



**Archaeological Watching Brief during works  
at the Old Slaughter House, Springbank  
Medbourne, Leicestershire  
May 2013 and May 2014**

Accession number: X.A48.2013

Report No 14/107

Author: Jason Clarke

Illustrator: James Ladocha



**Archaeological Watching Brief during works  
at the Old Slaughter House, Springbank  
Medbourne, Leicestershire  
May 2013 and May 2014**

Accession number: X.A48.2013

Report No 14/107

Quality control and sign off:

<b>Issue No.</b>	<b>Date approved:</b>	<b>Checked by:</b>	<b>Verified by:</b>	<b>Approved by:</b>	<b>Reason for Issue:</b>
1	22/5/2014	Ed Taylor	Ant Maull	Andy Chapman	Draft for client review

Author: Jason Clarke

Illustrator: James Ladocha

© MOLA Northampton 2014

MOLA  
Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park  
Northampton  
NN4 8BN  
01604 700 493  
[www.mola.org.uk](http://www.mola.org.uk)  
[sparry@mola.org.uk](mailto:sparry@mola.org.uk)

**STAFF**

Project Manager: Anthony Maull Cert. Arch

Text: Jason Clarke BSc MA AIfA

Fieldwork: Jason Clarke

Illustrations: James Ladocha BA

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>OASIS No: molanort1-179352</b>	
Project title	Archaeological watching brief during works at the Old Slaughter House, Springbank, Medbourne, Leicestershire		
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MOLA, on land at the Old Slaughter House, Springbank, Medbourne, Leicestershire. A disused stone-lined well at the centre of the site, probably served the Old Slaughter House. It was capped with a large fragment of ironstone. No other archaeological features were present and no finds were recovered.		
Project type	Watching Brief		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Garden		
Future work	None		
Monument type and period	Well, Post medieval?		
Significant finds	None		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address	Springbank, Medbourne		
Easting Northing	SP 799 931		
Area (sq m/ha)	0.19ha		
Height aOD	64mOD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology/MOLA		
Project brief originator	Leicestershire County Council		
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Director/Supervisor	Jason Clarke (MOLA)		
Project Manager	Anthony Maull (MOLA)		
Sponsor or funding body	BRP architects		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	24/05/2013		
End date	15/05/2014		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	X.A48.2013	Site records (1 small archive box)	
Paper			
Digital		Client report PDF	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)			
Title	Archaeological watching brief during works at the Old Slaughter House, Springbank, Medbourne, Leicestershire		
Serial title & volume	14/107		
Author(s)	Jason Clarke		
Page numbers	8 text, 4 figs		
Date	May 2014		

# Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>BACKGROUND</b>	<b>1</b>
	2.1 Location and geology	1
	2.2 Historical and archaeological background	1
<b>3</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>5</b>
	3.1 Objectives	5
	3.2 Methodology	5
<b>4</b>	<b>THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>THE SITE ARCHIVE</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>DISCUSSION</b>	<b>8</b>
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>8</b>

## Figures

Front Cover: Development area: pre-works, looking south-west

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Area of archaeological observation

Fig 3: An excavated house foundation trench, showing the sequence of geological strata

Fig 4: Stone-lined well [5]

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF DURING WORKS AT  
THE OLD SLAUGHTER HOUSE, SPRINGBANK  
MEDBOURNE, LEICESTERSHIRE  
MAY 2013 AND MAY 2014**

**Abstract**

*An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MOLA, on land at the Old Slaughter House, Springbank, Medbourne, Leicestershire. A disused stone-lined well at the centre of the site, probably served the Old Slaughter House. It was capped with a large fragment of ironstone. No other archaeological features were present and no finds were recovered.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by MOLA, formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology, on land at the Old Slaughter House, Springbank, Medbourne, Leicestershire (NGR SP 799 931 Fig 1). The investigation was commissioned by BRP architects and was undertaken as a condition of planning consent for residential development.

The scope of works was outlined in a brief issued by the Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council (LCC 2011) and detailed in the specification prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2013).

**2 BACKGROUND**

**2.1 Location and geology**

The development site lies in the centre of the historic village of Medbourne, which is situated 22km south-east of Leicester. The southern boundary of the parish lies on the county boundary with Northamptonshire, formed by the River Welland. The site itself is bounded by the churchyard of St Giles' Church to the south, residential housing to the east and west and gardens to the north.

The Medbourne Brooke runs past the western side of the site, separating it from the gardens beyond.

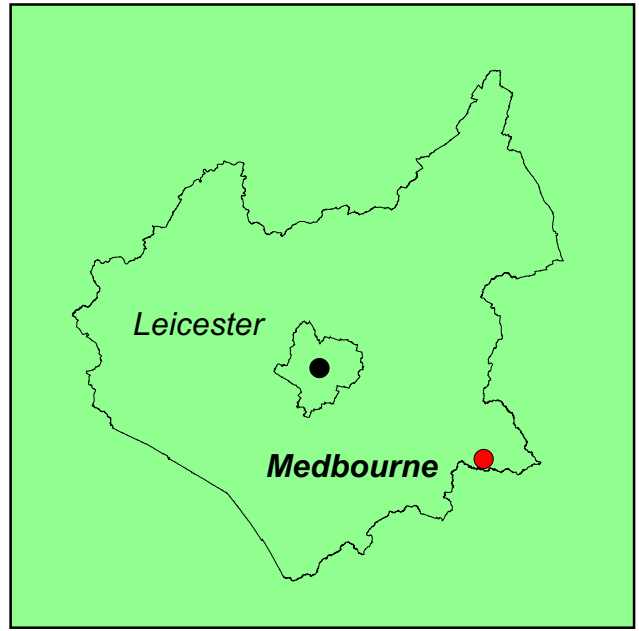
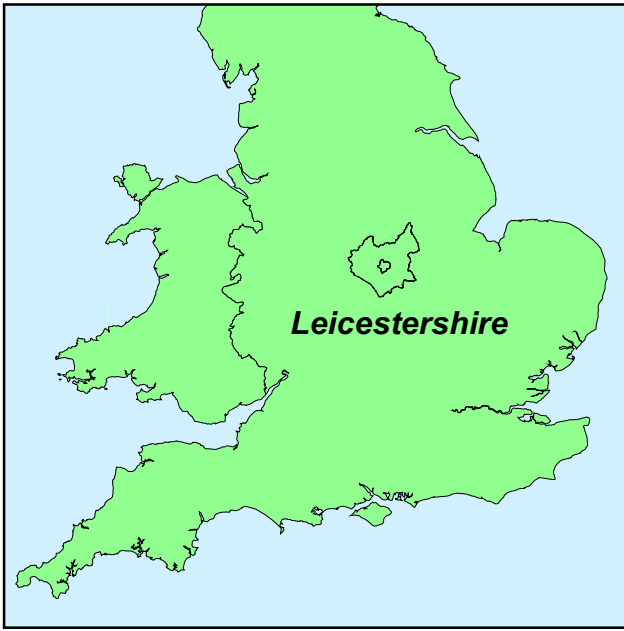
The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising the Blue Lias Formation and Charmouth Mudstone Formation overlain by first terrace river deposits of sand and gravel (BGS Geotitles <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geotitles>).

**2.2 Historical and archaeological background**

The Roman small town of Medbourne (Historic Environment Record (HER): MLE2005) is situated to the north-west of the village on the line of the Gartree Road. A high status Roman villa (HER: MLE2001) is situated to the west of the site.

At Domesday there were two manors in Medbourne, one held by Robert de Toden and the other by the king's soke of Great Bowden.

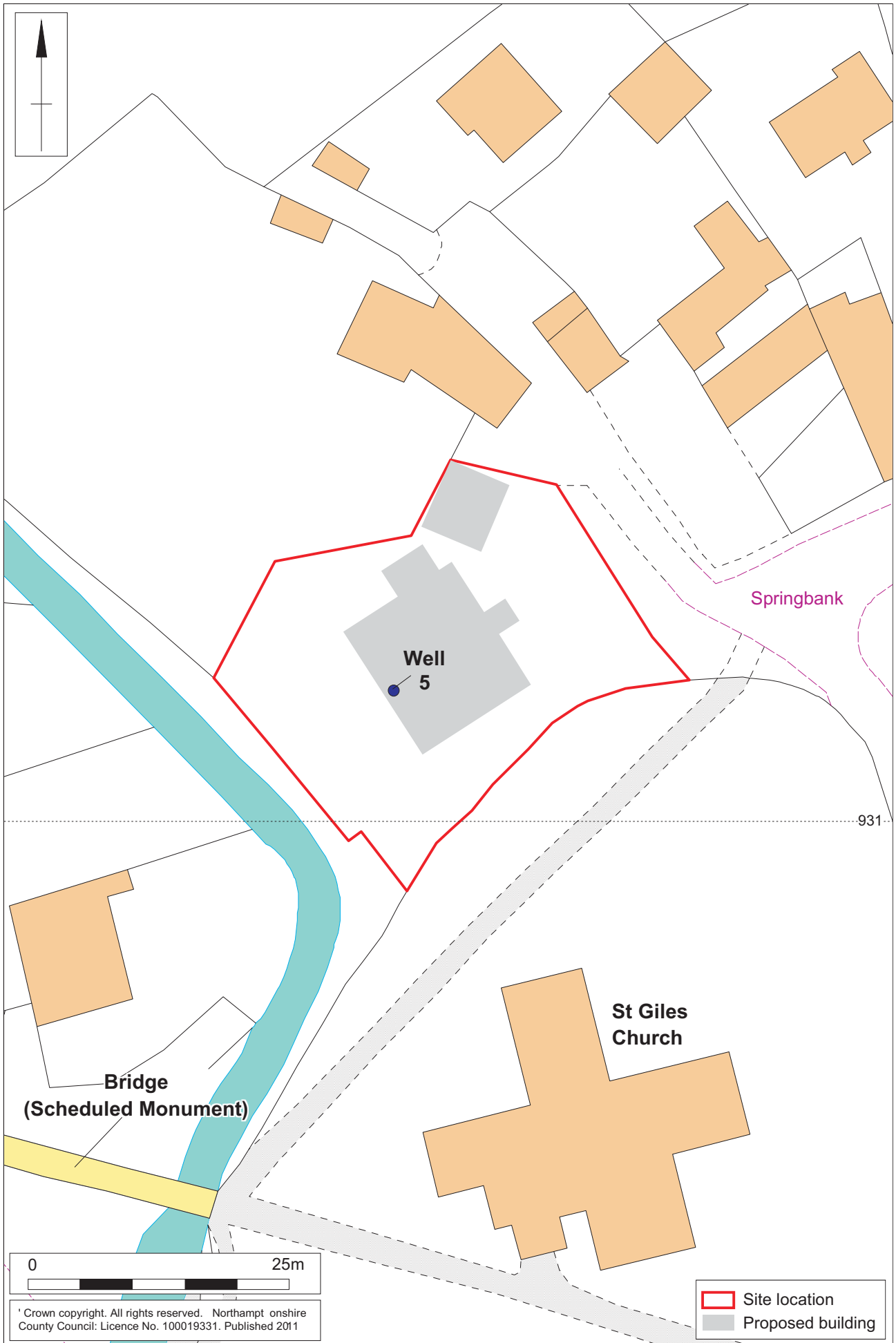
There was a church at Medbourne in the 12th century on the manor held by the king. However, the sub-circular shape of the churchyard may suggest an earlier origin for the foundation of a church. It is thought that the first church may have burnt down in the mid-13th century and was replaced by the current church in the 14th century (HER: MLE14463). Extensive renovations were undertaken in the 17th century. It is possible that the church was a focus of activity in the medieval period. To the north of the site an area of possible former medieval village earthworks have been identified (HER: MLE2045). To the west of the development site is a medieval packhorse bridge, which is a Scheduled Monument (HER: MLE2043).



Scale 1:5,000

Site location Fig 1





Scale 1:500

Area of archaeological observation Fig 2

### 3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Objectives

The objectives of the investigation were to:

- identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits exposed during the groundworks;
- determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits;
- establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape;
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

#### 3.2 Methodology

All groundworks were undertaken by a 360° mechanical excavator with a flat ditching bucket to remove topsoil and subsoil within the development area and to excavate the footings for the house, curtain wall, and garage, as well as drainage trenches (Fig 2). The area was cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features.

Recording followed standard MOLA procedures as described in the *Fieldwork Manual* (2014). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Photography was with 35mm black and white film and digital images. Spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to maximise the recovery of metal objects.

The ground clearance and excavation of the garage and curtain wall footings were undertaken in May 2013. Due to a planning issue causing a delay the house foundations and drainage was excavated in May 2014.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010) and *Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008).

#### 4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The underlying geology of mid grey-brown mudstones was observed throughout the development area. It was overlain by 0.05-0.10m of mid black-brown sandy clay subsoil, which was overlain by 0.20-0.30m of dark black-brown sandy clay garden soil. Both soils were truncated in places due to the previous building activity and subsequent garden landscaping.

The house foundations were cut to a depth of 2.20m showing the sequence of underlying geology (Fig 3).



An excavated house foundation trench, showing the sequence of geological strata  
Fig 3

**Stone-lined well [5]**

Located in the middle of the development area was a stone-lined well [5] (Fig 4), 1.10m in diameter and 2.50m deep. It was lined with undressed ironstone blocks and was capped with a large fragment of ironstone. The well was not backfilled and water was present at its base.

The well probably served the old slaughter house, probably going out of use when it was connected to the mains water; it had been capped with a large fragment of ironstone and covered with garden soil.

The well has been backfilled with concrete for the new development.



Stone-lined well [5]

Fig 4

## 5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The site archive comprises:

Record	Number
Watching brief logs	5
Photographic record sheets	2
Black and white contacts and negatives	13
Digital photographs	39

## 6 DISCUSSION

The upper horizons of the development area were truncated and disturbed by the recent demolition of the previous buildings and subsequent garden landscaping. The stone-lined well was probably post-medieval, possibly built to serve the old slaughter house.

No pre-modern archaeological features were present within the development area and no finds were recovered.

### BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS 2001 *Solid geology map, UK South sheet, Scale 1:625,000*, British Geological Survey

IfA 2008 *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute for Archaeologists

IfA 2010 *Code of Conduct*, Institute for Archaeologists

LCC 2011 *Generic brief for archaeological attendance*, Leicestershire County Council

NA 2013 *Written scheme of investigation for an archaeological watching brief during works at the Old Slaughter House, Springbank, Medbourne, Leicestershire* Northamptonshire Archaeology

MOLA 2014 *Archaeological fieldwork manual*, Museum of London Archaeology

VCH 1964 *A History of the County of Leicestershire, 5*, Victoria County History

### Websites

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex>

<http://www.old-maps.co.uk>

MOLA  
22nd May 2014



MOLA  
Bolton House  
Wootton Hall Park  
Northampton  
NN4 8BN  
01604 700 493  
[www.mola.org.uk](http://www.mola.org.uk)  
[sparry@mola.org.uk](mailto:sparry@mola.org.uk)