



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Land Adjacent to the Bell

61 High Road

Cotton End

Bedford

Bedfordshire



Quality Check

<i>Author</i>	Rebecca Bradford BSc	<i>Version</i>	347/CEH/2.2	<i>Date</i>	29.01.2018
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<i>Revision</i>		<i>Version</i>		<i>Date</i>	

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Unit 3 Leighton Road Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire LU7 1LA
Tel: 01525 385443
Email: office@kdkarchaeology.co.uk
Website: www.kdkarchaeology.co.uk





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Summary

In January 2018 an archaeological evaluation was carried out by KDK Archaeology Ltd on land adjacent to The Bell, 61 High Road, Cotton End, Bedfordshire, prior to the construction of two 4-bed dwellings and associated works. Four trenches were excavated on the site, in which a possible post-hole and post-medieval ditch were revealed.

1 Introduction

1.1 In January 2018 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological on land adjacent to the Bell, 61 High Road, Cotton End, Bedford, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by Alan Brown Builders Ltd, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Shlasko 2017), and approved by Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team (BBCHET), Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Bedford Borough Council. The relevant planning application reference is 16/02903/FUL.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Condition 15 of planning consent for the development of the site.

1.3 *The Site*

Location & Description

Land adjacent to The Bell, 61 High Road, is in the village of Cotton End, the civil parish of Eastcotts, and the administrative district of Bedford Borough Council. The National Grid Reference is TL 08542 45321 (Fig. 1).

The proposed development site is located directly southeast of The Bell public house on the east side of the High Road. It is a roughly rectangular site, bounded on the northwest by a timber barn in the pub car park, on the southwest by a thick hedge along Wood Lane, and on the southeast and northeast by neighbouring buildings (Fig. 2).

Geology & Topography

The village of Cotton End is in the floodplain of the River Great Ouse. It is underlain by a sedimentary mudstone of the Stewartby Member and Weymouth Member formation (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). The proposed development site is located at approximately 32m AOD.

Development

The development calls for the erection of two 4-bedroom dwellings and associated works (Fig. 3).

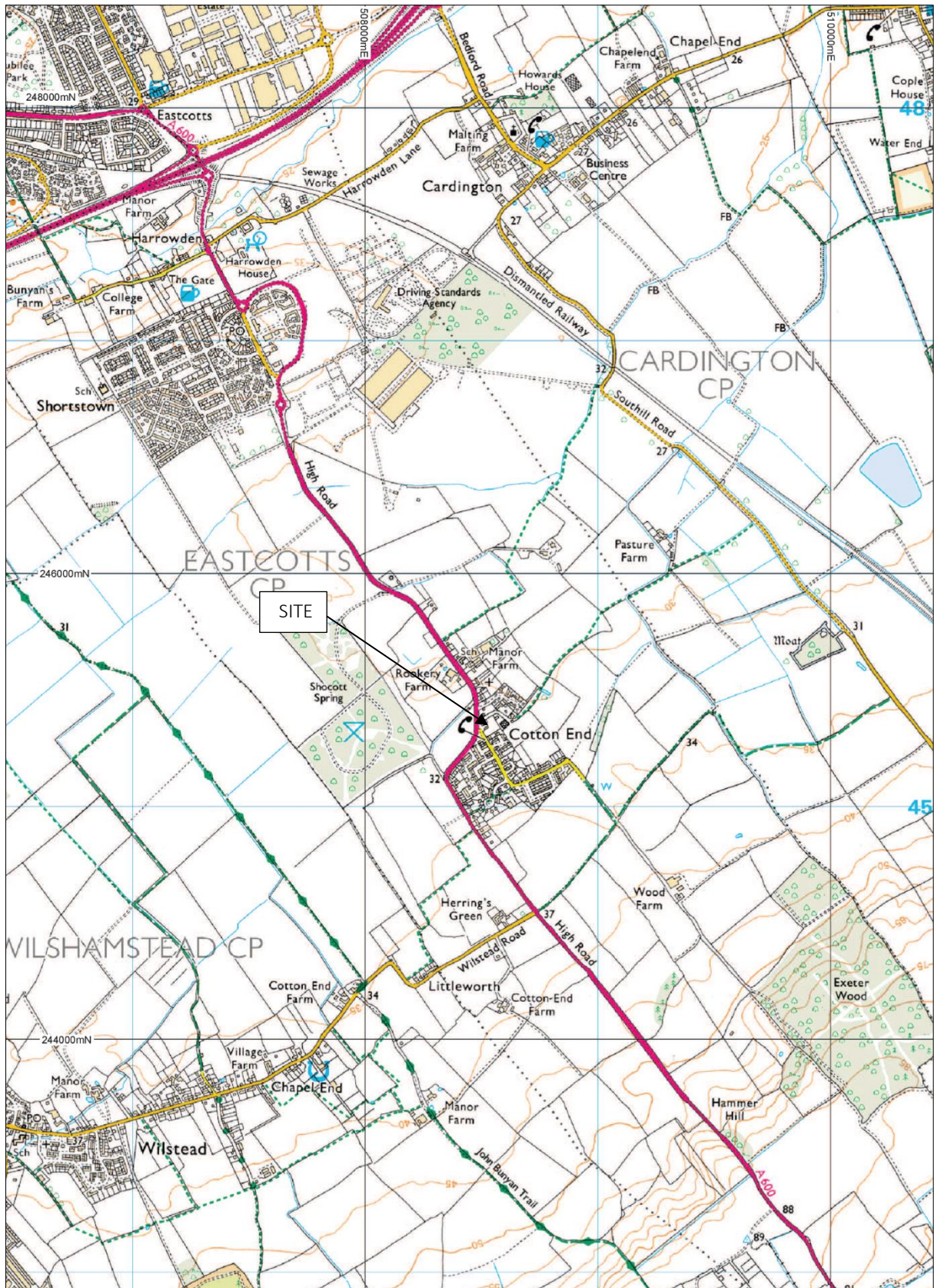


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

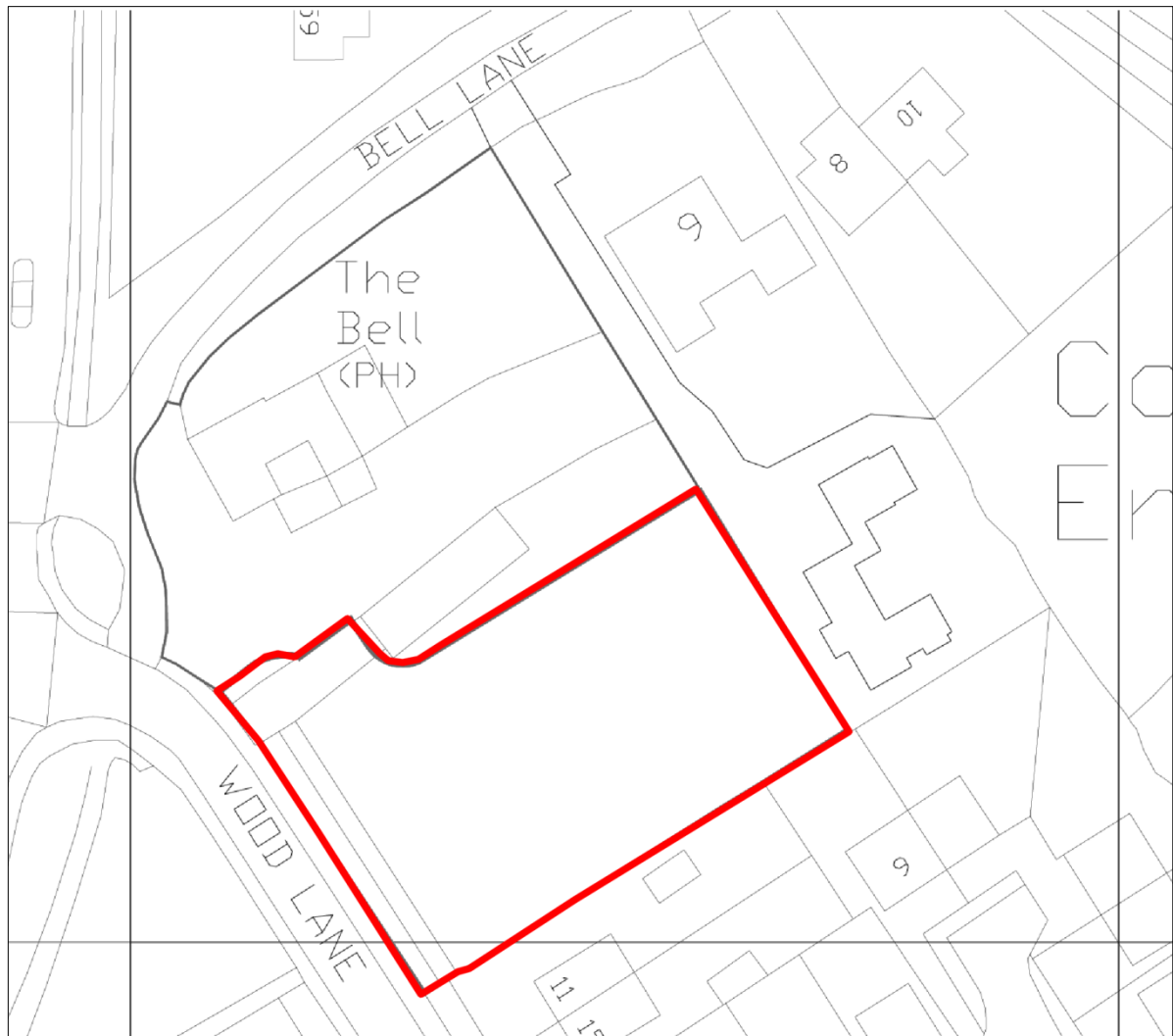


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:750)

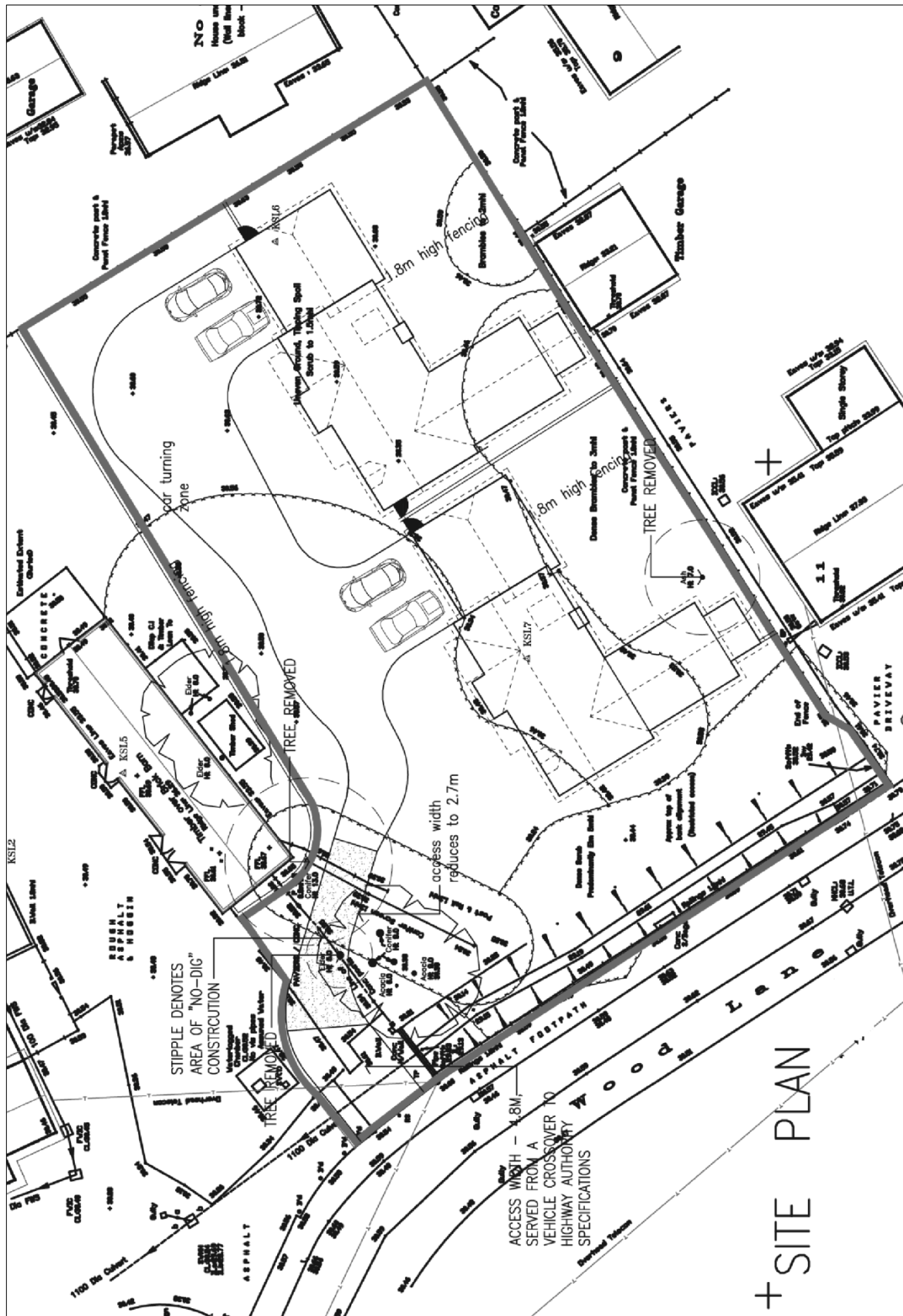


Figure 3: Proposed development (scale: 1:350)



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 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
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

2.2 *Methods*

In line with the requirements of the Brief, this is the first part of a staged investigation whereby the results of this stage will be assessed to determine the need and extent of further stages of archaeological investigation. The methods used were as follows:

- Trial trenching of 5% of the site, which covered c.1596 square metres. This consisted of three trenches, each 10m long by 2m wide and one trench measuring 15 x 2m, as shown in Figure 4.

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)

2.4 *Constraints*

Due to a temporary road surface onto the site that the contractor's needed to leave intact, Trench 1 was located further to the northwest of the original trench location, 3.4m from the existing barn (Fig. 4).

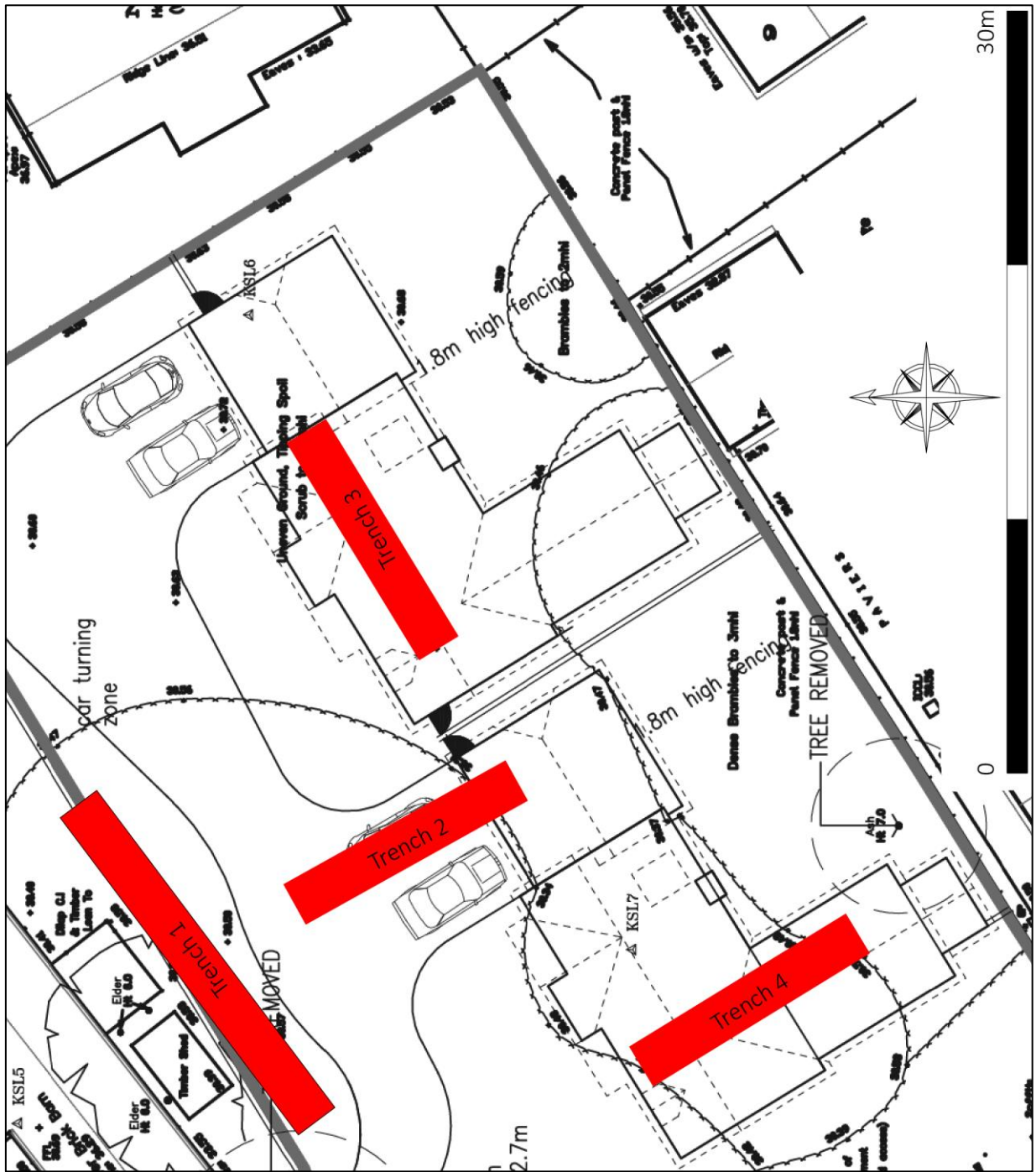


Figure 4: Actual trench location plan (Scale 1:250)



3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The site lies at the north end of the village of Cotton End, a community that grew in the post-medieval period from medieval roots. The manor of Cotes, which appears after the Domesday survey, was owned by descendants of Nigel de Albini until the 16th century.

This section has been compiled with information from the Victoria County History (VCH), the Bedfordshire Community Archives (BCA), the Bedford Historic Environment Record (HER License Number 042 (2017-18)), KDK's own library and other reliable online sources.

3.2 ***Prehistoric-Saxon*** (before AD1066)

The earliest occupation of the area around Cotton End is represented by a Paleolithic hand-axe, Mesolithic or Neolithic flints, and cropmarks, possibly of Bronze Age ring ditches. Other crop marks may represent Iron Age and Roman enclosures and linear features. The crop mark evidence is supported by finds of Iron Age and Roman pottery and Roman tile (HER 1181, HER 14750, HER 15773, HER 16613 and HER 16659). There is a supposed Roman road (Viatores No. 210) running west of the village (HER 10480).

3.3 ***Medieval*** (1066 - 1500)

During the medieval period, this settlement appears to have been part of the manor of Cotes, held by Nigel de Albini (VCH). Although this manor is not mentioned by name in the Domesday Book, later documents suggest it was part of the manor of Harrowden. That manor was occupied by 14 villagers, 10 smallholders and two slaves (www.opendomesday.org). In the 12th century, a motte and bailey castle (HER 9263) was built in Exeter Wood, c2.0km south of the site (BCA). Cotes stayed in the de Albini family until 1233, when it passed through marriage to the Saint Amand family, who held it until the 16th century (VCH). The HER suggests that Cotton End may have been deserted after the medieval period, only reviving in roughly the same location in the late post-medieval period (HER 17031).

3.4 ***Post-Medieval*** (1500 - 1900)

After this period of decline, settlement in Cotton End expanded during the post-medieval period. One element of this expansion was the opening of several public houses in the hamlet, including The Bell. There was a cottage on this site by the late 18th century, although it may have been occupied much earlier. In a 1772 sale, the cottage was now being used as a public house known as The Bell. When it was originally listed, The Bell was thought to be a 17th century building. However, a survey of the parish has a note that indicates that the original building was replaced in the late 1780s (BCA).

There are records of dissenting worship in Cotton End since the 17th century and a chapel was built by 1777. The surviving Baptist chapel replaced that building in 1836-1837 (HER 1047).

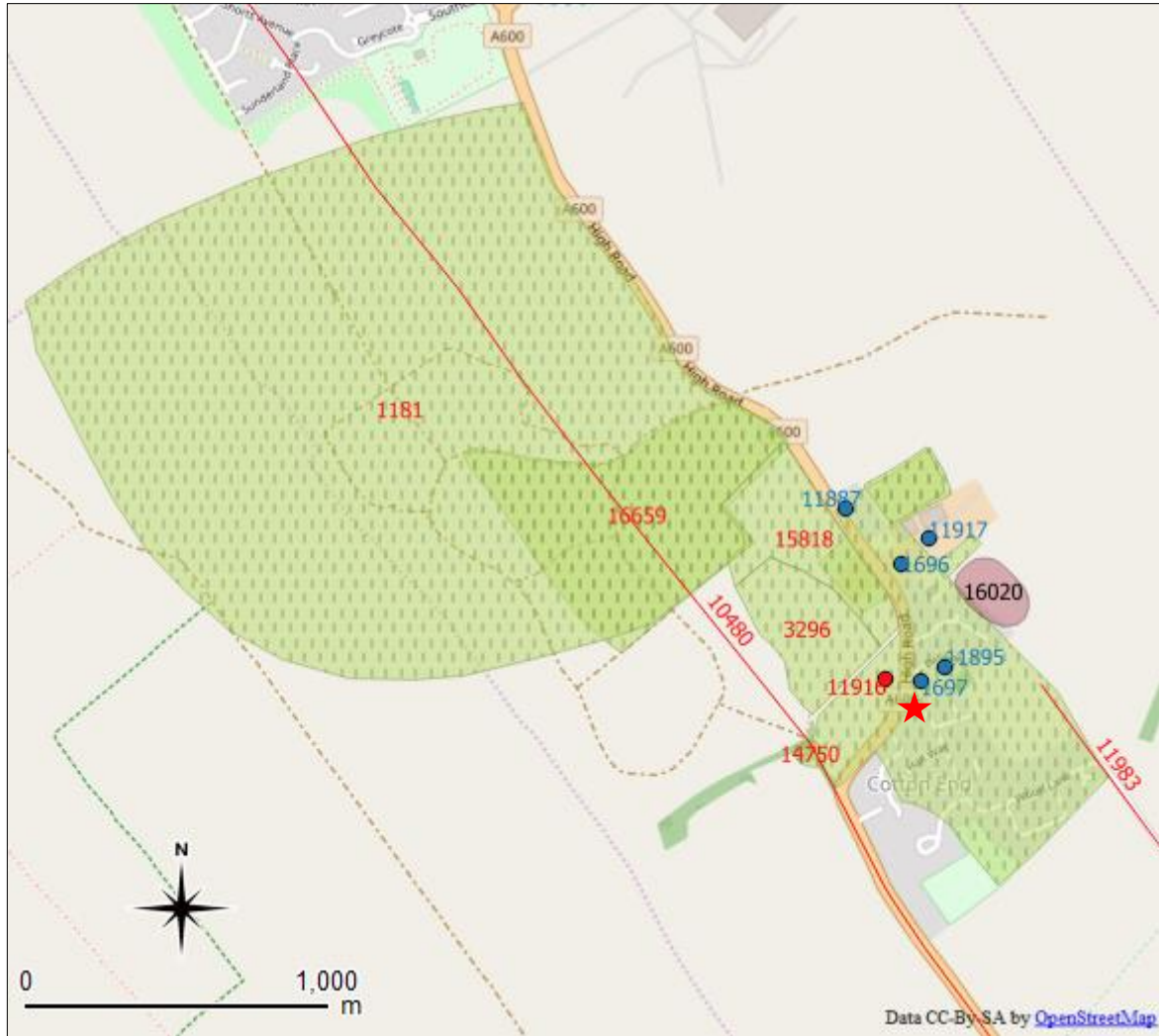


Figure 5: HER data plan: Listed Building in blue, Monuments in red, Site marked by a red star (scale 1:25,000)



4 Results

4.1 Introduction

Four trenches were mechanically excavated with a 5 tonne machine fitted with a 1.45m wide toothless ditching bucket. Excavations uncovered a post-hole [203] and a ditch [303] in Trenches 2 and 3 respectively (Fig.6).

The stratigraphy in all four trenches consisted of a soft silty clay made-ground containing modern dumped material. Below this was a layer of slightly silty clay sub-soil containing occasional sub-angular stone inclusions. The natural soil consisted of light yellowy orange soft clay (Fig. 7; Plates 2, 4, 7 and 10).

4.2 Trench 1 (Plates 1-2)

Trench 1 was situated outside the footprint of the proposed dwellings. It was orientated north-south and measured 15.70m in length, 2m in width and 0.7m in depth (Fig 6; Plate 1). No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed (Plate 2).

Table 1: Trench 1 Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
100	Layer	L:15.70m W:2m D:0.3m	Made-ground: dark brown, soft, silty clay that contained modern dumped material. A lens of demolition material observed with frequent fragments of tile and brick that was too fragmented to take measurements. The bricks observed did not appear to have a frog which would suggest a post-medieval date.
101	Layer	L:15.70m W:2m D:0.15m	Sub-soil: mid orange brown, soft, slightly silty clay with very occasional sub-angular stones <5mm.
102	Layer	L:15.70m W:2m D:>0.25m	Natural: light yellowy orange, soft clay.

4.3 Trench 2 (Plates 3-5)

Trench 2 was situated at the east end of the footprint of the proposed dwelling. It was orientated west –east and measured 10m in length, 2m in width and 0.6m in depth (Fig. 6; Plate 3). A possible post hole [203] was observed approximately 3.85m from the northwest end of the trench. The fill of the post hole (204) contained a fragment of post-medieval CBM (ceramic building material) (Fig.8; Plate 5).

Table 2: Trench 2 Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
200	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:0.35m	Made-ground: dark brown, soft, silty clay that contained modern dumped material.
201	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:0.1m	Sub-soil: mid orange brown, soft, slightly silty clay with very occasional sub-angular stones <5mm.
202	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:>0.15m	Natural: light yellowy orange, soft clay.



203	Cut	0.32m x 0.39m D:0.08m	Post-hole: circular, <45 degree sides and concave base
204	Fill	0.32m x 0.39m D:0.08m	Post-hole: dark black brown, soft, silty clay with occasional sub-angular stones <5mm and contained a fragment of cbm thought to be modern

4.4 Trench 3 (Plates 6-8)

Trench 3 was situated within the footprint of the proposed dwellings, south-east of Trenches 1 and 2. It was orientated north-south and measured 10m in length, 2m in width and 0.6m in depth (Fig 6; Plate 6). A ditch [303] was observed approximately 4.14m from the northeast end of the trench. The fill of the ditch (304) contained fragments of post medieval CBM, glass and a metal handle (Fig. 8; Plate 8).

Table 3: Trench 3 Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
300	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:0.35m	Made-ground: dark brown, soft, silty clay that contained modern dumped material.
301	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:0.2m	Sub-soil: mid orange brown, soft, slightly silty clay with very occasional sub-angular stones <5mm.
302	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:>0.05m	Natural: light yellowy orange, soft clay.
303	Cut	W:0.9m D:0.16m	Ditch: linear, orientated NW-SE, <45 degree sides, concave base
304	Fill	W:0.9m D:0.16m	Ditch: dark black brown, soft, silty clay with occasional sub-angular stones <5mm and contained 2 fragments of CBM, glass and metal handle thought to be post-medieval

4.5 Trench 4 (Plates 9-10)

Trench 4 was situated within the footprint of the proposed dwellings, south-west of Trenches 1 and 2. It was orientated north-south and measured 10m in length, 2m in width and 0.55m in depth (Fig. 6). No archaeological finds, features or deposits were observed (Plate 9).

Table 4: Trench 4 Context Table

<i>Context no.</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Dimensions (max)</i>	<i>Description</i>
400	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:0.25m	Made-ground: dark brown, soft, silty clay that contained modern dumped material.
401	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:0.2m	Sub-soil: mid orange brown, soft, slightly silty clay with very occasional sub-angular stones <5mm.
402	Layer	L:10m W:2m D:>0.1m	Natural: light yellowy orange, soft clay.



Plate 1: Trench 1: view to NE



Plate 2: Trench 1 stratigraphy



Plate 3: Trench 2: view to SW



Plate 4: Trench 2 stratigraphy



Plate 5: Posthole (204): view to NE



Plate 6: Trench 3, view to SW



Plate 7: Trench 3 Stratigraphy



Plate 8: Ditch [303], view to SE



Plate 9: Trench 4, view to SE



Plate 10: Trench 4 stratigraphy

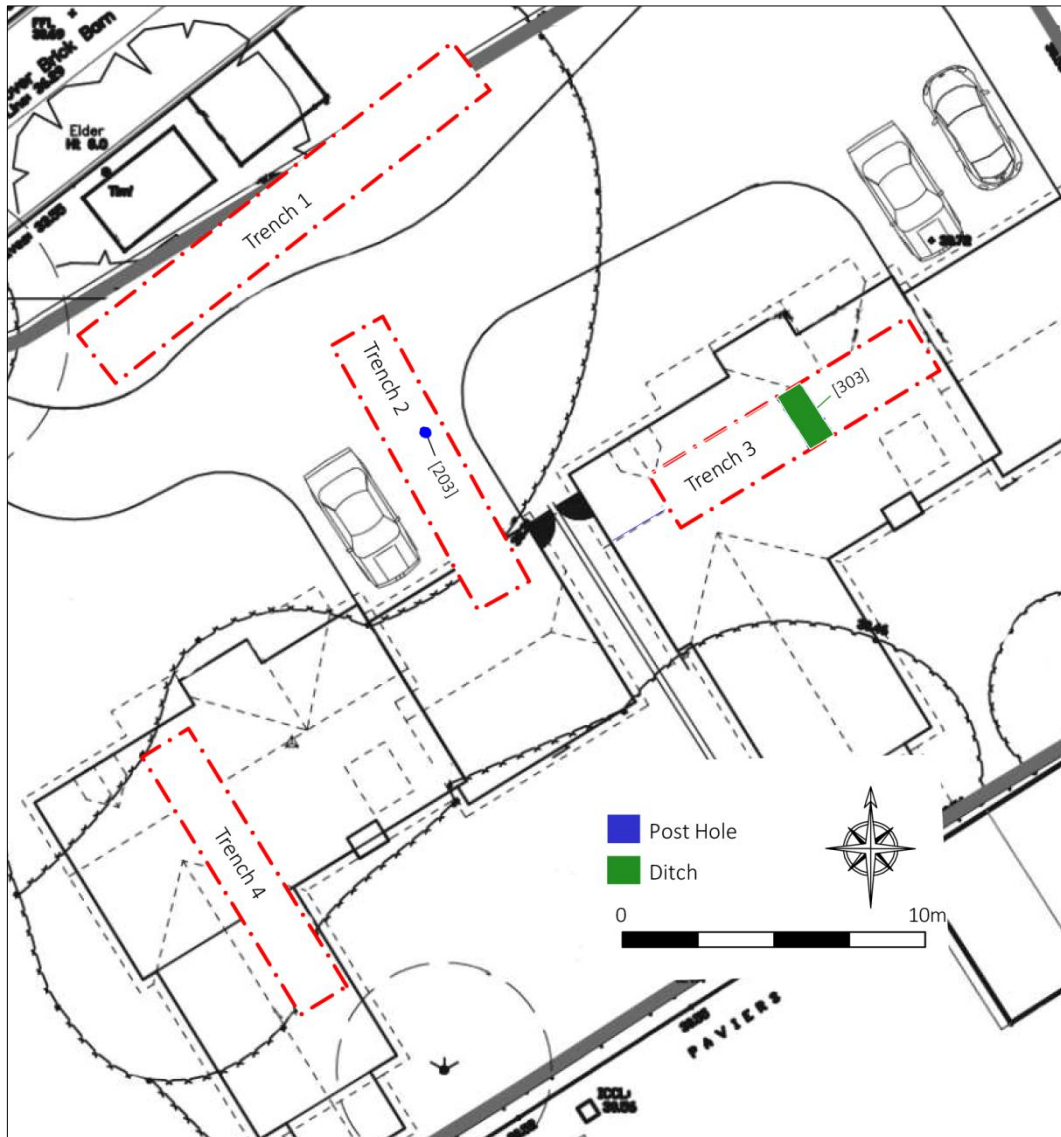


Figure 6: Overall archaeology plan (scale 1: 250)

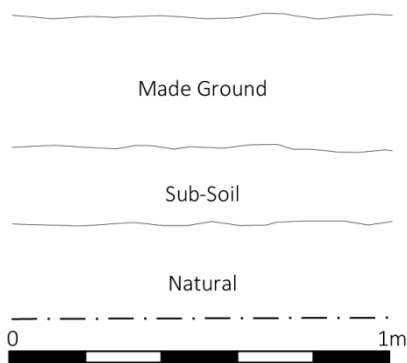


Figure 7: General stratigraphy for all trenches (scale 1:20)

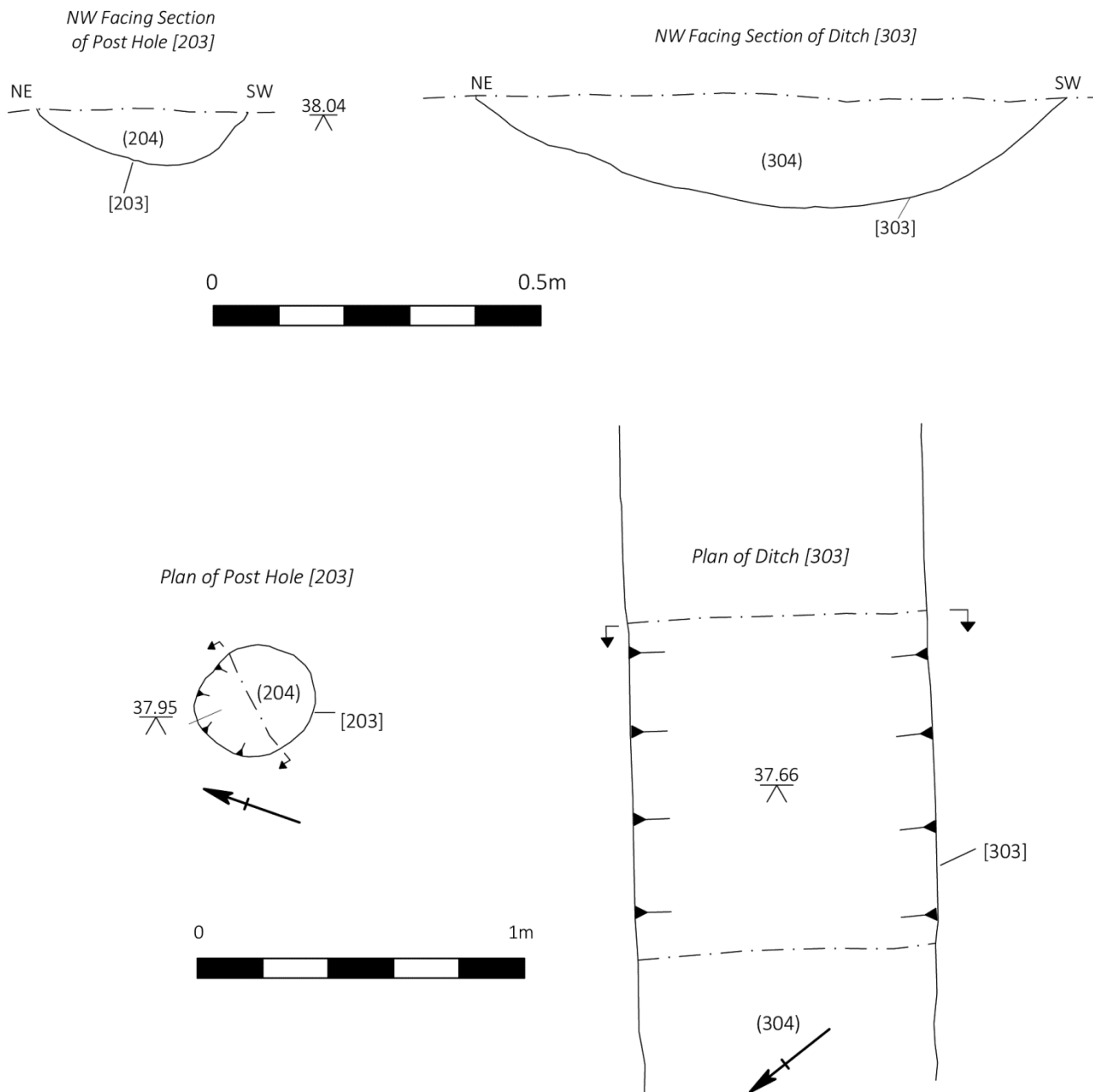


Figure 8: Sections and plans of post-hole and ditch (scale 1:10 and 1:20)



5 Conclusions

The presence of a possible post-hole [203] and a ditch [303] within is not unexpected. There has been occupation in the immediate surroundings since at least the 18th century, when the cottage adjacent to the site became a public house during the post-medieval expansion of the village. These features may well be related to this expansion and could have had multiple uses associated with construction, land management, or occupation.

The function of both is difficult to determine due to later activity, which may have truncated both features as well as removing any potential finds relating to its use. The possible post-hole was only 0.08m in depth and may have been a natural depression or small rubbish pit. However it may have been deeper when the cut was originally made, particularly if ground reduction has taken place in the past.

As Cotton End is situated on a floodplain and the natural geology is impermeable clay, it is likely that water management has always been a problem in this area. This would have necessitated the digging of drainage ditches and gullies, such as that post-medieval example revealed this site.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Alan Brown Builders Ltd for commissioning this report. Thanks are also due to Vanessa Clarke and Geoff Saunders of Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team (BBCHET) for providing historic environment records and for monitoring the project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA, Barney King and Rebecca Bradford BSc. The report was written by Rebecca Bradford, 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. Trench recording sheets
4. Site drawings
5. Client's site plans
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (BEDFM2017.117).



8 References

Standards & Specifications

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.
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- Williams A. & Martin G.H. 2002 *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*. London: Penguin



Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO/CODE: 347/CEH			Site Name: Land adjacent to the Bell
Digital	B&W	View	Subject
1	1	NE	Trench 1 (2x1m Scale)
2		SE	Trench 1 Stratigraphy (2x1m Scale)
3	2	SW	Trench 2 (2x1m Scale)
4		SW	Trench 2 Stratigraphy (2x1m Scale)
5		NE	Trench 2 Post-Hole[203], pre-ex (500mmScale)
6		NE	Trench 2 Post-Hole[203], post-ex (500mmScale)
7	3	SW	Trench 3 (2x1m Scale)
8		NE	Trench 3 Stratigraphy (2x1m Scale)
9		SW	Trench 3 Ditch [303] pre-ex (1m Scale)
10	4	SE	Trench 4 (2x1m Scale)
11		SE	Trench 4 Stratigraphy (2x1m Scale)
12	5	SE	Trench 3 Ditch [303] post-ex (1m Scale)



Appendix 2: Finds Concordance

Context Numbers		CBM		Fe objects		Glass	
Fill	Cut	No.	Gms	No.	Gms	No.	Gms
304	303	2	487	1	224	2	60



Appendix 4: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	Land adjacent to The Bell, 61 High Road, Cotton End, Bedfordshire	Project Site Code	347/CEH
OASIS reference	Kdkarcha1-304636	Event/Accession no	BEDFM2017.117
OS reference	TL08542 45321	Study area size	1575 Sq.m
Project Type	Evaluation	Height (mAOD)	38.52
Short Description	In January 2018 an archaeological evaluation was carried out by KDK Archaeology Ltd at the land adjacent to the Bell, 61 High Road, Cotton End, Bedfordshire, prior to the construction of two 4-bed dwellings and associated works. Four trenches were excavated on the site, in which a possible post-hole and a post-medieval ditch were revealed.		
Previous work	None	Site status	None
Planning proposal	Construction of two 4-bed dwellings and associated works	Current land use	Meadow
Local Planning Authority	Bedford Borough Council	Planning application ref.	16/02903/FUL
Monument type	Post Hole, Ditch	Monument period	Post-med/Modern
Significant finds	None	Future work	Unknown
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	Geoff Saunders (BBCHET)	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	David Kaye BA ACIfA	Director/Supervisor	Carina Summerfield-Hill MSc ACIfA
Sponsor/funding body	Alan Brown Builders Limited		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	24/01/2018	End date	24/01/2018
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	Bedford Museum (BEDFM 2017.117)	TBC	
Paper		Development Plans, WSI, report, site records, B&W photographs and negatives	
Digital		Digital versions of above	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Evaluation: Land adjacent to the Bell, 61 High Road, Cotton End, Bedfordshire		
Serial title & volume	347/CEH/2.0		
Author(s)	Rebecca Bradford BSc		
Page no.s	22	Date	29.01.2018