



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services



**An Archaeological
Evaluation for land off
Mundesley Road,
Hamilton, Leicester**

NGR: SK 6295 0665

James Harvey

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Land off Mundesley Road
Hamilton, Leicester**

NGR: SK 6295 0665 centre

James Harvey

For: Maber Associates Ltd

Approved by:

Signed:



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An Archaeological Evaluation for Land off Mundesley Road, Hamilton, Leicester (SK 6295 0665, centre)

James Harvey

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land off Mundesley Road, Hamilton, Leicester (SK 6295 0665, centre) on the 26th March 2014, on behalf Maber Associates Ltd. This work followed on from a previous desk-based assessment and archaeological evaluation that had highlighted the potential for archaeological deposits to be present within the application area of a proposed junior school. A total of five trenches were excavated across the application area that revealed no evidence of archaeological activity.

The archive will be deposited with Leicester City Museum Service under the accession number A10.2014.

1. Introduction

Planning consent is currently being sought for the construction of a new junior school on land off Mundesley Road, Hamilton, Leicester (SK 6295 0665, centre, figs. 1 and 2)

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological trial trenching that took place on the 26th March 2014. It follows earlier evaluation towards the centre of the application area (Richards 2005) and subsequent desk-based assessment (Browning 2014) that concluded that the site had archaeological potential.

A strategy for the work was set out in the Written Scheme for Investigation, (Clay 2014, hereinafter WSI). The fieldwork was carried out in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (NPPF; Department of Communities and Local Government 22.03.2012).

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The application area lies approximately 4.6km east of Leicester city centre on the north-east side of the A47 link road (Hamilton Way) within a recently developed housing estate. The centre of Humberstone village is located to the south-west. The site is located on a north-facing slope and currently comprises rough pasture within an area which encompasses an area of *c.* 1.84 hectares.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates that the underlying geology of the application area is likely to consist of mudstone of the Blue Lias Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 190 to 204 million years ago in the Jurassic and Triassic Periods, indicating a local environment previously dominated by shallow seas. The superficial deposits are Oadby Member diamicton <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed 26th March 2014).

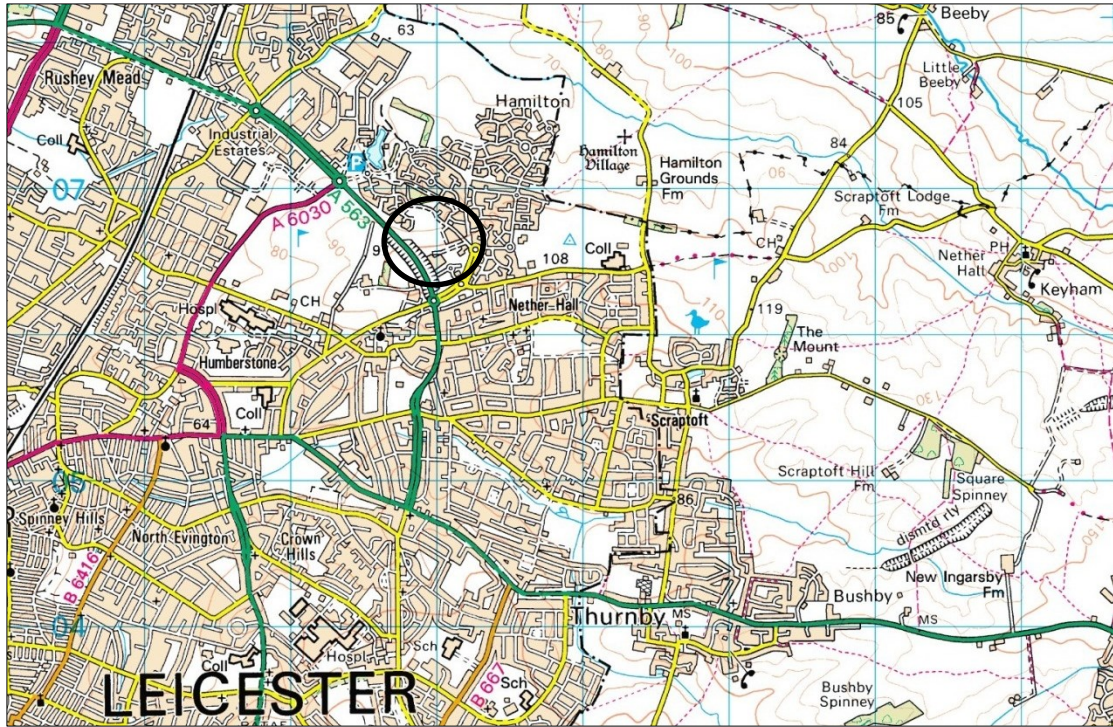


Figure 1: Location Map (Landranger 141) 1:50 000 ©Crown Copyright. Licence No. 100021186.
Location of site ringed.



Figure 2 Site Location Plan (supplied by the client)

3. Archaeological Background (from Browning 2014)

The site is positioned within a landscape particularly rich in late prehistoric remains. The development site itself is located within a Romano-British field system recorded on the Leicester HER (**MLC2263**) and is immediately south-east of an Iron Age field system (**MLC1434**). It is located c150m north of an unenclosed Iron Age settlement, with evidence for bronze and iron-working (**MLC567**) and a sub-rectangular Bronze Age enclosure (**MLC1302**). Iron Age settlement activity (**MLC1305**) and a probable Iron Age field system (**MLC1434**) were discovered less than 200m west of the proposed development site (on the west side of Hamilton Way). The site is less than 300m east of a largely unenclosed Iron Age settlement bounded on the north by a ditch (**MLC2363**), which appears to be an extension of the previous settlement. The archaeology of both settlements, divided by the modern Hamilton way, appears to be closely inter-related.

Prehistoric worked flint and possible field system (early Neolithic to late Iron Age) has been located at Quakesick Valley, Humberstone (**MLC1519**), only 150m to the east of the site.

The proposed development site has itself been subject to partial archaeological investigation, as part of a previous application including geophysical survey (Butler 2001) and trial trenching (Richards 2005). The geophysical survey comprised both magnetic susceptibility and fluxgate gradiometry (magnetometer survey) and identified a former trackway and ferrous litter on the site. Four trenches of varying lengths were excavated within the development area. One revealed the remains of medieval furrows orientated north-south. A trench located to the north of the current plot (now beneath properties off Mundesley Road) contained evidence for two ditches and a gully. Although no dating evidence was recovered, the ditches showed signs of re-cutting, indicating a long sequence of use. The trenches within this area also suggested a large proportion of the site had suffered considerable modern disturbance associated with the construction of Hamilton Way (Richards 2005, 13).

4. Aims and Objectives

The main aims 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 development
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

5. Methodology

The *WSI* stated that a c. 2.5% sample of the application area should be subject to trial trenching (c. 280m²), the equivalent of five 30m x 1.8m trenches.

The topsoil and overlying layers were removed under full archaeological supervision until either the top of archaeology or natural undisturbed ground was reached, or to a maximum safe depth given the specific site conditions.

The bases of the trenches were cleaned in areas where potential archaeology was observed. Any archaeological remains would be recorded and sample excavated in order to determine the character and date of any remains. Bulk soil samples were to be taken as appropriate in order to evaluate the environmental potential of the site. Archaeological contexts as a cut are indicated by square brackets e.g. [09], while those that are fills are indicated by round brackets e.g. (07).

The trenches were located using a GPS receiver and the final plans completed with the aid of TurboCad v.15 design software.

All the work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct (2010) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations (2008)*.

6. Results

The excavated trenches were located as set out in the WSI (Fig. 3), although the south-westernmost trench (Trench 5) was moved to the eastwards in order to avoid two substantial drains.

The overlying deposits were consistent across the whole site. The topsoil was composed of a dark grey brown clayey loam with occasional chalk and pebbles. This directly overlaid the substratum within all the excavated trenches. The natural substratum was reached in all trenches and consisted of yellowish brown clay with chalk and pebble inclusions on the higher ground to the north and east of the site (Trenches 1, 2, and 5). Within the lower part of the site (Trench 3 and the southern end of Trench 4) reddish brown clayey sand was recorded that probably represents the southern extent of Wigston Member sands and gravels recorded immediately north of the site on the geological survey.

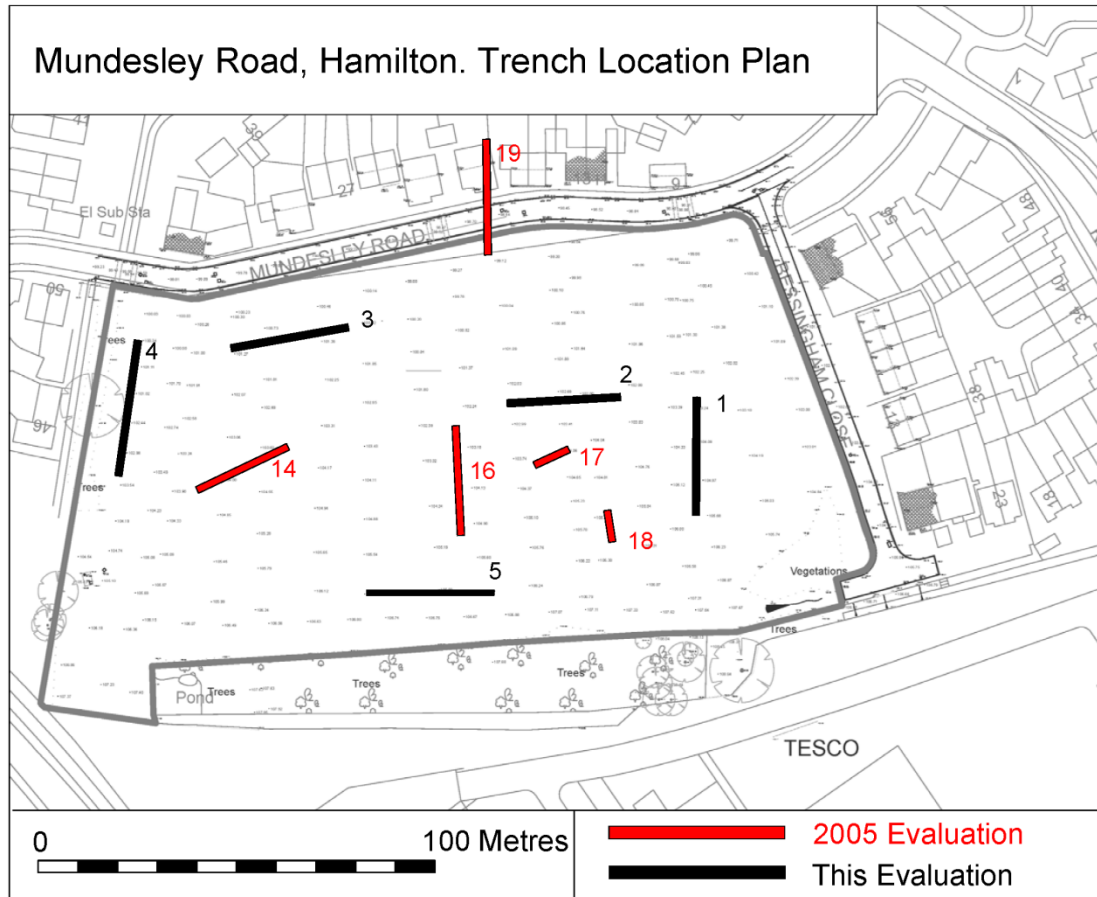


Figure 3 Trench Location Plan. Scale 1:1500

Table 1 Trench Summaries

TRENCH	ORIENTATION	LENGTH (m)	DEPTH (m aOD)	TOPSOIL THICKNESS (m)	DESCRIPTION	TRENCH DEPTH (m)	MINIMUM DEPTH TO ARCHAEOLOGY (m aOD)
1	N-S	32	102.91-105.35	0.30-0.33	Negative	0.35-0.39	N/A
2	ENE-WSW	30	102.62-102.22	0.20-0.35	Three north-south furrows	0.28-0.39	N/A
3	NNE-SSW	28	100.48-100.69	0.26-0.30	One north-south furrow. Modern Truncation	0.34-0.58	N/A
4	NW-SE	32	99.95-103.27	0.19-0.28	Modern Truncation	0.28-0.41	N/A
5	E-W	32	105.39-105.75	0.28-0.45	Four north-south furrows	0.36-0.60	N/A

Trench 1 (Plate 1)

Trench 1 was located towards the eastern boundary of the site. No archaeological deposits were recorded within this trench.

Trench 2 (Plate 2)

Trench 2 was located *c.*20m west of the northern end of Trench 1. Three furrows were recorded within the trench that were aligned approximately north to south. These features had been partially backfilled with topsoil. No other archaeological deposits were recorded within this trench.

Trench 3 (Plate 3)

Trench 3 was located towards the north-west corner of the site, parallel with Mundesley Road. A single furrow was recorded 7m from the east-north-east end of the trench. The west-south-west half of the trench had been heavily truncated and backfilled with mixed topsoil, re-deposited natural and modern building debris. No archaeological deposits were recorded within this trench.

Trench 4 (Plate 4)

Trench 4 was located *c.*20 west of Trench 3, along the western boundary of the site. The northernmost *c.*5m of the trench contained the continuation of the modern truncation observed within Trench 3. No archaeological deposits were recorded within this trench.

Trench 5 (Plate 5)

Trench 5 was located along the southern boundary of the site, *c.*40m south of Trench 2. Four furrows were recorded within the trench that were aligned approximately north to south. These features had been also partially backfilled with topsoil.

7. Conclusion

The archaeological evaluation at Mundesley Road, Hamilton, revealed no archaeological evidence, with the exception of traces of furrows associated with medieval or post-medieval cultivation activities. These features had been partially backfilled with topsoil, suggesting upstanding ridge and furrow earthworks had been levelled on the site in recent times.

Previous archaeological trenching within the application area had suggested that a large proportion of the site had suffered considerable modern disturbance associated with the construction of Hamilton Way (Richards 20015, 13). However the current phase of trenching suggested that the previous disturbance was more restricted within the north-west corner of the site where large storm drains had been constructed. Further disturbance was also recorded within the north-west corner of the site that appears to relate to the subsequent residential development.

The extensive areas of Iron Age activity recorded to the south-west of site were confined by a large sinuous boundary ditch on its northern side (Harvey 2011, 43). The projected line of this boundary crosses the extreme south-west corner of application area, within the area previous truncated by the storm drains. The remainder of the site is located to the north of the projected line of the boundary. Elsewhere, little archaeological activity has previously been recorded within the areas

immediately north of this boundary and the results from this evaluation also appears to confirm this.

8. Archive

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicester Museums in due course with accession number A10.2014. The archive consists of the following:

- 1 Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report No. 2014-061)
- 5 Trench recording sheets
- 1 Contact sheets of digital photographs
- 1 photographic record (1 sheet)
- 1 CD of digital photographs
- 1 Set B&W contact sheets
- 1 Set B&W negatives

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* in due course. The report will also be added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York under the reference universi1- 148469.

INFORMATION REQUIRED	EXAMPLE
Project Name	Mundesley Road, Hamilton
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	James Harvey
Previous/Future work	Yes/Not Known
Current Land Use	Vacant
Development Type	Junior primary school
Reason for Investigation	NPPF, Section 12
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-Application
Site Co ordinates	SK 6295 0665
Start/end dates of field work	26/03/2014-26/03/14
Archive Recipient	LCCHNET
Study Area *	1.84 hectares
Associated project reference codes Museum accession	Accession Number A10.2014 OASIS form ID: universi1- universi1-176035

10. Bibliography

Butler, A. 2001 *A Geophysical Survey on land at Quakesick Valley, Humberstone, Leicester (SK630 067)* ULAS Report 2000-160.

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11. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was carried out by James Harvey and Donald Clark. Patrick Clay managed the project. The plant was provided by Planters (Leicester) Ltd.

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Appendix 1 Trench Record Photographs



Plate 1 Trench 1 looking south



Plate 2 Trench 2 looking west



Plate 3 Trench 3 looking west



Plate 4 Trench 4 looking south



Plate 5 Trench 5 looking east

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