



UNIVERSITY OF  
**LEICESTER**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
For 2A Bridge Street, Shepshed,  
Leicestershire LE12 9AD**

**NGR: SK 447900 319900**

By Kim Sidwell-Smith



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**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
For 2A Bridge Street, Shepshed  
Leicestershire**

**NGR: SK 447900 319900**

**Kim Sidwell-Smith**

**For: Mr John Savage**

Checked by

Signed:



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**Date:** 19 April 2016

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# **An Archaeological Watching Brief for 2A Bridge Street, Shepshed, Leicestershire.**

## **Summary**

*An Archaeological watching brief was undertaken by ULAS for Mr John Savage on land at 2A Bridge Street, Shepshed, Leicestershire NGR SK447900 319900 during groundworks associated with the erection of a single story extension and a single car garage. The proposed development at 2A Bridge Street is located in the north side of the village of Shepshed, 5 miles north-west of Loughborough on the northern edge of Charnwood Forest. Bridge Street is in the core of the settlement and it is within the Conservation Area. Modern disturbance within the topsoil was noted on site, attributed to the previous lawns and vegetable garden, the subsoil was completely undisturbed. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under the Accession Number XA43.2016.*

## **1. Introduction**

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out by ULAS in March 2016 during groundworks associated with the conversion of the shop and outbuildings at 2A Bridge Street, Shepshed, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 447900 319900; Fig. 1) into residential dwellings. Charnwood Borough Council has granted permission for the erection of a single-storey extension and single car garage, subject to an archaeological condition. The location of the site within the conservation area of Shepshed indicates that buried archaeological remains could be affected by the development. Archaeological attendance (watching brief) was therefore required by Charnwood Borough Council in order to identify and record any structural or archaeological remains of significance that might exist.

## **2. Topography and Geology**

The village of Shepshed lies 5 miles north-west of Loughborough on the northern edge of Charnwood Forest. Bridge Street is in the core of the settlement and it is within the Conservation Area. The British Geological Survey shows the underlying geology of the site is likely to comprise Mudstone of the Gunthorpe Formation and Charmouth Formation with Made Ground and alluvium (Sheet 141, Loughborough).

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

Despite the early importance of agriculture, Shepshed had become an important centre for domestic framework knitting by the mid-17th century, the early knitters being traditionally employed as out-workers by larger factories, mostly based in Leicester. The development and economic importance of domestic framework knitting continued into the 18th and 19th centuries. After 1845 the cottage industries that had previously dominated Shepshed went





## 4.1 Research Aims

All work was considered in light of the National research context (English Heritage 1991 and 1997), the East Midlands Research Framework (Cooper ed. 2006) and strategy (Knight *et al.* 2012), along with targeting national research aims.

The archaeological work had the potential to contribute to the following research aims:

- *The Medieval period* (Lewis 2006, Knight *et al.* 2012; English Heritage 2012):  
The origins and development of medieval settlement, landscape and society.

Environmental evidence could provide information on local environmental conditions as well as settlement activity, craft, industry and land use. Artefacts can assist in the development of a type series within the region and provide evidence for evidence for craft, industry and exchange across broad landscape areas.

Therefore, the archaeological work had the potential to contribute to Research Agenda topics:

### *Urbanism*

7.1.2. Define the industrial and trading activities associated with towns and the nature and extent of urban influence upon the countryside.

### *Rural Settlement*

7.2.1. Understand the development of nucleated villages

7.2.2. Shed further light upon the origin and development of dispersed hamlets and farms in champion and pastoral areas.

7.2.3. Understand the form, evolution and functions of buildings within rural settlements and establish the extent of surviving medieval fabrics

### *Industry and Trade*

7.6.4. Development of a typological classification of buildings associated with medieval industrial and commercial activities and identification of regional and chronological patterning.

### *The Agrarian Landscape and food-producing economy*

7.7.3. What can we deduce about changes in woodland management and animal or crop husbandry?

7.7.4. What can environmental remains teach us about diet and living conditions in rural communities?

Research Objective 7E - *Investigate the morphology of rural settlements.*

## 5. Methodology

The work followed the Written Scheme of Investigation (Score 2015) and adhered to the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2014).

The programme of work consisted of the excavation of ground trenches using a 1½ ton tracked excavator with a 450mm flat-blade bucket.

## 6. Results

### Single Storey Extension

Foundation trenches were cut at a consistent width of 0.5m and a depth of 1m on the southern end of the existing outbuildings and ran 3.8m in a southerly direction from the southern wall of the existing structure turning west for 3.8m then north for 3.8m back to the wall Fig. 4). The trenches contained a 0.30m to 0.36m layer of dark brown topsoil. A small number of brick fragments from the outbuilding were contained within the topsoil layer. The subsoil was consistently exposed to a depth of 0.64m to 0.70m and consisted of a yellowish orange-brown clayey-soil. The subsoil was undisturbed in all 3 trenches and reached the water table at 1m.



Figure 3 Western trench for extension looking north.



### Single Detached Garage

The 4 trenches to the west of the outbuilding cut for the single car garage were 3.5m by 5.450m, cut to a depth of 1m and .50m wide. This was an area that was previously laid to lawn and vegetable garden. The topsoil was very dark brown and loose to a depth of .50m. The subsoil was again comprised of yellowish orange-brown clayey-soil and undisturbed. All 4 trenches reached the water table at 1m.



Figure 4 Western trench for garage looking north.



Figure 5 Completed footing trenches for garage.

## 7. Discussion

Despite the location of the site in the conservation area of the village and next to a Grade II listed dwelling, no significant archaeological structures or deposits were identified during the work.

## 8. Archive

The site archive will be held by *Leicestershire County Council, under accession no.XA43.2016*

The archive contains:

- Site notes (watching brief sheets) with photographic recording sheet
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- Unbound copy of this report
- Thumbnail print of digital photographs

## OASIS data entry

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>	<b>Oasis No</b>	universi1-247262		
	<b>Project Name</b>	2A Bridge Street, Shepshed, Leicestershire		
	<b>Start/end dates of field work</b>	15/03/2016		
	<b>Previous/Future Work</b>	Not known		
	<b>Project Type</b>	Watching Brief		
	<b>Site Status</b>	None		
	<b>Current Land Use</b>	Residential		
	<b>Monument Type/Period</b>	Post Medieval		
	<b>Significant Finds/Period</b>	None		
	<b>Development Type</b>	Residential		
	<b>Reason for Investigation</b>	NPPF		
	<b>Position in the Planning Process</b>	Planning condition		
	<b>Planning Ref.</b>	P/12/2050/2		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>	<b>Site Address/Postcode</b>	Shepshed, Leics LE12 9AD		
	<b>Study Area</b>			
	<b>Site Coordinates</b>	SK 447900 319900		
	<b>Height OD</b>			
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Brief Originator</b>	Local Planning Authority (LCC)		
	<b>Project Design Originator</b>	ULAS		
	<b>Project Manager</b>	Richard Buckley		
	<b>Project Director/Supervisor</b>	Richard Buckley		
	<b>Sponsor/Funding Body</b>	Developer		
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		<b>Physical</b>	<b>Digital</b>	<b>Paper</b>
	<b>Recipient</b>	NA	LCC MusService	LCCMusService
	<b>ID (Acc. No.)</b>		XA43.2016	XA43.2016
	<b>Contents</b>		Photos Survey data	Watching brief records Field Notes
<b>PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>Type</b>	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	<b>Title</b>	An Archaeological watching brief for 2A Bridge Street, Shepshed, Leicestershire		
	<b>Author</b>	Kim Sidwell-Smith		
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	<b>Publisher/Place</b>	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	<b>Description</b>	Developer Report A4 pdf		

## 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* in due course. The

report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.

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## 11. Acknowledgements

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