

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT:
LAND OFF GATEHOUSE LANE, GREAT EASTON, LEICESTERSHIRE**

Planning Reference: 09/00752/OUT
NGR: SP 8557 9270
AAL Site Code: GRGA 14
Museum Accession Number: X.A9.2014
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-169485



Report prepared for Bybrook Builders Limited

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
Report Number AAL2014011

January 2014



Allenarchaeology



Contents

| | |
|--|---|
| Executive Summary | 1 |
| 1.0 Introduction..... | 1 |
| 2.0 Site Location and Description..... | 1 |
| 3.0 Planning Background..... | 1 |
| 4.0 Archaeological Background | 1 |
| 5.0 Methodology | 2 |
| 6.0 Results | 2 |
| Trench 1..... | 2 |
| Trench 2..... | 3 |
| Trench 3..... | 4 |
| Trench 4..... | 5 |
| 7.0 Discussion and Conclusions..... | 6 |
| 8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology..... | 6 |
| 9.0 Acknowledgements | 7 |
| 10.0 References..... | 7 |

List of Plates

| | |
|---|---|
| Plate 1: Trench 1 looking south. Scales are 1.00m..... | 3 |
| Plate 2: Trench 2 looking south. Scales are 1.00m..... | 4 |
| Plate 3: Trench 3 looking east-northeast. Scales are 1.00m | 5 |
| Plate 4: Trench 4 looking north-northwest. Scales are 1.00m | 6 |

List of Appendices

| | |
|--|---|
| Appendix 1: Context Summary List | 8 |
| Appendix 2: Figures | 9 |

List of Figures

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Site outlined in red | 9 |
| Figure 2: Plan of evaluation trenches overlaid on proposed development with possible pond shaded in black | 10 |
| Figure 3: Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4 representative sections..... | 11 |

Document Control

| Element: | Name: | Date: |
|----------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| Report prepared by: | Aaron Chapman | 23/01/2014 |
| Illustrations prepared by: | Aaron Chapman | 23/01/2014 |
| Report edited by: | Gavin Glover | 24/01/2014 |
| Report produced by: | AAL2014011 | 24/01/2014 |

Allen Archaeology reports are printed double sided on 100% recycled paper to reduce our carbon footprint.

Cover photograph: General view of site, looking northeast

Executive Summary

- Allen Archaeology Limited was commissioned by Bybrook Builders Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation to support a planning application for a proposed residential development on land off Gatehouse Lane, Great Easton, Leicestershire.
- The site is located in an area of archaeological interest and potential.
- Four 20m long trenches were excavated within the proposed development area. A possible pond of unknown date was identified in Trench 4, no archaeological remains were recorded in the other trenches.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited (AAL) was commissioned by Bybrook Builders Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching in order to support a planning application for a residential development on land off Gatehouse Lane.
- 1.2 The fieldwork, recording and reporting conforms to current national guidelines, as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations*' (IfA 1999, revised 2001 and 2008) and the English Heritage document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (English Heritage 2006).
- 1.3 The documentary archive will be submitted to Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service within six months of the completion of the fieldwork, where it will be stored under the museum accession code X.A9.2014.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 Great Easton is located approximately 29km east-southeast of central Leicester, in the administrative district of Harborough District Council. The proposed development site itself (hereafter referred to as 'the site') is located c.800m east-southeast of the village, on the south side of Caldecote Road and east of Gatehouse Lane, centred on NGR SP 5287 9946.
- 2.2 The bedrock geology comprises Charmouth Mudstone, overlain by superficial deposits of river terrace sand and gravel (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 An outline planning application was submitted to Harborough District Council for a residential development of four dwellings (Reference 09/00752/OUT). The application was refused, but subsequently granted on appeal (Reference APP/F2415/A/10/2126655). As a condition of the planning consent, it has been requested that a programme of archaeological evaluation be undertaken to inform the nature and extent of any further intrusive investigations that may be required to mitigate the effects of the development upon the archaeological resource.
- 3.2 The approach adopted is consistent with the recommendations of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the particular chapter of relevance being 'Chapter 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment' (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012).

4.0 Archaeological Background

- 4.1 There is limited evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site, although a scatter of Mesolithic and Neolithic flint was recorded during fieldwalking c.900m to the northwest (NMR Reference 964745), and a Neolithic polished flint axe has been found 1km to the west (NMR Reference 346237). Enclosures of a possible prehistoric or Roman date have been identified by aerial photography approximately 1km to the south-southeast (NMR Reference 346218).
- 4.2 Roman activity has also been identified in the core of the village, with reports of pottery found in several locations during building work in the 1950s (NMR Reference 346230). There are also antiquarian references to the discovery of Roman cremations in 1848 near to Great Easton

Road, c.800m to the east-northeast (NMR Reference 346202). The outline of further graves was apparently noted in the same area, although the precise location of this find spot is not certain.

- 4.3 Test pitting in the village has recovered finds suggesting activity in the Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Saxo-Norman and medieval periods, focussed on the current historic core of the settlement (LHER References MLE 16779 - MLE 16787, MLE 6722). The evidence generally indicates a low level of activity during the Roman period with most finds of this date being residual, whereas possible Anglo-Saxon cobbled surfaces were recorded, as well as possible structures and boundary features of medieval date. Rubbish pits containing Saxo-Norman pottery, as well as a possible wall were identified during stream clearance in the southern part of the village (NMR Reference 964756). Trial trenching at Rectory Farm also produced small quantities of Roman and medieval material (LHER References MLE 20643, MLE 20644).
- 4.4 The Domesday Book of 1086 records the village as *Estone*, and was in the ownership of Peterborough Abbey. The estate was populated by 27 villagers of varying status, along with their dependents (Williams and Martin 2002). The place name is of Old English derivation, meaning 'eastern farmstead village.' <http://kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/map/place/Leicestershire/Great%20Easton>).

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 A programme of trial trenching has been agreed with the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council. The works comprised four trenches, each measuring 20m long by 1.6m wide. The works were undertaken over a period of two days; 20th and 21st January 2014, and supervised by the author.
- 5.2 The trenches were located on site using a Leica GS08 RTK NetRover GPS, allowing centimetre accurate real-time precision. In each trench, topsoil, subsoil and underlying non-archaeological deposits were removed by a JCB excavator with a toothless ditching bucket in spits no greater than 10cm in depth. The process was repeated until the first archaeologically significant or natural horizon was exposed. All further excavation was carried out by hand.
- 5.3 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard Allen Archaeology Limited trench recording sheets. Archaeological deposits were drawn in plan and section (at scale 1:50), with Ordnance Datum heights being displayed on each class of drawing. Colour photography formed an integral part of the recording strategy, and all photographs had scales, an identification board and directional arrow.

6.0 Results

Trench 1

- 6.1 The natural geology, 103, comprised mid brown firm silty clay. It was overlaid by a 0.70m thick alluvial layer, 102, which comprised firm mid grey silty clay. This in turn was sealed by a 0.40m thick alluvial subsoil, 101, of mid orange brown clay silt. A 0.35m thick ploughsoil, 100, formed the uppermost layer and the modern ground surface.

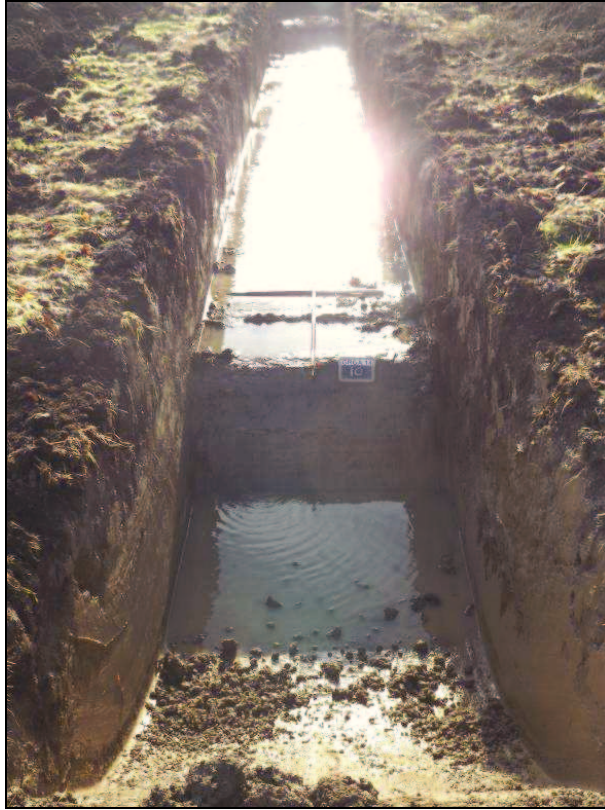


Plate 1: Trench 1 looking south. Scales are 1.00m

Trench 2

- 6.2 A layer of soft mid orange brown sand, 204, was overlaid by a 0.25m thick layer of loose pea grit gravel, 203, both deposits representing naturally occurring geological deposits. The geological deposits were sealed by a 0.35m thick alluvial layer, 202, of firm mid grey orange silty clay. This was overlaid by 0.55m thick alluvial subsoil, 201, comprising firm mid orange brown clay silt. A 0.35m thick layer of ploughsoil, 200, formed the uppermost layer and the modern ground surface.



Plate 2: Trench 2 looking south. Scales are 1.00m

Trench 3

- 6.3 The earliest deposit 301, was a natural geology of firm light to mid brownish orange sandy clay. It was sealed by layer 303, a firm dark greenish grey alluvial silt which was partially sealed at the western end of the trench a second alluvial layer, 304, which comprised firm mid brown orange silty clay. The alluvium was sealed by a 0.15m thick subsoil, 300, comprising firm mid orange brown sandy silt, which in turn was sealed by a surface, 302, consisting of a 0.35m thick layer of crushed tarmac over a sub base of concrete and rubble.



Plate 3: Trench 3 looking east-northeast. Scales are 1.00m

Trench 4

- 6.4 The natural geology, 403, comprised firm mid brownish orange sandy clay. It was sealed by an alluvial layer, 401, which was confined to the southern half of the trench and comprised firm dark greenish grey silt, possibly infilling a pond or natural hollow. This was sealed by 0.15m thick subsoil, 402, a firm mid brown sandy silt and was sealed by a 0.50m thick layer, 400, which consisted of crushed tarmac over a sub-base of concrete and rubble.



Plate 4: Trench 4 looking north-northwest. Scales are 1.00m

7.0 Discussion and Conclusions

- 7.1 Trenches 1 and 2 were devoid of archaeological finds, features or deposits. In both of these trenches, a similar sequence was recorded consisting of ploughsoil overlying a subsoil which in turn sealed an alluvial deposit covering the natural geology. The alluvial deposits are likely to be a result of the site's location in between the Rivers Eye and Welland, and as such it seems likely that the area was seasonally flooded and perhaps used for little more than summer pasture until recent land drainage made the area more suitable for permanent habitation.
- 7.2 Trenches 3 and 4 were also devoid of archaeological finds, features or deposits. Crushed tarmac overlay a subsoil in both trenches, reflecting recent levelling of the site. In Trench 3 the subsoil again overlay two distinct alluvial deposits, which sealed the natural geology, whilst in Trench 4 alluvium was confined to the southern half of the trench in an area that may have been a former pond, although the feature did not have a clearly defined cut and may equally represent a natural hollow.

8.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 8.1 The trial trenching methodology was appropriate to the nature and extent of the proposed development. It has shown that there were no archaeological features or deposits present on the site, and that the proposed development will have a negligible impact upon the archaeological resource.

9.0 Acknowledgements

9.1 Allen Archaeology Limited would like to thank Bybrook Builders Limited for this commission.

10.0 References

AAF, 2007, *Archaeological Archives: A guide to best practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation*, Archaeological Archives Forum

AAL, 2014, *Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trenching: Land off Gatehouse Lane, Great Easton, Leicestershire*, Allen Archaeology Limited unpublished planning document

Department for Communities and Local Government, 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*. London, Department for Communities and Local Government

IfA, 1994 (revised 2001 and 2008), *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations*, Institute for Archaeologists, Reading

Knight, D., Vyner, B., Allen, C., 2012, *East Midlands Heritage. An updated research agenda and strategy for the historic environment of the East Midlands*, University of Nottingham, Nottingham

LMARS, 2001, *The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service*, Leicestershire Museums Arts and Records Services

Williams A. & Martin G.H., 2002, *Domesday Book: A complete translation*, Alecto Historical Editions, London

Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Trench 1

| Context | Type | Description | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|---|------------------|
| 100 | Layer | Mid dark brown clayey silt, 0.35m thick; seals 101 | Topsoil |
| 101 | Layer | Mid orange brown clayey silt, 0.40m thick; sealed by 100 and seals 102 | Subsoil/alluvium |
| 102 | Layer | Mid greyish orange brown silty clay, 0.70m thick; sealed by 101 and seals 103 | Alluvium |
| 103 | Layer | Mid brownish grey silty clay, sealed by 102 | Natural geology |

Trench 2

| Context | Type | Description | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|---|------------------|
| 200 | Layer | Mid dark brown clayey silt, 0.35m thick; seals 201 | Topsoil |
| 201 | Layer | Mid orange brown clayey silt, 0.55m thick; sealed by 200 and seals 202 | Subsoil/alluvium |
| 202 | Layer | Mid greyish orange brown silty clay, 0.35m thick; sealed by 201 and seals 203 | Alluvium |
| 203 | Layer | Small pea grit gravel well sorted, sealed by 202 and seals 204 | Natural geology |
| 204 | Layer | Mid orangey brown sand with manganese flecks sealed by 203 | Natural geology |

Trench 3

| Context | Type | Description | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|---|-----------------|
| 300 | Layer | Mid orangey brown sandy silt, 0.15m thick; seals 304 and is sealed by 302 | Subsoil |
| 301 | Layer | Light to mid brownish orange sandy clay, 0.20m thick; sealed by 303 | Natural geology |
| 302 | Layer | Crushed tarmac and concrete hard core, 0.35m thick; seals 300 | Hard standing |
| 303 | Layer | Dark greenish grey silt, sealed by 304 and seals 301 | Alluvium |
| 304 | Layer | Mid brown orange silty clay sealed by 300 and seals 303 | Alluvium |

Trench 4

| Context | Type | Description | Interpretation |
|---------|-------|--|-----------------------|
| 400 | Layer | Crushed tarmac and concrete hard core, 0.50m thick; seals 402 | Hard standing |
| 401 | Layer | Dark greenish grey silt, sealed by 402 and seals 403 | Pond deposit/alluvium |
| 402 | Layer | Mid brown sandy silt, 0.15m thick; sealed by 400 and seals 401 | Subsoil |
| 403 | Layer | Mid brown orange sandy clay sealed by 402 | Natural geology |

Appendix 2: Figures

Figure 1: Site outlined in red

Figure 2: Plan of evaluation trenches overlaid on proposed development with possible pond shaded in black

Figure 3: Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4 representative sections

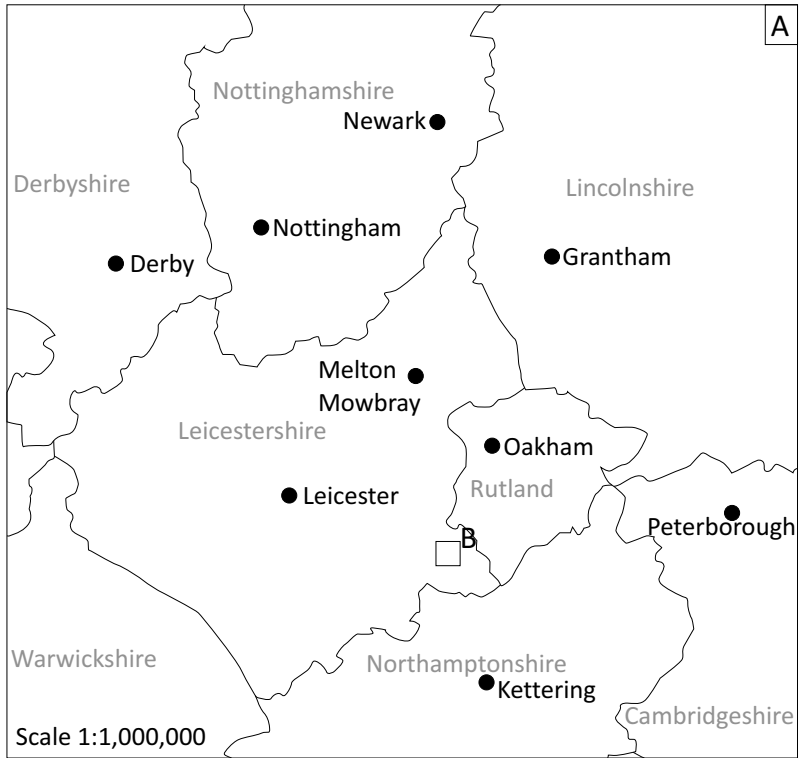
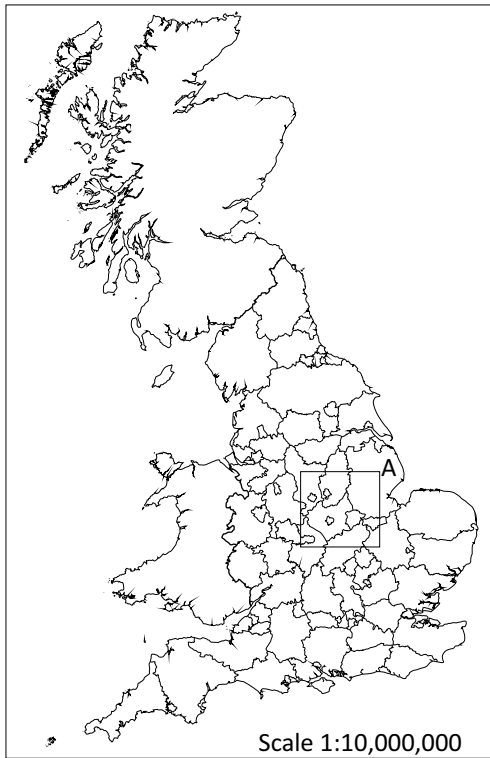


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red
 © Crown copyright 2000. All rights reserved. Licence Number 100047330

| | |
|-----------|--|
| Site Code | GRGA 14 |
| Scales | 1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | A Chapman |
| Date | 23/01/2014 |

Allenarchaeology
 Lincoln
 Birmingham
 Cambridge
 Southampton
 www.allenarchaeology.co.uk

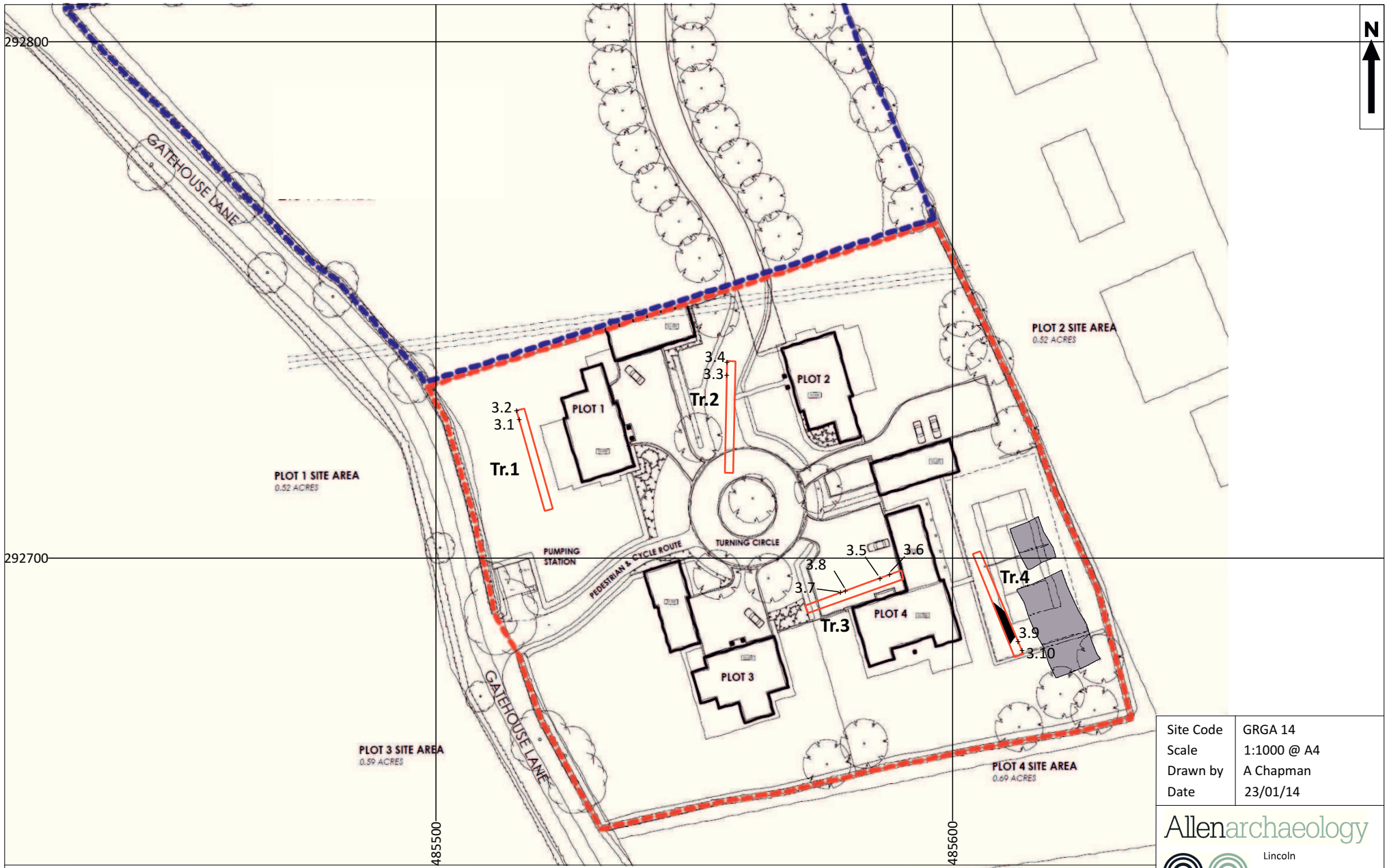
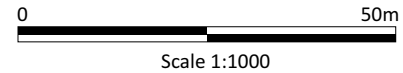


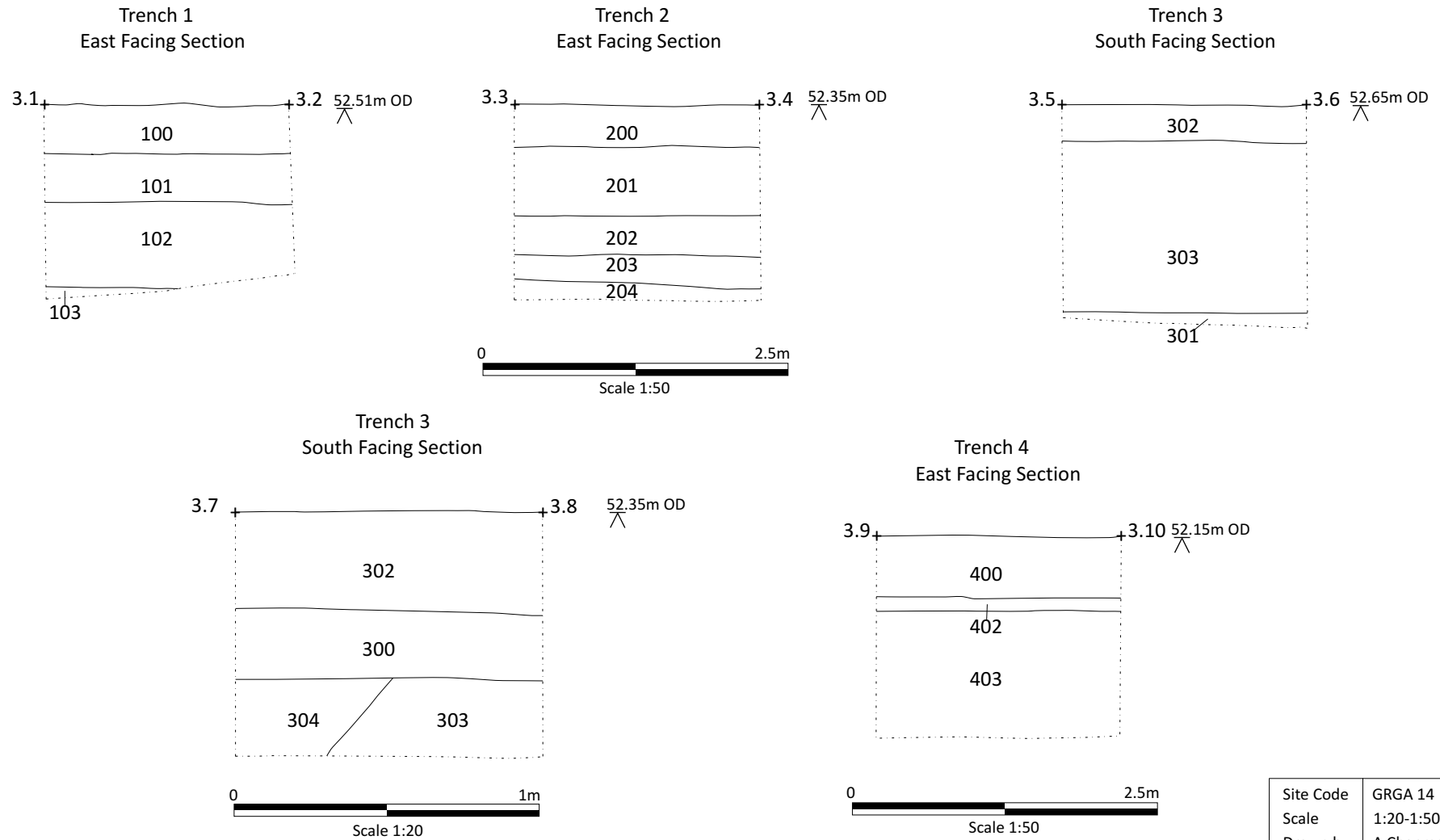
Figure 2: Plan of evaluation trenches overlaid on proposed development. Possible pond feature shaded in black.



| | |
|-----------|-------------|
| Site Code | GRGA 14 |
| Scale | 1:1000 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | A Chapman |
| Date | 23/01/14 |

Allenarchaeology

Lincoln
Birmingham
Cambridge
Southampton
www.allenarchaeology.co.uk



| | |
|-----------|----------------|
| Site Code | GRGA 14 |
| Scale | 1:20-1:50 @ A4 |
| Drawn by | A Chapman |
| Date | 23/01/14 |

Allenarchaeology

Lincoln
Birmingham
Cambridge
Southampton

www.allenarchaeology.co.uk

Figure 3: Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4 representative sections



Allen Archaeology Limited
Website: www.allenarchaeology.co.uk

Company Registered in England and Wales No: 6935529

Lincoln
Unit 1C
Branston Business Park
Lincoln Road
Branston
Lincolnshire LN4 1NT

Birmingham
Arion Business Centre
Harriet House
118 High Street
Birmingham
B23 6BG

Cambridge
Wellington House
East Road
Cambridge
CB1 1BH

Southampton
International House
Southampton International Business Park
George Curl Way
Southampton
SO18 2RZ

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 1522 794400
Email: info@allenarchaeology.co.uk

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 800 610 2545
Email: birmingham@allenarchaeology.co.uk

Tel/Fax: +44 (0) 800 610 2550
Email: cambridge@allenarchaeology.co.uk

Tel: +44 (0) 800 610 2555
Email: southampton@allenarchaeology.co.uk