



UNIVERSITY OF  
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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Strip  
Map and Sample  
Excavation on  
Land at 39 Main Street,  
Great Bowden,  
Leicestershire  
NGR: SP 74263 88810**

Roger Kipling



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on Land at 39 Main Street,  
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**Roger Kipling**

**For: Mr. Ben Cowd**

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## Summary

*An archaeological Strip Map and Sample investigation was undertaken in October 2017 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Mr. Ben Cowd on land at 39 Main Street, Great Bowden, Leicestershire, in advance of proposed residential development.*

*The investigation represented a follow up to a preliminary archaeological evaluation which produced evidence for archaeological activity in the form of a single cess or rubbish pit of medieval date located at the rear of the property. The Strip, Map and Sample investigation uncovered further evidence for rear property medieval occupation in the form of gullies and refuse pits, defined by probable burgage property boundary ditches leading south from the Main Street frontage. Ceramic evidence suggests refuse deposition over a lengthy period, ranging between the 10th or 11th and the 16th or 17th centuries.*

*The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A111.2017.*

## Introduction

An archaeological Strip, Map and Sample excavation (SMS) was undertaken on land at 39 Main Street, Great Bowden, Leicestershire, in advance of a proposed residential development comprising a single-storey dwelling, detached garage and stable block. The site is located on the western edge of the village, close to the rail line, and to the rear of No. 39 Main Street. The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) for the area shows that the application site lies in an area of archaeological interest, within the historic settlement core of Great Bowden. Test pitting undertaken in 2014 within the application site recovered a prehistoric flint flake, medieval and post-medieval artefacts and possible structural evidence in the form of a posthole and stone feature.

Stemming from this, a programme of archaeological work comprising trial trenching was undertaken by ULAS at the request of the Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire in order to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on any buried archaeology and produce a mitigation strategy for the site. Whilst the evaluation provided negative indications of archaeological survival across much of the proposed area of development, evidence of medieval activity, in the form of pitting, was discovered at the rear of the property and within the footprint of the proposed development (Kipling 2017). In view of this, the Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council (LCC), as advisor to Harborough District Council, requested a SMS excavation of the area in order to record in order record any archaeological deposits which would be impacted on by the groundworks connected with the outline planning permission P.A 16/00631/FUL.

The programme of archaeological work 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 2017; hereinafter WSI).

Fieldwork was undertaken in October 2017 and involved the control and supervision of overburden removal by mechanical digger, followed by hand cleaning, excavation and recording of archaeological remains across the footprint of the new buildings. The extent of machining was subject to slight adjustment in order to fully define and investigate certain features extending beyond the footprint of the proposed buildings. 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).

### **Site Description, Topography and Geology**

The proposed development is located on the western edge of Great Bowden, a parish in the Harborough district of Leicestershire, northeast of, and a suburb of, Market Harborough (Figure 1). The sites lies on the western edge of the village close to the railway line. The land is at the rear of No. 39 Main Street and comprises a grassed garden area and paddock. The land is relatively level at a height of c.82m O.D.

The British Geological Survey identifies the bedrock geology of the area as bands of mudstone, specifically of the Charmouth Mudstone Formation of the Jurassic Period with siltstone and mudstone to the immediate west of the Dryham Formation.

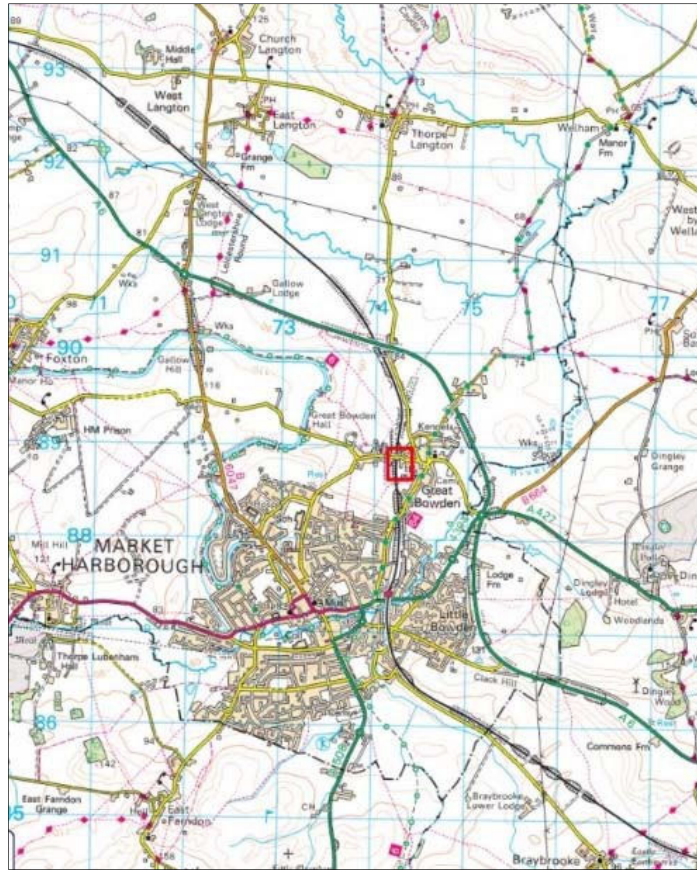


Figure 1: Location of the proposed site (Scale 1:50 000)

*Reproduced from the Landranger 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100029495*

## Archaeological and Historical Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies in an area of archaeological interest, within the historic settlement core of Great Bowden. Test pitting undertaken in 2014 within the application site recovered a prehistoric flint flake, medieval and post-medieval artefacts and possible structural evidence in the form of a posthole and stone feature.

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) (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12, paragraph 128 and Appendix 2) spanning the period from the earliest evolution of the village to its more recent past were 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*. Consequently, there is a likelihood that buried archaeological remains will be affected by the development.

## 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 revealed in the trenches
- 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).

### *Prehistoric*

To characterise the prehistoric settlement resource and investigate intra-regional variability (4C).  
To investigate intra-regional variations in development of fields and linear boundaries (4F).

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

To investigate the landscape context of rural settlements (5H).

### *Medieval (Lewis 2006; Knight et al 2012)*

To review the evidence for developing settlement hierarchies (6C) Investigate the morphology of rural settlements (7E).

To investigate development of the open field system and woodland management (7I).

## Methods

Prior to the commencement of works an Accession Code was obtained, an OASIS online record was initiated and the key fields completed on Details, Location and Creator forms. Following recommendations from the Principal Planning Archaeologist of Leicestershire County Council, a programme of archaeological investigation was undertaken, comprising the opening of three trial trenches targeting the locations of the proposed buildings and access road.

The strip map and sample excavation area measuring *c.* 12m x 9m was located in the southeast corner of the development area and targeted archaeological features encountered during the preliminary evaluation work (Figure 2). A mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket (*c.* 1.6m wide) was employed under constant archaeological supervision to remove overburden, with excavation ceasing at undisturbed archaeological deposits. Archaeological deposits were recorded at an appropriate scale by measured drawing and photography and were located to Ordnance Survey National Grid. Whilst all archaeological deposits were recorded, excavation was limited to those features within the footprint of the proposed buildings.

## Results

The stripped area revealed a small cluster of intercutting refuse pits located at the rear of the medieval property fronting onto 39 Main Street, as defined to the south and west by ditches (Figure 3). A few smaller gullies and isolated post hole hinted at further structural features and/or spatial subdivisions.

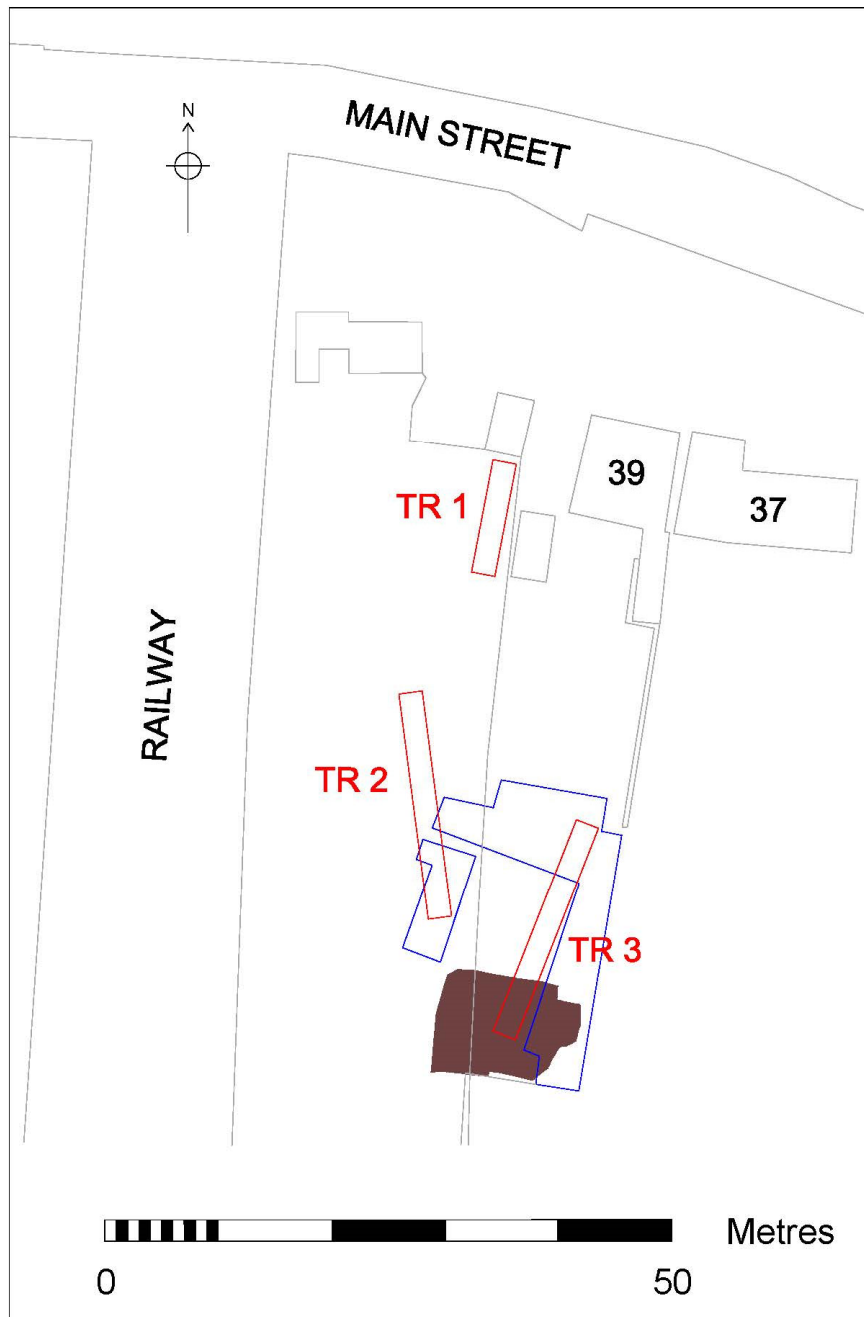


Figure 2: Site plan showing evaluation trench locations (red), footprints of proposed buildings (blue) and archaeological strip, map and sample (shaded)



Ditch [03] (10m+ x 1m x 0.4m) and its subsequent recut [05] (10m+ x 1m x 0.55m) were aligned east to west and appeared to change alignment and run north, although heavy tree and gardening disturbance mitigated against tracing the course of these features clearly (Figures 5 & 8). The feature produced pottery of medieval and post-medieval date, suggesting a 16th or 17th century date for its infilling. Extremely fragmentary traces of a wall, represented by ironstone rubble footings (23), were set into the upper fills of ditch [05], suggesting that the rear property boundary continued to be marked in another form, after the ditches had gone out of use. Smaller, gully-like features [09], [24] & [26], hinted at north-south and east-west plot subdivisions (Figure 6).

A small, ill-defined pit group comprising features [01], [11], [17], [19], [28] & [30] was located adjacent to ditch [03] and at the southern end of evaluation Trench 3, within which pit [01] was originally identified. The features produced pottery with a broad date range, from the late Saxon or Saxo-Norman period, through to the 14th century.

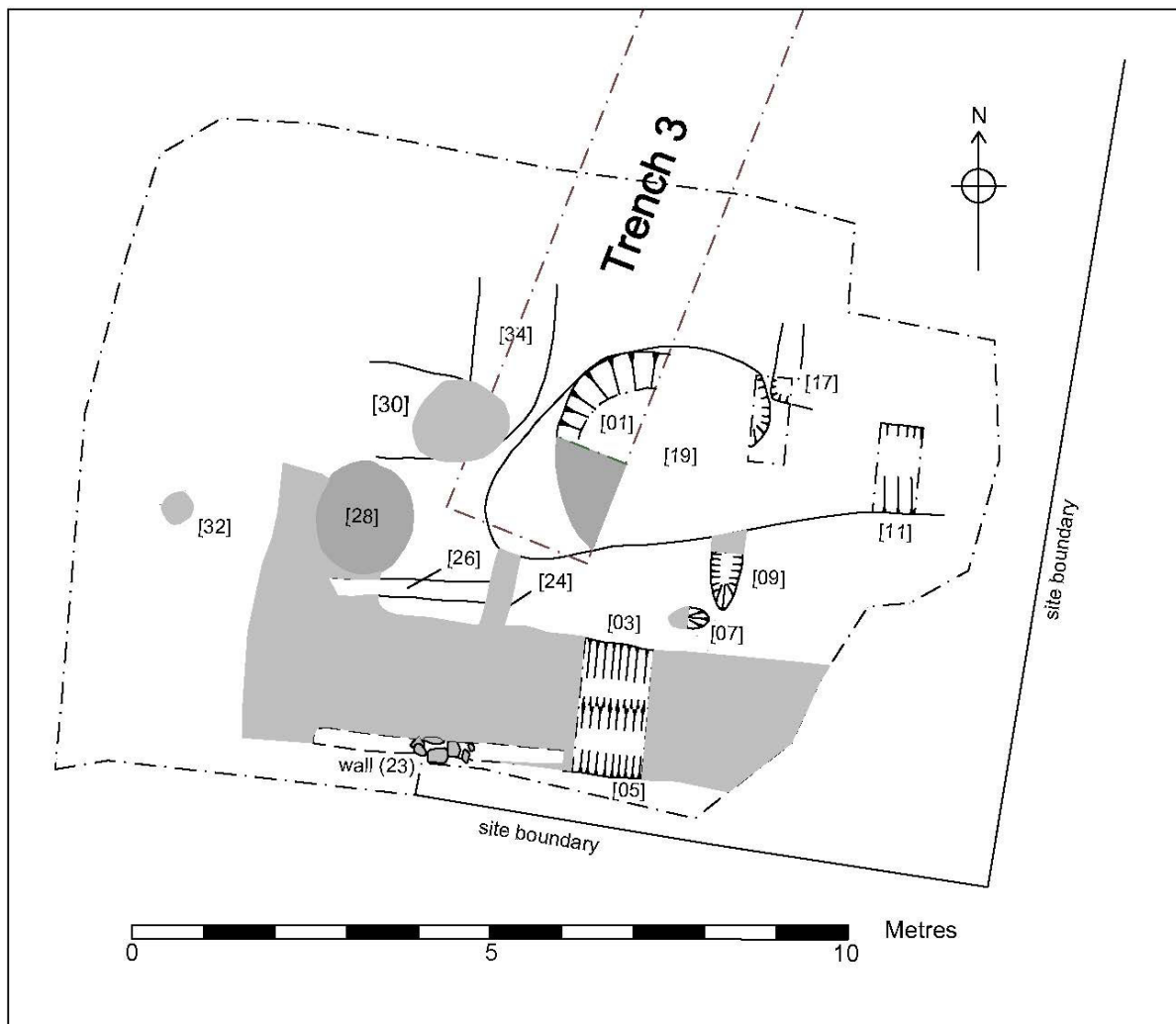


Figure 3: General plan of stripped area



Figure 4: General view northeast across excavation area

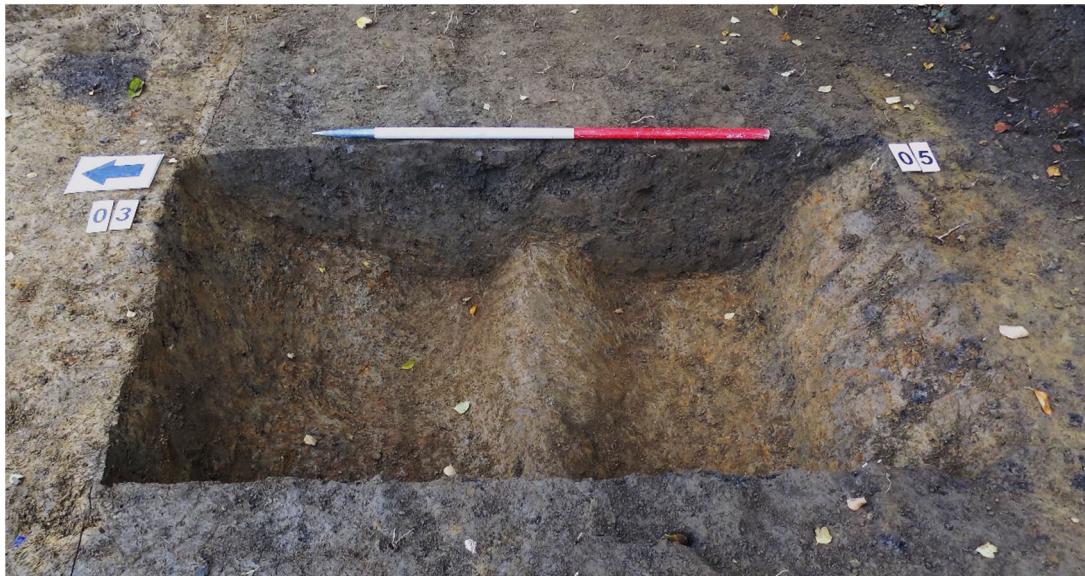


Figure 5: Ditches [03] & [05]: view east (1m scale)



Figure 6: Butt end [09]; view north (0.3m scale)



Figure 7: Pit [17]; view west (1m & 0.3m scales)

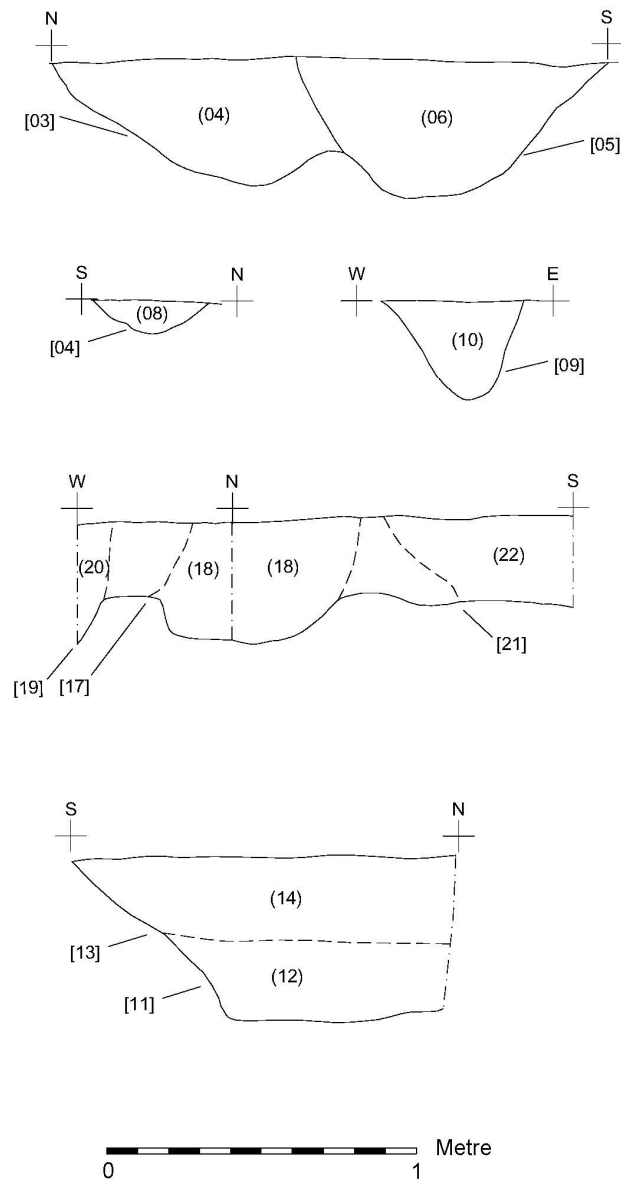


Figure 8: Section drawings of features

## Discussion and Conclusions

The archaeological strip map and sample investigation provided further evidence for medieval occupation to the rear of 39 Main Street, in the form of gullies and refuse pits. This activity appears to have been defined by ditches on the edge of probable burgage plots, which lead southwards from the Main Street frontage. Pottery recovered during the excavation was mixed, resulting from numerous episodes of deposition and re-deposition indicating occupation over a lengthy period of time. This is confirmed by the date-range for the pottery which lies between the 10th or 11th and the 16th or 17th centuries.

The pottery assemblage recovered from this assemblage is small, but informative, consisting of a range of domestic jars and bowls, mostly produced by the Lyveden Stanion industry in north

Northamptonshire. In contrast to the plainwares, the presence of at least five highly decorated jugs in the Lyveden Stanion fabric, LY1, is of note. These vessels were commonly used to decant and store liquids and may suggest the nearby presence of a building of some status with a parlour, perhaps in this, or a neighbouring plot.

## Archive and Publications

The site archive (X.A111 2017), consisting of paper, drawing and photographic records in addition to pottery sherds, will be housed with Leicestershire County Council.

The archive consists of:

- 3 x trench record sheets
- 3 A1 plan sheets
- Context record sheets
- Photographic record indices
- 13 x digital photographs
- Risk assessment form

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 evaluation on behalf of Mr. Ben Cowd. The project was managed by Vicki Score and John Thomas.

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## Appendix 1: The Pottery *Deborah Sawday*

### *The Pottery*

The pottery assemblage was made up of 65 sherds, weighing 1.215 kg representing 29 vessels, with a vessel rim equivalent (EVE) of 0.373 (calculated by adding together the circumference of the surviving rim sherds, where one vessel equals 1.00).

### *Condition*

The condition of the pottery was variable, some of the material was abraded, and other sherds showed little if any evidence of wear. The average sherd weight was 18.6grams. The bulk of the assemblage dated from the late Saxon to the 15th or 16th centuries, with the later medieval or early post-medieval sherds accounting for less than 20 percent of the total.

Table 1: The medieval pottery fabrics.

Fabric	Common Name/Kiln & Fabric Equivalent where known	Approx. Date Range
ST3	Stamford ware – coarse, fabrics E/F, H A/D (1)	c.850/900-1050+
SN	St Neots/St Neots type ware (2), Northants CTS fabric 100/101 (3)	c.850-1100
CS	Coarse Shelly ware (includes sherds previously catalogued as LY4 – Lyveden Stanion A ware - Northants CTS 330 (3)	c.1100-1400
LY1	Lyveden/Stanon type - Lyveden/Stanon ‘B’ ware, Northants CTS fabric 320 (3)	c.1200-1500
LY4	Lyveden/Stanon type - Lyveden/Stanon ‘A’ ware, Northants CTS fabric 319 (3)	1150-1400
BO1	Bourne D ware/type ware (4)	c.1450-1640
EA1/2	Earthenware 1/2 – Coarse Post Medieval Earthenware - Chilvers Coton/Ticknall, Derbyshire(5)	c.16 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> C
(1) Kilmurry 1980, Leach 1987		(4) Healey 1973, Young <i>et al</i> 2005.
(2) Hunter in McCarthy 1979		(5) Gooder 1984, Sawday 1989
(3) Northants CTS, Blinkhorn 2007, 2008		

### *Methodology*

The material was examined under an x20 binocular microscope and catalogued with reference to current guidelines (MPRG 1998, MPRG 2016) and the ULAS fabric series (Sawday 2009).

The fabric codes and sources – where known – are shown in the fabric list, table 1. Table 2 gives the medieval and later pottery by fabric, number, weight (grams), average sherd weight (AVS), vessel count and EVES. Table 3 lists the pottery, and miscellaneous finds, by context. Co-joining sherds are noted, whilst single sherds are generally counted as one vessel.

Table 2: The medieval pottery site totals by fabric, sherd number, weight (grams), average sherd weight (ASW), vessel count. And EVES

Fabric	Common Name	Sherds	Weight	ASW	Vessel No	EVEs
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<b>Late Saxon/Saxo Norman</b>						
ST3	Coarse/Fine Stamford ware	9	77		5	0.100
SN	St Neots type	22	301		4	0.038
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>31</b>	<b>378</b>	<b>12.19</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>0.138</b>
<b>Early/High Medieval</b>						
CS	Coarse Shelly ware	6	19		4	0.01
LY1	Lyveden/Stanion B ware	12	349		8	0.225
LY4	Lyveden/Stanion A ware	5	50		4	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>23</b>	<b>418</b>	<b>18.17</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>0.235</b>
<b>Late Medieval</b>						
BO1	Bourne D ware	1	14		1	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>14.00</b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>Post Medieval/Modern</b>						
EA1/2	Earthenware 1/2	10	405		3	
<b>Sub Total</b>		<b>10</b>	<b>405</b>	<b>40.5</b>	<b>3</b>	
<b>Site Total</b>		<b>65</b>	<b>1215</b>	<b>18.6</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>0.373</b>

### *The Ceramic Record*

The earliest pottery consisted of thirty one sherds of late Saxon or early medieval Stamford and Saint Neots type ware. The identifiable vessels comprised a small bowl with a flat topped rim and what is thought to be a large jar, forms 7 and 12 at Stamford, (Kilmurry 1980), in the coarse Stamford fabric, ST3. An externally sooted bowl with an inturned rim in Saint Neots type ware was also present.. Moulded rims similar to the latter are found at Northampton, (McCarthy 1979, fig.17.493), and the type is recognised as a late Saxon form at Raunds (Blinkhorn 2007, fig.6.4.46). A fragment of a jar was also recorded in Saint Neots type ware.

Pottery dating from the 12th to the 15th centuries included part of a jar rim in Coarse Shelly ware and predominantly undiagnostic body sherds in both Coarse Shelly ware and Lyveden Stanion A ware, LY4. The twelve sherds in Lyveden Stanion B ware, LY1, were virtually all decorated with both slip and glaze and represented at least five jugs. Four sherds made up part of the neck of a finely made, wheel finished if not wheel thrown, glazed jug, decorated with grid stamped strips and pads of white slip. Similar decoration on an aquamanile at Raunds (Blinkhorn 2007, fig.6.8.67) was dated to the second quarter of the 13th to the early 14th century. West Coton also produced examples of jugs with moulded rims and glazed rod handles in the same fabric (Blinkhorn 2001, fig.10.25). A similar jug was recorded at Great Bowden, though interestingly the example found here had been pierced with a wooden or metal rod from the interior of the neck right through into the handle, perhaps to help attach the handle to the neck of the vessel, or to help prevent warping during firing. A more uncommon example of the strap handle of a jug in LY1, which had been plugged into the neck of the vessel, was also found.

A single sherd in the later medieval or early post medieval Bourne D ware was recorded as well as ten predominantly hollow ware sherds in the post medieval coarse Earthenwares EA1 and EA2.

### *The Site Record*

Twenty nine of the thirty three sherds in the late Saxon or Saxo Norman Stamford and Saint Neots type ware, fabrics ST3 and SN, occurred in the back fill (14) of the ditch [13] which has been interpreted as a recut of ditch [11]. Three sherds of possibly 12th century Coarse Shelly ware were found in the same context. Two sherds of pottery with a similar date range, from the 10th



or 11th to the 12th centuries, were recovered from the backfill of the pit [17], and two more from pit [21] in ST3 and Lyveden Stanion A ware, LY4, the latter also probably dating from the 12th century.

Pottery dating from the 13th or early 14th centuries in Lyveden Stanion B ware, LY1, was retrieved from the pits [1] and [9]. Later medieval or early post medieval Bourne D ware, fabric BO1, was found in the backfill (4) of the ditch [3] together with earlier medieval finds; whilst the post medieval Earthenwares EA1 and EA2 also occurred in [3] and the ditch recut [5].

### ***Conclusion***

The assemblage though limited in size, provides evidence of late Saxon/Saxo Norman, medieval and early post medieval activity relating to a building fronting on to the Main Street and other possible structural features and boundary divisions on the site. The relatively low average sherd weight of 18.6 grams and the degree of abrasion evident, indicate many episodes of deposition and re-deposition over a long period of time. This is confirmed by the date-range for the pottery which lies between the 10th or 11th and the 16th or 17th centuries. It is perhaps not surprising with so much activity and given the relatively small size of the assemblage, no co-joining sherds were found between different contexts.

The range of wares present is typical of the period and of the region, with Stamford and the Lyveden Stanion industry in north Northamptonshire producing the bulk of the finds. The origins of the St Neots type wares remains uncertain, but the pottery is found throughout the south east midlands and East Anglia.

Whilst, typically, the earlier part of the assemblage was made up of bowls and jars – the presence of at least five highly decorated jugs in the Lyveden Stanion fabric, LY1, is of note. These vessels were commonly used to decant and store liquids and may suggest the presence of a building of some status with a parlour nearby (Soden 1988-9, 89).

Table 3: The pottery and miscellaneous finds by context.

<i>Context</i>	<i>Major fabric/ware</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Gr</i>	<i>Vessel No</i>	<i>Comments – terminal date</i>
<i>POTTERY</i>					
2 [1] pit	CS - Coarse Shelly ware	2	5	1	Misc. body, c.1100-1400.
2 [1]	LY4. - Lyveden/Stanion A ware	4	48	3	2 sherds sooted, one heavily, c.1100-1400
2 [1]	LY1 - Lyveden/Stanion B ware	1	1	1	Decorated with white slip and glaze – probably a jug fragment, c.1200-1500.
4 [3] ditch	LY1 - Lyveden/Stanion B ware	1	118	1	Glazed jug with ribbed rim and rod handle stub. Diameter 118mm, 0.225 EVE. Circular hole pierced through handle from inner wall. Abraded. West Coton also produced examples of jugs with moulded rims and glazed rod handles in the same fabric (Blinkhorn 2001, fig.10.25)
4	LY1	2	29	1	Slipped and glazed jug shoulder, join
4	LY1	3	25	3	Misc. body, abraded
4	BO1 – Bourne D ware	1	14	1	
4	EA2 – Earthenware 2	1	15	1	
6 [5] ditch recut	LY1	1	114	1	Heavily abraded jug neck with plugged stub of a strap handle
6	EA1/2 1 - Earthenware 1/2	8	292	1	Lower wall of hollow ware – probably a jar, slipped with dark brown glaze on interior.
6	EA2	1	98	1	Flat hollow ware base, probably part of a jar, Oxidised and slipped with light brown internal glaze and glaze run on exterior base suggesting that pot was fired upside down with another stacked vessel above during firing.
10 [9] pit	LY1	4	62	1	Glazed jug neck decorated with white slip strips and pads and grid stamps, similar decoration on an aquamanile at Raunds (Blinkhorn 2007, fig.6.8.67) where dated second quarter of the 13 <sup>th</sup> to the early 14 <sup>th</sup> C. Finely made, wheel finished if not wheel thrown.
14 [13] ditch recut of [11]	SN – Saint Neots	19	291	1	Bowl with inturned rim, some joins, sooted externally, estimated diameter c.200m, EVE 0.038. Similar moulded rim at Northampton, (McCarthy 1979, fig.17.493), and at a Late Saxon form at Raunds (Blinkhorn 2007, fig. 6.4.46). ?Buff bodied with grey core, Northampton fabric 101 AD.900-1150
14	SN	3	10	3	Broken jar rim fragment and misc. body sherds
14	CS	1	7	1	Jar rim fragment, estimated EVE, 0.01
14	CS	2	6	1	Misc. body c1100+
14	ST3 – Coarse Stamford ware	2	23	2	Misc. body
14	ST3	5	28	1	Flat topped bowl rim and body – some joins sooted externally, external diameter c.170mm, EVE 0.025. Possibly form 12 (Kilmurry 1980).
18 [17] pit	ST3	1	15	1	body

18	CS	1	1	1	body
20 [21] pit	LY4	1	2	1	
20	ST3	1	11	1	Large bowl rim form 7-13, rim, (Kilmurry 1980) diameter c.160mm EVE 0.075, 11 <sup>th</sup> C+.
MISC.					
14 [13]	Fired clay	1	4		
18 [17]	Fired clay	1	3		
20 [21]	Fired clay	1	5		

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## Appendix 2: OASIS Data Entry

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>OASIS ID</b>	universil-302936		
	<b>Project Name</b>	39 Main Street, Great Bowden, Leicestershire		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	01-10-2017; 03-10-2017		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	Yes		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Strip, Map and Sample Excavation		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Garden & paddock		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	Medieval pit		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	Medieval pottery		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Residential development		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Post-determination		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>	16/00631/FUL		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	39 Main Street, Great Bowden, Leicestershire, LE16 7HB		
	<b>Study Area</b>	0.55ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SP 74263 88810		
	<b>Height OD</b>	82m OD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority (Harborough District Council)		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Vicki Score		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Roger Kipling		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Mr. Ben Crowd		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	ULAS	ULAS	ULAS
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>	X.A111 2017	X.A111 2017	X.A111 2017
	<b>Contents</b>	pottery	Photos	Site records Field notes
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	<b>Title</b>	<i>An Archaeological strip, Map and Sample Excavation at 39 Main Street, Great Bowden, Leicestershire</i>		
	<b>Author</b>	Kipling, R.		
	<b>Other bibliographic details</b>	ULAS Report No 2017-193		
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