



University of  
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**Archaeological Services**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
to the rear of Cresswell Spring Farm,  
19 High Street, Waltham on the Wolds,  
Leicestershire.**

**NGR SK 8047 2499**

Sophie Clarke



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to the rear of Cresswell Spring Farm, 19 High Street,  
Waltham on the Wolds,  
Leicestershire  
(NGR SK 8047 2499)**

**Sophie Clarke**

**For: Mr. and Mrs. Pilkington**

Approved by:

Signed:



Date: 10.10.2013

Name: Patrick Clay

**University of Leicester  
Archaeological Services**  
University Rd., Leicester, LE1 7RH  
Tel: (0116) 2522848 Fax: (0116) 2522614  
[www.le.ac.uk/ulas](http://www.le.ac.uk/ulas)

**ULAS Report Number 2013-170**

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## **An Archaeological Watching Brief to the rear of Cresswell Spring Farm, 19 High Street, Waltham on the Wolds, Leicestershire (NGR SK 8047 2499)**

Sophie Clarke

### **Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the removal of topsoil and the excavation of foundation trenches associated with the construction of a new garage on land to the rear of Cresswell Springs Farm, 19 High Street, Waltham on the Wolds, Leicestershire (NGR SK 8047 2499). A large square-shaped pit containing medieval pottery was located in association with an undated gully, with a second large pit, also undated located nearby. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under the Accession Number X.A151.2013.*

### **1. Introduction**

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), (DCLG 2012) on land to the rear of Cresswell Spring Farm, at 19 High Street, Waltham on the Wolds, Leicestershire (SK 8047 2499), within the borough of Melton. The work took place on the 19th of September 2013 and was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on behalf of Mr and Mrs Pilkington. The watching brief was undertaken in connection with the removal of topsoil and excavation of foundation trenches for the construction of a new cart-shed. (P.A. 10/00697/FUL; 11/00451/FUL).

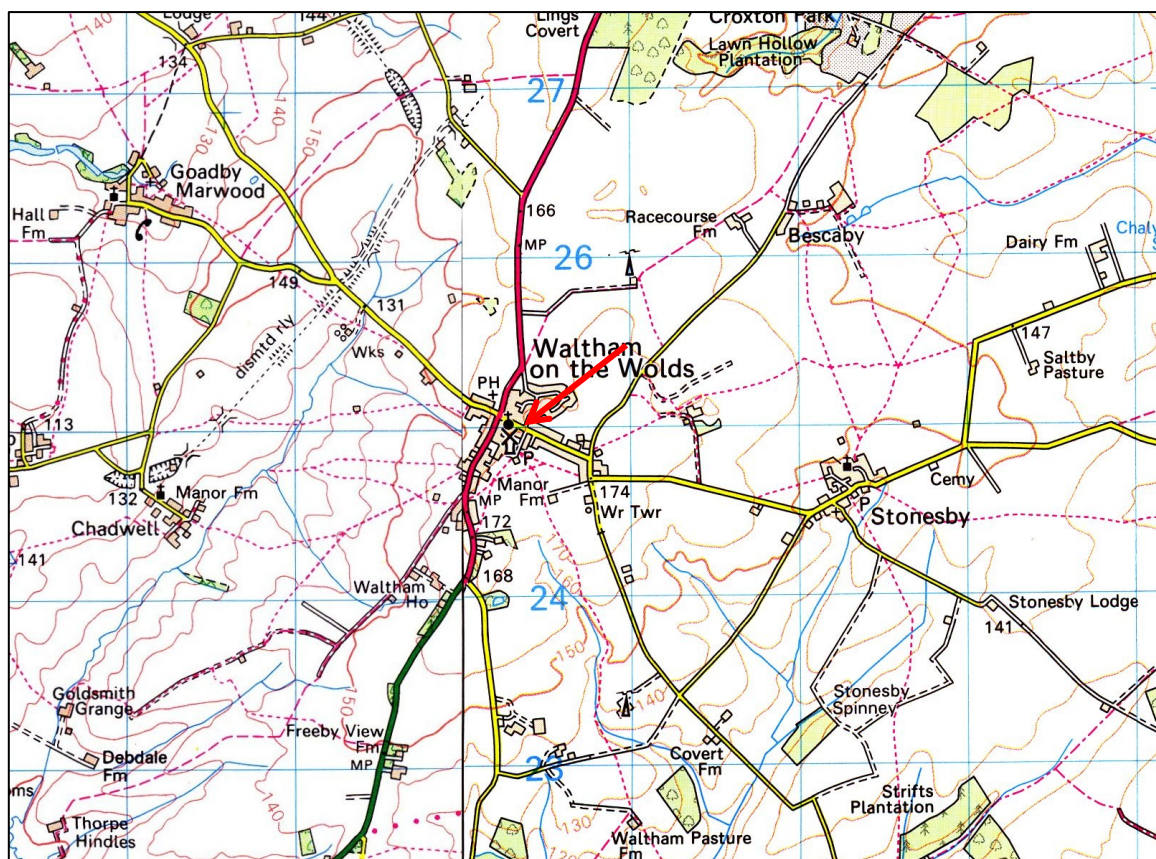


Figure 1. Site location. Scale 1:50000

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Figure 2. Location of proposed new cart shed (outlined in red) to the rear of Cresswell Spring Farm (supplied by Mr. Pilkington, not to scale).

## 2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The development area is located to the rear of 19 High Street, Waltham on the Wolds, on the northern side of the principal main street running east/west through the village, which is located in the Melton Borough Council of Leicestershire. The development area comprises an area of approximately 0.1 ha.

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates that the bedrock geology consists of Northampton Sand Formation- sandstone, limestone and ironstone, which was laid down in the Jurassic period. No superficial geology is recorded.

(<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed on 8th October 2013).

### **3. Historical and Archaeological Background**

The application site lies within an area of significant archaeological potential, within the medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Waltham on the Wolds, to the rear of a Grade II listed 19th century farmhouse (LB ref: 1835/32/30/410; HER ref. MLE12594). It has also been suggested that High Street may form part of a Roman road which joins the Drift to the Saltway (MLE3814). Consequently, there is a likelihood that buried archaeological remains could be affected by the development. The Principal Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council therefore recommended that archaeological work should be undertaken to determine if any buried heritage assets were likely to be affected by the proposed development. A strategy for a programme of archaeological attendance, in the form of archaeological attendance during groundworks was set out in the Written Scheme for Investigation (Clay 2013), hereinafter WSI.

### **4. Aims and Objectives**

The purpose of the current archaeological work was:

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

### **5. Methodology**

The work followed the WSI (Clay 2013) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (rev. 2010) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (rev. 2008).

The programme of work consisted of the stripping of topsoil and the excavation of footings, using a mini-digger with a ditching bucket. The resulting ground surface was visually inspected, hand-cleaned where appropriate and recorded following standard ULAS methods.

### **6. Results**

The site was visited on the 19th and 20th of September 2013. An area of ground corresponding with the footprint of the new cart-shed, measuring approximately 15m long by 8m wide was stripped of topsoil and subsoil layers to a maximum depth of 0.5m below the existing ground surface. The topsoil consisted of a 0.25m deep layer of dark brown sandy, clay silt and this overlay a layer of subsoil consisting of dark yellowish brown sandy clay. The overburden was clean, showing little sign of previous disturbance.

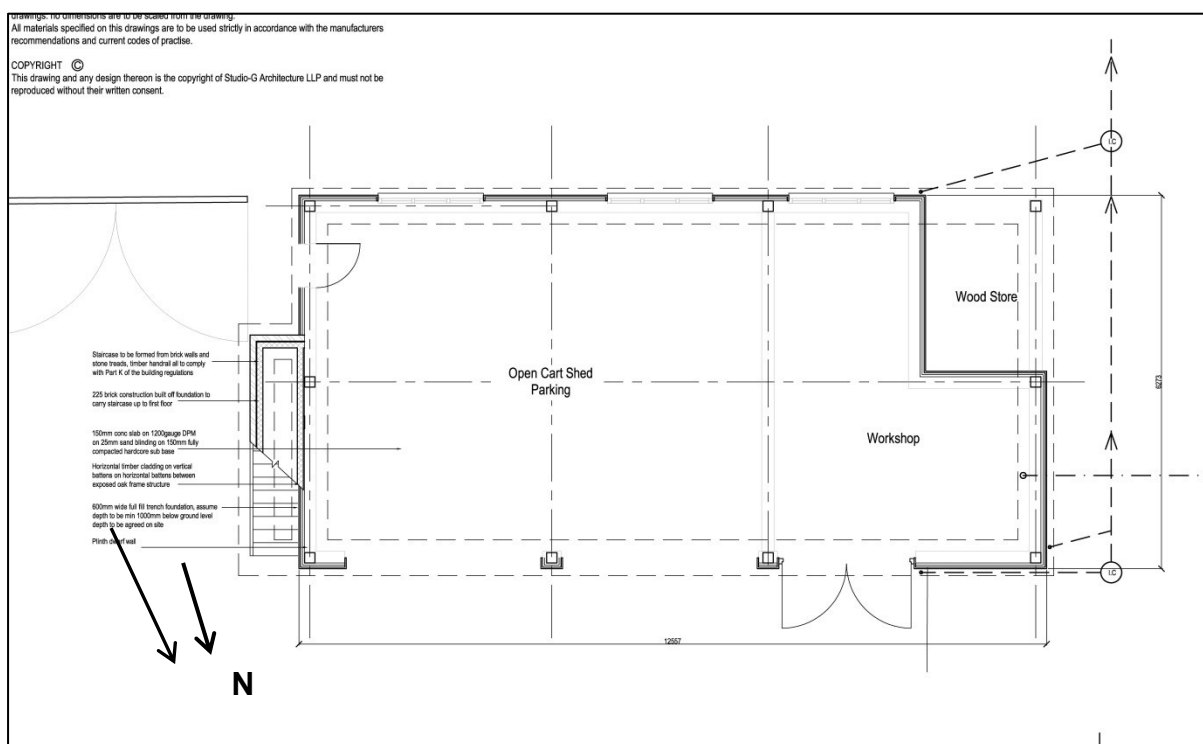


Figure 3. Proposed floor plan for new cart-shed (supplied by Mr. Pilkington, not to scale).

Following removal of the overburden, in the south-western corner of the stripped area a square-cut pit [2] was observed to cut into the natural sandy clay substratum. Its fill (1) consisted of very soft, dark, greyish brown sandy silt and a clean-up over the surface produced 13 sherds of pottery, ranging in date from the late Saxon to the late medieval periods. The latest sherd of pottery recovered was a ribbed handle, possibly from a jug, in Midland purple fabric which has a date range of 1375-1550. On the eastern side of the pit, a narrow gully [4] ran from east to west, apparently leading into the pit although the relationship could not be discerned from differences in the fills of each feature. The gully measured approximately 0.45m wide and was very shallow with a flat base, measuring only 0.1m in depth. The gully ran for a stretch of approximately 5m, before being truncated away by the machine. Its fill (3) consisted of dark yellowy brown silty clay, but was undated.

Following the machining of the foundation trench on the north-western side of the plot, which measured 0.6m wide by 1m deep, the section of the pit was recorded (Figure 5), revealing a flat base and near vertical edges.

Part of an apparently linear feature, possibly a pit or the butt-end of a ditch, was visible against the southern edge of the excavated area, apparently on an east/west alignment. Its fill (5) consisted of mid orangey brown, silty sandy clay and contained lots of stone rubble but no dating evidence. The foundation trench excavated along the southern edge of excavation cut through the pit at an oblique angle, which did not provide a true profile of the feature [6], but indicated a depth of approximately 0.8m, with edges sloping down at an angle of 45° to a rounded base.



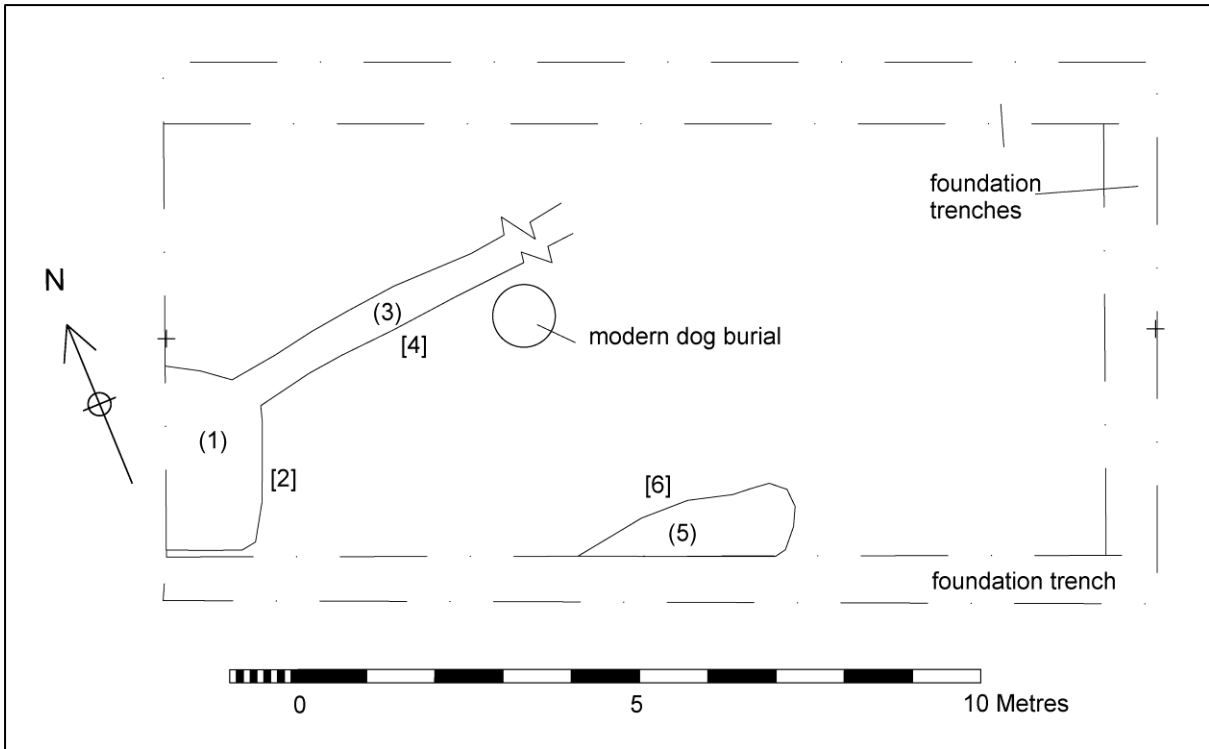


Figure 4. Plan of excavated footprint and archaeological deposits on site.

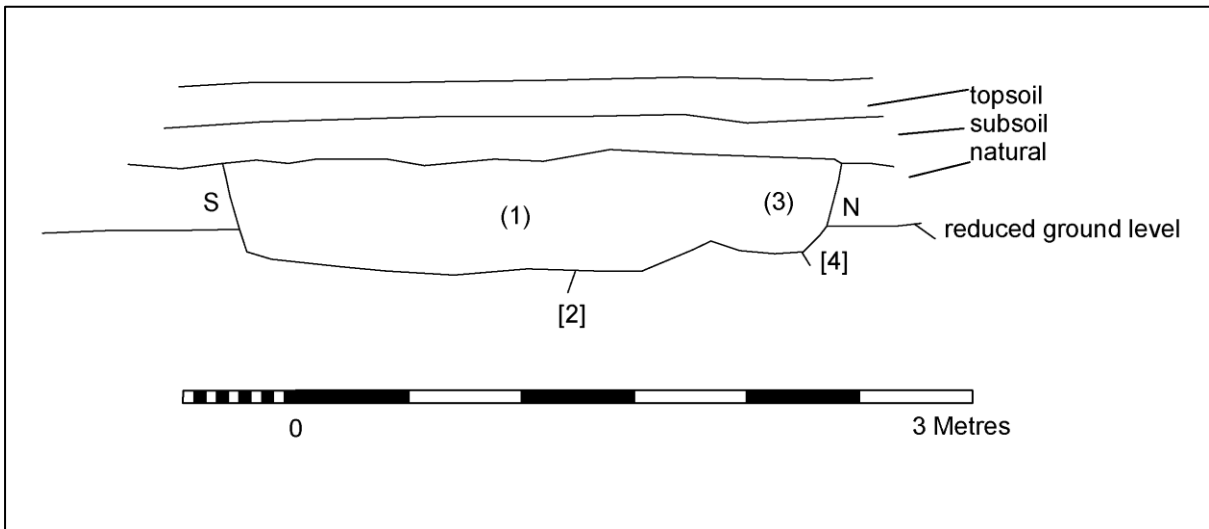


Figure 5. Section 1, showing pit [2] and gully [4] profiles.



Figure 6. Topsoil stripping over footprint of new car port, looking south-east.



Figure 7. Square-cut pit (1) [2], looking north.



Figure 8. Section 1 of pit [2] and gully [4], following excavation of foundation trench. Looking west.



Figure 9. Fully excavated site. Looking north-west.



Figure 10. Fully excavated site, looking south west.



Figure 11. A above, with possible pit (5) [6] on right hand side, against foundation trench. Looking east.



Figure 12. Possible pit (5) [6] looking south-east.

## **7. The pottery**

by Deborah Sawday

### ***Methodology***

The pottery, 13 sherds, weighing 101grams, was catalogued with reference to the guidelines set out by the Medieval Pottery Research Group, (MPRG 1998; MPRG 2001) and the ULAS fabric series (Sawday 2009). The results are shown below, (table 1).

### ***Discussion***

The material was all recovered from the backfill of a pit (context 1) in the paddock to the rear of the farm buildings. The pottery assemblage, although small, dated from the late Saxon to the later medieval periods, and affords an interesting insight into the evolution of the medieval village, and to the range of traded wares available to the inhabitants.

Table 1: The medieval pottery by fabric, sherd numbers and weight (grams) by context.

Context	Fabric/ware	No.	Grams	Comments
<b>POT</b>				
1	ST3 –Coarse Stamford	3	22	Two joining sherds, part of an externally sooted vessel with a flat base, and burnt residue on the interior surface, c.900-1050+ (Leach 1987).
1	ST2 – Fine Stamford	5	19	Abraded rim and part of a handle from a spouted pitcher, yellow lead glaze, some joins (Kilmurry 1980, form 5), c.1050-1200.
1	SN – St Neots type	1	2	Body fragment, light buff, grey surfaces & grey core. General date range c.850-1100/1150+
1	L13 – Lincs. Late Saxon Shelly	3	7	Body fragments, general date probably late 9th - 11th century.
1	Midland Purple	1	51	Ribbed strap handle probably part of a jug or cistern. Similar fabric at Lincoln, (Young <i>et al</i> 2005, 225, fig.189), and Leicester (Woodland 1981); possibly a Nottingham, Chilvers Coton (Mayes & Scott 1984) or Torksey product (Spavold, and Brown, 2005), dated c.1375-1550.
<b>MISC</b>				
1	Daub	1	9	

Site/ Parish: 19 High Street, Waltham on the Wolds, Leics. Accession No.: XA151 2013 Document Ref: Waltham on the wolds1.docx Material: pot	Submitter: S. Clarke Identifier: D. Sawday Date of Identification: 3.10.2013 Method of Recovery: watching brief Job Number: 13-477 Site Type: village core
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## **8. Conclusion**

The deposits revealed during the course of the groundworks associated with the construction of a new cart-shed to the rear of Cresswell Spring Farm are indicative of medieval occupation of the area, perhaps associated with garden or farming activity. The square-cut pit feature may have been used as a sump for the collection of surface water, into which domestic waste might have been washed. The pottery recovered from the pit indicates a date range between the 9th and 15th centuries for the activity represented on site. The excavated area is set some distance back from the street frontage and there is a strong likelihood that similar remains will be located in the vicinity of the farm buildings, which are proposed for redevelopment at a future date.

## **9. Archive**

The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museums Service under the Accession Number X.A151.2013

The archive contains:

- a watching brief pro forma record sheet,
- digital colour photographs,
- black and white photographic negatives,
- photographic contact sheets and indices,
- a sheet of A3 permagraph paper with site plan and section drawings,
- 13 sherds of medieval pottery

The report is listed on the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

## **10. Publication**

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* and *Rutland Record* in due course. The report will be added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.

## OASIS Information

Project Name	19 High Street, Waltham on the Wolds
Project Type	Archaeological Attendance (Watching Brief)
Project Manager	P. Clay
Project Supervisor	S. Clarke
Previous/Future work	Yes
Current Land Use	Garden
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	As a condition
Position in the Planning Process	Ongoing
Site Co ordinates	NGR SK 8047 2499
Start/end dates of field work	19/09/2013- 20/09/2013
Archive Recipient	LCC
Study Area	0.1ha

## 11. Bibliography

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## **12. Acknowledgements**

The fieldwork was carried out by Sophie Clarke for ULAS. Patrick Clay managed the project. Plans were supplied by MWS Design.

Sophie Clarke  
University of Leicester Archaeological Services  
University Road  
Leicester  
LE1 7RH  
Tel: 0116 2522848  
Fax: 0116 252 2614

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## 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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