

**An Archaeological Watching Brief at Bakers Cottage, 29 King Street, Seagrave,
Leicestershire LE12 7LY**

NGR: SK 6182 1767

Leon Hunt



Site Name: Bakers Cottage, 29 King Street, Seagrave,

Leicestershire LE12 7LY

Grid Ref: SK 6182 1767

Author: Leon Hunt

Client: Graham Harris Partnership Ltd

Planning Ref. P/19/1065/2 & P/19/1168/2

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OASIS RECORD

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	Start/end dates	04/02/2020		
	Previous/Future Work	None		
	Project Type	Watching Brief		
	Site Status	Listed Building		
	Current Land Use	Garden		
	Monument Type/Period	None		
	Significant Finds/Period	None		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
Planning Ref.	P/19/1065/2 & P/19/1168/2			
PROJECT LOCATION	County	Leicestershire		
	Site Address/Postcode	Bakers Cottage, 29 King Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire LE12 7LY		
	Study Area	350 metres sq		
	Site Coordinates	SK 6182 1767		
	Height OD	81m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (Charnwood Borough Council)		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Vicki Score		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Leon Hunt		
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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by University of Leicester Archaeological Services at Bakers Cottage, 29 King Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire LE12 7LY (SK 6182 1767), during ground-works associated with a new extension to the existing building. The cottage is an 18th century building, raised by a storey in the 19th century and currently Grade II listed.

The house lies within the historic core of the village and there are medieval earthworks nearby. The archaeological work involved the monitoring of the striping of the proposed extension area to floor levels and the excavation of foundation trenches.

The excavations revealed thick garden soil over a buried topsoil and subsoil in some areas, lying over the natural stony clay. No archaeological finds or features were retrieved or revealed during the watching brief.

The archive for the work will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number X.A105.2019.

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 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) at Bakers Cottage, 29 King Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire LE12 7LY (NGR: SK 6182 1767).

The fieldwork was carried out in advance of the extension of the existing Grade II listed 18th century house as a mitigation strategy to provide a record of any archaeological remains. The fieldwork and report addresses the requirements of Charnwood Borough Council for a scheme of work comprising archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication (a 'Watching Brief').

Site Location, Geology and Topography

Seagrave lies in the Borough of Charnwood, Leicestershire around 10 miles north-east of Leicester and 2 miles north-east of Sileby (Fig. 1).

The site lay to the rear of the building at 29 King Street, Seagrave and consisted of a garden, including part of the lawn and a gravel path. The total area covered 350m² and was level at a height of around 81m aOD (Fig. 2).

The British Geological Survey identifies the geology of the area as Scunthorpe Formation Mudstone overlain in part by Head (clay, silt, sand and gravel).

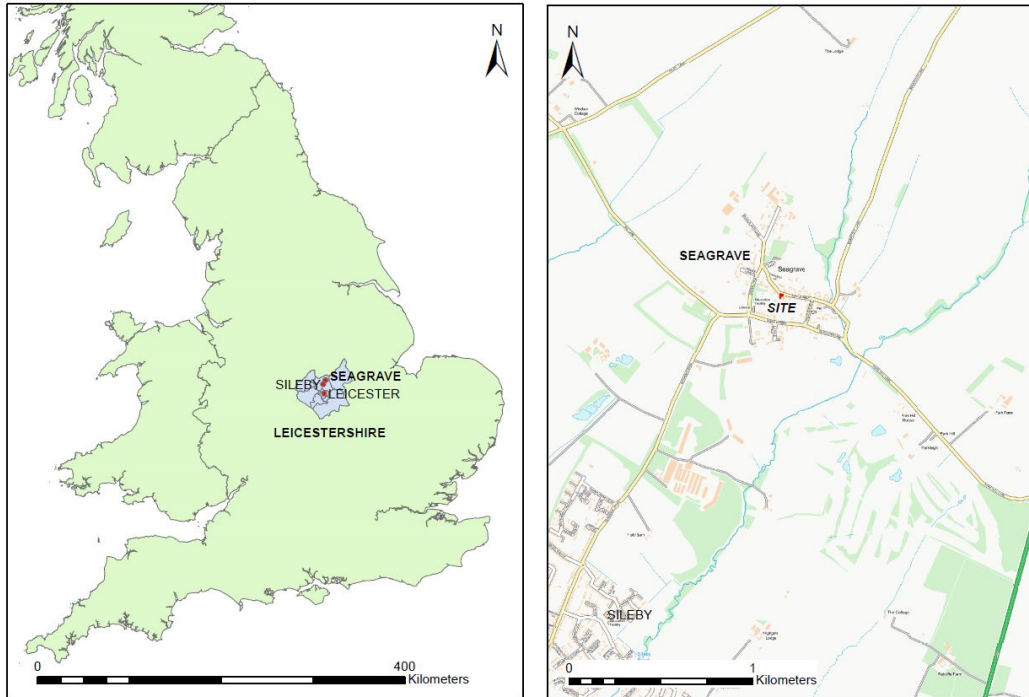


Figure 1: Site location

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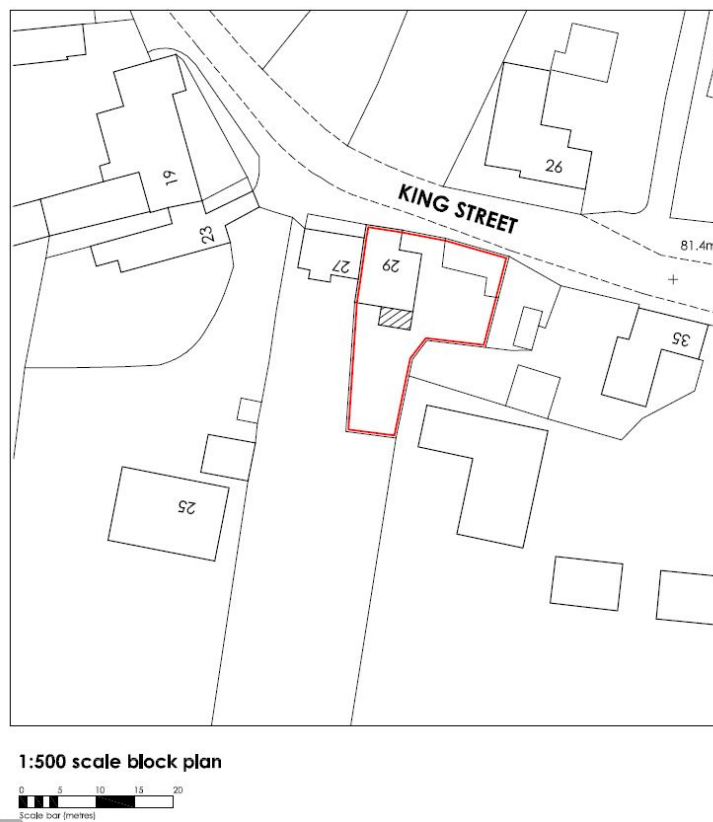


Figure 2: Site location plan (red) proposed extension shown within hashed area

Historical and Archaeological Background

The Historic environment Record for Leicestershire and Rutland (HER) indicates that the site lies within the historic medieval core of the village of Seagrave (HER Ref. No. **MLE922**). There are known medieval earthworks to the north of the village centre (**MLE917**), 250m north-east of the site, and a prehistoric tool has been found nearby (**MLE9352**). Medieval pottery has been found in Water Lane (**MLE6674**), 200m north-west of the site and at Church Street, 170m to the east (**MLE10651**). A medieval trackway lies to the south of King Street (**MLE15925**), with a curving medieval property boundary nearby (**MLE8608**).

The Grade II listed Bakers Cottage is 18th century in date and was raised by a floor during the 19th century (Fig. 3). It is of red brick with a granite rubble stone plinth and a Welsh slate roof. The extension to the house will be at the rear of the house away from the original historic frontage that faces King Street. The extension will also not be visible from the road. The site lies within the Conservation Area but the new development will have limited impact on the heritage asset and the Conservation Area as a whole (Graham Harris Partnership Ltd: Combined Design Access and Heritage Statement 2019).



Figure 3: Bakers Cottage from King Street, looking south-west

Applications for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent were submitted in December 2018 (Refs. P/18/2462/2 and P18/2513/2) but changes requested by the Local Planning Authority did not allow for clarification and discussion resulting in refusals being issued. Discussions subsequently continued over the requested changes and the proposals were amended to present a suitable scheme (Refs. P/19/1065/2 & P/19/1168/2).

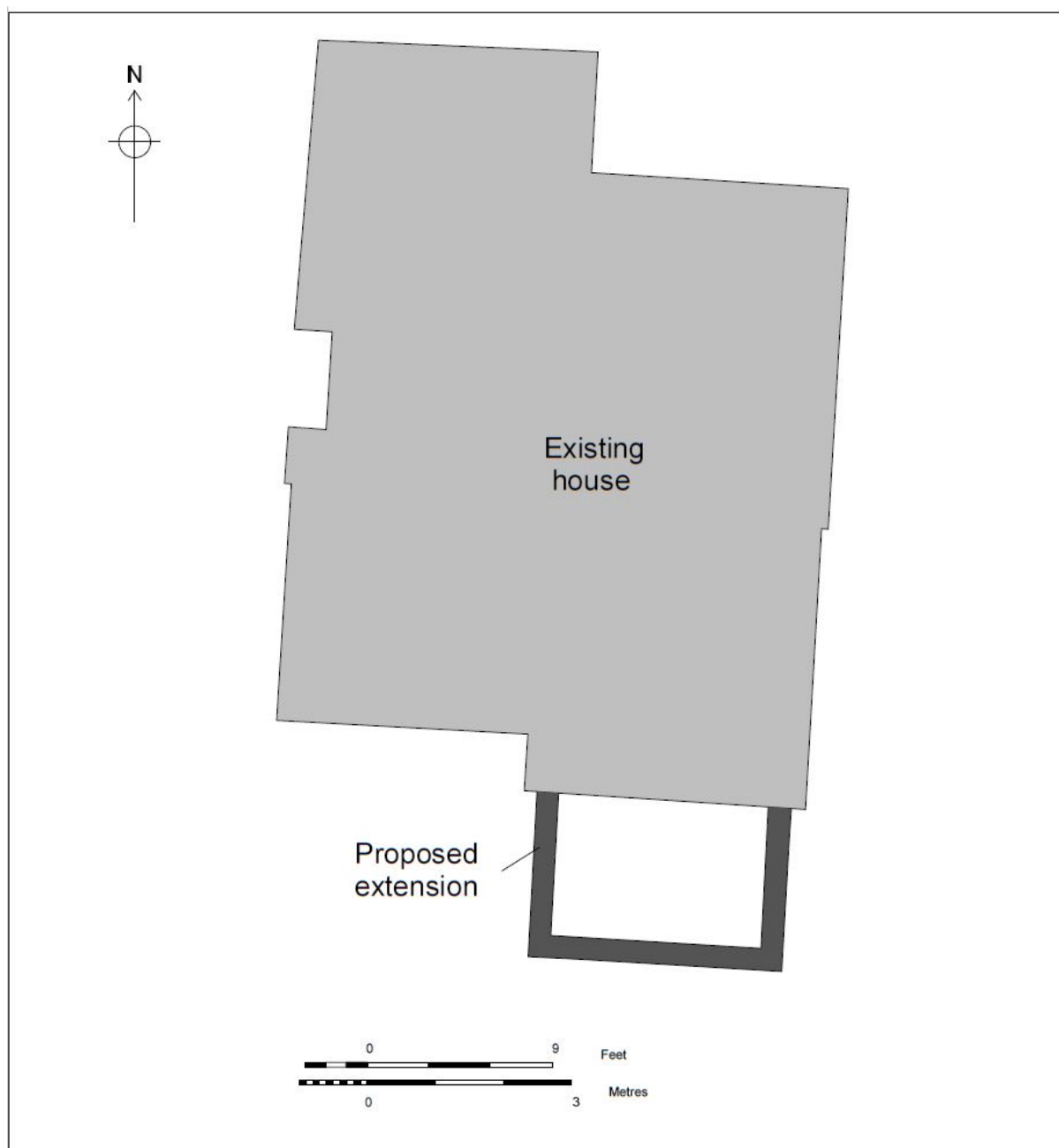


Figure 4: Plan of area covered by watching brief

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).

Research Objectives

The presence of prehistoric features in the area suggests a potential for further features of this date. There is also potential for further information on the origins of the village. It is therefore possible to determine some initial objectives derived from *The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda* (2006) and *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands* (2012).

Medieval

7.2 Rural settlement and 7.6 Industry and trade and 7.7 The agrarian landscape and food-producing economy.

Post-Medieval – Industrial

Agricultural landscapes and the food-producing economy, 8.3 Agricultural landscapes and the food-producing economy and 8.4 Rural settlement patterns and building traditions.

These research aims have been identified based on the current state of knowledge within the area of the scheme. The research aims will be re-assessed and updated during the course of the fieldwork.

Methodology

The work followed the methodological statement set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the project (Hunt 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.A105.2019) 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 4th February 2020 when the specific programme of work consisted of the clearance of the development area and excavation of foundation trenches, using a small tracked excavator and skip dumper.

Results

The small rectangular area of the proposed extension, measuring 2.45m by 3.80m, was initially stripped using a flat-bladed bucket of 1m width over a portion of lawn and a narrow 1m wide gravel path close to the rear of the building (Fig. 5). This exposed a porous membrane below the gravel then a dark garden soil (silty clay) over the rest of the area. The initial strip removed around 0.30m of turf and topsoil (Fig. 6).



Figure 5: Work in progress, looking south-east



Figure 6: Extension area stripped, looking north-east



Figure 7: Western trench, post excavation, looking north-west

Subsequently the three trenches were excavated using a 0.60m wide toothed bucket to around 1.50m depth. The western trench section revealed a sequence of around 0.50m dark topsoil over 1m of yellowish grey stony clay, which became more grey in colour towards the base (Fig. 7).



Figure 8: South-west facing section, looking north-east

The south-west facing section revealed a further 0.30m of topsoil (after the removal of around 0.30m above). Below this was a thin line of gravel over 0.15m of buried topsoil, a 0.10m layer of subsoil and at the base a yellow/ grey stony clay (Fig. 8). The final trench revealed a similar sequence to the others, although the buried soil layer was less obvious (Fig. 9).

The trenches excavated against the rear wall of the building revealed the concrete foundations of the cottage, with the western foundation around 0.50m deep and the eastern foundation closer to 1m.



Figure 9: Trenching complete, looking north-east

Conclusion

The site at Bakers Cottage, Seagrave lay within the historic medieval core of the village. There are medieval earthworks nearby suggesting that the village had shrunk in size since the medieval period and therefore there was potential for medieval remains in the study area.

The excavations revealed rich loamy garden soil, which appeared to have been laid or accumulated over the original ground viewed as a thin layer of topsoil and subsoil within the southern trench. The excavations also revealed the foundations of the house, which has been extended from its original size, with a deeper foundation on the eastern side of the building, presumably due to a change in the original ground level here.

No archaeological features or artefacts associated with archaeological features were discovered during the watching brief.

Archive and Publication

The archive for the project will be deposited with Leicestershire Museums with accession number X.A105.2019 and consists of the following:

- 1 Unbound copy of this report (2020-023)
- 1 watching brief recording sheet (includes the photo index)
- 1 CD containing a copy of this report and the digital photographs

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

Graham Harris Partnership Ltd: Combined Design Access and Heritage Statement 2019: Application for Planning Permission and Listed Building Consent for Proposed two-storey rear extension & associated internal alterations at 29 King Street, Seagrave, Loughborough LE12 7LY

Hunt, L. 2019 Written Scheme of Investigation for *Land at Bakers Cottage, 29 King Street, Seagrave, Leicestershire LE12 7LY* 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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