



University of
Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching brief
3 Swithland Lane,
Rothley, Leicestershire
NGR: SK 5684 1240 centre (Phase 2)**

Tim Higgins



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**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
3, Swithland Lane, Rothley
Leicestershire (Phase 2)**

NGR: SK 5684 1240

Tim Higgins

For: Mr and Mrs P Rodgers

Approved by



Signed:

Date: 01/10/2010

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at 3, Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire (Phase 2)

(NGR: SK 5684 1240)

Tim Higgins

1. Summary

An Archaeological watching brief of groundworks at No. 3 Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire (Phase 2) was undertaken by ULAS on behalf of Mr and Mrs P Rodgers. The initial groundworks comprised the removal of concrete surface, ground reduction and the excavation of new foundations for a new extension. Attendance at the site occurred from the 16th to the 17th September 2010.

A possible 2nd century Roman ditch or pit and scatter of granite stone rubble were found during the construction Phase 1 extension, located on the south gable. A similar granite stone rubble deposit was observed within the trenches of the Phase 2 extension on the northern gable. The house is located approximately 125 metres to the north of a known 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 second 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 Statement 5 (PPS5, Planning and the Historic Environment). 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 Phase 2 plot was an extension to the property and was located on the north gable end of a detached house and follows an earlier extension phase 1 undertaken on the south gable. The Phase 2 extension covers was approximately 17.5m 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.

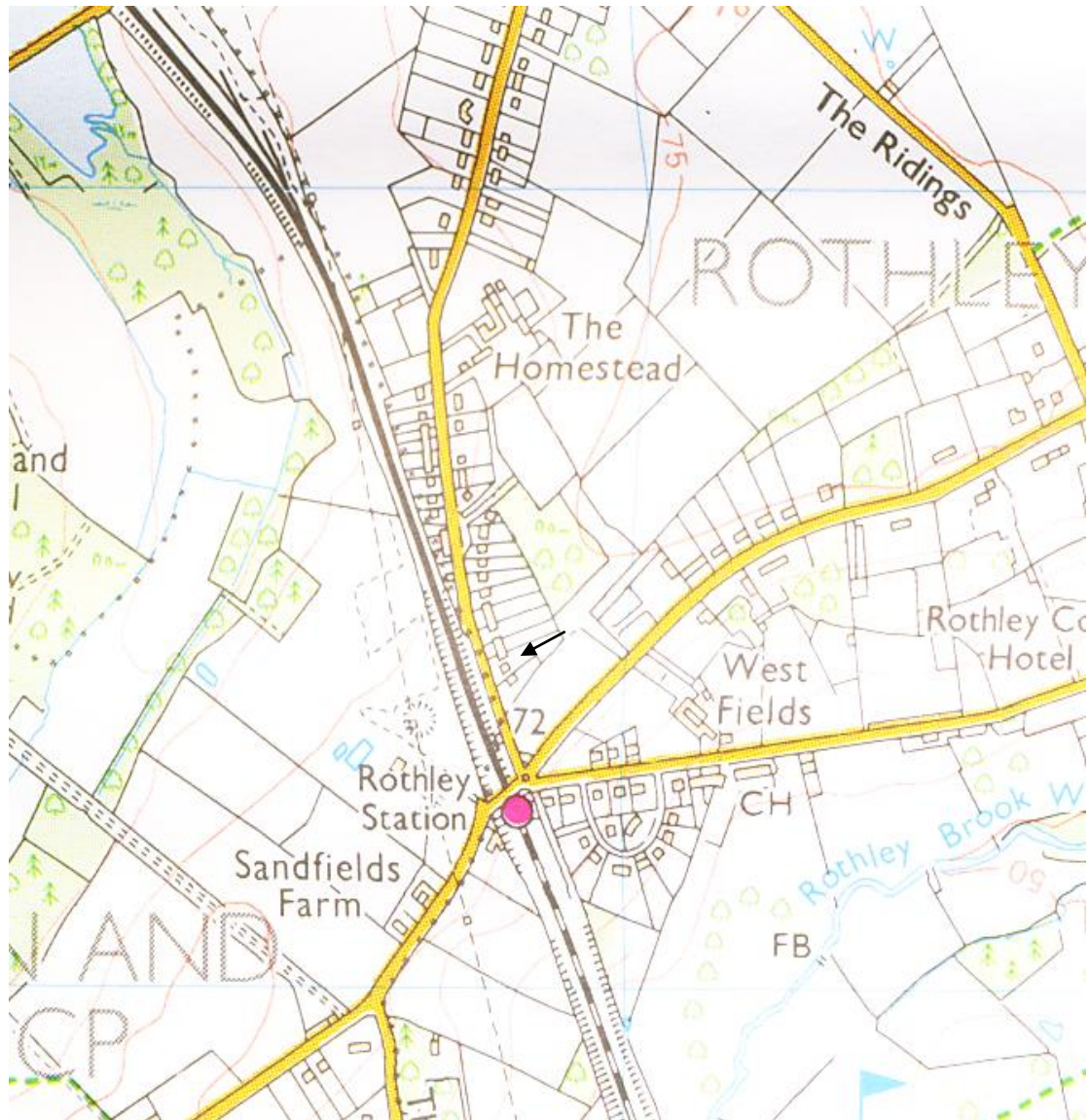


Figure 1: Location of the development No. 3 Swithland Lane Rothley

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).

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the construction of the first phase of development, a south gable extension. The watching brief revealed a scatter of large granite stones and a ditch or pit containing mid to late 2nd century Roman pottery and tile, which was located 125m to the north of Rothley Roman villa.

5. Aims and method.

Through archaeological attendance and, as appropriate, controlled stripping and investigation the aim of the watching brief was:

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.

All work and archaeological deposits encountered were recorded in accordance and follow 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 adherence to the University's Health and Safety policy.

6. Results



Plate 1: Ground clearance for the north gable extension

Initial groundwork involved the clearance of concrete surfaces and excavation of foundation trenches for the second new extension (Figure 2) and site visits were undertaken on the 16th and 17th September 2010. The machine used for the ground works 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 north gable end of the detached house and comprised foundations for the new extension plot that measured 6.00m long by 4.50m wide. There were a total of three foundation trenches for the extension, which all measured 0.60m wide and depth of between 1.00m and 1.10m.

The natural substratum consisted of reddish brown sandy clay found at depth of 0.80m below the present ground surface. Towards the north-west corner the extension within the foundation trenches two large roughly hewn large granite stones were found on top the natural substratum. The stones measured up to 0.40m long, 0.20m wide and 0.20m deep and were imbedded in reddish-brown clay spread 0.20m deep. During the excavations of the south gable extension similar stone material was observed at the same level. The dispersed nature of the stone within the red clay 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 stone and red clay spread and ditch were sealed by pale reddish-brown sandy-clay subsoil 0.50m deep. A large modern brick soft water tank was observed cutting the subsoil within the northern trench of the Phase 2 extension (Plate 3). The tank was a bell-pit type structure with circular brick wall tank 1.60m diameter and 0.80m deep. The structure was capped by a brick dome 0.20m deep, with octagon shape access whole at the top. The bell pit was sealed by a rectangular concrete man whole and cover.

This area appeared to have been previously levelled, with a layer 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.



Plate 2: Granite stone and red clay spread within the Phase 2 extension foundation trenches (Looking north)



Plate 3: Modern brick bell-pit soft water tank found within foundation trench (Looking west)

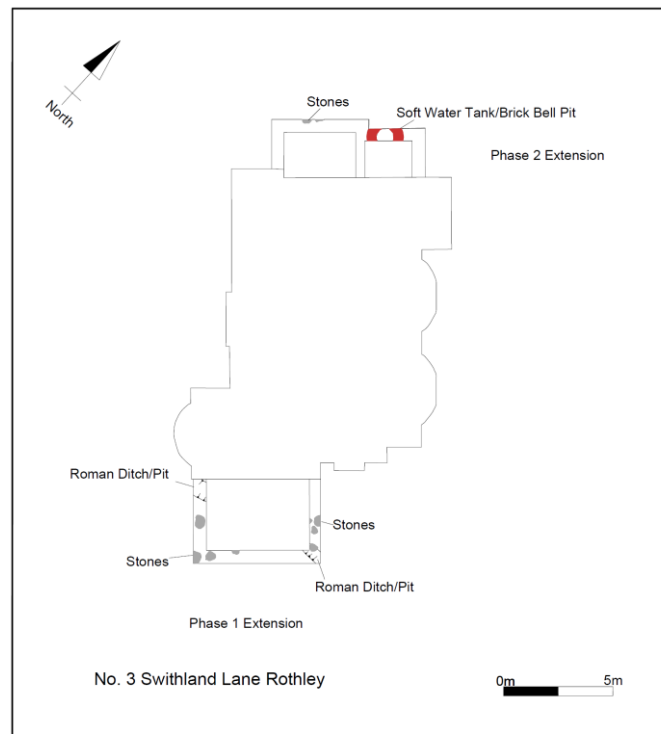


Figure 2: Phase 1 and 2 extensions at No. 3 Swithland Lane

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 the railway line (Liddle 1982). A possible 2nd century Roman ditch or pit and scatter of granite stone rubble was found during the construction of the Phase 1 extension, located on the south gable (Higgins 2010). A similar granite stone rubble deposit was observed within the trenches of the Phase 2 extension on the northern gable. The house is located approximately 125 metres to the north of the main villa and the stone rubble along with the Roman pit were perhaps associated with either the villa or other possible structures within an extensive site that spreads to the north.

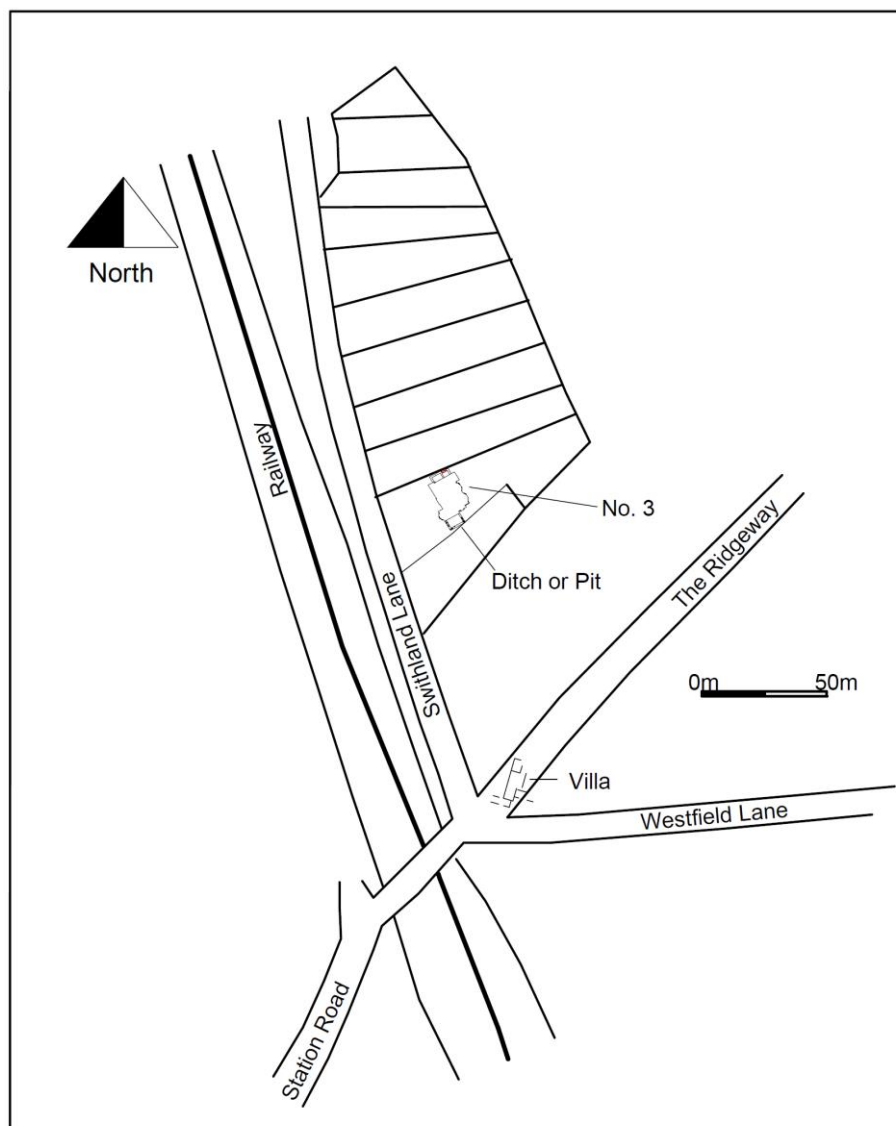


Figure 3: The location of Rothley villa and ditch or pit found at No. 3 Swithland Lane

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.

10. Archive

A full copy of the archive as defined in Brown (2008) 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 Phase 1 report and the Phase 2 report,

indices

Primary context sheets

5 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

Higgins, T., 2010 *An Archaeological Watching Brief at 3, Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire (Phase 1) (NGR: SK 5684 1240)* ULAS Report

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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30.09.2010

Appendix 1 Oasis Summary

INFORMATION REQUIRED	EXAMPLE
Project Name	An archaeological watching brief at 3, Swithland Lane, Rothley, Leicestershire (Phase 2) (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	16/09/2010 to 17/09/2010
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council
Study Area *	Approx 17.5 m sq

Appendix 2 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., 2008 *Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives* (Institute for Archaeologists)

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27.01.2010

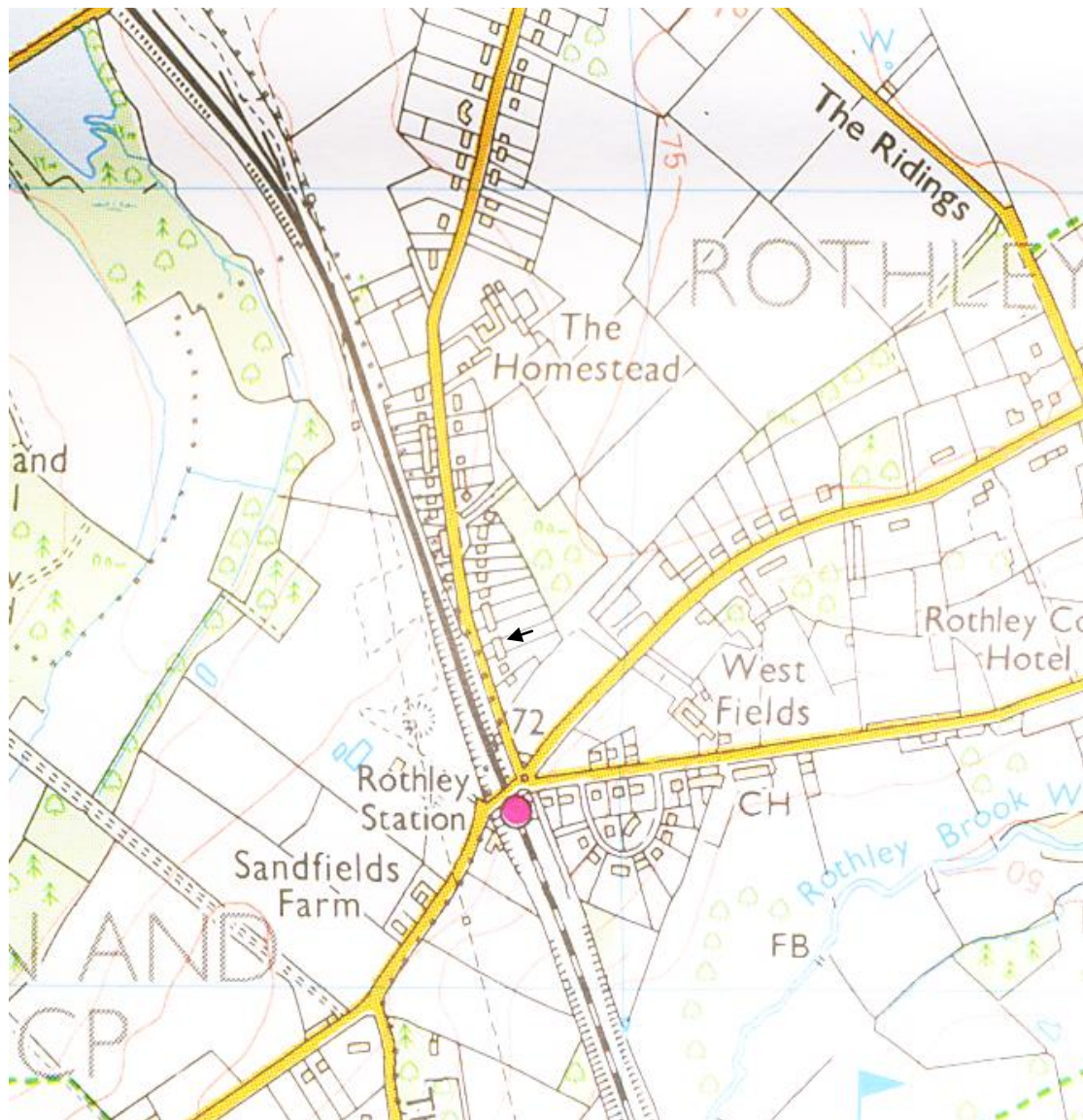
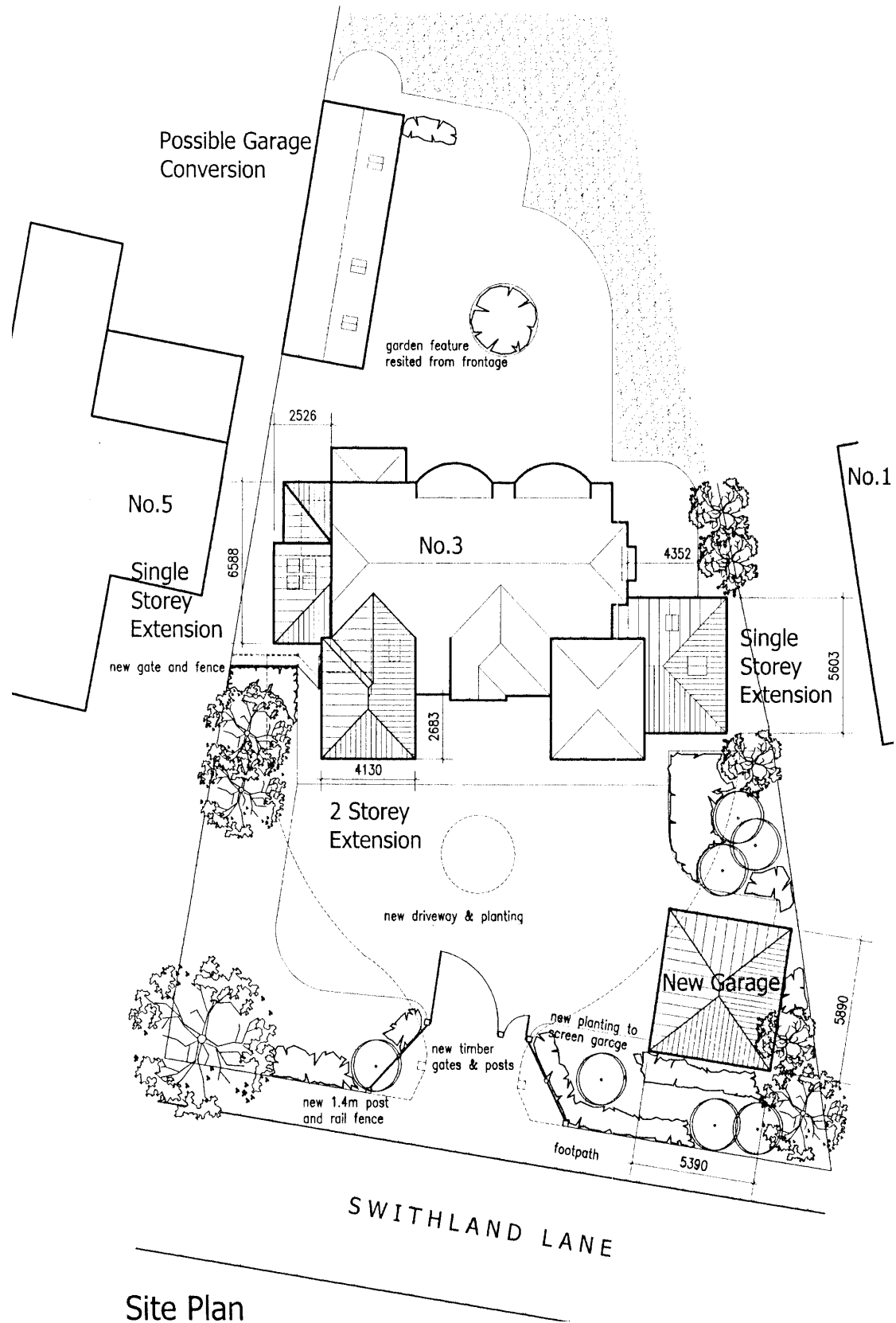


Fig 1 Location of Development



Site Plan

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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