



University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
On Land Adjacent to 182, Main Street,
Thornton, Leicestershire
(SK 651 776)**

Gerwyn Richards



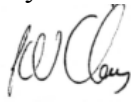
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**An Archaeological Watching Brief
On Land Adjacent to 182 Main Street,
Thornton, Leicestershire.
(NGR SK 651 776)**

Gerwyn Richards

Planning Application: 10/00999/4

For: Mr J C Fidler

Approved by	
Signed: 	Date: 23.01.2011
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Contents

Summary	1
1. Introduction	1
2. Aims and Methodology	2
3. Results	3
4. Conclusion	4
5. Archive & Publication	4
6. References	4

Figures

Figure 1	Site Location	2
Figure 2	Area of Archaeological Watching Brief.	3
Figure 3	Proposed development area, work in progress.	5

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Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services was commissioned by Trevor Mastin Architects on behalf of Mr J C Fidler to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks in advance of the construction of a new residential unit on land between 178 and 182 Main Street, Thornton, Leicestershire.

The proposed development area had been identified as being of archaeological potential, located within the historic settlement core of the village. No evidence of archaeological deposits or artefacts was encountered during the course of the watching brief.

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council, under the accession number X.A5. 2011.

1. Introduction

University of Leicester Archaeological Services was commissioned by Trevor Mastin Architects on behalf of Mr J C Fidler to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks for the construction of a new residential unit on land between numbers 178 and 182 Main Street, Thornton, Leicestershire (SK 651 776; *Figure 1*). The proposed development area is located on the Main Street frontage. The groundworks initially consisted of a topsoil strip and reduced dig followed by the excavation of foundation trenches.

The Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record (HER) indicates that the proposed development area lies in an area of archaeological interest, located within the medieval and post-medieval historic settlement core of the village of Thornton (HER Ref MLE 5942; Richards 2009). The Church of St Peter (HER Ref MLE 11703) to the south-east, although much altered has 13th-century origins. To the north-west is Bagworth Park (HER Ref MLE 2695), a medieval deer park, within which is a medieval moated house known as Bagworth Moats. To the west there is the site of a medieval and post-medieval watermill (HER Ref MLE 2684). The line of the Leicester to Swannington Railway (HER Ref MLE 16056), originally designed and built Robert Stephenson passes to the south west of the village. A linear crop mark (HER Ref MLE 2687) observed in 1981 to the north of the village is believed to be a continuation of the Roman road Via Devana.

The Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council as advisor to Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council advised that the proposed works may have an impact upon buried archaeological remains. In view of this a programme of archaeological attendance was approved. This consisted of a watching brief carried out during the

groundworks undertaken by the client's contractors. This work followed Planning Policy Statement 5 (*Planning and the Historic Environment*) (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2010).

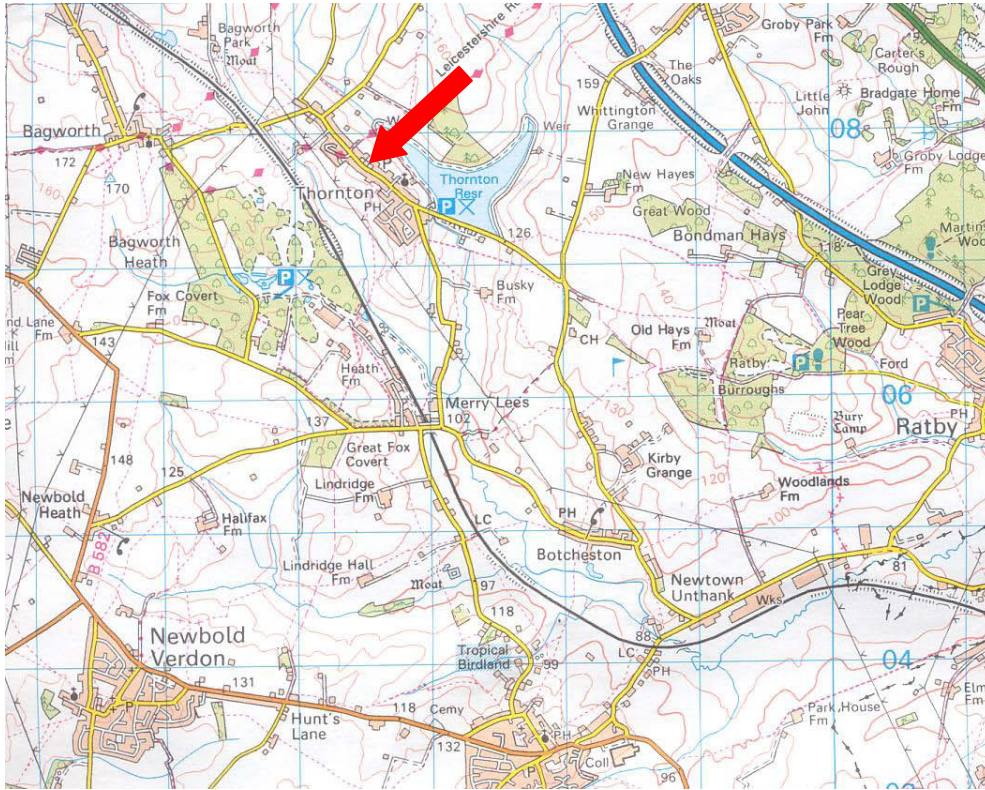


Figure 1. Site location

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2. Aims and Methodology

The aim of the archaeological work, through archaeological inspection and recording of groundworks by the client's contractors, was to:

- To identify the presence/absence of 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

The work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* (2006) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* (2008), the *Guidelines for Archaeological Work in Leicestershire and Rutland* (LMARS) and adhered to the University's Health and Safety policy. The methodology to be followed was detailed in the *Design Specification for Archaeological work* (ULAS 11-507).

All groundworks were carried out by a 7.5 tonne mini digger fitted with a ditching bucket under continuous archaeological supervision. The exposed substratum was

observed and the spoil searched for finds. The watching brief took place on January 20th 2011.

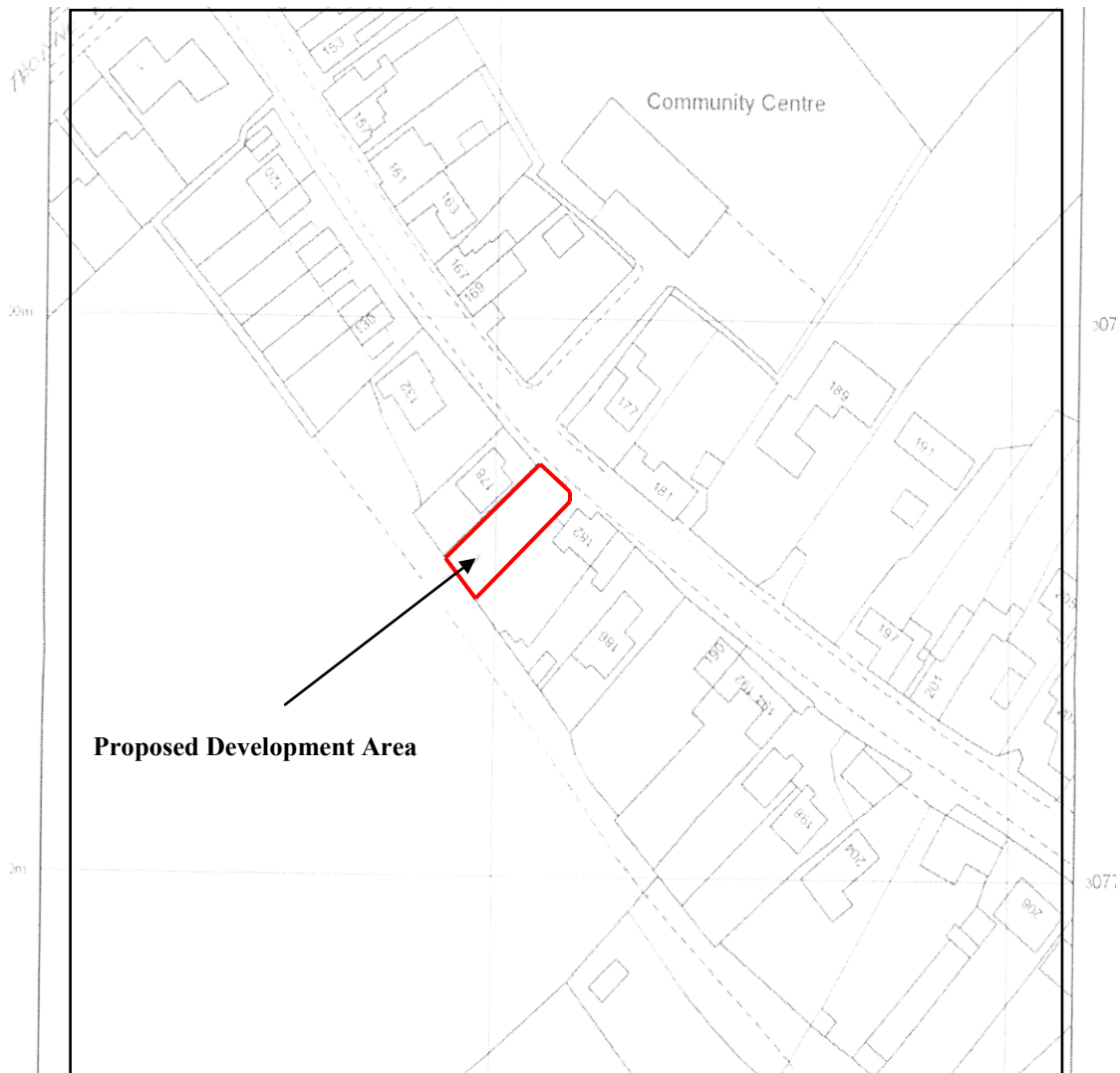


Figure 2 Area of archaeological watching brief.
(Not to Scale)

3. Results

The proposed development area occupied an overgrown garden area to the north-west of number 182 Main Street. The site was largely level and approximately 0.45m above the current road level. The frontage boundary consisted of a granite rubble wall, part of which was demolished for access, while the south-western boundary was a hawthorn hedge, possible an enclosure hedge. A visual survey of the proposed development area prior to work commencing indicated no standing earthworks.

The topsoil strip and reduced dig was limited to the frontage area, an area of approximately 8m to 10m at the south-western end of the plot was un-affected by these groundworks. Excavation began on the frontage and proceeded towards the south-west. Approximately 0.45m of topsoil was removed revealing a substratum of orange brown silty-clay. The depth of the topsoil decreased to approximately 0.4m

towards the south-west. Running parallel with south eastern boundary was a length of mid 20th century brick wall, probably an earlier boundary wall.

No evidence for archaeological finds or features was observed within either the removed topsoil or the exposed substratum.

4. Conclusion

The proposed development area occupied a promising location within the historic settlement core of Thornton, but no evidence of archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered during the course of this watching brief. There was no evidence of recent ground disturbance, suggesting that the proposed development area is likely always to have been an un-occupied plot.

5. Archive & Publication

The site archive consists of:

- 2 Black & White negatives and contact prints
- CD containing 2 digital images
- 1 A4 contact sheet
- 1 A4 watching brief sheet
- 1 A4 paper map showing proposed development area
- Unbound copy of this report (ULAS Report Number 2011-007)

The archive will be held by Leicestershire County Council under the Accession Number X.A5. 2011.

A version of the summary (above) will be published in *Transactions of Leicestershire Historical & Archaeological Society* in due course.

6. References

IfA, 2008 *Code of Conduct*

IfA, 2008 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*

Richards, G. 2009 *An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment of Manor Farm, 2 Main Street, Thornton, Leicestershire (NGR SK 461 081)*. ULAS Report 2009-144.

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Figure 3 Proposed development area, work in progress (looking south-west).

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