

**An Archaeological Strip, Plan and Record
Exercise on Land at 'The Old Manor House',
Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire
(NGR: SP 525 900)**

Greg Jones

For: Dr. S. Wheatley

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An Archaeological strip, plan and sample exercise on land at 'The Old Manor House', Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 525 900)

Greg Farnworth-Jones

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological strip, plan and sample excavate exercise on land at 'The Old Manor House', Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire, (SP 525 900) between the 14th and the 20th of January and again on the 12th March 2009. This work was undertaken on behalf of Dr. S. Wheatley during the ground works for the construction of a rear extension, front porch and garage on land at 'The Old Manor House', Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 525 900). No significant archaeological finds or deposits were observed during this work.

The site archive will be held with the County Archaeological Heritage Services, Leicestershire County Council, Community Services Department, under the accession code: [X.A2.2009].

1. Introduction

1.1 University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Dr. Wheatley to undertake an archaeological strip, plan and sample excavate exercise prior to ground works for the construction of a rear extension, front porch and garage on land at 'The Old Manor House', Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 525 900); Planning application no. 07/01674/3). The watching brief was undertaken between the 14th and the 20th January and on the 12th March 2009.

1.2 To fulfil the terms of an archaeological planning condition in accordance with DOE Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning, para.30) the Senior Planning Archaeologist of the Historic and Natural Environment Team of Leicestershire County Council (LCC HNET), in his capacity as archaeological adviser to the planning authority Harborough District Council, requested that an archaeological strip, plan and sample excavate exercise be undertaken to confirm the presence or absence of archaeological remains at the site. This is detailed in their *Brief for archaeological investigation (strip plan and sample excavation) at The Old Manor House, Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire* of 09.04.2008 from LCC HNET (hereinafter the *Brief*).

2. Site Location

2.1 The proposed development site is located on Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 525 900) (fig. 1). The Old Manor House is a grade II Listed building of 16th century timber framed post and truss construction showing several building or rebuilding phases. It is of two stories with three bays of timber framing with a brick panel infill, and a brick right-hand bay

with granite in the gable wall and a thatched roof. The brick bay has two replacement casement windows to the right of the doorway which are perhaps 18th century additions. The right hand timber framed bay has continuous vertical posts one of which is arch braced, on padstones, and with a single middle rail. It contains the doorway to the right. The two bays beyond are higher, possibly of slightly later date. The outer posts have curved arched braces, straight braces to central post (see Listing description Appendix 1).

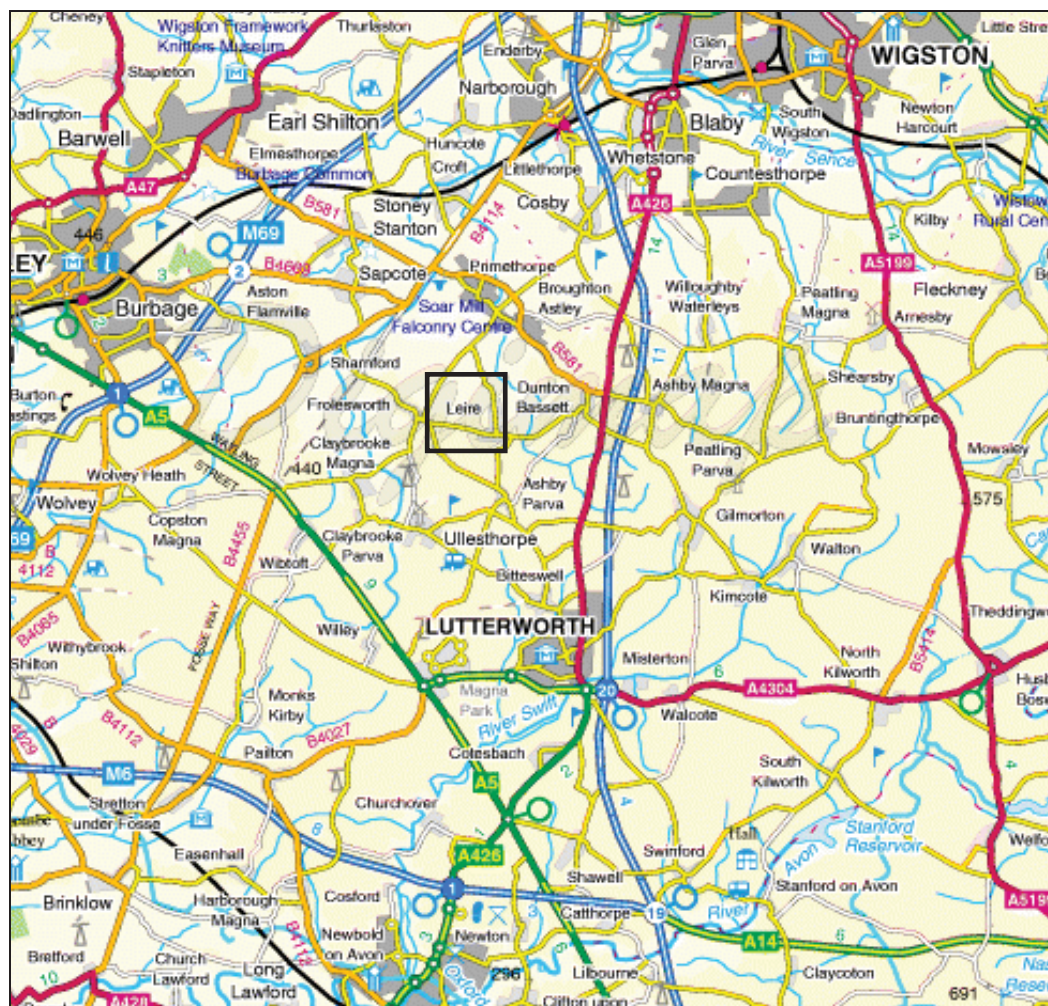


Fig.1 Site location

Reproduced from the OS map Landranger 1:50000 map by permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office. © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 10002186.

3. Geology and Topography

3.1 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 169 (1994), indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Wolston Sand and Gravel and Wolston Clay. The site appears to be relatively level, at a height of *c.* 105m OD.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 The site is located in the medieval and post-medieval village core of Leire (MLE 9183), and is within the curtilage of the Listed Old Manor House and has the potential to contain evidence relating to the origins of the settlement in the late Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods. A moated site has been recorded to the east of the site.

4.2 Roman pottery and a flint assemblage, with material dating to the Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age, was recovered through fieldwalking off Back Lane by the Parish Archaeological Warden and the Lutterworth Field Group (SP 52 90) (Pollard 2001, 147). In addition, a watching brief took place on a building site just inside the southern limit of the site

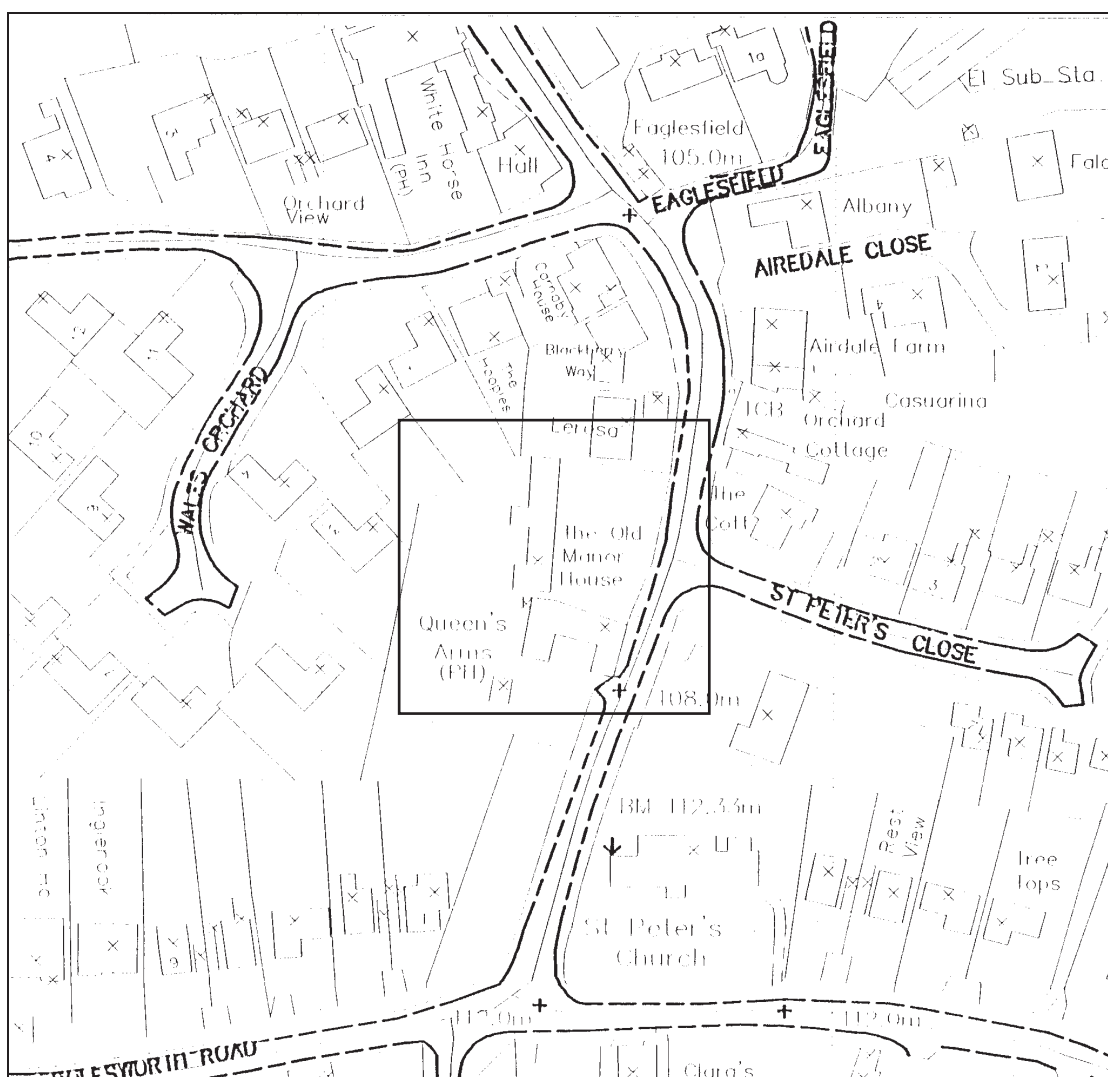


Fig. 2 Site Location (from the 'Brief')

5. Methodology

5.1 All archaeological work adhered to the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and

archaeological excavations the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (LMARS). The work followed the approved design specification (Appendix).

5.2 The archaeological watching brief involved the inspection and recording of groundworks to identify any deposits of archaeological importance.

5.3 The main objectives of the archaeological watching brief were:

- 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.

5.4 Any archaeological deposits located were hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Samples of any archaeological deposits located were hand excavated and measured drawings of all archaeological features prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100.

5.5 Archaeological deposits were 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 was paid to the potential for buried palaeosoils and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

5.6 All excavated sections were recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights were taken as appropriate.

6. Results

6.1 Results of the Watching Brief

6.1.1 Before the groundworks an archaeological archaeological strip, plan and sample excavate exercise was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services. An initial trench in the location of the proposed foundation trench however indicated that the topsoil and subsoil lay immediately above the natural clay substratum at a depth of *c.* 0.7m. As no further ground reduction was proposed the foundation trenches were then excavated under archaeological control for a rear extension, garage and front porch.

6.1.2 This work took place between the 14th January and the 20th January and on the 12th March 2009.

6.1.3 The foundation trenches for the rear extension were excavated on the 14th and the 16th January 2009. Initial machining revealed dark greyish brown sandy silt topsoil, to a

depth of *c.* 0.4m, below which was located light greyish brown silty sand subsoil, to a further depth of *c.* 0.3m. Below this layer was revealed the natural substratum which consisted of yellowish grey brown clay. Located at *c.*5m east from the house was a modern rubbish pit, 1.5m wide and 1m deep, which contained *c.*19th century pottery and one sherd of post-medieval (*c.*16th/17th century) pottery. No other archaeological finds or features were present in any of the excavated trenches to the rear of the property.

6.1.4 The second part of the archaeological work was undertaken on the 14th and 17th January 2009 and involved ground reduction for a garage at the front of the property and observing foundation trench excavation (fig.3). The original wall at the front of the property was demolished and removed. Machining for the foundation trenches revealed overburden down to a depth of *c.*0.75m, below which was revealed yellowish/red clay. The full depth of the trenches was *c.*1.1m nearest to the road, which reduced to *c.*0.6m towards the house.

6.1.5 The third phase of the watching brief took place on the 12th March 2009 and involved the observation of the foundation trenches for the new porch (fig.3). This work uncovered the same stratigraphy that was observed in the other trenches, but failed to locate any archaeological finds or features.

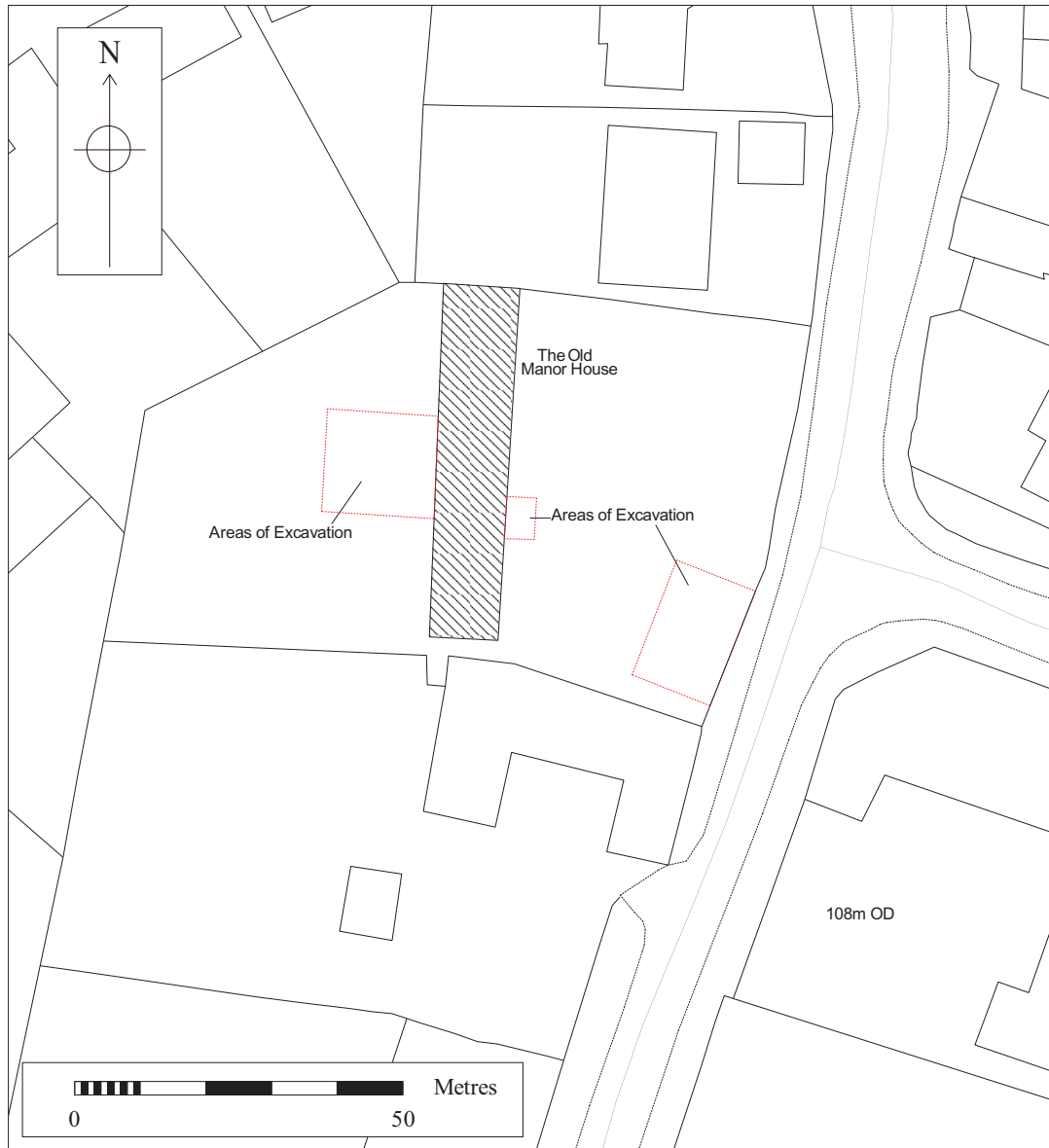


Fig. 3 Site Location (excavated areas in red)



Figure 4 General view of rear looking north



Figure 5 Stratigraphy at rear looking east



Figure 6 General view of the garage area looking west



Figure 7 Stratigraphy of the front garage area looking south-west

7. Conclusion

7.1 The strip, plan and map exercise failed to locate any archaeological finds or features of any great archaeological significance and it was apparent that the area had been previously disturbed down to the natural substratum. The area excavated for the garage at the front of the house and the area around the porch failed to produce any archaeological finds or features. The excavations to the rear of the property were also negative except for one 19th century Victorian rubbish pit.

8. Archive

8.1 The site archive consists of 96 colour digital photographs and 5 watching brief recording forms and will be held by County Archaeological Heritage Services, Leicestershire County Council, Community Services Department, under the accession code: [X.A2.2009].

Archive accession code [X.A2.2008] contents:

Copy of Report:	Recording Sheets:	Digital Colour Photographs:
1	5	96

9. Oasis Record

Project Name	'The Old Manor House', Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (SP 684 928)
Project Type	Strip, Plan and Record/Watching Brief
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Greg Jones
Previous/Future work	No previous work
Current Land Use	Residential
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	PPG16
Position in the Planning Process	As a condition
Site Co ordinates	NGR: SP 525 900

Start/end dates of field work	14.01.09/12.03.09
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire
Study Area	c.400 m sq

10. Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the client, Dr. S. Wheatley, and the contractor Pat Hutchinson for his assistance and co-operation on site. Patrick Clay managed the project and the fieldwork was carried out by the author, both of ULAS.

11. Bibliography

Clay, P., 2008. *Design Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief on Land at 'The Old Manor House', Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (SP 525 900)*. ULAS Ref: 08/630

Pollard, R. 2001 'Leire: Back Lane (SP5290)' & 'Leire: Little Lane (SP5290)' *Transactions of the Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeological and Historical Society* Vol75 2001 pp147

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Appendix 1 Listing description

MAIN STREET (West Side) SP59 SW 3/38 The Old Manor House 26.8.70 GV II House. Largely C16 but displaying evidence of several phases of building (or rebuilding). Timber framed, of post and truss construction, with brick panel infill, and a brick right-hand bay with granite in the gable wall. Thatched roof. 2 storied. 3 bays of timber framing and a brick bay with 2 renewed casement windows to right of doorway which is perhaps a C18 addition. Right hand timber framed bay has continuous vertical posts one of which is arch braced, on padstones, and with a single middle rail. It contains the doorway to the right. The two bays beyond are higher, possibly of slightly later date. The outer posts have curved arched braces, straight braces to central post. Two middle rails. Windows are renewed 3-light casements on each floor. Stack behind entry.

Appendix 2 Design Specification

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological work

The Old Manor House, Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (SP 525 900)

Planning Application: 08/00270/3

Planning Authority: Harborough District Council

For: Dr S. Wheatley

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 archaeological strip plan and record, 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 the erection of a detached garage with accommodation over at The Old Manor House, Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (SP 525 900) Planning Application: 08/00270/3 for Dr S. Wheatley.

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 work involves a strip plan and record exercise within the development area to identify any deposits of archaeological importance as detailed in the *Brief for archaeological investigation (strip plan and sample excavation) at The Old Manor House, Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire* of 09.04.2008 from LCC HNET (hereinafter the *Brief*).

2.2 Archaeological potential

2.1 The site is located in the medieval and post-medieval core of the village of Leire (MLE 9183) and is within the cartilage of the Listed Old Manor House.

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 an initial trial trench 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 an initial trial trench, and found to be 0.15m or less below proposed formation, the site is to be stripped down to the top of the archaeology, followed by a programme of excavation and recording, using additional personnel as necessary.

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 palaeosoils 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 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, 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*

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

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)

FRG/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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30.06.2008

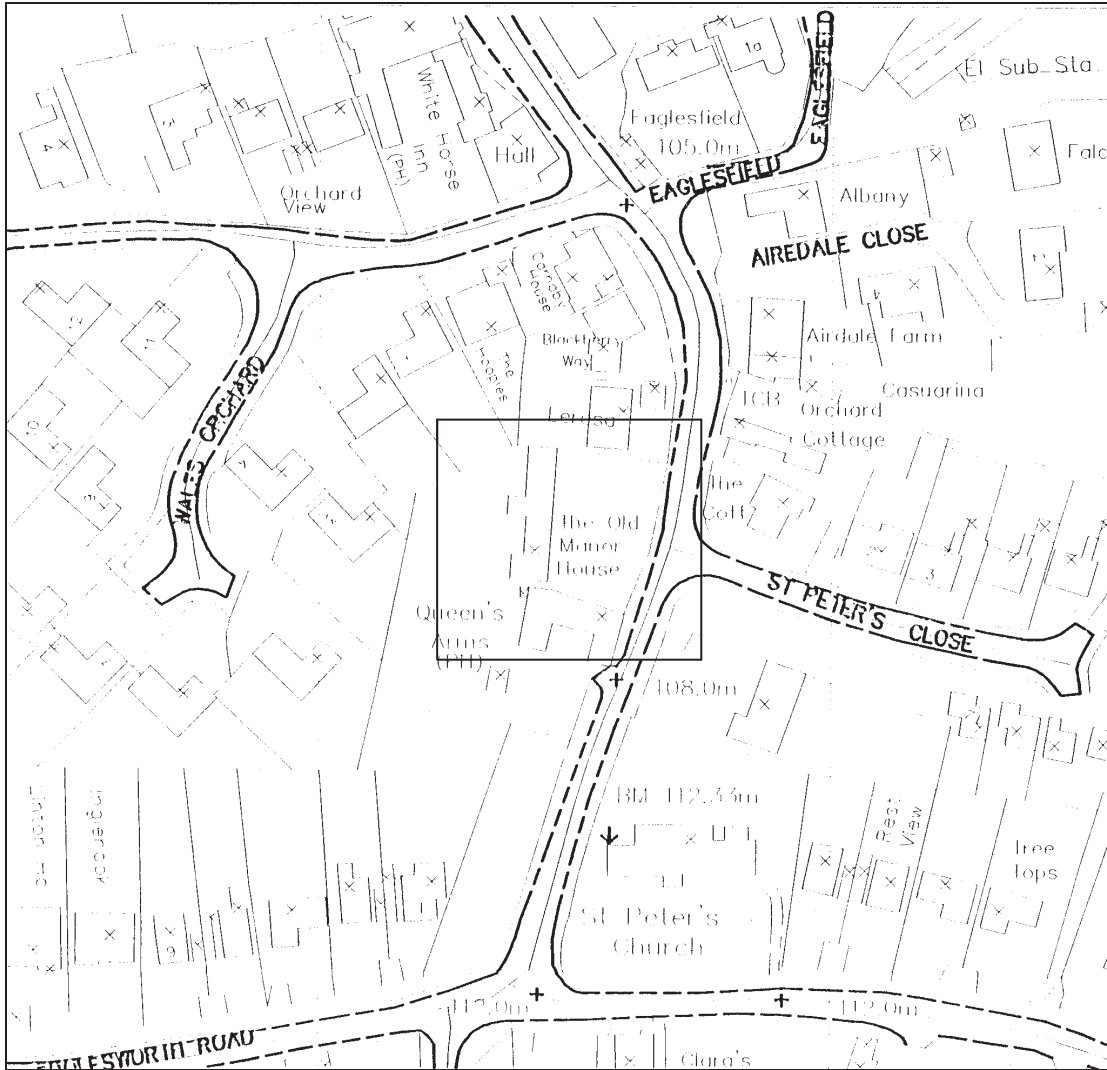


Fig 1 Location of Development

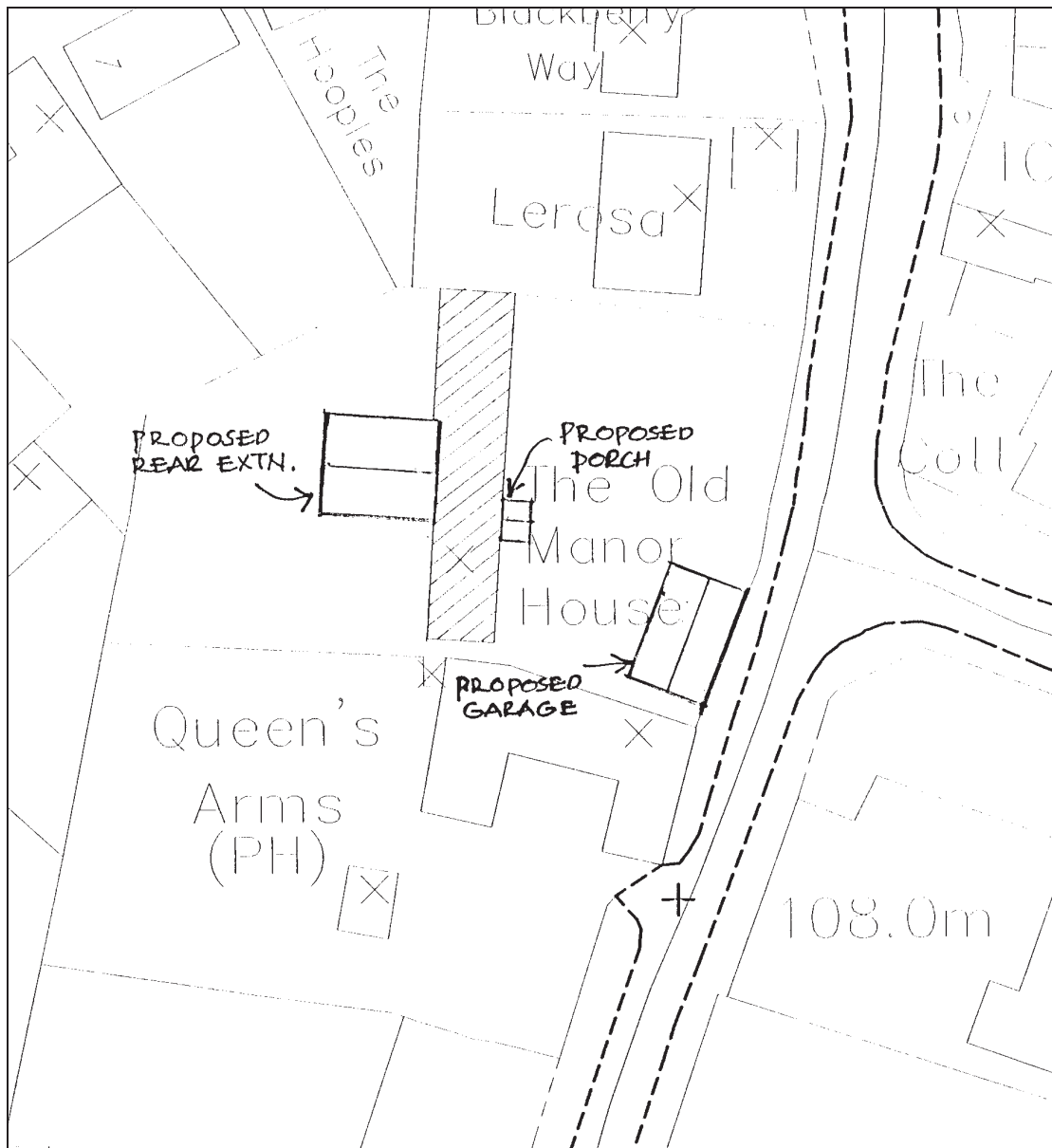


Fig. 2 Plan of proposed development

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

The Old Manor House, Main Street, Leire, Leicestershire (SP 525 900)

Planning Application: 08/00270/3

Planning Authority: Harborough District Council

For: Dr S. Wheatley

1. *Nature of the work*

1.1 This statement is for archaeological watching brief (strip plan and sample). It will be revised following the commencement of operations when the extent of risks can be assessed in full.

1.2 The work will involve overburden stripping by JCB 3C or similar during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be c. 1.0 –1.2m. Following stripping the exposed deposits will be examined with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and archaeological features will be excavated. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the ULAS Health and safety and the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers manuals, together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines, including the following.

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

1.3 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation .All work will adhere to the company's health and safety policy.

2 *Risks Assessment*

2.1 *Working within an excavation.*

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces deeper than 1.2m. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear 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.

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.

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

30.06.2008