

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT REGENT STREET,
NORTHAMPTON,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
(NARS 06)**

**Work Undertaken For
Westleigh Developments Limited**

May 2007

Report Compiled by
Paul Cope-Faulkner BA (Hons) AIFA

Planning Application No: WN/2006/0040
National Grid Reference: SP 7518 6095
OASIS Record No: archaeo11-25643

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT SERVICES



APS Report No. **39/07**

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Plates

1.	SUMMARY	1
2.	INTRODUCTION.....	1
2.1	DEFINITION OF A WATCHING BRIEF.....	1
2.2	PLANNING BACKGROUND.....	1
2.3	TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY.....	1
2.4	ARCHAEOLOGICAL SETTING	1
3.	AIMS	2
4.	METHODS	2
5.	RESULTS	2
6.	DISCUSSION	2
7.	CONCLUSION	2
8.	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	3
9.	PERSONNEL	3
10.	BIBLIOGRAPHY	3
11.	ABBREVIATIONS	3

Appendices

1. Specification for archaeological watching brief
2. Context descriptions
3. Glossary
4. The Archive

List of Figures

- Figure 1 General location plan
- Figure 2 Site location plan
- Figure 3 Plan of the development showing location of drawn section
- Figure 4 Section 1

List of Plates

- Plate 1 View looking west across the development area
- Plate 2 Section 1 showing the general sequence of deposits encountered

1. SUMMARY

A watching brief was undertaken during groundworks at Regent Street, Northampton. The watching brief monitored the excavation of foundation trenches for a new block of flats.

The site lies within the formerly walled circuit of the medieval (AD 1066-1540) town, close to the Cluniac Priory of St. Andrew. The only extant medieval remains in the vicinity is the 12th century church of the Holy Sepulchre. Late Saxon (AD 850-1066) remains are known to the south.

The watching brief identified only recent demolition and hardstanding deposits due to the shallow depth of the groundworks. Archaeological layers may still lie preserved at depth. No artefacts were retrieved during the investigation.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Definition of a Watching Brief

An archaeological watching brief is defined as “*a formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons. This will be within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed.*” (IFA 1999).

2.2 Planning Background

Archaeological Project Services was commissioned by Westleigh Developments Limited to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the construction of 28 flats at Regent Street, Northampton. Approval for the development was sought through the submission of planning application WN/2006/0040. The watching brief was

carried out on the 13th March 2007 in accordance with a specification prepared by Archaeological Project Services (Appendix 1).

2.3 Topography and Geology

Northampton is located in the southern part of the county of Northamptonshire (Fig. 1).

The site is located 600m northwest of the centre of Northampton as defined by All Saints Church at National Grid Reference SP 7518 6095 (Fig. 2). The site lies on the north side of Regent Street next to its junction with St. Andrew’s Street at a height of 78m OD on a slope down to the east towards the valley of the Brampton River.

As an urban area, local soils have not been mapped. The site lies over the junction of Jurassic Upper Lias and Inferior Oolite series.

2.4 Archaeological Setting

The site is located within the historic walled town of Northampton. Prehistoric and Romano-British remains are known from the general area, but the main settlement began in the Saxon period. Late Saxon remains have been found to the south of the site which were enclosed by earthen defences, although a suburb may have existed at the junction of St. Andrew’s Street and Broad Street (Williams and Bamford 1979, 24).

The site lies to the west of the extant church of the Holy Sepulchre, a circular church dating to c. 1110 built by Simon de Senlis, Earl of Northampton (Pevsner 2002, 323). Simon de Senlis was also responsible for the construction of the castle, which lay to the southwest of the site. De Senlis was perhaps also responsible for the town defences, which followed the line of Grafton Street to the

immediate north, although available murage grants date to the 13th century.

To the north of the town defences was the site of St. Andrew's Priory, also founded by de Senlis between 1093 and 1100, for monks of the Cluniac order (Serjeantson and Adkins 1906, 102).

3. AIMS

The requirements of the watching brief, as detailed in the specification (Appendix 1), were to locate and record archaeological deposits and, if present, to determine their date, function and origin.

4. METHODS

The footprint of the proposed new building was stripped by machine to a depth of 0.55m to provide a level surface prior to the insertion of piles. Following excavation, the exposed surface was examined for archaeological deposits and selected portions of the sides of the area were then cleaned and rendered vertical. Selected deposits were excavated further to retrieve artefactual material and to determine their function. Each deposit was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their descriptions appears as Appendix 2. A photographic record was compiled and sections were drawn at a scale of 1:10. Recording was undertaken according to standard Archaeological Project Services' practice.

Following excavation the records were checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was assigned based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

5. RESULTS

Archaeological contexts are listed below and described. The numbers in brackets are the context numbers assigned in the field.

The earliest deposit encountered during the watching brief was a layer of loose reddish brown brick rubble (004). This measured in excess of 0.25m thick.

This was sealed by mid brown and grey clayey silt that contained frequent brick and tile (003) that provided a make-up deposit for a modern hardcore surface (002). A 80mm thick turf layer (001) had developed upon this.

6. DISCUSSION

The watching brief encountered only recent deposits, perhaps relating to demolition of former buildings at the site, prior to its use as a car park. The depth of the trench did not exceed 0.55m thick and it is probable that archaeological deposits are present, but survive only at depth.

No monitoring was undertaken during the piling. No artefacts were retrieved during the investigation.

7. CONCLUSION

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken at Regent Street, Northampton, as the site lay within the core of the medieval town.

However, only recent deposits were encountered, due to the shallow depth of the trench, with no archaeological deposits or artefacts identified during the investigation.

8. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Archaeological Project Services wishes to acknowledge the assistance of Mr M. Finnie of Westleigh Developments Limited for commissioning the fieldwork and post-excavation analysis. The work was coordinated by Gary Taylor who edited this report along with Tom Lane. Dave Start kindly allowed access to the library maintained by Heritage Lincolnshire.

9. PERSONNEL

Project Coordinator: Gary Taylor
 Site Supervisor: Mary Nugent
 Photographic reproduction: Sue Unsworth
 Illustration: Paul Cope-Faulkner
 Post-excavation analysis: Paul Cope-Faulkner

10. BIBLIOGRAPHY

IFA, 1999, *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

Pevsner, N, 2002 *Northamptonshire, The Buildings of England* (2nd edition revised B, Cherry)

Serjeantson, RM, and Adkins, WRD, 1906 *The Victoria History of the County of Northampton Vol. II*

Williams, J, and Bamford, H, 1979 *Northampton – the first 6000 years*

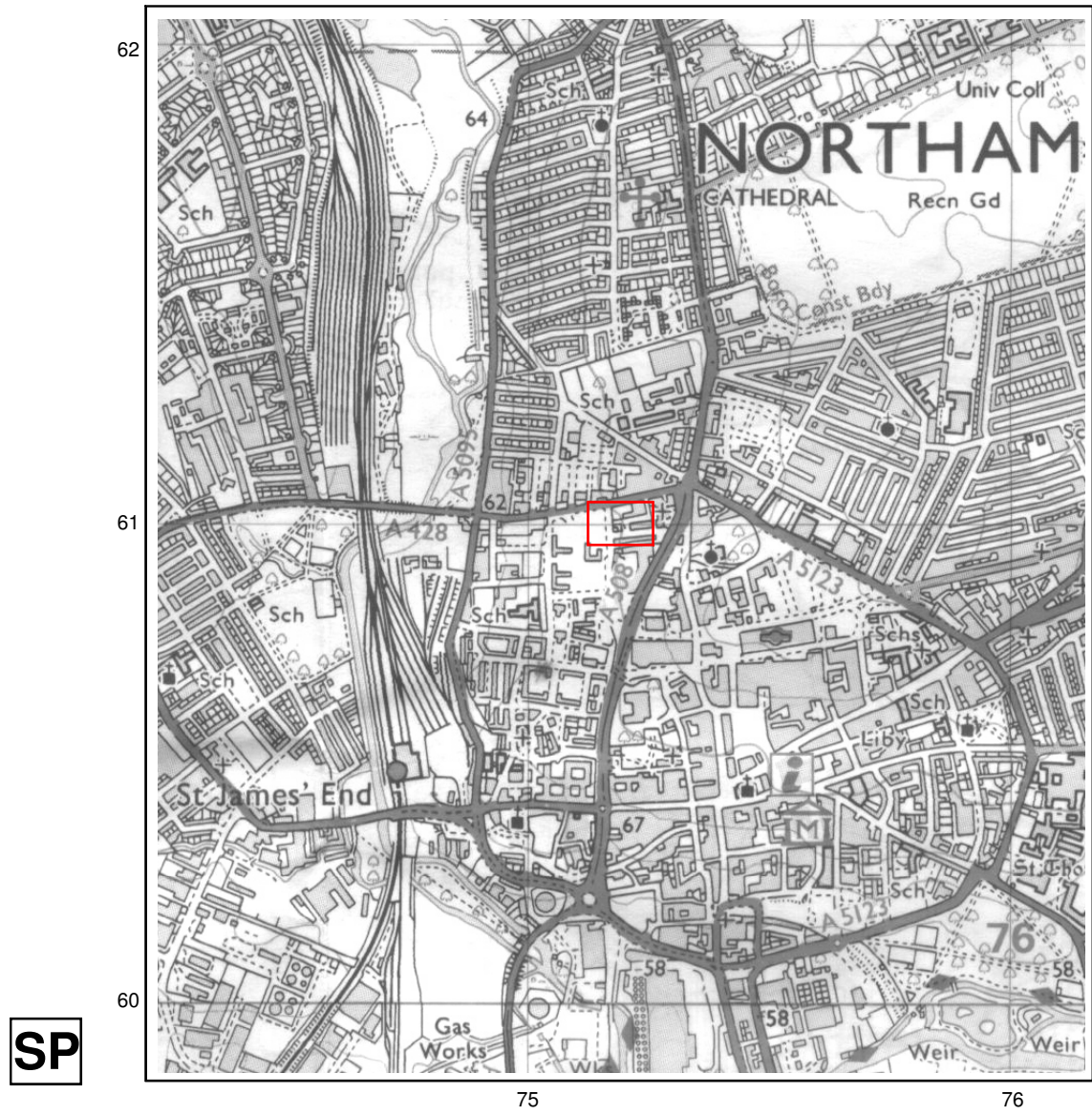
11. ABBREVIATIONS

APS Archaeological Project Services


IFA Institute of Field Archaeologists

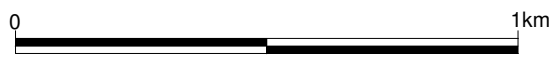


Figure 1 - General Location Plan



Reproduced from the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 map with the permission of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office (C) Crown Copyright. HTL Ltd Licence No. AL5041A0001

 Area detailed in Figure 3




 Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Regent Street, Northampton NARS06		
Scale 1:15000	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 39/07

Figure 2 - Site location plan

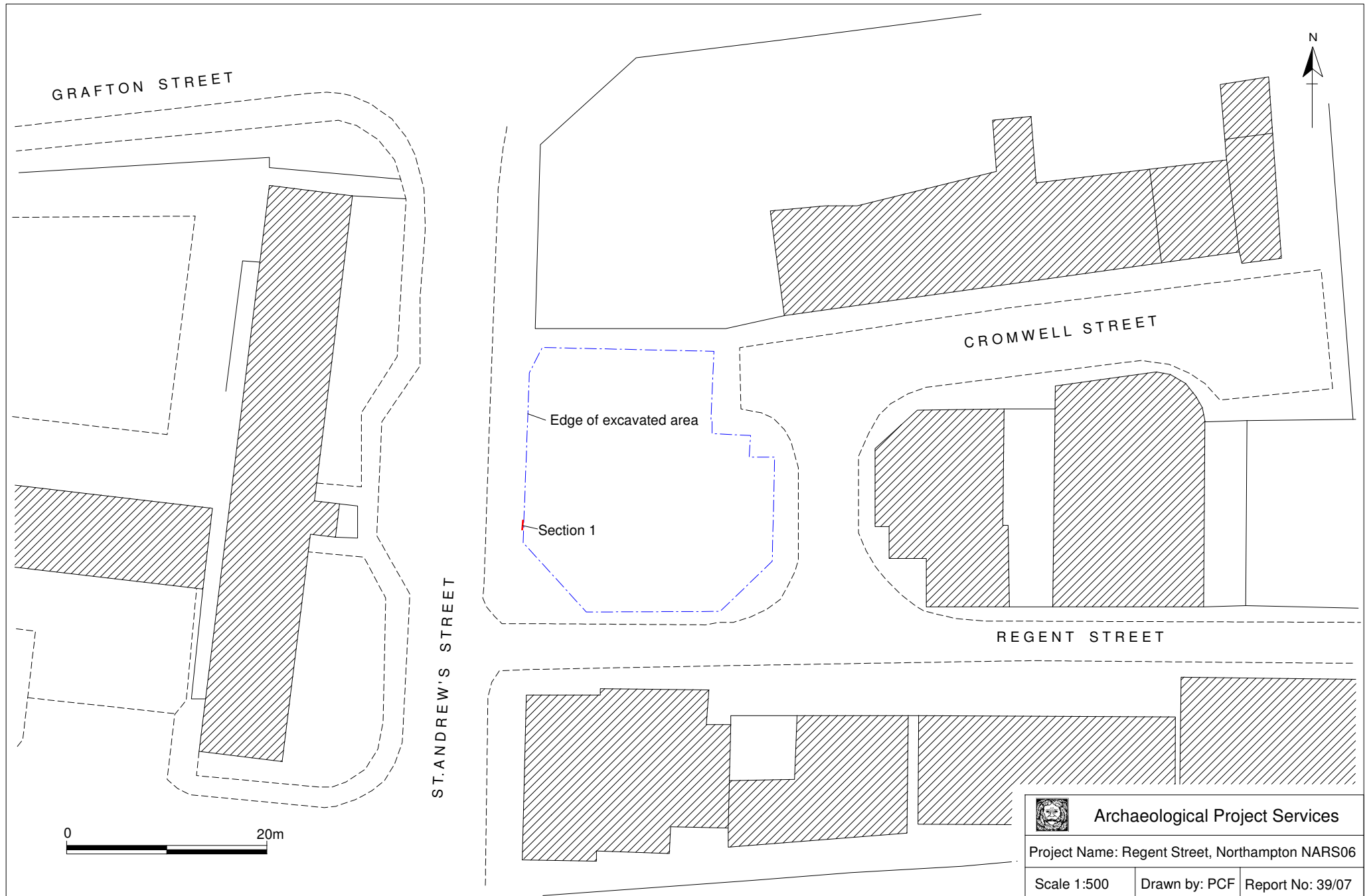

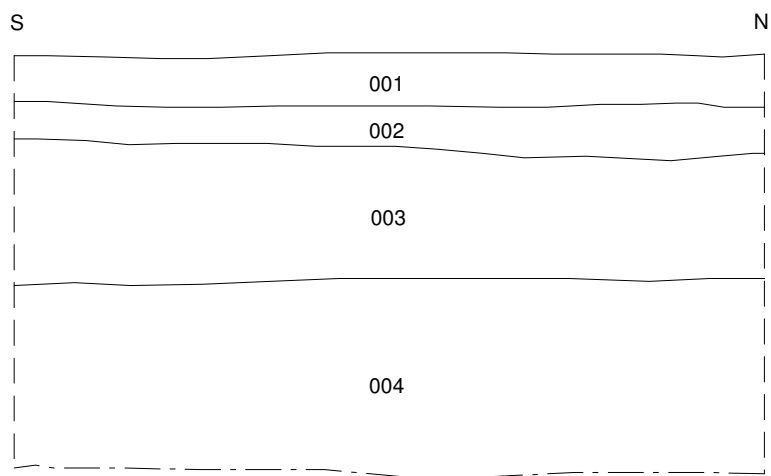


Figure 3 - Plan of the development showing location of drawn section

 Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Regent Street, Northampton NARS06		
Scale 1:500	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 39/07



Section 1




 Archaeological Project Services		
Project Name: Regent Street, Northampton NARS06		
Scale 1:10	Drawn by: PCF	Report No: 39/07

Figure 4 - Section 1



Plate 1 - View looking west across the development area



Plate 2 - Section 1 showing the general sequence of deposits encountered, looking east

Appendix 1

LAND AT REGENT STREET, OFF ST. ANDREW'S STREET, NORTHAMPTON - SPECIFICATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

1 SUMMARY

- 1.1 *A watching brief is required during construction of flats on land at Regent Street, Northampton.*
- 1.2 *The site lies in an area of known archaeological significance. It lies in the historic core of the medieval walled town, between the castle bailey and the precinct of St Andrew's Priory, both established in the 11th century. Late Saxon, medieval and later remains have previously been found nearby.*
- 1.3 *The archaeological work will consist of a watching brief during development works on the site.*
- 1.4 *On completion of the fieldwork a report will be prepared detailing the results of the watching brief. The report will consist of a narrative supported by illustrations and photographs.*

2 INTRODUCTION

- 2.1 This document comprises a specification for archaeological watching brief during construction of flats on land at the junction of Regent Street and St Andrew's Street, Northampton.
- 2.2 This document contains the following parts:
 - 2.2.1 Overview.
 - 2.2.2 Stages of work and methodologies.
 - 2.2.3 List of specialists.
 - 2.2.4 Programme of works and staffing structure of the project

3 SITE LOCATION

- 3.1 Northampton is located in the southern part of the county of Northamptonshire. Regent Street is in the northern part of the town centre, immediately west of the church of St Sepulchre. The site is located at the western end of Regent Street, on its northern side, at its junction with St Andrew's Street, centred on National Grid Reference SP 752 609.

4 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 4.1 A planning application (WN/2006/0040) was submitted to West Northamptonshire Development Corporation for the demolition of two houses and the construction of 28 flats with parking. Permission is subject to a condition requiring the undertaking of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that has been submitted to and approved by the Local planning Authority. This document provides such a written scheme of investigation.

5 SOILS AND TOPOGRAPHY

- 5.1 As an urban area soils have not been mapped. Ironstone provides the natural geology. The site is on a slope westward down to the Brampton Rover, a tributary of the River Nene, and lies at about 75m OD.

6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

- 6.1 The development site is located within the historic walled town core of Northampton, between the castle bailey and the precinct of St Andrew's Priory, both established in the late 11th century. The site also lies a short distance to the west of the Norman church of St. Sepulchre, and immediately east of St

Andrew's church, built in the 1840s. Prehistoric remains have previously been identified in Northampton but the main settlement begins in the Saxon period. Late Saxon remains have been found a short distance to the south on King Street and, at that same location, medieval quarry pits were identified, and there was evidence of post-medieval activity (Chapman 2000-1). Much of Northampton was destroyed in a major fire of 1675, but was rebuilt quickly. Both Regent Street and St Andrew's Street are shown on Speed's 1610 map of the city (Williams 1979).

7 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

7.1 The aims of the watching brief will be:

7.1.1 To record and interpret the archaeological features exposed during the excavation of the foundation trenches and other areas of ground disturbance.

7.1.2 The objectives of the watching brief will be to:

- Determine the form and function of the archaeological features encountered;
- Determine the spatial arrangement of the archaeological features encountered;
- As far as practicable, recover dating evidence from the archaeological features, and
- Establish the sequence of the archaeological remains present on the site.

8 SITE OPERATIONS

8.1 General considerations

8.1.1 All work will be undertaken following statutory Health and Safety requirements in operation at the time of the watching brief.

8.1.2 The work will be undertaken according to the relevant codes of practise issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA), under the management of a Member of the institute (MIFA). Archaeological Project Services is IFA registered organisation no. 21.

8.1.3 Any and all artefacts found during the investigation and thought to be 'treasure', as defined by the Treasure Act 1996, will be removed from site to a secure store and promptly reported to the appropriate coroner's office.

8.2 Methodology

8.2.1 The watching brief will be undertaken during the ground works phase of development, and includes the archaeological monitoring of all phases of soil movement.

8.2.2 Stripped areas and trench sections will be observed regularly to identify and record archaeological features that are exposed and to record changes in the geological conditions. The section drawings of the trenches will be recorded at a scale of 1:10. Should features be recorded in plan these will be drawn at a scale of 1:20. Written descriptions detailing the nature of the deposits, features and fills encountered will be compiled on Archaeological Project Services pro-forma record sheets.

8.2.3 Any finds recovered will be bagged and labelled for later analysis.

8.2.4 Throughout the watching brief a photographic record will be compiled. The photographic record will consist of:

- the site during work to show specific stages, and the layout of the archaeology within the trench.
- groups of features where their relationship is important

8.2.5 Should human remains be located the appropriate Home Office licence will be obtained

before their removal. In addition, the Local Environmental Health Department and the police will be informed.

9 POST-EXCAVATION

9.1 Stage 1

9.1.1 On completion of site operations, the records and schedules produced during the watching brief will be checked and ordered to ensure that they form a uniform sequence forming a level II archive. A stratigraphic matrix of the archaeological deposits and features present on the site will be prepared. All photographic material will be catalogued and labelled, the labelling referring to schedules identifying the subject/s photographed.

9.1.2 All finds recovered during the fieldwork will be washed, marked and packaged according to the deposit from which they were recovered. Any finds requiring specialist treatment and conservation will be sent to the Conservation Laboratory at the City and County Museum, Lincoln.

9.2 Stage 2

9.2.1 Detailed examination of the stratigraphic matrix to enable the determination of the various phases of activity on the site.

9.2.2 Finds will be sent to specialists for identification and dating.

9.3 Stage 3

9.3.1 On completion of stage 2, a report detailing the findings of the watching brief will be prepared.

9.3.2 This will consist of:

- A non-technical summary of the results of the investigation.
- A description of the archaeological setting of the watching brief.
- Description of the topography of the site.
- Description of the methodologies used during the watching brief.
- A text describing the findings of the watching brief.
- A consideration of the local, regional and national context of the watching brief findings.
- Plans of the archaeological features exposed. If a sequence of archaeological deposits is encountered, separate plans for each phase will be produced.
- Sections of the trenches and archaeological features.
- Interpretation of the archaeological features exposed, and their chronology and setting within the surrounding landscape.
- Specialist reports on the finds from the site.
- Appropriate photographs of the site and specific archaeological features.

10 REPORT DEPOSITION

10.1 Copies of the report will be sent to the Client; the Northamptonshire County Council Built and Natural

Environment Service; West Northamptonshire Development Corporation; and the Northamptonshire County Historic Environment Record. The Historic Environment Record will also be provided with a digital copy of the report and all data.

11 ARCHIVE

- 11.1 The documentation and records generated during the watching brief will be sorted and ordered into the format acceptable to Northampton Museum, for long-term storage and curation.

12 PUBLICATION

- 12.1 Details of the investigation will be input to the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS). A note on the investigation will also be submitted to the journal *Northamptonshire Archaeology*.
- 12.2 If appropriate, notes on the findings will be submitted to the appropriate national journals: *Britannia* for discoveries of Roman date, and *Medieval Archaeology* and the *Journal of the Medieval Settlement Research Group* for findings of medieval or later date.

13 CURATORIAL RESPONSIBILITY

- 13.1 Curatorial responsibility for the archaeological work undertaken on the site lies with the Northamptonshire County Council Built and Natural Environment Service. They will be given written notice of the commencement of the project.

14 VARIATIONS AND CONTINGENCIES

- 14.1 Variations to the proposed scheme of works will only be made following written confirmation of acceptance from the archaeological curator.
- 14.2 In the event of the discovery of any unexpected remains of archaeological importance, or of any changed circumstances, it is the responsibility of the archaeological contractor to inform the archaeological curator.
- 14.3 Where important archaeological remains are discovered and deemed to merit further investigation additional resources may be required to provide an appropriate level of investigation, recording and analysis.
- 14.4 Any contingency requirement for additional fieldwork or post-excavation analysis outside the scope of the proposed scheme of works will only be activated following full consultation with the archaeological curator and the client.

15 PROGRAMME OF WORKS AND STAFFING LEVELS

- 15.1 The watching brief will be integrated with the programme of construction and is dependent on the developers' work programme. It is therefore not possible to specify the person-hours for the archaeological site work.
- 15.2 An archaeological supervisor with experience of watching briefs will undertake the work.
- 15.3 Post-excavation analysis and report production will be undertaken by the archaeological supervisor, or a post-excavation analyst as appropriate, with assistance from a finds supervisor, illustrator and external specialists. It is expected that each fieldwork day (equal to one person-day) will require a post-excavation day (equal to one-and-a-half person-days) for completion of the analysis and report. If the fieldwork lasts longer than about four days then there will be an economy of scale with the post-excavation analysis.

16 SPECIALISTS TO BE USED DURING THE PROJECT

- 16.1 The following organisations/persons will, in principle and if necessary, be used as subcontractors to provide the relevant specialist work and reports in respect of any objects or material recovered during the investigation that require their expert knowledge and input. Engagement of any particular specialist subcontractor is also dependent on their availability and ability to meet programming requirements.

<u>Task</u>	<u>Body to be undertaking the work</u>
Conservation	Conservation Laboratory, City and County Museum, Lincoln
Pottery Analysis	Prehistoric - Trent & Peak Archaeological Trust Roman - B Precious, Independent Specialist Post-Roman – P Blinkhorn, Independent Specialist
Non-pottery Artefacts	J Cowgill, Independent Specialist, or G Taylor, APS
Animal Bones	J Kitch, APS
Environmental Analysis	J Rackham, Independent Specialist
Human Remains Analysis	J Kitch, APS

17 INSURANCES

- 17.1 Archaeological Project Services, as part of the Heritage Trust of Lincolnshire, maintains Employers Liability Insurance of £10,000,000, together with Public and Products Liability insurances, each with indemnity of £5,000,000. Copies of insurance documentation can be supplied on request.

18 COPYRIGHT

- 18.1 Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.
- 18.2 Licence will also be given to the archaeological curators to use the documentary archive for educational, public and research purposes.
- 18.3 In the case of non-satisfactory settlement of account then copyright will remain fully and exclusively with Archaeological Project Services. In these circumstances it will be an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 for the client to pass any report, partial report, or copy of same, to any third party. Reports submitted in good faith by Archaeological Project Services to any Planning Authority or archaeological curator will be removed from said planning Authority and/or archaeological curator. The Planning Authority and/or archaeological curator will be notified by Archaeological Project Services that the use of any such information previously supplied constitutes an infringement under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 and may result in legal action.
- 18.4 The author of any report or specialist contribution to a report shall retain intellectual copyright of their work and may make use of their work for educational or research purposes or for further publication.

19 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chapman, A., 200-1 Excavations at the Moat House Hotel, Northampton, 1998, *Northamptonshire Archaeology* 29

Williams, J., 1979 *St Peter's Street, Northampton, Excavations 1973-1976*

Appendix 2

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

No.	Description	Interpretation
001	Loose mid brown sandy silt, 80mm thick	Topsoil
002	Loose mid grey sand with limestone fragments, 70mm thick	Hardcore
003	Firm mixed mid brown and grey clayey silt with frequent ceramic building material, 0.2m thick	Make-up
004	Loose mid reddish brown brick rubble, >0.25m thick	Demolition/dumped deposit

Appendix 3

GLOSSARY

Context	An archaeological context represents a distinct archaeological event or process. For example, the action of digging a pit creates a context (the cut) as does the process of its subsequent backfill (the fill). Each context encountered during an archaeological investigation is allocated a unique number by the archaeologist and a record sheet detailing the description and interpretations of the context (the context sheet) is created and placed in the site archive. Context numbers are identified within the report text by brackets, <i>e.g.</i> (004).
Layer	A layer is a term to describe an accumulation of soil or other material that is not contained within a cut.
Medieval	The Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1066-1500.
Murage	Tax levied for building or repairing the walls of a town.
Post-medieval	The period following the Middle Ages, dating from approximately AD 1500-1800.
Prehistoric	The period of human history prior to the introduction of writing. In Britain the prehistoric period lasts from the first evidence of human occupation about 500,000 BC, until the Roman invasion in the middle of the 1 st century AD.
Romano-British	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 43-410 when the Romans occupied Britain.
Saxon	Pertaining to the period dating from AD 410-1066 when England was largely settled by tribes from northern Germany.

Appendix 4

THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of:

9	Context records
1	Photographic record sheet
1	Daily record sheet
1	Sheet of scale drawings
1	Stratigraphic matrix

All primary records are currently kept at:

Archaeological Project Services
The Old School
Cameron Street
Heckington
Sleaford
Lincolnshire
NG34 9RW

The ultimate destination of the project archive is Northampton Museum

Accession Number: *Pending*

Archaeological Project Services Site Code: NARS 06

The discussion and comments provided in this report are based on the archaeology revealed during the site investigations. Other archaeological finds and features may exist on the development site but away from the areas exposed during the course of this fieldwork. *Archaeological Project Services* cannot confirm that those areas unexposed are free from archaeology nor that any archaeology present there is of a similar character to that revealed during the current investigation.

Archaeological Project Services shall retain full copyright of any commissioned reports under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved; excepting that it hereby provides an exclusive licence to the client for the use of such documents by the client in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Project Specification.