



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording at
22 Brackley Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire
March 2013



Northamptonshire Archaeology

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. 155050	
Project title	Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording at 22, Brackley Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire		
Short description	An archaeological investigation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology at 22 Brackley Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire. No archaeological features or finds were present.		
Project type	Archaeological watching brief		
Site Status	-		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Garden		
Future work	None		
Monument type and period			
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Northamptonshire		
Site address	22 Brackley Road, Towcester		
Post code			
OS co-ordinates	SP 69109 487706		
Area (sq m/ha)	49sqm		
Height aOD	93m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)		
Project brief originator	Northamptonshire County Council Assistant Archaeological Advisor		
Project Design originator	NA		
Director/Supervisor	Christopher Jones (NA)		
Project Managers	Anthony Maull (NA)		
Sponsor or funding body	Mr P Miskelly		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	18-03-2013		
End date	18-03-2013		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	NA store		
Paper		Site records (1 small archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)		
Title	Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording at 22, Brackley Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire		
Serial title & volume	13/60		
Author(s)	Christopher Jones		
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION, INVESTIGATION
AND RECORDING AT 22 BRACKLEY ROAD, TOWCESTER,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

Abstract

An archaeological investigation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology at 22 Brackley Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire. No archaeological features or finds were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned by Mr P Miskelly to carry out an archaeological investigation through continuous observation of groundworks for the construction of a two storey extension at 22 Brackley Road, Towcester, Northamptonshire in March 2013 (NGR SP 69109 487706; Fig 1).

The investigation was carried out to fulfil the objectives of a request for archaeological investigation as required by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor, Northamptonshire County Council (NCC 2012) and the written scheme of investigation (NA 2013).

The works were undertaken in accordance with *the National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

Towcester lies in the district of South Northamptonshire approximately 17km south-west of Northampton. The development area lies at an approximate height of 93m aOD and fronts onto Brackley Road. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Whitley Formation Mudstone.

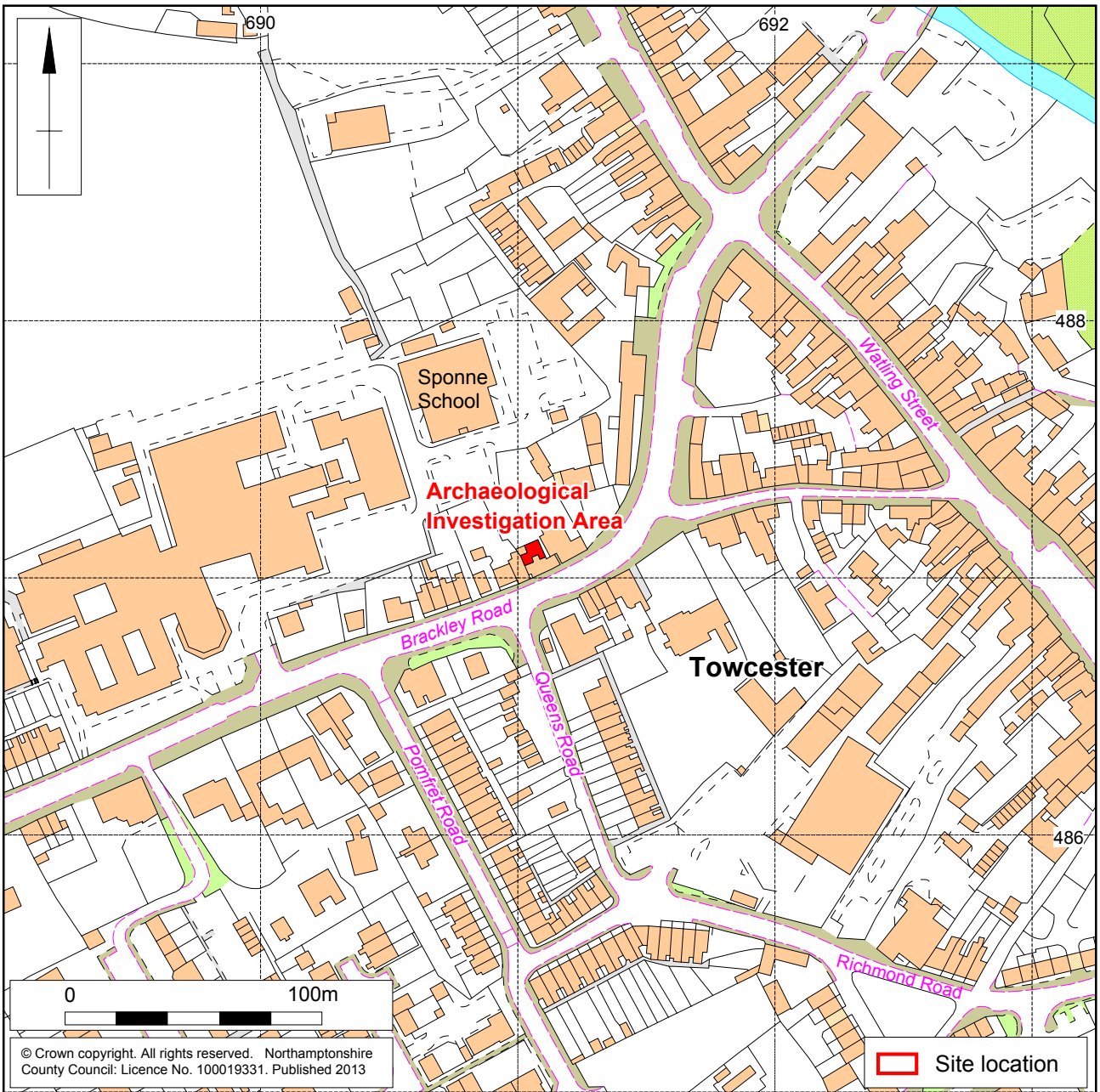
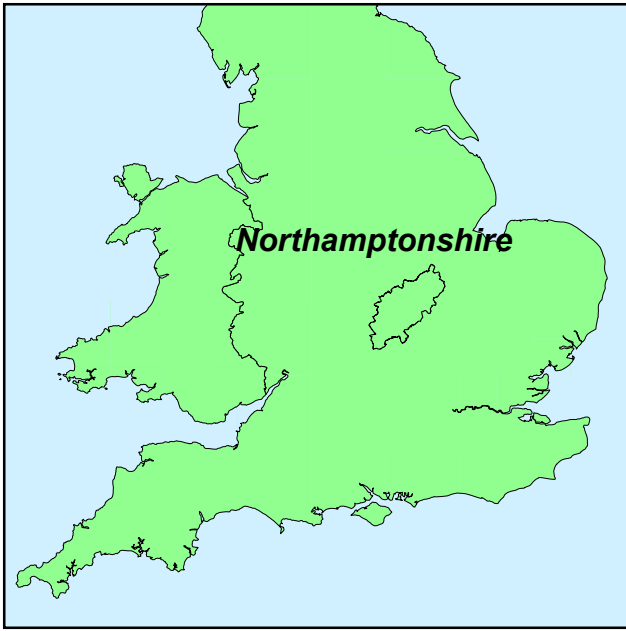
2.2 Historical background

The site lies within an area of archaeological interest and within the boundaries of the Roman and medieval settlement of Towcester.

The line of the Roman wall and defensive ditch has been located immediately to the north, within the grounds of Sponne School (Brown and Alexander 1982). To the south it has been shown that at least the eastern end of Richmond Road coincides within the line of the defensive ditch (Atkins and Woodfield 1999, Upson-Smith 2004).

The projected line between these locations suggests that the ditch may lie beneath Queens Road, with the wall and rampart to the east, as described by Woodfield (1992). Recent trial trenching to the east of Queen's Road failed to find any evidence for the defences, but the site was heavily disturbed by later activity (Markus 2013). There is, therefore, little doubt that the present site within the line of the defences, but probably inside the line of the ditch.

The town is recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086AD where it is referred to as *Toucestre*. The pattern of medieval settlement in the town is defined by a series of burgage plots extending back from Watling Street, evidence suggests that the site lies within the area of medieval tenements.



Scale 1:2500

Site location Fig 1

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the work was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The aims of the investigation were to:

- Identify, investigate and record all archaeological deposits, exposed during the groundwork's for the new extension;
- recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- Determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits.

The character, composition and general depositional sequence of stratification was recorded on Northamptonshire Archaeology watching brief sheets. All recording followed the guidelines detailed in the Northamptonshire Archaeology *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual* (2011). A photographic record was maintained, consisting of digital images. All records were compiled during fieldwork into a comprehensive site archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (1991).

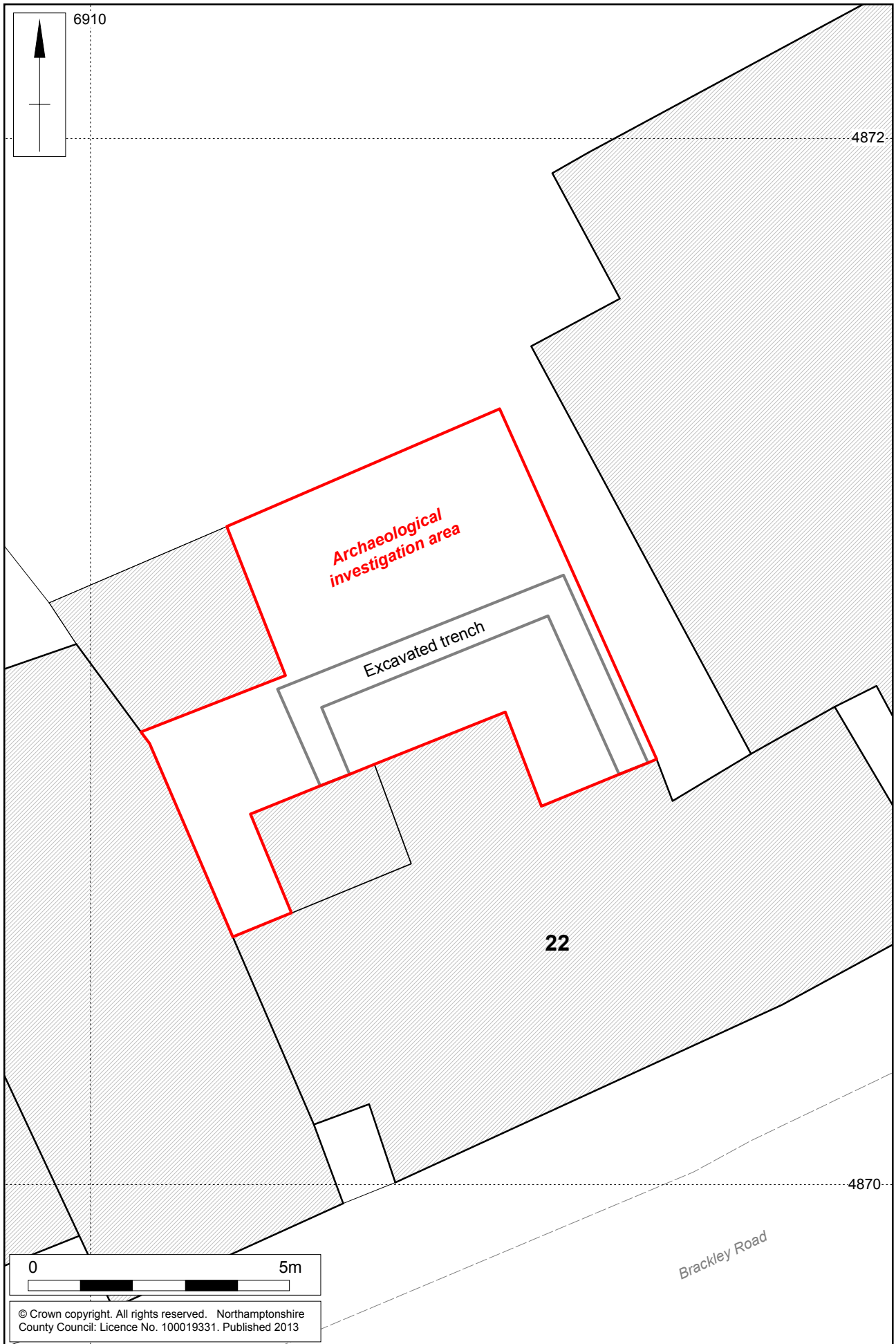
A toothless grading bucket was used for all the removal of topsoil, subsoil and the natural substratum. The conditions were good and observation of the excavated groundwork's was possible throughout the machine excavation (Fig 2). Work was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief* (IfA 2008).

The foundation trench comprised one trench 6m long aligned north-east to south-west with two shorter arms 2m long and 4m long, aligned north-west to south-east. The trenches were 0.60m wide by 1m deep (Fig 3).



Location of trench, looking north-east

Fig 2



Scale 1:100

Archaeological investigation area Fig 3

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

Generally, the natural substrate was orange clay, 0.55m below the surface and present across the site. Overlying this was pale brown sandy clay subsoil, 0.30m thick. A dark brown garden soil 0.15m thick, mixed with gravel and modern brick was present across the whole site (Fig 4).



Trench section, looking north-west Fig 4

The machining began at the east end of the trench, where undisturbed natural was found, but to the west disturbed made-up ground was encountered. The disturbed ground appeared to be a modern backfilled pond or soak away, which caused water to pour into the trench (Fig 5).



Trench showing back-fill, looking south-west Fig 5

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive that will be prepared and consolidated for deposition. However, until such time a suitable depository has been appointed the project archive will be held with Northamptonshire Archaeology.

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	1
Context sheets	1
Digital photographs	12

6 DISCUSSION

Archaeological observation, investigation and recording on the machine excavation of the extension foundations revealed no archaeological features or finds.

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