

**An Archaeological Watching Brief  
on land adjacent to Snowdrop Cottage,  
Knossington Road, Braunston,  
Rutland.**

**(NGR SK 8309 0669)**

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For

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Planning Application No. 03/0391/9

**Summary**

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS), on behalf of Norton Property Consultants Ltd during groundworks for residential development on land adjacent Snowdrop Cottage, Knossington Road, Braunston, Rutland. The watching brief revealed some medieval and post-medieval pottery, and a small flint flake but none associated with archaeological features or deposits. The archive will be deposited with Rutland County Museum. (Accession number to be assigned).*

**Introduction**

This report presents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out during groundworks associated with residential development on land adjacent Snowdrop Cottage, Knossington Road, Braunston, Rutland on behalf of Norton Property Consultants. Archaeological work was required as a condition of the planning permission granted by Leicestershire County Council (application number: 03/0391/9) and as outlined in the Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief (19/7/03) (Appendix 1) and following the Design Specification for Archaeological Work (ULAS 2003) (Appendix 2).

The Leicestershire and Rutland SMR shows that the site has potential for archaeological remains particularly those of the medieval period. The site lies close to the edge of the historic core of Braunston and there are earthworks recorded to the south of the site of possible medieval date (SMR ref: 80NW, AP).

The site is located on land adjacent to and to the west of Snowdrop Cottage, Braunston, on the south side of Knossington Road. Braunston lies approximately 3 miles to the south west of Oakham in Rutland (Fig 1). The site is located at SK 8308 0669, at a height of approximately 120m OD.

The land is a piece of rough ground, which until recently supported two barns and a small brick building, along with some trees. The site is square and measures approximately 50m x 50m. A mixed hedge, which is to be retained along with one of the trees, lies along the northern and western sides of the site. The rest of the site is to be demarcated with a new post and rail fence. Three dwellings along with their related services and drains are to be erected.

The underlying geology is likely to consist of clay (Ordnance Survey Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 157).

## Historical and Archaeological Background

Braunston contains some interesting medieval buildings the most important of which are All Saints Church, Chapter Farm and Quaintree House.

The chancel arch of the church, the small doorway from the chancel to the vestry along with the south doorway is 12<sup>th</sup> or 13<sup>th</sup> century in date. Other parts of the interior of the church point towards a late 13<sup>th</sup> century date. An obscure, primitive, and undated carving of a woman lies at the foot of the tower. There are also wall paintings dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup> century and some brasses.

Just to the south of the church lies Chapter Farm, an Elizabethan building with some evidence of pre-Reformation architecture. On the green stands Quaintree House, which has a roof that has been tree-ring dated to the late 12<sup>th</sup> or early 13<sup>th</sup> century.

A watching brief carried out by ULAS at Meadowsweet Farm revealed an old river channel but no archaeological deposits (Derrick & Warren, 2000). However, a watching brief carried out at Braunston Manor and its grounds revealed evidence of a cobbled surface dating from the Roman period. Roman, Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery was also retrieved (Smith & Jones, 1996).

## Aims and Methods

The purpose of the watching brief was to ascertain whether archaeological deposits were present. If so, the character, extent and date range of any deposits identified would be established, in order to assess their significance (see Appendices, Design Specification). Recording of these deposits would be carried out as appropriate, and an archive and this report produced. The work followed the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*, and adhered the University's Health and Safety policy.

The site was visited on the 30<sup>th</sup> July, 22<sup>nd</sup> August and 1<sup>st</sup> December 2003 and on the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> January 2004. During these visits the stripping of the topsoil was observed along the excavation of trenches for the foundations of the dwellings and the areas checked for signs of features that may be archaeological. The spoil heaps were also checked periodically for any archaeological finds. A JCB 3CX back actor fitted with a toothed bucket was employed throughout.

## The Results

Most of the topsoil stripping had been carried out before the start of the watching brief but it was possible to identify it as a brown loam often with small pieces of coal and brick, which lay over the area to a depth of 0.10m. This overlay 0.20m of brownish grey clay loam, which itself overlay the natural substratum, which consisted of an orangey yellow clay with ironstone. The trenches were dug to a depth of 1.6m in most places, although in some areas they were taken deeper to around 2.2m, particularly on the western side of Plot 3 (Fig. 3). In these areas it was possible to see a yellowish or bluish grey clay at the very base of the trench.

The trenches were 0.80m wide throughout, except in one area close to the front of Plot 1 where a hole measuring 1.30m x 1.40m x 1.20m was excavated to accommodate a garage pillar.

The old barn and the garage that had existed on the site had been levelled before excavation began and only a rubble core remained. In many places the site had been levelled by the use of modern brick, pieces of limestone and modern pottery. Much of this was the remains of an old school, which had been demolished some years before and had stood opposite the current site (Charles Cooper, pers. comm.).

There were some other areas of disturbance in the trenches of Plot 1 that seem to have been the result of existing pipe trenches, although a brick drain and chamber belonging to a cowshed, which once stood on the site, were also observed.

A variety of finds were recovered from the areas of rubble on the site close to the area of Plot 3 including a small flint flake, part of a whetstone and various pieces of medieval and post-medieval pottery. Unfortunately none of these were associated with any archaeological features.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the proximity to the medieval core of Braunston there is little to suggest that any features or buildings of archaeological significance existed on this site. The finds in themselves are interesting and point to medieval activity in the vicinity, but they cannot be associated with any features, particularly when one takes into consideration the amount of imported material on the site. The only evidence that older structures may have existed here is anecdotal evidence from a local man Charles Cooper who recalls that he helped demolish a building, which he described as 'a hovel', during the 1950s (pers. comm..)

## **The Archive**

The archive consists of four watching brief pro-forma sheets including sketch sections and plans and a series of colour slides. The archive will be held at Rutland County Museum (accession number to be assigned).

## **The Pottery and Miscellaneous Finds. D. Sawday**

The pottery and miscellaneous finds from Snowdrop Cottage, Braunston, Rutland

D. Sawday

The ten sherds of pottery, recovered from unstratified contexts during the watching brief, were examined under a binocular microscope and catalogued with reference to the ULAS fabric series (Davies and Sawday 1999). Three of the sherds, weighing twenty nine grams, are medieval and are thought to date from the 13th to the 15th centuries. The two identifiable fabrics, Stanion Lyveden ware and Bourne ware, from north Northamptonshire and Lincolnshire respectively – are typical of the range of medieval pottery found in Rutland, and are indicative of the essentially local nature of most of the pottery traded in the medieval period.

Also present was a hone stone and a worked flint.

## **Bibliography**

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Moore, D.T., and Oakley, G.E., 1979. 'The Hones' .in J.H., Williams, *St Peters Street, Northampton, Excavations 1973-76*, Northampton Development Corporation Archaeol. Mon. 2, 280-283.

Site/Parish: Snowdrop Cottage, Braunston, Rutland Accession No/ Doc Ref:..../braunston1 Material: pottery & misc. finds Site Type: ?village core	Submitter: S. Warren/L. Hunt Identifier: D. Sawday Date of Id: 29.09.03 Method of Recovery: ?watching brief
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context	fabric/ware	sherd nos.	weight grams	Comments, approximate date range
POTTERY				
U/S	LY1 – Stanion Lyveden type ware 1	1	8	Decorated ?jug body sherd with applied white clay slip and glazed decoration, 1200-1400
	BO2 – Bourne A/B ware	1	12	Possibly a fragment of roof material, ridge tile, 1250-1450.
	MS – Medieval Sandy ware	1	9	
	EA2 – Earthenware 2	3	57	Pancheon/jar fragments, 17th/18th C.+
	EA3 - Mottled ware	2	13	1650-1778
	?EA11 – Tin Glazed Earthenware	1	2	Over fired glaze, ?18th C.
	SW5 – Brown Salt Glazed Stoneware	1	107	Jar lid, modern
Misc.				
U/S	Hone stone	1		Fragment of a whetstone, medieval-modern (Moore and Oakely 1979).
U/S	flint	1		worked

### Acknowledgements

ULAS would like to thank Norton Property Consultants Ltd and the contractors for all their assistance with the watching brief. Sally Warren, Roger Kipling and Leon Hunt carried out the watching briefs. The Project Manager was Patrick Clay.

## **Bibliography**

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Smith, D. & Jones, E. 1996. 'Braunston Manor, Rutland (SK 8340 0656)' *The Leicestershire Archaeological & Historical Society Transactions* Volume 71 1997, Page 108.





Figure 1 : Location map of Braunston, Rutland. Scale 1:50 000.

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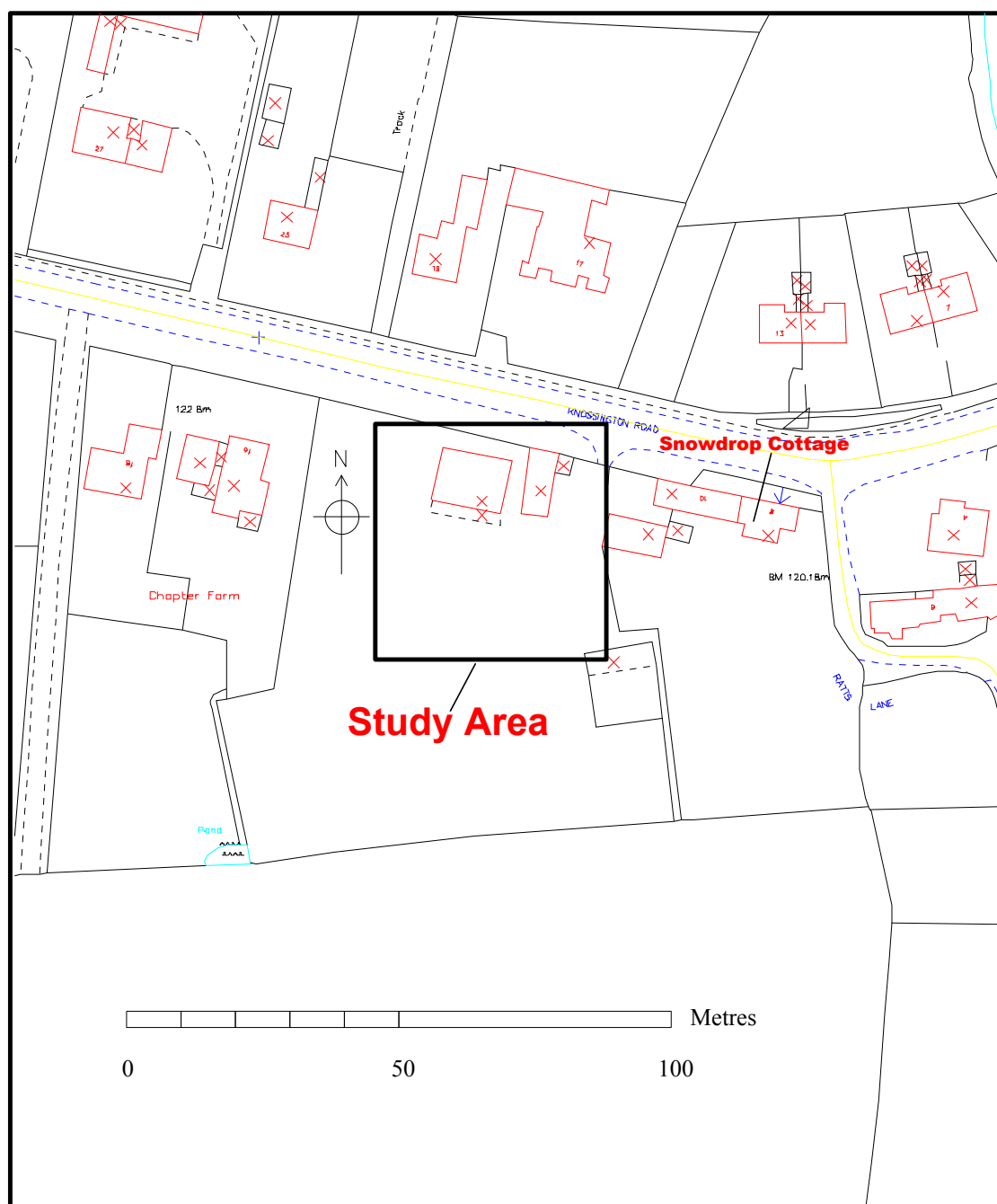


Figure 2: Location map of Study Area and Snowdrop Cottage. Scale 1:5000.  
Based on plans supplied by developer.

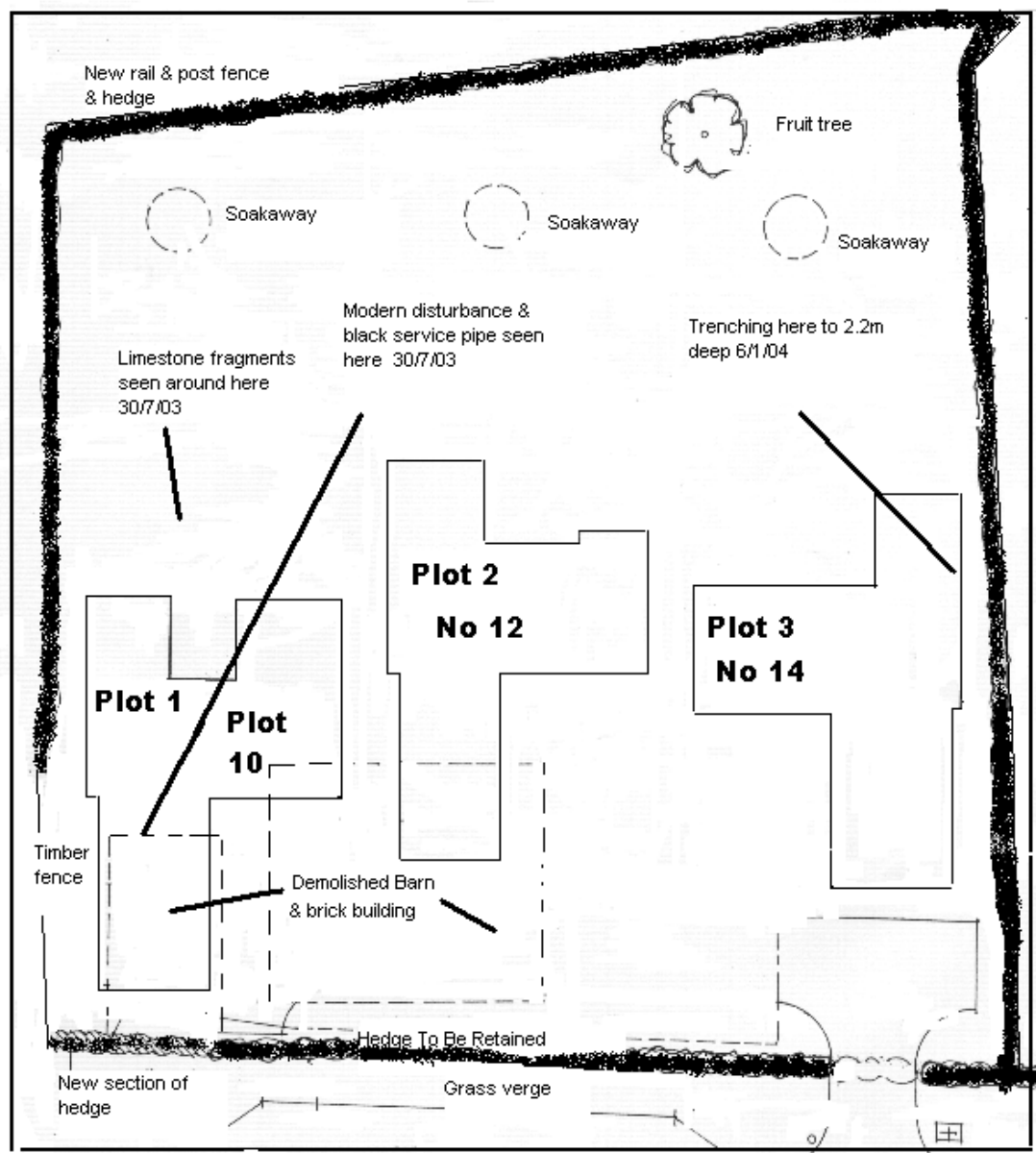


Figure 3: Location plan of proposed developments, showing features observed.  
Derived from plan provided by developer.