

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
At Crown Passage, High Street East,  
Uppingham, Rutland. (SK 867 996)**

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**For: Everards Brewery Ltd**

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D. Sawday

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## **An Archaeological Watching Brief At Crown Passage, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland. (SK 867 996)**

**Leon Hunt**

### **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) during the excavation of foundation trenches at the rear of the Crown Public House, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland. The site lies within the historic core of Uppingham with the potential for the survival of archaeological deposits of a medieval date. The watching brief revealed a wall and a number of pit features and medieval pottery. The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services or with Rutland County Museum with accession number RT05.2005*

### **Introduction**

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) were commissioned by Everards Brewery Ltd to carry out a watching brief during the excavation of foundation trenches for an extension and alterations to the Crown Public House, 19-21, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland (SK 867 996). Archaeological work was required as a condition of the planning permission granted by Leicestershire County Council (planning application No. 95/0367/9; 95/0368/9).

The site lies within the historic core of Uppingham, which is a medieval town with a number of extant medieval buildings including a church with a 14th century tower. Sites indicating prehistoric, Roman and Saxon activity have also been located in the vicinity.

The planned development of a small extension, to be used as a bottle store, to the rear of the Crown Public House was seen to have the potential to have a damaging impact on any archaeological remains if present.

The correspondence from the Planning Officer at Rutland District Council dated 20th July 1995 requested archaeological attendance for inspection and recording of any remains present, therefore a *Design Specification for Archaeological Work* was prepared by ULAS (Appendix 2).

### **Site Location and Geology**

The development site is located on the north side of High Street East, behind the Crown Public House and consists of a roughly rectangular plot measuring 4.5m by 2.5m (Figures 1 & 2).



## **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 (see Appendix 2, Design Specification). 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 and ULAS's Health and Safety policy.

An archaeologist visited the site on the 23rd July 2005 and groundworks associated with the development were observed (Figure 3).

## **Archaeological Background**

The following is summarised from Desk-Based assessment prepared for previous work in Uppingham (Browning 2000):

*Early activity in the Uppingham area is suggested by prehistoric finds. A Neolithic leaf-shaped arrowhead was found in a garden at Rutland Close (80SE. AX) and a variety of flints, which included Mesolithic and early Neolithic elements, was recovered during a watching brief on Leicester Road (80SE. AW). More than 200 worked flints were among finds recovered from a garden south of Gower Lodge. These were mostly waste flakes with a few tool types (89NE.AA). Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery were also recovered from the garden.*

*A number of medieval sites are listed in the SMR. Uppingham is a medieval town and was granted a market in 1281 (89NE.AS). The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul (89NE.AK) is medieval with its most dominant feature being a 14th century tower. A Grade II listed building of probable late medieval date is to be found at 27 High Street East. The house has a probable date of 1467 although its facade is later and appears to be 17th century (89NE.AW). The town also had a medieval windmill (89NE.AT). A number of medieval potsherds of Stamford Ware were recovered from an ironstone layer during construction work at Meadowsweet Nursery (89NE. AY). Some insubstantial features of probable medieval date were noted during archaeological evaluation of land at 56 High Street in 1997 (89NE. AZ).*

More recent work carried out by ULAS in Uppingham has shown that the town is located in an archaeological rich landscape. A possible late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pit circle was discovered during evaluations in Firs Avenue in 2000, along with Iron Age ditches (Chapman 2000).

## **Results**

An archaeologist visited the site on 23rd July 2003 and the excavation of a foundation trench was observed. This trench was 0.5m wide and 0.3m deep and was excavated close to the walls that bounded the development site.

The excavation revealed a mixed reddish brown sandy clay soil, which overlaid dark orangey brown sandy clay. The southernmost trench along the back wall of the public house was very disturbed, but both the western and northern trenches contained archaeology.

In the northern trench, which was excavated along the wall of a stone outbuilding (Figure 4b) the foundations could be observed overlying a curved sided pit (1), containing a dark brownish black fill, containing charcoal, glass and pottery. The glass was shown to be modern, but the pottery was of a 16th-17th century date (Appendix 1).

The western trench contained a section of wall (3)[4], oriented east-west, comprising medium sandstone undressed blocks, measuring approximately 0.1m in diameter. To the south of this feature was an area of red sandy clay (2) (Figure 4a).

Just to the north of these features were two sub-circular pits. The largest measured 0.25m across, with a u-shaped cut [6] containing a fill (5) of light brown sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks and small stones.

The smaller pit was more rounded with a shallow cut [8] containing a fill of greyish brown silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks and occasional stones. Both of these pits appeared to be cut into the dark orangey brown silty clay natural sub-stratum.

No datable finds were discovered within these two features.

A further area forming the eastern side of the extension was to be excavated at a later date (Figure 3), but this had been heavily disturbed, and so no further visits were made.

Discoveries of pottery, dating to the 16th-17th century were made from the two disturbed areas (9) and (10).

## **Conclusion**

The watching brief revealed evidence of archaeological activity in the study area, most likely of a medieval date.

The wall (3)[4] observed in the western trench (Figure 4a) obviously predates the neighbouring building, although it is unclear of the date of this feature and whether the pit (5)[6] and the post-hole (7)[8], which are also undated, are related to it in some way.

The red sandy clay layer (2) seems to lie only to the south of the wall and may represent a floor make-up layer associated with the wall.

The small pit (1) discovered under the foundations of the stone outbuilding (Figure 4b) yielded medieval pottery of a 16th-17th century date, although modern glass was also discovered within the fill. The date of the stone outbuilding is unclear; it is possible that the pit is medieval in origin and the glass found its way into the pit during the laying of the foundations for the outhouse.

Two further sherds of 16th-17th century pottery were recovered from the disturbed fill of the southern trench (9) and the disturbed eastern area (10), but were not associated with archaeological features.

The finds discovered during the watching brief highlight the fact that study area contains archaeology of a medieval date, most likely from the 16th and 17th centuries. However, although the archaeological features discovered are interesting in themselves they cannot be dated to any specific period.

### **Archive**

The archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council Heritage Services or Rutland County Museum with accession number RT05.2005 and consists of the following:

- 1 watching brief record sheet, including sketch plan
- 1 Sheet of A4 permatrace, with plan
- 1 A4 sheet, including section drawing
- 1 Architect's plan

### **Bibliography**

Browning. J., *An Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment for a Proposed New Languages Building at Uppingham School, Uppingham, Rutland* (Report No. 2000/39)

Chapman. S., *An Archaeological Evaluation at Firs Avenue, Uppingham, Rutland* (Report No. 2000/77)

### **Acknowledgements**

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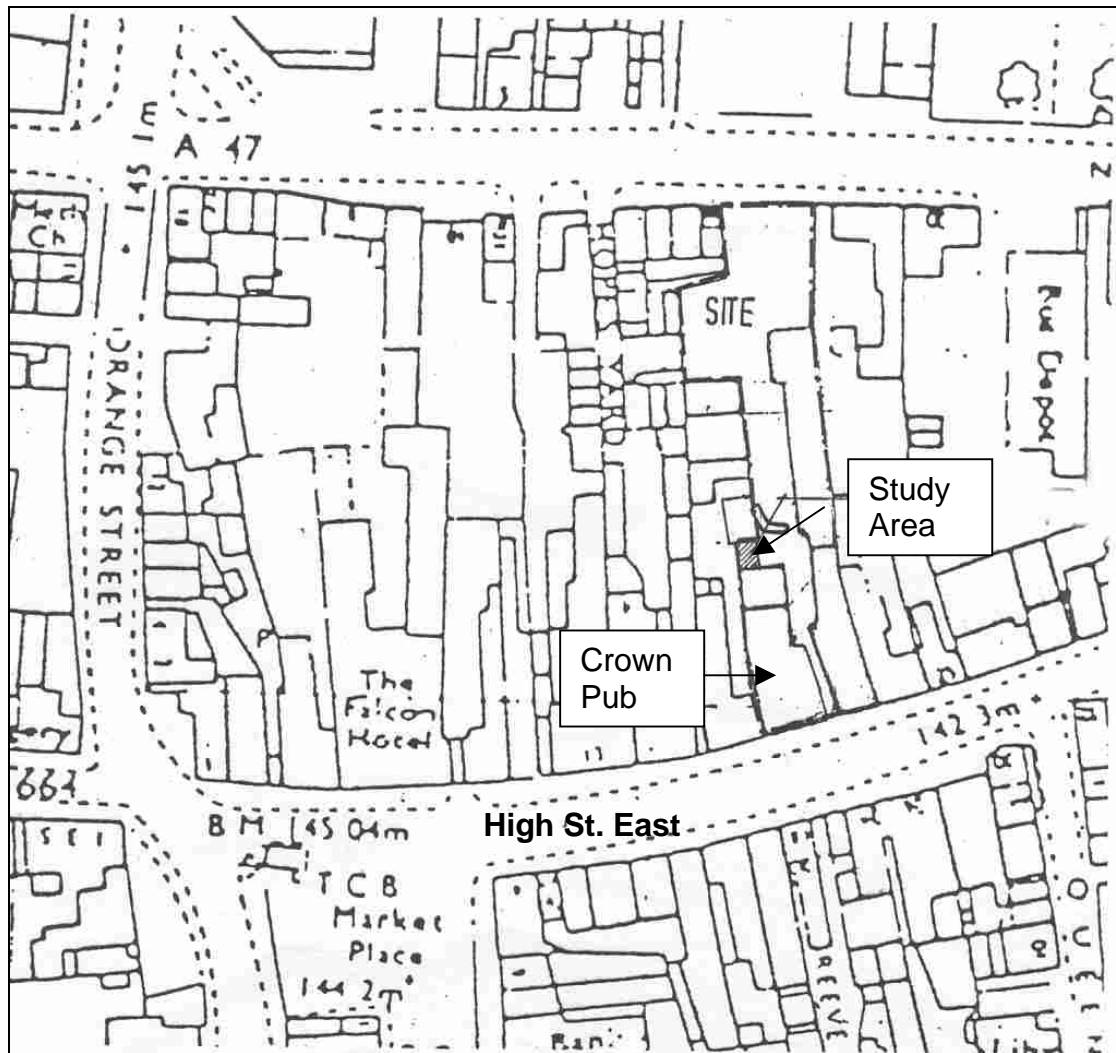


Figure 2: Location plan of study area. Scale 1:1250



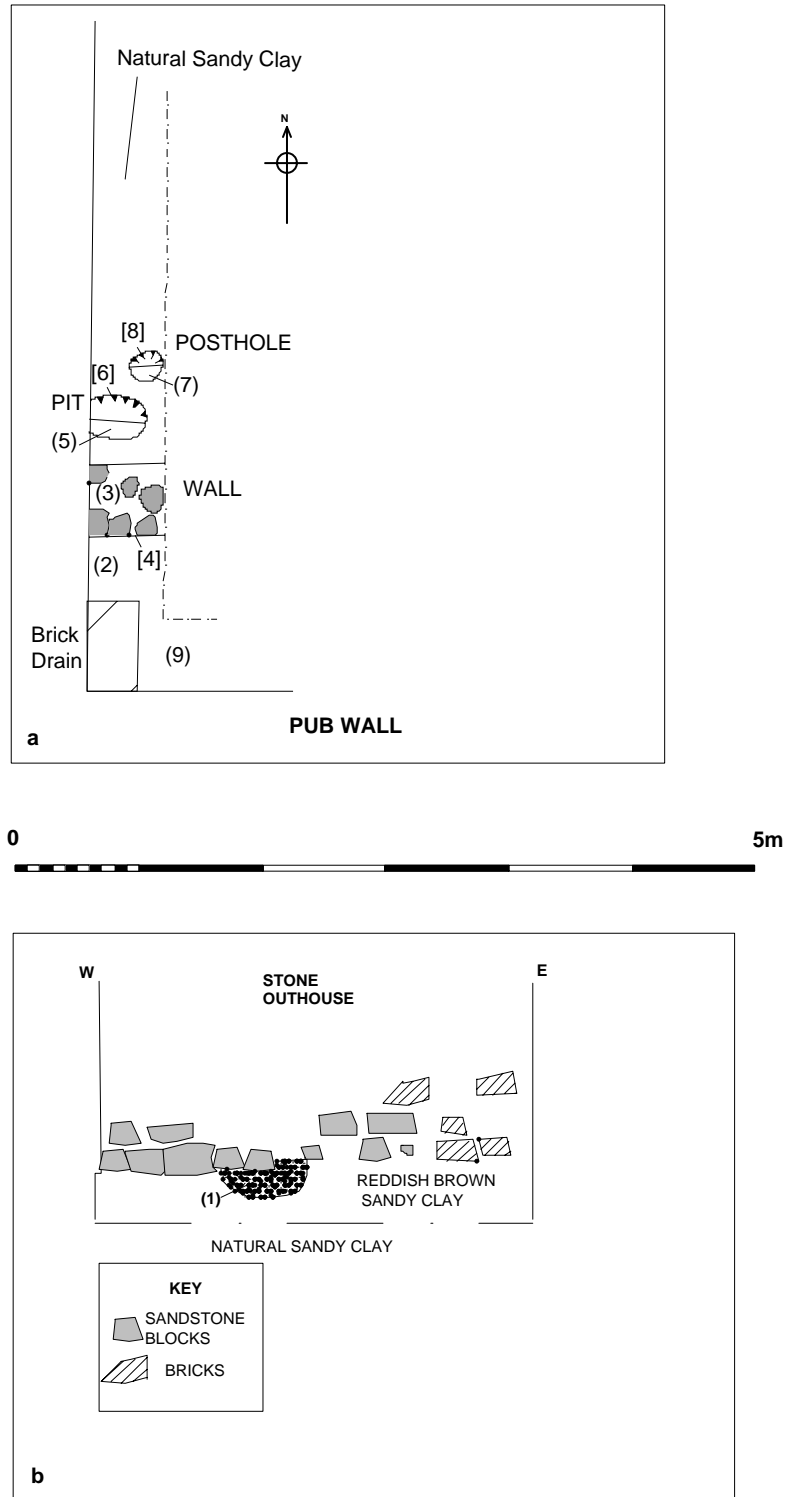
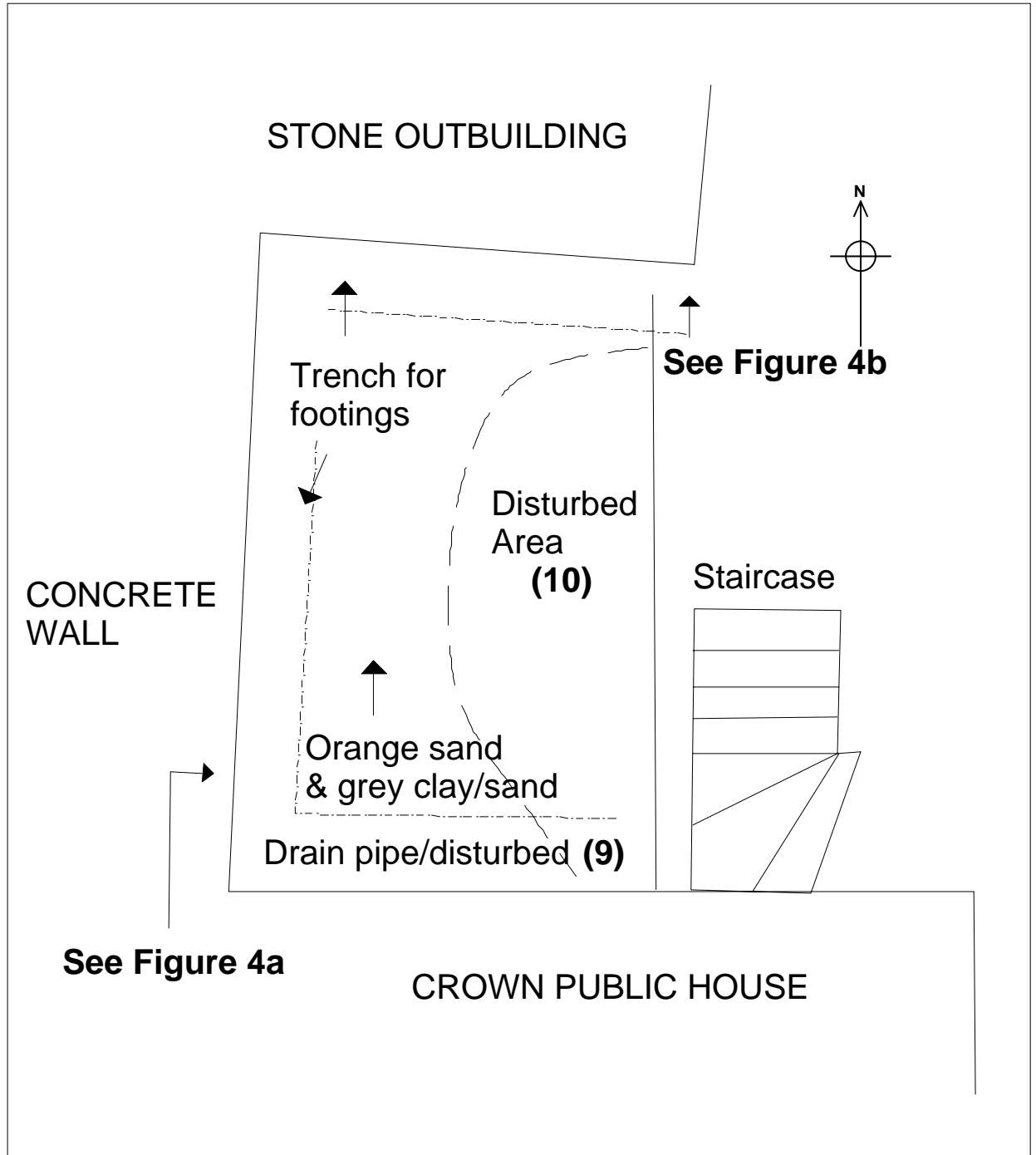


Figure 3: Plan of study area, showing observations made during watching brief



**Figure 4a: Post-excavation plan showing features observed**  
**Figure 4b: South facing section of outbuilding wall**

**APPENDIX 1:** The pottery and miscellaneous finds from a watching brief at Crown Passage, High Street East, Uppingham, Rutland

D. Sawday

The pottery, four sherds, weighing one hundred and thirty two grams, was examined under a binocular microscope and catalogued with reference to the ULAS fabric series (Davies and Sawday 1999). The possibly earliest material, in Cistercian ware or Midland Blackware, occurred in context 10, and dated from the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries, if not slightly later. Two more sherds in post medieval earthenware, fabric EA1, and Midland Yellow ware, from contexts 1 and 9, dated from the sixteenth or seventeenth centuries.

Modern glass was also recovered from context 1.

**Bibliography**

Davies, S., and Sawday, D., 1999. 'The Post Roman Pottery and Tile' in A. Connor and R. Buckley, *Roman and Medieval Occupation in Causeway Lane, Leicester*, Leicester Archaeology Mon. **5**, 165-213.

Site/Parish: Crown Passage, High Street East, Uppingham Accession No/ Doc Ref: RT05 2005/Uppingham2doc Material: pottery & misc finds Site Type: historic town core	Submitter: L. Hunt/S. Jones Identifier: D. Sawday Date of Id: 18.08.05 Method of Recovery: watching brief
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context	fabric/ware	sherd nos.	weight grams	comments
POTTERY				
1	EA1 – Earthenware 1	2	105	16 <sup>th</sup> – 17 <sup>th</sup> C +.
9	MY – Midland Yellow ware	1	17	16 <sup>th</sup> C. +
10	CW/MB – Cistercian/Midland Blackware	1	10	Circa 1450 – 1550 +
GLASS				
1	Bottle base	1		Cylindrical wine bottle with kick up – modern, i.e., 1750+
1	Vessel/bottle glass	9		Modern

## **APPENDIX 1: DESIGN SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORK**

