



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

## Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample & Observation & Recording Report

41 Rookery Road  
Wyboston  
Bedford



### Quality Check

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Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



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## Summary

In July 2015 a strip map and sample excavation/archaeological observation & recording was undertaken prior to the construction of a manège and stable block at 41 Rookery Road, Wyboston, Bedfordshire as a planning condition for the development of the site. No features or finds of archaeological significance were revealed as only minimal ground reduction was required and consequently excavations did not reach a depth to which any surviving archaeology could be observed. The subsoil yielded material that was modern in date relating to previous land use.

## 1 Introduction

1.1 In July 2015 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of strip map and recording of 41 Rookery Road, Wyboston, Bedford. The project was commissioned by Mark Herbert, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Barclay Jones 2015), and approved by Bedford Borough Historic Environment Team (Archaeology), archaeological advisor to the local planning authority (LPA), Bedford Borough Council. The relevant planning application reference is 14/00987/FUL.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Condition 2 of planning permission for the development of the site.

### 1.3 *The Site*

#### *Location*

The site is located to the east of Rookery Road, which is a linear development to the north of the village. Wyboston is situated to the within the civil parish of Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden and the administrative district of Bedford Borough. The development site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 516012 257859 (Fig. 1).

#### *Description*

The site as a whole is bounded to north and south by private houses and to the east by agricultural land. It is on level ground at approximately 22m AOD (Fig. 2).

#### *Geology & Topography*

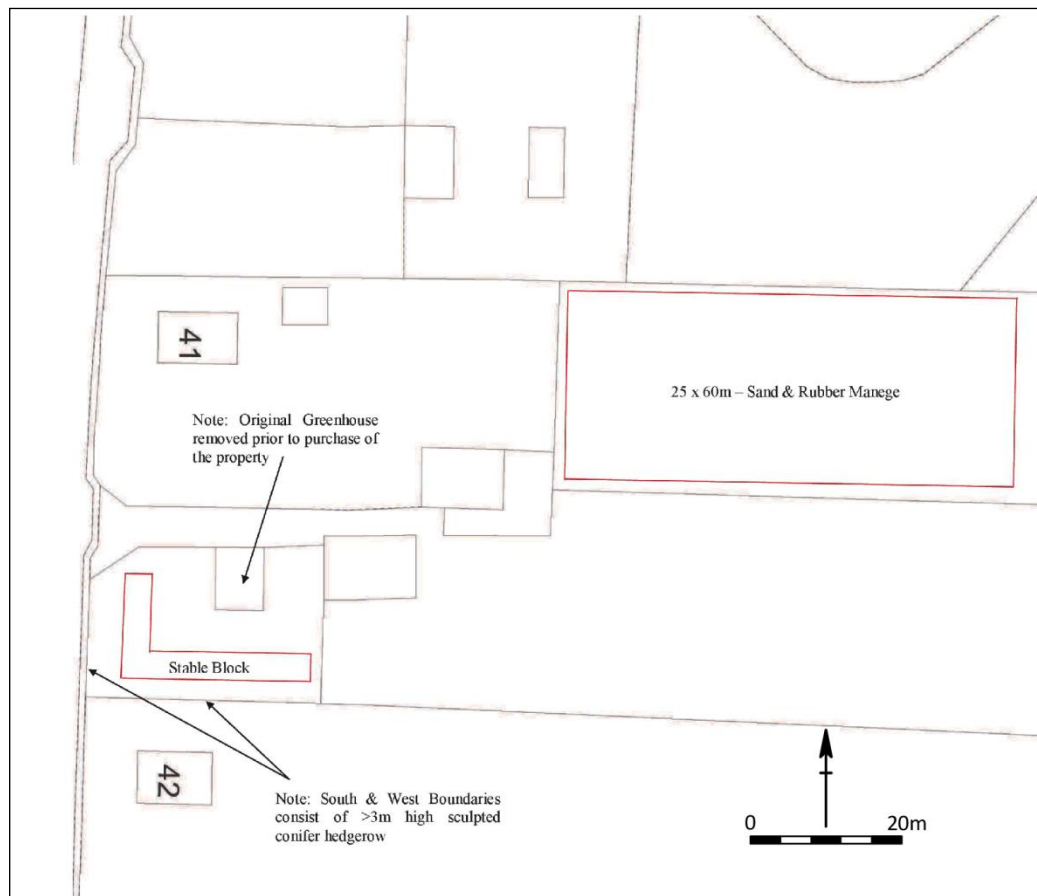
The bedrock geology of the site is part of the Oxford Clay Formation dating from the Jurassic period and is overlain by River Terrace Deposits of sand and gravel of the Ouse Valley Formation (Clarke 2015).

#### *Development*

The development consists of a manège on the plot of land between the house and the agricultural field, and a stable block on a smaller plot of land to the south of the house, which is largely bounded by hedges. The two plots are separated by an east-west aligned track to the south of the house. The manège area (in the east) measures approximately 25 x 60m, totalling 1500sq.m. The stable block area (in the south) measures 26.2m long (east to west) by 13.8m north to south, with 3.6m wide rooms (Fig. 3).



**Figure 2:** Site location (scale 1:1250)



**Figure 3:** Proposed development (scale 1:1000)





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## 2 Aims & Methods

2.1 The aims of this project as defined in the approved WSI (Barclay Jones 2015) were:

*Strip, Map & Sample Excavation:*

- to ensure the archaeological monitoring of the ground reduction of the proposed manege, and the further archaeological investigation and recording of the site, as appropriate.
- the analysis, conservation, and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site in appropriate conditions

*Watching Brief:*

- to establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area
- to establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.
- to ensure that the project findings are placed in their historical and geographical context through appropriate levels of cartographic, documentary and other research, and are then properly disseminated and published.

### 2.2 Methods

In line with the requirements of the brief, modern overburden and topsoil were removed down to the full depth of development impact.

### 2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The design brief
- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA 2014)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014)
- Current Historic England guidelines (HE 2015, EH 2008)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)





### 3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The site lies within a designated Area of Archaeological Interest containing cropmarks, which are thought to comprise a palaeochannel (relict, ancient stream course) as well settlement remains, characterised by pits that may date from the later prehistoric or Roman era.

This section has been compiled with information from KDK's own library, reliable internet sources, and Bedford Borough HER (search radius 500m).

3.2 ***Prehistoric*** (before 600BC)

The site lies within an extensive area of River Terrace Deposits comprising sands and gravels laid down in the Quaternary period up to 3 million years ago, in a far wider form but in an approximate course in which the River Great Ouse still follows. The currently available internet aerial photographic coverage of Wyboston ([www.google.co.uk/maps/](http://www.google.co.uk/maps/)) shows that a cropmark of an extensive branch of a later stream channel that was formed in the top of the gravel deposits, approaches the site from the main channel to the east and splits to go around the north and south of the application site. This probably equates with the known palaeochannel recorded in the HER (1882) which is known from oblique aerial photographs taken in 1970.

A series of pits, which may be prehistoric or later, occur in the area around the palaeochannel (HER 1882). Further undated but probably prehistoric linear cropmarks have been recorded in fields to the north-east of the site (HER 1881). Other fields surrounding the Rookery Lane/Northfield Road housing envelope also have evidence of cropmarks: a series of rectangular and polygonal enclosures south of Field Farm Cottages (HER 16782), extensive curvilinear, rectangular and polygonal enclosures south of Eaton Tithe Farm (HER 13980). At the junction of Rookery Lane and Northfield Road is the site of a ring-ditch (HER 16783). Slightly further afield, several ring ditches are known associated with enclosures on the east side of the A428/A1 (HER 480) and indistinct remains to its immediate north (HER 629).

There is no evidence of prehistoric activity within the immediate environs of the site.

3.3 ***Iron Age*** (600BC-AD43)

An enclosed Iron Age farmstead is known from Wyboston Lakes to the east of the development site, where a group of rectangular enclosures observed on aerial photographs was investigated before gravel extraction in the 1950s [HER 476]. Two ring ditches were revealed along with an inhumation in one of the enclosure ditches. There was also evidence for Roman occupation on the site, although it is unclear whether occupation was continuous ([www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Wyboston/](http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Wyboston/))

There is no evidence for Iron Age activity within the search radius.

3.4 ***Roman*** (AD43-c.450)

A single find of a Roman coin was made from the south-western end of Rookery Road (HER 481), directly to the south of the site.

Cropmarks of two adjoining rectangular enclosures in the area to the east of the development site (HER 15202) have produced a number of surface finds from the Roman period including brooches, a dagger chape, coins, and an eagle figurine. Many of the finds were bronze, and



the evidence suggests that there may have been a high status Roman settlement in that location. Other cropmarks (HER 1794) in the vicinity of Bell Farmhouse (HER 1712), to the north-east of the development site, show a probable trackway with attached enclosures; this area has also produced coins and other metalwork from the Roman period.

### 3.5 **Saxon** (c.450-1066)

The Domesday Survey (1086) provides an indication of the complexity of the landholdings that had developed in the Saxon period. There are 6 separate entries in the Domesday Survey, which were held by the Church of St Benedict, the monks of St Neots, several thegns and 12 sokemen. The socio-political implications of these holdings suggest a varied and convoluted history throughout the Saxon period, for which there appears to be very little archaeological and documentary evidence. To date the archaeological evidence for Saxon activity within the search area rests on the discovery of four 7<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> century brooches (HER 1794), which were found in association with the possible high status Roman settlement (HER 15202).

The post-Conquest landholdings are dominated by Nigel d'Aubigny's 9 hide estate that was held by Piro, and the 6 hide estate held by Eudo FitzHubert. Ramsey Abbey and the monks of St Neots were not deprived of their lands, although they, like the other land holders, suffered a sharp decline in the value of their estates in 1066 (Williams & Martin 2002: 566; 570; 573; 576; 580; 586).

### 3.6 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

The village of Wyboston is a medieval roadside settlement, with The Lane and the Great North Road forming the historic core (HER 17149). There was also a village green (HER 8621), although this was enclosed c. 1799, and one end of it has now been developed, while the other end remains as pasture.

To the south of the development area lies The Lane, along which is located a medieval moated site, which is also a scheduled monument (SM 1012076; HER 474). This is a moated enclosure, with associated building platforms, and is believed to be the site of a medieval manor house; another medieval manor was reputedly located at Manor Farm (HER 10116) ([www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk)).

### 3.7 **Post-Medieval** (1500-1900)

All the listed buildings in the village date back to post-medieval times, including the Crown Inn (MBD8760) to the north-east of the site, and a small cluster of properties along the Great North Road, to the south-east of the site (64, 66 and 68 – MBD1713 & 878). Number 64 was previously the Queen's Head Public House, while 66 and 68 were previously the Gun & Cannon Public House ([www.bedfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk)). Heddings Farmhouse (MBD12471) on The Lane and Bell Farmhouse (MBD12471) on the Great North Road are also listed buildings. Manor Farm, to the south of the site, is a post-medieval farmstead, although it is thought that it may have originated from a medieval manor. Other post-medieval structures lay along The Lane and the Great North Road, but have not survived to the present day.

Gravel Pit Close (HER 8629), marked on an enclosure map from 1799, may provide place name evidence for the presence of a gravel extraction pit from this period, although this has now disappeared.



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### 3.8.1 *Modern* (1900-present)

The only notable modern construction that lies within the search area is a 20<sup>th</sup> century water standpipe (HER 8589), which lies at the eastern end of The Lane, to the south of the development area.

### 3.8.2 *The Known Archaeology & History of the Site*

Rookery Road was one of five sites within the parish in which small holdings were created and managed by the Land Settlement Association scheme. This system aimed to provide work and agricultural training for unemployed industrial workers in the 1930s and the land along Rookery Road was owned by the LSA until it was sold into private ownership in 1982.

By the 1950s several nurseries had been erected in and around the site. There is evidence to suggest that several greenhouses were contained within the site boundaries, all of which were no longer standing at the time of the archaeological investigations. Detritus of the green houses remain within the top and subsoils.



## 4 Results

### 4.1 *Site Stripping*

#### Area 1 Manège

An area of 374.46 sq m (Fig. 4) was mechanically stripped of topsoil and overburden under close archaeological supervision using a 14 tonne machine with a 1.80m toothless bucket.

Ground reduction on the site was minimal due to the unobtrusive nature of the development. As such it was deemed unnecessary by BBCHET to supervise the entire proposed 25x60m area as the building requirements did not reach a depth to which archaeology could be observed. Therefore, only the top soil and interface between topsoil and subsoil were removed to a depth of <0.20m. The stratigraphy encountered comprised of:

Topsoil: <0.20m. Mid grey brown friable silty clay.

Subsoil (Northern): Mid orangey brown firm silty clay which was quite friable. Frequent rooting and sub-angular stones were observed.

Subsoil (Southern): Mid orangey grey firm silty clay which was also friable. Frequent rooting and sub-angular stones were observed as well as occasional inclusions of CBM and glass.

The underlying natural stratum was not reached.

#### Area 2 Stable

The second area to be excavated consisted of an area 238.26 sq m (Fig. 5) which was excavated using a 14 tonne machine with a 1.80m toothless bucket. Once again minimal ground reduction was required. The stratigraphy encountered consisted of:

Topsoil: Depth <0.23m. Mid grey brown friable silty clay.

Subsoil: Mid orangey grey firm silty clay which was also friable. Frequent rooting and sub-angular stones were observed as well as occasional inclusions of chalk, charcoal, plastic CBM and glass.

The underlying natural stratum was not reached.

### 4.2 *Sampling Strategy*

On completion of the site strip, no archaeological features were revealed within the stripped area, and no finds of archaeological significance were noted in the spoil removed during stripping. With the agreement of BBCHET no further archaeological works were undertaken on the site.



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## 5 Conclusions

### 5.1 *Introduction*

This strip map and recording project was undertaken prior to the construction of a manège and stable block. Due to the nature of this development, only minimal ground reduction was required and consequently excavations did not reach a depth to which archaeology could be observed. The subsoil yielded material that was modern in date relating to previous land use. Detritus found within the subsoil relate in part to greenhouses and polytunnels which no longer exist on the site. These structures would have been 20<sup>th</sup> century in date and similar to those which can be observed on several plots along Rookery Road. A single stake hole was uncovered during stripping which was modern and was used to anchor the nearby polytunnel of which the polythene debris still remained within the subsoil. No artefacts of archaeological significance were recovered from this site. Artefacts consisted of glass, polythene, metal, pottery and CBM all of which were modern in date, therefore, none of the artefacts were retained.



**Plate 1:** Area 1: Manège area looking ESE.



**Plate 2:** Area 1: Manège area looking north.



**Plate 3:** Area 2: Stable area looking west.



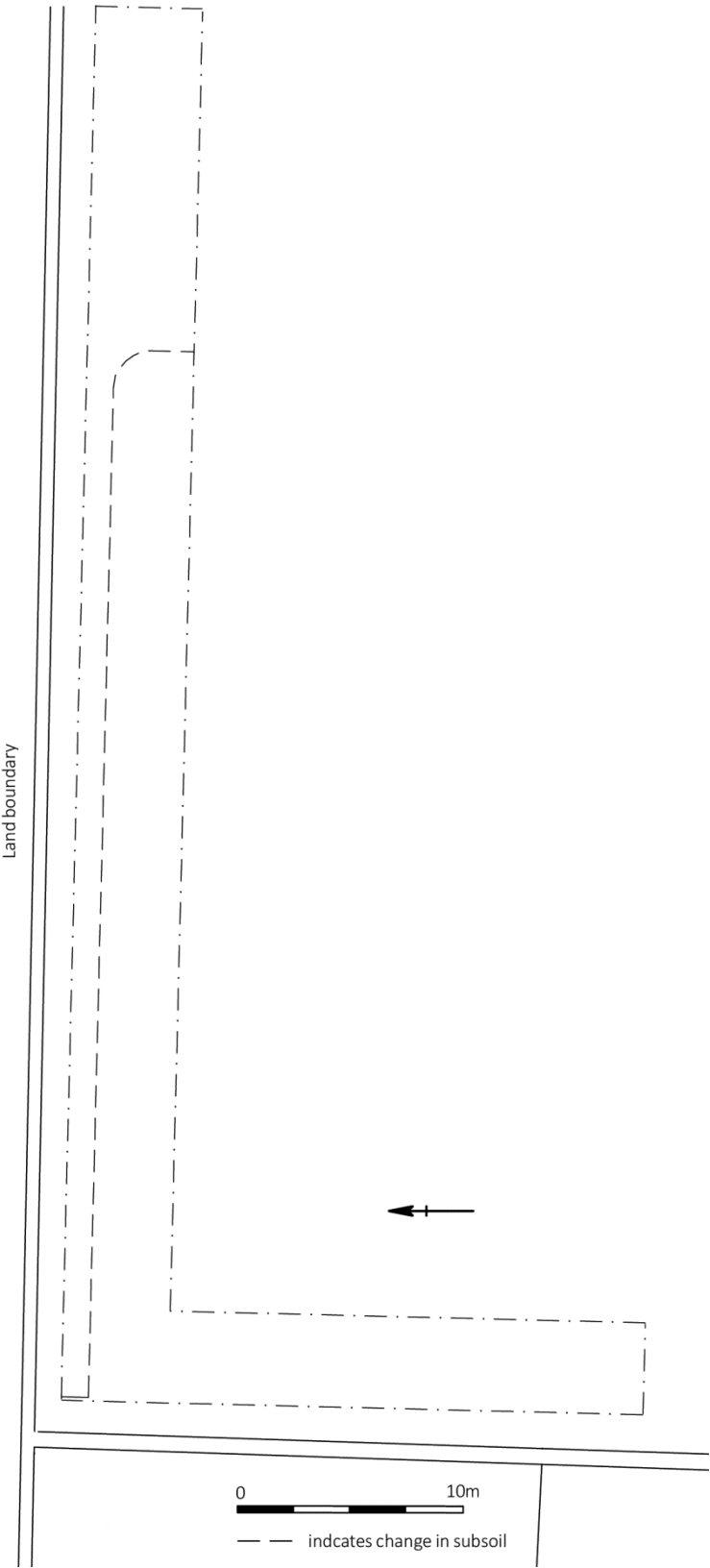
**Plate 4:** Area 2: Stable area looking south.





**Plate 5:** Area 2: Stable trench stratigraphy looking south.





**Figure 4:** Area 1: Manège area (Scale 1:30)

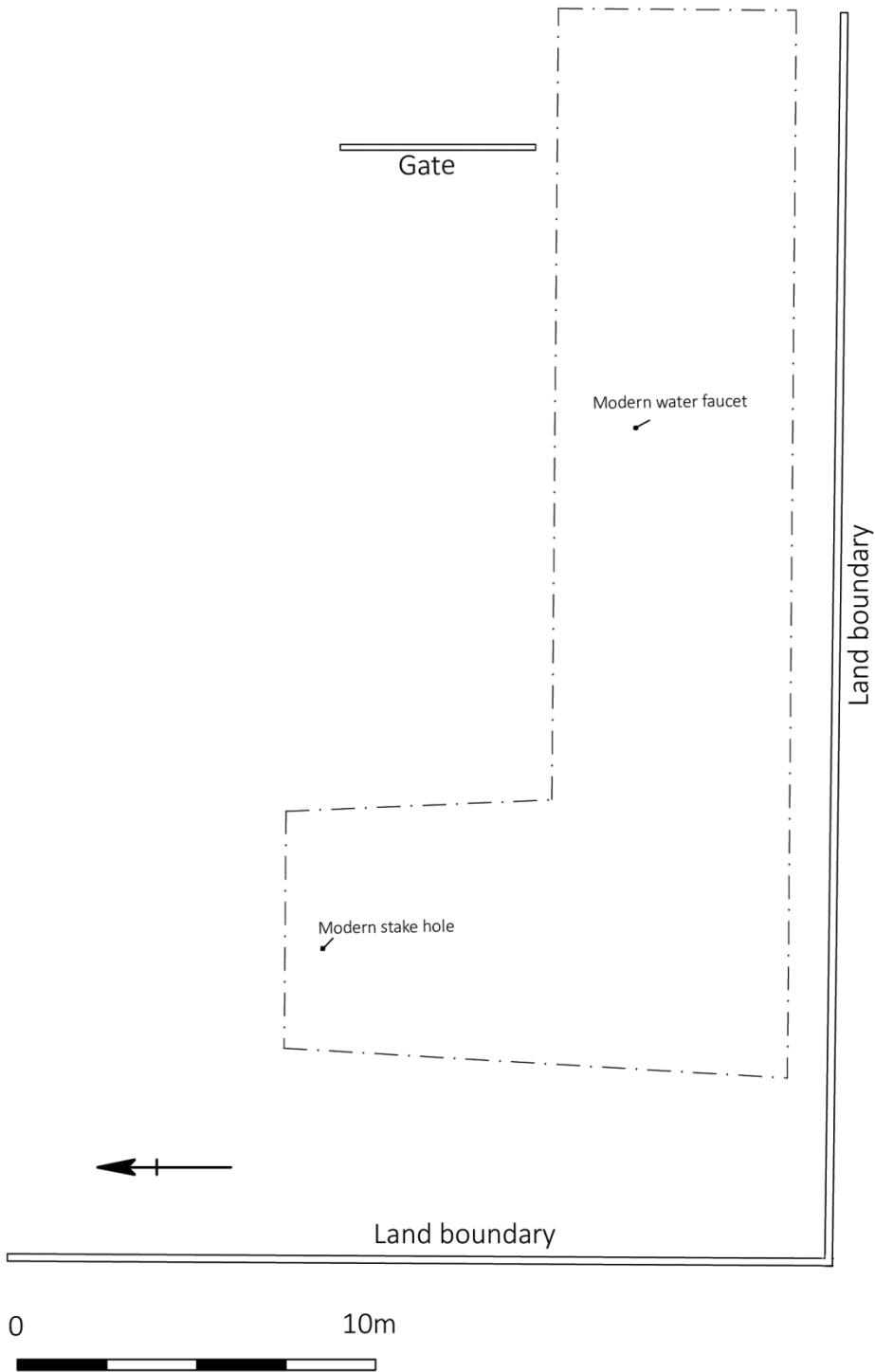


Figure 5: Area 2: Stable block (Scale 1:20)



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## 6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Mark Herbert for commissioning this report. Thanks are also due to Vanessa Clarke of Bedford Borough Council for providing historic environment records, Geoff Saunders of BBCHET for monitoring the fieldwork and to Kate Herbert and the digger operator for their assistance on site.

The fieldwork was carried out by Jessica Bertrand MA and Laura Dodd MSc. The report was written by Laura Dodd, and edited by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA.



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## 7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Written Scheme of Investigation
3. Initial report
4. Monitoring sheets
5. Site drawings
6. Client's site plans
7. List of photographs
8. B/W prints & negatives
9. Specialist reports
10. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (BEDFM 2015.12)



## 8 References

### *Standards & Specifications*

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.
- Allen J. L. & Holt A. St J. 1986 (with later updates) *Health & Safety in Field Archaeology*. London: Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers
- Brickley M. & McKinley J. I. 2004 *Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Technical Paper.
- CIfA 2014 *Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
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- EH 2011 *Environmental Archaeology: a guide to the theory and practice of methods from sampling and recovery to post-excavation*. London: English Heritage
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- Gurney D. 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14
- HE 2015 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. London: Historic England
- SMA 1995 *Towards an accessible archaeological archive - the transfer of archaeological archives to museums: guidelines for use in England, Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales*. London: Society for Museum Archaeologists
- Walker K. 1990 *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage*. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Archaeology Section (London).
- Watkinson D. & Neal V. 1998 *First Aid for Finds*. Hertford & London: Rescue

### *Secondary Sources*

- Williams, A & Martin GH 2002 *Domesday Book: a complete translation* London: Penguin

### *Internet Sources*

- British Geological Society: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>
- British History Online: 'Parishes: Eaton Socon', in *A History of the County of Bedford: Volume 3*, ed. William Page (London, 1912), pp. 189-202 <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/beds/vol3/pp189-202> [accessed 25 February 2015].



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Google Maps:

<https://www.google.co.uk/maps/place/Rookery+Rd,+Wyboston,+Bedford+MK44/@52.2041731,-0.3045866,17z/data=!3m1!4b1!4m2!3m1!1s0x4877c610fe0ae5c9:0x3e57b34c9d6f6e3e?hl=en>

Wyboston:

<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Wyboston/WybostonIndexOfPages.aspx>

<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Wyboston/WybostonInPrehistory.aspx>

<http://www.bedfordshire.gov.uk/CommunityAndLiving/ArchivesAndRecordOffice/CommunityArchives/Wyboston/WybostonInTheRomano-BritishAndAnglo-Saxo.aspx>



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**Appendix 1: Photograph List**

SITE NO/CODE:			Site Name:
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		X	Ground reduction Area 1. Looking ESE
2		X	Ground reduction Area 1. Looking ESE
3		X	Ground reduction Area 1. Looking N
4		X	Ground reduction Area 1. Looking N
5	X	X	Ground reduction. Area 2. Looking W
6		X	Ground reduction. Area 2. Looking S
7	X	X	Ground reduction. Area 2. Looking S
8	X	X	Area 2 stratigraphy. Looking S





## Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	41 Rookery Road, Wyboston	Project Site Code	113/WRR
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-204564	Event/Accession no	BEDFM 2015.12
OS reference	516012 257859	Study area size	374.46sqm & 238.26sqm
Project Type	Strip map and sample	Height (mAOD)	22
Short Description	In July 2015 a strip map and sample evaluation was undertaken prior to the construction of a manège and stable block at 41 Rookery Road, Wyboston, Bedfordshire as a planning condition for the development of the site. No features or finds of archaeological significance were revealed as only minimal ground reduction was required and consequently excavations did not reach a depth to which any surviving archaeology could be observed. The subsoil yielded material that was modern in date relating to previous land use		
Previous work	Unknown	Site status	None
Planning proposal	Construction of stable block and manège	Current land use	Residential
Local Planning Authority	Bedford Borough Council	Planning application ref.	14/00987/FUL
Monument type	None	Monument period	Modern
Significant finds	None	Future work	None
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	Vanessa Clarke	Project Design originator	David Kaye
Project Manager	David Kaye	Director/Supervisor	Laura Dodd
Sponsor/funding body	Mark Herbert		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	27.07.15	End date	31.07.15
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	Bedford Museum	-	
Paper		Archaeological strip, map and record report, WSI, site records, photographs	
Digital		CD ROM, digital photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Strip, Map and Sample report; 41 Rookery Road, Wyboston, Bedford		
Serial title & volume	113/WRR/2		
Author(s)	Laura Dodd		
Page nos	22	Date	24.08.15