

**Archaeological Observation and
Recording at 23 Fowke St, Rothley,
Leicestershire LE7 7PJ**

NGR: SK 5855 1273

Lucy Brown

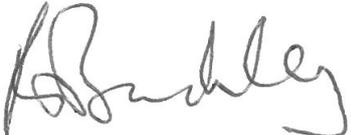


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For: Solus Homes

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out archaeological observation and recording (watching brief) at 23 Fowke St, Rothley, on the 12th December 2017, during the demolition of an existing building and reduction of land; entailing the excavation of the footprint of the development area to the level of the natural sub-stratum. No deposits of archaeological interest were uncovered.

The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire County Council, under accession number XA147.2017.

The watching brief took place as a planning condition for the development of the site into 6 residential flats with associated access, parking, landscaping and groundworks (Planning ref: P/17/1564/2) in accordance with section 12 (Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment) of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1. Introduction

This document is a report of the programme of archaeological mitigation at 23 Fowke St, Rothley in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (Section 12 Enhancing and Conserving the Historic Environment). The fieldwork specified below provides a record of the absence of archaeological remains in mitigation of the impact of the proposed development. This report addresses the requirements from Charnwood Borough Council for a scheme of work comprising archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication (a 'Watching Brief').

The archaeological work was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services on 12th December 2017 and entailed the presence of an archaeologist to monitor the demolition of an existing building and excavation of the footprint of the development area, located to the immediate south of the Fowke Street.

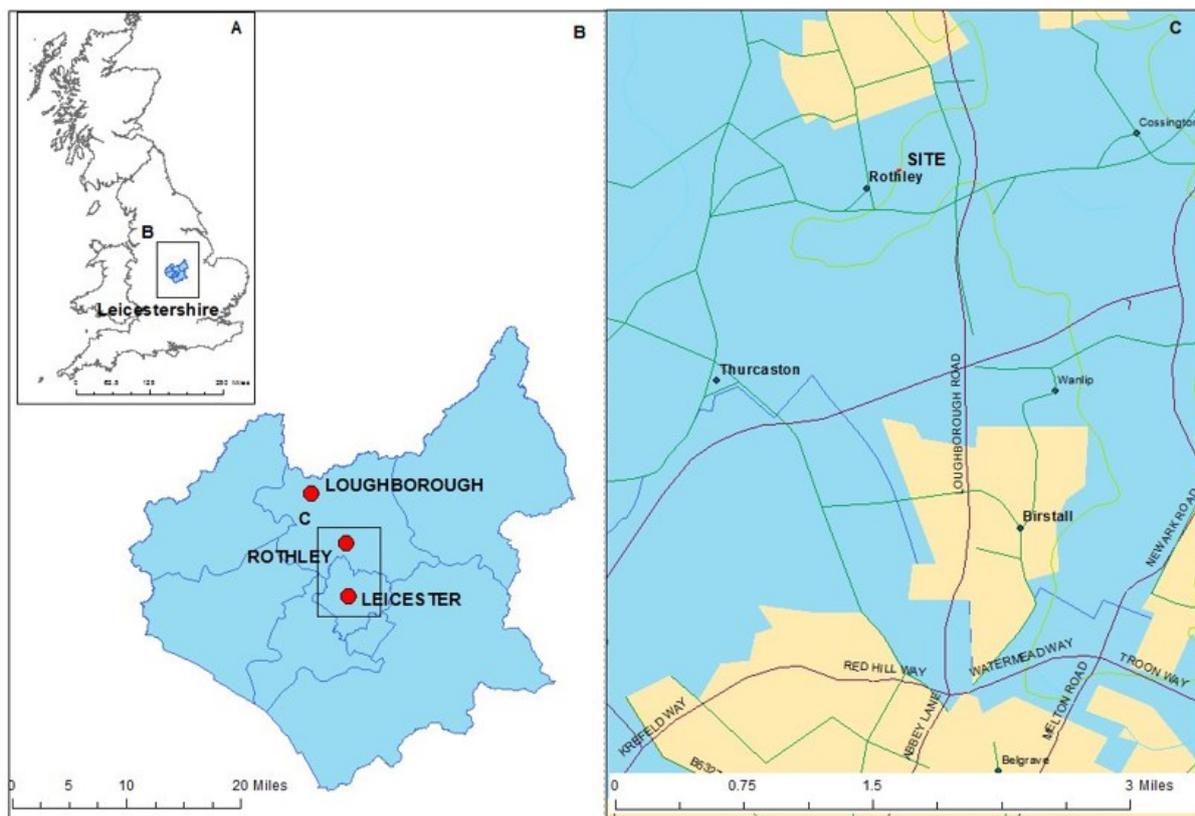


Figure 1: Leicestershire site location

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology (Figure 1, Error! Reference source not found.)

The site lies at the corner of Fowke Street and School Street in the village centre of Rothley.

The site consists of a corner plot of land containing a single-storey building with a car park to the east. It covers around 420 square metres in total at a height of around 49m aOD. The site is broadly flat, although the building lies on a small stone plinth raising it above the line of the road. The car park is on a slight incline rising to the west.

The British Geological Survey website indicates that the underlying geology consists of Edwalton Member mudstone.

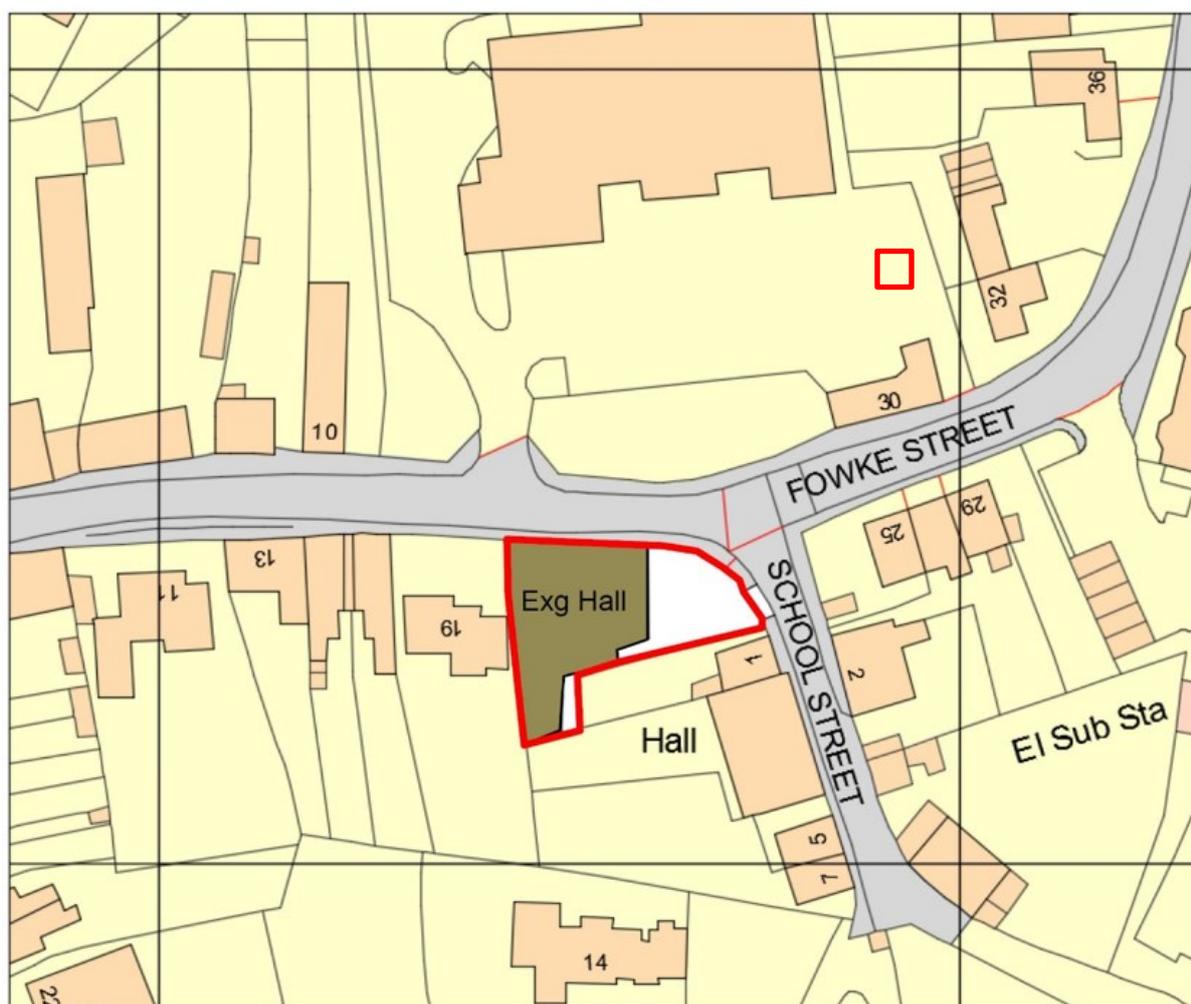


Figure 2: The Site location

3. Historical and Archaeological Background

Rothley has been inhabited since Saxon times, evidenced by the ancient Saxon cross in the church graveyard in the village. It is mentioned in the Domesday Book where it is listed as "Rodolei" which is most likely from the Anglo-Saxon *Roþlēah* meaning "meadow in a clearing" (Mills 2003).

The Domesday Book shows that at the time it was amongst the lands belonging to the King (Morris 1979). It shows that the land included 37 acres of meadow, a mill and considerable woodlands. This manor also controlled surrounding pieces of land in a large number of villages including Asfordby, Seagrave and Sileby (Nichols 1804).

In the Middle Ages, Rothley was home to a manor of the Knights Templar, known as Rothley Temple, but is now the Rothley Court Hotel, which passed to the Babington family after the dissolution of the monasteries in the 16th century. The Babington family held the manor for almost 300 years until the death in 1837 of Thomas Babington who was MP for Leicester from 1800-1818, and a leading Anglican evangelical. Educated at St John's College, Cambridge

alongside William Wilberforce, the two worked closely together on social improvement and famously on the Bills to abolish the slave trade (White 1877).

Rothley centres on two greens, Cross Green and Town Green, both of which are reached by a road that leads from the crossroads. The crossroad lies on the old route of the A6 road, which now bypasses the village. The Parish Church is dedicated to St Mary and St John.

The site contains a late 19th-early 20th century brick hall, with modern additions, which for most of its history was the local Conservative Club. This was closed around 11 years ago and since then the building has been used for storing documents.

The Historic Environment Record (HER) for Leicestershire and Rutland records that there are no known archaeological remains within the boundaries of assessment area.

The site lies within the medieval settlement core of the village and within Conservation Area of Rothley village. The Ridgeway Conservation area lies to the west of the site.

There are a number of known archaeological sites in the vicinity of the assessment area. A summary of these is shown below in the Appendices, along with a list of historic buildings.

4. Aims and Objectives

4.1 The main objectives of the archaeological work were:

- 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 establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape and to advance understanding of the heritage assets.
- To recover artefacts and ecofacts to compare with other assemblages and results
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

Within the stated project aims, the principal objective of the recording was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, and significance of the heritage assets within their local and regional context.

5. Methodology (Figs 3-5)

The demolition of the building and reduction of the ground level of the existing building was undertaken with a toothed bucket on a mini-digger prior to the arrival of an archaeologist. Subsequently 'made ground' and approximately 1m of the underlying natural mudstone was removed with both a toothed and toothless bucket on a mini digger under the observation of an archaeologist. The footings of the building and the area excavated are approximately 245sq.m

The work followed the approved design specification (Buckley/Gonzalez, 2016) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2014).



Figure 3: Level of excavation upon arrival (looking south)



Figure 4: Excavation with toothed bucket observed by archaeologist (looking north)



Figure 5: Excavation with toothless bucket observed by archaeologist (looking east)

6. Results (Figs 6-9)

The building had been demolished and any remaining older stone footings removed prior to the arrival of the archaeologist.

The subsoil consisted of a mid-brown sandy loam and was approximately 30cm in depth below the original ground level. Further to the centre and north of the site were areas of ‘made ground’ which consisted of a mid orange-brown sandy clay of variable depths.

The development area was excavated to approximately 1m below the level of the subsoil in the footprint of the building prior to the arrival of the archaeologist. The depth of excavation into the natural meant that any surviving archaeology had already been removed and the remaining building debris appeared to be modern in character. The area immediately to the south of the where the building would have been situated was excavated under the observation of the archaeologist and was also removed to approximately 1m below the level of the ‘made ground’. The remaining ground to the very south of the site will not be reduced and will form an elevated garden area which will therefore conserve any archaeology present. Due to the depth of the excavations and the intended 30mm deep foundation trenches, any archaeology that was present underneath the previous building had been removed. A modern services pipe and cables were observed during the excavation of the ‘made ground’. No archaeological artefacts, deposits or features were revealed at the reduced ground level and during excavations observed by the archaeologist.



Figure 6: Rubble from demolished building (Looking north-east)



Figure 7: Remaining foundations of the demolished building (looking south-west)



Figure 8: Underlying Edwalton Member mudstone (looking north)



Figure 9: Modern services pipe revealed during excavation (looking east)

7. Conclusion

No archaeological deposits or features were observed in the development area.

The building and the ground beneath had been removed to a depth approximately 1m below the subsoil prior to the archaeologist's arrival. Land to the immediate south of the building was reduced under observation by the archaeologist and revealed no archaeology. The most

southern area will not be reduced and is therefore unlikely to affect underlying archaeology. Ground to the east of the building footings is yet to be excavated although this area consists of a sloping tarmac driveway consisting of ‘made ground’ which is therefore likely to have disturbed any pre-existing archaeology.

The remaining rubble consists largely of bricks and concrete with little indication of the presence of the stone footings mentioned in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Buckley, 2017). The foundation trenches will be approximately 30 mm deep (due to the fact that levels have already been significantly reduced over the footprint) and are well below the expected level of archaeology on this site.

9. Archive

The site archive will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums Service, under accession no. XA147.2017

The archive contains:

- 1 Watching Brief Record Sheet
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- Thumbnail prints of digital photographs

OASIS data entry

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	universi1-303767
	Project Name	An Archaeological Watching Brief for Fowke St, Rothley
	Start/end dates of field work	12-12-2017 - 12-12-2017
	Previous/Future Work	No / Not known
	Project Type	Watching Brief
	Site Status	Conservation area
	Current Land Use	Other
	Monument Type/Period	none
	Significant Finds/Period	none
	Development Type	Residential
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition
	Planning Ref.	P/17/1564/2
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	23 Fowke St, Rothley, LE7 7PJ
	Study Area	145 Square metres
	Site Coordinates	SK 458472 312785
	Height OD	
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (LCC)
	Project Design Originator	Richard Buckley
	Project Manager	Vicki Score
	Project Director/Supervisor	Lucy Brown

	Sponsor/Funding Body	Developer / Solus Homes		
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	NA	ULAS/Northamptonshire County Council	ULAS/Northamptonshire County Council
	ID (Acc. No.)		XA147.2017	XA147.2017
	Contents		Photos	Watching brief records Photo records
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
	Title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at 23 Fowke St, Rothley		
	Author	Lucy Brown		
	Other bibliographic details	ULAS Report No 2017-201		
	Date	2017		
	Publisher/Place	University of Leicester Archaeological Services / University of Leicester		
	Description	Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication for land at 23 Fowke St, Rothley, LE7 7PJ including photographs of the site.		

10. Publication

10.1 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.

11. Bibliography

Cifa 2014a,	<i>Code of Conduct</i> . The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, December 2014.
Cifa 2014b,	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation</i> . The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, December 2014.
Cifa 2014c,	<i>Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives</i> . The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, December 2014.
Knight, D. et al. 2012	<i>East Midlands Heritage: An updated research agenda and strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands</i> .
ULAS 2017	<i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Attendance and recording during groundworks</i> .

11. Acknowledgements

The fieldwork was undertaken for Solus Homes and was carried out by Lucy Brown of ULAS. Richard Buckley and Vicki Score managed the project.

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