

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT
122 BRACKLEY ROAD, TOWCESTER,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE
(NGR 468597 248518).**

On behalf of

Mr & Mrs D Robinson

MAY 2015

REPORT FOR Mr & Mrs D Robinson
122 Brackley Road
Towcester
Northamptonshire
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FIELDWORK 12th May 2015

REPORT ISSUED 20th May 2015

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Site Code TOBR 14
JMHS Project No: 3004

Archive Location The archive is currently held at JMHS and will be deposited in due course with the relevant museum when one is available

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Summary

On the 12th May 2015 John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at 122 Brackley Road, Towcester (S/2014/0169/FUL), on behalf of Mr & Mrs D Robinson. The watching brief was carried out during ground-works at the proposed location of the basement. The watching brief identified the geological horizon at a depth of c. 0.35m. The geological horizon was overlain by a modern brick path, and rubble associated with the recent demolition of the house and garage. The watching brief involved the monitoring the removal of the overburden onto the geological horizon. No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified.

1 INTRODUCTION**1.1 Site Location and Geology (Figure1)**

The site is located at 122 Brackley Road, Towcester (NGR 468597 248518). The site is residential. The underlying geology is Boulder Clay. The site lies at approximately 100m AOD.

1.2 Planning Background

Planning permission has been granted for the demolition of the existing house and garage and construction of one new residential dwelling including garage and basement (S/2014/0169/FUL). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced, and approved by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor of Northamptonshire County Council, which outlined the method by which the archaeological work would be carried out in order to identify and record any archaeological remains existing on the development site.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The proposed site is located in an area of archaeological potential west of the area of Roman and medieval Towcester.

Archaeological observation to the west in the early 1990s recorded a probable Saxon Cemetery, and finds from metal detecting in the area also suggest Romano-British, medieval and post-medieval activity.

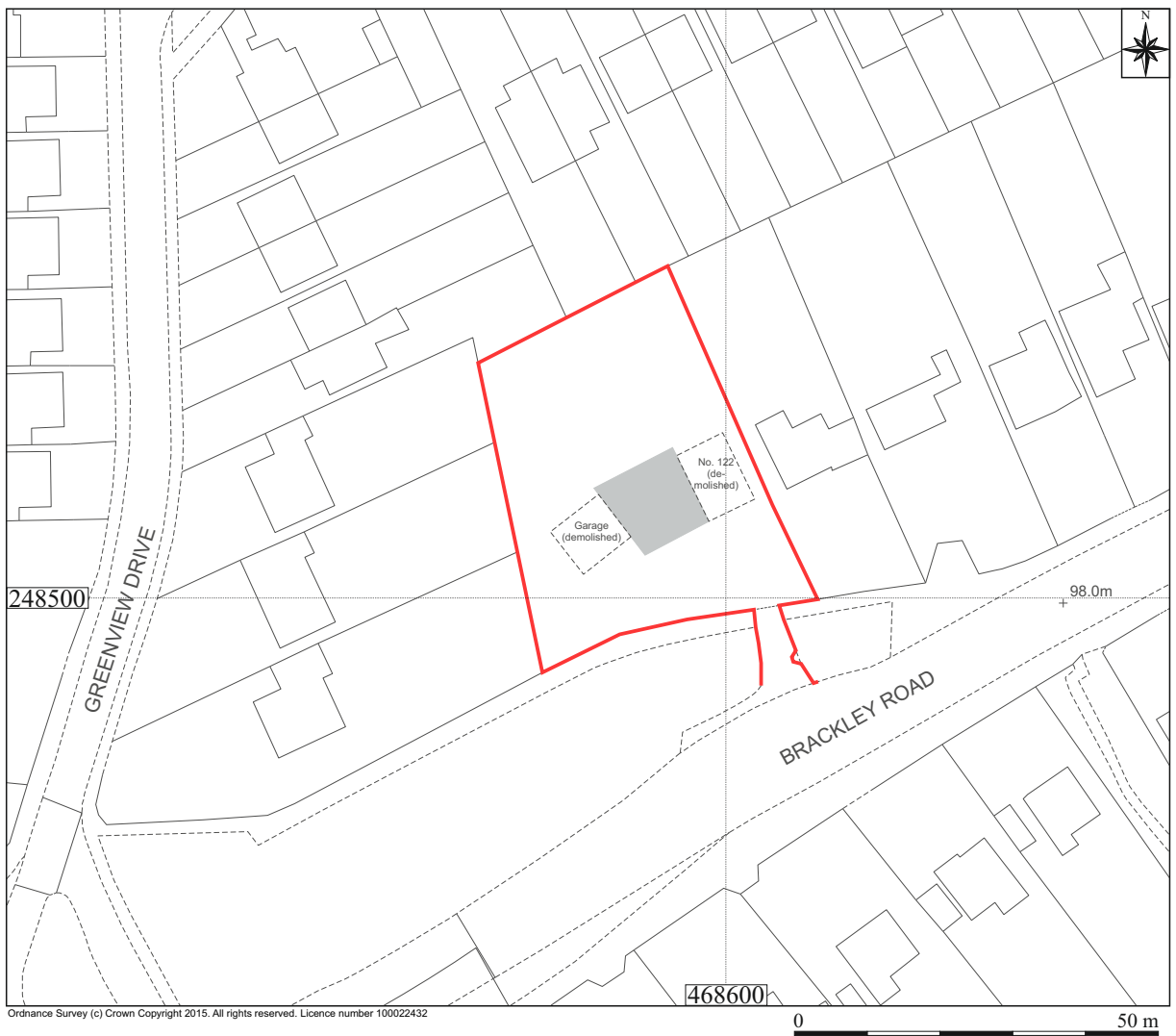
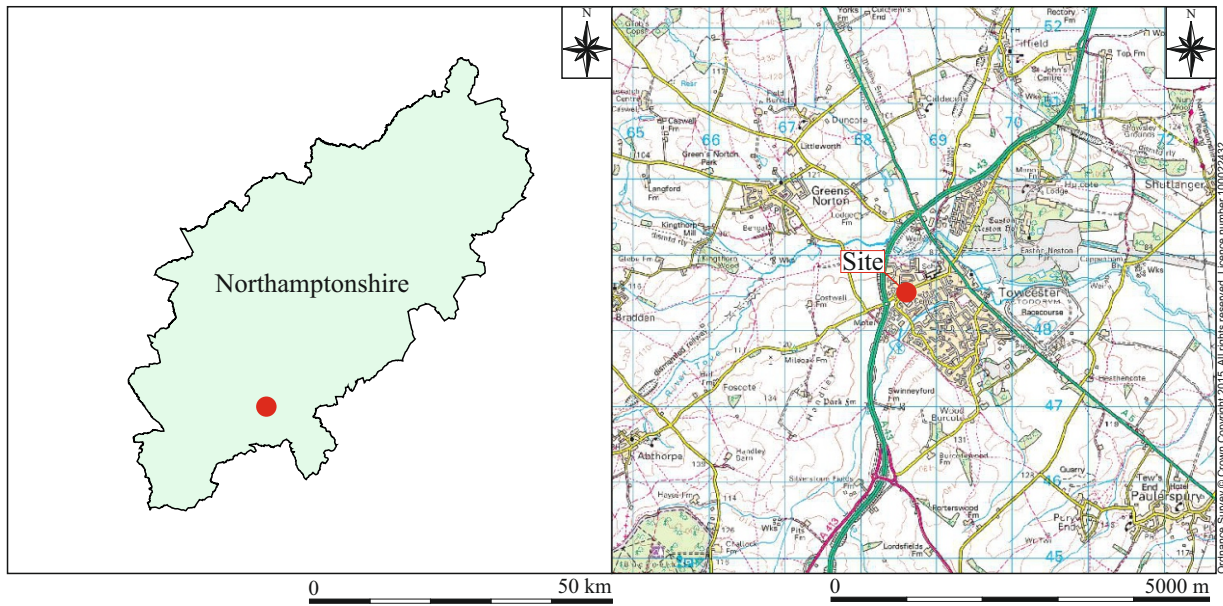
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims as laid out in the WSI were:

To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

In particular:

- establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site
- establishing the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes



Key Site boundary Monitored area

Figure 1: Site location

- recovering artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region
- recovering palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions as an intrinsic part of the investigation.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the Assistant Archaeological Advisor of Northamptonshire County Council.

3.2 Methodology

Ground reduction of the development footprint was carried out with a 15 T tracked excavator fitted with a ditching bucket.

An archaeologist was present on site during ground reduction of the location of the proposed basement.

Any archaeological deposits and features revealed were to be cleaned by hand and recorded in plan before being excavated and recorded at an appropriate level. Any archaeological features or other remains i.e. concentrations of artefacts, were to be recorded by written, drawn and photographic record. Where archaeological features were to be exposed during ground reduction but otherwise would remain unaffected they were to be recorded only by plan and written description. All artefacts were to be collected and retained except for concentrations of building material where a representative sample would be kept.

4 RESULTS

All features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers shown in brackets () refer feature fills or deposits. Context numbers without brackets refer to cuts.

The geological horizon (1) was encountered at a general depth of 0.35m (c. 100m AOD), and consisted of a moderately compact mid brown silty clay. The geological horizon was cut by a large (c, 10m x 4m) modern intrusion with two *in situ* piles, 4, to the west, and clearly associated with the (now demolished) garage. The geological deposit (1) was overlain by turf and topsoil (2) towards the north, and a modern brick surface (3) and associated bedding layers to the south.

5 FINDS

No finds were recovered or noted during the course of the archaeological work.



Watching brief area (view to north-east).

6 DISCUSSION

No significant archaeological features or deposits were identified. The ground reduction was carried out with a machine fitted with a ditching bucket, providing a clear and level horizon. The location of the demolished garage was obscured by demolition rubble, although had clearly undergone significant underpinning which partly extended into the watching brief area.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014 *Standard and Guidance for Watching Briefs*.

John Moore heritage Services, 2015, *Written Scheme of Investigation (Project No 3004)*.

Appendix A Context Table

Context	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Finds	Interpretation	Date
1	Layer	Geology					Boulder Clay	
2	Layer	Layer					Turf and Topsoil	Modern
3	Layer	Layer					Mod Brick Path	Modern
4	Layer	Cut		4m	10m		Modern Intrusion	Modern