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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation
on Land at Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 333 112



Stephen Baker

ULAS Report No. 2015-115

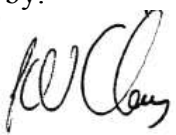
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**An Archaeological Evaluation on
Land at Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire**

(SK 333 112)

Stephen Baker

For: CgMs

Approved by:

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An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land at Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire (SK 333 112) between 1st – 3rd July 2015. The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed residential development.

The evaluation involved the excavation of 13 trenches to sample the proposed development area for the survival of archaeological deposits. Evidence for field systems was identified but no remains or deposits of archaeological interest.

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Service under accession number XA70.2015.

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS for CgMs and was undertaken as a planning condition in advance of a proposed residential development.

The fieldwork was intended to provide preliminary indications of 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 definition of archaeological field evaluation, taken from the Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2010) is a limited programme of non-intrusive and/ or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The site lies on the north-eastern side of Atherstone Road, south of the town centre of Measham, North-West Leicestershire (Fig. 1). The site is a sub-triangular area of arable land, bisected by a public footpath, which rises slightly to the east from around 82m OD to around 88m OD (Fig. 2).

The assessment area measures 3.2 hectares and is bordered by hedges to the north; by fences along the north-west edges, separating it from the neighbouring housing with hedges and

large trees along Atherstone Road to the west; and by hedges and a large screen of trees along the south-eastern edge.

The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology is likely to be Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation.

The proposed development is for five new dwelling with associated garages, with a new access from Glebe Lane to the north. The development proposals include works (e.g. foundations, services and landscaping) likely to impact upon those remains and Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team (LCCHNET) as archaeological advisors to the planning authority required an evaluation by trial trenching to assess the location, extent, significance and character of any buried archaeological remains.



Figure 1: Site location

Reproduced from Explorer® 1:25,000 OS map by permission of Ordnance Survey® on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown copyright 2010. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100029495.



Figure 2: Proposed development area (supplied by client).

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

An archaeological desk-based assessment was undertaken for the site (Hunt 2013). The site lies outside the medieval/post-medieval village core and map regression suggests that the area has been agricultural land from at least the post-medieval period. A nursery once existed on northern edge of the assessment area.

The line of a Roman road runs through Measham, but this is 600m north of the site and there are a number of known prehistoric archaeological sites in the vicinity of the assessment area. However, most are between 800m - 2.2km away.

A preliminary geophysical survey was carried out by Stratscan in early 2014 (Stratascan 2014). The results do not suggest any obvious archaeological remains on the site, although there is evidence of ridge and furrow earthworks (Fig. 3).

4. Aims and Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation were to:

- identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- 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.

5. Methodology

Thirteen 30m x 1.6m (624m sq.) trenches were excavated across the development area using a JCB with a ditching bucket in order to achieve a representative sample of any archaeological remains (Fig. 3).

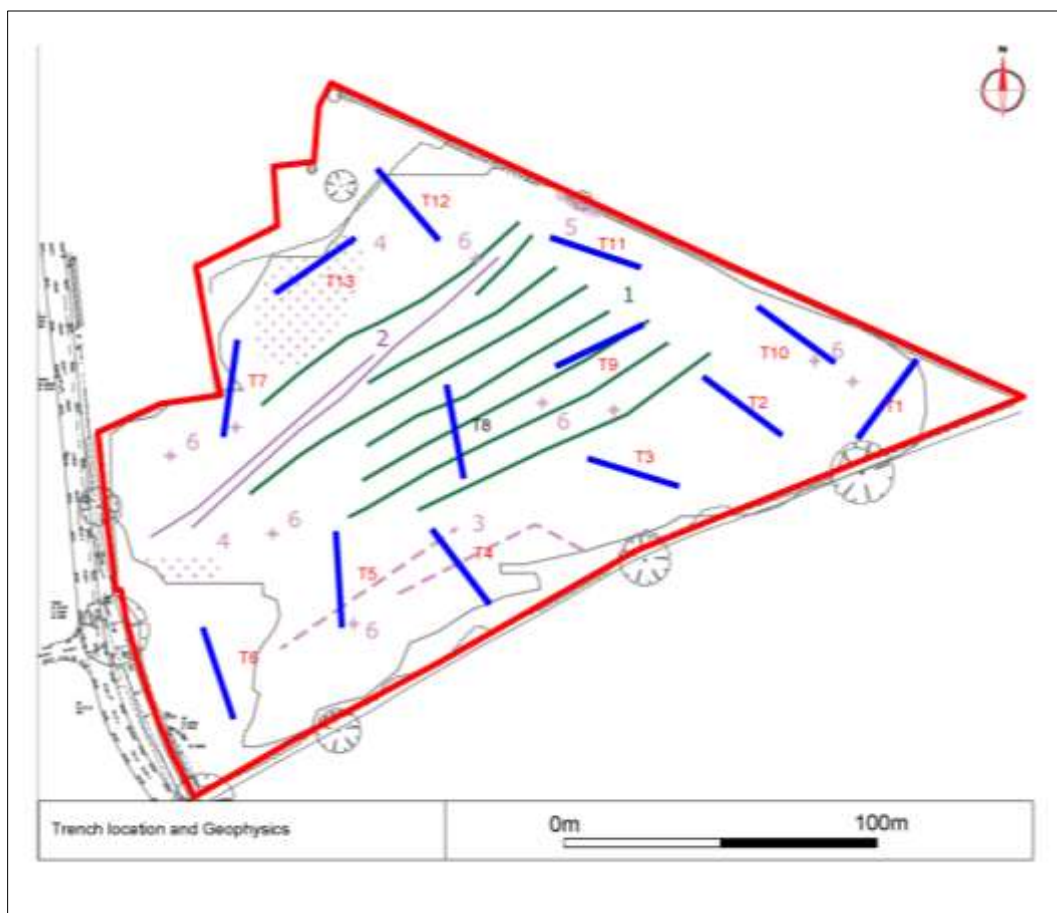


Figure 3: Trench locations overlain on the geophysical survey.

Topsoil and overburden were removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator using a toothless bucket. Trenches were excavated down to the top of archaeological deposits or natural undisturbed ground, whichever was reached first. All excavation by machine and hand was undertaken with a view to avoid damage to archaeological deposits or features which appeared worthy of preservation in situ, or more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation.

Trenches were examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits were recorded using standard procedures as per the ULAS recording manual and outlined in the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; ULAS 2015). All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists (CIfA) Codes of Conduct (2014) and Standards and Guidance (2014)

All trenches identified were backfilled after recording.

Constraints

A public footpath crosses the site and trenches were located to avoid this. There were no other physical constraints to the excavation of the trenches. Trench 7 was slightly relocated on site to avoid a nearby boundary.

6. Results

The topsoil across the site was a dark brown silty clay approximately 0.2-0.3m deep. A thin orange-brown subsoil was visible (approximately 0.1m thick) in all of the trenches, overlaying the natural sand and gravel.

No archaeological features were identified. Plough scars, the remnants of furrows and field drains were seen in all of the trenches. A modern dump of material was identified in Trench 13. The results are shown in the table below and photographs of each trench are shown in Appendix 1.

TRENCH	ORIENTATION	LENGTH AND WIDTH (metres)	TOPSOIL THICKNESS (metres)	SUBSOIL THICKNESS (metres)	DESCRIPTION	TRENCH DEPTH (MIN-MAX metres)
1	NE - SW	31.3 x 1.60	0.24 – 0.31	0.07 – 0.11	Field drains	0.38 – 0.50
2	NW - SE	31.1 x 1.60	0.23 – 0.28	0.08 – 0.10	Field drains	0.34 – 0.39
3	NW - SE	30.25 x 1.60	0.25 – 0.28	0.05 – 0.10	Field drains	0.36 – 0.41
4	NW SE	30 x 1.60	0.24 – 0.29	0.05 – 0.10	Field drains	0.35 – 0.44
5	N - S	30.60 x 1.60	0.22 – 0.28	0.02 – 0.08	Plough scars/furrows	0.30 – 0.42
6	N - S	30.85 x 1.60	0.26 – 0.30	0.05 – 0.21	Field drains, plough scars/furrows	0.36 – 0.63
7	NNE - SSW	31.20 x 1.60	0.23 – 0.26	0.04 – 0.08	Plough scars/furrows	0.25 – 0.38
8	N - S	30.65 x 1.60	0.20 – 0.26	0.03 – 0.12	Field drains, furrows	0.32 – 0.45
9	ENE - WSW	30.85 x 1.60	0.18 – 0.27	0.03 – 0.07	Plough scars	0.26 – 0.35
10	NW - SE	30.40 x 1.60	0.20 – 0.26	0.04 – 0.11	Field drain, furrows	0.28 – 0.39
11	NW - SE	30.20 x 1.60	0.21 – 0.27	0.08 – 0.12	Field drains, furrows	0.34 – 0.54
12	NW - SE	30 x 1.60	0.27 – 0.34	0.16 – 0.22	Field drains	0.52 – 0.65
13	NE - SW	30.80 x 1.60	0.22 – 0.30	0.08 – 0.18	Furrows, modern feature	0.38 – 0.55

7. Conclusion

The evaluation identified evidence for the agricultural use of the area, indicated by furrows on a north-east/south-west alignment and the presence of modern field drains in the majority of the evaluation trenches excavated. This confirms the suggestion from the desk-based assessment and geophysical survey that the site has been in agricultural use from at least the post-medieval period. Apart from the modern feature in Trench 13 no archaeological deposits or features of archaeological interest were identified.

8. Archive

The completed archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession no. XA70.2015 and contains:

- 13 trench recording sheets
- 1 photographic recording sheet
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- Unbound copy of this report
- Thumbnail print of digital photographs

The report is listed on the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York, under ID: universi1-286797. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

ID	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire
Summary	<p>University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land at on 2 Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire (SK 333 112) from 1st – 3rd July 2015. The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed residential development.</p> <p>The evaluation involved the excavation of 13 trenches to sample the proposed development area. Evidence of undated field systems were identified but no remains or deposits of archaeological interest.</p> <p>The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Service under accession number XA70.2015</p>
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Stephen Baker
Previous/Future work	Previous: none / Future: unknown
Current Land Use	Rough pasture
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF, Section 12
Position in the Planning Process	
Site Co ordinates	SK 333 112
Height OD	M82.8 OD
Start/end dates of field work	1 – 3 July 2015
Archive Recipient	County Council
Study Area	3.2 ha
Associated project reference codes	Museum accession ID: XA70.2015 OASIS form ID: universi1-

9. Bibliography

CIFA, 2014 *Codes of Conduct*

CIFA, 2014 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*

Hunt, L. 2013, *An archaeological desk-based assessment for land at Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire (SK 333 112)*. ULAS Report 2013-213

Stratascan 2014, *Land off Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire*. Report J6258.

ULAS 2015 *Written scheme of investigation for archaeological work, Atherstone Road, Measham, Leicestershire*. ULAS 15/213

10. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was commissioned and monitored by Mike Dawson of CgMs. Fieldwork was carried out by Stephen Baker and Donald Clark. Vicki Score managed the project for ULAS.

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Appendix 1: Trench photographs.



Trench 1 looking south-east



Trench 2 looking north-west



Trench 3 looking north-west



Trench 4 looking north-west



Trench 5 looking north



Trench 6 looking north



Trench 7 looking north



Trench 8 looking north



Trench 9 looking north-east



Trench 10 looking north-west



Trench 11 looking north-west



Trench 12 looking north-west



Trench 13 looking north-east

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