

**LAND AT THE FORMER CASTLE SOAPWORKS, THE CALLIS,
ASHBY-DE-LA-ZOUCH, LEICESTERSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

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Planning Ref.: 13/00517/FULM
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Prepared for
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Summary

An archaeological evaluation consisting of three trenches was undertaken on land at the former Castle Soapworks, The Callis, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, to inform the planning process concerning the survival, nature and extent of archaeological remains in the southern part of the site.

An archaeological desk-based assessment has identified the potential for remains relating to the early 19th century glue and leatherworks which occupied this part of the site prior to the development of the soapworks. The leatherworks buildings are clearly depicted on the town plan dating to 1837, and were probably first built in the late 18th century. The leatherworks closed in the first decade of the 20th century, when the site was bought by the growing soapworks; the buildings themselves were incorporated into the soapworks until redevelopment of the site in the late 1950's when they were demolished and the area covered with a tarmac carpark.

The results of the evaluation indicate a sequence of construction and demolition events, including the original leatherworks and at least two phases of construction for the soap works, potentially including one phase not recorded on historic mapping.

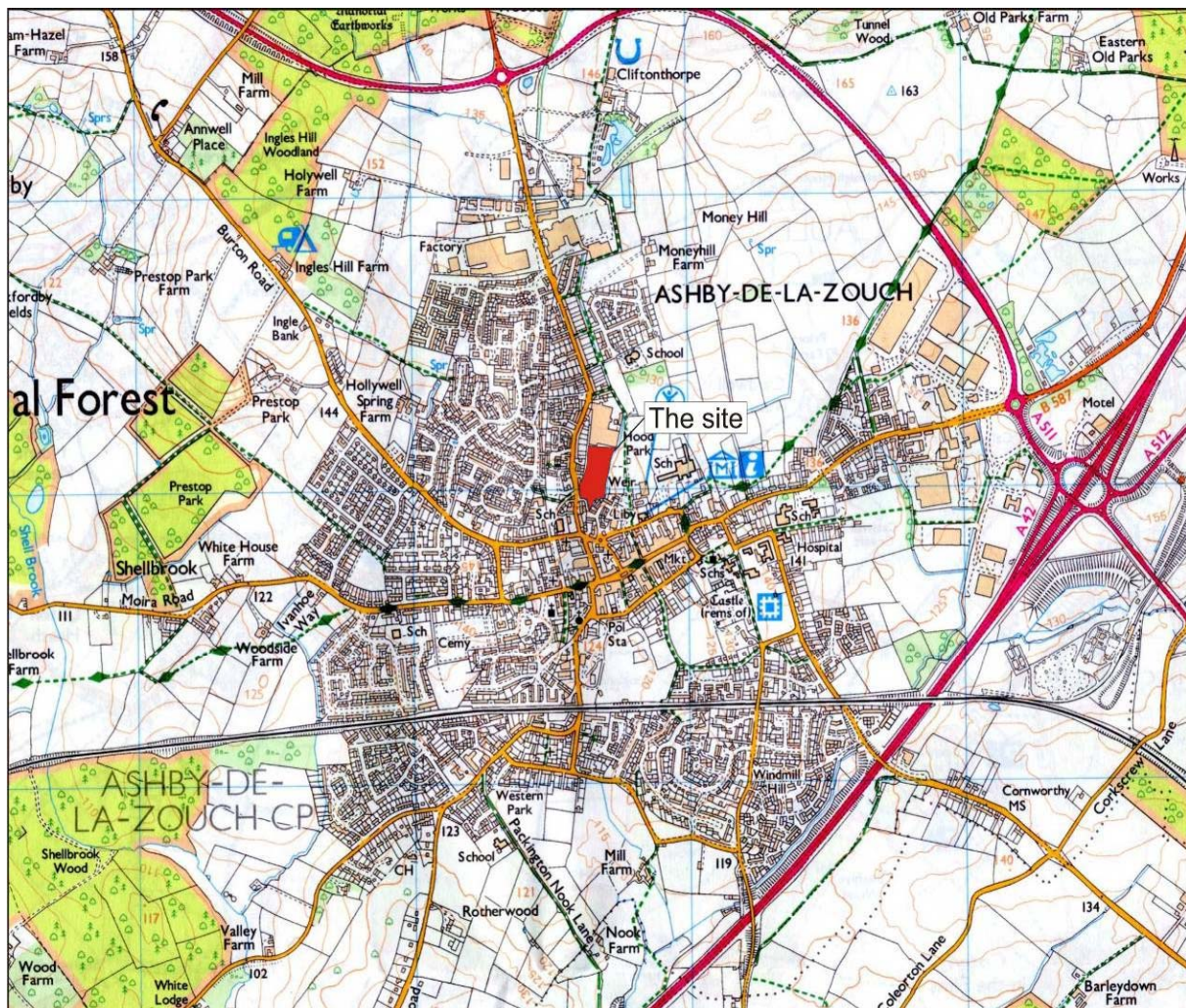


Figure 1: Location of the proposed redevelopment site at scale 1:25,000. The site is marked in red. (OS mapping © Crown copyright. All rights reserved. PCAS licence no. 100049278.)

1.0 Introduction

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd (PCAS) was commissioned by Ben Bailey Homes to carry out an archaeological evaluation on land at the former Castle Soapworks, The Callis, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire. This work took place to advise the proposed re-development of the site.

2.0 Location and description (Fig. 1 and 2)

Ashby-de-la-Zouch lies approximately 27km north-west of the centre of Leicester, 12km south-east of Burton-upon-Trent. It lies to the west of the A42/A511 junction, on the bank of the Gilwiskaw Brook, which was culverted in the 19th century.

The site lies on the east side of The Callis, now one of the main roads leading north from the centre of Ashby. The area was previously used for mixed residential and industrial processes; the site itself was occupied by the Castle Soapworks from the early 20th century until its closure in 2011. The buildings of this former factory still occupied the site at the time of writing. The proposed redevelopment plot is roughly rectangular, with an inverted triangular plot of land on the southern edge. The site covers around 1.4 hectares of land approximately centred on NGR SK 35656 17055. Access is from The Callis, in the south-west corner. The setting of the site is an area of mixed residential housing, with public playgrounds and occasional shops.

The archaeological trial trenching was concentrated at the southern end of the site where the remains of the 19th century leatherworks would potentially survive. The NGR for this small area is SK 35638 16978.



Fig. 2: Trench location plan on proposed development plan. Scale 1:1000

3.0 Geology and topography

Ashby-de-la-Zouch lies alongside the Gilwiskaw Brook, a minor waterway which feeds into the River Mease at its confluence to the south near Oakthorpe. A contour survey of the entire site confirms the highest point is in the central eastern area, at 129m OD; levels in the area of the trenches are around 126m OD. A reading taken from outside the gates in the southwest corner shows the site lies considerably higher than the adjacent road.

The British Geological Survey shows the bedrock geology of Ashby as rather complex: the site itself lies primarily on the Pennine Lower Coal Measures, inter-bedded grey mudstone, siltstone and sandstone, with coal seams in the upper layers. The northern area of the site also contains Bromsgrove Sandstone; mixed sandstones inter-bedded with siltstones and mudstones although this was not expected in the area of the trenches.

No superficial deposits are recorded in the immediate area of the trial trenches although Pleistocene Glaciofluvial deposits of sand and gravel do occur in the surrounding area. Additionally, superficial deposits are recorded in the quaternary alluvium that has been deposited in the small flood plain of the Gilwiskaw brook, a Special Area of Conservation and Site of Special Scientific Interest presently constrained to a weir immediately east of the site and now flowing in a culvert under the town centre.

At the time of writing, no boreholes or other geotechnical investigations are known to have been undertaken on the site, although two shallow boreholes are recorded within 50m of it. The first of these lies 75m west of the site boundary and records layers of sandy clay and weakly cemented sandstone to a depth of 5m (122m A.O.D); the second, lying 100m from the southwest corner, reveals layers of firm silty clay to a depth 121m above O.D (3m deep). Additionally, geotechnical pits are evident on the ground, although no further information is known concerning these.

4.0 Planning background

A planning application for the development of thirty-seven new houses, with associated landscaping, access roads and ancillary works was submitted to North-West Leicestershire District Council (NWLDC) in July 2013 (Planning ref: 13/00517/FULM).

In accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record was consulted, and the buildings of the former Castle Soapworks identified as of historic, architectural and/or archaeological interest. In consequence, the Principle Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire identified the need for an archaeological desk-based assessment of the below ground archaeology to be completed in conjunction with a historic building survey of the structure.

The desk-based assessment identified an early 19th century leatherworks in the south of the site. This area was redeveloped in the mid 20th century as parking for the soap works, with limited intrusive ground works identified. Therefore the foundations of the leatherworks and associated features have potentially survived.

In response to the planning application, this scheme of archaeological trial trenching focused on the area of the leatherworks as recommended by the Planning Archaeologist. The scheme was devised to investigate the survival and extent of archaeological remains in this area, and will inform any further mitigation strategy to fulfill the requirements of the NPPF guidelines.

5.0 Archaeological and historical background (Fig. 3 &)

A full archaeological desk-based assessment with integral building survey of the soap works buildings has already been completed (Lane and Savage 2013). This is a summary of that assessment:

Evidence for Prehistoric, Roman and early Saxon occupation around Ashby-de-la-Zouch is sparse. Prehistoric features interpreted as indicating seasonal occupation of the area were identified during archaeological work in advance of the construction of the Ashby bypass (A511), a little over 1km north of the development site (LRHER ref: MLE17533). Roman activity is recorded in this same area, however the town does not lie close to any major Roman roads (Margary 1973), and the limited evidence indicates that this area was occupied by a disperse community of farms, concentrated to the north.

Ashby is first documented in 1041 as a manor of approximately 560 acres valued at 10 shillings (Scott 1907), suggesting that the area was already a substantial estate in the late Saxon period, although corroborative archaeological evidence is almost non-existent. It has been suggested the late Saxon village may have focused to the east of the current town centre, around a second loci of settlement identified on early historic mapping (Newsome *et al.* 2008).

The place name Ashby is from the Old English words *askr* and *by* meaning “*farmstead or village where the ash trees grow*”. The alternative is *Aski* and *by*, a Saxon personal name giving the meaning “*Aski’s farmstead*” (Mills 1993). The suffix *de-la-Zouch* was granted in c.1230, given for the *Zouche* family who owned the land from c.1160 to 1399 (Mills 1993, Newsome *et al.* 2008), although *Esseby la Zuche* is recorded as early as 1205 (Cox 2005) indicating that the town was known as such some years earlier.

The town is recorded in the Domesday Book as *Ascebi*, a large village of 21 households, one of several manors in Leicestershire held by Hugh de Grandmesnil (including Leicester Castle itself) (Williams and Martin 1992). A charter granting a weekly market and annual fair was granted to the Zouches in 1219.

The proposed redevelopment site lies on the north edge of the historic core of the medieval town (LRHER ref: MLE 4295), identified by map regression analysis. The Callis, the road forming the western boundary, can be traced on historic mapping as far as 1735, at which time the road is just a track granting access to agricultural plots. The name *Calais* features in many of the field names for this area. It can be postulated that the name is a mid 15th century relic, referring to William Hastings, lieutenant of Calais, then owner of Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

Ashby Castle, which lies 650m southeast of the site, found itself under siege in the English Civil War. It was occupied by the Royalist army during a 3 year siege before surrendering to Parliamentary forces in 1648, when it was largely destroyed (Millward 1985, Mee 1997). Ashby remained a large, locally important market town throughout the medieval and early post medieval period, but saw rapid expansion in the 19th century. The coalmines and limestone quarries at neighbouring Moira were first exploited on an industrial scale in the 18th century, leading to the development of the canal and tramline. The tramline extended along the western boundary of the development site, yet fell out of use in the early 20th century, being finally dismantled in the 1940’s. The discovery of a natural spring gave rise to the development of Ashby as a spa town, and much of the architecture of the town centre dates from this period.

The development site was mainly agricultural land for much of the post-medieval period. Mid 18th century mapping (Fig. 3) indicates large fields, connected by the name *Calais*, accessed by a minor track way from the Market Place. The town was re-mapped in 1837, which is the first map to show the Glue and Leatherworks in the south of the site (Fig.4). A review of the town at this time described The Callis as “*The houses are poor; the roadway an open sewer;*

the women old hags, half clothed, loud in speech and rough in manner" (Wood 1837). The area was mixed industry and rough housing; indeed, tanneries are notorious for their noxious smells and were commonly positioned away from main residential areas.



Fig 3: 1735 town plan with approx location of site marked. Not to scale

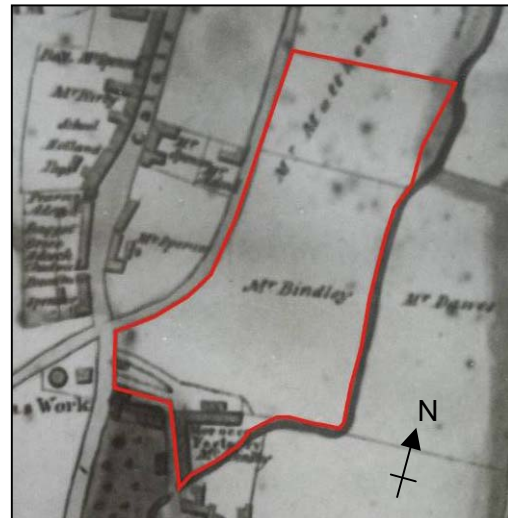


Fig. 4: 1837 town plan with approx location of site marked. Not to scale

The development of the Castle Soapworks began in the late 19th century; with the first buildings appearing on the 1903 OS map (Fig. 5) alongside the leatherworks and a waterworks. This new factory was state of the art for the period, with electricity and telephone systems (Hillier 1984). There is some debate about the exact time the glue and leatherworks closed, either c.1904 with the building of the new factory (Hillier 1984), or, considering the original buildings remained, it seems more likely to have been about 1910 when the land was auctioned off (see Lane and Savage 2013). Now the soap factory fully enveloped both the leatherworks and the waterworks (Fig. 6) with the majority of the leatherworks buildings apparently being utilised as part of the soap factory until they were finally demolished in the late 1950's. The soap factory initially struggled but eventually thrived in the late 20th century, despite a major fire in 1979 which destroyed the original factory buildings. These were replaced by the modern offices which remained in use until the site closed in 2011 and are still standing at the time of writing.

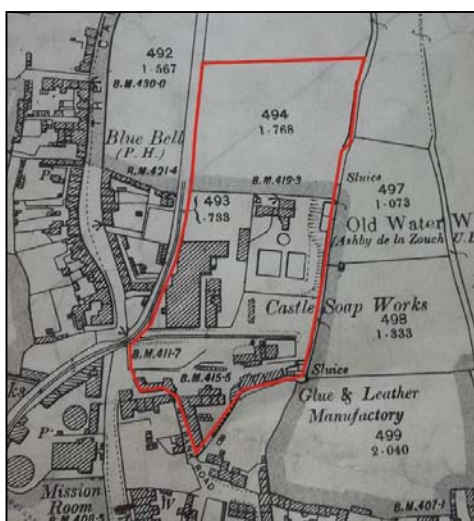


Fig. 5: 1903 OS map with approx location of site marked. Not to scale



Fig. 6: 1923 OS map with approx location of site marked. Not to scale

6.0 Methodology (Fig.4)

The Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire advised a scheme of archaeological evaluation trenching to ascertain the survival and nature of archaeological remains relating to the 19th century tannery which occupied the southern portion of the site prior to the re-development of the soap works in the mid 20th century. This scheme of trenching shall inform the planning application on the scope of works required to record any archaeological remains affected by the planning proposals.

Three trenches were excavated in the south of the site (Fig. 2). Trench 1 lay in Plot 35, Trenches 2 and 3 in Plots 36-37 of the planning proposals. The trenches were positioned with a view to avoiding known cables and other services.

- Trench 1: measured 10mx2m, orientated east-west within Plot 35. This trench lay to the north of the existing old canteen building and was on the footprint of part of the leatherworks.
- Trench 2: measured 25mx2m, orientated north-south across the proposed footings of Plot 36, in an area occupied by a range of buildings in the historic mapping of the tannery.
- Trench 3: measured 15mx2m, orientated east-west and positioned within the existing car park over the leatherworks buildings along the western edge of the site, as shown on late 19th century mapping.

The trenches were opened under archaeological supervision, using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless blade. They were excavated to the first archaeologically significant horizon or until natural deposits were encountered. All archaeological deposits identified were cleaned and defined by hand and features were manually excavated.

All Archaeological remains within the trenches were recorded on scale plans of each trench at 1:50 with section drawings made at both 1:50 and 1:20 as appropriate. A written record of each significant stratigraphic horizon and archaeological feature was made on standard PCAS context recording forms. A photographic record in colour slide and digital formats was collected alongside the written documentation and a narrative account of the daily progress was also maintained. The small corpus of finds from the site were analysed in house at Pre-Construct Archaeological Services.

The fieldwork was carried out by Simon Savage, Rachel Savage and the author between the 28th of November and 9th of December 2013.

7.0 Results (Figs. 7-14)

7.1 Trench 1 (Fig. 7 & 8)

The natural layer reached in Trench 1, at a depth of c.0.45m, was a friable greyish-yellow sandy clay (106) that became a bluish-grey at depth: this deposit contained a moderate number of water worn pebbles. It was overlain by roughly 0.25m of made ground (104) directly underneath a thin layer of tarmac. In turn, this was covered by two layers of bedding and finally the present tarmac surface (100).

To the west end of the trench modern drains had cut into the natural and these were truncated by a large (2.5m wide) geotechnical pit, of which nothing is presently known. Two structures were also identified within Trench 1: a probable brick plinth base [102] and a possible drain [107], truncated by the modern drainage.

The drain [107] was not fully visible in either plan or section but appeared to have been a small brick built structure identified at the south west of the trench, and likely running north-south. More promising was the plinth base [102], consisting of bricks 230x115mm in plan with the remnants of a slate surface on top. The bricks were laid in a header course on the north and south faces irregularly filled in between and the ends of two iron rods, truncated at the surface, support its interpretation as a plinth.

No finds were recovered from this trench.

7.2 Trench 2 (Fig. 9 & 10)

The natural material encountered in Trench 2 was a very fine greyish-yellow sandy clay (205) with a thin layer of trample at its surface, consisting of charcoal and occasional brick rubble, however the deposit was clearly homogenous beneath this and contained pockets of a more orange clay and well rounded cobbles. This was only exposed at the northern end of the trench at a depth of c.0.45m.

Abutting this deposit at its southern extreme was a gritty dark brown sandy clay with pockets of the natural (205) throughout, within which was a large circular brick built drain [228] running east-west, but with a spur joining it to run off to the north east. Unfortunately, the actual join of the two runs was destroyed by the installation of a tie for the earthing rod. This drain was constructed of bricks 210x110x80mm in size, but being chamfered to c.50mm wide in order to construct the circular form of the drain. It was filled with light grey brown sandy clay (210) devoid of artefacts.

These deposits and features were overlain by a dark grey to black sandy clay with frequent charcoal inclusions and occasional fragments of brick rubble (204). This had been cut for the installation of a modern electricity pipe running north west – south east [208], feeding the former canteen building directly east of the trench, and the installation of two earthing rods which ran east-west. The electric pipe directly cut the drain [228] at the western edge of the trench and this cut [208] was filled with a course black gravely sandy clay (209) containing a lot of brick, slate and general rubble. To the south of this, and beneath (204) was a return to the natural (205), although this time with a 5-10cm thick layer of trample at its surface, consisting primarily of charcoal and brick rubble ((227) and (225)). This was divided in plan by another drain [226], although this time a much smaller, square example consisting of two layers of stretcher laid bricks laid directly into the natural, capped by bricks laid across the internal void, all bricks being 230x110x80mm size. This drain was covered to the east by the remains of a wall [223], with stretcher laid bricks on the west face and header laid ones behind, running into the eastern section. On the western side it was covered by a brick cobble floor [224], built on the natural (225). This small section of damaged floor displayed half overlapping runs of bricks orientated north-south, and is likely to have been an extension of the identical floor [222] just south. Both of these appeared to be external floors, bifurcated by a 330mm wide brick gully, laid east-west, and an area of missing bricks infilled with the overlying sandy clay (204).

South of this external area were two rooms and a dividing passage. The northern external wall of this complex [221] revealed a doorway with a concrete sill. A double skin of bricks laid in stretcher courses was present to the east of the doorway and a header course to its west. The internal floor [219] was composed of half overlapping red quarry tiles laid east-west. These tiles were 160mm² and 20mm thick, and remained for the full length of the room on the eastern side (4.6m), although a recent geotechnical pit [206], identical to that seen in Trench 1, cut through the floor at the west, being filled by a mixture of the overlying layers (207) – see below. Whilst the quarry tiles are now clearly evident, several of them displayed the remnants of multiple re-coatings, with at least 4 separate coverings identified (see Pl. 7) Beneath this floor was a continuation of the well trampled natural (designated (220)).

Through a doorway in the southern internal wall was a small room/passageway laid with north to south half overlapping runs of 150mm² red quarry tiles. The southern and northern walls of this room were joined by a raised area of bricks that could be a raised floor area or simply infilling of a space (all designated [217]). Both doorways for this room had well worn sandstone sills, worn to reflect the changing floor heights, with the northern room's floor (219) 120mm higher and the southern ones [215] 60mm lower. This southern room was walled on the west and south [214], with the latter arm certainly being an external wall. There was evidence on these bricks that the internal walls would have been painted green at one time. Although the floor was primarily composed of 200mm² red quarry tiles, laid in half overlapping north south runs, there was a small (0.5m²) area of concrete to the west and an interesting arrangement of bricks in the south west corner. No evidence remained as to the purpose of this arrangement, but it would appear to be an area re-enforced to withstand the heat of a hearth or burner placed in the corner.

Immediately south of this complex was an area of concrete [212] with a gully laid into it against the outside of the southern wall [213]. This gully was manufactured from black bricks measuring 250x50mm (as exposed), within which was sloping concrete leading to a central concave orange tile gutter some 110mm wide. Abutting the south of this concrete was a rather confused brick cobble floor extending beyond the confines of the trench. This external floor was well worn and consisted of areas of brick cobbling laid in three distinct directions; north east – south west, west north west – east south east, and north west – south east. There were some patches of concrete that suggest it would have had a skim of concrete laid over it at some point, but this was mostly gone.

The southern floor, and indeed the entire building complex, was directly covered by a rubble layer consisting of brick, tile and mortar in a dark-mid brown sandy loam matrix with occasional charcoal flecks and fragments present (202). This deposit ran up to and over the dark grey to black sandy clay (204) mentioned above. In the southern 7m of the trench this rubble was itself covered by a dark grey-black sandy clay (201) with very occasional charcoal and brick fragments, far fewer than evident in (204). However, beyond a concentration of bricks within deposit (202), which occurred in the small joining room floored by [218], the sandy clay (201) deposit was replaced by a black course sandy clay with frequent charcoal and occasional brick rubble (203), which continued to cap the rubble deposit (202) until it lensed out as it covered the sloping southern edge of the black sandy clay mentioned above (204).

All of this was finally capped by two layers of modern bedding and levelling and the present tarmac car park. However, as mentioned, this was cut into by a modern geotechnical pit.

No finds were recovered from this trench.

7.3 Trench 3 (Fig. 11 - 14)

Trench 3 was usefully divided into three sections by two extant walls. The ground levels in these sections rose, moving east from 0.9m, to 0.8m and finally 0.7m in the eastern section.

The natural in Trench 3 was only revealed at its western end some 0.85m down, being the same sandy clay observed elsewhere. Here it also displayed a thin dirty surface, being homogenous and clean beneath. At the very western end of the trench was an area of what appeared to be repeated floor laying. A floor of red brick cobbles [305] was seen laid directly onto a bed of heavily trampled natural (306), immediately underneath a floor of 155mm² red quarry tiles [304]. Directly on this floor, and in the very north western corner of the trench, was a fragment of brick masonry [303] running northeast, out of the trench. There appeared to be rendering on the remaining remnant of south face.

East of the exposed natural was probably the oldest archaeological material exposed on the site, a sandstone rubble wall running north – south [309]. This wall consisted of either undressed, or very roughly dressed sandstone blocks that looked to be laid directly into the natural. This wall appeared to have been demolished and built over by a brick successor [310], of which 5 courses remained, 4 laid in stretcher fashion with the bottom run in header (Fig. 13). This wall delimited the western section of the trench from the central one described below. The western face was well dressed, while the eastern face was rough, suggesting that a building ran away to the east. Against the external western face the remaining sandstone wall had a mixed grey brown sandy clay (308) compressed into it with some brick rubble also present, extending underneath the brick wall [310]. This was the only deposit on site to have produced artefacts: one piece of glazed white wear, two pieces of brown glazed earthenware, three pieces of clay pipe, and three pieces of drain pipe. All of the pot dates to the 18th or 19th century, whilst the sewage pipe is 19th to 20th century. The clay pipe material however, potentially spans a range from the 18th to early 20th centuries. This material provides a *terminus post quem* for the construction of the wall [310], indicating that it was built in the early 20th century.

East of the wall [310] was further, less consolidated sandstone rubble covered and surrounded by concrete and brick rubble in a light brown sandy clay matrix with lots of darker patches probably indicative of burning. Whilst this appeared separate it may well have been the base of the overlying deposit (301) (see below), compressed into the natural (307).

The most striking remains in this trench were a series of walls within this central section [314]. A main, presumably exterior, wall ran east – west down the centre of the trench, primarily laid in stretcher courses (there was a short run of header bricks that may represent an infilled opening or joining of two separate structures). Running south from this section, but clearly contemporary, were four walls which would have separated the internal rooms, all laid in stretcher fashion. This created a structure with at least three rooms c.1.10m wide, and probably more as the central run extended beyond the remaining south running walls. Each of these rooms was filled with a sandy clay, with varying levels of rubble and burning evident. The westernmost room had a brick and mortar rubble in light orange/yellow sandy clay matrix, with charcoal inclusions (317), that graded southwards into a black, burnt sandy clay with occasional brick fragments that dominated by slate rubble (319). This latter deposit continued in the central room, although here there were more frequent and larger chunks of brick (320), seen again in this form in the southern half of the eastern most room. Here, however it graded north into a very coarse cream coloured sandy clay with lots of brick rubble (321) that continued east of the easternmost south running wall. North of the central external wall the black, burnt sandy clay deposits continued (318), with the brick content increasing significantly to the east (323). In the west of this northern, external area a north running wall of stretcher laid bricks [316] had been abutted to the central wall, and along with an insubstantial single run of bricks further west [315], a room of the same width as those to the south was created. Within this room a brick floor had been laid, although it did not respect the alignment of the walls. The floor was laid directly on light brown sandy clay that may represent either trample on the surface of the natural or redeposited material to create a bed. Directly over this floor and into the section were large chunks of concrete that did not appear to be related to the floor but be part of the overlying deposit (311).

To the east of this central section was a second wall [324] that stood proud of the ground, separating the central and eastern sections of the trench. Some six courses remained, with the bottom course laid in header fashion as seen in the western wall (Fig.14). The five courses laid on this were predominantly stretcher, although with occasional header bricks. Although this wall was on a different alignment to the western one [310], running north east – south west, it was the eastern face that appeared to be a well dressed external wall. This suggests that it was the eastern return wall of a structure, also represented by the western wall [310]. In this it is worth noting that the central wall described above [314] ran directly beneath this wall.

In the eastern section, beyond wall [324] the primary feature was a brick cobble floor [327]. Whilst this was reasonably uniform at the very east of the trench, as it progresses west it became much more confused, composed largely of broken bricks laid no doubt in repair. There is a possibility that this floor was the continuation of that seen in the southern end of trench 2 [211]. Just west of the floor, and in the northern section of the trench was a further structure of rowlock laid bricks in a more or less straight line north, with a short run of stretcher laid bricks attached [326]. Its purpose is uncertain, although it is possible that it was simply a part of the floor already mentioned [327]. These features appear to be directly laid into a well trampled natural sandy clay (325) that may have been levelled and bedded prior to their placement, hence the addition of brick fragments and occasional charcoal.

All of this material was sealed by a destruction layer (301) of loose brick rubble in (where present) a dark brown sandy loam matrix (almost certainly the same as the destruction layer seen in Trench 2 (202)). In the western section of the trench this was over a friable dark grey-brown sandy clay made ground, which contained frequent brick rubble, mortar and charcoal, and lenses of light brown sand (302), increasing the ground level above the base of the wall [310]. Over all of this was the bedding and tarmac of the modern car park (300).

8.0 Discussion and conclusion

The earliest phase of construction observed in this evaluation seems likely to be the sandstone wall and subsequent rubble in Trench 3. Elsewhere in Ashby, this local grey sandstone is indicative of medieval construction, although it is also seen in the 19th century Spa buildings. Indeed, the town saw enormous rebuilding in the Georgian period and there is evidence for a post 17th century phase of material theft from the castle (NWLDC 2001). Thus it is possible that this material was recycled from elsewhere during the 18th or 19th century. As the tannery was the first recorded building on the site, it seems likely that this wall relates to the first phase of its construction. Indeed, at least two further phases of construction are evident from the archaeology.

Another building was constructed in brick to the east, possibly running off the sandstone wall given that rubble from the demolition of the latter overlay this brick wall, although the 1903 O/S map (Fig. 5) does show two adjoining buildings running east west in this area that are actually separate from the main building. This new building was divided into several rooms, the sizes of which suggests they were probably for storage. A further room appears to have been added to the north of this structure at a later date, although equally this could be part of the northern adjoining building.

All of these buildings appear to have been demolished during the late 19th century and a new larger building erected over the top, although this does not appear to be represented on any map. To the west of Trench 3 was a flooring area and wall that were possibly internal areas of this building, although the gap in material between them and the main wall remains confusing at this stage. Despite a lack of evidence, it seems likely that the external floor to the east of Trench 3 also relates to this period, and as a probable extension of the floor seen to the south of Trench 2. It is also likely that the building discovered in Trench 2 was constructed at this time as well. Indeed, the repeated decorating of one of the floors in this latter building (Pl. 7) suggest it stood for some time, or witnessed intensive use.

As suggested by the map regression and known history, this area was cleared rapidly in the mid 20th century, and all of the rubble was simply left where it fell. Finally the area was levelled and tarmaced to create the present car park.

9.0 Effectiveness of methodology

An intrusive evaluation was the appropriate method for gathering further information about the site as a follow-up to non-intrusive desk-based assessment. Whilst it appears that the original tannery has been located, there remains confusion due to the discovery of later buildings that are apparently not represented on any of the available mapping. The body of data thus produced is sufficient to inform the planning and redevelopment process.

10.0 Project archive

The site recording, currently in the custody of PCAS, will be deposited with a printed copy of this report with Leicester County Council Museums Service. It may be consulted there by citing the global accession number, X.A177.2013.

11.0 Acknowledgements

Pre-Construct Archaeological Services would like to thank Ben Bailey Homes for this commission and for their co-operation during the groundworks.

12.0 References

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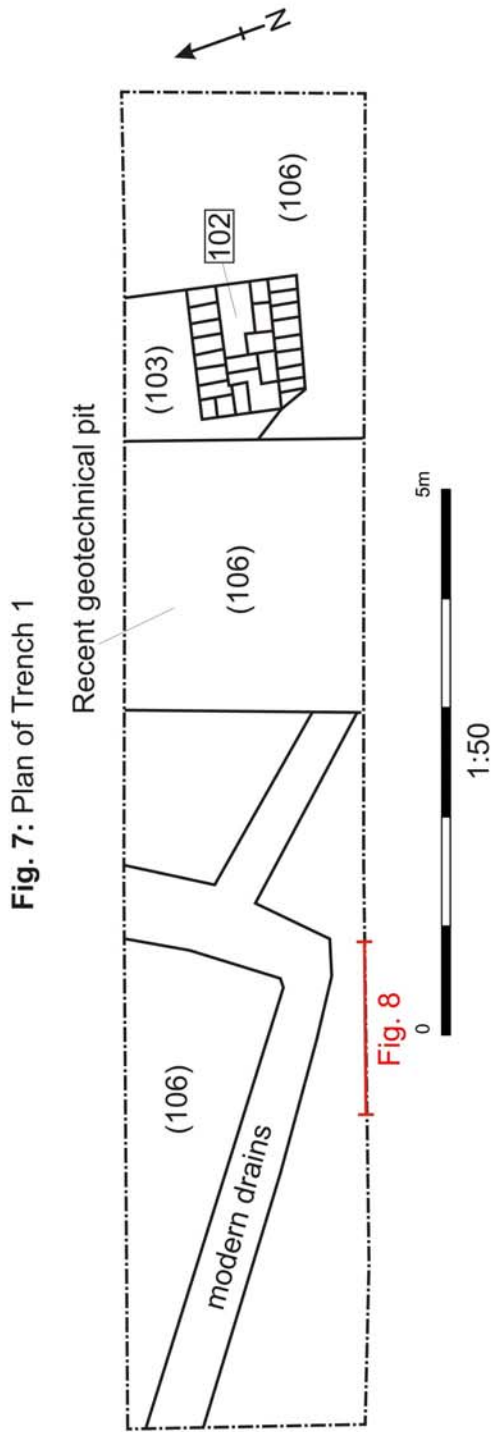


Fig. 8: North facing representative section of Trench 1

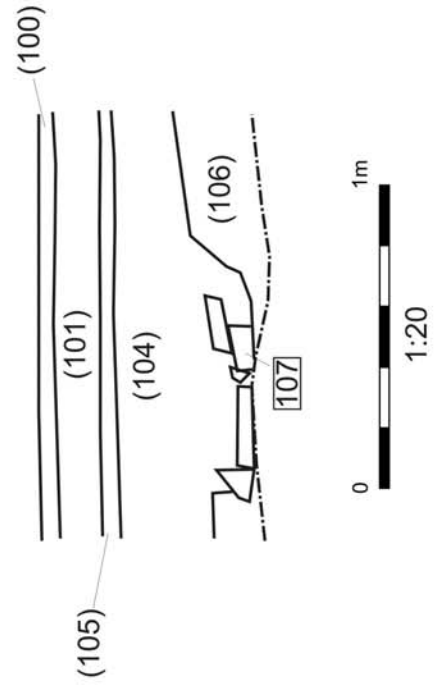


Fig. 10: East facing section along the length of Trench 2

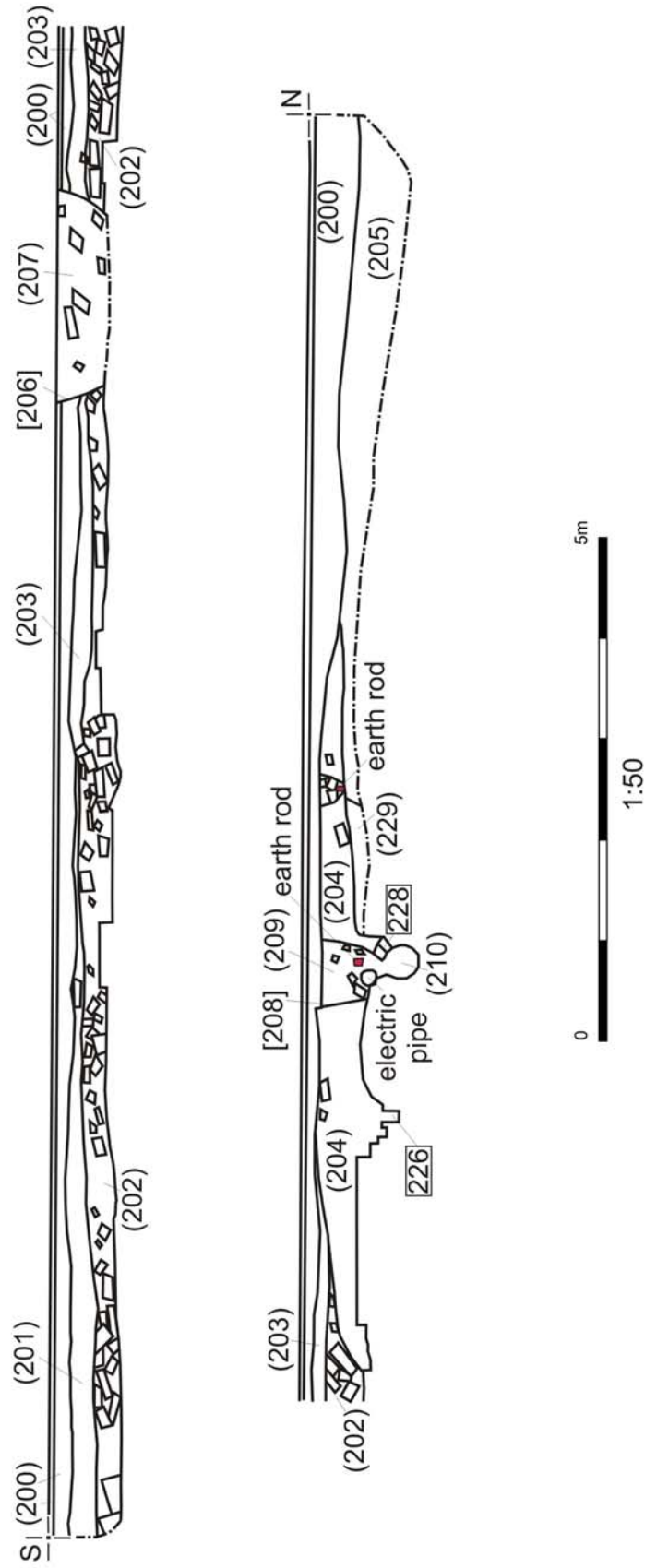
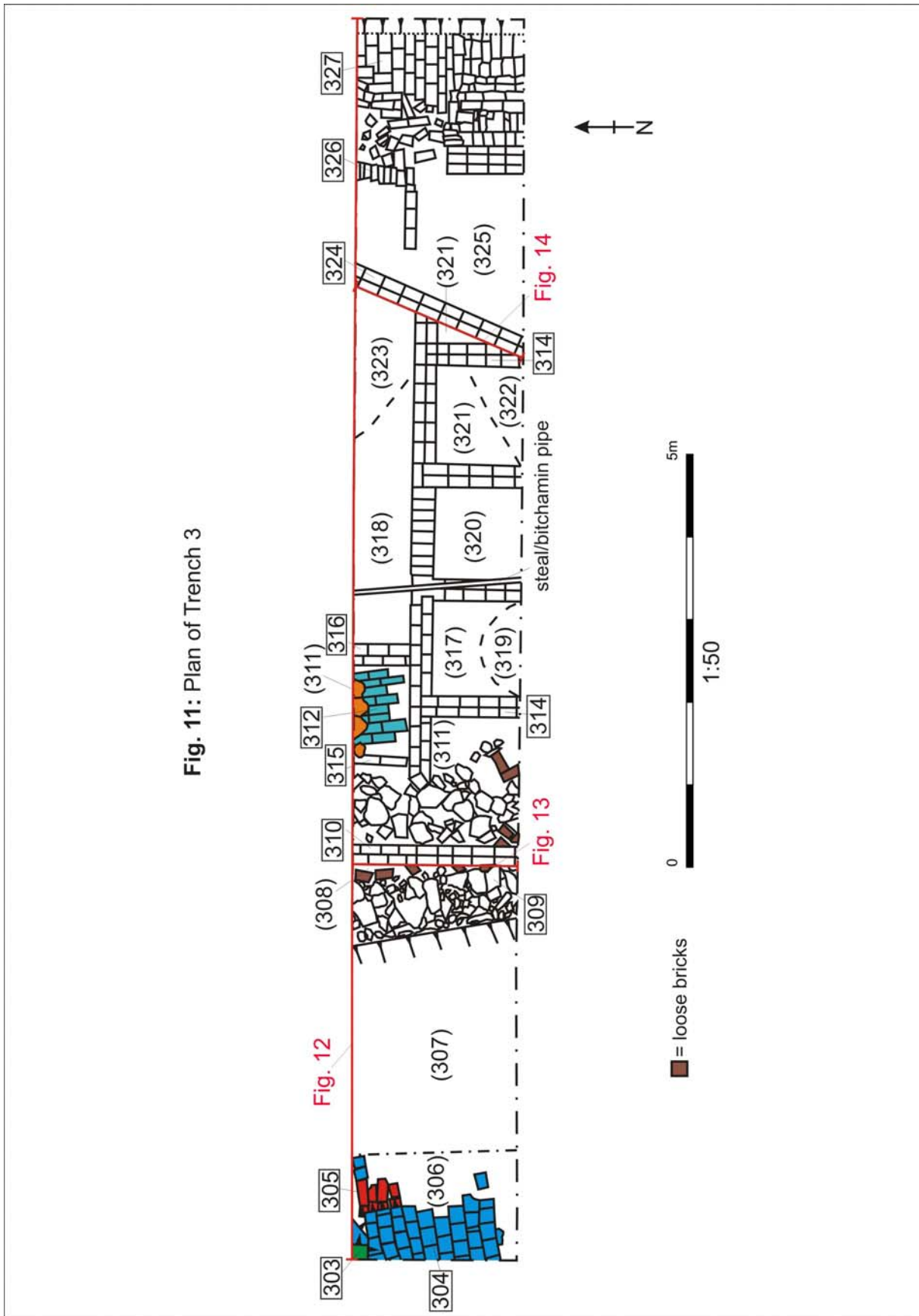


Fig. 11: Plan of Trench 3



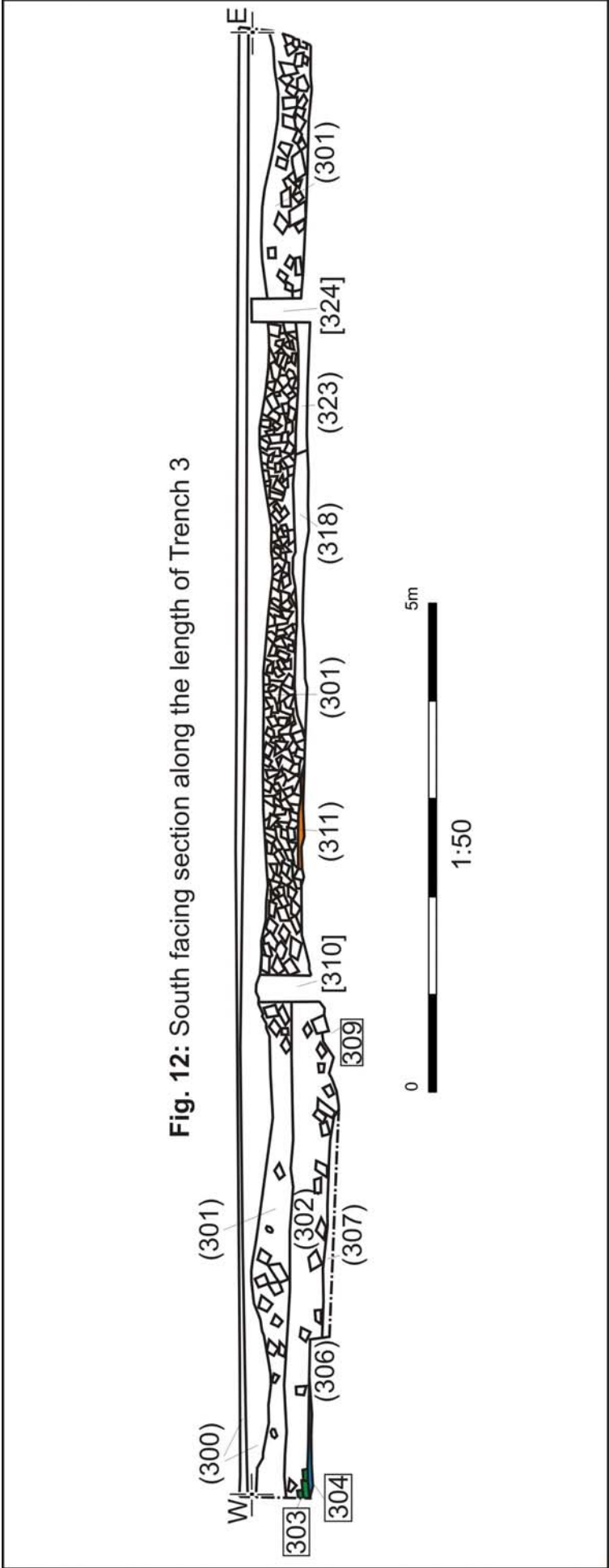
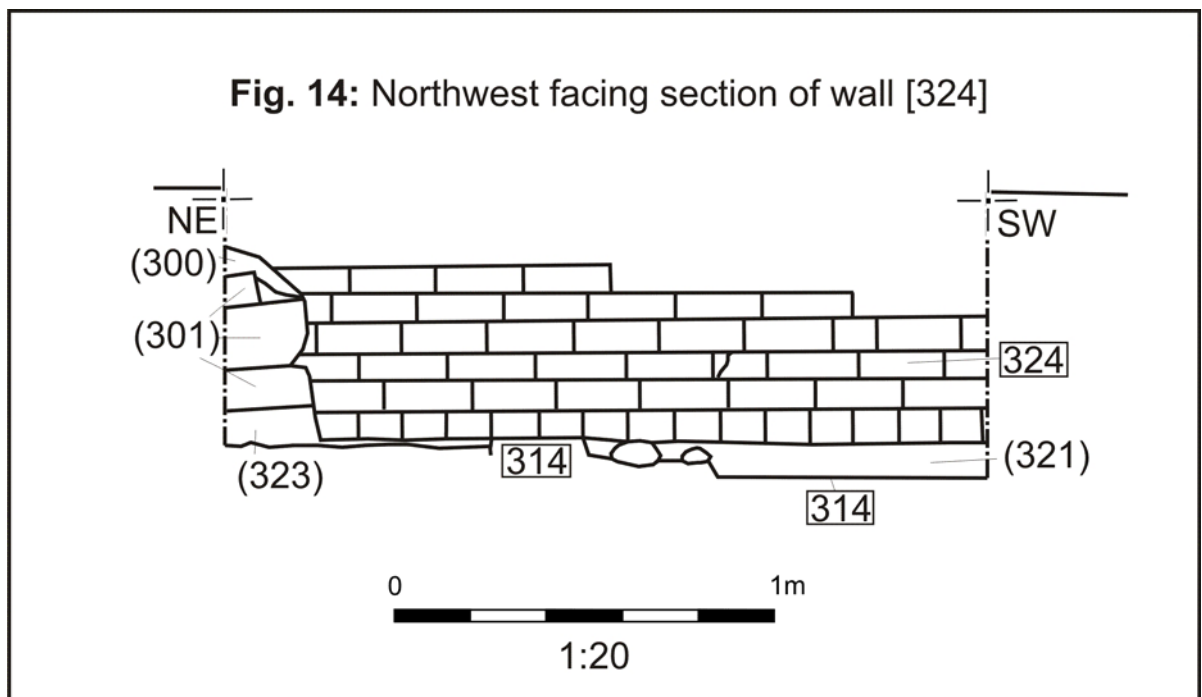
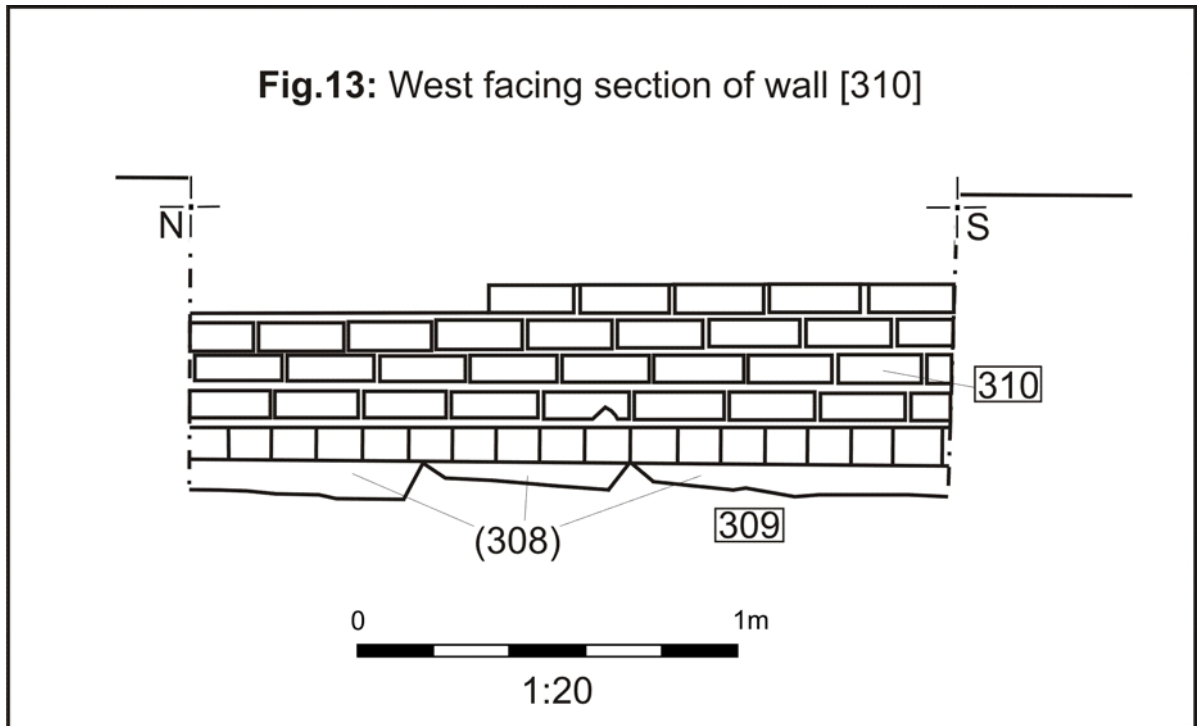


Fig. 12: South facing section along the length of Trench 3



Appendix 1: Colour Plates



Plate 1: Overview of Trench 1 looking east
(see Fig: 7)



Plate 2: Overview of Trench 1 looking west
(see Fig: 7)



Plate 3: North facing representative section in Trench 1 (see Fig: 8)



Plate 4: Plinth structure [102] in east end of Trench 1 (see Fig: 7)



Plate 5: Overview of Trench 2 looking south
(see Fig: 9)



Plate 6: Overview of Trench 2 looking north
(see Fig: 9)



Plate 7: close up of painted floor tiling in Trench 2. Showing multiple layers of re-painting



Plate 8: Overview of Trench 3 looking west (see Fig: 11)



Plate 9: Composite photo plan of the middle section of Trench 3 (see Fig: 11)



Plate 10: Sandstone wall [309] at western end of Trench 3. (see Fig: 11)



Plate 11: West face of wall [310]. (see Fig: 13)



Plate 12: East face of wall [310]. Also showing rubble from wall [309] overlying wall [314]



Plate 13: Northwest face of wall [324]. (see Fig: 14)

Appendix 2: Context Summary

Trench 1

Context	Type	Description	Finds/Dating
100	Layer	Modern overburden, tarmac over a layer of hardcore bedding. 0.16m thick.	Modern (late 20 th century)
101	Layer	Bedding/ground raising layer of crushed limestone (or similar), reduces in depth to west. 0.35m thick; c.9.5m exposed in trench.	Modern (late 20 th century)
102	Structure	Probable plinth or mounting, brick structure (9"x 4 ½ "), external bricks laid footers facing out, internal bricks irregularly fitted.	Modern
103	Layer	Compact layer of crushed CBM, rubble and lime cement, below and to north of 102. 1.3m long; 1.25m wide; 0.06m deep.	Modern
104	Layer	Mixed made ground with CBM rubble below tarmac (105). 0.25m deep, trench wide.	Modern
105	Layer	Former tarmac surface below (101), on thin hardcore bedding layer. 0.09m thick.	Modern
106	Layer	Natural, greyish yellow friable clayey sand with moderate pebble inclusions at surface, becoming blueish grey with no inclusions with increasing depth.	Natural
107	Structure	Modern brick built drain (9"x 4 ¾ "x 3"); flat base and vertical sides.	Modern

Trench 2

Context	Type	Description	Finds/Dating
200	Layer	Modern tarmac and (x2) hardcore bedding layers. 0.20m thick.	Modern (Late 20 th century)
201	Layer	Dark grey-black sandy clay with occasional charcoal and CBM flecks.	
202	Layer	Dark-mid brown sandy loam matrix with frequent CBM, rubble and mortar, occasional charcoal inclusions.	
203	Layer	Black course sandy clay with frequent charcoal and occasional CBM fragment inclusions.	
204	Layer	Dark grey/black friable sandy clay with frequent charcoal and occasional CBM fragment inclusions.	
205	Layer	Natural. Very fine sandy clay, trampled on the surface with occasional CBM and charcoal inclusions, homogenous beneath. Pockets of well-rounded cobbles (<0.10m) and orangey clay.	Natural
206	Cut	Oval pit in plan, not bottomed, steepish sides.	Modern (late 20 th century)
207	Fill	Single (exposed) fill of [206], mixed	Modern (late 20 th century)

		(redeposited) fill including (200), (202), (203) & mainly (205).	century)
208	Cut	Steep sided modern cut for electric cable, extends to existing building (Building J of survey).	Modern
209	Fill	Single fill of [208]. Black course gravely sand with common CBM, slate and rubble inclusions.	Modern
210	Fill	Single fill of structure 228. Light grey brown sandy clay.	Post-medieval
211	Structure	Worn external yard floor, brick built (c. 8 ¾ " x 4 ½ ") laid diagonally across trench in two different patterns	Post-medieval
212	Structure	Concrete plinth	Modern
213	Structure	Brick built drain (10" x 2") in floor 214	
214	Structure	SW corner of building internal brick built wall outer stretcher, inner header (9" x 4 3/8" x 3 ½ ")	Post-medieval
215	Structure	Red quarry tile floor (8" square) (internal), associated with structure 214.	Post-medieval
216	Structure	Brick built structure (9" x 4 3/8" x 3 ½ ") in SW corner of structure 214. May be base of hearth truncated at this height.	Post-medieval
217	Structure	E-W aligned brick built wall (8 3/8" x 4" x 2 6/8") with gap for entrance. Mainly stretchers. Step (0.60m) up to floor 218 from floor 215.	Post-medieval
218	Structure	Red quarry tile floor (2" x 6") of possible corridor/alley.	Post-medieval
219	Structure	Red quarry tile floor (5 ½ " x 5 ½ " x ¾"). Associated with structure 221.	Post-medieval
220	Layer	Trampled layer of (205), bedding material for structure 219.	Post-medieval
221	Structure	E-W aligned brick built (4" x 9 ¼ ") wall with concrete slab (15" x 32") – possible doorway? Divides 219/222.	Post-medieval
222	Structure	Brick floor (9" x 4" x 3") - external yard floor? Stretcher laid with inbuilt gully at north end of floor.	Post-medieval
223	Structure	Brick built wall (9" x 4 ½ " x 2 ¾ ") E-W alignment. External stretcher, internal header.	Post-medieval
224	Structure	Brick external floor (9" x 4 ½ " x 2 ¾ "), continuation of floor 222.	Post-medieval
225	Layer	Heavily trampled layer of (205), upper 0.05 – 0.10m contains rubble, CBM and charcoal inclusions.	Post-medieval
226	Structure	NW-SE aligned brick built drain (9" x 4 ½ " x 3").	Post-medieval
227	Layer	Heavily trampled layer of (205), upper 0.05 – 0.10m contains rubble, CBM and charcoal inclusions. Same as (225).	Post-medieval
228	Structure	Brick built (8 ¼ " x 4" x 3") domed Victorian drain.	Post-medieval
229	Layer	Gritty dark brown sandy clay with pockets of Natural (205) redeposited.	

Trench 3

Context	Type	Description	Finds/Dating
300	Layer	Modern tarmac car park on hardcore bedding layer 0.24m thick total.	Modern
301	Layer	Loose brick rubble infill at south end of trench. Partially consolidated by lime mortar, and a dark brown sandy loam matrix (where present). 0.52m thick.	Modern
302	Layer	Friable dark greyish brown to brownish or greyish black sandy clay with frequent brick rubble, moderate fragments of limestone mortar and coal, occasional pebbles and lens' of light brown sand. Made ground 0.70m thick	Modern
303	Structure	Fragment of brick masonry in NW trench corner. Only 3 bricks are visible, 2 courses high, remnants of rendering on S face which overlies floor 304.	Post-medieval
304	Structure	Red quarry tile floor (6" x 6" x 1") laid in half overlapping rows.	Post-medieval
305	Structure	Brick floor or yard surface (9" x 4 1/4").	Post-medieval
306	Layer	Mixed deposit of mid brown friable clayey sand with lenses of compact grey and yellowish grey sand. Contains frequent charcoal frags and CBM flecks. Bedding layer/trample? 0.07m thick	Post-medieval
307	Layer	Plastic mid brown silty clay, dirty on surface but clean and homogenous underneath. Natural?	Natural?
308	Layer	Mixed grey brown sandy clay and rubble from wall 310. 0.80m x 2m x c. 0.20m)	Post-medieval
309	Structure	Sandstone wall, E face appears roughly dressed. Possible sand mortar.	Post-medieval
310	Structure	Brick built wall (9" x 4 1/4 " x 2 3/4 "), four course stretcher; 1 course header. E face well finished; W face rough.	Modern?
311	Layer	Tarmac and brick rubble in light brown sandy clay matrix. Some darker patches: possible burning? 2m x 0.80m.	Post-medieval
312	Structure	Brick floor (9" x 4 1/4 " x 2 3/4 "), between walls 315 and 316. Probably earlier than these walls.	Post-medieval
313	Layer	Hardcore in black sandy clay matrix, loose. Bedding for 312.	Post-medieval
314	Structure	Brick walls of main building in T3 (9" x 4 1/4 " x 2 3/4 "). Mainly stretchers. N wall external, internal divisions into smaller rooms.	Post-medieval
315	Structure	E-W aligned wall single brick width (9" x 4 1/4 " x 2 3/4 ") abuts 314.	Post-medieval
316	Structure	Brick built wall (9" x 4 1/4 " x 2 3/4 "), E-W alignment abuts 314.	Post-medieval
317	Layer	Brick and mortar rubble in a light	Post-medieval

		orangey/yellow sandy clay matrix, occasional charcoal inclusions.	
318	Layer	Burnt sandy clay, black. Occasional brick fragments and charcoal.	Post-medieval
319	Layer	Burnt sandy clay, black. Occasional brick fragments and charcoal, frequent slate inclusions.	Post-medieval
320	Layer	Same as (319) but with larger and more frequent brick fragments.	Post-medieval
321	Layer	Cream coloured sandy clay, frequent brick inclusions,	Post-medieval
322	Layer	Same as (320) but with larger and more frequent brick fragments.	Post-medieval
323	Layer	Same as (320) but with larger and very frequent brick fragments.	Post-medieval
324	Structure	Brick built wall (9" x 4 1/4 " x 2 3/4 "), NW-SE alignment mainly stretchers crosses 314.	Modern
325	Layer	Very dark brown – black sandy clay with occasional brick fragments and charcoal inclusions.	Post-medieval
326	Structure	Brick wall (9" x 2 3/4 "), laid on the side, possible edge to floor 327 but very disturbed.	Post-medieval
327	Structure	Brick floor (9" x 4 1/4 " x 2 3/4 "), roughly laid/repared.	Post-medieval

Appendix 3: Pottery and CBM Catalogue

Context	Find	Description	Date
308	Pot	Modern white ware sherd, from plate	C18th/19th
308	Pot	2 sherds Brown glazed earthenware	C18th/19th
308	CBM	3 fragments sewage pipe	C19th/20th
308	C pipe	1 Stem fragment and 2 spur frags	C18th/E20th

Appendix 4: OASIS Summary

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: preconst3-169014

Project details

Project name	Land at the Former Castle Soapworks, The Callis, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire
Short description of the project	Archaeological evaluation comprising three trenches at the southern end of the site. The results of the evaluation indicate a sequence of construction and demolition events, including the original leatherworks and at least two phases of construction for the soap works, potentially including one phase not recorded on historic mapping.
Project dates	Start: 28-11-2013 End: 09-12-2013
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	V.A177.2013 - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	ADZB 13 - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Industry and Commerce 1 - Industrial
Monument type	LEATHERWORKS Post Medieval
Monument type	SOAPWORKS Modern
Significant Finds	NONE None
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Housing estate
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	Not known / Not recorded

Project location

Country	England
Site location	LEICESTERSHIRE NORTH WEST LEICESTERSHIRE ASHBY DE LA ZOUC Former Castle Soapworks, The Callis
Postcode	LE65 1HQ
Study area	1.40 Hectares
Site coordinates	SK 35638 16978 52.7489062872 -1.47196945256 52 44 56 N 001 28 19 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 126.00m Max: 129.00m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd
Project brief originator	Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd.
Project design originator	Pre-Construct Archaeological Services Ltd
Project director/manager	Will Munford
Project supervisor	D. Underhill
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Ben Bailey Homes

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Digital Contents	"Industrial", "Stratigraphic"
Digital Media available	"Database", "Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Paper Contents	"Industrial", "Stratigraphic"
Paper Media available	"Report", "Section", "Unpublished Text", "Context sheet", "Diary", "Drawing", "Photograph", "Plan"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land at the Former Castle Soapworks, The Callis, Ashby-de-la-Zouch, Leicestershire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Underhill, D.
Date	2014
Issuer or publisher	Pre-construct Archaeological Services Ltd
Place of issue or publication	Saxilby
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