



Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological trial trench evaluation on
land to the west of All Saints' Church
Easton on the Hill, Northamptonshire
May 2013



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2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council

Edmund Taylor

Report 13/93

May 2013



STAFF

Project Manager Ant Maull Cert Arch
 Text Edmund Taylor BSc
 Fieldwork Edmund Taylor
 Carol Simmonds BA PIfA
 The Slag Andy Chapman BSc MIfA FSA
 Illustrations James Ladocha BA

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Ed Taylor		
Approved by	Anthony Maull		

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No. 151641
Project name	EASTON ON THE HILL, ALL SAINTS' CHURCH CEMETERY EXTENSION	
Short description	An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at All Saints' Church, Easton on the Hill, Northamptonshire during May 2013. The work was undertaken in advance of the proposed extension of the existing cemetery. The evaluation identified two linear features and two postholes which, although undated, may relate to medieval settlement thought to have existed to the south of the proposed development area.	
Project type	Trial Trench Evaluation	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current land use	Fallow agricultural	
Future work	None	
Monument type/ period	None	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	All Saints' Church, Easton on the Hill	
OS Easting & Northing	TF 00991 04696	
Area	0.28ha	
Height aOD	c87m	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Ed Taylor	
Project Manager	Ant Maull	
Sponsor or funding body	Easton on the Hill Parish Council	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	20/5/13	
End date	20/5/13	
ARCHIVES		
Archive location		
Archive contents	Trial Trench forms (2), B+W contact sheets and negs (1) digital photos (1 cd)	
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	An archaeological trial trench evaluation on land to the west of All Saints' Church, Easton on the Hill, Northamptonshire, May 2013	
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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION ON
LAND TO THE WEST OF ALL SAINTS' CHURCH
EASTON ON THE HILL, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
MAY 2013**

Abstract

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at All Saints' Church, Easton on the Hill, Northamptonshire during May 2013. The work was undertaken in advance of the proposed extension of the existing cemetery. The evaluation identified two linear features and two postholes which, although undated, may relate to medieval settlement thought to have existed to the south of the proposed development area.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in May 2013 prior to the proposed extension of the existing cemetery at All Saints' Church, Easton on the Hill, Northamptonshire (NGR TF 00991 04696, Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Easton on the Hill Parish Council in response to a brief for archaeological evaluation issued by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire Archaeology (Mordue 2013a and b) in accordance with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). The investigation followed an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2013) and adhered to the procedural document MoRPHE issued by English Heritage (EH 2006) and the appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008).

2 BACKGROUND

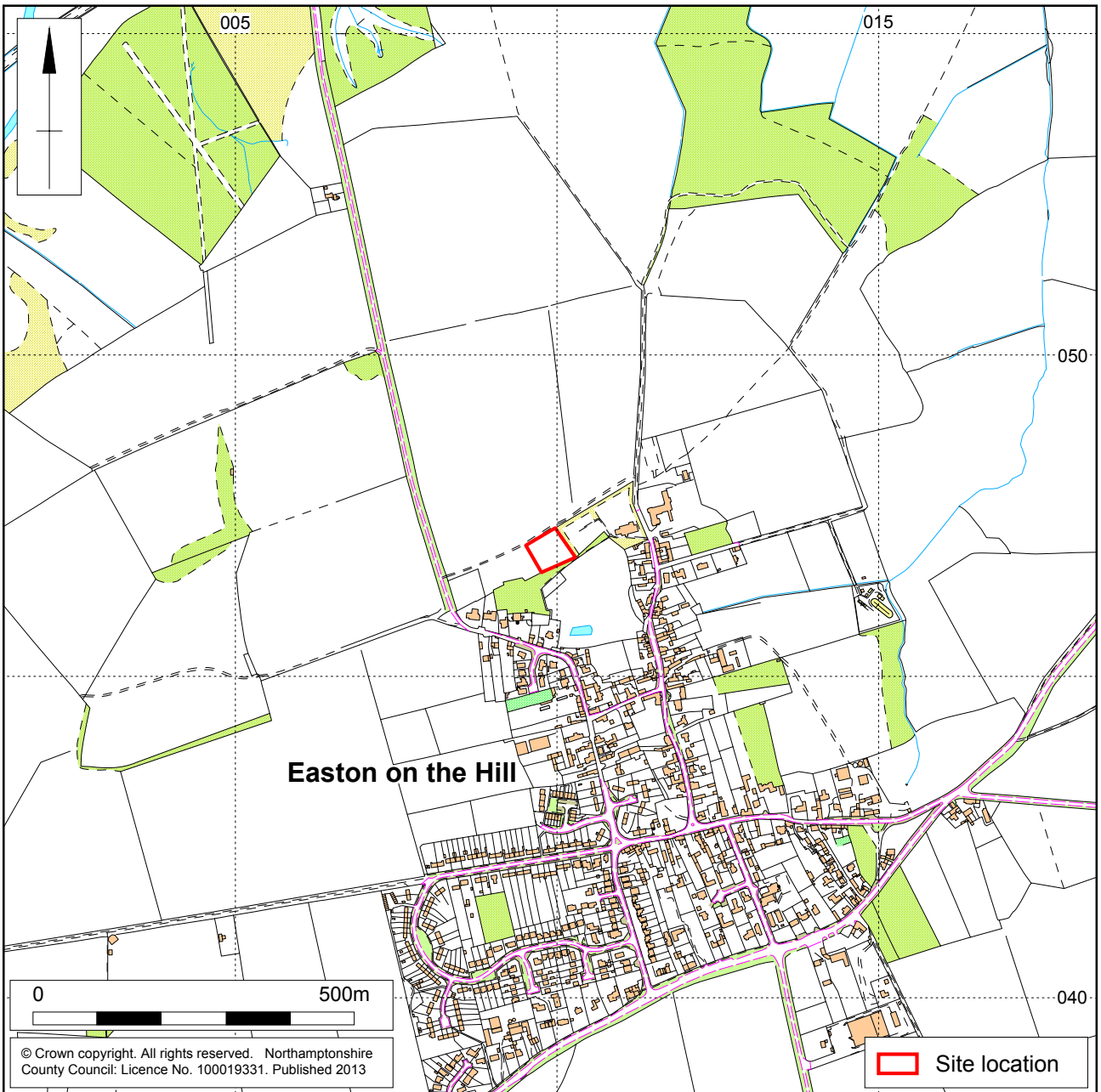
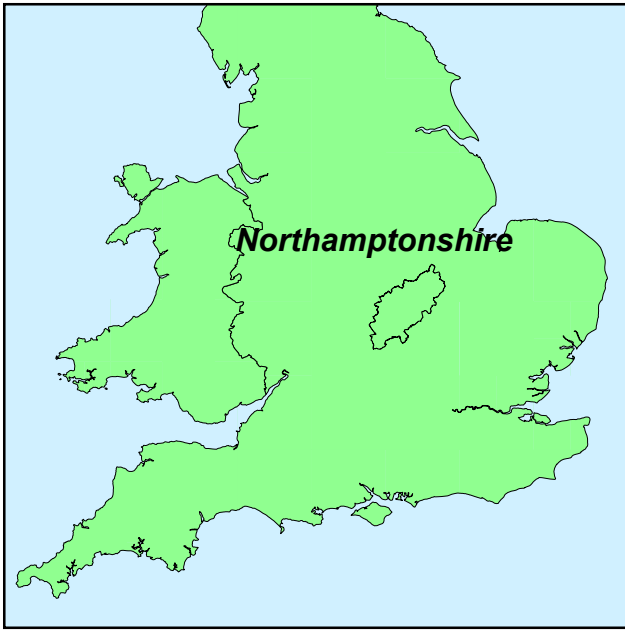
2.1 Location and topography

The site is c 0.28 hectares in extent and lies on the northern side of the village, immediately west of the current cemetery of All Saints' church (Fig 1). The proposed cemetery extension comprises agricultural land, currently fallow and is bounded to the north and west by arable land and pasture to the south.

Topographically the site is reasonably flat and lies at c 87m aOD. The underlying geology comprises Northampton Sands and Ironstone (www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex)

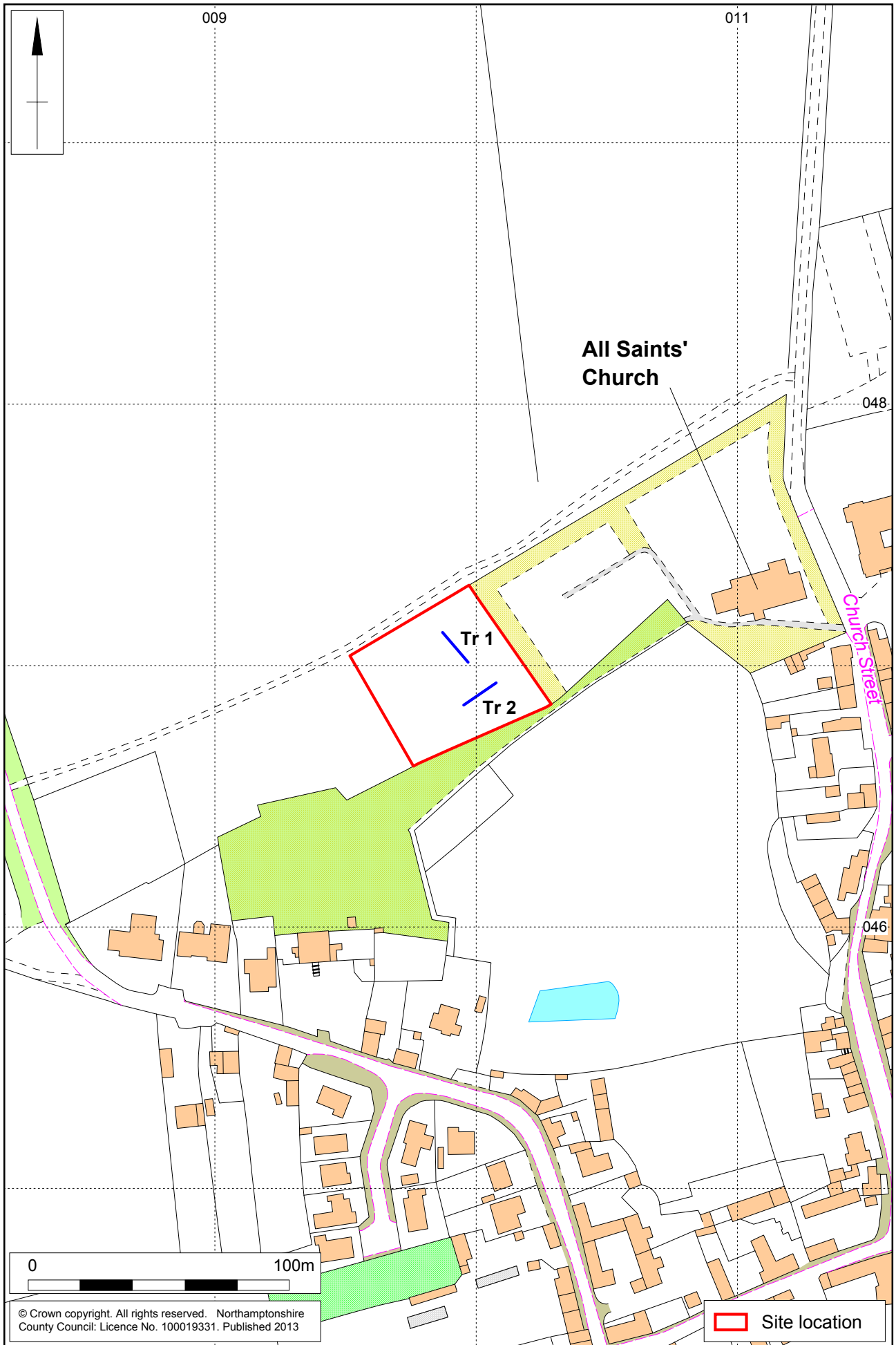
2.2 Archaeological and historical background

An Historic Environment Record (HER) search of the immediate area around the site shows that it lies immediately adjacent to and north of the historic settlement core of the village (HER 2881). The village of Easton on the Hill fell within the aegis of the Rockingham Forest Survey (Foard, Hall and Partida 2009). This comprehensive study looked at the development and layout of the village during and after the medieval period.



Scale 1:10,000

Site location Fig 1



Scale 1:2,000 (A4)

Trench locations Fig 2

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The prehistoric period is attested by a series of linear cropmarks comprising parallel ditches, aligned approximately north-east to south-west to the north-west of the application site (HER 5654/0/1 and 5654/0/2). Though the HER also describes some of the features as of geological origin, forming anomalies in the underlying natural. The projected line of the Jurassic Way (HER 195), an important prehistoric routeway connecting north-east and south-west Britain, transects the site on an east-north-east to west-south-west alignment. Although archaeological traces are unlikely to be found as it is not thought to be a formal road or track in the modern sense, but the line of a prehistoric transport zone.

A possible Saxon or medieval field boundary HER 6451/0/1, aligned north-west to south-east is known approximately 80m to the north-east of the site. To the north of the site, a number of Saxon pottery sherds have been recorded and a series of cropmarks in the same area defining possible hollow-ways may also be of Saxon or medieval date.

The site lies north of the historic settlement core of Easton on the Hill (HER 2881) and west of All Saints' Church (HER 2881/1). In the area of pasture adjacent to the southern boundary of the proposed application site are the remains of earthworks (HER 9176/0/38) which have been interpreted as former settlement remains indicating that the medieval settlement has either shifted or shrank.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the evaluation was to determine if archaeological remains survive within the proposed development area.

Specific aims were to:

- To determine or confirm the general nature 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;
- To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

The trenches were measured in from fixed points in the landscape and were excavated, under continuous archaeological supervision, using a JCB 4CX mechanical excavator fitted with a flat toothless bucket. The topsoil and subsoil were stacked separately and adjacent to the trenches. Mechanical excavation proceeded to the top of the archaeological deposits or to the natural substrate where no archaeology was encountered.

Archaeological excavation and recording followed the guidelines outlined in NA's *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (2011). Trenches containing possible archaeological remains were cleaned by hand, sufficient to define the features. Each feature or deposit was given a unique number consisting of the trench number and an individual

context number (eg 402, Trench 4, context 2). The details of each context were recorded on pro-forma sheets. The trenches were planned (scale 1:50) and section drawings were made at an appropriate scale (1:10 or 1:20) where necessary. Levels, which were related to Ordnance Datum, were taken on the trenches at appropriate points, on section datum and on all major features. Trench locations were related to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A photographic record was made of the excavation, using 35mm black and white negative and colour slide film, supplemented by digital images.

The spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval. The archive will be prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Museums and Galleries Commission (MGC 1992).

All works were carried out in accordance with the WSI prepared by NA (2013), the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 1985, revised 2010) and *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008).

All procedures complied with Northamptonshire County Council Health and Safety



Trench 1, looking south-east

Fig 3



Trench 2, looking north-east

Fig 4

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

The evaluation comprised two trenches, each 15m long, positioned within the proposed development area (Figs 2, 3 and 4).

The natural substrate comprised loose ironstone fragments with sandy patches. This was overlain by a mid orange-brown sandy loam subsoil with frequent ironstone fragments. The overlying topsoil comprised a dark brown sandy loam.

No archaeological remains were present in Trench 1.

4.1 Trench 2

All of the archaeological features identified in this trench cut the natural substrate and were overlain by subsoil (Fig 5)

Furrow [205]

In the middle of the trench there was a north-south aligned furrow, [205] (Fig 5) which was 1.70m wide, 0.15m deep with gradual sloping sides and a broad flat base. The fill, a mid orange-brown silty clay, which was similar to the overlying subsoil produced no finds.

Gully [213]

Located at the south-west end of the trench, this north-west to south-east aligned gully was 0.60m wide and 0.20m deep (Fig 5, Section 4). The primary fill comprised loose ironstone fragments which are likely to have been edge derived and the upper fill, which produced fragments of animal bone (see paragraph 5.2), comprised mid brown silty clay.

Postholes [207] and [210]

These circular postholes were located towards the south-western end of the trench and were 2.50m apart (Fig 5, Sections 2 and 3). They were 0.30m-0.50m in diameter and varied in depth from 0.10m to 0.20m with [210] being the smaller and deeper of the two. Posthole [207] had gradual sloping sides and a flat base whilst [210] had vertical edges and a narrow concave base. The fills comprised sandy clay and ironstone fragments. Neither posthole produced dating evidence but a piece of slag was retrieved from the fill of [207] (see paragraph 5.1).

5 THE FINDS

5.1 The metal working debris by Andy Chapman

From the fill (206) of posthole [207] there is a single fragment of tap slag, with its characteristic fluid surface, weighing 230g. This is debris from iron smelting, although more typically such material tends to be present in considerable quantities when deposited in the vicinity of a smelting furnace.

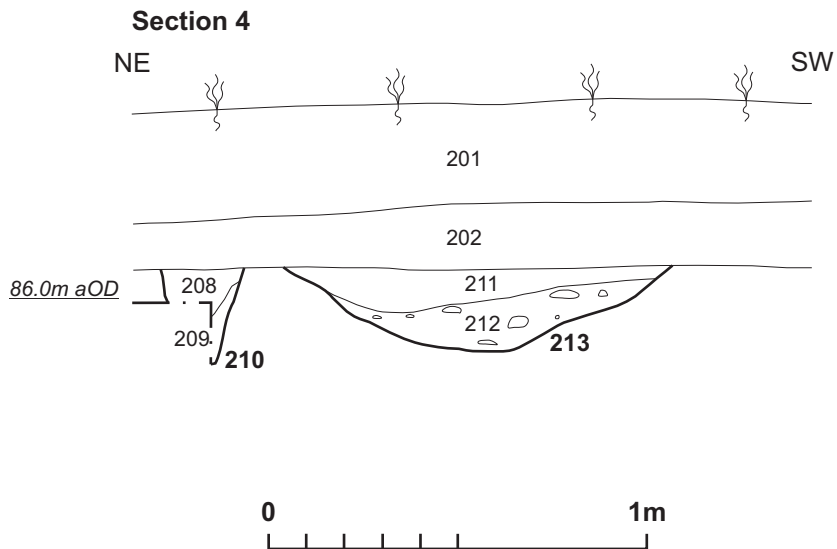
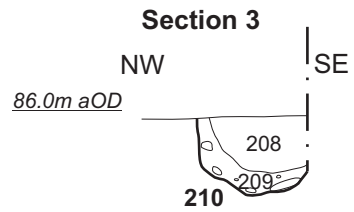
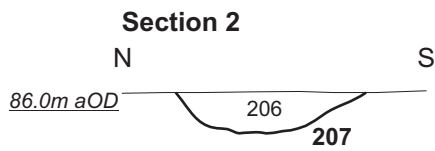
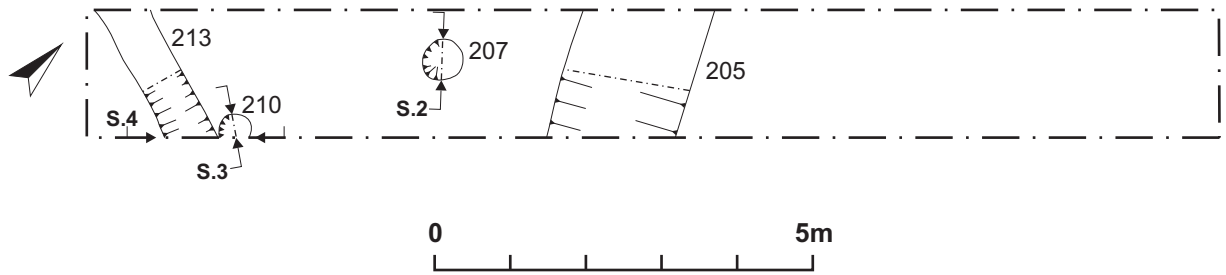
5.2 The animal bone

A total of 174g of animal bone were recovered from the upper fill of the undated gully [213]. The material was analysed using standard zooarchaeological methods in order to determine the taxa present and the state of preservation.

The small assemblage comprised part of a cattle scapula and a short section of probable sheep/goat rib. Preservation was good with minimal damage and abrasion to the cortical bone and a high level of fragmentation. Fragmentation consisted of old breaks. The old breaks could have been the result of butchery, trampling or compaction following burial.

Little can be said for the animal economy on site other than that it included cattle, sheep and/or goat.

Trench 2



6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has suggested that few archaeological remains survive within the proposed development area. The remains present may have been preserved due to the slightly greater depth of soil along the southern boundary of the site.

The furrow, gully and postholes are likely to represent peripheral agricultural activity associated with the shrunken medieval settlement to the south (HER 9176/0/38).

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APPENDIX: INDEX OF CONTEXTS BY TRENCH

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth of natural
1	15m x 1.6m Nw-SE	500992/304707	86.40m aOD	0.35m-0.40m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy loam	0.20m-0.30m thick	-
102	Subsoil	Mid brown-orange sandy loam with frequent ironstone inclusions	0.20m-0.25m thick	-
103	Natural	Ironstone with sandy patches	-	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth of natural
2	15m x 1.6m NE-SW	501001/304689	86.50m aOD	0.35m-0.50m
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
201	Topsoil	Dark brown sandy loam	0.15m-0.25m thick	-
202	Subsoil	Mid brown-orange sandy loam with frequent ironstone inclusions	0.20m-0.26m thick	-
203	Natural	Ironstone with sandy patches	-	-
204	Fill of [205]	Mid orange-brown silty clay	0.10m thick	-
205	Cut of furrow	Linear, N-S, gradual sides and flat base	1.70m wide, 0.10m deep	-
206	Fill of [207]	Mid brown silty clay	0.10m thick	Slag
207	Cut of posthole	Circular, gradual sides, flat base	0.50m Ø, 0.10m deep	-
208	Fill of [210]	Dark brown silty clay	0.15m thick	-
209	Fill of [210]	Loose ironstone fragments	0.05m thick	-
210	Cut of posthole	Circular, vertical sides narrow flat base	0.30m Ø 0.20m deep	-
211	Fill of [213]	Mid brown silty clay	0.10m thick	Animal bone
212	Fill of [213]	Loose ironstone fragments	0.10m thick	-
213	Cut of ditch	Linear, NW-SE, gradual sides, broad concave base	0.60m wide 0.20m deep	-



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