



28-30 Main Road

Duston, Northampton

28-30 Main Road

Duston, Northampton

Historic building & archaeological recording

NGR: SP 72331 61041

Site code: MRD16

OASIS ID: 110archa1-283456

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one ten archaeology

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Contents

SUMMARY	4
INTRODUCTION (Figs. 1 & 2).....	6
ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND	7
THE BUILDING RECORDING (Figs. 3-6).....	9
The 1688 House.....	9
The Stable and Cart-shed.....	9
The 1732 Stable rebuild	9
The 19 th century brick building.....	13
The 1899 House.....	13
Methodology.....	13
ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING	14
Aims of the work.....	14
Sample size and scope of fieldwork	14
Fieldwork methods and recording	14
RESULTS: GENERAL	14
Soil and ground conditions	14
Reliability of field investigation.....	14
Distribution of archaeological deposits	15
Presentation of results	15
RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS (Fig. 7).....	15
FINDS.....	17
Environmental data	17
DISCUSSION (Fig. 8).....	18
Archive Location.....	20
BIBLIOGRAPHY	21
APPENDIX 1; OASIS	41

Frontispiece 28-30 Main Road, Duston, front elevation

SUMMARY

Historic building and archaeological recording was carried out at 28-30 Main Road, Duston, Northampton between June and November 2016 in advance of redevelopment of the existing building and the excavation of the foundations for a new dwelling at the rear.

The site lies within the historic core of Duston, situated along a length of Main Road that follows the original Roman alignment connecting Northampton with Brington. Historic mapping (OS 1886) shows that even by the late 19th century Duston had probably changed little from the medieval plan and was still a sparsely developed settlement, in a rural setting with several farmsteads.

The periods of building in Duston from the late-17th to the present are well represented in nos.26-30 with the advantage of having three dated stone-panels, there is another on the school opposite. Nos. 28, east, and 30, west, are 2½ storey dwellings parallel to the road built of the local golden limestone. An old stone house with thatched roof and timber-lintels further west on the opposite side of the road gives a good impression of the appearance of the 1688 house.

The results of the excavation at the rear of the property showed a stratigraphy indicating an open rural environment, possibly utilised for cultivation and increased through continued composting/manuring. A few residual medieval pot sherds recovered from the layer represented the earliest evidence for this activity. Following the construction of the building on the Main Road frontage and a range of buildings along the eastern boundary, the area to the rear was enclosed to form the back plot or garden area and the ground further increased with the deposition of the existing garden deposits.



Fig. 1; site location



Fig. 2; area of study

INTRODUCTION (Figs. 1 & 2)

Location and scope of project

This document sets out the results of a programme of archaeological work carried out at 28-30 Main Road, Duston, Northampton, NN5 6JB during 25th June and 15th November 2016 at the request of Angus Lawson. The work was carried out as a condition of planning permission granted by Northampton Borough Council for the conversion to residential of a former shop at 28-30 Main Road, including the demolition of an associated outbuilding (planning ref: N/2015/1473), the former shop is listed as Grade II, and for the erection of a detached dwelling on land to the rear of 28-30 Main Road (planning ref: N/2014/1363).

Permission was conditional on a programme of approved archaeological work in accordance with briefs issued by the Archaeology Advisor to Northamptonshire County Council (Mordue, 2016). These required a programme of historic building recording at 28-30 Main Road, Duston prior to conversion and the implementation of a programme of archaeological recording (watching brief) during groundworks associated with the construction of the new dwelling.

Geology & topography

Duston is a suburb of and civil parish in the borough of Northampton. The parish, roughly rectangular and covering some 767 hectares, lies immediately to the west of Northampton and rises gradually north-west from a narrow front on the River Nene at 59m above OD (AOD) to a height of 108m OD towards its west end. Boulder Clay on the high ground to the west is bordered by a belt of Blisworth Limestone and Estuarine Series deposits to the west and east with Northampton Sands to the north, east and south of this. Head, sand and gravel and alluvium are found on the valley bottom.

The parish once contained a large amount of archaeological remains but unfortunately most of it is now developed. The extensive areas of prehistoric settlement, the Romano-British 'small town' and the Anglo-Saxon cemetery have largely been destroyed through 19th and early 20th century ironstone quarrying and the site of the Augustinian Abbey of St. James is now built over.

The site, approx. 830m², lies centrally within the suburb straddling Main Road, the principle route-way through the suburb, part of which follows the earlier Roman road alignment.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

A total of 65 monument records and 38 event records are identified from the Historic Environment Record (HER) within a 500m search area centred on the site. A summary of the more significant information is outlined below.

Prehistoric

MNN6304; site of possible prehistoric activity.

MNN249; site possible prehistoric flint scatter

MNN136170; site of possible prehistoric activity

Roman

MNN505; Route of Roman road linking settlements at Bannaventa (Whilton Lodge) & Duston.

Morton R., 1998, *Land Adjacent To Ryehill Farm, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire, Archaeological Assessment*

MNN14917; Romano-British Road Route (Bannaventa to Duston)

MNN3072; Possible Romano-British Activity

MNN6307; Roman Town at Duston. The nature of the settlement here is probably never to be known since detailed records were not made during ironstone quarrying. It covered at least 20 acres. A major problem relates to the date and nature of C1st occupation of the site. Evidence from finds points to an extensive settlement before AD60 and at least some occupation before AD43. There is nothing specifically military amongst the finds yet the situation of Duston mid-way between Bannaventa and Irchester suggests that a military presence is at least possible.

MNN28; Possible Romano-British Walls and pot sherds at Millway.

MNN315; Roman coin (Dupondius of Vespasian) found in St Luke's Churchyard.

MNN35738; site of possible Romano-British road uncovered on 16/8/96 by Miletree Construction. If accurate, a projection of the road would take it from Bannaventa through Roman Duston to a point in Marefair opposite St Peter's Church. This route would require crossing the northern arm of the River Nene just north of Westbridge and under the castle walls. Within the settlement little is known about the street plan but from the fragmentary information available it is possible to suggest that much of the settlement at Duston lay along two roads

(from Bannaventa to the north west and from Towcester to the south west) that met somewhere around SP732606.

MNN35739; unstratified Romano-British finds

MNN100209; Find Spot of unstratified Romano-British brooch. Copper alloy fibula. Two-piece Colchester type of quite simple design.

MNN102363; Find spot of unstratified late Roman coin, AD 267-70.

MNN138042; Possible site of Roman activity

Medieval

MNN1863; medieval village.

Study of map evidence from 1722 - 1827 (Price 1722; Eyre 1780; Bryant 1827) indicates a gradual drift of the southern entrance to Duston to a more easterly entrance.

MNN10734; The medieval church of St Luke at Duston (late 12th century). Granted to St James' Abbey between 1148 and 1153.

MNN282; Medieval/Post Medieval Features. Stone walls and a metalled area, pits and ditches, with associated medieval and post medieval pot sherds. Walls and medieval pottery found.

MNN31950; Possible Medieval/Post Medieval Well found within St Luke's churchyard.

MNN102413; Find spot. Metallurgical study of a medieval copper ewer spout from Duston.

Post-medieval

MNN1861; Possible Medieval/Post Medieval Settlement

MNN315; unstratified Post Medieval & Modern Finds

MNN106647; Nos. 25 to 29 Duston Main Road (odd)

Modern

MNN17115; Berrywood Asylum/St Crispin's Hospital (Formerly the Northampton County Asylum) constructed in 1876.

MNN7278; Possible Modern Commercial Site

MNN7781; WWII Military Activity at Duston

MNN173; Duston WWII Ministry of Supply Depot (unlocated)

MNN137436; Modern Features & Finds (Hancock, 2005).

Undated

MNN3190; site of uncertain, undated activity.

MNN319; undated Wall. Observation of a wall in garden of 11 Millway. Approx. 1.5 metres below ground and 0.6m wide, length of 10 metres. Date unknown.
MNN153783; find-spot, coin, undated.

THE BUILDING RECORDING (Figs. 3-6)

The 1688 House

The original 1½ storey, three bay stone and thatch house occupied the site of the present numbers 26 and 28. The east bay was lost when the existing no.26 was built (dated 1899), but the dated panel, 1688, in the west gable of the house is still visible from within no.30. The north and south walls survive in part with later inserted features. There is an original window embrasure, blocked, at the rear of the central bay, initially reduced in width prior to its complete blocking in 1899, but the existing original window embrasure opposite, on the road frontage, has a later window frame, panelling and seat.

The Stable and Cart-shed

A two-bay addition to the west end of the house was of the same height and the wide opening at the rear with a door over at 1st floor level suggests it was a cart-shed and stable with loft over accessed via an external stair.

The 1732 Stable rebuild

In 1732, the walls of the cart-shed were raised creating a 2½ storey building and in the process the original gable of the house was buried under the new masonry. There is a modest dated panel in the centre of the facade at attic level, with a simple flower motif above and below the date.

The joists of the top floor in the east bay have squarish scantlin and there is a trimmer for a stair in the north-east corner, these features and the wide boards are consistent with a 1732 date. It is unclear whether the west bay was fitted out for habitation now, as there have been numerous re-orderings and repairs during the later 20th century.

The new walling above the gable at the rear is partly supported on a simple scroll-moulded corbel.

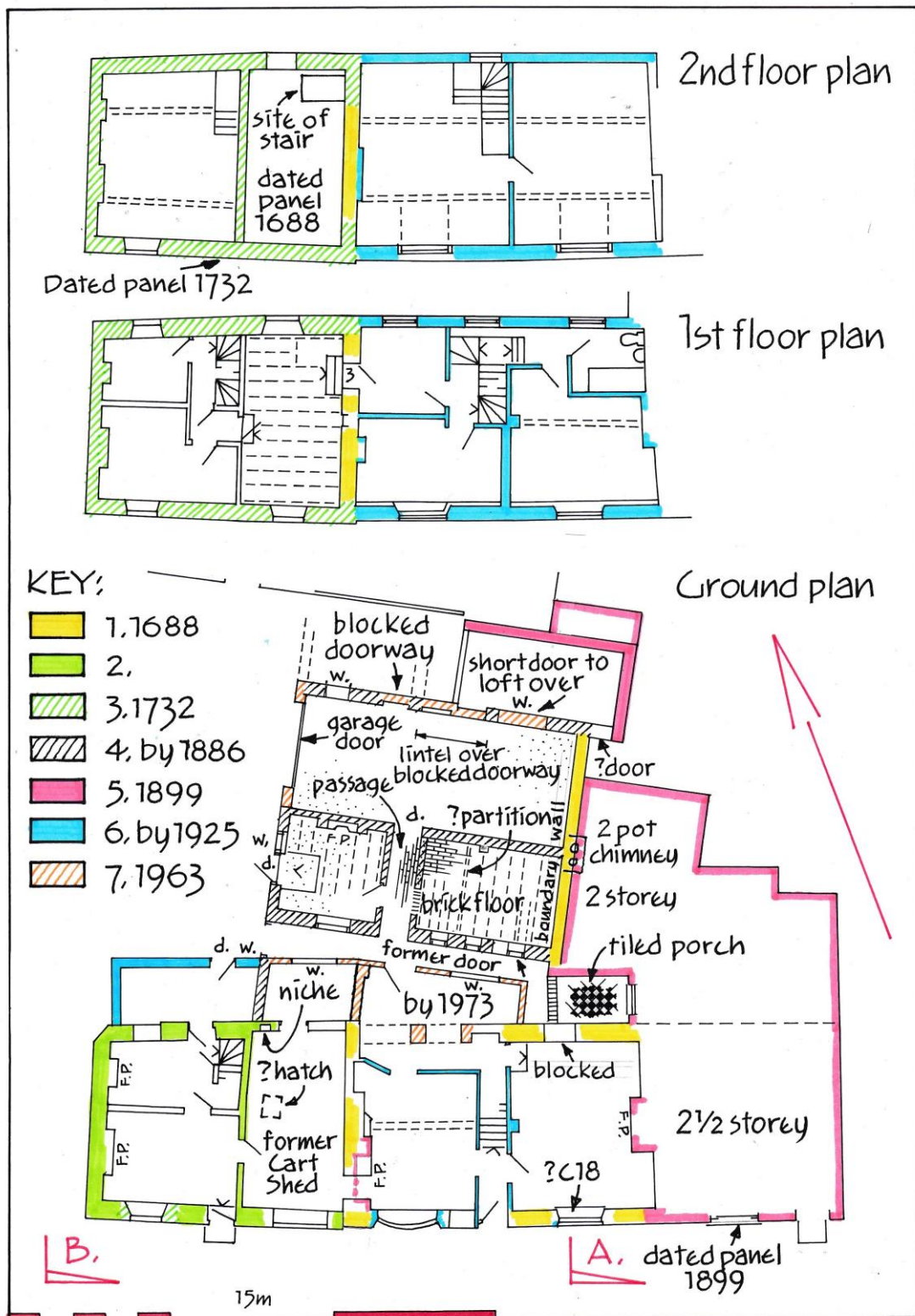


Fig 3; Floor plans

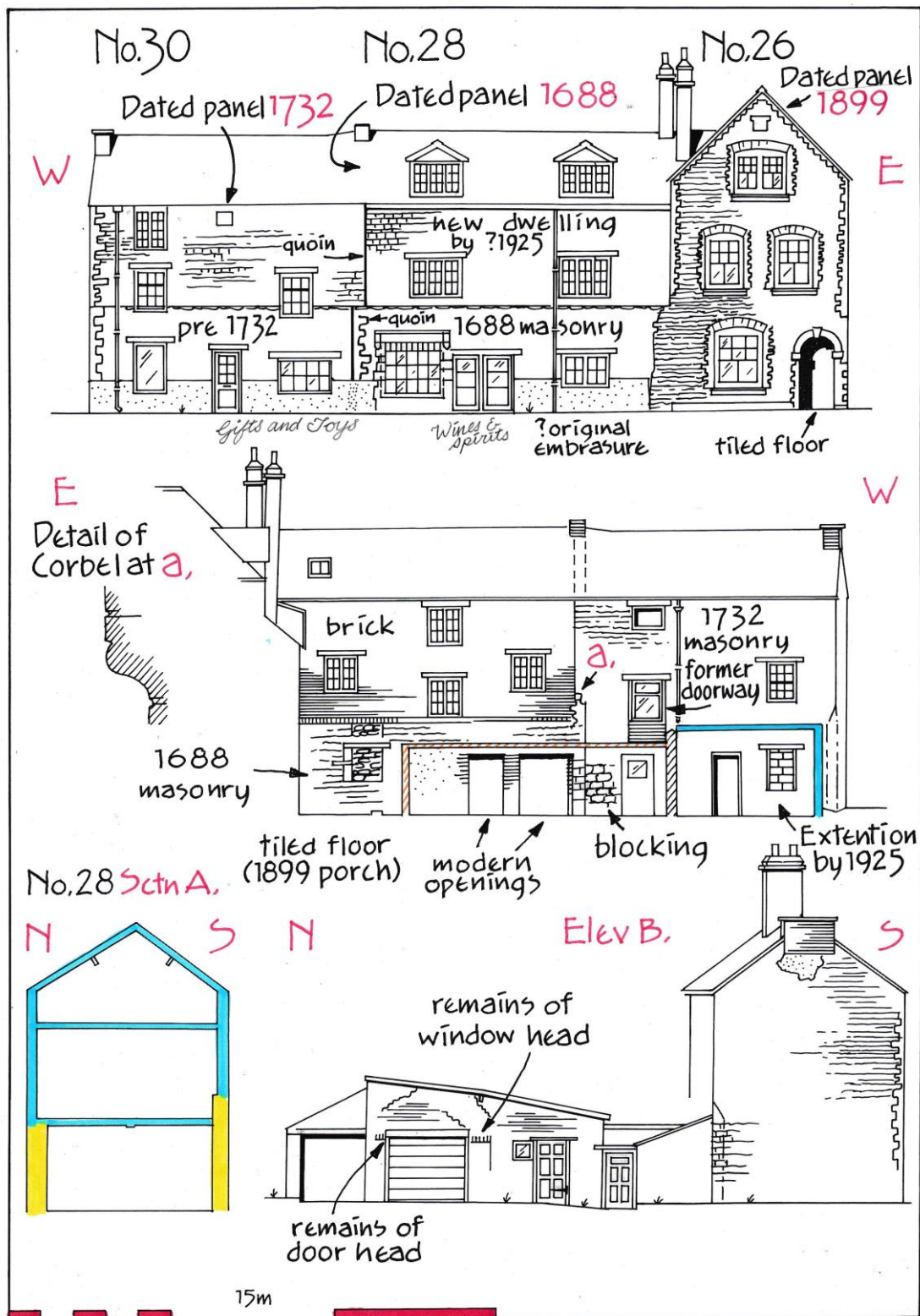


Fig.4; elevations

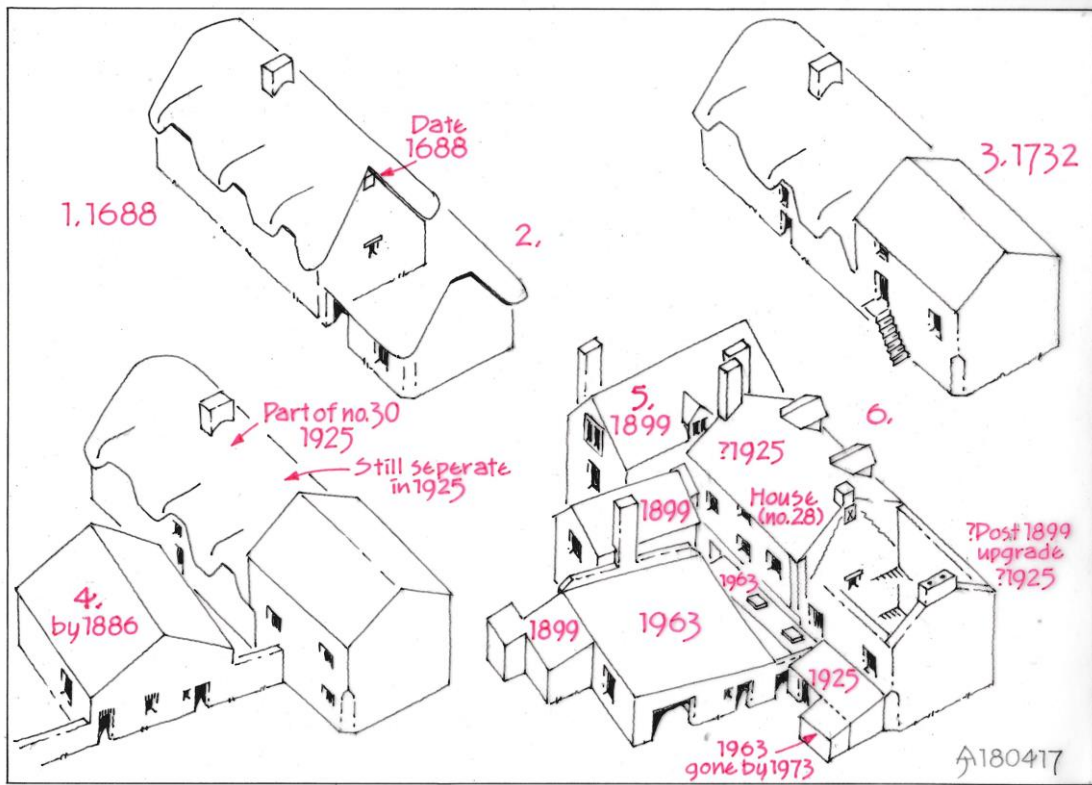


Fig. 5; phasing 1688-1973

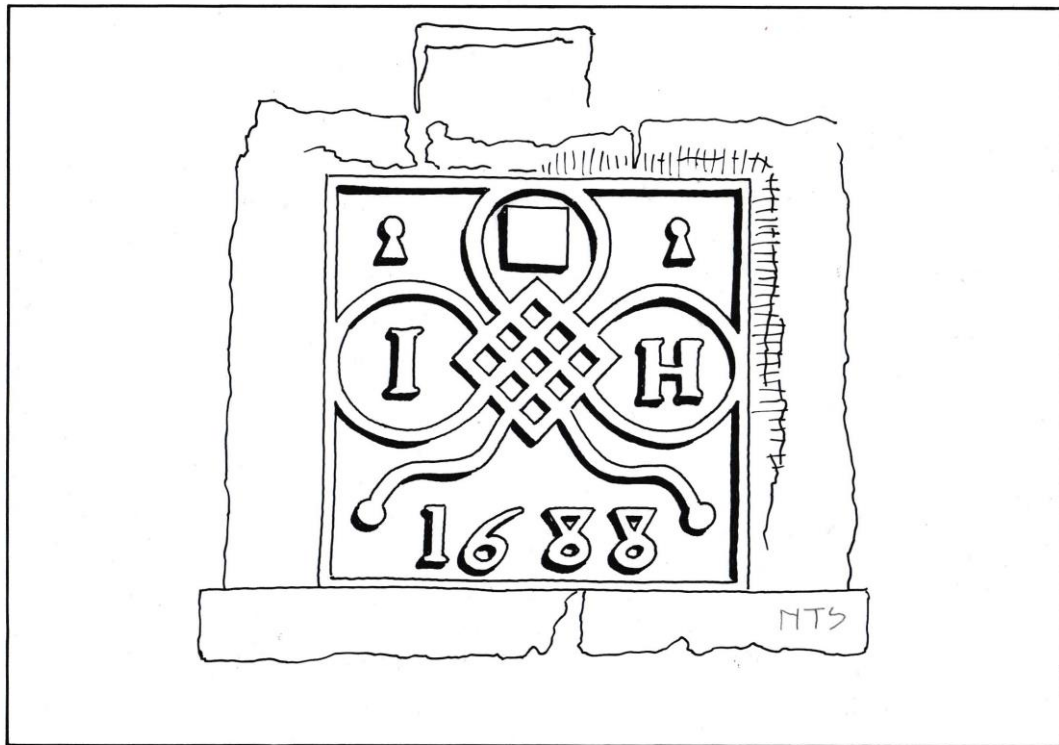


Fig. 6; Panel dated 1688 in gable

Also in the 18th century the house received an interior refit and a pair of small sash-windows with a paneled window-seat in the original window opening survive from this time.

The 19th century brick building

A brick building was erected to the north of the house on a different alignment, relating to an earlier boundary in this area. The present shed-roof slopes toward the house but the remains of the original pitched-roof can be seen incorporated into part of the 1899 house to the east. The southern half was divided by a cross-passage and the brick-paving of this and the east room survive. The west room accessed from the passage has an external doorway opposite and a fireplace in the north wall of a small domestic type. The position of this building indicates a service purpose but there is no evidence for its exact function.

The oven remains, brick and iron, in the 1688 west end of the house are probably contemporary with the new service building.

The 1899 House

The high (east) end of the house was rebuilt, and dated, in 1899 in a national style that contrasted with the earlier traditional local work. A grey limestone was

Methodology

Aims and objectives

The objective of the historic building recording was to obtain a detailed analysis and description of the history, character, and date, techniques of construction, phasing and significance of the structure. Primary and secondary sources relating to the building were consulted and relevant information included in this report.

The site survey comprised a systematic internal and external perambulation of the property, observing, discussing and noting features including structural, functional and chronological aspects, which was accompanied by the creation of a photographic and drawn record.

Documentary search, fieldwork & recording

The Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted with a search carried out over a 500m radius centred on the site. Significant aspects of the data within the

HER, both primary and secondary sources and historic mapping related to the building, have been consulted and analysed for this report.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL RECORDING

Aims of the work

The objective of the archaeological recording was to obtain an appropriate record of any archaeological deposits or finds disturbed or exposed during excavation of the site.

Sample size and scope of fieldwork

Excavation comprised a single trench approx. 0.60m wide on the perimeter with some internal sub-division at 0.45m wide, and varying between 0.90m and 1.15m deep along the outline of the foundations for the new dwelling, totalling an area of about 65m².

Fieldwork methods and recording

The archaeological field work and post-excavation was carried out in accordance with standards and guidance for archaeological watching briefs produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2014). Excavation, was carried out by machine using a toothless grading bucket under archaeological supervision. A plan and sample sections of the trench was made and recorded during excavation.

RESULTS: GENERAL

Soil and ground conditions

Conditions were generally dry during excavation, the deposits showing little moisture retention. Excavation was relatively smooth being made through alternate layers of topsoil and underlying subsoil leaving a clean and visible surface on the natural substrate.

Reliability of field investigation

Apart from a single modern pit in the south-east corner of the trench, the excavation revealed little evidence of previous truncation to the underlying

deposits. The thickness of the relict subsoil layer 101 and topsoil deposit 100 shows that there has been little previous ground reduction.

Distribution of archaeological deposits

In general, the stratigraphy of the site was comprised of a natural sand and stone, overlain by a relict subsoil deposit which was in turn sealed by the existing topsoil. A single modern pit was recorded.

Presentation of results

The results of the excavation (below) are described from the earliest to the latest deposits. The trench was attributed context numbers with a numerical value equivalent to the number of the trench.

RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS (Fig. 7)

Contexts 102 (natural substrate)

The surface of the natural geology (102), comprising a friable coarse orange sand with a large component of small angular limestone fragments was encountered throughout the excavated trench at approx. 0.65m below the existing ground level at a height of about 91.70-85m AOD.

Contexts 101 (relict subsoil); context 100 (topsoil) and modern pit

Overlying the natural sand and stone was a thick homogenous deposit of relict subsoil consisting of a dark yellowish-brown, sandy-silt varying in depth from 0.30-0.45m across the excavation area. Two sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from this layer. Extending along the length of the western arm of the trench the layer was overlain by two thin layers of construction related debris comprising mortar and re-deposited natural sand. Sealing these deposits and the underlying subsoil to a depth varying between 0.20-0.40m was the modern topsoil. This produced some sherds of contemporary 19th and 20th pottery and roof tile. Truncating the topsoil in the south-east corner of the trench was a modern pit.

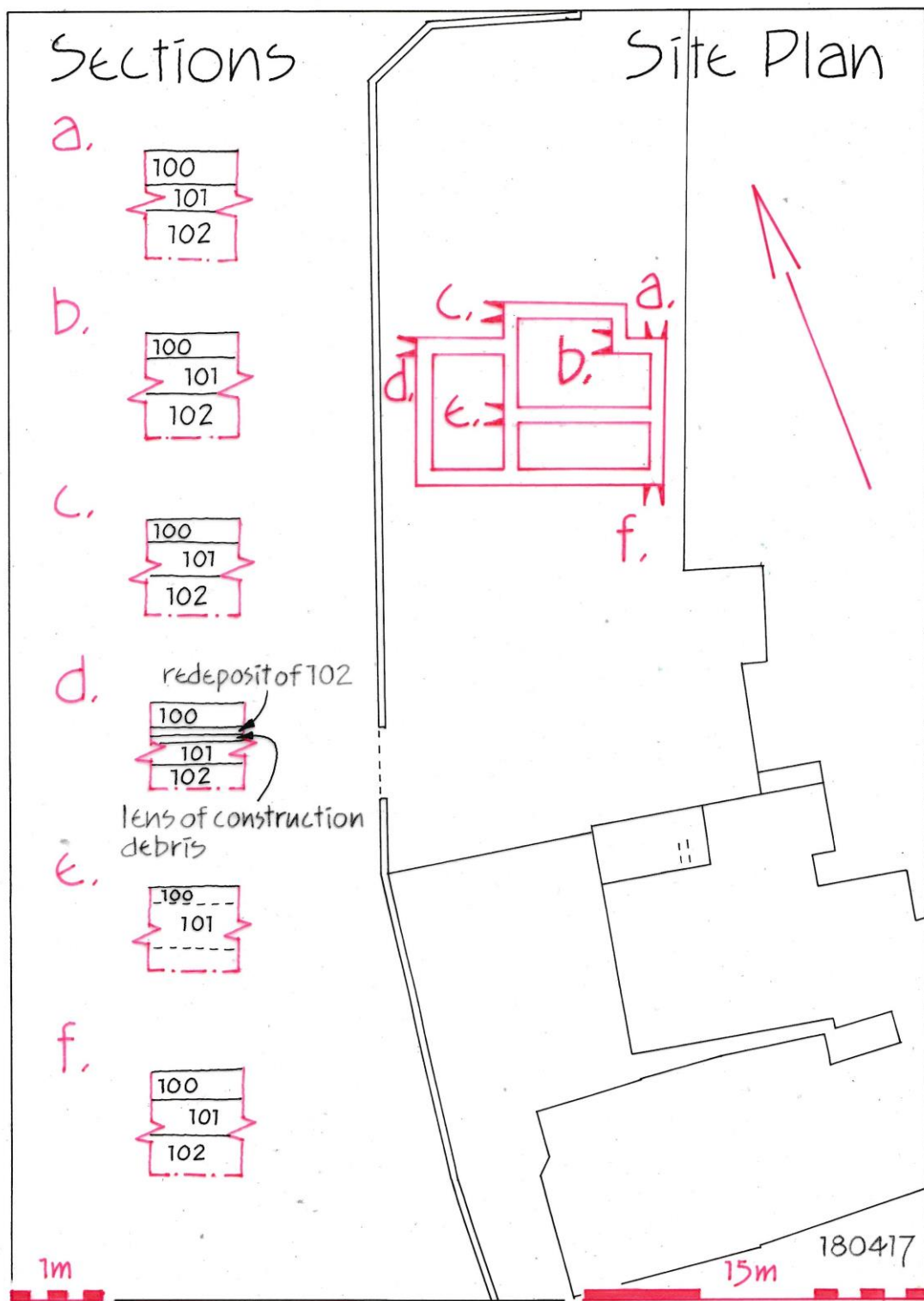


Fig. 7; trench excavation

FINDS

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 2 sherds with a total weight of 18g. They are both medieval, and both occurred in the same context, 101. It was recorded using the conventions of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (eg. Blinkhorn 2010), as follows:

F329: Potterspy Ware, AD1250 – 1600. 1 sherd, 3g.

F330: Shelly Coarseware, AD1100-1400. 1 sherd, 15g.

They are both very common finds at medieval sites in the region. The sherd of fabric F330 is from the rim of a large bowl, a common product of the tradition. Both sherds are in good condition, and appear to have suffered very little attrition or transportation.

Environmental data

None of the deposits exposed during the excavation proved suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling.

DISCUSSION (Fig. 8)

Although large areas of Duston have been subjected to substantial modern quarrying, the evidence suggests that the village has seen continued occupation from the prehistoric period. It later became the focus of a Roman settlement located 3km to the west of Northampton on the line of the Roman road to Brington now known as Main Road. The length of this road passing by the study site follows the original Roman alignment, whilst the east and west ends of the road have since diverted from its former course. To the east of the site the road bypasses the early 12th century parish church of St Luke to the north, lining up with the back lane of the properties on the north side of Main Road.

Nos. 28, east, and 30, west, are 2½ storey dwellings parallel to the road built of the local golden limestone. No.26 presents a gable end to the road and is constructed of a fossiliferous grey limestone, there are golden limestone quoins and dressings to the openings. Of the numerous buildings' formerly at the rear and those forming a west range to the plot only one of brick remains behind no.28; adapted for modern use and includes a garage. The lean-tos at the rear are more recent accretions.

The periods of building in Duston from the late-17th century to the present are well represented in nos.26-30 with the advantage of having three dated stone-panels, there is another on the school opposite. An old stone house with thatched roof and timber-lintels further west on the opposite side of the road gives a good impression of the appearance of the 1688 house.

Duston House at the west end of the village is a four bay 18th century rendered building with a portico and a continuous balustrade along the parapet, the coach house and stable block are brick-built.

By the middle of the 19th century Duston was still a sparsely developed settlement in a rural setting with several farmsteads and probably largely unchanged since the medieval period. The religious fervour and educational reforms are represented by the nonconformist chapel and the brick built school. A small number of bespoke houses, influenced by the arts and crafts movement, had been built at the west end of the village by 1901 and beyond these fine stone houses new terraced housing, in brick, and a less concentrated development had been added by the mid-1920s.



Fig. 8; the development of the study site 1887-1973

During the 1930s Northampton was spreading westward but it was not until the 1950s that this expansion reached Duston with a large works complex to the north of the church. By the end of the 1960s the rural setting had been replaced by a new development to the south, larger than the old village, and another,

larger than that, to the north and yet another to the east, what remained of the open spaces to the north and west had been re-ordered as sports grounds and playing fields. These areas were finally developed by the early 1990s and at this time, significantly, the areas behind the frontages on the north side of Main Road were developed with new dwellings which swept away much of the old topography, some of the old masonry buildings were, however, retained and re-ordered.

The string of recently reordered stone dwellings along the road to the east of no.26 have been formed out of a new-built mid-19th century farm and farmhouse, and the irregular west boundary of this farm suggests that this may be a replacement of a farm behind nos.26-30 of which the west range, now lost, was converted for habitation as nos.1-4 School Yard, there were other Courts and Yards to the west. Duston is now part of the greater Northampton conurbation.

Excavation work connected with the new build at the rear of the property represented an opportunity to investigate a seemingly undisturbed area within the historic core of Duston. The results confirmed little previous activity within the excavated trench which comprised a stratigraphy of natural sand overlain by a thick deposit of homogenous relict subsoil (101) which was in turn sealed by the existing topsoil. The evidence suggests an open rural environment, possibly utilised for cultivation and increased through continued composting/manuring. A few residual medieval pot sherds recovered from the layer indicate a date for this activity. Following the construction of the building on the Main Road frontage and a range of buildings along the eastern boundary, the area to rear was enclosed to form the back plot or garden area and the ground further increased with the deposition of garden deposits (100).

Archive Location

The archaeological documentary archive arising from the work will be appropriately conserved and deposited with the Northamptonshire County Museum. The digital archive arising from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) and a report submitted to OASIS.

Digital archive:

Pdf report

X33 digital images

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OS 1887

OS 1907

OS 1925

OS 1937

OS 1963

OS 1973



Plate 1; Nos. 30 and 28, front elevation



Plate 2; No. 30, front elevation



Plate 3; Date stone on the front of no. 30



Plate 4; Nos.28 and 26, front elevation



Plate 5; View of dwellings from south-west



Plate 6; North-west prospect of all the buildings



Plate 7; No.30, rear wall



Plate 8; No.28, rear wall



Plate 9; No.28, blocked rear window



Plate 10; No.30, blocked opening in rear wall



Plate 11; No.28, head of stair to attic



Plate 12; No.28, 1st floor window to road



Plate 13; No.28, stair from 1st floor to attic



Plate 14; No.28, east room on 1st floor with surviving mantelpiece



Plate 15; No.28, east room ground floor, 1688 embrasure, later window and seat



Plate 16; No.28, oven in west bay of original house, cut through by later opening



Plate 17; No.30, west attic room with circa 1970 decor



Plate 18; No.30, 1st floor kitchen at rear



Plate 19; No.30, 1st floor front room



Plate 20; Room over old cart-shed, from south-east

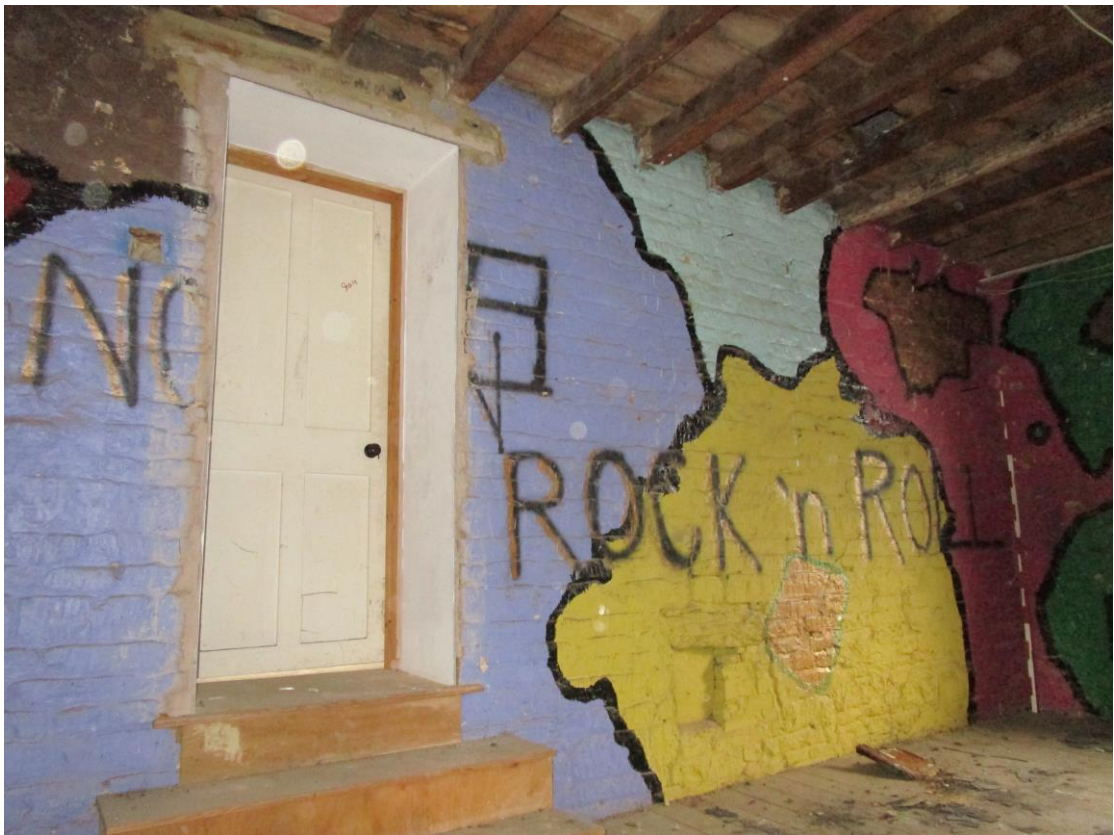


Plate 21; Room over old cart-shed, from north-west, showing 1688 west wall



Plate 22; Detail of feature in original west wall of the house



Plate 23; Panel dated 1688 at the top of the original west gable of the house



Plate 24; Ground floor west bay of no.26 from south-east



Plate 25; the old cart-shed interior from south, note niche at west corner



Plate 26; Blocked cart-shed doorway from north-west



Plate 27; overall view to the north showing excavated foundation trench



Plate 28; section 1a



Plate 29; section 1b



Plate 30; section 1c



Plate 31; section 1d



Plate 32; section 1e



Plate 33; section 1f

APPENDIX 1; OASIS

Project name	28-30 Main Road, Duston, Northamptonshire; historic building and archaeological recording
Project dates	Start: 25-06-2017 End: 15-11-2017
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	MRD16 - Sitecode
Type of project	Building Recording
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	NONE
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Photographic Survey", "Survey/Recording of Fabric/Structure"
Prompt	Planning condition
Country	England
Site location	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE NORTHAMPTON DUSTON 28-30 Main Road
Postcode	NN5 6JB
Study area	830 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 72331 61041 52.242397605253 -0.940540268815 52 14 32 N 000 56 25 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 91.7m Max: 91.85m
Name of Organisation	one ten archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	one ten archaeology
Project director/manager	sean cook
Project supervisor	sean cook
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Physical Archive recipient	county museum
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS
Paper Archive recipient	county museum
Paper Media available	"Notebook - Excavation', ' Research', ' General Notes', 'Plan', 'Report', 'Section"
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	28-30 Main Road, Duston, Northamptonshire; historic building and archaeological recording
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cook, S. and Atherton, J.
Date	2017
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