

**LAND ADJACENT TO
51 HIGH STREET, WOLLASTON,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

NGR REF: SP 90620 62759



ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING
(OASIS ID: independ1-289035)

(EVENT NR: ENN 108 787)

JUNE 2017

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Summary

A program of archaeological monitoring was conducted by Independent Archaeology Consultants for the construction of a new garage incorporating a basement level on land adjacent to the property at 51 High Street, Wollaston, Northamptonshire. The investigation area contained two east-west orientated modern ditches and a north-south orientated Medieval linear feature. The later is likely to be Medieval, as pieces of 13th-16th century pottery were recovered from its fill.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The site was located on land adjacent to 51 High Street, Wollaston, Northamptonshire (NGR: SP 90620 62759) (Figure 1-3). A larger area was opened up in the car park southeast of the existing building. The project was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Investigation* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2014), as well as discussions with Liz Mordue, Assistant Archaeological Officer at Northamptonshire County Council. The project was based on a WSI, which complies with the principles of NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework 2012).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 Planning Permission has been granted (WP/16/00756/LBC) for a new development on land adjacent to 51 High Street, Wollaston, Northamptonshire. The development comprised a new garage incorporating a basement level on land adjacent to the existing property.

2.2 The development site was located in the central parts of the village of Wollaston. It enclosed an area of some 180m² at an average height of 72m AOD. The site was located in a park landscape on land adjacent to Wollaston House. High Street was located some 50m to the east of the site and Rotten Row some 60m to the south. The solid geology of the site comprised Rutland Formation Mudstone (British Geological Survey).

2.3 The site was located within an area of archaeological potential, as defined by Northamptonshire HER. Therefore, archaeological monitoring and documentation was required prior to the proposed construction works. This condition is mentioned in the Planning Permission granted by the Borough Council of Wellingborough, and is in line with standards described in *NPPF* (2012).

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The development site was located in the Medieval village of Wollaston, on the west side of the High Street in the central parts of the village. Wollaston House was built in 1856 and is a Grade II listed building. The associated garden and landscape park are shown on historic OS mapping from the 19th and 20th century. The site was located on the edge of an area with known historic settlement and the development area lied in the grounds associated with Wollaston House.
- 3.2 Examination of aerial photographs has led to the recording of a number of undated linear features in the grounds of the house, likely to be earlier boundary features. There was the potential for remains of archaeological interest to be present in the site, albeit truncated by more recent activity, and the construction of the basement would have had an impact on any such remains present.
- 3.3 Within the landscape park, the county Historic Environment Record indicates the presence of a number of cropmark features. Some of these are interpreted as ditches, but there are several possible house sites, especially in the northern part of the parkland, some 50m north of the site. These are thought to be Medieval, but no intrusive work has been undertaken as yet to confirm this.



Figure 1. The location of Wollaston in England.



Figure 2. Site Location in Wollaston.

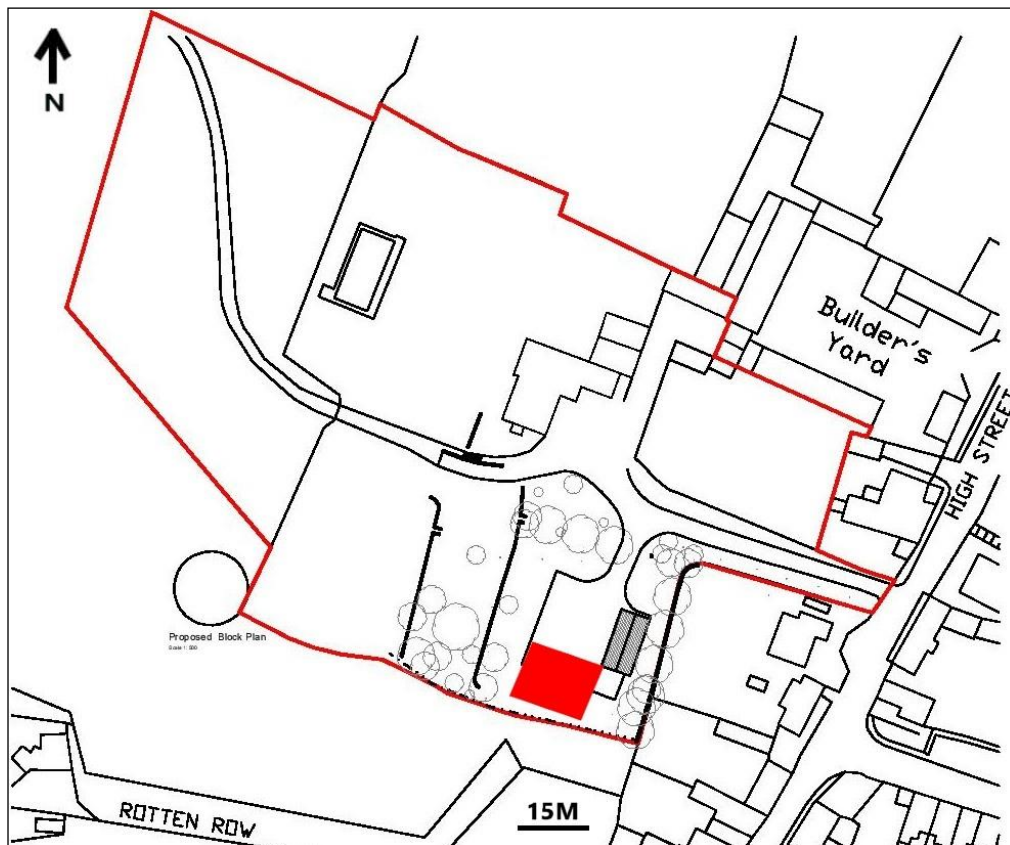


Figure 3. Site Outline and Trench Location.

4 AIMS

4.1 The aims of the program of archaeological monitoring were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:

i) to gain information about the heritage assets within the proposed development area;

ii) to provide detailed information regarding the date, nature, extent, integrity and degree of preservation of the identified heritage assets,

iii) to inform a strategy for the recording, preservation and/or management of the identified assets;

iv) to mitigate potential threats,

v) to inform proposals for further archaeological investigations (namely targeted area excavations) within the ongoing programme of research;

vi) to define the sequence and character of activity at the site, as reflected by the excavated remains;

vii) to interpret the archaeology of the site within its local, regional and national archaeological context.

4.2 The monitoring also considered the general investigative themes outlined by: *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (Ed. Nicholas J. Cooper) Leicester Archaeology Monograph No. 13, *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (Knight, D; Vynner, B; Allen, C. 2012), *English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda* (1997); *Discovering the Past, Shaping the Future: Research Strategy 2005 - 2010* (English Heritage 2005).

4.3 Specifically, the following investigative aims were accommodated in the programme of archaeological monitoring work:

*characterisation of the sites in the broader landscape;

*characterisation of the activities identified on the site;

*characterisation of changes affecting land-use through time

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Monitoring

The program of archaeological monitoring consisted of the continuous observation of removal of topsoil and overburden within the investigation area. The open area

investigation was concentrated to areas of development, and focused on the footprints of the new garage.

The stripping of overburden was conducted under constant archaeological supervision using a flat bladed ditching bucket. The investigation area was mechanically stripped to the upper interface of secure archaeological deposits or, where these were not present, to the upper interface of natural deposits. Thereafter, hand-excavation was required to sample the exposed features.

The excavation of the site took into consideration potential above- and below-ground constraints and/or hazards, such as trees, utility trenches, overhead cables and areas of modern disturbance. Topsoil and overburden were transported away from the development site during the course of the archaeological investigation.

When archaeological features were encountered they were hand cleaned, investigated and recorded according to the parameters described below. The investigation was not carried out at the expenses of the heritage assets within the site.

5.2 Metal Detecting

Thorough metal detector sweeps of exposed features and spoil heaps were carried out in advance of, and during, the excavation process.

5.3 Hand Excavation

All man-made features were hand cleaned, photographed, excavated and documented. Apparently natural features (such as tree throws) were sampled sufficiently to establish their origin and to characterise any related human activity. Hand excavation and feature sampling were sufficient to establish the date, character and relationships with other features. Deposits and layers (including buried horizons of top- and subsoils) were sampled sufficiently to enable a confident interpretation of their character, date and relationships with other features.

The investigation provided a full documentation and interpretation of the site's archaeology at no significant cost to the value or integrity of the historical remains therein. Judgement regarding the removal of structural remains, or other special remains or deposits, was led by this consideration, and was always made in consultation with the Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council.

The developer was informed that provision had to be made for delays caused by the need for archaeological recording or bad weather.

5.4 Recording

A numbered single context-based recording system, written on suitable forms and indexed appropriately, was used for all elements of the archaeological recording programme.

Measured plans were produced that show all exposed features (including natural features, modern features, etc.) and excavated areas. Excavation plans and sections in the scales 1:100 and 1:20 were produced for all excavated features and deposits. These were accurately tied in to trench plans/trench location plans, that in turn were accurately related to the Ordnance Survey grid and to suitably mapped local features (boundaries, buildings, roads, etc.). All sections and plans were related accurately to Ordnance Datum.

A photographic record comprising monochrome and digital photos formed part of the excavation record. A selection of digital photos was also used in this report (a maximum of two photos per A4 sheet). The photographic record followed the outlines in NAAWG 2014 paragraph A1.10.9 for site photographic guidance.

6 RECORDING

- 6.1 A numbered single context-based recording system, written on suitable forms and indexed appropriately, was used for all elements of the archaeological recording programme.
- 6.2 Measured plans were produced that show all exposed features (including natural features, modern features, etc.) and excavated areas. Individual measured plans and sections in the scales 1:20 and 1:50 were produced for all excavated features and deposits. These were accurately tied into trench plans/trench location plans that in turn were accurately related to the Ordnance Survey grid and to suitably local features (boundaries, buildings, roads, etc.). All sections and plans were related accurately to Ordnance Datum.
- 6.3 A photographic record comprising monochrome, digital and colour slides formed part of the excavation record. The photographic record followed the outlines in NAAWG 2014 paragraph A1.10.9 for site photographic guidance.

7 RESULTS

- 7.1 Underlying all other deposits in the investigation area was the natural ground, consisting of light yellow, soft sandy silt with frequent stones and occasional roots.
- 7.2 Cut into the natural were the ditches [103], [105], [107] and [109]. Only ditch [107] could be dated to the Medieval period, while the other three were clearly modern.
- 7.3 The two ditches [103] and [105] were modern drainage ditches that were running parallel across the site from east to west (Plan 1). As the whole investigation area was sloping from east to west the purpose of these two ditches was most likely to lead water away from higher ground in the east and into the small wood which was located southwest of the investigation area.

- 7.4 Ditch [103] was just 0.05m deep and had a fill (102) of dark brown, soft silty clay with occasional roots and stones. The sides and bottom of the ditch were rounded (Figure 4). Ditch [105] was only about 0.03m deep and had a fill (104) of dark brown, soft silty clay with occasional roots and stones. It is likely that these two ditches had originally been cut from a higher level, and were fairly modern in date, as pieces of broken modern China and glass could be seen in both ditches. Both ditches were cutting onto the top of the Medieval ditch [107] in the western end of the investigation area.
- 7.5 The ditch [109] with a modern plastic service pipe was up to 0.20m deep and had a fill of grey gravel (108).
- 7.6 The Medieval ditch [107] was 0.60m deep, orientated north-south and was running along the western side of the investigation area. The ditch contained the single fill (106) of dark grey, plastic silty clay with occasional stones and Medieval pottery (Figure 5). The pottery consisted of 2 sherds of Brill/Boarstall Ware from the 13th-16th century and one sherd of Shelly Coarseware from the 12th-15th Century. The ditch was cut at the top by ditches [103] and [105].
- 7.7 The ditch also seemed to contain burnt seeds and plant remains of possible Medieval origin, and an environmental sample was collected from the ditch. This sample, however, had to be rejected due to a high risk of contamination from modern inclusions, and the decision to reject the sample was discussed with the Plant Remains and Environmental Samples Expert Val Fryer.
- 7.8 The uppermost deposit within the investigation area was the modern gardensoil (101), which was covering most of the site. It consisted of up to 0.42m thick dark brown, soft silty clay with occasional roots and stones. From the topsoil was collected a single piece of Romano-British Shelly Ware, which was in a bad condition, and might have been brought into the site with the garden soil.

8 FINDS

It total 4 find posts were recovered during the program of archaeological monitoring. They all consisted of various sherds of pottery.

Pottery from Wollaston, Northamptonshire (By Paul Blinkhorn)

- 8.1 The pottery assemblage comprised 4 sherds with a total weight of 30g. It comprised a mixture of Romano-British and medieval material.
- 8.2 A single sherd (weight = 17g) of Romano-British Shelly Ware occurred in the topsoil, context (101). It is in poor condition, with most of the calcareous inclusions leached out. The medieval assemblage was recorded using the conventions of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (CTS), as follows:

- 8.3 **F324: Brill/Boarstall Ware**, 13th-16th century. 2 sherds, 10g.
F330: Shelly Coarseware, AD1100-1400. 1 sherd, 3g.

8.4 It all occurred in a single context, ditch fill (106). The fabric types are typical of sites in the region (eg. Blinkhorn 2010). The two sherds of Brill/Boarstall Ware are from glazed jugs, a major product of the industry. The assemblage is in good condition, and appears reliably stratified. It is likely to be of 13th-14th century date.



Figure 4. Ditch [103] with its fill (102) was barely 0.03m deep.



Figure 5. The medieval ditch [107] with its fill (106).

9 DISCUSSION

- 9.1 The program of archaeological recording carried out on land adjacent to 51 High Street, Wollaston indicated Romano-British and Medieval activity within the investigation area. While there was a clear and well dated Medieval ditch, the single Romano-British pottery sherd might have been brought in to the site with the garden soil.
- 9.2 The likelihood of finding Medieval remains were seen as fairly large. However, as no houses or building constructions were found in the investigation area it is likely that they were located further to the north, where earthworks and potential house platforms have been seen on aerial photos and old maps.
- 9.3 The investigated area, therefore, did not give the impression of having been built on, and the area was sloping from east to west, and probably not suitable for housing. The site rather gives the impression of having been a back garden or simply an area of empty land in the Medieval period. The main activity in this section of Wollaston is more likely to have taken place along High Street, about 50m east of the site.
- 9.4 Even if the program of archaeological monitoring came up with little new information regarding previously activities in the area, it is still an important site, which might have been located close to Medieval buildings that once stood in the central parts on Wollaston.

10 ARCHIVE

The archive consists of the following:

Paper Record

The project brief	The project report
Written Scheme of Investigation	The primary site records
The photographic and drawn records	Finds

The archive is currently maintained by Independent Archaeology Consultants.
The archive will be transferred to:

The Archaeological Collections for Northamptonshire County Council.

11 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDICES

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context nr	Depth (m)	Description	Younger than	Older than
(101)	0.42	Dark brown, soft silty clay. Occasional roots and stones.	-	(102) (104) (106) (108)
(102)	0.05	Fill of modern ditch [103]. Dark brown, soft silty clay. Occasional roots and stones.	[103]	(101)
[103]	0.05	Cut of modern ditch [103]. Rounded sides and bottom.	(106)	(102)
(104)	0.03	Fill of modern ditch [105]. Dark brown, soft silty clay. Occasional roots and stones.	[105]	(101)
[105]	0.03	Cut of modern ditch [105]. Rounded sides and bottom.	(106)	(104)
(106)	0.60	Fill of Medieval ditch [107]. Dark grey, plastic silty clay. Occasional stones and Medieval pottery.	[107]	[103] [105]
[107]	0.60	Cut of Medieval ditch [107]. V-shaped sides and rounded bottom.	Natural	(106)
(108)	0.20	Fill of modern plastic pipe [109]. Grey gravel.	[109]	(101)
[109]	0.20	Cut of modern plastic pipe. Rounded sides and bottom.	Natural	(108)
Natural	-	Light yellow, soft sandy silt. Frequent stones and occasional roots.	-	[103] [105] [107] [109]

FINDS LIST

Find nr	Context	Material	Object	Description	Period
1	(101)	Fired Clay	1 sherd of pottery	Romano-British Shelly Ware	Romano-British
2	(106)	Fired Clay	1 sherd of pottery	Brill/Boarstall Ware	13 th -16 th Century
3	(106)	Fired Clay	1 sherd of pottery	Brill/Boarstall Ware	13 th -16 th Century
4	(106)	Fired Clay	1 sherd of pottery	Shelly Coarse Ware	12 th -15 th Century

OASIS ID: independ1-289035

Project details

Project name	51 High Street, Wollaston, Northamptonshire
Short description of the project	An archaeological recording project was carried out within the site. A piece of Medieval pottery was found in the topsoil, and more pieces of Medieval pottery were found in the fill of a Medieval ditch.
Project dates	Start: 27-06-2017 End: 29-06-2017
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HSW17 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	17/00208/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	SN CL Medieval
Monument type	SN CL Post Medieval
Significant Finds	SN CL Medieval Romano-British
Significant Finds	SN CL Post Medieval Romano-British
Investigation type	"Recorded Observation"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE WELLINGBOROUGH WOLLASTON 51 High Street, Wollaston, Northamptonshire
Postcode	NN29 7QE

51 High Street, Wollaston: Archaeological Monitoring

Study area 225 Square metres
Site coordinates TL 21417 99517 52.579521510596 -0.20789595311 52 34 46 N 000 12 28 W Point
Height OD / Depth Min: 5m Max: 6m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Independent Archaeology Consultants
Project brief originator Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator Independent Archaeology Consultants
Project director/manager Christer Carlsson
Project supervisor Christer Carlsson
Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Northamptonshire County Council
Physical Contents "Ceramics","Environmental"
Digital Archive recipient Northamptonshire County Council
Digital Contents "Ceramics","Environmental"
Digital Media available "Images raster / digital photography","Images vector"
Paper Archive recipient Northamptonshire County Council
Paper Contents "Ceramics","Environmental"
Paper Media available "Context sheet","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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