



**University of
Leicester**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation
On Land South of Spinney Drive,
Barlestone, Leicestershire
(SK 429 023)**



Roger Kipling

ULAS Report No 2013-101

©2013

**An Archaeological Evaluation on
Land South of Spinney Drive,
Barlestone, Leicestershire
(SK 429 023)**

Roger Kipling

For: Price Bailey Fiduciary Ltd.

Approved by:

Signed:



Date: 07.06.2013

Name: Patrick Clay

University of Leicester
Archaeological Services
University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH
Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614

ULAS Report Number 2013-101
©2013
Accession Number X.A75.2013

CONTENTS

| | |
|--|----|
| Summary | 1 |
| Introduction | 1 |
| Site Description, Topography and Geology | 2 |
| Archaeological and Historical Background | 4 |
| Aims and Objectives | 6 |
| Methodology | 7 |
| Archaeological Trial Trenches | 7 |
| Results | 8 |
| Western Area (Trenches 1-4) | 8 |
| Eastern Area (Trenches 5-10) | 11 |
| Discussion and Conclusions | 14 |
| Archive and Publications | 14 |
| Publication | 15 |
| Acknowledgements | 15 |
| Bibliography | 15 |
| Oasis Information | 15 |

FIGURES

| | |
|---|----|
| Figure 1: Site Location (Original Scale 1:50 000) | 3 |
| Figure 2: Location of proposed development | 3 |
| Figure 3: Western site area showing interpreted geophysical survey results and evaluation trenches | 9 |
| Figure 4: Eastern site area showing interpreted geophysical survey results and evaluation trenches | 10 |
| Figure 5: Trench 1: view west (1m scales) | 11 |
| Figure 6: Trench 2: view north-east; 1m scales | 11 |
| Figure 7: Trench 5; view south-east; 1m scale | 12 |
| Figure 8: Trench 5; clay & gravel geophysical signal | 13 |
| Figure 9: Trench 9; view north-east; (1m scales) | 13 |

An Archaeological Evaluation on Land South of Spinney Drive, Barlestone, Leicestershire (SK 429 023)

Roger Kipling

Summary

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken in May and June 2013 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Price Bailey Fiduciary Ltd on land south of Spinney Drive, Barlestone Leicestershire. The fieldwork was undertaken as a preliminary to the submission of a planning application for the residential development, following a geophysical survey, in order to assess the potential impact of the development on any archaeological remains that may have been present.

The archaeological evaluation on land south of Spinney Drive, Barlestone, Leicestershire, produced no evidence of archaeological activity, with the exception of limited evidence for medieval agricultural activity in the form of plough furrows in the western part of the site.

The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A75.2013.

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Spinney Drive, Barlestone, Leicestershire. A desk-based archaeological assessment commissioned for the site established that a range of finds from the prehistoric to post-medieval period had been discovered in the surrounding area of the proposed development (Browning 2012). These included a Late Mesolithic to Early Bronze Age prehistoric flint scatter from a location c.600m south of the site, whilst local fieldwalking in the 1980s and 2008/9 produced a range of prehistoric flints. Later prehistoric evidence included an Iron Age beehive quern found east of Osbaston Hall and two possible Iron Age rectangular enclosures 1km south-east of the site.

Evidence for the Roman period focused on Mill Field, some 800m to the south-west of the proposed area of development, where fieldwalking during the 1980s produced a number of pottery sherds. Further afield, a corroded Roman coin was found in Osbaston around 1km south of the proposed development area.

Cartographic evidence indicates that the land has remained in agricultural use for several centuries with little evidence for earlier development. Consequently, any archaeological remains present were likely to be of pre-medieval periods. A follow-up geophysical survey proved inconclusive (Richardson 2013).

In consequence Leicestershire County Council, acting in its role as Local Planning Authority, recommended the need for a secondary phase of archaeological investigation comprising a programme of evaluation trenching. The investigation was required in order to provide an adequate sample of the development area and to assess the likely archaeological impact of the development proposals. The agreed scheme was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (ULAS 2013).

The fieldwork specified was intended to provide further indications of the character and extent of any buried archaeological remains in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains might be assessed. Fieldwork was carried out in May and June 2013 and involved the machine excavation of ten trial trenches in order to provide the c.3% of the area identified for archaeological evaluative works. The number, size, orientation and distribution of the trenches equated to an area of c.650m² of excavation. The trenches were positioned in order to target geophysical anomalies as well as the locations of proposed buildings.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG March 2012). 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 proposed development site (SP 473 757) is located on the southeast edge of the village of Barlestone, which lies c.15km to the west of Leicester, in the Borough of Hinckley and Bosworth, at NGR SK 429 053. The site consists of an arable field, paddocks, a spinney and an area of scrubland. A brook flows northeast to southwest through the spinney.

The superficial geology consists of diamacton till (Oadby member) with seams of underlying geology likely consisting of deposits of River terrace sands and gravels. The site is effectively flat, lies at a height of c.75m O.D. and appears to be the original topography.



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

Reproduced from the Landranger 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 100029495

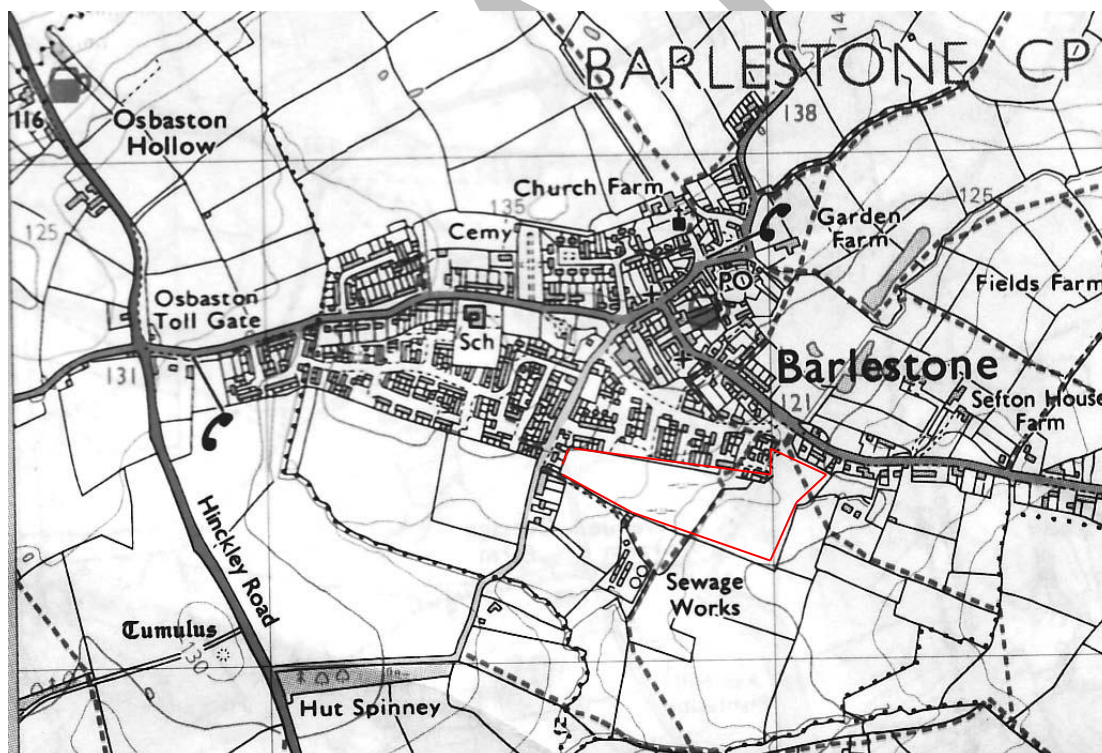


Figure 2 Location of Proposed development (outlined)

Reproduced from the Landranger 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 100029495

Archaeological and Historical Background (from Browning 2012)

A search of the Historic Environment Record (HER) within 1km of the development area has revealed evidence for archaeological sites from the prehistoric to the post-medieval period. No HER sites lie within the application area but a number of archaeological finds and sites are located within 500m of the site.

Prehistoric

A tumulus in Mill Field is noted approximately 100m southwest of the site and there are strong indications for prehistoric activity around it (**MLE17120** SK 418 049). Field-walking carried out both in the 1980s and in 2008/9 has produced various prehistoric flints, some of which are thought to be Mesolithic and there is apparently a concentration around the mound. A Neolithic axe was found in 2009. The largest accumulation of later flint was also around the mill mound, including early Bronze Age scrapers, cores and waste flakes. Further flint artefacts, comprising ten flakes, a blade, seven cores, four scrapers, five burins and six pot boilers, were found during trial trenching on the mound in 2009.

There is further evidence for prehistoric activity in the area. In 1975, a complete beehive quern (Late Iron Age) was found whilst deep ploughing in a field east of Osbaston Hall, c.700m south of the area (**MLE6544** SK 425 044). Two possible Iron Age rectangular enclosures linked by ditches are located approximately 1km south of the site (**MLE2994** SK 423 040). A flint scatter is recorded on the highest point of a spur between two rivers (approximately 600m southeast of the proposed development area), which suggests occupation during the Late Mesolithic to the Early Bronze Age. The finds included blades, scrapers and cores (**MLE7566** SK 427 046).

Roman

Mill Field, 100m south of the proposed development area, has also produced evidence for Roman activity (**MLE17118** SK 419 049). During field-walking in the 1980s, one sherd of Roman pottery was recovered. A further 20 sherds were found during field-walking in 2009 and three possible Roman sherds were found during trial trenching on the mill mound later in the year.

In the wider area, a corroded Roman bronze coin, possibly an As, was found in Osbaston approximately 800m south of the proposed development area (**MLE10257** SK 424 043).

Medieval

There is considerable medieval evidence in the locality, however the proposed development site is located outside the medieval villages cores of both Barlestone to the north (**MLE2703** centroid SK 427 057) and Osbaston to the south (**MLE3005** centroid SK 424 044). St. Giles's Church (**MLE2701**), a Grade II listed building, is located approximately 600m north of the site in Barlestone. It has medieval origins and is mentioned in a Matriculus of 1220. The present Parish church was built in 1854/5 using masonry from the earlier medieval chapel; however the chancel is 14th century.

Within the historic settlement core of Barlestone, a body sherd of dark green glazed medieval pottery dating to the 13th-14th centuries was recovered from behind the

Three Tuns (**MLE9246**). Ten sherds of coarse medieval pottery and a grey sherd of sandy fabric found during building work south of the Manor House, approximately 200m northeast of the proposed development area (**MLE6783** SK 426 054). The Manor House (**MLE9291** SK 426 055) is located on the southern edge of medieval Barlestone, c.350m north of the proposed development area. It is thought to be one of the manor sites mentioned in Domesday, although the house that now occupies the site was built in 1700, after the destruction of the earlier building. The present building is listed (Grade II- **MLE11700**).

Within the conservation area of Osbaston, southeast of the proposed development area, there is documentary evidence for a medieval chapel, which was abandoned prior to the 18th century (**MLE3004** SK 425 043). An artefact scatter, comprising a medieval coin, harness pendant and spindle whorl, was recovered during metal detecting south of the Rookery in Osbaston (**MLE10256** SK 42363 04211). The HER also records fishponds which were visible north of Osbaston Hall on the early 19th century Surveyor's map and the late 19th century OS 1st edition map (**MLE16600** SK 423 046).

Medieval and post-medieval

One sherd of medieval pottery and seven sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from the topsoil during a watching brief at 5, Main Street Osbaston in 2008 (**MLE17113** SK 427 057). During this work, a possible former drainage or property boundary ditch was also observed running alongside the road and a single sherd of 18th century pottery was recovered from the fill (**MLE17114** SK 428 057).

During field-walking in the 1980s 43 sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from the **Mill Field**. Field-walking in 2009 recovered over 100 more sherds of medieval and over 200 sherds of post-medieval pottery, which appeared to form a fairly even spread. Trial trenching on the mill mound in 2009 found a further eight sherds of pottery, all dating from the 12th-14th centuries (**MLE17119** SK 418 049).

Post-medieval/modern

The closest monument of this period is a post-medieval windmill mound, recorded in Mill Field, less than 100m southwest of the proposed development area (**MLE2993** SK 419 050). The mound had been thought to represent a barrow but map evidence, including Prior's map of 1777, depicts a post mill. Trial trenching, undertaken in 2009, recorded 17th century construction layers and produced post-medieval finds including 26 sherds of late 17th-early 19th century pottery. The mound appears to have been constructed in the last quarter of the 17th century. The cross trees of the mill presumably sat on top of the make-up layers. After the mill was taken down, the recess at the summit was backfilled with garden soil. The latest pottery from the backfill dates to between c.1790- c.1820.

There is documentary evidence for a post-medieval windmill at a location approximately 850m northeast of the proposed development area. Map evidence suggests that this was in use during the 19th century, as it is depicted on 1800s maps, including the early C19th Surveyor's map but not on 1770 or 1904 (**MLE2700** SK 432 055). 'Roundhouse Corner' is the local name for the corner of Barton and Bosworth Roads (and West End). The site of a roundhouse lockup was shown on an 1841 Estate Map **MLE9492** SK 426 056). A pound was shown on the same 1841

estate map and is also mentioned in 19th century parish records (MLE9493 SK 428 056).

Aims and Objectives

The aims of the evaluation were as follows:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains within the development site
- To assess vulnerability/sensitivity of any exposed remains
- To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to enable the archaeological implications of the proposed development to be assessed
- To assess the impact of previous land use on the site
- To inform a strategy to avoid or mitigate impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains
- To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire HER.

Specific evaluation aims are to:-

- Seek to establish the nature of the geophysical anomalies and to determine if they are of archaeological significance

In addition, the archaeological evaluation was deemed to have the potential to contribute to the following research aims:

Mesolithic (Myers 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2010)

The exploitation of stream side locations during the Mesolithic (Myers 2006). Palaeoenvironmental evidence could provide information on land use.

Neolithic and Early Middle Bronze Age (Clay 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2010)

The development of ceremonial monuments and their environs – the area contains several prehistoric Ceremonial landscapes and the scheme may uncover archaeological assets associated with these. Palaeoenvironmental evidence may provide information on agricultural practices and land use.

Late Iron Age (Willis 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2010)

There are Iron Age settlements in the vicinity of the scheme. Information on the sequence and chronology of settlements may be recovered and palaeoenvironmental evidence could provide information on agricultural practices and land use. Artefacts can provide evidence for evidence for craft industry and exchange across broad landscape areas.

The Roman Period (Taylor 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)

There are several Roman sites within the study area including enclosures and a Roman road. The evaluation may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman

transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy

The results of the evaluation will enable reasoned and informed recommendations to be made to the local planning authority and, if appropriate, a suitable mitigation strategy for the proposed development to be formulated.

This specification conforms to the requirements of the National Planning Policy Framework (2012). It has been designed in accordance with current best archaeological practice and the appropriate national standards and guidelines including:

- *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991);
- *Model Briefs and Specifications for Archaeological Assessments and Field Evaluations* (Association of County Archaeological Officers, 1994);
- *Code of Conduct* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2010);
- *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (Institute for Archaeologists, 2010);
- *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (Association of Local Government Officers, 2003);
- *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicestershire County Council 1997)

Methodology

Archaeological Trial Trenches

Prior to the commencement of works an Accession Code was obtained and the required archive deposition forms completed. An OASIS online record was initiated and the key fields completed on Details, Location and Creator forms. Following recommendations from the Senior Planning Archaeologist (SPA) of Leicestershire County Council, as advisor to the planning authority, a programme of evaluation trenching was undertaken.

It was proposed that c.650m² of trenching, the equivalent of 12 trial trenches, each measuring 30m x 1.8m wide, be excavated in order to cover the 3% sample required by the brief (Figures 2 & 3). Practicalities necessitated two changes to the trenching strategy as outlined in the Written Scheme of Investigation. Firstly, the opening of two trenches within the area of paddock in the south-west part of the site was not possible due to problems of access, and secondly, the two small trenches planned for the open area to the east were amalgamated due to boggy ground.

Topsoil and overburden was removed by a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket (c.2m wide), under archaeological supervision. The spoil generated during the evaluation was mounded away from the edges of each trench. Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately. Mechanical excavation ceased at undisturbed natural deposits. The trenches were recorded at an appropriate scale by measured drawing and photography and were GPS-located to Ordnance Survey National Grid.

A photographic record, utilising black and white negative film, supplemented by high resolution digital data capture, was maintained during the course of the fieldwork and included:

- the site prior to commencement of fieldwork;
- the site during work, showing specific stages of fieldwork;

Upon completion of the evaluation trenching, the excavated trenches were backfilled and loosely compacted.

Results

In a slight modification to the Written Scheme of Investigation (ULAS 2013), c.600m² of archaeological trial trenches, comprising 10 trenches measuring 30m x 2m wide, were excavated.

Excavation was undertaken using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket, with topsoil and overburden removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision.

Western Area (Trenches 1-4)

Trenches 1-4 were opened in order to investigate the paddocks and land west of the brook, an area which the geophysical survey had indicated was archaeologically quiet. **Trench 1** (Figure 4) was aligned east-west and measured 30m x 2m and between 0.27m and 0.61m deep. A pale grey-brown sandy clay loam topsoil overlay a pale orange-brown clay silt subsoil which in turn overlay a mottled pale bluish-grey and dull pale brown clay natural. Regular dull red sand bands diagonally crossed the trench. There were no indications of archaeological activity.

To the east, **Trenches 2 & 3** (Figure 5) revealed a comparable sequence of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural orange-brown sandy clay. Trench 2 was subdivided into 15m long lengths (2a and 2b) in order to avoid a gateway. Both Trenches 2b and 3 produced evidence for medieval cultivation in the form of plough furrows, in the case of the latter represented by 1m-wide dark bands set at regular 5m intervals along the length of the trench. **Trench 4**, positioned on the edge of marshy ground extending to the east, demonstrated a change in natural to a pale yellow-brown clay with yellow sand banding. The trench produced no archaeology.

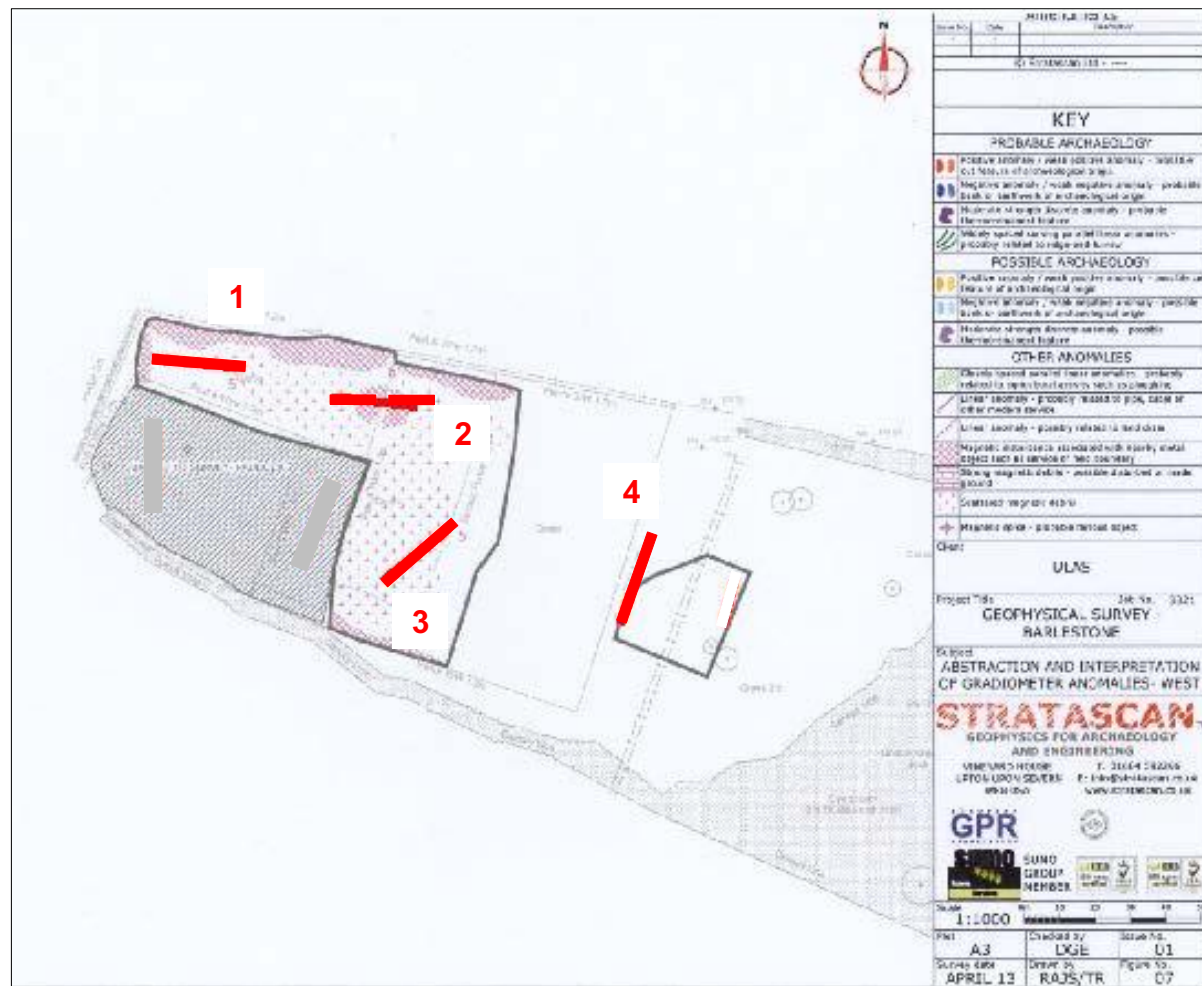


Figure 3: Western site area showing interpreted geophysical survey results and evaluation trenches

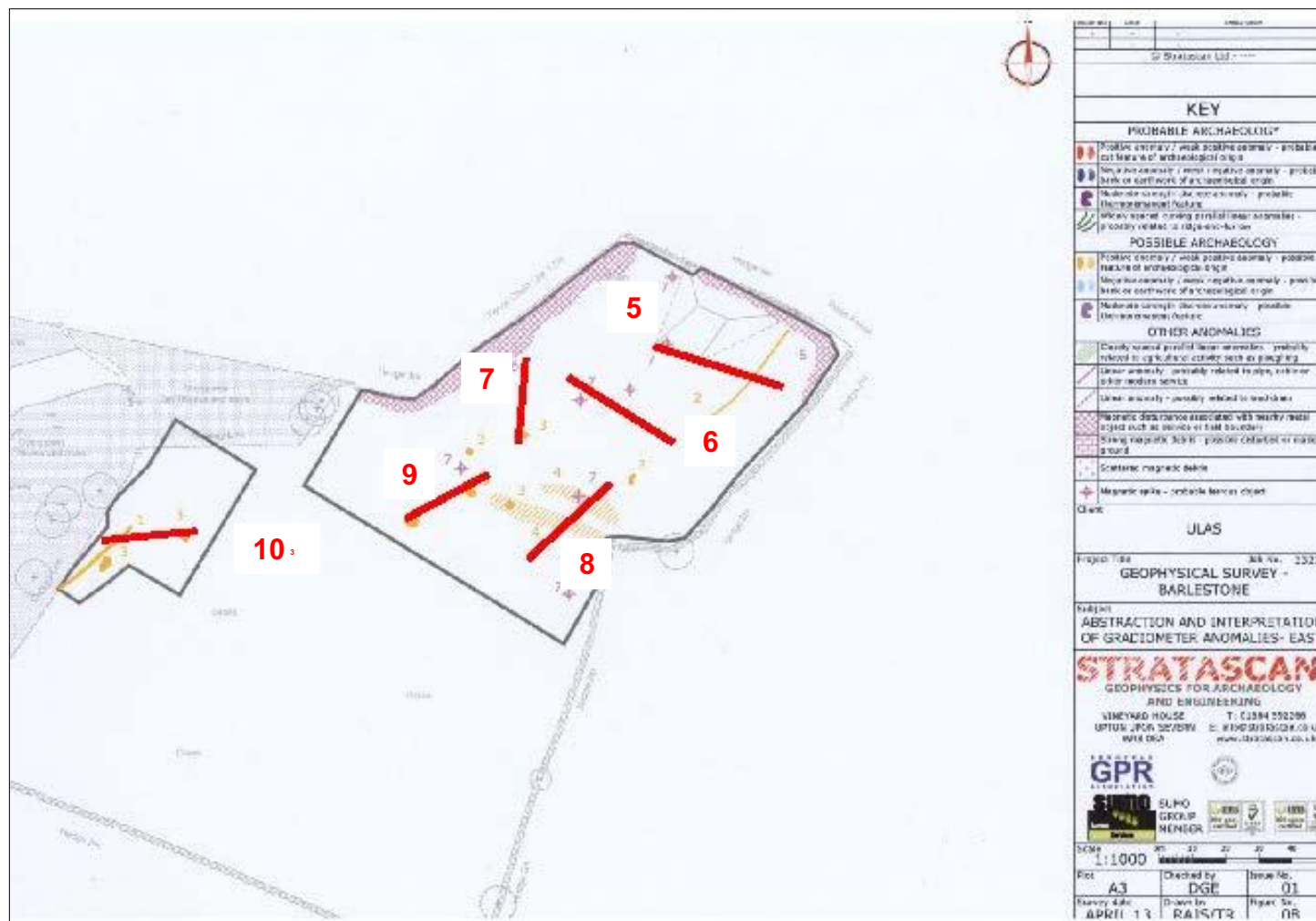


Figure 4: Eastern site area showing interpreted geophysical survey results and evaluation trenches



Figure 5: Trench 1: view west (1m scales)



Figure 6: Trench 2: view northeast; 1m scales

Eastern Area (Trenches 5-10)

Trenches 5-10 were located in the eastern half of the development, an area at the time of writing under arable cultivation. **Trench 5** (Figures 6 & 7), 30m x 2m wide and

0.20m-0.83m deep, was in part positioned in order to target a positive geophysical survey anomaly. The removal of 0.14m-0.27m of pale grey-brown sandy loam ploughsoil and 0.24m-0.38m of mid orange-brown sandy-clay subsoil revealed a clear 0.75m-wide band of compact reddish brown clay with heavy gravel content crossing the trench northeast to south-west at its east end. Sample excavation confirmed this as a natural variation within the pale orange-brown clay natural. Its position tallied with the geophysical anomaly. The trench also featured three modern stone-filled field drains.



Figure 7: Trench 5; view south-east; 1m scale



Figure 8: Trench 5; clay & gravel geophysical signal

The remainder of the trenches were also archaeologically blank, although **Trench 9** also featured modern field drains (Figure 8).



Figure 9: Trench 9; view north-east; (1m scales)

| TRENCH | ORIENTATION | LENGTH AND WIDTH (metres) | DESCRIPTION | DEPTH (MIN-MAX metres) |
|--------|-------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------|
| 1 | E-W | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.21-0.28m, subsoil 0.10-0.26m. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.27-0.61 |
| 2A | E-W | 15 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.15-0.23m, subsoil 0.08-0.22m. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.42-0.57 |
| 2B | E-W | 15 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.19-0.33m, subsoil 0.13-0.21m. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.59-0.59 |
| 3 | SW-NE | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.21-0.41m, subsoil 0.03-0.08m. Medieval plough furrows visible. | 0.32-0.47 |
| 4 | N-S | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.17-0.28m, subsoil 0.03-0.11m. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.32-0.45 |
| 5 | E-W | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.14-0.27m, subsoil 0.22-0.38m. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.20-0.83 |
| 6 | E-W | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.18-0.29m, subsoil not present. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.32-0.42 |
| 7 | N-S | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.24-0.40, subsoil not present. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.33-0.46 |
| 8 | SW-NE | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.17-0.30m, subsoil 0.09-0.18m. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.41-0.43 |
| 9 | SW-NE | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.15-0.25m, subsoil 0.16-0.28m. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.38-0.48 |
| 10 | E-W | 30 x 2.0 | Topsoil 0.22-0.46m, subsoil not present. No archaeological finds or features. | 0.22-0.46 |

Discussion and Conclusions

The archaeological evaluation on land south of Spinney Drive, Barlestone, Leicestershire, produced no evidence of prehistoric or Romano-British activity, either in terms of finds or features, reflecting the inconclusive results of the geophysical survey. There was, however, limited evidence for medieval ridge and furrow cultivation in the form of furrows in a number of trenches, with the exception of the central zone associated with the brook, the markedly wetter character of which would suggest an absence of occupation across this area.

Archive and Publications

The site archive (X.A75.2013), consisting of paper and photographic records, will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Service.

The paper archive consists of:

- Trench records sheets
- Photographic record indices
- 11 digital photographs
- Monochrome 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

Roger Kipling and Nick Hannon of ULAS undertook the archaeological evaluation on behalf of Price Bailey Fiduciary Ltd. The project was managed by Patrick Clay.

Bibliography

- Brown, D., 2008 *Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives* (Institute for Archaeologists)
- Browning, J., 2012 *A desk-based assessment for land south of Spinney Drive, Barlestone, Leicestershire* (NGR SK 429 053) ULAS Report 2012-167
- Clay, P., 2006 'The Neolithic and Early to Middle Bronze Age in N. J. Cooper (ed) 2006 69-89.
- Cooper, N.J., (ed) 2006 *The Archaeology of the East Midlands An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda*. Leicester Archaeology Monograph 13.
- English Heritage 2010, *English Heritage Thematic Research Strategies. Research Strategy for Prehistory*, Consultation Draft June 2010.
- English Heritage 2012, *Research Strategy for the Roman-Period Historic Environment*. Feb 2012.
- Knight, D.; Vyner, B.; Allen, C.; 2012, *East Midlands Heritage. An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*. Nottingham Archaeological Monographs 6, University of Nottingham and York Archaeological Trust.
- Myers, A., 2006 'The Mesolithic in N. J. Cooper (ed) 2006 51-69
- Taylor, J., 2006 'The Roman Period in N. J. Cooper (ed) 2006 137-160.
- Willis, S., 2006 'The Later Bronze Age and Iron Age in N. J. Cooper (ed) 2006 89-136. IfA, 2008 *Codes of Conduct and Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*.
- Richardson, T., 2013, *Geophysical Survey. Barlestone*. Stratascan Report J3321

Oasis Information

| | |
|----------------------|---|
| Project Name | Land south of Spinney Drive, Barlestone, Leicestershire |
| Project Type | Archaeological evaluation |
| Project Manager | Patrick Clay |
| Project Supervisor | Roger Kipling |
| Previous/Future work | Development |
| Current Land Use | Agricultural/paddock |

| | |
|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Development Type | Residential |
| Reason for Investigation | NPPF |
| Position in the Planning Process | Pre-determination |
| Site Co ordinates | NGR SK 429 023 |
| Start/end dates of field work | May/June 2013 |
| Archive Recipient | Leicestershire County Council |
| Study Area | unknown |

Roger Kipling
ULAS
University of Leicester
University Road
Leicester LE1 7RH
Tel:0116 252 2836
Fax: 0116 252 2614
Email: rwk1@le.ac.uk

© ULAS 16/05/2013

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



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

