


**An Archaeological Strip, Plan and Record at  
5 Mill Road, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire  
NGR: SP 506 878**

**Andrew Hyam**

**For: Brice Homes Ltd**

Checked by <b>Signed:</b> ..... <b>Date:</b> .....
<b>Name:</b> .....
Approved by 
<b>Signed:</b> . ..... <b>Date:</b> ....26.2.2008.....
<b>Name:</b> .....Patrick Clay.....

**University of Leicester  
Archaeological Services**  
University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH  
Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614  
[www.le.ac.uk/ulas](http://www.le.ac.uk/ulas)

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## **An Archaeological Strip, Plan and Record operation at 5 Mill Road, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire. NGR: SP 506 878**

Andrew Hyam

### **Summary**

*An archaeological strip, plan and record operation was undertaken for Brice Homes Limited by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on the 29th of November and the 5th of December 2007 during ground preparation and foundation work in advance of four dwellings (planning application number 06/01325/FUL). The site, covering approximately 0.06ha, lies within the medieval core of Ullesthorpe. In view of this the site was considered to have potential for undisturbed archaeological features and deposits. The excavation of two small trial trenches, foundations for two building plots and associated ground reduction were observed during the archaeological work. No archaeological deposits were present within these areas or elsewhere on site.*

*Records will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, under Accession Number X.A.238.2007*

### **1. Introduction**

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning), para 30, this document forms the report for an archaeological strip, plan and record operation on land at 5 Mill Road, Ullesthorpe in the Harborough District of Leicestershire (NGR: SP 506 878). Brice Homes Limited had received planning permission to demolish the existing bungalow and construct four domestic dwellings (Planning application 06/1325/FUL).

The village of Ullesthorpe lies approximately 3km north-west of Lutterworth in south-west Leicestershire (fig. 1). The development site is located on Mill Road in the north-western corner of the village near to the site of a tower mill (fig. 2). It is at a height of approximately 117m OD on relatively flat ground although there is a slight slope down to the south beyond the site. The geology of the site is Oadby Member which can be seen as a mid orange clayish sand and gravel with patches of red clay. Until recently part of the site was occupied by a small bungalow, shown in figure 2, which has now been demolished (fig. 3). Part of the rear gardens of the two neighbouring properties to the west have also been incorporated into the development. The four new dwellings to be built are set further south and to the rear of the earlier bungalow as shown in figure 4.

The location within the village core and the proximity to other archaeological discoveries meant that there was potential for surviving deposits that would be affected by the current development works. In view of this, as a condition of planning permission granted by Harborough District Council, an archaeological strip, plan and

record operation was required during groundworks to ensure that any affected deposits were adequately recorded.

## **2. Background**

Place-name evidence suggests that Ullesthorpe has probable Viking origins with *thorpe* indicating a daughter settlement to a larger nearby settlement. It also lies close to the major Roman road of Watling Street, with the crossroads for the Fosseyway being about 4km to the north-west. A series of earthworks in the south-western corner of the village relate to the medieval Manor House whilst the deserted medieval village of Bittesby is less than 2km to the south.

The mill which is about 30m east of the site was constructed in 1800 but may have replaced an earlier timber structure. Map evidence indicates that most of the site has not been developed since the early 19th century which may coincide with the mill construction and a general reorganisation of the area. Because little activity has taken place since this time it was thought likely that, should any archaeological remains survive, they would be close to the ground surface and would be prone to truncation or loss as a result of the current programme of development.

In the very recent past the development site has been used as a lawn and vegetable plots.

## **3. Archaeological Objectives**

The objectives of the archaeological work were:

To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.

To excavate and record a sample of any archaeological deposits found during the watching brief and affected by the groundworks.

To establish the character, extent, date range and significance of any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed ground works.

To produce an archive and report of any results.

## **4. Methodology**

All traces of the former bungalow had been removed prior to the commencement of this work with site huts and equipment occupying this area. The area where Plot 1 (fig. 4) will be was covered in a thick layer of concrete and was unavailable during the course of this archaeological work. A small part of this concrete had been lifted to reveal what appeared to be heavy disturbance beneath. This will be the last house to be built in the development.

Two small evaluation trenches were excavated using a toothless ditching bucket down to the natural substrate over the area of Plot 2. This plot was not to be built for a number of weeks so the opportunity was taken to excavate the trenches rather than extend the duration of the archaeological work. Each trench measured 3m x 1.6m. The trenches were to assess the potential for any surviving archaeological deposits and to assess the thickness of the overlying topsoil and subsoil.

The foundation trenches for Plot 3 were excavated using a combination of a JCB 3X mechanical excavator with a toothed bucket fitted to the rear actor or a 360<sup>0</sup> mechanical digger with the same bucket according to space restrictions. Once the concrete for the foundations had set the whole of the internal area of Plot 3 was then reduced to the natural substrate using a toothless ditching bucket.

The entire footprint of Plot 4 was stripped of topsoil and subsoil using a toothless ditching bucket to expose the natural substrate before the foundation trenches were excavated. Because of this the foundation trench excavation did not have to be watched on this plot.

All deposits were recorded by notes, sketches and digital colour photographs. The excavation work was observed and the spoil scanned for finds. All work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhered to their *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (LMARS).

## 5. Results

### *Plot 1*

As mentioned above, Plot 1 was beneath a concrete surface at the time of the archaeological work and was not observed. The area showed considerable evidence of disturbance.

### *Plot 2*

Two 3m long x 1.6m wide trenches were excavated within the footprint of Plot 2. This area had been stripped of turf at an earlier date and had been disturbed by vehicles tracking on it. However, a thin layer of mixed overburden was removed to reveal a dark brown clayish sandy silt topsoil with an average depth of 0.1m in both trenches. Beneath this was a pale orange-brown silty clay-sand subsoil. The depth of this varied from 0.38m at the easternmost edge to 0.42m at the west. The natural substratum consisted of a mid orange clayish sandy gravel with patches of slightly redder clay throughout. No archaeological features or deposits were observed within these trenches (fig. 5).

### *Plot 3*

Much of the southern edge of Plot 3 had been heavily disturbed by tree roots that formerly stood along the southern border of the site. This disturbance went as much as 1m below current ground level. However, elsewhere the topsoil had an average depth of 0.2m over between 0.28m and 0.38m of subsoil. No evidence of any archaeological features or deposits were observed cutting into the natural within the 0.6m wide foundation trenches.

After pouring the concrete the whole of the internal area within Plot 3 was then reduced to expose the natural substrate (fig. 6). The root disturbance extended

approximately 2m northwards from the site boundary but beyond that the footprint did not contain any archaeological features or deposits.

#### *Plot 4*

Plot 4, in the south-east corner of the site, had a very thin covering of topsoil although it was not clear why this should be. In the south-east corner the topsoil was around 0.3m deep but reduced to about 50mm at its northern end. Again tree root action appeared to have disturbed much of the southern edge of the plot. Instead of excavating the foundation trenches it was decided to reduce the footprint of the building first. Beneath the topsoil was a fairly consistent 0.3m layer of subsoil covering the natural substratum (fig. 7). No archaeological deposits or features were observed within the area of the footprint strip.

### **6. Discussion**

No archaeological deposits, features or pre-modern artefacts were encountered during the archaeological work. Despite the tree root disturbance along the southern boundary it seems unlikely that any features have been destroyed by this action. The evidence therefore indicates that there is no buried archaeology within the development site.

Because nothing was found beneath Plots 2-4 it was decided that it was likely that Plot 1 would also be blank especially as it lay beneath a thick slab of concrete which appeared to be deeper than the combined topsoil and subsoil in this area.

### **7. Archive**

The archive consists of: this report, 2 pro-forma watching brief forms, 1 contact sheet of digital photographs and 1 cd containing a copy of the report and the digital photographs. It is to be held by Leicestershire County Council under accession code number X.A.238.2007

### **8. Publication**

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

### **9. Acknowledgements**

The fieldwork was undertaken by A R Hyam. The project was managed by Patrick Clay.

### **10. Bibliography**

Clay, P. 2007. *Design Specification for Archaeological Work 5, Mill Road, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire*. (ULAS 07/436)

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)

Andrew Hyam  
University of Leicester Archaeological Services  
University of Leicester  
University Road  
Leicester

Tel: 0116 252 2848

Fax: 0116 252 2614

[ah58@le.ac.uk](mailto:ah58@le.ac.uk)

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## Appendix 1. Figures

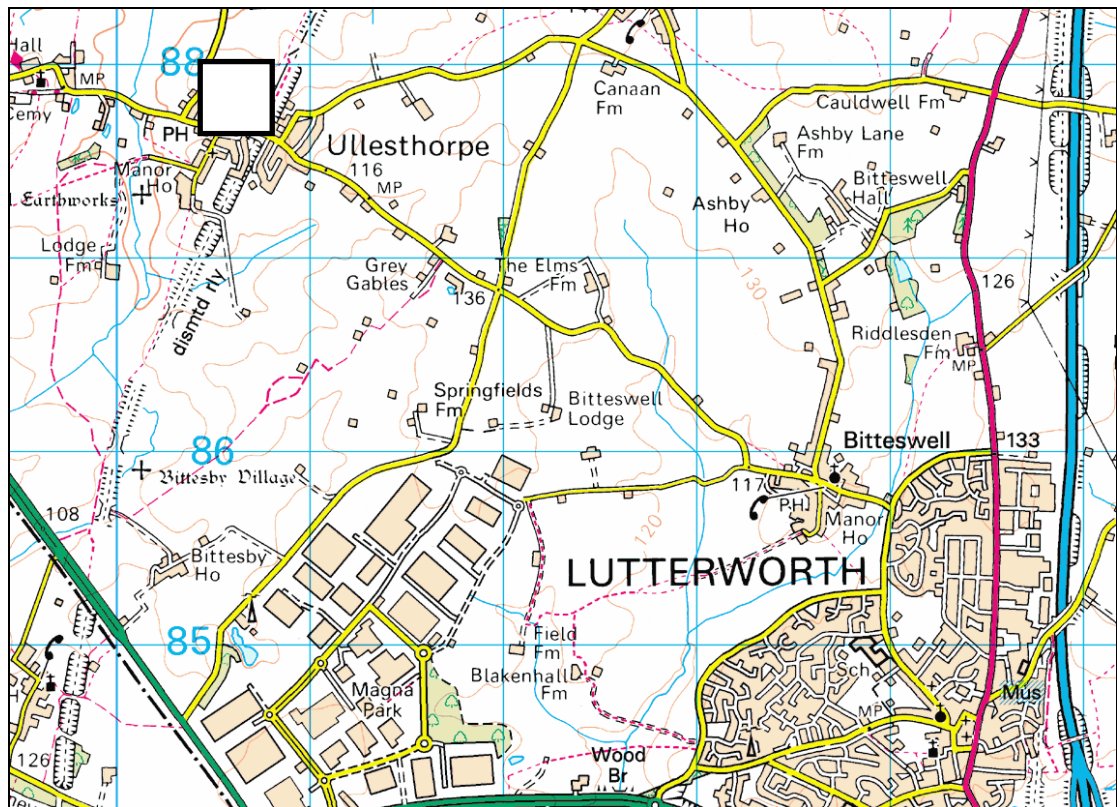


Figure 1 Ullesthorpe location

Reproduced from the Landranger 140 Leicester area 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10009495.



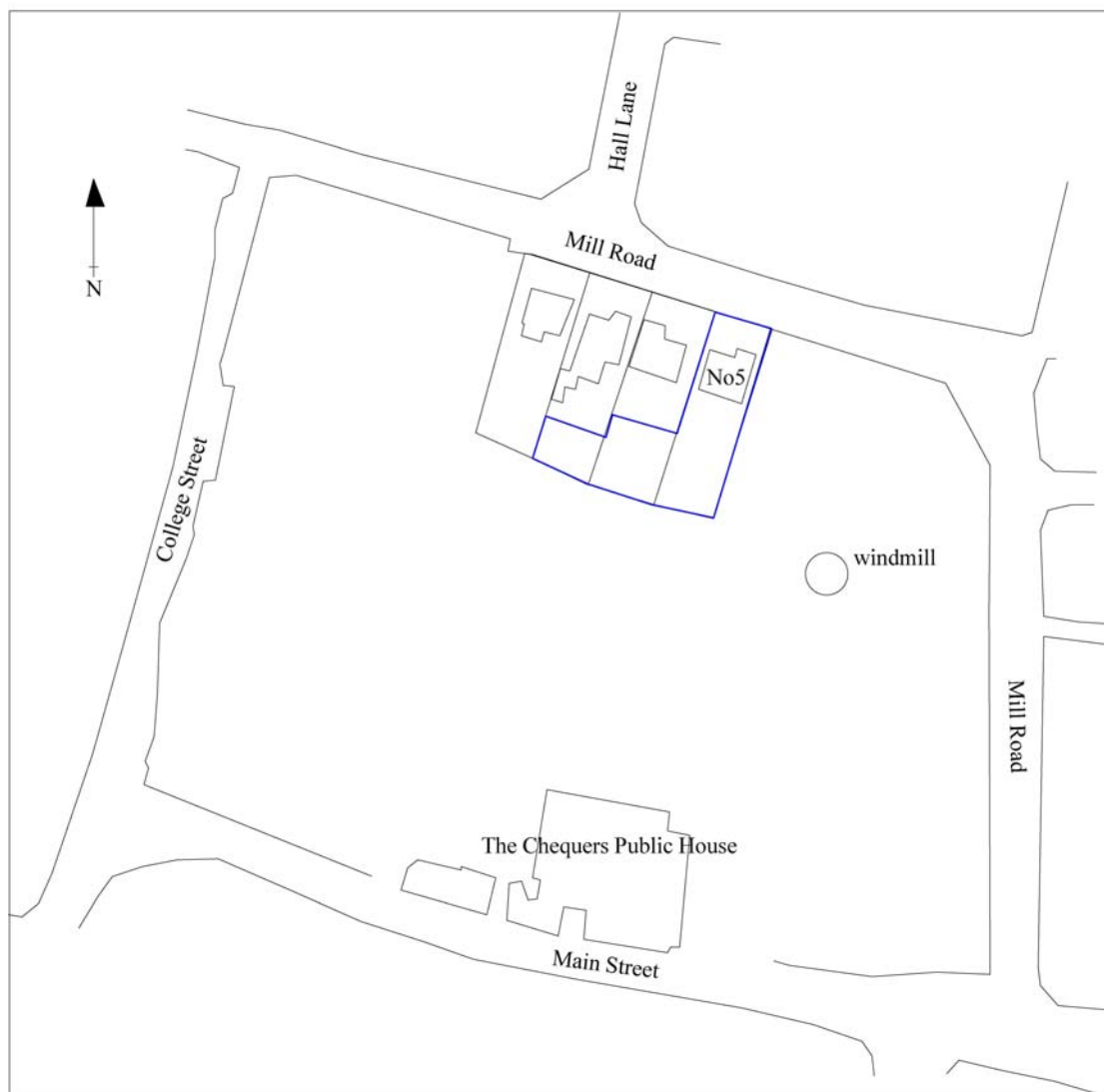


Figure 2 Site location



Figure 3 Site entrance  
Former bungalow beneath cabins.

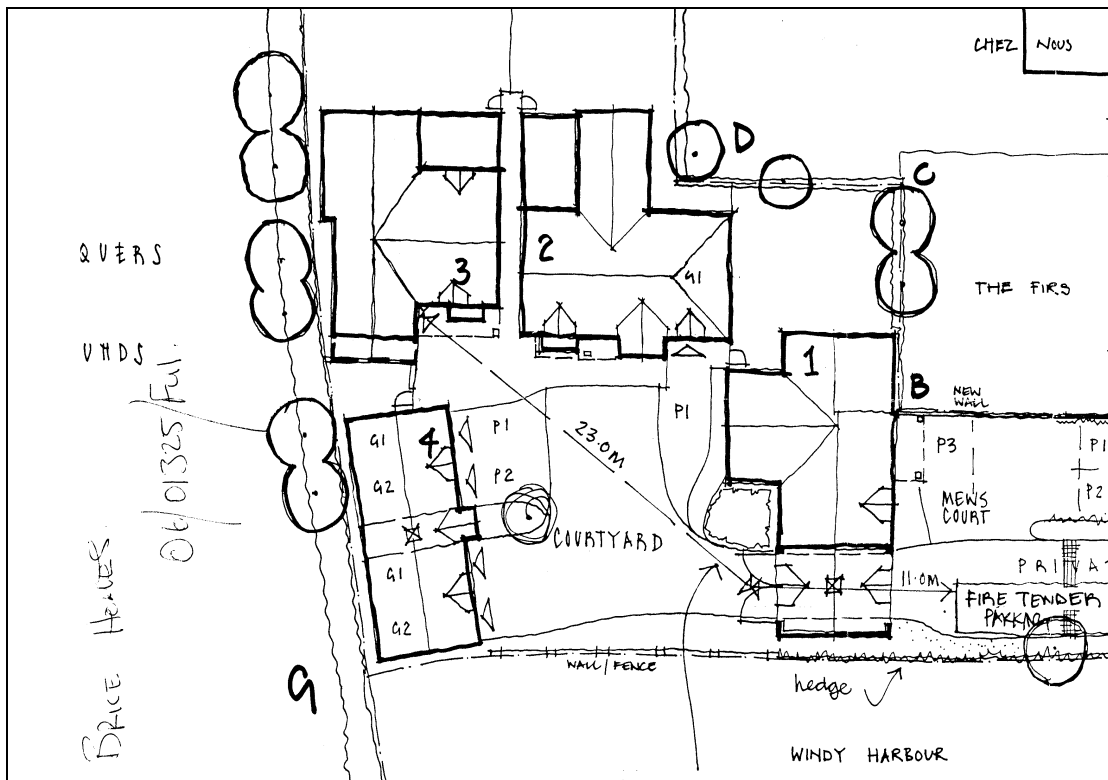


Figure 4 Developer's plan of house locations  
Brice Homes Limited



Figure 5 Plot 2 trial trench



Figure 6 Stripped footprint of Plot 3  
Note root disturbance along fenceline



Figure 7 Plot 4 being stripped

## **Appendix 2. ULAS Design Specification**

### **UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES**

#### **Design Specification for archaeological work**

*5, Mill Road, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire (SP 506 878)  
Planning Application: 06/01325/3  
Planning Authority: Harborough District Council  
For: Bruce Homes Ltd*

#### ***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 strip plan and record, 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 the erection of 4 dwellings at 5, Mill Road, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire (SP 506 878) Planning Application: 06/01325/3 for Bruce Homes Ltd.

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 archaeological work involves a strip plan and record exercise within the development area to identify any deposits of archaeological importance as detailed in the advice letter from LCC to HDC.

## *2.2 Archaeological potential*

The site is located in the medieval and post-medieval core of the village of Ullesthorpe (MLE 10380).

## **3 Aims**

3.1 Through archaeological controlled stripping and investigation:

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 removal and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works specified above. Initially it is proposed to open some initial trial trenches to assess the depth of topsoil/overburden and determine the presence/absence of any archaeological remains.

4.2 Should significant archaeological remains be identified in an initial trial trench, and found to be 0.15m or less below proposed formation, the site is to be stripped down to the top of the archaeology, followed by a programme of excavation and recording, using additional personnel as necessary.

4.3 In the event that archaeological remains of uncertain significance are located in the initial trench/test pit (e.g. undated post-hole/pit), further trenching may be necessary, at the discretion of the site supervisor, to clarify their nature and significance and determine the need for a full topsoil strip.

4.4 If no archaeological deposits are identified within the trench, or the depth of overburden is greater than 0.15m, there will be no requirement for the site to be stripped to a level below proposed formation and subsequent groundworks will be subject to an intermittent watching brief.

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

4.6 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.

4.7 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.

4.8 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.

4.9 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 and Leicestershire County Council will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.10 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 and Leicestershire County Council.

4.11 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 An accession number will be drawn prior to the commencement of the project (Brief 8.1). Following the fieldwork the on-line OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis> will be completed. A report on the investigation 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 investigation is scheduled to commence at the start of the contractors groundworks. An experienced archaeologist will be present during this work.

## **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 (revised 2005) 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 St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

## **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)

Patrick Clay  
Director  
ULAS  
University of Leicester  
University Road  
Leicester LE1 7RH

Tel:0116 252 2848  
Fax: 0116 252 2614  
Email: pnc3@le.ac.uk

08.08.2007





## **Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement**

### ***5, Mill Road, Ullesthorpe, Leicestershire (SP 506 878)***

Planning Application: 06/01325/3

Planning Authority: Harborough District Council

For: Bruce Homes Ltd

#### ***1. Nature of the work***

1.1 This statement is for archaeological watching brief (strip plan and sample). It will be revised following the commencement of operations when the extent of risks can be assessed in full.

1.2 The work will involve overburden stripping by JCB 3C or similar during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be c. 1.0 – 1.2m. Following stripping the exposed deposits will be examined with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and archaeological features will be excavated. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the ULAS Health and safety and the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers manuals, together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines, including the following.

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

1.3 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation. All work will adhere to the company's health and safety policy.

#### ***2 Risks Assessment***

##### ***2.1 Working within an excavation.***

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces deeper than 1.2m. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear 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.

##### ***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 Weils 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.

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

25.04.2007