



University of
Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An archaeological strip, plan and
sample excavation on land at
Kingswood Lodge, London Road,
Great Glen, Leicestershire**

NGR: SP 657 974

Mathew Morris



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On land at Kingswood Lodge, London Road, Great Glen**

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An archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation on land at Kingswood Lodge, London Road, Great Glen, Leicestershire (SP 657 974)

Mathew Morris

Summery

An archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation was carried out at Kingswood Lodge, London Road, Great Glen, Leicestershire (SP 657 974) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 17 September 2013. The work was carried out in advance of construction of a new detached dwelling with associated landscaping. Work involved supervision and inspection of machine removed overburden over the unexcavated footprint of the proposed building. No archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed during the course of the work and the result of the investigation proved negative. Much of the ground within the site appeared to have been extensively disturbed during previous occupation from the 19th century onwards, presumably activity associated with Manor Farm which was formerly located immediately west of the site. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A155.2013.

Introduction

This document constitutes the final report for an archaeological scheme of work (strip, plan and sample excavation) carried out on land at Kingswood Lodge, London Road, Great Glen, Leicestershire (SP 657 974; Figure 1). The work was carried by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 17 September 2013.

The proposed construction of a new detached dwelling with associated landscaping, alterations and extensions to Kingswood Lodge (Planning Application No. 13/00822/FUL) was located *c.*55m to the south of London Road and *c.*130m east of Orchard Lane on the southern outskirts of Great Glen (NGR SP 657 974), approximately 10km south-east of Leicester. The total development area covers *c.*0.1 ha.

The strip, plan and sample excavation was requested by the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council as archaeological advisor to the local planning authority, Harborough District Council, in accordance with *NPPF Sec. 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* (DCLG March 2012), as laid out in the *Specification for an archaeological strip, map and sample excavation* (Mortimer 2013).

Geology and Topography

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 156 (Leicester), indicates that the underlying geology likely consists of superficial deposits of diamicton overlying bedrock deposits of mudstone belonging to the Charmouth Mudstone Formation (BGS 2008). The site lies on flat ground at *c.*100m above Ordnance Datum (OD).

Historical and Archaeological Background

Great Glen is believed to be the center of a 9th century Anglo-Saxon royal estate. A charter dated AD 849 refers to it as *Glenne*, whilst in 1086 the Domesday Book names it *Glen*. This is celtic for ‘valley’ but probably refers to the old name of the river Sence used as a settlement

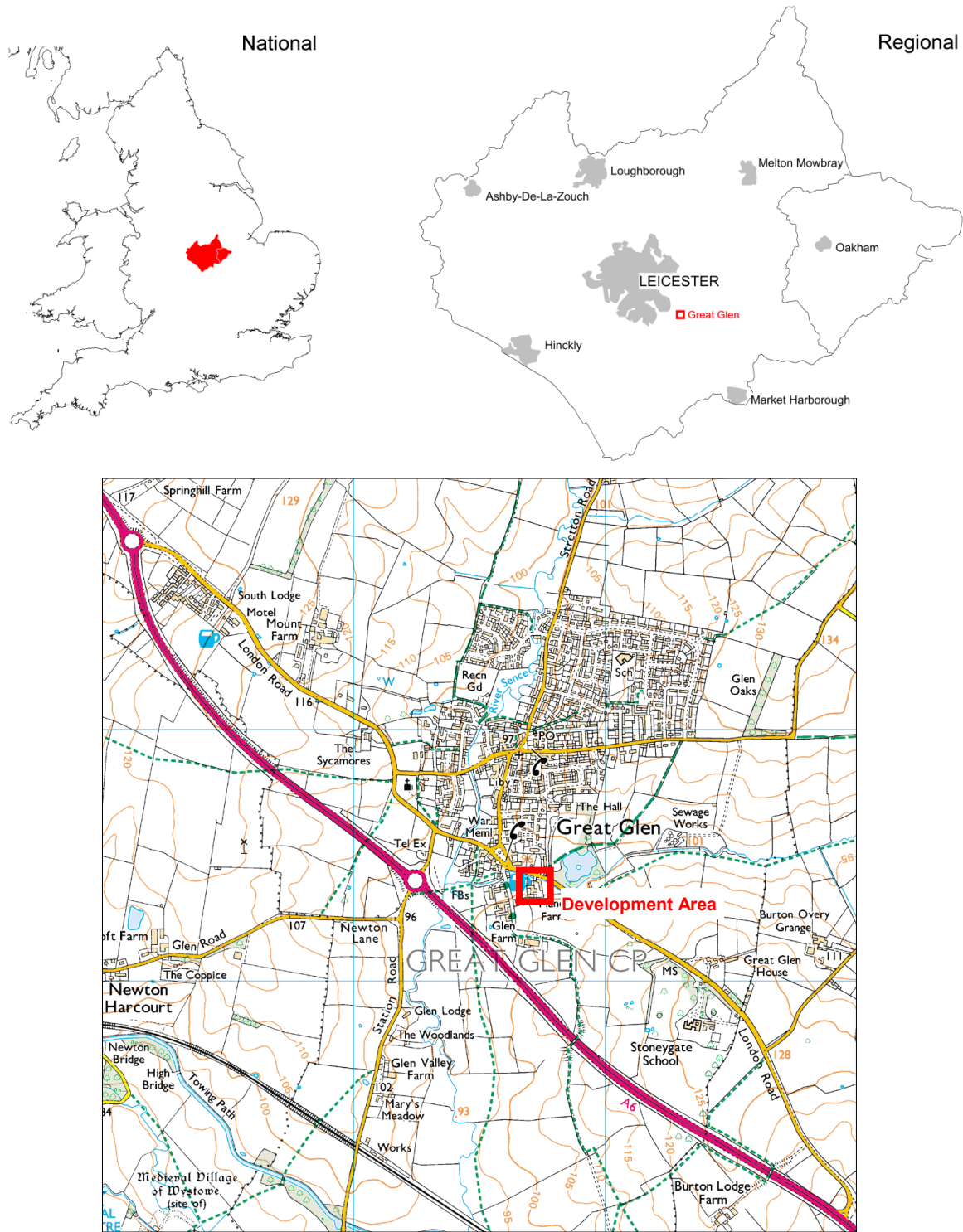


Figure 1: Location maps with development area highlighted

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name (Bourne 2003, 49). The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the project area lies within the historic medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Great Glen (HER ref. MLE8447). Immediately south of the site, two plots of land with no ridge and furrow on them could be of medieval to post-medieval date (MLE8446). These suggest that the project area was historically within the village core rather than part of the outlying field system. South-west of the site, west of Orchard Lane, further

medieval remains are known (MLE1604) including a building with a stone footing, ditches, house platforms and a hollow way. Iron Age and Roman pottery has also been found in the vicinity (MLE7841).

Available historic mapping from the 19th century to present day shows that the site lies in a small field immediately east of a complex of buildings known as Manor Farm. These have now been replaced by a small housing development of which Kingswood Lodge is a part. The small field presently forms garden for Kingswood Lodge.

Archaeological Aims and Objectives

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date of any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To advance understanding of the local heritage assets.
- To produce a report and archive of any results.

Methodology

The project involved the controlled supervision of overburden removal and other groundworks across the unexcavated footprint of the proposed dwelling and access road by an experienced professional archaeologist to determine the presence/absence of any archaeological remains. This was carried out using a mini-360° mechanical excavator with a c.1.6m wide ditching bucket.

All exposed areas, sections and spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. Any archaeological deposits were hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as appropriate to addressing the objectives of the archaeological work. Field notes were recorded on a pro-forma ULAS watching brief record form.

All work followed the *Institute for Archaeologists' (IFA) Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

Results

Overburden was stripped down to archaeology or natural substratum across approximately seventy-five percent of the proposed building footprint (Figure 2), the only area unavailable for examination being its south-western corner because an existing hedge/wall had yet to be removed. Along the southern side of the site natural substratum was reached at c.0.7m below ground level; along the northern side it was c.0.97m below ground level.

In the southern half of the building footprint, c.0.1m of turf and c.0.5m of modern overburden (believed by the client to relate to the demolition of farm buildings associated with Manor Farm before he built Kingswood Lodge) was found to cover c.0.1m of dark grey clayey-silt (Figure 3). The modern overburden was a mixture of soil, 19th and 20th century building rubble (including plastic sheeting) and redeposited natural clay; the grey clayey-silt underneath appeared to be preserved topsoil, representing the original ground level. This was removed to expose natural greyish-orange clay.



Figure 2: the southern half of the building footprint, looking south-east



Figure 3: section showing stratigraphic sequence on southern side of the building footprint, looking south

A modern service trench ran across the project area from south-west to north-east (Figure 5). North of this, the stratigraphic sequence was broadly the same except that the preserved topsoil was no longer present. Instead, a crude fieldstone and crushed brick surface was impressed into the natural clay. This is presumed to be a yard associated with the former Manor Farm.

In the northern half of the building footprint continuing into the area of the new access road, c.0.1m of turf and c.0.7m of modern overburden were removed to expose a series of parallel

pitch-coated timber planks placed side by side (Figure 4). These may have been the remains of a plank floor or a collapsed wall panel of a timber building. They rested on *c.*50mm of cinder and *c.*0.12m of brick rubble which was impressed into mottled greyish-brown/orange clay.

No subsoil was observed across the site, with topsoil or 19th/20th century activity directly overlying natural ground. This would suggest the ground has been previously reduced sometime in the past and no evidence of activity pre-dating the 19th century was observed.



Figure 4: timber planks, possibly the floor of an ephemeral farm building in the northern half of the building footprint, looking north-east

Discussion

Overall, no archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed during the course of the work and the result of the investigation proved negative (Figure 5). Much of the ground within the site appeared to have been extensively disturbed during previous occupation from the 19th century onwards, presumably activity associated with Manor Farm which was formerly located immediately west of the site.

If the timber planks found in the northern half of the area do represent a floor, no evidence of building walls was found. This suggests it may have been something ephemeral such as a large shed. No evidence for such a building appears on available historic mapping dating back to the 19th century, spanning a period during which the building must have existed judging by the relatively modern brick rubble present beneath it. This reinforces the notion that it is the remains of an ephemeral farm building.

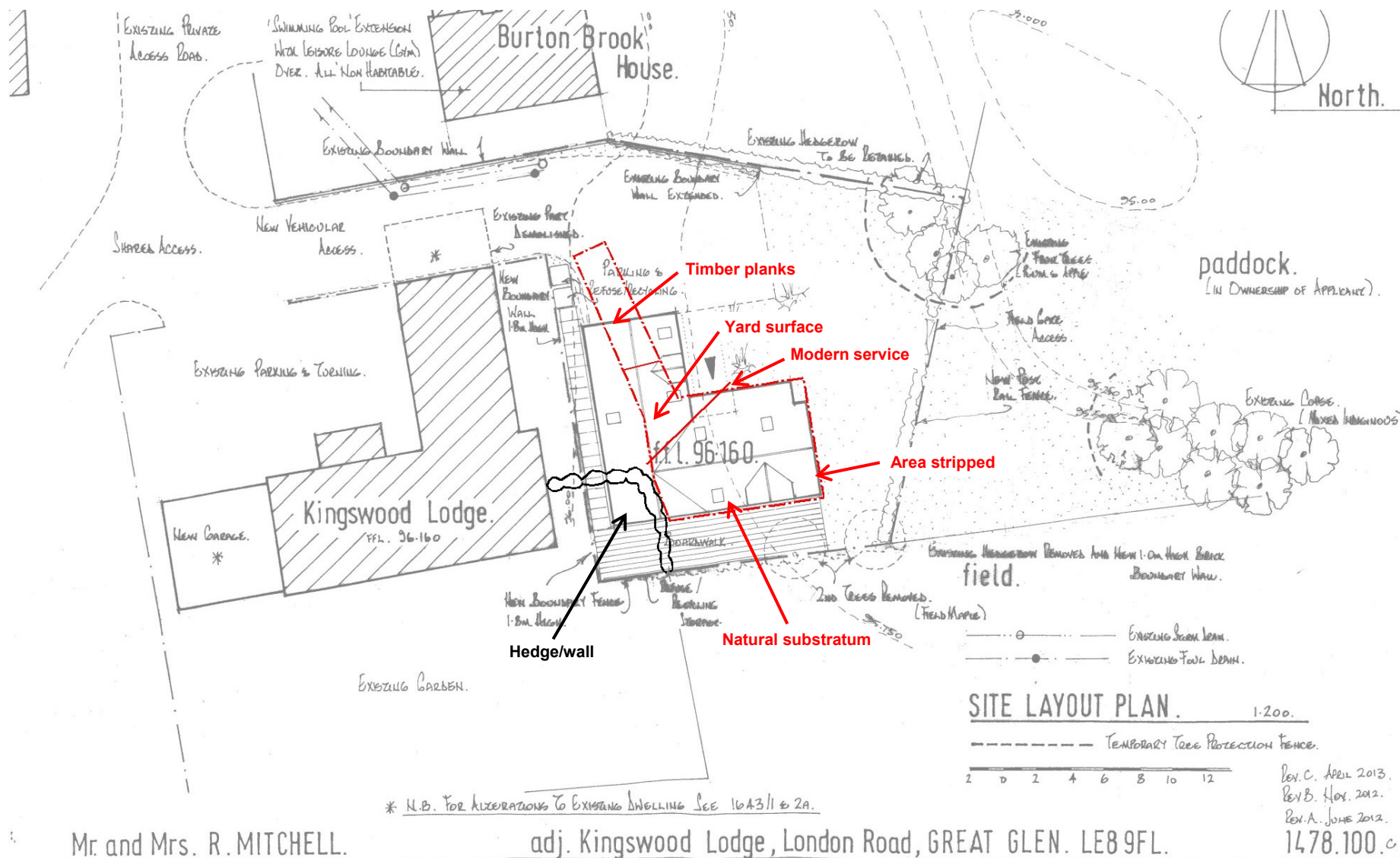


Figure 5: Plan showing project area and the results of the archaeological work, plan supplied by client

Bibliography

- B.G.S., 2008 *England and Wales Sheet 156 Leicester: Bedrock and Superficial Deposits*.
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Bourne, J., 2003 *Understanding Leicestershire and Rutland Place Names*.
Mortimer, S., 2013 *A Specification for an archaeological strip, map and sample excavation:
land at Kingswood Lodge, London Road, Great Glen, Leicestershire*. CgMs Consulting

Archive

The site archive consists of:

- 1 A4 watching brief record form
- 1 A4 annotated plan
- 9 digital photographs

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A155.2013

Publication

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

OASIS database project number - **universi1-160151**

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.

Acknowledgements

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