



UNIVERSITY OF
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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation on
Land at Coventry Road, Stoney
Stanton, Leicestershire**

NGR: SP 508 938

Nathan Flavell



ULAS Report No. 2016-032

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**An archaeological evaluation on land at Coventry Road, Stoney
Stanton, Leicestershire**

NGR: SP 508 938

Nathan Flavell

**For: Walter E. Sturgess & Sons Ltd
Planning application no. 15/0948/FUL**

Checked by:

Signed:



Date: 11.02.2016

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An archaeological evaluation on land at Coventry Road, Stoney Stanton, Leicestershire (SP 508 938)

Nathan Flavell

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out on land at Coventry Road, Stoney Stanton, Leicestershire (SP 508 938) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 4-5 February 2016. The work was carried out on behalf of Walter E Sturgess & Sons Ltd in advance of the redevelopment of the site. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A22.2016. No archaeological features were found.

Introduction

This document constitutes the report for an archaeological investigation carried out on land at Coventry Road, Stoney Stanton, Leicestershire (SP 508 938). The work was carried out on behalf of Walter E Sturgess & Son Ltd by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 4-5 February 2016.

The proposed development site is currently vacant, previously used for industrial purposes related to the production and distribution of concrete. The site comprises of several vacant buildings, with a combined area of 1284m² and a concrete parking area located to the east.

Planning permission has been granted for demolition of existing buildings and erection of a car bodyshop, repair and valeting building (Use Class B2) with associated offices, car parting, vehicle storage, 2.4 metre high fencing/sliding gates and modifications to existing access at Foxon Bros. (Concrete Products) Ltd. Planning permission was subject to planning conditions. According to Condition 18, no demolition/development shall take place/commence on site until a programme of archaeological work, informed by an initial phase of trial trenching has been detailed within a Written Scheme of Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the District Planning Authority to ensure satisfactory archaeological investigation and recording of any possible remains.

Mitigation in the form of archaeological attendance and recording was requested by the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council as 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 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Evaluation* (Gonzalez-Rodriguez 2016).

Geology and Topography

The proposed development site is located approximately 8km south-west of Hinckley town centre. The River Soar forms the eastern site boundary and Coventry Road forms the western one (Fig. 1). The area is approximately 0.12ha. The ground level is c.75.72m aOD with a natural upwards gradient of 0.25m running west-east across the site.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates that the site is underlain by superficial strata comprising River terrace Deposits (sand and gravels) and solid strata of

the Mercia Mudstone Group. Superficial Alluvial strata are illustrated to the east of the proposed development site.

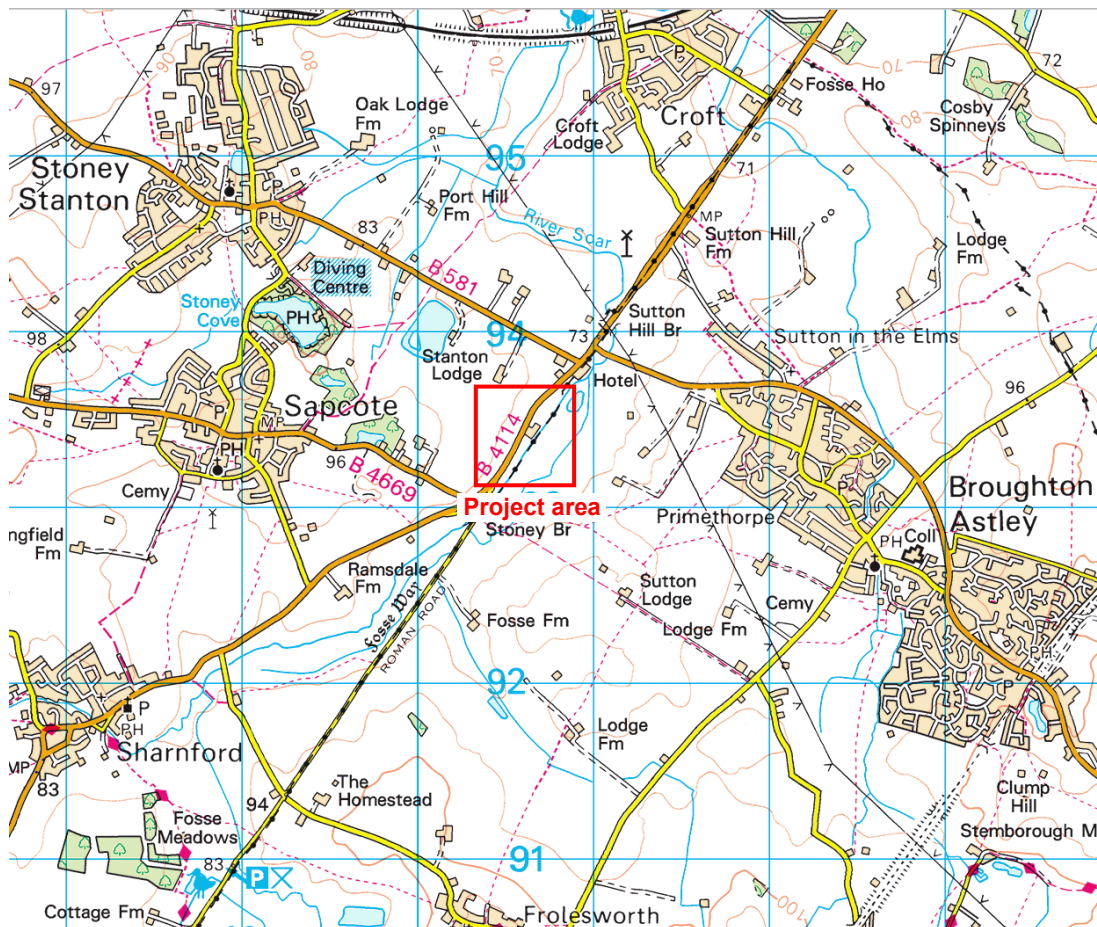


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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Historical and Archaeological Background

The place-name of Stoney Stanton is derived from the Old English for 'a stony place', with the nature of the village's situation further exemplified by the addition of 'stoney' (Mills 2003). The earliest reference to the village is in the Domesday Book. The village stands on an outcrop of grano-diorite and has a long association with the quarrying of this valuable stone, which was mainly used for road building. The stone was heavily exploited with large pits, such as Lane's Hill Quarry and Top Quarry, covering a large area to the south west of the village, which is now flooded. The village was also closely related to the hosiery trade, until the closure of the Couture Tight factory (Stevens and Hill 1981).

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland shows that the proposed development site lies within an area of archaeological interest. The course of the Roman Fosse Way (MLE1280) is believed to pass through the application area, and the site of a Roman villa (MLE283) is located approximately 900m to the south-west. A prehistoric occupation site, ranging from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age period, has been identified approximately 650m to the south (MLW17725; MLW17726) and a middle Bronze Age palstave (MLE10303) has been found immediately to the south-west of the area.

Stoney Stanton has early medieval origins and the core of the village MLE317), has been deduced from early maps. Cartographic evidence indicates that the proposed development site lies to the south west of the medieval core on arable land.

A geotechnical survey has been carried out by Ivy House Environmental (2015). This indicated that the concrete overlay alluvium comprising soft grey brown silty-clay with black organic material and occasional fine to coarse subangular to rounded gravel of quartzite and flint to a depth of c. 1.20m . This overlay River Terrace Deposits comprising firm to stiff mottled grey and orange brown gravelly silty clay.

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 record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape.
- To recover artefacts and ecofacts to compare with other assemblages and results
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

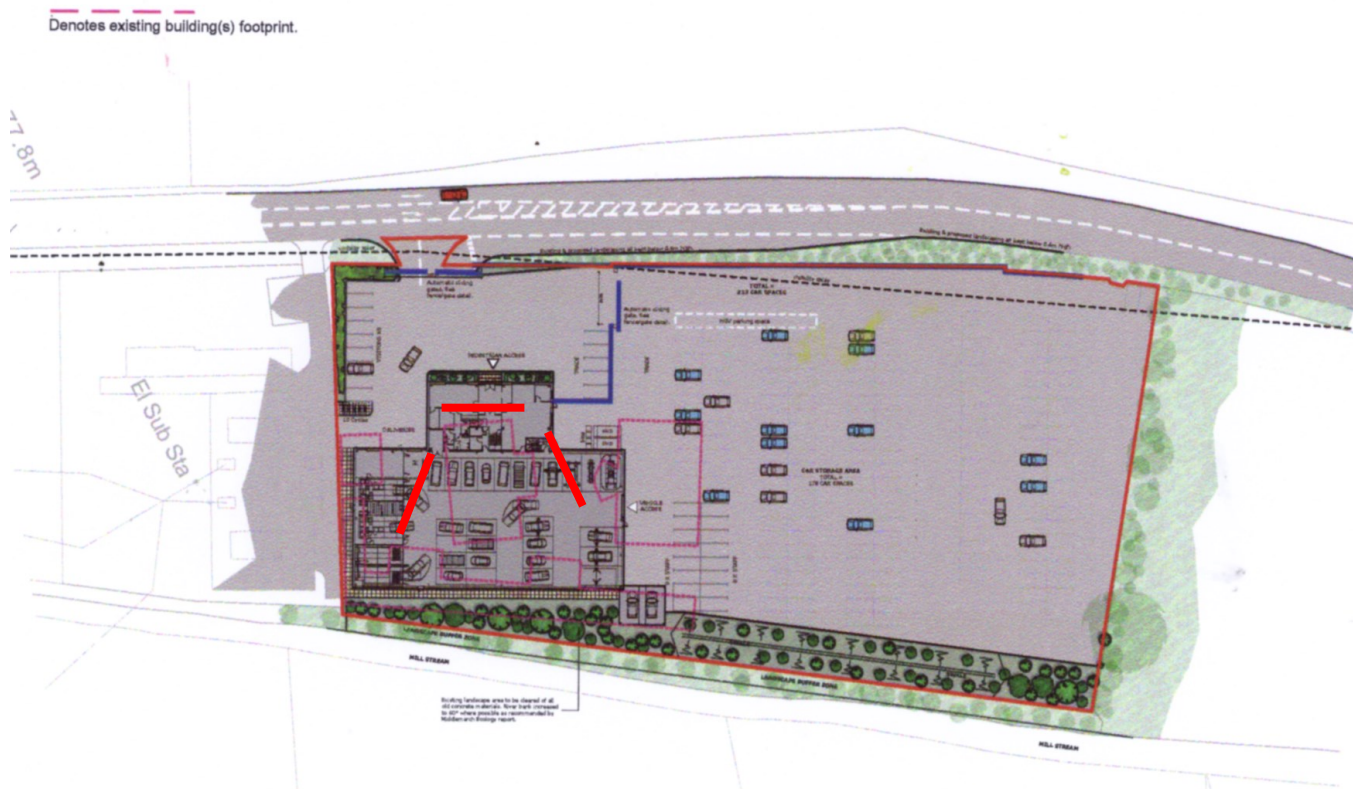


Figure 2: Plan of the proposed trench locations and development.
(Provided by client)

Methodology

As concrete slabs covered the site, three areas for trenches measuring 10x2m were broken up

by machine prior to soil stripping. Each trench was excavated to approximately 1m in depth and a sondage dug at one end to establish the depth of the deposits overlying natural substratum.

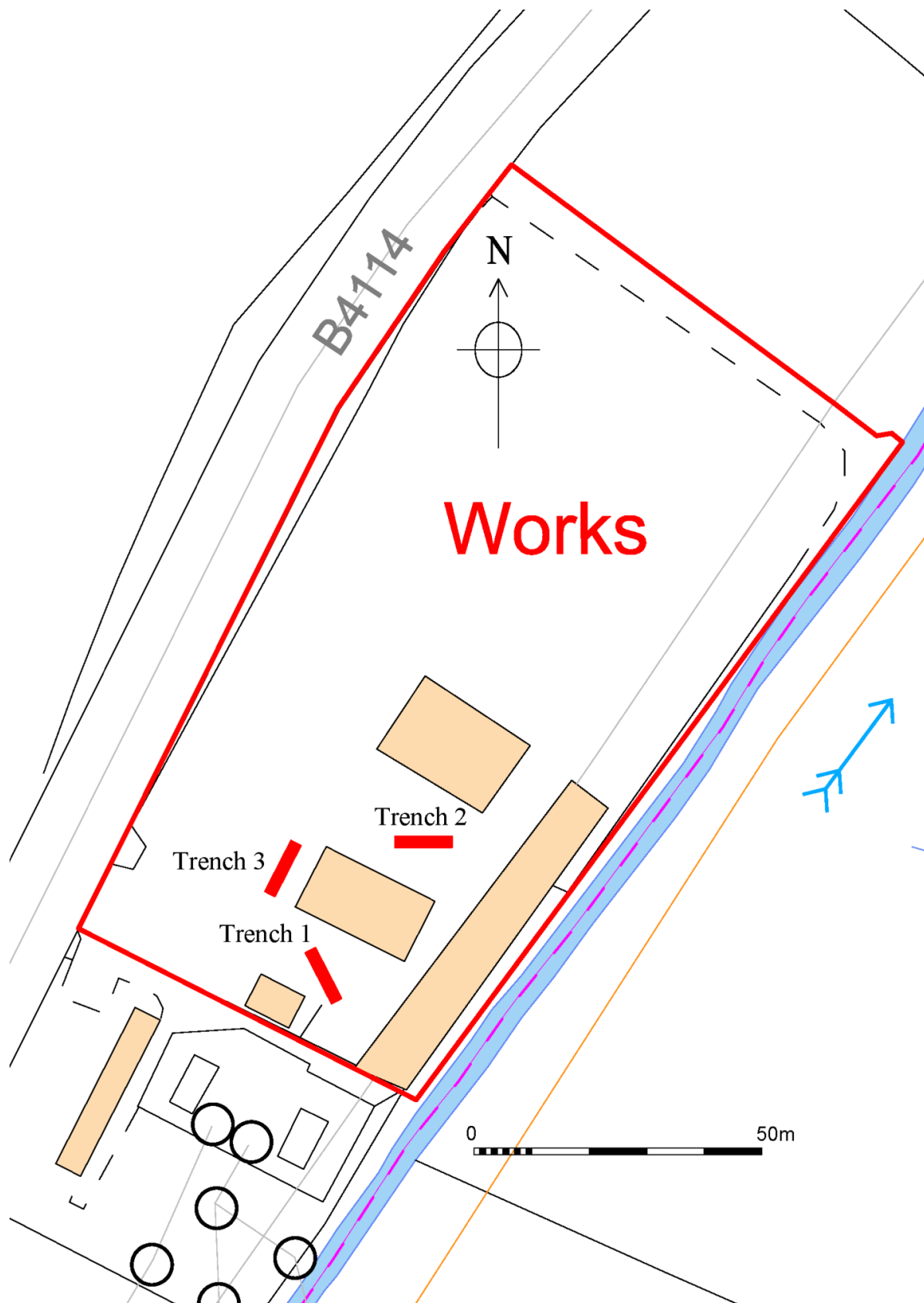


Figure 3: Trench layout plan

The sections and existing spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. If present archaeological features were to be hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as detailed in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological field evaluations* (2014).

Results

Trench 1 was aligned north-west to south-east (Fig. 4). The natural geology of mid yellow-grey clay was at a depth of 1.1m at the north-western end of the trench. Above this was dark blue-grey to mid blue-grey fine silt and alluvial clay generally made up in three layers, measuring on average 0.62m thick. This was covered by concrete, 0.38m thick. A sample was taken from the alluvial clay but on assessment was not found to contain any organic material.

Trench 2 was aligned east-west (Fig. 5). Natural geology was at a depth of 1.15m at the east end of the trench. This was overlain by the same alluvial silty-clay layers, between 0.62 and 0.76m thick. This was covered by concrete between 0.22m and 0.39m thick.

Trench 3 was aligned north-east to south-west (Fig. 6). The natural geology was 0.8m deep at the north-east end of the trench. The same alluvial silty-clay between 0.54m and 0.6m thick overlay the natural substratum, and was covered by concrete 0.2m to 0.26m thick. There was a live electric cable across the middle of the trench, so this part was only excavated to 0.36m deep.



Figure 4: Trench 1 looking south-east



Figure 5: Trench 2 looking east



Figure 6: Trench 3 looking north-east

Discussion

There were no archaeological features encountered within the trenches. No organic material was located within a sample taken from the alluvium in Trench 1. It would appear that the area has had flooding events and lying water probably for some time. The River Soar is just to the south-east of the site, and surrounding fields appear to be waterlogged. There also seems to be a rise in the land from the south-east of the site to the main road. This is also evidenced by the decrease in depth of the natural substratum within trench 3. No evidence of the Fosse Way was found within the trenches. It is interesting to note that the B4114 kinks around the site to the north-west, while the Fosse Way is projected through it. However the evidence from the trenches and geotechnical survey suggests that the area has always been very wet, and the Fosse Way may not have gone through the site but also have kinked to the north-west.

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Archive

The site archive consists of: 3 A4 trial trench sheets, 1 A4 photo index sheet, and 8 digital photographs.

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A22.2016.

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.	universi1-244347
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Project Name	Coventry Road, Stoney Stanton, Leicestershire
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Nathan Flavell
Previous/Future work	
Current Land Use	Brownfield
Development Type	Commercial
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Condition
Site Co ordinates	SP 508 938
Start/end dates of field work	04/02/16-05/02/16
Archive recipient	Leicestershire
Study Area	60 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.

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