



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Field
Evaluation on Land South Of
Grand Union Canal, Glen Road,
Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire,
LE8 9FQ
NGR: SP 635 966**

Claire LaCombe

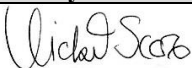


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**An Archaeological Field Evaluation on Land South of Grand Union
Canal, Glen Road, Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire, LE8 9FQ
NGR: SP 635 966**

Claire LaCombe

**For: David Hewitt
Planning Ref: 16/01605/FUL**

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CONTENTS

Summary	2
Introduction.....	2
Background.....	2
Objectives	5
Methodology.....	5
Results.....	6
Trench 1	6
Trench 2	8
Discussion.....	9
Publication	9
Acknowledgements.....	9
Bibliography	10
Appendix 1 OASIS Information	11

FIGURES

Figure 1. Location of the proposed site marked in red.	3
Figure 2. Aerial view of site	3
Figure 3. Proposed plans provided by the client.....	4
Figure 4. Ordnance survey map 1886. Sheet XXXVIII.16 Approximate location of site shown in red	5
Figure 5. Ordnance Survey map 1952. Sheet XXXVII.SE Approximate location of site shown in purple.	5
Figure 6. Location of trenches	6
Figure 7. Trench 1 location. Looking north-west. 1m scale.	7
Figure 8. Trench 2 looking north-east. 1m scale.	8

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Summary

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on the 5th January 2017 on land south of Grand Union Canal, Glen Road, Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire LE8 9FQ (SP 635 966). The work was commissioned by David Hewitt as requested by the planning archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on any buried archaeology in advance of the construction of a menage and stables.

Two trenches with a total length of 57.7 metres were excavated within the proposed development area. No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the work.

The archive for the work will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with the accession number X.A1.2017.

Introduction

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation on Land South Of Grand Union Canal, Glen Road, Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire LE8 9FQ. NGR: SP 635 966. David Hewitt wishes to construct a menage and stables. This archaeological evaluation forms part of a planning requirement Ref. 16/01605/FUL.

The ULAS *Written Scheme of Investigation for Evaluation on Land South Of Grand Union Canal, Glen Road, Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire LE8 9FQ* (hereafter the WSI), specified two trenches of variable length across the footprint of the proposed menage and stables. The trenches combined had a total length of 57.7 meters.

Background

Location and Geology

The village of Newton Harcourt lies within the parish of Wistow which lies seven miles south east of Leicester in the valley of the River Sence (Fig. 1). The proposed development site is located on land south of the Grand Union Canal, Glen Road, Newton Harcourt.

The application area covers an area of c.0.52 hectares and currently comprises of a grassed pasture area. The site slopes down to the south with the top of the slope being at approximately 90m above OD (Fig. 2).

The proposed development area is bounded on the east, north and south sides by a wood and metal fence with visible mature hedgerows and trees beyond, some of which line

the boundary of the Grand union Canal (North). To the west of the site is a large open area containing ridge and furrow which lies on slightly higher ground, thus restricting any view of the proposed development from the road to the west.

The Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates the underlying geology is mudstone sedimentary bedrock (Blue Lias Formation) formed approximately 190 to 204 million years ago in the Jurassic and Triassic Periods. This is overlain with clay, silt, sand, and gravel alluvium.

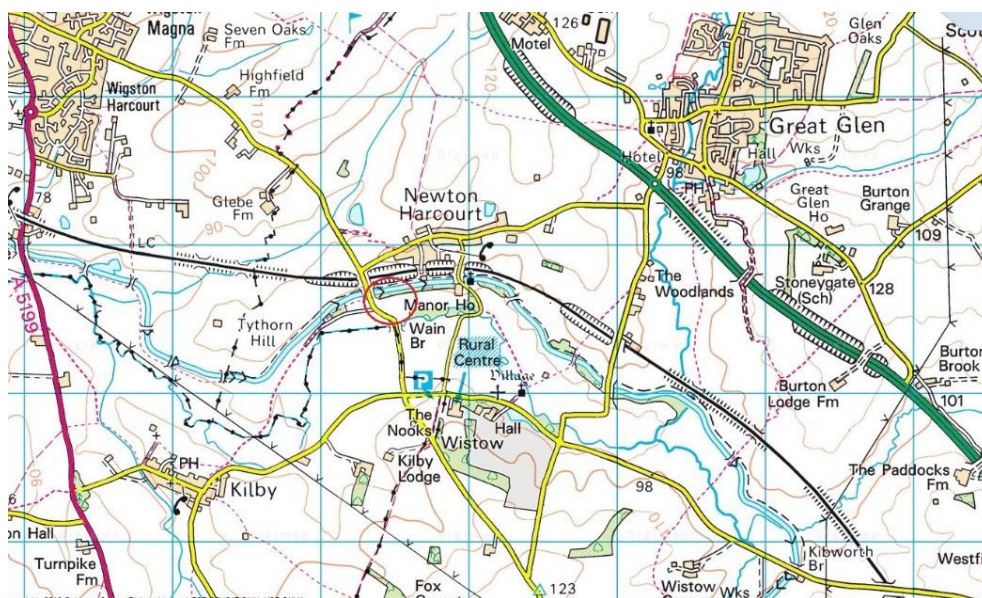


Figure 1. Location of the proposed site marked in red.

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Figure 2. Aerial view of site

© 2017 Google Map data/ Bluesky data

Archaeological and Historical Background

Examination of data in the Leicestershire Historic Environment Record and various published sources for a 1km radius of the site show that finds and features of

Prehistoric, Roman and Medieval date have been recorded in the vicinity of the application site and there is a potential that below-ground archaeological remains are present within the site. The villages of Leicestershire and the wider English Central Midlands appear to have evolved, alongside their open field systems, during the later 1st millennium AD. Buried archaeological evidence constituting one or more as yet unidentified heritage asset(s) spanning the period from the earliest evolution of the village to its more recent past can be expected within the development area. Historic mapping and aerial photographs indicate that the application site has remained largely undisturbed since at least the 19th century, therefore any archaeological remains present on the site are likely to be preserved in situ. There are no archaeological assets recorded within the development site.

The first edition of the Ordnance Survey map for the area, published in 1886 (Fig. 4), shows that the site lies in fields on the outskirts of the village close to the Manor house. A small building lay to the north-west of the development site. The 1931 edition shows that the land is largely unchanged and still contains a small building to the north-west of the development site (Fig. 5). It is not clear what this building was for or what materials it was constructed from.

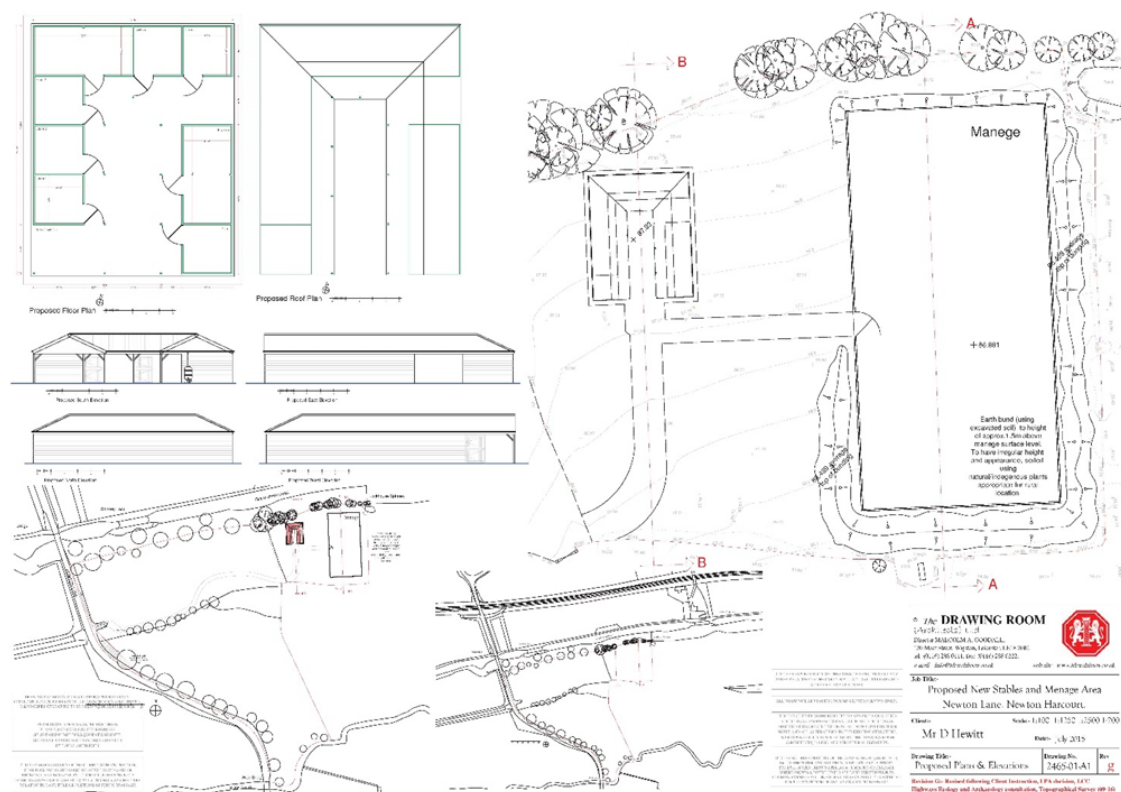


Figure 3. Proposed plans provided by the client



Figure 4. Ordnance survey map 1886. Sheet XXXVIII.16 Approximate location of site shown in red

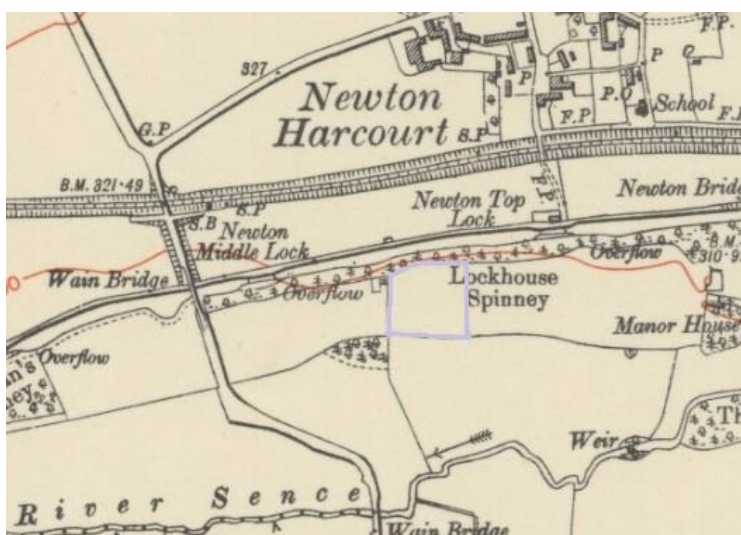


Figure 5. Ordnance Survey map 1952. Sheet XXXVII.SE Approximate location of site shown in purple.

Objectives

The objectives are as set out in the ULAS WSI (2016) approved by the County Planning Archaeologist. Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development. This includes the characterisation of the site within the broader landscape, any activities identified on the site and changes in land-use over time.

Methodology

Due to the slope only the northern areas would be subject to groundworks with the southern areas being filled to provide a level area. The southernmost boundary of the developers land will be gravelled to accommodate vehicular access to the proposed development site. It will run from the access gateway on the west side to the

development site at the east. No ground will be removed as the gravel will be placed on top of the existing ground thus minimising any ground disturbance (Fig. 3).

The 1.5m wide evaluation trenches were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket (Fig. 6). The methodology and recording system employed were as stated in the ULAS WSI. All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CifA) *Code of Conduct* (2014).

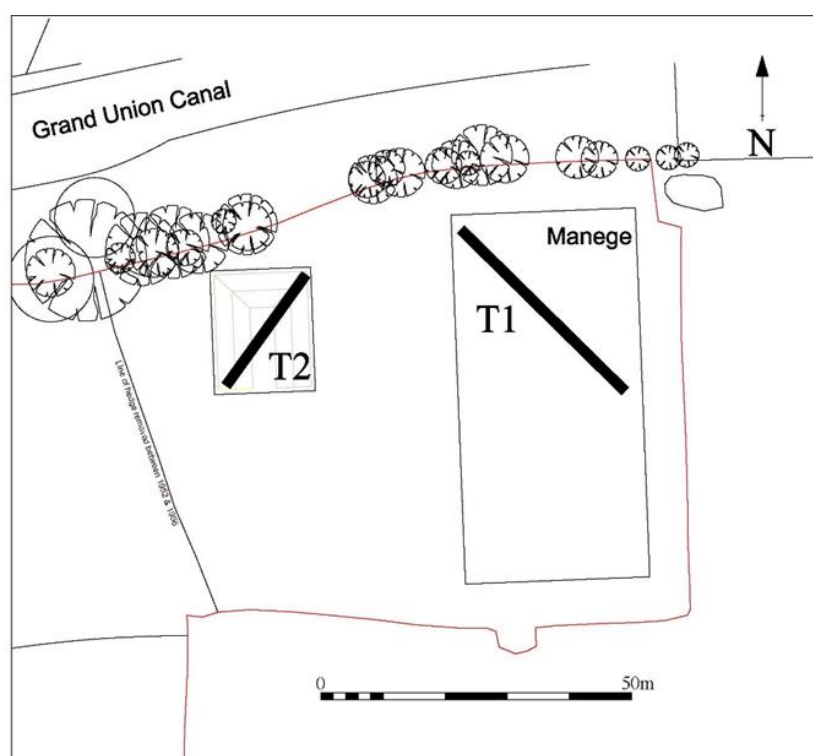


Figure 6. Location of trenches

Results

Trench 1

Trench 1 was placed within the proposed site for the manège. Running from the north westerly corner diagonally south-east for 36.7meters - approximately half way down the proposed area (Figs 6- 7).

The natural sub stratum consisted of mid - dark brown sandy soil with some frequent chalky inclusions. There was one land drain running north-south mid-way along the trench. The substratum showed no sign of tree root disturbance.

No archaeological features or deposits were present.

Trench 1 Length: 36.7 m

Interval	NW 1m	5m	10m	15m	20m	25m	30m	35m	36m SE
Topsoil Depth	0.24m	0.26m	0.24m	0.31m	0.30m	0.26m	0.30m	0.27m	0.22m
Subsoil Depth	0.18m	0.21m	0.18m	0.23m	0.17m	0.27m	0.29m	0.32m	0.20m
Top of natural substratum	0.42m	0.47m	0.42m	0.54m	0.47m	0.53m	0.59m	0.59m	0.42m
Base of trench	0.44m	0.49m	0.46m	0.58m	0.50m	0.56m	0.61m	0.62m	0.43m



Figure 7. Trench 1 location. Looking north-west. 1m scale.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was placed within the proposed site for the stable. Running from the north easterly corner diagonally south-west for 21 meters (Figs 6 and 8).

The natural sub stratum consisted of mid - dark brown sandy soil with some frequent chalky inclusions. There was one land drain running north-south mid-way along the trench. The substratum showed no sign of tree root disturbance.

No archaeological features or deposits were present.

Trench 2 length: 21.0 m

Interval	SW 1m	5m	10m	15m	20m NE
Topsoil Depth	Gravel layer	Gravel layer	Gravel layer	0.18m	0.25m
Subsoil Depth	0.36m	0.45m	0.40m	0.43m	0.40m
Top of natural substratum	0.36m	0.45m	0.40m	0.61m	0.65m
Base of trench	0.38m	0.48m	0.43m	0.62m	0.66m

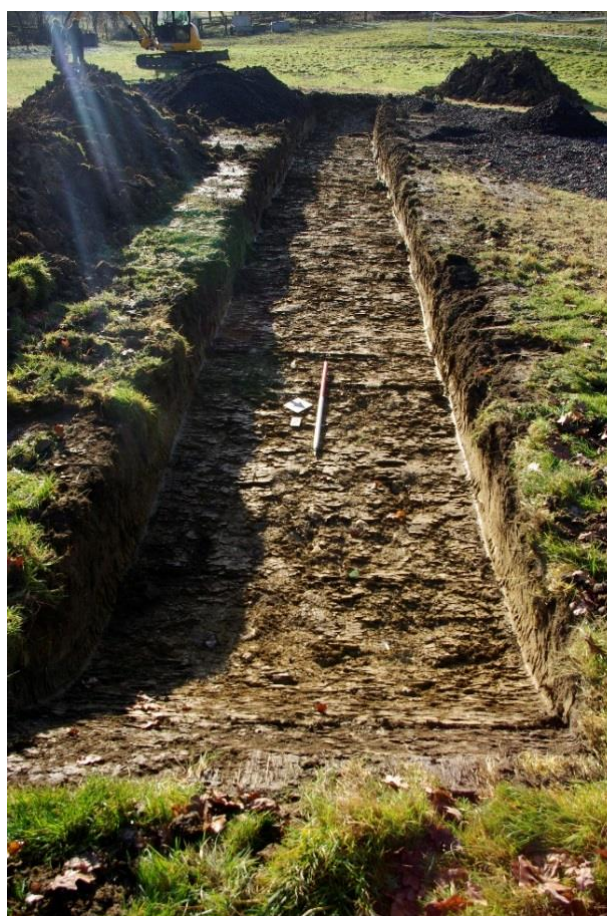


Figure 8. Trench 2 looking north-east. 1m scale.

Discussion

Despite the potential for the presence of archaeology from the Iron Age, Roman and medieval periods no archaeological features were observed within any of the evaluation trenches.

A post-medieval/modern field drain was identified in Trench 1 suggesting the land has been used for agricultural purposes from this period.

The area around Trenches 1 and 2 appeared to have been heavily farmed and significantly disturbed as there is only a very slight hint of the ridge and furrow which once used to cover the land.

The well-defined ridge and furrow in the fields to the west, east and north of the site appear to have at one time continued into the site. The fact that no earthworks are now visible suggests that the site has either been heavily ploughed or at least disturbed enough to remove this. No furrows could be seen cutting into the natural substratum. It therefore seems unlikely that any archaeological features will survive on this site.

Archive

The archive consists of:

- This report,
- 2 ULAS pro-forma trench recording sheets,
- 1 A4 photo record sheet,
- 1 CD of 10 digital photographs.

The archive will be held by Leicestershire Museum Service under the accession number X.A1.2017.

Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to extend its thanks to Davis Hewitt for his cooperation during the work and also to Matt for operating the mechanical excavator under difficult conditions.

The fieldwork was carried out by Andrew Hyam and Claire LaCombe. This report was written by Andrew Hyam and Claire LaCombe. The project was managed for ULAS by Vicki Score.

Bibliography

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OS MAPS: 6 inch to 1 mile: 1952 edition.

OS MAPS: 1:25000: 1886

ULAS. 2016. *Written Scheme of Investigation for Evaluation on Land South Of Grand Union Canal, Glen Road, Newton Harcourt, LE8 9FQ*.

Appendix 1 OASIS Information

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-273289		
	Project Name	Land South Of Grand Union Canal, Glen Road, Newton Harcourt		
	Start/end dates of field work	05/01/2017		
	Previous/Future Work	Not known		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Pasture grass land		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Development Type	Equestrian		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Granted		
	Planning Ref.	16/01605/FUL		
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	Newton Harcourt, LE8 9FQ		
	Study Area	0.52 ha		
	Site Coordinates	SP 635 966		
	Height OD	90m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (Harborough District Council)		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Vicki Score		
	Project Director/Supervisor	A Hyam		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Developer / David Hewitt		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	N/A	LCC MusService	LCC MusService
	ID (Acc. No.)		X.A1.2017.	X.A1.2017.
	Contents		Photos Report	Evaluation records Field Notes
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	An Archaeological Field Evaluation on Land South Of Grand Union Canal, Glen Road, Newton Harcourt, Leicestershire, LE8 9FQ NGR: SP 635 966		
	Author	Claire LaCombe		
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