

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
On land at The Black Horse,
17, Market Place,
Market Bosworth,
Leicestershire, (SK 406 030)**

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For: Market Bosworth Parish Council

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An Archaeological Watching Brief on Land at The Black Horse, 17, Market Place, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire (SK 406 030)

Leon Hunt

Summary`

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land at The Black Horse, 17, Market Place, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire (SK 406 030). The site lies within the medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Market Bosworth. The site was once part of the cattle market. Archaeological work had been carried out on the neighbouring site to the east, known as the Cattle Market site. This evaluation and subsequent excavation recorded archaeological features from several periods, including Iron Age and Roman activity and medieval boundary ditches. The watching brief revealed no archaeological features or finds relating to archaeological features. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services with accession number X.A209.2005.

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Market Bosworth Parish Council to carry out a watching brief during the creation of a new car park on land at The Black Horse, 17, Market Place, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire (NGR SK 406 030). Archaeological work was required as a condition of the planning permission granted by Leicestershire County Council (planning application No. 04/00892/COU).

The site lies within the medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Market Bosworth and the planned development of the new car park was seen to have the potential to have a damaging impact on any archaeological remains if present.

The site lies adjacent to the Cattle Market site, where archaeological work was carried out on behalf of Cadeby Homes by ULAS in 1996. The work here recorded a prehistoric pit, a Roman ditch and medieval ditches, which were most likely property boundaries. Other undated postholes were also observed. (Gossip 1996). Prehistoric and Roman discoveries had been made in the past around the town, including a Roman Villa just to the north of the town (NGR SK 406 035) and possible Bronze Age ring ditches at Bosworth Park (NGR SK 411 030).

The work involved the removal of existing concrete and the excavation of formation layers for hardcore and an asphalt surface. It was also planned to excavate an entranceway into the car park from Rectory Lane. This would involve the removal of the existing railings and shrubbery and the grading of the ground surface from the pathway on Rectory Lane into the car park. There were also a number of service trenches to be excavated.

The Planning Archaeologist at the Historic and Natural Environment Team, Leicestershire County Council prepared a Brief For An Archaeological Watching Brief for the site dated 30th September 2004 (Appendix). This document detailed the need for a watching brief during the ground-works.

Site Location and Geology

The development site is located in the village of Market Bosworth, adjacent, and to the south of the existing car park of The Black Horse Public House and on the northern side of Rectory Lane (Figure 2). It consists of an area of c.730 square metres. Prior to the development the land consisted of a concreted surface, partially enclosed by fencing and railings (Plate 2).

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain (Solid and Drift) Sheet 155 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of glacial sand and gravel overlying Mercia Mudstone. The land lies at a height of c.129m OD.

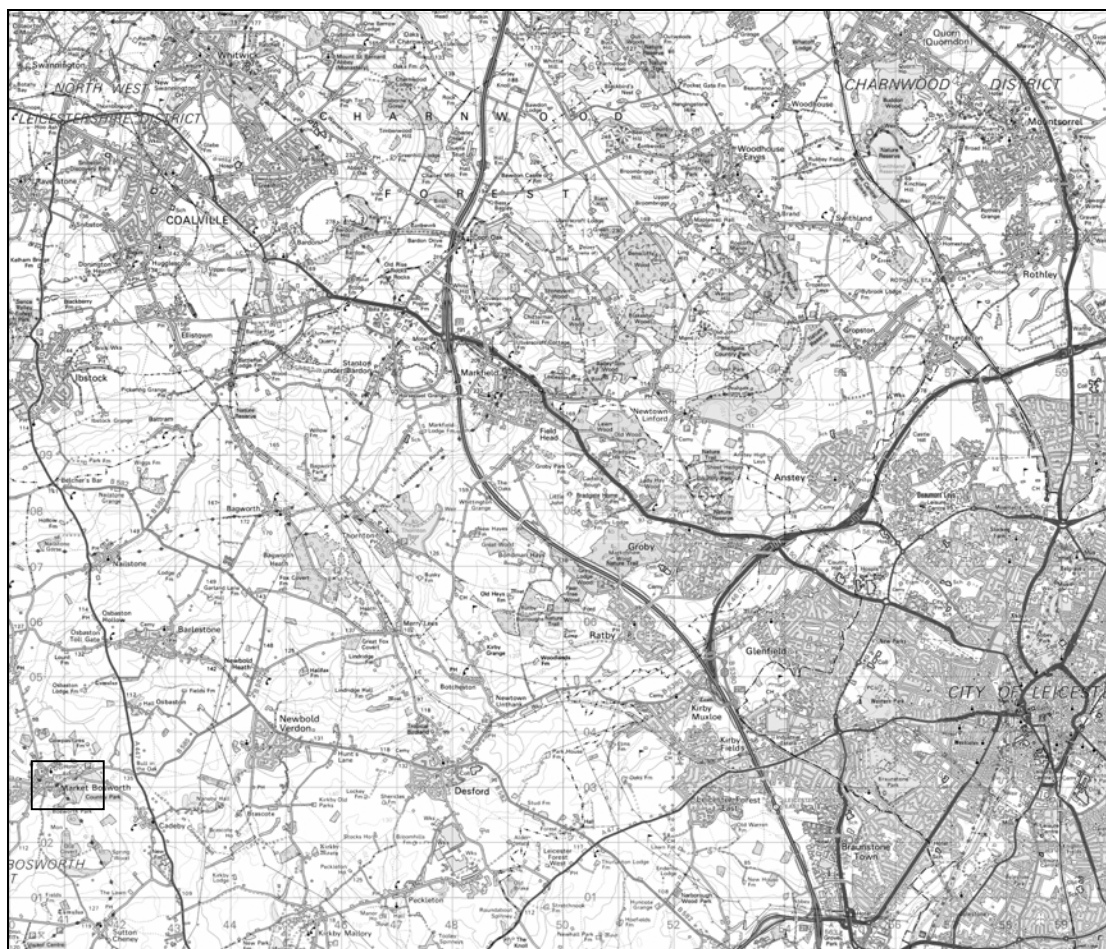


Figure 1: Location map of Market Bosworth. OS Map Landranger 140: Leicester, Coventry & Rugby

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Aims and Methods

The purpose of the watching brief was to ascertain whether archaeological deposits were present. If so, the character, extent and date range of any deposits identified would be established, in order to assess their significance. Recording of these deposits would be carried out as appropriate, and an archive and this report produced. The

work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, and adhered to the University's Health and Safety policy.

An archaeologist visited the site on 24th, 28th and 30th November and the 6th December 2005 and ground-works associated with the development were observed (Figure. 3). The spoil heaps were also examined for archaeological finds.

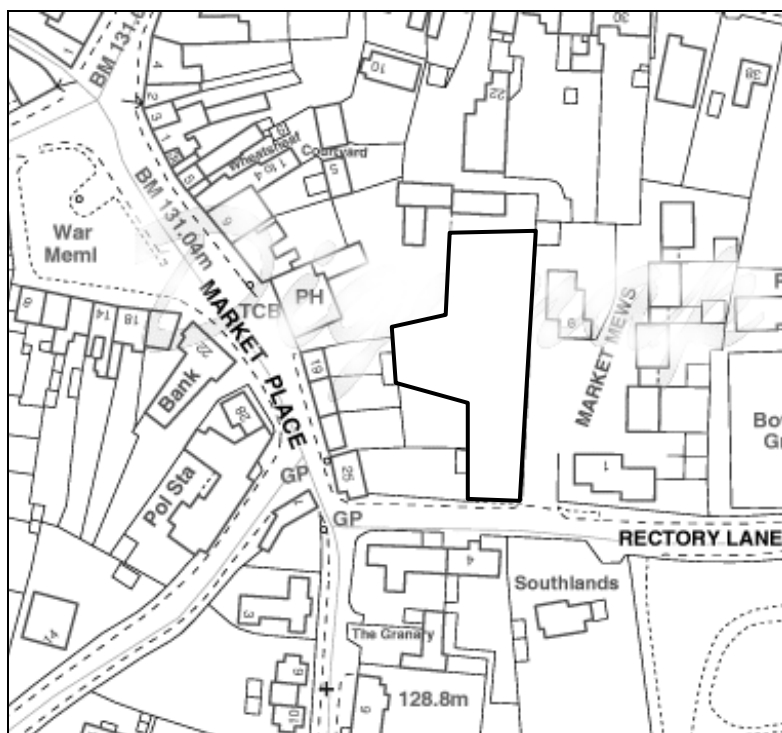


Figure 2: Location plan of development site (highlighted). Scale: 1:2500

Results

The site was initially visited on 23/11/05 and the excavation of the entranceway from Rectory Lane into the car park was observed. This required the removal of small shrubs and a large set of railings, with their footings, and the removal of a substantial amount of soil and natural clay. The depth of the excavation at the front of Rectory Lane was approximately 0.8m, which rose up in a 1:10 slope onto the main car park area for 10m (Plate 4).

The entranceway was completed on 28/11/05. The sequence of deposits visible in the section at the entranceway of the car park was very clear and consisted of 0.2m of very dark brown loam topsoil, overlying 0.3m of brown subsoil (Plate 5). This overlay the natural substratum of brownish orange sandy clay. No archaeological features were observed during these visits. A clay pipe and a small stoneware bottle were recovered from the topsoil.

The concrete on the site had been broken on 24/11/05 and the clearing for the debris and the excavation of formation levels was begun on 28/11/05 and continued throughout the following week. The topsoil stripping was observed on 28/11/05 and 30/11/05. The topsoil was stripped to a depth of 0.2m-0.3m and this exposed the brown subsoil beneath (Plate 3). In places the stripping exposed areas that had been previously disturbed. These included a patch of building debris close to the western side of the site near the small brick sheds and also in under the concreted area in the northeast corner of the site (Figure 3).

A slightly waterlogged area close to the western edge of the site was excavated to a depth of around 0.6m to a more substantial layer. This exposed the natural substratum below the subsoil (Plate 6). The natural substratum consisted of patches of soft clayey sand and clay and occasional patches of gravel. No archaeological features were observed during these visits, although a few sherds of pottery and two small coin-shaped objects were recovered from the topsoil.

During the visit of 06/12/05 the improvement of existing services was observed. (Figure 3). This consisted of a small amount of excavation around the existing drains. For the most part the areas were disturbed, although it was possible to observe the sequence of the area in the northwest corner (Figure 3 & Plate 7). This consisted of a 0.15m layer of subsoil overlying red sand. No archaeological finds or features were discovered during these excavations.

The excavation of a 2 x 3m hole to accommodate a new interceptor tank was to take place subsequent to the previous services work. As this was to be placed very close to the building on the west side of the site on ground that was mainly disturbed and due to the paucity of archaeology found on the site as a whole, the visiting archaeologist decided that it was unnecessary for this area to be examined.

Conclusion

The excavations in the southern part of the site during the creation of the entranceway revealed no archaeology. No archaeology was discovered during the excavation of the drainage and the waterlogged areas. Throughout the rest of the site only the topsoil was removed and was not deep enough to expose any archaeology.

The pottery consisted of a fragment of yellow ware (*c.* 1500-1750), a sherd of mottled ware (*c.* 1650-1780), fragment of a brown salt glazed stoneware mug (18th century). The white clay pipe, which has a milled rim, was dated to the late 18th or early 19th century and the small brown salt glazed stoneware bottle was dated to the 19th century and was possibly an inkwell. All these finds were recovered from the topsoil and therefore could not be related to any archaeological context.

The proximity of the site to the previously excavated Cattle Market site meant that the site had considerable potential for archaeological remains. However, the only area of the site excavated to any considerable depth was the entranceway at Rectory Lane and the drainage work and these excavations revealed no evidence of archaeological features. Throughout the remainder of the site the ground-works did not penetrate to a depth sufficient to reveal archaeological remains. The watching brief therefore was shown to have been a successful mitigation strategy for the work on this site.

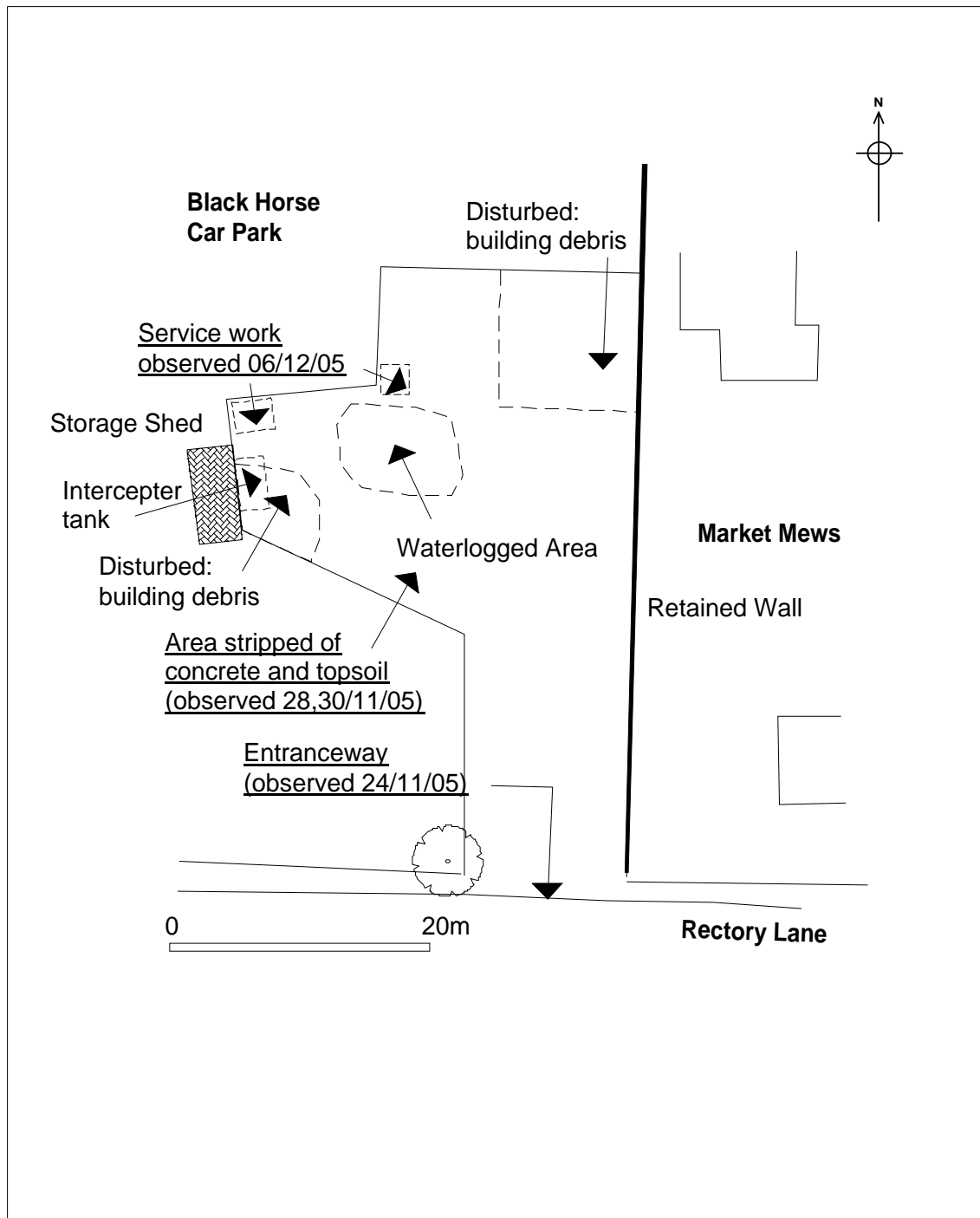


Figure 3: Plan of site, showing areas and features observed during watching brief

Bibliography

Gossip, James 1996 *An Archaeological Excavation on the site of the Cattle Market, Rectory Lane, Market Bosworth, Leicestershire (SK 4073 0306)*. ULAS Report No. 96/68

Ripper, S., 1996 *An Archaeological Evaluation at the former cattle Market, Market Bosworth*. ULAS Report 96/21

Archive

The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire Historic and Natural Environment Team with accession number X.A209.2003 and consists of the following:

4 watching brief record sheets

CD of digital photographs

1 Architect's Plan

Acknowledgements

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Plate 1: Site before commencement of work, looking north



Plate 2: Proposed entranceway prior to excavation and after removal of railings and shrubs, looking east northeast



Plate 3: Area stripped of topsoil close to west corner of site, looking east



Plate 4: Entranceway after excavation but before laying hardcore



Plate 5: West facing section at entranceway, looking northwest



Plate 6: Excavation of waterlogged area to western side of site, showing natural substratum. Disturbed area to left and rear of picture



Plate 7: South facing section of service trench in northwest corner, looking north

APPENDIX:

**BRIEF FOR AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT THE
BLACK HORSE, 17, MARKET PLACE, MARKET BOSWORTH,
LEICESTERSHIRE**