

**An Archaeological Evaluation of land off East Road, Wymeswold,
Leicestershire (SK 607 234).**

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An Archaeological Evaluation of land off East Road, Wymeswold, Leicestershire (SK 607 234)

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Report No. 2003/016

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken of land off East Road, Wymeswold Leicestershire (SK 607 234) by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Soar Valley Homes, in advance of residential development of the site. The site was occupied by rough pasture and a north south track. Six trenches were excavated during this stage of evaluation, all trenches were devoid of archaeological activity. The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service Accession No. X.A 17 2003.

1. Introduction

Planning permission was sought from Charnwood Borough Council by Soar Valley Homes for the construction of a residential development (P.A 2002/3054/3) at land off East Road, Wymeswold, Leicestershire (SK 607 234).

An archaeological evaluation of the development area was requested by the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire, Museums, Arts and Records Service, as advisor to the planning authority. The work followed the Design Specification for Archaeological Evaluation on this site. This stage of evaluation was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 24/01/03.

2. Location and Geology

The development area is located south off East Road, Wymeswold, 19 km north of Leicester (figure 1). The site is c.0.35ha in area and lies at a height of 80m O.D (figure 2). The underlying geology comprised of boulder clay to the north and sands and gravels to the south (BGS Sheet 142).

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

The site is located within the historic core of Wymeswold near to an area of Iron Age and Roman occupation (SMR SK 62 SW.AR). Earthworks thought to be evidence of a post-medieval house and garden are also situated close by (SMR SK 62 SW.D).

4. Aims

The aims of the evaluation programme were:

- To establish the nature, character and extent of any archaeological deposits within the area to be affected by the proposed development.
- To establish a date range for any archaeological deposits located.
- To define the state of preservation of these deposits, including the potential for the survival of environmental data and waterlogged materials.
- To assess the local, regional and national importance of any deposits.
- To define an appropriate mitigation strategy if necessary.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

5. Methodology

The total area of development was 3500m², Six 10m by 1.5m trenches were excavated using a *JCB 3C* fitted with a 1.6m toothless ditching bucket representing a c.2.5% sample of the evaluation area.

The levels above Ordnance Datum of all machined layers were recorded and all potentially significant archaeological deposits were investigated. The work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation (1999)*.

The locations of the machined areas were recorded using a level. The evaluation survey was tied to a spot height of 79.9m obtained from the Ordnance Survey map.

6. Results

The locations of the trenches are shown in figure 3. All trenches were 10 metres in length and 1.6 metres wide and were excavated to the top of the natural stratum (a light orange-yellow sandy clay). Archaeological deposits were absent in all of the trenches.

Trench 1

Level at top of trench: 75.84 m OD

Level at base of trench: 75.28 m OD

Aligned: north-south

A 0.20m layer of dark brownish-grey loam topsoil overlay friable mid-brownish grey subsoil, containing occasional rounded pebbles. This ran to a depth of 0.7m. The natural begun at 0.5m.

Trench 2

Level at top of trench: 75.75 m OD
Level at base of trench: 74.96 m OD
Aligned: north-south

A 0.30m layer of dark brownish-grey loam topsoil overlay friable mid-brownish grey subsoil, containing occasional rounded pebbles. This ran to a depth of c.0.7m. The natural begun at 0.4m.

Trench 3

Level at top of trench: 76.51 m OD
Level at base of trench: 75.25 m OD
Aligned: north-south

A 0.30m layer of dark brownish-grey loam topsoil overlay friable mid-brownish grey subsoil, containing occasional rounded pebbles. This ran to a depth of 0.6m. Alluvium deposits begun at a depth of 0.6m to 1.1m continuing for five metres through the trench.

Trench 4

Level at top of trench: 76.81 m OD
Level at base of trench: 76.33 m OD
Aligned: northwest-southeast

A 0.30m layer of dark brownish-grey loam topsoil containing a modern disturbance layer; overlay friable mid-brownish grey subsoil, containing occasional rounded pebbles. This ran to a depth of 0.7m.

Trench 5

Level at top of trench: 78.16 m OD
Level at base of trench: 77.63 m OD
Aligned north-west to south-east

A 0.20m layer of dark brownish-grey loam topsoil containing a modern disturbance layer. This overlaid friable mid-brownish grey subsoil, containing occasional rounded pebbles. This ran to a depth of 0.6m.

Trench 6

Level at top of trench: 77.19 m OD
Level at base of trench: 76.47 m OD
Aligned: north-south

A 0.20m layer of dark brownish-grey loam topsoil overlay friable mid-brownish grey subsoil, containing occasional rounded pebbles. This ran to a depth of 0.6m.

7. Conclusion

The absence of archaeological deposits and the apparent lack of residual pottery in the topsoil would suggest that the land has been under pasture for a substantial amount of time.

8. Site Archive

The archive will be deposited with Leicester Museums, Arts and Records Service with the Accession No. *X.A 17 2003*. It consists of trench recording sheets, survey data (levels etc), colour transparency slides and monochrome negatives.

9. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.

10. Acknowledgements

I would like to thank Soar Valley Homes for their help and cooperation with this evaluation. This archaeological evaluation was carried out by Gavin Speed and Michael Derrick. The project manager was Dr. Patrick Clay.

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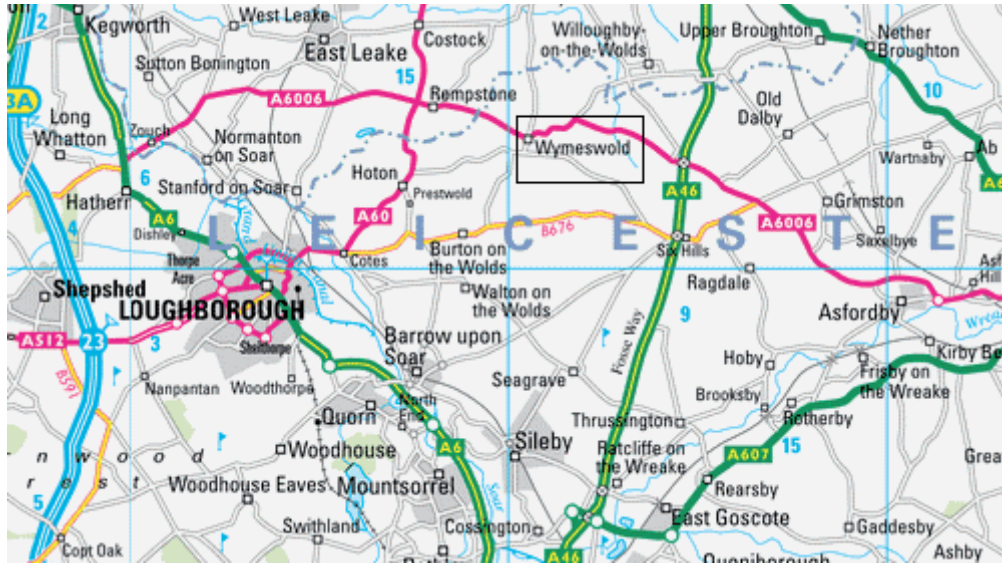


Figure 1: Location plan. Scale 1:20000.
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Figure 2: Location plan. Scale 1:10000.
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