



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LEICESTER**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation at:  
Lubbesthorpe-Balancing Ponds, Land  
parcel R5pt1 & R5pt2, Leics.  
SK 5301 0189.**

George Issitt



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**Site Name:** Lubbesthorpe-Balancing Ponds, Land parcel R5pt1 & R5pt2, Leics.

**Grid Ref:** SK 5301 0189

**Author:** G. Issitt

**Client:** The Trustees of ERB Drummond Deceased

**Planning Ref:** N/A

**ULAS Report Number:** 2021-107

**Accession Number:** X.A67.2021

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## OASIS RECORD

	<b>Oasis No</b>	<b>universi1-502018</b>		
	<b>Project Name</b>	An Archaeological Evaluation at Lubbesthorpe-Balancing Ponds, Land parcel R5pt1 & R5pt2, Leics. SK 5301 0189		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	06-07-2021 to 06-07-2021		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	No/no		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Field Evaluation		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Arable		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	None		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	None		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Drainage		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	National Planning Policy Framework		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Pre-planning		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>	N/A		
<b>OASIS RECORD</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	LE19 4BS		
	<b>Study Area</b>	0.34ha		
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 5301 0189		
	<b>Height OD</b>	Min: 95m - Max: 97m		
<b>OASIS RECORD</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Authority Archaeologist		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	Vicki Score		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Vicki Score		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Wayne Jarvis		
<b>OASIS RECORD</b>	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Developer: The Trustees of ERB Drummond Deceased		
		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
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<b>OASIS RECORD</b>	<b>Contents</b>	NONE	Digital photographs Report	Trench sheets Photo Index Report
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**An Archaeological Evaluation at Lubbesthorpe-Balancing Ponds,  
Land parcel R5pt1 & R5pt2, Leicestershire.  
(SK 5301 0189)**

George Issitt

## **Summary**

*University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation for a site at Lubbesthorpe (Land Parcel R5pt1 & R5pt2), Leicestershire, on behalf of the Drummond Estate in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework, Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment. Three trenches, totalling 158.4m<sup>2</sup>, were excavated to evaluate an area in advance of a proposed drainage infrastructure development as part of the New Lubbesthorpe development. The archaeological fieldwork was carried out on the 6th of July 2021.*

*Possible evidence for medieval agriculture in the form of furrows, and some modern plough scarring was recorded in the trenches as well modern truncation. No other evidence for archaeological features was noted, and no finds were recovered.*

*The site archive will be held by Leicestershire Museums under the Accession Number X.A67.2021.*

## **Introduction**

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by the Trustees of ERB Drummond Deceased to carry out an archaeological field evaluation on Land parcel R5pt1 & R5pt2 Lubbesthorpe Leicestershire in advance of a proposed drainage infrastructure development (Balancing Ponds 13, 14, 15).

The work was carried out as part of a phased programme of archaeological work required by the Planning Authority following advice from the Leicestershire Planning Archaeologist in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF, MHCLG 2019).

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological trial trenching, which took place in July 2021 and was intended to provide preliminary indications 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.

## **Site Description, Topography and Geology**

The proposed development area is situated on land to the north of Lubbesthorpe Bridle Way, east of the site of Old House (Figs 1-2). It is currently an arable field, and the archaeological work covered an area of approximately 0.35ha in size. The land falls from the north to the south, and varies between c.95m - 97m aOD.

The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of alluvium and river gravels overlying boulder clay and Mercia Mudstone.

## Historical and Archaeological Background

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland shows that there are no archaeological sites within the proposed area for development, however, there are several archaeological sites in the vicinity of the assessment area from the prehistoric period through to the post-medieval period. Previous trenching in the local environs has not identified any particular areas of archaeological significance in the immediate vicinity.

### Archaeological Background

The assessment area lies within a wider area that is rich in archaeological remains. Recent archaeological work in 2015 to the west of the site has revealed Roman Pottery (**MLE23227**). Six sherds of pottery were recovered. In the same area and during the same investigation, three pieces of worked flint (two flakes and a fragment of a blade core) of Neolithic / Bronze Age date were recovered (**MLE23228**). Lubbesthorpe medieval deer park is situated north-west of the site (**MLE230**). The park belonged to the Archbishop of York in 1354. Also to the west of the site, a ring ditch cropmark was noted on aerial photographs taken in 1975. It is possibly a Bronze Age barrow (**MLE218**). Immediately to the west of the site are pond earthworks, thought to be potentially of medieval date, and surveyed during 2016 as part of the New Lubbesthorpe development (Beamish and Jarvis 2016).



Figure 1: Location of site within the larger Lubbesthorpe area. Site is north of the Bridle Road, marked in red (cf. Fig. 2).

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## **Methodology**

The trial trenching followed a strategy for the work devised by ULAS, which was set out in the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for Lubbesthorpe Balancing Ponds 13-15, Land parcel R5pt1 & R5pt2 (ULAS 2021). The brief was for three 30m trenches across the areas of the three ponds with a contingency for a fourth trench if archaeological deposits were present and needed clarifying. The trenches were located as proposed in the WSI using differential GPS. Extra attention was given to avoid any works adjacent to the Severn Trent water main which demarcates the north of the site (Fig. 3). Trench 3 in the east of the area was shortened by two metres at the east end due to the placement of a new road in the east of the site. The trenches were numbered consecutively from west to east, with two 30m and one 28m long trench being excavated which targeted the site of the proposed balancing pond areas (Fig. 3). Trenches were excavated using a JCB 3CX with a 1.8m wide flat bladed ditching bucket.

The topsoil and overlying layer were removed in level spits under continuous archaeological supervision to the uppermost level of significant archaeological deposits, the natural substratum, or to a maximum safe working depth, depending on which was reached first. The trenches were recorded and then backfilled at the end of the evaluation.

All trenches, exposed sections and spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds and trenches were recorded on pro-forma ULAS trench recording forms.

A photographic record of the excavation was prepared. Digital photographs were taken throughout the evaluation. The photographic record also included 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

All work followed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Code of Conduct (rev. 2019) and adhered to their Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation (2020).



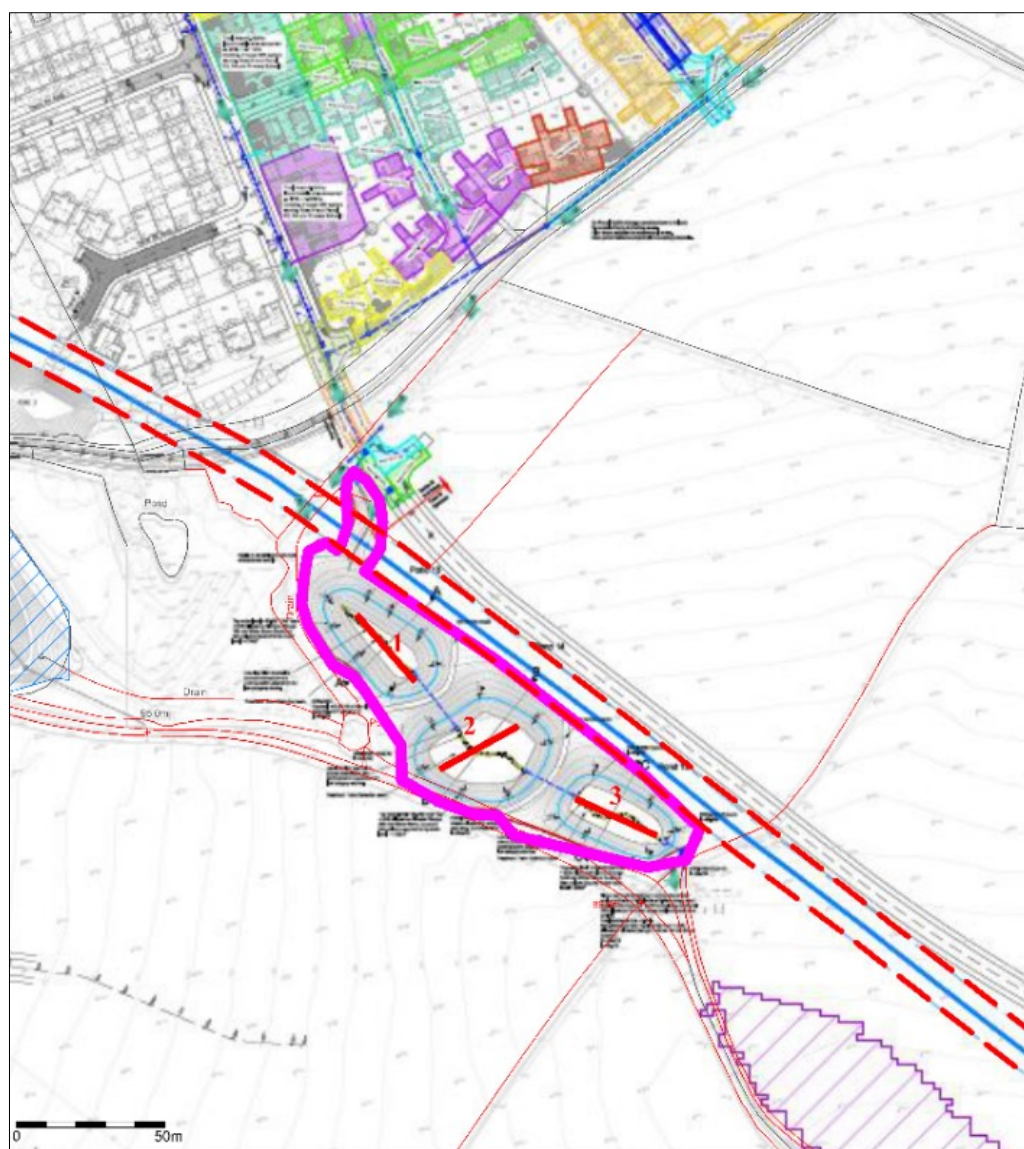


Figure 3: Numbered trench locations within site area

## Results

The trenches were all shallow, having been plough eroded. The topsoil was a dark brownish-grey friable silty clay with occasional sub-rounded gravel inclusions. Subsoil was a light brownish grey clay silt mix, with some areas having higher concentrations of gravel and pebbles than others. The natural substratum was observed at depths between 0.31m and 0.50m and consisted mostly of pale yellow-brown clay or brownish red clay, with a few patches of gravel. Light modern plough scarring and root disturbance were noted in all of the trenches which was unsurprising given the shallow nature of the topsoil in this field.

All of the trenches were negative for archaeology aside from the possible remains of a medieval furrow. Historic ridge and furrow has been recorded in the vicinity (Fig. 7). No finds were recovered during this fieldwork.

The site is immediately east of pond earthworks, which are potentially medieval in date. These were surveyed in 2016 (Beamish and Jarvis 2016), and the LiDAR results are shown below (Figs. 7-8). These results do not indicate any clear features within the current site, although the pond earthworks to the west are clear, and with surrounding ridge and furrow.

Table 1: Trench Summary

Trench	Orientation	Min. Depth	Max. Depth	Length of Trench	Width of Trench	Total area of trench	Comments
1	NW-SE	0.31m	0.42m	30m	1.8m	54m <sup>2</sup>	No Archaeological features possible Furrow
2	NE-SW	0.32m	0.50m	30m	1.8m	54m <sup>2</sup>	No Archaeological features
3	NW-SE	0.35m	0.48m	28m	1.8m	50.4m <sup>2</sup>	No Archaeological features

***Trench 1***

Trench 1 was located in the north-west corner of the field, running in a north-west to south-east direction (Fig. 4). The natural substratum was observed at depths between 0.28m and 0.40m. The topsoil was a dark greyish black silty clay with sparse sub-angular gravel. A shallow subsoil was observed, a light brownish grey, silty clay mix, and sub-angular gravel was present. The natural substratum consisted mostly of pale yellow brown clay mixed with brownish red clay. Some fine compact light gravel in clay was present in small patches. No archaeological deposits or residual finds were recovered. A possible indistinct furrow was observed crossing the trench. This was seen as a wide shallow deposit of subsoil, probably running north-east to south-west. Another possible feature proved to be natural in nature, a lignite-rich deposit in the subsoil.



Figure 4: Trench 1 looking south-east (scale 1 x 1m). No archaeological features.



### ***Trench 2***

Trench 2 was located in the center of the sample area, running in a north-east to south-west direction (Fig. 5). The natural substratum was observed at depths between 0.29m and 0.49m. The topsoil was a dark greyish black silty clay with sparse sub angular gravel. Shallow subsoil was observed. a light brownish grey, silty clay mix, and slightly more sub angular gravel was present. The natural substratum consisted mostly of pale yellow brown clay mixed with some brownish red clay, with a more yellow clay present than in Trench 1. Some fine compact light gravel in clay was present in small patches. Some modern disturbance was seen at the south-west end of the trench, but no archaeological deposits or finds were recovered.



Figure 5: Trench 2 looking south-west (scale 1x 1m). No archaeological features.

### ***Trench 3***

Trench 3 was located in the south-eastern end of the site, running in a south-east to north-west direction (Fig. 6). The natural substratum was observed at depths between 0.33m and 0.42m. The topsoil was a dark greyish black silty clay with sparse sub angular gravel. Again, a shallow subsoil was observed, light brownish grey, silty clay mix, with 20% more sub-angular gravel present than the other trenches. The natural substratum consisted mostly of pale yellow brown clay mixed with brownish grey clay (more yellow clay was present than seen in Trench 1). Some fine compact light gravel in clay was present in small patches. A disused land drain was exposed at the south-east end. No archaeological deposits or finds were recovered.



Figure 6: Trench 3 looking South East (scale 1 x 1m). No archaeological features.



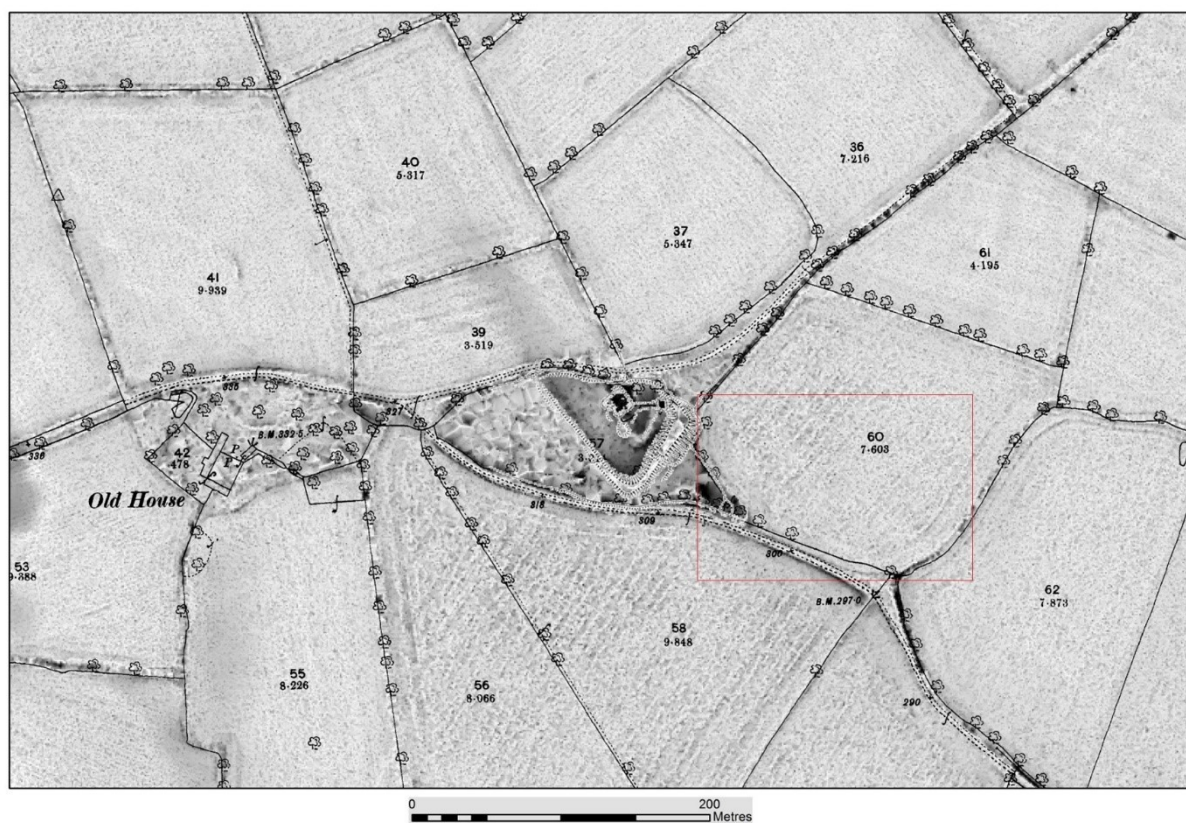


Figure 7: RVT positive openness analysis of the 1m DTM LiDAR data, with Hartley's earthwork survey, and 1st edition Ordnance Survey County Series 1:2500, 1886. Possible ridge and furrow visible to immediate north-west, south and east of the pond (Beamish and Jarvis 2016). Current site shown by red box.

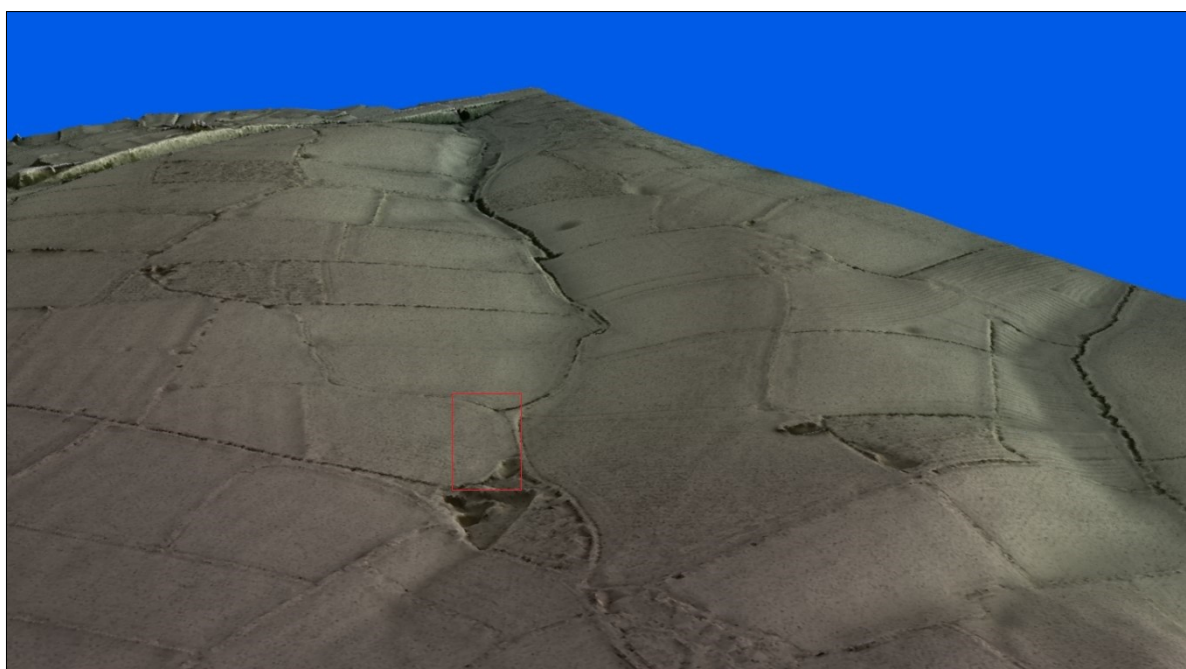


Figure 8: Visualisation using 1m DTM LiDAR data, of MLE222 Pond site from the north-west, with village earthworks of Lubbethorpe in distance adjacent to the more incised stream valley. The embanked motorway can be identified at the top of the image. The gentle topography has been enhanced X 4 to show the detail (Beamish & Jarvis 2016). Current site shown by red box.

### ***Draft Research Themes***

The evaluation was designed taking into consideration the *East Midlands Research Framework* (Cooper 2006), and the updated *Research Agenda and Strategy* (Knight *et al.* 2012). The following draft research themes were identified.

#### ***The Iron Age and Roman Periods (Taylor 2006; Willis 2006; Knight et al 2012)***

There are known Iron Age and Roman sites within the vicinity, including enclosures and a Roman road. The evaluation may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy. The evaluation has the potential to contribute to Research Agenda topics:

- 4C - Characterise the Late Bronze Age and Early Iron Age settlement resource and investigate intra-regional variability.
- 4E - Assess the evidence for the evolution of settlement hierarchies;
- 4F - Investigate intra-regional variations in the development of fields and linear boundary systems

As the site was negative it has no potential to contribute to these research themes.

### **Conclusion**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the 6th of July 2021 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of the Trustees of ERB Drummond Deceased in advance of a proposed drainage infrastructure development. The fieldwork was carried out at Lubbesthorpe Bridle Road. Three trenches were excavated by JCB to provide a representational sample of the development area. Plough truncation was clear, including possible remains of medieval furrows with one very shallow feature, indistinct and truncated. There was also evidence of modern plough scarring into the natural to suggest past agricultural activity in the remaining trenches. No archaeological deposits were observed, during the evaluation, and no finds were recovered.

### **Archive**

The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Service under Accession No. X.A67.2021

The archive contains:

- 1 x A4 report
- 1 x Trench summary index sheet
- 3 x Trench sheets
- 1 x Digital photo index
- Digital photos on CD and 1 contact sheet

### **Publication**

A summary report will be submitted to the regional journal *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.

University of Leicester Archaeological Services supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. The online OASIS form (Appendix 1) shall be completed detailing the results of the evaluation and once the report has become a public document following its incorporation into the Historic Environment Record it shall be placed on the website.

## Acknowledgements

The project was managed by Vicki Score and directed by Wayne Jarvis, and the fieldwork was undertaken by George Issitt and Wayne Jarvis. Thanks go to David Ambion Contractors Ltd, for operating the machinery.

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