



**Northamptonshire
County Council**

Northamptonshire Archaeology

**An archaeological watching brief on land
to the rear of Parson Latham's Hospital,
Oundle, Northamptonshire
January - April 2005**



David Leigh
June 2005
Report 05/075
Planning Application
No:EN/04/00256/FUL

Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE

w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk

t. 01604 700493/4

f. 01604 702822

e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk



STAFF

Project Manager Iain Soden BA Hons
Text David J. Leigh BA Hons
Fieldwork David J. Leigh
Illustrations Andy Chapman BSc MIFA

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Iain Soden		
Verified by	Andy Mudd		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	An archaeological watching brief at Parson Latham's Hospital, Oundle, Northamptonshire	
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks connected with the construction of new wheelchair accessible almshouses. An undisturbed stratigraphy was revealed across all the development area. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.	
Project type (eg DBA, evaluation etc)	Watching Brief: Planning Application No:EN/04/00256/FUL	
Site status (none, NT, SAM etc)	None	
Previous work (SMR numbers etc)	Evaluation	
Current Land use	Garden at the rear of Parson Latham's Hospital	
Future work (yes, no, unknown)	No	
Monument type/ period		
Significant finds (artefact type and period)		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address (including postcode)	Parson Latham's Hospital, North Street, Oundle, Northamptonshire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)		
OS Easting & Northing (use grid sq. numbers)	0432 8833	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The Senior Planning Archaeologist NCCHE	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J.Leigh	
Project Manager	Iain Soden	
Sponsor or funding body	Parson Latham's Hospital, Oundle	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	January 2005	
End date	April 2005	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		Watching brief forms (4) Colour slides (15) black and white contact prints (5) Digital photographs (2)
Digital		Report text and figures

Contents

- 1 INTRODUCTION
 - 2 BACKGROUND
 - 3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY
 - 4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE
 - 5 THE SITE ARCHIVE
 - 6 CONCLUSIONS
- BIBLIOGRAPHY

Figures

Fig 1: Site location

Plates

Plate 1: The development area during the excavation of foundations

Plate 2: View of the development area after the completion of groundworks and the start of the construction of the new building

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND TO THE REAR
OF PARSON LATHAM'S HOSPITAL, OUNDLE, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JANUARY - APRIL 2005**

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology during groundworks connected with the construction of new wheelchair accessible almshouses on land to the rear of Parson Latham's Hospital, Oundle, Northamptonshire. An undisturbed stratigraphy was noted across all of the development area. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology between January and April 2005 during groundworks associated with the construction of new wheelchair accessible almshouses (Planning application No: EN/04/00256) on land to the rear of Parson Latham's Hospital, Oundle, Northamptonshire (NGR TL 0432 8832: Fig 1). The work was carried out on behalf of CMPS architects acting for Parson Latham's Hospital in order to fulfil the requirements of a brief for an archaeological watching brief issued by The Historic Environment Team Northamptonshire County Council on the 23rd July 2004.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and Topography

The development area covers 0.1ha and is located to the rear of Parson Latham's Hospital and lies on level ground at a height of c28.0m aOD. The British Geological Survey has mapped the underlying geology as comprising Upper Estuarine Series Clays, with First River Terrace gravels exposed at its eastern limits.

2.2 Historical Background

The development area is located within the historic core of Oundle. Documentary evidence suggests that Oundle may have been an important Saxon centre, perhaps even a provincial capital with a monastery and a major late Saxon manor (Foard 1985, Johnston 1994; SMR Supplementary note 0488035). The presence of a Roman small town some 500m to the north-east at Ashton on the other side of the River Nene is of uncertain significance to the foundation of the Saxon settlement and only a light scatter of Roman artefacts has been found in Oundle.

Adjacent to the application area, immediately to the west of Parson Latham's Hospital, is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (Northamptonshire SAM 200) which includes a substantial V-shaped ditch of early-middle Saxon date together with a series of smaller features containing contemporary and later pottery. The area has been extensively disturbed by post-medieval quarrying and terracing (Johnston 1994, 99-117 and Foard n.d).

Previous archaeological work within the development area has comprised of a desk-based assessment and trial excavation carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology as part of the present application (Carlyle and Masters 2002). The results indicated that the development area has been in use during historical times as a garden and backyard.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- ◆ Observe the groundworks connected with the new development 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.

The fieldwork comprised four visits to the site during the removal of topsoil to formation level and the excavation of foundation trenches for the new development (Plate 1). The groundworks were carried out using a JCB-type excavator fitted with a combination of both toothed and toothless buckets. A photographic record in both black and white negative and colour slide was kept and the written record used Northamptonshire Archaeology pro-forma sheets. The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the standards and guidelines for an archaeological watching brief (IFA 1999).

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

There was a consistent stratigraphy across all of the development area. The natural substrata comprised orange/yellow sandy clay containing pockets of alluvial calcareous gravel. This was overlain by mid brown sandy silt loam up to 0.65m thick, containing occasional fragments of modern ceramic building material. This was sealed by grey/brown topsoil/turf, up to 0.37m thick, containing occasional small fragments of modern ceramic building material and occasional small fragments of corroded iron.

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The site archive comprises:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	4
Colour slides	15
Black and white contacts and negatives	5
Digital photographs	2

6 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered. The results of the watching brief confirm the recordings obtained from the previous evaluation that the area has functioned as a garden and backyard area during historical times. The watching brief was carried out in favourable conditions and the results are considered to be reliable.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Carlyle & Masters 2002 *Archaeological Evaluation of Parson Latham's Hospital, Oundle, Northamptonshire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology Report

Dix B and Masters P 1993 *An archaeological watching brief at Gardenways, Black Pot Lane, Oundle, Northants*, Northamptonshire Archaeology Report

Foard G (nd) *Oundle as an administrative and ecclesiastical centre in the Saxon and Medieval period*, unpublished manuscript held in Northants SMR

Holmes M and Hylton T 1997 *New Technology Block, Oundle School, Oundle, Northamptonshire* unpublished Northamptonshire Archaeology Report

IFA 1999 *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*, Institute of Field Archaeologists

Johnston A G 1994 *Excavations in Oundle, Northants: Work carried out at Stoke Doyle Road 1979, Black Pot Lane 1985 and St Peter's Church 1991*, Northamptonshire Archaeology 25

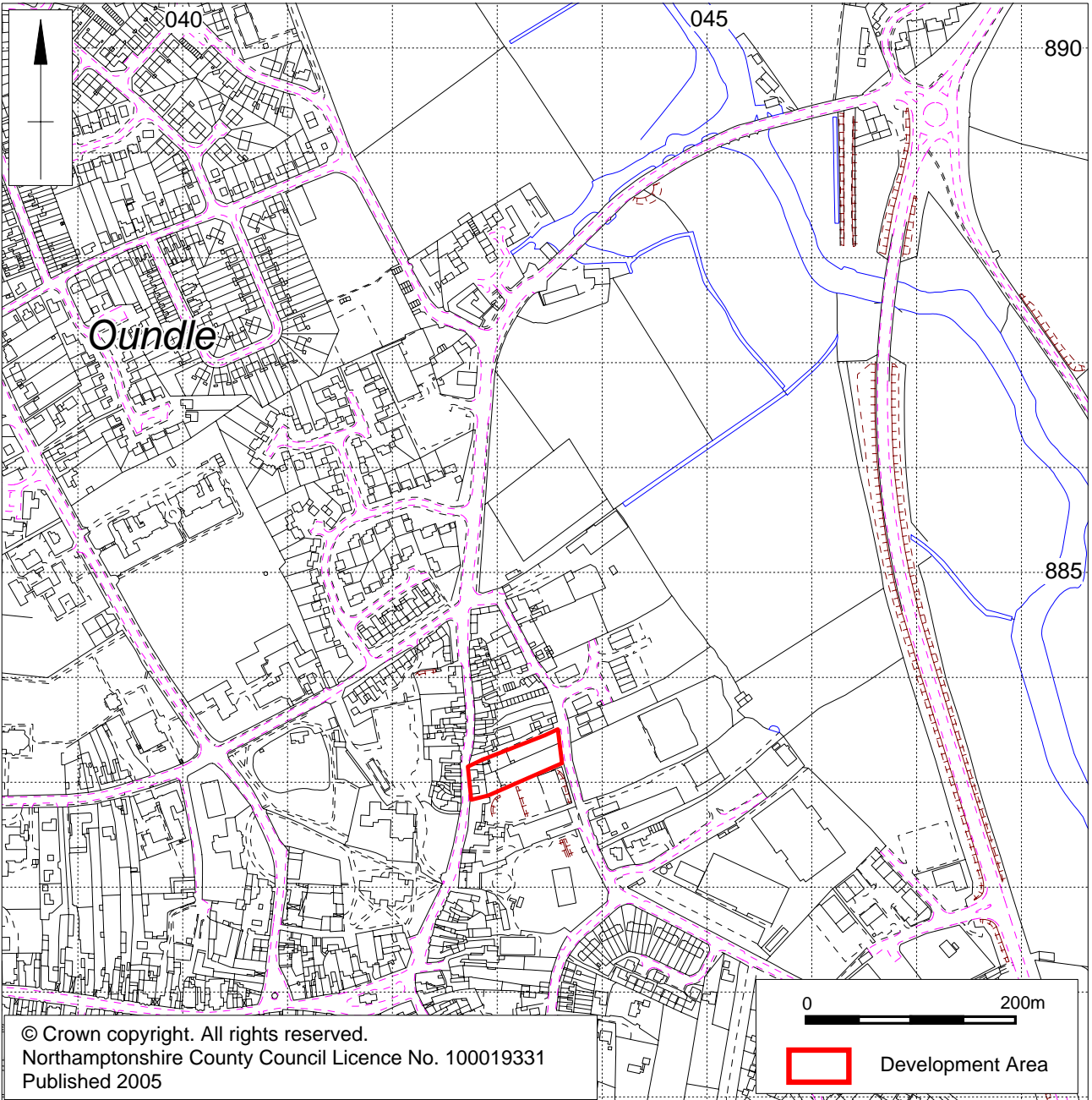
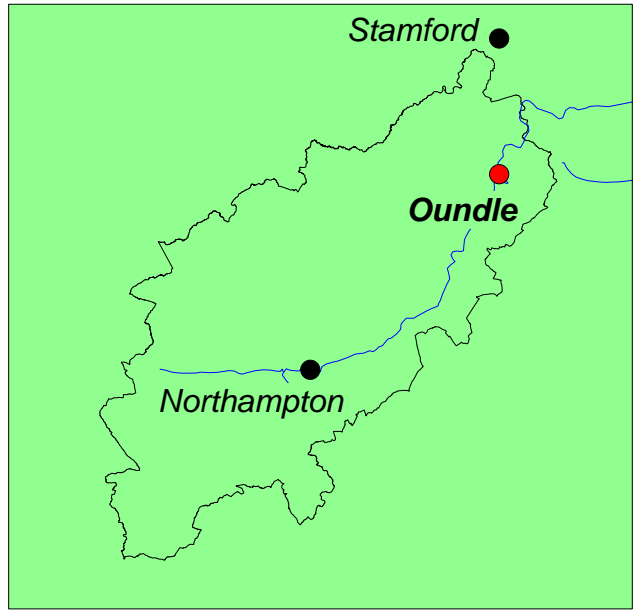
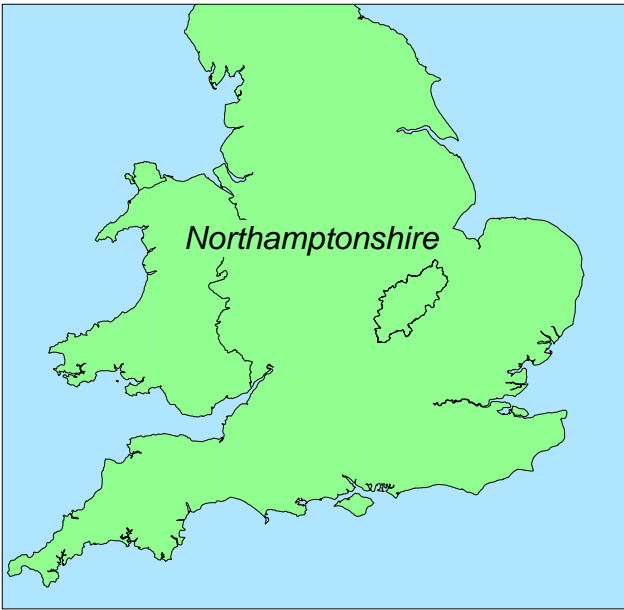


Fig. 1



Plate 1



Plate 2