



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LEICESTER**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Excavation  
at Jewry Wall Museum,  
St Nicholas Circle,  
Leicester.**

**NGR: SK 58226 04453**

By Gavin Speed



**ULAS Report No 2018-023**


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Jewry Wall museum,  
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**Dr Gavin Speed**

**For: Leicester City Council**

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# **An Archaeological Evaluation at Jewry Wall Museum, St. Nicholas Circle Leicester.**

**Dr Gavin Speed**

## **Summary**

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological investigation on land at Jewry Wall museum, St. Nicholas Circle, Leicester (SK 58226 04453).*

*The open area strip evaluation was located at the southern edge of the Jewry Wall baths ruins, immediately adjacent to the public footpath to the south, in advance of a proposed pedestrian access ramp for Jewry Wall Museum. Archaeological evidence was located in the middle area, and consisted of two Roman walls, a patch of tessellated pavement, and associated floor make-up levels. These could relate to the baths complex, or else be evidence for a separate building adjacent to the baths.*

*The site archive will be held by Leicester Museums Service, under accession number YA.1.2018.*

## **1. Introduction**

The open area strip evaluation was located at the southern edge of the Jewry Wall baths ruins, immediately adjacent to the public footpath to the south, in advance of a proposed pedestrian access ramp for Jewry Wall Museum.

The proposed pedestrian access ramp has not been designed as yet, though it is likely to be supported on a series of piles, the installation of which has the potential to destroy or damage buried archaeological remains associated with the Jewry Wall bathhouse site, a Scheduled Monument. In view of this, the Historic England Inspector of Monuments has requested an archaeological open area evaluation of the area affected, to assess the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be present.

This document presents the results of a scheme of archaeological work, in accordance with the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act 1979 and National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment*.

This document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation, with an assessment of the potential impact on buried archaeological remains from groundworks associated with future development. The proposed development affects part of a Scheduled Monument 1013312 (The Jewry Wall Baths, palaestra, and Anglo-Saxon church, Leicester). The archaeological work was required to assess the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which might be present in order to determine the potential impact of the proposed development upon them.

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

The site is located within the historic core of Roman and medieval Leicester, and in particular, affects part of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of the Jewry Wall Roman baths (list entry number: 1013312).



The Jewry Wall site was excavated between 1936 and 1939 (Kenyon 1948), after which the remains of the Roman bath house were consolidated for public display. The proposed pedestrian ramp (centred on SK 58226 04453) lies immediately to the south of the Roman bath house and palaestra, a portico, Roman drains, and further Roman walls lead south from the baths towards the proposed pedestrian access ramp. Roman masonry is clearly seen upstanding immediately adjacent to the proposed ramp at the west-end, there is therefore very good potential for Roman remains at a shallow depth. At the east-end archaeological deposits may have been removed by 20<sup>th</sup> century landscaping.

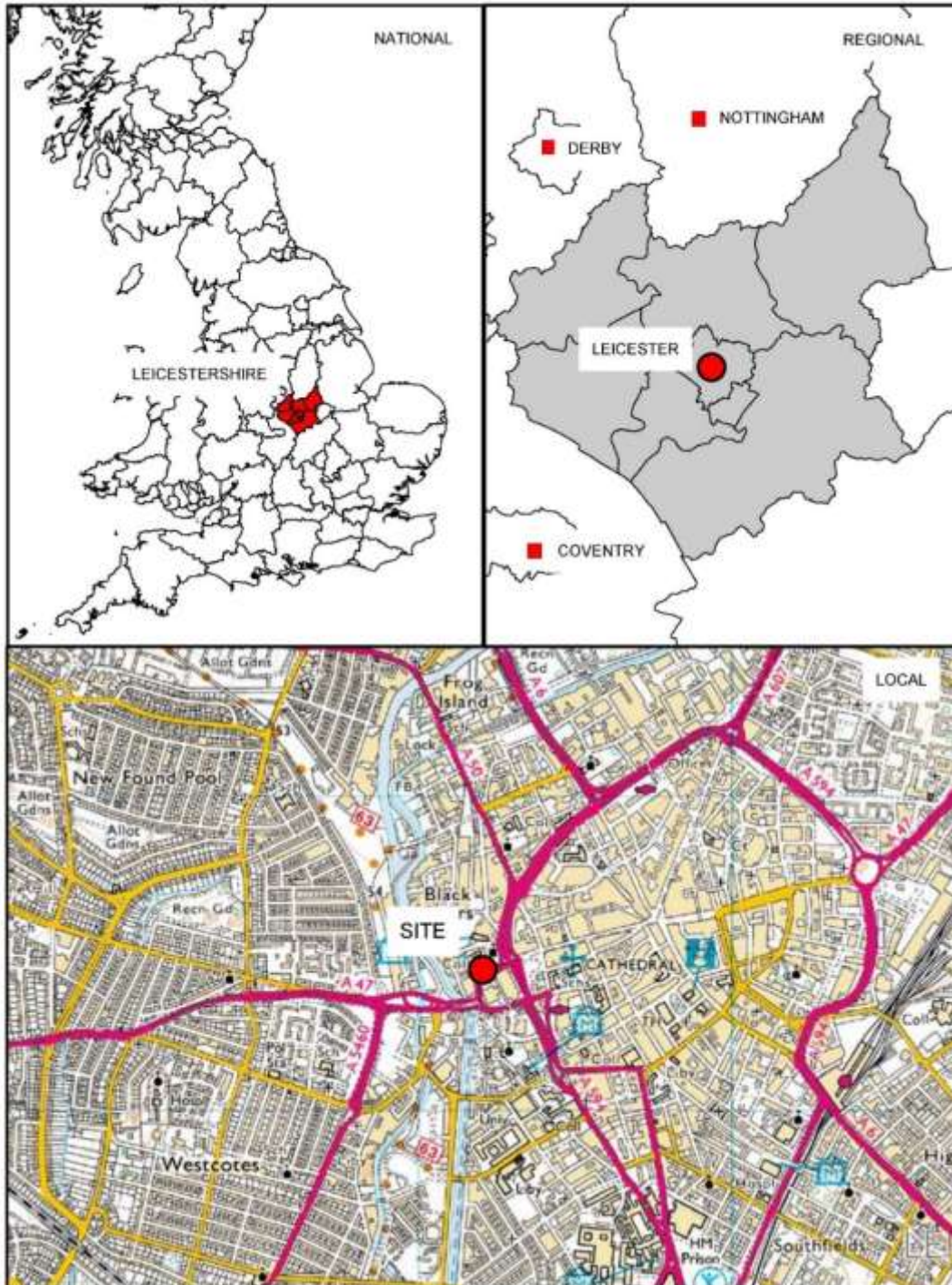


Figure 1: Site location within the UK, county of Leicestershire, and city of Leicester

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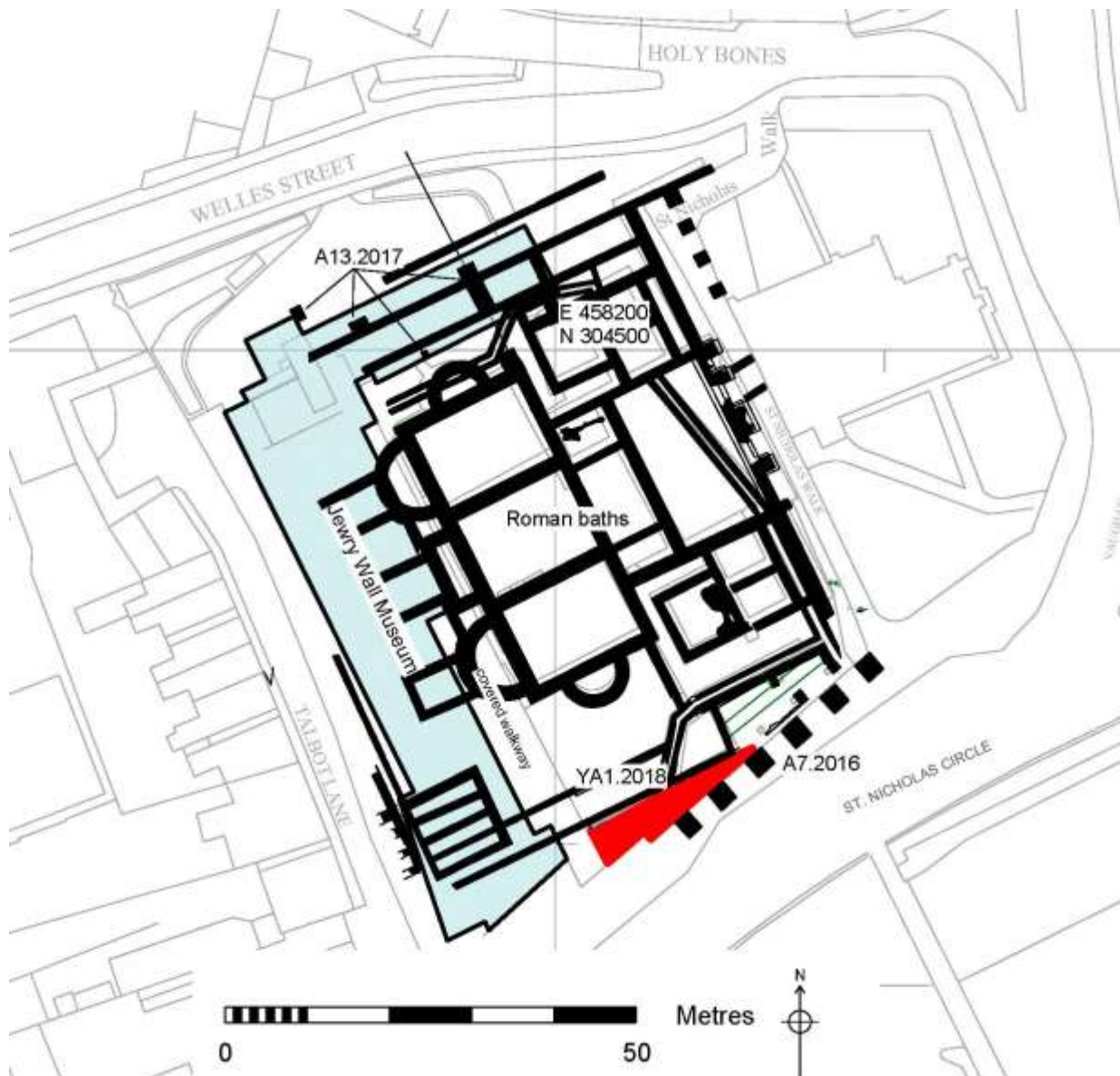


Figure 2: Trench location plan on OS 100m grid (also showing recent archaeological investigations)

### 3. Historical and Archaeological Background

The area of the excavation lay at the edge of the Jewry Wall museum and ruins to the north. The Jewry Wall is one of the largest fragments of standing Roman masonry in the country. It was visible up to 19th century (though houses were built up against it in the 18th century, Throsby 1791, 5), when it was incorporated into a factory. This was demolished in 1936 to make way for new city baths and a series of four seasons of excavations were carried out prior to the proposed redevelopment from 1936 to 1939, led by Kathleen Kenyon (Kenyon 1948).

During the 1960s and 1970s the surrounding area underwent major redevelopment, and numerous excavations, many by Leicestershire Archaeological Unit (LAU), revealed archaeology of Iron Age, Roman, and medieval date (Clay and Pollard 1994).

In 1971 a watching brief was undertaken during construction of a footbridge over St. Nicholas Circle (accession number: A179.1971). There is no paper record in the archives (L. Hadland pers. comm.). A summary of the work records that “Foundations of a Roman wall and traces of floors and other occupation were recorded. A quantity of pottery was recovered. Other finds...coin of Vespasian...painted wall plaster...” (Mellor 1972, 63-64). The footbridge was recently removed,

though the concrete pile bases remain in situ, just over a 1 metre away from the 2016 evaluation trenches 2, 4, and 5 (visible in Figure 6).

More recently, at the north-end of the ruins (60m north of the 2018 excavation) an evaluation in 1997 and watching brief in 1998 revealed features of the 1st to 2nd century AD (Gnanaratnam 1997, 1999). A watching brief in a similar location in 2004 revealed no archaeological features, but many finds of Roman date (Hunt 2004). Also at the north-end of the ruins an evaluation took place in March 2017 (Browning 2017) involving the hand excavation of four trenches beneath the classroom block at Vaughan College, an area originally excavated by Kenyon and associated with archaeology that pre-dates the construction of the bath house. This evaluation revealed areas of surviving archaeology below the car park make-up layers, including remains associated with two parallel walls excavated by Kenyon and pits representing both Roman and modern activity. A watching brief in 2017 revealed an *opus signinum* floor (8) in Room VIII (Rodríguez 2017, 14), a likely base for hypocaust pilae.

In 2016 two phases of trial trenching located archaeological evidence consisting of Roman, medieval, and post-medieval archaeology (Speed 2016). A second phase of evaluation was subsequently undertaken at the revised location for the proposed ramp. The evaluation trenches lay on the south-east side of the Roman bath complex. A Roman wall was located in two trenches, as well as an *opus signinum* floor and numerous Roman artefacts. These could relate to the baths complex, or else be evidence for a separate building adjacent to the baths. A clay-bonded medieval wall was located within Trench 4, perhaps footings for a building fronting onto St. Nicholas Street. Human remains discovered in Trench 1 were disturbed by later service pipes, these are likely to be burials associated with the St. Nicholas churchyard to the NE.

The full Scheduled Ancient Monument entry for the Jewry Wall Roman baths (list entry number: 1013312) is as follows:

The bath house was one of the principal public buildings of a Roman town. The practice of communal bathing was an integral part of Roman urban life, and the public bath house served an important function as a place for relaxation and social congregation as well as exercise and hygiene. Public bath houses were used by most inhabitants of Roman towns, including slaves, to the extent that private bathing facilities in town houses were rare; men and women bathed at separate times of day, or in separate suites. Bath houses therefore varied in both size and plan, according to the local population and bathing arrangements, but all consisted of a series of rooms of graded temperature containing a variety of plunge-baths. The frigidarium (cold room) led, progressively, to one or more tepidaria (warm rooms) and caldaria (hot rooms). Bath houses could also include changing rooms, latrines, sauna and massage rooms, and were often linked to a palaestra or exercise area, which originated as an open courtyard but in Britain was later adapted to a covered hall. The bath house was heated by hypocausts connected to nearby furnaces; it was also linked to, and depended upon, an engineered water supply which involved the construction of drains, sewers and an aqueduct. As a necessity of Roman town life, the public bath house was one of the first buildings to be constructed after the establishment of a town. Most bath houses, therefore, originated in the first or second century AD and continued in use, with alterations, to the fifth century. They are distributed throughout the towns of Roman Britain, which were principally situated in what is now eastern, central and southern England and south Wales. In view of their importance for an understanding of Romano-British urban development and social practice, all surviving examples are considered to be worthy of protection. The remains of the Roman bath house and palaestra at Jewry Wall include the only standing fragments of the Roman town of Leicester, *Ratae Coritanorum*. The Jewry Wall itself, representing the west wall of the palaestra, is also rare in being one of the largest standing pieces of a Roman civilian building in the country and has contributed significantly to our knowledge of this type of architecture. The remains of the bath house were excavated in the 1930s and are thus quite well understood, revealing several unparalleled details on an unusual plan. The excavations also demonstrated the survival of pre-Roman deposits at a lower level, which remain intact. As a result of their presentation for public display, the bath house remains also serve as an important educational and recreational resource. The area of the palaestra and overlying Anglo-Saxon church is largely unexcavated and will thus preserve architectural, artefactual and ecofactual remains of a period of over a thousand years. The superimposition of the Anglo-Saxon church on the Roman building will provide a valuable insight into the manner in which civil authority was transferred to the church between the late Roman period and the Anglo-Saxon era. The monument includes the above-ground and buried remains of a Roman bath house and palaestra (exercise hall) constructed in the 2nd century AD in the northern half of Insula XXI of the Roman town, *Ratae Coritanorum*. The visible remains of the bath house are represented by a mixture of consolidated surviving masonry, reconstruction (the hypocaust bases, for example, are all modern replicas) and the delineation of robber wrenches by modern

kerbs. In the post-Roman period the buildings were partially demolished and an Anglo-Saxon church was built on the site of the palaestra. In the 18th and 19th centuries the only standing piece of Roman masonry surviving above ground was a fragment of the west wall of the palaestra, against which a succession of domestic and industrial buildings were erected. In 1920 this fragment, known as the Jewry Wall, was taken into state care and in 1936 the site of the bath house was cleared of modern buildings. Archaeological excavations carried out between 1936 and 1939 uncovered the remains of the bath house, and the surviving parts are now exposed for public display. The site of the palaestra and Anglo-Saxon church is now largely occupied by the present church of St Nicholas and surrounding graveyard. The Church of St Nicholas is a Grade B Listed Building and is excluded from the scheduling although the ground beneath it is included. The churchyard, which is no longer used for burial, and the Jewry Wall, which is Listed Grade I, are included in the scheduling. The excavated remains of the bath house lie on the east side of the Jewry Wall Museum and take the form of a series of stone foundations, partially restored and consolidated for public presentation. They include, immediately adjacent to the museum building, the remains of three large rectangular halls representing caldaria (hot baths); on each of the north and south sides is a semi-circular extension where a cold plunge bath was situated. Attached to the east are the remains of three smaller rectangular rooms representing tepidaria (warm baths) and including the remains of a hypocaust. The bath house is joined to the palaestra on the east by two blocks of rooms which were built, with the palaestra, at a slightly earlier date; that on the north contains the remains of a latrine which is connected to a series of stone-lined drains running on the north, east and south sides of the bath house. Between the two blocks is an open rectangular area, believed to have been the frigidarium where cold water basins were located. On the north side of the bath house are the foundations of stone walls believed to represent the remains of a portico which ran along the edge of the insula, and in which road side shops may have stood. Fragments of pre-Roman pottery of the early first century AD were discovered during excavation, indicating that the site of the bath house was occupied immediately before the Roman Conquest. On the eastern side of the area of exposed foundations are the standing remains of the west wall of the palaestra, known as the Jewry Wall. The wall is constructed of coursed stone and brick and survives to a height of over 9m. Near the centre of the wall are two doorways which led from the palaestra to the frigidarium of the bath house; on the eastern face is a series of blind arches and niches. The foundations of part of a colonnade running inside of, and parallel to, the west wall of the palaestra have been discovered beneath St Nicholas Walk. In its entirety the palaestra was a rectangular building over 50m x 25m with a colonnade on two sides, occupying the north eastern corner of the insula; the remains of the greater part of the building now lie buried beneath the present church and churchyard. In the post-Roman period the Jewry Wall is believed to have served as the west wall of an Anglo-Saxon church pre-dating the surviving church of St Nicholas. Partial excavation in the area between the wall and the present church revealed two post-Roman walls connecting the two structures. The survival of late Saxon stonework in the fabric of the present building, and the alignment of the nave on one of the Roman doorways, further indicates the presence of an earlier church on the site. The remains of the earlier church are largely overlain by the present one. The northern wing of Vaughan College, all modern walls, steps, signposts, road and carpark surfaces, lamp-posts, floodlights and iron railings are excluded from the scheduling, as are the gravestones and Roman masonry fragments on the surface of St Nicholas's churchyard; the ground beneath these features is, however, included.





Figure 3: Archive photo from 1930s excavation, the 2018 excavation lay close to the edge of the excavation on the right. Image credit: Leicester Arts and Museums Service.



Figure 4: Close up of the edge of the excavation during the 1930s excavations (Kenyon 1948)



Figure 5: Glass plate negative from 1962. Showing landscaped bank on right, prior to construction of museum (Image credit: Leicester Arts and Museums Service, LCC ID NO. GP4242).

#### **4. Aims and Objectives**

The purpose of the archaeological work may be summarised as follows:

- 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 advance understanding of the heritage assets
- To produce an archive and report of any results.
- To deliver archaeological supervision of works and on site guidance to contractors so as to minimise risk of accidental damage and disturbance to the scheduled monument in particular the delicate consolidated remains of Roman structures exposed at ground level and the upstanding Jewry Wall (an ancient monument in the Guardianship of Secretary of State).

The project has the potential to contribute to the following research themes outlined as regional research priorities in the East Midlands Archaeological Research Framework (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/>)

#### ***Roman***

## 5.1 Chronology

1. How can we enhance our knowledge of developing pottery industries, particularly during the Conquest period and 3rd to 4th centuries?

2. How may information on temporal and regional variations in pottery typology and vessel fabrics best be disseminated?

3. How may our understanding of sites known only from metal-detected and fieldwalking finds be enhanced?

4. How can we advance our knowledge of the chronology of metal finds, particularly brooches?

**5. What are the** priorities for scientific dating, particularly radiocarbon, and how may targeted dating programmes be developed?

## 5.2 The military impact

1. How far was the military conquest a motor of social and economic change?

**2. To what extent is** the pivotal location of the region between civil south and military north reflected in the archaeological record?

**3.** Can we define more closely the distribution of early military sites and their periods of use?

4. How did the supply needs of military garrisons and armies along the northern frontier affect the economy and transport infrastructure?

5. How did the withdrawal of Roman political and financial support impact upon the established society and economy?

## 5.3 Growth of urban centres

1. What spurred the foundation of extramural settlements (vici) next to early forts and how was the development of vici and forts related?

2. How does the distribution of towns correlate with Iron Age foci, and how far may their social, political and economic roles have overlapped?

3. What processes drove the growth of secondary urban centres?

4. How were towns organised, what roles did they perform and how may their morphology and functions have varied over time?

**5. How and why did the urban landscape** change in the late Roman period, and what roles may fortifications have played in this period?

## 5.4 Rural settlement patterns and landscapes

1. How did the Conquest impact upon rural settlements and landscapes?

2. How and why did settlement forms and building traditions vary within the region and over time?

3. How did rural settlements relate to each other and to towns and military sites, and how may this have varied regionally and over time?

4. How did field and boundary systems relate to earlier systems of land allotment, and how did these boundary networks develop over time?

5. What patterns can be discerned in the location of settlements in the landscape?

6. Can we elucidate further the daily life of settlements and their role in the processing and marketing of agricultural products?

## 5.5 The agricultural economy

1. How is the upland-lowland divide manifested in the regional agricultural economy and other aspects of the archaeological record?

2. How did integration into the Roman Empire impact upon the agrarian economy, including the introduction of new crops, herbs and fruits?

3. What is the evidence for the diet of people of high and low status in urban and rural settlements, especially those close to military sites?
4. Can we chart more closely the processes of agricultural intensification and expansion and the development of field systems?
5. Can we define more precisely the networks developed for the trade and exchange of agricultural produce and fish?

#### **5.6 Artefacts: production, distribution and social identity**

1. What resources moved in and out of the region during this period?
2. How can we add to our understanding of the nationally important iron and lead industries?
3. How may studies of the production, movement and consumption of pottery contribute to understanding of the regional economy?
4. What production techniques and exchange networks were involved in the manufacture and marketing of salt and building materials?
5. How can we utilise most effectively the regional coin resource as evidence for the transition to a monetary economy?
6. What can artefact research contribute to studies of eating, drinking and other manifestations of social identity?

#### **5.7 Roads and waterways**

1. Can the chronology of road construction and links between road building and campaigns of conquest be clarified?
2. How were roads, rivers and artificial waterways integrated?
3. To what extent may communication routes have been influenced by Late Iron Age settlement patterns and routes of movement?
4. How may roads and waterways have impacted upon established communities and how may roads have influenced urban morphology?

#### **5.8 Ritual and religion**

1. How far is the location of religious sites related to Late Iron Age activity and to what extent may structured deposition of human/animal bones in settlement/boundary features have continued?
2. How far may data from surveys and the Portable Antiquities Scheme assist in locating religious or ritual sites?
3. Can we elucidate the beliefs and practices associated with religious or ritual foci and may certain classes of site have been associated with particular activities?
4. Why have so few early Roman burials been found, and may practices have varied regionally and between different communities?
5. What may studies of later Roman inhumation cemeteries teach us about changing burial practices and demography?

#### **6.3 Roads and rivers: transport routes and cultural boundaries**

1. To what extent were Roman roads used and maintained from the fifth century, and may some have acted as social or political boundaries?

## **5. Methodology**

All fieldwork followed a written scheme of investigation for archaeological excavation, agreed with the City Archaeologist at Leicester City Council and the Inspector of Ancient Monuments at Historic England, as a condition of Scheduled Monument Consent. The work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations* (CIfA 2014b). Internal monitoring procedures were undertaken including

visits to the site by the project manager. These ensured that project targets were met and professional standards were maintained. Provision was made for external monitoring meetings with Historic England, the City Archaeologist at Leicester City Council, and the Client. The topsoil was removed by hand across the area under investigation, down to 1m then stepped, or to the top of archaeology. Prior to any archaeological investigations photographs of the site areas were taken. The area exposed was examined by hand cleaning the archaeological deposits, and then planning them at an appropriate scale. Archaeological deposits were not sample-excavated, but find were retrieved to help aid the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. Particular attention was paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer. Internal monitoring procedures were undertaken including visits to the site from the project manager. These ensured that professional standards were being maintained. Provision was made for monitoring visits with representatives of the Client, Historic England and the City Archaeologist. Archaeological deposits were hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Measured drawings of all archaeological features were prepared at a scale of 1:10 and 1:20, and tied into an overall site plan. All plans were tied into the National Grid using a Differential Global Positioning System (dGPS). Archaeological deposits were excavated and recorded as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. The ULAS recording manual was used as a guide for all recording. Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed were entered onto pro-forma recording sheets. A photographic record of the investigations was prepared illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. Digital photographs were used during the recording. The photographic record also includes 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation. The Site has been given the Leicester City Museum Service accession number: YA.1.2018.





Figure 6: Views of the investigation area (looking east), prior to start



Figure 7: View of the investigation area (looking east), during removal of the top soils.

## 6. Results

The excavation has revealed evidence for significant Roman archaeology in the central part of the area under investigation (Figure 8). The results are now discussed in detail. Archaeological contexts are assigned as a cut number [\*\*\*] and fill numbers (\*\*\*)

At the west-end of the investigation area was a 15cm thick concrete base. This was removed with a concrete breaker. Below was a mixed soil (1), this contained metal and modern brick debris and a mixed of finds (1st or 2nd century Roman pottery sherd, a 15th to mid-16th century Late medieval pottery sherd, and a fragment of post-medieval or modern clay pipe stem). Three test pits were excavated through (1) to check for potential underlying archaeological deposits. Natural substratum was quickly reached at 58.95 – 58.47m OD (sloping downwards to the west).

To the east of the concrete area was a 20th century retaining wall, constructed of breeze blocks with stone cemented in on top. The wall ran from the edge of the ruins from the south northwards, then turned NE up to the consolidated Roman wall drain. This wall had a construction cut *c.*0.18m wide with concrete at the base (0.6m deep). Within this area were further mixed modern soils. Within these were numerous roots from the recently removed hedge. The soil appears to be landscaped soils, perhaps put in place in the early 1960s prior to the museum opening in 1966. These were excavated 1m down to 58.85m-60.03m OD, no change was seen in the mixed soils.

After removal of the mixed soils (8) a further part of Roman wall (9) was revealed (60.45m OD). This wall was *c.*0.6m wide, it had a single course of granite blocks, under this were three courses of tiles. It formed part of the consolidated wall remains of the drain. A further 3.2m east a further Roman wall was uncovered under more mixed soils (7), at 61.51m OD. This wall (4) was 0.95m wide over 0.95m deep, and 1.8m long. It abutted wall (10), and was made purely of granite stone, unlike wall (10) which had tile coursing and was thinner.

Between walls (4) and (9), and under the mixed soils (8) was a good sequence and survival of Roman stratigraphy. The uppermost survival was part of a tessellated pavement (61.15m OD). This was composed of red tile tesserae (3). These were *c.*33mm, though roughly cut. This had been consolidated in the past with a concrete block on its west-side. These were set in a mortar layer (5). Below this (61.01m OD) was a mixed 'demolition' levelling layer, consisting of crushed Roman brick / tile and mortar (6). This layer had been truncated on its SE side, and the underlying layer (2) was seen at a much lower level (60.28m OD). This was a clean Roman sand layer, perhaps for consolidation / makeup. Within this, Roman pottery dates to the mid 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Also within this layer were grey and white tesserae (notably smaller than the red tile floor (3), indicating an earlier tessellated floor had been disturbed during construction of the red tile pavement (3).

To the east of Roman wall (4) were further mixed soils (7). As with the soils in the western-end, the soil appears to be landscaped soils, perhaps put in place in the early 1960s. Within this was Roman pottery, one fragment of painted wall plaster, and a sherd of a post-medieval jar. These were excavated down to 60.28m OD. A concrete breeze block wall was located to the west. To the east of this a trial trench excavated in 2016 showed similar mixed soils, along with a displaced fragment of Roman wall (Speed 2016, 60-61).

Table 1: Contexts list

CONTEXT	FEATURE TYPE	FINDS?	DATE
1	Mixed soils (under concrete)	Pottery	20 <sup>th</sup> century
2	Sand layer	Pottery	Roman
3	Tessellated pavement (red tile – course)	-	Roman
4	Roman wall (superstructure)	-	Roman
5	Mortar layer (for tessellated pavement (3))	-	Roman





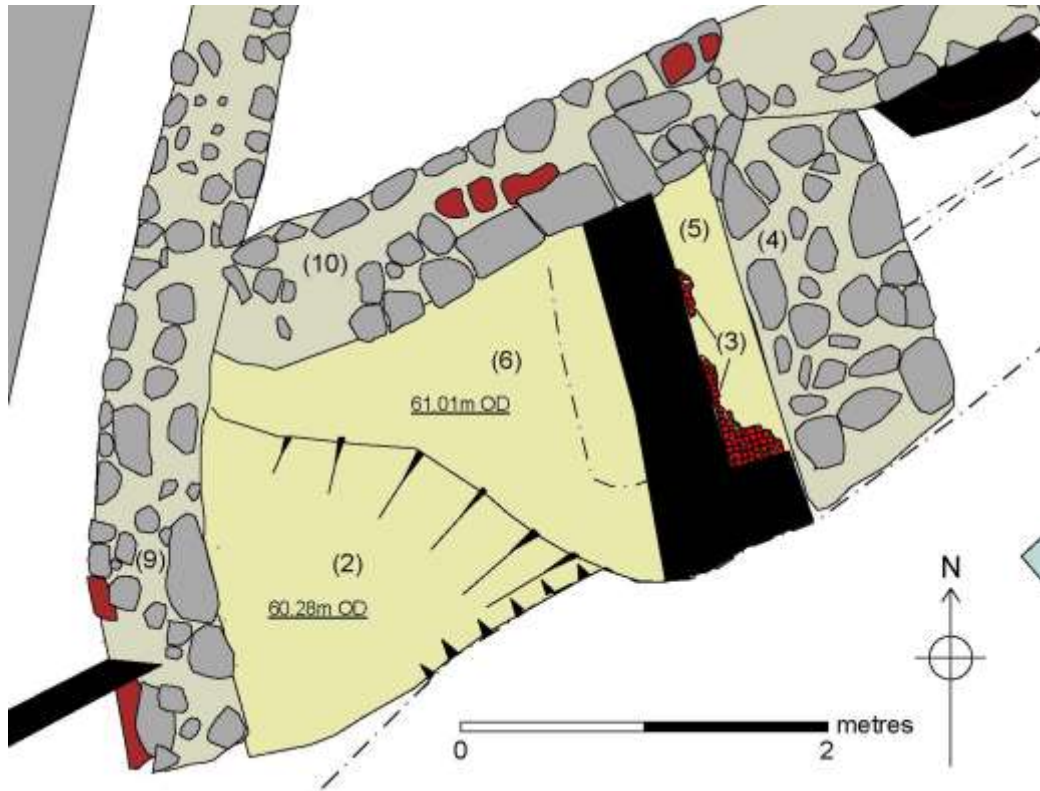


Figure 9: Detailed plan of archaeology in central area



Figure 10: Aerial view of central area, created using photogrammetry (0.4m scale)

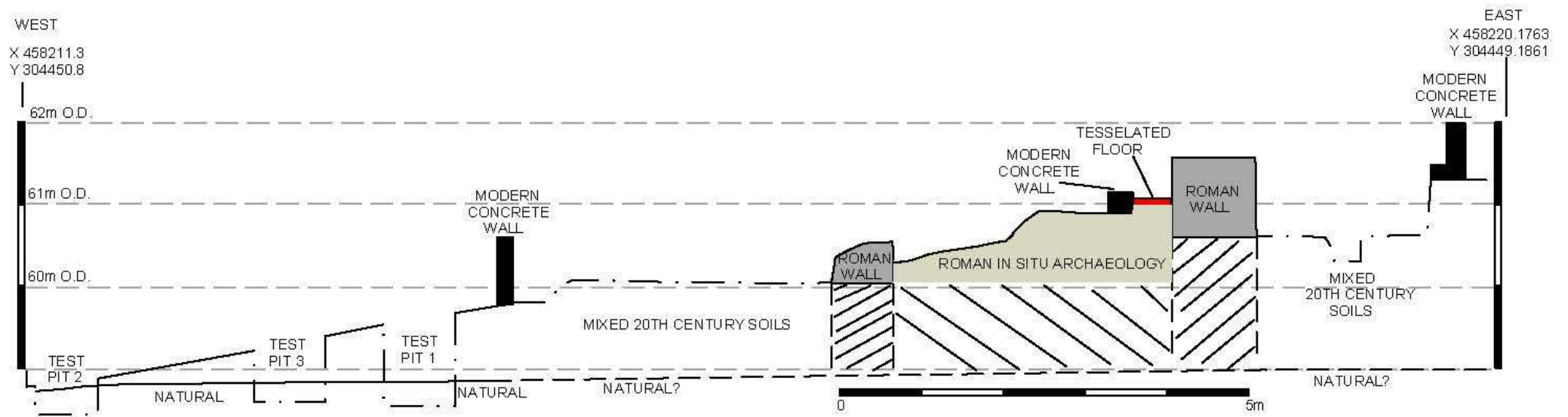


Figure 11: Longitudinal profile (SE-NW) across stripped area





Figure 12: East (left) and west (right) ends of investigation area showing mixed soils and natural substratum



Figure 13: Views of tessellated floor (3) and wall (4)



Figure 14: View of Roman layers under tessellated pavement (left), relationship between walls (4) and (10) (right)

## 7. Finds *(by Elizabeth Johnson, with contributions from Heidi Addison and Deborah Sawday)*

The excavation recovered a range of material culture artefacts including: Roman pottery, plaster, medieval and post-medieval pottery. This section contains the catalogue, analysis, and report of each.

### 7.1 *Assemblage Size and Condition*

An assemblage comprising 11 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 146g with an EVEs value of 0.225, was recovered from the excavations, along with two sherds of medieval pottery (158g, 0.435 EVEs), a fragment of clay pipe, a fragment of painted wall plaster and three stone tesserae. The pottery is in good condition, with average sherd weights of 13.3g and 79g for the Roman and medieval material respectively.

### 7.2 *Methodology*

The pottery was examined in hand specimen using a binocular microscope at x15 magnification and classified using the Leicestershire fabric series for Roman pottery as set out in Pollard 1994. The Medieval pottery was identified by Deborah Sawday (medieval pottery specialist). Quantification was by sherd count, weight (grams) and estimated vessel equivalents (EVEs) using vessel rims. Vessel forms were assigned where diagnostic sherds allowed, using the Leicestershire Museums form series and other published typologies. The dataset was recorded and analysed within an Excel workbook, which comprises the archive record.

Table 1: Roman pottery catalogue

Cont	Fabric	Form	Ves part	Sherds	Wgt (g)	Dating
1	Fine white sandy ware (WW2)	Flagon	Body	1	2	late1st-2ndC
1	Midland Purple ware (MP)	Jar	Rim	1	131	15th-mid16thC
2	Coarse white sandy ware (WW4)	Flagon	Body	1	6	late1st-2ndC

2	Shell-tempered ware (CG1A)	Jar	Body	1	13	mid/late1st- mid2ndC
2	Black Burnished ware (BB1)	Jar	Base	2	20	c.AD120+
2	Fine grey sandy ware (GW3)	Jar	Rim	1	34	late1st-2ndC
7	Coarse white sandy ware (WW4)	Flagon	Body	1	18	late1st-2ndC
7	Grey sandy ware (GW5)	Jar	Body	1	26	2ndC+
7	Central Gaulish samian (CGSam)	Beaker/Jar	Body	2	24	mid-late2ndC
7	South Gaulish samian (SGSam)	Bowl	Flange	1	3	late1stC
8	Midland Black ware (MB)	Jar	Rim	1	27	16thC/17thC

### 7.3 Finds Discussion

Pottery was recovered from four contexts, (1), (2), (7) and (8). Of these four contexts, only sand layer (2) was identifiable as a stratified layer of Roman archaeology. The other contexts comprised layers of modern mixed soils.

One sherd from a Roman white ware flagon was found alongside a Late Medieval Midland Purple ware jar in the mixed soils layer (1). The flagon dates to the late 1st or 2nd century, whilst the Midland Purple ware dates from the 15th century to the mid-16th century. Ms Sawday notes the medieval vessel is unusually coarse and heavy, and could possibly be an industrial base rather than a lid-seated jar (D. Sawday, *pers. comm.*). The fragment of post- medieval or modern clay pipe stem (3g), was also recovered from mixed soils layer (1).

Sand layer (2) revealed five sherds (73g) of Roman pottery comprising grey, white, shell-tempered and Black Burnished wares. The shell-tempered ware jar is decorated with fine combing and could date any time from the mid-1st century to the mid-2nd century. An s-shaped necked fine grey ware jar dates to the late 1st or 2nd century, as does the white ware flagon. The two sherds from a Black Burnished ware jar place the group firmly in the 2nd century, from c.AD120 onwards (Holbrook and Bidwell 1991). Unfortunately there is no decoration to assist with dating the vessel more closely, however given the nature of the other material in the group, a date within the 2nd century is most likely, possibly as early as the middle of the 2nd century.

Three stone tesserae (51g) were also recovered from this layer, two are grey coloured, the other is white/cream. The measurements are given below.

Table 2: Roman tesserae.

Cont	Colour	Measurements	Date
2	Grey	17mm x 25mm x 17mm (depth)	Roman
2	Grey	20mm x 25mm x 17mm (depth)	Roman
2	White	16mm x 21mm x 13mm (depth)	Roman

Five sherds (71g) of Roman pottery were recovered from mixed soils layer (7), comprising white, grey and samian wares. The grey ware jar is decorated with burnished horizontal lines and dates from the 2nd century onwards, whilst the white ware flagon dates to the late 1st-2nd century. Two samian fine ware vessels are present; a Curle 11 bowl from South Gaul dating to the late 1st century, and a beaker or jar from the Lezoux industry in Central Gaul dating to the second half of the 2nd century (Webster 1996, 50; 59-62).

One fragment (76g) of painted wall plaster was also recovered from (7). The fragment has a red painted outer surface over white lime mortar, and is typical of the kind commonly found in Roman Leicester (H. Addison, *pers. comm.*).

Lastly, one sherd (27g) from an early post-medieval medieval Black ware jar was recovered from mixed soils layer (8). The vessel can be dated to the 16th or 17th century (D. Sawday *pers. comm.*).

Although the assemblage is small and in spite of some disturbance (as evidenced by the mixed soils layers and presence of post-Roman material), overall, the pottery is indicating Roman activity within the 2nd century. The latest datable Roman pottery is the Central Gaulish samian ware beaker or jar, dating to the mid-late 2nd century; with the presence of a Black Burnished ware jar also suggesting a date from the second quarter of the 2nd century onwards. The absence of Nene Valley wares, mortaria or substantial quantities of Black Burnished wares also supports a date within the 2nd century, as these types of pottery are typify activity in Roman Leicester from the 3rd century onwards.

## 8. Discussion

The open area strip was located at the southern edge of the Jewry Wall baths ruins, immediately adjacent to the public footpath to the south. Archaeological evidence was located in the central area, with evidence for recent landscaping soils to the west and east.

The Jewry Wall site lies within Insula XXI of the Roman street system within Roman Leicester (Figure 15). Early interpretations of the Jewry Wall were as a Roman temple (Throsby 1791), or part of the Roman town defences on the west-side as a gateway (Page 1907, 24). Haverfield in 1918 proposed that the Roman public building at Jewry Wall, was that of a public baths (Haverfield 1918, 18). The interpretation during the 1930s excavation was as a forum, with the upstanding Jewry Wall as the west wall of the Roman Basilica, this was subsequently replaced by a later bath-house (Kenyon 1948, 1-2). Subsequent excavations have located the Roman forum-basilica further to the east (under the new 'Jubilee Square', Hebditch and Mellor 1973). The accepted interpretation has reverted to Haverfield's view that the Jewry Wall complex is a mid-2nd-century AD public bath-house, with a palaestra under the church of St. Nicholas (Wacher 1974, 342-343).

The area of the excavation lay on the south-east side of the bath complex, just within the area of the 1930s excavation (see archive photos, Section 3). This is an area just to the south of a row of porticos enclosing the bath complex (Kenyon 1948, 30; see also Wacher 1974, 356 fig.80 and **Error! Reference source not found.** below). The Kenyon report describes a portico as ending against a channel (drain?). After this the south-east area was on a high level (Kenyon 1948, 30). After the channel 'An additional wall was built in this south-east angle, probably cutting off the area to the east...' (Kenyon 1948, 30). A wall projected to the south of this and ran beyond the edge of the excavation, under the street. This is the wall (4) rediscovered during these new investigations. On the west side of this was a brick tessellated floor (Kenyon 1948, 30). The red tile tessellated floor (3) re-discovered in this excavation is the same as found by Kenyon. We can now know that it was a plainly decorated red tile floor, constructed with very large tesserae, and well-worn. The small fragment of *opus signinum* floor found in Trench 3 in the 2016 evaluation (Speed 2016, 47) lay on the east side of wall (4), most likely in a different room. An earlier mosaic floor was likely removed prior to the construction of red tile floor (3), as evidenced in the smaller grey and white tesserae recovered in a make-up layer below the tile floor (2).

Wall (4) and the associated floors are clearly an additional structure added to the south of the baths complex. As suggested previously (Speed 2016, 47), there is a possibility it could be part of the same structure as the Peacock Pavement building, discovered in 1898 and excavated in 1965. This building is believed to be a town house for an important official, or else a *mansio* (Clay and Mellor 1994, 2-11). The Peacock Pavement lay 15m to the SE, if the town house was around 60m by 30m it would be of a similar scale to the Vine Street town house (40m by 40m, Higgins et al. 2009). It therefore could have easily occupied this area, the town house adjoining the baths to the north, and fitting in to the north of the *mithraeum*. There are further references to 'Roman pavement' between the red tessellated pavement



uncovered in these works and the Peacock pavement, recorded on Kenyon's plans, indicating there was no side street separating these buildings.

The Peacock Pavement is an outstanding high quality mosaic consisting of nine octagonal panels around 5.59m square (Smith 1994, 48). Mosaics of a more humble style were located in adjacent rooms, more in keeping with the tessellated pavement rediscovered during these investigations. A contrast of high quality mosaic floors in one room, and adjacent rooms with plain flooring can be paralleled at the Roman town house discovered during recent excavations at the former Stibbe factory site nearby (Speed 2017).

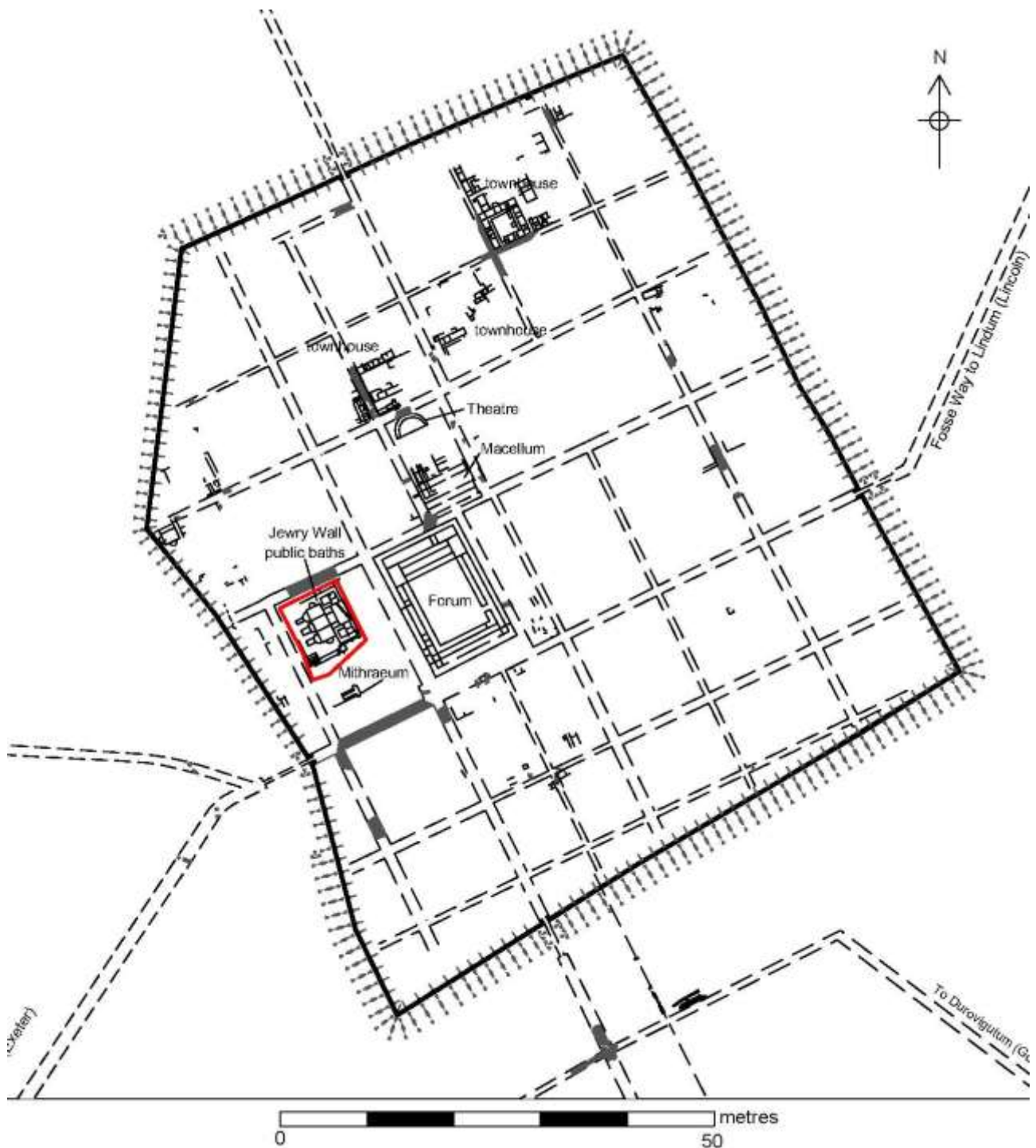


Figure 15: Jewry Wall baths within Roman Leicester



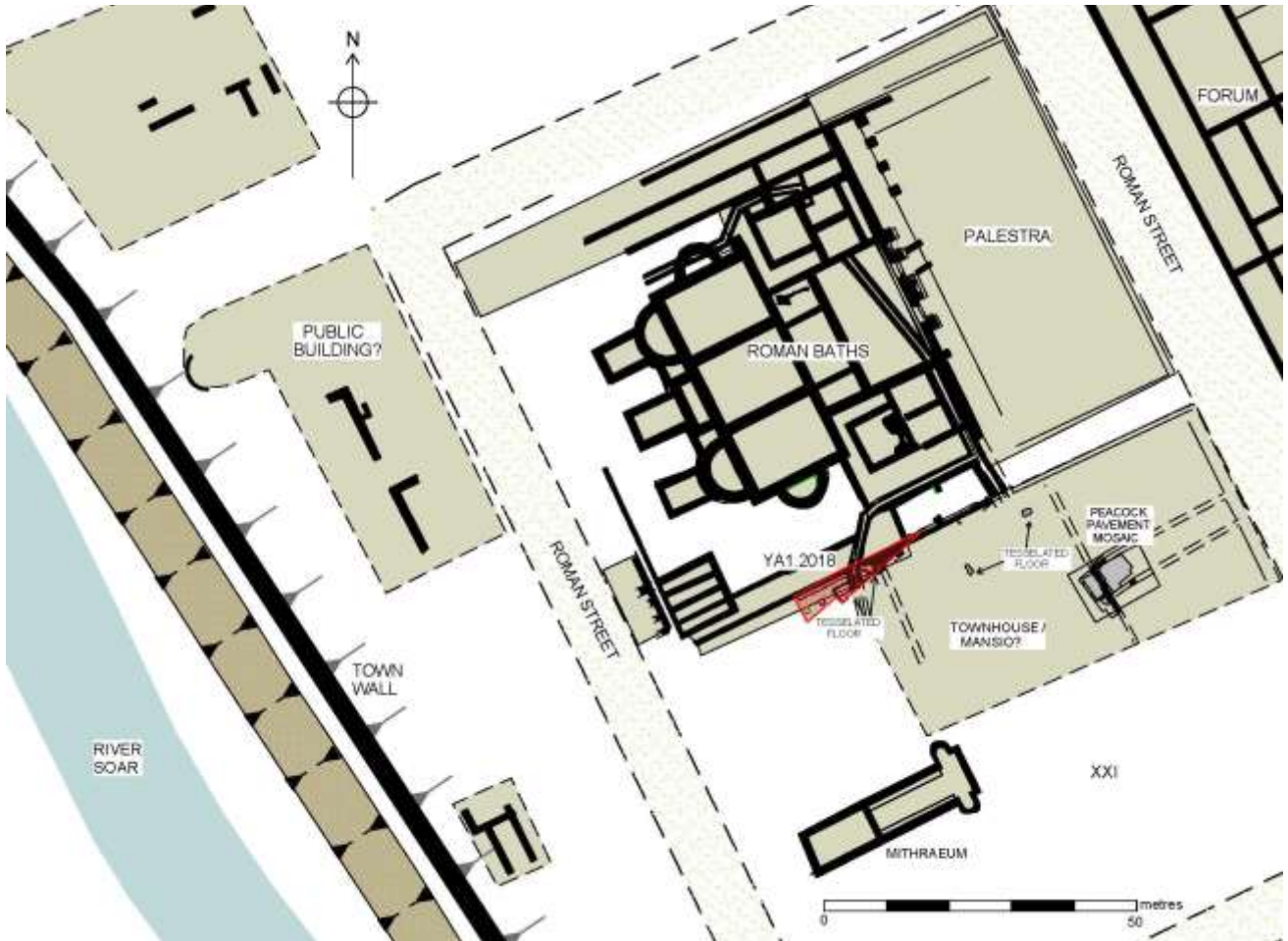


Figure 16: Roman evidence from the excavation, in relation to surrounding Roman structures and streets

## 9. Conclusion

The archaeological investigation has successfully addressed the aims and objectives and the highest confidence can be placed in the data recovered and this report.

The open area strip excavation was located at the southern edge of the Jewry Wall baths ruins, immediately adjacent to the public footpath to the south, in advance of a proposed pedestrian access ramp for Jewry Wall Museum.

Archaeological evidence was located in the middle area, and consisted of two Roman walls, a patch of tessellated pavement, and associated floor make-up levels. These could relate to the baths complex, or else be evidence for a separate building adjacent to the baths. The archaeological remains have potential to add further to our understanding of the Roman baths complex and surrounding Roman structures within Roman Leicester.

At the west-end and east-end of the investigation area no archaeological deposits were present, the area having been landscaped in the mid-20th century. Natural substratum was reached at 58.95 – 58.47m OD at the west-end. These areas can be viewed as clear of archaeological deposits allowing design for a pedestrian access ramp. The new Roman walls (and tessellated pavement) revealed would be directly under the proposed walkway.

## 10. Archive

The site archive will be held by *Leicester Museums Service, under accession no. YA.1.2018.*

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>Oasis No</b>	universi1- 308009		
	<b>Project Name</b>	Jewry Wall Museum, St. Nicholas Circle, Leicester.		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	11-01-2018 - 18-01-2018		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	Yes		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Excavation		
	<b>Site Status</b>	Scheduled Ancient Monument		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Museum		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	Roman/wall/floor,		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	Pottery / Roman, medieval, post-medieval		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Access ramp		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Planning condition		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>			
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	St. Nicholas Circle, Leicester, LE1 4LB		
	<b>Study Area</b>	0.63ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 458226 304453		
	<b>Height OD</b>	58-60m OD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Leicester City Council		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Dr Richard Buckley		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Dr Gavin Speed		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Developer / Leicester City Council		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	LCC MusService	LCC MusService	LCCMusService
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>	YA.1.2018	YA.1.2018	YA.1.2018
	<b>Contents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photos</li> <li>Survey data</li> <li>Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>trench recording sheets</li> <li>context summary records</li> <li>context sheets</li> <li>photographic recording sheet</li> <li>Sample records sheet</li> <li>Drawing Index sheet</li> <li>CD containing digital photographs and report</li> <li>Survey data</li> <li>Unbound copy of this report</li> <li>Thumbnail print of digital photographs</li> </ul>
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
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	<b>Date</b>	2018		
	<b>Publisher/Place</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	<b>Description</b>	Developer Report A4 pdf		

## 11. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. The report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York (under OASIS ID: universi1-308009, see archive above).

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