



**Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at
Roadley House Farm, 8 Leicester Road
Sharnford, Leicestershire
June 2016**

Report No. 16/118

Author: Paul Clements

Illustrator: Ian Fisher



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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS molanort1-256251	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Roadley House Farm, 8 Leicester Road, Sharnford, Leicestershire, June 2016		
Short description	In June 2016 an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by MOLA Northampton, for Mr Clive Attard. The works identified remnant furrows of medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	-		
Current land use	Lawn garden		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Medieval to post-medieval furrows		
Significant finds	-		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address	Roadley House Farm, 8 Leicester Road, Sharnford		
Easting Northing	SP 47787 91656		
Area (sq m/ha)	0.10 ha		
Postcode	LE10 3PR		
Height aOD	c.88m AOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Teresa Hawtin, Leicestershire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA Northampton		
Director/Supervisor	Paul Clements		
Project Managers	Anthony Maull (MOLA Northampton)		
Sponsor or funding body	Mr Clive Attard		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	21/06/2016		
End date	21/06/2016		
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Paper		Site records (1 archive box)	
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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	BACKGROUND	2
2.1	Location and geology	3
2.2	Historical and archaeological background	3
3	METHODOLOGY	3
4	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE	4
6	DISCUSSION	5
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	6
	APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX	

Figures

Front cover: General view, looking west

Fig 1: Site location 1:1,000

Fig 2: Furrow in Trench 1 overlain by modern hardcore, looking south

Fig 3: Eastern furrow in Trench 2, looking north

Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Roadley House Farm, 8 Leicester Road, Sharnford, Leicestershire June 2016

Abstract

In February 2016 an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by MOLA Northampton, for Mr Attard. The works identified two phases of medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation.

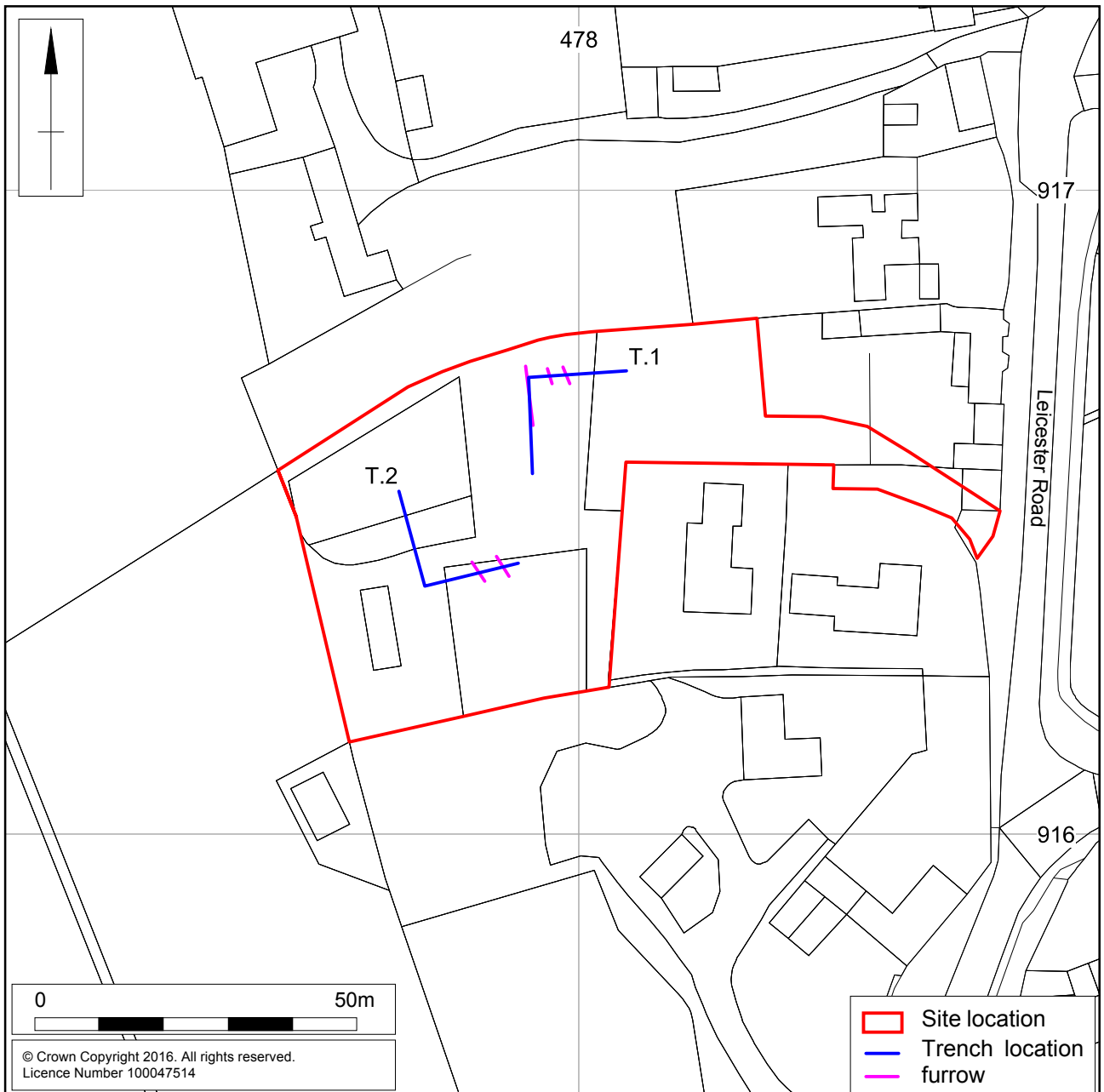
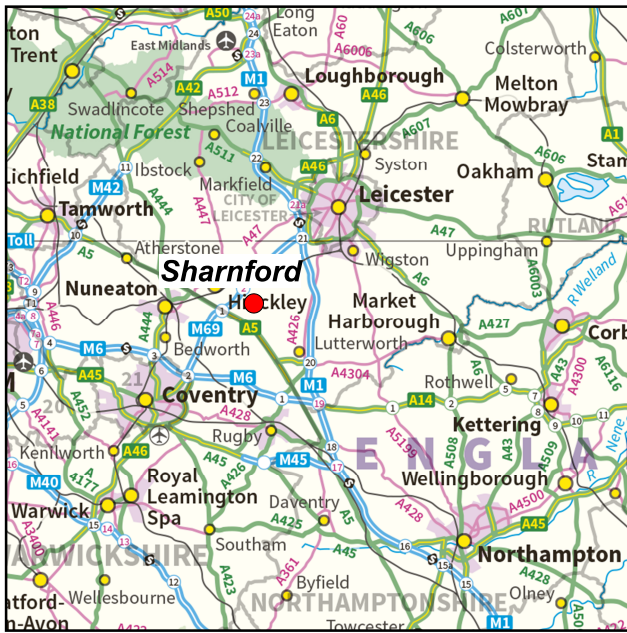
1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out in June 2016 by MOLA Northampton on behalf of Mr Clive Attard. on land to the rear of Roadley House Farm, 8 Leicester Road, Sharnford, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 47787 91656, Fig 1), in advance of proposed residential development (Planning Ref: 14/0751/1/OX).

The scope of works was outlined and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA Northampton (2016).

The objectives of the evaluation were to establish:

- the date, nature, significance and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- the potential for the recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- the potential for palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions;
- the impact of the proposed works upon any surviving archaeological remains;
- to inform any future excavation and/or preservation *in-situ* strategy.



Scale 1:1000

Site location Fig 1

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and geology

The development area lies on the western edge of Sharnford, a village in Leicestershire. The land proposed for redevelopment lies to the west and rear of Roadley House Farm, which faces onto Leicester Road (Fig 1). The site is bounded to the south by the properties of Sunnysides and Farm View. To the east, the buildings of Roadley House Farm front onto Leicester Road, which passes the property north-south. The development area comprises a former garden, lawn and greenhouses with agricultural fields beyond to the west. To the north, the site is bordered by a hedged boundary, with a narrow paddock and further buildings beyond.

The land is level, lying at c.88m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying bedrock geology comprises mudstone of the Mercia Mudstone Group overlain by alluvium to the north and with Oadby Member diamicton glacial tills to the south (BGS 2016). Soils across the site recorded slowly permeable, loamy and clayey soils (Landis 2016).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The site is located within the medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Sharnford.

Prehistoric flint material has been identified in the area of the village. Around 30 flint implements were found in the vicinity of the Soar Brook to the west of the village in the early 20th century, including Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Mesolithic pygmy flakes and scrapers. Neolithic flint implements have been found north of the village, around c.630m to the north of the site.

Around 650m north-east of the site, a damaged inhumation was found by contractors in a lane north of the main road at Sharnford in 1953. It was not dated.

Aerial photography shows surviving earthworks of ridge and furrow cultivation, aligned north-north-west, within the pasture field immediately west of the development area.

Historic Ordnance Survey maps show that the development site was under orchard from at least 1888 until 1964. By this later date, a small building had been constructed in the south-west corner of the western field. Between 1955 and 1964, the row of buildings facing onto Leicester Road to the north of the farmhouse had been demolished, and a long building was constructed in the centre of the site. This was demolished after 1984, and the properties of 'Sunnysides' and 'Farm View' were constructed.

3 METHODOLOGY

Two L-shaped trial trenches, each arm 15m long by 1.80m wide, covering an area of 108sqm, were excavated in accordance with a trench plan prepared by MOLA Northampton and approved by Teresa Hawtin (Leicestershire Planning Archaeologist). The trench plan was designed to provide a general coverage of the proposed development area (Fig 1). All trenches were positioned using a Leica Viva RTK GPS.

A JCB 3CX mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.80m wide toothless ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. Archaeological deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature. Recording followed standard MOLA Northampton procedures as described in the Fieldwork Manual (MOLA 2014). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive

details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Photography was with 35mm black and white film and digital images.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (ClfA 2014c) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (ClfA 2014a).

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The trench locations are shown in Figure 1 and an inventory of contexts is provided in the Appendix.

The natural geology was encountered at an average of 0.50m below the modern ground surface. It comprised mid orange-brown slightly clayey-sand with occasional small and medium-sized rounded gravel. The subsoil, 0.30m thick, consisted of light grey-brown sandy clay with infrequent medium-sized cobbles. The turf and topsoil comprised dark grey-brown loam, 0.20m thick. Brick fragments and other modern debris, overlying the subsoil in the northern arm of Trench 1, represented the remains of a modern trackway aligned parallel to the northern boundary of the development area (pers com).

Truncated furrows of a former ridge and furrow field system were spaced at 2-3m intervals and aligned north-north-west, were identified in both trenches. They were 1.20-1.30m wide and up to 0.20m deep with shallow bowl-shaped profiles. The fill, light grey-brown clayey-sand containing small rounded cobbles was consistent within all of the furrows.



Furrow in Trench 1 overlain by modern hardcore, looking south Fig 2



Eastern furrow in Trench 2, looking north Fig 3

6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has identified remnant furrows of ridge and furrow cultivation on the same alignment as surviving earthworks of ridge and furrow in the field immediately west of the development area. No archaeological features predating the furrows were identified and no residual finds were recovered from the overburden to indicate the presence of features within the immediate vicinity. The mitigation works have identified that the development area most likely lay within the open field system around Sharnford rather than within the medieval historic settlement core.

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Websites

- BGS 2016 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html> British Geological Survey website
- Landis 2016 <https://www.landis.org.uk/soilscapes/> Cranfield University National Soil Resources Institute

APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	15m x 1.80m E-W 15m x 1.80m N-S	SP 47792 91671	84.40m aOD	m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
101	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown loam.	0.20m thick	-
102	Trackway layer	Hardcore brick rubble	0.20m thick	Modern brick
103	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay-loam	0.10-0.30m thick	-
104	Fill of 105	Light grey-brown sandy-clay	1.30m wide 0.20m thick	-
105	Furrow	Shallow bowl-shaped profile	1.30m wide 0.20m deep[-
106	Fill of 107	Light grey-brown sandy-clay	1.20m wide 0.20m thick	-
107	Furrow	Shallow bowl-shaped profile	1.20m wide 0.20m deep	-
108	Natural	orange-brown clay sand containing occasional mixed sized gravels		-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	15m x 1.80m E-W 15m x 1.80m N-S	SP 47776 91638	84.97m aOD	m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown loam	0.30m thick	-
202	Subsoil	Mid grey-brown clay-loam.	0.10m thick	-
203	Fill of 105	Light grey-brown sandy-clay	1.20m wide 0.15m thick	-
204	Furrow	Shallow bowl-shaped profile	1.20m wide 0.15m deep[-
205	Fill of 107	Light grey-brown sandy-clay	1.25m wide 0.10m thick	-
206	Furrow	Shallow bowl-shaped profile	1.25m wide 0.10m deep	-
207	Natural	orange-brown silty clay containing occasional mixed sized gravels		-



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