

**An Archaeological Evaluation at
Church Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire
NGR: SP 444 966 centre**

Dr. Roger Kipling



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**An Archaeological Evaluation at Church Lane,
Barwell, Leicestershire**

[NGR SP 444 966]

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For: Leicestershire County Council

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CONTENTS

Summary	1
1: Introduction.....	1
2: Aims and Methods	2
3: Results.....	4
4: Conclusions.....	7
5: Archive.....	7
6: Publication	8
7: Acknowledgements.....	8
Bibliography	8
Appendix: Design specification.....	9

FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000).....	2
Figure 2: General view from south-east of site.....	3
Figure 3: Trench location plan.....	3
Figure 4: Trench 1: view looking south-west	4
Figure 5: Trench 2: view looking south.....	5
Figure 6: Trench 2, post-holes [1] & [3].....	6
Figure 7: Post-hole [1]	6
Figure 8: Post-hole [3]	6
Figure 9: Trench 3: view south.....	7

An Archaeological Evaluation at Church Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire (NGR SP 444 966)

Dr. Roger Kipling

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 28th July 2009 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services in response to a planning application on behalf of Leicestershire County Council for the construction of a community centre at Church Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire. The only archaeological features encountered consisted of two undated post holes. The site archive will be deposited with the Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team under the accession number X.A154.2009.

1: Introduction

1.1: An archaeological evaluation was undertaken as part of the planning conditions connected with construction of a new community centre on land at Church Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire. Work was carried out on the recommendation of the Planning Archaeologist of the Leicestershire County Council Historic and Natural Environment Team, as archaeological advisor to the planning authority, and addressed the requirements for an archaeological impact assessment following Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning, Paragraph 30).

1.2: A desk-based assessment and geophysical survey of the development area had been undertaken prior to the evaluation (Bocock 2006; Elks 2007), the former indicating the existence of various archaeological sites within 1km of the development site. Whilst the Leicestershire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the site is located outside the medieval village core of Barwell (**MLE2821**), a medieval occupation site has been located directly adjacent to the development area (**MLE2802**). The geophysical survey indicated that there were possible anomalies of archaeological origin within the area of the proposed community centre, although much of the survey appeared to consist of magnetic disturbance and debris.

1.3: As it was deemed likely that the proposed development would have a damaging effect on any archaeological deposits, if present, within the application area, the undertaking of an archaeological evaluation was recommended by the design specification (ULAS 2009).

1.4: The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Wolston Sand and Gravel. The land lies at a height of c. 117 OD.

2: Aims and Methods

2.1: The aim of the evaluation was to ascertain whether any archaeological deposits were present within the area of development, via the undertaking of trial trenching, following the *Design Specification for Archaeological Work at Church Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire* (CLE2720). All work was in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' (IfA) Code of Conduct and adhering to their *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*.

2.2: The archaeological evaluation involved the machine excavation of three trial trenches aligned across the development area.

2.3: A JCB 3C excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket was employed to excavate three trial trenches measuring 20m by 1.6m (Trenches 1 to 3), targeting possible archaeological features identified by the geophysical survey. Full archaeological supervision was undertaken throughout this work in order to monitor for evidence of archaeological deposits or remains. Trenches were examined by hand cleaning and the archaeological deposits and geological strata revealed recorded in detail.

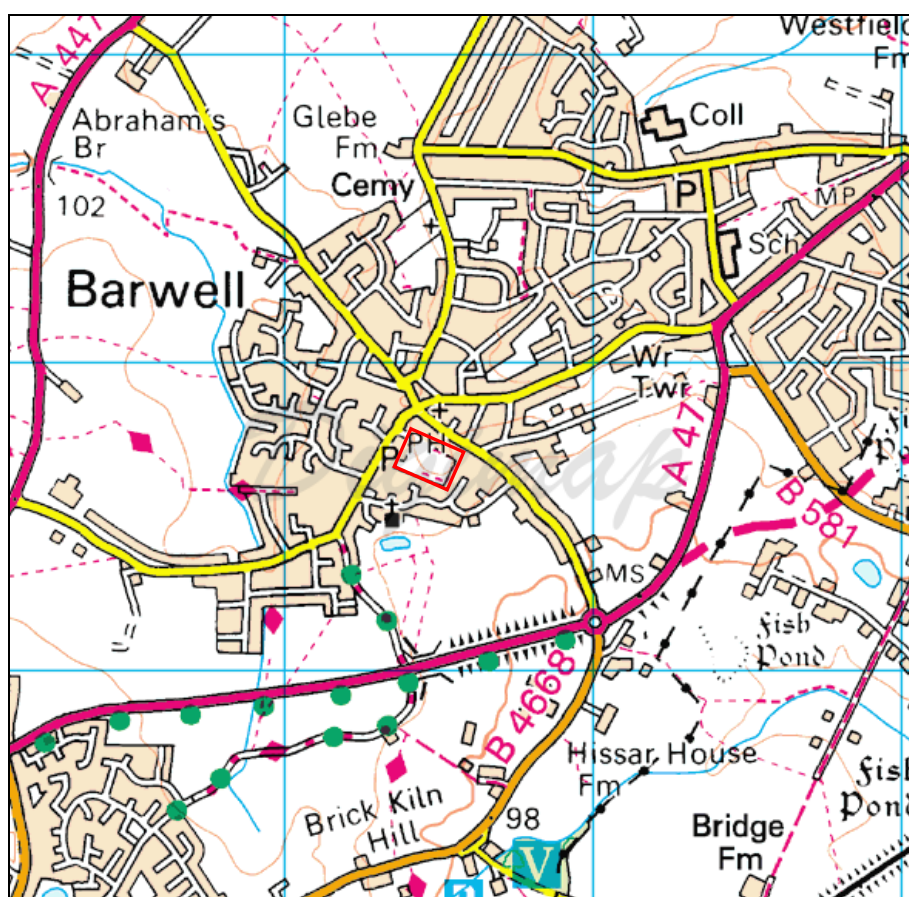


Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

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Figure 2: General view from south-east of site

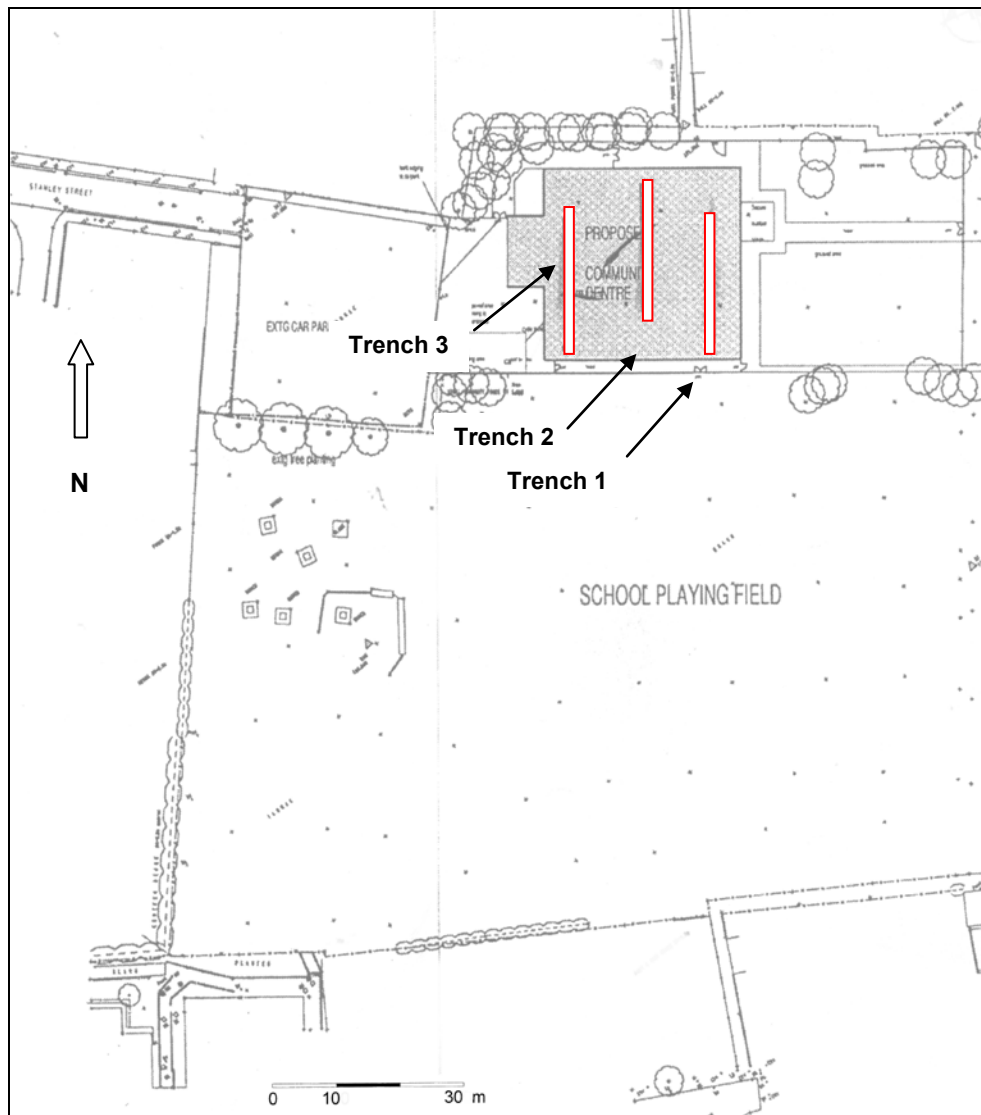


Figure 3: Trench location plan

3: Results

3.1: The work involved the machine excavation of three parallel north-south aligned trenches (1-3) located within a fenced area defining the area of the proposed community centre and located at the north end of an area of playing fields associated with Barwell Primary School.

3.2: Machining of **Trench 1**, the easternmost trench, involved the removal of 0.1m-1.3m of turf and sandy-silt topsoil and 0.30m-0.60m of underlying sandy-silt subsoil. Both topsoil and subsoil contained occasional small and medium-sized gravel inclusions and were of largely mixed appearance, possibly due to site levelling associated with the setting out of the playing fields. Mixed natural clays and sands were revealed at the base of the trench, and characterised by a progressive change from orange clay at the north to mixed sands to south. No archaeological deposits were encountered. The depth of the trench varied between 0.55m and 0.95m and sloped gently towards the south.



Figure 4: Trench 1: view looking south-west

3.3: **Trench 2** revealed a 0.5m to 1m accumulation of topsoil and subsoil overlying sandy natural clay, the latter noticeably sandier and stonier at the north end of the trench. The trench produced the only archaeological evidence from the excavation in the form of two probable post holes ([1] & [3]) cut into the natural clay and located *c.*4m apart midway along the centre of the trench. Both roughly circular features had 45° sides, measured *c.*0.40m in diameter and *c.*0.20m in depth. Neither produced dating evidence.



Figure 5: Trench 2: view looking south

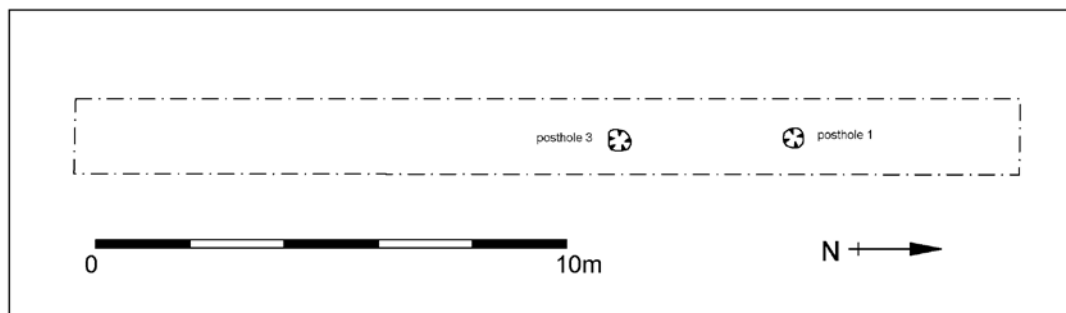


Figure 6: Trench 2, post-holes [1] & [3]

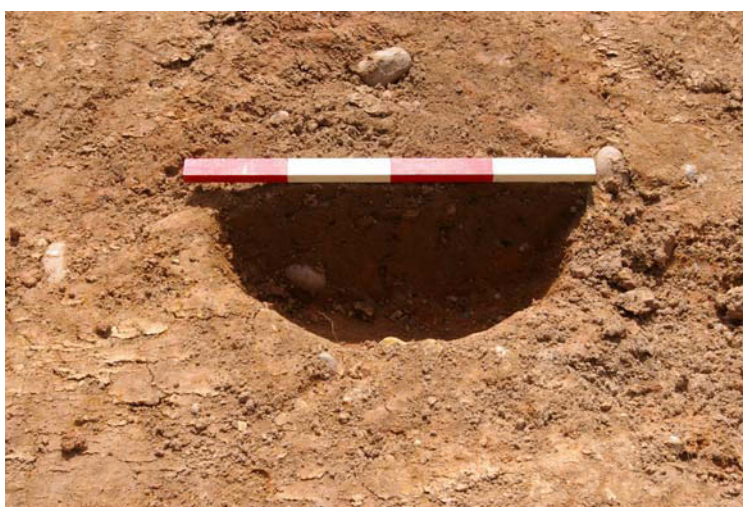


Figure 7: Post-hole [1]

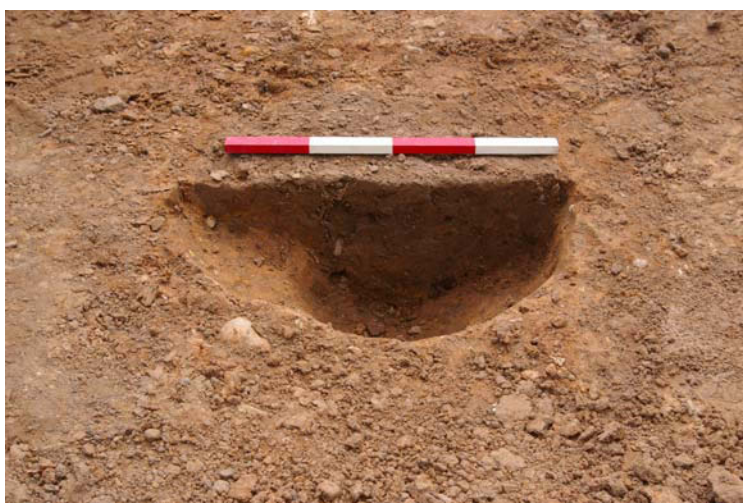


Figure 8: Post-hole [3]

3.4: The third and westernmost trench, **Trench 3**, again sloped gradually to the south, measuring between 0.5m and 1.0m in depth, and with comparable topsoil and subsoil. The underlying natural substratum consisted of a fine, very sandy orange

clay with regular flint inclusions and abundant manganese staining at the north end of the trench, grading gradually to a fine yellow brown sand towards the south.



Figure 9: Trench 3: view south

4: Conclusions

4.1: The archaeological evaluation at Church Lane, Barwell, failed to identify possible archaeological features as suggested by the earlier geophysical survey. There were, however, limited indications of possible human activity in the form of two undated probable post-holes.

5: Archive

5.1: The site archive (X.A154.2009), consisting of paper and photographic records, will be housed with the County Historic and Natural Environment Team, Leicestershire County Council.

5.2: The archive consists of:

- Three trench record sheets

- Four single context record sheets
- A single A3 drawing sheet
- 18 digital photographs
- 18 monochrome (film) photographs
- A risk assessment form

6: Publication

6.1: A version of the excavation summary (see above) will appear in due course in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.

7: Acknowledgements

7.1: Dr. Roger Kipling and Dan Stone of ULAS undertook the archaeological evaluation on behalf of Leicestershire County Council. The project was managed by Dr. Patrick Clay.

Bibliography

Bocock, S., 2006 *An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment for the Proposed New Community Centre, Barwell, Leicestershire (SP 444 966)*. U LAS Report 2006-093

Elks, D., 2007 *Geophysical Survey Report for the Proposed Community Centre, Barwell, Leicestershire*. Upton Upon Severn: Stratascan

ULAS 2009 *Design Specification for Archaeological Work at Church Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire (SP 444 966) 09/692*

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Appendix: Design specification

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological work

Job title: Barwell Community Centre, Church Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire (SP 444 966)

Client: Leicestershire County Council

Planning Authority: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Planning application No.

1 Introduction

1.1 *Definition and scope of the specification*

This document is a design specification for an initial phase of archaeological field evaluation (AFE) at the above site, in accordance with DOE Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning, para.30). The fieldwork specified below is intended to provide preliminary indications of character and extent of any buried archaeological remains in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority.

- 1.2 The definition of archaeological field evaluation, taken from the Institute for Archaeologists Standards and Guidance: for Archaeological Field Evaluation (IfA S&G: AFE) is a limited programme of non-intrusive and/ or intrusive fieldwork which determines the presence or absence of archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts or ecofacts within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. If such archaeological remains are present field evaluation defines their character, extent, quality and preservation, and enables an assessment of their worth in a local, regional, national or international context as appropriate.

2. Background

2.1 *Context of the Project*

- 2.1.1 The site is at Barwell Community Centre, Church Lane, Barwell, Leicestershire (SP 444 966; Figs 1-2).
- 2.1.2 Planning permission has been granted for the construction of a new community centre covering c. 1020 sq metres (Figure 3).
- 2.1.3 Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team (LCCHNET) as archaeological advisors to the planning authority have requested an evaluation by trial trenching to identify and locate any archaeological remains of significance and propose suitable treatment to avoid or minimise damage by the development.

2.2 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

- 2.2.1 A desk-based assessment and geophysical survey has been undertaken for the area (Bocock 2006; Elks 2007). The Leicestershire County Council Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the site is located outside the medieval village core of Barwell (**MLE2821**) however a medieval occupation site has been located directly adjacent to the development area (**MLE2802**). In addition, various archaeological sites have been recorded within 1km of the development site. The geophysical survey indicated that there were possible anomalies of archaeological origin in the area of the new community centre although much of the survey detected magnetic disturbance and debris.

3. Archaeological Objectives

- 3.1 The main objectives of the evaluation will be:
- To identify the presence/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 produce an archive and report of any results.
- 3.2 Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation is to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.
- 3.3 Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area.

4. Methodology

4.1 *General Methodology and Standards*

- 4.1.1 All work will follow the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2001).
- 4.1.2 Staffing, recording systems, health and safety provisions and insurance details are included below.
- 4.1.3 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site by the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are met and professional standards are maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with the Senior Planning Archaeologist the Planning authority and the Client.

4.2 *Trial Trenching Methodology*

- 4.2.1 Topsoil/modern overburden will be removed in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision, down to the uppermost archaeological deposits by JCB 3C or equivalent using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 4.2.2 Trenches will be excavated to a width of 1.5m and down to the top of archaeological deposits. The area of the trenches will be protected by barrier fencing.
- 4.2.3 The trenches will be backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation.
- 4.2.4 The area of impact covers *c.* 0.102 ha. A *c.* 9.4% sample of the area is the equivalent of three 20m x 1.6m trenches totaling *c.* 96 sq m. (Fig. 3). The exact location of the trench may need to be modified depending on constraints on site.
- 4.2.5 Trenches will be examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located will be planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans will be tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.
- 4.2.6 Sections of any excavated archaeological features will be drawn at an appropriate scale. At least one longitudinal face of each trench will be recorded. All sections will be levelled and tied to the Ordnance Survey Datum, or a permanent fixed bench mark.
- 4.2.7 Trench locations will be recorded using an electronic distance measurer. These will then be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.
- 4.2.8 Any human remains will initially be left *in situ* and will only be removed if necessary for their protection, under Ministry of Justice guidelines and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations.

4.3 *Recording Systems*

- 4.3.1 The ULAS recording manual will be used as a guide for all recording.
- 4.3.2 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.

- 4.3.3 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 trench plan at appropriate scale, which will show the location of the areas investigated in relationship to the investigation area and OS grid.
- 4.3.4 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made. Sections including the half-sections of individual layers of features will be drawn as necessary, typically at a scale of 1:10. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be recorded.
- 4.3.5 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared 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.
- 4.3.6 This record will be compiled and checked during the course of the excavations.

5. Finds and Samples

- 5.1 The IfA *Guidelines for Finds Work* will be adhered to.
- 5.2 Before commencing work on the site, a Site code/Accession number will be agreed with the Planning Archaeologist that will be used to identify all records and finds from the site.
- 5.3 During the fieldwork, different sampling strategies may be employed according to the perceived importance of the strata under investigation. Close attention will always be given to sampling for date, structure and environment. If significant archaeological features are sample excavated, the environmental sampling strategy is likely to include the following:
- i. A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.
 - ii. Any buried soils or well sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.
 - iii. Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located.
 - iv. Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated and datable. Consultation with the specialist will be undertaken.
- 5.4 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording with the approval of the Senior Planning Archaeologist. The IfA *Guidelines for Finds Work* will be adhered to.
- 5.5 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner. Where appropriate they will be cleaned, marked and receive remedial conservation in accordance with recognised best-practice. This will include the site code number, finds number and context number. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self sealing plastic bags, again marked with site code, finds and context numbers and boxed by material in standard storage boxes (340mm x 270mm x 195mm). All materials will be fully labelled, catalogued and stored in appropriate containers.

6. Report and Archive

- 6.1 The full report in A4 format will usually follow within eight weeks of the completion of the fieldwork and copies will be dispatched to the Client, Senior Planning Archaeologist; HER and Local Planning Authority.
- 6.2 The report will include consideration of:-
- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the evaluation.
 - The nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any structural, artefactual and environmental material uncovered.
 - The anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits.
 - The anticipated archaeological impact of the current proposals.
 - Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
 - Summary.
 - The location and size of the archive.

- A quantitative and qualitative assessment of the potential of the archive for further analysis leading to full publication, following guidelines laid down in *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage).
- 6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in the *IfA Standard and Guidance for archaeological archives* (Brown 2008) will normally be presented to Leicestershire County Council within six months of the completion of fieldwork. 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 of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*.

8. Acknowledgement and Publicity

- 8.1 ULAS shall acknowledge the contribution of the Client in any displays, broadcasts or publications relating to the site or in which the report may be included.
- 8.2 ULAS and the Client shall each ensure that a senior employee shall be responsible for dealing with any enquiries received from press, television and any other broadcasting media and members of the public. All enquiries made to ULAS shall be directed to the Client for comment.

9. Copyright

- 9.1 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.

10. Timetable

- 10.1 The evaluation start is proposed for w.c 20.07.2009 with two staff. Further staff will be added if archaeological remains are discovered.
- 10.2 The on-site director/supervisor will carry out the post-excavation work, with time allocated within the costing of the project for analysis of any artefacts found on the site by the relevant in-house specialists at ULAS.

11. Health and Safety

- 11.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Archaeological Services Health and Safety Policy and Health and Safety manual with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is attached as Appendix 1. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate. The HSE has determined that archaeological investigations are exempt from CDM regulations.
- 11.2 A Risks assessment will be completed prior to work commencing on-site, and updated as necessary during the site works.

12. Insurance

- 12.1 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.

13. Monitoring arrangements

- 13.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and Planning Archaeologist subject to the health and safety requirements of the site. At least one weeks notice will be given to the LCCHS Senior Planning Archaeologist

before the commencement of the archaeological evaluation in order that monitoring arrangements can be made.

- 13.2 All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the IfA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*.
- 13.3 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

14. Contingencies and unforeseen circumstances

- 14.1 In the event that unforeseen archaeological discoveries are made during the project, ULAS shall inform the site agent/project manager, Client and the Planning Archaeologist and Planning Authority and prepare a short written statement with plan detailing the archaeological evidence. Following assessment of the archaeological remains by the Planning Archaeologist, ULAS shall, if required, implement an amended scheme of investigation on behalf of the client as appropriate.

15. Bibliography

- Bocock, S., 2006 *An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment for the Proposed New Community Centre, Barwell, Leicestershire (SP 444 966)* ULAS Report 2006-093
- Brown, D., 2008 *Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives* (Institute for Archaeologists)
- Elks, D., 2006 *Geophysical survey report. Proposed Community Centre, barwell, Leicestershire (Stratascan Report J2329)*

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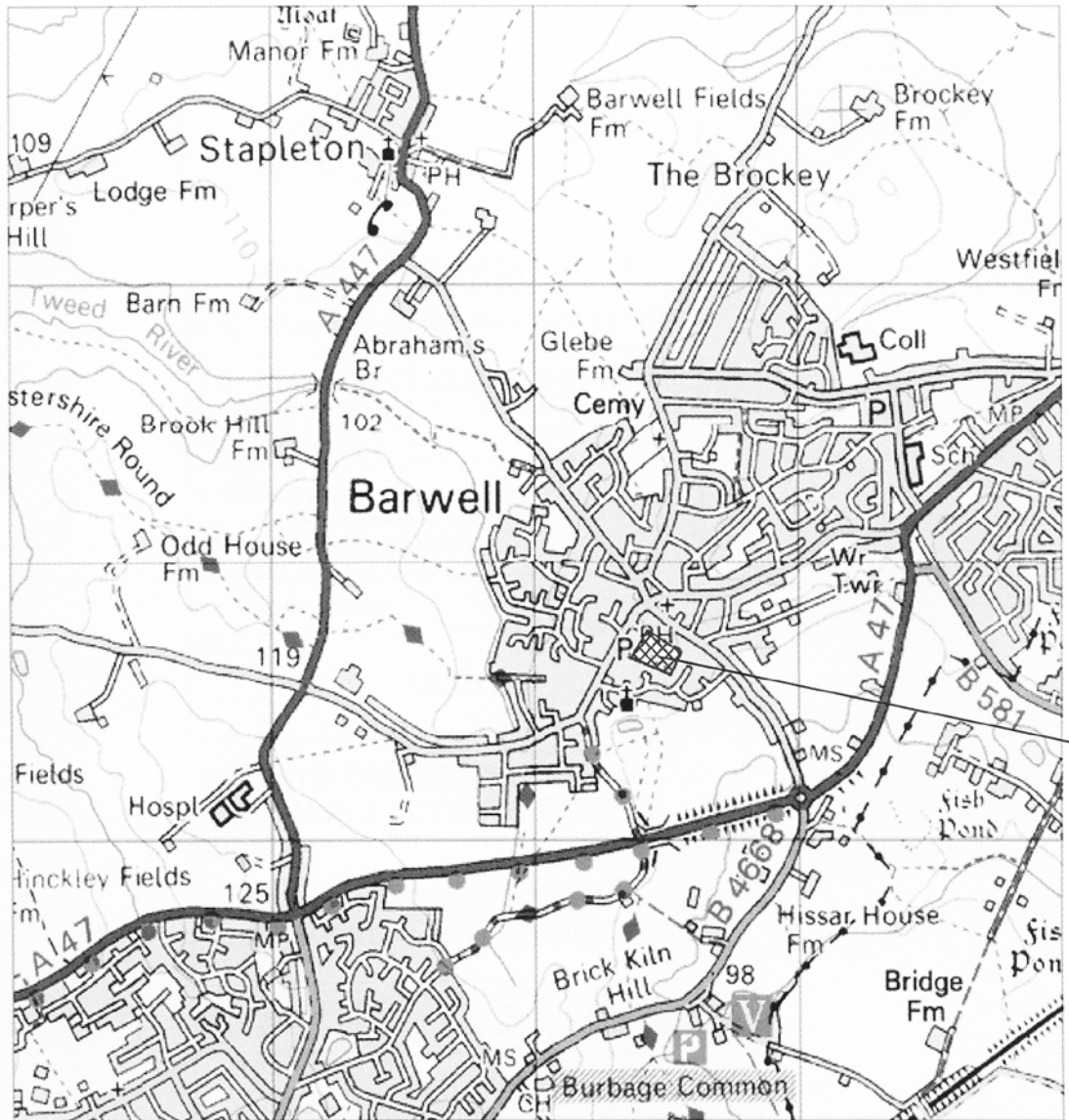


Figure 1 Location of the application area

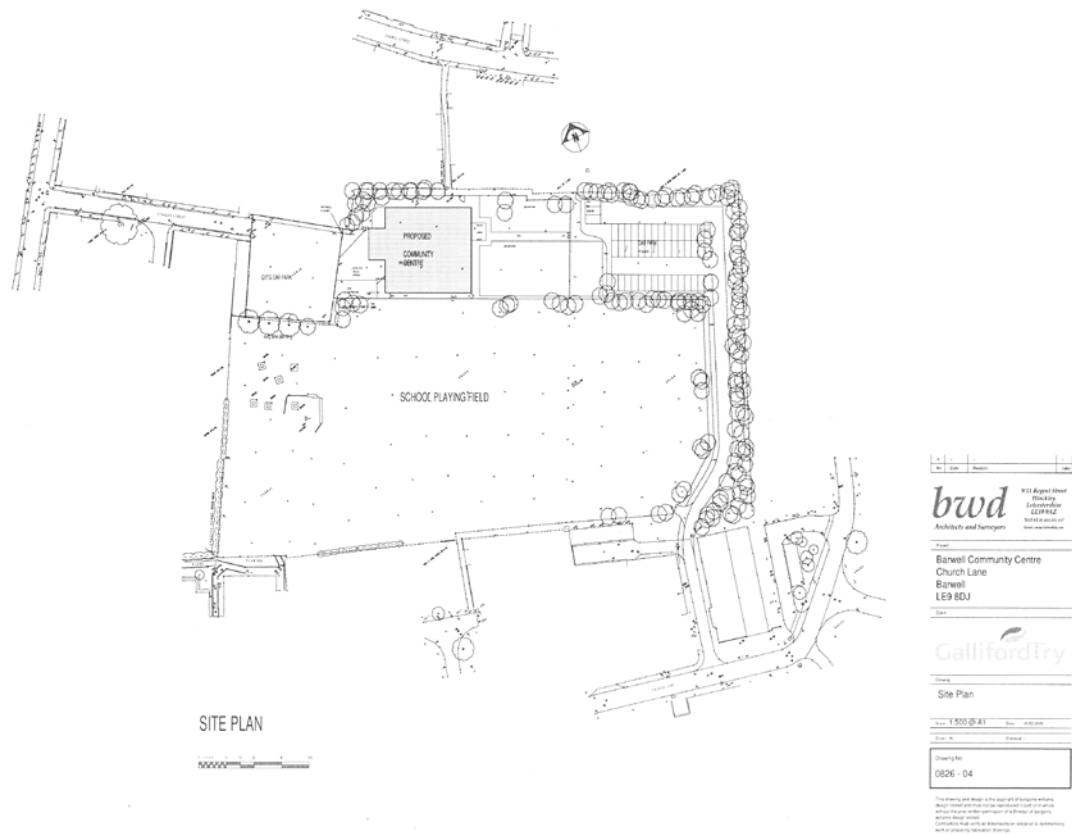


Figure 3 Plan of proposed community centre (supplied by LCC)

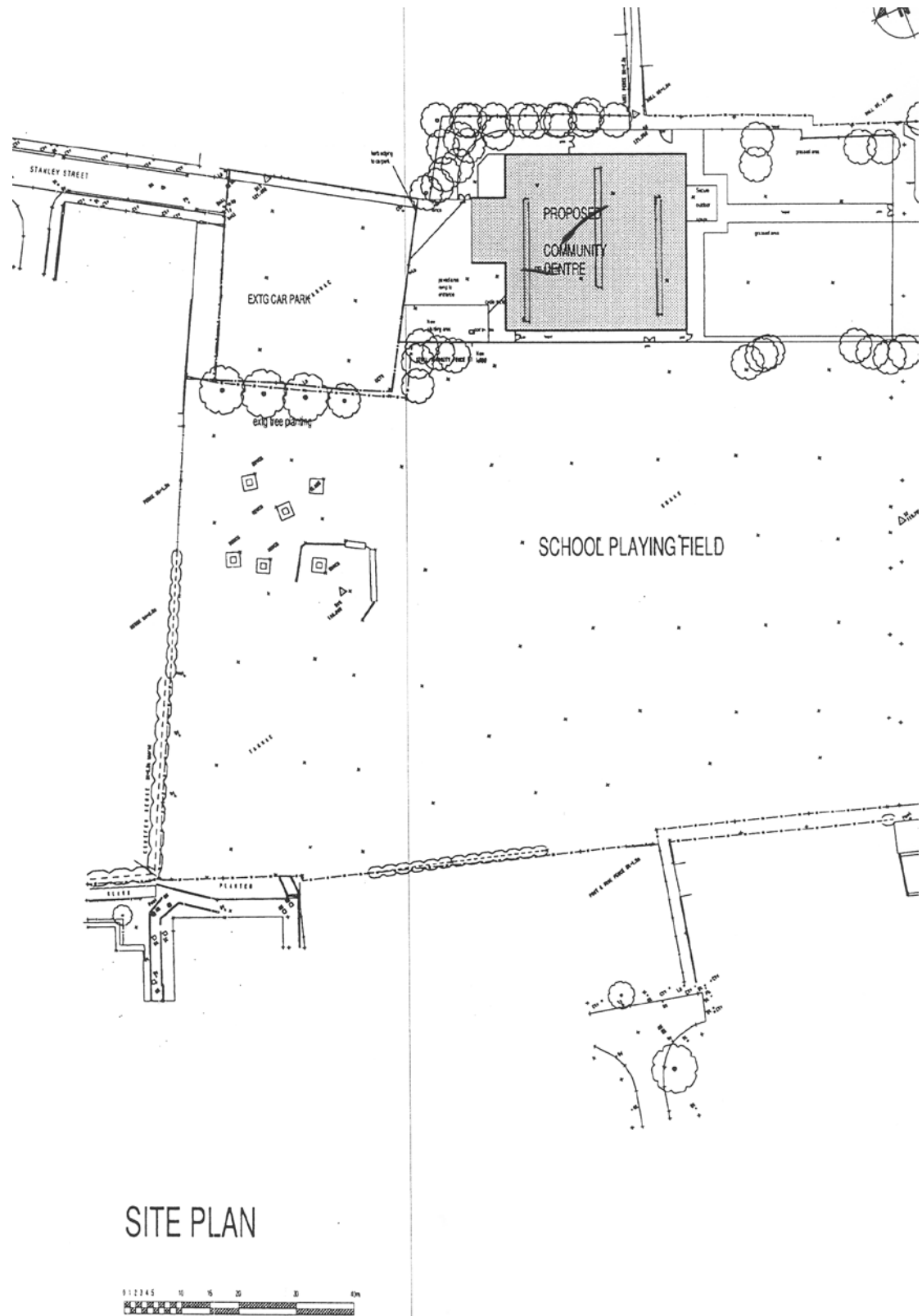


Figure 3 Plan of proposed community centre in relation to the geophysical survey anomalies and proposed trench locations.

APPENDIX 1

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

A risks assessment will be produced by on-site staff, which will be updated and amended during the course of the evaluation.

1. Nature of the work

1.1 Brief description of the work involved e.g.

The work will involve machine excavation by JCB 3C or equivalent during daylight hours to reveal underlying archaeological deposits. Overall depth is likely to be c. 0.5 m with possible features excavated to a depth of another 1m. Trenches will not be excavated to a depth exceeding 1.2m. Spoil will be stockpiled no less than 1.5 m from the edge of the excavation, the topsoil and subsoil being kept separate. Remaining works will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. Deeper features will be fenced with lamp irons and hazard tape. Three staff will be used on the evaluation.

2 Risks Assessment

2.1 *Working on an excavation site.*

Precautions. Trenches to not be excavated to a depth exceeding 1.2m. Spoil will be kept 1.5m away from the edge of the excavated area to prevent falls of loose debris. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn when working in deeper sections or with plant. First aid kit to be kept in site accommodation/vehicle. Vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 *Working with plant.*

Precautions. Archaeologists experienced in working with machines will supervise topsoil stripping at all times. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. Machine driver to be suitably qualified and insured. If services or wells are encountered machining will be halted until extent has been established by hand excavation or areas where it is safe to machine have been established.

2.3 *Working within areas prone to waterlogging.*

If waterlogging occurs on site preventing work continuing it is proposed to excavate a sump, suitably fenced and clearly marked to enable the water to drain away. If this is insufficient a pump will be used. The sump will be covered when not in use and backfilled if no longer required. Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Wile's 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.

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