



**University of
Leicester**

Archaeological Services

**Archaeological Trial Trenching At
Land North-West of Acresford Road,
Donisthorpe, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 30976 13683**

Donald Clark



ULAS Report No. 2015- 081

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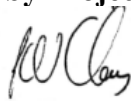
**Archaeological Trial Trenching at
Land north-west of Acresford Road,
Donisthorpe, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 30976 13683**

**Planning Authority: North West Leicestershire District Council
Planning Application Number: 14/01081/OUT**

Client: Mr. G. Barney

Checked by Project Manager

Signed:



Date: 13.05.2015

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Summary

Archaeological trial trenching was undertaken on land to the north-west of Acresford Road, Donisthorpe, Leicestershire prior to redevelopment of the land (Planning Application No. 14/01081/OUT). The archaeological work was carried out by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of the client, Mr. G. Barney, and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), section 12 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment). No deposits of archaeological origin were revealed by the trial trench evaluation. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the Accession Number X.A52.2015.

Introduction

This report presents the results of archaeological trial trenching undertaken prior to possible development of land to the north-west of Acresford Road, Donisthorpe, Leicestershire, and was carried out on the 22nd and 23rd April 2015 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services.

Location and Geology

The site covers approximately 0.75 hectares and is located on the north-west of Acresford Road which is located to the south-west of the village of Donisthorpe. The village of Donisthorpe lies approximately 29km west-north-west of Leicester.

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates that the bedrock geology consists of Middle Coal Measures Formation with superficial alluvial deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel.

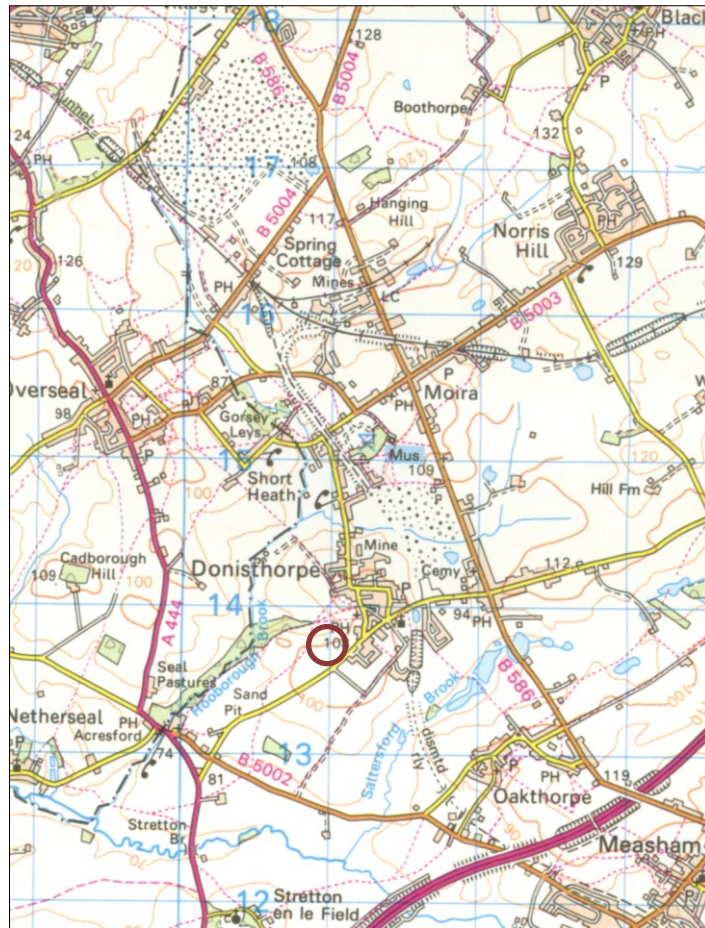


Figure 1: Location of site

Archaeological and Historical Background

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland indicates that there are archaeological sites located within the vicinity of the assessment area. The eastern third of the site lies within the medieval and post-medieval historic core of the village of Donisthorpe (HER ref.: MLE9096). In addition, buried remains have been identified to the south of the present site on Acresford Road, comprising enclosure ditches, possible cut features, yielding few finds, probably indicative of Iron Age or Roman settlement.

Donisthorpe is first recorded in the Domesday Book when land was held there by Henry Ferrers. The de Aula family held the Manor in the 12th -14th centuries. By 1518 the Gresley family held Oakthorpe and Donisthorpe which became a single parish in 1838. Donisthorpe had historically been divided between Derbyshire and Leicestershire and had also been included within the parishes of Seal, Gresley and Measham (Marsden 2001).

Aims and Methods

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of 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 produce an archive and report of any results.

Methodology

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct (2014) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological excavations* (2014). Staffing, recording systems, health and safety provisions and insurance details are detailed in the WSI.

The trial trenches were excavated by a JCB excavator using a 1.60m ditching bucket under the direction of a ULAS archaeologist. Seven trenches were excavated each measuring approximately 30m in length and 1.60m in width. No archaeological features were disturbed during the assessment.

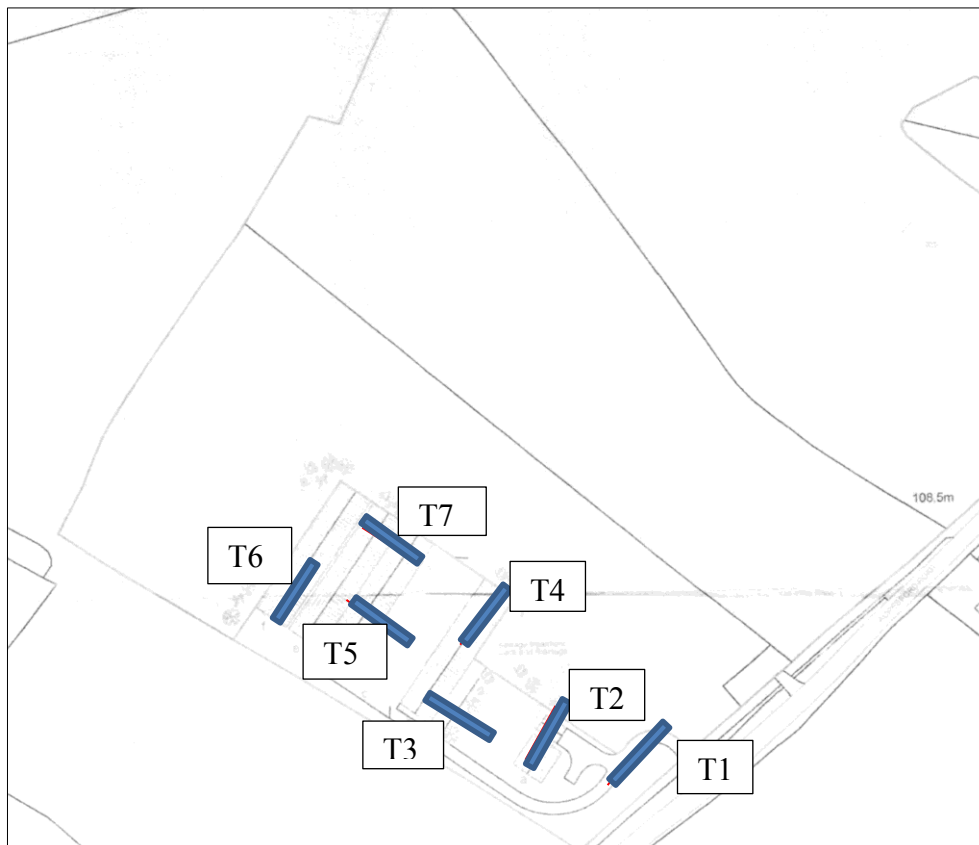


Figure 2: Location of trenches

Results

The archaeological trial trenching was undertaken on the 22nd and 23rd April 2015 at land on the north-west of Acresford Road, Donisthorpe, Leicestershire.

Seven trenches were laid out on the site with various orientation and their excavation by machine down to the natural sub stratum was closely observed.

Trench T1

Trench T1 was excavated under archaeological supervision down to the natural sub-stratum of reddish-brown sand with patches of gravel. The sub-stratum was overlain by a reddish-brown silty-sand subsoil and the subsoil was overlain by a grey-brown silty sand topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were located in this trench.

Orientation: South-West to North-East
 Length: 29.60m
 Width: 1.60m

Interval	NE 1m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.47m	0.43m	0.46m	0.33m	0.40m	0.42m	0.50m
Subsoil Depth	0.19m	0.26m	0.23m	0.22m	0.11m	0.16m	0.24m
Top of Natural	0.66m	0.69m	0.69m	0.55m	0.51m	0.58m	0.74m
Base of Trench	0.77m	0.79m	0.78m	0.61m	0.60m	0.65m	0.81m



Figure 3: Trench T1 looking south-west

Trench T2

Trench T2 was excavated under archaeological supervision down to the natural substratum comprising a brown-pink clay with patches of dark red-brown sand with patches of gravel and a light yellow-brown sand. The substratum was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand subsoil and the subsoil was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were located in this trench.

Orientation: South-West to North-East

Length: 29.40m

Width: 1.60m

Interval	NE 1m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.37m	0.31m	0.39m	0.46m	0.53m	0.38m	0.34m
Subsoil Depth	0.07m	0.16m	0.16m	0.36m	0.29m	0.22m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.44m	0.47m	0.55m	0.82m	0.82m	0.60m	0.48m
Base of Trench	0.51m	0.54m	0.69m	0.89m	0.98m	0.88m	0.52m



Figure 4: Trench T2 looking south-west

Trench T3

Trench T3 was excavated under archaeological supervision down to the natural substratum of a greyish-brown sand with patches of light yellowish-brown sand and brownish-pink clay.

The substratum was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand subsoil and the subsoil was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were located in this trench.

Orientation: North-west to South-east

Length: 29.40m

Width: 1.60m

Interval	SE 1m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29m
Topsoil Depth	0.51m	0.41m	0.36m	0.31m	0.33m	0.28m	0.25m
Subsoil Depth	0.23m	0.23m	0.18m	0.21m	0.15m	0.16m	0.14m
Top of Natural	0.74m	0.64m	0.54m	0.52m	0.48m	0.44m	0.39m
Base of Trench	0.95m	0.80m	0.71m	0.61m	0.57m	0.50m	0.47m



Figure 5: Trench T3 looking north-west

Trench T4

Trench T4 was excavated under archaeological supervision down to the natural substratum comprising a reddish-brown sand with patches of gravel. The substratum was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand subsoil and the subsoil was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were located in this trench.

Orientation: South-West to North-East

Length: 29.40m

Width: 1.60m

Interval	NE 1m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	28m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.48m	0.34m	0.38m	0.30m	0.23m	0.22m	0.22m
Subsoil Depth	0.23m	0.19m	0.24m	0.16m	0.16m	0.11m	0.12m
Top of Natural	0.71m	0.53m	0.62m	0.46m	0.39m	0.33m	0.34m
Base of Trench	0.85m	0.68m	0.76m	0.58m	0.53m	0.45m	0.38m



Figure 6: Trench T4 looking north-east

Trench T5

Trench T5 was excavated under archaeological supervision down to the natural substratum comprising a reddish-brown sand with patches of gravel and brownish-pink clay with patches of sand and gravel. The substratum was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand subsoil and the subsoil was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were located in this trench.

Orientation: North-West to South-East

Length: 30.45m

Width: 1.60m

Interval	SE 1m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m NW
Topsoil Depth	0.34m	0.32m	0.35m	0.35m	0.38m	0.32m	0.35m
Subsoil Depth	0.15m	0.14m	0.13m	0.14m	0.16m	0.14m	0.13m
Top of Natural	0.49m	0.46m	0.48m	0.49m	0.54m	0.46m	0.48m
Base of Trench	0.61m	0.58m	0.60m	0.57m	0.65m	0.57m	0.54m



Figure 7: Trench T5 looking north-west

Trench T6

Trench T6 was excavated under archaeological supervision down to the natural substratum comprising a reddish-brown sand with patches of light yellowish-brown sand and brownish-pink clay with patches of sand and gravel. The substratum was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand subsoil and the subsoil was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand topsoil. No archaeological features or finds were located in this trench.

Orientation: South-West to North-East

Length: 29.60m

Width: 1.60m

Interval	SW 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	29.60m NE
Topsoil Depth	0.24m	0.25m	0.30m	0.40m	0.41m	0.31m	0.45m

Subsoil Depth	0.56m	0.50m	0.39m	0.35m	0.28m	0.26m	0.13m
Top of Natural Substratum	0.80m	0.75m	0.69m	0.75m	0.69m	0.57m	0.58m
Base of Trench	0.90m	0.84m	0.76m	0.81m	0.69m	0.57m	0.58m



Figure 8: Trench T6 looking north-east

Trench T7

Trench T7 was excavated under archaeological supervision down to the natural substratum comprising a mottled greyish-brown/reddish-brown soft sand with occasional grit and gravel and a mottled greyish-brown/pinkish-brown clayey sand and gravel. The substratum was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand subsoil and the subsoil was overlain by a grey brown silty-sand topsoil. The trench contained a modern metal water pipe running in an east-west direction. No archaeological features or finds were located in this trench.

Orientation: North-West to South-East

Length: 31m

Width: 1.60m

Interval	NW 0m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m SE
Topsoil Depth	0.28m	0.28m	0.22m	0.38m	0.28m	0.24m	0.26m
Subsoil Depth	0.13m	0.14m	0.27m	0.31m	0.24m	0.26m	0.18m
Top of Natural	0.41m	0.42m	0.49m	0.69m	0.52m	0.50m	0.44m

substratum							
Base of Trench	0.51m	0.48m	0.49m	0.84m	0.67m	0.62m	0.62m



Figure 9: Trench T7 looking north-west



Figure 10: Metal water pipe located in trench T7

Conclusion

Archaeological trial trenching was undertaken on the land north-west of Acresford Road, Donisthorpe, Leicestershire. Seven trenches were excavated, none of which contained any archaeological deposits. A diffuse interface between topsoil, subsoil and natural may suggest that little prior disturbance to area had taken place. The depth of soil deposits may suggest that the area has been used as pasture for a prolonged period.

Archive

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the Accession No. X.A52.2015. The archive will contain site notes, digital photographs and photo index.

Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society in due course. The report will be added to the Archaeology Data Services (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.

Bibliography

CIfA 2014a *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

CIfA 2014b *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Marsden, P., 2001 *An archaeological desk-based assessment for land off Hill Street, Donisthorpe, Leicestershire*. ULAS Report 2001-104

OASIS Information

ID	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	Land to the north-west of Acresford Road, Donisthorpe, Leicestershire
Summary	<i>Archaeological trial trenching was undertaken on land to the north-west of Acresford Road, Donisthorpe, Leicestershire prior to redevelopment of the land (Planning Application No. 14/01081/OUT). The archaeological work was requested by the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council and carried out by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of the client, Mr. G. Barney, and in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), section 12 (Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment). No deposits of archaeological origin were revealed by the trial trench evaluation. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the Accession Number X.A52.2015.</i>
Project Type	Archaeological Trial Trenching
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Mathew Morris
Previous/Future work	
Current Land Use	Pasture
Development Type	Construction of new farm development
Reason for Investigation	Planning condition
Position in the Planning Process	Planning application number 14/01081/OUT
Site Co ordinates	SK 30976 13683
Start/end dates of field work	22nd to 23rd April 2015

Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museum Services
Study Area	0.75 hectares approx
Associated project reference codes	

Acknowledgements

The archaeological fieldwork was carried out by Mathew Morris and Donald Clark and the project was managed by Patrick Clay.

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