

**Land north of Cliffhill Lane, Aslockton, Rushcliffe,
Nottinghamshire, NG13 9AP**

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Planning Ref:	16/00733/OUT
PCAS Site code:	CLAE 16
PCAS Job No.:	1614
OASIS ref:	preconst3-240691

Prepared for
Oxalis Planning

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Non-Technical Summary

This document presents the results of a scheme of archaeological trial trenching on land north of Cliffhill Lane, Aslockton. The report will be used in conjunction with previous evaluation results, geophysical survey, a desk-based assessment and a map regression to inform a forthcoming planning application for residential development.

The site lies on the northern periphery of the village, on the north side of Cliffhill Lane. Aerial photography and archaeological investigations have identified a complex of cropmarks and features north of the village relating to prehistoric and Roman occupation. The scheduled remains of the medieval Crammers Mound and associated features lie to the south.

The trenching was based on a geophysical survey of the site, and revealed ditches that generally corresponded with identified linear magnetic anomalies; thought to relate to field boundaries seen on historic mapping. One large ditch did not correspond with any mapping, nor did it feature as a magnetic anomaly. The remains of ridge and furrow were identified across the site.

Dating evidence was limited; a single sherd each of Roman grey ware, Saxon Torksey ware and a later post-medieval sherd associated with a fragment of CBM of the same date. These artefacts are thought to be trace evidence of activity in the wider landscape; residual in later features.

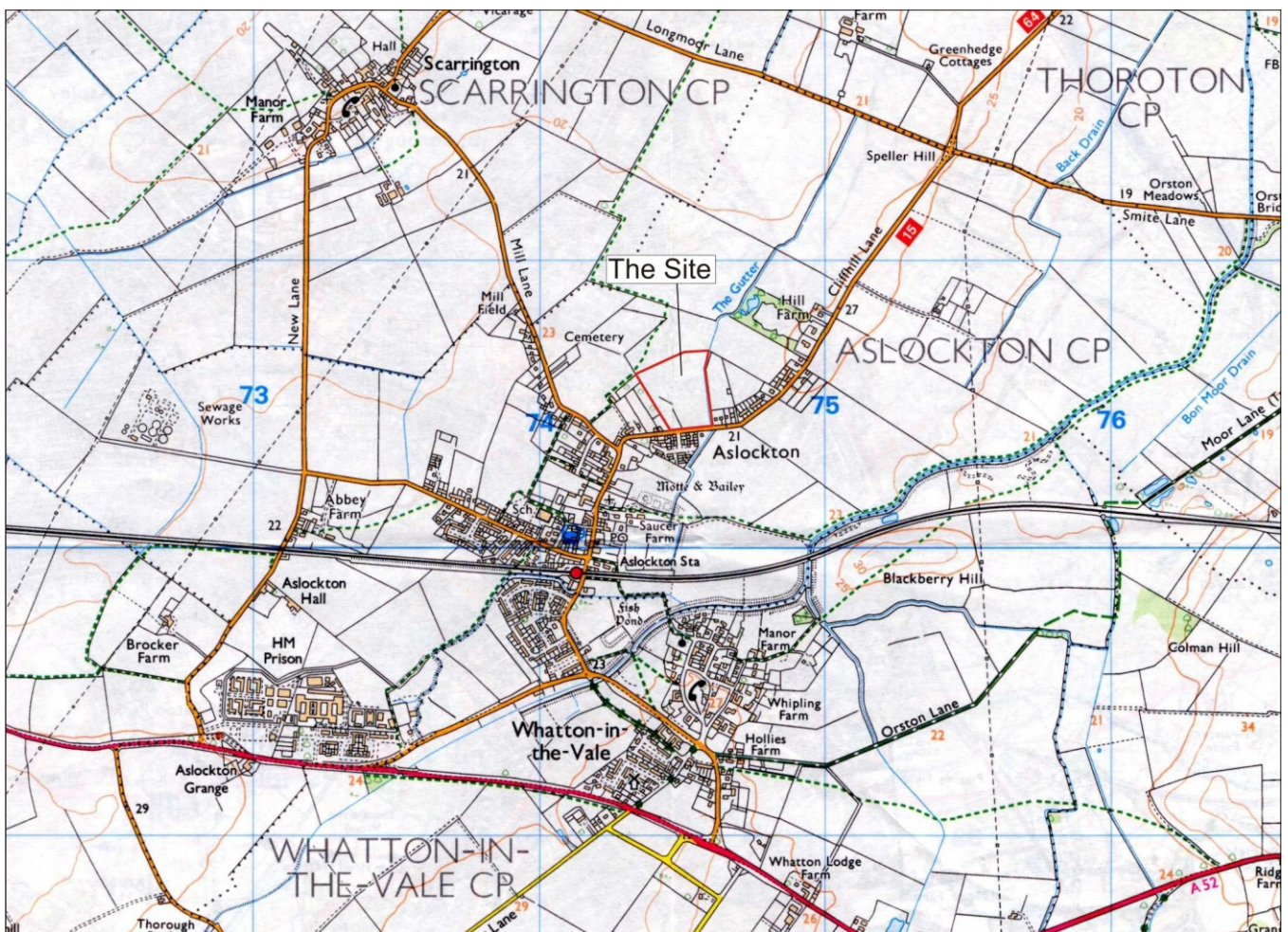


Figure 1: Site location at scale 1:25,000. Site indicated in red. (OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278).

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS) was commissioned by Oxalis Planning to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the north of Cliffhill Lane, Aslockton, Nottinghamshire, to inform a planning application for residential development. Geophysical survey and previous trenching had indicated an archaeological potential, however further trenching was recommended by the County Archaeologist for Nottinghamshire County Council to inform any archaeological mitigation strategy.

This document follows current best practice and national guidance, including:

- NPPF, National Planning Policy Framework, 2012;
- ClfA Code of Conduct (2014 as revised);
- ClfA Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations (2014);
- Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE v1.1, English Heritage 2009)
- Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook (Lincolnshire County Council, 2010).

2.0 Site Location and Description (Fig. 1)

Aslockton is a village and civil parish in the Rushcliffe district of Nottinghamshire. It lies on the north side of the A52 around 4km east of Bingham and the A46. It primarily centres around Main Street and Mill Lane / Cliffhill Lane, which give access from the A52 to the rural villages to the north. The East Midlands Train line between Nottingham and Skegness runs east-west through the settlement.

The site is on the north side of the modern village, to the north of Cliffhill Lane which branches northeast from Main Street towards Thoroton and Orston. The southern boundary of the site is Cliffhill Lane, with rural farmland occupying much of the land to the north, east and west.

The area of the site is given as c.4.62 hectares; two fields fronting onto Cliffhill Lane, and the southern half of a large field to the north. All were previously in use as arable farmland. The site boundary is irregular and historic, with the north boundary excluding the northern half of the larger field where significant cropmarks of enclosures and trackways have been identified. There are two potential access points to the site from Cliffhill Lane.

The site is approximately centred on NGR SK 74488 40561.

3.0 Topography and Geology

The bedrock geology of the proposed site is of the Branscombe Mudstone Formation which is a sedimentary bedrock formed circa 200-217million years ago in the Triassic era. The local environment of the Triassic was that of hot dry deserts with a low potential for precipitation.

The overlying deposits are River Terrace Deposits (undifferentiated) - Sand and Gravel. These were formed from rivers depositing mainly sand and gravel detrital material in channels to form terrace deposits, with fine silt and clay from overbank floods forming floodplain alluvium, and some bogs depositing peat; includes estuarine and coastal plain deposits mapped as alluvium. This evaluation has also identified the gradual introduction of alluvial silts from the south, where BGS records Alluvium as the overlying superficial deposits.

Trenching recorded modern topsoil and subsoil layers sealing the site, with topsoils around 0.30m thick, and subsoils varying in depth.

The site is fairly level at around 21m OD.

4.0 Planning Background

The site to the north of Cliffhill Lane is currently being considered for residential development under planning application ref. 16/00733/OUT.

An initial geophysical survey and archaeological evaluation trenching report were submitted in support of a previous application, however the Senior Archaeological Officer for Nottinghamshire County Council (advising Rushcliffe Borough Council) stated the results of this work, while determining the presence of a complex sequence of deposits on the site, did not result in a body of information sufficient to inform and advise a planning application, or for devising any future scheme of archaeological mitigation. Therefore further survey and trenching were required to further investigate the site.

This requirement is consistent with current planning policy, the National Planning Policy Framework (2012), which states:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. ... Where a site on which development is proposed includes or has the potential to include heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation (Paragraph 128, NPPF, 2012).

This scheme of trenching aims to further investigate the geophysical anomalies on the site, and to more fully investigate and understand the complex of features and deposits identified in the first phase of trenching.

5.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

An archaeological desk-based assessment collating the known archaeological monuments around the site was produced by ULAS (Hunt, 2014) and submitted with the outline planning application.

A number of early prehistoric worked flints have been recovered during fieldwalking to the west of the site; however these were not associated with any known cut features. Within the site itself, there is a complex of cropmarks recorded on aerial photographs that indicate the presence of a number of enclosures and to the north a possible trackway (L1513/M1513), with cropmarks extending westwards towards the findspots of the prehistoric flints (PastScape ref: 321965 & 321912). Iron Age and Roman pottery have also been recovered in these areas during investigations, with features indicating habitation from the Neolithic through to the Roman period, including a probable Iron Age settlement, identified in the early 1990's during a watching brief in this area (PastScape ref. Aslockton).

Settlement at Aslockton village is believed to commence in the Post-Roman period. The place name derives from the Old Scandinavian name Aslacr and the Old English tun, suggesting a Viking influence (Mills, 1993), although at least one burial described as Saxon was discovered somewhere off Mill Lane to the west of the site in the late 19th century (PastScape ref: 321894) which may infer an earlier date on the settlement.

Aslockton is home to the scheduled remains of Cramners Mound, an early medieval motte which was later reused as a prospect mound overlooking later medieval fishponds, enclosures, a trackway and ridge and furrow earthworks, all of which are included in the scheduling (List entry ID 1009306). The motte is small, indicating the early medieval tower, probably built soon after the Norman Conquest, was also small. Its modern name is derived from the association with Thomas Cramner, Archbishop of Henry VIII in the 16th century, who

was born in the Aslockton manor house which lay in the historic core of the village, c.400m southwest of the site (PastScape ref: 321901). The medieval motte and later earthwork features lie c.200m south of the site, on the eastern edge of the village.

A second scheduled site, a moated enclosure with associated features, lies to the south of the village (List entry ID 1008260), probably dating from the late 13 – early 14th century. The parish church of St. John of Beverley also lies on the south side of the modern village, a Grade II* 14th century building.

There are ridge and furrow earthworks in the fields to the east of the site (Google Earth images).

An initial phase of geophysical survey and evaluation took place in conjunction with the application for outline planning permission for the site. The results were somewhat mixed; confirming the presence of archaeological remains, although the results did not provide a sufficient body of data to advise the planning process.

The first evaluation consisted of nine 50m trenches, dispersed across the site to investigate cropmarks and anomalies. Eight of these trenches lay within the current application area, five of which contained cut archaeological features. The revealed remains included undated pits and gullies (mainly the southern trenches), and in Trench 8 on the north edge of the current site a substantial ditch c.1.20m deep corresponded with cropmarks identified on aerial mapping of a probable enclosure. The only dating evidence from this ditch comprised three flint fragments, identified as being Mesolithic – Neolithic flakes and a knife blade, however the dating of this feature is uncertain as two sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from a pit that was stratigraphically earlier than the ditch (Pascoe, 2015).

A second geophysical survey undertaken by Pre-Construct Geophysics in late 2015 yielded clearer results, with features interpreted as ridge and furrow and field boundaries being clearly identifiable across the majority of the site. The cropmark features remained vague as magnetic anomalies, and a dense area of disturbance of unknown origin lay in the central area of the site (Figure 2).

A map regression shows the site was formally enclosed in the late 18th century, when it was divided into smaller plots by field boundaries, the majority of which have since been removed (Lane, 2016b)

6.0 Methodology (Fig.2)

The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (Lane, 2016a) approved by the Senior Archaeologist for Nottinghamshire County Council.

Four evaluation trenches, each 30mx2m, were originally proposed to investigate the archaeological potential of the site. Two of these were positioned to further investigate a possible enclosure ditch and other potentially associated anomalies on the northern boundary of the site, with two further trenches excavated in the central and southern areas of the site where no previous trenching had been undertaken. Trenches were located using GPS according to the approved trenching plan based on the geo-referenced geophysics (Bunn, 2015).

After opening and investigating these trenches, the Senior Archaeological Officer for NCC advised that a fifth trench was required, to confirm the results of the previous evaluation in relation to the current project. Thus a small “L” shaped trench was opened to the east of Trench 2 to correspond with the recorded position of Trench 8 of the first phase of archaeological intervention (Pascoe, 2015).

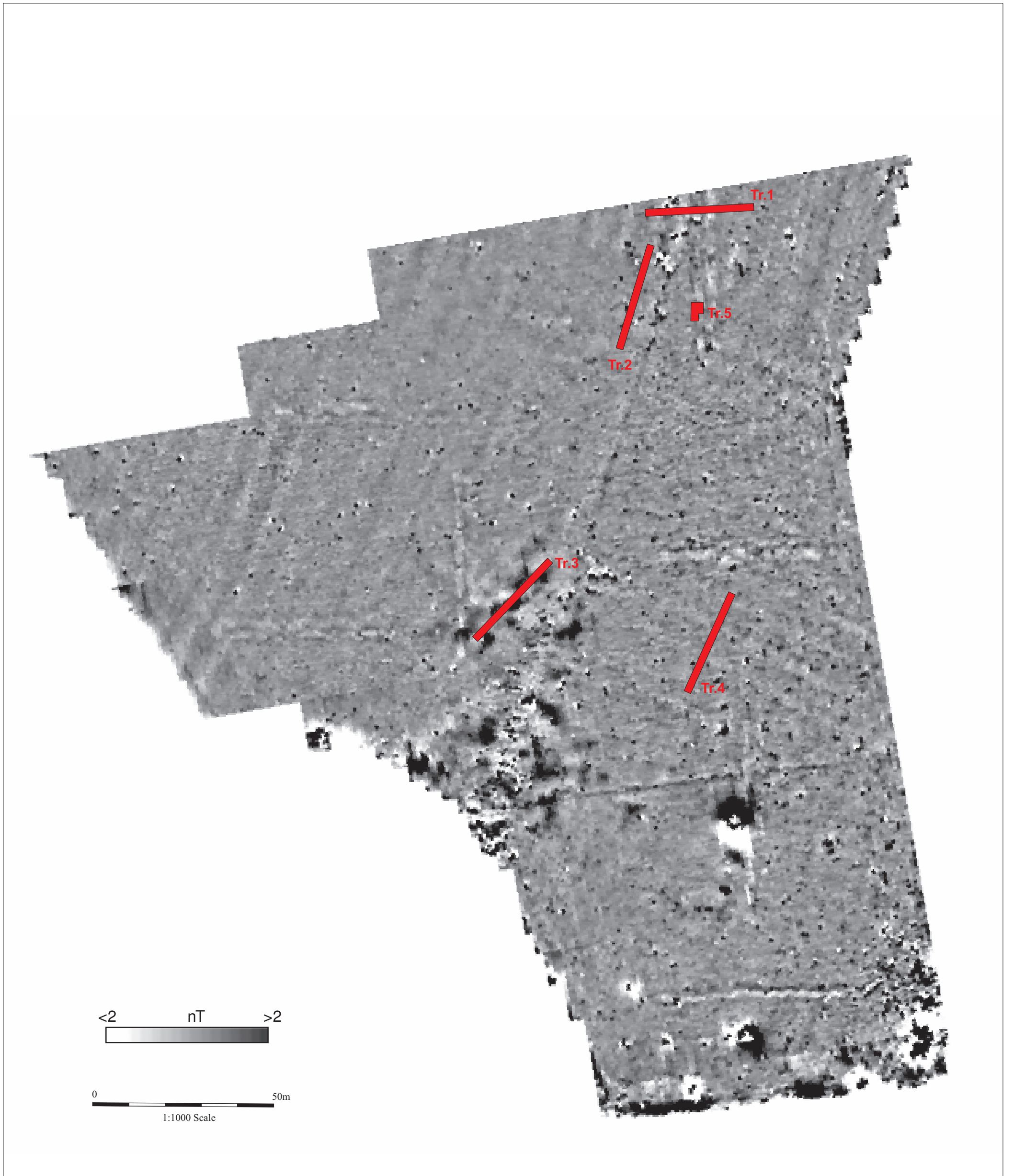
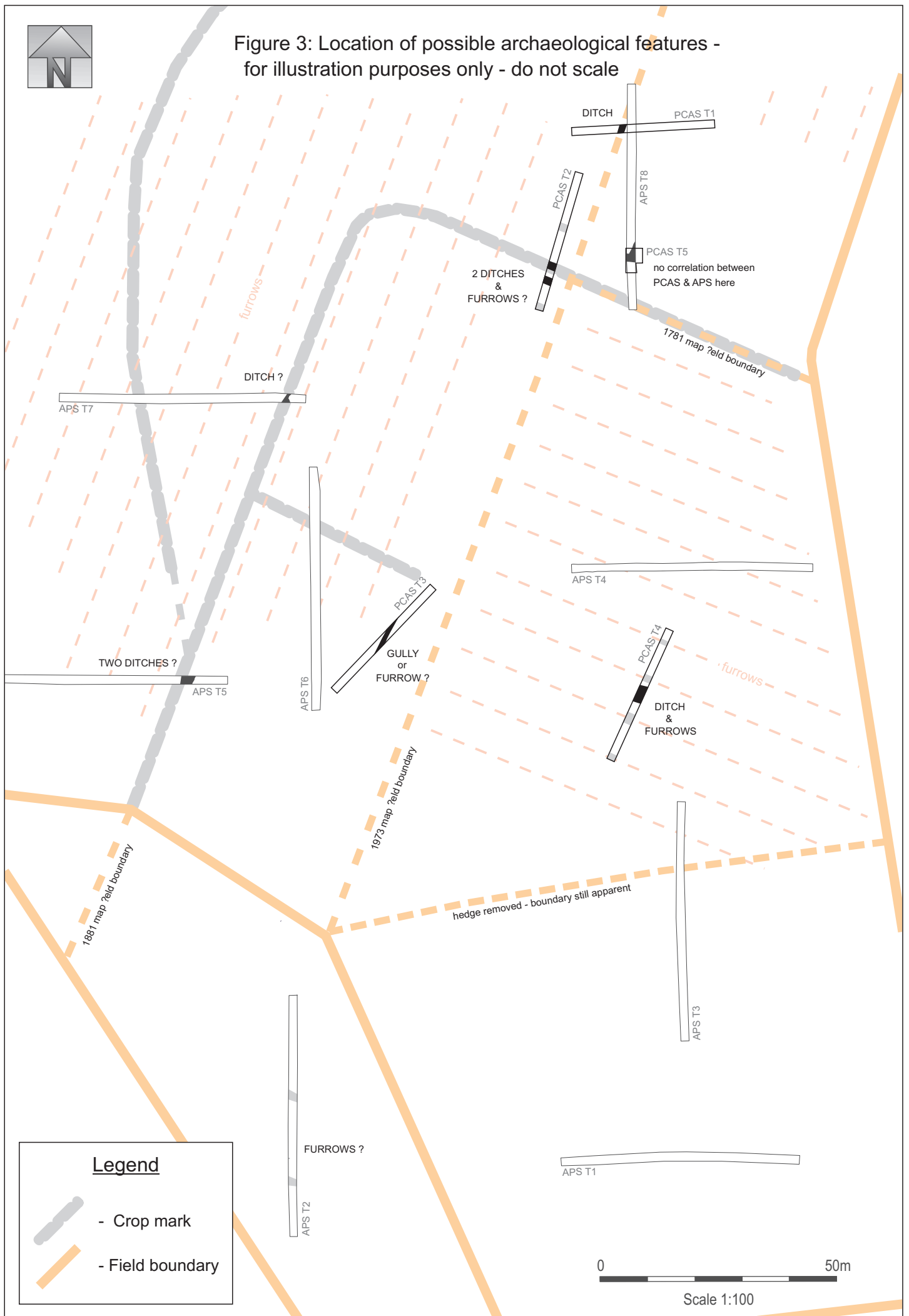


Figure 2: Trenching plan for second phase of evaluation. Based on greyscale geophysics (Bunn, 2015). 1:1000 @ A3



Figure 3: Location of possible archaeological features -
for illustration purposes only - do not scale



All trenches were opened using a JCB fitted with a wide, smooth bladed bucket, under archaeological supervision. Machine excavation ceased at the first archaeologically significant layer or the natural geology. Trenches were cleaned by hand, with all encountered archaeological features defined and sample excavated.

Where identified, archaeological features were examined sufficiently to determine their date, character and survival condition and then recorded by measured plan (1:100) and section drawings (1:20), incorporating Ordnance Survey datum heights surveyed in using GPS.

A written record of each significant stratigraphic horizon and archaeological feature was made on standard PCAS context recording forms. These were supplemented by a narrative account in the form of a site diary.

A digital photographic record was maintained during the course of the archaeological intervention.

All artefacts were treated in accordance with UKIC guidelines, *First Aid for Finds* (Watkinson & Neale 1998). All artefacts encountered during the groundworks were retrieved and returned to PCAS offices for cleaning, marking and in-house assessment and subsequent dispatch to external specialists.

Archaeological fieldwork was undertaken by M. Rowe, between 10/2/16 – 23/2/16.

7.0 Results (Fig. 3-8)

Trench 1 (Fig. 4)

Northernmost of the trenches, lying on a c.E-W alignment on the northern boundary of the site and intercepting a NNE-SSW geophysical linear anomaly, and the north end of APS Trench 8. Encountered a single undated ditch, corresponding with a geophysical anomaly.

The earliest horizon, encountered at a depth of c.0.40m, was mixed yellowish brown sandy gravel, dark grey sand and silty gravel (103), identified as natural river terrace deposits.

Into this a single cut feature was identified. A ditch, on a c. NNE-SSW alignment, with moderately steep sides and a flat base, was encountered just off centre of the trench. It contained a single fill of mid-dark brown sandy/silty loam with occasional gravel inclusion. This feature was observed in section to be cut through the subsoil. It remains undated, but its position corresponds with a linear anomaly identified by geophysics, which in turn corresponds with a field boundary established in the late 18th century when the parish was enclosed. This field boundary remained in place throughout the 19th and early 20th century.

The natural deposit was sealed by a thin layer of subsoil (102). This was slightly deeper at each end of the trench which may tentatively indicate the presence of ploughed out medieval / post-medieval furrows in this area.

Trench 2 (Fig. 5)

Trench 2 lay parallel to the geophysical anomaly identified in Trench 1, positioned to intercept a linear feature seen on the geophysical survey which roughly corresponded to a historic field boundary and a cropmark recorded on the Nottinghamshire Historic Environment Record. Two parallel ditches were encountered, one of which contained dateable artefacts.

Trench 2 lay on a NNE-SSW alignment to the southwest of Trench 1. The earliest horizon encountered comprised the river terrace deposits (203) as seen in Trench 1, although at a depth of c.0.65m below existing ground level and sealed by a thin lens of alluvial silt.

Figure 4: Trench 1 plan (1:100) and section (1:20)

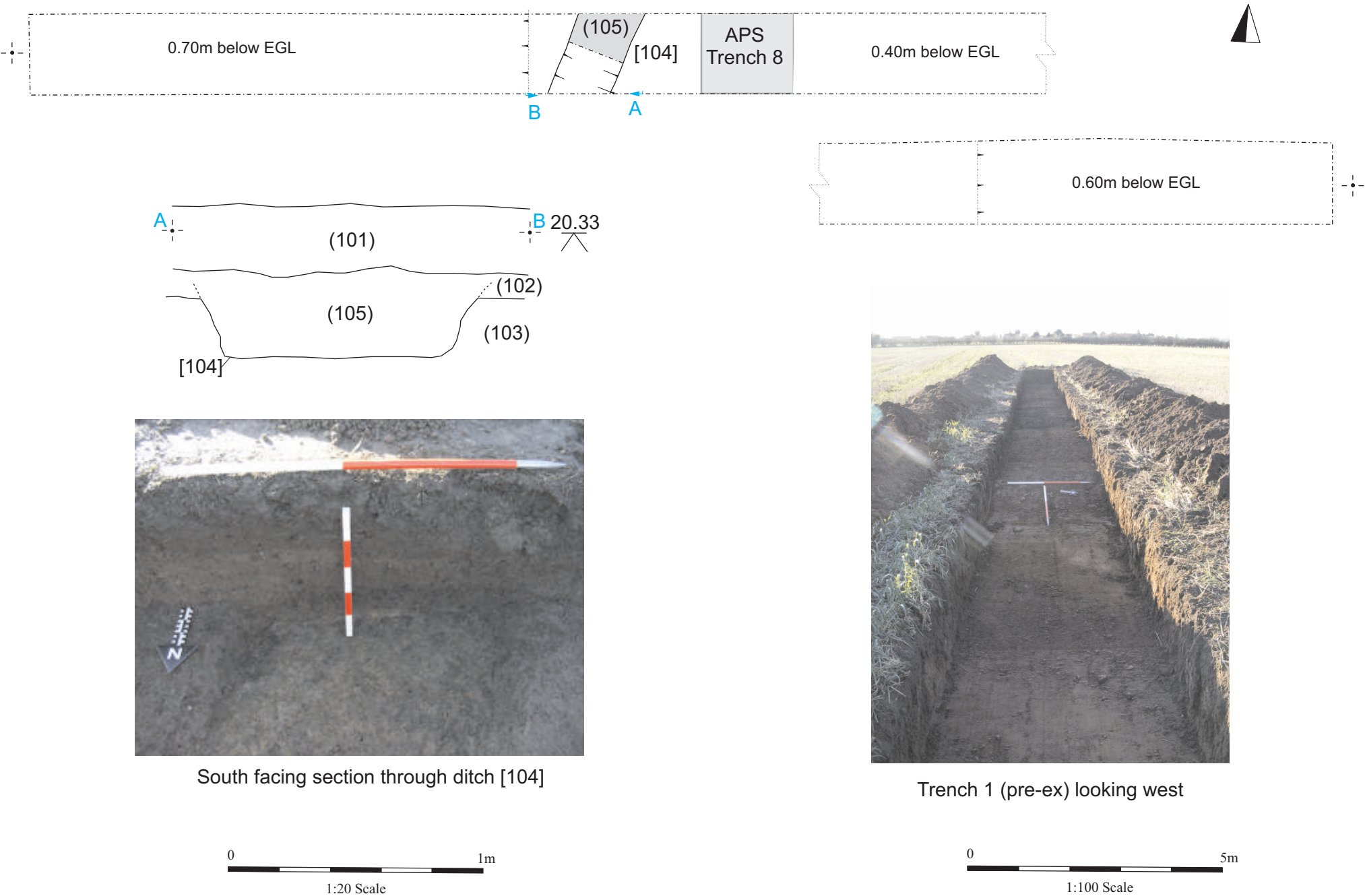
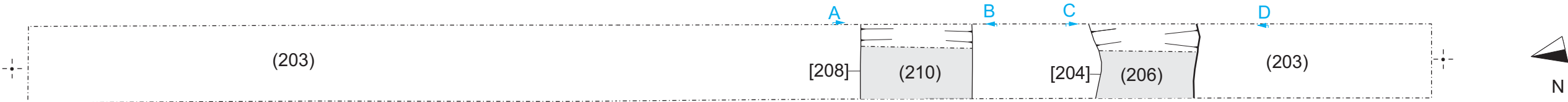


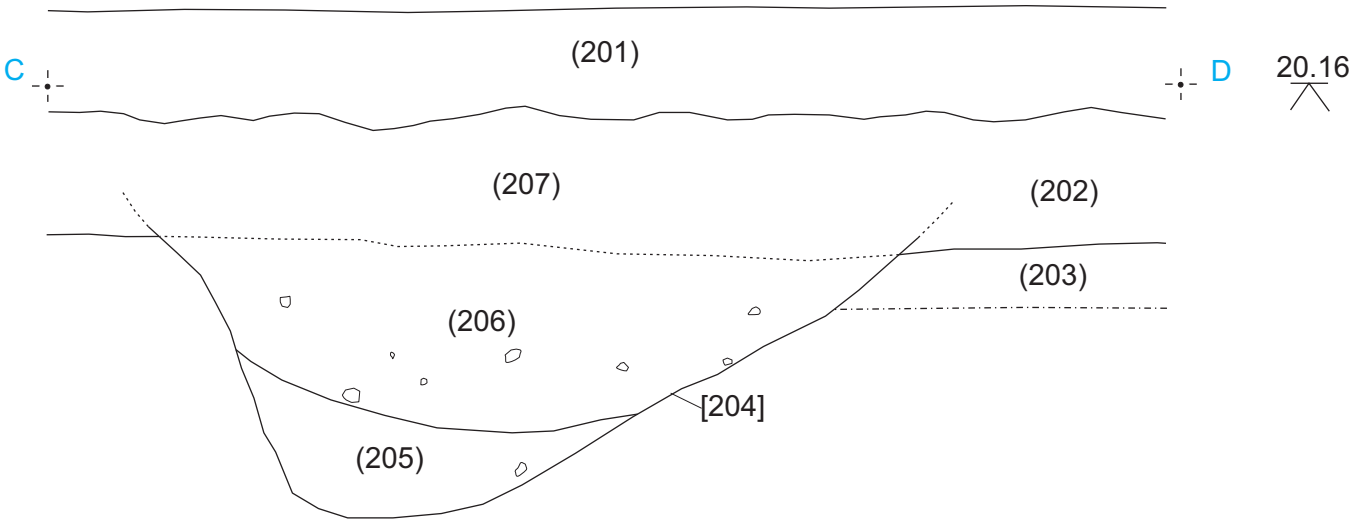
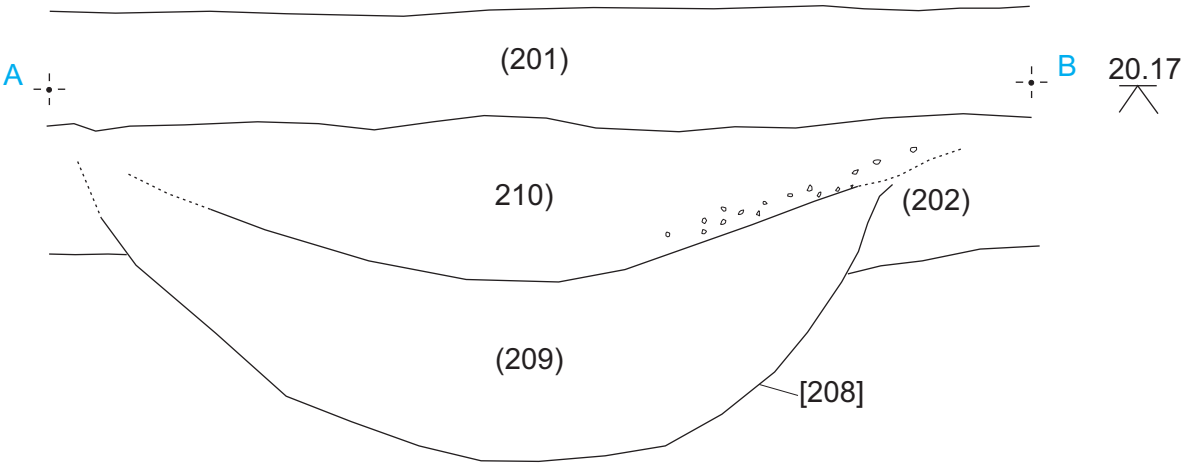
Figure 5: Trench 2 plan (1:100) and sections (1:20)



West facing section through ditch [208]



West facing section through ditch [204]



Two wide parallel ditches were cut into the natural geology at the south end of Trench 2. Both had moderately sloping sides and wide concave bases, however the southernmost of the two, [204], had a more irregular profile than the northern ditch [208]. The cut of both features was visible within the subsoil, but there was no direct physical relationship between them.

Ditch [204] contained three fills; (205) the lowest comprised a dark sandy silt with lighter lenses, interpreted as water-borne sediments and natural erosion of the ditch sides. An environmental sample taken from this contained very few diagnostic remains; only two small fragments of oak charcoal were identified as potentially historic while there were common roots and straw/chaff in the sample. This was covered by a slightly lighter sandy silt (206) with occasional gravel inclusions, from which a small number of fragments of abraded animal long bone was recovered. The presence of the gravels is suggestive of a higher energy deposition than the sediments below, or of natural deposition from the surrounding gravelly soils. The upper fill of ditch [204] was similar to the subsoil, a slightly grey sandy silt (207), with the full extent of the cut not being clear due to the similarities.

Ditch [208] was wider and deeper, and contained two fills. The lower fill (209) was a mid greyish brown fine silt, with increasing sand towards the top. The character of this indicates this horizon was deposited gradually by natural silting processes. A fragment of a post-medieval floor tile and a single sherd of Staffordshire type Brown Stoneware, both dating from the late 17th – 19th century, were recovered from (209). The ditch was sealed by (210) which, as with the upper fill, was very similar to the recorded subsoil, with the upper part of the cut being indefinable due to the similarities.

The trench was sealed by reddish brown subsoil (202), and modern ploughsoil (201). A single sherd of Roman greyware pottery was recovered from the subsoil around Trench 2 indicating Roman activity in the vicinity, although without further evidence this cannot be assumed as dating evidence for either of the features exposed in this trench.

Trench 3 (Fig. 6)

Trench 3 lay towards the centre of the site where the magnetic variation was very mixed, but linear anomalies interpreted as former field boundaries all approach this area. A ditch on a c.N-S alignment was revealed, from which a single sherd of pottery was recovered.

The earliest horizon encountered in Trench 3 was the natural geology. Towards the south end of the trench the mixed sands and gravels (304) of the river were exposed; at the north end of the trench the gravels were sealed by alluvial silts (303) which occurred in bands across the trench.

A single cut feature was revealed: ditch [305] on a c.N-S alignment towards the centre of the trench with moderately steep sides and a concave base. The ditch was clearly cut through the natural alluvium (303), but the relationship with subsoil (302) could not be confirmed. The ditch contained a single fill (306) of light grey brown fine silts and clay with occasional gravels, and a single sherd of Torksey ware pottery dating from the mid 9th – mid 11th century.

Trench 4 (Fig. 7)

Trench 4 lay towards the eastern boundary of the site in an area where the geophysical survey indicated probable ridge and furrow. The furrows were confirmed, and a large undated ditch on a slightly different alignment was revealed.

The natural geology was consistent with that encountered in Trench 3; river-terrace sand and gravel (404) overlain with natural alluvium (403), encountered only at the southern end of the trench.

The figure consists of several parts: a site plan at the top, a north arrow, a cross-section of ditch [305], a representative section of Trench 3, and two photographs of the trench.

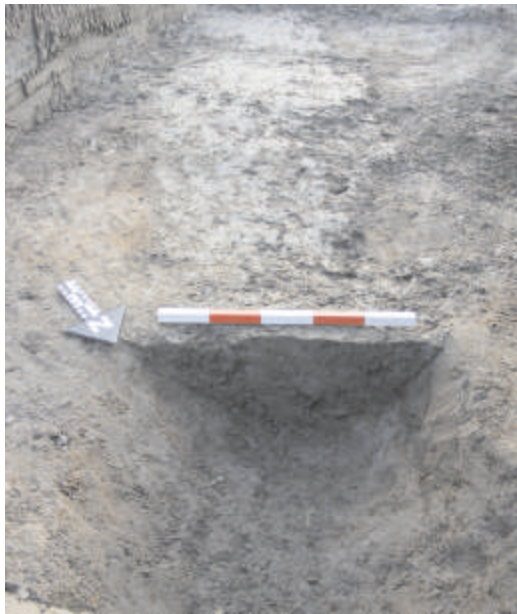
Site Plan: A dashed-line plan of the trench area. It shows a long, narrow feature labeled (304) at the top. Below it, a series of features are labeled (305), (306), (303), (304), (303), (304), and (303). A blue line labeled [305] runs through the trench, with points A, B, C, and D marked. A north arrow is located in the top right corner.

Cross-section of ditch [305]: A profile view showing the ditch [305] with a depth of 19.51. The ditch is labeled (306) and (305). Points A and B are marked at the top of the ditch.

Representative section Trench 3: A profile view showing the trench with a depth of 20.14. The trench is labeled (301), (302), (303), and (304). Points C and D are marked at the top of the trench.

Photographs: Two photographs of the trench. The left photograph shows a north-facing section of ditch [305] with a scale bar. The right photograph shows a view looking north along ditch [305], with a scale bar and a note: "Looking north along ditch [305]. Note the bands of alluvium/gravels in the background."

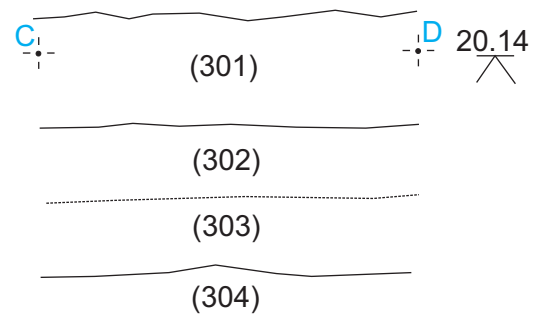
Scales: The left photograph has a scale of 1:20. The right photograph has a scale of 1:100.



North facing section ditch [305]



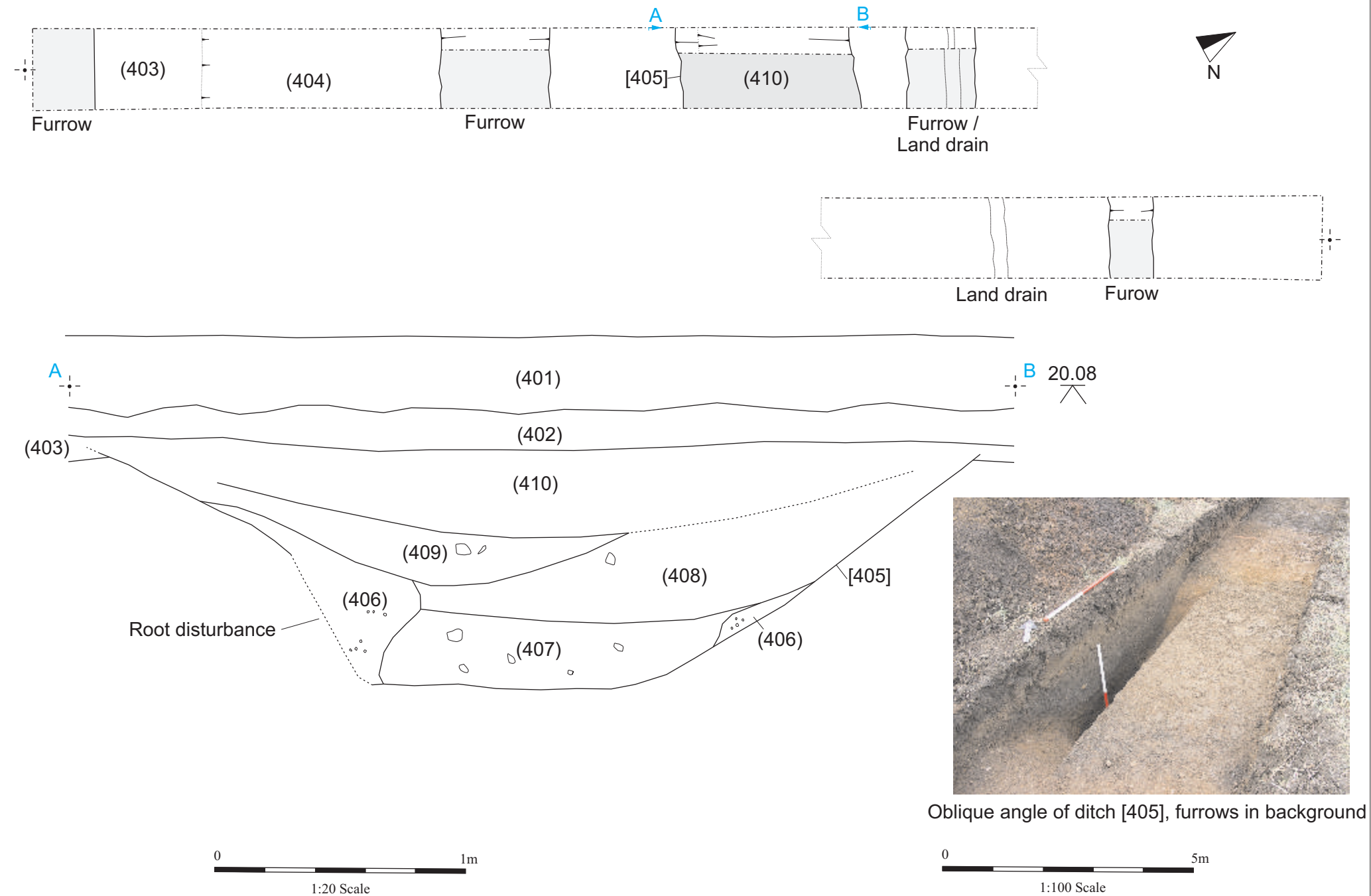
Above: N facing section through ditch [305].
Below: Representative section Trench 3.



Looking north along ditch [305].
Note the bands of alluvium/gravels in the background.



Figure 7: Trench 4 plan (1:100) and section (1:20)



Four furrows were identified: orientated on the NW-SE alignment indicated by the geophysical anomalies, the furrows lay c.8-9m apart along the length of the trench with diffuse horizons with the natural alluvium and subsoil. The position of the furrows was marked on the trench plan and the features sample excavated to confirm their identification. One of the furrows had a 19th – 20th century land drain laid along its length.

Ditch [405] lay towards the centre of the trench. It was c.3.50m wide and nearly 1.0m deep, with moderately steep sides and a wide flat base. There was considerable disturbance to the lower part of the cut resulting from root disturbance or water percolation while the feature was open. Tree roots were found in disturbance at the base of this feature, confirming this interpretation.

The ditch contained five fills. Fill (406) was the result of slumping and the disturbance towards the base of the feature. Fill (407) lay at the bottom of the ditch, a mottled sandy silt with frequent gravel which may be water bourne or washed in from the sides of the feature during the course of natural silting. An environmental sample was taken from this feature, however the resulting flot was minimal containing trace amount of clinker, charcoal (identified as oak) and two fragments of hazel shell. The horizon was sealed by silty sand (408), which also contained occasional gravel inclusions, and a small number of fragments of abraded animal bone, identified as large mammal long bone, were recovered from this horizon. The fine silt (409) was found in a natural hollow within the ditch above (408), with the silty sand (410) covering and levelling the feature.

The horizons between the upper fills of the ditch were diffuse, but the horizon with the sealing subsoil (402) over the ditch was relatively clear. The modern topsoil covering the trench was c.0.30m thick.

Trench 5 (Fig. 8)

Trench 5 was excavated on the recommendation of the Senior Archaeologist for NCC to investigate a pit and ditch recorded in Trench 8 of the prior trenching. The trench was located according to the available information, however only natural geology was encountered.

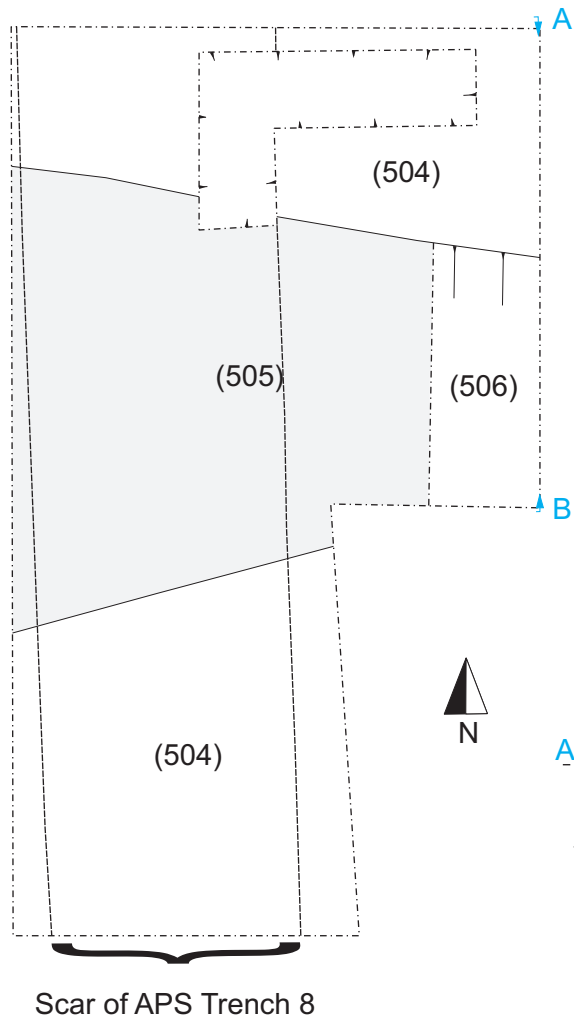
Trench 5 was “L” shaped and orientated and positioned to intercept Trench 8 of the prior evaluation (Pascoe, 2015), to further investigate a pit and ditch that had previously been identified. The trench position was identified based on the overlain trenching plans.

The trench encountered a varying natural at c0.60m below existing ground level. Bands of mottled grey brown sandy gravel (505) and the sandy river terrace deposits (504) & (506) encountered in Trenches 1 & 2 were recorded, with the mottled sandy gravel being interpreted as a variation in the terraces resulting from the natural deposition of water-borne deposits rather than evidence of a cut feature. This was sealed by a layer of alluvium (503) which had a very diffuse horizon with the subsoil / furrow feature (502) above.

The possible furrow (502) deposit was very similar to the alluvium deposit at the north end of the trench, but contained occasional gravels unlike the clean alluvial silt. It was interpreted on site as a possible furrow as in section it appears to lie on the same alignment as other furrows seen in this evaluation, however it may simply be a slight change in the subsoil characteristics.

Trench 5 was sealed by c.0.30m of modern topsoil.

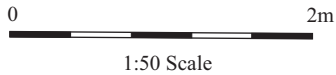
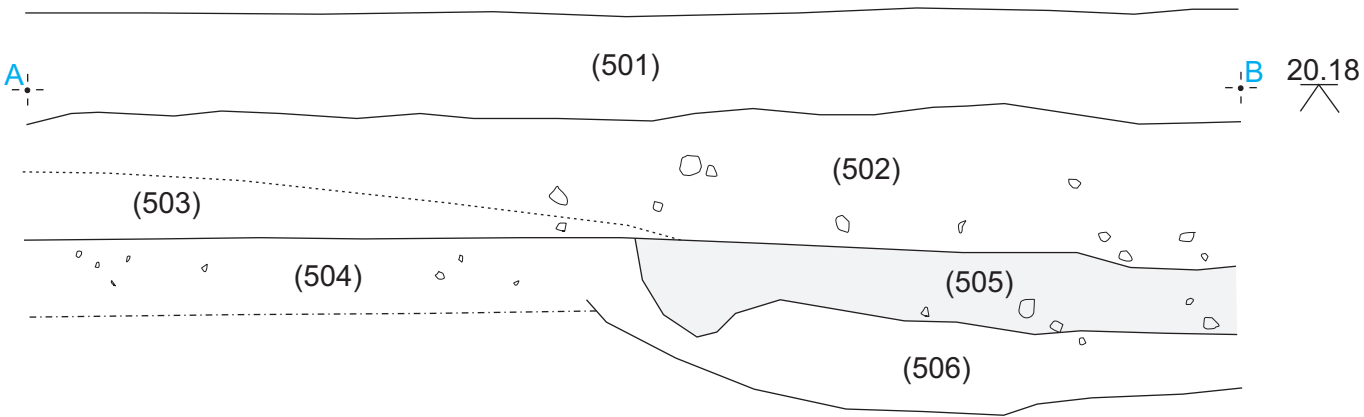
Figure 8: Trench 5 plan (1:50) and section (1:20)



Trench 5 in plan



Trench 5 west facing section



8.0 Discussion and Conclusion

The majority of the geophysical linear anomalies that feature in the site correspond with field boundaries shown on the enclosure map (Fig.9), which in turn corresponds with a selection of the cropmarks identified from aerial photographs (Fig. 10). The evaluation confirmed the presence of low density archaeological remains, the majority of which correspond with the mapped features.



Figure 9: Sketch plan showing cropmarks and positions of APS and PCAS trenches roughly overlain on extract from enclosure map 1781. See also map regression (Lane, 2016)

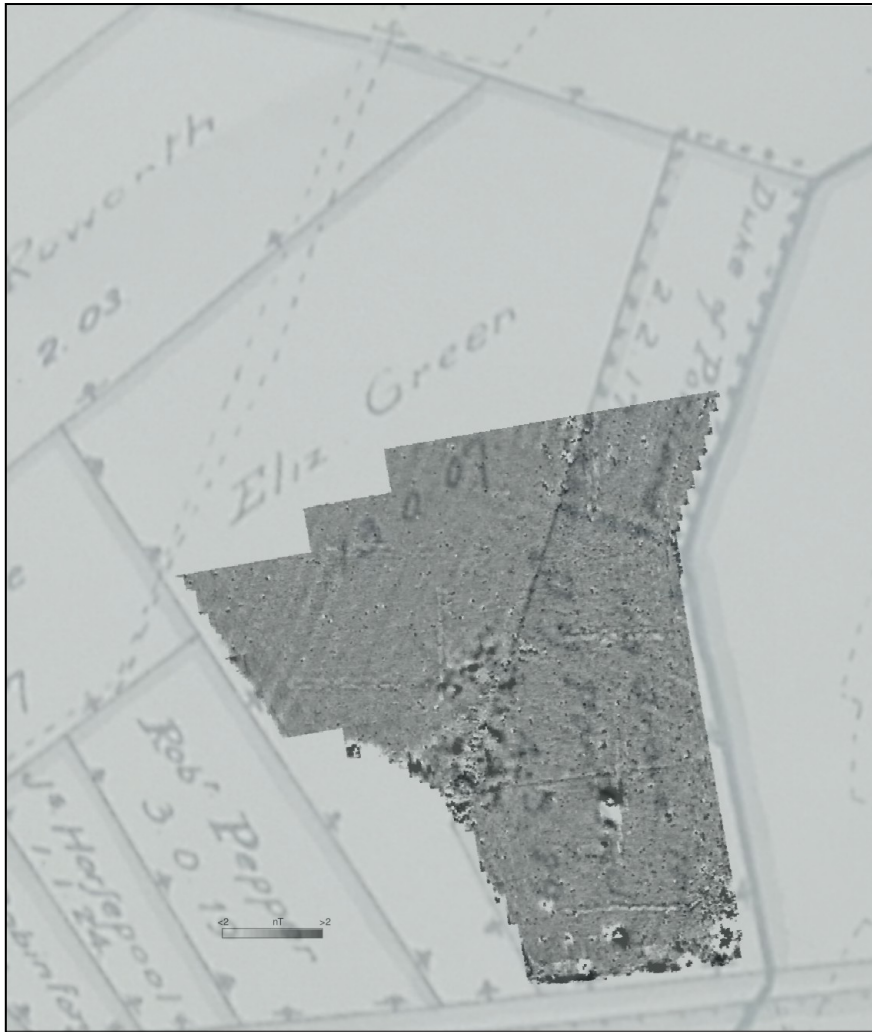


Figure 10: Greyscale geophysics plan overlain roughly on enclosure map 1781. See also map regression (Lane, 2016)

The single ditch encountered in Trench 1 and shown on the geophysics corresponds with the field boundary which mapping indicates was established when the parish was enclosed in 1781. This field boundary was removed in the late 20th century, and is shown on OS mapping from the late 1970's but has been removed before the turn of the 21st century. The geophysics also indicated possible pits in this area, but no corresponding features were encountered.

Two ditches were encountered at the south end of Trench 2. These appeared to be parallel, but the profiles and fills were different which may indicate they were not contemporary. The northernmost ditch [208] was better defined and corresponds with the geophysical anomaly, which continues the line of a field boundary shown on the enclosure mapping. It is considered likely that this ditch therefore relates to a late post-medieval / early modern field boundary which had been removed prior to the start of detailed OS mapping in the late 19th century. The earliest 6" OS map (1884 – Fig 11) shows a slight deviation in the straight line of the NNE-SSW field boundary close to this location, considered evidence of a removed boundary. The southern-most ditch in Trench 2 was undated with an indistinct cut. Its relationship with the potential field boundary could not be determined.

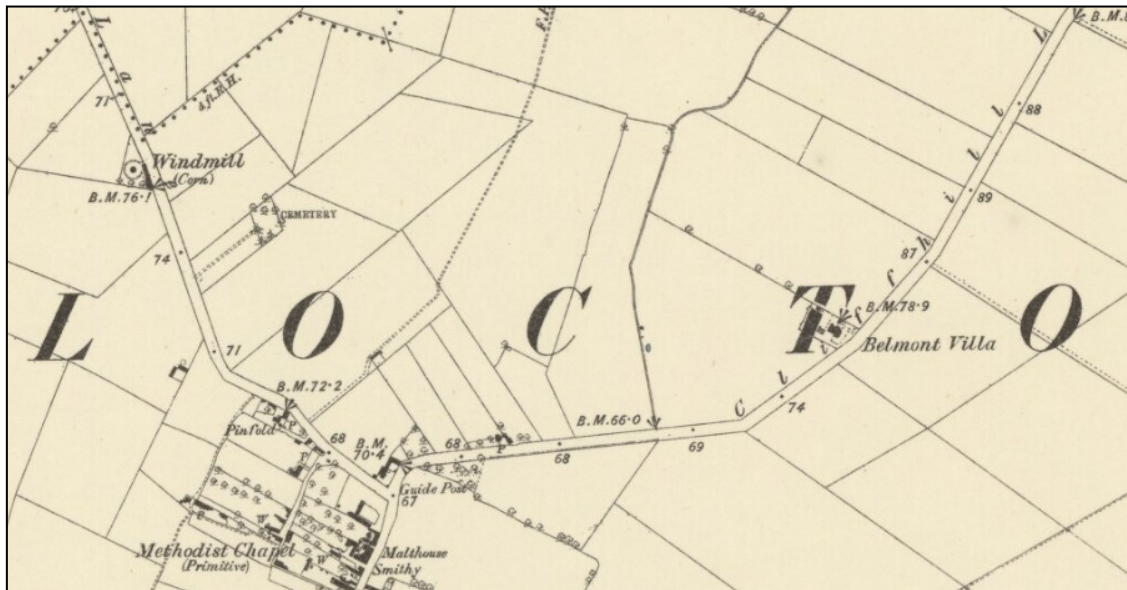


Figure 11: Extract from the 1884 OS map, showing approximate outline of site. <http://maps.nls.uk/view/101603370>

The single ditch encountered in Trench 3 can only be tentatively dated based on the single sherd of Torksey ware pottery from the upper fill which may or may not be residual. Torksey ware was produced between the 10th – mid 11th century, just prior to the Norman Conquest of 1066AD, and the ditch may date from this period, however it is abraded which would indicate it has moved around since its original deposition, and may be consequential trace evidence of the early settlement at Aslockton, consistent with the place name evidence and the possible Saxon burial identified at Mill Lane in the 19th century. The ditch in Trench 3 runs parallel to the removed late 18th century enclosure field boundary that was also encountered in Trench 1, which may indicate these features are contemporary, however this is conjecture based on plan with little other evidence to support it. The magnetic variation seen on the geophysics in this area could not be accounted for, however the landowner remembers hedgerow boundaries being removed from this area with the tree roots being burnt in situ rather than excavated out which may account for the anomalies. Alternatively, this ditch may be the base of a furrow or gully associated with the furrows, which geophysics indicates lie on this alignment in this area. The repetitive action of ploughing may account for the presence of the abraded pottery sherd in the upper fill of the ditch.

The recent removal of the hedgeline boundaries in the site and associated burning as described by the current landowner may account for the magnetic variation around Trenches 1 & 2 where possible pit-type anomalies were identified by geophysical survey alongside the confirmed 18th century field boundary, as well as the variation around Trench 3.

Trench 4 confirmed the presence of regular ridge and furrow in this area as indicated by geophysics. Ridge and furrow earthworks survive to the south of the site around the scheduled remains of Crammers Mount and the associated fishponds, and as easily accessible land on the periphery of a medieval / post-medieval village this area is likely to have been utilised as farmland throughout this period. That the earthworks have been ploughed out in this area is the result of the changing agricultural practices of the later post-medieval and modern periods.

The substantial ditch in Trench 4 is interesting. Neither of the geophysical surveys identified this feature despite its size. No dateable artefacts were recovered from it, but in section there was a clear difference between the upper fill of the ditch and the overlying subsoil / historic

plough soil which filled the furrows, which would suggest the ditch pre-dates the medieval / early post-medieval ridge and furrow.

Trench 5 was positioned to target the features identified in Trench 8 of the evaluation undertaken by Archaeological Project Services (APS, Pacsoe, 2015). Unfortunately although the cut of the APS Trench 8 was identified with Trench 5 of the current project, the features recorded in this previous evaluation could not be established, and only varying bands of natural were encountered in this trench. The reasons for this discrepancy are unclear, but it may be due to human error somewhere in the different stages of investigation of this site.

The results of the evaluation have confirmed the presence of dispersed archaeological remains across the site. Many of the features encountered in this second phase of trenching relate to the later post-medieval and modern field boundaries and their associated features, however the presence of features such as the large ditch in Trench 4 confirms a slight potential for archaeological remains pre-dating the 18th century enclosure of the site.

The cropmark evidence for dense archaeological remains to the north and northwest is considerably clearer than within the redline boundary of the site. Within the site there are few recorded cropmarks; although aerial photographs from the last two decades do show the removed historic field boundaries as defined cropmarks in the right conditions there is little evidence for features relating to the dense prehistoric – Romano-British complexes less than 200m to the north. This difference may be due to the density of archaeological remains dissipating to the south within the site, however it may also be due to geological changes. No alluvium was encountered in Trench 1 at the north end of this evaluation, with topsoil and thin subsoil directly overlying the ancient river terrace deposits of sand and gravel. Ditch features cut into this geology would potentially result in pronounced cropmarks where crops growing over moisture-rich ditches grow differently to those growing over the free-draining gravels. The BGS records a change in the overlying geology from river terraces to alluvium to the south of Cliffhill Lane, but the change to the geology occurs gradually with alluvium being encountered from Trench 2 southwards. This increasing cover of natural alluvium may have had a blanketing effect on crop growth resulting in a more even growth pattern and obscuring the presence of archaeological remains.

The evaluation has therefore identified dispersed archaeological remains, the majority of which relate to post-medieval and modern field boundaries but with medieval ridge and furrow and an unanticipated undated large ditch also revealed. These remains are considered to be of low archaeological value and therefore in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework the development may proceed.

9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology

Intrusive evaluation was an appropriate method for gathering further information about the sites archaeological potential. The body of data produced by this evaluation is considered sufficient to inform the planning and development process.

10.0 Project Archive

Following completion of the full report, a project archive (documentary and material), will be prepared at the offices of PCAS in accordance with the guidelines contained in *Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990), *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission 1992). At present there is no receiving archive for Rushcliffe, therefore the prepared archive shall be stored at the PCAS offices until a suitable repository can be found. A digital copy of this report will be uploaded to OASIS, where it will be accessible via the ADS website.

11.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services would like to thank Oxalis Planning for this commission.

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Appendix 1: CLAE 16 Cliffhill Lane, Aslockton

GIS trench locations (x,y)

Tr. 1 E: 474545.2008,340668.3960

Tr. 1 W: 474515.2178,340667.3850

Tr. 2 N: 474517.3388,340657.2675

Tr. 2 S: 474508.1740,340628.7017

Tr. 3 NE: 474487.9443,340571.6925

Tr. 3 SW: 474466.6634,340550.5472

TR. 4 NNE: 474538.1739,340561.9426

Tr. 4 SSW: 474524.5255,340535.2270

Appendix 2: Context summary

Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Finds / Dating
101	Layer	Topsoil. Dark brown silty sandy loam. Up to 0.30m thick.	None / Modern
102	Layer	Subsoil. Mid brown sandy silt with occasional gravels. Up to 0.10m thick. Possible furrows at each end of the trench where subsoil is slightly deeper.	
103	Layer	Natural geology. Mixed light-mid yellow brown sand and gravel / dark grey sand / silty gravel.	Natural geology – River terrace deposits
104	Cut	Ditch cut on a c.NNE-SSW alignment. Moderately steep sides and flat base. W c.1.10m; D 0.36m.	None, but corresponds with late 18 th century field boundary
105	Fill of [104]	Mid to dark brown sandy silt loam with occasional gravels. Single fill of [104].	None

Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Finds / Dating
201	Layer	Topsoil. Dark brown slightly sandy silty loam with occasional gravels. Up to 0.30m thick	Modern
202	Layer	Subsoil. Mid reddish brown slightly sandy fine silt with occasional gravels. Up to 0.35m thick.	Pottery x 1 Roman
203	Layer	Natural geology. Mixed river terrace deposits of sand and gravel with final phase of ancient alluvial silting – mid yellow brown sand and gravel overlain by dark grey silt sand gravel	Natural geology – River terrace deposits and alluvium
204	Cut	Cut of ditch on a.ESE-WNW alignment. NE side steeply sloped, SW side moderately sloped with broad concave base. W 1.90m; D 0.76m	
205	Fill 1 st fill of [204]	Dark grey sandy silt with sandy lens' (eroding of side of ditch) and occasional gravels. Up to 0.28m deep.	Ø2
206	Fill 2 nd fill of [204]	Mid grey brown sandy silt with occasional gravels. Up to 0.52m deep.	Animal bone x 8
207	Fill 3 rd fill of [204]	Very similar to (202); slightly greyish lighter reddish brown slightly sandy fine silt with occasional gravels. Up to 0.10m deep. Diffuse horizon with (202)	
208	Cut	Cut of ditch on c.ESE-WNW alignment. Clean well defined cut bowl shaped with concave sides and base. W 2.1m D0.90m.	

209	Fill 1 st fill of [208]	Mid greyish brown silt / fine silt, becoming more orange with sand towards the top. W 2.1m, D 0.50m.	Pottery x late 17 th – mid 18 th century CBM – floor tile x 1 late 17 th – 19 th century
210	Fill 2 nd fill of [208]	Backfill – redeposited material very similar to (202). D 0.40m.	

Trench 3

Context	Type	Description	Finds / Dating
301	Layer	Topsoil. Dark brown silty loam with occasional gravels. Up to 0.30m thick	Modern
302	Layer	Mid slightly yellow orange brown fine silt clay with rare gravels. D 0.20m.	
303	Layer	Ancient alluvium. Mid mottled reddish and greyish brown sandy silt with rare stone fragments / gravels. Up to 0.20m thick	Ancient alluvium
304	Layer	River terrace deposits. mixed sands and gravels in light grey – red brown sandy silt matrix	River terrace deposits
305	Cut	Cut of possible ditch on c.NNE-SSW alignment. Steep sides and concave base. W 0.60m; D 0.44m	
306	Fill of [305]	Light grey brown fine silt clay with occasional gravels.	Pottery x 1 10 th – mid 11 th century

Trench 4

Context	Type	Description	Finds / Dating
401	Layer	Topsoil. Mid to dark brown silt loam up to 0.30m deep.	
402	Layer	Subsoil. Mid orange-red brown silt. Up to 0.35m thick	
403	Layer	Ancient alluvium. Mid orange red brown sandy silt. Up to 0.20m thick	Ancient alluvium
404	Layer	River terrace deposits. mixed light-mid orange reddish brown – dark red brown – black gravel in silt sand matrix.	River terrace deposits
405	Cut	Cut of ditch on c.ESE-WNW alignment. Moderately steep sides with some root disturbance / water percolation disturbance on S side. W c.3.50m; D c.0.90m.	
406	Fill 1 st fill of [405]	Slumping of natural gravels due to disturbance. Light-mid orange brown sand and gravel. Up to 0.70m deep	
407	Fill 2 nd fill of [405]	Mottled dark grey-orange brown sandy silt with frequent gravel. Up to 0.30m deep.	Rooting Ø1
408	Fill 3 rd fill of	Mid grey brown silty sand with occasional	Animal bone x 3

	[405]	gravels. Up to 0.36m deep.	
409	Fill 4 th fill of [405]	Light-mid grey silt – fine silt. Up to 0.22m deep.	
410	Fill 5 th fill of [405]	Mid grey brown silty sand. Up to 0.36m deep.	

Trench 5

Context	Type	Description	Finds / Dating
501	Layer	Topsoil. Mid to dark brown silt loam up to 0.30m deep.	Modern
502	Layer	Subsoil. Possible furrow fill. Mid reddish brown sandy silt with occasional gravels. Up to 0.40m deep.	
503	Layer	Subsoil / alluvium. Mid red brown slightly sandy silt. Up to 0.40m deep	
504	Layer	Natural geology. Mixed river terrace deposits of sand and gravel	Natural geology – River terrace deposits
505	Layer	Part of (504) but mottled mid-dark grey brown. Appears in a band of water lain deposits. up to 0.20m deep	Natural geology – River terrace deposits
506	Layer	Similar to (504). Up to 0.26m deep.	Natural geology – River terrace deposits

Appendix 3: The Roman Pottery archive- CLAE16 Aslockton, Notts

I.M. Rowlandson

April 19th 2016

A single sherd of grey ware was retrieved from context 202. The sherd could only be assigned a broad Roman date.

An archive has been produced to comply with the requirements of the Study Group for Roman Pottery (Darling 2004) using the codes and system developed by the City of Lincoln Archaeological Unit (Darling and Precious 2014). A tabulated summary by context and a sherd archive are presented below. The dates provided represent the pottery recorded here: the main text of the report and other specialist contributions should be consulted to ascertain the overall date attributed to each context.

CLAE16 Roman Pottery Archive										
Context	Fabric	Form	Decoration	Vessels	Alt	Comments	Sherd	Weight (g)	Rim diam	Rim eve
202	GREY	-		1	ABR	BS	1	5	0	0

It is recommended that this pottery should be deposited with the relevant local museum along with the rest of the archive.

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APPENDIX 4: REPORT ON THE POST-ROMAN CERAMIC MATERIAL FROM CLIFF HILL LANE, ASHLOCKTON, NOTTINGHAMSHIRE (CLAE 16)

JANE YOUNG

INTRODUCTION

Two sherds of post-Roman pottery and a fragment of tile were recovered during archaeological investigation at Ashlockton. The material was quantified by three measures: number of sherds/fragments, weight and vessel/CBM count within each context and has been fully archived to the standards for acceptance to a museum archive within the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, *et al.* (2001) and the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (2001). Visual fabric identification of the post-medieval pottery was undertaken by x20 binocular microscope. The data was entered on an access database using fabric codenames (see Table 1) developed for the Lincoln Ceramic Type Series (Young, Vince and Nailor 2005) and the preliminary Nottingham Type Series (Nailor and Young 2001)

CONDITION

The material is in a mixed fresh to abraded condition with sherd/fragment size varying between 4 grams and 67grams.

THE POTTERY AND TILE

The pottery ranges in date from the late Saxon to late post-medieval periods whilst the tile is of late post-medieval or early modern date (Table 1).

Table 1 Ceramic types with total quantities by sherd and vessel count

Codename	Full name	Earliest date	Latest date	Total sherds	Total vessels	Total weight in grams
FLOOR	Floor tile	1100	2000	1	1	67
STBRS	Staffordshire-type Brown Stoneware	1690	1730	1	1	4
TORK	Torksey ware	870	1060	1	1	16

Ditch **209** in Trench 2 produced a small sherd from a Staffordshire-type Brown Stoneware mug (STBRS) of late 17th to early/mid 18th century date and a piece of tile. This type of Stoneware is thought to have been produced between 1690 and 1730 never becoming as popular as Nottingham Stoneware. A fragment of 28mm thick unglazed tile in a fine orange sandy fabric is from a floor tile of late 17th to 19th century date.

A small basal sherd from a 10th to mid 11th century Torksey ware jar (TORK) was recovered from ditch **305** in Trench3.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Torksey ware sherd suggests late Saxon activity in the vicinity of Trench 3 whereas the Staffordshire-type Brown Stoneware mug and plain quarry floor tile found in Trench 2 are of late post-medieval to early modern date. The material should be retained for possible future study.

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Appendix 4: Post Roman ceramic archive

Pottery

site code	context	cname	form type	sherds	vessels	weight	part	description	date
CLAE 16	209	STBRS	mug ?	1	1	4	BS		late 17th to early/mid 18th
CLAE 16	306	TORK	small jar	1	1	16	base	abraded	10th to mid 11th

CBM

site code	context	cname	fabric	frags	weight	description	date
CLAE 16	209	FLOOR	fine orange sandy	1	67	plain floor;28mm thick;abraded;corner	late 17th to 19th

**Appendix 5: Land north of Cliffhill Lane, Aslockton,
Rushcliffe, Nottinghamshire (CLAE 16)**
The Animal Bone
By Jennifer Wood

Introduction

A total of 11 (16g) refitted fragments of animal bone were recovered by hand during archaeological works undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Services Ltd at Land north of Cliffhill Lane, Aslockton, Rushcliffe, Nottinghamshire. The remains were recovered from Trench 2 ditch [204] and Trench 4 ditch [405].

Results

The remains were generally of a moderate overall condition, averaging at grade 4 on the Lyman criteria (1996). The remains were leached and fragmentary allowing for little survival of taphonomic changes.

No evidence of burning, butchery, working or gnawing was noted on the remains.

Table 1, Summary of Identified Bone

Context	Cut	Taxon	Element	Side	Number	Weight	Comments
206	204	Large Mammal Size	Long Bone	X	8	11	Shaft fragments
408	405	Large Mammal Size	Long Bone	X	3	5	Shaft fragments

As can be seen, the remains were only able to be identified to size category.

The assemblage is too small to provide meaningful information on animal husbandry and utilisation on site, save the presence/use of the animals identified.

References

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on behalf of
Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd

Land north of Cliffhill Lane
Aslockton
Nottinghamshire

palaeoenvironmental assessment

report 4135
April 2016

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1. Summary

The project

- 1.1 This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of two bulk samples taken during archaeological works at Land north of Cliffhill Lane, Aslockton, Nottinghamshire.
- 1.2 The works were commissioned by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd, and conducted by Archaeological Services Durham University.

Results

- 1.3 The assessment provides little information about the age or nature of the features due to the limited number of diagnostic palaeoenvironmental remains. The presence of small quantities of charred remains in ditch fill [407] may indicate the inclusion of some background domestic waste. The two charred fragments of hazel nutshell suggest the use of wild-gathered foods.

Recommendations

- 1.4 No further palaeoenvironmental analysis is required for the samples, however if additional work is undertaken at the site, other features with the potential to preserve palaeoenvironmental remains should be sampled and assessed. The results of this assessment should be added to any further palaeoenvironmental data produced.

2. Project background

Location and background

- 2.1 Archaeological works were conducted by Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd at Land north of Cliffhill Lane, Aslockton, Nottinghamshire. This report presents the results of palaeoenvironmental assessment of two bulk samples, [205] and [407], comprising the lower fills of two ditches of unknown origin.

Objective

- 2.2 The objective of the scheme of works was to assess the palaeoenvironmental potential of the samples, establish the presence of suitable radiocarbon dating material, and provide the client with appropriate recommendations.

Dates

- 2.3 Samples were received by Archaeological Services on 21st March 2016. Assessment and report preparation was conducted between 1st and 11th April 2016.

Personnel

- 2.4 Assessment and report preparation was conducted by Dr Carrie Armstrong. Sample processing was by Rosie Morris and Stephanie Piper.

Archive

- 2.5 The site code is **CLAE16**, for **Cliffhill Lane Aslockton 2016**. The flots and finds are currently held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University awaiting collection. The charred plant remains will be retained at Archaeological Services Durham University.

3. Methods

- 3.1 The bulk samples were manually floated and sieved through a 500µm mesh. The residues were examined for shells, fruitstones, nutshells, charcoal, small bones, pottery, flint, glass and industrial residues, and were scanned using a magnet for ferrous fragments. The flots were examined at up to x60 magnification for charred and waterlogged botanical remains using a Leica MZ6 stereomicroscope. Identification of these was undertaken by comparison with modern reference material held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University. Plant nomenclature follows Stace (1997). Habitat classifications follow Preston *et al.* (2002).
- 3.2 Selected charcoal fragments were identified, in order to provide material suitable for radiocarbon dating. The transverse, radial and tangential sections were examined at up to x600 magnification using a Leica DMLM microscope. Identifications were assisted by the descriptions of Schweingruber (1990) and Hather (2000), and modern reference material held in the Palaeoenvironmental Laboratory at Archaeological Services Durham University.
- 3.3 The works were undertaken in accordance with the palaeoenvironmental research aims and objectives outlined in the regional archaeological research framework and resource agendas (Monckton 2006).

4. Results

- 4.1 The two ditch fills produced small flots including small quantities of clinker/cinder, fragmented charcoal and coal/coal shale. An animal tooth enamel fragment was present in ditch fill [407] and a tiny glass fragment was recovered from ditch fill [205].
- 4.2 Charred plant macrofossils comprised only two hazel nutshell fragments from ditch fill [407]. A small number of charcoal fragments, including oak, were also present in this flot. Two small charcoal fragments, both of cf. oak, were recovered from ditch fill [205]. Modern roots and straw fragments were present in both samples, and as neither of the samples showed evidence of waterlogged preservation the few uncharred seeds are considered to be recent intrusive material. Material for radiocarbon dating is available for both of the samples, although the material may be unsuitable due to long-lived species or insufficient weight of carbon. The results are presented in Appendix 1.

5. Discussion

- 5.1 The assessment provides little information about the age or nature of the features due to the limited number of diagnostic remains. The presence of small quantities of charred nutshell and animal tooth in [407] may indicate the inclusion of some background domestic waste. Hazelnuts are a food utilised from prehistoric to modern times (Greig 1991) and so the presence of charred hazel nutshell can provide little information about the date of the features.
- 5.2 Much of the charcoal noted in the samples was extremely mineralised and in poor condition, with orange mineral-staining preventing identification in a number of cases. The presence of oak charcoal within the samples indicates the availability of this resource, although the small fragment size of the charcoal and the presence of very few charcoal fragments prevents further conclusions.
- 5.3 While there were no indicators of waterlogged preservation from the plant macrofossil assemblages, the presence of small amounts of natural pan concretions was observed in [407] and this alongside the noted mineralisation of the charcoal may indicate that the ground has undergone cycles of repeated wetting and drying, causing natural pan concretions to form.

6. Recommendations

- 6.1 No further palaeoenvironmental analysis is required for the samples, however if additional work is undertaken at the site, other features with the potential to preserve palaeoenvironmental remains should be sampled and assessed. The results of this assessment should be added to any further palaeoenvironmental data produced.

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Appendix 1: Data from palaeoenvironmental assessment

Sample	1	2
Context	407	205
Feature number	405	204
Feature	Ditch	Ditch
Material available for radiocarbon dating	(✓)	(✓)
Volume processed (l)	33.5	29
Volume of flot (ml)	65	25
<i>Residue contents</i>		
Charcoal	(+)	(+)
Glass (number of fragments)	-	1
Hammerscale flake	-	(+)
Tooth (animal - enamel fragment)	1	-
<i>Flot matrix</i>		
Bone (unburnt) indet. frags	-	(+)
Charcoal	+	-
Clinker / cinder	+	-
Coal / coal shale	(+)	+
Insect / beetle	(+)	+
Roots (modern)	++	+++
Straw / chaff (modern)	(+)	++
Uncharred seeds	(+)	(+)
<i>Charred remains (total count)</i>		
(t) <i>Corylus avellana</i> (Hazel) nutshell frag.	2	-
<i>Identified charcoal (✓ presence)</i>		
<i>Quercus</i> sp (Oaks)	✓	?✓

[t-tree/shrub. (+): trace; +: rare; ++: occasional; +++: common; ++++: abundant.

(✓) may be unsuitable for dating due to size or species]

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