

**A Retrospective Level 2 Historic
Building Recording and Trial Trench
Evaluation at Butchers Yard,
2 High Street, Earls Barton,
Northamptonshire.**

NGR: SP 85253 63777

Andrew Hyam



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Trial Trench Evaluation at
Butchers Yard, 2 High Street,
Earls Barton
Northamptonshire**

NGR: SP 85253 63777

A R Hyam

For: Life Space Developments Ltd

Checked by



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A Retrospective Level 2 Historic Building Recording and Trial Trench Evaluation at Butchers Yard, 2 High Street, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire.

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Summary

A retrospective Level 2 Historic Building Survey and a trial trench evaluation exercise were undertaken by the University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Butchers Yard, 2 High Street, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire. The building survey examined the remaining evidence which survives from a recently demolished range of buildings dating to the 18th and 19th centuries. Three evaluation trenches were also excavated across the site targeting the locations of proposed new housing.

No archaeological features or deposits were observed during the trial trenching.

Planning permission has been granted to demolish the existing buildings on site and erect a number of private dwellings and a dance studio.

The work took place on the 3rd and 4th of November 2014. The report and archive will be held by ULAS under Accession Number NHEBBY.2014 until it can be deposited with the Northamptonshire archive storage.

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for a retrospective historic building survey (Level 2) on buildings located at Butchers Yard, 2 High Street, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire, NGR SP 85253 63777 (Fig. 1). Level 2 historic building surveys are defined in the English Heritage guidance document – *Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good recording practice* (2006). This document also forms the report for a trial trench evaluation at the same property.

Under planning application number WP/2013/0504/F Life Space Developments gained permission to demolish the existing buildings on site in advance of a proposed development to create a new dance studio and residential dwellings. Due to a number of circumstances the buildings, which included a former dance studio, were demolished before any form of accurate building survey could take place. The building survey is therefore based upon available plans and from photographs taken by the developer prior to demolition.

Earls Barton lies between the A4500 and the A45 midway between Northampton, to the west, and Wellingborough, to the east. The site is located at the western end of the High Street, east of the junction with West Street, Broad Street and Station Road (Fig. 1). On the opposite side of High Street, to the north-west, is the parish church of All Saints which has elements dating back to AD 970. Prior to redevelopment the site consisted of a number of buildings built along the street frontage and having an

overgrown yard to the rear (Figs 2 and 3). The buildings were most recently used as a dance studio. A row of shops, built from stone and brick, form the south west boundary of the site (Fig. 4).

The site lies on a gentle south to south east facing slope at a height of approximately 81m OD. The geology map of Great Britain indicates that the site consists of Whitby Formation Mudstone with Northampton Sand Formation Ironstone present in the northern side.



Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2: Site before redevelopment
Plan supplied by client. Red line indicates site boundary

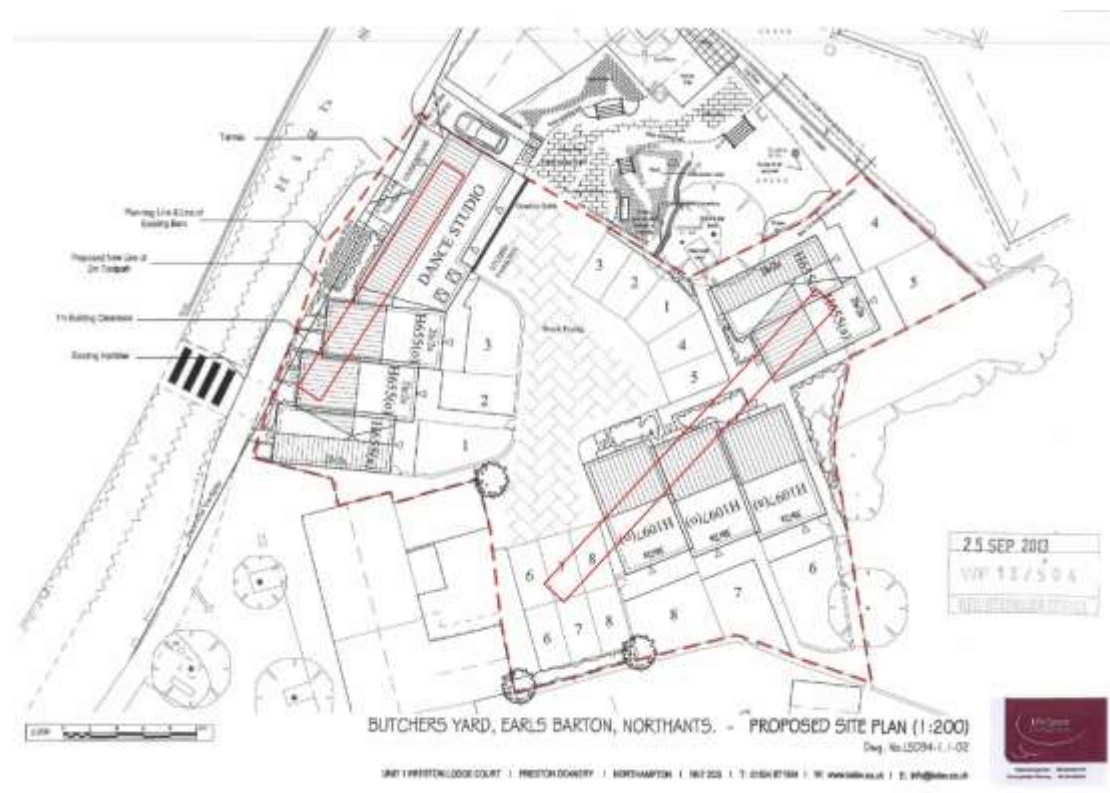


Figure 3: Proposed redevelopment details and suggested trench locations
Plan supplied by client



Figure 4: Site seen from The Green
Looking north-east. Location of site arrowed. Churchyard on left of picture

Background

Historic Environment Record search

Listed Buildings

Two listed buildings stand near to the proposed development site. The Grade I listed All Saints' Church and the Grade II listed village hall are both located on the northern side of High Street. The church (listing entry number 1294226), has a late 10th century tower which indicates the likely importance of pre-conquest Earls Barton. The rest of the stone-built church has late 12th, 13th and 14th century elements and was restored and partially rebuilt in the 19th century. The church is located next to the Berry Mount which is discussed below.

The village hall which is Grade II listed (listing entry number is 1371654), is a mid-19th century building that began life as the village school. It is located immediately south-east of the church and is adjacent to High Street.

Scheduled Monuments

A substantial earthwork feature known as the Berry Mount lies on the north-western side of the church. The motte is an oval flat-topped mound approximately 3m in height. The south edge of the motte lies within the churchyard whilst the north side of the mound is bounded by a flat-bottomed ditch. The ditch is between 3m and 4m deep and up to 10m wide with traces of an outer bank on its north side. A number of theories have been suggested about the age of the ditch which could have prehistoric origins. However, it is thought most likely that the feature is Saxon in origin and was intended to surround a manor house. The motte is of later date.

Archaeological sites

The whole of the village core is listed under monument number MNN5552; HER Ref 3738 as a village settlement with Saxon origins.

Three possible prehistoric or Roman sites have been identified to the north and south of the site: MNN140364, SMR 9807 prehistoric site, MNN6871, SMR 5867 and MNN1405, SMR 3562 both identified as being possible prehistoric and Roman settlement activity sites.

On the north-western side of Northampton Road, approximately 400m away from the development site, is MNN4538, SMR 2147 a possible Saxon funerary site.

Historic Map Evidence

The earliest available map is the 1772 enclosure map which shows the footprint of the buildings much as they survived until demolition (Fig. 5). The map shows a narrow building running along the edge of the street. There is a distinct kink in the building as the road curves around towards the north-east so it is not clear if the building is formed of two components or of a single long building. A two-storey stable building, discussed below, is not present on this map. There appears to be a large yard to the rear of the buildings with a corresponding row of similarly sized buildings along the south eastern site boundary. The row of buildings, currently in use as small shops, is also present although it is possible that this map may show older buildings which have been replaced by the present buildings having a similar footprint. Alternatively the brick-built shops may have been rebuilt or re-skinned with brick.

The First Edition County Series Ordnance Survey map published in 1885 shows a significantly different layout to the 1772 enclosure map (Fig. 6). The large yard to the rear of the streetside buildings has been subdivided into smaller plots and the buildings along the south eastern boundary have been removed. The long kinked building along High Street is clearly shown as two buildings on this map with the northernmost building appearing to have an open side facing into the smaller yard. The angles at which the buildings join suggests that the open sided building may be the earliest structure. An additional building has been added to the northern end of the open sided building. A small building now projects out onto High Street. The row of shops appears to have virtually the same footprint as it does now.

The 1900 edition of the Ordnance Survey is the next available edition. This map shows that a new structure has been added along the southern boundary of the site and the open fronted building has had an additional structure built across its front (Fig. 7). It is not clear what the function of any of these buildings was. Subsequent editions of the Ordnance Survey show very little change until the 1976 edition which shows that the structure added to the front of the open fronted building has now been removed (Fig. 8). The open fronted building also appears to have been divided into three sections by this date.



Figure 5: 1772 enclosure map
Site highlighted



Figure 6: Ordnance Survey County Series map. First Edition 1885



Figure 7: Ordnance Survey County Series, 1900 edition



Figure 8: Ordnance Survey, 1976 edition

Objectives

The purpose of the building recording work was to record and advance understanding of the significance of the affected heritage asset:

The objectives of the Historic Building Recording programme were:

- To provide a comprehensive visual record of historic fabric revealed by the development work as this structure represented upstanding fabric of local and regional importance.
- The project report should provide a review of the local and regional historical context of the structures recorded by the project, making reference to the appropriate regional research agendas. This would be adequately detailed to place the findings of the recording in their context and to be able to inform future conservation decisions and the subsequent management of the structures.
- The project should produce a high quality, fully integrated archive suitable for long-term deposition in order to ‘preserve by record’ the buildings in their current form prior to demolition.

The purpose of the archaeological trial trenching work was to:

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

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area.

Methodology

Building recording

The ULAS written scheme of investigation specified that the building recording site record should include the following elements:

Building Plans to establish an accurate record of the structures and sections illustrating the vertical relationships within the buildings, at an appropriate scale of not less than 1:100. Existing architect’s plans, should any be available, may be used as a basis for the record but should be verified for accuracy and amended as appropriate with historical and architectural detail.

The completion of a photographic survey to English Heritage Level 2 standard, showing the buildings in their present condition. Detailed recording of any significant structural features, including any architectural detailing and decoration, timber framing, graffiti, ritual marks or carpenters marks.

Written record

A written record should be maintained on site in the form of field notes and annotations on survey drawings.

The written component of the report will include:

- The precise location of the building, by name or street number, civil parish, town etc. and National Grid Reference.
- A note on any statutory or non-statutory designations.
- The date the record was made, the names of the recorders, and the location of project archive.
- A brief statement describing the building's type or purpose, materials and possible dates of construction and alteration.
- A desk-based assessment to place the buildings in their local and regional historic and archaeological context.
- Appropriate illustrative material including maps, plans, sections, drawings and photographs.
- Photographs of key views needed to illustrate the text of the report, including diagrams indicating the direction/location from which the photographs were taken.
- A table of contents and list of figures or illustrations.
- Full bibliographic and other references, or a list of sources consulted.

Photographic record

A photographic record of the investigations will be made to English Heritage Level 2, using a 35mm format SLR camera with black and white print film supplemented by colour digital photographs. The photographic record would normally comprise:

- General views of the building in its setting or landscape
- A record of the building's exterior appearance.
- A record of interior space, fixtures and fittings.

Trial Trenching

A sample by trial trenching of the area was proposed across the areas of new build. The provisional trench plan attached (Fig. 3 above) shows the proposed location of the trenches (1 x 20m trench and 1 x 30m trench), seeking to target the positioning of the proposed buildings, although the size and position of the trenches indicated on the plan was expected to vary due to unforeseen site constraints or due to the presence of any archaeological deposits.

Topsoil and demolition overburden was removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator fitted with a

toothless bucket. Trenches were excavated down to the top of archaeological deposits or natural undisturbed ground, whichever was reached first.

All excavation by machine and by hand was undertaken with a view to avoid damage to archaeological deposits or features which may have appeared worthy of preservation in situ or more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation. Where structures, features or finds appeared to merit preservation in situ, they would be adequately protected from deterioration.

Trenches were examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located were planned at an appropriate scale. Should any archaeological deposits be exposed they would be sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention would be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

Any archaeological deposits encountered would be recorded and excavated using standard ULAS procedures. Sufficient of any archaeological features or deposits would be hand excavated in order to provide the information required.

Results

Historic Building Survey

As noted, the building had been demolished before any opportunity could be taken to visit the building. The survey is therefore assembled from map evidence, some photographs taken by the developer and online street view images. No plans or elevations of the buildings exist.

The north-west facing frontage along High Street formed a prominent feature when seen from the open square to the south west (Figs. 9 and 10). The frontage consisted of two components: a tall structure with a steeply pitched roof on the southern side and a much lower structure to the north. Both buildings appeared to have been built from locally sourced ironstone similar to that seen on other nearby buildings. Both appear to be single storey structures.

The lower single storey structure on the northerly side corresponds with the probable open fronted building shown on the 1772 map and the 1885 Ordnance Survey map. The online street view image, which cannot be shown in this report for copyright reasons, appears to have been built from coursed rubble ironstone with a slate roof. Most of the slates were missing which appears to have caused a great deal of weather damage to the roof structure. Parts of the roof structure were visible and suggest that the timbers were quite substantial and consisted of a central king post and two queen posts supporting the principal rafters. The size of the timbers is consistent with the strength required for an open-fronted cart shed type building. There was the suggestion of a blocked window at the southern end but otherwise there did not appear to be any other openings, or blocked openings out onto High Street. The lower building butted against the taller steep-pitched roof building at an odd angle which

suggests that the buildings were built at different dates although it is not clear which was the oldest. There are no internal views or views of the south east facing elevation.

The taller building was again built from coursed ironstone rubble but at some point in time had the wall height increased by a further metre, or slightly more. The height extension was made using red brick which was covered in render. It was not possible to see what brick bond had been used. Even before the height extension the ironstone part of the wall was higher than the adjacent building to the north which again suggests a different construction date for the two buildings. A row of red bricks showed the original eaves height before the steeply pitched roof was raised. This may be an indication that the building was thatched when first built, or perhaps that extra ceiling height was required at a later date. A set of double doors with limestone detailing and a carved lintel was set towards the southern end of the elevation. A wide window and what could have been a loading bay had similar limestone detailing and lintels. These openings extended above the original eaves height showing that these were later modifications which may have been added when the roof was raised. The well-maintained roof was covered in Welsh slate.

The south facing gable end of the taller building had a rendered brick gable with coursed ironstone rubble below. A small window was set into this elevation. A single red brick chimney could be seen breaking the ridge on this gable end. The north facing gable end was obscured by the lower building. The south east facing elevation, which looked out into the yard, was also ironstone with brick modification (Fig. 11). This elevation only had a small window near to the southern end but there is a suggestion of a blocked doorway where this window was.

To the north-east of the lowest building was a two-storey rectangular building which could not be seen from the road as it was obscured by a brick-built house which still stands. This building appears to have been a small stable and was built entirely of coursed ironstone rubble (Fig. 12). The building is not shown on the 1772 enclosure map but is clearly present on the 1885 Ordnance Survey map. The building had a wide ground floor doorway with brick detailing and a hayloft type door at first floor level. Parts of this structure were still standing at the time of the evaluation and the ground floor appeared to be laid with modern concrete (Fig. 13). The walls had been whitewashed and the north and east walls had been skinned internally with red bricks. It could be seen that this two-storey stable butted against the lower open-fronted building and can clearly be seen as a later addition between the 1772 and 1885 maps.



Figure 9: Taller, steeply pitched roof building seen from High Street
Looking east. Photo taken by client



Figure 10: Taller, steeply pitched roof building seen from High Street
Looking south east. Photo taken by client



Figure 11: Rear of steeply pitched roof building
Looking west. Photo taken by client



Figure 12: Stable building
Looking north. Photo taken by client



Figure 13: Partially demolished stable building
Looking north-east. 1m scale

Trial Trench Evaluation

At the time of the evaluation the site was open to the road after the demolition of the buildings (Figs. 14 and 15). Part of the yard was covered with tarmac with the south eastern portion having a mix of turf and small trees and shrubs. The boundary along the south eastern edge was extremely overgrown. There was no physical demarcation between the rear of the properties belonging to the shops and Number 2 High Street land. A number of rubble spoil heaps remained on site. Because of a number of physical constraints, discussed below, three trenches were excavated instead of the two specified trenches (Fig. 16).

<i>Trench Number</i>	<i>Orientation</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Min depth</i>	<i>Max depth</i>	<i>Notes</i>
Tr1	NE-SW	17m	0.10m	0.30m	Demolition rubble down to natural
Tr2	NE-SW	20m	0.34m	0.45m	
Tr3	NW-SE	11m	0.18m	0.36m	



Figure 14: Site prior to trial trenching
Looking northwest



Figure 15: Site viewed from High Street
Looking east.

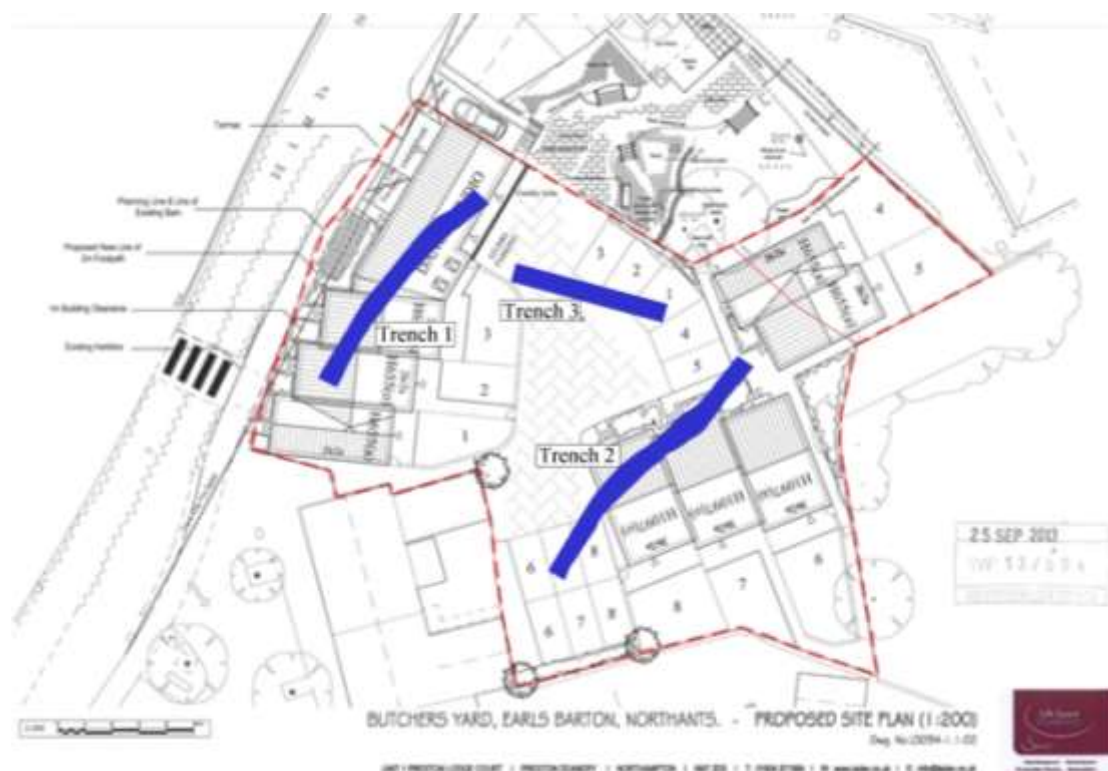


Figure 16: Trench locations
Superimposed on plan supplied by client

Trench 1

Trench 1 was located along the High Street frontage targeting the footprint of the proposed new housing. Once the remnants of loose demolition rubble had been cleared a mid yellow brown sandy clay with lots of broken brick, slate and ironstone layer was exposed. This layer had a thickness between 0.1 and 0.28m below which was the natural substratum which consisted of a mid grey hard clay with pockets of sand and ironstone. A single line of red bricks marked the alignment of a shallow drain. At the north-eastern end of the trench a large area of closely packed blue bricks marked the former floor surface of the lower open-fronted building. The bricks had been laid over a thick layer of concrete which could not be removed by the machine but sample excavation along one edge indicated that it extended at least 0.15m below the top of the natural. Other areas of modern disturbance could be seen along the length of the trench (Figs 17, 18 and 20). Further towards the north-east the ground had been dug away through and below the level of the natural substratum so it was decided to leave the length of Trench 1 at 17m.

No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed in this trench.



Figure 17: Trench 1
Looking north-east. 1m scale



Figure 18: Trench 1
Looking south west. 1m scale

Trench 2

Trench 2 was placed at an angle extending from the edge of the shop boundary across the former garden. A number of trees and an ornamental well made it necessary to excavate an S-shaped trench rather than the more conventional straight trench. Removal of between 0.15 and 0.22m of dark grey brown clayish sandy silt topsoil revealed a mid orange brown clayish sandy silt subsoil. This had a depth varying between 0.14 and 0.24m which sat on top of the natural substrata. The natural varied in consistency along its length and had a mid orange brown sandy clay at the south west end which changed to an area of ironstone brash. An interface band of mixed ironstone and clay led on to an area of pale grey clay with patches of orange sand and ironstone. Two ceramic pipe land drains and a pitched stone and roof tile land drain marked the northern limit of the clay before changing back to ironstone brash (Figs. 19 and 20). The site restraints were such that only 20m of the specified trench could be excavated. It was therefore decided to excavate a third trench.

No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed in this trench.

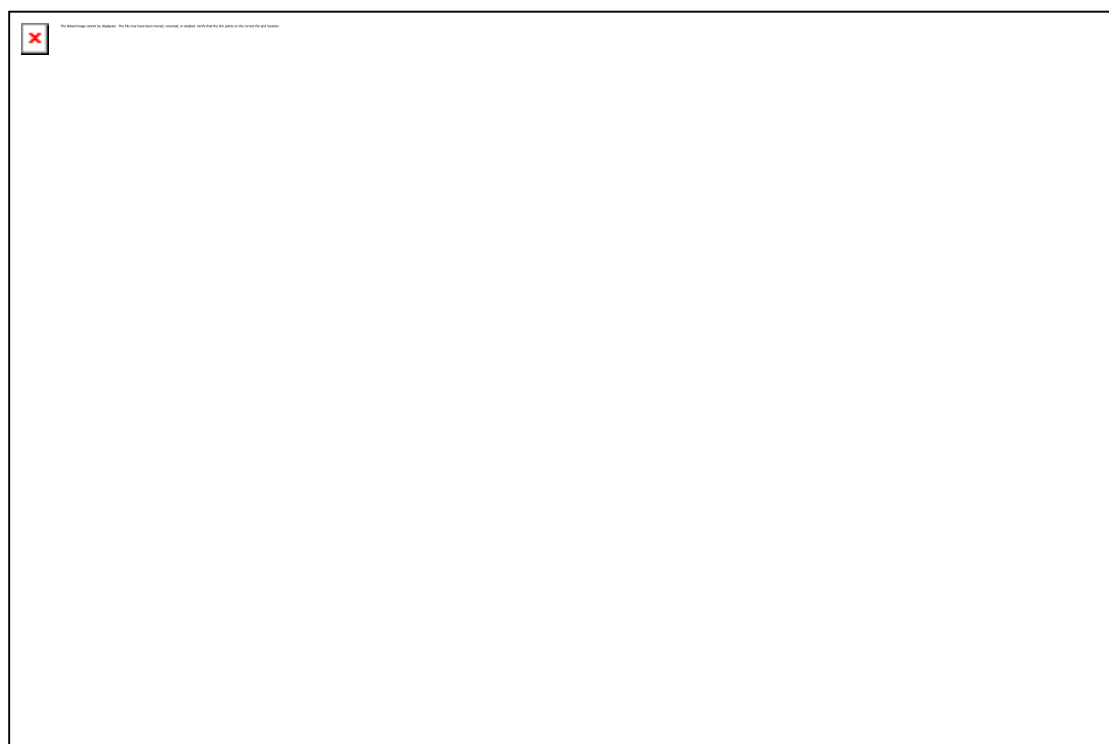


Figure 19: Trench 2
Looking east. 1m scale

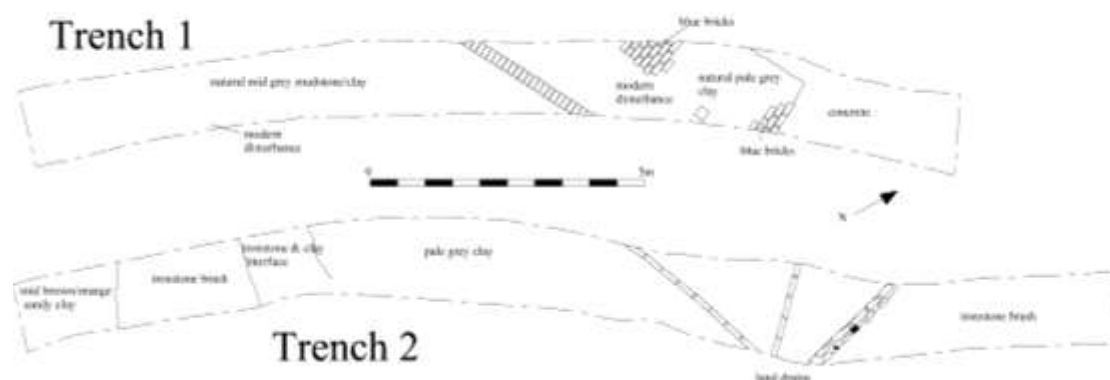


Figure 20: Trenches 1 and 2 plans

Trench 3

Trench 3 was placed in an open space between Trenches 1 and 2 over the site of a proposed parking area. It was hoped that this may identify any plot boundaries or backyard features which may have survived behind the more recent buildings. As with Trench 1 no topsoil or subsoil was present. Between 0.17 and 0.37m of mid yellow brown sandy clay and demolition material was removed to exposed the undisturbed natural substrata consisting of ironstone brash at the north-west end and mid grey clay with ironstone patches in the sound east (Fig. 21).

No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed in this trench.



Figure 21: Trench 3
Looking west. 1m scale

Discussion

From the available records and limited number of photographs it is possible to state that the two buildings fronting on to High Street are likely to date at least to the second half of the 18th century. Furthermore it seems likely that, of the two, it is the lower of the two buildings which is the earliest in date. No evidence survives to show what they may have been built for but the open-fronted building seems to be similar in style to local agricultural cart sheds found in more rural locations. The use of local building materials suggests light industrial or agricultural use rather than as a prestige building. The taller building has been heavily modified by raising the roof height and inserting new window and door openings. The style of the lintels might suggest an early 20th century date for this rebuilding. The two-storey stable is of 19th century date and although a construction date cannot be confidently stated it certainly pre-dates the First Edition Ordnance Survey of 1885. This building also appears to have been modified by the addition of a new internal brick skin and probable modifications to the openings. It is difficult to speculate on any further details.

Considering the key location in the centre of Earls Barton it was surprising that no archaeological features, or even finds, were observed during the trial trench evaluation. However, the total lack of any topsoil and subsoil across most of the site suggests that the ground has been heavily truncated. Given the age of the village it might be imagined that the road would be seen as a possible hollow way running between the churchyard and the development site. This is not the case as the site is significantly lower than the road which may suggest that the footprint of the buildings was cleared and levelled before they were built. Demolition of the buildings and scrub clearance appears to have had a minimal effect on any further truncation. Later modification and levelling of the rear yard has also caused further loss of any potential archaeological deposits.

Archive

The archive consists of:

This report,

3 ULAS pro-forma trench recording sheets,

1 photographic record sheet,

1 contact sheet of 36 digital photographs taken during the evaluation,

1 contact sheet of 14 digital photographs taken by the client immediately prior to demolition,

1 DVD of this report and the digital photographs.

Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the appropriate local archaeological journal 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.

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<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/process/national-heritage-list-for-england/>

Appendix 1 Digital photographs

Photographs taken by client:



Before demo (1).jpg



Before demo (2).jpg



Before demo (3).jpg



Before demo (4).jpg



Before demo (5).jpg



Before demo (6).jpg



Before demo (7).jpg



Before demo (8).jpg



Before demo (9).jpg



Before demo (10).jpg



Before demo (11).jpg



Before demo (12).jpg

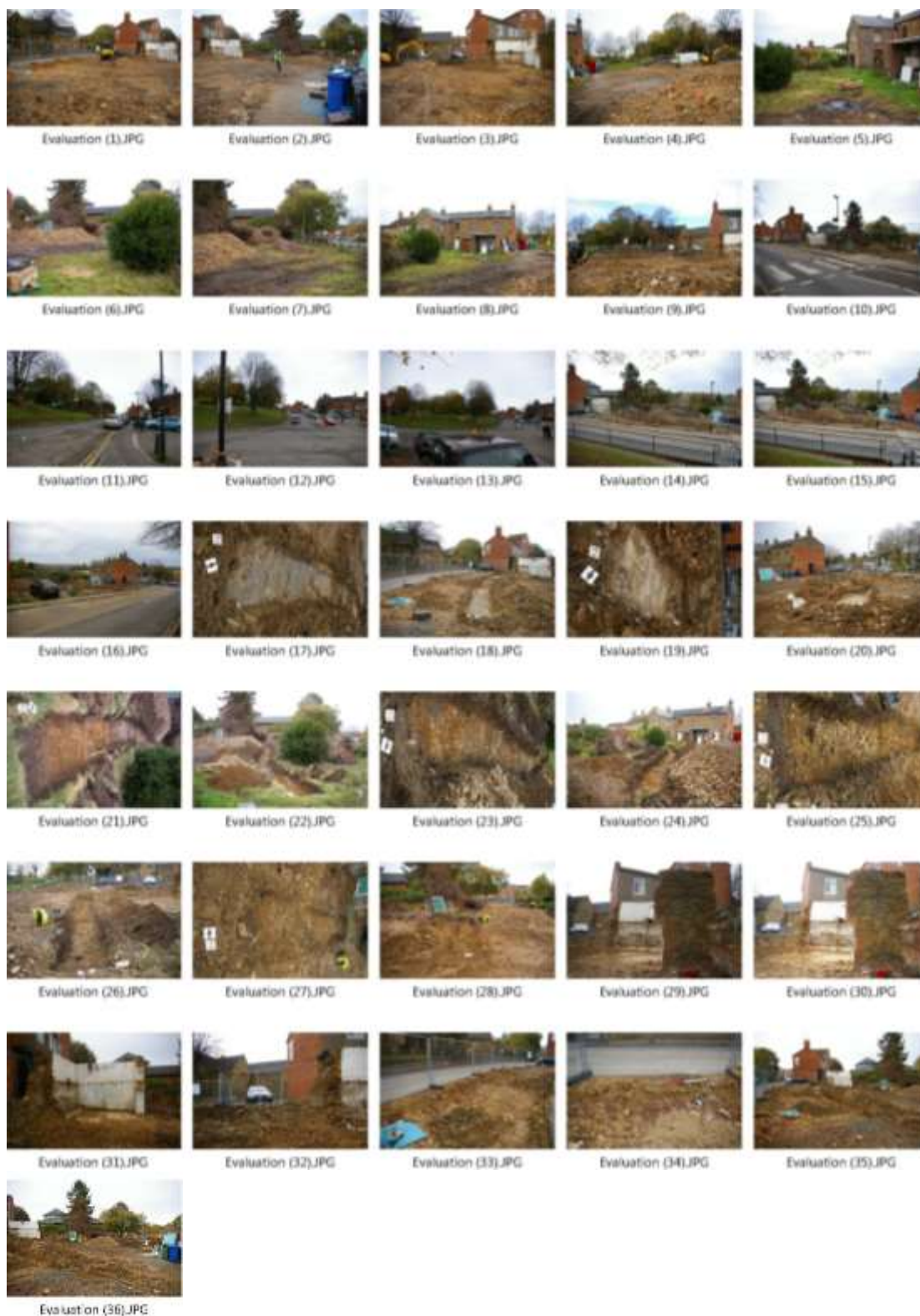


Before demo (13).jpg



Before demo (14).jpg

Evaluation photographs:
(on next page)



Appendix 2 OASIS Information

Project Name	Butchers Yard, 2 High Street, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire
Project Type	Level 2 building survey and trench evaluation
Project Manager	V Score
Project Supervisor	A Hyam
Previous/Future work	None
Current Land Use	Commercial property
Development Type	Residential and commercial
Reason for Investigation	As a condition
Position in the Planning Process	Proceeding
Site Co ordinates	SP 85253 63777
Start/end dates of field work	3-4.11.2014
Archive Recipient	
Study Area	Approx 150m ²

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