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Archaeological Services

An archaeological field
evaluation at The Cedars,
29-33 London Road,
Kegworth,
Leicestershire
(SK 48819 26496)

Leon Hunt



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**An archaeological field evaluation
at The Cedars,
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(SK 48819 26496)**

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for

Craven Carr Ltd

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Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at The Cedars, 29-33 London Road, Kegworth, Leicestershire (SK 48819 26496) in advance of the development of the associated land, currently a large garden to the rear of a Grade II listed house.

The site lies adjacent to the Scheduled Monument at The Wymeshead, a series of medieval village earthworks. There was a possibility that the earthworks continued into the proposed development area. There are also other known archaeological sites and monuments in the vicinity, including the medieval historic core of the town.

A total of five trenches were excavated within the garden area: four on the lawns and one in an area of allotments. All were negative for archaeological remains, except that two linear features, which contained modern brick were revealed in Trench 01 at the northern end of the lawn, with one of the features possibly continuing into Trench 04 to the west. Trench 04 also contained the remains of a brick-built ornamental pond, or related garden feature.

The trenches also showed that the land had been landscaped at the southern end of the lawn to build up the land to provide a level surface for the tennis court that was existed on the lawn.

The archive for the site will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number X.A32.2017.

Introduction

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at The Cedars, 29-33 London Road, Kegworth, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 48819 26496) in advance of the development of the associated land for two new detached dwellings.

The archaeological work was in accordance with NPPF Section 12: Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment.

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the development area is located near to known heritage assets including the historic core of Kegworth. The proposed development site is also located immediately adjacent to a Scheduled Ancient Monument at the Wymeshead, which includes well-preserved earthworks produced by the northwards shift of the medieval settlement.

The fieldwork was intended 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.

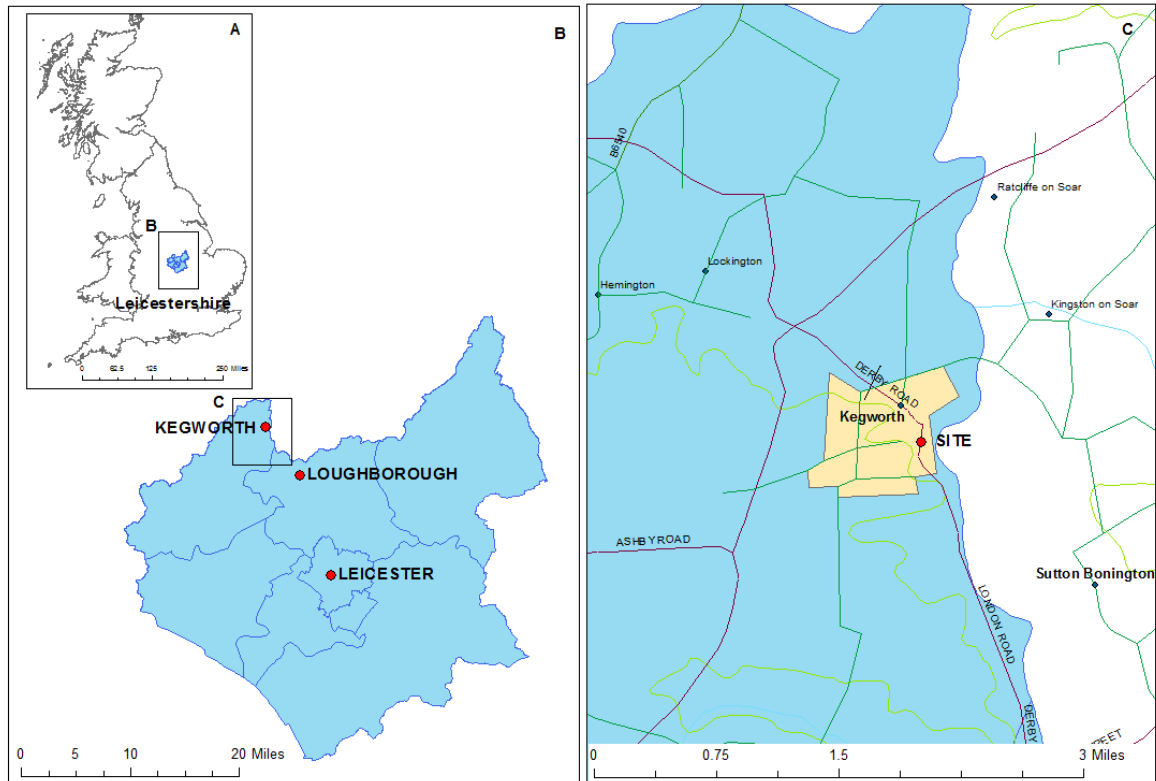


Figure 1: Site Location

Location and Geology

Kegworth lies at the north-western edge of Leicestershire, close to the Nottinghamshire border, approximately 18 miles north-west of Leicester and 6m north-west of Loughborough (Figure 1). It is within North-West Leicestershire administrative district.

‘The Cedars’, a Grade II listed building is situated on the eastern side of London Road (the A6), with the proposed development area; the associated gardens, to the east of the house (Figure 2).

The proposed development area comprises an approximate area of 860 square metres at a height of 37m aOD. The garden is situated on slightly varying levels, but the land broadly falls slightly to the south and east (Figure 3).

The British Geological Survey for England and Wales indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of sandstone of the Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation (sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 237 to 251 million years ago in the Triassic Period), overlain by superficial head deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel.

Historical and Archaeological Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the development area is located near to known heritage assets including the historic medieval core of Kegworth.

The proposed development site is located immediately adjacent to a Scheduled Monument at the Wymeshead (DLA402; SM1018359), which includes well-preserved earthworks produced by the northwards shift of the medieval settlement. The earthworks are centred on two hollow

ways, around 1m in depth, thought to have led to a fording point on the River Soar. These are associated with three embanked enclosures, believed to represent house platforms, with adjacent rectangular closes, which may represent areas of cultivation. There are also two sub-rectangular mounds at the northern end of each enclosure; one of these is thought to be the remains of a rabbit warren, while the smaller of the two may be a further house platform.

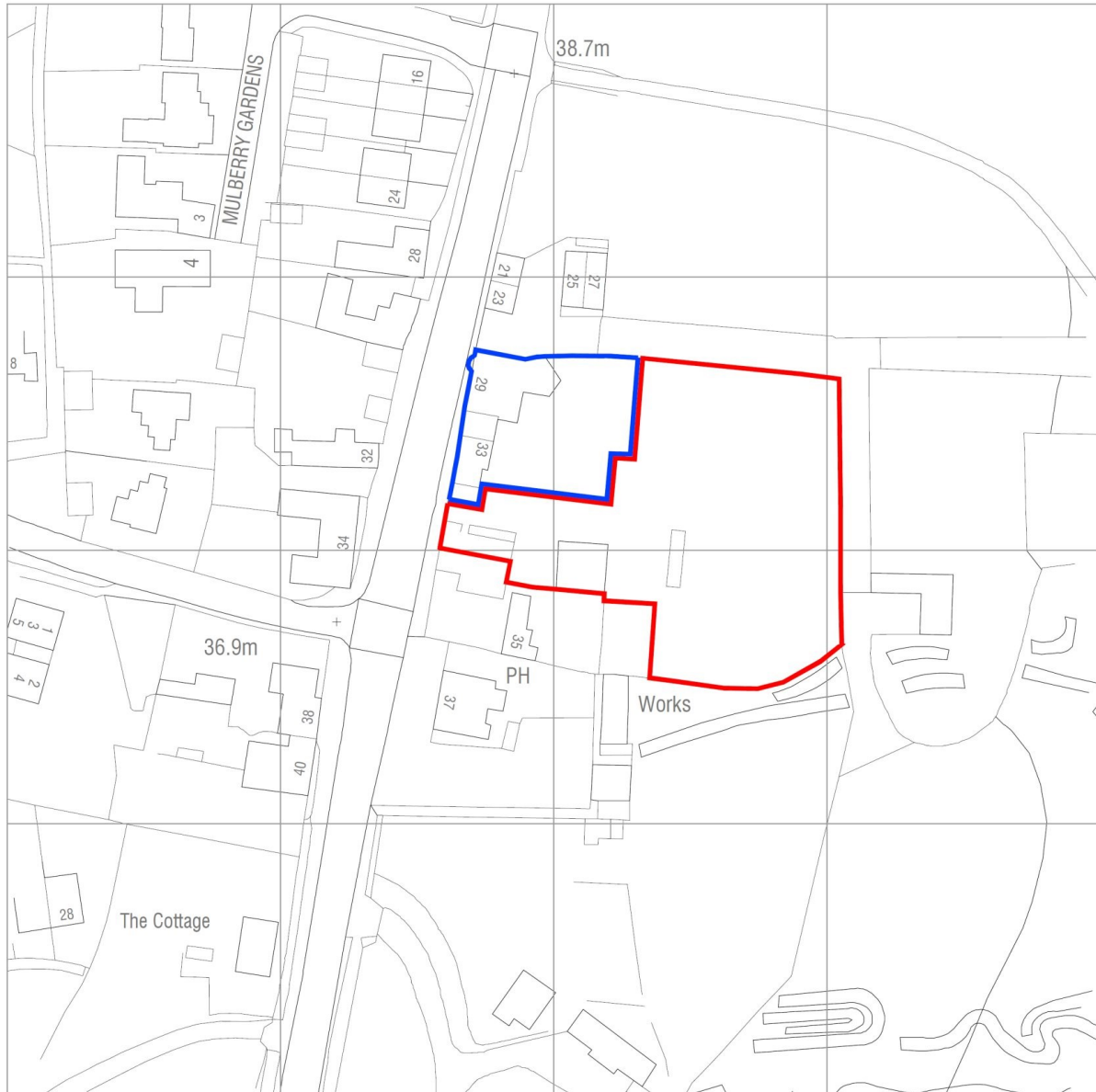


Figure 2: Plan of the site showing the house and area to be retained (blue) and the proposed development area (red)

In addition to the earthworks in the immediate vicinity, the medieval market place lies 215m north-west of the site (HER Ref No. **MLE4639**). The remains of a burgrave plot were discovered at 9, Market Place in 2011 (**MLE19794**). A medieval seal was recovered west of Welwyn Cottage (**MLE6903**), c. 640m south-west of the site.

The site of the medieval manor house, The Hermitage (**MLE4643**) lies to the north-east of the site. The present house (see **MLE18746**) incorporates medieval fragments in its structure. The medieval manor house is believed to have been moated, but no structural evidence of this remains.

A Late Saxon pin was recovered from south of The Hermitage (116m south-east of the site) and was thought to have been disturbed from a burial (HER Ref No. **MLE4644**).

There is a large circular enclosure, defined by earthworks and by the opposite curve at Borough Street (**MLE16643**) located *c.* 420m north of the site. The enclosure is clear on most of the early OS maps of the town. It is likely to be the remains of the Anglo-Saxon, 'burh' (fortified town), although there is a possibility that it is prehistoric.

The house at 7 The Dragwell, which lies 400m to the north-west of the assessment area, is believed to be medieval in date, but it is unclear if the record refers to the house that is situated here (**MLE4646**). Medieval and post-medieval finds have been recovered from Dragwell (**MLE22312**).

The house at The Cedars is originally 18th century in date with many later additions. It was once the home of Irish poet Thomas Moore and is Grade II listed.



Figure 3: The site from the western lawn, looking west

Archaeological Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation 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 produce an archive and report of any results.

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 archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area.



Figure 4: Work in progress on Trench 2, looking north-west

Methodology

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (rev.2014) in accordance with their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (rev. 2014). The archaeological work followed the *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological work* (WSI) prepared by ULAS.

A c.3% sample of the proposed development area was to be evaluated, equating to 3 x 10m x 1.6m trenches and 2 x 5m x 1.6m trenches.

As space was limited by trees and large shrubs and access was limited for the machinery, there was some adjustment to the size and positioning of the trenches to accommodate the narrow ditching bucket provided with the small machine and the restricted working area (Figure 3).

The work was carried out by a 1.5 tonne mini digger fitted with a 0.9m wide ditching bucket under archaeological supervision at all times (Figure 4).

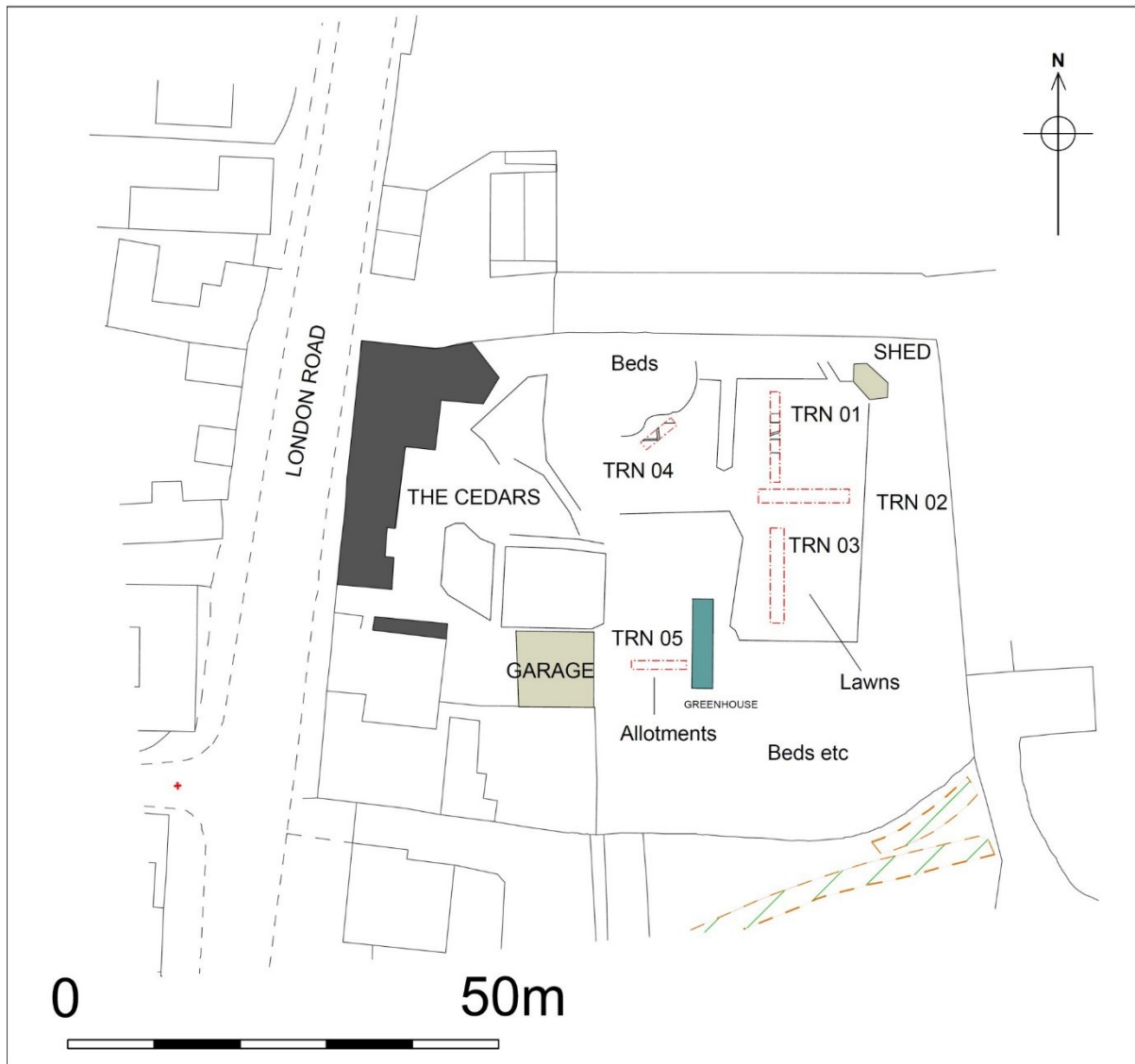


Figure 5: Plan showing trench locations

Results

Trench 01

Trench 01 was situated at the northern end of the eastern lawn (see Figure 5 for positions).

Orientation: North- south

Length: 10.5m

Width: 1m

Topsoil: Very dark reddish brown crumbly silty-clay with occasional angular stones

Subsoil: Firm reddish brown silty-clay with occasional angular stones

Natural Substratum: Brownish red clay with stones

Interval	N 0m	2m	4m	6m	8m	10.5m S
Topsoil Depth	0.29m	0.30m	0.22m	0.25m	0.26m	0.23m
Subsoil Depth	0.04m	0.03m	-	0.40m	0.08m	0.07m
Depth of Natural	0.33m	0.33m	0.23m	0.65m	0.34m	0.30m
Base of Trench	0.33m	0.33m	0.23m	0.65m	0.34m	0.30m



Figure 6: Trench 01, post excavation, looking south

There were two apparently linear features within this trench, running east to west across the trench. The northern one was 1m wide and shallow and the southern was 1.5m wide and around 0.40m deep. The northern one contained topsoil almost to the base and the other contained subsoil to the base. Both contained modern brick.

Between them lay a stone filled field drain running north-east to south-west.

The topsoil contained a lot of roots from adjacent trees, some very large, which made excavation difficult, and so the trench was limited to 1m wide (Figure 6).



Figure 7: Trench 02, post excavation, looking south

Trench 02

Trench 02 was situated at the southern end of the eastern lawn.

Orientation: North- south

Length: 11m

Width: 1.6m

Topsoil: Very dark reddish brown crumbly silty-clay with occasional angular stones

Subsoil: Firm reddish brown silty-clay with occasional angular stones

Natural Substratum: Brownish red clay and patches of stone

Interval	N 0m	2m	4m	6m	8m	11m S
Topsoil Depth	0.34m	0.36m	0.50m	0.70m	0.34m	0.40m
Subsoil Depth	0.14m	0.20m	0.13m	0.20m	0.60m*	0.60m*
Depth of Natural	0.48m	0.56m	0.63m	0.90m	0.94m	1.00m

Base of Trench	0.48m	0.56m	0.63m	0.90m	0.94m	1.00m
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***Made ground**

The trench contained deep topsoil throughout the length of the trench. At the southern end the upper soil consisted of layers of dark topsoil and other mixed material suggesting made-up ground. There were patches of brick and rubble within this matrix for around the first 4-5m from the southern end. The ground here was easier to excavate and so the trench was excavated to the 1.6m width.

No archaeological features were identified within the trench (Figure 7).



Figure 8: Trench 03, post excavation, looking east

Trench 03

Trench 03 was situated at the northern end of the eastern lawn.

Orientation: East - west

Length: 10m

Width: 1.6m

Topsoil: Very dark reddish brown crumbly silty-clay with occasional angular stones

Subsoil: Firm reddish brown silty-clay with occasional angular stones

Natural Substratum: Brownish red clay with stones

Interval	W 0m	2m	4m	6m	8m	10.5m E
Topsoil Depth	0.27m	0.30m	0.35m	0.40m	0.46m	0.45m
Subsoil Depth	0.07m	0.10m	0.10m	0.12m	0.13m	0.10m
Depth of Natural	0.34m	0.40m	0.45m	0.52m	0.59m	0.55m
Base of Trench	0.34m	0.40m	0.45m	0.52m	0.59m	0.55m

No archaeological features were identified within the trench (Figure 8).



Figure 9: Trench 04, post excavation, looking north-east

Trench 04

Trench 04 was situated at the northern end of the western lawn just to the south of a bed containing large shrubs. The trench was supposed to be within the bed, but this would require the removal of most of the shrubs and landscaping here, so the trench was moved to the south.

Orientation: North-east – south-west

Length: 4.5m

Width: 1m

Topsoil: Very dark reddish brown crumbly silty-clay with occasional angular stones

Subsoil: None visible

Natural Substratum: Brownish red clay

Interval	NE 0m	1m	2m	3m	4m SW
Topsoil Depth	0.30m	0.30m	0.20m	0.50m	0.50m
Subsoil Depth	-	0.40m	-	-	-
Depth of Natural	0.32m	0.70m*	Within 'pond'	Within 'pond'	Within 'pond'
Base of Trench	0.32m	0.70m	0.20m	0.50m	0.50m

*Within feature

At the north-east end of the trench was an apparent feature of the same form and alignment as the northern linear in Trench 01, and contained a small piece of modern pottery.

Most of the rest of the trench contained a brick and concrete structure, with a green glaze on its internal surfaces that could not be excavated with the small machine. The current house owners had described the area as originally containing an ornamental pond (David Leadsam pers. comm.).



Figure 10: Work in progress on Trench 05



Figure 11: Trench 05, post excavation, looking east

Trench 05

Trench 05 was situated within the vegetable garden area to the direct west of a large greenhouse (Figures 10 & 11). Space was somewhat limited here and so the trench was only 1m wide. The trench was made 6.4m long to compensate for some loss of area due to the width restriction.

Orientation: East - west

Length: 6.4m

Width: 1m

Topsoil: Very dark reddish brown crumbly silty-clay with occasional angular stones (thick loamy soil)

Subsoil: Firm reddish brown silty-clay

Natural Substratum: Brownish red clay

Interval	W 0m	2m	4m	6.4m E
Topsoil Depth	0.52m	0.50m	0.70m	0.70m
Subsoil Depth	0.05m	0.20m	0.15m	0.20m
Depth of Natural	0.57m	0.70m	0.85m	0.91m
Base of Trench	0.57m	0.70m	0.85m	0.91m

No archaeological features were identified within the trench (Figure 8).

Conclusion

The gardens at The Cedars, Kegworth lie adjacent to the group of Scheduled earthworks at The Wymeshead, which are the remains of a deserted medieval village, associated with the early settlement at Kegworth. There was some potential for the earthworks to continue into the site itself. The site also lies close to the historical settlement core of the town and close to other known archaeological assets.

The evaluation was limited due to access considerations and on site features, but it was possible to excavate five trenches within the footprint of the proposed development plots and the new access road.

Mostly the trenches were negative for archaeological remains. The exception was Trench 01, which contained a pair of apparent linear features, and Trench 04, which contained part of a ditch and the remains of a former ornamental pond, which the small machine could not easily remove.

The two linear features seen in Trench 01 (and possibly picked up in Trench 04), were parallel to one another and a few metres apart, running east to west at the northern end of the eastern

lawn. One contained topsoil virtually to the base and both contained modern brick within their fills (Figure 12).

These features, along with the infilled pond feature in Trench 04 most likely represent the infilling of modern garden or agricultural features. Trench 02 at the southern end of the lawn shows evidence of significant deposits of soil and made up ground to build the land up at this end of the garden against the natural fall of the land to provide a level surface for the lawn, which was once used as a tennis court.

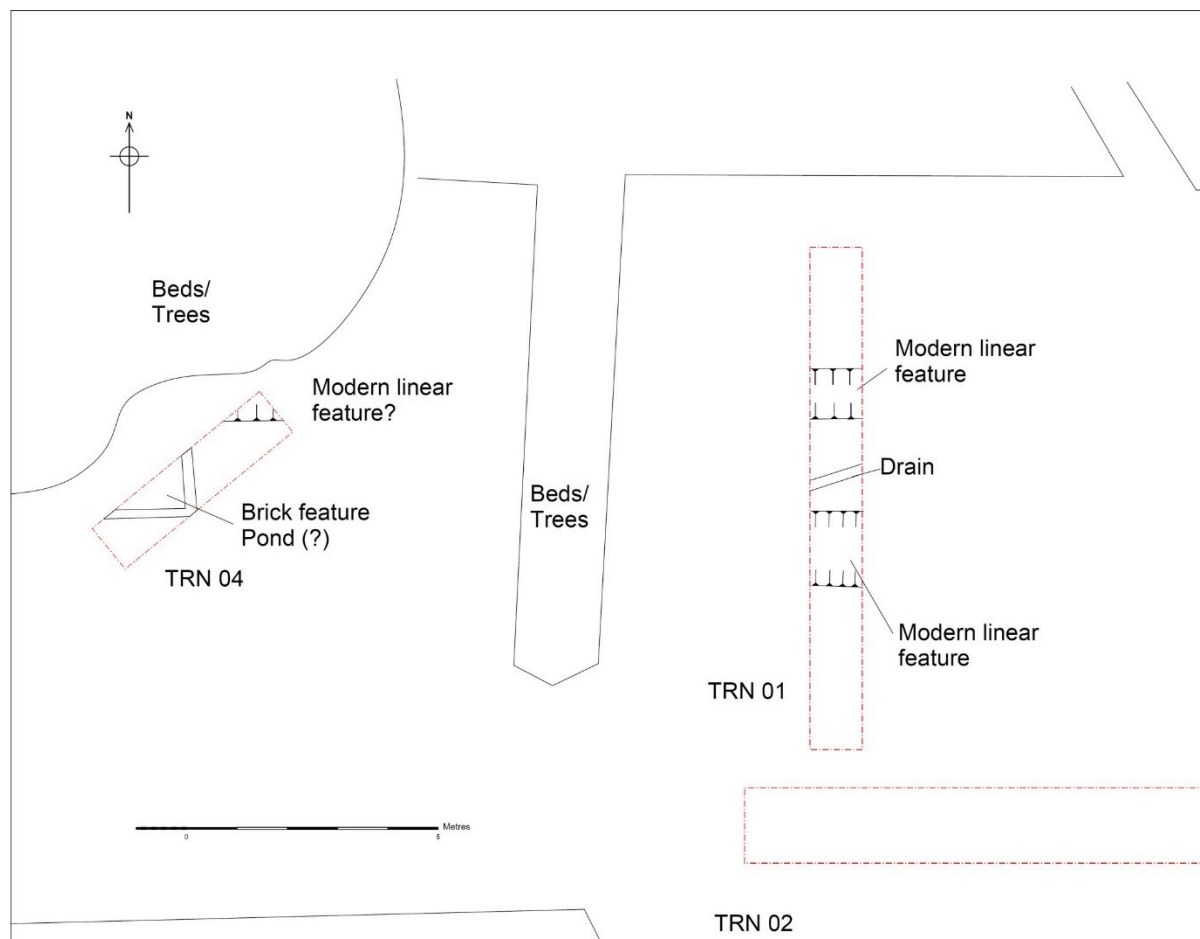


Figure 12: Plan of features identified during evaluation

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank Gary Hartley of Fine and Country Ltd and the owners David and Suzanne Leadsam for their help and co-operation with this project. The work was carried out by Leon Hunt, with Richard Clark of Planters on the machine. The project was managed by Patrick Clay.

Archive

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number X.A32.2017 and consists of the following:

- 1 Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report Number 2017-043)
- 5 Trench Recording Sheets
- 1 Photo Record sheet
- 1 Contact sheet of digital photographs

1 CD digital photographs

1 A3 sheet of prematrace (sketch plan)

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Appendix 1: OASIS data entry

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.

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1- 280402		
	Project Name	The Cedars, 29-33 London Road, Kegworth, Leicestershire (SK 48819 26496)		
	Start/end dates of field work	22-03-2017		
	Previous/Future Work	No/ Not known		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Gardens		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
	Planning Ref.	15/00365/OUT		
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	29-33 London Road, Kegworth		
	Study Area	860 sq. m		
	Site Coordinates	SK 48819 26496		
	Height OD	37m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Patrick Clay		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Leon Hunt		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Craven Carr Ltd		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
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	Contents	None	Photographs	Report/ trench sheets/ Drawings
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