



# University of Leicester

## Archaeological Services

**A Strip, Plan, and Sample  
Excavation and watching brief  
at 4 Lady Gate, Diseworth,  
Leicestershire  
NGR: SK 453 243**

Jon Coward



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**A Strip, Plan, and Sample Excavation  
and watching brief at  
4 Lady Gate, Diseworth, Leicestershire  
NGR: SK 453 243**

**Jon Coward**

**PA no. 09/00320/FUL**

**For: Keller Construction**

Approved by

**Signed:** ..... **Date:** .....

**Name:** .....

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## **A Strip, Plan, and Sample Excavation, and watching brief at 4 Ladygate, Diseworth, Leicestershire NGR: SK 453 243**

### **1. Summary**

*A strip, plan and sample exercise, with attendant watching brief over services, was undertaken by ULAS in January and March 2010 at 4 Ladygate, Diseworth, Leicestershire SK 453 243 for Keller Construction Ltd, in advance of redevelopment. No archaeological deposits were encountered during the strip. The watching brief over services indicated that the ground in the southern and part of the western sides of the development area had probably been made up prior to the construction of the 19th century buildings on the site. Roof trusses belonging to an earlier phase of building were noted. The archive will be deposited with LMARS under accession code X.A2.2010 in due course.*

### **2. Background**

Planning permission was granted for a proposed residential development at 4 Ladygate, Diseworth, Leicestershire, with a condition for the implementation of a programme of archaeological work to mitigate any damage to buried remains which might occur from the proposals. This comprised the control and supervision of groundworks by an archaeologist, with provision for excavation and recording of any significant archaeological remains which might be affected ('Strip, plan and sample'). A watching brief was also undertaken over associated ground works.

The site lies in the centre of Diseworth village (Figure 1, Figure 2), at an approximate height of between 56m and 57m O.D.

### **3. Historical Background**

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies in an area of archaeological interest within the historic core of the medieval and post-medieval village of Diseworth.

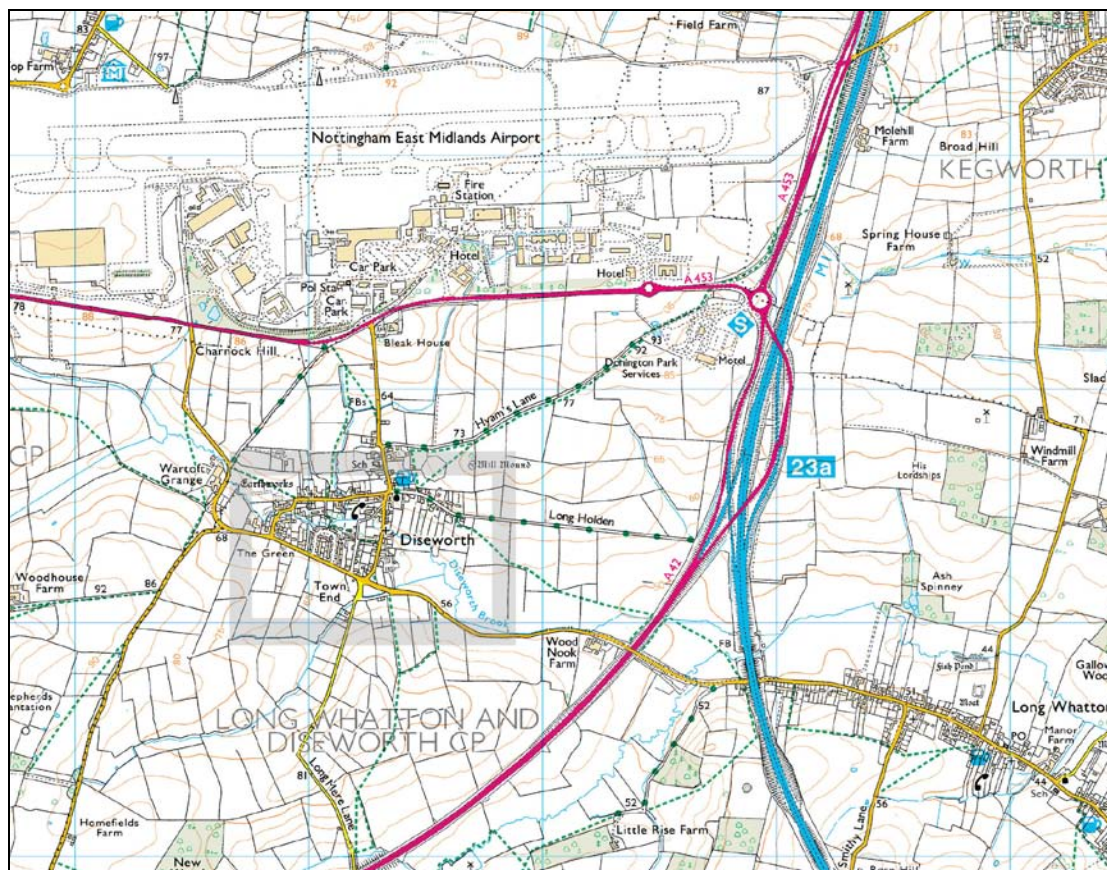


Figure 1 Diseworth, Leicestershire.

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#### 4 Aims

The aim of the programme of work was:

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 affected by the proposed ground works.
3. To record any archaeological deposits affected by the ground works.
4. To produce an archive and report of any results.

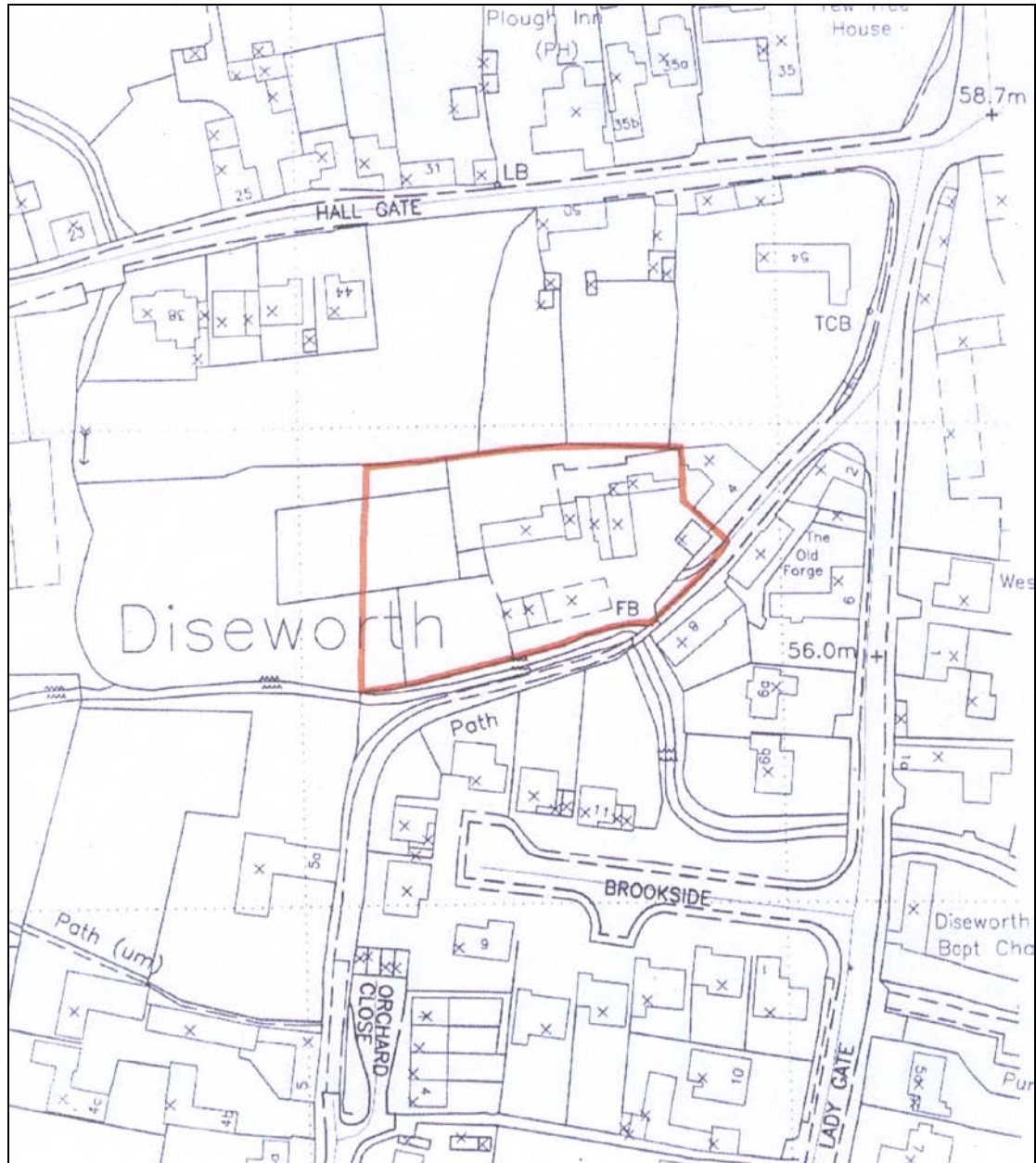


Figure 2 Location of development area within village  
N.T.S. Plan provided by developer.

### 5. Methods

The project was to involve the supervision of overburden removal and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the groundworks. As ground was to be reduced along part of the north edge of the site, a 360° excavator was used to remove the soil in spits under archaeological supervision until either natural ground or the formation depth was reached. It was proposed to open small trial trenches over the footprint of each proposed plot to assess the depth of topsoil/overburden and determine the presence/absence of any archaeological remains; unfortunately in the event it did not prove possible to carry this out.

However, the opportunity was taken to monitor groundworks for the services installed for these plots.

## 6. Results

### 6.1. Plot A

This area (Figure 3; also front cover, looking east) consisted of high ground covered with a concrete slab which was to be broken through and removed, the ground taken down to the level of the building immediately to the south. A retaining wall was removed on the south side of this area which revealed that the natural ground surface, a orangey clay, was overlain by a dark clayish loam. Over this was make-up comprising various dumps of CBM, concrete, ash, etc., acting as hardcore for the 0.25m thick concrete slab over. A 360o excavator was used to dig a 2m wide trench, firstly breaking and removing the slab and solid hardcore with a toothed bucket, followed by the removal of any loose hardcore and the garden-type soil in spits using a toothless bucket, until undisturbed natural strata were revealed. No archaeological deposits were encountered, and the only finds revealed were modern (i.e. 19th century or later) building material and china, which were not retained.

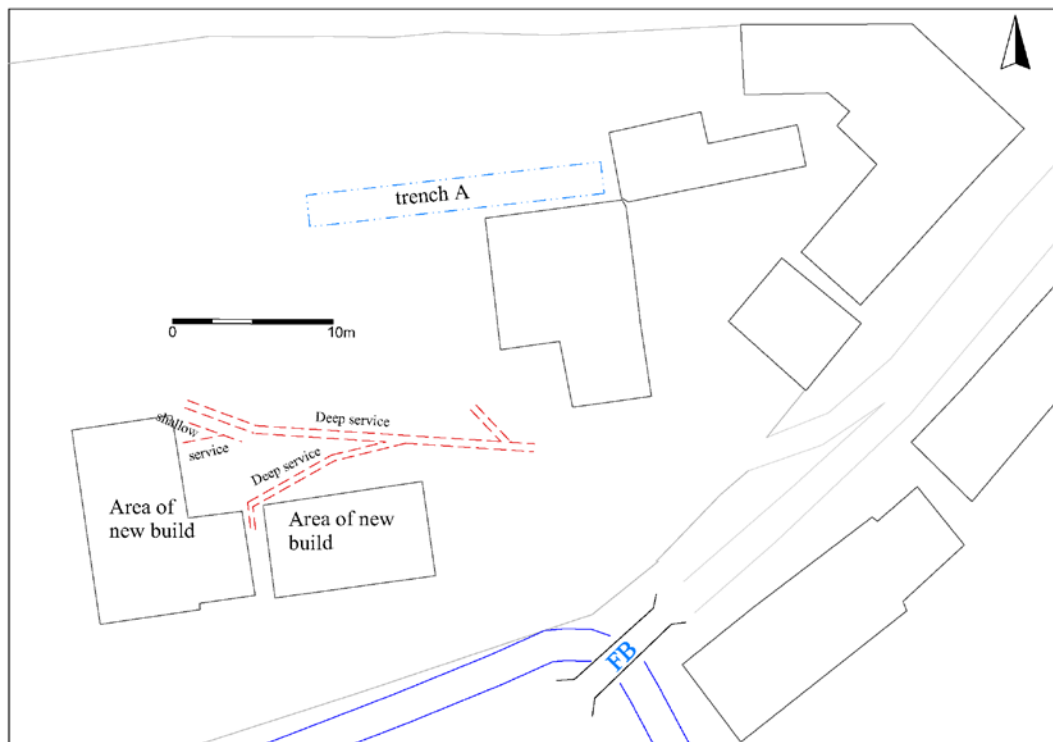


Figure 3 Position of trench A, and line of monitored services.  
Not to scale; based on a plan provided by developer

## 6.2 Watching brief on associated groundworks

Service trenches (Figure 3) were dug by a 360° excavator using a narrow toothless bucket, with an archaeologist in attendance. Natural ground was not encountered in most of the service trenches, although they were c.0.80m metre deep in places. The deposit removed for the services was a black or very dark-grey smelly clay with common brick and stone fragments. Several land drains or disused services were encountered, and some of the trenches flooded. Apart from a mortared brick wall footing (19th century or later), no features were encountered in this subsoil. Where the service trenches encountered natural ground on the eastern edge of the area, it was a homogeneous clean brown clay.

It is possible that that an old clay pit may have removed the natural to the western side of the area, and then the area used for dumping before 19th century construction. Alternatively, the dark-grey clay may have been dumped on the site in advance of the construction, in order to bring the level up to protect the area from any potential flooding from the brook adjacent. The presence of this potential make-up deposit does at least indicate that the footings of the new construction on the south side of the site are unlikely to have disturbed *in-situ* archaeological deposits.

## 6.3 Building phases

The major timbers of a dismantled roof (Figure 4, Figure 5) were stacked on the site, taken from one of the buildings undergoing alteration. The timbers included two roof trusses and a collection of long beams. The trusses, which appeared to be of oak with raked struts, were badly affected by woodworm. The principals were re-used, probably having originally served as wall-plates or some other component of a timber-framed structure. All joints visible were pegged. The purlins had been trenched into the principals. The roof was said to have come out of one of the buildings undergoing re-furbishment; the building in question (Figure 6) is certainly of more than one phase, but appears to be 18th century at the earliest. The trusses cannot be dated with any certainty on typological grounds, but the form would not normally be expected much after the end of the 17th century. However, it is possible that they were purpose-made for the building, or perhaps salvaged from elsewhere in the village for re-use. The opportunity was taken to make a brief photographic record of them where they lay.





Figure 4 Detail of timbers



Figure 5 Trusses



Figure 6 Building from which trusses were removed  
Note single skin thin brickwork, probably 18th century.

### **7. Archive**

The archive consists of 1 *pro-forma* trench record sheet, 1 *pro-forma* watching brief sheet, and digital images. No finds were retained. It will be deposited with LMARS under accession code X.A2.2010 in due course.

### **8. Acknowledgements**

ULAS would like to thank Andrew Keller for his assistance in the course of this project. The project was managed by Richard Buckley of ULAS, and carried out by Jon Coward of ULAS.

**9. OASIS**

<b>INFORMATION REQUIRED</b>	<b>EXAMPLE</b>
Project Name	\$ Ladygate Diseworth Leicestershire
Project Type	Strip,plan,sample; watching brief
Project Manager	Richard Buckley
Project Supervisor	Jon Coward
Previous/Future work	n/a/
Current Land Use	Paddock, farm, residential,gardens
Development Type	Residential,
Reason for Investigation	PPG16
Position in the Planning Process	As a condition
Site Co ordinates	SK 453 243
Start/end dates of field work	Jan 2010 to March 2010
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire Museums
<b>Study Area *</b>	c. 1030 sq metres

## ***Appendix 1: The Design Specification***

Design Specification for archaeological work: Strip, Plan & sample

*Job title: 4 Lady Gate, Diseworth, Leics*

NGR: SK453243

*Agent Mr. D. Insley*

*Planning Authority: North West Leicestershire District Council*

*Planning application No. 09/00320/FUL*

### 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 of investigation for a programme of archaeological work during ground works associated with residential development, as required by the Planning Authority.

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)*.

#### 2.1 *Context of the Project*

2.1.1 Planning permission has been granted for the proposed development with a condition for the implementation of a programme of archaeological work to mitigate any damage to buried remains which may occur from the proposals. This is to comprise the control and supervision of groundworks by an archaeologist, with provision for excavation and recording of significant archaeological remains which may be affected ('Strip, plan and sample').

#### 2.2 *Archaeological Background*

2.2.1 The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies in an area of archaeological interest within the historic core of the medieval and post-medieval village of Diseworth.

### 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 a series of small trial trenches on the footprint of each proposed plot 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 the initial trial trenches, and found to be 0.15m or less below proposed formation, each plot will be stripped down to the top of the archaeology, followed by a programme of excavation and recording, using additional personnel as necessary. This work may not necessarily follow on immediately from the initial trial trench, instead being done at a later date.

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 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 and Dissemination of Results*

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.

7.2 University of Leicester Archaeological Services supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The online OASIS form at <http://ads.ac.uk/project/oasis> will be completed detailing the results of the project. ULAS will contact the Senior Planning Archaeologist prior to completion of the form. Once a report has become a public document following its incorporation into Leicestershire HER it may be placed on the web-site.

## 8 *Timetable and Staffing*

8.1 No date has been set as yet for the initial trial trenches.

## 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 2007) 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)

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