



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LEICESTER**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Strip,  
Plan and Sample Excavation  
on Land adjacent to The Laurels,  
Main Street, The Hollow,  
Normanton-Le-Heath,  
Coalville, Leicestershire**

**NGR SK 37732 12773**

Roger Kipling



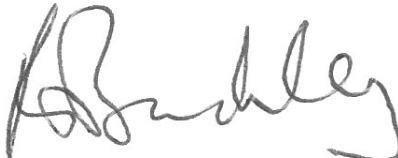
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**Roger Kipling**

**For: Mr. & Mrs. S. J. Bryan**

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# **An Archaeological Strip, Plan and Sample Excavation on Land Adjacent to The Laurels, Main Street, The Hollow, Normanton-Le-Heath, Coalville, Leicestershire**

**Roger Kipling**

## **Summary**

*An archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation was undertaken on land adjacent to The Laurels, Main Street, Normanton-Le-Heath, Leicestershire between the 5th and the 10th of September 2018 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS). Outline planning permission has been granted for a residential development and associated outbuildings and hardstanding on the land. A preliminary archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation undertaken in 2017 had produced evidence for medieval settlement dating to the 12th to 14th centuries within the footprint of the main dwelling. In light of these findings, the Leicestershire County Council, Senior Planning Archaeologist, as advisor to the local planning authority, requested that a programme of additional archaeological investigation take place in order to identify the impact on the archaeological resource of groundworks associated with construction of outbuildings, roadway and parking, and to formulate a mitigation strategy if appropriate.*

*Monitoring of the machine strip of the area of the stable block, barn and stable yard produced no indications of archaeology. However, monitoring of the access road and parking area revealed a pit and several linear features of 12th to 14th date and likely constitute medieval domestic activity at the rear of properties running west from High Street. It is possible that the linear feature [27]/[29] represents a division between two such properties, and that the other, smaller linears represent horticultural closes, livestock pens subdivisions or similar. As such they tally with evidence from the 2017 fieldwork.*

*The report will be archived under accession number X.A138.2017.*

## **Introduction**

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation on land adjacent to 'The Laurels', Main Street, Normanton-Le-Heath, Leicestershire, NGR: SK 37732 12773. Under planning application 18/00085/FULM outline planning permission has been granted for the erection of a dwelling and associated outbuildings, two storey triple garages with gym above and additional hardstanding allowing field access and an extended driveway. The Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council had previously requested that a programme of archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation (Baker 2017) be undertaken prior to any construction work taking place. As a result of the latter, a supplementary programme of archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation was requested, targeting land adjacent to an area which had produced medieval archaeological features.

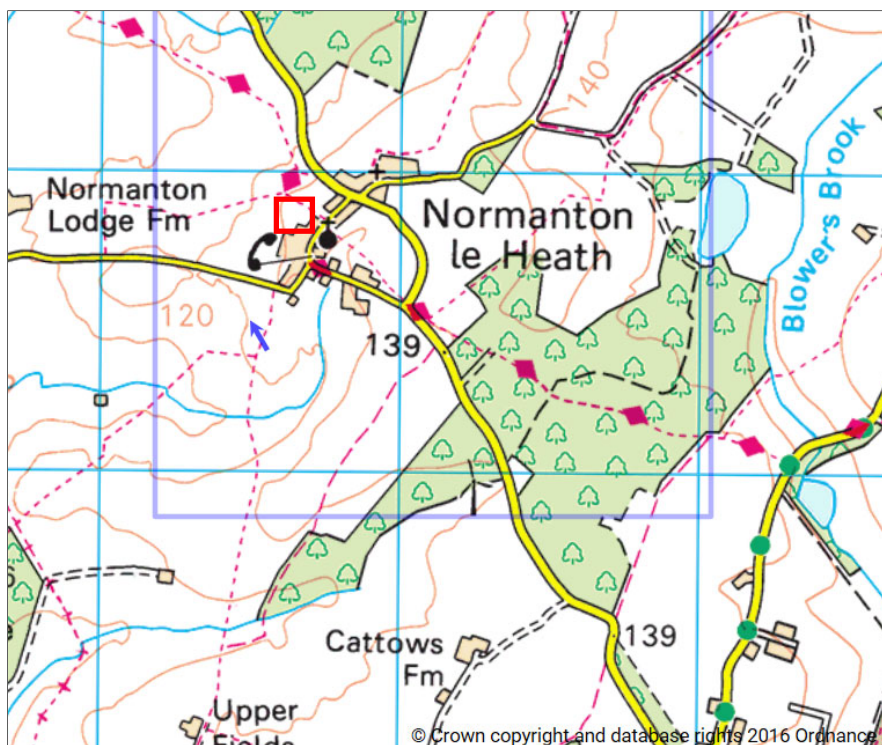


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### Site Description, Topography and Geology

The development site is located on the west side of Main Street in the village of Normanton-Le-Heath, Leicestershire centred at National Grid Reference SK 37732 12773 (Fig. 1). The site comprises *c.* 1.54 hectares of pasture land adjacent to 'The Laurels', is generally level and is situated at *c.* 131m OD.

The solid geology of the site is mapped as Head - Clay, Silt, Sand and Gravel above Tarpoley Siltstone Formation - Siltstone, Mudstone and Sandstone.

([mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html](http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html)).

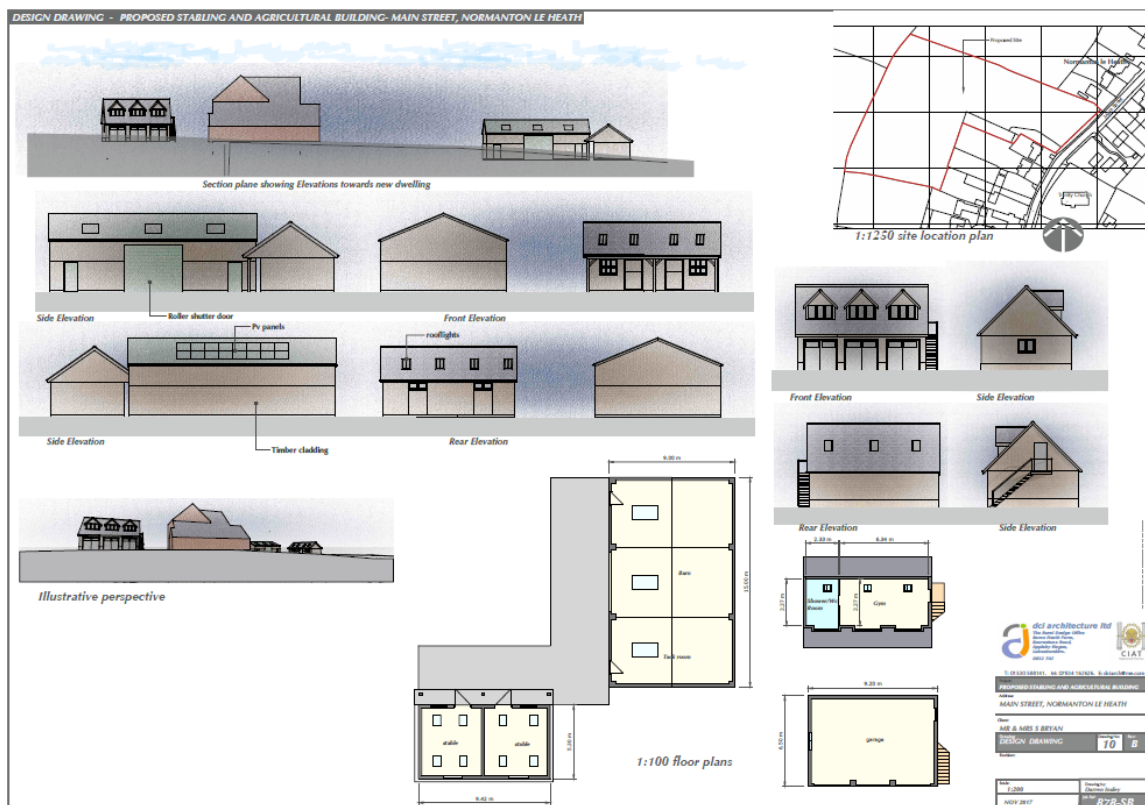


Figure 2: Proposed development area and elevations of buildings (supplied by client)



Figure 3: Areas of machine strip for building footprints (in red) and for drive and area of hardstanding (in yellow). The grey area marks the location of the house, the subject of the 2017 excavation.

## **Archaeological and Historical Background**

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) notes that the projected line of a Roman road, the ‘Via Devana’ (HER ref.: MLE4345), appears to run c.200m to the south of the application area. Whilst it is unlikely that the proposed development will, consequently, disturb evidence of the road, its presence in the vicinity raises the potential that there may be as yet unrecorded Roman remains in the area. The proposed development also lies squarely within the historic settlement core of the medieval and post-medieval village (MLE16886); this is the area within which it is anticipated to find evidence of Anglo-Saxon and later settlement and activity. The potential for such remains is enhanced by the location of the site close to Holy Trinity church, first recorded in the 13th century. The place name – Normanton-le-Heath – is suggested to indicate a farmstead and settlement established by Norwegian Viking settlers, however, it is not mentioned in the Domesday Book.

Looking at the historic mapping and available aerial photographs for the site, it appears there were some earthworks in the area of the proposed development in the 1960s, these appear to have survived, at least in part, until the 1990s but were damaged by ploughing/cultivation in or before 2001.

It was deemed a possibility that some further significant buried remains could be affected by the proposed development. Furthermore, additional excavation would perhaps be able to provide information that would help put the disparate archaeological features found in the 2017 evaluation in context and relate them to the area as a whole. Consequently the Planning Archaeologist recommended an archaeological strip, map and sample evaluation followed by excavation of any archaeological deposits.

## **Aims and Objectives**

The overall objectives and research agenda are detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for *Archaeological work: Strip, Plan and Sample on land adjacent to The laurels, Main Street, The Hollow, Normanton-Le-Heath, Coalville, Leicestershire* (ULAS 2018).

The specific objectives for this programme of work were as follows:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the location, character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits.
- To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to assess the impact of the proposed development on the archaeological resource
- To inform a strategy to mitigate the impacts of the proposed development on surviving archaeological remains
- To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate Museum and to provide information to the Leicestershire HER.

In addition, the programme of archaeological investigation was conducted within the general research parameters and objectives defined by ‘East Midlands Heritage: A research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment’ (compiled on behalf of the region’s historic environment community by D. Knight, B. Vyner and C. Allen) and the earlier Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda for the East Midlands ‘The Archaeology of the

East Midlands' edited by N. Cooper (2006). Specific research aims stemming from this were determined as:

- How are the nucleated settlements related to one another and to other settlements of the period? In particular, is there evidence for a developing settlement hierarchy? [4. 5.2];
- Can we shed further light upon the development of field and boundary systems? [4.6.1];
- How may agricultural changes have impacted upon settlement patterns? Can the relationship between sedentary and mobile economies be clarified, and how did this vary spatially and over time? [4.8.3];
- How did the Conquest impact upon rural settlements and landscapes? [5.4.1];
- How did field and boundary systems relate to earlier systems of land allotment, and how did these boundary networks develop over time? [5.4.4];
- Can we elucidate further the daily life of settlements and their role in the processing and marketing of agricultural products? [5.4.6].

### **Methodology**

All work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2014b) and adhere to their Code of Conduct (2014a).

Excavation undertaken using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and employed under constant archaeological supervision in order to monitor the areas affected by the proposed development.



Figure 4: Machine strip of barn and stables area; view east

### **Results**

The area of the proposed stable block, barn and stable yard were initially monitored (Figure 4) comprising an area *c.*30m x 35m located between the rear of the main residential building and open pasture land. Machining revealed that clearance of the site several years previously had



resulted in removal of all topsoil, leaving a thin overburden of subsoil overlying the natural clays, which was carefully removed by machine in order to determine whether archaeology was present. The area was determined to be archaeologically blank.

Subsequently the area of the access road and associated parking area was monitored (Figure 5), located immediately north of the recently-constructed main dwelling, beneath which archaeology was encountered in 2017.

Excavation revealed a number of archaeological features of medieval date, comprising a single shallow pit and several shallow ditches and gullies (Figure 6)

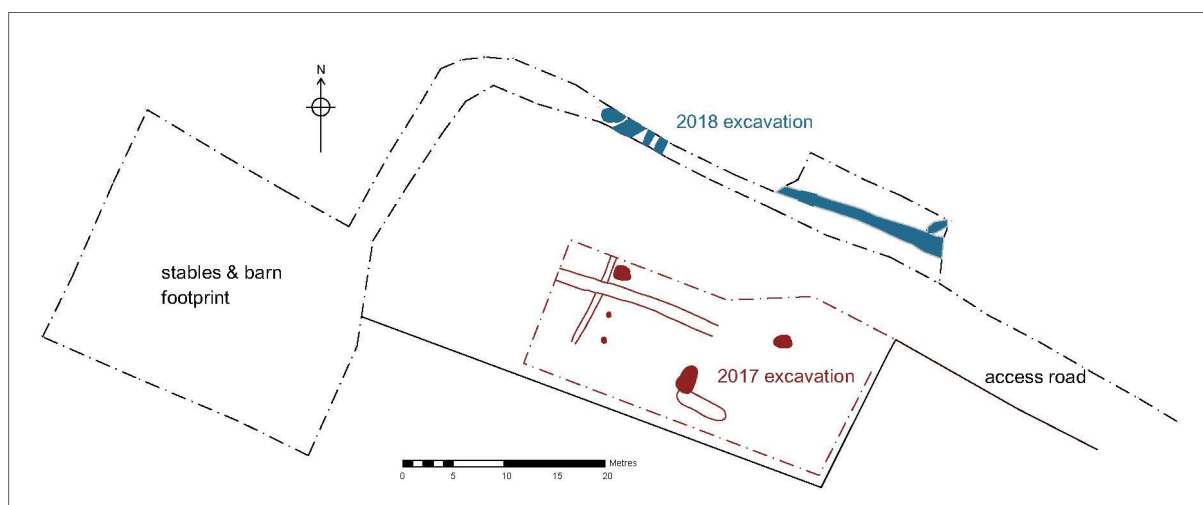


Figure 5: Plan of monitored strip area (stables, barn and access road) showing archaeology in relation to results of 2017 watching brief phase

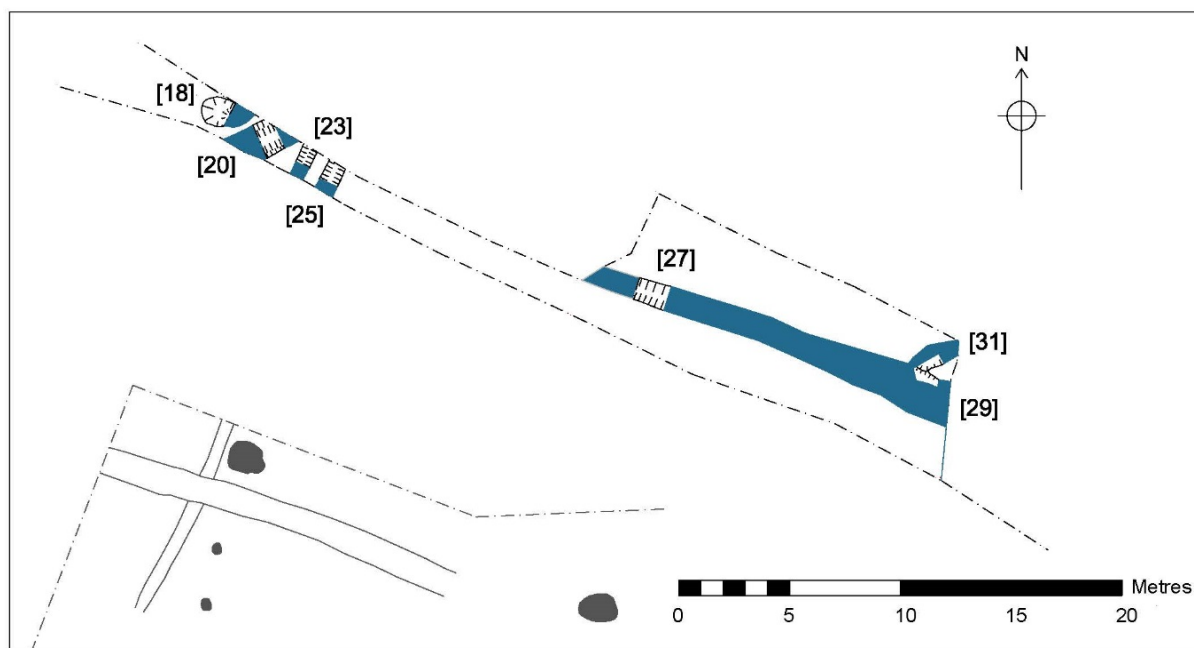


Figure 6: General plan of archaeological features

### ***Features [18], [20], [23] & [25]***

A cluster of several archaeological features were revealed along the course of the east-west roadway providing access to the development site from Main Street (Figure 7, Figure 8).

Pit [18] was a shallow feature of oval plan (2.3m x 1.2m x 0.3m) with 45° sides and a concave base (Figure 9). The single mid-brown clay silt fill (19) produced no finds. The feature was flanked to the east by a truncated ditch [20] aligned northeast-southwest (1.8m+ x 1.65m x 0.38m) with a 35m° sides and a concave base. The mid orange brown clay silt primary fill (21) produced three sherds of pottery dating to the 13th 15th centuries (Figure 10).

Two further smaller linears [23] & [25] flanked the eastern side of the ditch. Mid brown clay silt fill (24) of [23] (1.5m+ x 0.66m x 0.2m), aligned north-northeast to south-southeast produced two sherds of 13th to 15th centuries pottery. The second, parallel gully [25] (1.4m x 0.95mx 0.18m) was undated.



Figure 7: Features [18], [20], [23] & [25]; view west (1m scale)

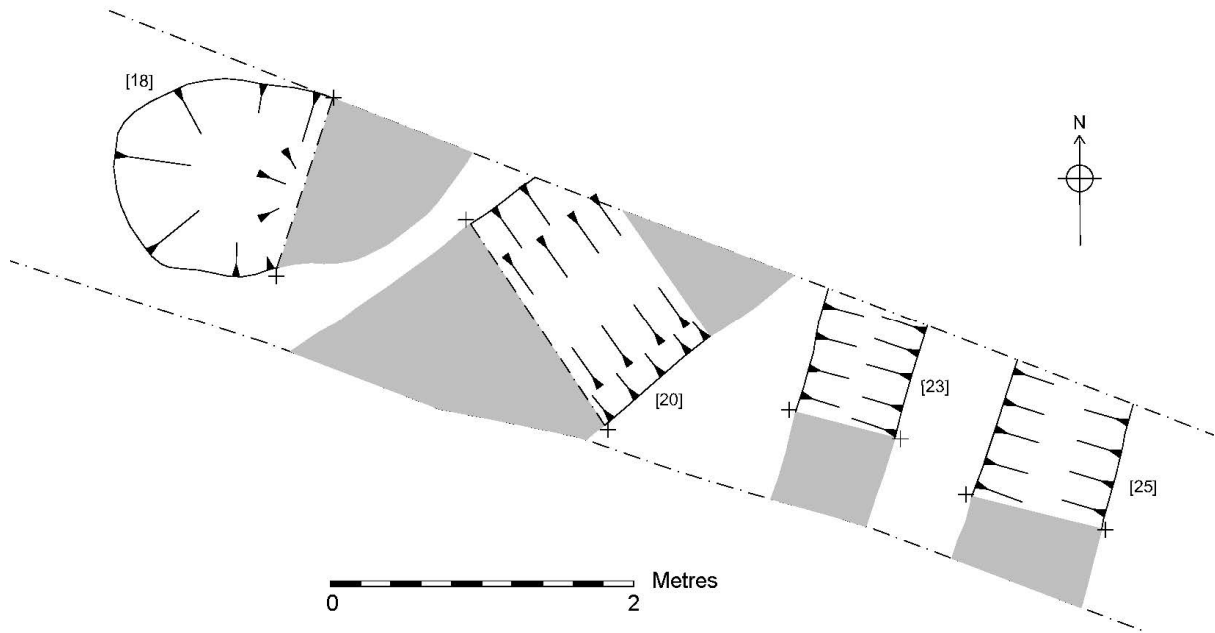


Figure 8: Plan of pit [18] & linears [20], [23] & [25]



Figure 9: Pit [18]; view southeast (1m scale)



Figure 10: Ditch [20]; view southwest (1m scale)

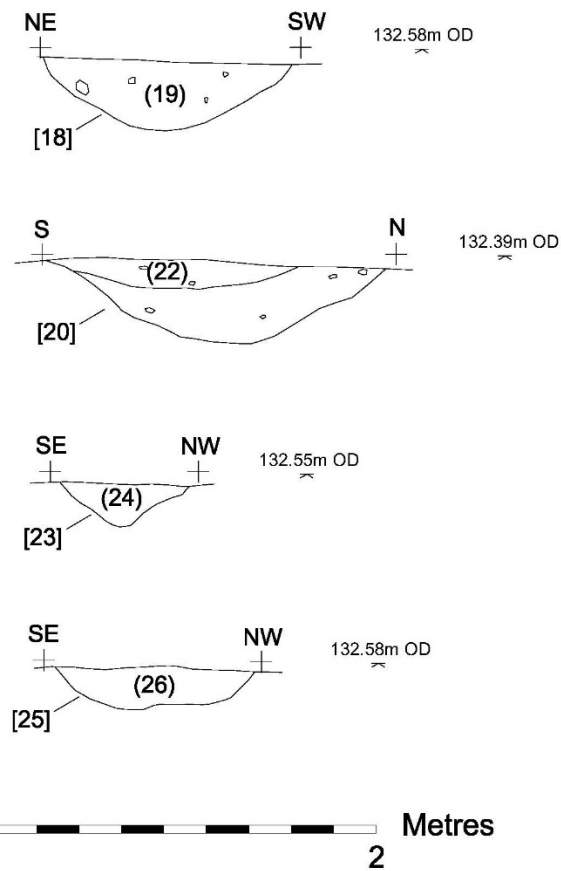


Figure 11: Sections of pit [18] and linear [20], [23] & [25]

### Features [27], [29] & [31]

Additional archaeological features were encountered a short distance to the west during monitoring of the machining of the parking area associated with the access road. A single ditch [27]/[29] (1.2m x 0.32m) was observed running northwest-southeast for 18m+. The open v-shaped ditch with 45° sides and a concave base was undated. A smaller, later linear feature [31] ran in from the northeast and terminated at the eastern end of [27] in a butt end. The single mid grey brown silty clay fill (32) of [31] produced a single sherd of pottery dating to c. 1100. The mid grey brown silty clay fill (28)/(30) of [27]/[29] produced no finds.

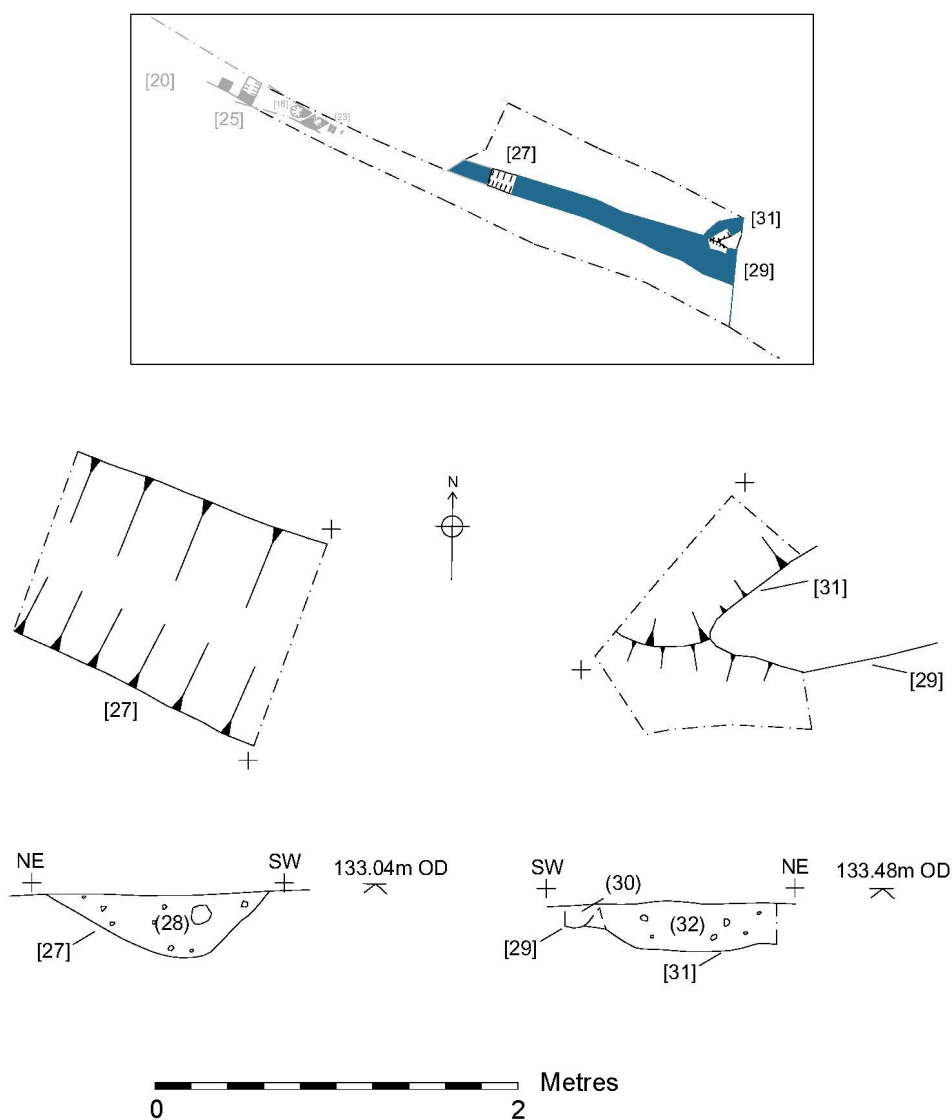


Figure 12: Plans & sections of linears [27], [29] & [31]



Figure 13: Ditch [27]; view northwest (1m scale)

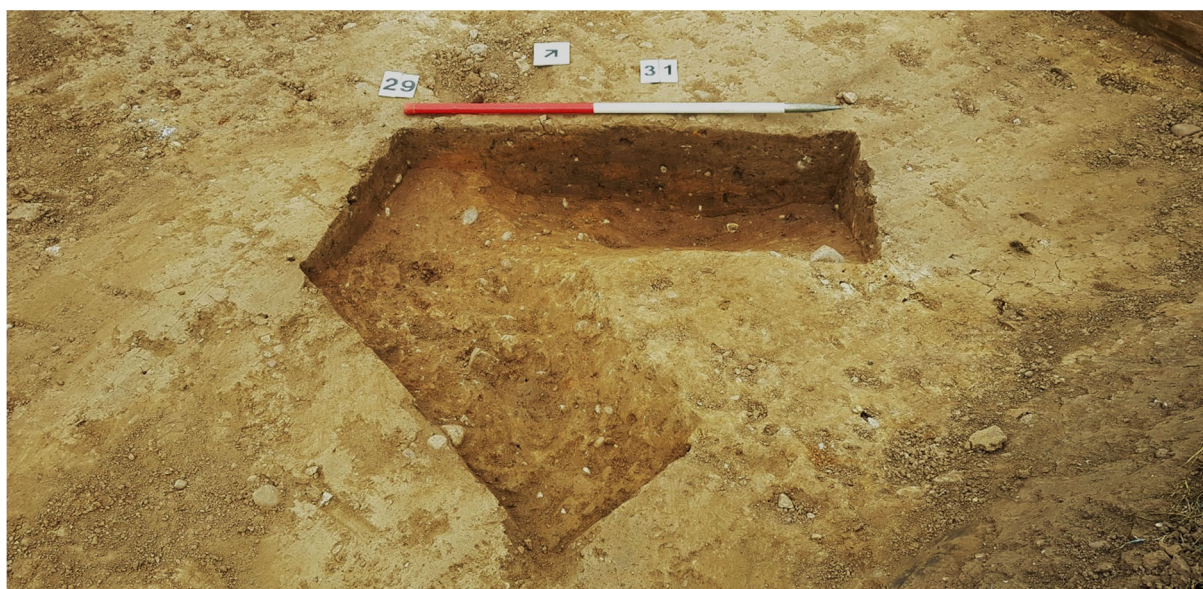


Figure 14: Linears [29] & [31]; view northwest (1m scale)

### Discussion

An archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation was undertaken on land adjacent to The Laurels, Main Street, Normanton-Le-Heath, Leicestershire between the 5th and the 10th of September 2018 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS). Outline planning permission has been granted for a residential development and associated outbuildings and hardstanding on the land. A preliminary archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation undertaken in 2017 had produced evidence for medieval settlement dating to the 12th to 14th centuries within the footprint of the main dwelling. In light of these findings, the Leicestershire County Council, Senior Planning Archaeologist, as advisor to the local planning authority, requested that a programme of additional archaeological investigation take place in order to

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### **Archive**

The archive consists of:

The developer reports (this report and Baker 2017)

32 x single context record sheets

2 x photo record sheets

2 x contact sheets of 51 digital photographs

1 x CD of 51 digital images

2 x A3 drawing sheets

1 x A2 drawing sheet

### **Publication**

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

### **Acknowledgements**

The work was project managed by Vicki Score. The site director was Roger Kipling.

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13-09-2018



**Appendix 2: The Medieval Pottery***Deborah Sawday*

The pottery assemblage was made up of six sherds, weighing 102g and representing six vessels.

*Condition*

The condition of the pottery was good with relatively little abrasion and an average sherd weight of 17g.

*Methodology*

The pottery was examined under an x20 binocular microscope and catalogued with reference to current guidelines (MPRG 1998, MPRG 2016), the ULAS fabric series (Sawday 2009) and to material from Derbyshire (Boyle and Rowlandson 2006-2008, 2009, Cumberpatch 2002/3).

*The Ceramic Record*

The results are shown below (tables 1 and 2). The fabric codes and sources – where known – are shown in the fabric list, table 1. Table 2 catalogues the medieval pottery by context, fabric, number and, weight (grams).

Table 1: The medieval pottery fabrics.

Fabric	Common Name/Kiln & Fabric Equivalent where known	Approx. Date Range
RS	Reduced Sandy ware-? Local	c.850-c.1400
MS	Medieval Sandy ware – misc. coarse hard fired quartz tempered fabrics - ? Burley Hill/Allestree/Ticknall, Derbyshire	Early/mid 13th c. 1450
MP2	Midland Purple ware 2 - Ticknall, Derbyshire	c.1375-1550

*Discussion*

Only relatively undiagnostic body sherds were recovered, all were wheel thrown and several showed evidence of external sooting. This suggested that they had been used in the cooking of food and that the assemblage was domestic in nature.

*Conclusion*

The origins of the Reduced Sandy ware sherd are uncertain, but both this sherd and the remainder of the assemblage are typical of the region. All the sherds had the coarse sand and most the white clay/argillaceous inclusions typical of Burley Hill/Allestree and Ticknall in Derbyshire, which were important medieval centres of pottery production at this time.

The Reduced Sandy ware possibly dates from as early as the later 9th century, but an early medieval date from c.1100 is more likely. The remaining sherds, lie within the 13th to the 15th or mid-16th centuries. All are evidently associated with the several phases of activity within the medieval village, the relatively large average sherd size perhaps indicating that they originated from occupation in the vicinity.

Table 2: The pottery by context, fabric, sherd number and weight (grams).

Context	Fabric/ware	No	Gr	Comments
21 [20]	MS	1	11	? Derbyshire orange gritty ware, soft fired, orange surfaces, grey core, very coarse sandy fabric, plus

				Fe and white clay inclusions. Burley Hill/Ticknall type.
21	MS3	1	13	Hard fired – thin walled, coarse sandy fabric, + Fe, and white clay inclusions, grey core, buff surfaces - Abraded basal angle, Ticknall type.
21	MP2	1	41	Convex base, brown glaze internally, sooted externally. Sand + Fe inclusions. Underfired Midland Purple.
24 [23]	MS	1	15	? Derbyshire orange gritty ware, hard fired, but inclusions as MS above, Burley Hill/Ticknall type, sooted externally.
24	MS	1	18	Oxidised pink sandy body sherd with white clay inclusions, Burley Hill/Ticknall type.
32 [31]	RS	1	4	Body sherd, coarse sandy fabric, reduced black/dark grey. ? Derbyshire grey gritty ware.

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## Appendix 2: OASIS Information

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>Oasis No</b>	universi1-328410		
	<b>Project Name</b>	The Laurels Normanton-Le-Heath		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	05-09-92018 - 10-09-2018		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	No		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Strip plan and sample		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Uncultivated land		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	Gully, pit		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	Medieval pottery		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Residential		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Planning condition		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>	18/00085/FULM		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	The Laurels Main Street Normanton-Le-Heath Coalville Leicestershire LE67 2TB		
	<b>Study Area</b>	1.54 ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 377732 12773		
	<b>Height OD</b>	131m OD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority (e.g. LCC)		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Vicki Score		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Roger Kipling		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Developer		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	NA	LCC MusService	LCCMusService
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>		XA138 2018	XA138 2018
	<b>Contents</b>		Photos Survey data	Field Notes
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	<b>Title</b>	An Archaeological Strip, Plan and Sample Excavation on Land Adjacent to The Laurels, Main Street, The Hollow, Normanton-Le-Heath, Coalville, Leicestershire		
	<b>Author</b>	Roger Kipling		
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