



# University of Leicester

## Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Evaluation on land at  
36A Desford Road,  
Kirby Muxloe,  
Leicestershire  
(NGR SK 52121 04673)

Jennifer Browning



ULAS Report No 2014-060

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**An Archaeological Evaluation on land  
At 36A Desford Road,  
Kirby Muxloe,  
Leicestershire  
(NGR SK 5212 0467)**

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**For D. Weafer**

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Signed:



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ULAS Report Number **2014-060**  
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## CONTENTS

Summary .....	1
1. Introduction.....	1
2. Site Location, Geology, Topography, and Description .....	2
3. Archaeological and Historical Background .....	2
4. Aims and Objectives .....	4
5. Methodology .....	4
6. Results.....	5
7. Discussion.....	7
8. Archive and Publications .....	5
9. Publication .....	8
10. Acknowledgements.....	8
11. Bibliography .....	9
12. Oasis Information .....	9

## FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000) .....	3
Figure 2: Location of the site within the village .....	3
Figure 3: Location of the trench in relation to the proposed new building (adapted from plan by The Art of Building Architecture).....	6
Figure 4: Plan of trench showing location and orientation of land-drains and the possible furrow.....	6
Figure 5: Overview of trench, looking north .....	7
Figure 6: Trench section (ceramic land-drain visible in section) .....	8

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**Summary**

*An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken in March 2014 within the grounds of 36A Desford Road, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire (SK 5212 0467) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Mr. D. Weafer. The fieldwork was required as a condition by the Senior Planning Archaeologist in response to an application for one new dwelling on the site (Planning Application: 13/0718/1/PX), in order to assess the impact of the development on any potential archaeological remains. The site is located within the settlement core of the medieval village and close to the Church of St Bartholomew.*

*The archaeological evaluation comprised the excavation of a single trench (12m in length) targeting the footprint of the proposed new dwelling. The work did not reveal any significant archaeological deposits. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under the Accession Number X A46 2014.*

**1. Introduction**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken within the grounds of 36A Desford Road, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire (NGR SK 5212 0467). The Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire Council recommended the need for archaeological investigation, as the site lies within the historic village core of the village, close to the church.

The planning application 13/0718/1/PX is for the construction of a single bungalow on land to the rear of the existing property. 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 (WSI; ULAS 2014). Fieldwork was carried out in March 2014 and comprised the machine excavation of one trial trench in order to provide a 5% sample of the development area as requested by the Senior Planning Archaeologist in her capacity as Archaeological Advisor to the planning authority.

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 followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct (2010) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2008).

## 2. Site Location, Geology, Topography, and Description

The proposed development area is currently occupied by a residential garden belonging to 36A Desford Road, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire (approximately 475 sq. m of which will be affected by the development) and lies within the historic settlement core of Kirby Muxloe, north-west of the castle and close to the Church of St Bartholomew. It is bordered by other residential properties. The site is within Blaby District.

Topographically the site is at an approximate height of *c.* 89m aOD and is on fairly flat land. Geological maps indicate that the site contains Gunthorpe Member Mudstone overlain by mid-Pleistocene glaciofluvial sand and gravel.

## 3. Archaeological and Historical Background

The village of Kirby Muxloe is located approximately 5 miles to the west of Leicester. The settlement of Kirby is mentioned in the Domesday Book and place-name evidence suggests that it has Danish origins. Kirby has been referred to as Chereby within the Domesday Book, and subsequently as Carbi, Cherebi, Kirby in 1235, Kereby in 1254, 1271 and 1289, and as Kirkby in 1296 according to Nichol's Victorian County Histories (1811:622). Kirby Muxloe at this time was one of the bailiwicks or sub-divisions of the manor of Desford. The Muxloe was eventually added, perhaps to distinguish it from Kirby Bellars or to emphasise its growing importance, *muchle* or *muckel* meaning greater or more. The Muxloe family lived at three miles away at Desford and this ties in well with Kirby being a bailiwick of Desford.

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies within an area of archaeological interest, within the Historic Settlement Core of Kirby Muxloe (HER ref: MLE211). The site is also in close proximity to the Grade II\* Listed medieval Church of St. Bartholomew (LB ref: 1285/31/4/41), which would have been a focus for settlement and activity in the medieval period.

Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team (LCCHNET) as archaeological advisors to the planning authority required that an evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken. They considered that it is reasonable to expect buried archaeological remains relating to the medieval development of the village to be present within this site. Historic mapping and aerial photographs show that the site has not been disturbed by development in more recent times and therefore any archaeological remains present are likely to have survived *in situ*.



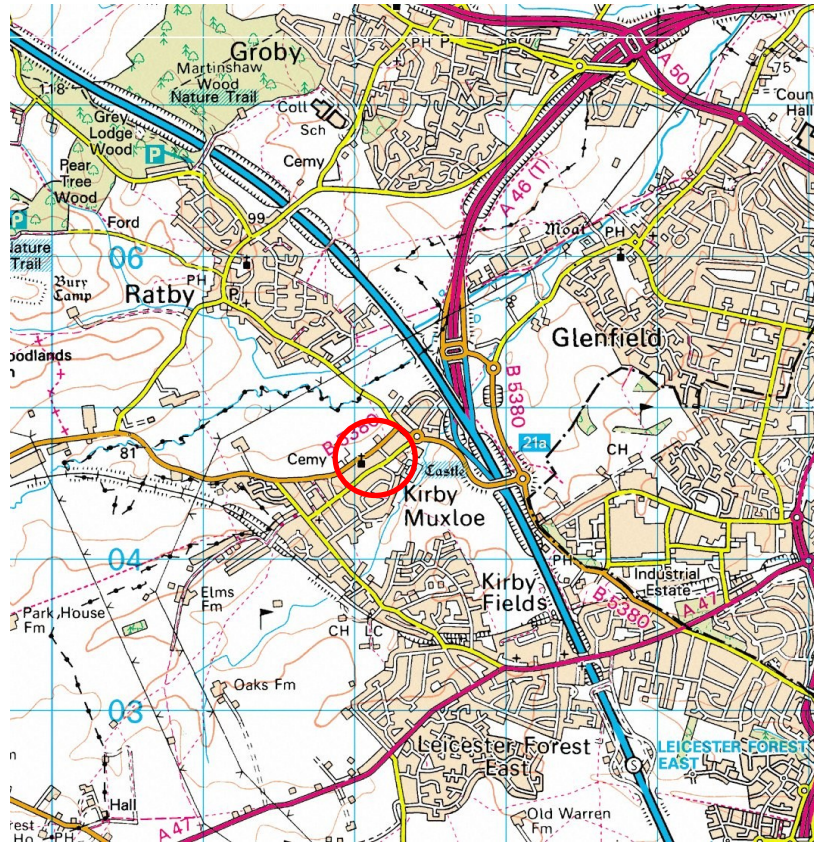


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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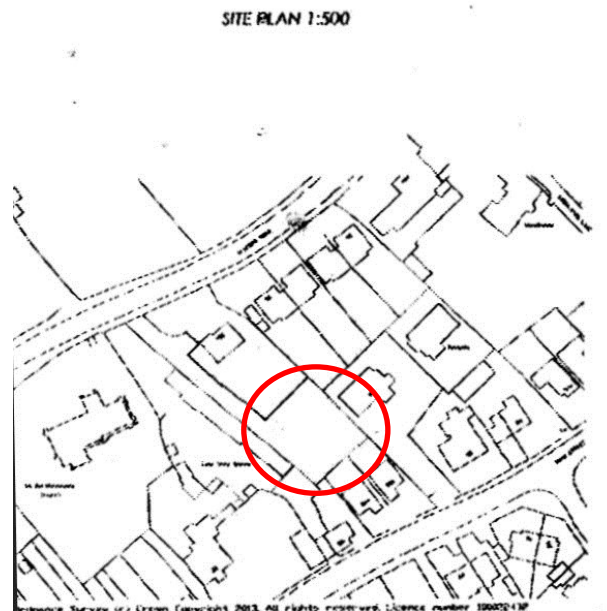


Figure 2: Location of the site within the village

#### **4. Aims and Objectives**

The archaeological evaluation had the potential to contribute to the following research aims. The purpose of the archaeological work was:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological or environmental deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological or environmental deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

In general the purpose of an archaeological investigation is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of an archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

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

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area. The evaluation was undertaken in order to 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.

#### ***Research aims***

This work has the potential to contribute to research objectives for the Iron-Age/Roman period and Anglo-Saxon – medieval period (Cooper, 2006 and Knight, Vyner & Allen, 2012).

#### **5. Methodology**

The methodology for the work was set out in the WSI (ULAS 2014). Following recommendations from the Planning Authority, evaluation trenching was undertaken. A 5% sample of the proposed area was required in the form of a single trial trench. It was agreed that a 10m x 1.6m trench would be positioned on the plot to target the footprint of the proposed new dwelling.

Topsoil and overburden was removed under archaeological supervision by a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket (c1.6m wide). The spoil generated during the evaluation was mounded away from the edges of the trench and stored separately. Mechanical excavation ceased at undisturbed natural deposits or the top of archaeology.

The trench was recorded by description, sketch drawings and photography. A measured drawing was not produced as no archaeology was identified. A photographic record utilising high resolution digital images was maintained during the course of the fieldwork. The trench was located by means of measuring tapes to the known points and boundaries.

## 6. Results

A trench measuring 12m x 1.6m was excavated on the plot on a north-south alignment. No archaeological features were noted. Topsoil consisted of dark brown silty clay with a high organic content, occasional small pebbles and occasional small natural flints. Below this was a subsoil comprising mid reddish-brown (grey-brown in places), sandy clay with occasional small and medium rounded pebbles and angular stones. There was a diffuse boundary to the natural subsoil, which was mottled orange-brown/reddish-brown sand with some clay patches, particularly towards the north end of the trench. Two circular ceramic land-drains crossed the trench, orientated approximately north-east to south-west. These were encountered at depths of 0.6-0.7m below ground level. A patch of light grey-brown sandy soil was observed towards the northern end of the trench. The was roughly linear in shape and contained moderate quantities of rounded pebbles, Some root disturbance was also noted in this area and the feature was considered to represent either the remains of a plough furrow or root activity associated with former vegetation on the plot. No finds were noted, with the exception of the land-drains, which were not collected.

<b>Interval from S end of Trench (m)</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>Depths from Ground Level (m)</b>					
Topsoil	0.30	0.30	0.33	0.30	0.30
Subsoil	0.70	0.55	0.70	0.65	0.60
Top of natural subsoil	0.70	0.55	0.70	0.65	0.60
Base of trench	0.95	0.75	0.90	0.70	0.65

Table 1: Soil depths within the trench

## 7. Conclusion

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at 36A Desford Road, Kirby Muxloe. A trench (measuring 12m x 1.6m) comprising 7% area of proposed development did not produced evidence for archaeological activity, despite its location within the historic core of the village.



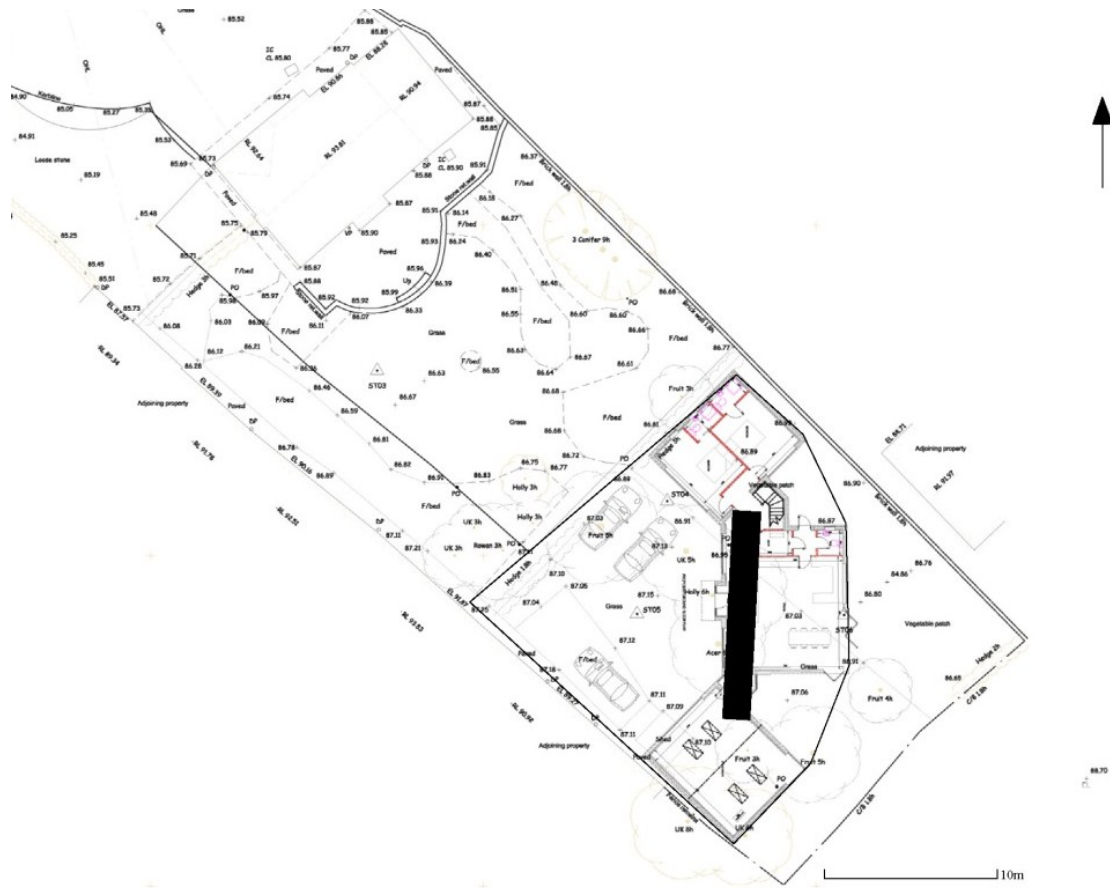


Figure 3: Location of the trench in relation to the proposed new building (adapted from plan by The Art of Building Architecture)

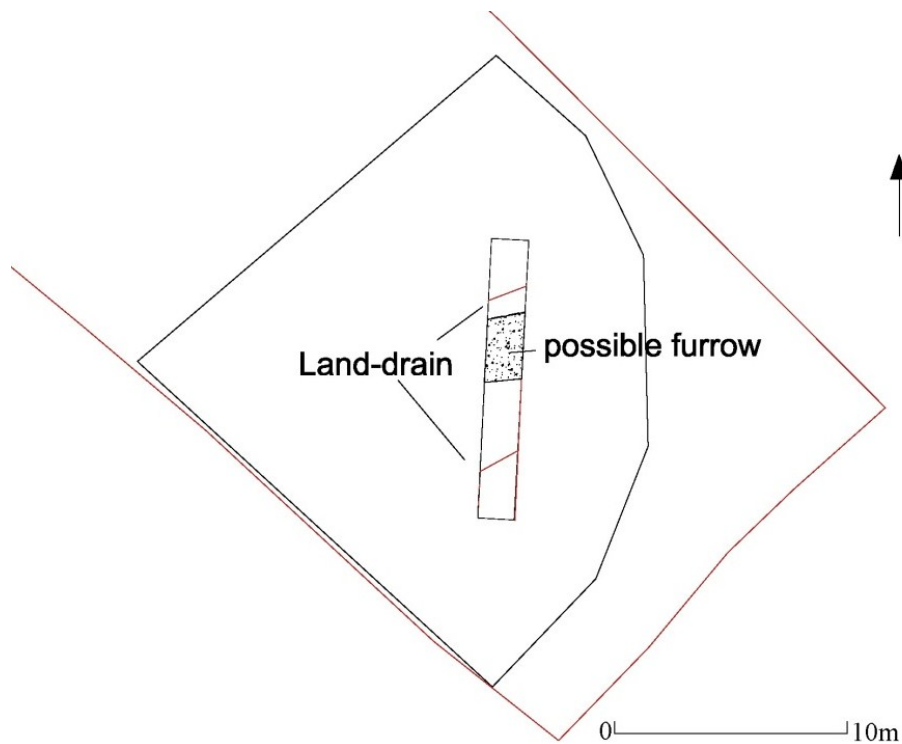


Figure 4: Plan of trench showing location and orientation of land-drains and the possible furrow



Figure 5: Overview of trench, looking north





Figure 6: Trench section (ceramic land-drain visible in section)

## 8. Archive and Publications

The site archive, consisting of paper and photographic records, will be held by under the Accession Number XA46 2014.

The archive consists of:

- 1 trench recording sheet
- Photographic record indices
- Digital photographs

## 9. Publication

A version of the summary (see above) will appear in due course in an appropriate publication.

## 10. Acknowledgements

Jennifer Browning undertook the archaeological evaluation and Richard Buckley managed the project. The author would particularly like to thank David Weafer and Peter Vaughan for their help and co-operation during the work.

## 11. Bibliography

Brown, D., 2008 Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives (Institute for Archaeologists)

Cooper, N.J., (ed.) 2006 *The Archaeology of the East Midlands - An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* Leicester Archaeology Monograph 13

IfA, 2010 Codes of Conduct and Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation

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.

ULAS, 2013 *Written scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Work – Land rear of 36A Desford Road, Kirby Muxloe, Leicestershire*

## 12. Oasis Information

Project Name	36A Desford Road, Kirby Muxloe
Project Type	Archaeological evaluation
Project Manager	Richard Buckley
Project Supervisor	Jennifer Browning
Previous/Future work	Development
Current Land Use	Garden
Development Type	Residential development
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	post-determination
Site Co ordinates	NGR 5212 0467
Start/end dates of field work	25th March 2014
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area	475sq. m. (total area)

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