

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief
on land at Upton Deserted Medieval Village,
Upton, Northamptonshire
February – October 2006



David J. Leigh

June 2007

Report 07/090

STAFF

Project Manager Steve Parry MA MIFA
Text David J. Leigh BA Hons
Fieldwork David J. Leigh
Illustrations Jacqueline Harding BA

QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
Checked by	Steve Parry		
Verified by	Andy Mudd		
Approved by	Andy Chapman		

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	An archaeological watching brief on land at Upton Deserted Medieval Village, Upton, Northamptonshire	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during ground-works connected with the dismantling and re-building of a stone boundary wall, the demolition of derelict buildings and the removal of "fly tipping" on land at Upton Deserted Medieval Village, Upton, Northamptonshire. The ground-works were confined within the footprint of the existing foundations. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Site status	Scheduled Monument No: NN165	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Pasture	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period	Medieval	
Significant finds		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Upton Lane, Upton, Northamptonshire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)		
OS Easting & Northing	Centred on SP 719 599	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	English Heritage, 44 Derngate, Northampton	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J. Leigh	
Project Manager	Steve Parry	
Sponsor or funding body	RPS on behalf of English Partnerships	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	February 2006	
End date	October 2006	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		Watching brief forms (13) Colour slides (18) black and white contact prints (20) Digital photographs (32)
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: Upton Lane and the location of the boundary wall and the derelict buildings

Plates

Plate 1: The derelict buildings during demolition, view towards the east

Plate 2: The area of the derelict buildings after demolition with the boundary wall in the background

Plate 3: The wall trench in the area of the derelict buildings

Plate 4: The new wall during construction, viewed to the north

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT
UPTON DESERTED MEDIEVAL VILLAGE,
UPTON, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
FEBRUARY – OCTOBER 2006**

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on behalf of RPS for English Partnerships between February and October 2006 during ground-works connected with the dismantling and re-building of an existing stone boundary wall the demolition of derelict buildings and the removal of “fly tipping” on land at Upton Deserted Medieval Village, Upton, Northamptonshire. The ground-works were confined within the footprint of the existing foundations. No archaeological deposits or artefacts were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology between February and October 2006 during ground-works associated with the dismantling and re-building of an existing stone boundary wall and the demolition of derelict buildings on land at Upton Deserted Medieval Village, Upton, Northamptonshire (Centred on NGR SP 719 599; Fig 1). The work was carried out on behalf of RPS acting for their clients English Partnerships, under Scheduled Monument Consent and following a specification prepared by RPS and approved by English Heritage (RPS 2006).

The archaeological work was required under the terms of the Scheduled Monument Consent granted for the works (Appendix 1). Condition ii states:

“Before works are carried out, the applicant will ensure that an approved archaeological contractor (as specified in the application) has made arrangements to enter the site at any reasonable time before and during the execution of the specified works for the purpose of inspecting the site and recording and removing for study of any matters of archaeological importance in the course of the inspection”

The development works entailed rebuilding the eastern boundary wall using both existing stone and imported stone, tree work including felling and removal of deadwood, the demolition of attached brick and stone buildings and the infilling of an associated cellar, and the removal of fly tipping. Associated ground disturbance works including the wall’s rebuild had a potential to expose archaeological remains.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and Topography

The development area is located on the west side of Upton Lane. The wall runs north-south for approximately 226m and forms the western boundary between Upton Lane on the east side and pasture land containing Upton Medieval Village on the west. The derelict buildings were situated immediately adjacent to the boundary wall on the western side approximately 36m from the northern terminus. The ground slopes moderately down towards the River Nene approximately 1km to the south. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Northampton Sand with Ironstone and Glacial Lake Clays.

2.2 Historical Background

The development area itself is located within an area of archaeological interest. Approximately 22m to the north-east of the development area an extensive Iron Age and Romano-British settlement has been investigated (Maull 2001). The remains include a Late Bronze Age pit alignment along with Iron Age enclosures and boundary ditches. In the eastern half of the site two burials and a kiln of Romano-British date may represent the westernmost edge of the Roman small town of Duston. A watching brief subsequently carried out a little to the south in 2005/6 (Leigh, Maull and Walker forthcoming) revealed further features connected with the Roman settlement. To the north of the development area within the grounds of Quinton House School an evaluation (Foard-Colby 2007) revealed a possible continuation of the Late Bronze Age pit alignment along with an Iron Age enclosure.

Further prehistoric sites have been investigated nearby. These include Upton Barrow, a Scheduled Ancient Monument, located to the south-east (Sites and Monuments Record No:5132/11) and a Neolithic mortuary enclosure was excavated (Jackson 1993) approximately 1km to the south-west. A watching brief carried out during road and infrastructure works approximately 120m north of Quinton House School and on the northern side of the present A45 road, revealed no archaeological deposits (Leigh 2003).

Immediately to the west of the development is located the earthwork remains of Upton Deserted Medieval Village (Scheduled Ancient Monument No:165; SMR No:5138). It survives as earthworks associated with former house platforms, hollow-ways and lanes, and is likely to contain well preserved buried archaeological remains. It is thought that the present Upton Hall stands on the site of the medieval manor (Shaw 1990), although it contains no medieval fabric.

The evaluation carried out in the grounds of Quinton House School also revealed a medieval ditch that may indicate the northernmost extent of the medieval village.

No previous archaeological work is recorded as having been carried out within the development area.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- ◆ Observe the ground-works connected with the demolition of the derelict buildings, and the dismantling and re-building of the stone boundary wall, 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.
- ◆ Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

The fieldwork comprised periodic visits to the site during the demolition of the derelict buildings (Plates 1 & 2) and the dismantling and re-building of the stone boundary wall. The buildings were of mainly red brick construction with stone patching that had clearly been inserted later. The ground-works connected with the building demolition were limited in nature and did not therefore impinge on any below ground deposits. Around the vicinity of the buildings extensive 'fly tipping' had taken place, this was cleared during the demolition phase of works.

The stone masonry of the wall was dismantled down to, and including the foundations in sections of up to 50m in length (Plate 4). As much original material was retained for re-use in the reconstruction, this was supplemented with a mixture of re-claimed stone from the derelict buildings and new imported stone. The line of the new foundation was then excavated to a maximum depth of 0.42m using a mechanical excavator, the new foundations being contained within the original footprint mitigating the impact on any potential archaeological deposits.

A photographic record in both black and white negative and colour slide was kept, with supplementary photographs in digital format. 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 2000).

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

The stratigraphic sequence comprised yellow/brown natural ironstone and sands. This was overlain by grey/brown silt loam subsoil, up to 0.23m thick, containing numerous fragments of ironstone and fragments of modern ceramic building material. This in turn was overlain by a grey/black topsoil/turf layer, up to 0.19m thick, containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material.

A consistent stratigraphy was revealed along most of the line of the new wall foundation, the only variation being in the area where the derelict buildings and several large trees had stood, here the subsoil increased in thickness to 0.48m.

No archaeological features were observed in the exposed sides and base of the wall’s original foundation trench.

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	13
Colour slides	18
Black and white contacts and negatives	20
Digital photographs	32

6 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological deposits, features or artefacts were revealed during the course of the watching brief, this may be mainly due to the limited nature of the ground-works. In view of the close proximity of the development to the medieval village it is probable that archaeological deposits are present in the immediate vicinity.

The watching brief was carried out in favourable conditions and the results are considered to be reliable. The development works have had no adverse impacts on archaeological remains and it is concluded that the data recovered by the watching brief has no potential for further study.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Foard-Colby A 2007 *Archaeological Evaluation at Quinton House School, Upton, Northamptonshire* Northamptonshire Archaeology Client Report

IFA 2000 *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* Institute of Field Archaeologists

Jackson D 1993/4 *Archaeological valuation at Upton* Northamptonshire Archaeology **25**, 69-76

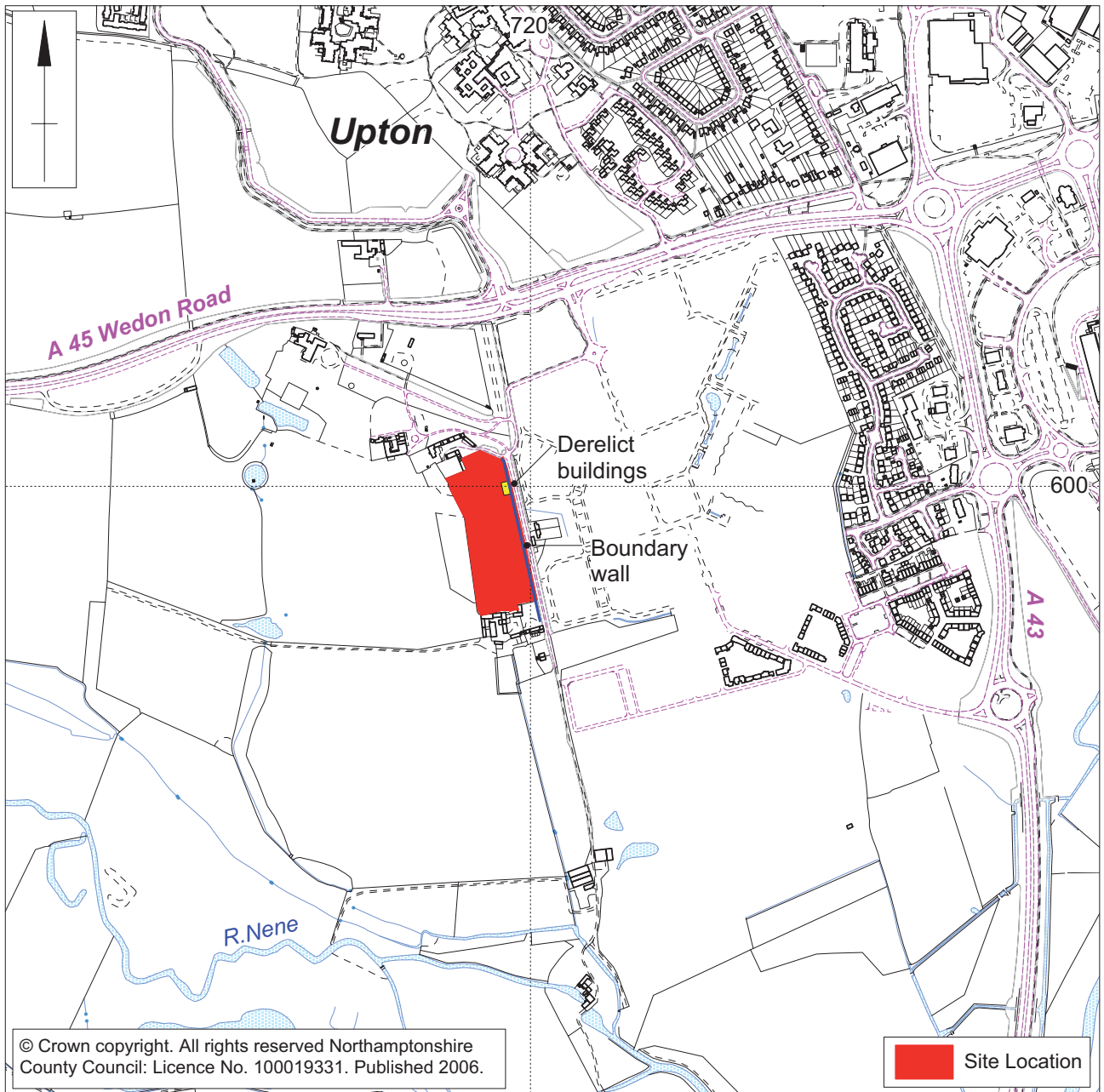
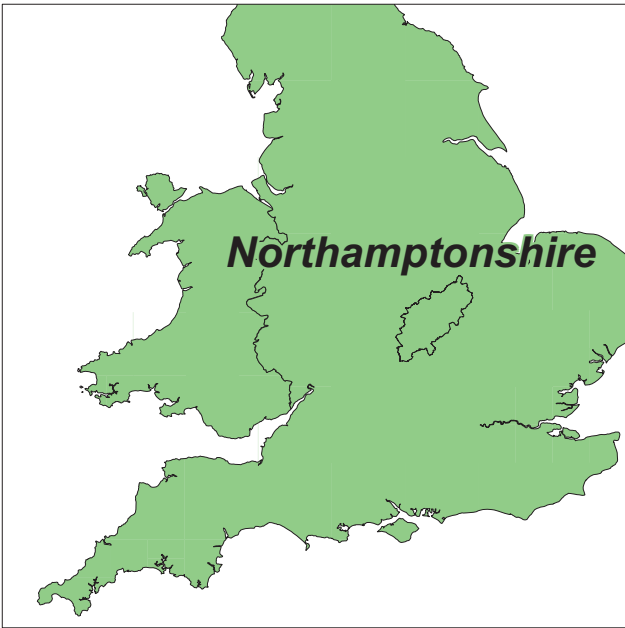
Leigh D 2003 *Archaeological Watching Brief, Weedon Road to St Crispin Link Road, Northampton, Northamptonshire* Northamptonshire Archaeology Client Report

Leigh D, Maull A & Walker C forthcoming, *Excavation of an Iron Age and Roman settlement at Upton, Northampton, Northamptonshire* Northamptonshire Archaeology Report

Maull A 2001 *Archaeological Investigations at Upton, Northampton South West District, Autumn 2000* Northamptonshire Archaeology Client Report

RPS 2006 *Upton Deserted Medieval Village, Northamptonshire. Method Statement for Archaeological Monitoring of Ground Disturbance Works associated with the Repair of a Boundary Wall, the Removal of a Derelict Building and Rubbish*

Shaw M 1990 *Archaeological Evaluation at Upton, Northamptonshire (South-west District)* Northamptonshire Archaeology Client Report



Scale 1:1000

Upton Lane and the location of the boundary wall and derelict buildings Fig 1



Plate 1: The derelict buildings during demolition, view towards the east



Plate 2: The area of the derelict buildings after demolition with the boundary wall in the background



Plate 3: The wall trench in the area of the derelict buildings



Plate 4: The new wall during construction, viewed to the north