



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
High Hopes Nursery,
Sandhills Avenue,
North Hamilton,
Leicester**

NGR: SK62994 07309

Andrew Hyam



ULAS Report No. 2019-083
©2019

**An Archaeological watching Brief on land at
High Hopes Nursery, Sandhills Avenue
North Hamilton
Leicester**

NGR: SK 62992 07317

A R Hyam

For: Jag's Childcare

Filename/Version	Checked by	Date
2019-083v1	Richard Buckley	24/7/2019

This Report has been prepared solely for the person/party and project for which it has been commissioned and should not be relied upon or used by any other person/party or for any other project without the written consent of ULAS. No part of this report is to be copied in any way without prior written consent. While every effort has been made to provide detailed and accurate information, however, ULAS cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies contained within this report

**University of Leicester
Archaeological Services
University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH
Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614**

**ULAS Report Number 2019-083
©2019
Accession Number A16.2019**

OASIS Information

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1- 358219		
	Project Name	Watching Brief at High Hopes Nursery, Sandhills Ave, North Hamilton, Leicester		
	Start/end dates	26.06.2019		
	Previous/Future Work	Watching brief in November 2017		
	Project Type	Watching Brief		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Nursery		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
	Planning Ref.	20182289		
PROJECT LOCATION	County	Leicester		
	Site Address/Postcode	Sandhills Avenue, North Hamilton, Leicester, LE5 1LU		
	Study Area	100m ²		
	Site Coordinates	SK 62994 07309		
	Height OD	88m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Leicester City Council		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Richard Buckley		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Andrew Hyam		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Jag's Childcare		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	LCC Museum service	LCC Museum service	LCC Museum service
	ID (Acc. No.)		A16.2019	A16.2019
	Contents	None	Photographs	Report, pro-forma record sheets
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Description	Developer Report A4 pdf		
	Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at High Hopes Nursery, Sandhills Avenue, North Hamilton, Leicester		
	Author	Hyam, A		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2019-083		
	Date	2019		
	Publisher/Place	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		

CONTENTS

Summary	1
Introduction.....	1
Background.....	1
Objectives	4
Methodology	4
Results.....	5
Discussion.....	8
Archive.....	8
Publication	8
Bibliography	9
Appendix 1 Post Pad Pit and Site Photographs	10

FIGURES

Figure 1 Site location.....	2
Figure 2 Proposed extension to present building.....	3
Figure 3 Post pad locations for the nursery building.....	3
Figure 4 Site of extension before excavation.....	5
Figure 5 Relocated drain.....	6
Figure 6 Modern drain pipe in Post Pad Pit 41.....	6
Figure 7 Post Pad Pit 43.....	7
Figure 8 Fully excavated post pad pits	7
Figure 9 Fully excavated post pad pits	8

An Archaeological Watching Brief at High Hopes Nursery, Sandhills Avenue, North Hamilton, Leicester.

Andrew Hyam

Summary

An Archaeological Watching Brief was carried out on the 26th of June 2019 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of Jag's Childcare on land at Sandhills Avenue, North Hamilton, Leicester LE5 1LU (SK 62994 07309). The fieldwork was undertaken to observe groundworks associated with the erection of an extension to an existing modular nursery school. The archaeological work observed the excavation of 25 post pad pits which will support the new extension.

No archaeological features or deposits were present in any of the pits.

The archive will be deposited with Leicester City Museums Services under Accession Number A16.2019

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 watching brief at High Hopes Nursery, Sandhills Avenue, North Hamilton, Leicester, LE5 1LU. Under planning application 20182289 proposals have been submitted for the construction of an extension to the existing High Hopes nursery building which was constructed in late 2017. Such work would have the potential to impact upon any buried archaeological remains, should any be present. Therefore the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicester City Council requested that an archaeological watching brief take place during groundworks. This work follows on from an archaeological watching brief which observed the groundworks for the first part of the nursery in November 2017 (Gonzales Rodriguez, 2018. ULAS Report 2018-027).

Background

The development area lies to the north of Humberstone Village and is approximately 5.6km northeast of Leicester City Centre (Fig. 1). The nursery school site is located within the residential area of Hamilton which has grown in size over the past two decades. It is on the northern side of Sandhills Avenue within the grounds of Hope Hamilton Primary School (Fig. 2). The site covers approximately 155 square metres and lies at a height of c.89m aOD. The nursery building is on a small area of level ground which drops down to the north and east towards the primary school and playing field. The area immediately to the north and east of the proposed extension appears to have been landscaped. The ground to the south of the nursery rises to the south-west towards Sandhills Avenue.

The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology consists of Wilmcote Limestone Member - Mudstone and Limestone.

The archaeological watching brief which took place in 2017 revealed two undated possible archaeological features, a ditch and a pit, which would not be affected by the proposed development. Therefore, these features were noted but not investigated and no finds were recovered from them. The new extension will be attached to the north-eastern end of the existing building and will almost double the size of the present building (Fig. 2). The existing building will be extended slightly to the south-west with the addition of a canopy on previously disturbed ground.

The lightweight building is supported on a series of concrete pads which are dug through the topsoil and subsoil (Fig. 3). The 2017 watching brief entailed the stripping of the topsoil and some subsoil before excavating the holes for the post pads. However as the land drops away to the north the pads for this phase were excavated directly through the topsoil without removing any turf.

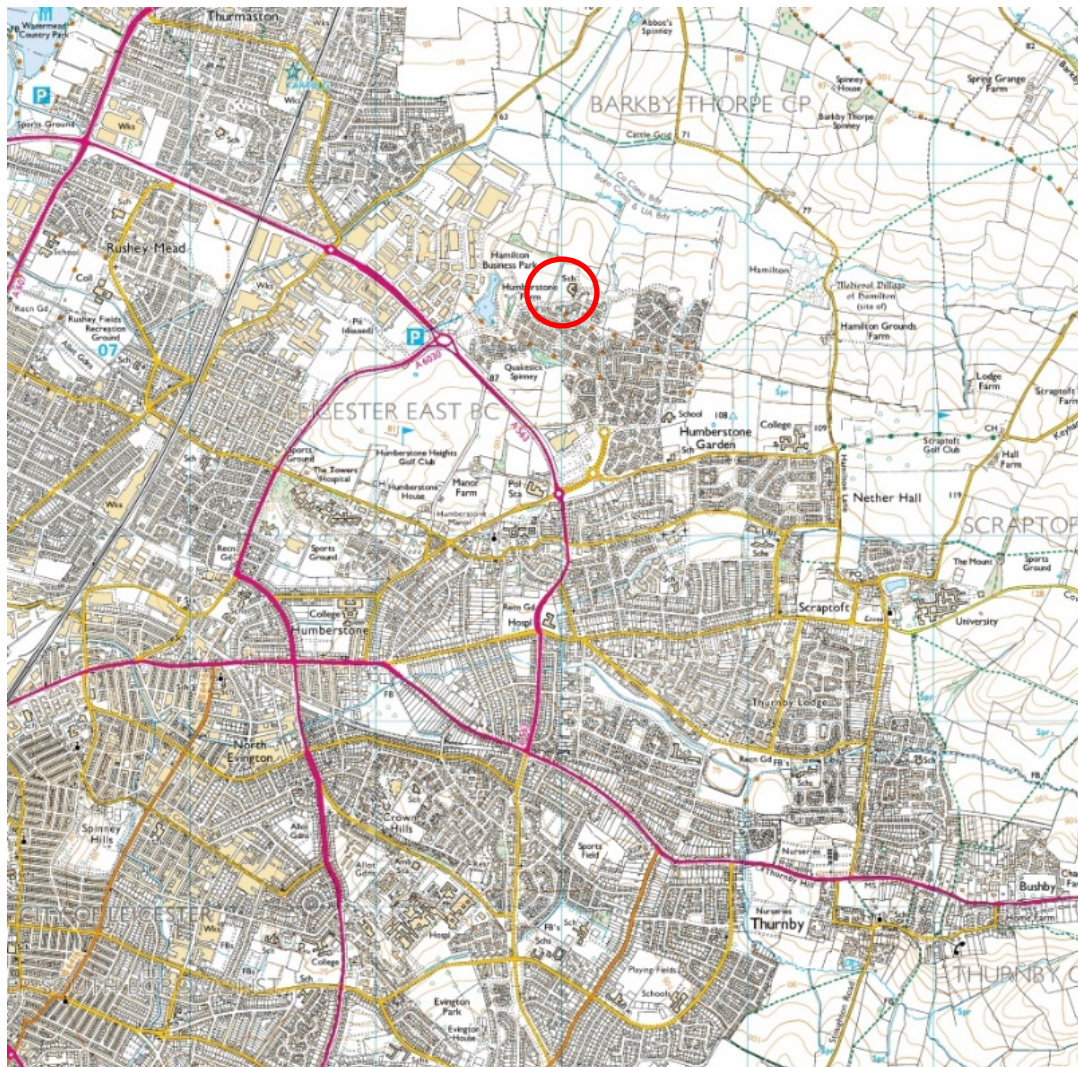


Figure 1 Site location
Site highlighted

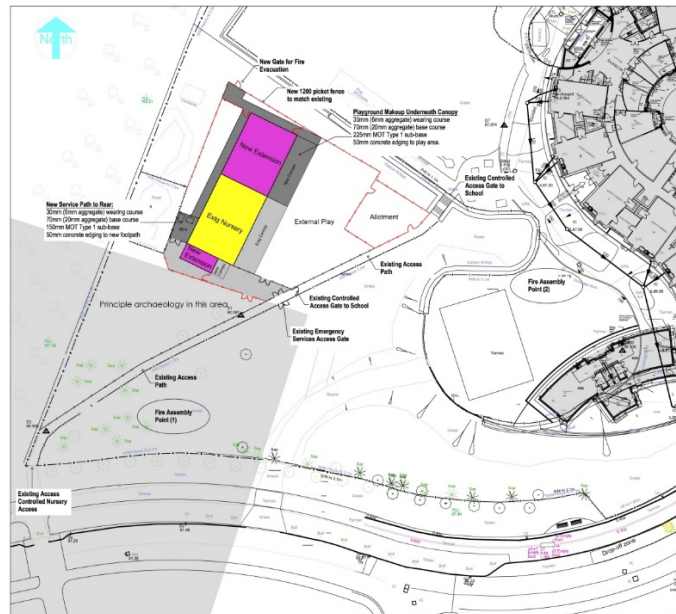


Figure 2 Proposed extension to present building
Plan supplied by client. The purple represents the new build

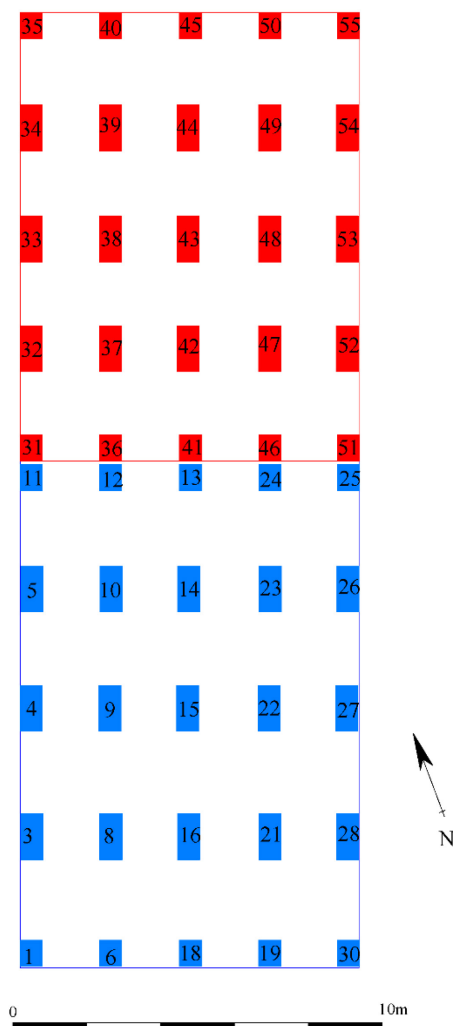


Figure 3 Post pad locations for the nursery building
Blue represents 2017 existing building, red are the 2019 extension post pads

Objectives

All exploratory and mitigation work was considered in light of the *Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Cooper 2006) and *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight et al. 2012), along with targeting national research aims, highlighted as Historic England's critical research priorities for the medieval period (EH 2010). Within the research objectives, this archaeological scheme of work could contribute to regional research agendas on medieval landscape studies and morphologies of rural settlements.

Generally the main objectives of the archaeological investigation 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 establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape and to advance understanding of the heritage assets.
- To recover artefacts and ecofacts to compare with other assemblages and results.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project aims, the principal objective was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, and significance of the heritage assets within their local and regional context. The specific research agenda topics noted in the ULAS WSI have been identified as relevant to this study, based on the current state of knowledge within the application area.

Methodology

The Written Scheme of Investigation (LaCombe 2017) approved by the City Planning Archaeologist on behalf of the planning authority, who also monitored the fieldwork, required an archaeological watching brief during groundworks in order to determine the presence/absence, character and extent of archaeological remains. This WSI was written for the original building in 2017 but is also applicable to this phase.

Excavation of each post pad pit was undertaken using a Kubota KX71-3 mechanical excavator fitted with a 0.6m ditching bucket, with topsoil and overburden removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision.

A photographic record of the investigations was prepared, including photographs illustrating both in general and detail the principal features. The photographic record also includes working shots to illustrate the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

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 (2014) and Archaeological Excavations (2014).

Results

Prior to the excavation of the post pads a drain running from the existing building had to be diverted along the western side of the extension to join with the existing junction to the north-east of the site (Figs 4 and 5). The trench for this cut through approximately 0.15m of topsoil and 0.2m of subsoil into the undisturbed natural substratum. The natural consisted of a mid-brown silty clay with slightly sandy areas. No archaeological features or deposits were seen in the relocated drainpipe trenches

Twenty five post pad holes or pits were excavated across the footprint of the proposed extension (Fig. 3 above). Unlike the 2017 work which removed the topsoil and some subsoil before excavating the pits the 2019 pits were excavated from turf level. This was due to the slope in ground level which meant that the north end of the extension floor will be nearly 1m above ground level. The 2019 pits were numbered from 31 to 55 in order to distinguish them from the 2017 pits which were numbered 1 to 30.

The pits at the northern and southern ends of the extension measured 0.6 by 0.7m whilst the remaining pits measured 0.6m wide by 1.25m long. Most pits were excavated to a depth of between 0.3m and 0.33m with the exception of pits 31 and 39 which, due to disturbed ground, were excavated to 0.4m below ground level. A drain pipe ran along the northern edge of the existing building and had disturbed the ground in all five pits (31, 36, 41, 46 and 51) dug in this location (Fig. 6). Pits 43 and 44 partially cut across a modern soakaway feature filled with sand and drainage blocks (Fig. 7).

No archaeological features or deposits were observed in any of the 25 pits.



Figure 4 Site of extension before excavation

Looking east. Existing nursery on right. Relocated drain in front of tripod. Post pad pits to be placed between Heras fencing on left and existing building

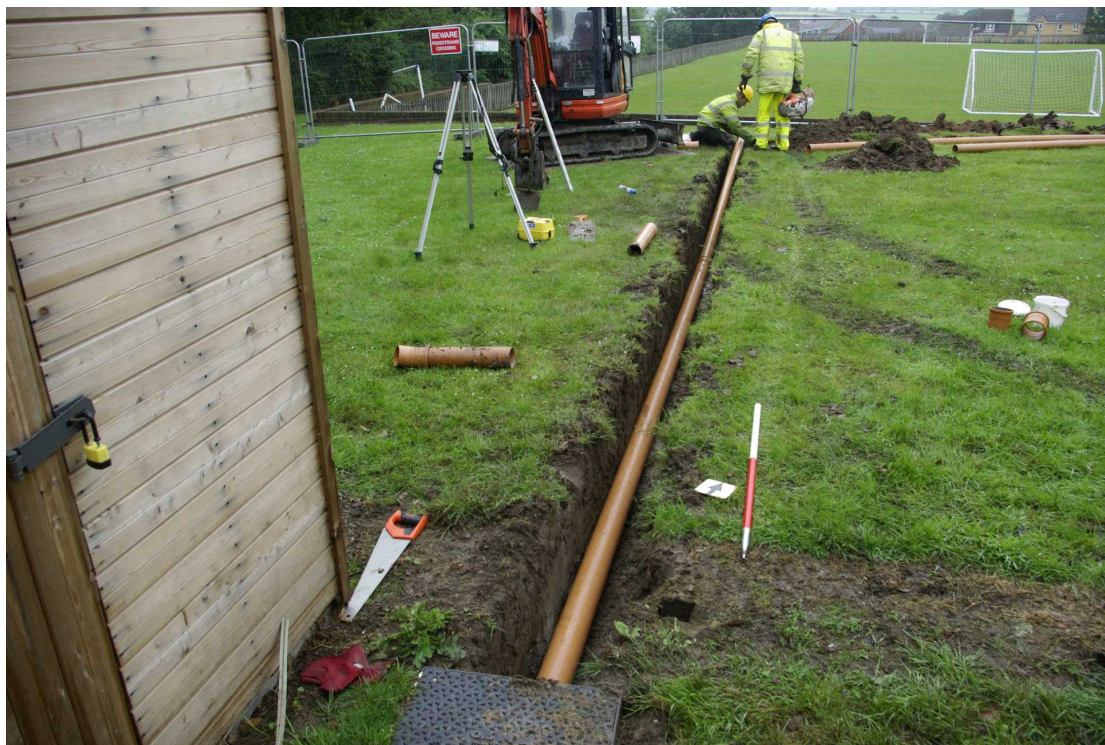


Figure 5 Relocated drain
Looking north. 1m scale. Pipe is laid in undisturbed natural substratum



Figure 6 Modern drain pipe in Post Pad Pit 41
Looking east. Existing wall of nursery on right. 1m scale



Figure 7 Post Pad Pit 43
Modern soakaway seen as sandy deposit at northern end. 1m scale



Figure 8 Fully excavated post pad pits
Looking south-west



Figure 9 Fully excavated post pad pits
Looking north-east

Discussion

Despite the potential for exposing archaeological deposits none were observed during the work. The land drops away to the north of the existing nursery building and the depths of topsoil and natural are less than was observed in the 2017 work. It is therefore possible that this area has been landscaped which may have removed any features or deposits, should any have been present. A revetment wall and landscaped playing field immediately north of the proposed extension and the area around the primary school has certainly been heavily landscaped.

Archive

The archive consists of:

This report,

1 photo record sheet,

1 contact print of 35 digital photographs,

1 DVD containing 35 digital photographs

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.

Bibliography

Brown, D. 2008. *Standard and Guidance for the Preparation of Archaeological Archives*. Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologist 2014. *Code of Conduct*.

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological watching briefs*.

DCLG 2012. National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Section 16 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment.

Gonzales Rodriguez, M. 2018. *An Archaeological Watching Brief on Land at Hope Primary School, Sandhills Avenue, North Hamilton, Leicester*. ULAS Report 2018-027

Hunt, L. 2004. *An Archaeological Watching Brief during Groundworks at the Primary School Site, North Hamilton, Leicester*. ULAS Report No. 2004-102.

ULAS. 2018. *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Attendance and recording during groundworks. High Hopes Nursery, Sandhills Avenue, North Hamilton, Leicester LE5 1LU*.

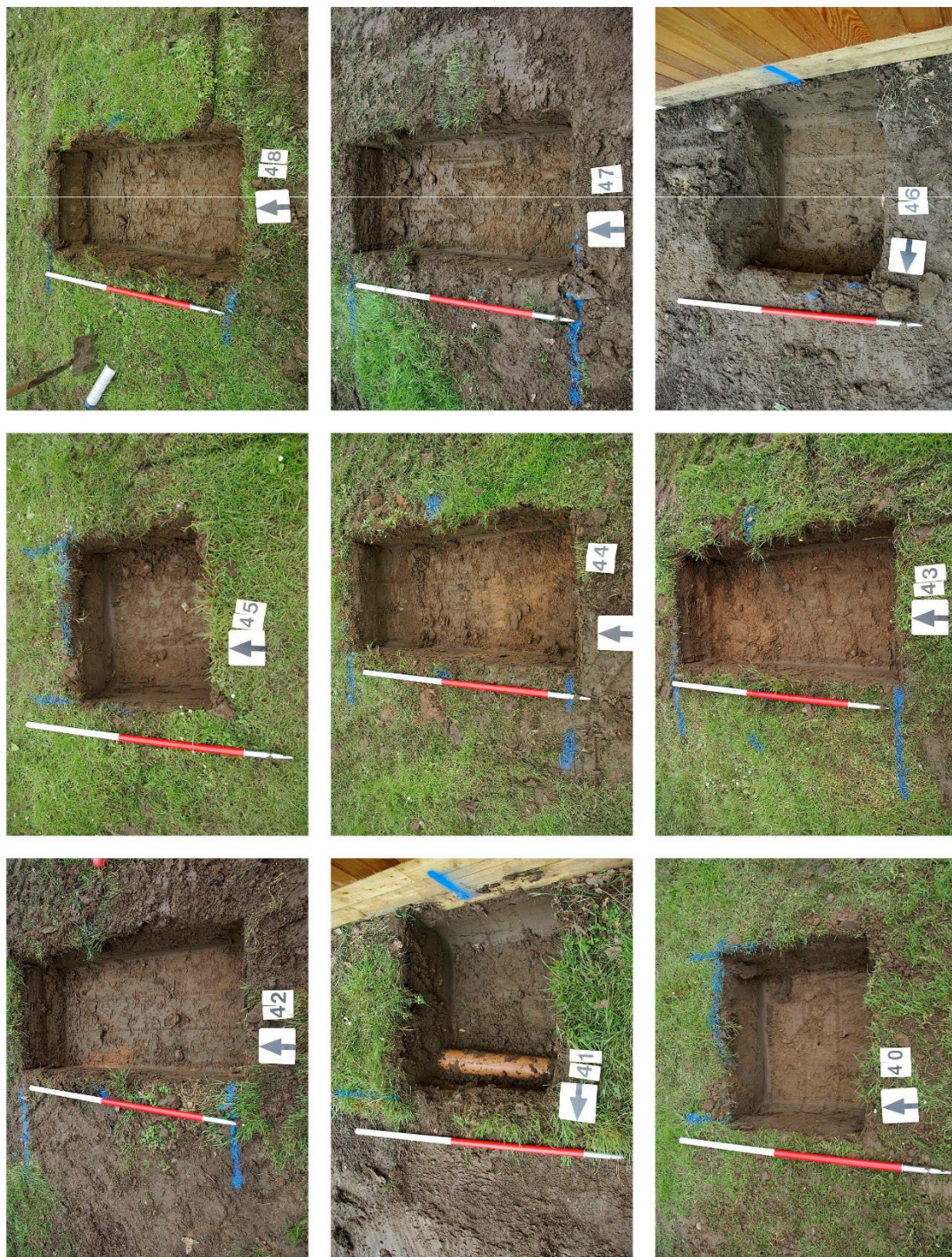
A Hyam
ULAS
University of Leicester

3rd July 2019

Appendix 1 Post Pad Pit and Site Photographs

1m scale in all pictures











UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

University of Leicester
University Road
Leicester LE1 7RH
UK

Directors

Dr Richard Buckley OBE BA PhD FSA MCifA

e: rjb16@le.ac.uk

t: +44 (0)116 252 2848

f: +44 (0)116 252 2614

e: ulas@le.ac.uk



THE QUEEN'S
ANNIVERSARY PRIZES
FOR HIGHER AND FURTHER EDUCATION
2013



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

