

Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief
on land Abbey House Farm,
Syresham, Northamptonshire
October 2006



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Report 07/106

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QUALITY CONTROL

	Print name	Signed	Date
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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	An archaeological watching brief on land at Abbey Farm, Syresham, Northamptonshire.	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks connected with the construction of a new agricultural shed on land at Abbey Farm, Syresham, Northamptonshire. A truncated natural substratum was present across all the development area. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.	
Project type	Watching Brief; Planning Application No: S/2002/0927/P	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Agricultural hard-standing	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period		
Significant finds		
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Northamptonshire	
Site address	Abbey Farm, Syresham, Northamptonshire	
Study area (sq.m or ha)		
OS Easting & Northing	SP 630 412	
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	Mr Paterson, Abbey Farm, Syresham, Northamptonshire	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	October 2006	
End date	October 2006	
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical		
Paper		Watching brief forms (1 Colour slides (8 black and white contact prints (8) Digital photographs (9)
Digital		Report text and figures

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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT
ABBEY FARM, SYRESHAM,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
OCTOBER 2006**

Abstract

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in October 2006 during groundworks connected with the construction of a new agricultural barn on land at Abbey Farm, Syresham, Northamptonshire. A truncated natural substratum was revealed across all the development area. No archaeological deposits were present and no artefacts were recovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in October 2006 during groundworks associated with the construction of a new agricultural barn on land at Abbey Farm, Syresham, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 630 412; Planning Application No: S/2002/0927/P: Fig 1; Plate 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Mr Paterson of Abbey Farm, Syresham following a specification submitted by Northamptonshire Archaeology and approved by The Heritage Environment Team, Northamptonshire County Council.

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and topography

The development area is located on the southern side of the village of Syresham and fronts directly onto Biddlesden Road. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Glacial Sand and Gravel.

2.2 Historical background

The development area is located in an area of archaeological interest close to the location of an Iron Age settlement and iron smelting site discovered at Biddlesden Road Bridge in advance of the construction of the A43 dual carriageway (Mudd 2007).

No previous archaeological work has been carried out within the area of development. Up to the present development the development area has functioned as an agricultural hard-standing.

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- ◆ Observe the groundworks connected with the construction of the new agricultural barn, 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 a single visit to the site during the excavation of 20 stanchion base pits 1m square (Plate 2). The groundworks were carried out using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothed bucket.

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

The stanchion pits were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.80m. The stratigraphic sequence comprised grey/brown silt loam containing numerous fragments of modern ceramic building material and large concrete fragments, along with fragments of modern corroded iron and small pieces of plastic sheeting. This material extended the full depth of all the stanchion pits.

5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	1
Colour slides	8
Black and white contacts and negatives	8
Digital photographs	9

6 CONCLUSIONS

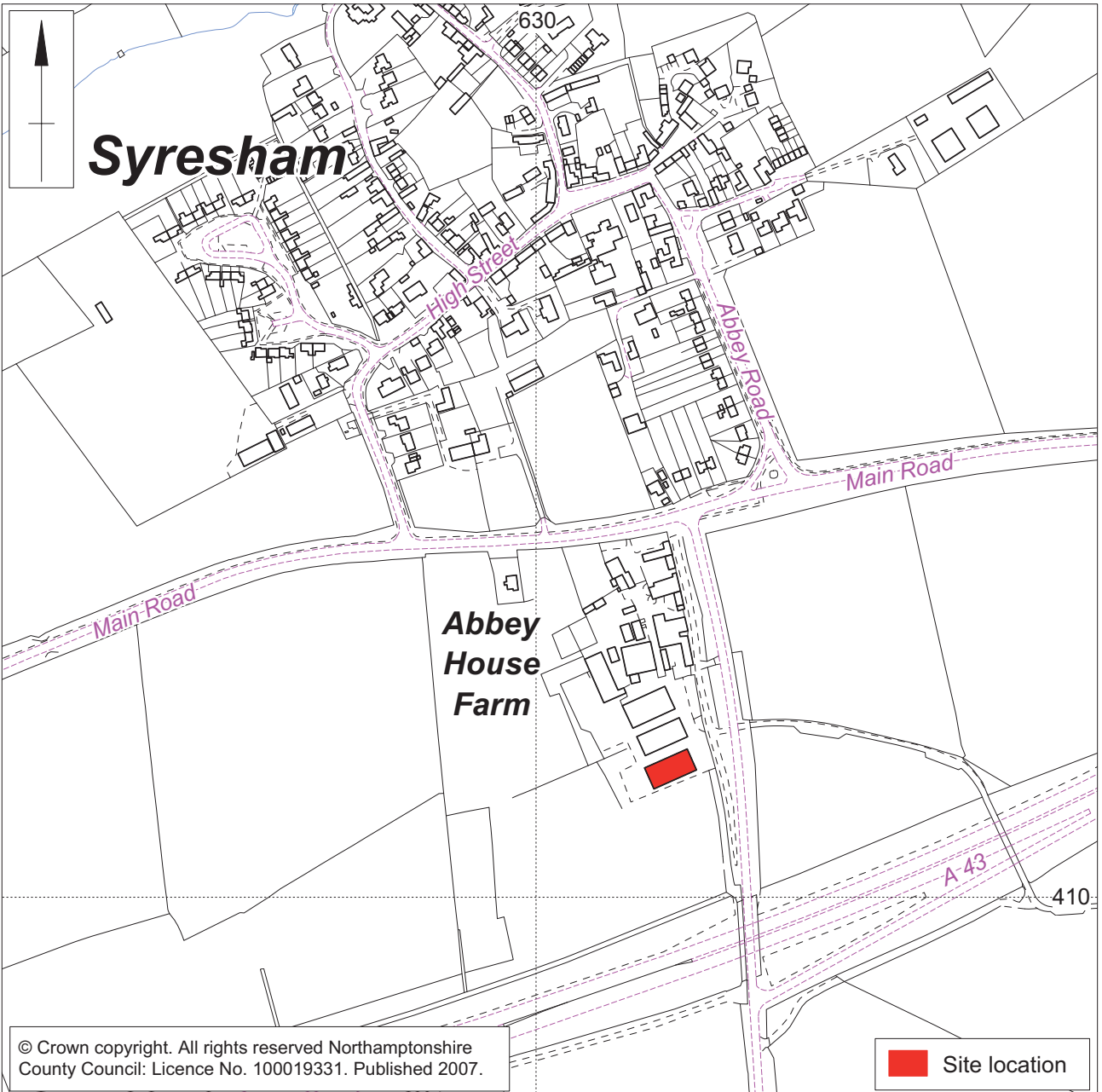
The results of the watching brief clearly show that the area has been subject to considerable modern disturbance. However as the stanchion pits did not penetrate the modern overburden it cannot be said whether the natural has been truncated, or if the modern overburden seals undisturbed deposits.

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

BIBLIOGRAPHY

IFA 2001 *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* Institute of Field Archaeologists

Mudd, A, 2007 *Iron Age and Roman settlement on the Northamptonshire uplands: Archaeological work on the A43 Towcester to M40 Road Improvement scheme in Northamptonshire and Oxfordshire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology Monog, **1**



Scale 1:5000

Location of the development area Fig 1



Scale 1:1000

Location of the groundworks Fig 2



Plate 1: The development area at the start of groundworks



Plate 2: The excavation of the stanchion pits