

Land off Desford Lane, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire: Report on an Archaeological Excavation



Looking south across Area 1, with post-medieval ditch [0008] in the foreground

Prepared for Wheatcroft Land (Kirby) Ltd

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Summary

- Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA) were commissioned by Wheatcroft Land (Kirby) Limited to undertake an archaeological excavation ahead of a proposed development on land off Desford Lane, Kirby Muxloe (SK 51161 04432; Figure 1). The site is located at the western edge of the village of Kirby Muxloe, to the south of Desford Lane. It is a roughly L-shaped plot of land that measures c 1.2 hectares, incorporating the farmhouse and buildings forming part of Barons Park Farm, along with its gardens and rough grassland in its southern and south-western parts.
- The work comprised the excavation of two areas, Area 1 measuring approximately 15m x 25m and Area 2 measuring 10m x 10m, within the footprint of the proposed development. The location of the excavated areas was determined by the results of the trial trench evaluation conducted by TPA in April 2021.
- Area 1 was located primarily to investigate the potential for the survival of subsurface archaeological remains dating to the Iron Age. A previous trial trench evaluation undertaken in April 2021 revealed a pit which contained a number of sherds from a single vessel of probable Iron Age date (Poole 2021). In addition, it was thought that excavation may better characterise an undated, but probable Romano-British ditch (MLE15783), previously identified within close proximity to the Site.
- The excavation of Area 1 revealed no further Iron Age remains within the immediacy of the pit recorded during the trench evaluation phase. Investigation of an undated ditch feature revealed during groundworks was able to establish a post-medieval date. Additional post-medieval/modern features were recorded, in the form of field drains and a large probable rubbish pit, from which a sample of predominantly 19th century material was retained. No further archaeological finds, features or deposits were recorded in Area 1.
- Area 2 revealed an undated pit truncated by a modern field drain, as well as a ditch of probable post-medieval or modern date that may relate to historic strip cultivation or land division. With the exception of additional field drains of modern date, no further archaeological finds, features, or deposits were recorded in Area 2.
- Archaeological features remained relatively sparse in the excavated areas. The identified features appear to relate to the use of the land as a farm from the post-medieval period onwards, which conforms with the bulk of the data recorded during the trial trench evaluation. No further Iron Age remains were found to be present at the site and the pit appears to be an isolated feature.

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The following people are thanked for their specialist contributions to this report:

Alison Wilson (Finds)

Stacey Adams (Environmental Remains)

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1 Introduction

- 1.1** Trent & Peak Archaeology (TPA) were commissioned by Wheatcroft Land (Kirby) Ltd to undertake archaeological excavation on land off Desford Lane, Kirby Muxloe (SK 51161 04432; Figure 1), prior to a proposed residential development. The development would comprise 17 new dwellings and the hybrid planning application (15/01221/HYB) includes a full application for conversion of existing buildings to three dwellings and outline application for the construction of 14 dwellings. In addition to this, some of the more temporary structures on site were to be demolished.
- 1.2** The site is located at the western edge of the village of Kirby Muxloe, to the south of Desford Lane. It is a roughly L-shaped plot of land that measures c 1.2 hectares, incorporating the farmhouse and buildings forming part of Barons Park Farm, along with its gardens and rough grassland in its southern and south-western parts.
- 1.3** This document outlines the results of the archaeological excavations, which adhered to the detailed methodology outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Malone 2021). However, a slight alteration was made to the overall dimensions of Area 1 due to the location of a thick hedgerow and tree line. These changes are described in the methods section below.
- 1.4** The implementation of the WSI was conducted by TPA, under the approval and monitoring of Leicestershire County Council's Principal Planning Archaeologist, Richard Clark.
- 1.5** The archaeological investigation of the site consisted of two rectangular areas, Area 1 approximately 20m x 20m and Area 2 measuring 10m x 10m.

2 Site Location, Topography and Geology

- 2.1** The site is located at the western edge of the village of Kirby Muxloe. It is bounded by Desford Lane to the north, modern housing, and green open space to the east and south, with farmland and Barons Park nursing home on its western side.
- 2.2** The bedrock geology of the site is recorded as Gunthorpe Member - Mudstone which is described as Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 237 to 247 million years ago in the Triassic Period. Local environment previously dominated by hot deserts. The bedrock is overlain with a superficial deposit of Oadby Member (Trias-rich) - Diamicton (British Geological Survey 2020). The overlying soils are recorded as slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey soils (Cranfield Soil and Agrifood Institute 2020).
- 2.3** Topographically the Site lies on land sloping gently to the north, at a height of 84 to 86m AOD.

3 Historical and Archaeological Background

3.1 The background given below is derived from the results of the previous trial trench evaluation (Poole 2021).

3.2 Prehistoric

3.2.1 Evidence of prehistoric activity within a 1km radius of the site is limited to a scatter of Neolithic/Bronze Age flint (MLE15784) opposite New Bridge Farm, 280m to the northwest and a Bronze Age spearhead found during metal detecting (MLE17820), approximately 280m to the southwest of the site. The latter may have been associated with a ploughed-out barrow reported near to this find spot.

3.2.2 Further prehistoric activity is present in a wider area around the site, including a probably Late Iron Age hillfort at Bury Camp, 1.7km to the northwest, a Late Iron Age/Roman site at Forest Drive/Hastings Road, Kirby Muxloe, 1.3km to the southeast, or 1.8km to the northeast at the M1/A46 interchange, where various Late Iron Age/Roman finds have been found in a number of different phases of work (MLE190).

3.2.3 The trial trench evaluation conducted by TPA in April 2021 revealed evidence for Iron Age activity in the form of a pit from which a number of sherds from a single vessel of probable Iron Age date (Poole 2021).

3.3 Romano-British

3.3.1 An evaluation conducted in 2002, approximately 190m to the southeast of the site (MLE10025), recorded a series of ditches and pits containing pottery of 2nd-3rd century AD date, possibly associated with a farmstead or part of a village estate (Anon. 2002). An undated ditch (MLE15783) located approximately 5m to the south of the site may represent a field boundary associated with the Romano-British settlement.

3.3.2 Romano-British activity is indicated approximately 250m to the southwest of the site, where various chance finds, including coins, pottery, and jewellery, were found in 2004/5 (MLE10253). Further evidence of Romano-British activity is present from a wider area, including a number of fieldwalking finds north of Forest Farm (MLE208), 1.5km to the south of the site and as noted above, at the M1/A46 interchange (MLE188, MLE190).

3.4 Early Medieval to Medieval

3.4.1 There is no recorded Anglo-Saxon activity within the environs of the site. During the medieval period, the site was situated in the north-eastern part of the medieval deer park known as Barons Park (MLE17057), which may have been created as early as the 12th century (Hartley 2008, 14). Evidence of possible medieval to post-medieval quarrying (MLE10026) was found at Barons Park Farm, near the eastern edge of the park. A possible medieval ditch was also found further to the southeast, west of Gullet Lane (MLE19860; Richards 2009). The medieval historic settlement core of Kirby Muxloe is situated some 620m to the east of the site, including the medieval Church of St Bartholomew (MLE11081) and Kirby Muxloe Castle.

3.5 Post-Medieval to Modern

3.5.1 Barons Park continued to exist into the early post-medieval period but appears to have gone out of use at some point in the 17th century (Hartley 2008, 14). Baron Park Farm is recorded on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1885, which shows a series of structures around a central fold yard and at least

two other buildings, forming an L-shape. A similar arrangement of buildings is shown in this location on the preliminary 1815 Ordnance Survey Drawings of Leicester and Loughborough. These structures shown on mapping are likely part of the main fabric of the extant farm buildings within the site. During the 20th century, further temporary farm buildings were constructed on the site.

- 3.5.2 The Leicester-Burton upon Trent railway line was constructed just to the southwest of the site in 1832. To the east of the site, at the junction of Desford Lane and Hedgerow Lane, an archaeological evaluation in 2003 revealed a possible ditch and sherds of late 17th/18th century pottery (MLE10100; Couling 2004). Further east, within the historic core of Kirby Muxloe, a number of listed buildings date from the 17th-19th centuries.

4 Relevant Legislation and Guidance

4.1 National Planning Policy

- 4.1.1 Developments of this nature, and their impact upon the historic environment, are addressed by the 2021 revised national planning policy Framework (NPPF), published by the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG), and the NPPF Planning Practice Guide Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (MHCLG 2021). This now supersedes the 2020 NPPF.

- 4.1.2 Section 16, paragraph 194, states that:

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. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. 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.

4.2 Local Planning Policy

- 4.2.1 A planning application was submitted to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council for the development (15/01221/HYB) NDE 13/01124/OL). Planning Condition O8 of the planning permission requires the following:

Prior to commencement of development a programme of archaeological work, commencing with an initial phase of trial trenching, has been detailed within a Written Scheme of Investigation, shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The scheme shall include an assessment of significance and research questions and:

- *The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording (including the initial trial trenching, assessment of results and preparation of an appropriate mitigation scheme).*
- *The programme for post-investigation assessment.*
- *Provision to be made for analysis of the site investigation and recording.*
- *Provision to be made for publication and dissemination of the analysis and records of the site investigation.*

- *Provision to be made for archive deposition of the analysis and records of the site investigation.*
- *Nomination of a competent person or persons/organisation to undertake the works set out within the Written Scheme of Investigation.*

All development shall be carried out in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation.

5 Aims & Objectives

5.1 Site-specific Aims and Objectives

5.1.1 The overall aim of the programme of archaeological works was to identify any further significant archaeological remains, and to better characterise certain features recorded during the trial trench evaluation, to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the development and to achieve an appropriate level of preservation by record in accordance with NPPF paragraph 189 (2019).

5.1.2 The general aims of the fieldwork can be stated as:

- To identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the development.
- To better characterise specific archaeological remains identified during the trial trench evaluation to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the proposed development.
- To attempt to quantify any such archaeological remains which are encountered by identifying, for example, their form, nature, date, and preservation, within the confines of the trenches or within the initial watching brief strip.

5.1.3 The general objectives of the fieldwork can be stated as:

- To ensure preservation by record of any archaeological remains encountered during the archaeological field evaluation.
- To recover any archaeological artefacts and ecofacts revealed by the excavations.
- To prepare a report on the findings of the archaeological evaluation.

5.2 Regional Research Questions

5.2.1 Depending on their nature, the possible presence of buried archaeological remains was considered to offer an opportunity to address regional research priorities, as outlined in the *East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework (EMHERF) Interactive Digital Resource*, which hosts a digitised version of Knight *et al* (2012) *East Midlands Heritage and Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*.

5.2.2 Prior to the commencement of work, the following research questions were considered to have particular relevance to this project:

Late Bronze Age and Iron Age (c 1150BC - AD 43)
<i>4.3-4.5 LBA and IA settlement</i>
2. What can we deduce about the morphology, special extent, and functions of settlements, and in particular the processes underlying the development in some areas of enclosed occupation or activity foci. 3. How may nucleated and other settlements have developed into the Roman period.
Romano British (AD43 – c.410)
<i>5.4 Rural settlement</i>
4. How did field and boundary systems relate to earlier systems of land allotment, and how did these boundary networks develop over time? 5. What patterns can be discerned in the location of settlements in the landscape?

6 Methodology

6.1 General Methodology

- 6.1.1 Two areas of investigation were excavated at the site according to locations recommended by the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire (Sophie Clark, Pers. Comm. 2020). These were designed to target specific archaeological remains recorded during the trial trench evaluation conducted by TPA in April 2020.
- 6.1.2 Area 1 was concentrated in the centre of the southern part of the site, focussing on the area of possible Iron Age activity. The orientation and dimensions of Area 1 had to be slightly altered due to an impassable tree and hedgerow boundary to the north of the area. The excavated area is adjacent to the farm buildings of Barron Park Farm to the north, which are to be retained and renovated.
- 6.1.3 Area 2 was situated close to the south-western boundary of the site. The excavated area of 10m x 10m targeted an un-dated pit, recorded during the trial trench evaluation, and its immediate environs so as to better characterise any further archaeological remains in this part of the proposed development area.
- 6.1.4 All archaeological fieldwork, recording and post-excavation analysis will be carried out in accordance with the relevant Standards and Guidance produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2020b) and Code of Conduct (2020a).

6.2 Excavation Methodology

- 6.2.1 Both excavated areas and any archaeological features were located by GPS, Leica CS15/GS15 RTK Differential GNSS prior to excavation.

- 6.2.2 Prior to excavation the area of each trench was scanned with a CAT and genny to locate any potential hidden services that were not shown on the services plan supplied by the client. No services were encountered within the area investigated by the trial trench evaluation.
- 6.2.3 Machine excavation was conducted under constant archaeological supervision, using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket so that a clean surface could be exposed.
- 6.2.4 Topsoil and subsoil where encountered were excavated in spits no greater than 250mm, and the investigation areas excavated to a level at which archaeological deposits were present.
- 6.2.5 Topsoil and subsoil were kept separate during the removal to allow sequential backfilling of the excavation and stored at a safe distance from the trench edge where it was checked for artefacts, including by use of a metal detector.
- 6.2.6 Identified features were hand cleaned. Following scanning by a metal detector, features were sample excavated sufficient to determine their plan and form, and to recover any datable artefacts.
- 6.2.7 Feature fills were removed by contextual change (the smallest usefully definable unit of stratification) and/or in spits no greater than 100mm. Substantial features were to be hand-excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m, or a perceived safe depth if the sides were unstable.
- 6.2.8 On completion of the fieldwork the excavated areas were backfilled by machine but did not include full reinstatement.

Recording

- 6.2.10 Plans of all contexts including features were surveyed using a GPS, Leica CS15/GS15 RTK Differential GNSS, and show at least: context numbers, all colour and textural changes, principal slopes, levels expressed as O.D. values, or levelled to permanent features if a benchmark was absent, sufficient details to locate the subject in relation to OS 1:2500 mapping.
- 6.2.11 Sections were drawn on drafting film in pencil at a scale of 1:10/1:20/1:50 (as appropriate) and show the same information, but levelling information is given in the form of a datum line with O.D./arbitrary value. The location of all sections was surveyed.
- 6.2.12 Digital images of each context were taken together with general views illustrating the principal features of the excavations.
- 6.2.13 Written records were maintained as laid down in the TPA recording manual (TPA 2015).
- 6.2.14 The location of any artefacts including those recovered in the topsoil/subsoil were recorded by context/spit, or three-dimensionally if determined to be of exceptional archaeological significance.
- 6.2.15 Where appropriate features were, soil samples were retrieved in order to undertake palaeoenvironmental sampling. The sampling of features will follow procedures set out within the English Heritage (now Historic England) guidelines in *Environmental Archaeology* (Campbell *et al* 2011). Samples were to generally be 40 litres if possible and were processed within the TPA Environmental Lab, under the supervision of TPA Environmental Officer Stacey Adams.

7 Results

Area 1 (Plates 1-7; Figure 2)

- 7.1.1 Area 1 measured 25m long by 15m wide. These dimensions differed from the agreed WSI due to the topography of the site which prevented access to all of the intended excavation area. It was positioned in the approximate centre of the site over previous phase Trenches 04 and 05 in order to better characterise the features identified therein and to seek to identify further possible evidence of Iron Age activity. Removal of the mid grey/brown and yellow/brown subsoil (0001) and overlying dark brown silty topsoil (0002) to a depth of c.0.5m revealed the natural geology consisting of red, yellow, and grey/yellow and yellow/brown clays and silty clays which formed the main archaeological horizon (0003) (Plate 1).
- 7.1.2 Cutting into (0003) were the remains of two intersecting ditches [0006] and [0008], identified as post-medieval/modern land features representing drainage/land management which correspond to the features recorded during the evaluation phase (Figure 04, Dr 02-03).
- 7.1.3 Ditch [0008] was aligned approximately east by west, having been previously recorded within Trench 04 during the evaluation phase. This feature ran for 5m from the north-eastern part of the Area before terminating by the south-facing limit of the excavation. It was 0.58m wide and 0.25m deep, with straight, steep sides and a concave base, probably representing some form of land management, whether for drainage and/or acting as field boundary (Plates 4 and 5). Ditch [0008] had been recorded during the evaluation phase within Trench 04 but had remained undated. Subsequent excavation during this phase of works revealed a number of post-medieval and modern pottery and CBM fragments within its fill of (0009), comprised of mid grey/yellow silt clay, although the finds were not retained. In plan, ditch [0008] could be seen to be truncated by [0006] but the two features had similar fills and may have been broadly contemporaneous. Gully [0008] was also seen to be cut by a north-west by south-east running French drain, similar to those recorded during the evaluation phase.
- 7.1.4 Gully [0006] was a probable drain aligned south-west to north-east and extended for some 12m across the Area, being seen to terminate just short of evaluation Trench 05 and within ditch [0008]. Gully [0006] was 0.35m wide and 0.07m deep, and with a naturally deposited fill (0007) comprised probable alluvial dark yellow/brownish grey clay, which was derived from the surrounding geology (Plates 2 and 3). Fragments of ceramic brick material (CBM) were recovered from the fill, possibly remains of a field drain.
- 7.1.5 In the eastern corner of Area 1 a large, 19th-century/modern feature [0004] was recorded (Plates 6 and 7; Figure 04, Dr 01). This was 6.0m wide and 0.2m – 0.52m deep and continued beyond the limit of the excavation. This was excavated via machine to the natural, after which a 0.50m slot was excavated to establish maximum depth. The backfill (0005) comprised dark brown and black coarse sand, silty-sands and burnt waste material and was full of 19th century/modern pottery, CBM, and glass; in particular many complete empty original bottles of Camp coffee and dated 1896. A complete tractor tyre was also observed. Pit [0004] had clearly served as a rubbish pit for domestic and agricultural waste, but it remains possible that a natural feature (such as a pond or tree throw) was utilised for the purpose rather than it being deliberately cut as such.
- 7.1.6 No other archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed within Area 1, and in particular no further potential or actual Iron Age features were identified in the excavated area, which has demonstrated post-medieval/modern activity only.

Area 2 (Plates 8-12; Figure 3)

- 7.1.7 Area 2 was orientated north by south and measured approximately 10 square metres. Removal of the mid grey/brown and yellow/brown subsoil (0001) and overlying dark brown silty topsoil (0002) to a depth

of c 0.4 to 0.7m revealed the natural geology consisting of primarily reddish-brown silty clay with yellow/grey patches (0003). This formed the archaeological horizon (Plate 8).

- 7.1.8 Cutting into (0003) was an undated pit-like feature [0010] (Plates 9 and 10; Fig 04, Dr 04). This was ovoid, and measured 1.6m in length, and was 0.6m wide and 0.25m deep with steep sides and a flat but uneven base. The fill (0011) was comprised of very firm mid grey clay in which no finds, charcoal or any other anthropogenic elements were observed. This appeared to be a naturally deposited fill, possibly alluvial in nature. The feature was truncated by a modern drain and was in the vicinity of a similar undated pit recorded during the evaluation phase. The pit was sampled for further analysis but remains an ambiguous feature.
- 7.1.9 Extending into the Area and running on a southwest to northeast alignment for 6.0m before terminating was ditch group 0016 (Plates 11 and 12). The excavated slots revealed a variable width of 0.8 to 1.2m, and depth of 0.09-0.2m, being shallowest at the terminus, possibly indicating a level of truncation by subsequent agricultural activity. The sides of the feature were predominantly steeply sloping, and with a flat but uneven/irregular base and it contained a single fill comprising friable, mixed mid to dark yellow and brown coarse silty sands and clays with frequent sub-rounded and sub-angular stones. Fragments of post-medieval/modern field drain were recovered from the base of the fill within slot [0012] (Figure 04, Dr 05-06). The feature was interpreted as a possible furrow or field boundary.
- 7.1.10 In addition to the above, two field drains were observed, one of which was aligned northwest by southeast and was seen to truncate ditch [0016]. The other drain was aligned northeast to southwest and the two drains seemed to intersect just beyond the limit of the excavation.
- 7.1.11 No other archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed within Area 2, and in particular there was no indication that any Iron Age occupational activity occurred in this part of the site.

8 Specialist Reports

- 8.1.1 A total of 30 finds were recovered during an archaeological excavation on land off Desford Lane, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire.

Table 1: Finds recovered by quantity and weight

Material	Period	Quantity	Weight
Pottery	Post-medieval/Modern	12	649g
Glass	Post-medieval/Modern	6	1218g
CBM	Post-medieval/Modern	12	68g

8.2 Pottery

By Alison Wilson

- 8.2.1 A total 12 of fragments of 19th-20th century pottery, weighing 649g were recovered. The pottery was examined both visually and using a x10 hand lens, then quantified by two measures: number of sherds and weight. The resulting archive is stored in one archive box which is at present kept at the Trent & Peak Archaeology stores, Chilwell, Nottingham.

- 8.2.2 All of the pottery finds came from a 19th-20th century rubbish pit [0004] (0005). There was one complete, small buff coloured stoneware jar, weighing 271g, as well as part of the lid of a brown stoneware cooking pot (276g). White bodied earthenware was represented by 4 sherds of blue and white transfer decorated pottery from 2 different plates, and a moulded green glazed body sherd from a hollow vessel of some kind, possibly a vase. Collectively these weighed 63g. The remaining sherds from this context consisted of a piece of porcelain cup with handle, the only decoration being a thin gold band below the rim, and 4 sherds from the same plate, with black and brown transfer decoration. Collectively these weighed 39g.

8.3 Ceramic Building Material

by Alison Wilson

- 8.3.1 Two small fragments of probable field drain weighing 68g were recovered from post-medieval/modern ditch [0006] (0007).

8.4 Glass

by Alison Wilson

- 8.4.1 Six glass finds were recovered from the 19th century/modern rubbish pit [0004] (0005).
- 8.4.2 A pale green glass bottle weighing 417g was embossed with PATTERSONS, GLASGOW, ESS CAMP COFFEE AND CHICORY. Camp coffee was first produced by the Patterson company in 1871 and this bottle can be dated to the late 19th century.
- 8.4.3 Another bottle was small, weighing 200g, with the lettering SYMINGTON & Cos. EDINBURGH, ESS COFFEE & CHICORY. Symington & Co were in business slightly later than Patterson's, producing the coffee drink between c 1900 – 1910.
- 8.4.4 An aqua coloured bottle, containing a dark residue and weighing 187g, carried the lettering WHITTAKER & Co COLOUR Wks, KENDAL, ENGLAND. This was a bottle of Luton Straw Hat Dye, a powerful dye used for dyeing women's straw hats, made by Whitaker and Co. Kendal, Cumbria, for the Luton hat trade at the beginning of the 20th century.
- 8.4.5 A cobalt blue bottle, weighing 234g and embossed with the lettering WOODWARD CHEMIST NOTTINGHAM, would probably have contained gripe water and would have been produced in the late 19th – early 20th century.
- 8.4.6 An early 20th century pale aqua bottle, weighing 94g and embossed with FOSTER CLARK LTD, MAIDSTONE, EIFFEL TOWER LEMONADE would have contained powdered fruit concentrate for making juices.
- 8.4.7 The remaining glass finds were a small 20th century clear, ribbed glass paste jar weighing 77g, and a clear glass stopper weighing 9g.

8.5 Conclusions

- 8.5.1 The finds constitute a typical late 19th – early 20th century domestic assemblage. No further study is required, and discard is recommended.

8.6 Environmental Remains

by Stacey Adams

Introduction and Methodology

- 8.6.1 A 40-litre bulk environmental sample was taken from pit [0010] for the recovery of environmental remains such as plant macrofossils, charcoal, faunal remains and mollusca as well as to assist finds recovery. The bulk environmental sample was processed by flotation tank using a 500µm mesh for the heavy residue and a 250µm mesh for the flot. The residue was sorted, by hand, for environmental and artefactual remains (Table 2). The flot, was scanned, in its entirety, under a stereozoom microscope at magnifications 7x-45x and its contents recorded in Table 3.

Results and Discussion

- 8.6.2 The bulk environmental sample from Kirby Muxloe contained very little charred material consisting of a small quantity of charcoal in both the residue and the flot. No artefactual material was identified within the sample. The flot contained modern roots, leaves and wood fragments along with several land snail shells. The bulk environmental sample from Kirby Muxloe has no archaeological potential with the charcoal likely being wind-blown from burning activities elsewhere.

Table 2: Contents of heavy residue from the bulk environmental sample from Kirby Muxloe.

Quantification: * = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-150, **** = 151-250, ***** = >250 and weight in grams.

Sample Number	Context	Context / Deposit Type and Parent Context	Sample Volume (L)	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal 2-4mm	Weight (g)	Flint	Weight (g)	Magnetic Material
<1>	(0011)	Pit [0010]	40	*	<1	**	<1	*	<1	<1

Table 3: Flot contents from the bulk environmental sample from Kirby Muxloe.

Quantification: * = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-150, **** = 151-250, ***** = >250.

Sample Number	Context	Context/ Deposit Type and Parent Context	Sample Volume (L)	Flot Weight (g)	Flot Volume (ml)	Volume Scanned (ml)	Uncharred (%)	Charcoal 2-4mm	Charcoal <2mm	Land Snail Shells	Modern Leaves	Wood Fragments	Modern Roots
<01>	(0011)	Pit [0010]	40	10	23	23	99	*	**	*	*	*	*****

9 Discussion and Conclusions

- 9.1.1 The trial trench evaluation found one pit of Iron Age date within the south-western part of the Site. However, the archaeological excavations described here did not reveal any further surviving sub-surface remains from that time period. It appears that the pit represented an isolated feature.
- 9.1.2 With the exception of the undated pit 010] in Area 02, all of the recorded features can be securely dated to the later post-medieval/modern periods and likely reflect the use of the Site for farming activity.
- 9.1.3 The results of the excavation do not contribute in any significant manner to the research questions posed by the East Midlands Regional Research Framework highlighted in section 5.2.

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Appendix 1: Context Register

Context	Type	Description
0001	Layer	Topsoil – dark brown sandy silt
0002	Layer	Subsoil – dark yellow brown/grey-brown silty sand/clay
0003	Natural	Mid-brownish red/grey clay/silty clay
0004	Cut	Cut of large 19 th century/modern rubbish pit
0005	Fill	Fill of [0004], mixed sand, silts and burnt waste material
0006	Cut	Cut of post-medieval/modern ditch, probable drain
0007	Fill	Fill of [0006]; mid grey silty clay
0008	Cut	Cut of post-medieval/modern ditch, probable field boundary
0009	Fill	Fill of [0008]; mid grey/brown silty clay
0010	Cut	Cut of undated pit
0011	Fill	Fill of [0010], light to mid grey clay
0012	Cut	Slot in post-medieval/modern ditch [0016]
0013	Fill	Fill of [0012], mixed coarse sand, silty sand and clay with frequent small to medium sub-rounded stones
0014	Cut	Terminus of ditch [0016], north of slot [0012]
0015	Fill	Fill of [0014], mid silty sand with occasional small sub-rounded stones and clay patches
0016	Group	Northwest by southeast aligned post-medieval ditch, possible furrow/field boundary.

Appendix 2: Oasis Form

OASIS Summary for yorkarch3-520117

OASIS ID (UID)	yorkarch3-520117
Project Name	Land off Desford Lane, Kirby Muxloe: Archaeological Excavation
Sitename	Land off Desford Lane, Kirby Muxloe
Sitecode	KMD2
Project Identifier(s)	
Activity type	Open Area Excavation
Planning Id	15/01221/HYB
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	York Archaeology
Project Dates	29-Mar-2021 - 05-Apr-2021
Location	Land off Desford Lane, Kirby Muxloe NGR : SK 51161 04432 LL : 52.635234277651804, -1.245465810776016 12 Fig : 451161,304432
Administrative Areas	Country : England County/Local Authority : Leicestershire Local Authority District : Hinckley and Bosworth Parish : Desford

Project Methodology	Two areas of investigation were excavated at the site according to locations recommended by the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire. These were designed to target specific archaeological remains recorded during the trial trench evaluation conducted by TPA in April 2020. Area 1 was concentrated in the centre of the southern part of the site, focussing on the area of possible Iron Age activity. The orientation and dimensions of Area 1 had to be slightly altered due to an impassable tree and hedgerow boundary to the north of the area. Area 2 was situated close to the south-western boundary of the site. The excavated area of 10m x 10m targeted an un-dated pit, recorded during the trial trench evaluation, and its immediate environs so as to better characterise any further archaeological remains in this part of the proposed development area. Machine excavation was conducted under constant archaeological supervision, using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket so that a clean surface could be exposed. Identified features were hand cleaned and recorded.
Project Results	The excavation of Area 1 revealed no further Iron Age remains within the immediacy of the pit recorded during the trench evaluation phase. Investigation of an undated ditch feature revealed during groundworks was able to establish a post-medieval date. Additional post-medieval/modern features were recorded, in the form of field drains and a large probable rubbish pit, from which a sample of predominantly 19th century material was retained. No further archaeological finds, features or deposits were recorded in Area 1. Area 2 revealed an undated pit truncated by a modern field drain, as well as a ditch of probable postmedieval or modern date that may relate to historic strip cultivation or land division. With the exception of additional field drains of modern date, no further archaeological finds, features, or deposits were recorded in Area 2. Archaeological features remained relatively sparse in the excavated areas. The identified features appear to relate to the use of the land as a farm from the post-medieval period onwards, which conforms with the bulk of the data recorded during the trial trench evaluation. No further Iron Age remains were found to be present at the site and the pit appears to be an isolated feature.
Keywords	
Funder	Private or public corporation Wheatcroft Land (Kirby) Ltd

HER	Leicestershire HER - unRev - STANDARD
Person Responsible for work	Edmund Taylor
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums;

Plates



Plate 1: Area 01, general overview, looking south.



Plate 2: Area 01, oblique plan view of ditch [0006], looking west.



Plate 3: Area 01, northeast facing section of ditch [0006], looking southwest.



Plate 4: Area 01, oblique plan view of ditch [0008], looking south.



Plate 5: Area 01, northeast facing section of ditch [0008], looking southwest.



Plate 6: Area 01, oblique of the northwest facing section of [0004], looking east.



Plate 7: Area 01, southwest facing section of slot in [0004], looking northeast.



Plate 8: Area 02, general overview, looking south.



Plate 9: Area 02, northeast facing section of pit [0010], looking southwest.



Plate 10: Area 02, oblique of northwest facing section of pit [0010], looking west
Trench 4 overview, looking northwest, prior to extension

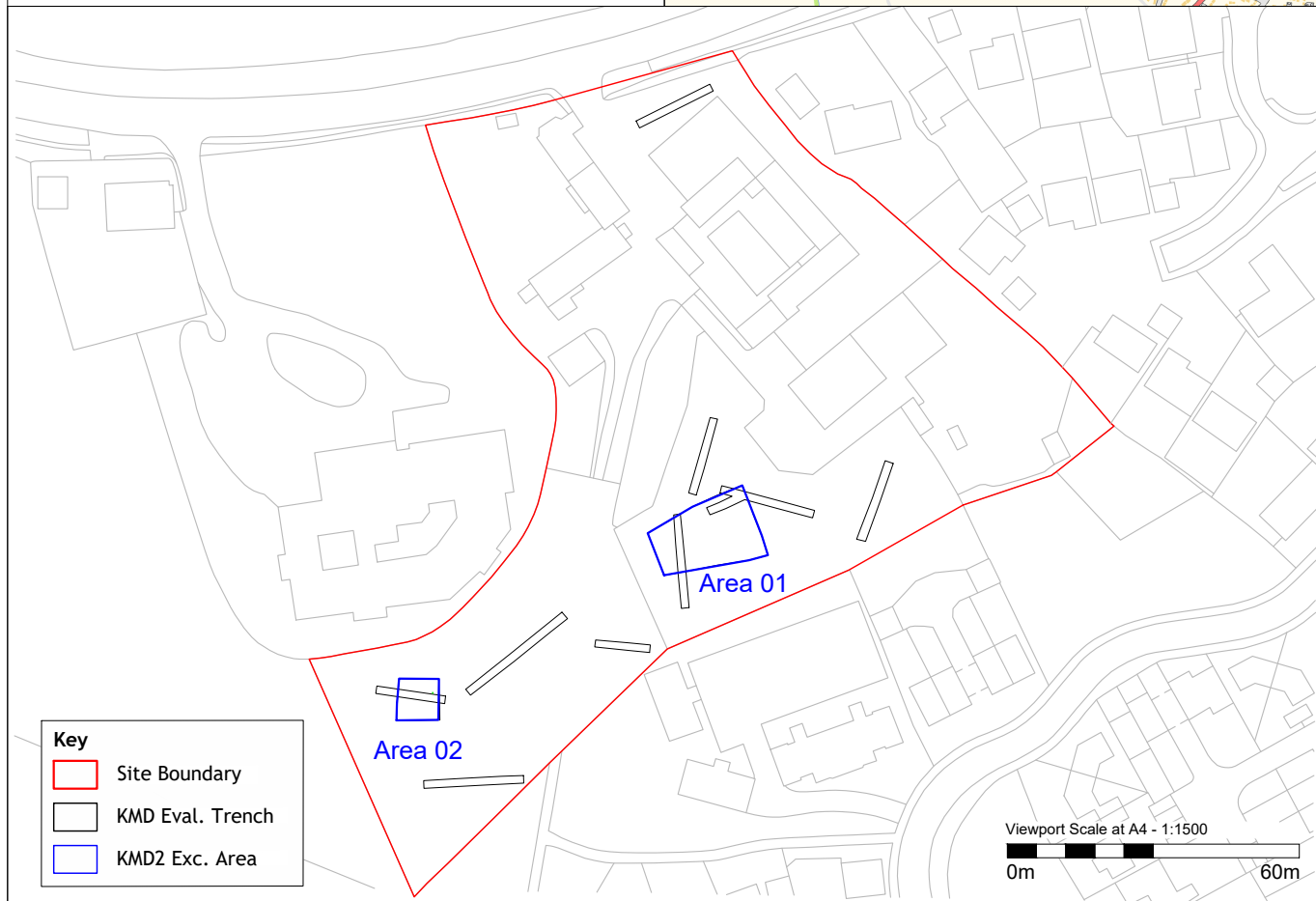


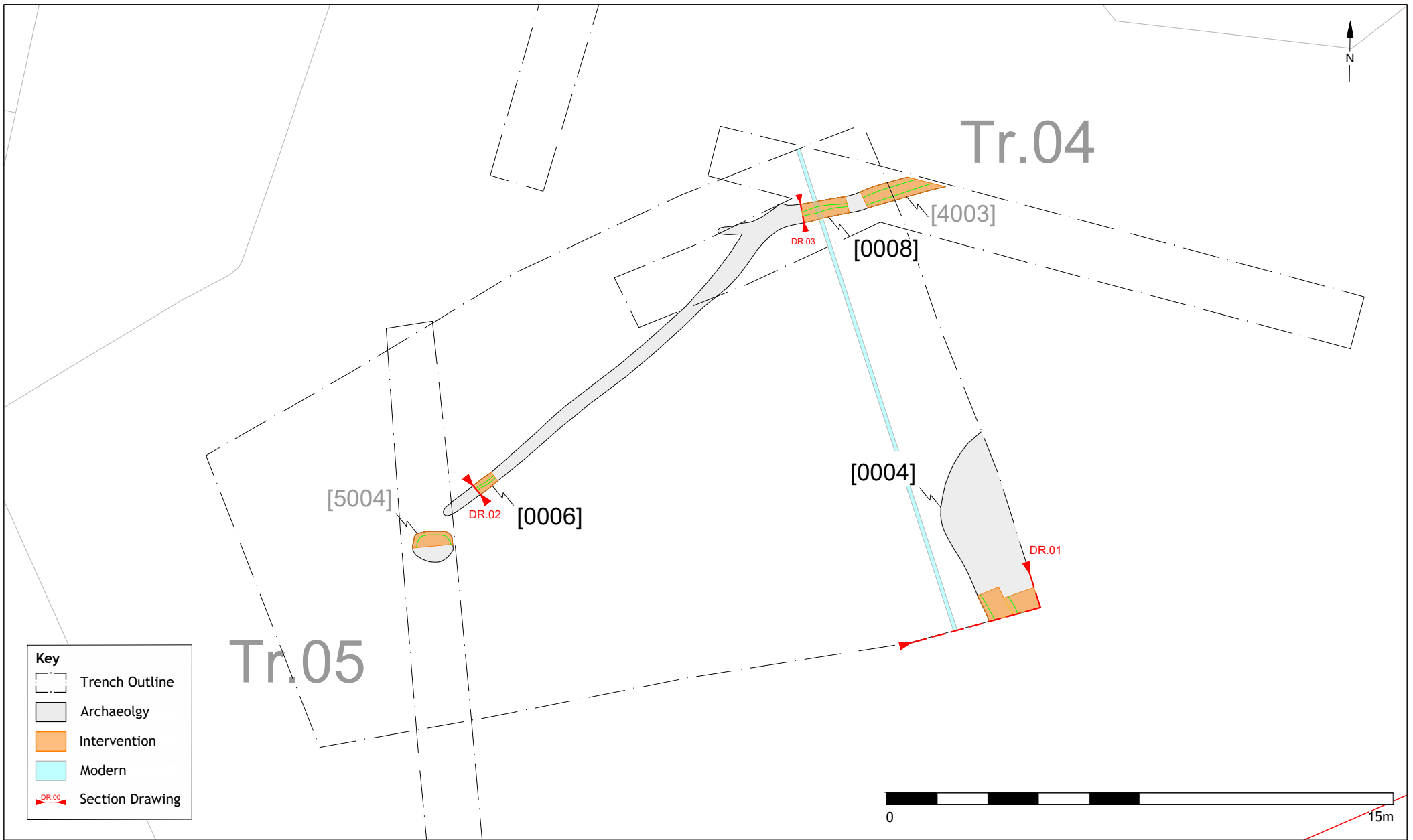
Plate 11: Area 02, southwest facing section of slot [0012] in ditch [0016], looking northeast.

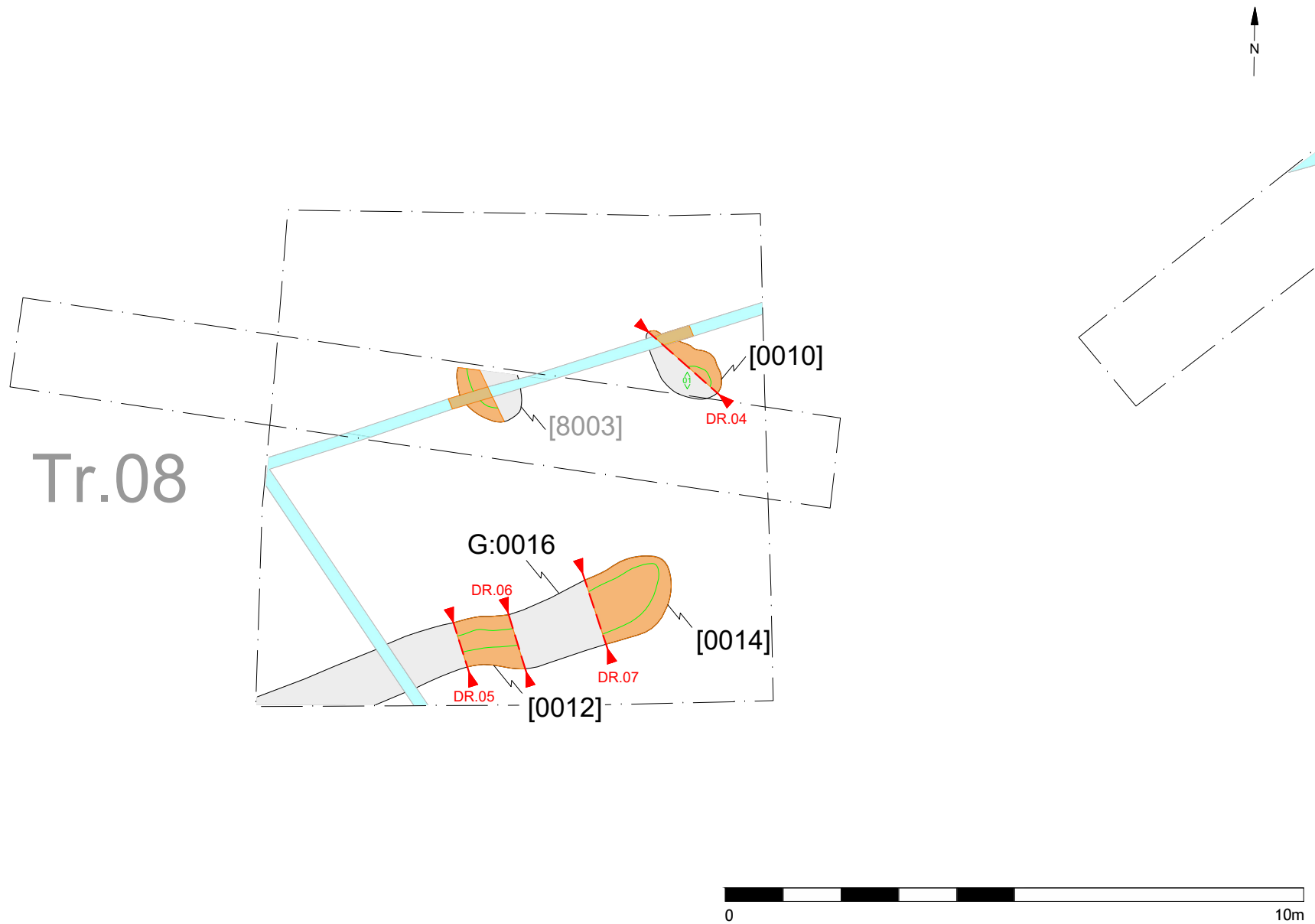


Plate 12: Area 02, northeast facing section of terminus slot [0014] of ditch [0016], looking southwest.

Figures



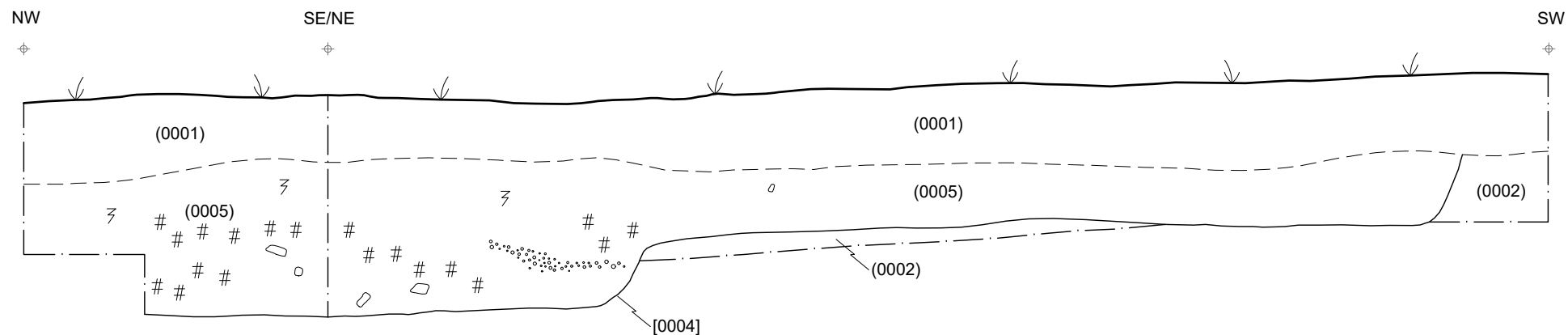




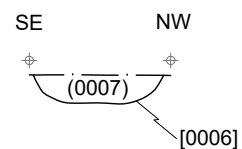
Key

- Trench Outline
- Archaeology
- Intervention
- Modern
- Section Drawing

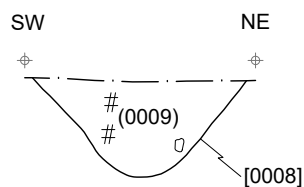
DR.01
North-West and South-East Facing Section of [0004]



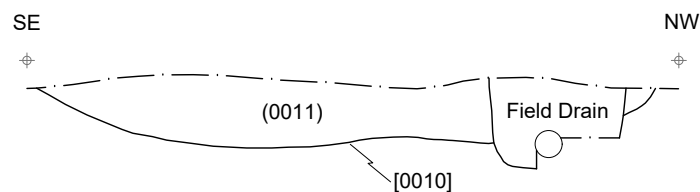
DR.02
North-East Facing Section of [0006]



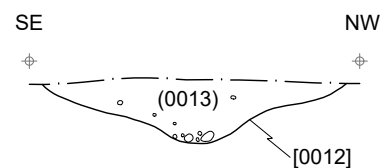
DR.03
North-West Facing Section of [0008]



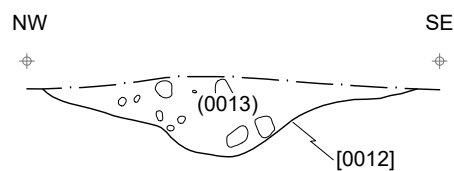
DR.04
North-East Facing Section of [0010]



DR.05
North-East Facing Section of [0016]



DR.06
South-West Facing Section of [0012]



DR.07
North-East Facing Section of [0014]

