

ARCHAEOLOGY IN LEICESTER, LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND 2017

Edited by John Thomas

Archaeological watching briefs and evaluations, which have produced no significant archaeological features or finds, are listed at the end of the relevant county sections below. In each case, the parish/site name is followed by the name of the organisation which undertook the fieldwork. For abbreviations, please see below (p. iv). Some entries may relate to fieldwork undertaken before 2017 but not previously reported.

LEICESTER

All finds and records are deposited with Leicester City Museums Service (LCMS) under the accession number cited at the end of the entry.

Beaumont Leys, Castle Hill
(SK 56489 09217)

*Mathew Morris, Mireya Gonzalez
Rodriguez, Adam Clapton*

Leicester City Council and ULAS have teamed up to run a two-year Heritage Lottery funded community excavation at Castle Hill in Beaumont Leys, as part of the *Story of Parks* project. Castle Hill, a scheduled monument, is believed to be a medieval estate centre held by the Knights Hospitallers between c.1240 and 1484. However, more recent use of the site as a Victorian sewage farm had potentially caused extensive disturbance to the underlying medieval monument.

In 2017 the second season of excavation took place over four weeks, during which five trenches were opened across the earthworks. Three of the trenches continued the work started in the previous year and two explored new areas of the monument.

The main focus of the second season was the excavation of a 10 × 20m trench around a large square footing which was first found in 2016. Further investigation proved that the footing represented part of a substantial building measuring 8m wide and over 10m long. Fragments of stone footings for timber-framing survived, along with areas of stone and clay floor and a large hearth area. The building also had some complexity to it; a curious square platform had been added on to its eastern side, perhaps representing the base of a staircase, and there are two distinct phases to the hearth, with the final phase showing evidence that it was used for metalworking. Evidence suggests that the building had been deliberately demolished and was surrounded by a smashed layer of roof slates and glazed ceramic ridge tiles.

The most unexpected discovery of the project was a stone-lined well adjacent to the building's north-eastern corner. The top 1m of the well lining had been robbed out and backfilled with building rubble, and lodged in the well-shaft below the



Fig. 1. Waterlogged timbers, possibly from the roof of the adjacent medieval building, were found lodged in the top of a rubble-filled well shaft.

rubble was a group of waterlogged, possible roof timbers, which potentially came from the demolished building (Fig. 1).

In the other trenches, an entrance into the monument was identified. The outer ditch for this was substantial and too deep to fully excavate, but it had two terminals leaving a *c.*6m wide causeway through the ditch line. Elsewhere, an enigmatic earth mound in the centre of the site was proven to be a pile of earth dug out of a nearby pond, and not a prehistoric barrow as had previously been thought. An area of medieval quarrying was also identified in the monument's north-western corner and the fifth trench was negative.

Overall, the project was a huge success, with over 40 volunteers taking part, along with two Open Days, five school visits and visits from the Leicester Fieldworkers and the Young Archaeologists Club. A13.2016.

Leicester, 'Stibbe', Friars Causeway (SK 5826 0473)

Gavin Speed

The largest excavation undertaken in Leicester for over a decade was undertaken from September 2016 to August 2017 on the site of the former Stibbe and Maxim factories off Friars Causeway and Highcross Street, Leicester. The excavation was undertaken in advance of proposed redevelopment for hotels, offices and open

public space. New innovative approaches were utilised to record the complex urban site, including GPS and SfM photogrammetry. Previous trial trenches investigated by ULAS in 2001 had already demonstrated that pockets of well-preserved Roman features had survived, while evidence for medieval activity was limited to areas within the rear of properties.

The Stibbe site lies just to the north of *Ratae's* key Roman public buildings, and encompasses three insulae (IXa, IXb and XVI). Close to these, the excavations revealed tantalising traces of early Roman structures, clusters of post-holes and beamslots, pointing to the presence of a number of timber buildings. Two Roman streets were discovered, one running east–west and the other north–south the latter covering the full length of the site for 55m. Both roads were well-preserved, surviving to over 1.5m wide in places. Further pits and boundary ditches were set further back from the roads, pointing to a bustling and intensely occupied part of the town in the late first and early second centuries.

Evidence for at least three large Roman townhouses was discovered. One was located on the east-side of the site and fronted onto the north–south street (now under Highcross Street). This may be the townhouse that contained the ‘Cyparissus mosaic’, discovered in the seventeenth century and described in 1804 as being in this location (also shown on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map). Another townhouse was located on the west-side and was perhaps a courtyard style structure, but its plan had been heavily truncated by nineteenth-century factories.

The finest preserved Roman structural evidence lay on the north-edge of the site and was represented by the southern wing of a large, possible courtyard-style, townhouse which contained tessellated pavements and mosaics in every room. The best-preserved of these, at the east-end, was outstanding, being the largest and finest-quality mosaic to be uncovered in Leicester in over 150 years (Fig. 2). Decorated with complex geometric patterns, this floor had been cut by medieval pits and a 1950s cellar, but enough survived for us to see it was sited within a room stretching 10m in length and 6m wide. Its intricate design included a border composed of four intertwined strands (known as a guilloche), surrounding shield (*peltae*) and Greek key (*meander*) patterns. It also contained octagonal panels depicting a variety of scenes. The quality and workmanship is comparable to the Blackfriars and Peacock pavements that were found in Leicester during the nineteenth century. This impressive mosaic was perhaps in the main reception room of the house, covering the channelled hypocaust system that provided underfloor heating.

A highly decorated cast copper alloy key handle was recovered from between two floor surfaces in the northern townhouse. Its decoration shows a male figure, possibly a Roman caricature of a Germanic ‘barbarian’, dressed in trousers with a wide waistband and his neck-length hair swept straight back (Fig. 3). The details of his face are strikingly well-preserved; a short beard covers his chin from ear to ear, and his broad nose and outsized eyes are also visible. At the bottom of the tableau are four naked male figures with curly hair, upon which the main figure stands. He is also shown under attack from a male lion, who clings to his waist with its jaw gaping widely and its tail curled around his left leg.

The composition of this image is surprisingly complex for such a small object (other known examples tend to have limited themselves to just one or two figures



Fig. 2. The fine mosaic under excavation.

in their decoration), and it was clearly designed to exploit the handle's three-dimensional possibilities, revealing different details as the artefact is turned. It has been suggested that the central figure might represent a *damnatio ad bestias* scene, depicting a condemned captive facing execution by being thrown to the wild beasts in the amphitheatre. If the handle represents some form of (albeit grisly) public entertainment, though, this seems particularly apt given that the townhouse in which it was found once stood just 50m from what may have been a Roman theatre.

Two large, curving walls were found on the southern side of the excavation. These were clearly part of a substantial structure, almost certainly a Roman public building, with foundations almost 2m deep and a superstructure surviving to over 1.5m in height. A range of other associated evidence, including a stone column, stone mouldings and painted wall plaster, all suggest the presence of a fairly grand public structure, perhaps relating to a Roman theatre, concert hall or council chamber.

The excavation was open to the public on numerous open days throughout May 2017, and the discoveries created much media and public interest. Over 5,000 people visited the open weekends and lunchtime tours, as did more than 500 local schoolchildren. The mosaic has since been lifted and conserved, ready for deposition with the museum in due course. A 3D model of the floor *in situ* can be viewed at <https://skfb.ly/6ps9y>. A12.2016.



Fig. 3. Detail of the elaborately decorated key handle.

Leicester, Highcross St/Vaughan Way (SK 5832 0480)

Mathew Morris

Excavation at the corner of Highcross Street and Vaughan Way, next to the John Lewis car park, uncovered significant new evidence for Leicester's Roman past (Fig. 4). The project took place ahead of the construction of a ten-storey apartment block with wings ranged around a central courtyard, which replaced a 1960s office block and a late nineteenth-century brewery. Following demolition of existing buildings, a programme of trial trenching was undertaken by ULAS in 2012 and 2014, revealing evidence for a Roman street, structures of the second–fourth century, a Roman mosaic, part of the medieval street frontage and fragments of a medieval hospital.

Subsequently, over the winter of 2016/17 the footprint of the proposed building was stripped under archaeological supervision, and the archaeological deposits exposed were then cleaned, recorded and sampled to assess date and significance. The results indicated that for the most part, the piles would pass through deposits which would remain intelligible in the future and that no further archaeological investigation would therefore be required in those areas. Elsewhere, some pile positions were re-adjusted to avoid specific structural remains, and four areas where the piles would go through complex archaeology, including walls, a hypocaust, a mosaic and associated deposits, were investigated in a programme of limited excavation to address these impacts.



Fig. 4. Excavation in progress at Highcross Street, looking east.

The excavation covered nearly two-thirds of Insula X in the Roman town's north-east quarter. A Roman street and three Roman buildings were identified (Fig. 5). Today, Highcross Street still follows the line of the main road leading from the Roman *forum* (beneath Jubilee Square) to the north gate. On this western side of the site a large Roman building was uncovered. Two ranges of rooms flanked by a corridor or portico appeared to surround a courtyard. At least one room had a *hypocaust* (underfloor heating), and it is likely that this was a large townhouse, reminiscent of the nearby Vine Street courtyard house and the Blue Boar Lane townhouse.

North of this building, running east to west across the northern edge of the site, close to All Saints' Church, was a cambered gravel street. Activity along the street edge appears to have been quiet during the Roman period. Roadside ditches and boundary walls were identified, but no substantial buildings were present. Instead, activity seems to have been more ephemeral, possibly gardens and yards with some timber buildings. Evidence for copper working was found in the area, perhaps suggesting commercial or industrial activity taking place along the street.

On the eastern side of the site, close to the John Lewis car park, a second Roman house was identified. Evidence for mosaic floors was recovered in at least three of its rooms, and one of the mosaic fragments, measuring some 2m by 3m (about a quarter of the original floor), is one of the largest pieces of mosaic pavement found

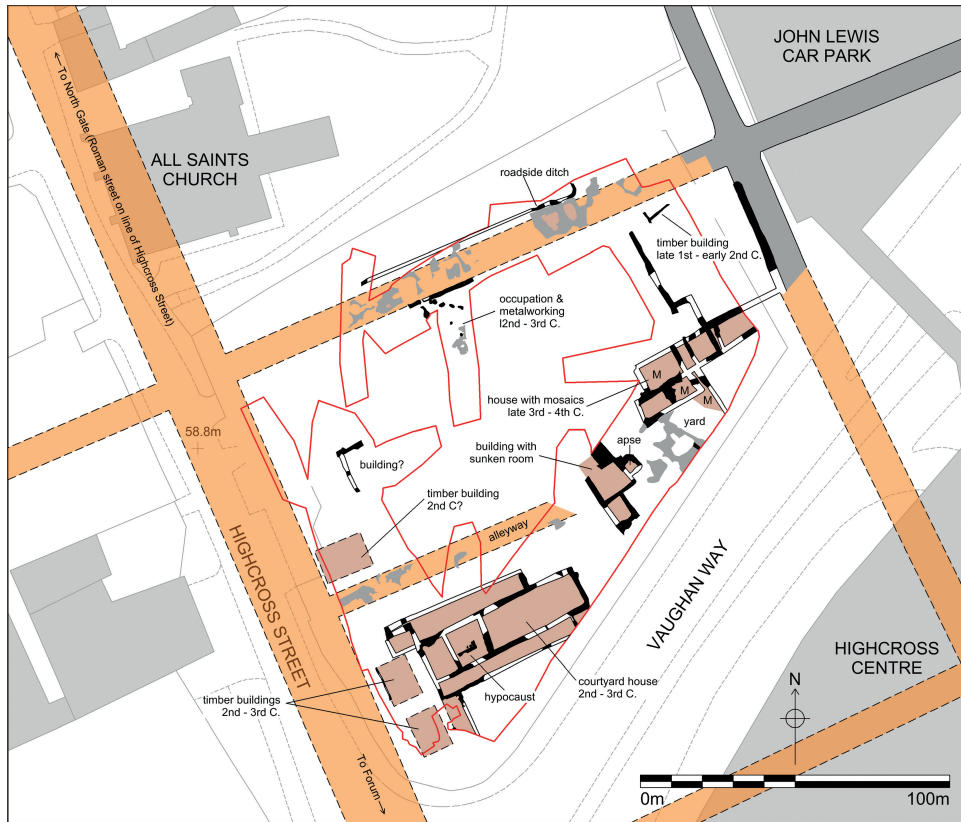


Fig. 5. Plan of the key Roman features excavated at Highcross Street.

in Leicester in the last 30 years (Fig. 6). This was originally found during the 2012 evaluation, and most likely dates to the early fourth century AD. It would have originally been in a square room in the house. It has a thick border of red tiles surrounding a central square of grey tiles. Picked out in red in the grey square are several decorations, including a geometric border, foliage and a central hexafoil. As part of the project the mosaic was lifted and conserved for future display.

More curious, however, is a third small Roman building found in the centre of the site. It had a large sunken room or cellar with what appears to be a small apse attached to one side. The building has no obvious purpose, but sunken rooms are relatively unusual in the Roman period. It could be a large hypocaust: research into its function is still ongoing. It seems to be tucked away in yards and gardens in the middle of the insula, giving it privacy away from the surrounding streets; and the possible apse is only really big enough to house something like a statue, possibly making it something special like a shrine or ornamental garden feature.

Surviving medieval archaeology along the Highcross Street frontage ultimately proved to be rather quiet. Large areas of medieval remains had largely destroyed the Roman archaeology. Usefully though, the pits formed distinct lines revealing the



Fig. 6. The Highcross Street mosaic after conservation.

position of at least six burgage plots. In the corner of Highcross Street and Vaughan Way more substantial medieval remains were recorded, including part of a wall which is thought to be part of the chapel attached to St Johns' Hospital. Another notable medieval feature recorded during the project was a stone-lined 'cold-storage' pit, which remarkably produced three intact medieval green-glazed jugs which were found on the pit bottom. A16.2016.

Leicester, Jewry Wall Museum, Welles Street
(SK 58191 04509)

Jennifer Browning

ULAS undertook hand-excavation of four trial trenches of varying size in the car park at the Jewry Wall Museum, Leicester. The work investigated the depth and preservation of archaeological deposits beneath the extant raised classroom block at Vaughan College, to establish how they might be affected by the construction of a new classroom beneath it. The work took place in an area originally excavated in the 1930s (Kenyon 1948), and later occupied by Vaughan College. The area was subject to previous archaeological interventions in the late 1990s.

Despite heavy truncation and disturbance associated with the construction of Vaughan College, the work revealed areas of surviving archaeology below the car park make-up layers. Trench 1 was the largest trench, measuring 6 × 2m, and it

located remains associated with two parallel walls excavated by Kenyon – part of the ‘northern shops’ which are believed to pre-date the construction of the Bathhouse. The trench also revealed a series of pits representing both Roman and modern activity, as well as intact buried soil/trample layers. Trench 3 located a compact mortar deposit, surviving beneath modern disturbance, but the nature of this feature was unclear.

Although most of the finds from the site were recovered from mixed and redeposited contexts, the date range of the pottery, from the mid-late first to mid-second century, is consistent with earlier archaeological work on this part of the site, which indicates activity pre-dating the construction of the Baths *c.*130 AD. Evidence for modern services and concrete foundations restricted the excavation of trenches close to the entrance to the modern building. A3.2017.

Leicester, Northgates (SK 580 049 – centre) *James Harvey, Stephen Baker*

ULAS carried out an initial phase of archaeological evaluation by trial trenching within a large parcel of land immediately north of Leicester City Centre, located to the west of Northgates (A50), and to the east of the River Soar and the Grand Union Canal. The work was undertaken on behalf of Keepmoat Homes as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of the proposed regeneration of the area.

This phase of the evaluation consisted of 19 trial trenches, two of which were located inside the projected line of the Roman and medieval town wall, with the remainder of the trenches located to the north of the defences.

The evaluation provided a good insight into the nature, extent and current state of preservation of archaeological deposits within the proposed development area. The trenches located within the projected line of the town walls, on All Saints Road, revealed the remains of a substantial Roman townhouse, including a well-preserved tessellated pavement. Trenches outside the town defences, located adjacent to the River Soar at the Former Travis Perkins Site and Friars Mill, recorded deep alluvial/channel deposits. An extensive spread of late prehistoric and early Roman activity was located on the low-lying ground to the east of the deeper river-channel deposits on Swan Street, Pingle Street and Soar Lane, including both occupation and burial evidence. Multi-period activity dating from the Roman to post-medieval period was recorded along Northgate Street frontage, including evidence of both timber and stone buildings. A9.2017.

Historic Building Recording

Rutland Street: The Queens Buildings, 37–43 Rutland Street (SK 59177 04496) (ULAS)

Welford Road: 98–100 Welford Road (SK 58820 03816) (ULAS)

Negative watching briefs and evaluations in Leicester
(undertaken by ULAS unless otherwise stated)

Leicester: 12 New Walk (SK 5889 0403); *Leicester*: 2–4 Peacock Lane/16 New Street (SK 585 043); *Leicester*: 98–100 Welford Road (SK 58820 03816).

LEICESTERSHIRE

All finds and records are deposited with Leicestershire County Council under the accession number given at the end of each entry.

Anstey, Packhorse Bridge, Leicester Road (SK 5563 0895) *Roger Kipling*

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by ULAS following dredging operations of the Rothley Brook at Packhorse Bridge, Leicester Road, Anstey. Two vertical timbers were observed adjacent to the stonework of Pier 1 of the bridge that may relate to its original construction. No other archaeological deposits were observed or artefacts recovered during the dredging operations. X.A137.2017.

Appleby Magna, Land at 6 Top Street (SK 31716 09752) *Roger Kipling*

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by ULAS in response to proposals for residential development. Archaeological remains dating to the medieval period, including pits, post holes and ditches, were revealed across the area, which may be associated with a moated manorial site that lies adjacent. X.A9.2017.

Asfordby, Land South of Hoby Road (SK 69951 18707) *James Patrick*

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by ULAS in response to proposals for residential development. Previous work on the site, including a desk-based assessment, fieldwalking and geophysical surveys, had suggested the presence of two prehistoric ring ditches, one of which was located directly underneath the overhead power lines crossing the site. These may be associated with a significant scatter of Neolithic-Bronze Age worked flints, including tools, which were recovered during fieldwalking, and may have derived from ploughed out burial mounds.

The evaluation followed on from a previous programme of trenching that failed to find archaeological remains. A further 30 trenches were opened, most of which reflected the negative results of the previous evaluation; however, one ring ditch was confirmed by trenching which revealed the full extent of the feature and can be interpreted as a ploughed out round barrow. The second ring ditch was not located. X.A138.2014.

Ashby de la Zouch, Ashby School House, Leicester Road (SK 362 167) *Mireya González Rodríguez*

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by ULAS at Ashby School in response to development proposals for a new school prayer and quiet room

building. The work recorded a tile-lined drain, as well as a possible sandstone wall of uncertain date. X.A72.2017.

Belton, Spring Barrow Lodge (SK 4442 1789)

Witan Archaeology

Two strips of a ploughed field were walked on 28 February 2017, the first on the north side of the field and the second on the east side. A small scatter of possibly Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age flint was recorded on the eastern side of the field (a knife, a blade, a core rejuvenation flake, a re-corticated core and a flake). One of the flints, a re-corticated core, may be earlier. Domestic pottery, glass and tile of the nineteenth–early twentieth century was also observed in both strips.

Burbage, Cedar Lawns, Church Street (SP 44252 92690)

James Patrick

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS in a deserted garden at Cedar Lawns, directly south-west of Church Street, within the historic core of Burbage. The work took place in advance of residential development of the property and consisted of four trenches. The evaluation revealed evidence for heavy landscaping and did not reveal any features connected with medieval activity; however, two large features were located which are likely to be former garden features. X.A66.2017.

Cadeby, Cadeby Quarry, Brascote Lane North (SK 431 027)

Tim Higgins

A fieldwalking survey was carried out by ULAS at Brascote Lane North, in advance of mineral quarrying. The survey revealed a light scatter of flint flakes and cores equally distributed across the area. In addition, a moderate density of mostly modern pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) was identified across the entire survey area. X.A48.2017.

**Cadeby, Cadeby Quarry Extension (Phases 2a & 2b),
Brascote Lane (SK 442 027)**

Leon Hunt

Archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS in advance of an extension to Cadeby Quarry. A geophysical survey undertaken prior to the evaluation had identified possible archaeological features within the proposed extraction area, including a ring ditch.

A number of archaeological features were revealed including evidence for a Roman pottery kiln, alongside enclosure ditches and gullies. A large number of kiln bars, together with fired and partially fired pottery, was retrieved from the kiln. The forms of the jars were broadly consistent with production in the later decades of the first century AD.

The probable northern arm of a prehistoric ring ditch, revealed during the geophysical survey, was revealed, although no dating evidence was found. Evidence for quarrying of unknown date was also discovered. X.A42.2017.

Castle Donington, East Midlands Airport car park
(SK 46490 25820)

Kamil Orzechowski

Between October and November 2017, MOLA carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on the East Midlands Airport car park prior to construction of proposed automated parcel sortation facility.

Fifty-three trenches were excavated and three of the trenches contained undated archaeological features. The evaluation also identified a series of post-medieval furrows and the location of a former farm remains, along with an adjacent field boundary ditch, both of which were depicted on nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey maps. Three out of 17 excavated furrows contained dateable evidence which comprised four seventeenth/eighteenth century pottery sherds and an eighteenth/nineteenth century horseshoe. X.A110.2017.

Castle Donington, 7 The Hollow (SK 4483 2747)

Neil Finn

A test pit evaluation was undertaken by Archaeology & Built Heritage on 22 May 2017, within the area of the Scheduled Monument of Enclosure Castle and the Castle Donington Conservation Area.

The test pit exposed a series of deposits of medieval, post-medieval and modern date. The earliest dated deposit was attributable to the second half of the thirteenth or the fourteenth century. A deposit containing a considerable quantity of sandstone rubble, possibly derived from an episode of stone robbing on the castle site, included pottery sherds dating from the later fourteenth to fifteenth century.

It is possible that the deposits exposed represent backfill of an outer ditch on the south side of the castle, although no evidence of a ditch cut was observed within the test pit. X.A62.2017.

Castle Donington, land off Park Lane
(SK 437 279 and SK 435 263)

Ben Kidd

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) carried out a trial trench evaluation consisting of nine trenches in March 2017. In the northern part of the site three trenches contained remains, which comprised part of a palaeochannel and three undated small ditches. The latter may have been part of a field system associated with a late Iron Age to Roman settlement excavated to the south.

At the southern end of the site two of the trenches contained three undated shallow ditches, two of which match the location of a field boundary recorded on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map. X.A112.2014.

Cosby, land to the rear of 1 and 3 Bradbury Close
(SP 5471 9491)

Mark Bell

CFA Archaeology carried out a strip and record excavation on a plot of land at the rear of 1–3 Bradbury Close, Cosby, in June 2017. The excavation was targeted on the proposed footprint of two dwellings. The excavation uncovered a ditch that was

tentatively dated to the thirteenth or fourteenth century, due to its association with other linear medieval features that had previously been identified to the south of site in an adjacent excavation. No finds were recovered. X.A56.2017.

Donisthorpe, Acresford Road (SK 31153 13597)

Donald Clark

ULAS carried out excavation on land off Acresford Road, on the western edge of Donisthorpe, in advance of residential development. The work revealed a complex of Romano-British field systems or stock-enclosures in association with a trackway. Small sections of compact pebble metalling survived between the east–west ditches, and these are believed to have formed part of a deliberately laid trackway between different enclosures. The enclosures adopted two different alignments, suggesting at least two phases of activity, and similar features revealed in neighbouring fields show that it was part of a more widespread system. Few finds were recovered, suggesting that the enclosures were not located near to any associated settlement, but a general third to fourth century date was indicated by the pottery. X.A125.2017.

Gilmorton, Land off Kimcote Road, Gilmorton

An evaluation and earthwork survey by Cotswold Archaeology identified a bank, a large undated ditch and numerous undated field system ditches. Medieval or post-medieval ridge and furrow earthworks were present across the site, truncating the bank. Evidence of possible nineteenth century quarrying was also recorded.

Great Bowden, 68 Great Bowden Road (SP 7422 8808)

Rosemary Culkin

A test pit excavation was carried out by Great Bowden Heritage & Archaeology in the back garden of a house on Great Bowden Road in the north-eastern part of Market Harborough, and at the eastern end of the long hill named Bowden Ridge. It was carried out on 6 May 2017. The area was disturbed. In total, seven sherds of Roman pottery, one mid-late Iron Age sherd, two medieval, seven post-medieval and one modern sherds were found.

Great Bowden, Land at 39 Main Street (SP 74263 88810)

Roger Kipling

Following a trial trench evaluation, a strip map and sample investigation was undertaken by ULAS in October 2017 on land at 39 Main Street, Great Bowden, in advance of proposed residential development. The excavation revealed a cluster of archaeological features relating to medieval activity in the village settlement core, including gullies and refuse pits, defined by probable burgage property boundary ditches leading south from the Main Street frontage. Ceramic evidence suggests refuse deposition was carried out over a lengthy period, ranging between the tenth or eleventh and the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries. X.A111.2017.

Great Bowden, Land at Nether Green (SP 74547 88969)*Roger Kipling*

An archaeological evaluation undertaken by ULAS in April 2017 revealed evidence for archaeological activity in the form of ditches, a possible pit and a post hole, and dated by pottery to the Roman and Saxo-Norman periods. Environmental evidence indicates the consumption of free-threshing wheat and barley during the Saxo-Norman period. The presence of buried soils across all three trenches in combination with deep overlying subsoils is intriguing and, in tandem with the possible presence of standing earthworks, is suggestive of (potentially deliberate) adaptive changes having been made to the site's natural topography. X.A35.2017.

Great Easton, Stoneacres, Caldecote Road (SP 8513 9278)*Neil Jefferson*

Archaeological evaluation by Midland Archaeological Services recorded two possible Bronze Age cremations, a late Saxon field boundary, and medieval ridge and furrow. A single piece of early Roman pottery was also recovered, suggestive of Roman activity within the area. X.A58.2017.

Great Glen, land north of Oaks Road (SP 6650 9817)*Chris Jones*

Trial trenching comprising 16 trenches was undertaken in March 2017 by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology), in advance of residential development and associated infrastructure.

Possible archaeological anomalies, detected by geophysical survey lying partly within the eastern area of the site, were found to be part of a middle to late Iron Age settlement. Seven features were uncovered in three of the trenches. A moderate quantity of pottery was found in two north-east to south-west aligned gullies. Although the mid to late Iron Age remains on the current site were limited and small in scale, they probably form part of the peripheral landscape for the late Iron Age to Roman farmstead located a short distance to the north-west at Stretton Road (Luke *et al.* 2015).

Two undated ditches were also found on the western side of site. All but two of the 16 trenches contained traces of medieval ridge and furrow agriculture. X.A20.2017.

Luke, M., Barker, B.
and Barker, J., 2015

A Romano-British Farmstead at Stretton road, Great Glen, Leicestershire. Albion Archaeology Monograph 2.

**Hemington, East Midlands Gateway fields 35 and 43
(SK 45555 27110 and SK 45555 26900)***Emily Eastwood,
Sam Fairhead*

Nineteen evaluation trenches were excavated in two fields as part of development of the East Midlands Gateway strategic rail freight interchange. In field '35' (SK 45555 27110), the extent of an Iron Age boundary ditch (previously excavated in a single location) was confirmed to correlate well with an existing geophysical survey. In field '43' (SK 45555 26900), the depth of overburden (up to 1.55m) hampered

investigation. Nonetheless, a series of ditches were recorded which probably defined plots of land associated with Romano-British activity immediately to the east. The results of this investigation support and expand on the results of previous phases of work in the area. X.A168.2013.

Higham on the Hill, land at MIRA Ltd (SP 36821 96192)

Donald Clark

Archaeological evaluation was undertaken by ULAS on land at MIRA Technology Park, Higham on the Hill, in April 2017. An earlier ULAS evaluation had partly uncovered two brick and concrete structures, and the trenching was designed to establish their extent and character. The western structure was chevron shaped and to the east was a rectangular structure. Both comprised two single-skin brick constructions with a concrete pad mid-way along the northern side. The structures were both filled with an ashy/tarmac type material. No dateable material was recovered from the buildings; however, it seems likely that it was associated with the defence of the former airfield. X.A23.2016.

Hose, Grange Farm

A detailed magnetometer survey was conducted over approximately 3.3ha of mixed arable farmland and pasture. Possible earthwork remains of the shrunken medieval settlement (MEL3538), including a potential holloway and building platforms, have been detected; however, the responses could also be of agricultural or modern origin.

Kegworth, East Midlands Gateway: Kegworth Bypass
(SK 48100 26000 to SK 48490 25940)

Stuart Pierson

A second phase of ten trial trenches was excavated by Wessex Archaeology within the proposed road corridor for the A6 Kegworth Bypass, which forms part of the East Midlands Gateway strategic rail freight interchange development. The trenches focused on an area of Iron Age features discovered during earlier work.

Three trenches encountered boundary ditches and pits containing Middle–Late Iron Age pottery, and two trenches revealed undated features. The confirmed archaeological features from all phases of investigation were found scattered along a 300m length of the proposed bypass route, seemingly with three separate foci. The results may represent the remains of an enclosure or portion of a field system dating to the middle–late Iron Age.

The local soils do not appear particularly receptive to geophysical survey: there was a generally low degree of concordance between existing geophysical data and the archaeology revealed in the trenches. X.A168.2013.

Lockington, Lockington Quarry Extension (SK 4839 2894)

R. Brown

In June 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation for Phase 8 of the Lockington Quarry Extension. The evaluation comprised the excavation of 11 30m trial trenches.

The remains of a post-medieval/modern field boundary ditch were identified in the centre of the site, its position and alignment suggesting that the modern field once comprised two smaller fields. The boundary is not shown on the 1st edition 1884 Ordnance Survey map of the area, indicating that the boundary had become redundant before this date. The other dated feature was a relatively large pit of a similar date, which may have been dug to extract sand and gravel.

Four undated ditches in the western half of the site are probably the remains of an earlier agricultural field system, probably associated with the late Iron Age/Roman settlement *c.*300m to the north-west of the current site.

Lubenham, on land at Westgate (SP 70319 87206)

Roger Kipling

Following a trial trench evaluation by MOLA, a subsequent archaeological excavation was carried out by ULAS in advance of residential development. The work produced further evidence for rear property medieval occupation in the form of gullies and refuse pits, defined by probable close boundary ditches extending west from the Westgate Lane frontage and linking with the major north–south ditch likely demarcating the western village boundary.

Environmental evidence provided rich evidence of cereal processing and on-site bread production. Ceramic evidence suggests occupation between the Late Saxon (tenth century) period and the fourteenth century, towards the end of which period date the site appears to have been abandoned. This cessation of activity tallies with results from other excavations such as Kilsby, Northamptonshire, reflecting a widely observed phenomenon of shrinkages and/or desertions of villages during this period, as a result of a fall in rural populations. On-site activity appears to have been resumed following a lengthy period of abandonment with construction of the Poor Law Cottages in the eighteenth century. X.A53.2017.

Market Bosworth, 48 Barton Road (SK 4055 0355)

Elisabeth Charles

In March 2017 an archaeological strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken by Archaeology Warwickshire on behalf of Mr Steven Wong, on a plot previously evaluated as part of planning permission for a new dwelling. The investigation revealed that the area had been subject to considerable quarrying and some rubbish disposal, as well as having been disturbed by tree roots.

A small assemblage of mostly Roman pottery was recovered (eight sherds), a single Iron Age sherd and a sherd of Midland Purple pottery, as well as a fragment of medieval brick. A small assemblage of ceramic building material confirms the existence of a nearby hypocaust. A large quantity of animal bone recovered from one of the quarry pits appears relatively modern.

Market Bosworth, Bosworth Links Projects, Dig 1 (SK 406 031) *Mathew Morris*

Bosworth Links is a two-year community initiative set up in 2016 by the Market Bosworth Society in partnership with University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS), and primarily funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), the Parish

Communities Initiative Fund (PCIF) and the Dixie Educational Foundation (DEF). The town of Market Bosworth is situated 18km west of Leicester and 9km north of Hinckley, and is best known for its association with the Battle of Bosworth (1485). Past finds of Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman artefacts in the town have shown that it has rich archaeological potential, but have left many unanswered questions particularly regarding the origins and early development of the settlement. The project aims to address these questions by involving residents of Market Bosworth and its wider community in digging test-pits in the spaces in which they live in order to make new discoveries about the history of those places. It is hoped that this will inspire and stimulate wider interest in the history of the market town, and contribute to ongoing academic research into the development of settlement, landscape and demography in Britain.

In total, 25 test-pits were excavated in July 2017 by homeowners, volunteers and local school pupils. On average, test-pits were excavated to a depth of *c.*0.6m through topsoil and subsoil. Natural substratum was reached in 16 of the 25 test-pits. For the most part, it was clear that the ground at most sites was extensively reworked in the past, either through agricultural disturbance (i.e. ploughing), building work or gardening. However, two test-pits did contain archaeological features: a possible wall and pebble surface in one; and a possible pebble surface in another. Altogether, 8,534 individual finds (76.43kg) were recovered. Archaeological material ranged in date from the early Bronze Age to the present day and could be broken down into the following categories for analysis: flint, pottery, clay tobacco pipe, glass, metalwork, coins, building material, industrial residues, bone, shell and other finds.

Analysis of the data has identified an extensive early Bronze Age landscape beneath the town. Flint debitage, cores, a concave scraper and calcined bone focus in one area east of the market place, between Park Street and Rectory Lane, suggesting domestic and funerary activity took place nearby. A second activity site was identified west of the village, where one test-pit produced an assemblage of flint debitage and a piece of prehistoric pot. The new evidence, coupled with known but currently undated ring-ditches and an earth mound recorded around the town increasingly suggest that it is sited over an early Bronze Age barrow cemetery. No new Iron Age or Roman sites were identified beneath the town, with the few finds of these periods found in proximity to known Iron Age and Roman activity east of the market place, and next to a Roman villa to the north of the town.

Significantly, however, one test-pit close to the villa also produced a piece of Anglo-Saxon pottery, as did two other test-pits on a neighbouring hill. This is the first recorded evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity in the parish and the three test-pits have possibly identified two new activity sites north of the town.

Evidence suggests that Market Bosworth did not develop in its present location until the tenth century. This early activity appears to concentrate along Park Street, south of St Peter's parish church and north of the market place. By the twelfth century the town appears to be well established, the bulk of the activity again focusing along the southern side of Park Street. During the thirteenth century, activity had spread westwards around the market place and northwards along Main Street, but by the fifteenth century it had contracted back to the eastern side of the market place and along Park Street. This constituted a 44 per cent drop in activity from the preceding

centuries and can perhaps be taken as an indication of population decline following the Black Death in the mid-fourteenth century. By the end of the sixteenth century, occupation across Market Bosworth appears to have been re-established in areas which had seemingly become depopulated in the later medieval period, particularly around the market place and along Main Street and Park Street. It had not, however, spread much beyond its former medieval limits, keeping a compact, nucleated plan. This remained the case until modern housing estates were constructed in the later twentieth century, causing the town to expand beyond its historic core. X.A67.2017.

Market Harborough, Burnmill Road (SP 73019 88637)

Claire Brown

Following a geophysical survey over 5.6ha of arable land, ULAS carried out an archaeological evaluation. The survey had revealed a series of adjoining enclosures, indicative of a ladder settlement, along with larger enclosures, boundary ditches and pits, and with ridge and furrow cultivation remains.

The evaluation confirmed the geophysical anomalies as archaeological features, identifying areas of prehistoric and Romano-British settlement activity. The area of settlement comprises a series of adjoining enclosures, along with larger enclosures, boundary ditches and pits. Pottery from the west of the development area consisted of abraded fragments of mid-late Iron Age pottery, but the majority of the ceramic remains suggest an occupation period of first-third centuries AD, with the majority of finds from the late first and second centuries AD in the east of the area.

The geophysical survey shows a semi-circular enclosure with possible D-shaped adjoining enclosure, which, together with the dating evidence provided by the pottery, indicate early to middle Iron Age use of the western field for occupation. Moving west across the development site, the evidence suggests early-mid Roman settlement activity, with a roughly north-south enclosure ditch curving round to the east delineating the settlement area. Some pottery of a later third century date indicates later Roman occupation in the south-eastern corner of the area.

Archaeobotanical samples from five of the excavated features revealed evidence of grain processing, so it is likely that the grain was grown in the area and used for bread and/or beer making. X.A129.2017.

Market Harborough, Manor Farm (SP 719 876)

*Mike Luke, Ben Barker,
Ben Carroll*

Between September 2016 and April 2017, Albion Archaeology undertook open-area excavation and additional evaluation trenching (Fig. 7) in advance of residential development at Manor Farm, on the west side of Market Harborough (Fig. 8). The investigations uncovered three lengths of early Iron Age pit alignments, middle/late Iron Age boundaries, enclosures and settlement, an early Roman settlement and evidence for medieval open fields (Albion 2017). Further fieldwork is expected; therefore, this summary represents an interim statement of the results prior to the commencement of analysis.

Early Iron Age

Three lengths of pit alignment – *c.*230m, 50m and 230m from north to south – were investigated within Area 1/6, Area 2 and Area 5 (Fig. 7). The pits were regularly spaced at *c.*1m intervals; they were *c.*2m in diameter and 1m deep. Their consistency in form and dimensions suggests that the creation of the alignment was planned and co-ordinated. The lengths of pits were sinuous in plan and although there were gaps of up to 250m in places, they are likely to be part of the same alignment, extending from the Lubenham Hill excavation to the south. In several areas the boundary represented by the pit alignment was later replaced by a ditch.

Pit alignments are enigmatic but not uncommon landscape features, usually dated to the late Bronze Age or early Iron Age. The small quantities of undiagnostic pottery recovered from the Manor Farm pits indicate that an early Iron Age date is likely. The gaps between the three lengths of pits within the alignment were examined but no obvious reason for them was apparent. It is possible that they were areas of woodland when the pits were dug.

Mid-late Iron Age

The mid-late Iron Age landscape was dominated by extensive ditched boundaries following the course of the earlier pit alignment. A number of enclosures, some not excavated but identified by geophysical survey, were tacked on to the northern length – creating a ‘washing line’ layout (Fig. 9). Although some of these enclosures contained roundhouses and other features, the main settlement focus was within Area 1 (shaded in grey) to the south of the terminus of the northern length of a boundary ditch. This unenclosed area extended over *c.*1ha and contained a number of small sub-circular enclosures or roundhouses. Their surviving external drainage gullies suggest that the roundhouses were 11–15m in diameter and, where identifiable, they all had east-facing doorways (Fig. 10).

The assignment of features to this period is based partly on stratigraphical relationships and partly on the pottery assemblage. The latter comprised wares in a range of shell-, sand- and grog-tempered fabrics, characteristic of the period. Forms are poorly attested but include a few scored examples, typical of the East Midlands Scored Ware tradition of the middle and late Iron Age.

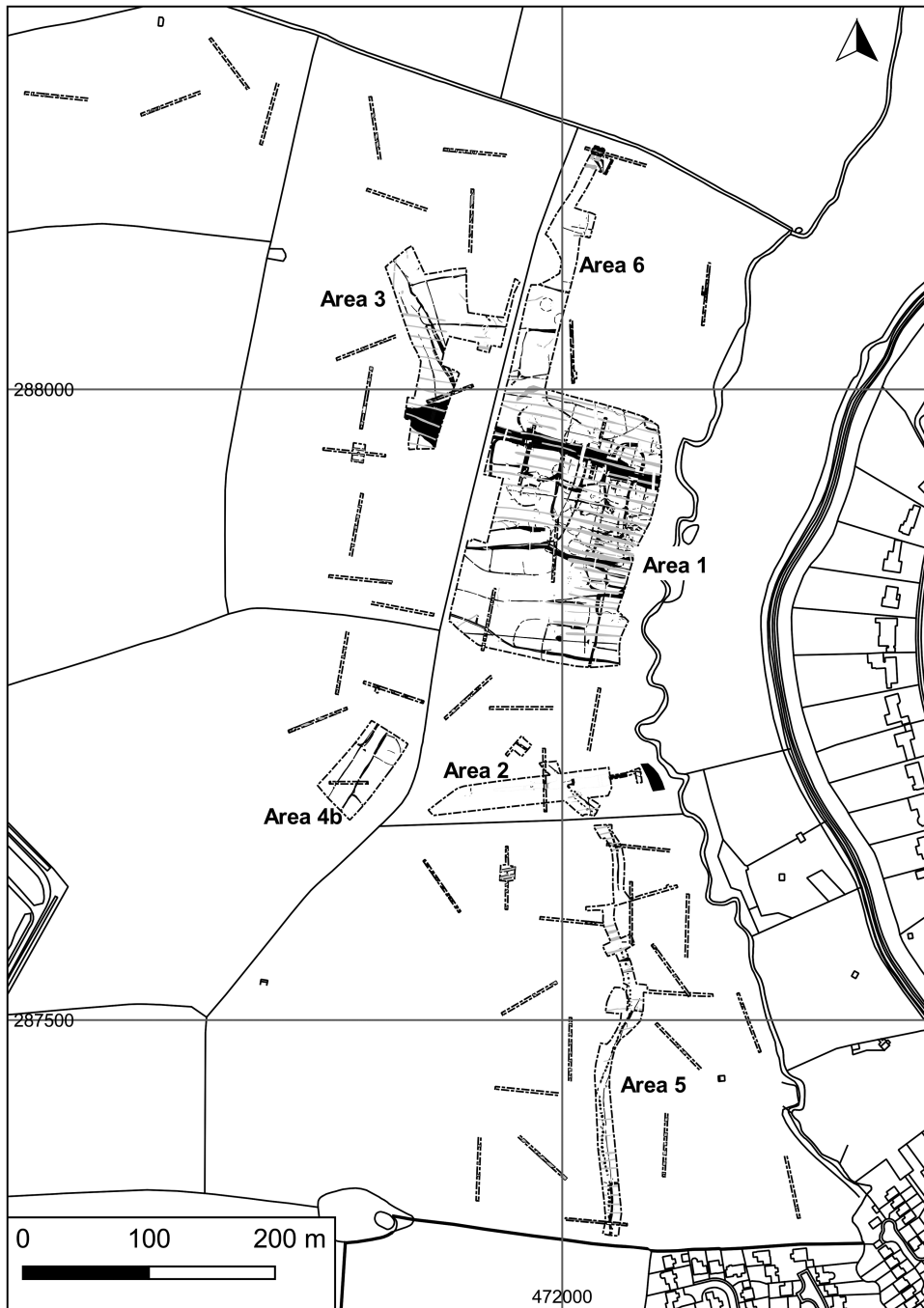


Fig. 7. All-features plan showing location of excavation areas and trenches.



Fig. 8. Aerial photograph showing all areas, except Area 4b, and Market Harborough to the left.

Early Roman

The settlement that had originated in the Iron Age was modified during the early Roman period. It was no longer unenclosed but was defined by an extensive, rectilinear system of ditched enclosures (Fig. 11). Although some of the ditches were redug, there were no major changes to the layout. No later Roman artefacts were found and it is presumed that the settlement had been abandoned by the mid-third century AD.

The early Roman settlement was more extensive than its Iron Age predecessor and extended over 2.6ha, although the core (shaded in grey) occupied an area a quarter that size. Evidence for buildings and other structures was scarce.

Despite extensive metal-detecting only one possible Roman coin and 12 fragments of first century AD brooches were recovered. A single glass bead was found during the investigations. Perhaps the most unusual metal find is a sword scabbard chape (a protective metal fitting at the bottom of a scabbard or sheath for a sword or dagger), dated to AD 100–200. The presence of small numbers of military fittings on civilian settlements is an increasingly recognised phenomenon (Luke *et al.* 2015, 19).

Medieval

Furrows were found within all excavation areas and represent evidence for strip-ploughing within open fields. X.A65.2014.

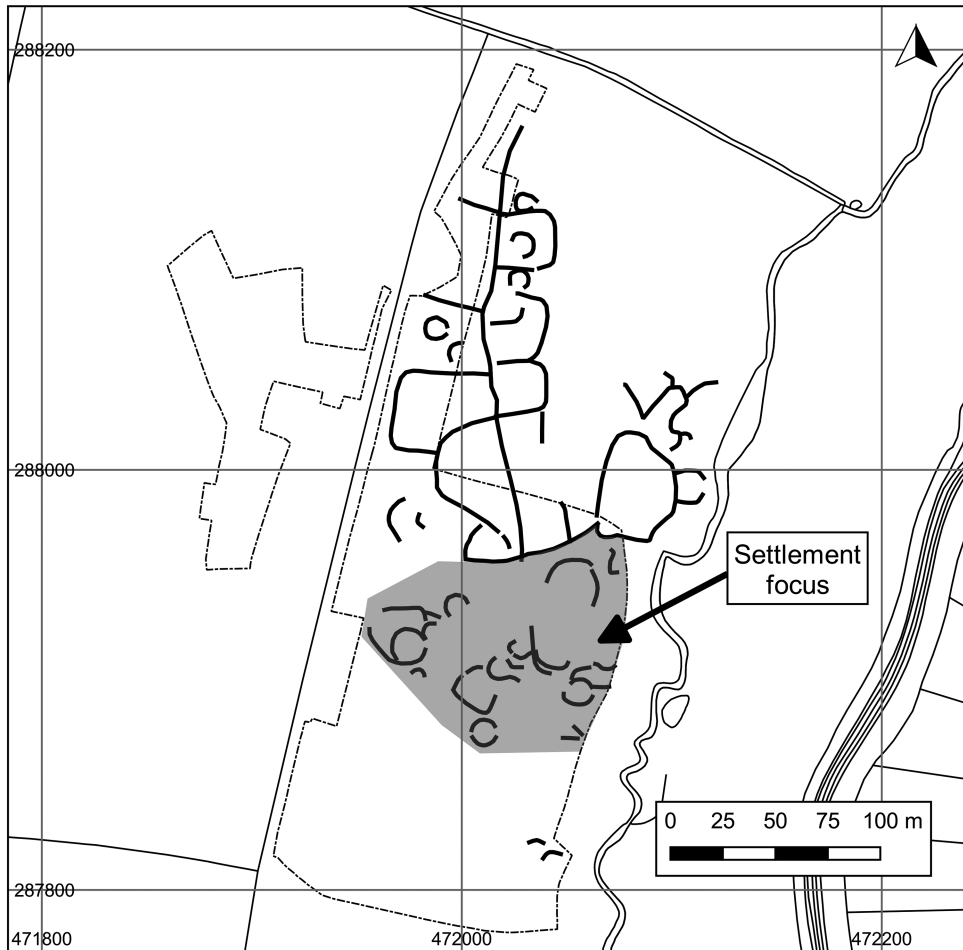


Fig. 9. Simplified plan of the mid-late Iron Age landscape based on features within the excavation areas and geophysical survey.

Further details of this project can be found online at the Archaeology Data Service Grey Literature Library: OASIS reference: albionar1-177938.

Albion Archaeology,
2017

Preliminary report on the archaeological investigations at Manor Farm, Market Harborough, Leicestershire (Unpub. report 2017/64).

Luke, M., Barker, B.
and Barker J., 2015

A Romano British Farmstead at Stretton Road, Great Glen, Leicestershire. Albion Archaeology Monograph 2.

Melton Mowbray, Hilltop Farm, Nottingham Road
(SK 74111 21026)

Nathan Flavell

A second phase of archaeological trail trenching was undertaken by ULAS on 23–26 October 2017 in advance of a new housing development. Two Iron Age gullies and one undated ditch were encountered. X.A6.2016.



Fig. 10. Late Iron Age roundhouse under investigation.

Melton Mowbray, land south of Kirby Lane
(SK 76153 17405)

*Yvonne Wolframm-Murray,
Carol Simmonds, Stephen Morris*

MOLA undertook a fieldwalking survey and subsequent trial trench evaluation on land south of Melton Mowbray.

A fieldwalking survey had been carried out by Melton Fieldworkers Group in 1987 and this work revealed a scatter of Roman pottery. The area of this scatter was in the same location where anomalies were identified in two geophysical surveys. The 2017 MOLA fieldwalking survey was undertaken to characterise the artefactual content of the topsoil. No substantial concentrations of artefacts were present until the post-medieval/modern period. Worked flint was more prevalent in the two westernmost fields. Roman pottery was recovered in the north-western corner close to the settlement identified in the geophysical survey. There was a general scatter of medieval and post-medieval pottery which presumably related to past manuring.

The trenching recorded evidence for early occupation of the local landscape; a prehistoric polished stone axe was recovered from the subsoil. The trenches specifically targeted features recorded in the geophysical surveys (Fig. 12). There was an extensive, multi-phase mid/late Iron Age to Roman settlement, as well as a separate smaller late Iron Age to second century Roman settlement some c.0.5km apart.

The larger settlement spread largely across the west side of the small north-south aligned valley (Fig. 13). Middle to late Iron Age features, which collectively



Fig. 11. Simplified plan of the early Roman landscape based on features within the excavation areas.

produced a moderate quantity of pottery, was found across the settlement – showing it had covered a large area in the early part of its existence. At some point, possibly in the latest Iron Age/early Roman period and continuing to the late Roman period, the settlement seems to have been formed largely over a *c.*7ha area. The settlement was enclosed on a north to south alignment parallel to and about 100m to the west of a stream, probably respecting the contours on the western side of a stream valley. In this settlement area there were seemingly two core areas of occupation *c.*200m apart, linked within and outside by at least three routeways as well as extended boundary ditches. There was evidence for grain processing and animal husbandry being undertaken within the settlement.

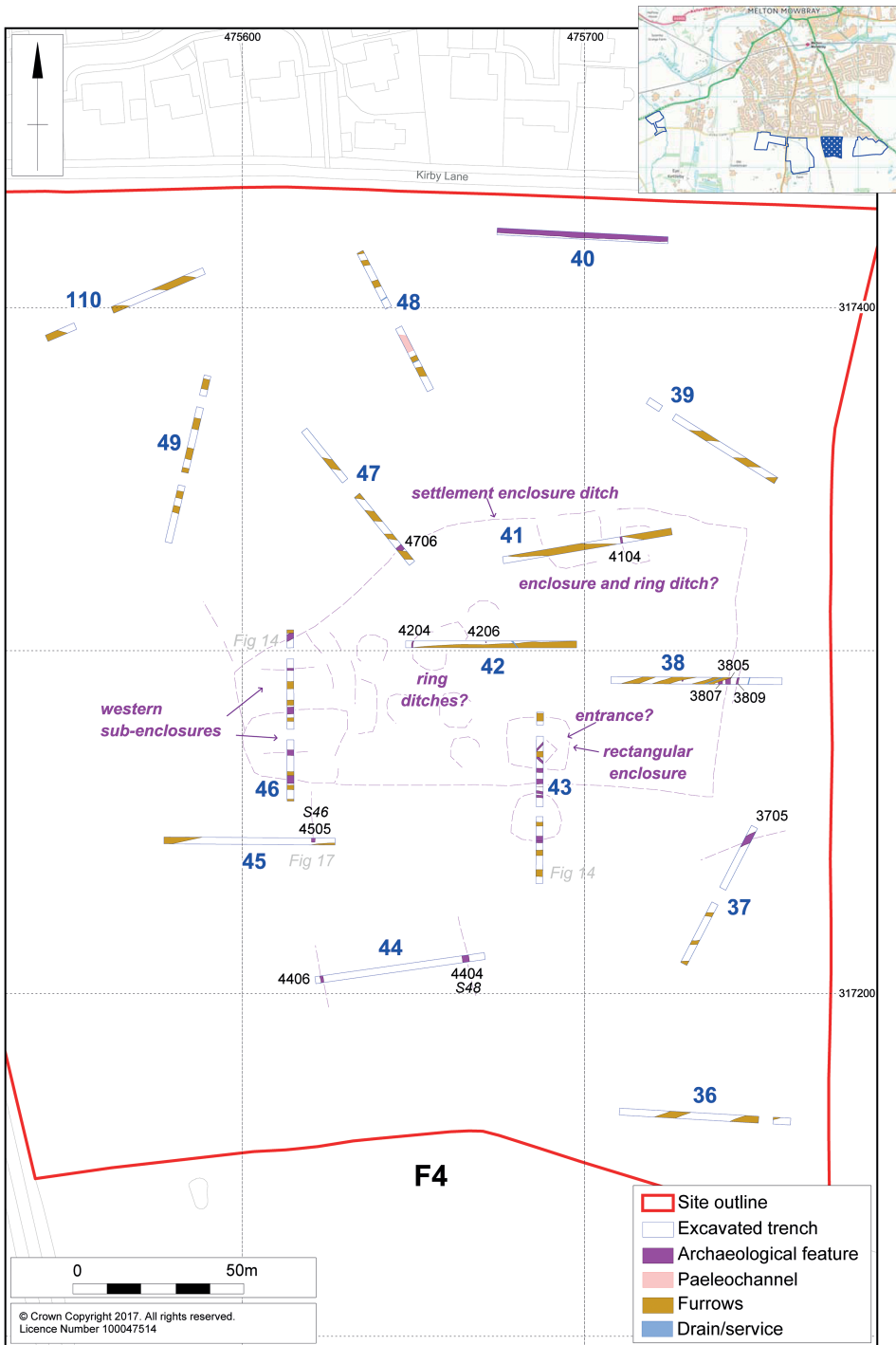


Fig. 12. Location of the trial trenches in association with geophysical survey responses.



Fig. 13. Geophysical survey results showing the extensive settlement area.

The smaller settlement occupied the east side of the small north–south aligned valley. It was partly enclosed by a large curvilinear ditch 140m by 80m in length, and encompassed a number of small pens or paddocks and possible ring ditches.

Across the rest of the fields there were ditches marking field system boundaries of similar date and also two late Iron Age/early Roman graves containing three inhumations. A palaeochannel was found in one trench. Medieval ploughing across the development area created well-defined ridge and furrow, which in places truncated and possibly masked some of the earlier features. In more recent times the area became enclosed by hedgerows, and traversed by the existing lane and road. X.A19.2017.

Melton Mowbray, St Mary's Church (SP 75276 19029)

Leon Hunt

ULAS carried out archaeological work during groundworks at St. Mary's Church, Melton Mowbray.

The floor of the church, which was lowered in the 1850s, was to be restored to its original level. This would necessitate work to remove the ledgers and floor slabs in the church and reduce all the floor levels, in both the nave and transepts, to accommodate make-up layers for the new floor and underfloor heating.

The work followed on from a small-scale test-pit evaluation carried out by ULAS in 2014 that revealed archaeological deposits relating to earlier phases of the churches use, the historic fabric of the church itself and burials.

As the nave floor had been lowered previously during the 1850s during restoration work, much of the deposits below the floor of the nave had been disturbed before. However, the transepts' floor had not been lowered and still contained a large quantity of intact eighteenth–nineteenth-century brick chambers containing human remains, along with a number of lead coffins not within brick chambers.

The chambers were emptied of soil and inhumation remains prior to their destruction to a depth just below the finished make-up level for the new flooring. The lead coffins were mostly below the finished floor level and were left intact *in situ*.

The human remains within the chambers mainly consisted of disarticulated bones; most likely the charnel remains of former burials within the church, disturbed by the later inhumations.

Three of the brick chambers were vaulted and sealed. These had to be removed to facilitate the reduction of the ground level. One contained a wooden coffin, one a lead coffin and one was not fully investigated. The coffins lay below the level of the floor make-up layers and were not removed.

Two further graves consisted of larger brick tombs. One contained a single damaged lead coffin, the other was sealed under brick and stone, and contained a multi-shelled coffin of wood and lead, with a cloth covering and depositum plate. This coffin, despite being below the make-up level for the new floor, remained *in situ*.

The watching brief also revealed the unpinning of the southern transept wall in new brick and the damage done to the foundations of the pillars during the floor lowering in the 1850s.

The watching brief has allowed a glimpse into the nature of belief and burial practices during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

**Mountsorrel, land south of Kinchley Lane
(Mountsorrel Quarry Site 4)**

Donald Clark

ULAS carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land south of Kinchley Lane, Mountsorrel (Mountsorrel Quarry Site 4), between 13 and 21 March 2017. The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a permitted quarry extension for soil storage/landform creation.

Following a desk-based assessment and geophysical survey, the evaluation involved the excavation of 45 trenches to sample the permitted development area. No archaeological deposits or features were observed, although an Acheulian Lower Palaeolithic hand axe was recovered from the ploughsoil. Possible alluvial deposits were identified in two trenches. X.A28.2017.

**Nailstone, The Bull's Head Public House, 88 Main Street
(SK 4157 0709)**

Neil Finn

Archaeological evaluation in two phases was carried out by Archaeology and Built Heritage on land to the north-west of The Bulls Head Public House, 88 Main Street, Nailstone on 23 and 24 of January 2017.

In the first phase three trial trenches were excavated. A series of shallow ditches/gullies were encountered in all three trenches, representing plot boundary and/or drainage features. Most of these were undated, though two ditches contained sherds of medieval pottery and a third contained a sherd of post-medieval pottery. An undated pit and a possible post-hole were also found.

A succession of ditch recuts in Trench 1, representing a boundary that was maintained over a long period of time, corresponded with a feature recorded on an earthwork survey of Nailstone. This may have formed the boundary between properties along the north side of Main Street and open fields beyond.

The second phase took place on 13 and 14 of April 2017, and consisted of a further two trenches.

A substantial ditch on a NE–SW alignment, exposed in Trial Trenches 4 and 5, formed part of the same boundary feature previously recorded as an earthwork by R. F. Hartley. The ditch was re-cut at least once and there was possible evidence for the former existence of a hedgerow on its NW side. This is likely to have been a croft boundary ditch separating medieval properties fronting onto the north side of Main Street from open fields beyond. Finds recovered from the fills indicate a date in the later medieval period for the infilling of this ditch, around the fourteenth or fifteenth century.

A second ditch, aligned NW–SE, corresponded with a ditch recorded in the earlier Trial Trench 3. This may have been a property boundary ditch separating two adjacent medieval plots, or possibly an internal plot division. Finds suggest a twelfth century date for this feature. A post-hole adjacent to this ditch may have been associated with a boundary fence. A single sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery,

of late fifth or sixth century date, occurred as a residual find in a medieval ditch. X.A14.2017.

Newtown Linford, Bradgate Park
(SK 532 108 centre)

*Jennifer Browning, James Harvey,
Richard Thomas*

The third season of the University of Leicester's student training excavation, the Bradgate Fieldschool, took place during June and July 2017. Excavations focused primarily on areas within Bradgate House, where the discovery of potentially earlier buildings, with a mixture of brick and stone footings, suggest that the phasing of the House is ripe for re-assessment. Other highlights of the season included a late Mesolithic flint scatter and a possible Bronze Age enclosure with a roundhouse. Over 70 students participated in the excavations, assisted by several SAAH staff and student volunteer supervisors, to whom we are very grateful. The Outreach team provided tours to schools throughout the season and a well-attended Public Open Day took place on 2 July, near the end of the season. The full post-excavation analysis of the 2017 excavation results has yet to be conducted, but our preliminary findings are set out below.

The enclosure

The 2017 season included trial trenching of an enclosure in the deer sanctuary, following geophysical survey during the previous season. Archaeological features, which had shown up clearly on the survey, were extremely hard to distinguish from the natural subsoil. Nevertheless, sections excavated through the substantial enclosure ditch revealed it was *c.*2.3m wide and 0.75m deep and contained several fills, including a lower one containing charcoal fragments (Fig. 14). The remains of a ring gully were identified within the enclosure. Dating evidence was sparse; however, a sherd of possible Bronze Age pottery was recovered, which potentially adds another period of human activity within Bradgate Park.

Bradgate House

The courtyard

During the first season in 2015, parch marks indicating buried wall lines in the courtyard were evaluated. This building had been described on the Bradgate House plan as a possible 'laundry'. The excavated walls had stone footings, distinguishing them from the upstanding brick ruins. The overlying demolition rubble contained early sixteenth-century pottery that suggested it could be part of an earlier phase of occupation.

The main objectives for 2017 were to confirm the layout of this building and look for evidence for its development and function, and particularly its relationship to the other buildings within the house complex. Trench 5 was therefore re-opened and enlarged to expose the entire footprint of the stone building, which had a length of 11m (Fig. 15). It consisted of three substantial stone walls on its northern, southern and eastern sides. A narrower intermittent wall was located on the western side of the trench, 5.5m from the parallel eastern wall. It was eventually revealed to be a later wall/partition, suggesting that the building originally continued west beyond



Fig. 14. A section through the enclosure ditch.

the limit of excavation. A stone-built drain ran externally along the northern side of the building that formed part of the original fabric of the wall.

The western continuation of the northern wall was recorded within the north-west corner of the trench. It had been truncated by a brick-built drain that ran along the western side of the wall partition and connected to the earlier stone drain on the northern side of the building. This suggested that the eastern side of the building had been re-fashioned after the western part had gone out of use. A further drain truncating the wall was on a different alignment. It clearly related to a later phase and had removed any trace of the continuation of the southern wall within the trench.

Within the northern side of the building, a layer of red clay was revealed beneath demolition rubble and represented a floor level. It was separated from a larger flagstone floor on the southern side of the building by an east-west aligned beam slot, indicating the presence of an internal timber partition. These elements both relate to the final use of the building and were contemporary with two drains inserted at the base of the eastern wall that fed water into the building. Rather than being level, the flagstone floor was carefully shaped to channel the flow of water towards the north-west corner of the building. Here, a brick outlet drain had been built into the western wall/partition that connected to the adjacent later brick drain. Material recovered from the surface of the clay floor and the overlying demolition layers suggested that this part of the building remained in use until the middle to



Fig. 15. The courtyard building in Trench 5, seen from the south during excavation.

late sixteenth century. A small slot was excavated through the clay floor within the northern part of the building to expose the wall foundation. Pottery recovered from these lower deposits may help to determine the construction date of this building.

An extension to the eastern side of the trench revealed further structures adjoining the eastern wall of the stone building. A rectangular stone built pad butted against the wall, measuring *c.*2.4m long and 1.4m wide. The function of this structure is uncertain, although the base of an external staircase is one possibility. A substantial brick wall butted against the pad on its eastern side, forming the northern wall of a building that was only partially exposed within the trench and included a possible fireplace. This later brick addition was on a different alignment to the existing chapel, suggesting that it pre-dated the construction of the chapel; the associated demolition suggested it went out of use at the same time as the adjoining stone building. To the north of these structures (within the north-east corner of the trench) a lead pipe had been laid within a service trench that cut through the earlier demolition material. This is the first evidence revealing that the house was supplied by fresh drinking water, presumably sourced from the natural spring located to the north of the house.

Parlour and guest lodging

During the dry spring of 2015, parch marks suggesting underlying walls were noted within the northernmost room of the eastern wing (the parlour). These appeared to

represent the gable end of an earlier building and lined up with the range extending north, described as the guest lodgings. Trench 14 targeted the parch marks and examined the area north of the parlour wall, within the guest lodging itself. The parlour trench exposed stone footings which appear to represent the original southern wall of the guest lodging, suggesting that it was originally a free-standing building. There was evidence for further phases of activity on the west side. The removal of rubble and levelling layers covering the demolished wall revealed a brick plinth, resting on stone foundations and bordering an area of loose rubble to the west. A stone footing running from the south-western side of the building appeared to line up with the wall of the chapel, but the trench did not extend far enough to confirm this. A sondage excavated on the building interior exposed possible bedrock; if confirmed, this may suggest levelling over an outcrop. A rich finds assemblage from levelling layers below the rubble included fragments of fine imported Venetian glass, as well as Cistercian and black wares – dating the infill of the building to the sixteenth/seventeenth century. However, there was little evidence for clearly defined floor layers below the demolition; these must have been either beaten earth or stripped out during demolition.

The long, narrow range, thought to represent the guest lodging, extended northwards from the centre of the parlour (Fig. 16). Significantly, it is also



Fig. 16. The southern part of Trench 14, showing the demolished part of the 'guest lodging'.



Fig. 17. The northern half of Trench 14, showing the tiled and stone surfaces and blocked up doorway.

constructed from stone, although some parts were clad in brick, presumably to provide a consistent appearance with the brick house. The higher ground level of the extant part of the guest lodging to the north of the parlour wall, compared to the demolished gable end, presents a puzzle. Excavation indicated that this simply reflects the natural topography rather than resulting from a build-up of stratigraphy. An area of quarry tiles near the entrance to the parlour possibly demarcated a high traffic area running between two blocked up doorways on the east and west sides of the building (Fig. 17). The flooring did not continue through the building, but instead butted up against a thin layer of stones to the north. These were roughly set within a soil matrix and may represent consolidation under a vanished floor, or possibly a rough surface for a non-domestic function. A fireplace was present on the western wall and its tiled hearth provides a clue to the original floor level in this area. The unmortared foundations for an east–west aligned wall were seen where the tiles abutted the stone surface. Excavation below the wall foundation encountered a bioturbated subsoil, overlying what appeared to be undisturbed natural subsoil. The guest lodging has clearly been modified several times and analysis of the excavation records should help shed further light on this sequence.

Kitchen

An L-shaped trench (Trench 13) was opened in the kitchen, which is dominated by a substantial fireplace on the western wall, below a large chimney. The trench revealed the patchy remnants of a mortar floor extending across the area. The floor overlaid a large brick-lined drain, capped with slate, which entered the kitchen from the courtyard, running initially from the south-east to north-west side, before re-aligning to run north towards the Great Hall. The base was partly silted, but it was sufficiently open to establish the brick construction (Fig. 18).

On the southern wall, a second fireplace was revealed of similar dimensions to the western example. Excavation exposed the remains of the hearth, constructed of bricks and quarry tiles (Fig. 19). These were covered by a thick charcoal rich layer, presumably the remnants of the last fire and scorched through use. The hearth was set on top of a thick brick plinth, which may also have provided stability for the



Fig. 18. The hearth in the kitchen trench, looking south.



Fig. 19. A view inside the drain.

chimney arch. A similar feature, but constructed from stone, was present beneath the western chimney. The work suggests that much of the fabric of this part of the house in this area is likely to be original.

Wardrobe

The small structure located against the eastern side of the east wing has been variously interpreted as a wardrobe, garderobe, stairwell or porch. Our investigations indicated that the existing structure bore little resemblance to below-ground structures. Earlier wall lines were present beneath the modern reconstruction, but these were only partially exposed. The main feature of the trench was the presence of interlinked brick-lined drains, from which many objects, including numerous copper alloy dress pins, pottery and animal bones, were recovered (Fig. 20). The drains were similar in construction to those seen in Trench 13 and presumably date to the same period.

Brewer's lodging

Much of the southern frontage of Bradgate House has been altered since its initial construction in the early 1500s and some of the upstanding structures are early twentieth-century fabrications, including the southern gable end of the west wing and south-western tower, which collapsed in the storm of 1896. The boundary wall was also constructed in the twentieth century to provide a barrier to access of the



Fig. 20. A junction of drains in Trench 15.

ruins. Trench 12 aimed to investigate the validity of the reconstructed wall lines in relation to the original buildings within this heavily modified part of the site. Walls and surfaces were uncovered immediately below the turf line, suggesting that *in-situ* archaeological deposits had been effectively scoured in this area of the House during the early twentieth-century consolidation of the site for public presentation. Excavations revealed a brick outbuilding extending to the south beyond the current boundary wall. The bricks were of modern rather than Tudor dimensions, suggesting that the structure post-dates the use of Bradgate House. The walls were two bricks thick and it was almost certainly single storey. There was a semi-circular fireplace in the south-western corner of the structure, with a hearth constructed of quarry tiles, and patchy remnants of a mortar floor visible around it (Fig. 21). The north wall of the building was *c.*1.2m shy of the Tudor wall. Between the two there was a brick pavement laid in a basket-weave pattern which lipped up against the Tudor wall. An underlying brick drain ran north–south beneath it. The pavement terminated abruptly at a stone and brick structure, previously described as a ‘brewery vat’. Its walls were constructed of granite fragments mortared together in random courses and capped with slate. Exploration of the structure showed that it had no base or lining and contained no deposits specifically related to its use. Its function is therefore still unknown. An undated charcoal spread extended beneath the ‘brewery vat’ into



Fig. 21. The hearth in Trench 12, showing the shallow occupation layers over the rocky outcrop.

the ‘brewery lodging’ buildings to the west. Stone steps had been constructed to the south of the ‘brewery vat’ to accommodate the level change down into the ‘brewer’s lodgings’.

Trench 12 also unexpectedly revealed a late Mesolithic flint scatter. More than 20 flints were recovered from an area *c.*1m in diameter. Eight were also recovered from a 1 × 1m test-pit, located *c.*4m south-east of the first site outside the boundary wall. The flints were found within the Charnwood head deposit, which directly underlaid the thin layers associated with the floor of the building. Approximately *c.*600m west across the floodplain, a Late Upper Palaeolithic scatter was excavated in 2014–16, above an outcrop of granodiorite, overlooking the River Lin. The new site represents the first known Mesolithic activity within the park and provides further evidence for the extensive utilisation of this landscape in early prehistory.

Excavations within the house have revealed that few deposits in the excavated areas relate to the upstanding ruins of Bradgate House. These layers appear to have been removed following the abandonment of the building in the eighteenth century, possibly through deliberate robbing, as well as later landscaping and reconstruction. The evidence retrieved appears to either pre- or post-date Bradgate House, apart from some kitchen deposits. Although a construction date has not been established for the stone structures in the courtyard and the parlour, preliminary dating evidence

suggests that they were demolished during the sixteenth century. Since the brick residence was believed to be substantially complete by *c.*1530, this could raise new questions about the construction of Bradgate House. Although the structure in the parlour is not on the same alignment as the courtyard building, the similarity in stone foundations suggests that they may be part of the same earlier complex, pre-dating the brick-built phase. Was Bradgate House built on the site of a previous lodging? Or was there a stone phase prior to the familiar brick residence? With two further seasons of fieldwork yet to run, there are many exciting questions yet to answer.

North Kilworth, Evergreen Field Farm, Pincet Lane
(SK 61648 83726)

Cathryn Shean

An archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation was undertaken by ULAS between 9 and 14 March 2017. The work revealed evidence for Bronze Age and Iron Age occupation, including an enclosure ditch, gullies, post-holes and a pit. X.A27.2017.

Pickwell, land adjacent to Stygate Lane (SK 79989 12166)

Wayne Jarvis

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS in February 2017 as part of a pre-planning inquiry for a proposed bio-digester and access road. The evaluation comprised 39 trial trenches and revealed archaeological activity in two areas: at the east of the site close to the A606 along the proposed access road; and in the west of the site within the main proposed digester site itself. In the former area, Iron Age activity, including a roundhouse and several other features, was exposed. Just to the east of this was a concentration of Roman material and several stone structures which are likely to form part of a range of buildings of a villa complex. In the west of the proposed site further evidence was produced of another area of Iron Age activity, with two ditches producing occupation material. X.A8.2017.

**Ravenstone, land to the rear of Jenny's Lane and
Ibstock Road** (SK 40645 13390)

Stuart Pierson

The excavation of six evaluation trenches by Wessex Archaeology revealed only a single undated pit. Iron Age/Romano-British ditches from adjacent sites did not continue into this area. The overall picture is of low-density activity, likely to have been open agricultural land throughout its history. X.A38.2017.

Rothley, Broadnook Garden Suburb (SK 582 113)

Adam Clapton

An archaeological field evaluation was carried out by ULAS on land to the north of Birstall in the parishes of Wanlip, Thurstaston, Rothley and Cropston, Leicestershire.

The work was commissioned in advance of a Sustainable Urban Extension (SUE) development across several fields to the north of Birstall. Forty-eight trenches were excavated across the area of proposed development with archaeological features

discovered in seven of these positive trenches, including an area containing a probable Iron Age enclosure with associated features suggesting settlement. Features included gullies, ditches and post-holes with diagnostic sherds of pottery, indicating a Middle–Late Iron Age date. A second area to the south-west contained undated features that may represent an earlier phase of activity. Three other trenches contained isolated undated features in the western part of the site. X.A113.2017.

Rothley, Charnwood Roots Project (SP 584 128) *Julie Attard & Mathew Morris*

In July 2016 an archaeological dig was organised for the community of Rothley, Leicestershire by the Charnwood Roots Project, a Leicestershire Victoria County History Trust initiative funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. This was the third and final year of excavation within the project, which previously investigated Anstey in 2014 and Whitwick in 2015. The dig was supported by staff of ULAS and over 150 volunteers from the local community, wider county, and students and staff from the University of Leicester. A total of 32 1m² test-pits were excavated with a goal of evaluating the nature of Rothley’s settlement history and promoting local history and heritage to the community (Fig. 15).

Overall, results suggest that much of the village has experienced some ground disturbance from the post-medieval period onwards: this may have removed earlier deposits. Finds of Anglo-Saxon and medieval date were surprisingly scarce considering the known antiquity of the village and extensive evidence of Anglo-Saxon activity in the surrounding landscape. Nearly half the pits did produce small quantities of worked flint: this is unsurprising, considering the significant Neolithic and Bronze Age remains in the vicinity, but of particular note was a piece of a leaf-shaped arrowhead of Neolithic date. One pit dug close to a known Roman ‘villa’ site produced a large quantity of Roman pot, but no new Roman sites were identified.

Due to the scarcity of recovered material, settlement development could only be identified from the late medieval period onwards, with two settlement foci suggested at Town Green and in the village centre to the north of the parish church. One feature of note was excavated in a test-pit behind a seventeenth-century timber-framed cottage on Fowke Street. This has been identified as a stone wall foundation, most likely part of a wing projecting of the building which is no longer extant, but is visible on the 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of 1888 (demolished before 1904). X.A79.2016.

Stoke Golding, Laburnum Cottage, High Street (SP 398 971) *Tim Higgins*

ULAS carried out an archaeological evaluation at Laburnum Cottage, High Street, Stoke Golding, in December 2016. Trenches were excavated to evaluate an area for a proposed new residential development to the rear of the southern side of High Street. Two of the trenches located in the south-west corner of the development contained twelfth to fourteenth century archaeological features, possibly associated with medieval properties that fronted on to either High Street or Main Street. X.A142.2016.

Sysonby, Butt Close, Riverside Road (SK 7397 1907)*Wayne Jarvis*

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by ULAS at Butt Close, Riverside Road, Sysonby, on 13 November 2017. The watching brief took place during groundworks in preparation for a new stable block and hay barn, and lies adjacent to earthworks thought to be archery butts of medieval or later date. A metallated trackway was identified during the works. This can be identified on the nineteenth-century Ordnance Survey map as a track which led across to the church of St Mary from Riverside Road and beyond. No further archaeological deposits were encountered. X.A139.2017.

Tugby, land at Hallaton Road (SK 76331 00814)*Roger Kipling*

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by ULAS in March 2017 in advance of residential development. The work revealed evidence for localised archaeological activity in the northern corner of the proposed development area in the form of ditches, a possible pit and a post-hole, the majority of which were dated by pottery to the late third or fourth century. The ditches appear to follow the contour of the brow of the slope, and hence form the line between the falling land to the south-east and the higher land to the north-west.

Consequently, the ditches may represent the boundary to an enclosure occupying the higher, flatter ground immediately to the north-west of the site. The presence of several recuts suggests that this boundary have been maintained over a lengthy period. The absence of these linear features from Trench 1 implies that their course shifted sharply to the north or north-west, hence suggesting the presence of a square or rectangular enclosure. Environmental analysis of ditch fills points to wheat cereal processing and consumption activity in the near vicinity, and animal faunal evidence suggests typical Roman domestic consumption. The discovery of a third-century military baldric terminal plate from one of the ditches is a rare and unexpected find.

The wetter land downslope appears to have been unoccupied. In addition, there are no indications that the changes in slope visible across the eastern area are archaeological in origin and, possibly, associated with the adjacent medieval manorial site to the north. Rather, these appear to be geological in origin. X.A30.2017.

Waltham on the Wolds, land at Bescaby Lane (SP 80734 25042)*Tim Higgins*

ULAS carried out an archaeological evaluation land at Bescaby Lane, Waltham on the Wolds, in February 2017. Trenches were excavated to evaluate the area in advance of a new residential development. Two of the trenches located in the south-west corner of the development, close to the High Street, contained a scatter of archaeological features. The features comprised gully ditches and post-holes, but their date remains uncertain; however, they were found below the medieval ridge and furrow. X.A16.2017.

Waltham on the Wolds, land east of Melton Road
(SK 8047 2472)*Steve Thomson*

Archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Headland Archaeology between 1 and 11 August 2017. The investigation revealed evidence of a circular or pennanular late Iron Age feature, a ditch and pit of Romano-British date, and undated ditches probably relating to land division. Two large parallel, probable boundary ditches were also identified. A scatter of discrete features included two containing burnt bone. Evidence of ridge and furrow agriculture was recorded, along with a post-medieval ditch.

A recovered artefact assemblage included prehistoric and Romano-British pottery, flint tools and debitage, modified stone and bone. A discoidal flint knife of later Neolithic date was recovered from subsoil deposits.

Waltham on the Wolds, land off Mere Road (SK 8052 2532)*Alan Telford*

Allen Archaeology Limited carried out an archaeological evaluation in advance of residential development. Evidence of activity in the early to middle Iron Age was recorded, largely confined to the westernmost third of the site – an area covered by Trenches 1–11 and Trench 22.

Possible boundary ditches and pits were identified, including a large concentration of intercutting pits adjacent to a probable boundary ditch in Trench 2. In Trench 8 a pit containing abundant fragments of partially roasted iron ore was recorded. The finds suggested that the feature was an ore roasting pit or channel hearth of Middle Iron Age date. There was also evidence of a possible superstructure.

The Iron Age activity on the site was confined to the westernmost part, with the eastern part of the site being largely devoid of features of archaeological interest. Within the western part of the site, evidence was recorded of activity associated with iron production, and it is likely that further remains of ore hearths and possibly bloomer furnaces survive in the western part of the site. Archaeological fieldwork undertaken by ULAS on land immediately adjacent to the western part of the site in 2016 recovered evidence of industrial activity, including probable iron manufacture, dating to the Late Iron Age and Romano-British periods (Huxley 2016). The results of the evaluation suggest that the area may be the location of one of the earliest iron production sites in the region.

Huxley, R. 2016

An Archaeological Strip, Map and sample Excavation to the Rear of Hall Farm, Mere Road, Waltham on the Wolds, Leicestershire.
Unpublished ULAS Report 2016-067.

Walton, land opposite Walton Hall, Chapel Lane
(SP 59628 86905)*Roger Kipling*

An archaeological watching brief was carried out in response to residential development by ULAS in February 2017. The watching brief revealed archaeological activity towards the rear of the property in the form of two pits, one of which produced pottery and roof tiles dated to the thirteenth to fourteenth/fifteenth

centuries, and is likely to represent contemporary refuse disposal probably associated with a nearby building. X.A13.2017.

Wigston Magna, land to the east of Denbydale

Stratascan

A magnetometer survey was conducted over approximately 2.4ha of arable land at Wigston Magna. The survey revealed an area of possible settlement activity, comprising rectilinear enclosures and linear anomalies in association with a possible trackway. Ridge and furrow remains were also present.

Historic Building Recording

<i>Kegworth</i>	Field Farm, Ashby Road (SK 46849 26603) Wessex Archaeology
<i>Nailstone</i>	The Bull's Head PH, 88 Main Street (SK 4160 0706) Archaeology & Built Heritage
<i>Stanton-under-Bardon</i>	Battleflat Lodge Farm (SK 4457 1079) PCAS

Negative watching briefs, evaluations in Leicestershire (undertaken by ULAS unless otherwise stated)

Barsby: Barsby Pipeline (SK 67047 11710 to SK 70430 12190) (Wessex Archaeology); *Blaby*: Rose Business Park, Lutterworth Road (SP 564 963); *Castle Donington*: Cross Keys Inn, 90 Bondgate (SK 446 275); *Coalville*: Land off Greenhill Road (SK 460 141); *Coleorton*: Church of St Mary the Virgin, Ashby Road; *Donington le Heath*: The Green (SK 42392 12244); *Earl Shilton*: 40 High Street (SP 46813 98055); *Enderby*: Desford Road (SK 52727 00359) (MOLA); *Frisby on the Wreake*: Land at Great Lane (SK 6999 1763) (TPA); *Gaddesby*: 'The Hall', 2 Main Street; *Gilmorton*: Mill Lane (SP 57329 88133); *Great Easton*: 'Barnsdale House', 17 Barnsdale (SP 84824 92783); *Hemington*: Tamworth Road (SK 4579 0111); *Hoby*: All Saints Church, Church Lane (SK 66912 17360); *Kegworth*: 'The Cedars', 29–33 London Road (SK 48819 26496); *Kibworth Beauchamp*: Land east of Longbreach Road (SP 68449 93499); *Kibworth Harcourt*: Land off St Wilfrid's Close (SP 6816 9401) (MOLA); *Kirby Bellars*: (SK71928 17958 to SK 71709 17456) (Wessex Archaeology); *Lount*: Land to the rear of 'Lobourne', Nottingham Road (SK 3860 1941); *Lutterworth*: Coventry Road (SP 5287 8404) (OA); *Market Harborough*: Farndon Road (SP 71976 86507); *Narborough*: Desford Road (SP 539 974); *Nether Broughton*: 46 Middle Lane (SK 6950 2559) (Archaeology & Built Heritage); *Newton Harcourt*: Glen Road (SP 635 966); *Ravenstone*: Ashby Road (SK 39962 13878); *Ravenstone*: Heather Lane (SK 40203 13332); *Rothley*: 23 Fowke Street (NGR); *Scalford*: Land north of Melton Road (SK 76110 24181); *Smeeton Westerby*: Mill Lane (SP 67730 93026); *Sproxton*: St Bartholemew's Church (SK 8565 2491) (Network Archaeology); *Swadlincote*: 23 Main Street (SK 34562 09365); *Swannington*: 79 Main Street (SK 4155 1645); *Thurnby*: St Lukes CofE Primary School, Main Street (SK 64769 03936).

RUTLAND

All archives are deposited with Rutland County Museum (RCM) under the accession number given at the end of each entry.

Great Casterton, Pickworth Road (SK 99953 09244)

Tim Sharman

Human remains were uncovered during a conservatory extension by the developer on land at Pickworth Road. The police were informed and a bone fragment was sent off for radiocarbon dating; this gave a late Roman date for the burial.

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by MOLA in September 2015 and this showed it was an isolated burial. It was a male adult with a pair of iron fetters, secured with a lock fastened around his ankles and buried in a probable ditch. Iron hobnails were present around the feet of the individual. Some sherds of fourth-century Roman period pottery and fragments of animal bone were also recovered. The individual appeared to have been buried in a ditch, although restrictions on the limit of excavation and some modern truncation precluded any certainty on the method of burial. OAKRM:2015.12.

**Ketton Quarry (Ketton Gorse: SK 96379 05236;
Ruddy Field 19W: SK 96251 05240)**

*Chris Jones, Mary
and Mo Muldowney*

Archaeological investigations were undertaken during 2017 on land north of Empingham Road, at Ketton Quarry. These comprised a geoarchaeological assessment of surface depressions within Ketton Gorse and a watching brief of Field 19W.

In February, within Ketton Gorse, test-pits were excavated in two of *c.*30m sub-circular depressions (*c.*1–2m deep) mapped by a LIDAR (Light Detection and Ranging) survey, which were aligned along a major north-east to south-west fault in the limestone. These conical hollows, suspected solution hollows or sinkholes have poorly understood formation and infilling history. The excavated hollows contained *in situ* undisturbed natural bedrock with no indication of human activity (such as quarrying) or sediment with environmental potential that relate to archaeological time periods.

The watching brief during September and October revealed the remains of up to 11 iron smelting furnaces, as well as a ditch and three unrelated pits. The smelting furnaces were located within an area of clay, distinct from the limestone to the west and north. They were all aligned in different directions and were arranged in no particular order or pattern. All were, however, sited on the east side of a narrow boundary ditch, which demarcated the area of clay from the start of the limestone to the west. Two abraded pottery sherds of Roman date were recovered from the ditch.

Seven of the furnaces were similar in appearance, sub-rectangular in plan with bulbous ends. One end retained the scorched clay formed whilst the furnace was in use, and all contained burnt material, charcoal and slag. Throughout the clay were scatters of ironstone nodules, which may be the raw material used in the furnaces. A further four possible furnaces were excavated, but these were very shallow. No

dateable material was recovered from the furnaces or pits, but there is the potential to achieve a date for final use through analysis of charcoal.

North Luffenham, St George's Barracks (SK 46750 27100) *Jamie McCarthy*

A 46 trial trench evaluation by Wessex Archaeology, in advance of the redevelopment of St George's Barracks, uncovered pits and ditches containing pottery dating to the Middle/Late Iron Age, suggesting a possible farmstead settlement of this period; though no definite structural remains were identified. A single pit dating to the late Iron Age/Romano-British period suggests some continuity of occupation. Undated ditches and gullies were also recorded. Despite the nearby presence of a known Saxon cemetery, no remains dating to this period were uncovered. OAKRM:2015.18.

Uppingham, land at Leicester Road (SK 8586 0019) *Sean Parker*

A detailed magnetic gradiometer survey was undertaken for Matrix Planning Ltd in connection with proposed development on land at Leicester Road, Uppingham, Rutland. The survey area totalled c.7.2ha. The survey was undertaken between 12 and 19 June 2017.

The site has strong archaeological potential that is confirmed by the suspected round barrows in area 1; there are also multiple linear features that could be former boundaries and pits. One such double-ditched boundary has previously been mapped from aerial photographs.

Most of the site has clear agricultural anomalies, showing that the site will confirm many of the potential features present.

Historic Building Recording

Teigh Teigh Lodge Farm (SK 8569 1626) Witham Archaeology

Negative watching briefs and evaluations in Rutland
(undertaken by ULAS, unless otherwise stated)

Empingham: Land at Bayleys Close (SK 9518 0885) (PCAS); *Greetham:* Greetham Garden Centre, Oakham Road (SK 9210 1443) Allen Archaeology

PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME ANNUAL REPORT FOR LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND 2017

Wendy Scott, Finds Liaison Officer, Museums Service,
Leicestershire County Council

Objects recorded and period breakdown

In 2017 the Leicestershire team, now consisting of the FLO, four volunteers and four self-recorders, have added 1,831 objects, in 1,533 records, from 112 finders. The scheme has recorded 1,308 objects (1,168 records) for Leicestershire and 390 objects (307 records) for Rutland. The majority of finders provided ten or eight figure grid references, utilising GPS, and the remainder provided information to produce six figure references from mapping software. Roman artefacts and coins remain the most numerous finds reported, closely followed by medieval coins.

This year Rupert Birtwistle, a postgraduate student at Leicester University, completed the mammoth task of recording the flint collection of a prolific finder from Leicestershire on behalf of the PAS. The ‘Massey collection’ of over 680 objects is slowly being added to the database by my regular volunteers and will make a valuable contribution to mapping the Counties’ prehistoric activity.

In 2018 the PAS, and the Leicestershire FLO, celebrate 15 years of existence. Although the scheme started in the late 1990s it only became a nationwide scheme with HLF funding in 2003. To celebrate we are launching an Instagram account, highlighting the best discoveries, and will have an accompanying social media campaign #PAS15.

Interesting objects recorded in Leicestershire and Rutland

PREHISTORIC

Early Neolithic flint leaf-shaped arrowhead, LEIC-B31DBC – Uppingham, Rutland (Fig. 22)

An early Neolithic flint leaf-shaped arrow head (4000–3500 BC) of Ogival type was amongst a small scatter of Neolithic flint found by a local detectorist. It is a wonderfully fragile and beautiful object and it demonstrates the valuable contribution of observant detectorists, who collect by eye as well as by ear wherever they go.

PREHISTORIC SWORD FRAGMENTS

Prehistoric sword fragments are generally very rare, but in 2017 three fragments from different parts of a sword, all from different periods, were discovered.

Late Bronze Age sword fragment, LEIC-90D6B3 – Whissendine, Rutland

Rare late Bronze age sword fragment (950–800 BC). Dr Neil Wilkin at the British Museum has identified the fragment as belonging to a relatively small group of British swords with ‘solid’ bronze hilts rather than organic ones (Burgess and Colquhoun 1988, 122, no. 751–5), including a recent discovery in a hoard from



Fig. 22.

Cherry Burton, Yorkshire (YORYM-958D05). This type of sword has parallels in continental Europe and, in terms of chronology, it belongs to the Ewart Park phase.

Burgess, C. and Colquhoun, I. 1988. *The Swords of Great Britain*.

Iron Age anthropomorphic mount, LEIC-C69CAB – Arnesby, Harborough (Fig. 23)

Iron Age anthropomorphic mount (200 BC–AD 50), showing a male head with gaping mouth. Only two others have been recorded by the PAS and identification is still uncertain, but can be paralleled by swords such as that from Grimston, East Yorks. This has a stylised human as its handle; the torso is the grip, arms and legs form the guards, and the head is a pommel cap.

Late Iron Age scabbard mouth fitting, LEIC-C9D34C – Cossington, Charnwood
 Late Iron Age sword scabbard mouth fitting (50 BC–AD 50). This copper alloy fitting would have formed a rigid edge to the scabbard opening. Again a rare find – only five other examples have been recorded by the PAS nationally.



Fig. 23.

ROMAN

Late Roman 'swan-necked' spoon, LEIC-B9A082 – Eaton, Melton Mowbray

A late Roman inscribed 'swan-necked' spoon (AD 250–400) was found originally in 2000 and reported to the County Archaeology team. It was recorded in 2016 after the finder asked for confirmation that all of his finds were properly recorded. Finders are encouraged to make old finds available for recording. Our records are a form of on-line publication, ensuring the information is available to all. This find is a significant example of why this is important. The swan-necked spoon on its own is a nice find, but this one is rare as a name is inscribed across its bowl. In 2017, Dr Roger Tomlin confirmed the inscription TEGERNEMA [...], as 'Tegernemaglus'. This is a 'Celtic' name well attested in post-Roman Britain, meaning both king (tegnos) and lord (maglos). It adds considerably to the very small corpus of ancient personal names in the county.

We are extremely grateful to the finder, Steve Colman, who donated the object to Leicestershire Museums Service in 2017. The spoon is on display at Melton Carnegie Museum.

Early medieval

Zoomorphic pin head, LEIC-C26523 – Kirby Bellars, Melton Mowbray (Figs 24 and 25)

Copper alloy zoomorphic pin head (AD 700–800). This is an extremely rare find in an already small group of objects. There are only four pins listed on our database, decorated with the same mouse-like creature with its tail wrapped around its body, forming the terminal – the closest parallel being RAH1481 (the others are WMID-1E3407, [NLM-B4B904](#) and [CPAT-076382](#)). This one is so far unique, being the only example with cast ‘interlace’ decoration and the addition of a blue glass/stone eye.

Lead weight, LEIC-5C4051 – Shepshed, Charnwood

This lead weight, inlaid with a glass-like substance, is a typical ‘Viking’ artefact. It is the first recorded in Leicestershire, and an important find in its own right. It was also found very close to an Anglo-Viking coin (LEIC-B7F405 and TLAHS 90). Groups of artefacts such as these are good indicators of Scandinavian activity. Scatters of lead weights, gaming pieces, coins and other metalwork recorded by the PAS are currently being studied by Richards and Hadley (Torksey Project, LAHS lecture January 2018), and are revealing possible Viking winter camps not listed



Fig. 24.



Fig. 25.

in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle. Another has been identified just over the border at Catton in Derbyshire, with gaming pieces, strap ends and Arabic Dirham fragments.

Immediately to the north-east of this latest find, on the banks of the Soar in Loughborough, more evidence has turned up. A mystery object, possibly a goad spur (LEIC-EEF651), was found on the southern bank and a trefoil brooch (LEIC-BD8163) was found close by on the opposite bank. Together, these objects add weight to a Scandinavian presence, possibly even another ‘winter camp’ in the Loughborough area.

Anglo-Scandinavian stirrup strap mounts, LEIC-8D1AC0 and LEIC-8C54F0 – Peckleton, Hinckley and Bosworth (Fig. 26)

A pair of Anglo-Scandinavian stirrup strap mounts (AD 1000–1100) were found on separate occasions by the same person. They are only the second pair we have



Fig. 26.

recorded nationally (the others are from Oxfordshire). They are Williams class A type 11A, a rare sub-type with only 11 known. So far, they also appear to have a Midlands distribution and may be a regional variant. More examples are needed to confirm this. They are also part of a scatter of finds which highlight neatly the settlement shift at Peckleton. Starting in the south-west, we have these mounts amongst a group of late early medieval objects. The finds are then found north-east in the high medieval period, with a scatter centred on the church, which now stands alone to the south of the present village.

We would like to pay tribute here to David Williams and his work on stirrup mounts and other early medieval artefacts. He was a dear colleague and friend, who sadly we lost in December 2017. The world of artefacts studies is much the poorer without him.

Zoomorphic mount, LEIC-FFDEE7 – Skeffington, Harborough

This zoomorphic mount is a very nice example of classic Romanesque decoration (1050–1200), in the form of a backwards-facing beast biting its own tail within a round frame. Decorative mounts of this type are rare, with only one exact parallel recorded by the PAS (DENO-75BAA6 found near Mansfield). There are also a handful of rectangular and circular book mounts with similar decoration.

Coins from Leicestershire and Rutland

476 coins (including 25 in three hoards) were recorded in 2017 in Leicestershire and 175 (including 14 in two hoards) coins in Rutland. Roman coins totalled 262. Medieval coins came in second as usual with 221; 157 post-medieval coins were recorded as well as eight Iron Age, two early medieval and one modern.

Nummus of Constantine, LEIC-222A4D, Rutland

A very rare Nummus of Constantine II (AD 317–340) was found in Rutland. Only about ten of these coins have been recorded nationally, all originating from the Trier mint. This find is unusual in that it has only the Emperors title as its reverse motif.

Early medieval penny, WAW-A5B442 – Witherly, Hinckley and Bosworth (Fig. 27)

Rare early medieval penny, issued by Archbishop Wulfred of Canterbury (c.823–825). It unusually features a tonsured bust, rather than that of the monarch. Only 14 of these have been recorded nationally and this is the most northerly example found.

Medieval silver penny, LEIC-B3FE7D – Ridlington, Rutland (Fig. 28)

Medieval silver penny of John III of Brabant, Brussels mint (AD 1312–55). Only six have been recorded by the PAS. These and other similar coins are known as ‘Sterling imitations’, as European leaders copied English Sterling designs which had a good reputation for quality. It was thought that these were either lost by Europeans or were present as bullion. Given the growing quantity of Sterling imitations being recorded by the PAS, it is probable that these were being accepted in transactions, in spite of being technically illegal.



Fig. 27.



Fig. 28.

Treasure cases

Nationally, a total of 1,239 cases were dealt with in 2017, a new record, and 28 of those were reported in Leicestershire. Of these, 17 were found in Leicestershire, four were from Rutland and one was from Leicester city. The majority of local cases were either coin hoards or finger rings. Those worthy of note are listed here.

Bronze Age gold ring, PUBLIC-F4E0E7 2017T997 – Thorpe Satchville, Melton Mowbray (Fig. 29)

A Bronze Age, gold penannular ring with ribbed surface (1600–1000 BC). These objects are fairly rare, with only 130 examples listed by us in total. They are generally plain with a circular cross section. This flat, ribbed type is much rarer, with only three other examples recorded. This is also our first treasure case recorded by the finder, and had been so expertly researched that the treasure report proved exceptionally easy to write.

The object has been disclaimed by Leicestershire museums, but will be loaned to us for one year and will be displayed at Melton Carnegie museum.

Group of silver Iron Age coins, LEIC-6D20ED – Thornton, Hinckley and Bosworth

A group of four silver Iron Age units of the Corieltavi (60–20 BC). They are all of the same 'proto boar' type and are notable as they are earlier than the Hallaton treasure examples, and they have good, clear depictions of boars. The coins of this type found in the treasure are more typical and have very poor or blank 'boar' sides. It is thought that for some reason, the majority of coins became 'blank' as the boar dies became worn and were never re-cut.



Fig. 29.

We are extremely grateful to the finder and landowner for donating these to Leicestershire Museums. They will be displayed in the Hallaton treasure gallery in Market Harborough.

Republican Denarii, 2017T475 LEIC-F34F86 and 2017T417 LEIC-F4014B – Whissendine, Rutland

T475 is a Pierced Republican Denarii (c.140–130 BC) of L. Trebanius. The piercing suggests it has been deliberately taken out of circulation and is probably a temple offering, as coins were often nailed to temple structures. T417 is a silver intaglio finger ring fragment from the same field. This is probably associated with T475, as we are seeing increasing numbers of objects made of precious metal appearing in temple assemblages. The assumption is that fragments of objects held meaning, perhaps as symbols of occupation or rank, or were at least good substitutes for coin offerings.

Hoard of Roman Sestertii and other objects, 2017T540 LEIC-FF9BCD – Leighfield, Rutland

Roman Sestertius hoard with associated other coins and objects (AD 138–268). This is an interesting hoard as the coins are extremely worn, and were found along with other worn and broken copper alloy objects, including a Late Iron Age harness fitting (LEIC-FD99C4), figurative mount or handle (LEIC-09128C) and blundered later coins. Along with a large scatter of lead, this provides promising evidence for a metalworking site.

Roman jet and gold bead, 2017T557 – Leicester city (Fig. 30).

Roman jet and gold bead (AD 250–400). This is a rare excavated treasure case from the Stibbe site in Leicester. Dr Nick Cooper writes ‘jet objects were fashionable in the Late Roman period and beads were not uncommon. Examples are known from Leicester (e.g. Cooper 1999, 260, fig.124.79 and 80), although they are more common in Yorkshire, closer to the Whitby jet outcrops. However one with applied gold sheet is remarkable, and appears to have no parallels in Britain. The closest British parallel is the jet bead armet from a grave at Westhawk Farm, Ashford Kent, where the beads had gold foil spots applied to their surfaces (Lindsay Allason-Jones



Fig. 30.

pers. comm). From the Continent, an armband from a grave group in Cologne has two bands of gold foil or paint, running in grooves around the circumference (Allason-Jones 1996, 14, fig.12).’

Cooper, N. J., 1999 ‘The Small Finds’ in A. Connor and R. Buckley (eds) *Roman and Medieval Occupation in Causeway Lane, Leicester*. Leicester Archaeology Monographs No. 5, 245–82.

Allason-Jones, L., 1996 *Roman Jet in the Yorkshire Museum*. York: The Yorkshire Museum.

Early medieval coin pendant, LEIC-D22E312017T739 – Hoby with Rotherby, Melton (Fig. 31)

Early Medieval coin pendant of Edward the Confessor (issued AD 1048–50). This is a wonderful intact example of a coin pendant which has been dated by its coin, a small flan-type minted in nearby Stamford. As a pendant it is harder to date and it could have been made shortly after Edward’s death and worn by a supporter, as a subdued saint’s cult existed shortly after the Norman Conquest. However, it may have been an heirloom coin, made into a pendant after Edward was canonised by the Pope in AD 1161. He remained a national saint until the adoption of St George c.1350.



Fig. 31.



Fig. 32.

Late medieval finger ring, LEIC-743E7A 2017T19 – Asfordby, Melton

Late medieval iconographic finger ring (1400–1550). This silver gilt ring has a three-faced bezel which may represent St John the Evangelist, flanked by two saints or angels. These rings are appearing more frequently, with over 100 examples recorded as treasure. Not all of this ‘type’ have clear religious decoration. This is a good example with a clear saintly portrait. Acquired by Leicestershire Museums.

Because of the nature of the treasure process it is seldom possible to report on all cases from the same year. An instance of this is a case from 2016 that has only just been processed.

Probable Æstel terminal, LEIC-57BE78 2016T951 – Grimston, Melton Mowbray (Figs 32 and 33)

This is a rare (and only) probable Æstel terminal in the form of a beast’s head. It has beaded ‘filigree’ wire decoration and stone/glass eyes set in gold collars, with raised strips forming ears and nostrils. Its function as an Aestel is unknown, but a few notable parallel objects are also recorded by the PAS. The closest in form, although at different ends of the decorative spectrum, are NMS-02D9D8 and SWYOR-C75C64. The item was disclaimed by Leicestershire museums; however, at the time of printing another museum service has expressed an interest.