

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELDWALKING REPORT:
LAND OFF SYSONBY ROAD, MELTON MOWBRAY, LEICESTERSHIRE

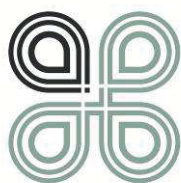
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AAL Site Code: MESY 13
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Report prepared for Leicestershire County Council

By
Allen Archaeology Limited
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Allenarchaeology



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Executive Summary

- A fieldwalking survey was undertaken by Allen Archaeology Limited within nine fields off Sysonby Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. The work was commissioned by Leicestershire County Council and was undertaken to support a planning application for a residential development.
- Approximately 11ha was surveyed, comprising mainly recently sown fields. The remainder of the proposed development area was not surveyable as it was either under pasture or farm buildings were located there.
- A total of 38 artefacts made of glass or ceramic were recovered during the survey. Apart from one small sherd of Roman pottery the dating ranged between medieval to early modern.
- There were no obvious concentrations of artefacts from the survey, suggesting a low level of activity in the wider landscape, with no evidence of pre-Roman activity. The medieval and post-medieval material is most likely to represent the result of manuring of fields on the periphery of the settlement. This is confirmed by the results of the geophysical survey, which identified evidence for medieval ridge and furrow throughout the site.

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Allen Archaeology Limited (hereafter AAL) was commissioned by Leicestershire County Council to undertake a programme of fieldwalking on land to the northwest off Sysonby Road in Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire.
- 1.2 The site works and reporting will conform to current national guidelines as set out in the Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluations*' (IfA 1994, revised 2001 and 2008), the English Heritage document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (English Heritage 2006), and a generic brief prepared by the Historic and Natural Environment Team (HNET) at Leicestershire County Council.

2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The site is located within the parish of Melton Mowbray, in the administrative district of Melton Borough Council, approximately 21km northeast of central Leicester and 28km southeast of Nottingham (Figure 1). Sysonby Farm is located 2.1km north-northwest of the centre of Melton Mowbray and is centred on NGR SK 7442 2120. The site comprises an irregular shaped area of agricultural land and farm buildings which covers a total area of 40.04 hectares.
- 2.2 The bedrock geology is variable and comprises Charmouth Mudstone Formation in the southern half of the site and Dyrham Formation Siltstone and Mudstone in the northern half. Overlying superficial deposits of Oadby Member Diamicton are recorded across the site with localised areas of Head indicated within two shallow glacial valleys (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>), which run across the site from north-northeast to south-southwest. At its highest the site is c.130m above Ordnance Datum and at its lowest it is c. 110m OD.

3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 The proposed development entails a residential development of the site, although the number of dwellings or layout has not yet been finalised, as it is intended to submit an outline application in due course. As a first stage of archaeological investigation, a desk based assessment has been prepared for the scheme (AAL 2013). This identified a significant archaeological potential, due to the possibility of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery extending into the site, with evidence for prehistoric Roman and medieval activity nearby. Following consultation with the Principal Planning Archaeologist (HNET), a programme of non-intrusive survey was requested, comprising the current fieldwalking survey, and a geophysical survey.
- 3.2 The relevant planning policy which applies to the effect of development with regard to cultural heritage is Chapter 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Department for Communities and Local Government 2012). The current strategy is in line with the recommendations of this document.

4.0 Archaeological Background

- 4.1 The preceding desk-based assessment contained a detailed discussion of the sites archaeological setting, and this is summarised below.
- 4.2 Prehistoric and Roman activity in the area is restricted to a small number of findspots, including a Neolithic flint arrowhead, a Roman coin, a scatter of Roman pottery and painted plaster, and a number of cropmarks of later prehistoric or Roman date.
- 4.3 There is a 19th century reference to the discovery of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery during gravel digging. The precise location of this find is unclear, but the activity may extend into the northwest corner of the site.
- 4.4 Evidence for medieval activity is limited, and the site was probably within the agricultural hinterland of Melton Mowbray. The scheduled earthworks of the medieval Sysonby Grange are 250m to the west of the site.
- 4.5 The Grade II Listed 19th century hunting lodge at Sysonby Lodge is adjacent to the southern edge of the site, and the northern part of the site was used as an airfield in World War One.

5.0 Methodology

- 5.1 The fieldwalking survey was undertaken by a team of two experienced field archaeologists. The collection sample comprised a 20% sample of the areas available for survey, achieved by means of a series of 2m wide collection traverses at 10m spacing.
- 5.2 In each collection traverse artefacts were collected from the ground surface and placed within plastic bags each marked with a unique sequential numerical identifier. The location of each find spot was recorded by handheld GPS using a Garmin eTrex10, providing sub-metre accuracy.
- 5.3 A selective artefact recovery policy was adopted based on the following criteria. All pottery sherds, excluding obviously modern fabrics, were retained. All worked flints and worked stone were to be retained if discovered. Modern brick, tile and ceramic land drain were not retained. No animal bone was to be kept, unless worked, due to the problem of dating unstratified material.
- 5.4 All metal objects were to be collected, other than obviously modern material.

6.0 Results

- 6.1 The ground conditions varied across the site, with Fields 1 – 6 comprising pasture and scrub with a 0% visibility, so were not surveyed. Fields 7 – 9 had either been very young crops evident with a 70 – 100% visibility recorded, so were suitable for fieldwalking (Figure 2).
- 6.2 A total of 38 artefacts were collected during the fieldwalking survey (Figure 3). The assemblage comprised: one Roman pottery sherd, one sherd of medieval pottery, five sherds of late medieval to early post medieval pottery, 28 sherds of post-medieval pottery as well as two glass fragments of late post-medieval date. No animal bone, worked flints or stone or metalwork were noted or recovered.

Prehistoric

- 6.3 No finds were recovered dating to any prehistoric periods.

Roman

- 6.4 A single small sherd of Roman pottery was discovered on site which says very little about any such activity at and around the site.

Anglo-Saxon

- 6.5 No finds were recovered dating to the Anglo-Saxon period.

Medieval

- 6.6 A small number of medieval pottery sherds were recovered across the site. The earliest find was a strap handle dating to mid 12th century to 14th century. There were four Midland Purple Ware of late 14th to 16th century date and two sherds of Cistercian-type ware of late 15th to 16th century date.

Post-medieval

- 6.7 Most of the finds recovered from site were of post-medieval date and comprised either glass or pottery.
- 6.8 The earliest artefact was a sherd from a Black-glazed drinking vessel dating to the mid 16th-17th century. The other 27 sherds were mainly of 17th to 19th century date and comprised fragments of Black-glazed and Brown-glazed earthenware jars and bowls. The two glass fragments were from two wine bottles of late post-medieval date.
- 6.9 Post-medieval artefacts represent the largest assemblage of material from the site and included pottery, glass, ceramic building material (CBM, e.g. brick and tile) and clay pipe. The majority of the material was recovered from the northern half of Field 7 (See Figure 3); however the volume was low and is more likely to reflect episodes of manuring of fields with domestic waste from the town to the southeast.

7.0 Discussion

- 7.1 The finds assemblage recovered during the fieldwalking survey was small in number given the size of the site, and provided no evidence of prehistoric activity. A single sherd of Roman pottery provides no clues to contemporary activity in the local landscape.
- 7.2 The greatest quantity of finds were of medieval and later date, and are very likely to be the result of manuring of fields with assorted domestic detritus gathered and deposited by the residents of the town. This hypothesis is supported by the results of the geophysical survey that show clear evidence for medieval ridge and furrow throughout the site.

8.0 Conclusions

- 8.1 Overall, the results of the fieldwalking survey suggest a limited archaeological potential, with no obvious concentrations of finds from any period.

9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

- 9.1 The fieldwalking methodology was appropriate to the nature and extent of the project forming as it did part of a program of archaeological works being undertaken to assess the archaeological potential of the site.

10.0 Acknowledgements

- 10.1 Allen Archaeology Ltd would like to thank Leicestershire County Council for this commission.

11.0 References

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Appendix 1: Finds List

Find ID	Easting	Northing	Type	Date	Period	Field
A001	474624	321117	Clay Pipe discarded	n/a	Post-medieval	7
A002	474668	321102	Pot	Mid 18th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A003	474766	321075	Pot	Mid 16th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A005	474826	321056	Pot	Late 14th to 16th	Medieval	7
A006	474820	321048	Pot	Mid 16th to mid 18th	Post-medieval	7
A007	474822	321047	Shell discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A008	474837	321035	Flint (natural) discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A009	474800	321047	Stone discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A010	474749	321073	Pot	Mid 16th to mid 18th	Post-medieval	7
A011	474766	321059	Flint (natural) discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A012	474766	321059	Pot	Mid 18th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A013	474772	321054	Pot	18th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A014	474788	321041	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A015	474808	321006	Pot	18th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A016	474807	321007	Bone discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A017	474807	321007	Clay Pipe discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A018	474735	321062	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A019	474725	321071	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A020	474716	321078	Slag discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A021	474676	321094	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A022	474720	321061	Pot	Late 14th to 16th	Medieval	7
A023	474761	321030	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A024	474782	321013	Glass	Late 18th	Post-medieval	7
A025	474787	321009	Pot	Mid 18th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A026	474766	321010	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A027	474581	321143	? discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A028	474662	321058	Pot	Mid 16th to 17th	Post-medieval	7
A029	474696	321033	Pot	Late 15th to 16th	Medieval	7
A030	474701	321030	Clay Pipe discarded	n/a	Post-medieval	7
A031	474749	320994	Pot	Roman	Roman	7
A032	474783	320968	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A033	474699	320995	Pot	Mid 16th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A034	474603	321045	Shell discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A035	474631	321021	Pot	Mid 16th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A036	474637	321017	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A037	474679	320985	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A038	474698	320971	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A039	474751	320933	Bone discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A040	474619	321004	Clay Pipe discarded	n/a	Post-medieval	7
A041	474734	320855	Pot	Mid 16th to 19th	Post-medieval	7

Find ID	Easting	Northing	Type	Date	Period	Field
A042	474681	320893	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
A043	474894	321041	Shell discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A044	474878	321030	Pot	Late 15th to 16th	Medieval	8
A045	474930	320942	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	8
A046	474913	320945	Shell discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A047	474925	320874	Pot	Mid 18th to 19th	Post-medieval	8
A048	474908	320846	Bone discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A049	474753	320833	Pot	Mid 12th to 14th	Medieval	7
A050	474820	320809	Bone discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A051	474862	320807	Iron nail discarded	n/a	Modern	9
A052	474962	320809	Bone discarded	n/a	n/a	7
A053	474903	320774	Clay Pipe discarded	n/a	n/a	9
A054	474887	320773	Pot	Mid 16th to 19th	Post-medieval	9
B060	474644	321091	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
B061	474692	321051	Pot	Late 14th to 16th	Medieval	7
B062	474699	320961	Slag discarded	n/a	n/a	7
B063	474668	320957	Stone discarded	n/a	n/a	7
B064	474715	320858	Pot	Late 17th to 19th	Post-medieval	7
B065	474922	320883	Pot	Late 14th to 16th	Medieval	8
B066	474886	320830	Glass	18th to 19th	Post-medieval	9

Appendix 2: Ceramic Finds Archive

By Anne Irving

The Pottery

Introduction

All the material was recorded at archive level in accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski *et al.* (2001). A total of 36 sherds from five vessels, weighing 1,093 grams was recovered from the site.

Methodology

The material was laid out and viewed in context order. Sherds were counted and weighed by individual vessel within each context. The pottery was examined visually and using x20 magnification. This information was then added to an Access database. An archive list of the pottery is included in Table 2.1. The pottery dates to the medieval, post-medieval and early modern periods. A single sherd is Roman.

Results

Table 2.1, Pottery Archive

Cxt	Cname	Full name	Form	NoS	NoV	W (g)	Description	Date
A002	LERTH	Late Earthenwares	Jar/ bowl	1	1	14		Mid 18th to 19th
A003	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	Jar/ bowl	1	1	3		Mid 16th to 19th
A005	MP	Midlands Purple ware	?	1	1	5		Late 14th to 16th
A006	BL	Black-glazed wares	?	1	1	2		Mid 16th to mid 18th
A010	BL	Black-glazed wares	?	1	1	16		Mid 16th to mid 18th
A012	LERTH	Late Earthenwares	?	1	1	5	BL or BERTH	Mid 18th to 19th
A013	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jar	1	1	34	Upright rounded rim	18th to 19th
A014	BL	Black-glazed wares	Hollow	1	1	6		Late 17th to 19th
A015	BL	Black-glazed wares	Bowl	1	1	44	Rounded rim	18th to 19th
A018	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jar/ bowl	1	1	17		Late 17th to 19th
A019	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jar/ bowl	1	1	29	Rounded rim	Late 17th to 19th
A021	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jar/ bowl	1	1	17		Late 17th to 19th
A022	MP	Midlands Purple ware	Jug	1	1	34	Strap with central hollow; Ticknall?	Late 14th to 16th
A023	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jug/ jar	1	1	78	Burnt; ?ID	Late 17th to 19th
A025	LERTH	Late Earthenwares	Garden pots	1	1	6		Mid 18th to 19th
A026	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jug/ jar	1	1	16	Burnt; ?ID	Late 17th to 19th
A028	BL	Black-glazed wares	Drinking vessel	1	1	11		Mid 16th to 17th
A029	CIST	Cistercian-type ware	Drinking vessel	1	1	15	Wrenthorpe?	Late 15th to 16th
A031	GREY	Miscellaneous Grey ware	Small jar/ bowl	1	1	6		Roman
A032	BL	Black-glazed wares	Bowl	1	1	51	Long everted rim	Late 17th to 19th
A033	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	Jug/ jar	1	1	15		Mid 16th to 19 th
A035	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	Jar/ bowl	1	1	21		Mid 16th to 19th
A036	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jar	1	1	51	Square rim	Late 17th to 19th

Cxt	Cname	Full name	Form	NoS	NoV	W (g)	Description	Date
A037	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jar	1	1	13		Late 17th to 19th
A038	BL	Black-glazed wares	Bowl	1	1	34	Complex everted	Late 17th to 19th
A041	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	Jug	1	1	42		Mid 16th to 19th
A042	BL	Black-glazed wares	Bowl	1	1	111	Everted rim	Late 17th to 19th
A044	CIST	Cistercian-type ware	Jug	1	1	69		Late 15th to 16th
A045	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jar	1	1	47		Late 17th to 19th
A047	LERTH	Late Earthenwares	Jar	1	1	61	Ticknall?	Mid 18th to 19th
A049	BOUA	Bourne-type Fabrics A, B, C, E, F and G	Jug	1	1	76	Strap with central hollow; finger pressed UHJ	Mid 12th to 14th
A054	BERTH	Brown glazed earthenware	Jar	1	1	14		Mid 16th to 19th
B060	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jug/ jar	1	1	81		Late 17th to 19th
B061	MP	Midlands Purple ware	?	1	1	7		Late 14th to 16th
B064	BL	Black-glazed wares	Jar/ bowl	1	1	12	Round everted rim	Late 17th to 19th
B065	MP	Midlands Purple ware	Jar/ bowl	1	1	30	Burnt; overfired; waster?; ID?	Late 14th to 16th

Potential

All of the pottery is suitable for long-term storage. No further work is required on the assemblage.

Abbreviations

BS	Body sherd
CBM	Ceramic Building Material
CXT	Context
LHJ	Lower Handle Join
NoF	Number of Fragments
NoS	Number of sherds
NoV	Number of vessels
UHJ	Upper Handle Join
W (g)	Weight (grams)

References

~ 2001, *Draft Minimum Standards for the Recovery, Analysis and Publication of Ceramic Building Material*, third version [internet]. Available from <<http://www.geocities.com/acbm1/CBMGDE3.htm>>

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Appendix 3: Glass Report

By Mike Wood

Introduction

Two fragments of glass weighing 90g were recovered during fieldwalking on land at Sysonby Farm, Melton Mowbray

Methodology

The material was counted and weighed in grams, then examined visually to identify any diagnostic pieces and the overall condition of the assemblage. Reference was made to published sources (Davis 1973, Dumbrell 1983). A summary of the material is recorded in Table 3.1.

Assemblage

Context	Form	Colour	Date	Shds	Wt (g)	Comments
A024	Wine bottle	Completely iridescent	L18th	1	66	Cylindrical bottle base with the remnant of a deep, wide kick. Heavily battered, chipped and iridescent.
B066	Wine bottle	Green	18 th -19 th	1	24	Heavily abraded and scarred glass.

Table 3.1 Glass

Discussion

The assemblage contained two fragments of heavily abraded and iridescent wine bottles, which exhibits considerable evidence of fracturing, presumably post-depositional. As late 18th to 19th century finds from ploughsoil, this is of little value for further study.

Recommendations for further work

No further work is recommended and the artefact can be returned to the landowner or be discarded.

References

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Dumbrell, R., 1983, *Understanding Antique Wine Bottles*. Baron Publishing Suffolk

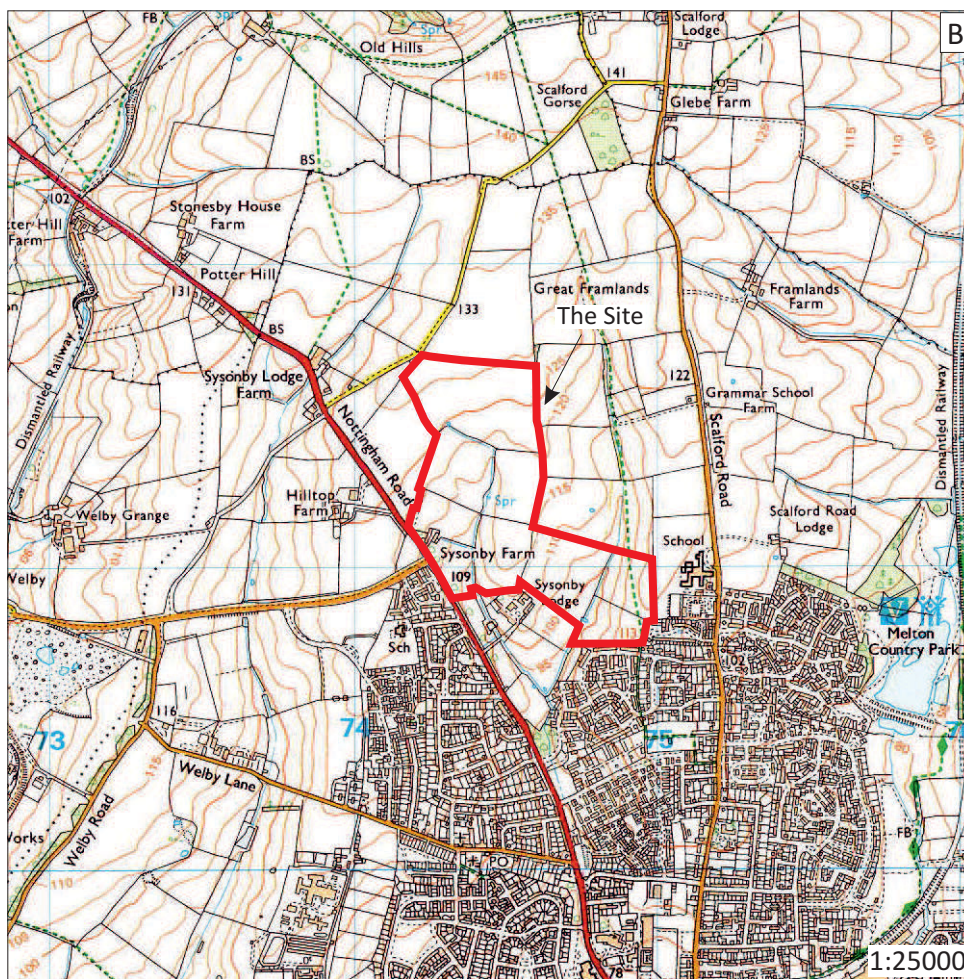
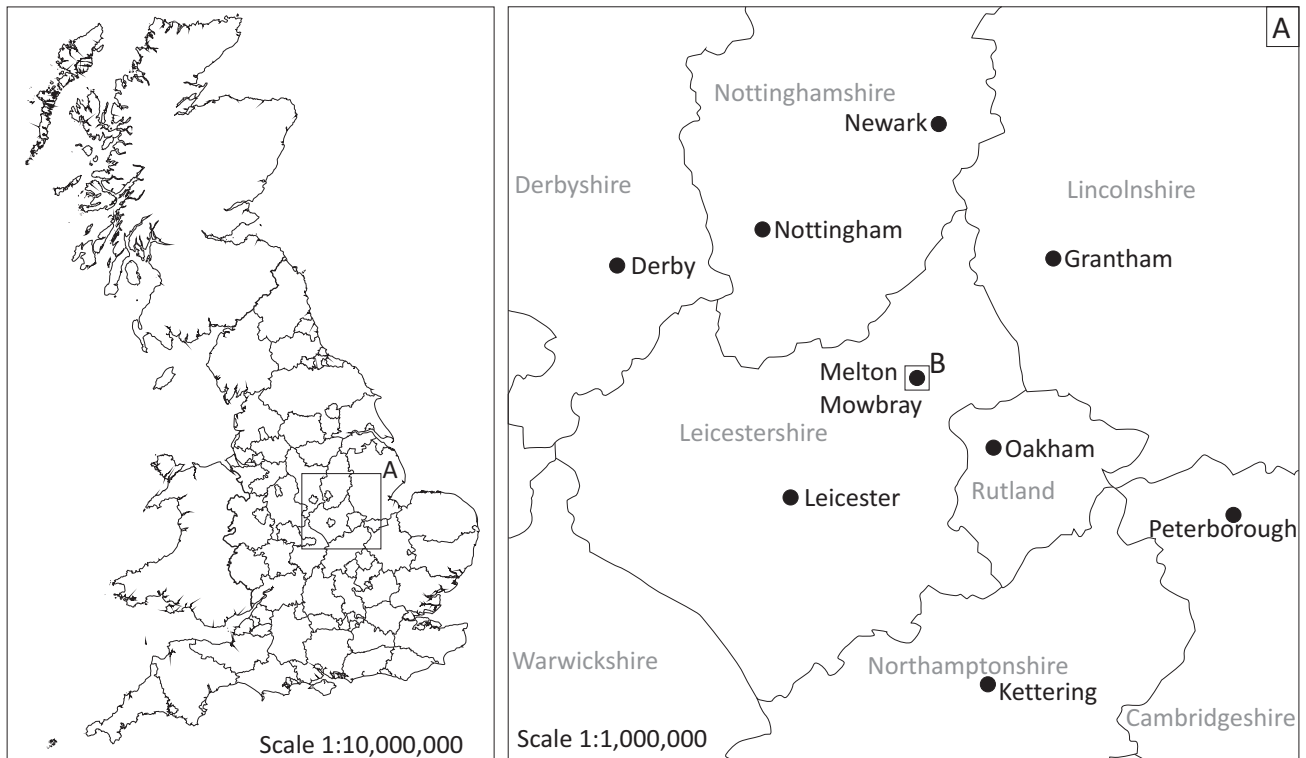


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

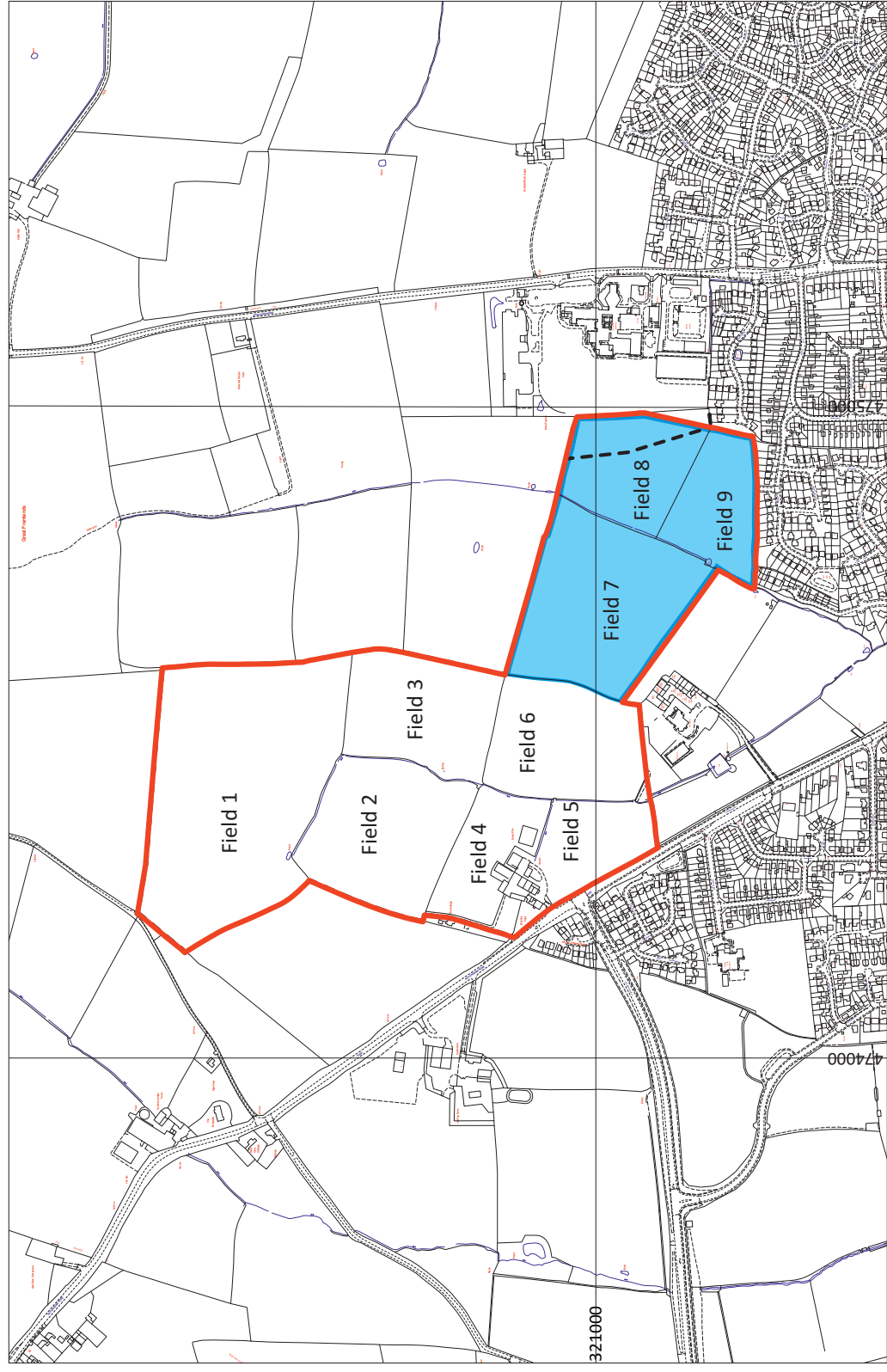
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Site Code	MESY 13
Scales	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	R Evershed
Date	30/01/2014

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Key



Site Location



Area Fieldwalked

0

400m

Scale 1:10,000

Site Code
MESY 13

Scale
1:10,000 @ A4

Drawn by
Robert Evershed

Date
30/01/14

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Lincoln

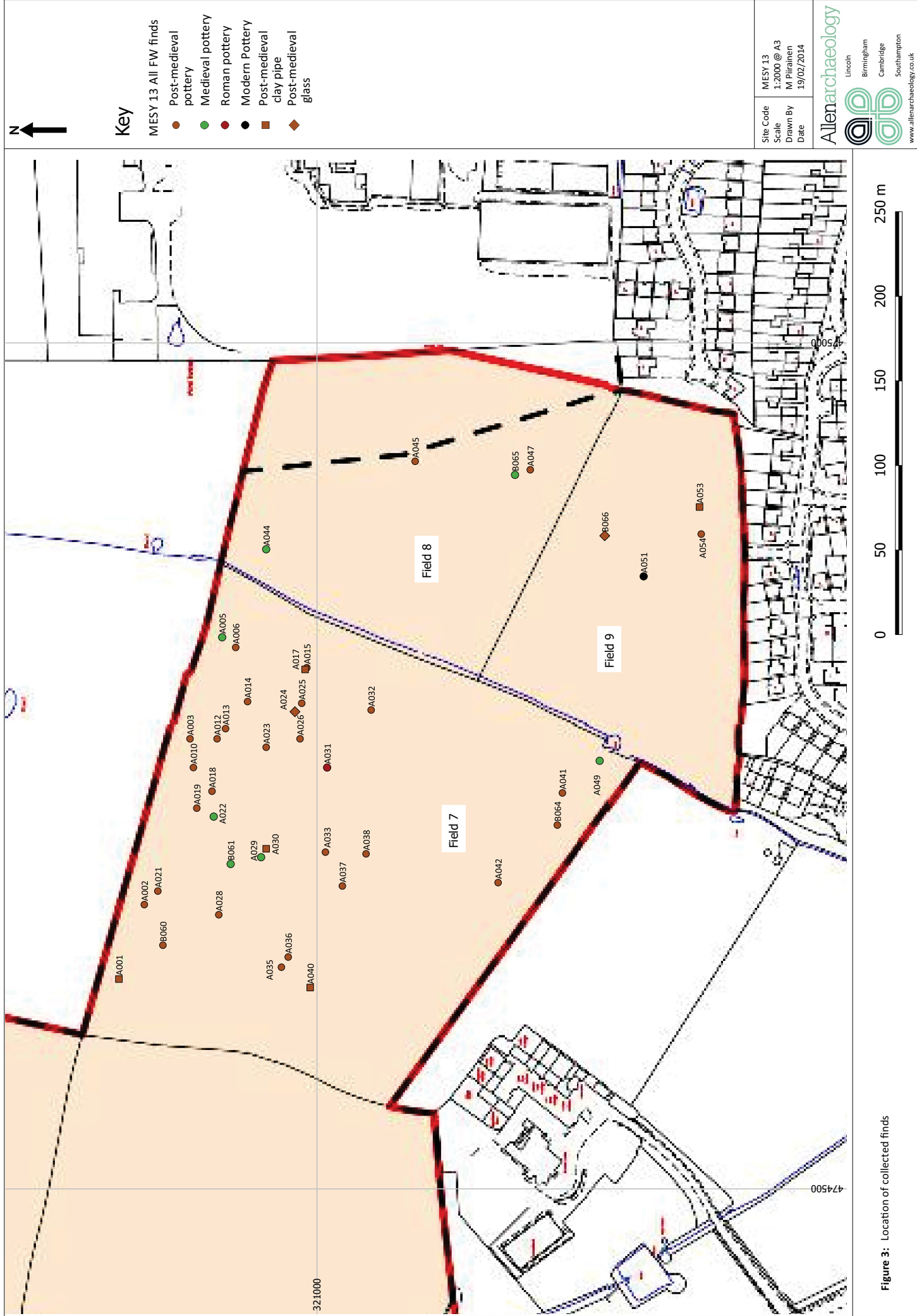
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Figure 2: Location of surveyed fields







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