

**An Archaeological Watching Brief on Land adjacent  
to Curzon Cinema, Woodgate/Mill Lane,  
Loughborough, (SK 537 194)**

**M. Hurford**

**Planning Application No. 04/01871/FUL  
Planning Authority: Charnwood Borough Council**

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Matthew Hurford

**1. Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken on land adjacent to Curzon Cinema, Woodgate/Mill Lane, Loughborough, Leicestershire (SK 537 194) by ULAS on 20th April 2006 in advance of the proposed construction of a 6 storey mixed use retail and residential building. The work was commissioned by North Building Ltd.*

*The watching brief established that the area to the west of the cinema had been considerably truncated by modern footings, services and Victorian cellaring that would have destroyed any earlier archaeological deposits.*

*The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services Section, under the Accession Number X.A108.2006.*

**2. Introduction**

**2.1** In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning, para 30), this document presents the results of an archaeological watching brief on land adjacent to Curzon Cinema, Woodgate/Mill Lane, Loughborough (SK 537 194) required by Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team, in their capacity as archaeological advisors to the planning authority.

**2.2** The area had been subject to a planning application (P.A.04/01871/FUL) for the development of the site to a new six storey mixed use retail and residential building. It follows an initial archaeological desk-based assessment of the proposed development area that was commissioned by Faulks Perry Culley and Rech and Curzon Cinema (Loughborough) Ltd (Marsden 2002) which concluded that the site had potential for archaeological remains.

**2.3** Following the results of the desk-based assessment, a brief for archaeological evaluation was prepared by Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team detailing further archaeological work that would be required as a condition of planning permission. Trial trench evaluation was undertaken by ULAS which revealed two late medieval wells and other features (Tate 2006).

**2.4** A subsequent stage of archaeological watching brief was undertaken following the results of the evaluation and the assessed impact of the proposed development on the archaeological remains. This stage of mitigation was formulated through discussions with Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team, ULAS and the developer and implemented following the evaluation.

### 3. Site Location

3.1 The proposed development site is located on land adjacent to Curzon Cinema, Woodgate/Mill Lane, Loughborough (SK 537 194). It consists of an area *c.*0.1ha within which is proposed a six storey mixed use retail and residential building. The site consists of a vacant 'L'-shaped plot of land, which is covered in tarmac and used as a car park.

### 4 Geology and Topography

4.1 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 141 indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of river terrace gravel or clay over Mercia Mudstone Group substratum. The site lies at a height of *c.*44m O.D. The land is fairly flat.

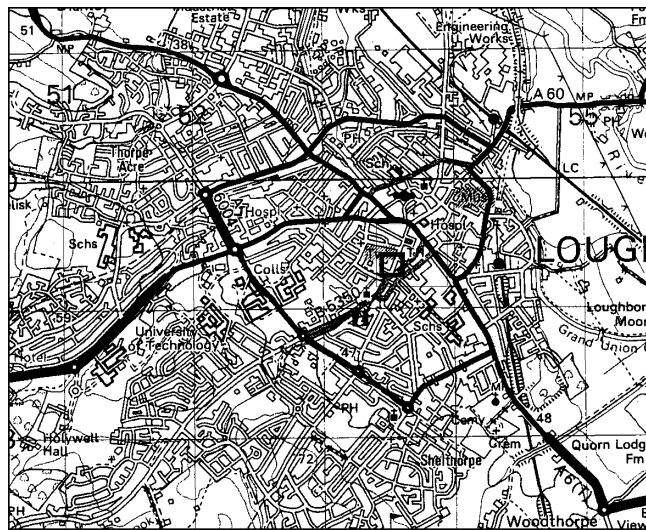


Figure 1. Site location (scale 1:50000)

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Figure 2. Location of the development area (scale 1:2500)

Reproduced from the OS map SK 5319 SE 1:1250 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1991. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002186.

## **5. Archaeological and Historical Background**

**5.1** A desk-based assessment (Marsden 2002) had established that the site was within the medieval historic core of Loughborough close to the centre of the medieval town. The site of a dam belonging to the medieval watermill, Fishpool Mill (**LE610**) that is believed to be located *c.* 50m west northwest of the proposed development area at the west end of the market place. The market place was used as a cattle market by the 1880s. The site of the medieval watermill itself (**LE609**) is located *c.*170m west northwest of the site. In addition, the site of the Medieval market cross and fair are situated *c.*150m northwest of the development area (**LE595** and **LE596**). An evaluation to the south and southwest of the watching brief (Tate 2006) encountered three postholes and a rectangular pit of unknown, but possible prehistoric date and two wells of possible late medieval date.

## **6 Objectives**

**6.1** The main objectives of the watching brief 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 produce an archive and report of any results.

**6.2** Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the watching brief was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

**6.3** All work follows the *Institute of Field Archaeologist's Code of Conduct* and adheres to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological watching briefs*.

## **7 Methodology**

**7.1** An area totaling *c.*88 square metres was machined in level spits under full archaeological supervision using a 360 excavator with a toothed ditching bucket to depths in excess of 3.00m.

**7.2** The area was examined by appropriate hand cleaning. Any archaeological deposits or significant natural deposits were planned and sample-excavated by hand to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans have been tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Spot heights were taken as appropriate.

## **8 Results**

**8.1** The modern overburden and tarmac was removed to a depth of *c.*0.20m whereupon orangey yellow sandy gravel was encountered. This deposit appeared to be re-deposited natural and was cut by the restaurant building footings and services. At a depth of *c.*1.10m below ground level (*c.*42.80OD) cellars which had been backfilled with material containing 20th century artefacts were uncovered. The

plastered walls had been primarily built of stone though there was some brickwork present. The cellar floors were of brick. In places the cellar walls survived to a height of 2.50m. These cellars are almost certainly associated with the houses shown on the 1884 Ordnance Survey map (Marsden 2002).



Figure 3. Trench and feature location plan.

## 9. Conclusion

**9.1** The watching brief established that the area to the west of the cinema had been truncated to a depth in excess of 3.50m below ground level by modern footings, services and Victorian cellaring that would have destroyed any earlier archaeological deposits.

## 10 Acknowledgements

**10.1** I would like to thank the clients, North Midland Building Ltd., for their assistance and co-operation on site. Patrick Clay managed the project, and the fieldwork was carried out by the author with the assistance of Greg Jones. Other visits were undertaken by Sam Boccock.

## 11 Bibliography

Clay, P., 2005 *Design Specification for archaeological evaluation Woodgate/Mill Lane, Loughborough, Leicestershire (SK 537 194)* ULAS Ref. 05/546

Marsden, P., 2002 *An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment for land adjacent to Curzon Cinema, Woodgate/Mill Lane, Loughborough, Leicestershire (SK 537 194)* ULAS Ref. 2002-142

Tate, J., 2006 *Archaeological Evaluation on Land adjacent to Curzon Cinema, Woodgate/Mill Lane, Loughborough, (SK 537 194)* ULAS Ref. 2006-022

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## **Appendix 1 – Design Specification**

### **UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES**

#### **Design Specification for archaeological work**

*Job title: Woodgate/Mill Lane, Loughborough, Leicestershire*

*NGR: SK 537 194*

*Client: North Midlands Building Ltd*

*Planning Authority: Charnwood Borough Council*

*Planning application Nos. 04/01871/FUL*

#### **1 Definition and scope of the specification**

1.1 In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and planning), para.30, this specification provides a written scheme for archaeological attendance, including control and supervision of ground works, as required by the Planning Authority, of any ground works on the site which may disturb areas of archaeological potential in connection with the construction of student accommodation. The development site is located on land at Woodgate/Mill Lane, Market Harborough (SK 537 194; figs.1 and 2). It consists of an area of c.0.1 ha.

1.2 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

#### **2 Background**

##### *2.1 Requirement for archaeological work*

2.1.1 The archaeological watching brief involves observation of site strip and foundation and service trench excavations to identify any deposits of archaeological importance.

##### *2.2 Archaeological potential*

2.2.1 A desk-based assessment has been prepared for the application area (ULAS Report 2002-142). This showed that the site lies within the medieval core of Loughborough. A subsequent evaluation (ULAS Report 2006-022) located medieval and post medieval features including two wells. The construction is to be by piling and the ground beams will be located above most of the archaeological deposits. The planning authority has asked for a watching brief during development to monitor this.

#### **3 Aims**

3.1 Through archaeological observation of existing overburden stripping and groundworks by the client's contractors:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any earlier building phases or archaeological deposits.
2. To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.



3. To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
4. To produce an archive and report of any results.

#### **4 Methods**

4.1 The project will involve the observation of overburden and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works specified above. During these ground works, if any archaeological deposits are seen to be present, the archaeologist will record areas of archaeological interest.

4.2 The archaeologist will co-operate at all times with the contractors on site to ensure the minimum interruption to the work.

4.3 Any archaeological deposits located will be hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Samples of any archaeological deposits located will be hand excavated. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans will be tied into the National Grid using an Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) where appropriate.

4.4 Archaeological deposits will be excavated and recorded as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

4.5 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.5 Any human remains encountered will be initially left *in situ* and only be removed under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The developer, Leicestershire County Council, and the coroner will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.6 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site from the project manager. These will ensure that professional standards are being maintained. Provision will be made for monitoring visits with representatives of the owners, Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and Charnwood Borough Council.

4.7 In the event of significant archaeological remains being located during the watching brief there may be the need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken. On the discovery of potentially significant remains the archaeologist will inform the developer, the Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and the planning authority. If the archaeological remains are identified to be of significance additional contingent archaeological works will be required.

#### **5 Recording Systems**

5.1 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto prepared pro-forma recording sheets.

5.2 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map, (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at 1:200 (or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated.

5.3 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made on drawing film, related to the OS grid and at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Elevations and sections of individual layers of features should be drawn where possible. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans.

5.4 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include black and white prints and colour transparencies illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5.5 This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the watching brief.

5.6 All site records and finds will be kept securely.

## ***6 Report and Archive***

6.1 A report on the watching brief will be provided following the groundworks.

6.2 Copies will be provided for the client, Sites and Monuments Record and planning Authority. The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in the 'Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage' (UKIC 1990), and Standards in the Museum care of archaeological collections (MGC 1992) and 'Guidelines for the preparation of site archives and assessments for all finds (other than fired clay objects) (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993) will be presented to Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services normally within six months of the completion of analysis. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

## ***7 Publication***

7.1 A summary report will be submitted to a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. A full report will be submitted if the results are of significance.

## ***8 Timetable and Staffing***

8.1 The watching brief is scheduled to start on 8.8.2006. An experienced archaeologist will be present during this work. It is proposed to observe the works, as specified above, with appropriately timed visits during the work in consultation with the contractors.

## ***9 Health and Safety***

9.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and uses the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (revised 2005) with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is in the Appendix. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate.

## ***10 Insurance***

10.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

### ***11. Bibliography***

MAP 2, *The management of archaeological projects* 2nd edition English Heritage 1991

MGC 1992, *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission)

RFG/FRG 1993, *Guidelines for the preparation of site archives* (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700)

SMA 1993, *Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

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7.8.2006

## **Appendix**

### **Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement**

*Job title: Woodgate/Mill Lane, Loughborough, Leicestershire*

*NGR: SK 537 194*

*Client: North Midlands Building Ltd*

*Planning Authority: Charnwood Borough Council*

*Planning application Nos. 04/01871/FUL*

#### *1 Nature of the work*

1.1 This statement is for an archaeological watching brief.

1.2 The work will involve observation of groundworks during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be c. 0.2-0.5m. This will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (2001) together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines.

1.3 HSE Construction Information Sheet CS8 Safety in excavations.  
HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)143 (L): Getting to grips with manual handling.  
HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)145 (L): Watch Your back.  
CIRIA R97 Trenching practice.  
CIRIA TN95 Proprietary Trench Support Systems.  
HSE Guidance Note HS(G) 47 Avoiding danger to underground services. HSE Guidance Note GS7 Accidents to children on construction sites

1.4 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation .

1.5 All work will adhere to the contractors' health and safety policy.

#### **2 Risks Assessment**

##### *2.1 Working within a building site*

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn at all times. A member of staff qualified in First Aid will be present at all times. First aid kit, vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

##### *2.2 Working with plant.*

Precautions. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. No examination of the area of stripping will take place until machines have vacated area. Observation of machines will be maintained during hand excavation. Liaison will be maintained with the contractors to ensure programme of machine movement is understood.

##### *2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.*

Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Wile's disease or similar.

#### *2.4 Working with chemicals.*

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

#### *2.5 Other risks*

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.

2.9 No other constraints are recognised over the nature of the soil, water, type of excavation, proximity of structures, sources of vibration and contamination.

Patrick Clay

7.8.2006