

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND RECORDING REPORT:  
MANOR WORKS, MAIN STREET, FLECKNEY, LEICESTERSHIRE**

Planning Reference: 20/00091/FUL  
NGR: SP 64802 93464  
AAL Site Code: FLMS 20  
Museum Accession Number: X.A80.2019  
OASIS Reference Number: allenarc1-406725



Report prepared for Cropston Properties

By  
Allen Archaeology Limited  
Report Number AAL2020011

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Allenarchaeology



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*Cover image: General view of the site, looking northwest*

## Executive Summary

- Cropston Properties commissioned Allen Archaeology Limited to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition of planning consent for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of six dwellings at Manor Works, Main Street, Fleckney, Leicestershire.
- The site lies in an area of archaeological interest; medieval finds relating to settlement have been located close to the site and post-medieval activity associated with the brick and hosiery industry are also within the vicinity.
- The archaeological monitoring covered the demolition of existing buildings and foundations for six dwellings, and was undertaken on 21st May 2020 and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020. The works exposed a sequence of limited interest, comprising natural geology overlain by modern made ground.

## 1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 Cropston Properties commissioned Allen Archaeology Limited to undertake a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording as a condition of planning consent for a residential development on land at Manor Works, Main Street, Fleckney, Leicestershire.
- 1.2 The excavation, recording and reporting conformed to current national guidelines, as set out in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists '*Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*' (CIfA 2014) and the Historic England document '*Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*' (Historic England 2015) and a specification prepared by this company (AAL 2020a).
- 1.3 The documentary archive will be assembled in accordance with the local guidelines. The archive will be submitted to The Leicestershire County Council Museum, within twelve months of the completion of this report, where it will be stored under the museum accession code X.A80.2019.

## 2.0 Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The development site is located in Fleckney, in the administrative district of Harborough District Council, in the county of Leicestershire. It is situated 10km northwest of Market Harborough and 13km southeast of Leicester. The site is approximately 0.06 hectares and occupied by two buildings. It is centred at National Grid Reference SP 64802 93464 and is c.109m above Ordnance Datum (Figure 1).
- 2.2 The bedrock geology comprises Charmouth Mudstone Formation with an overlying superficial geology of glacial till, Mid Pleistocene – Diamicton (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

## 3.0 Planning Background

- 3.1 Planning permission was granted by Harborough District Council for the for the demolition of existing buildings and erection of six dwellings (revised scheme of 19/01490/FUL). The permission was granted subject to conditions, including the undertaking of a scheme of archaeological monitoring and recording during all associated groundworks.
- 3.2 The approach adopted is consistent with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), with the particular chapter of relevance being '*Chapter 16: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*' (Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government 2019).

## 4.0 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 4.1 The site is located within the historic settlement core of Fleckney (HER Ref: MLE16856), where there is a potential for remains of medieval and post-medieval date to be present. Fleckney was settled before the Norman Conquest and the Church of St. Nicholas contains 12<sup>th</sup> century fabric (MLE 12834). To the west of the village hall, medieval pottery has also been found (MLE 6713).
- 4.2 The Leicestershire Historic Environment Record (LHER) includes a reference to a middle Bronze Age looped spearhead, which is the earliest known find from Fleckney (MLE6315). It is possible that this is a residual find but it is not clear whether associated archaeological features may exist.
- 4.3 The origins of the village are not clear but there was settlement prior to the Norman Conquest when the land was held by Edward Alferd (Badcock 1980, 9). At this time the land lay in the Gartree Wapentake and belonged to Robert the Bursar and is mentioned twice in the Domesday Book as '*Flechenie*'. One carucate of land was referred to as waste and valued at 12d. The second entry lists three carucates of land, including meadow, all valued at 20s (Morgan 1979). In addition, a further seven carucates of land in Fleckney, held by the Bassets of Weldon, are not mentioned in the Domesday Book (Lee and McKinley 1964: 86).
- 4.4 Although there appears not to have been a manor house in Fleckney (the house known as the 'Manor' house bears no true association), the manorial rights passed down through various families until they came to the Lovelace family in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. These rights lapsed in the 1920's (Badcock 1980:12).
- 4.5 The majority of HER references for Fleckney document the presence of medieval remains. The Church of St. Nicholas on Main Street has Norman features, although much of the present church was rebuilt in 1869-70 (MLE1487). It is Listed as a Grade II\* Building and located to the west of the site. Medieval earthworks thought to represent early village settlement are to be found at the Cedars (MLE1486 and MLE1490). The earthwork of a medieval village fishpond is located southwest of the village centre (MLE1489). Pottery from medieval cooking pots was discovered west of the village hall (MLE6713). Landscape mapping for the village and the surrounding area shows ridge and furrow field systems suggesting the medieval agricultural exploitation of the area.
- 4.6 The village appears to have been a small farming community until the introduction of the brickmaking industry in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, which swelled the population from 348 in 1801 to 514 in 1831 (Badcock 1980: 23). The bricks were handmade and said to be extremely hard. The Fleckney village pond is an example of a former brick pit. By the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, hosiery had taken over as the main industry.
- 4.7 Early maps of Fleckney show the main settlement during the 18<sup>th</sup> century concentrated along Main Street but appeared to extend along what is now the High Street, as far as Cedar Farm (Welding 1984:3).
- 4.8 The site is located between the Grade II Listed Manor House and flanking wall to the west (Listing No. 1360758) and the Grade II Wolsey House to the east (Listing No. 1180210), both of which were constructed in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Brickmaker's mud and thatch cottages used to surround Manor House, but none appear to have survived after the 1950s (Lee and McKinley 1964).

- 4.9 Historic mapping suggests that the site was occupied by four buildings by 1886 and surrounded on all sides by residential development, some potentially associated with the hosiery factory (HER MLE22173) to the northeast. In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were four hosiery manufacturers registered in Fleckney (ibid, Wright's Directory of Leicestershire 1887-1888).
- 4.10 The site remains unchanged by the time of the publication of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map in 1904. The growth of the hosiery industry is evident with the expansion of the hosiery factory to the northeast of the site. The area of the site remained largely undeveloped by the time of the 1929 Ordnance Survey map. The buildings fronting Factory Square are still marked although they are now unshaded, in contrast to the surrounding buildings. This suggests that these buildings were perhaps being amended or were un-roofed at this time.
- 4.11 The buildings that were on the site, were subject to historic building recording prior to demolition, and comprised a main two storey structure with later extensions. Comparisons to historic mapping suggests the structure was built during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, with 20<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding. The buildings were most likely not residential in nature, and may have been used for storage, commercial or industrial use (AAL 2019a).

## **5.0 Aims and Objectives**

- 5.1 The purpose of the archaeological monitoring and recording was to allow the preservation by record of the archaeological resource within the proposed development area, where exposed by the groundworks.

## **6.0 Methodology**

- 6.1 Archaeological monitoring of groundworks for Units 1 and 2 and adjacent garage plot were undertaken on 21<sup>st</sup> May 2020 and 16<sup>th</sup> June 2020. Unit 3 and garage were undertaken without AAL being notified, but photos of the works were subsequently provided by the client.
- 6.2 A full written record of the archaeological deposits was made on standard Allen Archaeology Limited context recording sheets. A comprehensive record of all drawings was maintained, and the location of every section drawing plotted onto the site master plan and correctly referenced. All excavated sections were drawn at an appropriate scale (1:10, 1:20 or 1:50), with Ordnance Datum heights being displayed on each drawing.
- 6.3 All archaeological deposits and features were recorded by full colour photography, with an identification number board, metric scales and a north arrow, as appropriate. General site shots were also taken to show the location of the groundworks and the stratigraphic sequence.

## 7.0 Results

- 7.1 The initial visit was to monitor the demolition of the existing building on the site and grubbing out of foundations (Figure 2, cover image), recorded during a building survey in 2019 (AAL 2020b). A second visit in June was made to monitor groundworks for the new dwellings.
- 7.2 The works monitored in June 2020 extended across 3 Units; Unit 1 was located at the west end of the site, contained a 'T' shaped residential plot with further parking to the northeast. Unit 2 comprised a rectangular residential plot and was northeast of Plot 1. Between Units 1 and 2 were garages. Unit 3 was to the southeast of Unit 1. It comprised a housing plot and two garages, with parking for a further three vehicles (Figure 3).

### **Unit 1**

- 7.3 The earliest deposit in Unit 1 was the natural geology of glacial till, 101, a mid-brown silty clay. Sealing this was 100, made ground, up to 0.60m thick in places, and containing whole bricks (Plate 1).



*Plate 1: Unit 1, representative section, looking southwest*

### **Garages between Units 1 and 2**

- 7.4 Demolition layers 001 and 008, measuring 0.40m thick, sealed a large pit, [007], revealed in almost the entire length of the garage footings, and extending to the west beyond the limit of excavation. The pit was only apparent in the westernmost footing of the garage.
- 7.5 Pit [007] had a steep sloping northern edge, its base was not visible in section. It had a depth of 2m and was filled by 003, 004, 005 and 006, all of which were undated (Figure 4, Plate 2).
- 7.6 Pit 007 cut a mid-grey blue clay till, 002.





*Plate 2: Garages between Units 1 and 2, pit [007], looking southwest. Scale 1m*

## **Unit 2**

- 7.7 In the building plot and garages of Unit 2 a similar sequence of deposits was encountered to that of Unit 1. Mudstone 202 was overlain by glacial till, 201 which was sealed by modern demolition, 200 (Plate 3).



*Plate 3: Unit 2, representative section, looking northwest*

## **Unit 3 and Garages**

- 7.8 In the building plot and garages of Unit 3 the sequence of deposits comprised modern demolition material, 300, above natural mudstone 301 (Plate 4).



*Plate 4: Unit 3, representative section, looking south*

## **8.0 Discussion and Conclusions**

- 8.1 Monitoring of foundation trenches for the buildings and garages revealed one large undated pit. The 1886 and 1902 Ordnance Survey maps shows a track across where the pit is located, suggesting the pit predates 1886, but no dating evidence was recovered to confirm this.
- 8.2 Modern demolition layers sealed the natural geology across the site suggesting that there may have been significant truncation of deposits, possibly as a result of the construction and subsequent demolition of former buildings on the site.

## **9.0 Effectiveness of Methodology**

- 9.1 The methodology was appropriate to the scale and nature of the project; indicating that the development has not impacted upon the archaeological resource.

## **10.0 Acknowledgements**

- 10.1 AAL would like to thank Cropston Properties for the commission and the groundworkers on site for their assistance.

## 11.0 References

- AAL, 2020a, *Specification for Programme of Archaeological Monitoring and Recording During Groundworks at Manor Works, Main Street, Fleckney, Leicestershire*. Allen Archaeology Limited, Lincoln
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- Ordnance Survey map 1886 (surveyed 1884), Leicestershire XLV.5, National Library of Scotland
- Ordnance Survey map revised 1902 (published 1904), Leicestershire XLV.SW, National Library of Scotland
- Welding, J, D., 1984, *Leicestershire in 1777*, Leicestershire Libraries and Information

100 m

## Appendix 1: Context Summary List

Context	Type	Location	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Thickness/depth (m)	Interpretation
001	Layer	Garages between Units 1 and 2	Firm dark brown silty clay with brick and tarmac inclusions			0.40m	Demolition
002	Layer	Garages between Units 1 and 2	Light grey blue clay				Natural glacial till
003	Fill	Garages between Units 1 and 2	Orange sand			0.11m plus	Fill of 007
004	Fill	Garages between Units 1 and 2	Light grey yellow clay with chalk flecks			0.46m	Fill of 007
005	Fill	Garages between Units 1 and 2	Dark grey silt sand with chalk and charcoal flecks			0.22m	Fill of 007
006	Fill	Garages between Units 1 and 2	Mid yellow grey silt clay with chalk flecks			1.22m	Fill of 007
007	Fill	Garages between Units 1 and 2	Pit			2m	Brick Pit?
008	Cut	Garages between Units 1 and 2	Firm dark brown silty clay with brick and tarmac inclusions				Demolition
100	Layer	Unit 1	Firm dark brown silty clay with brick and tarmac inclusions			0.60	Demolition
101	Layer	Unit 1	Light grey blue clay			1m exposed	Natural glacial till
102	Layer	Unit 1	Firm Yellow mudstone			0.10 exposed	Natural mudstone
200	Layer	Unit 2	Firm dark brown silty clay with brick and tarmac inclusions			0.40m	Demolition
201	Layer	Unit 2	Light grey blue clay			1m exposed	Natural glacial till
202	Layer	Unit 2	Firm Yellow mudstone			0.10 exposed	Mudstone

<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Length (m)</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Thickness/depth (m)</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
300	Layer	Unit 3 and Garages	Firm dark brown silty clay with brick and tarmac inclusions			0.40m	Demolition
301	Layer	Unit 3 and Garages	Firm Yellow mudstone				Mudstone

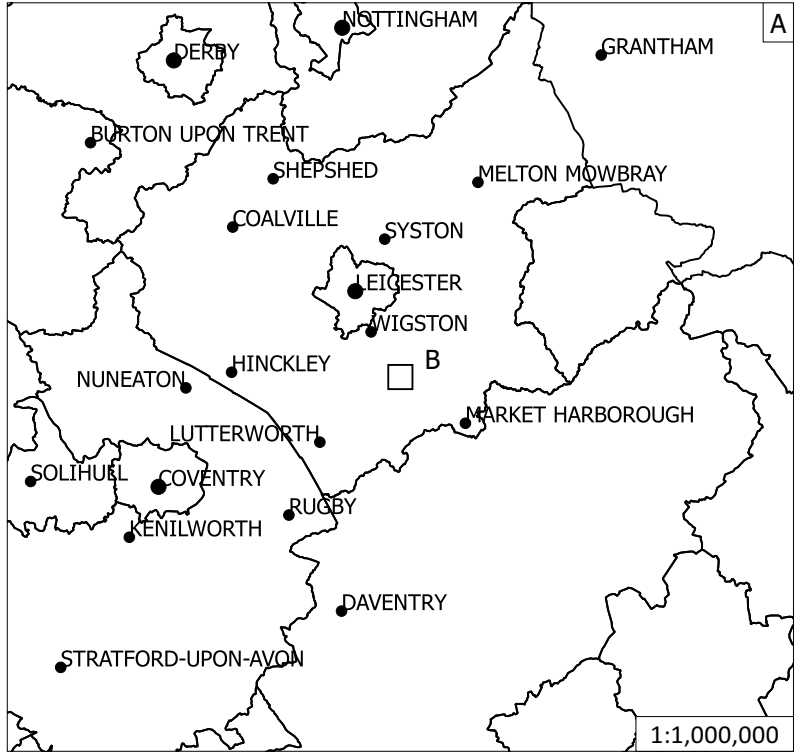
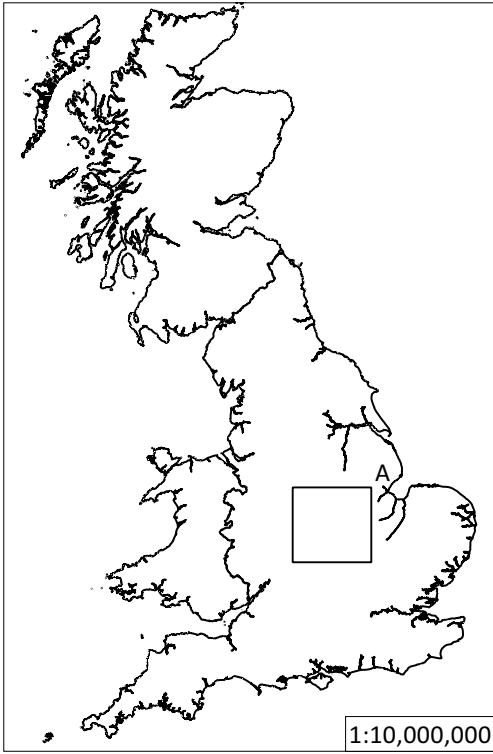


Figure 1: Site location outlined in red

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Site Code	FLMS 20
Scale	1:10,000,000 1:1,000,000 1:25,000 @ A4
Drawn by	V Zoppi
Date	13/10/2020

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Figure 3: Site location plan

293500



Key

— Site Boundary

+ + Section

— Monitored

— not Monitored

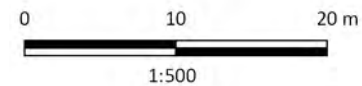
Site Code	FLMS 20
Scale	1:500 @ A4
Drawn By	V Zoppi
Date	05/11/2020

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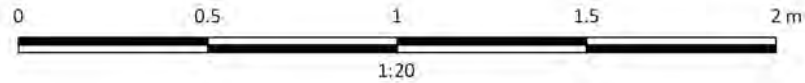
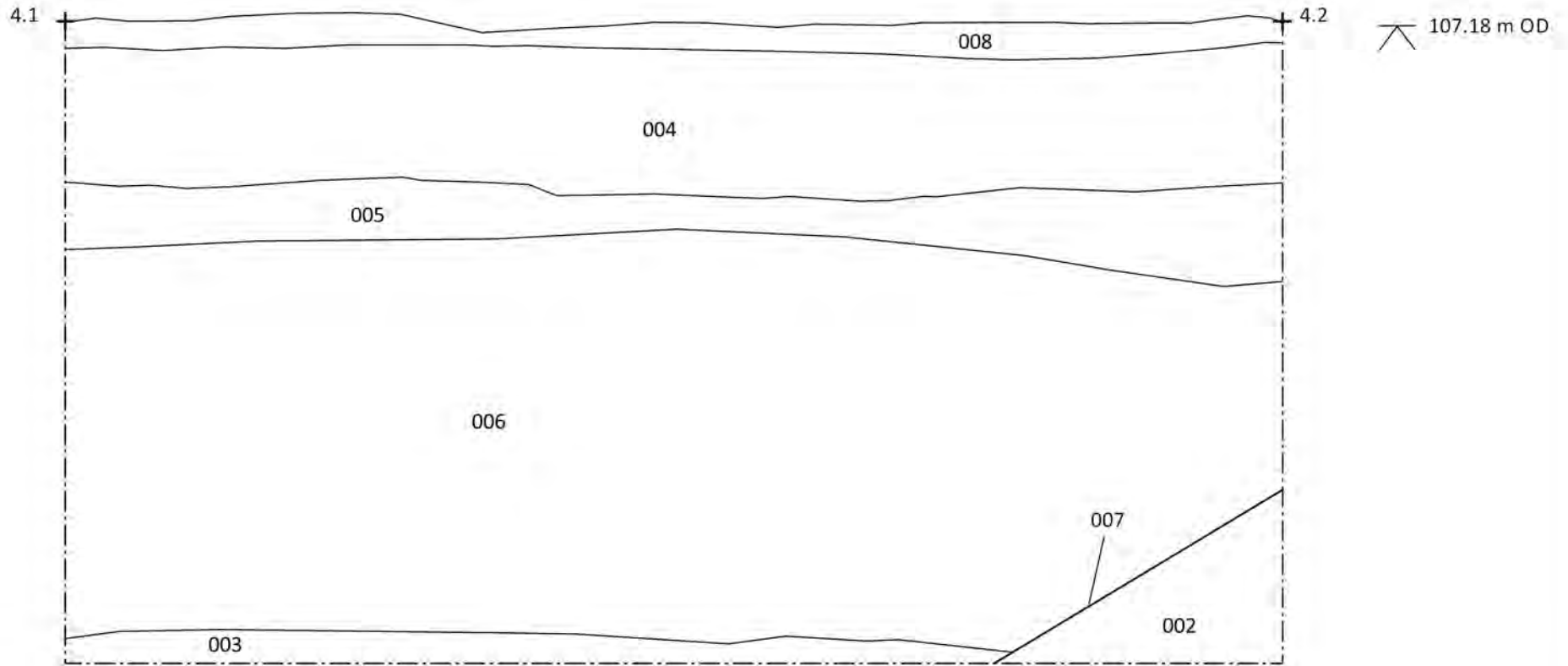
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Figure 3: Unit locations showing areas monitored and not monitored





Northeast-facing section



Site Code	FMLS 20
Scale	1:20 @ A4
Drawn By	V Zoppi
Date	27/10/2020

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Figure 4: Representative section



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