



# University of Leicester

## Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Watching Brief  
on land adjacent to 23 Middle Lane,  
Nether Broughton,  
Leicestershire.

NGR: SK 6960 2572

Andrew Hyam



ULAS Report No. 2014-023

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**NGR: SK 6960 2572**

**A R Hyam**

**For: HSSP Architects**

Checked by

Approved by

**Signed:**  **Date:** 14 February 2014.

**Name:** R.J. Buckley..

**University of Leicester**

Archaeological Services

University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH

Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614

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## **An Archaeological Watching Brief on Land Adjacent to 23 Middle Lane, Nether Broughton, Leicestershire**

**Andrew Hyam**

### **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at 23 Middle Lane, Nether Broughton, Leicestershire. The work took place on the 31st of January 2014 during foundation excavation and groundworks for a single domestic dwelling. The site lies at the heart of the village core hence the requirement for a programme of 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.A14.2014*

### **Introduction**

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an archaeological watching brief at 23 Middle Lane, Nether Broughton, Leicestershire, NGR SK 6960 2572.

Melton Borough Council has granted planning permission (planning application ref: 13/00678/REM/10/00624/EXT) for the construction of a residential property at the above site with the requirement that an archaeological watching brief would be maintained during the groundworks.

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies within an area of archaeological interest. It is inside the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of the village. The early 19th-century Surveyor's map seems to show buildings on site; these are not shown by the time of the late 19th century 1st edition OS map. The 1885 First Edition Ordnance Survey County Series map shows the development area as an open space, as do all subsequent editions. The site has been slightly disturbed along the northern edge, but most of the new house's footprint lies outside that of an existing domestic garage. The new house will be on two street frontages, namely Middle Lane and King Street.

The villages of Leicestershire, and the wider English Central Midlands, appear to have evolved alongside their open field systems, during the later 1st millennium AD. Buried archaeological evidence, constituting one or more as yet unidentified heritage asset(s) (National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12, paragraph 128 and Appendix 2), spanning the period from the earliest evolution of the village to its more recent past could be expected within the development area. Consequently, there was a likelihood that buried archaeological remains would be affected by the development.

## Background

The village of Nether Broughton lies approximately 8km to the north-west of the market town of Melton Mowbray and 25km to the north-east of Leicester (Fig. 1). The village lies at the base of a slope heading north-west up to the neighbouring village of Upper Broughton 1km away. The development site is centred on National Grid Reference SK 6960 2572 in Melton District on a south facing slope at a height of 75.3m. The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain Sheet 142 indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of glacial drift (Dyrham formation – siltstone and mudstone) with sand and gravels to the south.

A single residential property is to be erected on the corner of Middle Street and King Street on the site of a former garden and single garage (Figs. 2 and 3). Prior to the start of the development work the site consisted of a single pre-fabricated garage in the north-east corner with a small concrete driveway running from Middle Lane. The remainder of the plot running down to King Street was covered in grass with some small trees and shrubs along the south and south east boundaries. A wooden fence formed the boundary with Middle Lane whilst a brick wall formed the King Street boundary. Initial groundworks, which took place before the start of the watching brief, included removal of the garage and drive, removal of the boundary fence and shrubs, demolition of the brick wall and removal of topsoil. None of this work appeared to damage any potential archaeological deposits which may have been present.

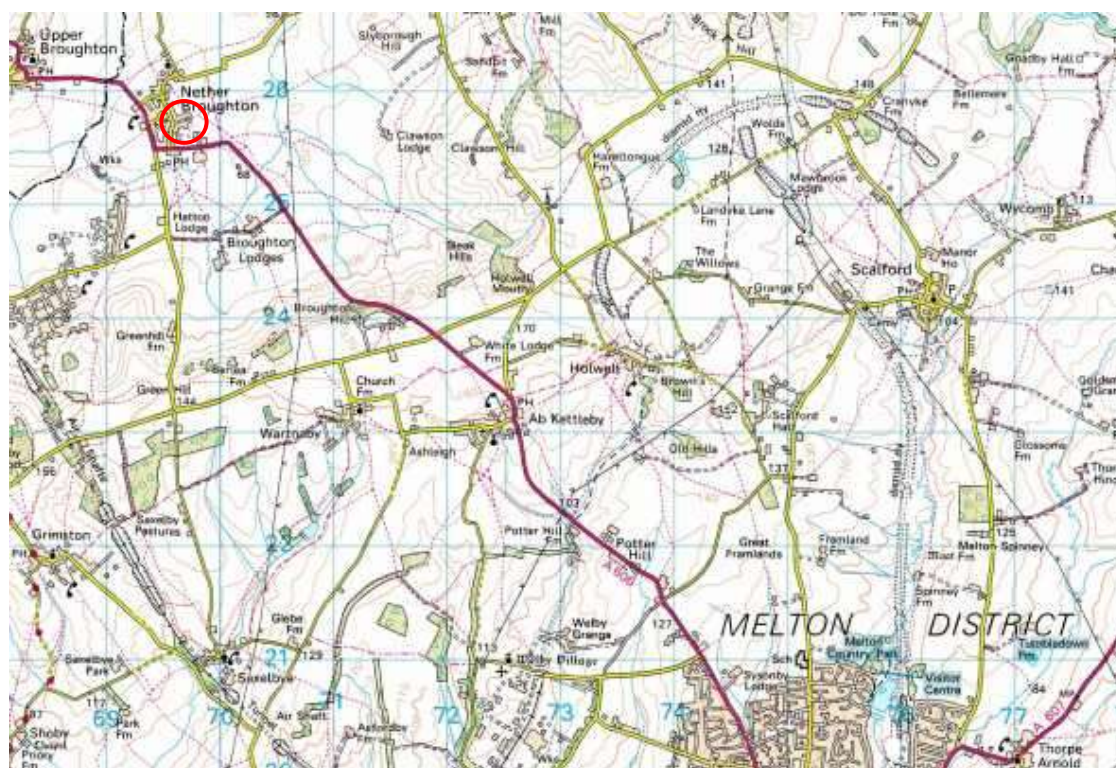


Figure 1 Nether Broughton location

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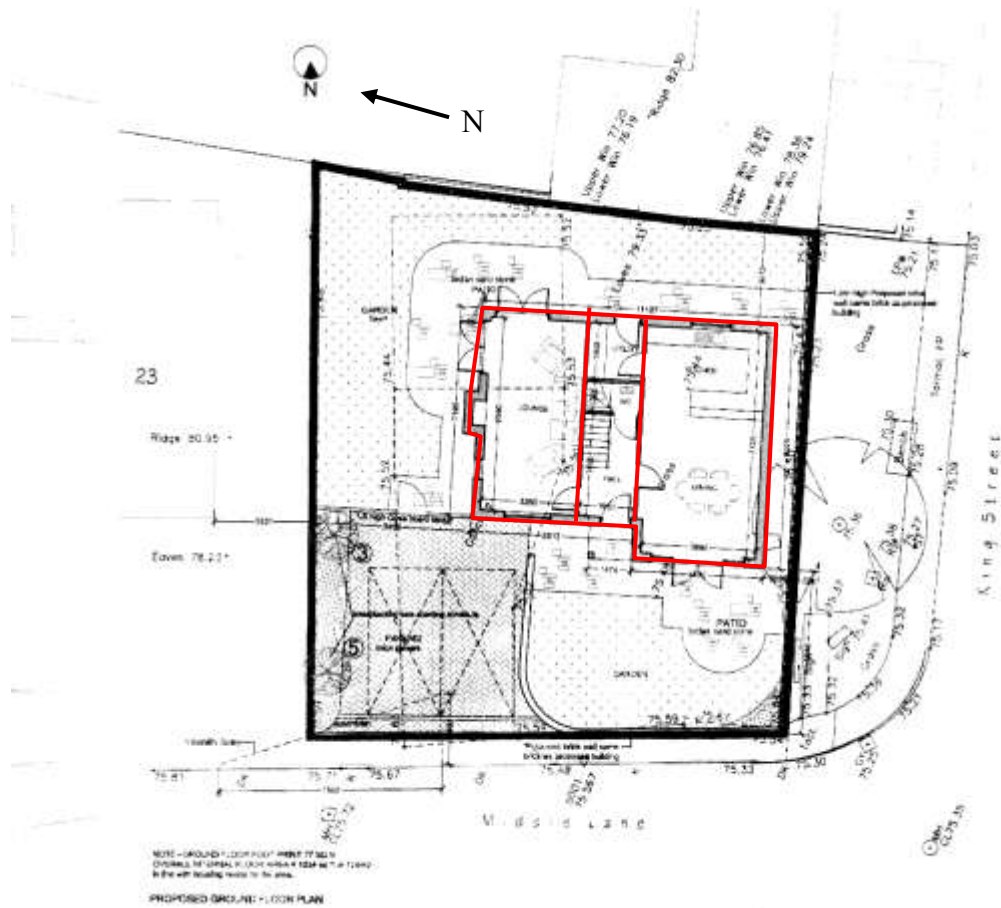


Figure 2 Site location and foundation trenches  
Trenches shown in red. Plan supplied by client



Figure 3 Development site  
Looking south east towards junction with King Street

## Objectives

The purpose of the archaeological watching brief may be summarised as follows:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To describe, record and if possible provide a date range for the stratigraphy.
- To produce an archive and report of any results to inform the need for further work and to provide supplementary data for the Heritage Assessment.

## Methodology

A tracked mini-digger with a 0.6m wide toothed bucket was used to excavate the foundations under continuous archaeological supervision, with provision for a programme of excavation and recording using additional personnel, should this be necessary.

All groundworks and deposits were recorded by notes, sketches and both digital colour and 35mm black and white photographs. The recording methodology followed that specified in the ULAS Design Specification for Archaeological Work for land adjacent to *23 Middle Lane, Nether Broughton, Leicestershire*. All work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2008) and adhered to their *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008) and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

## Results

The initial turf strip and ground reduction removed all of the dark greyish-brown topsoil and some yellowish-brown clay silt subsoil to create a level surface. At its deepest, to the north east, approximately 0.5m of overburden was removed although this depth decreased towards the Middle Lane site boundary. The total thickness of topsoil varied between 0.2 and 0.4m. The single garage, which had been removed earlier, had left an area of disturbance full of bricks and other modern debris in the north-east corner. The trees and shrubs along the road boundaries had also created areas of disturbance.

The foundation trenches which were between 0.6 and 0.7m in width and 1m deep were excavated through the remaining subsoil down into the greyish-yellow silty clay natural substratum (Figs. 4 and 5). Where the subsoil had not been disturbed by modern activity its average thickness was between 0.3 and 0.4m. The trenches were excavated along the proposed internal and external wall lines as shown in Figure 2.

No archaeological deposits or features were encountered during the watching brief.



Figure 4 Partially excavated foundation trenches  
Looking north west



Figure 5 Foundation trenches  
Looking south west



## **Discussion**

Despite the potential for archaeological features or deposits none were observed during the course of this watching brief. As mentioned, the early 19th century map suggests that there has been no development on this site since the mid to late 19th century which would perhaps raise the potential for earlier undisturbed features. It was hoped that the structure hinted at on the early 19th century map may have left some trace, this however appears not to be the case.

## **Archive**

The archive consists of:

This report,

1 pro-forma watching brief form,

1 photo record sheet,

1 contact sheet of 18 digital photographs,

1 cd of this report and the digital photographs.

## **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.

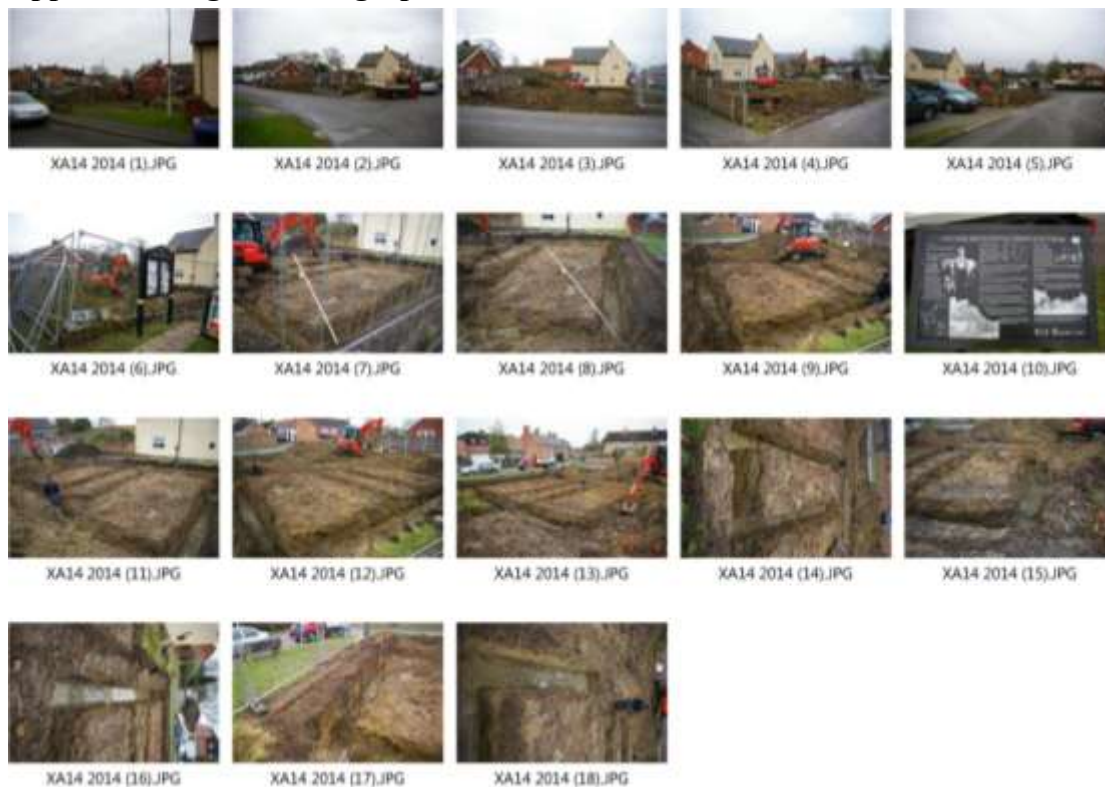
## **Bibliography**

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Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Attendance, Watching Brief. 23 Middle Lane, Nether Broughton, Leicestershire. ULAS

IfA, 2008, *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

## Appendix 1 Digital Photographs



## Appendix 2 OASIS Information

Project Name	23 Middle Lane, Nether Broughton.
Project Type	Watching Brief
Project Manager	R Buckley
Project Supervisor	A Hyam
Previous/Future work	None
Current Land Use	Garden and domestic garage
Development Type	Single house
Reason for Investigation	As a condition
Position in the Planning Process	Ongoing
Site Co ordinates	SK 6960 2572
Start/end dates of field work	31.1.14
Archive Recipient	Leics County Council
Study Area	500m <sup>2</sup>

## ULAS Contact Details

Richard Buckley or Patrick Clay  
University of Leicester Archaeological  
Services (ULAS)  
University of Leicester,  
University Road,  
Leicester LE1 7RH

**T:** +44 (0)116 252 2848

**F:** +44 (0)116 252 2614

**E:** [ulas@le.ac.uk](mailto:ulas@le.ac.uk)

**W:** [www.le.ac.uk/ulas](http://www.le.ac.uk/ulas)



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