

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief
at the former abattoir site,
78 High Street, Raunds, Northamptonshire
January – August 2004



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Report 07/094

Northamptonshire Archaeology

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QUALITY CONTROL

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

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	An archaeological watching brief on land at the former abattoir site, 78 High Street, Raunds, Northamptonshire.	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during ground-works connected with the construction of seven new dwellings on land at the former abattoir site, 78 High Street, Raunds, Northamptonshire. An undated ditch and a stone-lined well of post-medieval date were recorded. The watching brief revealed extensive modern truncation of the natural substratum in all but one of the foundation trenches. No archaeological artefacts were present.	
Project type	Watching Brief; Planning Application No: EN/02/00604/FUL	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Disused abattoir	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period		
Significant finds		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	78 High Street, Raunds, Northamptonshire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	700 Sqm	
OS Easting & Northing	SP 9994 7315	
Height OD		
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The Heritage Environment Team, Northamptonshire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J. Leigh	
Project Manager	Steve Parry	
Sponsor or funding body	Clifden Developments Limited	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	January 2004	
End date	August 2004	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		Watching brief forms (12) Colour slides (40) black and white contact prints (47) Digital photographs (6) Context sheets (6)
Digital		Report text and figures

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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT
THE FORMER ABATTOIR SITE, 78 HIGH STREET,
RAUNDS, NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
JANUARY – AUGUST 2004**

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology between January and August 2004 during ground-works connected with the construction of seven new dwellings on land at the former abattoir site, 78 High Street, Raunds, Northamptonshire. An undated ditch and a stone-lined well, of post-medieval date, were recorded. The watching brief revealed extensive modern truncation of the natural substratum in all but one of the foundation trenches. No archaeological artefacts were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology between January and August 2004 during ground-works associated with the construction of seven new dwellings on land at the former abattoir site, 78 High Street, Raunds, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 9994 7315; Planning Application No: EN/02/00604/FUL: Fig 1; Plates 1 & 2). The work was carried out on behalf of Clifden Developments Limited following a specification submitted by Northamptonshire Archaeology (Leigh, 2003) and approved by The Heritage Environment Team, Northamptonshire County Council.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and Topography

The site is situated on the north-west side of Raunds on undulating ground at an approximate height of c51-54m above Ordnance Datum and encompasses an area approximately 700sqm. The land lies within a base of a small valley which contains the culverted Raunds Brook. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Northampton Sand and Ironstone and Upper Estuarine Series Clays with areas of Blisworth Limestone, a part of the Great Oolite Limestone Series.

2.2 Historical Background

The site lies in an area of archaeological interest both within the late Saxon and medieval core of the village and within the *Raunds Archaeological Priority Area* defined by Northamptonshire County Council in 1979. Extensive fieldwork undertaken as part of the Raunds Area Project

(Parry 2006 & Audouy with Chapman forthcoming) has shown that settlement of this part of the village began in the early – middle Saxon period as one of two separate areas of occupation. Raunds has been defined as being of national archaeological importance due to its significant studies into the origins and development of the medieval village.

Northamptonshire Sites and Monuments Record list three sites in close proximity to the development area, all of which are post-medieval to modern in date. These comprise a blacksmith's workshop (SMR No:7201/19), a Baptist Chapel (7201/43) dating from 1798 and a Sunday School (7201/44).

Archaeological investigation close to the Raunds Brook has been limited. Trial trenching was undertaken on land behind 14 Rotton Row, approximately 100m north of the development area (Masters & Parry 1997), this found no evidence of Saxon or medieval activity.

Previous work within the development area has comprised an archaeological evaluation (Thorne 2002). This revealed a single pit of late medieval date along with a substantial undated ditch in the northern half of the site close to the rear of the existing buildings.

Up to the present development the site was in a derelict state having fallen out of use as an abattoir. Much of the area was covered with a concrete hard-standing on which sat a number of low outbuildings.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- ◆ Observe the ground-works connected with the construction of the new dwellings and associated ground-works, 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 excavation of foundation trenches for the new dwellings along with associated ground-works. The ground-works were carried out using a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a combination of toothless and toothed buckets. The foundation trenches varied in depth between 0.55m and 0.93m and were approximately 0.70m in width.

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 2001).

4 THE RECORDED EVIDENCE

4.1 The stone-lined well (Fig 2; Plate 3)

A stone-lined well in the northern half of the development area lay close to the rear of the existing building. The well was cut into the natural ironstone and lay just beneath the level of the present ground surface. It was 0.98m in diameter with a measured depth of 0.32m and was constructed of unworked limestone fragments with a lining thickness of 0.26m, no bonding material was present. The well was sealed by a concrete slab and although partially filled-in still contained water.

4.2 The ditch (Fig 2; Plate 4)

Within the same foundation trench as the well approximately 0.90m to the north, there was a small ditch on a north-east to south-west alignment. It had sloping sides with a flat base and was cut into the natural ironstone. It measured 1.33m in width by 0.42m deep and was filled with grey/blue silt loam containing occasional irregular stones. No dating evidence was recovered. Sealing the ditch was red/brown silt sand/gravel, up to 0.82m thick, containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and limestone fragments. This in turn was sealed by a concrete slab.

4.3 The remainder of the site

Throughout the remainder of the ground-works a disturbed stratigraphy was present. This comprised natural ironstone and sand substrata in the northern half of the site with patches of limestone towards the southern boundary. Overlying this was mixed sand and gravel containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material along with fragments of unworked limestone. This in turn was sealed across much of the area by a concrete hard-standing.

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	12
Colour slides	40
Black and white contacts and negatives	47
Digital photographs	6
Context sheets	6

6 CONCLUSIONS

The results of the watching brief demonstrate that much of the area of the new development has been subject to extensive modern truncation of the natural substratum.

Neither the stone lined-well nor the ditch produced any dating evidence. However, based on the construction style and its location, the stone-lined well may be contemporary with the stone-built dwelling of post-medieval date that still stands within the development area fronting onto Rotton Row at the rear of the site.

The ditch is located in the area of a larger ditch revealed in the previous evaluation, this too was undated and therefore all that may be said is that they are probably contemporary with each other.

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

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



Plate 2: General view of the ground-works in progress



Plate 3: The stone-built well

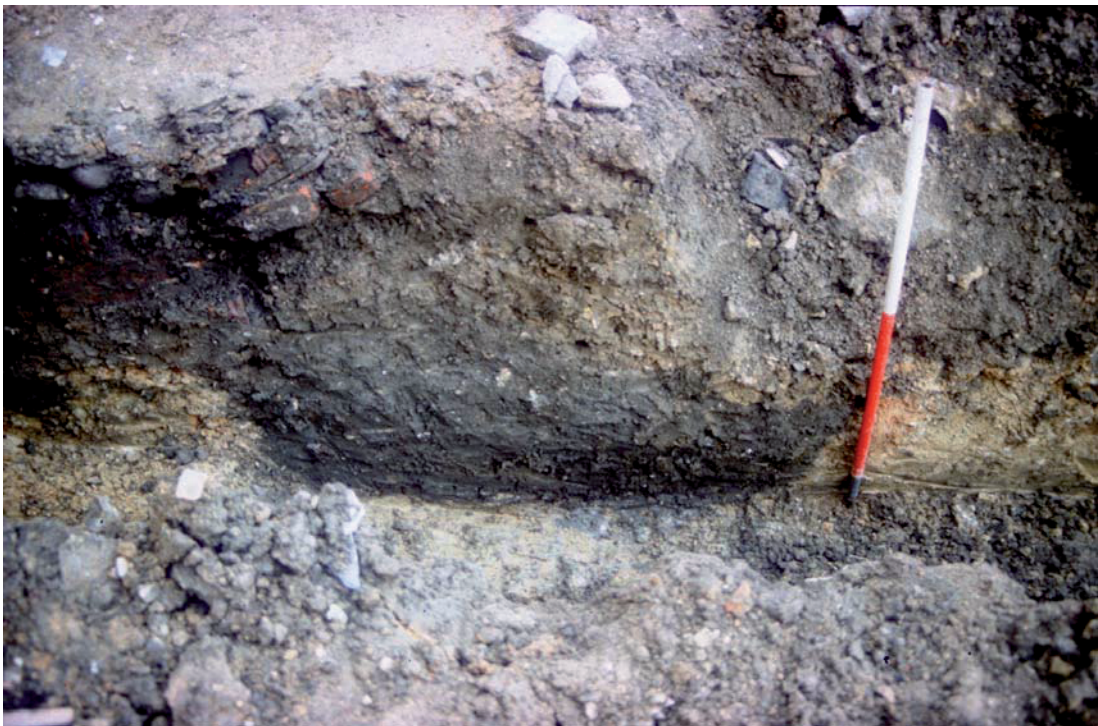


Plate 4: The undated ditch