



**Archaeological Impact Assessment
for land east of Leicester Road
Earl Shilton
Leicestershire
May 2024**

Report No. 24/050

Author: Mary Ellen Crothers

Illustrator: Hugh Gatt



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OASIS REPORT FORM

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Project/ Activity type	Desk-based assessment		
Reason for investigation	To accompany planning application		
Development type	Residential		
Planning reference ID	N/A		
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Site name	Land east of Leicester Road, Earl Shilton		
REVIEWERS/ ADMIN			
HER for project	Leicestershire		
National organisation	Historic England		
WORK UNDERTAKEN			
Methodological summary	MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) conducted an archaeological impact assessment for land east of Leicester Road, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire, May 2024. A walkover survey of the site was undertaken to examine the current character of the site, visible historic features and factors that could affect the survival of potential archaeological remains. A visit was also made to Leicestershire Archives. Leicestershire HER was consulted for sites and monuments within 1km of the site boundary. All available relevant sources, including Lidar data, aerial photographs, historic maps, online sources, grey literature and journals were collated in order to provide as accurately as possible, a realistic assessment of the significance of the archaeological remains and likelihood of their survival on the site.		
Previous works?	None	Future works?	Unknown
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RESULTS			
Description of outcomes/ summary of research framework contribution	The proposed development site is for new housing within a field on the north side of Earl Shilton, Leicestershire. There are 109 entries in the HER within 1km of the site, including one Scheduled Monument, Earl Shilton motte and bailey castle. A realistic assessment of the potential for archaeological remains to survive across the site is largely achievable, due to a recent geophysical survey of the site and the volume of archaeological work carried out nearby, particularly on land close to the west. Archaeological evidence suggests that the area around the site had been exploited during prehistoric periods although no settlement evidence dating to these periods has yet been confirmed.		

	Iron Age activity in the area is focused on the south-east side of Earl Shilton, where an enclosure, a droveway, a possible field system and a boundary ditch were found. A double pit alignment of likely Iron Age date lies to the north, suggesting that the landscape around the site was certainly controlled and exploited at this time, although there is no direct evidence that the site itself was settled. Roman remains within the area are limited to chance findspots within the local fields and occasional discoveries from domestic gardens. No Saxon remains are recorded from nearby although Earl Shilton was in existence prior to the Norman Conquest. The site lies within the defined medieval settlement boundary of Earl Shilton. An undated enclosure lies within the eastern field of the site and may date to the beginning of the period but Lidar data suggests that the site contains ridge and furrow throughout which has remained intact in the location of the enclosure. Cartographic and aerial photographic evidence suggests that the site had remained as farmland during the post-medieval period. In 1778, a north-south aligned boundary bisected the site and a number of later boundaries have been inserted, relocated and removed since the mid-20th century.		
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Archaeological Impact Assessment

for land east of Leicester Road

Earl Shilton

Leicestershire

May 2024

ABSTRACT

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) conducted an archaeological impact assessment for land east of Leicester Road, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire.

The proposed development site is for new housing within a field on the north side of Earl Shilton and on the east side of Leicester Road, Leicestershire. There are 109 entries in the HER within 1km of the site, including one Scheduled Monument, Earl Shilton motte and bailey castle.

A realistic assessment of the potential for archaeological remains to survive across the site is largely achievable, due to a recent geophysical survey of the site itself and to the volume of archaeological work carried out on nearby sites, particularly on land to the west. Archaeological evidence suggests that the area around the site had been exploited during prehistoric periods although no settlement evidence dating to these periods has yet been found nearby.

Iron Age activity in the area is focused on the south-east side of Earl Shilton, where an enclosure, a driveway, a possible field system and a boundary ditch were found. A double pit alignment of likely Iron Age date lies to the north, suggesting that the landscape around the site was certainly controlled and exploited at this time, although there is no direct evidence that the site itself was settled.

Roman remains within the area are limited to chance findspots within the local fields and occasional discoveries from domestic gardens. No Saxon remains are recorded from nearby although Earl Shilton was in existence prior to the Norman Conquest.

The site lies within the assumed medieval settlement boundary of Earl Shilton. An undated enclosure lies within the eastern field of the site and may date to the beginning of the period but Lidar data suggests that the site contains ridge and furrow throughout which has remained intact in the location of the enclosure.

Cartographic and aerial photographic evidence suggests that the site had remained as farmland during the post-medieval period. In 1778, a north-south aligned field boundary bisected the site and a number of later boundaries have been inserted, relocated and removed since the mid-20th century.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by Manor Oak Homes to conduct an archaeological impact assessment of land to the east of Leicester Road, Earl Shilton, Leicestershire (Fig 1; NGR SP 46903 98425). The assessment will be used to inform a planning application for residential development. It was carried out to assess the nature, extent and significance of the known and potential archaeological resource within the development, in addition to the potential impacts of the proposed development on said resource.

All works were carried out in accordance with best archaeological practice as defined in the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2022) and *Standard and Guidance for desk based assessment* (CIfA 2020) as well as the Historic England procedural document *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (HE 2015). The assessment has been carried out in accordance with the requirements of the (NPPF) (DLUHC 2023) and relevant local planning policies and to the standards specified by Historic England (EH 2008, HE 2015, 2017, 2019). Under the 'Copyright, Designs and Patents Act' 1988 MOLA retains the copyright to this document.

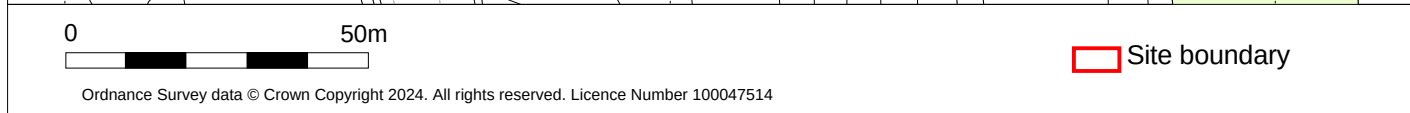
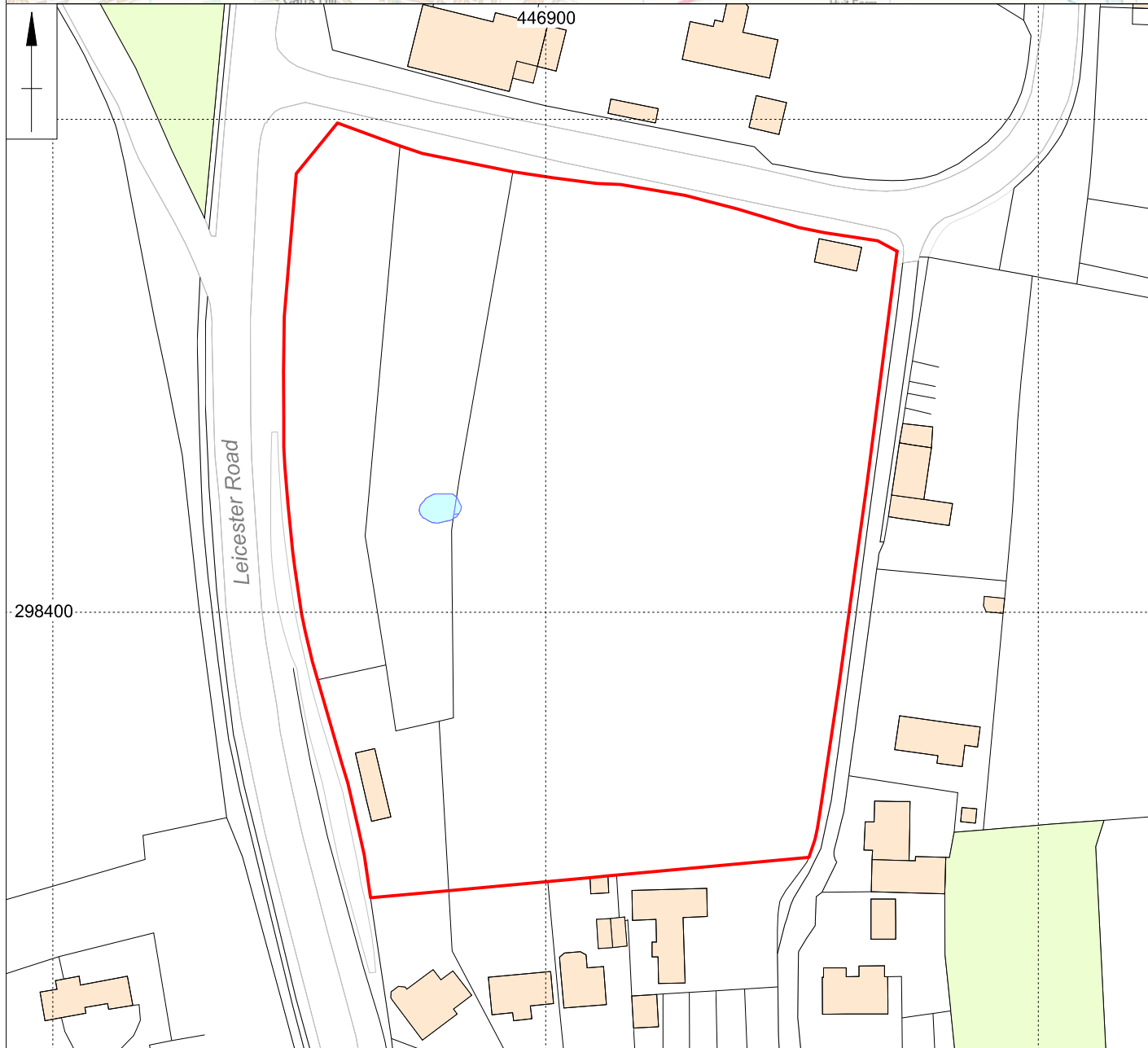
This desk-based study assesses the impact of the scheme on buried archaeological remains (buried heritage assets) and the implication of the proposed development. The built heritage assets (Listed and locally listed buildings) are not included within this report and have been assessed separately (AHC 2024). This assessment will enable the archaeological advisors to the local planning authority (LPA) to formulate an appropriate response in the light of the impact on any known or possible heritage assets. These are parts of the historic environment which are considered to be significant due to their rarity or potential survival. Paragraph 203 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) states that "*The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.*".

Note: within the limitations imposed by dealing with historical material and maps, the information within this document is, to the best knowledge of the author and MOLA, correct at the time of writing. Further archaeological investigation, more information about the nature of the present buildings, and/or more detailed proposals for redevelopment may require changes to all or parts of the document.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

The proposed development site consists of a field on the east side of Leicester Road on the north side of Earl Shilton, Leicestershire, between the built areas of the town and the open countryside. The field is hedged on all sides but subdivided into three separate fenced paddocks and contains stabling for donkeys at the south-western corner and small barns at the north-east corner of the site. The site is bounded by Leicester Road and open fields beyond to the west, for which planning applications for c.190 dwellings have been approved. The site is bounded to the north by an unnamed road with small commercial premises on the north side. Spring Gardens lies adjacent to the east with a builders' yard, housing and small open fields beyond and Clearview Crescent lies adjacent to the south

The site lies between 98m and 112m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), rising sharply to the south-west towards the crest of the hill (FMT 2024). The solid geology comprises Gunthorpe Member (BGS 2024). The overlying soils of the site are slightly acid loams and clays with impeded drainage (CSAI 2024).



1.3 Aims and Objectives

The aim of the assessment was to collate information about the known or potential archaeological resource within the development site, including its presence or absence, character and extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and relative quality. The work was undertaken in accordance with the guidelines of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of conduct* (CIfA 2022) and *Standard and guidance for archaeological desk-based assessment* (CIfA 2020).

The aim of the assessment is to:

- identify the presence of any known or potential buried heritage assets within and around the proposed development site that may be affected by the proposals;
- describe the significance of such assets, as required by national planning policy (see Appendix 1) using a standardised method to determine said significance (section 3.4)
- assess the likely impacts upon the significance of the assets arising from the proposals.

1.4 Sources consulted

The Leicestershire Historic Environment Record was consulted for documented sites and monuments within 1km of the proposed development (Fig 2). The search returned a total of 109 records for analysis. A visit was made to Leicestershire Archives on 7th May 2024 to view historic maps of the area.

Lidar data, aerial photographs and satellite imagery were also analysed as part of the report.

2 HERITAGE ASSET ASSESSMENT

2.1 Designated and undesignated heritage assets within the site

There are no designated heritage assets within the site or adjacent to the site boundary. However, Earl Shilton motte and bailey castle, Scheduled Monument list entry 10103032, lies c.150m to the south-east of the site.

2.2 Previous archaeological work

Within the site boundary

A geophysical survey was undertaken within the site boundary, which identified a possible rectilinear enclosure within the north-eastern quarter of the site (Emery 2024).

Within the study area

Three phases of trial trench evaluation and a geophysical survey were carried on land on the west of Leicester Road, less than 50m from the site. The initial geophysical survey (ELE11631) revealed little of archaeological interest but the subsequent trial trench evaluation (ELE11630) demonstrated prehistoric and medieval activity (Danielsson 2021). However, very little was found during two further trial trench evaluations (ELE11834; Wright 2022 and ELE12380; Heitor 2023).

A substantial body of work was undertaken in advance of the Earl Shilton bypass and housing developments to the east, south-east and south of the site, including geophysical surveys (ELE8441, ELE5468, ELE11988) trial trench evaluations (ELE7183, ELE9420), a trial trench evaluation and watching brief (ELE8758) and excavation (ELE11401) which demonstrated extensive Iron Age activity on the south-eastern periphery of the town.

Further smaller archaeological schemes of fieldwork include a watching brief at the Castle Mound (ELE5224),

No archaeological finds or features were found during watching briefs c.100m to the east of the site to the rear of 59, Church Street (ELE4965, George 2004) at 40, High Street (ELE10437), c.270m to the south of the site (Flavell 2017), at 41-43 High Street (ELE5984, Henderson 2007), at Thurlaston Lane and Leicester Road c.890m to the south-west (ELE7881, Stone 2008), at Mill Lane c.350m to the south-east (ELE7189, Higgins 2010), at Glenaber, c.160m to the south-east of the site (ELE4262, Leigh 2005) or at the Church of St Simon and St Jude c.215m to the east of the site (MLE21699, ELE9223; Browning 2014). Trial trench evaluations at Almeys Lane c.280m to the east of the site (ELE7612, Higgins 2009) and at Oaks Way c.860m to the south-west of the site (ELE5705, Thomas, 2001) also produced negative results.

A geophysical survey and trial trench evaluation at Tom Eatough Court, c.620m to the south-east of the site revealed only post-medieval stone-filled drains (ELE4417, Morris 2006). A further survey over a large area at Westfield Farm, c.690m to the south-west of the site (ELE9424) revealed trace ridge and furrow and former field boundaries (Bunn 2015).

2.3 Summary and significance of heritage assets (Fig 2)

Neolithic

A fragment of a late Neolithic to early Bronze Age macehead (MLE15877) was found c.720m to the north-west of the site at Brockey Farm during a metal detecting survey.

A polished axe was also found c.700m to the south-east of the site during a geophysical survey (ELE8441, Walford 2012).

Bronze Age

A middle to late Bronze Age cremation was found on land c.700m to the south of the site during a trial trench evaluation (ELE9420, Newman 2013).

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) reported a small gold penannular ring (LEIC-434896), although the exact find location is unknown.

Iron Age

A substantial Iron Age rectilinear enclosure ditch (MLE17049) was initially identified through aerial photography c.900m to the south-east of the site and was evident during a geophysical survey (ELE5468; Cook 2008). Quantities of pottery dating to between the 3rd century BC and the 1st century AD were recovered from the enclosure during the subsequent trial trench evaluation (ELE7183), which also revealed a pair of ditches which are thought to represent a droveway. In addition, a series of interrelated ditches and gullies were found which may be the remains of a possible Iron Age or Roman field system (Morris 2010). The later excavations in the area around the droveway (ELE10486) demonstrated that the route was likely to have been in use for an extended period and that the low quantities of Iron Age finds suggests that a contemporary settlement was located elsewhere, possibly to the south of the enclosure (Huxley 2020). The western side of the enclosure was seen during a trial trench evaluation and watching brief (ELE8758) on an adjacent site (Trimble 2013).

Further Iron age remains were found during a trial trench evaluation (ELE9420) on land close to the south-west of the area containing the droveway and enclosure, comprising gullies, a pit and a boundary ditch, dating predominantly to the early Iron Age (Newman 2013).

The PAS holds records for a copper alloy bow brooch (LEIC-8CFFF0) that was found within the parish, although the exact location is unknown.

Prehistoric

Some references to archaeological discoveries in the area are not closely dateable but can be broadly attributed to prehistoric periods.

A large shallow pit (MLE26781) of unknown function was found c.240m to the west of the site during a trial trench evaluation (ELE11630). The pit was sealed by a metalled surface that contained pottery dating to the late Bronze Age, to the middle Iron Age and to the 2nd-4th centuries AD. The metalled surface has been interpreted as a possible trackway or the floor of a building. In addition, a small assemblage of prehistoric flints were recovered from the topsoil (Danielsson 2021).

A double pit alignment (MLE3070) has been identified through aerial photography c.720m to the north of the site near to Folly Farm. While such features commonly date to the Iron Age, this cannot be verified.

Several undated features of likely prehistoric origin, interpreted as such based on their morphology, were found during a trial trench evaluation on land to the south-east of Earl Shilton (ELE9420) c.700m to the south of the site, including pits and ditches (Newman 2013).

Roman

A single sherd of Oxfordshire Ware (MLE15864) dating to the mid-3rd to the 4th centuries AD was recovered during a watching brief off The Poplars (ELE9550), c.490m to the east of the site. Further pottery comprising two Greyware rims (MLE7937) was found on the western side of that development, c.430m to the east of the site.

Three coins have been found within the fields to the north of Earl Shilton during metal detecting surveys. Two late Roman coins were found together (MLE9381) c.480m to the north-west of the site and a bronze coin (MLE10245) was found c.285m to the north-west.

The PAS holds records for a harness ring (LEIC-90BC15), two brooches (LEIC-8D71E9, LEIC-A0637C), five nummii of Constantine (LEIC-38F9CA, LEIC-742550, LEIC-740488, LEIC-73DDCF, LEIC-6C204E), two nummii of Licinius (LEIC-289B2B, LEIC-283F8C), a radiate of Gallienus (LEIC-2889A1), an As of Dupondius (LEIC-737B96), pottery sherds (LEIC-EFE14F) and a nail (LEIC-742550). The locations of their discovery is, however, unknown.

Saxon

No Saxon remains are recorded from within 1km of the site.

Medieval

The site lies within the northern periphery of the defined historic settlement core of Earl Shilton (MLE9535).

Earl Shilton is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as *Sceltone*, having 10 villagers, 4 freemen, 5 smallholders, a slave and a priest. It had land for 6 ploughs, 12 acres of meadow, 8 by 3 furlongs of woodland and a mill. The estate was granted to Hugh de Grandmesnil after the Norman Conquest (Powel-Smith 2024, Williams 2002).

Earl Shilton Castle lies c.150m to the south-east of the site. This motte and bailey castle is a Scheduled Monument (1010302) which survives as a castle mound with an encircling ditch and part of the southern bailey bank. There is no remaining bailey but it may have been altered when it was later appropriated by the churchyard. The castle was relatively short-lived, having been constructed by the Earl of Leicester shortly after the Norman Conquest but was demolished during the late 12th century. The width of the medieval moat was found to have been wider than anticipated during a watching brief at the castle (ELE5224) but the upper fills of the moat contained quantities of 19th-century demolition material (Farnworth-Jones 2008).

A complex series of levelling layers, dumps, a cut feature, a possible surface and pottery dating to the 13th-14th centuries (MLE26782) was found during a trial trench evaluation on land to the west of Leicester Road (ELE11630), c.280m west of the site. Although the function of the layers is uncertain, they may represent structural evidence (Danielsson 2021).

A possible pound (MLE2862) lies c.290m to the south-east of the site. The area is marked on an undated map as 'Pinfold Close', which was an area where stray animals would have been held until payment had been made for their release.

A possible site of a watermill (MLE3078) lies c.680m to the north of the site, suggested by a field name on the Peckleton tithe map, but the mill had gone by the time the map had been produced.

Lidar data and the recent geophysical survey (Emery 2024) suggests that ridge and furrow is present across the site on a north-south alignment. Ridge and furrow is also evident on Lidar on the land to the west of Leicester Road and was identified there during a geophysical survey (ELE11631; Walford 2021).

Further ridge and furrow was found during a geophysical survey (ELE9424, Bunn 2015) and trial trench evaluation at Westfield Farm, c.690m to the south-west of the site (ELE10486, Parker and Taylor 2015). Extensive areas of ridge and furrow were also identified on land to the south-east of Earl Shilton during a geophysical survey (ELE8441, Walford 2012) and trial trench evaluation (ELE11988, Reid 2022), c.700m to the south-east of the site.

A mortar (MLE6790) was recovered from the garden of The Old Vicarage, c.290m to the south of the site.

A coin of Henry III (MLE10246) was found on land c.300m to the north of the site during a metal detecting survey.

The PAS holds records for a silver Gros Tournois Of Philip IV of France, dated to 1295–1314 (LEIC-F85D01, two seal matrixes (LEIC-93D304, LEIC-939C56), three spindle whorls (LEIC-937B51, LEIC-DD9411, LEIC-3F8AD3), a half groat of Henry VII (LEIC-253AD9), a short cross penny of Henry II (LEIC-8B62A9), a farthing of Edward I (LEIC-24A35C), an Irish voided long cross cut farthing (LEIC-FD1442), a voided short cross cut farthing (LEIC-FCFC80), a voided short cross cut halfpenny (LEIC-FCCAF8), a voided short cross penny (LEIC-FC7F26), a weight (LEIC-935918), a mount (LEIC-3F7105) and two buckles (LEIC-91B980, LEIC-917DEC).

Post-medieval

A boundary ditch dating to the 18th-19th century was discovered on land to the west of Leicester Road during a geophysical survey (ELE11631; Walford 2021) and confirmed during subsequent trial trench evaluations (ELE11630; Danielsson 2021 and ELE11834; Wright 2022).

A windmill (MLE2852) is shown c.720m to the south-west of the site on maps of 1779, 1814, 1826 and the First Edition Ordnance Survey map but had been demolished by the time the Second Edition maps of 1919 had been produced.

Two coins of medieval and post-medieval date were found to the east of the allotment gardens, c.175m to the east of the site comprising a penny of Edward I and a coin of Charles I (MLE10248)

The PAS holds records for a whistle (LEIC-914507), a coin weight (LEIC-6CFD76), a 17th-century trader's token (LEIC-9C9793) and a half groat of Elizabeth I (LEIC-9C9A67).

Modern

The Baptist Chapel burial ground (MLE21700) lies c.310m to the south-east of the site on Mill Lane and includes a number of graves dating to the early 19th century. A later cemetery also lies on Mill Lane, c.740m to the south-east of the site and was established in the late 1920s.

Undated

An irregular rectilinear enclosure was identified within the eastern field of the site during the recent geophysical survey. Although its morphology suggests a medieval

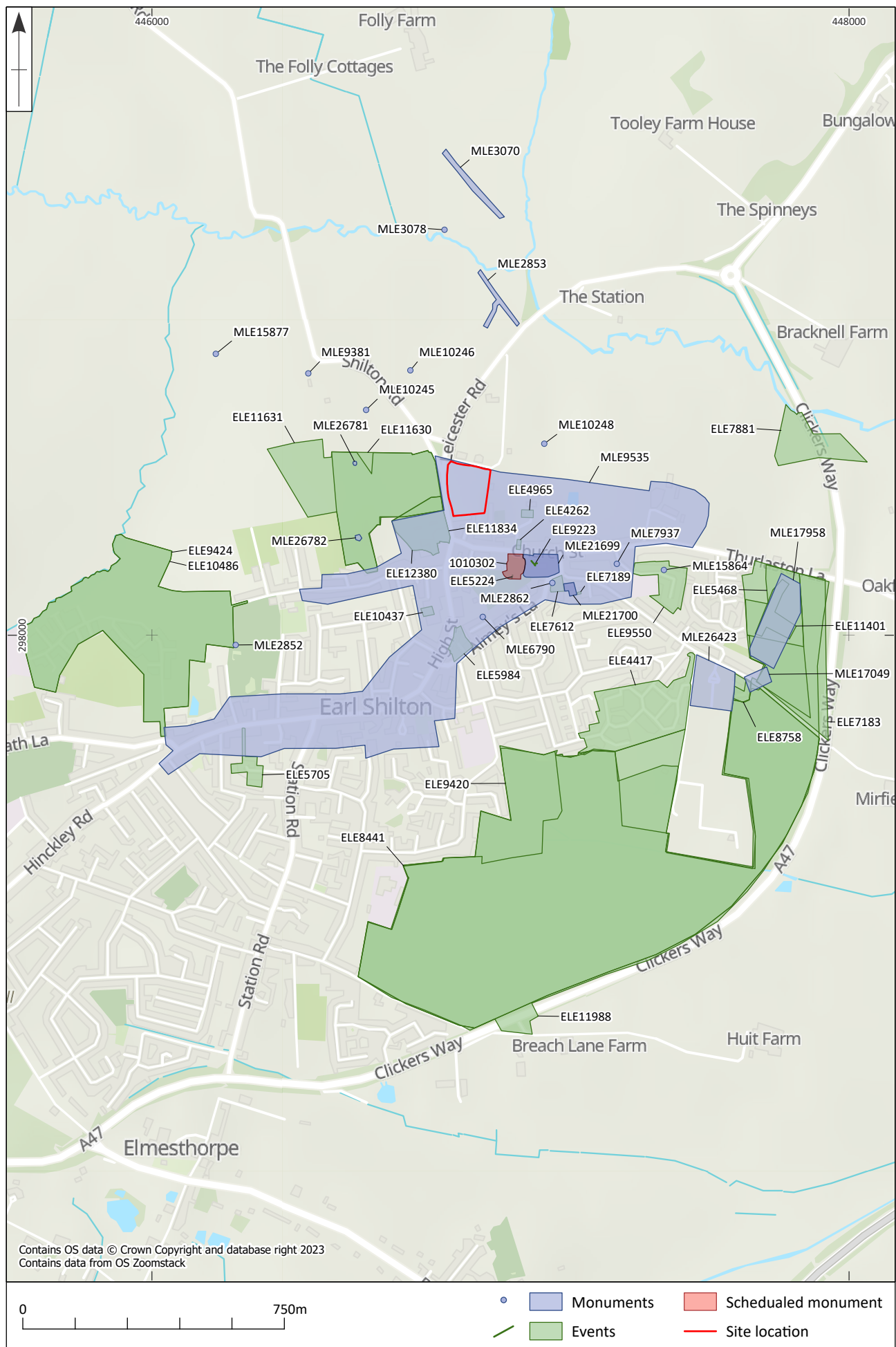
date (Emery 2024), Lidar data shows that the medieval ridge and furrow is unbroken in this area and the enclosure predates the later arable use.

An undated field system (MLE2853) was identified c.440m to the north of the site to the south-west of Tooley Farm. Cropmarks of a field boundary were seen in 1986 which suggest they may follow an earlier alignment.

Former field boundaries were identified during a geophysical survey on land to the west of Leicester Road (ELE11631; Walford 2021).

Table 1: Historic Environment Record (HER) data

HER ref	Description	Location
Designations		
1010302	Earl Shilton motte and bailey castle	Scheduled Monument 447030 298190
Monuments		
MLE2852	Windmill south of Westfield Farm	446200 297900
MLE2853	Field system, SW of Tooley Farm	446900 298900
MLE2862	Possible medieval pound, Pinfold Close	447100 298100
MLE3070	Prehistoric pit alignment SE of Folly Farm	446900 299200
MLE3078	Possible site of watermill, Mill Holme	446800 299100
MLE6790	Medieval mortar, Old Vicarage	446900 298000
MLE7937	Roman pottery from The Poplars	447300 298200
MLE9381	Roman coins	446400 298700
MLE9535	Historic settlement core of earl Shilton	446800 298000
MLE10245	Roman coin	446600 298600
MLE10246	Medieval coin	446700 298700
MLE10248	Coins from east of the allotment gardens	447100 298500
MLE15864	Roman pottery from east of The Poplars	447400 298100
MLE15877	Prehistoric macehead from NE of Brockey Farm	446100 298800
MLE17049	Iron Age enclosure at 123 Mill Lane	447700 297800
MLE17958	Iron Age droveway and field system, south of Thurlaston Lane	447700 298000
MLE21699	St Simon and St Jude's Church burial ground	447110 298200
MLE21700	Baptist Chapel burial ground, Mill Lane	447200 298130
MLE26423	20th-century cemetery, Mill Lane	447600 297860
MLE26781	Bronze Age/Iron Age pit, NW of Hill Top Farm	446580 298490
MLE26782	Possible medieval features west of Hill Top Farm	446590 298280
Events		
ELE4262	Glenaber, 59 Church Street, watching brief, 2005 (negative)	447052 298260
ELE4417	Tom Eatough Court, geo survey and trial excavation, 2006	447390 297804
ELE4965	Rear of 59, Church Street, watching brief, 2004	447077 298349
ELE5224	Castle Mound, Earl Shilton Castle, watching brief, 2007	447034 298168
ELE5468	Thurlaston Lane, geo survey, 2008	447796 297983
ELE5705	Land off Oaks Way, trial trenching, 2001	446200 297600
ELE5984	41-43 High Street/Almeys Lane, strip, map and sample, 2007	446880 297970
ELE7183	Land between Thurlaston Lane and Mill Lane, trial trenching, 2010	447800 297900
ELE7189	8, Mill Lane, evaluation, 2010	447200 298100
ELE7612	74, Almeys Lane, evaluation, 2009	447100 298100
ELE7881	Thurlaston Lane and Leicester Road, watching brief, 2008	447900 298500
ELE8441	Land to the south-east of Earl Shilton, geo survey, 2012	447200 297300
ELE8758	96 Mill Lane, trial trenching and watching brief, 2013	447690 297840
ELE9223	Church of St Simon and St Jude, watching brief, 2014	447090 298200
ELE9420	Land to the south-east of Earl Shilton, trial trenching, 2013	447250 297370
ELE9424	Land at Westfield Farm, geo survey, 2015	445940 298000
ELE9550	Land off The Poplars, watching brief, 1996/7	447450 298130
ELE10437	40, High Street, trial trenching, 2017	446790 298060
ELE10486	Westfield Farm, trial trenching, 2015	445940 298000
ELE11401	Land south of Thurlaston Lane, excavation, 2020	447780 298070
ELE11630	Land off Leicester Road, trial trenching, 2021	446670 298350
ELE11631	Land west of Leicester Road, geo survey, 2021	446580 298370
ELE11834	Land at Hill Top Farm, trial trenching, 2022	446770 298310
ELE11988	Earl Shilton SUE, trial trenching, 2022	447260 297510
ELE12380	Land at Hill Top Farm, trial trenching, 2023 (negative)	446770 298310



Scale 1:15,000

HER data Fig 2

2.4 Cartographic evidence

Several cartographic sources and aerial photographs were consulted for this report, dated to between 1610 and 2022. The following images are extracts from historic maps held at Leicestershire Archives.

Until the Ordnance Survey maps were produced from the early 19th century, maps were created for a number of purposes and were not always aligned north, accurate or drawn to scale, although efforts were made on the part of the cartographers to do so. For this reason, it is not always possible to show the site outline with precision and the following images are for illustrative guidance only.

Speed's map of Leicestershire, 1610 (Fig 3)

The first available cartographic evidence shows *Erlshilton* situated within Sparkenhoe Hundred to the north-east of Hinckley, which was the administrative centre of the area. No detail is shown on this map, although the relative status of the settlements can be understood. Earl Shilton is one of a number of similar small villages in proximity to a paled park.



Speed's map of Leicestershire, 1610 Fig 3

Earl Shilton inclosure map by John Sandars, 1778 (Fig 4)

The earliest map to depict any detail of the site is the Earl Shilton inclosure map. The northern and eastern boundaries of the site had been established by this time, although Leicester Road led off to the north-west. The site occupied parts of two individual homesteads, each with housing and barns and roughly equal sized fields on the lower lying land to the north. The slightly illogical property boundary between the buildings is likely to represent a division of a former single plot but both remained larger than those of their neighbours to the east. The line of long domestic plots to the east of the site along Church Street are probably remnants of former furlongs, which are also indicated by trace ridge and furrow visible on Lidar. Some of these plot boundaries have a kink which may reflect earlier shorter plots and a possible back lane which may have been removed in order to extend into the lower lying land to the north.

The north-south aligned boundary through the site is visible on aerial photographs from 2011 as a slight hollow but is unclear within the geophysical survey data for the site.

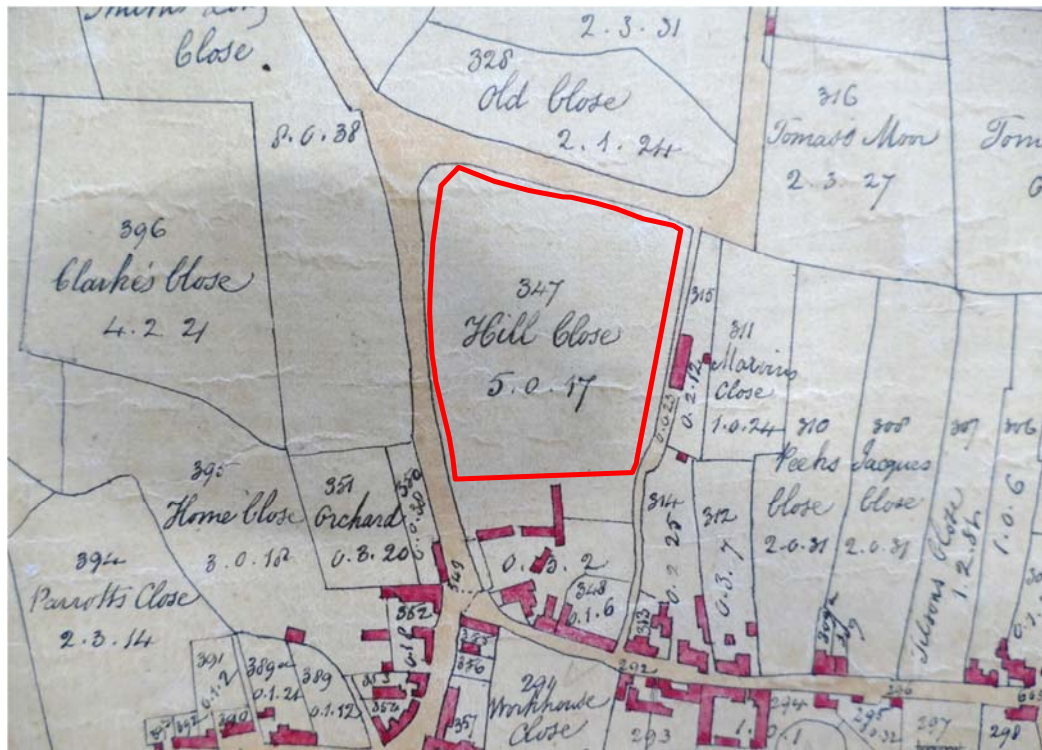


Earl Shilton inclosure map by John Sandars, 1778 Fig 4

A map of the parish of Earl Shilton, 1835 (Fig 5)

Leicester Road had been realigned by this time and a new, curved road junction had been created. The field boundary within the site had been removed to create one large field called Hill Close. The buildings forming the two former homesteads that had previously stood adjacent to the south of the site had all been demolished apart from the far south-eastern house and replaced with a new farmhouse and outbuildings. The boundaries between the two had also been redrawn.

The map also demonstrates that Earl Shilton had expanded, older plots had been subdivided and new buildings had been constructed on the periphery of the town, including along Spring Gardens adjacent to the east of the site.



A map of the parish of Earl Shilton, 1835 Fig 5

Earl Shilton tithe map, 1858 (Fig 6)

The Earl Shilton tithe map does not show any detail of the site because neither the site or the adjacent properties to the south formed part of the tithable lands of the parish. Indications of plot boundaries and properties included here suggest that very little change had taken place over the previous twenty years.

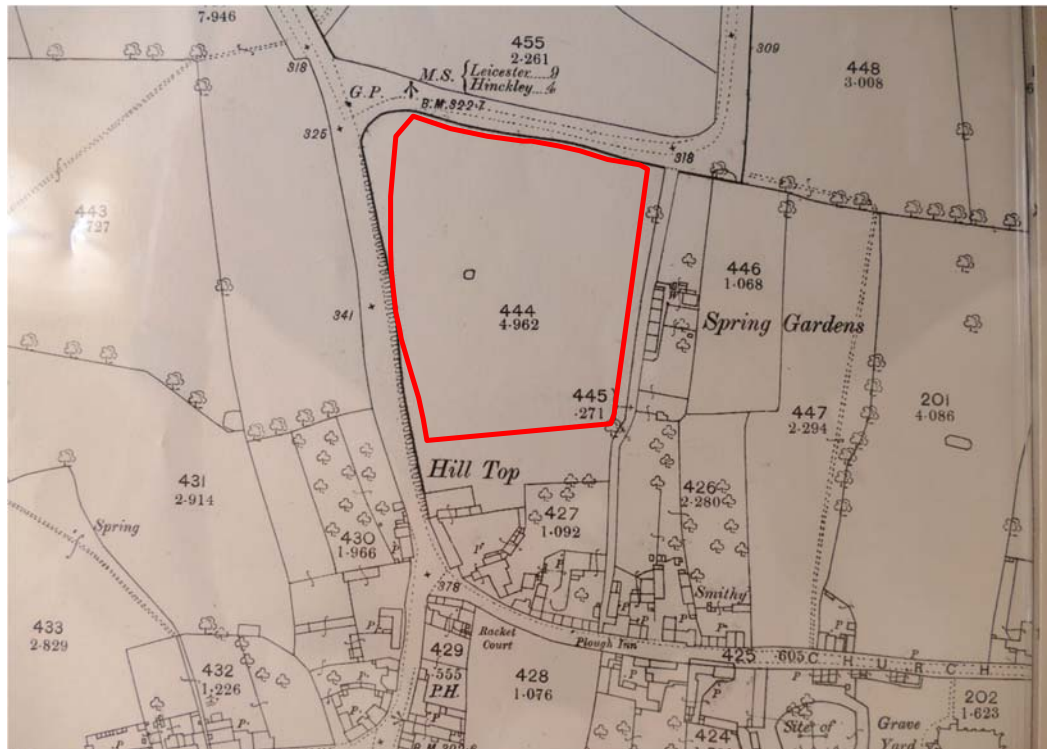


Earl Shilton tithe map, 1858 Fig 6

First Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1888 (Fig 7)

A pond is shown within the site but no further changes had taken place inside the boundary.

Many of the buildings nearby are shown to have been subdivided into smaller properties. Although this may have taken place before this map was published, it may equally represent the response to the growth of the town and the rise of small non-agricultural businesses relating to framework knitting and the shoe industry.



First Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1888 Fig 7

Second Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1903 (Fig 8)

No further changes had taken place within the site boundary by the 20th century. Small-scale alterations had been made to the nearby properties and a boot factory had been built next to an older smithy on Church Street close to the south-east.



Second Edition Ordnance Survey map, 1903 Fig 8

Ordnance Survey map, 1916 (Fig 9)

No further changes had been made to the site and limited further expansion had taken place to the northern margins of Earl Shilton.



Ordnance Survey map, 1916 Fig 9

2.5 Aerial photography

Google Earth images suggest that the stabling and barns which are currently standing within the south-west and north-east corners of the site had been constructed before 1999. In addition, the former homesteads adjacent to the southern boundary had been cleared and Clearview Crescent had been built. Premises had also been constructed along the eastern side of Spring Gardens and the property to the north of the site was also in place by this time.

At some point after the 1916 map was published, the site was divided into up to six paddocks. Two long paddocks lie on the western side of the site and are still in place today but the larger eastern field was subdivided with an east-west fenceline until 2015, when it was removed. Until 2006, the southern half of the eastern field was also split into possibly three small plots. Several temporary fences had also been installed within the western paddocks and were relocated and removed several times over this period for grazing management.

The former north-south boundary visible on the map of 1778 that lay down the centre of the site is visible on aerial imagery from 2011 as a linear hollow.

2.6 Walkover survey

The purpose of a walkover survey was to assess the current character of the proposed development site and to identify visible historic features and assess possible factors that may affect the survival or condition of known or potential assets (CiFA 2020).

Methodology

Permission to access the site for the purpose of the walkover survey was granted by the client prior to the site visit because the land is not currently publicly accessible. The site visit was conducted unaccompanied on 7th May 2024.

Photographs were taken of the site to include clear views from within, across and beyond the main site from all relevant directions (Figs 10-19).

Observations

The site comprises one grassed field which is subdivided with fences into three main paddocks, currently used for grazing donkeys and sheep. There is a pair of small barns in the north-west corner of the site and stabling in the south-west corner.

The site rises steeply to the south-west which lies almost at the crest of a hill. There is a small pond along the western boundary of the largest paddock with a small spinney of trees. The perimeter of the site is entirely hedged apart from three gates within the northern boundary.

All areas of the site were accessible although the barns and stables were not entered.

The weather conditions were mild and cloudy but with good visibility.



View from the northern boundary, looking south towards properties on Clearview Crescent and Spring Gardens Fig 10



View from the south-eastern corner of the site, looking north Fig 11



View from the crest of the hill at the southern boundary, looking over the site towards the north-east Fig 12



View from the south-western corner of the site, looking north Fig 13



View from the southern end of the long paddocks, looking north Fig 14



The spinney and former pond near the centre of the site, looking south Fig 15



View through the field, looking south-east from the northern boundary Fig 16



View through the donkey paddocks on the west side of the site, looking south from the northern boundary Fig 17



The sheep barns in the north-east corner of the field, looking north Fig 18



The donkey stables in the south-west corner of the site, looking south-west Fig 19

2.7 Archaeological potential

Potential refers to the likelihood of archaeological remains to have ever existed on a site, according to available sources of information. It is not considered in isolation as this can be offset by other factors such as severe truncation, (e.g. past redevelopment or deep ploughing), good ground preservation (e.g. permanent pasture, waterlogged sites, undeveloped areas) or if there is a definite/negative archaeological record on neighbouring sites. All of these factors are considered with professional judgement.

Table 2: Summary of archaeological potential by period

Palaeolithic	Mesolithic	Neolithic	Bronze Age	Iron Age
Unknown	Unknown	Low	Low	Low

Roman	Saxon	Medieval	Post-medieval	Modern
Low	Unknown	High	High	Low

A realistic assessment of the potential for archaeological remains to survive across the site is largely achievable, due to the volume of archaeological work carried out on the site itself and in the immediate vicinity, particularly on land close to the west adjacent to Leicester Road.

A Neolithic macehead and a polished axe were found c.720m to the north-west and 700m to the south-east of the site respectively. A small quantity of unstratified prehistoric worked flint was recovered from land close to the site on the west side of Leicester Road but very little material from the period has been found locally.

A Bronze Age cremation was found 700m to the south of the site and a possible pit was found c.240m to the west but no further material is known from nearby.

An early Iron Age settlement lies c.900m to the south-east of the site, represented by an enclosure, a driveway a possible field system and a boundary ditch. Although undated, a double pit alignment lies c.720m to the north of the site. The evidence suggests that although the landscape around Earl Shilton was certainly exploited and controlled during the period, there is no direct evidence that the site or the area around it was occupied at this time.

Roman presence in the area is indicated by groups of finds that have been recovered during watching briefs and metal detecting surveys. No settlement evidence, occupation or activity has been identified from within 1km of the site.

No Saxon remains have been recorded from the locality but Earl Shilton is recorded in the Domesday Survey of 1086 as a relatively large village which is therefore likely to have been in existence for some time previously and may have Saxon origins.

The site lies within the northern limits of the defined medieval historic settlement core of Earl Shilton. However, there is little physical evidence to suggest that the site was inhabited at this time and the medieval settlement boundary may not be definitive. The site contains ridge and furrow throughout, which demonstrates that it lay on the northern hillslopes within the surrounding agricultural land on the periphery of the village. Ridge and furrow has been identified in many areas outside the historic core

of Earl Shilton, encircling the medieval settlement in a typical nature. A possible medieval building lies c.280m to the west of the site and to the south of areas of surviving ridge and furrow, therefore perhaps within the medieval settlement, although it lies outside the assumed boundary.

An irregular rectilinear enclosure was identified within the eastern field of the site during the recent geophysical survey (Emery 2024). Although the feature is undated, its morphology would suggest a medieval date. However, it likely to pre-date the medieval ridge and furrow.

Post-medieval field boundaries are present within the landscape to the north of Earl Shilton, many of which are still in use. One former boundary lay within the site and is illustrated on the map of 1778 but had been removed by 1835 and is evident on aerial photographs.

Limitations

The ridge and furrow present on the site may have truncated earlier remains but its survival also demonstrates that the site has not been affected by later ploughing or other modern truncation.

2.8 Archaeological significance

Significance refers to a standardised measurement system that is used to objectively assess the importance of archaeological and historical remains, including Listed Buildings and other designated heritage assets. The level of archaeological sensitivity can only be assessed against the known or likely presence of archaeological remains on or around the site.

Table 3: Criteria for assessing the relative importance of cultural heritage sites

Level of significance	Definition
Very high	Sites of international importance: World Heritage Sites
High	Sites of national importance include those that are designated as Scheduled Monuments or those that are considered to be suitable for scheduling, Grade I and Grade II* Listed Buildings, Registered Battlefields, Grade I and II* Registered Parks and Gardens
Medium	Sites of regional importance include Grade II Listed Buildings, Grade II Registered Parks and Gardens, Conservation Areas and those sites which are considered to be significant regional examples with well-preserved evidence of occupation, industry etc.
Low	Sites which are of less-defined extent, nature and date or which are in a poor or fragmentary state, but which are considered to be significant examples in a local context
Negligible	Areas in which investigative techniques have produced negative or minimal evidence of antiquity
None	Sites or areas where large-scale destruction of the archaeological resource has taken place (e.g. by mineral extraction).

Table 4: Summary of archaeological significance by period

Palaeolithic	Mesolithic	Neolithic	Bronze Age	Iron Age
Unknown	Unknown	Low	Low	Low

Roman	Saxon	Medieval	Post-medieval	Modern
Low	Unknown	Low	Low	Low

The significance of potential remains from the archaeologically represented periods is expected to be low.

Although the medieval Scheduled Monument of Earl Shilton Castle lies 150m to the east and is of high significance, no remains relating to the castle are expected to lie within the site boundary.

3 IMPACT ASSESSMENT

3.1 The proposed development

The proposed development comprises 1.58 ha within a single field and will be for c.33 housing units and associated infrastructure, including a balancing pond and public open space. The proposed vehicular access to the development will be from the road at the northern boundary and a pedestrian access point will be installed at the western boundary on Leicester Road. The proposed development aims to respond to the topography of the site and deep groundworks for underbuilds or tanking will be limited. The boundary hedges will be maintained and enhanced.

3.2 Impact on buried heritage

The identification of physical impacts on buried heritage assets within the site takes into account any activity which would entail ground disturbance, for example, site set up works, remediation, landscaping and the construction of new foundations. Although the topography of the site will be incorporated into the development, it is expected that the entire site will be subject to landscaping and foundations in varying proportions, as stated within the design concept for the site (MOH 2023).

The recent geophysical survey identified an irregular rectilinear enclosure of unknown date within the eastern field, which is overlain by the ridge and furrow recorded across the entire site. The associated groundworks, landscaping and foundations of the proposed development are expected to truncate or entirely remove any surviving archaeological remains. However, it is considered that the impacts of the proposed development may be offset through a suitable programme of conditioned archaeological works.

4 CONCLUSIONS

The proposed development site is for new housing within a field on the north side of Earl Shilton, Leicestershire. There are 109 entries in the HER within 1km of the site, including one Scheduled Monument, Earl Shilton motte and bailey castle.

A realistic assessment of the potential for archaeological remains to survive across the site is largely achievable, due to a recent geophysical survey within the site and the volume of archaeological work carried out nearby, particularly on land close to the west. Archaeological evidence suggests that the area around the site had been exploited during prehistoric periods although no settlement evidence dating to these periods has yet been confirmed.

Iron Age activity in the area is focused on the south-east side of Earl Shilton, where an enclosure, a droveway, a possible field system and a boundary ditch were found. A double pit alignment of likely Iron Age date lies to the north, suggesting that the landscape around the site was certainly controlled and exploited at this time, although there is no direct evidence that the site itself was settled.

Roman remains within the area are limited to chance findspots within the local fields and occasional discoveries from domestic gardens. No Saxon remains are recorded nearby although Earl Shilton was in existence prior to the Norman Conquest.

The site lies within the assumed medieval settlement boundary of Earl Shilton. An undated enclosure lies within the eastern field of the site and may date to the beginning of the period but Lidar data suggests that the site contains ridge and furrow throughout which has remained intact in the location of the enclosure.

Cartographic and aerial photographic evidence suggests that the site had remained as farmland during the post-medieval period as part of a field to the rear of a property fronting onto Church Road to the south. A north-south aligned field boundary present in 1778 bisects the centre of the site and a number of later boundaries have been inserted, relocated and removed since the mid-20th century.

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APPENDIX 1

Policy background

National policy

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) provides national guidance on the preservation, management and investigation of the parts of the historic environment that are historically, archaeologically, architecturally or artistically significant. The revised National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) was published on 5th September 2023 by the Department of Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) and sets out the government's planning policies for England and how these are expected to be applied. This replaces the previous NPPF which was published in March 2012 with revisions in 2018, 2019, and 2021.

The framework covers those heritage assets that possess a level of interest sufficient to justify designation as well as those that are not designated but which are of heritage interest and are thus a material planning consideration. Where nationally important archaeological remains are affected by development then there should be a presumption in favour for their conservation.

Paragraph 189 of the National Planning Policy Framework recognises that:

Heritage assets range from sites and buildings of local historic value to those of the highest significance, such as World Heritage Sites which are internationally recognised to be of Outstanding Universal Value. These assets are an irreplaceable resource and should be conserved in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of existing and future generations.

Paragraph 194 states that:

In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the asset's importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant Historic Environment Record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require the developer to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation.

Paragraph 195 states that:

Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal.

Paragraph 199 states that:

When considering the impact of a proposed development on the significance of a designated heritage asset, great weight should be given to the asset's conservation (the more important the asset, the greater the weight should be). This is irrespective of whether any potential harm amounts to substantial harm, total loss or less than substantial harm to its significance).

Paragraph 203 also recognises that:

The effect of an application on the significance of a non-designated heritage asset should be taken into account in determining the application. In weighing applications that directly or indirectly affect non-designated heritage assets, a balanced judgement will be required having regard to the scale of any harm or loss and the significance of the heritage asset.

Local Policy

The Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan 2006-2026 includes the Core Strategy DPD, which was adopted in 2009 and contains policies relating to archaeology and heritage:

Spatial Objective 10: Natural Environment and Cultural Assets

To deliver a linked network of green infrastructure, enhancing and protecting the borough's distinctive landscapes, woodlands, geology, archaeological heritage and biodiversity and encourage its understanding, appreciation, maintenance and development.

Policy 2: Development in Earl Shilton

To support the regeneration of Earl Shilton, the council will:

- Allocate land for the development of a mixed use Sustainable Urban Extension to the south of Earl Shilton including 2000 environmentally sustainable homes, 10 ha of employment, neighbourhood shops, a new primary school and children's centre, GP's, Neighbourhood Policing and green space provision. The employment allocations are to provide for industrial and warehousing developments. They should primarily support local employment opportunities, including starter and grow-on units, and should aim to achieve zero-carbon development. The community services will be provided in a 'community hub' with the primary school and children's centre at its heart. The feasibility of providing some or all of the energy needs of the Sustainable Urban Extension by sustainable on site power generation will be investigated and if viable, implemented as part of the development. The required facilities, land and buildings will be provided by the developer, in partnership with the relevant service providers through appropriate developer contributions and supported by relevant funding streams such as the New Growth Point Initiative. Detailed requirements for this Sustainable Urban Extension including boundaries, facilities to be provided, layout and design, will be set out in an Area Action Plan. All development must be in conformity with this Area Action Plan. No piecemeal developments will be permitted
- Support development within Earl Shilton settlement boundary to deliver a minimum of 10 new residential dwellings. Seek to diversify existing housing stock to ensure an appropriate mix and type of housing is available to meet future needs as supported by Policy 15 and 16. A key aim in Earl Shilton is to encourage more young professionals and prospering households to move into and stay in the area

- Ensure there is a range of employment opportunities within Earl Shilton
- Support the regeneration of the Earl Shilton local centre including public realm improvements, the development of a focal civic space and the provision of additional retail floor space within the defined Earl Shilton local centre that does not compete with the Hinckley Town Centre as the sub regional centre
- Support the development of new leisure facilities and sporting hub on land off the A47 in the vicinity of Hinckley United Football Stadium supported by sustainable public transport links including enhanced walking and cycling connections from Barwell, Earl Shilton, Hinckley and Burbage
- Require transport improvements in line with Policy 5
- Support the development of the tourism industry in line with Policy 23

To ensure development respects the character of Earl Shilton, builds on its sense of place and helps deliver the regeneration of the town the council will:

- Address the existing deficiencies in the quality, quantity and accessibility of green space and play provision in Earl Shilton as detailed in the council's most up to date strategy and the Play Strategy. New green space and play provision will be provided where necessary to meet the standards set out in Policy 19.
- Deliver improvements in the quality of the William Bradford/Heathfield/Newlands indoor facilities and Weavers/Townlands outdoor facilities as detailed in the Hinckley & Bosworth Cultural Facilities Audit
- Deliver the strategic green infrastructure network detailed in Policy 20. To achieve this, strategic interventions involving the Earl Shilton Urban Extension and the Hinckley/ Barwell/Earl Shilton/Burbage Green Wedge will be implemented
- Deliver safe, high quality cycling routes as detailed in Policy 5 with particular focus on routes to Earl Shilton local centre and schools, existing and proposed residential and employment areas, community and leisure facilities, the Hinckley town centre and railway station and into the countryside to provide an alternative to car travel and encourage physical exercise
- Require new development to respect the character and appearance of the Earl Shilton Conservation Area by incorporating locally distinctive features of the conservation area
- Expect development to respect Earl Shilton's industrial heritage through sympathetic reuse of existing buildings unless it can be demonstrated that this is not achievable
- Require development to be of the highest environmental standards in line with Policy 24

The Earl Shilton and Barwell area Action Plan 2014 forms part of the Hinckley and Bosworth Local Plan and demonstrates that the site lies outside the settlement boundary of Earl Shilton. Therefore, the site is not included within any specific planning strategy.



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