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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation on  
Land to the south of Brooksby  
Grange Farm, Brooksby Quarry  
Phase 13b, Leicestershire  
NGR: SK 66650 14950**

Wayne Jarvis



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**An Archaeological Evaluation on Land to the south of Brooksby**

**Grange Farm, Brooksby Quarry Phase 13b, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 66650 14950**

**Wayne Jarvis**

**For: Archaeologica for Tarmac**

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**An Archaeological Evaluation on Land to the south  
of Brooksby Grange Farm, Brooksby Quarry Phase 13b, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 66650 14950**

Wayne Jarvis

**Summary**

*An archaeological evaluation was carried out in February 2018 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of Archaeologica for Tarmac on land to the south of Brooksby Grange Farm, Brooksby Quarry Phase 13b, Leicestershire. The fieldwork was undertaken as part of a pre-planning enquiry for a proposed extension to the quarry. The scheme of archaeological evaluation took the form of 6 trial trenches excavated down to archaeological deposits or natural ground.*

*The evaluation revealed archaeological activity in one trench, at the west of the area and close to the perimeter of the site. Here a north-south gully was identified the excavation of which produced three sherds of pottery, animal bone and slag. The pottery suggests a Saxon date for the feature. The other trenches produced no further features or finds.*

*The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A57 2006.*

**Introduction**

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation on land south of Brooksby Grange Farm, Brooksby Quarry Phase 13b, Leicestershire, NGR: SK 66650 14950 on behalf of Archaeologica for Tarmac. The area is a small proposed extension to the Permitted Quarry at Brooksby Quarry, Phase 13 being adjacent, just to the east. As part of a pre-planning enquiry the Leicestershire County Council Principal Planning Archaeologist as advisor to the planning authority has requested a programme of archaeological work. This comprised a scheme of archaeological evaluation in order to determine the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area. If such archaeological remains were present the field evaluation would define their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enable an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

## Site Description, Topography and Geology

The proposed area comprises a small field south of Brooksby Grange Farm, south of the A607 near Melton Mowbray, and to the west of Phase 13 within the current quarry area (SK 66650 14950, Figure 2). The site is fenced on the east, and also bounded by native hedging and trees along its other boundaries. The field encompassing the current proposal, 'Grange Paddock', is c.9500 sq. m in area.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 171 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Oadby Till. The proposed area is on a south sloping valley side with the ground height dropping from 67 to 64m aOD. The ground slopes down to the Rearsby Brook which lies to the south. The field is currently pasture and used predominantly for sheep grazing. No noticeable surface irregularities were observed in the field, and there is no evidence that it was ever under ridge and furrow.

## Archaeological and Historical Background

To the north of Phase 13b fieldwalking undertaken identified a few of sherds of Saxon date and Romano-British pottery (Lisboa 2017). In the course of fieldwalking an artefact scatter consisting of struck flint was located to the east of Phase 13b. Further flint and some Romano-British pottery were found in test pits opened in this area. In Phases 11 and 12 also to the east of Phase 13, the watching brief identified several cremation burials at the north end and Saxon activity in the form of pit features at the south end. Geophysical results suggested cultivation marks in the southern end of Phase 12 and were identified in the course of the soil stripping in this phase. Further to the north-east in the quarry area a watching brief carried out during the works has identified the southern edge of a large settlement complex of Iron Age and Romano-British date, towards the ridge where the A607 now runs. Further downslope towards the Rearsby Brook further enclosures have been identified, and streamside activity of Neolithic to Saxon date has also been recorded. The latter has included Prehistoric burnt mound activity, and industry in the form of two pits with ladders of late Roman or Saxon date. The HER data shows a number of clusters of worked flint in the valley on the southern side of the Rearsby Brook (LHER MLE3895, 3813) suggesting that the valley was also the preferred locale for Mesolithic to Bronze Age activity, as well as the floodplain burnt mound activity.

Brooksby appears in two entries in Domesday (*ibid.*). There were 14 acres of meadows and 6 furlongs mixed measures four carucates of ploughland and two mills listed in those two entries. It depicts a landscape with a mix of arable and meadows. Its taxable value was relatively high, suggesting this was a prosperous area at the close of the Saxon period. The place name (*Brochesbi, Brokesbya*) was suggested by Ekwall to derive from the Old English to have meant the settlement by the Brook. Although an alternative derivation is suggested a Scandinavian origin for the place-name meaning the settlement of Brok (personal name) from the Old Norse. The Tithe map of 1848 depicts the Site as part of a much larger field which might have been used for arable agriculture.

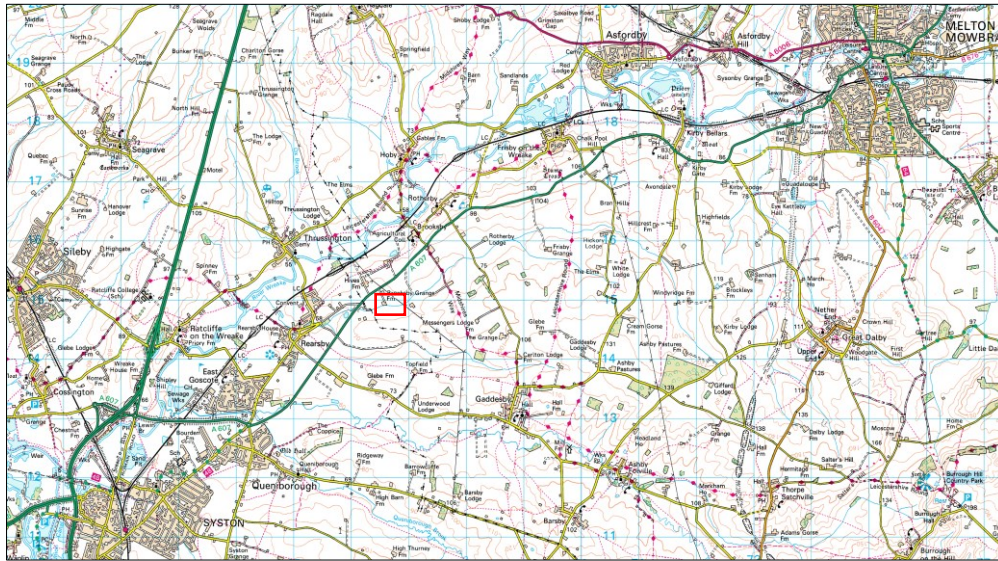


Figure 1: Site location

Reproduced from Explorer® Nottingham & Loughborough Area 129 1:50,000 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.

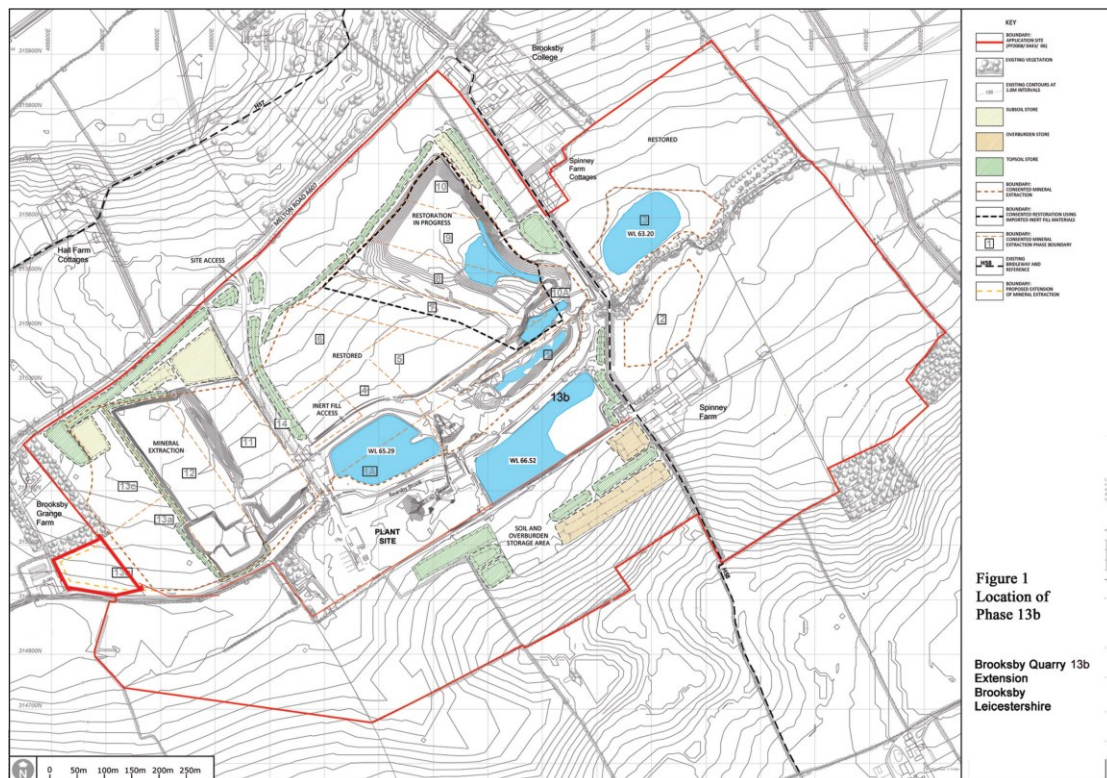


Figure 2: Area of evaluation (left, highlighted) in relation to current quarry works (Lisboa 2018)

## Aims and Objectives

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.

- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To 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 aims, the principal objective of the recording is to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, and significance of the heritage assets within their local and regional context.

### ***Draft Research Themes***

While the nature, extent and quality of archaeological remains within the areas of investigation for the project remain unknown until archaeological work is undertaken, it is possible to determine some initial objectives 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).

The *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) identified the archaeological evaluation as having the potential to contribute to the following research objectives:-

#### ***Iron Age***

*4E Assess the evidence for the evolution of settlement hierarchies*

*4F Investigate intra-regional variations in development of fields and linear boundaries*

#### ***Roman***

*5H Investigate the landscape context of rural settlements*

#### ***Saxon***

*6A Elucidate the chronology and demography of Roman to Anglo- Saxon transition period*

*6C Review the evidence for developing settlement hierarchies*

#### ***Medieval***

*7I Investigate the development of the open field system and woodland management*

### **Methodology**

The WSI (Lisboa 2017) approved by the County Planning Archaeologist on behalf of the planning authority, who also monitored the fieldwork, required an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching in order to determine the presence/absence, character and extent of archaeological remains.

Excavation was undertaken using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m toothless ditching bucket, with topsoil and overburden removed carefully in level spits, under



continuous archaeological supervision. These deposits were removed until archaeological levels were reached or natural undisturbed ground. Trenches were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid using a Topcon differential GPS. Trenches were backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation.

All archaeological work was undertaken following the approved design specification (Clay 2017), and in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014), and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation and Archaeological excavations* (2014).

## Results

Six trenches were excavated spread across the proposed site area, all being 30m long and 1.8m wide. The trenches were sited as per the WSI (see Figure 3-Figure 5). Five of the six of the trenches were negative, exposing no features nor producing any finds.

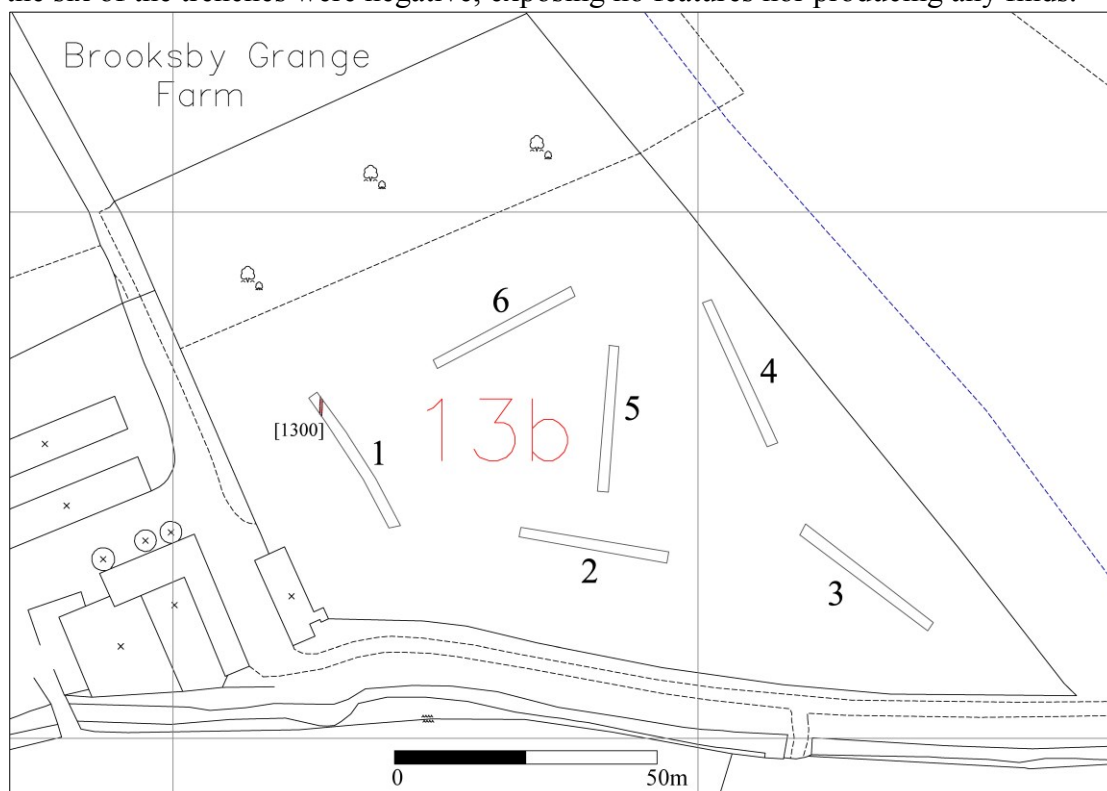


Figure 3: Trench locations.

### ***Trench 1***

A single archaeological feature was exposed in this trench 1 feature [1300] (1301) at a depth of 0.54m from current ground level. This was a gully running north to south, which was more than 2m long, had a width of 0.4m, and a depth of 0.24m. The fill context (1301) was a sterile mid grey brown sandy silt, excavation of which produced three pottery sherds, and small single pieces of hearth slag and animal bone. The pottery consisted of two sherds of abraded Roman material, and one small sherd of Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon date. The Roman material is probably residual in a feature of Saxon date.



Figure 4: General view of site, north end.



Figure 5: General view of site, south end.

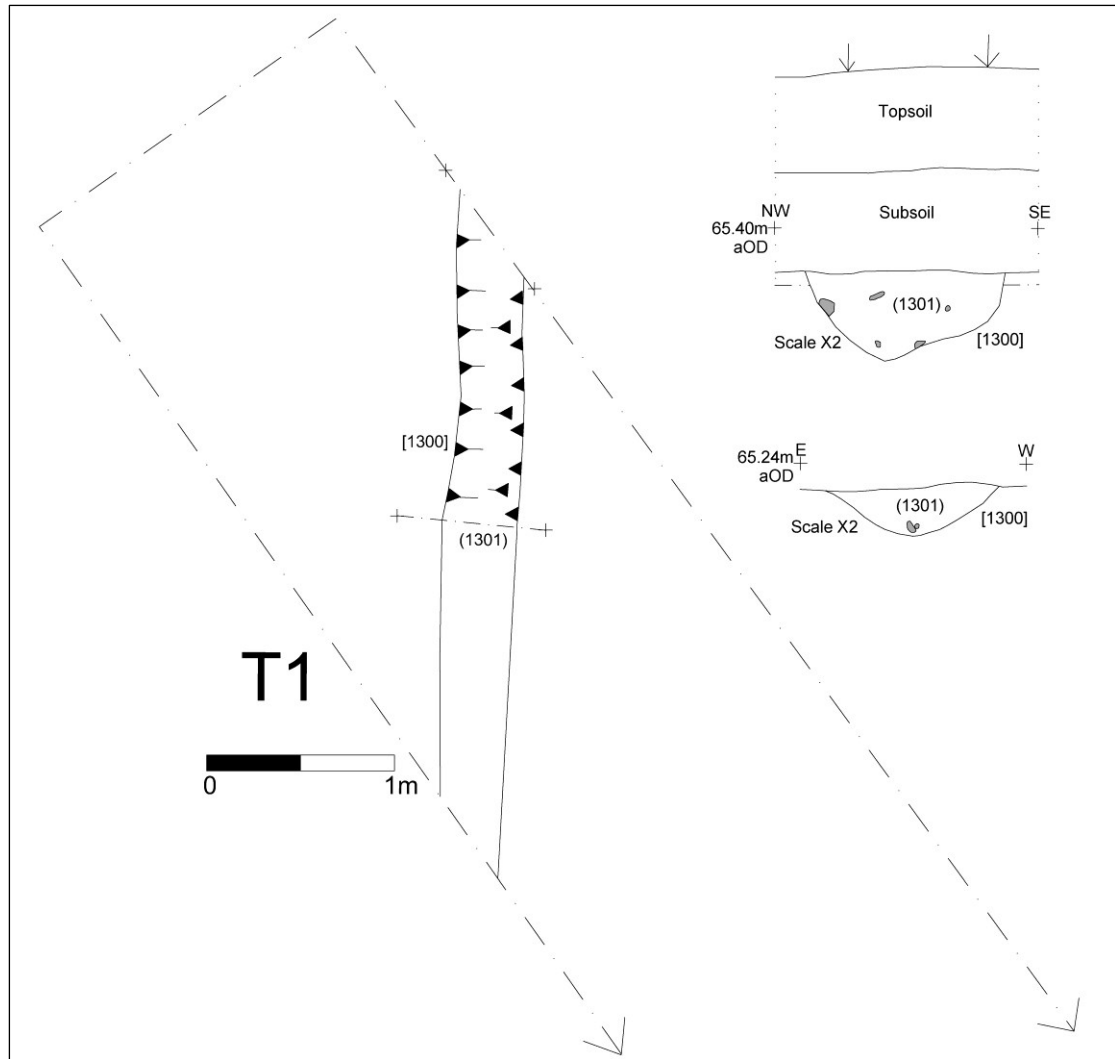


Figure 6: Trench 1 Results.



Figure 7: Trench 1, gully [1300], looking South.



Figure 8: Trench 1, gully [1300] section, looking North-East.

## **The Finds**

### **Roman and Early Saxon Pottery**

*Nicholas J. Cooper*

#### **Introduction**

Two sherds of Roman pottery (7g) and one of Early-Middle Anglo-Saxon date (1g) were recovered from gully [1300] (1301). The Roman pottery was abraded, suggesting that it was possibly residual in a later context. The material was classified using the Leicestershire Roman pottery form and fabric series (Pollard 1994, 110-114) and the Earl-Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery fabric series (Blinkhorn 1999, 165) and quantified by sherd count and weight.

#### **Analysis**

The Roman pottery comprises the bead rim of a necked jar manufactured in a fine sandy oxidised ware (Fabric OW2) and a body sherd in the early Roman shell-tempered fabric (Fabric CG1A). Both date to Mid-1st to 2nd century. A single sherd of Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon pot in a quartz sand-tempered fabric (Fabric 1) may date the context.

#### **Other Finds**

An amorphous fragment of hearth slag (5g) and a fragment of animal bone (1g) came from the same context suggesting industrial and domestic activity in the vicinity.

#### **Conclusions**

The evaluation revealed archaeological activity in one area, at the west of the proposed quarry extension. Here, in Trench 1 a north-south linear gully was identified. Excavation of the gully produced pottery of Roman and Saxon date, slag and animal bone. The presence of this material indicates occupation of Roman and Saxon date in the vicinity of this part of the site.

The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A57 2006.

#### **Archive and Publications**

The site archive (X.A57 2006), consisting of finds, paper and photographic records, will be housed with Leicestershire County Council.

The documentary archive consists of:

- Context, drawing, trench and photographic record indices
- 2 context record sheets
- 22 digital photographs – contact prints and on compact disc.
- 1 x A3 drawing sheet

A version of the excavation summary (see above) will appear in due course in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.

## Acknowledgements

Wayne Jarvis of ULAS undertook the archaeological evaluation with assistance from Sofia Picken also of ULAS, on behalf of Archaeologica for Tarmac. The project was managed by Matthew Beamish. I am also grateful to the Senior Planning Archaeologist Richard Clark for on-site discussions.

## Bibliography

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19.04.2018

### OASIS Data Entry

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>OASIS ID</b>	universi1-315155		
	<b>Project Name</b>	An Archaeological evaluation on Land to the south of Brooksby Grange Farm, Brooksby Quarry Phase 13b, Leicestershire		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	19-02-2018 to 20-02-2018		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	Yes		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Evaluation		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Pasture		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	Saxon gully		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	Roman and cf. Saxon pottery, slag, animal bone		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Quarry extension		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	S73 Amendment		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>			
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	Land to the south of Brooksby Grange Farm, Brooksby Quarry Phase 13b, Leicestershire, LE7 4YT		
	<b>Study Area</b>	0.9ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 66650 14950		
	<b>Height OD</b>	64.47 to 67.26 m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	Archaeologica for Tarmac		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Matthew Beamish		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Wayne Jarvis		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Archaeologica for Tarmac		
<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.A57 2006	X.A57 2006	X.A57 2006
	<b>Contents</b>	Pottery, slag, animal bone	Photos	Site records Field notes Plans
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	<b>Title</b>	An Archaeological evaluation on Land to the south of Brooksby Grange Farm, Brooksby Quarry Phase 13b, Leicestershire		
	<b>Author</b>	Jarvis, W.		
	<b>Other bibliographic details</b>	ULAS Report No 2018-073		
	<b>Date</b>	2018		
	<b>Publisher/Place</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	<b>Description</b>	Developer Report A4 pdf		

### **Publication**

A report on the site results will be published in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.



## Appendix 1. Trench Details

Tr No	Co ords centre (SK)	Features, notes	Topsoil*	Subsoil*	Depth to top of natural*	Trench depth*
1	466633 314958	Gully [1300] (1301), N end of trench. Modern PH midway along trench, some modern material in overburden S end trench. Mixed natural.	.18-.30m	.15-.22m	.31-.52m	.36-.60m
2	466679 314936	Negative. Soft sand natural.	.22-.30m	.18-.30m	.41-.60m	.45-.65m
3	466732 314933	Negative. Sand & gravel natural.	.23-.28m	.20-.32m	.43-.56m	.48-.68m
4	466709 314977	Negative. Clay natural	.19-.25m	.15-.22m	.33-.46m	.38-.56m
5	466660 314981	Negative. Clay natural	.19-.28m	.12-.20m	.33-.43m	.36-.50m
6	466686 314962	Negative. Clay natural mostly, S end sand natural.	.20-.26m	.14-.23m	.37-.46m	.44-.54m

(\*min-max)

## Appendix 2. Context Index

Context	Cut	Area	Description
1300	1300	T1	Cut gully, N-S, N. end of trench
1301	1300	T1	Fill gully, N-S, N. end of trench



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INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

