



# University of Leicester

## Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at  
Willow Barn, Hillcrest Lane,  
Husbands Bosworth,  
Leicestershire.  
NGR: SP 641 844**

Andrew Hyam



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**An Archaeological watching Brief at  
Willow Barn, Hillcrest Lane,  
Husbands Bosworth,  
Leicestershire.**

**NGR: SP 64120 84414**

**Andrew Hyam**

**For: Axon Beckett**

Approved by

**Signed:**



**Date:** 16 June 2011

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## CONTENTS

Summary .....	1
Introduction.....	1
Background.....	1
Objectives .....	6
Methodology .....	6
Results.....	6
Discussion .....	8
Archive.....	8
Publication .....	9
Acknowledgements.....	9
Bibliography .....	9
Appendix I Digital Photographs .....	10
Appendix II OASIS Information .....	10

## FIGURES

Figure 1 Husbands Bosworth location.....	2
Figure 2 Development site location .....	3
Figure 3 Willow Barn seen from Hillcrest Lane.....	4
Figure 4 Location of extension prior to excavation of foundations.....	4
Figure 5 Proposed location of extension.....	5
Figure 6 Excavated foundation trenches.....	7
Figure 7 Excavated foundation trenches.....	7
Figure 8 Foundation trench at joint with existing barn.....	8

## **An Archaeological watching Brief at Willow Barn, Hillcrest Lane, Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire. NGR: SP 64120 84414**

**Andrew Hyam**

### **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Willow Barn, Hillcrest Lane, Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire. The work took place on the 18th April 2011 in advance of the construction of a single storey extension to the rear of a brick-built 19th century barn which is being refurbished and converted into a single domestic dwelling. The development site lies within the historic core of the medieval and post-medieval village and is close to the site of a now demolished Baptist Chapel. The foundations for the proposed extension were excavated and the internal footprint of the extension was reduced to reveal an area of heavy disturbance over an undisturbed natural substratum of mid yellow brown silty sandy-clay. No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the watching brief.*

*The fieldwork was carried out by A.R.Hyam. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Service under Accession Number X.A.57.2011*

### **Introduction**

In accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, Policy HE12.3 (DCLG 2010) this document forms the report for an archaeological watching brief carried at Willow Barn, Hillcrest Lane, Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire, SP 64120 84414. It was proposed that an extension was to be added to the rear of an existing single storey brick-built barn and workshop which is currently undergoing refurbishment and conversion into a domestic dwelling (10/01082/FUL). When considering the planning application the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, as advisor to the planning authority, recommended the requirement for a programme of archaeological monitoring work during soil stripping and groundworks due to the site's location within an area of archaeological interest. The work has been commissioned by Axon Beckett.

### **Background**

Husbands Bosworth lies approximately 15km due south of Leicester and 10km south-west of Market Harborough (Fig. 1). The development site is centred on National Grid Reference SP 64120 84414 in the Harborough District at a height of approximately 157m OD. The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of England and Wales, Sheet number 170 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of Glacial Till.

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) showed that the application site lay within an area of archaeological interest. The building concerned

is situated within the historic medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Husbands Bosworth (HER ref. MLE9467) and the late 19th century 1st edition Ordnance Survey map for the village suggested that the extension may partially encroach on the site of a now demolished Baptist Chapel, of an uncertain date. Consequently, there was a likelihood that buried archaeological remains would be affected by the development. Because of this the Senior Planning Archaeologist recommended archaeological attendance for inspection and recording to be undertaken during the groundworks with a contingency for recording and detailed excavation if required.

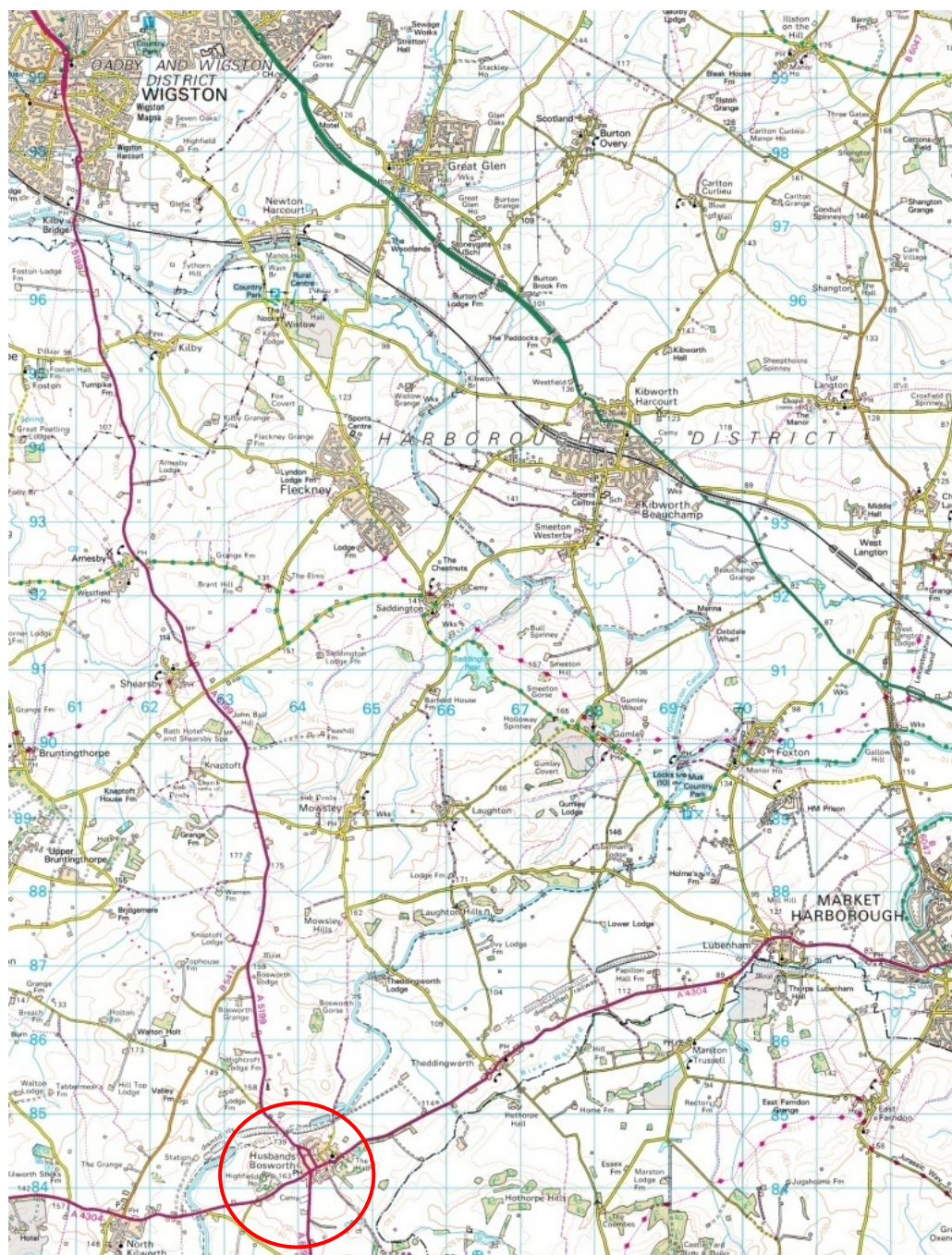


Figure 1 Husbands Bosworth location

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The site is located on the southern side of Hillcrest Lane and to the east of 42 Bell Lane, Husbands Bosworth (Fig. 2). It consists of a long single storey brick-built barn which has its longest elevation running parallel to Hillcrest Lane which forms a very shallow hollow way running east to west (Fig. 3). The roof is currently made from corrugated sheeting but was presumably slate when originally built at some point in the mid to late 19th century. The rear of the property slopes down from south to north by approximately 0.5m and was a covered in a mix of grass and unpaved yard prior to the start of development work (Fig. 4). Vehicular entry to the site is from Bell Lane which runs to the west of the property. A small pedestrian alleyway runs along the western side of the barn from Hillcrest Lane to the rear of the property.



Figure 2 Development site location

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Figure 3 Willow Barn seen from Hillcrest Lane.  
Looking south-west



Figure 4 Location of extension prior to excavation of foundations  
Looking north-east

The first edition Ordnance Survey map of 1884 shows the location of Willow Barn and the Baptist Chapel located in the south-east of the property. The proposed extension would not encroach on the site of the chapel but might be expected to cover part of the chapel site boundary. The next available OS edition, published in 1904, shows the same layout. There is then a large gap in the available maps but the chapel has disappeared by the 1963 edition.

From discussions with the owner, the barn was used as a wheel wrights and coffin makers before being used as a light engineering workshop. It was in use as a workshop until recently before closing down and being purchased for redevelopment by the present owner. It is proposed that a single storey extension will be attached to the south-western corner of the barn to create a large L-shaped dwelling with a large courtyard style garden to the east (Fig. 5). The garden will remain virtually unchanged and will cover any surviving chapel remains that may still exist.



Figure 5 Proposed location of extension  
Extension shown in grey, property boundary shown in red  
Plan provided by developer. North to top of page. 25m grid squares



## Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological watching brief were:

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

## Methodology

A tracked mini-digger with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket was used to excavate the foundations under continuous archaeological supervision. If significant archaeological remains had been identified during the watching brief a programme of excavation and recording would have been necessary, using additional personnel if required.

All groundworks and deposits were recorded by notes, sketches and both digital colour and 35mm black and white photographs. The recording methodology followed that specified in the ULAS Design Specification for Archaeological Work for *Willow Barn, Hillcrest Lane, Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire*. All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2006) and adhered to their *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008) and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

## Results

Prior to the watching brief the area of the proposed extension had been levelled by removing a small area of turf, on the eastern side, and approximately 0.3m of disturbed building rubble and silty clay which formed a crude yard surface behind the barn. Despite this initial ground reduction the area was still covered in a layer of dark brown clay silt filled with brick rubble and other debris (Fig. 4).

Excavation of the foundation trenches showed that this layer of disturbance varied in depth from 0.1m to 0.45m down onto the top of the mid yellow brown silty sandy clay natural substrate. The base of the disturbed layer was relatively flat across the area of the foundations despite the general slope of the site from north to south. The foundation trenches measured 0.6m in width and were 1m in depth cutting through the disturbed layer and into the natural (Figs. 6 and 7). At the joint of the foundation trench with the barn wall it could be seen that the barn had quite shallow foundations approximately 0.4m below present ground level. No archaeological features or deposits were observed within the development area.



Figure 6 Excavated foundation trenches  
Looking north. 1m scale



Figure 7 Excavated foundation trenches  
Looking south-east. 1m scale



Figure 8 Foundation trench at joint with existing barn  
Looking north. 1m scale

### **Discussion**

Despite the potential for archaeological features or deposits none were observed during the course of this watching brief. As mentioned, the site of the chapel building is located to the south-east of the development underneath the garden, which will not be disturbed. No evidence for any possible property boundaries belonging to the chapel were found either. The disturbed layer seen in varying depths across the area may relate to a possible landscaping or levelling episode connected to the building of the barn when a level surface for a yard was required. The quantity and type of materials observed within this layer were of contemporary or later date than the barn. It seems that this area was used as a yard for the wheel wrights and the later workshop

### **Archive**

The archive consists of:

This report,

1 pro-forma watching brief form,

2 photo record sheets, 1 for colour digital and one for 35mm black and white,  
1 contact sheet of 9 35mm black and white photographs,  
35mm black and white negatives,  
1 contact sheet of 19 digital photographs,  
1 cd of this report and the digital photographs.

### **Publication**

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course. A record of the project will also be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

### **Acknowledgements**

The fieldwork was undertaken by A. Hyam. The project was managed by Richard Buckley. Thanks are also due to the client.

### **Bibliography**

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

Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief. *Willow Barn Farm, Hillcrest Lane, Husbands Bosworth, Leicestershire*. ULAS

IfA, 2006, *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

## Appendix I Digital Photographs



XA57 2011 (1).jpg



XA57 2011 (2).jpg



XA57 2011 (3).jpg



XA57 2011 (4).jpg



XA57 2011 (5).jpg



XA57 2011 (6).jpg



XA57 2011 (7).jpg



XA57 2011 (8).jpg



XA57 2011 (9).jpg



XA57 2011 (10).jpg



XA57 2011 (11).jpg



XA57 2011 (12).jpg



XA57 2011 (13).jpg



XA57 2011 (14).jpg



XA57 2011 (15).jpg



XA57 2011 (16).jpg



XA57 2011 (17).jpg



XA57 2011 (18).jpg



XA57 2011 (19).jpg

## Appendix II OASIS Information

Project Name	Willow Barn, Hillcrest Lane, Husbands Bosworth
Project Type	Watching Brief
Project Manager	P Clay
Project Supervisor	A Hyam
Previous/Future work	None
Current Land Use	Disused barn building
Development Type	Conversion to domestic dwelling
Reason for Investigation	As a condition
Position in the Planning Process	As a condition
Site Co ordinates	SP 64120 84414
Start/end dates of field work	18.04.2011
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire Museums Service
Study Area	Approx 150 m <sup>2</sup>

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