



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief to the rear of
45 East Bond Street, Leicester.**

NGR: SK 58558 04813

Gavin Speed



ULAS Report No 2012-120.

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to the rear of
45 East Bond Street, Leicester.**

NGR: SK 58558 04813

Gavin Speed

For: Corporate Architecture Ltd

Approved by



Signed:

Date: 29.08.2012

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An Archaeological Watching Brief to the rear of 45 East Bond Street, Leicester.

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) to the rear of the former Great Meeting School (now Charles Berry House), 45 East Bond Street, Leicester (SK 58558 04813), during the groundworks for a new access ramp. The foundations did not reach sufficient depth to reveal any potential archaeological deposits. Garden soil in one small area produced a single sherd of modern pottery and clay pipe, along with unidentifiable bones. The remaining foundation trenches contained modern concrete and tarmac. No archaeological deposits were identified. The site archive will be held by Leicester City Museum Service, Accession Number A10.2012.

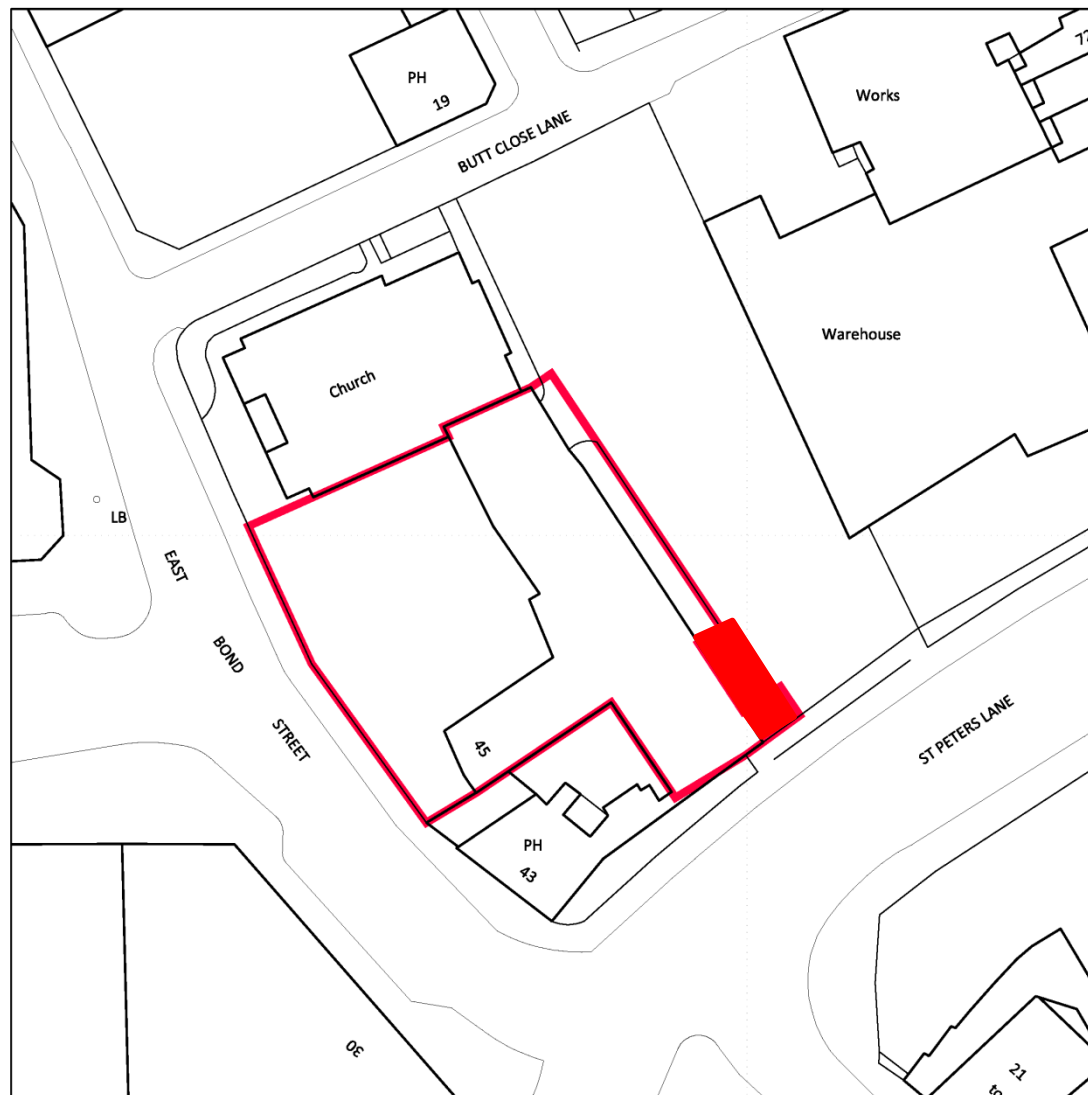
1. Introduction

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief, which was undertaken during construction of an access ramp to the rear of 45 East Bond Street, Leicester (SK 58558 04813) on the 2nd August 2012 by ULAS.

The fieldwork had been requested by the Leicester City Council Archaeologist, as advisor to the planning authority to identify and record any archaeological remains of significance prior to construction on the land. The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment (PPS5) and followed the design specification (Clay 2012).

The development site is located to the rear of 45 East Bond Street (Charles Berry House) Leicester, in the graveyard of the Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel (Figs. 1, 2, and 3). The site was identified as being situated within an area of archaeological potential, being sited within the historic core of Leicester close to known remains of Roman and medieval date (Jarvis 2002).

The geology consists of alluvial sands and gravels above Mercia mudstone. The site lies at a height of approximately 59.85 above O.D.



Site Plan Scale 1:500

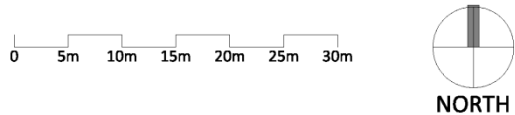
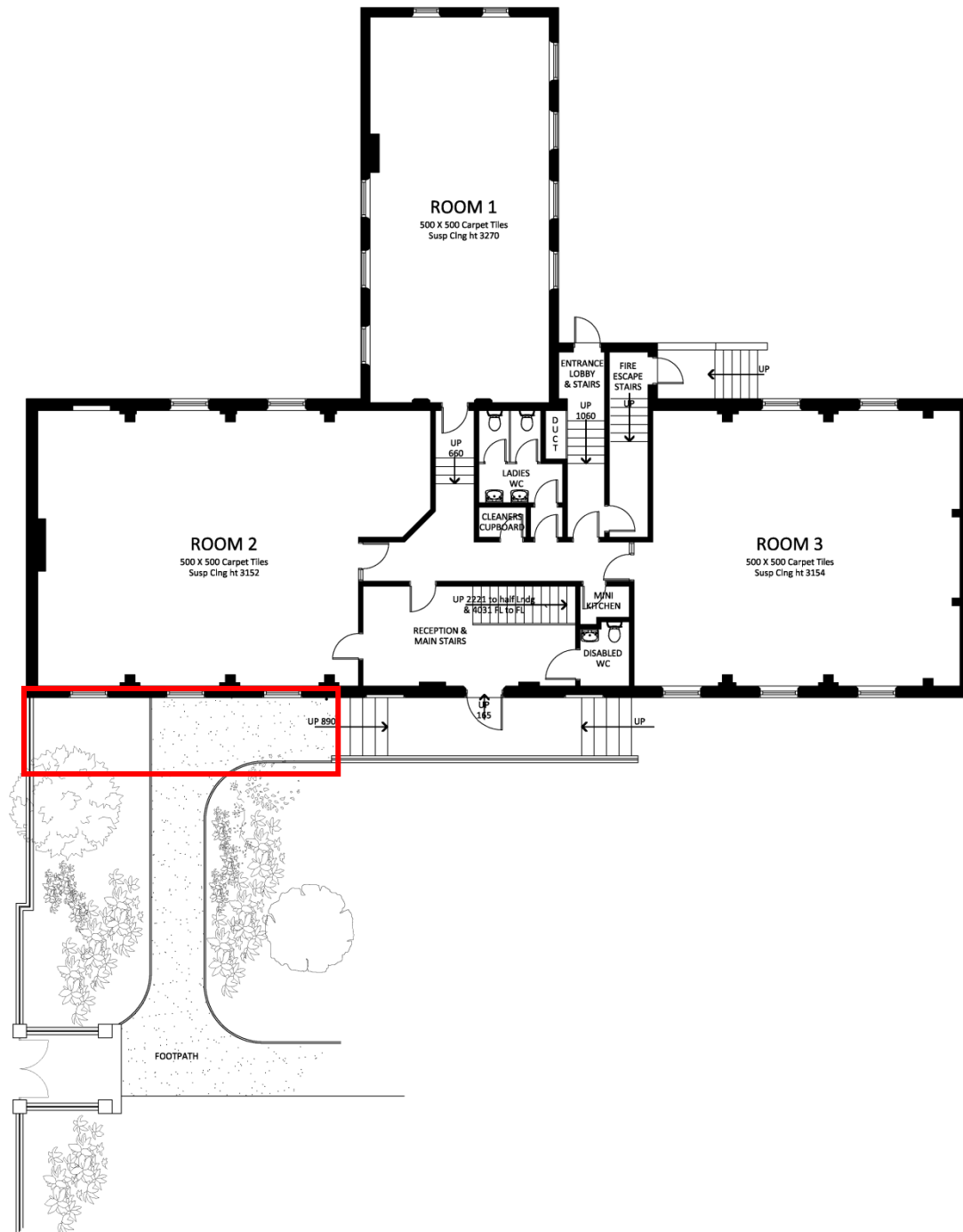


Figure 1: Site location plan, red shaded area denotes location of access ramp.
(provided by client)



EXISTING GROUND FLOOR PLAN

Figure 2: Detailed site location plan showing area of new access ramp (provided by client)

2. Archaeological and Historical Background

The development area lies within the town walls of Roman and medieval Leicester, on the north side of St Peters Lane, in an area commonly known as the north-east quarter (Connor and Buckley 1999,1). Beyond, and to the east of this site towards Churchgate, lay the town defences of Roman Leicester (*Ratae Corieltavorum*) which comprised a wall, rampart and ditch.

Previous work in this area has included a large open area excavation immediately opposite the site on land north of Causeway Lane (*ibid.*), and more recently the large Highcross Leicester excavations (Higgins 2007, Tate 2007). A small project directly to the south of the present site in the Great Meeting School Rooms cellars located mainly truncated deposits (Higgins 1994). In 2001, during construction of a link building between the Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel and Great Meeting School Rooms (20m to the north), a small amount of *in situ* Roman wall, along with medieval pits were excavated, indicating the former presence of a relatively substantial Roman building on the site (Jarvis 2002).

The Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel was built in 1708 as a meeting place of ‘Protestant Dissenters’, with the School Rooms being constructed much later in 1859-60. The Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel is the oldest nonconformist congregation in Leicester, founded in 1672, and the Chapel is the earliest complete brick building in the city. The congregation has always made an important contribution to Leicester life, promoting the hosiery trade in the late 17th century, founding the first bank in the town, fighting for political and religious reform in the 19th century, and representing the City Council at the present day. One of its most significant devotees was the accountant Joseph Dare (1800-1883), who was employed by the Unitarians to work as a domestic missionary. He lived near to the Great Meeting Chapel, at 122 Churchgate, and campaigned for better education, sanitation, and working conditions for the town’s poor. Chapel members helped found the Leicestershire Archaeological Society in the 19th century.

3. Aims and Methods

The purpose of the watching brief was to ascertain whether archaeological deposits were present. If so, the character, extent and date range of any deposits identified would be established, in order to assess their significance. Recording of these deposits would be carried out as appropriate, and an archive and this report produced. The work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, and adhered to the University's Health and Safety policy. The groundworks were to involve the hand-excavation of foundation trenches for an access ramp. Monitoring of this work took place on 03/08/2012.

4. Results

Two trenches were hand-dug, each measured 9.6m in length and 0.4m wide (Figure 4). Garden soil was revealed immediately at the north-end of the east-trench, and the south-end of both trenches. This consisted of a mid to dark blackish-brown soil. Within this was a single sherd of modern pottery and clay pipe, along with unidentifiable bones. The remaining areas of the foundation trenches contained modern concrete and tarmac, and brick / building demolition material. No archaeological deposits were identified.

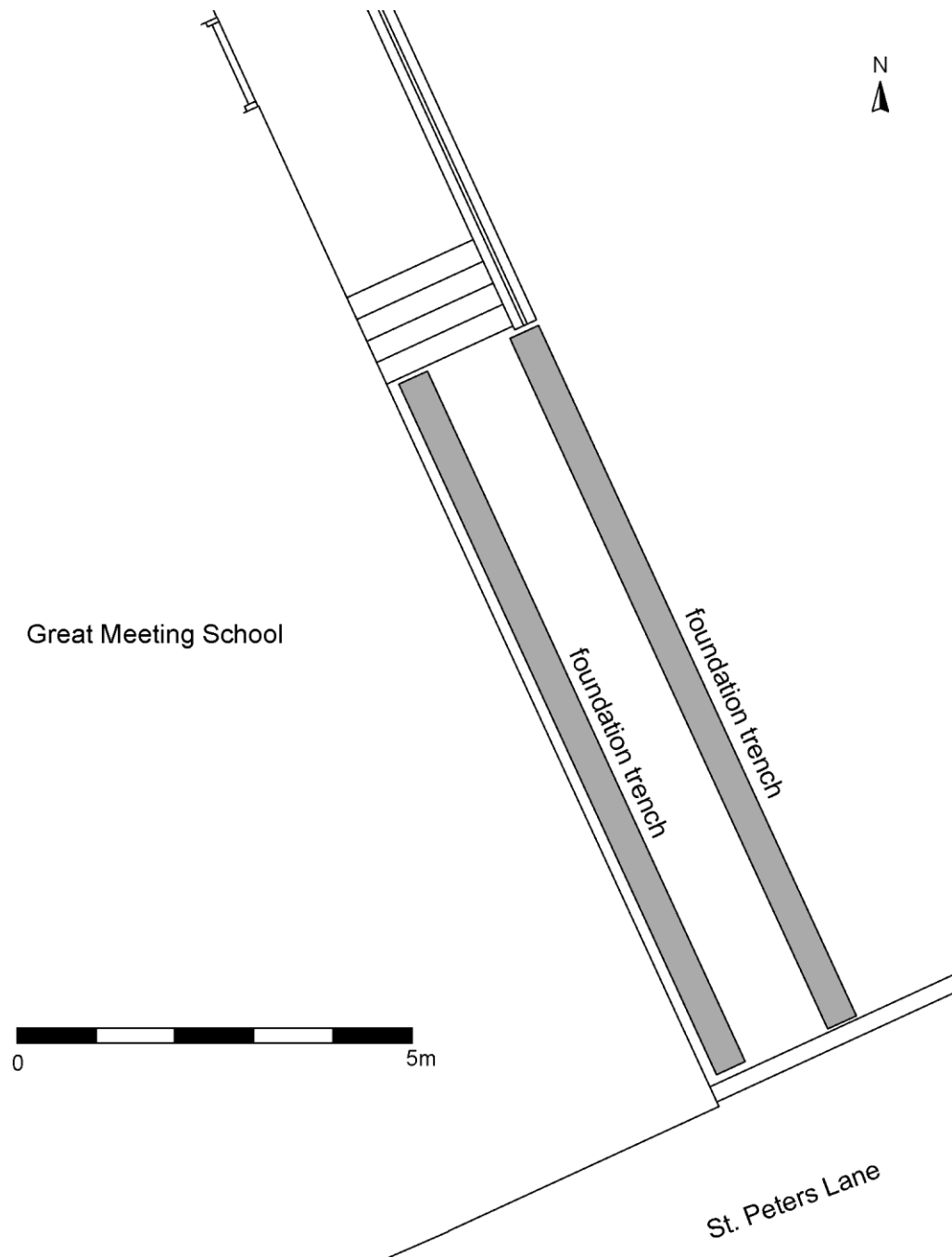


Figure 3: Location of foundation trenches (modified plan supplied by client)



Figure 4: View of foundation trenches prior to excavation, looking north-west.



Figure 5: View of foundation trenches, looking south-east.



Figure 6: Detail of eastern-trench, showing garden soil in section



Figure 7: Detail of western-trench, showing modern concrete and tarmac in section

5. Conclusions

No archaeological features were exposed during the groundworks, although a single sherd of modern pottery, clay pipe fragments, and unidentifiable bone were recovered from garden soil.

6. Archive

The archive will be deposited with Leicester City Council Museum, and is an addition to the current archive under accession number A10.2012.

The archive contains:

- Watching brief form
- Digital photos thumbnails (and on CD)
- CD containing this report and unbound copy

The report is listed on the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York under ID: universi1-131641. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

ID	OASIS entry summary for universi1-131641
Project Name	Rear of 45 East Bond Street, Leicester.
Summary	No archaeological deposits.
Project Type	Watching Brief
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Gavin Speed
Previous/Future work	none / none
Current Land Use	Commercial
Development Type	Commercial
Reason for Investigation	PPS5
Position in the Planning Process	as a condition
Site Co ordinates	SK 58558 04813
Start/end dates of field work	04/08/2012
Archive Recipient	Leicester City Council
Study Area	0.1ha
Associated project reference codes	Museum accession ID: A10.2012

7. Bibliography

IfA, 2008, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*,

Clay, P. 2012, '*Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Attendance for Inspection and Recording at East Bond Street / St Peter's Lane, Leicester*' University of Leicester Archaeological Services unpublished written scheme of investigation 12/419.

Higgins, T. 2007, "Vine Street", in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, 81, 192-205.

Jarvis, W. 2002, *A Watching Brief and Salvage Excavation on Land Adjacent to the Great Meeting Unitarian Chapel, East Bond Street, Leicester*. ULAS report 2002-022.

Tate, J. 2007, *Archaeological Investigations at St. Peter's Lane Car Park, East Bond Street, Leicester*. University of Leicester Archaeological Services, unpublished report 2007-038.

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