



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Vine House, 22-24 Loughborough Road,
Shepshed, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 4801 1983**

Tim Higgins



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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
Vine House, 22-24 Loughborough Road
Shepshed, Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 4801 1983

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For: Cadeby Homes Ltd

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CONTENTS

| | |
|--|---|
| 1. Summary | 1 |
| 2. Introduction | 1 |
| 3. Site description, topography and geology | 2 |
| 4. Archaeological and Historical background (adapted from the Brief) | 2 |
| 5. Aims and method. | 5 |
| 6. Results | 5 |
| 7. Conclusion. | 6 |
| 8. Archive and publication | 6 |
| 9. Acknowledgements | 6 |
| 10. Bibliography | 7 |
| Appendix 1: Design Specification | 9 |
| 1 Definition and scope of the specification | 9 |
| 2 Background | 9 |

FIGURES

| | |
|---|---|
| Figure 1: Site location© <i>Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100021186</i> | 2 |
| Figure 2: Development site location | 4 |
| Figure 3: Foundation trench for new dwelling located on the Vine House plot Loughborough Road Shepshed | 7 |
| Figure 4: Ground reduction on development area at rear 22-24 Loughborough Road.. | 8 |
| Figure 5: Foundation trench for new dwelling located at the rear 22-24 Loughborough Road Shepshed..... | 8 |

An Archaeological Watching Brief at Vine House and land at the rear of 22-24 Loughborough Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire NGR (SK 4801 1983)

1. Summary

An Archaeological Watching Brief was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Vine House and land at the rear of 22-24 Loughborough Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire NGR SK 4801 1983. The groundworks involved the removal of garden soil, ground reduction, and the excavation of foundations for new dwellings.

No significant archaeological finds or deposits were observed during the groundworks. The area fronting onto Loughborough Road had been previously disturbed.

The archive for the archaeological work will be held by Leicestershire County Council under the accession number X.A82.2010

2. Introduction

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at Vine House and land at the rear 22-24 Loughborough Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire (SK 4801 1983; Figure). In connection with a planning application for a new dwelling (Planning Application 09/1583/2), University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) was commissioned by Cadeby Homes to attend the site for inspection and recording during any groundworks which might disturb areas of archaeological potential. The groundworks involved the removal of garden soil, ground reduction and the excavation of foundation trenches for two new dwellings and a driveway. No previous archaeological work has been carried out on the site.

The archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5). All archaeological work adhered to the Institute for Field Archaeologist's (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2006) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2001) and *Guidance for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.



Figure 1: Site location © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100021186.

3. Site description, topography and geology

The site is located on land that was once Vine House and land at the rear of 22-24, Loughborough Road Shepshed (Figure 2). The underlying geology of the site is likely to comprise Mudstone of the Gunthorpe Formation and Charmouth Formation with Made Ground and alluvium to the west (British Geological Survey of England and Wales, Loughborough, Sheet No. 141).

4. Archaeological and Historical background (adapted from the Brief)

The development area has been identified as area of archaeological potential from the information held in the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER). Shepshed is an old parish, first mentioned in the Domesday Survey (Morgan 1979) as 'Schepeshefde Regis' (generally thought to mean 'hill where sheep graze'). However, some see the dedication of its church (a building of 13th to 15th century construction, on an 11th century site) to St Botolph as suggestive of possible Saxon foundations (VCH, 1, 356). In 1086, it was a Royal Manor but, by 1124, it had passed to the Earls of Leicester and in 1264 was split into two parts.

Shepshed is also one of the oldest seats of hosiery manufacture in the region (Lacey *et al* 1965). Nichols (1804) describes it as 'a very considerable village, 6 miles long and 3¼ miles wide mainly in Charnwood Forest' (Nichols, 1984, III, 1011). There are several old buildings in the village including thatched cottages used in the early 19th century by frame-work knitters, and the Fenny windmill on the southern side of the town, a mill which was one of the last in Leicestershire to grind corn.

The development site lies in an area of potential archaeological interest within the historic settlement core of Shepshed. Prior's map of 1777 suggests development in the area (although it is insufficiently detailed to be specific about the development site) and the Ordnance Survey map of 1815 indicates a building in or near the site. The evidence would therefore indicate development in the vicinity of the site by the late 18th or early 19th century. However, the presence of buildings of 'medieval' date both within the town core and at its periphery (e.g. 42/44 Loughborough Road) might indicate the occupation of the area from a much earlier period. The pattern of occupation with a set of well-defined closes lining the north side of Loughborough road may well have an early origin. It appears to represent a direct route between the market place and a back lane to Loughborough. Later maps indicate structures on the site from the late 19th century to the present, showing the site as two separate plots in the late 19th century with structures present in both. The western half sees no change until the demolition of the former buildings at some point after 1979, after which the plot remains vacant. The eastern half is redeveloped at some point between 1921 and 1964 at which point Vine House is constructed. Prior to that, the main focus of occupation had been at the street frontage, with ranges of building running back into the plot.

In view of this the Senior Planning Archaeologist recommended archaeological attendance (an intensive watching brief) to be undertaken during soil stripping and groundworks as outlined in a brief.

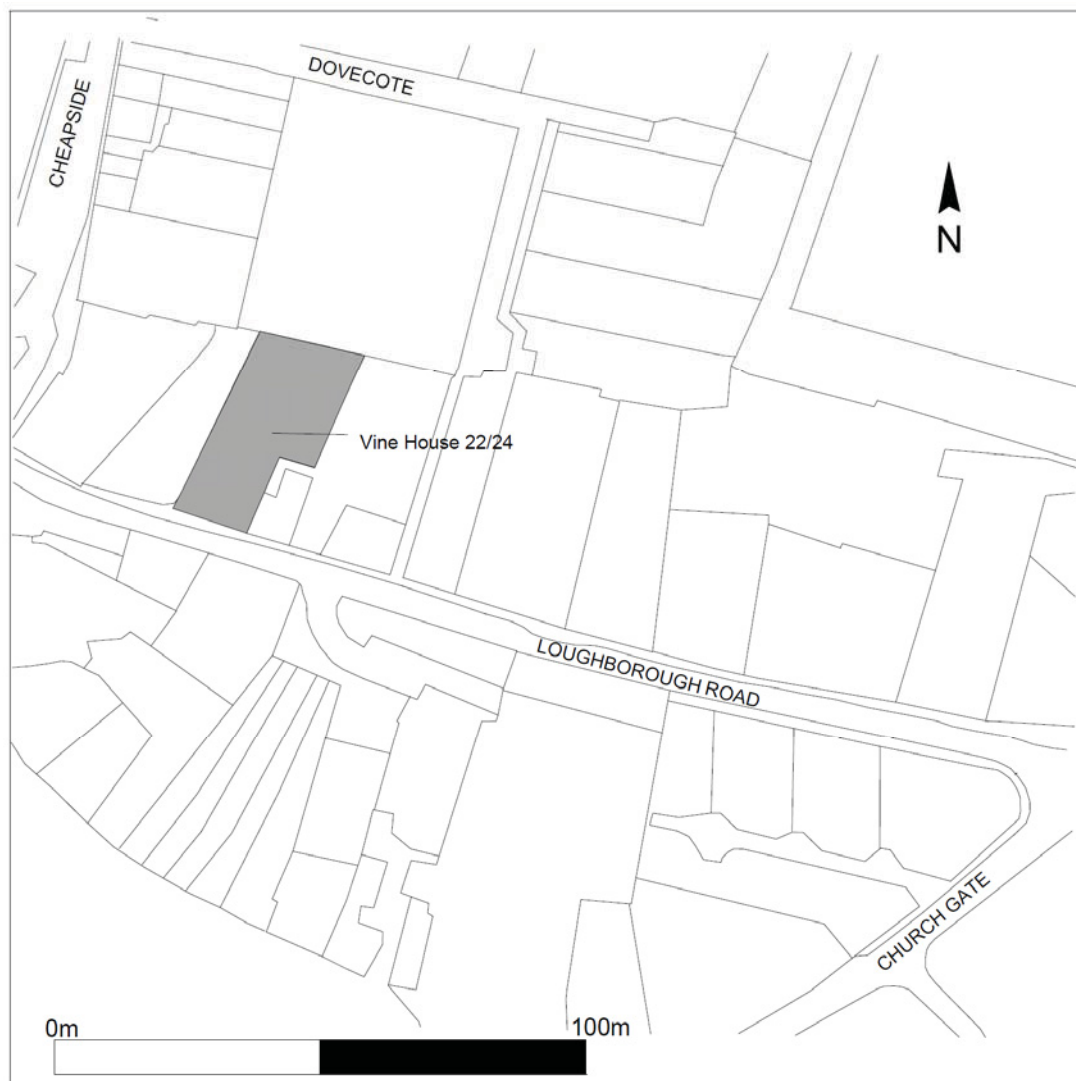


Figure 2: Development site location

5. Aims and method.

The aims through archaeological monitoring and observation were

- To identify the presence/absence of any earlier building phases or archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

The archaeological work followed the Design Specification for archaeological work (10-130; Appendix 1) which addressed the requirements of the Brief for Archaeological Attendance for Inspection and recording (An Intensive Watching Brief) issued by their archaeological advisers at the Heritage and Natural Environment Team, Leicestershire County Council.

6. Results

Initial groundworks, monitored on 5th May 2010, involved the removal of areas of hard-standing, garden soils and overburden and the excavation of foundations within the development area (Figure 2). The machine used for the ground works was a mini 360 degree excavator fitted with a bladed bucket. The initial ground works comprised reducing the ground level between 0.50m and 0.60m across the site down to subsoil. The garden soil comprised very dark grey silty loam containing modern artefacts including brick, slate and pottery sherds. The modern artefacts were observed and noted on site and then discarded.

The new buildings were located in the south-west corner (measuring 21m x 12m) and the north-west corner (measuring 18 x 17m) of the development.

An intensive watching brief was maintained during the excavation of foundations located in the south-west corner of the site fronting onto Loughborough Road. The excavated foundation trenches for the new dwelling measured *c.*0.70m wide and 0.60m deep. This area appeared to have been previously levelled, with a layer 0.20m deep comprising reddish-brown clay and sand mixed with medium-sized angular stones and modern building materials, which had perhaps been deposited to raise the ground levels. The re-deposited layer and levelling probably occurred during the construction or demolition of Vine House and would have removed evidence of any potential early structures that may have fronted on to Loughborough Road. The natural substratum consisted of dark reddish-brown clay and sand mixed with occasional pebbles, and was found at 0.20m below the surface.

An inspection was also undertaken during the excavation of the foundations for the new dwelling located in the north-west corner. Here they measured *c.*0.70m wide and 1.30m deep and inspection indicated that the subsoil was pale-brown silty clay mixed with occasional small pebbles and measured 0.60m deep. The natural substratum consisted of a dark reddish brown clay and sand mixed with occasional pebbles. There was no evidence of pre-modern deposits, features or artefacts found within these trenches.

All of the stripped area and spoil heaps were walked over and visually inspected. No archaeological deposits or pre-modern artefacts were encountered during the inspection of the site.

7. Conclusion.

Despite its location within the historic village core, nothing of archaeological significance was uncovered during the course of the archaeological work. The inspection of the ground works that fronted on to Loughborough Road revealed that the natural horizons appeared to have been levelled at some point in the past. The topsoil and subsoil had been removed and replaced with mixed layers of re-deposited natural soil, stones and modern building debris used to raise the ground levels. Any earlier buildings that may have fronted onto Loughborough Road are likely to have been disturbed by this work.

The inspection of ground works to the rear of the development area revealed the only undisturbed natural horizon and subsoil that had a depth of 0.60m at the northern end of the development area.

8. Archive and publication

The site archive consists of
1 watching brief recording form
1 photo index form
Colour digital photo and B+W contact sheet
Colour digital CD and B+W negatives
1 copy brief for archaeological work
1 unbound copy of this report

The archive will be held with the Archaeology, Environment and Heritage Services (Leicestershire County Council Museums).under accession number X.A82.2010

9. Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the clients Cadeby Homes Ltd for their help and co-operation on site. The project was managed by Richard Buckley and the fieldwork was carried out by the author, Tim Higgins of ULAS. A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. The report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) Online Access to the index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York (Appendix 2).

10. Bibliography

IFA, 2001, *Standards and Guidelines for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

IFA, 2006, *Code of Conduct*

Lacey, A. Smith, S. Jowett, D & Smith, C. 1965 *A History of Shepshed 1086-1969*.
Freeman Press: Shepshed.

Morgan, P. (ed.), 1979, *Domesday Book, Leicestershire*, Phillimore Chichester.

Nichols, 1804, *The History and Antiquities of the County of Leicestershire* Vol. 3

Victoria County History, Leicestershire Vols, 1-3



Figure 3: Foundation trench for new dwelling located on the Vine House plot
Loughborough Road Shepshed



Figure 4: Ground reduction on development area at rear 22-24 Loughborough Road



Figure 5: Foundation trench for new dwelling located at the rear 22-24 Loughborough Road Shepshed

Appendix 1: Design Specification

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological work

Job title: Vine House and land to rear of 22-24 Loughborough Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire

NGR: SK48011983

Client: Cadeby Homes Ltd

Planning Authority: Charnwood Borough Council

P.A. 09/1583/2

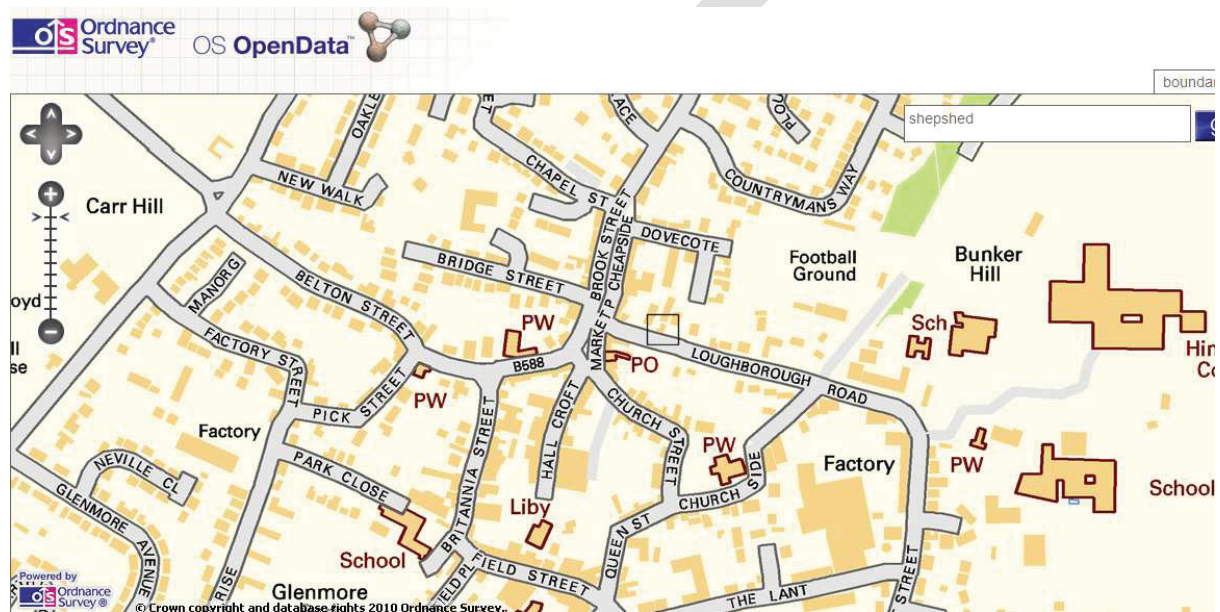


Figure 1 Location Plan

1 Definition and scope of the specification

1.1 In accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) this specification provides a written scheme for archaeological attendance for inspection and recording (a watching brief), as required by the Planning Authority, of any groundworks on the site which may disturb areas of archaeological potential in connection with a planning application for a residential development .

1.2 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute for 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 planning authority require an archaeological watching brief to be maintained during groundworks on the site, details of which are presented in the 'Brief for an Archaeological Attendance for Inspection and Recording (An Intensive Watching Brief) issued by their archaeological advisers at the Heritage and Natural Environment Team, Leicestershire County Council on 15 December 2009

(hereinafter the 'Brief'). An intensive watching brief is to be maintained on the western half of the application area, some 550 sq. m in area, excluding the footprint of Vine House and the immediately adjacent areas of hard standing.

2.2. Archaeological potential (adapted from the Brief)

2.2.1 The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies in an area of potential archaeological interest within the historic settlement core of Shepshed. Prior's map of 1777 suggests development in the area (although it is insufficiently detailed to be specific about the development site) and the Ordnance Survey map of 1815 indicates a building in or near the site. The evidence would therefore indicate development in the vicinity of the site by the late 18th or early 19th century. However, the presence of buildings of 'medieval' date both within the town core and at its periphery (e.g. 42/44 Loughborough Road) might indicate the occupation of the area from a much earlier period. The pattern of occupation with a set of well-defined closes lining the north side of Loughborough road may well have an early origin. It appears to represent a direct route between the market place and a back lane to Loughborough. Later maps indicate structures on the site from the late 19th century to the present, showing the site as two separate plots in the late 19th century with structures present in both. The western half sees no change until the demolition of the former buildings at some point after 1979, after which the plot remains vacant. The eastern half is redeveloped at some point between 1921 and 1964 at which point Vine House is constructed. Prior to that, the main focus of occupation had been at the street frontage, with ranges of building running back into the plot.

2.2.2 The proposal are likely to include the excavation of footings and the introduction of services, etc., that will damage or destroy buried archaeological remains within the development area.

3 Aims

3.1 Through archaeological attendance and, as appropriate, 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.

4.2 Should significant archaeological remains be identified a programme of excavation and recording may be necessary, using additional personnel as necessary.

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

4.4 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.

4.5 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.

4.6 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.

4.7 Any human remains encountered will be initially left in situ and only be removed under a Ministry of Justice Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The developer and Leicestershire County Council will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.8 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.

4.9 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 Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, 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, Historic Environment 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 Brown (2008) will be presented to Leicestershire County Council, 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 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

Brown, D., *Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives* (Institute for Archaeologists) 2008

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7/4/2010

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

Job title: Vine House and land to rear of 22-24 Loughborough Road, Shepshed, Leicestershire

NGR: SK48011983

Client: Cadeby Homes Ltd

Planning Authority: Charnwood Borough Council

P.A. 09/1583/2

1 Nature of the work

1.1 This statement is for an archaeological watching brief.

1.2 The work will involve inspection of buildings and 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 ULAS Health and Safety Manual (2001) 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 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.

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

Richard Buckley
28.9.2009

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