KEEPERS COTTAGE, DEBDALE LANE, GUMLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

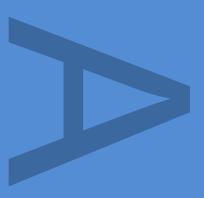


An Archaeological Watching

Brief



November 2014



PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY R11913

DOCUMENT VERIFICATION

KEEPERS COTTAGE, DEBDALE LANE, GUMLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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KEEPERS COTTAGE, DEBDALE LANE, GUMLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE: AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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PCA Report Number: R11913

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Abstract

This report details the working methods and results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at Keepers Cottage, Debdale Lane, Gumley, Leicestershire. The work was commissioned by Victoria Mellor and undertaken between the 20th February and 6th November 2014. This was conducted in order to define and record any archaeological deposits exposed during the construction of a two-storey rear extension and associated services.

The investigation identified a buried plough soil containing a fragment of late 16th – early 17th Century pottery a subsequent subsoil layer produced a scattering of pottery from the 17th -20th century. Three modern postholes were cut into the subsoil, a single residual late Neolithic to Bronze Age flint piercer was recovered from one of the postholes.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 Planning permission was granted for a two story rear and single story side extension at Keepers Cottage, Smeeton Road, Gumley. As a condition of the planning consent the Leicestershire County Archaeology Officer who stipulated that a programme of archaeological works be undertaken in mitigation of the proposed groundwork's for the development consisting of archaeological attendance.
- 1.1.2 Victoria Mellor appointed Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA Midlands) to undertake the archaeological works.

1.2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 1.2.1 The study site, centred on NGR SP 67708 90326 (figure 1), is situated in the rear a side gardens of Keeper Cottage adjacent to a small copse, bound to the southeast by Debdale Road at its junction with Gumley Road. The site lies approximately c.387m north-northwest of Gumley Village.
- 1.2.2 The site encompasses a detached domestic dwelling, formal gardens with large trees and bushes also a drive way leading to the front of the house (Figure 2).

1.3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.3.1 The ground level across the whole site is relatively flat a height of approximately 166m aOD which was recorded in the area of investigation. The remains of Ridge and Furrow were evident in the fields immediately to the northwest of the site. However, there was no visible evidence of them extending into the site.
- 1.3.2 The British Geological Survey (Geology of Britain Viewer) shows the study site underlain by glacial Till with outwash deposits of sand and gravel over Whitby Mudstone.

1.4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.4.1 The Leicester and Rutland Environment Record (LRHER) indicates the development site lies in an area if archaeological interest, Gumley is an historic settlement (LRHER MEL: 9433). In AD 749 Gumley was known as Godmundesleach meaning the Woodland clearing associated with Godmund (Bourne 2003.50). Godmundesleach is recorded in Anglo-Saxon Charters as being a meeting place of the witenagemot an assembly of important men gathered to advise the

Mercian Kings (Bowman 1996, 128), both King Aethelbald and King Offa are recorded as holding meetings of the royal council (Bourne 2003,50).

- 1.4.2 The village name is recorded as Gotmundeslea in the Domesday Book of 1086 it is divided into two manors held by Lord Robert of Vessey and Countess Judith. The survey records:
 - (16.4) Geoffrey holds 4 c. of land in Gumley for Robert. Before 1066, 2 ploughs. In lordship 1; 2 slaves. 3 Freeman have the other (plough). Meadow 8 acres. The value was 12d; now 10s.
 - (40, 17) Robert of Bucy holds in Gumley 9c. of land for Countess Judith. There were 6 ploughs. Now in lordship 1 plough; 2 slaves. 6 villagers with a priest, 5 small holders and 1 freeman have 5 ploughs. Meadow 20 acres. The value was 10s; now 40s 3 thanes held it freely.
- 1.4.3 The recording of a priest in the Domesday Book suggested the village may have had a Saxon Minster. The Church of St Helen (MLE 11464) is believed to have been built in the 14th century on the site of the earlier Minster. There are architectural aspects of the church dating to the 14th century although no evince for the Minster has been uncovered. The Church is currently situated at the northern tip of the village c.219m southeast of Keepers Cottage.
- 1.4.4 The location of the medieval settlement has been identified from aerial photos and earthwork remains within the fields surrounding the current village, these well preserved remains are protected in three Scheduled monuments areas; Gumley motte castle (National Heritage Numbers: NHLE:101257) located c.451m south of Keepers Cottage, Gumley medieval settlement remains and field systems (NHLE:1017211) c.657m to the southeast and Gumley medieval settlement remains, rabbit warren and field systems (NHLE:1017210) situated adjacent to the Keepers cottage almost encircling it (Figure 1).
- 1.4.5 The scheduled remains immediately adjacent to the development site consist of well-preserved ridge and furrow to the northwest and the remains of a hollow way which formally comprised the northern end of what is now Main Street. The Hollow way runs 130m form the church towards the development site, before it split in two (Liddle, 1982, 11-13). The east branch curves northeast running parallel to Debdale Lane. The other branch continuous northwest past Keepers Cottage and towards the modern Gumley to Saddington Road (Figure 3).
- 1.4.6 An archaeological evaluation in 2012 at Hall Farm (c.450m south of the investigation area) discovered the remains of an early 18th Century building, matching the alignment of a building on the 1773 enclosure map.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The general aims and objectives of the investigation were:

To establish the location, nature, extent, date and state of preservation of any archaeological

or geoarchaeological deposits or features within the site, to recover any associated objects and

to record the surviving evidence.

To deposit the site archive with Leicestershire Museum Service (LMS) under Accession number

X.A11.2014 for long term conservation.

Specific aims and objectives of the investigation were:

To confirm the presence or absence of any Saxon or earlier activity and land-use relating to the

villages origins, later documented in the Doomsday Survey;

To confirm the presence or absence of medieval activity relating the Scheduled medieval

village, motte and adjacent field systems.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 All groundwork's were undertaken by a 360° slew excavator under constant archaeological

supervision. The spoil from machine excavation was scanned for unstratified artefacts.

3.1.2 Archaeological and potential archaeological deposits were cleaned using hand tools and

recorded as set out in the PCA fieldwork manual (Taylor and Brown 2009). Contexts were

recorded according to PCAs fieldwork manual approved for use in Leicestershire, including

written, photographic and drawn records.

3.1.3 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute

individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British

archaeology as 'context numbers') and recorded utilising PCAs printed proforma.

3.1.4 Foundation and service trench plans, along with stripped areas were drawn using a single

context recording system at a scale of 1:50 and representative sections at a scale of 1:20. The

locations of the groundworks and the heights of deposits compared to Ordnance Survey

benchmarks were surveyed using a Global Positioning System (GPS) rover unit and Total Station

Theodolite (TST). A full digital photographic record was made.

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3.2 POST FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (EH 2006) was

used as the framework for post-excavation work.

3.2.2 All finds remain the property of the landowner (except for those defined as Treasure and

human remains) but ownership of all archaeological finds will be transferred to the receiving

museum with the agreement of the owner.

4. THE CONTEXTS

4.1 A unique context number was assigned to each distinguishable depositional event. In the text

below context numbers are given in **bold**.

4.2 Eleven context numbers were allocated to layers. They are presented in table form in the

APPENDIX (see APPENDIX 1). In the table the abbreviations used mean the following: UE means

'unexcavated'; N/A means 'not applicable'; > means 'greater than'; < means 'up to'; Context

numbers are followed by a brief description and interpretation; their dimensions in metres (in

the order length x width x depth; or diameter x depth); and their critical stratigraphic

relationships.

4.3 Cultural periods encountered on site were as follows:

Prehistoric Pre 100BC

Romano-British AD43-410

Medieval AD1066-1500

Post-Mediaeval/ Modern AD1500-Present

5. THE RESULTS: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

5.1 Phase 1: Natural Deposits

5.1.1 The natural deposits encountered during the watching brief consisted of a compact light brown sandy clay (contexts **108**) recorded in the foundation and service trenches (sections 5 & 6 Figure 5). The top of the natural was recorded at varying similar heights within the sections: c.165.43m aOD in section 5 and c.165.65m aOD in section 6 (taken from levels on the top of recorded sections). The natural layers represent glacial till deposits, formed during the Quaternary period when the local environment was dominated by Ice Age conditions (British Geological Society)

5.2 Phase2: Post-Medieval/Modern (AD1500 - Present)

- 5.2.1 The earliest human activity on the site was represented by a spread of mottled, dark greyish brown and light brown, firm sandy clay **109** recorded in Section 5 directly overlaying the natural deposit. This spread was only seen within the footprint of the rear exertion (Figure 4). A single rim fragment for a purple earthenware jar of late 16th –mid 17th was recovered along with a large tabular fragment of fired clay. The oval profile suggests the fired clay could come from a structural object such as a kiln/oven prop, but its badly abraded condition cases some uncertainty (Young section 6.3). This spread most likely represents the remains of a buried plough soil.
- 5.2.2 A subsoil layer **101** sealed both the Natural **108** and buried plough soil **109**. The subsoil was uniform across the site consisting of a mid-brown, friable to firm silty clay with roots and occasional water-worn pebbles. A high frequency of orange brick fragments were encountered throughout this layer along with two fragments of pottery dating from the 17th -20th century.
- 5.2.3 Topsoil stripping to the northeast of Keepers cottage revealed three small post holes cut through the subsoil (Figure 4). Postholes **103** and **105** are likely to be contemporary both contained similar dark greyish brown friable sandy clay with occasional modern brick and charcoal fragments **102** and **104**. They are also both very similar in shape (see Sections 1 & 2 Figure 5). A single large fragment of brick retained form **102** for identification confirms the brick is handmade dating from the mid-17th-20th century. The third posthole **107** in contrast is shallower (see Section 3, Figure 5) containing a mid-light greyish brown friable silty clay **106**. The fill produced a single residual flint core-tool piercer likely to date from either the late Neolithic to Bronze Age periods.
- 5.2.4 A dark greyish brown, friable silty clay with occasional charcoal fragments, Topsoil **100**, sealed all three postholes and the subsoil across the site. In the area of the water pipe (Figure 4) the

topsoil and subsoil have been stripped off and replaced with a gravel drive (see Section 6,

Figure 5).

6. THE FINDS

6.1 **OVERVIEW**

Six artefacts were recovered from four contexts. The finds were processed according to PCAs systems

approved for use in Leicestershire and are discussed in the text below.

6.2 **WORKED FLINT** by Kevin Trott

Introduction

The archaeological investigations at the above site resulted in the recovery of a single struck flint. This

report describes the flint and assesses its archaeological significance. The piece was recovered from the

fill 107 of a modern posthole [106]. All metrical descriptions follow the methodology established by

Saville (1980).

Description

Context (107): [106] Posthole

Small piercer in good condition made from a 'glassy' translucent black flint. This tool consists either of a

larger thermally disintegrated core or a large flake that has had a series of small broad flakes removed

from a number of striking platforms, resulting in it attaining a shape resembling a thickened irregular

orange segment. Although small, its shape and bifacial damage along its acute straight margin suggests

it was utilised as a core-tool piercer. It measures 33mm in length by 31mm wide by 11mm thick and

weighs 10g.

Discussion

The flint is generally in a good condition, being relatively sharp and showing only minimal opposing

edge chipping that formed the piercer point, and although recovered from a modern posthole, the

piece has probably not moved far from where originally discarded, although it could have been

imported into the site when soil was utilised to infill around the around the post. The piece is made

from black flint and the thermal scars on the piece would suggests that the raw material was obtained

from glacial tills or as alluvial pebbles eroded from the tills. Deposits of both of which can be found in

the vicinity of the site (e.g. Henson 1985; Cooper 2006, 62). This is not a chronologically diagnostic

piece but the technological attributes would suggest a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date.

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Significance and Recommendations

The struck flint indicates prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site, most probably during the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age, although it is too small to indicate the precise chronology or nature of the occupations. It does contribute to a wider appreciation of prehistoric landscape use in the area, and provides further important evidence for prehistoric activity within the East Midlands claylands, an

area believed until relatively recently to have been largely avoided during much of the prehistoric

period (Clay 2002; 2006).

No further analytical work is warranted on the tool. As it has some potential in contributing to a wider appreciation of landscape use in the area it should be recorded in the Historic Environment Record and a brief description included in any published account of the fieldwork.

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the Mesolithic to the Iron Age in central England. Leicester Archaeology Monographs 9.

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Cooper, L.P. 2006 Launde, a Terminal Palaeolithic Camp-site in the English Midlands and its North

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Saville, A. 1980 On the Measurement of Struck Flakes and Flake Tools. Lithics 1, 16-20.

6.3 POTTERY by Jane Young

Introduction

In total, three sherds of pottery representing three vessels were submitted for examination. The pottery recovered probably ranges in date from the post-medieval to early modern periods. The assemblage was quantified by three measures: number of sherds, weight and vessel count within each context. Fabric identification of the medieval pottery was undertaken by x20 binocular microscope. Reference has been made to the Leicestershire Pottery Type Series held at Leicester University. The ceramic data was entered on an Access database using Lincolnshire (Young et al.) fabric codenames with a concordance with Leicestershire codenames (see Table 1). Recording of the assemblage was in

accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, et al. (2001).

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Condition

The pottery is in a good condition with most sherds being in fresh and un-abraded condition. No cross-context joins were noted.

Overall Chronology and Source

A range of three different, identifiable pottery types were identified, the type and general date range for these fabrics are shown in Table 1. The pottery probably ranges in date from the post-medieval to early modern periods. A limited range of form types is present, with most sherds coming from singular jar bowl and garden pot.

Table 1: Ceramic codenames and date ranges with total quantities by sherd count

Lincolnshire	Leicestershire	Full name	Earliest	Latest	Total	Total
codename	codename		date	date	sherds	vessels
BERTH	EA2	Brown glazed earthenware	1550	1800	1	1
LERTH	EA	Late earthenware	1750	1900	1	1
CERTH	EA	Coarse Purple earthenware	1580	1800	1	1

The pottery was recovered from two different deposits on the site. The buried plough soil **109** produced a single rim sherd, in a fairly fresh condition, from an unglazed earthenware (CERTH) of a type of everted-rimmed jar commonly associated in groups dating to the late 16th to mid-17th century. Subsoil layer **101** contained two smallish post-medieval sherds in a fairly fresh condition. One of the sherds is from the rim of a large Brown-glazed (BERTH) earthenware panchion of a style typical of mid-17th to 18th century date. The second sherd is from the body of an unglazed earthenware (LEARTH) garden pot of late 18th to 20th century date.

Summary and Recommendations

The ceramic material recovered from this site suggests that there had possibly been activity in the area from at least the post-medieval period. The fairly fresh condition of this small assemblage suggests that it has undergone little disturbance since deposition.

The assemblage is in a stable condition and should be kept for future study.

References

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Mayes, P. and Scott, K. 1984. Pottery kilns at Chilvers Coton, Nuneaton. Soc. Medieval Archaeol. Mon.

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Slowikowski, A. Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001. Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording,

Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics. Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper

2.

Young, J, Vince A G and Nailor V 2005 A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln,

Lincoln Archaeology Studies 7, Oxbow, Oxford

6.4 CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL by Jane young

Introduction

A single fragment of ceramic building material weighing 123 grams in total was submitted for

examination. The fragment was examined both visually and at x 20 binocular magnification. The

resulting archive was then recorded using Lincolnshire codenames in an Access database and complies

with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, et al. (2001).

Condition

The CBM is mainly in an abraded but stable condition.

THE CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

Only one fragment of building material was recovered from the site. An abraded corner portion from a

handmade brick of mid-17th to mid-20th century date was recovered from the fill 102 of posthole

[103].

Summary and Recommendations

The ceramic building material recovered from this site is too small to be of use in site interpretation.

The material should be retained for future analysis or use in a local type series.

References

Slowikowski, A. Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001. Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording,

Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics. Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper

2.

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6.5 Fire Clay by Jane Young

Introduction

A single fragment of fired clay weighing 293 grams in total was submitted for examination. The fragment was examined both visually and at x 20 binocular magnification. The resulting archive was then recorded using Lincolnshire codenames in an Access database and complies with the guidelines

laid out in Slowikowski, et al. (2001).

Condition

The item is in a moderately abraded but stable condition.

The Fired Clay

The fragment is in a moderately abraded condition making interpretation of the material difficult. The surface of the piece is a light orange oxidised colour and when broken the core is of a light dull grey reduced colour. The fragment recovered from a buried ploughsoil **109** is in a highly micaceous fabric that appears to contain little quartz. The overall appearance of this fragment is represented by a large tabular piece that has an internal oval profile and could come from a structural object such as a

kiln/oven prop, although it is too abraded to be certain.

Summary and Recommendations

The fired clay object recovered from this site is too abraded to be of use in site interpretation but does indicate the use of a kiln-type/oven structure. The material should be retained for future analysis or

use in a local type series.

References

Slowikowski, A. Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001. Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics. Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper

2.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The watching brief fulfilled its aims and objectives by identifying and recording a sequence of geological and archaeological stratigraphy surviving on the site.
- 7.2 Natural deposits recorded on the site comprised light brown compact clay glacial till deposits formation in concurrence with the British Geological Survey mapping of the site.
- 7.3 Evidence of Prehistoric activity was provided by a single flint piercer of late Neolithic –early Bronze Age date, although its presence within the posthole may be residual, it can be regarded as an indicator of prehistoric activity within the wider environs of the site. The condition of the flint suggests it has not moved far from its original point of deposition (Trott section 6. 2).
- 7.5 The earliest Post-Medieval activity on the site was identified in form of a buried plough soil containing a fragment of late 16th early 17th Century pottery. This was sealed by a subsoil containing 17th -20th century pottery fragments and fragments of brick, there were also three modern postholes cut into this layer.
- 7.4 It is surprising that no Saxon or later medieval material was encountered on this site, givens its closes proximity to the scheduled earthwork remains (NHLE 1017210) of the medieval settlement (Figure 3). It is most likely the construction of Keepers Cottage in the early 1900's and the surrounding landscaping of the gardens/driveway over the last c.100 years may have destroyed any remaining evidence. The other possibility is the land was wooded and the settlement/field earthworks never extend into the investigation area. The lack of Saxon and medieval material would support both possibilities.

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9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Commissioning Client: Victoria Mellor Archaeological Monitoring: Teresa Hawtin Fieldwork: Steve Jones

Cad Drawings: Jennifer Simonson
Report: Kathryn Brook
Editing: Kevin Trott

PLATES



Plate 1. General view looking north towards the site with the Hollow way on the left in the foreground and the Ridge & Furrow in the background



Plate 3. Postholes 103, 105, 107. View southeast. 2m & 1m scales



Plate 5. Rear extension foundations. View west. 2m, 1m, & 0.4m Scales



Plate 2. View looking north to the stripped area to the east of the house. 2m & 1m scales



Plate 4. Stripped are to the west of the house. View north. 2m & 1m scales



Plate 6. Water Pipe trench. View northwest. 2m scales

APPENDIX 1. CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Category		Description		Interpretation	Above	Below
gory	gory	Colour	Texture	Inclusions	mer pretation		
100	Layer	Dark greyish brown	Soft silty clay	Grass roots and general root disturbance, occasional charcoal fragments.	Topsoil	101	-
101	Layer	Medium brown	Friable –firm silty clay	Roots, occasional very small pebbles	Subsoil	102, 104, 106, 108, 109, 111	101
102	Fill	Dark Greyish brown	Friable fine sandy clay	Occasional brick & charcoal fragments with rare pebbles	Fill of 103	103	101
103	Cut	-	-	Sub-circular in plan, U – shaped in section	Posthole	108	102
104	Fill	Dark Greyish brown	Friable fine sandy clay	Occasional brick & charcoal fragments with large stones at the base.	Fill of 105	105	101
105	Cut	-	-	Oval in plan, steep slopping near vertical sides with flat base.	Posthole	108	104
106	Fill	Medium light greyish brown	Friable silty clay	Occasional roots	Fill of 107	107	101
107	Cut	-	-	Sub-circular in plan,	Posthole	108	106
108	Layer	Light Brown	Compact clay		Natural	-	101, 103, 105, 107, 109,
109	Layer	Mottled dark greyish brown and light brown	Frim sandy clay	Occasional pebble and CBM fragments	Medieval plough soil	108	101, 110

Context	Catego	Description		Description Interpretation		Above	Below
¥.	Ϋ́	Colour	Texture	Inclusions			
110	Cut	-	-	Linear in plan running long side exiting house (not seen in section)	House foundation cut	-	111
111	Fill	Mottled dark grey brown and yellow	Mixture of topsoil and sand	Occasional small angular stones	Fill of 110	111	101, 109

APPENDIX 2. OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

Printable version

OASIS ID: preconst1-195609

Project details

Project name Keepers Cottage, Gumley, Leicestershire

the project

Short description of This report details the working methods and results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at Keepers Cottage, Debdale Lane, Gumley, Leicestershire. The work was commissioned by Victoria Mellor and undertaken between the 20th February and 6th November 2014. This was conducted in order to define and record any archaeological deposits exposed during the construction of a two-storey rear extension and associated services. The investigation identified a buried plough soil containing a fragment of late 16th - early 17th Century pottery a subsequent subsoil layer produced a scattering of pottery from the 17th -20th century. Three modern postholes were cut into the subsoil, a single residual late Neolithic to Bronze Age flint piercer was recovered from one of the postholes.

Start: 20-02-2014 End: 06-11-2014 Project dates

Previous/future

work

codes

No / No

Any associated project reference

KCSG14 - Sitecode

Type of project Recording project

Site status Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Project location

Country England

Site location LEICESTERSHIRE HARBOROUGH GUMLEY KEEPERS COTTAGE, DEBDALE

LANE, GUMLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

Site coordinates SP 67708 90326 52.5062528036 -1.00232836299 52 30 22 N 001 00 08 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 165.43m Max: 165.65m

Project creators

Name of Organisation **PCA Midlands**

Project brief originator

Leicestershire County Archaeology Office

Project design originator

Kevin Trott

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Project

Kevin Trott

director/manager

Project supervisor Steve Jones

Project archives

Physical Archive

Leicestershire Museums Service

recipient

Physical Archive ID X.A11.2014

"Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics" **Physical Contents**

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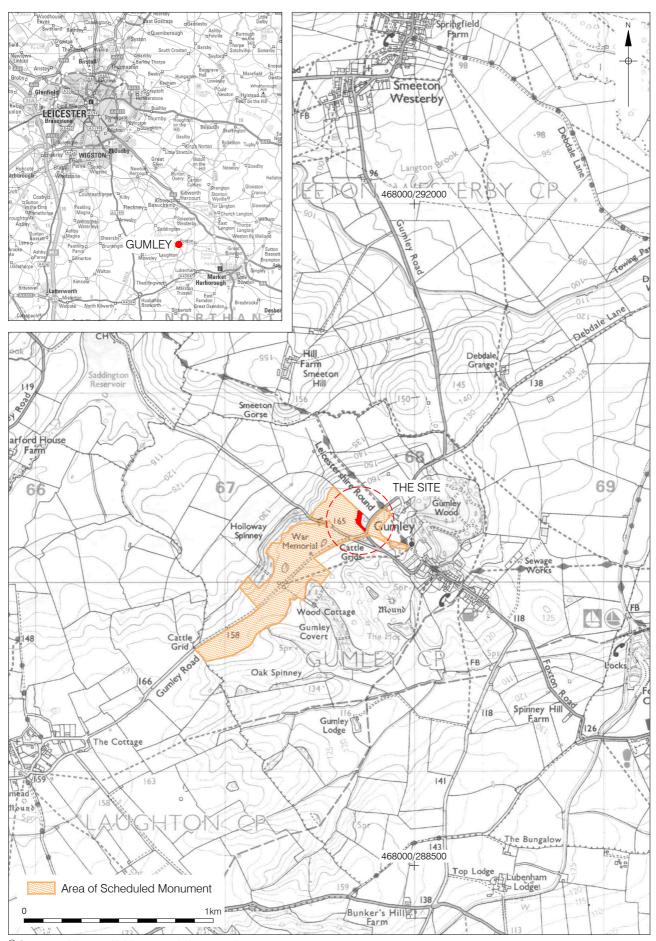
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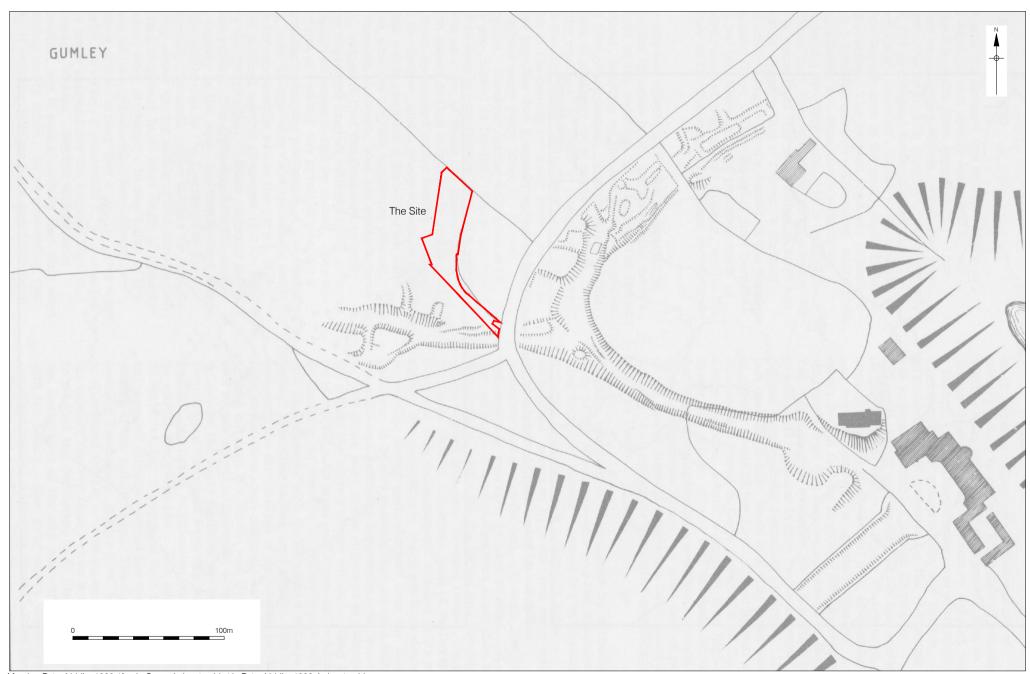
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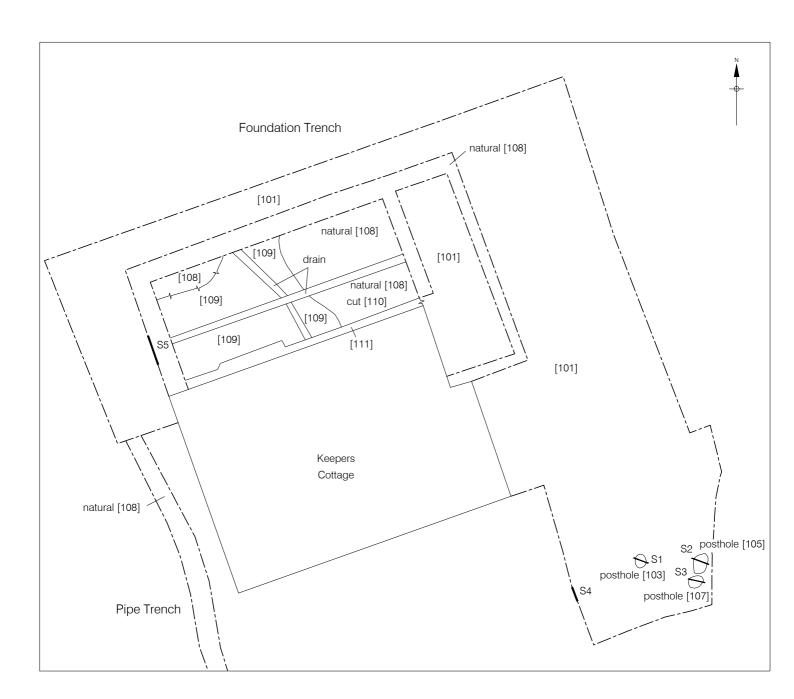
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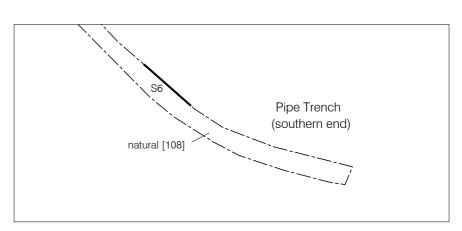
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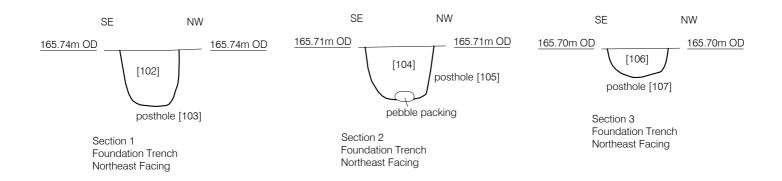
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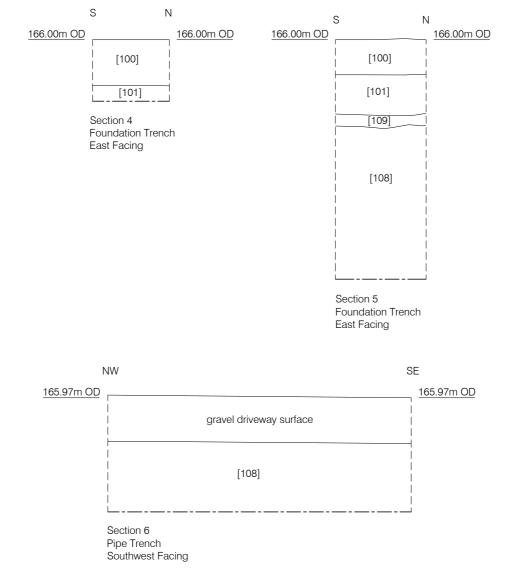
Figure 3 Earthworks Survey 1:2,500 at A4





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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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Abstract

This report details the working methods and results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at Keepers Cottage, Debdale Lane, Gumley, Leicestershire. The work was commissioned by Simeon & Victoria Lum and undertaken between the 20th February and 6th November 2014. This was conducted in order to define and record any archaeological deposits exposed during the construction of a two-storey rear extension and associated services.

The investigation identified a buried plough soil containing a fragment of late 16th – early 17th Century pottery a subsequent subsoil layer produced a scattering of pottery from the 17th -20th century. Three modern postholes were cut into the subsoil, a single residual late Neolithic to Bronze Age flint piercer was recovered from one of the postholes.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 Planning permission was granted for a two story rear and single story side extension at Keepers Cottage, Smeeton Road, Gumley. As a condition of the planning consent the Leicestershire County Archaeology Officer who stipulated that a programme of archaeological works be undertaken in mitigation of the proposed groundwork's for the development consisting of archaeological attendance.
- 1.1.2 Simeon & Victoria Lum appointed Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA Midlands) to undertake the archaeological works.

1.2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 1.2.1 The study site, centred on NGR SP 67708 90326 (figure 1), is situated in the rear a side gardens of Keeper Cottage adjacent to a small copse, bound to the southeast by Debdale Road at its junction with Gumley Road. The site lies approximately c.387m north-northwest of Gumley Village.
- 1.2.2 The site encompasses a detached domestic dwelling, formal gardens with large trees and bushes also a drive way leading to the front of the house (Figure 2).

1.3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 3.3.1 The ground level across the whole site is relatively flat a height of approximately 166m aOD which was recorded in the area of investigation. The remains of Ridge and Furrow were evident in the fields immediately to the northwest of the site. However, there was no visible evidence of them extending into the site.
- 1.3.2 The British Geological Survey (Geology of Britain Viewer) shows the study site underlain by glacial Till with outwash deposits of sand and gravel over Whitby Mudstone.

1.4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.4.1 The Leicester and Rutland Environment Record (LRHER) indicates the development site lies in an area if archaeological interest, Gumley is an historic settlement (LRHER MEL: 9433). In AD 749 Gumley was known as Godmundesleach meaning the Woodland clearing associated with Godmund (Bourne 2003.50). Godmundesleach is recorded in Anglo-Saxon Charters as being a meeting place of the witenagemot an assembly of important men gathered to advise the

Mercian Kings (Bowman 1996, 128), both King Aethelbald and King Offa are recorded as holding meetings of the royal council (Bourne 2003,50).

- 1.4.2 The village name is recorded as Gotmundeslea in the Domesday Book of 1086 it is divided into two manors held by Lord Robert of Vessey and Countess Judith. The survey records:
 - (16.4) Geoffrey holds 4 c. of land in Gumley for Robert. Before 1066, 2 ploughs. In lordship 1; 2 slaves. 3 Freeman have the other (plough). Meadow 8 acres. The value was 12d; now 10s.
 - (40, 17) Robert of Bucy holds in Gumley 9c. of land for Countess Judith. There were 6 ploughs. Now in lordship 1 plough; 2 slaves. 6 villagers with a priest, 5 small holders and 1 freeman have 5 ploughs. Meadow 20 acres. The value was 10s; now 40s 3 thanes held it freely.
- 1.4.3 The recording of a priest in the Domesday Book suggested the village may have had a Saxon Minster. The Church of St Helen (MLE 11464) is believed to have been built in the 14th century on the site of the earlier Minster. There are architectural aspects of the church dating to the 14th century although no evince for the Minster has been uncovered. The Church is currently situated at the northern tip of the village c.219m southeast of Keepers Cottage.
- 1.4.4 The location of the medieval settlement has been identified from aerial photos and earthwork remains within the fields surrounding the current village, these well preserved remains are protected in three Scheduled monuments areas; Gumley motte castle (National Heritage Numbers: NHLE:101257) located c.451m south of Keepers Cottage, Gumley medieval settlement remains and field systems (NHLE:1017211) c.657m to the southeast and Gumley medieval settlement remains, rabbit warren and field systems (NHLE:1017210) situated adjacent to the Keepers cottage almost encircling it (Figure 1).
- 1.4.5 The scheduled remains immediately adjacent to the development site consist of well-preserved ridge and furrow to the northwest and the remains of a hollow way which formally comprised the northern end of what is now Main Street. The Hollow way runs 130m form the church towards the development site, before it split in two (Liddle, 1982, 11-13). The east branch curves northeast running parallel to Debdale Lane. The other branch continuous northwest past Keepers Cottage and towards the modern Gumley to Saddington Road (Figure 3).
- 1.4.6 An archaeological evaluation in 2012 at Hall Farm (c.450m south of the investigation area) discovered the remains of an early 18th Century building, matching the alignment of a building on the 1773 enclosure map.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The general aims and objectives of the investigation were:

To establish the location, nature, extent, date and state of preservation of any archaeological

or geoarchaeological deposits or features within the site, to recover any associated objects and

to record the surviving evidence.

To deposit the site archive with Leicestershire Museum Service (LMS) under Accession number

X.A11.2014 for long term conservation.

Specific aims and objectives of the investigation were:

To confirm the presence or absence of any Saxon or earlier activity and land-use relating to the

villages origins, later documented in the Doomsday Survey;

To confirm the presence or absence of medieval activity relating the Scheduled medieval

village, motte and adjacent field systems.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

3.1.1 All groundwork's were undertaken by a 360° slew excavator under constant archaeological

supervision. The spoil from machine excavation was scanned for unstratified artefacts.

3.1.2 Archaeological and potential archaeological deposits were cleaned using hand tools and

recorded as set out in the PCA fieldwork manual (Taylor and Brown 2009). Contexts were

recorded according to PCAs fieldwork manual approved for use in Leicestershire, including

written, photographic and drawn records.

3.1.3 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute

individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British

archaeology as 'context numbers') and recorded utilising PCAs printed proforma.

3.1.4 Foundation and service trench plans, along with stripped areas were drawn using a single

context recording system at a scale of 1:50 and representative sections at a scale of 1:20. The

locations of the groundworks and the heights of deposits compared to Ordnance Survey

benchmarks were surveyed using a Global Positioning System (GPS) rover unit and Total Station

Theodolite (TST). A full digital photographic record was made.

©PCA LTD, November 2014 PCA:R11913 3.2 POST FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

3.2.1 English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (EH 2006) was

used as the framework for post-excavation work.

3.2.2 All finds remain the property of the landowner (except for those defined as Treasure and

human remains) but ownership of all archaeological finds will be transferred to the receiving

museum with the agreement of the owner.

4. THE CONTEXTS

4.1 A unique context number was assigned to each distinguishable depositional event. In the text

below context numbers are given in **bold**.

4.2 Eleven context numbers were allocated to layers. They are presented in table form in the

APPENDIX (see APPENDIX 1). In the table the abbreviations used mean the following: UE means

'unexcavated'; N/A means 'not applicable'; > means 'greater than'; < means 'up to'; Context

numbers are followed by a brief description and interpretation; their dimensions in metres (in

the order length x width x depth; or diameter x depth); and their critical stratigraphic

relationships.

4.3 Cultural periods encountered on site were as follows:

Prehistoric Pre 100BC

Romano-British AD43-410

Medieval AD1066-1500

Post-Mediaeval/ Modern AD1500-Present

5. THE RESULTS: ARCHAEOLOGICAL SEQUENCE

5.1 Phase 1: Natural Deposits

5.1.1 The natural deposits encountered during the watching brief consisted of a compact light brown sandy clay (contexts **108**) recorded in the foundation and service trenches (sections 5 & 6 Figure 5). The top of the natural was recorded at varying similar heights within the sections: c.165.43m aOD in section 5 and c.165.65m aOD in section 6 (taken from levels on the top of recorded sections). The natural layers represent glacial till deposits, formed during the Quaternary period when the local environment was dominated by Ice Age conditions (British Geological Society)

5.2 Phase2: Post-Medieval/Modern (AD1500 - Present)

- 5.2.1 The earliest human activity on the site was represented by a spread of mottled, dark greyish brown and light brown, firm sandy clay **109** recorded in Section 5 directly overlaying the natural deposit. This spread was only seen within the footprint of the rear exertion (Figure 4). A single rim fragment for a purple earthenware jar of late 16th –mid 17th was recovered along with a large tabular fragment of fired clay. The oval profile suggests the fired clay could come from a structural object such as a kiln/oven prop, but its badly abraded condition cases some uncertainty (Young section 6.3). This spread most likely represents the remains of a buried plough soil.
- 5.2.2 A subsoil layer **101** sealed both the Natural **108** and buried plough soil **109**. The subsoil was uniform across the site consisting of a mid-brown, friable to firm silty clay with roots and occasional water-worn pebbles. A high frequency of orange brick fragments were encountered throughout this layer along with two fragments of pottery dating from the 17th -20th century.
- 5.2.3 Topsoil stripping to the northeast of Keepers cottage revealed three small post holes cut through the subsoil (Figure 4). Postholes **103** and **105** are likely to be contemporary both contained similar dark greyish brown friable sandy clay with occasional modern brick and charcoal fragments **102** and **104**. They are also both very similar in shape (see Sections 1 & 2 Figure 5). A single large fragment of brick retained form **102** for identification confirms the brick is handmade dating from the mid-17th-20th century. The third posthole **107** in contrast is shallower (see Section 3, Figure 5) containing a mid-light greyish brown friable silty clay **106**. The fill produced a single residual flint core-tool piercer likely to date from either the late Neolithic to Bronze Age periods.
- 5.2.4 A dark greyish brown, friable silty clay with occasional charcoal fragments, Topsoil **100**, sealed all three postholes and the subsoil across the site. In the area of the water pipe (Figure 4) the

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topsoil and subsoil have been stripped off and replaced with a gravel drive (see Section 6,

Figure 5).

6. THE FINDS

6.1 **OVERVIEW**

Six artefacts were recovered from four contexts. The finds were processed according to PCAs systems

approved for use in Leicestershire and are discussed in the text below.

6.2 **WORKED FLINT** by Kevin Trott

Introduction

The archaeological investigations at the above site resulted in the recovery of a single struck flint. This

report describes the flint and assesses its archaeological significance. The piece was recovered from the

fill 107 of a modern posthole [106]. All metrical descriptions follow the methodology established by

Saville (1980).

Description

Context (107): [106] Posthole

Small piercer in good condition made from a 'glassy' translucent black flint. This tool consists either of a

larger thermally disintegrated core or a large flake that has had a series of small broad flakes removed

from a number of striking platforms, resulting in it attaining a shape resembling a thickened irregular

orange segment. Although small, its shape and bifacial damage along its acute straight margin suggests

it was utilised as a core-tool piercer. It measures 33mm in length by 31mm wide by 11mm thick and

weighs 10g.

Discussion

The flint is generally in a good condition, being relatively sharp and showing only minimal opposing

edge chipping that formed the piercer point, and although recovered from a modern posthole, the

piece has probably not moved far from where originally discarded, although it could have been

imported into the site when soil was utilised to infill around the around the post. The piece is made

from black flint and the thermal scars on the piece would suggests that the raw material was obtained

from glacial tills or as alluvial pebbles eroded from the tills. Deposits of both of which can be found in

the vicinity of the site (e.g. Henson 1985; Cooper 2006, 62). This is not a chronologically diagnostic

piece but the technological attributes would suggest a late Neolithic or early Bronze Age date.

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Significance and Recommendations

The struck flint indicates prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site, most probably during the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age, although it is too small to indicate the precise chronology or nature of the occupations. It does contribute to a wider appreciation of prehistoric landscape use in the area, and provides further important evidence for prehistoric activity within the East Midlands claylands, an

area believed until relatively recently to have been largely avoided during much of the prehistoric

period (Clay 2002; 2006).

No further analytical work is warranted on the tool. As it has some potential in contributing to a wider appreciation of landscape use in the area it should be recorded in the Historic Environment Record and a brief description included in any published account of the fieldwork.

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6.3 POTTERY by Jane Young

Introduction

In total, three sherds of pottery representing three vessels were submitted for examination. The

pottery recovered probably ranges in date from the post-medieval to early modern periods. The

assemblage was quantified by three measures: number of sherds, weight and vessel count within each

context. Fabric identification of the medieval pottery was undertaken by x20 binocular microscope.

Reference has been made to the Leicestershire Pottery Type Series held at Leicester University. The

ceramic data was entered on an Access database using Lincolnshire (Young et al.) fabric codenames

with a concordance with Leicestershire codenames (see Table 1). Recording of the assemblage was in

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accordance with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, et al. (2001).

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Condition

The pottery is in a good condition with most sherds being in fresh and un-abraded condition. No cross-context joins were noted.

Overall Chronology and Source

A range of three different, identifiable pottery types were identified, the type and general date range for these fabrics are shown in Table 1. The pottery probably ranges in date from the post-medieval to early modern periods. A limited range of form types is present, with most sherds coming from singular jar bowl and garden pot.

Table 1: Ceramic codenames and date ranges with total quantities by sherd count

Lincolnshire	Leicestershire	Full name	Earliest	Latest	Total	Total
codename	codename		date	date	sherds	vessels
BERTH	EA2	Brown glazed earthenware	1550	1800	1	1
LERTH	EA	Late earthenware	1750	1900	1	1
CERTH	EA	Coarse Purple earthenware	1580	1800	1	1

The pottery was recovered from two different deposits on the site. The buried plough soil **109** produced a single rim sherd, in a fairly fresh condition, from an unglazed earthenware (CERTH) of a type of everted-rimmed jar commonly associated in groups dating to the late 16th to mid-17th century. Subsoil layer **101** contained two smallish post-medieval sherds in a fairly fresh condition. One of the sherds is from the rim of a large Brown-glazed (BERTH) earthenware panchion of a style typical of mid-17th to 18th century date. The second sherd is from the body of an unglazed earthenware (LEARTH) garden pot of late 18th to 20th century date.

Summary and Recommendations

The ceramic material recovered from this site suggests that there had possibly been activity in the area from at least the post-medieval period. The fairly fresh condition of this small assemblage suggests that it has undergone little disturbance since deposition.

The assemblage is in a stable condition and should be kept for future study.

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Young, J, Vince A G and Nailor V 2005 A Corpus of Anglo-Saxon and Medieval Pottery from Lincoln,

Lincoln Archaeology Studies 7, Oxbow, Oxford

6.4 CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL by Jane young

Introduction

A single fragment of ceramic building material weighing 123 grams in total was submitted for

examination. The fragment was examined both visually and at x 20 binocular magnification. The

resulting archive was then recorded using Lincolnshire codenames in an Access database and complies

with the guidelines laid out in Slowikowski, et al. (2001).

Condition

The CBM is mainly in an abraded but stable condition.

THE CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

Only one fragment of building material was recovered from the site. An abraded corner portion from a

handmade brick of mid-17th to mid-20th century date was recovered from the fill 102 of posthole

[103].

Summary and Recommendations

The ceramic building material recovered from this site is too small to be of use in site interpretation.

The material should be retained for future analysis or use in a local type series.

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Slowikowski, A. Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001. Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording,

Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics. Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper

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6.5 Fire Clay by Jane Young

Introduction

A single fragment of fired clay weighing 293 grams in total was submitted for examination. The fragment was examined both visually and at x 20 binocular magnification. The resulting archive was then recorded using Lincolnshire codenames in an Access database and complies with the guidelines

laid out in Slowikowski, et al. (2001).

Condition

The item is in a moderately abraded but stable condition.

The Fired Clay

The fragment is in a moderately abraded condition making interpretation of the material difficult. The surface of the piece is a light orange oxidised colour and when broken the core is of a light dull grey reduced colour. The fragment recovered from a buried ploughsoil **109** is in a highly micaceous fabric that appears to contain little quartz. The overall appearance of this fragment is represented by a large tabular piece that has an internal oval profile and could come from a structural object such as a

kiln/oven prop, although it is too abraded to be certain.

Summary and Recommendations

The fired clay object recovered from this site is too abraded to be of use in site interpretation but does indicate the use of a kiln-type/oven structure. The material should be retained for future analysis or use in a local type series.

References

Slowikowski, A. Nenk, B. and Pearce, J. 2001. Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics. Medieval Pottery Research Group, Occasional Paper

2.

7. CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The watching brief fulfilled its aims and objectives by identifying and recording a sequence of geological and archaeological stratigraphy surviving on the site.
- 7.2 Natural deposits recorded on the site comprised light brown compact clay glacial till deposits formation in concurrence with the British Geological Survey mapping of the site.
- 7.3 Evidence of Prehistoric activity was provided by a single flint piercer of late Neolithic –early Bronze Age date, although its presence within the posthole may be residual, it can be regarded as an indicator of prehistoric activity within the wider environs of the site. The condition of the flint suggests it has not moved far from its original point of deposition (Trott section 6. 2).
- 7.5 The earliest Post-Medieval activity on the site was identified in form of a buried plough soil containing a fragment of late 16th early 17th Century pottery. This was sealed by a subsoil containing 17th -20th century pottery fragments and fragments of brick, there were also three modern postholes cut into this layer.
- 7.4 It is surprising that no Saxon or later medieval material was encountered on this site, givens its closes proximity to the scheduled earthwork remains (NHLE 1017210) of the medieval settlement (Figure 3). It is most likely the construction of Keepers Cottage in the early 1900's and the surrounding landscaping of the gardens/driveway over the last c.100 years may have destroyed any remaining evidence. The other possibility is the land was wooded and the settlement/field earthworks never extend into the investigation area. The lack of Saxon and medieval material would support both possibilities.

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PLATES



Plate 1. General view looking north towards the site with the Hollow way on the left in the foreground and the Ridge & Furrow in the background



Plate 3. Postholes 103, 105, 107. View southwest. 2m & 1m scales



Plate 5. Rear extension foundations. View west. 2m, 1m, & 0.4m Scales



Plate 2. View looking north to the stripped area to the east of the house. 2m & 1m scales



Plate 4. Stripped are to the west of the house. View north. 2m & 1m scales



Plate 6. Water Pipe trench. View northwest. 2m scales

APPENDIX 1. CONTEXT INDEX

Context	Category		Interpretation	Above	Below		
		Colour	Texture	Inclusions			
100	Layer	Dark greyish brown	Soft silty clay	Grass roots and general root disturbance, occasional charcoal fragments.	Topsoil	101	-
101	Layer	Medium brown	Friable –firm silty clay	Roots, occasional very small pebbles	Subsoil	102, 104, 106, 108, 109, 111	101
102	Fill	Dark Greyish brown	Friable fine sandy clay	Occasional brick & charcoal fragments with rare pebbles	Fill of 103	103	101
103	Cut	-	-	Sub-circular in plan, U – shaped in section	Posthole	108	102
104	Fill	Dark Greyish brown	Friable fine sandy clay	Occasional brick & charcoal fragments with large stones at the base.	Fill of 105	105	101
105	Cut	-	-	Oval in plan, steep slopping near vertical sides with flat base.	Posthole	108	104
106	Fill	Medium light greyish brown	Friable silty clay	Occasional roots	Fill of 107	107	101
107	Cut	-	-	Sub-circular in plan,	Posthole	108	106
108	Layer	Light Brown	Compact clay		Natural	-	101, 103, 105, 107, 109,
109	Layer	Mottled dark greyish brown and light brown	Frim sandy clay	Occasional pebble and CBM fragments	Medieval plough soil	108	101, 110

Category Context			Interpretation	Above	Below		
xt	γι	Colour	Texture	Inclusions			
110	Cut	-	-	Linear in plan running long side exiting house (not seen in section)	House foundation cut	-	111
111	Fill	Mottled dark grey brown and vellow	Mixture of topsoil and sand	Occasional small angular stones	Fill of 110	111	101, 109

APPENDIX 2. OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

Printable version

OASIS ID: preconst1-195609

Project details

Project name Keepers Cottage, Gumley, Leicestershire

the project

Short description of This report details the working methods and results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd at Keepers Cottage, Debdale Lane, Gumley, Leicestershire. The work was commissioned by Simeon & Victoria Lum and undertaken between the 20th February and 6th November 2014. This was conducted in order to define and record any archaeological deposits exposed during the construction of a two-storey rear extension and associated services. The investigation identified a buried plough soil containing a fragment of late 16th - early 17th Century pottery a subsequent subsoil layer produced a scattering of pottery from the 17th -20th century. Three modern postholes were cut into the subsoil, a single residual late Neolithic to Bronze Age flint piercer was recovered from one of the postholes.

Start: 20-02-2014 End: 06-11-2014 Project dates

Previous/future

work

codes

No / No

Any associated project reference KCSG14 - Site code

Type of project

Recording project

Site status

Area of Archaeological Importance (AAI)

Current Land use

Residential 1 - General Residential

Investigation type

"Watching Brief"

Project location

Country

England

Site location

LEICESTERSHIRE HARBOROUGH GUMLEY KEEPERS COTTAGE, DEBDALE

LANE, GUMLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE

Site coordinates

SP 67708 90326 52.5062528036 -1.00232836299 52 30 22 N 001 00 08 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 165.43m Max: 165.65m

Project creators

Name of Organisation **PCA Midlands**

Project brief originator

Leicestershire County Archaeology Office

Project design originator

Kevin Trott

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18 PCA:R11913

Project

Kevin Trott

director/manager

Project supervisor Steve Jones

Project archives

Physical Archive

Leicestershire Museums Service

recipient

Physical Archive ID X.A11.2014

"Ceramics", "Worked stone/lithics" **Physical Contents**

Digital Archive recipient

Leicestershire Museums Service

Digital Archive ID

X.A11.2014

Digital Media available

"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"

Paper Archive recipient

Leicestershire Museums Service

Paper Archive ID X.A11.2014

Paper Media available

"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Plan", "Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text"

Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

Title KEEPERS COTTAGE, DEBDALE LANE, GUMLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE:

Author(s)/Editor(s) Brook K

Other bibliographic R11913

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Date 2014

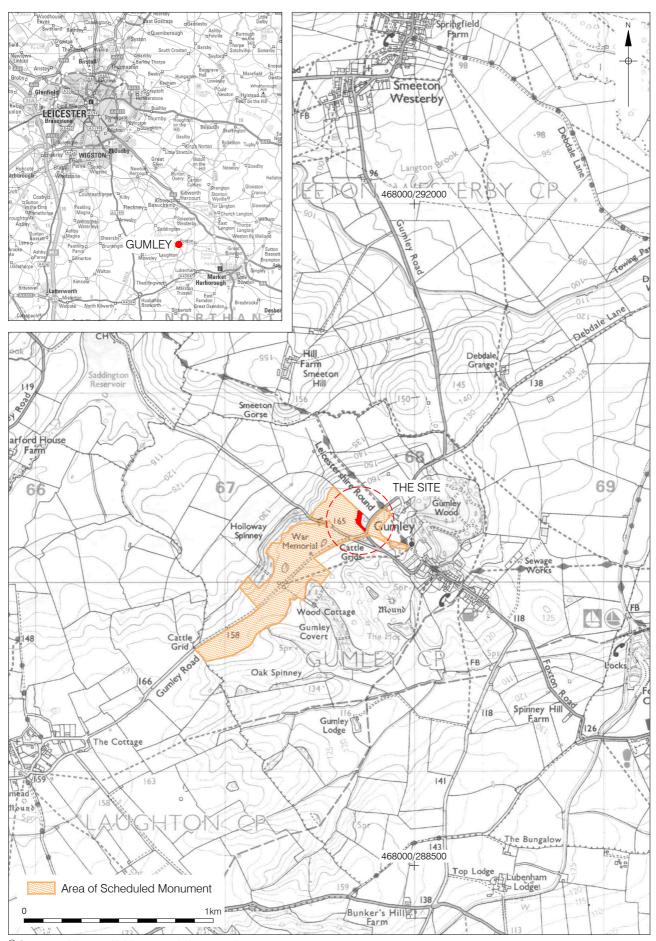
Issuer or publisher **PCA Midlands**

Place of issue or publication

Market Harborough

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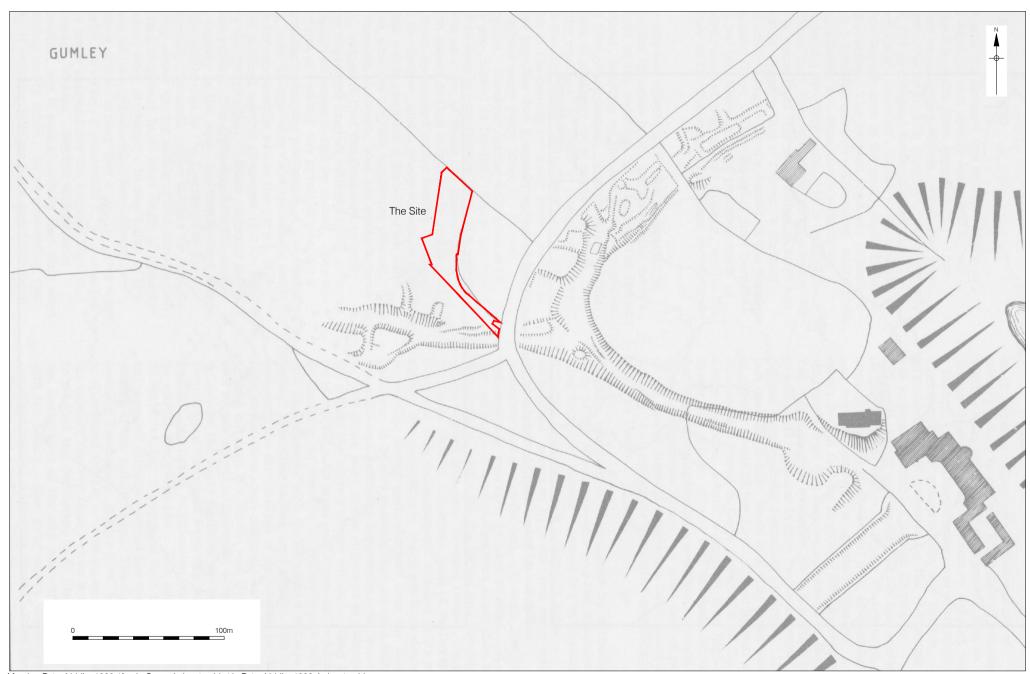
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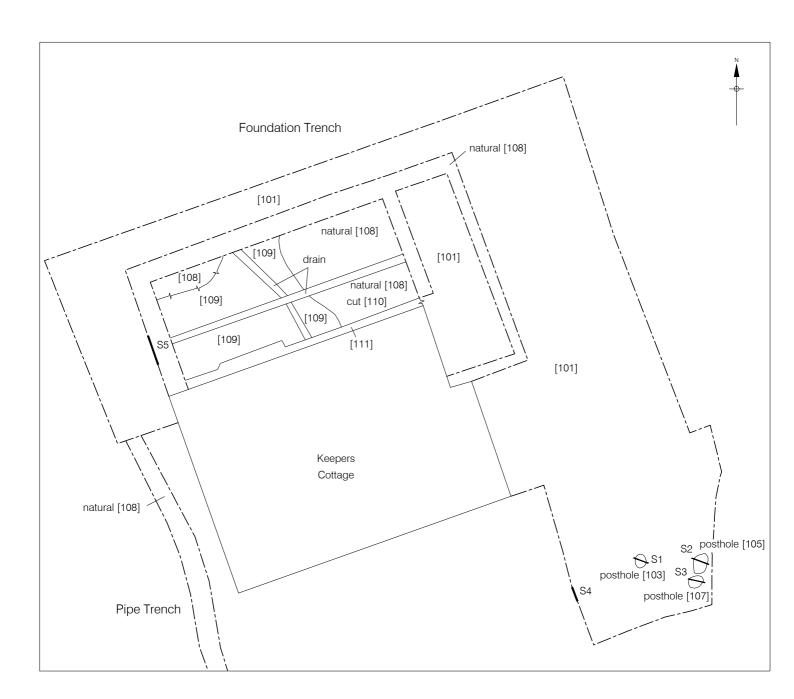
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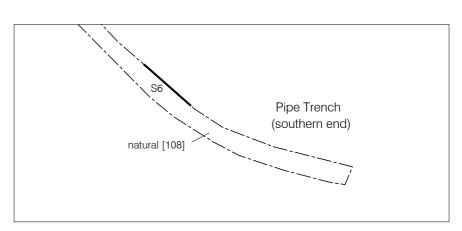
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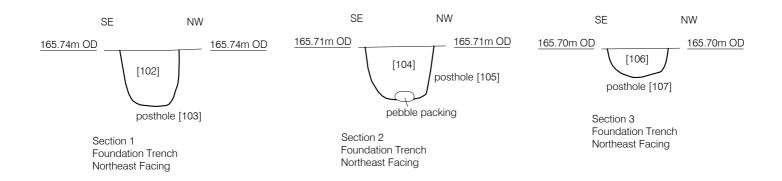
Map by: Peter Liddle, 1982. 'Anglo-Saxon Leicestershire' in Peter Liddle, 1982. Leicestershire Archaeology. The present state of knowledge, Volume 2. Anglo-Saxon & Medieval Periods. (Figure 3). Leicestershire Museums Art Galleries and Record Service. Archaeological Report No. 5. Leicester © Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd 2014 13/11/14 JS

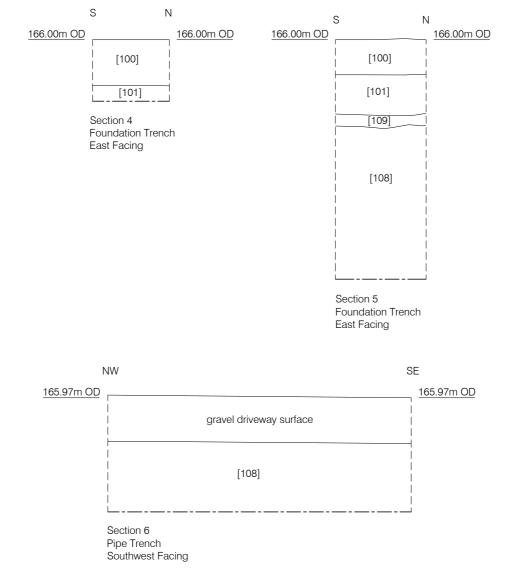
Figure 3 Earthworks Survey 1:2,500 at A4





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