



KDK Archaeology Ltd

Archaeological Observation and Recording Report

Ashfield Farm

Kimbolton Road

Bolnhurst

Bedfordshire



Quality Check

<i>Author</i>	Eva Estela MA	<i>Version</i>	159/BAF/2.0	<i>Date</i>	28.06.2016
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7b High Street Mews Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire LU7 1EA
Tel: 01525 385443
Email: office@kdkarchaeology.co.uk
Website: www.kdkarchaeology.co.uk





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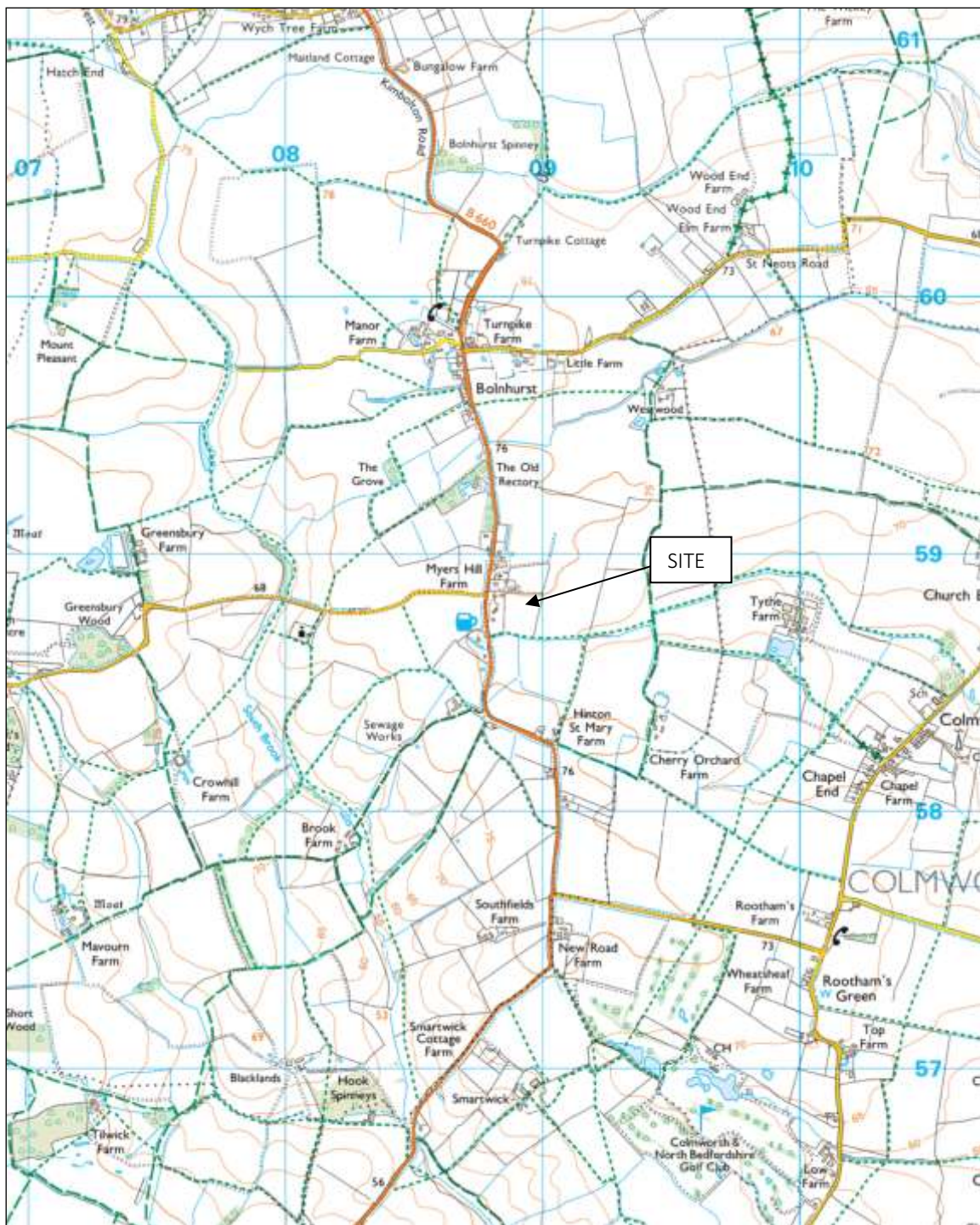


Figure 1: Site location (scale 1:25,000)



Summary

Between October 2015 and June 2016 a programme of Archaeological Observation and Recording was undertaken during the groundworks related to the construction of a new dwelling in Ashfield Farm, Kimbolton Road, Bolnhurst, Bedfordshire. The archaeological monitoring revealed that the site was probably truncated during the construction of the previous buildings in the 20th century. No finds, features or deposits were revealed during the groundworks.

1 Introduction

1.1 Between October 2015 and May 2016 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording of Ashfield Farm, Bolnhurst, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by Sycamore Homes, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Salsko 2015), and approved by Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team (BBCHE), Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Bedford Borough Council. The relevant planning application reference is 15/01222/FUL.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.3 *The Site*

Location

The development site is located to the south of the centre of Bolnhurst, in the civil parish of Bolnhurst and Keysoe, and the administrative district of the Bedford Borough Council. The National Grid Reference for the site is TL 08806 58781 (Fig. 1).

Description

Ashfield Farm is located on the east side of the Kimbolton Road (B660), south of the village of Bolnhurst. It is bounded on the east, south and west by agricultural fields and is part of a small cluster of houses and farm buildings situated near the junction of Kimbolton Road and Thurleigh Road (Fig. 2).

Geology & Topography

The development site sits upon soils laid down up to 2 million years ago by Ice Age glaciers. Moraines of till with outwash sand and gravel deposits in a scoured landscape characterise this formation (Oadby Member – Diamicton).

The underlying Oxford Clay Formation – Mudstone, is a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 156 to 165 million years ago in the Jurassic Period. This formation developed in a shallow sea (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing structures and the subsequent construction of a new dwelling, with associated access and landscaping (Fig. 3).

1.4 *Constraints*



Trench 1 and the soakaway were excavated without being monitored as KDK was not informed that this was to take place. They were, however, both inspected following excavation.

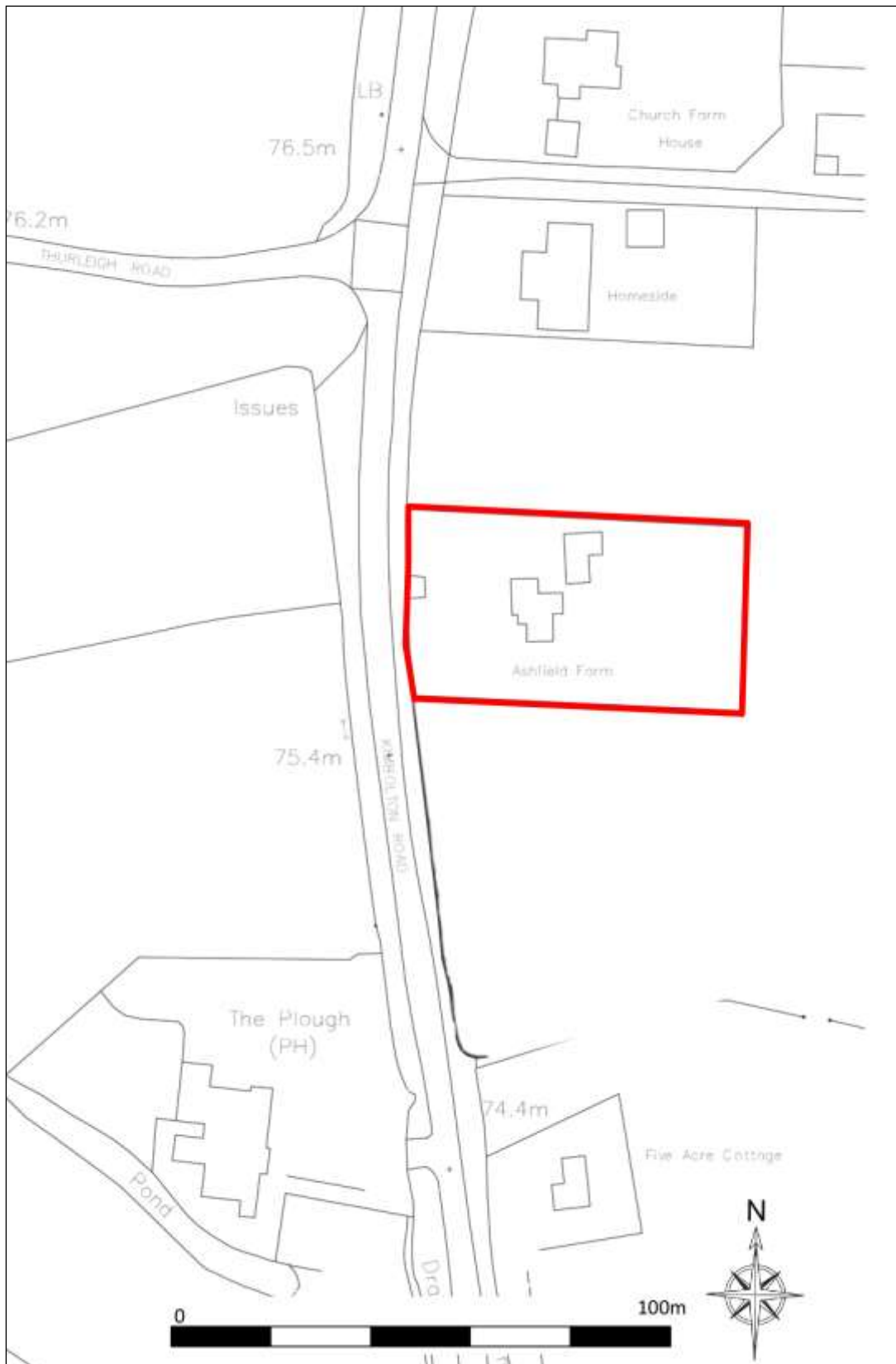


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:750)

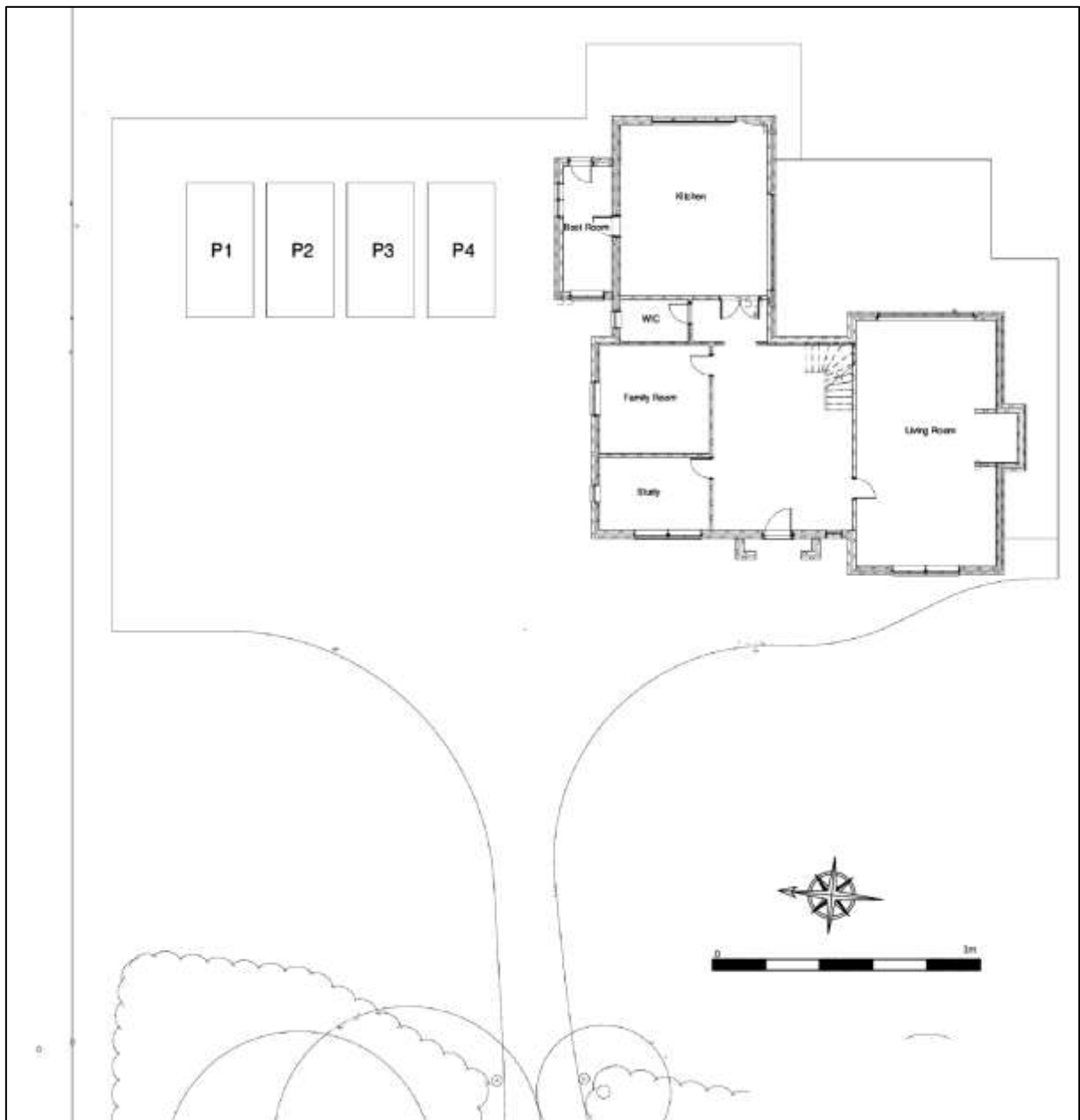


Figure 3: Proposed development plan (scale as shown)



2 Aims & Methods

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

- 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 landscape
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

2.2 *Methods*

The methods used were as follows:

Any ground or other works likely to have an impact on archaeological deposits or remains were to be done under continuous and constant archaeological supervision.

2.3 *Standards*

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- 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 English Heritage 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 & Historical Background

- 3.1 Bolnhurst is a small parish, with only 734 residents in the 2001 census (<http://virtual-library.culturalservices.net/webingres/bedfordshire/census/parish-profiles/pp-bolnhurst-and-keysoe.htm>). Nonetheless, it contains a range of interesting archaeological resources, particularly those relating to the Iron Age and Medieval periods. The following section briefly mentions some of the most intriguing of those remains.

This section has been compiled with information from the Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record, the Victoria County History and other reliable online resources.

3.2 *Prehistoric-Iron Age* (before AD43)

The Historic Environment Record indicates considerable prehistoric activity within a 1km radius of the development site. The earliest is a possible Bronze Age ring ditch (HER16695), located c.1km south of Ashfield Farm, but there are also cropmarks of a number of enclosures to the east and west of the site (HER 16691, 16692 and HER 16671, 16672 & 16675 respectively). Evidence for occupation, including a possible Iron Age roundhouse, has also been revealed to the east of the development site (HER 15018). The most significant prehistoric site in the area is the Iron Age hillfort at Manor Farm, 1km north of Ashfield Farm (HER 315). This site consists of an earthwork formed of a single ditch and bank, which was reused in the medieval period (see below). The hillfort is a Scheduled Ancient Monument (No. 11529).

3.3 *Roman* (AD43-c.450)

There is very little evidence of Roman period occupation in the vicinity of the development site. A Roman Republican denarius and a bow brooch were found at Church Farm, less than 300m north of the development site (HER 16403). A third century AD Roman coin and Roman pottery were found during field walking at Manor Farm (HER 315), c.1km north of the development site.

3.4 *Saxon-Medieval* (c.450-1500)

There is no evidence for early Saxon settlement in Bolnhurst, but the Domesday Survey records three landholders in the last years of the Saxon period. The largest landholding was that of Thorney Abbey, which had been granted a 2hide estate by Alflæd who in turn had held it from King Edward (Williams & Martin 2002: 567). The monastery retained ownership of the manor until the Dissolution. Guthmund held a small parcel of land of 3 virgates (*ibid*: 564) and Almær held half a hide, which was later granted to the Countess Judith (*ibid*: 583). Another half hide estate was held by Azur, a man of Burgræd (*ibid*: 563) and this land was later awarded to the Bishop of Bayeaux and held by Tovi the priest.

The medieval manor of Grymsbury is thought to have derived from Guthmund's landholdings, which were granted to the Bishop of Coutances after the Norman Conquest (Page 1908). Another manor, known as Mavorn or Glintells developed from land held by the priory of Canons Ashby (Page 1908).

Other than Manor Farm, (HER 315), which was built within the surviving earthworks of the Iron Age hillfort, reutilising the ditches to create a moated manor, the location of



these manors is uncertain, although they may well be associated with the deserted medieval settlements recorded in the HER. Church End medieval settlement (HER 17059), was located c.1km north of the development site; Free School End medieval settlement (HER 17060), includes part of Ashfield Farm, including the development site; and another possible site (HER 7693) lay around Bolnhurst church to the west. To the southwest of Ashfield Farm is another possible medieval settlement evidenced by rectangular enclosures and a surviving pond at Brook Farm (HER 16670). It is generally assumed that the arrival of the Black Death in 1348 led to the abandonment of these settlements and to the relocation of the village centre to the northeast of and some distance from the medieval church (http://virtual-library.culturalservices.net/webingres/bedfordshire/vlib/0.digitised_resources/bolnhurst_timeline.htm).

A number of possible moated sites occur in the vicinity, including Bolnhurst Rectory (HER 317), a site to the north of the Plough Inn (HER 3885), another to the south of the Plough (HER 3887) and a moated spinney (HER 3888) at The Grove to the northwest of the development site. Whether the remains are all moats rather than drainage is under debate.

The Church of St Dunstan, a Grade II* listed building (HER 1026), is the only surviving medieval structure in Bolnhurst. The chancel is the oldest surviving part of the building and is believed to date to the early thirteenth century. The nave and west tower are fifteenth century (Page 1912: 124-128). There are remnants of fifteenth century wall paintings in the nave and the church also retains its fifteenth century chancel screen (www.achurchnearyou.com).

3.5 *Post-Medieval* (1500-1900)

There are a number of post-medieval sites near the development site. Some are surviving structures, such as Laburnham Cottage (HER3 472), approximately 900m north of Ashfield Farm, and some are sites of known dwellings that have been demolished, such as HER 5603, which was a Grade III listed building in the immediate vicinity of the development site. Approximately 150m west is the Plough Public House (HER 5604), a seventeenth century Grade II listed building, which has the remains of two ponds that were thought to have been part of an irregular moat (HER 3886).

Bolnhurst Rectory, c.450m north of the development site, is an eighteenth century building with a fishpond and moat, both thought to be contemporary with the structure (HER 317).

3.6 *Modern* (1900-present)

Into the modern period, Bolnhurst retained its rural, agricultural character. In October 1942, a Women's Land Army Hostel opened approximately 400m south of the development site. Throughout the remainder of the Second World War, this hostel was home to some 40 so-called "Land Girls", who provided agricultural labour on the local farms. The hostel remained in operation until 1949 (HER 18241).



4 Results

Introduction

The groundworks that were monitored comprised ground reduction following the demolition of previous buildings on the site, followed by the excavation of two trenches and a soakaway. This was carried out with a 1.5 tonne machine fitted with a 0.3m toothed bucket.

Description

An area of 360 square metres located partly within the footprint of the previous dwelling was reduced by 0.25m (Figure 4: Plate 1).

Trench 1 was excavated to the south of the new dwelling. It measured 12.70 x 0.4 x 1m and was connected to the soakaway at the south end (Figure 4: Plate 2). The soakaway was 1.60 x 1.50 x 1.80m and had been excavated without an archaeologist being present, then filled to a depth of 1m by large pieces of hardcore (Figure 4: Plate 3). It wasn't considered essential to remove the rubble for the recording, as the bottom of the soakaway was 1.4m below the natural and it was possible to see the stratigraphy in section.

Trench 2, which was excavated under archaeological supervision, was located to the north of the new dwelling. It was aligned east-west and measured 17 x 0.40 x 0.90m (Figure 4: Plate 4).

The general site stratigraphy comprised a 0.40m layer of dark brown, heavily rooted topsoil overlying the natural yellow clay. The only disturbance was caused by a disused soakaway in the northeast end of Trench 2, which had been part of the services for the previous 20th century buildings. No subsoil was observed.

No archaeological artefacts, cut features or deposits were noted during the works.



Plate 1: Ground reduction facing NW (1x1m scale)



Plate 2: Trench 1 facing SW (1x1m scale)



Plate 3: Soakaway facing SE (1x1m scale)



Plate 4: Trench 2 facing NE (1x1 m scale)



Figure 4: Trench 1, Trench 2, soakaway and reduced area plan (scale 1:500)



5 Conclusions

The archaeological monitoring of the works in the development site was undertaken to record possible archaeological remains considering that the surrounding area contained several sites related to Iron Age and medieval period.

Despite the presence of a number of prehistoric and later monuments and find spots in the vicinity of the site, no archaeological features or finds were observed during the groundworks. This may be because the site lay outside areas of earlier activity or because the site had been truncated to form a level platform on which to build the previous house and garage. This is supported by the absence of subsoil across the site.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Sycamore Homes for commissioning this report. Thanks are also due to the staff of Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team (BBCHET) providing the Historic Environment Records and to Vanessa Clarke of Bedford Borough Council monitoring the project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Jessica Bertrand MA ACIFA and Eva Estela MA. The report was written by Eva Estela, and edited by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA



7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

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

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (Accession number BEDFM 2015.63).



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.

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Walker K. 1990 *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage*. United Kingdom Institute for Conservation, Archaeology Section (London).

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Medlycott M. (Ed) 2011 *Research and Archaeology Re-visited: revised framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24



Oake, M et al 2007 *Bedfordshire Archaeology - Research and Archaeology: resource assessment, research agenda and strategy* Bedfordshire Archaeology 9

Williams A. & Martin G. H. 2002 *Domesday Book: a complete translation*. London: Penguin

Online Resources

Bedfordshire County Council:

http://virtuallibrary.culturalservices.net/webingres/bedfordshire/vlib/0.digitised_resources/bolnhurst_timeline.htm)

<http://virtual-library.culturalservices.net/webingres/bedfordshire/census/parish-profiles/pp-bolnhurst-and-keysoe.htm>).

British Geological Society:

<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

Church of England:

http://www.achurchnearyou.com/documents/2015-04-01_33528_1427901686.pdf

Page, W (Ed) 1912 *Parishes: Bolnhurst*, pp 124-128 in A History of the County of Bedford: Volume 3:

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/beds/vol3/pp124-128> [accessed 25 August 2015]

Old Maps:

<https://www.old-maps.co.uk>



Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO/CODE:159/BAF			Site Name: Ashfield Farm, Kimbolton Road, Bolnhurst, Bedfordshire
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	X	X	Ground reduction facing NW (1m scale)
2	X	X	Ground reduction facing NW (1m scale)
3	X	X	Ground reduction facing SE (1m scale)
4	X	X	Ground reduction facing SE (1m scale)
5	X	X	Trench 1 facing SE (1x1m scale)
6		X	Stratigraphy of Trench 1 facing W (1x1m scale)
7	X	X	Soakaway facing SE (1x1 m scale)
8		X	Stratigraphy of soakaway facing W (1m scale)
9	X	X	Trench 2 facing NE (1x1 m scale)
10	X	X	Trench 2 facing SW (1x1m scale)
11		X	Modern soakaway in Trench 2 section facing NE (1x1m scale)
12		X	Stratigraphy of Trench 2 facing SW (1x1m scale)



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	Ashfield Farm, Kimbolton Road, Bonnhurst, Bedfordshire.	Project Site Code	159/BAF
OASIS reference	Kdkarcha1-221417	Event/Accession no	BEDFM 2015.6
OS reference	TL 08806 58781	Study area size	372 square m
Project Type	Watching Brief	Height (mAOD)	77mAOD
Short Description	Between October 2015 and June 2016 an Archaeological Observation and Recording was undertaken during the groundworks related to the construction of a new dwelling in Asfield Farm, Kimbolton Road, Bolnhurst, Bedfordshire. The archaeological monitoring revealed that the site was probably truncated during the construction of the previous buildings in the 20 th century. No finds, features or deposits were revealed during the development of the site.		
Previous work	None	Site status	None
Planning proposal	Demolition of existing structures and the subsequent construction of a new dwelling, with associated access and landscaping	Current land use	Dwelling
Local Planning Authority	Bedford Borough Council	Planning application ref.	15/01222/FUL
Monument type	None	Monument period	None
Significant finds	None	Future work	None
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator		Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	David Kaye	Director/Supervisor	Jessica Bertrand & Eva Estela
Sponsor/funding body	Sycamore Homes		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	12/10/2015	End date	10/06/2016
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	Bedford Museum		
Paper		Archaeological Observation and Recording Report, WSI, site records, photographs	
Digital		CD ROM, digital photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Observation and Recording: Ashfield Farm, Kimbolton Road, Bolnhurst, Bedfordshire.		
Serial title & volume	159/BAF		
Author(s)	Eva Estela		
Page no's	17	Date	28/06/2016