

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
Mill Lane, Gilmorton,
Leicestershire
NGR: SP 573 879**



Roger Kipling

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**An Archaeological Evaluation at Mill Lane,
Gilmorton, Leicestershire
NGR: SP 573 879**

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For: Broughton Hall Fencing

Approved by:

Signed:



Date: 27/01/2016

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in January 2016 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Broughton Hall Fencing on land at Mill Lane, Gilmorton, Leicestershire. The fieldwork was undertaken in advance of proposed residential development. The archaeological evaluation provided limited evidence for medieval archaeological cultivation in the form of plough furrows. No other archaeological evidence was forthcoming.

The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A7.2016.

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken on land surrounding Broughton Hall Fencing, Mill Lane, Gilmorton, Leicestershire, in advance of a proposed residential development. The site is located in the north-eastern side of Gilmorton, a parish in the Lutterworth district of Leicestershire. Gilmorton is located 3 miles north-east of Lutterworth. The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) for the area records a number of entries of known heritage assets in the vicinity which include Roman find spots and indicates the proximity of the site to the medieval village core and earthworks. Hence there was potential of remains from the Roman and medieval periods to be present.

In consequence the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council (LCC) recommended the need for a pre-planning scheme of archaeological field evaluation in order to provide preliminary indications of the character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority.

The programme of archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Section 12 Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment). The fieldwork was intended to provide a record of the archaeological remains in mitigation of the impact of the proposed development. The agreed scheme was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (ULAS 2015; hereinafter WSI).

Fieldwork was undertaken in January 2016 and involved the machine excavation of trial trenches followed by hand cleaning, excavation and recording of archaeological remains.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG March 2012). All archaeological work was in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CiFA) Code of Conduct (2014) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014). The *LCC Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological work Leicestershire and Rutland* (1997) was also adhered to.

Site Description, Topography and Geology

The proposed development is located on the north-eastern side of Gilmorton, a parish in the Lutterworth district of Leicestershire. Gilmorton is located 3 miles north-east of Lutterworth.

The proposed development site comprises an approximately rectangular area of c.0.55ha. of pasture ranged around three sides of the premises of Broughton Hall Fencing. The site lies at a height of c.150m OD.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 170 indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of Diamicton Till overlying Mudstone of the Blue Lias and Charmouth formation.

Archaeological and Historical Background

The name Gilmorton is derived from Old English *Gilden* Morton. Morton comes from *mor*, meaning marshy, and *tun*, meaning settlement, village or place. The later affix *Gilden* means wealthy or splendid, possibly a reflection of its development in the medieval period. Gilmorton is recorded in the Domesday Book when it lay in the Guthlaxton Wapentake.

A number of entries are held in the Leicestershire County Historic Environment Record (HER) for the village; a motte castle (HER **LE1535**) together with a moated site (**LE11537**), fishponds (**LE1538**) and a hollow way (**LE1536**) mark the early development of Gilmorton. The precise limits of the medieval settlement have never been firmly determined. The later focus of the settlement moved to the east where the modern village now stands.

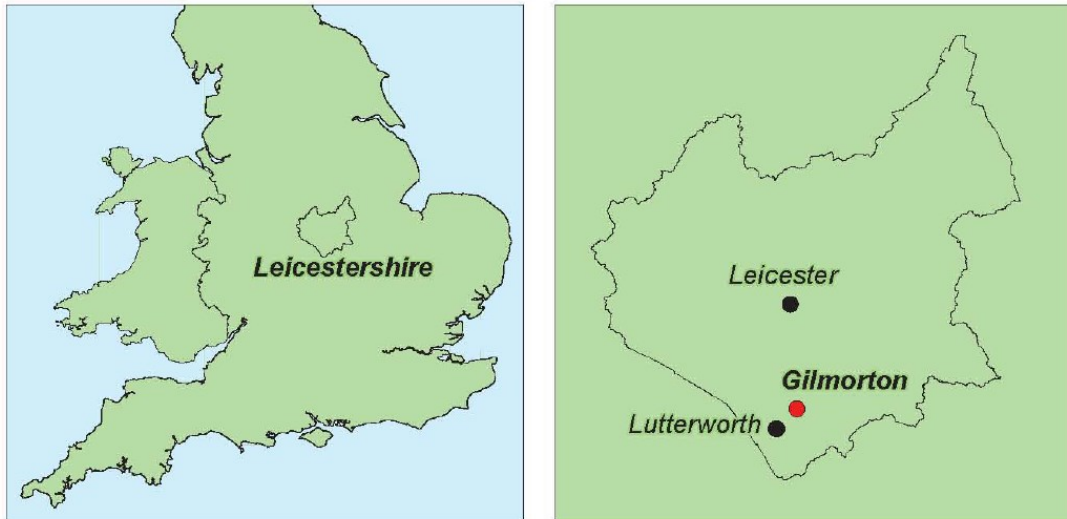


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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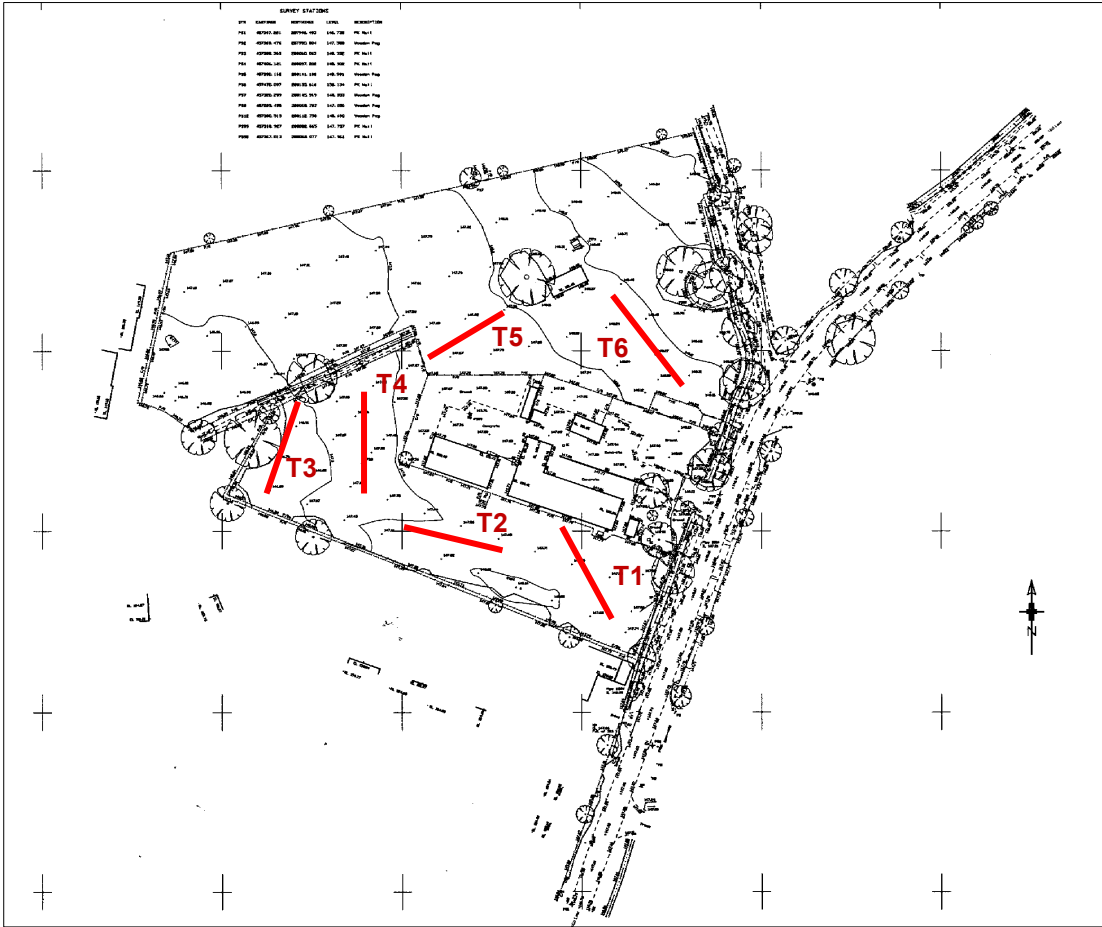


Figure 2: Development area showing evaluation trench locations

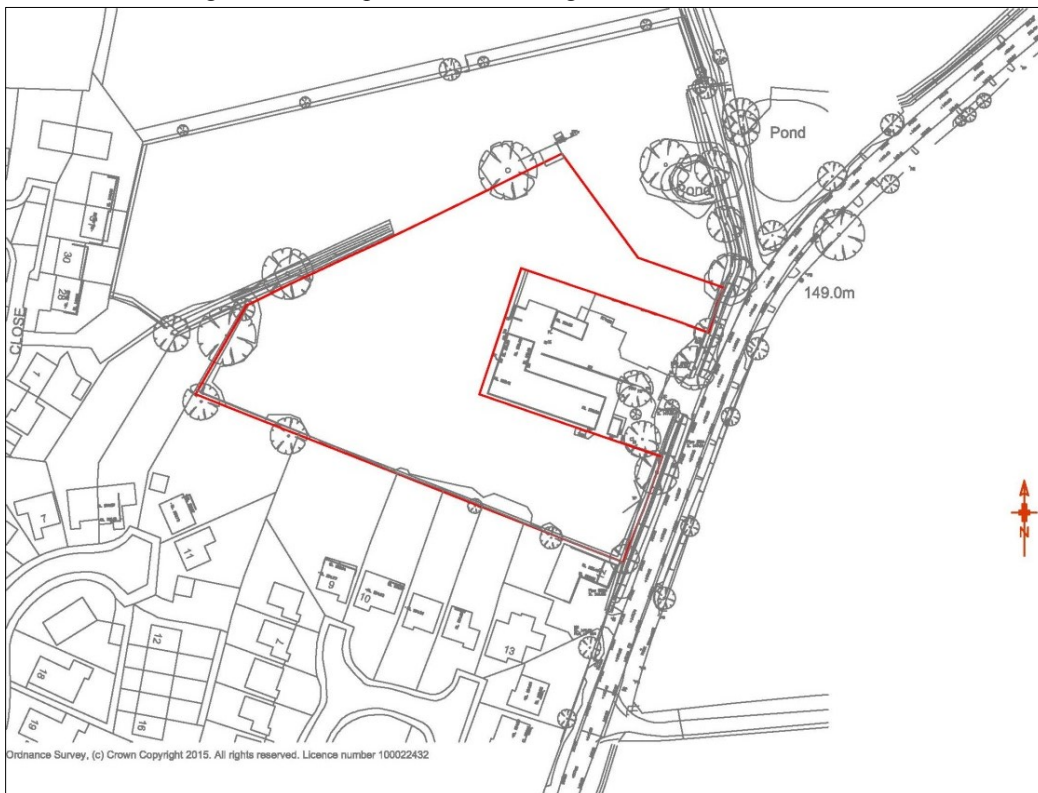


Figure 3: Area of proposed development (supplied by client)



Figure 4: Plan of development area

Aims and Objectives

The general aims of the archaeological works were as follows:

- 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 a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire HER.

In addition, the archaeological work was identified to have the potential to contribute to the following research aims, derived from *East Midlands Heritage: An updated research agenda and strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight *et al.* 2012) and *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006).

The Roman Period (Taylor 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)

Roman spot finds in the area are an indication of potential Roman activity. Therefore, the evaluation had the potential to contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy.

Medieval (Lewis 2006; Knight et al 2012)

The area lies close to the medieval village core and medieval earthworks and had the possibility to contribute to the study of rural medieval settlement and East Midlands Research Strategy 6.7.7.2 (Knight *et al.* 2012: 94; Lewis 2006).

Methodology

Prior to the commencement of works an Accession Code was obtained and the required archive deposition forms completed. An OASIS online record was initiated and the key fields completed on Details, Location and Creator forms. Following recommendations from the Senior Planning Archaeologist of Leicestershire County Council, a programme of archaeological excavation was undertaken, comprising the opening of trial trenches.

An excavated sample of the *c.*0.55 ha. comprised 6 x 30m by 1.6m trenches (*c.*288m²), providing a representative sample of the proposed area of development, targeting the footprints of the proposed buildings (Figure 4). A mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket (*c.*1.6m wide) was employed under constant archaeological supervision, with excavation ceasing at undisturbed natural deposits. The trenches were recorded at an appropriate scale by measured drawing and photography and were located to Ordnance Survey National Grid.



Figure 5: Excavation in progress

Results

Trenches 1-4

Trenches 1-4 each measured 1.6m x 30m and ranged between 0.9m-1.06m in depth. All had an overlying common 0.25m-0.42m deep mid grey-brown friable sandy silt loam topsoil and underlying 0.15m-0.43m thick accumulation of mid grey moderate compact sandy-silt subsoil. The underlying natural silty-sand was cut by a single 5m-wide medieval plough furrow at the southern end of Trench 3 and running on a north-south alignment.



Figure 6: Trench 1: general view south-east (1m scales)
Figure 7: Trench 3: general view south (1m scales)

Trenches 5 & 6

A further two trenches were opened in pasture land north of the fencing company's premises. Both Trench 5 (1.6m x 30m x 0.45m-0.62m) and Trench 6 (1.6m x 30m x 0.36m-0.50m) featured several 1.5m-2m wide medieval furrows aligned north-south, aligning with standing ridge and furrow earthworks visible to the north. No further archaeological evidence was present in any of the six excavated trenches.



Figure 8: Trench 6

Discussion and Conclusions

The archaeological evaluation undertaken in January 2016 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Broughton Hall Fencing on land at Mill Lane, Gilmorton, Leicestershire provided limited evidence for medieval archaeological cultivation in the form of plough furrows. No other archaeological evidence was forthcoming.

Archive and Publications

The site archive (X.A7.2016), consisting of paper and photographic records, will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Service.

The paper archive consists of:

- Photographic record indices
- 18 digital photographs
- A risk assessment form

Publication

A version of the excavation summary (see above) will appear in due course in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.

Acknowledgements

Roger Kipling of ULAS undertook the archaeological excavation and watching brief on behalf of Broughton Hall Fencing. The project was managed by Patrick Clay.

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Oasis Information

Project Name	Mill Lane Gilmorton Leicestershire
Project Type	Archaeological evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Roger Kipling
Previous/Future work	Development
Current Land Use	Paddock
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	Pre-application
Site Co ordinates	NGR: SP 573 879
Start/end dates of field work	January 2016
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area	0.55ha.

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