

Ibstock Brick, Ellistown Quarry: Report on Archaeological Watching Brief



Prepared for: Ibstock Group

Prepared by: Carmen Dahlke & Victoria Owen

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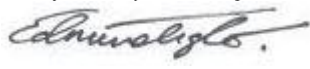

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Signed	
Approved by	Howard Jones Regional Director
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Non-Technical Summary

- Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Ibstock Group to carry out a scheme of archaeological monitoring of topsoil and subsoil stripping in advance of the excavation and stockpiling of approximately 60,000 cubic metres of clay.
- The site lies to the south-east of the village of Ellistown, within the civil parish of Ellistown and Battleflat, Leicestershire. The proposed quarry extension comprised a c 1.39ha area of agricultural land to the immediate north of the current quarry boundary, situated adjacent to Ellistown Terrace Road.
- Machine excavation revealed a c 0.6m thick deposit of subsoil and topsoil overlying firm mixed yellow clay and mudstone. The presence of a number of field drains suggest that the land has remained in agricultural use since at least the post-medieval period and the former field boundary represents a shift from smaller to larger fields in the 20th-21st century.
- No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified during the course of this watching brief.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to Ibstock Group for commissioning the work, and for facilitating monitoring of groundworks and continued site access.

The project was managed by Ed Taylor (Project Manager), and undertaken by Tristan Cousins (Project Supervisor), Tom Keyworth (Project Supervisor), and Carmen Dahlke (Project Supervisor). Illustrations have been compiled by Marius Ilie (TPA).

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1 Introduction

- 1.1 Trent & Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Ibstock Group Ltd to carry out a scheme of archaeological monitoring on land at Ellistown Quarry, Leicestershire for an area of excavation and stockpiling of approximately 60,000 cubic metres of clay.
- 1.2 Permission was granted for the proposed works under two aligned Leicestershire County Council Planning Consents (Reference Numbers 2011/0625/07 and 207/1278/07) with the condition that a scheme of archaeological mitigation is carried out during any intrusive aspects of the development that may have the potential to impact negatively on sub-surface archaeological remains.
- 1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Standards and Guidance* (2014b), utilising the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Collins 2018). The work was overseen by Louise Jennings, Principle Planning Archaeologist for Lincolnshire County Council (LCC).

2 Topography and Geology

2.1 Location

- 2.1.1 The proposed development is located at Ellistown Quarry, positioned immediately north of the associated Ibstock Brickwork to the south-east of Ellistown. The site is bounded on all sides by agricultural land, accessed off Whitehall Road.
- 2.1.2 The total area of the proposed development site is 1.39ha.

2.2 Geology and Topography

- 2.2.1 The underlying geology of the proposed development site consists of Gunthorpe Member Formation, a mudstone sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 237 to 247 million years ago in the Triassic Period. No superficial deposits have been recorded (BGS 2019).
- 2.2.2 The overlying soils are characterised as slowly permeable seasonally wet slightly acid but base-rich loamy and clayey-soils with impeded drainage (Soilscapes 2019).
- 2.2.3 The site is located at a height of 176.6m AoD.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The following archaeological and historical background is summarised from the approved WSI (Collins 2018).
- 3.2 Ellistown is a village of modern origins, which derives its name from the collieries and brickworks established in 1870 by Mr. J. J. Ellis. It was formed into an ecclesiastical parish in 1896, comprising Ellistown itself, a portion of Ibstock known as Battram and a portion of Hugglescote (Kellys 1899).
- 3.3 No known archaeological sites, finds or discoveries have been recorded within the proposed development area or its immediate surroundings.
- 3.4 An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken in September 2012 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Little Battleflats Farm, Ellistown (approximately 0.5km north of Ellistown Quarry). The results of the archaeological evaluation were negative, with no artefactual or structural evidence of archaeological activity encountered (Kipling 2012).
- 3.5 Ibstock Quarry and its environs, located approximately 1.75km west of the proposed development site, has been the subject of a number of archaeological interventions in recent years. Many of these archaeological investigations have produced negative results, with the most notable exception being the recent archaeological excavation conducted by TPA in 2016. A series of enclosures principally dating to the 1st-early 2nd centuries AD were encountered during the scheme of work. These were interpreted as representing agricultural or stock management activity, perhaps situated on the periphery of a relatively Romanised rural settlement (Owen & Malone 2017).

4 Relevant Legislation and Guidance

4.1 Planning Context

- 4.1.1 This program of archaeological mitigation was underpinned by the national legislation and local policies described below.
- 4.1.2 This document has been produced in accordance with the guidelines laid out in the relevant Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and Guidance (CIfA 2014a) and Code of Conduct (CIfA 2014b).
- 4.1.3 Permission was granted for the proposed works under two aligned Leicestershire County Council Planning Consents (Reference Numbers 2011/0625/07 and 207/1278/07) with the condition that a scheme of archaeological mitigation is carried out during any intrusive aspects of the development that may have the potential to impact negatively on sub-surface archaeological remains. Within Planning Permission Reference 2011/0625/07, this constitutes Condition 7, which states:

7. the applicant shall arrange for archaeological observation and recording to take place within the unworked areas (Phases 2B and 3A) to the south and west of the existing quarry void (as shown on Plan JA-053-014-003.1). Details of those arrangements shall be agreed in writing with the Mineral Planning Authority at least one month before any work commences within the unworked areas.

Within Planning Permission Reference 2017/1278/07 this constitutes Condition 5, which states:

5. No soil stripping or clay stockpiling shall take place within the area denoted with a solid red line on drawing number E/211 dated 23/03/2017 until a scheme of archaeological observation and recording to take place within this area has been submitted and approved by the Minerals Planning Authority. Work shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details.

4.2 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

4.2.1 Developments of this nature, and their impact upon the historic environment, are addressed by the 2012 National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG), and the NPPF Planning Practice Guide Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG 2014).

4.2.2 **Section 16 of NPPF, paragraph 187 states:**

4.2.3 Local planning authorities should maintain or have access to a historic environment record. This should contain up-to-date evidence about the historic environment in their area and be used to:

...assess the significance of heritage assets and the contribution they make to their environment; and b) predict the likelihood that currently unidentified heritage assets, particularly sites of historic and archaeological interest, will be discovered in the future.

4.2.4 **In addition, paragraph 189, 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.

4.3 The North-West Leicestershire Adopted Local Plan 2011-2031

4.3.1 The North-west Leicestershire Adopted Local Plan 2011-2031 Policy He1 – Conservation of North-West Leicestershire's historic environment states:

The district council will support development that conserves the significance of non-designated heritage assets including archaeological remains.

5 Aims and Objectives

5.1 The Aims and objectives of the watching brief were as follows:

- To identify the presence of any archaeological remains to be affected by any intrusive aspects of the development and to achieve an appropriate level of preservation by record.
- Where practical (within the constraints of the watching brief and development, this would include an assessment of the overall extent, date and state of preservation of archaeological remains.

6 Regional Research Objectives

6.1 The programme of archaeological mitigation proposed herein may reveal evidence that allows research priorities highlighted by regional research frameworks.

6.2 The *East Midlands Historic Environment Research Framework (EMHERF) Interactive Digital Resource* (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/>) hosts a digitised version of Knight, D., Vyner, B. and Allen, C.'s (2012) *East Midlands Heritage and Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*

6.3 Any evidence uncovered by the investigations should be considered with the guidance provided by the framework in mind. If the evidence significantly contributes to a research question raised by the framework, this should be stated in the final report and the website may, at the appropriate time, be used to feed this information back via the interactive commenting facility. This allows for the research framework to develop over time and remain relevant.

6.4 The following research questions were of particular significance to this project:

Romano-British (AD 43-c.410)
<i>5.4 Rural Settlement Patterns and Landscapes</i>
3. How did rural settlements relate to each other and to towns and military sites, and how may this have varied regionally and over time?
4. How did field and boundary systems relate to earlier systems of land allotment, and how did these boundary networks develop over time?

7 Methodology

- 7.1 All fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2014b) and the *Code of Conduct* (2014a). The work followed the Written Scheme of Investigation (Collins 2018), and was carried out by suitably qualified and experienced archaeologists selected from Trent and Peak's supervisory staff.
- 7.2 Intrusive groundworks were carried out under constant archaeological supervision. Where a mechanical plant was used, this was fitted with a toothless bucket where appropriate.
- 7.3 Below-ground stratigraphy was recorded, photographed and interpreted, even where no archaeological finds or features were present, in accordance with ClfA *guidelines* (2014b).
- 7.4 Recording was carried out on pro-forma context sheets and standardised drawing methods where appropriate. Spot heights were recorded relative to an Ordnance Datum.
- 7.5 All excavations were recorded at an appropriate scale by photography. Site photography was undertaken with the use of a high resolution colour DSLR camera, which include general site shots, shots of individual features, and groups of features.

8 Results

- 8.1 Monitored removal of subsoil (0013) and topsoil (0001) revealed Gunthorpe member geological substratum, formed of firm orangish red clay and mudstone (0002) at an approximate depth of 0.2-0.3m below ground level, which was the same across the site. A number of isolated features were identified adjacent to the access road to the south of the site (Fig 1), which are discussed by type below.

Boundary Ditch [0004] (Figs 3-3; Plate 2)

- 8.2 A probable former field boundary ditch was identified in plan aligned north to south, within an area adjacent to the western boundary of the site. Excavation revealed a wide U-shaped profile with a roughly flat base measuring c 0.64m in width and 0.4m in depth. The ditch was filled by a deposit of friable mottled reddish brownish yellow silty sandy clay that contained frequent charcoal flecks. The ditch is likely to represent the former western boundary of the site identified in historic mapping (c 1881), which sits between two footpaths to the north and south (with the southern footpath latterly becoming the quarry access road) (Plate 7).

Posthole [0006] (Figs 2-3; Plate 3)

- 8.3 A small, square posthole measuring 0.4m c 0.3m x 0.1m was identified to the west of boundary ditch [0004], within the south-western portion of the site. The feature was one of a number of squared postholes of similar size which extended on a north by south alignment parallel with field boundary [0004]. They appear to have formed part of a fence line that demarcated the site on the western boundary. Each posthole was infilled by a similar homogenous deposit of dark brown silty sand backfilled topsoil which yielded fragments of modern CBM and pottery that were not retained.

Field Drains [0008, 0010, 0012] (Fig 2, Plates 6-8)

- 8.4 A number of field drains were identified across the site, broadly corresponding to two phases of land drainage. Circular ceramic field drains were observed crossing the site aligned north north-west to south south-east within the north-western portion of the site. Less frequently, ceramic field drains were also observed following a north to south alignment. These are visible in plates 6-8, though their location was unrecorded.
- 8.5 All features were sealed by a c 0.24m thick deposit of friable mid brownish yellow silty clay subsoil (0013) and loose dark brown sandy silt topsoil (0001) to a depth of c 0.3m.

9 Discussion & Conclusion

- 9.1 No archaeological finds, features or deposits of significance were encountered during the course of the watching brief.
- 9.2 The presence of a number of field drains suggest that the land has remained in agricultural use since at least the post-medieval period and the former boundary represents a shift from smaller to larger fields in the 20th-21st century.

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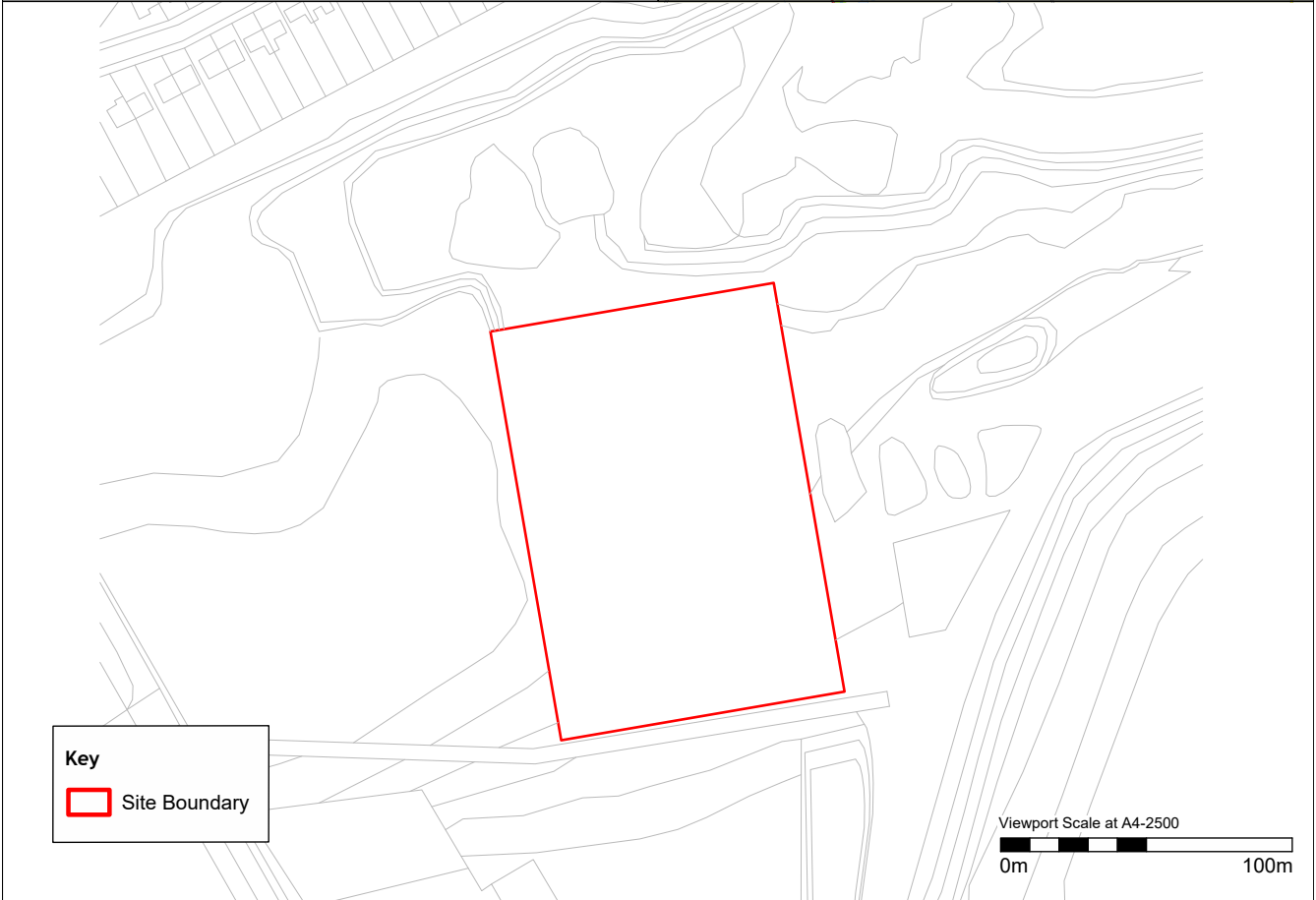
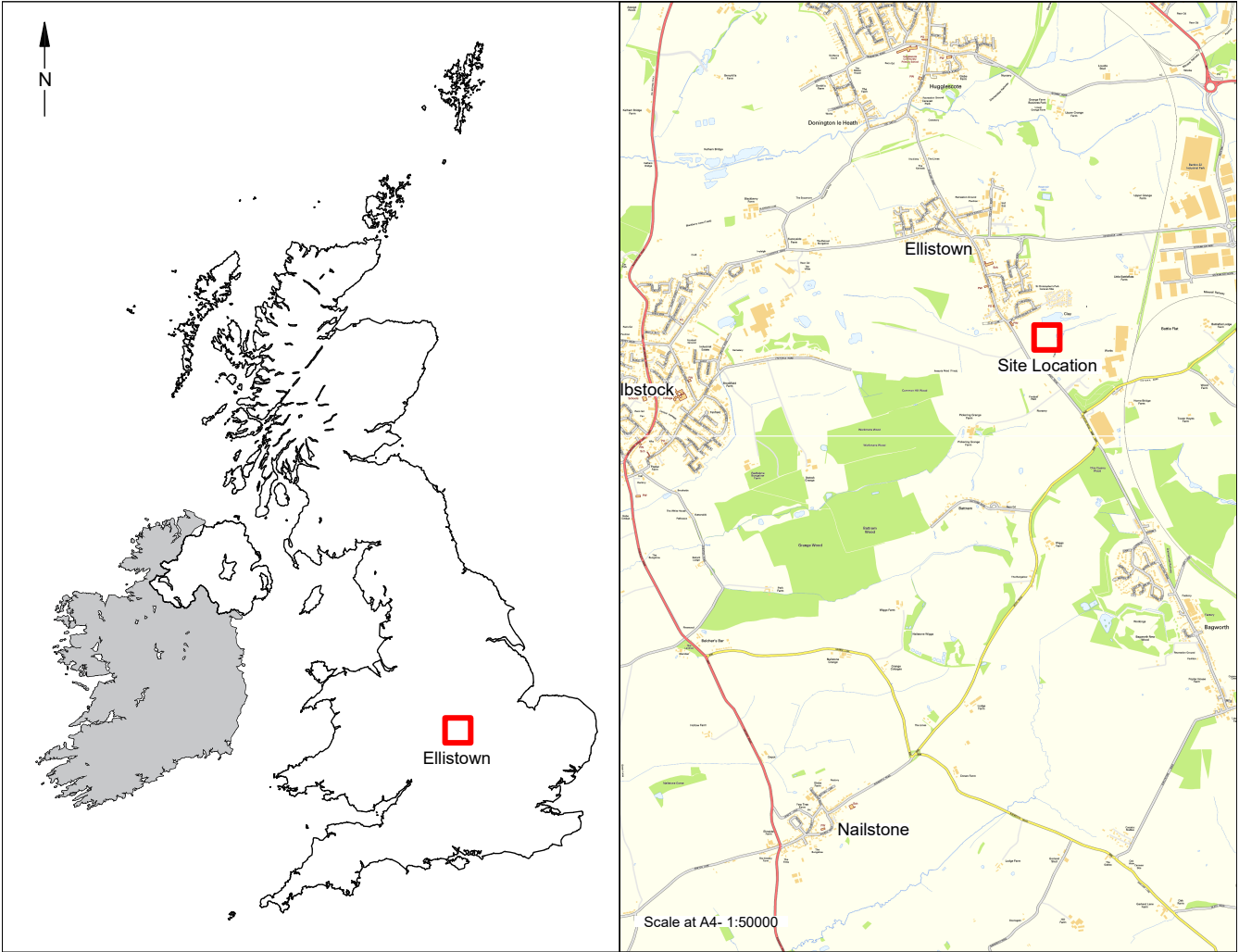
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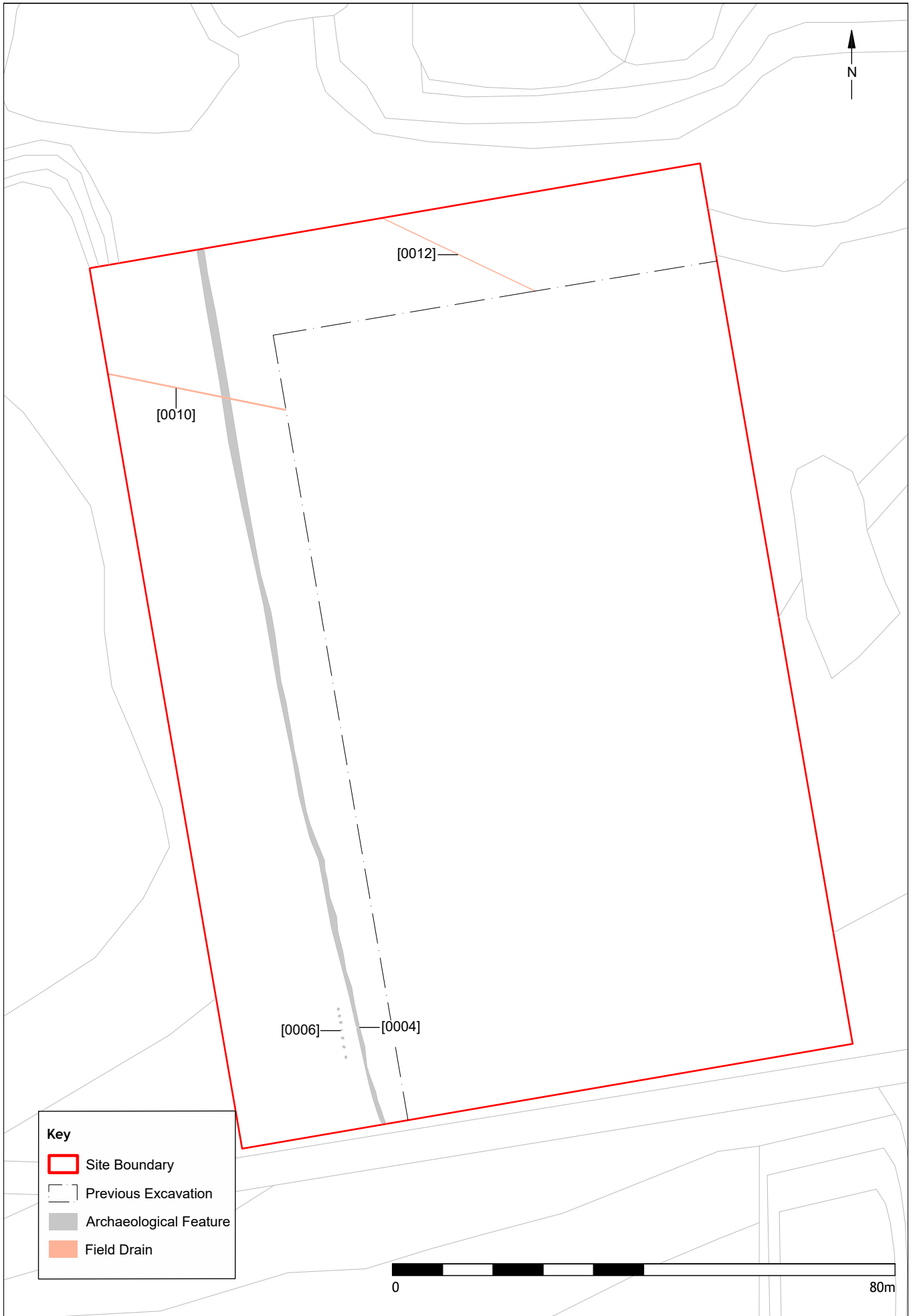
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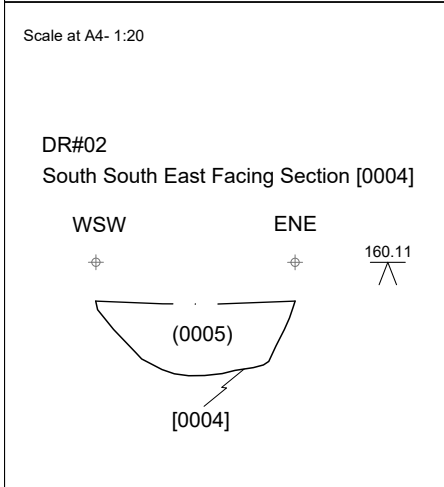
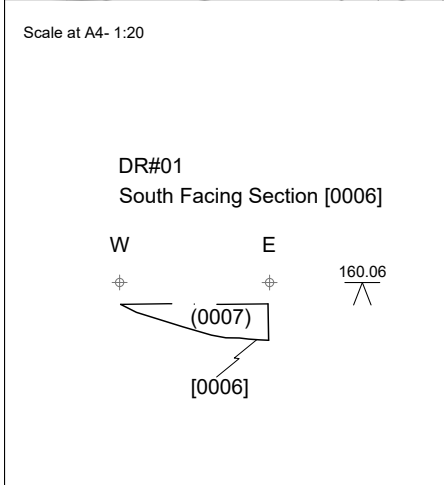
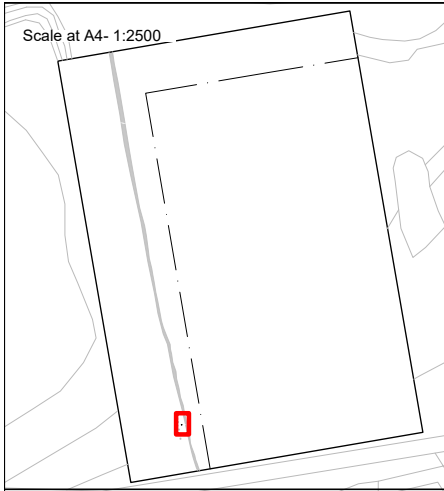
11 Context Register

Context	Category	Description	Date
0001	Layer	Agricultural Topsoil; dark brown	Modern
0002	Layer	Natural Yellow Clay/stone	Undated
0003	Layer	Band of natural red clay below (0002)	Undated
0004	Cut	N-S Running Linear Feature	Mod/PMed
0005	Fill	Mixed Fill of [0004]	Mod/PMed
0006	Cut	Cut of square post-hole	Modern
0007	Fill	Fill of [0006]	Modern
0008	Cut	NW-SE Field Drain cutting [0004]	Modern
0009	Fill	Fill of [0008]	Modern
0010	Cut	Cut of NE-SW Field Drain Cut by [0004]	Modern
0011	Fill	Fill of [0010]	Modern
0012	Cut	Field drain	Modern
0013	Layer	Subsoil located at south end of site only	Undated

12 Figures

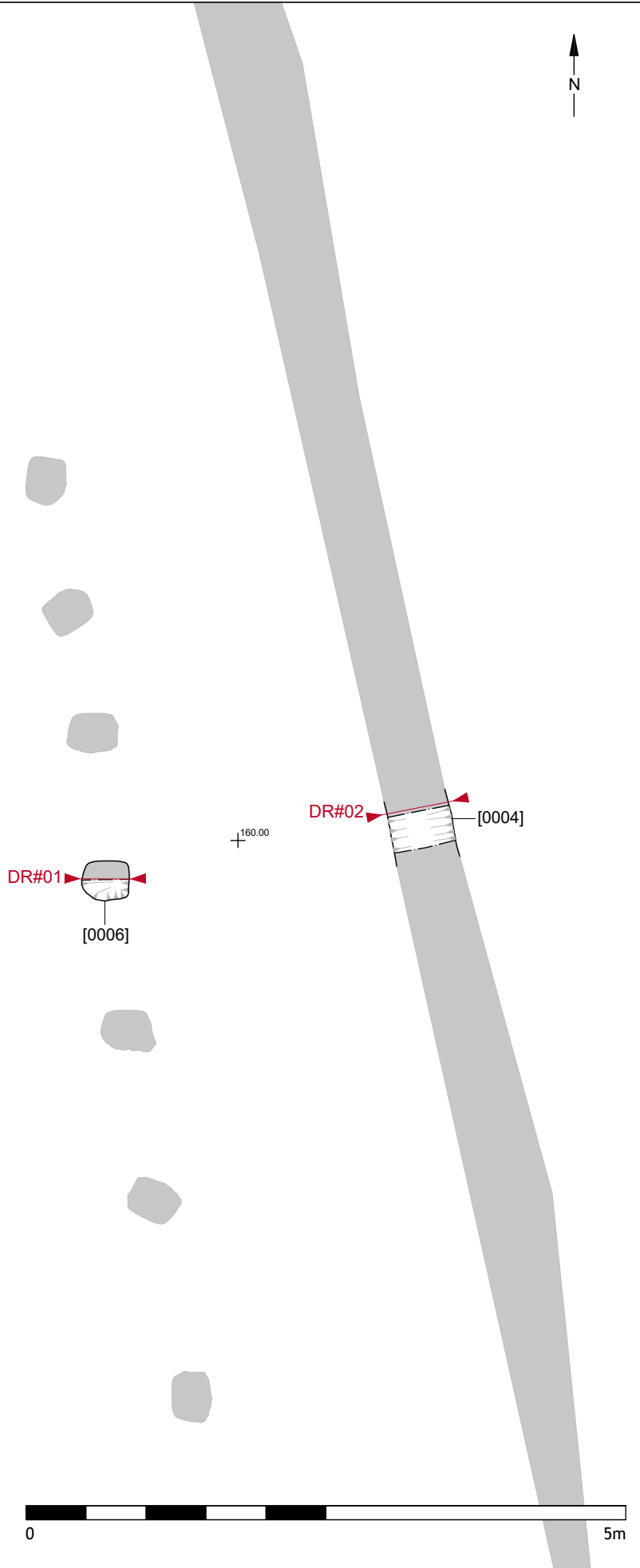






Key

■ Archaeological Feature



13 Plates



Plate 1: General site overview, pre-ex. Scale 1m x 1m, looking west.



Plate 2: Boundary ditch [0004], south facing section. Scale 1m, looking north.



Plate 3: Posthole [0006], south facing section. Scale 1m, looking north.



Plate 4: Remnants of a circular ceramic field drain aligned north north-west to south south-east. Scale 1m, looking south south-west.



Plate 5: Remnants of former field drains [0010], not investigated. Scale 1m, looking north north-west.



Plate 6: General site overview during archaeologically monitored strip showing differing alignment of field drains. Scale 2m x 2m, looking south.



Plate 7: General site view, looking north-east.



Plate 8: Representative section of topsoil (0001) and subsoil (0013). Scale 1m, looking north-east.



Plate 9: Ordnance Survey Historic Mapping c 1881, showing the site location outlined in red.

Appendix 1: Index of Archive and Arrangements for Deposition

<i>Field Records</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Watching brief record sheets	Record of visit and work carried out	8
Context register	Register of context numbers and descriptions	1
Context sheets	Record of features and deposits	12
Photo record sheet	Record of photographs taken	1
Digital photographs	All views	45
Site drawings	Plan and section of site	8
<i>Documents</i>		
<i>Documents</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Written scheme of investigation	Statement of the aims, objectives and methodology for the project.	1
Health & Safety	Safe working statement & risk assessment	1
Report to client	Report of findings of the watching brief.	1
<i>Find</i>		
<i>Find</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Number</i>
Nil	Nil	0

The site archive is currently held at the offices of Trent & Peak Archaeology, Unit 1, Holly Lane, Chilwell, Nottingham, NG9 4AB. They will remain within the offices of Trent & Peak Archaeology until a suitable repository has been identified.

Appendix 2: OASIS Data Collection Form

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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Printable version

OASIS ID: trentpea1-357339

Project details

Project name	Ibstock Brick, Ellistown Quarry
Short description of the project	Trent and Peak Archaeology was commissioned by Ibstock Group to carry out a scheme of archaeological monitoring of topsoil and subsoil stripping in advance of the excavation and stockpiling of approximately 60, 000 cubic metres of clay. The site lies to the south-east of the village of Ellistown, within the civil parish of Ellistown and Battleflat, Leicestershire. The proposed quarry extension comprised a c 1.39ha area of agricultural land to the immediate north of the current quarry boundary, situated adjacent to Ellistown Terrace Road. Machine excavation revealed a c 0.6m thick deposit of subsoil and topsoil overlying firm mixed yellow clay and mudstone. The presence of a number of field drains suggest that the land has remained in agricultural use since at least the post-medieval period and the former field boundary represents a shift from smaller to larger fields in the 20th-21st century. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were identified during the course of this watching brief.
Project dates	Start: 19-11-2018 End: 20-05-2019
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	ETQ - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	2011/0625/07 - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Cultivated Land 3 - Operations to a depth more than 0.25m
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LEICESTERSHIRE NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE ELLISTOWN AND BATTLEFLAT Ibstock Brick, Ellistown Quarry
Postcode	LE67 1GD
Study area	1.39 Hectares
Site coordinates	SK 443353 310708 52.874955572388 -1.341201593131 52 52 29 N 001 20 28 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 176m Max: 176m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Project brief originator	Trent and Peak Archaeology
Project design originator	Camilla Collins
Project director/manager	Edmund Taylor
Project supervisor	Carmen Dahlke
Project supervisor	Tristan Cousins
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Contents	"none"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Spreadsheets", "Text"
Paper Contents	"none"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Photograph", "Plan", "Report", "Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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