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**Leicester**

**Archaeological Services**



**An Archaeological Evaluation  
on land west of St John's,  
Enderby, Leicestershire**


**NGR: SP 5492 9901**

Wayne Jarvis

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on land west of St John's,  
Enderby, Leicestershire**

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**For: Jelson Ltd**

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# **An Archaeological Evaluation on land west of St John's, Enderby, Leicestershire**

**Wayne Jarvis**

## **Summary**

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land to the west of St. John's, Enderby, Leics. (SP 5492 9901). The work was undertaken as part of a planning condition in advance of a proposed development. Five trenches were excavated as a follow up to an initial pre-determination trenching stage that identified features of probable Roman date. No further features were identified, and only a small amount of medieval pottery and animal bone was recovered from the subsoil, probably associated with medieval ploughing. 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 evaluation was carried out by ULAS for Jelson Ltd in November 2011 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 evaluation 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 further assess the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which might be present in order to determine the potential impact upon them from future development proposals.

This report presents the results of this second stage of trial trenching, which targeted an area around an initial trench that had exposed features of probable Roman date.

## **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 Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) Policy HE6, LCC HNET as archaeological advisors to the planning authority required that further trial trenching be undertaken to further define and characterise the remains located during the pre-

application field evaluation (their letter of 24/05/2011 to Blaby District Council ref: CLE7702/TH; Jarvis 2011).

## 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, so these were examined during trial trenching.

## 2.3 Geology

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

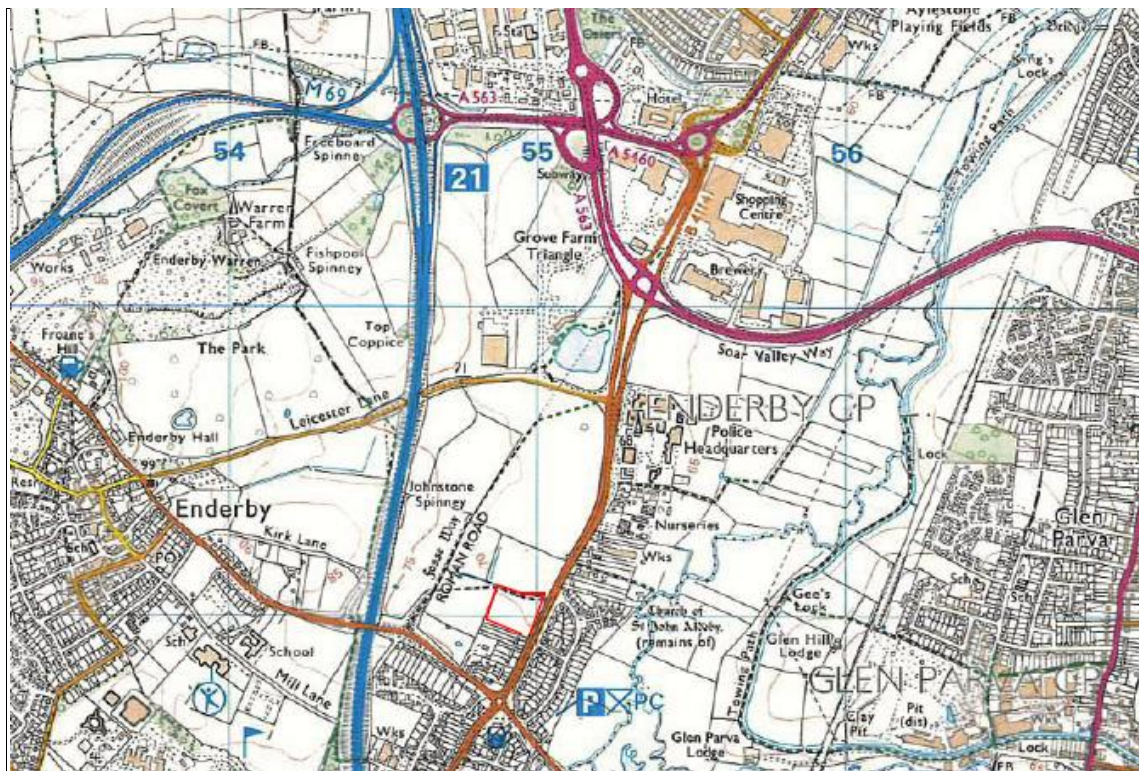


Figure 1: Site Location.

Reproduced from the Explorer 233 Leicester & Hinckley area 1:25 000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 2005. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100029495

## 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).





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

#### 4. Aims and Objectives

The principal aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- To identify possible areas of archaeological potential liable to be threatened by the proposed development.
- To establish the location, extent, date, and significance of any archaeological deposits located.
- To define the quality and state of preservation of these deposits.
- To assess the local, regional and national importance of any deposits.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

The objective was to gain an indication of the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be present in order that an informed planning decision can be taken. The initial pre-planning stage of evaluation had identified a series of features of likely Roman date in only one trench of the ten excavated (Jarvis 2011). This follow up work targeted the area around the earlier trench with a further five trenches.

#### 5. Methodology

Prior to any machining of trial trenches, general photographs of the site areas were taken. The Senior Planning Archaeologist had requested the examination of the area around the earlier trench with a further five 20 metre trenches (Fig. 3). The trenches were excavated 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. Trenches were examined for archaeological deposits or finds by hand cleaning. The trenches were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid and then were backfilled and leveled at the end of the evaluation.

The work followed the approved design specification (ULAS 2011) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2008).

## 6. Results

Five twenty-metre long trenches were excavated, all being *c.*1.8 metres wide and sited as per the amended specification being adjacent to Trench 3 in the initial evaluation (Figure 3). The topsoil consisted of a dark grey loamy sand with occasional small rounded pebbles, and averaged *c.*0.29m in depth. Below this was a mid-brown yellow clay-sand subsoil also with moderately abundant small rounded pebbles, averaging 0.20m in depth. Descriptions of all trench details are provided in Appendix I. The natural substratum consisted of orangey sandy clays, occasionally pebbly. Only in the east of site did this vary, with a much more sand and gravel rich component being observed.

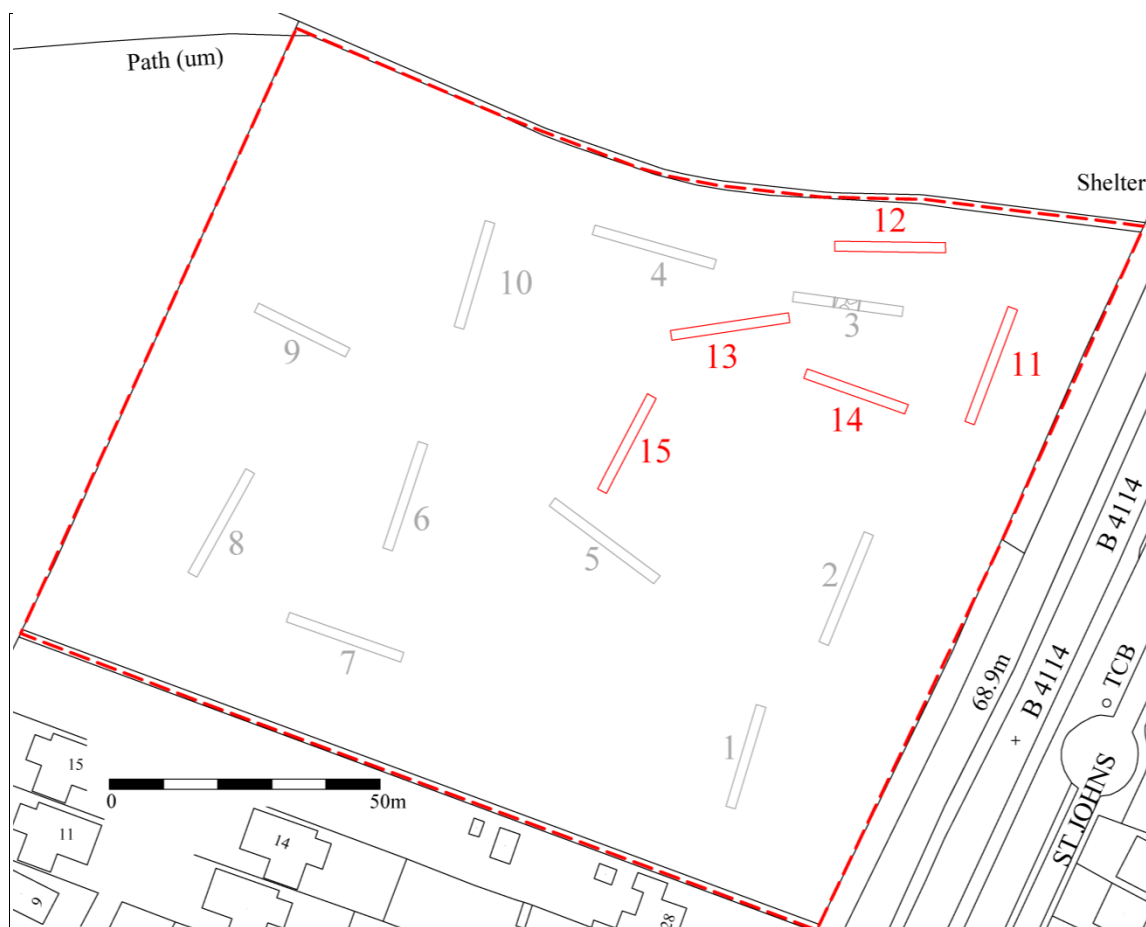


Figure 3: Evaluation trench plan, also showing initial evaluation trenches (grey).

No archaeological features were identified in the trenches, although a very few finds (medieval pottery and animal bone) were recovered from the subsoil in trench twelve. Modern stone built land drains were present in the trenches and further indications of ploughed out ridge and furrow were seen. There was a clear north-south pattern to both of these features, and indeed a remnant ridge still survived in the centre of site (targeted at the north end in trench three) and it was possible to see further very ephemeral examples parallel to this. It is likely that it is the furrows that were showing up on the geophysical survey in the west and central area of site (cf. trench five and nine results, Jarvis 2011), although these were not originally identified as such (Hancock 2010).

## 7. Discussion and Conclusion

The evaluation revealed no further archaeological features to add to the original work where a series of substantial features most probably pits were recorded in the north-east area of site (in trench 3). It seems likely that these features represent very isolated pitting activity. Occasional finds of pottery and animal bone recovered during the current work are most probably associated with the medieval ploughing represented on site.

## 8. Archive

The site archive will be held by LCC HNET, with the accession no. XA62.2011.

The archive contains:

- 15 trench recording sheets
- 1 context summary record sheet
- 14 A5 context sheets
- 3 photographic indices recording sheets
- 2 survey sheets
- 1 small finds index sheet
- 1 sample records sheet
- 1 drawing index sheet
- 1 drawing records index sheet (detail)
- CD containing digital photographs and...
- Survey data on CD
- Unbound copy of this report, & first report 2011-073
- Thumbnail prints of digital photographs
- 35mm black and white contact sheets and negatives (x3 films)

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 evaluation 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). Archaeological evidence was seen only in the north-east of the site area, in the form of substantial probable pits. 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	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Wayne Jarvis
Previous/Future work	Previous: geophysics. / Future: uncertain
Current Land Use	Pasture field
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	PPS5
Position in the Planning Process	Post appeal
Site Co ordinates	SP 5492 9901



Start/end dates of field work	05/05/2011-16/11/2011
Archive Recipient	LCC HNET
Study Area	2ha
Associated project reference codes	Museum accession XA62.2011 OASIS form ID: universi1-101351

## 9. 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.

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## 11. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was funded by Jelson Ltd and was carried out by Wayne Jarvis, with Tony Gnanaratnam also of ULAS. Patrick Clay managed the project. Theresa Hawtin of LCC HNET monitored the work on behalf of the planning authority.

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**Appendix I: Trench details**

TRENCH	ORIENTATION	LENGTH (m)	SLOPE DOWN TO?	AVG. WIDTH (m)	CONTEXTS	DESCRIPTION	TOPSOIL DEPTH (AVG.)	SUBSOIL DEPTH (AVG.)	DEPTH TO ARCHAEOLOGY (m)
11	N-S	19.3	N	1.88	---	East of T3, next to B4114. On to sand and gravel, clay	.32	25.4	---
12	E-W	19.8	E	1.88	---	Geological feat only. Pot and bone from subsoil. Parallel to T3	28.6	24.4	---
13	WSW-ENE	21.1	NE	1.85	---	West of T3	27.2	15.4	---
14	E-W	19.2	E	1.85	---	Parallel to T3	30.8	20.2	---
15	NNE-SSW	19.4	N	1.87	---	Centre of field	28.4	12.6	---

**Appendix II: The Finds****Pottery by Nicholas J. Cooper**

Two sherds of Potters Marston ware (2g) (Leicestershire County Medieval Fabric code MP, Davies and Sawday 1999, 166 Table 30) were recovered from the subsoil of Trench 12. The ware, which produced mainly cooking post, was in use during the 12th and 13th centuries and, given that the area was under open field agriculture, the sherd has probably been deposited during manuring.

**Animal Bone by Jennifer Browning**

Two small and heavily abraded fragments of animal bone (2g), were recovered from the subsoil of Trench 12. They are not identifiable to species but appear to be cattle-sized.

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