

**An Archaeological Evaluation on land at Vicarage Street, Luton,
Bedfordshire**

SITE A

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Abstract

Archaeology South East (ASE) conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at Vicarage Street, Luton for CgMs on behalf of their client during October 2008. Five trial trenches were excavated to a cumulative length of 30m. The natural geology was encountered mostly at c. 1.20m beneath the current ground level ranging from 103.17mOD to 103.82m OD.

The medieval deposits and features of possible 13th -14th century date were recorded in trenches A2, A3 and A4 with overlying late post-medieval deposits and structures. Although the function of the ditches is not apparent and no structural remains were found in situ, the linear features could relate to the castle which briefly occupied the site in the 1220s. The finds of burnt daub indicate the presence of timber-framed structures in the near vicinity, and possibly represent the internal buildings of the castle.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE), a division of the Centre for Applied Archaeology (UCL CAA), were commissioned by CgMs on behalf of Liberty Living Properties Limited to undertake an archaeological evaluation at Vicarage Street (Site A), Luton prior to redevelopment (NGR TL 0960 2110; see Fig 1).

1.1.2 The site is currently occupied by a three-storey building owned by the University of Bedfordshire. The site is bounded to the north-west by Vicarage Street, the south-east by Lea Road and the Park Viaduct to the south-east and north-east. The proposed development comprises the demolition of the existing building and the re-development of the entire plot.

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site is located within the town centre of Luton at a height of c. 105m OD. The line of the River Lea is c. 185m northeast of the study site.

1.2.2 The underlying geology of the site is shown on British Geological Survey Sheet 220 (1992: Leighton Buzzard) to be deposits of Glacial Sand and Gravel, above chalk.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 The Bedfordshire Archaeological Officer identified the site as lying in an archaeologically sensitive area and subsequently prepared a brief for a programme of Archaeological evaluation of the site to satisfy the requirements of PPG16 and the Luton Local Plan's archaeological policies.

1.3.2 The Specification (BCC 2008) outlined the possible need for further programme of archaeological works (Stage III) subject to the results of the initial evaluation.

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The general aims of the archaeological evaluation, as specified in the *Brief* are:

- Establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site
- Recovering artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region
- Recovering palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions

1.4.2 According to Ayers, the study of medieval urban archaeology must investigate the entire range of the urban experience. Topography, buildings, craft production, markets, waterfront facilities, defences, ecclesiastical

institutions, cemeteries and environmental evidence all need to be evaluated and the available evidence synthesised (Ayers in Glazebrook 1997:61). With regard to research frameworks, Ayers believes each town should be regarded as a single, exceptionally complex site with potential for increasing understanding of urban communities. With this in mind, specific research aims of the evaluation were:

- Is there any evidence for pre-urban or proto-urban activity?
- Is it possible to characterise, in general terms, the chronology, distribution and social status of the occupation?
- Is there any evidence for adaptation or change in the occupation?
- Is there any evidence of the range of economic activity?
- Is there any evidence of continuity of the property boundaries and streets?
- Is there any evidence for urban expansion in the Saxo-Norman period?
- Is there any evidence of urban expansion in the 12th and 13th centuries?
- Is there any evidence of late medieval urban decline?
- Is there any evidence for the local post-medieval economy?
- Is there any evidence for the urban relationship with the hinterland?
- Is it possible to demonstrate pre-urban agricultural phases from the environmental evidence?
- Is there any evidence for on-site crop processing? Or are the samples grain-dominated, a characteristic of 'consumer-type' assemblages?
- Are there any latrine pits?
- Is there any evidence for food supply or raw materials?
- Does the animal bone assemblage show any evidence for local stock-rearing?
- Is there any evidence for the exploitation of marine food resources?
- Is there any evidence for the use of fuel or constructional wood and timber?
- Is there any dietary evidence of the occupants?
- Are there any environmental remains of 'exotic' plant foods?

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 This report represents the findings of the fieldwork undertaken by Paul Riccoboni (Senior Archaeologist) and Caroline Russell (Assistant archaeologist) during the week beginning Monday 27th October 2008 for five working days.

2.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The *Archaeological Desk Based Assessment* (Meager 2008) has a full account of the archaeological background of the site.
- 2.2** In brief, the site lies within the former medieval core of Luton (HER 16993) and is close to the Church of St Mary and the possible location of Breaute's castle.

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1** The methodology comprised machine excavation under archaeological supervision of five trenches (see Fig. 2 Trench location plan). The Trenches were a minimum of 1.9m in width and were a cumulative length of 45m
- 3.2** The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with *Brief* and the *Specification for an Archaeological Evaluation at Land at Vicarage St (Site B) Luton*, CgMs and the IFA 2001 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation*.
- 3.3** The location of each trench was scanned prior to excavation using a CAT scanner. The trenches were mechanically excavated using a toothless ditching bucket and under constant archaeological supervision. Services, if encountered, will be left intact.
- 3.4** Only undifferentiated topsoil, subsoil and overburden of recent origin was removed by machine and was kept separately where possible. The excavation was taken down, in spits of no more than 0.25m, down to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the top of the underlying 'natural', whichever is uppermost.
- 3.5** Where trenches exceeded the general safe working depth of 1.20m they were stepped to allow safe access.
- 3.6** Spoil was divided into topsoil, subsoil and made ground, as appropriate, and backfilled sequentially where possible.
- 3.7** All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using the standard context record sheets used by Archaeology South-East. Soil colours were recorded using visual inspection and not by reference to the Munsell Colour chart.
- 3.8** Archaeological structures, features and deposits exposed or excavated were planned in relation to the trench and the trench planned onto a copy of the Ordnance Survey map not smaller than 1:2500 scale.
- 3.9** The Bedfordshire Archaeological Officer was informed at the earliest opportunity, via CgMs, of any archaeological features or deposits deemed worthy of preservation and subsequently visited the site.
- 3.10** Environmental samples were processed and assessed in accordance with *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practise of Methods, from sampling and recovery to post excavation (English Heritage 2002)*.

Number of Contexts	69
No. of files/paper record	75
Plan and sections sheets	3
Bulk Samples	1
Photographs	19 colour slide + 19 B & W + 20 digital
Bulk finds	5
Registered finds	0
Environmental flots/residue	1 flot/residue

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS (Fig. 3)

4.1 Trench A1

Number	Type	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height m. OD
A1/001	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.18m	104.62m – 104.74m
A1/002	Wall	2m	0.40m	0.20m	c. 104.56m
A1/003	Deposit	5m	Tr.	0.33m	c. 104.56m
A1/004	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.29m	c. 104.23m
A1/005	Deposit	6m	Tr.	0.17m	c. 103.94m
A1/006	Deposit	2m	Tr.	0.26m	c. 103.77m
A1/007	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	103.37m (N) 103.82m (S)
A1/008	Deposit	8m	Tr.	0.14m	c. 104.50m
A1/009	Deposit	2m	Tr.	0.13m	c. 104.50m
A1/010	Wall	2m	0.20m	0.40m	c. 104.56m
A1/011	Construction cut	5m	0.40m	0.20m	c. 104.56m
A1/012	Construction cut	2m	0.20m	0.40m	c. 104.56m

Table 2: List of recorded contexts Trench A1

Summary

Trench A1 was excavated to a length of 10m and to a width of 2m (Fig. 2). The trench reached a depth of 1.18m at the northern end and 0.99m at the southern end. The stratigraphy consisted of the following contexts.

The natural geology [A1/007], was a brownish orange clay silt with frequent gravels. Directly above the natural was orange brown clay silt [A1/006] with occasional gravel. Also overlying the natural was a layer of grey brown sandy clay [A1/004] with occasional gravels and specks of ceramic building materials (CBM).

Deposit [A1/005] lay directly above [A1/006], this comprised a grey brown friable sandy clay with occasional gravels and chalk flecks. Deposit [A1/003] was seen above [A1/004]. This was a mottled yellow and grey mix of gravels and sands. Overlying, [A1/004] was dark brownish black friable silty clay [A3/008] with moderate charcoal flecks, chalk flecks and flint gravels. Layer [A1/009] was seen above [A1/008]. This comprised a mottled brown and yellow clay silt with frequent gravels, chalk flecks and occasional CBM.

Cutting layer [A1/003] were construction cuts [A1/011] and [A1/012] for red brick walls [A1/002] and [A1/010] respectively (Fig. 3). Both walls survived to a height of two courses.

4.2 Trench A2

Number	Type	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height mOD
A2/001	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m	104.60m (E) 104.61m (W)
A2/002	Deposit	2m	Tr.	0.45m	c. 104.30m
A2/003	Wall	2m	0.45m	0.45m	c. 104.30m
A2/004	Wall	1.25m	0.30m	0.45m	c. 104.30m
A2/005	Deposit	2m	Tr.	0.17m	c. 103.85m
A2/006	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.15m – 0.26m	c. 103.68m
A2/007	Cut	c. 2m	0.80m	0.60m	c. 104.30m
A2/008	Fill	c. 2m	0.80m	0.60m	c. 104.30m
A2/009	Cut	c. 1m	1m	0.25m	c. 104.30m
A2/010	Fill	c. 1m	1m	0.25m	c. 104.30m
A2/011	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m	c. 103.55m
A2/012	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	N/A	103.25m (E) 103.40m (W)
A2/013	Construction cut	2m	0.45m	0.45m	c. 104.30m
A2/014	Construction cut	1.25m	0.3m	0.45m	c. 104.30m

Table 3: List of recorded contexts Trench A2

Trench A2 was excavated to a length of 5m and to a width of 2m. The average depth of the trench was 1.40m from the present ground surface.

The natural [A2/012] was a light orange brown clay with gravels. Overlying was black grey clay silt [A2/011], an apparent buried soil layer, with finds of two fragments of daub of probable medieval date (Fig. 3).

Above [A2/011] was mottled orange and brown clay layer [A2/006] with chalk flecks.

Cutting [A2/006] was linear feature [A2/007] which had concave sides and a gently rounded base. The fill was black friable silt clay [A2/008] with occasional brick fragments.

Also cutting [A2/006] was linear feature [A2/009] which had gradual sloping concave sides. The fill was black friable silt clay [A2/010] with occasional CBM fragments.

Overlying [A2/010] and [A2/008] was brown grey firm clay silt [A2/005] with frequent CBM fragments and occasional chalk flecks. At the eastern end of the trench were a series of structural remains cutting layer [A2/005]. Red brick walls [A2/003] and [A2/004] built in construction cuts [A2/013] and [A2/014] survived two courses high. Between these walls was brown yellow clay layer [A2/002] with occasional CBM inclusions and gravels (Fig. 3).

Overlying was topsoil [A2/001].

4.3 Trench A3

Number	Type	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height mOD
A3/001	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.30m	104.53m (W) 104.60m (E)
A3/002	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.10m- 0.30m	c. 104.37m
A3/003	Wall	2m	0.30m	0.66m	c. 104.37m
A3/004	Wall	2m	0.10m	0.07m	c. 104.37m
A3/005	Floor	1m	0.50m	0.10m	c. 104.37m
A3/006	Wall	1.50m	0.10m	0.07m	c. 104.37m
A3/007	Floor	1m	0.70m	0.10m	c. 104.37m
A3/008	Wall	2.5m	0.10m	0.07m	c. 104.37m
A3/009	Floor	1.7m	0.40m	0.05m	c. 104.37m
A3/010	Floor	4.5m	2m	0.10m	c. 104.37m
A3/011	Floor	1m	1m	0.10m	c. 104.37m
A3/012	Deposit	1m	1m	0.10m	c. 104.37m
A3/013	Floor	0.60m	Tr.	0.20m	c. 104.17m
A3/014	Deposit	1.40m	Tr.	0.40m	c. 104.17m
A3/015	Deposit	2.30m	Tr.	0.36m	c. 104.17m
A3/016	Deposit	0.59m	Tr.	0.18m	103.97m
A3/017	Floor	1.20m	Tr.	0.20m	c. 104.17m
A3/018	Deposit	4.66m	Tr.	0.44m	c. 103.77m
A3/019	Deposit	0.58m	Tr.	0.90m	c. 104.47m
A3/020	Cut	1.35m	0.23m	0.40m	103.47m
A3/021	Fill	1.35m	0.23m	0.40m	103.47m
A3/022	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	/	c. 103.17m
A3/023	Floor	0.60m	Tr.	0.05m	c. 104.25m
A3/024	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	c. 25m	c. 103.47m
A3/025	Construction cut	0.58m	Tr.	0.90m	c. 104.37m
A3/026	Construction cut	2m	0.30m	0.66m	c.104.37m
A3/027	Construction cut	2m	0.10m	0.66m	c.104.37m
A3/028	Construction cut	1.5m	0.10m	0.07m	c.104.37m
A3/029	Cut	0.30m	2m	0.10m	c.104.45m
A3/030	Fill	0.30m	2m	0.10m	c.104.45m

Table 4: List of recorded contexts Trench A3

Trench A3 was excavated to a length of 5m and to a depth of c. 1.20m from the current surface.

The natural mid brownish orange clay silt [A3/022] was seen at the base of a slot excavated through linear feature [A3/020]. Directly above the natural was an apparent buried soil layer of dark greyish brown clay silt [A3/024] which was seen throughout the trench.

Cutting the buried soil layer was linear [A3/020], aligned east to west with a steep northerly concave side and a gently rounded base. The southern edge of this feature was not seen as it extended beneath the baulk section. Linear [A3/020], was filled by [A3/021], a light grey chalky clay. A sherd of

medieval pottery dating to the 13th - 14th century was recovered from this fill, along with one tile fragment of a similar date (Fig. 3; Section 1).

Above fill [A3/021], was layer [A3/018], a mid blackish grey clay silt with occasional fragments of CBM and chalk flecks.

Layer [A3/018] was cut by construction cut [A3/025] containing wall [A3/003] which was constructed of red bricks and survived to eight courses in height. Construction cut A3/025 was backfilled with a dark greyish black silty clay [A3/019] which contained a thick lens of charcoal and lay against wall [A3/003].

Above deposit [A3/018], was layer [A3/015], a black silty friable clay with occasional CBM flecking (Fig. 3; Section 1). Also above [A3/018] further to the west existed the truncated remains of layer [A3/014], a mottled deposit with occasional CBM and chalk flecking, mortar patches and gravels (Fig. 3; Section 1).

Deposits [A3/014] and [A3/015] were both cut by [A3/032] which was partially filled by crushed building debris [A3/016] and overlain by black bricks [A3/013], the latter forming a hard surface beneath floor [A3/010] (see below).

Above and possibly pressed into [A3/015] were a series of bricks laid on edge [A3/010] and brick floor surface [A3/017]. A deposit of demolition material consisting mainly of crushed loose mortar was seen directly above these bricks, [A3/002].

Red brick walls [A3/003], [A3/004] and [A3/006] were built in construction cuts [A3/026], [A3/027] & [A3/028] and survived two courses high. Between these walls were a series of different floor surfaces [A3/017], [A3/009], [A3/007], [A3/005] & [A3/010] constructed of stone or bricks (Fig. 3).

Cut through the topsoil [A3/001] and layer [A3/002] was a square cut [A3/029] which was filled with a mid greyish brown silty clay [A3/030].

4.4 Trench A4

List of recorded contexts

Number	Type	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height mOD
A4/001	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.14m	104.77m
A4/002	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.31-0.41m	c.104.64m
A4/003	Deposit	TR.	Tr.	0.41-0.46m	c.104.34m
A4/004	Deposit	3m	Tr.	0.46m	c.103.94m
A4/005	Deposit	TR.	Tr.	/	103.48m
A4/006	Deposit	2m	Tr.	0.16m	c. 103.64m
A4/007	Cut	4m	0.87m	0.29m	103.33m
A4/008	Fill	4m	0.87m	0.26m	103.33m
A4/009	Fill	4m	0.45m	0.21m	103.33m

Table 5: List of recorded contexts Trench A4

Summary

This trench was excavated to a length of 4m and to a width of 2m. The natural light brownish orange clay with frequent gravels [A4/005] was seen at the base of the trench.

Cut into the natural was a linear feature [A4/007], which had a minimum width of 0.87m (the feature extended beneath the eastern baulk section). This feature had sharp concave sides which formed a flattish base. It was filled by two different fills (Fig. 3). The primary fill was [A4/008], a dark greyish brown clay silt with frequent charcoal and chalk flecks. This fill also contained one piece of daub of probable medieval date. One environmental sample was taken from this fill <1001> (see section 6). The upper fill of this feature [A4/009], was an orange brown clay silt with frequent gravels, and occasional chalk and charcoal flecks.

Above the natural at the southern end of the trench was context [A4/006], a mottled orange brown to mid grey sandy friable clay. Above the natural, at the northern end of the trench, was [A4/004], an undated brownish orange clay silt with frequent gravels.

Overlying [A4/004] and [A4/006] was a post-medieval demolition deposit [A4/003], with frequent CBM and chalk fragments. Overlying [A4/003] was [A4/002], a mottled orange brown and grey silty clay. The latest deposit was [A4/001], a dark greyish brown sandy clay topsoil.

4.5 Trench A5

Number	Type	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Depth	Height mOD
A5/001	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.11m	104.62m
A5/002	Deposit	0.50m	/	0.23m	c.104.51m
A5/003	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.24m	c.104.28m
A5/004	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	0.45m	c.104.04m
A5/005	Deposit	Tr.	Tr.	/	103.59m
A5/006	Deposit	1m	Tr.	0.16m	c.104.51m

Table 6: List of recorded contexts Trench A5

Summary

This trench was excavated to a length of 3m, a width of 2m and a depth of c. 1.20m beneath the current ground level. The trench was shortened due to the presence of a live gas supply.

The natural was light brownish orange clay silt with frequent gravels [A5/005]. Above was greyish brown friable silt clay [A5/004] with occasional CBM flecking, chalk flecks, charcoal flecks and gravels.

Overlying [A5/004] was [A5/003], a mid greyish brown silty clay with frequent gravels, chalk flecks, CBM and slate fragments. Context [A5/002] was a lens within context [A5/003], and was firm greyish black silty clay with frequent charcoal flecks.

At the northern end of the trench a light greyish brown silty clay subsoil [A5/006] was observed beneath dark brown clay silt topsoil [A5/001]

5.0 THE FINDS by Elke Raemen

Spot Dates

A2/003	19 th century (Brick Sample)
A3/009	Late 19 th to 20 th century (Floor Tile)
A3/010	20 th century (Brick Sample)
A3/021	13 th to mid 14 th century

5.1 The excavations produced a small assemblage of finds, which is summarised below. Thanks are due to Luke Barber for identification of the pottery.

Context	Pot	wt (g)	CBM	wt (g)	Fired Clay	wt (g)	Mortar	wt (g)
A2/003			1	446				
A2/011					2	374		
A3/009			1	1134				
A3/010			1	3226				
A3/021	1	6	1	46	1	<2	1	4
A4/008					2	126		

Table 7. Quantification of the finds from the evaluation at the Vicarage Street, Luton- Site A.

5.2 The Pottery

5.2.1 A single pottery sherd was recovered from the site. Linear [A3/020] ([A3/021]) contained a piece of grey sandy ware tempered with moderate medium quartz sand. The fragment dates to the 13th to mid 14th century.

5.3 The Building Material

5.3.1 Four pieces of ceramic building material (CBM) were recovered during the evaluation. A single high fired, medium sand-tempered peg tile fragment was produced by [A3/021]. The piece exhibits traces of white slip under a patchy clear glaze and dates to the mid 13th to 14th century.

5.3.2 A brick sample from [A2/003] is a sparse fine sand-tempered fabric with occasional crushed flint temper to 6 mm, rare slag temper to 6 mm and iron oxide inclusions to 3mm. The fragment, with a buff coloured sandy mortar adhering, is frog-less and measures 60 mm high and 95 mm wide. The piece is of 19th-century date. Finally, a sample from [A3/010] consists of a well formed brick measuring 248 mm long, 50 mm high and 121 mm wide. The piece, dating to the 20th century, is high fired with sparse fine sand-tempering and occasional iron oxide inclusions to 2 mm.

5.3.3 A yellow floor tile (151 mm wide; 26 mm thick) was recovered as well ([A3/009]). The fragment is sparse fine sand-tempered with occasional slag inclusions to 5 mm and dates to the late 19th to 20th century.

5.3.4 A single piece of buff-coloured sand mortar, contained by [A3/021], is of late post-medieval date.

5.4 The Fired Clay

- 5.4.1 Five daub fragments were recovered from three different contexts. Two different fabrics were noted:

Fabric 1: Sparse fine sand-tempered with occasional iron oxide inclusions to 1 mm, rare chalk inclusions to 6 mm and rare organic temper. Some contain in addition rare crushed flint or flint pebbles to 20 mm.

Fabric 2: Medium fine sand-tempered with rare to moderate chalk inclusions to 4 mm and occasional to moderate iron oxide inclusions to 3 mm.

- 5.4.2 Three pieces exhibit wattle imprints. The two pieces from [A2/011] both contain two parallel wattle imprints, as well as a smooth, flat surface. A single imprint was contained by a piece from [A4/008]. A second piece from this context exhibits one flat, vitrified surface. Wattle imprints range in diameter between 5 and 17 mm.

5.5 Potential

- 5.5.1 The assemblage is small and mainly late post-medieval in date. It is not considered to merit any further research. No further work is required.

6.0 THE ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES by Karine Le Hegarat & Lucy Allott

6.1 Introduction

One sample (<1001>) was taken from the fill of a possible medieval ditch (A4/008) as part of the evaluation work at Vicarage Street, Luton to establish evidence for environmental remains. Sampling aimed to retrieve environmental remains such as charred botanical remains, bone and shell. This report characterises the assemblage and assesses its potential to provide information regarding the economy of the site, past vegetation and depositional conditions contributing to the formation of the feature sampled.

6.2 Methods

The sample was processed in a flotation tank, the residue and flot were retained on 500µm and 250µm meshes respectively and were air dried prior to sorting. The residues were passed through graded sieves and each fraction sorted (Table 8). The flot was scanned under a stereozoom microscope at magnifications of x7-45 and its content recorded (Table 9). Preliminary identifications of the charred macrobotanicals have been made through comparison with reference material and reference texts (Cappers *et al.* 2006; Jacomet 2006).

6.3 Results

This small flot (40ml) is dominated by uncharred vegetation including modern roots (65%) as well as uncharred seeds (such as *Rubus* sp.) and sediment (20%). All uncharred remains must be considered modern intrusive material as no waterlogged or anaerobic conditions are present at the site.

The flot contains a moderate amount of wood charcoal fragments the majority of which are <4mm in size although occasional larger fragments are also present. The charcoal is generally well preserved.

Macrobotanical remains, including some charred crop and weed seeds, are evident in the samples. The crop grain assemblage is dominated by indeterminate cereal grains, although *Triticum* sp. (wheat), *Triticum* cf. *aestivum* (bread wheat), *Hordeum* sp. (barley) and some *Avena/Bromus* sp. (oat/bromes) are evident. Charred cereal grains are generally of moderate to poor quality. Small quantities of seeds from the Fabaceae family, such as *Vicia/Lathyrus* sp. are evident. These may be wild taxa or grown for fodder. The charred weed seeds (one *Polygonum / Rumex* sp. as well as another indeterminate seed) are moderately preserved. Some additional charred botanical remains are present in the flot. However, they are poorly preserved and therefore indeterminate.

The assemblage also contains some fish bones and a small quantity of land snail shells. Occasional fragments of burnt clay are present in the residue.

6.4 Significance and Potential

Sampling has confirmed the presence of a small range of environmental remains including wood charcoal fragments, a moderate quantity of charred crop and weed seeds, some fish and land snail shells.

This sample was extracted from the primary fill of a ditch and although it appears to be relatively well sealed it may have accumulated over an extended period while the ditch was in use. The environmental remains held within the deposit most likely represent general waste materials derived from a range of domestic activities within the local vicinity. The wood charcoal assemblage is small and although some fragments could be identified they are too few to provide significant information about the local woody vegetation present or the fuel used. Macrobotanicals and fish bones from this single sample have no potential for further analysis however further work in the vicinity should continue to sample for richer deposits.

6.5 Further Work

No further work is recommended for this sample.

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	sub-Sample Volume litres	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Charcoal <4mm	Weight (g)	Charred botanicals (other than charcoal)	Weight (g)	Fishbone and microfauna	Weight (g)	Land Snail shells	Weight (g)	Other (eg ind, pot, cbm)
1001	A4/008	Fill of ditch	20	20	*	<2	*	<2	* Cerealia	<2	**	<2	*	<2	B. Clay*/ <2g

Table 8: Residue Quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250) and weight in grams

Sample Number	Context	weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred %	Sediment %	Seeds uncharred	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm	Crop seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	weed seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	other botanical charred	Identifications	Preservation	LSS
1001	A4/008	24	40	65	20	Y	*	***	***	***	Cerealia <i>Triticum</i> sp., <i>T. cf. aestivum</i> , <i>Hordeum</i> sp., <i>Avena/Bromus</i> sp.	mod -poor	*	<i>Polygonum/</i> <i>Rumex</i> sp.(1), Fabaceae cf. <i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i> sp.	mod	*	Indet.	poor	**

Table 9: Flot Quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250)

7.0 DISCUSSION

- 7.1** The natural ground level was seen in the trenches between the heights of 103.17m OD to 103.82m OD.
- 7.2** Medieval features and deposits were recorded in trenches A2, A3 and A4. An apparent buried soil layer was seen in Trenches A2 and A3 overlying the natural at approximately 13.50m OD. Two linear features, identified in trenches A4 and A3 contained finds of burnt daub and a sherd of 13th -14th century pottery respectively. The extent and nature of these features is not clear but they do not appear to be portions of the same feature. The fragments of burnt daub suggest the occurrence of burnt and demolished medieval structures in the vicinity.
- 7.3** Overlying the medieval features were a series of post-medieval deposits and 19th century structural remains. These structural remains almost certainly relate to the buildings shown on Ordnance Survey plans 1901 & 1938 (Meager 2008).
- 7.4** Modern services are known to exist within Site A. However, as the trenches were located to avoid the services the extent of the truncation was not seen.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1** The medieval deposits and features of possible 13th -14th century date were recorded in trenches A2, A3 and A4 with overlying late post-medieval deposits and structures. Although the function of the ditches is not apparent and no structural remains were found *in situ*, the linear features could relate to the castle which briefly occupied the site in the 1220s. The finds of burnt daub indicate the presence of structures, possibly timber-framed buildings, in the near vicinity, and could therefore represent internal buildings of the castle.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank Richard Meager of CgMs Ltd for commissioning Archaeology South-East to undertake the work and Lesley-Ann Mather, Archaeological Officer, Heritage and Environment Section, Bedfordshire County Council for monitoring the site on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

SMR Summary Form

Site Code	VSL 08					
Identification Name and Address	Land at Vicarage Street, Luton- SITE A					
County, District &/or Borough	Bedfordshire					
OS Grid Refs.	509604 221053					
Geology	Glacial clay					
Arch. South-East Project Number	3610					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. ✓	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban ✓	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 27-31 st Oct 08	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	CgMs					
Project Manager	Giles Dawkes					
Project Supervisor	Paul Riccoboni					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED ✓	PM	Other Modern		
<p>100 Word Summary.</p> <p><i>Archaeology South East (ASE) conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at Vicarage Street, Luton for CgMs on behalf of their client during October 2008. Five trial trenches were excavated to a cumulative length of 30m. The natural geology was encountered mostly at c. 1.20m beneath the current ground level ranging from 103.17mOD to 103.82m OD.</i></p> <p><i>The medieval deposits and features of possible 13th -14th century date were recorded in trenches A2, A3 and A4 with overlying late post-medieval deposits and structures. Although the function of the ditches is not apparent and no structural remains were found in situ, the linear features could relate to the castle which briefly occupied the site in the 1220s. The finds of burnt daub indicate the presence of timber-framed structures in the near vicinity, and possibly represent the internal buildings of the castle.</i></p>						

OASIS ID: archaeol6-50988	
Project details	
Project name	Land at Vicarage Street, Luton, Bedfordshire- SITE A
Short description of the project	Archaeology South East (ASE) conducted an archaeological evaluation of land at Vicarage Street, Luton for CgMs on behalf of their client during October 2008. Five trial trenches were excavated to a cumulative length of 30m. The natural geology was encountered mostly at c. 1.20m beneath the current ground level ranging from 103.17mOD to 103.82m OD. The medieval deposits and features of possible 13th -14th century date were recorded in trenches A2, A3 and A4 with overlying late post-medieval deposits and structures. Although the function of the ditches is not apparent and no structural remains were found in situ, the linear features could relate to the castle which briefly occupied the site in the 1220s. The finds of burnt daub indicate the presence of timber-framed buildings in the near vicinity, and possibly represent the internal buildings of the castle.
Project dates	Start: 27-10-2008 End: 31-10-2008
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	VSL08 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	2008/63 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	LAYER Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	TILE Medieval
Methods & techniques	'Sample Trenches'
Development type	Public building (e.g. school, church, hospital, medical centre, law courts etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the	Not known / Not recorded

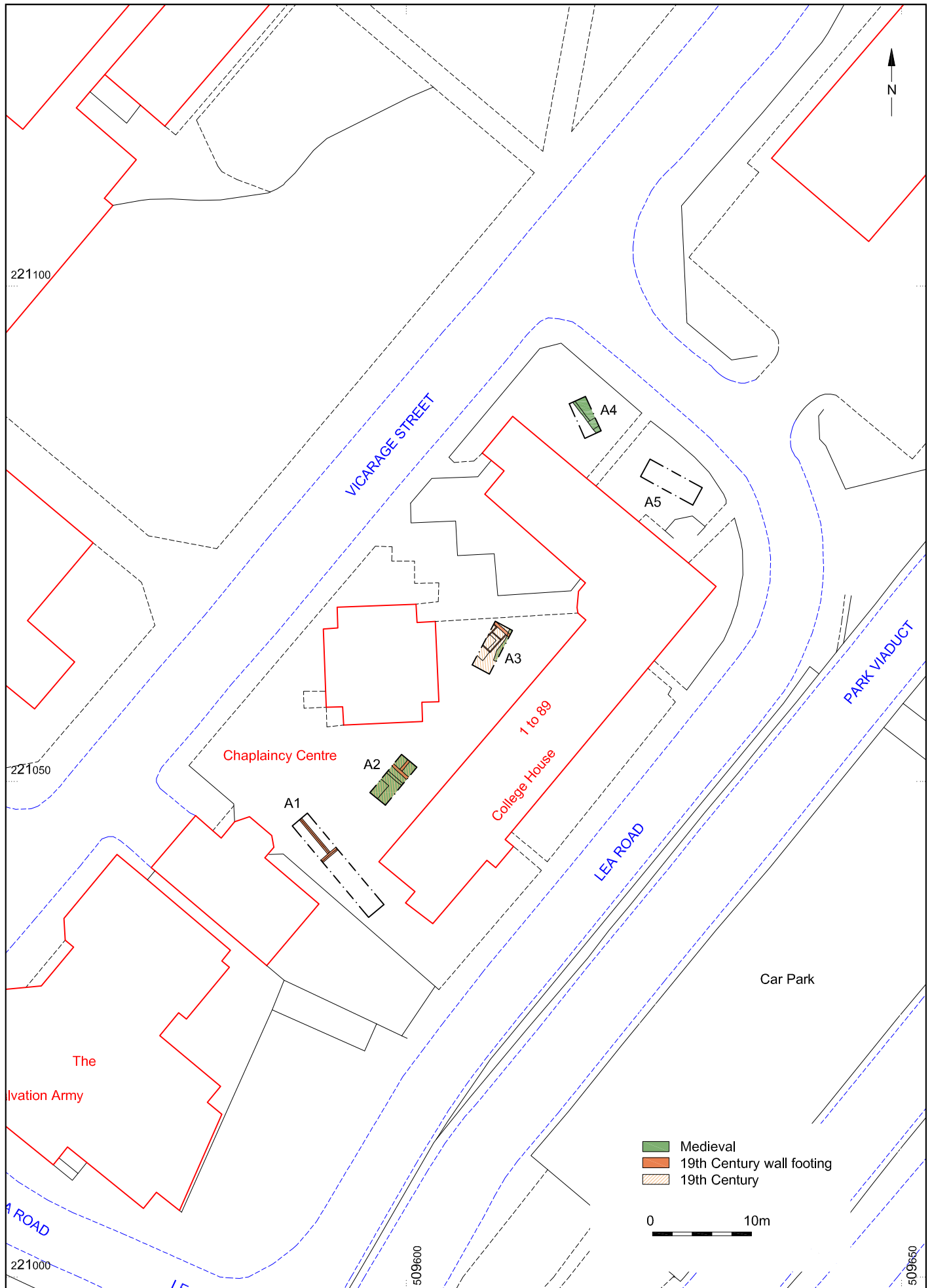
planning process	
Project location	
Country	England
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE LUTON Land at Vicarage Street, Luton (Site A)
Study area	50.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 0960 2110 51.8772359324 -0.407658084597 51 52 38 N 000 24 27 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 103.17m Max: 103.82m
Project creators	
Name of Organisation	Archaeology South East
Project brief originator	CgMs Consulting
Project design originator	Archaeology South-East
Project director/manager	Giles Dawkes
Project supervisor	Paul Riccoboni
Type of sponsor/funding body	CgMs Consulting
Project archives	
Physical Archive recipient	Local Museum
Physical Contents	'Ceramics'
Digital Archive recipient	Local Museum
Digital Contents	'Stratigraphic'
Digital Media available	'Survey','Text'
Paper Archive recipient	Local Museum
Paper Media available	'Context sheet','Diary','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey','Unpublished Text'

Project bibliography 1	
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land at Vicarage Street, Luton, Bedfordshire (Site A)
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Riccoboni, P.
Other bibliographic details	3610/2008200
Date	2008
Issuer or publisher	Archaeology South East
Place of issue or publication	Portslade
Description	Bound copy
Entered by	Paul Riccoboni (tcnprmr@ucl.ac.uk)
Entered on	6 November 2008

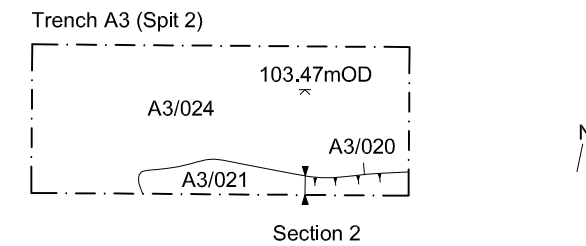
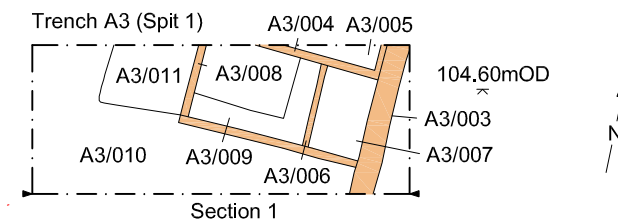
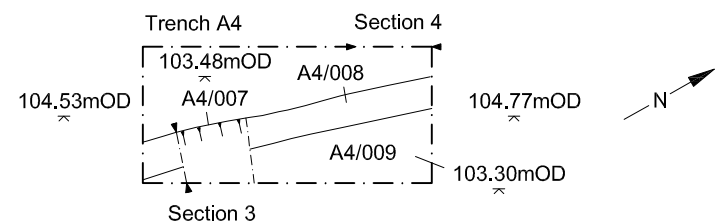
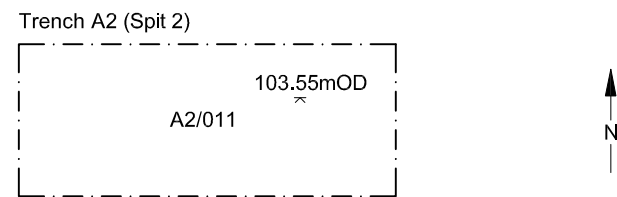
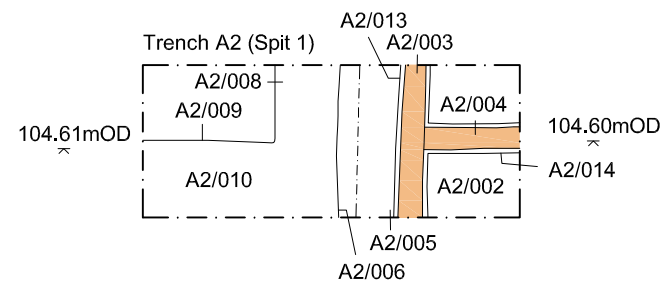
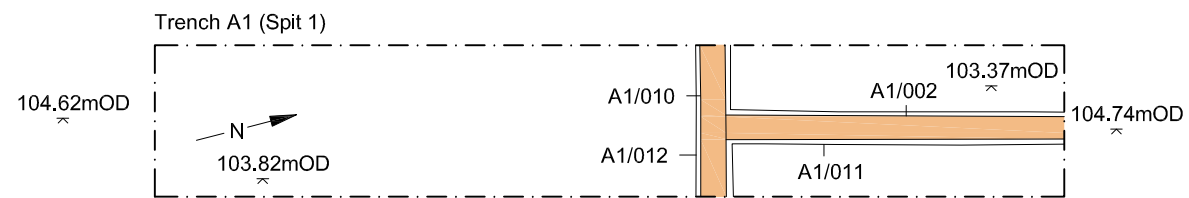


© Archaeology South-East		Land at Vicarage Street Site A, Luton	Fig. 1
Project Ref: 3610	Nov 2008	Site Location Plan	
Report Ref: 2008200	Drawn by: JLR		

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© Archaeology South-East		Land at Vicarage Street Site A, Luton		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 3610	Nov 2008	Trench location		
Report Ref: 2008200	Drawn by: JLR			



- Brick
- Mortar
- Flint
- * Charcoal
- Stone

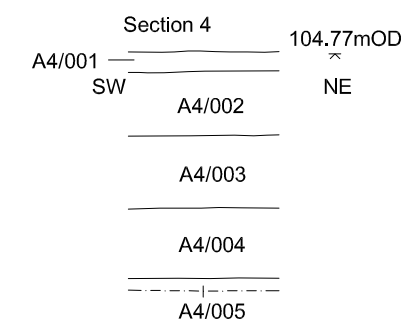
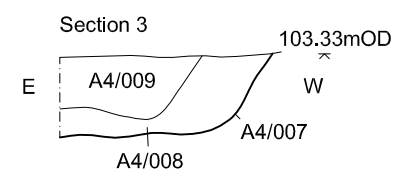
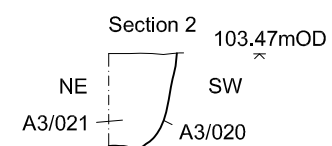
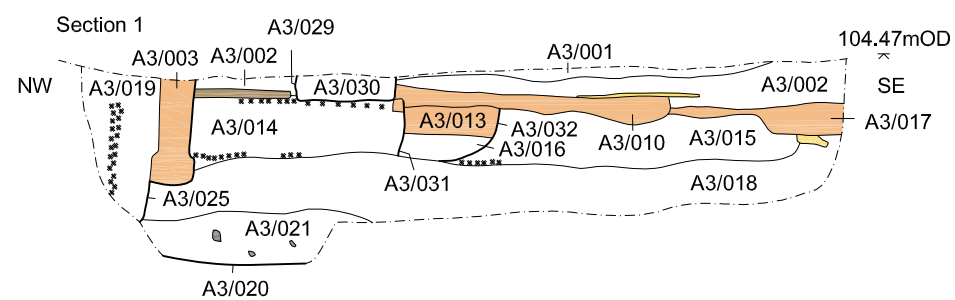


Figure 4: General shot of Trench A4 looking north



Figure 5: North facing section of linear feature [A4/007]

