

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at Whitehouse Farm,
2 Church Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire.
(SK 620 176)**

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Planning Application: P/04/2579/2

For: Mr & Mrs P. Billington

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Summary

University Of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Mr & Mrs P Billington to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground works at Whitehouse Farm Seagrave. The area was identified as being of high archaeological potential, being close to the medieval village core. During the course of the watching brief nothing of archaeological significance was observed, however, a single sherd of twelfth century pottery was recovered. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services under the accession number X.A152.2005.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services were commissioned by Mr & Mrs P Billington to undertake an archaeological watching brief during ground works in advance of construction work to the east of Whitehouse Farm, 2 Church Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire (SK620 176). Planning Application No P/04/2579/2. An examination of the Leicestershire and Rutland Sites and Monument Record (SMR) indicated that the site is located within an area of archaeological importance close to the historical core of Seagrave. As a result Leicestershire County Council, Historic & Natural Environment Team, as archaeological adviser to Charnwood Borough Council, requested an archaeological watching brief during development. All ground works were to be controlled and supervised by an archaeologist.

The site is located in an area with archaeological potential as it lies within the historic core of Seagrave and close to a series of medieval village earthworks (SMR 61NW E). The site also lies close to finds of medieval pottery. In view of this it was thought that the development proposals may have a damaging effect on any archaeological deposits present.

All work followed the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (LMARS 1997), the Institute of Field Archaeologists' (IFA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*. The watching brief followed the design specification for archaeological work 18.7.2003 (Appendix). The watching brief took place on July 20th 2005.

The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 142, indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of glacial drift including boulder clay.

2. Methodology

An area approximately 18 metres by 14 metres to the east of Whitehouse Farm, adjacent to the boundary with no73 King Street and All Saints' Church was reduced by 500mm before the footings were excavated. A JCB with ditching bucket was used, monitored by an archaeologist. The area had been previously used as a garden and a

single-storey brick and corrugated concrete garage was also within the proposed development area, however, this had been demolished prior to arrival.



Figure 1: Site location. Scale 1:50000.

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3. Results

The area appeared to have suffered considerable recent disturbance and there was no evidence of undisturbed topsoil (Colour Slide 1). Approximately 500mm of overburden was excavated revealing a horizon of mottled yellowish grey-brown weathered bedrock. A single sherd of twelfth century pottery (Sawday, *D. pers com*) was recovered during the excavation, the pottery was largely un-abraded and likely,

therefore to have come from a disturbed archaeological feature, unfortunately no evidence of this possible feature was observed.

There was a change in ground level of approximately 2700mm between the current ground level within the churchyard of All Saints' and the ground level within the proposed development area. The proposed development required that this bank be cut back to a vertical face; this too was monitored during the course of the watching brief and once again nothing of archaeological significance was observed.

This dramatic change in ground level may suggest that the proposed development area had been reduced at sometime in the past. The original topography probably consisted of a gradual south to north slope, from the higher ground within the churchyard to King Street. In all likelihood the ground was terraced when the buildings were erected, and only the most substantial archaeological features would have survived.

Due to the lack of any visible archaeological remains at this level it was decided not to monitor the excavation of the footings themselves.



Colour Slide 1 Watching Brief Area.

4. Conclusion

Despite its promising location and the high potential of archaeological remains, nothing of archaeological significance was observed during the course of the

watching brief. It appears that the site had been extensively terraced and the ground level reduced in the past, destroying any potential archaeological remains. The recovered pottery does indicate potential archaeological remains within the locality.

5. References

Clay, P. *An Archaeological Watching Brief During Ground works at 28 Water Lane, Seagrave.* ULAS Report 2002-170.

Coward, J. *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Hall Farm Seagrave.* ULAS Report 2000-108.

Higgins, T. *An Archaeological Watching Brief at 31 Swan Street, Seagrave.* ULAS Report 2001-158.

Jarvis, W. *An Archaeological Watching Brief on Land Adjacent to Hall Farm, Seagrave.* ULAS Report 2002-41.

6. Archive

The archive consists of a watching brief report sheet including sketch plan and 3 digital colour images. A sherd of medieval pottery. The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services under the accession number X.A152.2005.

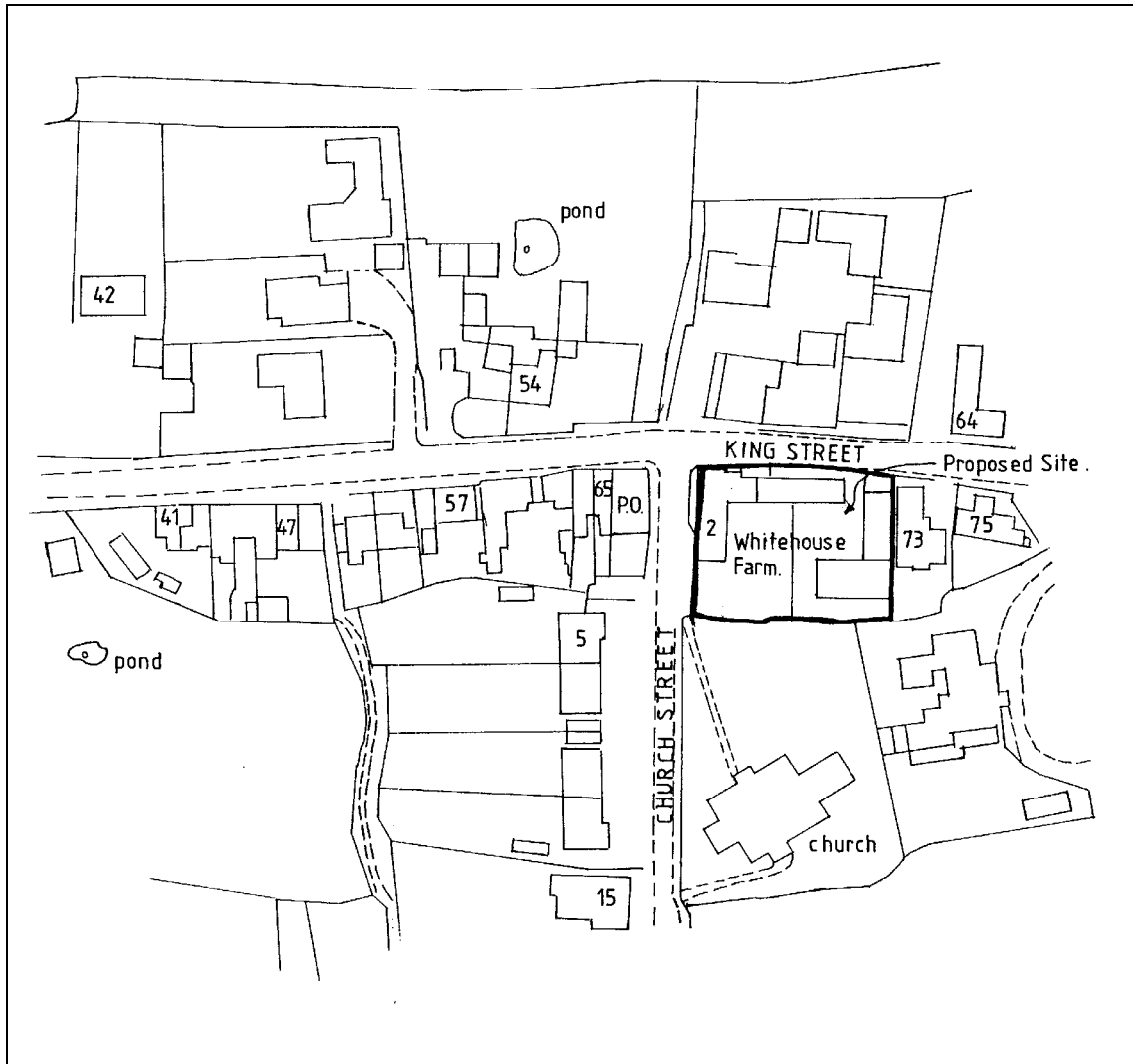


Figure 2 Site Location
Drawing Supplied By Andrew Granger Architectural Design.

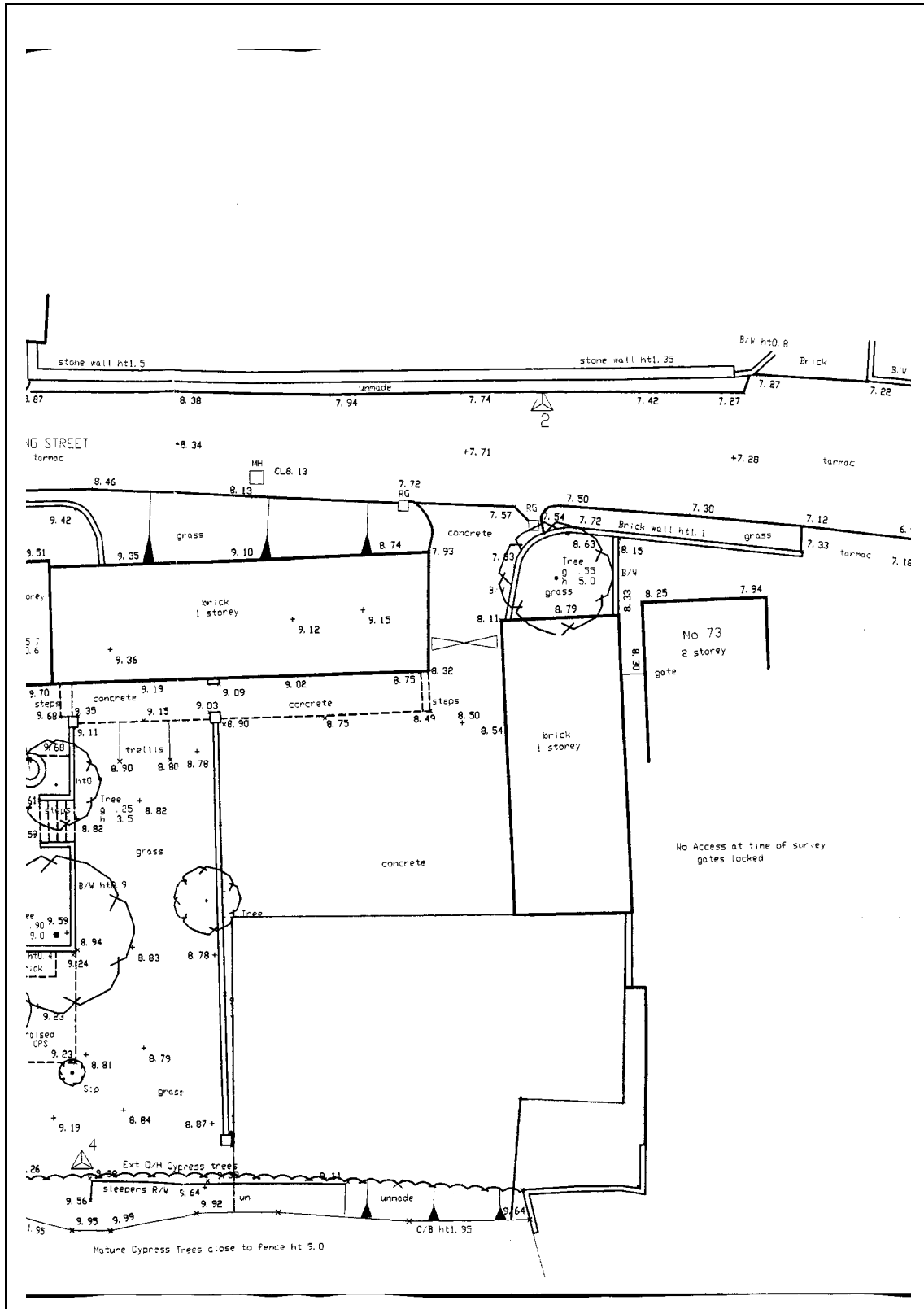


Figure 3 Location of Watching Brief (In Bold).
Drawing Supplied By Andrew Granger Architectural Design.