



## Archaeological Field Evaluation

On behalf of

**MTX Contracts Ltd**

Concerning

**East Midlands Congenital Heart Centre**

**University Hospital Leicester**

**(Leicester Royal Infirmary)**

**Jarrom Street**

**Leicester**

July 2019



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*Cover: View of site looking northeast*

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## 1 Non-Technical Summary

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*Border Archaeology (BA) was instructed by MTX Contracts Ltd to carry out a programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation (AFE) in connection with the proposed relocation of East Midlands Congenital Heart Centre to University Hospital Leicester (Leicester Royal Infirmary) involving internal alterations and a three-storey extension to the existing Kensington Building (NGR SK 58583 03575) (Planning ref. 20182199) (fig. 1).*

*The site was located on the southeast side of Jarrom Street, roughly 1km from Leicester city centre, on a narrow sward between the street and the hospital buildings, which was considered likely to have been heavily landscaped and supplied with services during construction of the Kensington Building.*

*Its importance in archaeological terms focused upon its location within the former boundaries of an extra-mural suburb of the Romano-British town of Ratae Corieltavorum, with potential to contain significant evidence relating to the contemporary road network and water supply system.*

*A single evaluation trench was opened, its dimensions reflecting the physical constraints of the site. The trench revealed modern made-ground deposits, together with service pipes and brick ducting, with no archaeological features or deposits encountered.*

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## 2 Introduction

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Border Archaeology Ltd (BA) was instructed by Aaron Burke BE (Hons.) Design Manager on behalf of MTX Contracts Ltd to undertake a programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation (AFE) in connection with the proposed relocation of East Midlands Congenital Heart Centre to Leicester Royal Infirmary involving internal alterations and a three-storey extension to the Kensington Building facing onto Jarrom Street Leicester (NGR SK 58583 03575) (Planning ref. 20182199) (*fig. 1*).

Fieldwork took place on July 8<sup>th</sup> 2019.

The site lay within the boundaries of an extra-mural suburb of the Romano-British town of *Ratae Corieltauorum*, close to the Roman road from Leicester to *Tripontium* (Shawell Warwickshire) and the Scheduled Raw Dykes Roman Aqueduct (List Entry No. 1017391), thought to run c.20-30m to the E of the site.

This Report details the results of the AFE and is for submission to Anne Provan Team Leader Conservation Team Leicester City Council.

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## 3 Site Description

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The site was located c.1km from Leicester city centre on a confined roadside strip of land c.3m wide separating Jarrom Street from the Kensington Building.

This location is considered to be of archaeological importance as it lies within the boundaries of a Romano-British extra-mural suburb, with the projected line of the Roman road between *Ratae Corieltauorum* and *Tripontium* potentially running directly across the E end of the site whilst line of the Raw Dykes Roman Aqueduct, a Scheduled Monument (List Entry No. 1017391), is thought to lie c.20-30m E.

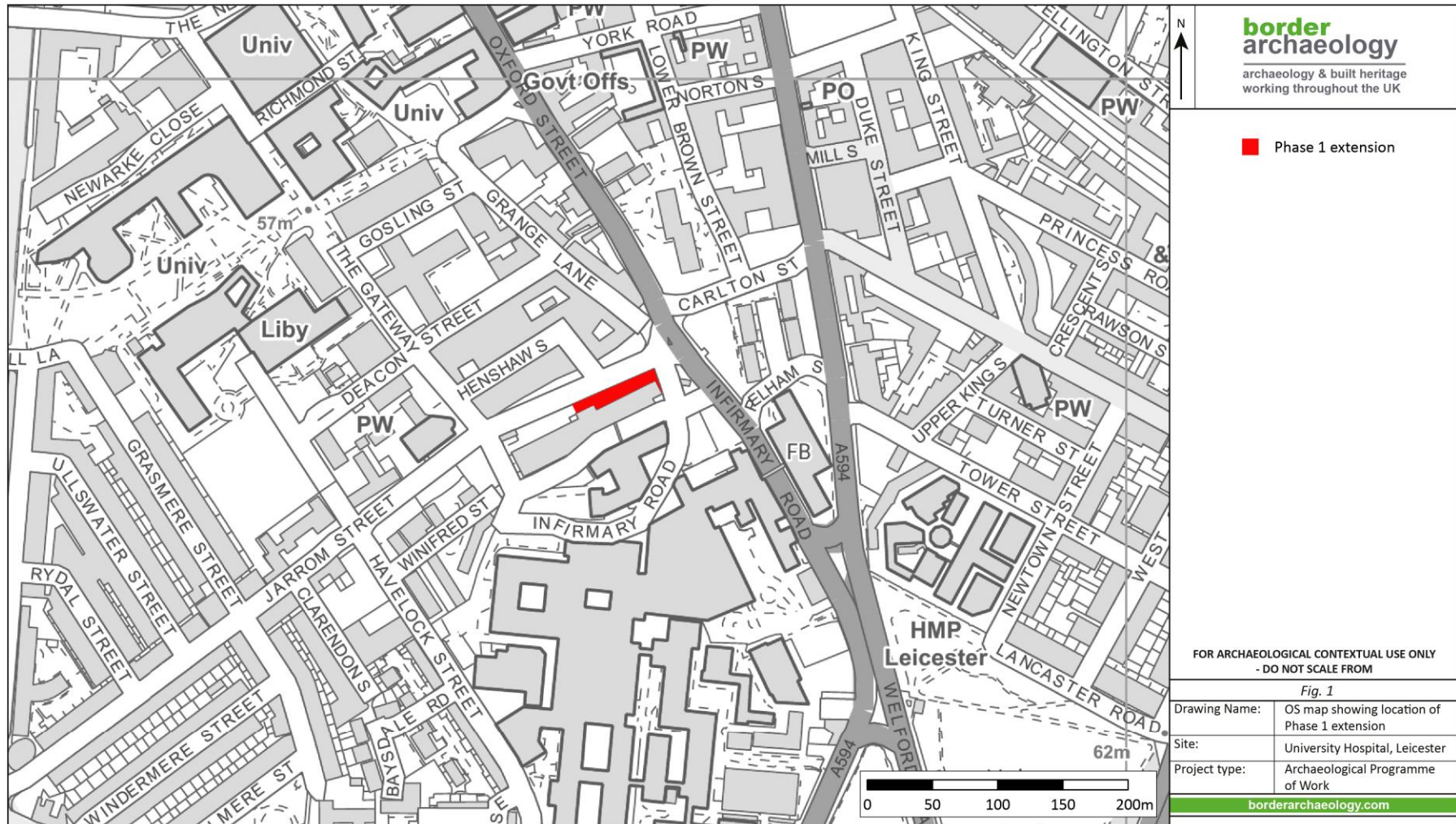
### 3.1 Soils and Geology

Solid geology is recorded as Branscombe Mudstone Formation with superficial deposits of alluvial clay, silt, sand and gravel underlain by Syston Member sands and gravels, with Keuper Marl deposits also recorded (BGS 2019).

A geotechnical borehole excavated to a depth of 6m below existing ground level (bgl) on the N side of Jarrom Street (NGR SK 58280 03570) recorded 0.9m of made-ground overlying soft dark grey and brown mottled clay with occasional gravel and ash extending to 1.7m bgl. Underlying this was a firm brown sandy gravelly clay alluvium to 2.3m bgl above dense yellowish-brown clayey sandy gravel deposit to 4m bgl (BGS 2019).

The evaluation trench encountered made-ground overlying firm mid-orange-brown silty clay natural at a depth of c.0.9m.





## 4 Brief Historical and Archaeological Background

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The following summary is based on the results of BA's Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (ADBA) (BA 2018) previously submitted in connection with the proposed development.

### 4.1 Prehistoric

An important Late Iron Age settlement was established on the E bank of the River Soar from the late 1<sup>st</sup> Century BC. However, recorded evidence for prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site is limited, consisting of a small quantity of residual worked lithics and Iron Age pottery recovered during evaluation in 1993-4 at Bonners Lane, about 200m NW of the site and, more recently, an undated ditch and two residual arrowheads of possible Neolithic date revealed in 2005 at 52 Grange Lane, about 75m NW of the site.

### 4.2 Romano-British

The site lies within the boundaries of an extra-mural suburb to the S of the Romano-British *civitas* (city) of *Ratae Corieltauvorum*. The line of the Roman road from Leicester to *Tripontium* appears to run directly across the E end of the site. Significant evidence of Roman roadside occupation and extra-mural burials extending alongside the Leicester to *Tripontium* road have also been identified by previous archaeological work undertaken in the vicinity of the site, although the precise extent and chronology of Romano-British occupation and burial activity has yet to be fully established. The postulated course of the Raw Dykes, a substantial Romano-British ditch or aqueduct feature, also runs about 20-30m to the E of the site.

### 4.3 Medieval

Throughout the medieval period, the site lay on the southern fringes of the medieval urban settlement of Leicester on the northern edge of an open-field system known as 'the South Fields' (the present-day South Fields area of the city). The site of the medieval church of St Sepulchre's (subsequently occupied by the Leicester Royal Infirmary in the late 18<sup>th</sup> Century) is located about 40m SE of the site. The precise extent of the cemetery is unclear.

### 4.4 Post-Medieval

Historic map evidence shows the site lying within open fields to the SW of Oxford Street in the 16<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Century.

The former site of a substantial early 19<sup>th</sup> Century prison or 'House of Correction' (demolished 1847) is marked on historic mapping immediately SE of the proposed development.



The 1888 Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 25-Inch map records a row of densely-packed workers' houses fronting onto Jarrom Street within the boundaries of the site, as well as associated gardens, yards and outbuildings to the rear. The housing was cleared in the late 1960s-early 1970s. Other features shown for the first time are the Sir Robert Peel public house at the junction of Jarrom Street with Gateway Street, the 'Deacon Street Works' (an elastic web factory), and a small area of public garden occupying the centre of Infirmary Square.

## 5 Aims and Objectives

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These were as follows:

- To clarify the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusion and assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits and surviving structures of archaeological significance in order to inform any potential mitigation strategy;
- To identify any evidence of the Roman road running between *Ratae Corieltavorum* and *Tripontium* or the Scheduled Raw Dykes Roman Aqueduct, any evidence of which would be regarded as being of considerable significance;
- To consider the extent to which any archaeological features, structures or deposits present within the site may inform the regional research themes and objectives (Cooper 2006; Knight *et al.* 2012) detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (BA 2019).

## 6 Methodology

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Following detailed discussion with the City Archaeologist, it was agreed that the aim should be to open a 35m ENE-WSW-aligned trench using a mini-digger and 1.5m toothless bucket. It was acknowledged, however, that the limited width of the site, combined with the presence of trees, a 2m slope and the proximity of the Kensington Building, may dictate otherwise and that the trenching option might have to be abandoned in favour of Archaeological Observation of engineering groundworks.

Trenching was in the event considered viable but constraints were such that it was not possible to open the full 35m specified in the WSI (BA 2019) and a trench of 22.7m × 1.5m was therefore excavated on the specified alignment.

Excavation proceeded in level spits of c.100mm through topsoil (001001) and modern made-ground (001002) to the natural substrate (001003), with removed soil retained for subsequent reinstatement.

## 6.1 Recording

Written, drawn and photographic records were made in accordance with BA's *Archaeological Field Recording Manual* (2017) and the WSI (BA 2019). The written record comprised a *pro-forma* trench recording sheet and separate context sheets for each context/stratigraphic unit encountered.

A trench plan was produced on gridded, archive stable polyester film, together with a representative section at a scale of 1:10. A temporary benchmark (TBM) was established using an Ordnance Survey (OS) cutmark on St Andrew's Church Jarrom Street. All drawings were numbered and listed in a drawing register, these drawing numbers being cross-referenced to written site records.

A photographic record was made using a high-resolution digital camera. Photographs included scales and photographic records were indexed and cross-referenced to written site records. Details concerning subject and direction of view were maintained in a photographic register, indexed by frame number.

## 7 Results

### 7.1 Trench 001

Trench 001 was opened in the ENE corner of the site and was aligned ENE-WSW along the NNW edge of the Kensington Building. The trench was 22.7m long × 1.5m wide, with a variable depth of 0.7-2m reflecting the presence of a modern water pipe and brick duct running, respectively, WNW-ESE and NW-SE beyond the trench limit (*Plates 1 & 2; fig. 2*).

Topsoil (001001) consisted of loose organic dark grey-brown silty clay to a maximum thickness of 0.1m containing occasional small-to-medium subangular and sub-rounded stones.

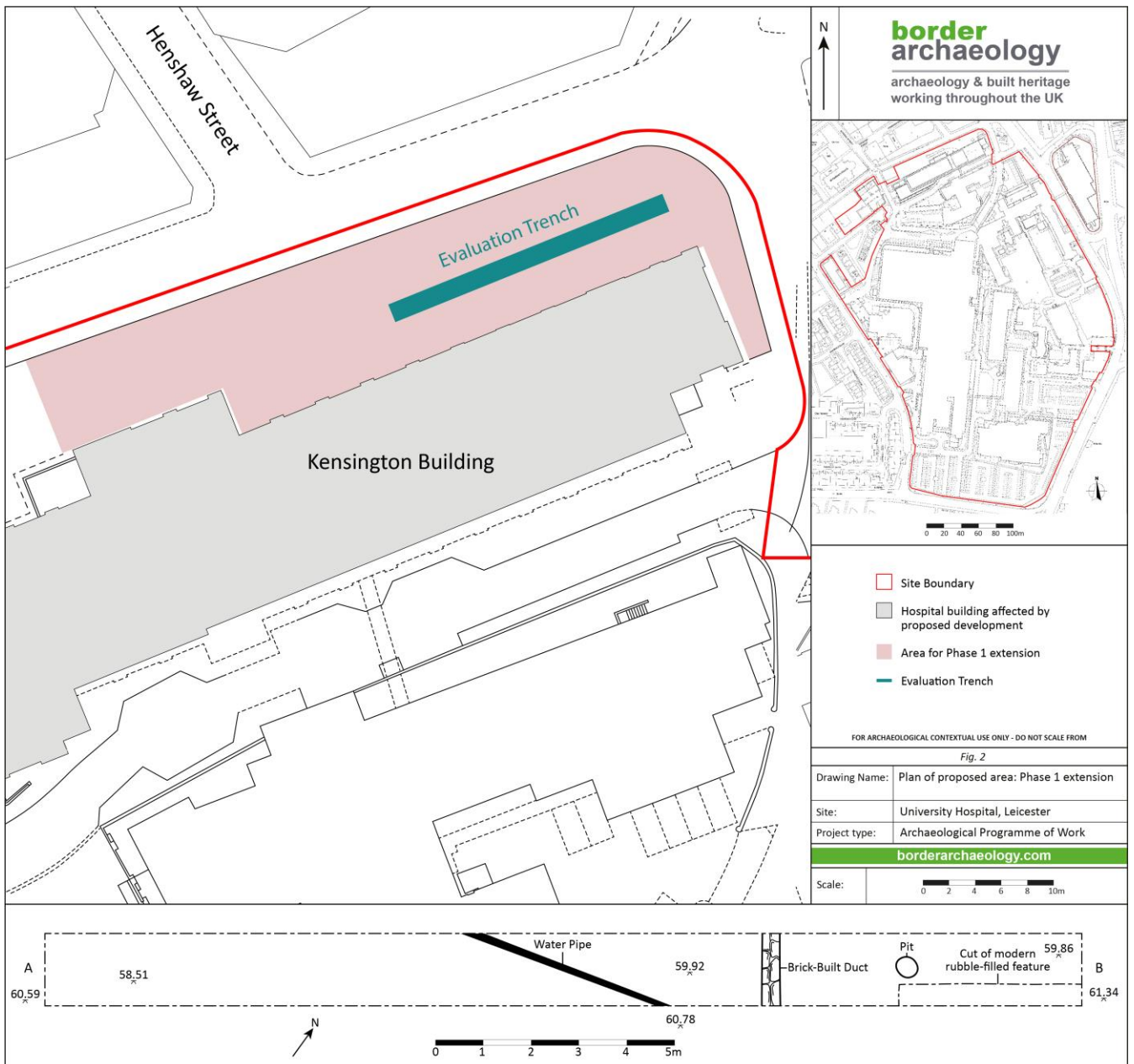
Underlying the topsoil, made-ground (001002) consisted of stony dark-to-light grey-brown silty clay to a maximum thickness c.0.9m containing frequent modern CBM.

The natural substrate (001003) was composed of firm mid-orange-brown silty clay and was encountered beneath (001002) at a depth of c.0.9m bgl generally, but at >1.2m in the SW trench section.

The water pipe ran between c.8m and 12m from the WSW extent of the trench at a depth of c.0.7m bgl, with the 0.4m-wide brick duct encountered c.6m from the ENE extent at a depth of 0.8m.

A rounded pit with regular edges together with a partially visible linear feature with squared corners filled by modern brick and mortar rubble were encountered close to the ENE end of the trench cutting made-ground (001002) (*Plate 2; fig. 2*).

No archaeological structures, features or deposits were encountered.



## 8 Significance of Results and Conclusion

The trenching confirms that this area had been heavily impacted by modern development, probably relating to construction of the Kensington Building.

In addition to the water pipe and brick duct encountered towards the centre and ESE extent of the trench, respectively, the modern pit and linear cutting made-ground at its ENE end are also likely to be associated with previous construction activity.



The results confirm that any buried archaeological deposits that may have been present have been removed by modern groundworks relating to development of the hospital site, thereby significantly reducing the archaeological potential of this specific area.



*Plate 1: NNW-facing representative section of Trench 001*





*Plate 2: View WSW of Trench 001*

## 9 Copyright

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## 10 Bibliography

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## 10.1 Cartography

1887 – OS 1<sup>st</sup> Edition 25-inch map.

1904 – OS 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 25-inch map.

1915 – OS 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition 25-inch map.

1930 – OS 4<sup>th</sup> Edition 25-inch map.

1970 – OS 1:1250 Map National Survey.



## 11 Appendix: Context table

### 11.1 Trench 001

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample No	Provisional Date
(001001)	Deposit	-	-	Loosely compacted organic dark grey-brown silty clay (50/50); occasional sub-rounded & sub-angular stones; 0.1m thick (60.98m AOD NNE, 60.88m AOD SSW). Overlies (001002).	Topsoil	-	-	Modern
(001002)	Deposit	-	-	Moderately compacted dark-to-light grey-brown silty clay (40/60); frequent brick & small to medium subangular & sub-rounded stones; c.0.9m thick (60.86m AOD NNE, 60.76m AOD SSW). Overlies (001003). Underlies (001001).	Made-ground	-	-	Modern
(001003)	Deposit	-	-	Firm mid-orange-brown silty clay (20/80) (59.56m AOD NNE, 58.50m AOD SSW). Underlies (001002).	Natural	-	-	-

Title		Reference	
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