

**An Archaeological Watching Brief during  
groundworks at the  
site of the Countryman Inn,  
Station Road, Great Bowden,  
Leicestershire (SP 4743 2884)**

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**For: Darian Homes**

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## **An Archaeological Watching Brief during groundworks at the site of the Countryman Inn, Station Road, Great Bowden, Leicestershire (SP 4743 2884)**

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### **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at the site of the Countryman Inn, Station Road, Great Bowden, Leicestershire. The site lies outside the historic core of the village and a short distance from a substantial spread of Roman material, possibly a small town. The site, therefore, has a low to moderate archaeological potential. The watching brief revealed no archaeological features or finds associated with archaeological features. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services with accession number X.A.163. 2004*

### **Introduction**

The University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Darian Homes to carry out a watching brief during the excavation of foundation trenches at the site of the Countryman Inn, Station Road, Great Bowden, Leicestershire (SP 4743 2884). Archaeological work was required as a condition of the planning permission granted by Leicestershire County Council (planning application No. 03/1109/3).

The site lies outside the historic core of Great Bowden village. A substantial east-west linear spread of Roman material, possibly evidence of a small town, lies to the south-west of Great Bowden along the Ridgeway 200 metres south-west of the development site. The Countryman Inn is of 19<sup>th</sup> century date and is situated on the site previously occupied by a domestic residence known as Springfield House (Fig. 2).

The planned development of 10 new dwellings with associated access and parking on the site was seen to have the potential to have a damaging impact on any archaeological remains if present.

The correspondence from the Senior Planning Archaeologist dated 21<sup>st</sup> November 2003 (appendix 1), detailed the need for a watching brief during the demolition and ground-works. A Design Specification for a watching brief was prepared by ULAS (appendix 2). A desk-based assessment had previously been prepared by ULAS and included a building appraisal for the Countryman Inn (ULAS Report No. 2003-168)

## Site Location and Geology

The development site is located in the village of Great Bowden, in Hinckley Parish, in Harborough District. It consists of an area of about 0.4 hectares.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain (Solid and Drift) Sheet 170 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Lower Liassic strata, most likely clays. The land is level at a height of c.83m.

## Aims and Methods

The purpose of the watching brief was to ascertain whether archaeological deposits were present. If so, the character, extent and date range of any deposits identified would be established, in order to assess their significance (see Appendices, Design Specification). Recording of these deposits would be carried out as appropriate, and an archive and this report produced. The work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, and adhered to the University's Health and Safety policy.

The site was visited by an archaeologist on 17<sup>th</sup> April, 26<sup>th</sup> April and 4<sup>th</sup> May 2004 and groundworks associated with the development were observed (Figs.3&4). The spoil heaps were also examined for archaeological finds.

## Results

The site was visited on 17.4.2004 during the demolition of the public house. Due to Health and Safety considerations it was not possible to carry out a photographic survey. Observation of the partially demolished building suggested that the earliest phase of building was of late 19th century date and there was no evidence of earlier phases.

The Countryman Inn had been demolished before the below ground watching brief visits and the tarmac of the car park had been removed. Remnants of the foundations of the Inn were still to be seen at the southern end of the site (Area 02, fig. 4) and the surface throughout the site was littered with building debris. Three spoil heaps of building debris and tarmac were situated at the east side of the site.

On the visit of 26<sup>th</sup> April the excavation of the foundation trenches of two house plots were observed (Area 01, fig 3). The trenches were dug to various depths, around 0.6m for internal walls, and around 0.9-1m for external walls. The strata revealed was uniform throughout the area and consisted of 0.3-0.4m of dark grey silty clay, which overlay a yellowish brown clay. Ceramic drains occupied the only places where the area had been disturbed.

Area 02 was observed on 4<sup>th</sup> May and was similar to Area 01, except that the upper margins of the substrata were more disturbed by drains and modern brick. The foundations of the Countryman Inn appeared to have been relatively insubstantial and had not disturbed the ground significantly. The new foundations were dug to a depth

of between 1.55m and 1.20m, and around 0.9-1m for internal walls. In places the substrata consisted of sandy clay as well as clay and recent heavy rain caused them to collapse in many places. No archaeological features were revealed during the excavations and no archaeological finds were discovered.

## **Conclusion**

The substrata below the car park (Area 01, Figure 3) is undisturbed except by the presence of drains. The upper dark grey silty clay layer smells as if it is contaminated, possibly by the laying of the tarmac. There is little evidence to suggest what lay here before the car park, there is no evidence of buried soil to suggest that this was once farmland or a garden associated with Springfield House.

Area 02 (figure 4), was more disturbed than Area 01 and also showed no evidence of archaeological deposits.

## **Archive**

The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services with accession number X.A.163.2004 and consists of the following:

3 watching brief record sheets, including sketch plans and section.

1 set colour slides

## **Bibliography**

Courtney, P. 2003, *An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment for the site of the Countryman Inn, Great Bowden, Leicestershire (SP 4743 2884)*.

## **Acknowledgements**

ULAS would like to thank Mike Topley and Richard Matthews of Darian Homes and their team for their co-operation. The author carried out the watching brief; Patrick Clay was the Project Manager.

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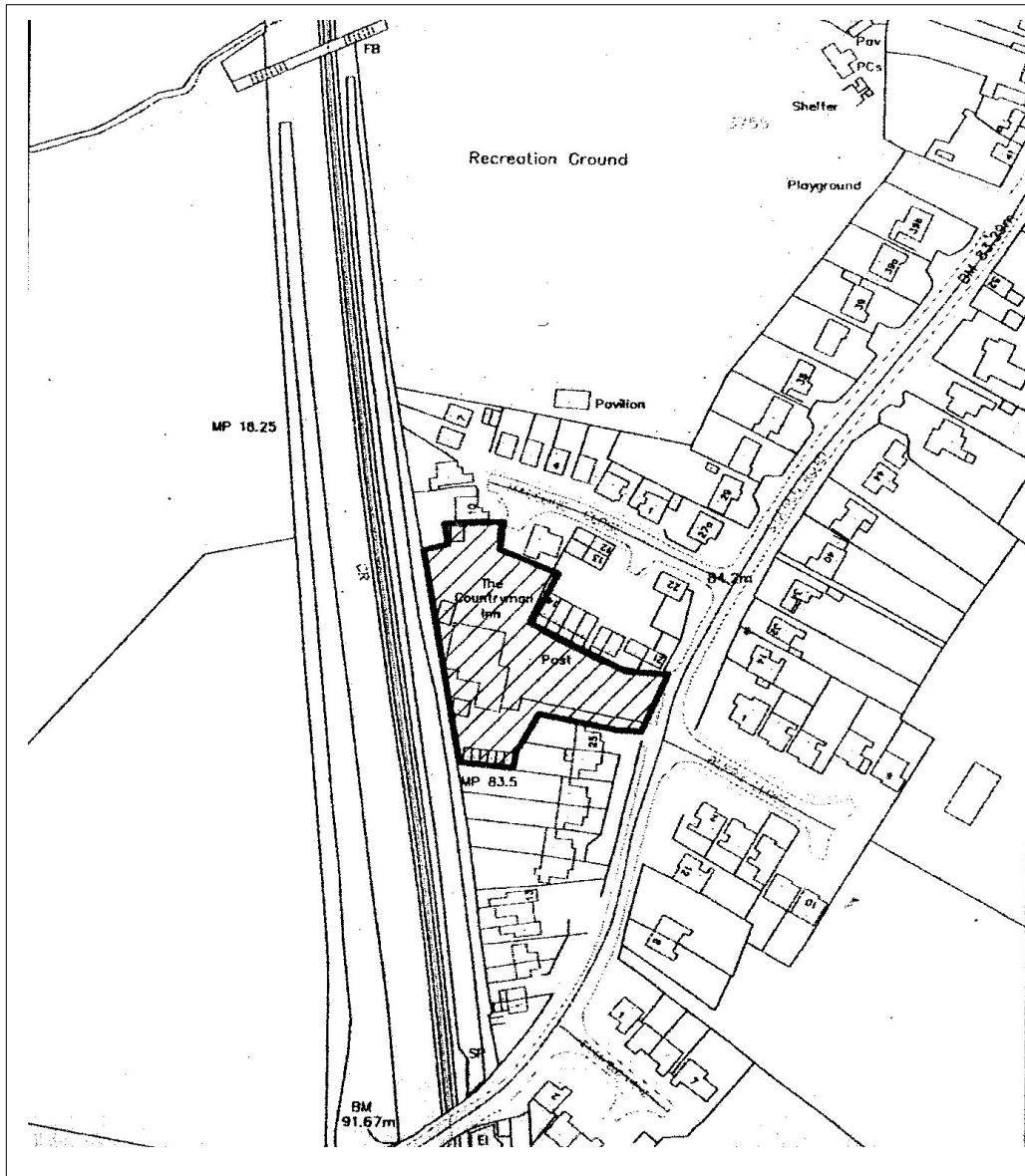


Figure 1: Site Location

OS 1:2500 scale map reproduced by permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office, Crown copyright 1992. Licence No. 10002186

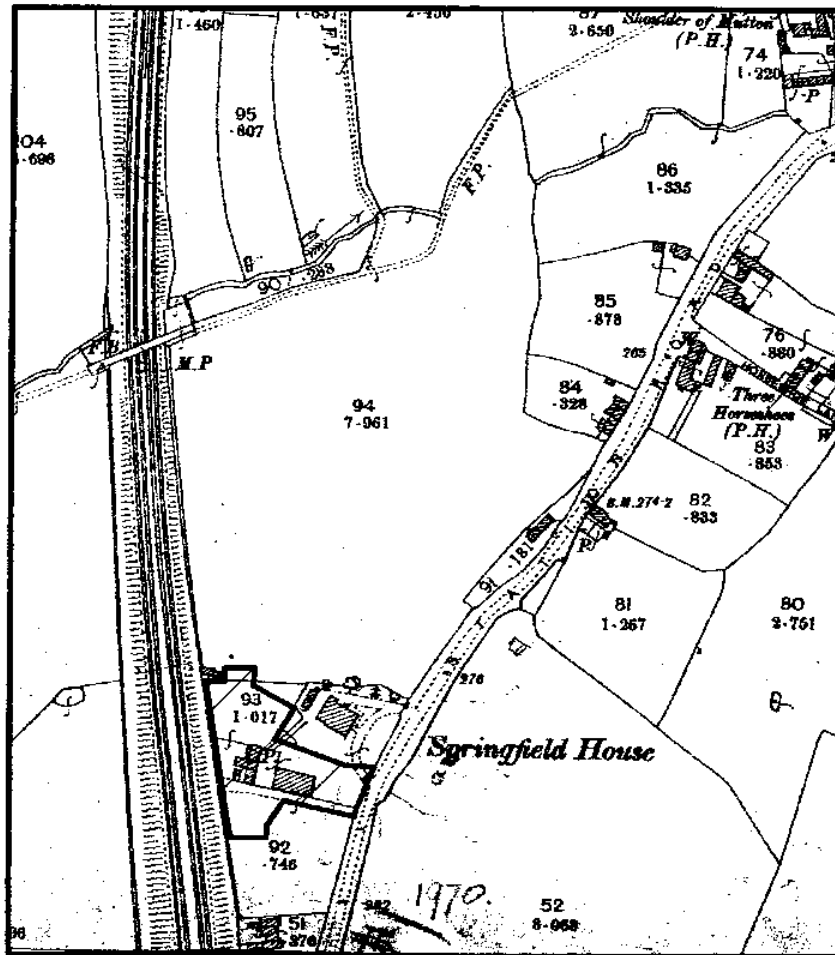
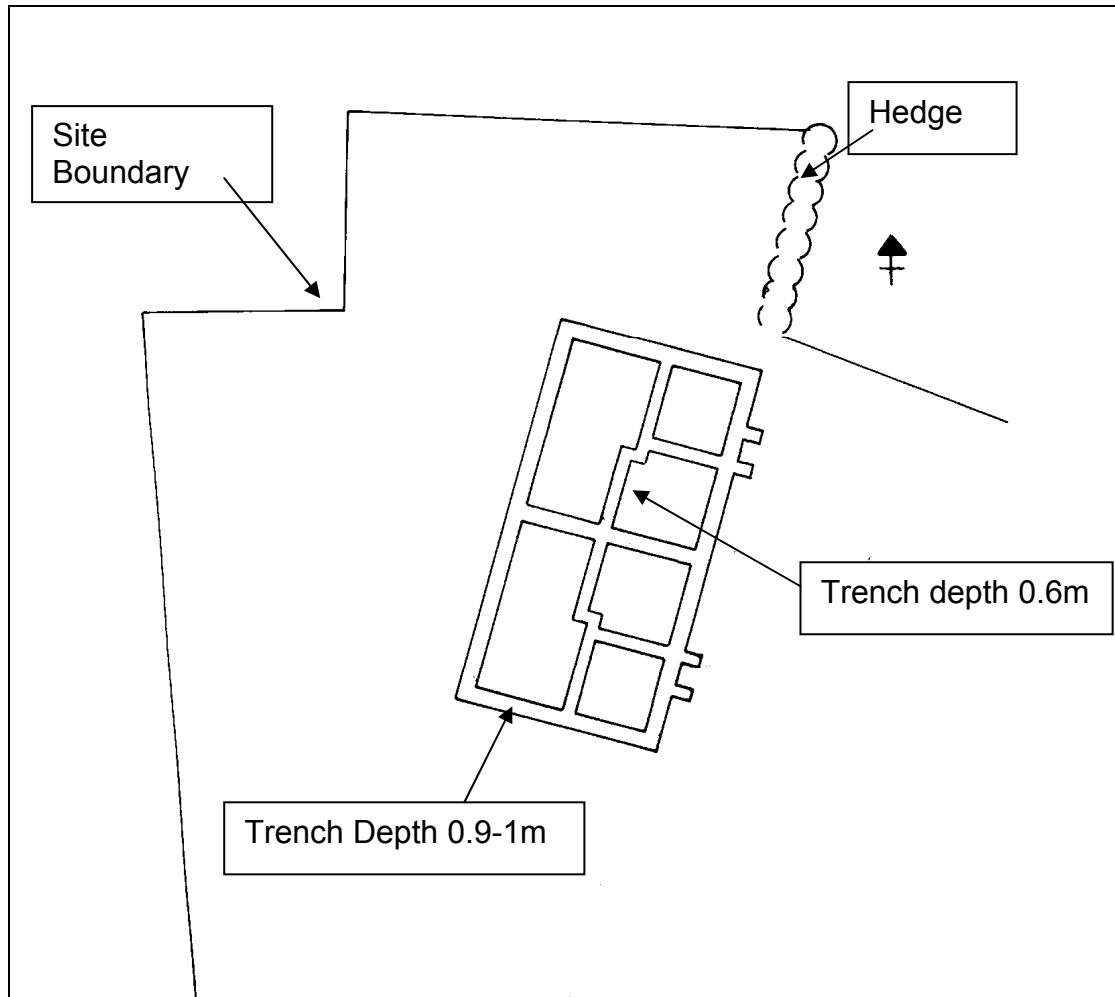
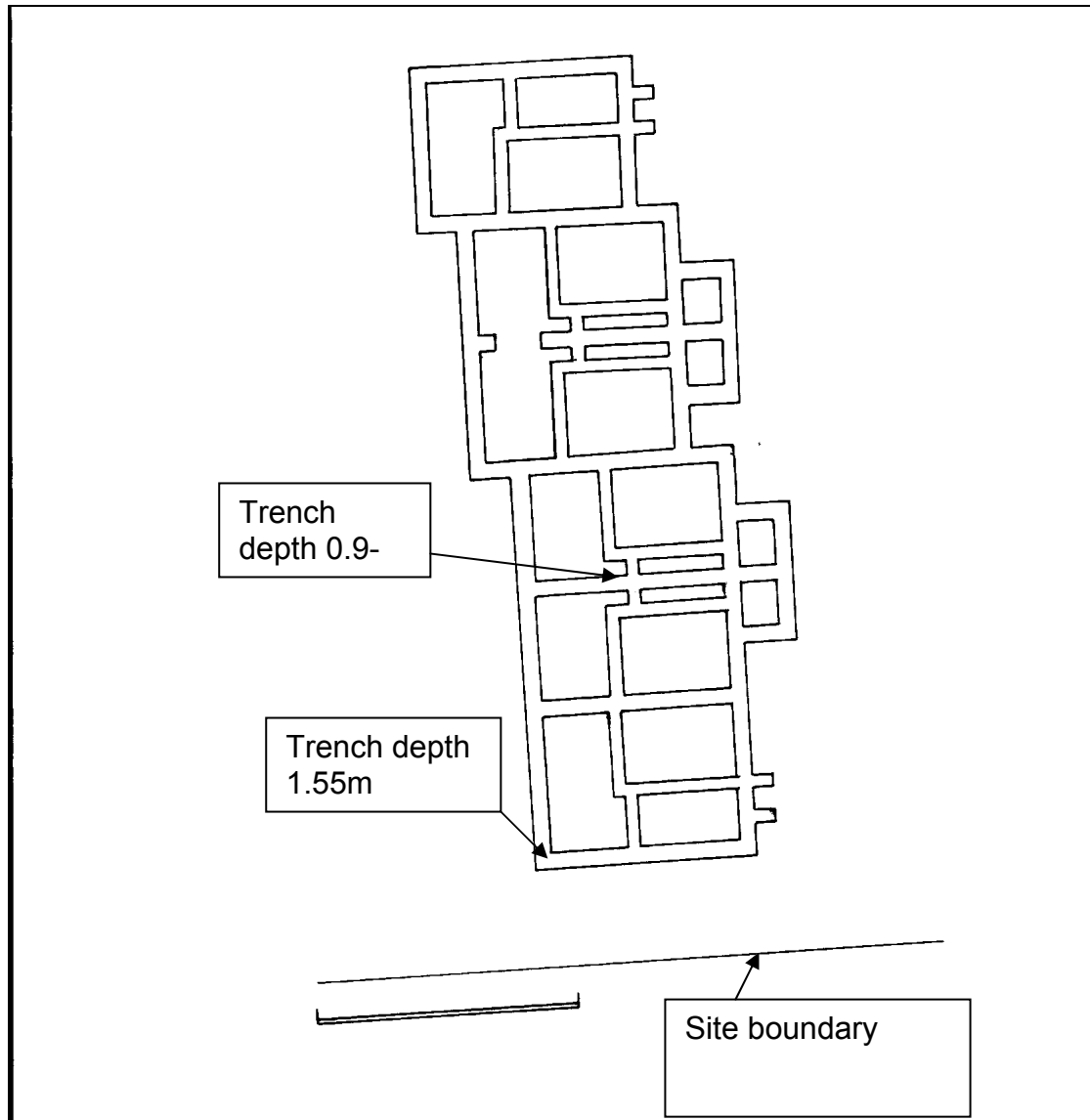


Figure 2: Site Location circa 1900, showing Springfield House. OS 2nd Edition. 25ins to 1 mile (Scale 1:2534)



**Figure 3: Area 01 (Northern end of site), Plots 8 & 9, showing areas covered by watching brief on 26/4/04. Scale 1:200**





**Figure 4: Area 02 (Southern end of site), Plots 2-7, showing areas covered by watching brief on 4/5/04. Scale 1:200**

**APPENDIX: DESIGN SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK**

## UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

### Design Specification for archaeological work

*The Countryman Inn, Station Road, Great Bowden,  
Leicestershire (SP 4743 2884)*

*Planning Application: 03/1109/3).*

*For: Darian Homes*

## 1 Definition and scope of the specification

1.1 In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and planning), para.30, this specification provides a written scheme for archaeological attendance, including control and supervision of ground works, as required by the Planning Authority, of any ground works on the site which may disturb areas of archaeological potential in connection with a planning application for residential development at The Countryman Inn, Station Road, Great Bowden, Leicestershire. (SP 4743 2884; Planning Application: 03/1109/3) for Darian Homes. It addresses the requirements detailed in the letter of 21.11.2003 from Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services to Harborough District Council. It forms part of a scheme of work to fulfil the planning conditions required by Harborough District Council.

1.2 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

## 2 Background

### *2.1 Requirement for archaeological work*

2.1.1 The intensive archaeological watching brief involves control and supervision of ground disturbance to identify any deposits of archaeological importance.

### *2.2 Archaeological potential*

2.2.1 A desk-based assessment has been prepared for the application area (ULAS Report 2003-168). This showed that the site lies outside the medieval core of Great Bowden and 300m south of a known Roman site. The Countryman Inn is of late 19<sup>th</sup> century date but could have earlier origins..

## 3 Aims

3.1 Through archaeological supervision of existing overburden stripping and groundworks by the client's contractors:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any earlier building phases or archaeological deposits.
2. To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
3. To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
4. To produce an archive and report of any results.

#### **4 Methods**

4.1 The project will involve the supervision of overburden and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works specified above. During these ground works, if any archaeological deposits are seen to be present, the archaeologist will record areas of archaeological interest.

4.2 The archaeologist will co-operate at all times with the contractors on site to ensure the minimum interruption to the work.

4.3 Any archaeological deposits located will be hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Samples of any archaeological deposits located will be hand excavated. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans will be tied into the National Grid using an Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) where appropriate.

4.4 Archaeological deposits will be excavated and recorded as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

4.5 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.5 Any human remains encountered will be initially left *in situ* and only be removed under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The developer, Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and the coroner will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.6 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site from the project manager. These will ensure that professional standards are being maintained. Provision will be made for monitoring visits with representatives of the owners, Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and Harborough District Council.

4.7 In the event of significant archaeological remains being located during the watching brief there may be the need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken. On the discovery of potentially significant remains the archaeologist will inform the developer, the Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and the planning authority. If the archaeological remains are identified to be of significance additional contingent archaeological works will be required.

#### **5 Recording Systems**

5.1 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto prepared pro-forma recording sheets.

5.2 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map, (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at 1:200 (or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated.

5.3 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made on drawing film, related to the OS grid and at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Elevations and sections

of individual layers of features should be drawn where possible. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans.

5.4 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include black and white prints and colour transparencies illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5.5 This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the watching brief.

5.6 All site records and finds will be kept securely.

## ***6 Report and Archive***

6.1 A report on the watching brief will be provided following the groundworks.

6.2 Copies will be provided for the client, Sites and Monuments Record and planning Authority. The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in the 'Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage' (UKIC 1990), and Standards in the Museum care of archaeological collections (MGC 1992) and 'Guidelines for the preparation of site archives and assessments for all finds (other than fired clay objects) (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993) will be presented to Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services normally within six months of the completion of analysis. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

## ***7 Publication***

7.1 A summary report will be submitted to a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. A full report will be submitted if the results are of significance.

## ***8 Timetable and Staffing***

8.1 The watching brief is scheduled to commence at the inception of the contractors groundworks, currently scheduled for 20.4.2004. An experienced archaeologist will be present during this work. It is proposed to watch all works, as specified above, with appropriately timed visits during the work in consultation with the contractors.

## ***9 Health and Safety***

9.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and uses the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (2001) with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is in the Appendix. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate.

## ***10 Insurance***

10.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with Gerling Insurance Services Policy No. 62/99094/D, Risk Reference LT 35101 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Sun Alliance Insurance Policy No. 03A/5A 001 05978, Risk Reference LT 27229.

### **11. Bibliography**

MAP 2, *The management of archaeological projects* 2nd edition English Heritage 1991

MGC 1992, *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission)

RFG/FRG 1993, *Guidelines for the preparation of site archives* (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700)

SMA 1993, *Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

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## Appendix

### Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

*The Countryman Inn, Station Road, Great Bowden,  
Leicestershire (SP 4743 2884)*

*Planning Application: 03/1109/3).*

*For: Darian Homes*

#### *1 Nature of the work*

1.1 This statement is for an archaeological watching brief.

1.2 The work will involve observation of groundworks during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be c. 0.2-0.5m. This will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (2001) together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines.

1.3 HSE Construction Information Sheet CS8 Safety in excavations.  
HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)143 (L): Getting to grips with manual handling.  
HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)145 (L): Watch Your back.  
CIRIA R97 Trenching practice.  
CIRIA TN95 Proprietary Trench Support Systems.  
HSE Guidance Note HS(G) 47 Avoiding danger to underground services. HSE Guidance Note GS7 Accidents to children on construction sites

1.4 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation .

1.5 All work will adhere to the contractors' health and safety policy.

#### **2 Risks Assessment**

##### *2.1 Working within a building site*

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn at all times. A member of staff qualified in First Aid will be present at all times. First aid kit, vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

##### *2.2 Working with plant.*

Precautions. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. No examination of the area of stripping will take place until machines have vacated area. Observation of machines will be maintained during hand excavation. Liaison will be maintained with the contractors to ensure programme of machine movement is understood.

##### *2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.*

Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Vialls disease or similar.

#### *2.4 Working with chemicals.*

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

#### *2.5 Other risks*

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.

2.9 No other constraints are recognised over the nature of the soil, water, type of excavation, proximity of structures, sources of vibration and contamination.

Patrick Clay  
7.4.2004