

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Evaluation on land at Home Farm,
Rugby Road, Swinford, Leicestershire
February 2007



Jason Clarke

March 2007

Report 07/37

**NORTHAMPTONSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL
MARCH 2007**

NGR SP 569 794

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION ON LAND AT HOME FARM,
RUGBY ROAD, SWINFORD, LEICESTERSHIRE
FEBRUARY 2007
REPORT 07/37
X.A37.2007**

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	Archaeological Evaluation on land at Home Farm, Rugby Road, Swinford, Leicestershire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an evaluation on land at Home Farm, Rugby Road, Swinford, Leicestershire. Archaeology was present in two trenches. A series of ditches which may form an enclosure and a single ditch produced medieval pottery.	
Project type	Evaluation	
Previous work	ULAS desk-based assessment	
Future work		
Monument type and period	Medieval Ditches	
Significant finds	St Neots-type pottery	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Leicestershire	
Site address	Land at Home Farm, Rugby Road, Swinford, Leicestershire	
Easting	569	
Northing	794	
Height OD	117 OD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation		
Project brief originator	Historic and Natural Environment Team, Environment and Heritage Services, Leicestershire County Council	
Project Design originator		
Director/Supervisor	Jason Clarke	
Project Manager	Iain Soden	
Sponsor or funding body	Aspects Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	27/02/2007	
End date	1/03/2007	
ARCHIVES	Location (X.A37.2007)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		
Digital		
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological Evaluation on land at Home Farm, Rugby Road, Swinford, Leicestershire	
Serial title & volume		
Author(s)	Jason Clarke	
Page numbers		
Date	March 2007	

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Plate 3: Gully [411], looking south

Plate 4: Gully [402], looking south

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION ON LAND AT HOME FARM, RUGBY ROAD, SWINFORD, LEICESTERSHIRE

Abstract

Northamptonshire Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation on land at Home Farm, Rugby Road, Swinford, Leicestershire. A total of six trenches were excavated, two of which confirmed archaeological features were present in two. Four inter-cutting gullies and a single ditch, aligned north-south were present in Trench 4. Trench 3 produced two inter-cutting gullies aligned east-west. They may form a rectangular enclosure with the gullies found in Trench 4. A few sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from features in Trench 4.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) undertook an archaeological evaluation on land at Home Farm, Swinford, Leicestershire on behalf of Aspects Ltd during March 2007 (NGR SP 569 794; Fig 1).

The work was undertaken in order to inform a planning application (06/01566/FUL) for the construction of house plots and associated infrastructure. The excavation met the requirements of a specification prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (2007) and approved by the Planning Archaeologist of Leicestershire County Council Environment and Heritage services.

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The development area is located close to the historic core of the medieval village. To the north-east of the development area lies All Saints Church, the earliest parts of which date to the 13th and 14th centuries. The Leicestershire Sites and Monuments Record lists a post-medieval barn (SMR No: MLE 9945) that stood until recently on the site, within the development area. No previous archaeological work has been undertaken in the development area.

3 LOCATION, TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The site is located on the western side of Swinford, off the south side of the Rugby Road. The site covers 0.45 hectares (1.33a) and is bounded by the 18th-century and later Grade II – listed Home Farm with barn and cottages to the north, existing house plots to the west and farmland to the south and east. The current land use is modern gardens and pastoral. The site lies at about 117m above Ordnance Datum.

The underlying geology has been mapped by the Soil Survey for England and Wales as Chalky Till (Soils of England and Wales, Sheet 3). The evaluation showed it to comprise of orange-brown sandy clay.

4 METHODOLOGY

All works were conducted in accordance with the IFA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (1994 revised 2004) and specific requirements of the specification

A total of 6 trenches were excavated, representing 5% sample of the proposed development site. A mechanical excavator with a 2m flat ditching bucket was used to excavate topsoil

and overburden to archaeological levels. All archaeological features were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature. Recording followed standard Northamptonshire Archaeology procedures (NA 2003). All archaeological features were given a separate context number, features were described on pro-forma context sheets, which included details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and associated finds. A photographic record was kept using monochrome and colour slide film.

5 RESULTS

A total of 6 trenches were excavated totalling 5% of the site. Trenches 3 and 4 contained archaeological remains and are described below. Trench 5 contained made up ground overlying natural and along with Trenches 1, 2 and 6, contained no archaeological features. A short description of their deposit make-up is described within a full context inventory presented in Appendix 1.

Trench 3

Measuring 20m long by 2m wide, Trench 3 was aligned north-south (Fig 2 and 3). Natural clay was encountered at a depth of 0.9m. Two inter-cutting gullies were encountered cutting natural geology.

Gully [304]

Gully [304] was aligned east-west measured 1.48m wide and 0.26m deep, and cut gully [306]. The fill comprised mid grey black sandy clay (303). No finds were recovered from this feature.

Gully [306]

Gully [306] was aligned east-west was cut by gully [304] and cut natural. Measuring 0.76m wide and 0.28m in deep, the fill comprised of mid grey-black sandy clay (305). No finds were recovered from this feature.

Trench 4

Aligned east-west, Trench 4 measured 20m long and 2m wide (Fig 2 and 3). Natural geology, which was comprised of mid orange-brown sandy clay (413), was encountered at a depth of 0.5m. A ditch and four gullies were present within Trench 4.

Ditch [402]

Ditch [402] had a slight curve but was aligned generally north-south and cut natural geology (Figs 2 and 3). Measuring 0.7m wide and 0.3m deep, the fill comprised mid grey sandy clay (403). Medieval pottery was recovered from this deposit.

Gully [404]

Gully [404] was aligned north-south and was cut by gully [407]. It measured 0.8m wide and 0.38m deep. The primary fill comprised of mid brown silty clay (405). The upper fill comprised of mottled brown orange silty clay (406). Medieval pottery was recovered from the upper deposit (406).

Gully [407]

Gully [407] was aligned north-south and cut gully [404] but was cut by [409]. It measured 1.0m wide and 0.42m deep, the fill comprised of mid brown silty clay (408) and no finds were recovered from this deposit.

Gully [409]

Gully [409] was located 5m west of ditch [402]. Aligned north-south, it cut gully [407], and was 1.6m wide and 0.61m deep. The fill comprised mid brown silty clay (410) and no finds were recovered from this deposit.

Gully [411]

Gully [411] was aligned north-south, located 1m west of gully [404] and cut natural geology (413). It measured 0.6m in width and 0.24m in depth, the fill comprises of mid brown silty clay (412) and medieval pottery was recovered from this deposit.

6 FINDS

A total of 5 sherds of pottery were recovered. All five sherds were recovered from four contexts in Trench 4: (403) the fill of ditch [402], (405) the fill of gully [404], and (412) the fill of gully [411].

All the sherds are of St Neots-type ware (Leicestershire type series SN; Davies and Sawday, in Connor and Buckley 2000, 166). The tradition can be found across the east and south-east midlands as early as the 10th century and as late as the early 13th. One sherd (from 412) is of a squared, everted rim form from a cooking pot/jar which is probably 12th or early 13th century. The remainder comprise non-diagnostic body sherds.

7 DISCUSSION

Out of the six evaluation trenches archaeology was present in two trenches, Trenches 3 and 4. Trench 5 contained a layer of modern made ground, which was the result of the demolition of a modern barn that had occupied the site from the 1950s; no other archaeology was present within the trench. In Trenches 1, 2 and 3 archaeology was also absent.

The features within Trench 3 were the junction of two gullies [304] and [306], with gully [304] cutting [306]. The gullies were shallow (0.28m and 0.26m) and no finds were recovered from the excavated deposits. Gullies and a ditch were also present in Trench 4. Ditch [402] had a slight curve to the west and a sherd of possible medieval pottery was recovered from its fill. The trench is too narrow to accurately project the ditch's curvature.

Gullies [404], [407] and [409] are aligned north-south and excavation revealed [409] cuts [407], while [407] cuts [404]. Medieval pottery was recovered from the fill of gully [404], which is the earliest feature in the inter-cutting gully sequence. Similar pottery was recovered from the fill of a shallow gully [411], located 1m to the west of gully [404].

The gullies present in Trenches 3 and 4 may form the north-south and east-west boundaries of a square enclosure. The gullies present in Trench 4 may have been expected to be present in Trench 6 but excavation of this trench showed an absence of archaeology, which suggests the gullies either terminate before Trench 6, curved away, or as suggested formed a square enclosure.

The pottery recovered from the archaeological features gives an earlier medieval date for the site. The small amount of finds from the gullies might suggest that the gullies were located away from the main occupation focus and may form an agricultural enclosure or the back plots of houses fronting onto Rugby Road.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

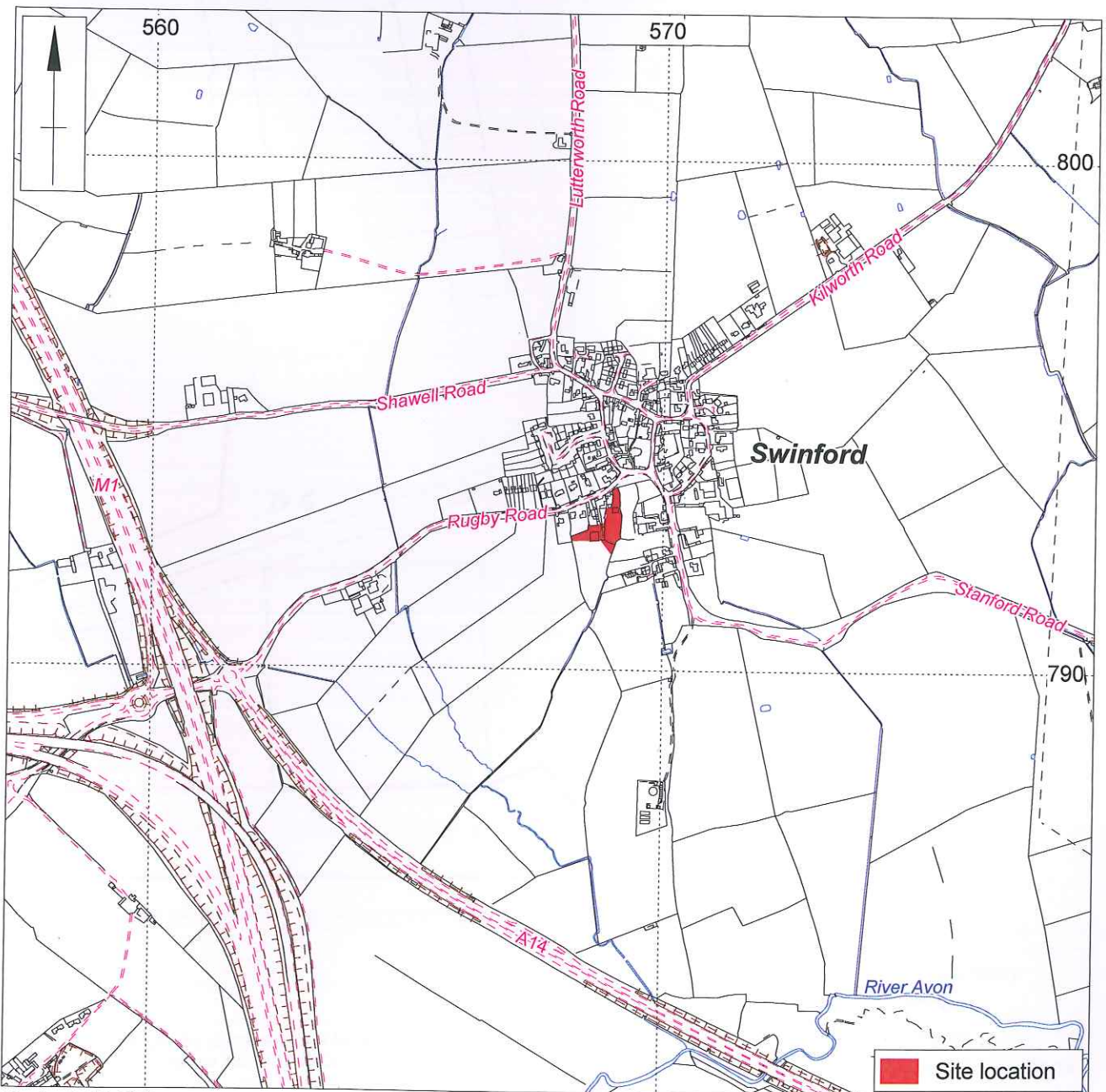
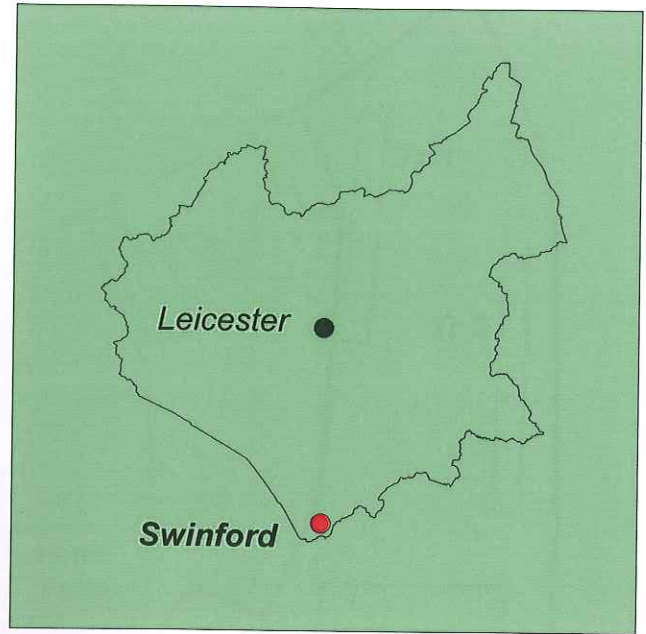
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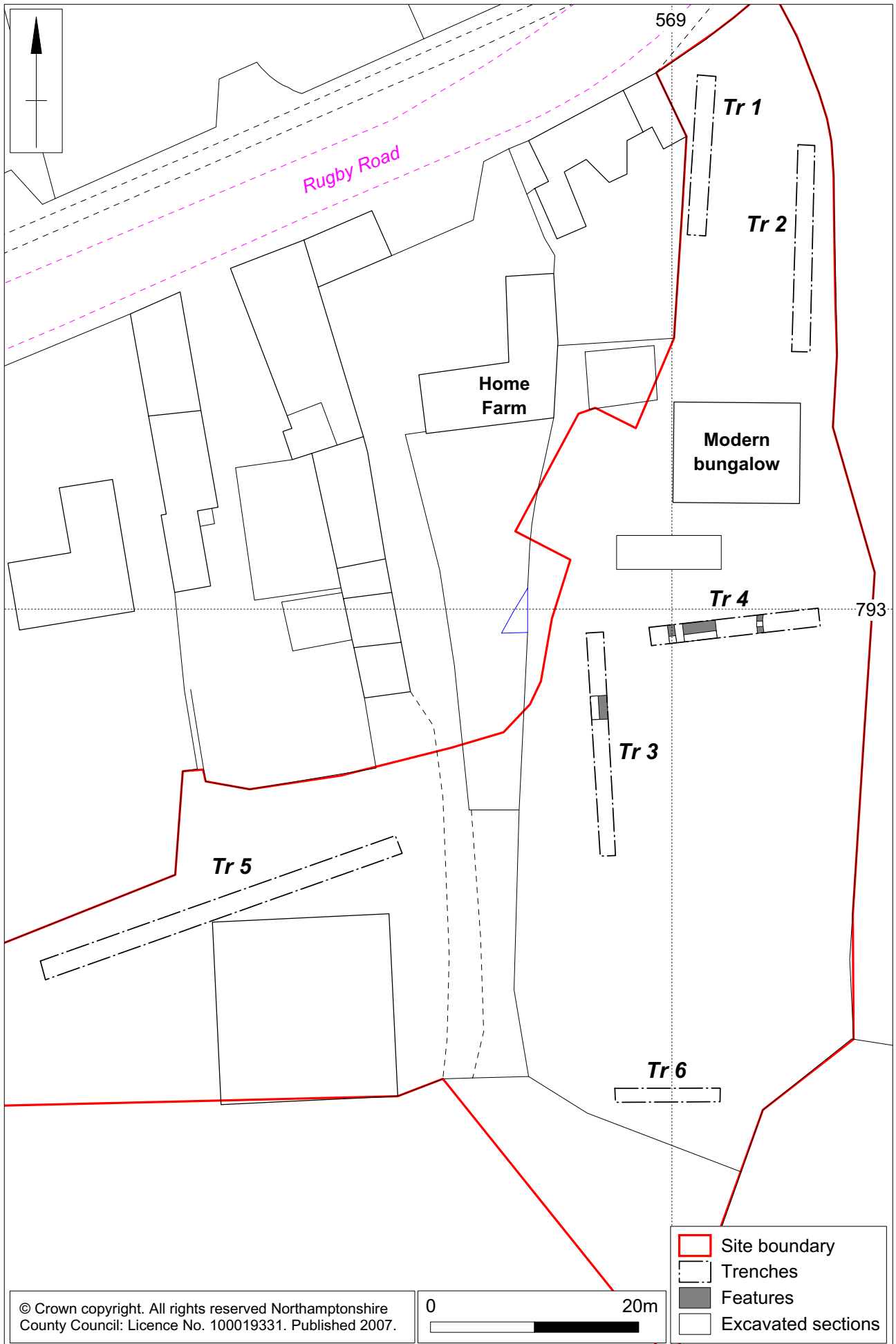
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Scale 1:12,500

Site location

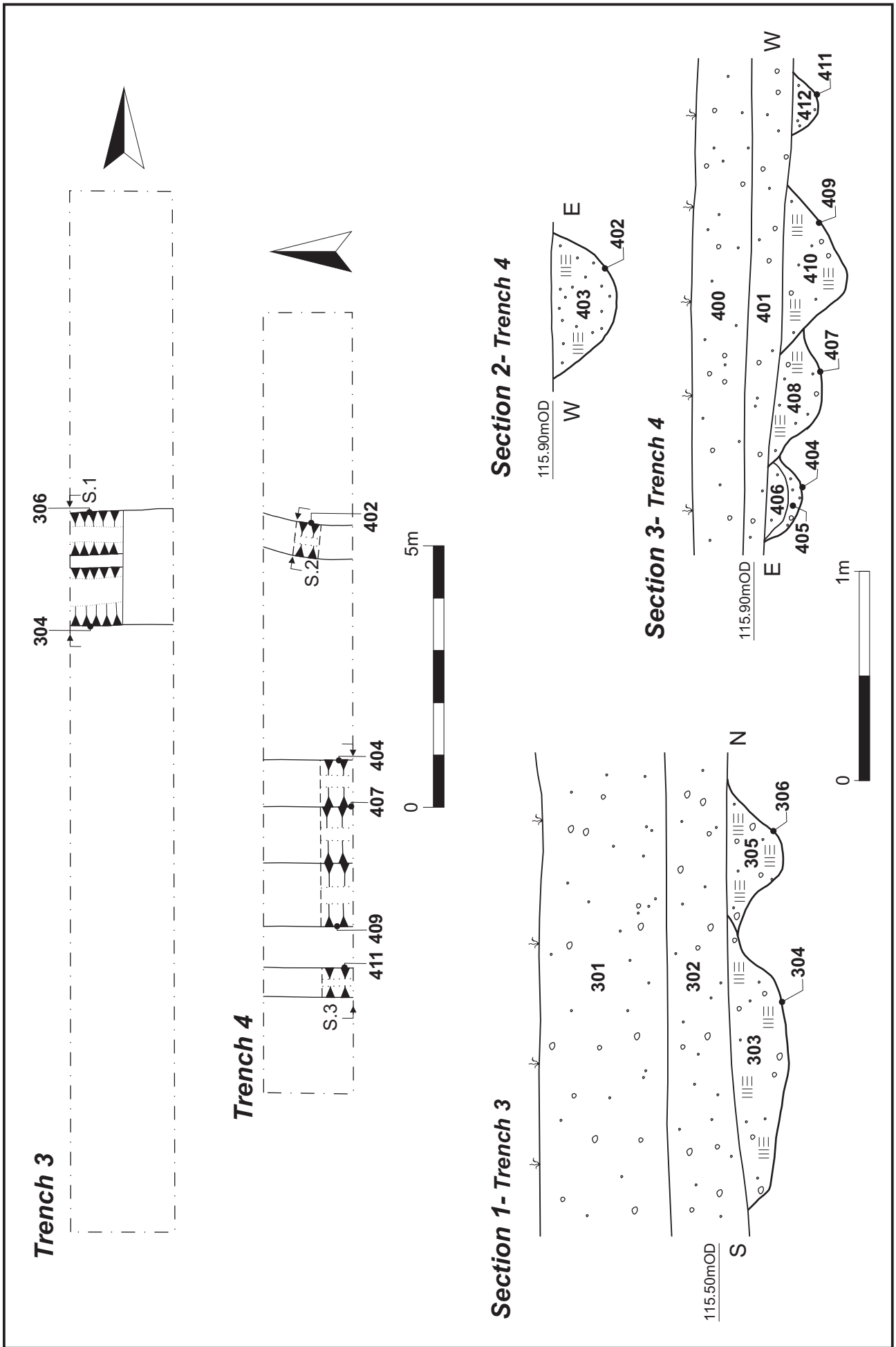
Site location Fig 1



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Scale 1:500

Trench location Fig 2



Trench plans and sections 1-3 Fig 3



Plate 1: Trench 4, showing ditches [402], [404], [407], [409] and [411], looking west



Plate 2: Ditches [404], [407] and [409], looking south



Plate 3: Gully [411], looking south



Plate 4: Gully [402], looking south

A1: SITE CONTEXT DATA

Trench No	Context	Deposit Type	Description	Artefact types
1	101	Deposit	Mid-grey black sandy clay. 0.3m thick. Topsoil	
	102	Deposit	Mid-black grey sandy clay. 0.2m thick. Subsoil	
	103	Natural	Orange-brown clay. Natural	
2	201	Deposit	Mid grey-black sandy clay. 0.3m thick. Topsoil	
	202	Deposit	Mid black-grey sandy clay. 0.5m thick. Subsoil	
	203	Natural	Mid orange-brown clay. Natural	
3	301	Deposit	Mid grey-sandy clay. 0.5m thick. Topsoil	
	302	Deposit	Light grey-black sandy clay. 0.3m thick. Subsoil	
	303	Fill	Mid grey-black sandy clay. 1.48m width 0.26m depth. Fill of [304]	
	304	Cut	East-West aligned gully. 1.48m width 0.26m depth. Filled by (303). Cuts (305)	
	305	Fill	Mid grey-black sandy clay. 0.76m width 0.28m depth. Fill of [306], cut by [304]	
	306	Cut	East-West aligned gully. 0.76m width 0.28m depth. Filled by (305)	
	307	Natural	Light orange brown-sandy clay. Natural	
4	400	Deposit	Dark brown-sandy clay. 0.3m thick. Topsoil	
	401	Deposit	Mid brown-sandy clay. 0.3m thick. Subsoil	
	402	Cut	North-South aligned ditch. 0.7m width 0.3m depth. Filled by (403)	
	403	Fill	Mid brown-silty clay. 0.7m width 0.3m depth. Fill of [402]	Medieval pottery
	404	Cut	North-South aligned gully. 0.8m width 0.38m depth. Filled by (405) and (406)	
	405	Fill	Mid brown silty clay. 0.7m width 0.12m depth. Primary fill of [404]	Medieval pottery
	406	Fill	Mottled brown-orange silty clay. 0.8m width 0.18m depth. Upper fill of [404]	
	407	Cut	North-South aligned gully. 1m width 0.42m depth. Filled by (408)	
	408	Fill	Mid brown silty clay. 1m width 0.42m depth. Fill of [407]	

Rugby Road, Swinford, Leicestershire

Trench No	Context	Deposit Type	Description	Artefact types
	409	Cut	North-South aligned gully. 1.6m width 0.61m depth. Filled by (410)	
	410	Fill	Mid brown silty clay. 1.6m width 0.61m depth. Fill of [409]	
	411	Cut	North-South aligned gully. 0.6m width 0.24m depth. Filled by (412).	
	412	Fill	Mid brown silty clay. 0.6m width 0.24m depth. Fill of [411]	Medieval pottery
	413	Natural	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	
5	500	Deposit	Dark brown clay silt. 0.3m thick. Topsoil	
	501	Layer	Make up layer. 0.5m thick	
	502	Deposit	Mid brown silty clay. 0.4m thick. Subsoil	
	503	Natural	Orange-brown clay. Natural	
6	601	Deposit	Mid grey sandy clay. 0.3m thick. Topsoil	
	602	Deposit	Mid grey-black clay 0.5m thick. Subsoil	
	603	Natural	Mid brown sandy clay	