



**University of
Leicester**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
At Leicester Road, Eye Kettleby, Melton
Mowbray, Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 732 178

**Stephen Baker
& Nathan Flavell**



ULAS Report No. 2014-043


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An Archaeological Watching Brief
At Leicester Road, Eye Kettleby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 732 178

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& Nathan Flavell

For: Clegg Food Projects Ltd
Planning Application Authority: Melton Borough Council

Approved by:


Signed:

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X.A3.2014
ULAS Report No 2014-043

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An Archaeological Watching Brief with control and supervision at Melton Foods, Leicester Road, Eye Kettleby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire

**Stephen Baker
& Nathan Flavell**

Summary

An archaeological watching brief with control and supervision was carried out at Melton Foods, Leicester Road, Eye Kettleby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) between 17th- 21st February 2014. A second phase was carried out between 27th-30th January and 2nd February 2015 for a further extension to the factory. Work was undertaken on behalf of Clegg Food Projects Ltd during ground works connected to the erection of an extension of the Samworth Brothers factory. Machine excavated foundation trenches and other groundworks were monitored but no archaeological features, deposits or finds were observed and the result of the investigation proved negative. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, subject to their confirmation, under the accession number X A3.2014.

Introduction

During February 2014 University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Melton Foods, Leicester Road, Eye Kettleby, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. The work was undertaken on behalf of Clegg Foods during ground works connected to the construction of an extension to the present factory. A second phase of work was carried out during January and February 2015 for a further extension to the factory. This report presents the final results of the archaeological investigation.

Site Location, Geology and Topography

The Samworth Brothers Factory is situated to the north of Leicester Road and west of Melton Mowbray, located approximately 2km west of the town centre (Figure 1). The site comprises a rectangular area to the south-east and parallel to the existing factory measuring approximately 30m by 15m.

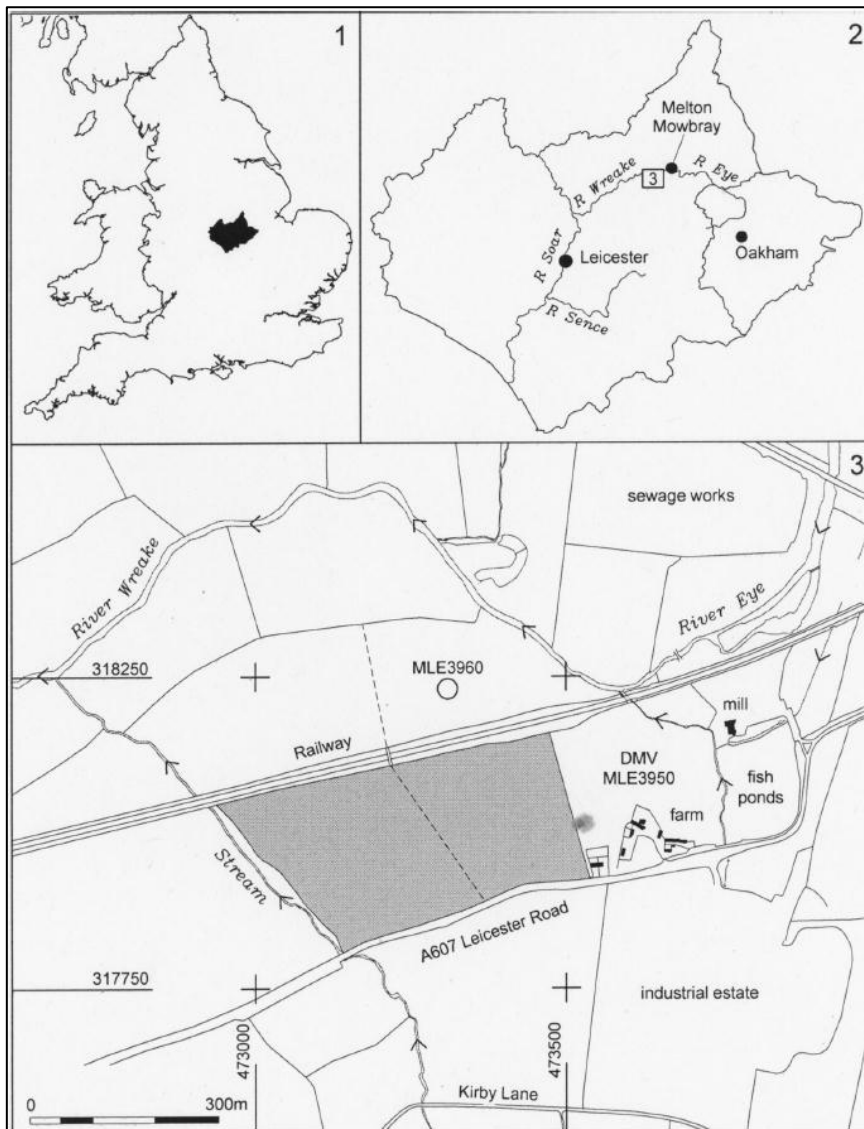


Figure 1: Location Plan

Archaeological and Historical Background

The area is within a known significant prehistoric (MLE8895) and Anglo Saxon (MLE3981) sites examined in 1996 (Finn 1998; 1999; 2011). These comprised an important sequence of Bronze Age monuments and earlier prehistoric activity revealed by fieldwalking and then excavations in advance of development. Mesolithic exploitation, seemingly in a clearing in the river valley, was followed by further seasonal use in the Early and especially the Late Neolithic, when users of Woodlands style Grooved Ware left behind prolific material culture. This early frequentation may have rendered the clearing a special, revered place, contributing to the development of a monumental ritual landscape here by the beginning of the Bronze Age. This complex displays an unusual symmetry, with opposing pairs of large ring ditches and D-shaped enclosures, which might well represent the efforts of two separate but related communities. Throughout the Bronze Age, these monuments were a focus for evolving ritual burials of special deposits, cremated human remains and cremation pyre deposits, for which

an extensive dating programme has provided relatively fine chronological resolution. In the later Bronze Age, two pit alignments hint at new landscape divisions.

The Anglo-Saxon settlement included the remains of over 40 buildings in addition to numerous pits, hearths and ditches. Occupation in the 5th-6th centuries is indicated by the closely datable artefacts recovered from the site although the end date of this activity is currently unclear. A small possibly middle Anglo-Saxon element has been identified in the ceramic assemblage suggesting some continuity into the 7th century. Other finds indicate a wide range of activities were carried out including the manufacture of bone and iron tools and the production of textiles.

Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site also lies adjacent to the scheduled deserted medieval village of Eye Kettleby (MLE3950; SM 30250). Some medieval ditched enclosures which were probably associated with the settlement were identified during the fieldwork (Finn 1999, 5). Consequently, there was the likelihood that buried archaeological remains may have been affected by the development (Figure 2).

The Principal Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council (LCC) as advisor to the planning authority has recommended archaeological attendance for inspection and recording during the ground works for the proposed development to record any archaeological remains uncovered.

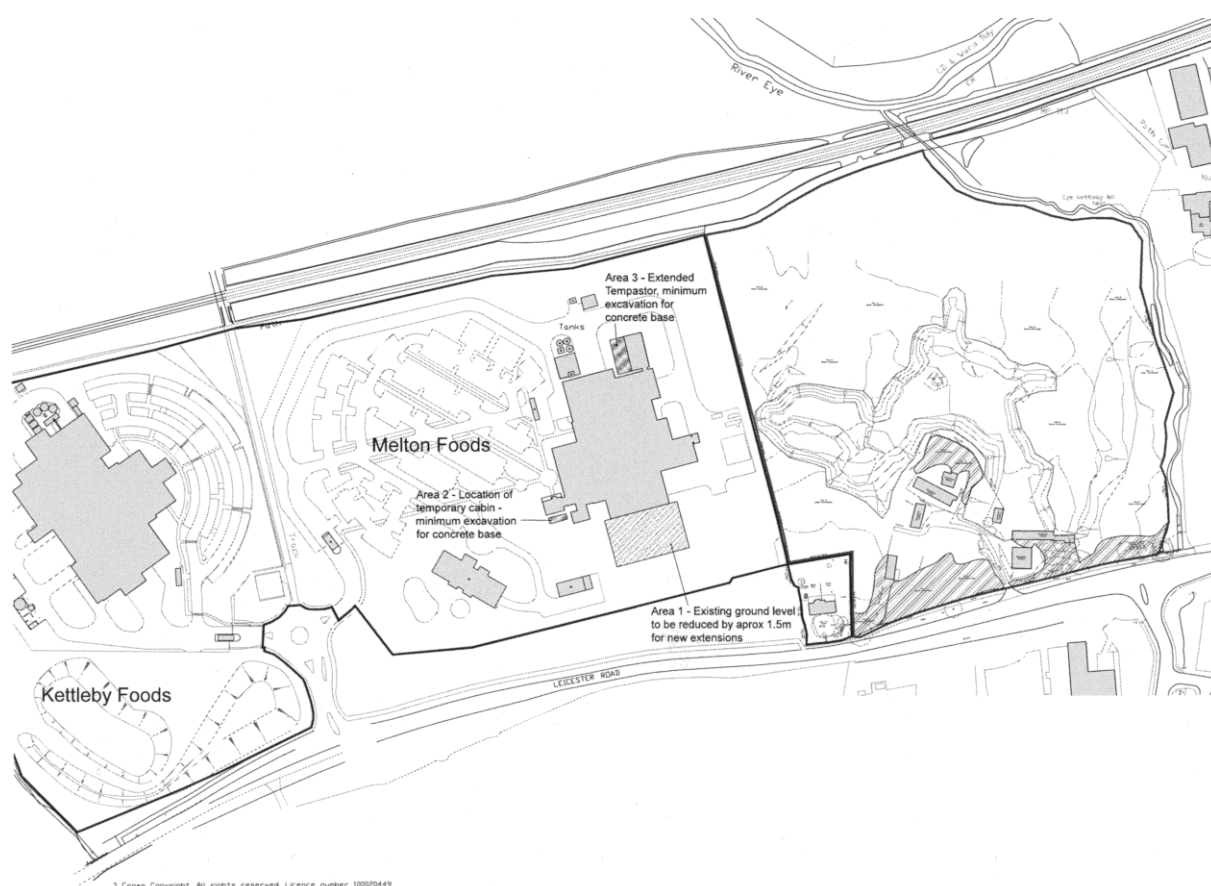


Figure 2: Proposed development area. Phase 1 comprised of Areas 1-3

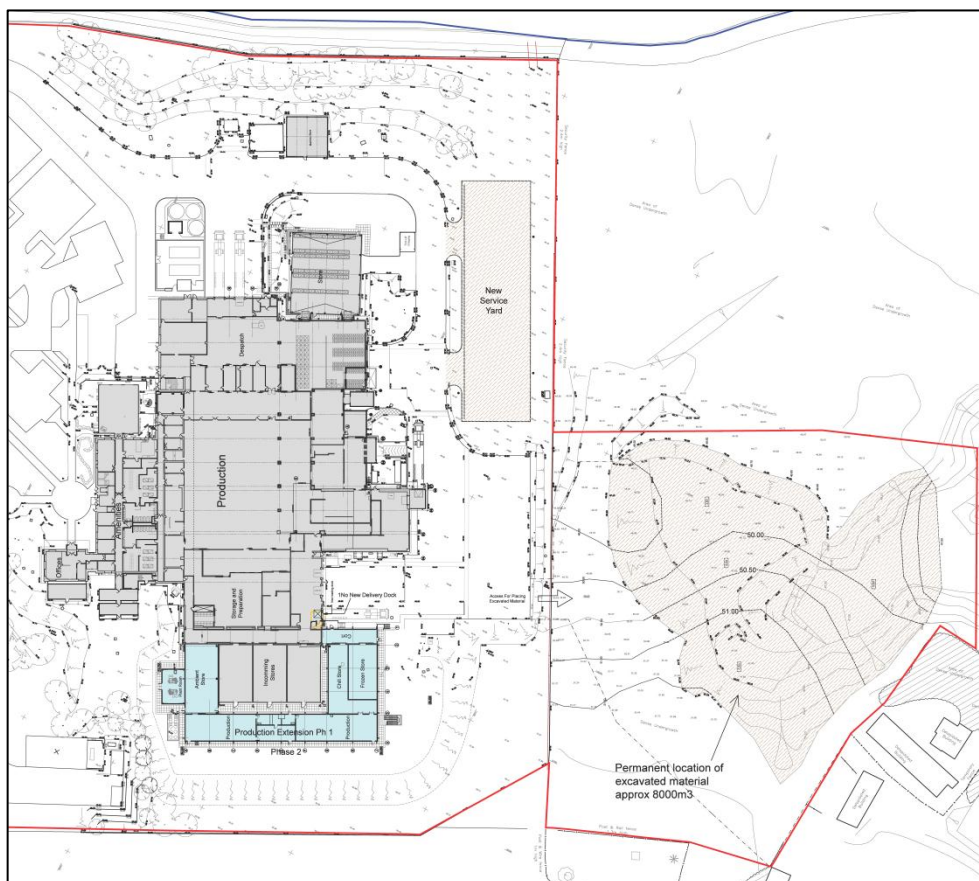


Figure 3: Phase 2 development area with area of watching brief in blue

Archaeological Aims and Objectives

The project was to carry out an archaeological watching brief (with control and supervision) at the above site, in accordance with NPPF (Section 12 Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment). This was carried out, as a requirement by the Planning Authority, on any ground works in connection with the erection of the new buildings and associated works. This work followed a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI - Clay 2014), recommended by the LCC Principal Planning Archaeologist as historic environment adviser to Melton Borough Council.

The project had the potential to contribute to our understanding of Bronze Age burial practices (Clay 2006) and Anglo Saxon settlement (Vince 2006) supplementing the ongoing research into the site (Finn 1999; 2011). The specific objectives of the archaeological work may be summarised as follows:

- 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 record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To advance understanding of the heritage assets
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Methodology

Archaeological attendance for inspection and recording was carried out with site visits from February 17th until February 21st 2014 (Phase 1). The project involved the inspection and control of the machine-dug foundation footprint strip and other ground works associated with the construction of the factory extension by an experienced professional archaeologist to determine the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits. A second phase of groundworks for a further extension was carried out between 27th January and 2nd February 2015 (Phase 2).

The groundworks were carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator with a c.1.8m wide ditching bucket and a mini-digger. 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 and recorded as appropriate to addressing the objectives of the watching brief. Field notes were recorded on pro-forma ULAS watching brief record forms.

All work followed the approved written scheme of investigation (Clay 2014) and the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation* (2008) and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (LMARS).



Figure 4: Machine removing turf/topsoil to reveal made ground immediately south-west of existing buildings (Phase 1).



Figure 5: Western section of Phase 1 foundation strip, looking south-east

Results

The deposits overlying the area of the Area 1 ground works preparation stripped during the Phase 1 2014 watching brief consisted of made ground. Initially the topsoil level was reduced to reveal any subsoil (Figures 2, 4-5). Deposits immediately below the topsoil at a depth of *c.* 0.15m were composed from a grey yellow mixed matrix of both soil and hard core and containing modern building and demolition material. Natural geology (yellow clay) was observed at a depth of 1.5m+. An area extending 5m from the wall of the existing factory and running parallel to it was also found to consist of made ground to a depth of 1.5m. Modern services ran beneath this alongside the building. No deposits of archaeological interest were observed in any of the areas subject to machine stripping and ground works.

Areas 2-3 had already been developed when the site was visited in February 2015 so the groundworks have not been monitored.

The 2015 second phase was immediately to the south-west of the previous works described above (Figure 3). Natural geology of yellow clay, and in some areas a grey clay with orange sandy patches, was encountered at a depth of 0.4m at the east end of the foundation strip, lowering to 1.3m at the west end. This was overlain by a dark grey organic sandy clay layer, 0.3m thick, narrowing in depth towards the east. Covering this was compacted mid grey clay sand with russet streaking, 0.59m at the west end of the strip, narrowing to 0.3m. Overlaying this was a layer of made ground consisting of red silty-sand layer with modern inclusions, 0.2m thick. This was covered by topsoil, 0.15m thick.

Discussion

The watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features or finds other than demolition material contained within made ground and finds of modern date presumably from the time that the present factory and associated services were constructed.

Archive

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council with accession number. X.A3.2014. The archive contains:

- 10 watching brief recording sheets
- 3 photographic record sheets
- Thumbnail prints of digital photographs
- CD containing digital photographs
- An unbound copy of this report, 2014-043

The report is listed on the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. Available at <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

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.	universi1-14650
Project Name	Leicester Road, Eye Kettleby, Melton Mowbray
Project Type	Watching Brief
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Stephen Baker & Nathan Flavell
Previous/Future work	None/None
Current Land Use	Garden
Development Type	Commercial
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Pre- Planning condition
Site Co-ordinates	SK 732 178
Start/end dates of field work	17/02/14 – 21/02/14, 27/01/15 – 02/02/15
Archive Recipient	Leicester County Council
Study Area	c.450 sq. m

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.

Bibliography

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Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) 2010 *Code of Conduct*

Vince, A., 2006 'The Anglo-Saxon Period 450-850' in N Cooper ed 2006, 161-184.

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken on behalf of Clegg Food Projects and was carried out by Stephen Baker, Donald Clark and Nathan Flavell. We are grateful to the contractors for their cooperation on site. Dr Patrick Clay managed the project.

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06-02-2015



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