

An Archaeological
Evaluation at
Wood Street, Hinckley,
Leicestershire (SP 429 940).

Matthew Hurford

Checked by Project Manager

SignedDate.....

Name.....

For: Steve Feneley Developments Ltd.

**University of Leicester Archaeological Services
Report 2005/048**

**An Archaeological Evaluation at Wood Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire
(SP 429 940).**

Contents

1. Summary	1
2. Introduction	1
3. Geology	1
4. Archaeological and Historical Background	2
5. Objectives	4
6. Methodology	4
7. Results	4
8. Conclusion	7
9. Acknowledgements	8
10. References	8

Appendix 1

Sites and Monuments Record

Appendix 2

Design specification for archaeological desk-based assessment and evaluation by trial trenching

Illustrations

- 1.Site location plan . Reproduced from the Landranger OS map 140 1:50000.
2. Location of the development area supplied by the developer.
3. 1782 Robinson Plan of Hinckley (ROLLR Ma/142/3).
4. 1889 Ordnance Survey map Leicestershire Sheet No. XLII.8 with development area outlined (Scale 1:25000).

5. 1903 Ordnance Survey map Leicestershire Sheet No. XLII.8 with development area outlined (Scale 1:25000).

6. 1924 Ordnance Survey map Leicestershire Sheet No. XLII.8 with development area outlined (Scale 1:25000).

7. 1961 Ordnance Survey map Leicestershire Sheet No. XLII.8 with development area outlined (Scale 1:25000).

8. Proposed development plan (Marchini Curran Associates Ltd).

9. SMR sites in vicinity of proposed development area (Scale 1:10000).

10. Trench and feature location plan.

All Ordnance Survey maps are reproduced by permission of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (HMSO)

© Crown copyright

**An Archaeological Evaluation at Wood Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire
(SP 429 940).**

Matthew Hurford

1. Summary

Following a desk-based assessment (ULAS Report No. 2005/031) a trial trench evaluation was undertaken at Wood Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire (SP 429 940). In total five trenches were excavated from which it was concluded that previous nineteenth and twentieth century development had caused extensive disturbance. No significant archaeological deposits were located. The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, Environment and Heritage Services under the Accession Number XA 128 2005.

2. Introduction

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning, para 30), this document presents the results of an archaeological evaluation of trial trenching at Wood Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire (SP 429 940) required by Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services.

The area is subject to two planning applications (04/00882/6 and 04/00883/6) for the land to be developed. It follows the results of desk-based assessment (ULAS Report No 2005/031). The evaluation follows an advice letter by Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services as archaeological advisors to the planning authority detailing the level of archaeological work required (27.07.2004). The work adhered to the Design Specification for Work (ULAS 05/617 Appendix 2) and was undertaken between the 13th and 15th April 2005.

All the archaeological work complied with the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) *Code of Conduct* and their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* and followed the design specification for archaeological work (ULAS 05/617 Appendix 2).

The proposed development site is located on Wood Street, Hinckley (figs.1 and 2). It consists of an area of c.0.13 ha.

3. Geology

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 169 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Dunsmore Gravel, brown and yellow clayey sand and gravel. The site lies at a height of c.130 m O.D.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

The Leicestershire Sites and Monuments Record indicates that the site for development lies within the historic medieval core of Hinckley (**MLE2901**). In addition, seven further medieval archaeological sites have been identified in the vicinity of the development (**MLE2877**, **MLE2878**, **MLE2885**, **MLE2890**, **MLE2894**, **MLE2896** and **MLE2897**). Various archaeological sites have been recorded within 1km of the proposed development site. This includes one prehistoric site (**MLE6500**), two Roman sites (**MLE2895** and **MLE7941**), twelve post-medieval sites (**MLE2876**, **MLE2879**, **MLE2880**, **MLE2881**, **MLE2886**, **MLE2888**, **MLE2889**, **MLE6006**, **MLE9161**, **MLE9162**, **MLE9165** and **MLE9762**) and one undated site (**MLE2891**).

Archaeological Background

No archaeological sites have been recorded within the proposed development area, however this may reflect the lack of systematic archaeological investigation. Previously archaeological investigations undertaken in Hinckley include a series of negative watching briefs at 14 Upper Bond Street (Kipling 2002a), land off St Mary's Road (Kipling 2002b) and Logix Park (Harvey 2002). In addition, a negative archaeological evaluation was undertaken at land adjacent to Outlands Drive (Jarvis 2002).

The proposed development site is located within the historic medieval town core of Hinckley (**MLE2901**). A 25ft deep sandstone well was found during building works on Lower Bond Street, 300m to the west of the proposed development area (**MLE2877**). There is documentary evidence at Hinckley Priory for a religious cell, belonging to the Benedictines, 280m to the southwest (**MLE2878**). A cobbled surface was found 580m to the southwest, which is possibly a medieval road (**MLE2885**). Hinckley Castle is a medieval, possibly Saxo-Norman castle, located 110m to the south (**MLE2890**). St Mary's Church is a medieval extant church with 13th and 14th century features, 260m to the southwest (**MLE2894**). A pavement made of double rows of kidney stones was exposed indicating an earlier roadway 310m to the southwest (**MLE2896**). There is documentary evidence for a medieval 'Holy' well dedicated to St Mary (the Virgin), 340m to the east (**MLE2897**).

One prehistoric archaeological site has been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed development site. An Iron Age boat shaped brooch (Italian) was found at Hinckley Castle, 160m to the south of the development site (**MLE6500**).

Two Roman sites have been identified in the vicinity of the proposed development area. Finds of tessera, pottery, wall plaster, a portrait bust and glass tear bottle suggest a possible Roman occupation site 520m to the northeast of the development site (**MLE2895**). In addition, two Roman coins were found 820m to the southwest (**MLE7941**).

Various post-medieval archaeological sites have been recorded in the vicinity of the proposed development area. Timber framed cottages possibly dating to the 17th

century were located 190m to the southwest of the development site, however they were demolished in 1955 (MLE2876). Hall House is recorded at Hinckley Priory with a formal garden and moats, 280m to the southwest of the development site (MLE2879). There is also documentary evidence for a fishpond (MLE2880) and a post-medieval garden (MLE2881). There is documentary evidence for a post-medieval windmill at Mill Hill, 590m to the west (MLE2886), and to the west of the Grammar School 370m to the northeast (MLE2888). There is documentary evidence for a post-medieval tower windmill 740m to the southwest (MLE2889). A post-medieval barrel vaulted cistern was located 430m to the north (MLE6006). Building recording prior to demolition, revealed fragments of a timber framed building dated to 1625 (by dendrochronology), 370m to the southwest (MLE9161). Buildings at St Albert's Nursing Home were surveyed prior to demolition, 50m to the northeast (MLE9162). Buildings at 1-3 Regent Street, surveyed prior to demolition, showed a timber frame of poor quality, 360m to the southwest (MLE9165). Atkin's cottages (Knitwork factories) are a row of timber framed cottages of probable 17th century date, 350m to the northwest (MLE9762).

One undated archaeological site has been identified in the area surrounding the development site. An oak lined well is recorded at the foot of castle hill, below a cottage floor, 170m to the south of the proposed development area (MLE2891).

Historical Background

Hinckley (Hinchelie) is referred to in the Domesday Book as "The Earl of Aubrey also held Hinckley. 14 carucates of land. In lordship 4 ploughs; 8 slaves. 42 villagers with 16 smallholders and 3 Freemen have 9 1/2 ploughs. Meadow 6 furlongs in length and 3 furlongs wide; woodland 1 league long and 3 furlongs wide. The value was £6; now £10" (Morgan 1979). Soon after the Conquest, Hinckley became the property of Hugh de Grentesmainil, who owned considerable lands in Leicestershire. The manor then passed to several of the Earls of Leicester (Nichols 1811, 697). The name Hinckley means "Woodland clearing of a man called Hynca" (Mills 1998). The period from the mid-17th century to the early 19th century was one of expansion in Hinckley, with the growth of the stocking frame industry. However, a decline in the industry meant that Hinckley became one of the poorest parts of Leicestershire in the mid nineteenth century (Royle 1979, 53).

A map search was undertaken at the Leicestershire, Leicester and Rutland Records Office (ROLLR), however no enclosure maps were seen of the proposed development area. The 1782 Robinson Plan of Hinckley, although fairly schematic shows the possibility of structures within the proposed development area (fig. 3). The tithe map of 1841 shows the area containing houses and gardens owned by Jeoffment Great Trustees of Occupier. The first edition OS Map of 1889 shows the Grammar School buildings fronting New Buildings, with a further structure fronting Wood Street (fig. 4). The second edition OS Map of 1903 shows no changes within the development area, although the Grammar School is no longer named (fig. 5). The 1924 OS Map shows the demolition of the Grammar School buildings and the construction of a Picture Theatre (fig. 6). Three small structures are shown to the rear of the Picture Theatre, and the structure fronting Wood Street is extant. The 1961 OS Map shows very minor changes to the structures to the rear of the Picture Theatre (fig. 7). The map supplied by the developer shows the area as a vacant lot (fig. 2).

5 Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To 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 proposed development.

6. Methodology

The development area totaled c.0.13ha of which c.85 sq metres was evaluated providing a sample of 5% of the area. This was achieved by excavating five 10m long, and 1.5m wide trenches.

The topsoil was removed in spits by a JCB machine with a toothless ditching bucket under full archaeological supervision.

The trenches were examined by hand cleaning and the archaeological deposits located were planned and sample excavated by hand as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Service.

7. Results

Trial Trenching

Trench 1

Interval from W end	0m	2m	4m	6m	8m	10m
Overburden	0.13m	0.13m	0.15m	0.18m	0.22m	0.32m
Sub layer 1	0.21m	0.25m	0.48m	0.74m	0.76m	0.52m
Sub layer 2	-	0.68m	0.40m	0.90m	-	-
Base of Trench	0.34m	1.05m	1.03m	1.02m	0.98m	0.84m

Trench 1 measured 10m long and 1.50m wide and was on an east to west alignment. It was located in the north west of the site to the east of a series of backfilled modern cellars (fig.11).

Between 0.13m and 0.32m of overburden consisting of mixed pinkish brown clay with large quantities of hardcore was removed beneath which were two layers of clayey sand containing modern material.

Trench 1 is located in an area that has been extensively disturbed by nineteenth and twentieth century house building and cellaring.

Trench 2

Interval from W end	0m	2m	4m	6m	8m	10m
Overburden	0.21m	0.30m	0.20m	0.29m	0.51m	0.84m
Sub layer	0.33m	0.70m	0.82m	0.51m	0.39m	-
Natural	1.04m	1.00m	1.02m	0.78m	0.90m	0.84m
Base of Trench	1.04m	1.00m	1.02m	0.80m	0.93m	0.86

Trench 2 measured 10m long and 1.50m wide and was on an east to west alignment. It was located in the south west of the site to the east of a series of modern backfilled cellars (fig.11).

Between 0.20m and 0.84m of overburden consisting of mixed dark brown clay loam with frequent bricks and tarmac was removed beneath which was dark brownish grey clay loam with occasional brick fragments. The natural substratum that consisted of mid orange brown sandy clay was reached between 0.78m and 1.04m.

Trench 2 is also located in an area that has been extensively disturbed by nineteenth and twentieth century house building and cellaring. Where the natural substratum has survived no archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 3

Interval from W end	0m	2m	4m	6m	8m	11.70m
Overburden	0.16m	0.14m	0.10m	0.78m	0.70m	0.52m
Sub layer	0.17m	0.20m	0.24m	-	0.75m	-
Natural	0.33m	0.34m	0.34m	-	0.75	0.52
Base of Trench	0.36m	0.34m	0.36m	0.78m	0.80m	1.00m

Trench 3 was located in the centre of the site (fig.11). It measured 11.70m long and 1.50m wide and was on an east to west alignment. It was necessary to dog-leg the trench as the JCB was unable to remove the concrete foundations and tiled floor of a department store dating to the 1960's.

Between 0.16m and 0.78m of overburden consisting of mid orange brown loam and gravels with frequent bricks and tarmac was removed. In places there was a sub layer of mid brownish orange clayey sand that also contained modern material including bricks. The natural substratum that consisted of mid orange brown sandy clay was reached between 0.33m and 0.75m.

Trench 3 is also located in an area that has been extensively disturbed, mainly by twentieth century development. Where the natural substratum has survived no archaeological deposits were encountered.

Trench 4

Interval from W end	0m	2m	4m	6m	8m	9.60m
Overburden	0.23m	0.26m	0.19m	0.16m	0.39m	0.32m
Sub layer	0.40m	0.41m	0.24m	0.54m	0.55m	0.38m
Natural	0.63m	0.47m	0.33m	0.70m	0.94m	0.70m
Base of Trench	0.63m	0.47m	0.33m	0.88m	0.94m	0.70m

Trench 4 measured 10m long and 1.50m wide and was on a north to south alignment. It was located to the north of Trench 3 and positioned towards the southern boundary of the site as the ground level to the south was higher suggesting that it had been less truncated in the last century, therefore increasing the chance of encountering archaeological deposits (fig.11).

Between 0.16m and 0.39m of garden soil consisting of dark brownish grey silty loam containing modern material including brick fragments was removed beneath which was a layer of mid brownish orange clayey silt that could be an undisturbed sub-soil. At a depth of between 0.33m and 0.94m natural substratum was encountered that consisted of mid brownish orange sandy clay with occasional patches of sand.

In the southern half of the trench a circular well, [001], with a diameter of 0.98m was uncovered. It was constructed with un-mortared, slightly curved bricks measuring 230mm by 120mm and 80mm thick and had been repaired with fragments of blue engineering brick. The well had been backfilled with fine orange brown sand that contained 5% tarmac fragments. It was excavated by machine to a depth of 2.00m; the construction remained the same throughout suggesting a nineteenth or twentieth century date. No other archaeological features were encountered.

Trench 5

Interval from E end	0m	2m	4m	6m	7m	9m	10.10m
Top soil	0.62m	0.81m	0.52m	0.51m	0.50m	0.34m	0.35m
Sub layer	0.87m	0.98m	0.61m	0.60m	0.62m	-	-
Natural	0.87	0.98m	0.61m	0.60m	0.62m	0.34m	0.35m
Base of Trench	0.95m	1.05m	1.64m	0.63m	0.63m	0.41m	0.43m

Trench 5 measured 10.10m long and 1.50m wide and was located in the south eastern corner of the site. As with Trench 4 it was positioned to the south as the ground level was higher than to the north suggesting that it had been less truncated in the last century, therefore increasing the chance of encountering archaeological deposits (fig.11).

Between 0.34m and 0.81m of garden soil consisting of dark brownish grey silty loam containing modern material including brick fragments was removed beneath which was a layer of mid brownish orange clayey silt that could be an undisturbed sub-soil. At a depth of between 0.34m and 0.98m natural substratum was encountered that consisted of mid brownish orange sandy clay with occasional patches of sand.

No archaeological features were encountered. However a modern well, [002], of probable nineteenth or twentieth century date was discovered to the north of the trench. It was 0.93m in diameter and reached a depth of 2.10m. It was constructed with un-mortared, slightly curved bricks measuring 210mm by 110mm and 80mm thick. It had been backfilled with grey brown silty clay containing 25% modern debris including plastic bottles and bags.

A further well, [003], was located to the south of the trench. Previous excavations on the site had almost completely destroyed it. However, the remains indicated that it had been constructed in an identical manner to [002].

8. Conclusion

The trial trench evaluation has indicated that the western half of the site has been extensively disturbed during the nineteenth and twentieth century. The level of disturbance is such that it is unlikely that archaeological deposits have survived.

The eastern half of the site is better preserved, especially to the south where it has been less truncated and garden soil and sub-soils survive. The absence of archaeological deposits, combined with the map evidence clearly showing a lack of development from 1782 to the present, suggests that the south eastern area has always been garden plots or agricultural land.

9. Acknowledgements

This evaluation was supervised by Matt Hurford with assistance from Matt Parker. Dr. Patrick Clay managed the project.

10. References

- George, S. 2005 *An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment for the Proposed Residential Development at Wood Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire (SP 429 940)*. ULAS Report No. 2005-031
- Harvey, J. 2004 *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Logix Park, Hinckley, Leicestershire. (SP 415 923)*. ULAS report No. 2004-092.
- Jarvis, W. 2002 *An Archaeological Evaluation on Land Adjacent to Outlands Drive, Hinckley, Leicestershire (SP 4115 9445)*. ULAS report No. 2002-185.
- Kipling, R. 2002a *A Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief undertaken at 14 Upper Bond Street, Hinckley, Leicestershire (NGR SP 428 941) 28.09.01. & 01.10.01*. ULAS report No. 2002-049.
- Kipling, R. 2002b *A Report on an Archaeological Watching Brief undertaken on Land off St. Mary's Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire (NGR SP 426 937) 13.09.02. & 24.09.02*. ULAS report No. 2002-154.
- Mills. A. D., 1998 "Hinckley" *A Dictionary of British Place-Names*. A. D. Mills. Oxford University Press, 2003. *Oxford Reference Online*. Oxford University Press. Leicester University. 9 March 2005
http://www.oxfordreference.com/views/SEARCH_RESULTS.html?q=hinckley&category=t40&ssid=254213315&scope=book&time=0.229781936325981
- Morgan, P, (editor) 1979 *Domesday Book 22 Leicestershire*, Phillimore and Co. Ltd.
- Nichols, J. 1811 *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicester*. Volume III part ii. (Sparkenhoe Hundred).
- Royle, S.A. 1978/9 'Hinckley in the mid-nineteenth century' *Trans. Leics. Arch. Hist. Soc.* 54.

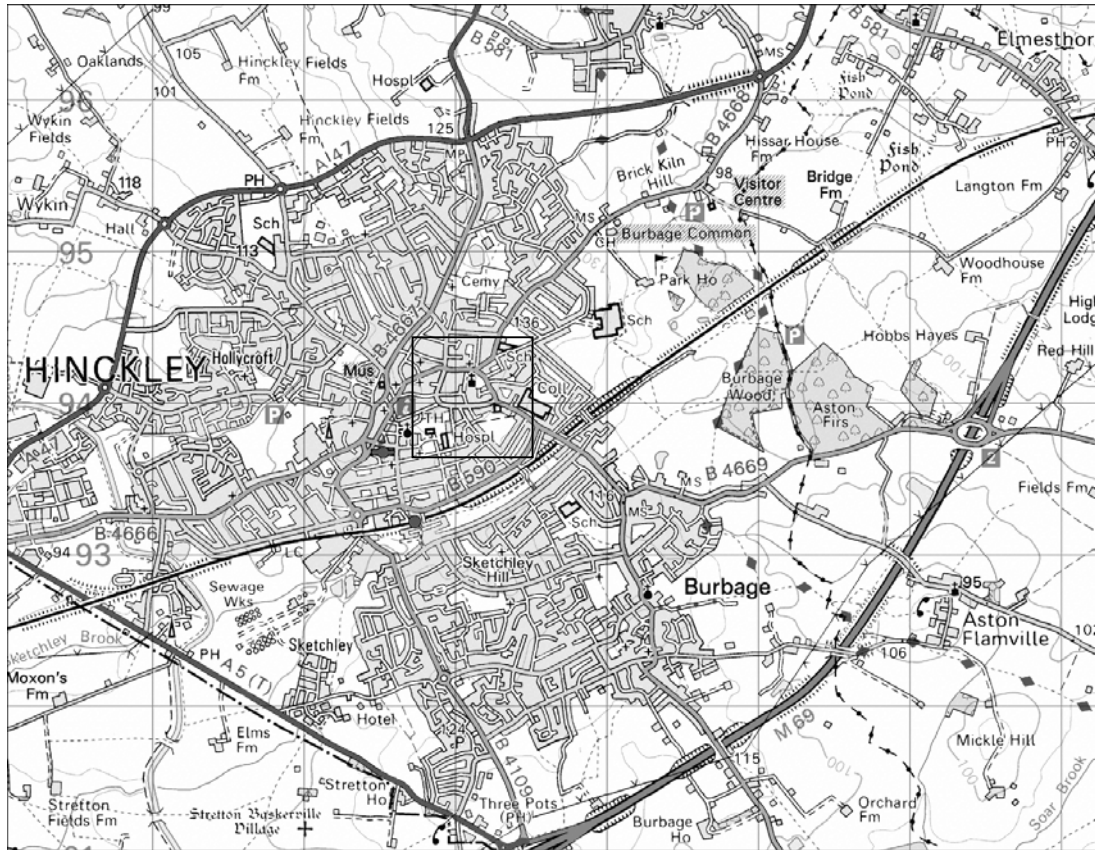


Fig. 1. Site location Scale 1:50000

Reproduced from the Landranger 140 Leicester area 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002186.



Fig. 3. 1782 Robinson Plan of Hinckley (ROLLR Ma/142/3).

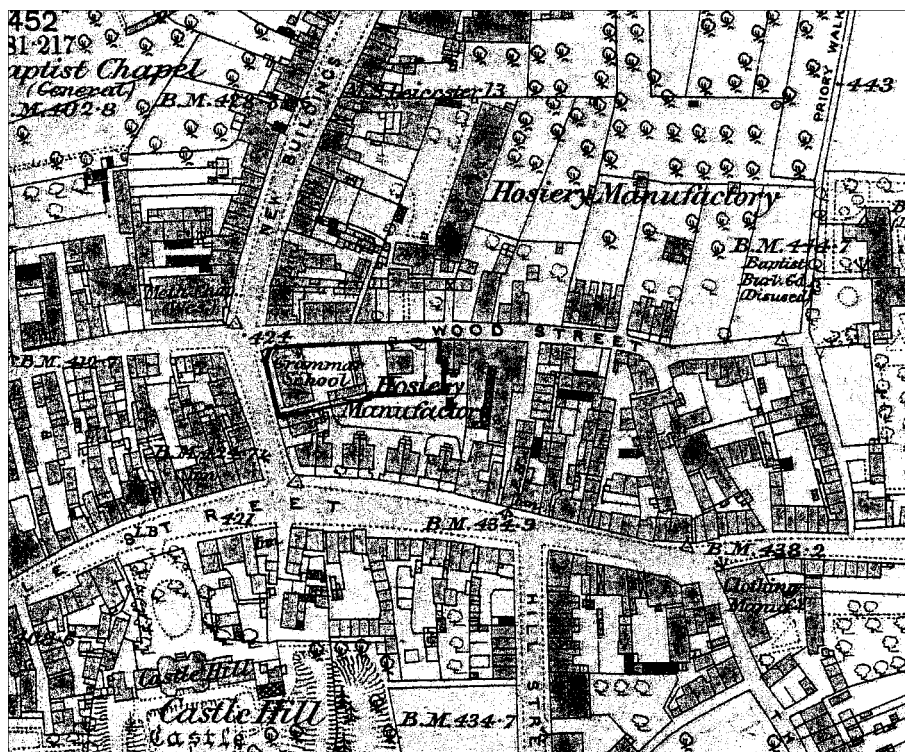


Fig. 4. 1889 Ordnance Survey map Leicestershire Sheet No. XLII.8 with development area outlined (Scale 1:2500).

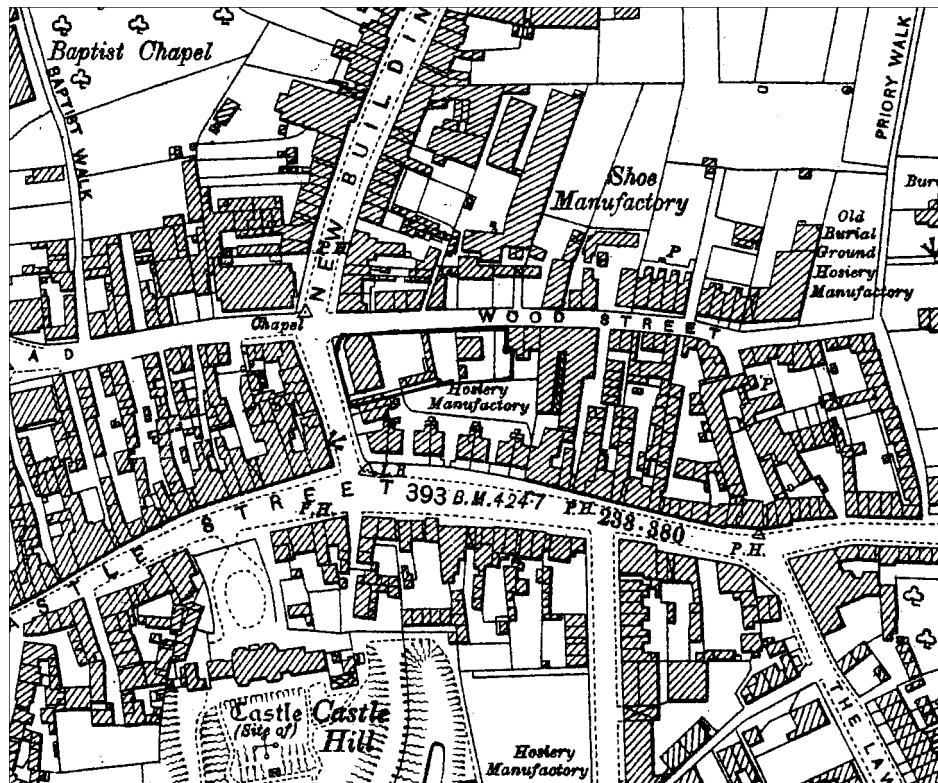


Fig. 5. 1903 Ordnance Survey map Leicestershire Sheet No. XLII.8 with development area outlined (Scale 1:2500).

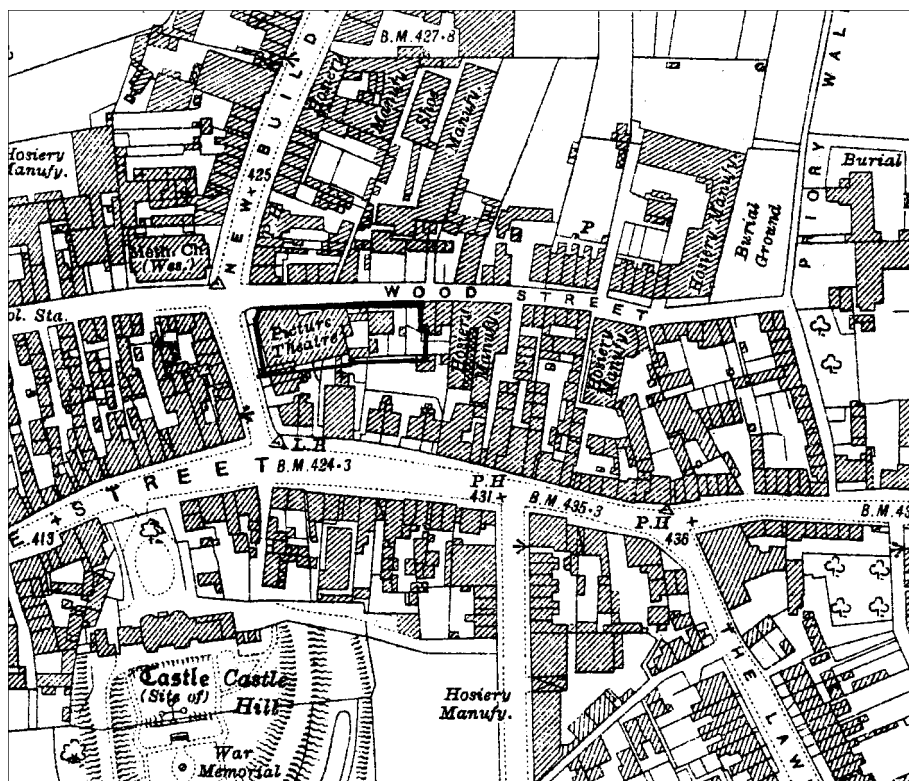


Fig. 6. 1924 Ordnance Survey map Leicestershire Sheet No. XLII.8 with development area outlined (Scale 1:2500).



Fig. 7. 1961 Ordnance Survey map Leicestershire Sheet No. SP 4293-4393 and SP 4294-4394 with development area outlined (Scale 1:2500)

Reproduced from the OS map Leicestershire Sheet SP 4293-4393 and SP 4294-4394 1:2500 by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1961. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002186.

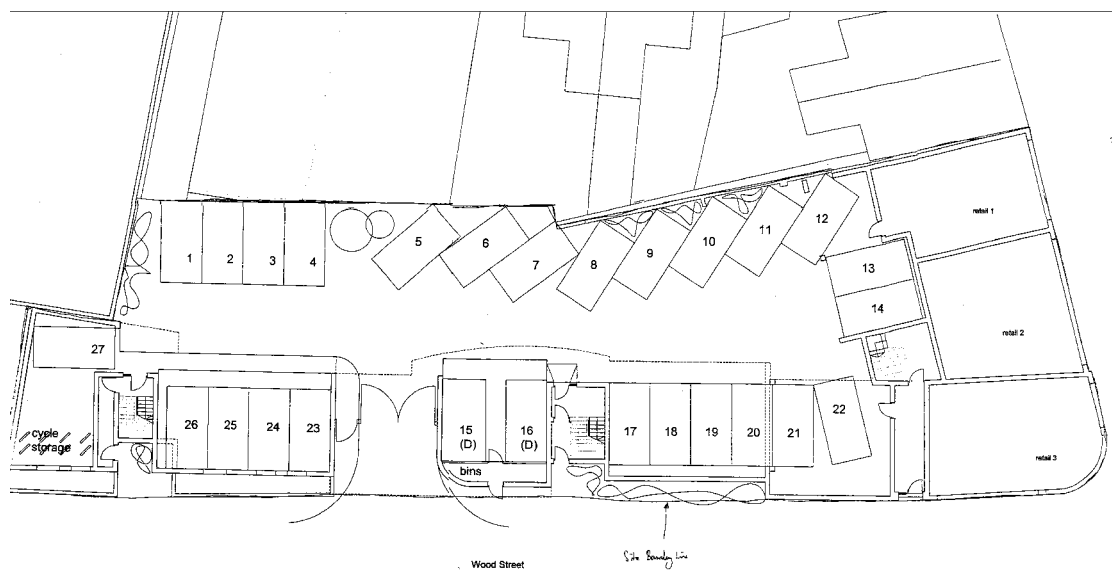


Fig. 8. Proposed development plan (Marchini Curran Associates Ltd).

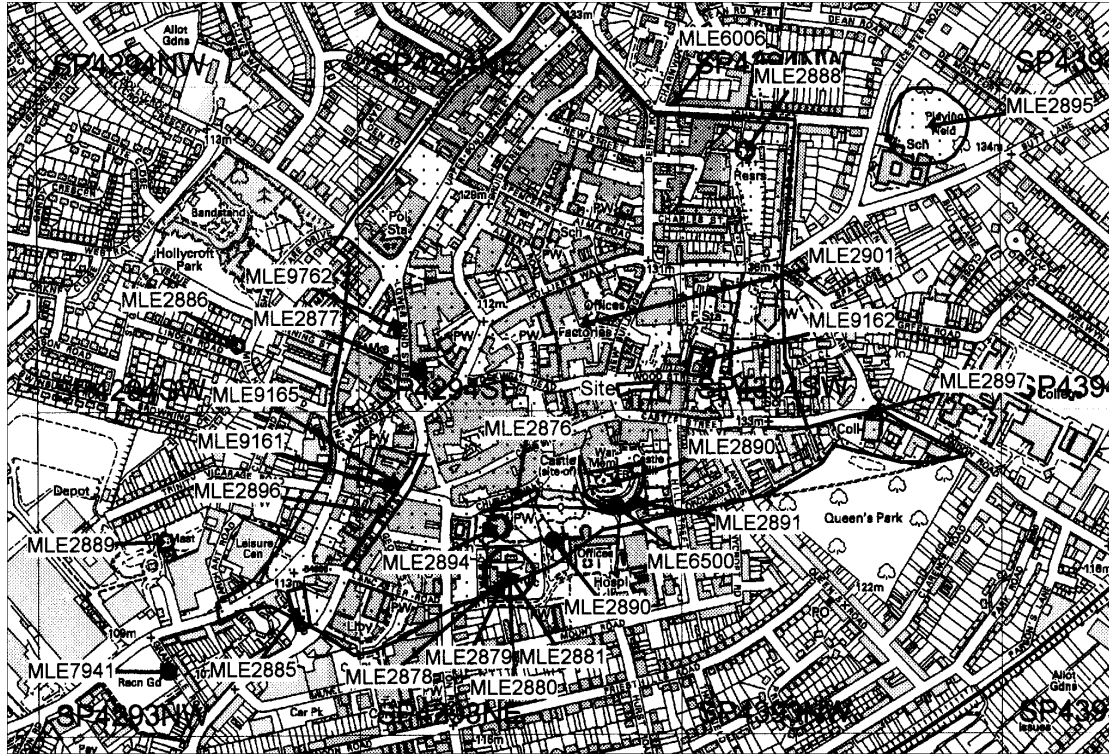


Fig. 9. SMR sites in vicinity of proposed development area (Scale 1:10000)

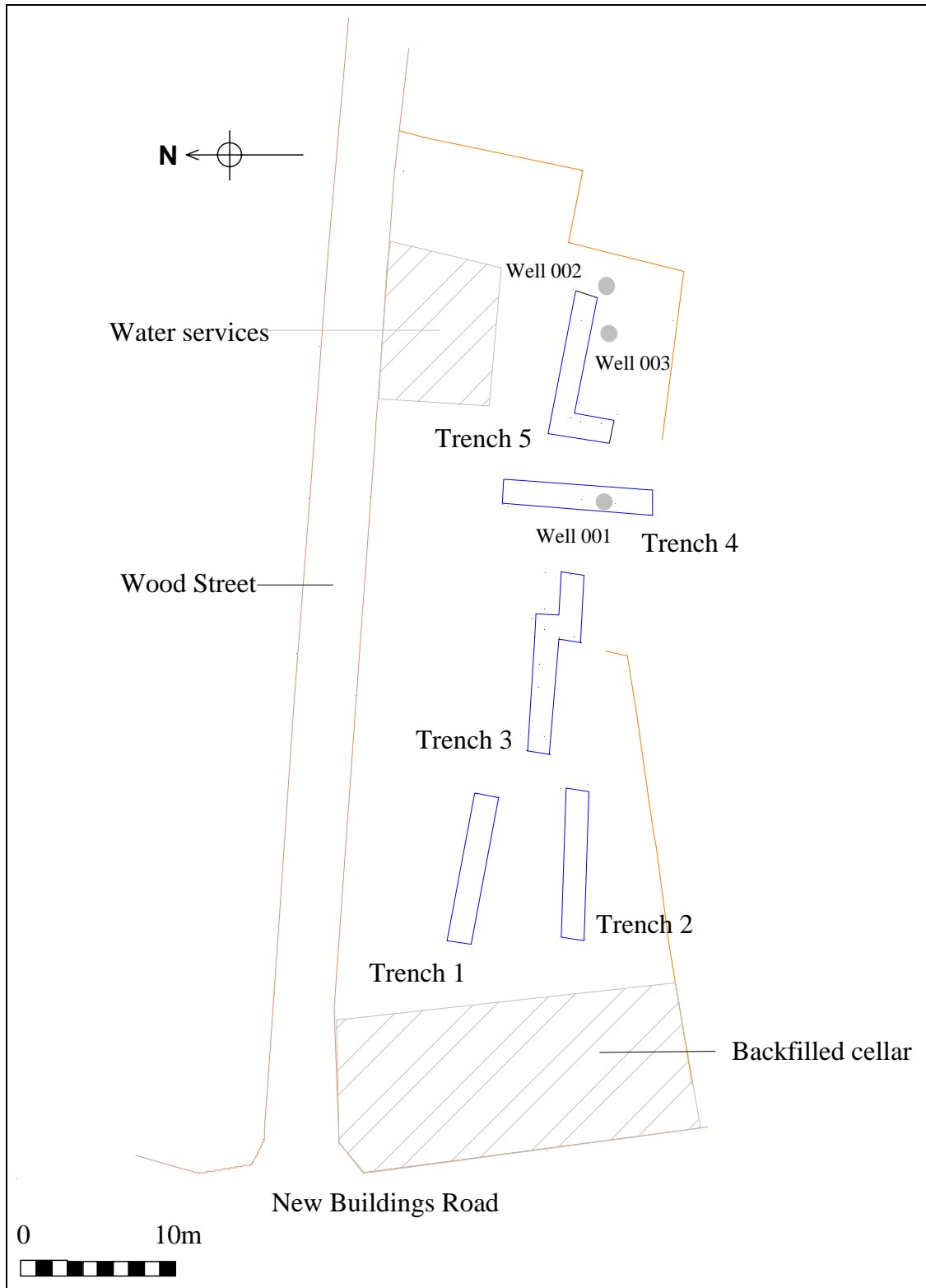


Fig. 10. Trench location plan.

Appendix 1: Sites and Monuments Record

The following sites located in the vicinity of the proposed development area are listed on the SMR:

1. Prehistoric

MLE6500 (SP 428 938) An Iron Age boat shaped brooch (Italian) was found at Hinckley Castle.

2. Roman

MLE2895 (SP 434 944) Finds of tessera, pottery, wall plaster, a portrait bust and glass tear bottle suggest a possible Roman occupation site near Priory cottage.

MLE7941 (SP 422 936) Two Roman coins were found at Walton Terrace.

3. Medieval

MLE2877 (SP 426 941) A 25' deep sandstone well was found during building works on Lower Bond Street, adjacent to the Atkins Factory in 1956. It had 18th century brick repairs to the top. .

MLE2878 (SP 427 937) There is documentary evidence at Hinckley Priory for a religious cell, belonging to the Benedictines.

MLE2885 (SP 424 937) A cobbled surface was found at Lancaster Road, which is possibly a medieval road.

MLE2890 (SP 428 938) Hinckley Castle is a medieval, possibly Saxo-Norman castle, ruined by 1538. There is evidence for a well, a bridge over a ditch and cobbled pavement around the site. The castle is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 94).

MLE2894 (SP 427 938) St Mary's Church is a medieval extant church with 13th and 14th century features including the west tower. The spire is from 1788 and the church was much enlarged in the 1870s. An internal timber has a dragon carved on it.

MLE2896 (SP 425 938) A pavement made of double rows of kidney stones was exposed 5' below the surface indicating an earlier roadway. There was a broken lower stone of a quern (of unspecified type) above this surface. The paving was also seen at the Regent St/Coventry St corner. A worn, four-lugged stone mortar was found under the Regent Club on Regent Street.

MLE2897 (SP 433 940) There is documentary evidence for a medieval 'Holy' well dedicated to St Mary (the Virgin).

MLE2901 (SP 427 940) The historic core of the medieval town of Hinckley has been deduced from landscape maps.

4. Post-medieval

MLE2876 (SP 427 939) Timber framed cottages possibly dating to the 17th century were located on Church Walk, however they were demolished in 1955.

MLE2879 (SP 427 936) Hall House is recorded at Hinckley Priory with a formal garden and moats.

MLE2880 (SP 427 936) There is documentary evidence for a fishpond (associated with the formal garden?) at Hinckley Priory.

MLE2881 (SP 427 938) There is documentary evidence for a post-medieval garden at Hinckley Priory.

MLE2886 (SP 423 941) There is documentary evidence for a post-medieval windmill at Mill Hill.

MLE2888 (SP 431 944) There is documentary evidence for a post-medieval windmill to the west of Grammar School.

MLE2889 (SP 422 938) There is documentary evidence for a post-medieval tower windmill to the south of Hollycroft Park.

MLE6006 (SP 430 945) A post-medieval barrel vaulted cistern was located at 4 John Street.

MLE9161 (SP 42552 93879) Building recording prior to demolition, revealed fragments of a timber framed building dated to 1625 (by dendrochronology), which was incorporated in the building when remodelled in the 18th century. Site is now a public house.

MLE9162 (SP 43031 94075) Buildings at St Alberts Nursing Home were surveyed prior to demolition, as it had been a Dominican Priory. The earliest building on the site was dated to 1824.

MLE9165 (SP 42558 93888) Building at 1-3 Regent Street, surveyed prior to demolition, showed a timber frame of poor quality. Thought to be a transition between timber framed and brick building styles.

MLE9762 (SP 42561 94128) Atkin's cottages (Knitwork factories) are a row of timber framed cottages of probable 17th century date, used by framework knitters.

5. Undated

MLE2891 (SP 428 938) An oak lined well is recorded at the foot of castle hill, below a cottage floor.