

Archaeological Services

An archaeological watching brief during groundworks at Mount Pleasant, Back Lane, Burton Overy, Leicestershire (SP 6775 9803)

Andrew Hyam



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for

Marianne Robinson
Planning Application Number 12/00032/FUL

Checked by Project Manager

Signed:

Date: 6/6/2012

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Mount Pleasant, Back Lane, Burton Overy, Leicestershire. The work took place on the 5th and 6th of April 2012 during foundation excavation and groundworks for a garage and two-storey house extension. The site lies at the heart of the medieval and post medieval village core and close to a Scheduled Monument consisting of medieval fishponds and earthworks, hence the requirement for archaeological work.

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.A44 2012

Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) was commissioned by Marianne Robinson to carry out an archaeological watching brief during groundworks at Mount Pleasant, Back Lane, Burton Overy, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 6775 9803).

This archaeological work was in accordance with Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment, Policy HE12.3 (DCLG 2010).

The watching brief was required as a condition of the planning consent for a new development at the site, including the demolition of an attached outbuilding and the erection of a two-storey rear extension and a detached garage. (Planning Application No. 12/00032/FUL).

The site lies within the medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Burton Overy (HER Ref No. MLE9035) and lies 70m to the south of the Scheduled Monument of medieval manorial banks and fishponds (MLE1343).

Location and Geology

The site lies on the south side of the northern corner of Back Lane, Burton Overy, Harborough District of Leicestershire. Back Lane forms a hollow way running in an arc from Main Street to the east and down to Washbrook Lane to the south (Fig. 1). The development site is on a raised platform which slopes sharply down to the road and has an overall gentle slope down towards the southern boundary of the site (Figs 2 and 3). The existing detached two-storey house dates from the early part of the 20th century and forms an L-shape with the principal elevation facing to the west over the north to south portion of Back Lane. Prior to the development, two small outbuildings were attached to the south-eastern corner of the house (Fig. 4). These had been demolished by the time of the watching brief leaving only their foundations and a thin concrete base. The outbuildings will be replaced by a two-storey extension which will almost double the footprint of the present house (Fig. 5). In the south-east corner of the site a small garage or shed had also been demolished leaving a base of unbonded

red bricks. A concrete and tarmac driveway leads up onto the north-east corner of the site from Back Lane. The remainder of the garden has a variety of small trees, shrubs and lawn areas.

The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology of the site is likely to be Oadby Member Diamicton overlying Charmouth Mudstone (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain).



Figure 1. Site Location 1km grid. North to top of map

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Historical and Archaeological Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies within an area of archaeological interest, within the medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Burton Overy (HER ref: MLE9035).

The proposed development is situated c.70m south of the Scheduled Monument of the medieval manorial fishponds and banks (MLE1343), which are thought to have formed part of an impressive garden. Several 17th- and 18th-century buildings are also recorded in the vicinity, including the Manor Farmhouse, White House Farmhouse and the former Wheatridge. Consequently, it was considered by the planning archaeologist that the development proposals had the potential to damage or destroy buried archaeological remains.

The 1904 Ordnance Survey map shows no development of this site but by the time the 1929 edition was published the house is shown in the same outline as seen before the start of the works, with the garage and outbuildings all being present.



Figure 2. Mount Pleasant, Back Lane Looking north-east



Figure 3. Development area Looking south from Back Lane.

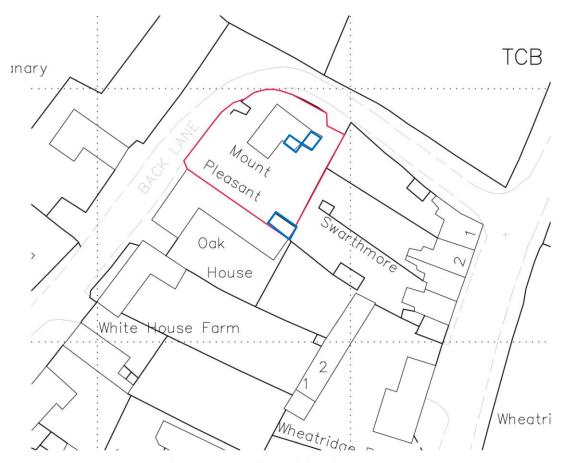


Figure 4: Location of development area Plan provided by developer. Buildings to be demolished highlighted in blue

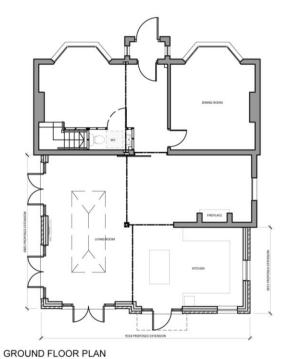


Figure 5. Proposed house extension
Plan supplied by developer. Existing walls shown in grey. North to right of plan

Archaeological Objectives

The main objective of the archaeological watching brief was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any significant archaeology on the site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The aims of the Watching Brief were:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits or historic building fabric
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits/ historic building fabric to be affected by the proposed ground-works.
- To record any archaeological deposits/ historic building fabric to be affected by the ground-works or building alterations.
- To advance the understanding of the heritage assets
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Methodology

All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2010) and adhered to their *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008).

A Design Specification for Archaeological Work (see Appendix 3) was produced by ULAS prior to the archaeological work being undertaken.

The project involved the supervision of overburden removal and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works.

The work consisted of the excavation of the foundation trenches associated with the construction of the garage in the south-eastern corner of the site and with the two-storey extension on the eastern side of the house.

The soils were removed in level spits by a tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. If significant archaeological remains were identified this would be followed by a programme of excavation and recording which would be undertaken during the course of the groundworks in order to keep interruption to the development work to a minimum.

Any archaeological deposits located would be hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Samples of all archaeological deposits located would require hand excavation and measured drawings of all archaeological features prepared at an appropriate scale and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans would be tied into the National Grid.

Any archaeological deposits located during the watching brief would be excavated and recorded as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention would also be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

Any excavated sections would be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. A photographic record of the archaeological work was made using both digital colour and 35mm black and white photographs.

Results

As noted above, the existing garage and small outbuildings had already been demolished prior to the commencement of the watching brief. The area of the proposed new garage was levelled by removing approximately 0.4m of disturbed topsoil in the north of the area going down to approximately 0.2m in the south in order to create a flat surface on which to work. Trenches with a width of 0.45m and a depth of 1m were excavated following the footprint of the garage (Fig. 6). The dark grey-brown clayish silt topsoil was very disturbed in this area and little distinction could be seen between it and the subsoil. A number of 20th-century fragments of pottery and building materials were seen throughout this layer. Between 0.1m and 0.3m of disturbed topsoil was removed to reveal the natural substratum of dark greenish-grey sandy clay which had patches of mid orange-brown sandy gravel patches within it especially towards the north-western corner. No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the excavation of the garage trenches.

The foundation trenches for the house extension were excavated with a width of 0.75m in a U-shape following the outline of the proposed two-storey structure. Much of the area around the north-western corner of the new foundations had been disturbed to a depth of around 0.4m by the original single-storey outbuildings. Beneath this disturbed layer was the same greenish-grey sandy clay natural substratum seen in the garage trenches although here there were significantly more patches of mid orangebrown sandy gravel and areas of mid orange-brown clay. The first foundation trench was excavated on the southern side of the proposed extension from the house towards a manhole cover accessing the existing services for the house. No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench except for a brick-built rainwater tank at the eastern corner. The bricks matched the size and type used in the house indicating the two are of the same age. Further excavation along the eastern foundation wall exposed more of the tank showing it to be concrete lined with bricks laid on end around the outside and measuring 1.6m in diameter (Fig. 7). Although still containing water the tank was also full of rubble so it was not possible to measure the depth of the structure.

Beyond the tank, to the north, the sewer pipes from the manhole ran towards the road along the line of the foundation trench. This effectively disturbed the original interface between subsoil and the natural substratum along the whole of the eastern side of the foundations. Along the northern foundation trench much of the area had been disturbed by the earlier outbuilding foundations so no archaeological features where observed.

No archaeological features or deposits were observed in either the house extension or garage foundations.



Figure 6. Garage foundation trench Looking east.



Figure 7. Fresh water tank within extension foundations Looking north. 1m scale

Conclusion

Despite the relatively high potential, no archaeological features or deposits were found during the course of the watching brief. The ground around the new development appears to have been quite heavily disturbed during the construction of the outbuildings, water tank and services. Where the natural substratum remained undisturbed there was however still no indication of any archaeological features.

Archive

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Service under Accession Number X.A44 2012

The archive consists of:

This report,

2 pro-forma watching brief form,

1 photo record sheet for the 35mm black and white photographs

1 contact sheet of 7 35mm black and white photographs,

35mm black and white negatives,

1 contact sheet of 22 digital photographs,

1 cd of this report and the digital photographs.

Publication

A record of the project will be submitted to the OASIS project. OASIS is an online index to archaeological grey literature.

Andrew Hyam

16.04.2012

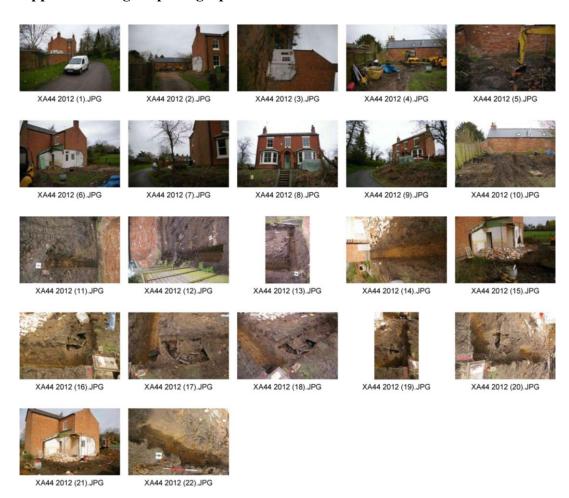
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Appendix 1. OASIS Information

	1
Project Name	Mount Pleasant, Back Lane, Burton Overy,
	Leicestershire
Project Type	Watching Brief
Project Manager	P Clay
Project Supervisor	A Hyam
Previous/Future work	No previous work.
Current Land Use	Residential
Development Type	Extension and garage
Reason for Investigation	Archaeological potential
Position in the Planning	As a condition
Process	
Site Co ordinates	SP 6775 9803
Start/end dates of field work	5.4.2012 - 6.4.2012
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire Museums
Study Area	Approx 50m ²

Appendix 2. Digital photographs



Appendix 3. Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological work

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Written Scheme of Investigation for archaeological attendance,

inspection and recording (watching brief)

Mount Pleasant, Back Lane, Burton Overy SP 6775 9803

For: Marianne Robinson

Planning application: 12/00032/FUL

Planning Authority: Harborough District Council

1 Introduction

Definition and scope of the specification

- 1.1 This document is a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for archaeological attendance and monitoring at the above site, in accordance with PPS5 (Planning for the Historic Environment). This specification provides a written scheme for an archaeological watching brief, as required by the Planning Authority, in connection with: Demolition of attached outbuildings; erection of two and single storey rear extensions and detached garage; alterations to existing driveway and front steps:
- 1.2 The document provides details of the following work proposed by ULAS on behalf of the client as recommended by the Senior Planning Archaeologist...
 - Archaeological monitoring of development groundworks

2. Background

Context of the Project (from the advice letter)

2.1. The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies within an area of archaeological interest, within the medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Burton Overy (HER ref: MLE9035). The proposed development is situated c.70m south of the Scheduled Monument of the medieval manorial fishponds and banks (MLE1343), which are thought to have formed part of an impressive garden. Several 17th and 18th century buildings are also recorded in the vicinity, including the Manor Farmhouse, White House Farmhouse and the former Wheatridge. Consequently, there is a likelihood that buried archaeological remains will be affected by the development.

3. Archaeological Aims and Objectives

- 3.1 The purpose of the archaeological work may be summarised as follows:
 - To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits or historic building fabric.
 - To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits/historic building fabric to be affected by the proposed ground works.
 - To record any archaeological deposits/historic building fabric to be affected by the ground works or building alterations.
 - To advance understanding of the heritage assets
 - To produce an archive and report of any results.

4. Methodology

General methods

- 4.1 All work will follow the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2010) and adhere to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008).
- 4.2 Staffing, recording systems, health and safety provisions and insurance details are included below.
- 4.3 An accession number will be obtained prior to commencement of the project and used to identify all records and artefacts.

Archaeological attendance for inspection and recording

- 4.4 The project will involve a watching brief by an experienced professional archaeologist. during during groundworks During these works, if any archaeological deposits are seen to be present, the archaeologist will record areas of archaeological interest.
- 4.5 Excavation should be undertaken by a mechanical excavator using a toothless bucket for stripping in level spits. A toothed bucket may be used for removing modern overburden or rubble deposits.
- 4.6 If the initial monitoring identifies areas of no archaeological interest (e.g. modern made ground or disturbed areas), then the archaeologist may stand down monitoring of that area.
- 4.7 If significant archaeological deposits are discovered work may need to be halted in order for contingency excavation and recording to be carried out. The archaeologist will co-operate at all times with the contractors on site to ensure the minimum interruption to the work.
- 4.8 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.
- 4.9 Archaeological deposits will be excavated and recorded using standard ULAS procedures. Sufficient of any archaeological features or deposits will be hand excavated in order to provide the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Standard sampling amounts are:
 - 50% of the exposed area of each pit and other discrete archaeological features.
 - 10% (minimum 1m section) of the exposed lengths of linear features (including slotted and interrupted ditches and pit alignments). Excavation sections will be placed to provide adequate coverage of the features and will include excavation of terminals and intersections. A flexible approach will be adopted to the location of excavation samples such that areas of exposed ditch fill with higher artefact or ecofact content may be targeted.
 - 25% of ring gullies will normally be excavated to include excavation of the terminals. Special regard will be given to significant stratigraphic relationships and concentrations of artefactual material.
 - Structural and foundation deposits will be exposed and cleaned with a view to defining their nature and any relationships.
- 4.10 All below ground stratigraphy will be recorded. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.
- 4.11 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.
- 4.12 Spoil will be monitored for artefacts. A representative sample of unstratified finds may be retained.
- 4.13 Any human remains encountered will be initially left in situ, covered and protected, and only be removed in accordance with a Ministry of Justice licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The landowner and/or developer, the Planning Authority and the coroner will be informed immediately of their discovery.

Preservation in situ and Contingency Provisions

- 4.14 In the event of significant archaeological remains being located during the archaeological investigation there may be the need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken.
- 4.15 On the discovery of potentially significant remains the archaeologist will inform the developer and the planning authority in order for detailed discussion between all relevant parties to take place.

Recording Systems

- 4.16 The ULAS recording manual will be used as a guide for all recording.
- 4.17 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto pro-forma recording sheets.
- 4.18 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 trench plan at appropriate scale, which will show the location of the areas investigated in relationship to the investigation area and OS grid.
- 4.19 A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made. Sections including the half-sections of individual layers of features will be drawn as necessary. The relative height of all principal strata and features will be recorded. The stratigraphy of all trenches shall be recorded even where no archaeological features are identified.
- 4.20 A photographic record of the investigations will be prepared as per the brief, 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.
- 4.21 This record will be compiled and checked during the course of the excavations.

5 Finds & samples

- 5.1 The IfA Guidelines for Finds Work will be adhered to.
- An Accession number will be obtained prior to the commencement of any on-site works, that will be used to identify all records and finds from the site.
- 5.3 Any finds that may constitute 'treasure' under the Treasure Act, 1996 will be reported to the local Coroner and removed to a safe place.
- All antiquities, valuables, objects or remains of archaeological interest, other than articles declared by Coroner's Inquest to be subject to the Treasure Act, discovered in or under the Site during the carrying out of the project by ULAS or during works carried out on the Site by the Client shall be deemed to be the property of ULAS provided that ULAS after due examination of the said Archaeological Discoveries shall transfer ownership of all Archaeological Discoveries unconditionally to LCC for storage in perpetuity.
- 5.4 All identified finds and artefacts are to be retained, although certain classes of building material will, in some circumstances, be discarded after recording.
- 5.5 Although the environmental potential of the site is uncertain, if significant archaeological features are sample excavated, the following environmental sampling strategy will be adopted, following consultation with the ULAS Environmental Officer.
 - i. A range of features to represent all feature types, areas and phases will be selected on a judgmental basis. The criteria for selection will be that deposits are datable, well sealed and with little intrusive or residual material.
 - ii. Any buried soils or well-sealed deposits with concentrations of carbonised material present will be intensively sampled taking a known proportion of the deposit.
 - iii. Spot samples will be taken where concentrations of environmental remains are located.

- iv. Waterlogged remains, if present, will be sampled for pollen, plant macrofossils, insect remains and radiocarbon dating provided that they are uncontaminated and datable. Consultation with the specialist will be undertaken.
- 5.6 Wet sieving with flotation will be carried out using a York Archaeological Trust sieving tank with a 0.5mm mesh and a 0.3mm flotation sieve. The small size mesh will be used initially as flotation of plant remains may be incomplete and some may remain in the residue. The residue > 0.5mm from the tank will be separated into coarse fractions of over 4mm and fine fractions of > 0.5-4mm. The coarse fractions will be sorted for finds. The fine fractions and flots will be evaluated and prioritised; only those with remains apparent will be sorted. The prioritised flots will not be sorted until the analysis stage when phasing information is available. Flots will be scanned and plant remains from selected contexts will be identified and further sampling, sieving and sorting targeted towards higher potential deposits.
- 5.7 Where there is evidence for industrial activity, macroscopic technological residues (or a sample of them) may be collected. Separate samples (c. 10ml) may be collected for microslags (hammer-scale and spherical droplets). All industrial samples will be undertaken with reference to the Centre for Archaeology Guideline on Archaeometallurgy (English Heritage 2001).
- 5.8 All finds and samples will be treated in a proper manner. Where appropriate they will be cleaned, marked and receive remedial conservation in accordance with recognised best practice. This will include the site code number, finds number and context number. Bulk finds will be bagged in clear self sealing plastic bags, again marked with site code, finds and context

6. Report and Archive

- Arrangements will be made for the archive, consisting of record sheets, original drawings, drawn plans, photographs, notes, copies of all reports along with an index to the archive to be deposited at Leicestershire Museums in accordance with the relevant procedures.
- 6.3 The archive will be quantified, ordered, indexed and internally consistent and marked with the site accession number.
- 6.4 The archive will be prepared in line with appropriate professional guidelines (e.g. UKIC and ADS guidelines for the preparation of archaeological archives for long term storage and *Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in creation, compilation, transfer and curation* (AAF 2007).
- 6.7 The full report in A4 format will usually follow within six weeks of the completion of the fieldwork and copies will be directed to the client, the Planning Authority and to the Historic Environment Record.
- 6.8 The report will include consideration of:
 - A non-technical summary.
 - The aims and methods adopted in the course of the work.
 - The location, date, significance and quality of the building.
 - The nature, location and extent of any structural, artefactual and environmental material uncovered.
 - The anticipated degree of survival of archaeological deposits.
 - The local, regional and national context as appropriate highlighting any research priorities where applicable.
 - Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
 - The location and size of the archive.
 - Contents of the archive

7 Publication and Dissemination of Results

- 7.1 A summary of the work will be submitted to the local archaeological journal. A larger report will be submitted for inclusion if the results of the evaluation warrant it.
- 7.2 University of Leicester Archaeological Services supports the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) project. The online OASIS form at http://ads.ac.uk/project/oasis will be completed detailing the results of the project. Once the report has become a public document following its incorporation into the HER it may be placed on the web-site.

8. Copyright

8.1 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.

9. Timetable

- 9.1 A date for the commencement of the watching brief is to be confirmed.
- 10. Health and Safety
- 10.1 A Risks Assessment form will be completed prior to work commencing onsite, and updated as necessary during the site works (see end of this document).

11 Insurance

11.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. Employers Liability Insurance and Public/Products Liability Insurance Allianz Insurance plc Policy No. SZ/21696148 Professional Indemnity Insurance – Newline Underwriting Management Ltd Policy No. WD1100541

12. Monitoring arrangements

- 12.1 Unlimited access to monitor the project will be available to both the Client and his representatives and to the Planning Authority subject to the health and safety requirements of the site. Notice will be given to the Development Control Archaeologist before the commencement of the archaeological survey in order that monitoring arrangements can be made.
- 12.2 Internal monitoring will be carried out by the ULAS project manager.

13. Bibliography

AAF Archaeological Archives: A Guide to Best Practice in creation, compilation,

2007 transfer and curation

English Centre for Archaeology Guidelines on Archaeometallurgy

Heritage 2001

Institute for

Archaeologists Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

(IfA) 2008

Institute for

Archaeologists Code of Conduct

(IfA) 2010

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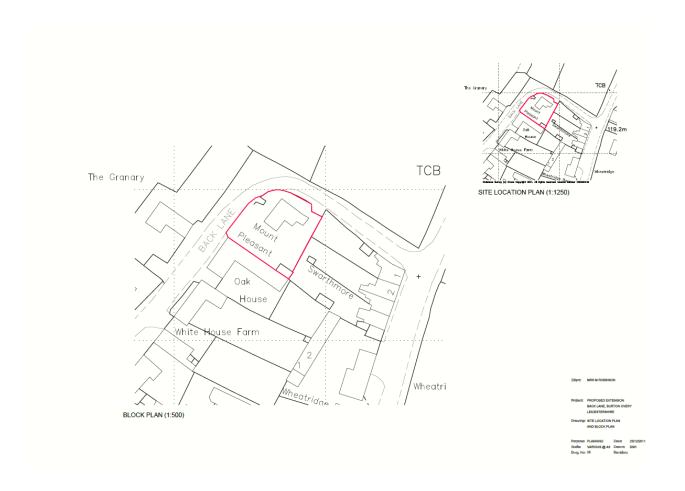


Fig. 1a Site Location (100m grid)

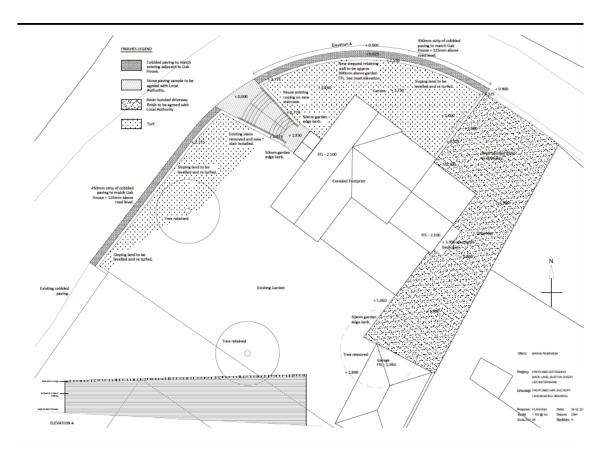


Fig 2 Proposed landscaping (not to scale)

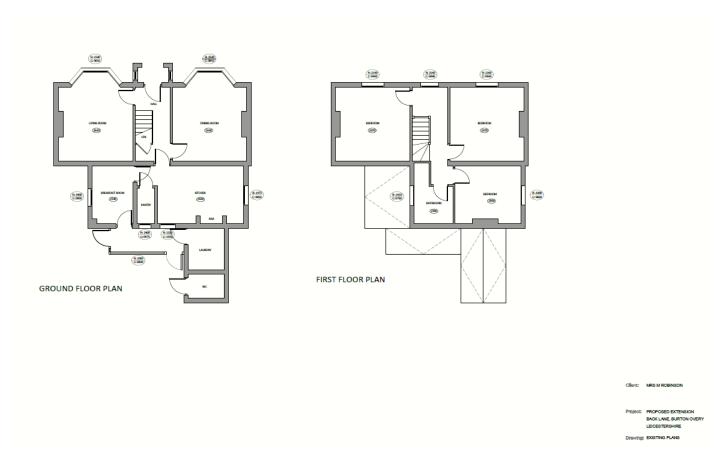


Fig 3 Existing plans



Fig 4 proposed plan

Contact Details

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