



Northamptonshire  
County Council

# Northamptonshire Archaeology

An archaeological watching brief  
on land at 37 Peveril Road,  
Ashby Magna, Leicestershire  
March 2008



David J. Leigh

May 2008

Report 08/102

## Northamptonshire Archaeology

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**QUALITY CONTROL**

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

**OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project name	An archaeological watching brief on land at 37 Peveril Road, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks connected with the construction of a new dwelling on land adjacent to 37 Peveril Road, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire. Across all of the development area disturbed soils were noted with no discernible distinction between topsoil and subsoil layers. The partial remains of an undated cobbled surface were recorded in the north-west corner of the development area and a quantity of unstratified pottery sherds datable to the 19 <sup>th</sup> century were collected. No further archaeological deposits were present.	
Project type	Watching Brief	
Site status	None	
Previous work	None	
Current Land use	Garden of 37 Peveril Road	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type/ period		
Significant finds		
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
County	Leicestershire	
Site address	37 Peveril Road, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire	
OS Easting & Northing	SP 561, 905	
Height OD		
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	The Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council	
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Director/Supervisor	David J. Leigh	
Project Manager	Steve Parry	
Sponsor or funding body		
<b>PROJECT DATE</b>		
Start date	March 2008	
End date	March 2008	
<b>ARCHIVES</b>	<b>Location (Accession no.)</b>	<b>Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)</b>
Physical		Pottery sherds (20)
Paper	Leicestershire Museum	Watching brief forms (3) Colour slides (10) black and white contact prints (10) Digital photographs (24)
Digital		Report text and figures

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**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT  
37 PEVERIL ROAD, ASHBY MAGNA,  
LEICESTERSHIRE  
MARCH 2008**

*Abstract*

*An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology during March 2008 during groundworks connected with the construction of a new dwelling on land at 37 Peveril Road, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire. Across the site disturbed soils were noted with no discernible distinction between topsoil and subsoil layers. The partial remains of an undated cobbled surface were recorded in the north-west corner of the development area and a quantity of unstratified pottery sherds datable to the 19<sup>th</sup> century were collected. No further archaeological deposits were present.*

**1 INTRODUCTION**

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology during March 2008 during groundworks connected with the construction of a new dwelling on land at 37 Peveril Road, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire (NGR SP 561, 905: Fig 1; plate 1). The work was carried out on behalf of Mr I E G Smith following a specification submitted by Northamptonshire Archaeology on the 13<sup>th</sup> February 2008 (Leigh 2008) and approved by The Senior Planning Archaeologist, Leicestershire County Council.

**2 BACKGROUND**

**2.1 Location and Topography**

The development area is located within the village of Ashby Magna and fronts directly onto Peveril Road. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Keuper Marl.

**2.2 Historical Background**

Ashby Magna has been identified as an area of archaeological potential, and the development area itself lies within the historic core of the village on land previously undeveloped. Leicestershire and Rutland Historic Environment Record lists a moat and fishponds lying to the east of the development area on the periphery of the village. This is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM No: 17040; NGR SP 5649, 9038). Two timber framed houses of seventeenth century date (HER Reference No: MLE 11031 & MLE 11021) lie close to the development area.

A field evaluation carried out at 7/9 Old Forge Road to the north of the development area revealed evidence for medieval land management and agricultural practices (Hayward 2002). Subsequently an evaluation carried out at 4 Old Forge Road (Leigh 2003) revealed a ditch of probable medieval date.

Up to the present development the area has functioned as part of the garden of number 37 Peveril Road. This comprised of a grassed area across most of the plot with a small planting mound in the north-east corner. No previous archaeological work is recorded as having been carried out in the development area.

### **3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY**

The aims of the watching brief were to:

- ◆ Observe the groundworks connected with the construction of the new dwelling and associated groundworks, 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 two visits to the site during the removal of topsoil the excavation of foundation trenches. The groundworks were carried out using a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a combination of toothed and toothless buckets.

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**

A consistent stratigraphy was revealed across all of the development area. This comprised natural red/brown compact clay overlain by grey/black silt loam garden soils, up to 0.31m thick, (this increased to 0.72m thick in the area of the planting mound) containing numerous cobblestones and fragments of modern ceramic building material along with very occasional small fragments of modern plastic. A total of twenty sherds of Staffordshire Earthenware pottery belonging to a 'pansion' type vessel datable to the 19<sup>th</sup> century, were collected from this layer.

In the north-west corner of the plot the partial remains of an undated cobbled surface were noted. This measured 2.5m in length with a maximum width of 0.50m and comprised closely set cobblestones pressed into the natural clay. The surface was photographed and recorded (Plate 4). Numerous pockets of loose cobbles were also noted throughout the garden soil within the development area.

## 5 THE SITE ARCHIVE

The project has generated a small archive comprising:

RECORD	NUMBER
Watching brief forms	3
Colour slides	10
Black and white contacts and negatives	10
Digital photographs	24
Pottery sherds (Staffordshire Earthenware)	20

## 6 CONCLUSIONS

The partial remains of a cobbled surface were revealed during the course of the watching brief. As no datable evidence was present, or connected with this, it can only be surmised that this is contemporary with the existing cottages lying either side of the development area.

It is notable that the development area is located in a space between established dwellings and it would be reasonable to surmised that an earlier dwelling stood on this location and that the cobbled surface relates to this. However no evidence of any dwelling was revealed during the course of the watching brief.

The results of the watching brief clearly show that the development area has been subject to moderate horticultural disturbance, this has resulted in a mixed horizon with no discernible topsoil or subsoil division. This has penetrated down and, while this activity has not directly truncated the natural substratum, it has led to the almost complete destruction of the cobbled surface set into it.

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

**BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Hayward, S, 2002 *Proposed dwellings 7 & 9 Old Forge Road, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire Archaeological Evaluation*, Northamptonshire Archaeology Client Report

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

Leigh, D J, 2003 *An archaeological evaluation on land at 4 old Forge Road, Ashby Magna, Leicestershire*, Northamptonshire Archaeology Client Report





Plate 1: General view of 37 Peveril Road



Plate 2: The development area before the start of groundworks



Plate 3: The stratigraphic sequence within the foundation trenches



Plate 4: The cobbled surface after cleaning