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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Field Evaluation on  
gardens adjacent to the North-west  
elevation of Radbourne Hall,  
Radbourne Lane, Radbourne,  
Derbyshire (SK 428634 335683)**

James Patrick



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North-west elevation of Radbourne Hall, Radbourne Lane,  
Radbourne, Derbyshire  
(SK 28664 335683)**

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*for*

The Trustees of The Radbourne Settlement

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## **An Archaeological Field Evaluation on gardens adjacent to the North-west elevation of Radbourne Hall, Radbourne Lane, Radbourne, Derbyshire (SK 428634 335683)**

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### **Summary**

*An archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on gardens, situated directly to the north-west elevation of Radbourne Hall, Radbourne Lane, Radbourne, Derbyshire (SK 428634 335683). The work was undertaken to establish if there was any structural evidence of an external staircase which was believed to have been in located in front of the north-west facing facade. Five trenches were excavated of varying width in order to target the possibility of a previous stone staircase within the same area as indicated on plans by William Emes who designed the gardens for the house. Analysis of the plans/ maps suggested the staircase was potentially located between the present stone bordered flower beds and the north-west elevation. Most of the trenches contained substantial brick drains from the washroom probably associated with the 1958 alterations to the building. The north-east end of trench 5 was heavily disturbed by services. However much of the natural clay in all trenches was general un-disturbed. However the evaluation proved negative for any remains of the staircase foundation including any associated demolition rubble.*

### **Introduction**

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by The Trustees of the Radbourne Settlement to carry out an archaeological field evaluation on gardens directly at the north-west elevation of Radbourne Hall, Radbourne Lane, Radbourne, Derbyshire (SK 428634 335683).

The work was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment and followed the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; ULAS 2017) for an initial phase of trial trenching to assess the potential impact on buried archaeological remains (i.e. possible external stone staircase remains) from groundworks associated with future development to help determine an archaeological mitigation strategy for the project.

### **Site Location, Details and Geology**

Radbourne Hall is located less than a kilometre south of the small Parish village of Radbourne within the southern area of the county of Derbyshire. It is located two kilometres west of Mickleover (District of Derby) and approximately four kilometres north-east of the village of Etwall (Fig. 1). The hall is reached via an unclassified road (Radbourne Lane) from the south and approached via a private road through farm land (formerly a Deer park). The house is surrounded by parkland and trees.

The application area is situated on gardens directly to north-west elevation of the Hall and covers a rectangular shape of approximately ninety six square metres (Figs.2 &3).

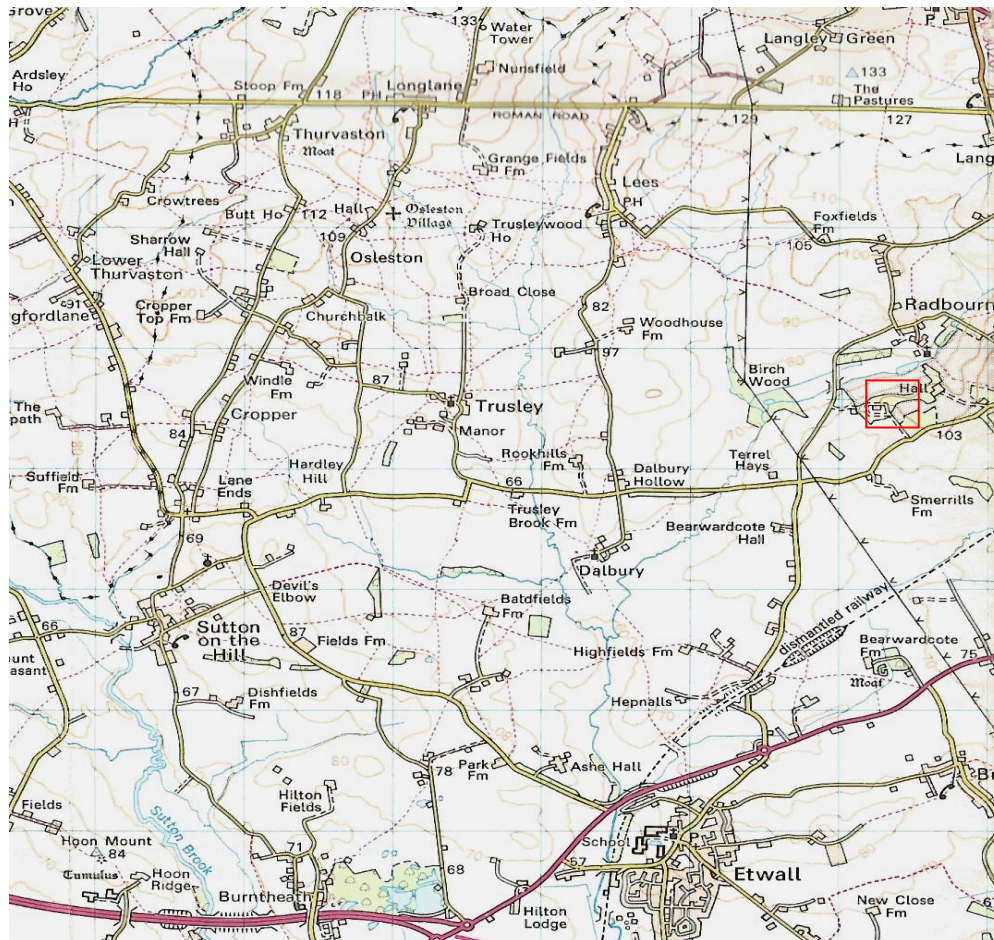


Figure 1: Site Location

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The site lies at a maximum height of 42m aOD with the application area situated on level ground. The British Geological Survey indicates that the underlying geology is likely to be of Mercia Mudstone Group.

## Historical and Archaeological Background

Radbourne Hall is a Grade I Listed building of 18th century date with a listing description as follows:

*Country house. 1739 with c.1865 addition, restored and reduced c.1960. Built for German Pole, probably by William Smith the Younger. Rusticated stone basement, red brick with stone dressings elsewhere. Hipped slate roof with brick ridge stacks hidden by stone coped brick parapets. Plain stone plinth, plain sill band. top of basement and moulded stone cornice.*

*Two storey plus basement, and seven bays with three central bays advanced. Entrance front has broad flight of stone steps with shaped balusters, across central three bays. To either side the basement has two glazing bar sashes with rusticated voussoirs. Above are six full height glazing bar sashes with alternating segmental and triangular pediments, moulded shouldered surrounds and pulvinated friezes. To centre, double glazed doors in Corinthian doorcase with dentilled segmental pediment and pulvinated frieze. Above again, seven glazing bar sashes in moulded shouldered surrounds. Central bays have triangular pediment over with central achievement of Pole family amidst abundant flower and foliage carving. Park elevation in similar style with advanced central three bays, seven glazing bar sashes on each level, those to ground floor with moulded cornice rather than pediments, and bull's eye window to central pediment. East and west elevations are of three bays with central bays advanced. West elevation has similar disposition and style of windows as main elevation, except for central bay which has a glazed door below rusticated voussoirs to basement, above which is a round window in moulded surround and a large Venetian staircase window. East elevation is plainer without rustication to the basement and with Venetian window to ground floor of central bay. Attached to north corner the remains of a large c1865 addition, now mostly demolished.*

Although there is some historical evidence which suggests there was possibly an intention to construct either an external stair from the piano noble or a portico, there is no physical evidence to suggest removal or 'making good' on the façade. The existing garden beds are believed to be a later addition (A Adeyemi pers. comm.).

No other country houses within Derbyshire are known to have been designed by William Smith the Younger. However William Emes not only designed the gardens for Radbourne Hall, but many others within Derbyshire and surrounding counties including a hand in the nearby Kedleston Hall six kilometres to the north, and Calke Abbey gardens to the south-east corner of Derbyshire. The grounds of Radbourne Hall extend to two kilometres south of an unclassified lane known as 'Long Lane' which follows the course of a Roman Road ultimately leading to Littlechester Roman Fort in Derby. On a wider scale, several Deserted Medieval Villages are known from South Derbyshire including Osleston four kilometres to the west (see fig.1).

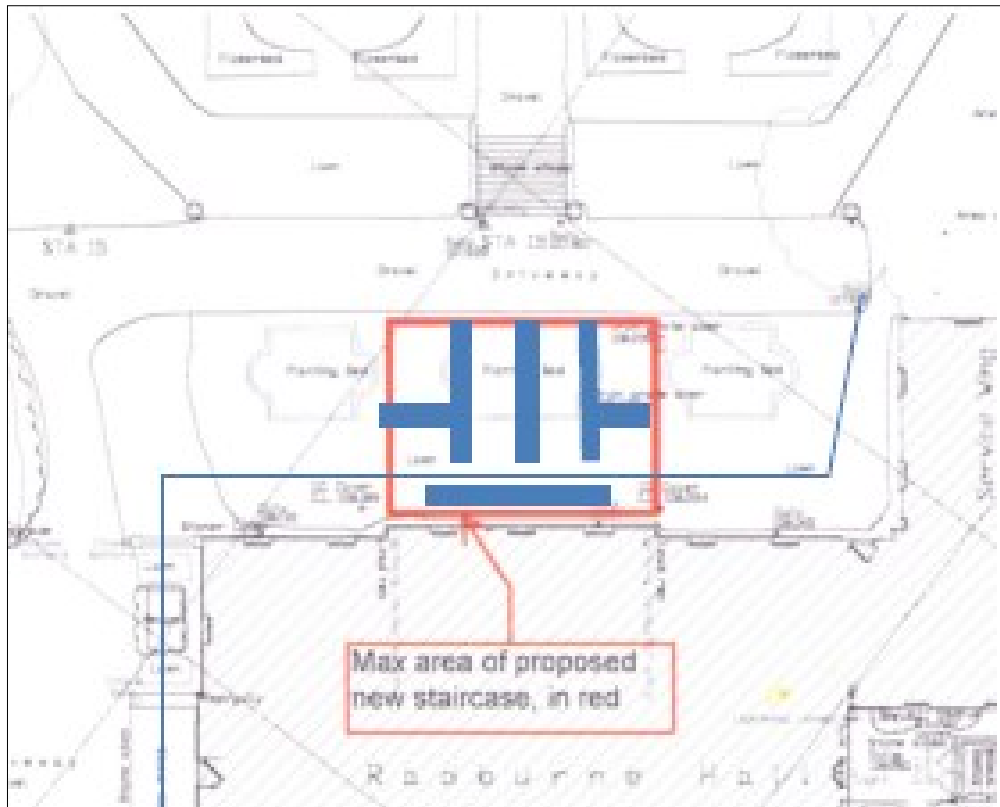


Figure 2: Proposed Trench locations within new external staircase area

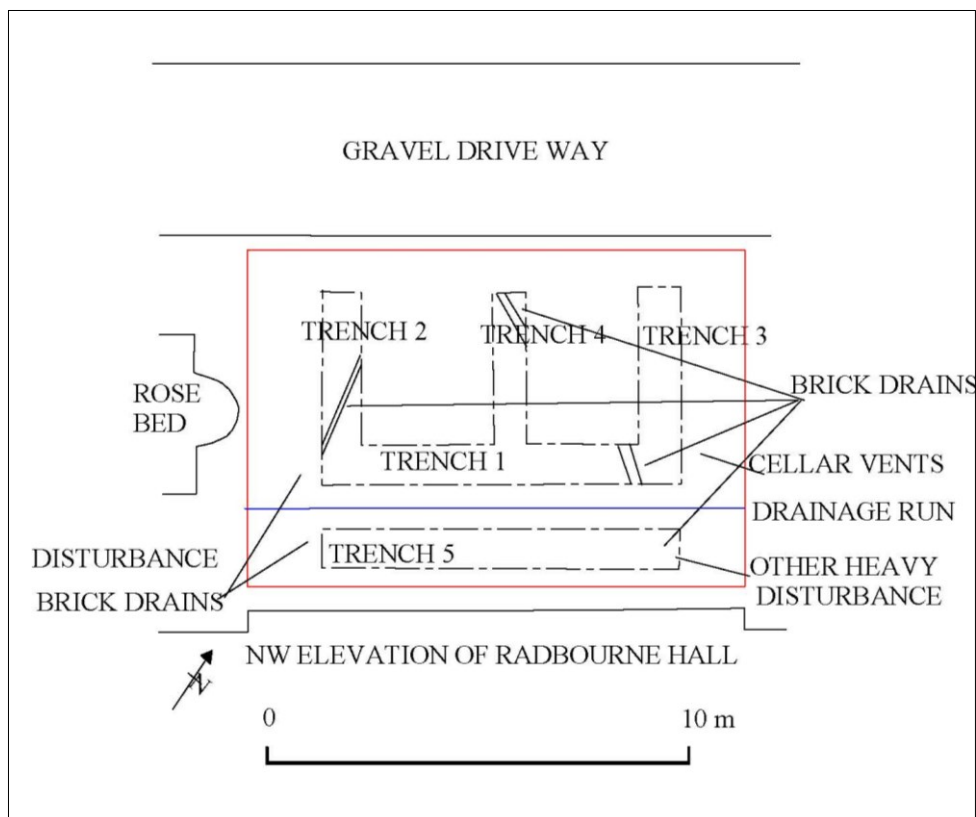


Figure 3: Application area highlighted in red with final trench locations 1 -5.

## Archaeological Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation were:

To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits, in particular evidence of a former external staircase

- 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 record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape.
- To recover artefacts and ecofacts to compare with other assemblages and results.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation is 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.

## Methodology

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological trial trenching, which took place on the 16<sup>th</sup> August 2017. It follows a strategy for the work devised by ULAS, which was set out in the WSI (ULAS 2017).

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014) in accordance with their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014).

Five trenches were excavated which varied in length from three metres to eight metres. The only constraint was a drainage run along the edge of the building and cellar vents on the right hand side of the study area. Trench 5 was positioned between the drainage run and the wall. A sample of 40m<sup>2</sup> was opened equating to approximately 41% of the area.

The trenches were excavated by a small tracked excavator with a 0.90m bladed bucket under archaeological supervision. A wider ditching bucket was available although due to the constraints posed by the drainage run and the firmness and restriction of the area this was not found to be practical. After excavation and recording, the trenches were left open for the architect to view for the staircase construction prior to backfilling.





Figure 4: Application area prior to evaluation, looking North-east.



Figure 5: House looking south-east towards the study area

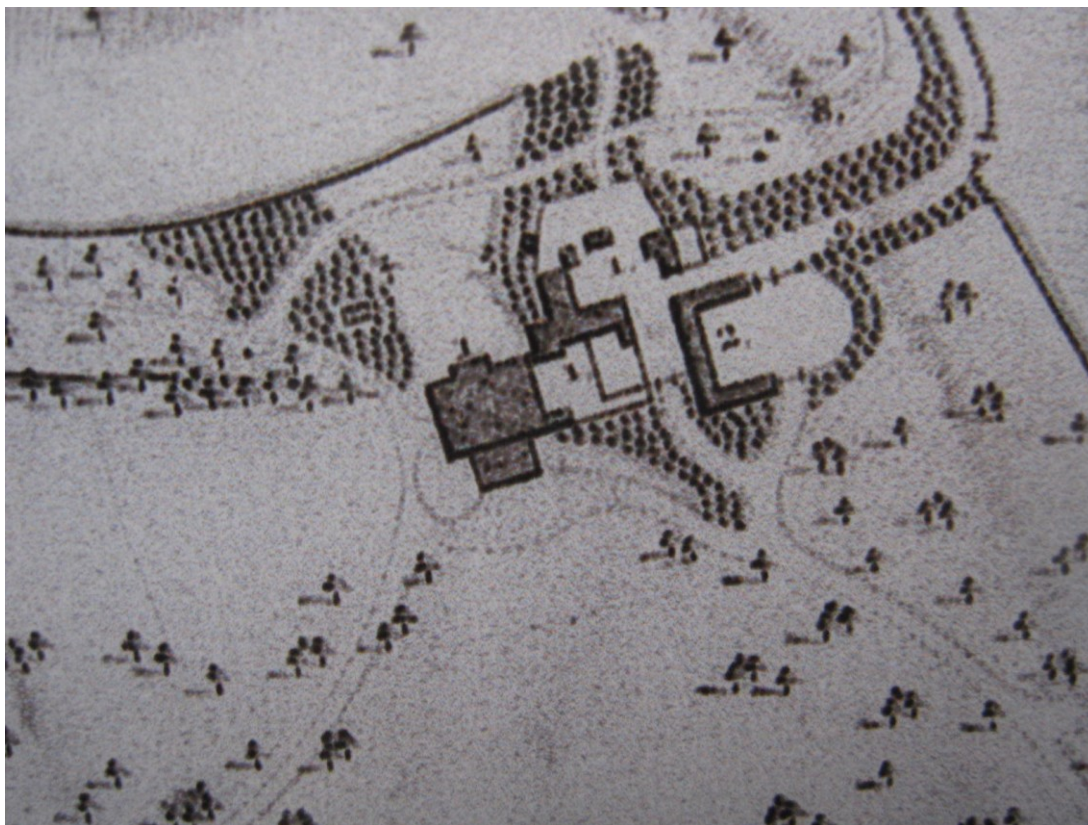


Figure 6: Plan of gardens c.1790 (Emes). Shows a projection on North-west elevation

## Results

All the trenches were situated between the two smaller flower beds except trench 4 which was positioned through the larger central flower bed. Emes plan shows the projection of a very short width from the north-west elevation appearing not to extend any further than the southern side of the central flower bed.

The topsoil (turf only) and subsoil were removed separately in spits. The evaluation proved negative for any archaeological remains including any potential footings for the external staircase. The majority of trenches were c.0.7m deep with little topsoil present with exception to the area beneath the central flower bed where the topsoil was more organic and consisted of a deeper dark yellowish grey silty clay loam. The sub-soil consisted generally of two layers. The upper sub-soil represented a re-deposited natural substratum layer consisting of a soft light reddish brown silty clay containing brick fragments, but no pottery apart from some modern pottery (20th century) within the topsoil.

Present below the re-deposited natural substratum layer was a lower subsoil consisting of a thick layer of soft mid yellow brown silty-clay with occasional charcoal flecks and pebbles. This probably represented deposits from earlier landscaping. Directly below this was a generally undisturbed compacted red clay natural substratum averaging up to a depth of 0.70m below ground level.

**Trench 01**

**Orientation:** South-west to north-east.

Length: 8.50 m Width: 0.90 m

No Archaeological remains identified

Interval	SW 0m	2m	4m	6m	8.50m
<b>Topsoil Depth</b>	0.20	0.18	0.20	0.16	0.15
<b>Subsoil Depth</b>	0.46	0.60	0.20 0.26	0.15 0.42	0.22 0.07
<b>Top of natural</b>	0.66	0.78	0.66	0.67	0.44
<b>Base of Trench</b>	0.73	0.78	0.74	0.75	0.77



Figure 7: Trench 1 looking north-east

***Trench 02***

Orientation: South-east to North- west

Length: 4.50m Width: 0.90m

No Archaeological remains identified

Interval	SW 0m	1m	2m	3m	4.5m
Topsoil Depth	0.20	0.20	0.18	0.20	0.25
Subsoil Depth	0.16 0.38	0.20	0.20 0.28	0.16 0.25	0.30
Top of natural	0.74	0.40	0.64	0.61	0.55
Base of Trench	0.74	0.80	0.80	0.75	0.70



Figure 8: Trench 2 looking north-west

***Trench 03***

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Length: 4.50 m Width: 0.90m

No Archaeological remains identified

Interval	NW 0m	1m	2m	3m	4.50m
Topsoil Depth	0.20	0.20	0.20	0.10	0.10
Subsoil Depth	0.56	0.60	0.24 0.30	0.30 0.26	0.30 0.26
Top of natural	0.76	0.80	0.74	0.66	0.60
Base of Trench	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80	0.80



Figure 9: Trench 3 looking north-west

**Trench 04**

Orientation: North-west to south-east

Length: 3.5m Width: 0.90 m

No Archaeological remains identified

Interval	SE 0m	1m	2m	3.5m
Topsoil Depth	0.14	0.30	0.40	0.40
Subsoil Depth	0.30 0.20	0.24 0.18	0.40	0.40
Top of natural	0.64	0.72	0.80	0.80
Base of Trench	0.68	0.76	0.80	0.80



Figure 10: Trench 4 looking north-west

**Trench 05**

Orientation: North-east to south-west

Length: 8.50 m Width: 0.90 m

No Archaeological remains identified

Interval	NE 0m	2m	4m	6m	8.50m
Topsoil Depth	0.10	0.10	0.15	0.20	0.14
Subsoil Depth	0.40	0.60	0.47	0.40	0.50
Top of natural	0.50	0.70	0.62	0.60	0.64
Base of Trench	0.50	0.70	0.62	0.66	0.68



Figure 11: Trench 5 looking north-east



Figure 12: Trench 5, section looking south-east

## Conclusion

The evaluation proved negative for archaeological remains with no evidence of a possible external stone staircase identified from the projection on William Emes plan. There had been heavy disturbance within the area with new services in the form of substantial brick drains in some of the trenches. The upper re-deposited natural substratum layer evident across the site is indicative that either the natural substratum had been truncated, or had been excavated from elsewhere and deposited here during landscaping perhaps during the renovations to the hall in 1958. This is especially noticeable closer to the building, although an earlier layer of subsoil perhaps relating to earlier landscaping is evident in the other trenches.

The evaluation results present two simple options. If the staircase had existed, but was demolished, for instance due to instability, the shaped sandstone blocks would probably have been valued and re-used elsewhere, perhaps including the foundation stones. However, observation of the facade shows no physical evidence for its presence for example access to the stairs or any evidence of any sandstone rubble and mortar flecks within the top and lower subsoils.

The most likely explanation was for an intended staircase shown on the plan either by William Smith the Younger during building construction in 1739, or later as part of the re-landscaping



by Emes in 1790. Emes was known to design small scale buildings and it is possible he designed a short external staircase leading on to the terrace as part of the landscaping but this was never constructed. He was known to furnish the plan for the landscaping and leave the client to carry out the work although other times he would supervise the landscape works for the duration. A painting exists in the possession of the Trustees of the north-west elevation which is said to show a short flight of stairs, although the staircase may have been just added to enhance the painting.

### **Archive**

The archive consists of the following:

- 5 Trench recording sheets
- 1 Indice photographic record sheets
- 1 Unbound copy of this report
- 1 CD digital report
- 1 Contact sheet of digital photographs
- 1 CD digital photographs

### **Publication**

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.

### **Bibliography**

CIfA, 2014 *Codes of Conduct and Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*. (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists).

<https://upclosed.com/people/william-emes/> accessed 18/08/2017

### **Acknowledgements**

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17-08-2017

*OASIS data entry*

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>Oasis No</b>	universi1- 1293410		
	<b>Project Name</b>	An archaeological field evaluation An Archaeological Field Evaluation on gardens adjacent to the North-west elevation of Radbourne Hall, Radbourne Lane, Radbourne, Derbyshire (SK 428634 335683)		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	16-08-2017 to 16- 08-2017		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	none		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Evaluation		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Gardens		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	None/none		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	None		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Extension (external stone staircase)		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>			
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>			
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	Radbourne Hall, Radbourne Lane, Radbourne, Derbyshire		
	<b>Study Area</b>	96 square metres		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>			
	<b>Height OD</b>	c 42m OD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Patrick Clay		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	James Patrick		
<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Developer :Trustees of the Radbourne Settlement			
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	NA	DCC	DCC
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>	DBYMU	DBYMU	_DBYMU
	<b>Contents</b>		Photos Survey data	Fieldwork records Field Notes
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