



An Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Midland Road, Peterborough October 2013 – March 2014

Report 14/116

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Illustrator: Amir Bassir



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Site Code: PMR13
NGR: 518500 298900

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on land at
Midland Road, Peterborough
October 2013 – March 2014**

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS No: molanort1-180866	
Project name	An Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Midland Road, Peterborough		
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology), on behalf of URS acting for their clients Westleigh Homes, between October 2013 and March 2014 during groundworks for the construction of a new residential development on land at Midland Road, Peterborough. Modern disturbance was recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.		
Project type	Watching brief		
Site status	None		
Previous work	None		
Current Land use	Former bakery		
Future work	No		
Monument type/ period			
Significant finds			
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Cambridgeshire		
Site address	Land at Midland Road, Peterborough		
Study area (ha)	1.27ha		
OS Easting & Northing	518500 298900		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology)		
Project brief originator	Peterborough City Council Archaeologist		
Project Design originator	Jim MacQueen URS Infrastructure and Environment Ltd		
Director/Supervisor	David J Leigh		
Project Manager	Anthony Maull supported by David J Leigh		
Sponsor or funding body	Westleigh Homes		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	October 2013		
End date	March 2014		
ARCHIVES	Location	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)	
Physical			
Paper	Peterborough Museums	Watching brief forms (16) Photographic record sheets (5) Black and white photographs (51) Digital photographs (123)	
Digital		Report text and figures	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)			
Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief on land at Midland Road, Peterborough		
Serial title & volume	MOLA report 14/116		
Author	David J Leigh		
Date	May 2014		

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Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology), on behalf of URS acting for their clients Westleigh Developments between October 2013 and March 2014 during groundworks connected with the construction of a new residential development on land at Midland Road, Peterborough. Modern disturbance was recorded throughout the investigation area with evidence of a residual buried soil. No archaeological features or artefacts were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by MOLA (formerly Northamptonshire Archaeology) between October 2013 and March 2014 during groundworks connected with the construction of a new residential development on land at Midland Road, Peterborough (NGR 518500 298900; Figs 1, 2 and 3). The work was undertaken on behalf of URS acting for their client Westleigh Developments and was carried out following a request for an archaeological watching brief by the Peterborough City Council Archaeologist.

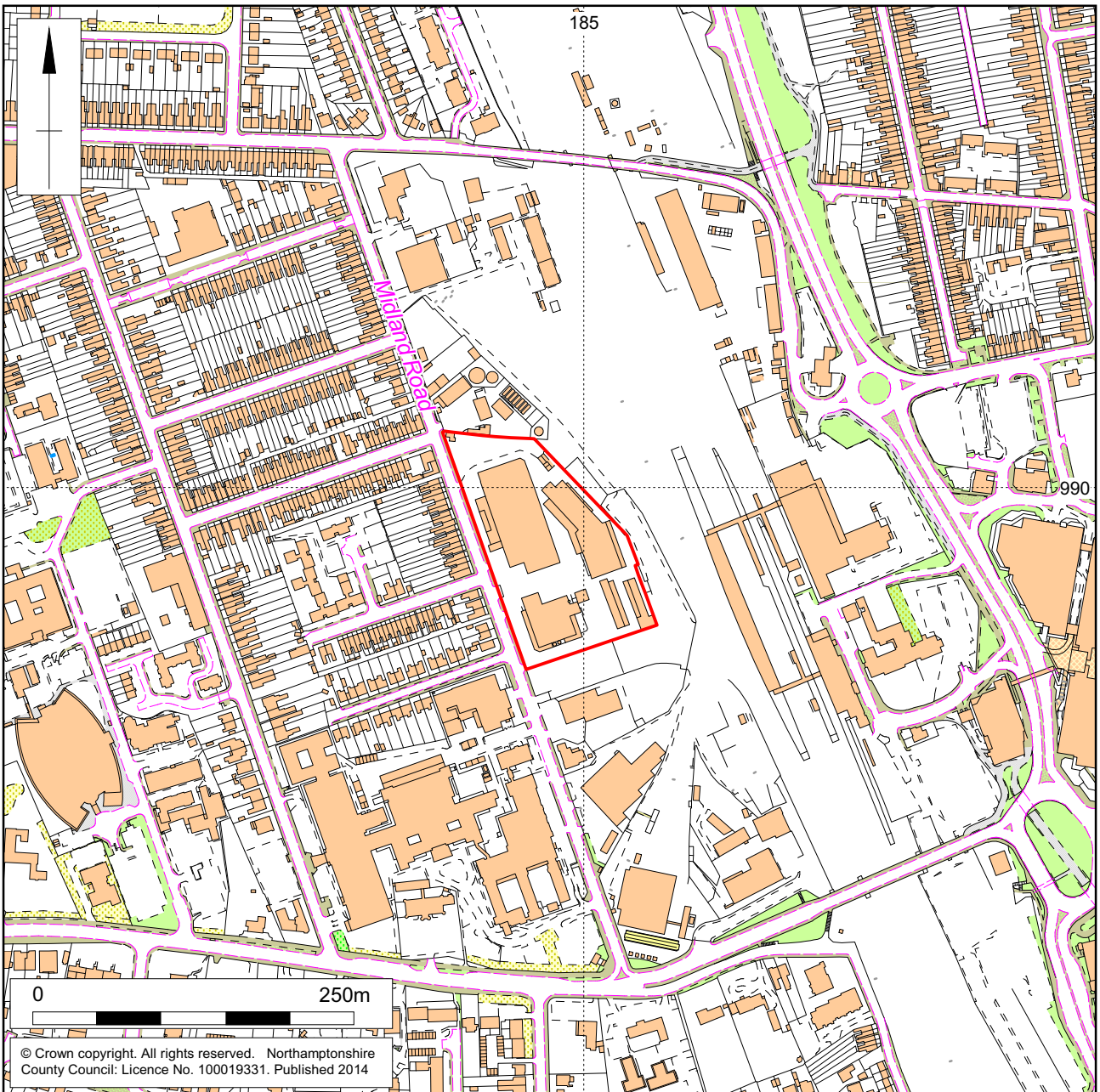
It adhered to the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012) and followed a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by URS (MacQueen 2013) and the procedural document MoRPHE issued by English Heritage (EH 2006) along with the appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

The site lies within an area of residential development to the west of Peterborough city centre. The investigation area lies on relatively level ground and encompasses an area approximately 1.72ha.

The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey as comprising Cornbrash ,sandy gravelly clay with outcrops of limestone gravel (BGS Geindex: <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex>).



Scale 1:5,000

Site Location Fig 1



Scale 1:1000

Areas of archaeological observation Fig 2

2.2 Historical background

The site lies to the west of Peterborough City centre and within an area of archaeological interest.

A heritage statement undertaken as part of the current application (MacQueen 2012) examined the archaeological potential of the site and its immediate surroundings.

No evidence for early prehistoric activity was identified within the development area, however The Historic Environment Record (HER), Peterborough City Council lists a number of sites of archaeological interest. These include a Bronze Age torc (HER 017516) which was recovered from a probable rubbish pit associated with a Roman villa, and three Iron Age coins (HER 01751a) which were recovered from close to Mayors Walk. On the northern edge of the site disarticulated human remains are recorded as being of possible medieval date (HER 51600). The site of the former St Leonards Hospital, which was founded sometime before 1125AD lies immediately to the east of the site.

During the post-medieval period cartographic evidence suggests that the site lay in an area of open fields, a number of allotments were subsequently set out during the late 1920s. Soon after buildings associated with a new bakery and dairy were constructed in the north-western and eastern parts of the site. These subsequently extended during the early 1970s.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the archaeological investigation were to:

- ◆ Observe the groundworks for the new residential development within the designated areas of archaeological interest, and to record all archaeological deposits uncovered;
- ◆ Determine the date, character, state of preservation and depth of any archaeological deposits observed and to retrieve all datable artefacts;
- ◆ Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

A photographic record in both black and white negative film was kept along with photographs in digital format. The written record used MOLA pro-forma sheets (MOLA 2014). The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008).

The fieldwork was undertaken between October 2013 and March 2014 during soil stripping for the new residential development. The groundworks were carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator (Fig 4) fitted with a toothless bucket. The watching brief was carried out in three areas (WJ4, TP7 and WJ7: Fig 2) within the development which had been designated as of archaeological interest following geotechnical investigations which identified the remains of buried soils.



General view of the investigation area, looking west Fig 3



The groundworks in progress Fig 4

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

A disturbed stratigraphy was recorded throughout the investigation area (Figs 5 and 6).

The natural substratum was encountered between 0.80m and 1.0m below present ground level and comprised pale grey limestone cornbrash progressing to grey-brown compact clay. This was overlain by modern overburden comprising pale-mid grey-brown sandy loam, containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and stones along with pockets of dark grey-black sandy loam with charcoal flecks.

Remnants of a buried soil overlying the natural substratum was recorded on the western edge of area WJ4, on the northern edge of area TP7 and the southern edge of WJ7. This comprised grey-brown sandy loam, up to 0.30m thick and containing occasional charcoal flecks. This was directly overlain by the modern overburden. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.



General view of the stratigraphy Fig 5



The stratigraphic sequence Fig 6

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	16
Photographic record sheets	5
Black and white photographs	51
Digital photographs	123

The project archive will be consolidated and prepared for deposition with Peterborough Museums.

6 CONCLUSIONS

A disturbed stratigraphy was recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological features or artefacts were present. The absence of any artefactual evidence, would suggest, but not preclude, that no significant archaeological deposits are present in the immediate vicinity of the investigation area.

The archaeological investigation was carried out in favourable circumstances and the results are considered to be reliable.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- BGS 2009 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html> British Geological Survey website
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