



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Observation and Recording Report

Car park to the rear of Saint Michael and
All Angels Church
High Street
Shefford
Bedfordshire



Quality Check

| | | | | | |
|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|------------|
| <i>Author</i> | Karin Kaye MA MCifA | <i>Version</i> | 542/SCP/ 2.1 | <i>Date</i> | 18.08.2020 |
| <i>Editor</i> | David Kaye BA ACifA | <i>Version</i> | 542/SCP/ 2.1 | <i>Date</i> | 25.08.2020 |
| <i>Revision</i> | | <i>Version</i> | | <i>Date</i> | |

© KDK Archaeology Ltd 2020 No part of this document is to be copied in any way without prior written consent.

Every effort has been made to provide as complete and as accurate a report as possible. However, KDK Archaeology Ltd cannot accept any liability in respect of, or resulting from, errors, inaccuracies, or omissions contained in this document.

© Ordnance Survey maps reproduced with the sanction of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.
KDK Archaeology Licence No. 100053538

Unit 3 Leighton Road Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire LU7 1LA

Tel: 01525 385443

Email: office@kdkarchaeology.co.uk

Website: www.kdkarchaeology.co.uk





CONTENTS

| | |
|-------------------------------------------------|----|
| Summary | 1 |
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Aims & Methods | 5 |
| 3. Archaeological & Historical Background | 6 |
| 4. Results..... | 9 |
| 5. Conclusions..... | 13 |
| 6. Acknowledgements..... | 14 |
| 7. Archive..... | 15 |
| 8. References..... | 16 |

Appendices:

| | |
|------------------------------|----|
| 1. List of Photographs | 18 |
| 2. OASIS and Site Data..... | 19 |

Figures:

| | |
|-------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. General location | 2 |
| 2. Site location..... | 3 |
| 3. Existing block plan..... | 4 |
| 4. Brick surface and church boundary..... | 10 |

Plates:

| | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|----|
| 1. Brick surface and made ground deposits from the west..... | 10 |
| 2. Detail of brick surface from the west..... | 11 |
| 3. Brick surface in relation to the church..... | 11 |
| 4. Northeastern corner of the reduced area | 12 |
| 5. Exemplar of general surface..... | 12 |



Summary

In August 2020 a programme of Observation and Recording was undertaken on the car park to the rear of the Church of St Michael and All Angels, High Street, Shefford, Bedfordshire, in order to fulfil a condition of planning permission for the development of the site. The existing car park was stripped by up to 170mm revealing only made ground including building debris comprising 19th century red and gault bricks. One area of gault bricks at the eastern end of the car park appeared to form a cohesive surface, possibly a pathway, but there is insufficient archaeological or documentary evidence to confirm this. No archaeological features or finds were otherwise revealed.

1 Introduction

1.1 In August 2020 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording on the car park to the rear of the Church of St Michael and All Angels, High Street, Shefford, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by Lee Thompson, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Kaye 2020), and approved by Central Bedfordshire Archaeology Team, Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Central Bedfordshire Council. The relevant planning application reference is CB/20/01289/FULL.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *The Site*

Location & Description

The site is located to the rear of the Church of St Michael and All Angels in the town and civil parish of Shefford, and the unitary authority of Central Bedfordshire. It is centred on National Grid Reference TL 14357 39067 (Fig. 1).

The site is bounded to the northwest by St Michael's church and to the west and southeast by commercial buildings. A park with a play area lies to the east of the car park (Figs. 2 and 3).

Geology & Topography

The superficial deposits on the site consist of gravel and sand from the River Terrace Deposits formed up to 3million years ago. The bedrock geology below this is sandstone of the Woburn Sands Formation, that was formed in shallow seas approximately 101 to 126 million years ago (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

The site is flat and lies approximately 36m above OD.

Development

The surface of the car park is to be changed from gravel to tarmac with rolled stone chippings.

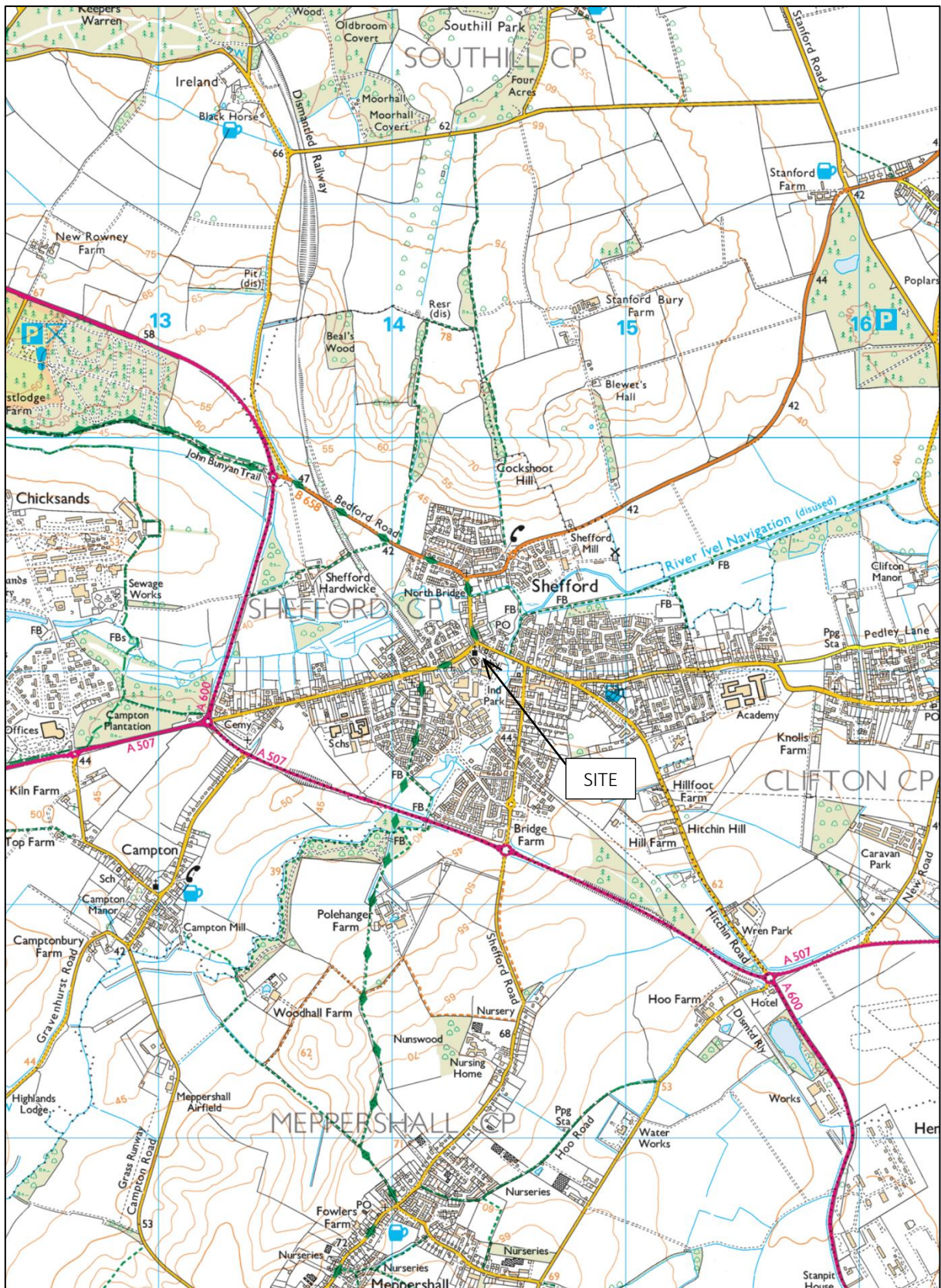


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

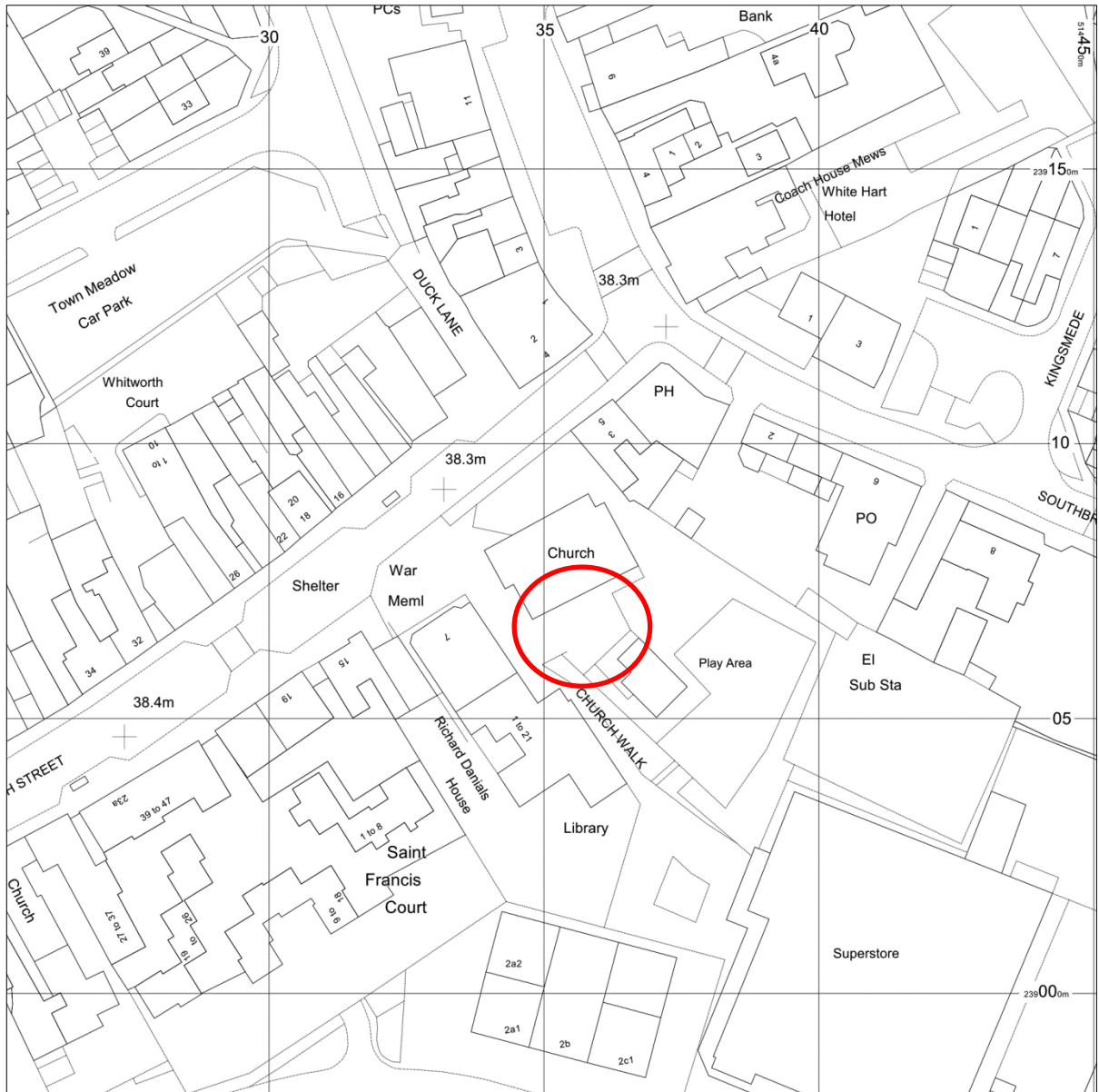
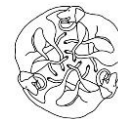


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:1250)



Figure 3: Existing block plan (scale as shown)



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

The aims of this project as defined in the approved WSI (Kaye 2020) 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

In addition general research aims set out *inter alia* by Brown & Glazebrook (2000), Oake *et al* (2007), Medlycott (2011), Edgeworth (2007) and Wade (2000) that are relevant to the site include:

- Investigating Saxon, medieval and post medieval settlements to examine diversity characterise settlement forms and understand how they appear, grow, shift and disappear

2.2 Methods

The agreed methodology was to assess the extent to which the works would affect the ground surface. The works were monitored until c. 85% complete.

2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA 2014 & 2020)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2019)
- 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 Shefford is situated eight miles south of Bedford and lies close to the border with Hertfordshire. The township of Shefford developed between two bridges in the area where the Bedford to Hitchin Road crosses the River Ivel (CBC 2019: 3; SCAAD 2010). The settlement's name derives from the Old English *scēap* or *sciep* (sheep) + *ford*, meaning 'ford used for sheep' (Mills 1991: 292) which the crossing was known as by AD1000 (CBC 2019: 3).

This section has been compiled with information the Shefford Conservation Area Appraisal Draft (SCAAD 2010), reliable internet sources, and KDK's own library.

3.2 *Prehistoric* (before 600BC)

Little archaeological work has taken place within the centre of Shefford, but a decorated long-necked beaker (HER 380) variously described as late Neolithic or Bronze Age and a possible ring ditch (HER 3524), visible as a cropmark on aerial photographs have been recorded to the southwest of the medieval core. Archaeological investigations (EBD394) at 77-81 Ampthill Road documented residual struck flints, probably Neolithic or Bronze Age, and sherds of late Bronze Age/early to middle Iron Age pottery in later features. Further investigations (EBD 994; Luke et al 2010) revealed a small residual pottery assemblage dated to the late Bronze Age/early Iron Age (1100 – 400 BC), which suggests occupation of this period within the area.

3.3 *Iron Age* (600BC - AD43)

A substantial late Iron Age boundary ditch, which contained domestic debris indicative of local settlement, was excavated at 77-81 Ampthill Road (EBD394). A number of small archaeological investigations have found evidence for occupation from the Iron Age (HER 379) to possibly the 3rd or 4th century AD at the western end of Shefford, including a possible roundhouse (EBD 994; Luke et al 2010) with associated postholes, pits and hearths contained within a substantial enclosure ditch. Late Iron Age ditches, postholes, pits and hearths have also been found. at Shefford Lower School (EBD448). Test-pitting at the Robert Bloomfield School (EBD599), south of the development, discovered late Iron Age/early Roman pottery in a ditch. Further evidence for Iron Age activity was revealed during an evaluation to the rear of the White Hart Hotel (Utrata 2020).

3.4 *Roman* (AD43 - c.450)

Extensive remains from this period have been found in Shefford including a 2nd century aisled building and two timber buildings at Shefford Lower School (HER 379; EBD628, 150-1, 783, 982, 994, 1414-5, 1447; Luke et al 2010) and several ditches, gullies and other agriculturally linked features at the Robert Bloomfield School (EBD 126, 390, 598). Higher status occupation evidence is currently excavated at the former Shefford Lower School site on Wynchwood Lane, which has been identified on old maps the location of a Roman Vila and cemetery (KDK forthcoming).

3.5 *Saxon* (c.450 - 1066)

Saxon remains within the Roman Villa and Cemetery (HER 379) area comprise a pair of 6th century gilt bronze disc brooches that suggest 'a stray burial of Saxon date'. A small number of artefacts were found during antiquarian investigations that suggested Saxon activity, though no corroborative evidence was found during recent investigations (EBD994).

The first indications of a settlement at Shefford date to the 11th century, and the village acquired its name that was derived from the name of meeting point between two bridges that crossed the River Ivel (SCAAD 2010).



3.6 *Medieval* (1066 - 1500)

Shefford is not named in the Domesday Book of 1086, as at that time it was a hamlet administered by the Manor of Campton-cum-Shefford (BHO 2019; CBC 2019). The survey records three land holdings in Campton and it is the largest of these that became the Manor of Campton-cum-Shefford (CBC 2019; Williams & Martin 2002: 568, 569, 582).

The settlement is recorded to have been a thriving commercial centre, a consequence of the founding in 1150 of the nearby Gilbertine Priory of Chicksands (SCAAD 2010: 3). By 1225 Shefford had been granted a charter for a weekly market, and by 1312 a charter for an annual fair had also been granted. The village remained relatively modest in size focused around the River Ivel.

The town is still centred on the historic medieval core (HER 17106), but little has survived from this period. Archaeological investigations to the north of the proposed development site revealed 12-14th century features (Utrata 2020) and Polehanger Mill (HER 5448), which is mentioned in The Coroners Rolls of 1270 regarding the murder of a miller travelling to Polehanger Mill is depicted on Jefferys' Map of 1765. The only remaining medieval structure in Shefford is the 15th century church of St Michael and All Angels, which is immediately west of the proposed development area. It has been extensively altered since it was first built as a chapel of ease and is further described in section 3.8 below.

3.7 *Post-medieval* (1500 - 1900)

The foundation of the town resulted from its position at the crossing point of the river and from its waterways, as the river Ivel had been navigable to Biggleswade (SCAAD 2010: 3). In 1822, Shefford was linked to Kings Lynn by a navigable waterway, an extension of the Ivel Navigation. This gave a direct trading route to the east, with corn and coal the main commodities carried. A commercial wharf opened up in Northbridge Street.

Old maps indicate that the street plan of the town centre has remained essentially the same since 1736 (SCAAD 2010: 3). The section of the Bedford to Hitchin Road that lies within the town was a toll road and this provided trade to the town. During the 17th century it became a base for carriers' wagons and the surviving carriage entrances are evidence of this aspect of the town's economy.

The age of the railway is represented by the rail-line from Bedford to Hitchin (HER 11832), part of the Midland Railway, which opened in May 1857, and closed in December 1964, and the Railway Bridge (HER 4336) on the High Street. The branch line closed in 1962, and the bridge was demolished in 1976.

Shefford became a separate civil parish in 1866 and a separate ecclesiastical parish in 1903 (CBC 2019).

A number of heritage assets and listed buildings within the vicinity of the proposed development site date to this period including The Bridge PH (HER 15425) and the Grade II* listed Catholic Church of St Francis of Assisi on the High Street (List Entry No. 1113767; HER 5394); the adjacent Presbytery (List Entry No 1311648); a Wesleyan Methodist chapel (HER 15438), which was replaced by the present Wesleyan Methodist church in 1912 (HER 13210); 37 High Street (Grade II, List Entry No. 1113768; Her 2172); and 46 & 48 High Street (Grade II, List Entry No. 1157982; HER 13208).



3.8 **Modern** (1900 - present)

Until 1903 Shefford lay within the parish of Campton, and St Michael's church served only as a chapel of ease until it was licensed for communion services in 1853. Twenty years later it was licensed for marriages. Baptisms were recorded for Campton until 1902 although a brick, built font is known to have been present in St Michael's Church as early as 1708 (Pickford 1994:637).

A faculty was obtained in 1807 to enlarge the church, which was almost completely rebuilt on the same site the following year (Pickford 1994: 637). The alterations to the building included the construction of a fire engine house on the north side of the church.

Despite the increased seating that the rebuilding allowed, the church was again too small by 1822 when the Rector of Campton bought a house and garden next to the church to allow it to be enlarged. The church was re-opened in 1823 having been extensively remodelled and a new aisle added to the south of the nave. Scant 30 years later the church was again enlarged, this time to the east to allow for a chancel and communion table (ibid: 238).

Test pitting on the opposite side of the High Street in 2012 revealed pottery ranging from the Roan period to the 19th century (EBD 1050).



4 Results

An area measuring 142 sq metres was reduced by up to 170mm using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.

The existing surface was seen to consist of mixed made deposits including brick, aggregate and concrete. A considerable amount of building debris in the form of 19th century gault and frogged red bricks was revealed during the ground reduction. Although predominantly randomly deposited, a cohesive area of brickwork, possibly a former garden path, was exposed at the eastern end of the car park. The bricks were of gault clay, measured 210 x 110mm (8¼ x 4 inches) and were set directly into the ground.

No other discernible features or finds were observed.

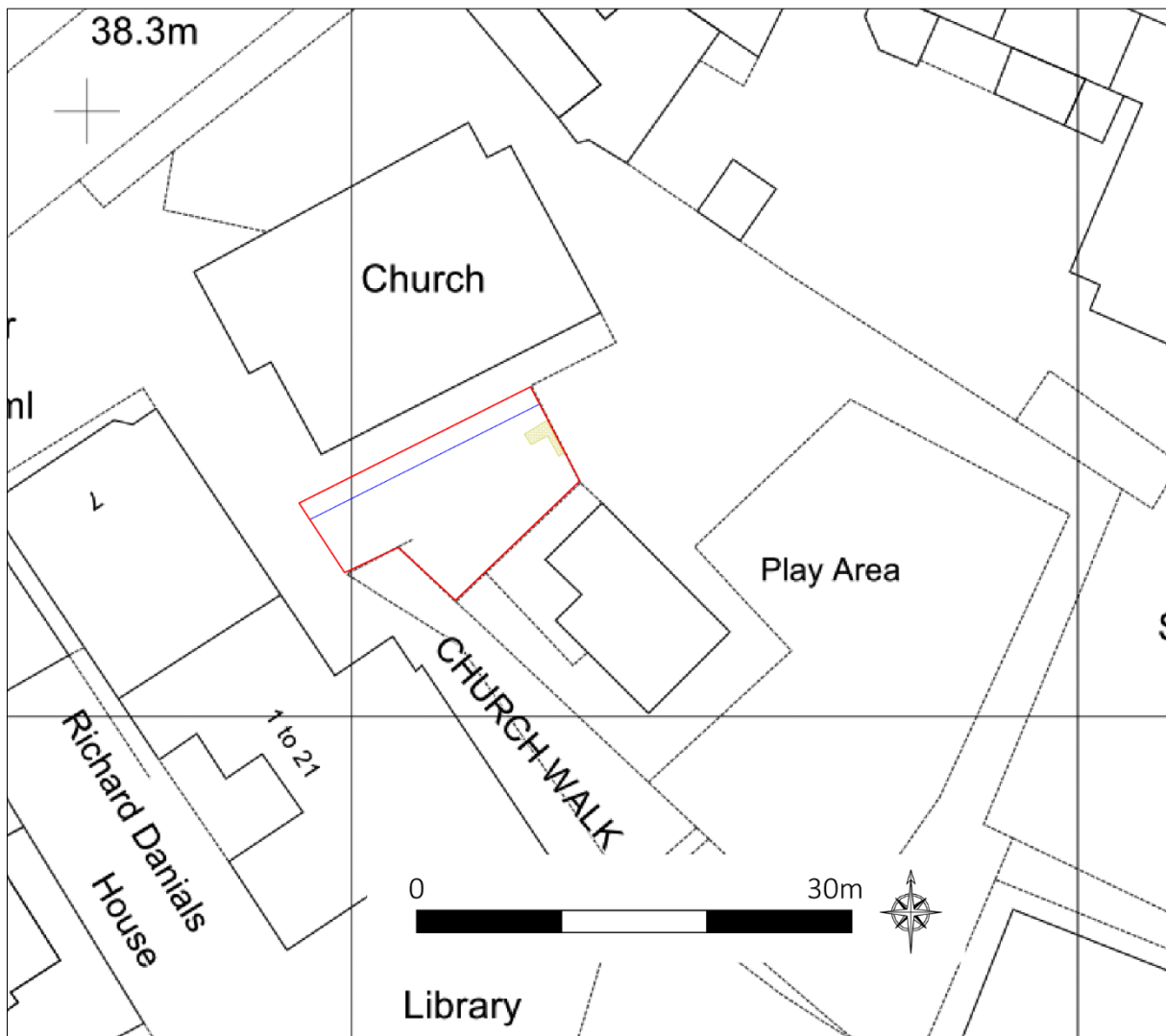


Figure 4: Brick surface (yellow) and church boundary (blue) (scale 1:500)



Plate 1: Brick surface and made ground deposits from the west



Plate 2: Detail of brick surface from the west

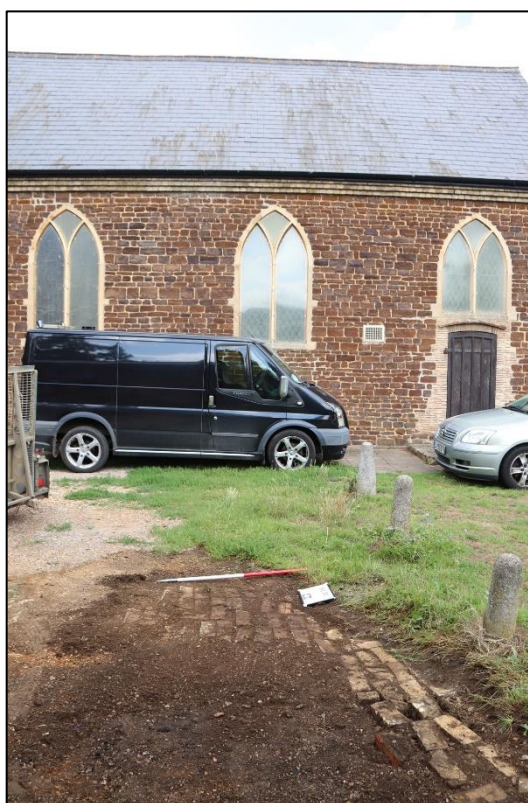


Plate 3: Brick surface in relation to the church



Plate 4: Northeastern corner of the reduced area



Plate 5: Exemplar of general surface



5 Conclusions

The made ground deposits that were revealed during the site reduction included building debris from one or more 19th century structures. The only building known to have been on the site from historic mapping is depicted solely on the 1937 Ordnance Survey map (<https://www.old-maps.co.uk/#/Map/514500/239500/12/101169>), and is unlikely to have been the source of the bricks.

Whilst the area of gault bricks could have formed a path or similar, there is insufficient evidence in readily available aerial photographs or historic mapping to confirm the hypothesis. It is equally impossible to suggest with any confidence where the bricks throughout the car park originated, other than they were probably locally sourced.

None of the research aims could be met because the depth of ground reduction was minimal and would not have affected any archaeological remains within the area.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to JHC Contracts for commissioning this report on behalf of Lee Thompson. Thanks are also due to Stephen Coleman and Slawek Utrata of Central Bedfordshire Council for providing historic environment records and monitoring the project respectively.

The site contractors are also to be thanked for their willing assistance and good humour.

The fieldwork was carried out by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA. The report was written by Karin Kaye, and edited by David Kaye BA ACIfA.



7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Written Scheme of Investigation
2. Initial report
3. Monitoring sheets
4. Site drawings
5. List of photographs
6. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (Accession Number BEDFM 2020.52).



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.
- EH 2008 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment. PPN3: Archaeological Excavation*. London: English Heritage.
- EH 2011 *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods from Sampling and Recovery to Post-Excavation*. London: English Heritage.
- Ferguson L. M. & Murray D. M. 1997 *Archaeological Documentary Archives: Preparation, Curation and Storage*. Manchester: Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Paper 1.
- 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.
- Kaye, K. 2020 *Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording: Car Park to the rear of St Michael and All Angels, Church, High Street Shefford* KDK Archaeology 542/SCP/1.2
- 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.

Books and Historical Sources

- Bedfordshire Historical Records Society 2000 *Bedfordshire churches in the nineteenth century: Part III: Parishes Salford to Yelden*, ed. Chris Pickford (Bedford) BHRS vol. 79, pp. 637-640
- British Geological Society (BGS) 2015: <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>



-
- Brown N. & Glazebrooke J. 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8
- Luke, M. Preece, T., & Wells, J., 2010 A Romano-British Aisled Building And Associated Settlement South Of Ampthill Road, Shefford. *Bedfordshire Archaeology*, 26: 269-346.
- Medlycott M. (ed) 2011 *Research and Archaeology Re-visited: A Revised Framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24
- Oake M. Luke M., Dawson M. Edgeworth M. and Murphy P. 2007 *Bedfordshire Archaeology - Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy*. Bedfordshire Archaeology 9
- SCAAD 2019 Shefford Conservation Area Appraisal Draft. January 2010. Central Bedfordshire Council. https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=2&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=2ahUKEwjSpOqWkLzKAhUZQUEAHVFhDC8QFjABegQIBRAC&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.centralbedfordshire.gov.uk%2Fmigrated_images%2Fshefford_tcm3-12967.pdf&usg=AOvVaw1f5Z2HeR_232O7j6bZcbea [accessed 05/09/2019]
- Utrata, S. 2020 Planning Application Re. CB/20/01289/FULL Internal Planning Consultation Memo (5th June 2020)
- Victoria County History: '*Parishes: Campton cum Shefford and Chicksands*', in A History of the County of Bedford: Volume 2, ed. William Page (London, 1908), pp. 269-270
- Wessex Archaeology 2010 Land off Wynchwood Lane, Shefford, Bedfordshire. Heritage Statement and Archaeological Evaluation Report. Unpublished report Ref: 117910.4
- Williams A. & Martin G.H. 2002 *Domesday Book: A Complete Translation*. London: Penguin

Online Sources

Aerial Photographs: <https://britainfromabove.org.uk/en/image/EPW026483>



Appendix 1: Photograph List

| Shot | RAW | JPEG | Subject |
|------|-----|------|----------------------------------------------------|
| 1 | X | X | Possible brick surface, at eastern end of car park |
| 2 | X | X | Possible brick surface, at eastern end of car park |
| 3 | X | X | Detail of possible brick surface |
| 4 | X | X | Possible brick surface in relation to the church |
| 5 | X | X | Northeast corner of the car park stripped |
| 6 | X | X | Detail of the north east corner |



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

| PROJECT DETAILS | | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Project Name & Address | Car Park r/o Church of St Michael & All Angels, Shefford, Bedfordshire | Project Site Code | 542/SCP |
| OASIS reference | kdkarcha1-399930 | Event/Accession no | BEDFM 2020.52 |
| OS reference | TL 14357 39067 | Study area size | 142 sq m |
| Project Type | Watching Brief | Height (mAOD) | 36mAOD |
| Short Description | In August 2020 a programme of Observation and Recording was undertaken on the car park to the rear of the Church of St Michael and All Angels, High Street, Shefford, Bedfordshire, as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site. The car park was stripped by up to 170mm revealing only made ground including building debris comprising 19th century red and gault bricks. One area of gault bricks at the eastern end of the car park appeared to form a cohesive surface, possibly a pathway, but there is insufficient archaeological or documentary evidence to confirm this. No archaeological features or finds were otherwise revealed. | | |
| Previous work | No | Site status | None |
| Planning proposal | Proposed change of surface finish to car park from gravel to tarmac with rolled stone chippings | Current land use | Private car park |
| Local Planning Authority | Central Bedfordshire Council | Planning application ref. | CB/20/01289/FULL |
| Monument type | N/A | Monument period | N/A |
| Significant finds | None | Future work | No |
| PROJECT CREATORS | | | |
| Organisation | KDK Archaeology Ltd | | |
| Project Brief originator | N/A | Project Design originator | KDK Archaeology Ltd |
| Project Manager | Karin Kaye MA MCIfA | Director/Supervisor | Karin Kaye MA MCIfA |
| Sponsor/funding body | Lee Thompson | | |
| PROJECT DATE | | | |
| Start date | 17 th August 2020 | End date | 17 th August 2020 |
| PROJECT ARCHIVES | | | |
| | Location | Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets) | |
| Physical | | None | |
| Paper | Bedford Museum | Fieldwork sheets, report, WSI | |
| Digital | OASIS | Report | |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report) | | | |
| Title | Archaeological Observation & Recording: Car Park r/o Church of St Michael & All Angels, Shefford, Bedfordshire | | |
| Serial title & volume | KDK Archaeology Report 542/SCP/2 | | |
| Author(s) | Karin Kaye MA MCIfA | | |
| Page no's | 19 | Date | 18 th August 2020 |