



**University of  
Leicester**

**Archaeological Services**

**An Archaeological Watching  
Brief on land at Bridge Farm,  
Elmesthorpe, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SP 45593 95313**

Nathan Flavell



ULAS Report No. 2015-116

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**An archaeological watching brief on land at  
Bridge Farm, Elmesthorpe, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SP 45593 95313**

**Nathan Flavell**

**For: Hebblethwaite Farms  
Planning application no. P.A. 2014/1081/1/PX**

Checked by:

Signed:



**Date:** 10.07.2015

**Name:** Patrick Clay

**University of Leicester**  
Archaeological Services  
University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH  
Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614

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# **An archaeological watching brief on land at Bridge Farm, Elmesthorpe, Leicestershire (SP 45593 95313)**

*Nathan Flavell*

## **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was carried out on land at Bridge Farm, Elmesthorpe, Leicestershire (SP 45593 95313) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 26 May 2015. The work was carried out on behalf of Hebblethwaite Farms in advance of the proposed erection of two new agricultural buildings. In total 16 stanchion holes for foundations totalling 21.6 square metres were excavated. This revealed no archaeological deposits. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A71.2015.*

## **Introduction**

This document constitutes the report for an archaeological investigation carried out on land at Bridge Farm, Elmesthorpe, Leicestershire (SP 45593 95313). The work was carried out on behalf of Hebblethwaite Farms by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 26 May 2015.

Bridge Farm lies south of the deserted medieval village of Elmesthorpe and fishponds (Fig.1), and east of Burbage Common.

Planning consent has been granted for the erection of two new agricultural buildings. Condition 3 of the planning permission states: *No demolition/development shall take place until a programme of archaeological work (archaeological attendance during groundworks) including a Written Scheme of Investigation has been submitted and approved by the Planning Authority.* The archaeological attendance was undertaken during the excavation of stanchion holes for new foundations for the easternmost of these buildings totalling 21.6 square metres.

The work was requested by the Leicestershire Senior Planning Archaeologist in her capacity as archaeological advisor to Blaby District Council, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. The work followed the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) as laid out in the *Design Specification for archaeological work* (Clay 2015).

## **Geology and Topography**

The solid geology of the area is Triassic Mercia Mudstone, with superficial deposits consisting of alluvium (valleys), sands and gravels, and glacial tills (Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of England & Wales, Coalville, sheet 155).

## **Historical and Archaeological Background**

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the farm lies in an area of archaeological interest. It is situated relatively close to known prehistoric and Roman findspots and south of the Deserted medieval village of Elmesthorpe with associated fishponds. First and Second World War remains are also known from Burbage Common.

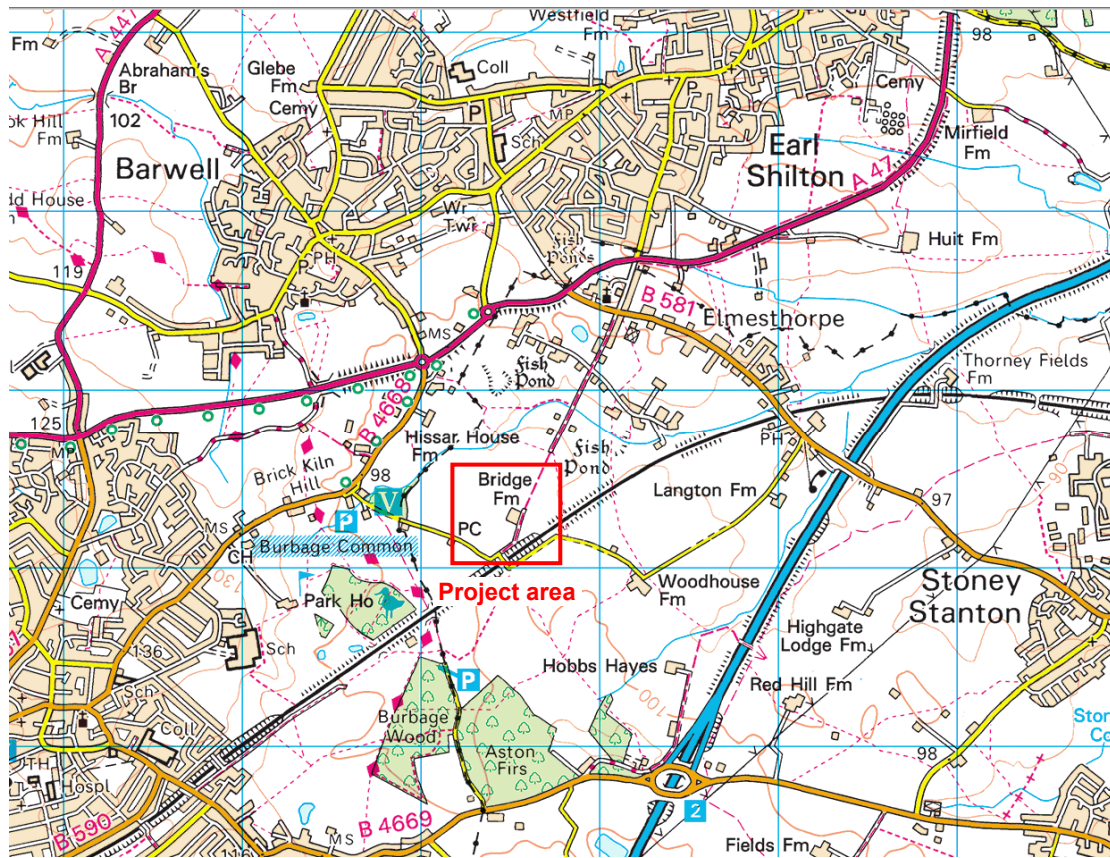


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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## Archaeological Objectives

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 advance understanding of the heritage assets
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

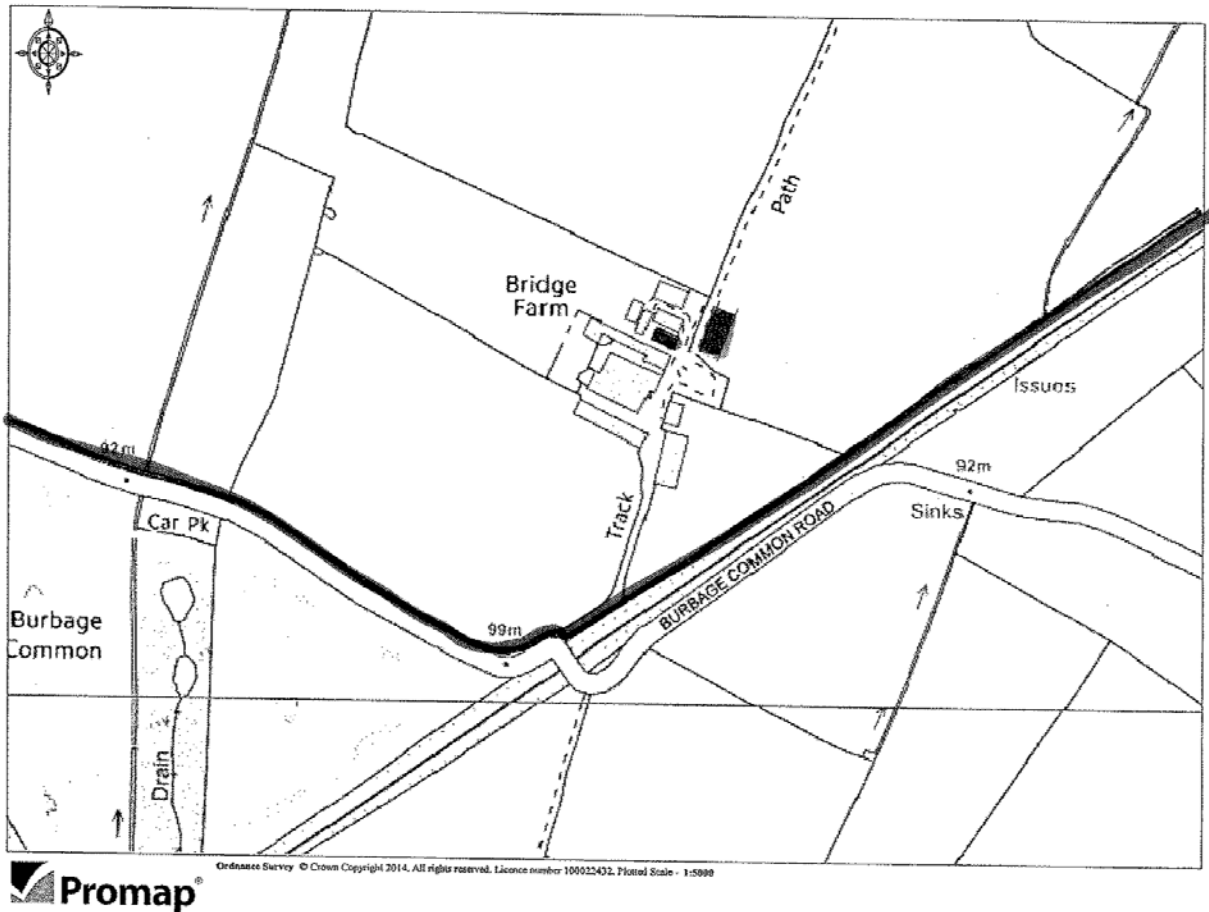


Figure 2 Site location showing proposed buildings. The archaeological attendance was during work on the eastern barn (Building 1).

## Methodology

The surface of the site was covered with rubble through which the stanchion holes were excavated. These were to be filled with concrete to support the barn stanchions.

Sixteen stanchion holes were excavated under continuous archaeological control and supervision using a small tracked mini digger with a toothed bucket within the footprint of the proposed building. The stanchion holes were generally 1.2m by 1m wide and approximately 1m deep.

The stanchion holes, sections and existing spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. If located archaeological features were to be hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as per the approved WSI (Clay 2015).

All work followed the *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological field evaluations*.

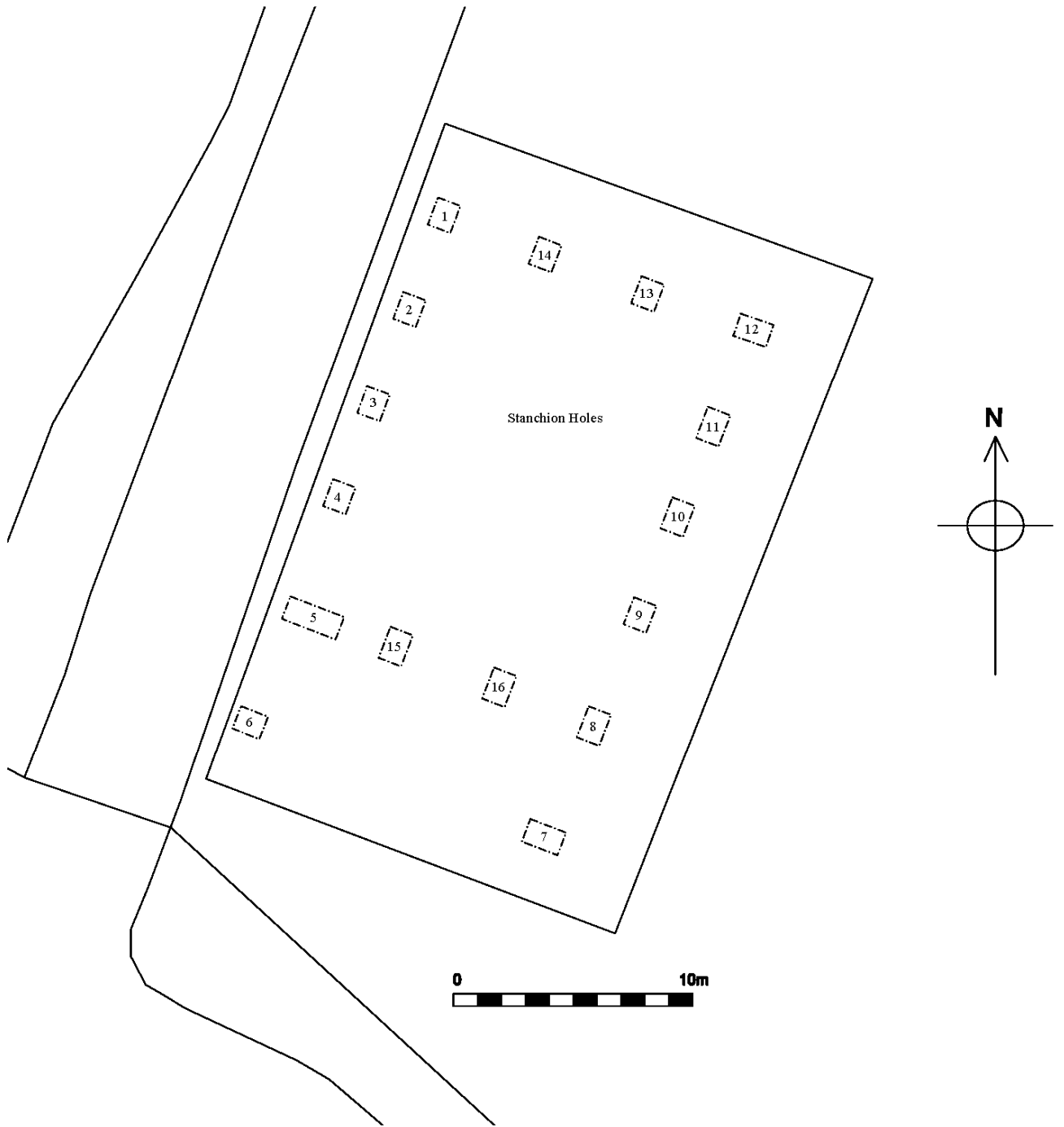


Figure 3: Footprint of building 1 showing stanchion hole locations

## Results

The natural substratum of Mercia Mudstone was encountered between 0.5m and 0.8m deep. This was overlain by a yellow clay subsoil varying between 0.5m and 1.1m deep. The topsoil immediately below the rubble was a dark brown silty clay between varying between 0.15m and 0.5m thick. The footprint of the building was covered by a layer of rubble hardcore between 0.3m and 0.6m thick.

Table 1: List of deposit depths in metres

Stanchion Hole	Hardcore Depth (in m)	Topsoil Depth (in m)	Subsoil Depth in (m)	Total Depth (in m)
1	0.5	0.5	0.16	1.31
2	0.35	0.2	0.2	0.9
3	0.3	0.2	0.2	1.0
4	0.3	0.15	0.1	0.95
5	0.3	0.15	0.1	0.75
6	0.3	0.2	-	0.85
7	0.4	0.3	0.15	0.85
8	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.8
9	0.6	0.5	-	1.1
10	0.5	0.5	-	1.0
11	0.7	0.2	-	0.9
12	0.7	0.2	-	0.9
13	0.6	-	-	0.6
14	0.5	0.5	-	1.0
15	0.3	0.2	0.1	0.6
16	0.5	0.5	-	1.0





Figure 4: Stanchion hole 4 looking south-east



Figure 5: Stanchion hole 20 looking south-west

## Discussion

No archaeological features were revealed within the stanchion holes and no pre-modern material was located on the site.. , however these were rather small in size.

## Bibliography

B.G.S. website, <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

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

Clay, P., 2015, *Design Specification for archaeological work: Bridge Farm, Elmesthorpe, Leicestershire*. Leicester, unpublished ULAS WSI ref. 14-697

## Archive

The site archive consists of: 1 A4 watching brief recording form, 1 A4 photo index, sheet and 21 digital photographs.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A71.2015.

## Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work through the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course.

OASIS no.	
Project Name	Land at Bridge Farm, Elmesthorpe, Leicestershire
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Nathan Flavell
Previous/Future work	No
Current Land Use	Agricultural Field
Development Type	Agricultural Building
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Condition
Site Co ordinates	SP 45593 95313
Start/end dates of field work	26/05/2015
Archive recipient	Leicestershire
Study Area	c. 21.6 square metres

## **Acknowledgements**

Thanks are extended to the client and contractors for their co-operation and assistance on site. Fieldwork was undertaken by Nathan Flavell; the report was written by Nathan Flavell and the project was managed for ULAS by Patrick Clay.

Nathan Flavell BA (Hons) PG Dip  
Archaeological Services (ULAS)  
University of Leicester  
University Road  
Leicester LE1 7RH

Tel: 0116 252 2848  
Fax: 0116 252 2614  
Email: [nf70@le.ac.uk](mailto:nf70@le.ac.uk)

09/07/2015

## Contact Details

Richard Buckley or Patrick Clay

University of Leicester Archaeological  
Services (ULAS)

University of Leicester,  
University Road,  
Leicester LE1 7RH

**T:** +44 (0)116 252 2848

**F:** +44 (0)116 252 2614

**E:** [ulas@le.ac.uk](mailto:ulas@le.ac.uk)

**w:** [www.le.ac.uk/ulas](http://www.le.ac.uk/ulas)



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