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**Archaeological Services**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
At Packington Hill,  
Kegworth,  
Leicestershire  
NGR: SK 4793 2714**

Dr. Roger Kipling



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**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
Packington Hill, Kegworth,  
Leicestershire  
NGR: SK 4793 2714**

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**For: Charles Church North Midlands Ltd**

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## CONTENTS

Summary .....	3
Introduction.....	3
Site Description, Topography and Geology.....	4
Archaeological and Historical Background .....	6
Aims and Methods .....	7
Results.....	8
Conclusions.....	12
Archive and Publications .....	12
Publication .....	13
Acknowledgements.....	13
Bibliography .....	13
Oasis Information.....	13

## FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000) .....	4
Figure 2: Plan of development area with trench locations.....	5
Figure 3: View east across the development area prior to machining .....	6
Figure 4: View west across development area prior to machining.....	6
Figure 5: Trench 1, view north; scale: 1m .....	9
Figure 6: Trench 5, western end, view north, scale: 1m .....	10
Figure 7: Trench 6 viewed northeast; scale 1m .....	11
Figure 8: Trench 10 viewed west; scale 1m.....	12

## **An Archaeological Evaluation at Packington Hill, Kegworth, Leicestershire**

**[NGR: SK 4793 2714 ]**

Dr. Roger Kipling

### **Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in February and March 2012 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Charles Church North Midlands Limited. The fieldwork was a post-determination requirement on a proposed planning application for residential housing at Packington Hill, Kegworth, Leicestershire, in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority and an appropriate mitigation strategy put in place.*

*The evaluation work did not reveal any archaeological deposits or features and made ground was evident in the south of the area. The site archive will be deposited with the Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A15.2012.*

### **Introduction**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land at Packington Hill, Kegworth, Leicestershire. The application site lies within an area of archaeological potential, as indicated by an archaeological desk-based assessment and geophysical survey of the area (Gailey 2008). In addition, the application area lies close to sites of some archaeological significance and listed on the Historic Environment Record (HER).

In view of the potential impact of the development upon archaeological remains, in pursuance of Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) Policy HE6, and following recommendations by the Leicestershire County Council Planning Archaeologist, the planning authority required that evaluation by trial trenching be undertaken to further define and characterise the remains suggested by the results from the geophysical survey. The fieldwork specified was intended to provide further indications of character and extent of any buried archaeological remains in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains

Fieldwork was carried out between 28th February and 1st March 2012 and involved the machine excavation of ten trial trenches in order to assess the archaeological potential of the development area.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5, Planning and the Historic Environment). All archaeological work was in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct (2010) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2008). The LCC *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological work Leicestershire and Rutland* (1997) was also adhered to.

## Site Description, Topography and Geology

The site lies at Packington Hill, Kegworth, Leicestershire and occupies an area of 6.8 ha that is bounded to the north-east by Derby Road, to the east by Packington Hill, to the south by residential properties and to the west by marginal land. The site is centred around National Grid Reference SK 4793 2714.

The area is shown by the British Geological Survey (England and Wales Sheet 141, Loughborough) to lie in an area underlain by Wanlip Sand and Gravels in the south of the site and head deposits in the north. The site lies on a hill that slopes down to the north from c. 55m AOD in the south of the site to 34.4m AOD in the north of the site. The development area is currently to grass and with a number of trees. The existing development in the northern part of the site has been terraced into the natural hill slope to create level terraces and platforms for development.

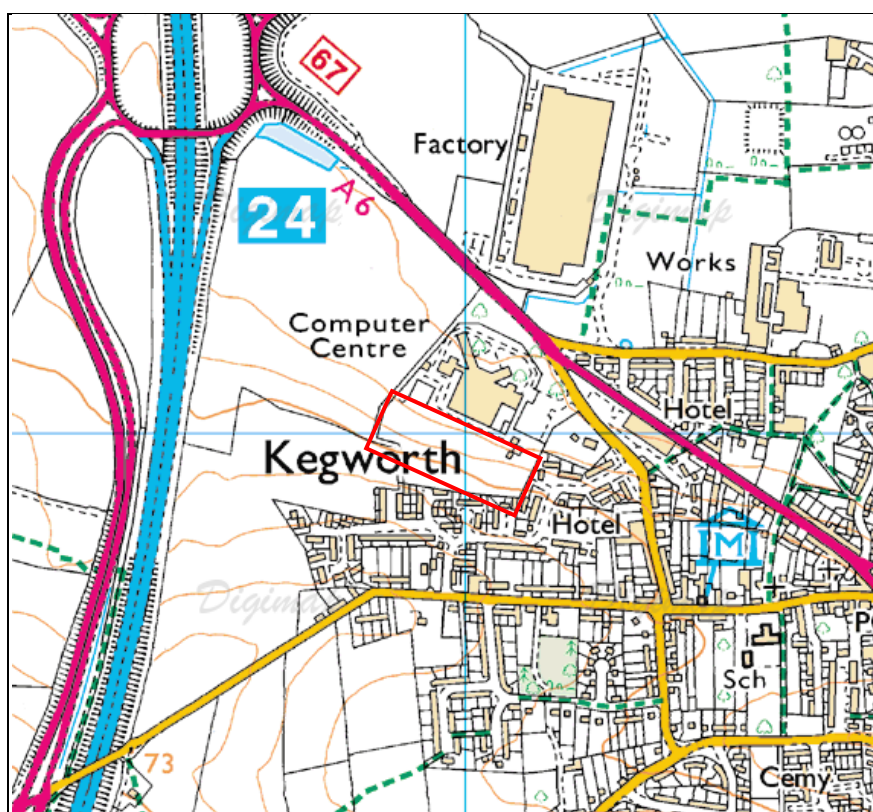


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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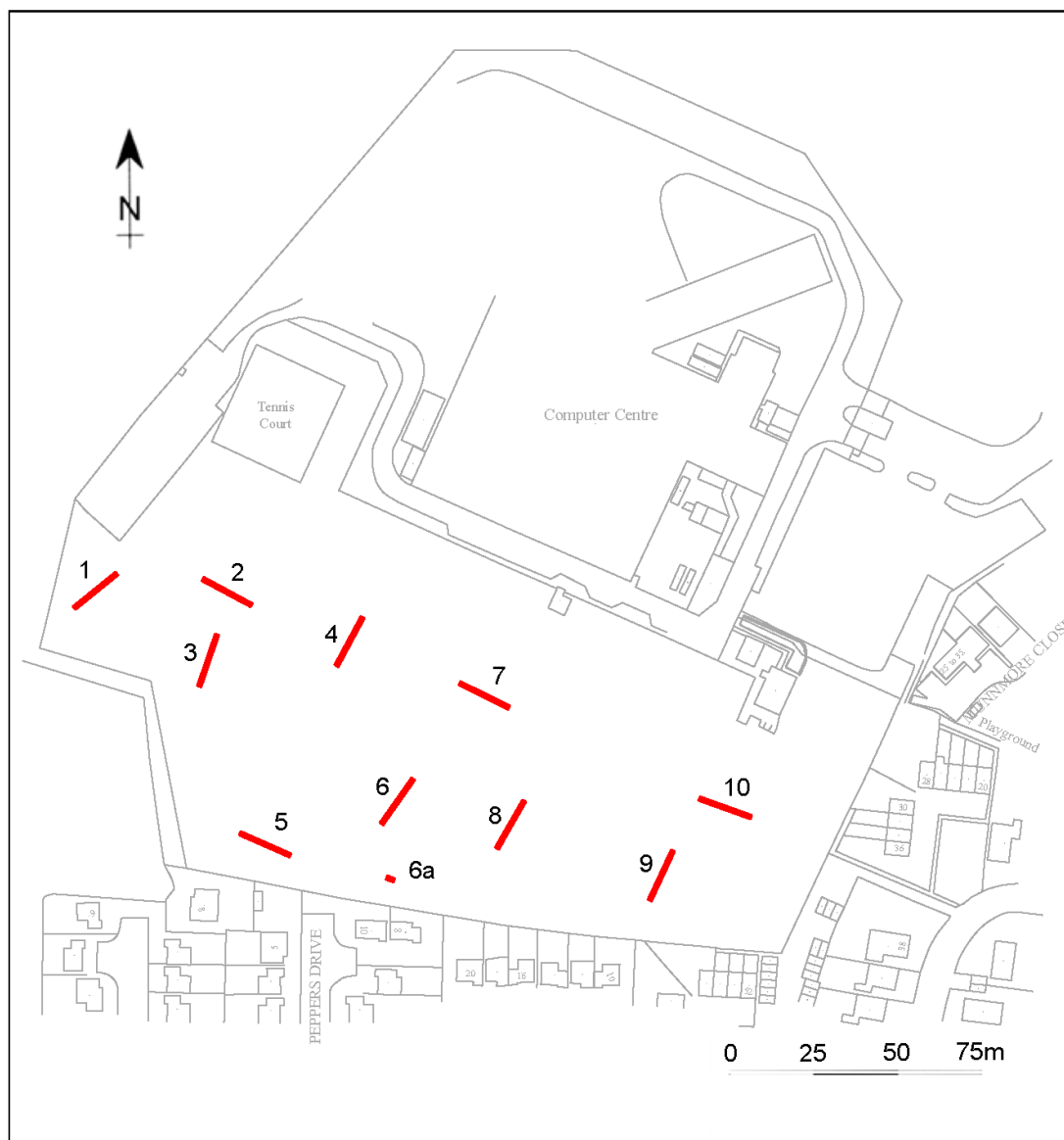


Figure 2: Plan of development area with trench locations





Figure 3: View east across the development area prior to machining



Figure 4: View west across development area prior to machining

## **Archaeological and Historical Background**

An earlier archaeological desk-based assessment and geophysical survey of the area (Gailey 2008) indicated that the application area lies close to sites of some archaeological

significance, as listed on the Historic Environment Record (HER), including a scatter of late prehistoric worked flint found to the west of Barn Farm approximately 1km north east of the site (MLE 4657 SK485 287) and 1km north-west of the site (MLE9715 SK 476 282) suggesting areas of possible Neolithic to Bronze Age activity. A ditch and pit alignment of potentially late prehistoric date was identified during geophysical surveying approximately 900m north of the site (MLE9704 SK 481 281). A possible ring ditch was recorded during geophysical surveying approximately 650m north-west of the area (MLE9703 SK477 276) and a possible rectilinear enclosure was observed as a cropmark approximately 1km north-west (MLE4682 SK472 280).

Long Lane is known to follow the alignment of a Roman road leading to the Roman town of Red Hill (MLE4658 SK 486 259) approximately 800m east of the area. In addition a scatter of Roman pottery representing a possible occupation site along the Roman roadside has been recorded approximately 1km north-east of the site (MLE8049 SK486 280). A further potential Roman road is recorded on the HER at King Street Plantation approximately 1km west of the site although there is no evidence to support this (MLE4636 SK468 271).

Kegworth was recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as being held by Earl Harold Godwin. Place name evidence suggests its name has a Danish origin meaning 'the enclosure of Kaggi'. No remains dating back to the Early Medieval period have, however, been recovered within 1km of the study site. The settlement of Kegworth developed in the medieval period focusing on the Church of St Andrew which was originally built in the 13th century approximately 850m south-east of the study site (MLE11172 SK 487 267) and extended along the High Street as identified from remnant Burgage Plots visible on either side of the street approximately 550m south-east of the study site (MLE4638 SK 485 268). By the post-medieval period the village of Kegworth continued to expand mainly along the High Street but the historic core of the settlement remained some distance from the site (MLE4637 SK 486 266).

As it was deemed likely that the proposed development would have a damaging effect on any archaeological deposits, if present, within the application area, an archaeological evaluation was required by the planning authority following an approved written scheme of investigation (ULAS 2011). Consequently an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by ULAS in February/March 2012.

## **Aims and Methods**

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to:

1. Identify the presence/absence of any earlier building phases or archaeological deposits.
2. Establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by proposed ground-works.
3. Record any archaeological deposits to affected by the ground-works.
4. Produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon



them from the development. All work was recorded in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, the standard policy and practice of ULAS. The University of Leicester's Health and Safety policy was adhered to.

The programme of archaeological evaluation consisted of a sample targeting undisturbed areas, totalling c.320 sq m. of trenching, the equivalent of ten 20m x 1.6m trenches, positioned in order to avoid areas of terracing to the north where disturbance had been caused by the construction of the computer centre and associated landscaping. Information relating to services was also taken into account.

Slight modifications to the size and position of the trenches as indicated in the provisional trench location plan in the specification document were necessitated by the presence of trees, test bore holes, and by the considerable depth of redeposited natural clay encountered in the south-west area of the site deriving from terracing of the hillside during construction of the computer centre. Excavation was undertaken using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket, with topsoil and overburden removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision.

## Results

*Trench 1*, aligned approximately north-east to south-west, measured 20m long, 1.60m wide and between 0.49m and 0.63m deep (Figure 5). Mechanical removal of 0.23m-0.30m of mid orange-brown sandy-silt topsoil and turf and 0.26m-0.30m of underlying mid grey-brown sandy clay-silt subsoil revealed a mid brownish-orange silty-sand with patches of greenish cream degraded sandstone.

*Trench 2*, aligned approximately north-west to south-east, measured 20m long, 1.6m wide and between 0.60m and 0.72m deep. Mechanical removal of 0.05m-0.12m of mid orange-brown sandy-silt topsoil and turf and 0.20m-0.41m of underlying redeposited orange-red sandy-clay revealed 0.14m-0.25m of underlying mid grey-brown sandy clay-silt subsoil. Natural substratum beneath this was revealed as a mid brownish-orange silty-sand with patches of greenish cream degraded sandstone.

*Trench 3*, aligned approximately north-south and with a slight down slope to the north, measured 20m in length, 1.6m in width and 0.54m-0.60m deep. Mechanical removal of 0.10m-0.25m of mid orange-brown sandy-silt topsoil and turf and 0.26m-0.30m of underlying mid grey-brown sandy clay-silt revealed a mid brownish-orange natural silty-sand with patches of greenish cream degraded sandstone.

*Trench 4* was located east of Trench 2, aligned approximately north-east to south-west, measured 20m long, 1.60m wide and between 0.68m and 0.92m deep. Removal of 1.10m-0.16m of topsoil and turf revealed 0.25m-0.60m of redeposited orange-red sandy-clay revealed 0.06m-0.30m of subsoil overlying beige sand/clay and greenish degraded sandstone natural.

*Trench 5*, located at the western end of the southern site boundary and aligned east-west, measured 20m in length, 1.6m in width and 1.65m - 2.10m deep (Figure 5,

Figure 6). Excavation revealed a *c.*1.5m deep of re-deposited orange-red clay containing brick and tarmac rubble beneath the 0.10m-0.15m thick turf and likely representing dumped material associated with construction of the adjacent data centre. A dark grey-brown silty sand observed at the base of the trench may represent subsoil. Safety considerations prevented further excavation to establish the depth of the natural substratum.



Figure 5: Trench 1, view north; scale: 1m



Figure 6: Trench 5, western end, view north, scale: 1m

*Trench 6* (Figure 7) was slightly repositioned to the east due to the considerable depth of modern dump material encountered in the adjacent *Trench 5* along the southern site boundary. *Trench 6*, measuring 20m x 1.60m and between 0.80m and 1.55m deep, was aligned north-south and positioned in order to ascertain the northern limit of the re-deposited clay dump. The latter was observed to be over 1.45m deep at the southern end of the trench, becoming progressively shallower towards the northern end, at which point the greenish-cream degraded natural limestone was emerging at 0.78m-0.99m below present ground surface.

As natural clay was not observed in *Trench 5*, the decision was taken to open a small (2.8m x 1.6m x 2.45m depth) sondage (*Trench 6a*) in the original location of *Trench 6*, as outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation document. Results were comparable with those from *Trench 5*, namely a considerable overburden (1.55m) of re-deposited reddish natural clay. A heavily disturbed grey sandy silt deposit containing brick rubble observed at the base of the trench likely represents a disturbed subsoil. For reasons of safety a decision was taken to abandon the trench and relocate *Trench 6*.



Figure 7: Trench 6 viewed north-east; scale 1m

By contrast with trenches in the western half of the site, those encountered to the east were noticeably shallower, likely indicative of ground reduction at the time of the construction of the data centre. *Trench 7*, aligned broadly east to west and measuring 20m x 1.6m x 0.32m-0.46m in depth, was located in the central area of the site. A 0.20m-0.34m thick accumulation of topsoil and re-deposited clay overlay a thin (0.10m-0.14m thick) truncated subsoil upon natural sandy-clay and degraded sandstone.

*Trench 8* (20m x 1.6m x 0.55m-0.72m depth) revealed degraded natural sandstone beneath 0.10m-0.30m of topsoil and 0.05m-0.43m of re-deposited natural clay. A short distance to the east, *Trench 9* was similarly shallow (20m 1.6m x 0.34m-0.50m) with natural sandstone observed at its base. The final, easternmost trench, *Trench 10* (20m x 1.6m x 0.32m-0.81m) (Figure 8), revealed a slightly more complex geology, running parallel with the junction between a reddish-brown clay to the south and a degraded greenish sandstone to the north, the latter undulating noticeably along the length of the trench. A shallow (0.15m-0.50m) grey-brown subsoil underlay a thin 0.14m-0.21m topsoil and turf horizon.





Figure 8: Trench 10 viewed west; scale 1m

## Conclusions

The archaeological evaluation at Packington Hill, Kegworth, revealed no evidence for archaeological finds or features within the development site. As anticipated, the site appeared to have been subject to heavy disturbance from landscaping works associated with construction of the adjacent data centre. This was particularly noticeable in the south-western area, with a considerable depth of clay likely linked to terracing of the hillside as part of these works. Whilst a disturbed subsoil was observed in several of these trenches, and hence that it is not impossible that underlying archaeological deposits and features are present beneath this deposit, the sheer (*c.*2.50m+) depth of overlying material renders it unlikely that the present development will damage any such remains if present. The remaining trenches were, however, fully excavated to the level of the natural clay and sandstone, and revealed no archaeological deposits, suggesting a similar absence in the deeper southern trenches.

## Archive and Publications

The site archive (X.A15.2012), consisting of paper and photographic records, will be housed with Leicestershire County Council.



The archive consists of:

- Eleven trench recording sheets
- 72 digital photographs
- 30 monochrome (film) photographs
- A risk assessment form

## Publication

A version of the excavation summary (see above) will appear in due course in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.

## Acknowledgements

Dr. Roger Kipling of ULAS undertook the archaeological evaluation on behalf of Charles Church North Midlands Limited. The project was managed by Dr. Patrick Clay.

## Bibliography

Clay, P. 2010 *Written scheme of investigation for archaeological work, Packington Hill, Kegworth, Leicestershire* ULAS Report 12/573

Gailey, S., 2008 *An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. Land at Packington Hill, Kegworth, Leicestershire* NGR: SK 588 138 ULAS Report 2009-099

## Oasis Information

Project Name	Packington Hill, Kegworth
Project Type	Archaeological evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Roger Kipling
Previous/Future work	Construction
Current Land Use	Green open space
Development Type	Residential housing
Reason for Investigation	PPS5
Position in the Planning Process	Post-determination requirement
Site Co ordinates	NGR SK 4793 2714
Start/end dates of field work	28th March and 1st March 2012
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area	c.6.8 ha.

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