

Land west of Heather Lane  
Ravenstone  
Coalville  
Leicestershire

*Archaeological Evaluation*



*for*  
Pegasus Group

*on behalf of*  
Coalville Wind Limited

CA Project: 660653  
CA Report: 16105

February 2016



# Land West of Heather Lane Ravenstone Coalville Leicestershire

## Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 660653  
CA Report: 16105



Document Control Grid						
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## SUMMARY

<b>Project Name:</b>	Land west of Heather Lane
<b>Location:</b>	Ravenstone, Leicestershire
<b>NGR:</b>	SK 3956 1310
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation
<b>Date:</b>	15 to 16 February 2016
<b>Planning Reference:</b>	15/00147/FUL
<b>Location of Archive:</b>	To be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Services
<b>Site Code:</b>	RAVE 16

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in February 2016 of land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone, Coalville, Leicestershire. The fieldwork was undertaken as part of a planning condition attached to planning consent for the erection of a 500 KW wind turbine and associated infrastructure. The evaluation comprised the excavation of four trenches.

The Leicestershire Historic Environment Record records no known archaeological remains within or immediately adjacent to the site, although prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval sites are recorded in the wider vicinity. Archaeological interest in the site is derived from the presence of undated cropmarks identified through aerial photographic analysis located within the central area of the site.

The evaluation identified three undated, but probable post-medieval/early modern ditches. They fit within the general alignment identified within the surrounding field systems and depicted on historic and current Ordnance Survey mapping. The ditches are likely to represent boundary and/or drainage features.

No evidence of archaeological features associated with the undated cropmarks was identified during the evaluation and it is concluded that they are of geological origin.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In February 2016, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone, Coalville, Leicestershire (centred at NGR: SK 3956 1310; Fig. 1). The evaluation, which formed the first stage of a possible two phase programme of archaeological investigation, was undertaken at the request of Pegasus Group on behalf of Coalville Wind Limited.
- 1.2 Planning permission for the development comprising the erection of 1 no. 500 KW wind turbine and associated infrastructure was granted by North West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC; the local planning authority), conditional on this programme of archaeological work (ref: 15/00147/FUL).
- 1.3 The scope of the evaluation, which comprised the excavation of four trenches, was defined during discussions between Rosey Meara, Pegasus Group and Sophie Clarke, Assistant Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council (APALCC), the archaeological advisor to NWLDC.
- 1.4 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2016) and approved by Sophie Clarke. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (ClfA 2014), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (HE 2015).

### **The site**

- 1.5 The proposed development area is approximately 0.5ha in size and is located c. 650m south-west of Ravenstone. It comprises parts of two agricultural fields, currently under arable cultivation. The site is bounded to the east by agricultural fields and a water treatment works, to the south by Heather Lane and to the west and north by further agricultural fields under a mixture of pasture and arable cultivation. The site lies at approximately 125m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) in the north-western part of the site, rising steadily to c. 139m aOD in the south-east.
- 1.6 The solid geology of the northern part of the site is mapped as Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation, mudstone, siltstone and sandstone formed during the

Carboniferous Period. This is overlain by superficial quaternary deposits of alluvium, clay, silt, sand and gravel. The southern part of the site is recorded as Tarporley Siltstone Formation, siltstone, mudstone and sandstone of the Triassic Period. No superficial deposits are recorded within the southern part of the site (BGS 2016).

## 2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been presented in a Heritage and Archaeological Statement (TCP 2015). Recent Cotswold Archaeology works in the vicinity include a Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (CA 2014) and an archaeological evaluation (CA 2015) c. 600m north of the current site, the results of which have also informed this WSI. Reference to the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that no archaeological remains are recorded within or immediately adjacent to the site, although prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval sites are recorded in the wider vicinity. The following section is summarised from these sources and reference to the Leicestershire HER (HER numbers in parenthesis).

### ***Prehistoric (pre-AD 43)***

- 2.2 Flint scatters, comprising, blades, cores and scrapers, representing a possible Mesolithic occupation site were found west of Kelham Bridge Farm, c. 1km south-east of the site (MLE4826). Fieldwalking south of Snibston Barn, c. 900m south-east of the site recorded a similar Mesolithic flint assemblage (MLE4830).
- 2.3 Neolithic/Bronze Age flints were recorded during fieldwalking c. 1km to the north-east and c. 1km to the south-west of the site. A further scatter of Neolithic/Bronze Age flint was found during fieldwalking at Alton Grange Farm, c. 750m north of the site (MLE10576). Flint artefacts, broadly dateable to the Bronze Age, were also recorded during fieldwalking south of Heather Lane, c. 700m east of the site (MLE21468) and a Middle Bronze Age palstave was found approximately 1km to the south-west (MLE6403).
- 2.4 A ring-ditch cropmark, representing either a round house or barrow (burial mound), has been recorded c. 1km to the north-west of the site.

- 2.5 Possible Iron Age rectilinear cropmark enclosures have been recorded c. 750m north of the site.

### **Roman (AD 43 – AD 410)**

- 2.6 Fieldwalking conducted c. 700m to the north-west of the site recorded a small concentration of pottery including mortaria and cooking pots/jars. Subsequent excavation identified enclosure ditches, droveways, postholes and a possible pottery kiln (Trimble 1991). Further Roman pottery and pottery slag, similar to that excavated from the kiln, was recorded in the fields surrounding the excavation area during fieldwalking in 1996 (Bayley 1996). Romano-British pottery kiln sites have also been recorded within Ravenstone, c. 800m east of the site (Trimble 1991).
- 2.7 A geophysical survey of land c. 600m north-west of the site identified a number of discrete anomalies indicative of areas of intensive sustained burning, similar to those induced by kilns. Subsequent evaluation recorded Roman ditches and a posthole, as well as a small number of shallow, undated ditches and an undated pit containing evidence for *in situ* burning (CA 2015).
- 2.8 Roman pottery was discovered during fieldwalking near Alton Grange north of the site. Further Roman pottery sherds were also found amongst a Mesolithic flint scatter (see above; MLE4830) during fieldwalking south of Snibston Barn c. 900m south-east of site (MLE17331).
- 2.9 Additionally the find spot of Roman coins found in 1741 is recorded c. 450m south-east of the site (920573) and the projected alignment of the 'Via Devana' road, suggested through cropmarks and excavation evidence, is located c. 1.6km to the east of the site.

### **Early medieval (AD 410-1066) to medieval (1066-1539)**

- 2.10 Early medieval and medieval pottery sherds were recorded c. 700m to the north-west of the site during fieldwalking in 1996 (Bayley 1996). Medieval and post-medieval pottery, interpreted as having been deposited during manuring of the land was recorded during fieldwalking south of Jubilee Plantation, c. 650m north-west of the site (MLE8592); further medieval and post-medieval pottery has been recovered from Alton Grange Farm, c. 750m north of the site.

- 2.11 The Domesday Survey of 1086 records the closest settlement to the site as Ravenstone (MLE4831), which suggests that this settlement was established within the early medieval period (Morgan 1979). Coal mining activities were undertaken around Ravenstone in the medieval and post-medieval periods, primarily extracted through the use of bell pits (NWLDC 2001).

#### ***Post-Medieval (1540-1800) to present***

- 2.12 Various post-medieval findspots have been discovered through fieldwalking in the wider area (see above). Further post-medieval evidence includes ridge and furrow identified through analysis of historic aerial photographs, the historic settlement core of Normanton-le-Heath, a turnpike road (currently Ashby Road), and garden earthworks south-west of Ravenstone Hall which appear now to have been destroyed.

#### ***Undated***

- 2.13 Undated cropmarks identified through aerial photographic analysis have been identified within the site. No archaeological features associated with these cropmarks were identified during the current evaluation.

### **3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

- 3.1 The objectives of the evaluation were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014). This information will enable NWLDC to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

### **4. METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of four trenches (comprising one no. 25m long trench and three no. 30m long trenches, all the trenches were approximately 1.8m wide; Fig. 2). The trench plan was designed to sample potential archaeological



features identified as cropmarks from aerial photography, as well as to evaluate the area of the turbine base and crane pad. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual*.

- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites*. However, no deposits were identified that required sampling. All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with *CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately after Excavation*.
- 4.4 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes, prior to its final deposition with Leicestershire Museums Service. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## 5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-7)

- 5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results (Fig. 2). Detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix A.
- 5.2 The evaluation recorded a modern ditch and two undated ditches within Trenches 1 and 2 (Figs 4 and 5). No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed within Trenches 3 and 4 (Fig. 6).

### **General stratigraphy**

- 5.3 A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was identified within all of the trenches. The geological substrate, which comprised sandy clay, was identified at a depth of

between 0.3m and 0.45m below present ground level. This was directly overlain by silty clay topsoil, measuring between 0.3m and 0.45m thick.

### **Trench 1 (Figs 2 & 5)**

- 5.4 Located towards the south-western end of the trench was north-west/south-east orientated ditch 102. It measured 1m wide and 0.33m deep, with a V-shaped profile. No dateable material was recovered from its silty clay fill 103. This ditch is on the same alignment as the extant field system and most likely represents the continuation of a north-west/south-east orientated field boundary depicted on current and historic Ordnance Survey mapping (Fig. 7). A geological test pit, located to the north of ditch 102 was mapped, but not further investigated.

### **Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 6)**

- 5.5 Located within the southern part of the trench were parallel north-east/south-west orientated ditches 202 and 204. Ditch 202 contained fragments of modern brick within fill 203. Located c. 2.75m to the north-west was ditch 204. It measured 1.21m wide and 0.13m deep. The base of the ditch was slightly convex with shallow curved sides. No dateable material was recovered from its silty clay fill 205. These ditches are on the same alignment as the extant field system.

## **6. DISCUSSION**

- 6.1 Located to the west of the site and partially extending into the site, cropmarks possibly representing archaeological features have been identified from aerial photographs. Evaluation was undertaken to determine if the archaeological remains associated with these cropmarks extend into the development area. No evidence of this feature was identified within the site during the current evaluation.
- 6.2 The evaluation has recorded evidence for archaeological features within the site, comprising three linear ditches. The southernmost ditch contained modern brick fragments, while the remaining ditches did not contain any dateable material. It is likely that these ditches represent subdivisions of the current field system.
- 6.3 The evaluation identified ditches within the northern field only. The alignments of the ditches suggest a field system aligned broadly north-east/south-west by north-west/south-east, with the ditches running parallel and perpendicular to each other.

The putative field system comprised ditches 102, 202 and 204 located within Trenches 1 and 2. A small quantity of dating evidence was recovered from one of these ditches, which are attributed to the post-medieval/modern periods based on cartographic evidence and morphological characteristics.

- 6.4 The field system corresponds with the general alignment of the surrounding field systems depicted on historic and current Ordnance Survey mapping, which predominantly relate to Parliamentary Enclosures of the post-medieval period (Fig. 7).

## 7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Whelan, assisted by Jonathan Whitmore. The report was written by Andrew Whelan. The illustrations were prepared by Dan Bashford. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Stuart Joyce.

## 8. REFERENCES

- Bayley, L. 1996 *A Fieldwalking Survey at the proposed Thorntree Opencast Coal Site east of Normanton-le-Heath, Leicestershire*. ULAS Report No.96/90
- BGS (British Geological Survey) 2016 *Geology of Britain Viewer* [http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology\\_viewer\\_google/googleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/googleviewer.html) Accessed 4 February 2016
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2014 *Land at Normanton-le-Heath, Normanton-le-Heath, Leicestershire: Heritage Desk-Based Assessment* CA Report No. **14208**
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 *Coalville Solar Farm, Normanton le Heath, Leicestershire: Archaeological Evaluation* CA typescript report **15031**
- CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 *Land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone, Leicestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*

Morgan, P. 1979 *Domesday Book 22: Leicestershire*. Chichester: Phillimore

NWLDC (North West Leicestershire District Council) 2001 *Ravenstone Conservation Area Appraisal and Study*

TCP (Trigpoint Conservation & Planning Ltd) 2015 *Erection of a Wind Turbine, Land at Heather Lane, Ravenstone: Heritage and Archaeological Statement*

Trimble, R. 1991 *The Excavation of a Romano-British Farmstead at Normanton-le-Heath, Leicestershire*.

DRAFT



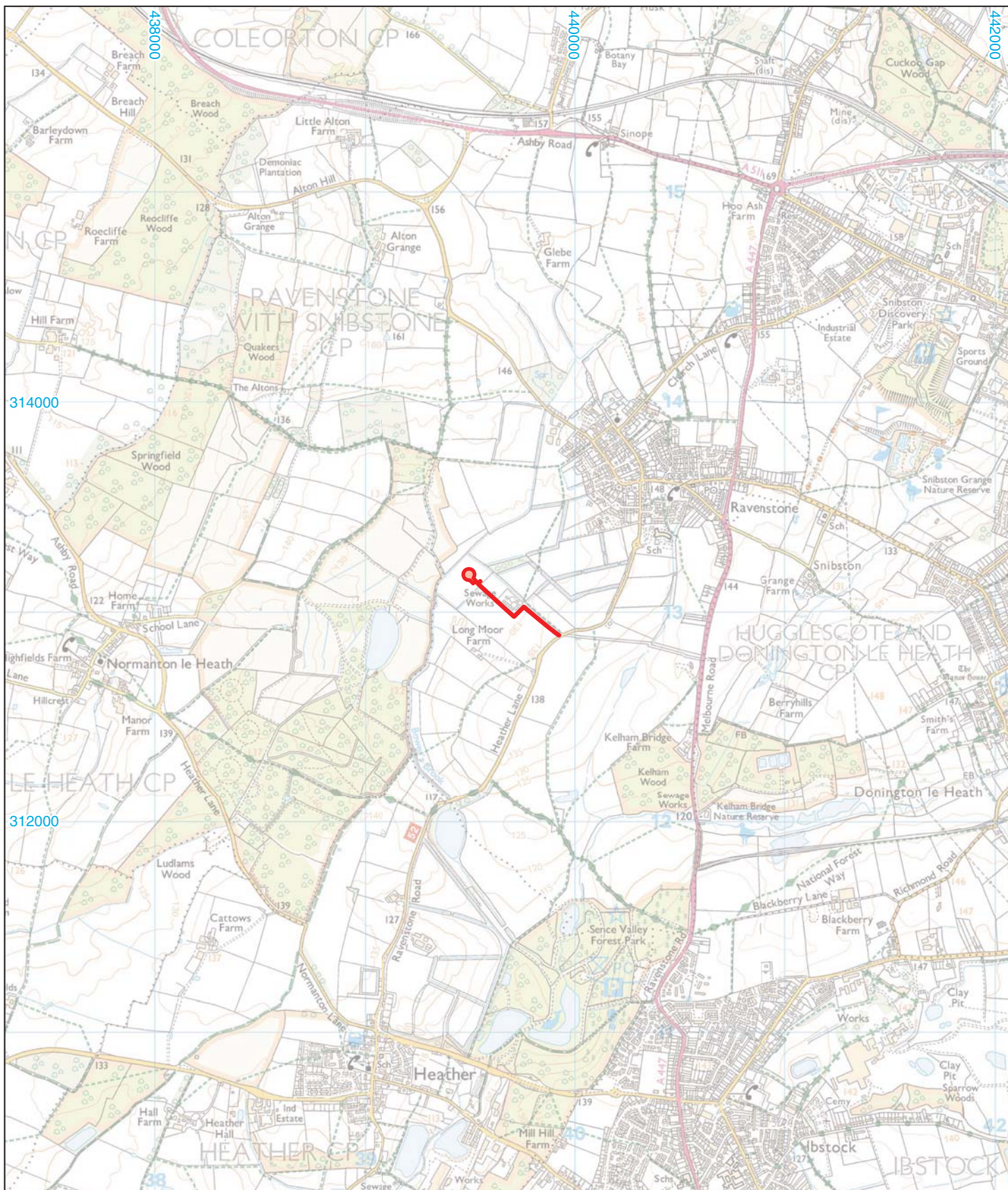
## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	>25	>2.1	0.29	modern
1	101	Layer		natural	light brownish yellow sandy clay	>25	>2.1		
1	102	Cut		ditch	V-shaped ditch, east/west orientated, stepped south edge	>2	1	0.33	
1	103	Fill	102	fill of ditch	dark reddish brown silty clay	>1.8	1	0.33	
2	200	Layer		topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	>30	>2.1	0.45	modern
2	201	Layer		natural	light brownish yellow sandy clay	>30	>2.1		
2	202	Cut		ditch	modern ditch, north-east/south-west orientated, unexcavated	>2	0.8		modern
2	203	Fill	202	fill of ditch	dark greyish brown silty clay, unexcavated	>2	0.8		modern
2	204	Cut		ditch	shallow slightly convex based ditch north-east/south-west orientated	>2	1.21	0.13	
2	205	Fill	204	fill of ditch	mid grey brown sandy silt	>2	1.21	0.13	
3	300	Layer		topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	>30	>2.1	0.34	modern
3	301	Layer		natural	light brownish yellow sandy clay	>30	>2.1		
4	400	Layer		topsoil	mid grey brown silty clay	>30	>2.1	0.36	modern
4	401	Layer		natural	light brownish yellow sandy clay	>30	>2.1		

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## APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project Name	Land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone, Leicestershire	
Short description	<p>An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in February 2016 at land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone, Coalville, Leicestershire. The fieldwork was undertaken to fulfil a planning condition attached to planning consent for the erection of a 500 KW wind turbine and associated infrastructure. The evaluation comprised the excavation of four trenches.</p> <p>The Leicestershire Historic Environment Record records no known archaeological remains within or immediately adjacent to the site, although prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval sites are recorded in the wider vicinity. Archaeological interest in the site is derived from the presence of undated cropmarks identified through aerial photographic analysis located within the central area of the site.</p> <p>The evaluation identified three undated, but probable post-medieval/early modern ditches. They fit within the general alignment identified within the surrounding field systems and depicted on historic and current Ordnance Survey mapping. The ditches are likely to represent boundary and/or drainage features.</p>	
Project dates	15 to 16 February 2016	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	DBA (Trigpoint Conservation & Planning Ltd 2015)	
Future work	Unknown	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site Location	Land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone, Leicestershire	
Study area (M <sup>2</sup> /ha)	0.5ha	
Site co-ordinates	SK 3956 1310	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	N/A	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Stuart Joyce (Cotswold Archaeology); Rosey Meara (Pegasus Group)	
Project Supervisor	Andrew Whelan	
<b>MONUMENT TYPE</b>		
Modern and undated ditches		
<b>SIGNIFICANT FINDS</b>		
None		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVES</b>		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	N/A	None
Paper	Leicestershire Museums Service	Pro-forma recording sheets, registers, WSI
Digital		Database, digital photographs, digital survey data
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2016 <i>Land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone, Leicestershire: Archaeological Evaluation</i> . CA typescript report <b>16105</b>		



**Cotswold Archaeology**  
 Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Exeter 01392 826185  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

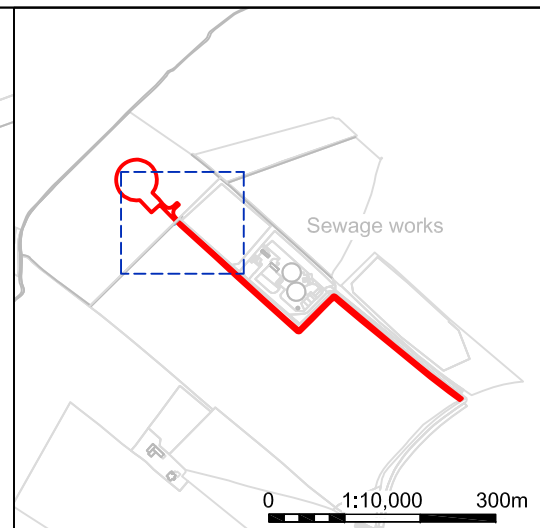
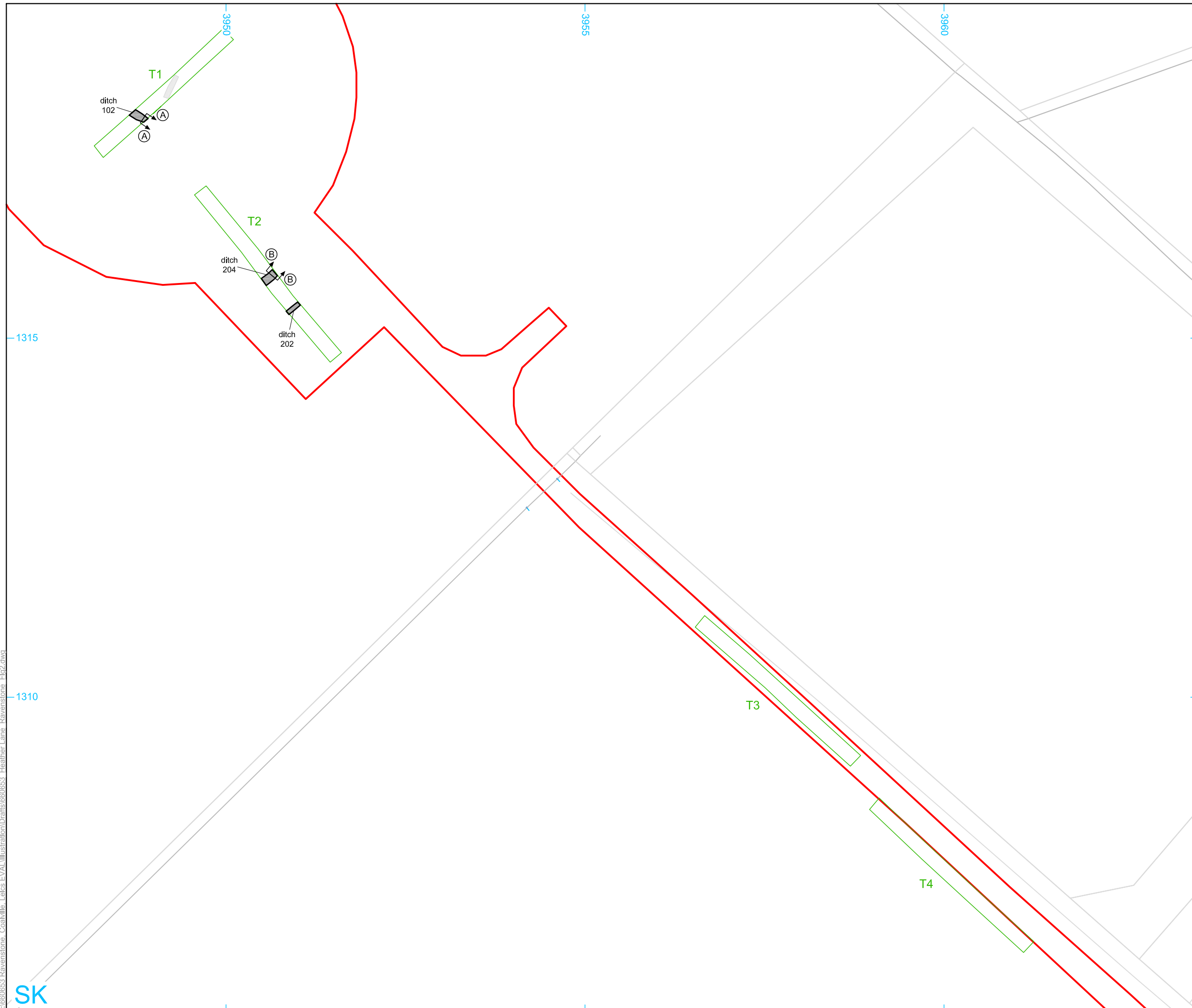
**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone  
 Leicestershire





**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Site location plan



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<b>DRAWN BY</b> LJM	<b>PROJECT NO.</b> 660653	<b>FIGURE NO.</b>
<b>CHECKED BY</b> LM	<b>DATE</b> 29/02/16	
<b>APPROVED BY</b> SJ	<b>SCALE@A4</b> 1:25,000	<b>1</b>



-  site boundary
-  evaluation trench
-  archaeological feature
-  modern



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Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Exeter 01392 826185  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
[www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)  
[enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk)

PROJECT TITLE  
**Land west of Heather Lane  
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FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench location plan showing  
 archaeological features**

DRAWN BY	LJH	PROJECT NO.	660653	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	29/02/2016	
APPROVED BY	SJ	SCALE@A3	1:500	<b>2</b>

P:\660653 Ravenstone\_Coatville\_Lales EYA\Illustration\Drafts\660653 Heather Lane Ravenstone Fig2.dwg







Site, looking south-east



Site, looking south-east



Andover 01264 347630  
 Cirencester 01285 771022  
 Exeter 01392 826185  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk  
 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

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FIGURE TITLE

General site photographs

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 CHECKED BY DJB DATE 29/02/16  
 APPROVED BY SJ SCALE@A4 NA

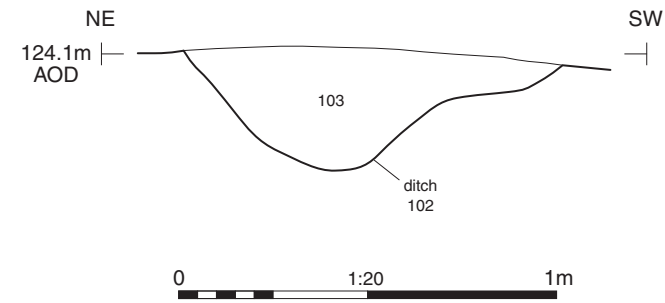
FIGURE NO.

3



Trench 1, looking south-east (1m scales)

Section AA



Ditch 102, looking south-east (0.5m scale)


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 Exeter 01392 826185  
 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
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 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

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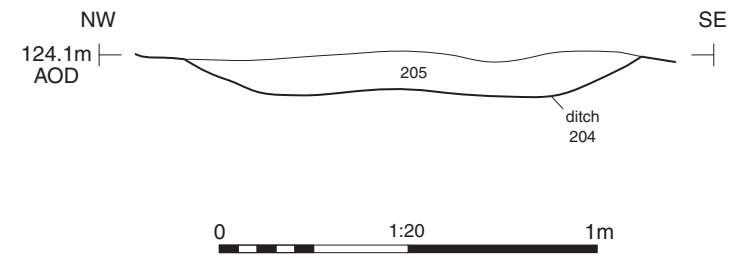
FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 1: section and photographs**

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APPROVED BY	SJ	SCALE@A3	1:20	



Trench 2, looking north-east (1m scales)

Section BB



Ditch 202, looking north-east (1m scale)



Ditch 204, looking north-east (0.5m scale)


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 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk  
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FIGURE TITLE  
**Trench 2: section and photographs**

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CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	02/03/16	<b>5</b>
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Trench 3, looking north-west (1m scales)



Trench 4, looking south-east (1m scales)



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 Milton Keynes 01908 564660  
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 enquiries@cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk

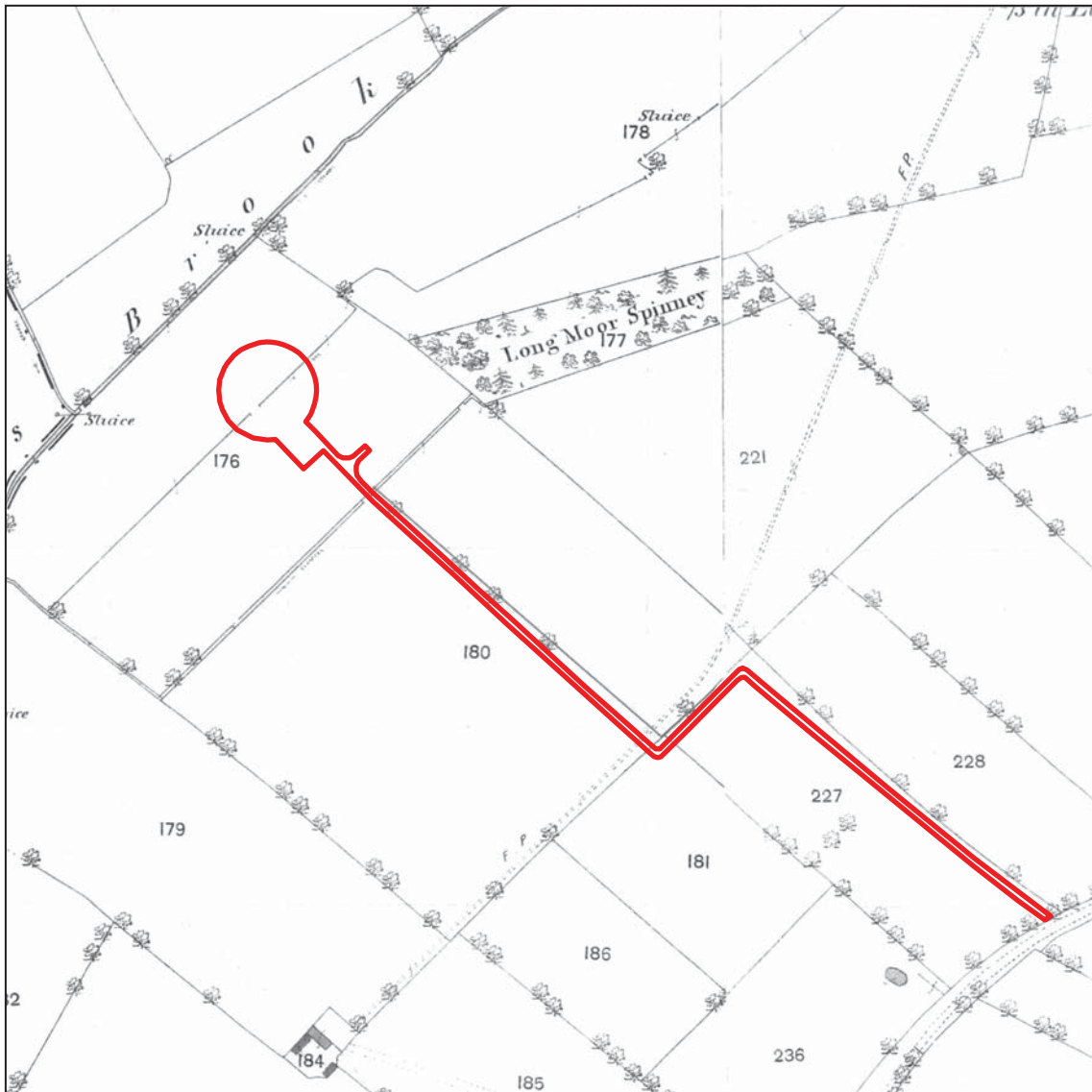
PROJECT TITLE

Land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone  
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FIGURE TITLE

Trenches 3 and 4: photographs

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 www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk  
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PROJECT TITLE

Land west of Heather Lane, Ravenstone  
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FIGURE TITLE

Extract from the 1883 1st Edition  
 Ordnance Survey map

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#### **Andover Office**

Stanley House  
Walworth Road  
Andover  
Hampshire  
SP10 5LH

t: 01264 347630

#### **Cirencester Office**

Building 11  
Kemble Enterprise Park  
Cirencester  
Gloucestershire  
GL7 6BQ

t: 01285 771022

#### **Exeter Office**

Unit 53  
Basepoint Business Centre  
Yeoford Way  
Marsh Barton Trading Estate  
Exeter  
EX2 8LB

t: 01392 826185

#### **Milton Keynes Office**

41 Burners Lane South  
Kiln Farm  
Milton Keynes  
Buckinghamshire  
MK11 3HA

t: 01908 564660