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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Walkover Survey on land off Stygate Lane, Pickwell,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 806 127

Andrew Hyam and Matthew Beamish



ULAS Report No 2019-011
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Site Name: Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire

Grid Ref: SK 806 127

Author: Andrew Hyam and Matthew Beamish

Client: E4environment

Planning Ref. 17/00087/CM

ULAS Report Number: 2019-011

Accession Number:

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| 2019-011 | Matthew Beamish | 14/02/2019 |
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OASIS RECORD

| | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|---|--|----------------|--------------|
| PROJECT DETAILS | Oasis No | universi1- 340487 | | |
| | Project Name | An Archaeological Walkover Survey on land off Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire | | |
| | Start/end dates | 27 th September 2018 | | |
| | Previous/Future Work | | | |
| | Project Type | Evaluation | | |
| | Site Status | None | | |
| | Current Land Use | Agricultural Land/ set aside | | |
| | Monument Type/Period | None | | |
| | Significant Finds/Period | None | | |
| | Reason for Investigation | NPPF | | |
| | Position in the Planning Process | Pre Application | | |
| Planning Ref. | 17/00087/CM (associated application) | | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | County | Leicestershire | | |
| | Site Address/Postcode | Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire | | |
| | Study Area | 0.8 ha | | |
| | Site Coordinates | SK 806 127 | | |
| | Height OD | 145m to 162m aOD | | |
| PROJECT CREATORS | Organisation | ULAS | | |
| | Project Brief Originator | 1 | | |
| | Project Design Originator | ULAS | | |
| | Project Manager | Matthew Beamish | | |
| | Project Director/Supervisor | Andrew Hyam | | |
| | Sponsor/Funding Body | E4environment | | |
| PROJECT ARCHIVE | | Physical | Digital | Paper |
| | Recipient | | | |
| | ID (Acc. No.) | | | |
| | Contents | None | | |
| PROJECT BIBLIOGRA PHY | Type | Grey Literature (unpublished) | | |
| | Description | Developer Report A4 pdf | | |
| | Title | An Archaeological Walkover Survey on land off Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Somerby, Leicestershire (SK 806 127) | | |
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An Archaeological Walkover Survey on land off Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire

Andrew Hyam and Matthew Beamish

Summary

This document is a fieldwork report for an archaeological walkover survey, carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at land off Stygate Lane, Pickwell in the parish of Somerby, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 806 127) in advance of a planning application for the construction of a new access track and anaerobic digester.

Trench evaluation of other parts of the site were undertaken in 2017 which revealed evidence of Iron Age and Roman settlement activity towards the east of the proposed new track. Only four undiagnostic sherds of pottery were recovered dating between the 18th and 20th centuries.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by E4environment Ltd. to carry out an archaeological walkover survey on land off Stygate Lane, Pickwell, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 806 127 Fig. 1). The work was carried out on 27th September 2018.

The work was carried out as part of a phased programme of archaeological work required by the Planning Authority following advice from the Leicestershire Planning Archaeologist in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, MHCLG 2018).

The site lies in Somerby Parish between the villages of Pickwell, Leicestershire and Whissendine in Rutland. Planning permission is sought for an anaerobic digester with service road. Archaeological evaluation by trial trenching has been undertaken in 2017 and some areas of archaeological activity identified (Jarvis & Higgins 2017). The walkover survey was undertaken on the line of a service road which has been rerouted giving access from Stygate Lane rather than the A606 to the east.

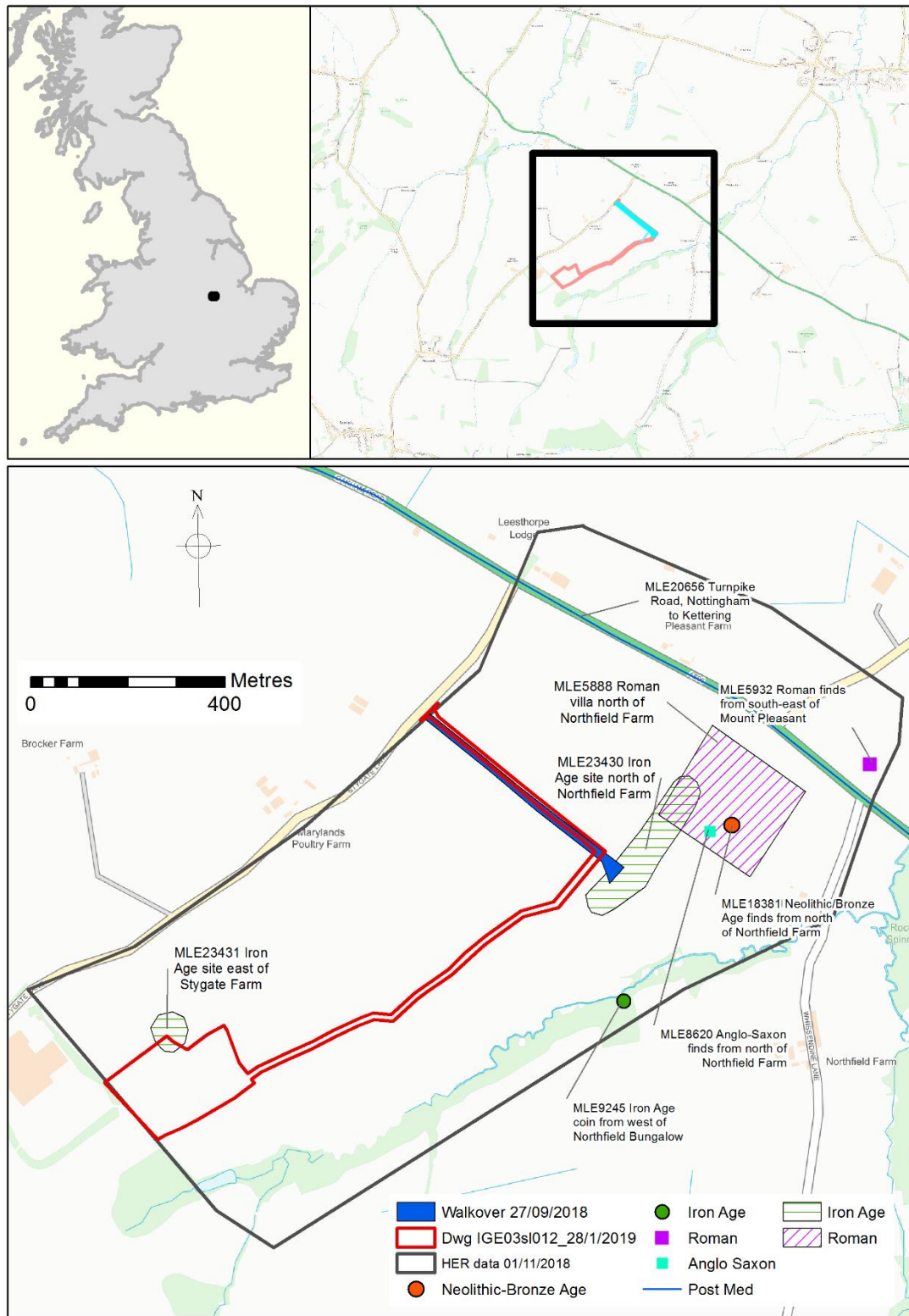


Figure 1: Site Location

Location and Geology

The main proposed development site comprises a field west of Northfield Farm, with an access road approaching from the east parallel with a stream valley. The re-routed service road runs south-east from the Stygate Lane to the existing line of the track.

The land use was arable at the time of survey. A crop of beans had been harvested, and the field cultivated prior to the survey.

The British Geological Survey Geology of Britain viewer indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Wolston Formation boulder clay above Dyrham Formation mudstone. The study area comprises a strip of land on a south sloping valley side with the ground height dropping from 160 to 130m aOD.

Historical and Archaeological Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record was re-searched on 1st November 2018 and the results are included below (Figure 1). Three sites are identified in the vicinity of the site as follows: **MLE5888**; Roman villa north of Northfield Farm: A villa was discovered here in the 1990s. The scatters of material located several discrete buildings. Finds included coins, brooches, furniture fittings, tile and pottery. Evaluative trenching in 2017 has identified areas of Iron Age occupation in two areas: **MLE23430**; an apparent linear spread of activity to the west of the Villa site, and **MLE23431**; a second area of Iron Age activity some 800m to the west. Confirmation of the presence of villa buildings was also forthcoming during the evaluation work (Jarvis & Higgins 2017).

Additionally, find spots may indicate the presence of further sites: **MLE8620**; Anglo-Saxon mount from north of Northfield Farm. An Anglo-Saxon mount with four attachment rivets cast into the back of the piece was found here in the 1990s. The front has a close decorative parallel to the disc from a great square headed brooch. **MLE18381**; Bronze Age spearhead from north of Northfield Farm. A fragment of a looped Bronze Age spearhead was found here in the 1990s.

Archaeological Objectives

The main objectives of the evaluation were:

- To determine the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains visible on the surface of the proposed area
- To assess the artefactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits encountered
- To assess the impact of previous land use on the site
- To produce a site archive for deposition with an appropriate museum and to provide information for accession to the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the survey is to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of any archaeological deposits identified on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

Research Objectives

While the nature, extent and quality of archaeological remains within the areas of investigation for the project remain unknown until archaeological work is undertaken, it is possible to determine some initial objectives derived from East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands (Knight et al. 2012), and The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda (Cooper 2006).

The Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) identified the archaeological evaluation as having the potential to contribute to the following research aims:-The Neolithic-Bronze Age (Clay 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012) The find spot of a Bronze Age spearhead mount may indicate the presence of a settlement or cemetery of this period. The survey may contribute to our understanding of the development of Bronze Age occupation sites and / or burial practices The Roman Period (Taylor 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012) There is a Roman site close to the study area. The evaluation may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age –Roman and Roman-Saxon transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy. The Anglo-Saxon period (Vince 2006, Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012. The find spot of an Anglo Saxon mount may indicate the presence of a Saxon settlement or cemetery. The evaluation may contribute to our understanding of the development of Saxon occupation sites and /or burial practices.

Methodology

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (rev. 2014a) in accordance with their *Standard and Guidance*.

The site was visited on 27th September 2018. The survey was undertaken following the cultivation of the field after harvest in order to maximise the potential for identification and recovery of artefacts or archaeological deposits from the ploughsoil. The existing track running from Stygate Lane follows a north-west to south-east alignment and runs alongside an existing hedgeline (Fig. 2). The track consists of an undisturbed hard core surface with cultivation running up to the south-western edge of the track. At the south-eastern end of the track an area of set-aside remained under cultivation. This area contained a range of vegetation from grasses up to sunflowers up to 1m in height. The main field had been drilled but was relatively level with good visibility in the sunlight.

A 10m wide area was traversed on foot. A handheld GPS unit recorded the route walked, and was used to mark the locations of artefacts recovered. Four pieces of abraded and undiagnostic pot were collected, but none of these are of any archaeological significance (Cooper below).

The south-east end of the track at the bottom end of the field has been left as set-aside so is still covered in vegetation (Fig. 3).



Figure 2 Existing trackway and field walked area
Looking south-east. Set-aside area in middle distance



Figure 3 Set-aside area at southern end of the track
Looking north-west. Stygate Lane runs along crest of hill. The track can be seen running up the hill to the left of the hedge line

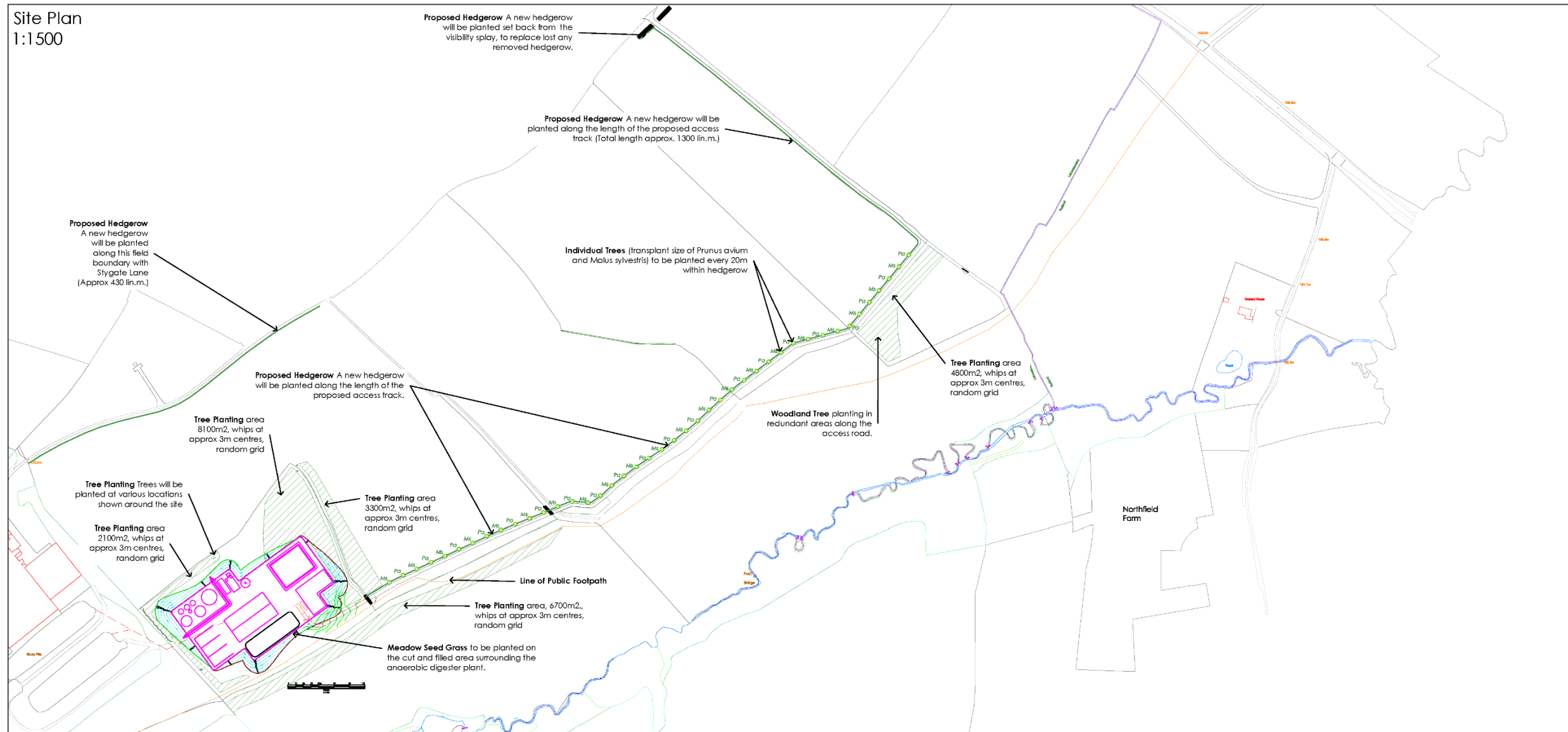
Results

The area of the proposed new trackway was walked in a zig-zag fashion down the slope of the track from the north-west to the south-east. Figure 4 below illustrates the extent of the fieldwalking logged onto the hand-held GPS. Four sherds of abraded pottery were recovered and were located and identified as GPS waypoints 003, 004, 005 and 006. The four sherds were relatively well-dispersed along the field walked route with no areas of pottery concentration. The sherds appeared to have been in the ploughsoil for a number of years and had clearly been rolled and moved around by agricultural activity. No rims, bases or other diagnostic features were visible on any of the sherds. No other archaeological finds or features were observed during this work.

As noted in the methodology the south-eastern end of the proposed trackway was covered in set-aside vegetation with no visibility of the soil. The set-aside area continues to the south-west of the fieldwalked area. The northern edge of this was plotted as waypoints 007 and 008 and is shown on Figure 4 below. The fieldwalking results were also logged on a standard ULAS proforma record sheet (Appendix 1).



Figure 4 Plot of fieldwalked area alongside existing trackway with line of proposed trackway (2019/01/28), HER records, and setaside visible in Google Earth imagery (20180625). Waypoints 003 to 006 show location of pottery finds



| Tree Planting (hatched area) | | | | |
|--|--|---------------------|-----------|-------------------|
| All trees to be planted at 3m interval spacing and to be staggered to prevent a straight line arrangement. | | | | |
| Percentage | Species | Form | Height | Species Groupings |
| 20% | ACER CAMPESTRIS (Red Maple) | RR Transplant (1+1) | 60-80cm | 3-5 |
| 20% | FRAXUS SAXATILIS (Silver Birch) | RR Transplant (1+1) | 60-100cm | 3-5 |
| 10% | PRUNUS AVIUM (PO) (Wild Cherry) | RR Transplant (1+1) | 60-100cm | 3-5 |
| 30% | QUERCUS ROBUR (Pedunculate Oak) | RR Feathered (2+) | 125-150cm | 5-7 |
| 20% | MALUS SYLVESTRIS (Malus sylvestris) (Crab Apple) | RR Transplant (1+1) | 60-100cm | 3-5 |

| Hedgerow Planting | | | | |
|-------------------|---------------------------------|-----------|--------------------|-------------------|
| Percentage | Species | Form | Height | Species Groupings |
| 15% | ACER CAMPESTRIS (Red Maple) | 400-600mm | 5 per linear metre | 3-5 |
| 10% | CORNUS ALGIDA (Dogwood) | 400-600mm | 5 per linear metre | 3-5 |
| 10% | CORYLUS AVERRANZA (Hazel) | 400-600mm | 5 per linear metre | 3-5 |
| 40% | COTONEASTER HYBRIDA (Muscotard) | 400-600mm | 5 per linear metre | 5-7 |
| 25% | KOELERIA (Dog Rose) | 400-600mm | 5 per linear metre | 3-5 |

Proposed Planting
 Tree Planting is proposed along the access road of the proposed development. The trees that will be planted are indicated in the Planting Table. Understoreys will also be sown with meadow grass seed mix where no hedgerow is present. Trees will be planted in the areas and locations specified. Meadow grass seed mix will be planted on the cut and fill areas surrounding the anaerobic digester plant. Hedgerow shrubs will be planted along the length of the access road forming a hedgerow, with transplants of *Prunus avium* and *Malus sylvestris* planted every 20m within the hedgerow.

Planting Phases
 Before planting begins, areas will be removed of any rubbish, debris and unwanted existing vegetation. Some healthy and native plants that are to be removed will be kept, if possible to become part of the proposed planting scheme. New vegetation should be planted during the dormant season between October and March, if construction does not finish until Spring then planting will not be able to be carried out until the following October at the earliest. The planting scheme is a mixture of native species local to the area. Tree planting will be organised in 3 metre interval spacing. Ideally whips (40 - 90cm in height) will be used as these will establish quickly and thrive. Shrub plants will be planted in double staggered rows with 4-6 plants per metre. Local specimens are recommended as they will establish faster having become accustomed to the climate.

Management
 Prior to construction works, any trees to be retained within the extent of the works should be protected with adequate temporary fencing in accordance with the provisions of BS5837, 2012 Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction - recommendations. Areas designated for landscaping will not be used during or as part of the construction process. During the early years light regular trimming during the autumn will encourage dense and bushy growth. Mulch placed immediately after planting will reduce the amount of weeds and will help retain soil moisture.

The planting will be inspected regularly during the first summer following planting. If any plant failures are identified these will be removed and replaced during the next dormant season.

To protect young plants from damage they will be protected using plant guards - shrub species to be fitted with a 0.75m 'Tubex' shrub shelter and tree species to be fitted with a 1.2m 'Tubex' tree shelter. If necessary a rabbit-proof fence will be installed around the areas of planting. Trees will be managed to avoid conflict within site usage - they will not be planted too close to areas where damage could occur to the roof ball.

Management Objectives
 The management objective of landscaping specification is to provide screening, improve the visual amenity of the site for views from the South and West and to increase biodiversity at the site. This will be done by planting trees and shrubs to act as screens for reduced visual impact and to provide suitable habitats for vertebrate and invertebrate species.

Aftercare and Maintenance
 The aftercare of the vegetation is planned for five years after planting. Within the first year the new planting will be inspected regularly during the first summer following planting. Plant failures will need to be replaced during the next dormant season. Weeds will be removed (by hand or chemically) and during the first 5 years the planting will be regularly inspected.

| | | | | |
|--|---|---------------|---|--|
| Figure 4 Planting Specification Drawing Number: IGE03_PP_003 | Scale*: Various | Papersize: A3 | Project: Green's Lodge Farm (land southwest of A606) | |
| | Drawn by: FI/EW Date: 8th March 2019 | | | |
| | Planting shown is representative of approximately 3 years growth | | | |

* When printing please ensure the document is printed at actual size to preserve the correct scale.

Figure 6: Planting Plan (2019-03-08)

Finds

Nicholas Cooper

Four undiagnostic fragments of ceramic building material (nos. 3-6), weighing 150g, were recovered during the walkover survey on 27/9/18. The hardness of the fabrics and their flowing, mixed, appearance confirms that they are of modern earthenware and therefore 18th-20th century in date, probably from field drains. They have not been retained in the finds archive.

Discussion and Conclusion

No further areas of archaeological deposit or artefact scatter were identified during this work and no finds of any significance were made. The visibility of the cultivated areas was acceptable and therefore there is a degree of credibility to these observations and it is unlikely that the fieldwalked area covers any areas of Roman activity.

The area in the south-west of the fieldwalked area had not been cultivated and remained as set-aside. It was therefore not possible to make any observations in this area and thus the potential of this area on the basis of surface finds remains unknown.

Although this work has not directly contributed to the research aims as stated, it has identified that the pottery scatter and Roman settlement activity identified to the east of the proposed trackway during the 2017 evaluation does not appear to extend this far west. Roman ceramics survive well in the ploughsoil and the work has provided a useful indicator for the archaeological potential. However, Iron Age and Saxon pottery is not as long-lived once disturbed and the negative fieldwalking results are therefore not quite as reliable for these periods. It is possible that undisturbed earthfast features from the Iron Age and Saxon periods may still be present.

Archive and publication

No material of any significance has been identified and no accession number requested

1 Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report No. 2019-011)

1 recording sheets

1 Photo Record sheet

1 Contact sheet of digital photographs

1 CD digital photographs

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work through the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York.

A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank Nicky Strudwick and Debs Cairns of E4environment.

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Appendix 1 Fieldwalking record sheet

| ULAS Fieldwalking Record Sheet | | Site Accession no: |
|---|---|-----------------------------------|
| Site Name: <u>STYGATE LANE, PICKWELL.</u> | Parish: <u>SOMERBY</u> | County: <u>LEICESTERSHIRE</u> |
| OS Field name/No: | ULAS Field No: | Nat Grid Square: <u>SK806 127</u> |
| Landowner: Tenant: <u>eharisonak</u> | Address: | Phone: |
| Date walked: <u>27.9.18</u> | Photo Nos: <u>1-8</u> | |
| Purpose: | | |
| Method: | | |
| Distance of lines: | Approximate direction: <u>N-S</u> / E-W / <u>NE-SW</u> / NW-SE | |
| CONDITIONS am / <u>pm</u> Visibility: <u>Good</u> / Indifferent / Poor Cloud cover: Continuous / Broken / None Sun: even light / <u>high sunlight with little shadow</u> / low sunlight with strong shadow | | |
| GROUND CONDITIONS State of Land: a) Wet / Damp / <u>Dry</u> / Frozen b) Ploughed and unweathered / ploughed and weathered / sown / other (specify) <u>DRILLED & UNWEATHERED.</u> If sown, was crop <u>N/A</u> c) Not yet through / just through / thick but viable for walking / other (specify) Are there signs that ploughing has cut into the subsoil?: Yes / <u>No</u> / Unclear as follows: | | |
| Geology: <u>IRONSTONE BEDROCK.</u> | Description of ploughsoil: <u>FALSBLE SILT/CLAY</u> <u>RECENTLY DRILLED & GRAZED</u> | |
| Fieldwalking team: <u>A. HATM</u> | | |
| EDM Erics: <u>H/hellGPS</u> <u>WAYPOINTS 001-039</u> | Finds Codes: <u>003 TO 006 WAYPOINTS.</u> | |
| Notes/Sketch of transects and topography: <div style="text-align: right;">NOT TO SCALE</div> <p>The sketch map shows a diagonal road labeled 'STYGATE LANE' at the top left. Below it is a 'TRACK WALKED' indicated by a wavy line. Further down is a 'STONE TRACKWAY' with a dashed line. To the right is a 'HEDGE' represented by a series of small circles. Two areas are marked with diagonal hatching and labeled 'SET-ASIDE COVERED IN VEGETATION'. A north arrow is in the top left corner.</p> | | |



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