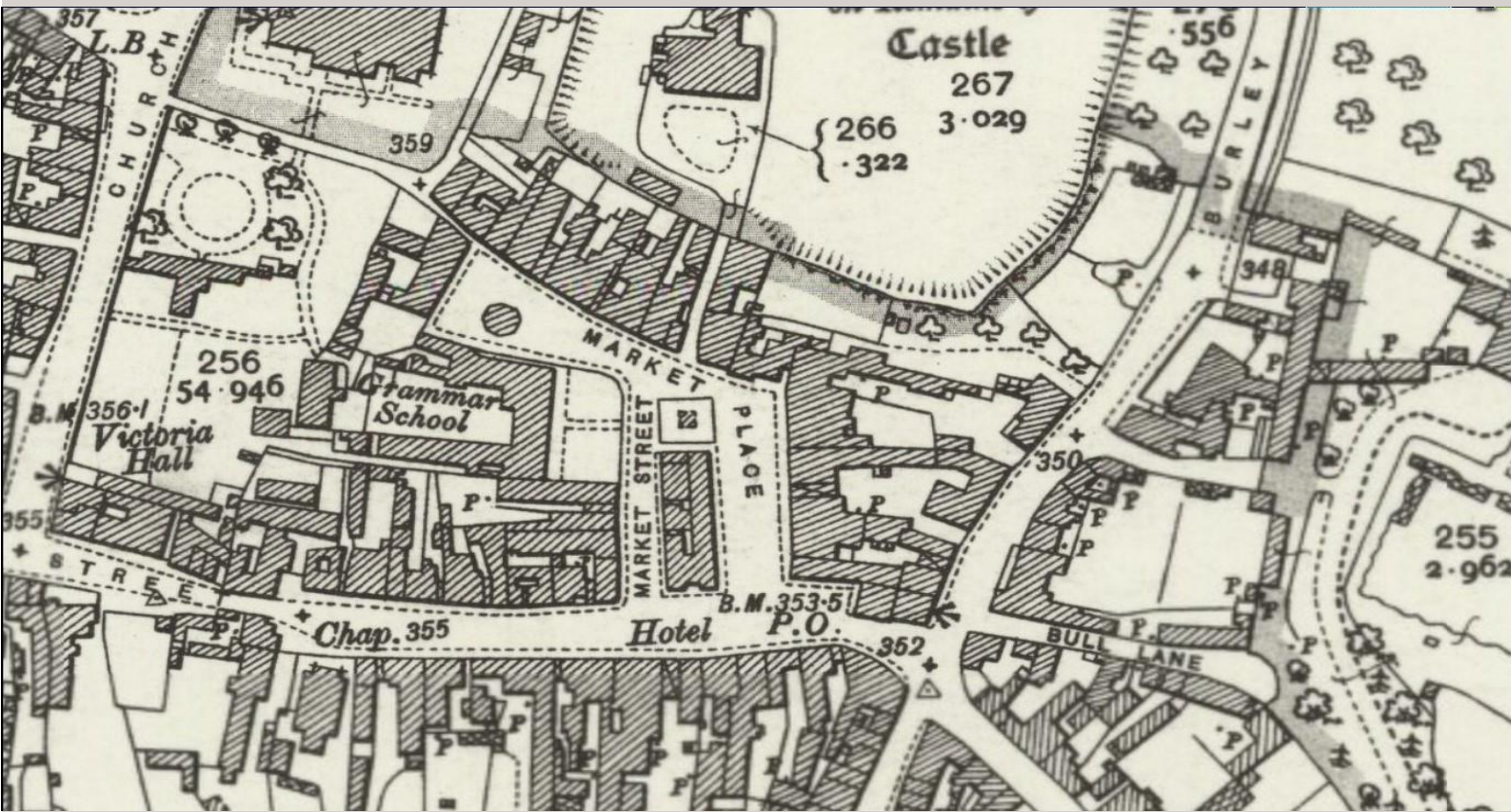


# border archaeology

archaeology & built heritage



## Archaeological Observation

On behalf of:



Concerning:

**A6W/12228 Oakham Town Centre  
Fire Hydrant Replacement  
Market Place  
Oakham  
Rutland  
LE15 6DT**

May 2018



[borderarchaeology.com](http://borderarchaeology.com)

ISO 9001 | ISO 14001 | OHSAS 18001

**REPORT SPECIFICATION**

**Compilation:**

Giuseppe Castelli MSc MPhil PCIfA

**Artwork:**

Holly Litherland BA (Hons.)

**Edit:**

Ross Shurety MA (Cantab.)

**Final Edit & Approval:**

Neil Shurety Dip. M G M Inst M

**Report Reference:**

BA1814OTC

**Grid Reference:**

NGR: SK 86117 08833

**OS Licence No.:**

100055758

**Date:**

May 2018

*Cover: Extract from the Ordnance Survey 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition 25-Inch Map Edition of 1904 (Rutland Sheet IX.2)*

## GENERAL ENQUIRIES

e: [info@borderarchaeology.com](mailto:info@borderarchaeology.com)

t: 01568 610101

### Administration

The Plaza, Owen Way, Leominster Enterprise Park, Leominster, HR6 0LA

### Post-Ex Facility – Leominster

Telephone 01568 610101

Email [postex@borderarchaeology.com](mailto:postex@borderarchaeology.com)

### Post-Ex Facility – Milton Keynes

Telephone 01908 533233

Email [postexmk@borderarchaeology.com](mailto:postexmk@borderarchaeology.com)

## REGIONAL OFFICES

### Milton Keynes

Common Farm  
Calverton Lane  
Milton Keynes, MK19 6EU  
t: 01908 533233

### Leeds

No1 Leeds  
26 Whitehall Road  
Leeds, LS12 1BE  
t: 0113 8187959

### Shoreditch

The Old Fire Station,  
140 Tabernacle Street,  
London, EC2A 4SD  
t: 02033 015670

### Newport

Merlin House  
No1 Langstone Business Park  
Newport, NP18 2HJ  
t: 01633 415339

### Bristol

First Floor,  
Citibase Bristol Aztec West,  
Aztec Centre, Aztec West  
Almondsbury,  
Bristol, BS32 4TD  
t: 0117 9110767

### Winchester

Basepoint Business Centre,  
Winnal Valley Road,  
Winchester, SO23 0LD  
t: 01962 832777



Contents:

1	Non-Technical Summary.....	1
2	Introduction.....	2
3	Site Description & Geology.....	2
4	Methodology.....	5
	4.1 Adopted scheme of work.....	5
	4.2 Recording.....	6
5	Tabulated Results.....	7
	5.1 Pit 1.....	7
	5.2 Pit 2.....	8
	5.3 Pit 3.....	9
	5.4 Pit 4.....	10
	5.5 Pit 5.....	11
	5.6 Pit 6.....	12
	5.7 Pit 7.....	13
	5.8 Pit 8.....	14
	5.9 Pit 9.....	15
6	Discussion.....	16
7	Conclusion.....	16
8	Copyright.....	16
9	Bibliography.....	17

## 1 Non-Technical Summary

---

*Border Archaeology was instructed by Amey plc on behalf of Severn Trent Water to carry out a programme of Archaeological Observation of engineering groundworks in connection with the A6W/12228 Oakham Town Centre Fire Hydrant Replacement Market Place Oakham Rutland LE15 6DT (NGR: SK 86117 08833).*

*The groundworks comprised seven Receiver Pits measuring between 0.45m × 0.65m × 0.74m (max. depth) and 1.80m × 2.20m × 1.20m (max. depth) for the insertion of a 63mm PE pipe within an existing 3" cast iron water main at c.0.90m depth. Two Access Pits were added in order to place the PE pipe (Pits nos.8-9).*

*The watching brief encountered modern/20<sup>th</sup> Century deposits and no archaeological features/deposits were identified.*

---

## 2 Introduction

---

Border Archaeology (BA) was instructed by Amey plc on behalf of Severn Trent Water to carry out a programme of Archaeological Observation (or 'watching brief') of engineering groundworks in connection with the A6W/12228 Oakham Town Centre Fire Hydrant Replacement Market Place Oakham Rutland LE15 6DT (NGR: SK 86117 08833) (*figs. 1-2*).

The groundworks comprised seven Receiver Pits measuring between 0.45m × 0.65m × 0.74m (max. depth) and 1.80m × 2.20m × 1.20m (max. depth) required for the insertion of a 63mm PE pipe within an existing 3" cast iron water main at 0.90m depth. Two Access Pits were added between Pits 3 and 4 to the NE of the Buttercross in order to insert the PE pipe (Pits 8-9).

---

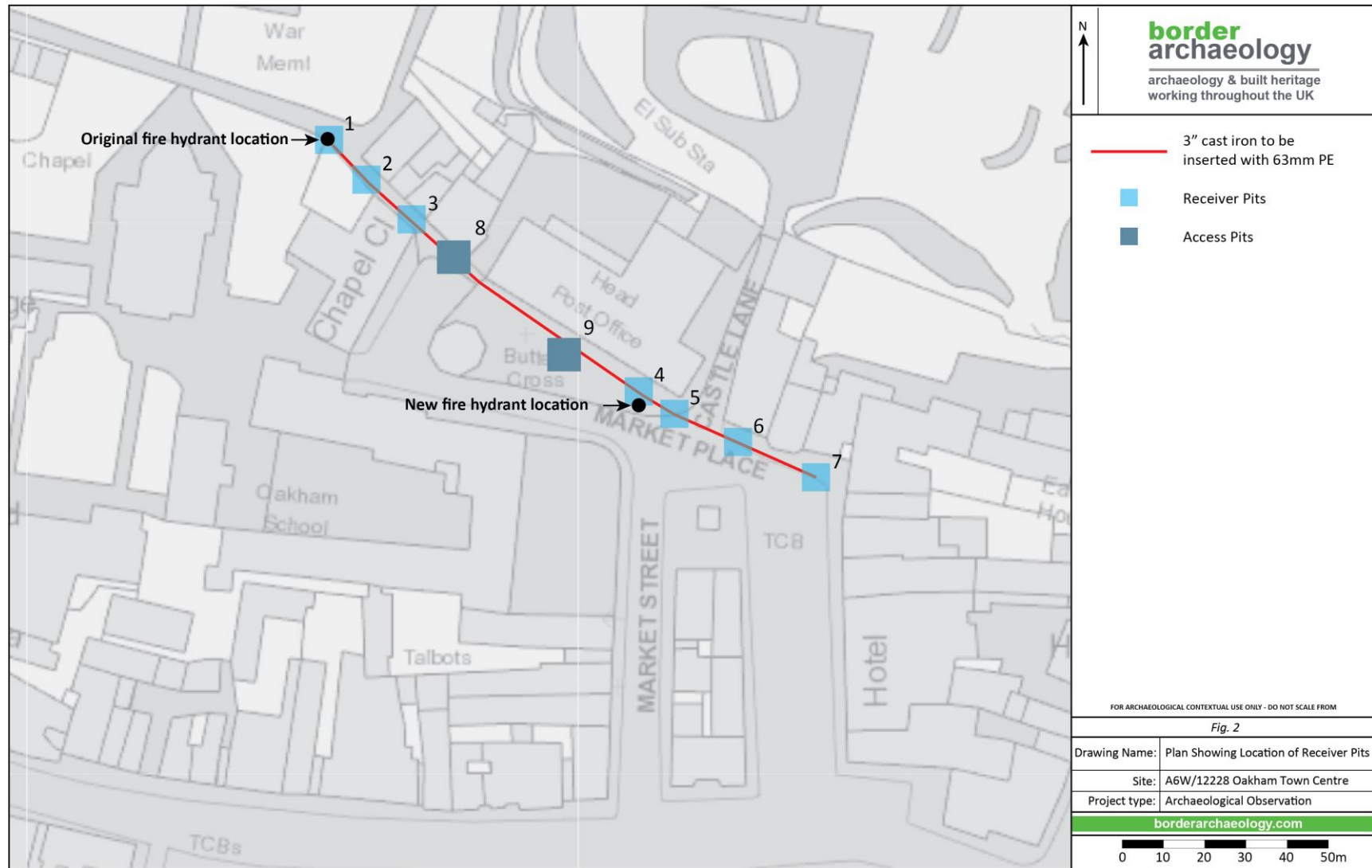
## 3 Site Description & Geology

---

The market town of Oakham is the largest settlement in the county and lies towards the southern end of the Vale of Catmose. The site lies at a height of roughly 108m AOD within the town's historic core and in close proximity to the Grade I Listed 17<sup>th</sup> century Market Cross (or 'Buttercross') and stocks.

This area is characterised by ferritic brown earths of the BANBURY series (544), composed of well-drained brashy fine and coarse loamy ferruginous soils over Jurassic and Cretaceous ironstone (SSEW 1983).







## 4 Methodology

The programme of archaeological work was carried out in accordance with practices set out in *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014) and *Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials* (ClfA 2014). BA adheres to the *ClfA Code of conduct* (2014).

The definition of an 'archaeological watching brief' ('archaeological observation') is a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons (ClfA 2014).

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (ClfA) states (2014, 4) that the purpose of a watching brief (Archaeological Observation) is:

- To allow, within the resources available, the preservation by record of archaeological deposits, the presence and nature of which could not be established (or established with sufficient accuracy) in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works
- To provide an opportunity, if needed, for the watching archaeologist to signal to all interested parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.

### 4.1 Adopted scheme of work

Fieldwork took place between the end of January and the beginning of February 2018. Engineering excavation of the pits was carried out by mini-digger under Archaeological Observation, with deposits recorded strictly within health and safety parameters. The initial use of a toothed bucket was necessary in order to remove the tarmac; thereafter, the groundworks were undertaken using a flat-bladed bucket.

Groundworks commenced to the NW of the Buttercross (adjacent to Chapel Close) and progressed SE across Market Place.

The excavation of the pits began with the removal of paving slabs (average depth of 0.10m) followed by hardcore (average depth of 0.15m), sand-based cement (average depth of 0.20m) and mixed made-ground associated with service backfill (variable depth of up to 0.85m).

Overall, the site comprised nine Pits, detailed as follows (see *fig. 2*):

- Pit 1: 0.80m × 1.83m × 0.82m
- Pit 2: 0.78m × 1.05m × 0.74m
- Pit 3: 0.45m × 0.65m × 0.75m
- Pit 4: 0.96m × 1.07m × 1.05m
- Pit 5: 1.80m × 2.00m × 1.20m
- Pit 6: 0.98m × 1.70m × 1.06m
- Pit 7: 1.18m × 2.20m × 1.10m
- Pit 8: 1.40m × 2.07m × 1.07m
- Pit 9: 1.00m × 1.50m × 1.15m

No further excavation/extension was necessary as archaeological deposits were not encountered. In addition, no archaeological artefacts were recovered since the original deposits had been affected by several disturbances related to previous groundworks activity.

## 4.2 Recording

A full written, graphic and photographic record was made in accordance with BA's *Archaeological Field Recording Manual* (2017) and included:

- A standard numbered context record for each stratigraphic unit encountered
- A location plan tied into Ordnance Survey (OS) National Grid data. Contractor regulatory conditions precluded entry to trenching in order to undertake detailed recording
- A high-resolution digital photographic record. Photographs contained appropriate scales and were indexed and cross-referenced to written site records. Details concerning subject and direction of view were maintained in a photographic register and on a photograph board, indexed by frame number
- Sections, which were produced on gridded, archive-stable polyester film at a scale of 1:10. All drawings were numbered and listed in a drawing register, these drawing numbers being cross-referenced to written site records.

## 5 Tabulated Results

Below are the tabulated results, broken down by Pit, detailing the stratigraphic sequence recorded during the course of the Archaeological Observation.

### 5.1 Pit 1

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample no	Provisional Date
(001001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs (max 0.80m × 0.50m × 0.10m) mortared with concrete/cement; overlies (001002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(001002)	Deposit	-	-	Cement-based sand (002001); 0.04m deep; overlies (001003) & underlies (001001)	Sand deposit; base for pavement (001001)	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(001003)	Deposit	-	[001004]	Made ground/service backfill of [001004]; max 0.72m deep; overlies/fills [001004] & underlies (001002)	Grouped mixed made ground	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[001004]	Cut	(001003)	-	Cut of services; max 0.72m deep; underlies/filled by (001003)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥

5.2 Pit 2

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample no	Provisional Date
(002001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs (max 0.80m × 0.50m × 0.10m) & granite cobbles (max 0.27m × 0.12m × 0.22m) mortared with concrete/cement; overlies (002002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(002002)	Deposit	-	-	Cement-based sand (002001); 0.14m deep; overlies (002003) & underlies (002001)	Sand deposit; base for pavement (002001)	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(002003)	Deposit	-	[002004]	Made ground/service backfill of [002004]; max 0.50m deep; overlies/fills [002004] & underlies (002002)	Grouped mixed made ground	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[002004]	Cut	(002003)	-	Cut of services; max 0.50m deep; underlies/filled by (002003)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥

5.3 Pit 3

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample no	Provisional date
(003001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs; limestone and siltstone; mortared with concrete/cement; max 0.80m × 0.50m × 0.10m; overlies (003002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(003002)	Deposit	-	-	Cement based sand (CBS) used as a preparation surface for pavement (003001); max 0.13m deep; overlies (003003) & underlies (003001)	Sand deposit; base of pavement (003001)	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(003003)	Deposit	-	[003004]	Made ground/service backfill of [003004]; max 0.55m deep; overlies/fills [003004] & underlies (003002)	Mixed made ground, grouped	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[003004]	Deposit	(003003)	-	Cut of services grouping multiple service cuts; max 0.55m deep; underlies/filled by (003003)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥

5.4 Pit 4

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample No	Provisional Date
(004001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs (max 0.80m × 0.50m × 0.10m); mortared with concrete/cement; overlies (004002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(004002)	Deposit	-	-	Sandy gravels, used to seal cable/pipe; light grey-brown colour; >0.17m deep; overlies (004003) & underlies (004001)	Service backfill	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(004003)	Deposit	-	-	Cement sealing service ducts; light grey colour; >0.35m wide × 0.16m deep; overlies (004004) & underlies (004002)	Concrete	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(004004)	Deposit	-	[004005]	Made ground/service backfill of [004005]; dark grey-brown colour; >0.85m deep; overlies/fills [004005] & underlies (004003)	Mixed made ground, grouped	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[004005]	Cut	(004004)	-	Cut of services; >0.85m deep; underlies/filled by (004004)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥

5.5 Pit 5

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample No	Provisional Date
(005001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs; limestone and siltstone; mortared with concrete/cement; max 0.80m × 0.50m × 0.10m; overlies (005002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(005002)	Deposit	-	-	Hardcore, made of aggregate and compressed rock; 0.28m deep; overlies (005003) & underlies (005001)	Hardcore; base of pavement (005001)	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(005003)	Deposit		[005004]	Made ground/service backfill of [005004]; >1.10m deep; overlies/fills [005004] & underlies (005002)	Mixed made ground, grouped	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[005004]	Cut	(005003)	--	Cut of services grouping multiple service cuts; >1.10m deep; underlies/filled by (005003)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥

5.6 Pit 6

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample No	Provisional Date
(006001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs (max 0.80m × c.0.50m × 0.10m); mortared with concrete/cement; overlies (006002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(006002)	Deposit	-	-	Hardcore containing sand, gravel & compressed rock; 0.10m deep; overlies (006003) underlies (006001)	Hardcore; base for (006001)	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(006003)	Deposit	-	[006006]	Sand construction layer associated with service backfill; 0.35m deep; overlies/fills [006006] underlies (006002)	Sand construction layer	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(006004)	Deposit	-	[006005]	Made ground/service backfill of [006005]; dark grey-brown colour; >0.52m deep; overlies/fills [006005] & underlies/cut by [006006]	Mixed made ground, grouped	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[006005]	Cut	(006004)	-	Cut of services; >0.50m deep; underlies/filled by (006004)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[006006]	Cut	(006003)	-	Cut of services; >0.35m deep; underlies/filled by (006003) & overlies/cuts (006004)	Cut of services	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥



5.7 Pit 7

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample No	Provisional Date
(007001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs; limestone and siltstone; mortared with concrete/cement; 0.80m x 0.50m x 0.10m (max); overlies (007002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(007002)	Deposit	-	-	Cement-based sand; 0.07m deep; overlies (007003) & underlies (007001)	Sand deposit; base for pavement (007001)	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(007003)	Deposit	-	[007006]	Industrial concrete comprising crushed rock/modern bricks; 0.34m – 0.66m (min-max); overlies/fills [007006] & underlies (007002)	Service backfill	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(007004)	Deposit	-	[007005]	Made ground/service backfill of [007005]; >0.45m deep; overlies/fills [007005] & underlies/cut by [007006]	Mixed made ground, grouped	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[007005]	Cut	(007004)	-	Cut of services; >0.45m deep; underlies/filled by (007004)	Cut of services	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[007006]	Cut	(007003)	-	Cut of services; 0.34m – 0.66m (min-max); underlies/filled by (007003) & underlies/cuts (007004)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥

5.8 Pit 8

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample No	Provisional Date
(008001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs (max 0.80m × 0.50m × 0.10 m) and granite cobbles (max 0.27m × 0.12m × 0.22m); mortared with concrete/cement; overlies (008002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(008002)	Deposit	-	-	Hardcore containing sand, gravel & compressed rock; 0.05m deep; overlies (008003) underlies (008001)	Hardcore; base for pavement (008001)	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(008003)	Deposit	-	[008004]	Made ground/service backfill of [008004]; >0.92m deep; overlies/fills [008004] & underlies (008002)	Mixed made ground, grouped	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[008004]	Cut	(008003)	-	Cut of services; >0.92m deep; underlies/filled by (008003)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥

5.9 Pit 9

Context	Type	F/B	F/O	Description	Interpretation	Finds	Sample No	Provisional Date
(009001)	Surface	-	-	Stone paving slabs; limestone and siltstone; mortared with concrete/cement; max 0.80m × 0.50m × 0.10m; overlies (009002)	Pavement	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(009002)	Deposit	-	-	Cement based sand & industrial rough concrete; 0.12m deep; overlies (009003) & underlies (009001)	Sand construction layer; base for pavement (009001)	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
(009003)	Deposit	-	[009004]	Made-ground associated with service backfill [009004]; >0.95m deep; overlies/fills [009004] & underlies (009002)	Mixed made ground, grouped	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥
[009004]	Cut	(009003)	-	Cut of services; >0.95m deep; underlies/filled by (009003)	Grouped service cut	-	-	20 <sup>th</sup> Century ≥

---

## 6 Discussion

---

The archaeological watching brief encountered no remains of archaeological significance and the recorded features related solely to the service backfill, the construction of which has removed any earlier archaeological deposits; in addition, no artefactual evidence was recovered from any of the deposits identified.

---

## 7 Conclusion

---

The watching brief undertaken in Oakham Town Centre revealed modern deposits, such as paving slabs/cobbles, hardcore, sand construction layers and mixed made-ground associated with multiple service trenches associated with the surrounding buildings. No archaeological remains were encountered and, due to the small size of the Pits and modern disturbances identified within, information remains limited.

A 20<sup>th</sup> Century date has been assigned to the services and deposits identified.

The lack of archaeological features or deposits is a reflection of the continued and intensive construction which has been undertaken within the area. However, this should not be seen to reflect the archaeological potential of the surrounding area, which has shown evidence for extensive activity from Prehistory through to the Late Medieval period and has seen a continued and varied evolution and development of the landscape.

---

## 8 Copyright

---

Border Archaeology Ltd shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents, under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, with all rights reserved, excepting that it hereby provides a license to the client and the Council for the use of the report by the client and the Council in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification to use the documentation for their statutory functions and to provide copies of it to third parties as an incidental to such functions.

## 9 Bibliography

---

Border Archaeology, 2017, *Archaeological Field Recording Manual*.

ClfA, 2014, *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief*.

ClfA, 2014, *Code of Conduct*.

ClfA, 2014, *Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials*.

ClfA, 2014, *Standard and guidance for the creation, preparation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives*.

SSEW, 1983, *Soil Map of England and Wales Scale 1:250 000*, Silsoe.

Title		Reference	
Archaeological Observation on behalf of Severn Trent Water concerning A6W/12228 Oakham Town Centre Fire Hydrant Replacement Market Place Oakham Rutland LE15 6DT		BA1814OTC	
Compilation	Giuseppe Castelli MSc MPhil PCI/fA		
Edit	Ross Shurety MA (Cantab.)		
Issue No.	Status	Date	Approved for issue
1.	Final	May 2018	Neil Shurety Dip. M G M Inst. M