



Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Watching Brief at the
Priory Stables, Stamford, Lincolnshire
(SAM No 22614)

Accession No 2009.66

April 2009



Mark Patenall and Tim Upson-Smith

May 2009

Report 09/54

Northamptonshire Archaeology

2 Bolton House
Wootton Hall Park
Northampton NN4 8BE
t. 01604 700493 f. 01604 702822
e. sparry@northamptonshire.gov.uk
w. www.northantsarchaeology.co.uk



Northamptonshire
County Council



STAFF

Project Manager	Anthony Maull Cert Arch
Fieldwork	Mark Patenall
Text	Mark Patenall and Tim Upson-Smith BA PG Dip
Illustrations	Pat Walsh BA

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Anthony Maull		
Verified by	Pat Chapman		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

Priory Stables Stamford

OASIS REPORT FORM ID No 59752

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Archaeological Watching Brief at the Priory Stables, Stamford, Lincolnshire (SAM No 22614) Accession No 2009.66	
Northamptonshire archaeology carried out a watching brief at the Priory Stables, Priory Road, Stamford in April 2009. The site was located with the Scheduled Ancient Monument of St Leonard's Priory (SAM No 22614). No archaeological features or layers were exposed during the works.		
Project type	Watching brief	
Site status	SAM No 22614	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Pasture	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period	medieval	
Significant finds	None	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Lincolnshire	
Site address	Priory house, Priory Road, Stamford PE9 2EU	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	40.50 sq m	
OS Easting & Northing	503907 307325	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Supervisor	Mark Patenall	
Project Manager	A. Maull	
Sponsor or funding body	Ross Thain and Co Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	April 22nd 2009	
End date	April 22nd 2009	
ARCHIVES	Location	Content
Physical	NA Office	1 Black and white and 1 colour slide film,
Paper	NA Office	6
Digital	NA Office	
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
Title	Archaeological Watching Brief at the Priory Stables, Stamford, Lincolnshire (SAM No 22614) 2009.66	
Serial or volume number	09/54	
Author(s)	Mark Patenall and Tim Upson-Smith	
Page numbers	5	
Date	May 2009	

CONTENTS

1	INTRODUCTION	1
2	BACKGROUND	2
2.1	Topography and geology	2
2.2	Historical background	2
3	METHODOLOGY	3
4	RESULTS	4
5	DISCUSSION	4
	BIBLIOGRAPHY	5

Figures

Fig 1: Site Location

Plates

Cover: St Leonard's Priory, looking south-east

Plate 1: The site during ground reduction works, looking north-east

Plate 2: The site reduced to formation level, looking north

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT THE PRIORY STABLES
STAMFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE**

(SAM NO 22614)

ACCESSION NO 2009.66

OASIS ID NO 59236

ABSTRACT

Northamptonshire archaeology carried out a watching brief at the Priory Stables, Priory Road, Stamford in April 2009. The site was located within the Scheduled Ancient Monument of St Leonard's Priory (SAM No 22614). No archaeological features or layers were exposed during the works.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire archaeology were commissioned by Ross Thain & Co Ltd, acting for Burghley Estates Ltd, to undertake an archaeological watching brief on land at the Priory Stables, Priory Road, Stamford, Lincolnshire (Fig 1; NGR TF 03907 07325).

Listed Building Consent had been granted by South Kesteven District Council to Burghley Estates Ltd as part of a planning application to undertake improvements to the former stable block at Priory House, Priory Road, Stamford, Lincolnshire (Planning application S08/LB/7097/LB).

The site of the Priory Stables is situated within the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No 22614) of St Leonard's Priory. The remains of the former Benedictine Priory (Cover Plate) comprise mainly earthworks within the larger part of the adjoining field, with ponds to the south. Scheduled Monument Consent was not required for these works.

It was the requirement of the planning authority at South Kesteven District Council, as part of the Listed Building Consent, that preparation of the floor level should be undertaken with an archaeological watching brief.

Northamptonshire Archaeology is an Institute of Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation (No 48).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

Stamford is located within the extreme south-west part of Lincolnshire, adjacent to Rutland, Northamptonshire and Peterborough. The scheduled area is situated on the south-east side of the town, south of Priory Road and north of the River Welland, at c25-27m above Ordnance Datum. The stables lay within the eastern part of the scheduled area, south of the upstanding remains of St Leonard's priory (Cover Plate), south-west of Priory House and south east of St. Nicholas Church.

The site is situated on the floodplain of the River Welland, close to the confluence of the River Gwash, with a gradual slope noted from north to south. The superficial geology of the valley is mapped by the British Geological Survey as alluvial silt, sand and clay beside the channel with sand and gravel River terrace deposits to the east and upon raised gravel islands (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeolIndex/index.htm>). More generally, the site of Burghley House is situated circa 1.5km to the south of the River Welland, with the village of Uffington located approximately 2km to the east.

2.2 Historical background

Stamford first came to prominence in the 9th and 10th centuries when it became one of the five controlling boroughs of Danelaw. The name, Stamford, Steanford (10th century) or Stanford (1086) means 'stone ford' or 'stony ford' (Mills 1998). In the Domesday Book (c1086AD) the entry for Stamford is listed under 'The Kings Borough of Stamford'. It thrived under the Normans with an economy based mainly on wool with the town's excellent communication routes via the Great North Road (the A1) and the River Welland to the North Sea ensuring the success of its trade.

To the north-west of the site, a number of archaeological sites dating to the Saxon period have been identified where undeveloped and developed Stamford wares and iron slag (SMR Ref 30699, 30723) were recovered. Further finds, including two Saxon furnaces, were located to the west of the development site (SMR Ref. 30731). By the 13th century Stamford was one of the ten largest towns in England containing a castle, 14 churches, two monastic institutions, and four friaries. Many buildings survive from this period including the early-12th-century St Leonard's Priory lying outside of and east of the town walls of Stamford. The line of Wharf Road to the west of the site is thought to designate the line of the 13th-century

walled defences, which are extant in the northern part of the medieval town. The date of the establishment of the town walls is unknown, but murage grants (a toll paid towards the maintenance of walls) dating between 1261 and 1352, refer to parts of the walls, which are now traceable.

The Benedictine priory of St. Leonard's is amongst the oldest religious houses in Lincolnshire. It is thought to have been built upon the site of a monastery founded by St Wilfrid in AD 658, and destroyed by fire in the 9th century. Land for a monastery was certainly given to St Wilfrid by Alcnfrid, son of King Oswy of Northumbria, at a place called Stamford (Bede, Eccles Hist V, c 19). The Prior of Durham, who died in 1446, stated that the house was destroyed by the Danes and was refounded by William Carileph, Bishop of Durham, with the co-operation of William the Conqueror in 1082. Within a very short time after the Conquest the land formed a cell of Durham.

The priors of the house were presented by the prior and convent of Durham, and instituted by the Bishop of Lincoln. The prior and convent of Durham continued to hold the cell until the dissolution in 1536. Its value in 1291 was £28; (Pope Nich. Tax, Rec Com) in 1534 it was £25 1s.2½d, (Valor Eccles, Rec Com) while in the Ministers' Accounts the total given is only £7 10s. 9½d (Dugdale, Mon, IV, 472); from: 'Houses of Benedictine monks: The priory of St Leonard, Stamford' (VCH 1906, 127-128)

3 METHODOLOGY

The archaeological watching brief monitored the removal of the existing concrete floor prior to the preparation for laying the new floor level.

The objective of the fieldwork was to ensure that any archaeological features exposed by the groundworks were recorded and interpreted, recovering any remains that were disturbed by the development.

The existing concrete floor was removed under archaeological supervision, using a mini digger with a toothless ditching blade, which provided a clean surface for inspection.

Digital photographs formed the principal photographic record (Plates 1 and 2), from which sheets of contact prints will be produced for archive. These were supplemented with 35mm monochrome negatives, and colour transparencies.

All records compiled during fieldwork will be put into a comprehensive and fully cross-referenced site archive.

4 RESULTS

The building from which the floor was to be removed was partially destroyed by fire in 2008, leaving three limestone walls standing between 1.9m and 2.8m high (Plates 1 and 2).

The area of concrete floor to be removed measured 10.7m by 5.1m. Mixed in with the concrete were brick and stone fragments. The concrete floor was rough laid and measured between 50mm and 80mm thick. The concrete was laid on a layer of broken brick and stone rubble bedding layer. This layer was reduced accordingly by a further c300mm, to the formation level, with the proposed new floor to be established in the same rubble layer. No archaeological features or layers were exposed during the works.

5 DISCUSSION

No archaeological features or layers pertaining to St Leonard's Priory were exposed during the watching brief as the formation level for the new floor was still within the rubble bedding layer of the removed concrete floor.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

IfA 1985 (revised 2006) *Code of Conduct*, Institute for Archaeologists

IfA 1994 (revised 2001) *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Institute for Archaeologists

LCC 1997 *Lincolnshire Archaeological Handbook, Standard Briefs for Archaeological Projects in Lincolnshire*, Lincolnshire County Council

NA 2003 *Archaeological Fieldwork Manual*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

NA 2003 *A Specification for an Archaeological Watching Brief at Priory Stables, Stamford, Lincolnshire: Scheduled Ancient Monument No 22614*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

VCH 1906 *A History Of The County of Lincoln, Volume 2*, Victoria County History

Web pages

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeolIndex/index.htm>.

<http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/section.asp?catId=3155>

Northamptonshire Archaeology

A Service of Northamptonshire County Council

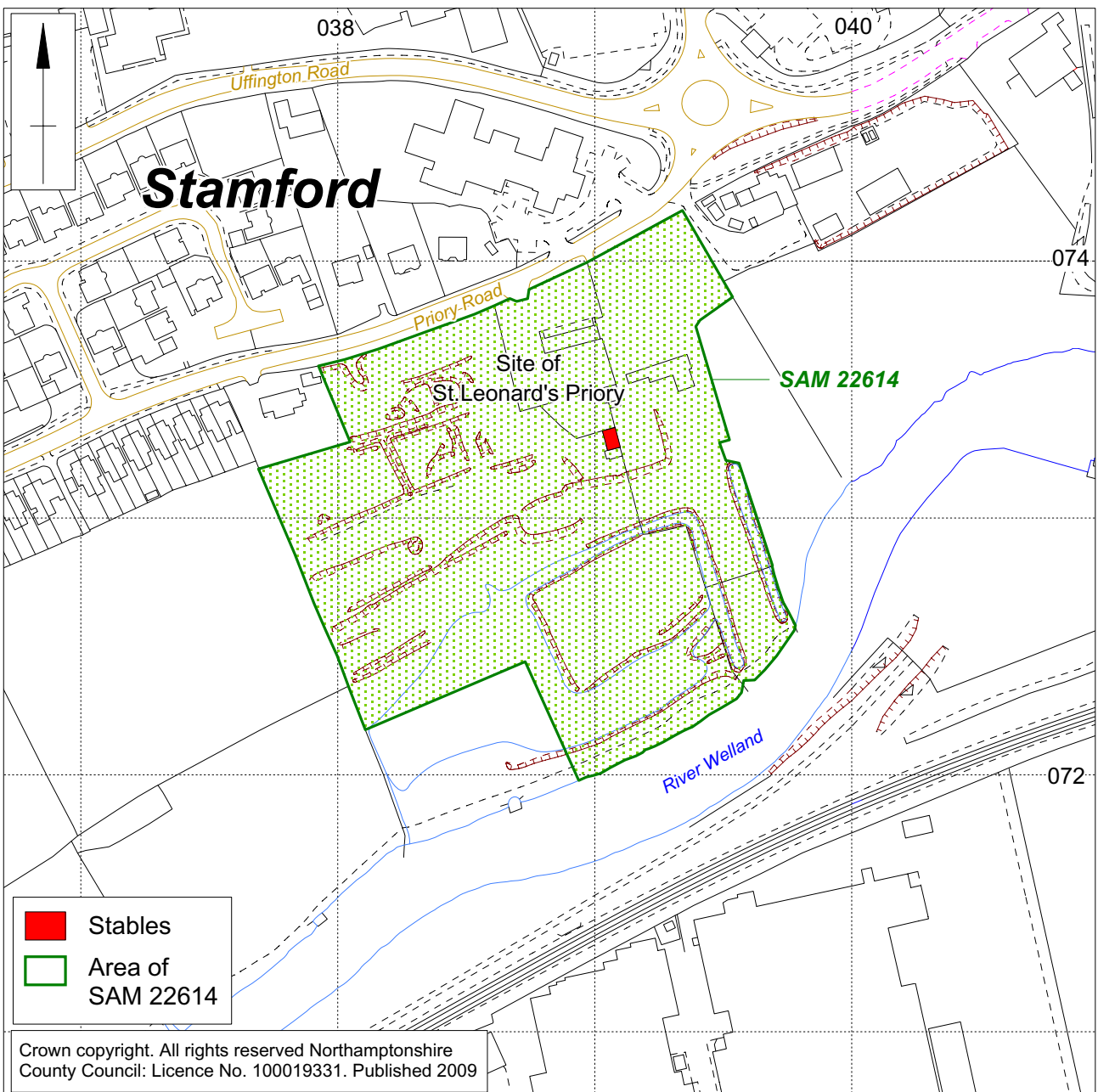
7th May 2009



Plate 1: The site during ground reduction works, looking north-east



Plate 2: The site reduced to formation level, looking north



Scale 1:2500

Site location Fig 1