



# Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land north of Fairways Meadows Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire October 2016

Report No. 16/195

Author: Paul Clements



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Project Manager: Ant Maull  
Event Number: XA.106.2016  
NGR: SP 5083 8797

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**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>OASIS molanort1-267446</b>	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land north of Fairway Meadows, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire, October 2016		
Short description	In October 2016 an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by MOLA for CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client. The works identified medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation and a natural linear hollow representing a possible palaeochannel.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	Desk-based assessment.		
Current land use	Golf Course		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Medieval to post-medieval furrows; possible palaeochannel.		
Significant finds			
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address	Fairway Meadows, Ullesthorpe		
Easting Northing	SP 5083 8797		
Area (sq m/ha)	c 3.5ha		
Height aOD	c 110m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Leicestershire County Council		
Project Design originator	CgMs Consulting		
Director/Supervisor	Paul Clements		
Project Managers	Ant Maull (MOLA)		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMS Consulting		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	25/10/2016		
End date	26/10/2016		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	X.A106.2016		
Paper		Site records (1 archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF. Survey Data, Photographs	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>			
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land north of Fairway Meadows, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire, October 2016		
Serial title & volume	MOLA Northampton Report 16/195		
Author(s)	Paul Clements		
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# Archaeological trial trench evaluation on land north of Fairway Meadows Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire October 2016

## **Abstract**

*In October 2016 an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) for CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client. The works identified medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation and a natural linear hollow representing a possible palaeochannel.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out in October 2016 by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) on land north of Fairway Meadows, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 5083 8797; Fig 1). The work was commissioned by CgMs Consulting on behalf of their client. The work was undertaken as a condition of planning consent by Harborough District Council requiring archaeological mitigation (Planning ref: 13/01228/OUT; Condition 6) prior to the erection of 60 dwellings and associated groundworks.

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

The objectives of the evaluation were to:

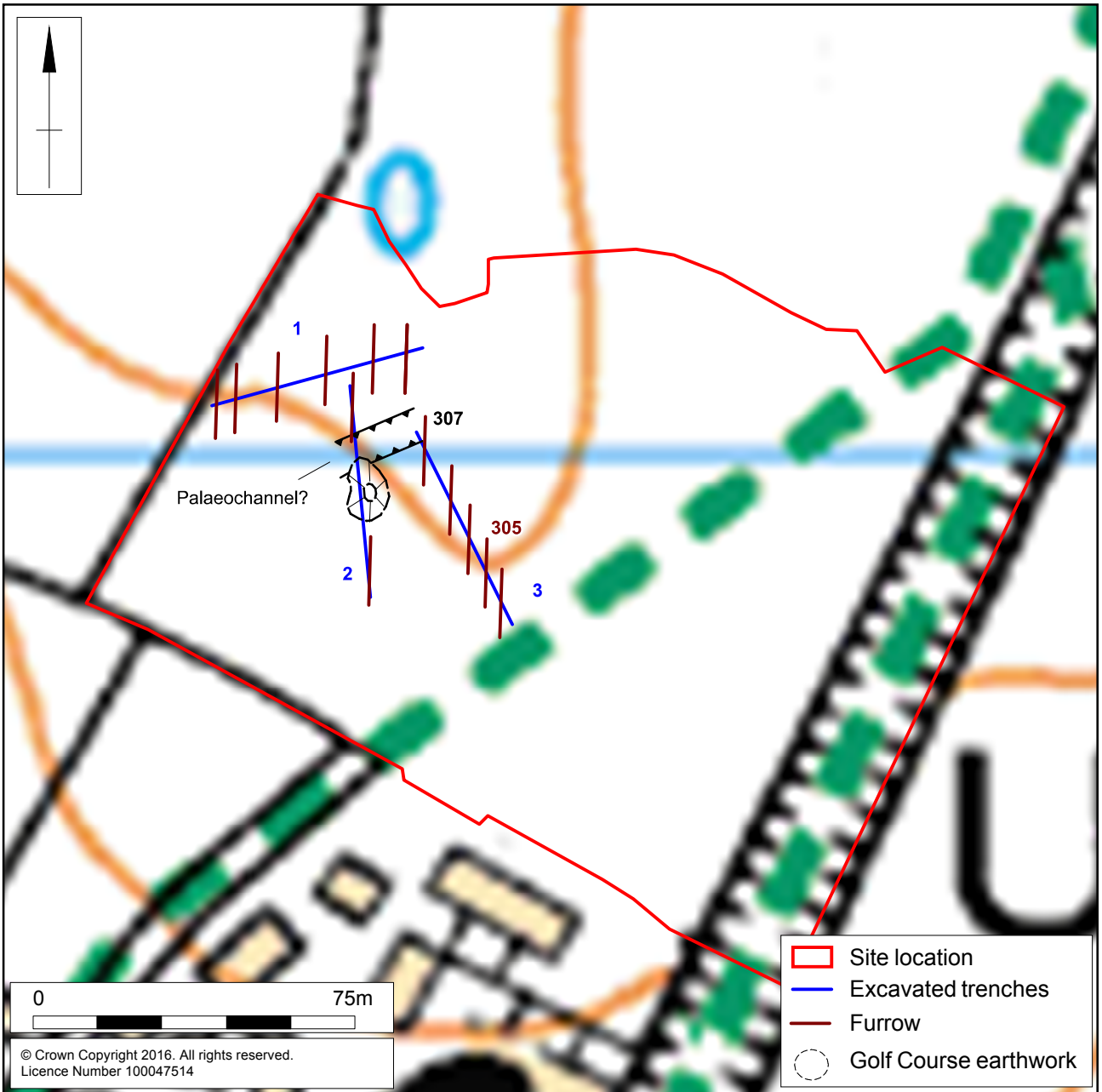
- determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development site
- assess the artefactual and environmental potential of the archaeological deposits encountered
- inform formulation of further measures to mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains
- produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire HER

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Location and geology**

The development site is located on the northern edge of Ullesthorpe, north of Fairway Meadows (NGR SP 5083 8797). The site is currently sited within the southern part of Ullesthorpe Golf Course.

The site is underlain by mudstone of the Mercia Mudstone group which is overlain by superficial deposits of Oadby Member Diamicton (BGS 2016). Soils across the site are recorded as loamy and clayey soils (Landis 2016).



Scale 1:1500

Site location and excavated trenches Fig 1

## 2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The historical and archaeological background was summarised the Written Scheme of Investigation (CgMs 2016) and is reproduced below.

### Prehistoric

A small number of lithic scatters are known within the vicinity of the site, including Mesolithic flint blades and cores and Neolithic/Bronze Age flints found during fieldwalking c220m east-north-east of the site, whilst further fieldwalking identified early Neolithic/early Bronze Age flint flakes and cores c600m south-west of the study site.

### Roman

Two Roman findspots are known within the vicinity of the site, three sherds of Roman pottery found during fieldwalking c220m east-north-east of the site and a possible Roman finger ring found c800m south-west of the site.

### Saxon

Ullesthorpe was probably originally settled during the Saxon period. 'Ulfr' is a Saxon name and 'Thorp' means outlying farmstead or village which suggests that the village's name means 'the settlement associated with Ulfr'. The site is located immediately outside the historic settlement core of Ullesthorpe.

The historic mapping shows nothing of significance within the site, which is shown as fields.

## 3 METHODOLOGY

Three trial trenches were excavated in accordance with a trench plan prepared by CgMs Consulting and approved by Teresa Hawtin (Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council). The trench plan was designed to provide a general coverage of the development area (Fig 1). A total area of 270 square metres was excavated comprising 3 trenches 50m long by 1.80m wide. 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 2014a) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (ClfA 2014b).



## 4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

### *General stratigraphy*

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

The underlying geology was light orange and brown-grey silty-clay containing small rounded gravel. It was encountered at 0.30-0.40m below the modern ground surface. The subsoil, 0.15m thick, was dark orange-brown loamy-clay. The topsoil was 0.20-0.30m thick, dark grey-brown loamy-clay.

### **Palaeochannel**

A probable palaeochannel was identified at the centre of Trench 2 and continuing through the northern end of Trench 3. It was visible on the surface as a shallow, north-east aligned, linear depression. The palaeochannel was c. 5m wide and 0.40m deep and was filled with mid brown silty clay (Fig 2). A golf course bank earthwork, constructed with modern material, including plastic, had been partially constructed over the palaeochannel (Figs 1 and 2).



Trench2 Palaeochannel and golf course earthwork, looking east Fig 2

### **Furrows**

Remnant furrows of medieval to post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation were identified in all three trenches. The furrows averaged 1.30m wide and 0.15m deep with wide bowl shaped profiles. The fills comprised dark orange-brown silty clay. All of the excavated furrows were cut by modern V-shaped trenches for the placement of ceramic drains (Figs 3 and 4).



Trench 3, Furrow 305, looking north-east Fig 3



Trench 3, Furrow 307, looking north-east Fig 4

## 5 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has identified remnant furrows. No artefacts were recovered but, they likely date to the medieval to post-medieval period indicating that the development area lay within the open field system around Ullesthorpe during this time.

An undated possible palaeochannel was found in Trenches 2 and 3. Modern golf club disturbance, a modern bank, was restricted to the area of Trench 2. No other features were identified and no residual finds were recovered from the topsoil or subsoil to indicate the presence of earlier features within the vicinity of the development area.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

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EH 1991 *Management of archaeological projects, second edition (MAP2)*, English Heritage

EH 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide*, English Heritage

MOLA 2014 *Archaeological fieldwork manual*, MOLA Northampton

## 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**

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
1	50m x 1.80m ENE-WNW	450774 288011	111.25m aOD	110.75m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
101	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown loamy-clay.	0.20m thick	-
102	Subsoil	Dark orange-brown loamy-clay	0.30m thick	-
103	Natural	Orange-brown and brown-grey silty-clay containing small gravels		-
104	Fill	Dark grey-brown loamy-clay.	1.30m wide 0.15m thick	-
105	furrow	Wide bowl shaped profile	1.30m wide 0.15m deep	-

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
2	50m x 1.80m N-s	450778 288015	110.05m aOD	109.55m aOD
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
201	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown loamy-clay.	0.20m thick	-
202	Subsoil	Dark orange-brown loamy-clay	0.30m thick	-
203	Natural	Orange-brown and brown-grey silty-clay containing small gravels		-
204	Fill	Mid orange-brown silty-clay.	c. 5m wide 0.30m thick	-
205	Palaeochannel	Wide bowl shaped profile	c. 5m wide 0.30m deep	-
206	Modern makeup	Dark grey-black loam	7m wide 0.60m thick	Brick, tile, plastic
207	Modern makeup	Mid orange grey loam	3.5m wide 0.40m thick	

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>50m x 1.80m NNW-SSE</b>	<b>450792 288005</b>	<b>110.08m aOD</b>	<b>109.78m aOD</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
301	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown loamy-clay.	0.20m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Dark orange-brown loamy-clay	0.30m thick	-
303	Natural	Orange-brown and brown-grey silty-clay containing small gravels		-
304	Fill	Dark grey-brown loamy-clay.	1.20m wide 0.15m thick	-
305	furrow	Wide bowl shaped profile	1.30m wide 0.15m deep	-
306	Fill	Dark grey-brown loamy-clay.	1.35m wide 0.15m thick	
307	Furrow	Wide bowl shaped profile	1.35m wide 0.15m deep	



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