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**An Archaeological Evaluation and
Level 1 Historic Building Survey on
Land at Laurel House, 2 Main Street, Bagworth,
Leicestershire, LE67 1DN**

NGR: SK 44741 07969

Joseph Peters



**ULAS Report No: 2023-030
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Site Name: Land at Laurel House, 2 Main Street, Bagworth, Leicestershire, LE67 1DN

Grid Ref: SK 44741 07969

Author: Joseph Peters

Client: Spacecom Ltd

Planning Authority: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council

Planning Ref. 19/01130/OUT / 22/00353/REM

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Cover photo: Site entrance from main street, facing north

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OASIS RECORD

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	Universi1- 514415		
	Project Name	An Archaeological Evaluation and Level 1 Historic Building Survey on Land at Laurel House, 2 Main Street, Bagworth, Leicestershire, LE67 1DN		
	Start/end dates	29/03/2023 (HBR), 03/04/2023 – 04/04/2023 (TT)		
	Previous/Future Work	DBA 2016-108		
	Project Type	Evaluation		
	Site Status			
	Current Land Use	Farmyard		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning requirement		
	Planning Ref.	19/01130/OUT - 22/00353/REM		
PROJECT LOCATION	County	Leicestershire		
	Site Address/Postcode	Land at Laurel House, 2 Main Street, Bagworth, Leicestershire, LE67 1DN		
	Study Area	0.32 hectares		
	Site Coordinates	SK 44741 07969		
	Height OD	168m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority: Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Gavin Speed		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Joseph Peters		
	Sponsor/Funding Body	Spacecom Ltd		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	Leicestershire Museum service	Leicestershire Museum service	Leicestershire Museum service
	ID (Acc. No.)	X.A32.2023	X.A32.2023	X.A32.2023
	Contents		Photographs	Report / Trench & photo sheets
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
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An Archaeological Evaluation and Level 1 Historic Building Survey on Land at Laurel House, 2 Main Street, Bagworth, Leicestershire, LE67 1DN

Summary

This report details the results of an archaeological evaluation and Level 1 historic building survey carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land at Laurel House, 2 Main Street, Bagworth, Leicestershire (NGR: SK 44741 07969). An initial site inspection and Level 1 photographic historic building survey was completed on the 29th of March 2023. Subsequently, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken between 3rd – 4th April 2023. The work was carried out in advance of residential development.

A Level 1 photographic historic building survey on the remains of a dry stone wall at Laurel House was undertaken. On inspection, it was discovered the wall had been previously demolished and all building materials removed prior to the fieldwork. Digital photographs of the wall were taken on a previous site visit (Brown 2016).

Five evaluation trenches were excavated across the site, located along the building footprints. All trenches contained no archaeological features or finds.

The archive for the work will be deposited with Leicestershire Museum Services under accession number X.A32.2023.

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* (MHCLG 2021) this document forms the report for an archaeological evaluation on land at Laurel House, 2 Main Street, Bagworth, Leicestershire.

The work was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on behalf of Spacecom Ltd. Planning permission has been granted for residential development for 7 dwellings (Planning Ref: 19/01130/OUT) and the permission included a condition for archaeological work. There is potential for post-medieval and modern remains and the Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire as advisor to Hinckley & Bosworth Borough Council had requested trial trench evaluation to determine the impact of the proposed scheme on any buried archaeology and if necessary, provide a mitigation strategy for the site.

Site Location, Geology and Topography

Bagworth lies in the Hinckley and Bosworth district of Leicestershire, nine miles west of Leicester, in the civil parish of Bagworth and Thornton. The assessment area lay on the south side of the Main Street in the centre of Bagworth, close to the T-junction with Station Road, and was located on the western edge of the historic core of the village (Figure 1).

The site consisted of open space, formerly consisted of farm buildings (two large barns, smaller sheds and offices), with tarmac and concrete surfaces and grass areas. The land extended southwards and gently sloped down beyond the area of excavation to the southern field. To the west of site, there was an area of scrub land that had subsided due to mining activities in the 1970's. To the south of the site lay a mixture of pasture and arable fields. Further west of the site were a few buildings and beyond, an area of woodland and scrub.



Figure 1: Location of site

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The British Geological Survey identified the underlying geology as Edwalton Member Mudstone bedrock with Glaciofluvial deposits and Mid Pleistocene sand and gravel. The Soilscape website indicated that the soils, would be a slowly permeable seasonally wet acid loamy and clayey soils (Soilscape 17).



Figure 2: Existing site plan (provided by client)

Historical and Archaeological Background

A Desk-Based Assessment of the site was undertaken previously (Brown 2016), the following is a summary of the results.

Historical Background

The place name of Bagworth is likely to be Anglo-Saxon in origin and is derived from the personal name 'Bag' or 'Bæcge' and the Old English word meaning enclosure. It is listed in the Domesday survey as 'Bageworde' (Morris 1979). Two collieries were established in the village in 1830 (Nichols 1815.). After the sinking of the mines the village developed quickly, by the 1950s the village was showing signs of decay due to subsidence, and there was a decline in the population. The Desford Colliery was closed in 1984, and Bagworth pit in 1991.

Archaeological Background

There are no Scheduled Monuments, World Heritage Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens or battlefields located within 1km of the assessment area. The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland record several known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the assessment area:

Prehistoric

A findspot of a flint core and flake dated to the Late Mesolithic or Early Neolithic (10000 BC to 3001 BC) is located at Laurel Farm itself (MLE8348). A possible Palaeolithic flint was recorded from south of Bagworth New Wood to the east (MLE9284).

Roman

The solitary find from the Romano-British period is represented by a lead weight found near the Barlestone Road (MLE9287), c.600m west of the site.

Medieval to Post-medieval

The application area is located within the historic settlement core of the village (MLE2699) and most of the sites on the HER relate to the medieval and post-medieval periods. A solitary piece of early medieval pottery has been discovered close to the application area, c. 100m south of (MLE9288). The nearby Holy Rood church (MLE18309) has Saxo-Norman origins. Only the arch remains of the original external structure (MLE2697), although the church also contains a medieval wooden screen (MLE6782). Earthworks associated with the medieval village are located around Manor Farm (MLE2696), outside the modern village, 200m to the east of the site. Bagworth Park lies to the east of the village (MLE2695). This was a medieval deer park which belonged originally to the Bishop of Durham, passing in the 15th century to Lord Hastings. Nichols describes it as ‘of old times very large and extensive’ estimating it at some 400 acres and in use as a deer park until around 1622.

There are a number of other sites further afield. To the north-east is the post-medieval house, Bagworth Moats (MLE9976), the site of a medieval moated house (MLE2688) and fishponds to the west and south-east (MLE2690, MLE17452). The moat and fishponds are designated Scheduled Monuments (SM Ref. 1010485). Close by a cannon ball was found (MLE7350). An old farmhouse - The Hollow - (MLE11708) lies just to the east and the site of a windmill lies to the south-east (MLE2680).

At the southern edge of the site was a dry stone wall, seen running east-west and then curving to the north behind a modern barn. It appears to have been built in two phases, with the curving wall running north being older. The east-west portion of the wall is in poor condition and the top course is capped in places by concrete. The date of this is uncertain, but likely to be of post-medieval – modern.

Cartographic Evidence

The earliest available usable map of the area is an 1814 Surveyor’s drawing showing dense settlement in the village core and the area adjacent to Laurel House to the east, but only patchy settlement immediately to the west of the house. The 1838 tithe map does not show the area in any detail.

The map of 1886 shows the original Laurel Farm and buildings, with garden/orchard to the south and just to the west of the site, a small pond (Figure 3). None of the buildings shown exist today. The 1903 map shows no change in the layout of the farm and its buildings from the 1886 map. By 1956 the southern-most buildings of the farm complex had changed in outline and a telephone exchange and some water tanks had been built outside the western boundary of the site, but the farm otherwise remained substantially the same. The modern buildings were constructed in 1982. The approximate location of the buildings shown on the 1886 map are shown below, in relation to the proposed new buildings, and trial trenches.



Figure 3: Trench plan with proposed new buildings outlined, and earlier buildings shown on 1886 map (grey)

Aims and Objectives

The main objectives of the archaeological work were defined as follows:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits.
- To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
- To provide sufficient information on the archaeological potential of the site to assess the impact of the proposed development on cultural heritage and to help formulate a mitigation strategy
- To record any archaeological deposits and produce an archive and report of any results

The results of the evaluation will provide information in order for the local planning authority to make informed recommendations and to identify an appropriate mitigation strategy for the proposed development.

Research objectives

Initial research objectives were derived from *East Midlands Heritage* research agenda (Cooper 2006, Knight *et al.* 2012), and updated here: <https://researchframeworks.org/emherf/>

There was a moderate potential for archaeology within the study area. In particular post-medieval and modern remains have been found in the vicinity and therefore had the potential to contribute to the following Research Objectives:

Post-Medieval

- 8.4 Rural settlement patterns and building traditions

Modern

- 9.2 Buildings in town and countryside
- 9.6 Agriculture
- 9.7 The growth of industry



Figure 4: Pre-groundworks, looking north across the site

Methodology

The work followed the procedures set out in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the project (ULAS 2022).

All work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (updated 2020) and adhered to their *Code of Conduct* (updated 2021). The Accession Number (XA32.2023) was used to identify all records and artefacts.

Fieldwork was carried out by ULAS on the 29th of March and between the 3rd and 4th of May 2023 and was followed by post-excavation and reporting. The project involved the excavation of five 20m long trenches across the development area using a three tonne tracked mini excavator with a 1.50m ditching bucket. On arrival at the site the position of the trenches were marked out across the area and positioned over the footprints of each of the new dwellings (Fig. 4).



Figure 5: Location of trenches (red) with site outline (red) (supplied by client).

Monitoring

Internal monitoring procedures were undertaken with the project manager, to ensure that project targets were met and professional standards maintained. No monitoring visits were undertaken, but photos and descriptions of the results were shared with LCC Planning Archaeologist during the work.

Historic Building Recording

Results

The site was visited on the 29th of March 2023. The conditions during the survey were dry and sunny with partial clouds. On inspection, it was discovered the wall had been previously demolished and all building materials removed prior to the fieldwork. Digital photographs of the wall were taken on a previous site visit (Brown 2016) and on request the client returned some of the stone from the wall for inspection. Although the stone appeared to be of a similar description to that visible of stone from previous photos, it could not be said with certainty that all of it was from the wall (Figure 14).

A small stack of in situ bricks were observed towards the northern extent of the demolished wall. It is likely the bricks formed a foundation for a building associated with the original farmhouse (Figure 13). The foundation was formed of at least five courses of brick and was observed for a depth of 0.40m.

The dry-stone wall was identified in the Desk-Based Assessment (Brown 2016) and described as a L-shaped rubble built dry stone wall of locally sourced stone. The wall appeared to have been built in two phases, with the north to south segment appearing to be older. The east-west portion of the wall was in poor condition and the upper course appeared to be capped in places with concrete. An aerial photograph of Laurel Farm taken in

the 1950's suggests that the wall continued east approximately 5 to 10 metres forming a gated access to the southern field before continuing north to east. It is likely this wall formed a boundary around the farmyard.



Figure 6: Aerial photograph of Laurel Farm (c.1950's), dry stone wall highlighted in red, taken from Desk-Based Assessment (Brown 2016).



Figure 7: Dry stone wall, looking south-west (Provided by former landowner).



Figure 8: Dry stone wall running east-west, looking south (Brown 2016).



Figure 9: Curving portion of wall running to the north, looking west (Brown 2016).



Figure 10: Close up of dry-stone wall, looking south-west (Brown 2016).



Figure 11: Location of demolished dry stone wall, looking north.



Figure 12: Location of demolished dry stone wall, looking south-east, 1m scale.



Figure 13: In situ brick foundation towards north of demolished dry stone wall, looking south-west, 0.30m x 0.50m scale.



Figure 14: Collection of stone returned by client.

Trial Trench Evaluation

Results

All topsoil and subsoil had been removed from the site due to modern intrusion, related to farm yard development and waste disposal activity. Initial trenching observed an upper layer of crushed tarmac and mixed hardcore with an underlying dark greyish black sandy silt with crushed brick and mortar inclusions. This deposit was likely related to the demolition of the original farm building. A thin metallised surface was observed comprised of small rounded pebbles and was likely related to the original farm yard. In addition, structural brick footings of the original farm buildings were seen in Trench **05** (Figure 16). A lower deposit of disturbed natural was observed towards the base of trenches.

In addition to the removal of topsoil and subsoil across site, trenches observed large areas of modern disturbance and farm related waste disposal pits into the natural substrata. No archaeological features were identified. A shallow ditch was observed and partially excavated towards the south-western end of Trench **02** (Figure 17). Upon inspection, it is likely the feature was a recent boundary ditch.

Table 1: Trench dimensions

Trench	Orientation	Min. Depth	Max. Depth	Dimensions	OD Height	Comments
01	E - W	0.30m	1.10m	17.5m x 1.60m	167.75m	Shortened to east due to site access / Modern pit towards east machined out.
02	NE - SW	0.20m	0.90m	16m x 1.60m	167.92m	Shortened at north-east end due to site access / Field boundary towards south-west end.
03	NE - SW	0.50m	0.70m	20m x 1.60m	168.02m	Modern pits towards north-east / NW-SE oriented drains towards south-west.
04	E - W	0.70m	0.80m	20m x 1.60m	167.82m	NE-SW drain and NW-SE drain towards east.
05	NW - SE	0.95m	1.10m	21m x 1.60m	167.35m	Concrete slabs towards east and west of trench were not removed. Significant modern disturbance observed.

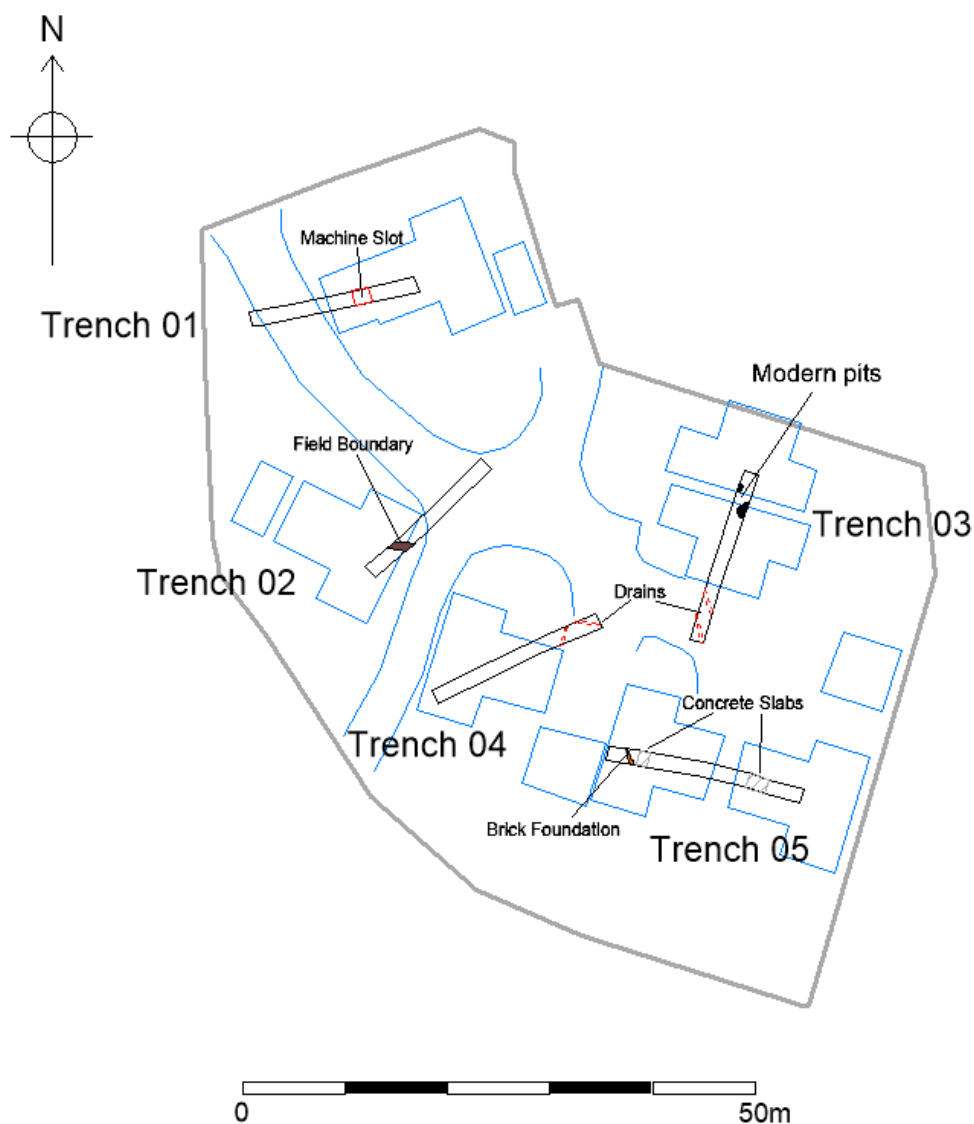


Figure 15: Annotated Trench plan, proposed footings in blue.



Figure 16: Brick foundations in Trench 5.



Figure 17: Boundary ditch in Trench 2.

Discussion and Conclusion

The site at Laurel House, Bagworth, had previously been subject to an archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (Brown 2016). The DBA results suggested that the site, located within the historic core of the village, had moderate potential for medieval and post-medieval remains but was likely to have been disturbed by the modern farm and associated buildings. This was confirmed by the trial trench excavations which observed large areas of modern disturbance and farm related waste disposal.

The trial trench excavations also confirmed the presence of earlier farm building remains in Trench 05. The remains for recorded and surveyed before removal.

At the southern edge of the site was, until recently, a dry stone wall, originally running east-west and then curving to the north behind a modern barn. A retrospective Historic Building Record was undertaken, utilising archive photos, and inspection of the remaining stone. Earlier fragments of a brick wall remained in situ towards the northern extent of the demolished dry stone wall and are likely to have been contemporary.

Archive and Publication

The archive for the project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number X.A32.2023 and consists of the following:

- 1 Unbound copy of this report (2021-000)
- 5 Trench recording sheets
- 1 Photographic record
- 1 CD of digital photographs

A summary of this report will appear in due course in the Transactions the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.

University of Leicester Archaeological Services supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The online OASIS data entry has been completed detailing the results of the project and will be digitally accessible through The Archaeological Data Services (<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>).

Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank the client, Spacecom Ltd and to site manager for his help and for providing the machine and driver. The fieldwork and post-excavation were undertaken by Joseph Peters and project managed by Gavin Speed and Vicki Score for ULAS.

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Appendix 1: Trench Photos









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