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Archaeological Services

An archaeological evaluation of land at 44 Main Street, Swannington, Coalville, Leicestershire

NGR: SP 4159 1640

Wayne Jarvis



ULAS Report No. 2018-163

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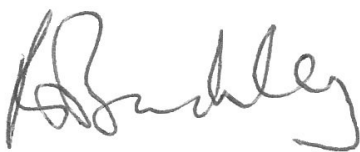
**An archaeological evaluation of land at 44 Main Street, Swannington, Coalville,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SP 4159 1640

Wayne Jarvis

For: Brian J Knapp

Planning ref.: 17/01041/FUL

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An archaeological evaluation of land at 44 Main Street, Swannington, Coalville, Leicestershire

Wayne Jarvis

Summary

An archaeological evaluation by trial trenching was carried out on land at 44 Main Street, Swannington, Coalville, Leicestershire (SK 4159 1640) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 13-14th September, 2018. Work was undertaken for Brian J Knapp in order to establish the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which may be present, in order that an assessment may be made of the impact of any proposed development on the buried remains. The application area comprised a c.450 sq m area of garden/rough ground on the east side of Main Street and adjacent to the lane Tan Yard. Medieval activity is known from the vicinity of the site and the area has a strong industrial heritage. Evidence suggests this part of the Main Street frontage was originally developed by c.1800. Two trenches were excavated within the plot of 44 Main Street, one along the frontage of Tan Yard, the other crossing the actual proposed footprint of the new building. Both trenches exposed activity dating to the late 18th-early 19th century, and associated with known late Georgian buildings on site. This included stone and brick foundations of the main buildings, outbuildings, and ancillary activity. The main building is known to have been used by The Leicester and Swannington Railway Co. to carry out business from 1833. In the later 19th century the site incorporated the Railway Inn public house. Beyond the confines of disturbance from these historic structures only small undisturbed areas were exposed, and no evidence, features or finds, for earlier activity was identified. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under the accession number X.A86.2018.

Introduction

In September 2018, University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching of land at 44 Main Street, Swannington, Coalville, Leicestershire (SP 4159 1640 - Figure 1). The work was undertaken for Brian J Knapp to establish the nature, extent, date, and significance of any archaeological deposits which might be present, in order that an assessment may be made of the impact of any proposed development on the buried remains.

A planning application was been granted for the erection of a new dwelling and associated works by North West Leicestershire District Council (Application Ref. 17/01041/FUL). Following advice from the Principal Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, as archaeological advisor to the local planning authority, a programme of archaeological work was undertaken in order that the potential impact of the development on any archaeology could be assessed and an appropriate mitigation strategy implemented. This was in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (MHCLG 2018).

Archaeological work took place on 13-14th September, 2018. This document presents the results of the archaeological investigation.



Figure 1: Site location with project area highlighted (contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2016).

Site Location, Geology and Topography

Swannington is a village in north-west Leicestershire, approximately 14km 5.5km east of Ashby-de-la-Zouch. The application area lies east of Main Street, on the plot of the former No. 44, at SP 4159 1640 (Figure 1). It is bounded on all sides by residential dwellings fronting onto Main Street and the lane to the north ‘Tan Yard’. The area comprises a broadly L-shaped plot covering around 450 sq m. At the time of work the site was waste ground, an overgrown garden with heaped building spoil (Figure 2).

The British Geological Survey shows that the underlying geology is likely to consist of bands of mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone (BGS Open Geoscience). The application area lies on relatively flat ground at approximately 116m aOD, with ground in the wider setting dropping down generally from west to east.



Figure 2: Site during initial clearance work. Looking south-east.

Archaeological and Historical Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) notes that the site lies towards the northern edge of the Historic settlement core (**MLE8663**). There are village earthworks recorded to the south of the road, visible on the 2011 aerial photographs which appear to include a large platform (**MLE23135**). At 53 – 57 Main Street, pits and linear features dating from the medieval/post-medieval periods were recorded during a watching brief in 2005 (**MLE15747**), as well as the remains of a building that may have existed before Stone House on the frontage. Medieval pottery was recovered from some features. The Railway Inclined Plane (**MLE4874**) built in 1832, lies approximately 160m east of the site. It was built as part of the Leicester to Swannington railway. It took coal from the mines and hauled trucks up to

the railway. From 1877 it was used in reverse to haul coal to the pumping station from the railway. It closed in 1948. Iron-Age and Roman pottery sherds have been found within a 1km radius of the site (MLE8477) suggesting some form of occupation close by. In addition, pre-historic flints, and pottery have been recovered in the location of Redhill Farm (MLE7332, MLE7629).

The village contains a number of historic buildings such as ‘The Grove’, a C17th timber framed house (MLE12335). This is situated within the historic settlement core of the village, and north-east of the proposed area for development. Friends Meeting House and burial ground, east of the Methodist Chapel is located south of the site, south of Church Road (MLE4885).

Village survey evidence indicates that this part of the Main Street frontage was built on in c.1800 and historic mapping shows that there was definitely a building on the plot by the time of the first edition OS in the 1880s (Figure 3). The main building is known to have been used by The Leicester and Swannington Railway Co. to carry out business from 1833 (Baker *et al.* 1998). In the later 19th century the site incorporated the Railway Inn public house (Figure 4). The building survived until demolition after the Second World War.

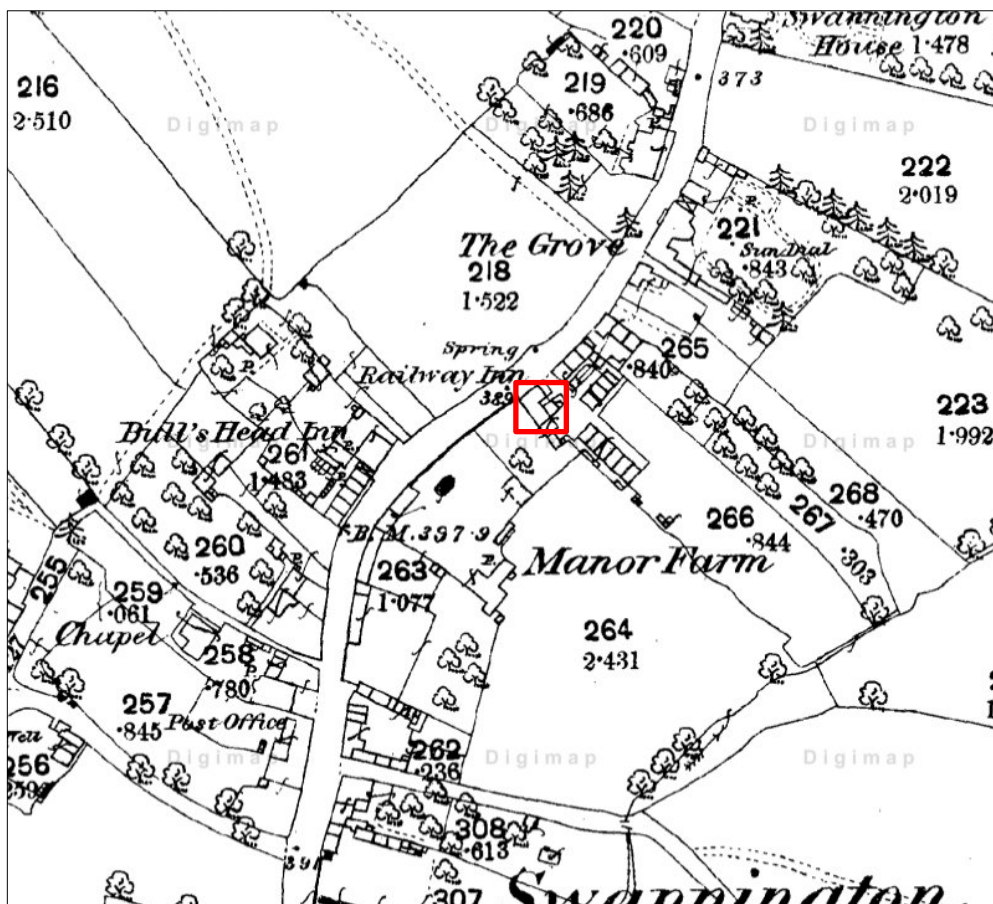


Figure 3: Site location on 1st edn. Ordnance Survey map (contains OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2016).



Figure 4: The Railway Inn (right foreground) at No. 44 Main Street. 1900 (Baker et al. 1998).

Archaeological Objectives

The principle aims of the archaeological investigation were:

- To identify the presence/absence of archaeological deposits
- To establish the character, extent, and date range of any archaeological deposits, artefacts and ecofacts to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To appropriately record any archaeological deposits revealed in the trenches.
- To establish the relationship between any remains found and the surrounding contemporary landscape.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Draft Research Themes

The results of the investigation were considered in light of the East Midlands Research Agenda (Cooper 2006) and updated Agenda and Strategy (Knight et. al 2012). 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 research agenda (ibid.).

Prehistoric

Characterise the prehistoric settlement resource and investigate intra-regional variability (4C).

Investigate intra-regional variations in development of fields and linear boundaries (4F)

Romano-British

Investigate landscape context of rural settlements (5H)

Early Medieval – High Medieval

Review the evidence for developing settlement hierarchies (6C)

Investigate the morphology of rural settlements (7E)

Investigate development of the open field system and woodland management (7I)

The research aims were updated as work progressed and new information came to light.

Methodology

During the evaluation, soil was removed in level spits under continuous archaeological supervision down to the uppermost archaeological deposits or the natural substratum, depending on which was reached first. This was carried out with a JCB type mechanical digger using a 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket backactor (Figure 2).

Trenches, open areas, exposed sections, and spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and artefacts. Features were hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as appropriate. Field notes were recorded on pro-forma ULAS trench recording forms whilst stratigraphic units were given a unique context number and recorded on proforma ULAS context sheets. Trench and feature plans/sections were drawn at appropriate scales and tied into the National Grid using appropriate methods. A photographic record of the excavation was prepared, illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. Colour digital photographs were taken throughout the excavation. The photographic record also included ‘working shots’ to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

All work followed the a written scheme of investigation (LaCombe 2018), approved by the Principal Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014a) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014b).

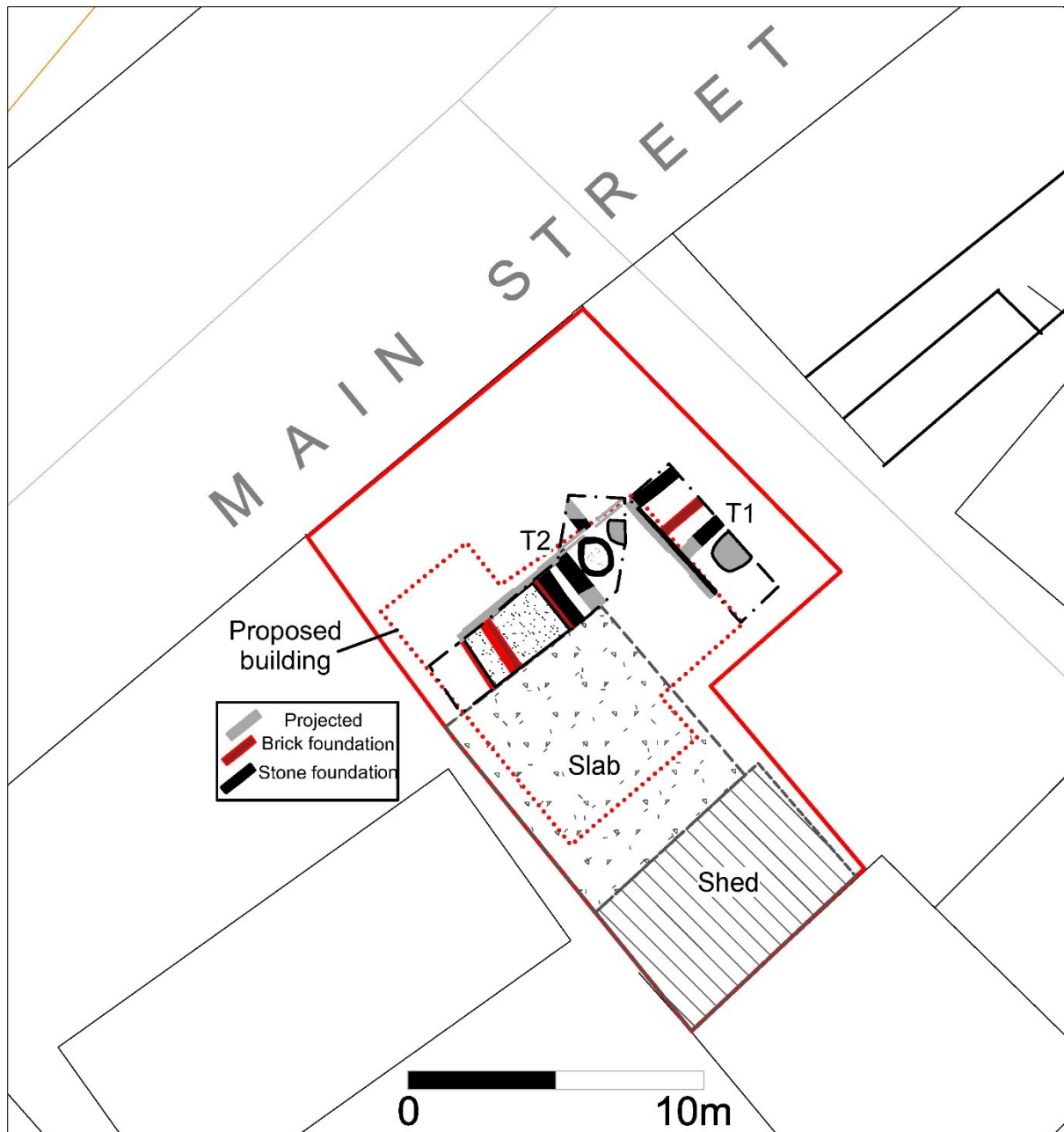


Figure 5: Plan of the application area showing proposed dwelling (dotted red), trench locations and orientation of main structures exposed. Background map provided by client.

Results

At the direction of the Principal Archaeologist, the written scheme of investigation (LaCombe 2018) provided for the investigation of one 25m by 1.6m trench (totalling 40 sq m) across the length of the plot and incorporating the footprint of the proposed new dwelling. This set-out was not feasible on site due to site constraints. At the rear of the plot a shed was still standing, and this being fronted by a large concrete slab, which could not be lifted without compromising the property boundary wall to the south. Low overhead cables also crossed the site. Because of these factors, two trenches were excavated instead, Trench 1 parallel to and along the frontage of Tan Yard, and Trench 2 crossed the proposed building footprint in a broadly north-east to south-west direction. The trenches measured 5.6m and 8.8m respectively, with a 1.8m minimum width (total trenched area 28sq m). The site has been used in recent times for

dumping a considerable amount of building spoil, and below this excavation initially encountered relatively modern building demolition under the modern garden soil, in turn sealing brick and stone structures at some depth, from the previous properties on site.

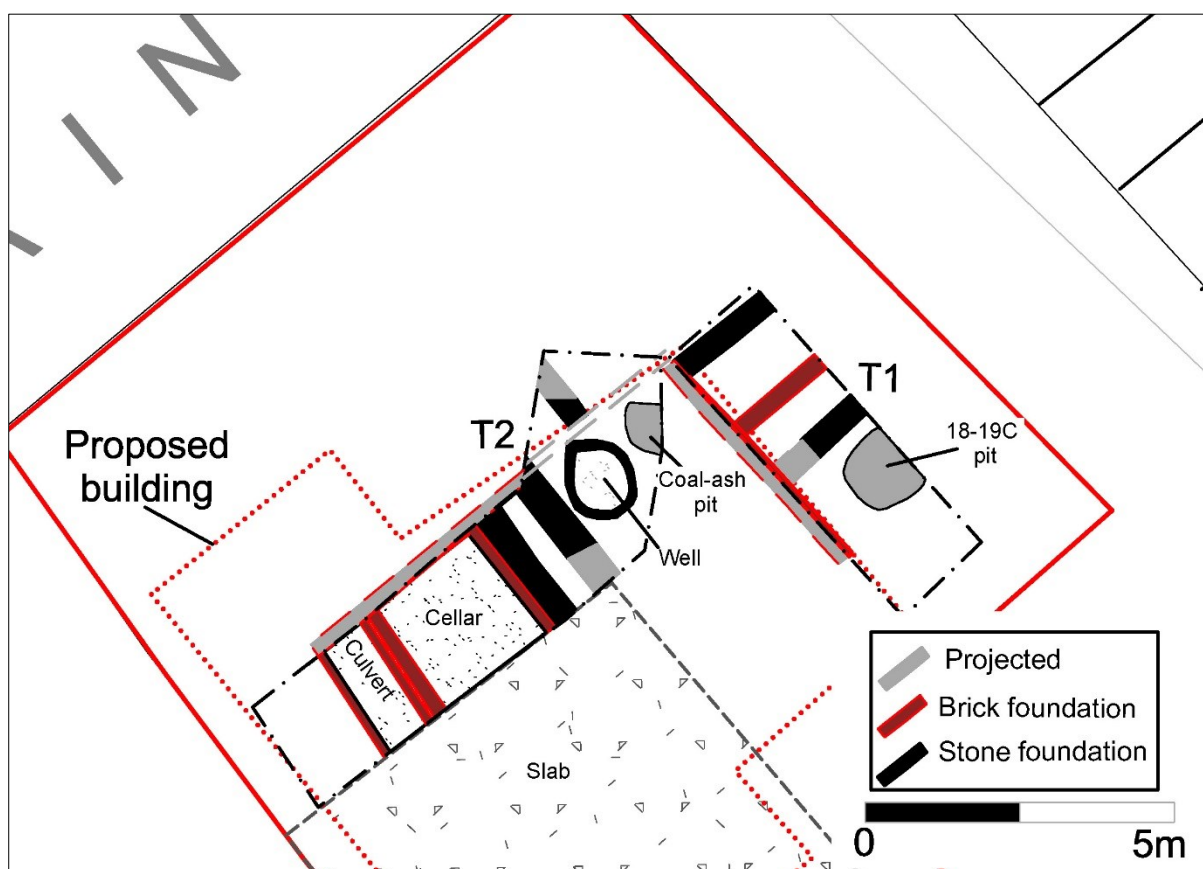


Figure 6: Trenching results (detail)

Trench 1

Length	Width	Area (sq m)	Min. depth	Max. depth	Topsoil depth	Overburden depth	Top of natural substratum	Base of trench
5.6	1.8	10.1	1.1	1.5	0.2	0.5	1.1	1.5

Measurements in m

Trench 1 was positioned parallel with, and along the frontage of, Tan Yard (Figure 6, Figure 7). It was broadly orientated north-west to south-east. After clearing the recent spoil-heap the mechanical digger removed *c.*0.2m of a loose dark greyish-brown silty sand topsoil. This represents the use of the plot as a garden in the second half of the 20th century. Below this were demolition deposits with a depth of up to 1.1m, where in situ foundations and features of late 18th-early 19th century date, and limited areas of natural deposits, were observed. The natural substratum consisted of a pale green sand. The northern half of the trench exposed three wall footings running perpendicular to the Tan Yard frontage and one wall in the west baulk of the trench (and parallel to Tan Yard), see Figure 6. These represent the wing of a building running back from Main Street and along the west side of Tan Yard (and shown on the first edition O.S map, see Figure 3). The most substantial of these wall-lines, at the north, was a

mortared sandstone footing (Figure 8) on the same line as the rear of the property just to the west (Nos. 46-50), being parallel with the Main Street frontage and most likely representing the rear of the main original building fronting onto Main Street. An examination of the east gable of properties Nos. 46-50 showed that they were of the same build, with mortared lower stone courses and brickwork upper (Figure 9). These cottages are known to have been built in *c.* 1800. The walls to the south are more ephemeral and suggest that the wing of rooms southwards may have been (single storey?) outbuildings. The photograph in 1900 shows an entrance to this range of rooms on Main Street (Figure 4), and it seems likely that these were the business premises of the Leicester and Swannington Railway Co., and the public house (the Railway Inn) was the rest of the property to the west. Just east of the group of structures in Trench 1 a rubble-filled pit produced two sherds of glazed pottery during sample excavation. One sherd was of EA2 fabric (108g), one of EA8 (83g; D.S. pers. comm.). Both sherds were fresh primary refuse and indicate a date of 1750-1850. The sherds were discarded after spot-dating by Deborah Sawday of ULAS. No earlier deposits or finds were identified.



Figure 7: looking west across Trench 1.



Figure 8: Rear wall of former property No. 44 as seen in Trench 1.



Figure 9: East gable end wall of properties No. 46-50.



Figure 10: West end of Trench 2, natural ground level and showing brick culvert in foreground and backfilled cellar.



Figure 11: East end of Trench 2, showing property wall and natural deposits (foreground), and brick well, coal-ash pit.

Trench 2

Length	Width	Area (sq m)	Min. depth	Max. depth	Topsoil depth	Overburden depth	Top of natural substratum	Base of trench
8.8	2.0	17.6	1.0	1.2	0.2	0.5	1.0	1.2

Measurements in m

Trench 2 crossed the proposed building footprint in a broadly north-east to south-west direction (Figure 6). After topsoil and demolition removal further structural evidence for the former properties was identified at a minimum depth of 0.45m from current ground level. Where observed, natural was at a depth of 1.0m. The structures included a brick vaulted culvert at the

west of the trench, adjacent to a backfilled cellar, and probably from the former Railway Inn public house (Figure 10). In the central area of Trench 2 were further wall-foundations of both brick and sandstone running back from the Main Street frontage. Outside this structure (i.e. to the east) was a backfilled brick well with a rather unusual teardrop shape, and a coal-ash pit (Figure 11). No earlier deposits, features or finds were identified during the work.

Discussion

The evidence exposed indicated that the majority of the site has been previously developed, being intensively built-up with a range of structures, and with only very limited areas of natural deposits being encountered. The structures fronting on to Main Street and Tan Yard were constructed of a combination of sandstone and brick. Based on various types of evidence, historic maps and documents and the evaluation results, the site area was most likely first developed in c.1800, with the buildings being used as a business premises and public house. It would seem from the evidence that the business premises were the east wing (along the frontage of Tan Yard), and the public house the rest of the building to the west of this with its frontage on Main Street. All finds from the evaluation indicate activity of this late 18th - early 19th century date, and no earlier activity or finds were observed.

Overall, the results of the archaeological investigation were negative, aside for activity associated with the late Georgian structures of the former No. 44 Main Street, and representing the building formerly used by the Leicester and Swannington Railway Co. and public house the Railway Inn.

Conclusion

The evaluation produced evidence for late 18th- or early 19th-century activity in the form of stone and brick structures. These structures are from the former property at No. 44 Main Street, the building formerly used by the Leicester and Swannington Railway Co. and public house the Railway Inn. A little backyard activity was also identified, including a brick well and two refuse pits. No earlier activity, features or finds, were recovered on site.

Archive

The site archive consists of 2 trench record sheets, 1 A3 sheet of permagraph, 1 drawing index sheet, 31 digital photographs and a photo index. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under the accession number X.A86.2018.

Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service (ADS) at the University of York (see Table 1).

A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in an appropriate local archaeological journal in due course.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to extend its thanks to our client, Brian Knapp and to Planters (groundworks) for their assistance and co-operation throughout the project; and also to Richard Clark, Principal Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council, for his advice and support. Wayne

Jarvis completed the fieldwork and this report. The project was managed for ULAS by Richard Buckley.

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Version 1: 27-09-2018

Table 1: Summary of OASIS information

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-329420		
	Project Name	44 Main Street, Swannington, Coalville		
	Start/end dates of field work	13th-14th September 2018		
	Previous/Future Work	none / not known		
	Project Type	Evaluation by trial trenching		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Garden		
	Monument Type/Period	None / none		
	Significant Finds/Period	None / none		
	Development Type	Rural residential		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Between deposition of an application and determination		
	Planning Ref.	17/01041/FUL		
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	44 Main Street, Swannington, Coalville, Leicestershire		
	Study Area	450 sq m		
	Site Coordinates	SK 4159 1640		
	Height OD	116m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body		
	Project Design Originator	Richard Buckley		
	Project Manager	Richard Buckley		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Wayne Jarvis		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Developer		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	-	Leics. Mus. Service	Leics. Mus. Service
	ID (Acc. No.)	-	X.A86.2018	X.A86.2018
	Contents	-	Photos Report	Trench records Photo index, Contact sheet from digital photos, Report
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	An archaeological evaluation of land at 44 Main Street, Swannington, Coalville, Leicestershire (SP 4159 1640)		
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	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No. 2018-163		
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