1403) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Paul Gajos, Director of GHC Archaeology and Heritage Ltd, acting on behalf of William Davis Ltd at Forest Field, Head Office, Forest Rd, Loughborough LE11 3NS.

Outline planning permission for the residential development of the site is being sought from Rutland County Council. A programme of archaeological trial trenching has been requested in order to provide information on the archaeological potential of the site in order to inform the planning process. This is in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2021) and the Council's policies on archaeology. The work took place according to a written scheme of investigation, produced by GHC Archaeology and Heritage (GHC 2022), and approved by Ms Chloe Cronogue, Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, acting as adviser to Rutland Council.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Steve Ford and Stacey Smith, between 25th and 26th of January, 2023 and the site code is MLC 23/11. The archive is presently held at TVAS East Midlands, Wellingborough and will be deposited at the Rutland Museum and the Archaeology Data Service in due course.

## **Location, topography and geology**

The study site is located the north of the village of Cottesmore, Rutland (NGR SK 9024 1403) (Fig 1). It comprises an irregular plot of land of approximately 6.3ha, only 4.6ha of which is to be subject to development with possible impact to archaeological remains, as the remaining 1.7ha is to form open space which does not involve any significant ground work. The site comprises a pasture field to the east and a very small part of an arable field to the west. The site is accessed off Mill Lane to the south-west by a track, which separates the two fields. The site is bounded to the south by Mill Lane and residential properties, and on all other sides by agricultural fields. The topography of the site slopes slightly from an elevation of approximately 138m above

Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the west down to 135m aOD to the east. The underlying bedrock geology is recorded as oolitic limestone overlain by glacial till (BGS 1975).

## **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site was presented in an archaeological desk-based assessment (GHC 2021). In summary, no deposits of archaeological interest were recorded for the site itself but a handful of Neolithic artefacts have been found within 1km of the site. Previous archaeological fieldwork 70m to the south-east of the site at The Rookery uncovered a number of Roman ditches and pits dating to the 1st or 2nd century AD, as well as kiln furniture, indicating Roman settlement in the area and suggesting the presence of a pottery kiln. Cottesmore has Anglo-Saxon origins and is mentioned in Domesday Book of AD 1086 (Williams and Martin 2002, 783) as *Cotesmore*. Archaeological excavations at Lilac Farm, 500m south, revealed late Saxon ditches, pits and gullies as well as linear alignments of limestone, possibly representing the footings of timber-framed buildings. According to the desk-based assessment, the site was in agricultural use and has remained relatively unchanged.

A geophysical survey identified agricultural-origin anomalies (Fig.5) with earthworks identifiable as ridge and furrow cultivation crossing the site (Magnitude Survey 2021).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the evaluation was to identify and assess the significance of any archaeological remains within the site to allow informed recommendations on the potential impacts of the proposed development upon the archaeological resource and to enable a mitigation strategy to be produced. It was hoped the project could contribute to research priorities such as those outlined in the Historic England *Research Agenda* (HE 2017), and the regional archaeological research framework (Knight *et al.* 2012).

According to the agreed WSI (GHC 2022) the trenching aimed to achieve the following objectives:

- to determine the location, extent, date, character, condition and significance of any archaeological remains within the development site
- to excavate and record identified archaeological features and deposits to a level appropriate to their extent and significance
- to assess vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed remains
- to assess the impact of previous land use on the site
- to assess the potential for survival of environmental evidence
- to inform a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains

to undertake sufficient post-excavation assessment to confidently interpret identified archaeological features

to report the results of the evaluation and place them in their local and regional context; and

to compile and deposit a site archive.

It was proposed to excavate 15 trenches, each 30m long by 1.6-2m wide . A contingency for an additional 225m of trenching was included within the proposal should this be required to clarify the nature of the initial findings. Topsoil and any other overburden was to be removed by a machine fitted with a ditching bucket to expose archaeologically sensitive levels under constant archaeological supervision. Where archaeological features were present these were to be excavated or sampled by hand in to an agreed sampling fraction dependent on the nature and significance of the feature. This was to be undertaken without compromising the integrity any feature(s) which might warrant preservation *in situ* or might better be investigated in a subsequent phase of mitigation.

## **Results**

All 15 trenches were dug as intended (Fig. 2) and ranged from 29m-34.7m in length and in depth from 0.23-0.62m. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. Topsoil and subsoil were essentially the same across all the trenches, while the natural geology varied only slightly as described in more detail below. Stone land drains were encountered in almost all of the trenches.

### Trench 1

Trench 1 was orientated ENE–WSW, 31.6m long and 0.54m deep. The stratigraphy consisted on average of 0.27m of soft grey-brown sandy silt topsoil, and 0.21m of mid orange-brown sandy clay subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay. The trench contained intermittent ridges and furrows and 3 stone land drains but no archaeological finds or features.

### Trench 2 (Pl. 1)

Trench 2 was orientated close to north-south, 29m long and 0.51m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil, and 0.2m of subsoil, both as in Trench 1, overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay. The trench contained a stone land drain but no archaeological finds or features. No trace of a geophysical anomaly was observed.

### Trench 3

Trench 3 was orientated ENE–WSW, and was 31.9m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil, and 0.16m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay. The trench contained 2 stone land drains but contained no archaeological finds or features.

### Trench 4

Trench 4 was orientated close to north-south, and was 34.7m long and 0.4m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.23m of topsoil, and 0.09m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of yellow-brown sandy clay. The trench contained two stone land drains but no archaeological finds or features. No trace of a geophysical anomaly was observed.

### Trench 5

Trench 5 was orientated ENE–WSW, 32.7m long and 0.46m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of topsoil and 0.10m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of yellow-brown sandy clay. The trench contained intermittent ridges and furrows and a stone land drain but contained no archaeological finds or features.

### Trench 6 (Pl. 2)

Trench 6 was orientated close to north-south, 30m long and 0.5m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.2m of topsoil and 0.12m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of yellow-brown sandy clay with flint pieces and chalk flecks. A machine-dug geotechnical test pit was observed near the midpoint of the trench, but no archaeological finds or features.

### Trench 7

Trench 7 was orientated close to north-south, 32.2m long and 0.52m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.24m of topsoil and 0.12m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of yellow-brown sandy clay with grey sand lenses and inclusions of small flints and pebbles. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features but two stone land drains were noted.

### Trench 8

Trench 8 was orientated ENE–WSW, and was 30.9m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil, and 0.17m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay. The trench contained intermittent ridges and furrows but no archaeological finds or features.

#### Trench 9 (Pl. 3)

Trench 9 was orientated ENE–WSW, 32m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.27m of topsoil, and 0.14m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay with flint pieces and chalk flecks. The trench contained intermittent ridges and furrows and a stone land drain but no archaeological finds or features.

#### Trench 10

Trench 10 was orientated close to north-south, 31.7m long and 0.58m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.24m of topsoil, and 0.14m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay with flint pieces and chalk flecks.. The trench contained no archaeological features but one piece of possibly struck flint was recovered from the spoil heap.

#### Trench 11

Trench 11 was orientated NE–SW, and was 31.9m long and 0.62m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.3m of topsoil and 0.18m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features. No trace of a geophysical anomaly was observed.

#### Trench 12

Trench 12 was orientated ENE–WSW, 31.2m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.29m of topsoil, and 0.15m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay. Other than intermittent ridges and furrows there were no archaeological finds or features.

#### Trench 13 (Pl. 4)

Trench 13 was orientated NE–SW, and was 32m long and 0.55m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil, and 0.17m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of yellow-brown sandy clay. The trench contained no archaeological finds or features.

#### Trench 14 (Pl. 5)

Trench 14 was orientated ENE–WSW, 31m long and 0.42m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil, and 0.09m of subsoil overlying the natural geology of light orange-brown sandy clay. The trench contained two stone land drains but no archaeological finds or features.



### Trench 15 (Figs 2-4, Pls 6-8)

Trench 15 was the only trench located in the western field. It was orientated NE–SW, and was 31.2m long and 0.46m deep. The stratigraphy consisted on average of 0.24m of soft grey-brown sandy silt topsoil, and 0.14m of orange-brown sandy clay subsoil overlying the natural geology of yellow-brown sandy clay. The trench contained two possible features: a linear feature and curvilinear feature. The trench also contained two stone land drains.

Linear gully 1 was located 16.4m from the south-west end, aligned NW–SE and perhaps slightly curving. It was 0.35m wide and 0.35m deep and was filled with friable grey sandy clay (50) which contained one sherd of probable Roman pottery (Fig. 4, Pls 7-8). The curving feature was part of a root hole and contained 3 sherds of Roman or Medieval pottery.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery by Rebekah Pressler*

Pottery finds were collected from two contexts from the evaluation in total. The assemblage is characterised and assessed for potential for further analysis in the commentary below the table.

Trench	Cut/fill	Fabric Description	Qty	Wt (g)	Date/Period	Comment
15	1/50	Pinkish buff fine textured fabric, grey external surfaces	1	3	Roman?	
15	U/S roothole	Finer grey/brown micaceous fabric. Rare calcareous inclusions. Blackened or burnished surfaces	2	22	LIA/Rom or Saxon?	2 adjoining sherds
15	U/S roothole	Grey micaceous fabric with abundant quartz and haematite inclusions. Rare /occasional sandstone	2	27	Roman/Medieval?	Abraded. Wheel finished? Sooted
	Total		5	52		

Five sherds of pottery were noted from the two of the contexts within trench 15. The pottery was examined both visually and using a x20 hand lens. All of the pottery is either abraded or slightly abraded.

Three fabrics were observed in total amongst the assemblage. The first of the fabrics comprises a sherd in a buff oxidised fabric with external grey and internal orangeish pink surfaces. The sherd is not diagnostic, however it may be Roman in date.

The four remaining sherds derived from rooting disturbance in trench 15 adjacent to gully 1. The first of the fabrics comprises two adjoining sherds in a brown micaceous fabric with few other visible inclusions and blackened/burnished surfaces. The pottery is incised externally on one sherd and has the appearance a local variant of black surfaced ware (BSW); however it could also be potentially be middle or late Saxon in date. A further two abraded sherds in a wheel finished grey sandy fabric (possibly sherds deriving from a cooking vessel) with abundant quartz may be either Roman or medieval in date.

### *Fired clay*

Two small fragments of fired clay in a buff to orange fabric were noted from gully 1 (50).

### *Struck Flint* by Steve Ford

A single struck flint was recovered from the spoil heap of Trench 10. It was a small cortical flake with a cortical platform. As the natural till geology included flint fragments, it is possible this piece is not prehistoric but is an accidental by-product of Roman or medieval ploughing

## **Conclusion**

In conclusion the archaeological evaluation uncovered a single gully of Roman or later date. A small number of sherds of late post-medieval 'china' and occasional tile fragments were noted on some of the spoil heaps and a few extra sherds of Roman or medieval date came from a roothole next to the gully in trench 15. A linear geophysical anomaly that corresponded with a boundary on early Ordnance Survey maps was not represented by any below ground features, and presumably existed as a (short-lived?) hedge (Fig. 5). Agricultural ridge and furrow and stone land drains were noted. On the basis of these results the vast majority of the site is considered to have low archaeological potential.

## References

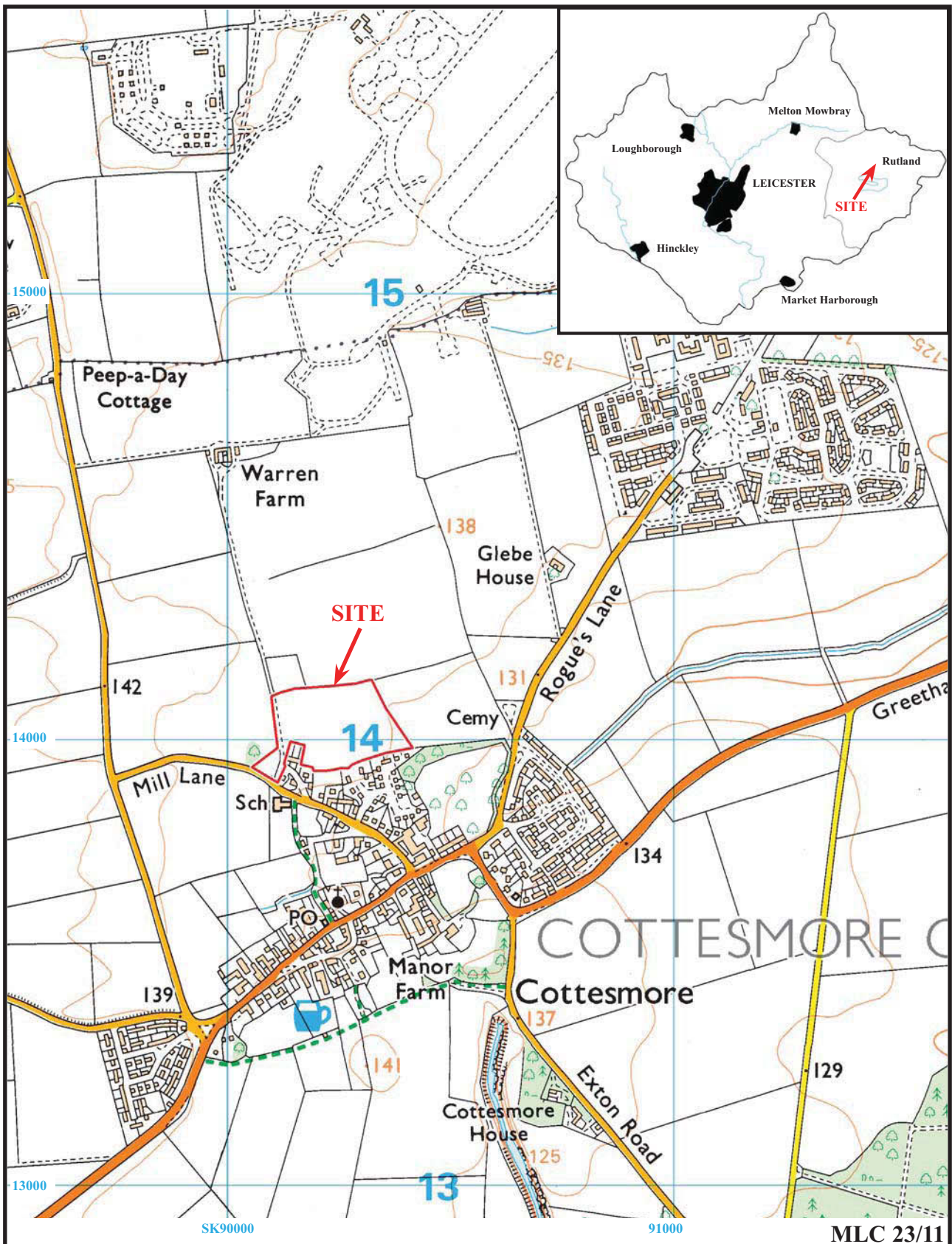
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## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	31.6	1.8	0.42-0.54	0-0.27m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.27m-0.48m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.48m+ light orange-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). Intermittent ridge and furrow and 3 stone land drains observed.
2	29	1.8	0.40-0.51	0-0.26m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.26m-0.46m friable mid orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.46m+ light orange-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). 1 stone land drain observed. <b>[Pl. 1]</b>
3	31.9	1.8	0.45-0.52	0-0.21m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.21m-0.37m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.37m+ light orange-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). 2 stone land drains observed.
4	34.7	1.8	0.28-0.40	0-0.23m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.23m-0.32m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.32m+ yellow-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). 2 stone land drains observed.
5	32.7	1.8	0.35-0.46	0-0.26m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.26m-0.36m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.36m+ yellow-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). Intermittent ridge and furrow and 1 stone land drain observed.
6	30	1.8	0.39-0.50	0-0.20m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.20m-0.32m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.32m+ yellow-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). 1 geotechnical test pit observed. <b>[Pl. 2]</b>
7	32.2	1.8	0.45-0.52	0-0.24m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.24m-0.36m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.36m+ yellow-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). 2 stone land drains observed.
8	30.9	1.8	0.33-0.55	0-0.28m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.28m-0.45m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.45m+ light orange-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). Intermittent ridge and furrow observed.
9	32	1.8	0.23-0.55	0-0.27m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.27m-0.37m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.37m+ light orange-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). Intermittent ridge and furrow and 1 stone land drain observed. <b>[Pl. 3]</b>
10	31.7	1.8	0.40-0.58	0-0.24m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.24m-0.38m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.38m+ light orange-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). Spoil heap contained 1 possible struck flint.
11	31.9	1.8	0.49-0.62	0-0.30m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.30m-0.48m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.48m+ light orange-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). No archaeological finds or features observed.
12	31.2	1.8	0.40-0.56	0-0.29m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.29m-0.44m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.44m+ light orange-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). Intermittent ridge and furrow observed.
13	32	1.8	0.43-0.55	0-0.28m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.28m-0.45m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.45m+ yellow-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). No archaeological finds or features observed. <b>[Pl. 4]</b>
14	31	1.8	0.32-0.42	0-0.17m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.17m-0.31m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.31m+ yellow-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). 2 stone land drains observed. <b>[Pl. 5]</b>
15	31.2	1.8	0.38-0.46	0-0.24m soft grey-brown topsoil; 0.24m-0.38m friable orange-brown sandy clay subsoil; 0.38m+ yellow-brown sandy clay (Natural Geology). Gully 1, tree hole/rooting 2 and 2 stone land drains observed. <b>[Pls 6-8]</b>

**APPENDIX 2: Feature details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
15	1	50	Gully	Roman?	1 pottery sherd
15	2	51	Tree rooting	Roman/Medieval	3 pottery sherds



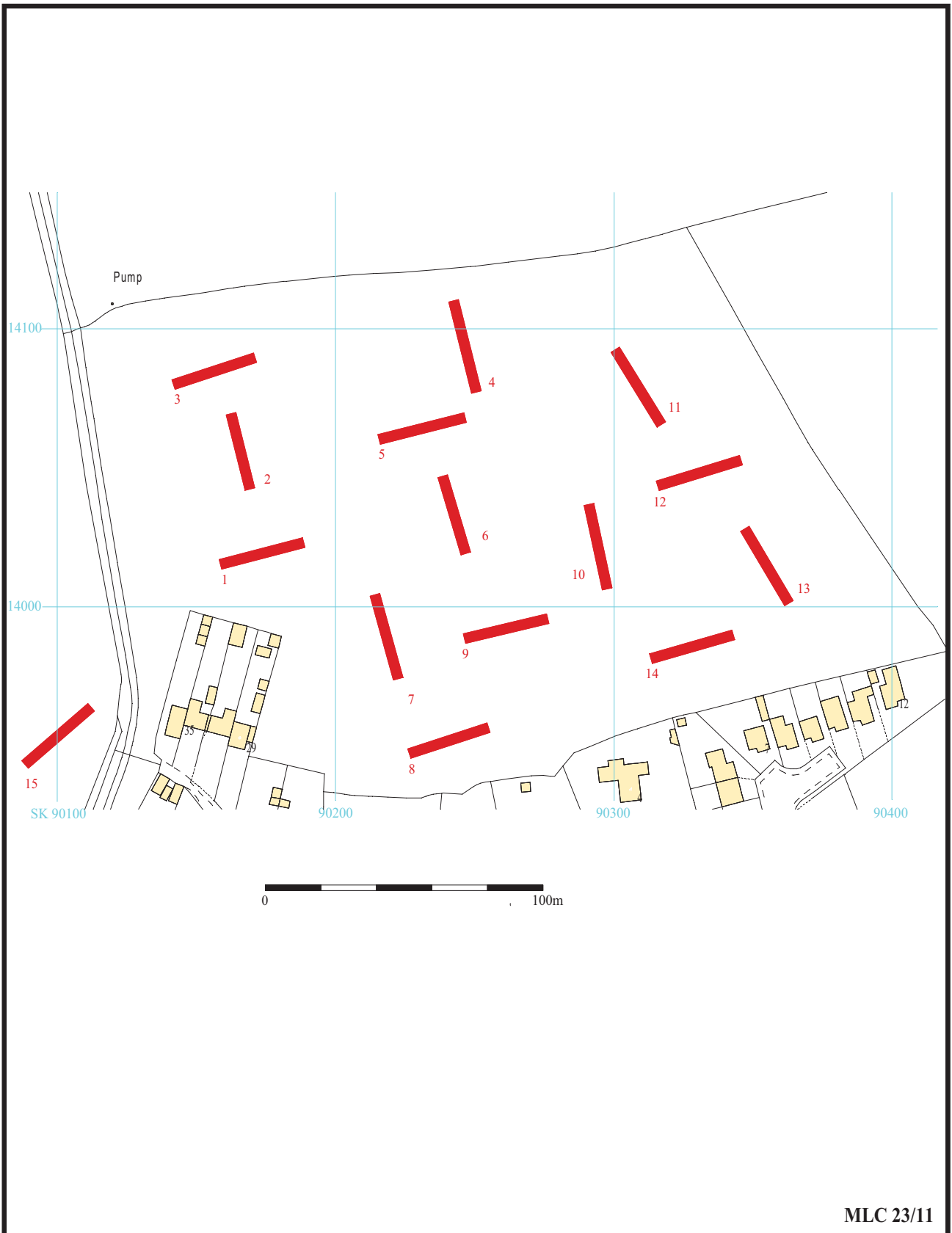
**Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore,  
Rutland**

**Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 1. Location of site within Cottesmore and Rutland

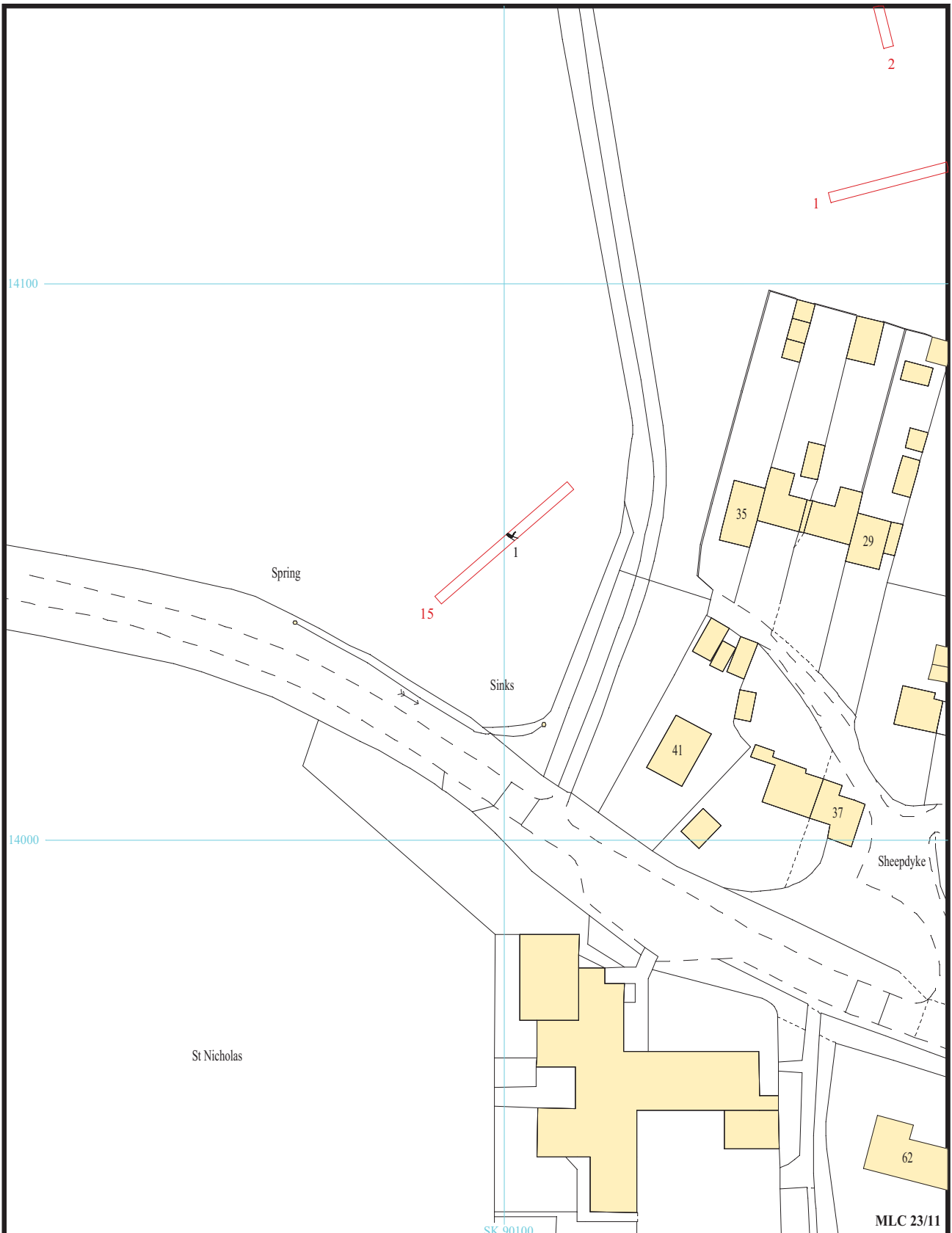
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**Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore,  
Rutland**  
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site and trenches.





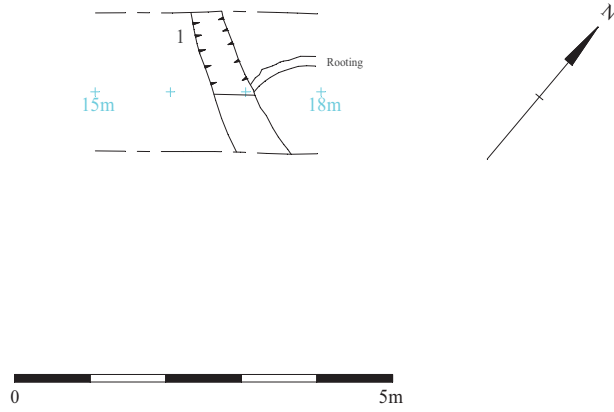
**Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore,  
Rutland  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 3. Detailed location of trench 15 and gully 1

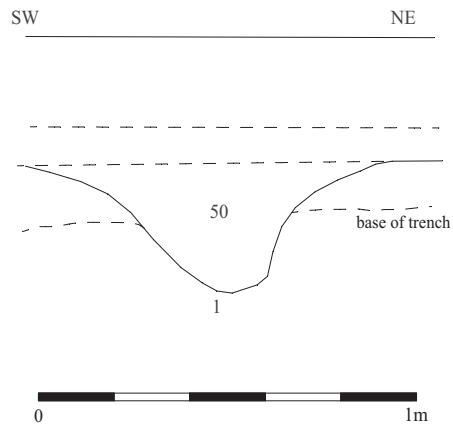




Trench 15



Trench 15

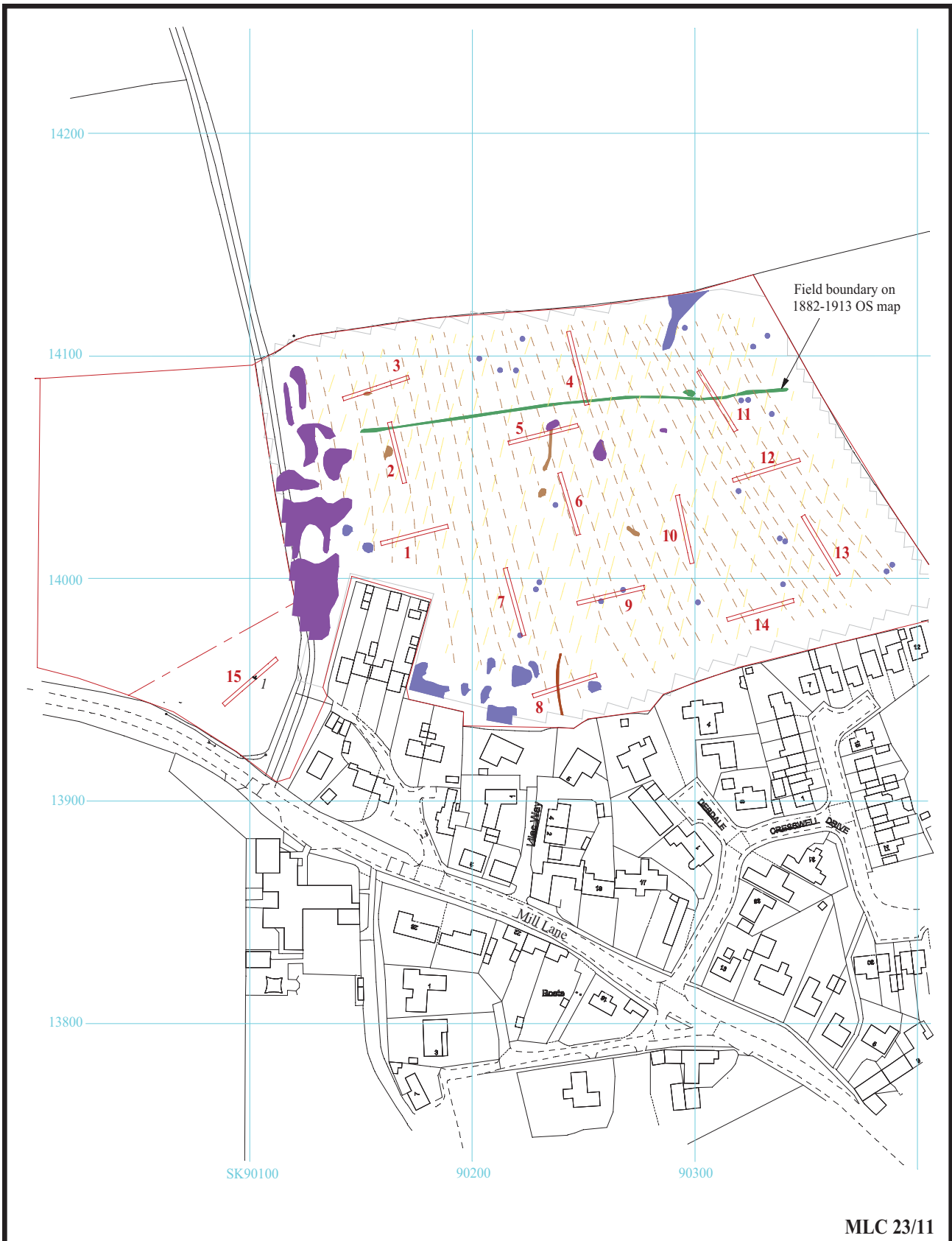


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**Land off Mill Land, Cottesmore,  
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Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 4. Plan and Section of gully 1.





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**Land at Mill Lane,  
Cottesmore, Rutland  
Archaeological Evaluation**

Figure 5. Location of trenches, compared to geophysical survey results





Plate 1. Trench 2, looking North, Scales: 2m and 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 6, looking North, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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**Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore,  
Rutland  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 1 and 2.**





Plate 3. Trench 9 ridge and furrow, looking South-West, Scales: 2m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 13, looking North-West, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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**Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore,  
Rutland  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 3 and 4.**

**T V A S**  
  
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Plate 5. Trench 14, looking South-West, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 6. Trench 15, looking North-East, Scales: 2m, 1m and 0.5m.

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**Land off Mill Lane, Cottesmore,  
Rutland  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 5 and 6.**

**T V A S**  
  
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Plate 7. Trench 15 Gully Pre-excitation, looking North-East,  
Scale: 1m.



Plate 8. Trench 15 Gully 1, looking North-West,  
Scales: 1m, 0.5m and 0.3m.

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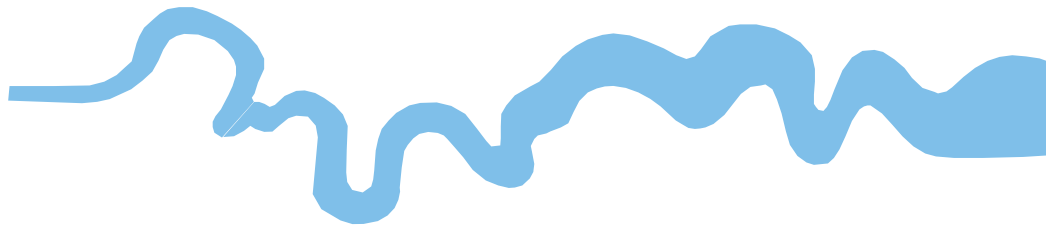
**Mill Lane, Cottesmore,  
Rutland  
Archaeological Evaluation  
Plates 7 and 8.**



## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	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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