



**University of  
Leicester**

**Archaeological Services**

**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
Parkland House, 73 Main Street, Smeeton Westerby, Leicestershire.**



**NGR:  
SP 6787 9273**

Gavin Speed


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**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
Parkland House, 73 Main Street,  
Smeeton Westerby, Leicestershire.**

**(SP 6787 9273)**

**Gavin Speed**

**For: Mr. and Mrs. Dean (c/o Twigg and Associates)**

Approved by:

<b>Signed:</b>
<b>Date:</b> 02/11/2012
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## **An Archaeological Evaluation at Parkland House, 73 Main Street, Smeeton Westerby, Leicestershire.**

**Gavin Speed**

### **Summary**

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land at Parkland House, 73 Main Street, Smeeton Westerby, Leicestershire (SP 6787 9273). The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed residential development.*

*The evaluation revealed no archaeological find or deposits, the area having been subject to late 19th / early 20th century quarrying. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under accession no. X.A96.2012.*

### **1. Introduction**

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS for Mr and Mrs Dean (c/o Twigg and Associates) in October 2012 on land at Parkland House, 73 Main Street, Smeeton Westerby, Leicestershire (SP 6787 9273). This was undertaken in advance of an application for proposed residential development of a new house, garage and access.

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 village of Smeeton Westerby is located approximately 18km to the south-east of Leicester and 10km north-west of Market Harborough. The site lies within the gardens of the existing Parkland House (Figure 1) and is located on the northwest side of Main Street, with the eastern and southern boundaries defined by a wall running along Main Street. The area consists of approximately 0.14 hectares, within which the new house, garage and access will be constructed. The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of mudstone of the Blue Lias and Charmouth formations, while the superficial geology is mid-Pleistocene diamicton till. The site lies at a height of approximately 106m 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 within the historic medieval and post-medieval core of the village (HER ref.: MLE9333), thereby having potential to contain evidence for Saxon and medieval occupation. Earthworks have been noted immediately to the north (Beaker Close/Main Street, MLE2394) and finds recovered from this location includes rare Middle Saxon pottery along with pottery dating from the 10th to 13th centuries (MLE19270, 19990). In addition, an undated burial was found during the 19th century, 100m to the east of the site with references to further burials being found during quarrying in the locality (MLE2392). Recently, Roman, medieval and later pottery has also been recovered in the immediate vicinity (MLE19266, 19277, 19976, 19977).

There is some evidence for post-medieval quarrying, which may have impacted upon the area. The First Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1886 (Figure 6) shows that quarrying was taking place in the vicinity of the site, however subsequent Ordnance Survey mapping suggests that this quarrying took place mainly to the west of the development and was largely complete by 1930. There is a bank which runs along the northern boundary of the area (Figure 5), which suggests that quarrying of some sort took place at least towards the rear of the property, however, the extent of the quarrying remains unclear and undisturbed areas of ground may exist, particularly towards the street frontage and in the eastern portion of the plot.

### **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 2% sample by trial trenching of the area is proposed of the 0.14 ha area which will comprise c. 27 sq metres, the equivalent of one 15m by 1.8m trench. The Brief requests that ideally this would be orientated east-west and situated to the south of the current summerhouse and to the north of the existing garage, so as to assess the nature of deposits close to the street frontage and behind. However, the size and position of the trenches varied slightly, due to site constraints (tree cover and standing buildings), so two separate trenches were opened: one close to the street frontage, and the other further back in the area of the proposed garage (Figure 2).

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 palaeosoils 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**

Two trenches were excavated, one close to the street frontage, and the other further back in the area of the proposed garage (Figures 2-5). No archaeological finds or features were located. The topsoil, consisting of dark blackish-brown sandy-clay loam with occasional small rounded pebbles, ranged in depth from 0.1m to 0.3m 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	E-W	7 x 1.8	Thin topsoil, straight to natural. Substantial root disturbance, slopes down from frontage, appears to be landscaped. No archaeological finds or features.	0.10 – 0.25
2	NE-SW	8 x 1.8	Thicker topsoil, modern (20th century) brick and demolition spreads (backfilled quarry?). No archaeological finds or features.	0.35- 0.48

## 7. Discussion

As noted in Section 3, there is some evidence for post-medieval quarrying, which has impacted upon the area. The earliest Ordnance Survey map of 1886 (county series 1:2500) shows a track from the Main Street, and possibly quarry workings in the eastern-half of the neighbour's property to the west (Figure 6). The development site is shown to have trees along the street frontage area. The 1903 edition clearly shows a quarry in the western-end of the neighbour's property to the west (immediately adjacent to Christ Church). No trees are illustrated in the development site (Figure 7). The 1929 edition (and subsequent editions) shows a substantial cut bank along the eastern edge as before, and also along the entire northern border (Figure 5), indicating the quarry had spread eastwards into the current development site, prior to the construction of the existing property (Parkland House) by 1929. This corresponds with results from the evaluation, with the quarry workings focused in the rear of the site (Trench 2). The area closest to the street frontage (Trench 1) appears to have been landscaped with a very thin level of topsoil and substantial root disturbance throughout.

## 8. Conclusion

In summary, the evaluation revealed no archaeological evidence, this is because it appears to have been quarried previously, and subsequently landscaped.

## 9. Archive

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, accession number X.A96.2012.

The archive contains:

- 2 trench recording sheets
- 1 photographic recording sheet
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- 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: universi1-135960. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

ID	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	Parkland House, 73 Main Street, Smeeton Westerby, Leicestershire, Leicestershire
Summary	The evaluation revealed no archaeological find or deposits, the area having been subject to late 19th / early 20th century quarrying.
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Gavin Speed
Previous/Future work	Previous: none / Future: unknown
Current Land Use	Garden
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF, Section 12
Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition
Site Co ordinates	SP 6787 9273
Start/end dates of field work	18/10/2012
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services
Study Area	0.14ha
Associated project reference codes	Museum accession ID: XA.96.2012 OASIS form ID: universi1-135960

## 10. 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.

## 11. 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 Main Street, Smeeton Westerby, Leicestershire*. 13/544.



## 12. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was funded by Leicestershire County Council Property Department, and was carried out by Gavin Speed and Steve Baker. Dr Patrick Clay managed the project. Teresa Hawtin of LCC HNET monitored the work on behalf of the planning authority.

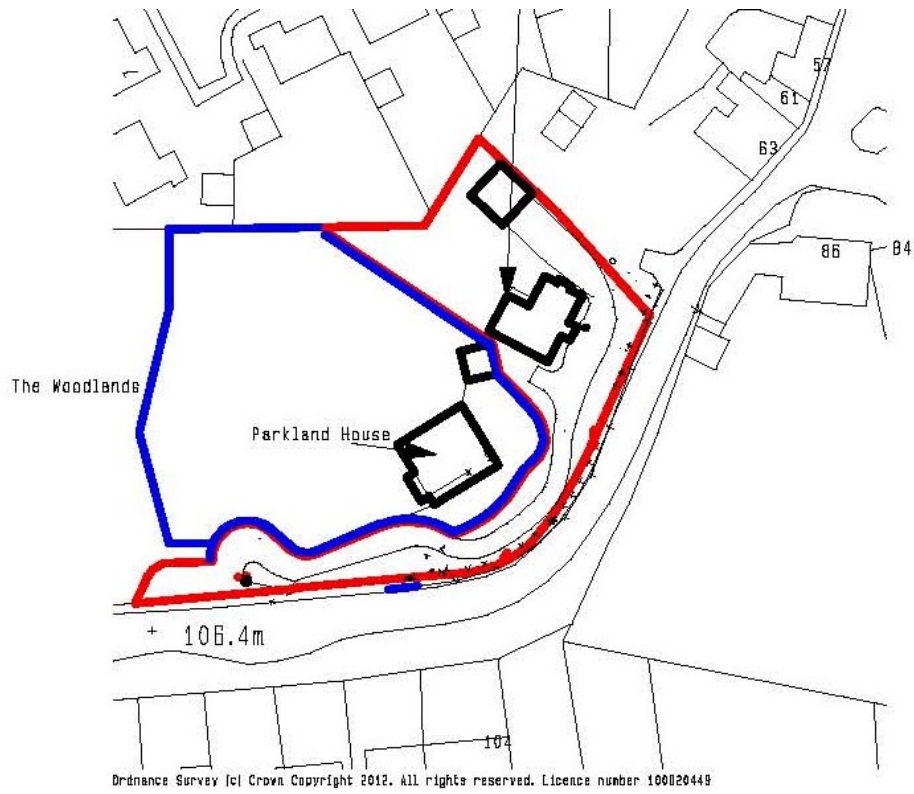
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02/11/2012

## Appendix I: Figures



Erection of new dwelling and alteration to existing access

Mr & Mrs Dean  
Smeeton Westerby

SCALE 1:1250(A4) P5

0 10m 20m 30m 40m 50m



**Figure 1: Site location within Western Smeeton (supplied by client)**

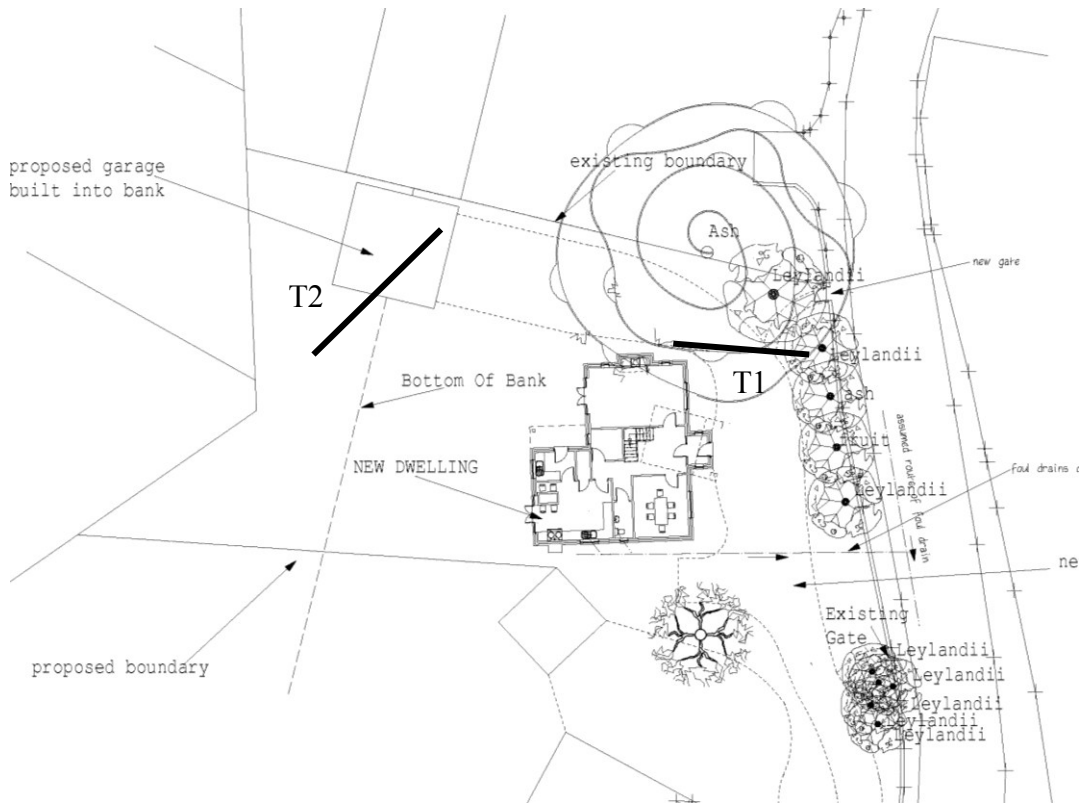


Figure 2: Trench plan and proposed development (plan supplied by client).



Figure 3: Trench 1, 2m scale



Figure 4: Trench 2, 2m scale



Figure 5: Backfilled Trench 2, and to the rear the large bank, seen on early OS maps

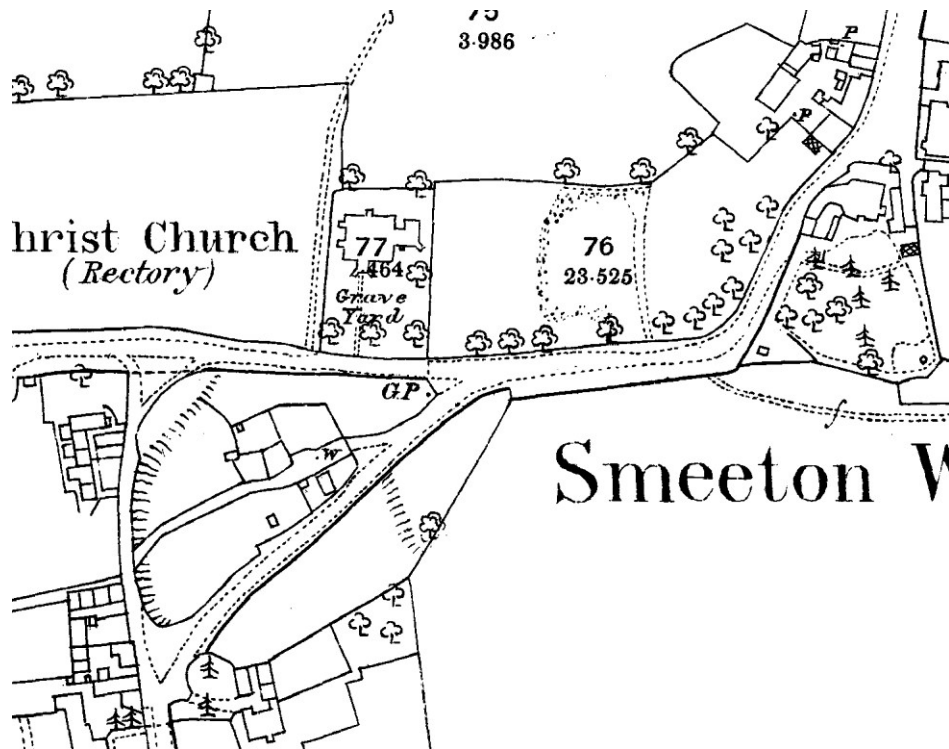


Figure 6: Extract from 1886 Ordnance Survey map (development site is eastern-half of area labelled as '76')

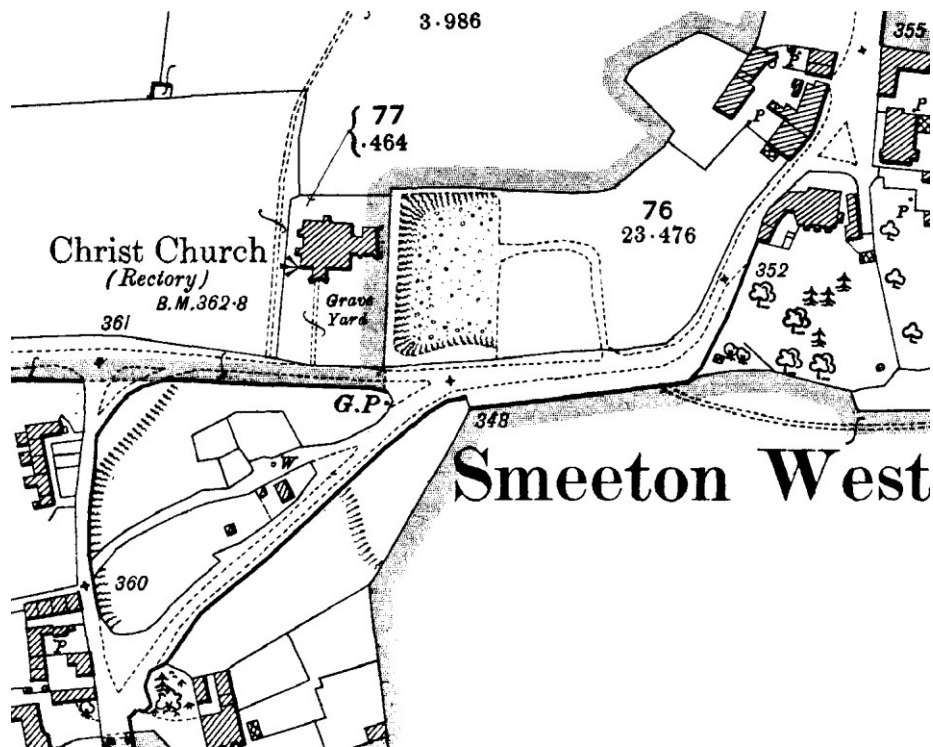


Figure 7: Extract from 1903 Ordnance Survey map (development site is eastern-half of area labelled as '76')

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