



UNIVERSITY OF
LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Field Evaluation on Land north of Cold Overton Road,
Langham, Rutland**

NGR: SK 8390 1088

Stephen Baker



ULAS Report No 2020-076

©2020

Site Name: Cold Overton Road, Langham, Rutland

Grid Ref: SK 8390 1088

Author: Stephen Baker

Client: Langton Developments Ltd

Planning Ref. Pre-Determination

ULAS Report Number: 2020-076

Accession Number: OAKRAM:2020.9

Filename/Version	Checked by	Date
Draft	Vicki Score	27/05/2020

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
www.le.ac.uk/ulas

© ULAS 2020

OASIS RECORD

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-412131		
	Project Name	An archaeological field evaluation at Cold Overton Road, Langham, Rutland		
	Start/end dates	20 th – 22 nd May 2020		
	Previous/Future Work	None		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	Rough pasture		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Pre-determination		
Planning Ref.	N/A			
PROJECT LOCATION	County	Rutland		
	Site Address/Postcode	Cold Overton Road. Langham, Rutland		
	Study Area	c.1.72 hectares		
	Site Coordinates	SK8390 1088		
	Height OD	135 - 140m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator			
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Vicki Score		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Stephen Baker		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Langton Developments Ltd		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	Rutland Museum service	Rutland Museum service	Rutland Museum service
	ID (Acc. No.)	OAKRAM:2020.9	OAKRAM:2020.9	OAKRAM:2020.9
	Contents	None	Photographs Survey	Report/Record/Sheets Photo Trench
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Description	Developer Report A4 pdf		
	Title	An archaeological field evaluation at Cold Overton Road, Langham, Rutland		
	Author	Stephen Baker		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2020-076		
	Date	2020		
	Publisher/Place	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		

Contents

Summary	2
Introduction.....	2
Location and Geology.....	4
Historical and Archaeological Background (from the WSI)	5
Archaeological Objectives	6
Research Objectives.....	6
Methodology	6
Results.....	8
Trench 1 - 3	8
Trench 4	10
Trench 5	11
Trench 6	12
Discussion and Conclusion	14
Archive and publication.....	14
Acknowledgements.....	14
References.....	15

Figures

Figure 1: Site location.....	3
Figure 2: Proposed development	4
Figure 3: Geophysical Survey Interpretation (From Sumo 2020; Fig. 3).....	5
Figure 4: Trench location plan. Geophysical anomalies targeted are shown in blue.	7
Figure 5: Machining Trench 2	8
Figure 6: Trench 2, looking north-east	9
Figure 7: Trench 3, looking east	10
Figure 8: Trench 4, looking east	11
Figure 9: Trench 5, looking south-west	12
Figure 10: Trench 6, looking south.....	13

An archaeological field evaluation at Cold Overton Road, Langham, Rutland

(SK 8390 1088)

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 Cold Overton Road, Langham, Rutland (SK8390 1088) in advance of residential development.

A total of six trenches were opened, either side of a public footpath traversing the site. One of these, Trench 2, was targeted in order to investigate a geophysical anomaly. The investigation revealed possible evidence for past agriculture but no significant archaeological deposits.

The archive for the site will be deposited with Rutland Museums under accession number OAKRAM:2020.9

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were contracted by the client, Langton Developments Ltd, to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation at Cold Overton Road, Langham, Rutland (SK8390 1088; Fig. 1). The fieldwork was carried out between 20th and 22nd May 2020.

The work was required by the Planning Authority following advice from the Leicestershire Planning Archaeologist in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, MHCLG 2018). All work was undertaken as per the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

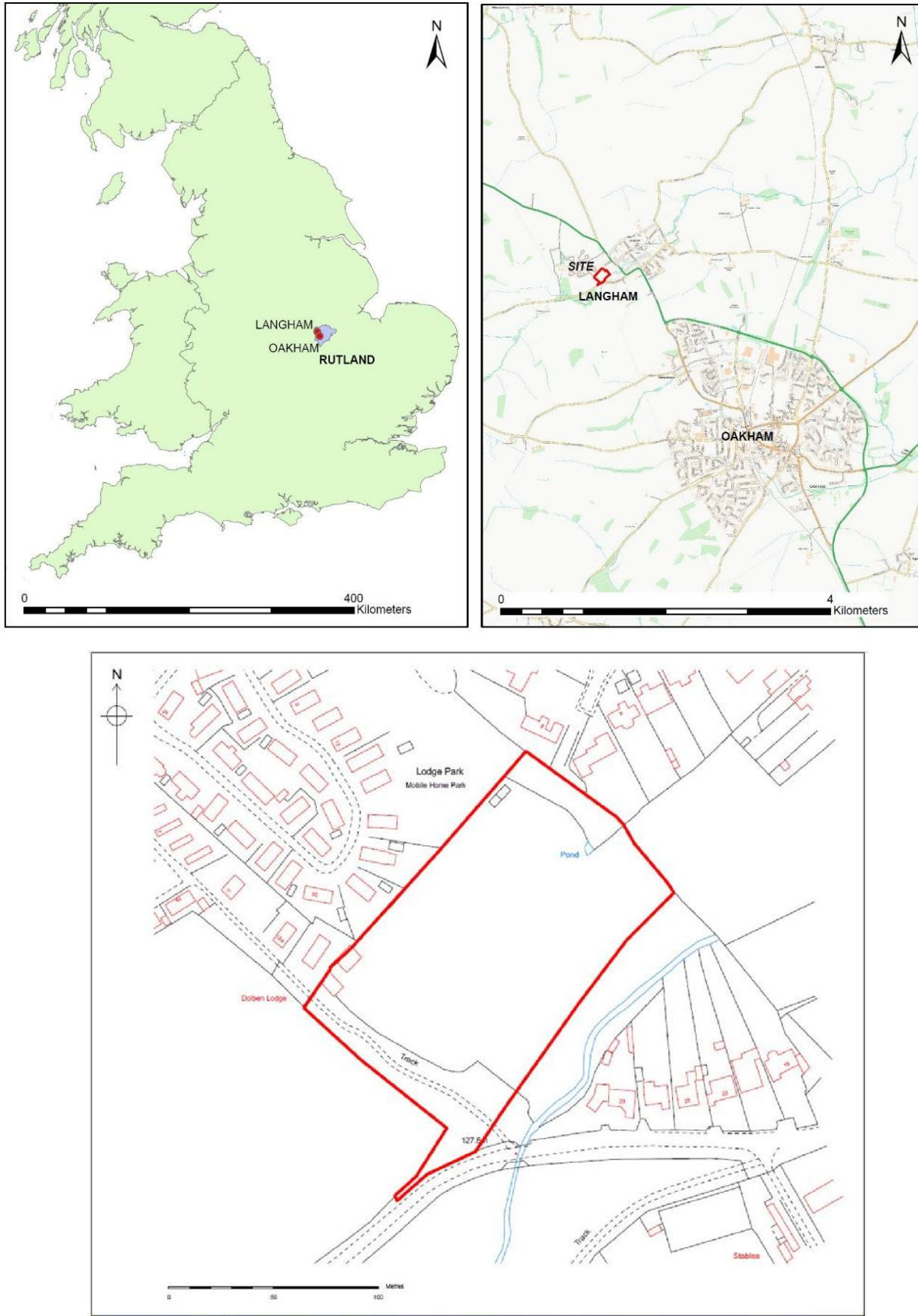


Figure 1: Site location

Location and Geology

Langham lies around 2 miles to the north-west of Oakham in Rutland and the proposed site lies at the western edge of the village (Fig. 1).

Planning permission is being sought for residential development of the site (Fig. 2). A desk-based assessment and geophysical survey had previously been undertaken (Hunt 2020, Sumo 2020) and the Planning Archaeologist, as advisor to Rutland County Council, had requested trial trenching to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on any buried archaeology and produce a mitigation strategy for the site.



Figure 2: Proposed development

The proposed site lies on open grassland at the western edge of the village close to a stream, which forms the south-eastern boundary of the site. It comprises an irregular shaped, approximately 1.72 hectare parcel of land. This falls from *c.*140m aOD in the north-west to *c.*135m aOD in the south-east, towards the stream. There was a noticeable contour along the northern side of the field, aligned north-east/south-west and corresponding to an old hedge boundary shown on early maps.

A footpath also traverses the site from south-west to north-east, and tall trees and wooded

areas surrounded the site.

The British Geological Survey website indicated a mixed underlying geology of mudstone of the Whitby or Dyrham Formation across most of the site, with a band of ferruginous Limestone across the centre. Alluvial and gravels were likely along the south-eastern edge, close to the stream.

Historical and Archaeological Background

A desk based assessment was undertaken for the site (Hunt 2020). The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) indicated that the application area had the potential to include heritage assets with an archaeological interest. At the time of the Domesday Survey (1086) Langham was held by the lords of Oakham Castle. Although it lies outside the historic settlement core and Conservation Area there are prehistoric, Roman, medieval and post-medieval finds 50m to the east of the site. Map evidence showed that the land was once part of two or three larger fields, which gradually became enclosed and faint ridge and furrow earthworks have been identified using LiDAR. There is the site of a possible medieval chapel opposite the assessment area, where burials were discovered.

A geophysical Survey was also undertaken in 2020. While it did not identify any anomalies of definite archaeological interest, it did highlight two possible ditch-type anomalies are of uncertain origin as well as evidence of ridge and furrow in the northern part of the site, and an old field boundary. Areas of natural magnetic variation and modern magnetic disturbance were also present in the data (Sumo 2020, 4; Fig. 3).



Figure 3: Geophysical Survey Interpretation (From Sumo 2020; Fig. 3)

Archaeological Objectives

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 ecofactual 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.

The results of the evaluation 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 areas of investigation for the project remained unknown until archaeological work was undertaken, it was possible to determine some initial objectives derived from *East Midlands Heritage* research agenda (Cooper 2006, Knight *et al.* 2012). The site lies outside the village core, in what were probably open fields associated with the village. The evaluation therefore had the potential to contribute to the following research aims:

Early Medieval

6.4 Rural settlement patterns, 6.7 Agricultural economy and rural landscape

High Medieval

7.2 Rural settlement,

These research aims were identified based on the current state of knowledge, within the area of the scheme, and re-assessed and updated during the course of the fieldwork.

Methodology

Six trial trenches were excavated across the proposed development area, three to either side of the public footpath. Two of these (Trenches 2 and 4) were positioned to look at anomalies identified on the geophysical survey. They were located using measurements from the boundaries (Fig. 4). Notably, at the request of the Planning Archaeologist, Trench 2 was moved c.5m to the south to ensure the location of the possible geophysical anomaly was covered.

Prior to any machining of trial trenches, general photographs of the site areas were taken. The trenches were excavated in level spits, using a JCB mechanical excavator equipped with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket (Fig. 5).

Trenches were examined for archaeological deposits or finds by hand cleaning. The trenches were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid using a Topcon Hiper SR GPS and then were

backfilled and levelled at the end of recording, in view of their proximity to the public right of way and with approval from the Leicestershire County Council Planning Archaeologist.

The work followed the approved WSI (ULAS 2019) and adhered to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2014).

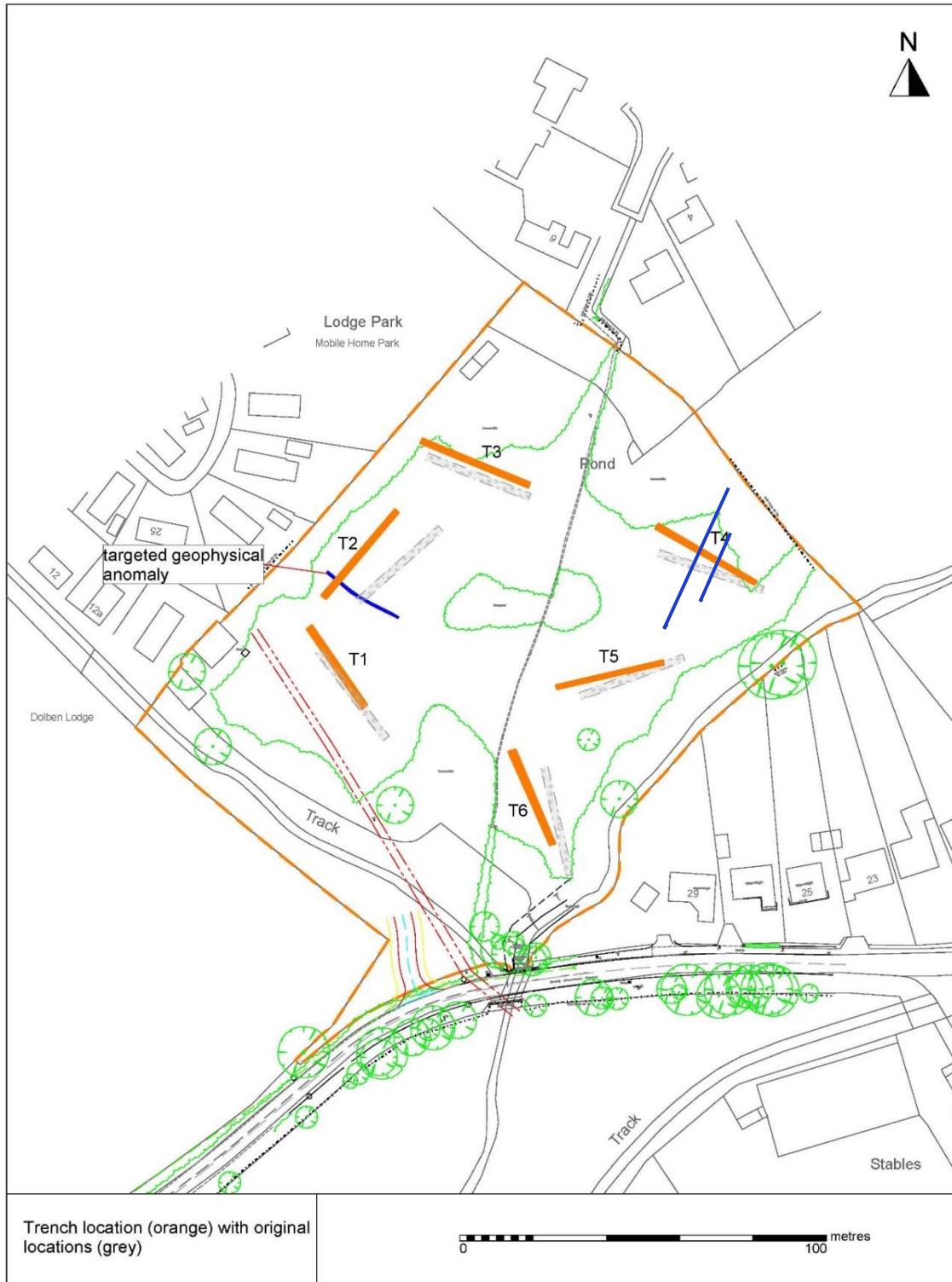


Figure 4: Trench location plan. Geophysical anomalies targeted are shown in blue.



Figure 5: Machining Trench 2

Results

A total of 6 trenches were excavated within the proposed development area.

TRENCH	ORIENTATION	LENGTH AND WIDTH (metres)	TOPSOIL THICKNESS (metres)	SUBSOIL THICKNESS (metres)	DESCRIPTION	TRENCH DEPTH (MIN-MAX metres)
1	E - W	29 x 1.6	0.17 – 0.22	0.08 – 0.74	No archaeological deposits	0.28 – 1.04
2	NE - SW	29 x 1.6	0.18 x 0.26	0.11 – 0.44	No archaeological deposits, furrows	0.32 – 0.76
3	E - W	30 x 1.6	0.14 – 0.19	0.24 – 0.42	No archaeological deposits, furrow	0.28 – 0.66
4	E W	31 x 1.6	0.17 – 0.20	0.19 – 0.33	No archaeological deposits, furrow	0.50 – 0.76
5	NE - SW	30 x 1.6	0.15 – 0.28	0.05 – 0.27 (inc. alluvium)	No archaeological deposits, alluvium	0.24 – 1.14
6	NE - SE	28 x 1.6	0.19 – 0.34	0.26 – 0.73 (inc. alluvium)	No archaeological deposits, alluvium	0.46 – 1.5+

Trench 1 - 3

Trenches 1 – 3 were located to the north-west of the public footpath. A consistent mid-grey brown clay silt topsoil, with occasional small – large sub-rounded pebbles, overlay a lighter

brown subsoil with more clay. This had an interface and merged with the natural mudstone substratum.

Trench 1 was located on the ridge of higher ground in the north of the proposed development area and the natural geology fell to the east. It was positioned parallel to and a safe distance from the overhead services bisecting the southern part of the development area. No archaeological deposits or finds were observed.

Trench 2 was repositioned *c.*5m south in order to investigate an identified geophysical east - west linear anomaly. An irregular deposit did appear on the stratigraphic horizon between the topsoil and subsoil. This part excavated and determined to be a very shallow depression, filled with topsoil, into the natural substratum. Comparable linear deposits in alignment and character, were identified at regular intervals in Trench 2 (Fig. 6) and also to the south of Trench 3. These are interpreted as the scant remains of furrows and suggests different alignments of ploughing in this area.



Figure 6: Trench 2, looking north-east



Figure 7: Trench 3, looking east

Trench 4

A further linear depression at the east of Trench 4 that coincided with one of the geophysical anomalies was investigated and also interpreted as a furrow. The topsoil and subsoils were comparable and the natural substratum included clay and gravel patches, perhaps consistent with the proximity to the stream. No other archaeological deposits were observed or finds recovered (Fig. 8).



Figure 8: Trench 4, looking east

Trench 5

Proximal to the stream, Trench 5 was excavated down to a yellow clay with pebbles and gravel lenses, overlain by an apparent alluvium deposit of mid-yellow/brown silty clay with gravel patches. No archaeological deposits were observed or finds recovered. The north-east of the trench was subject to significant modern truncation, comprised of dumps of building materials (including tiles, brick, mortar and concrete), in a grey clay matrix containing plastic, disused electrical wiring and fragments of glass. This was not fully removed by the machine and continued past the *c.*1.2m limit of excavation (Fig. 9). No archaeological deposits were identified.



Figure 9: Trench 5, looking south-west

Trench 6

Natural deposits comprising grey boulder clay were also recorded in Trench 6, lying beneath the alluvium, at a depth of *c.*1.5m. Approximately 10m from the west of the trench, the substratum consisted of increased gravel content, perhaps representing a terrace formed by past courses of the watercourse. No archaeological deposits were recorded with this trench (Fig. 10).



Figure 10: Trench 6, looking south

Discussion and Conclusion

The excavation of six trial trenches across the development area did not reveal any significant archaeological remains or yield any finds. Evidence for agricultural systems, in the form east–west furrows, visible in the subsoil and substratum, were noted within Trenches 2 and 4, where anomalies from the geophysical survey were targeted, but also in Trench 3. Ridge and furrow in these areas was noted on both the LIDAR and the geophysical survey. Although the furrows in Trench 2 is on a different alignment to those seen in the surveys, ridge and furrow on this alignment is visible elsewhere in the field notably just to the west. This evidence would seem to support the suggestion that the area was part of the field systems on the outskirts of the medieval settlement core.

The trenches positioned towards the stream displayed some degree of alluvial activity, possibly due to flooding episodes, earlier water channels, or both. There was also some significant modern disturbance at the eastern end of Trench 5.

Archive and publication

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number OAKRAM:2020.9 and consists of the following:

- 1 Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report No. 2020-076)
- 6 Trench recording sheets
- 1 Photo Record 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 be submitted for publication in a suitable regional archaeological journal in due course.

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like thank Langton Developments Ltd for their help and co-operation with the project. Stephen Baker carried out the fieldwork for ULAS and the project was managed by Vicki Score. The project was monitored by Chloe Cronogue-Freeman, Senior Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council.

References

- CifA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) 2019, Code of Conduct
- CifA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) 2014a, Standard and Guidance for Field Evaluation
- CifA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) 2014b. Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives
- Cooper, N. (Ed.) (2006). The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda. Leicester Archaeological Monographs No. 13. University of Leicester Archaeological Services: Leicester.
- Historic England, 2006a. Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment
- Historic England, 2011. Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation. Centre for Archaeology Guidelines 2011
- Hunt, L., 2020, An archaeological desk-based assessment for land north of Cold Overton Road, Langham, Rutland (SK 8390 1088). ULAS Report 2020-004
- Knight, D., Vyner, B. and Allen, C. (2012). East Midlands Heritage: An updated research agenda and strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands. University of Nottingham and York Archaeological Trust.
- LCC, Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological work in Leicestershire and Rutland
- LMARS, 2014 The Transfer of Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records Service.
- MHCLG (Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government) 2019 (Rev.), National Planning Policy Framework
- Neal, V., & Watkinson, D. 1998. First Aid for Finds: Practical Guide for Archaeologists. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation of Historic & Artistic Works, Archaeology Section; 3rd Revised Edition.
- Sumo Services Ltd 2020 GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY REPORT Cold Overton Road, Langham, Rutland. ULAS Report no 2020-064.

Stephen Baker

Project Officer

ULAS

University of Leicester

University Road

Leicester LE1 7RH

Tel: 0116 252 2848

Fax: 0116 252 2614

Email: sb390@leicester.ac.uk

26/05/2020



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

