



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

## Archaeological Observation and Recording Report

The Quaker Meeting House

1 The Alleys

Hemel Hempstead

Hertfordshire



### Quality Check

<i>Author</i>	Chris Martin-Taylor BSc	<i>Version</i>	348/HHQ/2.1	<i>Date</i>	04.12.2019
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<i>Revision</i>		<i>Version</i>		<i>Date</i>	
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## Summary

From January 2018 to June 2019 a programme of Observation and Recording was undertaken at the Quaker Meeting House, 1 The Alleys, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire in order to fulfil Conditions 6, 7 and 8 of planning permission for the landscaping of the site.

Excavation of a wall foundation trench along the western boundary of the site revealed no archaeological features although there was a large quantity of post-medieval and modern finds in the topsoil and subsoil indicating the occupation of both adjacent property plots throughout the post-medieval period. Although the site has been used as burial ground, no graves were affected by the work.

## 1 Introduction

1.1 From January 2018 to June 2019 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording of Quaker Meeting House, 1 The Alleys, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by the Religious Society of Friends, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Shlasko 2017), and approved by Alison Tinniswood of Hertfordshire County Council, Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Dacorum Borough Council. The relevant planning application reference is 4/02024/17/FUL.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as Conditions 6, 7 and 8 of planning permission for the development of the site.

#### *Location*

The Quaker Meeting House is located at 1 The Alleys, in the town and civil parish of Hemel Hempstead and the administrative district of Dacorum Borough Council. The National Grid Reference is TL 05672 07875 (Fig. 1).

#### *Description*

The proposed development site is the burial ground/garden on the southwest side of the Quaker Meeting House. It is an open lawn surrounded by a brick wall. There is a shed at the west end and a store along the north wall. The site is approximately 85m east of the High Street and is in a developed urban environment, with a car park to the south and buildings to the north (Fig. 2).

The Meeting House is Grade II listed and described as:

*1718, restored 1808, altered 1860. Red brick, hipped tiled roof. 2 storeys, with single storey part of the same height. Wide eaves cornice Meeting room has 2 tall round arched flush sash windows 2 storey part has 2 flush sash windows under flat arches to each floor.* (<https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1262907>)

#### *Geology & Topography*

Hemel Hempstead is located in the southwest of Hertfordshire, in the valley of the River Gade. The bedrock geology consists of Lewes Nodular Chalk Formation and Seaford Chalk Formation, a sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 84 to 94 million years ago



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(<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). There is no identified superficial geology in the town. The site is located approximately 108m AOD.

*Proposed Development*

The proposed development calls for the construction of a new patio, removal and construction of a waste bin store and garden shed. It also includes the replacement of dilapidated low brick retaining wall and fence (Fig. 3).

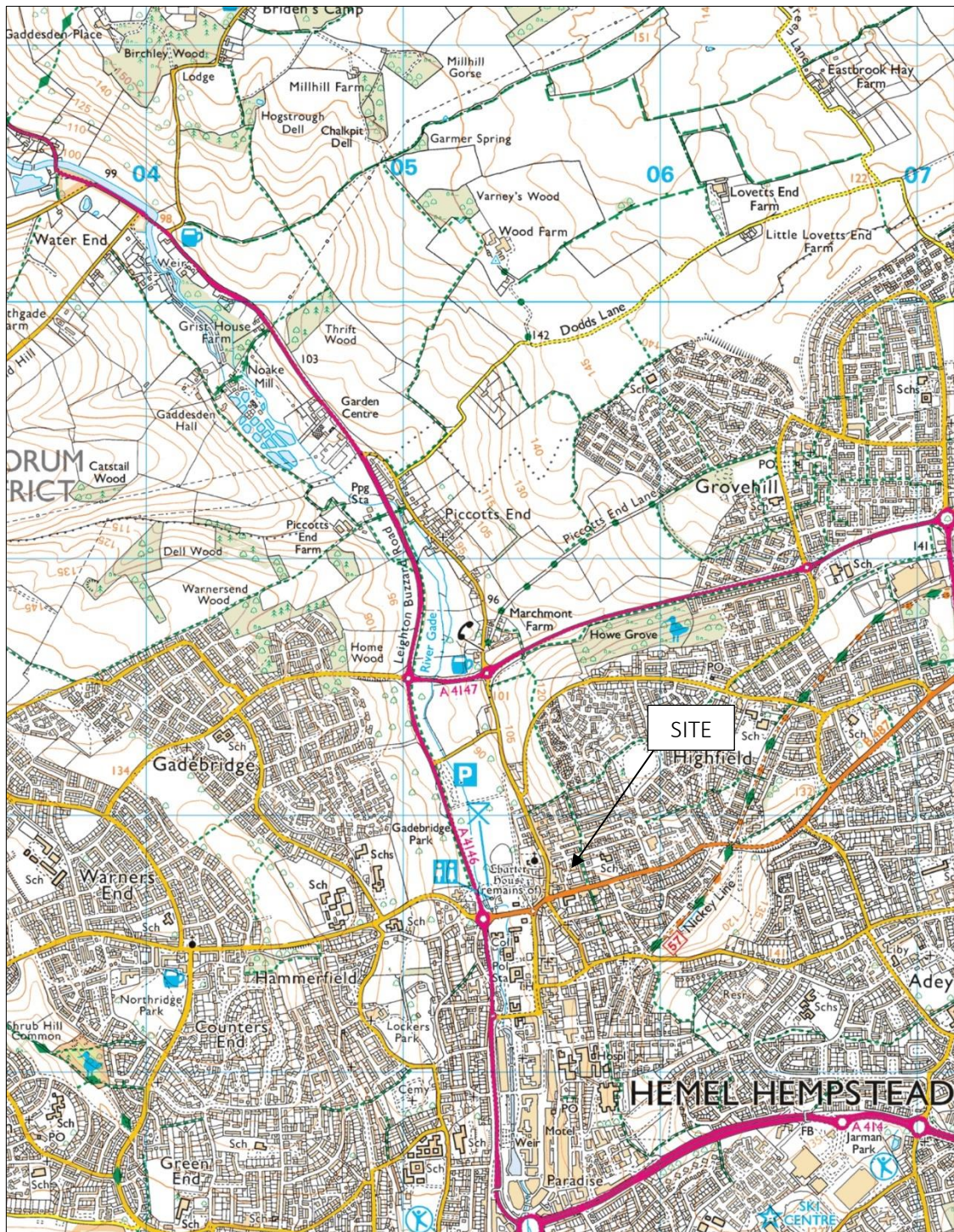


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



Figure 2: Site layout (scale 1:1,250)



Figure 3: Development plan (not to scale)





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## 2 Aims & Methods

### 2.1 Aims

The aims of this project as defined in the approved WSI (Shlasko 2017) 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

### 2.2 Methods

The methods used were as follows:

- The archaeological monitoring of all the groundworks associated with the development
- The archaeological recording of all groundworks associated with the development

### 2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The WSI
- 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 The proposed development site is located in the historic core of Hemel Hempstead, just to the east of the High Street. The settlement appears to have its origins in the medieval period, although nearby Roman remains indicate that there was occupation in the area from an earlier period. There is a large body of evidence to suggest that hamlets and villa complexes dating to the Roman period were liberally scattered throughout the area. Prior to this there is evidence for prehistoric use of the landscape stretching to the Palaeolithic with finds of stone tools at quarries throughout Hemel Hempstead.

This section has been compiled with information from previous KDK reports (Shlasko 2017), the Extensive Urban Survey (Hunns 2000), KDK's own library, the Heritage Gateway and other reliable internet sources.

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

Hemel Hempstead is located in the Gade valley, an environment exploited from the earliest period. Paleolithic flints have been found at various sites around Hemel Hempstead (e.g. HER 540, 1303 & 2276), particularly in Leverstock Green. Bronze Age finds and a Late Bronze Age-Early Iron Age occupation (HER 584, 585 and 9203) are clustered to the east of the site.

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

During the Iron Age, the lands around Hemel Hempstead would have been part of the tribal holdings of the Catuvellauni, who had significant settlements at St. Albans and Wheathampstead. Several Iron Age coins have been discovered in the area and reported to the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS).

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

By the Roman period, clear evidence emerges of occupation in the vicinity of the proposed development, most importantly, Gadebridge Park Roman villa, a 2<sup>nd</sup> century winged corridor villa with 1<sup>st</sup> century timber antecedents (HER 88). The villa, Scheduled Ancient Monument 27881, is located north of the site. First excavated in the 1960s, the villa was occupied through the late 4<sup>th</sup> century. It possessed a bath house and a swimming pool, built in the early 4<sup>th</sup> century near the baths (<http://www.dacorumheritage.org.uk/article/discover-how-dacorums-largest-roman-villa-evolved/>).

The Gadebridge Park villa is just one of group of villas, settlements and industrial sites around Hemel Hempstead, including villas at Boxmoor (HER 72), Northchurch (HER 1859) and Gorhambury (HER 504); a significant metal working site at Cow Roast (HER 1874); plus the city of Verulamium (St. Albans) only 8km to the east.

Additional Roman material found in the area of the site include a hoard of late 1<sup>st</sup> century coins and a possible votive hoard of bronze coins and other objects, both associated with the Gadebridge villa (HER 518 and HER 1867).

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

Whilst there is no archaeological evidence for the early or middle Saxon period activity in the study area, there are early references to the settlement in the documentary record. As early as c704, King Offa granted land in *Haemele* to the Bishop of London (Hunns 2000: 3). A stone coffin, discovered in 1808 in Hemel Hempstead churchyard, purportedly contained the remains of Offa (Page 1908). That it was an early and important land holding is clear.



Prior to the Norman Conquest, the manor of *Hamelhamstede* was held by two brothers who were in the service of Earl Leofwine. The manor was assessed at 10 hides, with land for up to 30 ploughs and woodland for 1200 pigs; there were also 4 mills in the manor, although there is no mention of a priest, which may mean that there was no church in the manor at this time. The whole manor was valued at £25 (Williams & Martin 2002:379).

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

The proposed development site is to the east of the medieval High Street. The Norman church of St Mary's, on the west side of the High Street, has 12<sup>th</sup> century origins (Hunns 2000: 5). In the 13<sup>th</sup> century, at least half of the manor of Hemel Hempstead was granted to the College of Bonhommes of Ashridge, founded in 1283 (Page 1905). The monastery was dissolved in 1539 and the manor passed into private hands (*ibid*). A new manor house was built, part of which survives as the 'Charter Tower', a Scheduled Ancient Monument located in Gadesbridge Park, approximately 260m northwest of the proposed development (List Number 1005260) (Hunns 2000:4).

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

Originally a fairly small agricultural settlement, Hemel Hempstead began to expand rapidly following the Dissolution. In 1593, Henry VIII granted a 'Bailiwick' charter to Hemel Hempstead. This gave the town borough status and permitted the townspeople to elect a bailiff annually. A weekly market and an annual fair were also granted at this time (Gazetteer of Markets and Fairs in England and Wales to 1516 online, Hunns 2000: 5). Oliver Cromwell granted a further three annual fairs to Hemel Hempstead in 1656, after a petition from the townspeople. These fairs were discontinued after the Restoration (*ibid*: 6).

The markets and courts made the town a magnet for economic activity in the area. Agricultural products from the surrounding countryside were brought to the markets and shops along the High Street (*ibid*: 6). Hemel Hempstead had important corn and cattle markets. Many local residents were involved in the straw plaiting industry.

The Quaker Meeting House (HER10205) was built in 1718, on land purchased from the Bell Inn (Hemel Hempstead Quakers). It is the second oldest house of worship in Hemel Hempstead, after St Mary's Church. Prior to that, Quakers met in private homes. According to the Victoria County History, Quaker services were first licenced in 1699, but there is a record of regular meetings being held in Woodgreen, Hemel Hempstead by 1683 (VCH).

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, both the Grand Junction Canal (1804) and the railway (1837) came to Hemel Hempstead, but in both cases, they were located some distance from the town centre, over 2km south. A branch line linking Hemel Hempstead and Harpenden finally opened in 1877. This closed to passenger traffic in 1947 and is now a public footpath known as the Nickey Line ([http://www.nickeyline.org/the\\_nickey\\_line/nickey\\_line\\_history/](http://www.nickeyline.org/the_nickey_line/nickey_line_history/)). The line passed to the southeast of the proposed development site and contributed to the development of Hemel Hempstead beyond the town centre, an early phase of development somewhat confusingly known as the 'New Town'. This first 'New Town' expansion occurred at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. An Ordnance Survey map dating to 1898 indicates that the plot immediately to the west of the Meeting House burial ground was occupied by a smithy at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (OS 1898).

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

The more common use of the term New Town refers to post-World War II expansion, which began in 1947 and was designed to provide homes to those displaced by the destruction wrought by the bombing of London during the war. Hemel Hempstead grew rapidly in the



second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The town centre moved south to the Marlowes, a pedestrianised shopping district to the south and west of the proposed development.

Population growth in the 20<sup>th</sup> century meant that the Quaker congregation began to outgrow the 18<sup>th</sup> century building. Two major expansions occurred, in 1959 and 1976. At the time of the first expansion, the stones were removed from the graves in the burial ground and placed along the surrounding wall. A plan produced at the time shows the locations of the marked graves (Fig. 4). The graves themselves remain *in situ*, but the space is now used as a garden.

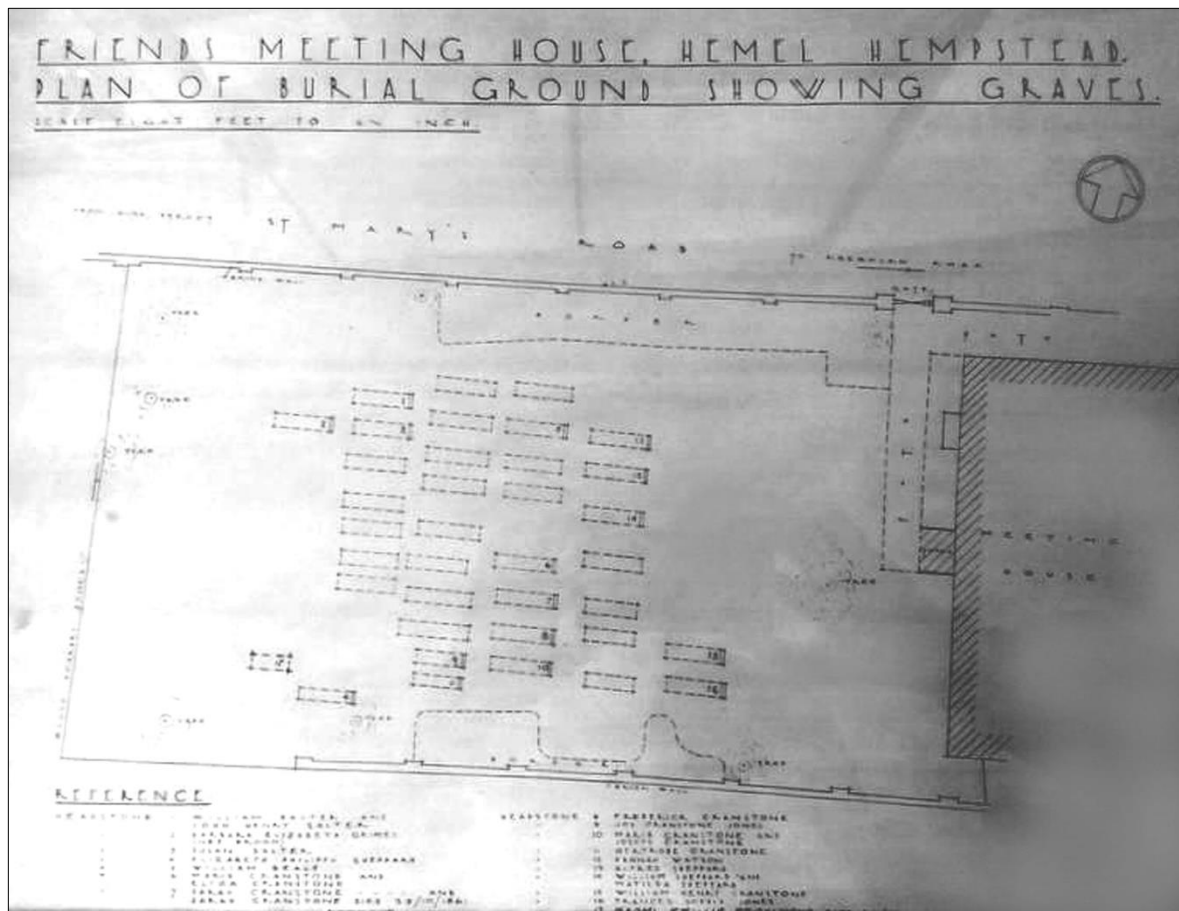


Figure 4: Burial plan 1951



## 4 Results

### 4.1 Introduction

The groundworks monitored during the project comprised the excavation of a foundation trench for the new garden wall at the western end of the property. This ranged from 1.5m to 1.6m in depth and measured 17.25m in length and 0.6m in width (Plates 1 and 2). The foundation trench was preceded by two trial holes, each measuring 0.2m in diameter and 1.1m in depth, located just to the east of the boundary wall (Plates 5 and 6). In addition, an area measuring 7.5m by 6.5m was reduced by 0.3m in order to lay a new patio adjacent to the Meeting House at the east end of the site (Plate 7). The slabs of the garden path to the north were also removed, revealing only a relatively modern layer of sand (Plate 8). All excavations were completed using a 1 tonne tracked excavator with a 0.6m or 0.4m wide toothless bucket. (Fig. 5)

### 4.2 Description

The general stratigraphy of the site was most clearly visible in the west-southwest facing section of the wall foundation (Plate 3). It consisted of a 0.6m deep layer of dark grey-brown loam topsoil (101) above 0.45m of mid grey-brown sandy clay subsoil (102). Below this was a narrow band of natural mid orange-brown sandy clay (103) that varied in depth between 0.05m and 0.3m. This served as an interface between the overlying layers and the chalk bedrock (104), of which 0.35m was exposed. (Fig. 6)

No features of archaeological significance were identified during the project. A possible cut feature [105] was observed in the east-northeast facing section of the wall foundation trench, however the edges were irregular and diffuse. The mid brown sandy clay fill contained no finds and appeared to have been deposited naturally. The feature did not appear in the opposite section and was likely to be a tree throw or other form of rooting (Plate 4, Fig. 7).

Large quantities of post-medieval and modern finds were recovered from the topsoil (101), including animal bone, blue and white pottery, clay pipes, CBM and various plastic items. The subsoil produced yet more animal bone and clay pipes. Spot dating indicated that the clay pipes likely ranged from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. One pipe fragment sported the letters 'B' and 'I', presumably maker's initials, each stamped on either side of the spur.

#### Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
(101)	Layer	L: >30m; W: >17.25m; D: 0.6m	Dark grey-brown loam topsoil
(102)	Layer	L: >17.25m; W: >0.7m D: 0.45m	Mid grey-brown sandy clay subsoil
(103)	Layer	L: >17.25m; W: >0.7m D: 0.3m	Mid orange-brown sandy clay natural interface
(104)	Layer	L: >17.25m; W: >0.7m D: >0.35m	Natural chalk
[105]	Cut	L: 1.3m; D: 0.55m; Width unknown	Probably rooting or tree throw
(106)	Deposit	L: 1.3m; D: 0.55m; Width unknown	Mid brown slightly sandy clay with chalk inclusions. Naturally deposited fill of [105]



**Plate 1:** Wall footing trench, view N



**Plate 2:** Wall footing trench, view SE



**Plate 3:** Representative site stratigraphy in WSW facing section of footing trench



**Plate 4:** Possible rooting [105] in ENE facing section of footing trench



**Plate 5:** Trial Pit 1, view WSW



**Plate 6:** Trial Pit 2, view WSW



**Plate 7:** Patio ground reduction, view NNW



**Plate 8:** Path slab removal, view SSE



**Plate 9:** Clay pipe from topsoil (101), left hand side



**Plate 10:** Clay pipe from topsoil (101), right hand side

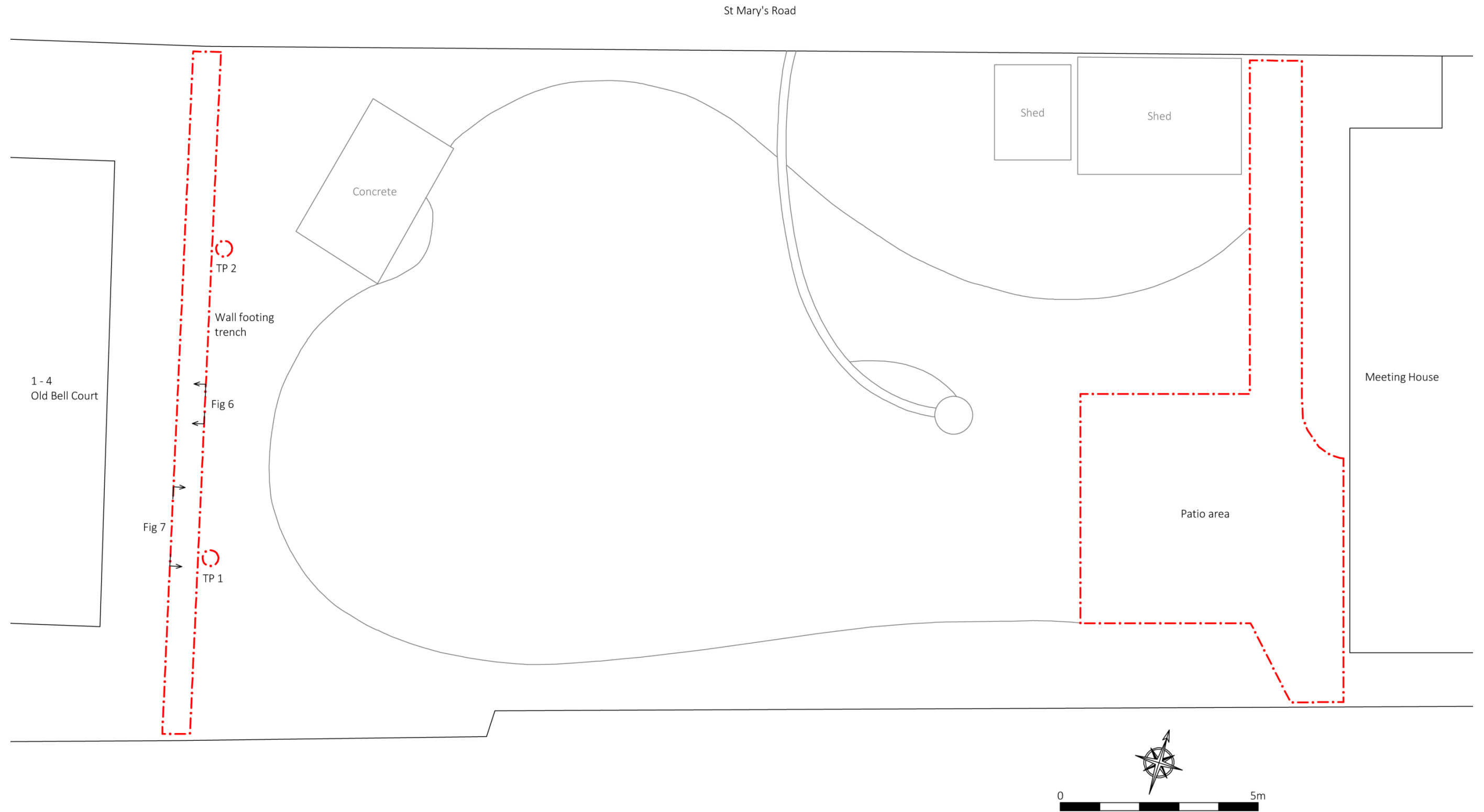


Figure 5: Excavation plan (scale 1:100)



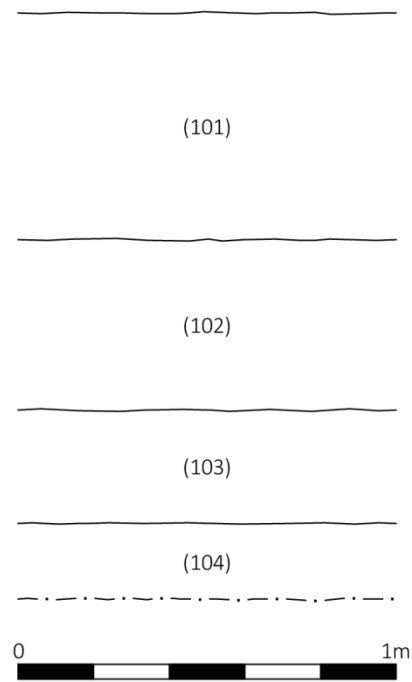


Figure 6: Representative stratigraphy of wall footing trench (scale 1:20)

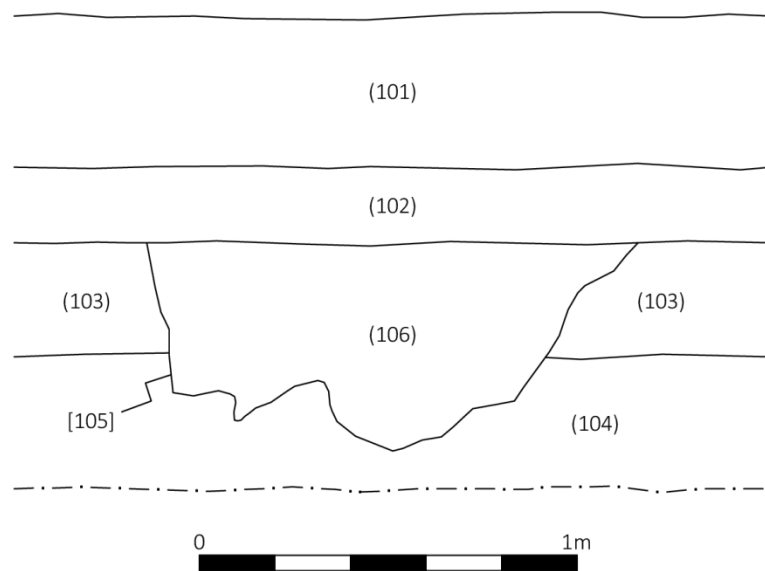


Figure 7: Possible rooting [105] present in the east facing section of the footing trench (scale 1:20)



## 5 Conclusions

The wall foundation trench excavated along the western boundary of the site did not contain any archaeological features, except for an area of probable rooting visible in the west section, which contained no finds.

The finds recovered elsewhere were varied and came entirely from the topsoil and subsoil. Items from the topsoil ranged widely in date and included CBM, animal bone, clay tobacco pipes, plastic and blue and white pottery, a mixture of post-medieval and modern finds. The finds from the subsoil were less variable and consisted of animal bone and clay tobacco pipes dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. This suggests that the subsoil may have gone relatively undisturbed in recent times.

The general impression is that of constant post-medieval occupation, understandable given that the Quaker Meeting House was built in 1718 and, before that, the land had belonged to the Bell Inn. This would certainly explain the quantities of animal bone and tobacco pipes. In addition, the plot immediately to the west was apparently occupied by a smithy in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, which no doubt contributed to the build-up of post-medieval detritus along the property boundary.

Although the plot has been used as a burial ground, the foundation trench did not encroach upon any graves, which are undoubtedly located further to the east. The lack of archaeological features can likely be explained by the presence of the property boundary. It is also possible that the excavations lie between widely dispersed archaeological features, particularly as the site is located some distance from the medieval High Street. The other excavations were not deep enough to penetrate below the topsoil, so did not contain any archaeological features.



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## 6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Roger Ramsden for commissioning this report on behalf of Religious Society of Friends (Quakers), Hemel Hempstead Local Meeting. Thanks are also due to Isobel Thompson and Alison Tinniswood of Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Team for providing historic environment records and for monitoring the project respectively.

The fieldwork was carried out by Chris Martin-Taylor BSc. The report was written by Chris Martin-Taylor, and edited by Karin Kaye MA MCIFA.



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## 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 As Dacorum Heritage Trust no longer accepts archives from negative watching briefs, the paper archive will be retained by KDK Archaeology and the report uploaded onto OASIS.



## 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 *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds, Archiving)* Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- CIfA 2014 *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- CIfA 2014 *Code of Conduct*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
- CIfA 2014 *Standards & Guidance for Archiving Archaeological Projects*. Reading: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists.
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- Ferguson L. M. & Murray D. M. 1997 *Archaeological Documentary Archives: Preparation, Curation and Storage*. Manchester: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Paper 1.
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- Shlasko E. 2017 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Observation, Investigation & Recording: The Quaker Meeting House, 1 The Alleys, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire*. KDK Library Reference: 348/HHQ/1
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Ordnance Survey 1898 *OS County Series: Hertfordshire, 25 inch to 1 mile, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. Available at: <https://www.old-maps.co.uk/#/Map/505672/207875/12/100650>

Williams A. & Martin G. H. 1992 *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*. Penguin Group: London.



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**Appendix 1: Photograph List**

Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		N	Wall footing trench
2		SE	Wall footing trench
3		WSW	Representative site stratigraphy in WSW facing section of footing trench
4		ENE	Possible rooting [105] in ENE facing section of footing trench
5		WSW	Trial pit 1
6		WSW	Trial pit 2
7		NNW	Patio ground reduction
8		SSE	Path slab removal
9		-	Clay pipe from topsoil (101), left hand side
10		-	Clay pipe from topsoil (101), right hand side



## Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	The Quaker Meeting House, 1 the Alleys, Hemel Hempstead	Project Site Code	348/HHQ
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-304067	Event/Accession no	-
OS reference	TL 05672 07875	Study area size	63.8 m <sup>2</sup>
Project Type	Archaeological Observation and Recording	Height (mAOD)	104
Short Description	From January 2018 to June 2019 a programme of Observation and Recording was undertaken at the Quaker Meeting House, 1 The Alleys, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire in order to fulfil Conditions 6, 7 and 8 of planning permission for the landscaping of the site. Excavation of a wall foundation trench along the western boundary of the site revealed no archaeological features although there was a large quantity of post-medieval and modern finds in the topsoil and subsoil indicating the occupation of both adjacent property plots throughout the post-medieval period. Although the site has been used as burial ground, no graves were affected by the work.		
Previous work	None	Site status	None
Planning proposal	Construction of patio, removal and construction of waste bin store and garden shed. Replacement of dilapidated low brick retaining wall and fence.	Current land use	Meeting house
Local Planning Authority	Dacorum Borough Council	Planning application ref.	4/02024/17/FUL
Monument type	Grade II curtilage	Monument period	Post medieval
Significant finds	None	Future work	Unknown
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	Alison Tinniswood MA ACIfA	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	Karin Kaye MA MCIfA	Director/Supervisor	Chris Martin-Taylor BSc
Sponsor/funding body	Religious Society of Friends - Luton & Leighton Area Mtg.		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	03.01.18	End date	21.06.19
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical		None	
Paper	KDK Archaeology Ltd	Site drawings, method statement, report	
Digital	OASIS	Report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Observation and Recording: The Quaker Meeting House, 1 The Alleys, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume	348/HHQ/2		
Author(s)	Chris Martin-Taylor BSc		
Page no's	23	Date	04.12.19





### Appendix 3: Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Sheet

Site name and address: The Quaker Meeting House, 1 the Alleys, Hemel Hempstead	
County: Hertfordshire	District: Dacorum Borough Council
Village/Town: Hemel Hempstead	Parish: Hemel Hempstead
Planning application reference: 4/02024/17/FUL	
Client's name, address, & tel. no: Religious Society of Friends - Luton & Leighton Area Mtg. Trustees, Wicklow Lodge, 1 Boulders Lock, Giffard Park, Milton Keynes, MK14 5QR	
Nature of application: Construction of a new patio, removal and construction of a waste bin store and garden shed	
Present land use: Meeting House	
Size of application area: 1016.6m <sup>2</sup>	Size of area investigated: 63.8 m <sup>2</sup>
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 05672 07875	Site code: 348/HHQ
Site director: Karin Kaye MA MCIFA	Organization: KDK Archaeology Ltd
Type of work: Archaeological Observation and Recording	
Date of Work: Start: 03.01.18	Finish: 21.06.19
Curating museum: Dacorum	
Related HER no's: HER 10205	Periods represented: Post-medieval to modern
Relevant previous summaries/reports: -	
<p>Summary of fieldwork results: From January 2018 to June 2019 a programme of Observation and Recording was undertaken at the Quaker Meeting House, 1 The Alleys, Hemel Hempstead, Hertfordshire in order to fulfil Conditions 6, 7 and 8 of planning permission for the landscaping of the site. Excavation of a wall foundation trench along the western boundary of the site revealed no archaeological features although there was a large quantity of post-medieval and modern finds in the topsoil and subsoil indicating the occupation of both adjacent property plots throughout the post-medieval period. Although the site has been used as burial ground, no graves were affected by the work.</p>	
Author: Chris Martin-Taylor BSc	Date: 04.12.19