

**EXETER ARMS,
3 CHURCH LANE,
HELPSTON,
PETERBOROUGH**

NGR REF: TF 12191 05578



ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

JANUARY 2020

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Summary

Archaeological monitoring was conducted by Independent Archaeology Consultants 13 January 2020 for the construction of new drainage and services behind the former public house the Exeter Arms in Helpston, Peterborough. The monitoring was following an open area excavation of the same area, which was carried out in the summer of 2019. The archaeological monitoring revealed no new archaeological finds or features, but the monitoring works also included the reburial of a Roman building which was investigated during the open area excavation.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 The site was located at the Exeter Arms, 3 Church Lane, Helpston, Peterborough (NGR: TF 12191 05578) (Figure 1-2). The proposed development entailed the conversion of the former public house to a modern dwelling, the conversion and extension of a barn to dwellings and the erection of three detached dwellings with associated garaging, manoeuvring and amenity space.
- 1.2 The project was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA 2015), as well as discussions with the Peterborough City Council's Historic Environment Team. The project was based on a WSI, which complies with the principles of the NPPF (National Planning Policy Framework 2012).
- 1.3 Independent Archaeology Consultants is an archaeological consultancy company based in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. The company subscribes to the Code of Conduct issued by the CIfA. All relevant CIfA Codes of Practice were adhered to throughout the course of the project.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning Permission has been granted (18/02197/FUL) for a new development at the former pub the Exeter Arms, 3 Church Lane, Helpston, Peterborough. The proposed development entailed the conversion of the former public house to a modern dwelling, the conversion and extension of a barn into dwellings and the erection of three detached dwellings with associated garaging, manoeuvring and amenity space.
- 2.2 The proposed development site comprised an irregularly shaped area of approximately 0.282 hectares at an average height of 13m AOD. The site was located close to the village centre on the north side of Church Lane. It was sitting within the boundaries of Helpston Conservation Area and included the Exeter Arms, a late 18th-early 19th century Grade II listed building. The

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geology of the site comprised alluvium of clay, silt, sand and gravel over Blisworth Limestone Formations (British Geological Survey).

- 2.3 The site was situated within an area of archaeological potential, as defined by the Peterborough City Council HER. Therefore, archaeological monitoring was required prior to further construction within the site. This condition was mentioned in the Planning Permission granted by Peterborough City Council.

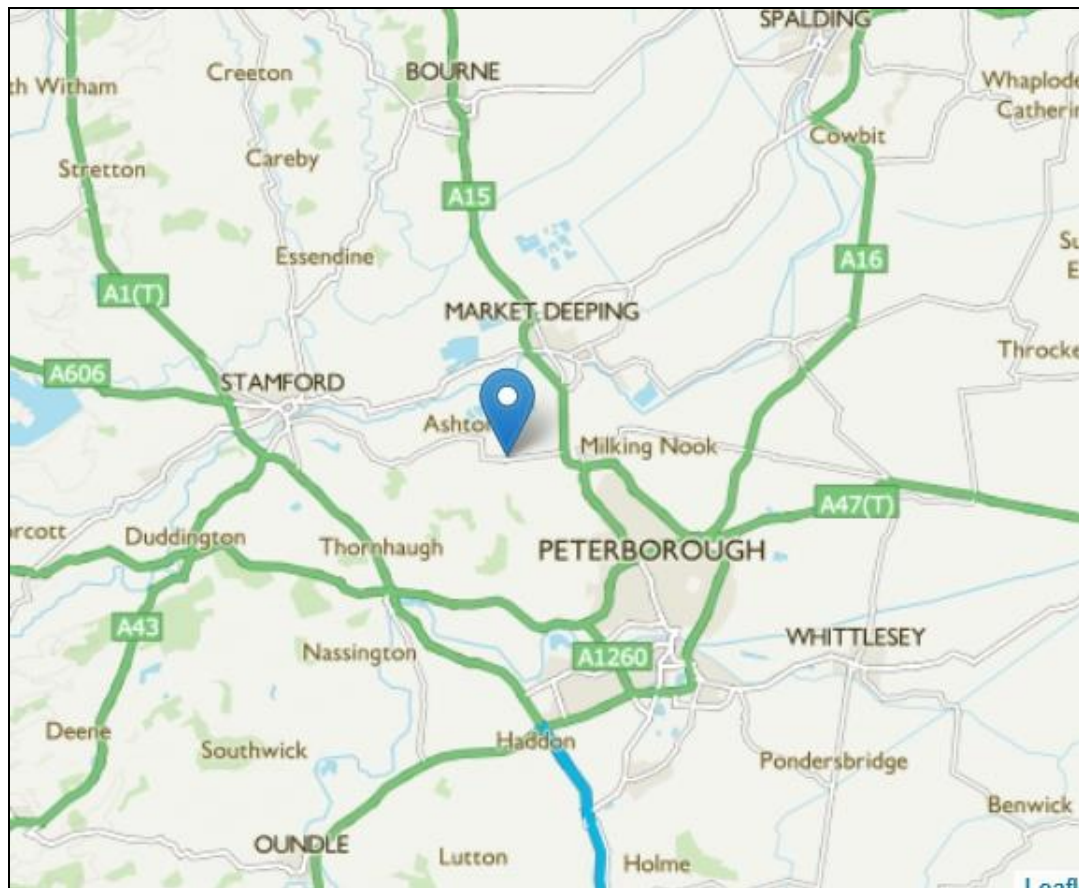


Figure 1. The Site Location in England.

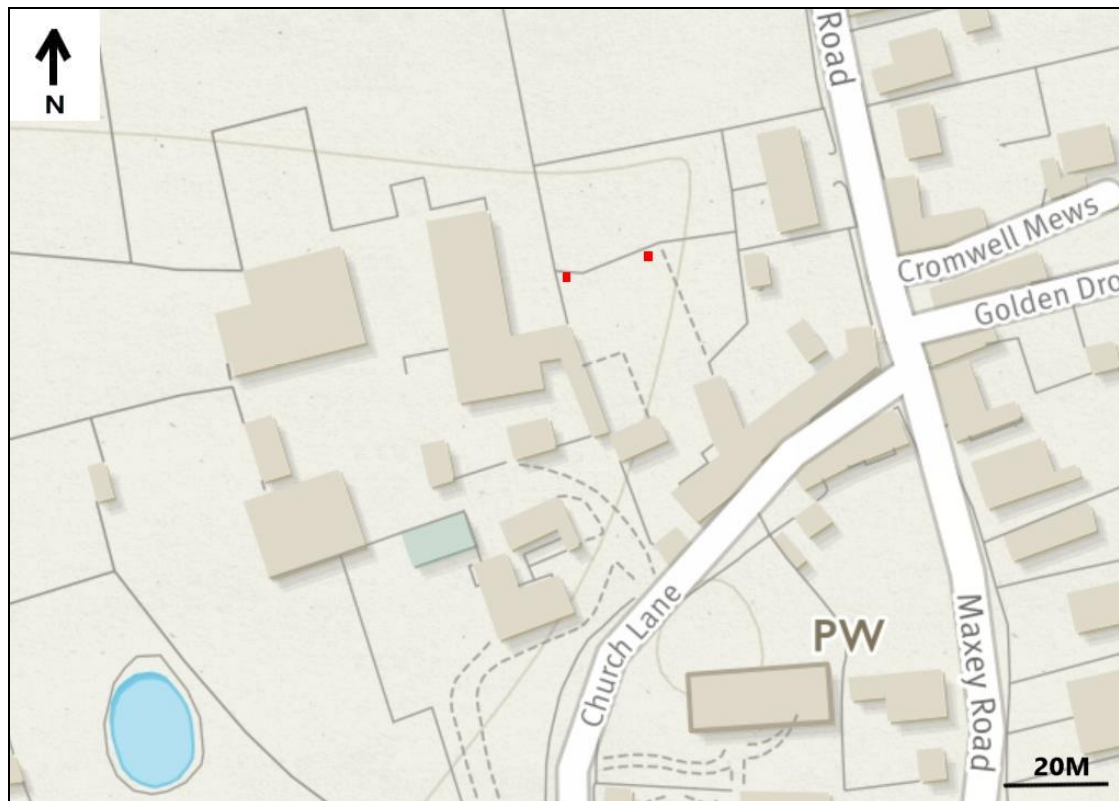


Figure 2. The Site Location and Trench Locations in Helpston.

3 THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The proposed development site was located within the boundaries of Helpston Conservation Area and included the Exeter Arms, a late 18th-early 19th century Grade II listed public house (List Entry Number: 1365652) which sits within its listed curtilage. Additional listed buildings were located in the vicinity of the site and contributed to the historic character of the area. To the north was a 19th century cemetery.
- 3.2 The area, for this reason, had a high archaeological potential as indicated by the distribution of known finds from the site and the immediately surrounding area in the Peterborough Historic Environment Record (HER).
- 3.3 In April 2016 the Torpel History and Archaeology Group (HAG) opened up a series of test pits at various locations within the historic core of Helpston village, including John Clare Primary School (front garden), the Golden Drop just off Maxey Road, the former Rose and Crown beer-house and behind the Exeter Arms public house. A collection of sherds was recovered, most of which consisted of fragments of cooking pots (bowls/dishes), as well as storage jars with a dominance of grey ware from Castor- while there was just one sherd of Samian ware. These finds were dated to the Roman period, from the late 2nd to the 4th century AD, although some may have been earlier. This is a typical collection from a Roman farmstead, comparable to findings from

similar sites in the Nene Valley. One of the pits excavated within the grounds of the Exeter Arms also included mid-Saxon pottery dating from AD 600-750. A portion of a possible Roman wall was also recorded at this location.

- 3.4 To the north archaeological monitoring undertaken on land at 29 Maxey Road in 2013 revealed evidence for Romano-British activity within the south-eastern part of the site. A linear feature was interpreted as a shallow ditch or, possibly, part of a track and ditch, and the re-cut as either a boundary or enclosure ditch. Although there was no direct evidence relating to structures or occupation in the immediate area, small quantities of pottery, including a sherd of mortarium dated to between the 2nd to 4th century, a fragment of Roman tile, possible stone roof tile, and animal bones attest to domestic occupation in the general vicinity of the site. Evidence for ridge and furrow was also uncovered, indicating that during the medieval and post medieval periods the site lay within the open fields of the parish.
- 3.5 The proposed development was also located adjacent to the site of the listed medieval church of St Botolph, which consists of early work of the 12th-14th century, with some alterations and reconstructed parts dating from the 17th century. Fragments of an Anglo-Saxon grave-cover used as a wall stone during the rebuilding of the church tower may indicate an earlier origin.
- 3.6 To the south of the church graveyard archaeological monitoring carried out in 2015 on land to the rear of The Nook exposed a number of archaeological settlement features likely to date from the Saxo-Norman period to the 14th century. Some features had shallow and truncated profiles with some pottery showing evidence of slight abrasion, undoubtedly the result of later medieval/post-medieval ploughing activity.
- 3.7 To the west of the proposed development site was also the listed complex of the 17th-early 18th century Manor House.
- 3.8 In the summer of 2019 an open area excavation of the area behind the former pub the Exeter Arms made it possible to, in detail, investigate a well-preserved Roman building from 2nd to the 4th century A. D. The structure had a preserved stone floor and well-defined foundations for the former walls. The building produced a rich variety of Roman pottery, a well-preserved clay oil lamp and two Roman coins. It was decided that the Roman house was going to be preserved for the future by the laying out of buffering material in order to preserve this important archaeological structure beneath the future garden land in the north east corner of the site (Carlsson 2019).

4 AIMS

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

- Supervise the laying out of buffering material, including geotextile, in the area of the Roman house in order to preserve this important structure in-situ beneath the future garden land.
- Fully document and interpret any further archaeological remains exposed during the remaining groundworks.

4.2 The monitoring also considered the general investigative themes outlined by: Medlycott, M. 2011 (ed.) *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24; *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties* (Glazebrook 1997; Brown & Glazebrook 2000), *English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda* (1997); *Discovering the Past, Shaping the Future: Research Strategy 2005-2010* (English Heritage 2005).

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 Monitoring

It was suggested that the Roman house was to be covered with buffering material, including the laying out of geo-textile, in order to preserve this important archaeological structure beneath the future garden land in the north east corner of the site. This project was fully monitored by staff from Independent Archaeology Consultants.

The monitoring in the northern parts of the site consisted of the continuous monitoring of the remaining ground works within the site. This included the digging of services within the area in general and the installation of two new drainage wells close to the cemetery in the northern parts of the site.

The monitored areas were machine excavated to the upper interface of secure archaeological deposits or, where these were not present, to the upper interface of natural deposits. Thereafter, cleaning and hand-excavation was required to investigate and document any features exposed. The archaeological monitoring was not carried out at the expenses of the heritage assets and was minimally intrusive to archaeological remains.

5.2 Metal Detecting

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

5.3 Hand Excavation

All man-made features were investigated. 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 was sufficient to establish the date and character, and to allow appropriate levels of recording.

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. Descreet exposed features were subject to a minimum of 50% excavation. At least 15% (or a percentage sufficient to achieve information on the character, function and dating) of linear features was hand excavated. All slots through linear features were at least 1m wide. Particular attention was given to terminals and intersections, to ascertain stratigraphic and physical relationships.

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 to 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 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 colour prints formed part of the excavation record. A selection of digital photographs was also used in this report.

5.5 Reburial of Roman Building

The following guidance documents were used in order to keep the highest possible professional archaeological standards during the preservation in-situ of the Roman building: *Preserving Archaeological Remains. Appendix 5. Materials for Use in Reburial of Sites. Historic England 2016* and *CIfA Standards and Best Practise for the Preservation in Situ of Archaeological Remains. CIfA 2016*.

When the Roman house was fully exposed during the open area excavation in May and June 2019 discussions were immediately held with Rebecca Casa Hatton from Peterborough City Council about the possibilities of preserving the structure for the future. The location of the Roman house in the northeast corner of the site protected it from the planned development, as none of the footings for the new dwellings were going to cut into the archaeological remains. The possibilities of preserving the

Roman house for the future were also discussed during an open public day at the archaeological site which took place on 6 June 2019.

When the possibilities of preserving the house were first discussed the client kindly offered to provide the archaeological team with all the material necessary for its preservation: A non-acid geotextile cloth, a membrane which allowed water to pass through the buffering material and clean sand to fill out any pockets in the ground prior to the laying out of the geotextile. The uppermost protection material consisted of the topsoil which had been scraped off during the stripping of the site in May 2019.

Altogether the four layers of buffering material: The clean sand, the acid free geotextile, the membrane and the original topsoil is thought to give the Roman building sufficient protection for the future. It will, therefore, be possible for future generations to come back to the site for further archaeological investigations if necessary. The monitoring of the reburial of the Roman house was documented through a number of photos (Figures 5-6).

6 RESULTS

- 6.1 Two holes were dug for the installations of the new drainage wells in the northern parts of the site (Figure 2). The holes were dug under constant monitoring, but no new archaeological finds or features were being uncovered.
- 6.2 The new drainage wells were also connected through a number of services. These were also fully monitored, but no further archaeological finds or features were found.
- 6.3 The fact that no new archaeological discoveries were being made is probably largely due to the fact that the drainage wells and attached services were put in areas that had already been opened up during the open area excavation in the summer of 2019.
- 6.4 The client, therefore, had a good idea of where archaeological remains were present in the ground and what areas that were empty. This information helped a great deal when planning and putting in the new drainage systems.
- 6.5 While the pit for the new drainage well in the north west corner of the site contained no archaeological finds or features the pit in the north east contained a part of a Roman ditch which had already been investigated during the open area excavation in the summer of 2019 (Figures 3-4).



Figure 3. The pit for the drainage well in the north west corner of the site indicated that no archaeological features were present within the ground at this location.



Figure 4. The pit for the new drainage well in the north east corner of the site exposed a part of a Roman ditch which had already been investigated during the open area excavation in the summer of 2019. The light sandy area is the backfilled slot from that excavation.



Figure 5. The laying out of the geotextile over the Roman house. Photo from southwest.



Figure 6. The laying out of the geotextile over the Roman house. Photo from southwest.

7 ARCHIVE

The archive consists of the following:

Paper Record

The project brief

Written Scheme of Investigation

The photographic and drawn records

The archive is currently maintained by Independent Archaeology Consultants.

The project report

The primary site records

The archive will be transferred to: Peterborough Museum

8 REFERENCES

British Geological Survey. (Online resource).

Brown, N. & Glazebrook, J. 2000. *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the eastern Counties, 2. Research agenda and strategy*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8.

Carlsson, C. 2019. Archaeological Open Area Excavation. Exeter Arms, 3 Church Lane, Helpston, Peterborough. Independent Archaeology Consultants Project Report.

English Heritage, 1997. *English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda*.

Glazebrook, J. 1997. *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties 1. Resource Assessment*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Papers 3.

CIfA 2015. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Monitoring*.

Medlycott, M. 2011 (ed.). *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24.

NPPF 2012. (National Planning Policy Framework). Department for Communities and Local Government. London 2012.

Peterborough Historic Environment Record (HER).

Wass, G. 2003. *Peterborough Museum and Art Gallery Standards for Archaeological Archive Preparation*.

APPENDICES

OASIS ID: independ1-382249

Project details

Project name	Archaeological Monitoring. The Exeter Arms, 3 Church Lane, Helpston, PeterboroughH
Short description of the project	Archaeological monitoring of the construction of a new drainage system behind the former pub.
Project dates	Start: 13-01-2020 End: 13-01-2020
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	EAHP19 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	18/02197/FUL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	N/A None
Monument type	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
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Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE PETERBOROUGH HELPSTON The Exeter Arms, 3 Church Lane, Helpston, Peterborough
Postcode	PE6 7DT
Study area	0.28 Hectares
Site coordinates	TF 12191 05578 52.635977387919 -0.341949978292 52 38 09 N 000 20 31 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 12m Max: 13m

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	Peterborough Museum
Physical Contents	"other"
Digital Archive recipient	Peterborough Museum
Digital Contents	"none", "other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Images vector"
Paper Archive recipient	Peterborough Museum
Paper Contents	"none", "other"
Paper Media available	"Photograph", "Plan", "Report"

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Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Archaeological Monitoring, The Exeter Arms, 3 Church Lane, Helpston, Peterborough
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Carlsson, C
Date	2020
Issuer or publisher	Independent Archaeology Consultants
Place of issue or publication	Peterborough
Entered by	Christer Karlsson (contact@independentarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	24 January 2020