



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

**Archaeological Attendance and Recording
During Groundworks at De Montfort
University Hugh Aston Building, Oxford
Street, Leicester**

NGR: SK 5843 0406

Adam Clapton



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De Montfort University Hugh Aston Building
Oxford Street
Leicester**

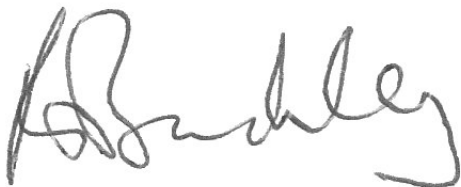
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for

De Montfort University

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Archaeological Attendance and Recording During Groundworks at De Montfort University Hugh Aston Building, Oxford Street, Leicester (SK 58430406)

Adam Clapton

Summary

Archaeological attendance and recording was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of De Montfort University at De Montfort University Hugh Aston Building, Oxford Street, Leicester on June 19th 2019. Work consisted of the monitoring of groundworks associated with the construction of an extension to the Hugh Aston Building within its courtyard area. Despite the potential for archaeological deposits on site, no archaeological features or deposits were recorded.

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 attendance and recording during groundworks (hereafter referred to as a Watching Brief) at De Montfort University Hugh Aston Building, Oxford Street, Leicester. The work at De Montfort University was undertaken in June 2019 and follows the strategy of work set out in the Written Scheme for Investigation (WSI; ULAS 2019).

The work is related to groundworks associated with the proposed construction of an extension to the Hugh Aston Building within its courtyard area (Planning Application 20190869). The site is currently a landscaped courtyard area and the City Archaeologist as an advisor to the Planning Authority has requested mitigation in the form of archaeological attendance and recording to ensure that any archaeological remains are investigated and recorded.

Site Description, Topography and Geology

The site lies within the south-western quarter of central Leicester immediately south-west of Oxford Street. The development area sits within the De Montfort University campus and is enclosed by the Hugh Aston Building to the north, east and west and by the Pace Building to the south (Figures 1 and 2).

The site lies on ground gently sloping down to the west towards the River Soar from 62.98m above Ordnance Datum (OD) adjacent to the Clephan Building's frontage on Oxford Street to 61.01m OD in front of the Hawthorn Building.

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 156 (Leicester), indicates that the underlying geology consists of superficial deposits of river terrace sand and gravels across the north-eastern side of the development area overlying a band of red clay, belonging to the Mercia Mudstone group, crossing the site from the eastern side towards the Castle. Alluvium is shown to cover the south-western half of the area.

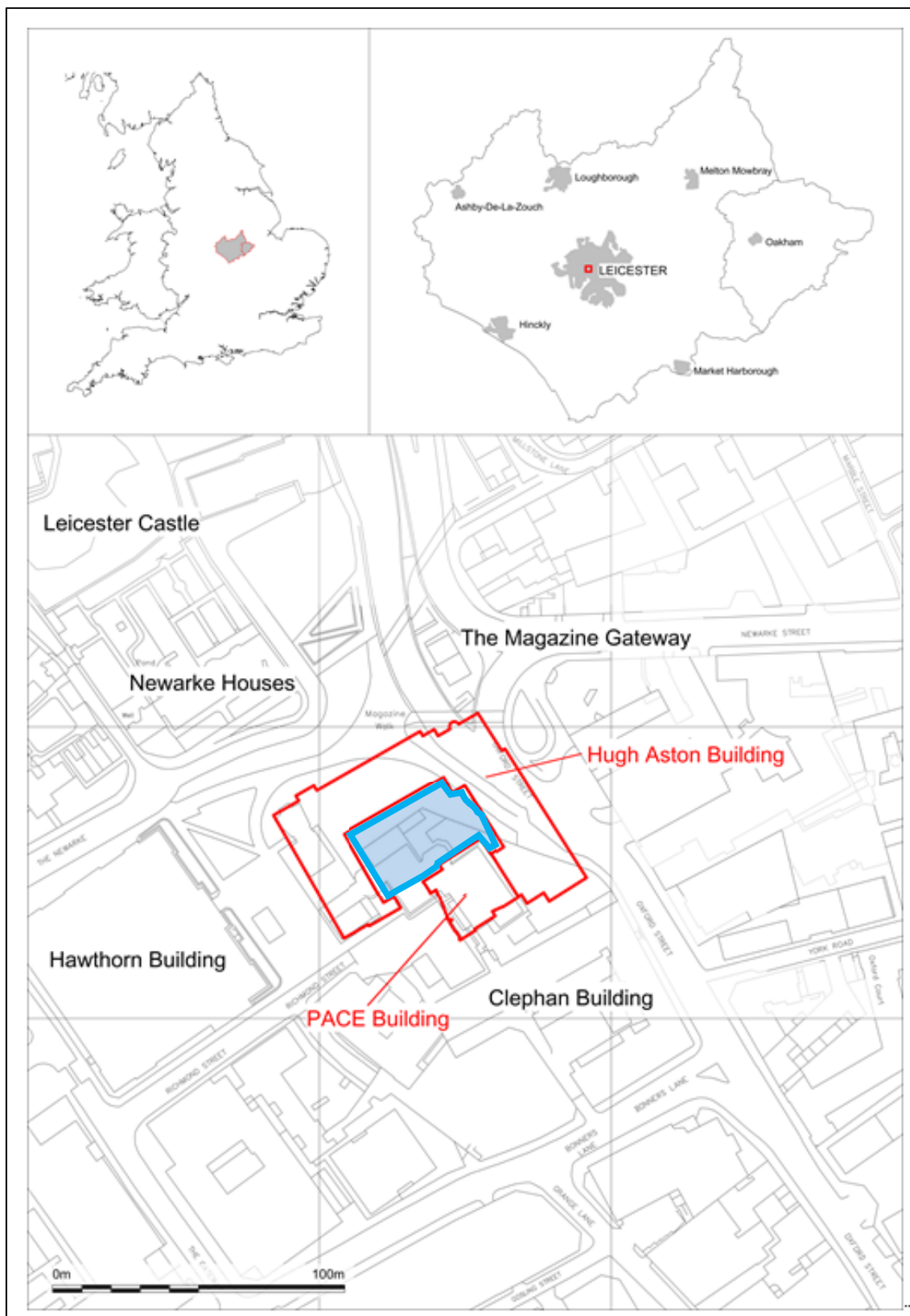


Figure 1: Site location. Development area shown in blue.

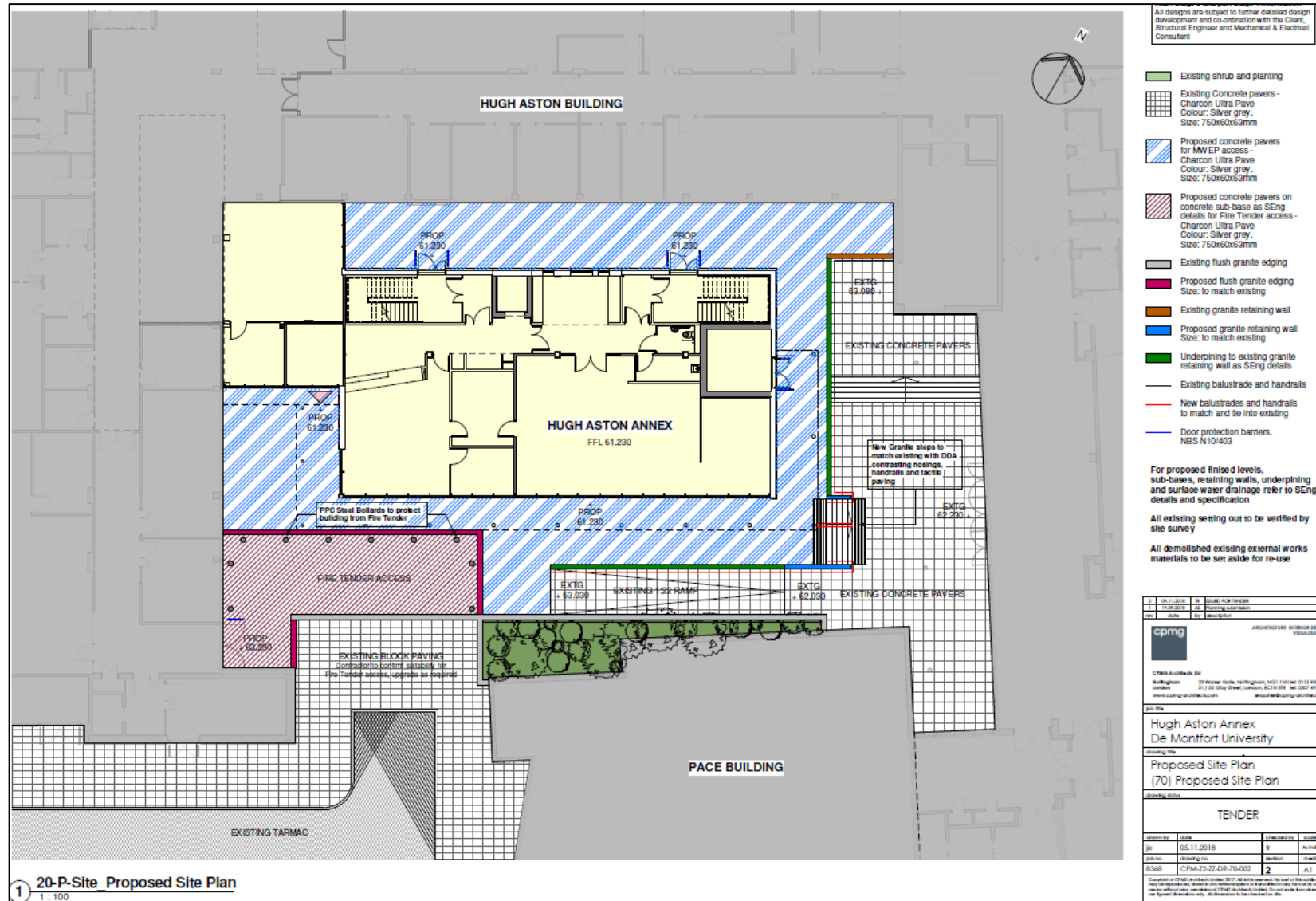


Figure 2: Plan of proposed development (supplied by client).

Archaeological and Historical Background

An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment carried out in 2001 for the De Montfort University Campus (Meek 2001) prior to the construction of the Hugh Aston Building, summarised the potential for the area as:

... likely to contain important archaeological remains relating to the Roman and medieval south suburbs. Previous excavations in and around the area have shown that significant remains of Roman, medieval and post-medieval date exist. Roman buildings, features and burials may be located within the development area. Two Saxon buildings have been recorded in the vicinity and occupation of this date is possible. The development area partially covers the former Newarke precinct, an originally medieval religious community, and later an autonomous enclave of Leicester for the wealthy... The remains of religious and ancillary buildings associated with the Collegiate Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary are very likely to exist inside of the enclosure, including the former burial ground of the church itself. Medieval structures and back-yard activity are also likely to be found in the area outside of the Newarke. The Newarke was the main focus of attack during the two sieges of Leicester during the English Civil War in 1645. In addition, post-Civil War late 17th and 18th century buildings associated with post-dissolution occupation of the Newarke and the re-building of the south suburbs after the Civil War are likely to be present. The proposed development area, therefore, is recognised as having very significant archaeological potential. Archaeological field evaluation would be advisable on the site to better ascertain the archaeological potential and aid in the design of any future development proposals and mitigation strategies (Meek 2001, 1).

Whilst the archaeological potential for the site of the proposed development was described as follows:

[The site] covers the area of the [former] James Went Building and the surrounding grounds... The eastern side of [the] area lies adjacent to the former line of the Tripontium road, and thus has the potential for Roman suburban occupation, including archaeological evidence for buildings, plot boundaries and possible burials associated with the former occupation of the plots. This part of the area also has good potential for Anglo-Saxon occupation, suburban medieval occupation and post-medieval occupation. The report has shown that the majority of this area lies within the Newarke enclosure, and on the eastern side of the open square of possibly medieval origin, associated with the Collegiate Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. The area has thus high potential for the remains of either religious buildings, or ancillary structures associated with the religious community (Meek 2001, 44-45)

Results of previous archaeological excavation undertaken in and around the footprint of the Hugh Aston Building prior to its construction are summarised as follows (from Morris 2010):

Prehistoric

It has previously been noted that there is very little evidence for pre-Iron Age settlement in Leicester with much of the sparse corpus of material recovered from other sites in the vicinity

only producing indirect confirmation of prehistoric activity, in the form of residual finds of worked lithics. This remains the case as the few flints recovered from this site again proved to be residual, ranging in date from the Mesolithic to the Bronze Age. It is unusual that the lithic material recovered proved to be entirely comprised of tools rather than a wider range of material including waste flakes. However, this bias is likely due to the collection approach of the excavators, tools being recognised and recovered from contexts known to be of later date, and does not provide an accurate sample of the assemblage as a whole. Of particular interest is the Late Neolithic transverse arrowhead (SF302). Coupled with the Neolithic 'Peterborough Ware' from the Old Bowling Green Site and a stone axe from the Bonners Lane site this is now increasingly suggesting there is tangible proof of late Neolithic activity in the immediate area.

Quantifiable Iron Age activity is now known to be present south of the recognised focus of pre-Roman settlement. This appeared to only be in the form of field boundaries and fence-lines, suggesting activity was still outside the settlement core. However, the continuation of these field alignments into the late 1st century suggest the landscape remained unchanged from the late Iron Age into the early Roman period.

Roman

Evidence for the Roman period was exposed across the site but particularly to the east along the line of the *Tripontium* Road. This does not appear to have become clearly defined until the early 2nd century, possibly as part of the formalisation of the town's street-grid, but remained in use throughout the Roman period, as evidenced by the repeated resurfacing of the main carriageway and recutting of the roadside ditches into the 4th century. The general consensus is that this formalisation occurred during the late 1st or very early 2nd century AD, probably coinciding with *Ratae* becoming established as a *civitas* capital, and on other sites in town a date of c.100-120AD has been suggested. However, fragments of earlier gravel surfaces and ditch alignments beneath, but marginally off-set to, the 2nd century road suggests the *Tripontium* Road may have evolved from a much earlier route way, possibly originating in the late Iron Age or early Roman period.

At this time evidence to the west of the road suggests a dispersed landscape with ditches probably delineating large rectilinear enclosures. These possibly represent a series of individual property holdings laid out along the road but, considering the scarcity of domestic material in the vicinity, fields or paddocks are a more probable interpretation. Evidence of activity in these enclosures is sadly lacking but the propensity for early post-holes to cluster or align within close proximity to the ditches suggests they represent fence-lines surrounding the enclosures rather than structures within them. Along the road frontage a series of smaller fenced rectilinear enclosures associated with extensive gravelled yard surfaces are suggested to represent further small paddocks or stock-pens. This is again intimated by the absence of domestic material and contrasts with other sites in the southern extra-mural area of the Roman town, on Bonners Land and Newarke Street for instance, where features such as domestic refuse pits were found in proximity to similar structures. Overwhelming the evidence for early Roman activity in the vicinity suggests it was predominately agrarian in nature.

Activity appears to have been short-lived and did not continue beyond the middle of the 2nd century. This can be seen in the widespread deposits of soil which began to accumulate across the earlier activity during the latter half of the 2nd century and the lack of evidence for repeated recutting of any of the enclosure ditches which all appear to have been allowed to silt up

naturally. Whether this represents a complete hiatus in activity across the site during the late 2nd and early 3rd century is inconclusive, however, and subsequent activity is largely uncharacterisable due to subsequent post-Roman truncation. Evidence for small scale industrial activity is evident in the small oven or furnace excavated on Area E though and a similar pattern of decline and renewal in activity has been identified on Bonners Lane where it has been suggested it represents the emergence of ribbon development along the southern approach to the town. Beyond this very little evidence for the late Roman period survives and nothing can be inferred about the character of any activity beyond confirmation that the *Tripontium* Road continued to be maintained into this period.

The uniqueness of Phase 2.1 ditch [4167], situated perpendicularly to the west of the *Tripontium* Road, is worth discussing. Its size, almost twice that of any other roadside ditch excavated on the site, and distinctive shape suggests it may pre-date the road alignment and it may represent a pre-existing boundary ditch along which the secondary road subsequently developed. Importantly, its distance from the later 2nd century town defences to the north is broadly comparable to the size of an insulae within the town's street-grid whilst ditches in Area 2 appear to align with the projected position of the street separating Insulae XXXII and XXXIII. This may, therefore, be the first evidence for the town's boundary, or *pomerium*, and possibly indicates that the town's street grid once extended beyond the later town defences.

Anglo-Saxon

On Bonners Lane it was noted that the *Tripontium* Road probably survived beyond the Roman period and was still a recognisable landscape feature when the SFB was constructed next to it in the late 5th or 6th century. It has therefore been suggested that it provided a focus for settlement of which both the Bonners Lane and Oxford Street SFBs were part, although there was no evidence for continuity of occupation from the late Roman period into the Anglo-Saxon period (Finn 2004, 63). Evidence from this site is far more difficult to characterise and based on its position Structure 3 would have likely been positioned, at least partially, over the *Tripontium* Road alignment. However, it does provide further invaluable evidence for the size and character of the extra-mural Anglo-Saxon settlement, suggesting it extended for c.150m along both sides of the southern approach to the old Roman town.

Medieval

Clear evidence of settlement of 12th- and early 13th-century date, in the form of cess and refuse pits, yard surfaces, fence lines, hearths and ephemeral earth-fast timber structures existed to the west of Southgate Street (now Oxford Street). However, no evidence of buildings along the street frontage, or the street itself, were present on site and the bulk of the evidence was indicative of backyard activities. These appeared likely to be arranged in a series of longitudinal property divisions extending perpendicularly away from the street and fit with the documented presence of burgesses and customary (peasant) tenants living outside the South Gate of the town in c.1200.

Evidence of large scale, possibly commercial, cereal processing, evident by the corn-dryer in Trench 3, fits with the sites proximity to the town's south field and the documented presence of a bread oven in the south suburb during this period, whilst spreads of iron slag in Trench 3 and Area E also suggest some form of metalworking activity was being carried out in the vicinity.

To what extent the establishment of the Trinity Hospital and the subsequent development of the Newarke Precinct had on the area's existing population in the early 14th century is difficult to fully characterise but it may have been negligible for evidence suggests suburban activity in the vicinity had declined sufficiently for much of the area to be returned to arable cultivation during the latter half of the 13th century. No explanation for this decline is presently apparent but it does appear to be a part of a trend across the suburb as a whole with similar cultivation soils appearing on Bonners Lane (Finn 2004, 28). Similar decline has also been noted inside the medieval town with activity in the north-east quarter tailing off from the mid-13th century and not picking up again until the late medieval period, if at all (Connor & Buckley 1999; Higgins *et. al.* 2009). There it is suggested a range of factors – wetter ground not being conducive to denser populations; a shift in settlement focus with greater emphasis to filling out the main streets; and an inability to sustain the economic prosperity and expansion of the preceding century – all contributed towards the decline.

Evidence of ground clearance, in the form of dispersed spreads of redeposited natural clay covering the cultivation soil, probably marks the foundation of the 'Newarke', whilst in Area E proof was uncovered of at least one building, Structure 5, being demolished to make way for the precinct wall. The foundation of Trinity Hospital in 1330-1 also probably denotes the period when occupation in this part of the south suburb resumed, the evidence of activity only appearing following the ground clearance. These properties must have become firmly established by the turn of the 15th century for the uneven course of the Newarke wall, with its series of perpendicular turns, suggests it was following established boundaries that even the prestige and influence of the House of Lancaster, now Kings of England, could not overcome.

Examination of the accumulated evidence of post-lines, pit alignments and boundary walls from across the late medieval and early post-medieval period, through which occupation appears to have been continuous, together with the course of the Newarke wall has lead to the suggestion that at most a total of eight properties existed along the length of Southgate Street present on site, or nine including the piece of ground the Newarke Gateway was eventually constructed on. These appear to have been set out to be *c.*10m wide by *c.*25m or *c.*50m long, although their exact length cannot be conclusively established as the exact position of the street frontage remains unknown. These measurements roughly equate to imperial divisions of 2 rods (10.0584m) by 1 or 2 chains (25.146m and 50.292m respectively) and may indicate a degree of formal planning was involved in the re-establishment of the south suburb after the 13th century.

Little evidence of occupation inside the Newarke precinct survived but the little which did was sufficient to suggest the area east of the site of the Church of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary was divided into a series of large longitudinal domestic properties orientated east to west off a street to the west, adjacent to the church.

Post-medieval

The same intensity of occupation appears to have been maintained along this portion of Southgate Street into the early post-medieval period, but it is clear from the disposition of specialised features and deposits that much of the excavated area was now devoted to mixed small scale industrial and domestic occupation in contrast to the more exclusively domestic nature of the late medieval period.

The presence of a tawyering workshop on the southern side of Area A compares favourably with that excavated on Bonners Lane and is further proof that large areas of the south suburb were devoted to processing and finishing animal skins during the early post-medieval period. The leather trade, however, appears to have been a long established industry in the area, dating back as far as the 13th century. Evidence of leather working has been recovered from a 12th or 13th century well on the Oxford Street site, whilst tawyering and shoe-making waste has been recovered from late 13th- or 14th-century features on Areas A and B. The Bonners Lane workshop appeared in the late 15th century and continued until *c.*1600, and the workshop on Area A was marginally later, probably not being founded until into the 16th century but apparently continuing until 1645 when it was swept away to make way for the Civil War defences.

The Civil War had a catastrophic effect on the south suburb. This is evident in the layers of redeposited natural clay and building rubble, probably the remains of an earth rampart, and the substantial defensive ditch excavated on the site. These clearly prove that some areas of the south suburb suffered a significant degree of destruction during the town's preparations for war. Considering the south suburb was the only suburb to suffer significant destruction during the lead-up to the war it has been cynically suggested that the Civil War provided a convenient excuse to clear the poor, run-down industrial areas adjacent to the exclusive residential district which had emerged within the Newarke Precinct. This is speculation but it is noticeable that following the quick dismantlement of the defences after the conclusion of the war none of the previous industrial activity, which had been so prevalent across the excavation area, returned. Instead, reconstruction of the south suburb appears to have proceeded slowly and the evidence from rear yards of the newly emerging properties along Southgate Street suggests most were devoted to more domestic pursuits.

Although little further can be extrapolated from the surviving archaeological evidence beyond the early post-medieval period the Stukeley and Roberts maps clearly show that Southgate Street was continuously fronted on the western side by buildings from the Newark Gateway to Mill Lane (now Bonners Lane) during the early 18th century, and subsequent maps show the area changed little until Oxford Street was widened during the 1960s.

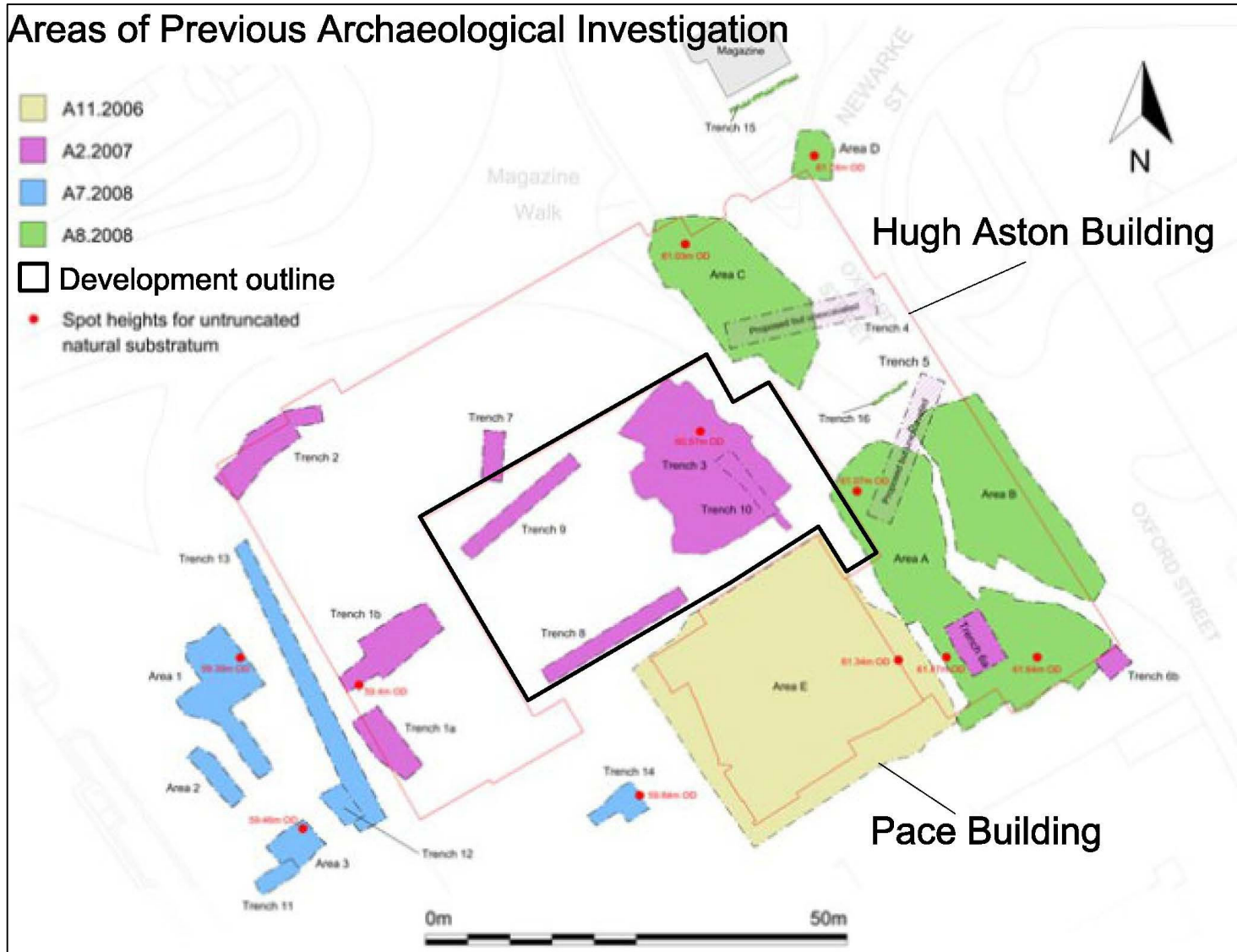


Figure 3: Areas of previous archaeological investigation. Proposed development area in black.

Aims and Objectives

The principal aim of the archaeological work was to monitor the groundworks in order to identify the presence of any archaeological deposits and, where present, to establish their nature, date, significance and state of preservation in order to determine the impact upon them from the proposed groundworks.

The objectives of the archaeological programme may be summarised as follows:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent, and date for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To advance understanding of the heritage assets.
- To produce and archive and report of any results
- To deliver archaeological supervision of works and on site guidance to contractors with the purpose of minimising risk of accidental damage and disturbance to any archaeological remains or deposits encountered.

Research Objectives

The presence of Roman, Saxon and medieval archaeology in the area suggested a potential for further features of this date. It is therefore 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 following specific research agenda topics have been identified as relevant to this work (knight *et al* 2012):

Roman

5.1 Chronology

1. How can we enhance our knowledge of developing pottery industries, particularly during the Conquest period and 3rd to 4th centuries?
2. How may information on temporal and regional variations in pottery typology and vessel fabrics best be disseminated?
3. How may our understanding of sites known only from metal-detected and fieldwalking finds be enhanced?
4. How can we advance our knowledge of the chronology of metal finds, particularly brooches?
5. **What are the** priorities for scientific dating, particularly radiocarbon, and how may targeted dating programmes be developed?

5.2 The military impact

1. How far was the military conquest a motor of social and economic change?
2. **To what extent is** the pivotal location of the region between civil south and military north reflected in the archaeological record?
3. Can we define more closely the distribution of early military sites and their periods of use?

4. How did the supply needs of military garrisons and armies along the northern frontier affect the economy and transport infrastructure?

5. How did the withdrawal of Roman political and financial support impact upon the established society and economy?

5.3 Growth of urban centres

1. What spurred the foundation of extramural settlements (vici) next to early forts and how was the development of vici and forts related?

2. How does the distribution of towns correlate with Iron Age foci, and how far may their social, political and economic roles have overlapped?

3. What processes drove the growth of secondary urban centres?

4. How were towns organised, what roles did they perform and how may their morphology and functions have varied over time?

5. How and why did the urban landscape change in the late Roman period, and what roles may fortifications have played in this period?

5.4 Rural settlement patterns and landscapes

1. How did the Conquest impact upon rural settlements and landscapes?

2. How and why did settlement forms and building traditions vary within the region and over time?

3. How did rural settlements relate to each other and to towns and military sites, and how may this have varied regionally and over time?

4. How did field and boundary systems relate to earlier systems of land allotment, and how did these boundary networks develop over time?

5. What patterns can be discerned in the location of settlements in the landscape?

6. Can we elucidate further the daily life of settlements and their role in the processing and marketing of agricultural products?

5.5 The agricultural economy

1. How is the upland-lowland divide manifested in the regional agricultural economy and other aspects of the archaeological record?

2. How did integration into the Roman Empire impact upon the agrarian economy, including the introduction of new crops, herbs and fruits?

3. What is the evidence for the diet of people of high and low status in urban and rural settlements, especially those close to military sites?

4. Can we chart more closely the processes of agricultural intensification and expansion and the development of field systems?

5. Can we define more precisely the networks developed for the trade and exchange of agricultural produce and fish?

5.6 Artefacts: production, distribution and social identity

1. What resources moved in and out of the region during this period?

2. How can we add to our understanding of the nationally important iron and lead industries?

3. How may studies of the production, movement and consumption of pottery contribute to understanding of the regional economy?

4. What production techniques and exchange networks were involved in the manufacture and marketing of salt and building materials?

5. How can we utilise most effectively the regional coin resource as evidence for the transition to a monetary economy?

6. What can artefact research contribute to studies of eating, drinking and other manifestations of social identity?

5.7 Roads and waterways

1. Can the chronology of road construction and links between road building and campaigns of conquest be clarified?

2. How were roads, rivers and artificial waterways integrated?

3. To what extent may communication routes have been influenced by Late Iron Age settlement patterns and routes of movement?

4. How may roads and waterways have impacted upon established communities and how may roads have influenced urban morphology?

5.8 Ritual and religion

1. How far is the location of religious sites related to Late Iron Age activity and to what extent may structured deposition of human/animal bones in settlement/boundary features have continued?

2. How far may data from surveys and the Portable Antiquities Scheme assist in locating religious or ritual sites?

3. Can we elucidate the beliefs and practices associated with religious or ritual foci and may certain classes of site have been associated with particular activities?

4. Why have so few early Roman burials been found, and may practices have varied regionally and between different communities?

5. What may studies of later Roman inhumation cemeteries teach us about changing burial practices and demography?

Early Medieval

6.1 Demography and the identification of political and social groups

2. What was the relationship between indigenous communities and Germanic populations, and how may this have varied spatially and over time?

3. How may studies of sites yielding late Roman metalwork elucidate further the relationship between indigenous and Germanic populations?

5. How can we refine our understanding of the chronology and process of Scandinavian immigration during the ninth and tenth centuries?

6.5 Inland Towns, 'central places' and burhs

1. How may Anglo-Saxon and British communities have utilised late Roman towns and their immediate environs?

3. What was the impact of the Danish occupation upon urban development and what were the differences between Danish and non-Danish burhs and other urban settlements?

High Medieval

7.1 Urbanism

1. How did the major towns and smaller market towns of the region develop after the Norman Conquest, both within the urban core and in suburban and extra-mural areas?

2. Can we define more closely the industrial and trading activities associated with towns and the nature and extent of urban influence upon the countryside?

1. How and where was post-Conquest pottery manufactured and distributed, and what communication systems were employed?

2. By what means were the extractive mineral industries controlled or organised by royal, monastic or lay lords?

3. Can we identify, investigate and date sites associated with the region's key extractive industries (especially iron, coal, lead and alabaster), the production and distribution of cloth and leather-work, and freshwater or marine fishing?

4. Can we develop a typological classification of buildings associated with medieval industrial and commercial activities and can we identify sub-regional and chronological patterning?

7.4 Castles, military sites and country houses

How can studies of the region's buildings contribute to an understanding of castle origins, and can we identify local typologies of castles and country houses?

What was the date and function of currently undated minor motte and bailey castles?

How many castle sites have been lost within the region?

Was there continuity of location between castles and country houses, and are earlier structures concealed in later buildings?

What local resources were used for building and maintenance and what was the environmental context and economic impact of these buildings?

How should battlefield sites be further investigated?

7.7 The agrarian landscape and food-producing economy

5. What may fish bones and other environmental data contribute to studies of the exploitation and distribution of freshwater and marine fish?

Post-medieval

8.1 Urbanism: morphology, functions and buildings

1. Can we elucidate the roles of towns as social, administrative, industrial and commercial centres, their integration within regional marketing systems and their relationship to communication routes?

2. How were towns organised and planned, and how did population growth impact upon their internal spatial organisation?

3. What was the impact of religion, urban government, civic pride and class structures upon town planning and architecture (e.g. public buildings such as town halls or prisons and water management structures)?

4. What can studies of environmental data, artefacts and structural remains tell us about variations in diet, living conditions and status?

5. Can we recognise the emergence of the poorer classes in the developing suburbs?

6. How can we advance studies of building plans and standing remains, especially where hidden inside later buildings, and of caves and cellars?

8.3 Agricultural landscapes and the food-producing economy

3. What changes and improvements occurred in animal husbandry and the use of animals (e.g. new breeds, traction and traded animal products)?
4. What garden plants and crops were grown in the countryside and urban market gardens, and what new types were introduced?
5. How did the diet, living conditions and status of rural and urban communities compare?

8.5 Industry and communications

1. Can we elucidate the organisation of the workplace, gender differences at work and the development of industrial processes (especially the nationally important lead, coal and tanning industries)?
3. Can we identify domestic buildings adapted for the textile industry?
4. How were transport infrastructures improved and how was this related to the developing urban and market hierarchy?
5. What may be learned of the material culture of industrial workers?
6. What can we deduce from factory/non-factory production data about the changing economy (especially patterns of marketing and consumption)?

8.8 Material culture

1. How was pottery distributed across the region and can we identify competition between regional potteries?
2. Can we establish a dated type series for ceramics (building in particular upon unpublished urban pit and well groups)?
3. Can we identify the changing material culture of the urban and rural poor, the emerging middle classes and the aristocracy?
4. Were there different patterns of consumption between town and countryside and between different agricultural regions?
5. What may be deduced about the symbolic use of material culture (e.g. in social competition)?

Methodology

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (2014b) and adhered to their Code of Conduct (2014a). The work involved the monitoring of ground level reductions in preparation for a new annex for the Hugh Aston Building, in order to determine the presence/absence of any archaeological remains. A site visit was undertaken for these works by the author on June 19th 2019. The work was carried out using a 4 tonne 360 rubber-tracked machine fitted with a 0.3m and 0.7m flat bladed bucket.

A photographic record of the assessment area was made prior and during commencement of the ground works in accordance with the approved WSI. This includes 'working shots' to illustrate the nature of the work.

Results

On arrival the majority of the site had been cleared of above ground vegetation and structures including foliage and garden landscape features. A service trench had been dug measuring 1m in width and 1m in depth along the southeast perimeter of the development area and existing services exposed to a depth of up to 2m on the north east edge of the development area (Figures 4 and 5) . Both were dug through modern backfill layers consisting of modern debris, redeposited red clays and imported sand and gravels. No undisturbed deposits were seen. Extensive exposure of several services through the central portion of the development area (north-east to south-west) up to 1.5m in depth again revealed no undisturbed deposits and yielded only modern backfills most likely associated with the landscaping of the area during the demolition of the James Went Building and subsequent construction of the Hugh Aston Building (Figure 6). To the south-west of the site a large water tank was exposed measuring 4m in depth, 4m in width and 5m in length removing any potential archaeological deposits in this area (Figure 7). In both the north -west and south-east corners of site large concrete pads previously installed for cranes used during the construction of the Hugh Aston building had truncated levels up to 2m in depth in these areas.

A combination of demolition material associated with the former James Went building and landscaping during the construction of the Hugh Aston building appears to have removed any potential archaeological deposits up to and beyond the level of the ground reduction associated with the proposed development (Figure 8). Despite the potential for archaeological deposits to be present, no archaeological deposits or features were observed during the works.



Figure 4: The site on arrival looking north, with service trench to the right.



Figure 5: Exposed services up to a depth of 2m at the north-east end of the development area looking south-east.



Figure 6: Ground reductions through the centre of the development area looking south (1m scale).



Figure 7: Exposing the large water tank looking south.



Figure 8: The development area looking north-east showing the extent of previous truncation and demolition deposits.

Archive and Publication

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicester City Museums Service with accession number Y.A15.2019 and consists of the following:

- 1 Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report No. 2019-088)
- 1 Watching brief recording 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 been submitted for publication in an appropriate local archaeological journal in due course.

Bibliography

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Oasis Data

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-358788		
	Project Name	De Montfort University Hugh Aston Building		
	Start/end dates of field work	19/06/2019, 19/06/2019		
	Previous/Future Work	No		
	Project Type	Construction		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Garden		
	Monument Type/Period	none		
	Significant Finds/Period	none		
	Development Type	Public Building		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
	Planning Ref.	20190869		
	PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	De Montfort University Hugh Aston Building, Oxford Street, Leicester	
Study Area		0.083 hectares		
Site Coordinates		SK 5843 0406		
Height OD		61-63m OD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Leicester City Council		
	Project Design Originator	Richard Buckley		
	Project Manager	Richard Buckley		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Adam Clapton		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Developer		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	Leicester City Museum Service	Leicester City Museum Service	Leicester City Museum Service
	ID (Acc. No.)	Y.A15.2019	Y.A15.2019	Y.A15.2019

	Contents	none	Photos Report	Paper records
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey literature		
	Title	Archaeological attendance and recording during groundworks at De Montfort University Hugh Aston Building, Oxford Street, Leicester		
	Author	Adam Clapton		
	Other bibliographic details			
	Date	10/07/2019		
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	Description			

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