



Land off Ullesthorpe Road Gilmorton Leicestershire

Archaeological Evaluation



for Pegasus Group

on behalf of Davidsons Developments Ltd

CA Project: 661013 CA Report: 17692

November 2017



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SUMMARY

Project Name: Land off Ullesthorpe Road

Location: Gilmorton, Leicestershire

NGR: 456818 288028

Type: Evaluation

Date: 13-15 November 2017

Planning Reference: 17/01256/OUT

Location of Archive: To be deposited with Leicestershire County Museum

Accession Number: X.A130.2017

Site Code: LUL 17

During November 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation at Land off Ullesthorpe Road, Gilmorton, Leicestershire. The evaluation was undertaken to inform an outline planning application for the residential development of up to 42 dwellings with associated access, public open space, car parking, landscaping and drainage. The fieldwork comprised the excavation of eight trenches.

Archaeological interest in the site is derived from its location adjacent to an area containing the Scheduled remains of extant medieval features, including a motte, moat, house platforms and fishponds, located *c.* 70-220m south-east of the site, as well as All Saints Church and its associated burial ground located *c.* 155-180m south-east of the site.

A previous geophysical survey identified strong, positive, linear anomalies across the site, which are interpreted as the remains of ridge and furrow agriculture. The archaeological evaluation results displayed a strong correlation with these geophysical survey results. Extant ridge and furrow earthworks, the remains of the medieval open field system that once surrounded the village of Ullesthorpe, were encountered across the majority of the site.

Despite the archaeological potential of the area, with the exception of medieval furrows, no features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In November 2017, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Land off Ullesthorpe Road, Gilmorton, Leicestershire (centred at NGR: 456818 288028; Fig. 1). The fieldwork was commissioned by Pegasus Group on behalf of Davidsons Developments Ltd.
- 1.2 The evaluation was undertaken to inform an outline application (ref: no. 17/01256/OUT) to Harborough District Council (HDC; the local planning authority) for the residential development of up to 42 dwellings with associated access, public open space, car parking, landscaping and drainage.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the *Generic Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation (Trial Trenching)* (Leicestershire County Council 2017), and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2017) and approved by Richard Clark, Principal Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council (PALCC; archaeological advisor to HDC). The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014), and *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands (Knight et al 2012)*. It was monitored by Richard Clark, including a site visit on Tuesday 14 November 2017.

The site

- 1.4 The proposed development area measures approximately 1.87ha in size and is located to the immediate west of Gilmorton. It comprises three fields separated by hedgerows. The northern and south-western fields are currently utilised as pasture, with the south-eastern field comprising a playing field. The site is bounded to the north by agricultural land with a track and agricultural outbuildings beyond, to the east by Ullesthorpe Road, beyond which lies an area of woodland and Gilmorton Chandler Primary school and its associated grounds. It is bounded to the south by Ullesthorpe Road, with agricultural land beyond and to the west by further agricultural land. The site lies at approximately 145m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).
- 1.5 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation, mudstone of the Jurassic and Triassic periods.

This is overlain across the majority of the site by superficial Middle Pleistocene Diamicton deposits. Along the eastern boundary of the site a band of alluvium comprising clay, silt, sand and gravel is also mapped.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site was summarised in a Heritage Desk-Based Assessment (DBA) produced by Pegasus Group (2017). The following section is summarised from this source.
- 2.2 In addition, a geophysical survey of the site was undertaken, which revealed strong, positive, linear anomalies across the site, which are interpreted as the remains of ridge and furrow agriculture.

Prehistoric (pre-AD 43) and Roman (AD 43 – AD 410)

- 2.3 No prehistoric or Romano-British finds or features are recorded within the site.
- 2.4 The findspot of a Bronze Age spearhead is recorded *c*. 330m north of the site, in the field adjacent to Farm View (HER ref. MLR 6441). A fragment of copper alloy blade dating to the Bronze Age was recorded to the west of Gilmorton in 2004 by metal detecting (HER ref. MLE 18369). The precise location of the findspot is not recorded.
- 2.5 A sherd of Roman greyware pottery was recovered during an archaeological trial trench evaluation *c.* 220m north-east of the site at Goodmans Farm (HER ref. MLE 21777, ELE 9296). Two Roman brooches were recovered in 2004 by metal detecting *c.* 400m west of the site (HER ref. MLE 10306). The precise location of the findspot is unknown. A piece of Roman tile, a pila, was recorded *c.* 780m north-west of the site in ploughsoil in the late 1960s. (HER ref. MLE 7836).
- 2.6 A cropmark representing a potential later prehistoric or Romano-British enclosure is recorded *c.* 720m north-west of the site (HER ref. MLE 17859). The irregular enclosure is visible on an aerial photograph dating to 2006.

Early medieval and medieval (AD 410 – 1539)

- 2.7 The site was historically located within the parish of Gilmorton and formed part of the agricultural hinterland to this historic settlement, which is located adjacent to the site, from at least the medieval period (HER ref. MLE 9865). Ridge and furrow earthworks lie within the site, on a broadly east/west alignment. The slight curve to the earthworks is indicative of a medieval or early post-medieval date.
- 2.8 The site is located within the study area utilised for Turning the Plough, a study of ridge and furrow earthworks published in 2001. Turning the Plough identified 43 priority townships, considered to contain the most significant ridge and furrow earthworks in the East Midlands, although Gilmorton and our site does not fall within one of these priority townships. Remains of ridge and furrow within the site are within the historic extent of Gilmorton.
- 2.9 Medieval features, including a motte, moat, house platforms and fishponds are located *c*. 70-220m south-east of the site and have been designated as a Scheduled Monument Motte, moat and fishponds west of All Saints Church (HER ref. MLE 1535-1538). The circular motte is large with a flat top and surrounded by a ditch which leads in a north-west direction to a partially infilled moat, possibly representing the location of a significant dwelling. House platforms and fishponds have been recorded to the south of the motte, representing the remains of settlement.
- 2.10 All Saints Church, a Grade II* Listed Building, and its associated burial ground are recorded *c.* 155-180m south-east of the site, beyond the medieval motte and associated features (HER ref. MLE 11803, MLE 21778). The church appears to be largely a Victorian and later rebuild of a medieval church. The church tower was originally constructed during the 14th and 15th centuries, but rebuilt in 1909. The nave, aisles and chancel were constructed in the later 19th century.
- 2.11 Medieval finds and features were recorded during archaeological trial trench evaluation at Goodmans Farm c. 180m north-east of the site (HER ref. MLE 21775, MLE 21776). Numerous sherds of medieval pottery were recorded, as well as linear features, ditches, pits and possible postholes. A potential extraction pit was also recorded. Medieval ditches and a plough furrow were recorded which possibly represented a boundary between the medieval fields and an area of occupation. Medieval village earthworks, recorded on RAF vertical aerial photographs, are located c. 220m north-east of the site, north-east of the settlement of Gilmorton.

2.12 The findspot of a possible medieval spoon is recorded *c.* 280m north of the site, south-west of Farm View (HER ref. MLE 6990). The small lead alloy spoon was recorded in 1998 and had a flat head with a decorated back. Metal detecting in 2004 recorded the findspot of a silver early medieval brooch *c.* 400m west of the site (HER ref. MLE 10305).

Post-medieval and modern (1540 – present)

2.13 The site is first depicted on a map of the estate of the Reverend Deane Judd in the Lordship of Gilmorton in the county of Leicestershire in 1778. The land within the site, together with other land in the vicinity, is labelled as glebe land, and was utilised by the priest at this time. The Church of All Saints and associated churchyard is depicted to the south-east of the site. The site is depicted on the First Edition Ordnance Survey Map of 1886 as situated across two agricultural fields to the west of the main of settlement of Gilmorton. A small pond was located in the north-eastern corner of the southern field of the site. A public right of way crossed the southern field within the site in a north-west to south-east direction, and the boundaries of the site are depicted as tree-lined. The motte of the Scheduled Monument is labelled as a tumulus to the west of the Church of All Saints. An associated rectory (now the Primary School) is located to the east of the site, on the opposite side of Ullesthorpe Road.

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

3.1 The objectives of the evaluation, as detailed in the WSI (CA 2017), are to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality, in accordance with *Standard and guidance: Archaeological field evaluation* (CIfA 2014). This information will enable the Leicestershire County Council to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it, and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of eight 30m long by 2m wide trenches, in the locations shown on the attached plan (Fig. 2). The locations of the trenches were adjusted slightly from those within the WSI in order to ensure they were orientated along the ridges. Trench 7 was shortened due to on-site restrictions. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA Technical Manual 4 *Survey Manual*.
- 4.2 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*. The trenches were backfilled with the JCB 3CX to the best quality achievable with this vehicle, efforts were made to reinstate any upstanding ridge and furrow affected by the trenching.
- 4.3 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes. The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Museum under accession number X.A130.2017. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGS 2-4)

5.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts can be found in Appendix A.

General stratigraphy

5.2 A broadly similar stratigraphic sequence was identified across the site. The natural geological substrate, which comprised light brown orange silty clay, was encountered at between 0.4m and 0.6m below present ground level (bpgl). This was overlain by subsoil, comprising dark to mid orange brown sandy clay, which measured between 0.2m and 0.3m thick. This was sealed by topsoil with an average depth of between 0.2m and 0.3m (Fig. 3; section AA).

- 5.3 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks and, despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.
- 5.4 Features interpreted as furrows, the remains of medieval ploughing were identified within Trenches 1, 3, 5 and 7, which corresponded to anomalies in the geophysical survey.

Medieval ridge and furrow (Trenches 1, 3, 5 and 7)

Regularly spaced furrows, the remains of an open field system, were recorded in Trenches 1, 3, 5 and 7 (Fig. 4; section BB), and were found to closely correspond with the alignment of the furrows shown on the geophysical survey plot. The furrows measured between 0.6m and 3.6m wide and, where excavated, were up to 0.4m deep. Their wide spacing, at between *c.* 2.15m and 7.5m apart, and the slight curve in their alignment at the ends of the selions (individual strips), suggests that they are probably medieval in date. The alignment of the furrows was consistent across the site, indicating that the site, most likely, consisted of part of a single field.

6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 The results of the evaluation correlate well with the preceding geophysical survey, which identified anomalies representing components of a former open field system across the site.
- No evidence of medieval or earlier occupation, relating to the nearby settlement of Ullesthorpe were identified. The presence of partially upstanding ridge and furrow earthworks across the site indicate that the site has been under an agricultural regime since at least the late medieval period.

Medieval to post-medieval (1066 to 1800)

6.3 The ridge and furrow earthworks recorded across the site are the remains of a medieval open field system (Figs 2 & 4). The earthworks are generally well-preserved, although later agricultural and recreational use of the site has substantially truncated the earthworks in places and their height is considerably reduced from their presumed former maximum.

6.4 The remains of the open field system indicate that the area was used as arable land in the medieval period. A medieval date for the earthworks is suggested by the spacing of the selions (individual strips) and the reversed S-shaped curve evident in their alignment (Taylor 1975, 82; Rackham 1986, 167-9). The land was probably turned over to pasture following enclosure, which is suggested by the survival of the medieval ridge and furrow earthworks. The field system corresponds with the general alignment of the surrounding field systems depicted on historic and current Ordnance Survey mapping. These surrounding field systems predominantly relate to Parliamentary Enclosures of the post-medieval period, with many surviving elements of earlier medieval strip fields remaining.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

7.1 Fieldwork was undertaken by Martyn Cooper, assisted by Anne Templeton and Daniele Marzeddu. The report was written by Martyn Cooper. The illustrations were prepared by Dan Bashford. The archive has been compiled by Emily Evans, and prepared for deposition by Jessica Cook. The project was managed for CA by Stuart Joyce.

8. REFERENCES

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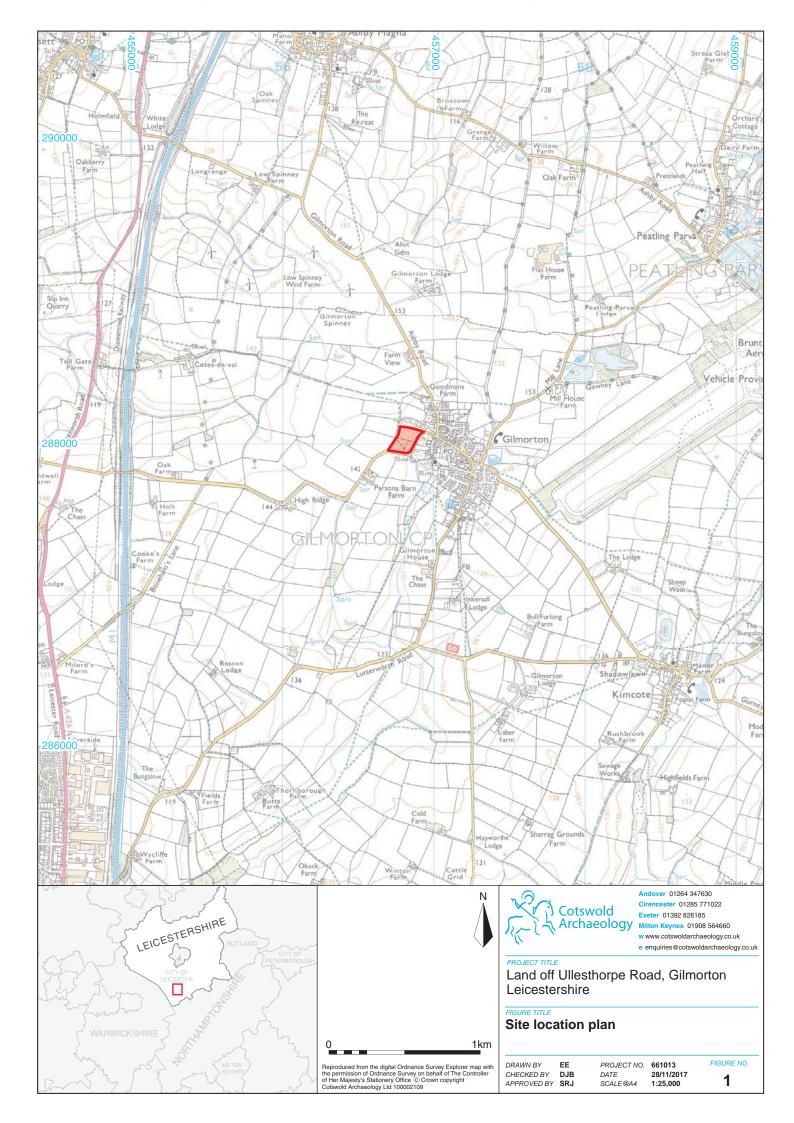
 Ref. P16-1042
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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

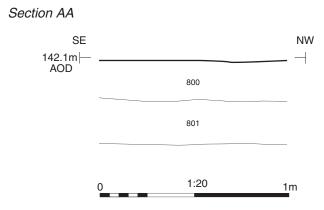
Trench No.	Context No.	Туре	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D (m)
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brownish-orange. sandy-clay, friable	()		0.2
1	101	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brownish-orange, sandy-clay, mid compact			0.4
1	102	Layer		Natural	Light brownish-orange. silty/clay, compact, inclusions: roots (15%)			
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brownish-orange. sandy-clay, friable			0.3
2	201	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brownish-orange, sandy-clay, mid compact			0.3
2	202	Layer		Natural	Light brownish-orange. silty/clay, compact, inclusions: stones (10%, 0.03-0.10 m)			0.6
3	300	Layer		Topsoil	Dark orangish-brown, sandy-clay, friable			0.2
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Dark orangish-brown. sandy-clay, mid compact			0.4
3	302	Layer		Natural	Light orangish-brown. inclusions: stones (15%; 0.03-0.10 m)			0.2
4	400	Layer		Topsoil	Dark orangish-brown, sandy-clay, friable			0.3
4	401	Layer		Subsoil	Dark orangish-brown. sandy-clay, mid compact			0.3
4	402	Layer		Natural	Light orangish-brown, compact. inclusions: stones (15%; 0.03-0.10 m)			0.3
5	500	Layer		Topsoil	Dark orangish-brown, sandy-clay, friable			0.2
5	501	Layer		Subsoil	Mid orangish-brown. sandy-clay, mid compact			0.2
5	502	Layer		Natural	Light brownish/orange, silty-clay, compact. inclusions (stones 10%, 0.03-0.15 m)			0.4
5	503	Cut		Furrow	Linear shape, with concave shallow sides, shallow concave base, oriented e-w	1.3	0.6	0.1
5	504	Fill	503		Light brownish-orange, silty-clay, compact inclusions of stones (10%, dim. 0.03-010 m) and charcoal (5%, 0.03-0.7 m)			0.3
6	600	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brownish-orange, sandy-clay, friable			0.2
6	601	Layer		Subsoil	Mid orangish-brown, sandy clay, mid compact			0.3
6	602	Layer		Natural	Light brownish-orange, silty-clay, compact. inclusions: stones (15%; 0.03-0.10 m)			0
7	700	Layer		Topsoil	Dark brownish-orange, sandy-clay, friable			0.1
7	701	Layer		Subsoil	Mid brownish-orange, sandy-clay, mid compact.			0.3
7	702	Layer		Natural	Light brownish-orange, silty-clay, compact. inclusions of stones (10%, dim. 0.03-010 m)			0.4
7	703	Cut		Furrow	Linear shape, shallow/symmetrical sides, with a concave base, se-nw oriented	1.6	3.7	0.4
7	704	Fill	703		Mid brownish-grey, clayey-silt, loose compaction. inclusions of small rounded pebbles (15%, 0.02-0.05 m)			0.4
8	800	Layer		Topsoil	Mid brownish grey, silty/clay			0.2
8	801	Layer		Subsoil	Mid orange brown silty clay and gravel			0.2
8	802	Layer		Natural	Red-brown silty clay, gravel and sandy orangey patches			0.5

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS					
Project Name	Land off Ullesthorpe Road, Gilmorton, I	Leicestershire			
Short description Project dates	During November 2017, Cotswold Archaeology carried out a archaeological evaluation at Land off Ullesthorpe Road, Gilmorto Leicestershire. The evaluation was undertaken to inform an outling planning application for the residential development of up to a dwellings with associated access, public open space, car parking landscaping and drainage. The fieldwork comprised the excavation of up to eight trenches. Archaeological interest in the site is derived from its location with an area containing the Scheduled remains of extant mediew features, including a motte, moat, house platforms and fishpond located c. 70-220m south-east of the site, as well as All Sain Church and its associated burial ground located c.155-180m sout east of the site. A previous geophysical survey identified strong, positive, line anomalies across the site, which are interpreted as the remains ridge and furrow agriculture. The archaeological evaluation resuld displayed a strong correlation with these geophysical surver results. Extant ridge and furrow earthworks, the remains of the medieval open field system that once surrounded the village Ullesthorpe, were encountered across the majority of the site. Despite the archaeological potential of the area, with the exceptic of medieval furrows, no features or deposits of archaeologic interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactur material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.				
•	13-15 November 2017				
Project type Previous work	Evaluation Deak Record Accompant (Pageous 2017), Coophysical Survey				
Future work	Desk-Based Assessment (Pegasus 2017), Geophysical Survey				
	Unknown				
PROJECT LOCATION	Land off I Weethern a Dood Cilmenton Laiseatarchina				
Site Location	Land off Ullesthorpe Road, Gilmorton, Leicestershire				
Study area (M ² /ha)	1.87ha				
Site co-ordinates	456818 288028				
PROJECT CREATORS					
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology				
Project Brief originator	Leicestershire County Council				
Project Design (WSI) originator		Cotswold Archaeology			
Project Manager	Stuart Joyce				
Project Supervisor	Martyn Cooper				
MONUMENT TYPE	Ridge and furrow earthworks				
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None				
PROJECT ARCHIVES	Intended final location of archive	Content			
Physical	N/A	none			
Paper	Leicestershire County Museum	Pro-forma recording sheets, registers, WSI			
Digital	Leicestershire County Museum	Digital photographs, digital survey data			
BIBLIOGRAPHY					
•	d off Ullesthorpe Road, Gilmorton, Le	icestershire: Archaeological			
Evaluation. CA typescript report 17692					









Trench 8, representative section, looking south-west (1m scale)



Trench 8, looking south-east (1m scales)



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PROJECT TITLE

Land off Ullesthorpe Road, Gilmorton Leicestershire

FIGURE TITLE

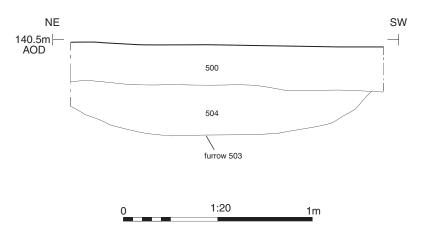
Trench 8: representative section and photographs

 DRAWN BY
 EE
 PROJECT NO.
 661013
 FIGURE NO.

 CHECKED BY
 DJB
 DATE
 28/11/2017

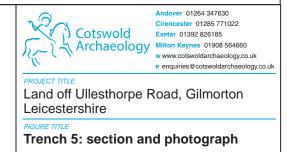
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Section BB





Furrow 503, looking south-east (1m scale)



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 EE
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 661013

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FIGURE NO.



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