



163 The Park

Market Bosworth, Leicestershire.

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Market Bosworth, Nuneaton, Leicestershire, CV13 0LP.

Archaeological Strip, Map & Sample Excavation (ASMSE).

NGR: *SK 41525 03352*

Site code: *MB23*

Museum accession number: *X.A12.2023*

OASIS ID: *110archa1-515244*

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14th May 2023

one ten archaeology

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Frontispiece view from the northwest corner of the excavation area.

SUMMARY

Archaeological Strip, Map & Sample Excavation (ASMSE) was carried out during April 2023 at 163 The Park, Market Bosworth, Nuneaton, Leicestershire prior to the construction of a single storey extension. The HER showed that the site lies in area of archaeological importance. The building is located nearby the historic settlement core of Market Bosworth, and on the park pale of Southwood Deer Park. There was also potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval buried remains to be found within this area and there was also good potential for significant post-medieval buried remains within the surroundings of The Gatehouse from activities associated with the building itself.

The area of the proposed development was stripped of the overlying soil layers revealing the surface of the natural clay substrate, within this clay was a shallow, linear, hollow-like feature aligned northeast-southwest with an undulating base. The nature and date of this feature is unclear, but its alignment coinciding with a boundary marked on the OS 1903 may be significant.

Filling the linear feature and overlying the remainder of the clay was the remains of a thin undated relict soil layer representing the earliest soil horizon. In the absence of any finds the evidence suggests little human activity before the construction of the house other than that associated with the former agricultural use of the land. Truncating this deposit was the former brick-built well associated with the house which was built in 1885. The evidence suggests that the well was capped and buried below ground with water drawn through a lead pipe existing through a hole between two capping stones which then continued eastwards connecting with the pump in the former yard area. The walled remains of outbuildings marking the site of the former kitchen yard and WC were partly revealed in the southeast corner confirming the outline configuration of the yard area as shown on the OS 1886 map.

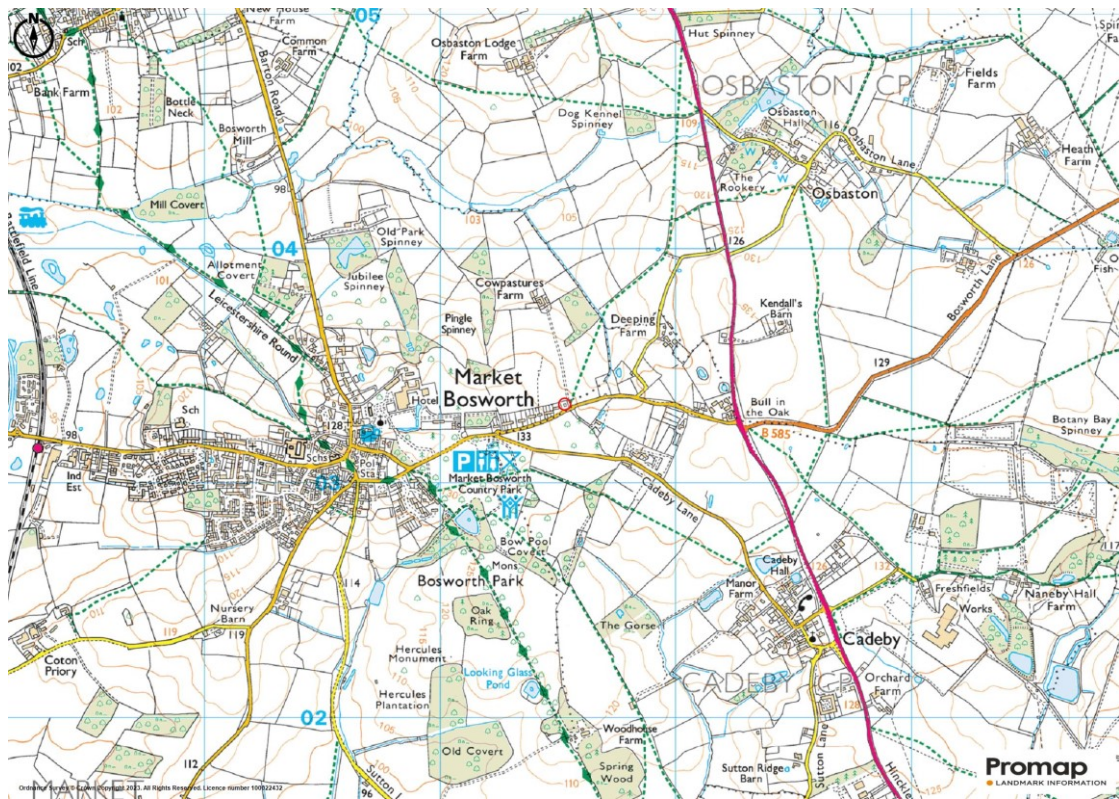


Fig. 1: site location circled in red.

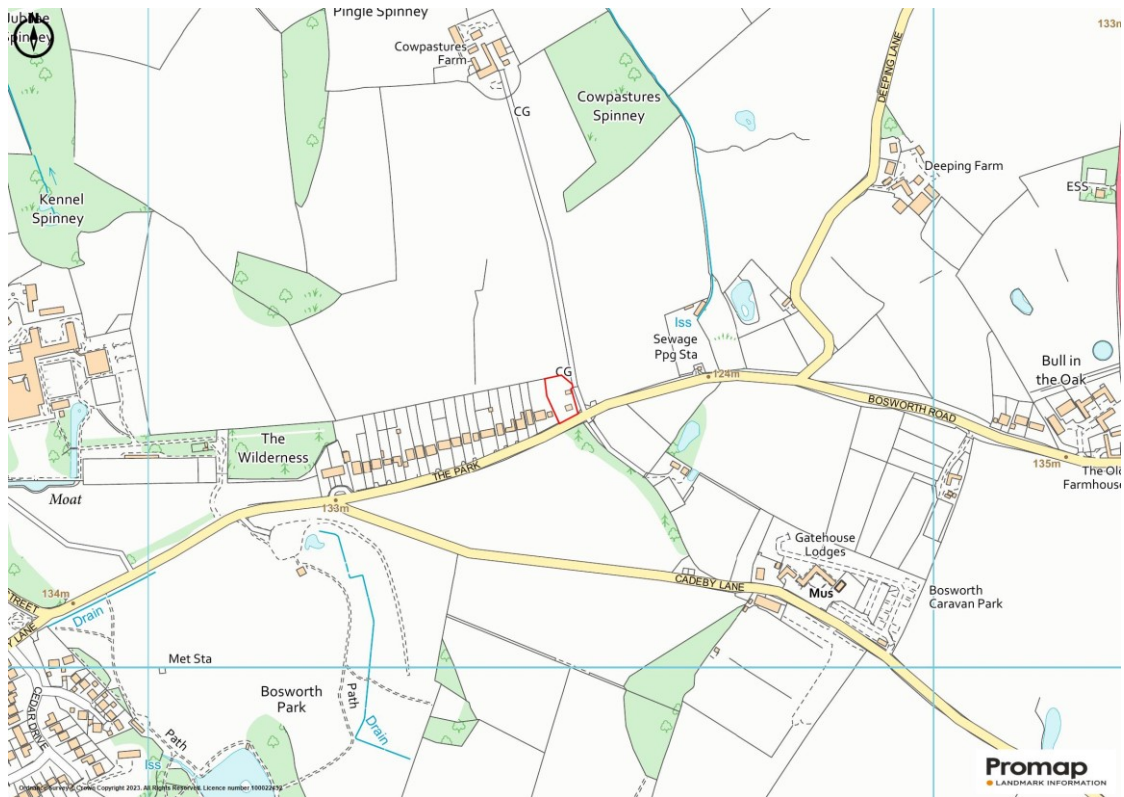


Fig. 2: site location outlined in red.

INTRODUCTION

Location and scope of work

This document sets out the results of an Archaeological Strip, Map & Sample Excavation (ASMSE) carried out between 3rd and 5th of April 2023 at 163 The Park, Market Bosworth, Nuneaton, Leicestershire, CV13 0LP. Planning permission had been granted (*planning Ref: 22/00076/HOU*) for a single storey extension and lowered driveway including alterations to the Grade II Listed Dwelling. The proposed development may have impacted on archaeological remains and permission was subject to ASMSE of the main area of impact, the footprint of the new extension. The planning permission was also subject to historic building recording prior to the excavation (Atherton & Cook, 2023).

The Historic Environment Record (HER) shows us that the site is of archaeological importance. The building is located nearby the historic settlement core of Market Bosworth (*mle2935*), and on the park pale of Southwood Deer Park (*mle2931*).

There was potential for medieval buried remains to be found within this area. A prehistoric flint scatter (*mle24214*) and a Roman coin hoard (*mle10309*), recovered 650m and 510m respectively to the SE of the application area, indicate further potential for remains of these periods within the site.

There was also good potential for significant post-medieval buried remains within the surroundings of The Gatehouse from activities associated with the building itself. This information has the potential to further contextualise the building and its development as a gateway feature for the park.

Geology, topography & historical setting

Market Bosworth is a market town and civil parish in western Leicestershire. The application site lies on the north-eastern end of the town at a height of about 124m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and is represented by a roughly rectangular shaped plot amounting to an area of about 1,700m²; the underlying geology comprises grey, brown clay with flint and chalk clasts (BGS, 2010).

HISTORICAL and ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Historical Background

Market Bosworth is most famously near to the site of the decisive final battle of the Wars of the Roses. The town's historic cattle market closed in 1996. Building work here and at other sites has revealed evidence of a settlement on the hill since the Bronze Age. Remains of a Roman villa have been found on the east side of Barton Road. Bosworth as an Anglo-Saxon village dates from the C8. Before the Norman Conquest of 1066, there were two manors at Bosworth.

Following the Norman conquest, as recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086, both the Anglo-Saxon manors and the village were part of the lands awarded by William the Conqueror to the Count of Meulan from Normandy, Robert de Beaumont, 1st Earl of Leicester. Subsequently, the village passed by marriage dowry to the English branching of the French House of Harcourt. King Edward I gave a royal charter to Sir William Harcourt allowing a market to be held every Wednesday. The village took the name Market Bosworth in 1285 and was established as a town. The two oldest buildings in Bosworth, St. Peter's Church, and the Red Lion pub, were built during the C14.

The Battle of Bosworth took place to south of the town in 1485 as the final significant battle in the Wars of the Roses between the House of Lancaster and the House of York, resulting in the death of King Richard III.

Archaeological Background

A HER search has been completed on a 500m radius of the site, centred on *SP 41525 03352* and a summary of the details are outlined below.

Southwood Park (*mle2931*) is mentioned in 1292/3 and is probably on the site of the modern Bosworth Park. Evidence that the parks to the north and south of the Hall were once organised in a much more formal pattern. The curving boundaries of this park are still apparently to the south of Market Bosworth, enclosing an area of woods and grassland, and including several fishponds. The park is mentioned in 1232 and 1293.

The Gatehouse at no. 163, The Park is a detached, two storey Grade II listed dwelling, described by the HER as the lodge to Bosworth Park, built late C19 in a neo-Dutch style (*mle12165*) as a lodge for Bosworth Park alongside the adjacent C17 park gate pillars, which mark the entrance to the Market Bosworth Country Park.

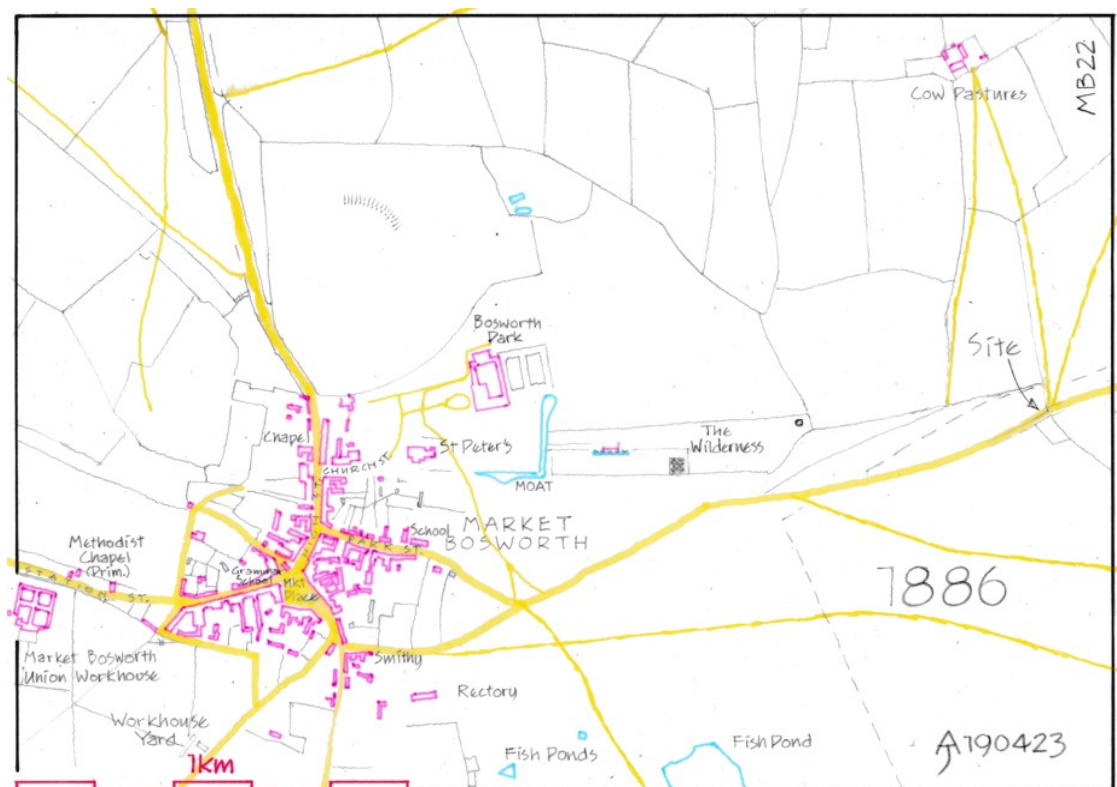


Fig. 3: Historic Environment plan, 1886.

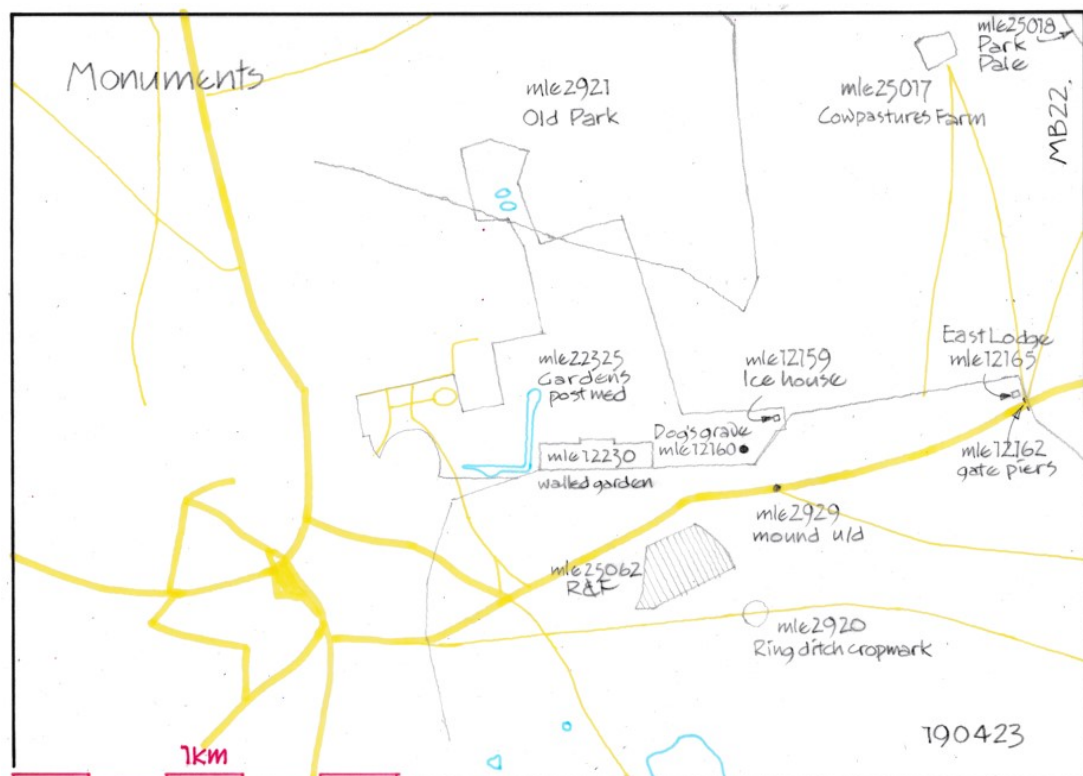


Fig. 4: Historic Environment plan showing monuments.

The four gate piers to Bosworth Park to the front of no. 163 are also Grade II listed ([mle12162](#)). Four gate piers forming gateway to park. Probably late C19, but in style of C17. Rusticated limestone ashlar. Taller inner piers have fluted applied shafts with scrolled volutes on inner face. Ramified capping urns above cornice. Smaller outer piers are similarly detailed, but with ball finials.

METHODOLOGY

Aims of the investigation

The aim of the work was to carry out a programme of Archaeological Strip, Map & Sample Excavation (ASMSE) prior to development on the site. ASMSE falls within the category of Archaeological Excavation as defined by The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA).

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) defines an Archaeological Excavation as 'a programme of controlled, intrusive fieldwork with defined research objectives which examines, records, and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within a specified area or site on land, inter-tidal zone or underwater. The records made and objects gathered during fieldwork are studied and the results of that study published in detail appropriate to the project design' (CIfA 2014a).

The CIfA defines the purpose of an Archaeological Excavation thus (ibid): • The purpose of excavation is to examine the archaeological resource within a given area or site within a framework of defined research objectives, to seek a better understanding of and compile a lasting record of that resource, to analyse and interpret the results, and disseminate them.

In general, the aims of the excavation were to include:

- i) establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site.
- ii) recovering artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region.
- iii) recovering palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

More specifically, the SMSE will investigate the potential for:

iv) finds and/or deposits of prehistoric and Roman date related to ([HER ref.: m1e9941-2](#)).

v) significant post-medieval buried remains within the surroundings of The Gatehouse from activities associated with the building itself. This information has the potential to further contextualise the building and its development as a gateway feature for the park.

Field methodology

The archaeological field work and post-excavation assessment was carried out in accordance with the code of conduct (CIfA, 2019) and the standards and guidance for archaeological excavations produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2014).

The SMSE area included the footprint of the new kitchen extension and comprised an area totalling approximately 112m² and was mechanically stripped using a toothless bucket, under archaeological supervision, to the surface level of the natural clay substrate (104).

RESULTS

The surface of the natural substrate (104) comprising a light orangey-brown, gravelly clay was observed throughout the entire ASMSE area. Along the southern and northern edges of the excavation, it was recorded at a level height of approx. 127m AOD. Within the surface of this deposit along the central area of the excavation, aligned east-west, was a shallow, linear hollow-like feature about 3.0m wide and up to 0.30m deep at its centre. The bottom of this feature was noticeably undulating throughout most of its length, and it appears to continue beyond both edges of the excavation (see Plates 2, 3, 4 & 12).

Overlying the clay across the excavated area at varying levels of thickness, was a thin undated soil layer (103) consisting of a mid-brown, clayey-silt with no noticeable inclusions. It was 0.15m thick at the southern end of the excavation tapering to about 0.07m thick towards the north end.

Truncating the soil layer (103) and located roughly within the central area of the excavation was a brick-built well (106). The wall of the well was constructed from a single course of bricks with an internal diameter of 1.18m. and an external diameter of 1.28m, it was at least 5m deep. Capping the well

beneath the overlying soil layer (101) were two large, almost semi-circular, flat pieces of lias stone, clearly shaped further so that each stone neatly covers one half of the top of the well. The well itself was unfilled and water was observed at its base. A single lead pipe leading to the bottom exited the east side of the well through a small hole between the two capping stones and continued towards the position of the well pump which was originally situated in the yard immediately on the north side of the house (OS 1886).

Partly overlying the soil layer (103) within roughly the central area of the excavation was an undated isolated layer (102) of what was interpreted as 1885 construction debris, consisting of a creamy-white, lime mortar deposit, it was about 0.05m thick along the southern edge of the excavation increasing to about 0.25m thick towards the centre of the excavation (see Plates 7 & 8). Its east-west extent is recorded in the section (1b) along the southern edge of the excavation where it continues beyond the edge, whilst its northern extent ends about half a metre short of the location of the well (see section 1a).

Sealing both the waste mortar deposit (102) and the soil layer (103) throughout the majority of the excavated area and also the well capping stones was a 0.50m thick layer (101) of re-deposited orangey-brown, gravelly-clay. Its relationship with the well clearly indicates that the soil was deposited after 1885. A single residual C19 glass bottle was retrieved from this deposit.

In the western half of the excavation area, truncating the clay substrate, is an existing salt-glazed ceramic pipe leading from the roof gutter down pipes on the west side of the house. It enters the excavation area from northwest corner of the excavation and curves eastwards exiting on that side. A lead pipe, presumably an earlier conduit for water and now disused was also recorded in the same area.

In the southeast corner of the excavation in the area are a series of brick walls and their concrete foundations representing the former outbuildings, a series of redeposited soil layers (107, 108, 109 & 110) associated with their construction and subsequent service pipes were recorded. The earliest of these deposits (108) consisted of a 0.50m thick yellowish-brown gravelly-clay which tapers off just beyond the most northern wall of the former outbuilding. This is overlain by (107), a layer of re-deposited construction debris as evidenced by the frequent inclusion of red brick fragments. The soil layers (109 & 110), consisting of a brown clay and a mixed soil and building debris relate to a former drainage pipe trench aligned north-south along the east side of the excavated area.

FINDS

A single, residually deposited C19 glass bottle was recovered during the excavation from deposit (101). This was not retained.

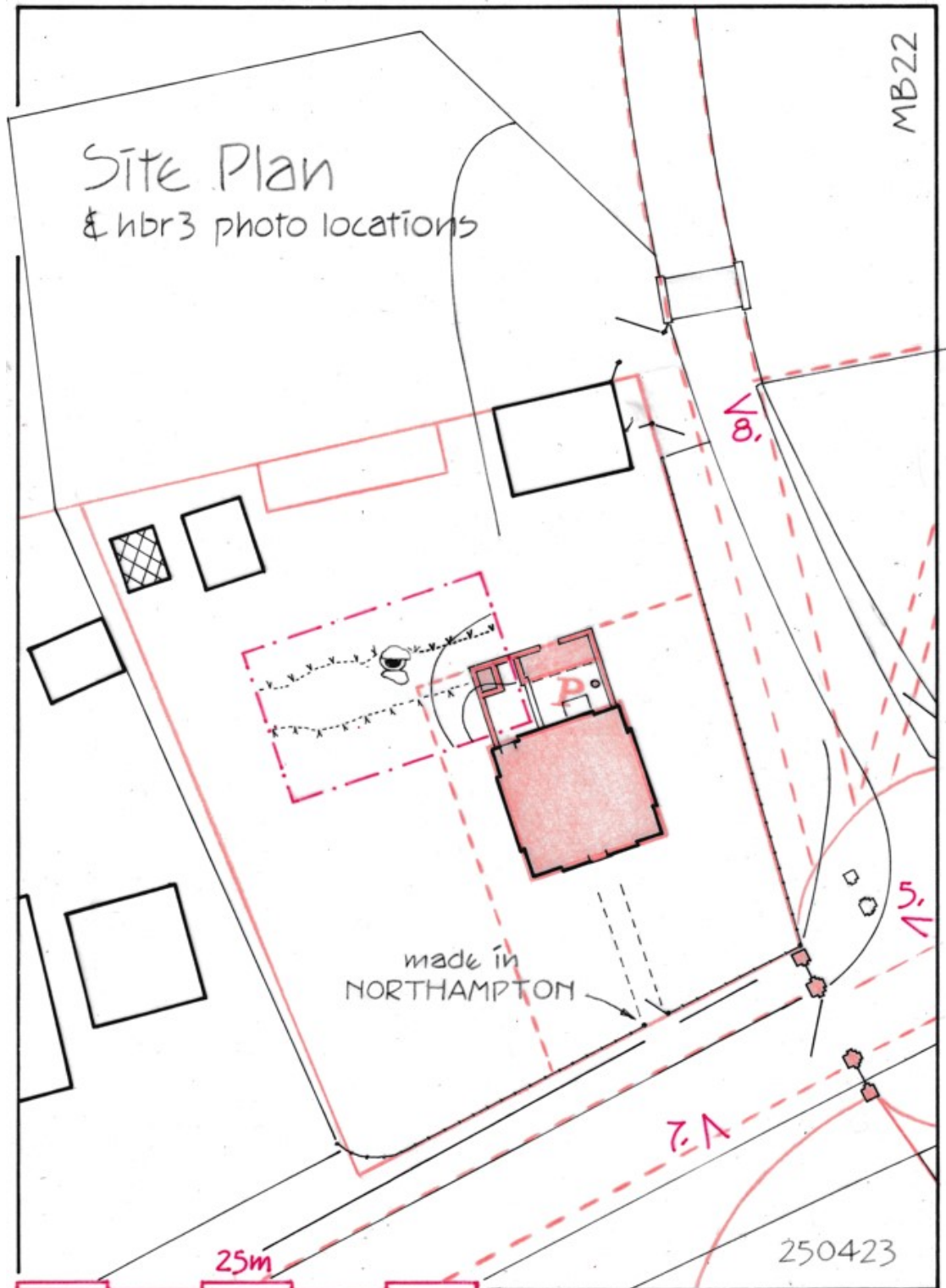


Fig. 5: site plan showing ASMSE area, also showing the main archaeological features (1903 OS features shown in pink).

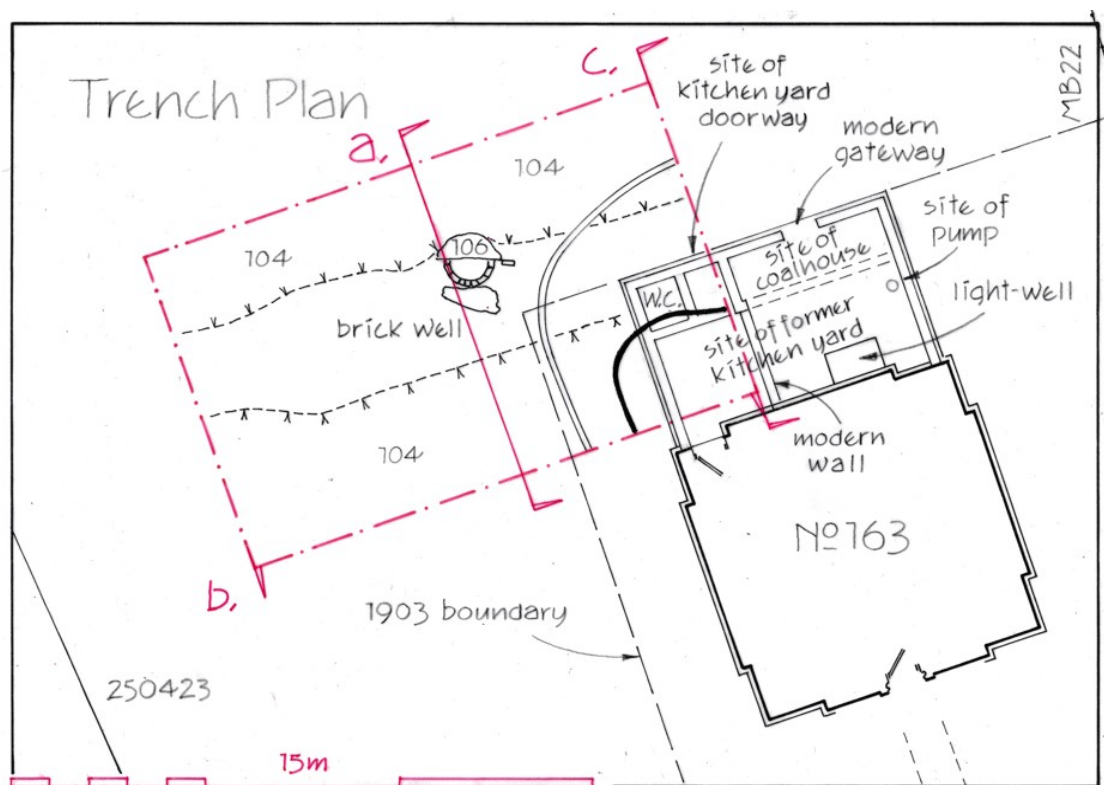


Fig. 6: trench plan showing the linear hollow-like feature, brick well, building foundations and services.

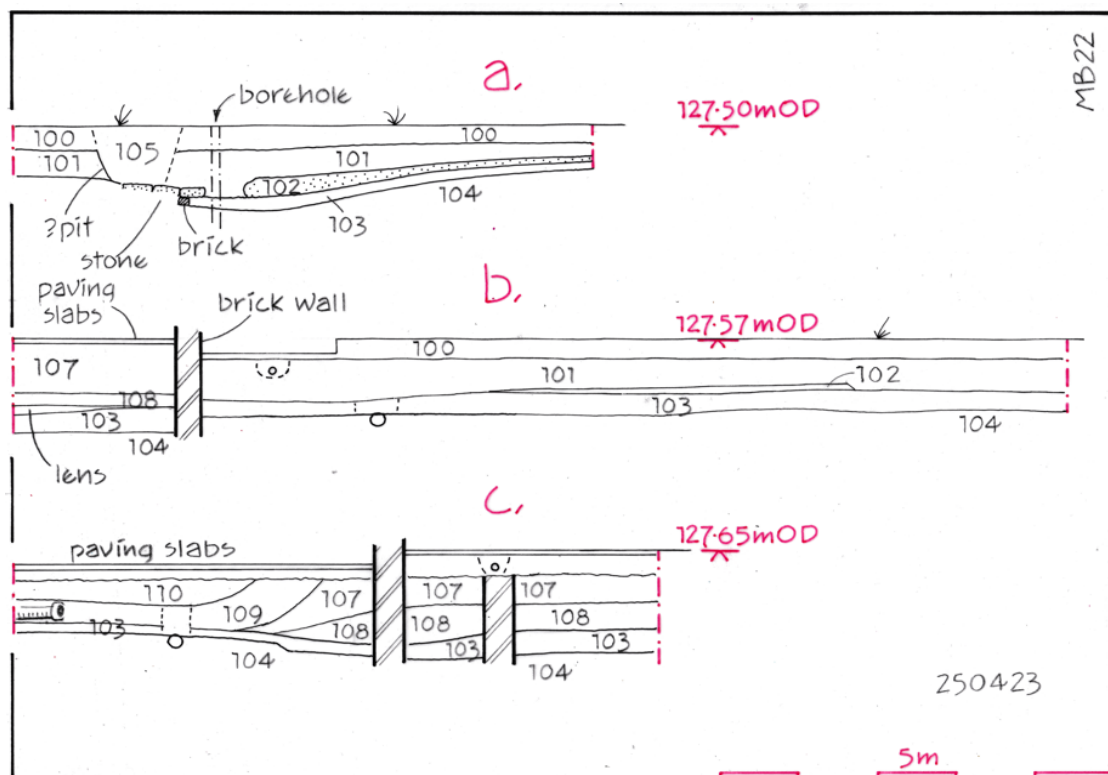


Fig. 7: trench sections.

DISCUSSION

The HER shows us that the site lies in area of archaeological importance. The building is located nearby the historic settlement core of Market Bosworth ([mle2935](#)), and on the park pale of Southwood Deer Park ([mle2931](#)). There was also potential for prehistoric, Roman and medieval buried remains to be found within this area including good potential for significant post-medieval buried remains within the surroundings of The Gatehouse from activities associated with the building itself.

The area of the proposed development was stripped of the overlying soil layers revealing the surface of the natural clay substrate (104) across the excavated area. Within this clay was a shallow (up to 0.30m deep and 3.0m wide), linear, hollow-like feature aligned northeast-southwest, with an undulating base. The nature and date of this feature is unclear, whether it is a natural feature or constructed could not be understood, but its alignment, coinciding with a boundary marked on the OS 1903 may be significant. Interestingly, the OS 1886 describes a footpath around the position of the feature, but this is not indicated with dashed lines in the way that footpaths are usually illustrated.

Filling the linear hollow feature and overlying the remainder of the clay substrate was the remains of a thin undated relict subsoil layer (103) representing the earliest soil horizon. In the absence of any finds pre-dating the C19 the evidence suggests little human activity before this date other than that associated with the former agricultural use of the land. The isolated spread of lime mortar debris (102) is probably associated with the construction of the house and is perhaps an indication of the working area where the lime mortar was being mixed during the brickwork. Truncating the soil layer (103) was a former brick well (106) presumably constructed in conjunction with the building in 1885.

How the well appears to have functioned in relation to the ground conditions in 1885 can perhaps be explained by the archaeological evidence, this suggests that rather than the well structure consisting of a well wall standing above ground level, with perhaps a wooden cover, the well was capped below ground, sealed by the thick layer of redeposited soil (101) with water drawn through a lead pipe exiting through a hole between the two capping stones which then continued eastwards beyond the excavation connecting with the pump in the former yard area. The stones appeared shaped to create a firm cover and placed in a manner that would prevent soil from above entering inside the well.

The walled remains of the former outbuildings marking the site of the former kitchen yard and WC were partly revealed in the southeast corner confirming the outline configuration of the yard area as shown on the OS 1886 map. Services associated with the house were also revealed in this area mainly a salt-glazed ceramic pipe linked to the roof gutters on the west side of the house, this pipe, truncating the clay, curves eastwards continuing beyond the edge of the excavation. Another disused lead pipe, similar to the pipe associated with the well was also observed in the southeast corner of the excavation.

Archive location & dissemination of the results

The archaeological documentary archive arising from the work will be appropriately conserved and deposited with the Leicestershire Museum Service. The digital archive arising from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) via the online portal OASIS.

A summary of the results of the work will be published in the Transactions of the Leicestershire Archaeological and Historical Society.

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PLATES



Plate 1: ASMSE area, view southeast.



Plate 2: ASMSE area, view northeast.



Plate 3: ASMSE area, view west.



Plate 4: remains of former outbuildings, view southwest.



Plate 5: stone capping for brick well (106). Note lead pipe to pump exiting on far side.



Plate 6: detail of brick well and lead pipe



Plate 7: section 1a.



Plate 8: section 1b.



Plate 9: section 1c.



Plate 10: section 1c, south end.



Plate 11: ASMSE area, view north.



Plate 12: ASMSE area, view west.