



**University of
Leicester**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching
Brief on land at Church Farm,
10 Melton Road, Waltham on
the Wolds, Leicestershire,
SK 801 250**

Sophie Clarke



ULAS Report No 2010-209.

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**An Archaeological Watching Brief
on land at Church Farm,
10 Melton Road, Waltham on the Wolds,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 801 250

Sophie Clarke

For: Mr and Mrs Duffin

Approved by

Signed:



Date: 24.10.2011.

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Summary

This report presents the results of a programme of archaeological attendance during groundworks associated with the construction of new houses and garages on land adjacent to and on the site of the former farm buildings at Church Farm, 10 Melton Road, Waltham on the Wolds. The work was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Service (ULAS) on behalf of Duffin Builders, between November 2010 and July 2011. The ground works were undertaken on the site of a small, stone-built stable building, which appears on the 19th-century Ordnance Survey map of the area, but was demolished prior to the commencement of the archaeological watching brief. An area of dark greenish grey/brown clay silt observed in the base of a trench in the vicinity of the south-eastern corner of the former building, may represent the remains of farmyard waste or slurry. The remains of two stone drains found on site may have been associated with the late 18th and early 19th century farm buildings formerly located on the site.

1. Introduction

This document presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken in accordance with conditions secured upon planning application 08/00551/FUL, for the demolition and alteration of various outbuildings associated with the residential development of Church Farm, 10 Melton Road, Waltham on the Wolds, Leicestershire NGR SK 801 250.

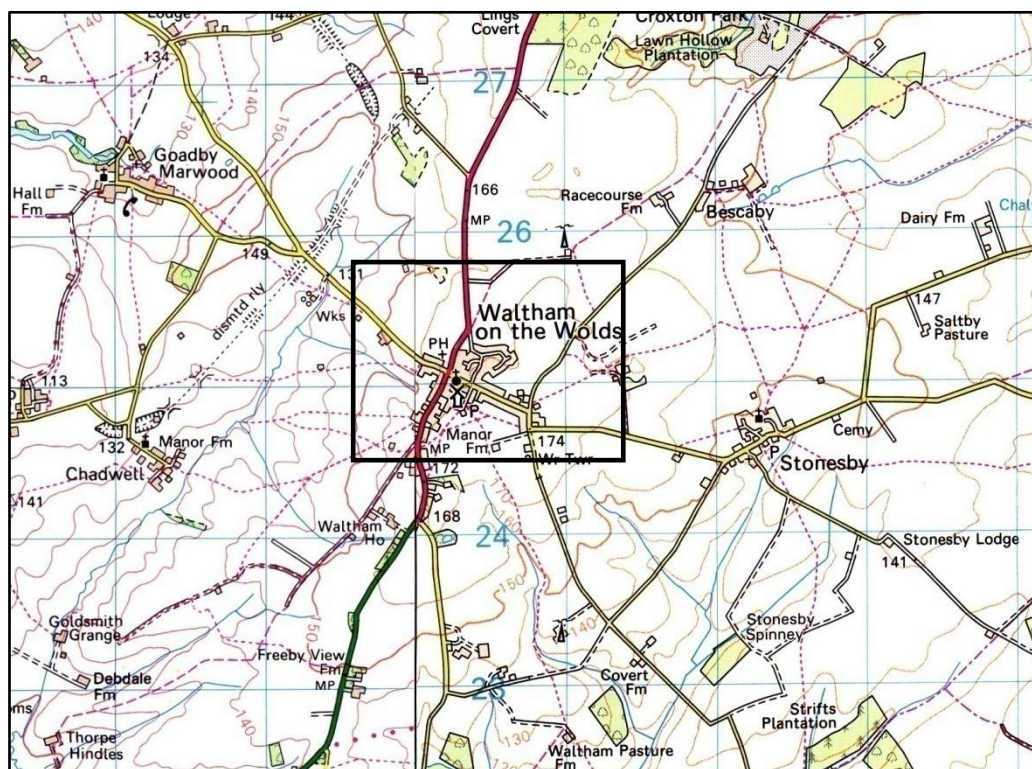


Figure 1. Location of Waltham on the Wolds. Scale 1:50,000

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The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the development site lies in an area of archaeological interest, located within the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of the village of Waltham on the Wolds (MLE9114) and falls within the boundary of the designated village Conservation Area. Church Farm has been identified as being of historic, architectural and potentially archaeological significance, from information held in the HER. The farmhouse and a number of its auxiliary buildings are shown on the first edition Ordnance Survey map of the late 19th century, but may date to the 18th century.

A photographic survey of the farm buildings has already been carried out (ULAS 2010-137), in mitigation of the effects of the development, in accordance with PPS5 'Planning for the Historic Environment' (2010) and following recommendations given by the Principal Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, in his capacity as advisor to the Planning Authority. It was further advised that provision should be made for archaeological attendance (Watching Brief) during all sensitive groundworks undertaken as part of the development.

2. Site Location

The development area is located on land to the south of Church Farm farmhouse, at National Grid Reference SK 801 250 at a height of *c.*161m above Ordnance Datum. The site is approximately 50m to the west of the parish church of St Mary Magdalene, close to the centre of the historic village core of Waltham on the Wolds and within the Local Conservation Area. The site was previously occupied by the former farm buildings associated with Church Farm, which were recorded through photographic survey prior to demolition (ULAS report 2010-137).



Figure 2. Site Location, taken from plan supplied by HSSC Architects. Not shown to scale.

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3. Aims and Methods

The aim of the archaeological work, through archaeological inspection and recording of groundworks undertaken by Duffin Builders, was to:

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

The work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2006) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008), the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (LMARS) and adhered to the University's Health and Safety policy.

The watching brief was undertaken on the 1st November 2010 in order to monitor the groundworks associated with the construction of a new garage to the rear of number 14 Melton Road. Further visits were made to monitor the groundworks associated with the construction of new houses and garages following the demolition of the former farm buildings of Church Farm. The final visit was made on the 15th July 2011 to monitor groundworks associated with the extension of a 19th-century cowshed. All groundworks were carried out using a JCB 802 mini digger fitted with a 0.5m toothed bucket, under continuous archaeological supervision, unless otherwise stated. The exposed substratum was recorded and the spoil searched for finds.

The site archive will be deposited with the Leicestershire County Council Museum Service under the accession number X.A126.2010.

5. Results

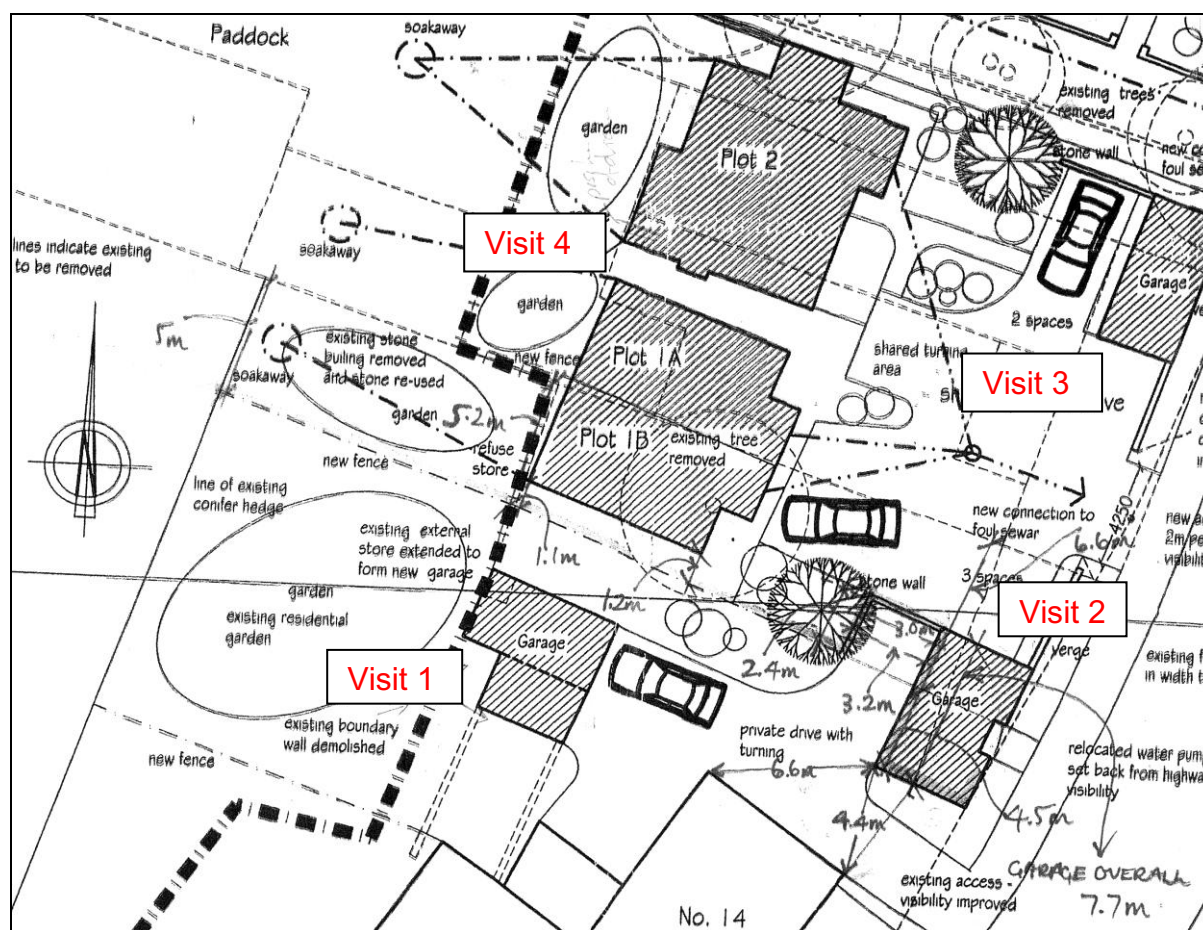


Figure 3. Location of new building plots (from plan supplied by developer, not to scale).

Visit 1: 01/11/2010

The demolition of a small, stone-built, single-storey stable building had been undertaken prior to the preliminary watching brief visit. The structure appears on the 19th century Ordnance Survey map of the area, but was not recorded as part of the photographic survey of the buildings associated with Church Farm, as it formerly served as an auxiliary structure to number 14 Melton Road on the adjacent plot and was not known to be included as part of the development plans. Plate 1 below, shows the building as it appeared prior to demolition and has been taken from the Google website:

http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?f=q&source=s_q&hl=en&geocode=&q=Waltham+On+The+Wolds,+Melton+Mowbray&sll=53.800651,-4.064941&sspn=11.562655,28.168945&ie=UTF8&hq=&hnear=Waltham+On+The+Wolds,+Melton+Mowbray,+Leicestershire,+United+Kingdom&ll=52.816526,-0.811666&spn=0,0.001719&t=h&z=19&layer=c&cbll=52.816606,-0.811589&panoid=UnE0hFLh7nWoRjjQYMt6UA&cbp=12,271.27,,0,14.08



Figure 4. Single storey structure demolished to make way for new garage. Looking south-west.

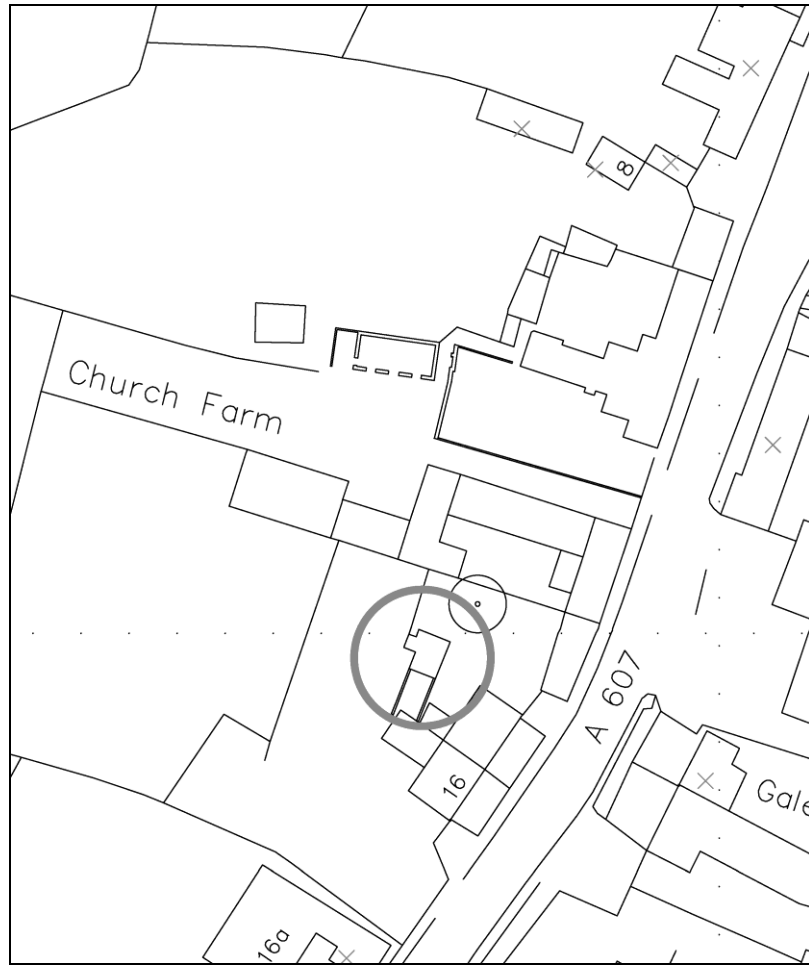


Figure 5. Location of 19th century, single-storey structure (taken from plan supplied by developer, not to scale).

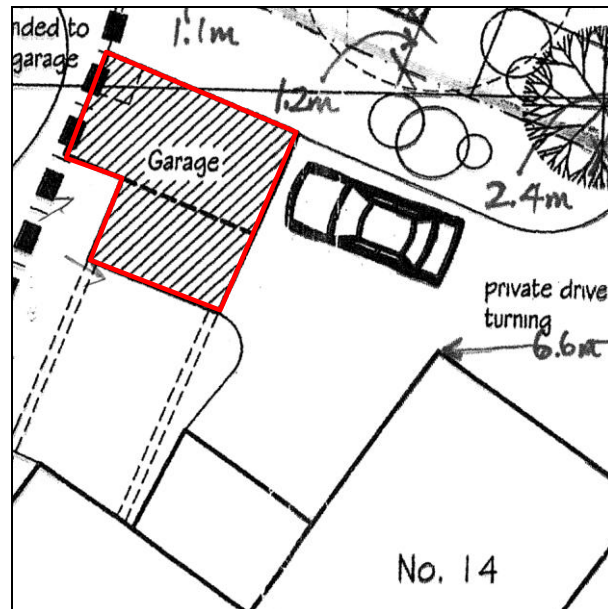


Figure 6. Plan of new garage on site of demolished outbuilding. Supplied by developer, not shown to scale.

The foundation trenches for the new garage were excavated over the footprint of the demolished stable building, and measured approximately 1m wide and between 0.8m and 1m in depth.

Inspection of the sections revealed the ground to have been heavily disturbed, during the construction and subsequent demolition of the outbuilding, with the overburden consisting of brick and stone rubble within a sandy silt matrix. The ground was less disturbed on the western side of the plot, where the line of the foundation trench was excavated through turf revealing a layer of topsoil measuring 0.3m deep, overlying a 0.6m depth of silty clay subsoil, containing fragments of brick and ironstone. The natural geological substratum consisted of clay and was reached at a depth of 0.8m-0.9m below the ground surface.

In the south-eastern corner of the plot, the base of the trench was excavated through an area of dark, greenish, grey/brown clay silt, which may represent the remains of farmyard waste or slurry. No clear edges were observed to indicate whether this had collected within a sump or through natural seepage, and no archaeological finds were observed within it.



Figure 7. Footprint of new garage, looking west.



Figure 8. Footprint of new garage, looking east.



Figure 9. Western wall-line of garage. Looking north.



Figure 10. South-eastern corner of building plot, looking east towards possible slurry pit.

Visit 2: 18/01/2011

The second watching brief visit was carried out in order to monitor the excavations of footings for a double garage and retaining wall, located adjacent to the Melton Road frontage, on the site of an earlier farm building which had collapsed prior to the photographic survey. The footings were excavated to a depth of between 0.8m and 1m in depth, to reveal the natural sandy clay and ironstone geological substratum, which was overlain with a layer of brick and stone rubble, mixed with topsoil measuring up to 0.6m in depth. No archaeological deposits or features were visible in this area.

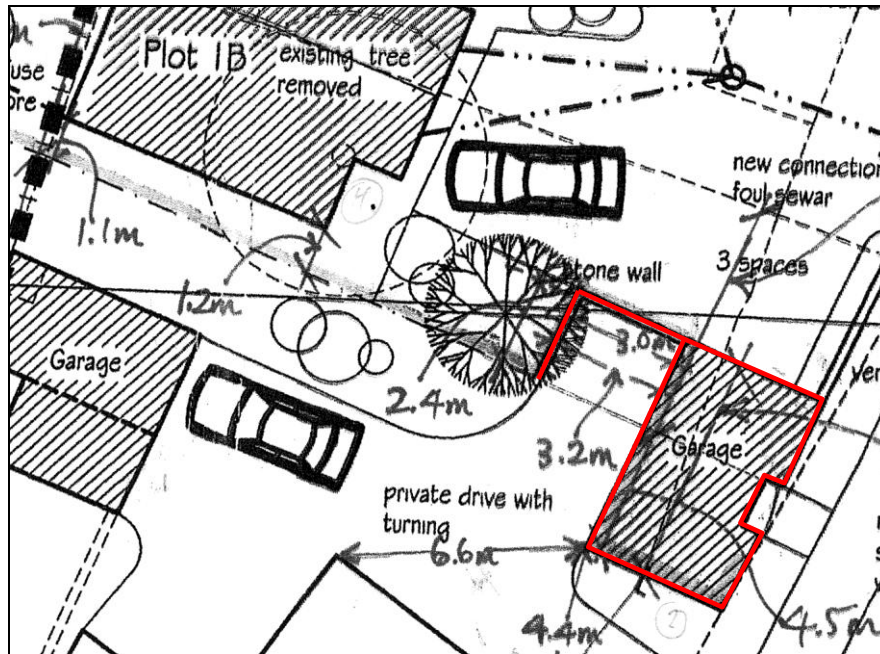


Figure 11. Location of new double garage (Plan supplied by developer, not to scale)



Figure 12. Footings for double garage, looking north.

Visit 3: 18/2/11

The third watching brief visit was made on the 18th February 2011, by Mathew Morris of ULAS. At this stage, the demolition of the former farm buildings had been undertaken and the purpose of this visit was to monitor the excavations of footings for a single garage located adjacent to the Melton Road frontage, on the site of the former cow-shed. The concrete floor of the demolished structure was still in situ at this time, and was revealed to lie approximately 0.5m below street level, lying directly above the natural sandy clay and ironstone substratum, indicating the previous removal of overburden, probably undertaken before the concrete floor was laid down.

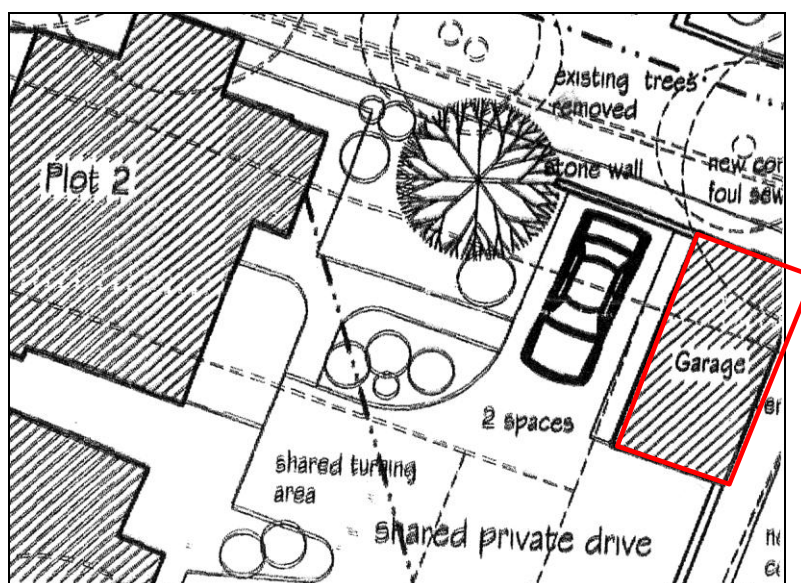


Figure 13. Location of new single garage (Plan supplied by developer, not to scale)

As a result of the earlier episode of levelling, the majority of the footprint was excavated directly into the natural geological substratum, to a depth of between 0.75 and 1m below the ground surface. At the northern end however, where the footprint extended beyond that of the earlier building, disturbed layers of topsoil and subsoil were revealed. Where recorded, topsoil consisted of gritty, dark greyish brown, silty clay, measuring up to 0.3m in depth, overlying a 0.6m deep layer of subsoil consisting of dark orangey brown, sandy clay. In the north-western corner of the plot, the remains of a deep, square-cut pit with vertical side was observed to cut through the subsoil, but was sealed by the topsoil. The element of this that was recorded, measured at least 0.5m long by 0.5m wide and 1m in depth. The pit was filled with very dark, blue-grey clay, containing fragments of modern brick and is likely to represent the remains of a sump or cess-pit, located against the outer wall of the cow-house, into which the internal drains would have lead. No deposits of archaeological significance were located in this area.



Figure 14. Footings for new single garage, looking south along western trench.



Figure 15. Square-cut cess pit in north-western corner of plot, looking west.



Figure 16. As above, with remains of northern external wall of former cow-house visible on left-hand side.

Visit 4:22/03/2011

The fourth site visit was made by Sophie Clarke of ULAS on the 22nd March 2011 in order to monitor the excavation of footings for adjoining house plots 1a and 1b, and detached house plot 2, located just to the north.

The footings for house plots 1a and 1b were excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m, through a 0.5m deep layer of made-up ground, containing brick and stone rubble pieces, which overlaid the natural geological substratum. The made-up ground was sealed by a thick layer of concrete, presumably relating to the floor of the building which previously stood on the site. The southern-most trench of Plot 1a, revealed traces of earlier stratigraphy within the sections, in the form of a layer of buried topsoil, measuring approximately 0.4m deep, lying above the natural sandy clay, but sealed in this area by the layer of modern overburden.

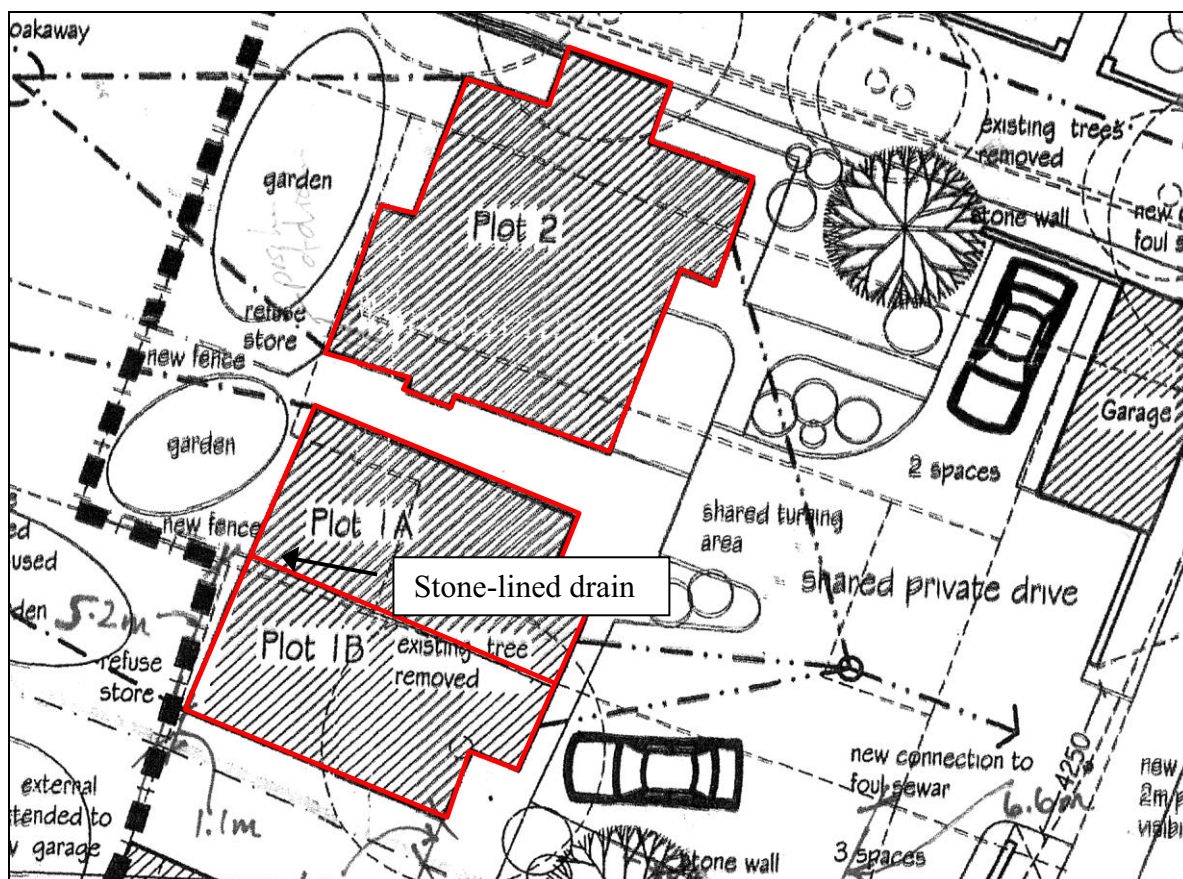


Figure 17. Location of house plots 1a, 1b and 2, with position of stone-lined drain marked (figure 20 below; not to scale).



Figure 18. Excavation of footings for house plots 1a and 1b. Looking west.



Figure 19. As above, looking north.

At the western end of the dividing wall trench between plots 1a and 1b, the machine was observed to truncate a stone-lined drain, likely to have been associated with the 18th century barn which previously stood on the site. The drain opening measured roughly 0.3m square and was located approximately 0.8m below the ground surface, and appeared to be aligned east/west although this could not be seen in plan. The visible remains consisted of roughly square-cut sandstone ‘slabs’ and the drain was still open, having clearly been active until the demolition of the structure above.



Figure 20. Remains of stone-lined drain seen in east facing section of plot 1a, with trowel shown for scale. Looking west.

House plot 2 was located to the north of plots 1a and 1b and the footings of this were excavated to a similar depth, within an area of increasing ground contamination, by wet, cess-like material. No archaeological deposits or features were seen within this area.

Visit 5: 15/07/2011

The final site visit was made by Wayne Jarvis on the 15th of July 2011, to monitor the excavation of foundation trenches associated with the extension and conversion of a 19th-century brick cow-shed, located at the north-eastern side of the development.

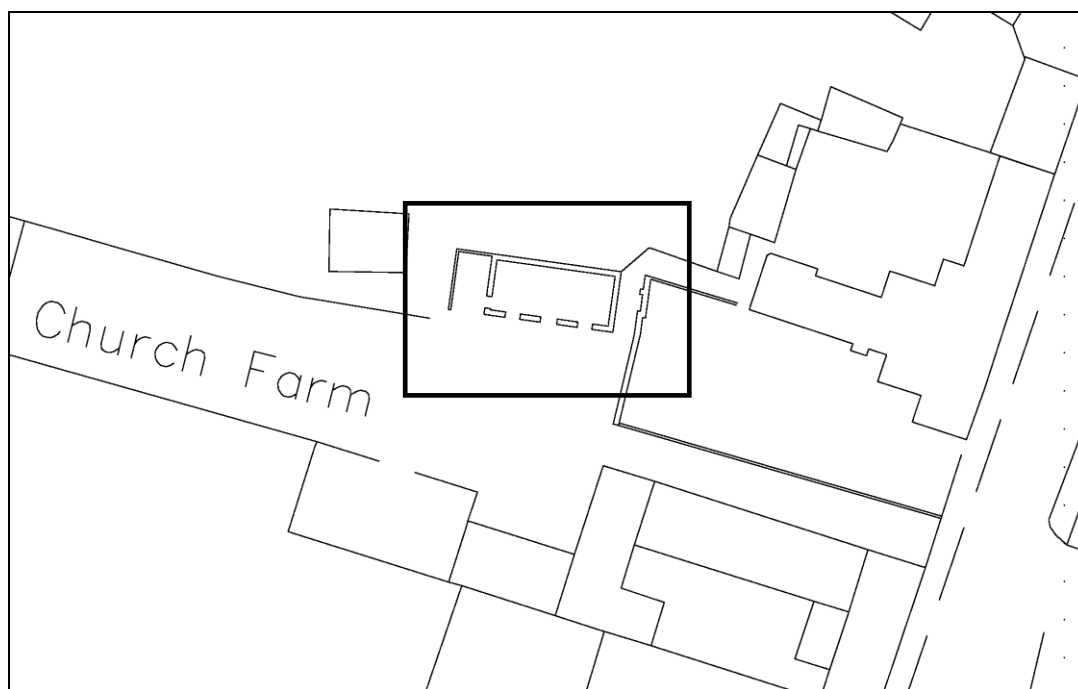


Figure 21. Location of 19th century cowshed. Not to scale.



Figure 22. 19th century cowshed prior to development.

Following the demolition of the lean-to store which was formerly located at the western end of the range, new footings were excavated at both ends of the existing building.

On the western side, foundation trenches measured 0.6m wide and were excavated to a depth of 1m, through ground which showed evidence of previous disturbance, probably during the construction and demolition of the lean-to structure. Revealed within the northern foundation trench and running beneath the northern wall of the 19th century structure was a stone-lined drain, with the opening measuring roughly 0.3m square.

On the eastern side of the existing structure, foundation trenches measured 0.5m wide and up to 1.4m deep. The overburden on this side consisted of a layer of rich, loamy garden soil measuring 0.8m deep, overlying the natural sandy clay substratum, with evidence for previously disturbed ground on the southern side. A stone drain revealed in the northern foundation trench appeared to be a continuation of the same drainage feature seen on the eastern side of the existing structure; this appeared to curve towards the south-east and was still open and found to contain water.

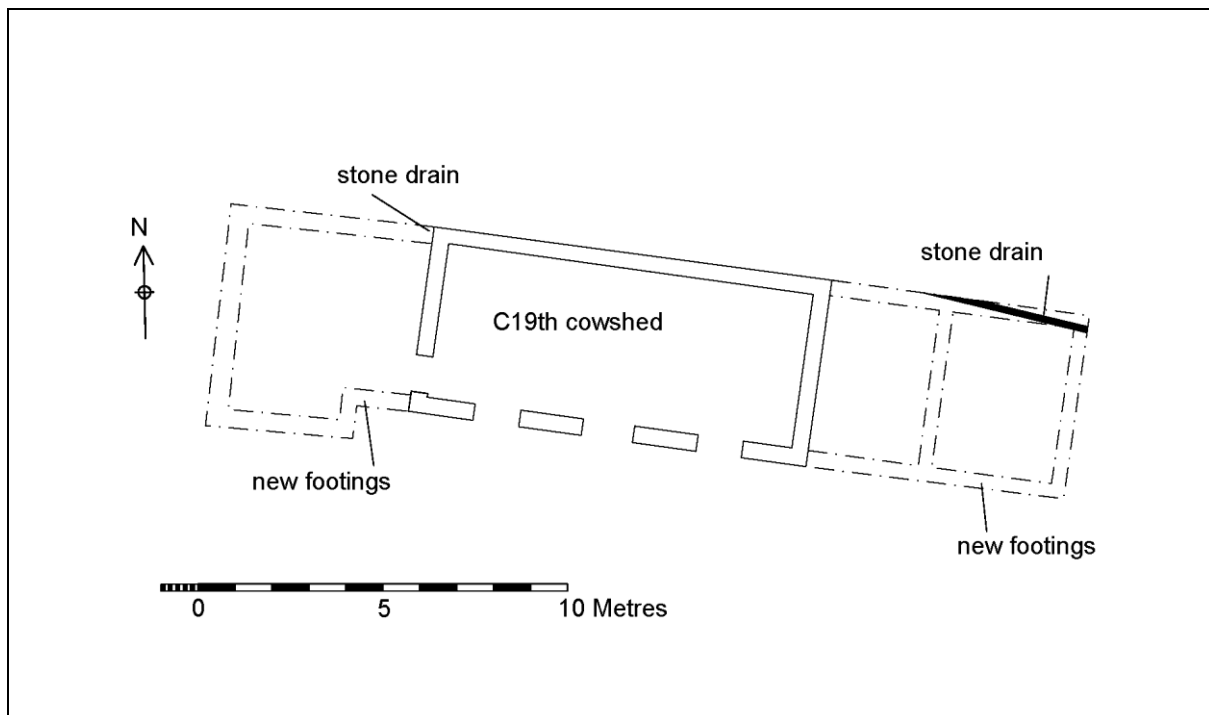


Figure 23. Plan of excavated footings for barn extension.



Figure 24. Excavation of footings on the western side of the 19th-century cowshed. Looking north.



Figure 25. As above, looking east.



Figure 26. Detail of above, with opening for drain located beneath northern wall of existing building. Looking east.



Figure 27. Excavation of footings on eastern side of 19th century cowshed.



Figure 28. Detail of above, looking north-east.



Figure 29. South-facing section of northern trench, showing northern 'wall' of stone drain.
Looking north-east.

6. Conclusion

The archaeological watching brief carried out during the excavation of footings for a new garage on land adjacent to Church Farm and number 14 Melton Road, Waltham on the Wolds, revealed no evidence of archaeologically significant deposits. A single-storey, stone-built stable building which formerly stood on the site, appears on the late 19th-century edition

Ordnance Survey Map of the area, but was demolished prior to the commencement of the watching brief. An area of dark greenish, grey/brown clay silt in the vicinity of the south-eastern corner of the former building may represent the remains of farmyard waste or slurry. The remains of two stone drains were recorded on site, likely to date to the late 18th or early 19th centuries, which may have been associated with the contemporary farm buildings on the site.

7. Archive

The watching brief archive consists of this report, site notes and plans, digital colour photographs and black and white negatives.

This will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under Accession No. X.A126.2010.

8. 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 reports.

9. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken by Sophie Clarke, Wayne Jarvis and Mathew Morris and the project was managed by Richard Buckley. ULAS would like to thank HSSP Architects and Duffin Builders for the provision of their survey drawings.

10. Bibliography

English Heritage 2006 *Understanding Historic Buildings. A guide to good recording practice*. London: English Heritage

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