



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at 33 Main Street, Rotherby,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 6763 1668

Mathew Morris



ULAS Report No. 2010-095
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**An Archaeological Watching Brief
At 33 Main Street, Rotherby,
Leicestershire**

NGR: SK 6763 1668

Mathew Morris

**For: Mr Graham Spurr
Planning application no. 05/00301/FUL**

Approved by:

Signed:  **Date:** 20/05/2010.

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An Archaeological Watching Brief at 33 Main Street, Rotherby, Leicestershire (SK 6763 1668)

Mathew Morris

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out at 33 Main Street, Rotherby, Leicestershire (SK 6763 1668) by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 14th May 2010. The work was carried out on behalf of Mr Graham Spurr in advance of construction of a new dwelling and garage. The work involved supervision and inspection of machine excavated foundation trenches within the garden adjacent and to the rear of No. 33 for any indication of archaeological activity. The results of the investigation proved negative. The site archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A83.2010.

Introduction

This document constitutes the final report for an archaeological watching brief carried out at 33 Main Street, Rotherby, Leicestershire (SK 6763 1668). The work was carried out on behalf of Mr Graham Spurr by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on 14th May 2010.

The proposed development of a new dwelling and garage (Planning Application No. 05/00301/FUL) was located within the garden adjacent and to the rear of No. 33. The site covers 728 square meters on the north-western side of Main Street, Rotherby, situated in the Wreake Valley approximately 15km north-east of Leicester and 8km west of Melton Mowbray (Figure 1), with the garage development area covering c.36.8 square meters set back c.28m from the street (Figure 2). Inspection of the dwelling development will be carried out at a later date.

The watching brief was requested by Leicestershire County Council's Historic and Natural Environment Team in their capacity as archaeological advisors to Melton Borough Council, in accordance with DOE Planning Policy Guidance 16 (PPG 16, Archaeology and Planning, para. 30), as laid out in the *Design Specification for Archaeological Work* (see Appendix 1).

Geology and Topography

The British Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 142 (Melton Mowbray), indicates that the underlying geology is likely to consist of superficial deposits of Pleistocene sands and gravels of the Bytham Formation overlying bedrock deposits of Early Jurassic mudstone belonging to the Blue Lias and Charmouth Formations (BGS 2003). The site lies at a height of c.66m above Ordnance Datum (AOD) with the ground dropping away into the Wreake Valley to the north-west.

Historical and Archaeological Background

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the development site lies in an area of archaeological interest within the medieval and

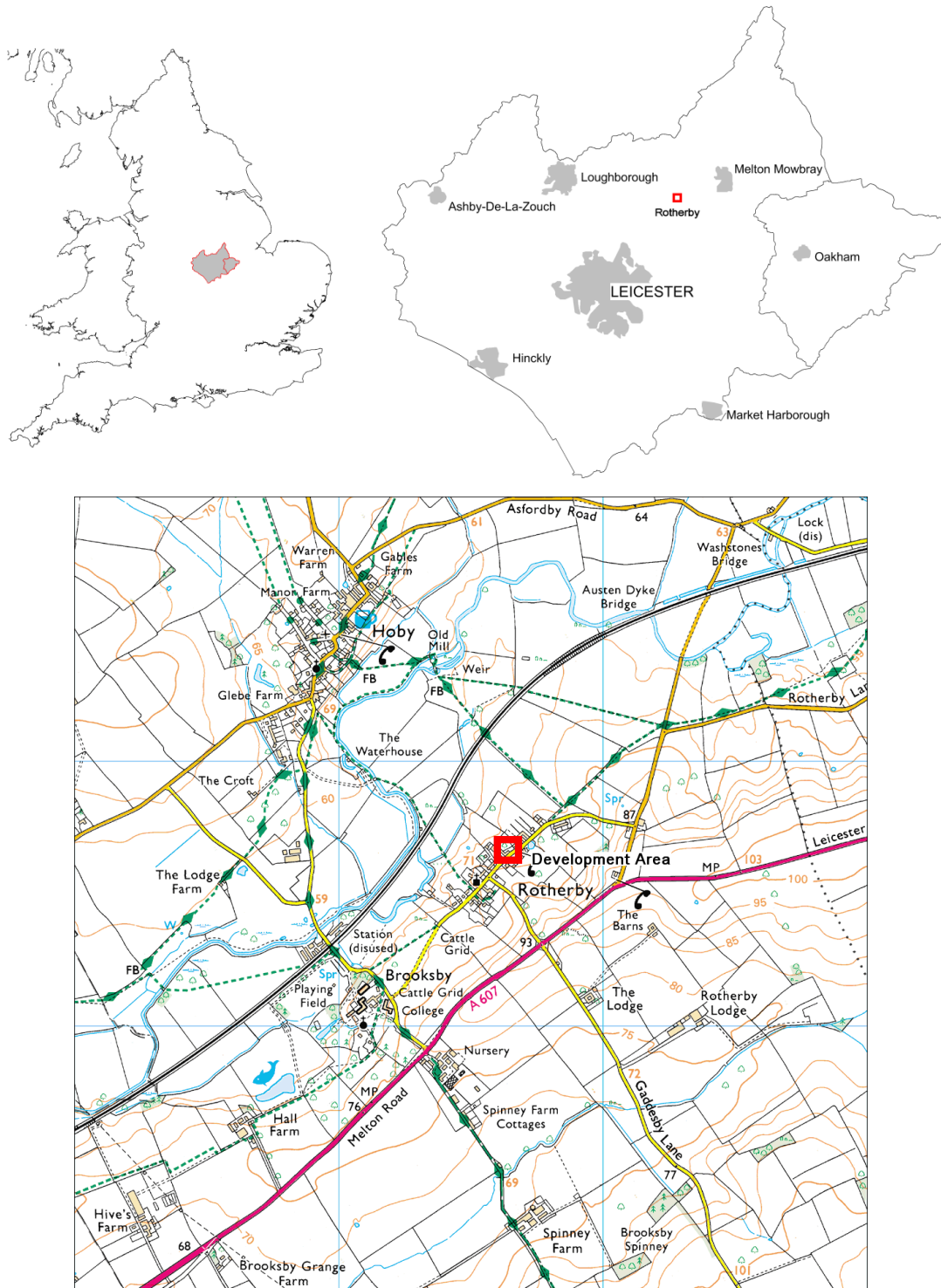


Figure 1: Location maps with development area highlighted

Reproduced from Explorer® 246 Loughborough, Melton Mowbray & Syston 1:25,000 OS map by permission of Ordnance Survey® on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationary Office. © Crown copyright 2010. All rights reserved. License number AL100029495.

post-medieval historic settlement core of the village (HER ref. MLE3889). The villages of Leicestershire, in common with the wider English Central Midlands, appear to have evolved alongside their open field systems during the 1st millennium AD. Therefore, buried archaeological evidence spanning the period from the earliest

evolution of the village to its more recent past could lie within the development area. No. 33 Main Street itself is a Grade II listed brick building dating to the late 18th century.

Archaeological Objectives

The principal objectives of the watching brief were:

- To identify the presence or absence of any archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date of any archaeological deposits to be effected by the proposed ground works.
- To excavate and record any archaeological deposits to be effected by the proposed ground works.
- To produce a report and archive of any results.

Methodology

The project required a professional archaeologist to supervise all groundwork likely to impact upon any archaeological remains.

The work involved the supervision and inspection of machine dug foundation trenches in order to identify any archaeological deposits or the natural substratum. This was carried out using a mini 360° mechanical excavator with a 0.45m toothed bucket. All exposed areas, sections and existing spoil heaps were visually inspected for features and finds. Archaeological deposits were hand cleaned, planned, photographed and sample excavated as appropriate to addressing the objectives of the watching brief. Field notes were recorded on a pro-forma ULAS watching brief recording form whilst any stratigraphic units would be given a unique context number and recorded on pro-forma ULAS context sheets if deemed appropriate.

All work followed the *Institute for Archaeologists' (IFA) Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LMARS)*.

Results

The site of the single garage was located to the rear of No. 33 c.28m from the street frontage (Figure 2 and Figure 3). It was situated over an existing area of hard standing. This had been levelled sometime in the past and was presently c.0.5m to c.0.65m below ground level in the garden to the west but at the same ground level as the garden to the east. Overall the footings covered a c.4.3m by c.6m area and were typically dug to be c.0.5m wide and c.1m deep.

Initial machining removed c.0.2m of quarry waste laid on matting as hard standing. This was resting directly on subsoil. However, at the north-western end of the garage footing a complete sequence of undisturbed stratigraphy was exposed. Here initial machining removed very friable dark grey loam topsoil, c.0.76m thick, to exposed c.0.72m of greyish-orange clayey-sand subsoil. The natural substratum was reached c.1.48m below ground level within the garden and c.0.72m below the hard standing. This was c.0.2m to c.0.4m of loose, coarse greyish-orange/pink gravelly-sand resting on mottled, pale greenish-yellow and greyish-blue clay.

Within the northern corner of the footing the subsoil was observed to disappear with the topsoil descending gradually down to a depth of c.1.4m (Figure 4). This may

represent the cut for a large shallow pit, measuring at least 2.3m by 1.4m, however the lack of differentiation between its fill and the topsoil makes it unlikely to be archaeological in origin. It and the entire north-eastern side of the footing were truncated by a known sewer line, put in during the 1980s. This was visible in the north-eastern wall of the footings as redeposited natural greyish-blue clay sealed beneath the topsoil (Figure 4).

Discussion

Although the development area was identified as an area of archaeological interest no archaeological deposits were encountered during the watching brief. The exceptional thickness of the topsoil and subsoil deposits can probably be attributed to accumulation through hill-wash and soil-creep moving north-west off the higher ground to the south-east. Their depth also alludes to lack of activity, particularly cultivation in this area, a fact supported by cartographic evidence which indicates that the land has been gardens and orchards since the mid-19th century.

Bibliography

B.G.S., 2003 *England and Wales Sheet 142 Melton Mowbray: Bedrock and Superficial Deposits*. 1:50,000 scale geology series.

Archive

The site archive consists of: 1 A4 watching brief record form
9 digital photographs

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council Museum Services under the accession number X.A83.2010

Publication

Since 2004 ULAS has reported the results of all archaeological work to the *Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations* (OASIS) database held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York (Appendix 2).

A summary of the work will also be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal, the *Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society*, in due course

Acknowledgements

Thanks are extended to the client, Mr Graham Spurr, and the contractors for their co-operation and assistance on site. Fieldwork was undertaken, and the report written by Mathew Morris. The project was managed for ULAS by Dr Patrick Clay.

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20/5/2010

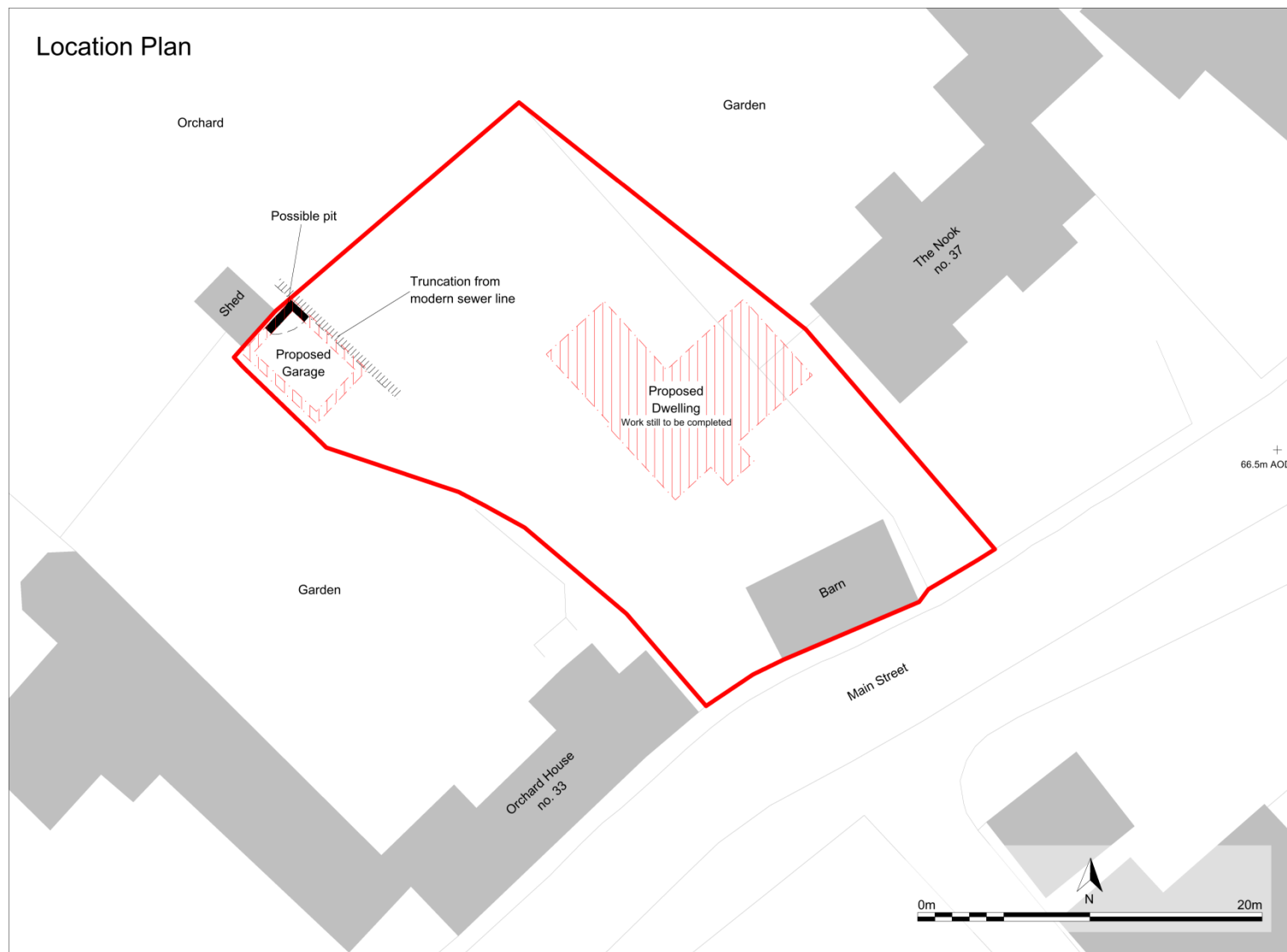


Figure 2: Plan of the development area showing results



Figure 3: Land to the rear of No. 33 showing the site of the proposed garage. Looking south



Figure 4: Section in north-western footing showing possible pit (behind scale) and truncation from modern sewer (top right). Looking north

Appendix 1: Design Specification for Archaeological Work

UNIVERSITY OF LEICESTER ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES

Design Specification for archaeological work

Job title: 33Main Street, Rotherby, Leicestershire

NGR: SK 6763 1668

Client: Mr Graham Spurr

***Planning Authority: Melton Borough Council
P.A 05/00301/FUL***

1 Definition and scope of the specification

- 1.1 In accordance with Planning Policy Guidelines 16 (PPG16, Archaeology and planning), para.30, this specification provides a written scheme for archaeological attendance for inspection and recording (a watching brief), as required by the Planning Authority, of any groundworks on the site which may disturb areas of archaeological potential in connection with a planning application for a proposed new dwelling and garage at ***33 Main Street, Rotherby, Leicestershire***, Leicestershire.
- 1.2 All archaeological work will adhere to the Institute for Archaeologist's (IfA) *Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* and the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (LCC 1997).

2 Background

2.1 Requirement for archaeological work (taken from Brief)

- 2.1.1 The archaeological work involves attendance (a watching brief) within the development area to identify any deposits of archaeological importance as detailed in the *Brief for the Archaeological inspection and recording (an intensive watching brief) at Land Adjacent To 33, Main Street, Rotherby, Leicestershire SK67631668* (hereinafter the 'Brief').
- 2.1.2 No. 33, Main Street is a Grade II listed building dating to the 18th century, and the Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies in an area of archaeological interest, inside the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of the village (HER ref.: MLE3889). The villages of Leicestershire, in common with the wider English Central Midlands, appear to have evolved alongside their open field systems, during the later 1st millennium AD. Buried archaeological evidence spanning the period from the earliest evolution of the village to its more recent past can be expected within the development area.
- 2.1.3 The proposals are likely to include the excavation of footings, landscaping and the introduction of services, etc., that will damage or destroy buried archaeological remains within the development area.

3 Aims

3.1 Through archaeological attendance and, as appropriate, investigation:

- To identify the presence/absence of any earlier building phases or archaeological deposits.
- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological deposits to be affected by the
 - proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.

- To produce an archive and report of any results.

4 Methods

- 4.1 The project will involve the supervision of overburden removal and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works specified above.
- 4.2 Should significant archaeological remains be identified a programme of excavation and recording may be necessary, using additional personnel as necessary.
- 4.3 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 palaeosoils 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 Ministry of Justice Licence and in compliance with relevant environmental health regulations. The developer and Leicestershire County Council 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 the owners and Leicestershire County Council.
- 4.8 In the event of significant archaeological remains being located during the watching brief there may be the need for contingency time and finance to be provided to ensure adequate recording is undertaken. On the discovery of potentially significant remains the archaeologist will inform the developer, the Senior Planning Archaeologist at Leicestershire County Council, and the planning authority. If the archaeological remains are identified to be of significance additional contingent archaeological works will be required.

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 A 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 black and white prints and colour transparencies illustrating in both 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 An accession number will be drawn prior to the commencement of the project (Brief 8.1). Following the fieldwork the on-line OASIS form at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis> will be completed. A report on the investigation will be provided following the groundworks.

6.2 Copies will be provided for the client, Historic Environment 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 Brown (2008) will be presented to Leicestershire County Council, normally within six months of the completion of analysis. This archive will include all written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigations undertaken.

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 investigation is scheduled to commence at the start of the contractors groundworks on 14 May 2010. An experienced archaeologist will be present during this work.

9 Health and Safety

9.1 ULAS is covered by and adheres to the University of Leicester Statement of Safety Policy and uses the ULAS Health and Safety Manual (revised 2007) 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

Brown, D., 2008 *Standard and guidance for the preparation of Archaeological Archives* (Institute for Archaeologists)

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13/5/2010

Appendix 2: OASIS Database entry

Project Name	33 Main Street, Rotherby
Project Type	Watching Brief
Project Manager	Dr Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Mathew Morris
Previous/Future work	None
Current Land Use	Garden
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	PPG16
Position in the Planning Process	As a condition
Site Co ordinates	SK 6763 1668
Start/end dates of field work	14/05/10
Archive Recipient	Leicestershire County Council Museum Services
Study Area	708 square meters

Contact Details

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