



# University of Leicester

## Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Watching Brief  
And Strip, Plan and Sample at  
Haymarket Bus Station, Leicester  
NGR: SK 58890 04780



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**An Archaeological Watching Brief and  
Strip, Plan and Sample at  
Haymarket Bus Station, Leicester**

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**For:  
WYG**

**Checked by Project Manager**

Signed: 

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## CONTENTS

Summary.....	1
Introduction.....	1
Archaeological and Historical Background.....	2
Geology.....	2
Aims and Methods.....	2
Methodology.....	3
Results of the Watching Brief.....	5
Results of the Strip, Plan and Sample.....	6
Conclusion.....	8
Archive.....	8
Bibliography.....	9
Acknowledgements.....	9

## FIGURES

Figure 1: Location plan.....	1
Figure 2: Site plan (Provided by client). Watching brief area outlined in blue, strip, plan and sample area outlined in yellow.....	4
Figure 3: Watching brief area facing East.....	5
Figure 4: Watching brief area facing South.....	6
Figure 5: Strip, Plan and Sample area facing North.....	7
Figure 6: Strip, Plan and Sample area facing South.....	8

## An Archaeological Watching Brief and Strip, Plan and Sample At Haymarket Bus Station, Leicester

Donald Clark

### Summary

*An archaeological watching brief and strip, plan and sample took place during the redevelopment of Haymarket Bus Station, Leicester (NGR: SK 58890 04780). The work was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in accordance with the Project Design for Archaeological Monitoring prepared by Archaeological Consultants WYG. The planning authority was Leicester City Council, planning application No. 20141389.*

*No archaeological deposits were disturbed during the groundworks and the area had been previously disturbed and truncated to some depth.*

*The archive will be held by Leicester City Museums under the Accession No. A2.2015 and the report uploaded onto the OASIS grey literature database in due course.*

### Introduction

The archaeological work took place during the redevelopment of the Haymarket Bus Station, Leicester (NGR: SK 58890 04780; Fig. 1, Planning Application No. 20141389). The work was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of the Archaeological Consultants WYG and agreed with the Leicester City Planning Archaeologist, in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12: Conservation and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

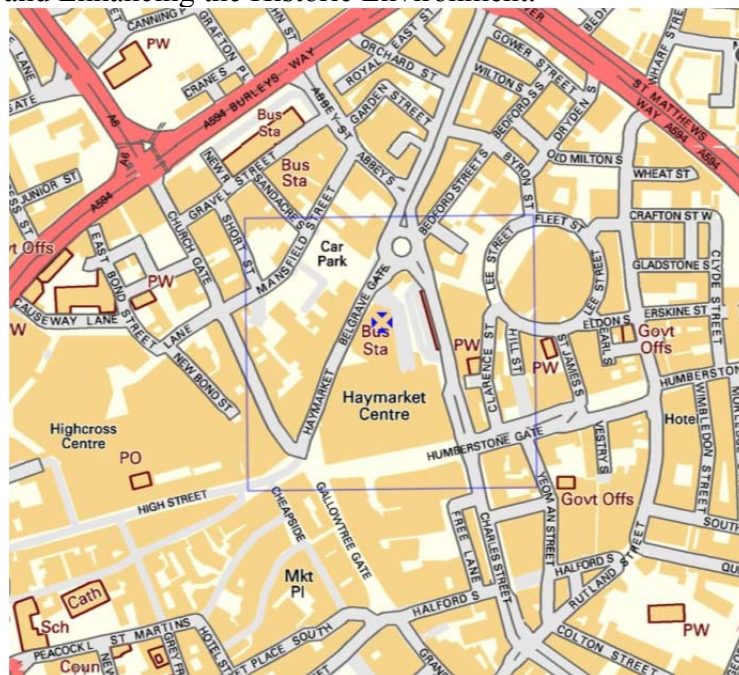


Figure 1: Location plan.

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The proposed development comprises redevelopment of the bus station and surrounding streets with a new revised road layout, traffic management, public realm works and demolition of the existing retail units and bus company office.

In view of the archaeological potential of the site, particularly in relation to Leicester's Roman cemeteries, the City Archaeologist advised the planning authority that a programme of work comprising archaeological monitoring of demolition followed by a strip/plan and sample excavation in order that any archaeological remains would be adequately recorded.

### **Archaeological and Historical Background**

The Bus Station is located on the southern side of the Fosse Way Roman road as it runs north-eastwards from the city toward the Roman fortress and city at Lincoln. In the Roman period cemeteries were located outside the walls of towns and along major routes, such as the Fosse Way. In the past, burials have been found along the line of the road, most recently to the rear of Wilkinson's shop, immediately east of the bus station. WYG undertook an archaeological desk-based assessment of the site and its surroundings and demonstrated significant 18th to 20th century suburban development across the study area that was built on earlier gardens or orchards (WYG 2013; 2014). In addition, WYG commissioned archaeological monitoring of geotechnical investigations to record any archaeological data present in core samples and test pits, this work was carried out by ULAS in July 2013 (Score and McLeish 2013). The results of this monitoring showed evidence of deposits consistent with Tudor gardens and the suburban development from the 18th century onwards. No evidence of Roman activity or burials was noted.

### **Geology**

The British Geological Survey (BGS) shows the bedrock to comprise Branscombe Mudstone Formation – Mudstone, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 200 to 217 million years ago in the Triassic Period, overlain by Syston Member sand and gravel. The land is generally flat at a height of c.100m OD.

### **Aims and Methods**

The main objectives of the archaeological work 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 ground works.
- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

### **Research objectives**

The following Research Objectives were identified following East Midlands Research Agenda Topics (Knight *et al* 2012):

### **Roman**

*Growth of Urban Centres* 5.3: 5.3.4. How were towns organised, what roles did they perform and how may their morphology and functions have changed over time? 5.3.5. How and why did the urban landscape change in the late Roman period, and what roles may fortifications have played in this period?

*Roads and Waterways* (5.7): 5.7.1. Can the chronology of road construction and links between road building and campaigns of conquest be clarified? 5.7.4. How may roads and waterways have impacted upon established communities and how may roads have influenced urban morphology?

*Ritual and Religion:* (5.8) 5.8.4 Why have so few early Roman burials been found and may practices have varied regionally and between different communities? 5.8.5 What may studies of later Roman inhumation cemeteries teach us about changing burial practices and demography?

### **Early Medieval**

*Roads and Rivers: transport routes and cultural boundaries* (6.3) 6.3.1 To what extent were Roman roads used and maintained from the 5th century and may some have acted as social and political boundaries.

### **High Medieval**

*Urbanism* (7.1): 7.1.1 How did the major towns and smaller market towns of the region develop after the Norman Conquest, both within the urban core and in suburban and extra mural areas?

### **Post Medieval**

*Urbanism* (8.1): 8.1.5 Can we recognise the emergence of the poorer classes in the developing suburbs?

### **Methodology**

The archaeological work comprised two phases of work; an Archaeological watching brief in the northern area of the site (Fig.2 marked in yellow) and an archaeological strip, plan and sample of the southern area (Fig. 2 marked in blue).

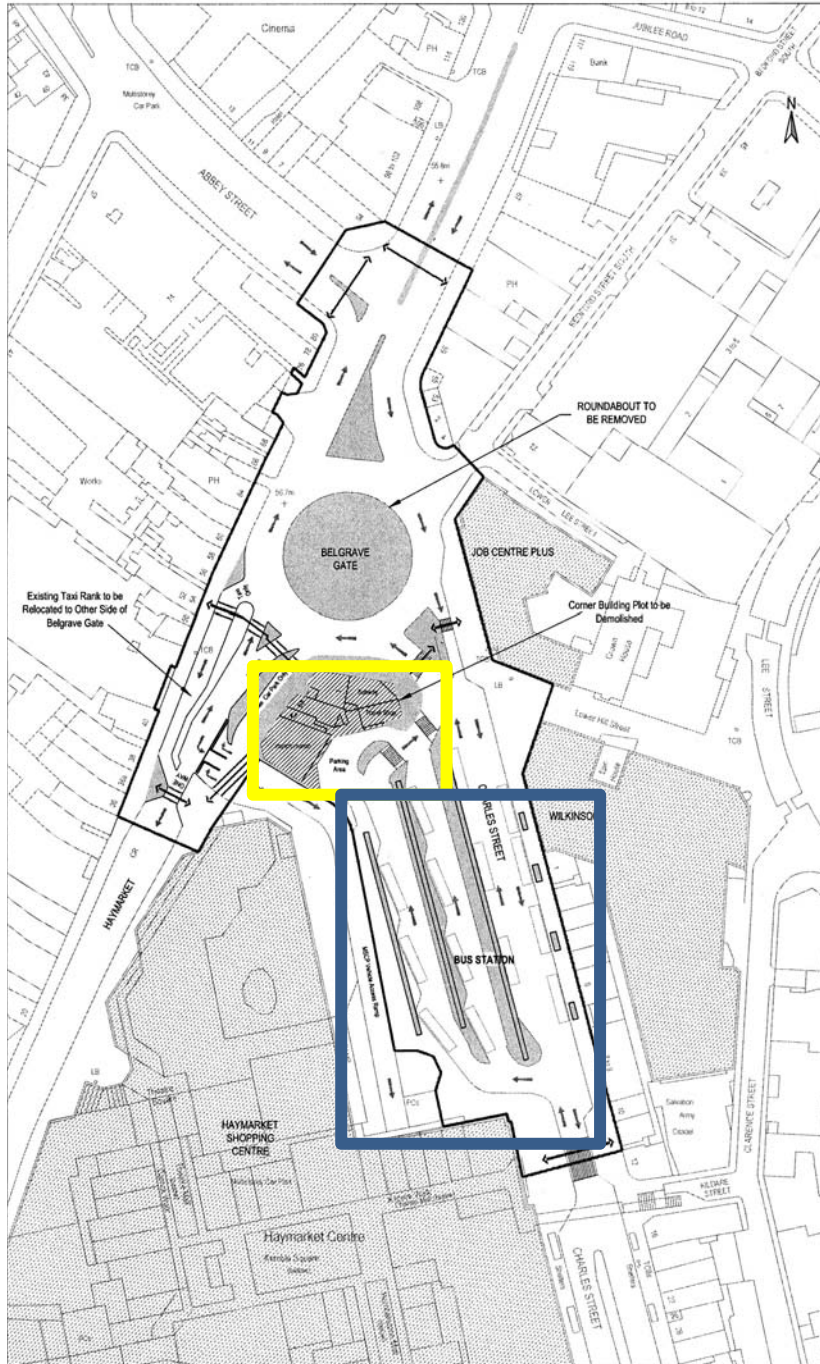
All work followed the *Project Design for Archaeological Monitoring* (WYG 2014) and the procedures set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Buckley 2014).

All work complied with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA,) *Code of Conduct* (2010) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs* (2010).

Connecting  
**Leicester**



**HAYMARKET BUS STATION  
EXISTING LAYOUT**



**NOTES**

1. THIS DRAWING IS REPRODUCED FROM THE PLAN SUBMITTED BY AEDAS ARCHITECTURE, DRAWING (SK)20111201\_03

**KEY**

- SITE BOUNDARY (11,481m<sup>2</sup>)
- [Pattern] KEY ATTRACTORS
- [Pattern] CORNER BUILDING PLOT TO BE DEMOLISHED
- [Arrow] PEDESTRIAN CROSSINGS
- [Arrow] VEHICLE MOVEMENT
- [Pattern] EXISTING ISLANDS TO BE TAKEN OUT
- [Pattern] BUS SHELTERS TO BE REMOVED

0	Amended by WYS	AC	1/8	16/05	27/02/13
1	Amended by WYS	DP	1/8	16/05	26/02/13
2	Amended by WYS	DP	1/8	16/05	19/02/13
A	Issued for information	VB	AC	20/01	
REV	DESCRIPTION	BY	CHK	APP	DATE

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Project:  
HAYMARKET BUS STATION REDEVELOPMENT

Drawing Title:  
EXISTING LAYOUT

Scale	Drawn	Date	Checked	Date	Approved	Date
1:500	DP	23/01/13	WYS	23/01/13	ANG	23/01/13

Number:  
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Figure 2: Site plan (Provided by client). Watching brief area outlined in blue, strip, plan and sample area outlined in yellow.

## Results of the Watching Brief

The archaeological watching brief took place between the 15th and 19th of December 2014 following the demolition of buildings occupying plots 37,47 and 49 Belgrave Gate, Leicester and 1-5 Charles Street, Leicester (Fig. 2). The removal of large concrete slabs were observed. Beneath these slabs was a build-up of demolition material from the previous buildings that had occupied the site (Figs 3-4). Due to the depth of the excavation and the poor stability of the ground, accurate measurements were not possible. However a construction worker was able to safely enter the excavated area and measured a depth of 3.50m. No natural substratum was observed at this depth.

The removal of further concrete slabs, concrete footings and a concrete staircase were observed and in the north-eastern corner of the site a brick wall, probably a Victorian cellar; this had been truncated by the more recent concrete wall footings.

No archaeological deposits were identified during the groundworks.



Figure 3: Watching brief area facing East.





Figure 4: Watching brief area facing South

### **Results of the Strip, Plan and Sample**

The archaeological strip, plan and sample took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> February 2015 on the area of the Haymarket Bus Station (Fig. 2). An attempt to excavate a continuous area was hampered by the large amount of disturbance in the area. Large concrete footings and walls were common throughout the area to be stripped; however it was possible to excavate some areas down to the natural sub stratum (Fig. 5). In these areas depths were measured for each of the fills.

The upper most fill across the area was Type 1 hardcore varying in depth from 0.85m to 1.15m. Below this was a layer of demolition rubble that measured between 0.45m to 0.60m in depth across the site. Below the rubble a band of re-deposited pinkish-brown redeposited clay was observed measuring between 0.15m and 0.25m in depth across the site. Beneath this clay lay a very dark buried topsoil mixed with modern brick and plastic sheeting measuring between 0.55m and 0.70m. This lay directly on top of the undisturbed natural substratum which was observed at depths of between 2.15m and 2.80m across the site (Fig. 6).

From these observations it is clear that that the area had previously been truncated and that no archaeological deposits were disturbed by the groundworks.



Figure 5: Strip, Plan and Sample area facing North



Figure 6: Strip, Plan and Sample area facing South

## Conclusion

The site was visited on several occasions between the 15th December 2014 and the 17th February 2015. The archaeological watching brief followed the demolition of existing buildings on the north end of the site (37, 47 and 49 Belgrave Gate, and 1-5 Charles Street) and the removal of the debris. The removal of several large concrete slabs revealed further demolition debris and concrete walls, staircases, and floors of cellars belonging to buildings that had previously occupied the site.

The strip, plan and sample excavation took place at the southern area of the Haymarket Bus Station and was comprised a number of trenches. The trenches showed that the area had been previously developed; concrete footings, stairways and walls were observed. This substantiates previous work carried out by ULAS in July 2013 (Score and McLeish 2013). No archaeological features were disturbed during groundworks.

## Archive

The archive for this project consists of watching brief forms and digital photographs and will be deposited with Leicester City Museums under the accession number A2.2015.

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 (ADS) at the University of York. The report will be listed and will be available at <http://oasis.ac.uk/>.

## **Bibliography**

- Buckley 2015, *Written Scheme of Investigation: Haymarket Bus Station, Leicester*.
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2010 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*
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ULAS Report 2015-013

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