



Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary Report

Land at Mulberry Farm

High Street

Stoke Golding

Leicestershire

Report No. 303

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Summary

- S1 A planning application (22/00661/FUL) has been approved by Hinckley and Bosworth Borough Council for the “demolition of the existing Mulberry Farm buildings, retention of Mulberry Farmhouse and proposed erection of 25no. residential units with associated parking facilities, amenity space, landscaping, village green, pond and paddock” at Mulberry Farm, High Street, Stoke Golding.*
- S2 Groundworks Archaeology produced an overarching archaeological management plan (AMP) which covers all aspects of the project. This summary report presents the results of the phase 1 watching brief which was maintained on the demolition phase of the project.*
- S3 The watching brief revealed that the buildings within the site were for the most part constructed on raised platforms of rubble with a concrete raft poured over the top. Where foundations were present, they were extremely shallow and were intended to retain the rubble make up. The demolition activity was limited to the hard standing and rafts with the rubble left in situ.*

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Groundworks Archaeology was commissioned by Stronghold Homes to undertake a programme of archaeological mitigation on land at Mulberry Farm, Stoke Golding, Leicestershire. Consultee advice provided by Mr William Kelly (dated 17th July 2024) recommended a staged programme of archaeological mitigation under the overarching principle of an archaeological mitigation plan (AMP).
- 1.2 An AMP was subsequently produced by Groundworks Archaeology (2025) which includes a fully detailed planning background, historical and archaeological background and details regarding resourcing, data management and archive protocol etc. A WSI was also produced for the phase 1 watching brief which was focussed on the demolition of the former agricultural buildings within the site. This summary report presents the results.

2. Site Location and Description

- 2.1 The proposed development site is located in Stoke Golding, in the administrative district of Hinckley and Bosworth. It is situated approximately 4km north-north-west of Hinckley and c.7km north-north-east of Nuneaton. The site is approximately 1.1 hectares and presently occupied by a number of farm buildings. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 3972 9743 at an approximate height of 106m AOD (figure 1).

Geology

- 2.2 The British Geological Survey records the bedrock geology as the Gunthorpe Member, a mudstone sedimentary bedrock formed between 247.1 and 237 million years ago during the Triassic period.
- 2.3 Superficial deposits are recorded as the Wigston Member, a sand and gravel sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present during the Quaternary period. The northern corner of the site is recorded as the Bosworth Clay Member. A sedimentary superficial deposit formed between 480 and 423 thousand years ago during the Quaternary period.

3 Aims and objectives of the project

- 3.1 ClfA defines archaeological monitoring and recording as “a formal programme of observation, investigation and recording conducted during works carried out for non-archaeological reasons, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed” (ClfA

2023).

3.2 The general aims of the project were to undertake the detailed monitoring of all development works which have the potential to impact archaeological remains and to examine by hand, record and interpret all archaeological deposits, features, structures, artefacts and ecofacts which will be impacted by the development, in order to facilitate the preservation by record of archaeological remains ahead of their physical loss. The watching brief will also provide an opportunity to identify remains of greater than expected significance ahead of their destruction allowing for further appropriate mitigation measures to be agreed.

3.3 The objectives of the project were:

- To establish the presence or otherwise of archaeological features within the demolition zone;
- To mitigate the impact of the development on any identified archaeological remains;
- To record stratigraphic information (as detailed in the methodology);
- To retrieve finds including artefacts and ecofacts from stratigraphic contexts (as detailed in the methodology);
- To produce a photographic archive detailing any archaeological remains encountered;
- To produce a summary report which will feed into the phase 2 (and potentially phase 3) report.

4. Methodology

4.1 The archaeological watching brief was carried out between the 17th October and the 5th November 2025. This involved supervision of demolition of the agricultural buildings within the site.

4.2 Where necessary, surfaces were hand cleaned for examination and recording and deposits observed were recorded on standard pro-forma recording sheets.

4.3 A digital colour photographic record was maintained, some of which is reproduced in Appendix 1, plates 1 – 4.

- 4.4 All work was carried out according to the agreed Archaeological Management Plan and the Written Schemes of Investigation (Roberts 2025 a and b) and in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Standard for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* (2023). The fieldwork was undertaken by James Roberts.

5. Results

- 5.1 The agricultural buildings present within the site were all of light weight construction generally built on concrete rafts. The site slopes down to the north and west, this resulted in the majority of the structures being constructed on built up platforms of rubble. Where foundations were present they were no more than two courses of brick deep. The demolition was limited to removal of the superstructure, concrete slabs and hard standing. The made ground was left in situ.
- 5.2 The removal of the concrete floors revealed large areas of made ground, generally comprising of rubble which had been laid directly onto the topsoil. The demolition activity did not penetrate below the buried topsoil.
- 5.3 The demolition zone was subject to metal detecting. However, the past use of the site and the nature of the demolition activity resulted in modern metal across the entire area and no metalwork predating the 20th century was identified.

6. Discussion and Conclusions

- 6.1 The watching brief revealed that the buildings within the site were for the most part constructed on raised platforms of rubble with a concrete raft poured over the top. Where foundations were present they were extremely shallow and were intended to retain the rubble make up. The demolition activity was limited to the hard standing and rafts with the rubble left in situ (see figure 2 for monitored area).
- 6.2 No archaeological features were observed within the monitored area as the demolition activity did not penetrate to a sufficient depth. The results are presented with a high confidence rating.

7. Archive

- 7.1 The records for phase 1 will be archived with the phase 2 evaluation under accession number X.A136.2025 in accordance with *The Transfer of*

Archaeological Archives to Leicestershire County Council Museum Collections (Leicestershire County Council, 2024)

8. Acknowledgements

- 8.1 Groundworks Archaeology would like to Stronghold Developments for commissioning this project. We would also like to thank Mr William Kelly for his kind assistance during the course of the project.

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Appendix 1: Plates



Plate 1: Looking south across site



Plate 2: Example of raised concrete raft

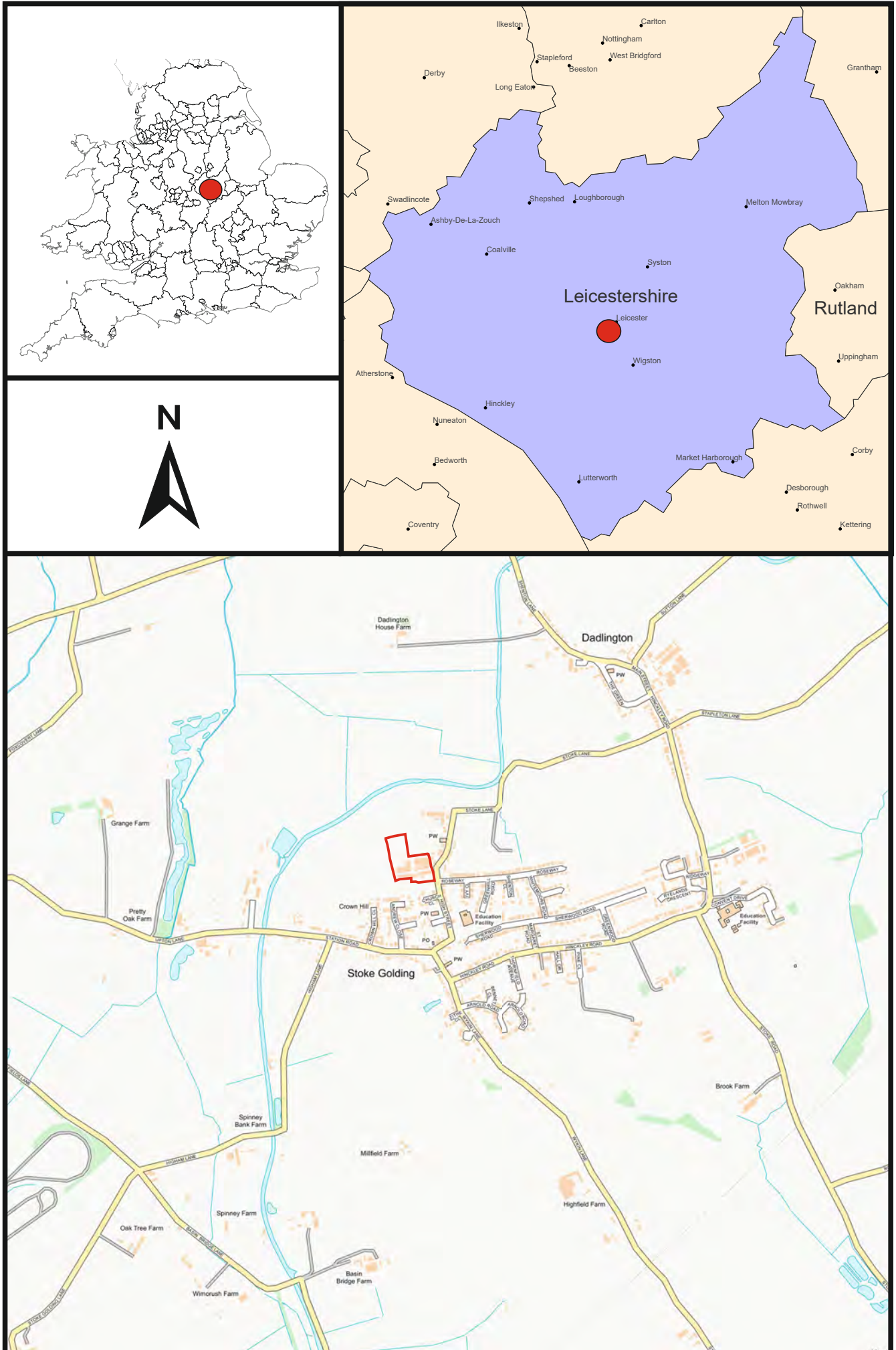
Appendix 1: Plates

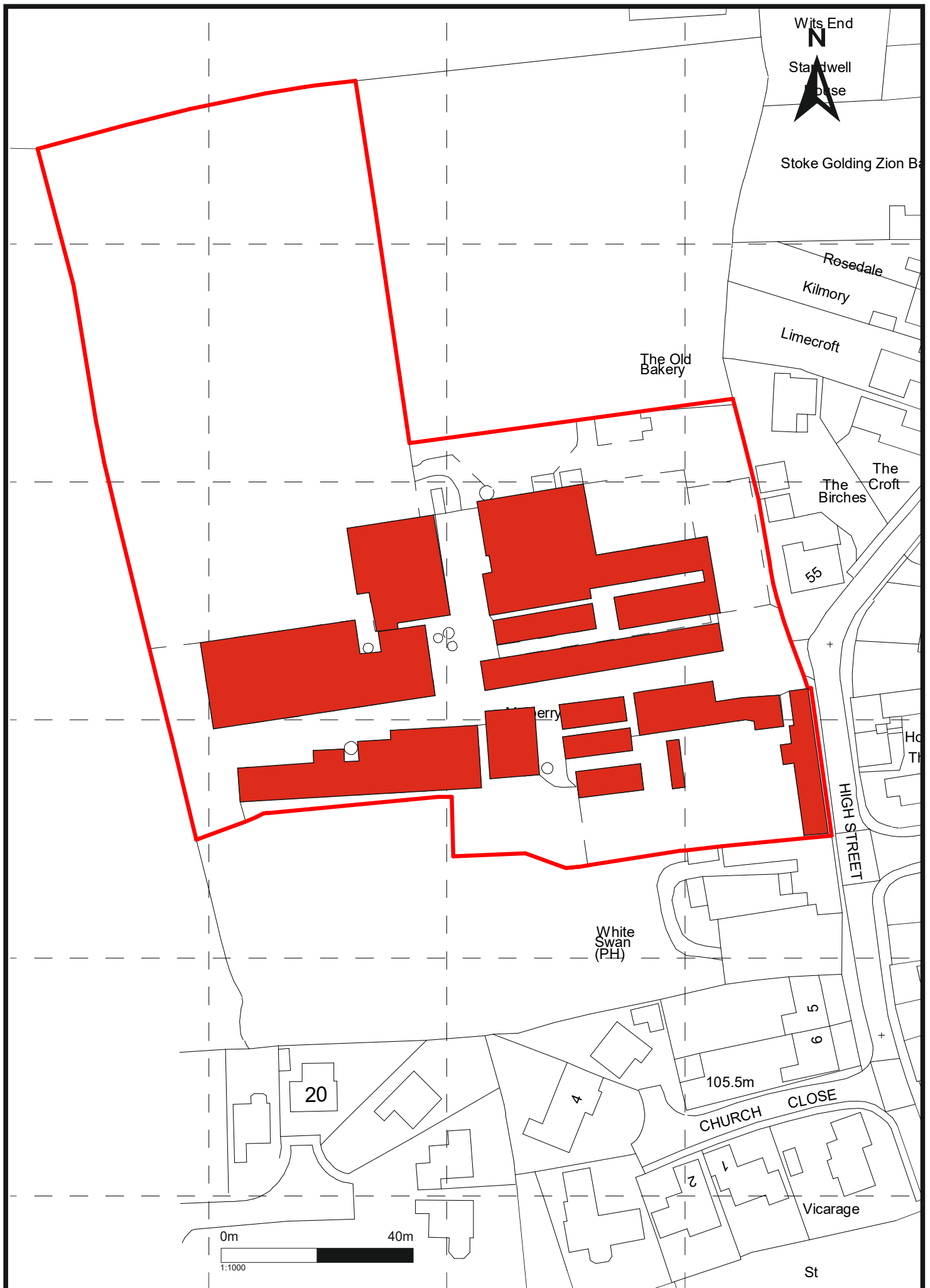


Plate 3: Rubble exposed below raft



Plate 4: Extent of demolition work





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Figure 2: Plan of Monitored Area, Demolished Buildings shown in red