UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER
Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Evaluation at Brascote Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire.

NGR: SK 4471 0309

Donald Clark and George Issitt

ULAS Report No 2022-050

Accession Number: XA.24.2022

Site Name: Brascote Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire

Grid Ref: SK 4471 0309

Author: Donald Clark and George Issitt

Client: RPS on behalf of Richborough Estates Ltd

Planning Ref: Pre-application

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	Project Name	An Archaeological Evaluation at Brascote Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire.		
	Start/end dates	14.02.2022 – 02.03.2022		
	Previous/Future Work	None/ Unknown		
	Project Type	Trench Evaluation		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Arable farmland		
	Monument Type/Period	Enclosure/ Possible Iron Age - Roman		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Pre -application		
	Planning Ref.	Pre-application		
PROJECT LOCATION	**County**	Leicestershire		
	Site Address/Postcode	Brascote Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire		
	Study Area	15.3 Hectares		
	Site Coordinates	SK 4471 0309		
	Height OD	123m-129m		
PROJECT CREATORS	**Organisation**	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	RPS on behalf of Richborough Estates Ltd.		
	Project Design Originator	RPS on behalf of Richborough Estates Ltd		
	Project Manager	Dr Gavin Speed		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Donald Clark		
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Donald Clark and George Issitt

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Brascote Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire (SK 4471 0309). The work was commissioned by RPS on behalf of Richborough Estates Ltd. Sixty nine trenches, totalling 5,520m² were excavated across the site.

Archaeological features were recorded in seven of the trenches, confirming features highlighted by geophysical survey and additional discrete features. A small amount of dating evidence was recovered in the form of two sherds of Iron Age pottery and one sherd of Roman pottery.

The site archive will be held with Leicester Museum Service, under the accession code: X.A.24.2022.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by RPS on behalf of Richborough Estates Ltd. to carry out an archaeological field evaluation at Brascote Lane, Newbold Verdon, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 4471 0309). The site was arable farmland and has been proposed for mixed development including residential.

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG 2021) this document forms the report for an archaeological trial trench evaluation which took place between 14th February and 2nd March 2022. This was undertaken as part of a programme of archaeological work, carried out pre-application to inform an intended outline planning application, following early consultation with the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council (and to specification detailed agreed with them, see Flitcroft 2022) , in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2021).

All work was carried out following the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct (2021) and adhered to their Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2020).

Site Description, Topography and Geology.

The village of Newbold Verdon is located in the county of Leicestershire, approximately 13km west of Leicester and approx. 5km east of Market Bosworth. The site is situated to the south of Newbold Verdon and east of Brascote Lane. The site consists of a large irregular shaped arable field (Fig. 1) measuring approx. 15.3 hectares and at a height ranging between 123m and 129m aOD. The British Geological Survey describes the geology as mudstone of the Gunthorpe Member. This is overlain by superficial deposits of glaciofluvial sand & gravel in the western half of the site, and diamicton till in the eastern half of the site. (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home –accessed 01.11.2021).

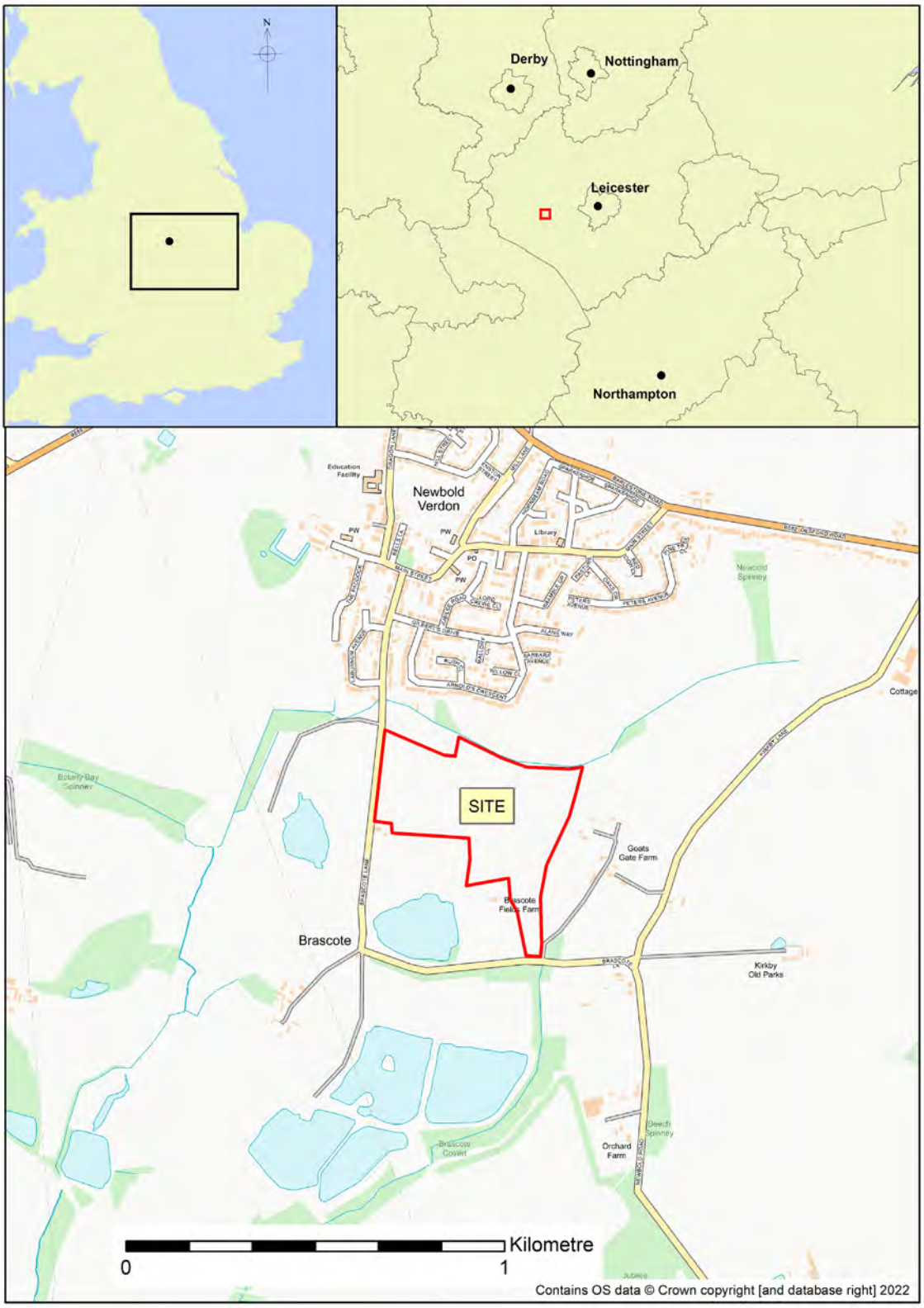

Figure 1: Location of site

Historical and Archaeological Background

A Heritage Statement has been undertaken for the site (Flitcroft 2021), the following section presents a summary of the report, with updated references to recent, currently unpublished, ULAS projects.

Historic Background

The assessment area lies just to the south of the village of Newbold Verdon, which had a recorded population of 3.5 households in 1086, putting it in the smallest 20% of settlements recorded in the Domesday Book. It records the settlement as Newbold meaning 'New Build' it acquired the suffix Verdon later. The site lies to the north of the deserted medieval village at Brascote, the DMV appears to consist of enclosures, house platforms and a fishpond close to the present Manor Farm.

Prehistoric

The HER identifies one archaeological site recorded within the Site boundary: a rectangular ditched enclosure (HER ref MLE2975) identified from aerial photos, and loosely dated to the Iron Age/Roman period on the basis of a small number of pottery sherds from fieldwalking in the same area in 1978. HER data for a surrounding 1km radius search area recorded prehistoric (Bronze Age) settlement remains (HER ref MLE19856) around 100m south of the Site and a possible Bronze Age barrow (MLE19855) 130m west of these.

An aerial photograph from the 1980s shows a possible pit alignment around 100m to the north-east of the site (MLE2976). The aerial photograph was provided by the Senior Planning Archaeologist to ULAS, and the photo then rectified using ArcMap GIS. The alignment appears to correspond with the northern edge of the site, along the alignment of a minor watercourse. Further Bronze Age/Iron Age pit alignments and other linear or enclosure cropmarks lay between 450m and 650m from the Site.

In 2016 ULAS undertook extensive excavations immediately to the west of Brascote Lane (Flavell 2018). Evidence for scattered Iron Age activity was revealed, including a roundhouse adjacent to Brascote Lane, along with other ditches and pits.

Roman

There is little recorded additional Roman archaeology within the 1km search area, the only known sites being the possible enclosure within the Site, and a Roman period pottery kiln and associated remains (MLE23206) discovered approx. 200m south-west of the Site.

Anglo-Saxon – Medieval

The HER data recorded no sites or finds of Early Saxon date within the search area, however, subsequent pre-application consultation with Leicestershire County Council's Historic & Natural Environment Team in January 2022 highlighted additional early Saxon discoveries from archaeological investigation within an adjacent quarry site to the south-west –as yet not fully reported, and not included in the HER data. This refers to the Cadeby Quarry extension excavation carried out by ULAS. It includes settlement evidence in the form two Grubenhäuser / sunken-featured buildings (Patrick & Beamish 2021). From the later Saxon period onwards, and through the Medieval and Post-Medieval periods, the development site area lay in the agricultural hinterland around the village settlement of Newbold (Verdon), Brascote, and Naneby and is thought to have remained undeveloped cultivated land.

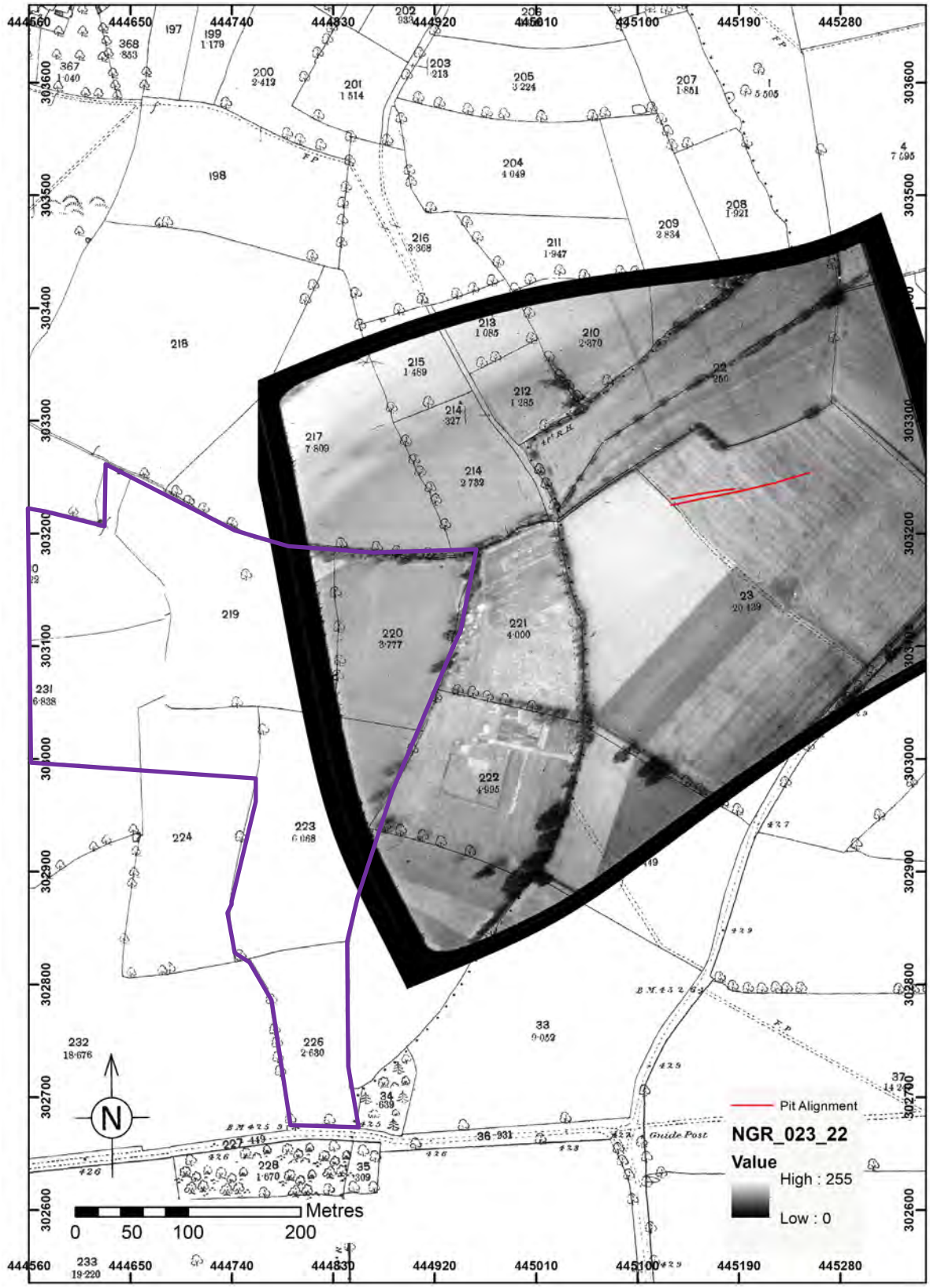

Figure 2: Rectified aerial photo, with 1st edition OS map overlaid. The position of the possible pit alignment is shaded red, site boundary purple (produced by ULAS)

Earlier Archaeological Work

Fieldwalking by a local amateur archaeology group in 1978 (ELE922) recovered a possible Iron Age rim sherd and two Roman pottery sherds from the site. This small amount of pottery was used to date a possible enclosure (MLE2975) which was identified from aerial photography within the western half of the site.

In 2021 a geophysical survey was undertaken on the site (Manktelow 2021). The survey identified a three-sided rectilinear enclosure (Fig. 2), open to the north-east, which lies towards the western side of the survey area. This feature, measuring 60m across, corresponds with the cropmark enclosure recorded by the HER (MLE2975). Although the suggested Iron Age / Roman date of the enclosure was noted, the survey report also highlights the feature's similarities with open-sided rectilinear enclosures of earlier Bronze Age date.

The other archaeological features identified in the geophysical survey were a scatter of possible pits and linear ditches. The ditches may represent parts of former field boundaries, although only two of them match with boundaries recorded on late 19th -and 20th century maps of the survey area.

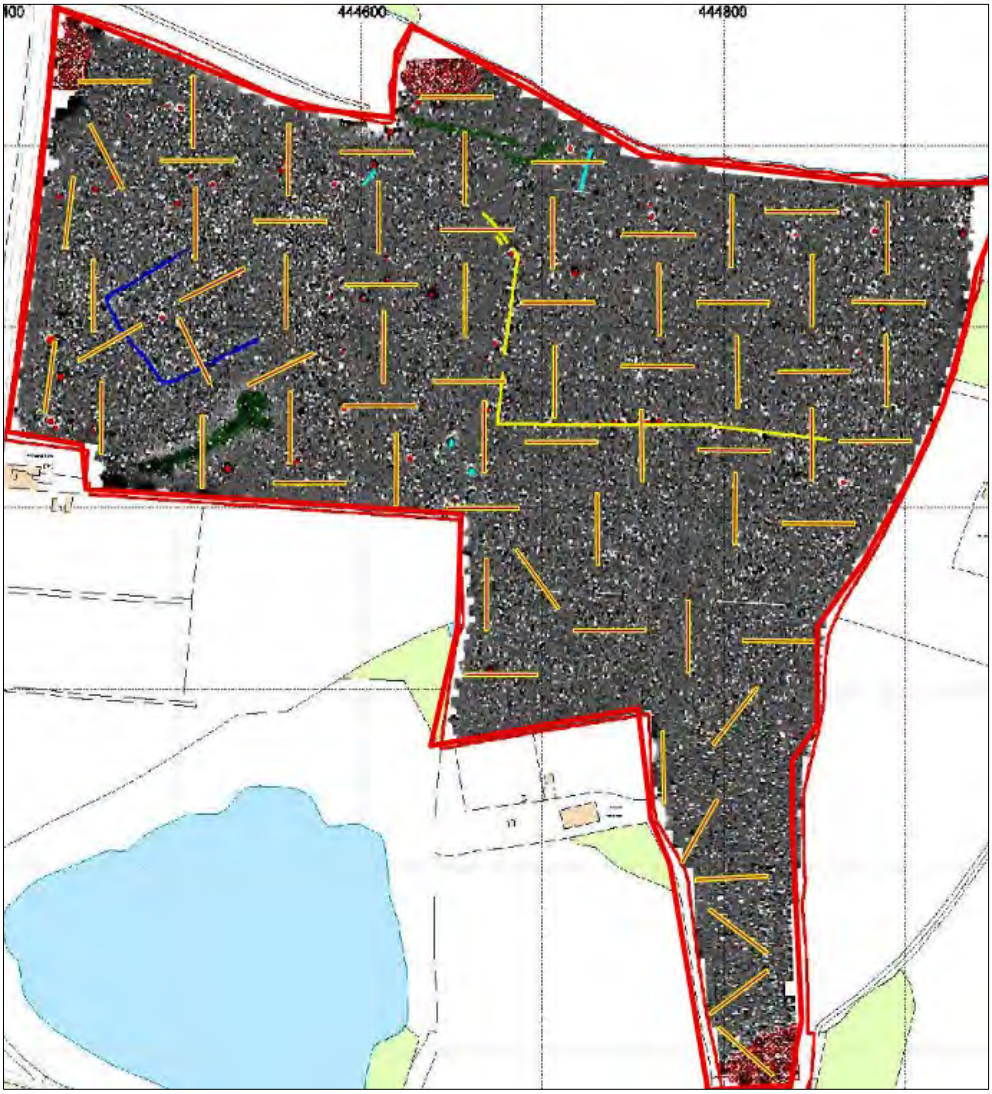

Figure 3: Geophysical survey of site with proposed trench plan

Aims and Objectives

Trial Trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation involving the excavation of exploratory trenches to ascertain the presence, condition and date of any archaeological remains that may be present.

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits.
- To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
- To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to assess the impact of the proposed development on cultural heritage and to help formulate a mitigation strategy
- To record any archaeological deposits and produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project aims, the principal objective was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, and significance of the heritage assets within their local and regional context in order to formulate a mitigation strategy to address the impacts of the proposed development on cultural heritage.

Research objectives

The project has the potential to contribute to research agendas identified within The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 13, (ed. Cooper 2006), and East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands (ed. Knight et al 2012), and updated here: https://researchframeworks.org/emherf/research-agenda/

Methodology

The Written Scheme of Investigation set out the scope of the evaluation, the excavation of sixty nine 40m x 2.0m trenches to provide a broad coverage of the proposed development area (Flitcroft 2022, Figure 4). The trenches were laid out to plan using DGPS. Trenches were excavated using two tracked 14.5 tonne 360º mechanical diggers, each fitted with a 2.0m wide toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and subsoil was removed in level spits under continuous archaeological supervision to the uppermost level of significant archaeological deposits, the natural substratum, or to a maximum safe working depth, depending on which was reached first. The trenches were recorded and then negative trenches were backfilled, partly to avoid flooding, as some areas were sodden. The location of the trenches and features were recorded using DGPS. All trenches, exposed sections and spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. Archaeological features were hand cleaned, photographed and where appropriate sample excavated as appropriate to address the objectives of the evaluation. Field notes were recorded on pro-forma ULAS trench recording forms whilst all excavated stratigraphic units were given a unique context number and recorded on pro-forma ULAS context sheets. Measured drawings of all archaeological features were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:10 and were attached to the overall site plan, which will be tied to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. A photographic record of the excavation was prepared, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record also

included ‘working shots’ to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

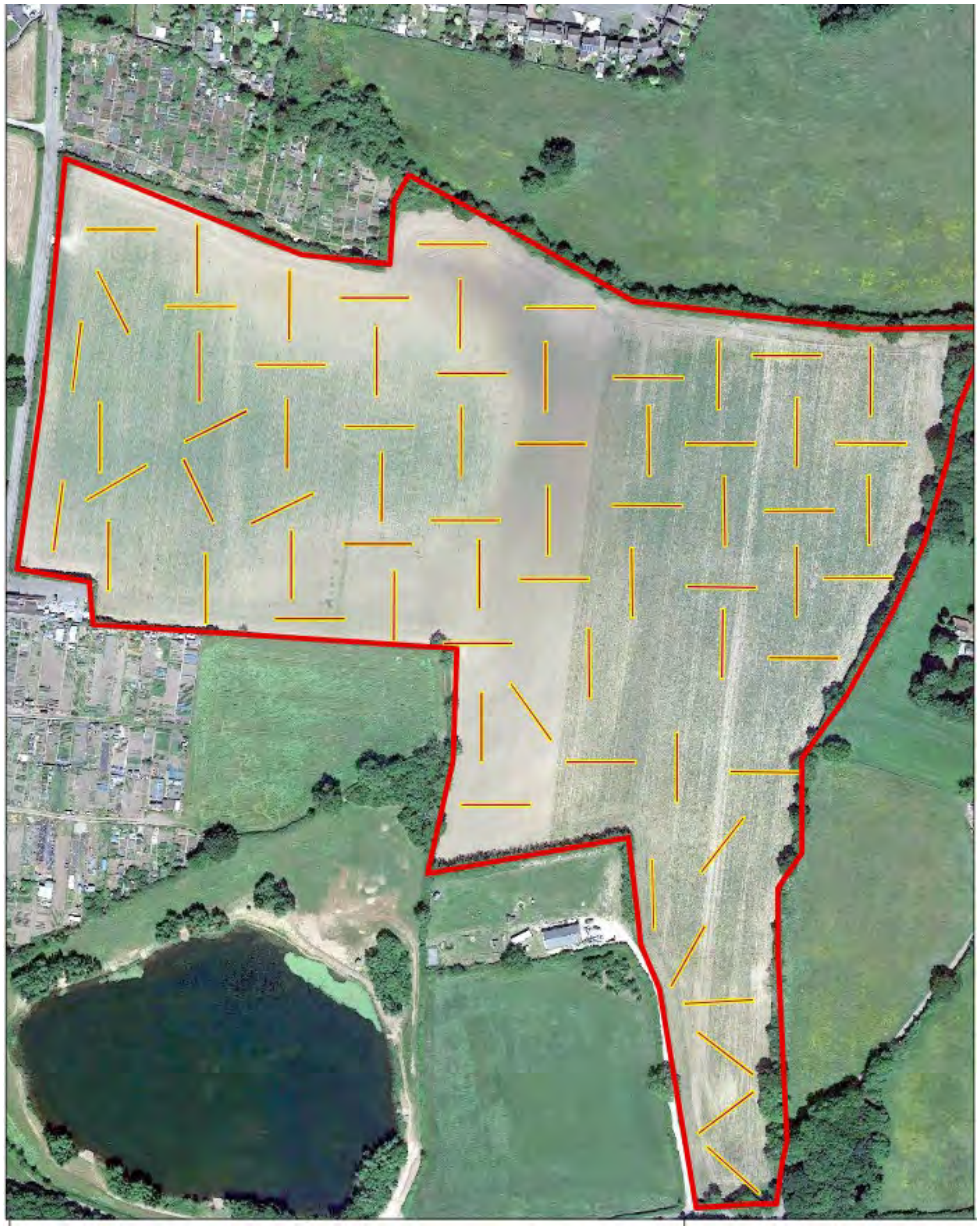

Figure 4: Proposed Trench plan (provided by client)

Results

The trenches were excavated across the field, and all but two were laid out according to the agreed plan (Figure 5). These two trenches (T 26 and T 32) were moved due to large areas of standing water. Sixty two of the trenches were negative apart from several containing past field boundaries. These trenches were recorded and backfilled. The seven trenches that contained features were examined in more detail by hand and the results are presented below, followed by specialist reports. A detailed table of negative trenches are in Appendix I, photographs of negative trenches are in Appendix II.

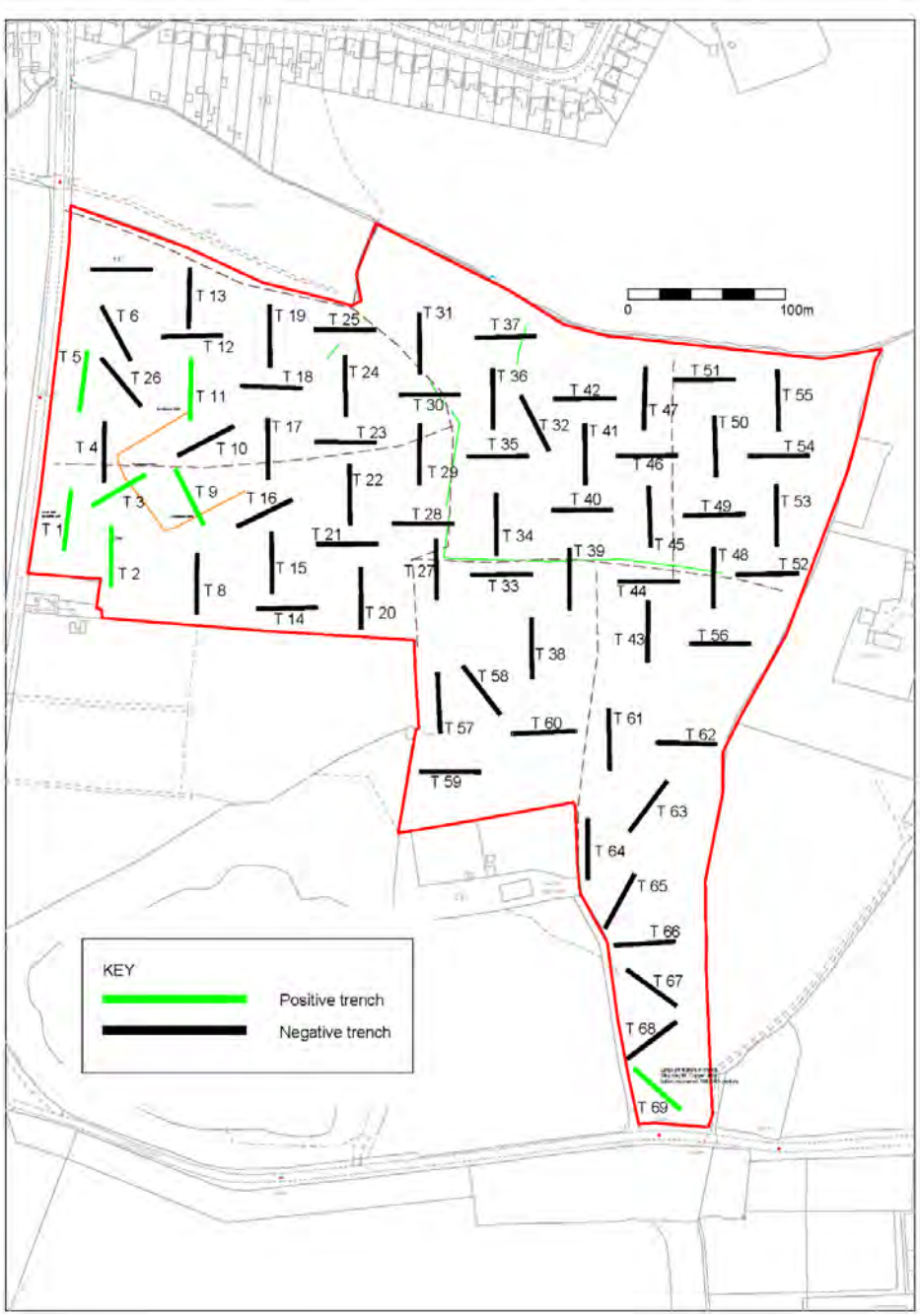

Figure 5: Plan of positive and negative trenches.

The trenches measured 40m long and 2m wide with depths ranging between 0.36m and 0.74m. The topsoil across most of the site, (3), ranged between 0.18m to 0.40m in depth and consisted of a friable mid greyish brown, sandy silt with occasional small rounded pebbles, evenly distributed. The subsoil across most of the site (2), ranged between 0.06m and 0.35m in depth and consisted of mid-orangey brown, medium silty sand with occasional small rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed. The natural substrata across the site varied between a mid-orange brown sand and gravel at the higher elevations, and a yellow brown clay at the lower elevations. The natural was reached across the site at depths between 0.36m and 0.74m. A network of stone and ceramic land drains crossed the site, these were confined to the areas where the natural consisted of clay. These were not damaged by the evaluation, and left in situ. Details of topsoils, subsoils and changes of natural, are listed in Appendix III.

Trench 1

Orientated N-S and located in the south-west corner of the site. Measuring 40m long, 2m wide and between 0.41m and 0.86m deep. Trench 1 contained a topsoil consisting of a fine dark grey brown silty sand and subsoil consisting of coarse orange brown silty sand. The natural substratum was orange brown sand and gravel. Trench 1 contained five archaeological features.

Cut [13] was a linear ditch or gully orientated NW-SE which ran diagonally across the trench. It had concave sides and a rounded base and measured 0.34m wide and 0.31m deep. Primary fill (14) was a slumping deposit at the base and consisted of mid-greyish brown silty sand. Secondary fill (15) consisted of mid brownish grey medium silty sand. No dating evidence was recovered. (Figs. 8-9).

Cut [16] was a linear ditch or gully orientated NW-SE which ran diagonally across the trench and parallel with cut [13]. It had steep sloping concave sides and a rounded base and measured 0.54m wide and 0.24m deep. Primary fill (17) was a slumping deposit at the base and consisted of mid-greyish brown silty sand. Secondary fill (18) consisted of mid brownish grey medium silty sand. No dating evidence was recovered.

Cut [19] was a possible ditch terminus orientated E-W. It was 1.60m long, 1.08m wide and 0.55m deep, and was visible at the west edge of the trench. The feature had steep straight sides and a flat base. The primary fill (20) consisted of mid-reddish brown, medium silty sand, 0.14m thick, most likely formed by slumping from side of feature. Secondary fill (21) consisted of mid greyish brown sandy silt, 0.53m thick. No dating evidence was recovered. (Figs. 10-11).

Cut [26] was a possible gully terminus initially thought to have a recut [28], but this was dismissed. The feature was orientated NW-SE and measured 1m long, 0.48m wide and 0.30m deep. The gully had steep straight sides and a flat base. The single fill (27) consisted of dark greyish brown, medium silty sand, 0.30m thick. No dating evidence was recovered. (Figs. 12-13).

Cut [30], was an uncertain ditch terminus or possible pit. It was orientated NW-SE and measured 1m long, 1.20m wide and 0.82m deep. The feature had steep straight sides and an irregular base. The primary fill (35) consisted of mid-orange brown, medium silty sand, 0.12m thick, most likely formed by early slumping from side of feature. Secondary fill (34) consisted of mid greyish brown sandy silt and gravel, 0.18m thick. The upper fill (31) consisted of mid-grey brown, medium silty sand and gravel, 0.42m thick. No dating evidence was recovered. (Figs. 14-15).

Figure 6: Trench 1, looking north

Table 1: Trench 1 details

Interval from **N**	**0m**	**10m**	**20m**	**30m**	**40m**
Topsoil depth	0.36m	0.35m	0.33m	0.30m	0.28m
Subsoil depth	0.38m	0.36m	0.31m	0.29m	0.12m
Top of Natural	0.74m	0.71m	0.64m	0.59m	0.40m
Base of trench	0.86m	0.80m	0.76m	0.62m	0.41m

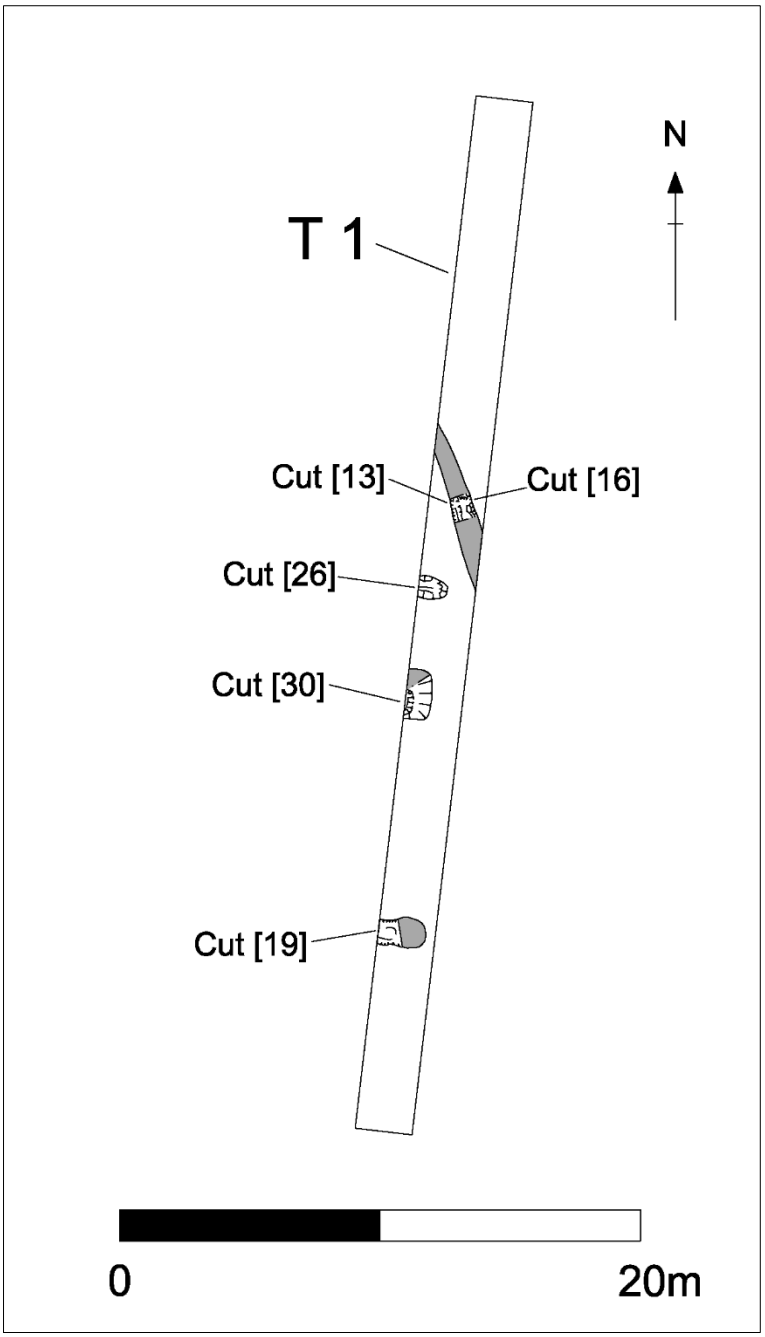

Figure 7: Detail of Trench 1

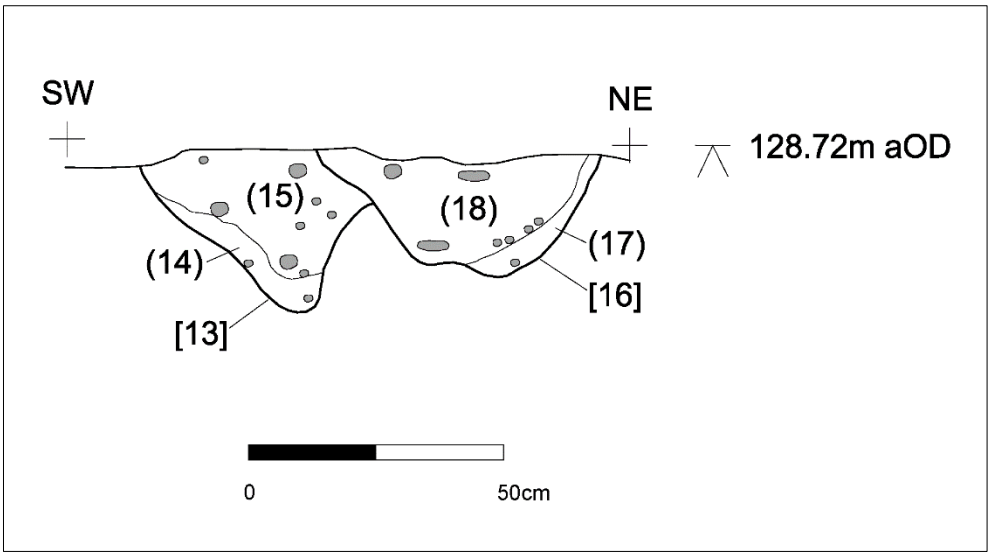

Figure 8: Section drawing of cuts [13] and [16]

Figure 9: Cuts [13] and [16] looking north west

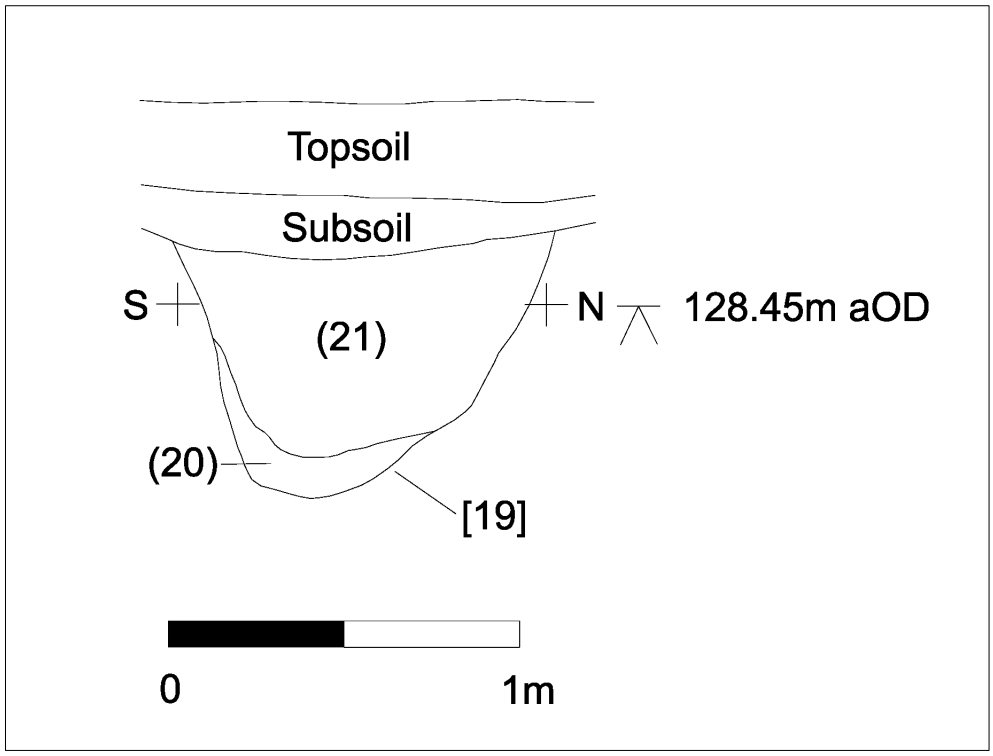

Figure 10: Section drawing of cut [19]

Figure 11: Cut [19] looking west

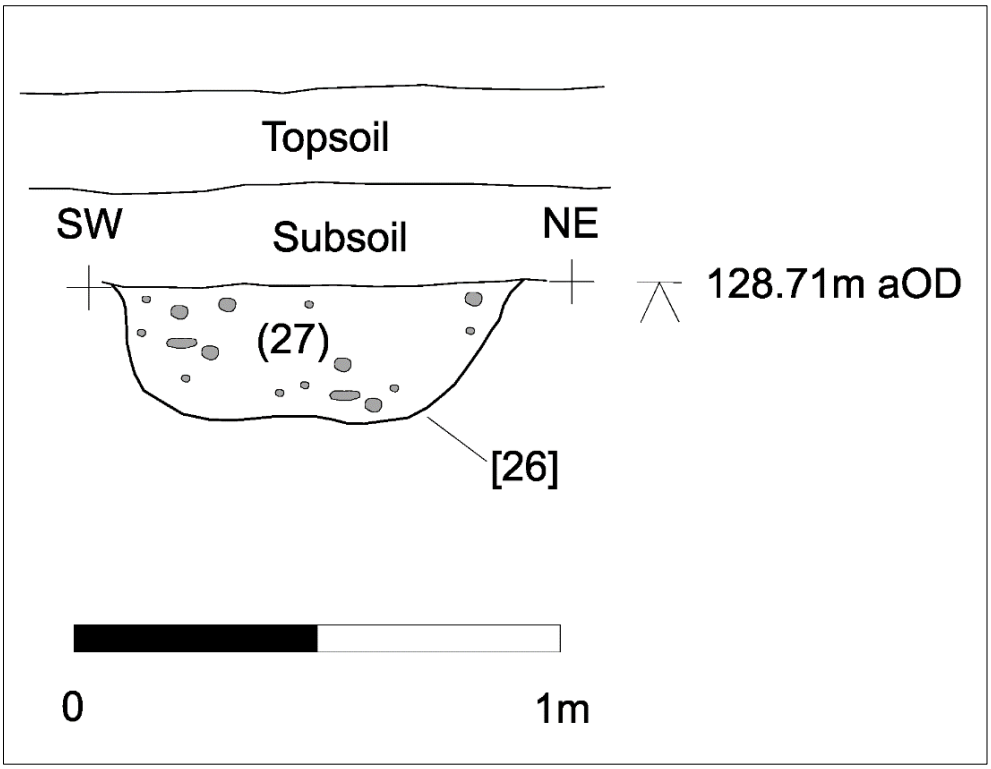

Figure 12: Section drawing of cut [26]

Figure 13: Cut [26] looking west, [28] was possible recut, but not real

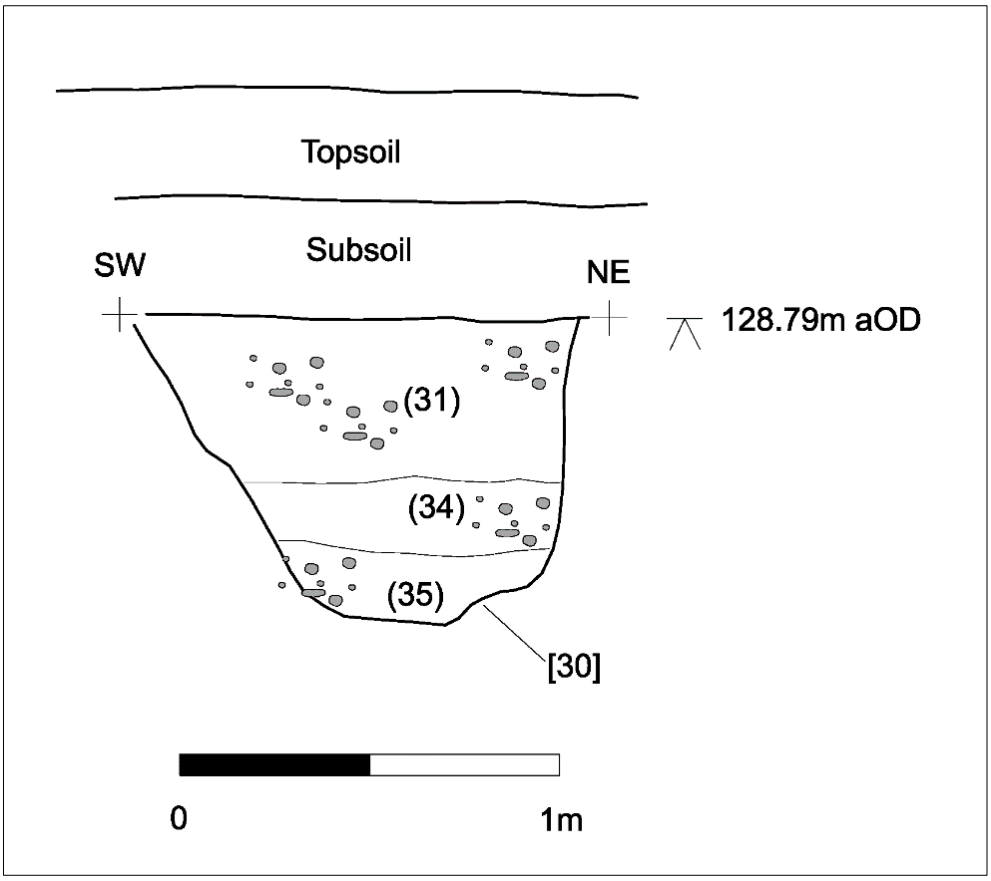

Figure 14: Section drawing of cut [30]

Figure 15: Cut [30], looking west, cut [32] was possible recut, but not real

Trench 2

Trench 2 was located in the south-west area of the site, approx. 30m east of Trench 1. It was orientated N-S, was 40m long, 2m wide and between 0.67m and 0.82m deep. Trench 2 contained a topsoil consisting of a fine dark grey brown silty sand and subsoil consisting of coarse orange brown silty sand. The natural substratum was orange brown sand and gravel. Trench 2 contained one archaeological feature.

Cut [37] was a shallow linear feature orientated E-W. It was visible across the width of the trench, was 0.40 m wide and 0.14m deep. The ditch had sloping, slightly concave sides and a rounded base. The single fill (38) consisted of mid-greyish brown silty sand. Due to flooding the feature was seen mostly in the trench side. No dating evidence was recovered. (Figs. 17-18).

Figure 16: Trench 2, looking north

Table 2: Trench 2 details

Interval from **N**	**0m**	**10m**	**20m**	**30m**	**40m**
Topsoil depth	0.33m	0.40m	0.36m	0.41m	0.27m
Subsoil depth	0.35m	0.30m	0.25m	0.28m	0.28m
Top of Natural	0.68m	0.70m	0.61m	0.69m	0.55m
Base of trench	0.78m	0.82m	0.81m	0.81m	0.67m

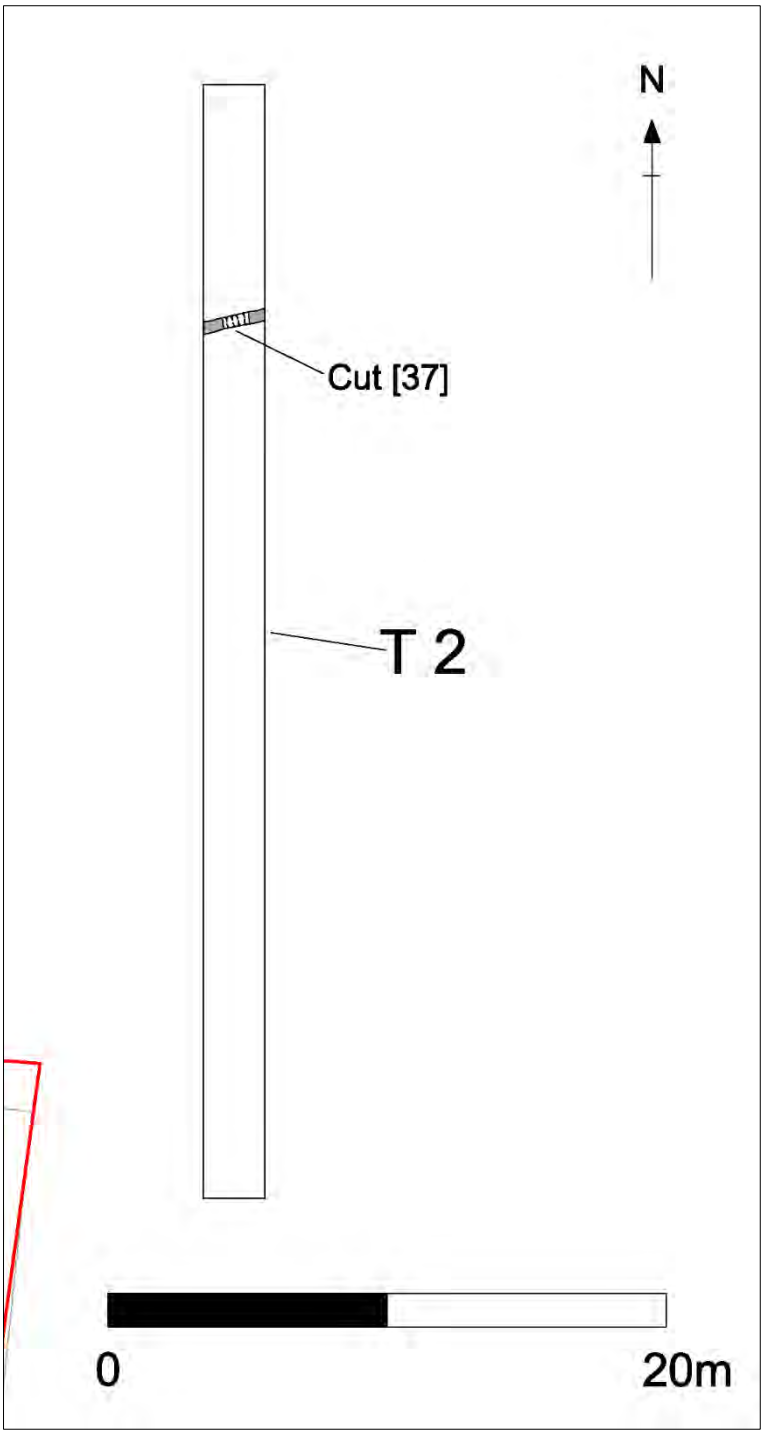

Figure 17: Detail of Trench 2

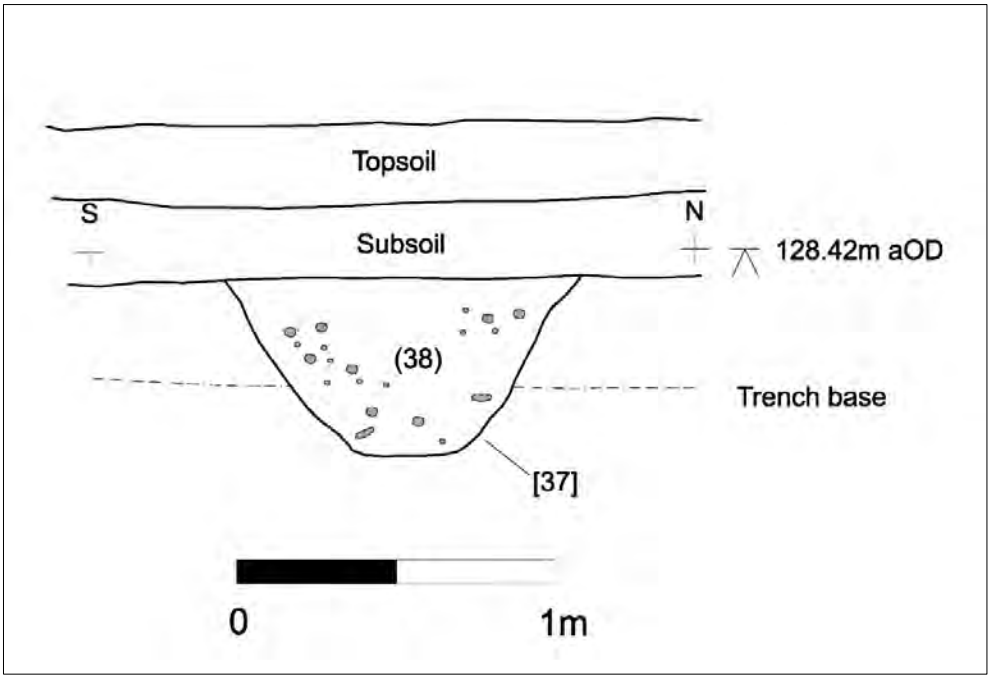

Figure 18: Section drawing of cut [37]

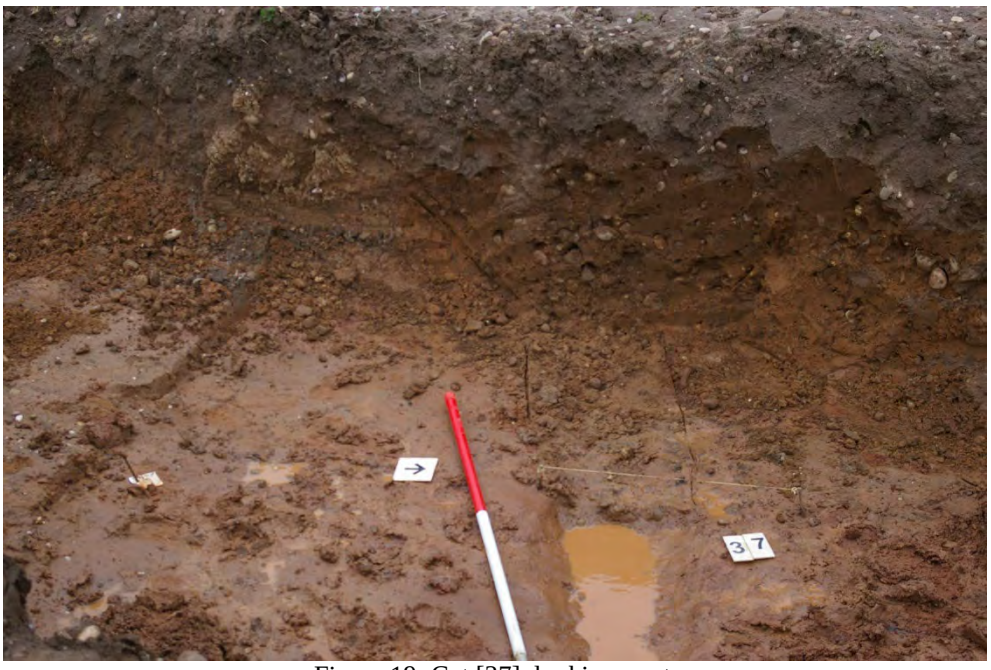

Figure 19: Cut [37], looking west.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was located in the south-west of the site, approximately 20m north of Trench 2. The trench was orientated NE-SW and was 40m long, 2m wide and between 0.50m and 0.68m deep. Trench 3 contained a topsoil consisting of a fine dark grey brown silty sand and subsoil consisting of coarse orange brown silty sand. The natural substratum was orange brown sand and gravel. Trench 3 contained two archaeological features.

Cut [6], was section of a linear ditch highlighted by geophysical survey as part of an enclosure. This section was orientated NW-SE and visible across the width of the trench, it was 1.87m wide and 0.66m deep. The ditch had concave side to south-west but convex to the north-east and a flat base. Primary fill (7) comprised of a dark orange brown, medium sandy silt, 0.44m thick. Secondary fill (8) comprised of mid orangey brown, medium sandy silt, 0.47m thick. One sherd of middle to late Iron Age pottery was recovered. The upper fill (9) consisted of dark orangey brown, medium sandy silt, 0.35m thick. One sherd of Roman pottery (dated to the 1st century) was recovered. (Figs. 21-22).

Cut [22], was an oval pit of unknown use. It measured 1.18 long, 0.88m wide and 0.32m deep. The pit had convex sides and flat base. The primary fill (23) consisted of light yellow brown, medium sandy silt, 0.50m. Secondary fill (24) consisted of dark orangey brown, medium sandy silt, 0.28m thick, Iron Age pot was recovered. (Figs. 23-24)

Figure 20: Trench 3, looking north-east

Table 3: Details of Trench 3

Interval from **N**	**0m**	**10m**	**20m**	**30m**	**40m**
Topsoil depth	0.27m	0.33m	0.31m	0.29m	0.33m
Subsoil depth	0.18m	0.25m	0.22m	0.20m	0.15m
Top of Natural	0.45m	0.58m	0.53m	0.49m	0.48m
Base of trench	0.50m	0.68m	0.54m	0.54m	0.52m

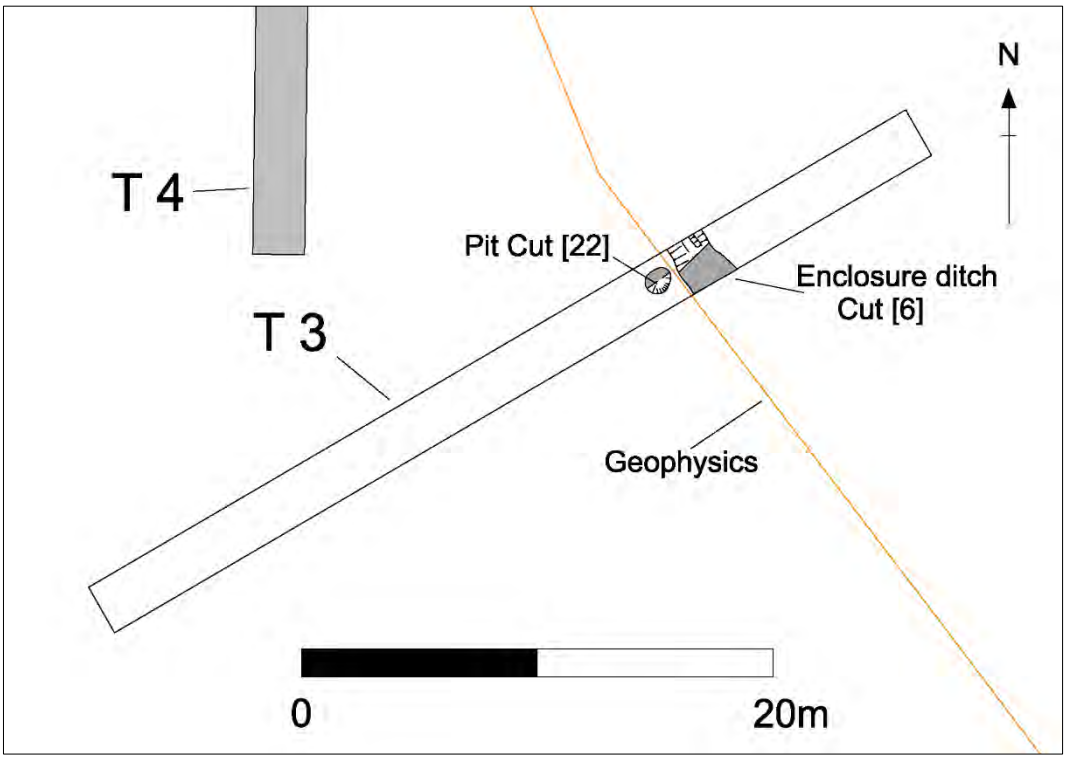

Figure 21: Detail of Trench 3

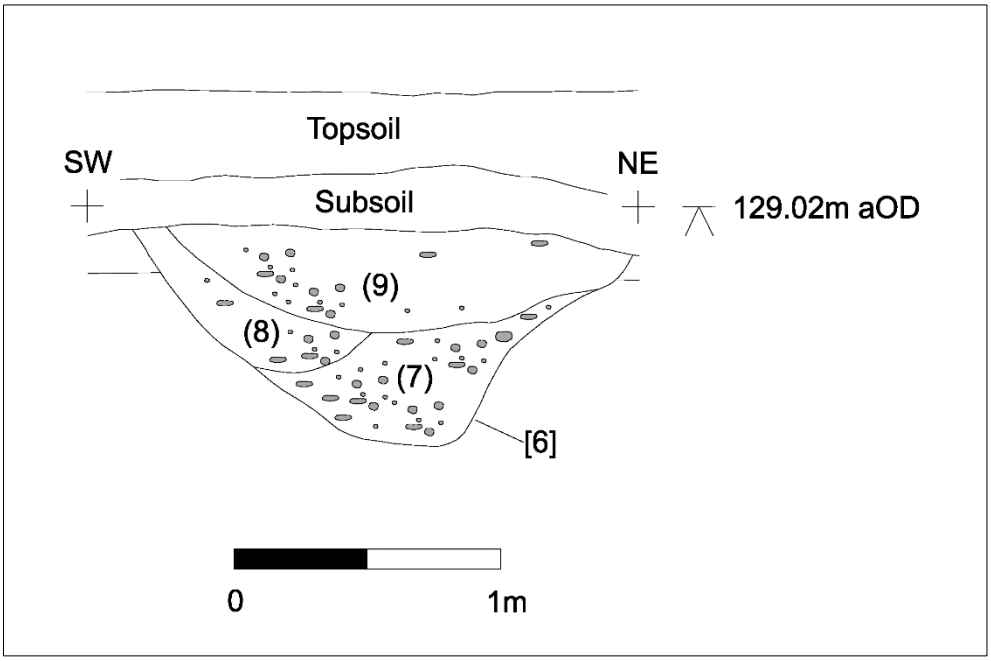

Figure 22: Section drawing of cut [6]

Figure 23: Cut [6], looking north-west. Section of enclosure.

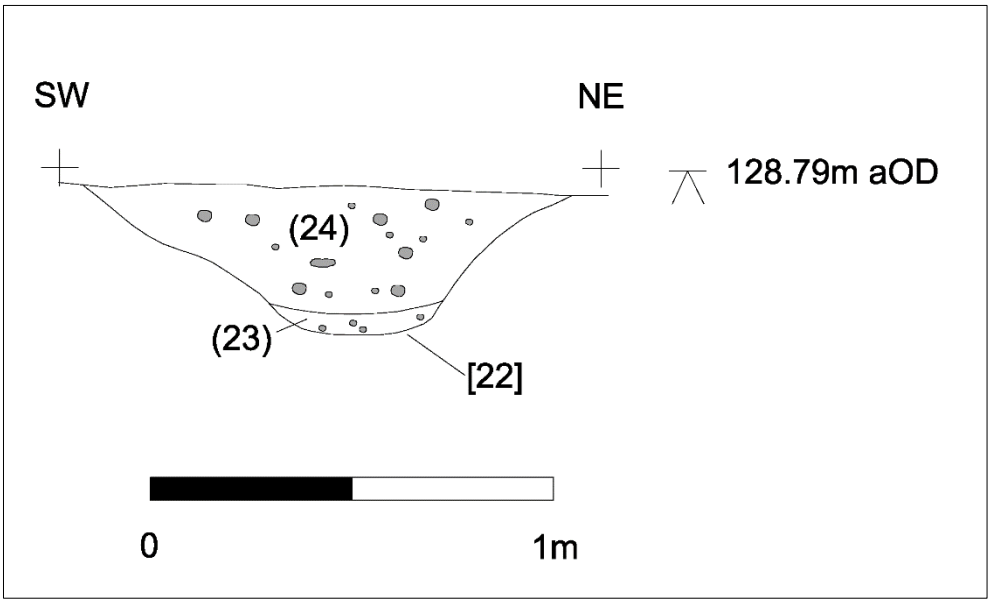

Figure 24: Section drawing of cut [22]

Figure 25: Cut [22], looking north-west. Pit section.

Trench 5

Trench 5 was located in the south-west of the evaluation area, approx. 50m north of Trench 1. The trench was orientated N-S and was 40m long, 2m wide and between 0.59m and 0.74m deep. Trench 5 contained a topsoil consisting of a fine dark grey brown silty sand and subsoil consisting of coarse orange brown silty sand. The natural substratum was orange brown sand and gravel. Trench 5 contained one archaeological feature.

Cut [39], was possible ditch terminus. It may be a continuation of a ditch recorded on a site located to the west (Flavell 2018). The feature survived poorly and was seen best in trench wall. It was orientated east-west and measured 0.55m long, 0.50m wide and 0.28m deep. The ditch had steep concave sides and a flat base. The single fill (40) consisted of mid greyish brown, medium sandy silt, 0.28m thick. No dating evidence was recovered. (Figs. 27-28).

Figure 26: Trench 5, looking north

Table 4: Details of Trench 5

Interval from **N**	**0m**	**10m**	**20m**	**30m**	**40m**
Topsoil depth	0.31m	0.40m	0.39m	0.29m	0.34m
Subsoil depth	0.21m	0.20m	0.13m	0.28m	0.28m
Top of Natural	0.52m	0.60m	0.52m	0.57m	0.62m
Base of trench	0.59m	0.68m	0.63m	0.68m	0.74m

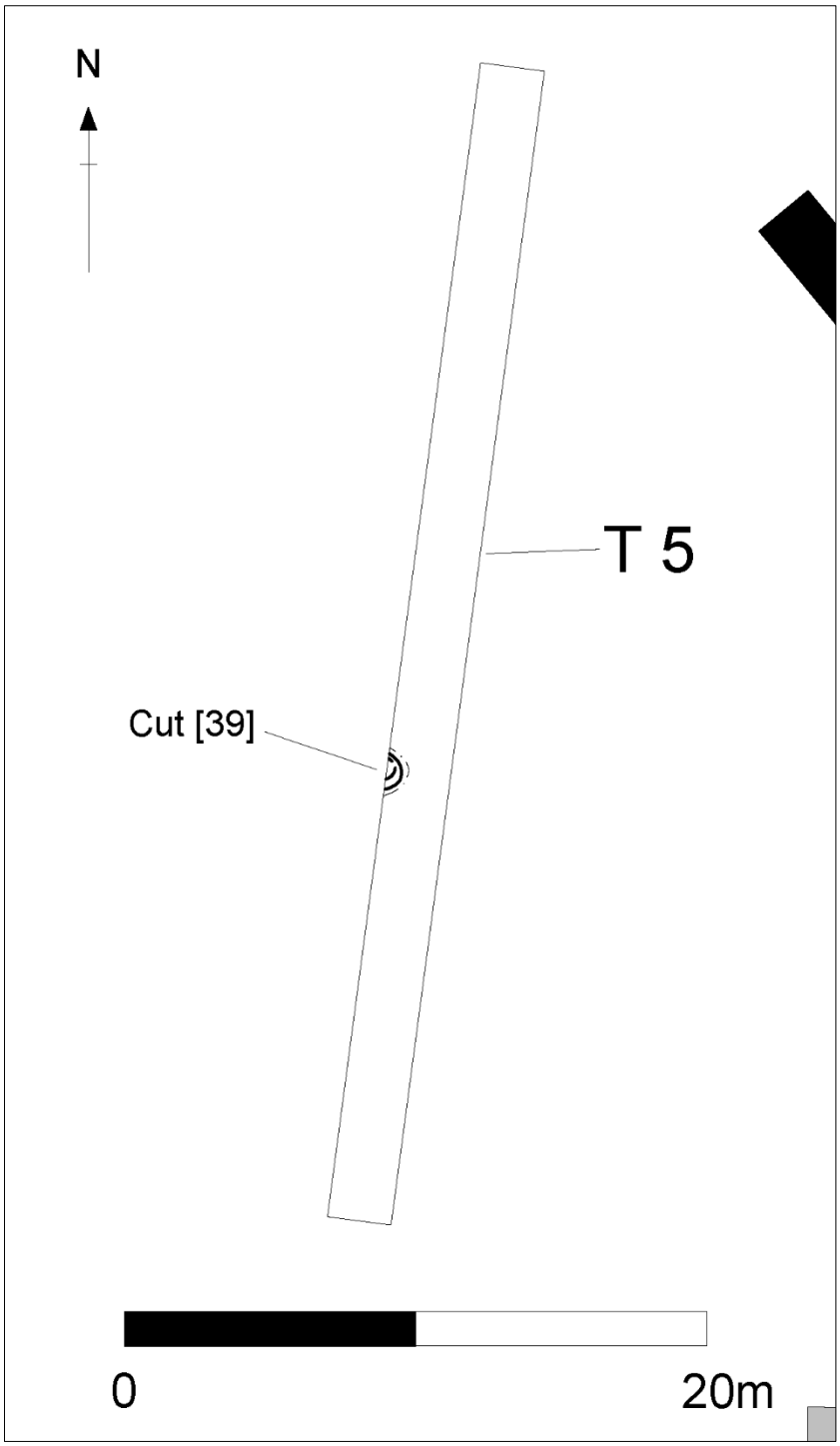

Figure 27: Detail of Trench 5

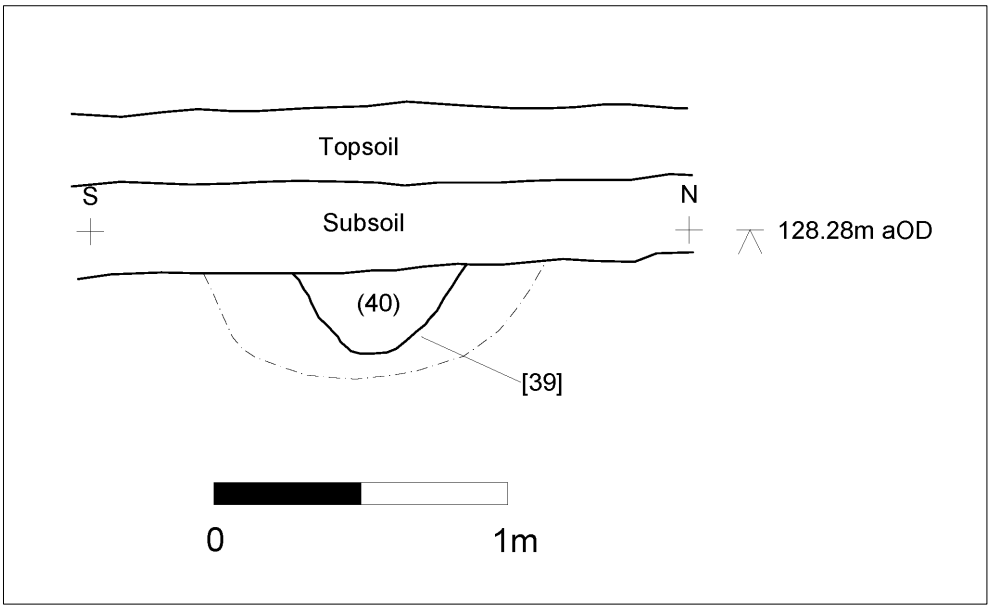

Figure 28: Section drawing of cut [39]

Figure 29: Cut [39], looking west

Trench 9

Trench 9 was located in the south-west of the evaluation area, approx. 30m east of Trench 3. The trench was orientated NW-SE and was 40m long, 2m wide and between 0.46m and 0.65m deep. Trench 9 contained a topsoil consisting of a fine dark grey brown silty sand and subsoil consisting of coarse orange brown silty sand. The natural substratum was orange brown sand and gravel. Trench 9 contained one archaeological feature.

Cut [10], was section of a linear ditch highlighted by geophysical survey as part of an enclosure. This section was orientated north-east to south-west and visible across the width of the trench, it was 2m wide and 0.96m deep. The ditch had steep straight sides and a concave base. Primary fill (11) was a silting deposit running down the sides of the ditch and consisted of mid yellowish brown, medium silty sand, 0.74m thick. Secondary fill (12) consisted of dark greyish brown, medium silty sand, 0.96m thick, and contained a large quantity of pebbles and heat affected stones. No dating evidence was recovered. (Figs. 31-32).

Figure 30: Trench 9, looking north-west

Table 5: Details of Trench 9

Interval from **NW**	**0m**	**10m**	**20m**	**30m**	**40m**
Topsoil depth	0.29m	0.30m	0.33m	0.33m	0.31m
Subsoil depth	0.12m	0.18m	0.19m	0.25m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.41m	0.48m	0.52m	0.58m	0.45m
Base of trench	0.46m	0.57m	0.60m	0.65m	0.52m

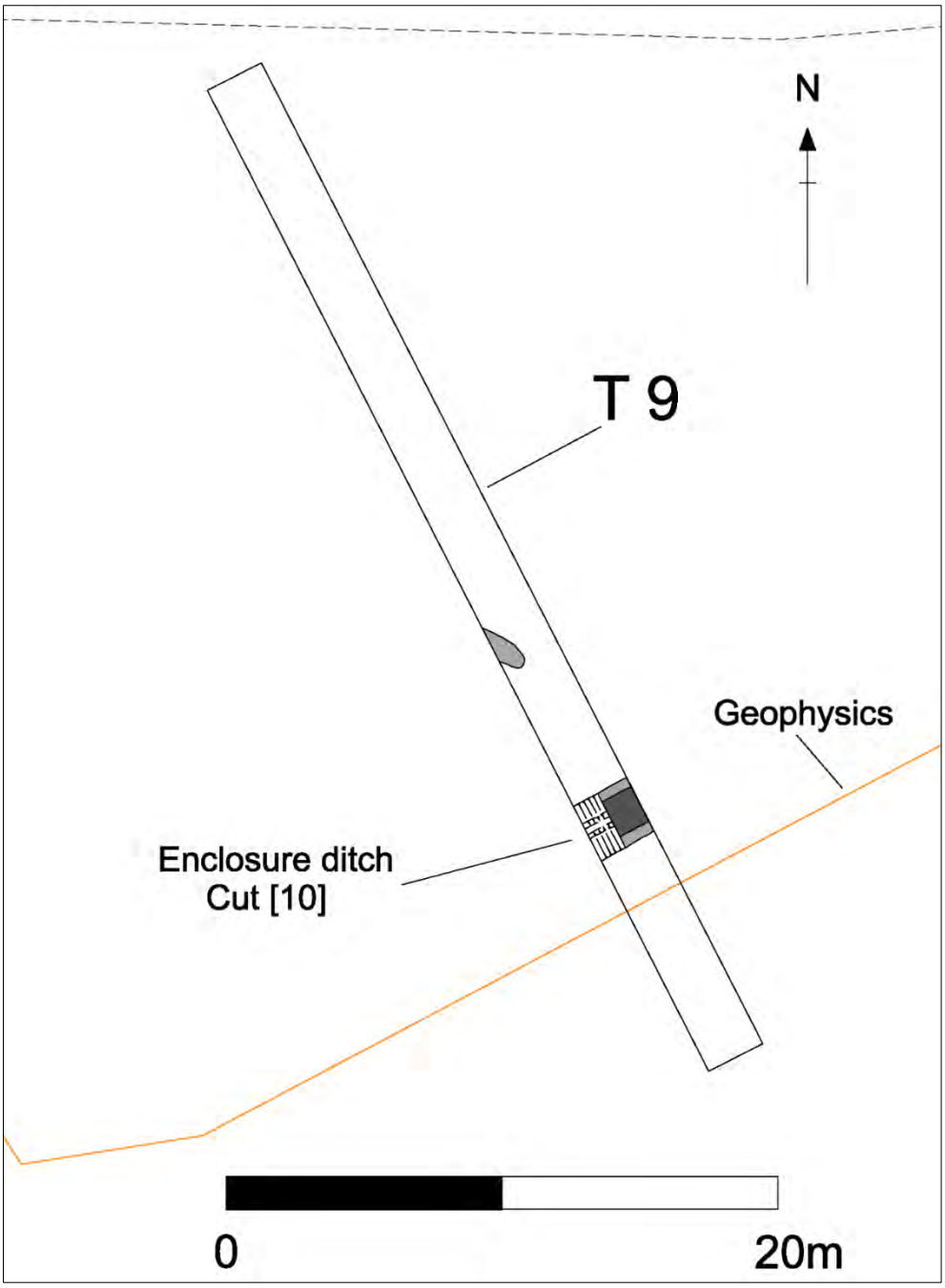

Figure 31: Detail of Trench 9

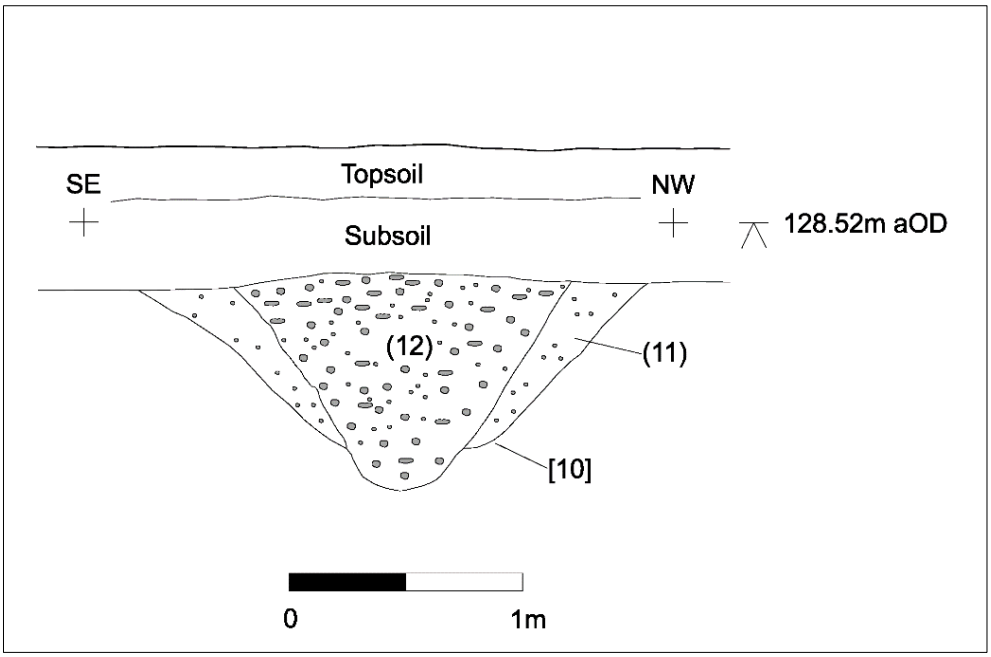

Figure 32: Section drawing of enclosure ditch, cut [10]

Figure 33: Cut [10], looking south-west

Trench 11

Trench 11 was located in the south-west of the evaluation area, *c*.40m north of Trench 9. The trench was orientated N-S and was 40m long, 2m wide and between 0.55m and 0.89m deep. Trench 11 contained a topsoil consisting of a fine dark grey brown silty sand and subsoil consisting of coarse orange brown silty sand. The natural substratum was orange brown sand and gravel. Trench 11 contained one archaeological feature.

Linear ditch [4] measured 2.0m in length, 0.40m in width and 0.50m in depth. The ditch had steep straight sides and gradual sides with a rounded base. The ditch was not shown on the the geophysical survey, although it followed the line of the enclosure, and is therefore likely a continuation of it. The single fill (5) consisted of mid-greyish yellow, medium silty sand containing occasional small rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed. No dating evidence was recovered. (Figs. 35-36).

Figure 34: Trench 11, looking north

Table 6: Detail of Trench 11

Interval from **N**	**0m**	**10m**	**20m**	**30m**	**40m**
Topsoil depth	0.30m	0.38m	0.37m	0.35m	0.41m
Subsoil depth	0.21m	0.32m	0.37m	0.37m	0.36m
Top of Natural	0.51m	0.70m	0.74m	0.72m	0.77m
Base of trench	0.55m	0.79m	0.89m	0.79m	0.83m

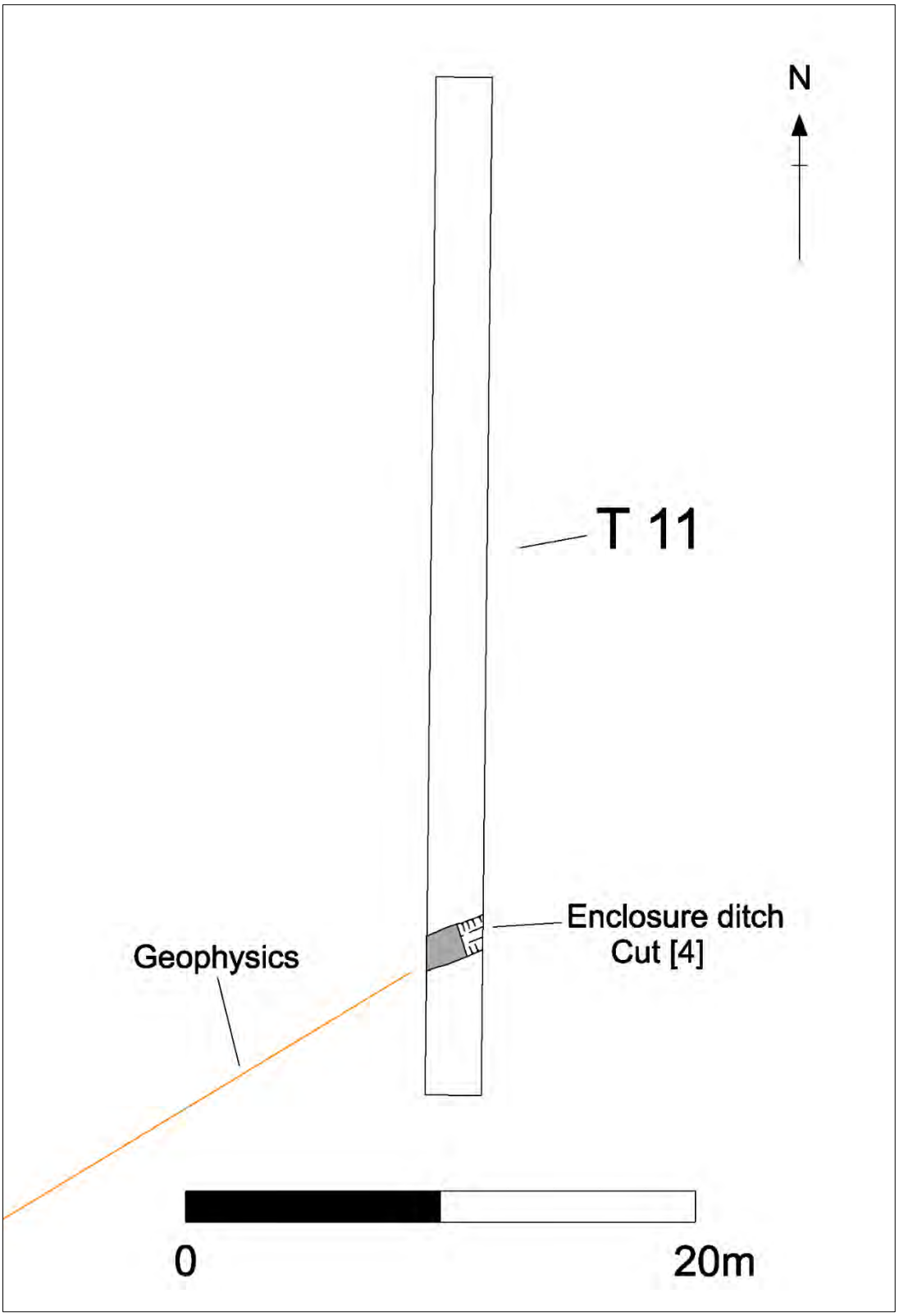

Figure 35: Detail of Trench 11

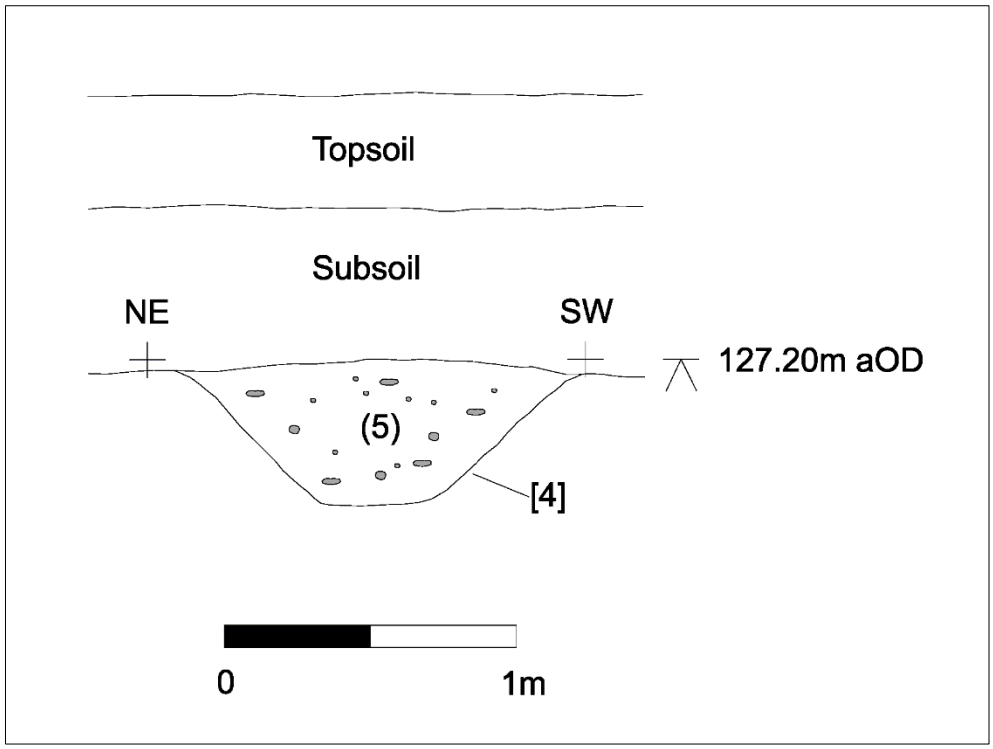

Figure 36: Section drawing of ditch cut [4]

Figure 37: Cut [4], looking north-east

Trench 69

Trench 69 was located at the southern end of the site. The trench was orientated NW-SE and was 40m long, 2m wide and between 0.55m and 0.89m deep. Trench 69 contained a topsoil consisting of a fine dark grey brown silty sand and subsoil consisting of coarse orange brown silty sand. The natural substratum was orange brown sand and gravel.

Trench 69 contained one uncertain feature, perhaps a post-medieval / modern pond. The feature was visible across the width of the trench and was approx. 6m wide. The fill was a mid-grey silty clay. A 19th century button and a fragment of red brick were recovered from the fill and the feature was not further investigated.

Figure 38: Trench 69, looking south-east

Table 7: Detail of Trench 69

Interval from **NW**	**0m**	**10m**	**20m**	**30m**	**40m**
Topsoil depth	0.25m	0.29m	0.35m	0.28m	0.30m
Subsoil depth	0.10m	-	0.23m	0.17m	0.26m
Top of Natural	0.35m	0.29m	-	0.45m	0.56m
Base of trench	0.39m	0.29m	0.80m	0.50m	0.68m

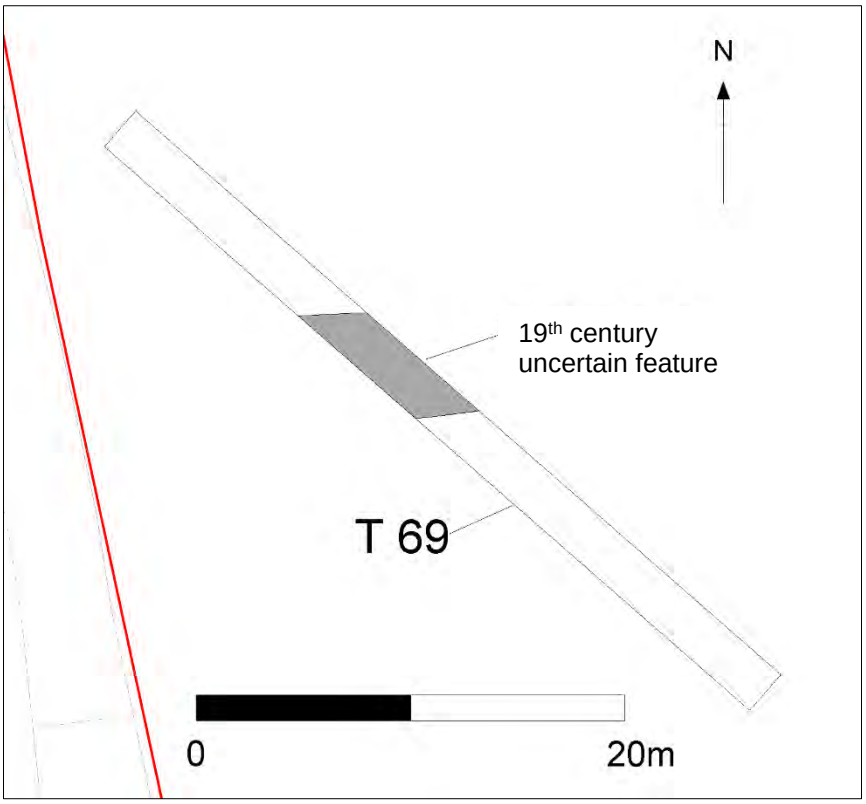

Figure 39: Detail of Trench 69

Iron Age and Roman Pottery (Nicholas J. Cooper)

Two sherds of Iron Age pottery from contexts (8) and (24), and one of Roman date from (9), were recovered during the field work. The pottery was analysed by form and fabric in accordance with national guidelines (Barclay et al. 2016), using the Leicestershire County Museums prehistoric and Roman pottery fabric series (Marsden 2011, 62; Pollard 1994, 110-114), and quantified by sherd count and weight (g). A quantified record is presented in the Table below.

Table 8: Quantified record of the pottery finds by context

Trench/Context	Code/descript	Count	Weight. g	Dating/comment
Tr3. Ditch [6] fill (8)	IA Pottery R1 (granodiorite)	1	3	Iron Age
Tr3. Pit [22] fill (24)	IA Pottery Q4 (quartz)	1	1	Iron Age
Tr3. Ditch [6] fill (9)	Roman Pottery 1st Century GW5. (Grey ware).	1	12	Roman

Contexts (8) and (24) contained single body sherds of Iron Age pottery. The sherd from (8), weighing 3g, was from a vessel manufactured in a granitic (granodiorite)-tempered fabric (R1), whilst that from (24), was tempered with quartz (Q4). Context (9) yielded a sherd from the shoulder of a jar (12g) in grey ware (Fabric GW5). Neither of the Iron Age sherds was large enough to tell if it exhibited scored decoration, but the presence of Roman material on the site would tend to indicated that it would be of middle to late Iron Age date rather than earlier. The grey ware will date from the later 1st century onwards and given the presence of Iron Age pottery would tend to indicate it would be earlier Roman rather than later. This suggested

possible late Iron Age to late Romano British activity on the site in terms of possible field boundaries and possibly more extensive activity nearly.

Statement of potential

Though a rather meagre assemblage, the occurrence of dated Iron Age and Roman pottery in stratified contexts does at least flag the potential for further stratified deposits to be uncovered if further work is undertaken. There is therefore some potential for the generation of assemblages worthy of research that will enlighten the chronology of the site and the activities of the inhabitants.

Discussion

The trenching strategy allowed for good coverage of the site allowing the best chance for the discovery of any archaeology. The geophysical survey had indicated the presence of a possible sub-rectangular enclosure and this was proven in Trenches 3, 9 and 11, where the ditch survived as a robust feature. Trenches 1, 2 and 5 also contained archaeological features and it seems that any archaeology is confined to the west area of the site. This is understandable as it is the highest elevated land, and on sands and gravels.

The geophysical survey was sufficient to highlight the greater part of the enclosure ditch, but as it was also found in Trench 11, it does mean that the entire surviving enclosure has not been mapped and further work would be required to achieve this. Dating of the enclosure is also open to discussion, only two sherds of pottery were recovered, one Iron Age and one Roman, further work would hopefully produce a greater assemblage and allow for more accurate dating. Although the features in Trenches 1, 2, and 5 were undated, the archaeological evidence is close to known activity of Iron Age date, previously uncovered by ULAS 50m to the west (X.A72.2016, Flavell 2018). Feature [39] in Trench 5 may be a continuation of a ditch (Flavell 2018).

Apart from the western area of the site, the other areas to the east and south were largely devoid of archaeological evidence, beyond extant 19th / 20th century ditches from former field boundaries, a 18th/19th century pit/pond in trench 69, and modern land drains.

An aerial photograph from the 1980s shows a possible pit alignment around 100m to the north-east of the site (MLE2976). The rectified alignment appears to correspond with the northern edge of the site, along a minor watercourse. The pit alignment was not located in any of the trenches, and likely led up to the small stream, or else lies to the north beyond the site boundaries.

Conclusion

The archaeological trial trench evaluation at Brascote Lane, Newbold Verdon, consisted of 69 trenches, excavated across the site. Archaeological features were recorded in seven of the trenches, confirming the presence of a rectangular enclosure, previously identified from aerial photography and geophysical survey. A small amount of dating evidence was recovered in the form of two sherds of Iron Age pottery and one sherd of Roman pottery. Close to this were further additional discrete features, these were undated, but may relate to the enclosure, and / or the Iron Age roundhouse and activity known 50m beyond the site, in the adjacent field to the west (Flavell 2018). Elsewhere, the site appears devoid of any significant archaeological activity or evidence, beyond former 19th century field boundary ditches, and modern land drains.

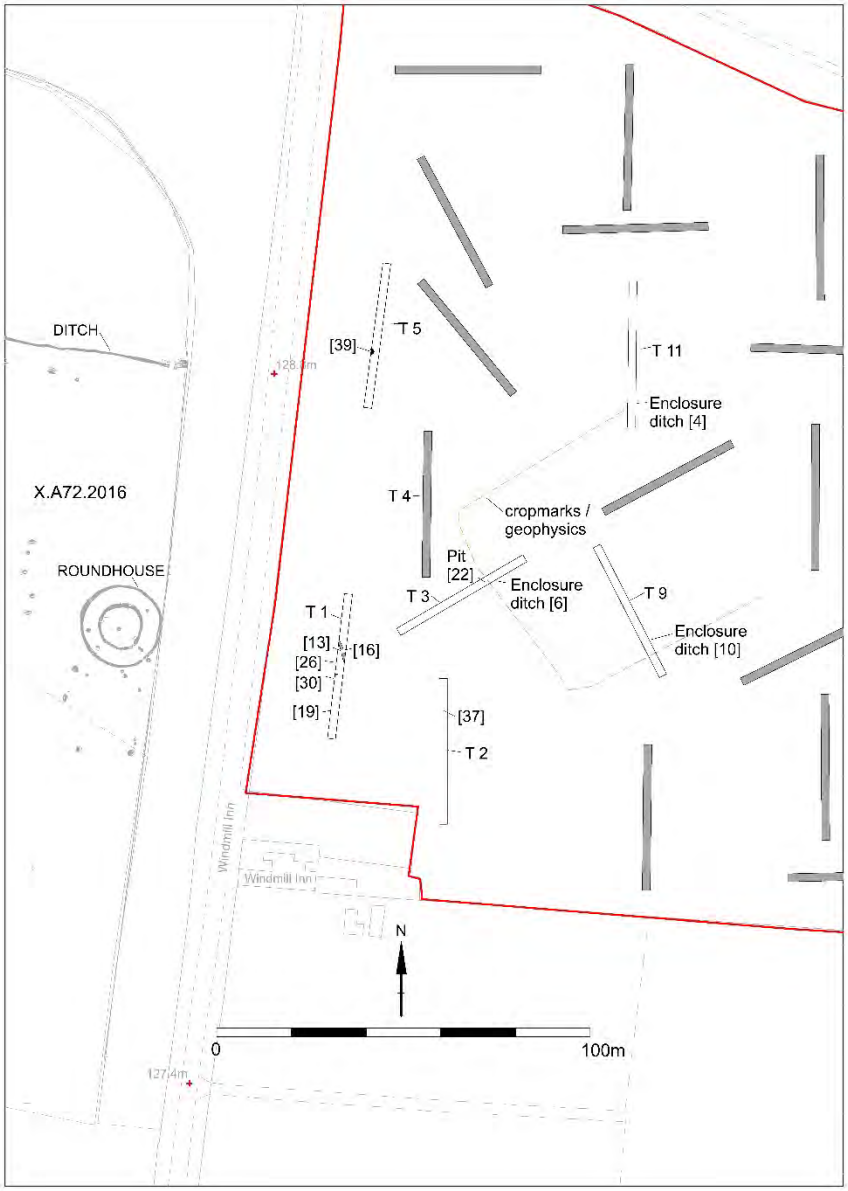

Figure 40: West side of the site containing the Iron Age / Roman activity, shown in relation to earlier archaeological work by ULAS in adjacent field to west

Archive

The site archive will be deposited with ULAS under accession number XA.24.2022.

The archive contains:

- 1 x A4 report
- 69 x Trench sheets
- 2 x Context summary index sheet
- 25 x Context sheets
- 3 x Digital photo index
- 2 x Digital photo sheets
- 1 x Drawing index
- 1 x Drawing record sheet
- 3 x Permatrace drawing sheets

Publication

University of Leicester Archaeological Services supports the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. The online OASIS form details the results of the evaluation, and once the report has become a public document following is incorporation into the Historic Environment Record it shall be placed on the website.

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Appendix I: Detail of negative Trenches

Trench Summaries:

Trench no.	Description	Orientation	Length (m)	Width (m)	Avg. depth (m)
4	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.53-0.74=0.64
6	Blank trench	NW-SE	40	2	0.54-0.81=65
7	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.45-0.59=0.52
8	Blank, noted mixed patches of sand and gravel with long patches of clay	N-S	40	2	0.47-0.59=0.55
10	Blank trench	NE-SW	40	2	0.62-0.82=0.70
12	Blank trench. Possible feature negative	E-W	40	2	0.44-0.64=0.52
13	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.41-0.60=0.51
14	Possibly blank?	E-W	40	2	0.43-0.55=0.49
15	Land Darinâ€™s, blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.43-0.48=0.45
16	Land drain. Blank other wise	NE-SW	40	2	0.46-0.71=0.58
17	Field boundary at south end. Blank of arc	N-S	40	2	0.59-0.67=0.62
18	Land drains to west end and centre. Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.42-0.58=0.49
19	Land drains south end and north. Blank	N-S	40	2	0.34-0.55=0.34
20	Land drains across trench. Otherwise blank	N-S	40	2	0.38-0.59=0.46
21	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.44-0.56=0.50
22	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.43-0.60=0.52
23	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.48-0.74=0.58
24	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.40-0.58=0.47
25	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.40-0.60=0.52
26	Blank tench. Trench had to be moved do to water longed ground making it unstable for trenching	E-W	40	2	0.57-0.66=0.62
27	Land drain at north end. Blank	N-S	40	2	0.46-0.64=0.54
28	2 land drains in trench centre east and west. Blank	E-W	40	2	0.48-0.69=0.57
29	Field boundary in trench north side. Blank of arc	N-S	40	2	0.47-0.61=0.53
30	Field boundary in east end of trench. Blank of arc	E-W	40	2	0.56-0.76=0.65
32	Blank trench	NW-SE	40	2	0.54-0.59=0.56
33	Drain/ boundary at east end of trench. Blank of arc	E-W	40	2	0.48-0.64=0.55
34	Blank. Flooded north end	N-S	40	2	0.37-0.49=0.43
35	Possibly a paleo Chanel in trench centre. a pit east end modern. Blank of arc	E-W	40	2	0.41-0.64=0.53
36	land drain to north end and south. Blank of arc	N-S	40	2	0.58-0.74=0.66
37	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.32-0.60=0.48
38	Land drains running the across north end of trench and south end. Blank of arc	N-S	40	2	0.44-0.51=0.47
39	Land drain runningâ€™s north south across trench. Blank of arc	N-S	40	2	0.49-0.72=0.59
40	Land drain to west end of trench. Blank of arc	E-W	40	2	0.49-0.61=0.54
41	Land drain to north end. Blank of arc	N-S	40	2	0.36-0.48=0.43
42	Land drain to east end of trench. Blank of arc	E-W	40	2	0.42-0.81=0.59
43	Land drains at north end. Blank of arc	N-S	40	2	0.51-0.65= .0.56
45	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.45-0.69=0.58
46	Land drains across the trench. Blank of arc	E-W	40	2	0.44-0.56=0.52
47	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.37-0.48=0.43
48	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.57-0.70=0.63
49	Land drains present. Blank of arc	E-W	40	2	0.49-0.58=0.53
50	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.42-0.52=0.48
51	Land drain at east end of trench. Blank of arc	E-W	40	2	0.42-0.59=0.50
52	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.43-0.66=0.54
53	Land drain running across trench length. Blank of Arc	N-S	40	2	0.40-0.50=0.44
54	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.42-0.45=0.43
55	Blank trench. Land drain at south end	N-S	40	2	0.44-0.48=0.45
56	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.37-0.65= 0.48
57	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.42-0.49=0.46
58	Blank trench	NW-SE	40	2	0.40-0.61=0.49
59	Blank trench. Flooded. Land drain at west end	E-W	40	2	0.32-0.40=0.35
60	Land drain centre of trench and east. Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.32-0.47=0.37
61	Land drains crisscrossing trench. Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.41-0.51=0.44
62	Land drain to east end. Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.41-0.61=0.49
63	Blank trench	NE-SW	40	2	0.31-0.51= 0.39
64	Blank trench	N-S	40	2	0.38-0.57=0.47
65	Land drains crisscrossing trench. Blank of arc	N-S	40	2	0.32-0.58=0.45
66	Blank trench	E-W	40	2	0.41-0.56=0.46
67	Land drain crossings trench in multiple places at east end and centre. Blank of arc	NW-SE	40	2	0.41-051=0.46
68	Blank trench	NW-SE	40	2	0.45-0.62=0.54

Appendix II: Photographs of negative Trenches

Figure 41: Trenches 4, 6, 10, 12-16

Figure 42: Trenches17-25

Figure 43: Trenches 26-34

Figure 44: Trenches 35-43

Figure 45: Trenches 44-52

Figure 46: Trenches 53-61

Figure 47: Trenches 62-68

Appendix III: Details of natural substratum found in trenches

Context no.	Trench	Type	Fill of	Description	Interpretation	Depth (m)
1	1	Layer	-	Natural of trench 1. Colour: mid brownish orange. Composition: sandy clay. Compaction: moist, plastic. Inclusions: moderate small well-rounded pebbles. Reliability: good.	Natural layer. Mid brown orange,gravel sand with clay patches. Under sub soil.	0.36-0.74
1.01	14	Layer	-	Natural of trench 14. Colour: mid yellowish brown. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, plastic. Inclusions: occasional small rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed. Reliability: good.	Natural clay yellow brown.	0.38-0.50
1.02	14	Layer	-	Natural of trench 14. Colour: light pinkish brown. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, plastic. Inclusions: none. Reliability: fair.	Patches of pinkish brown clay	0.38-0.50
1.03	11	Layer	-	Natural of trench 11. Colour: mid orangey brown. Composition: medium moderately sorted sandy pebble. Compaction: moist, friable. Inclusions: none. Reliability: fair.	Natural orange brown sand gravel	0.51-0.77
1.04	8	Layer	-	Natural of trench 8. Colour: mid yellow. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, plastic. Inclusions: none. Reliability: fair.	Natural yellow clay	0.32-0.56
1.05	15	Layer	-	Natural of trench 15. Colour: mid brownish yellow. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, firm. Inclusions: none. Reliability: good.	Natural brown yellow clay	0.38-0.58
1.06	15	Layer	-	Natural of trench 15. Colour: mid bluish grey. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist. Inclusions: none. Reliability: good.	Natural patches of blue Gary clay	0.41-0.45
1.07	21	Layer	-	Natural of trench 21. Colour: light greyish brown. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, plastic. Inclusions: none. Reliability: fair.	Natural Light grey brown clay.	0.38-0.48
1.08	29	Layer	-	Natural of trench 29. Colour: mid pinkish brown. Composition: medium sand. Compaction: moist, loose. Inclusions: none. Reliability: fair.	Natural pink brown sand.	0.42-0.52
1.09	30	Layer	-	Natural of trench 30. Colour: light greyish brown. Composition: medium moderately sorted sandy pebble. Compaction: moist, friable. Inclusions: none. Reliability: fair.	Light grey brown sand with patches of gravel. Natural.	0.51-0.65
1.1	31	Layer	-	Natural of trench 31. Colour: light yellowish brown. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist, plastic. Inclusions: none. Reliability: fair.	Light yellow brown clay. Natural.	0.34-0.60
1.11	32	Layer	-	Natural of trench 32. Colour: mid orangey grey. Composition: clay. Compaction: moist. Inclusions: rare medium rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed. Reliability: fair.	Orange grey clay. Natural.	0.50-0.58
2	1	Layer	-	Subsoil of trench 1. Colour: mid orangey brown. Composition: medium silty sand. Compaction: moist, friable. Inclusions: occasional small rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed. Reliability: good.	Sub soil.	0.06-0.35
2.01	31	Layer	-	Subsoil of trench 31. Colour: dark greyish brown. Composition: medium silty sand. Compaction: moist, firm. Inclusions: occasional small rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed. Reliability: good.	Dark grey brown. Sub soil with pebbles.	0.15-0.30
2.02	36	Layer	-	Subsoil of trench 36. Colour: dark greyish black. Composition: silty clay. Compaction: wet, friable. Inclusions: none. Reliability: good.	Possibly water longed sub soil in the more flooded area of the site.	0.23-0.28
3	1	Layer	-	Topsoil of trench 1. Colour: mid greyish brown. Composition: sandy silt. Compaction: moist, friable. Inclusions: occasional small rounded pebbles, evenly distributed. Reliability: good.	Top soil on site.	0.18-0.40
3.01	31	Layer	-	Topsoil of trench 31. Colour: light greyish brown. Composition: silty sand. Compaction: moist, friable. Inclusions: occasional small sub-rounded spheroidal pebbles, evenly distributed. Reliability: fair.	Light grey brown top soil with pebbles.	0.28-0.40

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