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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Excavation at Loughborough University  
Science & Enterprise Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 50470 18315**

Dr Gavin Speed



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**An Archaeological Excavation at Loughborough University Science  
& Enterprise Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire  
(SK 50470 18315)**

**Dr Gavin Speed**

**For: Pick Everard**

**Planning Ref: 18/00124/CONDIT**

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# **An Archaeological Excavation at Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire (SK 50470 18315)**

*Dr Gavin Speed*

## **Summary**

*An archaeological excavation was carried out at Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire (SK 50470 18315) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) in September 2018. The work was undertaken on behalf of Pick Everard in advance of the continued development of the Science and Enterprise Park. An undated ditch and postholes identified in the evaluation (Flavell 2018) was targeted; the excavation confirmed this as a modern ditch (it contained modern china). No other archaeological finds or features were revealed. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A100.2018.*

## **1. Introduction**

This document constitutes the report for an archaeological excavation at the Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire (SK 50470 18315). The work was undertaken on behalf of Pick Everard by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 25th and 26th September 2018.

The site is located to the west of and adjacent to the main Loughborough University Campus south of the A512 east of Junction 23 of the M12 motorway (Fig. 1). A programme of archaeological work comprising trial trenching was undertaken to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on any buried archaeology and produce a mitigation strategy for the site. The work followed the procedures laid out in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Speed 2018).

## **2. Geology and Topography**

The Site consists of a grassed and ploughed field (Fig.2) and is approximately 4.5 ha with a high point of c.65m in the north-west corner falling to the south-east. The site is bounded to the south by the Burleigh Brook. The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology is likely to be Gunthorpe Member mudstone.





Figure 1: Location of the proposed site

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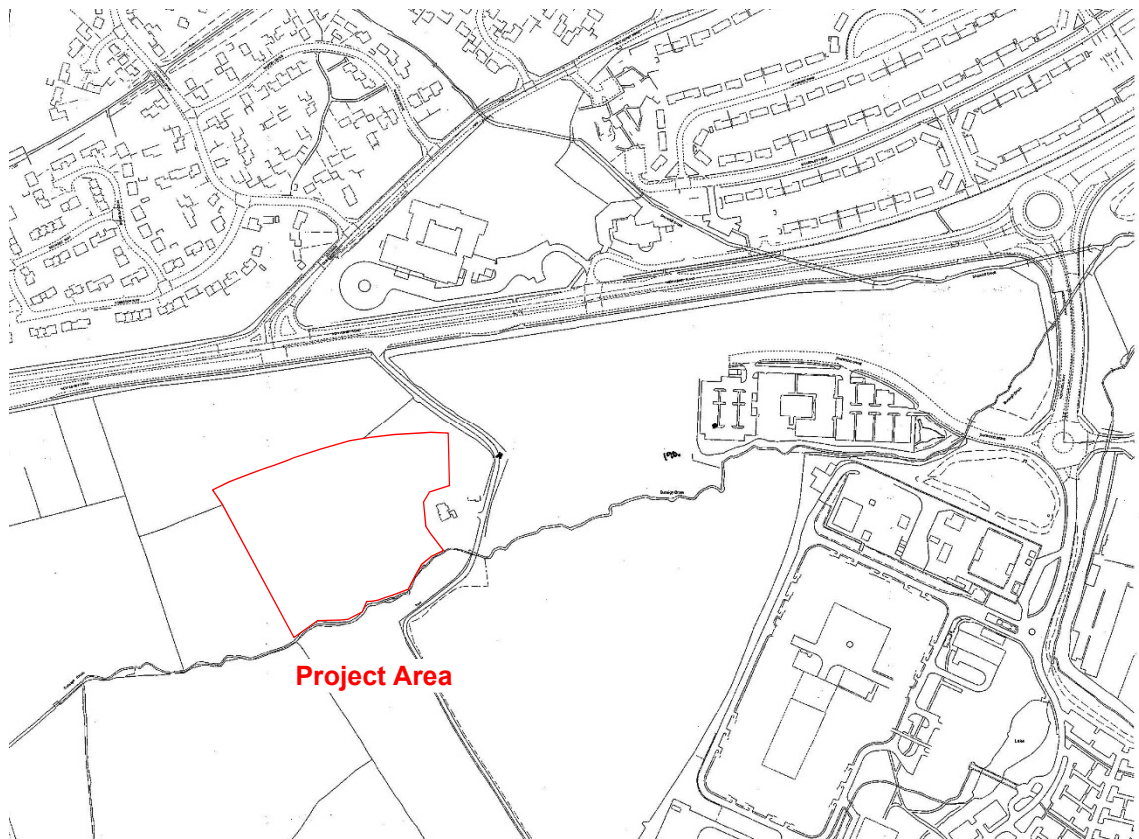


Figure 2: Detail of Site Location

### 3. Historical and Archaeological Background

A desk based assessment has been undertaken for the area (Bocock 2006). The Historic Environment Record (HER) for the area shows that there are no known archaeological sites in the assessment area itself, although there are numerous medieval and Roman findspots in the surrounding locality, mainly to the south.

Loughborough is referred to in the Domesday Book as land owned by Earl Hugh. There were “8 villagers with 15 Freemen and 16 smallholders owning 12 ½ ploughs, two mills at 10 shillings; meadow 45 acres; woodland 7 furlongs long and 3 furlongs wide. Five thane held them freely”. The name Loughborough appears to mean “fortified house of a man called Luhhede. The earliest documentary reference to Holywell Haw dates to 1330. Holy Well Haw means 'an enclosure around the holy well' and suggests that some form of worship, pilgrimage, and/or a building, once existed at the site. The Holy Well Haw has a unique legend associated with it, in the form of a poem which tells of the safe rescue of a lady by a hermit at the holy well.

Loughborough University originated from the Loughborough Technical Institute, set up by Leicestershire County Council in 1909 to provide local facilities for further education. During the First World War the Technical Institute became an 'Instructional Factory' for the Ministry of Munitions. It was renamed as Loughborough College in 1920 and expanded. It widened its reputation beyond engineering to athletics, handicrafts and teacher training. In 1951-2 the College was divided into four separate institutions reflecting its main areas of interest. The College of Technology 1957 was designated a College of Advanced Technology in 1957. In 1966 it was granted university status and received a royal charter as Loughborough University of Technology. In 1977 the original structure was partly restored when the University and the College of Education were amalgamated.

A geophysical survey (Stratascan 2008) found a few small anomalies that could be archaeological cut features. Archaeological trial trenching to the east in 2013 revealed no indications of archaeological activity, with the exception of medieval plough furrows (Kipling 2013).

In 2018 an evaluation revealed a series of undated gullies and post-medieval-modern ditches forming field boundaries and drainage (Flavell 2018, 34). A modern ditch running approximately east – west was uncovered in Trenches 3 and 4, containing modern pottery. This ditch truncated the colluvial layer in the southern part of the field which also contained modern finds. A second section of ditch aligned approximately north-west to southeast was uncovered in trenches 6, 8 and 10. Again modern pot was recovered from fill (16) of ditch [15] which also truncated the colluvium. Two gullies pre-dating the colluvium were identified. One aligned north-east to south-west across the field was seen in trenches 4, 5, 7 and 12. There was no dating evidence from this feature, but as it was sealed by colluvium in Trench 4, this suggests it is older than the colluvium. The gully in trenches 13 and 11 also appear to be the same linear feature. Again it was undated, but may appear on the geophysical survey and could represent an old field boundary or drainage. The pits/posthole and butt end of the gully in Trench 6 is the only suggestion of activity other than field boundaries or drainage, however as they are undated and the environmental sample contained no evidence for any charred plant remains it is difficult to say anything definitive about their nature. With the exception of the gully in Trenches 11 and 13 many of the anomalies suggesting cut features on the geophysical survey did not translate to features within the trenches. However, two are two larger anomalies between trenches 6 and 8, which are on the projected alignment of a modern ditch and may represent modern material within it. The first edition OS map of 1884 does not show any obvious boundaries for the identified ditches and gullies. This suggests that given their

alignment that they are pre-19th century boundaries, although the pottery suggest they were backfilled in the 18th - 19th century.

#### **4. Archaeological Objectives**

The main aim of the investigation is to provide evidence to understand the nature, date, function, and character of the archaeological remains at the site in their cultural and environmental setting and to preserve it by record.

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 and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits.
- To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
- To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to assess the impact of the proposed development on cultural heritage and to help formulate a mitigation strategy
- To record any archaeological deposits and produce an archive and report of any results.

#### **5. Methodology**

The excavation followed the WSI (Speed 2018), focusing on the evaluation Trench 6 (Flavell 2018), with an open area excavation of approximately 18m x 12m. The machine stripping was supervised to the top of any archaeological deposits revealed or the top of the natural substratum.

At this point the archaeological evidence was accessed.

All work were 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).

#### **6. Results**

An open area excavation (measuring 18m x 12m) was undertaken focused on the archaeological features from XA.80.2018 Trench 6. The topsoil was a consistent dark brown clay loam, 0.18-0.37m thick. A thin colluvial layer lay below this consisting of a mid-yellow-grey sandy silt with some manganese inclusions, *c.*0.25m thick. Natural substrata was a pink-red clay with some sand patches, 0.18-0.4m below ground level.

Gully [1] ([22] in XA.80.2018) was located, and its alignment traced to the west. It is confirmed as a linear shallow ditch, aligned east-west. The ditch had a u-shaped profile, 0.4m wide, 0.49m deep at the terminus, and very shallow elsewhere (0.1m). It was filled by (500), mixed yellow-brown silty clay with occasional small stones. It contained a single sherd of modern china. It intersected, and cut into, ditch [2] ([15] in XA.80.2018), aligned north-south with moderately steep sides, 0.81m wide, and 0.34m deep. It was filled with a mid-dark red-brown clay-silt with sand inclusions (501), which contained modern brick fragments.

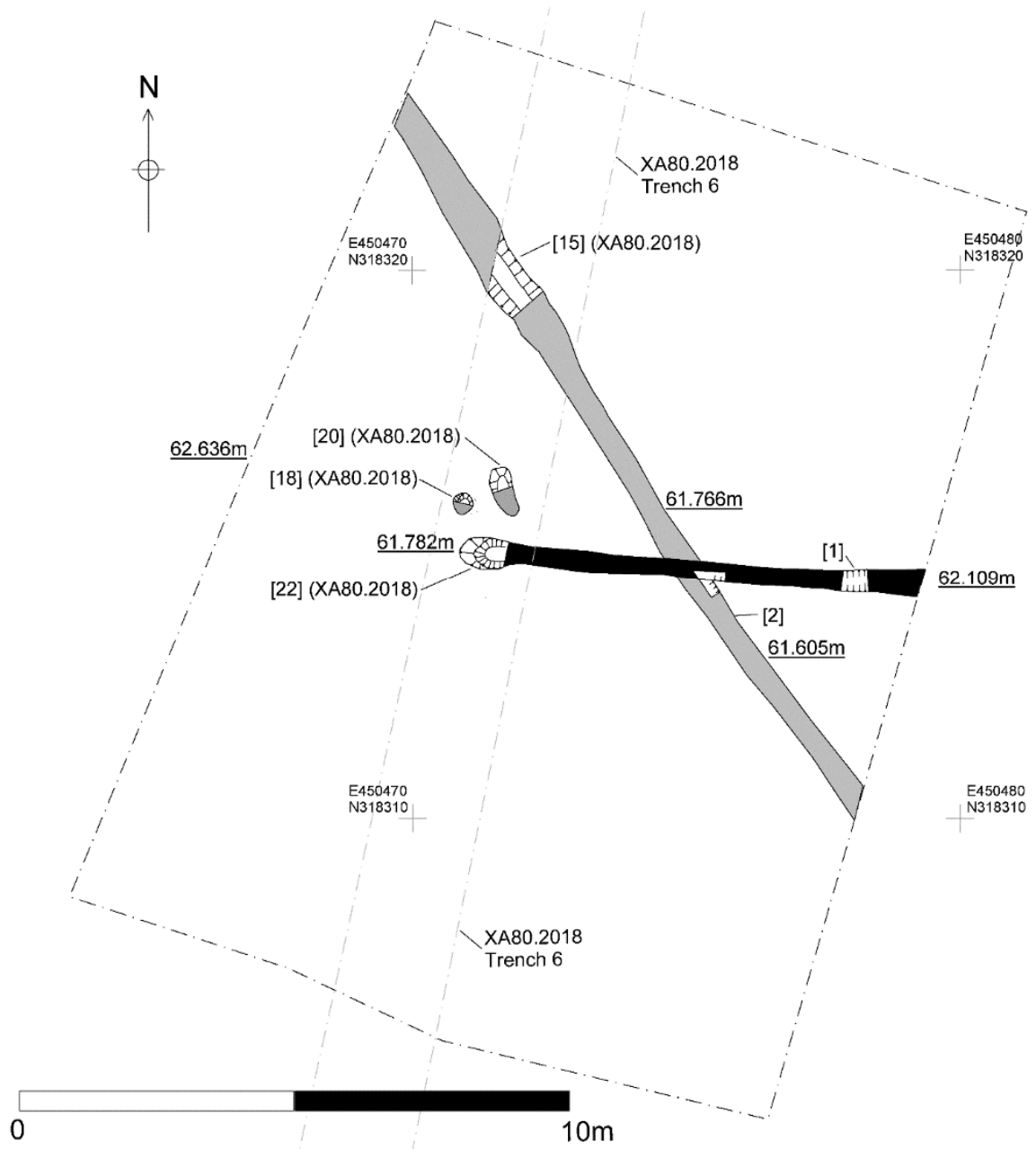


Figure 3: Trench plan showing modern ditches





Figure 4: Excavation underway

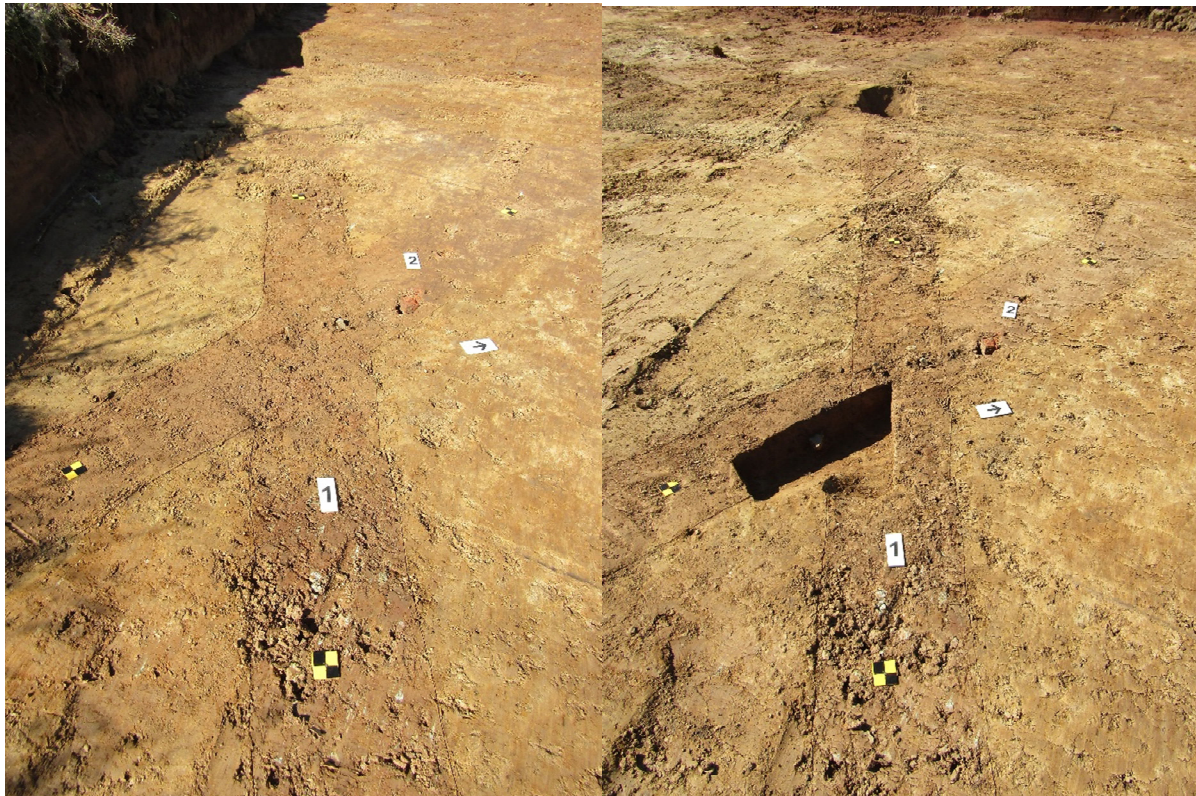


Figure 5: Views of ditch [1] cutting ditch [2] (markers at 2m intervals)





Figure 6: Wider view of modern ditches looking west





Figure 7: Views of excavated area looking SW and SE

## 7. The Find

A single sherd of modern china was recovered from ditch [1], identification confirmed by Debbie Sawday.



## 8. Discussion

The excavation has confirmed that the ditch discovered previously (see Flavell 2018), is of modern date. It contained modern china, and cut another ditch which had previously contained modern pottery and brick fragments.

The east-west ditch is likely of 18th/19th century date forming field boundaries and drainage. It was broadly on the same alignment as an undated ditch from Trench 4 (see Figure 8).

The modern ditch running approximately north-west to south-east contained modern pottery (Flavell 2018). The first edition OS map of 1884 does not show any obvious boundaries for the identified ditches and gullies (although the alignment of the ditch is parallel to the other field boundaries seen on the 1884 map). This suggests that this boundary was removed prior to the late 19th century, the pottery also suggests they were backfilled in the 18th - 19th century.

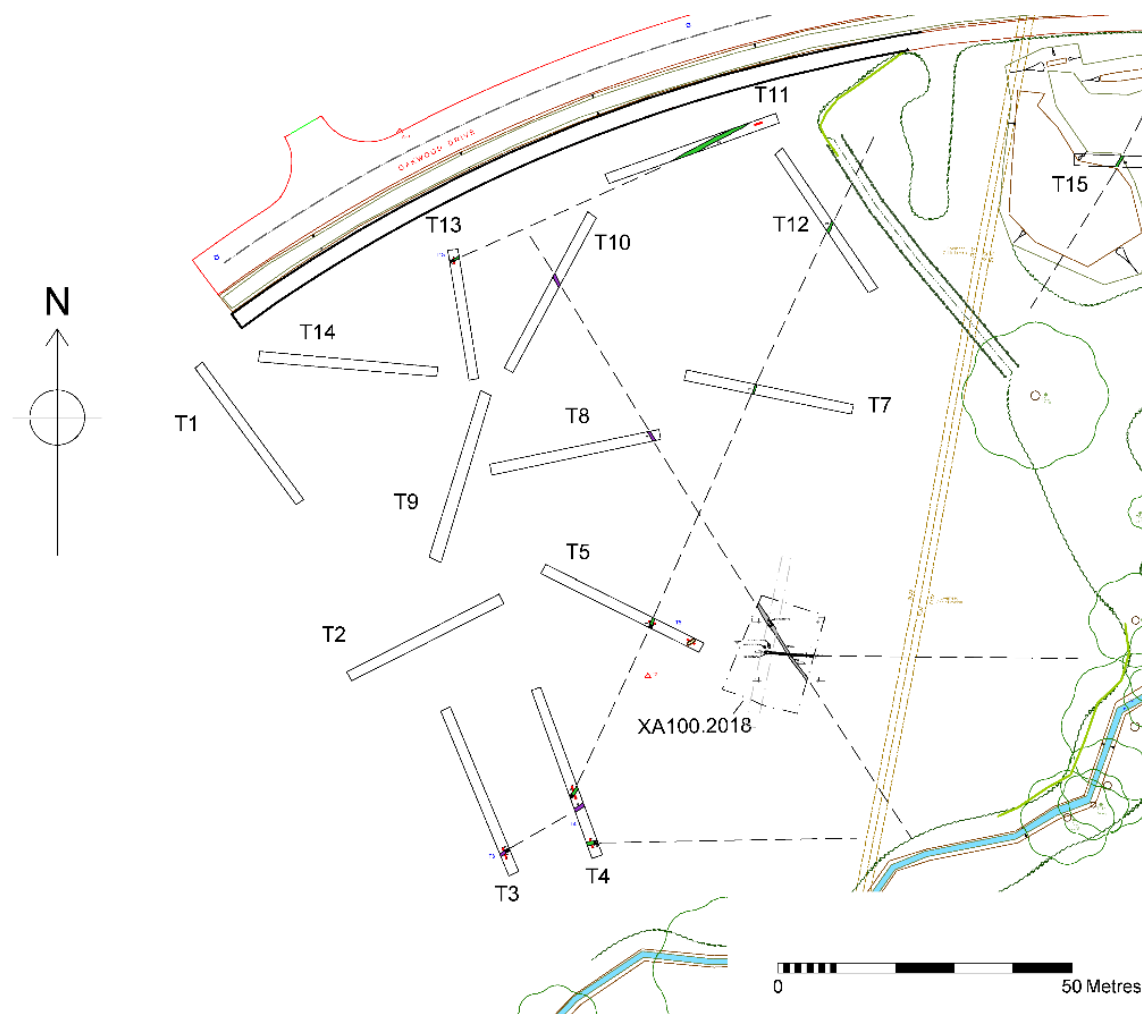


Figure 8: Plan showing area strip in relation to earlier trial trenches, dashed lines indicate projected post-medieval – modern ditches

## 9. Further work and recommendations

The features appear to represent two phases of field boundaries/drainage systems, both clearly modern (18th / 19th century). The excavation has confirmed that the archaeological evidence is of little significance, and therefore no further archaeological work is required for this site.

## 10. Bibliography

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## 11. Archive

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A100.2018.

## 12. 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 (see below).

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>Oasis No</b>	universi1-329658
	<b>Project Name</b>	Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	26-09-2018 - 27-09-2018
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	Geophysical survey J2427, ULAS DBA 2006-104, ULAS Evaluation Report 2013-208, 2018-138
	<b>Project Type</b>	Excavation
	<b>Site Status</b>	None
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Field
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	Modern
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	none
	<b>Development Type</b>	Academic
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Planning condition



	<b>Planning Ref.</b>	18/00124/CONDIT		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	Loughborough University, Epinal Way, Loughborough LE11 3TU		
	<b>Study Area</b>	4.5 ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 50431 18351		
	<b>Height OD</b>	65m OD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority (Charnwood County Council)		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Vicki Score		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Dr Gavin Speed		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Developer		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	Leics MusService	LC MusService	LCMusService
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>	XA.100.2018	XA.100.2018	XA.100.2018
	<b>Contents</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Finds</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Photos</li> <li>Report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paper archive</li> </ul>
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	<b>Title</b>	Archaeological Excavation at Loughborough University Science & Enterprise Park, Loughborough, Leicestershire		
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### 13. Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the client for their co-operation and assistance on site. Fieldwork was undertaken by Dr Gavin Speed, the project was managed for ULAS by Vicki Score.

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