



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Watching brief
3 Swithland Lane,
Rothley, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 5684 1240 centre

Tim Higgins



ULAS Report No 2010-043.
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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
3, Swithland Lane, Rothley
Leicestershire (Phase 1)**

NGR: SK 5684 1240

Tim Higgins

For: Mr and Mrs P Rodgers

Checked by:

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ULAS Report Number 2010-043

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[X.A23 2010]

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at 3, Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire (Phase 1)

(NGR: SK 5684 1240)

Tim Higgins

1. Summary

An Archaeological watching brief of groundworks at No. 3 Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire (Phase 1) was undertaken by ULAS on behalf of Mr and Mrs P Rodgers. The initial groundworks comprised the removal of tarmac surface, ground reduction and the excavation of new foundations for a new extension. Attendance at the site occurred from the 15th to the 16th February 2010.

The watching brief revealed a scatter large granite stones and a ditch containing mid to late 2nd century Roman pottery and tile located 125m to the north of Rothley Roman villa.

The archive will be deposited with Archaeology, Environment and Heritage Services (Leicestershire County Council Museum), subject to their confirmation. Accession No. X.A23.2010

2. Introduction

This report presents the results of an extended archaeological watching brief during the first phase of groundworks at No.3, Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire (NGR SK 5684 1240). In view of the potential impact of the development this was undertaken as a mitigation strategy following recommendations by the Leicestershire County Council Planning Archaeologist.

The ground-works involved ground clearance and reduction of the areas and excavation of foundations.

The archaeological watching brief was carried out in accordance with Planning Policy Guideline 16 (PPG16, Archaeology & Planning), paragraph 30. All archaeological work adhered to the Institute for Archaeologist's (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

3. Site description, topography and geology

The site is located on west side the village of Rothley, defined to the west by the Great Central Railway line and to the north by The Ridgeway road (Figures 1 and 2). The development at No. 3 Swithland Lane (NGR SK 5684 1240) lies on a south-facing slope overlooking Rothley Brook at a height of 70m OD.

The plot was an extension to the property located at the south gable end of a detached house and was roughly square in shape covering approximately 27m sq (figure 2).

The Geological Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 156 indicates that the underlying geology Upper Triassic mudstone of the Gunthorpe Formation (Mercia Mudstone Group), substantially overlain by superficial (drift) comprising pre-Anglian sands and gravels.

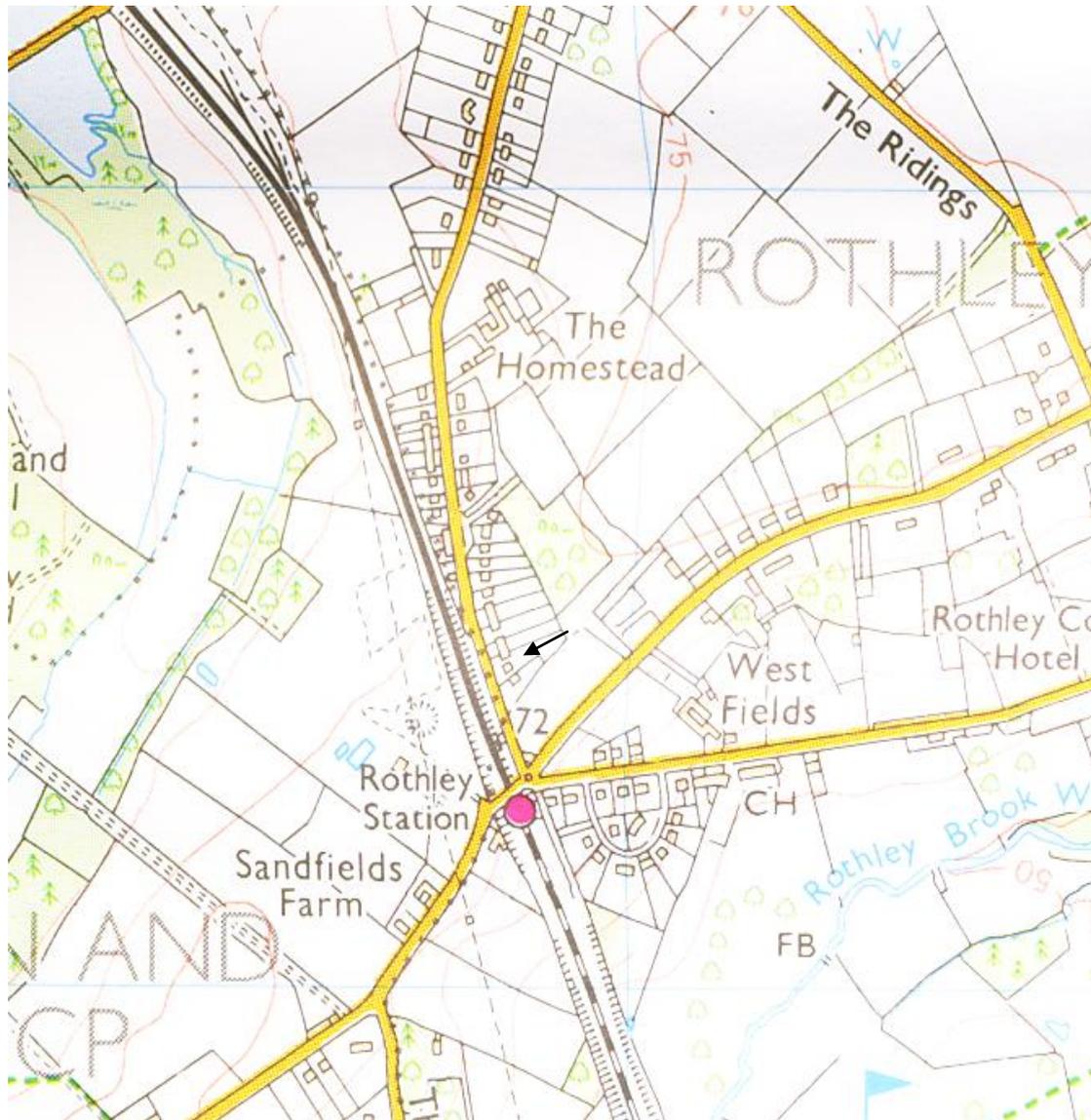


Figure 1: Location of the development No. 3 Swithland Lane Rothley

4. Archaeological and Historical background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies in an area of archaeological interest, in close proximity to the scheduled remains of the Rothley villa, a high status Roman settlement site (SM ref. LE159; HER ref. MLE891) discovered in the 18th century and partly excavated in

1901. In addition to evidence of extensive and significant archaeological remains of Roman date, an Anglo Saxon inhumation cemetery has also been located in the immediate vicinity, apparently focused to the west of the site (MLE880). To the west of the development area, two burials were located during the early 20th century, including an undated inhumation (MLE882) and a cremation urn thought to be of Bronze Age date (MLE881).

5. Aims and method.

Through archaeological attendance and, as appropriate, controlled stripping and investigation the aims of the watching brief were:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any earlier building phases or archaeological deposits.
2. To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by proposed ground-works.
3. To record any archaeological deposits to affected by the ground-works.
4. To produce an archive and report of any results.

The watching brief comprised the attendance of an archaeologist to monitor all groundworks for the new extension. The exposed surfaces were closely examined and the spoil searched for finds.

All work and archaeological deposits encountered were recorded in accordance with the ULAS recording manual. Contexts were recorded with fills/layers in round brackets (e.g (6)) and cuts in square brackets (e.g [5]). All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, the standard policy and practice of ULAS as set out in the design specification (appendix 1) and adhered to the University of Leicester Health and Safety policy.

6. Results

Initial groundwork involved the clearance of concrete surfaces and excavation of foundation trenches for the new extension (Figure 2) and site visits were undertaken on the 15th and 16th February 2010. The machine used for the groundworks was a Kubota Mini 360 degree excavator fitted with a 0.45m wide tooth bucket. A visual inspection was conducted across the new foundation trenches (Plate 1).

The excavations were located at the south gable end of the detached house and comprised foundations for the new extension plot that measured 6.00m long by 4.50m wide. There was a total of three foundation trenches for the extension and they all measured 0.60m wide and depth of 1.00m.



Plate 1: Machine excavating foundation trenches for the new extension

The natural substratum consisted of reddish-brown sandy-clay found at depth of 0.80m below the present ground surface. Within the foundation trench a scatter of six roughly hewn large granite stones measuring up to 0.40m long, 0.25m wide and 0.20m deep, was located. All were imbedded into a reddish-brown clay spread 0.20m deep (6). The stone material was dispersed which suggests that they were perhaps not part of a structure. However their frequency and regular size may indicate a possible rubble spread associated with either the construction or demolition of a structure (Figure 2).

The rubble spread (6) appeared to be cut by a possible ditch [5], which was located running in a south-east to north-west direction across the foundation trenches (Figure 2). The ditch was located at a depth of 0.80m below the surface and had a minimum length of 7.00m, a width of 1.10m and a depth of 0.38m (Plate 3 and Figure 2). The ditch had fairly steep 45 degree sloping sides and a wide rounded base. The fill (4) comprised dark-grey sandy-clay mixed with frequent charcoal flecks. The course inclusions comprised Roman pottery sherds (mid to late 2nd century) and fragments of tile.

Both the rubble spread and ditch were sealed by a pale reddish-brown sandy-clay subsoil, 0.30m deep. This area appeared to have been previously levelled, with a layer (2) 0.30m deep comprising pale brown clay and sand mixed with modern building materials overlying the subsoil, and was perhaps deposited to help raise the ground levels. This deposit supported a ground surface consisting of tarmac and gravel, 0.20m deep.

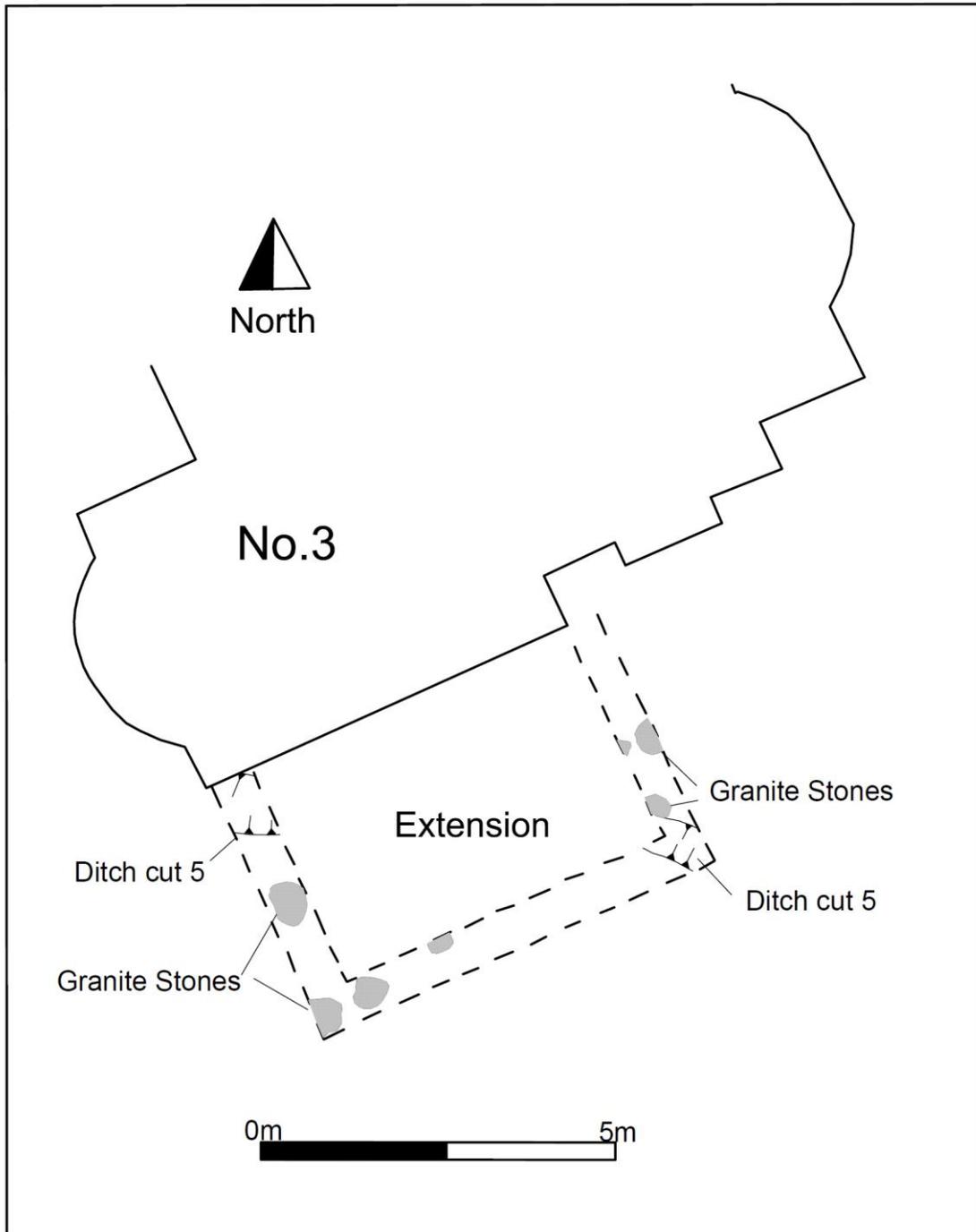


Figure 2: Location of the ditch cut [5] and granite stone spread context (6) within the extension foundation trenches



Plate 2: Roman ditch [5] and large granite stones (6) located on the east side of the extension

8. Conclusion.

The site lies directly to the north of a Roman villa site that was excavated in the early 1900s and the structure found was thought to be a possible bath house. The full extent of the villa is unknown, but the bulk of the building was thought to lay to the west towards railway line (Liddle 1982). The possible ditch and granite rubble spread were located approximately 125 meters to the north and were perhaps associated with either villa or other possible structures within an extensive site that spreads to the north. The Roman pottery, which dates from the mid to late 2nd century and tile material found within the ditch were fairly abraded and mixed with frequent charcoal

flecks, and were probably a deposit of domestic waste associated with the villa site (Cooper Appendix 2 below). The occurrence of flue tile also from the ditch indicates the existence of a hypocaust heating system within a nearby building, and this would be consistent with it deriving from the adjacent Rothley villa (Cooper Appendix 2 below).

9. Acknowledgements and publication

I would like to thank Mr and Mrs P. Rogers and the contractors for their help and co-operation on site. The project was managed by Dr Patrick Clay and the fieldwork was carried out by the author, Tim Higgins both of ULAS.

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. The report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) Online Access to the index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.



Plate 3: Roman ditch cut [5] excavated section located in the south east corner of the news extension

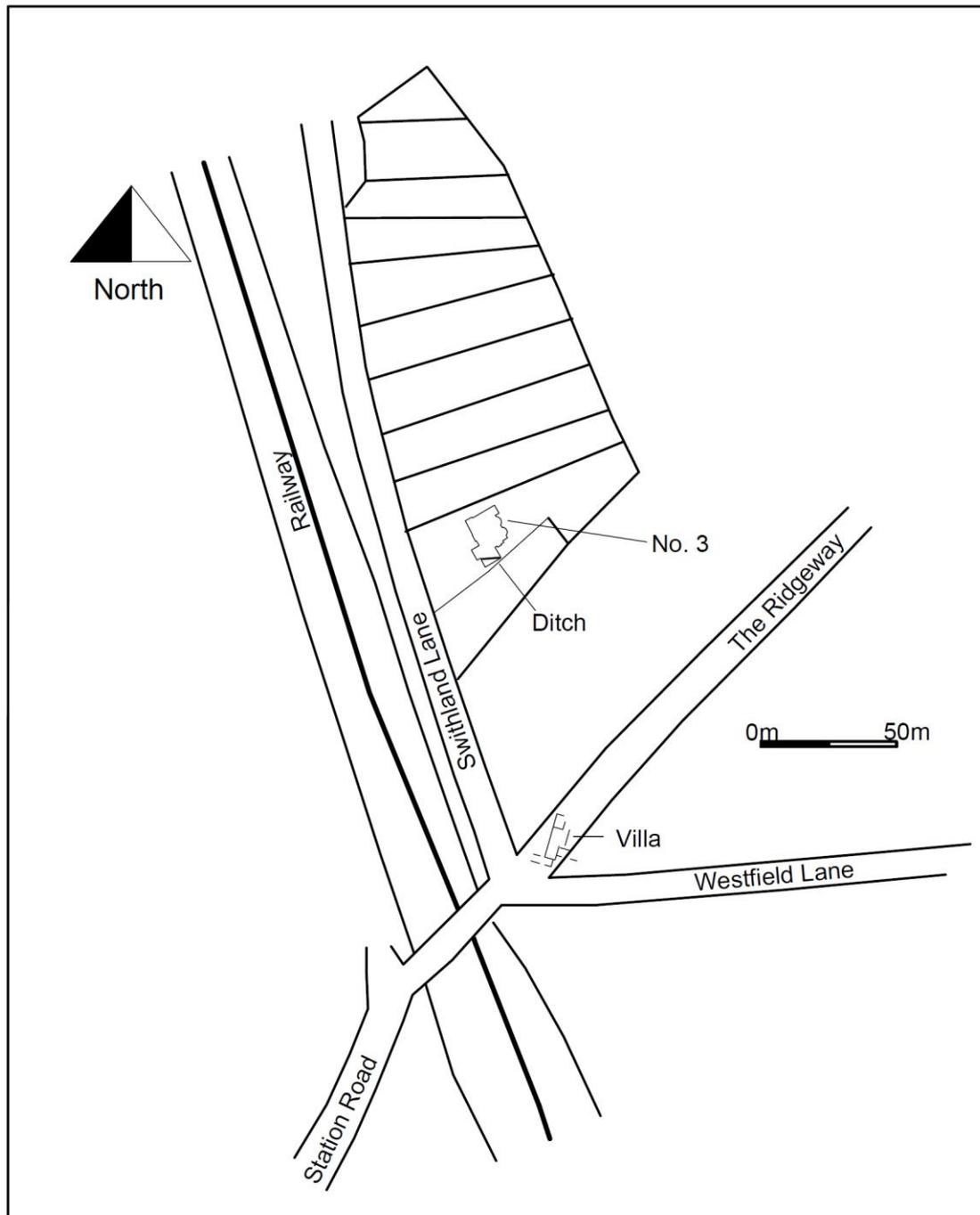


Figure 3: The location of Rothley villa in relation to the ditch found at No. 3 Swithland Lane

10. Archive

A full copy of the archive as defined in *The Guidelines For the Preparation Of Excavation Archives For Long Term Storage* (UKIC 1990), and the *Standards In The Museum: Care Of Archaeological Collections* (MGC 1992) and *Guidelines for the Preparation of Site Archives and Assessments for all finds* (RFG/FRG) will usually be

presented to within six months of the completion of fieldwork. This archive will include all records directly relating to the investigation undertaken.

The archive consists of 1 copy of this report, indices,

Primary context sheets

2 watching brief recording forms,

1 primary drawing sheets,

copies of site location plans and synthesised plans,

1 copy brief for archaeological work,

1 photo index form, colour digital photo contact sheet,

and 1 CD containing digital photos and a copy of the report.

Subject to confirmation it will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council under accession number X.A23 2009.

11. Bibliography

Liddle, P., 1982 *Leicestershire Archaeology The Present State of Knowledge Vol 1 To the end of the Roman Period* Leicestershire Museums, Art Galleries and Records Service Archaeological Report No. 4

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03.03.2010

Appendix 1 Oasis Summary

INFORMATION REQUIRED	EXAMPLE
Project Name	An archaeological watching brief at 3, Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire (SK 5684 1240).
Project Type	Archaeological watching brief
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Tim Higgins
Previous/Future work	Unknown
Current Land Use	Garden
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	PPG16
Position in the Planning Process	As a condition
Site Co ordinates	NGR: SK 5684 1240
Start/end dates of field work	15/02/2010 to 16/02/2010
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area *	Approx 27m sq

Appendix 2 The Finds

Roman Pottery

Nicholas J. Cooper

A total of seven sherds of Roman pottery weighing 80g was retrieved from context (4) alongside a small assemblage of Roman tile. The material was classified using the ULAS/Leicestershire Museums Fabric Series (Pollard 1994, 112-114) and quantified by sherd count and weight as detailed in the following table.

Roman Pottery XA.23.2010					
Context	Fabric	Form	Sherds	Weight	Date
4	MO4	Mortarium	1	11	c. 150+
4	BB1	jar	1	4	c. 150+
4	GW12	Jar	1	14	2nd cent+
4	GW5	jar	2	17	2nd cent+
4	SW	Jar	2	34	Mid-late 1st
Total			7	80	

The group is in relatively poor condition (Average sherd weight 11g) and some of the sherds (as well as some of the tile fragments) show signs of abrasion, perhaps due to exposure on midden heaps before becoming incorporated into the fill. The group includes a single sherd of a mortarium from Mancetter-Hartshill incorporating a mixture of grey, red and black grits perhaps indicating a date in the middle of the 2nd century rather than later. A single sherd from the shoulder of a BB1 jar is also included but the lack of visible lattice decoration does not allow this to be dated any more closely than the middle of the 2nd century onwards. The only other diagnostic

sherds belong to a grey ware (GW5) necked jar with bead rim which again is likely to be of a 2nd-century date. Overall, and given the likely redeposition of material involved, the fill dates to the later 2nd century at the earliest.

Reference

Pollard, R., 1994 *The Iron Age and Roman Pottery in P. Clay and R. Pollard Iron Age and Roman Occupation in the West Bridge Area, Leicester; Excavations 1962-71*, 51-114. Leicester: Leicestershire County Council, Museums, Arts and Records Service.

Roman Ceramic Building Material

Nicholas J. Cooper

A total of seven fragments of tile weighing 1215g was retrieved from context (4) alongside a small assemblage of later 2nd-century pottery. The material was classified by form and quantified by fragment count and weight. All the material was manufactured in sandy oxidised fabrics typical of the city and county, although two fragments (one roof tile and one wall tile) also contained calcareous fragments which may represent a locally-made fabric. The assemblage is summarised in the table below.

Roman Tile XA.23.2010			
Context	Form	Frag	Weight
4	Flue	2	143
4	Tegula	2	696
4	Wall tile	1	336
4	Misc	2	40
Total		7	1215

The occurrence of flue tile indicates the existence of a hypocaust heating system within a nearby building and this would be consistent with it deriving from the nearby Rothley villa (Figure 3).

Appendix 3 Design Specification

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological work

Job title: 3 Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire

NGR: SK 5684 1240

Client: Mr and Mrs P Rogers

Planning Authority: Charnwood Borough Council

P.A. 08/2201/2

1 Definition and scope of the specification

1.1 In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and planning), para.30, this specification provides a written scheme for archaeological attendance for inspection and recording (a watching brief), as required by the Planning Authority, of any groundworks on the site which may disturb areas of archaeological potential in connection with a planning application for a proposed extension to the property at 3, Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire for Mr and Mrs P. Rogers.

1.2 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute for Archaeologist's (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

2 Background

2.1 Requirement for archaeological work

2.1.1 The archaeological work involves attendance (a watching brief) within the development area to identify any deposits of archaeological importance as detailed in the *Brief for the Archaeological inspection and recording (an intensive watching brief) at 3, Swithland Lane, Rothley Planning Application No P/08/2201/2* (hereinafter the 'Brief' 02.10.2008).

3 Aims

3.1 Through archaeological attendance and, as appropriate, investigation:

1. To identify the presence/absence of any earlier building phases or archaeological deposits.
2. To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
3. To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
4. To produce an archive and report of any results.

4 Methods

4.1 The project will involve the supervision of overburden removal and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works specified above.

4.2 Should significant archaeological remains be identified a programme of excavation and recording may be necessary, using additional personnel as necessary.

4.3 The archaeologist will co-operate at all times with the contractors on site to ensure the minimum interruption to the work.

4.4 Any archaeological deposits located will be hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Samples of any archaeological deposits located will be hand excavated. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans will be tied into the National Grid using an Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) where appropriate.

4.5 Archaeological deposits will be excavated and recorded as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

4.6 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.7 Any human remains encountered will be initially left in situ and only be removed under a Ministry of Justice Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The developer and Leicestershire County Council will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.8 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site from the project manager. These will ensure that professional standards are being maintained. Provision will be made for monitoring visits with representatives of the owners and Leicestershire County Council.

4.9 In the event of significant archaeological remains being located during the watching brief there may be the need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken. On the discovery of potentially significant remains the archaeologist will inform the developer, the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, and the planning authority. If the archaeological remains are identified to be of significance additional contingent archaeological works will be required.

5 Recording Systems

5.1 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto prepared pro-forma recording sheets.

5.2 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map, (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at 1:200 (or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated.

5.3 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made on drawing film, related to the OS grid and at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Elevations and sections of individual layers of features should be drawn where possible. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans.

5.4 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include black and white prints and colour transparencies illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5.5 This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the watching brief.

5.6 All site records and finds will be kept securely.

6 Report and Archive

6.1 An accession number will be drawn prior to the commencement of the project (Brief 8.1). Following the fieldwork the on-line OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis> will be completed. A report on the investigation will be provided following the groundworks.

6.2 Copies will be provided for the client, Historic Environment Record and planning Authority. The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in Brown (2008) will be presented to Leicestershire County Council, normally within six months of the completion of analysis. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

7 Publication

7.1 A summary report will be submitted to a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. A full report will be submitted if the results are of significance.

8 Timetable and Staffing

8.1 The investigation is scheduled to commence at the start of the contractors groundworks. An experienced archaeologist will be present during this work.

9 Health and Safety

9.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and uses the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (revised 2007) with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is in the Appendix. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate.

10 Insurance

10.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

11. Bibliography

Brown, D., *Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives* (Institute for
2008 Archaeologists)

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27.01.2010

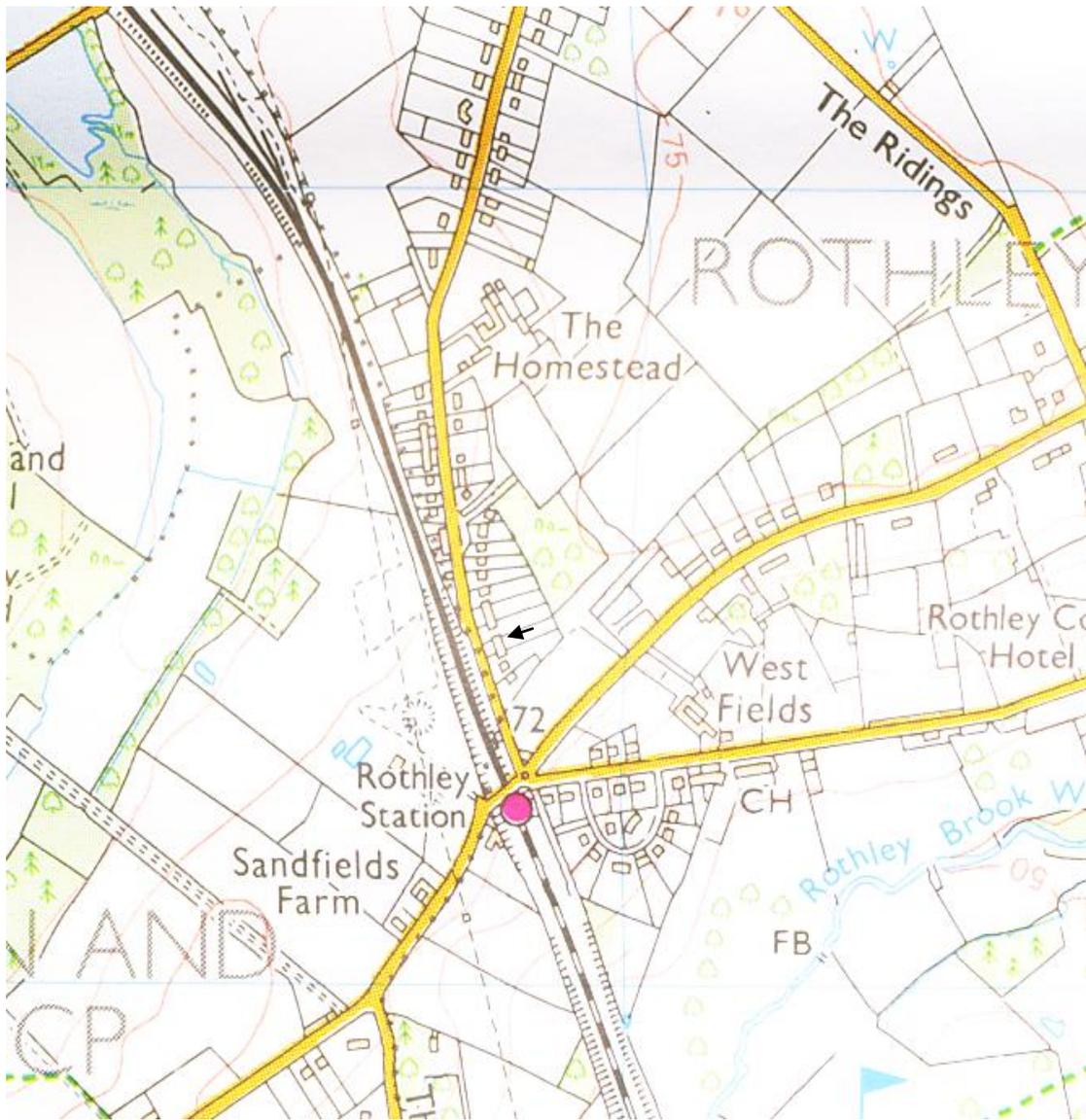


Fig 1 Location of Development

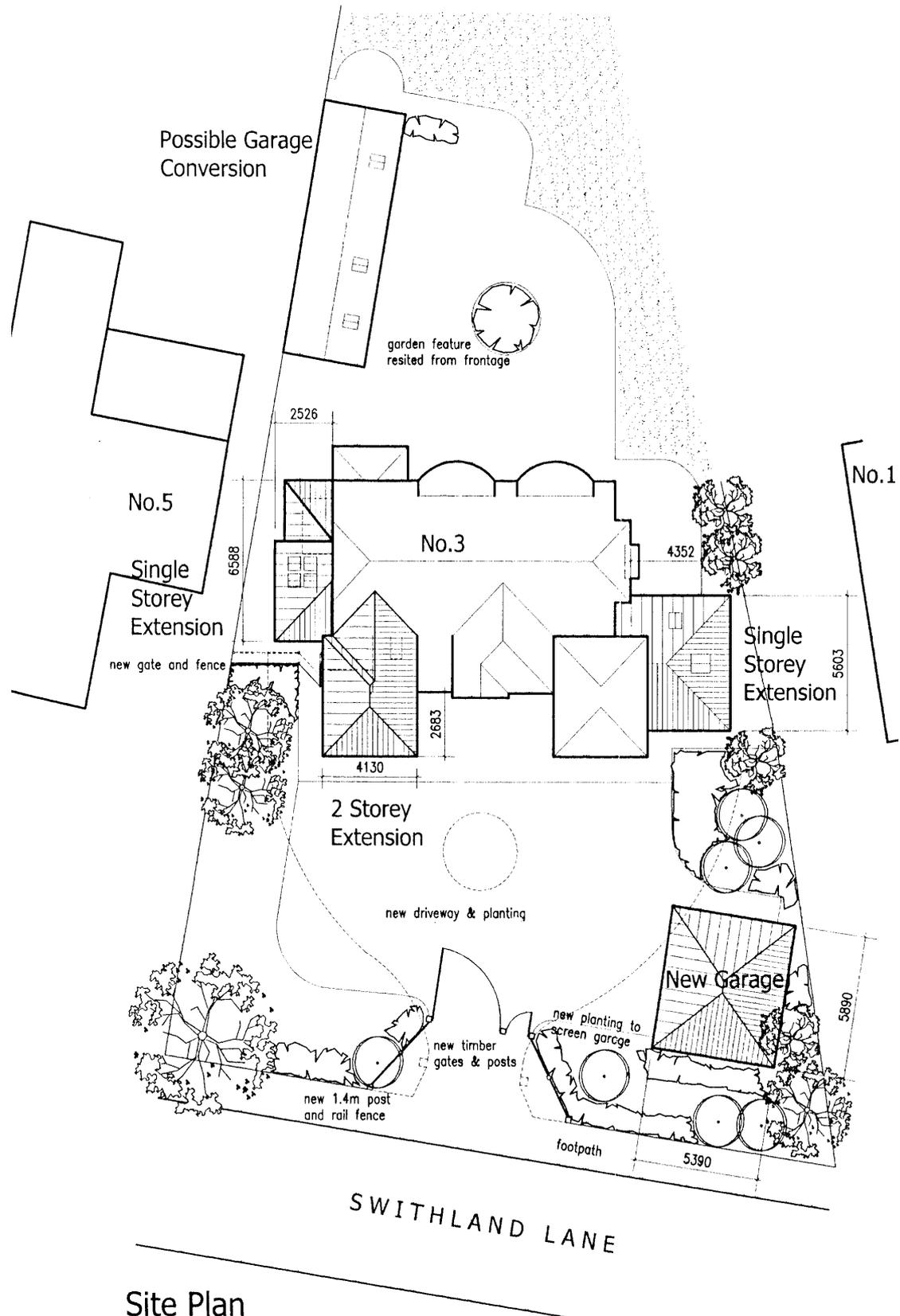


Fig. 2 Development area showing location of extensions.

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

Job title: 3 Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire

NGR: SK 5684 1240

Client: Mr and Mrs P Rogers

Planning Authority: Blaby District Council

P.A. 08/2201/2

1. Nature of the work

1.1 This statement is for an intermittent archaeological watching brief. It will be revised following the commencement of operations when the extent of risks can be assessed in full.

1.2 The work will involve overburden stripping by JCB 3C or similar during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be c. 1.0 – 1.2m. Following stripping the exposed deposits will be examined with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and archaeological features will be excavated. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the ULAS Health and safety and the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers manuals, together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines, including the following.

HSE Construction Information Sheet CS8 Safety in excavations.

HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)143 (L): Getting to grips with manual handling.

HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)145 (L): Watch Your back.

CIRIA R97 Trenching practice.

CIRIA TN95 Proprietary Trench Support Systems.

HSE Guidance Note HS(G) 47 Avoiding danger to underground services. HSE Guidance Note GS7 Accidents to children on construction sites

1.3 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation. All work will adhere to the company's health and safety policy.

2 Risks Assessment

2.1 Working within an excavation.

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces deeper than 1.2m. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. A member of staff qualified in First Aid will be present at all times. First aid kit, vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 Working with plant.

Precautions. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. No examination of the area of stripping will take place until machines have vacated area. Observation of machines will be maintained during hand excavation.

2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.

Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Weils disease or similar.

2.4 Working with chemicals.

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

2.5 Other risks

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.

2.6 No other constraints are recognised over the nature of the soil, water, type of excavation, proximity of structures, sources of vibration and contamination.

08.09.2009

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