

Northamptonshire Archaeology

**An Archaeological Watching Brief
at The Lake Soil Disposal Site, Brockhall Park
Northamptonshire**



September 2005

Report 05/123

Northamptonshire Archaeology

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project title	An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Lake Soil Disposal Site, Brockhall Park, Northamptonshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken following topsoil removal for a soil storage bund in connection with the dredging of an infilled part of the lake at Brockhall Park, Northamptonshire. No archaeological features were observed and no finds recovered.	
Project type (eg desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Watching Brief	
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)		
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	No	
Monument type and period	None	
Significant finds (artefact type and period)	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address (including postcode)	Brockhall Park, Brockhall	
Easting (use numbered 100km grid square no.)	4628	
Northing	2625	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Historic Environment Team Leader	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	Andy Mudd	
Project Manager	Andy Mudd	
Sponsor or funding body	Mr Peter Lee	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	August 2005	
End date	August 2005	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		Pro forma record sheets Colour slides Monochrome negatives
Digital		Report; text and figures

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Plate 4: Ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks, Brockhall Park

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT THE LAKE SOIL DISPOSAL SITE, BROCKHALL PARK, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology following the removal of topsoil to create a soil storage bund in connection with dredging part of the infilled lake at Brockhall Park, Northamptonshire. The subsoil surface was found to be very clean and no features or finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on 23rd August 2005 following the removal of topsoil to create a soil disposal bund in connection with the dredging of an infilled part of the lake at Brockhall Park, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 628625: Fig 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Mr Peter Lee of The Grange, Brockhall in fulfilment of planning conditions.

The work was undertaken in accordance with a Project Design prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology and approved by Myk Flitcroft, Historic Environment Team Leader, Northamptonshire County Council. The purpose of the investigation was to monitor the groundworks on the site and record any archaeological remains disturbed or exposed.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and Topography

The areas reserved for soil disposal lay on the south-western side of the southern end of the lake, between the currently infilled part of the lake and the M1 motorway (Fig 1). The lake appears to occupy the natural channel of a minor stream which lies in the upper reaches of the Nene valley. Brockhall is a shrunken medieval settlement lying up hill from the lake about 400 m to the north-east. There are extensive remains of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation within the park which is mainly used to pasture sheep (Plate 4). The sterile subsoil on the site appeared to be Boulder Clay.

2.2 Historical Background

The Royal Commission's survey of the parish (RCHM 1981, 31-3) does not identify any historical or archaeological features in the immediate area, although Watling Street forms the western boundary of the parish, another Roman road crosses the north-eastern part of the parish,

and there are antiquarian records of Roman finds in the area. The northern part of the village or hamlet has earthworks probably relating to the medieval settlement. The present landscaped park, scattered with parkland timber, dates from c. 1800. The lake was created around the same time from two earlier ponds which had developed from the mill leat and mill pond (EH 2001). The location of the former mill is not known (Myk Flitcroft, pers. comm.). The lake is depicted to its full extent on modern mapping, and is to be restored as such, but the southern 350 m had been filled and levelled prior to the current remedial works.

3 AIMS AND METHODS

The aim of the Watching Brief was to observe the surface of the ground stripped of topsoil on the site of the proposed soil bund, to record all archaeological deposits uncovered, and to recover associated archaeological materials.

A single site inspection was made. The entire area for soil disposal, amounting to about 4000 sq m, had been stripped of topsoil using a mechanical excavator with a toothless bucket. It was also possible to observe the southern area of the pond, which had also been largely stripped of topsoil in preparation for re-digging.

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

Turf and topsoil, which was seen to be about 200 mm thick, had been removed from two areas. The southern area measured 15-30 m wide and 100 m long (Plates 1 & 2) and the northern area 40 m wide and 45 m long (Plate 3). The surface of the subsoil was a yellow-brown silt-clay with varying quantities of pebbles, and had been left very clean. No archaeological features or finds were noted, although it is probable that the stripping had not been deep enough to uncover buried archaeological remains if they existed only as cut features. It seems highly unlikely, however, that any Roman or later buildings had ever been located in this area.

The former pond showed a mixed dark clay where topsoil had been removed, and this contained abundant modern concrete and building rubble in the southern part.

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

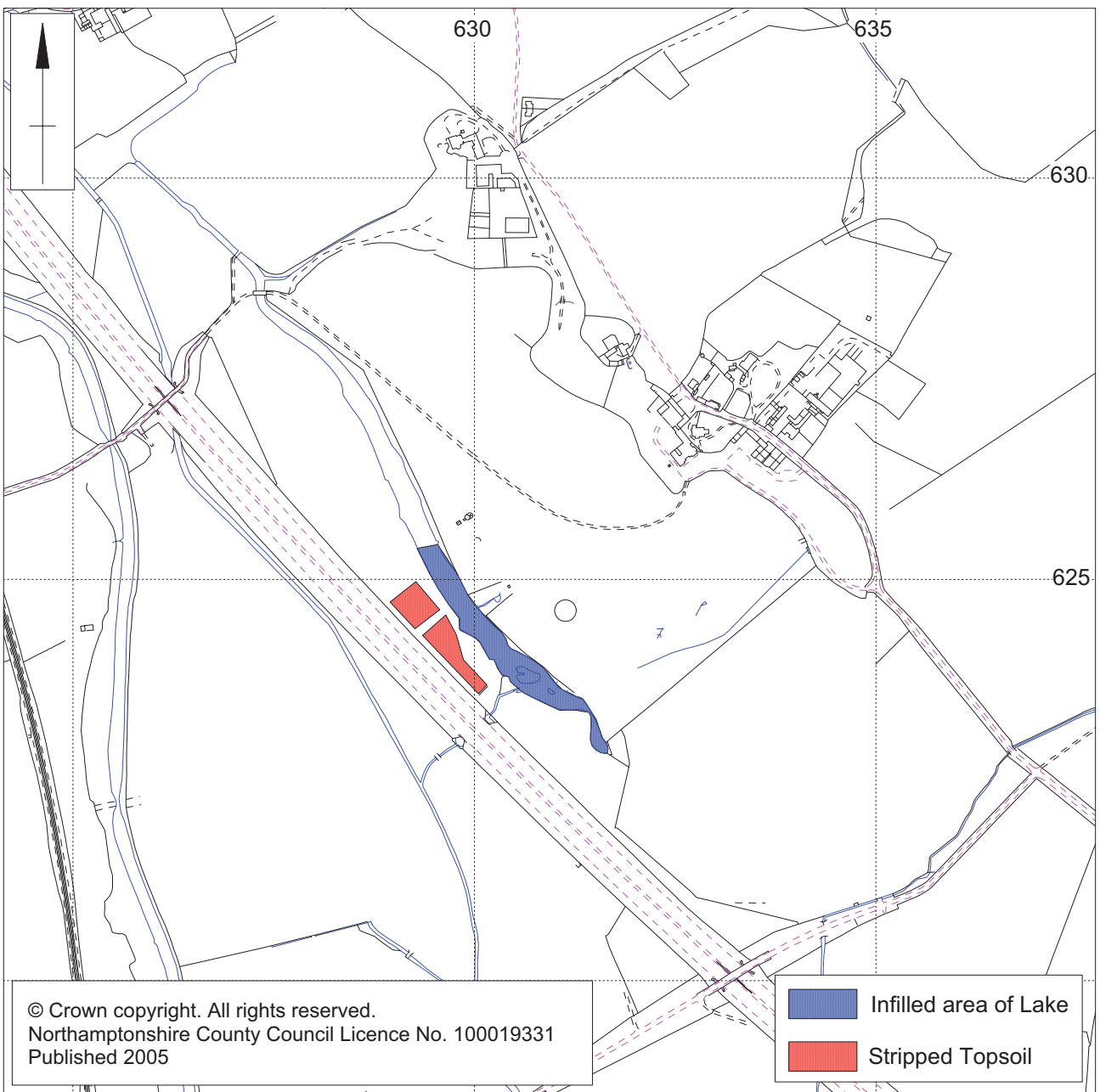
The site archive comprises:

RECORD	NUMBER
Record forms	3
Base map	1
Colour slides	21
Black and white contacts and negatives	13

REFERENCES

EH 2001 *Register of Parks and Gardens of special historic interest in England*, English Heritage

RCHM 1981 *An Inventory of Archaeological Sites in North-West Northamptonshire*, Royal Commission on Historical Monuments England, HMSO: London



Scale = 1:8000

Fig. 1



Plate 1: Southern soil disposal area, looking NW



Plate 2: Southern soil disposal area, looking SE



Plate 3: Northern soil disposal area, looking NW



Plate 4: Ridge and furrow cultivation earthworks, Brockhall Park