



**Archaeological evaluation at Bushfield School,
Wolverton, Milton Keynes
October 2014**

Report No. 14/215

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Illustrator: Amir Bassir



Archaeological evaluation at Bushfield School, Wolverton, Milton Keynes October 2014

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. molanort1-194460	
Project title	Archaeological evaluation at Bushfield School, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, October 2014		
Short description	Five trenches were excavated, two across the proposed area for the extension and three where the car park would be located. No archaeological features or finds were discovered in any of the trenches.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	School grounds		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	None		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Milton Keynes		
Site address	Bushfield School, Moon Street, Wolverton		
Post code	MK12 5JG		
OS co-ordinates	NGR SP 81902 40805		
Area (sq m/ha)	3.4ha		
Height aOD	80.74m to 88.82m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA Northampton		
Project brief originator	Nick Crank, Milton Keynes Council Senior Archaeologist		
Project Design originator	Jim Brown, MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	James Fairclough, MOLA		
Project Managers	Jim Brown, MOLA		
Sponsor or funding body	Milton Keynes Council		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	27 October 2014		
End date	28 October 2014		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	MOLA Northampton store EMK1248	None	
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Survey data, report, photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (MOLA report)		
Title	Archaeological evaluation at Bushfield School, Wolverton, Milton Keynes, October 2014		
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Archaeological Evaluation at Bushfield School, Wolverton, Milton Keynes October 2014

Abstract

Five trenches were excavated, two across the proposed area for the extension and three where the car park would be located. No archaeological features or finds were discovered in any of the trenches.

1 INTRODUCTION

MOLA was commissioned by Milton Keynes Council Environment Directorate to carry out a pre-application trial trench evaluation in advance of new buildings at Bushfield School, Milton Keynes (NGR SP 81902 40805; Fig 1). Due to the high archaeological potential of the site a scheme of archaeological work was completed on the advice of the Milton Keynes Council Senior Archaeologist, following the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012). A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by MOLA and approved by the authority prior to the works (Brown 2014).

2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The development area lies immediately adjacent to the existing school buildings and is currently part of the school playing field (Fig 1). The ground is level and grassed over at c88m above Ordnance Datum. The land lies on the upper slopes of the river terrace overlooking the Great Ouse Valley to the north.

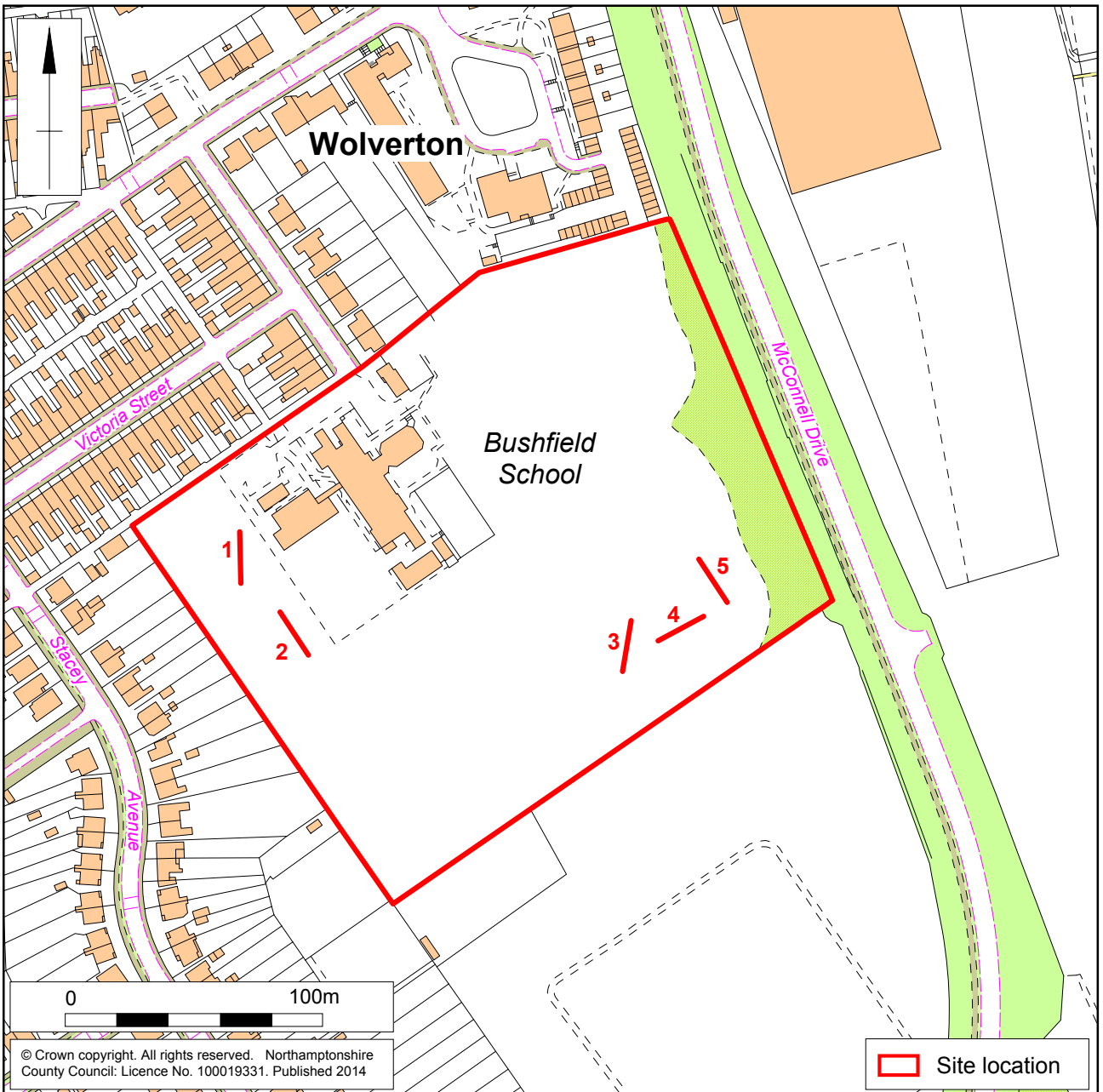
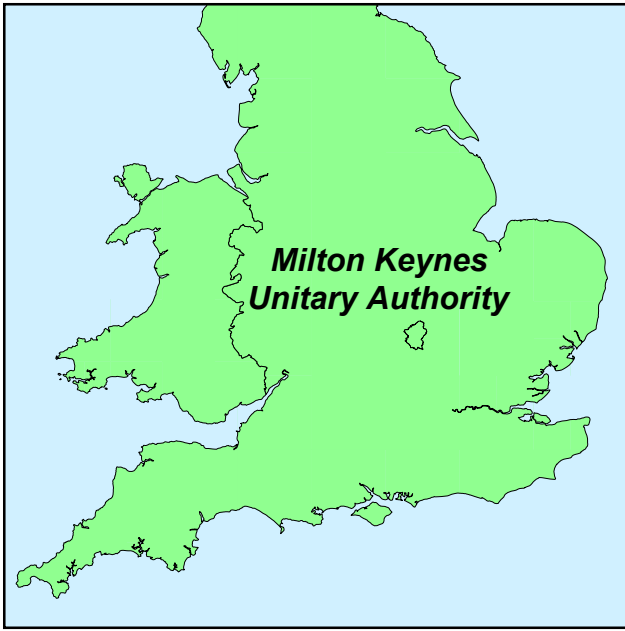
The geology is mapped by the British Geological Survey as an area of Great Oolitic Limestone outcrop with Cornbrash, overlying Upper Lias Clay (BGS 2001). The soils are of the Badsey 1 Association, comprising well drained calcareous and non-calcareous loamy soils which typically form over limestone river terrace gravel (LAT 1983).

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the investigation is to confirm whether archaeological remains are present within the proposed development area.

The specific objectives of the project were to provide further information on the following:

- The location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the proposed development site;
- The integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present within the proposed development site;
- The presence or absence of any datable archaeological deposits that may have environmental potential.



Scale 1:2500

Site location Fig 1

The project considered regional research themes and set the archaeological findings within the context of other sites within the Milton Keynes area and its wider region (Kidd 2007; Anthony 2003; Brown 2012; Ivens *et al* 1995; Knight 1993; Williams 1993; Williams and Zeepvat 1994; Williams *et al* 1996; Zeepvat *et al* 1994).

4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Archaeological background

Aerial photographic evidence and the results of a small amateur excavation in 1968 indicated that there are buried remains of late Iron Age date surviving within the school grounds.

Historic Environment Record data

A search of recorded data for sites within 250m radius of the development was made with the Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record (HER), which produced 15 records. Overall there was a general emphasis upon the likelihood of Iron Age settlement activity within the school grounds.

The results of the combined HER data search is tabulated here:

Table 1: Historic Environment Record data

Period	HER ref.	Description
Iron Age	1147	possible ring ditch, aerial photograph
	1148	possible ring ditch and central pit, aerial photograph
	1345	section through lower portion of truncated ring ditch
	1346	pottery sherds from fill of ring ditch
	1347	section through ditch
19th century	4738	St Georges Vicarage, Grade II Listed Building
	4739	Garden Pavilion, Cedar Lodge (demolished)
	5731	Parish boundary stone, mapped 1867
	5874	Young Street Good Shed, railway plan 1860
	5875	Young Street Good Yard, railway plan 1860
	5876	Goods Yard retaining wall, railway plan 1860
	5877	Goods Yard service line, railway plan 1860
20th century events	5665	The Elms, 1-2 Green Lane, building
	EMK1179	Building Recording assoc. of 20 th century railway building
	EMK59	Wolverton & District Archaeological Society excavations

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

Five trenches were excavated in order to investigate the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains within the development area.

The trenches were set out using differential GPS (Leica Viva) operating to an accuracy of +/- 0.05m. The orientation of trench 1 was altered to avoid school equipment.

All trenches were excavated using a JCB, fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket, operated under constant archaeological supervision. The trenches were excavated, each 20m long by 1.6m wide, to the top of the natural geological horizon.

The excavation and recording was carried out in accordance with MOLA guidelines and all records were created using MOLA *pro-forma* record sheets (MOLA 2014).

Photographs were taken of all trenches and all relevant deposits on 35mm monochrome print film and as high resolution digital images. Work was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008a).

Levels in metres above Ordnance Datum were established for all trenches using GPS and for all excavated features using a dumpy level from temporary bench marks (TBMs) established using GPS.

All records and materials will be compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991).

6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The natural horizon at the top of the site (trenches 1 and 2) was firm brown-orange sandy clay (Fig 2), this became more friable towards the base of the slope (trenches 3-5) due to increased rooting activity. The natural horizon was overlain by subsoil and topsoil in all of the trenches (Fig 3). Subsoil was made up of mid-orange-brown silty clay-sand. The topsoil was mid-brown sandy silt. The only variation was seen in trench 2 where levelling layer 204 comprised blue-grey clay at either end of the trench between the topsoil and subsoil. Full context descriptions can be found in Appendix 1.

The trenches revealed no archaeological features or finds except the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation which was visible on the surface in the eastern corner of the site (trenches 3-5), but were not clearly seen in the natural horizon due to the heavy rooting activity.



Trench 2, looking north-west Fig 2



Section of trench 2, looking north-east Fig 3

7 CONCLUSION

Although evidence of Iron Age activity has been recorded in the area surrounding the site no archaeological features or finds were found within the excavated trenches. This absence may be related to the site's location on a fairly steep slope. Trenches 1 and 2 were located at the top of the slope, at c89m above Ordnance Datum, whilst trenches 3-5 were at the base of the slope at c82m above Ordnance Datum.

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APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	50m x 1.8m, NE-SW	481852.32 240784.80	88.82m	0.53m deep 88.29m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
101	Topsoil	Friable, mid brown sandy silt	0.22m	-
102	Subsoil	Friable mid orange-brown silty clay-sand with occasional small stones	0.19m	-
103	Natural	Firm mid to light brown-orange sandy clay with moderate gravel inclusions	0.12m+	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	50m x 1.8m, NE-SW	481879.91 240757.18	88.76m	0.58m deep 88.18m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
201	Topsoil	Friable, mid brown sandy silt	0.38m	-
202	Subsoil	Friable mid orange-brown silty clay-sand with occasional small stones	0.14m	-
203	Natural	Firm mid to light brown-orange sandy clay with moderate gravel inclusions		
204	Leveling	Firm blue-grey clay with occasional small stone and CBM inclusions (found between 201 and 202)	0.06m	-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	50m x 1.8m, NE-SW	482001.44 240734.18	82.82m	0.42m deep 82.40m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
301	Topsoil	Friable, mid brown sandy silt	0.19m	-
302	Subsoil	Friable mid orange-brown silty clay-sand with occasional small stones	0.13m	-
303	Natural	Friable mid brown-orange clayey sand with moderate flint and gravel inclusions.	0.10m+	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
4	50m x 1.8m, NE-SW	482015.55 240746.04	81.17m	0.36m deep 80.81m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
401	Topsoil	Friable, mid brown sandy silt	0.19m	-
402	Subsoil	Friable mid orange-brown silty clay-sand with occasional small stones	0.13m	-
403	Natural	Friable mid brown-orange clayey sand with moderate flint and gravel inclusions.	0.04m+	

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
5	50m x 1.8m, NE-SW	482041.77 240761.44	81.21m	0.57m deep 52.02m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
501	Topsoil	Friable, mid brown sandy silt	0.29m	-
502	Subsoil	Friable mid orange-brown silty clay-sand with occasional small stones	0.24m	-
503	Natural	Friable mid brown-orange clayey sand with moderate flint and gravel inclusions.	0.04m+	



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