

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
on land at 2-4 Millstone Lane, Syston  
Leicestershire  
(SK 636 120)**

*Stephen Jones*

**For: Homes by Marshall Ltd**

**Checked by Project Manager**

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**Name: .....**

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**Contents**

<b>Summary</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>1 Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>2 Objectives</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>3 Methods</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>4 Results</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>5 Conclusions</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>6 Archive</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>7 Acknowledgements</b>	<b>8</b>

**Figures**

Figure 1: Location plan 1:200 000

Figure 2: Sketch plan of development area showing locations of observed groundworks.

Figure 3: Sketch section of typical site stratigraphy

**Appendix**

Design Specification

## **An Archaeological Watching Brief on land at 2-4 Millstone Lane, Syston Leicestershire (SK 636 120)**

### **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by ULAS, on behalf of Homes by Marshall Ltd, on land at 2-4 Millstone Lane, Syston Leicestershire (SK 636 120). This addressed the requirements from Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team as archaeological adviser to the planning authority (Planning Application: 04/1263/2) and follows guidelines outlined in a Design Specification for archaeological work (ULAS Design Specification 04/552). The land is located in close vicinity to the historic core of Syston and therefore any groundworks on the site had potential to disturb areas of archaeological importance. The watching brief was carried out by ULAS on 10/01/05. No significant archaeological remains were evident. The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums, Historic and Natural Environment Team under accession number X.A2.2005.*

### **1 Introduction**

The development area is located on Millstone Lane, Syston, approximately 7km northwest of Leicester City centre in Syston Parish in the district of Charnwood, Leicestershire (SK 628 1346) and consists of an area c.0.3 ha. The underlying geology of the site consists of river terrace gravel overlying Mercia Mudstone. The site itself is on flat land lying at c. 57m OD.

Planning permission had been granted for the construction of nine residential dwellings on the site (Planning Application: 04/1263/2).

The development is located on the periphery of the historic core of Syston therefore in view of the potential of the site for containing buried archaeological remains the archaeological adviser to the planning authority recommended archaeological attendance and recording during groundworks to ensure that affected deposits were adequately recorded.

Condition 3 of the planning permission therefore states:

*No development shall take place until the applicant or developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority, and no development shall take place except in accordance with the approved details.*

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 10/01/05 following a *Design Specification for a Watching Brief* (ULAS Design Spec. 04/552) which followed the recommendations of Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team in their capacity as archaeological advisers to the planning authority

## 2 Objectives

The objective of the archaeological work was to ascertain whether any significant archaeological remains were present within the area to be developed. If identified, a sufficient sample was then to be recorded to establish the extent, date, quality, character, form and potential, including environmental data. Further archaeological recording was also to be considered if deemed necessary.

The site was visited following the demolition of a factory to the southeast of the site and removal of its related car park surface to the northwest. Groundworks for house footings and related trial slots were closely monitored during the visit (See Fig 2).

## 3 Methods

The specific aim of the work was to ascertain whether any archaeological deposits were present and whether they would be destroyed by the groundworks. Any deposits encountered were recorded as appropriate. The work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

## 4 Results (Figures 2 and 3)

### 4.1 Area A

The groundworks in Area A were observed at the northwest extent of the site, in an area previously used as a car park for the former factory, located on the south extent. Within the profile of the footings a layer *c.*0.4m deep of demolition rubble (1) was visible, containing frequent bricks and rubble. Below this a dark greyish brown sandy silt topsoil layer (2), *c.*0.18m deep was also exposed containing pebbles, brick fragments, occasional fragments of charcoal and frequent roots. At the base of the trench a disturbed subsoil layer (3) was also evident consisting of orangey brown slightly greyish sand containing abundant rounded pebbles and occasional root disturbance *c.*0.35m deep, lying above a cleaner natural orange sand (4) also containing abundant rounded pebbles, *c.*0.25m deep.

### 4.2 Area B

Area B was also located in the northwest extent of the site and the machining revealed further similar deposits to Area A, but with more frequent root disturbance from the hedgerow bordering the site to the northwest and northeast. An area of modern disturbance *c.* 0.9m deep was also revealed containing modern pottery fragments and metal within a dark greyish brown sandy silt.

### 4.3 Area C

Machining within Area C was observed to the northwestern extent of the former factory footprint and below a layer of demolition rubble and disturbed topsoil (layers (5) and (6), *c.* 0.55m in total deep), a pale brown sandy layer (7) containing occasional small pebbles and fragments of charcoal, some 0.3m deep was exposed.

Below this a slightly disturbed reddish orange brown natural sand (8) was also visible, c.0.2m deep.

#### **4.4 Area D**

This area was located at the south extent of the site and revealed a similar depth of disturbed overburden (9) to Area C. A number of former modern drains were also evident relating to the toilet block of the factory. A slightly disturbed orange natural substratum c.0.3m deep containing some root disturbance overlay a cleaner natural c.0.1m deep at the base of the trench.

#### **4.4 Area E**

The trench within Area E was excavated to the southeast extent and also revealed a similar depth of disturbed overburden. A disturbed subsoil/natural substratum containing occasional charcoal flecks within a pale orange brown sand was exposed at the base of the trench.

### **5 Conclusions**

The watching brief revealed no significant archaeological evidence. The disturbed deposits clearly relate to the former factory and levelling for the related car park. The undated pale brown sandy layer (7), exposed in Area C could relate to an undisturbed archaeological deposit, however the overall lack of finds and archaeological features suggest that the site may have been in an area of undisturbed land or used as arable or orchard at the edge of the settlement of Syston.

### **6 Archive**

The site archive consists of

1 watching recording sheet, containing sketch plan, three sketch sections and descriptions.

1 hanger of colour slides.

The archive will be held at Leicestershire County Council Museums, Historic and Natural Environment Team under accession number X.A2.2005.

### **7 Acknowledgments**

This report was compiled from information collected on site by the author. The project was managed by Dr. Patrick Clay. I would like to thank Mr R. Griffiths, Director, Homes by Marshall Ltd and Richard Clark, Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council Museums, Historic and Natural Environment Team.

## UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

### Design Specification for archaeological work

*2-4 Millstone Lane, Syston, Leicestershire (SK 636 120)*

*Planning Application: 04/1263/2*

*For: Homes by Marshall 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 a archaeological attendance (control and supervision), 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 2-14 Millstone Lane, Syston, Leicestershire (SK 636 120; Planning Application: 04/1263/2) for Homes by Marshall Ltd. It addresses the requirements from Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services as archaeological adviser to the planning authority (1.8.2003; Appendix 3).

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 attendance brief is required to cover ground disturbance to identify any deposits of archaeological importance. It forms part of a scheme of work to fulfil the planning conditions required by Charnwood Borough Council following recommendations from Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services as advisors to the planning authority.

#### *2.2 Archaeological potential*

2.2.1 The development is located on the periphery of the historic core of Syston. In view of the potential of the site for containing buried archaeological remains the archaeological adviser to the planning authority has recommended archaeological attendance and recording during groundworks to ensure that affected deposits were adequately recorded.

Condition 3 of the planning permission (Planning Application: 04/1263/2) states:

*No development shall take place until the applicant or developer has secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works in accordance with a written scheme of investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing*

*by the Local Planning Authority, and no development shall take place except in accordance with the approved details.*

### **3 Aims**

3.1 Through archaeological observation of the overburden stripping and, if necessary, foundation and service trench excavation by the client's contractors:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any 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 presence on site of an experienced professional archaeologist during the works specified above. During these groundworks, 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 owner, 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 Homes by Marshall Ltd, Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services and Charnwood Borough Council.

## ***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 Some 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 County Council, Heritage Services 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 within six months of the completion of analysis. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

6.4. Any disk-based data will be provided for Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services.

## ***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. 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 the ULAS Health and Safety Policy (2001). Generic risk assessments and relevant legislation guidelines are contained within the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (2001). This augments and updates the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM) Health and Safety Manual (1997).

9.2 Health and Safety procedures will be agreed between ULAS and the site tenants prior to the commencement of work, and will be subject to review by both parties for the duration of the works.

## **10. Insurance**

10.1 All employees, consultants and volunteers are covered by the University of Leicester public liability insurance with Gerling Insurance Service Co. Ltd. and others (leading policy no. 62/99094/D). Professional indemnity insurance is with Sun Alliance, £10m cover, policy no. 03A/SA 001 05978. Employer's Liability Insurance is with Eagle Star, cover £10m.

## **11. Bibliography**

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

MGC 1992, *Standards in the County Council, Heritage Services Care of Archaeological Collections* (County Council, Heritage Services 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 County Council, Heritage Services Archaeologists)

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20.11.2004

## **Appendix 1**

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

***2-4 Millstone Lane, Syston, Leicestershire (SK 636 120)***

***Planning Application: 04/1263/2***

***For: Homes by Marshall Ltd***

#### *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 Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers manual, as revised in 1997, 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  
20.11.2004

## Appendix 2 Insurance details



### Corporate Division

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

P.O. Box 35  
9 South Parade  
Leeds LS1 1JW  
Tel: (0113) 2915010  
Fax: (0113) 2830251  
E-Mail: sam.naphey@ars.aon.co.uk

7 August 2004

Our Ref: EU/SN/Ext 5010

Dear Sirs

#### University of Leicester – Liability Insurances

We act as Insurance Brokers for the above and can confirm that we have arranged on their behalf the following liability insurances:-

##### *Employers Liability*

Insurer	:	Zurich Insurance
Policy Number	:	J0198732
Expiry Date	:	31 July 2002
Indemnity Limit:	:	£10,000,000 any one occurrence
Extension	:	Indemnity to Principal

##### *Public Liability*

Insurer	:	Gerling Insurance Service Company Ltd
Policy Number	:	62/99094H/D
Expiry Date	:	31 July 2002
Indemnity Limit:	:	£10,000,000 any one occurrence £10,000,000 any one period for Products Liability
Extension	:	Indemnity to Principal Liability assumed under Contract or Agreement

We trust that the above information is sufficient for your needs if not, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

Miss Sam Naphey  
Account Handler  
Education Unit



**Corporate Division**

**TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN**

P.O. Box 35  
9 South Parade  
Leeds LS1 1JW  
Tel: (0113) 2915010  
Fax: (0113) 2830251  
E-Mail: sam.nappey@ars.aon.co.uk

7 August 2004

Our Ref: EU/SN/Ext 5010

Dear Sirs

**University of Leicester – Professional Indemnity Insurance**

We act as Insurance Brokers for the above and can confirm that we have arranged on their behalf the following insurance:-

**Insurer** : Royal & Sun Alliance Insurance London  
**Policy Number** : PI45000A  
**Expiry Date** : 31 July 2002  
**Indemnity Limit:** : £10,000,000 any one claim and in all

We trust that the above information is sufficient for your needs if not, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sam Nappey', is written over a horizontal line.

Miss Sam Nappey  
Account Handler  
Education Unit

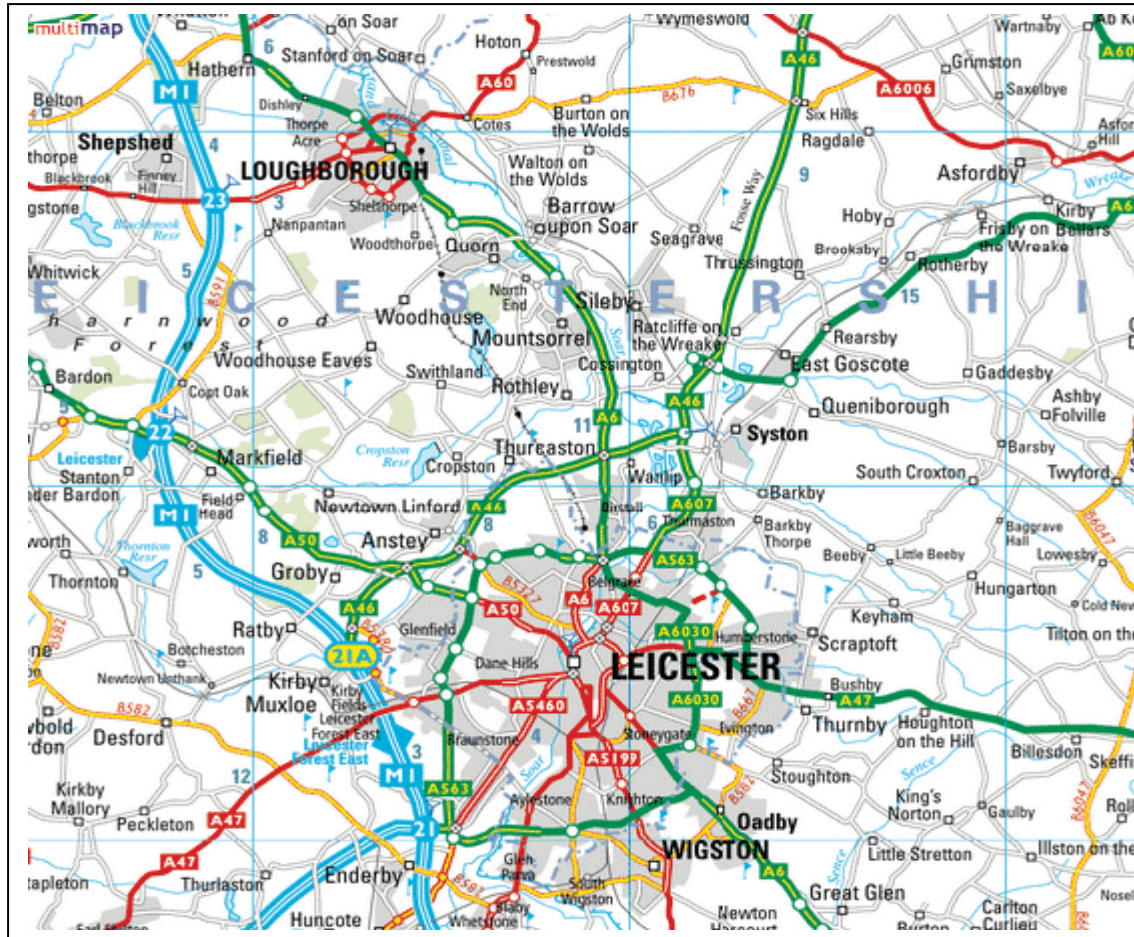


Figure 1 Location map Scale 1:200000

