



Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief during
groundworks on land at
Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby,
Leicestershire



Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council

David J Leigh

Report 13/25

February 2013

X.A12.2013



STAFF

Project Manager Stephen Parry MA FSA MIfA
and David J Leigh BA Hons
Text David J Leigh
Fieldwork David J Leigh
Illustrations Amir Bassir BSc PlfA
Project Archive Theodora Anastasiadou-Leigh BA MA (Bham)
MA (York)

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Pat Chapman		
Verified by	Andy Chapman		
Approved by	Stephen Parry		

SOMERBY HOUSE FARM

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No: 142559
Project title	An archaeological watching brief during groundworks at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension on land at Somerby House, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire. Modern deposits were recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.	
Project type	Watching brief : Planning Ref: 12/00390/FUL	
Site status	Grade II Listed Building (189875)	
Previous work	Building recording of outbuildings undertaken as part of the current application Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Current Land use	Agricultural	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period		
Significant finds		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Leicestershire	
Site address	Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire	
Study area (sq metres)	300m	
OS Easting & Northing	SK 7787 1047	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council	
Project Design originator	David J Leigh, (Northamptonshire Archaeology)	
Director/Supervisor	David J Leigh	
Project Manager	David J Leigh and Stephen Parry (NA)	
Sponsor or funding body	Ross Thain & Co acting on behalf of Mr and Mrs S Scrivens	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	September 2012	
End date	October 2012	
ARCHIVES	Location Accession No: X.A12.2013	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper	Leicestershire Museums	Watching brief forms (3) Colour slides (8) black and white contact prints (8) Digital photographs (26)
Digital		Report text and figures
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	An archaeological watching brief during groundworks on land at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire	
Serial title & volume	Northamptonshire Archaeology report 13/25	
Author	David J Leigh	
Date	February 2013	

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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF DURING
GROUNDWORKS ON LAND AT SOMERBY HOUSE FARM
8 CHURCH LANE, SOMERBY
LEICESTERSHIRE
SEPTEMBER – OCTOBER 2012**

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension on land at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire. Modern deposits were recorded throughout the investigation area. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present

1 INTRODUCTION

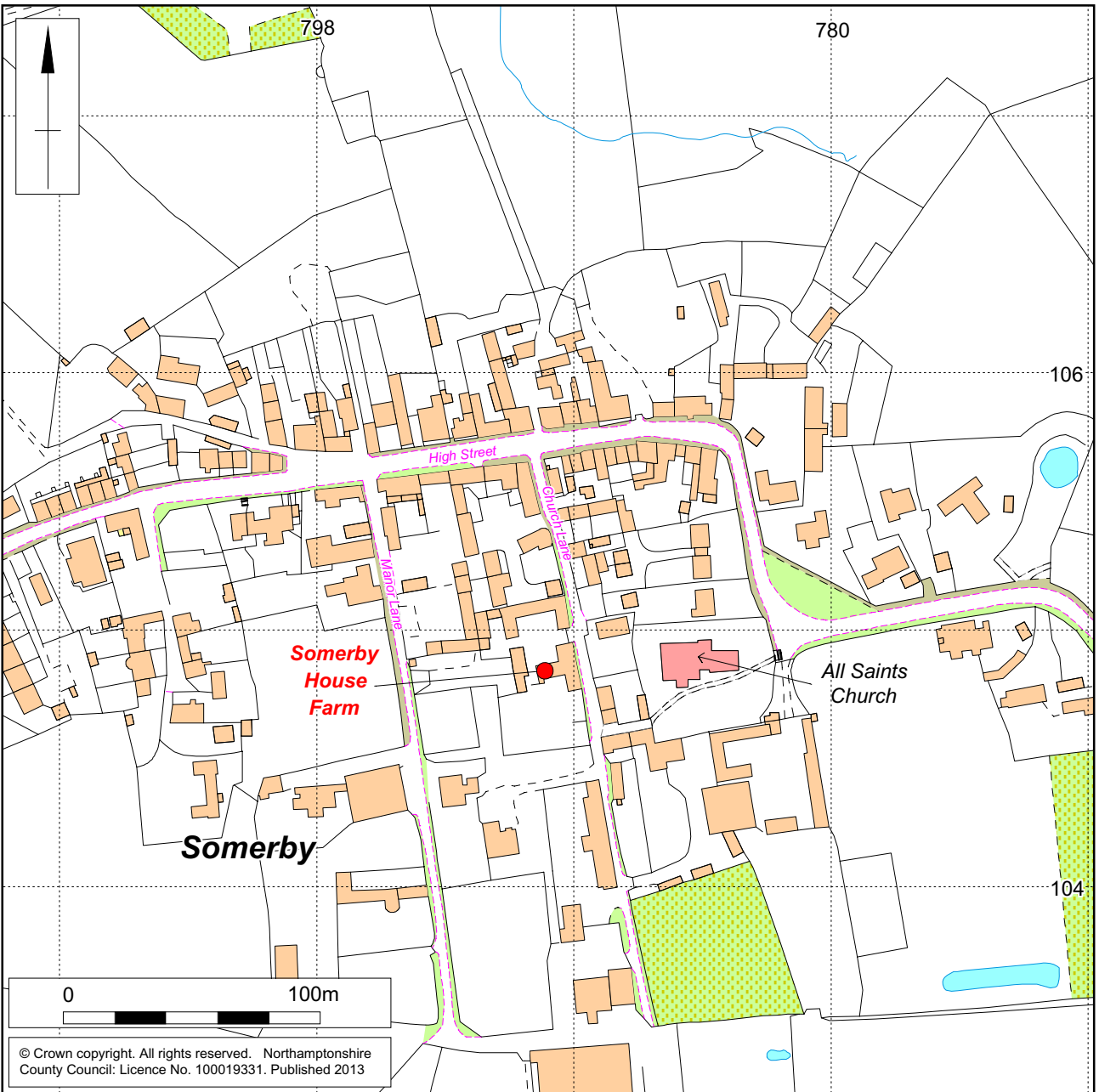
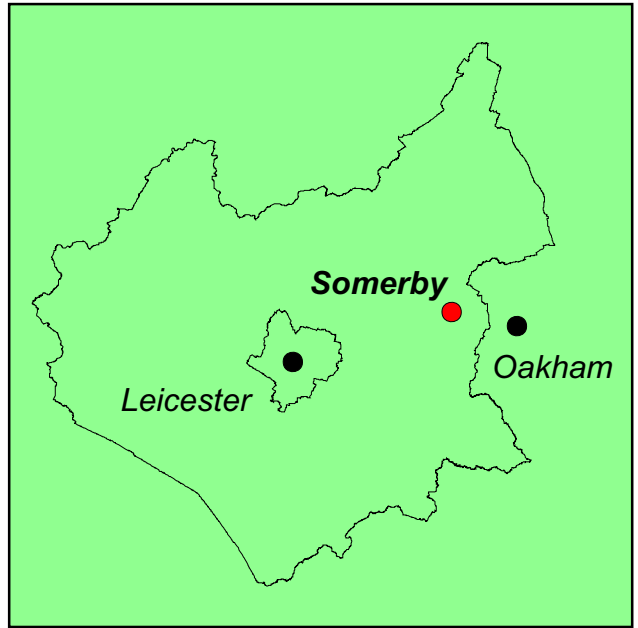
An archaeological watching brief was undertaken between September and October 2012 during groundworks for a new extension on land at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire, (NGR SK 7787 1047: Figs 1, 2 and 3). The work was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of Ross Thain & Co Ltd acting on behalf of their clients Mr and Mrs S Scrivens following a request for an archaeological watching brief by the Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council in a brief for archaeological attendance issued on the 9 March 2011 (LCC 2011). The work was carried out following the procedural document MoRPHE issued by English Heritage (EH 2006) and the appropriate national standards and guidelines, as recommended by the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA 2008).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

The investigation area is located on the west side of Somerby House Farm within the village of Somerby approximately 11km to the west of Oakham. It is bounded to the east by Church Lane and Manor Lane to the west and is located on relatively level ground at an approximate height of 180m aOD.

The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Lias Group mudstone, siltstone, limestone and sandstone overlain by glacial till (BGS Geotitles <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geotitles>).



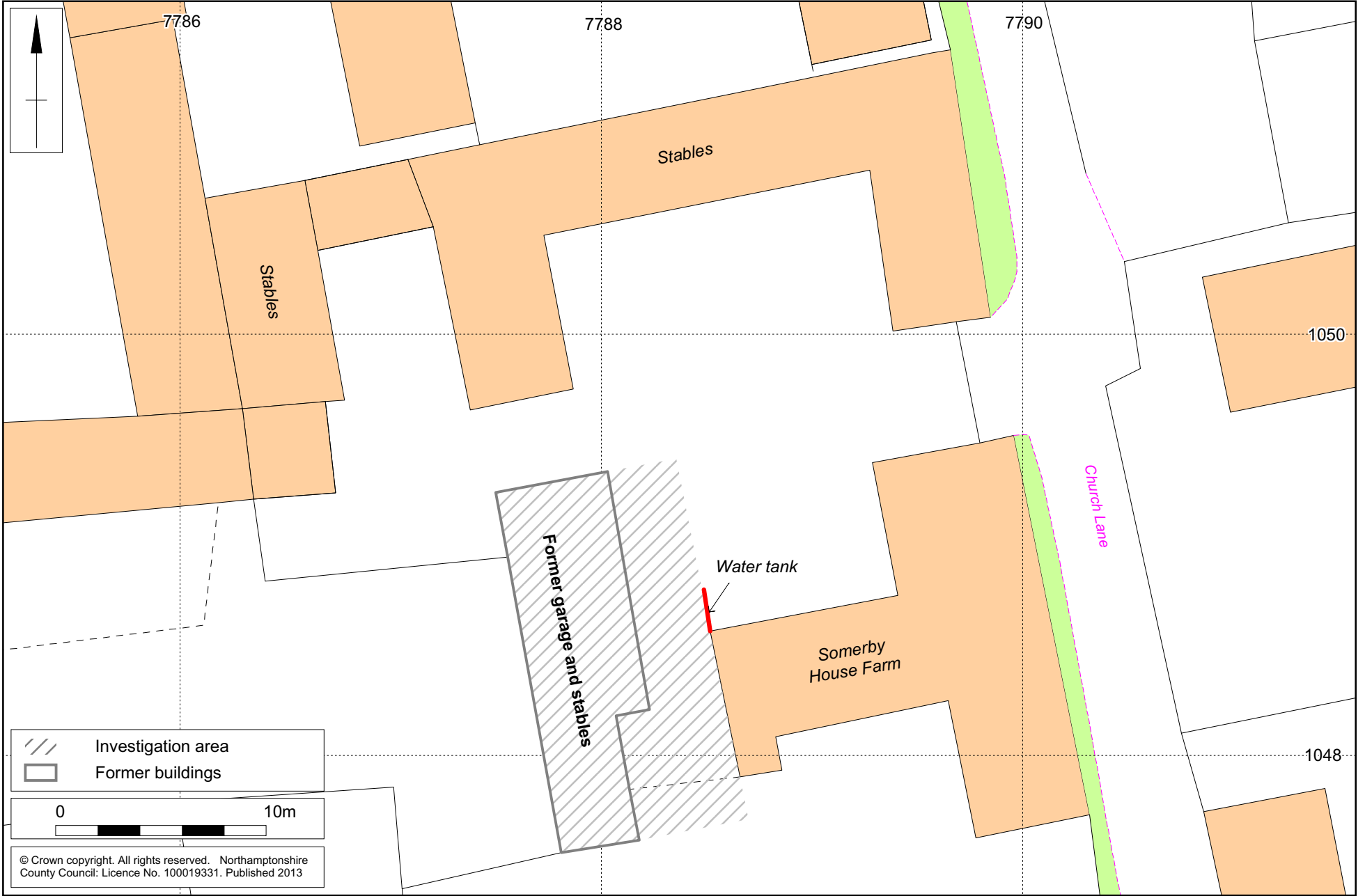
Scale 1:2500

Site Location Fig 1

Scale 1:250

Area of archaeological investigation

Fig 2



2.2 Historical background

The investigation area lies within the village of Somerby in an area of archaeological interest. The village is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086AD where it is recorded as *Sumerdeberie*.

Close by to the east is located the parish church of All Saints, a Grade I listed Building (English Heritage Ref: 189895), the earliest parts of which date from the 12th century, with later additions and subsequent restorations between 1714 and 1865. Somerby House a Grade II Listed Building (Ref: 189894) lies further to the east.

Somerby House Farm is a Grade II Listed Building (189875) dating from the early 18th century with later additions in the 19th and 20th centuries. The investigation area lies on the west side of the farmhouse, lying mostly within the footprint of a former stable/garage recently demolished.

Previous archaeological work recorded as having been carried out within the site has comprised a building recording survey of outbuildings undertaken as part of the current application (Bassir 2012).

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the programme of archaeological observation were to:

- ◆ Observe the groundworks undertaken for the new extension and to record all archaeological deposits uncovered;
- ◆ Determine the date, character, state of preservation and depth of any archaeological deposits observed and to retrieve all datable artefacts;
- ◆ Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

The fieldwork comprised visits to the site during the excavation of foundation trenches for the new extension. The groundworks were carried out using a 360° mini excavator fitted with a combination of toothed and toothless buckets. The investigation area lies within the footprint of a former stable/garage now demolished, lying adjacent to the main farmhouse.

A photographic record in both black and white negative and colour slide was kept, with supplementary photographs in digital format. The written record used Northamptonshire Archaeology pro-forma sheets. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008).



Somerby House Farm and the investigation area, looking east Fig 3

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

The foundation trenches measured 0.70m wide and were excavated to a maximum depth of 2.0m. (Figs 2 and 5).

The natural substratum was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.30m below present ground level and comprised orange-brown fragmented ironstone. This was overlain by modern overburden comprising crushed fragments of modern ceramic building material and concrete within a matrix of grey-brown sandy loam up to 0.30m thick.

In the eastern half of the foundation trench and adjacent to the western gable end of the house, a modern water tank, of red-brick construction bonded with a grey Portland cement was exposed (Figs 2 and 6) along with a number of modern service runs.

No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.



General view of the groundworks in progress, looking south-east Fig 4



The stratigraphic sequence Fig 5



The water-tank and modern services Fig 6

5 THE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	3
Colour slides	8
Black and white contacts and negatives	8
Digital photographs	26

The archive will be consolidated and prepared for deposition with Leicestershire museums under the Accession No: X.A12.2013.

6 CONCLUSIONS

A truncated natural substratum was recorded throughout the investigation area. Modern ceramic building material was present associated with the former stable/garage building which had stood upon the site in recent times.

The lack of any artefactual evidence would suggest that no significant archaeological deposits are present in close proximity of the investigation area.

The watching brief was carried out in favourable circumstances and the results are considered to be reliable.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Bassir, A, 2012 *Buildings Recording at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology report, **12/160**

BGS 2009 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html> British Geological Survey website

EH 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*, English Heritage procedural document

IfA 2008 *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute for Archaeologists

LCC 2012 *Generic Brief for archaeological Attendance*, Leicestershire County Council

NA, 2012 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Level 2 Building Recording and Archaeological Attendance at Somerby House Farm, 8 Church Lane, Somerby, Leicestershire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology



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