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LEICESTER

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Moat House, Old Hall Lane, Lubenham,
Leicestershire LE16 9TJ**

NGR: SP 708 871

Jennifer Browning



ULAS Report No: 2019-129

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Site Name: Moat House, Old Hall Lane, Lubenham, Leicestershire LE16 9TJ

Grid Ref: SP 70775 871133

Author: Jennifer Browning

Client: Mr and Mrs Harrison

Planning Ref. 18/02107/FUL SMC S00214910

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OASIS RECORD

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| | Project Name | An Archaeological Watching Brief at The Moat House, Old Hall Lane, Lubenham, Leics. | | |
| | Start/end dates | 01/10/2019 | | |
| | Previous/Future Work | None | | |
| | Project Type | Watching Brief | | |
| | Site Status | None | | |
| | Current Land Use | Farm Yard | | |
| | Monument Type/Period | medieval | | |
| | Significant Finds/Period | None | | |
| | Reason for Investigation | NPPF | | |
| | Position in the Planning Process | Planning condition/ SMC | | |
| Planning Ref. | 17/00401/FUL/ SMC S00214910 | | | |
| PROJECT LOCATION | County | Leicestershire | | |
| | Site Address/Postcode | The Moat House, Old Hall Lane, Lubenham, Leics. LE169TJ | | |
| | Study Area | 20sq m | | |
| | Site Coordinates | NGR SP 708 871 | | |
| | Height OD | 90m aOD | | |
| PROJECT CREATORS | Organisation | ULAS | | |
| | Project Brief Originator | Local Planning Authority (Harborough District Council) | | |
| | Project Design Originator | ULAS | | |
| | Project Manager | Vicki Score | | |
| | Project Director/Supervisor | Jennifer Browning | | |
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| | Contents | None | Photographs | Report/Watching brief sheet, site plan, photo index. |
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An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Moat House, Old Hall Lane, Lubenham, Leicestershire LE16 9TJ

Jennifer Browning

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at the Moat House, Old Hall Lane, Lubenham, Leicestershire SP708 871, during groundworks associated with a new extension to an existing property. The site was located within earthworks called the 'Old Hall Moated site', a scheduled monument (List Entry No: 1012566) and archaeological attendance was required in order to safeguard any archaeological remains that may be present. Scheduled monument consent was obtained for the works (SMC: S00214910). No archaeological structures, finds or features were observed during the work.

The report will be archived under accession number: X.A37.2019

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 12 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for an archaeological watching brief carried out at The Moat House, Old Hall Lane, Lubenham, Leicestershire LE16 9TJ. The site lies on the eastern edge of the village and is located within earthworks known as the 'Old Hall Moated site', a scheduled monument (List Entry No: 1012566).

Planning consent was granted for the erection of a single and a two-storey extension to the rear and the side of the existing property (Planning Ref: 18/02107/FUL and Scheduled Monument Consent S00214910). The Principal Planning Archaeologist for Leicestershire County Council and the Historic England Inspector have requested attendance for inspection and recording during groundworks for the proposed development in order to safeguard any archaeological remains that may be present.

Site, Geology and Topography

The Moat House is a property constructed in the 1960s and is located on the north side of a platform, enclosed by a medieval moat (Scheduled Monument No: 1012566). The moat is square, mostly water-logged and formerly surrounded a medieval manor house, which was demolished in the 18th century. The present Old Hall, (Grade II listed: 1360740), located south of the development site, dates from the 18th and incorporates part of the west wall of the earlier structure.

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain indicates that the site lies on mudstone of the Charmouth formation, overlain with clay, silt sand and gravel alluvium and river terrace deposits. The River Welland runs to the south of the village. The site is approximately 90m aOD and the development area is fairly level.



Figure 1: Site location

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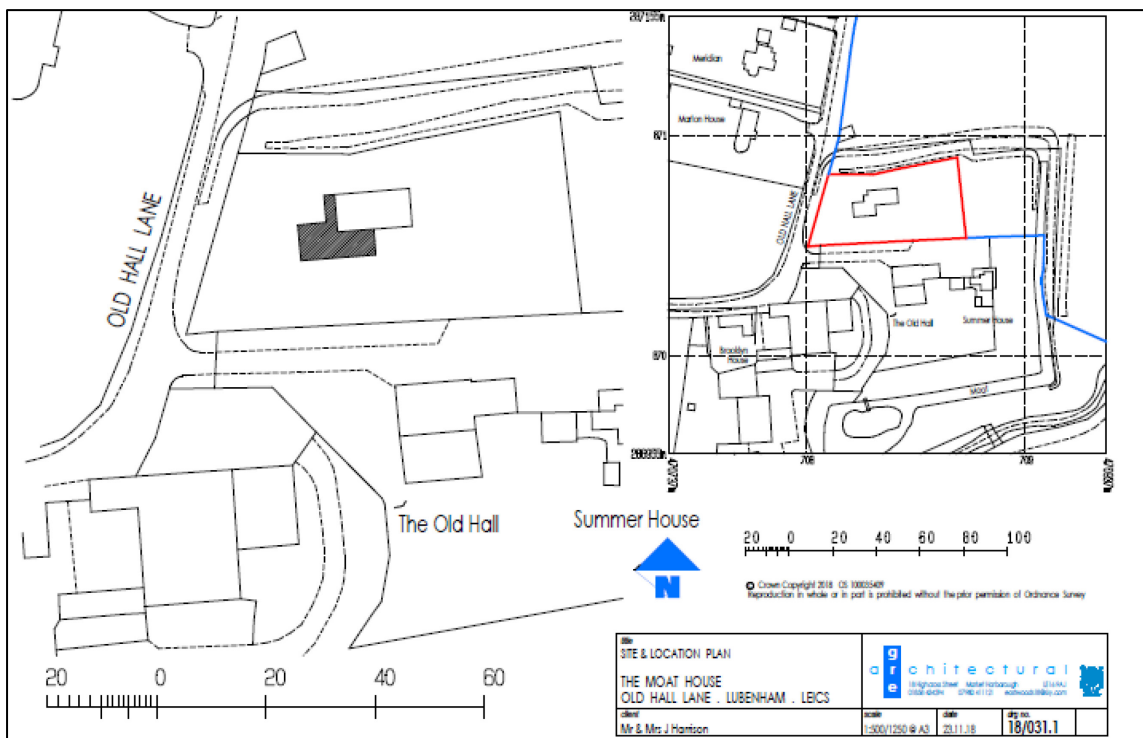


Figure 2: General location of the groundworks, shaded on main plan (supplied by client)



Figure 3: Plan of existing property (supplied by client)



Figure 4: Plan of the new extension (plan supplied by client)

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the watching brief have been defined as follows:

- :To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological deposits.
- :To establish the character, extent and date range and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits.
- :To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- :To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological deposits and features encountered.
- :To record any archaeological deposits and produce an archive and report of any results.

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

All mitigation work will be considered in light of the East Midlands Research Framework (Cooper ed. 2006) and strategy (Knight et al. 2012), along with targeting national research aims. Details of the specific objectives can be found in the WSI (Brown 2019).

Methodology

The work followed the methodological statement set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the project (Brown 2019).

All work was carried out in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs (2014b) and adhere to their Code of Conduct (2014a). The Site Accession Number (X.A37.2019) was used to identify all records and artefacts.

The project involved the observation of groundworks across the area as shown on the proposed plan. The site was attended on the 1st October 2019, when the specific programme of work consisted of the clearance of the development area and excavation of foundation trenches, using a JCB 3CX equipped with a 600mm ditching bucket.

Results

The development area was joined to an existing extension to the main house, within a mature garden (Fig. 5). The footing trenches (T1 and T2) were located at right angles, within an area measuring *c.* 20m², which had previously been paved. The exposed surface was a mixture of topsoil, disturbed soils and bedding sands for the paving slabs, containing small fragments of modern bricks, stone and charcoal flecks. Excavation of the footing trenches revealed this layer to be up to 0.4m thick within the north-south trench and slightly thicker in the east-west one (< 0.5m). Below this level, there was a homogenous brownish grey silty clay, with a soft consistency. It included charcoal flecks, pebbles and occasional fragments of ironstone and slate. The layer was observed as broadly similar in both trenches and was *c.*0.7m- 0.8m thick (Figs 6-7). There was a very loose patch at the west end of T2, which may indicate a backfilled intrusion or an area disturbed by root activity. The clay content of the layer appeared to increase towards the base of the trench. At the very base of the T2, there was an orange clay subsoil

with moderate ironstone fragments and pebbles, which was interpreted as a natural subsoil (Fig. 7).

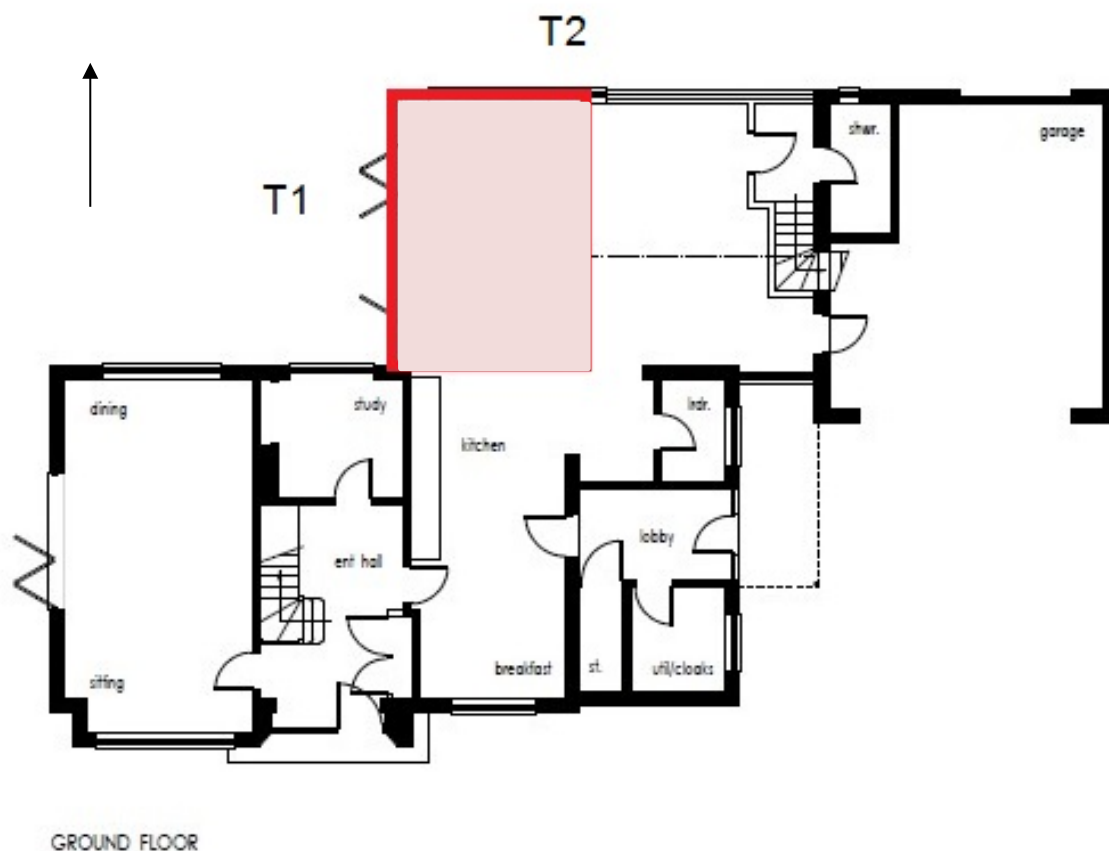


Figure 5: Plan of the Moat House, showing groundworks monitored during this project (modified from client plan- not to scale)



Figure 6: Trench 1, showing modern overburden, a brownish grey clay layer and a disturbed soil pipe. The footings of the existing house can be seen on the left of the picture. Looking east.



Figure 7: Trench 2, showing the thick homogenous brownish grey layer and potential natural subsoil at the base of the trench. Looking north.



Figure 8: The development area (forward of machine bucket). Looking west.

Conclusion

No archaeological artefacts were recovered during this work and no structural or earth-fast archaeological features were observed. A brownish grey silty clay deposit, *c.*0.7-0.8m thick, was notable. The layer was on top of undisturbed natural soils and appeared to be fairly widespread. Its characteristics and dissimilarity to the natural subsoil suggests that it is an accumulation rather than up-cast or re-deposited natural subsoil. The River Welland is located *c.*100m to the south and it is likely that this layer has alluvial origins; its thickness accounted for by minimal impact from medieval ploughing, which would have ceased when the moated site was created. However, within the small area of ground affected by the new extension, it is not possible to do more than speculate.

Archive and Publication

The archive for the project consists of an unbound copy of this report and the WSI, 1 watching brief sheet, 1 photo index sheet, 1 colour photo contact sheet, 1 supporting plan and a CD containing a copy of the report and the digital photographs. It will be held by LMARS under the accession number: X.A37.2019.

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work through the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York.

References

Brown, C. 2019 Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Watching Brief for The Moat House, Old Hall Lane, Lubenham Leicestershire, LE169TJ Unpublished ULAS report

CIfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) 2014a. *Code of Conduct*.

CIfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) 2014b. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

CIfA (Chartered Institute for Archaeologists) 2014c. *Standard and Guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*.

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