

SOUTH  
MIDLANDS  
ARCHAEOLOGY

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CBA SOUTH MIDLANDS GROUP  
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## **SOUTH MIDLANDS ARCHAEOLOGY**

The Journal of the Council for British Archaeology, South Midlands Group (Bedfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Northamptonshire, Oxfordshire)

**NUMBER 54, 2024**

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**It should be noted that the reports in this volume refer, unless indicated otherwise, to work carried out in 2023.**

|          |                                                                                                                                              |            |                                                                                                                     |
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**Front cover:** Aerial photograph of Bedford, Manton Lane Area 1, looking north-east (Albion Archaeology)

**Back cover:** Iron Age Gold Staters from Bedford, Manton Lane Area 1 (Albion Archaeology)

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# EDITORIAL

Welcome, from your editor and committee to volume 54 of South Midlands Archaeology.

As ever, this edition begins with a colourful selection of the many treasures reported to the region's Finds Liaison Officers. Thanks again to Ellie Cox, Finds Liaison Officer for Northamptonshire and colleagues from the Portable Antiquities Scheme for compiling this. Thanks are also due to Albion Archaeology for providing the images and sponsoring the front and back covers.

In addition to the usual summaries of archaeological work readers may also find annual round-ups from the archaeologists at Bedford Borough, Buckinghamshire, Milton Keynes City, North Northamptonshire and Oxford City Councils of interest.

This edition also features a number of longer illustrated notes and articles including: Mike Luke with a review of the archaeological evidence for **Roman Roads in Bedfordshire** (p. 12); Cotswold Archaeology on early Iron Age settlement in **Wootton**, Beds (p. 25); plus excavation of a possible medieval workshop in **Ravensden**, Beds by MOLA (p.29).

The societies from the region are also well represented with contributions from: Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society in **Great Linford**, Bucks/MK (p. 41); Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society in **Chesham** and **Little Missenden**, Bucks (p. 45); and projects in **Oxfordshire** by South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group (SOAG) p. 101; Oxfordshire Buildings Record in **Chipping Norton** and **Lyford** (p. 96, 98); and the Appleton Area Archaeological Research Project (AAARP) at **Besselsleigh** (p. 74).

2023 also saw three CBA conferences if we include the excellent East Midlands Research Framework conference organised by our neighbours the Council for British Archaeology East Midlands group (full conference details below).

Finally, I would like to thank all those who sent in reports and ask that they, and anyone else, send in articles for South Midlands Archaeology 55. Please refer to the Notes for Contributors (back page).

Nick Crank  
Editor

## CBA SOUTH MIDLANDS WEBSITE

**[cbasm.archaeologyuk.org](http://cbasm.archaeologyuk.org)**

On this site are (Journals):

Scanned / PDF copies of South Midlands Archaeology 1–52

The cumulative index to South Midlands Archaeology volumes 1–37

The CBA Group 9 Industrial Bulletin Nos 1–16 (1967–71)

Scanned copies of Bedfordshire Archaeology / Bedfordshire Archaeological Journal and several of the Bedfordshire Archaeology monographs

South Midlands Archaeology – Notes for Contributors

## CONFERENCES IN 2023

### **Reviewing The Late Bronze Age And Iron Age In The East Midlands, Ashby-De-La-Zouch, Saturday 13th May**

*The First Millennium BC in the East Midland Counties: the current state of knowledge 20 years on from the original assessment.* **Steve Willis**, University of Kent

*Mapping Mam Tor.* **Graeme Guilbert**

*Updated thoughts on the hillfort at Borough Hill, Daventry, Northamptonshire.* **Chris Chinnock**, Reports & Publications Project Officer, Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA)

*Interpreting the selective deposition of Bronze Age metalwork in the River Trent.* **Richard Davis and Mark Pearce**, University of Nottingham

*Midland hillforts in context: the Burrough Hill Project, Leicestershire.* **Jeremy Taylor**, University of Leicester

*Bronze Age to Iron Age settlement at Newark and beyond.* **Adam Tinsley**, Senior Project Manager, Oxford Archaeology North

*Marshlands and Monuments: Iron Age floodplain interactions in the Trent Valley.* **Kristina Krawiec**, Geoarchaeology Project Manager, York Archaeology

*A shrinking county – landscape changes across Lincolnshire in the later Bronze Age and Iron Age.* **James Rackham**, Environmental Archaeology Consultancy

*North Killingholme, North Lincolnshire: a late Iron Age settlement?* **Mick McDaid**, Senior Project Manager, Allen Archaeology

*An Iron Age village? Excavations of a large Iron Age agglomerated settlement at Brackley, Northamptonshire.* **Rob Atkins**, Senior Project Manager, Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA)

*Living between the hillforts & the farmsteads: investigating Iron Age aggregated settlements in Leicestershire.* **John Thomas**, Deputy Director, University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS)

### **Archaeological Work In And Around Oxford: A Review, Oxford, Sunday 21st May**

**David Radford** (Oxford City Council Archaeologist)

*Emerging Oxford, recent work on medieval religious houses, and Civil War remains*

**Jane Harrison** (Fieldwork Director, Appleton Area Archaeological Research Project)

*The Appleton Project: from lost Romans to Anglo-Saxon and medieval manors*

**David Clark** (Secretary, Oxfordshire Buildings Record)

*The role of a volunteer group in recording Oxford's buildings*

**Carl Champness** (Senior Project Manager, Oxford Archaeology)

*You are what you eat? Excavating the Oxford Jewry and the city's origins*

**Ben Ford** (Senior Project Manager, Oxford Archaeology)

*The archaeology of recent work at Frewin Hall, Oxford – with wider thoughts on some aspects of the archaeology of Oxford*

## **Non-Commercial Archaeology in the South Midlands, Winslow, Sunday 15th October**

*The Portable Antiquities Scheme in Buckinghamshire*

**Arwen Wood** (Finds Liaison Officer for Buckinghamshire)

*Meet the new CHAP: the Chilterns Heritage and Archaeology Partnership*

**Wendy Morrison** (Heritage and Archaeology Manager, Chilterns AONB)

*A Ha-ha from ///else.forget.surveyors to ///parsnip.skyrocket.novelist (a.k.a. Great Linford Manor)*

**Doug Stuckey** (Honorary Chair, Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society)

*The Irchester Field School: community engagement and collaboration at Chester House*

**Sarah Scott** (Professor of Archaeology, University of Leicester)

*Romano-British Excavations at Warkton, Kettering*

**David Errickson** (Senior Lecturer in Forensic Archaeology/Anthropology, Cranfield University)

*In Search of Old Linslade's Holy Well*

**Paul Tate** (Head of Archaeology and Old Linslade Site Director, LBDAHs)

*The Discovery of a Romano-British villa: SOAG fieldwork near Faringdon 2020–23*

**Bill Annan** (SOAG Vice-Chairman and Project Director)

# THE PORTABLE ANTIQUITIES SCHEME IN THE SOUTH MIDLANDS 2023

BY ELEANORE COX, with contributions from ARWEN WOOD, EDWARD CASWELL, ELEANORE COX, GEORGE WHATLEY, JOHN NAYLOR, MATTHEW FITTOCK, SIMON MASLIN, TERESA ALLEN and VICTORIA ALLNATT

## INTRODUCTION

In 2023 Find Liaison Officers (FLO's) have continued to adapt their ways of working to increase recording capacity and tailor systems to suit their local regions and recorders. Volunteer programs have greatly assisted for many with the addition of Find Liaison Assistants (FLA's) for some has proved incredibly useful in this regard. Winter ground conditions, much like 2022, were waterlogged but did not prove prohibitive to searching, allowing for the continued discovery of archaeological objects and coins by members of the public.

2023 saw a total number of 105 Treasure cases from the South Midlands, an increase of 8.57% from the previous year, which continues the general upward trend in Treasure cases across the UK.

By period, the finds for 2023 are as follows:

|                | Beds       | Bucks        | Northants    | Oxon         |
|----------------|------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|
| Palaeolithic   | 0          | 1            | 0            | 0            |
| Mesolithic     | 0          | 4            | 20           | 3            |
| Neolithic      | 0          | 11           | 25           | 56           |
| Bronze Age     | 1          | 9            | 15           | 30           |
| Iron Age       | 22         | 24           | 12           | 62           |
| Roman          | 18         | 750          | 333          | 1,052        |
| Early-Medieval | 0          | 41           | 40           | 89           |
| Medieval       | 56         | 344          | 386          | 526          |
| Post-Medieval  | 19         | 459          | 272          | 551          |
| Modern         | 0          | 10           | 12           | 15           |
| Unknown        | 0          | 11           | 2            | 62           |
| <b>Total</b>   | <b>116</b> | <b>1,664</b> | <b>1,117</b> | <b>2,446</b> |

The following artefacts represent a selection to highlight some of the finds recorded across the South Midlands in 2023. To see the object's full record please visit [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database) and search using the record ID e.g. NARC-9D2D17.

### Bedfordshire

*Total Objects: 116 Treasure Cases: 5*

A copper alloy developed flat Axehead of Early Bronze Age date (2200-1700BC). The object is sub rectangular in cross section and has a shallow lenticular side profile. There is a possible proto stop ridge/median bevel which is now barely visible due to the abraded surface and the developed patina. The axehead has a rounded, abraded butt end. The external edges are worn and have a hammer raised flange. The object then extends to a crescentic flared blade/cutting edge.

This axehead fits into Needham's Class 3A Lansdon type which is comparatively small with a straight butt, a clear stop ridge, straight and near-parallel sides producing a narrow



Figure 1: Copper alloy Flat Axe from Souldrop

mid-blade, below which it curves sharply to form expanded blade tips. Needham dates this axehead to 2200-2000BC (Needham 2017: fig.16, p48). Following Schmidt and Burgess' schema it probably best fits their Developed Type Aylesford there being a subtle proto-stop (see for example axes 313, 315, 316) that fit with Burgess' metalworking tradition phase IV. Class: Developed long flanged axehead Sub class: Class 3A (Lansdown)



Figure 2: BH-52AD 62: Silver Strap End from Silsoe

A silver strap-end of Early Medieval (ascribed culture: Anglo-Saxon), dating to the period AD 750-950 Thomas Class A type 2, with a geometric pattern. The strap end is broadly sub-lozenge, or tongue, shaped with a squared split attachment end featuring two circular attachment perforations. One of the perforations retains a complete circular-sectioned silver rivet extending through both split plates. The other rivet is broken and missing the head, and the pin only passes through the back plate.

The terminal at the opposite end of the strap end is rounded and is decorated, like the rest of the panel, with incised decoration. At the terminal this consists of a pelta



## Portable Antiquities Scheme

with two angular triangles above. Above this is a similar larger arrangement of a pelta with triangles. The pelta has another smaller pelta within it while each triangle has an interior recessed triangle.

Across the widest part of the plate is a flower-like arrangement consisting of a central square surrounded by inwardly pointing heart and pelta shapes. Closest to the attachment end are two triangles with central recessed triangles within and, above these, an inverted concentric teardrop surrounded by a border framing the lower edge of the rivet holes.

Silver Early Medieval strap ends of this form, of both Thomas' Class A type 1 (Trehiddle decoration) and type 2 (geometric decoration), have been frequently reported on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database and declared treasure. Interestingly this strap end lacks the zoomorphic snake-headed terminals that are commonly seen on these types. The pattern is also unusual. The style is broadly reminiscent of the kind of angular motifs associated with the later Early Medieval period.

Class: Thomas Class A, type 2



Figure 3: NARC-B3CCFD: Lead Seal Matrix from Dean and Shelton

A Lead Seal Matrix of Medieval date (AD 1200–1300). The object is flat and circular in plan. From the apex of the inscription is a rounded, perforated, integral suspension loop. The front of the object has a central incised design consisting of eight wedges radiating around a central pellet. This is surrounded by an inscription, in retrograde, within an inner and outer circular border. The inscription starts at twelve o'clock and runs retrograde (anti-clockwise) around the matrix. The inscription reads +S'WALT'F'AGN': This translates as 'Seal of Walter, son of Agnes. The reverse of the matrix is flat with roughly incised decoration depicting an equal armed cross. This matrix fits with a group of commonly reported simple lead personal seal matrices dating to the 13th-mid 14th centuries. This group of relatively simple non-heraldic designs and crude personal inscriptions belong to the 13th century (Harvey and McGuinness 1996, 79–80). Inscription: +S'WALT'F'AGN':

A copper-alloy zoomorphic knife handle end cap or terminal dating of late Medieval to Post-Medieval date (AD 1500–1700). The object is sub-rectangular in form and cross section. The terminal joint is oval with a portion of iron blade inserted. At the opposite end the head is the form



Figure 4: BH-297CD3: Copper alloy Knife cap from Silsoe

of an animal, possibly a bird, such as a duck, with an open beak, rounded head, narrow neck and V-shape collar below. Two parallel grooves extend over the top and back of the head. Above the beak are two circular recessions as eyes and a ridged bill. Short sub-rectangular arms project either side of the upper body. Each has concave upwardly turned upper edges, straight lower edges and sub-squared sides. Each terminal has two transverse grooves extending either side. Below the arms the waist narrows before widening into the oval-sectioned lower portion of the body with a transverse basal groove as decoration.

Class: end cap

## Buckinghamshire

Total Objects: 1664, Treasure Cases: 20



Figure 5: BUC-5CF735: Silver Denarius from Buckingham  
A silver Roman republican denarius of *P. Clodius Turrinus*. dating to 41 BC. Mint of Rome.

Obverse description: Laureate head of Apollo with lyre behind. Reverse description: *Diana Lucifera* standing facing holding two long torches, bow and quiver on her shoulder, P. CLODIVS on the right, M F on the left.

As RRC (Crawford) 494/23

A copper alloy Strap Fitting (Strap Slide) of Roman date (AD 43–200). The strap fitting is a pointed oval in plan with raised lenticular mouldings extending along both pointed terminals. The central panel comprises a central circular element divided into four sub-triangular recessed cells set within a circumferential recess. Two of the cells which are opposite one another retain red enamel. The back of the object is flat and undecorated and retains a complete, integral rectangular attachment loop. The back plate is rectangular



Figure 6: NARC-C1706D: Copper alloy Strap Fitting from Winslow

and runs at a 90-degree angle to that of the front plate. The upper and lower edges of the back plate are curved due to a break/wear.

Class: Strap Slide



Figure 7: BUC-E4E242: Copper alloy Buckle from Chesham

A copper alloy Pin from a Buckle of Early-Medieval date (AD 500–900). The object is possibly of insular/Irish style. The object is sub triangular in shape with flattened corners. From the central flattened edge, a rounded knop extends. The face has been divided into recesses with raised edges. There seems to be a central cross, with L and U-shaped recesses surrounding it. The recesses are scored and contain the remains of adhesive. Three of the shorter arms of the cross have the remains of millefiori contained within them, they are yellow and red coloured. One of these is worn and is only yellow. On the reverse in the centre there is a rounded attachment loop. There is no decoration.



Figure 8: BUC-9FC8FA: Silver Pilgrims Badge from Preston Bissett (2023-T524)

A silver pilgrim's badge of late Medieval to Post-Medieval date (AD 1400–1550). The badge is scallop shaped and contains a piece of jet in the centre. The jet has been carved to be in the shape of a scallop shell. The silver overlaps the jet to hold it within the badge. The silver projects out as a lip all the way round the badge and has been crimped. On the reverse is the remains of the badge attachment. There is a raised bar running from the top to the bottom of the shell, in the centre the remains of the worn and broken attachment. There is no decoration on the reverse, however along the edge is the shape of the crimping from the other side.

The scallop shell is the symbol of the shrine of St James in Santiago de Compostela, where originally pilgrims would use real scallop shells as symbols of their pilgrimage. This was a major pilgrimage route in the later medieval period, and the scallop shell was the symbol of both the pilgrim, and of Saint James whose body was said to be in Santiago.

## Northamptonshire

*Total Objects: 1117, Treasure Cases: 20*



Figure 9: NARC-9D96B1: Copper alloy Roman from Hinton-in-the-Hedges (designated find of County/Local importance)

A copper alloy Ring Buckle of Roman date (AD 200–300). The object is complete with frame and pin, the hoop is unfaceted, while the pin has an expanded upper recurved portion with repeating incised longitudinal lines around the recurved portion. The frame has bevelled inner and outer edges with repeating punched annulets, regularly spaced, around the frame. The underside of the frame is flat and undecorated. At the lower end of the frame are a pair of integrally cast, square collars with a single central punched annulet with small, punched pellets in each quarter on each, which flank the V shaped pin notch. From the lower edge of the frame, flanking the pin notch are a pair of chip-carved, opposing bird head terminals.

The zoomorphic terminals are symmetrical and are composed of outward-curving necks, with three grooves, respecting the curve of the outer edge. The two inner ridges have repeating diagonal incised lines along the length. Between the neck portions is an ovate carved notch. The heads are sub-triangular with a carved inner portion to the downward curving beaks and a single punched annular under the carved portion on each beak. From the upper edge of the heads are sub-square projections with a single

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punched annulet to represent the eyes, each surmounted by a bifid upper projection.



Figure 10: NARC-8DDE3C: Silver Finger Ring from Irthlingborough

A silver Finger Ring of Roman date (AD 43–250). Henig Type II/Guiraud Type 2d. The object is broadly oval in plan and D-shaped in cross section at its narrowest point opposite the bezel and widens and thickens, becoming lentoid in cross-section at the bezel. The ring's band is plain and undecorated. The bezel retains an oval setting, centrally located with an engraved intaglio of orange stone or glass. The intaglio is engraved with the helmeted figure of *Mars Gravidus*, advancing left and carrying a transverse spear and trophy.

Class: Henig Type II/ Guiraud type 2d Sub class: Mars



Figure 11: WAW-2D474: Copper alloy Die Stamp from Byfield

A copper alloy Die Stamp for making *pressblech* foils (see below for explanation), dating to the Early Medieval period (AD 550–700). The object is rectangular with rounded corners. The central design consists of double-strand interlaced knot designs which conform to interlace Style II or *Schlaufenornamentik* decoration without zoomorphic elements. This is placed within a border that has circular annulets in each corner then a repeating pattern around the circumference of linear ribs. There is a further linear border around the circumference that extends to the edge of the object. The reverse is flat and undecorated. The object has a green coloured surface patina.

The object was used during the early medieval period to impress designs on thin sheets of metal (often gold and silver), a technique known as die-impressing or *Pressblech*. Examples of the thin sheet are seen in the Sutton Hoo and Staffordshire Hoards.

This object is probably most closely paralleled with an example discovered in Staffordshire (LIN-490483) that was donated to Tamworth Castle and is now on display there. The Staffordshire example also comprises an interlace design without zoomorphic elements. The author states: "The interlacing asymmetric and twisting pattern gives the design a writhing quality, but it lacks any zoomorphic elements such as a head or limbs which means that this design is not strictly Style II. Concurrent with the development of Style II in the late 6th and early 7th centuries, another type of interlace – irregular and non-Roman in style, was developed, which could also include zoomorphic elements, termed *Schlaufenornamentik* (loop ornament) (Speake 2019, 245)".



Figure 12: NARC-17CDEA: Gold Escudo from Desborough

A gold Portuguese Escudo or 1600 Reis of John (Joao) V (1706–1750), dated to 1729 (on coin). Reverse depicts crowned coat of arms framed by scrollwork. Lisbon mint.

Obverse description: Laureate bust right

Obverse inscription: IOANNES. V. D. G. PORT. ET. ALG. REX // 1729

Reverse description: Crowned coat of arms framed by scrollwork

These coins are present in the UK due to the expansion of trade during this period (17th-18th centuries) resulting in gold coinage from Portugal, Spain and France circulating in the UK. Coin weights are known to have been made to control these coinages. By 1816 another Act of Parliament declared that only gold coins of the realm (above 40 Shillings) would be legal tender.

The coins were known as Joeys or Joes, Portuguese or Port Piece and were worth approximately 9 Shillings. The edges of the coin have been bent outwards slightly so it now appears slightly 'S' shaped in profile, possibly indicating its modification into a love-token.

## Oxfordshire

Total Objects: 2446, Treasure Cases: 60

A rapier broken into four parts with two surviving rivets of Middle Bronze Age date (1275-1100BC).





Figure 13: OXON-F156F3: Copper alloy Rapier from Gosford and Water Eaton

The hilt of the blade is trapezoidal in plan, its short side edges widening in diagonal lines from its butt which is narrower than the interface to the blade. It is almost flat in cross section becoming thicker and a pointed oval closer to the blade. The hilt is pierced by two circular holes for rivets placed near its obtuse corners.

From the hilt the blade of the rapier narrows in a smooth convex curve to form a slightly thickened blade that narrows more gradually along its length to a rounded point. The midrib is prominent with a pointed oval cross section with concave edges. The break in angle is visible as an almost flat surface running down the centre of the blade to the point.

The terms dirk and rapier are modern terms which, while useful in defining differing modes of use may not be appropriate for Bronze Age items. Burgess and Gerloff (1981, 5) suggest that the point at which an item maybe identified as one or the other of these types is unclear but for ease of use set rapiers as being over 300mm in length. The object's total length suggests it be classified as a rapier (Burgess and Gerloff 1981, 5) although it is close to the length of a dirk.

Similar examples to this object have been illustrated by Burgess and Gerloff (1981: pl 76, No.581) which they define as a Group IV. The defining feature of this group being the pointed oval cross section with slightly concave curved faces. This has several sub-types of which the closest form is the type: Appleby (*ibid.* 1981: pl 81–83 621–635). Regardless of sub-type, group IV dirks and rapiers are suggested to date in southern Britain to the Penard phase *c.* 1275–1100 cal BC (*ibid.* 106–109).

The object is broken into four pieces. The bending of the blade coupled with a transverse break would suggest that this was due to the deliberate destruction of the object. However, similar known examples show similar break patination on their blade and discovered separated over 100m away from one another presumably through plough damage. As such it is also possible this damage is post depositional. As such on the balance of probability it cannot be certain that this item was broken before deposition.

Class: Group IV Sub class: Appleby

A cast copper alloy Brooch of Middle Iron Age date (350–150 BC). The object comprises a central rounded knop, from which the two wings extend on either side. The wings of the brooch are rectangular in plan and near circular in cross section and each terminates in a circular knop. The main body of the brooch emerges from the base of the central knop and is comprised of a thick humped bow which is oval in plan and crescent shaped in profile the bottom of which is joined



Figure 14: OXON-439AC3: Copper alloy Brooch from Kingston Bagpuize with Southmoor (noted as an interesting find by the recorder)

to another rounded knop, which is connected to the front of the lower catch-plate. On the reverse of the brooch, the back of the central knop extends out to create two matching D shaped terminals which would have formed the upper pivot point for the pin. These terminals are both broken off but there is a small circular projection in the centre of the right terminal created by the remains of the hinge. The rear catch-plate is located at the terminal end of the back of the brooch and is connected to the base of the terminal knop in the form of a short, thickened loop which curves back onto itself. The two arms of the wings are decorated with a series of 5 smooth raised bands which twist around each wing creating a series of four grooves. The front foot of the catch-plate is also decorated with a series of 4 parallel grooves.

Dr Sophie Adams (2013, 70) places this style of brooch into her class 2LD which is characterised by the thick humped bow, the short length and a foot surmounted by an integral reverted foot.

Class: Adam Class 2LD



Oxfordshire Museums Service

Figure 15: OXON-66A9D8: copper alloy Brooch from Chesterton (noted as an interesting find by the recorder)

A copper alloy disc Brooch of Roman date (AD 160–400). The object is circular with a central circular cell which has an engraved green glass setting. The intaglio depicts an eagle, looking backwards holding a wreath and has a slightly raised wing. The bird has a truncated tail, not a long one like a parrot. The edge of the intaglio is slightly bevelled. The border to the cell has raised ridge in the centre of the plain border. The reverse of the brooch has a catch-plate at one edge and opposite there is a perforated lug.

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This type of brooch is consistent with the 'British' type, datable to the 3rd and 4th century. Mackreth classifies this type as Chap. 7, 'The Gilded Series' Type 3 or possibly 4 and dates to c. AD 160 to the 4th century. Mackreth illustrates very similar examples on Plate 107, Nos. 11619 and 10902 and Plate 8 No. 10914 although these are far more decorated than the recorded example.

Class: Gilded disc (circular) Sub class: Mackreth 2011, Chapter 7, 'The Gilded Series' Type 3 or 4 Plate 107–8.



Figure 16. OXON-0EB7C3: Gold Pendant from Swyncombe

A gold coin Pendant made using an early-medieval solidus of Chlothar II (AD 584–629) struck in Marseille, dating to the period AD 613–29 to which a piece of gold has been soldered to form a loop.

The loop made of a rectangular gold tab (c. 4.9mm) wide that has five longitudinal ribs. This folds over 190 degrees to form a loop. This is mostly complete but has been squashed slightly causing a crack to appear between two of the ribs.

The details of the coin are as follows:

Solidus of Chlothar II (584–629), obverse cf. Belfort 2466, reverse cf. Belfort 2468.

*Obverse:* Diademed bust, facing right.

*Obverse inscription:* from 7 o'clock, +CLOTARIVS R[ ] (S reversed)

*Reverse:* Cross on globe M A either side, blundered letters either side of globe, within beaded inner circle.

*Reverse inscription:* (retrograde) CHLOTAR[ ]V[ ]

This is the fifth example of a solidus of Chlothar II recorded from Britain, all of which are also looped for suspension with the addition of a soldered tab of ribbed gold. One was found within a grave (Sarre, Kent), with the other, from 'Kent', Balderton (Nottinghamshire) and 'East Anglia' all stray finds (Abdy and Williams 2006 nos 9, 31, 32 and 33). This coin is typical of the group as a whole and may share an obverse die link with the coin from East Anglia.

### PAS Scheme Contacts and Information

For further information regarding other finds from 2023, please visit: [www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database).

To contact a specific Finds Liaison Officer for more information please see the list of email contacts below.

**Bedfordshire:** Dr Matthew Fittock  
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## BEDFORDSHIRE

### ARCHAEOLOGY IN BEDFORD BOROUGH 2023

Geoff Saunders & Matthew Tuohy  
Planning Services, Bedford Borough Council

Over the last year, Bedford Borough Historic Environment Team (BBHET) has continued to work on providing responses to commercial and academic enquiries and to continue enhancements to the Historic Environment Record itself, based upon both commercial fieldwork and externally funded national projects. During the last 12 months 2456 monuments have been created or amended, across all parts of the Borough and all different monument types (Fig. 1).

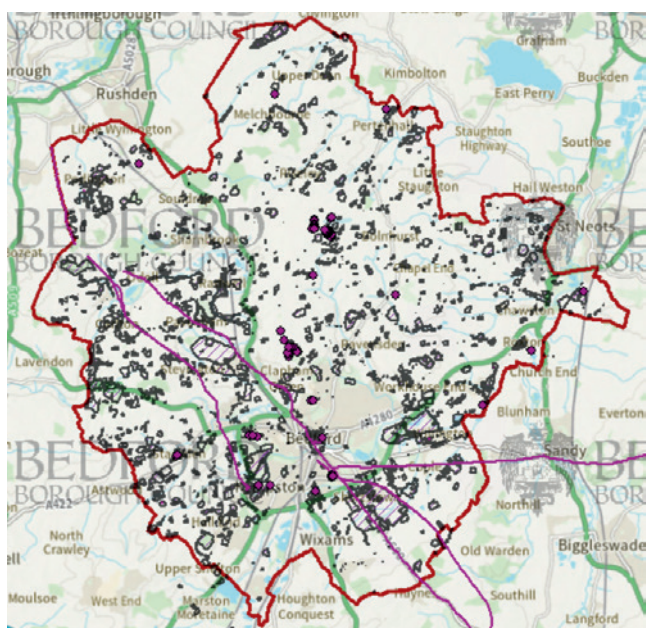


Figure 1: HER monuments created or amended during the last 12 months

#### Fieldwork Projects

A number of important archaeological fieldwork projects have been undertaken during 2023 and 2024 as part of the development process within Bedford Borough.

A large-scale excavation was undertaken by Albion Archaeology in 2023 on a development site at Manton Lane, Bedford following the results of an earlier programme of archaeological evaluation (see Albion summary below and cover images). The excavation identified two areas of archaeological activity, a smaller area of Late Iron Age pits and ditches on low lying land close to Clapham Road and to the northwest of this a large, enclosed, Late Iron Age hilltop settlement, with multiple roundhouses. The works revealed some interesting finds, including several complete (although crushed) pots, an iron spearhead, and a number of Iron Age coins. The majority of the coins appear to be coming from a later post-medieval trackway that respected the alignment of the Iron Age enclosure; this relationship suggests the Iron Age site was still visible as earthworks c. 200–300 years ago when the trackway was established. Post-excavation works analysing the results of the fieldwork are ongoing.

A further smaller scale excavation was undertaken by Albion Archaeology in advance of a housing development on London Road, Bedford (Albion summary and images below). The works identified a well-preserved Romano-British kiln together with associated features and waster pits. The kiln was constructed from stone and appears to be early Roman in date (c. 2nd century), initial indications are that the reusable elements of the kiln such as the kiln bars etc. were removed when the use of the feature ceased. It is slowly becoming apparent that the southern part of Bedford seems to have had a period of use for pottery manufacture in the Late Iron Age – early Romano-British period with kilns also recorded/reported at Mile Road and also on the opposite side of London Road. Quite how continuous or interconnected this activity was, is yet to be established. Post-excavation analysis of the latest kiln site is ongoing.

Fieldwork on the A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet bypass continued throughout 2023, we hope to provide further updates on the excavated sites along this scheme in the next round-up.

#### SHINE Project K Phases 1 and 2

During 2023/24, BBHET has taken part in Phases 1 and 2 the Forestry Commission administered and funded Project K, carried out by members of the team, following up on work carried out on Project E in 2022/23. This project focused primarily on the enhancement of the part of the SHINE agri-environment guidance layer overlying the Low- and Medium-Sensitivity Woodland Creation areas established by the Forestry Commission. In doing so, the project has amended or created 97% of Bedford Borough's total current SHINE layer. The changing of the guidelines for drawing SHINE polygons between Project E and Project K has allowed for much greater sensitivity and nuance in producing targeted agri-environment responses to landowners, for both farming and for the production of new woodland plantations.



Figure 2: New SHINE polygons within Bedford Borough

## Bedfordshire

The change of SHINE creation guidelines has permitted the creation of many new SHINE polygons, and the near total overhaul of the existing SHINE layer in north Bedfordshire. Whilst Phase 1 was concentrated in Marston Vale, Phase 2 covered much of the rest of the Borough including rural areas which had not been reviewed since the original SHINE digitisation fifteen years ago.

Project K has been very successful as an example of a collaboration between an HER and a national level organisation.

### *Woodland Creation Work*

Since May 2023, BBHET has been collaborating with the Forest of Marston Vale (FoMV) on their goal to reach up to 30% of tree coverage by 2030. Through the Woodland Creation Accelerator Fund, BBHET secured the post for a Woodland Creation Historic Environment Officer (WCHEO) to exclusively advise the FoMV on the impact of tree planting on the historic environment in the borough.

On the first year, a total of 7 woodland schemes have been completed considering the advice and comments from the WCHEO and on the second year at least 9 projects are still in consultation/advisory stages with the archaeological officer.

The WCHEO input on the planting schemes has been very successful and has underlined double benefits. Firstly, advisory comments at a preliminary stage of the woodland design has reduced the time spent by Woodland Creation Officers at the FoMV on the re-design of plans to accommodate heritage assets. Also, by providing an advisory post exclusively for woodland creation, BBHET has ensured that written archaeological comments are included at the time the Environmental Impact Assessment is submitted to the Forestry Commission (FC) and therefore, response time on the consultation from the FC to the Local Authority Advisory Team has been reduced greatly.

From hedgerows to orchards, wood pastures and woodland plantation, the WCHEO has had the opportunity to carefully advise on the more suitable strategies to avoid any impact on heritage assets. Advice has consisted mostly of agreeing to areas with cropmarks to remain unplanted, to reducing tree numbers on specific areas where ridge and furrow earthworks are visible and to respecting other visible earthworks so that planting is in accord with the overall setting. On occasions where tree planting is crucial, non-invasive geophysical survey has been advised to assess the archaeological potential of the site.

## ROMAN ROADS IN BEDFORDSHIRE: THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE

by Mike Luke<sup>1</sup>

This summary presents an overview of archaeological evidence for Roman roads in Bedfordshire.

Numerous Roman roads have been proposed by Margary (1973, map 7a) for Bedfordshire; one of the smallest counties in England. These were, in part, based on the dozen or so (totaling c. 150km by length) proposed by a group of Roman archaeologists operating in the south-east Midlands known as The Viatores (1964) of which Margary was a member.

The evidence proposed by The Viatores for roads usually comprised straight lengths of modern road or tracks, straight hedgerows and parish boundaries, and visible earthworks. This evidence was examined by Angela Simco in her survey of Roman Bedfordshire and she dismissed all but a few because many of the modern roads and hedgerows were only created at the time of Enclosure (1984, 78 and fig. 68). Of course, Simco was only dismissing the evidence available at that time and was not necessarily saying that all the roads proposed by Margary and The Viatores in Bedfordshire did not exist. For example, of the dismissed roads, there is now good evidence for the existence of the southern part of RR170a within the county (see below).

In the following summary I have concentrated on firm archaeological evidence e.g. physical evidence found during fieldwork, but where relevant I have mentioned cropmarks and anomalies identified in geophysical surveys. The Roman Road (RR) numbers are those used in Margary 1973 and maintained by the Roman Roads Research Association.

### **RR1 (Watling Street)**

Despite some extensive archaeological investigations near its route, north of Dunstable, no new evidence has been found directly associated with this Roman road. This is likely to be because the road underlies the present A5 trunk road. Despite the absence of recent discoveries this road is mentioned because it is the only main Roman highway which passes through the county.

### **RR22 (Braughing to Godmanchester)**

There is now a better understanding of the route of this road through the Roman 'small town' at Sandy (Luke 2024, 19–20, fig. 7). Although its route away from the town to the north-east is clearly preserved in present-day field boundaries, its course through the town has been a matter of speculation for some considerable time (Viatores 1964, 235–6, 473; Johnston 1974, fig. 1; Dawson 1995, fig. 15.2).

In 2018, the course of RR22 was traced for 320m as a linear geophysical anomaly (Magnitude Surveys 2018) and confirmed to be present within three trenches undertaken as part of evaluation adjacent to the present-day Potton Road and Swaden (Albion 2019). The road was up to 12m wide with make-up layers and surface comprised of compacted gravel, clay and silt. It was sealed by c. 1m of colluvium which probably explains why it had not been previously identified, for example, in 1955 when pipe trenches adjacent to Potton Road were observed (Viatores 1964, 235; Johnston 1974, 39).

Projected to the south, the road's alignment corresponds with road-like linear anomalies found by geophysical survey in 1996 at Woodside Farm, but at the time these were interpreted as a street within the town rather than as RR22 which was believed to have been located c. 100m to the east (GSB 1996, fig 4). In places the anomalies were defined by parallel ditch-type anomalies c. 9m apart.

To the south of Roman Sandy, evidence from a single trench at The Bungalow was used to suggest that the road lay c. 50m east of present-day Stratford Road (Viatores 1964, 237). While these remains may represent a road, its projected course does not correspond with a broad linear cropmark which continues the line of the road-like

<sup>1</sup> Mike Luke is an Archaeological Manager at Albion Archaeology



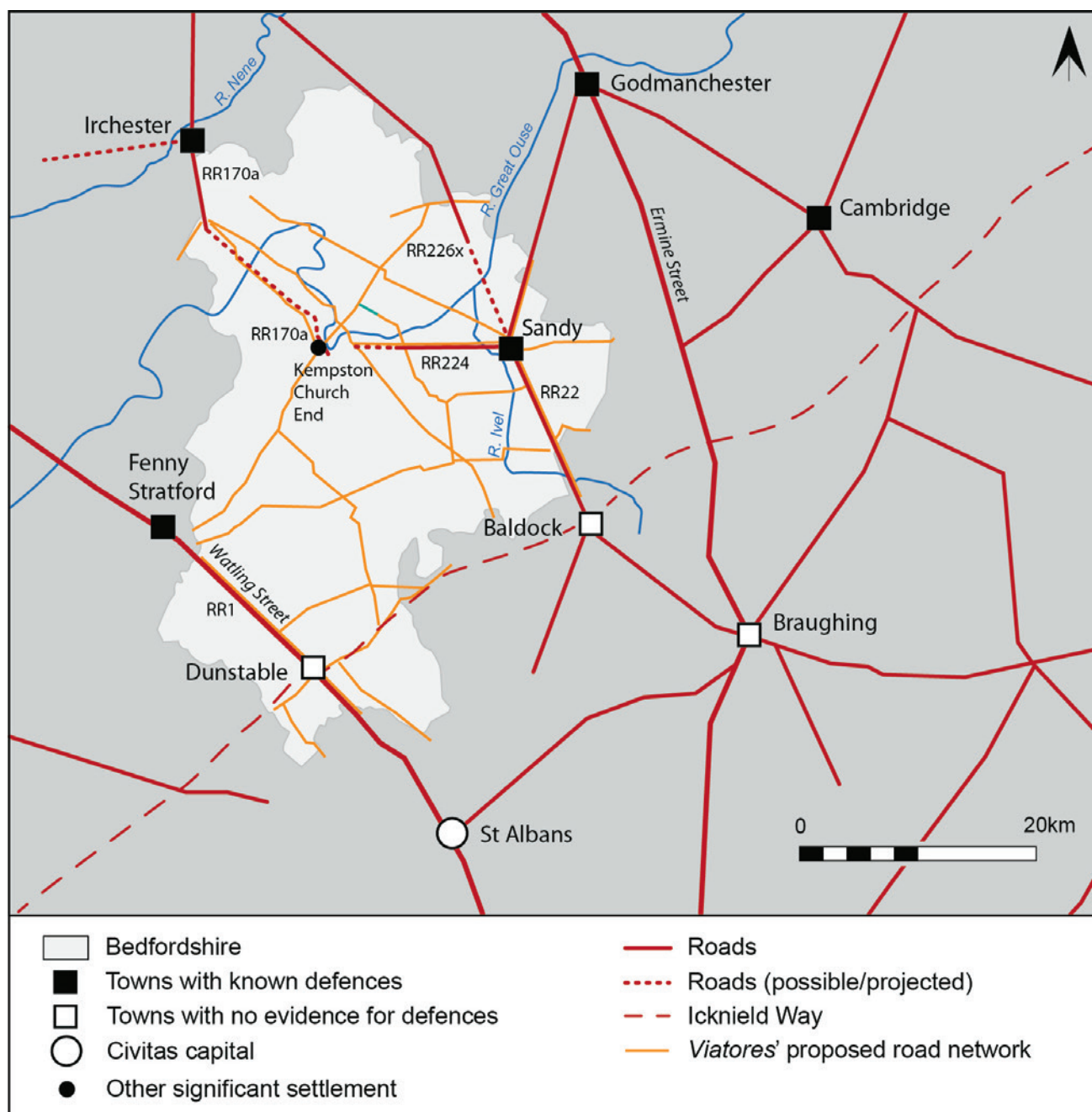


Figure 3: Location of Roman roads in Bedfordshire discussed in this article (by Mike Trevvarthen)

geophysical anomaly found at Woodside Farm. Therefore, based on the current evidence, it seems likely that RR22 underlies the southern part of present-day Stratford Road.

Approximately 3km to south of Sandy on the northern outskirts of Biggleswade the road has been detected during an evaluation by Oxford Archaeology. In this area two parallel linear geophysical anomalies *c.* 16m apart and an associated metallised surface, initially dated to the post-medieval period, were identified (RRRA 2021, 328). In the same area two parallel cropmarks are visible for *c.* 170m on a Google Earth aerial photograph dated June 2009.

#### RR170a (Irchester to Bedford area)

Only the southern part of this road proposed by The Viatores (1964, 290–293) is situated within Bedfordshire. At the time of The Viatores' publication, the only firm evidence for the existence of this road was in Northamptonshire near the

Roman 'small town' at Irchester (between modern Rushden and Wellingborough). However, over the last thirty years a number of investigations have identified a Roman road in the vicinity of the large settlement around Kempston Church End (to the west of Bedford) which is likely to be RR170a.

The road has been traced for 1km through the Kempston Church End Roman settlement and is *c.* 350m east of the route in this area than that proposed by The Viatores (1964, 149, 419). Within the settlement it has been examined within three different developer funded investigations: one associated with the construction in 1990/91 of a major sewer (Dawson 2004, 160, 179, fig. 5.81), another within the Bedford western bypass corridor in 2006, and the third, in a pipe trench in 2009 associated with adjacent housing development (both published in Luke 2016, 219–221).

Where RR170a was examined within the settlement it comprised a *c.* 4–6m wide cambered metallised surface, in



Figure 4: RR170a under investigations within the Kempston Church End settlement (Luke 2016, Plate 5.10) (Albion Archaeology)

places with a narrow limestone core, that had been resurfaced on a number of occasions (Dawson 2004, 160; Luke 2016, 221, plate 5.11) (Fig. 4). Side ditches were evident c. 7–10m apart and these had been redug on a number of occasions often resulting in the narrowing of the road width.

To the north of the Kempston Church End settlement the road could be traced for c. 300m as two parallel cropmarks c. 9m apart (now under the Box End lakes). The route to the north around Harrold and Carlton has been studied by Matt Tuohy (HER officer at Bedford Borough Council) who has suggested, based partly on historic trackways, a number of alternative routes to that suggested by The Viatores, but these have not been tested by excavation. The route to the south-east of the Kempston Church End settlement is unknown as it would be situated under modern Kempston. However, it is clear that the road did not stop at the settlement as The Viatores had suggested (1964, 419). It is speculated by the author that it may have followed the course of the loop in the River Great Ouse in this area and then headed east to join RR224 (see below).

#### **RR224 (Sandy to Bedford area)**

The original evidence for RR224 took the form of two parallel cropmarks c. 12m apart (as originally identified in two separate locations between Sandy and Bedford by The Viatores north of Cardington and south of Willington (1964, 268–9, 484). Similar parallel cropmarks have also been observed to the west of Moggerhanger Park and to the east near to Sandy but still to the west of the River Ivel. All four sets of cropmarks can be identified on Google Earth, confirming that they have the same alignment.

The cropmarks of the eastern alignment of RR224 are located 80m south of the route proposed by The Viatores;

they proposed that the road crossed the River Ivel near the Girtford Bridge (1964, 270, 485). The existence of this eastern length to the south of that proposed by The Viatores has since been confirmed, initially by geophysical survey (Sumo 2022, 5) and then within the route of a pipeline. Associated with the latter, the eastern length has been recorded within an evaluation trench (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2007a, 4) and subsequent investigation in advance of the construction of this pipeline (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2007b, 4). The evidence indicates that the road comprised a sand and gravel agger, approximately 8–10m wide, with side ditches c. 13m apart.

It has been observed by the author that if the alignment of the cropmarks and other evidence is projected eastwards, it would suggest that the course of the road was sighted on the hill occupied by Caesar's Camp hillfort immediately north of the Roman 'small town' at Sandy (Luke 2021). There is still no firm evidence for the course of the road between the River Ivel and the Roman town, partly because it underlies the modern town, but based on a recent review it is now assumed that this road must have entered the Roman town via its north-west gate (Luke 2024, 21, fig.7).

Simco believed that RR224 exhibited some peculiarities e.g. the way it appears to stop abruptly at a rural settlement and then restart on the other side (1984, 65–6, figs 63 and 64). To Simco this would not have happened if the road was constructed by Roman officials, and she suggests that it may have been commissioned by a member of the 'local aristocracy'. There are no 'small towns' as such in the Bedford area, but the most significant known settlements in the area that this road may have served are: the possible estate centre at Newnham (Ingham *et al.* 2016); the potential high-status villa at Manton Lane (Luke *et al.* 2017); the



possible high status farmstead SL54 within the southern part of the Biddenham Loop (Luke 2016, 337); and the *c.* 17ha settlement at Kempston Church End (Luke 2016, 208–41). The latter two sites would be located on the alignment of the Sandy to Bedford area road if it was projected westwards.

#### **RR226x (Sandy to Thrapston/Titchmarsh)**

The existence of a road from Sandy to the Thrapston/Titchmarsh area of Northamptonshire has recently been proposed by David Ratledge based on Lidar data (Ratledge 2024 and forthcoming). Although not identified in the vicinity of Sandy, mainly because it would underlie the modern town, it is assumed that this road must have entered via the north-west gate of the Roman town (Luke 2024, 21, fig. 7).

If this road is confirmed, its route near Sandy may enhance our understanding of the layout and development of the ‘small town’. For example, its projected course is aligned with an internal street which may be a continuation of the road from Baldock and the layout of the towns defences are symmetrical about this road (Luke 2024, 33). Therefore, it is even possible that the road to the Thrapston/Titchmarsh area was once the main road through Roman Sandy and that the road to Godmanchester was a later addition.

#### **Trackways**

Short lengths of evidence for trackways are often an integral feature of the layout of Roman rural settlements in Bedfordshire and the wider region. These trackways were identified based on the presence of parallel ditches *c.* 6–10m apart, often with slightly sinuous alignments and only in a small number of cases has there been evidence for stone or gravel surfacing (see below). Although they may have continued beyond the settlement areas they are rarely identified because their route has not left an archaeological

trace. Although the difference between a road and a trackway can be debated, that latter is used here to indicate routeways only identified within and the vicinity of rural settlements; ones that do not appear to link with more substantial settlements *e.g.* “small towns”.

In three areas of Bedfordshire, extensive archaeological investigations ahead of development have provided the opportunity to identify networks of trackways *e.g.* at Biddenham Loop (Luke 2016, 283–5, fig. 5.1), land west of Kempston (Luke 2016, 285–6, fig. 5.1) and north of Houghton Regis (Luke and Barker 2021, 11; Luke and Shotliff 2023, 37, 54–5, 172) where developer funded investigation by Albion Archaeology and others is ongoing.

Recent investigations by Albion Archaeology north of Houghton Regis have identified a stone surfaced trackway associated with a rural settlement. This comprised a *c.* 5m wide slightly cambered surface of flint cobbles (Fig. 5) defined by side ditches which had been recut on numerous occasions. No evidence for it, in terms of cropmarks or geophysical anomalies, have yet been found for its existence away from the settlement area. It may therefore have been more substantial in this area because it is in the vicinity of the likely crossing of the Ouzel Brook.

#### **Internal streets in the Roman ‘small town’ at Sandy**

Evidence for streets within the Roman Sandy has been found intermittently over the last 50 years including most recently within a watching brief by Albion Archaeology (2020, 9) and an AOC excavation (Capon 2023, 12). All available evidence has been reviewed and a new layout of streets within the town has been proposed (Luke 2024, 21–24, fig. 7). In summary, they appear to form a planned system but they are not in a rectangular grid like pattern. It is also clear that some of the streets were ‘cut off’ when the town defences were built.



Figure 5: Cobbled trackway under investigations north of Houghton Regis (Albion Archaeology)

## Bedfordshire

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## ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Arlesey, Land West of High Street (Parcel 2)** TL 1916 3677

ADAM WILLIAMS and HEATHER WHITE

Five evaluation trenches were excavated in an old paddock to the rear of the White Horse PH, on land intended for residential development. Archaeological features were identified in all the trenches; most of these contained no finds and are undated, but there is enough ceramic evidence to suggest that ditches and a pit in the eastern end of the paddock are medieval, with agricultural features extending westwards. Post-medieval and modern features were also identified, including ditches and a pit. OASIS ID: albionar1-514938; Accession no. BEDFM2023.242

### **Bedford, Land to the Rear of The Bull, 259 London Road** TL 0593 4811

IAIN LESLIE, BENJAMIN CARROLL and MATTEO PALOMBELLI

A small excavation behind The Bull public house was undertaken ahead of residential development after a potential Roman pottery kiln had been identified during an evaluation of the site. It revealed two main phases of Roman activity, based on stratigraphic relationships, both of which broadly dated to the second century AD. The earlier phase comprised a small number of storage pits and postholes, as well as a large boundary ditch that extended across the site on an ENE–WSW alignment. The later phase saw an apparent change in function from land division and storage to industrial activity: it was dominated by a keyhole-shaped pottery kiln (Fig. 6), although a rectangular enclosure, several large pits, and several other boundary ditches and smaller pits were also identified.

The kiln's furnace chamber had an internal diameter of 1.2m, fed by a 0.6m-wide flue of coursed, roughly hewn limestone bonded with clay, three courses of which survived (Fig. 1). Some remnants of clay lining covered the inner face of the furnace chamber; no evidence survived of a pedestal or oven floor, nor holes for kiln bars in the walls of the chamber. The relative dearth of kiln furniture recovered may indicate that the kiln was intentionally cleared out after its last firing. The kiln is most likely to have been used for grey-ware pottery production, given the high amount that was found in the contemporary pits and ditches of the later phase of activity, including wasters.

Roman use of the site appears to have ended by the early 3rd century AD, with no archaeological evidence of further activity until historical maps show that the site came under arable use. The only other remains identified on site were confined to 18th–19th century refuse pits, and drainage linked to The Bull in the mid-20th century. Oasis ID: albionar1-514256; Accession no. BEDFM 2023.228

### **Bedford, Manton Lane** TL 04164 51912

MATEVZ GROSELJ and KATHY PILKINTON

An excavation of 3.1ha of land on the northern outskirts of Bedford took place between March and November 2023, in relation to a school development. The main excavation area was located on high ground and revealed a large late Iron Age/early Roman settlement covering at least 2ha (Figs 7, 8, & front cover). The settlement appears to have





Figure 6: Bedford, The Bull, London Rd, 2nd-century Roman kiln

been established during the late Iron Age and abandoned by the end of the first century AD, although some degree of later activity is attested by 3rd-century coins. Nineteen roundhouses and five four-post structures were grouped in four domestic foci, alongside pits, a large water-pit, a well, and two inhumation burials towards the northern edge of the settlement. The main artefacts recovered were late Iron Age/early Roman pottery and animal bone, although an iron spear, fragments of quern stones, and coins including Iron Age gold staters (see back cover photo) were also found. A smaller excavation at the foot of the hill revealed a number of enclosures and a possible trackway; no internal features were revealed within the enclosures, but the density of finds suggests that the enclosures represent the edge of a large settlement that was contemporary with the hilltop one.

Little post-Roman activity was recorded, with the land apparently under cultivation as part of an open-field system in the medieval and post-medieval periods. Extant ridge and furrow earthworks were recorded by Souterrain Archaeological Services in an earthwork survey of the lower-lying area. The hilltop excavation revealed a series of post-medieval trackways, which are visible on early Ordnance Survey maps as routes between Bedford and Clapham Green. The correlation between their alignment and that of the Iron Age enclosure ditches suggests that the enclosures may have remained visible as earthworks until relatively recently. OASIS ID: albionar1-433262; Accession no. BEDFM 2021.99

#### **Bedford, Mile Road TL 0583 4799**

JONATHAN DURMAN, ERNIE RIZZO and BENJAMIN CARROLL

Following trial trenching in 2021 and 2022, a programme of archaeological monitoring and 'strip, map and sample' excavation took place as part of an industrial development at

Richardson Milling. The groundworks, covering a total area of c. 0.1ha, revealed several boundary ditches dating to the Roman and post-medieval periods. Taken together with the results of the evaluation, the Roman ditches probably formed part of a field system. Their general lack of finds suggests that they were located at some distance from the nearest settlement or focus of ritual or industrial activity. OASIS ID: albionar1-410705; Accession no. BEDFM 2020.88

#### **Biggleswade, Symmetry Park Phase 2, Stratton Business Park (TL) 2178 4296**

BENJAMIN CARROLL, JEREMY OETGEN and GARETH SHANE

Post-excavation analysis has shed light on the prehistoric and early Roman environment of the upper reaches of the Stratton Brook. Investigation of Symmetry Park Phases 1 and 3 was previously reported in *SMA* (Carroll *et al.* 2020; Groselj *et al.* 2022) but work on Phase 2 in 2021 was not submitted. However, radiocarbon dating has now demonstrated that the earliest deposits in Phase 2 were middle Bronze Age, with artefacts showing continuity into the late Iron Age/early Roman period (c. 1400 BC to AD 100). The features were located in the base of the brook's shallow valley, where geological and palaeoenvironmental evidence suggests that the land was persistently wet and boggy. This seems to have been a pastoral environment with woodland close-by. Most of the anthropogenic features are interpreted as field boundaries, corrals or droves/trackways concerned with the movement of livestock.

In the middle Bronze Age to early Iron Age, the disuse of the boundary ditches was marked with a large deposit of heat-affected pieces of sandstone. These stones resembled 'burnt-mound' material, although no related structures were present, and their purpose is unknown. Metal-detected finds of intrinsic interest included a late Bronze Age copper-alloy leaf-shaped razor (Fig. 9), a cast copper-alloy terret ring,





Figure 7: Aerial photograph of Bedford, Manton Lane Area 1, looking north-east

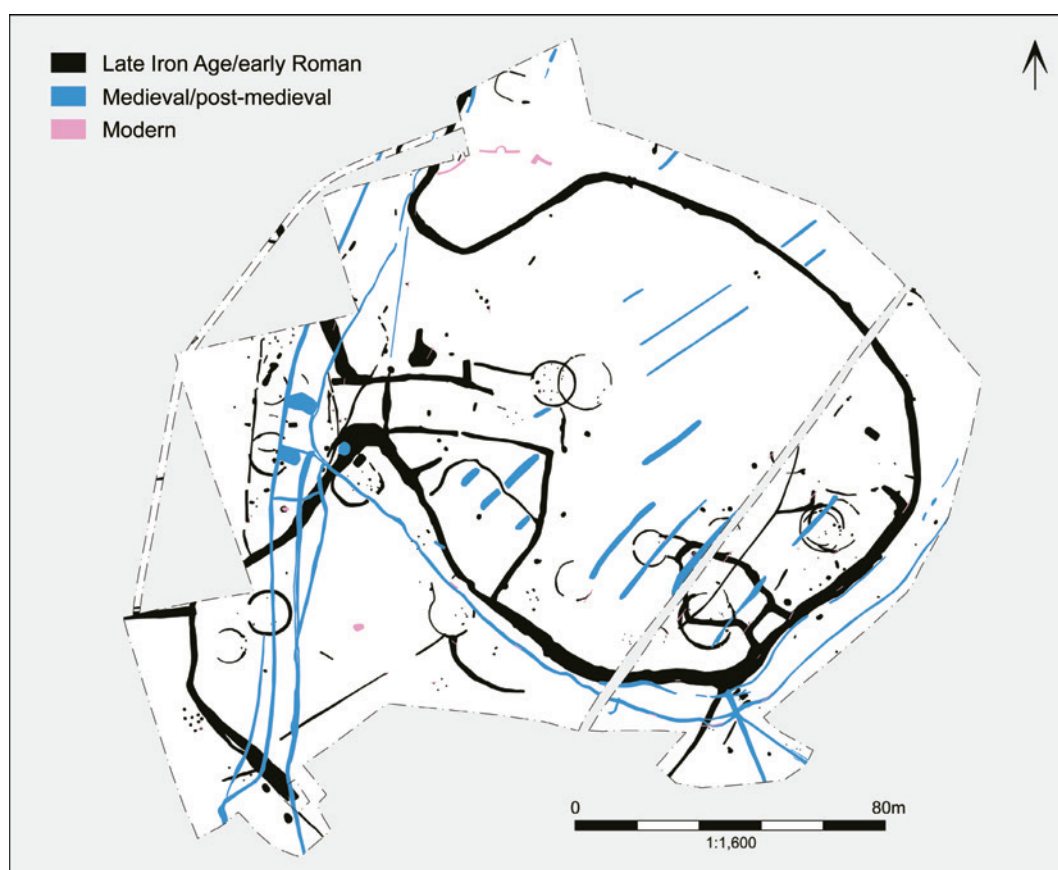


Figure 8: Phased all-features plan of Bedford, Manton Lane Area 1

and a late Roman silver finger-ring. This all suggests that people were active around the brook, even though it was boggy and at least 350m from contemporary settlement. Later evidence suggests that the land came under cultivation from the Middle Ages onwards and was actively drained to facilitate this. OASIS ID: albionar1-410260; Accession no. BEDFM 2020.85

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**Bletsoe, The Avenue TL 0240 5855**

ERNIE RIZZO

Two 25m-long trial trenches on land north of the Old Rectory revealed three ditches and up to three pits – two of the latter lay only partially within the trenches, making their interpretation uncertain. Only one pit and one ditch produced datable artefacts, but most features are likely to date to the 12th–13th centuries – the heavily abraded Roman pottery found alongside medieval wares are presumed to be residual, deriving from Roman activity beyond the trenches.

The ditches are likely to represent plot or field boundaries on the periphery of medieval Bletsoe. Two ditches were aligned north-east to south-west, broadly parallel with the road and extant field boundaries to the south. The recovery of late medieval/early post-medieval artefacts from the upper fills of the largest ditch may indicate that it either represents a later field boundary, or had a longer period of use in comparison with the smaller ditches. OASIS ID: albionar1-511050; Accession no. BEDFM 2022.209

**Bromham, Stagsden Road SP 99776 50252**

MATEVZ GROSELI

Two trial trenches were excavated ahead of a small housing development on land adjacent to 164 Stagsden Road. They revealed no archaeological features or artefacts. OASIS ID: albionar1-519179

**Dunstable, 191–199 High Street South TL 0239 2139**

MATEVZ GROSELI and WESLEY KEIR

A watching brief on groundworks associated with the residential redevelopment of 191–199 High Street South revealed no archaeological features or deposits. OASIS ID: albionar1-426749

**Dunstable, Priory Academy TL 0224 2175**

GARETH SHANE and TORI GUY

Planning permission for the creation of a multi-use games area at Priory Academy, Britain Street led to archaeological monitoring of the groundworks involved between 28th June and 3rd August 2023. A total of 38 medieval features were excavated across the site: two parallel ditches, 29 roughly circular pits, five other pits and two postholes. Pottery, roof tile and animal bone were recovered, with the good condition of the 12–13th-century pottery suggesting that it represents primary deposition. Ecofactual remains included small numbers of charred seed and fruit fragments, mostly cereal grains that were too small to be identified. Identifiable remains mostly comprise free threshing wheat, barley, oat, and possibly spelt.

The ditches and the circular pits are likely to relate to the Priory complex, contributing to our understanding of the site's wider environs, outside of its precinct. The ditches may have provided drainage, whilst the pits are likely to have been tree holes that related to an orchard or something similar. A larger, elongated pit may represent a localised chalk quarry or a storage pit. OASIS ID: albionar1-516118; Accession no. LUTNM 2022/63

**Everton, Green Lane TL 2047 5113**

MATEVZ GROSELI

Five trial trenches were investigated ahead of new housing, with only two containing archaeological features. All

excavated features contained finds and, where datable, were post-medieval or modern – predominantly 18th century onwards. The ditches probably served as field boundaries or for drainage. The 1st edition OS 25-inch map (Bedfordshire XIII.10, surveyed in 1883) shows an orchard in the north part of the proposed development area, and it is possible that the pits were dug in order to plant trees. Wheel ruts that were noticed in a few places are likely to have been caused by modern farm machinery. OASIS ID: albionar1-512940; Accession no. BEDFM 2023.238

**Haynes, Northwood End Road TL 10224 41806**

KATHY PILKINTON, ALLAN KING and GARETH SHANE

A 0.5ha excavation was carried out in April and May 2023 (Fig. 10), prior to residential development of the site. The earliest remains comprised a small Iron Age sub-circular enclosure with an east-facing entrance formed of inward-turning ditch terminals (Fig. 10). Features within the enclosure included a pit, a spread of gravel that may represent a surface, and a small, north-facing roundhouse, although the latter may have been contemporary with a later north–south boundary ditch and adjacent rectangular enclosure. The only features inside the rectangular enclosure were a four-post structure and a separate posthole. A partially revealed curving ditch and opposing terminus to the north of the early enclosure may represent the remains of another roundhouse.

There was a subsequent hiatus in activity until a rectilinear field system was established in the 12–13th centuries. A number of postholes and two small pits were revealed within the fields. There was little change in the layout of the fields in the post-medieval period, and a large pit was the only discrete feature dating to this period. OASIS ID: albionar1-505396; Accession no. BEDFM 2022/74

**Houghton Regis, Houghton Regis North 1****Site 1 TL 01715 25432**

WESLEY KEIR, BENJAMIN CARROLL and MATTEO PALOMBELLI

An excavation covering 1.5ha was undertaken before the Phase 4 Advance Infrastructure Works that form part of the urban expansion of Houghton Regis. It revealed part of a 2nd–4th-century settlement at the base of a shallow valley adjacent to the Ouzel Brook, which had originally been identified by trial trenching and geophysical survey in 2012 (Luke and Shotliff 2023).

The Romano-British settlement was defined by a large outer boundary ditch following the contours of the surrounding landscape (Fig. 11). The interior contained a series of contemporary rectangular enclosures, a metalled trackway, groups of storage pits and a series of natural springs. One of the rectangular enclosures, c. 26m×13m, is likely to have contained a substantial high-status building: artefacts from the surrounding ditches included *imbrex* and *tegula* roof tile, dressed stone, and box-flue tiles and *pilae* that may have derived from a hypocaust system, although surprisingly little pottery was found. The lack of any intact structural remains may have been due to ploughing, or the building may have been constructed on raised ground to combat the high risk of flooding.

The metalled trackway was aligned north-west to south-east, measuring up to 5m wide and flanked by drainage ditches on either side. The surface had a slight camber and



Figure 9: A late Bronze Age copper-alloy leaf-shaped razor, Biggleswade, Symmetry Park

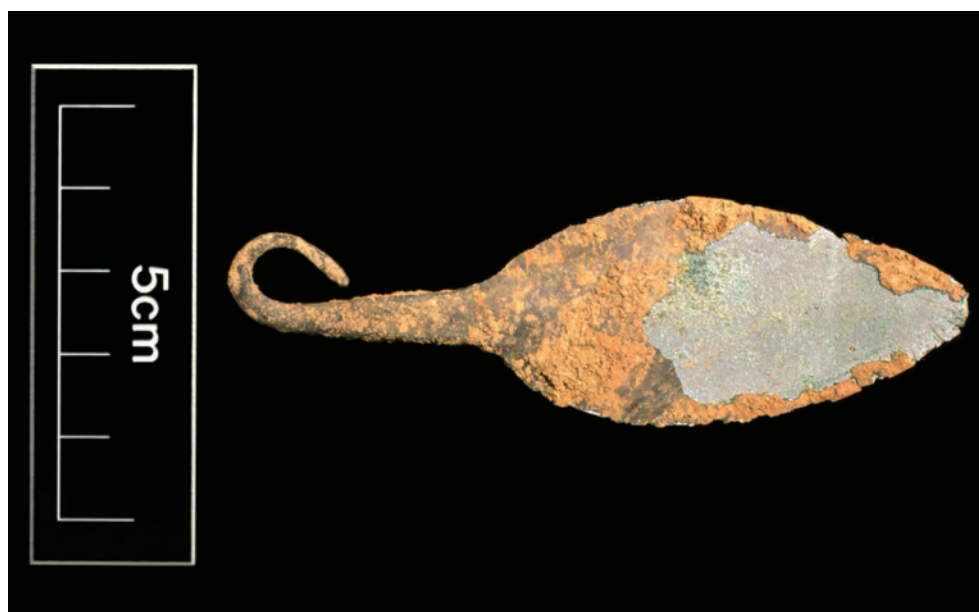


Figure 10: All-features plan of Northwood End Road, Haynes

was constructed from medium to large cobble-stones (Fig. 12). No preparation layers were identified, and the cobbles appear to have been set directly in the ground after it was stripped of any topsoil. The trackway was probably metalled

for only a short stretch where it was close to natural springs, with a higher chance of flooding.

A large cluster of postholes just outside the enclosed settlement may represent contemporary stock enclosures



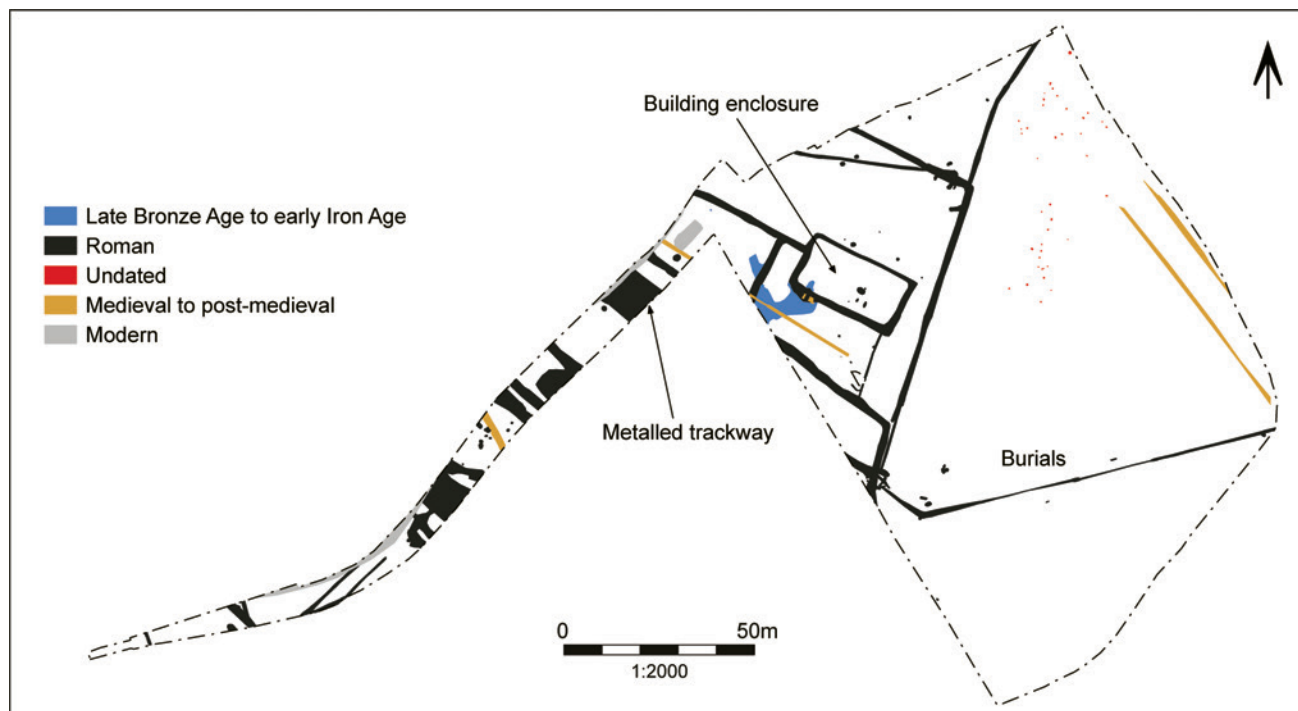


Figure 11: All-features plan of Site 1 at Houghton Regis North 1



Figure 12: Excavation of metalled trackway at Houghton Regis

or corrals, although no dating evidence was recovered from them. Three inhumation burials and a horse burial were also revealed outside the enclosed settlement; one contained a fragmented clay vessel dating to the 2nd–3rd century.

Remains from other periods were restricted to a small amount of activity tentatively dated to the late Bronze Age to early Iron Age, and a few medieval or post-medieval ditches and furrows.

## Bedfordshire

### Site 2 TL 02245 25607

WESLEY KEIR, BENJAMIN CARROLL and MARCO CAPARDONI

A 1.8ha excavation as part of the Phase 4 Advance Infrastructure Works produced evidence of a late Iron Age to 1st–2nd-century Romano-British settlement, defined by a large rectilinear enclosure (Fig. 13). Curved ditches within the enclosure probably represent roundhouse gullies, while there were also groups of storage pits, an inhumation burial, and rectangular partitions to the main enclosure. To the west of the settlement was a cremation burial.

The settlement appears to have continued in use until the late 1st century AD before the site was reworked by a series of Roman bedding trenches. Finds recovered from the settlement are primarily pottery, animal bone and fired

clay, with little metalwork other than four copper-alloy brooches.

Few archaeological remains other than furrows were found that date to other periods, the only significant one being a large pit which is provisionally thought to be early prehistoric. It measured 3m in diameter and 1.4m deep, and contained a small quantity of animal bones. OASIS ID: albionar1-507841; The Culture Trust Luton entry no. LTNMG 1569

### References

Luke, M. and Shotliff, D. 2023. *Late Mesolithic to Early Anglo-Saxon Land-Use at Houghton Regis North, Bedfordshire*, Albion Archaeology Monograph 11



Figure 13: All-features plan of Site 1 at Houghton Regis North 2



**Houghton Regis Greenside, 134 High Street**

TL 0202 2397

MATTEO PALOMBELLI

Three trial trenches measuring 23m long in total were excavated on the proposed plot of a new house. Two each contained a pit cut into geological deposits, but no archaeological features were present in the third. The only dating evidence was a fragment of post-medieval tile from one of the pits. OASIS ID: albionar1-520166; The Culture Trust Luton entry no. LTNMG 1742

**Houghton Regis Linnere, Phase 2: Parcels 1 and 2**

TL 0330 2540

JONATHAN DURMAN, IAN TURNER and WESLEY KEIR

The small number of archaeological features revealed within Parcels 1 and 2 of this large residential development correlates well with the similar pattern of generally low-key activity previously identified in adjacent parts of the overall development area. However, a four-post structure and two storage pits in Parcel 1 and a water-pit in Parcel 2 are evidence of some degree of settlement activity in the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age. The four-post structure is likely to have formed part of the focus of contemporary settlement activity previously identified to the south-east, where three four-post structures were revealed. The water-pit in Parcel 1 appears somewhat isolated, though evidence for later Bronze Age field boundaries and dispersed settlement activity were also revealed by the previous investigation to the south-east. A similar, though slightly smaller late Bronze Age/early Iron Age water-pit was revealed during a previous investigation 250m to the east; it too contained a solution hole at its base.

A ditch and two gullies in Parcel 1 represent elements of the late Iron Age/Roman field systems and boundaries revealed during investigations within the wider Linnere development. The ditch appears to have been a significant boundary in the landscape: it can be traced for at least 450m within previous investigations to the north-west and south-east of Parcel 1. Furrows identified in Parcel 1 are remnants of medieval/early post-medieval ridge and furrow cultivation associated with open-field agriculture; they appear to have been generally widespread throughout the Linnere development area. OASIS ID: albionar1-511851; Accession no. LUTNM 2022/52

**Houghton Regis Linnere, Phase 1: Parcel 4**

TL 0246 2568

JONATHAN DURMAN, IAN TURNER and WESLEY KEIR

Continued excavations within Parcel 4 of the Linnere residential development revealed only a small number of features, indicating that the previously excavated settlement in ACA9 had been almost fully exposed: only a late Bronze Age/early Iron Age ditch and a Roman ditch continued into this excavation area. Eight undated pits were also revealed, which are likely to be late Iron-Age/early Roman, as well as three dispersed postholes of unknown date. Later features comprised continuations of post-medieval boundaries/trackways present across neighbouring excavations, modern land drains, and recent disturbance. OASIS ID: albionar1-513219; Accession no. LUTNM 2022/59

**Kempston, Mill Lane TL 0229 4752**

ADAM WILLIAMS

Planning permission for the installation of a ground-mounted solar PV array next to Old Mill House led to the archaeological monitoring of a narrow cable trench that was approximately 175m long. Undisturbed geological deposits were encountered only at the western end of the trench, and no archaeological features or deposits were observed. Modern and post-medieval pottery and a Jetton dated to the 16th/17th century were the only finds. OASIS ID: albionar1-520050; Accession no. BEDFM 2023.261

**Maulden, New Road TL 0532 3673**

MATEVZ GROSELJ and IAN TURNER

Excavation prior to construction of a new barn at Black Moor Farm revealed only a small number of features. The principal ones were two large, parallel Roman boundary ditches, one of them perhaps a continuation of a previously revealed ditch in an excavation immediately to the east. Although no Roman structural features or pits were revealed, the quantity and nature of the finds recovered – including a moderate assemblage of pottery, fragments of roof tile, a fragment of quern stone, and metal-working slag – indicate the presence of a nearby 2nd–3rd-century domestic settlement. Two post-pads formed of multiple large stones, including a re-used millstone fragment, overlay a possible alluvial subsoil; this suggests that they postdate the Roman activity, presumably constituting the remnants of a timber structure of some sort. OASIS ID: albionar1-510915; Accession no. BEDFM 2022.129

**Milton Ernest, Rushden Road TL 0172 5629**

ADAM WILLIAMS

Nine trial trenches were excavated in support of a proposed application for residential development. All of them contained archaeological features, including the remains of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation, post-medieval building foundations, medieval to modern agricultural boundaries, and a pond that had been backfilled in the 20th century. The results of the evaluation demonstrate that although the open-field systems associated with medieval settlement at Milton Ernest extended into the development area, the core of the medieval village did not. OASIS ID: albionar1-514529; Accession no. BEDFM 2022.229

**Milton Ernest, Thurleigh Road TL 0293 5607**

HEATHER WHITE and ADAM WILLIAMS

Five trenches were excavated in anticipation of a small commercial development at the site, with three of them containing archaeological features – a shallow layer, a trackway, and a ditch. All are likely to have been associated with post-medieval agriculture. OASIS ID: albionar1-511376; Accession no. BEDFM 2022.214

**ALLEN ARCHAEOLOGY****Bedford, St Martin's Business Park, Cardington Road TL 072 485**

MICK McDAID

In Spring **2021**, an excavation was undertaken following a geophysical survey and trial trenching. The earliest





Figure 14: Bedford, St Martin's Business Park – Roman kiln, stokehole and rake out pit

archaeology identified comprised a small assemblage of Mesolithic flintwork. In the decades prior to the Roman Conquest, a ring ditch was constructed and was likely part of an extended landscape of rural settlement between the Great Ouse and Elstow Brook that extended into the Roman period. Following the Roman Conquest, an enclosure system was established alongside kilns (Fig. 14) and a stone-lined well. Following Roman abandonment, two sunken feature buildings were in use at some point in the 5th – 9th century. These were likely that of a scattered rural settlement. Medieval or post-medieval ridge-and-furrow was also observed. A publication providing further information on the findings is currently in preparation for submission to Bedfordshire Archaeology Journal. OASIS ID: allenarcl-133636

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING SERVICES

**Harrold, Mid Farm, New Road SP 92745 56167**  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL BUILDING RECORDING SERVICES

An archaeological standing building survey of Mid Farm in was carried out in advance of the proposed repair of the outbuildings and the demolition of the farmhouse. Mid Farm is predominately mid to late 19th century in date. The farm has suffered because of redundancy, leaving mainly the standing walls and little physical dating evidence to support the cartographic sources. The farm has an established history as part of Priory Farm, which originated as a 12th century Augustinian Priory. It possible that the site of Mid Farm remained with Priory Farm throughout. The late 18th century enclosure map appears to record a building in approximately the same location, it is possible that one of the buildings is potentially earlier than the others and may be this 18th century building.

## COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

**Bolnhurst, Mobile Freezer Rentals Ltd., Greensbury Farm NGR 507437 259043**  
TRUDY CRAIG

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded no features or deposits of archaeological interest.

**Brogborough, Land off Bedford Road NGR 496190 238280**  
ANNA WOLF

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified undated ditches, some of which had similar alignments to extant field boundaries. Medieval/post-medieval plough furrows were also recorded.

**Houghton Regis, Bury Spinney NGR 500704 224716**  
JONATHAN ORELLANA

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified Roman remains consisting of two parallel ditches potentially corresponding to enclosure or field boundaries. Additional undated ditches, pits and a cremation deposit were also identified in proximity to the Roman features and may have been contemporary. Two post-medieval/modern ditches corresponded to boundaries depicted on 1st Edition OS mapping.

**Meppershall, Meppershall Water Pipeline NGR 505258 236491 to 513500 235500**  
RALPH BROWN

An excavation by Cotswold Archaeology identified a large number of archaeological features. Iron Age ditches and pits were recorded, possibly forming enclosures and associated activity. Extensive evidence for Roman quarrying, ditches

possibly pertaining to field systems, a probable trackway and three cremation deposits were also identified. A possible Anglo-Saxon or post-medieval/modern agricultural ditch was also recorded, as well as additional medieval and post-medieval/modern pits and ditches, some of which correspond to features shown on 20th-century mapping. Medieval/post-medieval furrows were also identified.

**Meppershall, Monks Pool, Rectory Road** NGR 513748 236201

DAN RILEY

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded no features or deposits of archaeological interest.

**Wootton, Land on South Side of Keeley Lane**  
NGR: 500750 246017

ANNA WOLF

### Introduction

In June 2023, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological excavation on land on the south side of Keeley Lane, on the northern edge of Wootton, Bedfordshire in advance of residential development (Fig. 15). The 3-hectare development site is situated in a low-lying area, on the northern edge of the Marston Vale (45m aOD); a clay vale formed of Peterborough and Stewartby Member mudstone. Mapped superficial deposits comprise Crag Formation sand and Head deposits comprising gravel, sand, silt and clay (BGS 2024), which presented as sandy clay with frequent flint and angular stone inclusions within the development site.

The archaeological potential of the site was established by a trial-trench evaluation (CA 2022) confirming the presence of a localised cluster of Early Iron Age pits in the northern half of the site (Fig. 16), one of which produced a Neolithic stone axe-head. Small-scale Late Iron Age/Early Roman activity was also represented by a ditch and pit. A geophysical survey undertaken prior to this did not identify any anomalies of potential archaeological origin but it did confirm the presence of an extensive array of medieval ridge-and-furrow features (SUMO 2022), which were also visible on the ground surface of the site and subsequently recorded as part of an earthworks survey (CA 2022).

This report presents a summary of the discoveries at Keeley Lane; a detailed excavation narrative, with specialist finds and biological evidence reports including details of methods used during the analyses is available online via the Cotswold Archaeology website (CA 2024; report MK0890\_1 <https://reports.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/>).

### Early Iron Age pits (700–400 BC; Figs. 16–17)

Early Iron Age occupation was represented by twenty pits spread predominantly across the eastern half of the excavation area. None of the finds from archaeologically-secure deposits were suitable for radiocarbon dating but pottery recovered from some of the pits was identified as Early Iron Age and included shouldered and tall-necked jars (see Pearson 2024; CA 2024, Fig. 17) and sherds with finger-tip impressions, incised chevrons and circular indents or partial perforations (see Pearson 2024, 38–47; CA 2024, Fig. 17). A Neolithic stone axe-head, discussed in more detail below, and a sherd of Neolithic/Bronze Age pottery were also recovered from two Period 1 pits, implying the

presence of earlier land-use within the site. However, no corresponding features were definitively identified.

The Early Iron Age pits were typically oval or sub-round in plan and mostly characterised by wide, relatively shallow profiles. While some of the features contained very light coloured fills with a small number of finds, suggesting slow infilling through natural processes over a period of time, some of the larger pits, such as 10008, 10026 and 10058, were identified as likely dedicated waste disposal features. These were characterised by steeper profiles exceeding 0.4m in depth and organic-rich fills with abundant domestic refuse material, including pottery, animal bone (cattle, sheep and pig), wood charcoal and charred plant remains that were dominated by hulled barley and emmer/spelt wheat grain (Boardman *et al.* 2024, 61–8). Four foetal cattle bones were also recovered from pit 10058.

Of particular interest were intercutting pits 10008 and 10026 (Fig. 16), with pit 10008 being the earlier feature. The pits produced a range of artefacts and biological material, including a Neolithic stone axe-head (Fig. 17; Walker 2024) recovered alongside three sherds (6g) of broadly dated Iron Age pottery from fill 10007 of pit 10008 and a large sherd (27g) of pottery of likely Neolithic or Bronze Age date from pit 10026 (Pearson 2024, 38). The two pits were overlain by a dark-blue grey clayey silt deposit (10006; Fig. 16, Section AA) that appeared to represent the final infilling of these two features. It produced 140 sherds (1,210g) of Early Iron Age pottery, as well as 782g of animal bone. This included a fragment of antler and sheep/goat bone that showed signs of having been worked. Two flint flakes were also recovered, one of which displayed attributes that are consistent with an Iron Age date but could equally be Neolithic or Bronze Age in origin (Sommerville 2024, 48–9). A bulk soil sample taken from fill 10006 produced charcoal, dominated by oak, and charred cereal grains, which probably represented mixed domestic refuse and hearth waste.

The stone axe-head was of particular interest as it was a Group 1 greenstone type that most likely originated from West Cornwall and the Mounts Bay area, although the precise source of the rock is unclear, with no working sites yet identified (Walker 2024, 51). The exploitation of Cornish greenstones is thought to have occurred throughout the Neolithic period; its toughness and colour being important attributes (*ibid.* 52–4).

Pits 10008 and 10026 have been assigned to the Early Iron Age on the basis of pottery recovered from them and the predominance of similarly dated pits in the excavation area. However, the axe-head was not particularly weathered and coupled with the low volume of Iron Age pottery (three sherds; 6g) and the sherd of Neolithic or Bronze Age pottery from pit 10026, it is possible that one or both of these features were actually much earlier in date, with deposit 10006 representing some form of disturbance of these pits during the Early Iron Age.

Walker has highlighted several examples where axe-heads have been found in post-Neolithic contexts across Britain and it has been suggested that these objects were deliberately collected in the Roman period for religious and superstitious reasons (Walker 2024). This presents the possibility that the axe-head from Keeley Lane was a curated object and that its deposition could have been part of wider prehistoric and Roman practices of non-functional, ritually motivated deposition (*i.e.* cannot be explained in terms of normal



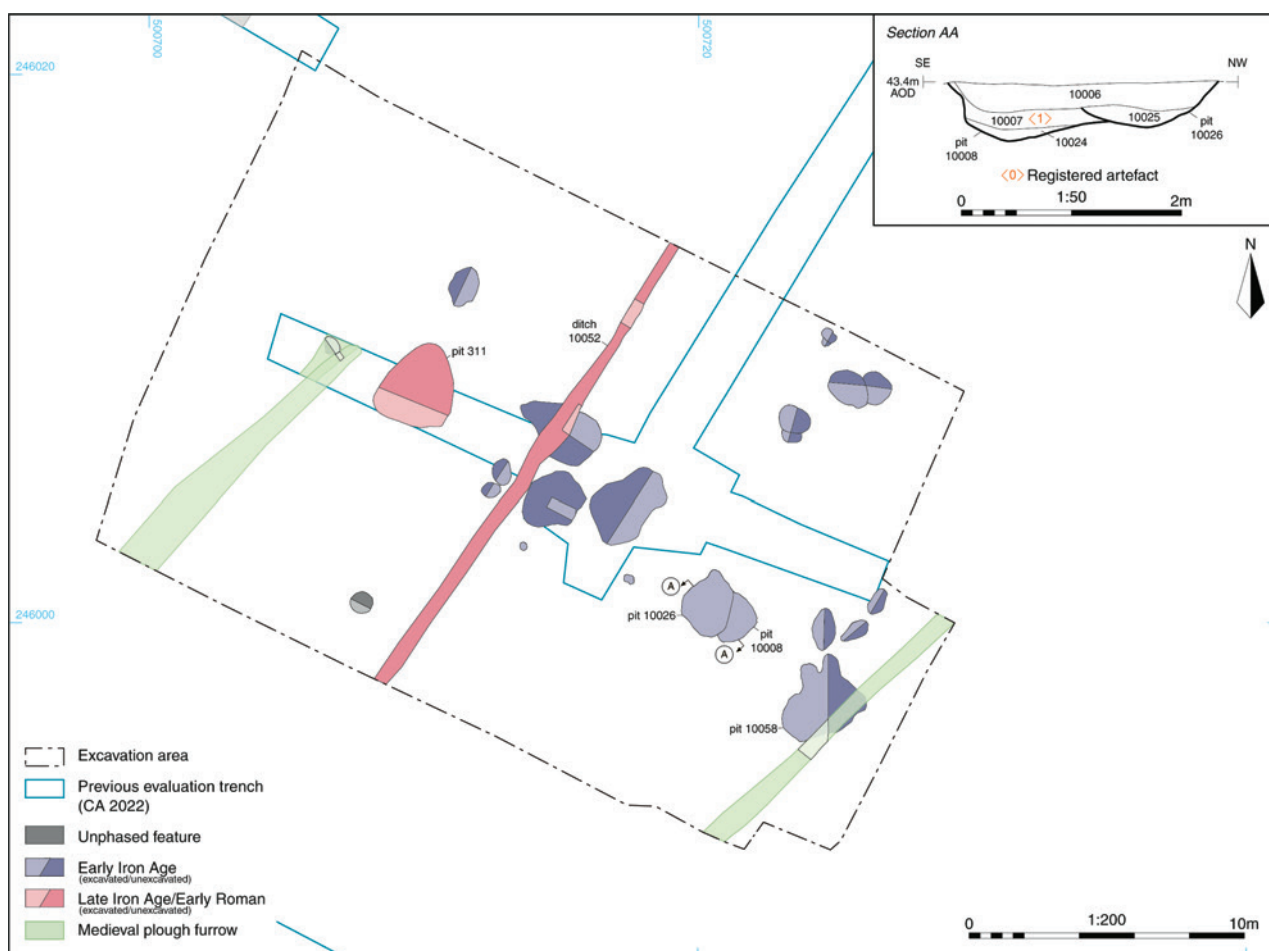
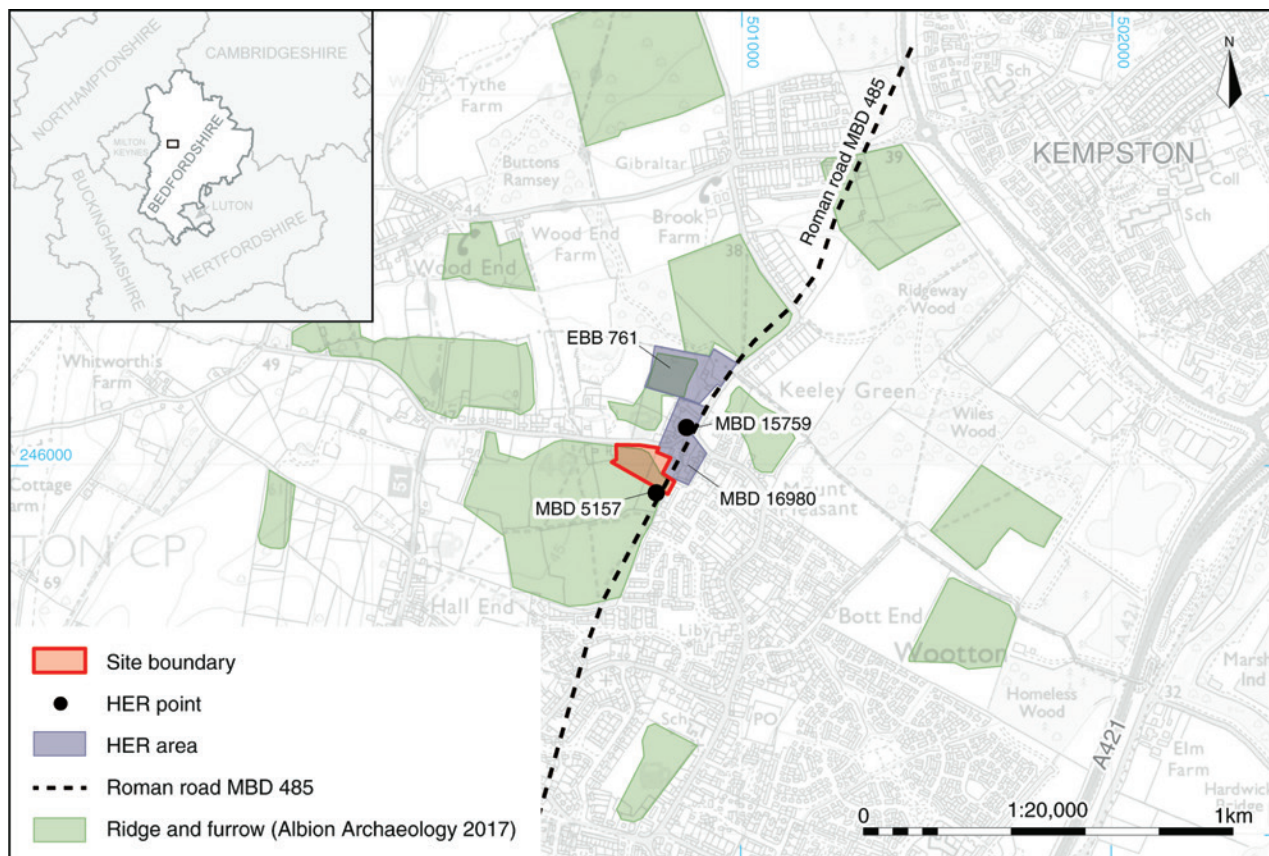






Figure 17: Neolithic stone axe-head, Wootton, Keeley Lane

patterns of discard), perhaps used to mark a significant place in the landscape or a specific event, although not possible to prove in this instance (Hill 1995, 125–28; Yates 2007, 18).

Some information on economy and land-use during the Early Iron Age was provided by the animal bone and charred plant remains recovered from the cluster of pits. A slightly higher incidence of sheep/goat over cattle was noted in the animal bone assemblage (Clarke 2024, 58–60). This is generally typical for the Iron Age (Hambleton 2008, 38–48) but not for this area of Bedfordshire, where the higher occurrence of cattle within Iron Age settlements, such as Marston Park (Albion Archaeology 2012) and Biddenham Loop (Maltby 2016, 189–9), has been attributed to the abundance of floodplains, which provide an ideal environment for cattle grazing (Hambleton 2008, 45). However, the recovery of four foetal cattle bones from pit 10058 could suggest that cattle husbandry was taking place in the vicinity of the pits (Clarke 2024, 58–9).

Charred plant remains indicate the cultivation of hulled barley, emmer and/or spelt wheat and oats, a typical range of cereals for the Early Iron Age (Boardman *et al.* 2024, 63), although no evidence for crop-processing activities was identified on site. Access to woodland is indicated by charcoal of oak, hazel, ash, hawthorn and field maple, with some of these species also suggesting the presence of hedgerows and scrubland in the vicinity. Pollen data from

two paleochannels on the Biddenham Loop floodplain, 1.3km to the north-east, suggested a regeneration of hazel and oak woodland in the local area during the Early and Middle Iron Age periods (Luke 2016, 113–14).

*Late Iron Age/Early Roman peripheral features (c. 50 BC – AD 100; Fig. 16)*

The recovery of only one sherd of Middle Iron Age pottery and an absence of diagnostic Late Iron Age pottery forms and decoration suggests a hiatus occurred, with activity re-establishing at the beginning of the Late Iron Age/Early Roman period, evidenced by pit 311 and ditch 10052. Both features are likely to be a continuation of Late Iron Age to Roman activity recorded on the north side of Keeley Lane, approximately 90m to the north-east (Fig. 15, MBD 15759; Pollard and Baker 1999, 90–97), and at 157 Bedford Road (Fig. 15, EBB 761; Albion Archaeology 2011), approximately 200m to the north.

The postulated course of a Roman road (MBD 485, Fig. 15), running from Dorchester-on-Thames to Alconbury House, has also been mapped, by the Bedford Borough HER, as passing through the eastern edge of the site, although the record's accuracy has been previously disputed (Simco 1984). No evidence of this road was found within the site but the clustering of this Late Iron Age and Roman activity suggests that some form of routeway might have existed in this area of Wootton.

## Bedfordshire

### *Medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation (Fig. 16)*

Surviving remains of medieval ridge-and-furrow cultivation were shown to be relatively well preserved across the majority of the site, with extant earthworks recorded as part of the earthworks survey (CA 2022). Within a localised area in the eastern portion of the site, the ridge-and-furrow system had been removed by post-medieval quarrying, probably associated with the local brick-making industry. During excavation, the remains of north-east/south-west aligned plough furrows were encountered across the excavation area, matching the extant features recorded on the surface of the site.

The medieval ridge and furrow recorded across the site correspond to a wider block recorded in fields to the south of Keeley Lane and would have formed part of the medieval open field system of Keeley Green medieval settlement (MBD 16980, Fig. 15).

### *Summary*

The evidence encountered suggests a localised focus of activity during the Early Iron Age; the quantity and concentration of pottery, as well as hearth waste material, butchery waste, foetal cattle bones and limited evidence for antler and bone working implies that the pits were associated with domestic activity, although no structures or other settlement components were identified within the development site. Evidence for subsequent phases of activity was scarce but the Late Iron Age/Early Roman features probably relate to known Roman settlement activity recorded to the north of Keeley Lane and the ridge and furrow features to medieval land-use in this part of Wootton.

### *Acknowledgements*

The archaeological investigations were undertaken at the request of Blakeney Estates Ltd. Fieldwork was undertaken by Joao Heitor, assisted by CA staff. The finds reports were written by Laura Pearson, Jacky Sommerville and Katherine Walker and the biological evidence reports were written by Andy Clarke, Sheila Boardman and Charlotte L. Molloy. The report illustrations were prepared by Hannah Kennedy. The project archive has been compiled and prepared for deposition by Molly Agnew-Henshaw and Claire Bond. The project was managed for CA by Antoni Nowak and the post-excavation stage was managed by Jo Barker. The fieldwork was monitored on behalf of Bedford Borough Council by Geoff Saunders.

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- KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**
- Bedford, High Street TL 0499 4992**
- DEREK WATSON
- An Archaeological Evaluation of Land to the Rear of 72 to 74 High Street, Bedford, Bedfordshire, was conducted in July 2023 by KDK Archaeology Ltd prior to the erection of a two-storey apartment building containing 4 one-bedroom flats. The development site is situated within the Bedford Conservation Area, Sub-Area 2 – Town Centre West, and a locally designated area of archaeological interest that is the postulated core of the Saxon and Medieval town at Bedford. The evaluation comprised the excavation of a single L-shaped trench situated within the footprint of the development, which revealed a series of pits, and a linear, with a wide range of artefacts including animal bone, slag, building detritus, and pottery, dated to the Saxo-Norman period (c. AD 1066–1150) and Medieval (AD 1000–c. 1350), and the post-medieval period. The data suggests a long-term pattern of residential/domestic and small-scale industrial activity adjacent to, and/or to the rear of the various buildings fronting onto the main street during the medieval to post-medieval periods.
- Dunstable, Kingscroft Avenue TL 0203 2217**
- LAURA DODD
- A programme of Observation and Recording was undertaken in December 2022 by KDK Archaeology Ltd at 26 Kingscroft Avenue, Dunstable, Bedfordshire in order to fulfil Condition 4 of planning permission for the development of the site. This necessitated the monitoring of ground reduction, the excavation of five foundation trenches and a soakaway pit. The excavations revealed a previously unrecorded well, with a 1m diameter shaft, though this wasn't excavated. The shaft was not lined with brick or stone but cut directly into the natural chalk. No dating evidence was recovered.
- Dunstable, Priory Road TL 0224 2191**
- LAURA DODD
- Between September 2022 and May 2023 KDK Archaeology undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at 2 Priory Road, Dunstable, Bedfordshire in order to fulfil



Condition 3 of the planning permission for the construction of an extension and garage conversion. Previous works undertaken in 1993 showed the site to be of significant archaeological interest as 20 medieval burials associated with the adjacent Augustinian monastery were exposed within the footing trenches of the new garage to the west of the development area. Although the potential for disturbing more burials was high, no further individuals were uncovered during this series of work.

Several layers of made ground and a feature made of Totternhoe Stone were observed within two of the footing trenches between the house and the 19th century outbuilding. Similar features and deposits were exposed during the earlier excavation in 1993 showing stratigraphical continuity to the east of the known burials. Amongst the finds were fragments of decorated medieval floor tile, similar to those recovered from the Dominican Friary on the western side of the Dunstable.

**Hulcote, Land adjacent to Rook Tree Farm Road**  
SP 9465 3903

FLORIAN WEBER

In April 2023, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording, during the construction of an agricultural barn for the storage of hay and housing livestock. The development included ground reduction within the footprint of the barn during which 5 shallow linear and 2 circular archaeological features were recorded, containing medieval pottery, ceramic building material (CBM) and animal bone. The linear features were used for water management and drainage and have silted up over a long period. The larger of the two pits may have been a water-hole for animals, while the small pit could have been used for rubbish disposal.

**Lidlington, Land North of Sheep Tick End SP 9861**  
3936

DEREK WATSON & FLORIAN WEBER

In October 2023, KDK Archaeology Ltd prepared a Heritage Asset Impact Assessment prior to the erection of 6 new dwellings with associated garages, parking, access and the provision of a new footpath on Land north of Sheep Tick End, Lidlington, Bedfordshire. The development site is not situated within a Conservation Area or an Area of Archaeological Significance, and no Listed buildings are situated nearby. However, it is situated immediately south-southwest of the deserted medieval village of Thrupp End, now a scheduled monument (NHLE: 1010364; HER 31).

An archaeological evaluation comprising three trial trenches was undertaken as part of the investigations, but despite the presence of remains dating from the prehistoric to the medieval periods in the surrounding landscape, only a modern linear feature was revealed. This suggests that the site either lies on the periphery of settlement or that the trenches lie between widely dispersed archaeological features. As the potential for further sub-surface archaeological remains cannot be confidently excluded at this stage, it is possible that a programme of Archaeological Observation and Recording (Watching Brief) may be required in order to safeguard any below-ground cultural remains.

**Roxton, Land at Great North Road TL 1526 5516**

FLORIAN WEBER

KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Archaeological Observation and Recording of Land at Great North Road, Roxton, Bedfordshire in June 2023, prior to the development of a single storey office building, following previous works monitored by KDK Archaeology Ltd in February 2018 (Dodd 2019). No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were revealed.

**Stotfold, St Mary's Lower School TL 2207 3689**

FLORIAN WEBER, DEREK WATSON & CHRIS MARTIN TAYLOR

From June to September 2023 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording at St Marys Lower School, Rook Tree Lane, Stotfold, Bedfordshire prior to the installation of a ground source heat pump with new plant. No significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were revealed other than the remains of the ridge and furrow system previously recorded in the Historic Environment Record.

**MOLA (MUSEUM OF LONDON**  
**ARCHAEOLOGY)**

**Cardington, DVSA Training Academy TL 08148 47205**

KAMIL ORZECZOWSKI

In February and March 2023 an archaeological watching brief was conducted by MOLA. A total of four test pits were excavated through existing mounds present on the site and the removal of a drain was also monitored during these works. During the works extensive disturbance and modifications to the landscape were observed due to past construction activities. Test pit excavations revealed artificial deposits consisting of rubble, tarmac fragments, and dumped items. A layer resembling the original strata was found in one test pit, containing modern brick and a fragment of 20th century pottery. The absence of natural deposits and the presence of secondary layers suggest historical alterations to the site.

**Ravensden, Graze Hill: An Archaeological Excavation**

RACHEL CLARE and ADAM REID. Illustration by CARLA ARDIS

In 2021 MOLA conducted an archaeological excavation on land at Graze Hill, Ravensden (NGR: TL 0585 5360; Reid 2023). Three excavation areas (Areas 1–3) targeted Iron Age, Saxo-Norman and medieval archaeological features identified by the preceding geophysical survey (Perry 2018) and trial trench evaluation (Sharrock 2019). The identified features dated from Neolithic through to the late medieval/post-medieval periods were focused in Areas 1 and 2, while undated features solely comprised the archaeological activity in Area 3 (Fig 18).

A solitary cremation burial, radiocarbon dated to the Early Neolithic period, was identified in Area 2 but this had been heavily truncated by a medieval ditch. Activity in the Middle to Late Iron Age comprised ditches and pits, including a possible enclosure and a trackway, were identified across Areas 1 and 2. This use may represent peripheral agricultural activity associated with the nearby Mowsbury Hillfort, located 0.5km to the south-east of site, or may have been a part of a settlement. Saxo-Norman and medieval features



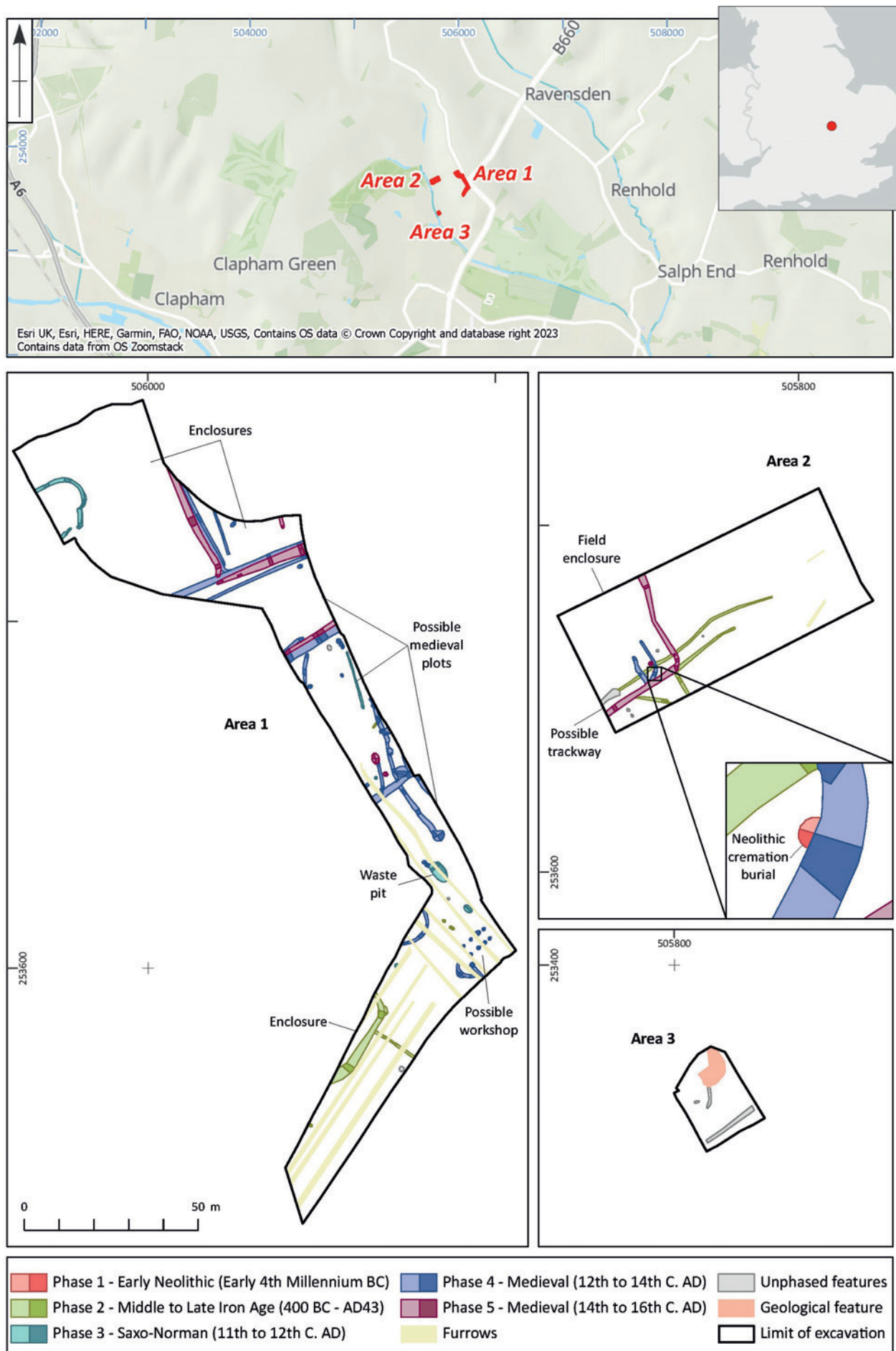


Figure 18: Ravensden, Graze Hill – Site Plan

produced evidence of small-scale metalworking debris with activity found especially in the 12th – 14th centuries, when a timber structure S1 (Fig. 19), which may have been a workshop, was established in the south-east of Area 1. Three contemporary potential plots and two further enclosures were identified in the same excavation area, while a single ditch and pit dated to this period were present in Area 2. In the late medieval or post-medieval period, the site was agricultural land as evidence of ridge and furrow cultivation was identified in Areas 1 and 2.

#### *Neolithic (Phase 1)*

An isolated Early Neolithic cremation burial deposit was identified in Area 2. No other Neolithic activity was present in the excavation areas and only a pit, that contained a worked flint blade of potentially Early Neolithic date, was identified approximately 100m to the north of Area 2 in the previous evaluation (Sharrock 2019, [3005]).

The cremated human remains were identified within a small circular pit located in the centre of Area 2. It had a U-shaped profile, measured 0.66m wide, 0.08m deep and was filled by a deposit of firm dark grey sandy clay that contained a dense concentration of cremated human bone (44.3g). Two radiocarbon dates were confirmed from the cremated bone and through the use of Bayesian Analysis it has been possible to further adjust the date range to 3711 – 3637 cal. BC (95.4% probability).

#### *Middle to Late Iron Age (Phase 2)*

Archaeological remains dated to Phase 2 comprised a partial enclosure ditch and pits in the southern part of Area 1 and three ditches, including a potential trackway, in Area 2. A total of 136 sherds (914g) of predominantly Mid to Late Iron Age pottery, were recovered from these features.

#### *Saxo-Norman to medieval (Phases 3–5)*

Saxo-Norman activity (c. 11th to 12th centuries AD, Phase 3) was only identified in Area 1, and it comprised a curvilinear enclosure ditch in the northern part of the excavation area, another ditch and several pits. Three of these pits contained

evidence of metalworking activity and may have remained open into the medieval period.

The next phase of activity (12th – 14th centuries, Phase 4) demonstrated the most intensive episode of activity at the site. The archaeological features included three potential plots, which may have fronted onto the routeway that today exists as Graze Hill Road, a trackway aligned parallel to these plots, and two possible enclosures in Area 1. Additionally, a rectangular timber structure S1, which may have been a workshop, was located in the south-eastern corner of the same excavation area (Fig. 19). This structure comprised two parallel rows of four postholes, aligned north-east to south-west. The timber structure measured 8m from north-east to south-west and 4m north-west to south-east, with spacings of between 0.90m and 1.80m between the individual postholes. Several of the ditches in Area 2 were also assigned to this as a result of stratigraphical analysis.

Activity in this second medieval phase of activity (14th – 16th centuries, Phase 5) comprised the recutting of three ditches in Area 1, and additionally two pits and further ditches were established in the centre of this area. A potential field enclosure ditch and a pit were present in Area 2.

#### *Post-Roman pottery and finds*

The post-Roman pottery assemblage comprised 767 sherds with a total weight of 9828g. Aside from a single sherd of residual Early/Middle Anglo-Saxon pottery, it was all Saxo-Norman (11th century) or later. A total of 83 contexts produced post-Roman pottery, with an average of 9.2 sherds per context and an average sherd weight of 12.8g. Six small finds were recovered from medieval features (Phase 4), and this was the most productive period for small finds. The most notable find was a high-status copper-alloy buckle plate, dated to c. AD 1300–1450.

#### *Conclusion*

The sporadic Neolithic activity in the vicinity of Area 2 was indicated by a solitary Early Neolithic cremation burial, and the worked flint blade of the same date identified in the previous evaluation. The use of cremation as a burial practice



Figure 19: Ravensden, Graze Hill – View of S1, looking south-west

## Bedfordshire

| Structure                                | Dimensions   | Interpretation          |
|------------------------------------------|--------------|-------------------------|
| Structure S18, Grove Priory (Baker 2013) | 7.4m×5.9m    | Workshop                |
| Structure S37, Grove Priory              | 20.2m×5.8m   | Barn                    |
| Structure S41B, Grove Priory             | 11.7m×5.5m   | Dwelling                |
| Structure ST1, Wilstead (Clare 2019)     | 12.6m×8.7m   | Agricultural Structure  |
| Structure ST2, Wilstead                  | 10m×8m       | Dwelling                |
| Structure ST3, Wilstead                  | 14m×7m       | Agricultural Structure  |
| Building 1, Houghton Conquest            | 7.8m×3.4m    | Workshop (metalworking) |
| <b>Structure S1, Graze Hill</b>          | <b>8m×4m</b> | <b>Workshop?</b>        |

Table 1. Medieval timber structures in Bedfordshire for comparison

is not thought to have become common until the Middle Neolithic period (Willis 2019), although Early Neolithic dates have been returned for an isolated cremation deposit within a Roman cemetery in Cirencester (Jordan *et al* 1994) and a burial at Parkbury, St Albans (Niblett 2001). This cremation deposit is one of only few known Early Neolithic examples, suggesting that it is regionally, if not nationally, significant. The role that radiocarbon dating played in this process is critical, as without scientific dating the feature would likely been attributed to the Iron Age period.

The archaeological evidence suggests that the site lay within an Iron Age landscape that was dominated by agricultural boundaries, with no clear evidence of timber structures or other domestic activity uncovered in any of the excavation areas. However, the presence of a possible trackway of Middle to Late Iron Age date in the northern part of the development area indicates that the site existed as part of a wider landscape. The identified enclosures likely formed part of field systems that extended beyond the site to the south and west. These may have covered a wide area, although it is not clear if they were contemporary to the potentially Iron Age or Roman field systems that are visible as cropmarks to the north of the site. Middle to Late Iron Age field systems, like the one at Graze Hill, are common in Bedfordshire and the surrounding counties, but the potential significance of the Graze Hill site is that it may have been situated in the hinterland of Mowsbury Hillfort, located 0.5km south-east of the site.

Although the medieval ditches located to the north of timber structure S1 have been interpreted as plot boundaries, their form and function were difficult to discern, partly due to the narrow confines of the excavation area. These ditches may have defined narrow plots that fronted onto the routeway that exists today as Graze Hill Road and this interpretation is corroborated by Structure S1, which shared the same alignment and may have existed within another similarly shaped plot. However, it is also possible that they were ditched boundaries that formed part of an agricultural landscape and this activity could contribute our knowledge

of the medieval rural landscape in Bedfordshire. It is perhaps significant that this phase of activity took place in the vicinity of the known moated sites at Mowsbury Hillfort and Graze Hill Farm. Medieval moated sites are common on the clay landscapes in Bedfordshire and have frequently been associated with the creation of new farmland during the 12th and 13th centuries (Edgeworth 2007).

Medieval buildings are rare in Bedfordshire, with the exception of ecclesiastical structures (*ibid*, 101). A table of comparable medieval structures indicated that S1 was narrower than other domestic and agricultural structures of the same type (Table 1). However, it did compare favourably to a structure found at Houghton Conquest (Building 1), that was also interpreted as a workshop based on the presence of recovered tap slag and furnace lining (Walker 2011, 13).

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**Wymington, Rushton, Goosey Lodge Farm SP 96534 63463**

ALEX SHIPLEY

In June 2023 a total of eight evaluation trenches were excavated by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) at Goosey Lodge, Wymington. A possible Roman cultivation system was revealed in two of the evaluation trenches, which were aligned north-east to south-west; however, no artefacts were recovered. The remaining trenches revealed medieval and post-medieval ridge and furrow systems and boundary ditches. In the south of the evaluation area geological features were present in the trenches, and a post-



medieval pond at the bottom of the valley, which separated the two parcels of land.

## OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

**Staploe, Bushmead Road TL 15404 59565**

TOBY KNIGHT AND MARIA ANNA ROGERS

In September 2023 Oxford Archaeology carried out archaeological trial trenching on the site of a proposed pipeline just to the north of Bushmead Road, Upper Staploe. Despite the evaluation being in the vicinity of several cropmarks marking Iron Age/Romano-British enclosures and settlement features, a low density of undated archaeological remains was uncovered in only five trenches along the pipeline. These consisted of agricultural furrows of probable medieval or post-medieval origin. A small group of east to west aligned discrete features was revealed, probably representing a former fence-line that extends parallel with a nearby modern field boundary. A further isolated pit was also identified. The only finds consisted of some poorly preserved horse bone; no dating evidence was recovered.

## PRE-CONSTRUCT ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

**A Late Iron Age–Early Roman Field System and Roman Cremation Burial At Butterfield Technology Park, Luton**

CHRISTIANE MECKSEPER & ISOBEL WOOLHOUSE

### *Introduction*

In Autumn 2018, Pre-Construct Archaeology carried out an archaeological excavation at Butterfield Technology Park, Luton (centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid reference TL 1084 2503). The site is 3.8km north-east of Luton city centre and 250m north-west of the A505 (Fig. 20). The excavation was commissioned by Henry Boot Construction Ltd in advance of construction of commercial units.

The geology is Clay-with-Flints over chalk. The site lies in an area of high ground (c. 174m AOD) which slopes down gradually from north-west to south-east within a wider landscape of gently rolling chalk downs. The River Lea flows approximately 2.5km to the south-west, through Luton.

This report describes the most significant results of the excavation: a small prehistoric flint assemblage, an un-urned Roman cremation burial, and six ditches from which Bronze Age and late Iron Age/Roman pottery sherds were recovered (Fig. 21). A full description of the work carried out, along with specialist reports, can be found in the ‘grey’ report (Meckseper 2019) available online from the Archaeology Data Service at <<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk>>. The site archive will be deposited with Luton Museum.

### *Prehistoric*

The struck flint assemblage is small and was distributed across the site. Eight struck flints and forty-five small flakes and flake fragments are evidence that some prehistoric flint working took place here but are not sufficiently diagnostic to be more closely dated. As most of the struck examples were found in isolation, it appears that the flint working was neither systematic nor large-scale.

Seven much abraded pottery sherds in friable grog-tempered fabric, similar to a single sherd of Beaker or early

Bronze Age pottery found to the north-east of our site during an evaluation in 2006 (Timby 2006), were recovered from a slot ([172]) roughly midway along Ditch 6 and may date to the early Bronze Age.

### *Late Iron Age and Roman*

Six ditches were recorded. Ditches 1–4 were on a north-north-west to south-south-east alignment. They were up to c. 0.5m wide and between 0.13 and 0.26m deep. Ditch 2 was a redefinition of Ditch 1, suggesting usage over an extended period. The narrow and shallow survival of some of the ditches indicates considerable truncation in the past. Ditches 5 and 6 were slightly apart from the other ditches, generally wider and deeper and on a slightly different alignment. Ditch 5 was a re-cut of Ditch 6 and followed the same course so was probably only dug a short time later, when Ditch 6 was still clearly visible.

Ditches 1, 3 and 4 contained a total of five fragments of pottery, each found on its own, dating from the mid-/late 1st century BC to the early 3rd century AD (late Iron Age to Roman). This pottery was poorly preserved, with a mean sherd weight of only 6g, and comprises unsourced coarsewares in a range of shell-tempered, sandy and grog-tempered fabrics, including the rim from a reeded-rim bowl in Ditch 4. Three pottery sherds, including the rim from a shell-tempered bead-rim jar, were found during removal of sub-soil across the site. Handmade sandy reduced ware found in the fill of Ditch 1 and grog-tempered ware from Ditch 3 may be late Iron Age (late 1st century BC to mid-1st century AD). As noted above, a small assemblage of possibly Bronze Age pottery was recovered from midway along Ditch 6. Its re-cut, Ditch 5, contained a single sherd of Roman (2nd-century) pottery. A few small fragments of much abraded post-medieval ceramic building material found in Ditches 1–3 conflict with a late Iron Age/Roman date, but they could have been intrusively incorporated via manuring and ploughing long after the ditches had filled in.

Owing to the lack of settlement features and the limited finds, it is likely that the ditches represent boundaries some distance away from a settlement area, probably part of a field system. They did not form any obvious enclosures but may have done so beyond the boundaries of the excavation area. Ditch 2 — a re-cut of Ditch 1 — followed a similar alignment to Ditch 3 so together they could have formed the boundaries of a track or driveway. Although Ditches 3 and 4 were also roughly parallel, there was a gap of only a few metres between them and, considering the removal of original topsoil and reduction of the ground level over time, this gap would have been even smaller in the past. Therefore, they may have been on either side of a hedge. These closely spaced, more-or-less parallel ditches could also represent successive redefinitions of a field or enclosure boundary that shifted slightly over time.

### *Roman Cremation Burial*

The most significant discovery was an isolated un-urned cremation burial at the eastern edge of the excavation. This was circular in plan, 0.49m in diameter and 0.19m deep, with a fill of mid-greyish-brown firm silty clay. Most of the 429g of cremated bone is incompletely oxidised; no elements are recognisable and it is not possible to identify the age or sex of the individual.

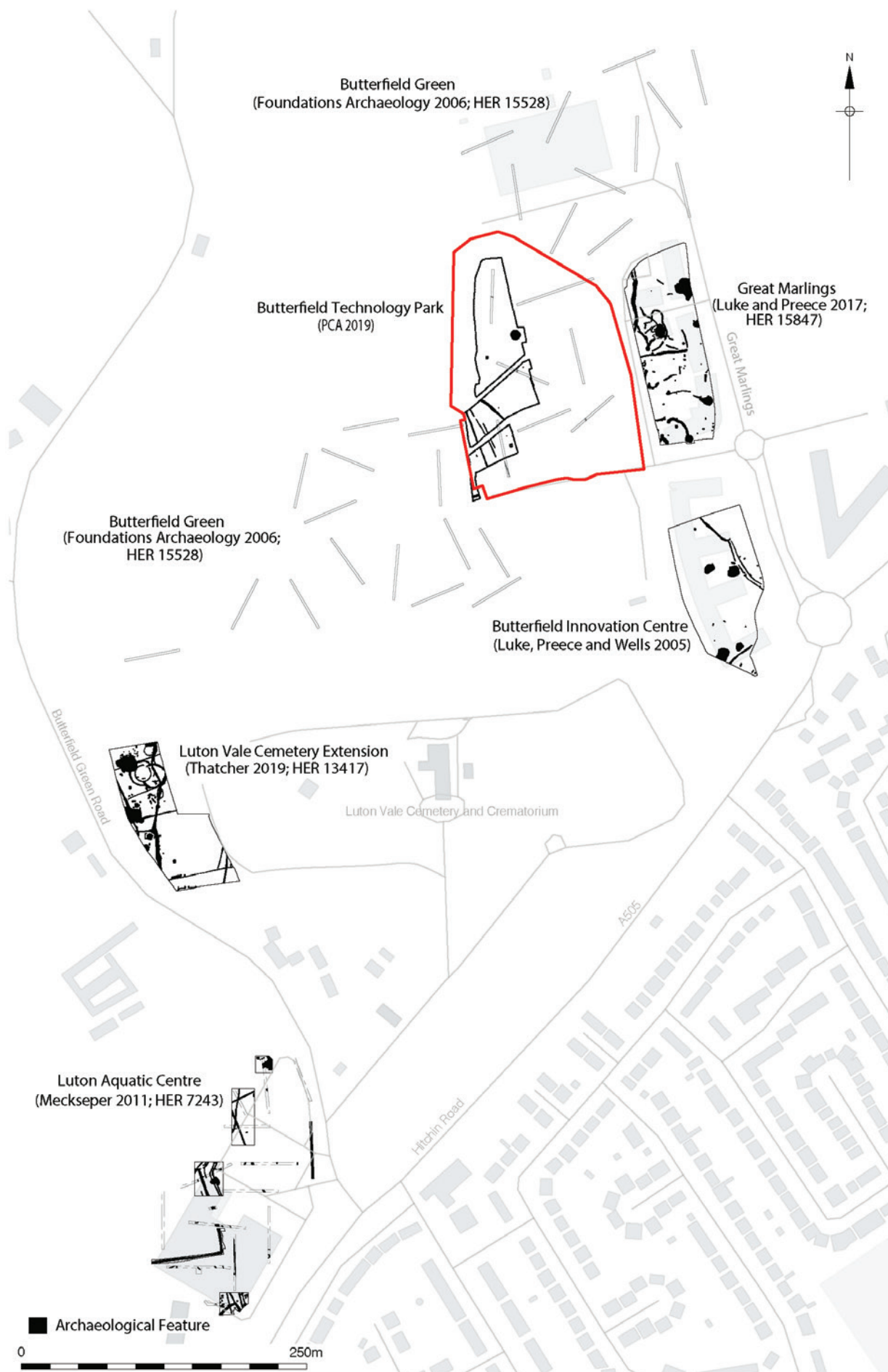


Figure 20: Butterfield Technology Park, Luton – Site location showing nearby archaeological sites



Figure 21: Butterfield Technology Park, Luton – Site plan



## Bedfordshire

A complete profile of a small plain central Gaulish Samian Drag. 33 cup dated to *c.* AD 50–230 was found accompanying the cremation. Ritual ‘killing’ of funerary pots and accessory vessels, perhaps to send them into the afterlife, was a common Roman funerary practice, so the cup may already have been incomplete/smashed when it was deposited (Wait 1984, 240; Philpott 1991, 239). Alternatively, the incompleteness of the vessel could be due to truncation of the cremation.

Two hundred and thirty-eight nails, or fragments thereof, were also recovered. Amongst these are three small tacks with flat, circular heads which might have been used for securing furnishings onto a wooden bier (Weekes 2008, 148). They may have been burnt during the cremation process as they exhibit little post-depositional corrosion (Cool 2004, 438). A further fifty-five nails have similar heads, but some appear domed and may be remains of hobnails. This is evidence of the common Romano-British practice of placing shoes within a grave (Smith 2018, 267). It is not unusual to find this high proportion of ironwork in Romano-British cremations as nails were used in the construction of pyres, coffins, biers, wooden boxes and other furniture that may have been burnt on the pyre or deposited with the deceased (Crummy 2014, 198).

The cremation weighs less than average for a complete cremated adult. This could imply that it is the remains of a young individual, a deliberately deposited token amount of human bone, or a pile of re-deposited pyre debris. However, the pieces of Samian cup and the significant number of hobnails suggest that a vessel and a pair of shoes/boots, or at least a single shoe/boot, were deliberately buried with the cremated remains. This would indicate that this is an in-situ cremation, albeit heavily plough-damaged, hence its low weight. The limit of excavation was extended eastwards to look for signs of further burials but none were found.

A sample of cremated bone was radiocarbon dated to 130–258 (87.5% probability), 285–288 (0.5%) or 295–322 (7.4%) cal. AD (Ref: SUERC-87834; 1806±26 BP). The presence of the Samian ware makes the earlier radiocarbon date more likely.

### Discussion

The excavation revealed relatively few archaeological features, mainly concentrated in one corner of the site.

The most significant and securely dated find is the Roman cremation. Burial of the dead singly or in small groups out in the fields was common practice in the Romano-British countryside (Dawson 2007, 76; Smith 2018, 231) so it is not unusual to find an isolated cremation. Its presence suggests that there was Roman settlement somewhere in the wider area, and probably that this part of the landscape was farmed at that time.

The ditches are harder to date because the finds, many of which may be either residual or intrusive, are limited and in poor condition. Although they indicate that Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman and post-medieval activity occurred nearby, the exact nature of this is difficult to determine.

When analysing the results of this excavation, it is useful to consider what is already known about the history of the area. Earthworks thought to be associated with a deserted medieval settlement are present around Whitehill Farm, around 400m north of this site (Central Bedfordshire and Luton Historic Environment Record (HER) 5474), and

Neolithic–Bronze Age flint scatters have been found to the west (HER 15526) and east (HER 15527) of Whitehill Farm. Butterfield Green, a 12th- to 13th-century settlement, is to the west (HER 12399) and the medieval settlements of Stopsley and Swifts Green lie to the south-west (HER 17100 and 17099).

Atrial trench evaluation for Butterfield Green (Foundations Archaeology 2006; HER 15528; Fig. 20), the scope of which included PCA’s 2018 excavation site, uncovered a possible Iron Age trackway, an Iron Age or Saxon boundary or hedge line, and a Roman pit and gully in the south-west corner — probably a storage pit and drainage ditch. These features were thought to be indicative of nearby Iron Age/Roman settlement. Scattered, undated ditches and gullies across the remainder of the site, including the 2018 excavation area, could not be dated but were presumed to be the remains of field systems, possibly continuing those of prehistoric date previously identified to the east and south-west.

Several developments in the immediate vicinity have been preceded by archaeological excavation (Fig. 20). These include Great Marlings to the east (Luke and Preece 2017; HER 15847), Butterfield Innovation Centre to the south-east (Luke, Preece and Wells 2005), Luton Vale Cemetery extension, *c.* 250m to the south-west (Thatcher 2019; HER 13417), and Luton Aquatic Centre, *c.* 500m to the south-west (Meckseper 2011; HER 7243).

The excavation at Great Marlings revealed evidence for late Bronze Age/early Iron Age activity in the form of residual artefacts in later features (sherds of pottery and part of a late Bronze Age loom-weight), early to middle Iron Age settlement including rectangular and curvilinear enclosures, one of which contained a roundhouse, and features indicative of late Iron Age/early Roman activity. Distribution of the latter suggested that settlement might be present on the current site, but this can now be discounted.

The Butterfield Innovation Centre excavation revealed possible Bronze Age features including boundaries and ‘water pits’, signs of early/middle Iron Age and late Iron Age/Roman settlement and a few sherds of possibly intrusive medieval pottery.

Features at Luton Vale Cemetery included enclosures and boundary ditches, though with little evidence for associated settlement. More significantly, a possible Iron Age barrow with four grave cuts, four mid- to late-1st-century AD cremations and three 2nd-century AD cremations were identified. It was concluded that the site was established as a burial ground in the early Iron Age and used until the end of the early Roman period.

The Aquatic Centre excavation revealed possible evidence of Bronze Age activity, securely dated late Iron Age/early Roman agricultural enclosures, a trackway, and post-medieval enclosures, field boundaries and possible building remains.

### Conclusions

Bronze Age pottery in Ditch 6 could be evidence that both this and its re-cut, Ditch 5, were of Bronze Age date. Evidence of Bronze Age settlement at Great Marlings would provide a context for Bronze Age land divisions in the area. However, the sherds were found in a single slot and are small and heavily abraded so may only be residual material, perhaps from where an Iron Age/Roman ditch cut through a Bronze Age pit or other localised deposit. The fragment of

Roman pottery in Ditch 5 also casts doubt on a Bronze Age date.

The presence of late Iron Age to Roman pottery sherds may mean that Ditches 1–4 were late Iron Age/Roman. The quantity and condition of the pottery suggest that it is most likely to have arrived on site within midden material that was spread on arable fields as manure, before becoming incidentally incorporated into the field ditches as they infilled.

Despite the limited datable material and subsequent difficulty of dating the ditches with precision, it is probable that this site was part of a later Iron Age to Roman field system, located away from contemporary occupation but associated with nearby settlements such as that identified at Great Marlings. Use for arable rather than pastoral farming is perhaps more likely given the distance from water (c. 2.5km from the river, though there could have been watering holes for livestock closer to the site). To this can be added the potential evidence for manuring provided by the abraded sherds of pottery found in the ditches and sub-soil. A ditched/hedged trackway, as suggested by the relative positioning of some of the ditches, could have facilitated movement of livestock from one area to another or, given the evidence for arable land use, relate to field access for farm labourers or carts.

#### Acknowledgements

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## SOUTERRAIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD

**Thurleigh, Waggon House at The Manor, Whitwick Green Road NGR 504430 259074**

MERCEDES PLANAS & MARTIN D WILSON

A Level III historic building record was made of a late-Victorian, decorative timber-built carriage house, prior to its conversion to private ancillary accommodation at The Manor. Known as the Waggon House, the structure is Grade II-listed and stands in the rear garden (Fig. 22). It was erected at some time between 1882 and 1886 by Mr. William Thompson, a wealthy industrial entrepreneur who purchased Manor Farm in 1880. The Waggon House is cruciform in plan and is comprised of three bays. One of the bays housed a family trap, another a cart, and the third was a harness room.

The structure has steep gables with barge boards and facias decorated with fretted, reversed scallops. Its stud-framed walls feature horizontal and diagonal panelling, and a continuous horizontal band of lozenge-shaped ventilation holes. Notably, the structure is an idiosyncratic blend of time-honoured carpentry techniques and modernity – a pegged mortise-and-tenon frame with a steel-sheeted roof and a king-bolt truss. The style, resonant of Arts and Crafts, undoubtedly reflects the contemporary artistic and architectural tastes of its creators, Mr. and Mrs. Thompson.





Figure 22: A late Victorian Arts and Crafts-style Waggon House, The Manor, Thurleigh

The report places the building into its historic context and identifies the main phases. The record is comprised of digital photographs, scale drawings and plans, and collates various surveys and reports commissioned by the present owner during the course of Listed Building Consent for the conversion. OASIS ID: souterral-513678.

#### **Turvey, Borough of Bedford, Elderswell Farm**

NGR 495605 251840

MARTIN D WILSON & MERCEDES PLANAS

In November 2023 two separate ranges of historic farm buildings were recorded at Elderswell Farm, Turvey, prior to their conversion for domestic usage. The buildings form part of the curtilage of a listed farmhouse. The farm is understood to have originated in the 17th century, and its layout is categorised as a Loose Courtyard type. There are two adjoining farmyards, a north yard and a south yard. The farmhouse forms one side of the north yard.

One of the historic ranges recorded is a four-bay open-sided cart shed with an additional lockable bay to house implements (Fig. 23). The building is sited away from the farmyards and alongside a field-access track. It is constructed of coursed limestone with brick arches and dressings (quoins, decorative angle corbels and gable verge). Erected in 1878 by the landowner, William Francis Higgins (1845–1899) of Turvey House, it is well-preserved example of this period-type farm building.

The other range consists of a stone-built threshing barn with two stable blocks attached to it. It separates the two farmyards, forming a side to each yard. It appears to have been built at some time between 1788 and 1843 using materials, particularly the roof structure, salvaged from an earlier barn (Fig. 24). Unlike a traditional threshing barn, it lacks opposing double-doors. It is considered to have been multifunctional, with mechanised (i.e. Horse-powered) threshing carried out in a cart entrance bay which is off-set from the centre. Attached to one end of the threshing barn is a largely stone-built stable block with dual-pitched roof. It consists of four bays and has a loft above. Formerly a single-storey building, the loft was added, possibly in the mid-19th century. The other stable block, a brick-built lean-to, is attached to the rear of the threshing barn. It was most probably erected at the same time as the loft.

The report provides a descriptive and illustrative account of the interiors and exteriors of each building, by means of photographs, scaled elevations and plans. It also lays the foundation for historical appreciation of the buildings. The tenant farmers and proprietors of Elderswell Farm are traced over a 176-year period (c. 1783–1959), from a wide range of historic source material. Finally, the rationale for the investment in farm buildings five years into the agricultural depression is briefly discussed, in both the local and wider historical context, paving the way for more in-depth research of the Turvey estates at a local level. OASIS ID: souterral-517339





Figure 23: Cart and implement shed, built in 1878, Elderswell Farm, Turvey



Figure 24: Threshing barn interior, Elderswell Farm, Turvey

**Upper Dean, Elm Cottage, Church Lane NGR 504668 267680**

MARTIN D WILSON

A watching brief was carried out during groundwork for rear and side extensions at Elm Cottage, in the village of Upper Dean. The cottage was formerly a row of three almshouses, built in 1857. It is separated from the parish churchyard by a footpath. A map of 1800 suggested that the almshouses were built partly inside the old churchyard boundary. Thus, the cottage's location in the historic core of the village highlighted the potential for buried remains of the medieval to post-medieval periods.

The investigation, however, found no evidence of a former churchyard and no evidence of pre-19th century occupation. The stratigraphy of the two excavation areas revealed that the land on which the almshouses were built was likely to have been pasture; and arable long before that. The works exposed the remains of a brick-lined privy, which was probably erected in 1857. Pottery from the privy-pit reflected typical domestic consumption from the Victorian period through to the early decades of the 20th century. It is the first feature of its kind to be recorded in Upper Dean and is now preserved beneath the new extension. OASIS ID: souterra1- 509010

## ABINGDON ARCHAEOLOGICAL GEOPHYSICS

Weedon SP 808 187

ROGER and SALLY AINSLIE

In 2023 we surveyed 0.5 ha of magnetometry and 0.1 ha of earth resistance for the landowner as a research project. Earth resistance was able to locate a probable stone building and possible dovecote. Lidar shows probable Civil War defences to the north of the building and it is possible that it may have been demolished as part of that activity.

The report is on the ADS grey literature library, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5284/1115986>

## ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY

Stoke Mandeville, Wendover Road SP 83652 11484

KATHY PILKINTON, VICTORIA GUY and CATIE WATTS

A 0.6ha excavation between March and May 2023, prior to residential development of the site, revealed part of an enclosed settlement immediately east of the railway line. Geophysical survey had previously established that the settlement covered c. 1.5ha in total. It was established in the late Iron Age/early Roman period, but a small amount of residual late Bronze Age/early Iron Age pottery attests to the presence of earlier activity in the area. Two roundhouses,

partition ditches, a well, an unurned cremation burial, and numerous pits and postholes were present within the enclosure, whose large perimeter ditch showed evidence of development and maintenance over time. Earlier and later phases of activity could be identified within the enclosure, though many of the individual features could not be chronologically separated. Earlier features included two ring ditches and a possible posthole structure, while later features included a cluster of pits that were used for rubbish and possibly for industrial purposes.

The settlement declined in the early Roman period; shallow quarry pits were dug through some of the settlement remains, although others were respected by Roman bedding trenches that were created for cultivation. There was then an apparent hiatus in activity until the post-medieval/modern period; a series of ditches and shallow pits of this date probably related to draining the land and using it for agriculture. OASIS ID: albionar1-506664; Accession no. AYBCM:2022.42

Walton, MSD North Car Park SP 8887 3660

ADAM WILLIAMS

A watching brief was carried out in June and July 2023 on groundworks associated with the creation of a new car park. The only archaeological feature revealed was a ditch containing Roman pottery and animal bones. OASIS ID: albionar1-507862; Accession no. MILSH.2022.52

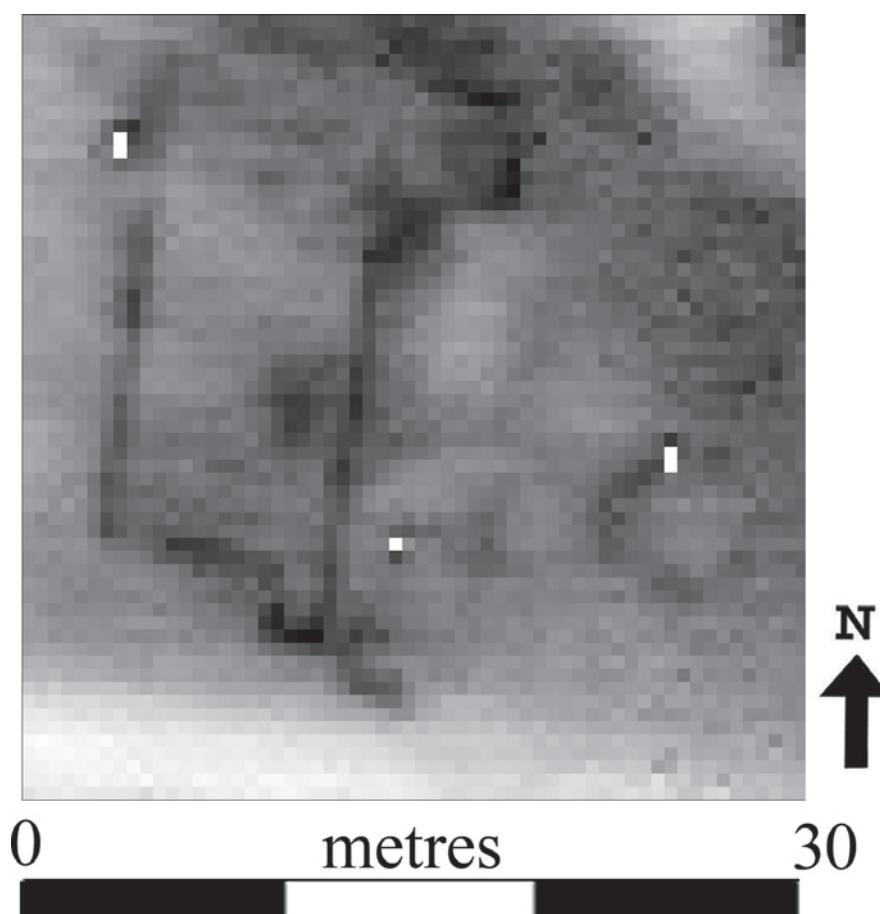


Figure 1: Weedon – Earth resistance 30 metre grid (High resistance is black)



**ALLEN ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Milton Keynes, MK East Primary School & Community Hub, London Road SP 8910 4235**

MATTHEW HUMPHREYS

In January 2023, trial trenching revealed a substantial east-northeast to west-southwest aligned ditch, which provided only limited dating evidence. In June-July 2023, a subsequent strip map and record excavation was undertaken to fully expose the margins of the feature. It showed that the ditch was a field boundary with evidence for frequent maintenance and a possible entranceway; associated pottery dated to the Later Iron Age *c.* 250-50BC. Further undated pits were also exposed. OASIS ID: allenarc1-513224 & 517464

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY (BAS)**

**Great Linford, Great Linford Manor, Milton Keynes  
SP 85350 42300**

DOUG STUCKEY

BAS has conducted a weekly community dig at Great Linford since September 2020, exposing sections of a buried Ha-ha wall in an older (14thC) ditch to the east of the Manor house garden.

In 2023 we continued at the southern end of the medieval ditch where the wall started to curve to the West and any sign of an earlier ditch cut disappeared. The wall construction in this section is consistent, with large stone footings and between 5 and 7 courses still intact. The overburden increased to a point where the current wall top is 70cm below the soil surface (Fig. 2).



Figure 2: Great Linford, Trench 11





Figure 3: Great Linford, Trench 12C “bridge” and steps



Figure 4: Great Linford, Trench 12C looking south towards High Street



This southern section appears to be an extension of the medieval ditch, dug specifically for the Ha-ha to reach the 18thC estate boundary.

Our first example of brick embedded in the wall occurred in Trench 11, with Local brick from the early 19thC. The wall curvature caused some problems as Trench 12 missed the wall (by a few centimetres). However, Trench 12F and Trench 12C found the wall again, both with brick inclusions.

The brick in Trench 12C formed the top two courses at the front of the wall, to the north of a slab that may have been a 'bridge' over the ditch. Steps lead down from the slab into the ditch (East) side of the wall (Fig. 3).

The Ha-ha wall appears to terminate in Trench 12C (beside the current Great Linford High Street) with an unexpected stoney platform next to the road, which will be explored in 2024 (Fig. 4). Finds in this section of the Ha-ha support an 18th C construction with later repair/decorations plus extensive soil dumping in the 20thC. To our surprise there is very little pipe stem for an 18thC structure but the limestone used for the wall provides good Jurassic fossils and small finds show the wall was visible into the late 19thC.

## BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL: ARCHAEOLOGY SERVICE 2023

The Council's Archaeology Service is part of the Heritage and Archaeology Team within Environmental Specialists which forms part of the Planning, Growth and Sustainability Directorate. We have one Senior Archaeology Officer, an Archaeology Officer, a Historic Environment Record Officer, and a Historic Environment Record Assistant.

We are now working to a 40/60 split in working from the office and home. Planning consultations have been very high and the major infrastructure schemes and major developments are progressing.

### Development Management

#### *High Speed 2*

It was a busy period with HS2/EKFB Teams meetings on numerous topics including, updated method statements, landscape design issues. Interim reports, reports, and post excavation assessments (PXAs) have largely been supplied for comment but usually with very tight turnaround times. Schedule 17 pre-application meetings take place most weeks; these are like planning applications and involve road, design and planting issues which could impact on the historic environment. For these applications Phil Markham covers archaeology, Fiona Webb covers the Heritage Team issues for the Aylesbury Vale area and Catherine Murray covers the Chiltern and South Bucks area. FUSION, HS2's archaeological contractor was wound up in October 2022 as the field work will largely have been completed. RSK/Headland will be undertaking archaeological works during the construction phase. There are bi-weekly meetings with Headland, HS2 and stakeholders over current field work and reports.

#### *Grim's Ditch Scheduled Monument/Hunts Green Farm, Great Missenden*

Archaeological investigation was undertaken including a geophysical survey, a topographic survey, trial trenching and excavation. A couple of trenches have been excavated

across the Scheduled Monument and the results of this will inform the full excavation of the monument. It is hoped that some of the monument can be preserved in situ and this depends on the EKFB construction design which has yet to be supplied. The works to the monument will be undertaken by a Schedule 19 application which will need to be approved by the Secretary of State under Historic England's guidance. Discussion is ongoing as construction design is yet to be finalised. Further geotechnical investigations have been undertaken which indicate potential geological hollows within the development area and these will inform the design and construction methodology. To assess these geological hollows bore holes will be undertaken and the methodology for this is likely to get Scheduled Monument Consent later in 2024.

#### *Hampden Fields Major Development South of Aylesbury*

An initial further phase of evaluation has been completed at the Hampden Fields development between Aylesbury and Weston Turville. This major development is for up to 3,000 dwellings and a 60-bed care home/extra care facility; provision of land for a Park and Ride site; a total of 6.90ha of employment land; provision of two primary schools (one 2 form entry and one 3 form entry); a mixed-use local centre (3.75ha) with provision for a food store of up to 1,200 square metres, further retail (including a pharmacy), restaurant and café units, a doctor's surgery, gym, public house, multi-functional green infrastructure (totalling 108.43ha) including parkland, sports pitches, sports pavilions, children's play areas, informal open space, allotments, community orchards and landscaping. It was decided that to de-risk the development further evaluation in the form of trial trenching would be undertaken. Evaluation was undertaken approximately ten years ago and included geophysical surveys and trial trenching. This phase of evaluation includes a further 460+ trenches which are being undertaken by RSP and PCA. Areas of excavation are being drawn up from these results. Excavation is likely to begin during the autumn together with further phases of evaluation as development requirements are timetabled.

#### **Outreach – Chalk Cherries and Chairs Project**

The archaeology team have been working with the Chilterns National Landscape on a project called The Mystery of Grim's Ditch, a sub-project of a wider lottery funded project called Chalk, Cherries and Chairs (CCC). This project seeks to connect local people to the wildlife and cultural heritage of the Central Chilterns. The Mystery of Grim's Ditch sub project looked to carry out further research about Buckinghamshire's largest and longest Scheduled Monument and engage more people with this enigmatic heritage asset.

As part of the project, the archaeology team;

- Visited three primary schools to talk to them about Grim's Ditch and prehistory in general.
- Carried out two days of geophysical survey (Fig. 5) with the two Buckinghamshire Young Archaeologist Clubs, and the CCC New Shoots participants (a young conservationists group) to try and identify the route of the ditch in an area where the location was uncertain. The survey proved successful with the line of the monument identified.





Figure 5: Members of Aylesbury YAC carrying out ERI survey (© Aylesbury YAC)

- Led three guided walks along the ditch and produced a self-guided leaflet.
- Worked with a volunteer to seek answers to any new questions which arose from interaction with local people.

### **Historic Environment Record (HER)**

The HER Assistant dealt with the bulk of the Countryside Stewardship applications, freeing up the HER Officer to work on the Local Heritage List project.

#### *Countryside Stewardship Scheme in 2023*

In 2023 HER consultations to support Countryside Stewardship funding applications continued in the same format as previous years. The application window for 2023 opened in February and closed in September. This year Paul has received and dealt with 27 applications for 4,609 hectares of land in Buckinghamshire with 8 applications at Mid-Tier and 19 applications at Higher Tier.

The transition to the proposed new Environmental Land Management Scheme is still expected to go live in 2024, however government has provided very little detail of the

HER consultation process to date, and the opening of the application window has also been delayed, currently with no date for commencement.

#### *Local Heritage List*

Phase 1 of the Local Heritage List was completed:

- Total Nominations were 3315.
- Locally Listed were 769.

Phase 2 is likely to be completed in 2024.

#### *HER enhancement and volunteer projects*

The two consultants from Skylarkeology completed work on the first of the Aerial Investigation and Mapping projects in north Buckinghamshire and in February 2024 started working on the second project which covers the area around Aylesbury. These are Historic England-funded projects which record and map evidence from aerial photography and LiDAR directly in the HER database. The data is a significant new source of information and will be particularly useful for development management, strategic planning and for the Buckinghamshire Local Plan. Finally, the HER volunteer

working on the milestones project continues to work on enhancing the records for milestones.

## CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

**Oving, Jesmond, Pulpit Lane SP 7873 2175**

GINA DALY

An archaeological evaluation comprising the excavation of two 10m×1.8m trenches was undertaken on the 16th of August 2023. The evaluation identified a single undated linear feature. The ditch measured 0.9m wide by 0.3m deep and contained no finds.

## CHESS VALLEY ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

**Chesham, Church Street SP 9574501466**

RHIAN MORGAN & BIRGITTA THWAITES

In August 2023 members of Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society undertook an investigation of a small outbuilding in Chesham at the request of the owner. The property is in Church Street which is part of the Chesham Conservation Area, and which contains several listed buildings from the 13th – 19th century. The property is one of a row of cottages whose gardens back onto the 18th century wall enclosing St Marys Churchyard. The back (NW) wall of the outbuilding is the churchyard wall.

The outbuilding contained the remains of a 20th century water closet, waste pipe and lead piping as well as a considerable amount of CBM rubble. Previous explorations to determine the depth of the side wall foundations resulted in large areas of disturbed material.

The floor was cleared exposing an L shaped brick foundation wall from a previous, slightly smaller building and two trenches excavated, the first to assess whether any original contexts could be discovered in the area of the WC, the second (a sondage) in a less disturbed area, positioned to explore the extent of the newly exposed foundation wall, and its relationship with the SW external wall.

Finds from the first trench included earthenware, stoneware, decorated pottery, glass, clay pipe stem fragments and animal bone dating from approximately 1800 onwards.

The sondage involved the removal of a packed flint surface (which contained small sherds of decorated pottery, clay pipe, bone and earthenware) beneath which was disturbed soil, CBM, mortar. Some 74% of the sherd count of earthenware and 51% of the decorated pottery finds were excavated from here. Beneath this disturbed area a context of dark loam soil was exposed with very few finds but with several fragments of animal bone and an area of yellow clay sloping down from the external wall and disappearing beneath the foundation wall. Further excavation of this feature exposed a 26 cm section of vertebra which curved underneath the foundations of the internal wall and beneath the remaining flint surface. These sheep bones appear to have been buried in a pit feature which predates the existing layout of the outbuilding. Finds in this last excavated context included a sherd of stoneware and some small sherds of decorated pottery matching sherds from the disturbed CBM context.

Whilst dating of finds continues, current conclusions indicate most items are 19th and 20th century. There are three earlier sherds of pottery (from the disturbed CBM sondage context) and two 17th century clay pipe stems fragments (one from the initial clearance of the outbuilding floor, one from the disturbed sondage context). The extent of the disturbance caused by the natural changes of use of such a building are indicated by the appearance in all contexts of sherds of decorated pottery which match with sherds from other contexts. The intention is to maintain a watching brief on the garden of the property (when invited to do so) and further explore any earlier occupation of the site.

**Little Missenden, Old Vicarage, field to rear of SU 9192 9893**

MICHAEL CORCORAN

An archaeological excavation was carried out by the Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society from the 14th to 17th August 2023 at Little Missenden, Buckinghamshire.

The objective of the excavation was to confirm the presence of building(s) identified by a resistivity survey which took place during 2022. An additional objective was to try and establish the type of building, its use and if possible, place the building within a time frame.

The site is located 100m to the south of the river Misbourne on the western edge of the village. The excavation took place in the field directly behind the garden of the Old Vicarage.

Two trenches were placed over two separate trenches identified in the survey. The trenches were initially measured 1m (w)×3m (l) and were dug by hand, using trowels. The trenches were stratigraphically worked, each layer being measured, recorded, and drawn. Both trenches were photographed using a combination of DLSR camera and mobile phones.

Trench 1 (Fig. 6), initially measured 3m long and later extended to 4.5m, north to south and 1m wide, east to west. The reason for extending the trench was in the hope of find an edge to the manmade surface identified, 13cm down. However, due to time constraints the edge was not identified. A sondage was dug into the floor 25cm to test whether a man-made surface existed. It was confirmed that a man-made floor existed, which was constructed of mixed compacted flint nodules, pebbles, and roof tile fragments. A thin layer of sandy subsoil of 1cm can be seen in the profile above that floor suggesting it was covered to even out the floor.

The tight compaction of the flint, cobbles, and tile fragments having an uneven top surface, suggested a man-made surface within a building rather than an outside courtyard.

The usual debris of ceramics, glass, iron nails, Kiln waste, pottery and roof tiles were unearthed, however, apart from the roof tiles, all other fragments were quite small.

A corner piece of slate was recovered from the trench. The slate had lines etched across its surface, also found was a piece of rounded tapered slate (possibly a slate stylus).

Trench 2, measured 3m long, north to south, and 1m wide, east to west. The trench was dug to a depth of 22cm. A sondage was dug in the bottom left-hand corner to a depth of 14cm. There was no indication of a wall or floor in Trench 2, and it was closed. The trench, contained small fragments of ceramics, flints, Kiln waste, iron nails, pottery, and roof tiles.





Figure 6: Little Missenden, Old Vicarage – Trench 1

It appears that no buildings are associated with trench 2, the rectilinear feature is in all probability geological deposits.

Although, a man-made surface was identified in trench 1, we were not able to state with certainty the type of building associated with the floor. It is not likely to be a dwelling. It is in all probability either a barn or an outside shelter for agricultural use. Whatever the structure may have been used for, it predates the earliest 19th century maps.

## COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

**Aylesbury, Whirlbush Solar Farm, Aston Sandford**  
NGR 476006 207122

JOAN ROIG-RIBAS

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified a Late Iron Age or Early Roman ditch and two undated ditches which may be contemporaneous. An undated pit contained a large quantity of charcoal, potentially forming a deposit of hearth debris. Medieval/post-medieval plough furrows and former field boundaries were also recorded, some of which corresponded to historic mapping.

**Beaconsfield, Wilton Park Phase 4** NGR 495534 190366

STEFFAN KLEMENIC

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified the foundations of a post-medieval garden or boundary wall.

**Beaconsfield, Wilton Park Phase 5** NGR 495534 190366  
and 496179 190310

STEFFAN KLEMENIC

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified and undated pit.

**Broughton, Land at Aston Clinton Road** NGR 484750  
213405

CRAIG JONES

A watching brief and evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified a Middle to Late Bronze Age posthole, three

medieval ditches and eight undated ditches which may be contemporaneous with the medieval ditches. Medieval/post-medieval furrows were also recorded.

**High Wycombe, Gomm Valley** NGR 489588 192441

DALE LANGFORD

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded no features or deposits of archaeological interest.

**High Wycombe, Land to the Read of Glynswood** NGR  
486673 194517

KEIGHLEY WASENCZUK

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded no features or deposits of archaeological interest.

**Long Crendon, Land at Hornage Farm, Bicester Road**  
NGR 467090 210455

JACK MARTIN-JONES

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded a series of intercutting Late Iron Age/Roman ditches and pits indicative of domestic activity. Two medieval/post-medieval furrows were also recorded.

## JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**Buckingham, Old Latin House** SP 6953 3408

GAVIN DAVIS

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Old Latin House, Market Street, Buckingham, in October 2019. The purpose of the watching brief excavations were for the monitoring of ground reduction and levelling works associated with the new lawn and vegetable garden, as well as the monitoring of foundation trenches associated with the construction of a new retaining wall. During the watching brief excavations, a series of three modern refuse pits were uncovered. No other archaeological features or deposits were observed. OASIS ID: johnmoor1\_518215

**Chenies, Land at Manor House TQ 0151 9838**

AIMEE SKILLEN-THOMPSON

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief / strip map sample at Land at Manor House, Village Road, Chenies in July 2023 during construction of a new swimming pool. The excavation showed that the area had been heavily disturbed by 20th century agricultural activity. Only a single post hole was observed which, upon excavation, yielded post-medieval to 20th century material. No archaeological features or artefactual finds associated with the medieval manor were observed. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-517759

**Great Missenden, Ardwick Lodge SP 90790 02043**

DR BRANDON BRAUN, CHRISTOPHER WHITEHEAD

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Ardwick Lodge, Potter Row, Great Missenden. The purpose of the watching brief excavations was to monitor groundworks associated with the construction of a new dwelling. During the watching brief, a series of modern demolition material and modern levelling made-ground deposits were uncovered. No other archaeological features or deposits were observed. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-523294

**Haddenham, 3 Gibson Lane SP 64040 08165**

ROBYN TRANTER

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at 3 Gibson Lane, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire for the purpose of monitoring groundworks associated with a replacement garage outbuilding next to an existing property. A single undated pit and two made ground deposits were identified during the ground reduction and excavation of garage footings. No finds were recovered from the pit, however, finds identified from a made ground deposit were dated as late post-medieval and modern and were not collected. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-520871

**Long Crendon, Larks Barn SP 6964 0903**

GAVIN DAVIS

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Larks Barn, Long Crendon, between February and April 2022 following the demolition of a former barn, during the excavation for the foundations to the new building and during the excavations of the foundations for a new boundary wall. The earliest features identified were three parallel ditches orientated north-east to south-west. The ditches contained no finds and so could not be dated. The ditches were parallel to the present road that is also the route of a Roman road, and this may suggest that their orientation may have been influenced by the presence of the road. The three ditches continued beyond the limit of excavation to the north-east. The only remains of the barn observed during the watching brief were the remains of the southern stone plinth foundation. The barn is probably 18th century in date with some later insertions, including a modern concrete floor; no evidence for an earlier structure was observed on the site. The only find of note was a fragment of worked bone recovered from the deep buried topsoil deposit inside the barn. The item was identified as pin beater or thread picker and could be medieval in date. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-510253

**Wooton Underwood, Lodge Farm SP 6861 1605**

DR BRANDON BRAUN

John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS) carried out an evaluation at Lodge Farm, Wooton Underwood. A single evaluation trench was excavated over the proposed footprint for the planned extension to the north of Lodge Farm. No evidence of the medieval period or earlier was encountered. A segment of a brick retaining wall of an 18th century pond and a segment of a second brick structure were found, both of which were covered by a 20th century backfill deposit. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-515626

**KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD****Aylesbury, Walton Street SP 82551 13367**

LAURA DODD

Between March and June 2023 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Strip, Map and Sample excavation of 67–71 Walton Road, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site. A previous evaluation undertaken in 2018 on the site showed potential for activity dating from the Romano-British, later Saxo-Norman and medieval periods with the majority of the archaeological features and artefacts being associated with minor agricultural or domestic activities (Dodd, 2018). Industrial features related to the Victorian engineering works located to the west was also encountered.

The works undertaken in 2023 included the excavation of two areas covering a total of 201 square metres. During this SMS investigation, more evidence for agricultural and domestic activity associated to the medieval period was encountered comprising: 23 pits, four ditches, three postholes, and one gully. Two walls and two midden deposits associated with the Victorian Engine Works to the northeast on the neighbouring plot were also noted.

**Burnham, Tithe Barn, Lake End Road SU 9296 8025**

LAURA DODD

A programme of Observation, Investigation and Recording at Tithe Barn, Lake End Road, Burnham, Buckinghamshire, was undertaken by KDK Archaeology Ltd in February 2023 as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site. This investigation follows the discovery of a possible medieval or post-medieval brick structure and a high concentration of Penn roof tiles uncovered during an archaeological evaluation in July 2022. The features encountered during the evaluation were not re-exposed as the ground reduction was limited to a small area to the west of the site. During the initial vegetation strip, the foundation of a late-medieval/early post-medieval wall was encountered. Further investigation exposed the full length of the surviving masonry which is believed to be either a part of a late phase of the monastic complex or a post-Dissolution ancillary building.

**Great Horwood, Former Service Station, High Street SP 7702 3118**

CHRIS MARTIN-TAYLOR

KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at the Former Service Station, High Street, Great





Figure 7: Walton Road, Aylesbury – Area 1

Horwood, Buckinghamshire in August 2023 following the demolition of the service station buildings and prior to the construction of new dwellings on the site. Three trenches were excavated, one of which revealed a late 14th-15th century limestone lined well, towards the eastern boundary of the site. This had been intentionally backfilled and contained finds of pottery, animal bone and CBM. Modern truncation of the site likely obliterated any other archaeological features that may have been present, the well surviving only by virtue of its depth, which was not established

**Long Crendon, Long Crendon Manor Stable, Thame Road SP 69308 08461**

ELLEN SHLASKO

An Archaeological Evaluation at Long Crendon Manor Stable, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire was conducted in September 2023 by KDK Archaeology Ltd as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site. The excavation of an evaluation trench revealed extensive modern disturbance, including land drains, services and a rubbish pit. There were no archaeological remains encountered.

**Wingrave, Thistlebrook Farm, Tring Road SP 8695 1715**

PHYLLIDA BROADWAY

In March 2023 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation in March 2023 at Thistlebrook Farm, Tring Road, Wingrave, Buckinghamshire to fulfil Condition 16 of the Planning Consent. Five trenches were excavated prior to the development of a synchronous gas-

powered standby generation facility. A single shallow, probably modern, pit containing the skeletal remains of a sheep was observed within Trench five. No further cut features, archaeological deposits or artefacts were encountered during the investigation.

**MILTON KEYNES CITY COUNCIL:  
CONSERVATION & ARCHAEOLOGY IN  
MILTON KEYNES 2023**

Report compiled by NICK CRANK, SENIOR ARCHAEOLOGICAL OFFICER, with contributions from: MARTIN ELLISON; CHRIS HOOPER; & SIMON PEART, CONSERVATION & ARCHAEOLOGY TEAM, MILTON KEYNES CITY COUNCIL

*Archaeological Fieldwork*

Work continued at the large mixed-use development to the east of the M1 between Milton Keynes and Newport Pagnell known as the MK East Strategic Urban Extension (MKE SUE). A third phase of excavations was underway by Pre-Construct Archaeology (PCA) with the focus on an intensive late Iron Age to Roman settlement complex straddling the A509 Newport Road.

The proposal to develop an Aldi supermarket alongside Warrington Road to the north of Olney went to Planning Committee in early August and gained planning permission. Archaeological excavations by Oxford Archaeology at the site in November 2022 (see SMA 53, 2023, p.45) unexpectedly uncovered a late Roman building containing a mosaic close to the road frontage. Though damaged in places by the collapse or demolition of the building, the mosaic was

well-preserved and closely resembles one recorded (also preserved *in situ*) at Great Staughton in Cambridgeshire in the 1950s.

It was proposed to preserve the mosaic and building *in situ* beneath the car park of the supermarket and a scheme was agreed for their careful reburial which was completed in December. Additional planning conditions were applied to secure on-site interpretation of the archaeology and provision for public outreach including open days where the local community may view the remains prior to reburial (Fig. 8), as well as provision for post-excavation analysis and publication of the findings.

A watching brief on improvements/upgrading to the footpath linking Watling Street to the Eaton Leys development and which traverses the scheduled monument of the Roman Town of Magiovinium was completed in March by CFA Archaeology. The scheme was carefully designed in consultation with Historic England to minimise impact on buried archaeology and as a result no significant finds were made.

#### *Historic Environment Record (HER)*

Progress continued with the HER Action Plan stemming from the recent full audit. Idox/Exegesis completed enhancement work including the incorporation of the results of the Bedford Borough National Mapping Programme data into the HER leading to a substantial increase in mapped heritage assets in the eastern third of the borough.

#### *MK New Town Heritage Register*

The MK New Town Heritage Register (NTHR) is a 'local list' that aims to identify and document the significant architectural areas, places and spaces created between 1967 – 1992.

The selection panel considered the first tranche of NTHR assets (160 of the 240 nominated). Their recommendations will be made to Milton Keynes City Council to make a formal decision in early 2024.

#### *Conservation Areas*

Since last reporting, the conservation area review programme has taken a significant step forward with four more reviews in the rural area completed and approved by Council at the end of March, namely: Emberton; Ravenstone; Sherington; and Weston Underwood. Key changes were boundary revisions to align with current property boundaries. Once the legal processes and requirements are complete the programme will move on to review Clifton Reynes, Lavendon, Newton Blossomville and Olney.

#### *Heritage At Risk*

The Heritage at Risk Register was updated and published on the City Council website. Focus remains on the buildings most at risk. Progress was made at key sites such as Tower House in Stony Stratford, and G Block at Bletchley Park where works to secure and make watertight the buildings were completed. New additions to the Register included Grade II listed Kickles Farm, Newport Pagnell and Two Mile Ash farmhouse and barns on Watling Street.

In November 2023, the scheduled monument of the Roman Town of Magiovinium (NHLE: 1006943) came off the national Heritage at Risk Register by Historic England. Since the "at risk" area of the monument came into Milton

Keynes City Council ownership in October 2022 arable cultivation has ceased and a plan put in place to establish a lowland meadow habitat, manage, and interpret the site. As such the risks to the monument have been substantially reduced.

#### *Community & Outreach*

After a 3-year pause Milton Keynes Archaeology Day (MKAD) returned to the Central Library in November for an extremely successful day with record high numbers of attendees for both the talks and activities. Talks included the MKE SUE (PCA, see above) and South Caldecotte (Albion Archaeology) excavations, with a talk by Paul Thompson on the internationally significant Saxon burial dubbed the "Harpole Treasure" (Northants) rounding off the day. MKAD will return on Saturday 2nd November 2024 when we will celebrate our 15th event. This year's 'hand's on' activity for young people was provided by Cotswold Archaeology (Fig. 9) and proved extremely popular with the team of 4 interacting with 300 adults and children through the day.

The BAS Active Archaeology Group (AAG) continued to excavate the Ha-Ha at Gt Linford – now in their 4th year! They also opened a trench on the post-medieval landscape garden and manorial site in Stanton Low Country Park.

In September, Oxford Archaeology held a series of open days in Olney to view the Roman Mosaic (see above, Fig. 8) prior to its reburial and preservation *in situ*. The events were hugely popular, being attended by over 3000 people including all the students from Olney Middle School.

## **MOLA (MUSEUM OF LONDON ARCHAEOLOGY)**

### **Granborough, land at SP 755 251**

CHRIS MANKTELOW

MOLA was commissioned to undertake an archaeological geophysical survey covering c40ha on land at Granborough. The survey detected several archaeological sites located mostly in the north of the survey area, along the banks of Claydon Brook. The proximity of the sites to a Roman road, detected in the west of the survey area, and the numerous finds of Roman pottery in the area suggest that some of the features are likely to be Roman in date, though, it would be quite possible that the earliest elements of the sites date from the Iron Age. Unambiguous evidence of settlement features such as roundhouses were only detected in one of the enclosures. However, with some of the features detected appearing very weak with many features being poorly resolved, it is possible that some features have not been detected by the survey.

### **Granborough, Hogshaw Road SP 7555 2510**

ALEX SHIPLEY

Between October and November 2023 MOLA carried out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land off Hogshaw Road, Granborough. A total of 23 trenches were excavated targeting anomalies and blank areas defined by earlier geophysical survey. The evaluation identified areas of settlement and agricultural activity, mostly dating to the late Iron Age to mid Roman period, in addition to evidence





Figure 8: Visitors view the Olney Roman mosaic during an open day



Figure 9: Cotswold Archaeology's "hands-on" activity proved extremely popular at MK Archaeology Day



for a possible road or trackway of likely Roman date and agricultural activity of medieval/post-medieval date. The pottery evidence has indicated occupation from as early as the middle Iron Age in this area, though the main phases of activity were probably from the late Iron Age into the middle Roman period. The finds evidence suggests some level of domestic activity, possibly within a number of small farmsteads, though the exact chronology is still to be established.

## NETWORK ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Aylesbury, Oxford House SP 81019 13421**

DR NIGEL CAVANAGH

An archaeological trial trench evaluation undertaken by Network Archaeology in advance of development at Oxford House, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, during April and May 2023 identified only undated or 18th to 20th century features, notably ditches and small pits. The evaluation also successfully highlighted the considerable extent of previous groundworks, the site having been previously stripped to the natural substrate and then reinstated with the excavated soils mixed with rubble hardcore, likely during the construction of Oxford House.

### **Little Brickhill, Watling Street SP 90625 32528**

JACQUI HUTTON

A watching brief undertaken by Network Archaeology during groundworks associated with development works on land to the north of The Clock House, Little Brickhill in July 2023 identified no archaeological features or deposits.

### **Lower Hartwell, The Spring SP 79313 12734**

DR NIGEL CAVANAGH

Between August and October 2023 Network Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during development works in the garden of the Springs, Lower Hartwell. The watching brief successfully identified a single ditch, possibly the remnant of a post-medieval field boundary.

## OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Aylesbury Eastern Link Road SP 8461 1599 to SP 8596 1276**

MARK DODD

In November 2022, Oxford Archaeology undertook a watching brief to monitor ground investigations along the proposed Aylesbury Eastern Link Road. This fieldwork formed the first phase of site investigation works along the proposed scheme, and a total of 24 test pits and borehole trial pits were monitored. One possible undated small ditch or gully was identified within the southern part of the route. A second set of test pits will be reported on separately.

### **Buckingham, London Road SP 70130 32326**

MARK DODD

Oxford Archaeology carried out a trial trench evaluation of a proposed development site west of London Road,

Buckingham. The evaluation comprised 65 trenches and took place between September and October 2023.

The evaluation recorded a residual assemblage of worked flint, tentatively dated to the late Neolithic or Bronze Age period, along with more substantial evidence for later prehistoric to early Roman settlement activity. This included middle Bronze to Iron Age pits and a spread of charcoal and burnt stone in the western part of the site. Iron Age to early Roman activity was also recorded in the eastern part of the site, comprising a possible stock enclosure and adjacent ditches.

### **Olney, Warrington Road SP 8895 5260**

PAUL MURRAY

Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during the construction of an access road west of Warrington Road, Olney from June to July 2021. The objective of the watching brief was to ensure that the area of significant Roman remains identified in the 2018 evaluation of the site was suitably protected and not impacted by the road construction.

While archaeological features were not definitively exposed during works, traces of underlying walls associated with the previously identified Roman building were noted, along with post-holes of uncertain origin. A small assemblage of Roman ceramic building material and a post-medieval iron tool were recovered from overburden deposits.

### **Stewkley, Wing Road SP 85516 25244**

TAMSIN JONES

Oxford Archaeology conducted an archaeological evaluation on the site of a proposed residential development at Wing Road, Stewkley in November 2023. A ditch and two pits were recorded in one trench at the eastern edge of the site. The pits contained charcoal, burnt flint and pottery of late Iron Age to early Roman date. The remainder of the trenches were devoid of archaeological features. The results suggest a late Iron Age to early Roman field system may extend into the eastern edge of the site, perhaps associated with nearby settlement activity, which was previously identified to the east and northeast.

## WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Aylesbury, Proposed Water Booster Pumping Station SP 89084 12166**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on a 0.40 ha parcel of land located off Buckland Road. The evaluation was carried out to understand the possible effects the proposed development would have upon the archaeological resource.

While two of the five excavated trial trenches were devoid of archaeological features, three contained ditches. One of the ditches is interpreted as a field boundary or drainage ditch, very tentatively dated to the prehistoric period from a single fragmented sherd of pottery. The remaining ditches probably represent furrows relating to a post-medieval strip field system. OASIS ID: wessexar1-514546; Accession no: AYBCM 2023.36



## Northamptonshire

### **Quainton, Church of the Holy Cross & St Mary** SP 75000 20154

A ground penetrating radar survey was conducted in the Church of the Holy Cross & St Mary with the aim of establishing the presence and nature of detectable archaeological features in support of renovation works.

A clear structure and possible void were identified near the altar and probably represent a crypt, which may relate to the medieval origins of the church. OASIS ID: wessexar1-520756

## NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

### **ALBION ARCHAEOLOGY**

#### **Brackley, Turweston Road SP 59274 37997** MATEVZ GROSELJ, ALLAN KING and JONATHAN DURMAN

A 0.3ha excavation took place ahead of a housing development located between the eastern edge of Brackley and the A43. The most significant remains uncovered date to the middle to late Iron Age, with at least two enclosures and up to four more – the full form of the latter was not visible due to either heavy truncation or their continuation beyond the excavation area. A circular ditch with an east-facing entrance probably related to a roundhouse, while several dense clusters of pits and postholes represent nine further potential structures. The largest concentration of finds came from a small area of intercutting quarry pits, suggesting their re-use as rubbish pits.

After the abandonment of the Iron Age settlement, there was an apparent hiatus in activity until the establishment of ridge-and-furrow cultivation in the medieval period. Later features include a large area of modern quarrying, land drains and a foul drain, related to a demolished building. OASIS ID: albionar1-504463; HER event code: ENN110548

#### **Raunds, Blotts Barn, Brooks Road TL 0082 7442** BENJAMIN CARROLL

Five trial trenches were excavated ahead of a small commercial development. Two ditched boundaries that were found are likely to be post-medieval in date, representing agricultural land divisions. OASIS ID: albionar1-513566; HER event code: ENN111056

#### **Raunds, Land at Northdale End – Site E SP 9994 7353** IAIN LESLIE, BENJAMIN CARROLL and GARETH SHANE

Excavation in January and February 2023, in advance of residential development, revealed remains dating from the Roman period onwards, with the majority relating to the late Anglo-Saxon period. Only part of the settlement was revealed, comprising two plots of land defined by ditched enclosures. Within the plots was evidence for at least one building (Fig. 1), as well as crop-processing and/or food preparation (Albion Archaeology 2023). This activity took place in the 10th and 11th centuries, after which the settlement focus of Raunds shifted in the 12th century, with the plots becoming incorporated into the settlement's open fields and used for cultivation. OASIS ID: albionar1-517688; HER event code: ENN110841

### **ALLEN ARCHAEOLOGY**

#### **Desborough, The Hermitage, Desborough Road SP 7837 8539** MATTHEW HUMPHREYS

In June 2023 an evaluation, comprised of six trenches, was undertaken. It followed a desk-based assessment that suggested a medieval hermitage, with moated enclosures and monastic grange lay in the vicinity of site. No evidence of a potential burial area related to monastic grange was exposed, however, the trenching revealed a large boundary ditch running broadly east-west (Fig. 2), and another smaller ditch running north-south. These larger ditches likely represent the former medieval moat enclosures; dating evidence from the larger ditch suggested it was only infilled during the 18th and 19th centuries. On historic mapping from 1886–1926, the larger ditch corresponds with a boundary depicted, while the smaller ditch could represent a central boundary between two enclosures shown on the 1817 Ordnance Survey. Further archaeological works took place in January 2024 to confirm the origin of the ditches. A report is forthcoming.

OASIS ID: allenarc1-516708

#### **Long Buckby, Land off Sation Road SP 6260 6684** EMILY DANIELSSON

In October 2023, an excavation was undertaken following geophysical survey and evaluations by trial trenching. Two Romano-British ditches were identified aligned for the most part parallel with each other on a north-northeast to south-southwest orientation and likely forming an enclosure. A small group of pits and postholes were recorded within the proposed enclosure. These features contained fragments of tile, associated with a hypocaust system, and pottery, including imported Samian and other fine wares, which likely suggest a high-status dwelling in the vicinity.

OASIS ID: allenarc1-513917

#### **Weldon, Stanford Road SP 9297 8980** MATTHEW HUMPHREYS

In Spring 2023, a watching brief revealed archaeological features principally relating to terracing and agricultural land management. A later drainage ditch truncated the deposits sealing the terracing. During earlier trial trenching, residual finds were recovered from the topsoil dating from the 10th – 15th century AD, plausibly indicating a date for the activity, although the cultivation terraces may have been earlier in age. No finds were recovered during the latest phase of works.

OASIS ID: allenarc1-515598





Figure 1: Raunds, Northdale End – Anglo-Saxon timber building under excavation



Figure 2: Desborough, The Hermitage – Infilled medieval moat ditch



## CFA ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

### **Bozeat, Church Farm, London Road SP 9043 5953**

GEORGINA BOLTON

Two phases of work were completed by CFA at Church Farm including archaeological trial trenching and geophysical survey. The survey was undertaken on the 20th of October and the trial trenching from the 4th to the 6th of December 2023. Four furrows were located in Trench 05 orientated north-west to south-east. Furrows were highly visible above ground due to their topography on the top of the hillside. In Trenches 03, 04 and 06, a modern waste deposit was present, consisting of brick, plastic, scrap metal and concrete. The deposit aligned with an area of magnetic disturbance identified during the geophysical survey. No features of archaeological significance uncovered during the evaluation.

### **Long Buckby, New Bungalow SP 6228 6754**

NICOLAS JONES

An archaeological evaluation comprising the excavation and recording of two 10m×1.8m trenches was undertaken by CFA Archaeology Ltd on land adjacent to Hampi, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire on the 2nd February 2023. The evaluation confirmed no archaeological remains were present within the footprint of the proposed development area.

### **Wellingborough, Land rear of 41, 41A Cambridge Street SP 8932 6797**

ALESSANDRA ROSSI

Archaeological monitoring was carried out in January, February, June and July 2023. Two brick floor surfaces were recorded which aligned structures visible on 19th century OS maps. Analysis of the bricks showed they were handmade and constructed between 1800 and 1875. No other archaeological finds, features or deposits were exposed during the excavation

## COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Brackley, Land Southeast of Field View NGR 457775 236951**

DAN RILEY and DANIELE PIRISINO

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified two medieval ditches, two undated ditches, a plough furrow and a post-medieval/modern field boundary ditch recorded on the 1888–1913 Ordnance Survey map.

### **Gayton, Gayton Solar Farm NGR 471529 255476 and 471022 254611**

ANDREW WHELAN

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified an undated ditch and medieval/post-medieval plough furrows. To the south, Middle to Late Iron Age pits, sub-circular enclosures and a ring ditch (Fig. 3) were recorded as well as a field system of possible Iron Age or Roman date.

### **Gayton, Gayton Solar Farm (Phase 2) NGR 471529 255476**

JOAO HEITOR

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded Middle Iron Age (Fig. 4) and Roman enclosures and a Roman pit. The remains of ridge and furrow cultivation was also recorded.

### **Harpole, Harpole Hall NGR 468915 260734**

JULIAN NEWMAN

A programme of archaeological observation by Cotswold Archaeology identified no features or deposits of archaeological interest.

### **Kettering, Land West of Gipsy Lane NGR 485250 278830**

JONATHAN ORELLANA

An excavation by Cotswold Archaeology investigated a suspected ring ditch identified during the preceding geophysical survey and archaeological evaluation but this was found to be geological in origin. No additional features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed.

### **Northampton, Land at Crow Lane NGR 481285 261559**

JOAN ROIG-RIBAS

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded a modern field boundary depicted on 1888–1913 Ordnance Survey mapping.

### **Watford Gap, Crockwell Hill Solar NGR 459577 267562**

RALPH BROWN

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified a possible pit which produced Iron Age pottery. A Roman field system was also identified. Evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation was recorded across the site, as well as four undated ditches which had the same alignment as the furrows and may correspond to this activity.

## JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

### **Ashton, Bozenham Mill Farm SP 7665 4824**

GRACE GRIFFITH

A Historic Building Recording and Heritage Impact Assessment was carried out at the pre-application stage at the outbuilding to the rear of Bozenham Mill Farmhouse, Bozenham Mill Lane, Ashton, to assess the potential impact to the outbuilding as a result of proposed repairs following storm damage.

The outbuilding was likely constructed during the 18th – 19th century. The building has coursed limestone rubble walls and currently has a timber frame roofing structure overlain with corrugated iron sheeting, though it is likely that the roof would originally have been thatch. The roofing structure comprises earlier roughly-worked tie beams and trusses, alongside modern machine-cut insertions and repairs. The outbuilding is divided into four bays via partitioning walls largely constructed from limestone, though one is redbrick. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-515276





Figure 3: Gayton – Ring ditch, looking south-west (0.3m scale)



Figure 4: Gayton – Middle Iron Age enclosure ditch, looking north (1m scale)





Figure 5: Radstone, Whitfield Road – Early medieval sheep burial

**Aynho, St. Michael's Church SP 51451 33060**  
TOM GOULDBOURNE

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at St Michael's Church, Aynho, Northamptonshire during works associated with the installation of a new heating and lighting system. The archaeological watching brief identified a homogenous deposit of graveyard soil which contained occasional fragments of disarticulated human bone. No articulated remains were encountered, neither were any significant features or deposits relating to the medieval and post-medieval church. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-519265

**Radstone, Whitfield Road SP 5887 4054**

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by John Moore Heritage Services on land to the west of Whitfield Road, Radstone in February 2021. The excavation followed an evaluation which identified features dating to the late early medieval period, including a pit capped by a quern stone and two articulated sheep burials. The archaeological excavation identified a total of 12 articulated sheep burials (including those identified during the evaluation), inhumed within pits and a boundary ditch; pottery from one of the burials was dated to the 12th to 13th century, though the majority did not contain any dating evidence. Additional features included a ditch, of possible 11th century date. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-415511

**KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

**Bozeat, Manor Farm, Dymchurch Lane SP 9076 5903**  
CHRIS MARTIN-TAYLOR

In February 2023 KDK Archaeology Ltd carried out a Historic Building Recording of an outbuilding at Manor Farm, 7 Dymchurch Lane, Bozeat, Northamptonshire in order to fulfil a condition of Planning and Listed Building Consent for renovation work to the building. It lies within

the curtilage of the Grade II listed main house at Manor Farm and appears to date to the 19th century. It is a single storey two bay structure that was originally partially open fronted. It may have had a combined function as a livestock shelter, outdoor lavatory and storage shed. It was probably constructed as part of a large programme of works that took place to the main house in the 19th century.

**Moulton, Land west of A43 SP 4789 2655**  
FLORIAN WEBER

Between May 2022 and August 2022 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a Strip, Map and Sample excavation of the Land West of the A43, Moulton, Northamptonshire in advance of the development of a secondary school with outdoor sports facilities, access, parking, landscaping and drainage. This followed a programme of Geophysical Survey, and Archaeological Evaluation.

The excavation covered the field designated for the sports pitches, south of the proposed school buildings in an area of approximately 2 hectares. The features present included 7 un-urned cremations, and several apparently unrelated, and undated, long narrow, parallel boundary gullies, cut by furrows, suggesting two phases of use; firstly, as a Bronze Age cemetery site and later as an agricultural site sometime after the Bronze Age but before the medieval period. Few other artefacts were recovered suggesting that the site was at the periphery of a settlement in for both phases of use.

**Towcester, Watling Street SP 69184 48885**  
CHRIS MARTIN-TAYLOR

A Historic Building Recording of the former Conservative Club at 152–154 Watling Street, Towcester, Northamptonshire was carried out by KDK Archaeology Ltd in February 2021 in order to fulfil Conditions 6 & 20 of planning permission for the conversion of buildings on the site. The former Conservative Club is a collection of four buildings that represent a sequence of construction stretching back to the

late 18th century. The oldest of these is a former Georgian residence that fronts onto Watling Street and dates to 1779, its neighbour to the south was constructed approximately a century later and a third building of a similar age runs perpendicular to the east, with a fourth modern addition forming a small courtyard to the rear. These four individual buildings have been altered and function as one continuous space on the interior Towcester, Northamptonshire, during the building's conversion to 15 one-bedroom flats. Nos. 152 & 154 Watling Street are a pair of buildings on the northeast side of Watling Street, which formerly housed the Towcester Conservative Club. The associated Watching Brief no archaeological cut features were revealed, but a dark earth deposit containing small fragments of Samian ware and oyster shell was observed to the east of the site. Similar dark, ashy deposits have been observed on a number of sites elsewhere in Towcester and are thought to originate in urban occupation activity in the Roman era.

#### **Walgrave, Barns at Rectory Farm House SP 8245 7275**

KARIN KAYE & DEREK WATSON

In March 2023 KDK Archaeology Ltd carried out Historic Building Recording of Barns at Rectory Farm House, Kettering Road, Walgrave, Northamptonshire in order to fulfil a condition of planning consent. The farm is located c. 2.5km northeast of the village of Walgrave and comprises a complex of brick-built outbuildings to the east of the former farm house and a steel framed former grain store, now a vehicle workshop.

There is very little documentary or cartographic evidence for the history of the farm, but the structural evidence suggests that it was built in the mid – late 19th century and considerably altered in the first quarter of the 20th century when two buildings were erected in the southern part of the farmyard and the present stables and stall were installed within formerly open fronted buildings, and the store was enlarged. The dairy was added to the west of the southernmost building at the same time. The steel-framed grain store was added in the middle of the 20th century and the northern building within the original farmyard was partially converted in the early 21st century.

Many historic features have survived including the platform for the threshing machine, the drive shaft and fly wheels, the brick-built floors within the threshing barn, the internal fittings within the stables and stall and the king post roof trusses in many of the buildings.

#### **Weedon, Former Builder's Yard, Queen Street SP 6243 5900**

FLORIAN WEBER

In January and February 2022, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording at the Former Builder's Yard, Queen Street, Weedon, Northamptonshire. Prior to the development of four dwellings and a garage, the ground had to be reduced up to 1.20m for the footings of house plots 1–3. Within this area, a large, irregular shaped stone quarry pit was uncovered which was probably Roman in origin. A separate, smaller pit was located further south-west and a third to the north.

In addition to the quarry pits, two Romano-British ditches were uncovered, one near the northern boundary of the site and the other in the footing trenches of one of the houses.

The recovered pottery was dated 2nd to 3rd century, while some animal bone was identified as cattle and sheep/goat.

#### **Wood Burcote, Land adjacent to Plum Cottage, Burcote Lane SP 6939 4676**

CHRIS MARTIN-TAYLOR

A programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording was conducted by KDK Archaeology Ltd, in February and March 2023, at Land adjacent to Plum Cottage, Burcote Lane, Wood Burcote, Northamptonshire, during the groundworks for the erection of a new dwelling with a detached garage. The groundworks revealed two ditches, a gully and three pits, variably containing Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery, slag, a loom weight, animal bone, and botanical remains. The archaeological features and finds, are indicative with agricultural, domestic and probably small-scale industrial activities associated with an adjacent settlement situated near Towcester that was active between the 11th and the 14th century.

#### **Yardley Gobion, High Street SP 7672 4474**

FLORIAN WEBER

In February 2023, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook two Archaeological Evaluations at 15 Hight Street, Yardley Gobion, Northamptonshire. Two 20 by 1.80m wide trenches were excavated within the footprint of the proposed dwellings. The only features uncovered were a large ditch and a pit in Trench 1, containing 19th century glass and pottery.

### **MOLA (MUSEUM OF LONDON ARCHAEOLOGY)**

#### **Desborough, Manor House's east range SP 80030 83407**

LAUREN WILSON

MOLA undertook a programme of historic building recording at the East Range of the Manor House, Gold Street. This was required prior to the proposed redevelopment of the site. The manor house lies outside of the site boundary, and as such does not form part of this project, but the attached east range is to be demolished as part of this scheme and is therefore the focus of this recording (Planning Ref. NK/2021/0659).

Technical analysis of the building reveals little historic interest survives. It is formed of three parts, of which the northern part is entirely mid/late 20th century in date, the central part is constructed in the local Northampton Sand mudstone, as is the lower level of the southern section and therefore likely are contemporary with the adjacent Manor House. The southern section was raised in height in the 19th century and given a king-post roof structure. Other than the outer walls very little of historic interest survives, we can only speculate that the range's original purpose related to the Manor House in some way; likely forming an outbuilding providing storage, stabling and other utilitarian functions.

#### **Horton, Station Farm SP 8247 5495**

CHRIS MANKTELOW

MOLA was commissioned to conduct a geophysical survey at Station Farm, Horton. The survey area comprised c0.25ha of pasture with extant earthworks of medieval to



## Northamptonshire

early post-medieval ridge and furrow. The survey detected no archaeological features other than the historic plough furrows. The only other anomalies detected during the survey were those caused by pieces of ferrous debris.

### **Kettering, Warkton, Kettering Phase 2 AW SP8935 7910** JIM BURKE

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken by MOLA at Warkton, Kettering. The previous geophysical survey had not indicated any settlement activity within the development area, but it had indicated that this might exist to the north and south (Manktelow 2023). A total of fourteen trenches were opened. No significant archaeological features were identified within the current trenches; however, the evaluation has confirmed the alignment of the medieval ridge and furrows. A trench contained a pit with a small amount of pottery dated to the medieval period and a few fragments of animal bone, but no other features of this date were identified within the current site.

### **King's Cliffe, Rockingham Forest Park, Phase 2** TL 035 975 JOHN WALFORD

MOLA was commissioned to conduct a geophysical survey at Rockingham Lodge Park, King's Cliffe. The survey identified a small number of dispersed and disjointed length of ditch, of unknown date and function, and two other ditches which could be identified on historic mapping and had formerly marked the lines of parish boundaries. Some possible fragments of ridge and furrow were also detected. However, much of the site showed evidence of disturbance from the construction and use of the former RAF King's Cliffe in the 1940s.

### **Kings Cliffe, Willow Brook SP 9890 9685** JOHN WALFORD

MOLA undertook a geophysical survey on land to the north of Willow Brook, King's Cliffe. The survey identified a complex of ditches and possible ironworking remains in the northeast of the survey area, where Roman pottery and undated iron slag had previously been observed. Other features of possible archaeological interest, mostly comprising isolated lengths of ditch and suspected patches of ironworking debris, were sparsely distributed across the remainder of the area.

### **Kislingbury, 22 The Green SP 69816 59345** PAUL THOMPSON

MOLA carried out an archaeological watching brief at 22 The Green, Kislingbury prior to works. A feature was located in the east of the site unfortunately, without any dating material therefore remains an undated feature. This feature is most likely to be a pit due to the lack of it continuing into other foundation trenches excavated to the north and south. No other archaeological features or artefacts were found.

### **Long Buckby, Old Coopers, Lodge Lane SP 63648 67820** ROBERT SIMISTER FALVEY

MOLA was commissioned to undertake a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording,

analysis and publication work at Old Coopers, Lodge Lane, Long Buckby. A single pit was recorded in the centre of the southern half of the site. The pit likely contained discarded material, that comprised a small number of pottery sherds of late Iron Age/early Roman date, which was found in the lower part of the deposit. The deposit also contained fire-cracked stones and charcoal flecks. Ditch corresponded to the northernmost ditch recorded during the previous evaluation. No finds were recovered from this feature during this phase of works, but the evaluation found pottery sherds of late Iron Age/early Roman and general Roman date. No evidence of the second ditch recorded previously was noted during this phase of works. The archaeological features identified in the evaluation, and this programme of OIRAP, as well as previous unstratified contexts contained Aylesford-Swarling pottery, jars of domestic character are possibly all part of the same phase of activity of the site. The ditches and the pit identified during these works may be outlying activity associated with a potential prehistoric or Roman settlement identified from cropmarks to the south of Uplands Farm, which are located immediately north of the current site. It is thought that the cropmarks date to a similar date found at Old Coopers which have included early Roman and later Roman finds.

### **Northampton, Buckton Fields Phase 3 SP 7416 6522** ADAM DOUTHWAITE

MOLA undertook an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land which formed part of Buckton Fields Phase 3 development. A single trench contained two archaeological features in the south-west corner of the investigation area, nearest to the area of settlement activity previously investigated to the south and south-west during mitigation works. The two identified ditches represent the continuation of this activity northwards, with the north to south aligned Roman ditch corresponding with a similar north to south aligned boundary ditch that formed the eastern edge of the activity to the south, while the earlier Roman ditch was likely associated with the preceding phase of activity currently dated to the late earlier Roman period. The other three trenches showed widespread deposits of modern overburden and disturbance, associated with modern land-use and landscaping, and no archaeological features.

### **Northampton, Chalk Lane and Doddridge Car Parks** SP 75250 60555 ANNA ROJEK

MOLA undertook evaluation works during January 2023 at Doddridge Car Park, comprising of two test pits and a watching brief at the undeveloped land at the southern end of site. The test pits revealed disarticulated human remains, which confirmed a presence of a medieval-post medieval burial ground, also identified by previous archaeological works. There were no archaeological remains observed in the southern area of site during the watching brief.

### **Northampton, Chalk Car Park and Castle Mound** SP 7491 6055 ROBERT SIMISTER FALVEY

In April 2023 MOLA undertook an archaeological test pit evaluation on land adjacent to Chalk Lane Car Park, the site



Figure 6: Northampton, Chalk Car Park & Castle Mound – Plan view of TP1, showing rubble deposit at base, looking east

of the inner bailey of the former Northampton Castle. The works were designed to establish the depth below ground level, and extent, of possible stonework of the core of the east wall of a major room in the former Northampton Castle, which had been previously observed in this area. Five test pits were excavated which established the depth below ground level of walls that possibly related to the castle.

The evaluation found rubble deposits without dressed hard stone or visible coursing in two test pits, including TP 1 (Fig 6). The deposit in TP1 produced a single small sherd of medieval pottery, dated to the 12th century is most likely residual. Evidence of another possible post-medieval rubble wall was identified in another test pit, and this was dated to the 17th century. This may relate to the results of the evaluation carried out by MOLA in 2019, which successfully identified the presence of a relatively intact *in situ* stone wall with well-preserved lime mortar, aligned north to south. However, it still remains a possibility that the ironstone rubble wall uncovered in another test pit was simply upcast rubble derived from the 1960s archaeological excavations. All of the test pits demonstrated that the overlying layers were modern, all producing artefacts that were mid to late 20th century in date.

#### **Northampton, Doddridge Car Park SP 74985 60485**

ROBERT SIMISTER FALVEY

MOLA excavated a total of three test pits to quantify the burials within the disused burial ground at the north of the site and to assess the nature and extent of surviving archaeological remains to the south. Six of the seven burials encountered in one test pit were preserved *in situ*, however information has been gathered on site to estimate the spread, depth, and the density of the burials. It is likely that the burial ground has around 1,500 burials within it. The single alignments of graves east to west, suggests a single phase of cemetery use and are characteristic of the post-medieval period. The lack of medieval artefacts recovered supports the assumption that the burial ground is associated with the earliest surviving Nonconformist chapel in Northampton

built in 1695, (now belonging to the Castle Hill United Reform Church) which is located 55 meters to the north of this test pit. Documentary records indicate the date that the burial ground went out of use.

In two of the test pits the stratigraphy in the southern half exhibited modern truncation extending 0.96m and to 1.75m below ground level. These test pits identified archaeological horizons dating to the 12th -14th century. In two test pits pottery was found comprising Shelly Coarseware jug handle and rim, and a jar handle of a specialist cooking vessel belonging to the St. Neots Ware typology, dating to the pottery industries of the south-east Midlands during the Saxo-Norman and early medieval periods.

#### **Raunds, Brick Kiln Road SP 9925 7383**

KATY DAVIES

MOLA undertook a programme of archaeological trial trench evaluation to assess the presence/absence of any archaeological remains on land off Brick Kiln Road, Northamptonshire. A total of 15, 50m trenches were excavated. Evidence for a ridge and furrow cultivation system was visible in seven of the 15 trenches across the site. The furrows have tentatively been dated to the post-medieval period based on how their alignments conform to cartographic evidence. The 1888 First Edition Ordnance Survey map provides the first evidence of the east to west hedge line that continues to bisect the site; the southern area of site was at this time further split into an eastern and western field. This field system would account for the variations in the ridge and furrow alignments across the site. Evidence of natural rooting was also identified in two trenches.

#### **Rothwell, 'Central Rothwell' SP 807 808**

ADAM MEADOWS and CHRIS MANKTELOW

MOLA was commissioned to undertake a magnetometer survey on c9ha of agricultural land located to the west of Rothwell. The survey has detected several linear ditches which, although widely dispersed, do have a moderately



## Northamptonshire

coherent arrangement. Whilst there is a lack of associated settlement evidence from within the survey area, the ditches could plausibly form part of a field system linked to the late Iron Age settlements on land to the north and south. However, there is no unequivocal continuity between the ditches detected here and those previously identified on the adjacent sites.

Remains of ridge and furrow cultivation, including a broad headland, were found to cover much of the survey area, demonstrating continued agricultural use of the land during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

### **Rushden, former Windmill Club SP95059 66830**

LAUREN WILSON

MOLA carried out a programme of archaeological historic building recording to Level 2 at the former Windmill Club site on Windmill Road, Rushden. The archaeological works are being carried out as part of a Condition on consent granted for the proposed development of partial demolition of the factory buildings, refurbishment of the retained building to form three new flats, erection of two townhouses and associated landscaping and car park (NE/22/01602/FUL).

It is clear the building started life as a purpose-built social club in 1898, with later additions and alterations attributing to the club's popularity and rise in membership. These have now been lost and remain only in the historical record. What does remain is a well-built building, utilising economy of construction in materials but with some architectural flare to the frontage with its stone dressings. However, these remained limited to this area. It is unknown what the former arrangement of the building was during this time, or how it was decorated.

From the mid-20th century, the Club relocated across the road to a larger building, which is still in use today. The site was utilised as a factory with a single-storey rear extension added within the rear yard, and this was probably when the rear elevations were removed to create an open-plan space.

Overall, the building represents a good example of social and community significance at the time of its construction, having local interest, but is not the best example of its type, and has now been largely stripped of significant features.

### **Walgrave, Old House, Horcot Road SP 79918 71950**

ROBERT SIMISTER FALVEY

MOLA was commissioned to undertake a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication work at Old House, Harcot Road, Walgrave, Northamptonshire in advance of residential development. No archaeological features were revealed from inspection of the excavated foundation trenches for the single-story extension. No artefacts were found during the work.

### **Wollaston, Hookam's Path SP 91488 62606**

TRACY PREECE

MOLA undertook archaeological excavation on land east of Hookam's Path, Wollaston in advance of residential development. Archaeological remains dating from the Early Iron Age through into the Late Iron Age period were revealed. There was evidence for a planned layout with enclosures and

structures being modified and altered to the changing needs of the occupants. One of the most significant discoveries are the Iron Age burials which are not commonly found. The absence of burnished and decorated bowls of Late Iron Age type, large jars with rolled rims and vessels of Aylesford-Swarling types and fabrics indicates that the settlement was most likely abandoned at some point in the Late Iron Age period and did not continue into the 1st century AD. The Early Iron Age is represented by an unenclosed settlement comprising roundhouses, pits and an associated livestock enclosure. There was an increase in activity during the Middle Iron Age and settlement is represented by ditched enclosures one of which was the domestic core containing roundhouses alongside another enclosure defined by more substantial ditches. Many pits were found including some containing inhumation burials (Figs. 7 & 8).

## **NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL: ARCHAEOLOGY IN NORTHANTS 2023**

LIZ MORDUE, LEAD PLANNING ARCHAEOLOGIST, NORTH NORTHANTS COUNCIL

2023–4 was a little quieter in terms of fieldwork than previous years but this seems to have been just a short lull as 2024 is already proving busy.

### **Higham Ferrers**

MOLA carried out excavations between July and November on land at Higham Ferrers, between the Ferrers College and the A6, where evaluation had identified Iron Age and Roman enclosures and related activity. The area strip revealed a sequence of intercutting enclosures with internal features and associated field systems (Fig. 9), related to the site excavated in 2002 ahead of the A6 bypass construction.

### **Kings Cliffe**

A small excavation took place just west of Collyweston Great Wood, ahead of expansion of the Augean waste management site. In the wood itself in the 1950s the remains of a Roman temple were excavated; evaluation in 2020 had found evidence for Roman activity and the open area works by PCAS demonstrated the presence of a rectangular enclosure containing a large post-built structure (Fig. 10). The pottery retrieved from the site suggested a higher status than a typical rural settlement, and it is therefore suggested that the site was a service area for the temple. Mortaria were well represented and included a sherd from a Central Gaulish mortarium and a Verulamium Region rim fragment, with a broken stamp of the potter Sollus (AD 60–90).

### **Weekley, Star Pond, Boughton House**

The Boughton Estate has been carrying out various refurbishment and landscaping works as an ongoing project for several years, and in 2023 they began the refurbishment of the Star Pond, a designed pond on a canalised stretch of the River Ise. This was backed by the EA as part of the remit was to provide fish passes in and out of the pond, as well as improving its water quality and repairing stonework. The pond features a cascade flanked by a niched facade and balustrade, all of which had fallen into disrepair (Fig. 11). As





Figure 7: Wollaston – Original enclosure ditch E3 and ditch re-cut, looking north



Figure 8: Wollaston – Animal skeletons found in pit [2458]





Figure 9: Higham Ferrers- Aerial view of excavation looking north. Photo: MOLA

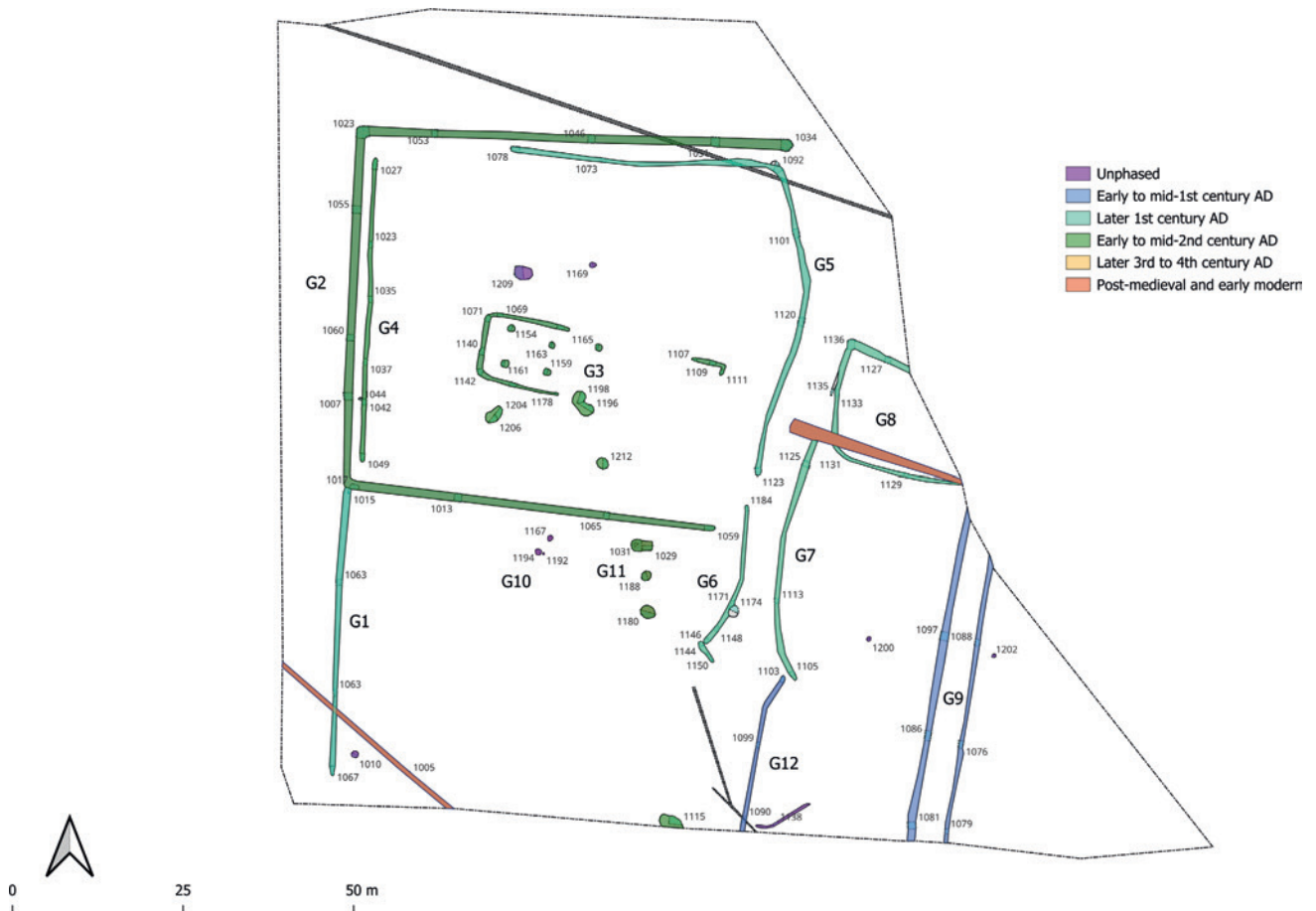


Figure 10: Kings Cliffe phase plan: PCAS

part of the works, recording of the structures was requested. and after drainage of the pond and removal of the later stone cladding, the original cascade and apron were revealed to be of pitched stones with stone or wood edges. This original structure was preserved under the new stone cladding (Fig. 12).

## Northampton, Marefair Heritage Park

Looking forward, there has been a lot of discussion around the Marefair Heritage Park in Northampton. This will redesign the Chalk Lane car park and a surviving part of the castle to create a public open space with seating, children's play area and information panels about the





Figure 11: Boughton House, Star Pond – photogrammetry of original cascade and apron: The Jessop Consultancy



Figure 12 Boughton House, Star Pond with reconstructed facade and cascade: Liz Mordue

history of the site. This is part of a wider programme of regeneration for the area around the station, Marefair, St Peter's Way and Black Lion Hill. Permission has now been granted for the heritage park so it will be interesting to see how the area is enhanced; there has been a good

deal of public support for promoting the history of the castle. The groundworks have been designed to minimise impact on archaeological levels but will be monitored by MOLA to ensure that anything exposed is investigated and recorded.



## OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Little Houghton, Land to the north-east of Preston Deanery, The Green SP7943657122**

DAN FIRTH

Oxford Archaeology undertook archaeological evaluation during October and November 2023 across land to the north-east of Preston Deanery, The Green, in advance of the construction of a solar farm.

Archaeological remains were concentrated in the north-east corner of the site, where a series of ditches were found to correspond with anomalies recorded during a previous geophysical survey. Most of the features dated to the Middle Iron Age, producing a small assemblage of pottery, animal bone and a single spindle whorl. The Middle Iron Age features probably derive from activities on the periphery of a nearby settlement and some may have formed part of an enclosure. A further probable enclosure was also encountered, possibly dating to the Late Iron Age.

In the north of the site, three ditches dating to the Romano-British period were recorded. The largest of the three produced most of the finds from the site, including pottery, slag, animal bone and an assemblage of charred plant remains. These features probably related to agricultural use of the site in the Romano-British period, potentially located on the periphery of a nearby settlement.

## **SOUTERRAIN ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICES LTD**

### **Ashton, Hilltop, Roade Hill NGR 476510 250255**

MERCEDES PLANAS & MARTIN D WILSON

In April 2023, three pre-determination archaeological trial trenches (120 sq.m) were excavated in a garden on the northern periphery of Ashton village, where it was proposed to build three detached dwellings. The objective was to ascertain whether significant archaeology was present.

An 18th century map indicated that the land formerly lay within Ashton's medieval open-fields. Today, it is bordered to the east by a roadway, adjacent to which is the West Coast Main Railway Line, while to the north and west it is surrounded by arable farmland.

The trenches provided a representative sample of the areas to be affected by the proposed development. They revealed nothing of archaeological significance. One trench exposed part of a post-medieval limestone-quarry, resonant with map evidence which shows that nearby quarrying occurred prior to the construction of the railway in the 1830s. HER Event No. ENN111057; OASIS ID: souterra1- 515917.

### **Brixworth, Grange Farm, Holcot Road NGR 476887 270224**

MERCEDES PLANAS & MARTIN D WILSON

Two distinct ranges of historic farm buildings at Grange Farm, Brixworth, were recorded in their 'as found' state, prior to conversion for residential usage. The buildings are Non-designated Heritage Assets. One range is comprised of a stone-built coach house and stable block, the other is part of a brick-built Victorian 'model farm'.

The coach house and stable block stands 24m northeast of a stone-built farmhouse and 14m southeast of the agricultural

complex. It is rectangular (19.5×6m) and comprised of four discrete bays: two sets of stables, a tack room, and a coach house (Fig. 13). It has a hipped, slated roof, with an eaves height of c. 4m and a ridge height of c. 5.9m.

A map of 1846 shows that the building once formed the back of a U-shaped courtyard layout with the arms of the U projecting to the southwest. By 1885 the building had undergone considerable alteration and the projecting arms demolished. The revamp included: the addition of doors and windows, with jambs and reveals constructed in brick; a brick cornice along three sides; the hipped slated roof; and a brick chimney in the tack room. But the period to which the building's stone shell belongs is vague. There is a possibility that it is contemporary with the farmhouse. The latter has Georgian façades, yet a window at basement level has a stone ovolo-moulded mullion, which suggests origination in the 16th or 17th century. In the pre-Victorian era, the house (and farm) was known as Moulton's Lodge or Brixworth Lodge.

Apart from a single iron hay rack and cast-iron water trough, all internal fixtures and fittings had been removed from the stables and coach house. In contrast, the tack room retained many original features, including wall panelling to height of 2m, a fire range with mantel, and harness racks with intact carriage harnesses.

The model farm was created post-1846 and stands to the north of the farmhouse. The agricultural range recorded in 2023 (Fig. 14) formed the 'back' of an E-shaped courtyard, one of the predominant farmstead plan types of the Victorian era. The range was essentially for crop processing and storage, fodder storage and the housing of implements and vehicles.

The dominant building was a threshing barn, which appears to have belonged to a pre-1846 farmstead configuration. It is 18m long by 7.2m wide and comprised of 5 bays. The tallest structure in the range, it has an eaves-height of 5.2m and a ridge height of 6.7m. The roof was dual-pitched and slated, the frame supported by four kingpost trusses with raking struts, each truss recessed into the brickwork at the top of the front and rear walls. Each truss is formed of machine-sawn pine (probably imported), fixed with nails, and has a kingpost and tie beam fastened by a wrought-iron king bolt.

A centrally positioned waggon-opening, 3.1m wide, has a segmental arch with its apex 3.5m above floor level. The arch has vertical timber boards below it, giving a clearance of 2.7m. Below the eaves, on either side of the entrance are two openings. One was a loading bay door (1.9×1.6m) serving an upper level in the southeast-end bay. The other (2.3×1.9m), part-boarded with a small hatch, was to allow belting to pass between an external steam engine and a mechanical threshing machine sited in the northwest end of the building. Typically, there no window openings. Ventilation was via four high-level vertical slits in the rear wall.

Adjoined to the northwest side of the barn is a former open-fronted cart shed (now part-blocked) of 5 bays, with granary above. This has an eaves-height of 4.4m and a ridge height of 5.6m. Adjoined to the cart shed is a 3-bay, single-storey open-fronted former cart shed and implement store, which has an eaves height of 2.4m and a ridge height of 3.2m.

The report provides a descriptive and illustrative account of the interior and exterior of each building by means of digital photographs, scale drawings and a phase





Figure 13: The coach house and stable block, Grange Farm, Holcot Road, Brixworth



Figure 14: Victorian model farm range with threshing barn: Grange Farm, Brixworth



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plan. The historical account covers a period of 125 years (c. 1824–1950), set against the backdrop of the period of ‘Victorian High Farming’ through to the ‘Great Agricultural Depression’ and into the early 20th century. HER Event No. ENN111080; OASIS ID: souterrai- 518341

### **Earls Barton, Mercer’s Farm, High Street SP 85275 63871**

MARTIN D WILSON

An early post-medieval two-storey stone-built house was discovered in the village centre during the gutting of a supposedly 19th century, concrete-rendered farmhouse. Curiosity was aroused after the demolition of an attached, single-storey, brick-built boot and shoe workshop exposed a blocked window of the farmhouse. Careful removal of the blocking revealed a carved timber window frame of early post-medieval date. An informal, intermittent record was subsequently made by M. D. Wilson (Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd.) during the development, with consent of Lexicus Developments Ltd.

Rectangular in plan, 9.8 by 4.9m, the stone building, now fully exposed, is comprised of two bays (east and west) separated by a through-passageway. Nineteenth century alterations included raising of the eaves/ceiling height, roof replacement (formerly thatched) and reconfiguration of the windows. The remains of seven original window-openings were identified on the ground floor and a further five on the first floor. The surviving frame is today preserved (encased) in situ within the refurbished house. It measures c. 1.12 by 0.92m and has a chamfered central mullion with two lights on either side, the lights separated by staves (one remaining) (Fig. 15). The underside of the head has two carved ogees in which the stave-mortises are located. While the window was most likely to have been unglazed and shuttered from the inside, fragments of leaded clear glass between the frame exterior and the blocking attested to a form of later glazing. In contrast to the brick- or stone-infill of the other windows, the blocking comprised an assortment of wood scraps and crude daub: seemingly a hasty response to window tax, and possibly as early as 1690. On the ground floor 19th century



Figure 15: Early post-medieval window frame, Mercer’s Farm, Earls Barton

boxwork concealed two oak spine-beams, the west bay with curved step chamfer stops, the east bay with jewel stops, styles which together broadly date to the mid-16th/mid-17th century. A c. 17th /18th century earthenware jug was also found upright beneath the floor.

It is considered that the building was erected in the 17th century, if not earlier. Before 2019, the farm had stayed in the ownership of a single family for a century, prior to which it was part of the estate of the Rev. J. F. Mercer. The family's received tradition knew the farmhouse to have been previously owned by an Elizabeth Mercer, while a former 'homestead' is depicted at this location on a 1771 estate map of Mr. Thomas Mercer, one of three major parish landowners. Research has since established that Elizabeth, née Farrow, or Farrer (m. Thomas Mercer of Hackleton, Northants, 1744) inherited the property from the Rev. William Farrow (d.1750); the Farrowes being prominent among Earls Barton's landed gentry throughout the 17th and 18th centuries. This has led to local speculation that the building was formerly the vicarage.

### **Little Houghton, Little Houghton House, Bedford Road NGR 480499 259720**

MARTIN D WILSON

Archaeological investigation was carried out by Souterrain in the grounds of Little Houghton House during excavation work for a new swimming pool (11.15m by 4.4m).

Little Houghton House is an 18th century country mansion which was substantially modified at some juncture between the 1770s and 1825 (Prentice 2018, 72), by either Christopher Smyth or his nephew William Tyler Smyth. The mansion stands either on, or near to, the site of an earlier manor house of the same name. In the late 20th century, a historic landscape study of Little Houghton parish argued that the grounds of the Georgian mansion partly overlaid the medieval village, the latter which suffered contraction in the 14th to 15th centuries (Hall, 1976). A map of 1829 shows a designed landscape garden and, to some extent, a park. The main road to the west of the house had been re-routed to extend the grounds and increase separation from the township.

The objectives of the investigation were therefore, to identify and record any buried remains associated with the mansion houses and the medieval village.

Historic maps show the site of the proposed pool to have been occupied by a substantial glasshouse from 1884 until at least 1923, and a pencilled outline of the proposed building was at some time added to a map of c. 1829. Unfortunately, no photographs, illustrations or written records have yet been found that might confirm its architectural appearance.

The groundwork for the new swimming pool shed new light on the character of the glasshouse. It revealed that the front of the building was erected on brick piers, in the manner of an orangery. Six lime-mortared piers were exposed in the excavation area. They were each roughly of the same dimensions (c. 1.55m by c. 0.55m), set apart c. 1.65m, and parallel (NE/SW) to the southeast wall of an existing garden store. They survived to heights of between 0.55m and 1.19m and were constructed upon a disturbed geological horizon of ferruginous sand and sandstone, c. 1.38m below the existing ground level. Thus, stone-extraction appeared to have directly preceded construction of the glasshouse, removing

all traces of pre-19th century land-use. Evidence of extensive stone extraction has been previously found in the vicinity of the mansion and kitchen garden (Wilson 2022, 74).

A large pozzolanic cistern for harvesting rainwater was partly exposed in the southwest corner of the excavation area. Situated on the outside of the glasshouse, it was probably concealed from view and fed by pipes. An assemblage of pottery recovered from backfill soils in-between the brick piers shows that the glasshouse was erected post-1859; either when the house was owned by William Smyth (d.1872) or Christopher Smyth (d.1897).

The existing southeast-facing brick wall of the garden store proved to be the rear wall of the glasshouse, evidenced by a row of blocked joist-mortises. The super-structure of the glasshouse is open to speculation but was probably either a lean-to or three-quarter span. It was removed post-1957; most likely carefully dismantled, as there were no glass sherds in the ground-levelling soils. HER Event No. ENN111053; OASIS ID: souterra1-515656

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### **Northampton, Upton Mill NGR 472090 259208**

MERCEDES PLANAS & MARTIN D WILSON

A Level II-III Historic Building Record was made of a late-Victorian stables and cart shed range, prior to its conversion to a domestic dwelling. The brick-built range with enclosed stable-yard is within the curtilage of Upton Mill, a Grade II-listed building situated on the south-western periphery of Northampton, on the north bank of the River Nene.

The stone-built mill with adjoining mill-house is now a private residence. It was erected on the site of an earlier mill in 1815, by Mr. George Turner. The Spokes family were tenants of the mill from 1812 until 2020. Turner's descendants were still proprietors in the 1920s. The stables block and cart shed range was built during the tenancy of John Spokes (b.1836, d.1897), who besides running the mill progressed through various local public offices – from Overseer of the Poor to, ultimately, Chairman of a newly-formed Rural District Council.

In addition to milling, Spokes farmed 125 acres at Upton and 150 acres in the adjacent parish of Kislingbury. After his death, his wife and sons ceased milling in 1900, from then on focussing on grazing sheep and cattle. At some time before 1923, the cart shed was converted to additional stables and a southwestern extension was added. It was most likely to have been the work of John's son, William B Spokes (b.1872), who took over the tenancy and re-vitalised the farm, adding another 50 acres at Upton. Further alterations to the stables range took place throughout the 20th century, to accommodate the changing needs of the farm and family home.

The building record is comprised of digital photographs, scale drawings and a phase plan, and includes a historic photograph of Mr. John Spokes with family and friends, playing lawn tennis in front of the historic buildings. HER Event No. ENN111021; OASIS ID: souterra1-519466.



## Northamptonshire

**Sibbertoft, 'The Roserie', 26 Westhorpe NGR: 467686 282888**

MARTIN D WILSON & MERCEDES PLANAS

A Level II-III record was made of a mid-19th century house called 'The Roserie', a Non-designated Heritage Asset, locally renowned for its architectural and historic merits. It was recorded in August 2023, during alteration and conversion. An analytical study was made of the building's structure and form, and correlated wherever possible with documentary evidence, thus elucidating its origin, evolution, and historic significance.

The house was built at some time after 1841. The earliest part is L-shaped – a main building, two-storeyed with attic, with dual-pitched roof, and a short service-wing at the rear. The front elevation facing the lane (Westhorpe) is redolent of the Georgian era. Symmetrical in form and fenestration, it is built in orange-red brick in Flemish Bond, with limestone adornment – ashlar quoins, string course, plinth course and cornice. There are three window-openings on the first floor, each with a limestone header and extended-profile keystone. In the early 20th century, the openings were altered to take French windows with lozenge-fretted glazing bars. The windows opened onto balustraded balconies with sun canopies above (Fig. 16). At the same time, the ground floor windows (one on either side of the entrance) were broken out to form large bays with balconies above. The entrance is centrally positioned and features moulded limestone steps and a limestone door head with an extended profile keystone. The existing front door, with lozenge-fretted glazing, belongs to the early 20th century facelift. It is partially concealed behind a flat-roofed porch with cornice-moulding, supported held by two cast-iron columns, that once carried an ornamental balustraded balcony. At some time prior to 1968, the French windows were foreshortened to form casements, the voids below them infilled with horizontal boards, and balconies and canopies were removed.

The gable ends are built of coursed rubble limestone, with their outer faces in plain ashlar, except for the upper courses

which are stuccoed imitation ashlar. The chimneys are brick-built and positioned in the gable ends walls, allowing fireplaces to serve all floors. A third chimney served the kitchen in the service wing, at the rear of the southern living room.

Circumstantial evidence suggests that the house was built by the Villiers family of Sulby Hall (Northants). The family was the principal landowner in Sibbertoft parish throughout the second half of the 19th century. In 1897, the Sulby estates were inherited by Miss Elizabeth Mansell, the niece of Lady Elizabeth Villiers, who became Sibbertoft's Lady of the Manor. The house appears to have been called Thorpe Cottage, occupied by Miss Mansell's estate agent. The Villiers family connection is evident in the form of a large stone-carved scallop shell set in each of the stone gable ends (Fig. 17).

In the early 1910s the house became the residence of William Smith Cort, a successful entrepreneurial businessman of Market Harborough (Leics.), Cort greatly enlarged the house, modernised its principal façade and made numerous internal alterations. The main addition was a large brick-built two-storeyed extension at the rear, to provide a spacious drawing room with sitting room above. It is probable that the Corts re-named the house 'The Roserie', following the establishment of a large rose garden to front of the house.

In c. 1930 the de Traffords became The Roserie's new owners. Charles Edmund de Trafford (b.1898, d.1951) was a famous cricketer and former High Sheriff of Leicestershire. His wife, Lady Agnes de Trafford (d.1921), was the daughter of Rudolf Fielding, 8th Earl of Denbigh. Their unmarried daughter Hilda Mary Bartha Clare (aged 32) moved with them. Miss Hilda remained at The Roserie until she passed away in 1967. For many years she was accompanied at the house by her sister Clare Mary Annette (b.1895, d.1978), better known as Lady Clare Wolseley, who remained in residence until sale of the The Roserie in 1968.



Figure 16: 'The Roserie', Sibbertoft, late 1910s (photo courtesy of Mr & Mrs Abrahams)



Figure 17: Stone-carved scallop shell (Villiers family crest) on the north gable of 'The Roserie', Sibbertoft

The report provides a descriptive and illustrative account of observations, by means of digital photographs, scale drawings and phase plan. HER Event No. ENN111220; OASIS ID: souterra1-519045.

**Sulgrave, Land South of The Retreat, Park Lane NGR 455713 245192**

MARTIN D WILSON & MERCEDES PLANAS

In January 2023, an evaluation trench (18 sq.m.) was excavated in a garden plot in the southwestern part of the village of Sulgrave. The plot adjoins 'The Retreat', a stone-built house which probably originated in the 16th or early 17th century. The plot lies 35m to the southeast of Sulgrave Castle, a defensive ringwork and primary manorial focus, occupied from the late-10th century through to the mid-12th century. The plot was therefore considered to have potential for buried remains pertaining to Sulgrave's medieval settlement.

The trench established the former presence of a substantial timber-framed structure erected upon stone sill-beam / plinth wall foundations, with a floor of compacted cobbles and soils. It was possibly an outbuilding. It was built directly upon the geological stratum, which was partly composed of limestone bedrock. Broken pottery dumped against the outer side of the foundations dated from the late 17th to early 18th century, a typical assemblage of rural domestic tableware and kitchenware. In addition, two residual medieval pottery sherds were found in the floor make-up; one of Anglo-Norman date (c. 10th – 12th century), the other, later medieval (c. 12th/13th century). HER Event No. ENN110988; OASIS ID: souterra1- 513152.

**Sutton Bassett, The Queens Head, Main Street NGR 477070 290288**

MARTIN D WILSON & MERCEDES PLANAS

In August 2023, the former Queen's Head Public House, in the village of Sutton Bassett, was found to conceal a probable

16th/17th century house. The discovery was made during a historic building record, prior to the building's demolition and site re-development. The public house was largely roughcast rendered, heavily painted, and had a deceptive appearance (Fig. 18). Its principal elevation underwent modification on two occasions, first in the late-19th century and again in the 1920s.

A traditional claim is that the building was established as an alehouse in the first half of the 18th century and named in honour of Queen Anne (1702–1714). The parish inclosure award map of 1802 depicts an L-shaped, quasi-rhomboidal building on the same spot as the standing building in 2023; the core of which was two-storeyed with cross-gabled roof. A non-exhaustive search of archives traced the alehouse's existence back to 1749, and a continuity of licensed victuallers or publicans from then onwards.

However, it became evident that the building originated as a 2-bay, two-storeyed stone-built house (Fig. 19). The absence of a cellar suggested that the building was not initially designed for the public consumption of ale. The building plot itself had been an encroachment onto a former medieval furlong field, the earthworks of which are still extant to the north and west. The house was rhomboidal in plan, its main axis aligned east/west. It was designed with a central chimneys and back-to-back hearths. The main fireplace retained an oak mantel-beam with curved chamfer stops, a style fashionable in the late-16th century and the 17th century. The beam was thought to be *in situ*.

Conversion to the L-shape took place in the 18th century. The short (south) arm of the L extended the building's frontage, increased public space on the ground floor and provided additional accommodation above it. A third hearth was situated in its gable end. The east and west gable-end walls were stone-built. The outer north wall appeared to be brick-clad stonework. This was in Flemish Garden Wall Bond, common from the 18th century onwards. Stone quoins were discernible at the west gable end.





Figure 18: The Queens Head, Main Street, Sutton Bassett

The ground-floor interior was much-obsured by wallpaper and render. Crumbly stonework was discernible on the front wall (east) inside the barroom, and stonework of the west wall was partially exposed in the rear lounge. The west wall preserved a blocked window with timber lintel. Much of the original south wall was removed in later phases. A spine beam and two of the ceiling crossbeams were hewn (i.e. adze-cut) and pit-sawn, the rest were either papered or concealed in boxwork. The staircase was a late 20th century addition.

The timber structure of the first-floor ceiling indicated that the 18th century room-layout mirrored that of the ground floor. It comprised three rooms – one at the front and two at the rear – accessed via a passageway. Each room was served with a fireplace. The joists were pit-sawn. The front room ceiling was secondary, with joists crudely lapped and fixed to a hewn spine-beam by hand-forged, square-profiled, die-headed iron nails. At the rear, the joists were mortised to a hewn crossbeam. The roof structure, where visible, was wholly comprised of hewn purlins and collar-beams and pit-sawn rafters. A possible attic-room was located at the west end.

An outhouse range attached to the rear of the building, included a brewhouse (mentioned in 1847) which later housed the barrel-room. The front elevation was given a facelift in the Victorian period, with a decorative carved bargeboard on the east gable and, below it, a casement window with a stuccoed splayed-head keystone. In the 1920s or early 1930s, front bay windows and a porch with Art Deco panes were added, and tongue and groove boards were fitted to some of the ceilings. Further modification came in the mid-late 20th century with a part-two storey/ part single storey, flat-roofed extension on the south rear side, which concealed the yard water pump/well beneath the floor. This provided, a kitchen, public W.C., a new stairway and additional first-floor accommodation.

The report provides a descriptive and illustrative account of observations, by means of digital photographs and scale drawings, aided by a broad phase plan. The documentary study should serve as a platform for future research into the building's history. HER Event No. ENN11122; OASIS ID. souterra1-517793.



Figure 19: The Queens Head, Sutton Bassett: phase plan



Figure 20: The Old Tithe Barn Thurning

**Thurning, The Old Tithe Barn** NGR 508612 282862  
MARTIN D WILSON & MERCEDES PLANAS

A Historic Building Record was made of a late medieval/early post-medieval tithe barn (Fig. 20) and adjoining outbuilding range in the village of Thurning. The buildings

stand within the curtilage of The Old Rectory, a Grade II Listed Building. The recording was carried out prior to conversion of the buildings to domestic accommodation.

The origin of the tithe barn has been variously reported as 16th century, or 17th century. In the 17th century,



## Northamptonshire

the nearby rectory was adapted from a late 15th century farmhouse. In this context, and on account of the barn's physical attributes, it is likely that it originated as a threshing barn.

Notably, in the Victorian period, oral tradition recalled that the tithe barn was once central to the village's annual celebration of the Feast of St James. The custom was revived in the 1890s by the rector Rev. E. Tottenham, and the tithe barn again became the key venue for the occasion. But in 1933, the building was devastated by fire, resulting in total loss of the roof structure and partial loss of its stone walls. Rebuilt, and greatly modified, a few years later, it continued to play an important role in the local community's annual festivities. In the late 20th century, the building underwent a fresh overhaul and was converted to a tea-room.

The barn is single storey, rectangular in plan (14.37m by 6.13m), and orientated NW/SE. It is constructed of coursed limestone rubble, with a dual-pitched roof covered in 20th century clay-tiles. It has a ridge height of c. 6.4 m and a roof pitch at 50 degrees. It is possible that the roof was originally thatched – as is the Old Rectory. The roadside elevation (northeast) has a stone-blocked former entrance, c. 2.9m wide, part-infilled by a 20th century window. To the southeast of the blocked entrance are two stone-blocked triangular vents. The northwest gable end of the barn has a carved quatrefoil vent; and a datestone formed from a re-used architectural fragment, bearing very faint numerals “\*5\*8”. The northwest corner of the tithe barn has been rebuilt and rounded. Similarly, the entire southwest elevation appears to be a post-conflagration re-build.

The report combines analytical study of the barn's structural characteristics with research of its early-modern history, the result of which, not only allows a greater appreciation of the building's present condition, but sheds light on its historic social significance. The barn may be viewed as a significant heritage asset in the narrative of the present local community's customary celebration of the Feast of St. James. HER Event No. ENN 111081; OASIS ID: souterran1-516642.

**Twywell, 'Gordonville', High Street** NGR 494988  
278509

MERCEDES PLANAS & MARTIN D WILSON

In July 2023, two evaluation trenches were excavated in a rear garden in the village of Twywell, where it is proposed to build two detached dwellings. The locality is known to have been well-settled during the Iron Age and Roman periods. The site was also deemed to have potential for buried remains pertaining to the origin and development of the village.

The trenches (total, c. 59 sq.m) were positioned to provide a representative sample of the area to be affected by the proposed development. There were, however, no archaeological features or deposits, and no artefacts of any period. Early 18th century map evidence suggests that the garden was once a part of the medieval open-fields, and that the property boundary was formed in the late medieval, or early post-medieval, period. There was nothing to confirm medieval strip-cultivation in either trench, although landscaping had occurred in the modern period. HER Event No. ENN111190; OASIS ID: souterran1-517491.

**Wellingborough, Jackson's Lane** NGR 488839 268045  
MARTIN D WILSON & MERCEDES PLANAS

A Level III record was made of a range of historic outbuildings within the curtilage of a Grade II listed building in Wellingborough, prior to site re-development. The listed building, known as 'Nos. 2 and 3 Broad Green', comprises two adjoining three-storey tenements built of coursed ironstone, both of which originated in the mid-18th century. Their frontages are on High Street, facing Broad Green. The outbuildings are sited at the rear of No.2, with their frontages on a side street called Jackson's Lane (Fig. 21). They belonged to a bakehouse at No. 2, which operated from the early 19th century until the second half of the 20th century, under at least three proprietorships.

Due to their poor condition, permission was granted to remove the outbuildings yet emulate the Jackson's Lane façade within the new development design, in an endeavour to maintain the historic character of the street frontage. In this context, the historic building report preserves the existing building 'by record' and will afford meaning and understanding of the new façade. The record combines analytical study of the structural characteristics of the outbuildings with research of primary documentation dating back more than two centuries, at the same time significantly augmenting knowledge of the listed buildings.

At least five phases of construction were identified (Fig. 22). The earliest was probably an 18th century single-storied, stone-built dwelling, with its frontage on Jackson's Lane. The second phase was a single-storeyed stone-built extension, probably a cart-shed, built in the early 19th century, again with its frontage on the lane. Re-development of the site, for the bakery business, took place before the mid-1840s and comprised two main elements. The first (Phase 3A) was the addition of an upper storey to the Phase 2 extension, to create a large flour loft above a cart-shed and stable. The second element (Phase 3B) was a two-storey brick-built extension at right-angles to the original (*i.e.* Phase 1) stone-building, thus forming the overall L-shaped configuration that was still in existence in 2023. At ground level there were two separate, unlinked rooms, with back-to-back fireplaces. One room was probably a bothy. The other, a scullery/ washhouse, retained an *in-situ* brick-built copper boiler. The first floor was probably a flour loft with a yard-side loading bay door.

In 1920 the outbuilding on the road-frontage caught fire. The loft floor and the roof were destroyed, while the load-bearing outer stone walls were seriously damaged. Subsequent restoration, and attempts at structural re-stabilisation, brought about a complete re-configuration of the building's interior (Phase 5), the layout still in existence in 2023. Event No. ENN111272; OASIS ID: souterran1-519331

## WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY

**Northampton, St Andrew's Wall** SP 74899 60552

Negative results. No summary provided. OASIS ID: wessexar1-519185; Accession no: ENN111034

**Thorpeville, Land to rear of Woodlands** SP 79179 65557

Negative results. No summary provided. OASIS ID: wessexar1 521-020; Accession no: ENN111344



Figure 21: Jackson's Lane, Wellingborough. A probable 18th century dwelling converted to a barn, cart shed and stable in the 19th century

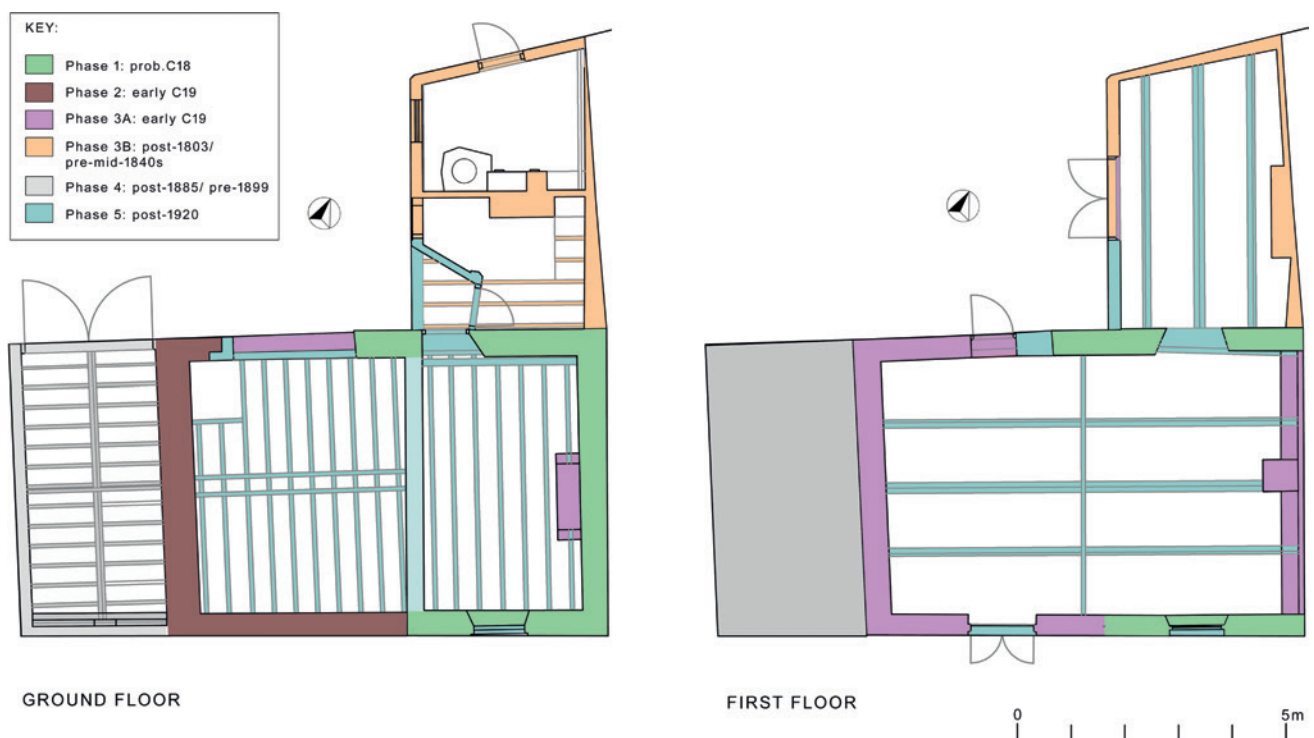


Figure 22: Jackson's Lane, Wellingborough: phase plan



## ABINGDON ARCHAEOLOGICAL GEOPHYSICS

### Abingdon, Caldicott recreation ground SU 493 964

ROGER and SALLY AINSLIE

In 2003 we started to survey this area for research purposes. A possible cursus and round barrow ditch are known from air photos (Fig. 1). Our work has clarified the relationship between these, has found small ditch-like lines approximately aligned on the main parallel ditches and has located probable ridge and furrow. Work is continuing intermittently, albeit hampered by the recent construction of a hard surfaced basketball area on the southern part of the field.

### Swalcliffe, Upper Lea SP395 389

ROGER and SALLY AINSLIE

In 2023 we carried out 2.4 ha of magnetometry for the North Oxon Archaeology Group and the Swalcliffe Historic Landscape Project. This located several ditch-like features, of which some were known from air photos. It didn't detect round houses or similar features. This will be reported more fully when it is on the ADS grey literature system.

## APPLETON AREA ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH PROJECT (AAARP)

### Besselsleigh Manor and Village Excavations BL23 SP 4558 0104

JANE HARRISON, LYNN AMADIO, SARAH MILES and KATHRYN MURPHY

#### Introduction

The Appleton Area Archaeological Research Project (AAARP) is researching the history and archaeology of the village of Appleton and its surrounding landscape, including the settlements of Eaton and Besselsleigh, the deserted medieval village of Tubney, and the deserted manor and village of Besselsleigh adjacent to the surviving church of St Lawrence. Research themes are focused on the development and growth of medieval settlements and manors, including the moated manor site at Appleton and the manor of Besselsleigh, and settlement abandonment at Tubney Manor

Farm and Besselsleigh. For further background on the project and previous excavations see *SMA* 49–52 (references below).

After comprehensive survey and evaluation at the site of the deserted manor and village of Besselsleigh, major excavation over the core of the manor began in 2021 (for a summary of the 2021–2022 excavations at Besselsleigh see *SMA* 53). Excavation continued in 2023 as a training site for local volunteers and fieldwork school for archaeology students from Oxford University's Department for Continuing Education and elsewhere. Work in 2023 explored further the remains of the manor house west of the surviving church of St Lawrence and the house's attendant farm buildings to the north. The first trench over the deserted village was also opened. The manor was demolished in the 1780s and the final farm buildings in the late nineteenth century. As a result, under what is now parkland, archaeological evidence survives for continuous occupation on the site from before the Conquest into the nineteenth century.

Trench 3 from 2022 was reopened and extended by six metres to the north, to link with Trench 4 from 2022, and also extended to the west and east to create a central area 26 metres long. The southern four metres west-east by three metres north-south of Trench 4 were also re-opened. Two new trenches were opened: Trench 5, c. 12.5m to the west of Trench 4, and Trench 6, c. 22m east of the new area of Trench 3 and north of the churchyard wall (Fig. 2).

Trench 5 (four metres west-east by three metres north-south) was located to explore the continuation to the south-west of the stone-built and capped drain first excavated in 2021 and tracked in ground penetrating radar results. Magnetometry findings also suggested the possibility of more buildings in that area, either manor outbuildings or belonging to the small village recorded by antiquarian John Leland in the 1540s (Toulmin Smith 1910, 72). Trench 6 (also four metres west-east by three metres north-south) was intended to test whether manor buildings did indeed stretch for some distance behind the northern churchyard wall as depicted in a 1724 map of the estate.

In Trenches 3 and 4, over the core of the manor complex, more stone walls of immediately post-Conquest origin were uncovered as well as evidence for alterations and additions made mainly in the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries. There followed major rebuilding and radical changes to the layout

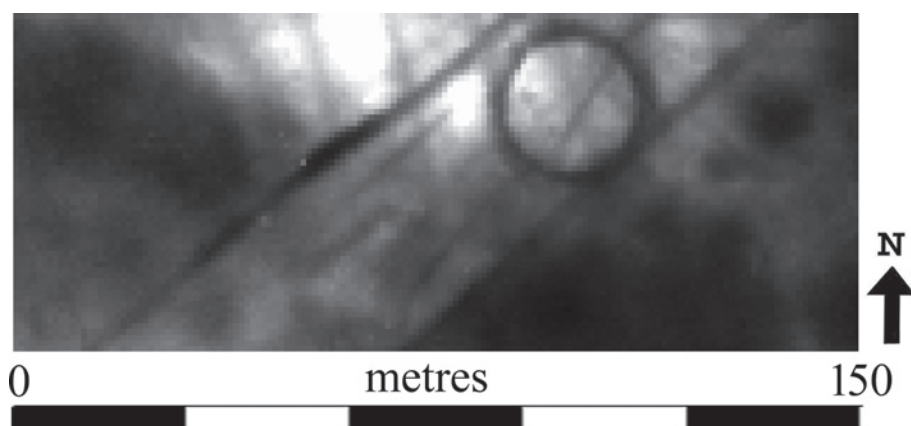


Figure 1: Caldicott recreation ground, Earth resistance, 30m grids (Low resistance is black)



Figure 2: Besselsleigh, Composite aerial view BL21-23 with Trenches 5 and 6 (Sumo Services Adam Stanford)

of the manor in the seventeenth century, during the lordship of William Lenthall, the Speaker of the Long Parliament, who acquired the manor in 1634. These alterations may have begun before the English Civil Wars and certainly resumed after the wars ended in 1651. During the Civil Wars the manor was badly damaged having been both occupied by Royalist troops and besieged and slighted by Parliamentarians. It was clearly substantially restored as the house was leased to a school for young ladies at the end of the seventeenth century and is depicted as a considerable range of buildings in a 1724 estate map.

Trench 5 discovered the line of the drain but also a poorly surviving wall and a likely pre-Conquest semi-cellar with associated earlier Medieval artefacts (Figs 2 & 7). In the sixteenth century and probably into the seventeenth century this area of separate ancillary or village buildings was linked by the drain to the main farm buildings to the north-east. However, there appear to have been buildings in this location from before the Conquest. This area will be investigated further in 2024.

Trench 6 produced no structural evidence, emphasising that the 1724 estate map was representative rather than spatially accurate. However, earlier Medieval artefacts were found, including hair pins and a possible terret ring, as well as a range of pottery and a Roman stylus.

#### *Trench 3 BL23 (incorporating the re-opened end of BL22 Trench 4)*

The central length of the 2023 Trench 3 lay broadly over the northern part of the manor buildings, the southern range of the farm buildings and the courtyard between, as generally

depicted in the 1724 estate map. The original medieval manor hall, around which the later iterations of the manor complex evolved, lay to the south in an area of the site hugely disturbed by the demolition of the surviving manor buildings in the later eighteenth-century. This disturbance, and the poorly surviving lines of walls first raised in the Medieval period, were recorded in the 2021 excavations. It is unlikely the full plan of the hall can be recovered. However, other aspects of the development of the manor and clues to the character of the original twelfth-century building can be established.

The entrance to the twelfth-century stone-built manor may originally have faced east towards a track running to the east of the church, with the hall forming the southern range around a courtyard. Subsequent changes to the layout of the manor buildings seem to have included creating smaller rooms to the north and north-east of the hall in the fourteenth century, and in the sixteenth century establishing a greater separation between the domestic heart of the manor in the south and ancillary and farm buildings to the north. That work resulted in considerable elements of the pre-seventeenth century buildings and yards to the north of the hall being preserved beneath an extended courtyard. It is these elements that were first recorded in 2022 and investigated further in 2023.

The thirteenth-fourteenth centuries marked an increase in the complexity of the manor's layout, and the creation of more and smaller spaces. The 2023 extensions uncovered the NNW and ENE continuations of substantial double-faced stone walls discovered in 2022, and probably of twelfth-century origin. The NNW-SSE trending metre-





Figure 3: Besselsleigh, BL22 Plan 306 (Digitised by K Murphy)



Figure 4: Besselsleigh, Aerial view of Trench 3 BL23, south at top (Sumo Services Adam Stanford)

wide wall [3077] (Figs. 3 & 4) continued northwards but in a much more degraded state. The southern stretch of [3077] excavated in 2022 had been carefully dismantled to its lowest and foundation courses to allow alterations. The longer length of the wall to the NNW found in 2023 had been badly damaged by later re-use of the foundations and subsequent comprehensive robbing, and by later walls and a stone-lined drain [3110] cutting across it at right angles (Fig. 5). Wall [3076], forming a right angle with [3077], continued into the 2023 trench extension to the ENE as [3169] (Fig. 6). Again, this wall had been dismantled to foundation courses; these foundations had been reused in a later configuration of the wall incorporating a new entranceway and new, smaller rooms to the north-west, probably during the thirteenth-fourteenth centuries.

The eastern part of Trench 3 into which wall [3169] ran contained a palimpsest of stone walls – for example wall [3168] – which will be explored further in the final 2024 season. These appeared to belong to smaller rooms dividing up larger spaces as noted above. Subsequently and probably in the sixteenth century, the western half of this area was incorporated into a cobbled courtyard area with a stone-lined and capped drain [3110]. This drain was very similar in construction and alignment to drain [4013] provisionally dated to the sixteenth century, 14.5m to the north-west (Fig. 2) and running across a yard north of a range of farm buildings. At this point wall the central length of [3077] running NNW was dismantled to create a smaller yard lying between buildings and opening out to the west into a larger

external area. These changes had the effect of detaching the more domestic range from the ancillary buildings to the north and north-west. All the structures in the far eastern part of the trench were badly disturbed and truncated. This disturbance – also recorded in 2022 – appears to be linked to an episode of seventeenth-century burning and demolition. It is plausible this represents some of the damage inflicted on the manor during the Civil War.

The 2023 season also uncovered an area of beautifully laid and decorative yard cobbling in the far west of Trench 3 (Fig. 4). The finds caught between the cobbles – and in a layer beneath them – indicated the courtyard was probably laid in the seventeenth century. It is possible that this was another element of the redesign of the manor house after the Civil War. This courtyard was laid behind the south-facing buildings further separating the house from the farm buildings to the north. A late wall, perhaps part of the nineteenth-century configuration of farm buildings had removed the north-western edge of the cobbles and they had also been much more disturbed by later activity in the east, where they had been knitted into the remains of the earlier cobbled yard. However, the courtyard continued beyond the trench edge to the west and south and will be explored further in 2024.

A range of pottery from pre-Conquest fabrics to nineteenth-century utilitarian wares was recorded. As in previous seasons, there was a strong presence of twelfth-thirteenth century pottery, as well as later Medieval and Tudor wares, and a considerable amount of later-seventeenth



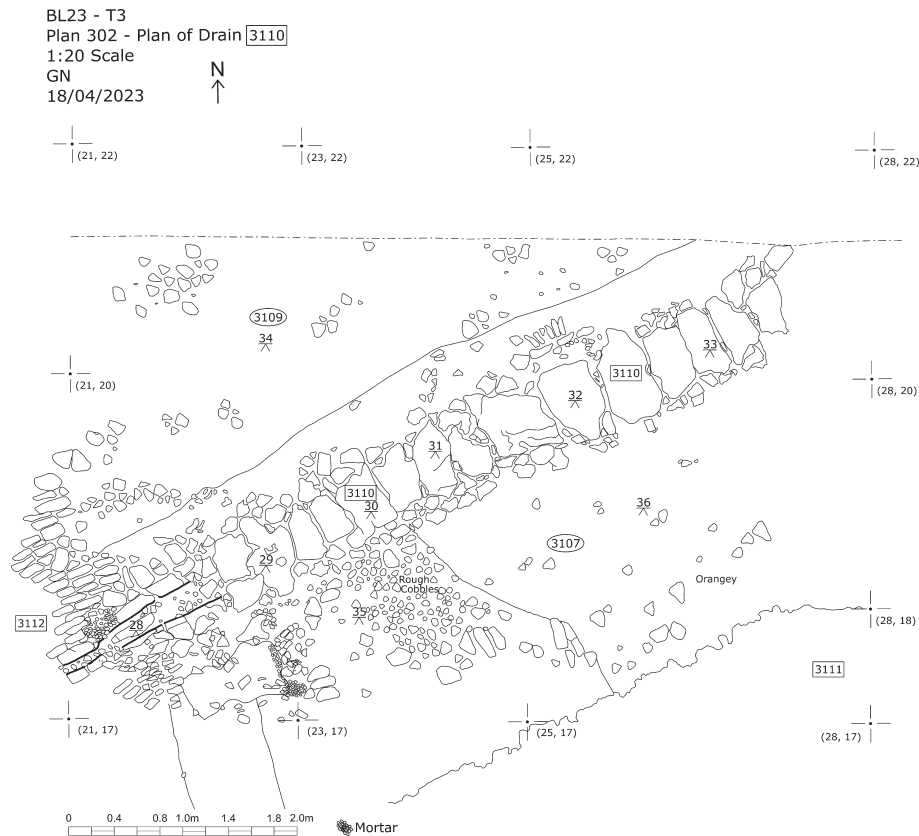


Figure 5: Besselsleigh, BL23 Plan 302 (Digitised by K Murphy)

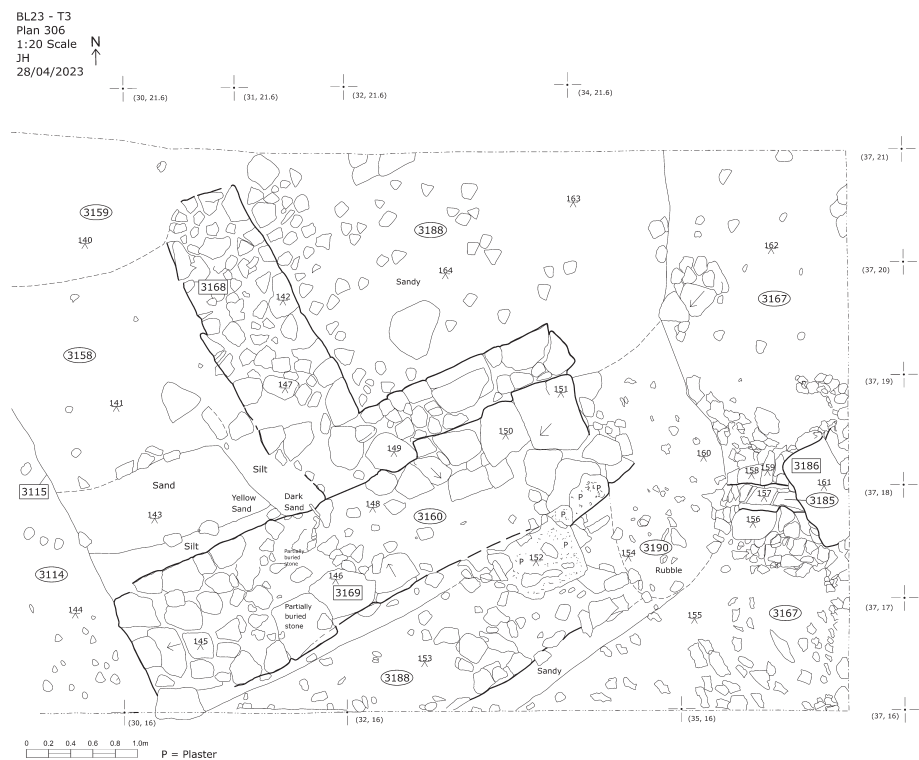


Figure 6: Besselsleigh, BL23 Plan 306 (Digitised by K Murphy) [inset 1.5 columns]

pottery, some of it from finer dining services. In 2022 there had been two especially interesting pottery finds. The Post-Medieval Redware assemblage from the farm building area included sherds of two chicken-feeders, a rare vessel form resembling concentric dishes with three-four internal rims.

Also unusual were the flat bases of two late-seventeenth to early-eighteenth century crucibles found in the domestic area (Cotter 2023). These suggest that during the time that the Lenthalls leased the manor to a school for young ladies in the 1690s, someone had set up a laboratory in

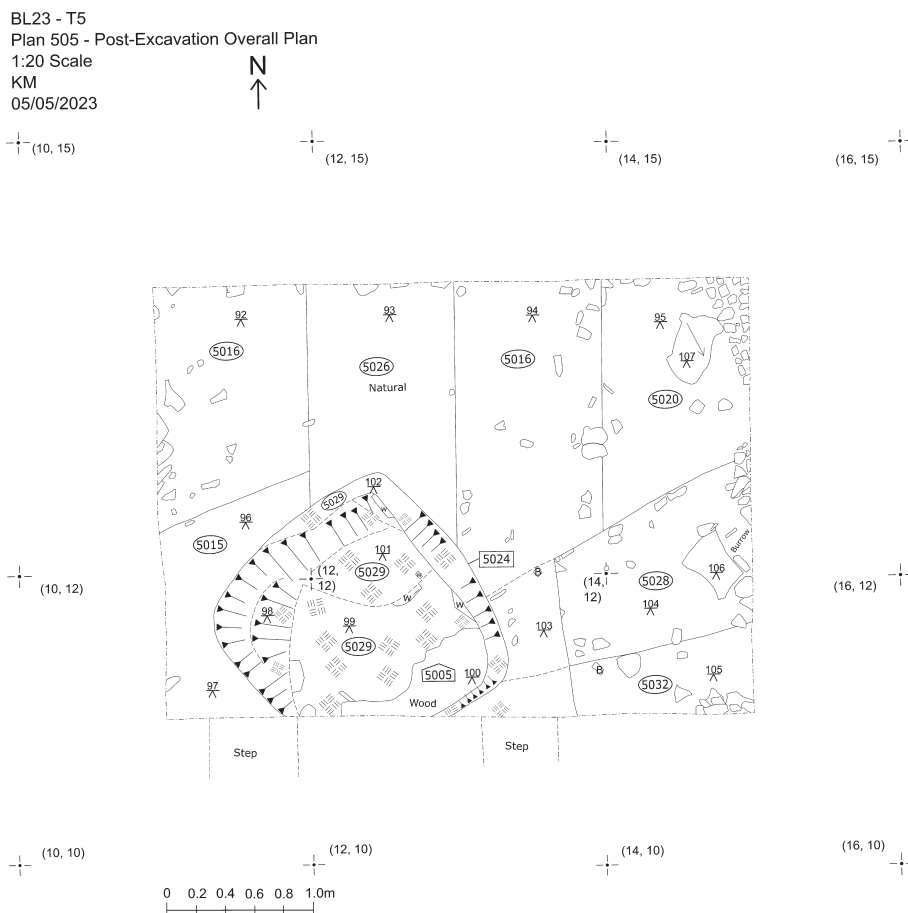


Figure 7: Besselsleigh, BL23 Plan 505 (Digitised by K Murphy)

the manor. Was the young women's education wider than might be expected? Other finds included dress accessories, from Anglo-Saxon hooked tags to early-eighteenth century silver thimbles, worked bone and a range of keys, as well as structural ironwork, floor and roof tiles and worked stone.

### Conclusion

The final season of excavation work will be carried out at the Besselsleigh manor and village site in 2024. The area of the Great Hall, which remained an architectural constant through centuries of change, was extensively damaged by the demolition of the manor in the eighteenth century. But the character of many of the changes made to the core of the manor complex between the thirteenth and seventeenth centuries has preserved a palimpsest of wall foundations and courtyards beneath later room arrangements and cobbled areas. This offers an excellent opportunity to chart the evolution of a manor from before the Conquest to its end in the later eighteenth century. The area of the small village – moved to the location of the modern village of Besselsleigh in the seventeenth century – and ancillary buildings has also been delineated and will be investigated further in 2024. Wider research will explore the relationships between the manors of Appleton and Besselsleigh, as well as the differing fates of the villages of the surrounding landscape.

### Acknowledgments

We are extremely grateful to John May for his kind support and permission to work on his land: so providing training opportunities to OUDCE undergraduate and postgraduate

students, other students and many AAARP volunteers. We are also very grateful to Jane Cranston for access to Besselsleigh Church. Finally, the AAARP fieldwork team would like to thank those who made the 2023 season possible: Trevor Rowley, Eileen Anderson, James Barnes, Linden Ellicott, Katie Hambrook, Alan Little, Charlie McCarthy, Mark Roberts, Paul Sayers, William Wintle, the Appleton with Eaton History Society and of course all the hard-working and companionable volunteers, and OUDCE and other students.

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## AVON ARCHAEOLOGY LIMITED

**Benson, Braze Lane SU 62449 92349**

KEVIN POTTER

Avon Archaeology Limited excavated 32 evaluation trenches (Fig. 8) on a site at Braze Lane, Benson, Oxfordshire

(centred on NGR SU 62449 92349). The evaluation revealed archaeological features across the site. Unfortunately dating evidence for the features was lacking in most instances. Dated features appear to reflect multiple periods of activity, but most significantly Romano-British and Early Medieval.

A ditch/gully of Romano-British (RB) date was recorded in two trenches toward the south east corner of the site. Further evidence of Romano-British activity was found in the form of residual finds within later contexts from features across the site. Of note was a copper alloy ear scoop found within gravel deposits toward the north-east of the site.

Early medieval archaeology was recorded and had two main loci. Toward the south-west of the site a probable

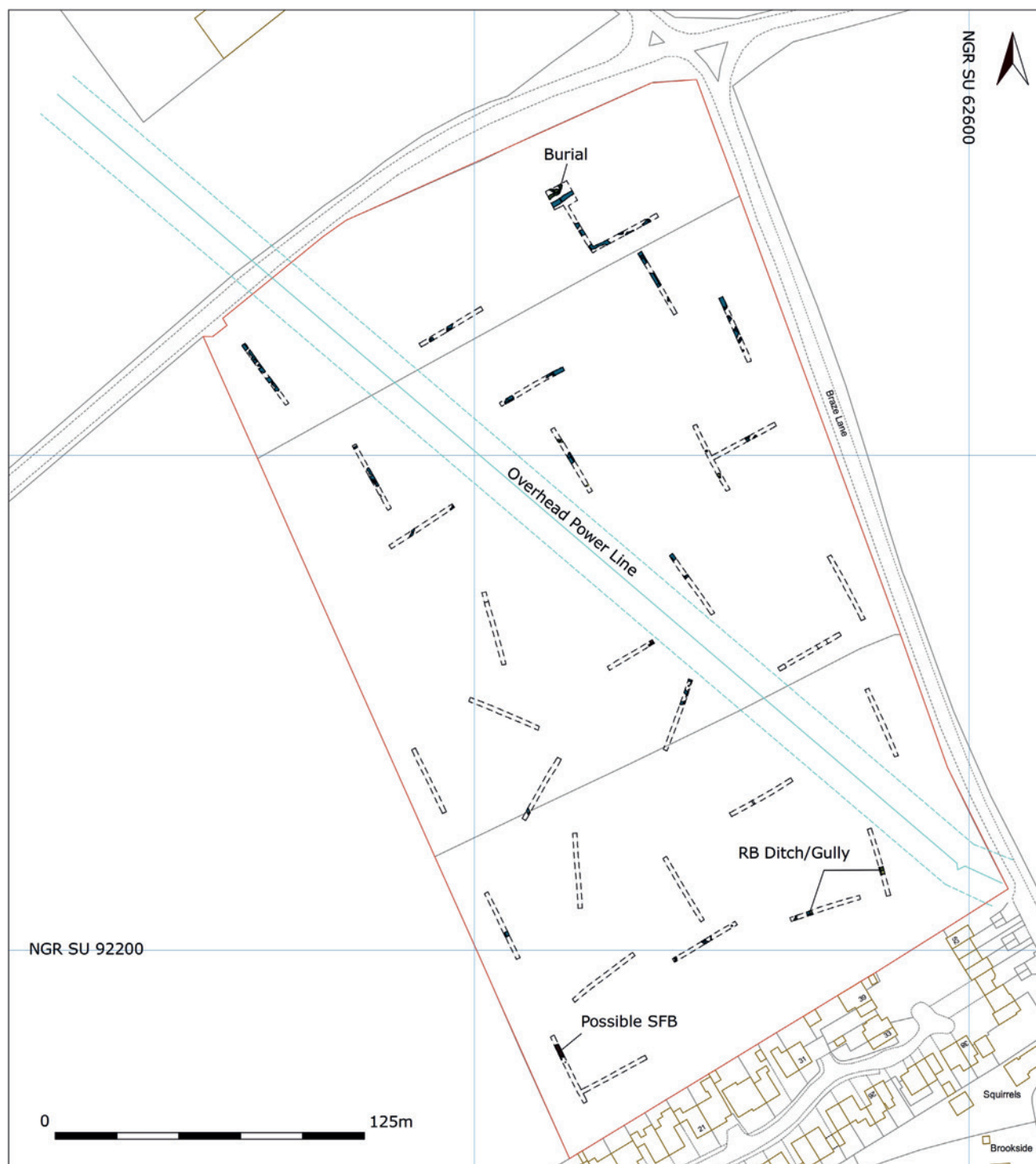


Figure 8: Benson, Braze Lane, Site Boundary with Trenches



Figure 9: Benson, Braze Lane, The Button Brooch



Figure 10: Benson, Braze Lane, The Bead Necklace

sunken feature building (SFB) was identified, with associated post-holes and deposits, producing a small assemblage of 5th – 8th century ceramic. The second area of notable early medieval activity was toward the north-east of the site where a poorly preserved burial with jewellery displaying Anglo Saxon characteristics was found. Only parts of the skull remained, but a clear cut was visible and within it were a well-preserved copper alloy brooch and an amber and blue glass bead necklace (Figs. 9 & 10). The brooch has been identified as a button brooch dating between 480 and 550 AD. It has stylised depiction, in relief, of a human face in the centre. The bead necklace comprised 13 beads, three blue glass and the remaining 10 amber. It is difficult to date beads with accuracy, but they conform most closely to Brugman Phase A type, which is 5th century (Brugman B, 2004).

In addition to the stratified archaeology described above, residual Bronze Age ceramics were recovered, and the topsoil produced a range of metal objects recovered by metal detector survey of spoil heaps. The latter included Roman coins and, of note an unusual scalpel like blade, of undefined date, with evidence of gilding. The latter was found in the area of the sunken feature building and must, therefore, be considered to be of potentially early medieval origin. Many un-dated cut features (some large and ditch like), filled with red-brown silty sand were cut into the gravel substrate at locations across the site. Investigation of these features found that, in most cases, they had profiles and stratigraphy strongly indicative of anthropogenic origins. However, no stratified finds were recovered from any of them.

It is difficult to draw any broad conclusions about the activity on the site based on the evaluation alone. There was

at least low-level activity on the site in the Romano-British period. However, the low quantity of finds suggests it may not have been intensive, possibly no more than agricultural land management. The undated features found across the site also suggest land management and utilisation but cannot be interpreted with any confidence at this stage. It can be argued confidently that the site was occupied during the early medieval period. Assuming our interpretation of the features is correct, the presence of a Sunken Feature Building is direct evidence of settlement. It should also be noted that evaluation of the neighbouring field to the west, undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology (CA 2017a) also recorded potential sunken feature buildings. The presence of an early medieval burial is further direct evidence of likely occupation. More evidence would be needed to characterise and map the nature of settlement on the site. Based solely on current evidence it can be suggested that there may have been settlement toward the south-west of the site (extents unknown) with a separated area given to burial to the north-east of that settlement.

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## COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Banbury, Land east of J11, M40** NGR 447651 242107

JACK MARTIN-JONES

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified medieval/post-medieval plough furrows and field boundary ditches as well as a probable pond or extraction pit of post-medieval/modern date.

### **Bicester, Land at J10, M40, Baynards Green**

NGR 454618 228934

JOAO HEITOR

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded a cluster of Early to Middle Iron Age pits that contained large assemblages of pottery and animal bone. Two undated ditches immediately west of the pits potentially formed part of a small enclosure. Additional undated ditches were also recorded.

### **Chesterton, Land south of Green Lane** NGR 455694

221000

JOAO HEITOR, MARTA PERLINSKA and DANIELE PIRISINO

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified two Roman rectilinear enclosures along with undated features comprising a ring ditch, a pit alignment, field boundary ditches and a cremation deposit. Post-medieval/modern furrows and a pit were also identified, along with field boundary ditches depicted on 1st Edition OS mapping.

### **Chipping Norton, Bruern Abbey** NGR 426562 220351

LIAM WILSON

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology identified medieval buried soil horizons and a limestone wall, the latter possibly part of the former Bruern Abbey. The wall had been robbed and was sealed by medieval demolition material, presumably derived from the demolition of the Abbey in 1536. This material was overlain by post-medieval levelling layers, likely related to the 18th-century landscaping of the extant Bruern Abbey house and gardens.

### **Chipping Norton, Land South of Banbury Road**

NGR 432514 227925

JOAO HEITOR

An evaluation by Cotswold Archaeology recorded medieval/post-medieval field boundary ditches, undated ditches which may be contemporaneous with the boundary ditches, and a post-medieval/modern quarry pit.

## FOUNDATIONS ARCHAEOLOGY

### **Bampton, Land West of Burford Road, Black Bourton**

NGR: 428631.204557

ANDREW HOOD

On 18th January 2023 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological watching brief comprising the monitoring of the excavation of foundation pits associated with the construction of an agricultural maintenance store.

The watching brief identified a general lack of archaeological features or finds within the monitored foundation pits; however, due to the limited nature of the excavations, it was unclear if this represented a true absence of archaeological potential within the site area. A single possible feature was partially revealed within one of the south-eastern pits, although, its form, function and date remained unclear.

### **Faringdon, Buscot Park Lake, Buscot Park**

NGR: 424678.196963

ANDREW HOOD

Between 14th November and 5th December 2022 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording on the site. The archaeological works comprised the monitoring and photographic recording of groundworks associated with the demolition of a lakeside spillway.

The archaeological monitoring allowed for the recording of brick and concrete-built elements of the spillway, during its demolition. Based on the observations made on site, it is likely that none of the revealed structures pre-dated the Victorian period and that large parts of the spillway had been re-built or repaired in the later 20th century.

### **Oxford, 18 Osler Road** NGR: SP 5439 0722

TRACY MICHAELS

Between the 16th and 17th January 2020 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief during groundwork excavations associated with the demolition of the existing dwelling and construction of a one and a half storey building.

The monitoring works did not identify any archaeological finds, features or deposits within the site area.

## JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

### **Adderbury, Horn Hill Road** SP 4649 3531

AIMÉE SKILLEN-THOMPSON

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological excavation at the land west of Horn Hill Road, Adderbury, Oxfordshire during the strip of the footprint to a new-build house. Previous investigations at the site had identified a curvilinear ditch of Roman date, however no archaeological features were identified during the investigation. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-513959

### **Bampton, Church View** SP 31309 03195

ROBYN TRANTER

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at 2 Church view, Bampton, Oxfordshire.

The purpose of the watching brief was for the monitoring of a hand dug L-shape foundation trench for the construction of a new extension attached to the rear of the existing property. During the watching brief a series of made ground deposits and a possible archaeological deposit were identified. No archaeological features were identified within any of these deposits. Most finds recovered from the site consisted of modern pottery, china, animal bone and clay pipes which were not retained for post-excavation assessment. The earliest deposit recorded, contained finds of medieval pottery and animal bone which were retained for post-excavation assessment. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-520451

#### **Benson, Birmingham Yard SU 6173 9169**

SCOTT GORDON

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological recording action during permitted development landscaping works in the rear garden of 4 Birmingham Yard, in Castle Square, Benson. Two structures, one of stone and one of brick, were encountered. A cylindrical stone well, the earliest structure, may have been converted into a more decorative water source with the addition of adjacent cuboid stone structure. The structure was later used for rubbish disposal in the early to mid-19th century, and the earlier well was also converted to serve a waste management purpose ahead of the mid-19th-century construction of 4 Birmingham Yard. A brick dome was added to the top of the well though it is unclear at which stage this was done. Late 19th-century to early 20th-century refuse then accumulated in the garden, before being covered by a modern levelling layer and lawn. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-513390

#### **Benson, The Jack House SU 6154 9145**

AIMÉE SKILLEN-THOMPSON

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Jack House, 2 St Helens Avenue, Benson. The purpose of this work was to monitor for any archaeological remains that had the potential to be disturbed during the groundworks for the external alterations to the existing house. During the monitoring a series of natural deposits were observed, demonstrating the geological processes which formed the landscape, however no archaeological features or deposits were uncovered within the watched area. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-513504

#### **Bicester, Graven Hill SP 5942 2088**

TOM GOULBOURNE

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an intermittent watching brief during removal of a concrete slab at the Bicester International Freight Terminal, Graven Hill, Bicester. The concrete slab was bedded upon a layer of gravel and the works did not extend into or below this modern layer. As such no archaeological features, finds or deposits were encountered during the demolition work. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-512930

#### **Burford, High Street SP 2516 1214**

STEPHEN YEATES

John Moore Heritage Services conducted an impact assessment and archaeological investigation at 107 High Street (Burford News), a Grade II listed house and shop.

The building is of probable late medieval date, remodelled in the 18th or early 19th century. The investigation focused on the basement, which was divided into a front and rear section. Features identified within the rear portion of the cellar included a chimney breast base and a former fireplace, both on the west side of the cellar. In-situ burnt deposits associated with the fireplace were also identified. In the front cellar of the building was a large curving wall located beneath a possible inglenook fireplace and attached oven. Thus, the surviving curving wall was most probably also a chimney breast foundation. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-515270

#### **Charlbury, Charlbury House SP 3710 1860**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at Charlbury House, to the southeast of Charlbury. 15 archaeological evaluation trenches measuring approximately 30m long by 1.8m wide and one trench measuring approximately 15m long by 1.8m wide were excavated across the development site. 13 out of the 16 trenches excavated did not uncover any archaeological horizons or features. Three pits and two undated ditches were discovered to the west of the core of the site. The pits were all sub-circular, with charcoal-rich basal fills which may have been deposited during the late Iron Age to early Roman period. The pits may be contemporary with Iron Age and Roman activity in the wider landscape, though this conclusion must be considered tentative at this stage. An alternative explanation is that they perhaps represent the remains of charcoal burning, as the area formed part of a large woodland until the 19th century. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-512748

#### **Didcot, Manor Road SU 5204 9037**

TREVOR JOSE; CHRISTOPHER WHITEHEAD

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at 26 Manor Road, Didcot. The purpose of the archaeological watching brief was to monitor the groundworks associated with the construction of a new barn-style dwelling together with associated access, garden and other related works. The site was located within an area of considerable archaeological interest, close to the historic core of the settlement; however, no archaeological features or deposits were observed during the groundworks. OASIS ID: johnmoor1\_514747

#### **Dorchester-on-Thames, Manor Farm Road SU 58028 94440**

ROBYN TRANTER

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at 11 Manor Road, Dorchester-on-Thames. The purpose of the watching brief was to monitor excavations of footings trenches and soakaway associated with construction of a new house extension. During the watching brief no archaeological features, deposits or finds were identified. Two made ground deposits associated with modern development and demolition were recorded. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-521732

#### **Emmington, The Barn SP 7424 0271**

MAXWELL TALBOT, CHRISTOPHER WHITEHEAD

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Barn, Emmington. The watching brief



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was undertaken during a series of groundworks related to the conversion of a barn into a single dwelling. Four test pits were monitored, along with foundation trenches on the northern, eastern and southern sides of the barn building as well as associated services. The brick-built barn foundations were observed to have been built directly onto a pre-existing boundary wall which remains undated. No further archaeological material or features were found during the work. OASIS ID: johnmoor1\_513622

### **Enstone, Enstone Airfield SP 4032 2614**

TOM ROSE-JONES

John Moore Heritage Services conducted an Appraisal of WWII Buildings and Earthwork Survey of the remaining WWII structures situated within the north eastern portion of Enstone Airfield, formerly RAF Enstone.

The eastern side of the study site was situated within an area formerly occupied by the airfield's bomb stores. The bomb stores contained a range of buildings associated with bomb storage and assembly, linked by a series of trackways. The bomb store was run by the station armourers, who oversaw the selection of bombs from the various stores, before fusing them and loading them onto trolleys for distribution. Following fusing the bomb trolleys would be pulled by tractor around the perimeter track from the bomb store area to the squadron armourers, who would load the ordinance onto the aircraft. Following the war the airfield was decommissioned and the bomb store became redundant, the associated structures gradually removed or left to decay. As a result, very little evidence of the WWII infrastructure remained intact within the study site. Extant remains present within the study site included five earth traverses associated with Buildings 81, 88, 89, 94 and 95, all bomb stores, and the foundations of brick buildings associated with Buildings 88, 89 and 93. Also extant to varying extents throughout the proposal site was the concrete trackway that formerly connected the various stores. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-515267

### **Garford, Millets Farm Cottages SU 4267 9623**

SIMONA DENIS

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief Millets Farm, Garford, during the groundworks for the construction of a house. During the works no archaeological features or finds were observed. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-505055

### **Great Haseley, Latchford House SP 65690 01465**

TOM GOULDBOURNE

John Moore Heritage Services carried out historic building recording during works to Latchford House, a Grade II listed building located to the south east of Great Haseley, Oxfordshire. Previous archaeological investigation has also been undertaken by JMHS, as detailed in previous editions of SMA. The recording was undertaken during the removal and replacement of the timber framed eastern facing first floor elevation; this belonged to the earliest phase of the building and formed a part of the jettied cross wing of a former hall house. The timber frame of the upper elevation had been subject to numerous modifications since construction in the 15th or early 16th century, however elements of the original structure remained extant, including arched braces, jowled main wall posts and a bressumer beam (Fig. 11). Later

modification involved insertion of large windows, which had resulted in the truncation of the tie beam and removal of the central part of the frame. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-511424

### **Langford, The Bell Inn SP 24878 02631**

ROBYN TRANTER

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Bell Inn, Langford. The purpose of the watching brief was for the monitoring of installation of replacement sewerage treatment plant and associated engineering operations. The watching brief aimed to identify the presence or absence of significant archaeological remains, with a particular focus on any evidence relating to known medieval earthworks shown on LiDAR, and to record any prehistoric and Roman remains identified. The presence of a single sherd of Roman pottery indicates that Roman activity appears to be present in the vicinity of the site. However, no features identified during this watching brief date to the Roman period. During archaeological monitoring a total of five ditches, a pit and two slumped deposits of material were recorded. The continuation of these ditches can be seen in the LiDAR imagery and appear to comprise an area of the Medieval settlement organised on a north east-south west/north west-south east aligned grid. Interpretation of the slumped deposits is somewhat limited, although they may indicate the presence of a holloway, possibly conforming to a linear feature running through the site on a north-east to south-west alignment. Most of these features contained artefactual material which appears to be Medieval in date, demonstrating modest domestic activity most probably associated with the nearby possible house platforms. Whilst the pottery types recovered are known to appear in the Saxon period, they are better dated to the 11-12th Century A.D. or after, providing a more likely date the site. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-519910

### **Long Hanborough, Land East of Hanborough Bowling Club SP 42267 13916**

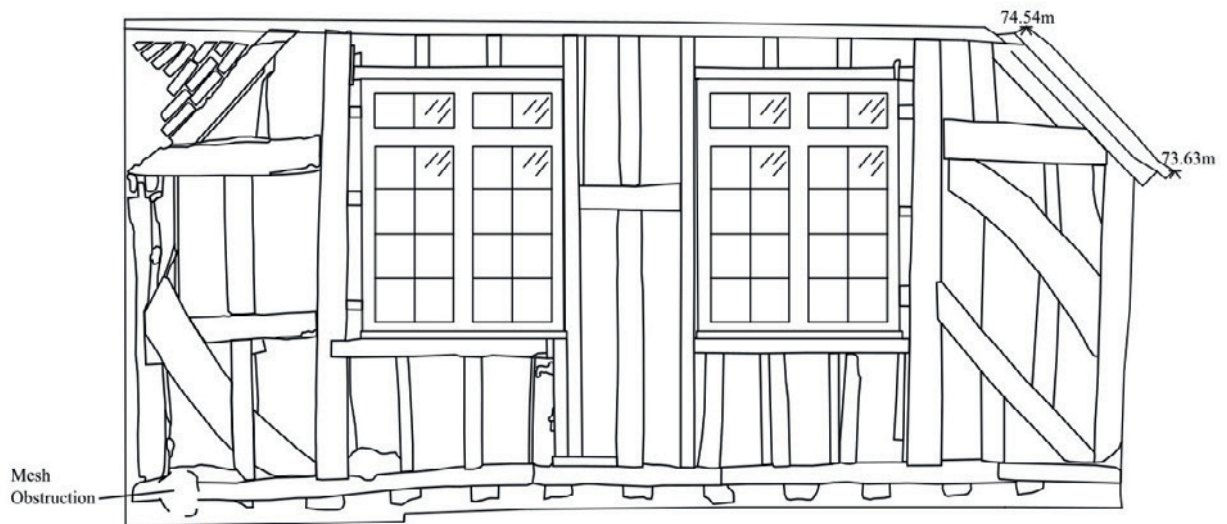
CHRISTOPHER WHITEHEAD and TOM GOULDBOURNE

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at land to the east of Hanborough Bowling Club, Roosevelt Road, Long Hanborough, Oxfordshire. The evaluation was part of the consideration of a planning application for the creation of a playing field with a WC. Seven evaluation trenches were excavated, throughout which several possible features were observed, which were deemed natural features upon testing. However, an undated linear ditch was uncovered within Trench 2, with a further ditch tentatively identified in Trench 1. A modern pit was also uncovered within Trench 4. No dateable evidence, or further archaeological features, were uncovered. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-519263

### **Long Wittenham, Northfield Farm Lane SU 5500 9423**

DR BRANDON BRAUN

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Long Wittenham Athletic Club during construction of an extension to the club building. The ground level reduction and excavation of footing trenches was monitored, however only modern and underlying natural deposits and were encountered. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-514901



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Latchford House, eastern elevation; elevation drawing and orthophoto

Figure 11: Great Hasely

**Milton, Blackbird Lane SU 48849 92269**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at Land off Blackbird Lane, Milton. A single evaluation trench was excavated across the site. A total of nine features were uncovered, including two ditches, two pits and five postholes. No datable artefacts were recovered from the features, however comparable features from other evaluations to the north and east of the site suggest a broad possible date range from the Bronze Age to medieval period. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-515715

**Oxford, Abingdon Road SP 5162 0479**

GRACE GRIFFITH

John Moore Heritage Services completed a historic building record of 178–184 Abingdon Road, formerly the Victoria Hotel, Oxford.

The original buildings of 178–180 and 182–184 Abingdon Road were constructed prior to 1854, and show evidence for multiple phases of alteration, extension, and development during the 19th–21st centuries. Multiple extensions have been added to the buildings, and the properties have been altered and extended to form one building, rather than four semi-detached dwellings. Most of the extensions have been added to the rear of the property; those that are road-facing have been constructed of similar materials and design aesthetics to the existing properties, which forms a cohesive elevation.

Furthermore, much of the interior of the building has been subject to large-scale refurbishment, in line with changing its use from private domestic dwellings to a hotel. This has removed or masked many of the original historic features, and it was not possible to determine the construction phase



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for many of the internal dividing walls. Historic features which remain include the original external walls of the properties; window apertures; blocked fireplaces and their associated chimney stacks; and evidence for internal walls constructed of lath and plaster.

The outbuildings, Buildings A-C, and the various extensions to the properties, were largely of 20th-21st century construction or re-fitting, therefore no features of historic value were identified in these outbuildings. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-515297

### **Oxford, Between Towns Road SP 5447 0410**

TOM GOULDBOURNE

A Historic Building Record was commissioned ahead of the demolition and redevelopment of 17–19 Between Towns Road, Oxford. Both buildings have their origins in the early 20th century and are testament to the growth of east Oxford during this time.

19 Between Towns Road was built in 1924 as the Cowley Conservative Club. The original building, of red brick with limestone detailing, comprised a central two storey pavilion with flanking single storey wings. The main elevation of the 1924 building, fronting Between Towns Road, remains legible. However, due to later alterations very little of the original internal layout, fixtures or fittings remain extant. Continual ad-hoc alterations and extensions to the building were made during the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s. The rooms of the current building are reflective of its use and include a bar, games room, skittles alley and concert hall, in addition to committee rooms and a kitchen. The building has not been subject to significant alteration since the 1970s and as such the internal decoration and fittings are predominantly of this period.

17 Between Towns Road originated between 1900 and 1920 as a two-storey dwelling, initially used as a post office and later a betting shop and hairdressers. Stylistically the building is typical of the Edwardian period, with mock timber framing and a prominent gabled bay window fronting Between Towns Road. Later unsympathetic alterations made during the 1960s have added substantially to the footprint of the building, though the form of the Edwardian building remains legible to some extent. Internally few original features remain extant. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-513495

### **Piddington, Piddington Training Area SP 6322 1697**

MAXWELL TALBOT

John Moore Heritage Services carried out a metal detector survey and archaeological watching brief at Piddington Training Area, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 63228 16977). The metal detector survey conducted prior to groundworks across the excavation areas only recovered modern materials. The groundworks consisted of the mechanical excavation of seven ponds; the only archaeological evidence recorded was identified in the excavations for pond 4, as a buried soil horizon of a likely 18th century date which was stratified over the remains of ridge and furrow. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-513669

### **Stanton Harcourt, Blackditch SP 4110 0574**

CHRISTOPHER WHITEHEAD, ALESSANDRO GUAGENTI

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Bungalow, Blackditch, Stanton

Harcourt, during excavation of foundation trenches and an area of ground reduction for the construction of two detached dwellings and associated parking area. During the archaeological observations, a single medieval ditch terminus was uncovered. It contained a single sherd of pottery that was dated to between the mid-11th and 14th centuries. The significant width and depth of the ditch terminus could suggest that it was a boundary ditch. However, as only a relatively small part of the terminus was uncovered, the true purpose of the ditch was uncertain. OASIS ID: johnmoor1\_513112

### **Tetsworth, Greenwood Cottage NGR not supplied**

ROBYN TRANTER

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Greenwood Cottage, 30 Silver Street, Tetsworth. The purpose of the watching brief was for the monitoring of archaeology during the excavation of footings trenches for the erection of a single-storey oak-framed dwelling. During the watching brief a topsoil deposit, made ground deposit and natural geology were observed. No archaeological features or deposits were observed, and no archaeological finds were recovered. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-521640

### **Wallingford, St Peters Street SU 60877 89408**

POVILAS CEPASKAS

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Cornerstone Cottage, St Peters Road, Wallingford, during the excavation of foundation trenches, underpinning trenches and associated service trenches for a single storey extension. Despite the position of the site within the Saxon and medieval town the investigations did not result in the discovery of any significant archaeological remains. OASIS ID: johnmoor1-515260

## **KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD**

### **Oxford, Garsington Road SP 5597 0423**

LAURA DODD

An Archaeological Evaluation at BMW UK Manufacturing Ltd, Garsington Road, Oxfordshire, was conducted by KDK Archaeology Ltd in December 2023 as a condition for planning permission for the construction of a new lorry park to the east of Roman Way. Six trenches were excavated across the site within the footprint of the proposed development and despite being in an area of high archaeological importance, no archaeological finds, features or deposits were encountered.

### **Witney, St Mary's Priory House, Church Lane SP36086 09652**

LAURA DODD

Between October 2023 and January 2024, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at Priory House, Church Lane, Witney, Oxfordshire in order to support an application for Scheduled Monument Consent and to inform a planning application for a single storey garden room. St Mary's Priory House is a Grade II\* listed building, and the site lies within the Scheduled Monument

of Cogges which includes the remains of a moated manor, priory, settlement, water mill, and fishponds (NHLE: 1016269). Four trenches were excavated within the footprint of the proposed extension, which revealed three sections of medieval limestone walling with a possible limestone threshold associated with the northeastern wall. In addition, two cut features that may pre-date the walls were exposed but not investigated further. These walls were located just below the modern topsoil, approximately 250mm below the current ground level, and are likely to be the remains of monastic buildings.

## **MOLA (MUSEUM OF LONDON ARCHAEOLOGY)**

**Deddington, Wimborn Close SP 460 320**

CHRIS MANKTELOW

MOLA was commissioned to conduct a geophysical survey of c.2.8ha of land off Wimborn Close, Deddington. The survey detected a few possible pits of uncertain date as well as evidence of medieval to early post-medieval ridge and furrow. Other features detected include a 20th century field boundary and north-west to south-east orientated medieval to early post-medieval ridge and furrow.

## **OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGY**

**Adderbury, Berry Hill Road SP 46920 34830**

JO MCKENZIE

Oxford Archaeology carried out an excavation at Berry Hill Road, Adderbury in September to October 2022. The focus of the excavation was to target an Iron Age settlement identified by a previous geophysical survey and evaluation.

Early prehistoric archaeological activity was represented by a possible Mesolithic blade, among a scatter of struck flint, most of which is probably late Neolithic or early Bronze Age. A pit containing 15 struck flints and a large deposit of charred barley was radiocarbon dated to the Beaker period.

There were three adjacent zones of Iron Age activity, densely populated with features and producing pottery of middle Iron Age date, and corresponding radiocarbon dates of 370–170 and 350–50 cal BC. There was no evidence for late Iron Age or Roman activity. The southern part of the site contained a large rectilinear enclosure aligned SW-NE with an open north-eastern end, containing several pit clusters, small gullies and occupation spreads (one covering many pits), and featuring a smaller sub-rectangular enclosure outside its southern corner. To the north-west of this was a triangular enclosure with deeper ditches and an eastern entrance, also containing numerous, generally clustered pits. A large occupation spread extended over the north-eastern enclosure ditch and other pits. Within the triangular enclosure two long ditches, one running parallel to the enclosure's southern edge, suggest internal division of activities. Both the rectilinear and triangular enclosure ditches were partly or wholly recut, confirming settlement of some duration.

East of the triangular enclosure, the third zone was bounded on the north by an east-west ditch and on the south and south-west by a ditch between the two larger enclosures but was open to the east and north-west. The ditches enclosed

several short curvilinear gullies, ditches, pit clusters and an occupation spread. Larger pits from all three locations show the classic flat-bottomed, steep-sided shape of Iron Age storage pits, and at least two stone-lined pits were recorded.

Despite the density of archaeological features, and the recovery of pottery, fired clay loomweights/oven bricks, slag, animal bone and charred plant remains, the presence of domestic structures at Adderbury could not be confirmed, with few postholes and, except for one small semicircular example, only short arcs of gully.

## **Appleford-on-Thames, Didcot Technology Park**

SU 52224 92078

GEORGE GURNEY

In December 2022, Oxford Archaeology carried out a 37-trench evaluation at the site of a proposed technology park. The purpose of the evaluation was to verify the preceding geophysical survey, which identified a potential Roman enclosure and other features.

In the western field, the evaluation confirmed the presence of Roman rural settlement features, dating to the 1st and 2nd century AD. These were located between two north-south aligned trackways. The trackways were created in two different phases, and probably linked the settlement to another one, located 0.5km to the north. The settlement itself was characterised by a series of rectilinear enclosures, which contained a very small number of discrete pits and postholes and contained areas of occupation layers. A single NE-SW-aligned burial was also recorded within one of the rectilinear enclosures, to the south of the evaluation area. Other than two postholes, no evidence of structures was recorded, and very little ceramic building material was recovered from site.

The finds recovered were predominantly of late Iron Age to early Roman date. No high-status objects were recovered from the site, which suggests that this was a low-status agricultural settlement, though one with some access to fine wares, due to its proximity to the Oxford pottery industry. Domestic ovens or kilns were attested by fragments of fired clay. Animal bones indicated the presence of cattle, sheep or goats, horse and pig, and evidence of butchery was recorded. Charred plant remains included wheat and barley.

In the eastern field, a post-medieval trackway ditch was recorded, as well as two undated ditches that may relate a trackway shown on historical maps.

## **Aston, Aston Children's Home SP 33938 03281**

KIRSTY SMITH

Oxford Archaeology undertook an excavation to the south of Back Lane in Aston, from August to November 2022. The excavation followed on from a two-trench evaluation in 2021. Most of the features recorded were ditches and pits, dating from the 11th century to the end of the 14th century. The floor and occupation layers of a building were also uncovered in the north-eastern part of the site. A small amount of residual prehistoric flintwork and a scattering of Roman pottery and metal finds were also recorded.

Three main phases of medieval activity were tentatively assigned from the pottery, Phase 1 dating from c 1050–1100, Phase 2 from c 1100–1250, and Phase 3 from 1250–1400. The site was divided by a succession of ditches, most aligned NW-SE and SW-NE parallel to Back Lane.



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The middle part of the site contained a zone of dense intercutting pits, which lay adjacent to and partly overlay the Phase 1 and Phase 2 ditches. These were bounded on the north-west by ditches of Phase 3, suggesting separation of the frontage of the medieval properties from the backyard containing the pits. No structures belonging to Phase 1 or Phase 2 were found.

In the north-eastern part of the main excavation area, a stone foundation marked the south side of a Phase 3 building. Structural remains comprised two floors, one of cobbles, the other of gravel, separated by an occupation layer, and with a hearth north-west of this. Stone-lined drains probably delineated the limits of the building on the west, although insufficient of the building survived to recover its overall dimensions or character. Pottery from the building was of late 13th and 14th century date, and a group of intercutting pits south-west of the drains contained domestic waste and were probably associated with the building.

### **Begbroke and Yarnton, Begbroke Innovation Centre** SP 48138 13281

DAVID KAY

Oxford Archaeology undertook two phases of trial-trench evaluation at the site of the proposed Begbroke Innovation District, an expansion of the existing Begbroke Science Park. Phase 1 of the trial trenching was undertaken from January to March 2023. This comprised 279 trenches which assessed the potential for the developable part of the site, and 119 of these contained archaeological features. Phase 2 comprised a further 86 trenches which were carried out between August and December 2023 and 45 of these contained features. This second phase assessed the areas which are proposed to be used as nature reserves, allotments, sports facilities, and public access routes. Both phases of evaluation were preceded by site-wide magnetometer and electromagnetic geophysical surveys. The site was divided into five areas: Area A comprised the western part of the site, Area B the eastern part, Area C the southern part, Area D the northern part and area E the south-eastern part.

Limited evidence for early prehistoric activity was found within the trenches, comprising a very small assemblage of worked flints that was widely scattered and mostly residual in later contexts. A pair of possible Bronze Age burial mounds was recorded in Area A, and these contained small assemblages of later Bronze Age pottery, but no human remains. A penannular ring-ditch located to the south of the possible barrows may represent a third such feature. Other late Bronze Age archaeology comprised two pit groups. In the north-western part of the site (Areas A and D) a dispersed Iron Age settlement was recorded, with features including a roundhouse and pit groups containing middle Iron Age pottery. Further to the east, a second larger area of Iron Age settlement and enclosure systems was found overlooking the Rowel Brook. This produced pottery indicative of occupation throughout the Iron Age, extending into the early Roman period.

The largest area of Iron Age settlement was located in Area E. It covered c 7.5ha, with activity concentrated across its northern extent. The majority of pottery dated from the middle Iron Age, with the site appearing to have been largely abandoned by the Roman period. Evidence for iron smithing

was recorded, including a slag deposit and a very rare find of a fragmented tuyère from an hearth or furnace.

Two areas (B and C) of intensive Iron Age and Roman settlement were located along the historic course of the Rowel Brook in the central and southern part of the site. The northerly settlement also extended eastwards into Area E, in the form of agricultural ditches. Both settlements produced ceramic evidence which suggested that they started life on a small scale in the early Iron Age. The main, most intensive period of activity on both sites was the middle to late Roman period. The farmsteads were linked with trackways which appear to be contemporary with the Roman settlements. There was some artefactual evidence that the network of trackways continued in use into the Anglo-Saxon period. Two east-west aligned inhumation burials found at a track junction are not securely dated but may be late Roman or Anglo-Saxon. Anglo-Saxon pottery was found in an enclosure ditch in an adjacent trench.

In the southern part of Area A, a rectangular enclosure of possible Anglo-Saxon date was discovered by magnetometer survey. Measuring c 20m long and 12m wide, it could enclose a hall-type building, although no postholes or other internal features could be discerned in the trench. The dating evidence is slight, but an Anglo-Saxon date is suggested by a fragment of a copper-alloy bucket rim from the enclosure ditch. Further rectilinear structures recorded 1.2km south-east (in Area E) may be of Anglo-Saxon date, based on morphological differences from the surrounding features, and similarities with Anglo-Saxon structures uncovered at nearby Yarnton. This interpretation remains highly tentative, pending further investigation.

### **Benson Relief Road SU 61179 92393**

DANIEL POND

Oxford Archaeology undertook a trial-trench evaluation in July 2022 at the site of a proposed relief road and associated works in Benson, including a flood compensation area. The evaluation identified the presence of a possible prehistoric boundary/field system in the south-western part of the site. This comprised two large parallel ditches on an NW-SE alignment (one of these contained prehistoric pottery and worked flint) and a smaller NE-SW aligned ditch. A north-south ditch was also recorded in the north-western part of the site, and this contained two fragments of Roman pottery.

### **Bucknell, Hawkwell SP 5705 2567**

CAMILLE GUEZENNEC and LEE SPARKS

Oxford Archaeology undertook a trial-trench evaluation on the site of a proposed residential development at Hawkwell in September-October 2023. A total of 47 trenches were excavated across the development area, and some of these targeted features identified by the preceding geophysical survey and from historic maps.

Ditches were recorded in the eastern and western parts of the site, which matched the position and alignment of field boundaries on later 19th century OS maps. Additional undated ditches were recorded, and these may have been contemporaneous. Small and abraded sherds of pottery were recovered from several of the ditch fills, indicating a Roman presence in the wider landscape.

**Culham SU 53033 95558**

MARK DODD and JOHN BOOTHROYD

Oxford Archaeology undertook a trial-trench evaluation from August to October 2022 at the site of a proposed residential development to the east of Culham. The evaluation comprised 156 trenches targeting the results of a geophysical survey. The works comprise the first of a two-stage programme of evaluation.

Upper Palaeolithic to early Bronze Age struck flints were recovered from the site, but no archaeological features could be dated to these periods. The flint assemblage includes a high percentage of fine tools and suggests significant activity during these periods.

Two foci of Iron Age activity were present, both comprising potential settlement sites with curvilinear ditches, attesting to the presence of roundhouses. Roman rectilinear enclosure systems accounted for most of the remains identified. Artefactual evidence suggests that the activity spans the whole period, but the pottery distribution suggests a shift of focus from the north of the site to the south. No direct evidence of structures of Roman date were identified beyond isolated postholes. The recovery of later pottery from ditches forming the enclosure systems suggests partial reuse during the Anglo-Saxon period but no focus of Saxon activity was identified.

**Dorchester-on-Thames, Manor Farm Road SU 57960 94324**

MARIUSZ I GÓRNIĄK

Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of two test pits in May 2023 prior to an extension at 14–18 Manor Farm Road. The site is situated c 150m to the east of the centre of Dorchester-on-Thames, close to the confluence of the Rivers Thames and Thame. The site is believed to lie outside the core of the Roman town, in the area between the medieval abbey buildings and their associated fishponds and is also within the grounds of the post-medieval Manor Farm.

The first test pit, on the north side of the present building, revealed no significant archaeology. The second test pit, on the west side of the present building, revealed a series of archaeological features including a ditch, a pit, a possible robbed-out wall and a clay surface, which were first visible at a depth of 1.0m. The associated artefacts suggest that these deposits were infilled in the post-medieval period, but they could have originated in the medieval period. The features appeared to be cut into a possible alluvial deposit towards the base of the trench, where river terrace deposits were exposed at a depth of 1.85m below ground level.

**Drayton St Leonard, Drayton House Farm SU 59702 96186**

KIRSTY SMITH

Oxford Archaeology undertook an evaluation, watching brief and small-scale excavation in 2023 at Drayton House Farm, on the southern side of the village of Drayton St Leonard. The evaluation and excavation stages in February to April 2023 revealed a series of intercutting ditches in the western part of the site, below the hardstanding associated with the farm. A smaller number of features were recorded in the central and eastern part of the site during the evaluation and subsequent watching brief. The central part of the site

had been heavily truncated by farm buildings and associated services.

An early Roman field system or possible stock enclosures were recorded in the western part of the site. The ditches were aligned NNE-SSW and roughly east-west. The alignments of these ditches were very similar to an extensive complex of cropmarks to the west, suggesting the fields were part of a larger field system and rural settlement. Environmental evidence recorded in these features included wheat, barley and large mammal bones.

Later Roman features included several field, enclosure and trackway ditches on differing alignments. These ditches were more substantial than those from the early Roman field system and contained later Roman pottery and a variety of animal bone and charred plant remains. The environmental evidence suggested a mixed economy with wheat, barley and oats grown and a variety of animal species including cattle, sheep, horse and pig.

A small number of medieval features were recorded in the eastern part of the site, including ditches aligned NE-SW and NW-SE and a few pits. The medieval features contained probable domestic and structural waste, including pottery dating from the late 11th–13th century, animal bone and medieval roof tiles. As with the Roman period, the environmental evidence suggested a mixed agrarian economy with wheat, cattle, sheep and pig dominant. Smaller amounts of other animal bones such as horse, chicken, pheasant, goose, cat and dog are suggestive of a farmstead or small holding. A well was recorded in the centre of the site, which contained medieval pottery and early post-medieval bricks. No structural evidence of a medieval or post-medieval farmhouse was recorded, although the presence of roof tiles and brick suggest that one or more buildings were located close to the site, perhaps adjacent to the track to the east.

**Gosford and Water Eaton, Oxford North PR6a**

SP 50744 11111

VICTORIA GREEN

Oxford Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation in December 2020 on the site of a proposed mixed development at Oxford North, just within the boundary of Cherwell District Council. A geophysical survey of the 32.3ha site carried out prior to the evaluation detected a small number of geophysical anomalies of possible archaeological origin. A total of 123 trenches were excavated across the site, both targeted on geophysical anomalies and to test blank areas.

Potentially the earliest features uncovered were three discrete features in the north of the site. These comprised single pits both containing Iron Age pottery, and a posthole containing early Iron Age pottery.

Within the centre of the site, a cluster of penannular geophysical anomalies also contained Iron Age pottery, fired clay and animal bone and are interpreted as roundhouses forming a small, potentially unenclosed settlement. This activity extended to the east with a further potential roundhouse gully, pits and a linear ditch all containing Iron Age material.

Two further penannular geophysical anomalies within the north of the site broadly corresponded to the location of two round barrows, noted from historic mapping and LiDAR imaging. The barrows were present in two trenches, with



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their surrounding ditches and parts of the internal mounds surviving. Within one of these trenches, a pit was sealed by the mound material. The pit contained cremated human bone and pottery; charred grain from the pit was radiocarbon dated to the late Bronze Age (1011–841 cal BC; SUERC-98223: 2790 ± 26 BP). Within the centre of the barrow, burnt charcoal-rich deposits overlay the mound material, and may represent *in situ* pyre material. A radiocarbon sample returned an Anglo-Saxon date (cal AD 575–646; SUERC-98219: 1458 ± 23 BP). A pottery vessel containing cremated human bone from an adult of unknown sex had been inserted into the possible pyre material. The vessel dated from AD 400–750 and exhibited fabric impressions and staining from an iron object, suggesting grave goods could remain within the barrow mound. Based on the recorded stratigraphy, and radiocarbon dating, the barrow may have been constructed in the late Bronze Age and reused in the early Anglo-Saxon period.

### Grove, Crab Hill (Stage 2) SU 40458 88726

JO MCKENZIE and MARTYN ALLEN

Oxford Archaeology undertook a second stage of excavation at Crab Hill, north of Wantage, in 2021. This followed on from the first stage of works which recorded an Iron Age and Romano-British settlement to the north and north-west of the site in 2018. The second stage of work revealed Iron Age, Romano-British and Anglo-Saxon features.

Within the main area of excavation, the Iron Age settlement was broadly of similar date to a settlement discovered during stage 1 to the north, being established in the early Iron Age and continuing through the middle Iron Age before its abandonment. Several areas were identified that possibly represent discrete zones of activity and/or habitation, with roundhouses, enclosures, pits and post-built structures all evident (Fig. 12).

A hiatus in activity during the late Iron Age was followed by the establishment of a large enclosure, probably sometime in the middle Roman period (c 2nd century AD). Only the

eastern side of the enclosure was revealed, represented by a long boundary ditch that was recut multiple times providing evidence of activity though to the 4th century AD. Several smaller, undated ditches probably formed internal divisions within the enclosure, which also contained two wells and an inhumation burial that were dated to the Roman period.

An Anglo-Saxon ditch, first discovered during the trial-trench evaluation of the site, was excavated along with a contemporary pit within a smaller excavation area to the north-west of the main area. There had been a suggestion that this ditch could have related to a putative late Anglo-Saxon deer-park boundary. However, the alignment of the ditch did not conform to this, while the material recovered from its fills suggested a much earlier date. The ditch was probably related to a nearby settlement.

### Little Haseley, Haseley Court SP 6450 0052

MARK DODD

In January 2023, Oxford Archaeology undertook a 27-trench evaluation in the grounds of the Grade I listed Haseley Court (NHLE: 1047539), which was built in the 14th/15th century and remodelled in the 18th century. The purpose of the evaluation was to verify geophysical survey results by targeting features, including potential prehistoric enclosures, and test areas shown to be blank.

The trenches exposed numerous curvilinear and rectilinear enclosure ditches, many of which corresponded with geophysical anomalies across the site, with several new features also coming to light, including pits and postholes. Evidence of early and/or middle Iron Age activity was identified from features across a wide area of the central-southern part of the site. Late Iron Age/Romano-British activity was fairly ephemeral, with a small number of pottery sherds identified from multiple locations and no clear settlement foci.

Evidence for late Saxon/medieval habitation was identified in the northern part of the site, where a widespread, ditched field system and enclosures were identified by the



Figure 12: Grove, Crab Hill An early to middle Iron Age post-built roundhouse

geophysical survey. Significant concentrations of 9th/10th to early 13th century pottery, animal bone and dumps of charred cereal grains were recovered from many of these ditches. This area of activity is located immediately to the east of the current settlement of Little Haseley. This suggests that the late Saxon/medieval settlement may have been originally located east of Thame Road, in an area which later became part of Haseley Court in the 14th/15th century.

#### **Lockinge, Wantage Eastern Link Road SP 4200 8857**

JO MCKENZIE and MARTYN ALLEN

Oxford Archaeology carried out a small excavation to the north of the A417, in advance of construction of a new link road. The excavation focused on a cropmark complex that was found to be the remains of a large, sub-oval, late Bronze Age hilltop enclosure. Pottery from the lower fills of the enclosure ditch dated to the late Bronze Age, while that from the upper fills dated broadly to the late Bronze Age/earliest Iron Age. An inhumation burial cutting into the top fills of the enclosure ditch was accompanied by an iron knife of possible Romano-British or Anglo-Saxon date.

#### **Middleton Stony, Dewar's Farm Quarry SP 5400 2480**

CHRISTOPHER BOOTH

Oxford Archaeology carried out a phased program of archaeological excavations between 2008 and 2022 within Dewar's Farm Quarry, in the parish of Middleton Stony. The excavations revealed extensive archaeological remains dating to the Neolithic, Iron Age and early medieval periods.

The Neolithic evidence included an isolated early Neolithic pit and a closely spaced group of 16 pits, one of which produced an early Neolithic radiocarbon date and another a quantity of middle Neolithic pottery. The Iron Age is evidenced by long-lived, possibly migrating, areas of settlement. Three main concentrations of settlement could be identified in the western, northern and southern parts of the site. The western and northern settlements were founded

in the earliest Iron Age, and the southern in the early Iron Age. There is a discontinuity of evidence at the northern area of settlement which may suggest abandonment in the early Iron Age and re-establishment in the middle Iron Age.

A NW-SE pit alignment divided the northern settlement from the other two. It was laid out in the earliest Iron Age and ran for c 700m across the site (Fig. 13). The southern portion of this pit alignment was recut as a ditch in the middle Iron Age, and the boundary it demarcated may have been visible into the late Iron Age. It is possible that this feature enclosed an area of c 170ha with the other edges of the enclosure being marked by two streams to the west and south. Another twin segmented ditch in the north-east corner of the site may have served a similar function on a smaller scale. Within the settlement areas were small groups of disarticulated human remains, as well as one infant burial which was radiocarbon dated to the middle to late Iron Age.

In the early medieval period, a nationally significant cemetery of 128 inhumation burials was interred in the north-west corner of the site. The cemetery included two significant and rare bed burials, one aligned north-south and the other east-west, the only known bed burials from Oxfordshire. One of the bed burials was radiocarbon dated to the 8th century, which may extend the established chronology of that burial rite in England. Such burial rites have been linked with aristocratic females and the adoption of Christianity in the mid- to late 7th century. The date of the cemetery, spanning the 7th, 8th and possibly 9th centuries, also makes it important as it is one of the very few large, fully excavated cemeteries in the county of this period.

#### **Minster Lovell, Burford Road SP 3066 1054**

STEVE LAWRENCE

Oxford Archaeology undertook a trial-trench evaluation on the site of a proposed residential development to the south of Burford Road, Minster Lovell, in April 2023. A total of 37 trenches were excavated, some of which were targeted to investigate features identified by the preceding



Figure 13: Middleton Stony, Part of the early Iron pit alignment which extended 700m across the site



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geophysical survey. Three small, shallow, circular pits were identified, two of which yielded small quantities of animal bone. A single pit also yielded two small sherds of pottery of probable 10-13th century date.

### **Nuffield, Nuffield Place SU 67857 87792**

JOHN BOOTHROYD

An archaeological watching brief was maintained during the installation of new sewage pipes around Nuffield Place. The work was undertaken in two stages, the first in May and June 2022 and the second in June 2023. Works comprised the excavation of trenches by both mechanical means and by hand. Archaeological remains were limited to a suspected 19th century brick-built soak away.

### **Oxford, Exeter College SP 51496 06386**

BELLE NEILSON

Oxford Archaeology undertook a historic building investigation and recording during the refurbishment of Exeter College library in 2022. The Grade II listed building (NHLE: 1046722) was designed by George Gilbert Scott in the Gothic Revival style and built between 1856–7. It forms part of his wider work at the college, which also saw an extension to the Broad Street range and the rebuilding of the chapel and rector's lodgings.

The library is formed of two contemporary ranges known as the Main Library and Annexe which are joined by the Link. Much of the refurbishment has focused on reworking unsympathetic alterations along with uncovering evidence of Scott's original design and intentions, which is significant as his plans have been lost. Most notable was fabric uncovered in the Link, which demonstrated that there was an enclosed passage between the ranges and that the arrangement of WCs shown on the 1876 Ordnance Survey Town Plan was probably original.

Several reminders of the largely undocumented workmen who built the library were also uncovered. Most notable was an exceptionally rare, complete clay tobacco pipe recovered from beneath the floor of the Main Library, which is contemporary with its construction and appears to have been deliberately placed. Graffiti in the form of names and dates was also observed both from the original workmen, and those who took part in the 1950s refurbishment.

### **Oxford, Frewin Hall SP 5120 0623**

STEVE TEAGUE

Oxford Archaeology undertook an excavation and watching brief on the site of a former garden to the south of Frewin Hall, Brasenose College, between July 2021 and May 2022. The excavations revealed a complex sequence dating to the Bronze Age, Roman, late Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval periods.

The fragmentary remains of an east-west aligned ditch and associated mound or earthwork (possibly part of a barrow) were recorded in the northern part of the excavation. Both were dated by optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) to the Bronze Age and may have been associated with the barrow cemetery known to have extended across much of modern central Oxford. Roman pottery and undated neonate remains were also recorded in the upper fills of the ditch and the mound.

The site is located in the north-west corner of the late Saxon burh and at least one sunken-featured building (SFB) was recorded (Fig. 14). Charcoal-rich deposits within this SFB were radiocarbon dated to the 9th century. Disarticulated human remains were found in an adjacent late Saxon pit and a medieval pit (containing 12th century pottery). Samples of human bone from the latter provided two 9th century radiocarbon dates, suggesting the human remains were residual in the medieval pit.

Throughout much of the medieval period, the site was used for the disposal of rubbish, as evidenced by dense clusters of inter-cutting pits. The finds and environmental evidence suggest low-status and largely domestic activity, despite documentary evidence suggesting that the site was located within a Norman urban manor. By the 14th century the site seems to have been divided into three plots, two of which contained the robbed remains of stone buildings with hearths or ovens, probably for domestic use, together with contemporary pits.

From 1435, at least part of the site was acquired by St Mary's College (a monastic college). A substantial east-west wall was recorded along the northern edge of the site, and this may have been a boundary wall associated with the college. To the south of the wall were the remains of largely robbed cellared structures that had been infilled between 1580–1610, some 40 to 70 years after the closure of the college during the Dissolution. The infill of these structures contained an exceptional assemblage of finds including pottery, glass vessels, window glass and animal bone suggesting it was derived from a high-status residence or institution near to the site. To the south were the remains of a boundary wall, stone latrine and pits, possibly the rear of a late medieval tenement fronting Shoe Lane. By the mid-17th century, the site became a walled garden owned by Brasenose College.

### **Oxford, Frewin Hall, Ground Source Heat Pump**

SP 5121 0626

MARK DODD

Oxford Archaeology undertook an evaluation and watching brief at Frewin Hall (part of Brasenose College) in September to October 2023. The works were undertaken as part of a proposed development which includes the installation of an external ground source heat pump array and under-floor heating. The combined investigations recorded a series of garden soils and other deposits that predominantly date to the early post-medieval period. These were probably associated with the demolition of St Mary's College and the subsequent construction of Frewin Hall in 1582. Beneath the external courtyard, the watching brief also revealed the brick foundations for an adjacent structure of probable 17th century date and a garden wall.

### **Oxford, St Giles SP 51125 06817**

JON GILL

Oxford Archaeology carried out an outline historic building assessment in 2023 at No. 40 St Giles in Oxford, a Grade II\* listed building (NHLE 1068575) owned by the University of Oxford, which is believed to have originally been constructed in the early 17th century. The assessment focused on a first-floor room in a rear range where the ceiling had partially collapsed, and options were being considered for its replacement.





Figure 14: Oxford, Frewin Hall, The partially excavated late Saxon sunken-featured building

The ceiling was evidently a secondary addition to the building, probably dating from the 19th century and of limited significance, but the rear range within which it is located is of considerable interest. It has previously been suggested that this range is of 17th century date and the current assessment supports this, although there is also evidence to suggest it could be earlier. The main evidence suggesting a potentially earlier date is apparent smoke blackening to the rafters above the secondary ceiling which may be due to this range originally having formed an open hall, with a hearth at the centre.

**Oxford, Godstow, Trout Island SP 48415 09246**

BERNADETTE RZADEK

Oxford Archaeology undertook recording and archaeological watching brief in 2022 during the replacement of Weir B in Godstow by the Environment Agency. Monitoring was also undertaken of Trout Island which is spanned by two sections of Little Godstow Bridge, a historic crossing over the River Thames. The bridge and Trout Island are located just north of the ruins of the 12th century Godstow Abbey (NHLE: 1021366; 1116388).

The weir, which dates from 1937, was recorded prior to the works. It was attached to the Grade II listed Little Godstow Bridge (NHLE: 1116442 and 1369373), and this was photographed following the dismantling of the weir. Investigation confirmed the medieval origins of the northern

part of Little Godstow Bridge (Fig.15) and the rebuilding of the southern part in 1892.

Archival research has shown that the garden on Trout Island was established at the turn of the 20th century and its historic form is shown in a number of historic photographs. The watching brief in the garden indicated that materials used in the construction or remodelling of Trout Island probably originated from the nearby Godstow Abbey.

**Oxford, High Street SP 51408 06188**

BELLE NEILSON

Oxford Archaeology undertook a historic building investigation and recording in 2021 during repairs to the timber frame of No. 131 High Street, Oxford. The building, which is Grade II listed (NHLE: 1047261) and owned by The Queen's College, Oxford, was thought to have an 18th century core, with an altered front, but the recording has found it to be principally of one phase, which probably dates from the mid-1830s.

The building has an irregular plan, but the exposure of the timber frame showed it to be of a single construction phase, including its brick east elevation and three roofs. It is a good example of late framing and is well-built, with joists integrated into the structure and primary iron ties reinforcing the corners and roof trusses. Tall and narrow softwood is used, and numerous Baltic timber marks were observed, this type of imported timber being commonplace by the 19th century.





Figure 15: Oxford, Godstow, Trout Island, The medieval northern span of Little Godstow Bridge and 20th century weir

**Oxford, Hythe Bridge Street, Beaver House SP 50701 06334**

DAVID KAY and ELIZABETH STAFFORD

Oxford Archaeology undertook an evaluation and watching brief in July 2023 on ground investigation boreholes at Beaver House, Oxford. The works were intended to include the excavation of a single evaluation trench, designed to investigate the possible location of the Rewley Abbey moat, previously mapped in the vicinity. Due to the presence of numerous services and restricted space it was not possible to excavate the evaluation trench. Instead, five purposive boreholes were drilled into the car park to evaluate the underlying deposits.

The resulting cores demonstrated significant truncation of the site in the areas investigated, resulting from various episodes of landscaping and construction since the 19th century. None of the deposits provided conclusive evidence for the presence of the Rewley Abbey moat. Shallow channel sequences were recorded beneath 19th to 20th century made ground deposits beneath the open car park adjacent to the Wareham and Castle Mill streams. Organic inclusions contained within these sediments are likely to have been reworked by fluvial processes and have limited potential.

**Oxford, St John Street SP 51049 06586**

BELLE NEILSON

Oxford Archaeology carried out a historic building investigation and recording, together with an archaeological watching brief, during the refurbishment of No. 59 St John Street, Oxford in 2022. The house is Grade II listed (NHLE: 1047113) and is owned by St John's College. It was built in the early 1830s as part of a leasehold development by

St John's College near the site of Beaumont Palace, a 12th century royal residence and later Carmelite Friary.

The houses on St John Street were intended for the middle class, such as the Margetts family, who were the first known occupants and lived at No. 59 for over fifty years. By the late 19th century, No. 59 was divided between two working-class households, and this reflected a wider decline in the social standing of the area. In the early 20th century, the house was used as a university lodging house and J. R. R. Tolkien boarded here as an undergraduate.

The refurbishment exposed fabric throughout No. 59 that has aided in the understanding of its development, particularly elements that were supposed to remain hidden, such as the extensive use of brick, limestone rubble and narrow timbers to economise on material costs. The original position of the basement partitions was also revealed, along with evidence for previous decorative schemes, some of which can be attributed to the Margetts family. The original extension structure was exposed and provided a typical example of late timber framing.

The garden excavation uncovered evidence for the earlier development of the site. A pit filled with construction waste and a fragment of medieval high-status roof tile may be associated with the Carmelite Friary. Other features related to No. 59 and its extension, including foundations and two soakaways.

**Oxford, Norham Gardens (SP 51515 07532)**

BELLE NEILSON

Oxford Archaeology undertook a historic building investigation and recording in 2023 at No. 17 Norham Gardens, Oxford, a detached house constructed in 1874,

as part of a leasehold development by St John's College. It is presently used by St Edmund Hall for student accommodation.

An Anglican theological college occupied No. 17 Norham Gardens between 1919–80. This recording principally focused on a chapel constructed in 1926, called St Stephen's House. The chapel was being demolished as part of a redevelopment at the site.

Despite being converted for secular use in 1980, the chapel retains numerous features which are illustrative of its former use, including a donation box, statue niche, holy water stoups and a piscina. A carving of a crucifix and wreath set in the south wall of the chancel extension may have been relocated from the first building occupied by St Stephen's house, when it was demolished in the 1930s.

#### **Oxford, Nuffield College SP 50994 06265**

BERNADETTE RZADEK

Oxford Archaeology undertook building recording works in 2023 at Nuffield College, Oxford prior to a programme of alteration works to the Grade II listed college (NHLE: 1278775). Nuffield is one of Oxford University's youngest constituent colleges, having been constructed in the post-war period (1949–60). Due to the nature of the contracted refurbishment work, the building recording was focused on selected areas of the exterior and interior of the building at the basement, ground floor and first floor levels. As a result of the works, two rooms in the basement, 11 rooms on the ground floor of the Lower College, 25 rooms on the ground floor of the Upper College and one room on the first floor of the Upper College were recorded.

#### **Oxford, Oxford Business Park, Trinity House SP 5490 0393**

TAMSIN JONES

In November 2023, Oxford Archaeology undertook a four-trench archaeological evaluation at Trinity House, Oxford Business Park. The trenches were excavated across the carpark of Trinity House to assess the impacts of the former Cowley works and previous office buildings that were present at the site. The trenches confirmed significant disturbance of the natural sequence across the area. The level of truncation identified within the trenching would suggest there is very limited archaeological potential at the site.

#### **Oxford, Pusey Lane SP 5108 0663**

ROBIN BASHFORD and BEN FORD

In June 2023, Oxford Archaeology conducted an archaeological watching brief on thirteen geotechnical test pits in the garages and behind the buildings along the west side of Pusey Lane and in the basements of Nos 19 and 20 St Johns Road, Oxford.

Several features were filled with a locally known redeposited loess, which suggests they date from the prehistoric to Saxon period. It is possible that some of these deposits may be associated with prehistoric barrows or monuments that survived as extant earthworks into the post-medieval period.

An 18th century ground level (the only horizon to be dated by artefacts) was also identified from two deep pits, with a possible occupation and/or construction surface

nearby. Other undated features were cut from this level and are probably contemporary, whereas features cut from lower levels are earlier, and may be medieval.

#### **Oxford, Roman Way, BMW Group SP 56189 04288**

PAUL MURRAY

Oxford Archaeology undertook archaeological monitoring in 2017 during alterations to an existing carpark at Roman Way, Oxford. The archaeological work predominantly comprised monitoring the reduction of tarmac surfaces and excavations for an inspection chamber and soak away. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded, although the majority of the works did not impact any potential archaeological horizons. It appears that the site had undergone significant landscaping, including the construction of a concrete and brick bedding layer for the existing car park.

#### **Oxford, University Parks SP 5157 0730**

HANA LEWIS

Oxford Archaeology carried out an archaeological watching brief in August 2023 during ground reduction works associated with the rerouting of the public footpath and badger proofing of the Cricket Pavilion, University Parks, Oxford. Two trenches were monitored and one of the trenches contained four pits, two ditches, two postholes and two possible ditches or natural features. Two pits were dated as Iron Age and another as medieval. Several of the features partly match features previously identified as cropmarks. The other trench was devoid of archaeology and had been heavily disturbed by modern activity.

#### **Oxford, Winchester Road SP 5105 0747**

MARK DODD

Oxford Archaeology undertook a trial-trench evaluation in February 2023 in the rear gardens of properties facing Winchester Road, Bevington Road and Banbury Road, Oxford. The work was undertaken for a proposed student residential development.

A total of 12 trenches were excavated within the available rear garden spaces. No archaeologically significant features were encountered, although a series of quarry pits and larger-scale quarry areas were recorded. Artefacts recovered from the fills of these consistently dated to the late 18th to early 19th century, preceding the construction of the extant Victorian houses. Localised areas of undisturbed gravel terrace overlain by brickearth-type or 'supra-natural' deposits were present within the northern part of the site, indicating some potential for archaeological deposits to survive.

#### **Oxford, Wycliffe Hall SP 5117 0739**

ROBIN BASHFORD

Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief in August 2023, on ground investigation works at Wycliffe Hall, Banbury Road. The works comprised the excavation of several soakaway trenches, geotechnical test pits and boreholes.

Monitoring of these excavations revealed evidence for widespread quarrying across the site during the early 19th century, except in the southern and north-eastern parts of the site. There was a low density of archaeological remains



## Oxfordshire

recorded in the areas unaffected by quarrying. These were limited to an undated possible pit in the north-east area and a shallow ditch of mid- to late 17th century date in the southern area. The ditch may relate to a windmill which is recorded as having stood in this area in the early 17th century.

### Wallingford, Wantage Road SU 59489 90620

THOMAS BRUCE

In July 2023, Oxford Archaeology undertook a trial-trench evaluation adjacent to Purely Plants, Wantage Road, Wallingford. Much of the site comprised a former sand and gravel quarry in use during the first half of the 20th century, which has subsequently been infilled with landfill.

The only archaeological remains found during the trenching were a shallow curvilinear ditch and a north-west to south-east aligned ditch. Both were located in the southern part of the site and neither yielded any artefactual evidence. The curvilinear ditch has been tentatively interpreted as a possible Iron Age ring gully associated with a roundhouse due to the presence of similar Iron Age features in the wider landscape. It was very shallow and indistinct and may not be an archaeological feature at all. It is possible that the undated linear ditch is related to a middle Bronze Age field system previously excavated to the south of the site.

## OXFORDSHIRE BUILDINGS RECORD

DAVID CLARK

Twelve buildings were recorded in 2023, the small number partly reflecting the winding-down of our projects in the north of the county. The results of this work will appear in Volume XXI of the Oxfordshire Victoria Country History, due to be published in 2024. An account of one of the houses studied is given below.

One important recording task was to understand the development of the almshouses at Lyford, and a report on

this can be seen below. In addition, private houses were recorded in Abingdon, Chipping Norton, Eaton, Hardwick and Wallingford. We were also asked to report on some historic fragments – two walls in Oxford (one possibly part of a former Oseney Abbey building) and some architectural salvage belonging to the National Trust at Coleshill. We also made records of two buildings scheduled for demolition – the Ferry Boat House in Abingdon and 34 Davenant Road, Oxford. In the case of the former we were able to record the building before and during demolition and create a record of its various uses over a hundred-year period. The latter is one of several houses near Oxford designed by Clough Williams-Ellis at an early stage in his career as an architect which have been studied using documentary sources to determine who his clients were and how he obtained his commissions. Others were in Oxford and Boar's Hill, Cumnor Hill, Cumnor village and Eynsham. An article on this is due to appear in *Oxoniensia* Vol. 89 (2024)

Reports on all these buildings will be available in due course at the Oxfordshire History Centre.

Our research project to record Inscribed Dates on buildings has continued to add to our collection, and as of December 2023 there were almost 1500 dates on the database. This is available for viewing on the OBR website: [www.obr.org.uk](http://www.obr.org.uk) or by scanning the QR code.



### Chipping Norton, Spring Street SP 31347 27263

PAUL CLARK

1–5 Spring Street (Fig. 16) is an unlisted building situated at what was probably the north-west corner of Chipping Norton Market Place, before infilling with what is now Middle Row, on the junction with Church Street, Market Street and Spring Street (Fig. 17). The location comprises mostly residential dwellings, the facades of which all



Figure 16: Chipping Norton, 1–5 Spring Street, view from south east

now present a typical eighteenth or nineteenth century streetscape.

The building today houses two dwellings in a 2½-storey, three-bay main range parallel to the street and a two-storey single-bay south range to its left. Both ranges are constructed in local limestone with tile and grey-slate roof covering.

The two ranges have undergone significant rebuilding since the eighteenth century with the south range new or substantially replaced. Within the main range two roof trusses, purlins, evidence for wind braces and some first-floor structure survive from a fifteenth-century building. Dendrochronology has shown that the roof timbers were felled between AD 1444–1477 which suggests construction occurred before 1479. The two roof trusses are coeval but have a dissimilar configuration, with the northern truss fully framed with a tie beam, while the southern truss is of the raised cruck form (Fig. 18). There may have been a third roof truss at the south end, although in keeping with the traditional Chipping Norton form, there was probably a stone gable end, as is also proposed at the north end. The north truss remains fully closed with stud and plaster infill from first-floor level up to the attic, the only opening being a Tudor-arched doorway which may be a later insertion, although evidence is inconclusive. Mortices and purlins on the north side show this bay was part of the primary main range although the presence of smoke blackening indicates the bay was once an open hall.

Not only is the interior of the building quite wide at 5.9m (19'5") but incorporation of a raised cruck truss is most unusual for Chipping Norton as all other contemporary buildings so far discovered use fully-framed roof trusses. Its use here suggests there was a need to do without a tie beam which, when associated with the contemporary first floor, suggests this may have been a first-floor meeting room.

If this was the case, two possible uses for the building present themselves, when accounting for its prominent location on the corner of Market Place and Church Street, the route to the town's church.

One is that this was a Church House, a building for the holding of 'Church Ales' and other meetings. Such buildings often have a large first-floor room with other spaces for almsmen or priests, and a kitchen with Brewhouse in or near the building. Similar buildings are known in the region such as Church End in Somerton, also with an adjacent open hall (OBR 128). The 'Courthouse' at Long Crendon was probably a church house as was the 'Old Manor' at Sunningwell (OBR 86). However, these are all in villages rather than towns and no documentary evidence for a Church House in Chipping Norton has yet come to light.

An alternative use is that the building was constructed as the original Guildhall for the Guild of the Holy Trinity at Chipping Norton, founded in 1450, a date which coincides well with the dendrochronology date for the building. 1450 also saw the founding of the grammar school, run by the guild, which may have shared the premises in the early years. By 1520/21 a new Guildhall, (OBR 468), occupying a much more prominent location in the Market Place (Fig. 17), had been built. Documentary evidence follows in 1530, recording 1–5 Spring Street being sold as a house.

There is no evidence of early windows lighting either floor of the fifteenth-century building, suggesting that the stone walls have probably been substantially rebuilt or refaced, and with the south end lacking any primary evidence, we can only speculate what the original access arrangements may have been. The Tudor-arched doorway, if primary, does offer a solution, but as stairs would have risen within the open hall, this may have been a service doorway rather than the principal entry. If inserted, the doorway probably relates



Figure 17: Chipping Norton, 1–5 Spring Street (marked red) at the corner of Chipping Norton Market Place. Adapted from a plan of circa 1840, courtesy of Chipping Norton Museum



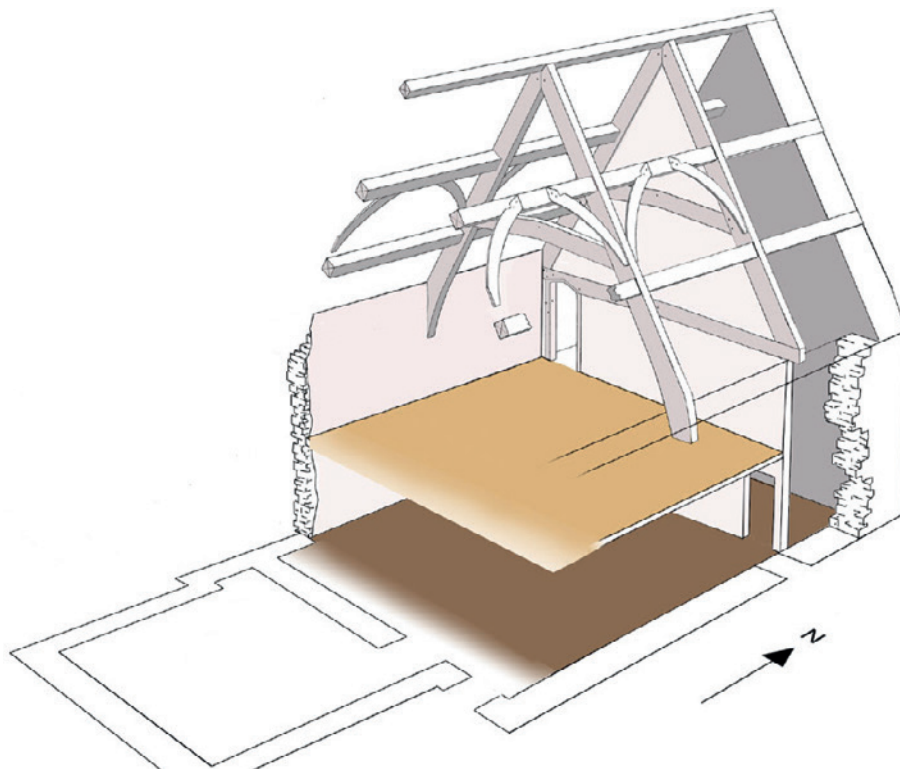


Figure 18: Chipping Norton, 1–5 Spring Street, View from south east with external stone wall removed for clarity

to the flooring over of the north bay when the building was converted to a house. However, the present entrance and stair to the first floor of 1 Spring Street are at the south end of the main range, which could reflect a primary arrangement. The present access to No 5 from Spring Street might also reflect a medieval entrance, perhaps serving the kitchen as well as the rest of the ground floor. The present doorway through to the north bay is a later opening.

Unfortunately, with such a large proportion of the fifteenth century building lost, including all the south end, several salient features have had to be assumed; principally the length of the north and south bays, the extent of the first-floor structure and the presence of curved wind braces which are based upon local contemporary styles. We could also speculate that the primary entrance of the present Guildhall, stylistically dating to either 1450 or 1520, (OBR 468), came initially from 1–5 Spring Street. Such an entrance would probably have presented to Church Street and the Market Place. Its removal from the building might explain why little, if any, of the south end of the building survives.

A significant feature which does survive is a rare example of a slip tenon in the apex of the north framed truss (Fig. 19). This form of joint is usually reserved for the apex of cruck trusses but two other examples have also been found in roughly coeval framed trusses in Chipping Norton, at 8 Market Street (OBR 243) and at 3 Middle Row (OBR 328). The 1–5 Spring Street example could provide a link to the more usual cruck lineage as it's the only example which can be associated with a cruck form of truss.

Research into 1–5 Spring Street and other vernacular buildings in Chipping Norton was carried out by the Chipping Norton Buildings Record, an associate of Oxfordshire Buildings Record, as part of Historic England's Early Fabric in Historic Towns project. Historic England provided funding for the dendrochronology

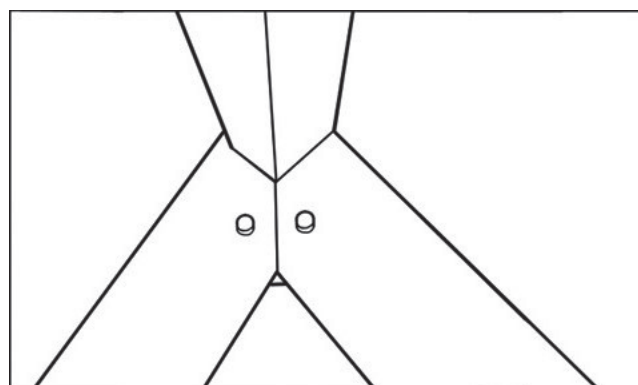


Figure 19: Chipping Norton, 1–5 Spring Street The apex of the north truss with a slip tenon connecting the two principal rafters

#### **Lyford, Ashcombe Almshouses SU 39213 94281**

DAVID CLARK

The picturesque group of almshouses in Lyford (Fig. 20) is described in the National Heritage List for England (no. 1368559) as dating from 'about 1760–70'. Our survey of them in 2023 showed the position to be quite different. Their initial foundation was by way of an instruction in the Will of Oliver Ashcombe, written and proved in 1611, in which he left funds for '...tenne poore men or women in an Almshouse to be built for that purpose in the Close...' However, later generations of Ashcombes do not seem to have taken their charitable responsibilities seriously. In the seventeenth century they were investigated four times by the Commissioners for Charitable Uses for mismanagement of the almshouses and non-payment of charitable monies. The affairs of the charity went before the Court of Chancery three times in the period from



Figure 20: Lyford Almshouses

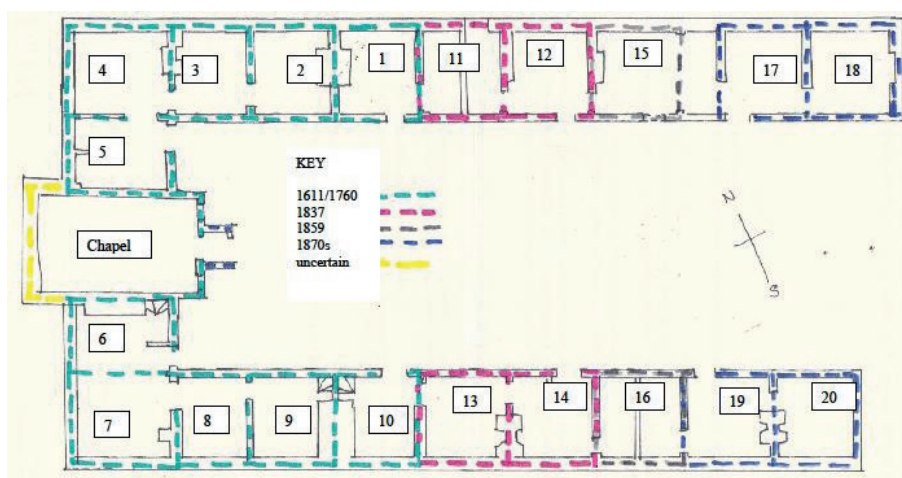


Figure 21: Lyford Almshouses, – suggested phasing

1711 to 1756, when the court appointed new trustees. Indeed the 1909 report of the Parliamentary Inquiry into charities noted that “it was not until December 1636 that the almshouses were completed at a cost of £240, and occupied.”

Our survey aimed to discover whether any of the 1636 building survived, and how and when it had been extended from the original 10 dwellings to the 20 visible in Fig. 1. The latter question was relatively easy to answer. The earliest units were those now at the western end of the courtyard to either side of the central chapel. A printed notice dated 13 June 1836 invited tenders for ‘six or eight additional almshouses’, and having acquired the extra land needed, four units were built in 1837, extending each of the wings by two units. In 1859 one more was added to each wing. The final four units were built in 1871, bringing the total up to 20. At the north wing, however, a passageway was created between the new units and the old – thus it extends about a metre further than the south wing, which did not have such a passage. Since then, improvements – such as the addition of toilets and kitchens in the 1950s – required amalgamation of some of the units and today there are seven separate cottages.

It was clear that considerable care was taken in each of the nineteenth-century additions to ensure that the style of the earlier units was followed. The brickwork is all in Flemish Bond, and the ground floor windows of the units

facing the road (to the south-east) seem to have been moved successively eastwards with each addition, as the casement with its distinctive quadrants stays is a feature from the late C17 or early C18.

The central unit at the rear is now a chapel, but its fittings suggest that this use dates only from the late C19 – the original intention was for a hall and prayer room, the vicar of the local church being charged with catering for the spiritual needs of the almspeople. In the event we were unable to come to a definitive conclusion as to whether any of the 1636 buildings survived – there was certainly no fabric unequivocally of that date – though it is possible that the C18 buildings were built on earlier foundations. Figure 21 shows the likely development phases of the almshouses.

## OXFORD CITY COUNCIL: ARCHAEOLOGY IN OXFORD CITY 2023

DAVID RADFORD, OXFORD CITY COUNCIL ARCHAEOLOGIST

This year saw a slightly reduced volume of fieldwork in comparison to previous years, nevertheless, a number of significant sites were investigated. In the suburb of Cowley there was a rare opportunity to investigate the periphery of a Roman pottery manufacturing area at the former Conservative Club site on Between Towns Road. Another





Figure 22: Christ Church, previously unrecorded Tudor polygonal tower from above

notable feature of the year was the impact of higher-than-average rainfall which created challenges for the excavation of certain sites, for example the investigation of part of the Oseney Abbey precinct at Gibbs Crescent and that also resulted in management issues for the ridge and furrow earthworks in South Park where public events are hosted. Elsewhere several small but significant discoveries were made as a result of evaluation and watching brief work. Some of the more notable discoveries are summarised below:

#### **A selective summary of 2023 fieldwork projects**

In January trial trenching was undertaken by OA at the Gibbs Crescent development site which sits over the southern end of the precinct of Oseney Abbey. The work revealed a stone-lined water channel with in-situ timbers located beyond the walled precinct and the wall of another possible stone-lined channel within the precinct. Further targeted excavation was undertaken between February and May that identified the line of the abbey precinct wall and surfaces and walls representing intra-mural buildings and working areas.

In April and May building recording work was undertaken by Graham Keevill, the Cathedral Archaeologist, during renovation works to the Deanery roof at Christ Church. The works revealed an unexpected void and curving wall of well-cut ashlar that encased the remains of a previously unrecorded Tudor polygonal tower (Fig. 22).

In August an excavation was undertaken at the former Conservative Club site at Between Towns Road by Southampton Archaeology. The site is located just to the east of the likely focus of a Roman pottery manufacturing compound at St Luke's Road, where kilns, stone built drying ovens and clay lined pits have previously been recorded. The Conservative club site revealed several features of interest including enclosure ditches, pits and a clay dump of 4th century date. Significant amounts of pottery were recovered from waste pits on the western edge of the site (Fig. 23), one of the recovered pottery sherds had an illiterate stamp.

Between August and September an evaluation was undertaken in the northern garden of Trinity College by TVAS prior to the determination of an application for a new grid of ground source heat pumps in the gardens. The



Figure 23: Decorated Roman pottery from the former Conservative Club site, Oxford

evaluation recorded a number of pits and ditches likely related to medieval tenement activity on the Parks Road frontage along with a range of features that relate to 17th and 18th century garden schemes.

The year saw the completion of a number of historic building recording projects, including the recording of a stone-built ruin at Osney Marina that may retain some medieval fabric and be associated with Osney Abbey, the early 20th century Conservative Club at No. 19 Between Towns Road and the 1830s timber frame of No 131 High Street. As part of the package of recording undertaken in relation to the conversion of the Boswells department store into a hotel Chronicles Storytelling have compiled a series of over 50 interviews with staff and customers capturing the social history of the well-loved Oxford store. These can be listened to here: <https://vimeo.com/showcase/7841250>.

#### Other news

The Urban Design and Heritage Team has commenced a project to accession records from the National Record of the Historic Environment onto the Oxford Historic Environment Record. So far, the process has largely involved the accessioning of duplicate records however there have been a few surprises, for example a geophysical survey from 2005 at Magdalen College Cloister that identified a large rectangular structure within the quadrangle on an east-west alignment.

Notable outreach and public benefit outcomes over the year include an outreach leaflet has been produced by Museum of London Archaeology detailing the results of the excavations at New College School in 2020 and featuring a reconstruction illustration of the Royalist defences. Following the completion of Rhodes House redevelopment the Royalist rampart is now visible and signposted from the public realm at both New College Music Room and Rhodes House.

## SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL GROUP

**Thrupp, nr Faringdon, Smokedown Farm SU 30322 98851**

BILL ANNAN

During the summer of 2023 more than fifty volunteer members of SOAG carried out a seven-week programme of further geophysical survey and excavation at this Late Iron Age/Romano-British site in the Upper Thames Valley.

Resistivity surveys carried out in 2022/23 revealed the outline of a double-corridor villa overlying an aisled building at its northern flank together with a rectangular single-spanned building to the north-east following the line of the inner perimeter ditch of the underlying Late Iron Age enclosure. The resistivity image shows the aisled building with six roof supports to the north but only three to the south, where the outline of the aisled building is overlapped by the northernmost rooms of the corridor villa.

Two trenches were positioned with the principal objective of investigating the sequence and relationship of these northern buildings. The largest trench, Trench 9 (Fig. 24), revealed elements of both the aisled building (Fig. 24, indicated by the blue, green, and black lines) and the northern rooms of the villa (Fig. 24, indicated by the red lines).

Two of the three southern post-holes of the aisled building were found in the north-east area of the trench (PH2 and PH3), both appearing to have been capped off (the third being just outside the trench to the east). There were indications of a possible floor surface, albeit very thin and broken-up, in the area around the post-holes.

On the assumption that as a standalone structure the aisled building would have had six roof supports on each side, sections were cut through the northern villa wall for evidence of further southern post-holes beneath it. Evidence



## Oxfordshire

was found for two post-holes in expected locations (PH5 and PH6) but no evidence was found for the third – in its expected position an earlier undisturbed gully was found beneath the villa wall.

Part of the southern wall of the aisled building was found in the south-east corner of Trench 9. It comprised two walls in parallel with rubble packing between them. The inner (northern) wall (depicted by the blue lines on Fig. 24) had been robbed out to the west, but a channel through the clay indicated that it originally continued until it was supplanted by the later villa structure. However, the outer (southern) wall does not seem to have continued to the west beyond the extent of the green lines shown on the trench photograph – the mortared wall to the west with a similar alignment is the northern end wall of the villa eastern corridor, with no evidence of any earlier walls beneath. The explanation for this partial double wall arrangement is not yet clear. There is no evidence of subsidence or other structural issues which would have required shoring up or replacement, so there may have been a structure above which required support. It is hoped that further excavation in 2024 might shed some light on the arrangement.

The second trench, Trench 10 (Fig. 25), included the easternmost of the six northern post-holes revealed by the resistivity survey (PH7) together with a further smaller and shallower post-hole close to it to the east (F1), not shown by the resistivity image, but presumably an additional roof support.

Trench 10 revealed only the barest evidence for the northern wall of the aisled building, namely a scatter of a few limestone pieces above a likely construction or robber trench. (shown edged purple on Fig. 25). The alignment of this feature matches that of the southern wall, albeit they suggest a wall construction much less substantial than that of the southern wall. No trace was found of the eastern end wall of the aisled building.

The possible remnants of a gravel and mortar floor surface in the north-east corner of Trench 9 and the absence of floor tiles or other flooring materials in the vicinity combine to suggest that the aisled building probably had a basic untiled floor. Similarly, the absence of roofing materials in the vicinity suggest that it would have had an un-tiled roof. Fragments of painted plaster near the southern wall indicate the presence of some simple wall colouring, predominantly dark red or dark red stripes.

The imprint of the villa over the aisled building indicates that user of the aisled building must have ceased at the latest by the time of the construction of the northernmost room of the villa. It is hoped that the post-excavation finds analysis may provide some dating indicators and it is proposed to carry out some further excavation of the aisled building in 2024. Trench 9 also included the northernmost room (Room B) and part of the adjoining room (Room A) of the corridor villa.

The variations in the construction and dimensions of the various walls clearly indicate that this part of the villa was constructed in several phases. Room B is a later extension, and it also appears that the western corridor was added or itself extended with this extension. This contrasts with the walls found in 2022 in the central part of the corridor villa, where there was no evidence of more than a single phase.

Room B contained the remnants of an oven (Fig. 26), surrounded by fragmented traces of a possible floor surface.

As well as charcoal and ash, the oven's cavity was filled with a mixture of tile, wall plaster (including twenty fragments of painted plaster), mortar and other material indicative of tumble seemingly arising from the collapse of the adjoining structure, indicating that the oven was contemporary with the final phase of the villa. This included a tegula which can be dated to the period 240–380 CE.

The tegula found in the oven and other ceramic roof tiles found in the locality indicate that the Room B extension likely had a ceramic roof – in contrast to the main part of the villa where the evidence is that the roofing comprised limestone tiling. Coinage and pottery finds generally show an emphasis on the later-3rd and 4th Centuries for the villa, but further excavation and the post-excavation work may gradually build a more specific timeline.

Trench 10 also revealed substantial walls (Fig. 25 shown edged red) forming the south-west corner of the rectangular single-span building lying to the north-east of the villa and following the line of the Late Iron Age enclosure inner perimeter ditch. The imprint of these walls over the aisled building.

A third trench revealed the outline of a possible well, yet to be further investigated. We continued our magnetometry survey of the wider field which is continuing to reveal the large and complex field system surrounding the settlement. A further programme of excavation and geophysical survey is planned for 2024.

### **Possible Late Saxon Enclosure and Other Studies at Wyfold Grange, Rotherfield Peppard**

DAVE CARLESS

#### *Abstract*

In 2022 and 2023 a wide-ranging archaeological investigation was undertaken by South Oxfordshire Archaeological Society at Wyfold Grange in the Oxfordshire Chiltern Hills. The initial motivation for the study was to excavate and try to date the substantial earthwork at the site, and this was shown to have once been a complete ditch and bank enclosure. By radiocarbon dating of a charcoal sample recovered from a secure context a *terminus post quem* in the late Saxon period was established. Possible interpretations of this result are discussed.

In addition to the work on the enclosure, further excavations of more recent features were undertaken and, along with some historical analysis, the post medieval development of the site was assessed. A broad programme of landscape studies was also completed to help place Wyfold Grange in its broader environment and an archaeological walk in the area was developed.

#### *Excavations of the Earthwork*

The earthwork (centred on SU 68840 81640) is well known and clearly shown on the 1897 Ordnance Survey 25" map (Fig. 27) but has never before been investigated archaeologically. In the present study, the northern half of the earthwork, which is largely intact, was sectioned by an 8.4m long trench and shown to be a ditch and bank, now eroded to a total height of 2.95m. No datable material was found in this trench.

A second trench (10m length) was excavated across the suspected line of the southern half of the enclosure. This confirmed the presence of a ditch, now filled with apparent

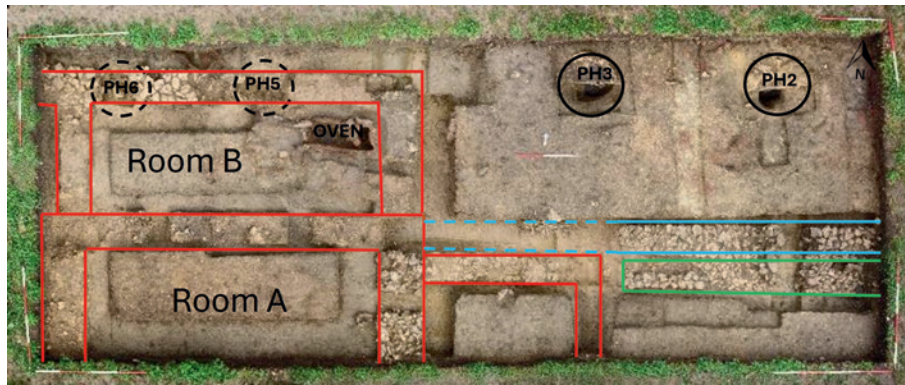


Figure 24: Thrupp, Smokedown Farm, Trench 9

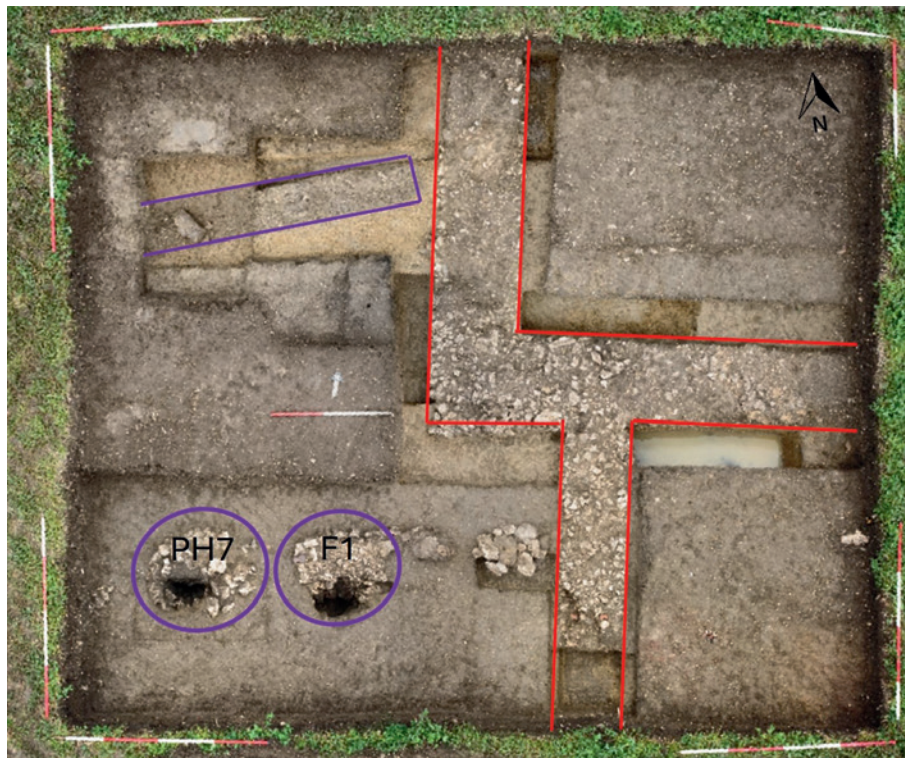


Figure 25: Thrupp, Smokedown Farm, Trench 10



Figure 26: Thrupp, Smokedown Farm, Oven in Room b, Trench 9



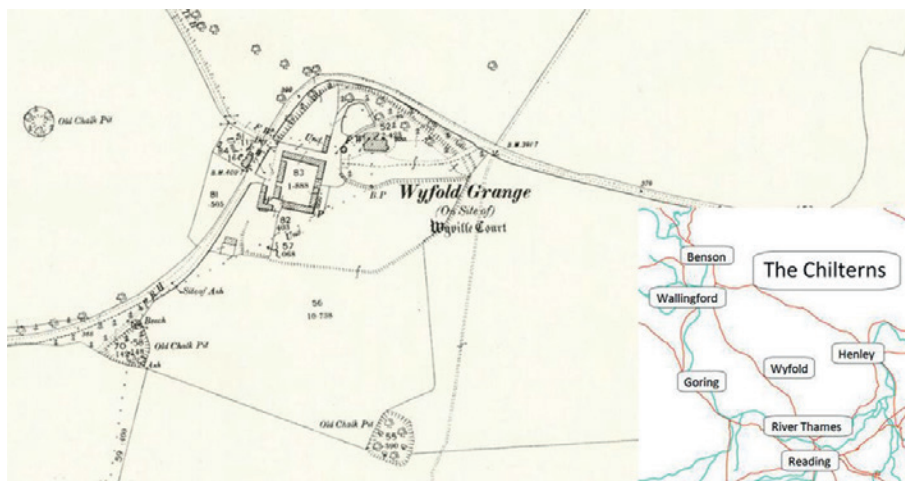


Figure 27: 1898 OS 25'' map showing Wyfold Grange. Reproduced with the permission of the National Library of Scotland

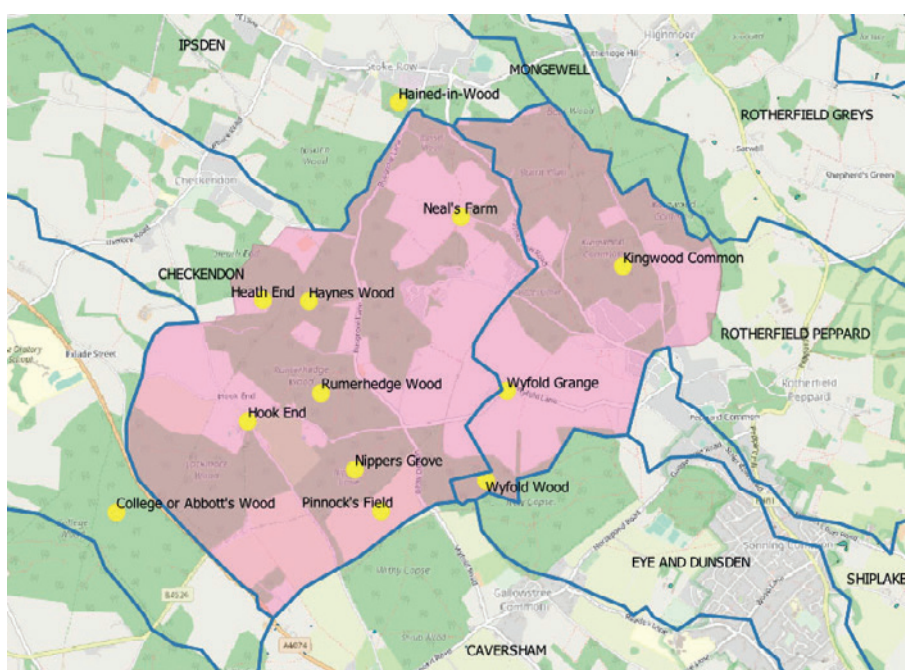


Figure 28: Possible extent of the Wyfold Estate (pink shaded area) with 1851 parish boundaries over modern base map

remains of a former bank and later soils. Further remnants of the bank were shown to have been spread out, sealing the original ground surface on which the bank had been built. A few small charcoal fragments were found in this former ground level, and one of these was subsequently radiocarbon dated to give a *terminus post quem* of 987 – 1030 cal AD (95.4% probability) for the bank construction.

By a programme of coring with a hand auger and visual observation it was shown that the earthwork had once formed a complete oval shaped enclosure of approximately 210m maximum diameter.

Because of the “old wood effect” it is possible that the enclosure was constructed substantially later than the *terminus post quem*. In order to evaluate the possible interpretations, the Wyfold Grange enclosure has been compared with a selection of other known enclosures dated from the late Saxon period up to the 12th century and evaluated in the context of the prevailing political, geographic and economic contexts. It seems probable that

the construction is late Saxon, but early Norman remains possible.

Full details of this work are given in our report “*Excavations of the Earthwork at Wyfold Grange, Oxfordshire*” available from our web site at: <https://www.soagarch.org.uk/projects/wyfold/wyfoldgrange.html>

#### *Landscape Archaeology at Wyfold*

A broad range of activities at Wyfold Grange was undertaken including geological and hydrogeological surveying, metal detecting and tree surveying. As a result of these, and extensive desk-based research, an understanding of the landscape around Wyfold Grange was developed. From traditional (pre-1851) parish boundaries and place names in the historic record an attempt has been made to map the extent of the former Wyfold estate (Fig. 28). Whilst it is recognised that holdings within the estate will have varied over time this shows a potential area of over 2000 acres.



Figure 29: Wyfold Grange, The 15th to 16th century St Edmund pilgrim badge

The geology and hydrogeology of the Wyfold Grange site were investigated by a programme of coring. This showed that the local superficial geology was more complex than that indicated by the British Geological Survey, which provided a useful understanding of the natural levels for the excavations. In addition it was shown that the geology at the location of a former pond was significantly different from the rest of the site in having a substantial clay layer. This gives credence to the hypothesis that the pond was a natural perched aquifer. Evidence was found that the pond was drained in the mid-20th century.

A metal detecting survey was undertaken within the enclosure and in two adjacent fields. Evidence was found of continuous activity from 1180 (coin) to the present day. Perhaps the most interesting find was a 15th to 16th century St Edmund pilgrim badge (Fig. 29).

A tree survey was made around the site, using girth measurements and dendrochronology, to see if there were any ancient specimens. It was found that most of the largest trees dated to the period around the construction of the present house (1871) and may have been planted as part of the associated landscaping.

The road network close to the Grange was examined. Features on the 1897 Ordnance Survey 25" map suggest a possible lost road to the north west, potentially linking to Judges Road and on towards Benson, the probable Saxon owner of the estate. The existence of this road would help to explain the unusual shape of the present road which deviates around Wyfold Grange. The possibility of the present road having been used as a droving route was examined. Though the evidence suggests this is likely, no direct proof has been found.

Full details of these investigations are given in our report "*Landscape Archaeology at Wyfold, Oxfordshire*" available from our web site.

#### *Post-Medieval Archaeology at Wyfold Grange*

Magnetometry and resistivity surveys were undertaken over all sufficiently clear areas within the earthwork enclosure. The aim was to identify any underground features which might relate to former occupation or other use of the grounds of Wyfold Grange with the potential for further investigation by excavation. Although there were broad anomalous

areas in both surveys which may indicate the presence of demolition material, no clear evidence of foundations of former buildings was found. The absence of any sign of the former house is consistent with the hypothesis that the new house was constructed on broadly the same footprint as its predecessor.

The resistivity survey showed a distinct dark (low resistivity) shallow V-shaped feature to the south of the lawn which corresponded with a dip in level and possible remnant of a ditch. Lidar images also showed this feature and so a 3.4m trench was dug across it (Fig. 30) revealing the footings of a wall built of dressed flint and limestone blocks. The trench produced substantial quantities of CBM, mainly broken roof tile with some brick, mortar and some faced flints. As well as this material, also uncovered were fragments of 19th and 20th century household goods but little or nothing from earlier periods.

Two small (0.5m×0.5m) test pits were dug to check if CBM was present across the whole lawn. CBM (predominantly roof tile) was recovered from both trenches and there were other modern small finds including pottery sherds, clay pipe fragments, animal bone, glass and ferrous metal. It was estimated from the total area of the lawn that there might be sufficient buried tiles to roof a small outbuilding say (8m×8m) but insufficient to cover the roof of the old house.



Figure 30: Wyfold Grange Trench 3 showing the base of a flint wall





Figure 31: Water colour entitled “South View of Wyfold Priory Oxfordshire April the 13. 1762”. Artist unknown, Bodleian Library

Early documentary evidence of the buildings is scant. The earliest known drawing (held by the Bodleian Library) was from 1762 (Fig. 31) which shows a walled area including a house and barn, and the end of a further building outside the wall to the left of the picture. The evidence from the lawn trenches, and of early 20th century postcards showing the remnants of a stone wall, substantiates the veracity of the 1762 drawing. Doubts have been cast over the reliability of a further, rather grandiose, drawing of 1868. Whilst its accuracy cannot be confirmed, analysis of the available pictorial and cartographic evidence cannot rule it out.

Until the introduction of piped water in the early 20th century, water supply in the Chilterns had always been problematic. There are suggestions of a well at Wyfold Grange but no physical evidence was found. In addition to the pond however, three cisterns were located and one of these partially excavated. These were all fed by rooftop collection of rainwater and one had evidence of having had a hand pump fitted.

Full details of these studies are given in our report “*Post-Medieval Archaeology at Wyfold Grange, Oxfordshire*” available from our web site.

#### *Archaeological Walk at Wyfold Grange*

Putting Wyfold into its historic and geographic context, an archaeological walk has been devised which links Wyfold grange with nearby Castle Grove (an Iron Age hill fort) and the earthwork in Old Copse which may also possibly be Iron Age. Full details of this walk are given in our report “*Wyfold Grange, Oxfordshire: An Archaeological Walk*” available from our web site. All these reports are available at: <https://www.soagarch.org.uk/projects/wyfold/wyfoldgrange.html>

## THE WALLINGFORD HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

**Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, C of E Primary School SU 5821 9094**

LINDSEY BEDFORD

The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society (TWHAS) was approached by members of the Brightwell-cum-Sotwell History Group to see whether we could help

them and local residents further their knowledge and understanding of the history of their village.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell C of E Primary School very kindly gave us access to their playing field which is known to be close to where the Silchester – Dorchester – Alchester Roman road passed by. The two objectives were therefore:

- To see whether any evidence for this road could be found in the west of the playing field.
- To see whether any evidence of settlement in the east of the playing field could be seen.

The route of the Roman road (Margary 160c) has long been suspected to pass through Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, very close to the school grounds because of evidence to the north and south of the village. Geophysical surveys undertaken by TWHAS across the area clearly showed that the route of the road actually passed through the school playing field (Fig. 32).

The resistivity survey showed the hard agger of the road as a band of high resistance orientated virtually north-south along the western side of the playing field. It is not possible to say with any certainty whether roadside ditches were present along this small stretch. It is possible that a short length, approximately 12m, of low resistance 1-2m wide on the eastern side may be remnants of the eastern ditch. Similar low resistance on the western side is more likely associated with the hedge and other vegetation between the school and the public footpath. To see whether ditches could be located using another method, a gradiometer survey was undertaken across the area, but this too was unable to reveal evidence of side ditches.

In the south-east corner of the survey area, an approximately rectangular zone of high resistance may be the remains of a structure, possibly contemporary with the Roman road. Without exploring further, it is just speculative but looks to be approximately 16-17m in length by 7m in width (this from the densest areas of high resistance). An extremely faint, linear high resistance feature, running parallel to the north-east side of the potential building may be traces of a corridor but this suggestion should be treated with caution. The north-west (short end) of the structure projects to the north-east possibly forming an end wall to the potential corridor. Further areas of high resistance to the south-west



Figure 32: The route of the Silchester–Dorchester–Alchester Roman road (yellow line) and the results of the resistivity survey

of the main structure may be a spread of demolition material or possibly remains of a buried hard surface area.

To see whether any further details could be teased from geophysics, a second resistivity survey was undertaken at a higher resolution (using 0.5m intervals as opposed to the initial 1m). Whilst no recognisable room partitions were evident it did show two possible walls projecting from the north-east side, possibly ending the 'corridor' and forming an entrance to the building. This also needs further exploration.

Although the gradiometer survey did not locate road ditches (nor the potential building) it did appear to show a possible ditch orientated north-east / south-west extending from the north-east corner of the structure which may be part of an enclosure ditch or boundary. Figure 33 is an interpretation of the combined geophysics which shows the location and relationship between the ditch and the structure.

Areas of low resistance (one possibly in the middle of the Roman road) may be old tree throws from when this land was used as an orchard in the 1950s. The circular feature to the east of the structure is a modern playground mound containing building rubble. The three patches of high resistance between the road and the structure currently remain unexplained.

Further work subject to approval may include:

- A slot trench across the Roman road to obtain a profile and possible dating material.
- Small scale excavation to further explore targeted areas of the potential building.
- A metal detecting survey across the area.

If these plans proceed it is hoped to involve the pupils and staff of the school as much as possible.

## WESSEX ARCHAEOLOGY

### Bicester, Bicester Arc, Oxford Road SP 57850 21584

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on a parcel of land located north of Bicester Avenue Garden Centre. The work was carried out in support of a planning application for the proposed development of the site. Six of the ten excavated trial trenches contained archaeological features comprising ditches, gullies and a pit. The ditches and gullies represent field boundaries dating to the medieval and post-medieval periods. OASIS ID: wessexar1-520620; Accession no: OXCMS 2023.134

### Botley, Land to the West of Red House Farm SP 46542 05861

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on a 49ha parcel of land located to the south and west of Red House Farm. The work was carried out as a condition of a planning application.

A total of 40 of the 177 excavated trial trenches contained archaeological features comprising ditches, gullies, pits, trackways, a posthole and a dew pond. While half of the features remain undated those from which datable material was recovered point largely to the Iron Age and medieval period.

Late Iron Age activity comprised linear features, buried soils and a possible metal surface. All possibly relate to nearby farmsteads situated within two ditched enclosures, previously identified in a geophysical survey. A single ditch and trackway containing medieval artefacts may suggest agricultural activity from a nearby settlement.



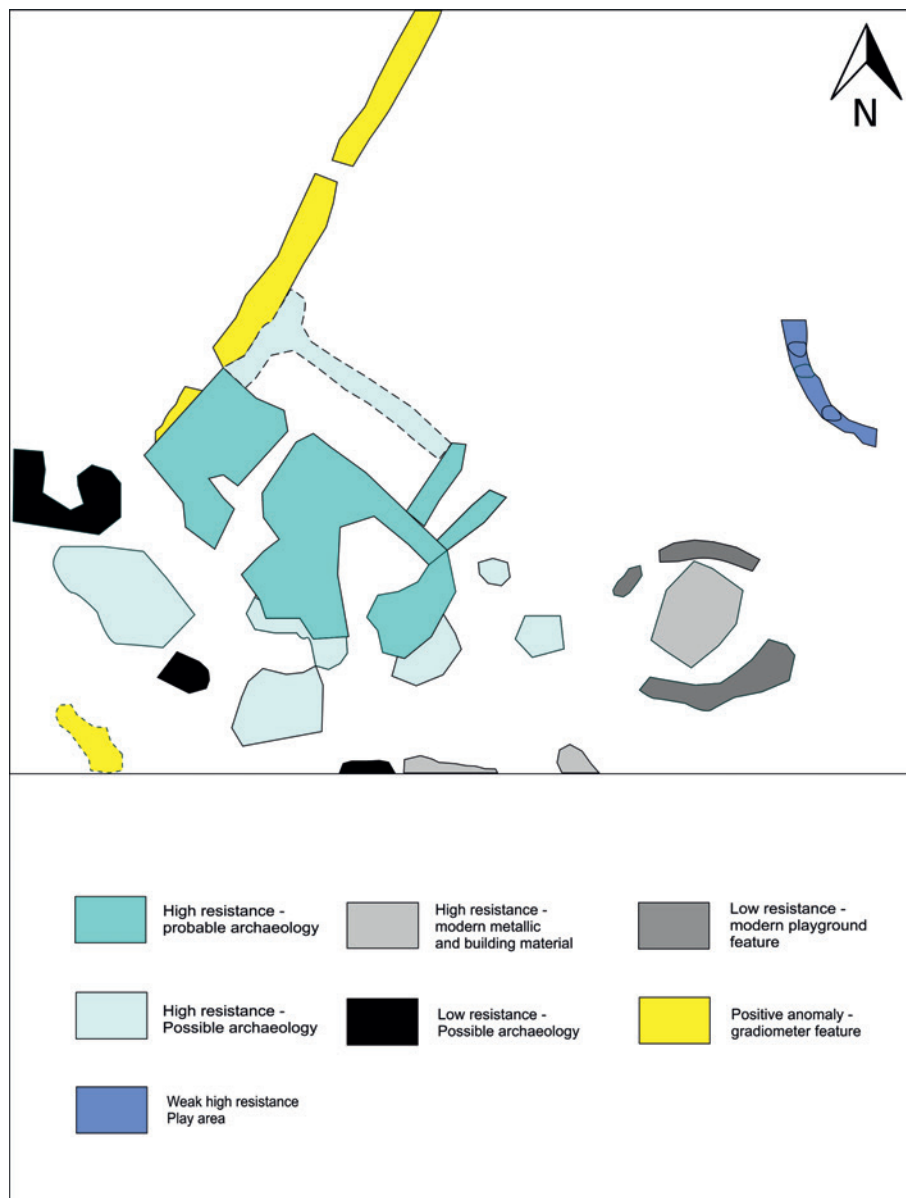


Figure 33: Interpretation of the combined geophysics results

There were also small traces of prehistoric activity present on site with a Late Mesolithic/Early Neolithic flint blade being recovered from a tree-throw hole and Bronze Age pottery from a ditch. Romano-British activity was also present but limited to a single ditch. A small amount of pottery and other artefacts indicate activity on or near the site during the post-medieval period, particularly in the south-east where it is associated with the Blind Pinnocks and Dean Court Grange buildings. OASIS ID: wessexar1-517619 Accession no: OXCMS 2023.43

**Chipping Norton, Land East of Burford Road SP 31782 26145**

Negative/indeterminate. No summary provided. OASIS ID: wessexar1-520023; Accession no: OXCMS 2023.111

**Moulsford, Moulsford Reservoir site, Cow Lane SU 58765 83155**

Negative/indeterminate. No summary provided. OASIS ID: wessexar1-519775; Accession no: OXCMS 2023.104

**Stoke Talmage, Cornwell Solar Farm SP 66675 00810**

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during the excavation of cable trenches and access tracks for Cornwell Solar Farm. The work was carried out as a condition of a planning application. The monitored groundworks did not impact upon any archaeological features or deposits, although a single ditch was identified during the excavation of a continuation trench beyond the boundary of the mitigation area. Pottery from the immediate vicinity of the ditch has been dated to the late 3rd/4th century, suggesting it is likely associated with Romano-British activity known to the north-west of Cornwell Copse. Prehistoric activity was represented by 5 undiagnostic flint flakes and 3 sherds of probable Iron Age pottery, all recovered from the subsoil in one of the trenches. OASIS ID: wessexar1-520341; Accession no: OXCMS:2023.95

**Watlington, Watlington Relief Road SU 68181 94867 to 69350 95145**

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the proposed Watlington Relief Road development footprint to

the north and west of the village of Watlington. The work was carried out as a condition of a planning application.

Fourteen of the twenty-two excavated trial trenches contained archaeological features comprising ditches, gullies, pits and postholes. Most of the features date from the Late Iron Age through to the late Romano-British period and likely relate to settlement activity. While no direct evidence of occupation was recorded in association with the features, the artefact assemblage derives from the disposal of domestic and small-scale metalworking waste. Environmental evidence revealed a combination of cereals,

high proportions of cereal chaff and arable weeds which suggests that crop processing activities were taking place nearby.

There is also some evidence of earlier activity in the vicinity as indicated by small quantities of worked flint of probable Late Neolithic and generic prehistoric date found residually in Romano-British features. The only evidence of activity post-dating the Romano-British period is represented by small quantities of medieval/post-medieval ceramic building material recovered from a pit. OASIS ID: wessexar1-521505; Accession no: OXCMS 2023.136



## NOTES FOR CONTRIBUTORS:

1. The submitted article should follow the format of South Midlands Archaeology. That is:
  - name of the County followed by;
  - name of the organisation (if applicable) followed by;
  - name of the writer or compiler followed by;
  - body of the article with suitable headings and sub-headings.
2. If the article consists of many separate site reports, each site should be reported as follows:
  - name of the site followed by;
  - grid reference (e.g. SP 1234 5678 [alphabetic prefix must be included]) followed by;
  - name of the person who wrote the site report followed by;
  - individual site report with suitable headings and sub-headings.
3. One purpose of SMA is to act as a record of the work carried out in the area; this does not mean that it need be dull. Contributors are asked to be as interesting as possible for the many members of CBA South Midlands who are not archaeologists but who have a lively interest in the past.
4. If, during an investigation, nothing was found, don't be afraid to say so in simple terms. **Always** include the reason for the investigation.
5. When the article is submitted, please ensure that all text (including captions) and pictures, as separate files, are included and clearly identified.
6. The preferred method for receiving text is as a Rich Text File (rtf extension) sent by email to: [nick.crank@milton-keynes.gov.uk](mailto:nick.crank@milton-keynes.gov.uk) with a subject of "SMA contribution". Please do not send documents with embedded pictures. Each illustration must be a separate file in bmp, jpeg or tiff format. If you are unable to comply with the above, please contact the Editor.
7. Pictures and diagrams should be of the highest possible quality; the printed version can be no better than that submitted. The journal is now **full colour** so submissions with **eye-catching colour photos and/or illustrations** are welcomed and encouraged.
8. Proofs will not be sent to contributors.
9. Contributors are responsible for the accuracy of their data.
10. Please note that charges are as follows: Professional/commercial – 1 free page, remainder charged at £20/page; Amateur group – 2 free pages, remainder charged at £20/page. *The submission of an article will be taken as an agreement to pay the charge.* Invoices will be sent out during the summer and payment is expected prior to publication in the autumn.

NAC

Revised: 20th February 2018

