

**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
Leicester Road,  
Hinckley,  
Leicestershire  
NGR: SP 45125 96138**

Donald Clark



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**An Archaeological Evaluation at  
Leicester Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SP 45125 96138**

**Planning Authority: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council**

**Planning Reference: 17/10068/PREHMO**

**Client: Cemetery Development Services Ltd**

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# **An Archaeological Evaluation at Leicester Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire.**

**Donald Clark**

## ***Summary***

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an Archaeological Evaluation by trial trenching on land at Leicester Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 45125 96138) prior to a proposed crematorium development. The archaeological fieldwork was intended to provide preliminary indications of the character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the planning authority. This document presents details of the work carried out by ULAS on behalf of the client following consultation with Leicestershire County Council on behalf of the planning authority. The evaluation trenches produced no archaeological deposits and were photographed, measured and then backfilled. The project archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the Accession No. X.A76.2018.*

## **Introduction**

An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was undertaken between the 24th July and 2nd August 2018 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of Cemetery Development Services Ltd. A planning application had been submitted for the creation of a crematorium with a chapel, associated maintenance building, yard and car parking. A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; Brown 2018) had been produced by ULAS for the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council as planning advisor to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, the planning authority in this case. It provided details of the aims, objectives and methodologies to be adopted during the course of the work. The fieldwork was intended to provide a record of any archaeological remains which might be present in mitigation of the impact of the proposed development in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Section 12: Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment).

All archaeological work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct (2014) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (2014). The *LCC Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological work Leicestershire and Rutland* (1997) were also adhered to.

## **Site location, Topography and Geology**

The application site lies approximately 500m south of Barwell, and 2 miles east of Hinckley town centre on land immediately to the south of the A47 (Fig. 1). The location of the A47 has been long established as a route way to Leicester since at least the 19th century and the land immediately to the south (encompassing the site) appears not to have been greatly impacted by the expansion into an A-road in the 20th century. A watercourse which originally fed the medieval fish ponds to the south forms the north eastern boundary of the proposed development area.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain, indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of drift geology Mercia Mudstone –a sedimentary rock formed approximately 201 to 252 million years ago in the Triassic Period.



Figure 1: Location of site within Leicestershire

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## Historical and Archaeological Background

### *Historical evidence*

The nearest settlement mentioned in the Domesday Book is that of Barwell immediately to the north of the site and consisting 22 households with meadow and woodland with a value to the lord of £1.5.

Cartographic evidence suggests that the site has consisted of fields from the 19th century until the erection of a sewage works (Fig. 2) in the 1950s on the eastern area of the site (now woodland). Whilst the sewage works is likely to have affected below ground deposits in this area of the site, there is still potential for archaeology to survive elsewhere.



Figure 2: Site outlined in red. Sewage works and medieval fish ponds detailed  
Detail from OS map 1952, sheet 49

### *Archaeological evidence*

A 1km search of Heritage Assets in the vicinity of the site has revealed that the site lies immediately to the north of a large medieval fish pond (MLE337915 & MLE337923) recorded as The Reed Pool on the Elmesthorpe Tithe map. The watercourse along the north eastern boundary originally fed these fishponds and there is some potential for the presence of other water management systems to be present below ground level on the site.

A desk-based assessment for land at Billington Rough, approximately 1 mile to the east of the site, also identified the possible remains of medieval fishponds and a supposed deserted village (Browning, 2003).

North-east of the site a Roman stone coffin lid was found (MLE337933) and to the north at High Close, Barwell there were the remains of Roman buildings and a possible villa (MLE338022). The same site also had evidence of a Neolithic settlement as well as a medieval kiln.

Several other find spots also indicate the presence of Roman activity in the area (MLE338031 and MLE338034).

There is therefore potential for the presence of medieval, Roman and prehistoric archaeological deposits on the site.

### **Methodology**

- Prior to machining general photographs of the site area were taken. A total of twenty four 1.6m wide trenches were excavated and examined, the trenches were generally 30m long but some were shortened due to discovery of unknown services and previous

road surfaces. These trenches were positioned within the proposed development area and the site plan shows their location (Fig. 3).

- Excavation was carried out with a machine appropriate for the work (tracked 360 degree excavator) fitted with a flat-bladed bucket to expose the underlying strata. Topsoil and overburden was removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision.
- The trenches were excavated down to the natural undisturbed ground. All excavation by machine and hand was undertaken with a view to avoid damage to archaeological deposits or features which appear worthy of preservation *in situ* or more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation.
- An overall site plan will be tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Trench locations will be recorded by an appropriate method. These will then be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.
- The trenches were backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation.

## Results

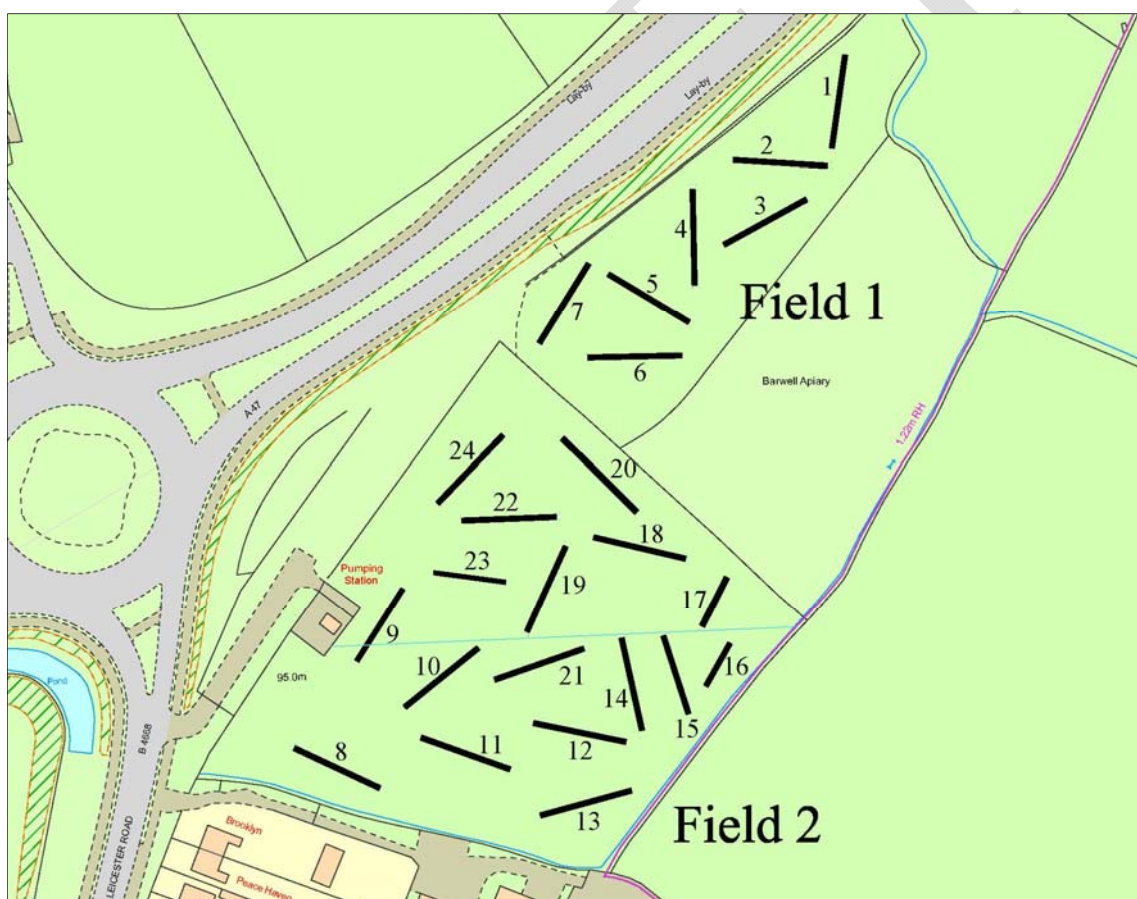


Figure 3: Plan of trenches excavated

Twenty four evaluation trenches were excavated to the natural undisturbed ground and varied in depth from 0.18m to 0.85m. The original trench plan from the WSI had twenty two trenches positioned across the site, however this plan was revised due to unidentified services and hidden road surfaces. Therefore the twenty four trenches excavated varied in length to avoid these modern features. The natural ground was mixed across the site with Field 1 generally a

light grey yellow clay with occasional natural stone and gravel patches. In Field 2 the natural was more commonly a firm gravel with patches of yellow clay and in some of the trenches located towards the centre of the field a dark brown alluvium was noted. It is possible that the topography of the field was originally slightly 'dished' allowing an alluvium layer to form over time during wet periods.

### *Field 1*

Located north-west of the former sewage works (Fig. 3), the field showed signs prior to excavation of modern disturbance, which included drains, gullies and the former route of the A47. In areas of the field the ground was uneven and this is likely to have been caused by works associated with the former sewage treatment plant and by compounds set up during the construction of the new A47.

Seven trenches were excavated in Field 1. Details below:

Trench No.	Length	Min. Depth	Max. Depth	Orientation	Comments
1	31.0m	0.35m	0.54m	N-S	2 land drains visible
2	30.0m	0.36m	0.53m	E-W	Tarmac roadway visible western end of trench
3	29.5m	0.37m	0.45m	NE-SW	Linear feature investigated, not archaeological
4	31.0m	0.29m	0.68m	N-S	Land drain visible
5	29.5m	0.30m	0.65m	NW-SE	Land drain visible
6	29.0m	0.32m	0.60m	E-W	Tarmac roadway visible western end of trench
7	29.0m	0.40m	0.85m	NE-SW	Hardcore surface at north eastern end of trench





Figure 4: Trenches 1-7

### Field 2

Located to the south of Field 1 and the former sewage works, Field 2 also showed signs of modern disturbance prior to the excavation of the trenches. A sewage pumping station is still active on the western boundary of the field and two conduits (Fig. 3) are visible as earthworks running across the site. A further unidentified service was visible as a parch mark running east-west across the site (Fig. 7), and was avoided during the evaluation. It is also possible that the field had been stripped of topsoil in the past, the depths of topsoil were not what one would expect on a rural site and the condition and make up was not consistent with ploughing activity.

Seventeen trenches were excavated in Field 2. Details below:

Trench No.	Length	Min. Depth	Max. Depth	Orientation	Comments
8	29.0m	0.31m	0.52m	NW-SE	Land drain visible
9	26.0m	0.25m	0.67m	NE-SW	Land drains, hardcore road surface and an unidentified service visible
10	28.5m	0.24m	0.49m	NE-SW	Negative trench
11	29.0m	0.39m	0.49m	NW-SE	2 land drains visible
12	29.0m	0.32m	0.61m	NW-SE	2 land drains visible
13	30.0m	0.31m	0.46m	NE-SW	Charcoal patch SW end of the trench investigated but not archaeological
14	31.0m	0.29m	0.69m	NW-SE	3 land drains visible
15	26.0m	0.36m	0.70m	N-S	2 land drains visible
16	18.5m	0.32m	0.60m	NE-SW	Shortened due to unidentified service

17	16.0m	0.53m	0.77m	NE-SW	Additional trench due to unidentified service
18	30.5m	0.38m	0.61m	NW-SE	Land drain visible
19	30.5m	0.32m	0.51m	NE-SW	3 land drains visible
20	33.5m	0.18m	0.50m	NE-SW	Trench lengthened to avoid conduit
21	30.0m	0.44m	0.59m	NE-SW	Land drain visible
22	30.0m	0.32m	0.57m	E-W	2 land drains visible
23	21.5m	0.41m	0.60m	E-W	Land drain visible. Trench shortened due to hardcore road surface
24	30.0m	0.33m	0.52m	NE-SW	Negative trench



Figure 5: Trenches 8-16



Figure 6: Trenches 17-24



Figure 7: View across Field 2 looking east, parch mark on right denotes unidentified service

### Conclusion

No archaeological deposits or finds were present within the twenty four trenches excavated during the evaluation. It may therefore be concluded that it is unlikely that the proposed development will have an impact upon any buried archaeological remains.

## Publication

ULAS supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The online OASIS form at <http://ads.ac.uk/project/oasis> will be completed detailing the results of the project. Once the report has become a public document following its incorporation into the HER it may be placed on the web-site.

## Oasis

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>Oasis No</b>	universi1-326084		
	<b>Project Name</b>	An Archaeological Evaluation at Leicester Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire.		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	24-07-2018 / 02-08-2018		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	Not known		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Evaluation trenching		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Vacant field		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	None		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	None / None		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Crematorium		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Pre-planning		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>	17/10068/PREHMO		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	Leicester Road, Hinckley, Leicestershire LE9 8BB		
	<b>Study Area</b>	2.38 hectares		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SP 45125 96138		
	<b>Height OD</b>	95m OD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Cemetery Development Services Ltd		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	John Thomas		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	D. Clark		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Cemetery Development Services Ltd		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	NA	Leicestershire Museums	Leicestershire Museums
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>		X.A76.2018	X.A76.2018
	<b>Contents</b>		Photos	Records Field Notes
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
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