

# KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

# Archaeological Evaluation Report

Orchard House Orchard Road Pulloxhill Bedfordshire

Derek Watson PhD

July 2022



# Quality Check

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# CONTENTS

Sun	nmary	1
1.	Introduction	1
	Aims and Methods	
	Archaeological and Historical Background	
	Results	
5.	Conclusions	. 14
6.	Acknowledgements	. 15
	Archive	
	References	

# Appendices:

1.	List of Photographs	19
	OASIS and Site Data	

# Figures:

1.	General location	2
2.	Site location	3
	Development plan	
	HER data plan	
	Trench location plan	
	· · - · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · · ·	

# Plates:

1.	Trench 1, facing NW	. 13
	Trench 1 stratigraphy, facing NW	
3.	Trench 2, facing NE	. 13
	Trench 2 stratigraphy, facing SW	



#### Summary

In June 2022, KDK Archaeology undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at Orchard House, Orchard Road, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshire, after the demolition of the existing detached house. The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches adjacent to the southwestern edge of the development footprint, which revealed a topsoil and made-ground layer overlying a diminishing layer of subsoil and the natural geology. The subsoil was thickest on the south-western edge of the trenches but had been increasingly truncated to the northeast causing substantial disturbance to the soil profile. This probably happened during the area landscaping and construction of the now demolished building.

The excavation revealed no significant archaeological features, finds, or deposits within either trench.

#### 1 Introduction

1.1 In June 2022, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at Orchard House, Orchard Road, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by Stuart King, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Watson & Kaye 2022), and approved by Richard Havis of Place Services, Essex, acting as Archaeological Advisor (AA), on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Central Bedfordshire Council. The relevant planning application reference is CB/22/00413/FULL., condition 4, parts A and B.

#### 1.2 Planning Background

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

#### 1.3 *The Site*

#### Location

The site is situated in the town and parish of Pulloxhill in the administrative district of Central Bedfordshire. It is centred on National Grid Reference TL 0619 3384 (Fig. 1).

#### Description

The development site is situated immediately north of the Parish Church of Saint James the Apostle (Grade II\*, List Entry No. 1138002) and is contiguous with the church grounds, to the northwest and southeast it is bounded by private residential properties, and Orchard House fronts onto Orchard Road to the northeast (Fig. 2).

#### Geology and Topography

Topographically, the site is situated on a plateau of clay ridge above the River Flit valley, a tributary of lvel, which lies approximately 1.5 km to the north-west. The bedrock geology is the mudstone Gault Formation, formed approximately 101 to 113 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period, with superficial diamicton deposits (sediments resulting from dry-land erosion) derived from the Oadby Member, deposited up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html). The development site is situated at an elevation of 106m AOD.

#### Development

The planning proposal calls for the erection of a detached dwelling following the demolition of existing dwelling (Fig. 3).



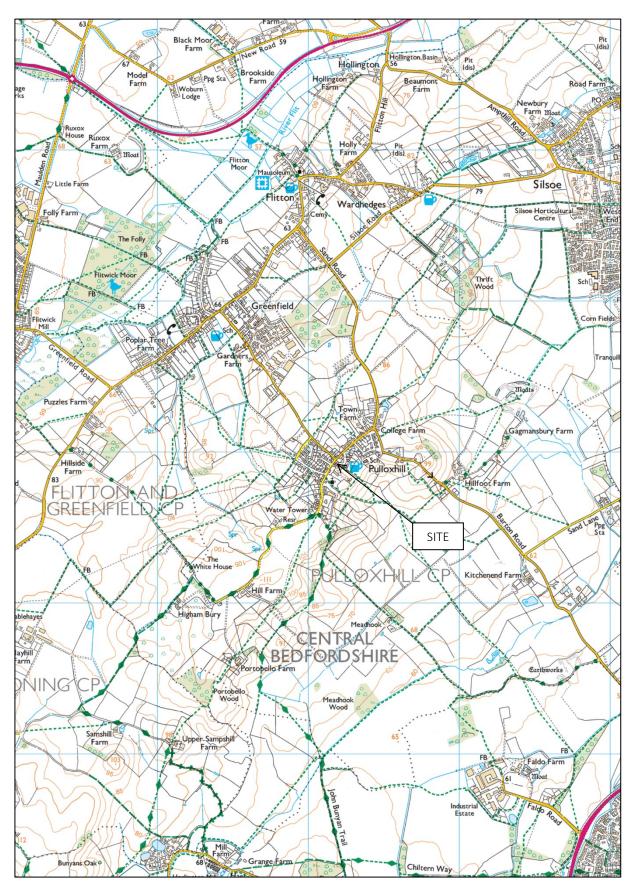


Figure 1: Site location (scale 1:25,000)



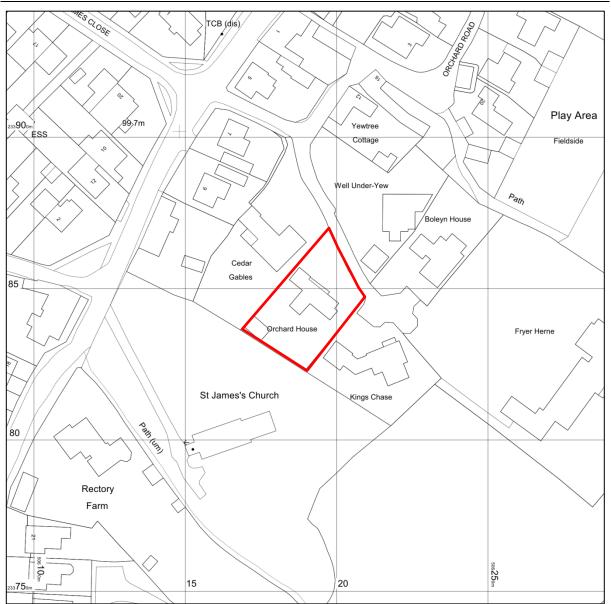


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:1,250)



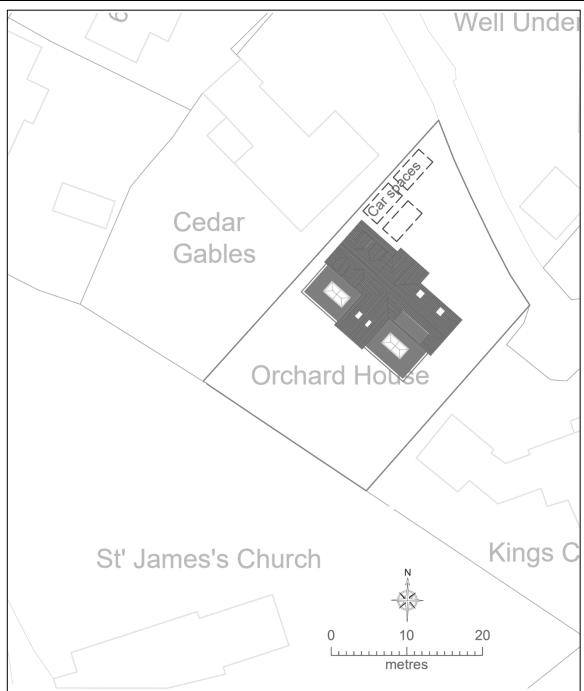


Figure 3: Development plan (scale 1:500)



#### 2 Aims and Methods

#### 2.1 *Aims*

The aims of this project as defined in the approved WSI (Watson & Kaye 2022) 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, the research aimed *inter alia* to consider various aspects of the development of rural Saxon, medieval and post-medieval settlements; their origins, morphology, diversity and ultimate success or failure (Wade 2000: 24-25; Oake 2007: 14; Medlycott 2011: 70 and Edgeworth 2007: 121-123).

#### 2.2 *Methods*

The method used was as follows:

• The archaeological field evaluation of the site using two trenches: one measuring 5 x 5m and the second 4 x 5m (Fig. 4).

#### 2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2020a)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2021)
- Current English Heritage guidelines (EH 2008, HE 2015b)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)



#### 3 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 The development site is situated within the historic medieval core of the village of Pulloxhill (HER 17013), which was originally focused around the church, a moated manor house site and a triangular green. It later expanded in a linear fashion along roads following the ridge top to the southwest and northeast. The linear village centred on the High Street which connects to the south with Church Road, the location of St James' Church, and Orchard Road where the development site is located. The development is situated outside of the Conservation Area (DBD3353) though it is contiguous with its boundary along the church grounds.

The toponym is derived from the Old English for a personal name (*Pulloc*) + hill (*hyll*) meaning the 'Hill of a man called Pulloc' (Mills 1991:264). Prehistoric to Roman activity and settlement has been documented in the parish but the majority of the local heritage assets date from the Saxon to post-medieval periods.

This section has been compiled with information from the Central Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER; Search No. 202223/035), the project brief (CBC 2021), reliable online sources, and KDK's own library. The location of the HER data, within a 500m search radius, is shown in Fig. 4. The HER search area contains twelve Grade II post-medieval Listed Buildings and the medieval Grade II\* Church of St James (List Entry No. 1138002; HER 3767) and as most of these, including 'sites of..' and locally recorded buildings, will not be impacted by this project they have been excluded from the following summary.

#### Prehistoric (before 600BC), Iron Age (600BC - AD43) and Roman (AD43 - c.450)

Few remains from these periods have been found locally. The earliest indication of prehistoric activity is provided by a late Neolithic to early Bronze Age north-south oriented ditch found during small scale excavation at Flitton Road (HER 17794; EBD417); c. 550m northeast of the development. Further possible prehistoric remains were identified in aerial photos in the forms of cropmarks indicating a circular enclosure and Bronze Age ring ditch (HER 18030), north east of Pulloxhill. A possible Iron Age inhumation (HER 15854) was found east of Hilltop Cottage, *c*. 570m northeast. The human remains were found by a dog at the edge of a field just outside the garden of Hilltop Cottage on Barton Road in Pulloxhill. Two sherds of Iron Age pottery recovered from the same general area suggest that the bones may also date from the Iron Age. The site was probably disturbed by deep ploughing. A ditch containing prehistoric pottery was also found adjacent to The Chalet, Flitton Road (BCAS 2000).

There is limited evidence for Roman activity within the study area. The suggested route of a Roman Road, Viatores No 170b (HER 5020) is located *c*. 380m southwest of the development. However, there is no definite evidence to suggest there was an actual Roman road in this area. Yet, a cobbled trackway on a perpendicular alignment was revealed along the route of the M1-A6 link road in 2018. Later interpretations of this route are that it is actually a hollow way or the remains of a medieval lynchet (farming terrace; HER 5159).

Archaeological investigations uncovered residual, abraded, Roman pottery, brick, and tile in a ditch at The Gables, Flitton Road (Heritage Network, 2012; HER 19539; EBD1005), *c*. 450m northeast of the development. This ditch is likely to have formed a post-medieval property boundary, and the presence of brick and tile might indicate a Roman building in the locality.

#### Saxon (c.450 - 1066) to Medieval (1066 - 1500)

The manor of Pulloxhill was first mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 AD. This suggests that the settlement may date, at least, from the late Saxon Period. The manor was held by Roger



and Riwallon of Nigel d'Aubigny. It was assessed at 10 hides with land for 13 ploughs. It had 11 villagers, 13 borders, 2 slaves, meadow for 6 ploughs and woodland for 100 pigs. At the time of the survey the village was worth £10, when received, £8 (Williams and Martin 1992: 575-576). Woburn Abbey, Dunstable Priory, and the Knights Hospitallers were major landholders in Pulloxhill until the early 16<sup>th</sup> century when their lands were seized by the crown during the Dissolution of the Monasteries (MBDC 1996: 3).

The contemporary village is situated predominantly within the boundaries of the medieval settlement (HER 17013). The original core of the village was probably close to St James' Church (HER 3767, NHLE 1138002, Grade II\*) and the medieval moated site (HER 7662) located to the east of the church, and these may have formed a magnate's enclosure. The development site is contiguous with the northern boundary of the grounds of St James' Church (HER 3767), which dates from the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries, though it was largely rebuilt in 1845-1846; its churchyard (HER 8953) was extended in 1904. Excavation for new drainage encountered the graves of adults and juveniles (EBD495) and exposed the medieval foundations of the Chancel and evidence for two blocked doors on the south wall (EBD685). The moated site (HER 7662), now known as Fryers Herne, located immediately east of the development, was probably a former manor house site. Maps of 1814 and 1826 both show 3 arms of a moat, though by 1960 only 2 arms are shown water-filled. The three arms were confirmed by a site visit in 1980 as were earthworks to the northwest and southwest. The fact that the part of the moat on the south east side can be traced as turning north-westwards at its southern limit suggests it may once have continued in some form along the south western side of the churchyard, thus encompassing church, churchyard and manor house. Archaeological investigations undertaken at Plot C Fryer Herne (EBD2006), adjacent to the medieval moated site, recorded archaeological finds and features that may be associated with the former medieval manor house (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2013). An archaeological survey of Rushymeade (EBD813), an important area of unimproved grassland immediately southeast of Fryers Herne, identified a rare survival of an area of medieval landscape with the magnate's enclosure (HER 7662), the ridge and furrow (HER 3322) and later close boundaries.

Linear and rectilinear earthwork features were identified from aerial photographs of fields located  $\geq$ 350m to the north of the site (HER 1825), which probably represent an area of shrunken medieval settlement. Some of the earthworks coincide with field boundaries shown on the Draft Enclosure Map (*c.* 1809-1826) and appear to overlie earlier features. Medieval pottery was recovered in this area during limited archaeological work undertaken during construction of a gas pipeline (BCAS, undated). The earthworks may represent part of the settlement known as the "Townys End" referred to in a will of John Halle of Flitton in 1505.

A village pond that may have had medieval origins was still present in 1949, but by 1980 had been filled in and grassed over, forming part of the village green (HER 11869).

Extensive medieval field systems are recorded from aerial photography and historic maps of former medieval and later common fields and furlongs within Pulloxhill parish. Immediately to the south-east of the village and adjacent to the church and moated site are the remains of medieval ridge and furrow visible as earthworks (HER 3322; these extend farther to the south and east). Similar remains preserved as cropmarks and earthworks are also present further to the north (HER 20535) and to the north-east (HER 20534, 21348), and adjacent to the shrunken settlement earthworks (HER 1825).

Archaeological Investigations have revealed scant medieval remains. At 11 High Street excavation (EBD1784) produced one abraded sherd of medieval pottery. During construction of the British Gas Pipeline (EBD920) one small, potentially 11<sup>th</sup> century, potsherd was recovered.



On Flitton Road (EBD417) the remains of a levelled cultivation furrow and a large pit containing pot can be dated to the medieval and/or post medieval periods, whereas another nearby project (EBD503) recovered undated remains. Trial trenching at Orchard Road (EBD2006), northeast of the development, revealed a medieval fish pond and one sherd of mid-13<sup>th</sup> 15<sup>th</sup> century pottery found in an alluvial layer; though nearby investigations at Fryer Herne (EBD212) revealed no archaeological remains. Other local findspots include Saxon/Saxo-Norman finds (HER 20763) located *c*. 850m northeast of the development where a half penny of William II (reign AD 1087-1100; coin date AD 1089-1092) and a Saxon brooch in the shape of a bird (AD 800-1100) were discovered; and a clipped silver long-cross penny of Henry VII (reign 1485 – 1509) found north of College Farm (HER 19918).

#### **Post-medieval** (1500 - 1900) **to Modern** (1900 - present)

The economy of the settlement was almost entirely agricultural, and by 1809 parliamentary enclosure swept away the surviving medieval open fields, replacing them with a system of mixed farming (MBDC 1996: 4). An eventful change in this small settlement was the demolition of most of the ruinous old church of St James and its virtual reconstruction in 1845-6.

A number of post-medieval listed buildings survive on the High Street and offshoot roads such as Barton Road, Flitton Road, and Greenfield Road. Church Road is also home to listed buildings such as the Rectory Farmhouse that is situated to the west of the parish church and dates from the 16<sup>th</sup> - 18<sup>th</sup> century (HER 3812; Grade II, List Entry No. 1321706); the 18<sup>th</sup> century Grange (HER 3814; Grade II, List Entry No. 1138009); and the 18<sup>th</sup> century Chequers Public House (HER 3813; Grade II, List Entry No. 1113937).

The site of an abandoned gold mine exists at a field called Gold Close, to the north-east of the village. The site was briefly worked in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century when gold quartz was discovered. Charles II was on the throne and after the discovery was made public, the pit was duly seized as a Royal Mine, as all gold found in the United Kingdom automatically becoming the property of the crown. However, on working the gold-ore it was discovered to consist of flakes of mica in drift stone and the scant gold did not repay the cost of separation, as a result the mine was abandoned (HER 10809).

The HER lists the findspot of an 18<sup>th</sup> century coin, found to the north of Collage Farm, which is a silver-plated forgery, with a copper-alloy core, of a silver Ecu of Louis XIV of France dating to 1788 (HER 18685).

Finally, the Pulloxhill War Memorial (HER 20324) at St James' Church, which commemorates those who fell in the First and Second World Wars, was unveiled 1920.

#### 3.2 The Known Archaeology and History of the Site

No site-specific information is listed in the HER.



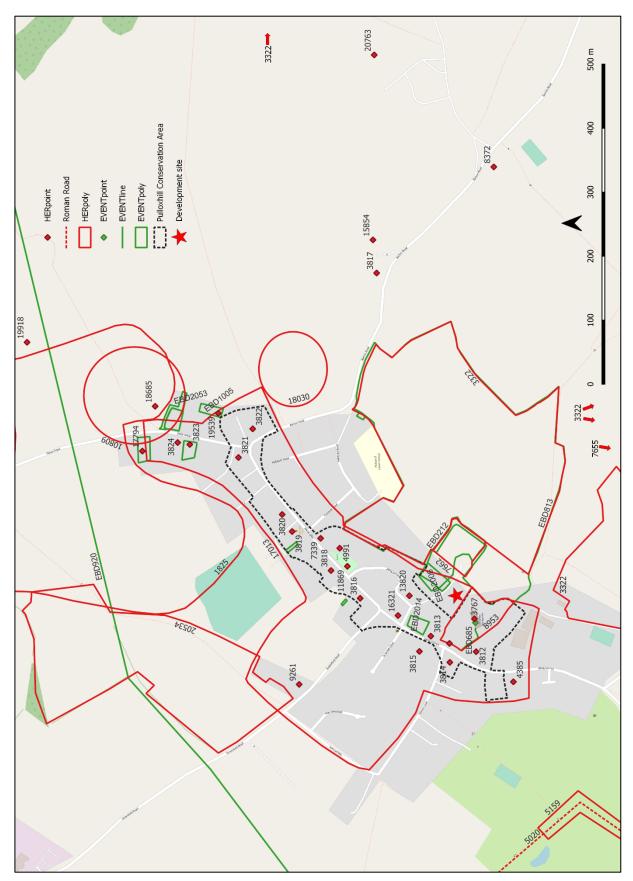


Figure 4: HER data plan (scale as shown)



#### 4 Results

#### 4.1 *Introduction*

In accordance with the approved WSI (Watson & Kaye 2022) two trenches measuring 5 x 5m and 4 x 5m ( $45m^2$ ) were excavated within the footprint of the development (Fig. 5) utilising a 3-tonne tracked machine fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless ditching bucket.

#### 4.2 *Description*

The stratigraphy encountered in Trenches 1-2 comprised (Fig. 6; Plates 1-4):

Trench 1

- Made-ground (101): Dark greyish brown, firm clayey sandy silt, with frequent rooting, with moderate inclusions of (modern) brick fragments and charcoal, and occasional flecks of charcoal and lumps of chalk (<0.05m). This deposit contained a significant topsoil component, and was a maximum of *c*.0.60m deep in Trench 1.
- Sub-soil (102): Reddish brown, firm sandy clayey silt, with occasional inclusions of subangular flint (<0.08m) and charcoal flecks. This layer was 0-0.65m thick and diminishing southwest-northeast.
- Natural geology (103): Variable natural. Mostly mottled yellowish brown to light beige, soft silty sand, with frequent inclusions of sub-angular to rounded flint (<0.05m).

#### Trench 2

- Made-ground (201): Dark greyish brown, firm clayey sandy silt, with frequent rooting, with moderate inclusions of (modern) brick fragments and charcoal, and occasional flecks of charcoal and lumps of chalk (<0.05m). As Trench 1, this deposit contained a significant topsoil component, and was a maximum of *c*.0.45m deep in Trench 2.
- Sub-soil (202): Reddish brown, firm sandy clayey silt, with occasional inclusions of subangular flint (<0.08m) and charcoal flecks. This layer was 0-0.45m thick and diminishing southwest-northeast.
- Natural geology (203): Variable natural. Mostly mottled yellowish brown to light beige, soft silty sand, with frequent inclusions of sub-angular to rounded flint (<0.05m).

The natural geology was a variable mixture of sands, partially covered by a layer of subsoil which diminished from the southwest to the northeast of the site. An L-shaped exploratory sondage was excavated in both trenches to ensure that the natural geology had actually been exposed. In Trench 1, a modern soakaway, with brick and plastic, was revealed at the northern corner, and at the eastern corner a modern drain was situated adjacent to the extant footing of the now demolished house.

On the completion of the excavation no significant archaeological features, finds, or deposits were revealed within either trench.



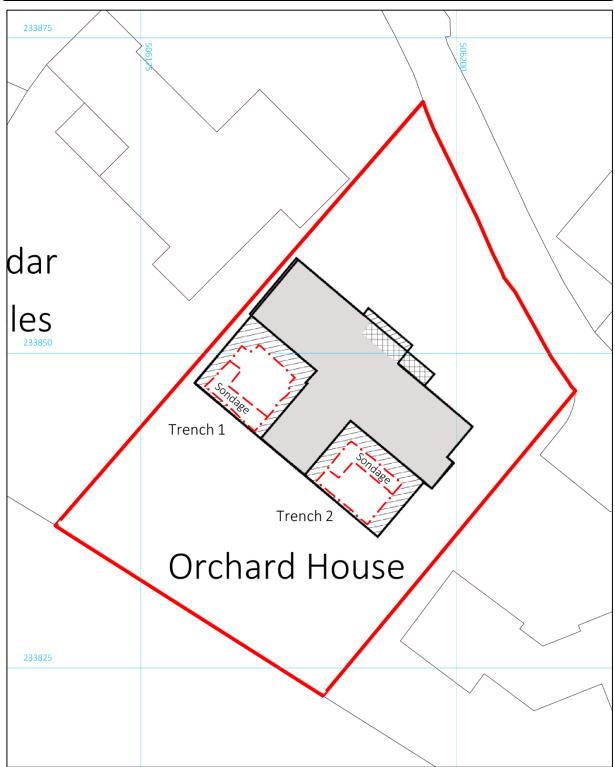


Figure 5: Trench location plan (scale 1:300)





Plate 1: Trench 1, facing NE



Plate 2: Trench 1, stratigraphy, facing SW





Plate 3: Trench 2, facing NE



Plate 4: Trench 2, stratigraphy, facing SW



#### 5 Conclusions

In June 2022, KDK Archaeology undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at Orchard House, Orchard Road, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshire, after the demolition of the existing detached house. The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches adjacent to the southwestern edge of the development footprint, which revealed a topsoil and made-ground layer overlying a diminishing layer of subsoil and the natural geology. The subsoil was thickest on the southwestern edge of the trenches but had been increasingly truncated to the northeast causing substantial disturbance to the soil profile. This probably happened during the area landscaping and construction of the now demolished building.

The excavation revealed no significant archaeological features, finds, or deposits within either trench.

Consequently, it has not been possible to advance any of the research aims of the project on this occasion.



# 6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Stuart King for commissioning this report. Thanks are also due to Sam Mellonie of CBCAT for providing historic environment records and Richard Havis of Place Services for monitoring the project respectively.

The fieldwork was carried out by Derek Watson PhD. The report was written by Derek Watson PhD, 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. Client's site plans
  - 6. List of photographs
  - 7. B/W prints and negatives
  - 8. Specialist reports
  - 9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.
- 7.2 The archive will be deposited with The Culture Trust, Luton (Accession No. LTNMG 1525).



#### 8 References

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# Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO	<b>D/CODE:</b> 7	00/PORE Site Name: Orchard House, Orchard Road, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshire	
Shot View		Description	
1	SE	Trench 1: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
2	SE	Trench 1: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
3	SW	Trench 1: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
4	SW	Trench 1: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
5	NW	Trench 1: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
6	NW	Trench 1: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
7	NE	Trench 1: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
8	NE	Trench 1: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
9	NW	Trench 1: S corner stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
10	NW	Trench 1: S corner stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
11	SE	Trench 1: S corner stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
12	SE	Trench 1: S corner stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
13	S	Trench 1: S corner stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
14	S	Trench 1: S corner stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
15	S	Trench 1: S corner stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
16	NW	Trench 1: NW soakaway (scale = 1 x 1m)	
17	NW	Trench 1: NW soakaway (scale = 1 x 1m)	
18	SE	Trench 1: modern drain (scale = 1 x 1m)	
19	SE	Trench 1: modern drain (scale = 1 x 1m)	
20	NW	Trench 2: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
21	NW	Trench 2: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
22	SW	Trench 2: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
23	SW	Trench 2: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
24	NE	Trench 2: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
25	NE	Trench 2: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
26	SE	Trench 2: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
27	SE	Trench 2: overall (scale = 2 x 1m)	
28	SW	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
29	SW	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
30	NE	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
31	NE	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
32	NW	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
33	NW	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
34	NW	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
35	NW	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
36	SE	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
37	SE	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
38	SE	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	
39	SE	Trench 2: stratigraphy (scale = 1 x 1m)	



# Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS				
Project Name & Address	Orchard House, Orchard Road, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshire	Project Site Code	700PORE	
OASIS reference kdkarcha1-416060		Event/Accession no	LTNMG 1525	
OS reference	OS reference TL 0619 3384		45m <sup>2</sup>	
Project Type	Archaeological Evaluation	Height (mAOD)	106m AOD	
Short DescriptionIn June 2022, KDK Archaeology undertook an Archaeological Evaluation at Orchard House, Orchard Road, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshire, after the demolition of the existing detached house. The evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches adjacent to the southwestern edge of the development footprint, which revealed a topsoil and made-ground layer overlying a diminishing 				
Previous work	None	Site status	None	
Planning proposal	proposal Erection of a detached dwelling following the demolition of existing dwelling		Residential	
Local Planning Authority	al Planning Authority Central Bedfordshire Council Planning application ref.		CB/22/00413/FULL	
Monument type	Monument type None Monu		None	
Significant finds	None	Future work	Unknown	
	PROJECT	CREATORS		
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd			
Project Brief originator		Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd	
Project Manager	David Kaye BA ACIfA	Director/Supervisor	Derek Watson PhD	
Sponsor/funding body	Stuart King, Orchard House, Orcha	ard Road, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshii	re	
	PROJEC	CT DATE		
Start date	28.06.2022	End date	28.06.2022	
	PROJECT	ARCHIVES		
	Location	on Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)		
Physical None		None		
Paper	The Culture Trust, Luton	WSI, report		
Digital WSI, report, site photographs				
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)				
Title	Title Archaeological Evaluation: Orchard House, Orchard Road, Pulloxhill, Bedfordshire			
Serial title & volume	olume 700/PORE/2.1			
Author(s)	Derek Watson PhD			
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