

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at 34 Main Street, Kirkby Mallory,
Peckleton, Leicestershire
SK 453 008**

Mathew Morris

**For: George Stew Ltd
Planning Application: 03/00242/OUT**

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ULAS Report Number 2008-002

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X.A.240.2007

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An archaeological watching brief at 34 Main Street, Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton, Leicestershire (SK 453 008)

Mathew Morris

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at 34 Main Street, Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton, Leicestershire (SK 453 008) on the 6th December 2007 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services. The work was carried out on behalf of George Stew Ltd in advance of construction of nine new dwellings and associated garages. The work involved observation of previously machine stripped surfaces and the supervision and inspection of machined trenches across the proposed development for any indication of archaeological activity. The results of the investigation were negative. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A.240.2007.

1. Introduction

This document presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on land at 34 Main Street, Kirkby Mallory, Peckleton, Leicestershire (SK 453 008). The archaeological assessment was undertaken on behalf of George Stew Ltd by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on 6th December 2007.

The proposed development of nine 2-storey dwellings with associated garages (Planning Application Number 03/00242/OUT) was located on a plot of land, approximately 0.26 hectares, set back approximately 20m from the north side of Main Street, Kirkby Mallory (behind existing properties - nos. 36 and 38), situated between the A47 and A447 approximately 13km west of Leicester city centre (*figure 1*).

The watching brief was requested by Leicestershire County Council's Historic and Natural Environment Team in their capacity as archaeological advisors to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council, as specified in their *Brief for archaeological attendance for inspection and recording (a watching brief)*, in accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and planning), para.30.

2. Geology

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 155 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of superficial deposits of Middle Pleistocene glaciofluvial sands and gravels capping deposits of Triassic mudstone belonging to the Mercia Mudstone Group. The site lies at a height of *c.*125m above Ordnance Datum.

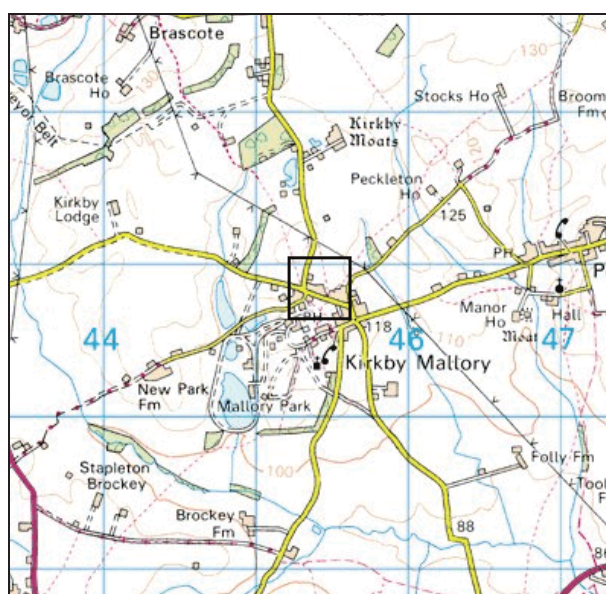
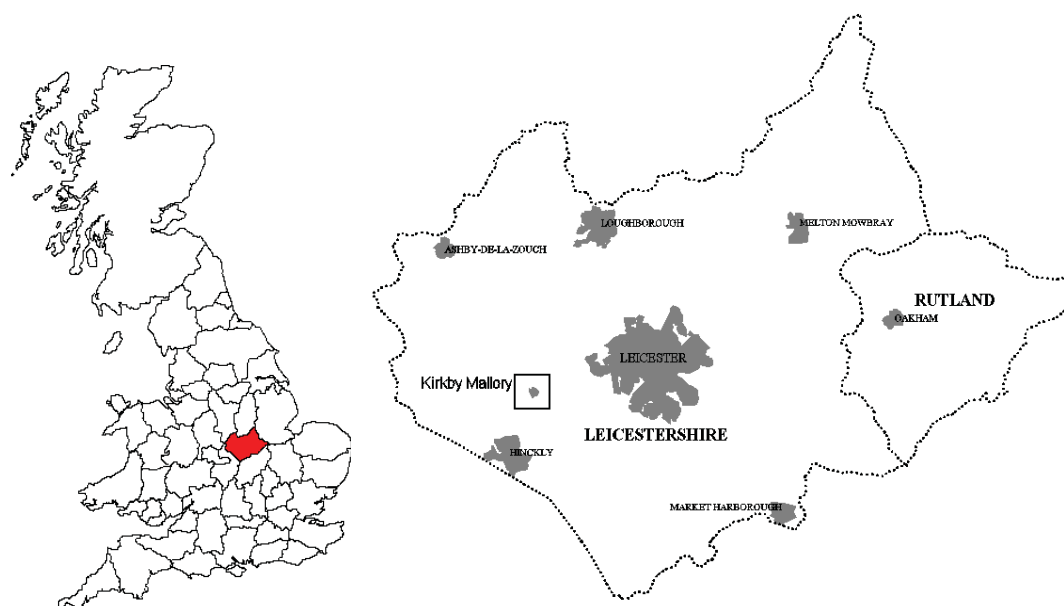


Figure 1: Location Plans with development area highlighted

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3. Archaeological Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the development area lies within an area of archaeological interest as it is within the historic core of the medieval village of Kirkby Mallory (HER ref. 40SE CM).

Ordnance Survey maps from the mid 19th to mid 20th centuries show the development area to be consistently fields until post 1940s. Maps of the late 20th century to present show a single property (now the proposed development area) labelled 'Works'.

4. Archaeological Objectives

The principle objectives of the watching brief were:

- To identify the presence or absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

5. Methodology

The project required a professional archaeologist to supervise all stripping and groundwork likely to impact upon any archaeological remains.

In order to determine whether any archaeological levels would be affected, it was decided to target a series of trenches over the principal areas of proposed disturbance. The work involved the supervision and observation of the excavation of three 2m wide trenches (73.5m, 30m and 10.5m long respectively) using a 360° mechanical excavator with a 2m ditching bucket. These trenches exposed approximately 10% of the development area and crossed all areas which would be directly impacted by the excavation of the proposed footings (*figure 2*).

Previously stripped areas and existing spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds.

All work followed the *Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

6. Results (*figures 2, 3 and 4*)

Machine stripping of the development area had already been carried out prior to arrival. This had occurred as part of the demolition of the former factory buildings and had removed modern concrete hardcore and footings from the surface of the site down to a depth c.0.3m beneath surrounding ground levels.

Three trenches were excavated across the development area. Trench 1 extended c.73.5m north-south across the centre of the site crossing the proposed location for plots 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 and the garages between plots 7 and 8. Trench 2 extended c.30m east-west across plots 6, 7, 8 and 9 transecting Trench 1 13.5m from its northern end. Trench 3 extended c.10.5m north-south across the garage between plots 2 and 3 10m west of Trench 1. Within all three trenches the only material exposed was a naturally deposited soft mid greyish orange – brownish orange silty sandy gravel (20:40:40) containing scattered pockets of sandy gravel (30:70). This appeared to continue beneath topsoil deposits along the edges of the development area. The only features truncating this deposits within the southern half of Trench 1 and along the eastern edge of Trench 3 (concrete footings, service trenches and a sewer trench) could be directly associated with the factories which formerly occupied the site. No features

were present within the north half of Trench 1 or Trench 2 and no features pre-dating the latter half of the 20th century were uncovered in any of the trenches.

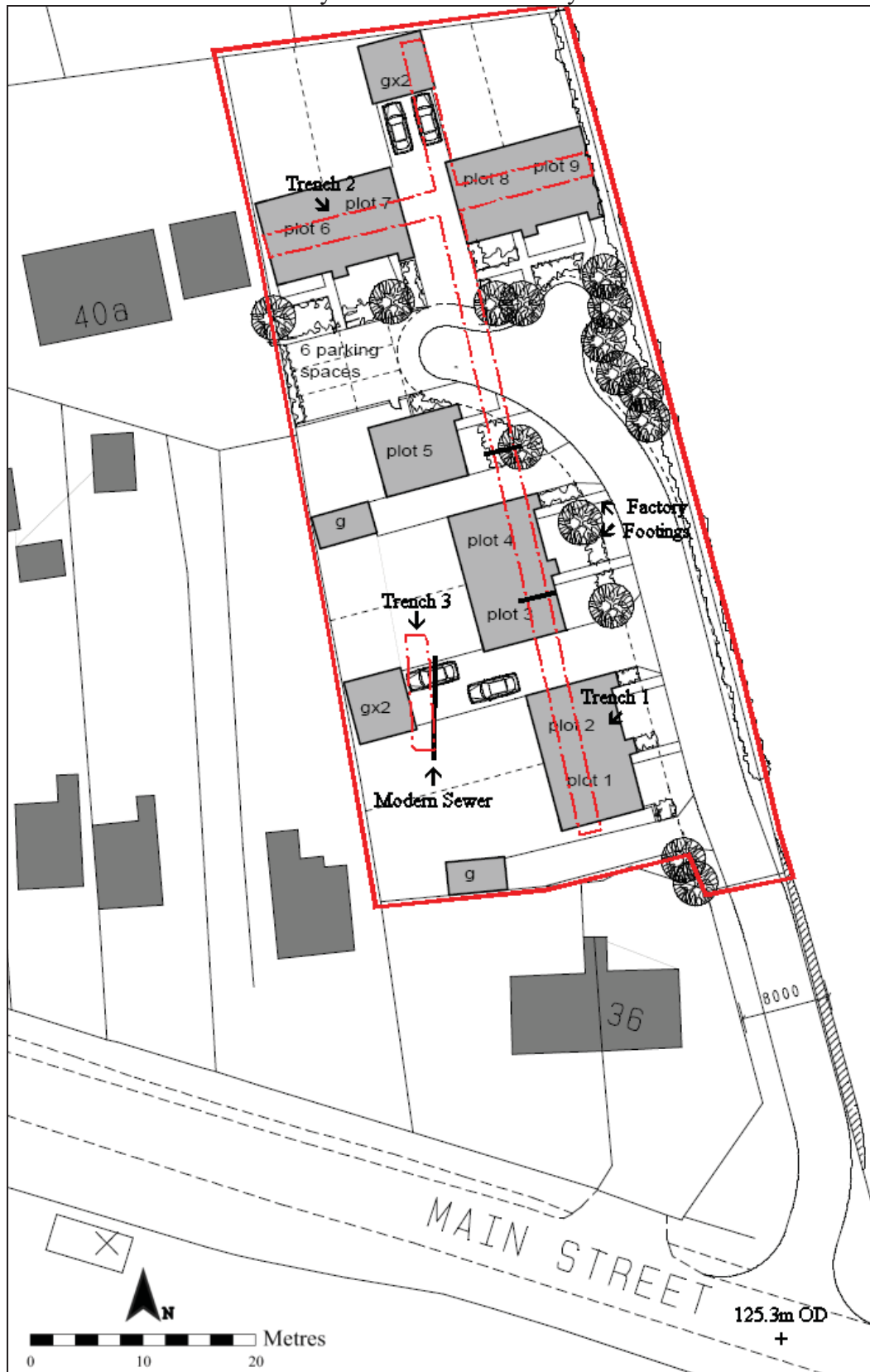


Figure 2: Plan of development area showing location of trenches

Figure adapted from image provided by client.



Figure 3: Trench 1 looking south



Figure 4: Trench 2 looking east

7. Discussion

Although the development area was identified as an area of archaeological interest no archaeological deposits were encountered. Ordnance Survey maps back to the mid 19th century indicate it has been a field prior to its recent industrial occupation and the absence of medieval and modern plough furrows suggest it has probably had a pastoral rather than arable function.

8. Archive

The site archive consists of 12 digital photographs, a watching brief recording form and an annotated site plan. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A.240.2007.

9. Acknowledgements

Thanks to Mark Stew for his co-operation and assistance on site. Fieldwork was undertaken by Mathew Morris. The project was managed by Richard Buckley.

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7/12/2007