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A Strip, Plan, and Sample Excavation off Ferndale Drive, Ratby, Leicestershire NGR: SK 513 064



Jon Coward

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A Strip, Plan, and Sample Excavation off Ferndale Drive, Ratby, Leicestershire

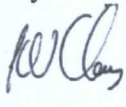
NGR: SK 513 064

Jon Coward

P.A No. 09/00211/4

For: Cawrey Ltd

Approved by:

Signed:  **Date**: 18.11.2010

Name: …Patrick Clay

University of Leicester
Archaeological Services
University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH
Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614

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A Strip, Plan, and Sample Excavation off Ferndale Drive, Ratby, Leicestershire NGR: SK 513 064

Jon Coward

1. Summary

A strip, plan and sample exercise was carried out by ULAS between Dec 2009 and April 2010 on land east of Ferndale Drive, Ratby, Leicestershire SK 513 064 for Cawry Ltd, in advance of residential development. The excavations revealed an early Roman enclosure and evidence for associated Roman masonry building; however it was clear that only one corner of the enclosure had survived, the rest having been destroyed by the cutting for the M1 motorway adjacent. The archive will be deposited with LMARS under accession code X.A244.2009 in due course.

2. Background

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) was commissioned by Cawrey Ltd. to carry out a strip, plan and sample exercise on land off Ferndale Drive, Ratby, Leicestershire, between December 2009 and April 2010. This work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment, in accordance with DOE Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning, para.30). The Senior Planning Archaeologist of the Historic and Natural Environment Team of Leicestershire County Council, as archaeological advisor to the planning authority, requested a strip, plan and sample excavation in advance of a proposed new construction of residential dwellings to identify and locate any archaeological remains of significance and record them as appropriate .

The site is located off Ferndale Drive, Ratby, Leicestershire (Fig 1), adjacent to the south side of the M1 motorway. The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain (Solid and Drift) Map Sheet 170 indicated that the underlying geology was likely to consist of glacial drift (boulder clay). The land lies at a height of *c.*90m, with a slight slope from the north-west down to the south-east.



Figure 1 Position of site.

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3. Historical Background

The development site lies on the south-west edge of the motorway close to the medieval core of Ratby (MLE10075). To the north is the site of a possible Bronze Age barrow known from a cropmark of a ring ditch (MLE3109 SK516 067). The site also lies within an area of archaeological importance adjacent to previous finds of Roman date (MLE3116) and close to the line of an important Roman road. This is thought to run south-east to north-west and may branch away from another road, which runs between Leicester and Mancetter. The site lies approximately 2.5km to the east of Bury Camp, a large rectangular earthwork, which is thought to date from the Iron Age (Liddle 1982). During a previous watching brief carried out by ULAS in 2000, several sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery were recovered, along with a single Roman sherd and evidence of a medieval field system (Higgins 2000; Hunt 2005). A geophysical survey was undertaken of the area but with inconclusive results (Butler 2009). An evaluation carried out in June 2009 (Jones 2009) showed the

presence of a ditch containing Romano-British pottery running approximately north-south in the eastern part of the evaluation area.

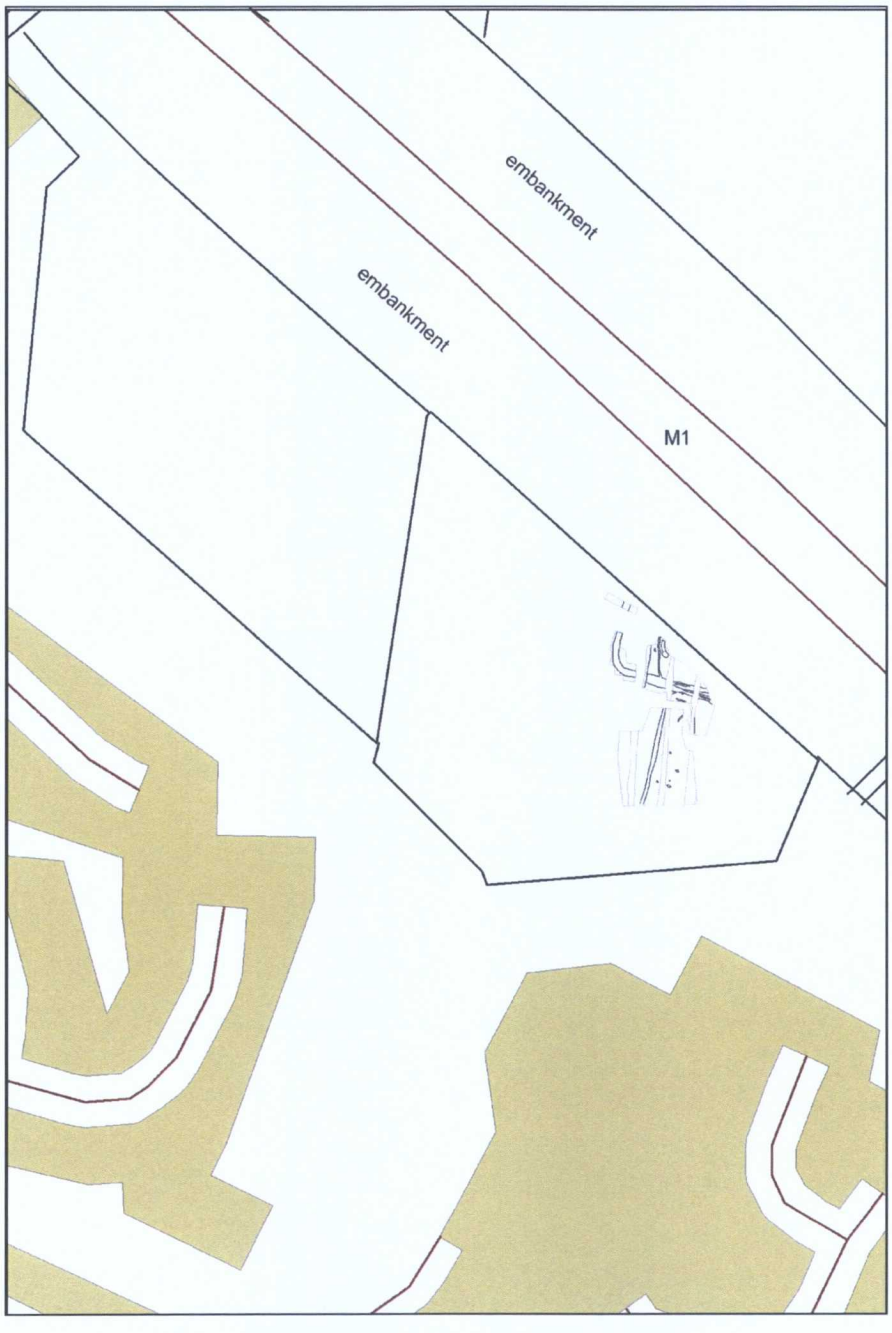

Figure 2 Plan of the stripped areas

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4. Aims

The principal aims of the archaeological work were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.

- To establish the character, extent and date range of any archaeological deposits located.
- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits which would be affected by the ground-works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

5. Methods

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological excavations*. Three adjacent areas (Figure 3) were opened up in three different tranches of work. Area A, to the south, was an irregular area of *c.* 627m^2 centred on the Roman ditch found in the June 2009 evaluation. Area B to the north of 334m^2 was opened up to check the extents of archaeological deposits exposed in Area A; Area C of 72m^2 was opened to pursue further linear features located in Area B, and a trial trench was excavated on the boundary of the M1 cutting to confirm alignment of a linear ditch observed in Area C. Archaeological deposits located were examined by hand cleaning and were planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. Environmental sampling was carried out on the ditch fill. All plans were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Sections of any excavated archaeological features were drawn at an appropriate scale, levelled, and tied in to the Ordnance Survey Datum.

Footpaths to the north and south edges constrained the area available for machining on the first tranche of work; pronounced ridge and furrow led to a somewhat stepped surface, with some furrow fill needing to be left *in-situ* in order to avoid over-truncating potential archaeological levels beneath the ridges. The natural substratum was boulder clay of mixed appearance, mostly a reddish-brown clay, but with areas of gravelly and sandy clay within it. A blanket of snow and freezing conditions hindered excavation of Area A in December 2009, fortunately however, possible archaeological deposits had been marked out before the snow fell, and so all potential features originally located were investigated. By the time of the second and third tranches the footpaths had been diverted, allowing excavation up to the northern field boundary on the edge of the cutting for the M1.

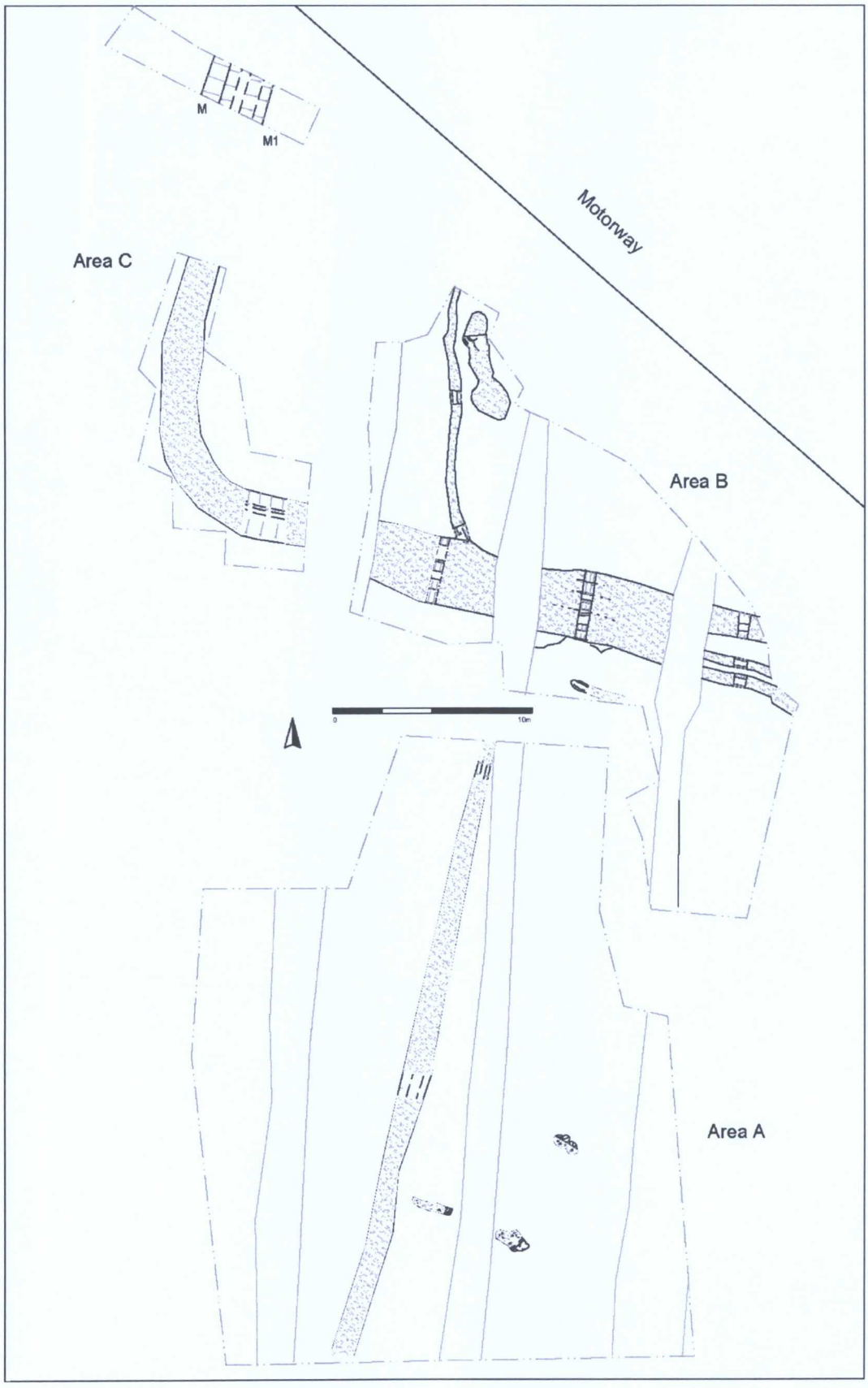

Figure 3 Overall plan of the areas and features

6. Results

6.1 Area A (Figure 4)

The north-south ditch identified earlier in 2009 was located under a medieval ploughing ridge, and followed for a total of *c.* 32m; it continued into both the south and north baulks. It was noticed that a surveying or mapping error in the original evaluation had placed the evaluation trench containing this ditch approximately 9 m too far to the east. An area to the west and east of this ditch were stripped. No potential archaeological deposits were seen to the west; to the east, several deposits were targeted for investigation.

6.1.1 The ditch

Although recorded as butt-ending in the evaluation, the area strip afforded a wider view so that it could be seen that the ditch actually ran continuously across the site, through a patch of varied natural substrata which had been assumed to have represented a terminal. Fortunately the medieval ploughing ridge was oriented quite closely to the line of the ditch, affording it some protection across most of the stripped area. Towards the north edge of the excavation area the ditch was becoming more shallow having been truncated by the medieval furrow. To the south the ditch remained in a better state of preservation, although at the southern edge the Roman ditch and medieval ridge were starting to divert, and so the feature will presumably have suffered some truncation in the adjacent furrow. Pottery recovered during cleaning this southern stretch (3) was of mid-to-late 1st century date. Immediately to the north of the original evaluation trench 9, the ditch survived to its widest extent (cut 10), measuring 1.30m east to west. Excavation showed it to have a maximum depth of 0.50m, with a discrete upper and lower fill. The junction between the two was very diffuse. The lower fill (11) was a clean mid-grey brown silty-clay with some pebbles; no finds were recovered from this layer. The upper layer (9) was slightly greyer and more friable; pottery from the 2nd century and fired clay were recovered from this layer. A section excavated near the north edge of the stripped area showed the ditch (cut 13) to have been truncated down to 0.85m in width and 0.25m in depth, with no distinction in fill (12). Bone and mid-to-late 1st century pottery were recovered from this deposit.

6.1.2 Other features

An ephemeral grey brown silty-clay linear deposit (cut 15, fill 14) of 2m in length by 0.4m in width proved to have a maximum depth of 0.05m; it could represent the remnant of a heavily truncated feature as some pottery was recovered from it. A similar sterile deposit 2.5m to the east (cut 17, fill 16) also proved shallow, and was of very irregular plan.

More convincing as possible post-holes were two intercutting features (cut 7 fill 6, and cut 8 fill 5). The light grey silty-clay fills were identical, with some pebbles and two larger fragments of stone in fill 5 which may have been utilised as post packing. Although shallow at a maximum of 0.16m in depth, the bases exhibited a clear

distinction between fill and natural substrata beneath. Cut 7 appeared to be the later of the two. Fragments of burnt bone were recovered from fill 6.

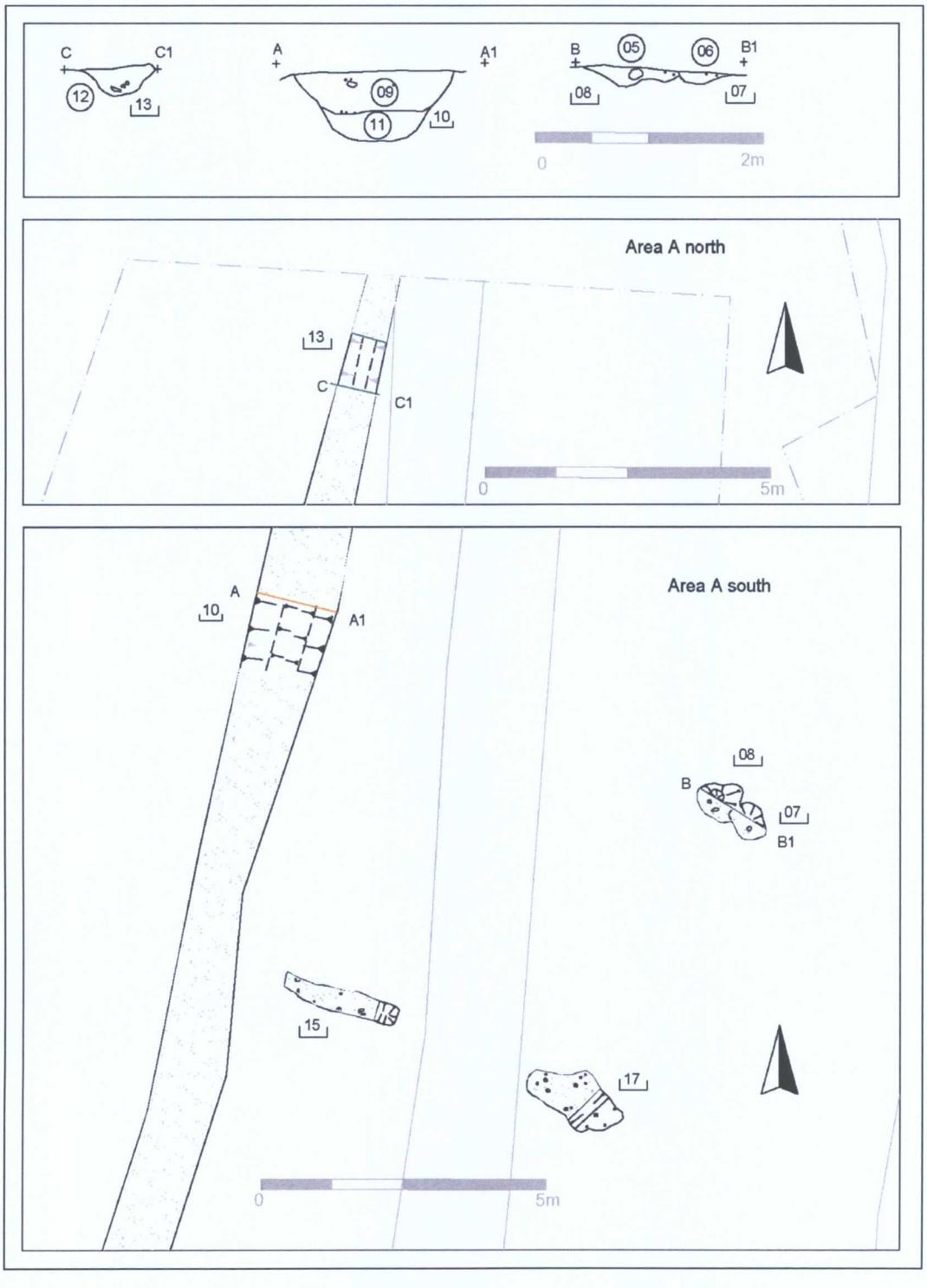

Figure 4 Plans and sections of features in Area A

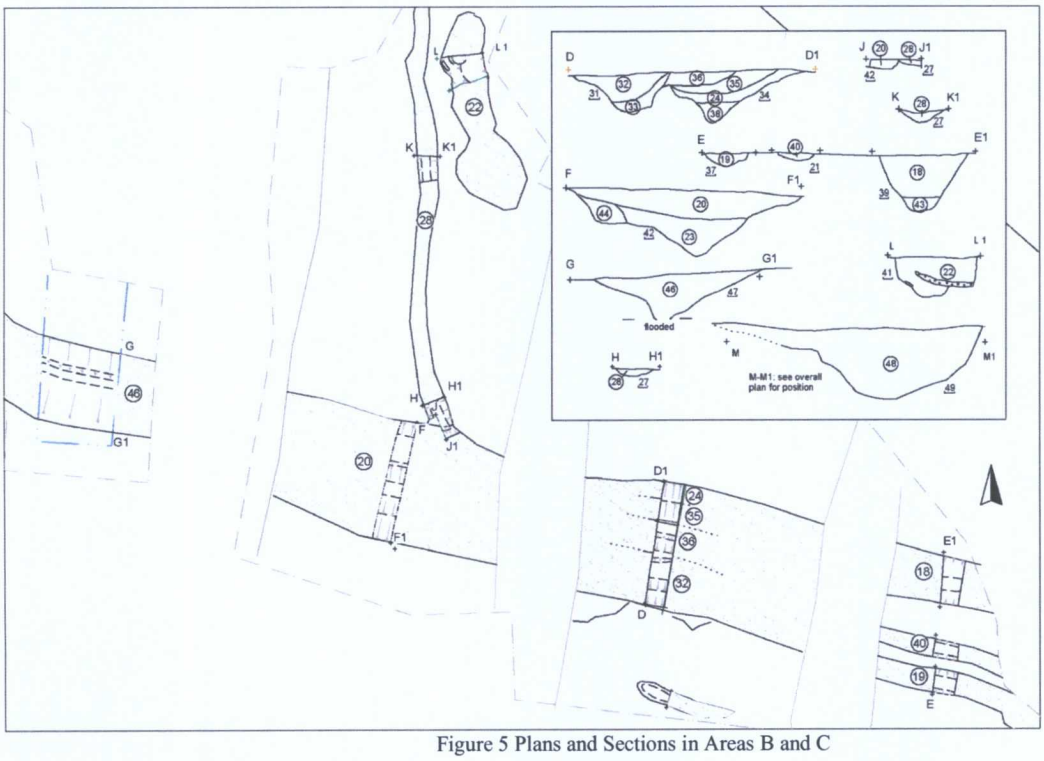

Figure 5 Plans and Sections in Areas B and C

6.2 Area B (Figure 5)

This area exhibited several re-cut linear ditch and gully features running in a general east-west orientation, a sinuous shallow north-south gully, and a vertical-sided amorphous pit. Beginning with the east side of the east-west linear features, two parallel features (cut 37 fill 19, and cut 21 fill 40), were of similar dimensions being *c.* 0.55m in width and 0.20m in depth; to the north was a substantial ditch (fills 18 and 43, cut 39) of 1.20m width and 0.80m depth. All three were truncated on their west edge by a north-south furrow, and re-appeared on the other side of the furrow as an amalgam intercutting feature. A section through this (D-D1) showed two main cuts (31, 34), with the fills of 34 being earlier than those of 31. Following the linear further west, another section (F-F1) showed a less complex stratigraphy with one major cut [42] containing the fills, although it is possible that the junction between fill 44 and fill 23 may represent another cut. A long, shallow and narrow sinuous gully (fill 28, cut 27, K-K1) ran northwards upslope at this point; the stratigraphic relationship between the two was ambiguous (J-J1) but it seems likely the gully was cut to drain into the larger east-west feature(s). Alongside the north end of this gully was a straight-sided amorphous pit, fill 22 cut 41. This was 5.35m in length by a maximum of 1.70m in width; the excavated slot (L-L1) exhibiting an irregular base of 0.50m maximum depth.

6.3 Area C, and trial trench on northern field boundary (Figure 5)

As the large east-west ditch was heading towards a supposedly negative evaluation trench (number 13) from the June 2009 evaluation, a further area was opened to the west of Area B in an attempt to track the course of the ditch. The strip showed that the ditch abruptly turned to the north (missing the edge of evaluation trench 13 by approximately 0.60m; trench 13 had also been plotted approximately 9m to the east of its true position in the original evaluation mapping). A section (G-G1) showed that, like section F-F1, the feature was less complicated at this point with only a single fill (46) discerned within cut 47, although a change in the north side of the cut hints that a re-cut may have been present. A trench opened along the northern field boundary (plan Figure 3, section Figure 5) showed that the ditch continues into the cutting for the motorway. The baulk section at this point (M-M1) also showed a single fill 48 within a single cut 49. The upper west side of the ditch cut was ill-defined, possibly due to interference from another plough furrow.

6.3 Discussion

It is clear from the plan that the large re-cut ditch defines some sort of enclosure; and that only the south-west corner of this enclosure has survived the construction of the M1 motorway. The multiple re-cuts in the central and east side of the large east-west ditch indicate quite intensive use, given that the pottery appears to terminate in the mid-2nd century. Of interest at this early date is the amount of Roman building material, with brick and tile common (only a sample of which was retained), and slate also utilised. This suggests the presence of stone buildings in the vicinity which may have been within the area since destroyed during the construction of the M1.

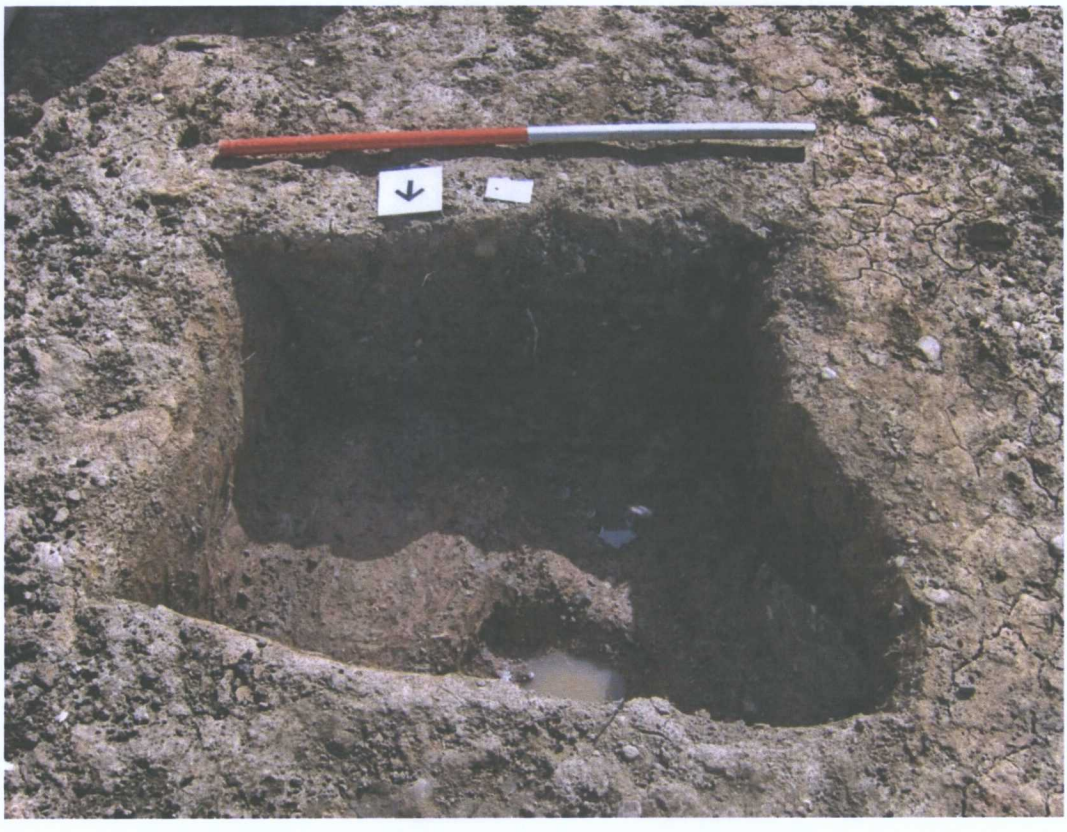

Figure 6 Straight-sided pit cut 41, partially excavated

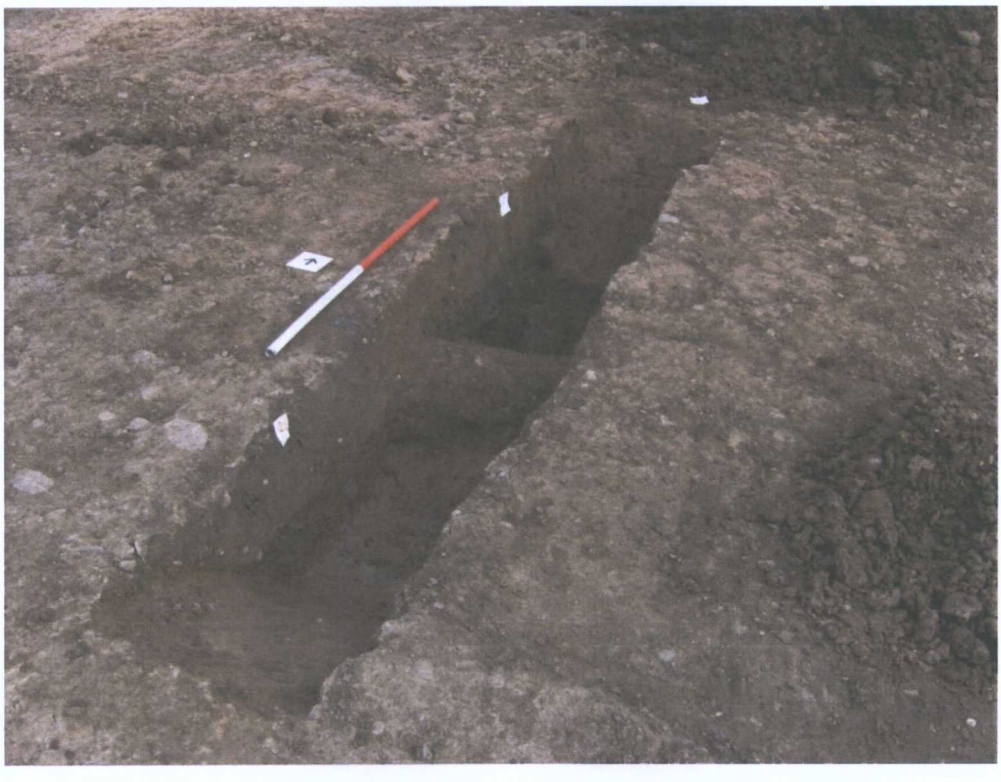

Figure 7 Large east-west ditch section D-D1

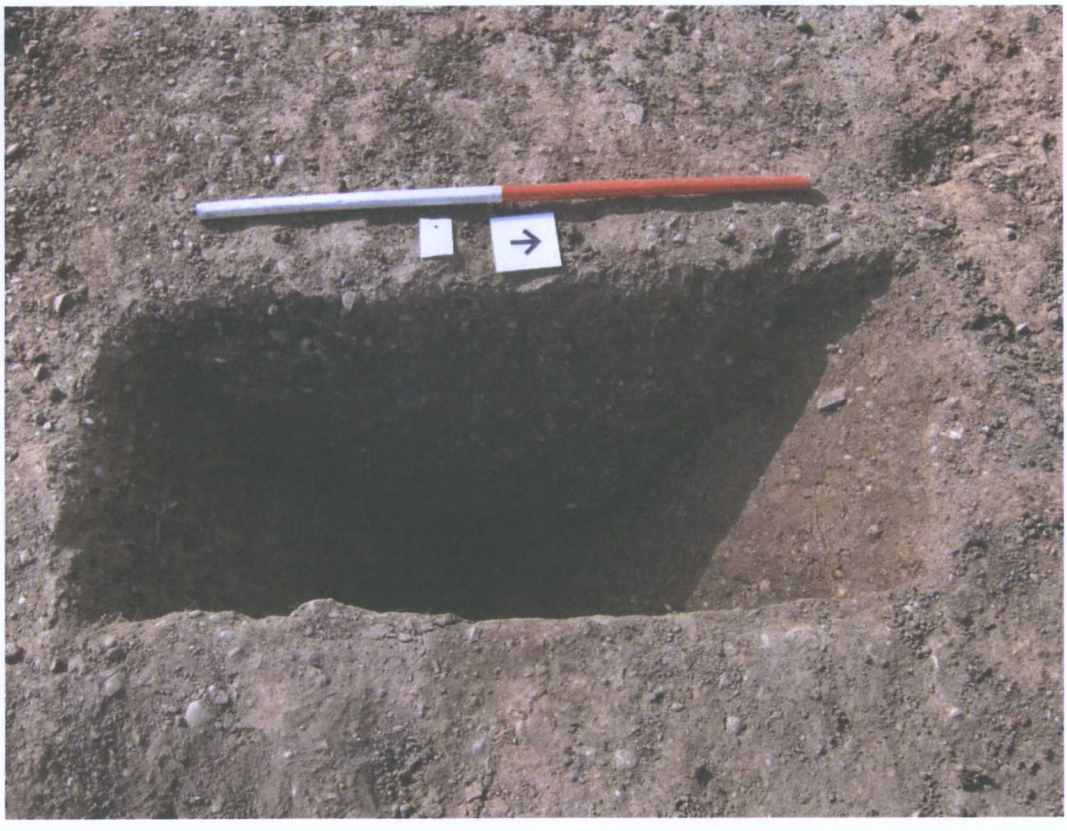

Figure 8 East-west ditch cut 39, north side of section E-E1



Figure 9 Large east-west ditch section F-F1

7. Archive

The archive consists of:

39 context sheets
3 sheets permagraph scaled drawings
1 small finds index sheet
1 drawing record sheet
1 drawing index sheet
1 sample index sheet
2 context index sheets
1 sheet monochrome photo index
1 sheet digital colour photo index
4 sheets digital contact prints
3 sheets of monochrome negatives and 3 sheets of monochrome contact prints
1 CD of the digital images
It will be deposited with LMARS under accession code X.A244.2009 in due course.

8. Acknowledgements

The project was carried out by Jon Coward with the assistance of Gavin Speed, Gerwyn Richards, Siobhan Brocklehurst, Matt Morris, and James Harvey. Project management was by Patrick Clay. ULAS would like to thank Cawry Ltd and staff, and local detectorist Neil Glenister, for their assistance during the course of the work.

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Jon Coward
ULAS
University of Leicester
University Road
Leicester LE1 7RH

T: 0116 252 2848
F: 0116 252 2614

www.le.ac.uk/ulas

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Appendix 1: The finds

Roman pottery *Nicholas J. Cooper*

A total of 133 sherds of Roman pottery weighing 2277g with an average sherd weight of 17g, was retrieved from 17 contexts with one unstratified. The average sherd weight is fairly typical for a rural assemblage and the occurrence of abraded sherds from (20) and (21) indicated exposure or waterlogging. The material has been classified according to the Leicestershire fabric type series (Pollard 1994, 112-14) and quantified by sherd count and weight (g) as summarised below.

Quantified summary by Fabric				
Fabric	**Sherds**	**Weight**	**%sherds**	**AvShWt**
Samian	1	1	1	1
BB1	4	10	3	3
White	2	65	2	33
Mortaria	3	200	2	67
Oxidised	16	208	12	13
Grey	78	1221	59	16
Sandy	11	195	8	18
Shell	3	17	2	6
Grog	15	360	11	24
Total	**133**	**2277**	**100**	**17**

In terms of the fabrics represented and their proportions, all of the pottery probably dates between the Conquest (AD 43) and the second half of the 2nd century, with nothing necessarily dating after about AD 150 or so. The occurrence of transitional fabrics (sandy and grog-tempered wares) indicates activity in the decades after the Conquest and a single 'Belgic' style vessel from (23) which may date to before the Conquest, although deposited later. A single sherd of South Gaulish samian, dating to the second half of the 1st century is the only import to the site and the only regional imports are a BB1 jar probably dating to the middle of the 2nd century and a white ware mortarium from Mancetter-Hartshill (Fabric MO12 with white quartz) where the bead sits below the flange and therefore dates to *c.*AD 100 to 150.

The remainder of the material (60%) comprises grey ware vessels all produced locally, probably from kilns in the vicinity of Leicester Forest, except for one sherd from the Lower Nene Valley dating to the middle decades of the 2nd century. Two other vessels are of note. The first is an example of a 'London ware'-type vessel copying samian Form 37 with compass drawn decoration from (19) (as Howe *et al.* 1980 no.23) dating to the second quarter of the 2nd century, but not from the Nene Valley. The second is a necked grey ware jar with beaded rim, with a single impressed wavy line around the neck. Such jars date to the early or middle decades of the 2nd century as demonstrated by several examples deposited in a large group dated by samian to the 150s at Empingham, Rutland (Cooper 2000, 78 and fig.37. 31 and 32).

Note: Context (18) also produced a single sherd (5g) of post-medieval earthenware with black glaze which is probably intrusive.

Roman Building Materials

Two contexts (20) and (46), dating to the middle of the 2nd century at the earliest contained Roman ceramic tile. Context (20) contained two examples of wall tile weighing 2.3kg, tighter with some fragments of red sandstone. Context (46) contained two tegula flanges and three unclassifiable fragments weighing 930g. Additionally, a wall tile fragment (1.5kg) was unstratified as was a roughly diamond-shaped Swithland slate (probably from the Groby quarries). It had no suspension hole so must have been complete, but a Roman date appears likely. The occurrence of these materials would indicate a stone-founded building with a tiled roof but without any under-floor heating systems due to lack of flue-tiles.

Fired clay

A total of 17 fragments of fired clay weighing 513g was retrieved from contexts (5) and (9).

Fired Clay Ratby XA.244.2009		
Context	**Frags**	**Weight**
9	11	491
5	6	22
Total	**17**	**513**

The material from (5) is very light and friable and is more properly described as an organic soil concretion. The material from (9) is made from poorly mixed clay similar to a Roman tile fabric and fired orange but coarser and with poorly finished surfaces. The largest fragment (length 75mm) has a curved surface as if forming the edge of a structure, such as a hearth, and has a blackened surface on one side.

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Context	*Cut*	*Fabric*	*Form*	*Type*	*Sherds*	*Weight*	*Date*	
3		GW5	jar		2	41	L1st-2nd	
9		GW3	jar		4	50	E-M 2nd	
9		OW1	misc		1	2	2nd cent+	
12		GT3	jar		2	52	L1st-2nd	
12		WW4	misc		1	5	M-L 1st	
14		GT3	jar		1	8	L1st-2nd	
18	39	WW2	flagon		1	60	L1st-2nd	
18	39	SW3	jar		1	53	M-L 1st	
18	39	SW2	jar	neckbead	1	18	M-L 1st	
18	39	GW5	jar	neckbead	1	8	M-L 1st	
18	39	GW6	jar	lidseat	2	28	M1st-M2nd	
18	39	GW3	jar	neckbead	2	8	M1st-M2nd	
18	39	GW5	jar	evertrim	2	14	L1st-E2nd	
18	39	GW5	jar	rusticated	13	88	50-120	
43	39	GT4	beaker	beadrim	6	79	M-L1st	
43	39	GT4	jar		2	88	M-L1st	
43	39	GT3	jar		1	13	M-L1st	
19		GW3	bowl	Dr37copy	4	60	125-150	London Ware dec as HPM23
20		GW4	bowl		1	10	125-275	
20		GW3	misc		3	20	2nd+	waterlogged abraded
20		OW5	misc		4	60	L1st-2nd	ncd abraded
20		CG1B	jar	neckbead	1	10	2nd-3rd+	Harrold? abraded
21	40	GW3	jar	base	5	148	L1st-2nd	SF1 abraded
21	40	GW6	jar		4	100	L1st-2nd	abraded
21	40	OW5	jar		1	56	L1st-2nd	abraded
22	41	SW3	jar		1	30	M-L1st	
22	41	CG	misc		1	2	ncd	
22	41	GT	misc		1	10	ncd 1st	
23		GT2	jar	Belgic	1	48	E-M1st	
23		GW5	bowl	carinated	1	15	M-L1st	
23		GW5	jar	rouletted	1	86	L1st-2nd	wavyline
23		GW5	jar	misc	18	215	L1st-2nd	

Context	*Cut*	*Fabric*	*Form*	*Type*	*Sherds*	*Weight*	*Date*	
24		samian	misc		1	1	M-L1st	South Gaulish
24		GT1	jar		1	62	M-L1st	
24		SW3	jar		3	65	M-L1st	
24		GW5	jar	cordon	1	8	M-L1st	
24		GW5	jar	outcurve	6	220	M-L1st	
24		OW5	jar	misc	5	65	M-L1st	grog
28	27	SW3	misc		1	5	M-L1st	
32	31	GW5	jar	necked	1	30	L1st-2nd	
33		MO	Mort	beadbelow	3	200	100-150	White Quartz grits
38	34	OW5	jar	neckedbead	5	25	L1st-E2nd	carinated
38	34	SW2	jar	necked	4	24	M-L1st	
46		CG1	jar		1	5	1st+	
46		GW6	jar		6	60	L1st-2nd	
46		BB1	jar		4	10	120+	
US		GW5	jar		1	12	Late 1st +	
Total					133	2277		

Pottery by Context

Animal bone *Jennifer Browning*

A small number of animal bones were recovered during this work from features dating to the Roman period. The bones were recovered by hand and also from sieving of bulk soil samples. Burnt bone and tooth enamel were in better condition than shaft fragments, which were poorly preserved with an abraded appearance, suggesting that the soil conditions were not conducive to good bone survival. There is evidence for mammals of both medium (eg sheep or pig) and large (cattle or horse) size in the assemblage, although the only positively identified species was cattle

Context	Description
6	Medium mammal shaft fragment (calcined)
12	Tooth enamel, possible cattle. The five fragments present probably represent a single tooth.
24	Cattle upper molar x1; bird/indeterminate shaft fragment (burnt);
46	Medium mammal tibia shaft (very poor preservation);
38	Large mammal vertebra fragment x3 (probably part of same bone)(gnawed);

Table 1: The hand-recovered bone fragments from each context

Context	Sample	Fraction	Description
43	2	Coarse fraction	Medium mammal shaft fragments x2, large mammal shaft fragments x2. (poor condition)

Table 2: The sieved bone fragments

Charred plant remains *Angela Monckton*

Introduction

Excavations by trial trenching were carried out by ULAS directed by Jon Coward. Roman enclosure ditches were investigated and a few samples were taken from features with the potential to contain charred plant remains which may indicate agriculture or occupation.

Methods

Samples were wet-sieved in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm mesh sieve. The flotation fractions (flots) were air dried and packed in self seal polythene bags. The residues were also air dried and the fraction over c.4mm sorted for all finds. This work was carried by Anita Radini at ULAS.

The flots were sorted for plant and animal remains using a x10-30 stereo microscope and the remains were removed to glass specimen tubes. The plant remains were identified by comparison with modern reference material at ULAS and were counted and recorded below (table 1).

Results

Only one sample had any potential to contain charred plant remains.

The Ditch cut 39 sample 2 (43): the 8 litre sample contained charcoal as small fragments and flecks. A few cereal grains included one of glume wheat, probably spelt (*Triticum*

spelta), and a couple of grain fragments of either cereal or large grasses. A couple of seeds included one fragment of vetch type (*Vicia* sp.) and one of small clover type (*Trifolium* type). These plants can occur in grassy vegetation or as weeeds of the fields.

Discussion

The only find was of a few charred cereal grains with occasional weed seeds in one sample. There were too few remains to interpret except as a low density of possible domestic or other waste from cereal use, no chaff was found. The maximum density of remains in the best sample was only 0.6 items per litre of soil. Domestic waste can include grains spilled during food preparation may represent domestic waste burnt in hearths. This waste may be raked from hearths and dumped or accumulated as a scatter on occupation sites. Plant materials for other purposes such as kindling may be represented by the grassy remains here in samples 3.

Comparison with other sites

Around only a dozen Roman rural sites have been sampled in Leicestershire and Rutland (reviewed in Monckton 2004, 160). The plant remains from this site appear to be similar in quantity and type to the local sites with few plant remains below 10 items per litre of soil which now includes Rearsby sites 2 and 6, and Market Overton. This group includes some farmsteads as at Normanton 1, Kirby Muxloe, Desford and Gimbro Farm. Possible explanations are that some of these sites may be more concerned with animal husbandry such as at some farmsteads, or may be from the parts of the settlement concerned with animal husbandry as is possibly the case at Rearsby site 6 where grassy remains were also found. Some low density plant remains may be from parts of a site further away from sites of cereal processing where the extent of the site is unknown, such as at Stamford Rd Oakham. This site is unusual in having Early Roman samples, also found at Loughborough and Market Overton, while at Rearsby the only early Roman sample was from a gully on site 2 which had very few remains. However, there are too few remains from this site to draw conclusions. More evidence is needed from Roman sites outside Leicester of all periods in the two counties.

Conclusions

The sample contained only a few charred plant remains at a low density in the feature sampled, indicating that this was possibly near the edge of domestic activity, or perhaps at some distance from where the cereals were being processed.

Acknowledgements

I am grateful to Jon Coward for information about the site and to Anita Radini for processing the sample.

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Table E1: Charred plant remains (X.A244.2009).

Samp No.	Cont No.	Feat type	Samp Vol. litres	Flot Vol. mls	Gr ch	Cf ch	Se ch	Se un	Oth ch	Chc	i/L	Charred plant remains and comments.
2	43	39 Ditch	8	12	3	-	2	-	-	++	0.6	A wheat grain, cereal or grass seeds, seeds of clover type and vetch.

Key: Gr = cereal grain, Cf = chaff, Se = seed, ch = charred, un = uncharred, Chc = charcoal, Oth = other charred item, tu = tuber, gs = grass stem bases, rts = small root fragments, fl = flecks, frag = fragments, lg = large, sm = small, + = present, ++ = moderate amount, +++ = abundant. # = further work required. D = ditch, i/L = items of charred remains per litre of soil sieved.

Other finds

A local metal detectorist, Mr Neil Glenister, kindly provided details of items he has retrieved in the vicinity:

1) Roman copper alloy coin, As, Antonius Pius, date *c.* 161 AD. Found in the field to the west of the site.
Scott,W (2010) LEIC-7D01B4 A ROMAN coin Webpage available at:
http://www.finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/291235

2) Medieval Edwardian type silver halfpenny of York mint, probably 1279-1377. Found in the area of the site.
Scott,W (2010) LEIC-7963B2 A MEDIEVAL coin Webpage available at:
http://www.finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/291117

3) Early medieval copper alloy stirrup mount, 900-1100 AD, found in the field west of the site.
Scott,W (2010) LEIC-791DC6 A EARLY MEDIEVAL mount Webpage available at:
http://www.finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/291110

Appendix 2: The Design Specification

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for Archaeological Works

Ferndale Drive, Ratby, Leicestershire (SK 513 064)

P.A 09/00211

Written scheme of investigation for a strip, plan and sample excavation

For: Cawrey Ltd

Summary

In view of the potential of the site for buried archaeological remains indicated by evaluation (Jones 2009), the archaeological adviser to the planning authority has recommended a strip, plan and sample excavation prior to topsoil stripping and groundworks for proposed residential development, to ensure that affected deposits are adequately recorded. This specification provides details of the methodologies and standards to be adopted by ULAS on behalf of the client during the course of the work.

1. Introduction

1.1 *Definition and scope of the specification*

In accordance with Planning Policy Guidance Note (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning), para.30, and the condition placed on planning permission, this specification constitutes a 'written scheme of archaeological investigation' which ULAS intends to implement on behalf of the Client in mitigation of any damage which may be caused to buried or standing archaeological remains from the development.

1.2 This document provides a scheme of works for:

Archaeological strip, plan and sample excavation to reveal and appropriately record archaeological deposits prior to topsoil stripping and groundworks likely to disturb archaeological remains, if present.

2. Archaeological Objectives

The main objectives, within the resources available, are

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

3. Background

3.1 *Context of the Project*

3.1.1 The proposed development area is located in the parish of Ratby (Grid. Ref. SK 513 064; figs.1 and 2). It covers an area of *c.* 2.5 ha currently a pasture field. Ratby is located approximately 8km to the west of central Leicester close to the M1 motorway.

3.1.2 Planning permission has been granted for residential development (Figure 2).

3.1.3 Leicestershire County Council, Historic and Natural Environment Team (LCCHNET) as archaeological advisors to the planning authority have requested a strip, plan and sample excavation to identify and locate any archaeological remains of significance and record as appropriate.

3.2 ***Archaeological and Historical Background***

3.2.1 The development site lies just to the west of the motorway south of the site of a possible Bronze Age barrow known from a cropmark of a ring ditch (MLE3109 SK516 067) and close to the medieval core of Ratby (MLE10075). The site lies within an area of archaeological importance adjacent to previous finds of Roman date (MLE3116) and close to the line of an important Roman road. This is thought to run south-east to north-west and is thought to branch away from another road, which runs between Leicester and Mancetter in Warwickshire. It lies approximately 2.5km to the east of Bury Camp, a large rectangular earthwork, which is thought to date from the Iron Age (Liddle 1982). During a previous watching brief carried out by ULAS in 2000 several sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery were recovered, along with a single Roman sherd and evidence of a medieval field system (Higgins 2000; Hunt 2005).

3.2.2 Geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation has been undertaken. The trial trench evaluation (2.25% sample comprising 12 30m by 1.6m trenches) was largely negative although one trench (Trench 9) to the south of the development did locate a Roman ditch

4. Methodology

4.1 ***General Methodology and Standards***

4.1.1 All work will follow the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological excavations.*

4.1.2 Staffing (as far as is possible), Recording systems, Health and Safety provisions and Insurance details are included below.

4.1.3 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site by the project manager. These will ensure that project targets are met and professional standards are maintained. Provision will be made for external monitoring meetings with the Planning Archaeologist at LCC, the planning authority and the Client, if required.

4.2 ***Methodology***

4.2.1 An area 30m by 30m centred on the Roman ditch in Trench 9 will be machine excavated under full archaeological supervision (Figure 2). This area may be enlarged depending on the results of the initial machining.

4.2.2 Any archaeological deposits located will be examined by hand cleaning and will be planned at an appropriate scale and sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence. All plans will be tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.2.3 Sections of any excavated archaeological features will be drawn at an appropriate scale. At least one longitudinal face of each trench will be recorded. All sections will be levelled and tied to the Ordnance Survey Datum, or a permanent fixed bench mark.

4.2.4 Trench locations will be recorded using an electronic distance measurer. These will then be tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid.

4.2.5 Any human remains will initially be left *in situ* and will only be removed , under Ministry of Justice guidelines and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations.

4.3. ***Environmental Sampling***

4.3.1 If significant archaeological features are subject to excavation, the sampling strategy will include the following if practicable, within the scope of the project and with the allocated resources:

A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.

Any buried soils or well-sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.

Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located.

4.3.2 Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated and datable. Consultation with the specialist will be undertaken.

4.4 ***Recording Systems***

4.4.1 The ULAS recording manual will be used as a guide for all recording.

4.4.2 Individual descriptions of any observed archaeological strata and features exposed by the works will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.

4.4.3 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at appropriate scale, which will show the location of the investigation area in relation to the OS or site grid, as appropriate.

4.4.4 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made. Sections including the half-sections of individual layers of features will be drawn as necessary, typically at a scale of 1:10. Relative levels of archaeological deposits will be taken across the site area.

4.4.5 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared in Black and White and digital formats illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5. Finds and Samples

5.1 The IfA Guidelines for Finds Work will be adhered to.

5.2 All antiquities, valuables, objects or remains of archaeological interest, other than articles declared by Coroner's Inquest to be subject to the Treasure Act, discovered in or under the Site during the carrying out of the project by ULAS or during works carried out on the Site by the Client shall be deemed to be the property of ULAS provided that ULAS after due examination of the said Archaeological Discoveries shall transfer ownership of all Archaeological Discoveries unconditionally to Leicestershire Museums for storage in perpetuity.

5.3 An accession number will be obtained for the strip, plan and sample excavtion which will be used to identify all records and finds from the site.

5.4 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording with the approval of the Senior Planning Archaeologist.

5.5 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner. Where appropriate they will be cleaned, marked and receive remedial conservation in accordance with recognised best-practice. This will include the site code number, finds number and context number. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self sealing plastic bags, again marked with site code, finds and context numbers and boxed by material in standard storage boxes (340mm x 270mm x 195mm). All materials will be fully labelled, catalogued and stored in appropriate containers.

6. Report and Archive

6.1 The full report in A4 format will usually follow within four weeks of the completion of the fieldwork and copies will be dispatched to the Client (2 copies), Senior Planning Archaeologist/Leicestershire HER (2 copies) and Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council Planning Officer (1 copy).

6.2 The report will include:-

- Summary
- The aims and methods adopted in the course of the strip, plan and sample excavation.
- The nature, location, extent, date, significance and quality of any structural, artefactual and environmental material uncovered.
- Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
- The location and size of the archive.

6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in Brown (2008) will normally be presented to within six months of the completion of fieldwork. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

7 Publication and Dissemination of Results

7.1 A summary of the work will be submitted to the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* for publication. A paper will be submitted for inclusion if the results of the archaeological works warrant it.

8. Acknowledgement and Publicity

8.1 ULAS shall acknowledge the contribution of the Client in any displays, broadcasts or publications relating to the site or in which the report may be included.

8.2 ULAS and the Client shall each ensure that a senior employee shall be responsible for dealing with any enquiries received from press, television and any other broadcasting media and members of the public. All enquiries made to ULAS shall be directed to the Client for comment. The Senior Planning Archaeologist will also be consulted when dealing with such enquiries.

9. Copyright

9.1 The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

10. Timetable/Staffing

10.1 The start date is to be arranged.

10.2 The report will normally be completed within eight weeks of the completion of fieldwork.

11. Health and Safety

11.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Archaeological Services Health and Safety Policy and FAME Health and safety manual with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is attached as Appendix 1. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate. The HSE has determined that archaeological investigations are exempt from CDM regulations.

A Risks assessment form will be completed prior to work commencing on-site, and updated as necessary during the site works.

It is assumed that the locations of all services on the site are already known to the Client, and that this information will be made known to the attending archaeologist.

12. Insurance

12.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605

13. Monitoring arrangements

13.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and Senior Planning Archaeologist subject to the health and safety requirements of the site. Usually at least one weeks notice will be given to the Senior

Planning Archaeologist before the commencement of the archaeological works in order that monitoring arrangements can be made, unfortunately in this case there has been some confusion with planning conditions resulting in the works commencing prior to archaeological.

13.2 All monitoring shall be carried out in accordance with the IFA *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological excavations.*

13.3 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

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Contact Details

Richard Buckley or Patrick Clay
University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS)
University of Leicester,
University Road,
Leicester LE1 7RH

T: +44 (0)116 252 2848
F: +44 (0)116 252 2614
E: ulas@le.ac.uk
w: www.le.ac.uk/ulas

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