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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Strip, Plan  
and Sample Excavation on  
Land at 27 Church Road,  
Nailstone, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 41867 07123**

**James Harvey**



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Road, Nailstone, Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 41867 07123**

**James Harvey**

**For: Mr Theobald**

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## **An Archaeological Strip, Plan and Sample Excavation on Land at 27 Church Road, Nailstone, Leicestershire**

**James Harvey**

### **Summary**

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an Archaeological Strip, Plan and Sample Excavation on Land at 27 Church Road, Nailstone, Leicestershire, prior to the construction of a new dwelling. The development area is located within the historic core of the village and adjacent to a 16th century manor house (SK 41867 07123).*

*Despite the location of the development within an archaeologically-sensitive area, no archaeological finds or deposits were encountered during the course of the excavation.*

*The site archive will be held by the Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the Accession No. X.A105.2018.*

### **1. 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 at 27 Church Road, Nailstone, Leicestershire (SK 41867 07123). Planning permission has been granted for the construction of a new dwelling on land adjacent to 27 Church Road (Planning Ref. 16/00618/FUL). The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) notes that the application area lies within the historic medieval and post-medieval core of the village (**MLE2968**). It is located adjacently to the Grade II listed Manor House (**MLE12090**) and lies to the south-east of the Grade II\* listed Church of All Saints (**MLE12091**).

In view of the archaeological potential of the site, the Principal Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council (on behalf of Hinckley & Bosworth district council) required a programme of archaeological work to be undertaken prior to any development. This work comprised of a strip, map and sample excavation, in order to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on any buried archaeology and produce a mitigation strategy for the site. This work was undertaken at the site on the 3rd October 2018 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Mr Theobald and followed the procedures laid out in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI, Brown 2018).

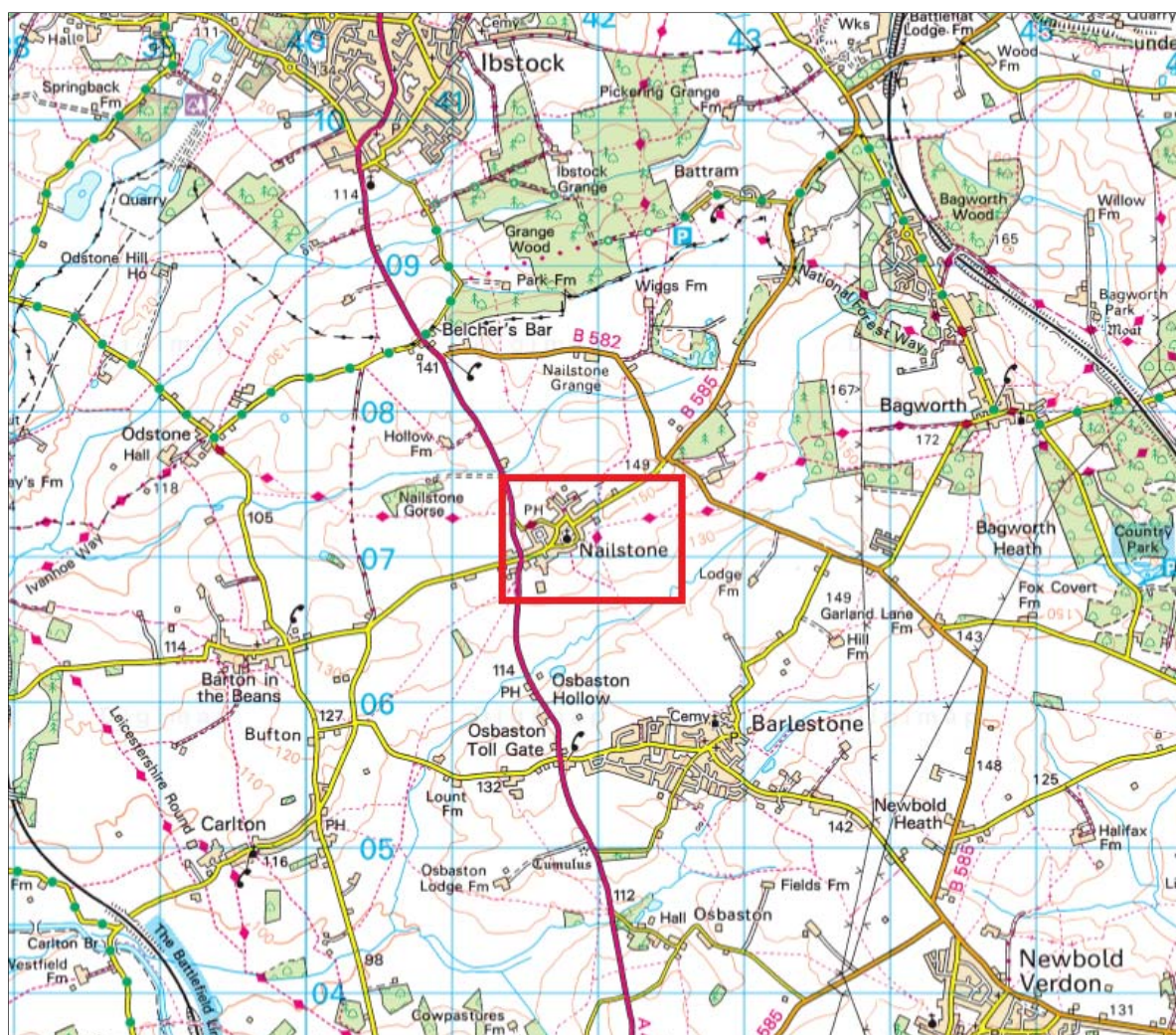


Figure 1: Site location

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## 2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The village of Nailstone is located in the Hinckley and Bosworth District of Leicestershire, c. 4km south-west of Ibstock and c. 20km west of Leicester (Figure 1 and Figure 2). The site itself is located on the south-eastern edge of Nailstone village, c. 60m south-east of All Saints parish Church. It consists of a rectangular parcel of land that formed part of the former gardens of 27 Church Road.

The site lies at a height of approximately 144m OD at the west end gently sloping up to the east to 145m OD. The land falls away sharply to the south of the site, towards a tributary of the River Anker.

The British Geological Survey website (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>) identifies the bedrock geology of the area as Gunthorpe Siltstone/Mudstone formation, and the superficial geology as Glaciofluvial Sand and Gravel.



Figure 2: Location of proposed development outlined in red. Supplied by Client.

### 3. Historical and Archaeological Background

The proposed development site lies within the historic medieval and post-medieval core of Nailstone, c.50m south-east of the Grade II\* listed church of All Saints (**MLE12091**). The Leicestershire HER records the Manor House immediately west of the site as a 16th century timber framed house, much altered in the 18th century (**MLE12090**). Other early post-medieval houses on Church Road include no. 55, a timber framed house built in the early 1600s (**MLE22126**). There is also a fishpond below the manor house seen on aerial photographs (**MLE2962**).

Archaeological investigations in the form of trial trenching took place in 2017 at the Bull's Head Public House, 88 Main Street. Medieval and post-medieval ditches and pottery were found, associated with village and property boundaries (Finn, 2017). An earlier evaluation at 57 Main Street also revealed a pit and gully of probable medieval date (Butler 2000).

Evidence for earlier activity was recorded during evaluations to the north of the village consisting of two ditches containing Iron Age pottery. Cropmark evidence and chance finds also suggest the presence of later prehistoric activity, including possible prehistoric enclosures and ditches to the north west of the village. Isolated finds in the vicinity of the site include a Mesolithic pebble hammer (**MLE7061**), Neolithic-Bronze age flint scatter (**MLE16531**) and an Iron Age quern (**MLE6543**).

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

Archaeological excavation is an intrusive form of investigation that will demonstrate the existence of archaeological features that may exist within the area.

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 advance understanding of the heritage assets
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the investigation is 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.

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

*The Iron Age and Roman Periods (Taylor 2006; Willis 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2010)*

The proposed archaeological work may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy.

*The Medieval period (Lewis 2006, Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2010)*

The excavation may contribute towards research into the origins and development of medieval settlement, landscape and society. Environmental evidence could provide information on local environmental conditions as well as settlement activity, craft, industry and land use. Artefacts can assist in the development of a type series within the region and provide evidence for evidence for craft, industry and exchange across broad landscape areas.

#### **5. Methodology**

The strip map and sample excavation involved the control and supervision of topsoil removal by an experienced professional archaeologist over the area of the footprint of the proposed new dwelling. This was located towards the north-west corner of the site and measured *c.* 14m x 10m.

The topsoil was stripped using a 7 tonne JCB mechanical excavator, using a 1.5m wide ditching bucket. The level was reduced in spits until the undisturbed natural substratum or the top of an archaeological features was exposed, whichever was reached first. If archaeological features were present, these were to be hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated, as detailed in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

All work was undertaken 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).

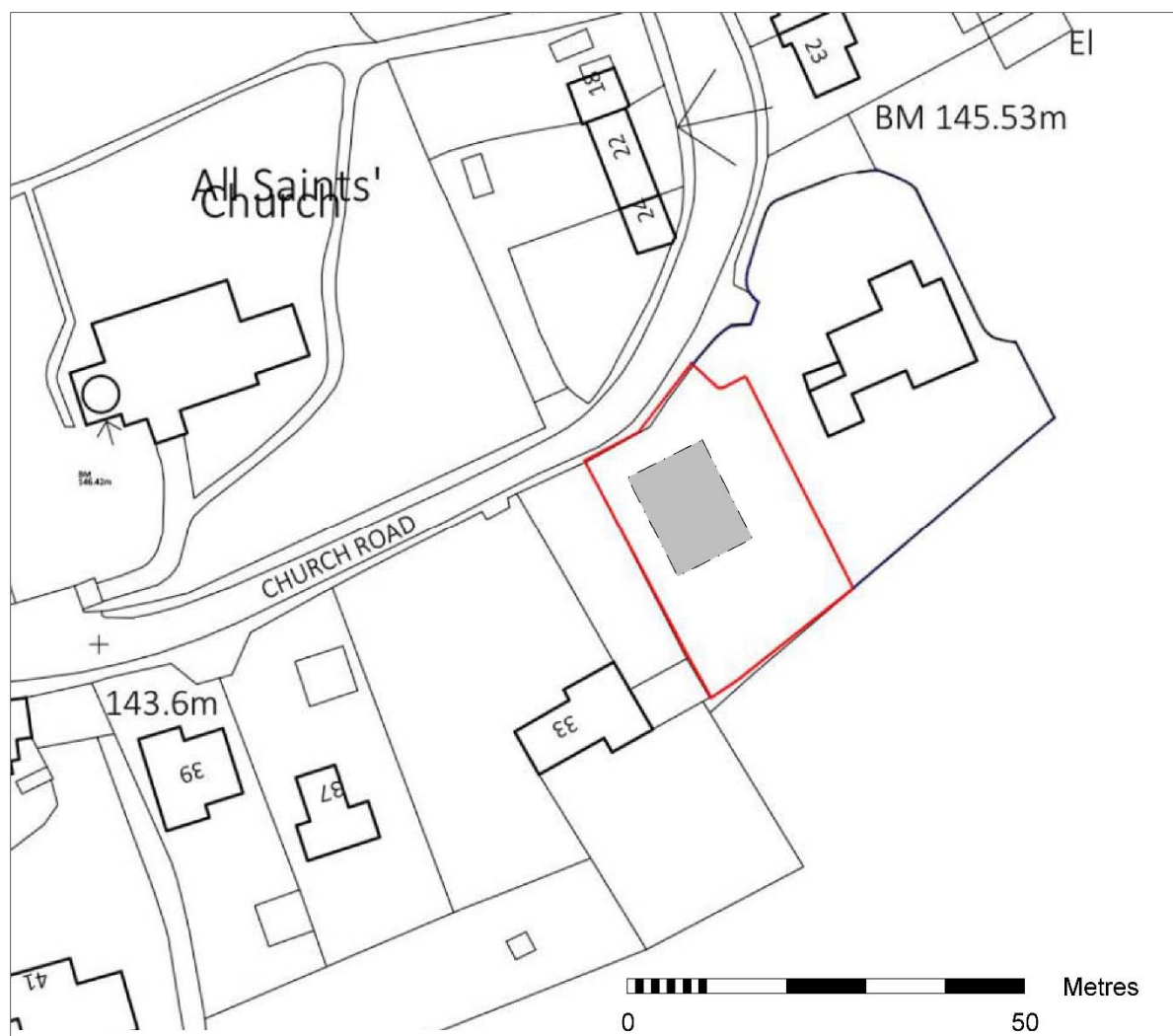


Figure 3: Plan showing the area covered by the strip, map and sample exercise (shaded grey)

## 6. Results

A rectangular area totalling *c.* 140 sq. metres was excavated within the north-west corner of the site that covered the entire footprint of the proposed dwelling (Figure 3). The topsoil consisted of a dark orangey brown sandy loam with common rounded pebble inclusions. It was generally thin across the area, measuring between 0.1-0.25m deep and was notably devoid of any artefactual material. The topsoil directly overlaid the natural substratum that consisted of a mid reddish brown gravelly clay (Figure 4 and Figure 5). Small areas of disturbance were noted within the top of this level that related to the recent removal of trees from the garden.

No archaeological deposits or finds were recorded during the course of the strip, map and sample exercise.





Figure 4: Exposed footprint of proposed dwelling, looking south



Figure 5: Exposed footprint of proposed dwelling, looking north-west

## 7. Discussion

Despite the apparent archaeological potential of the site, no archaeological activity was observed during the course of the strip, map and sample exercise. The lack of features and finds within the excavated area suggests this area of the village was not formally occupied during the medieval/post-medieval period. The absence of agricultural furrows (indicative of open fields) may indicate the site formed part of an enclosed parcel of land during this period.

## 8. Publication and Archive

The site archive will be held by the Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the Accession No. X.A105.2018.

The site archive consists of:

**PAPER**        1 x A4 ULAS pro forma Watching Brief Recording Sheet  
                  1 x A4 Contact print of digital photographs  
                  1 x unbound copy of this report

**DIGITAL**     1 CD-R with 7 digital photographs and A PDF\_A copy of this report

A summary of this report will appear in due course in the *Transactions the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*. The University of Leicester Archaeological Services supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The online OASIS data entry has been completed detailing the results of the project (see Appendix I of this report). This is digitally accessible through The Archaeological Data Services (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>).

## 9. Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to Rachel Theobald and the contractors for their help and cooperation. The fieldwork was carried out by James Harvey. The project was managed by Vicki Score, both of ULAS.

## 10. Bibliography

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## Appendix 1. OASIS Data Entry

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>OASIS ID</b>	<b>Universi1-330073</b>		
	<b>Project Name</b>	Strip, Map and Sample on Land at 27 Church Road, Nailstone		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	02-10-2018/03-10-2018		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	No/No		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Recording Project		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Garden		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	None/None		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	None/None		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Residential		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Condition		
<b>Planning Ref.</b>	16/00618/FUL			
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	27 Church Road, Nailstone, Leicestershire CV130QH		
	<b>Study Area</b>	700m <sup>2</sup>		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 41867 07123		
	<b>Height OD</b>	144m aOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Vicki Score		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	James HARvey		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Developer		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>	<b>Recipient</b>	<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>		Leicestershire County Museums	Leicestershire County Museums
	<b>Contents</b>		XA105.2018	XA105.2018
			Digital Photographs PDF_A Report	1 pro forma watching Brief sheet Unbound copy of report
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature		
	<b>Title</b>	An Archaeological Strip, Plan and Sample Excavation on Land at 27 Church Road, Nailstone, Leicestershire		
	<b>Author</b>	Harvey, J.		
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