



University of  
**Leicester**

**Archaeological Services**



**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
Ashcroft Hostel, Huncote Road,  
Narborough, Leicestershire.**

**NGR: SP 5321 5731**

Gavin Speed

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**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
Ashcroft Hostel, Huncote Road,  
Narborough, Leicestershire.**

**(SP 5321 5731)**

**Gavin Speed**

**For: Leicestershire County Council Property Department**

Approved by:

Signed:



Date: 19/10/2012

Name: Patrick Clay

**University of Leicester  
Archaeological Services**  
University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH  
Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614  
[www.le.ac.uk/ulas](http://www.le.ac.uk/ulas)

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## CONTENTS

Summary .....	2
1. Introduction.....	2
2. Site Description, Topography and Geology.....	2
3. Archaeological and Historical Background .....	3
4. Aims and Objectives .....	3
5. Methodology .....	3
6. Results.....	4
7. Conclusion .....	5
8. Archive.....	5
9. Publication .....	5
10. Bibliography .....	6
11. Acknowledgements.....	6
Appendix I: Figures .....	7
Appendix: Finds Reports .....	11
Prehistoric Worked Flint by Lynden Cooper .....	11
Pottery by Deborah Sawday .....	11

## FIGURES

Figure 1: Site location within Narborough .....	7
Figure 2: Trench plan (plan supplied by client).....	8
Figure 3: Proposed development plan (supplied by client) .....	9
Figure 4: View of Trenches 1, 2, and 3 (from left to right) .....	10

# **An Archaeological Evaluation at Ashcroft Hostel, Huncote Road, Narborough, Leicestershire.**

**Gavin Speed**

## **Summary**

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land at Ashcroft Hostel, Huncote Road, Narborough, Leicestershire (SP 5321 5731). The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed residential development.*

*The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits, and two artefacts in the topsoil. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under accession no. X.A95.2012.*

## **1. Introduction**

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS for Leicestershire County Council in October 2012 on land at Ashcroft Hostel, Huncote Road, Narborough, Leicestershire (SP 5321 5731). This was undertaken in advance of an application for proposed residential development of 14 units with access roads.

The Historic Environment Record for Leicestershire and Rutland indicates that the application site lies within an area of archaeological interest. An archaeological evaluation of the site by trial trenching was requested by Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team, as archaeological advisors to the planning authority. The work was required in order to assess the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which might be present in order to determine the potential impact upon them from future development proposals.

This document presents the results of the archaeological field evaluation (AFE) at the above site, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. The survey and fieldwork specified below is intended to provide preliminary indications of character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority.

## **2. Site Description, Topography and Geology**

The site lies in Narborough, the village is located approximately 9km to the south-west of Leicester. The site consists of c.0.49 hectares of land located on the south-west side of Narborough village, on the southern side of Huncote Road. The site is bounded by industrial units and to the north, east, and west by housing. The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain shows that the underlying geology consists of mudstone (Edwalton Member), overlain by superficial deposits of Diamicton till. The land is undulating, and generally slopes down from the street frontage, from 70m to 65m OD.

### 3. Archaeological and Historical Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies within an area of archaeological interest. The site lies outside the medieval village core however there is evidence for Roman and prehistoric occupation in the vicinity of the site. The projected route of the Roman Fosse Way, which connects Lincoln to Exeter, passes c 150m to the south-east of the site (HER ref: MLE1380) and archaeology relating to this period has been found elsewhere along the route. During construction of Red Hill Field School in the 1980s, Roman remains indicating the presence of a substantial occupation site were uncovered, which were interpreted as a villa-like complex, with associated industrial and agricultural structures (HER ref.:MLE247). In addition to the Roman remains, finds from the area also indicate the presence of prehistoric and medieval activity.

### 4. Aims and Objectives

The principal aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- To identify possible areas of archaeological potential liable to be threatened by the proposed development.
- To establish the location, extent, date, and significance of any archaeological deposits located.
- To define the quality and state of preservation of these deposits.
- To assess the local, regional and national importance of any deposits.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

The objective was to gain an indication of the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be present in order that an informed planning decision can be taken.

### 5. Methodology

A 4.4% sample by trial trenching had been requested for the 0.49 ha area, which would comprise c. 216 sq metres, the equivalent of four 30m by 1.8m trenches. However, the presence of the extant building and associated services is likely to limit the amount of trenching possible, particularly on the frontage. A provisional trench plan in the WSI showed proposed locations for trenching totalling c.135 sq metres (1x30m; 1x25m; 1x20m), equivalent to a 2.7% sample. However, the size and position of the trenches varied slightly, due to site constraints (tree cover and standing buildings).

Prior to any machining of trial trenches, general photographs of the site areas were taken. Topsoil and overburden was removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator using a toothless bucket. Trenches will be excavated down to the top of archaeological deposits or natural undisturbed ground, whichever is reached first. All excavation by machine and hand will be undertaken with a view to avoid damage to archaeological deposits or features which appear worthy of preservation in situ or more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation. Where structures, features or finds appear to merit preservation in situ, they will be adequately protected from deterioration

Trenches will be examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located will be planned at an appropriate scale. Archaeological deposits will be sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan. All plans will be tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Relative spot heights will be taken as appropriate. Sections of any excavated archaeological features will be drawn at an appropriate scale. At least one longitudinal face of each trench will be recorded. All sections will be levelled and tied to the Ordnance Survey Datum, or a permanent fixed benchmark. Trench locations will be recorded by an appropriate method. These will then be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Any human remains encountered will initially be left in situ and will only be removed if necessary for their protection, under Ministry of Justice guidelines and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. In the event that unforeseen archaeological discoveries are made during the project a contingency may be required to clarify the character or extent of additional features. The contingency will only be initiated after consultation with the Client and the Planning Archaeologist and Planning Authority. Following assessment of the archaeological remains by the Planning Archaeologist, ULAS shall, if required, implement an amended scheme of investigation on behalf of the client as appropriate. The trenches will be backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation.

The work followed the approved design specification (ULAS 2012) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2008).

## 6. Results

Three trenches were excavated, all consisting of *c.*25 metres in length and 1.6m in width. The trenches were spread across the development site (Figure 3). No archaeological features were located. A single sherd of 17th-century pottery and a single worked flint flake were recovered from Trench 2. The topsoil, consisting of dark grey-brown sandy-clay loam with occasional small rounded pebbles, ranged in depth from 0.1m to 0.23m in depth. Below this was a mid grey-brown clay subsoil, ranging in thickness from 0.05m to 0.2m.

TRENCH	ORIENTATION	LENGTH AND WIDTH (metres)	DESCRIPTION	DEPTH (MIN-MAX metres)
1	NNW-SSE	27 x 1.6	Very thin topsoil, to natural. Root disturbance all along length of trench. No archaeological finds or features.	0.12 – 0.47
2	E-W	25 x 1.6	Modern brick in topsoil, a shallow depression contained a single sherd of 17th century pottery. A single worked flint flake was recovered from the topsoil.	0.47- 0.51
3	NE-SW	26 x 1.6	No archaeological finds or features.	0.32 – 0.61

## 7. Conclusion

The evaluation revealed no significant archaeological evidence.

## 8. Archive

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, accession number X.A95.2012.

The archive contains:

- 3 trench recording sheets
- 1 photographic recording sheet
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- Survey data
- Unbound copy of this report
- Thumbnail print of digital photographs
- 33mm black and white contact sheet and negatives

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: universi1-135769. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

ID	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	Ashcroft Hostel, Huncote Road, Narborough, Leicestershire
Summary	The evaluation revealed no significant archaeological evidence
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Gavin Speed
Previous/Future work	Previous: none / Future: unknown
Current Land Use	Disused hostel
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF, Section 12
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-planning application
Site Co ordinates	SP 5321 5731
Start/end dates of field work	17/10/2012
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services
Study Area	0.5ha
Associated project reference codes	Museum accession ID: XA.95.2012 OASIS form ID: universi1-135769

## 9. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. The report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.

## 10. Bibliography

Brown, D. 2008, *Standard and Guidance for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives*.  
Institute for Archaeologists.

IfA 2008, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation, Excavations, and  
Watching Briefs*. Institute for Archaeologists.

IfA 2010, *Code of Conduct*.

NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*.

ULAS 2012, *Design Specification for Archaeological Work at Ashcroft Hostel, Huncote  
Road, Narborough, Leicestershire. 13/538*.

## 11. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was funded by Leicestershire County Council Property Department, and was carried out by Gavin Speed and Steve Baker. The pottery was analysed by Deborah Sawday, the worked flint by Lynden Cooper, both of ULAS. Dr Patrick Clay managed the project. Teresa Hawtin of LCC HNET monitored the work on behalf of the planning authority.

Gavin Speed  
Senior Archaeological Supervisor  
University of Leicester Archaeological Services  
University Road  
Leicester  
LE1 7RH

[gs50@le.ac.uk](mailto:gs50@le.ac.uk)

Tel: 0116 252 2848  
Fax: 0116 252 2614

18/10/2012



## Appendix I: Figures



**Figure 1: Site location within Narborough**

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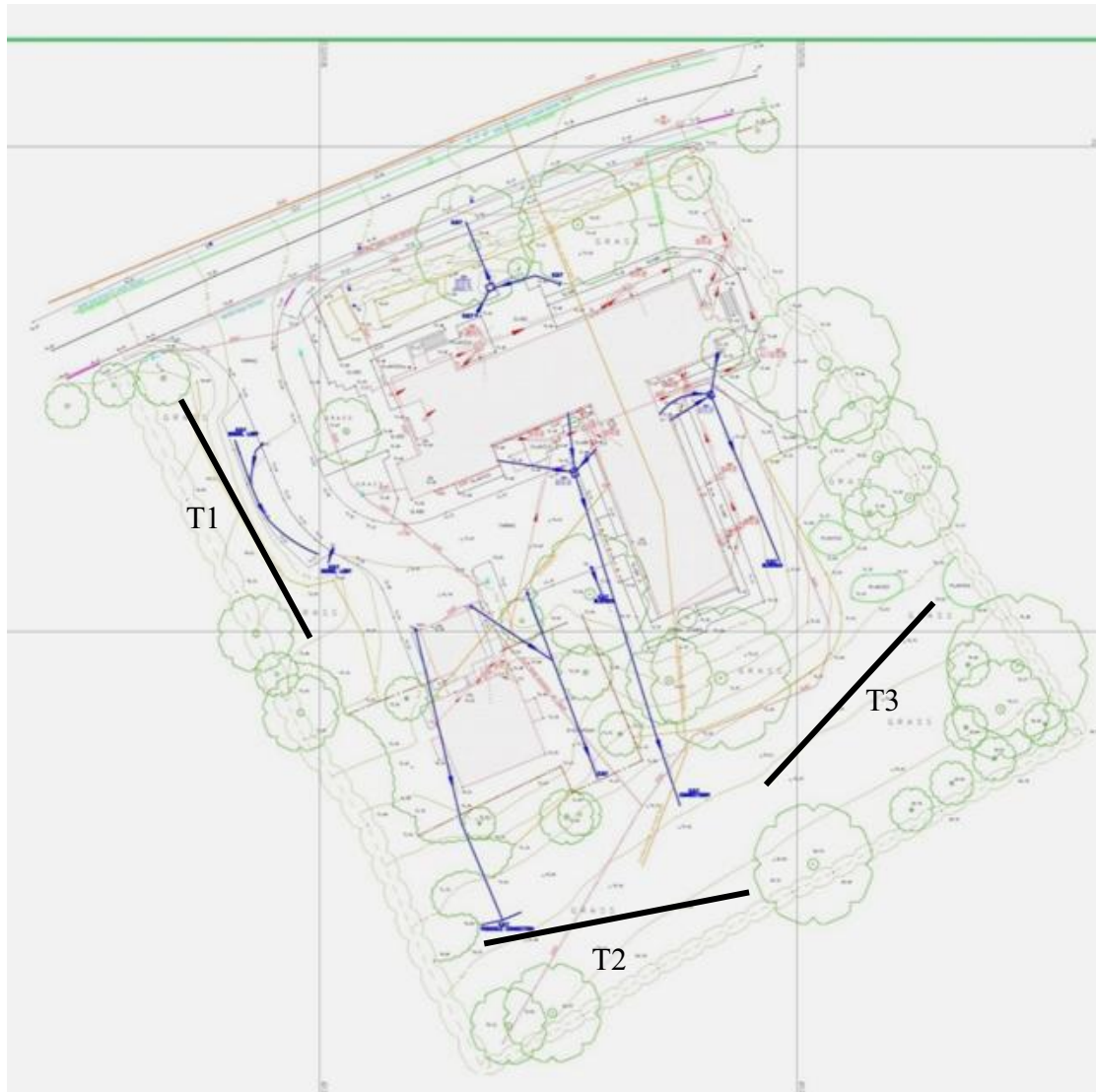


Figure 2: Trench plan (plan supplied by client).



Figure 3: Proposed development plan (supplied by client)





Figure 4: View of Trenches 1, 2, and 3 (from left to right)

## Appendix: Finds Reports

### *Prehistoric Worked Flint*

*by Lynden Cooper*

A single piece of worked flint was recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2. It consisted of a fragment of a secondary flake. The find represents a rather undiagnostic piece with a broad Neolithic to Bronze Age date.

### *Pottery*

*by Deborah Sawday*

The pottery, one sherd, weighing 14 grams, was catalogued with reference to the guidelines set out by the Medieval Pottery Research Group, (MPRG 1998/2001), and the ULAS fabric series (Sawday 1989), (Davies and Sawday 2004). The results are shown below (Table 1)

### Bibliography

- Davies, S., and Sawday, D., 2004 'Medieval and Later Pottery and Tile' in N. Finn 2004, *The Origins of a Leicester Suburb: Roman, Anglo Saxon, medieval and post-medieval occupation on Bonners Lane*. B.A.R. (British Series) 372, 86-99.
- MPRG, 1998 *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms*. Medieval Pottery Research Group Occasional Paper 1, London.
- MPRG, 2001. *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Saxon and Medieval Ceramics*
- Sawday, D., 1989 'The post Roman pottery', 28-41 in J.N. Lucas, 'An excavation in the north east quarter of Leicester: Elbow Lane, 1977', *Trans. Leicestershire Archaeol. and Hist. Soc.* **63**, 18-47.

Table 1: The medieval and later pottery by fabric, sherd numbers and weight (grams) by context.

Context	Fabric/Ware	Nos	Grams	Comments
U/S	EA2- Earthenware 2	1	14	Wheel thrown body, probably part of an internally black glazed jar. Oxidised red fabric – probably early in the sequence, 17th C+

## Contact Details

Richard Buckley or Patrick Clay  
University of Leicester Archaeological  
Services (ULAS)  
University of Leicester,  
University Road,  
Leicester LE1 7RH

**T:** +44 (0)116 252 2848

**F:** +44 (0)116 252 2614

**E:** [ulas@le.ac.uk](mailto:ulas@le.ac.uk)

**w:** [www.le.ac.uk/ulas](http://www.le.ac.uk/ulas)



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