



**Phase 14, East Leake Quarry, Nottinghamshire
Archaeological Watching Brief**

NGR: SK 563 251

Site Code: ELQ 08

Notts. County Council Planning Application No. 8/89/0472/P

Report

for

CEMEX Ltd

by

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LAS Report No. 1048

April 2008

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during topsoil stripping of most of Phase 14 of the sand and gravel quarry extension. The bases of two west-east aligned parallel very shallow features had survived ploughing near the north-eastern corner, but it was unclear whether these represented medieval ridge and furrow or a post-medieval farm track.

Introduction

Lindsey Archaeological Services was commissioned by CEMEX to undertake an archaeological watching brief during topsoil removal in Phase 14 of the extension of East Leake Quarry (Figs. 1 and 2).

The work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of Nottinghamshire County Council Environmental Department, Archaeology Section, and those of the Nottinghamshire County Council Department of Planning. The watching brief was conducted by Mike Garrett between April 7th and 9th 2008.

Site Location and Description

The extraction site is situated east of the floodplain of the River Soar, overlooking one of its tributaries. The monitored phase was located at the northern side of the quarry, east of Lings Farm (Fig. 2).

Planning Background

Planning consent for the site was granted in 1989 with provision for archaeological recording set out in a Section 106 agreement. This has comprised a continuing watching brief during topsoil stripping of the quarry areas, and limited archaeological excavation of parts of the site.

Archaeological Background

There has been no previous systematic archaeological investigation in this area prior to investigations at the quarry, although chance finds included Anglo-Saxon metalwork to the east of the quarry in Rempstone parish. The quarry site has had an intermittent watching brief monitoring topsoil stripping since 1999 (Tann 2001). In 2001 a large ditch aligned north-south was recorded and an archaeological evaluation and excavation in 2002 revealed a number of prehistoric features including a Bronze Age ring ditch and an associated pit group. Evidence for Neolithic settlement and an Anglo-Saxon 6th century inhumation cemetery was found in the Phase 5 area of the quarry workings, with later activity restricted to cultivation of the land (McDaid 2008). A watching brief during topsoil stripping of Phase 8 revealed Bronze Age cremations (Jordan 2004). A watching brief in Area 9 identified

several features of significant archaeological potential which were investigated in two stages of excavation (Jordan 2005). These revealed the remains of an Iron Age field system, a ring ditch and sub oval-enclosure indicative of Iron Age settlement and a substantial spread of burnt material. No further features were identified in Phases 11 and part of Phase 12, which were monitored in 2005 (Jordan 2005b). Further monitoring of Phase 12 and Phase 13 in 2006 found three sherds of Roman pottery and a single flint blade in the topsoil. A Late Bronze Age/Iron Age sherd was found in a small probably Anglo-Saxon pit containing heat-affected pebbles and charcoal. A larger pit containing sixth-century AD Anglo-Saxon pottery was interpreted as a domestic hearth. A small area of medieval ridge and furrow had survived later ploughing (Garrett and Tann 2006). To the north and north-east of The Lings Farm, no archaeological remains were found, although the farmstead site may have been deliberately sited on an area of ground containing less clay (Tann 2007).

The Watching Brief

Method

The topsoil stripping was carried out using a machine with a 1.8m wide ditching bucket (PIs. 1 and 2). Each strip was about 15m wide. Context numbers were assigned to deposits by LAS for recording purposes, and these are used, in bold type, in the report text. The southern end of Phase 14 had been stripped of topsoil in May 2003 when no archaeological remains were seen (Tann and Pullen 2004).

During a pause in topsoil removal, when approximately 80% had been monitored, the Nottinghamshire County Council's Senior Archaeological Officer agreed that no further archaeological input was needed for Phase 14 (email to LAS, dated April 10th 2008).

Results

Vestigial traces of two shallow features, orientated east-west, were visible at the north-eastern part of the site (PI. 3). They were about 2.5m wide and 4m apart, and were slightly curvilinear. Their survival appeared to be restricted to the lowest part of the field, and it is likely that colluvium (hill-washed material) had protected the features from total removal by ploughing. They also appeared to have cut more deeply into the underlying deposits in moister ground at the base of the slope. Similar features were recorded in Phase 13 (Tann 2007). In this location they may have been medieval plough furrows or ditches marking a former track leading eastwards from The Lings Farm.

The absence of any trace of medieval plough furrows across most of the slope is probably an indication of the extent to which subsequent ploughing has removed deposits. No subsoil layer was recorded.

Conclusion

No significant archaeological remains were found on this part of the quarry extension. The absence of artefacts in the ploughsoil indicates that this is probably not the result of plough damage and that past activity has concentrated on land to the west and south.

Acknowledgements

Lindsey Archaeological Services would like to thank the staff of CEMEX Ltd and their contractors for their help and co-operation on site. Further help was received from Dr S. Colcutt and Anne Johnson (Oxford Archaeological Associates); and Ursilla Spence (Senior Archaeological Officer, Nottinghamshire County Council).

Illustrations were prepared by Mick McDaid. This report was edited by Naomi Field.

Geoff Tann
Lindsey Archaeological Services
April 28th 2008

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Contents of the Site Archive

Context Sheets: 6

Correspondence

Photographs; colour prints, LAS film nos. 08/25/1-19

APPENDIX 1

East Leake Quarry Phase 14 (ELQ 08)

Context Summary

Context No.	Type	Description
1	Layer	Topsoil. Mid grey brown, loose silty sand. Frequent root inclusions and rounded pebbles. Thickness 0.25m – 0.30m
2	Layer	Natural sand layer. Loose yellow/white and yellow/orange sand. Moderate inclusion of rounded pebbles up to 50mm.
3	Fill	Fill of 4; grey/brown silt sand.
4	Cut	Shallow east-west linear/curvilinear feature, filled by 3, cuts 2. 2.5m wide, 0.06m deep
5	Fill	Fill of 6; grey/brown silt sand.
6	Cut	Shallow east-west linear/curvilinear feature, filled by 5, cuts 2. 2.5m wide, 0.06m deep

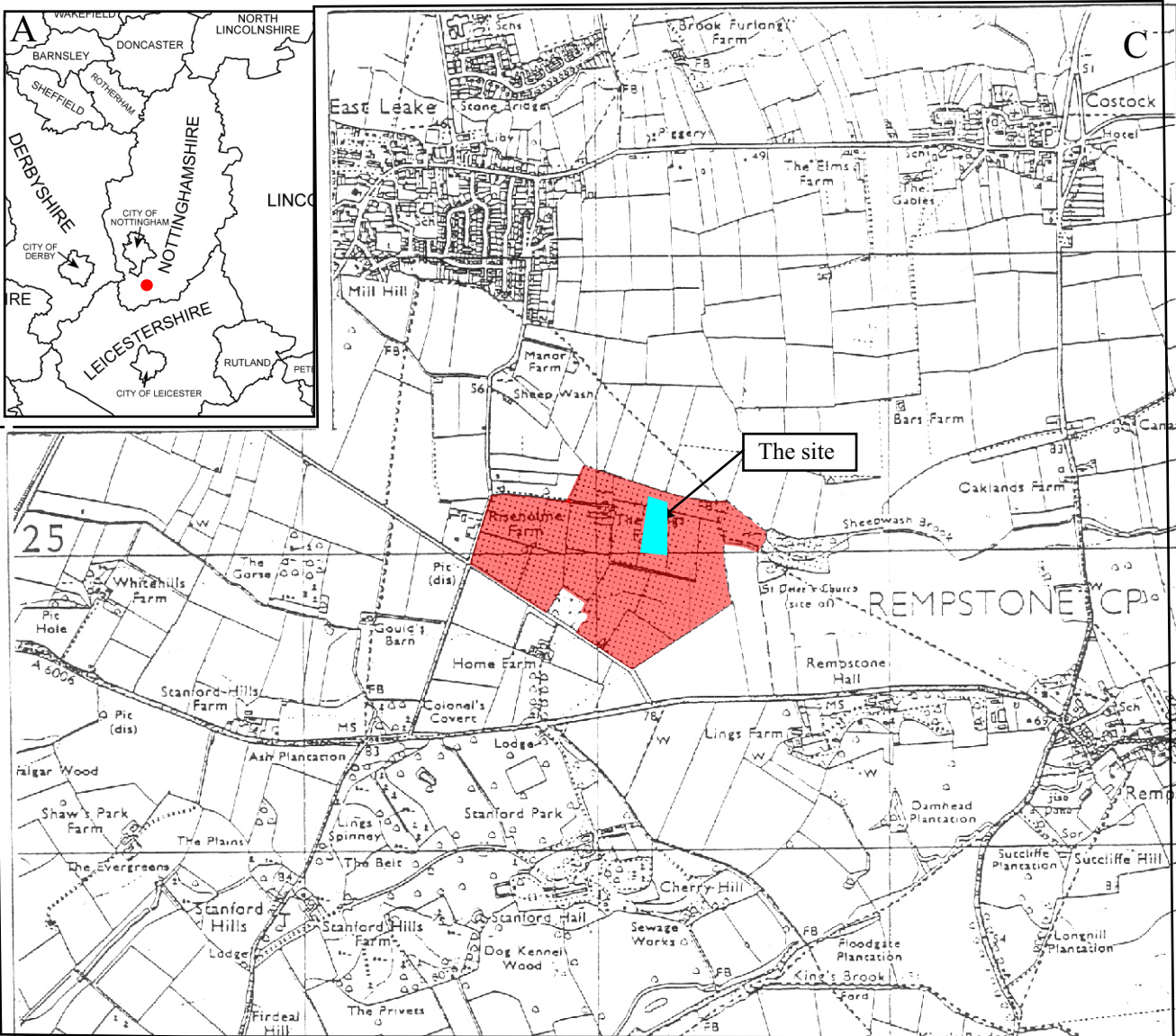
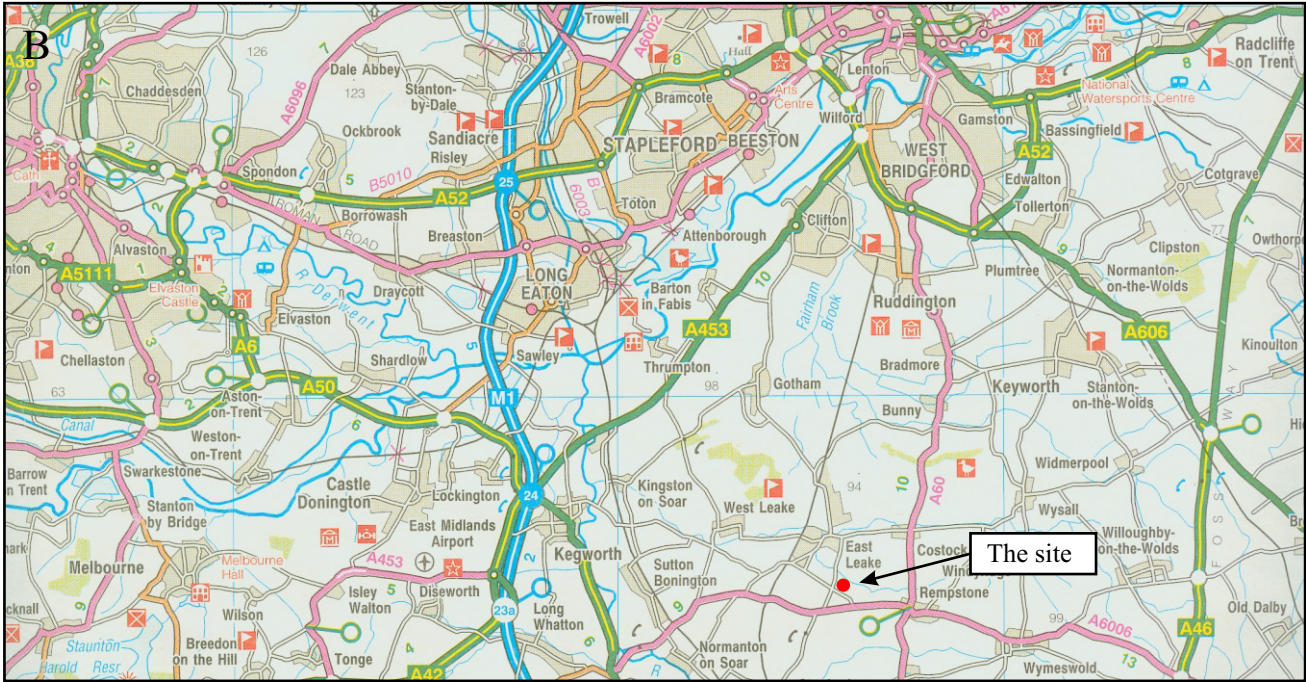


Fig 1 Location of East Leake, with stippled area marking extent of the full quarry area. Inset C based on the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Explorer map 246. Crown Copyright, reproduced with the permission of the controller of HMSO. LAS Licence No. AL 10002165.



Fig. 2 East Leake Quarry, location of Phase 14 (based on a plan supplied by the client).



PI. 1 The monitored area, before topsoil removal (looking north).



PI. 2 The monitored area, after topsoil removal (looking north).



Pl. 3 Section across one of the shallow linear features (looking west, scale 2m) ■