



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

## Archaeological Observation and Recording Report

Christ Church  
West Street  
Dunstable  
Bedfordshire



### Quality Check

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|-----------------|---------------------|----------------|-------------|-------------|------------|
| <i>Author</i>   | Derek Watson PhD    | <i>Version</i> | 551/DCC/2.1 | <i>Date</i> | 06.06.2022 |
| <i>Editor</i>   | Karin Kaye MA MCIfA | <i>Version</i> | 551/DCC/2.1 | <i>Date</i> | 07.06.2022 |
| <i>Revision</i> | Karin Kaye MA MCIfA | <i>Version</i> | 551/DCC/2.2 | <i>Date</i> | 20.06.2022 |

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## Summary

In March & August 2021, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at Christ Church, West Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, during alterations to an existing boundary wall. The removal of the boundary wall and the excavation of a foundation trench for the emplacement of a new wall did not reveal any significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts as only made-ground overlying natural chalk was revealed. The original chapel was built in 1801, and rebuilt in 1847 and these events, particularly the early 19<sup>th</sup> build, would have required appropriate levels of area preparation and landscaping all resulting in extensive truncation of any *in situ* stratigraphy and/or potential archaeological remains. The wall was probably (re-)built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as it was constituted by a variety of post-medieval brick types, including both solid and frogged forms. Another trench excavated near the rear garden gate in April 2022 for the construction of a replacement boundary wall was not archaeologically monitored as it was known to have been already disturbed by recent building activities.

## 1 Introduction

In March & August 2021, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at Christ Church, West Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by Benchmark Architects, and was carried at the request of the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeology Team (CBCAT), Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Central Bedfordshire Council. The relevant planning application reference is CB/20/01925/FULL and CB/20/01926/LB.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Condition 2 of the Listed Building Consent.

### 1.3 *The Site*

#### *Location*

The development site is situated in the town and civil parish of Dunstable and the administrative district of Central Bedfordshire. It is located on the north side of the street at National Grid Reference (NGR) TL 0181 2186 (Fig. 1). The site is within the Dunstable Conservation Area (CBC 2010).

#### *Description*

The development is an irregular rectilinear area within an urban setting and is situated within the boundaries of two Grade II listed buildings: Christ Church Baptist Chapel (List Entry No. 1114601) at 5125 West Street and the Plume of Feathers (List Entry No. 1321363) at 1/124 West Street (Fig. 2). The development is bounded to the northwest to southwest by a carpark and by religious and commercial properties, and associated access, in all other directions.

#### *Geology and Topography*

The site is located within the town centre of Dunstable, where superficial deposits have not been mapped. Surviving natural soils are likely to include the Upton 1 Association, namely shallow, well-drained calcareous soil (Soil Survey 1983: 342a). The solid geology is part of the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation (Undifferentiated) (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). The development is situated at an elevation of approximately 162m AOD.



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*Development*

The development requires alterations to existing boundary walls adjacent to the main building and the rear garden gate, and the extension of an existing shed (Fig. 3).

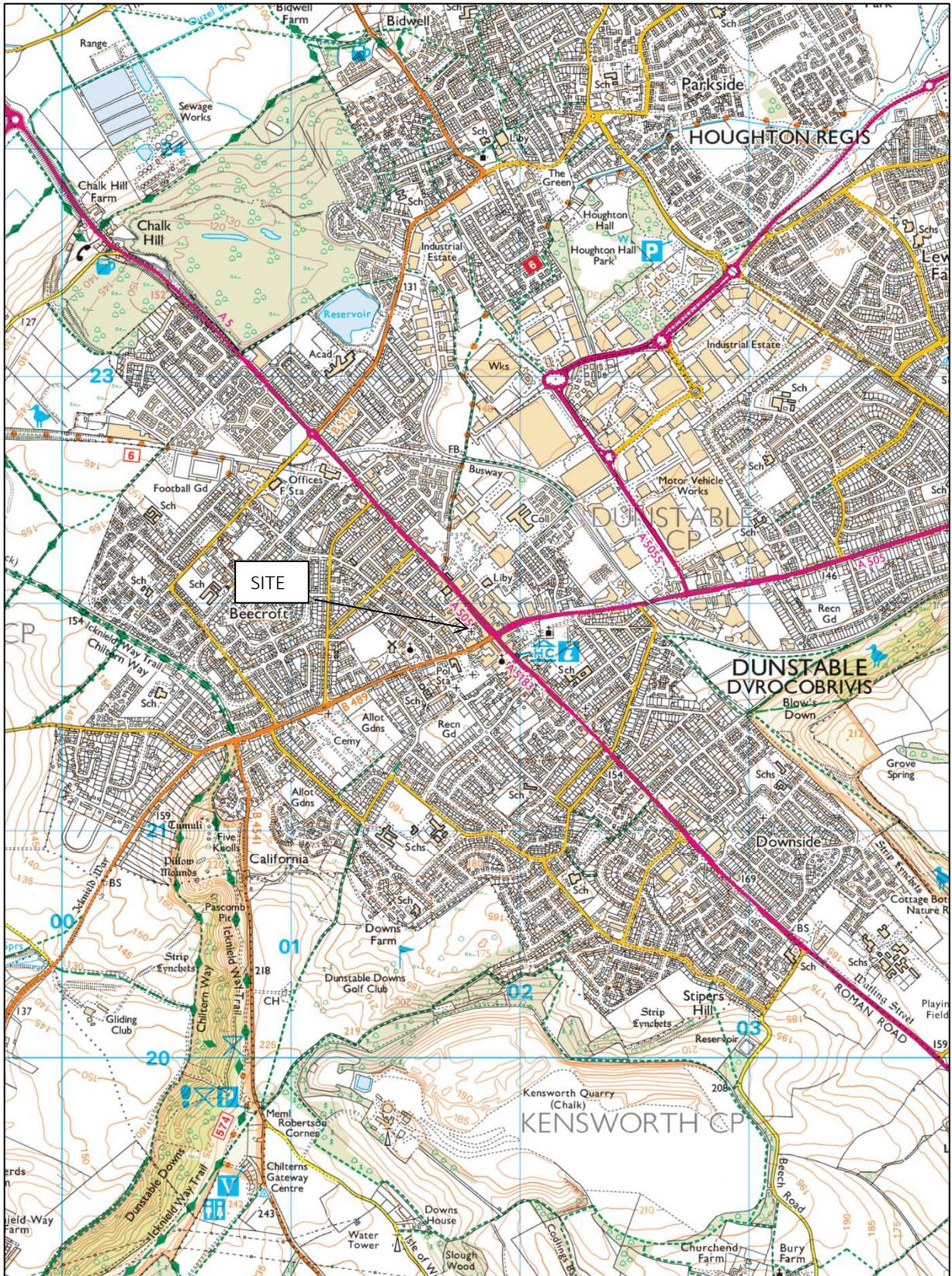


Figure 1: Site location (scale 1:25,000)

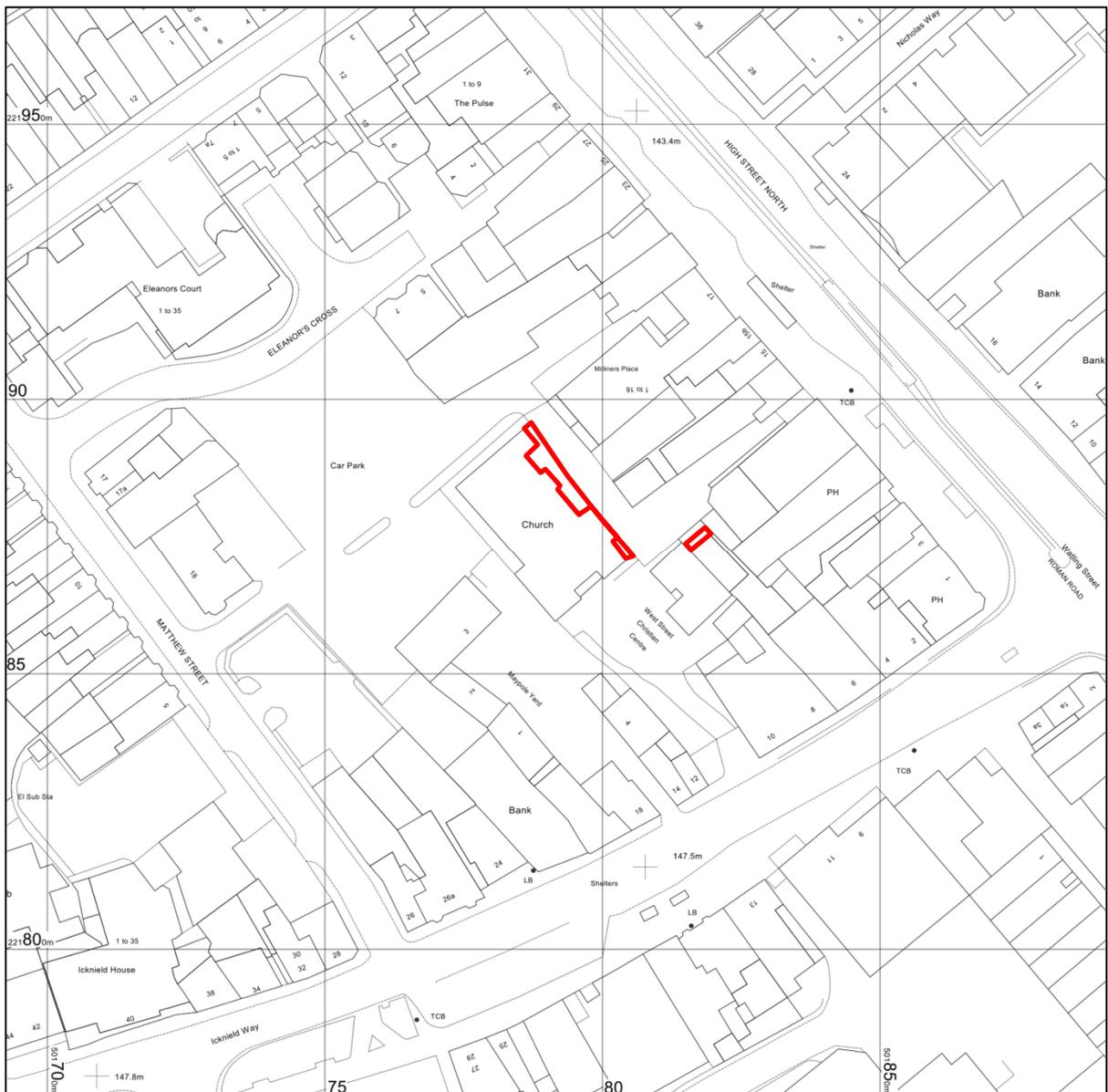


Figure 2: Site layout (scale 1:1,250)



Figure 3: Development plan (scale 1:200@A3)



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## 2 Aims & Methods

### 2.1 Aims

The aims of the project 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.

In addition, as the development site was considered to have the potential to contain archaeological deposits relating to the Roman, medieval and post medieval development of Dunstable, the research aims also included consideration of:

- The importance of Roman towns, their origins and development, and their inter-relationships with their hinterlands (Going and Plouviez 2000: 21)
- The origins and development of small towns, their inter-relationships with their hinterlands and early town planning from the Saxon through to the early post medieval periods (Ayers 2000: 27-32, Going and Plouviez, 21, Oake et al 2007: 11 and 14 and Medlycott 2011: 47-48, 58, 70 & 79)

### 2.2 Methods

The method used comprised:

- The continuous archaeological supervision of all the groundworks related to the development.

### 2.3 Standards

The work will conform to the following requirements:

- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance* notes (CIfA 2014 and 2019)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2019)
- Current Historic England guidelines (EH 2008, HE 2015)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)
- Data Protection Act 2018



### 3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The development site lies within the defined core of both the Roman town (HER 135) and the medieval town of Dunstable (HER 16986), and is considered to have the potential to contain archaeological deposits dating from these periods as well as from post-medieval times. Dunstable (*Durocbrivae*) began as a Roman settlement, though when the Romans departed Britain in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD the area was apparently abandoned until a town was founded there by Henry I c.1119.

The meaning of the name Dunstable (Dunestaple) may be derived from ‘boundary post (*stapol*) of a man called Dun(n)’ (Mills 1991: 112) or from a combination of hill (*dun*) and wooden post (*staple*) which may have been used to mark the site of a market during the Middle Ages (Lambert 2014).

The development site is within the Dunstable Conservation Area (CBC 2010) and it is situated within the boundaries of two Grade II listed buildings: Christ Church Baptist Chapel (List Entry No. 1114601; HER 6313) and the 17<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> century The Plume of Feathers (List Entry No. 1321363; HER 6312).

This section has been compiled with information from the Central Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER search ref: 202021/095), reliable web sites and KDK’s own library. The HER data is shown in Fig. 4, with a 750m search radius (250m radius for buildings). The HER search area also lists 115 buildings, numerous sites of now demolished (mostly post-medieval) buildings, and 34 listed buildings (predominantly Grade II, with 2 x Grade II\*), which have generally been excluded from the following as most will not be affected by this project.

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

Few prehistoric finds have come from the historic town core itself, though there is much material from the surrounding area, particularly the Downs to the south. Palaeolithic hand axe(s) and flakes (HER 12286) were found in gravel imported from Caddington, at a site situated at the northern edge of the HER search area.

During the Neolithic period, the development of agriculture was accompanied by the establishment of permanent settlements, ritual burial and communal field monuments, such as the causewayed camp at Maiden Bower (Albion 2003: 19). Sources from the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century indicate the possible site of a Neolithic Long Barrow (HER 129) on Union Street, which was gradually destroyed by urban development. The mound is called Mill Hill, Mill Bank or Windmill Hill in various sources since a windmill was built on it in the post-medieval period. Archaeological trenching in the area in 2000 found no evidence for a barrow but did identify the ditches of a late Iron Age or early Roman trackway (HER 12290; EBD321). An important ancient route-way, The Icknield Way (HER 353), may be Neolithic in origin and runs, approximately west to east through Dunstable (now West Street that runs immediately south of the development). It does not appear to have been metalled during the Roman period and is suggested to have been a service road connecting villas and settlements to Watling Street at that time. It seems to have been formalised as a road in the medieval period, and the suggested line has been traced from 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> century maps. Neolithic implements (HER 1444) were found in fields just north of the Icknield Way, c. 240m northeast of the development.

There is also some Bronze Age material from the town itself. Edward Street, northwest of the development, was the site of a Bronze Age round barrow (HER 128), situated 200 m east of long barrow (HER 129); but it has now been built over. A Bronze Age burial (HER 157) was also documented behind the Waggon and Horses on High Street South, south of London Terrace, in



the 1860s. The skeleton was in a tightly crouched position. Late Bronze Age axeheads (HER 18784) were discovered at Montpellier House by metal detecting.

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

During the Iron Age the area surrounding Dunstable lay within the territory of the hillfort at Maiden Bower (HER 666; Albion 2003: 20) and potential Iron Age occupation site was revealed at Pond Cottage, Bullpond Lane (Hudspith 1991: 34). A pit and a shallow ditch containing late Iron Age and Roman potsherds and brick/tile were also revealed at Grayfriars on Bullpond Lane in 2019 (Dodd & Watson 2019).

Iron Age/Roman occupation and an early Roman cemetery (HER 17802) were discovered in a 2002 excavation at Grove House Gardens, where a curving line of postholes suggested a segment of a roundhouse and internal features. A ditch in the southeast corner of the site is thought to be associated with the three sided enclosure located on the site of Asda: this ditch might be the fourth side of the enclosure. Excavations in advance of a playground development in 2005 revealed a 1<sup>st</sup> - 2<sup>nd</sup> century cemetery containing 20 cremations, seven inhumations and an animal burial. Iron Age coins (HER 143 & 1386) are listed within the HER search area.

Iron Age/Roman/medieval & post- medieval finds (HER 13357) have been recovered from Priory Middle School where excavations revealed a furrow, probably from the medieval period, which was filled with post medieval finds suggesting it was used for dumping from nearby houses or the adjacent 17<sup>th</sup> -18<sup>th</sup> century road. There were 2 other ditches nearby the furrow, one of which was cut directly by it. They probably represent field boundaries, from an earlier date but are undated. Iron Age and Romano-British potsherds were also found.

In the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, Worthington G. Smith identified a street named as Little Butts/South Place as formerly being known as Moll Dyke (or Moll or Maol; HER 19682), and suggested that Moll was derived from the Celtic Maol. R. W. Bagshawe in 1961 suggested this was one of a series of dykes or ditches attributable to the Belgic period existing at intervals and running at right angles to Watling Street similar to those adjoining the Icknield Way run from the High St South. This earthwork was supposedly situated about 200m south of development site.

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

The Roman town at Dunstable (HER 135, 11270, 11284) recorded as *Durocbrivae* or *Durocbrivis*, appears to have developed around the crossroads between the prehistoric routeway known as the Icknield Way (HER 353) and Watling Street (HER 5508), one of the major arterial roads in Roman Britain which runs on the line of the High Street. Watling Street (HER 5508) was built soon after the Roman conquest, linking London and Chester, and runs through Bedfordshire from Kensworth to Potsgrove. A part of the road surface (HER 7099) has been revealed c. 60m northeast of the development. It is not clear what role the Roman town had in this period and there is no evidence for a military presence, which would suggest that the town may have been a form of staging post (*mansion*) or even an administrative centre (*pagus*; Albion2003: 20-21). The decline of *Durocbrivae* is likely to have taken place during the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD following the formal withdrawal of Roman rule from Britain.

Roman material has been found in all four quadrants of Dunstable. Numerous small scale archaeological investigations have revealed evidence for cobbled road surfaces, wells, timber buildings, boundary features, industrial activity and a large late Roman cemetery (HER 11284, 11270, 14964, 16077; Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust 2000; Mudd 2004; Oxford Archaeology 2006). A Roman well (HER 11274), located c. 40m northeast of the development, contained pottery, bone and personal ornaments - the fill contained occupation debris of Roman and early medieval date. Roman pits (HER 11276-7) in Cross Street and Chapel Alley



(now Chapel Walk), c. 130m-200m southwest of the development, were discovered during the execution of drainage works in 1901. The descriptions suggest these were actually ditches, probably boundary ditches which had been used for the dumping of domestic refuse: pottery, animal bone and oyster shells. The discovery of a ditch (HER 11281) of possible 'defensive proportions', containing Roman pottery in 1970 led to the speculation that *Durocobrivae* was on the site of the present town centre. A possible 13m-wide Roman route-way (HER 20290) with substantial ditch segments was revealed at Central Bedfordshire College, Kingsway at the northern edge of the HER search area. Evidence of Roman occupation have also been found mixed with medieval and, occasionally, post-medieval remains at 3-25 Albion Street (HER 14964), 23-27 High Street North (HER 16077), Old Palace Lodge, Church Street (HER 14965), Priory School Playing Fields (HER 15822), and a Roman pit with a medieval inhumation (HER 14963) was revealed adjacent to 140 West Street. Numerous Roman coins (HER 1342, 1381, 11278-9, 11283) and a Bronze pin (HER 1347) have been found within HER search area.

As Roman law required that burials take place outside settlements, the various cemeteries situated near the development site define the variable limits of the Roman settlement. Evidence of Roman occupation and a cemetery (HER 11284) was revealed in Friary Field, c. 300m southeast of the development. Many finds from a variety of features (pits, ditches, wells, possible buildings) show the density of Roman occupation in this part of the town from the 1<sup>st</sup> to at least the 4<sup>th</sup> century. No substantial buildings have been located, but there were several deep wells, one was excavated to a depth of 92 feet (28 metres) and it contained pottery, bone, and personal ornaments. The most important discovery in Friary Field was a late Roman cemetery, only part of which was accessible for excavation. Furthermore, the fact that some features on the site, such as drying ovens, appear to have been dug through the cemetery ditch, and therefore to post-date it, suggests that occupation may have continued into the early 5<sup>th</sup> century. A single Roman inhumation burial (HER 19725) was found within the footprint of the access road adjacent to West Street on land opposite Westgate Court. Possible Roman burials were found on Albion Street (HER 122, 150), north of the development, including a skeleton in a lead coffin, though some of the skeletons may be Anglo-Saxon.

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

Following the demise of Roman rule the town appears to have been largely deserted, but Saxon settlement evidence has been found in the northwest quadrant, consisting of sunken featured buildings and a pagan Anglo - Saxon cemetery (e.g. Marina Drive HER 152; Albion 2003: 24). At present there does not appear to have been any continuity between the Roman and Saxon settlements, however this circumstance is not unusual, and it is possible that the focus of the Saxon settlement was simply shifted away from the centre of the Roman town.

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

The medieval town of Dunstable (HER 16986) originated in the early 12<sup>th</sup> century as in 1119AD Henry I founded the settlement as a market centre at the cross roads of Watling Street and the Icknield Way. The original parish boundaries to the north and east were relatively straight and formed rectangular areas containing the burghage plots. They are thought to have been the boundaries created when the town was mostly carved out of the parish lands of the king's manor of Houghton Regis; the original irregular zig zag southwest boundary appears to have been laid out to follow furlong boundaries within Kensworth parish from which Dunstable also took land.

The main heritage asset from this period is Dunstable Augustinian Priory of St Peter (Scheduled Monument 1004676; HER 131), founded by Henry I at Christmas 1131-1132; whereas the conventual church was built in the second half of the 12<sup>th</sup> century (see HER 132). The Priory was



dissolved in 1540, and while the church survives most of the other buildings have been demolished. The remains of the gatehouse survive to the south west of the church, and comprise carriage and pedestrian entrances (see HER 6329). An 18<sup>th</sup> century building called Priory House stands on the site of the priory guesthouse (Hospitium) and contains a medieval vaulted chamber, known as the undercroft, which is believed to date to the 13th century (HER 6311). Cellars belonging to the bakehouse/brewhouse are known to survive to the rear of High Street South (EBD 852). Much of the rest of the priory area is now under grass, in which low earthworks show the locations of priory buildings and it has been the subject of c. 21 archaeological excavations and surveys. Medieval inhumations (HER 16173) associated with the first century of Dunstable Priory were revealed at 2 Priory Road and comprised over 18 graves excavated in advance of garage construction. A 12<sup>th</sup> century seal (HER 1362) engraved with a depiction of the Martyrdom of St Katherine, was found in 1880 in the Priory grounds. The Priory is located c. 200m southeast of the development.

The site of a Dominican Friary (HER 141), founded in 1259 and dissolved in 1539, is located to the south of the High Street. Excavations and observations of ground disturbance have taken place on the site since the 1830s. Before the 1970s, parts of buildings had been located along with burials. In the 1970s extensive work located the church, identified a boundary wall and ditch to the north of the church, which could represent the precinct boundary, and confirmed the existence of what appears to be an elaborate monastic garden. The walls are generally well-preserved, surviving as high as 1m. It has been suggested that at the Dissolution, the interior furnishings were removed and the roof removed. The vaulting collapsed and the walls were removed down to ground level, but not down to floor level which was lower than the external ground level in places.

Archaeological investigations on Chapel Walk discovered medieval/post medieval occupation and maltings (HER 11280) remains c. 175m southeast of the development. The finds included shell-gritted pottery, probably derived from 10<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> century St. Neots ware, and cess-pits associated with buildings based on Watling Street. The evidence of buildings comprised an indiscriminate scatter of post-holes, a small round oven of edged tile and dressed Totternhoe stone at an 'entrance', and a rubble wall base and Totternhoe stone.

Evidence of medieval and post medieval occupation (HER 15212) was documented at 48, 50, 52 & 54 High Street North. The medieval evidence was mainly seen in the stone rubble base of a wall. To the east of the base was an oven or a fireplace, and another was located 1m north of the western edge of the wall. Alongside the north of the wall was a ditch that appeared to be contemporary with the wall. The lack of evidence for a floor suggests that the ditch and wall marked a boundary were not part of a building. The post-medieval remains comprised a well with chalk sides and an 18<sup>th</sup> -19<sup>th</sup> century brick cap, a probable cess pit with a peg tile, and a sherd of post-medieval pottery.

The site of an Eleanor Cross (HER 134), built to commemorate Queen Eleanor, wife of Edward I who died at Hadby near Lincoln in 1290, is situated c. 70m southeast of the development. The cross was destroyed during the Civil War in 1643.

The Old Palace Lodge Hotel on Church Street is on the site of the former royal residence of Kingsbury (HER 148) belonging to Henry I and granted to Dunstable Priory in 1204. Archaeological investigations have found evidence of medieval as well as Roman settlement activity (HER 14965; Summerfield-Hill 2018; Dodd 2018).

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



Dunstable prospered during the 17<sup>th</sup> century and, particularly, the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a coaching town, and numerous inns were established to cater for the travellers (Albion 2003: 35). During the 19<sup>th</sup> century the railway was established in Dunstable ceasing the coaching industry but become an attractive town in which to invest for other industries. As a result, from the 1830s Dunstable began to develop from a small market town into an industrial community (Albion 2003: 35). The Craven's Trade Directory for 1853 indicates that the straw plait and hat manufacture industry was important to Dunstable, and continued to be so to end of the century. The Hatfield, Luton and Dunstable Branch Railway (Great Northern Railway; HER14086) was opened in 1858, but the line ceased to be used for goods traffic in 1963 and for passenger traffic in 1965. By the early 20<sup>th</sup> century many factories had closed due to Luton's growing prosperity of having better rail links into London (Albion 2003: 50).

The development site is situated within the boundaries of two Grade II listed buildings and is surrounded by 17 buildings/structures, dating from the 17<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

Other religious institutions in the general area comprise St Peter's Parish Churchyard (HER 9022), adjacent to the Priory, the 19<sup>th</sup> century Wesleyan churchyard (HER 9008), and the Quaker Burial Ground (HER 1445) West Street, a Society of Friends burial ground of 17<sup>th</sup> century origin.

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

Only a few heritage assets are listed in the HER search area for this period. These include the Dunstable Cemetery (HER 8884), opened 1861/63 south of West Street; the Index Printing/Publishing Works (HER 21110) adjacent to the Priory; a WWII Tank Trap (HER 17883) and Machine Gun Emplacement (HER 17884) on Chiltern Road in Dunstable; and a WWII Air Raid Shelter (HER 18236), originally constructed in Grove House Gardens and revealed by archaeological excavation.

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

There are historical details available for the area encompassing the development and what is known is primarily from the post-medieval and modern periods. The development took place within the grounds of the Grade II listed (List Entry No. 1114601) Baptist Chapel of Christ Church.

The Listed Building entry is as follows:

*2. pediment. 2 storeys, 3 Early to mid C19, 1847. Red brick and stucco, central pediment. 2 storeys, 3 arched windows, round headed to first floor, segmental to ground floor. Quoins, slightly recessed centre and windows recessed in panels. 3 central doors, each 2 fold with 10 panels flanked by pilasters under consoles, cornice hood. 4 stone steps up. Recessed 1 storey side wings with doorways in round arches under stone tablets, parapet. Eaves level entablature to main block. Recent alterations to lower part of front.*

The original chapel was built in 1801, and rebuilt in 1847 (HER 6313). Although Christ Church is of 19<sup>th</sup> century origin, it is located within the medieval town of Dunstable, originally founded by Henry I at the crossroads between Watling Street and Icknield Way. This places the location of the works within the Dunstable Conservation Area.

Immediately adjacent to the development is the Post-Medieval Baptist churchyard (HER 9009) to the south, and the former site of the 19<sup>th</sup> century Hat Factory (HER 15254) at the rear of 17 High Street North to the east and northeast.





## 4 Results

### 4.1 Introduction

In March & August 2021, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at Christ Church, West Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, during the demolition of an existing boundary wall and the excavation of a foundation trench for its replacement with a new wall. The demolition of the wall was undertaken in March, and the removal of the existing wall foundation and excavation of a foundation trench took place in August. The foundation trench (Trench 1) was c. 20m long x 1.20 - 1.40m wide x 0.90m deep, and was oriented NNW-SSE with an area of c.28m<sup>2</sup> (Fig. 5; Plates 1 - 2). The excavation was undertaken by a 2.5-tonne tracked excavator fitted with a 0.80m toothless ditching bucket, or when needed, a hydraulic breaker for removing the old wall foundation. In addition, a second trench was excavated in 2022 in an area that had recently been heavily re-worked and so, with the agreement of the CBC Archaeology Team, was not monitored.

### 4.2 Description

The stratigraphy revealed within Trench 1 comprised (Fig 6; Plates 3 - 8):

- Made-ground (100): Yellowish brown silty sand, with occasional inclusions of angular flint (<0.05), and frequent fragmentary and complete modern brick. This made ground filled the area between the old wall and the church building, and was mostly covered in concrete slabs. This deposit was c.0.6m thick.
- Made-ground (101): Dark greyish brown sandy silt, with occasional post-medieval and modern brick fragments. This layer was situated in the north-western half of Trench 1, and was c.0.20m thick.
- Made-ground (102): A c.0.60m deep layer of greyish white chalk, constituted by angular blocks (<0.20m) and pulverised material situated in the north-western half of Trench 1.
- Made-ground (103): Mid greyish brown silty clay, with occasional to moderate red brick fragments and charcoal flecks, and occasional blocks (c.0.15) of angular chalk. This layer was >0.40-0.70m thick and formed the base of excavation in the north-western half of Trench 1 and extended to south-eastern end of the excavated area.
- Natural (104): Chalk. The natural geology was exposed at the base of Trench 1 in the south-eastern half of the excavated area.
- Made-ground (105): Road foundation, c.0.30m thick. Beneath the tarmac (106), the foundation of the road comprised dark brown to greyish brown silty sand, hardcore and mostly whole modern bricks.
- Tarmac (106): Road surface, c.0.10m thick.
- Lamp-post foundation (107): Concrete base and cement infill foundation for street lamp (not differentiated).

The project began with dismantling the now demolished wall by hand, as the bricks that could be salvaged were to be re-used for constructing the new wall. These bricks were a mixture of sizes and types including numerous 19<sup>th</sup> century Luton Grey bricks. The other types noted were post-medieval, with the following dimensions:

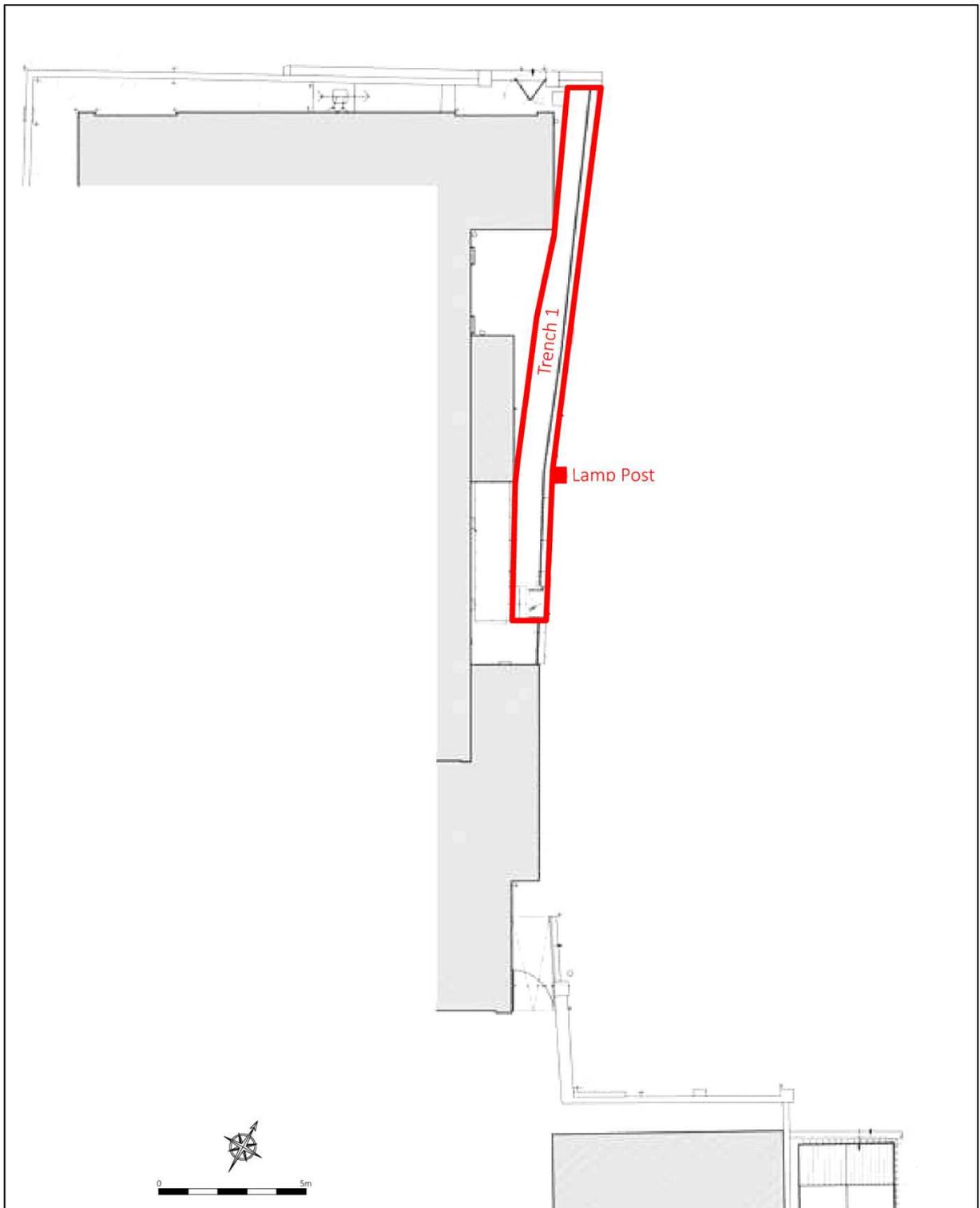
- 1) Two brick types with narrow frogging -
  - 1a): brick size = (L)  $9\frac{1}{16}$  (W) x  $4\frac{21}{64}$  x (H)  $2\frac{9}{16}$  inches (23 x 11 x 6.5cm), frog = (L)  $5\frac{33}{64}$  x (W)  $1\frac{3}{16}$  x (D)  $0\frac{25}{64}$  inches (14 x 2.5 x 1cm).
  - 1b): brick size: (L)  $5\frac{33}{64}$  x (W)  $4\frac{9}{64}$  x (H)  $2\frac{3}{4}$  (23 x 10.5 x 7cm, frog = (L)  $5\frac{33}{64}$  x (W)  $1\frac{3}{16}$  x (D)  $0\frac{19}{32}$  inches (14 x 2.5 x 1.5cm).



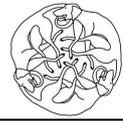
- 
- 2) Two brick type without frogging -  
2a): brick size = (L)  $9\frac{1}{16}$  x (W)  $3\frac{15}{16}$  x (H)  $2\frac{9}{16}$  inches (23 x 10.5 x 6.5cm).  
2b): brick size = (L)  $9\frac{29}{64}$  x (W)  $4\frac{17}{32}$  x (H)  $2\frac{9}{16}$  inches (H) 24 x 11.5 x (H) 6.5cm. These were glazed.

The natural geology was exposed in the southern half of the trench, whereas the northern half the base consisted only of made-ground. No archaeological features, finds, or deposits were revealed within the trench.

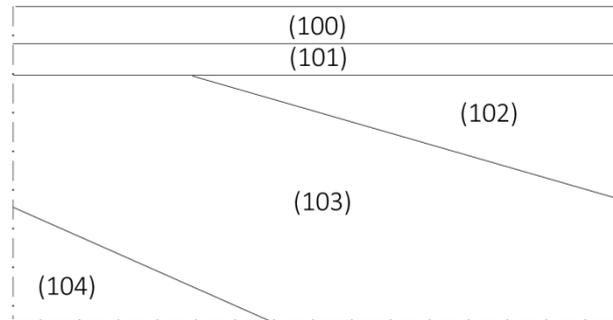
In May 2022, a second trench (Trench 2) was excavated for the erection of a boundary wall adjacent to the rear garden gate. This was not monitored as the area was known to have been disturbed by the construction of soakaway about 5 years previously, and the wall beside it was built in the 1980s. The stratigraphy revealed in Trench 2 comprised made-ground, tarmac and concrete (Plates 9-10).



**Figure 5:** Plan of Trench 1 (scale as shown)



Trench 1: Schematic Stratigraphy, facing northeast



Trench 1: Schematic Stratigraphy, facing southwest



**Figure 6:** Schematic representation of Trench 1 stratigraphy (not to scale). Top = church side stratigraphy; Bottom = roadside stratigraphy



**Plate 1:** Trench 1, facing northwest



**Plate 2:** Trench 1, facing southeast



**Plate 3:** Trench 1, stratigraphy of the south-eastern half of the excavated area, facing SW



**Plate 4:** Trench 1, stratigraphy of the central area of the excavated area, facing SW



**Plate 5:** Trench 1, stratigraphy of the north-western end of the excavated area, facing SW



**Plate 6:** Trench 1, south-eastern end showing stub of the demolished wall and modern drainage, facing SE



**Plate 7:** Trench 1, north-western end showing stub of the demolished wall, facing NW



**Plate 8:** Roadside stratigraphy, facing northeast. Modern street lamp foundation and road foundation, facing NE



**Plate 9:** Trench 2 stratigraphy



**Plate 10:** Trench 2 stratigraphy



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## 5 Conclusions

Despite the proximity of the development site to archaeological sites/finds dating from prehistory, through the Roman to medieval periods, the removal the boundary wall and the excavation of a foundation trench for the emplacement of a new wall did not reveal any significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts.

The stratigraphy revealed in Trench 1 along the side of the chapel consisted entirely of made-ground overlying natural chalk. The original chapel was built in 1801, and rebuilt in 1847 (HER 6313) and these events, particularly the early 19<sup>th</sup> build, would have required appropriate levels of area preparation, including land clearance, levelling, landscaping and foundation works, all resulting in extensive truncation of any *in situ* stratigraphy and/or potential archaeological remains. The made-ground revealed during the excavation was probably deposited as a foundation for the main building and the wall, and it may have been extended and/or deepened during the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century rebuilding of the church. The wall was probably (re-)built in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century as it was constituted by a variety of post-medieval brick types, including both solid and frogged forms. This mixture was probably a cost saving measure, but the presence of the different forms provides some dating information (i.e. a *terminus post quem*) as the recesses for mortar, called 'frogs', were only introduced into brick making in the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century.

Trench 2, excavated near the rear garden gate, was not archaeologically monitored as it was known to have been already disturbed by recent building activities.

As nothing of archaeological significance was revealed by the excavation, the research aims of the project could not be advanced on this occasion.



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## 6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Benchmark Architects for commissioning this report on behalf of Christ Church. Thanks are also due to Sam Mellonie of Central Bedfordshire Council for providing historic environment records and other relevant documents, and to Salwek Utrata and Hannah Firth of the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeology Team for monitoring the project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Derek Watson PhD. The report was written by Derek Watson PhD, 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. Specialist reports

7.2 The physical archive will be deposited with Culture Trust, Luton (Accession Number 2021/09) and the digital archive (WSI, Report, fieldwork sheets, digital photographs) with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).



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**Appendix 1: Photograph List**

| <b>Shot</b> | <b>View</b> | <b>Subject</b>   |
|-------------|-------------|--|
| 1           | NW          | General view of area   |
| 2           | NW          | General view of area   |
| 3           | NW          | General view of area   |
| 4           | SW          | General view of area   |
| 5           | SW          | General view of area   |
| 6           | NW          | Trench 1   |
| 7           | SW          | Trench 1, stratigraphy of the south-eastern half of the excavated area                     |
| 8           | SE          | Trench 1, south-eastern end showing stub of the demolished wall and modern drainage        |
| 9           | SE          | Trench 1   |
| 10          | SW          | Trench 1, stratigraphy of the north-western end of the excavated area                      |
| 11          | NW          | Trench 1, north-western end showing stub of the demolished wall                            |
| 12          | NE          | Roadside stratigraphy, facing northeast. Modern street lamp foundation and road foundation |
| 13          | NE          | Roadside stratigraphy, facing northeast. Modern street lamp foundation and road foundation |
| 14          | SW          | Trench 1, stratigraphy of the central area of the excavated area                           |
| 15          | NW          | General view of area   |



## Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

| PROJECT DETAILS  |   |  |                                   |
|--|---|--|-----------------------------------|
| Project Name & Address   | Christ's Church, West Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire   | Project Site Code                                  | 551/DCC                           |
| OASIS reference  | kdkarcha1-403748  | Event/Accession no                                 | 2021/09                           |
| OS reference   | TL 0181 2186  | Study area size                                    | 28m sq                            |
| Project Type   | Observation and Recording   | Height (mAOD)                                      | 162m AOD                          |
| Short Description  | In March & August 2021, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation and Recording at Christ Church, West Street, Dunstable, Bedfordshire, during alterations to an existing boundary wall. The removal of the boundary wall and the excavation of a foundation trench for the emplacement of a new wall did not encounter any significant archaeological features, deposits or artefacts as only made-ground overlying natural chalk geology was revealed. The original chapel was built in 1801, and rebuilt in 1847 and these events, particularly the early 19 <sup>th</sup> build, would have required appropriate levels of area preparation and landscaping all resulting in extensive truncation of any in situ stratigraphy and/or potential archaeological remains. The wall was probably (re-)built in the mid-19 <sup>th</sup> century as it was constituted by a variety of post-medieval brick types, including both solid and frogged forms. |  |                                   |
| Previous work  | None  | Site status  | Grade II, Listed Building         |
| Planning proposal  | Alterations to existing boundary wall and extension to existing shed  | Current land use                                   | Church                            |
| Local Planning Authority   | Central Bedfordshire Council  | Planning application ref.                          | CB/20/01925/FULL & CB/20/01926/LB |
| Monument type  | Listed Building   | Monument period                                    | Post-medieval                     |
| Significant finds  | None  | Future work  | Unknown                           |
| PROJECT CREATORS   |   |  |                                   |
| Organisation   | KDK Archaeology Ltd   |  |                                   |
| Project Brief originator   |   | Project Design originator                          | KDK Archaeology Ltd               |
| Project Manager  | Karin Kaye MA MCIFA   | Director/Supervisor                                | Derek Watson PhD                  |
| Sponsor/funding body   | Christ Church, West Street, Dunstable   |  |                                   |
| PROJECT DATE   |   |  |                                   |
| Start date   | 26.03.2021  | End date   | 26.08.2021                        |
| PROJECT ARCHIVES   |   |  |                                   |
|  | Location  | Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)  |                                   |
| Physical   |   | None   |                                   |
| Paper  | Culture Trust, Luton (Accession Number 2021/09)   | WSI, Report, photographs, field-work sheets        |                                   |
| Digital  | ADS   | WSI, Report, fieldwork sheets, digital photographs |                                   |
| BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report) |   |  |                                   |
| Title  | Archaeological Observation & Recording: Christ Church, West Street, Dunstable   |  |                                   |
| Serial title & volume  | 551/DDC/2.2   |  |                                   |
| Author(s)  | Derek Watson PhD  |  |                                   |
| Page no's  | 26  | Date   | 20.06.2022                        |