



# Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological trial trench evaluation at the  
White Horse Public House, Station Road  
Broughton Astley, Leicestershire  
January 2013



## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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**QUALITY CONTROL**

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Approved by	Andy Chapman		



**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		<b>Oasis No: 143165</b>	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at the White Horse Public House car park, Station Road, Broughton Astley, Leicestershire, January 2013		
Short description	In January 2013, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Marston's Estates Ltd, at the car park of the White Horse Public House, Station Road, Broughton Astley. The works identified the natural substrate overlain by alluvium, above which is a post-medieval buried soil, and a thick layer of modern material. No archaeological features were present within the excavated trenches.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Car park		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	Post-medieval		
Significant finds	None		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>			
County	Leicestershire		
Site address	The White Horse Public House, Station Road, Broughton Astley		
Easting Northing	SP 5266 9266		
Area (sq m/ha)	694 sq m		
Height aOD	80m above Ordnance Datum		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)		
Project brief originator	Teresa Hawtin, Leicestershire County Council		
Project Design originator	Jim Brown, Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)		
Director/Supervisor	Jason Clarke (NA)		
Project Manager	Jim Brown (NA)		
Sponsor or funding body	Marston's Estate Ltd		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>			
Start date	28/01//2013		
End date	28/01/2013		
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Contents</b>	
Physical	Leicestershire & Rutland Museum XA.7.2013	Pottery & clay-tobacco pipe stems	
Paper		Site records (1 archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF. Survey Data, Photographs	
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>			
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at the White Horse Public House car park, Station Road, Broughton Astley, Leicestershire, January 2013		
Serial title & volume	13/028		
Author(s)	Jason Clarke		
Page numbers	10		
Date	February 2013		



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Back cover: Trench 2 being reinstated





**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION AT  
THE WHITE HORSE CAR PARK, STATION ROAD  
BROUGHTON ASTLEY, LEICESTERSHIRE  
January 2013**

*Abstract*

*In January 2013, an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology, on behalf of Marston's Estates Ltd, at the car park of the White Horse Public House, Station Road, Broughton Astley. The works identified the natural substrate overlain by alluvium, above which is a post-medieval buried soil, and a thick layer of modern material. No archaeological features were present within the excavated trenches.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was commissioned by Urbanacity Ltd, on behalf of Marston's Estates Ltd, to undertake an archaeological trial trench evaluation of The White Horse Car Park, Station Road, Broughton Astley, Leicestershire (NGR: SP 5266 9266, Fig 1). The work was undertaken in advance of development, with the trenches positioned within the footprint of the proposed building. All work was undertaken to meet the requirements of Leicestershire County Council, as set out in their Generic Brief (LCC 2013). The Assistant Planning Archaeologist attended the site during the works.

The scope of works was outlined and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Brown 2012). Northamptonshire Archaeology is an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation and all works were conducted in accordance with the procedural documents of English Heritage (EH 2006; 2008) and the appropriate standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (IfA 2008a-b).

## **2 BACKGROUND**

### **2.1 Location and geology**

Broughton Astley is located 13km south-west of Leicester. The proposed development occupies a footprint of 694 sq m within the car park of The White Horse Public House. The site is bounded to the north by Station Road and to the west by Church Close, within the medieval and post-medieval settlement core of Broughton Astley village.

The solid geology map of Southern England the site is Triassic (Mercia) mudstone (BGS 2001). However, the drift geology of the area is mixed comprising Thrussington Tills, Wolston Clays and Wolston sand and gravels (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html>) and in the flood plain areas this is overlain by alluvium. The soils are of Salop association and comprise slowly permeable waterlogged reddish fine loamy soils over clay (LAT 1983).



Scale 1:5000

Site location Fig 1

## 2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The area which is now known as Broughton Astley consisted in 900 AD of three Danish or Saxon communities named Brocton, Suton and Thorpe. In 1086 the village housed 34 families. Astley derives from Thomas de Estle who held the manor in 1220. By 1800 a thriving hosiery industry had been built within the area.

On the western boundary of the site lies St Mary's Church, a Grade II\* listed building with a chancel dating to the late 13th century and the rest of the church dating the early 14th century. The church was restored in 1882 by W. Bassett Smith of London.

The most significant archaeology within the immediate area is the White Horse Inn (MLE1317). This was a public house dating to the 18th-19th centuries, which may have included the remains of a medieval manor house, fishponds and a dovecote (which may predate the Inn). This inn has now been developed into a modern pub called the White Horse and lies immediately east of the site.

The wider extent of the medieval village earthworks lie to the north of the site (MLE1306). These earthworks would relate to settlement in the immediate vicinity of the medieval manor, representing the dwellings of the labourers and peasants.

Other areas of possible archaeological interest in the wider area include:

- a medieval watermill (MLE1304);
- a post-medieval field boundaries and field systems (MLE1301);
- a post-medieval country house (MLE1319).

*Table 1: Historic Environment Record references*

HER no	Description
MLE1301	Earthworks of old field boundaries, probably post-medieval
MLE1302	Documentary evidence for post-medieval windmill
MLE1304	Possible site of medieval watermill
MLE1305	Watermill, post-medieval to modern
MLE1306	Former earthworks of medieval village, now levelled
MLE1317	White Horse Inn, likely to have been the site of a medieval manor
MLE1319	Documentary evidence for a late post -medieval hall
MLE1320	Post -medieval garden earthworks
MLE7343	Findspot, 17th-century coin found at White Horse Inn
MLE9437	Historic core of medieval village deducted from historic mapping
MLE9445	Historic core of medieval village (Primethorpe) deducted from historic mapping
MLE9447	Four sherd of medieval pottery recovered during watching brief at 65 Old Mill Road
MLE9448	Cobbled road surface, north of the church
MLE10982	St Mary's Church

### 3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Objectives

The principal aim of the archaeological evaluation was to quantify the quality and extent of the archaeological resource to inform further decisions regarding the archaeological mitigation strategy for the site, with due regard for regional research objectives (Cooper 2006; Knight *et al* 2012).

The aim of trial trench evaluation was to:

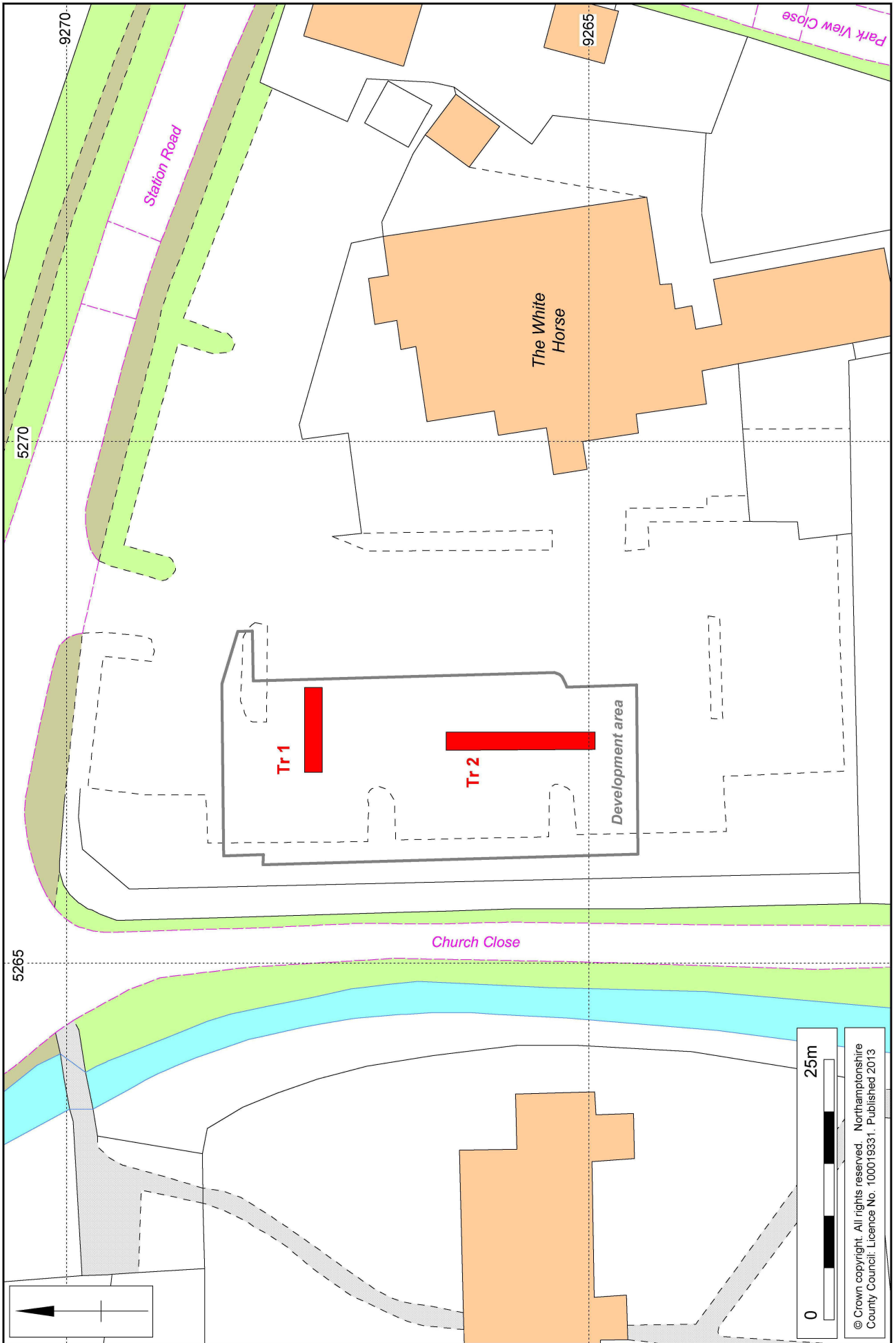
- establish whether any archaeological deposit existed in the area with particular regard to any which merit preservation *in situ*;
- identify the date, form and function of any archaeological deposit, together with its extent, depth and quality of preservation;
- evaluate the likely impact of past land use and possible presence of masking ridge and furrow features;
- establish the potential for the survival of environmental evidence;
- provide sufficient information to construct an archaeological mitigation strategy.

#### 3.2 Methodology

Two trial trenches were excavated in accordance with a trench plan prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology and approved by Leicestershire County Council (Fig 2).

The proposed trenches measured 14m long by 1.80m wide; although Trench 1 was shortened to 8m long due to the presence of previously unknown underground services. The total length excavated was 22m. Trenches were positioned using a Leica system 1200 GPS.

A 3CX wheeled mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.8m-wide ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. Deposits were examined by hand excavation to determine their nature. Recording followed standard NA procedures as described in the *Fieldwork Manual* (NA 2011). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Contexts were cross-referenced to scale plans, section drawings and photographs. Photography was with 35mm black and white film and colour slides, supplemented with digital images. Sections were drawn at scale 1:10 or 1:20, as appropriate and related to Ordnance Survey datum. Spoil heaps and features were scanned with a metal detector to maximise the recovery of metal objects.



Scale 1:500 (A4)

The excavated trenches Fig 2



Trench 1, looking east Fig 3



Section showing deposits in the eastern end of Trench 1 Fig 4



Western end of Trench 1, deepened to locate the top of the solid geology, encountered at 1.50m below the modern ground surface Fig 5



Trench 2, looking north Fig 6



Section showing deposits within the southern end of Trench 2 Fig 7



#### **4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE**

The underlying geology of Triassic (Mercia) mudstones, was encountered in the western end of Trench 1 only, it was 1.50m below the modern ground surface (Fig 5). This occurred as mid orange-brownish clay with occasional angular to sub-angular pebbles.

The natural substrate was overlaid by a layer of mid-grey clayey alluvium that was 0.50m thick. Above this was overlaid a dark grey-black sandy clay buried soil, 0.20m thick (Figs 3-4). Post-medieval pottery was recovered from the alluvium and buried soil layers.

The layers above comprised modern made ground, compacted stone and tarmac which are clearly depicted by the photographs (Figs 3-7). The trench locations are shown in Figure 2 and an inventory of contexts is provided as an Appendix.

#### **5 THE POTTERY AND OTHER FINDS** by Tora Hylton

Three post-medieval sherds weighing 158g were recovered from deposits in Trenches 1 and 2. The assemblage comprises a base sherd from a large straight-sided storage jar in English Stoneware from soil layer 103, and two undiagnostic bodysherds in black glazed red earthenware and white earthenware from alluvial layer 204. The fabrics suggest a late 18th-19th century date for the assemblage.

Two clay tobacco-pipe stems were recovered from soil layer 203. The moderately abraded fragments are up to 80mm long and they have relatively small bores (5/64th and 6/64th), suggesting a late 18th-19th century date.

#### **6 DISCUSSION**

The trial trenches identified post-medieval alluvium and a buried soil layer above which lay a thick deposit of modern material, used in the construction of the White Horse Public House car park. It would seem that any earlier remains would be sealed directly below the alluvium and that there are no medieval soil layers present.

The deposits were similar within both trenches, suggesting they are consistent across the proposed building footprint. The trenches were excavated to a depth of 1.20m, which was deemed the maximum safe depth. The western end of Trench 1 was deepened to locate the solid geology and the top of the natural substrate was located below the alluvium at 1.50m depth below the present ground level. No archaeological features were present within the trenches.

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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LAT 1983 *Soils of Eastern England*, **4**, Scale 1:250 000, Lawes Agricultural Trust

LCC 2013 *Generic brief for archaeological evaluation by trial trenching*, Leicestershire County Council

NA 2011 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

## **Websites**

BGS 2013 <http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/home.html> British Geological Survey website

**APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX**

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>1</b>	<b>8m x 1.80m E-W</b>	<b>SP 5267 9267</b>	<b>80.70m aOD</b>	<b>79.15m aOD</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
101	Tarmac	Car park surface	0.10m thick	
102	Make-up layer	Compacted stone	0.75m thick	
103	Remnant soil	Dark grey-black sandy silt	0.20m thick	Post-Medieval pottery
104	Alluvium	Mid grey-brown alluvium	0.50m thick	
105	Natural	Mid orange-brown sandy clay		

<b>Trench No</b>	<b>Length, width &amp; alignment</b>	<b>NGR</b>	<b>Surface height</b>	<b>Depth &amp; height of natural</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>14m x 1.80m N-S</b>	<b>SP 5267 9264</b>	<b>80.62m aOD</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Context</b>	<b>Context type Feature &amp; type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Artefacts/ Samples</b>
201	Tarmac	Car park surface	0.10m thick	
202	Make-up layer	Compacted stone	0.70m thick	
203	Remnant soil	Dark grey-black sandy silt	0.20m thick	Clay pipe stem
204	Alluvium	Mid grey-brown alluvium	Base of deposit not reached	Post-Medieval pottery



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