



University of
Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching-brief on
land at 4 Rutland Street, Leicester
Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 590 044

Mathew Morris



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land at 4 Rutland Street
Leicester**

NGR: SK 590 044

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For: West London Properties

Planning application no. 20130108

Approved by:

Signed:

Date:

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An Archaeological Watching-brief on land at 4 Rutland Street, Leicester (SK 590 044)

Mathew Morris

Summary

An archaeological watching-brief was carried out on land at 4 Rutland Street, Leicester (SK 590 044) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 7 March 2012. The work was carried out on behalf of West London Properties in advance of construction of a new seven-storey building on the site. The work involved the inspection of machine excavated trenches, for ground beams, for any indication of archaeological activity. The results of the watching-brief were negative, groundwork only impacting on layers of modern building rubble covering the site.

The site archive will be held by Leicester Museum Services under the accession number A4.2013.

Introduction

This document constitutes the final report for archaeological work carried out on land at 4 Rutland Street, Leicester (SK 590 044). The work was carried out on behalf of West London Properties by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 7 March 2012.

The proposed development involves the construction of a new seven-storey building (Planning Application No. 20130108) set back c.10m from the street frontage on the north side of the street. The development impacted an area of approximately 536 square meters. Rutland Street is located between Granby Street and Charles Street, approximately 300m south of Leicester's city centre (Figure 1 and Figure 2).

The work was requested by the Leicester City Archaeologist in their capacity as archaeological advisor to Leicester City Council, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. The work followed the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) as laid out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief* (Buckley 2013).

Geology and Topography

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 156 (Leicester), indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of superficial deposits of sand and gravel overlying bedrock deposits of mudstone belonging to the late Triassic Branscombe Mudstone Formation (BGS 2008). The site lies at c.62.8m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) on ground which gently slopes down from south-east to north-west.

Archaeological and Historical Background

In Leicester, Roman cemeteries have been located to the east and south of the Roman town. Leicester's Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that in the vicinity of the development, Roman burials have been found to the west and north-west of the site on Halford Street (HER ref. LC554), Gallowtree Gate (LC551) and Free Lane (LC551). Another Roman burial was found to the north of Humberstone Gate (LC1277) and a large Roman cemetery has been excavated between Charles Street and Clarence Street (LC1279). Roman

finds have also been found on Halford Street to the north (LC1287) on the site of the former Wholesale Market.

Given its location, it is possible that Roman burials could survive within the development area. However, the potential for medieval activity in this area outside the town walls is limited. The site is the old coach/stable yard of the former Wellington Hotel on the corner of Regent Street and Granby Street.

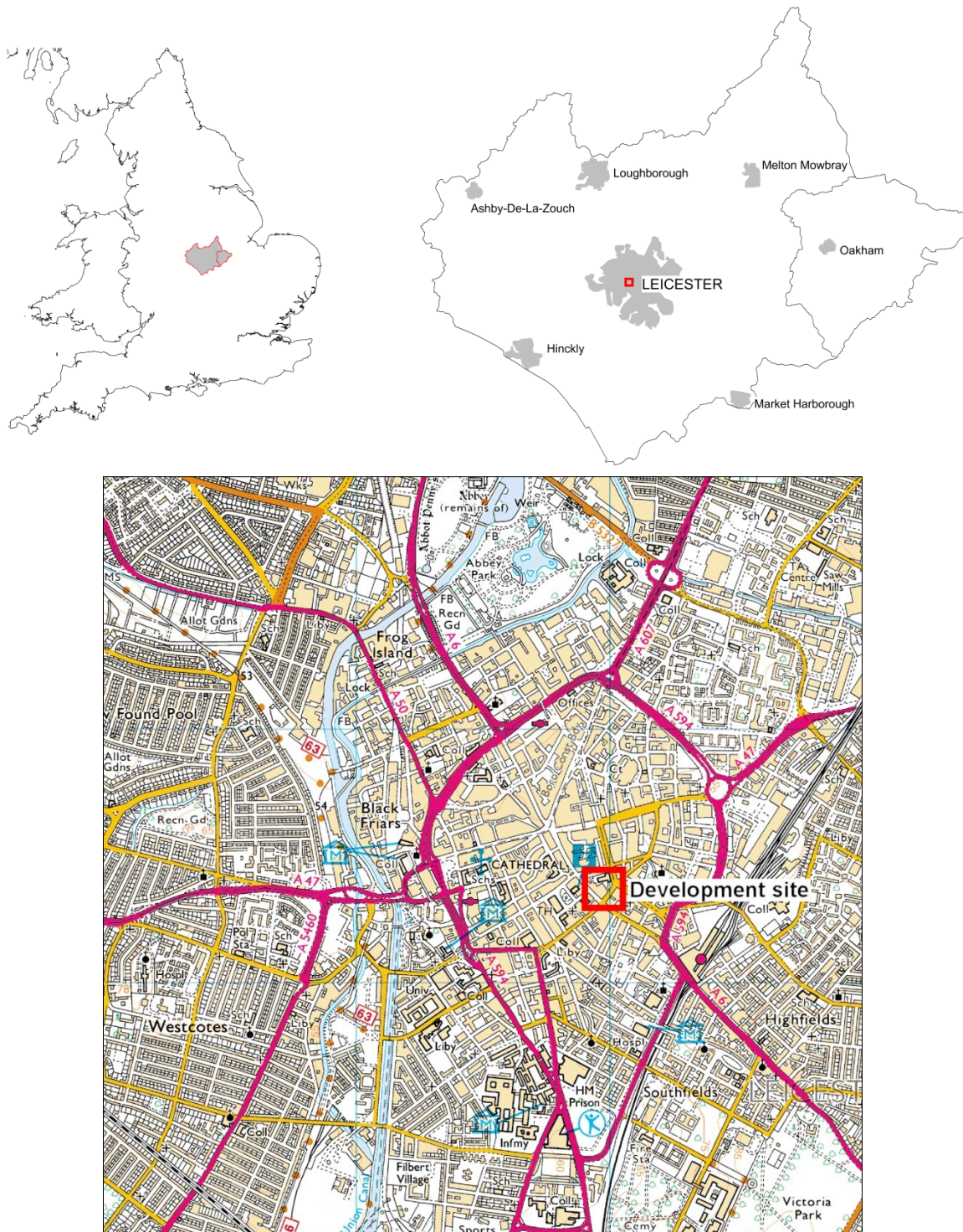


Figure 1: Location maps with development area highlighted

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Archaeological Objectives

The principal objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence or absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date of any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks.
- To record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks.
- To recover any artefacts, worked stone and other building materials.
- To produce a report and archive of any results.

Research aims:

- To contribute to our knowledge of cemeteries in Roman Leicester.
- To contribute to our knowledge of land use in this part of Leicester in the post-Roman period.

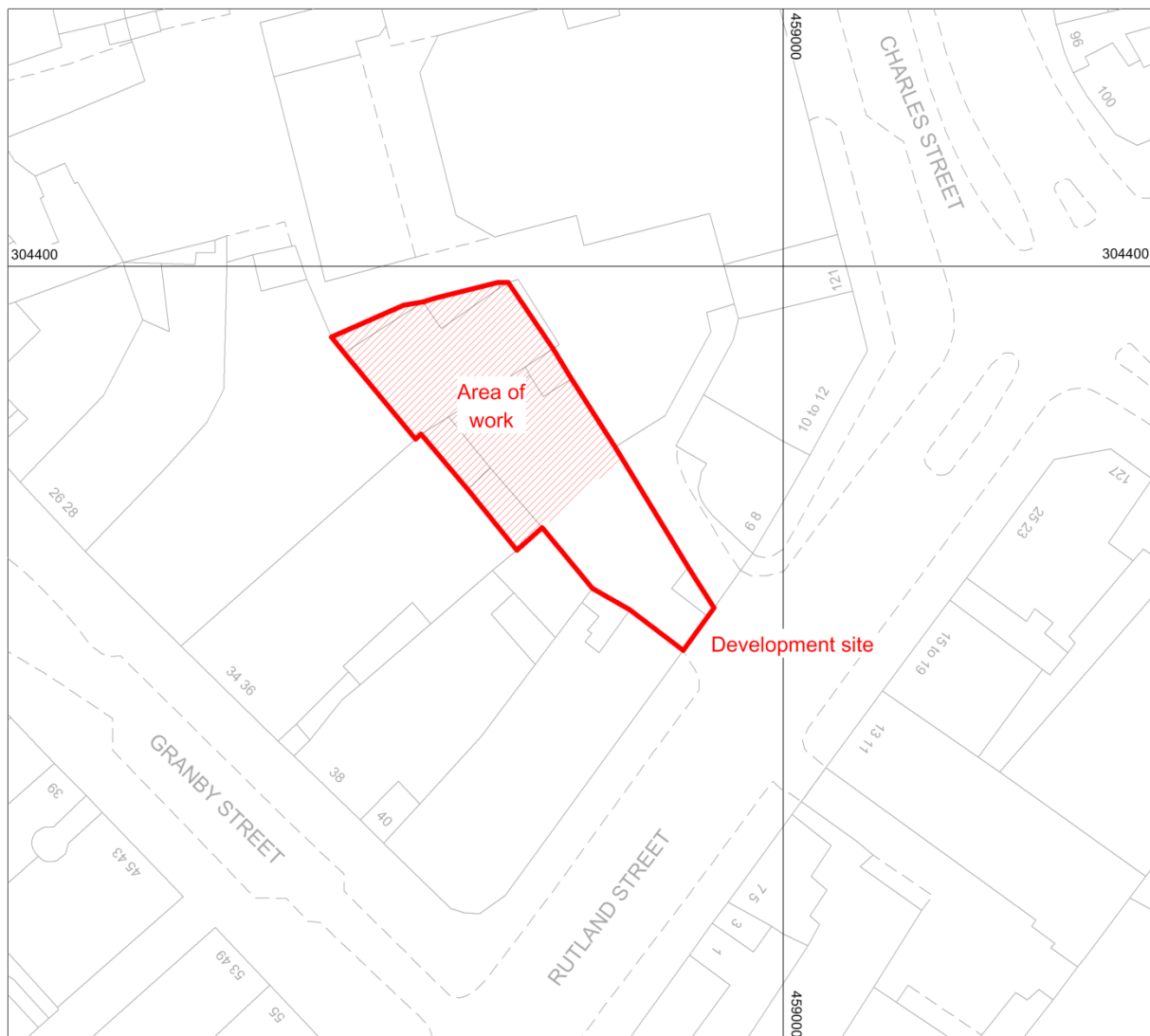


Figure 2: Plan showing the area of work

Adapted from 1:1250 Ordnance Survey map data, © Crown Copyright 2011. License number AL100029495

Methodology

The project required the attendance of an experienced professional archaeologist during all groundwork likely to impact upon any archaeological remains. The work involved the inspection of machine dug trenches for ground beams. Work was carried out using a mini 360° mechanical excavators with a 0.3m toothed bucket. All exposed areas, sections and existing spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. 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 pro-forma ULAS watching-brief recording forms whilst any archaeological deposits or features were given unique context numbers and recorded on pro-forma ULAS context sheets if deemed appropriate. 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)*.

The Watching Brief

A site visit was carried out by Mathew Morris on 7 March 2013 to inspect the excavation of trenches for ground beams across the site (Figure 3 and Figure 4). Prior to the visit, the site had been stripped of hard standing/buildings and piled. This had involved the importation of c.0.1-0.2m of mill waste to act as a piling mat.

The area of work was c.0.3m below street level, sloping down very gently to the north-west. Much of the area appeared extensively disturbed by modern brick foundations and beneath the mill waste were thick deposits of modern building rubble.

The trenches for the ground beams were c.0.6m wide and at most c.0.45m deep. These were being dug through the mill waste into the building rubble beneath. No archaeological features or finds were exposed and overall, the results of the watching brief were negative.

Bibliography

- B.G.S., 2008, *England and Wales Sheet 156 (Leicester): Bedrock and Superficial Deposits*. 1:50,000 scale geology series
Buckley, R., 2013, *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief 4 Rutland Street*. Leicester, unpublished ULAS document **13/014**

Archive

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

The archive will be held by Leicester Museums Service under the accession number A4.2012.

Publication

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

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

OASIS no.	universi1-146349
Project Name	Archaeological Watching Brief at 4 Rutland Street, Leicester
Project Type	Watching Brief
Project Manager	Richard Buckley
Project Supervisor	Mathew Morris
Previous/Future work	None
Current Land Use	Yard
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF Section 12
Position in the Planning Process	As a condition
Site Co-ordinates	SK 590 044
Start/end dates of field work	07-03-2013
Archive Recipient	Leicester City Museums
Study Area	536sq m

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the clients, West London Properties, and their contractors for their 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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07-03-2013



Figure 3: General view of the site looking south-east, showing finished ground-beam trenches in the foreground.



Figure 4: Working shot looking north-west, showing finished ground-beam trenches.

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