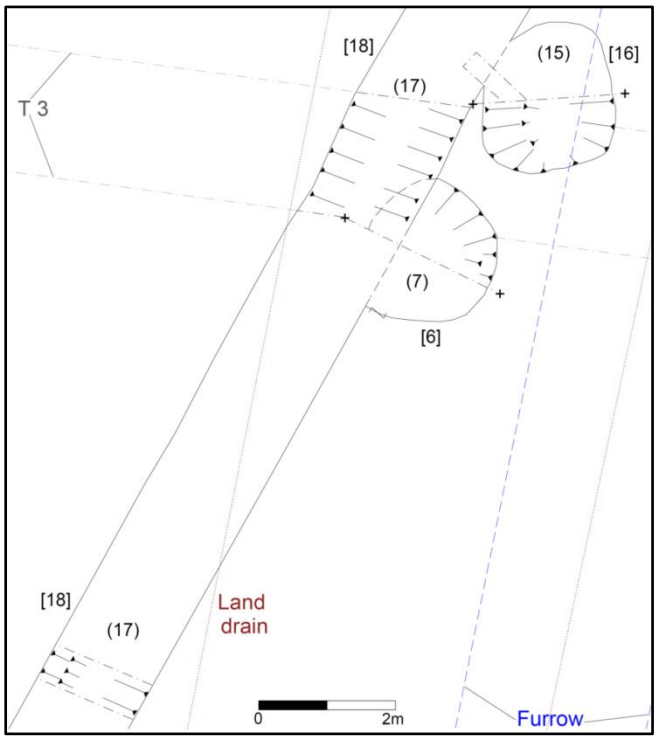
University of Leicester

Archaeological Services



Archaeological Fieldwork on land west of St John's, Enderby, Leicestershire

NGR: SP 5492 9901

Wayne Jarvis

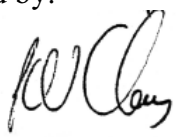
ULAS Report No 2012-158

Archaeological Fieldwork on land west of St John's, Enderby, Leicestershire

Wayne Jarvis

For: Jelson Ltd

Approved by:

Signed 

Date: 19/10 /2012

Name: Patrick Clay

University of Leicester
Archaeological Services
University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH
Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614
www.le.ac.uk/ulas

ULAS Report Number 2012-158

Accession Number XA62.2011.

CONTENTS

FIGURES

Archaeological Fieldwork on land West of St John's, Enderby, Leicestershire

Wayne Jarvis

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological strip, map and sample excavation on land to the west of St. John's, Enderby, Leicestershire (SP 5492 9901). The work was undertaken as part of a planning condition in advance of a proposed development. An area c.20m by 20m was stripped of overburden, and this confirmed that features identified during an earlier stage of work consisted of two large pits and a ditch, the latter probably a boundary feature. Only a very small amount of residual flint and Iron Age pottery, and some animal bone was recovered from this further excavation. The pottery may be residual as a few sherds of Roman pottery were recovered from the ditch during earlier work, but it is possible the pits are Iron Age cut by a Roman ditch. No further features were identified however a small assemblage of struck flint was recovered from this area too. The Planning authority is Blaby District Council (Planning application No. 11/0065/1/PX), and the site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, with the accession no. XA62.2011.

1. Introduction

An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation was carried out by ULAS for Jelson Ltd in April 2012 on land to the west of St. John's, Enderby, Leicestershire (SP 5492 9901). This was undertaken in advance of a proposed development involving the construction of new housing.

An archaeological strip, map and sample excavation of the site was requested by Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team (hereinafter LCC HNET), as archaeological advisors to the planning authority. The work was required in order to mitigate the impact of the development on localised remains identified during two previous evaluations (Jarvis 2011a, b), and probably of Roman date. This report presents the results of this third stage of fieldwork, and summarises the previous two evaluation projects within this context.

2. Site Description, Land use, Topography and Geology

2.1 Site Description

The proposed development site lies to the north-east of the centre of Enderby, Leicestershire, and west of St. John's adjacent to the B4114 (SP 5492 9901, centre; Fig. 1). The site is away from the historic core of the village, but close to the site of the church of St. John's (which probably originated in the 9th century), and some 175m east of the line of the Roman road, the Fosse Way. The application area comprises a single field covering 2 ha. An application has been granted on appeal for residential development comprising 45 dwellings with associated landscaping, access road and balancing pond (Planning application No. 11/0065/1/PX).

Following National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, LCC HNET as archaeological advisors to the planning authority required that further recording by strip, map and sample excavation be undertaken. This work would be to mitigate the impact on the localised remains identified during the pre-application initial evaluation (Jarvis 2011a), and the second stage evaluation after planning was granted on appeal (Jarvis 2011b).

2.2 Land use and Topography

The site is currently in use as a paddock. Hedgelines delimit the north, west and east of the site while the south is bounded by wooden fencing along the rear margins of residential gardens. The northern boundary marks the line of an east-west Public Right of Way. Access into the field is in the south-east corner off the B4114.The area exhibits a gentle south-west to north-east gradient that descends by *c*.3.5m from *c*.72m AOD. Faint earthworks and undulations were visible in the field, which were examined during the trial trenching phase, and thought to be of agricultural origin representing remnant ridge and furrow.

2.3 Geology

The soils of the site are of the Salop Association which comprise "slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged associated with reddish fine loamy clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils" (711m: Soil Survey 1983; Sheet 3). The drift geology comprises reddish till. Solid geology below this is of Lias formation.

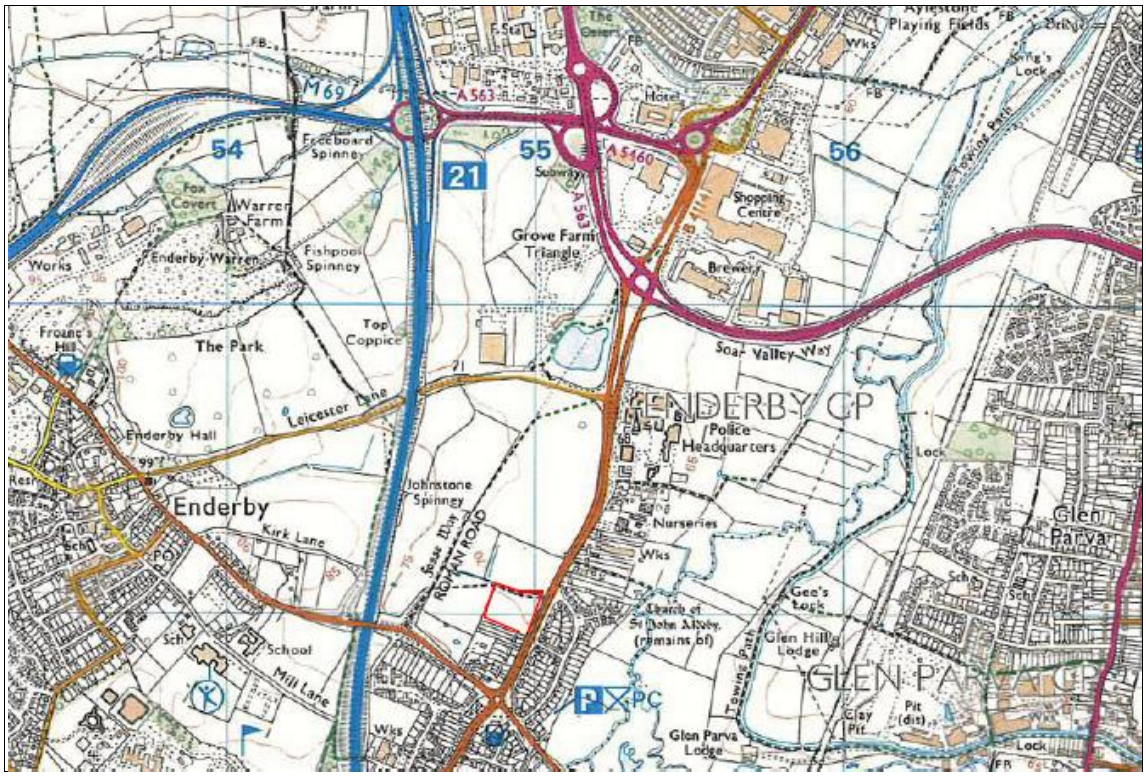


Figure 1: Site Location.

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

Although the application area is in an area of considerable archaeological potential close to Iron Age, Roman and medieval remains including the Fosse Way Roman road, geophysical survey results were inconclusive revealing few significant anomalies of archaeological interest (Figure 2, Hancock 2010). To follow up the geophysical survey and further elucidate whether archaeological deposits were present an archaeological evaluation of the site was requested by Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team (hereinafter LCC HNET).

Figure 2: Geophysical survey results and initial (Phase 1) trench location (Hancock 2010, amended 2011).

3.1 Phase 1 Evaluation Results (Jarvis 2011a)

In Phase 1 ten trenches were excavated across the proposed development site (Figure 2, 3). Some trenches were located to target possible geophysical anomalies (Trenches 3, 5 and 9), while others were to test apparently blank areas (Trenches 1, 7 and 10) and any possible archaeological earthworks (Trench 3).

Figure 3: Evaluation trench plan, also showing location of features in Trench 3

Definite archaeological evidence was only recorded in Trench 3, in the north-east of the site. Here, three or perhaps four substantial features were identified in the centre of the trench. Features [6] and [8] were probably pits, and features [12] and [14] could probably also be further pits or a north-south ditch. The finds assemblage was varied, including worked flints two of which are Mesolithic in form. Fifteen fragmentary (and laminated) sherds (34g) of mid-late Iron Age pottery (400 BC – AD 43), and two sherds (adjoining) of grey ware of early Roman date (mid-1st to 2nd century AD) were also recovered. A relatively good animal bone assemblage (39 bone fragments, cattle and horse represented) was also excavated. The material was interpreted as indicating a likely Roman date for the intercutting features.

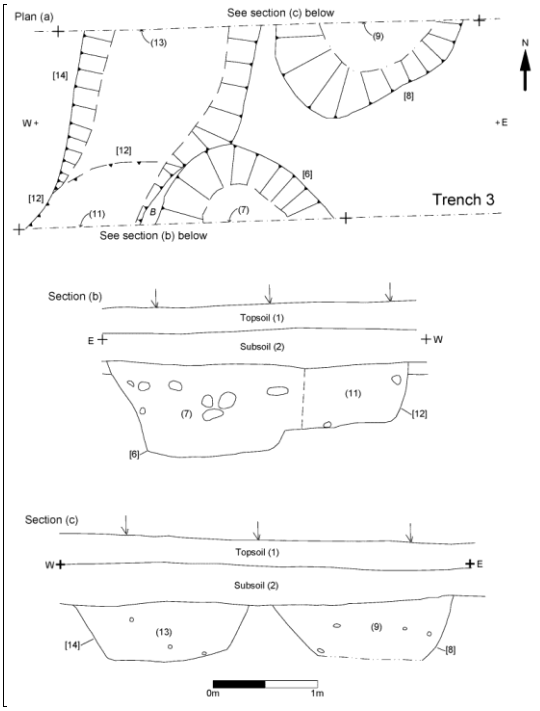


Figure 4: Features in trench 3. (a) plan of centre of trench, (b) south section (c) north section

No further features were identified; however plough furrows and stone built land drains were present. There was a clear north-south pattern to both, and ephemeral remnant ridges survived across site. It was suggested that the furrows were visible on the geophysical survey (e.g. in the west and central area of site, Trenches 5 and 9), although these were not originally identified as such (Hancock 2010).

Figure. 5. Cleaning the features in trench 3. Looking east

3.2 Phase 2 Evaluation Results (Jarvis 2011b)

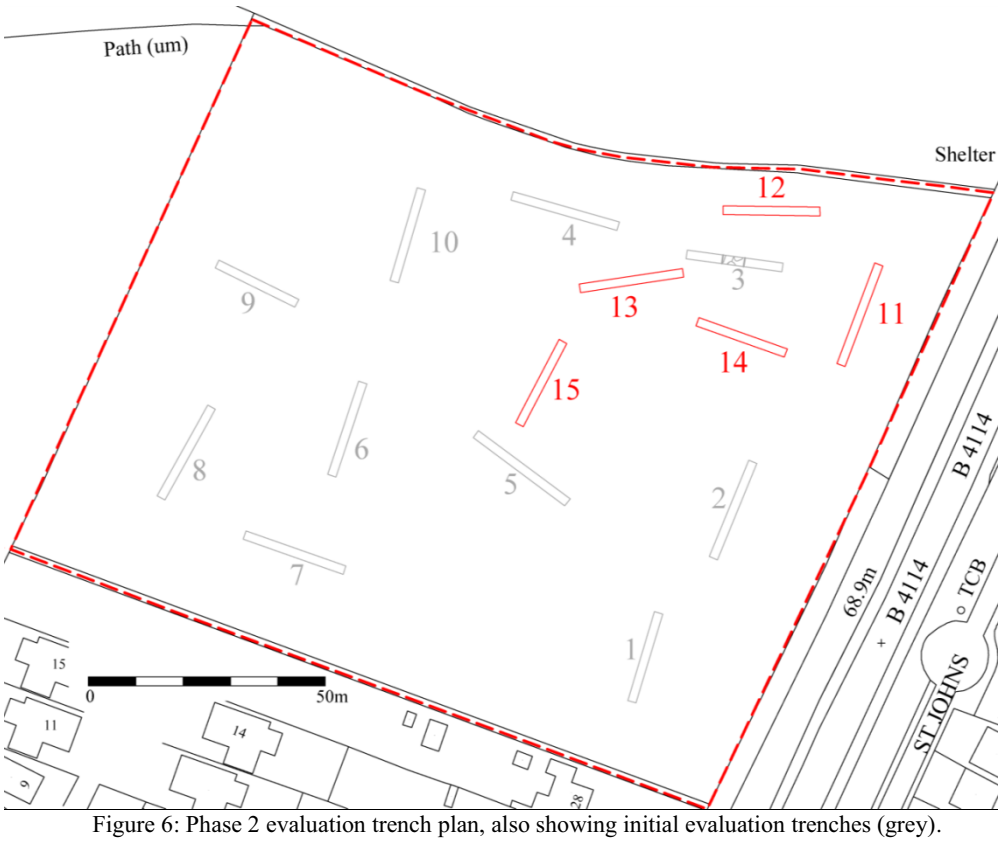


Figure 6: Phase 2 evaluation trench plan, also showing initial evaluation trenches (grey).

A further five trenches were excavated adjacent to the initial Trench 3 (Figure 6). No further archaeological features were identified, although modern stone built land drains were present and ridge and furrow was also again identified. A few finds (medieval

pottery and animal bone) were recovered from the subsoil in Trench 12. These finds were probably associated with the medieval ploughing recorded here. The Phase 1 archaeological features were identifioed as "likely representing very isolated pitting activity" (ibid. 6).

4. Aims and Objectives

The series of features of likely Roman date were apparently in an isolated context. The objective of the current work was to gain an indication of the nature, extent, date and significance of any further archaeological deposits which may be present. Generally, the strip, map and sample excavation was to be undertaken to mitigate the impact on the localised remains identified during these previous evaluations. The principal aims of the archaeological fieldwork 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 groundworks.
- To record to an appropriate level the archaeological remains revealed.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

5. Methodology

The Senior Planning Archaeologist had requested the examination of the area around the earlier positive trench (Trench 3, Figure 6). Stripping was carried out starting from this area of the originally identified features, continuing outwards towards the surrounding negative trench areas (Trenches 11-14), and until a substantial buffer without further features was exposed (Figure 7). This resulted in an area of *c*.20m by 20m being stripped (actual, 390 sq. m). The area was stripped using a 360 mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket. The topsoil and other overlying layers were removed under full archaeological supervision until either the top of archaeological deposits or the natural undisturbed substratum was reached. The area was examined for archaeological deposits or finds by hand cleaning. The stripped area and features were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and then after the end of fieldwork the area was backfilled and leveled.

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 Excavations* (2008).

Figure 7: Area of strip in relation to development area and earlier trenching.

6. Results

Stripping of the *c*.20m by 20m area revealed more of the original features identified during the earlier stage of work, but did not expose any further features (Figures 8-9). This confirmed that the original features consisted of two pits and a north-north-east to south-south-west orientated ditch.

Pit [6] measured up to 2.15m in diameter and was 1.0m deep with a stepped profile and a concave base (Figures 10, 13). It contained a single fill, (7) which was a pale orangey mottled grey sandy clay, with occasional large cobbles up to 0.15m across. A tertiary flake of worked flint was recovered from this. Just north of this was a further pit, [16] (Figures 11, 13). This measured 2.2m (north-south) by 1.95m (east-west), and was 0.9m deep. This had one fill, (15), a mid orangey grey clay loam with occasional gravel, and also had a stepped profile with a concave base. Eleven fragments probably representing one sherd of Iron Age pottery, a flint ?bladelet and animal bone were recovered from this feature.

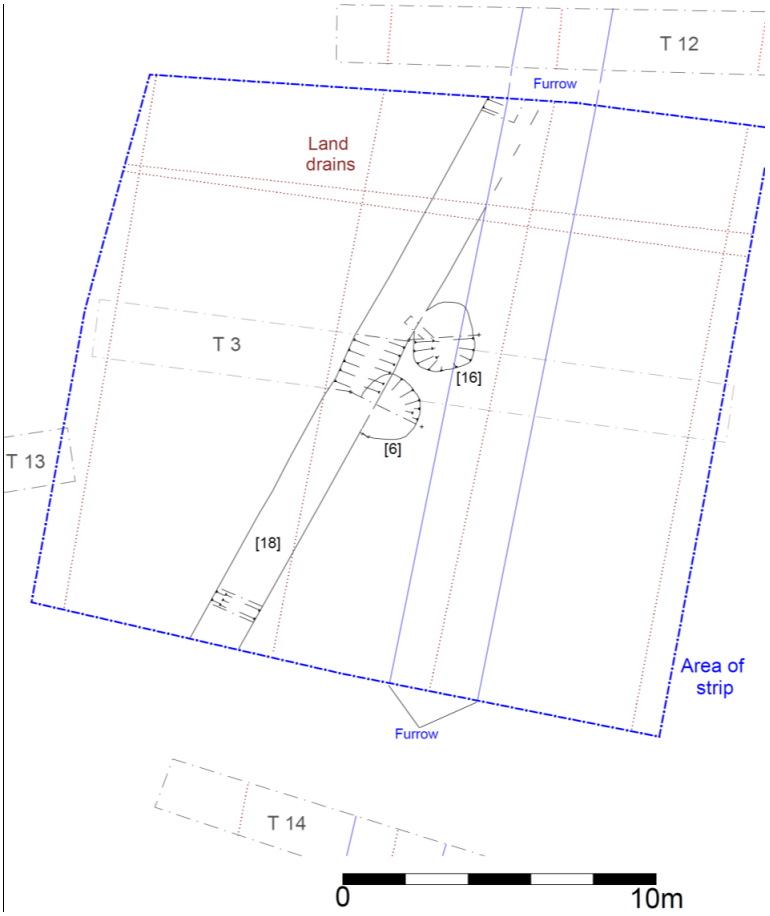


Figure 8: Area of strip in relation to earlier trenching, and later features.

To the west of these pits, and intercutting with them was a north-north-east to south-south-west orientated ditch, [18] (Figures 12, 13). The ditch was 2.3m wide and 0.75m deep, with an open profile. It had a single fill (17) which consisted of a pale mottled orangey grey sandy clay, with rare gravel and larger cobbles. Animal bone and worked flint were also recovered from this feature. It was not possible to ascertain the relationship between the ditch and two pits despite hand-cleaning the area, and examination of sections cut through their relationships. The relationship between the north pit [16] and the ditch [18] was too shallow to be established. The likelihood is that the south pit [6] was cut by the ditch [18], as the stonier fill of the pit ceased to continue west. The ditch could be traced for 19.6m across the stripped area, but to the north was truncated by a plough furrow (this had also been located in Trench 12 of the evaluation). If continuing as a straight feature, the projected line of this ditch to the south-west would be between Trenches 5 and 14 in the earlier evaluations (cf Figures 7-8). This further excavation of these features recovered only a small amount of pottery, animal bone and residual flint. It is perhaps possible that the pits are Iron Age, whilst the ditch is early Roman, as two (joining) sherds of grey ware were recovered from the ditch during the first phase of evaluation. The Iron Age sherds from this earlier phase of work and the current phase are very badly preserved however, and could easily be residual in features also of Roman date.

No further features were identified from the current site works, although a small assemblage of struck flint was recovered from the stripped area too. A single sherd of post-medieval pottery from the subsoil was also recovered.

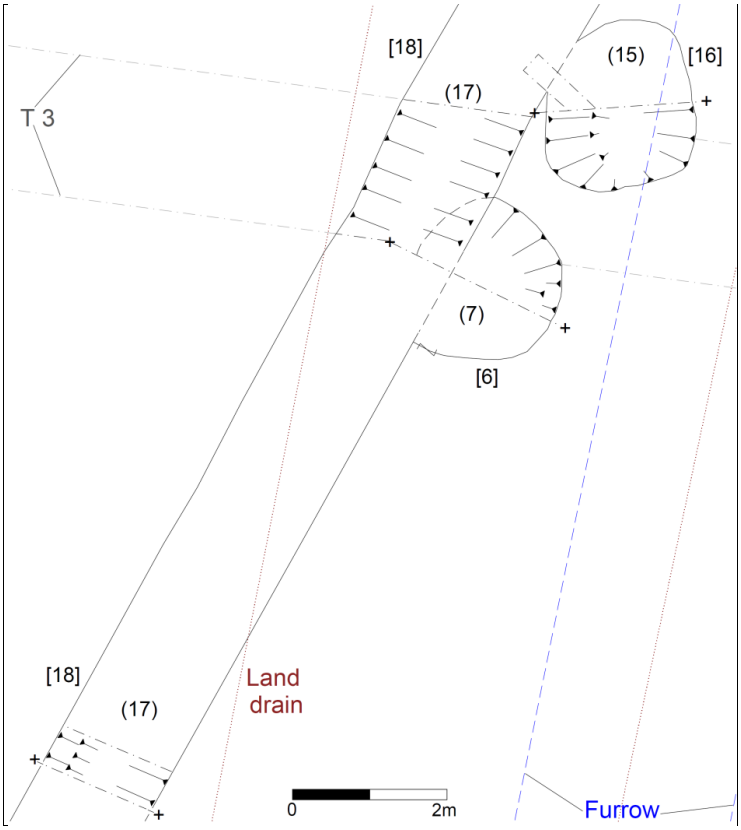


Figure 9: Plan of features exposed in stripped area.

Figure 10: Pit [6] during excavation.

Figure 11: Pit [16] after excavation.

Figure 12: Ditch [18] after excavation.

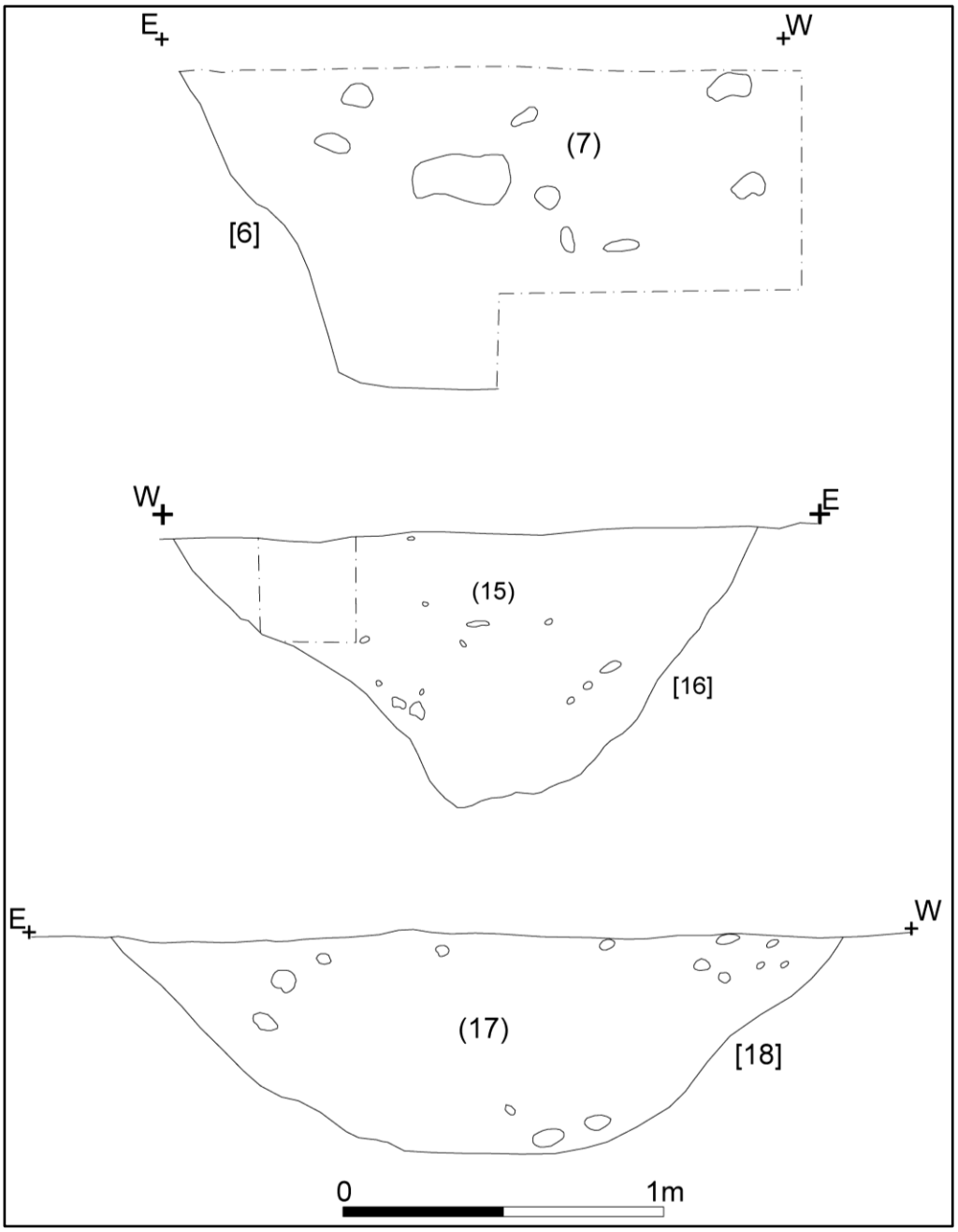


Figure 13: Sections of excavated features, [6] & [16] pits, [18] ditch.

7. Iron Age and Early Post-Medieval pottery and fired clay by Nicholas J. Cooper

Eleven laminated sherds of Iron Age pottery (10g), probably all one sherd originally, were recovered from context (15) [16]. The sherds are from a handmade vessel, manufactured in a reduced dark grey fabric with angular rock inclusions of granitic origin and matching fabric R1 in the Leicestershire Prehistoric Pottery Fabric Series (Marsden 2011, 62).

Two small fragments (2g) of very sandy, oxidised fired clay were also recovered from the same context and are probably burnt daub, perhaps from nearby structures.

A single sherd of post-medieval earthenware (12g) was recovered unstratified and identified as Leicestershire County Medieval Fabric code EA2 by Deborah Sawday, dating to the early post-medieval period (Davies and Sawday 1999, 166 Table 30).

8. The Flint by Lynden Cooper

Four undiagnostic flint pieces were recovered.

U/S secondary flake
(7) tertiary flake
(15) tertiary ?bladelet fragment (calcined), ?piercer
(17) 4 secondary flakes, 1 tertiary flake, 1 shatter

9. Animal Bone by Jennifer Browning

Introduction

A faunal assemblage numbering 39 fragments was recovered from the earlier of the two evaluations (ibid.a). Cattle and horse bones were retrieved from a feature of Romano-British date. This most recent stage of fieldwork was carried out by ULAS in 2012 and produced an animal bone assemblage numbering 27 fragments.

Evidence for archaeological activity consisted of two pits, [6] and [16], and a north-north-west to south-south-east aligned ditch, [18]. Pottery recovered from the features suggests a late Iron Age - Roman date for the features.

Preservation

The animal bones recovered during hand-excavation were assessed to evaluate preservation and variety and therefore provide an indication of the faunal potential, should the site progress to excavation. The assemblage was fragmented, illustrated by the fact that less than a third of the fragments (n=8) were considered identifiable (table 1) and both old and modern breakage was observed. Surface condition was briefly assessed by context, following Harland et al (2003), and was predominantly poor, indicating the bone surfaces were 'flaky or powdery over 50% of specimen'. Bones in contexts (2) and (17) were extremely eroded and abraded, which would certainly impede the identification of butchery marks, pathologies and other modifications. Bones in context (15) were assessed as good ('lacks fresh appearance but solid; very localized flaky or powdery patches'). There are therefore indications that burial conditions in individual features vary, giving rise to differential preservation.

The Assemblage

The current sample consists of 27 fragments from three different features. A cattle scapula and astragalus were recovered from subsoil, while the ditch produced a cattle horncore fragment and the remains of a second scapula. A fragmented but better-preserved sheep/goat scapula was recovered from pit (15) [16].

Table 1: The animal bones

Context	Cut	Feature	Number	Bone	Taxa	Condition	Notes
2	-	subsoil	1	scapula	cattle	poor	Left. Glenoid cavity, neck and distal part of blade. 3 fragments.
2	-	subsoil	1	astragalus	cattle	poor	2 fragments
2	-	subsoil	7	fragments	indeterminate	poor	Mostly large mammal.
15	16	pit	1	scapula	Sheep/goat	good	Good surface condition, 3

							fragments of the scapula blade and caudal edge.
17	18	ditch	1	scapula	cattle	poor	Glenoid cavity and part of neck.
17	18	ditch	4	horncore	cattle	poor	Fragments could be from the same bone
17	18	ditch	12	fragments	indeterminate	poor	Probably deriving from different bones
Total			27				

The bones were mostly in large fragments and there were a small number of bones where the state of epiphyseal fusion could be determined. No butchery was evident and it is possible that cut marks in contexts (2) and (17) were masked by very poor surface condition.

Archaeological Context and Potential

Rural Romano-British sites are rare in Leicestershire and, as such, have been identified as a research priority for environmental archaeology in the East Midlands, as they are currently rare and when they exist, are usually small and poorly preserved (Monckton 2006, 272). The situation is slightly better for the Iron Age, although more evidence is needed.

A potential parallel for the activity on site comes from recent excavations *c*.400m to the north at Leicester Lane, Enderby (Harvey 2009). This produced a faunal assemblage totalling 1194 fragments with a high proportion of cattle and horse bones (Browning 2009). An earlier excavation at Grove Farm, Enderby, dating to the Late Iron Age and transitional Roman period, confirms cattle as the most important species (Gouldwell 1992, 60). Similar results were obtained from smaller assemblages recovered from adjacent sites at Enderby (Baxter 1991 and Browning 2004).

10. Plant Remains by Anita Radini

Two contexts from two different features were bulk sampled for environmental remains. Sample **1** (13) and sample **2** (7) were then brought to the ULAS laboratory and assessed for potential of environmental analysis. The samples appeared to be pale brown in colour and consisted of fine clay. The samples were scanned for visible presence of charred plant remains (such as charcoal fragments and flecks), animal bone fragments, and any other biological remains such as insects or snails. It was possible to state that the samples consisted of sterile clay and no further work is required

11. Discussion and Conclusion

The strip, map and sample excavation did not reveal any further archaeological features to add to the original evaluation work, where several substantial but isolated features were recorded in the north-east area of the proposed development site. However, this current stage of work did confirm that one feature of uncertain form was a ditch, which could be traced running across the stripped area in a north-north-east to south-south-east alignment. Adjacent to this ditch were two large pits, which also produced a low density of artefacts in the form of pottery, flint and animal bone. The dating evidence was limited but supports the earlier results suggesting activity in the area of prehistoric and Roman date, with these features probably being of late Iron Age and Roman date.

The fieldwork has confirmed that the features do in fact represent relatively ephemeral activity, this being supported by the earlier work and the distinct paucity of finds across the site, but perhaps related to further Iron Age and Roman activity much further to the north. A potential parallel for this activity comes from excavations *c.*400m to the north at Leicester Lane, Enderby (Harvey 2009). Here, both mid-late Iron Age and early Roman material was recovered from various features, including two north-south linear ditches perhaps over 180m in length. These were also sited east of the Fosse Way and continued broadly towards the current site, perhaps indicating large-scale boundary earthwork divisions.

12. Archive

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, with the accession no. XA62.2011. The archive includes the earlier fieldwork material (documentary and finds archive), and contains:

- 15 trench recording sheets
- 1 context summary record sheet
- 18 A5 context sheets
- 4 site photographic indices recording sheets
- 3 survey sheets
- 1 small finds index sheet
- 1 sample records sheet
- 1 drawing index sheet
- 1 drawing records index sheet (detail)
- Site drawing permatrace sheets - 3 of (1 A2, 2 A3)
- CD containing digital photographs and…
- Survey data on CD
- Unbound copy of this report 2012-158, & previous reports 2011-073, 2011-183
- Thumbnail prints of digital photographs
- 35mm black and white contact sheets and negatives (x4 films (part of))
- Index of these photographs

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. Available at: http://oasis.ac.uk/

ID	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	St. John's, Enderby, Leics.
Summary	The strip, map and sample excavation revealed some archaeological evidence for activity most likely of Roman date, with pottery dating to the Mid to Late Iron Age (400 BC – 43 AD), and the early Roman period (1st to 2nd century AD). This supported the results of earlier evaluative work indicating that these features were isolated in nature. Occasional worked flint was also recovered including material probably of Mesolithic, and Neolithic/Bronze Age date. Additionally medieval ridge and furrow and probable post-medieval stone land drains were exposed.
Project Type	Strip, map and sample excavation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Wayne Jarvis
Previous/Future work	Previous: geophysics, evaluation. Future: uncertain

Current Land Use	Pasture field
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment
Position in the Planning Process	Post appeal
Site Co ordinates	SP 5492 9901
Start/end dates of field work	11/4/12 – 20/4/12
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area	2ha
Associated project reference codes	Museum accession XA62.2011

13. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* and *Rutland Record* 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.

14. Bibliography

Baxter, I. 1991 'Animal Bone' *in* P. Clay and J. Sharman 'Leicester Lane, Enderby: An archaeological evaluation' *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* **65,** 11.

Browning, J. 2004 'Animal Bone' *in* J. Meek, M. Shore and P. Clay 'Iron Age Enclosures at Enderby and Huncote, Leicestershire' in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* **78**, 14-16.

Browning, J. 2009 'The Animal Bones' *in* J. Harvey *Archaeological Excavations on Land Between St John's/Leicester Lane, Enderby, Leicestershire* ULAS Report 2009-169

Clay, P., 2011 *Written scheme of investigation for archaeological work: Job title: Land west of St. Johns, Enderby, Leicestershire*, ULAS Report

Davies, S., and Sawday, D., 1999 'The post-Roman pottery and tile' in A. Connor and R. Buckley *Roman and Medieval Occupation at Causeway Lane, Leicester*, 165-213. Leicester Archaeology Monograph 5. Leicester: University of Leicester School of Archaeological Studies.

Gouldwell, A. 1992 'The animal bone' in P Clay 'An Iron Age farmstead at Grove Farm, Enderby, Leicestershire' *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* ***66** , 58-69*

Hancock, A., 2010 *Geophysical Survey: Land Adjacent to St Johns, Enderby, Leicestershire*. ASC Report : 1330/ELR/01

Harland, J. F., Barrett, J. H., Carrott, J., *The York System: an integrated zooarchaeological database for research and teaching. Internet Archaeology 13*: (http://intarch.ac.uk/journal/issue13/harland_toc.html).

Dodney, K. and Jaques, D. 2003

Harvey, J., 2009 *Archaeological Excavations on Land Between St John's/Leicester Lane, Enderby, Leicestershire*, ULAS Report 2009-169

Jarvis, W., 2011a *An Archaeological Evaluation on land west of St John's, Enderby, Leicestershire, ULAS Report No. 2011-073*

Jarvis, W., 2011b *An Archaeological Evaluation on land west of St John's, Enderby, Leicestershire, ULAS Report No. 2011-183*

Marsden, P., 2011 'The Prehistoric pottery and briquetage' *in* J. Thomas, *Two Iron Age Aggregated Settlements in the Environs of Leicester: Excavations at Beaumont Leys and Humberstone*, Leicester Archaeology Monograph 19, 61-80. Leicester: University of Leicester, School of Archaeology and Ancient History

Monckton, A., 2006 Environmental Archaeology in the East Midlands, *in* Cooper N. (ed.) *The Archaeology of the East Midlands* Leicester Archaeological Monograph 13, 259-286.

Pollard, R., 1994 'The Iron Age and Roman Pottery' in Clay P. and Pollard R. *Iron Age and Roman Occupation in the West Bridge Area, Leicester; Excavations 1962-71*, 51-114. Leicester: Leicestershire County Council, Museums, Arts and Records Service.

15. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken on behalf of Jelson Ltd and was carried out by Wayne Jarvis, with James Patrick and Jennifer Browning also of ULAS. Patrick Clay managed the project, and Nicholas Cooper, Jennifer Browning and Lynden Cooper all also of ULAS identified the finds. Teresa Hawtin of LCC HNET monitored the work on behalf of the planning authority.

Wayne Jarvis
Field Officer
University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS)
University Road
Leicester
LE1 7RH

wj5@le.ac.uk
Tel: 0116 252 2836
Fax: 0116 252 2614

11/10/2012

Appendix I: Context Index Details

Context	Cut	Trench	Description
1	-	All	Topsoil
2	-	"	Subsoil
3	3	T5	Actually, furrow 'cut'
4	3	"	" 'fill'
5	-	"	Natural (lens of gravel)
6	6	T3	Pit cut, S pit
7	6	"	" fill, "
8	8	"	Pit cut, N pit
9	8	"	" fill, "
10		T5	Subsoil
11	12	T3	Fill of ditch, was ?Pit SW
12	12	"	Cut of ditch, was ?Pit SW
13	14	"	Ditch fill actually =11, was Pit NW
14	14	"	Ditch cut actually =12, was Pit NW
15	16	Strip	Pit fill, same as 9
16	16	"	Pit cut, same as 8
17	18	"	Ditch fill, same as 11
18	18	"	Ditch cut, same as 12

Contact Details

Richard Buckley or Patrick Clay
University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS)
University of Leicester,
University Road,
Leicester LE1 7RH

T: +44 (0)116 252 2848
F: +44 (0)116 252 2614
E: ulas@le.ac.uk
w: www.le.ac.uk/ulas

University of Leicester
Archaeological Services

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IfA

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

THE UNIVERSITY OF THE YEAR 2008/9