

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief
on land at The Warrens, Bury End,
Stagsden, Bedfordshire
September 2006
Accession No: BEDFM: 2007.114



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Report 07/15

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	An archaeological watching brief on land at The Warren, Stagsden, Bury End, Bedfordshire	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during ground-works connected with the construction of a new stable block on land at The Warren, Stagsden, Bury End, Bedfordshire. The development area lies within the site of Bury End House, which was once encompassed by a moat which is only partially preserved. A truncated natural substratum was revealed throughout the ground-works. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Agricultural hard-standing	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period		
Significant finds		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Bedfordshire	
Site address	The Warrens, Bury End, Stagsden, Bedfordshire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)		
OS Easting & Northing	4981 2506	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The County Archaeological Officer, Bedfordshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J. Leigh	
Project Manager	Steve Parry	
Sponsor or funding body	Mr A. Laing	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	September 2006	
End date	September 2006	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper	Bedford Museum Accession No: BEDFM: 2007.114	Watching brief forms (1) Colour slides (17) black and white contact prints (20)
Digital	Bedford Museum	Report text and figures

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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT
THE WARRENS, BURY END, STAGSDEN
BEDFORDSHIRE
SEPTEMBER 2006**

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in September 2006 during ground-works connected with the construction of a new stable block on land at The Warrens, Bury End, Stagsden, Bedfordshire. The development area lies within the site of Bury End House which was once encompassed by a moat, which is only partially preserved. A truncated natural substratum was revealed throughout the ground-works. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in September 2006 during ground-works associated with the construction of a new stable block on land at The Warrens, Bury End, Stagsden, Bedfordshire (NGR SP 9833 5073: Fig 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Mr A Laing in order to fulfil the requirements of a brief for an archaeological watching brief issued by The County Archaeological Officer, Bedfordshire County Council on the 4th July 2006. The work was undertaken in accordance with an approved specification (Leigh 2006).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and Topography

The development area lies approximately 1km north of the village of Stagsden, and is located on high ground, at a height of c80m aOD, encompassing an area approximately 115 square metres. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey as Calcareous Gley over Boulder Clay.

2.2 Historical Background

The development area is located within an area of archaeological interest. The Bedfordshire Sites and Monuments Record list a number of sites of archaeological interest around the area of development. Approximately ½km north-west of the site lies a moated site within Cobblers Field, (Historic Environment Record No: 3411). This has been partially ploughed out, however, the surviving ditch measures up to 2m deep. To the south of the development area,

approximately ½km, is an area of ancient woodland known as How Wood (HER No: 7267), this small patch of woodland is thought to originally have been much larger.

The development area itself is located within the site of Bury End (HER No: 3553), which was originally the site of Bury End House, dating from around the 17th century. A moat originally encompassed the site, however, only traces of this are preserved around Burdelys Manor (HER No: 4998) to the north-west of the development area.

Up to the present development, the area of the new stable block has been partially covered by hard-standing associated with agricultural use. No previous archaeological work has been carried out within the area of development.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- ◆ Observe the ground-works connected with the construction of the new stable block, 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 a single visit to the site during the excavation of the foundation trenches (Fig 2). Three foundation trenches were excavated using a JCB-type mechanical excavator. These were excavated only in the area where the stable block extended beyond the present hard-standing, the remainder utilising the hard-standing as a foundation base. A photographic record in both black and white negative and colour slide was kept. 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

The foundation trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.60m with a maximum width of 0.70m. A consistent stratigraphy was seen in all three trenches. This comprised, red/brown natural clay, sealed by grey/brown silt loam, up to 0.54m thick. This contained numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material, along with fragments of modern concrete and plastic drainage components.

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The site archive comprises:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	1
Colour slides	17
Black and white contacts and negatives	20

6 CONCLUSIONS

The results of the watching brief clearly show that modern truncation of the natural substratum has taken place in the area of the three foundation trenches. This is most likely to have occurred during the construction or extension of the hard-standing, as the material noted in the foundation trenches is of a similar nature to that used for the construction of the hard-standing.

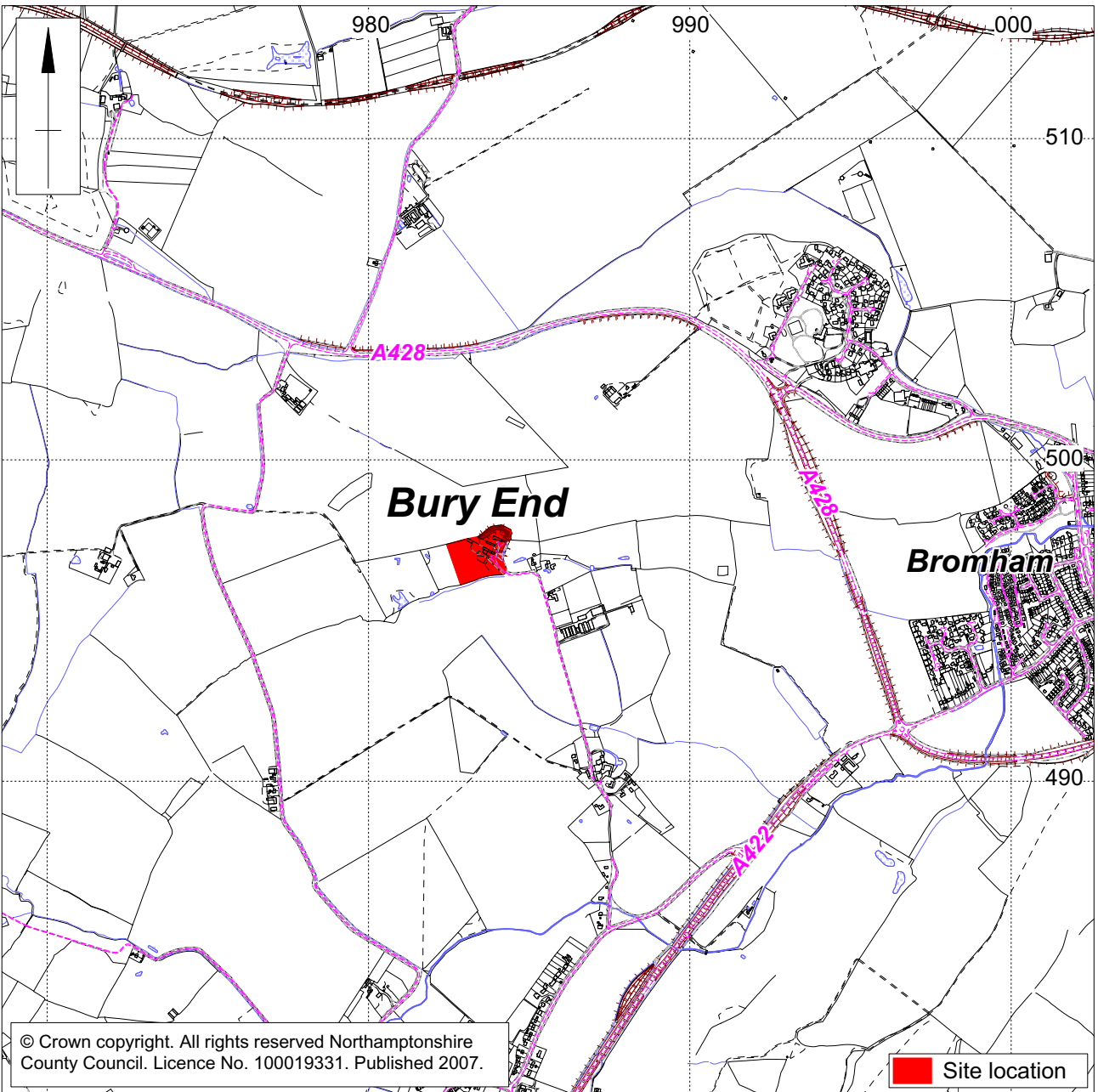
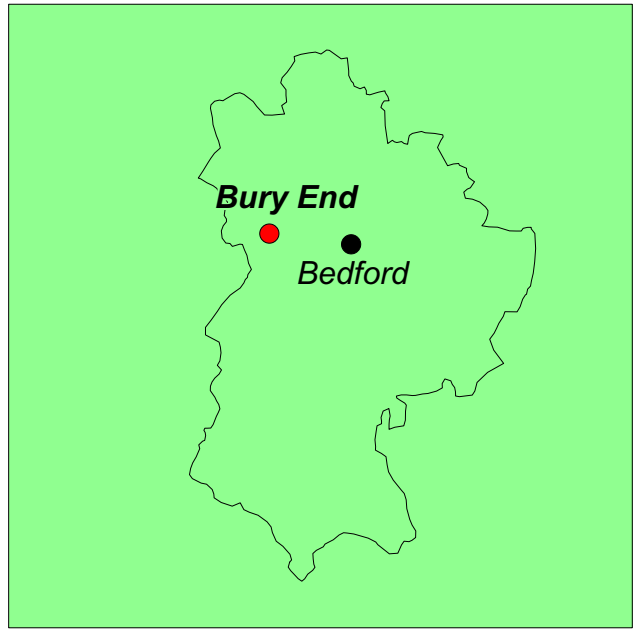
The watching brief was carried out in favourable conditions and the results are considered to be reliable.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BCC 2006 *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Land at The Warrens, Bury End, Stagsden, Bedfordshire* Heritage and Environment Section, Culture and Environment Group, Bedfordshire County Council

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

Leigh, D, 2006 *Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief on land at The Warrens, Stagsden, Bury End, Bedfordshire*



Scale 1:20,000

Location of The Warrens, Bury End Fig 1

Scale 1:1000

The location of the ground-works and the moated enclosure

Fig 2

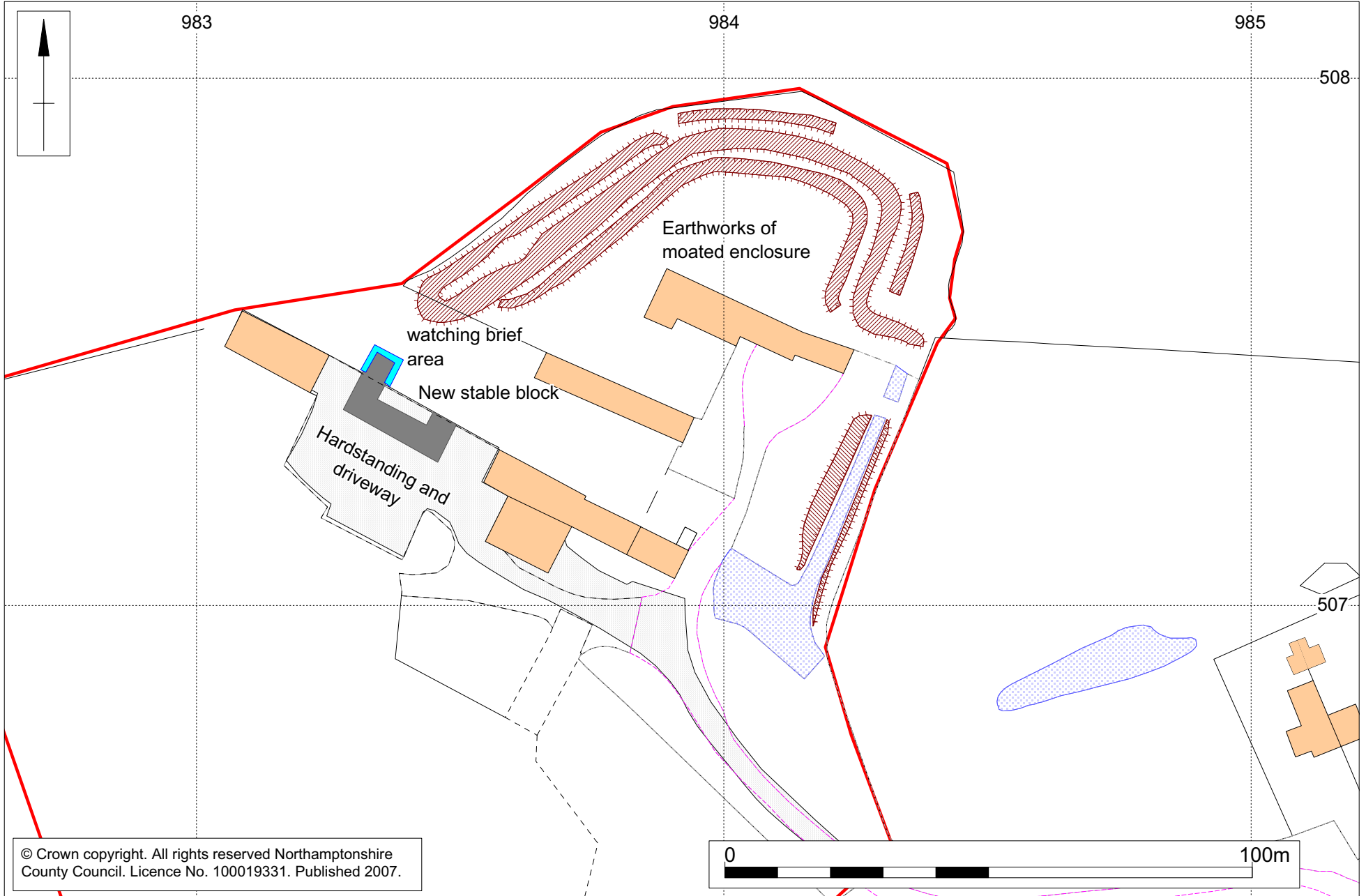




Plate 1: The area of development at the start of ground-works



Plate 2: Ground-works in progress, with the moat bank in the background