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Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Field Evaluation on Land at The Mead, Tugby,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 76283 00797

Stephen Baker



ULAS Report No 2020-109

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Site Name: The Mead, Hallaton Road, Tugby

Grid Ref: SK 76283 00797

Author: Stephen Baker

Client: Jenny Hine

Planning Ref. 19/01432/FUL

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OASIS RECORD

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	Start/end dates	14 th – 15 th July 2020		
	Previous/Future Work	None		
	Project Type	Evaluation by Trial Trench		
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	Current Land Use	Garden		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	As a condition		
	Planning Ref.	19/01432/FUL		
PROJECT LOCATION	County	Leicestershire		
	Site Address/Postcode	The Mead, Hallaton Road, Tugby		
	Study Area	350 square metres		
	Site Coordinates	SK 76283 00797		
	Height OD	164m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	ULAS		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Vicki Score		
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An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at The Mead, Hallaton Road, Tugby, Leicestershire

(SK 76283 00797)

Stephen Baker

Summary

This document is a fieldwork report for an archaeological trial trench evaluation carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land at The Mead, Hallaton Road, Tugby, Leicestershire (SP3972 9737), in advance of residential development.

A single trench was opened on the site, to determine the impact of a proposed new residential dwelling on the site and identify a mitigation strategy for any further archaeological work. It was positioned to avoid existing constraints but also to identify the extent of an area of Roman archaeology previously excavated by ULAS on land adjacent to the proposed development area to the south-east.

The trench revealed a substantial ditch and a gully, yielding pottery of Late Roman date and animal bone, as well as two undated linear features that could be projected from the earlier excavations by ULAS. A gully containing late 1st- 2nd century pottery hints at possibly earlier features in this area.

The archive for the site will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums under accession number XA61.2020.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were contracted by the client, Jenny Hine, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at The Mead, Hallaton Road, Tugby, Leicestershire (SK 76283 00797). The fieldwork was carried out on the 14th and 15th July 2020.

The work was required as a condition (19/01432/FUL) by the Planning Authority following advice from Leicestershire County Council in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, MHCLG 2019). All work was undertaken as per the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; Baker, 2020)

The development involves the construction of a single residential dwelling in the existing garden of The Mead property, with vehicular access from Hallaton Road. The work was intended to provide a preliminary indication of the character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority and a mitigation strategy be developed.

Location and Geology

Tugby lies around 10 miles east of Leicester and the site is located on the south edge of the village forming part of the garden to the side of the detached house, The Mead. Hallaton Road forms the western boundary and previous agricultural land, presently being developed, lies to the south and east (Figs 1 and 2).

Planning permission (19/01432/FUL) has been granted for a single residential detached dwelling with vehicular access from Hallaton Road.

In advance of the development an initial programme of trial trenching was undertaken to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on any buried archaeology, and produce a mitigation strategy for the site.

The rectangular shaped site covered approximately 350 square metres of land at a height of around 164m aOD. There is an approximate 1m rise from west to east.

The British Geological Survey website indicated that the underlying geology consisted of Oadby Member Diamicton overlying Gunthorpe Member Mudstone.

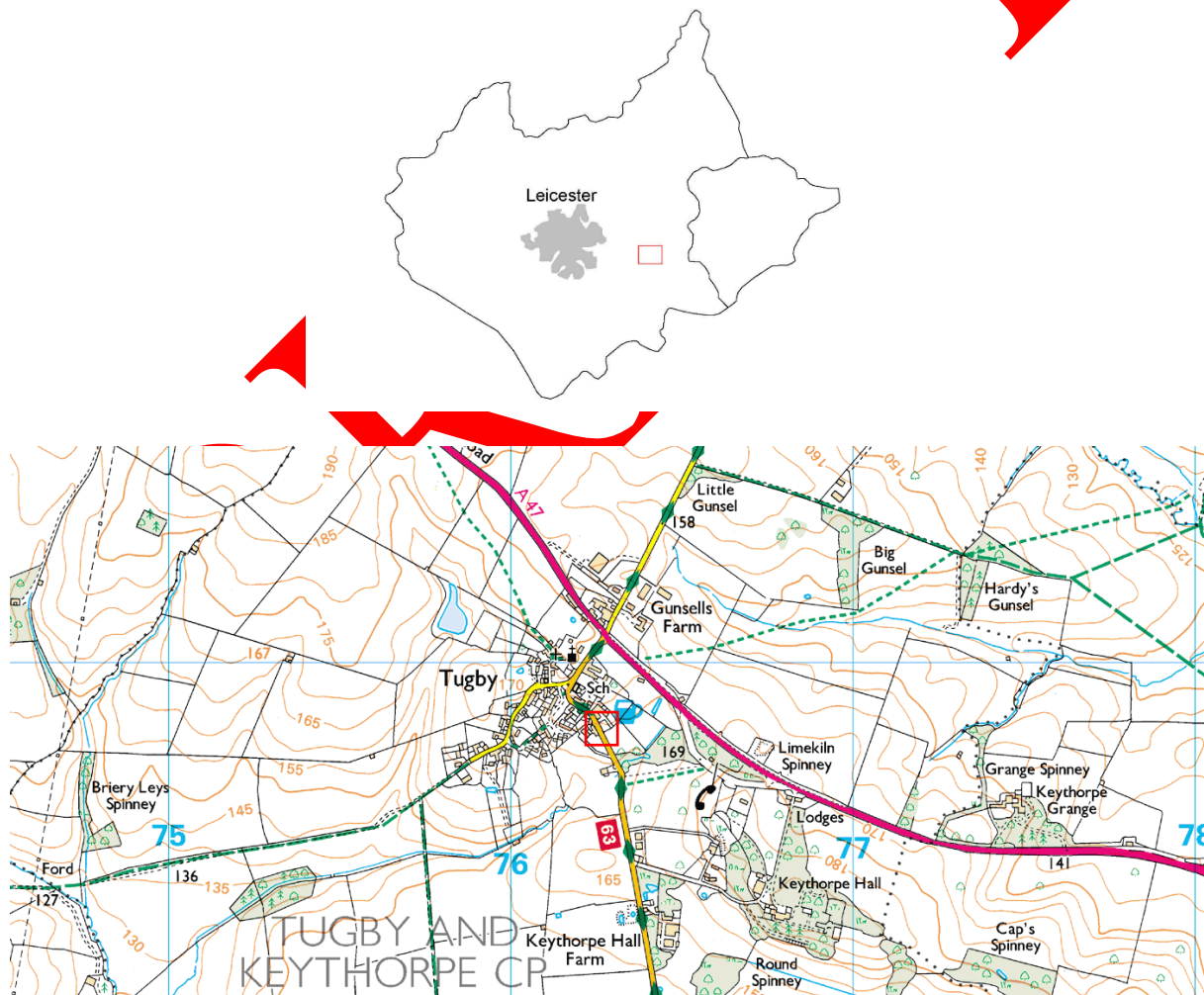


Figure 1: Site location

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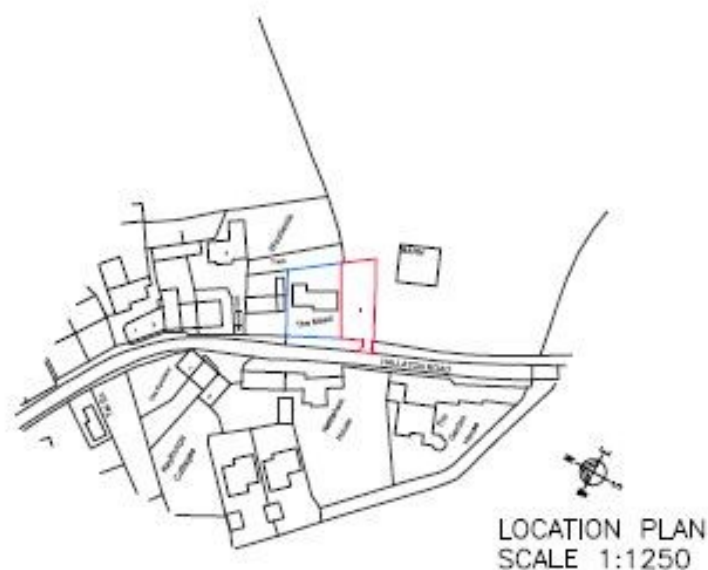


Figure 2: Site location (plan provided by developer).

Historical and Archaeological Background (from the WSI)

There are a number of known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the assessment area. As part of the previous work, a desk based assessment was undertaken (Score 2016). A summary of sites in the area is described below

In the north of the village, a stone with a smooth surface bearing several cup-shaped marks lies west of the church, a fragment of which was detached in 1962 and is in the museum collections. It is considered possible that it dates from the Bronze Age.

A pit containing three mid-2nd century Roman pottery sherds was recorded at the Old Manor House, Main Street on the eastern side of the village during a strip, plan and sample excavation in 2015 (MLE22630).

Recent excavations by ULAS on Hallaton Road found a series of Roman features including ditches, gullies, pits and post-holes representing peripheral activity on the outskirts of a late Roman rural settlement, such as a farmstead, perhaps somewhere to the north-east where a curving ditch may represent part of an enclosure, with other ditches indicative of boundaries and drainage (Browning 2020). The intercutting ditches and gullies suggest an extensive water management system on the site, renewed on a regular basis, perhaps to alleviate issues with silting and keep the area habitable. The pottery assemblage suggests that the area was primarily occupied in the later 3rd and 4th centuries and the settlement appears to have only been occupied for a relatively short period of time.

It was expected that these features extended to the north-west into the development area.

An Anglo-Saxon burial was discovered at Keythorpe Hall in May (MLE2568). The individual was accompanied by a number of grave-goods, including an elaborately decorated hanging bowl, a pair of bone dice, 46 bone gaming pieces and some possible brooches.

The site lies on the edge of the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of the village maps (MLE10345). The ridge and furrow plan (Hartley 1992, unpublished; Figs 4 and

6) shows some of the old boundaries and earthworks as well as the ridge and furrow in the fields surrounding the village.

Earthworks north of Fishpool Spinney, possibly represent a terraced garden, a fishpond and other boundary features (**MLE20620**). Other earthworks indicating a complex of substantial buildings (**MLE2572**) lie north-east of Manor Farm. The appearance of the earthworks, with apparent building platforms and indications of formal gardens, as well as their close proximity to the church, suggests that they could represent the site of the old Manor House and its associated grounds. Old Manor Farm House, Main Street was demolished in 2015 (**MLE21882**). The house was probably constructed as a 2-storey hall and cross-wing house c.1505. The hall was timber- framed and the cross-wing had a stone ground storey and a timber-framed upper storey.

Trial trenching in 2013 recorded two ditches to the south of the earthwork complex and c.500m east of the proposed site, thought to be medieval field or stock enclosure boundaries (**MLE21652**).

In the centre of the village a watching brief was carried out on levelling operations in the 1970s and found possible medieval cobbling with 12th-13th century pottery (**MLE2566**). Another watching brief at Spinney Nook, Main Street in 1998 recorded several gullies, thought to be boundary ditches for medieval plots (**MLE2564**). These contained medieval pottery, including Saxo-Norman sherds, providing supportive evidence for the pre-Conquest origins of the village (Browning and Warren 1998). The site appeared to have fallen out of use after the 14th century, possibly suggesting settlement shift or shrinkage. Works on Well Field in the 1970s (**MLE2566**) found cobbling and 12th/13th century pottery.

Faint village earthworks were photographed from the air in 1981 south-east of Wellfield Close, Tugby (**MLE2565**), 500m south east of the proposed site. The northern part was developed in the 1990s but the southern section is still visible on 2011 aerial photographs. Further earthworks were identified to the north-west (**MLE2573**).

Archaeological Objectives

The main aim of the investigation was to provide evidence to aid understanding the nature, date, function, and character of the archaeological remains on the site in their cultural and environmental setting, and to preserve it by record.

The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits.
- To establish the eco-factual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
- To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to assess the impact of the proposed development on cultural heritage and to help formulate a mitigation strategy
- To record any archaeological deposits and produce an archive and report of any results.

Specifically the evaluation will identify if the archaeology seen to the south-east extends into this area. The results of the evaluation will provide information in order for the local planning

authority to make informed recommendations and to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy for the proposed development.

Research Objectives

While the nature, extent and quality of archaeological remains within the area of investigation for the project remained unknown until archaeological work was undertaken, it was expected that the previously excavated remains recorded nearby were likely to extend into the development area. It was possible to determine some initial objectives derived from *East Midlands Heritage* research agenda (Cooper 2006, Knight *et al.* 2012, <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/>). The site's location close to Roman archaeology and the medieval village core suggested that the evaluation has the potential to contribute to the following research aims.

Roman

5.2 The military impact, 5.4 Rural settlements, patterns and landscapes

Early Medieval

6.4, 6.7 (Rural settlement patterns, the agricultural economy and rural landscape).

High Medieval

7.2, 7.3 (Rural settlement, manors and manorial estates).

Methodology

Prior to any machining of trial trenches, general photographs of the site were taken. A single 'L-shaped' trench (Trench 01), 20m long and 1.6m wide, was repositioned to avoid mature vegetation across the development area and 'dog-legged' to meet the required coverage. This was excavated in level spits, where possible, using a JCB mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket (Figs 3-4).

The trench was examined for archaeological deposits or finds by hand cleaning and tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid by Hyper SR FC5000 GPS. It was cleared for backfilling once sample excavation and recording was complete, with approval from the Leicestershire County Council Planning Archaeologist.

The work followed the approved WSI (Baker 2020) and adhered to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA) *Code of Conduct* and their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2020).



Figure 3: Machining Trench 01, looking west



Figure 4: Trench location

Results

Trench 01

Trench 01 was stripped of a consistent dark brown grey silty loam topsoil and lighter brown grey subsoil with more clay, down to an archaeological horizon cutting a variable light – mid orange brown mudstone. Two linear archaeological features were identified, sample excavated and recorded on site (Figs 5-7).

Table 1: Trench data

TRENCH	ORIENTATION	LENGTH AND WIDTH (m)	TOPSOIL THICKNESS(m)	SUBSOIL THICKNESS(m)	ARCHAEOLOGY DESCRIPTION	TRENCH DEPTH(m)
1	E-W/NW-SE	20	0.13 – 0.24	0.10 – 0.22	Gully [02] and ditch [04], undated/un-excavated gullies	0.31 0.73

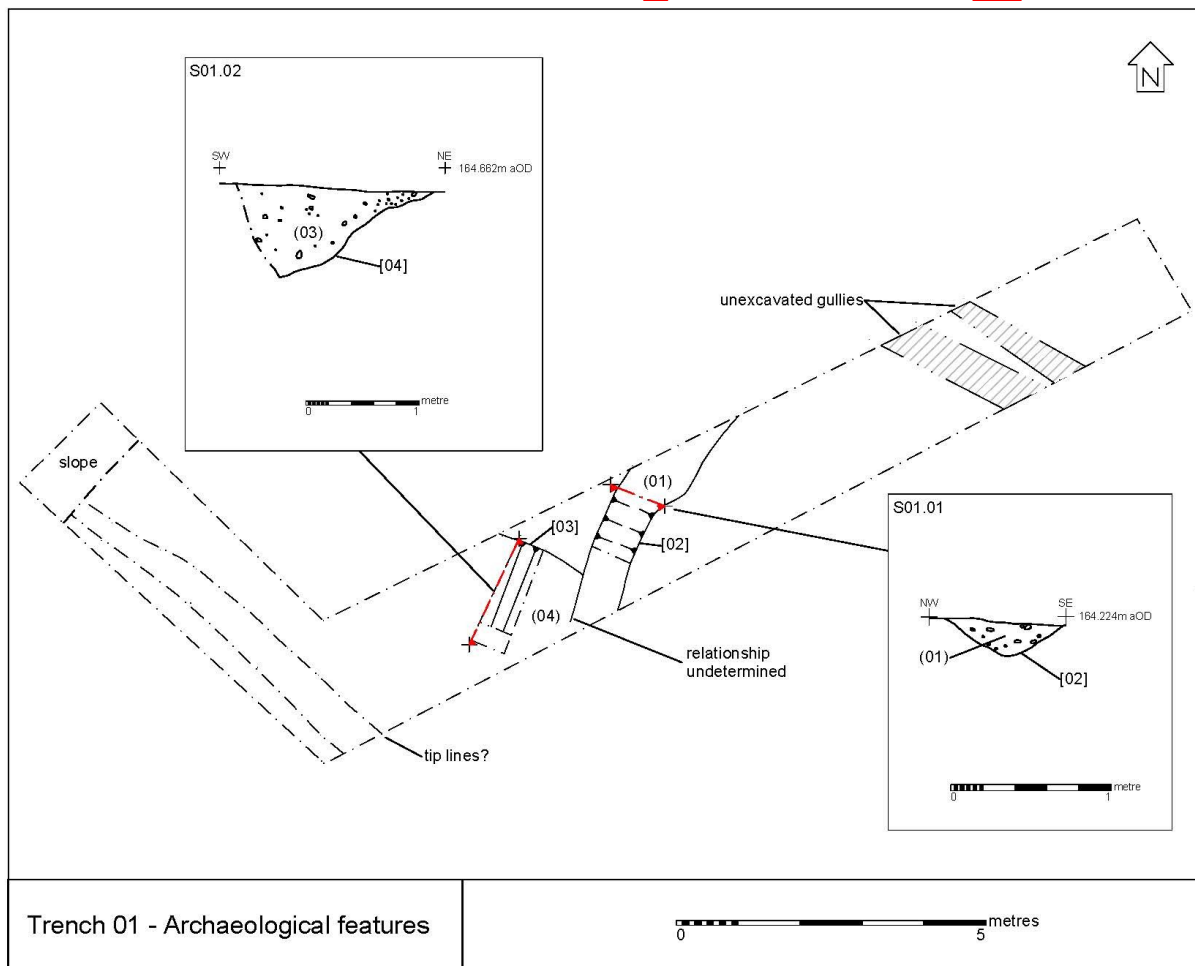


Figure 5: Trench 01 - Archaeological features and sections



Figure 6: Trench 01, looking west, east and south (from L to R)

Linear feature **[02]** (Fig. 7), was orientated north-east/south-west, and was over 3.59m long, running beneath the sides of the trench. It was *c.* 0.75m wide where investigated and up to *c.* 0.25m deep. Slightly irregular in plan, it displayed straight, moderately sloping sides and a concave, central base. It contained a single mid/dark grey brown silty clay fill (**01**), with abundant small - medium rounded and angular stones, and occasional natural flint fragments, and yielded pottery dated to the late 1st – mid 2nd century date, and a small quantity of animal bone, including cattle and a gnawed fragment (J. Browning, pers comm).

Linear feature **[04]** (Fig. 8), was a substantial ditch partially excavated. It was orientated north-west/south-east, over 5m long and possible 5m wide. It was investigated to a depth of *c.* 0.82m and displayed irregular, moderately sloping sides. The eastern edge was distinguishable in plan, although its relationship with nearby gully **[02]** was not visible. The west edge was not identified, probably lying outside the trench and the feature continued beneath the limit of excavation in the north and south. Discrepancies in the trench deposits in the west, on a comparable alignment, were investigated and may represent 'tip lines' of deposits contained within this substantial feature suggesting recuts of a series of features. The excavated mid brown-grey silty-clay fill (**03**), was clearly distinguishable from the natural substratum, and contained natural flint fragments along with angular and sub-rounded stones. Fragmentary horse bone (J. Browning, pers comm) and pottery of mid – 2nd century to 4th century AD date were recovered.

Two linear anomalies toward the east end of the trench were partially investigated but, devoid of finds were interpreted on site as possibly modern. They were recorded by GPS survey only. Subsequent post-excavation plotting of the archaeological features alongside nearby excavations has indicated that this interpretation was premature and they do in fact probably represent a continuation of two previously excavated gullies from the south-west.



Figure 7: Gully [02], Trench 01, looking north-east



Figure 8: Ditch [04] slot, looking north-west

Roman pottery - *Nicholas J. Cooper*

Introduction

An assemblage of ten sherds (92g) came (five each) from gully (1) [2] and ditch (3) [4]. The material is in fair condition, with an average sherd weight of 9.2g. A fragment of Roman *tegula* roof tile (69g) also came from (1) [2] and two joining fragments of fired clay (burnt daub) with a flat, finger smoothed surface (25g) came from (3) [4].

Methodology

The pottery was analysed by form and fabric in accordance with national guidelines (Barclay *et al.* 2016), using the Leicestershire County Museums Roman pottery fabric series (Pollard 1994, 110-114) and quantified by sherd count and weight (g).

Analysis

The full quantified record is presented in Table 2, below.

Table 2: Roman Pottery

Context	Fabric	Vess. Type	sherds	Weight	Dating
(1)[2]	MO	Mortarium	1	4	2nd cent
(1)[2]	GW12	Jar	2	5	L1st-E2nd cent
(1)[2]	CG1A	Lid-seated jar	1	11	E-M2nd cent
(1)[2]	CG1A	Necked jar	1	38	E-M2nd
(3)[4]	CG1B	Jar	3	23	4th
(3)[4]	C2NV	Jar	1	7	L3rd-4th
(3)[4]	GW7	Jar	1	4	M2nd-L3rd
Total			10	92	Av. Sh. Wt. 9.2g

The assemblage from gully (1) [2] comprises rims of two early Roman shell-tempered ware jars (Fabric CG1A), one with a lid-seated rim and the other necked, with an everted rim. Both types are well-known from early to middle 2nd century groups from Empingham, Rutland (Cooper 2000, 74-78, figs. 34.12 and 35.17). Two other joining sherds from a vessel in a dark, micaceous grey ware (GW12) and a sherd from a mortarium in an unusual, buff, slightly micaceous fabric, would also support an early-middle 2nd century date for the filling of the gully. The ditch (3) [4], would appear to have been filled about 150 or 200 year later, during the 4th century, as it contains the rim of a Lower Nene Valley colour-coated ware (C2NV) necked jar with a bead rim (Howe *et al.* 1980 no.77) and the base from a South Midlands, late Roman shell-tempered ware jar (CG1B) (Brown 1994). The remaining sherd in a light coloured, sandy grey ware jar (GW7) with a dark surface is earlier, with a later 3rd century date at the latest.

The 4th-century Ditch (3) [4] is therefore broadly contemporary with the activity on the adjacent Hallaton Road site, whilst the earlier gully (1) [2] demonstrates the existence of stratified deposits of 2nd-century date, only hinted at by the occasional residual sherd of that date found at Hallaton Road. The poor representation of building materials within the assemblage suggests that the activity is not necessarily close to the centre of settlement, although the presence of burnt daub may hint at timber structures with wattle and daub walls in the vicinity. Overall, the pottery is typical of Roman Leicestershire, indicates that datable stratified deposits are present on the site, and that further field work will uncover a larger

assemblage with research potential, regarding the chronology of the structures therein and their wider economic and social connections.

Discussion and Conclusion

The trial trench revealed evidence for Roman remains, possibly representing land boundaries, stock enclosures or drainage ditches. The unexcavated linear features to the east of the trench are undoubtedly a continuation of gullies on the same alignment, excavated by ULAS to the immediate south of the site in 2020 (Fig. 9), dating from the late 2nd century onwards.

The western extent of Ditch [04] was undetermined but this may be indicative of a substantial feature/series of inter-related features comparable to the parallel ditches over 3m wide excavated just 5m to the south east of the site and on a north-east/south-west orientation. The latter ditch terminates *c.*10m south of the site, and Ditch [04] appears to be perpendicular to it, possibly even suggesting a south-east facing entranceway existed between the two, although a trench across this area during the evaluation found no features (Kipling 2017).

The previous excavations suggested the ditches represent peripheral activity associated with agriculture and water management on the outskirts of a late Roman (3rd – 4th century) rural settlement, such as a farmstead. The pottery from the earlier excavations suggested that settlement was nearby, probably to the north-east. It seems clear that the features identified in Trench 01 represent a continuation of these features to the north and west (Browning 2020) with 2nd pottery from the gully hinting at possibly earlier activity in this area.

The remains beneath the development area have the potential to corroborate existing archaeological knowledge and further understand activity on the site and in the immediate vicinity in light of the local and wider research objectives.

Archive and publication

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museums with accession number XA61.2020 and consists of the following:

- 1 x Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report No. 2020-109)
- 1 x digital Trench recording sheet
- 4 x Context Record Sheets
- 1 x Photo Record sheet
- 1 x Contact sheet of digital photographs
- 1 x Primary Drawing Sheet
- 2 x Drawing Record Sheets
- 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 be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course.

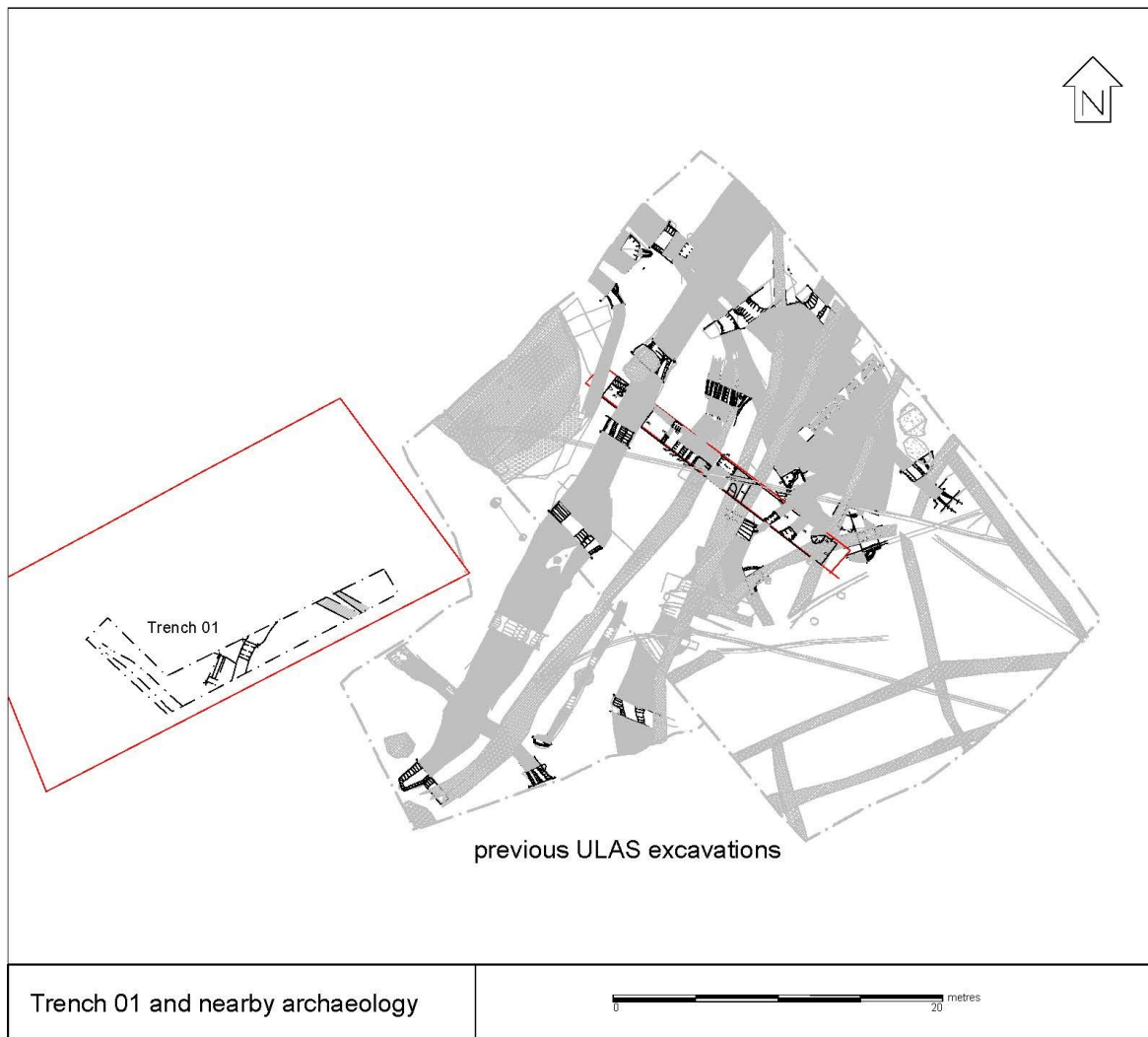


Figure 9: Trench 01 with nearby archaeology from the ULAS excavations.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank Jenny Hine for their help and co-operation with the project. Stephen Baker carried out the fieldwork for ULAS. The project was managed by Vicki Score and monitored by the Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council.

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