



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at 4 Measham Road, Packington,
Leicestershire, LE12 7NL**

NGR: SK 3590 1445

Mathew Morris



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For: Mr N. Miller

Planning application no. 1000942/FUL

Checked by

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ULAS Report Number 2012-196

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X.A118.2012

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at 4 Measham Road, Packington, Leicestershire, LE12 7NL (SK 3590 1445)

Mathew Morris

Summery

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at 4 Measham Road, Packington, Leicestershire, LE12 7NL (SK 3590 1445) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 26th November 2012. The work was carried out on behalf of Mr N. Miller in advance of construction of a new dwelling and amendments to existing access. Work involved supervision and inspection of machine excavated foundation trenches. No archaeological features or deposits were observed and the results of the investigation proved negative. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A118.2012.

Introduction

This document constitutes the final report for an archaeological watching brief carried out at 4 Measham Road, Packington, Leicestershire, LE12 7NL (SK 3590 1445) (Figure 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Mr N. Miller by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 26th November 2012.

The proposed construction of a new dwelling and amendments to access at 4 Measham Road (Planning Application No. 1000942/FUL) was located on the north side of Measham Road, approximately 2km south of Ashby-de-la-Zouch and 25km north-west of Leicester (Figure 2). The total development area covered *c.*172 square meters.

The watching brief was requested by the local planning authority, North-West Leicestershire District Council, in accordance with *NPPF Sec. 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* (DCLG March 2012), as laid out in the *Design Specification for Archaeological Inspection and Recording* (Buckley 2012).

Geology and Topography

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 155 (Coalville), indicates that the underlying geology comprises superficial deposits of glaciofluvial sand and gravel overlying bedrock deposits of sandstone belonging to the Pennine Lower Coal Measures Formation (BGS 2010). The site lies in the shallow valley of the Gilwiskaw Brook, a tributary of the Rive Mease, at *c.*109m above Ordnance Datum (OD) with the ground dropping down gradually from north-west to south-east.

Historical and Archaeological Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the site lies in an area of archaeological interest within the historic medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Packington (HER ref. MLE 10599), close to the 13th century Church of the Holy Rood (MLE10868) and its associated graveyard. Consequently, there it is likely that buried archaeological remains could be affected in the area.

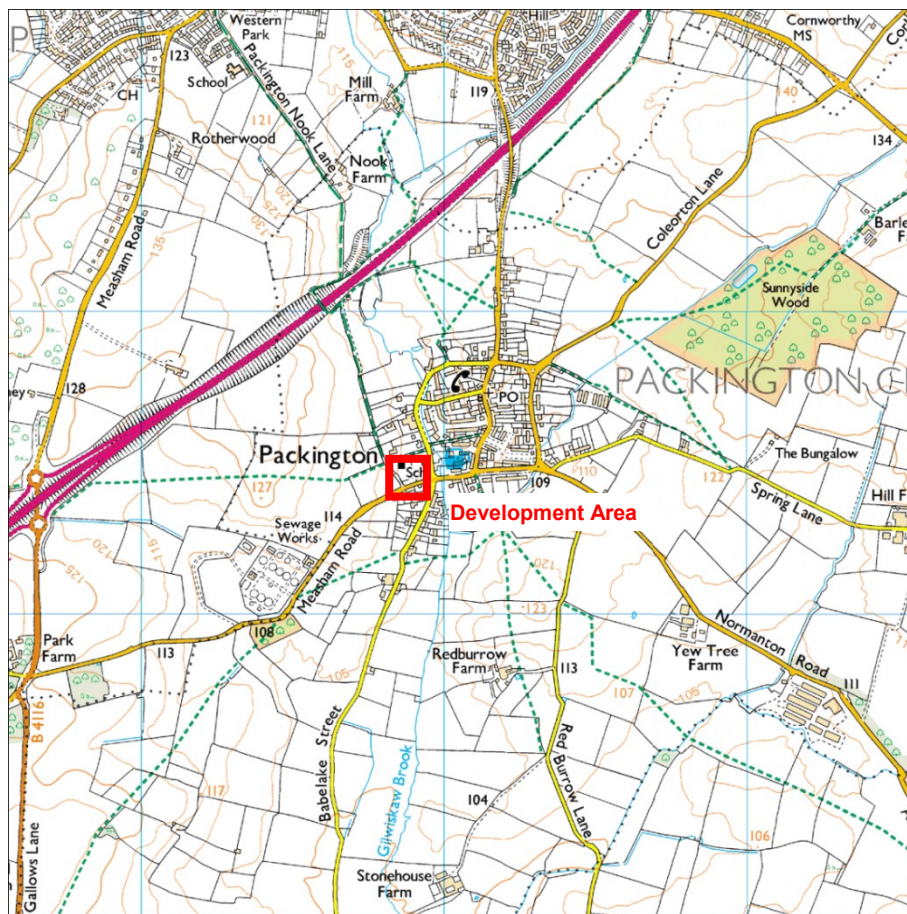


Figure 1: Location maps with development area highlighted

Reproduced from Explorer® 245 The National Forest 1:25,000 OS map by permission of Ordnance Survey® on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. © Crown copyright 2010. All rights reserved. License number AL100029495.

The village of Packington itself is early medieval, first documented during the Domesday Survey of 1086 as Pachintone (Williams & Martin 1992, 631). This is thought to refer to, in Old English, the 'Estate of Pacca' (Mills 2003). In 1043, Leofric earl of Mercia granted the manor and the advowson of the church to the abbey

of St Mary at Coventry. It remained in the possession of the abbey until the Dissolution of the Monasteries in the 1530s. At the time of the Domesday Survey the village contained approximately ten families, including a priest; this had risen to thirty-eight families in 1564. The village is noted to have had a mill since the 12th century and was granted the right to hold a market in 1257 (Nichols 1815, 924). Following the Dissolution of the Monasteries, the manor of Packington was granted by the Crown to the Hastings family of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. It was subsequently held by them and their descendants until the estate was sold off in the 1920s (NWLDC 2001, 2).

Archaeological Aims and Objectives

The purpose of the archaeological work was:

- To identify the presence or absence of any archaeological deposits or historic building fabric.
- To establish the character, extent and date of any archaeological deposits or historic building fabric to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits or historic building fabric to be affected by the ground works or building alterations.
- To advance understanding of the heritage assets.
- To produce a report and archive of any results.

Methodology

Proposed work required the reduction of the present ground level across the development area and the excavation of machine-dug foundation trenches. This required the presence of a professional archaeologist to supervise any work likely to impact upon any archaeological remains.

The work involved the inspection of previously levelled ground and the supervision and inspection of machine-dug foundation trenches in order to identify any archaeological deposits or the natural substratum. This was carried out using a JCB 3CX mechanical excavator with a c.0.6m wide toothed bucket. Trenches were typically dug to be c.0.6m wide and c.1m deep.

All exposed areas, sections and spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. Any archaeological deposits were hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as appropriate to addressing the objectives of the watching brief. Field notes were recorded on a pro-forma ULAS watching brief record form.

All work followed the *Institute for Archaeologists' (IFA) Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

Results

On arrival it was discovered that ground across the site had previously been reduced and leveled to c.0.5m above street level (Figs 3 and 4). This had reduced the ground by c.1.5m in the north-west corner of the site and c.0.3m in the north-east corner; both to the rear of the property along the boundary with the churchyard. Along the street frontage the ground had been reduced by c.1.2m in the south-west corner of the site and less than c.0.2m in the south-east corner. The ground level would have originally sloped down from north-west to south-east.

This groundwork had removed *c.* 1m of dark grey sandy-silt topsoil/overburden mixed with pebbles, charcoal and occasional brick fragments. The top *c.* 0.3m of this soil appeared extensively disturbed by vegetation, notably tree roots from the surrounding hedge lines. Topsoil covered *c.* 0.5m of greyish-orange silty-sand subsoil overlying natural substratum.

The foundation trenches were dug directly into *c.* 1m of compact reddish-orange sand and gravel of natural origin (Figure 5). At the bottom of the trenches this could be seen to cover greyish-yellow sandstone bedrock.

No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the work and the results of the investigation proved negative.

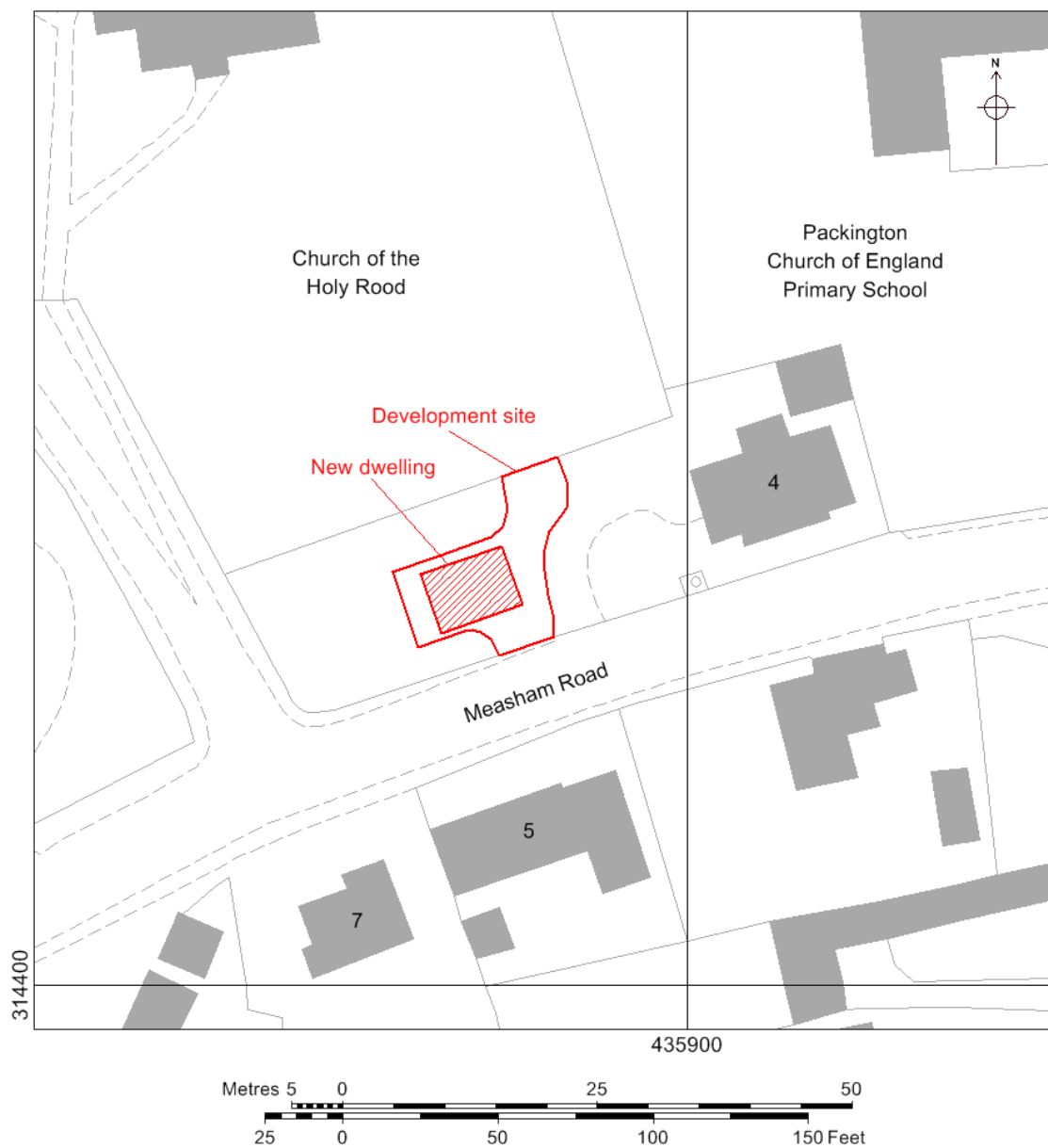


Figure 2: Location plan showing area of work



Figure 3: Site view from Measham Road, with the Church of the Holy Rood in the background. Looking north.



Figure 4: Site view showing the depth of reduced ground along the northern and western edges of site. Looking west.



Figure 5: View of south-west corner of foundation trench, showing natural sand and gravel. Looking north-east.

Discussion

No features or deposits of archaeological significance were identified during the groundwork and the natural sand and gravel seen in the foundation trenches matches the recorded superficial deposits noted in the British Geological Survey of Great Britain. Original ground level along the western side of the site would have been *c.*2m above the level of Measham Road, dropping down to *c.*0.5m above the road along the eastern side of the site. Unfortunately, none of this material could be inspected, having been removed from the site prior to the site visit.

Bibliography

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Archive

The site archive consists of: 1 A4 watching brief record form
6 digital photographs

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A118.2012

Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work to the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York (Table 1).

Table 1: OASIS database entry summary

Project Number	universi1-138207
Project Name	4 Measham Road, Packington
Project Type	Watching Brief
Project Manager	Richard Buckley
Project Supervisor	Mathew Morris
Previous/Future work	None
Current Land Use	Residential/garden
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	PPS 5
Position in the Planning Process	As a condition
Site Co ordinates	SK 3590 1445
Start/end dates of field work	26/11/2012
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museum Services
Study Area	172 square meters

A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal, the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, in due course.

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the client and contractors for the co-operation and assistance on site. Fieldwork was undertaken, and the report written by Mathew Morris. The project was managed for ULAS by Richard Buckley.

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27/11/2012

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