

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
At Woodend Cottage,  
Stapleford Road,  
Stapleford,  
Leicestershire  
(SK 814 191)**

Leon Hunt

For

Mr. & Mrs. L. Jones

**Checked by Project Manager**

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## CONTENTS

Summary .....	1
Introduction.....	1
Results.....	2
Conclusion .....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Archive.....	4

### APPENDIX: Design Specification for Archaeological Work

## ILLUSTRATIONS

Figure 1: Location of Stapleford Road. Scale 1:50 000.....	2
Figure 2: Location of Woodend Cottage. Scale Unknown .....	3
Figure 3: Location plan of extension, showing sections recorded during watching brief .....	5
Figure 4a & b: West facing elevations of foundation trench, against Woodend Cottage. ....	6

## PLATES

Plate 1: West facing elevation of Woodend Cottage, showing differential builds, looking east .....	7
Plate 2: Foundations trenches layout, prior to excavation, looking north east .....	7
Plate 3: South west facing section of trench, looking north east .....	8
Plate 4: North west facing elevation of house foundations (northern side), looking south east.....	8
Plate 5: North west facing elevation of house foundations (southern side), looking south east.....	9

## **An Archaeological Watching Brief At Woodend Cottage, Stapleford Road, Stapleford, Leicestershire (SK 814 191)**

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### **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) for Mr. & Mrs. L. Jones at Woodend Cottage, Stapleford Road, Stapleford, Leicestershire (SK 814 191), during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new extension to Woodend Cottage. The site lies close to Stapleford Park, an area with known archaeological remains. The watching brief revealed no archaeological remains or finds associated with archaeological features.*

### **Introduction**

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) for Mr. & Mrs. L. Jones at Woodend Cottage, Stapleford Road, Stapleford, Leicestershire (NGR SK 814 191). This work was carried out during excavation of foundation trenches for an extension to Woodend Cottage (Planning application number 05/01098/6).

The work was carried out in accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning), paragraph 30, and addresses the requirements for the implementation of a programme of archaeological work detailed in the Approval of Planning Permission (Condition 4) from Melton Borough Council.

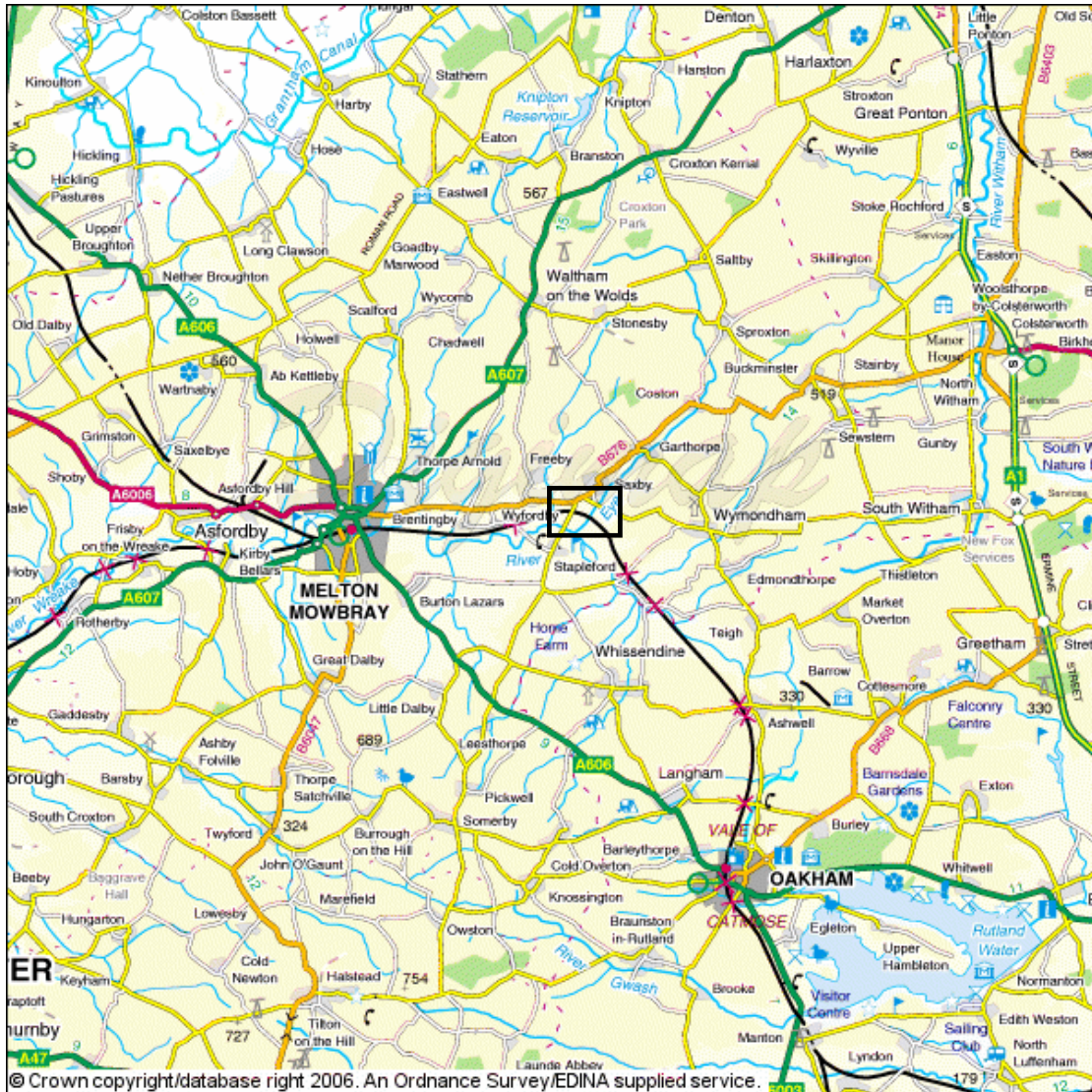
The site lies close to known archaeological remains located in Stapleford Park, a few hundred metres to the south of Woodend Cottage.

Woodend Cottage lies on the eastern side of Stapleford Road, c. 20 metres south of the mainline railway embankment (Figures 1 & 2). Stapleford Road declines to the south, but the site is situated on flat ground at c. 90m OD. The new extension was to be constructed on the western side of Woodend Cottage.

### **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.

The watching brief involved control and supervision of ground disturbance in order to identify any deposits of archaeological importance. An archaeologist visited the site on 13th September 2006 and ground-works associated with the excavation of foundation trenches were observed. The spoil heaps were also periodically checked for archaeological finds.



**Figure 1: Location of Stapleford Road. Scale 1:50 000**

Source: Edina:Digimap

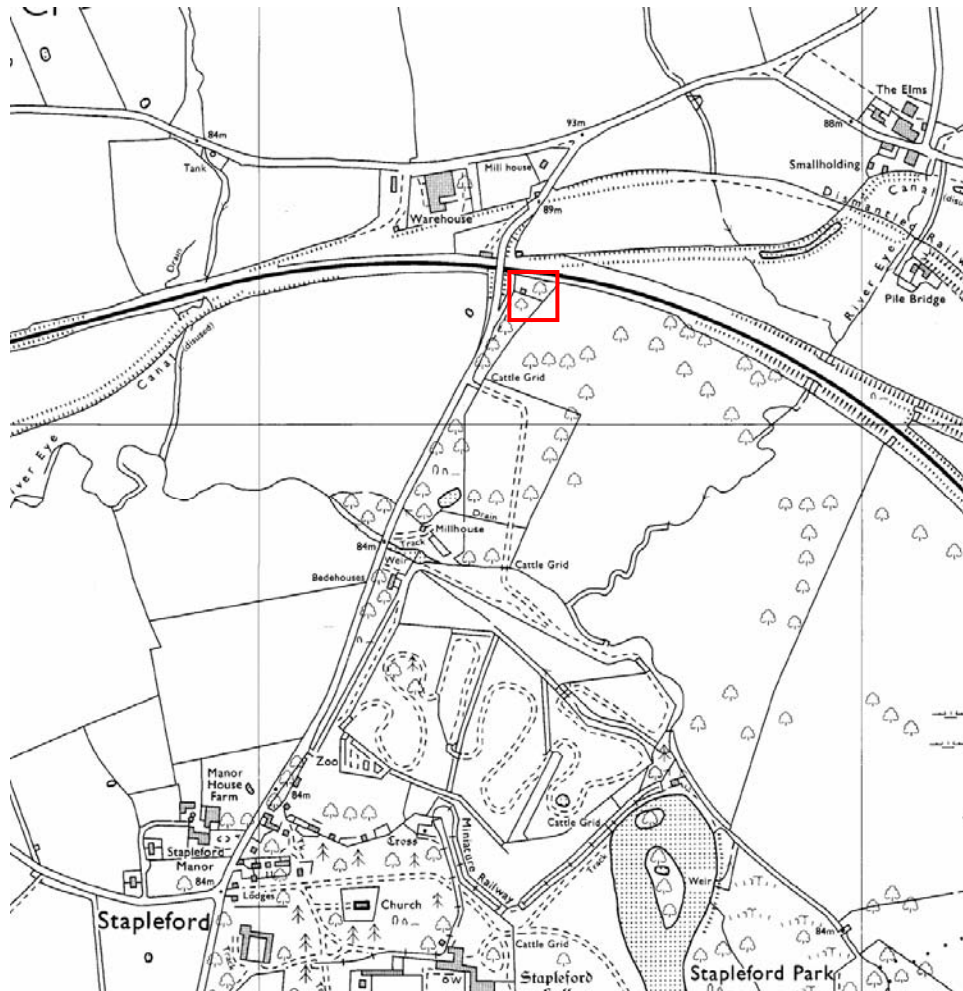
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## Results

An archaeologist visited the site on 13th September 2006 and the foundation trenches for the house extension were observed. The extension was to be erected abutting the front (north west facing) elevation of Woodend Cottage, itself a multi-period building that had been extended in the past (Plate 1). The area to be excavated consisted of a gravel drive that lay to the west of the house (Plate 2). The foundation trenches were excavated with a JCB 3CX back-actor fitted with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket. Where the trenches abutted the walls of the cottage, the trenches were partially dug by hand. The trenches were excavated to a depth of 0.8m.

The sections against the cottage were photographed and recorded (see Figure 4 and Plates 4 &5) and clearly showed the differences between the foundations of the earlier and later periods of the house, with the earlier (southern) side of the house of a rougher build (Figure 4b & Plate 5). The newer foundation consisted of 7-8 courses of

dressed ironstone with mortar (Figure 4a & Plate 4), whereas the older foundations were of a roughly dressed stone, which had no obvious mortar, although this may have degraded with time. Both sets of foundations were capped with a chamfered limestone plinth.



**Figure 2: Location of Woodend Cottage. Scale Unknown**

The sections of the trenches themselves showed the sequence across the drive as consisting of a thin layer of gravel over 0.2-0.3m of hardcore, soil and rubble. This lay over 0.2m of buried soil, which lay over the natural substratum of yellow and blue glacial till (boulder clay). There was little variation to this throughout the site, except in the south east corner of the Zoo excavation, where some garden soil could be seen in section below the gravel.

**Conclusion**

The sedimentary sequence observed during the watching brief indicated that the gravel drive overlay an earlier soil deposit and ground surface. No archaeological remains were discovered during the excavation of the foundation trenches.

## **Acknowledgements**

ULAS would like to thank Mr. And Mrs Jones for their co-operation. The author carried out the watching brief and would like to thank Tony Griffin and Woody for their help and assistance. Patrick Clay was the project manager.

## **Archive**

The archive for this project will be deposited with Leicestershire Historic and Natural Environment Team with accession number X.A109.2006 and consists of the following:

- 1 watching brief recording sheet
- 1 CD of digital photographs
- 1 B&W contact sheet
- 1 Set B&W negatives
- 1 A3 permatrace sheet
- 1 unbound copy of this report

Leon Hunt

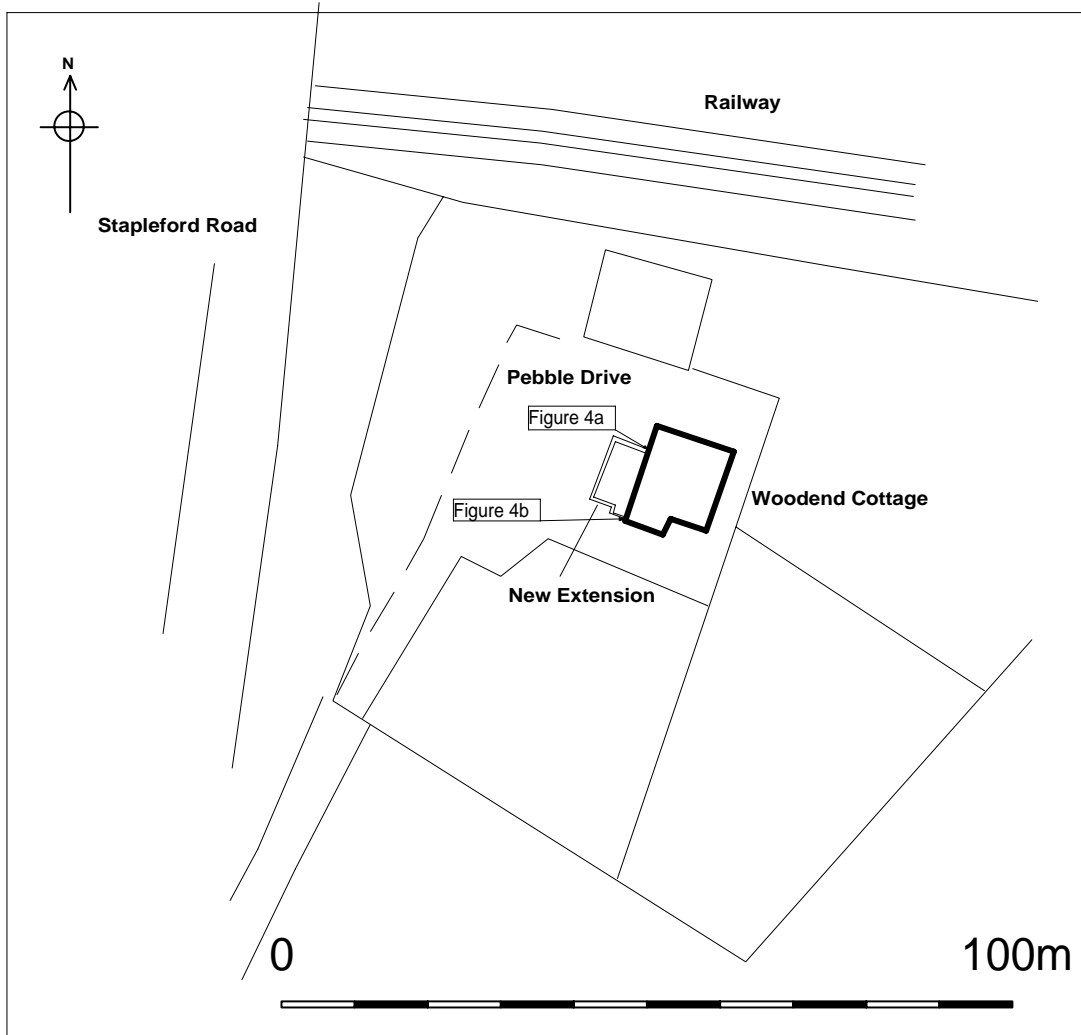
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**Figure 3: Location plan of extension, showing sections recorded during watching brief**

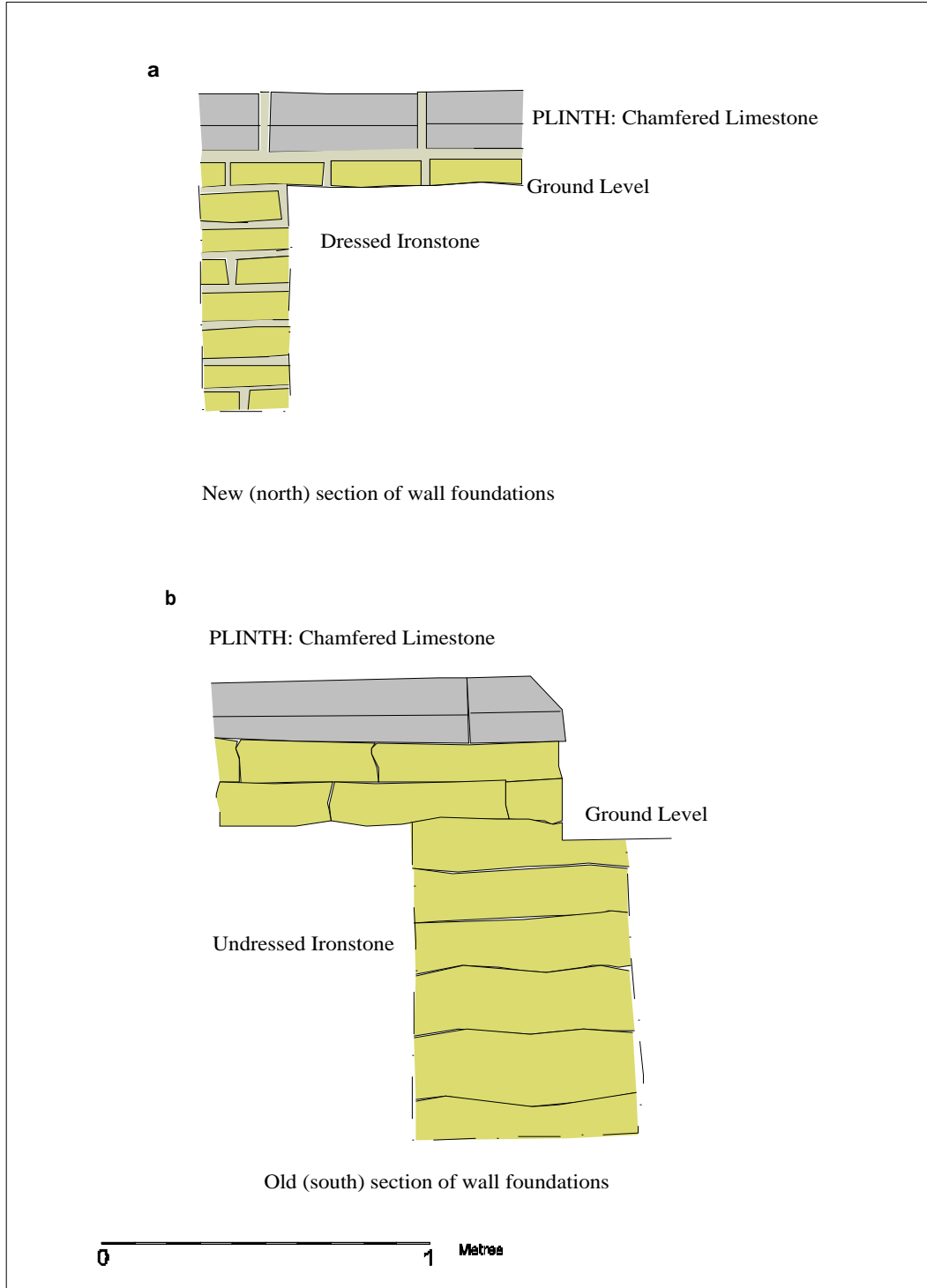


Figure 4a & b: North west facing elevations of foundation trench, against Woodend Cottage.





**Plate 1: North west facing elevation of Woodend Cottage, showing differential builds, looking east**



**Plate 2: Foundations trenches layout, prior to excavation, looking east**



**Plate 3: South west facing section of trench, looking north east**



**Plate 4: North west facing elevation of house foundations (northern side), looking south east**



**Plate 5: North west facing elevation of house foundations (southern side), looking south east**

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