


**An Archaeological Evaluation on
Land at 'Newhouse Grange', Orton Lane,
Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 317 024**

Greg Jones

For: Mr. and Mrs. R Poulson

Checked by

Signed:  **Date:** ...07.05.2009.

Name: .Vicki Score.....

Approved by

Signed:  **Date:** ...07.05.2009.

Name: Patrick Clay.....

University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH

Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614

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[X.A86.2009]

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An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at 'Newhouse Grange', Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 317 024)

Greg Jones

1. Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land at 'Newhouse Grange', Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire, SK 317 024 on the 27th April 2009. This work was undertaken on behalf of Mr. and Mrs. Poulson, as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed new steel portal barn covering c.405 ha. Two evaluation trial trenches were excavated, which failed to reveal any archaeological finds features or deposits.

The site archive will be held with Leicestershire Museums, under the accession code: [X.A86.2008].

2. Introduction

2.1 University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) was commissioned by Mr. and Mrs. Poulson to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at 'Newhouse Grange', Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire (SK 317 024) on the 27th of April 2009. This work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed new construction of a new steel portal barn covering c. 405 sq metres (Figure 3).

2.2 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, in his capacity as archaeological adviser to the planning authority, requested that a phase of archaeological investigation be undertaken, secured by condition in advance of the development. At the request of Mr. and Mrs. Poulson initial intrusive trial trench evaluation was undertaken to attempt to confirm the presence or absence of archaeological remains at the site.

2.3 The area of impact covers c. 405 ha, (fig. 2). The proposal as detailed in the design specification (Appendix) approved by the Senior Planning Archaeologist was for a c.5% sample of the area of impact be sampled, the equivalent of c. one 25m x 1.6m trench.

3. Site Location and Geology

3.1 The site is located at 'Newhouse Grange', Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire (SK 317 024; Fig 1).

3.2 The Ordnance Survey's Geological Survey of Great Britain Map Sheet 169 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to be Triassic mudstones including 'Keuper Marl' Dolomitic Conglomerate & Rhaetic.

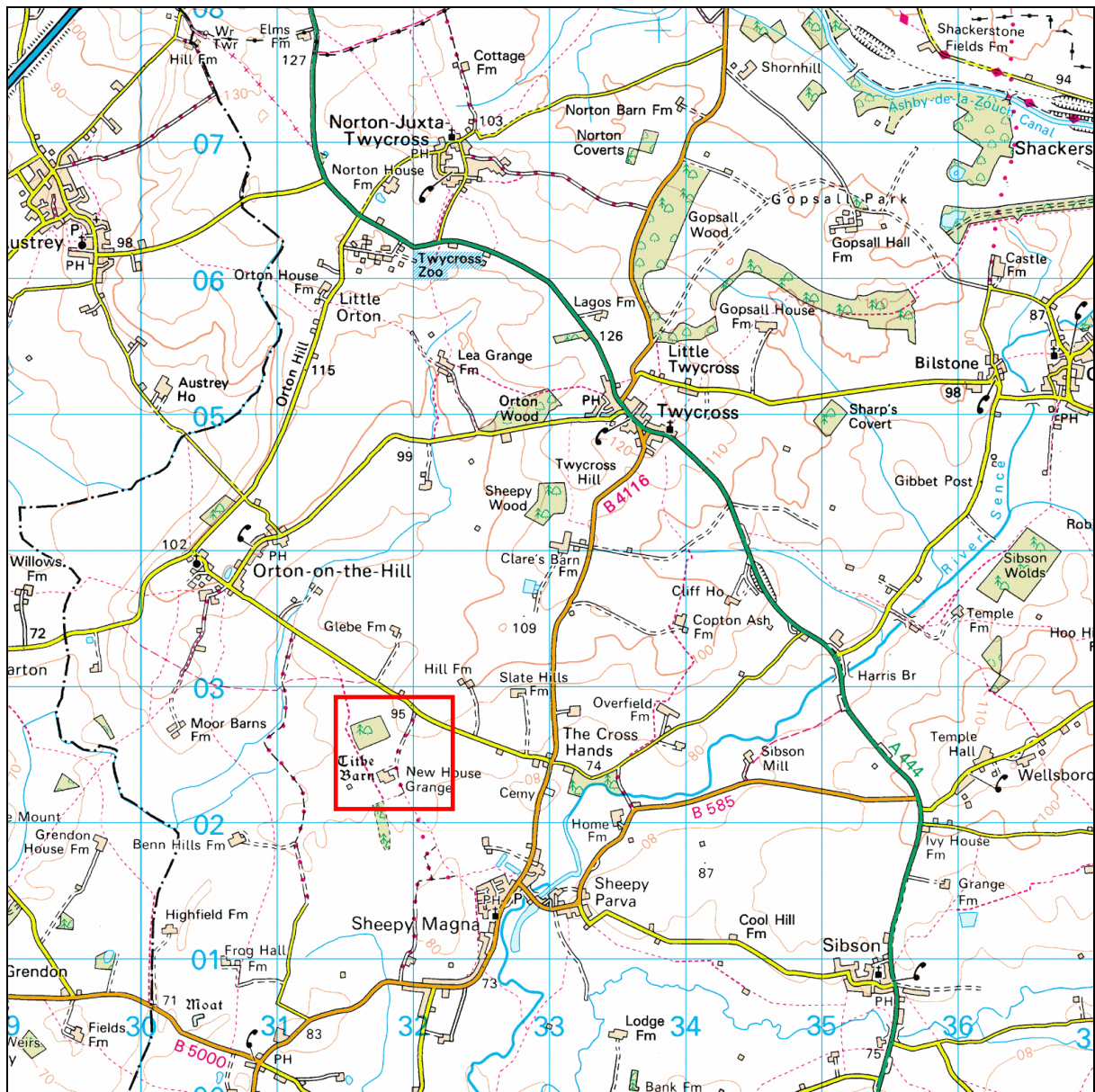


Fig.1 Site location

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.

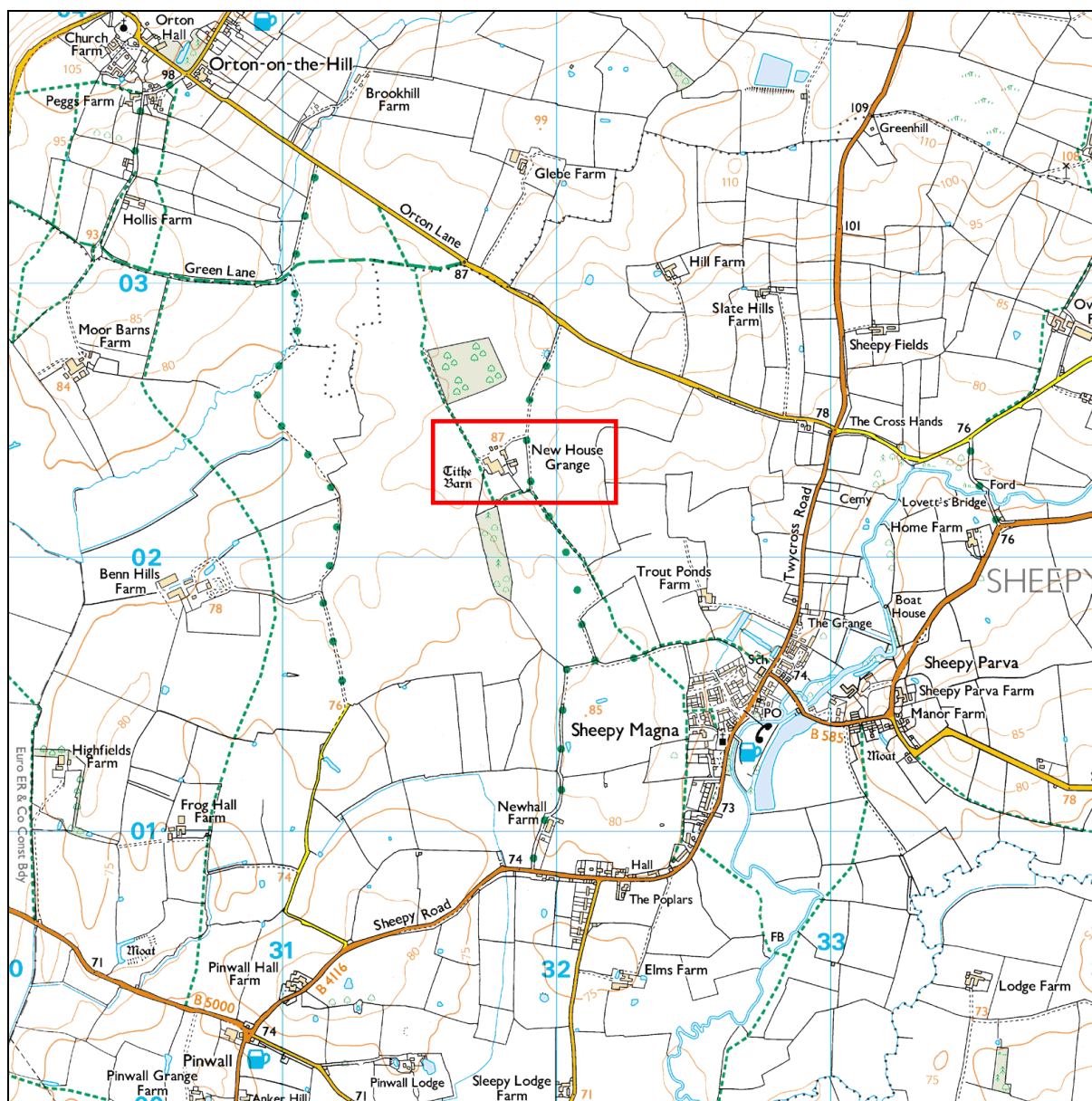


Figure 2: Site Location

. Scale 1:25000 © Crown Copyright 1996. All rights reserved.

Licence number AL 10002186.

4. Archaeological and Historical Background

4.1 The proposed barn is within an area associated with the medieval grange at Newhouse, said to be linked to Merevale Abbey and of which, the tithe barn survives. The Great Barn at Newhouse Grange is a large medieval aisled barn, Grade II* Listed, of 14th-15th century date. It was possible that remains of other buildings associated with the complex survived as buried remains. In addition to the potential for medieval archaeological remains to be present, finds recovered during fieldwalking also suggested earlier settlement in the vicinity (MLE 4383).

5. Aims and Objectives

5.1 The principle aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range of any archaeological deposits located.
- To define the quality and state of preservation of these deposits.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

6. Methodology

6.1 All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct and adhered to their relevant *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2001).

6.2 The area of impact covers *c.* 405 ha, (fig. 2). The proposal as detailed in the design specification (Appendix) approved by the Senior Planning Archaeologist was for a *c.*10% sample of the area of impact be sampled, the equivalent of *c.* one 25m x 1.6m trench. However as the machine supplied had a bucket width of 1.2m this was modified to fit the sample coverage to comprise two trenches, one *c.* 25m x 1.2m trench and one 6m x 1.2m trench (fig.2).

6.3 Topsoil and overburden was removed in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision, down to the uppermost archaeological deposits by JCB 3C using a toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were excavated to a bucket width of 1.2m down to the top of archaeological deposits or natural undisturbed substratum, whichever was reached first.

6.4 The trenches were examined by hand cleaning. Any archaeological or significant natural deposits would be planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence.

6.5 Sections were drawn as appropriate, including record of at least one longitudinal face of each trench. Spot heights were taken as appropriate.

6.6 Trench Locations were located and recorded using a GPS station and tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The data was processed using TopCon tools survey software and the final plans completed with the aid of TurboCad version 11 design software.

7. Results

7.1 Two trial trenches were excavated in the proposed development site, one of which was 25m in length and one which measured 6m in length, both trenches were 1.2m wide and their locations are shown on Figure 3. The trenches provided an approximately 10% sample of the area.

7.1.2 Trench 1

Trench 1 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	25m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	30 sq.m

Trench 1 was located in the central/north-eastern side of the site and was orientated north-east to south-west (fig.3). Initial machining revealed dark grey brown clay silt, with occasional small rounded / sub-angular stones (< 2%) to a depth of *c.* 0.4m. Beneath this layer was observed mid brown silty clay, with occasional small rounded stones (0.05m)(> 1%), to a further depth of between *c.* 0.2m. At a depth of *c.* 0.6m was revealed the natural substratum which consisted of orange/red clay with patches of blue/grey clay. No archaeological finds or features were located in trench one.

7.1.3 Trench 2

Trench 2 Details

<i>Length of Trench</i>	6m
<i>Area of Trench</i>	7.2sq.m

Trench 2 was located to the south-east of, and parallel to, Trench 1, orientated south-west to north-east (fig3). Initial machining in Trench 2 revealed dark grey-brown clay silt, with occasional small rounded stones (< 2%) to a depth of *c.*0.3m. Beneath this layer was observed mid greyish brown silty clay, with occasional rounded stones (> 1%), to a further depth of *c.*0.1.m. At a depth of *c.*0.4m the natural substratum was revealed which consisted of red/orange clay with blue/grey patches similar to that observed in Trench 1. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were located in Trench 2.

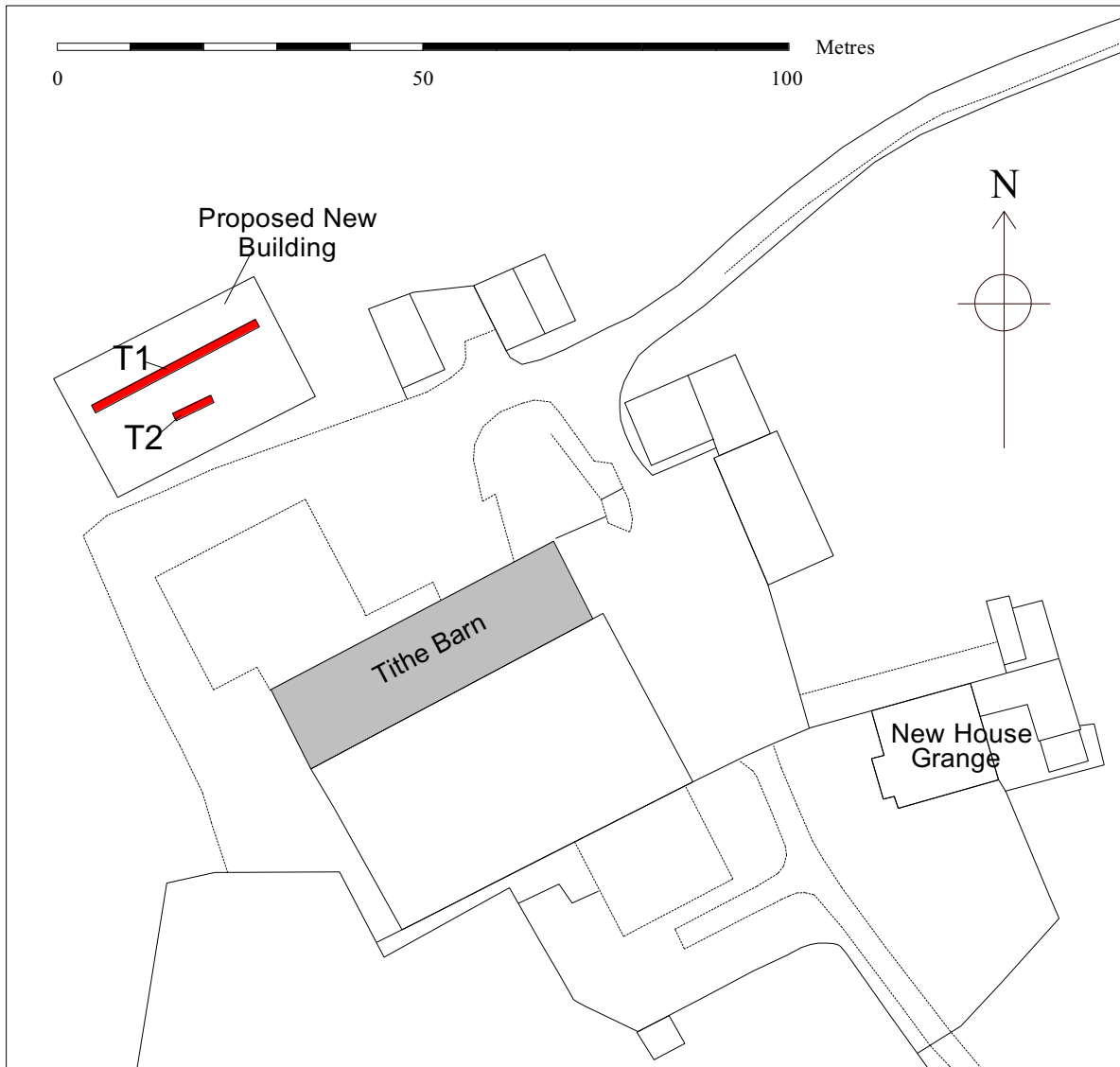


Figure 3 Site Location plan showing evaluation trenches



Figure 4 Trench 1 looking north-west



Figure 5 Trench 2 looking north-west

8. Conclusion

8.1 Although in an area of archaeological potential close to the medieval great barn, no archaeological finds, features or deposits were located during the evaluation by trial trenching, therefore the results of the archaeological work was negative.

9. Acknowledgements

9.1 I would like to thank the clients Mr. and Mrs. Poulson for their assistance and co-operation. Patrick Clay managed the project and the fieldwork was carried out by the author, both of ULAS.

10. Archive

The site archive consisting of paper records and digital colour photographs will be held with the County Archaeological Heritage Services, Leicestershire County Council, Community Services Department, under the accession code: [X.A86.2009].

Archive accession code [X.A86.2009] contents:

Copy of Report:	Trench Recording Sheets:	Digital Colour Photographs:
1	2	16

11. Oasis Information:

INFORMATION REQUIRED	EXAMPLE
Project Name	Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire
Project Type	Trial Trench Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Greg Jones
Previous/Future work	No previous work
Current Land Use	Field
Development Type	Barn Construction
Reason for Investigation	PPG16
Position in the Planning Process	As a condition
Site Co ordinates	NGR: SK 317 024
Start/end dates of field work	27.04.09

Archive Recipient	Leicestershire
Study Area	c. 405 sq m

12. Bibliography

Clay, P., 2009 *Design Specification for Archaeological Evaluation on land at Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire, (SK 317 024)* ULAS Ref: 09/626

Greg Jones BA, MA

Archaeological Senior Supervisor
University of Leicester Archaeological Services
University of Leicester
University Road
Leicester LE1 7RH

Tel: 0116 252 2848

Fax: 0116 252 2614

Email: gj28@le.ac.uk

06/05/2009

Appendix

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological work

Job title: Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire (SK 317 024)

Client: Mr and Mrs R Poulson

Planning Authority: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Planning application No. pre-planning enquiry

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 Newhouse Grange, Orton Lane, Sheepy Magna, Leicestershire (SK 317 024; Figs 1-2).
- 2.1.2 An application has been made for the construction of a new steel portal barn covering c. 405 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 The proposed barn is within an area associated with the medieval grange at Newhouse, said to be linked to Merevale Abbey and of which, the tithe barn survives. The Great Barn at Newhouse Grange is a large medieval aisled barn, Grade II* Listed, of 14th-15th century date. It is possible that remains of other buildings associated with the complex survive as buried remains. In addition to the potential for medieval archaeological remains to be present, finds recovered during fieldwalking suggest earlier settlement in the vicinity also (ELE 4383).

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.* 0.405 ha. A *c.* 10% sample of the area is the equivalent of one 25m x 1.6m trenches totaling *c.* 40 sq m. (Fig. 2). 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 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 usually be presented to 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 27.04.2009 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

- MAP 2 *The management of archaeological projects 2nd edition* English Heritage 1991
- MGC 1992 *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* 1992 (Museums and Galleries Commission)
- FRG/FRG 1993 *Guidelines for the preparation of site archives* (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993)
- SMA 1993 *Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* 1993 (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

Patrick Clay

Director

ULAS

University of Leicester

University Road

Leicester LE1 7RH

Tel:0116 252 2848

Fax: 0116 252 2614

Email: pnc3@le.ac.uk

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Figure 1 Location of the application area

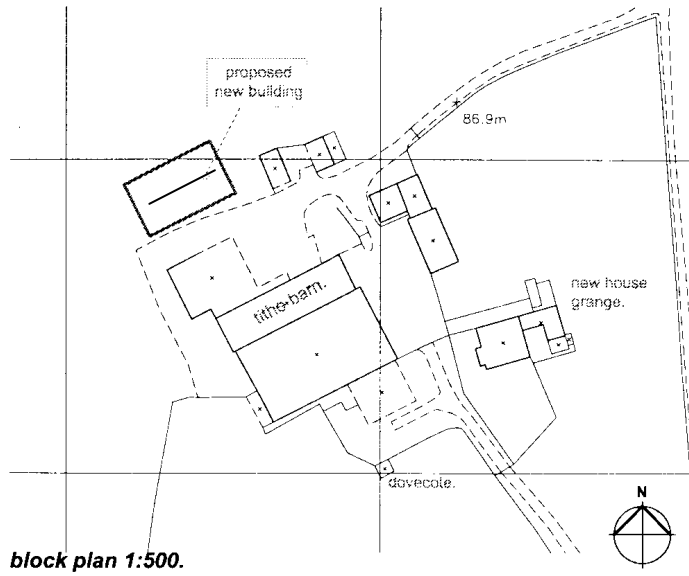


Fig 2 Proposed trench location

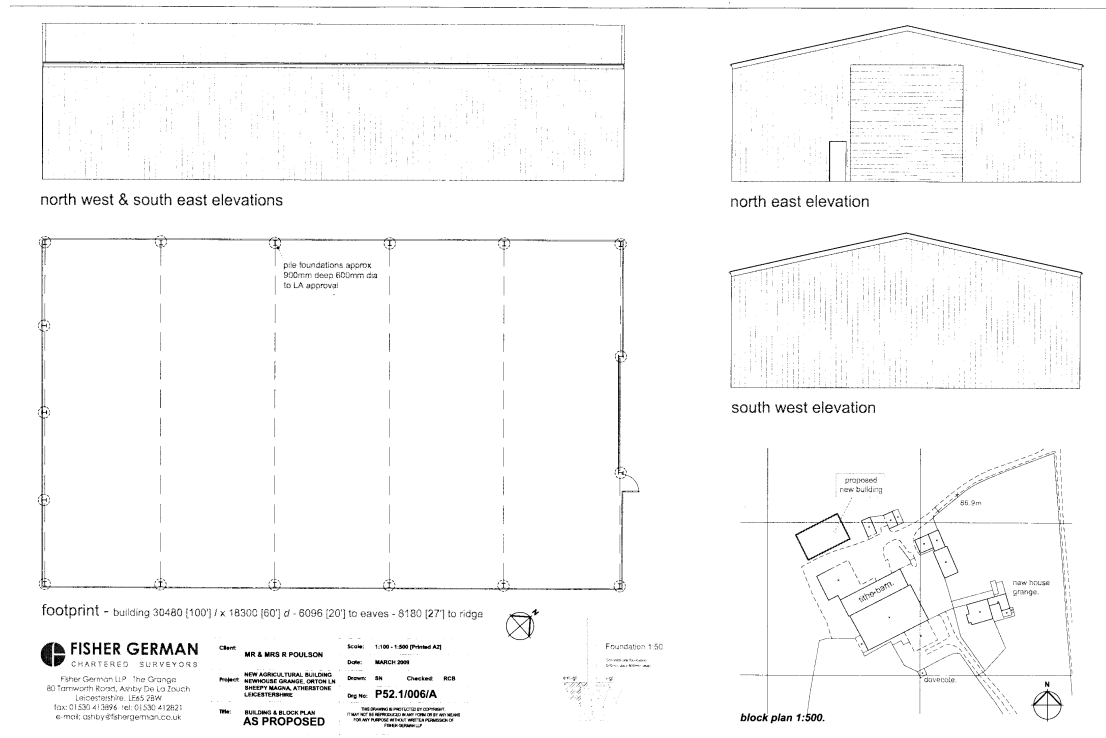


Fig 3 Plan of proposed development

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.