

**Archaeological Evaluation on Land
At 7 Cosby Road, Littlethorpe,
Leicestershire (SP 542 960)**

Greg Jones

**Planning Application No. 04/1168/IPX
Planning Authority: Blaby District Council**

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Archaeological Evaluation on Land at 7, Cosby Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire (SP 542 960)

Greg Farnworth-Jones

1. Summary

An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land at 7, Cosby Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire, (SP 542 960) on the 27th April 2006. This work was in advance of the proposed construction of three dwellings with associated garages, eight residential units and conversion of building into one residential unit with associated parking. This work was carried out on behalf of Wallace Green Builders Ltd by University of Leicester Archaeological Services. A total of two evaluation trenches were excavated, the archaeological results of which were negative. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services Section, accession number X.A50.2006.

2. Introduction

2.1 This document constitutes the first stage of archaeological assessment to have been carried out on land at 7, Cosby Road, Littlethorpe, (SP 542 960). The archaeological assessment was being undertaken on behalf of David Granger Architects by University of Leicester Archaeological Services.

2.2 Wallace Green Builders Ltd propose to convert an area of c.0.13ha of land at 7 Cosby Road three dwellings with associated garages, eight residential units and conversion of building into one residential unit with associated parking. The Senior Planning Archaeologist of the Historic and Natural Environment Team of Leicestershire County Council, in his capacity as archaeological adviser to the planning authority, requested that a phase of intrusive trial trench evaluation be undertaken at the site to confirm the presence or absence of archaeological remains at the site as a condition on planning.

2.3 The development area is located close to the centre of Littlethorpe, Leicestershire (SP 542 968) and therefore possesses a moderate to high chance of containing archaeological deposits.

3. Site Background

3.1 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 156 indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to consist of Lower Lias clay and limestone. The proposed development area is fairly flat at a height of c.68.3m O.D.

3.2 The development area consists of c.0.13 ha within which is proposed three dwellings with associated garages, eight residential units and conversion of building into one residential unit with associated parking. The development area is located close to the centre of Littlethorpe, Leicestershire (SP 542 968). Littlethorpe was part

of an estate centred on Narborough which was inhabited by the 8th century AD (George 2004). Narborough included a defended dwelling which played an important part in the running of the estate which comprised Narborough, Huncote, Croft, Sutton, Cosby and Littlethorpe (Jarrett 1987, 12). The estate was probably dispersed by the 10th century, with separate villages forming and Littlethorpe becoming a minor township (*ibid*). The Domesday book states that Ralph held (Little) Thorpe from Earl Aubrey and it consisted of 2 carucates of land, 'land for 2 ploughs, 2 villagers with 1 smallholder have them. A mill at 2s' (Morris 1979). Prior to 1800 the area surrounding Littlethorpe was agricultural, however, with the development of small cottage industries, such as framework knitting and boot making, Littlethorpe became more dependent on industry than farming (Crofts and Moreton 1998). Quarrying took over as the major industry in the area in the mid 19th century, which has since died out (*ibid*).

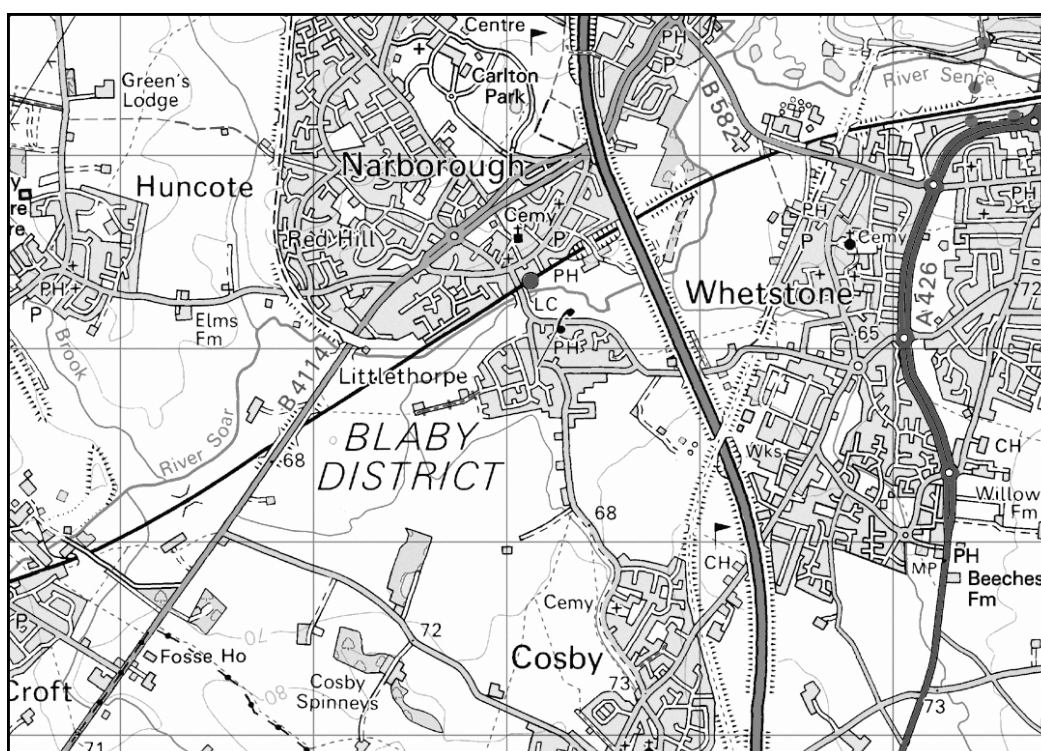


Fig. 1 Site location

Reproduced from the OS map Landranger 140 Leicester, Coventry and Rugby area 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002186.

4. Methodology

4.1 All work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhered to their relevant *Standard and Guidance*.

4.2 The main objectives of the evaluation were:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any 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 produce an archive and report of any results.

4.3 The Senior Planning Archaeologist had requested that *c.* 60 sq metres will be evaluated providing a *c.* 5 % sample of the *c.* 0.13ha. area where new buildings are proposed. This was to comprise of two 20m x 1.5m trenches (Meek, 2006).

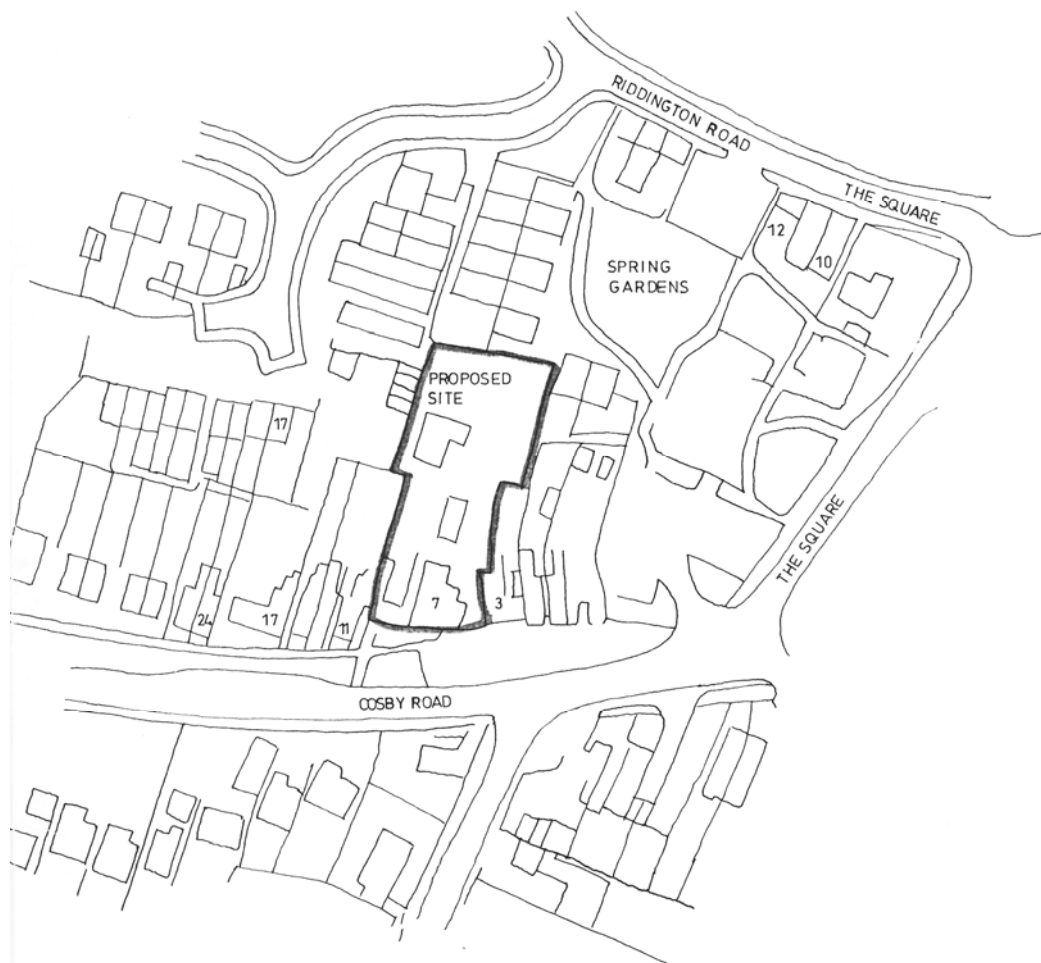


Figure 2: Location of development area (as supplied by the client – North to the right of the page)

4.4 Topsoil/modern overburden was removed in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision, down to the uppermost archaeological deposits by JCB 3C and mini-digger using a toothless ditching bucket. Trenches were excavated to a width of 1.6m.

4.5 Trenches were examined by hand cleaning. Any archaeological deposits or significant natural deposits were planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans have been tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Spot heights were taken as appropriate.

4.6 Sections were drawn as appropriate, including records of at least one longitudinal face of each trench.

4.7 Trench locations were recorded using an electronic distance measurer and tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

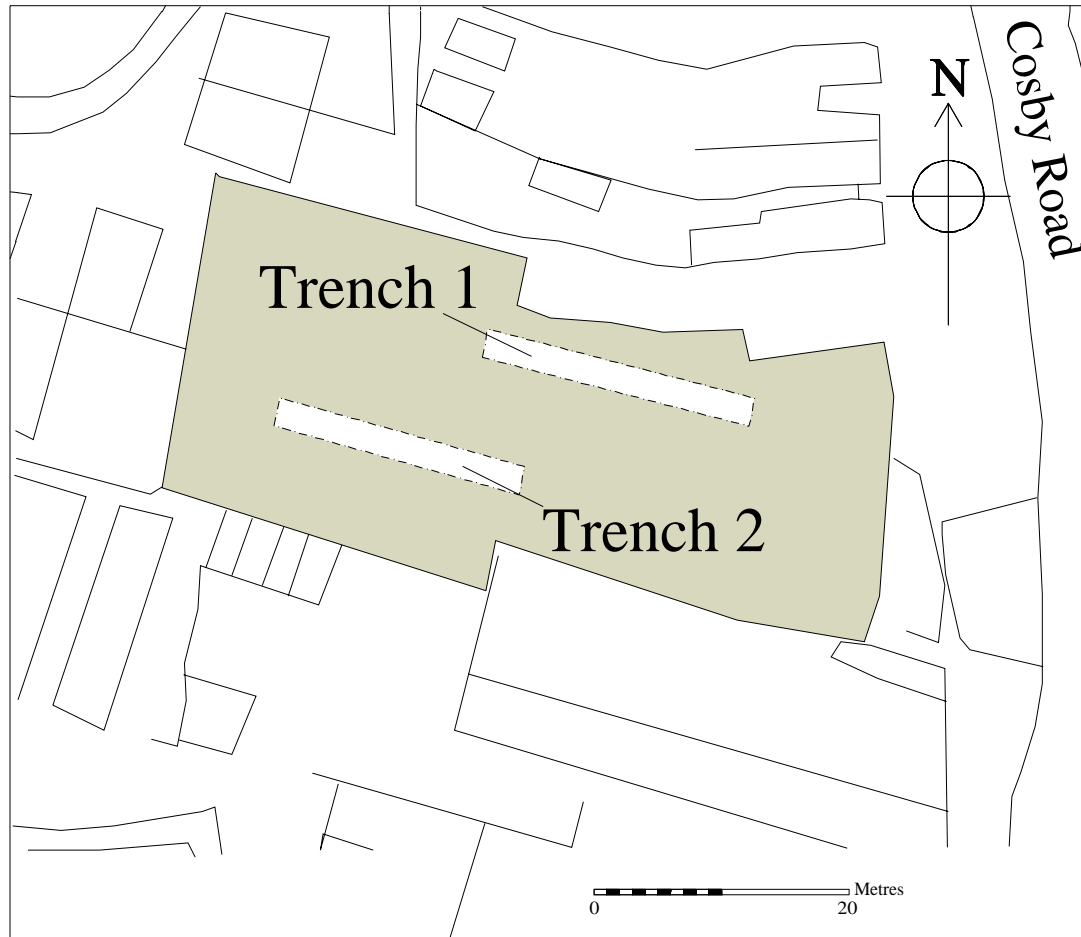


Figure 3. Trench Location Plan within development area

5. Results

5.1 Trench 1

Trench 1 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	24m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	38.4 sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.68.3 m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.67.2 m OD

Trench 1 was located on the eastern side of the site towards north and was orientated east-west (fig.3). Initial machining revealed a mid greyish brown, friable sandy clay silt topsoil containing 10% brick fragments. This revealed at a depth of c.0.5m a firm light grey subsoil layer consisting of sandy silt clay with occasional rounded stones. At a depth of c.0.6m light orangey yellow gravelly clay natural was revealed. Located at 4.5m from the western edge of trench 1 was located a concrete and brick foundation base. With a height of >1.1m and a width of 4m, machining continued on the eastern side of the foundation taking the total trench length to 24m. No archaeological deposits or features were seen in trench 1.

5.2 Trench 2

Trench 2 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	20m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	32 sq.m
<i>Surface Level (m OD)</i>	c.68.3 m OD
<i>Base of Trench (m OD)</i>	c.67.2 m OD

Trench 2 was located on the western side of the site towards south and was orientated east-west (fig.3). Initial machining revealed a topsoil layer almost identical to that seen in trench 1. This revealed a light yellowish-grey sandy silt clay subsoil. At a depth of c.0.7m natural was revealed which consisted of light orangey yellow gravelly clay. No archaeological deposits or features were seen in trench 2.

6 Conclusion

6.1 No archaeological features or deposits were discovered at 7, Cosby Road, Littlethorpe. The archaeological results of the evaluation were therefore negative. The absence of finds may also indicate that the area is outside the village core of Littlethorpe, although within the constraints of a 5% sample this may not be certain.

7 Archive

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services Section, accession number X.A50.2006.

8 Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the clients, Wallace Green Builders Ltd and their architects, David Granger Architects for their assistance and co-operation on site. James Meek managed the project, and the fieldwork was carried out by the author with the assistance of Andy Hyam, all of ULAS.

9 Bibliography

Crofts, J. and Moreton, N. 1998 *Enderby, Narborough and Littlethorpe*. The Chalford Publishing Company, Stroud.

George, S., 2004 *An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment for a Proposed Residential Development at Land to the rear of The Old House, 16 Station Road, Littlethorpe, Narborough, Leicestershire (SP 541 970)* ULAS Report 2004-151

Jarrett, R.P. 1987 *Narborough and Littlethorpe: A Revised Parish History*. Narborough Parish Council, Narborough.

Meek, J. E, 2006 *Design Specification for archaeological evaluation at 7 Cosby Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire, (SP 542 960)* ULAS Ref. 06/345

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16.5.2006

10 Appendix 1- Design Specification

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for Additional Archaeological Evaluation by Trial Trench Proposed Residential Development at 7 Cosby Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire

NGR: SP 542 960

Client: David Granger Architects

Planning Authority: Blaby District Council

Planning Application Number: 04/1168/1/PX

1 Introduction

1.1 *Definition and scope of the specification*

This document is a design specification for an additional phase of intrusive archaeological field evaluation (AFE) at the above site, in accordance with DOE Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning, para.30). The fieldwork specified below is intended to provide further indications of character and extent of buried archaeological remains in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority.

1.2 The definition of archaeological field evaluation, taken from the Institute of Field Archaeologists Standards and Guidance: for Archaeological Field Evaluation (IFA S&G: AFE) is a limited programme of non-intrusive and/ or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

1.1.3 The document provides details of the work proposed by ULAS on behalf of the client for:

- The archaeological evaluation by trial trench of an area of land at 7 Cosby Road, Littlethorpe, Leicestershire

2. Background

2.1 *Context of the Project*

2.1.1 Planning permission has been granted by Blaby District Council for the proposed erection of three dwellings and associated garages, eight residential units and conversion of building into one residential unit with new pitched roof at rear with associated parking and access. A condition on the planning permission requires archaeological investigation and appropriate mitigation prior to the commencement of any construction.

2.1.2 The development area is located close to the centre of Littlethorpe, Leicestershire (NGR SP 542 968; see figs. 1 and 2).

2.1.3 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 156 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Lower Lias clay and limestone. The proposed development area is fairly flat at a height of c.68.3m OD. The development area is about 0.13ha in size.

2.1.4 Due to the potential for archaeological deposits to be present on the site the senior Planning Archaeologist of Leicestershire County Council has required a phase of intrusive trial trench evaluation be undertaken at the site to confirm the presence or absence of archaeological remains at the site as a condition on planning.

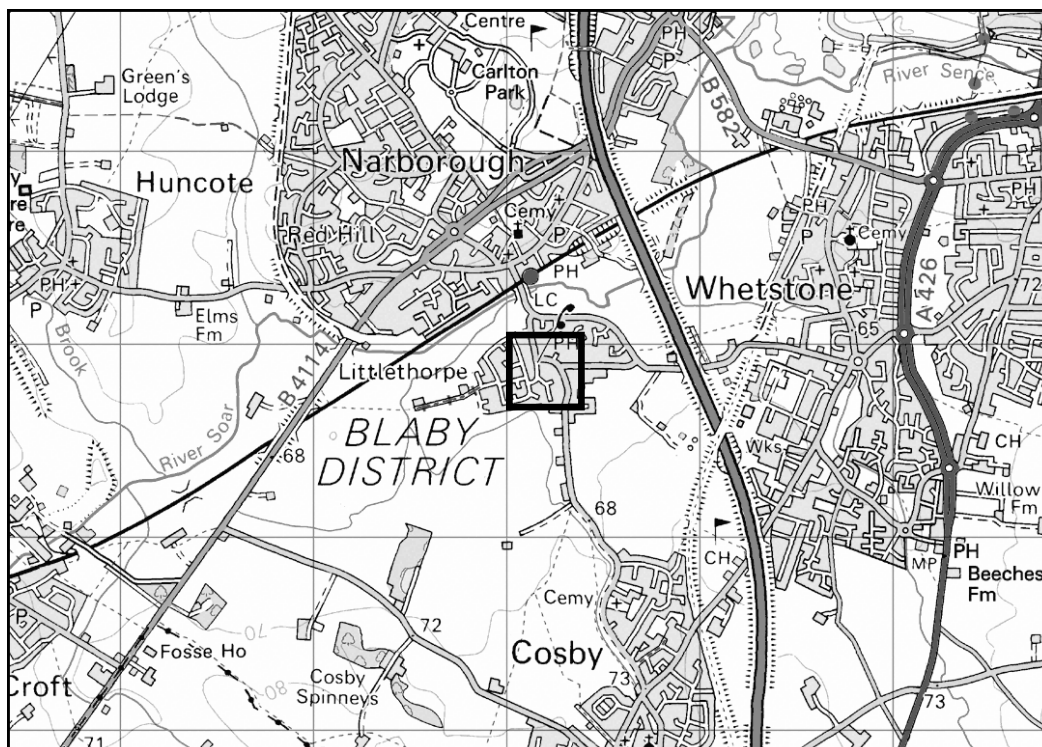


Fig. 1 Site location

Reproduced from the OS map Landranger 140 Leicester, Coventry and Rugby area 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002186.

3. Archaeological Objectives

3.1 The main objectives of the evaluation will be:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits within the site area.
- The archaeological evaluation will provide information on the extent, character, date, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality of archaeological deposits within the area.
- The potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains, whether known or postulated, will be assessed.
- The archaeological evaluation, once the above information has been gathered, will help suggest mitigation strategies to preserve/avoid archaeology or whether further stages of archaeological work are necessary.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

3.2 Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation 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 proposed development.

4. Methodology

4.1 General Methodology and Standards

4.1.1 All work will follow the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (1999).

4.1.2 Staffing, recording systems, health and safety provisions and insurance details are included below.

4.1.3 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site by the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are met and professional standards are maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with the Planning authority and the Client, if required.

4.2 ***Trial Trenching Methodology***

4.2.1 Prior to any machining of trial trenches general photographs of the site areas may be taken. It is ULAS' understanding that the development area is clear and accessible by a machine to undertake trial trenching, and that there are no other constraints such as services etc within the area.

4.2.2 Topsoil will be removed in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision, down to the uppermost archaeological deposits by mechanical excavator (JCB 3CX or equivalent) using a toothless ditching bucket. Trenches will be excavated to a width of 1.5m and down to the top of archaeological deposits.

4.2.3 Two trenches of 20m length are to be located within the area. The proposed trench locations are shown on Fig. 3, but this may alter due to available space or other as yet unforeseen constraints.

4.2.4 The trench will be examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located will be planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans will be tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.2.5 Sections of any excavated archaeological features will be drawn at an appropriate scale. At least one longitudinal face of each trench will be recorded. All sections will be levelled and tied to the Ordnance Survey Datum, or a permanent fixed bench mark.

4.2.6 Trench locations will be recorded using an electronic distance measurer. These will then be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

4.2.7 Any human remains will initially be left *in situ* and will only be removed if necessary for their protection, under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations.

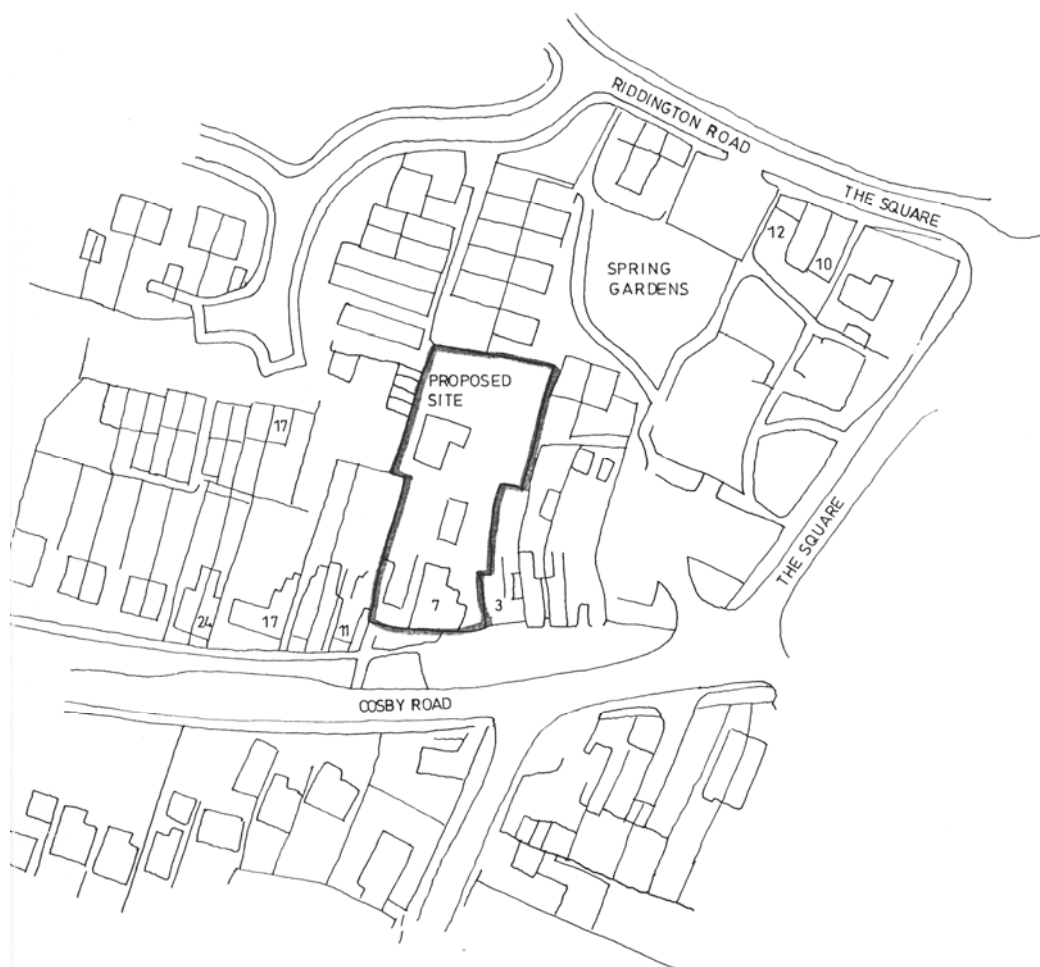


Figure 2: Location of development area (as supplied by the client – North to the right of the page)

4.3 **Recording Systems**

- 4.3.1 The ULAS recording manual, will be used as a guide for all recording.
- 4.3.2 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.
- 4.3.3 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 trench plan at appropriate scale, which will show the location of the areas investigated in relationship to the investigation area and OS grid.
- 4.3.4 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made. Sections including the half-sections of individual layers of features will be drawn as necessary, typically at a scale of 1:10. The relative height of all principal strata and features will be recorded.
- 4.3.5 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared 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.
- 4.3.6 This record will be compiled and checked during the course of the evaluation.

5. **Finds and Samples**

- 5.1 The IFA Guidelines for Finds Work will be adhered to.
- 5.2 All antiquities, valuables, objects or remains of archaeological interest, other than articles declared by Coroner's Inquest to be subject to the Treasure Act, discovered in or under the Site

during the carrying out of the project by ULAS or during works carried out on the Site by the Client shall be deemed to be the property of ULAS provided that ULAS after due examination of the said Archaeological Discoveries shall transfer ownership of all Archaeological Discoveries unconditionally to Leicestershire County Council for storage in perpetuity.

5.3 An accession number will be obtained from Leicestershire County Council prior to the start of the evaluation that will be used to identify all finds and records from the site.

5.4 During the fieldwork, different sampling strategies may be employed according to the perceived importance of the strata under investigation. Close attention will always be given to sampling for date, structure and environment. If significant archaeological features are sample excavated, the environmental sampling strategy is likely to include the following:

- i. A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.
- ii. Any buried soils or well sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.
- iii. Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located.
- iv. Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated and datable. Consultation with the specialist will be undertaken.

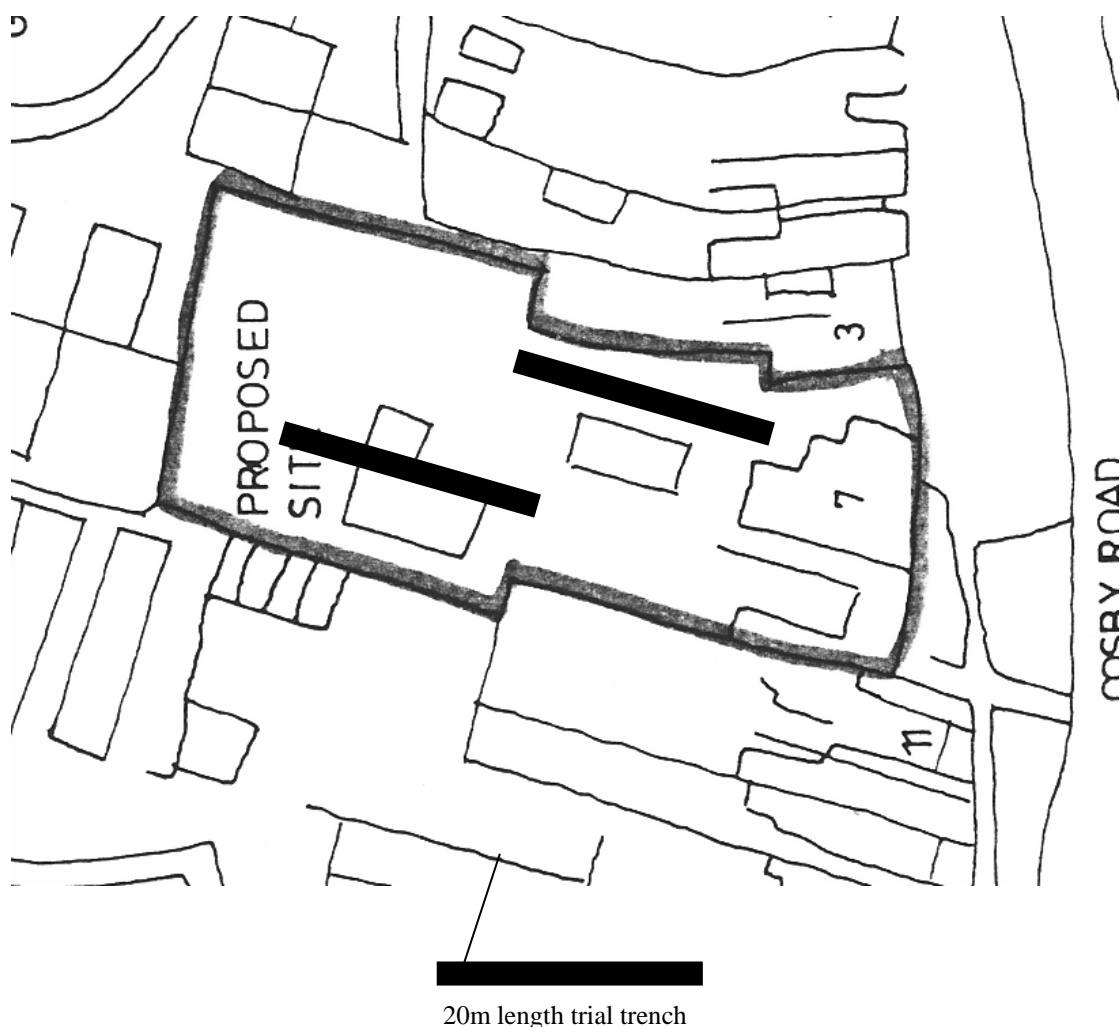


Figure 3: Proposed trench location plan

- 5.5 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording with the approval of the Planning Archaeologist. The IFA Guidelines for Finds Work will be adhered to.
- 5.6 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner. Where appropriate they will be cleaned, marked and receive remedial conservation in accordance with recognised best-practice. This will include the site code number, finds number and context number. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self sealing plastic bags, again marked with site code, finds and context numbers and boxed by material in standard storage boxes (340mm x 270mm x 195mm). All materials will be fully labelled, catalogued and stored in appropriate containers.

6. Report and Archive

- 6.1 The full report in A4 format will usually follow within eight weeks of the completion of the fieldwork and copies will be dispatched to the Client (2 copies), Senior Planning Archaeologist/SMR (2 copies) and Blaby District Council Planning Authority (1 copy).
- 6.2 The report will include consideration of:
- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the evaluation.
 - The nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any structural, artefactual and environmental material uncovered.
 - The anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits.
 - The anticipated archaeological impact of the current proposals.
 - Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
 - Summary.
 - The location and size of the archive.
- 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 usually be presented to within six months of the completion of fieldwork. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

7 Publication and Dissemination of Results

- 7.1 A summary of the work will be submitted to the local archaeological journal, the Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society. A larger report will be submitted for inclusion if the results of the evaluation warrant it.

8. Acknowledgement and Publicity

- 8.1 ULAS shall acknowledge the contribution of the Client in any displays, broadcasts or publications relating to the site or in which the report may be included.
- 8.2 ULAS and the Client shall each ensure that a senior employee shall be responsible for dealing with any enquiries received from press, television and any other broadcasting media and members of the public. All enquiries made to ULAS shall be directed to the Client for comment.

9. Copyright

- 9.1 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.

10. Timetable

- 10.1 It is envisaged that the site work will take three days on-site with two archaeologists. The work will be undertaken before the end of April 2006.

- 10.2 The on-site director/supervisor will carry out the post-excavation work, with time allocated within the costing of the project for analysis of any artefacts found on the site by the relevant in-house specialists at ULAS.

11. Health and Safety

- 11.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Archaeological Services Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety manual with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is attached as Appendix 1. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate. The HSE has determined that archaeological investigations are exempt from CDM regulations.
- 11.2 A Risks assessment form will be completed prior to work commencing on-site, and updated as necessary during the site works.

12 Insurance

- 12.1 All employees, consultants and volunteers are covered by the University of Leicester public liability insurance, £20m cover with St. Paul Travellers (policy no. UCPOP3651237). Professional indemnity insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters 50% and Brit Insurance 50%, £10m cover (policy no. PUNIO3605). Employer's Liability Insurance is with St. Paul Travellers, cover £10m (policy no. UCPOP3651237).

13. Monitoring arrangements

- 13.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and Planning Archaeologist subject to the health and safety requirements of the site. Notice will be given to the Senior Planning Archaeologist before the commencement of the archaeological evaluation in order that monitoring arrangements can be made.
- 13.2 All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the IFA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*.
- 13.3 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

14. Contingencies and unforeseen circumstances

- 14.1 In the event that unforeseen archaeological discoveries are made during the project, ULAS shall inform the site agent/project manager, Client and the Planning Archaeologist and Planning Authority and prepare a short written statement with plan detailing the archaeological evidence. Following assessment of the archaeological remains by the Planning Archaeologist, ULAS shall, if required, implement an amended scheme of investigation on behalf of the client as appropriate.

15. Bibliography

- MGC 1992 Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections 1992 (Museums and Galleries Commission)
- RFG/FRG 1993 Guidelines for the preparation of site archives (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993)
- SMA 1993 Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland 1993 (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

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APPENDIX 1

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement:

A risks assessment will be produced by on-site staff, which will be updated and amended during the course of the evaluation.

1. Nature of the work

- 1.1 The work will involve machine excavation by mechanical excavator during daylight hours to reveal underlying archaeological deposits. Overall depth is likely to be c. 0.3 m with possible features excavated to a depth of another 1m. Trenches will not be excavated to a depth exceeding 1.2m. Spoil will be stockpiled no less than 1.5 m from the edge of the excavation, the topsoil and subsoil being kept separate. Remaining works will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. Deeper features will be fenced with lamp irons and hazard tape. Two staff will be used on the evaluation.

2 Risks Assessment

2.1 Working on an excavation site.

Precautions. Trenches to not be excavated to a depth exceeding 1.2m. Spoil will be kept 1.5m away from the edge of the excavated area to prevent falls of loose debris. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn when working in deeper sections or with plant. First aid kit to be kept in site accommodation/vehicle. Vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 Working with plant.

Precautions. Archaeologists experienced in working with machines will supervise topsoil stripping at all times. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. Machine driver to be suitably qualified and insured. If services or wells are encountered machining will be halted until extent has been established by hand excavation or areas where it is safe to machine have been established. It is assumed that there is safe and permitted access to the site area.

2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.

In the event of waterlogging preventing work continuing, it is proposed to excavate a sump, suitably fenced and clearly marked to enable the water to drain away from the trenches to facilitate recording. Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Vials 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.