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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation of land at
18 Barrow Road, Burton on the Wolds,
Leicestershire**

(SK 58894 21002)

Mathew Morris



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**An Archaeological Evaluation
of land at 18 Barrow Road
Burton on the Wolds, Leicestershire
(SK 58894 21002)**

Mathew Morris

For: *Mr J. Searson*

**Planning authority: Charnwood Borough Council
Planning application: P/14/1517/2**

Approved by:

Signed:



Date:: 30.06.2015

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An Archaeological Evaluation of land at 18 Barrow Road, Burton on the Wolds, Leicestershire (SK 58894 21002)

Mathew Morris

Summary

An archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching was carried out on land at 18 Barrow Road, Burton on the Wolds, Leicestershire (SK 58894 21002) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 24 June, 2015. The work was undertaken for Mr J. Searson in order to establish the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be present, in order that an assessment may be made of the impact of any proposed development on the buried remains. One 15m x 1.8m trench was excavated across the footprint of the proposed residential development, sampling c.4% of the application area. Extensive disturbance from the roots of mature trees and a possible post-medieval tree throw were recorded but overall the investigation was negative for archaeologically significant substrata, features or artefacts.

The project archive will be held by Leicestershire Country Council under the accession number X.A69.2015.

Introduction

In June 2015, University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out a small archaeological evaluation of land at 18 Barrow Road, Burton on the Wolds, Leicestershire. The work was undertaken for Mr J. Searson in order to establish the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which might be present, in order that an assessment may be made of the impact of any proposed development on the buried remains.

In July 2014, a planning application was submitted to Charnwood Borough Council for the 'erection of one dwelling' at 18 Barrow Road (app. no. P/14/1517/2). Conditional planning permission was granted in April 2015, with Condition 14 requiring a programme of archaeological work to be carried out on the site prior to development commencing, in accordance with an a written scheme of investigation (Clay 2015) approved by the local planning authority. This was in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG 2012).

The archaeological fieldwork took place on 24 June, 2015 and this report presents the final results of the archaeological investigation.

Site Location, Geology and Topography

Burton on the Wolds is situated in northern Leicestershire, approximately 5.5km east of Loughborough and 16.5km north of Leicester (Figure 1). The site at No. 18, measuring c.0.7 hectares, is located in the south-western extent of the village on the east side of Barrow Road (SK 58894 21002).

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain shows that the underlying geology is predominately superficial mid-Pleistocene glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel overlying bedrock deposits of late Triassic mudstone belonging to the Branscombe Mudstone Formation (BGS OpenGeoscience). Topographically, ground slopes down from c.78m aOD on the southern side of the site to c.76m aOD on the north side. At the time of work, the area comprised lawned garden with mature hedges and trees fronting onto Barrow Road.

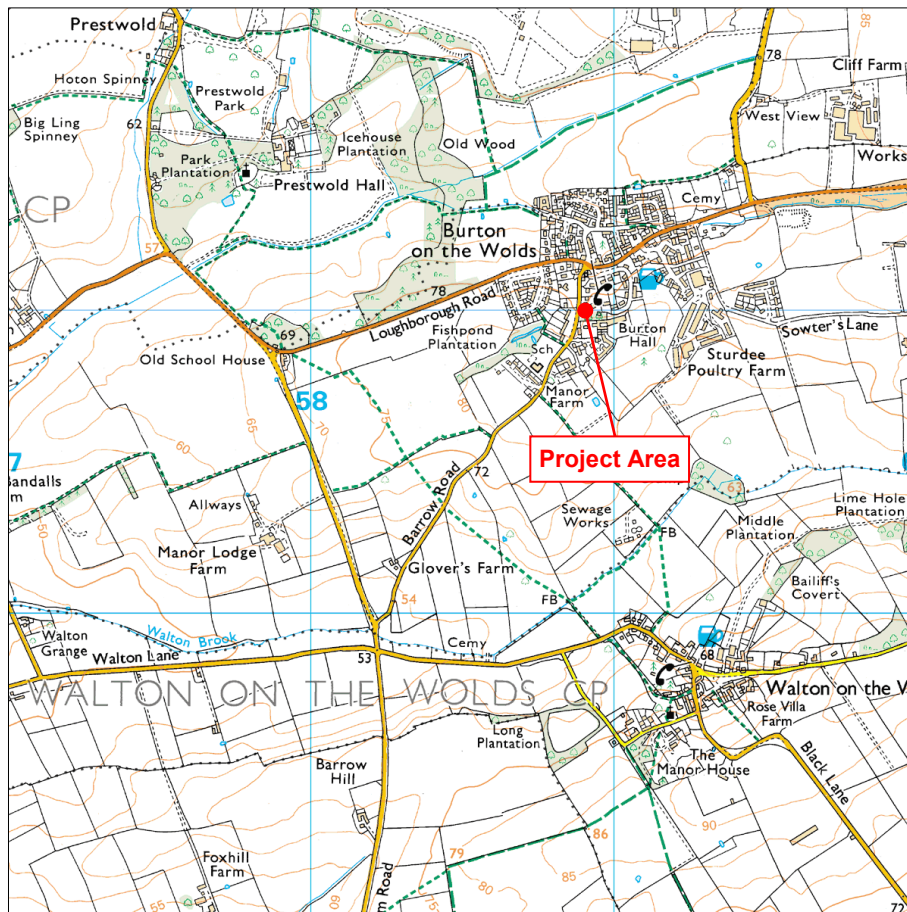
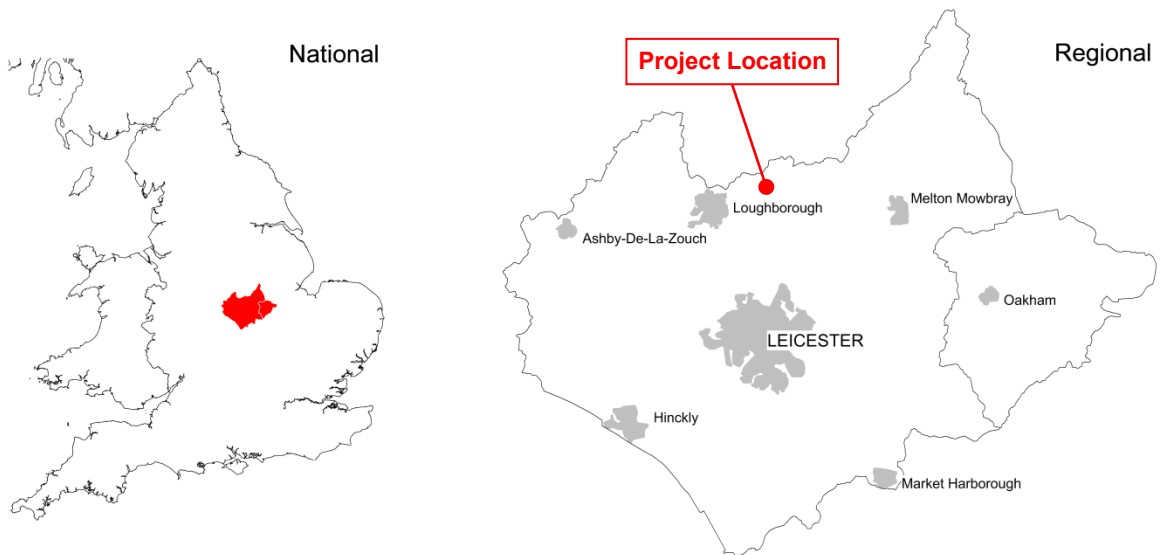


Figure 1: Location Plans with project area highlighted.

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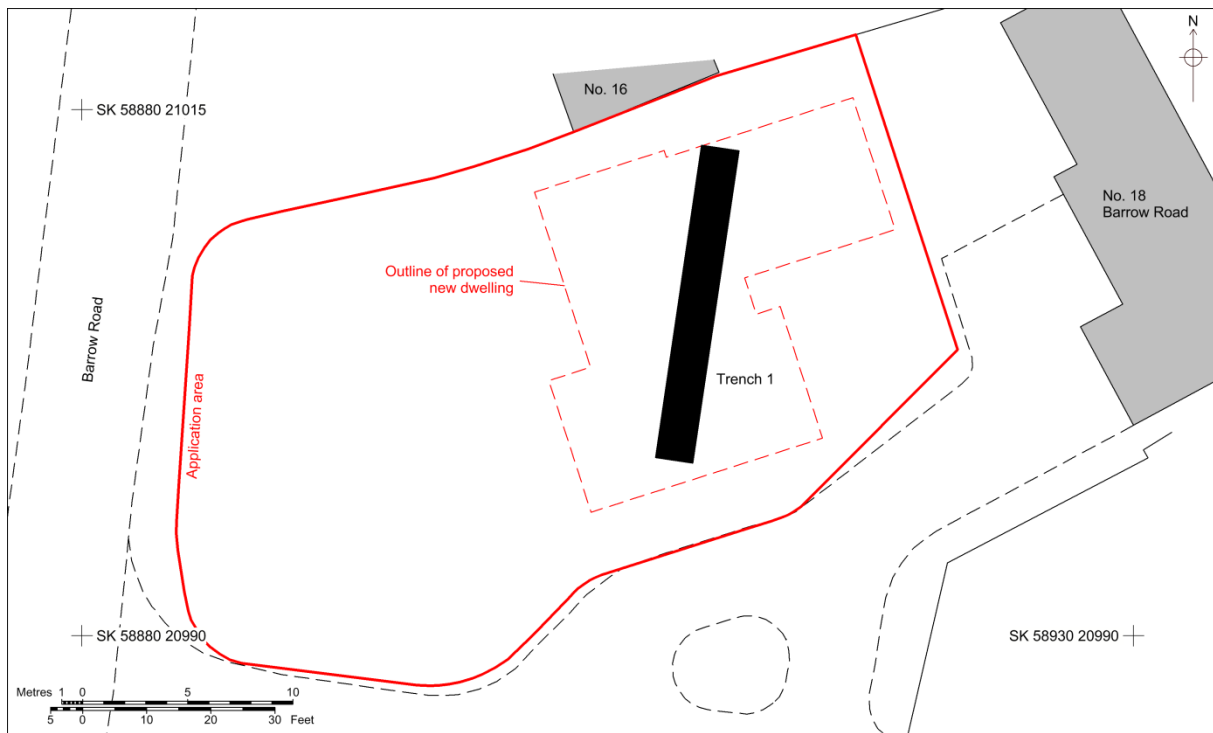


Figure 2: Plan of project area showing trench locations (plan adapted from survey data supplied by client).

Archaeological and Historical Background

The site has previously been examined through a desk-based assessment (Hunt & Clay 2014). This suggested that the area might have moderate to high potential for the presence of medieval remains. The Historic Environment Record for Leicestershire and Rutland (HER) indicates that the area lies within the historic medieval core of Burton on the Wolds (HER ref. **MLE521**). Medieval settlement evidence has been found nearby, at 15 Barrow Road (c.100m to the north), where medieval and post-medieval pottery, bricks and clay pipe stem were recovered during a watching brief in 2004 (**MLE10500**). This suggests occupation during these periods either on the site or nearby. Other known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the development area, include evidence for an Iron Age and Roman settlement on land at Melton Road to the east of the site (**MLE15794**, **MLE15796** & **MLE16710**) and there are other Roman remains at Burton Hall, to the south including burials (**MLE514**). The site also lies close to a number post-medieval Listed buildings and a WWII Polish re-settlement camp.

Archaeological Objectives

The principle aims of the archaeological excavation were:

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

The results of the investigation have been considered in light of the East Midlands Research Agenda (Cooper 2006) and updated Agenda and Strategy (Knight *et. al* 2012) as well as targeting national research aims highlighted by English Heritage. Of particular interest was any contribution the work might make towards research into the origins and development of medieval settlement, landscape and society.

Methodology

During the evaluation, the soil overburden was removed in level spits under continuous archaeological supervision down to the uppermost archaeological deposits or the natural substratum, depending on which was reached first. This was carried out with a Bobcat E19 compact 360° mechanical digger using a 1m wide, toothless ditching bucket.

All trenches, open areas, exposed sections and spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. Features were hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as appropriate. Field notes were recorded on pro-forma ULAS trench recording forms whilst stratigraphic units were to be given a unique context number and recorded on pro-forma ULAS context sheets.

Trench and feature plans/sections were drawn at appropriate scales and tied into the National Grid using appropriate methods. A photographic record of the excavation was prepared, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. Colour digital photographs were taken throughout the excavation. The photographic record also includes 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

All work followed the approved written scheme of investigation (Clay 2015) and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014).



Figure 3: The application area during work, looking west across Trench 1 towards Barrow Road (behind the trees)

Results

The written scheme of investigation (Clay 2015) called for the investigation of a c.5% sample (35 sq. m) of the c.0.07 hectare site, the equivalent of one 20m x 1.6m trench to be placed across the footprint of the proposed dwelling. Due to topographical constraints on site, however, the final trench only measured 15m x 1.8m (27 sq. m), the equivalent of a c.4% sample.

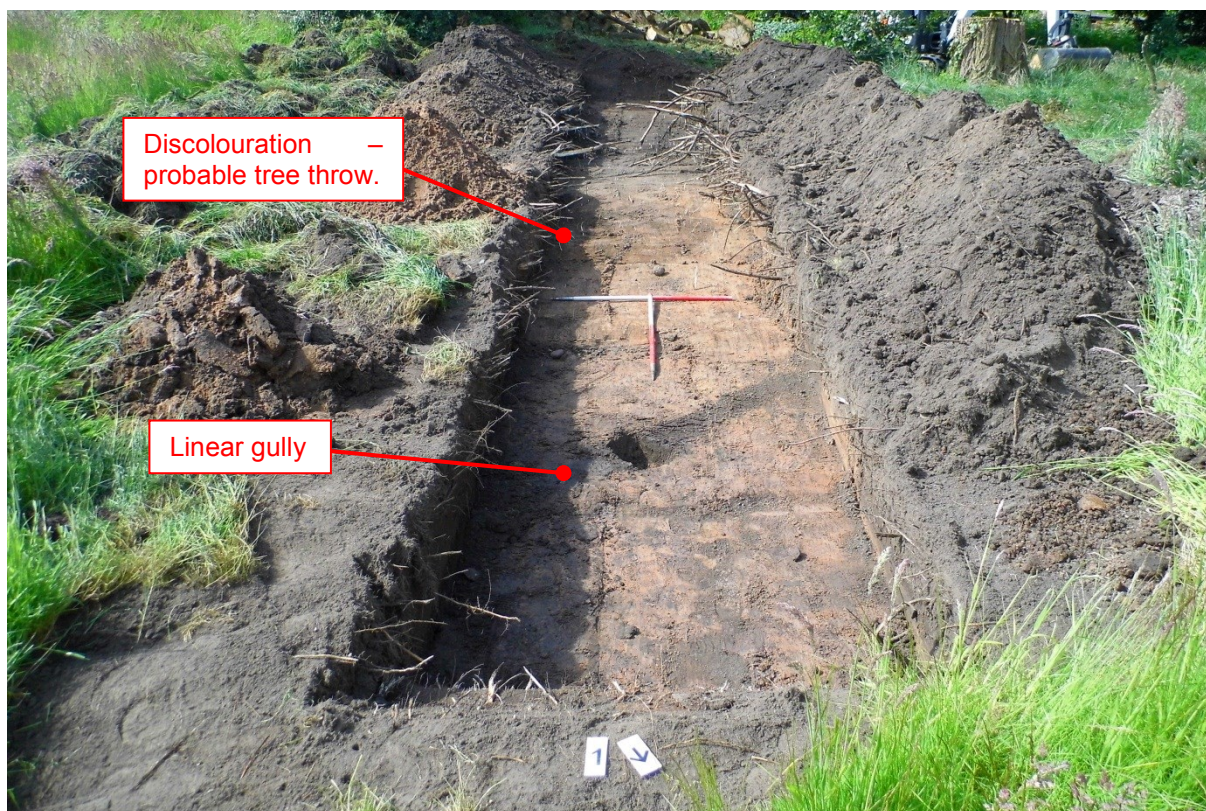


Figure 4: Trench 1, looking south-west

Trench 1

Length (m)	Width (m)		Area (sq. m)		Min. depth (m)		Max. depth (m)	
15	1.8		27		0.34		0.48	
Interval (m) from NE	0	5	10	15				to SW end
Topsoil depth	0.32	0.27	0.35	0.30				
Subsoil depth	0.14	-	-	-				
Top of natural substratum	0.46	0.27	0.35	0.30				
Base of trench	0.46	0.37	0.48	0.34				

Trench 1 was located on the eastern side of the application area, positioned to cross the footprint of the proposed new dwelling on a north-east to south-west orientation (Figure 2 & Figure 4). The mechanical digger removed *c.*0.27-0.35m of turf and dark greyish-brown sandy-silt topsoil to reveal natural substratum. At the northern end of the trench a thin layer of dark greyish-brown silty-clay subsoil was present but elsewhere, topsoil lay directly over the natural.

The natural substratum varied along the trench. At the northern end was mottled greyish-orange clay, whilst along much of the rest of the trench was similarly coloured clayey-sand. Between 6.5m and 11.9m from the northern end of the trench the substratum was much greyer in colouration. This appeared to coincide with an area of extensive root activity from a nearby tree and may have been discolouration from this disturbance.

At the northern end of the trench was a narrow linear gully cutting down from the topsoil. Running east to west across the trench, with vertical sides and flat base, it was *c.*0.2m wide and *c.*0.24m deep filled with dark grey clayey-silt. Modern glass was present within its fill and its appearance would suggest that it was a recent service trench or land drain.

Approximately 5.5m from the northern end of the trench was a c.2m diameter diffuse discolouration of the substratum. Investigation revealed a shallow concave depression c.0.12m deep filled with greyish-brown clayey-sand. A small quantity of brick, charcoal and the stem of a clay pipe were present, suggesting it was post-medieval in date. The ephemeral nature of the feature suggested that it was probably a tree throw feature.

Otherwise, no archaeological substrata, features or artefacts were identified.

Discussion

Overall, the results of the investigation were negative for archaeologically significant substrata, features or artefacts. Review of the cartographic evidence for the area, carried out as part of the desk-based assessment (Hunt & Clay 2015), shows the development site to be a wooded area on the edge of parkland (1st edition Ordnance Survey map dated 1884). This remains virtually unchanged until residential development along Barrow Road in the 1970s. Evidence from Trench 1, extensive disturbance from the roots of mature trees and a possible post-medieval tree throw feature, supports this.

Archive

The site archive consists of one trench record sheet and two digital photographs. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Service under the accession number X.A69.2015

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 (ADS) at the University of York (see Table 1).

Table 1: Summary of OASIS information

Project OASIS no.	universi1-215583
Project Name	18 Barrow Road, Burton on the Wolds, Leicestershire
Project Type	Evaluation by trial trenching
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Mathew Morris
Previous/Future work	No/Unknown
Current Land Use	Garden
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition
Site Co-ordinates	SK 58894 21002
Start/end dates of field work	24/06/2015
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Study Area	0.07 hectares.

A summary of the work will also been submitted for publication in an appropriate local archaeological journal in due course.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to extend its thanks to the client, Mr J. Searson for his assistance and co-operation throughout the project. Fieldwork was carried out, and this report written by Mathew Morris. The project was managed for ULAS by Dr Patrick Clay.

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