



Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
'ST JOHNS AMBULANCE SITE', CHAPEL ROAD
WELDON
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

on behalf of Mr & Mrs Howley



Nigel Wilson HND AIFA

May 2004

ASC: 501/WCR03/2

Letchworth House
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall,
Milton Keynes MK6 1NE
Tel: 01908 608989 Fax: 01908 605700
Email: office@archaeological-services.co.uk
Website: www.archaeological-services.co.uk



Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	WCR03	<i>Project no:</i>	501
<i>County:</i>	Northamptonshire		
<i>District:</i>	Corby Borough		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Weldon		
<i>Parish:</i>	Weldon CP		
<i>NGR:</i>	SP 9258 8977		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.800 Sq metres		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Former St Johns Ambulance hall, parking and access		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of dormer bungalow		
<i>Extent of development:</i>			
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	01/00051/DPA		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr & Mrs Howley Ironworks Cottage Weldon Northants NN17 3HW		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Linda Howley		
<i>Telephone</i>		<i>Fax:</i>	

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Nigel Wilson	<i>Date:</i>	12 th May 2004
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

© Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

No part of this document is to be copied in any way without prior written consent.

Every effort is made to provide detailed and accurate information. However, Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies within this report.

© Ordnance Survey maps reproduced with the sanction of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

ASC Licence No. AL 100015154

CONTENTS

Summary	4
1. Introduction	4
2. Aims & Methods	7
3. Results.	8
4. Conclusions	10
5. Acknowledgements	11
6. Archive	11
7. References	12

Appendices:

1. Field Monitoring Sheet.....	13
2. SMR Summary Sheet	14

Figures:

1. General location	3
2. Site plan.....	6
3. Plan of the footing and drainage trenches	8

Plates:

Cover: General view of the site

1. Footing trench looking W.....	9
2. Footing trench looking E.....	9

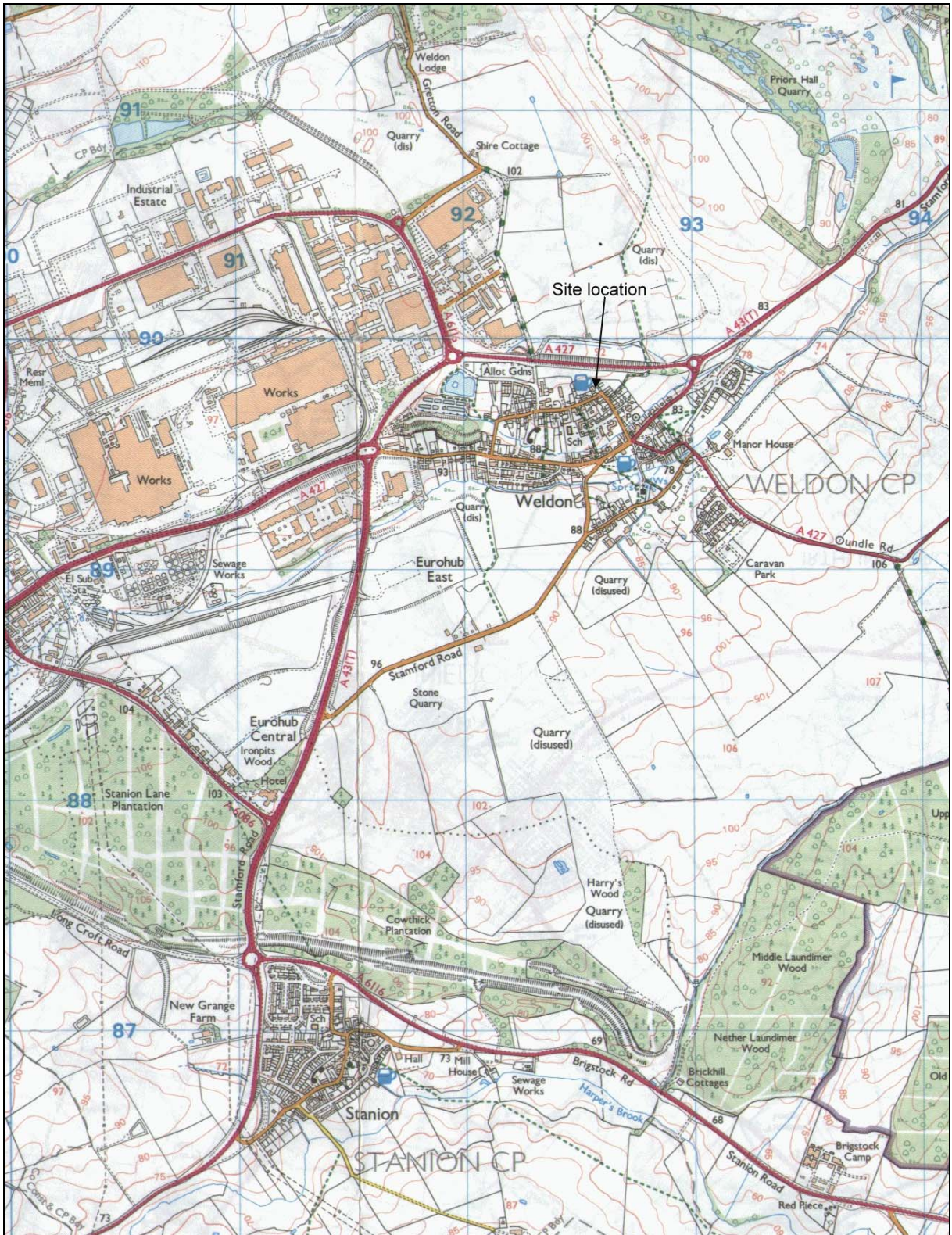


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

During May 2004 ASC Ltd undertook a watching brief at the former St Johns Ambulance site, Chapel Lane, Weldon. Northamptonshire. The work was required to fulfil a planning condition imposed by Corby Borough Council on the construction of a new dormer bungalow. No archaeologically significant finds were made during the watching brief.

1 Introduction

1.1 During May 2003 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief on the former *St Johns Ambulance site, Chapel Lane, Weldon. Northamptonshire* (NGR SP 9258 8977: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Howley, and was carried out according to a brief prepared by Myk Flitcroft of the Northamptonshire County Council Historic Environment Team (HET), and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ASC (Zeepvat 2003).

1.2 Reason for Work

Under current planning legislation archaeology can be a material factor in planning decisions. Planning Guidance Note 16 (PPG16) deals specifically with archaeology. When Mr & Mrs Howley submitted plans to build a dormer bungalow in Weldon to Corby Borough Council the HET recommended that a watching brief condition should be imposed. This recommendation was accepted and a condition requiring a watching brief was included in the granting of the planning permission.

1.3 Setting

1.3.1 Weldon village is located just over 2km east of the centre of Corby, in the borough of Corby (Fig. 1). The development site lies within the historic settlement boundary of the village, immediately north of the junction of Chapel Street and Bridge Street, centred on NGR SP 9258 8977 (Fig. 2). The site occupies an L-shaped area of *c.*800 square metres, comprising a narrow strip providing access to Chapel Road, and a larger roughly rectangular north-western part, extending behind the garden of 1 Chapel Road. About 30m to the north is Walnut Close, a modern housing development. To the west is open ground, and to the east are the grounds of Manor Field.

1.3.2 The site lies on a south-facing slope, at an elevation of *c.*88m AOD. Soils in the immediate area of the site appear to belong to the Ragdale association (Soil Survey 1983, 712g, comprising 'Slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged clayey and fine loamy over clayey soils. Some slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils, especially on slopes'. The underlying geology is a chalky till. Much of the area around Weldon, where the underlying geology comprises Jurassic ironstone, has been subject to ironstone extraction.

1.3.3 The site was most recently used as the local headquarters for the St Johns Ambulance brigade. The western part of the site was occupied by the brigade hall, with parking space to the east and a drive leading to Chapel Road.

1.4 Historical & Archaeological Background

- 1.4.1 The present Weldon village consists of two settlements, Great and Little Weldon, situated on either side of Willow Brook. The development site is located in Little Weldon. Settlement at Weldon has its origins in the Saxon period. Saxon burials were found during building work in the village in 1968, 300m south-east of the site (RCHME 1979, 164). Excavations in 1999 at 17 Chapel Road revealed a single late Saxon pit, and a range of medieval features (Morris 2000). A number of Saxon coins have also been found in the village (RCHME 1979, 164).
- 1.4.2 During the medieval period, Weldon was the focus for nationally important iron-working and stone-quarrying industries. There is evidence that these activities were pursued in the late Saxon and possibly Roman periods also. At the Little Weldon Roman villa site, 400m north-east of the site, excavations in the 1950s revealed a workshop containing three furnaces, probably used for iron working (RCHME 1979, 164). Limestone from the Weldon quarries was much in demand in the medieval period for major buildings. It was said to have been used in the construction of Old St Paul's Cathedral, and has been identified at Norwich Cathedral.
- 1.4.3 Recent archaeological investigations in Weldon have revealed evidence for medieval and post-medieval occupation in the village. Discoveries in Chapel Road have been mentioned above: excavations in 2001 in advance of housing development at Deene End, 500m to the east of the site, revealed three phases of medieval stone building, an earlier post-built structure and extensive medieval quarrying and associated features (Thorne 2002). In 1990, an evaluation in Church Street, 500m south of the site, revealed a substantial limestone quarry, backfilled with medieval pottery, charcoal, and slag from iron working.
- 1.4.4 The brief notes that the development site occupies a 'backland' position away from the frontage of Chapel Road, where evidence for the internal organisation and use of the medieval tenement plot may survive in the form of buried archaeological remains. The investigations detailed above have shown that medieval structures and features can survive in this area, though the brief also notes that trial excavations in the paddock adjoining the site revealed no evidence for significant archaeological remains.

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief the aims of the watching brief were:

- to seek to identify and record any archaeological features or remains revealed in the course of construction work.

2.2 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief, which required:

- a watching brief on groundworks.
- contingency provision for more detailed investigation of significant archaeology, if revealed
- on completion of the watching brief, preparation of a report summarising and interpreting the results

2.3 Standards

The work conforms to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

3 Results

- 2.1 Observations and appropriate notes were made on all of the footing trenches for the new building prior to the concrete being poured. The trenches were cut to *c.*1.2m depth using a JCB type excavator fitted with a 0.6m bucket. The natural subsoil in the base of the trenches comprised either decayed sandstone/ ironstone or clay. Natural deposits typically extended to within about 0.4m of the surface. Above the natural strata there was a layer of highly disturbed soil containing some modern material including building stone, probably associated with the construction/ demolition of the St Johns Ambulance hall.
- 2.2 No evidence for occupation of the site earlier than the St Johns hall was seen during the watching brief. As the proposed drain lines closely follow the wall lines they have not been monitored, but it seems highly unlikely that they would reveal any significantly different evidence from that seen in the main footing trenches 0.5m away.

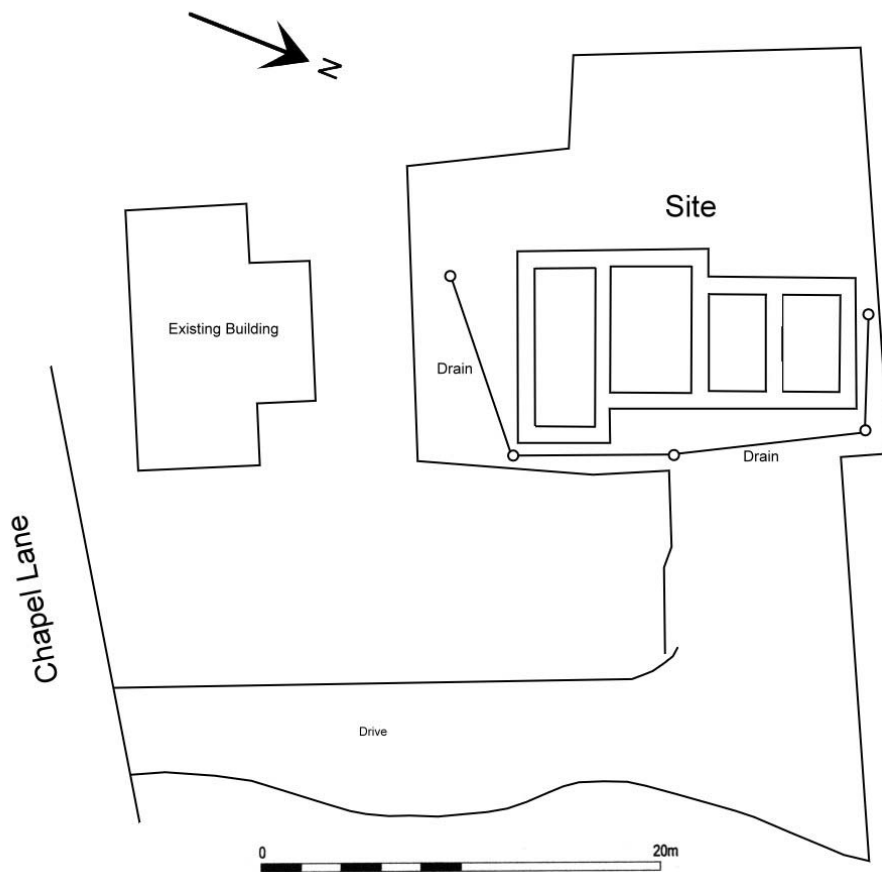


Figure 3: Layout plan of the footing and drainage trenches



Plate 1: Footing trench looking W



Plate 2: Footing trench looking E

4. Conclusions

- 4.1 The watching brief on the site of the former St Johns Ambulance hall has clearly demonstrated that, like the adjacent paddock where the trial excavations took place, the current site does not contain any significant archaeological remains. No pits or other evidence to suggest that the site formed the back of tenement plots was observed during the watching brief. The site owner Linda Howley has suggested that the site originally formed part of the kitchen garden associated with the nearby manor house, which is sited to the east of the site. (pers comm. L Howley).

5. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Mr & Mrs Howley for commissioning ASC to undertake the watching brief on their behalf. Myk Flitcroft of the HET prepared the brief and approved the project design, which was prepared by Bob Zeepvat. The monitoring visit was made by Nigel Wilson.

6. Archive

6.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheet
6. List of photographs/slides
7. Digital photographs on CD
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

6.2 The archive will be deposited with Northamptonshire archaeological storage facility when available. Temporarily stored at ASC's offices in Milton Keynes.

7. Bibliography

IFA 2000 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.

IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.

Morris S 2000 'Weldon, 17 Chapel Road', *South Midlands Archaeology* **30**, 42.

RCHME 1979 *An Inventory of Archaeological Sites in Central Northamptonshire*. Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (London).

Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpندن).

Thorne A 2002 'Weldon, Deene End', *South Midlands Archaeology* **32**, 31.

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets



A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Chapel Lane, Weldon		Project No/Code: 501/WCR03		Sheet: 1 of 1		
		Date of visit: 10/5/2004				
Client/Developer: Mr & Mrs Howley						
Contact: Mr & Mrs Howley				Phone:		
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 7.30		Finish: 10.45		
Completed by: Nigel Wilson						
Development Type:						
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Dry after a wet weekend. Site surface cut up by the JCB excavating the trenches						
Observations: Trenches all opened. No significant archaeology. About 0.4m disturbed soil containing some rubble Probably from construction of the St Johns hall. Natural seen in the base of all trenches comprises decayed sand/ ironstone or clay. Trenches 0.6m wide typically 1.2m deep. Linda Howley suggests that the site might be part of the manor kitchen garden thus not the rear of tenement plots. Drainage runs follow wall lines, about 0.5m out from the walls.						
Comments: No further visits required						

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003

Appendix 2: SMR Summary Sheet

SMR Record Number	Parish Weldon	Site Name St Johns Ambulance site, Chapel Road, Weldon
Date of Fieldwork May 2004	Grid ref. SP 9258 8977	Fieldworker Nigel Wilson AIFA (ASC Ltd)
Sponsor Mr & Mrs Howley	Activity Watching brief	
Landowner name/address: Mr & Mrs Howley Ironworks Cottage Weldon Northants NN17 3HW		
Finds location N/a	Finds Destination N/a	
Records location ASC Ltd, Letchworth House, Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall, Milton Keynes MK6 1NE	Records Destination Northamptonshire archive storage when available	
Finds Quantity N/a	Records Quantity Monitoring sheet, report, CD	
<p>Summary of Results</p> <p><i>During May 2004 ASC Ltd undertook a watching brief at the former St Johns Ambulance site, Chapel Lane, Weldon. Northamptonshire. The work was required to fulfil a planning condition imposed by Corby Borough Council on the construction of a new dorma bungalow. No archaeologically significant finds were made during the watching brief.</i></p>		