

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
During Topsoil Stripping for a Stable Block  
at Gilmorton Road,  
Ashby Magna, Leicestershire**

**Jon Coward**

**For Mr and Mrs S Tuck**

**Planning Application: 03/00730/FUL**

**Checked by Project Manager**

**Signed: ..**



**..Date: 22 April 2005**

**Name: ...R. Buckley...**

University of Leicester Archaeological Services

Report No. 2005-044 ©2005

## **1 Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was carried out by ULAS for Mr and Mrs. S. Tuck in October 2003 during the stripping of topsoil in advance of the construction of a stable block on land at Gilmorton Rd, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire (SP 5635 9035). No archaeological finds or deposits were encountered in the area of the stable block; however removal of modern building rubble from a depression adjacent to the moated site to the east did show some cobbling which may relate to a trackway into the earthworks. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under X.A43.2005*

## **2. Introduction**

The site is located to the east of Gilmorton Rd, Ashby Magna, in Harborough District, Leicestershire (fig 1). The area has been identified as of archaeological potential from information held in the Leicestershire and Rutland Sites and Monuments Record. The site is located to the south west of a series of medieval earthworks and a moated site, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 170 indicates that the underlying geology is Boulder Clay, although none was seen during the stripping of the stable block area.

## **3. Aims and Methods**

The aim of the watching brief was to record any archaeological evidence revealed by topsoil stripping. The watching brief took place in October 2003.

All work adhered to the Institute of Field Archaeologists's *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* and the *Guidelines and procedures for archaeological work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (Leicestershire Museums Service)

## **4. Results**

Topsoil and some subsoil was removed using a 360<sup>0</sup> tracked excavator with a toothless ditching bucket over the stable block area of approx 25m by 6m (figs 2,3), with an archaeologist in attendance.

A sandy loam topsoil of only c. 15cm depth was removed to show a silty-sand subsoil with abundant small pebbles. No archaeological finds or features were noted.

The machine also removed an extensive brick dump which was partially filling a depression at the eastern field boundary (figs 3,4). Although the building rubble itself

appeared to be of modern origin (the bricks being 19th century or later), there was also a large number of cobbles present in the lower part of this dump. The depression is at the east end of a slight linear earthwork (fig 5) running east-west across the field, heading towards the moated site in the field adjacent. This might be a remnant of a medieval hollow way, raising the possibility that the cobbling could have been an effort to consolidate the surface as it dropped onto the lower (and presumably wetter) ground to the east. When this putative consolidation occurred could not be ascertained as no dateable material was revealed.

## 5. Archive

The archive consists of :

- 1 *pro-forma* watching brief record sheet
- 7 colour slides showing the nature of the work undertaken
- 2 annotated site plans showing position of stable block strip, and brick dump.

It will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under accession number X.A43.2005

## 6. Acknowledgements

The project was carried out by Jon Coward, project management was by Richard Buckley. ULAS would like to thank Mr and Mrs. Tuck for their cooperation and for funding the work.

## 7. Publication

A version of the summary above will be published in *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. ULAS is participating in the Archaeology Data Service and National Monuments Record OASIS project and will complete the appropriate OASIS forms and upload a digital copy of this report in due course.

## 8. Illustrations

**Fig 1. Location of Site.** © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100021186

**Fig 2 Area of topsoil stripping for the stable block.**

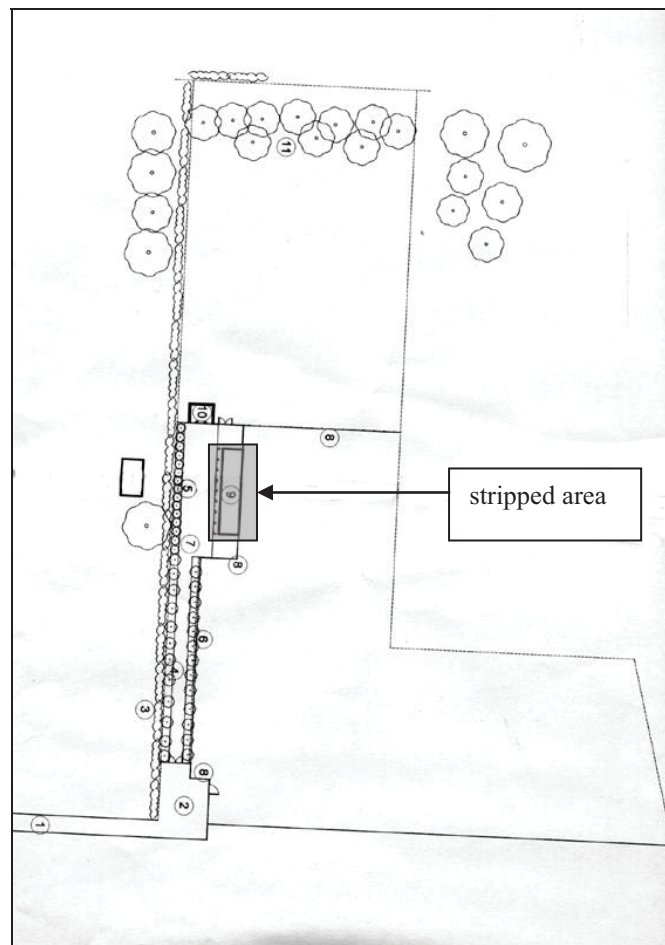
**Fig 3 Topsoil stripping in the stable block area.**

**Fig 4 Removal of brick dump in depression.**

**Fig 5 Plan of earthworks and area of brick dump.**



Fig 1. Location of Site. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100021186



**Fig 2 Area of topsoil stripping for the stable block.**

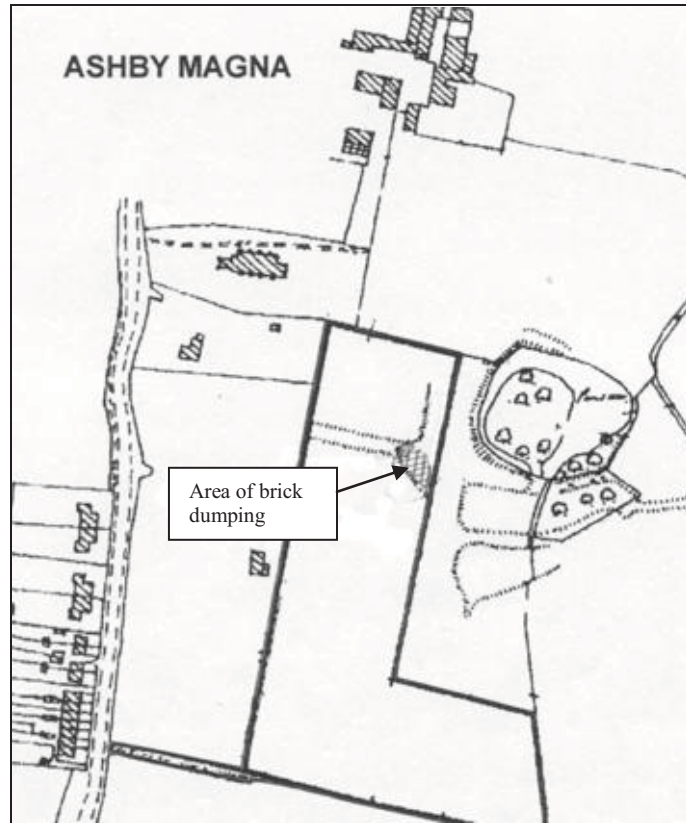
Based on a plan provided by the developer, not to scale



**Fig 3 Topsoil stripping in the stable block area. Looking south west**



**Fig 4 Removal of brick dump in depression. Looking north east**



**Fig 5 Plan of earthworks and area of brick dump. Not to scale.**  
(after Hartley, Leicestershire Museums Service)