LAND ADJACENT TO MOORLANDS FARM,

119 HIGH STREET,

ARLESEY,

BEDFORDSHIRE

NGR REF: TL 1930 3606

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

(OASIS ID: independ1-338442)

(MUSEUM ACCESSION NUMBER: BEDFM 2018.80)

NOVEMBER 2018

PREPARED BY CHRISTER CARLSSON

CONTENTS

Summary

An archaeological evaluation was conducted by Independent Archaeology Consultants for the construction of a new dwelling on land adjacent to Moorlands Farm, 119 High Street, Arlesey, Bedfordshire between 26-27 November 2018. A Post Medieval ditch and a modern concrete soakaway were uncovered, and the top- and subsoil showed signs of deep modern disturbance. Only Post Medieval features linked to the farm were encountered within the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 An archaeological evaluation was carried out on land adjacent to Moorlands Farm, 119 High Street, Arlesey, Bedfordshire (NGR: TL 1930 3606) (Figure 1-3). The investigation was carried out in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* issued by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014), as well as discussions with Slawek Utrata, Archaeological Officer at Central Bedfordshire Council. The evaluation was also based on a Brief which was issued by the Council.

1.2 Independent Archaeology Consultants is an archaeological consultancy company based in Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. The company subscribes to the *Code of Conduct, the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (CIfA 2014), *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (EAA Occasional Paper 14) and *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (EAA Occ. Paper No 24, 2011). All relevant CIfA Codes of Practice were adhered to throughout the course of the project.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

2.1 Planning Permission has been granted (CB/18/00496/FULL) for a new development on land adjacent to Moorlands Farm, 119 High Street, Arlesey, Bedfordshire. Central Bedfordshire Council has granted planning consent for the demolition of an existing barn and the erection of a new dwelling and vehicular access.

2.2 The development site was located in the central parts of the small town of Arlesey at an average height of 44m AOD. The site formed roughly a rectangular plot with an existing barn occupying its western part. High Street delimited the eastern boundary of the site with residential dwellings surrounding it on all other sides.

2.3 Topographically the site was situated on the eastern side of the River Hiz valley, a tributary of Ivel. The river lied approximately 450 metres to the west. The underlying geology of the area was recorded as West Melbury Marly

Chalk Formation, and alluvial deposits have been recorded within the valley of the River Hiz (British Geological Survey).

2.4 The site was located within an area of archaeological potential, as defined by the Central Bedfordshire HER-register. Therefore, an archaeological evaluation was required prior to the proposed construction works. This condition was mentioned in the Planning Permission granted by the Council.

Figure 1. The location of Arlesey in England (Ordnance Survey maps produced with Licence nr: Ordnance Survey 0100031673).

Figure 2. Site Location in Arlesey.

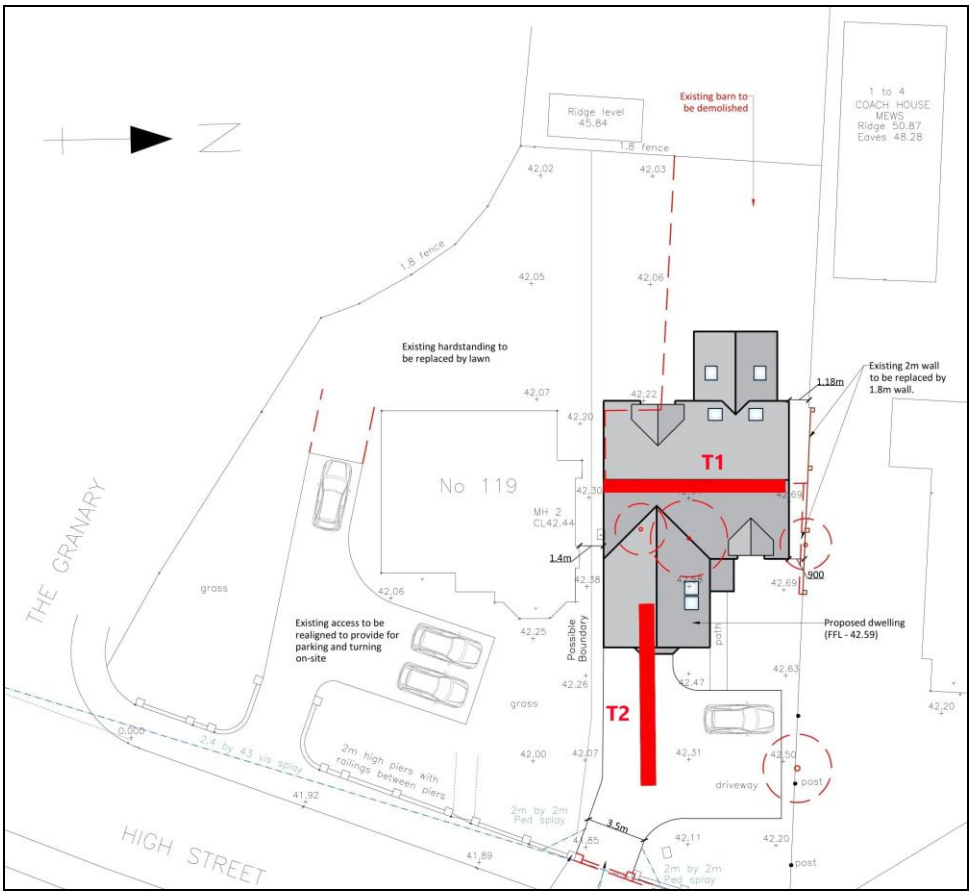

Figure 3. Site Outline and Trench Locations.

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 The development site was located within the core of the small medieval town of Arlesey (HER 17109). Within 1km from the proposed development site there were about 50 known entries in the local HER-archive.

3.2 A few Prehistoric sites and find spots have been identified in the area. Bronze Age and Iron Age settlements have been investigated at Fairfield Park (HER 16801; Webley et al 2007) about 1km east of the development site. Late Bronze Age to Middle Iron Age settlement has also been discovered near Etonbury (HER 17900; Heritage Network 2003). There was also evidence for finds of Prehistoric flint artefacts and pottery in the area around the Pix Brook (HERs 16083 and 16095).

3.3 Roman activity has also been noted in the area. A coin hoard of Roman date (HER 390) and frequent early Roman pottery (HER 389) has been discovered in a field just to the southeast of the site, but the exact locations of these artefacts are unknown. Roman occupation has, however, been recorded during the archaeological investigations at Fairfield Park (HER 16801; Webley et al 2007).

3.4 Arlesey is otherwise mainly known as a medieval settlement. The village was first mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086 AD, so the settlement is likely to be of earlier date and was possibly founded during the Saxon Period. The village was original concentrated to the area around the Church of Saint Peter (HER 1006; NHLE 1113817; Grade I listed building) and the manor site at Etonbury (HER 395).

3.5 The area known as Church End (HER 17108) was located to the north of the development site, and during the medieval period the settlement obviously expanded along what is now the High Street. This expansion moved the centre of the village closer to the southern end of High Street and Hitchin Road.

3.6 A recent archaeological evaluation undertaken at the Green End Farm, approximately 650m to the south of the site, identified a number of archaeological features. These features were mainly described as ditches and furrows, a single pit, a tree hollow and three postholes. Most of these archaeological features were either undated or Post medieval, but one of the ditch fills contained early medieval pottery from the 11th-13th century (Archaeological Solutions 2017). Further archaeological investigation revealed activity from the 12th-14th century (KDK Archaeology 2018).

3.7 To the medieval settlement was also linked a substantial farming landscape, of which parts still survive. Directly to the northeast of the site are the remains of medieval ridge and furrow visible as earthworks (HER 19519), and very similar remains in the shape of cropmarks and further earthworks are present to the north and to the southeast of the site (HER 6982 and 19520).

3.8 Furthermore a number of discrete, and undated, sub-rectangular enclosures are visible as cropmarks in the fields to the north and northeast (HERs 641, 772, 15078 and 16811). Similar cropmarks are also known from an area to the south of the site (HER 16812).

3.9 Further cropmarks identified as linear features are present about 200m to the southwest of the development site (HER 9089). Through archaeological investigations these features have been proven to represent quarrying associated with the construction of the nearby railway (EBD 606; Oxford Archaeology 2005).

3.10 A few listed buildings of interest were also present in the area. A timber framed building from a former granary was located about 30m to the southeast. The structure is from the 18th century and is a Grade II Listed building (HER 13341; NHLE 1113821).

4 OBJECTIVES

4.1 The purpose of the archaeological evaluation was to record and understand the significance of any potential archaeological remains and any further heritage assets before they were lost due to the proposed development. This was achieved by determining and understanding the date, nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

4.2 Since the proposed development site was located within the central parts of the medieval settlement of Arlesey the main archaeological focus was its potential to contain remains relating to the medieval and Post medieval development of the village.

4.3 Since the site was located close to a number of Prehistoric and Roman sites there was also a potential that the evaluation would contribute to a better understanding of the development of the area during the Iron Age and the Roman period (Oake 2007, 11; Bryant 2000, 14; Going and Plouviez 2000, 21-16 and Medlycott 2011, 31).

5 AIMS

5.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:

-establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area;

-establishing the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;

6 METHODOLOGY

6.1 The evaluation aimed at determining the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development. An adequate representative sample of all areas where archaeological remains were potentially threatened was therefore studied.

6.2 Based on the layout of the site, as well as guidelines in the Council Brief, it was suggested that the trial trenching initially comprised an area of 44 m². This area was divided over two different evaluation trenches to cover the site in both an east-west and a north-south direction. There was also a contingency for additional trenching of up to 20m² to further investigate features and deposits as necessary. However, this contingency was not necessary because of the lack of archaeological features.

6.3 The location of the trenches targeted areas of proposed ground disturbance and focused on the area to be covered by the parking area/access as well as the building footprint.

6.4 Prior to the evaluation it was mentioned in the WSI that the location of the trenches would be slightly flexible should unexpected obstacles be present in the field. The trenches were, however, never relocated as no such obstacles were identified. The evaluation area was searched for live cables and other potential threats prior to the evaluation, and the management of spoil heaps was planned carefully.

6.5 The evaluation trenches were excavated to the upper interface of secure archaeological deposits or, where these were not present, to the upper interface of natural deposits. Thereafter, hand-excavation was required to sample any features exposed. The machine excavation was undertaken under continuous and constant archaeological supervision and the machine was fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were not backfilled without the approval of Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeology Team.

6.6 The field evaluation was not carried out at the expenses of the heritage assets and was minimally intrusive to archaeological remains.

6.7 Metal detector sweeps of exposed features and spoil heaps were carried out in advance of, and during, the excavation process. The metal detector was not set to discriminate against iron.

6.8 All man-made features were investigated. Apparently natural features (such as tree throws) were sampled sufficiently to establish their origin and to characterise any related human activity. Hand excavation and feature sampling was sufficient to establish the date and character, and to allow appropriate levels of recording.

6.9 Deposits and layers (including buried horizons of top- and subsoils) were sampled sufficiently to enable a confident interpretation of their character, date and relationships with other features.

6.10 The artefact contents of the ploughsoil and any lower soil horizons was examined as part of the fieldworks. Bucket sampling was conducted, where 90 litres of spoil was hand sorted for each horizon encountered. Bucket sampling points were placed at each end of trenches. Unstratified artefacts were sought from the spoil heaps, but the result proved to be negative as no such artefacts were found in the process.

6.11 All exposed features were subject to a minimum of 50% excavation. At least 15% (or a percentage sufficient to achieve information on the character, function and dating) of linear features and/or very large and deep features was hand excavated.

6.12 Special care was taken to understand the stratigraphy of the site: Where the investigated deposits created in dry or wet conditions and what could this, in that case, tell us about the development and history of the site? Buried soils and deposits were carefully studied in order to understand the processes behind their creations.

6.13 A numbered single context-based recording system, written on suitable forms and indexed appropriately, was used for all elements of the archaeological recording programme.

6.14 Measured plans were produced to show all exposed features (including natural features and modern features etc.) and excavated areas. Individual measured plans and sections were produced for all excavated features and deposits. These were accurately tied into trench plans/trench location plans, that in turn were accurately related to the Ordnance Survey grid and to suitably mapped local features (boundaries, buildings, roads etc.). All sections and plans were related accurately to Ordnance Datum.

6.15 A photographic record comprising monochrome film and digital photos formed part of the excavation record. A selection of digital photographs was also used in this report (a maximum of two photographs per A4 sheet).

7 RESULTS

Trench 1

7.1 Trench 1 was north-south orientated, 11m long and 2m wide. It was excavated to a depth of about 0.60m below the present ground surface. The Natural deposits consisted of West Melbury Marly Chalk Formations. The trench had two modern concrete foundations (103) and (104), with a thickness of 0.48m

each, in its northern end, but contained otherwise no features of archaeological interest (Figure 4).

7.2 A slightly darker area in the southern part of the trench was checked, but turned out to have been caused by a natural slope in the ground, where subsoil had gathered. The southern end of the trench was also slightly disturbed due to a modern plastic drainage pipe, which was sticking out from the south section of the trench.

7.3 There is a possibility that this layer could be related to one of the buildings situated just to the west of the site, as shown on the OS Hertfordshire VII.2 map. If this was indeed the case the area around the soakaway in Trench 2 might have been a part of it as well.

7.4 The subsoil (102) in Trench 1 consisted of up to 0.32m thick light brown, plastic silty clay with moderate inclusions of small stones and roots. The uppermost deposit in Trench 1 was the up to 0.28m thick topsoil (101) of dark brown, plastic silty clay with frequent modern inclusions of crushed bricks, mortar and plastic items.

Trench 2

7.5 Trench 2 was east-west orientated, 11m long and 2m wide. It was excavated to a depth of about 0.70m below the present ground surface. The Natural deposits consisted of West Melbury Marly Chalk Formations. The trench had a modern concrete soakaway in its western part and a Post medieval drainage ditch was running along the south section of the trench before it disappeared into the section of the trench (Figure 5).

7.6 The drainage ditch [203] had a V-shaped cut and was up to 0.55m deep. At the bottom it had occasional Victorian bricks that had probably been deliberately placed in the ditch for drainage purposes. These bricks dated the ditch to the Victoria period as the earliest. The ditch's single fill (204) consisted of light grey, plastic silty clay with occasional inclusions of crushed bricks and mortar. The ditch was visible over a distance of 6.2m before it disappeared into the south section of Trench 2. For this reason the full width of the ditch was not seen. The excavated slot through the ditch was 0.75m long and 0.70m wide (Figure 6).

7.7 The modern concrete soakaway, cut [205] and brickwall (206), was located in the western part of the trench and was about 2.90m long and 1.5m wide. It had over the years been filled up with an up to 0.35m thick fill of dark brown, plastic silty clay (207). The soakaway probably belonged to the former Moorlands Farm.

7.8 A tree hole, a natural feature, was also present in Trench 2 between the ditch [203] and soakaway [205]. This natural feature was tested through a machine

dug slot, which was opened up across the feature in a north-south direction. The tree hole contained no archaeological finds or features.

7.9 The subsoil (202) in Trench 2 consisted of up to 0.30m thick light brown, plastic silty clay with moderate inclusions of small stones and roots. The uppermost deposit in Trench 2 was the up to 0.40m thick topsoil (201) of dark brown, plastic silty clay with frequent modern inclusions of crushed bricks, mortar and plastic items.

Figure 4. Trench 1 from north. Overview photo.

Figure 5. Trench 2 from west. Overview photo.

Figure 6. The section through ditch [203] in Trench 2.

8 DISCUSSION

8.1 The archaeological evaluation on land adjacent to Moorlands Farm, 119 High Street, Arlesey in Bedfordshire was able to prove that the site only contained Post medieval features that could probably be linked to the former farm.

8.2 The features that were uncovered during the fieldworks, such a two modern concrete foundations in Trench 1 and a modern concrete soakaway and a drainage ditch in Trench 2, probably belonged to the former farm while no evidence for earlier human settlement was identified within the development area.

8.3 It is possible that the ditch is shown on the OS Hertfordshire VII.2 map. It would in that case be one of the boundary ditches positioned at an angle to the High Street in the east.

8.4 Even if a large number of archaeological finds and features of interest for the history of Bedfordshire, and the history of Arlesey in particular, have previously been identified along High Street the evaluation that was carried out in November 2018 added only very limited archaeological information.

9 ARCHIVE

The archive consists of the following:

Paper Record

The project brief	The project report
Written Scheme of Investigation	The primary site records
The photographic and drawn records	

The archive will be deposited following the gaining of the transfer of title, and will be transferred to:

The Higgins Art Gallery and Museum, Bedford

10 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Archaeological Evaluation, Land Adjacent to Moorlands Farm 119, High Street, Arlesey, Bedfordshire. Brief from Central Bedfordshire Council.

Archaeological Solutions (2017) Green End Farm, 1 Hitchin Road, Arlesey, Bedfordshire SG15 6RP; Heritage Statement; Archaeological Evaluation Unapproved report no. 5387

Bedford Museum (2010) Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedfordshire. Unpublished Museum Archiving Guidance.

Brown, N and Glazebrook, J (2000) Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8

Bryant, S (2000) "The Iron Age" in Brown and Glazebrook (2000), 14-18

Digital Archives from Excavation and Fieldwork Guide to Good Practice Second Edition: available online at: http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/goodguides/excavation

English Heritage (2011) Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from sampling and recovery to post excavation. English Heritage Guidelines available online at: https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/environmentalarchaeology-2nd/

Glazebrook, J (1997) Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties - 1 Resource Assessment. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 3

Going, C and Plouviez, J (2000) "Roman" in Brown and Glazebrook (2000), 19-22

Gurney, D (2003) Standards for the Field Archaeology in the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14

Heritage Network (2003) Etonbury Farm Bund, Stotfold Road, Arlesey, Beds Archaeological Monitoring Report Unpublished report no 179

Historic England (2015) Management of Research Projects in Historic Environment.

Historic England Guidelines available online at: https://www.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/morphe-projectmanagers-guide

Historic England (2015) Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: PPN3: Archaeological Excavation. Historic England Guidelines available online at: https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images books/publications/morphe-projectplanning-note-3/morpheprojectplanningnote3.pdf/

KDK Archaeology (2018) Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Report; Land at Green End Farm, Arlesey, Bedfordshire Unapproved report no. 361/AGE/2.1

Medlycott, M (Eds) (2011) Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24. available online at: http://www.eaareports.org.uk

Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (2018) National Planning Policy Framework. Government National Planning Policy

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 Monograph 9

Oxford Archaeology (2005) St John's Road, Arlesey, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation Report. Unpublished report

Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedfordshire Bedford Museum 2010.

Technical Advisory Service for Images Introductory Pack: Image Capture: Hardware and Software available online at www.tasi.ac.uk

Wade K (2000) Anglo-Saxon and Medieval (Rural), in Brown and Glazebrook (2000), Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8: 23-26.

Webley L, Timby J, Wilson M (2007) Fairfield Park: Later Prehistoric Settlement in the Eastern Chilterns (Bedfordshire Archaeology Monograph 7).

APPENDICES

CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Context Nr	Depth (m)	Description	Younger than	Older than
		Trench 1 (11m x 2m)		
(101)	0.28	Topsoil of dark brown, plastic silty clay with frequent modern inclusions of crushed bricks and mortar.	(102)	-
(102)	0.32	Subsoil of light brown, plastic silty clay with moderate inclusions of small stones and roots.	(103) (104)	(101)
(103)	0.48	Solid modern concrete foundation.	Natural	(102)
(104)	0.48	Solid modern concrete foundation.	Natural	(102)
Natural	-	West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation.	-	(103) (104)
		Trench 2 (11m x 2m)		
(201)	0.40	Topsoil of dark brown, plastic silty clay with frequent modern inclusions of crushed bricks and mortar.	(202)	-
(202)	0.30	Subsoil of light brown, plastic silty clay with moderate inclusions of small stones and roots.	(204)	(201)
[203]	0.55	Cut of Post medieval ditch [203]. V-shaped sides.	Natural	(204)
(204)	0.55	Fill of Post medieval ditch [203]. Light grey, plastic silty clay with occasional crushed bricks and mortar.	[203]	(202)
[205]	0.43	Cut for modern concrete soakaway.	Natural	(206)
(206)	0.43	Modern concrete soakaway.	[205]	(207)
(207)	0.35	Fill of modern concrete soakaway. Dark brown, plastic silty clay.	(206)	(202)
Natural	-	West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation.	-	[203] [205]

OASIS ID: independ1-338442

Project details

Project name	Land adjacent to Moorlands Farm, 119 High Street, Arlesey, Bedfordshire
Short description of the project	An archaeological evaluation consisting of two trenches. A few modern concrete features were being uncovered, but nothing of archaeological interest was found.
Project dates	Start: 26-11-2018 End: 27-11-2018
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	MCAB18 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	CB/18/00496/FULL - Planning Application No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	Local Authority Designated Archaeological Area
Current Land use	Vacant Land 2 - Vacant land not previously developed
Monument type	SN BT Modern
Monument type	SN CL Modern
Significant Finds	N/A None
Significant Finds	N/A None
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England

Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE MID BEDFORDSHIRE ARLESEY Land adjacent to Moorlands Farm, 119 High Street, Arlesey, Bedfordshire
Postcode	SG15 6SX
Study area	400 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 1930 3606 52.009697623133 -0.261605455919 52 00 34 N 000 15 41 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 43m Max: 45m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Independent Archaeology Consultants
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Independent Archaeology Consultants
Project director/manager	Christer Carlsson
Project supervisor	Christer Carlsson
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Central Bedfordshire
Physical Contents	"other"
Digital Archive recipient	Central Bedfordshire
Digital Contents	"none","other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector"
Paper Archive recipient	Central Bedfordshire
Paper Contents	"none","other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section"

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Land adjacent to Moorlands Farm, 119 High Street, Arlesey, Bedfordshire
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Carlsson, C
Date	2019
Issuer or publisher	Independent Archaeology Consultants
Place of issue or publication	Peterborough
Entered by	Christer Carlsson (contact@independentarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	8 January 2019