



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

A programme of archaeological observation and recording  
of groundworks on land at 1 Harrowick Lane  
Earls Barton, Northamptonshire  
August 2012



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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Northamptonshire  
County Council

Chris Jones and  
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Report 12/185  
October 2012



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## QUALITY CONTROL

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Verified by	Ian Meadows		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>Oasis No: 136552</b>
Project name	Watching brief at 1 Harrowick Lane, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire	
Short description	Archaeological observation and recording was undertaken during the groundwork's ahead of the construction of two new dwellings at 1 Harrowick Lane, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.	
Project type	Watching brief	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Vacant land	
Future work	None	
Monument type/ period	-	
Significant finds	-	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	1 Harrowick Lane, Earls Barton	
Study area (sq metres)	0.1ha, stripping area 99.9sq m	
OS Easting & Northing	SP 850 638	
Height aOD	91m aOD	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The Assistant Archaeological Advisor Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Chris Jones	
Project Manager	Ian Meadows	
Sponsor or funding body	Mr S Watkins	
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	June 2012	
End date	July 2012	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location</b>	<b>Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical	-	None
Paper	Northamptonshire Archaeology	Watching brief forms (4) Colour slides (9) black and white contact prints (9) Digital photographs (37)
Digital		Report text and figures
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	A programme of archaeological observation and recording of groundwork's on land at 1 Harrowick Lane, Earls Barton Northamptonshire, June-July 2012	
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report 12/185	
Author	Chris Jones and Pat Chapman	
Date	October 2012	

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**A PROGRAMME OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION AND  
RECORDING OF GROUNDWORKS ON LAND AT  
1 HARROWICK LANE, EARLS BARTON  
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE  
AUGUST 2012**

*Abstract*

*A programme of archaeological observation and recording was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology during groundwork's ahead of the construction of two new dwellings at 1 Harrowick Lane, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

A programme of archaeological observation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in 2012 during groundwork's ahead of the construction of two new dwellings (Planning Application No: WP/2011/0410) on land at 1 Harrowick Lane, Earls Barton, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 850 638, Fig 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Mr S Watkins, following a request for a programme of archaeological observation and recording by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council. The work followed the appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008) and English Heritage (EH 2006).

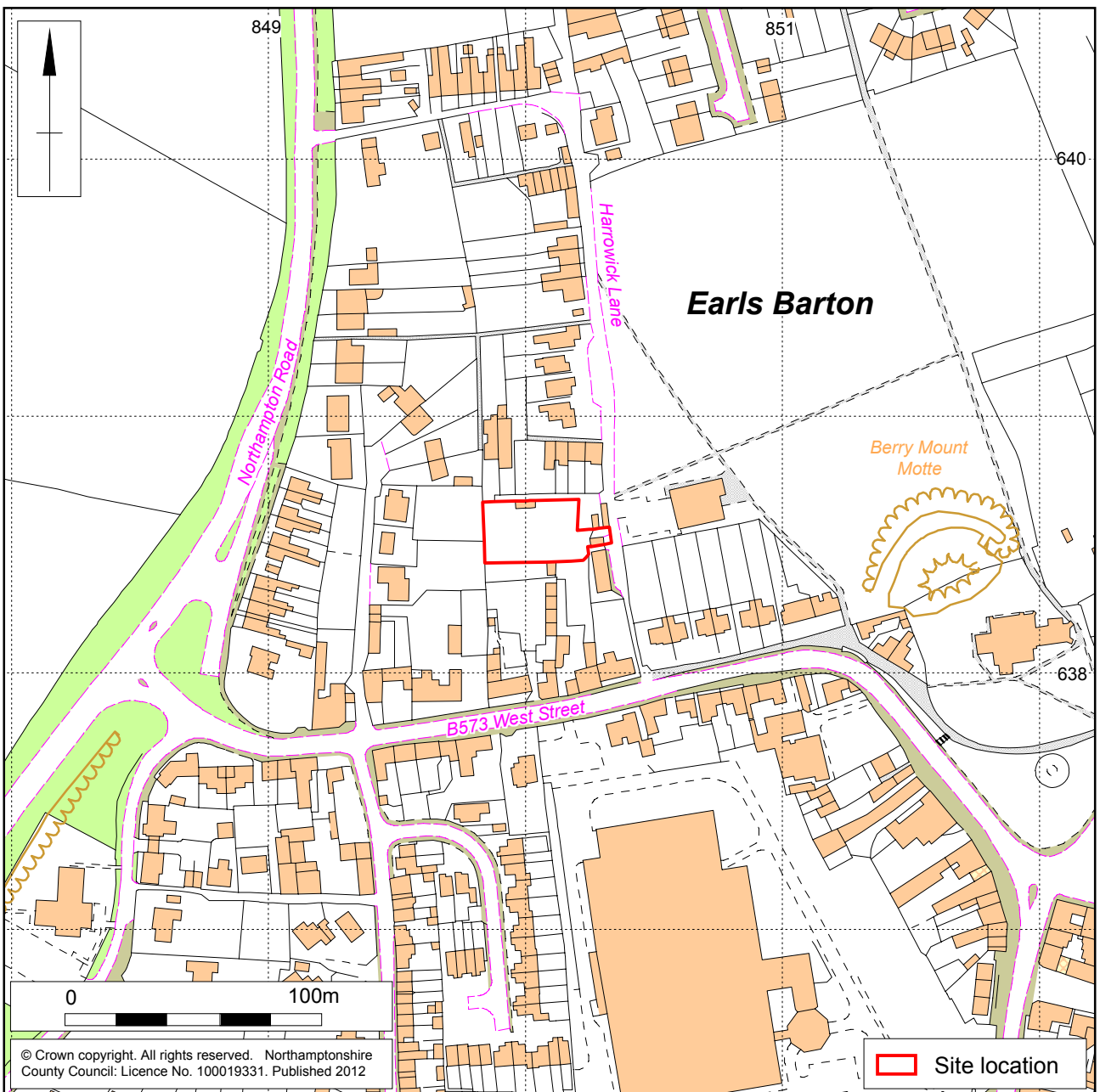
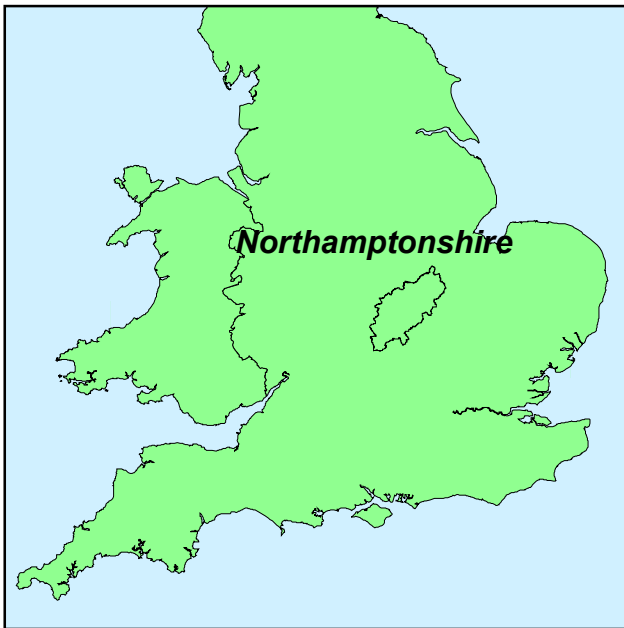
## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Location and topography**

The parish of Earls Barton, covering nearly 950ha, lies on the south-west facing slope of the Nene valley, between Wellingborough to the east and Northampton to the west.

The development area, 0.1ha of open ground, is surrounded by residential properties and gardens, between Harrowick Lane to the east and Leys Road to the west (Fig 2). The 10th-century Saxon church stands about 200m to the south-south-east.

The site is situated on ground reasonably level and lies at approx 91m aOD. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey as a mixture comprising the Inferior and Great Oolite groups and the Lias group of limestone, sandstone, siltstone and mudstones, overlain by glacial sands and gravels ([www.bgs.c.uk](http://www.bgs.c.uk)).



Scale 1:2500

Site location Fig 1

## 2.2 Archaeological and historical background

A large Bronze Age bell barrow on the flood plain of the River Nene, on the south side of the river, was excavated in 1969 and is the earliest evidence for human occupation in the parish, although there are major prehistoric monuments along most of the Nene valley (Jackson 1984). A large number of prehistoric settlements and pit alignments of probable Iron Age date and Roman settlements around the village have been recorded by aerial photography and fieldwork (RCHME 1979, 39-40). Iron Age and Roman settlement have been excavated at Mallard Close, c 1km to the north-east of the site (Chapman and Atkins 2004) and along the A45 bypass at Clay Lane (Windell 1983).

Earls Barton was settled in early Saxon times, the name *Beretun* indicating a barley growing region. The famous Saxon tower of All Saints Church probably dates to the 10th century, while major alterations and enlargements to the rest of the church were carried out in the 12th to 14th centuries (Audouy 1981). The prefix 'Earls' comes from a long association with the Earls of Northampton and Huntingdon.

North of the church and about 100m east of the development site lies Berry Mount, a Scheduled Monument which could be contemporary with the early church as a defensive rampart, or Iron Age in origin, an interpretation as a medieval motte seems unlikely (RCHME 1979, 42). Occupation earthworks and Saxon pottery have been recorded to the south and south west of the development site.

In the 14th and 15th centuries sheep rearing made the manufacture of woollen cloth a major cottage industry ([www.northamptonshire.co.uk/guides/earlsbarton](http://www.northamptonshire.co.uk/guides/earlsbarton)). Hide tanning was established by the 13th century, and leather processing only ceased as recently as 1984. By the 1780s the hand sewing of boots was being carried out in outhouses and cellars. When the railway arrived in 1845 it brought about the gradual mechanisation of the boot industry. This saw the rapid development of the village, including the building of New Barton in the 1870s and '80s. Ironstone quarrying was carried out briefly, and Silica sand extraction rather longer. Both these industries used a tramway system.

The village has always had strong Nonconformist elements. The Baptist faith being fostered by William Carey in the late 18th century and Eli Tebbutt, a local man, was a founder figure of the Methodist movement. There are churches of both of these denominations in the village, and the Roman Catholic Church of St Anselm was built in 1970.

No archaeological investigations are recorded as having been undertaken within the site. Up to the present application the development area has functioned as a domestic garden.

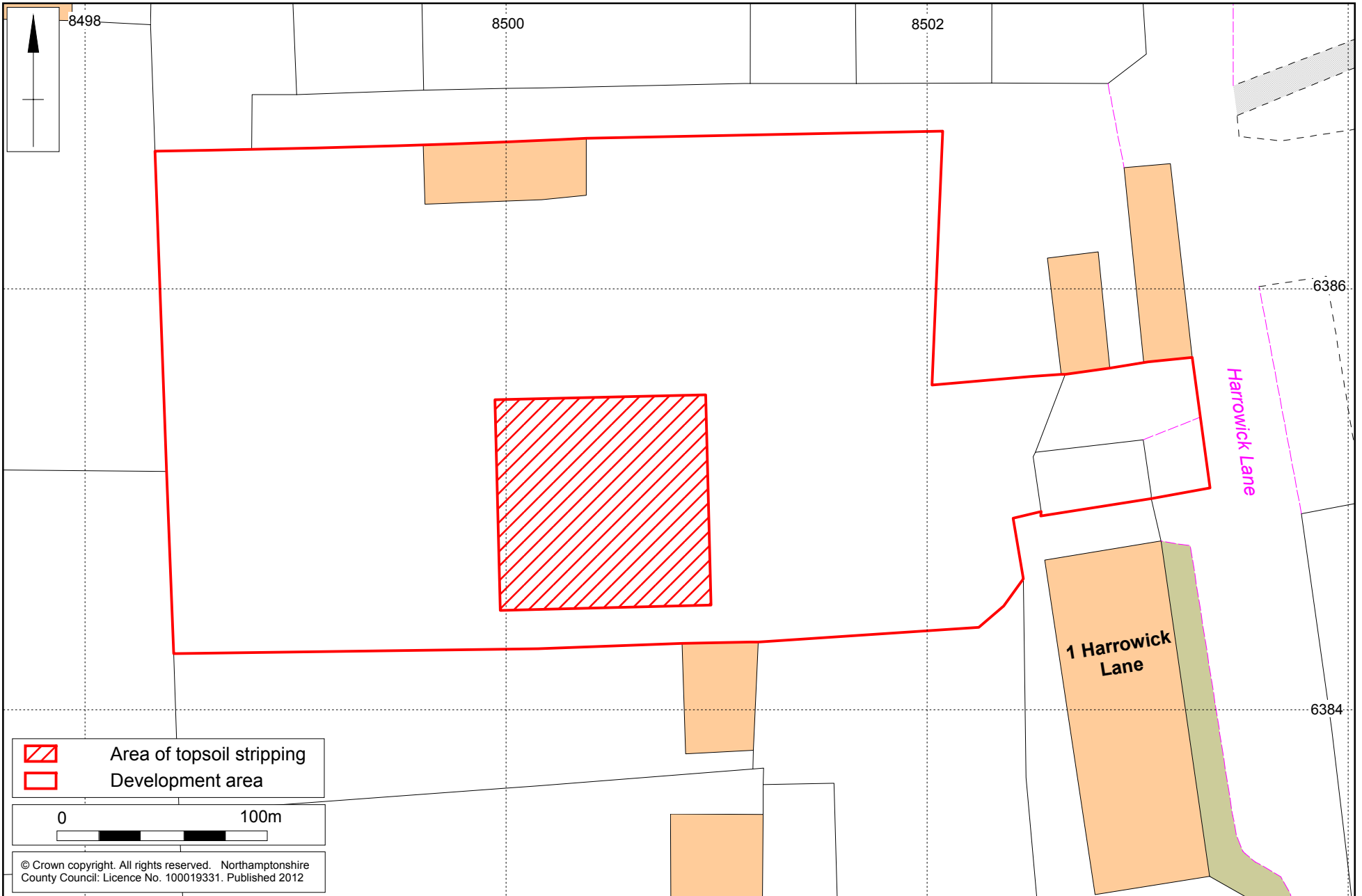
## 3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the programme of archaeological observation were to:

- ◆ Identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits exposed during the groundwork's for the two residential dwellings;
- ◆ Determine the date, character, state of preservation and depth of any archaeological deposits observed and to retrieve all datable artefacts;

Scale 1:250

The watching brief area Fig 2





- ◆ Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

The work was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008) and EH 2009 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*, English Heritage. The area outlined for development was stripped of topsoil and subsoil, with a mini 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket, under continuous archaeological observation. The excavation of the footings was also observed.

All groundwork and associated spoil-heaps were scanned with a metal-detector, no unauthorised metal-detecting was permitted anywhere within the development area.

Archaeological deposits, their character and composition were recorded on Northamptonshire Archaeology pro-forma record sheets (NA 2011). A photographic record was maintained in both monochrome and colour films with supplementary photographs in digital format.

I



Stripping of topsoil, looking east

Fig 3

#### 4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

An archaeological observation and record was undertaken ahead of the construction of two dwellings on land at 1 Harrowick Lane, Earls Barton.

A mini 360° tracked excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket, under continuous archaeological observation was used to remove overburden to the required depth for the development. The excavated area was 10m by 10m square and was cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features if any had been present.

The maximum depth of the groundworks was 0.70m below the modern ground surface. The underlying geology of sandstone and glacial sands and gravels was observed and was overlain by 0.40m of light brown sandy clay subsoil, which was overlain by 0.30m of dark brown loam clay topsoil. No archaeological features were present within the excavated area and no finds were recovered.



Excavated area, looking north

Fig 4



A second archaeological observation and record was undertaken when the footings were dug for the construction of the two new dwellings.

The topsoil had been removed from the whole development area and the footing trenches were 0.80m to 0.90m deep by 0.80m wide cutting the natural sandstone and glacial sands and gravels.

No archaeological features were present within the area and no finds were recovered.



Footings for new dwelling, looking east

Fig 5

## 5 THE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	4
Colour slides	9
Black and white contacts and negatives	9
Digital photographs	37

The archive will be held with Northamptonshire Archaeology until such time as a suitable depository has been appointed.

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological watching brief identified no archaeological features within the development area and no finds were present.

The archaeological observation was carried out in dry, clear weather, and the results are considered to be reliable.

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