

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at
21 King's Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire
(SK 7573 2822)
1.6.05.**

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January 2006

Planning Application ref: 03/00464/FUL
Client: WA & JM Brooks

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**University of Leicester Archaeological Services
Report 2006/015**

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at 21 King's Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 7573 2822)

Matt Parker

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during June 2005 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) as required by Melton Mowbray Borough Council as part of the planning application (No 03/00464/FUL). The site lies close to an Anglo-Saxon cemetery and a medieval/post-medieval water mill. During the completion of the watching brief on the development area no archaeological features were observed. The site archive will be deposited with the Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services under the Accession Number X.A2. 2006.

1: Introduction

1.1: In accordance with Planning and Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and planning) and the Ancient Monuments and Archaeological Areas Act (1979), section 2, a watching brief was undertaken during ground works in advance of the development of the area for the construction of a single story commercial building for WA and JM Brooks. The work follows the Design Specification for Archaeological Work (ULAS 06/555).

1.2: This work was carried out as part of an Archaeological Impact Assessment as recommended by the Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, Heritage Services, in her capacity as archaeological advisor to the planning authority.

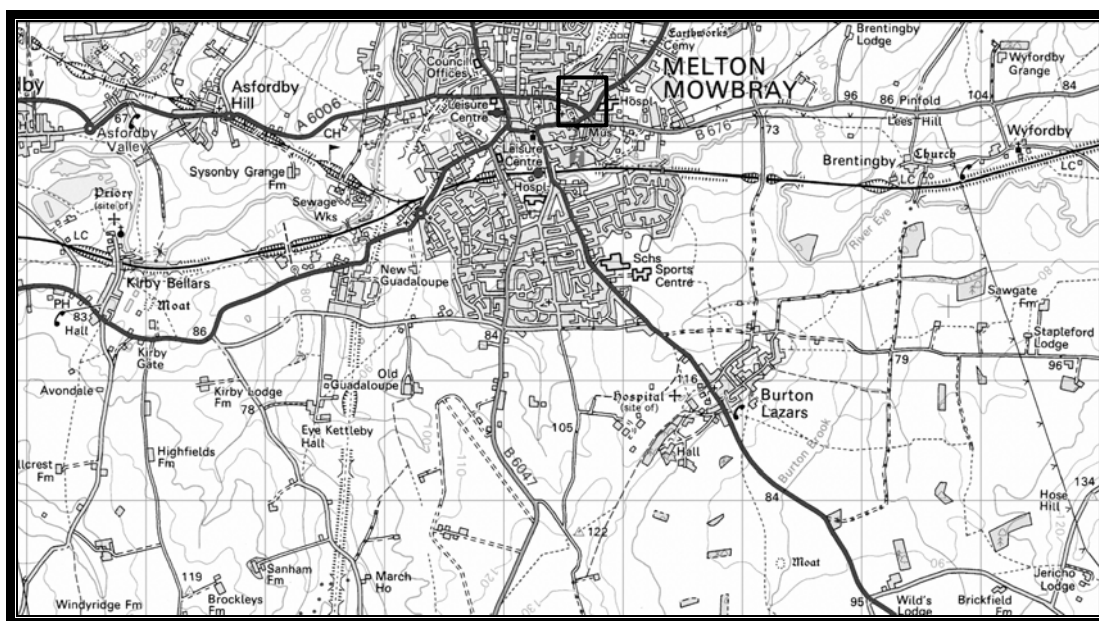


Figure 1 Location of development site.

Reproduced from Landranger 1:50 000 scale by permission of Ordnance Survey
on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
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2: Geology and Topography

2.1 The British Geological Survey map of Great Britain (sheet 142) indicates that the underlying geology should consist of sand and gravel. The site lies at a height of *c.* 7mm OD

3: Background of site

3.1: The desk-based assessment, conducted by Mr S Shouler, had found that the proposed development area was within an area with known archaeological deposits. The 1904 Ordnance Survey map indicates an Anglo-Saxon burial ground 0.1km to the north east of the development area. Other Anglo-Saxon remains were uncovered during an archaeological watching brief at St Mary's Hospital in 2003 (ULAS Report No 2004/039). A single sunken-featured building containing early (*c.*AD 450-650) Anglo-Saxon pottery, spindle whorls and a loomweight was discovered on the development site. A small group of animal bone belonging to domesticated animals also formed part of the assemblage. The finds represent part of a settlement of unknown size and extent, which appears to have been destroyed by later agricultural activity or hospital buildings. Thus it was deemed necessary to have adequate archaeological supervision whilst the foundation works were being undertaken.

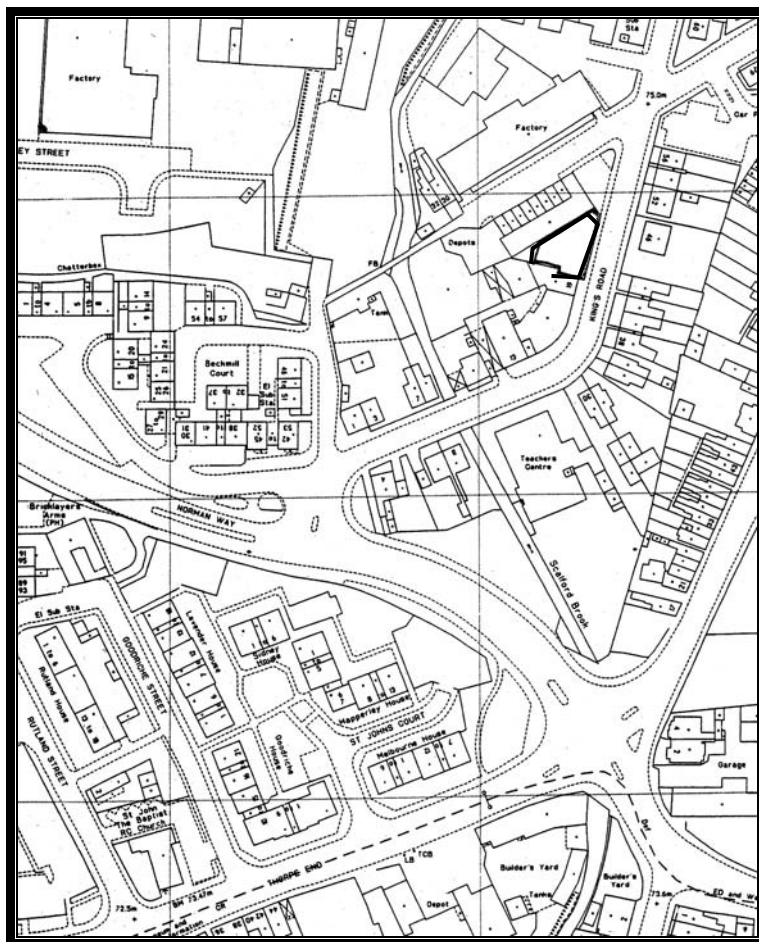


Figure 2 Site Location within Melton Mowbray

4: Archaeological Objectives

4.1: The aim of the archaeological watching brief was to ascertain whether any archaeological deposits were present following the Design Specification for Archaeological Work at 21 King's Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (ULAS 06/555, Appendix 1). In summary, these were as follows

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the nature, extent, date, and significance of any archaeological deposits affected by the proposed ground works.
- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the groundwork's.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

4.2: All work was undertaken in accord with the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Code of Conduct and adhering to their *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. The work also was in accordance with the Leicestershire County Council *Guidelines and Procedures for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland*.

4.3: The archaeological watching brief was undertaken between the 9th and 12th of January 2006 by Matt Parker. A total of three visits were conducted.

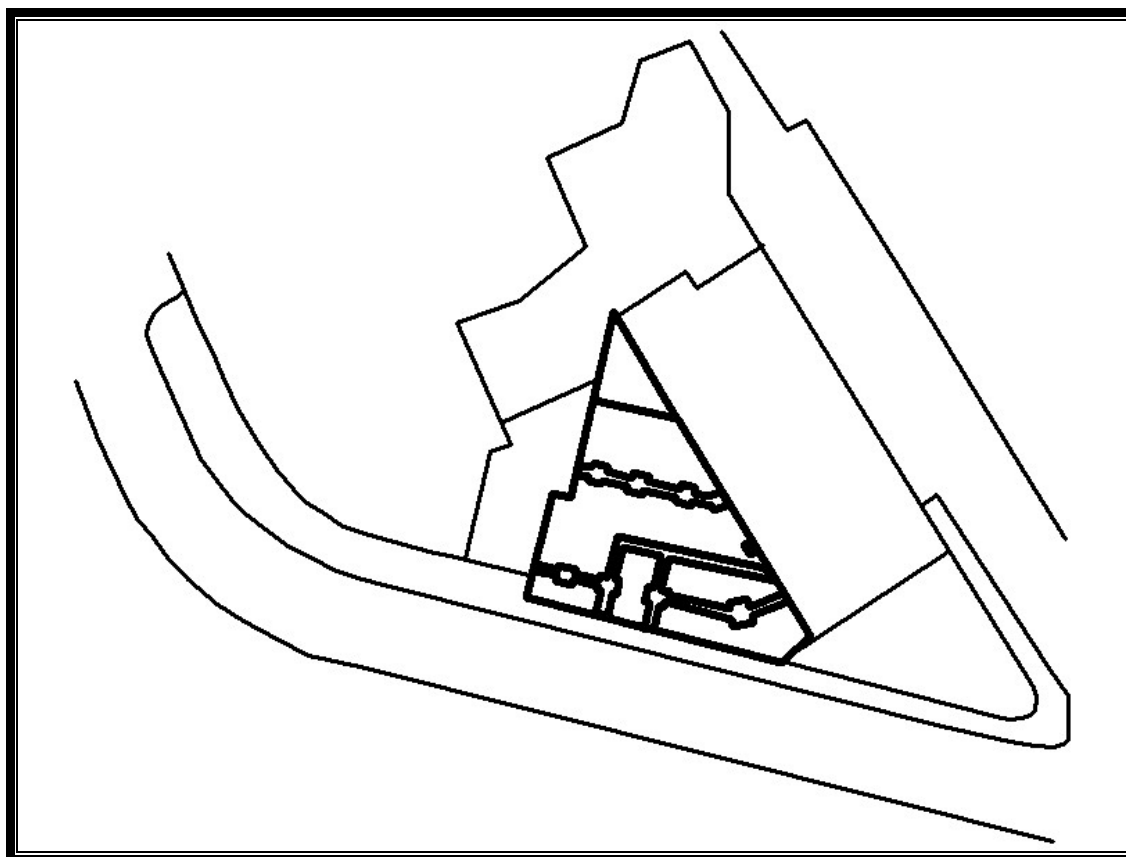


Figure 3 Site plan with development area and foundation trenches in bold

5: Methods

5.1 The site had already been stripped and cleared prior to the commencement of the watching brief. This was only a minor clearance and did not involve the stripping of any deposits. Previously the area had been used as a yard and was in a neglected state.

5.2: The excavation of the trenches of the foundations for the commercial property was completed with a wheeled JCB 3CX Sitemaster excavator using a 0.45m toothed bucket for the foundation trenches. All machining was conducted with full archaeological supervision in order to monitor for evidence of archaeological deposits or remains.



Figure 4 Site, pre-machining, looking south.

5.3: The foundation trenches were varied in width and depth due to the presence of Lime trees at the frontage of the site. These necessitated foundation depths of 2.0m in the north eastern portion of the development site. The trench depth in the southern part was 1.75m whilst the western foundations were 1.05m deep. The width was generally 0.60m with the exception of where the stanchions were located. These had dimensions of 1.20m by 1.0m. In practice the widths and depths were possibly slightly more than that required in the plans.

6: Results

6.1 No archaeological remains were observed during the course of this watching brief. The foundation trenches revealed 0.15-0.20m of mixed building material debris and subsoil in the majority of the site. Below this was

a relatively undisturbed layer of alluvium 1.5-1.75m thick. The natural substrata, where revealed, was generally at a depth of 1.9-2.0m below the present ground level.

6.2: No archaeological artefacts were recovered during the excavation of the foundation trenches. Modern debris, rubbish and glass littered much of the subsoil. The alluvium was clear of any modern debris but no archaeological deposits were seen. The alluvium comprised a mid brownish-orange silty clay. This was quite heavy and compacted. The natural substrata was of a mid yellowish-orange sand and gravel with some sandstone/ironstone deposits. The trenches where the substrata was uncovered were not entered due to the depths and health and safety concerns.

6.3: In the western portion of the site, the foundation trenches did not extend through the alluvium.



Figure 5 Foundation trench illustrating the thickness of alluvium and natural substrata.



Figure 6 Foundation trench, illustrating depth and narrowness.

7: Conclusion

7.1 The watching brief at 21 King's Road, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire, has revealed an absence of any archaeological deposits within the confines of the development area. This could be due to several reasons. The primary reason could be that there was no archaeological activity on this site. This would appear to be the more likely explanation, as the alluvium appears undisturbed. Thus if archaeological deposits had been present they would have been sealed beneath this layer of alluvium. This does not preclude later archaeological remains that could exist cut into the alluvium but none was apparent during the watching brief. Archaeological deposits could have existed within the development area but of either such an ephemeral nature that they left no visible traces or that they could have subsequently been truncated by factors unknown.

7.2 No archaeological artefacts were recovered during the undertaking of this watching brief. It was not possible to observe the material removed by the JCB as it was loaded immediately onto a trailer and deposited off-site. Thus it was not possible to check for any residual archaeological material.

7.3 In conclusion, the probability is that either no archaeological deposits exist within the development area or that if such activity did occur, then it was not of sufficient intensity to leave any significant traces on the site.

8: Archive

8.1: The site archive (X.A2. 2006), consisting of paper records and colour digital photographs will be housed with the County Archaeological Heritage Services, Leicestershire County Council Community Services Department.

9: Publication

9.1: A version of the summary (see above) will appear in the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society* in due course.

Appendix 1

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological watching brief

21 King Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 7573 2822)

Planning Application: 03/00464/6;

FOR: W A and J M Brooks

1. Definition and scope of the specification

1.1 This specification is for an archaeological watching brief during development on land at 21 King Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 7573 2822; Planning Application: 03/00464/6) for W A and J M Brooks.

1.2 It addresses the requirements for an archaeological scheme of work from Leicestershire County Council as archaeological advisors to Melton Borough Council following Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and Planning), para.30 (LCC advice letter of 25.11.20050).

1.3 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

2 Background

2.1 Requirement for archaeological work

2.1. The watching brief is required to cover all ground disturbance to identify any deposits of archaeological importance. It forms part of a scheme of work required by the planning authority following recommendations from Leicestershire County Council as advisors to the planning authority.

2.2 Archaeological potential

2.2. The proposed development is for a new factory. The site lies within an area of archaeological potential close to the location of an Anglo Saxon cemetery and a medieval/post-medieval water mill.

3 Aims

3.1 Through archaeological observation of foundation and service trench excavation by the client's contractors:

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

4 Methods

4.1 The project will involve the presence on site of an experienced professional archaeologist during the works specified above. During these groundworks, if any archaeological deposits are seen to be present, the archaeologist will record areas of archaeological interest. This may necessitate additional visits and staff time.

4.2 The archaeologist will co-operate at all times with the contractors on site to ensure the minimum interruption to the work.

4.3 Any archaeological deposits located will be hand cleaned and planned as appropriate. Samples of any archaeological deposits located will be hand excavated. Measured drawings of all archaeological features will be prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan of 1:100. All plans will be tied into the National Grid using an Electronic Distance Measurer (EDM) where appropriate.

4.4 Archaeological deposits will be excavated and recorded as appropriate to establishing the stratigraphic and chronological sequence of deposits, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention will be paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

4.5 All excavated sections will be recorded and drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 scale, levelled and tied into the Ordnance Survey datum. Spot heights will be taken as appropriate.

4.6 Any human remains encountered will be initially left in situ and only be removed under a Home Office Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The owner, Leicestershire Museums and the coroner will be informed immediately on their discovery.

4.7 Internal monitoring procedures will be undertaken including visits to the site from the project manager. These will ensure that professional standards are being maintained. Provision will be made for monitoring visits with representatives of Leicestershire Museums and the planning authority.

5 Recording Systems

5.1 Individual descriptions of all archaeological strata and features excavated or exposed will be entered onto prepared pro-forma recording sheets.

5.2 A site location plan based on the current Ordnance Survey 1:1250 map, (reproduced with the permission of the Controller of HMSO) will be prepared. This will be supplemented by a plan at 1:200 (or 1:100), which will show the location of the areas investigated.

5.3 Some record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered will be made on drawing film, related to the OS grid and at a scale of 1:10 or 1:20. Elevations and sections of individual layers of features should be drawn where possible. The OD height of all principal strata and features will be calculated and indicated on the appropriate plans.

5.4 An adequate photographic record of the investigations will be prepared. This will include colour transparencies and, as appropriate black and white prints illustrating both the detail and general context the principal features and finds discovered. The photographic record will also include 'working shots' to illustrate more generally the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

5.5 This record will be compiled and fully checked during the course of the watching brief.

5.6 All site records and finds will be kept securely.

6 Report and Archive

6.1 A report on the watching brief will be provided following the groundworks.

6.2 Copies will be provided for the client, Sites and Monuments Record and planning Authority. The copyright of all original finished documents shall remain vested in ULAS and ULAS will be entitled as of right to publish any material in any form produced as a result of its investigations.

6.3 A full copy of the archive as defined in the 'Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage' (UKIC 1990), and Standards in the Museum care of archaeological collections (MGC 1992) and 'Guidelines for the preparation of site archives and assessments for all finds (other than fired clay objects) (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700 1993) will be presented to Rutland County Museum within six months of the completion of analysis. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

6.4. Any disk-based data will be provided for Leicestershire Museums.

7 Publication

7.1 A summary report will be submitted to a suitable regional or national archaeological journal within one year of completion of fieldwork. A full report will be submitted if the results are of significance.

8 Timetable and Staffing

8.1 The watching brief is scheduled to commence at the inception of the contractors groundworks (currently 16.1.2006). An experienced archaeologist will be present during this work. It is proposed to watch the topsoil stripping, as specified above. Depending on the results of this further appropriately timed visits may be required during the work in consultation with the contractors.

9 Health and Safety

9.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and uses the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM) manual, as revised in 1997, as its Health and Safety Manual with appropriate risks assessments for all archaeological work. A draft Health and Safety statement for this project is in the Appendix. The relevant Health and Safety Executive guidelines will be adhered to as appropriate.

10 Insurance

10.1 All ULAS work is covered by the University of Leicester's Public Liability and Professional Indemnity Insurance. The Public Liability Insurance is with St Pauls Travellers Policy No. UCPOP3651237 while the Professional Indemnity Insurance is with Lloyds Underwriters (50%) and Brit Insurances (50%) Policy No. FUNK3605.

11. Bibliography

MAP 2, *The management of archaeological projects* 2nd edition English Heritage 1991

MGC 1992, *Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections* (Museums and Galleries Commission)

RFG/FRG 1993, *Guidelines for the preparation of site archives* (Roman Finds Group and Finds Research Group AD 700-1700)

SMA 1993, *Selection, retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections. Guidelines for use in England, Wales and Northern Ireland* (Society of Museum Archaeologists)

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22.12.2005

Appendix

21 King Street, Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire (SK 7573 2822)

Planning Application: 03/00464/6;

For: W A and J M Brooks

Draft Project Health and Safety Policy Statement

1 Nature of the work

1.1 This statement is for an archaeological watching brief.

1.2 The work will involve observation of groundworks during daylight hours and recording of any underlying archaeological deposits revealed. Overall depth is likely to be c. 0.2-0.5m. This will involve the examination of the exposed surface with hand tools (shovels, trowels etc) and excavation of archaeological features. All work will adhere to the University of Leicester Health and Safety Policy and follow the guidance in the Standing Committee of Archaeological Unit Managers manual, as revised in 1997, together with the following relevant Health and Safety guidelines.

1.3 HSE Construction Information Sheet CS8 Safety in excavations.
HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)143 (L): Getting to grips with manual handling.
HSE Industry Advisory leaflet IND (G)145 (L): Watch Your back.
CIRIA R97 Trenching practice.
CIRIA TN95 Proprietary Trench Support Systems.
HSE Guidance Note HS(G) 47 Avoiding danger to underground services. HSE Guidance Note GS7 Accidents to children on construction sites

1.4 The Health and Safety policy on site will be reassessed during the evaluation .

1.5 All work will adhere to the contractors' health and safety policy.

2 Risks Assessment

2.1 Working within a building site

Precautions. No work will be undertaken beneath section faces. Loose spoil heaps will not be walked on. Protective footwear will be worn at all times. Hard hats will be worn at all times. A member of staff qualified in First Aid will be present at all times. First aid kit, vehicle and mobile phone to be kept on site in case of emergency.

2.2 Working with plant.

Precautions. Hard hats, protective footwear and hazard jackets will be worn at all times. No examination of the area of stripping will take place until machines have vacated area. Observation of machines will be maintained during hand excavation. Liaison will be maintained with the contractors to ensure programme of machine movement is understood.

2.3 Working within areas prone to waterlogging.

Protective clothing will be worn at all times and precautions taken to prevent contact with stagnant water which may carry Weills disease or similar.

2.4 Working with chemicals.

If chemicals are used to conserve or help lift archaeological material these will only be used by qualified personnel with protective clothing (i.e a trained conservator) and will be removed from site immediately after use.

2.5 Other risks

Precautions. If there is any suspicion of unforeseen hazards being encountered e.g chemical contaminants, unexploded bombs, hazardous gases work will cease immediately. The client and relevant public authorities will be informed immediately.

2.6 No other constraints are recognised over the nature of the soil, water, type of excavation, proximity of structures, sources of vibration and contamination.

Patrick Clay
22.12.2005