

Archaeological Investigation at
Bradwell Village Pre-School
Memorial Hall
Vicarage Road, Bradwell
Milton Keynes MK13 9AG
(NGR 483181, 239557)

Planning Application Ref. 14/01247/FUL



September 2014

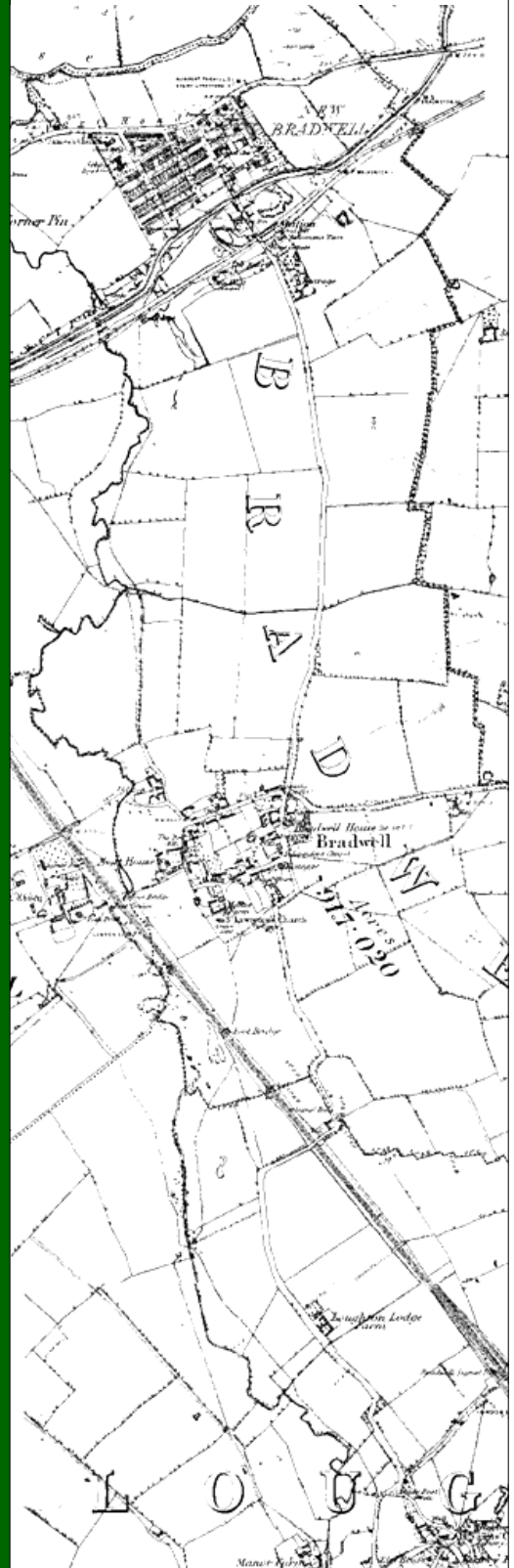
Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd

for

Bradwell Hall Memorial Hall Committee

Souterrain

Archaeological Services Ltd



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION AT
BRADWELL VILLAGE PRE-SCHOOL MEMORIAL HALL
VICARAGE ROAD, BRADWELL
MILTON KEYNES MK13 9AG
(NGR 483181, 239557)**

(Application Reference 14/01247/FUL)

Milton Keynes
Historic Environment Record
Event No. EMK1245

Souterrain Project ID.SOU14-365

September 2014

Produced for:

Bradwell Hall Memorial Hall Committee
(The Planning Applicant)

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*Cover map reproduced from the 1882 Ordnance Survey map of Buckinghamshire: 1:10,560
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Cover photograph courtesy of the Bradwell Hall Memorial Hall Committee

Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

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Summary

In August 2014, Souterrain Archaeological Services Limited carried out an archaeological watching brief during the hand-excavation of foundation trenches for a rear extension to Bradwell Memorial Hall, in Old Bradwell village, Milton Keynes.

The site, which lies within the medieval core of the village is located immediately northwest of the earthwork remains of a motte and bailey. The earthworks are a Scheduled Ancient Monument, while the Memorial Hall, built in the early 1920s, is located within the designated bounds of the monument.

The primary objective of the investigation was to ensure that the archaeological interest of the site was safeguarded.

Nothing of archaeological significance was present and there were no deposits earlier than the 19th/20th century. The results suggest that the ground was probably terraced in the 20th century, subsequent to which levelling deposits were laid down to enable the construction of the hall.

1. SCOPE OF THE REPORT

- 1.1 This report documents the results of archaeological observation and investigation carried out during ground preparation for a new rear extension at Bradwell Pre-school Memorial Hall, Vicarage Road, Bradwell Milton Keynes MK13 9AG (Figs. 1 and 2) in compliance with a condition attached to the planning consent. The investigation took place on the 21st, 24th and 25th of August 2104.
- 1.2 The report has been prepared by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) on behalf of the Bradwell Hall Memorial Hall Committee (the planning applicant).

2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission (Application Ref. 14/01247/FUL) has been granted subject to conditions by Milton Keynes Council, on the 31st of July 2014, for the demolition of an existing lean-to extension to the side of the Memorial Hall and for the construction of a new extension with a slightly increased floor area in same location. The area of the proposed development is defined on drawings associated with the planning application¹.
- 2.2 The Memorial Hall was built in the early 1920s in honour of those who served in the Great War. It is located on the north-western edge of a Norman motte and bailey earthwork, known locally as Bradwell Castle (Figs. 2 and 6). The earthwork is now a Scheduled Monument (No. 19002). The hall itself is believed to occupy part of the earthwork, and is thus included in the scheduled area. Scheduled Monument Consent was thus acquired from English Heritage by the planning applicant's agent before the development commenced². The site also lies within an archaeological notification area defining the medieval core of old Bradwell village.
- 2.3 In view of the archaeological potential of the site, a Condition (No.4) has been attached to the grant of planning permission for the implementation of a programme of archaeological works, in accordance with Policy paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). The purpose of the Condition is to ensure that features of archaeological interest encountered during groundwork are properly examined and recorded.
- 2.4 The archaeological investigation was undertaken by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation³ approved prior to the commencement of works by Nick Crank, Archaeological Officer for Milton Keynes Council and David Wilkinson, Assistant Inspector of Ancient Monuments for English Heritage.

3. SITE LOCATION AND ASPECT

- 3.1 The Memorial Hall is elevated above the street level of Vicarage Road. The development plot is located at the rear of the hall at its southeast end. Photographs 13.1 and 13.2 show the plot prior to groundwork. It largely occupies the former site of a brick-built lean-to. The floor area of the old lean-to measured approximately 12sq.m, while the new extension is to be 16.2sq.m⁴.

¹ Proposed Site Plan <http://edrms.milton-keynes.gov.uk/AnitePublicDocs/00190591.pdf>; Proposed Ground Floor Plan (<http://edrms.milton-keynes.gov.uk/AnitePublicDocs/00190585.pdf>); Proposed Elevations <http://edrms.milton-keynes.gov.uk/AnitePublicDocs/00190587.pdf>

² Ref.S00089451, 14th August 2014

³ Souterrain Archaeological Services Limited. 2014. *Scheme of Investigation, for an Archaeological Watching Brief: Bradwell Village Pre-School Memorial Hall, Vicarage Road, Bradwell, Milton Keynes MK13 9AG. (NGR 483181, 239557). (App. Ref. 14/01247/FUL)*, Souterrain Project ID.SOU14-365, V. 1. 14th August 2014

⁴ Design and Access Statement, Bradwell Memorial Hall, N.d. <http://edrms.milton-keynes.gov.uk/AnitePublicDocs/00190582.pdf>

- 3.2 The underlying geology is consists of Blisworth clay, Blisworth limestone and Cornbrash Limestone. The site is approximately 76.6m AOD.

4. HISTORIC BACKGROUND & ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

Settlement origins

- 4.1 At the time of the Domesday survey of 1086 survey there were thirteen households inhabiting Bradwell, these spread across three lordships⁵. The population of the parish may have been about five times this number.
- 4.2 Prior to the conquest, the main lordship (or manor) was held by two thegns, Godwin and Sibbi, both men of Alric son of Goding. The household heads of their lordship comprised five villagers and two slaves. There was arable land sufficient for three plough teams, including two teams for the demesne. Other assets consisted of two ploughlands-worth of meadow. At the time of the survey, the new owner and tenant-in-chief was Miles Crispin and the lord of the manor was William son of Tuold⁶. In the mid-12th century a part of this manor was acquired by the family of Bayeux, while the family of Bradwell held manorial rights to the rest⁷. Interestingly, the first known advowson of the church of St Lawrence was shared between William de Bayeux and Robert de Bradwell. It was bestowed on Tickford Priory⁸. The Bradwell share of the manor passed to the family of Barry at the end of the century.
- 4.3 Another lordship in the parish was held in 1066 by Alfgeat, a tenant-in-chief of Queen Edith. Here there were two ploughland and a ploughland of meadow. There were just two households: a smaller holder and a slave. Twenty years later it was listed as being held by Walter Giffard for overlord Walter Hackett. The third estate is 1066 was held by Alward, another of Goding's thegns. The households were a villager, two small holders and a slave. There was arable land for one plough and an equal amount of meadowland. In 1086 this territory was in the possession of William son of Ansculf.

The Bradwell motte and bailey

- 4.4 The motte and bailey at Bradwell is located about 80m east of the church of St Lawrence at NGR 483192, 239529 (SP8318395). The site is also known today as Bradwell Castle Mound. It is thought to have been built by one of the Bayeux family⁹ during the civil war of 1139-42 in the reign of Stephen, grandson of William I. It comprised a large conical mound of earth or rubble, known as the motte, upon which stood a palisade and timber tower. Some towers were later replaced by stone structures. At the foot of the mound/motte was an embanked enclosure, the bailey, which housed other buildings (garrison accommodation, stables, stores etc.). Motte and bailey fortifications were constructed in strategic positions. More than six hundred of such monuments are known to have existed in Britain. Such monuments are particularly important for the studies pertaining to the development of the feudal system. The Bradwell motte and bailey is one of a group of monuments, comprised of a moated manor house, Bradwell Abbey and the parish church, which together reflect the cohesive framework of medieval society¹⁰.

⁵ Information from <http://domesdaymap.co.uk/place/SP8339/bradwell/> Date accessed: 13 August 2014.

⁶ <http://domesdaymap.co.uk/place/SP8339/bradwell/> Date accessed: 13 August 2014.

⁷ 'Parishes: Bradwell', *A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 4 (1927)*, pp. 283-288. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=62585&strquery=bradwell> Date accessed: 14 August 2014.

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Ibid.

¹⁰ see English Heritage, The National Heritage List for England. Reasons for designation, <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1007935>

4.5 The motte at Bradwell was archaeologically surveyed in 1976¹¹. The mound rises to a height of 3m from the ditch bottom and is 22m in diameter. There are traces of a bank 1m high to west of mound. Depressions on its north and south sides were caused by the partial building of a WWII air raid shelter. To date, the only archaeological dating evidence from the motte and bailey site amounts to a small assemblage of 12th / 13th century pottery sherds found in the garden of the Memorial Hall and from graves dug in the northeast corner of the churchyard (c.55m SW of the Application Site)¹².

4.6 The Bradwell motte and bailey is designated as Scheduled Ancient Monument No. 19002. The schedule description is as follows:

“The monument includes a small motte and bailey castle some 0.5 hectares in area situated in close proximity to St Lawrence's Church, Old Bradwell. Central to the monument is the motte or castle mound, which survives as a turf covered earthwork 22m in diameter and up to 2.3m high. Depressions in the surface of the motte are believed to have been made during attempts to construct an air raid shelter during World War II. The remains of a once encircling ditch survive around the west and south of the mound as a spread hollow 5m wide and 0.3m deep, the remaining portion surviving as a buried feature. A small bailey survives to the west of the motte, defined by a scarp up to 0.7m high, running for a distance of 36m some 20m from the mound edge. All buildings, boundary features and metalled surfaces are excluded from the scheduling though the ground beneath is included.”¹³

4.7 As aforementioned (4.4) the Bradwell motte and bailey is one of a group of medieval monuments at Bradwell. The others elements are as follows:

Bradwell Bury

4.8 Bradwell Bury is located about 195m west-northwest of the Application Site. As the place name (OE) indicates this was a pre-conquest fortified place. It is believed that a substantial enclosure probably of Late Saxon date was succeeded by a medieval earthwork. It survives as a moated site about 60 metres square, though it understood to have formerly been about double this size. The moat surrounds a 17th century house which was restored in the mid-18th century. An archaeological rescue excavation took place at the site in 1975¹⁴ during major landscape works. The discoveries included evidence of three post-built structures together with gullies and ditches dated from pottery from the 9th to 12th centuries. In addition there were remains of a stone-built manor house, a limekiln and dovecotes which were dated to the 13th to late 14th century. The presence of Saxon pottery sherds suggested an earlier occupation of the site¹⁵.

Bradwell Abbey

4.9 The abbey, perhaps more rightly known as Bradwell Priory, was founded about 1155 as a Benedictine priory by Meinfelin, lord of Wolverton¹⁶. The site of the priory is located about 530m west-northwest of the Application Site. It became an important local centre, but was hit by plague in the 14th century and became later impoverished. It eventually suffered closure in 1524, before the Dissolution. Today, the upstanding remains comprise a 14th century chapel and a farm. It is in

¹¹ HER Event No. 1205

¹² HER Nos. 362300000, 362100010

¹³ Extract from English Heritage's National Heritage List for England. <http://list.english-heritage.org.uk/resultsingle.aspx?uid=1007935>

¹⁴ Her Event No. 273, HER No. 362300000

¹⁵ HER No. 362300001

¹⁶ 'Houses of Benedictine monks: The priory of Bradwell', A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 1 (1905), pp. 350-352. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=40304> Date accessed: 13 August 2014.

use an Urban Studies Centre. Various phases / elements of archaeological exploration have been carried out at Bradwell Abbey between the late 1960s and 2009, mostly small scale.

Chance finds of medieval pottery

- 4.10 Medieval pottery has been found at various locations within the study area which may indicate the site of early tenements and closes. A scatter of sherds was found by Bradwell Brook¹⁷; 13th/14th century sherds came from the churchyard and nearby the Bradwell churchyard rectory¹⁸ (c.100m SW), while a number of sherds have been found in the garden of the Memorial Hall¹⁹ and the gardens of Ivy House & No.5 Primrose Road, Old Bradwell²⁰ (c. 185m NW of the Application Site). The pottery from No.5 Primrose Road comprised a quantity of 12th – 13th century sherds, while the assemblage from Ivy House (c.185m N) amounted to 150 medieval pieces. Further finds of pottery have come from the spoil from an excavation for a footpath opposite the Post Office²¹ (c.215m N) and at house plots to the east of the Prince Albert public house and south of the street frontage Victoria Road²² (c.50m NE).

Archaeology of other Periods

Prehistoric

- 4.11 A small number of flint artefacts found in the study area represent a background signature of the Mesolithic to Neolithic / Bronze periods. For example, a Mesolithic core stone and blade²³ and two Neolithic flakes have been found on separate occasions at Bradwell Abbey²⁴. Two more Neolithic flakes were picked up at H3 City Road²⁵, to the north of the village and a various Bronze Age flint debitage were found at Bradwell Bury²⁶.

Roman

- 4.12 Within the search area, there is evidence of occupation and activity in the Romano-British period. A rescue excavation carried out at Bradwell Middle School in 1978 (c.365m NE) revealed a substantial enclosure ditch containing pottery dating to the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD²⁷. Trial trenching at the Bradwell Abbey site in 2006 recovered several fragments of Roman tile²⁸. Chance finds comprise a mid 2nd century coin from the front garden of the Bell Inn²⁹ (c.182m NW) and 4th century pottery and tiles picked up near the brook at Bradwell Abbey³⁰.

5. OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The objective of the investigation was to ensure that the archaeological interest of the site was safeguarded.
- 5.2 The Research Objectives of the investigation were to attempt to:
- i. establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;

¹⁷ HER No.365700000

¹⁸ HER No. 370000000

¹⁹ HER No. 373800000

²⁰ HER No. 379300000

²¹ HER No. 380800000

²² HER No. 381800000

²³ HER Nos. 301800000 and 322000000

²⁴ HER No. 262100005

²⁵ HER No. 262100006

²⁶ HER No. 328700000

²⁷ HER Nos. 312700000 to 312700005; Event No.314

²⁸ HER Event No. 951, 309400000

²⁹ HER no. 306500000

³⁰ HER nos. 310100000 and 310101000

- ii. establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- iii. to gain an understanding of former land-use and / or activity in this part of the historic monument.

6 FIELD PROCEDURE

- 6.1 The investigation was conducted with due consideration to Health and Safety and in accordance with the requirements of the Written Scheme of Investigation and the Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and *Standard Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (Rev.2013).
- 6.2 The foundation trenches were hand-excavated by a team of experienced ground-workers supervised by an archaeologist. The team was thoroughly briefed beforehand by the archaeologist about the sensitivity of the archaeological site, its designated status, and the objectives of the archaeological investigation. The team demonstrated a full understanding the archaeologist's needs and were fully co-operative throughout the works, reporting the slightest changes in excavated material.
- 6.3 The excavation was monitored closely throughout by the archaeologist, making investigations and records as appropriate. Sections were hand-cleaned by the archaeologist and recording was carried out in accordance with the written scheme. Archaeological features were surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and height datum by RTK GPS.

7. INVESTIGATION RESULTS

- 7.1 In the descriptions which follow, context numbers in square brackets denote 'cuts' (i.e. dug features), whilst those in round brackets denote layers, deposits, fills or structures. The Munsell system is used for soil colour descriptions.
- 7.2 Initially, a test pit was hand-dug by the contractor alongside the rear wall of the 20th century hall (Fig. 2, S.D; Fig.5, Section D; photograph 13.8), monitored closely by the archaeologist. The purpose of the test was to ascertain the nature and depth of existing foundations and to acquire knowledge about ground deposits. This would help determine the most suitable type of foundation for the new building: mini-piles or traditional strip foundation. The test pit was excavated to a depth of 1.2m.
- 7.3 Although visibility was constrained by the size of the test pit, nothing of archaeological significance was revealed. Anthropogenic-derived material was present for a depth up to c.0.3m. Directly below the lower course of bricks of the rear wall of the hall was a layer of ashy clay with brick fragments (001), c.0.08m in thickness. This was interpreted as a ground make-up layer for the hall. This overlay a layer of compact dark greyish-brown (10YR 4/2 and 10YR 3/2) sandy clayey soil (002) with occasional flecks of charcoal. A small fragment of brick, shallow in gauge, was recovered, which is likely to be a residual deposit of post-medieval date (*post.* 8.4, Table 2).
- 7.4 At the base of layer (002) was a rubble layer composed of irregular fragments of limestone and (006) in a slight matrix of dark brown soil (007). A single fragment of 19th / 20th century brick was recovered. Layer (006/007) lay directly upon a geological stratum of very dark grey-brown (10YR 3/2) very porous sandy clay with occasional pieces of chalk (003) and fragments of fossils. This layer was approximately 0.38m in thickness. Below it was another fossiliferous stratum of dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4), porous gritty clay with pieces of limestone and flint (004).
- 7.5 Subsequently, a strip foundation trench was hand-excavated for the new extension (Fig. 2). The south-western part of the trench (i.e. Section C) adjoined the test pit. The trench was 0.7m wide

and dug to a depth of 1.2m (*post.* 13.3 – 13.10). The extent of the foundation trench is shown on Figure 2. Archaeological visibility was clear throughout the works. The uppermost layers encountered comprised either modern (late 20th century) surfacing (Fig. 3, Section A; Fig. 5, Section C) or topsoil (Fig.4, Section B, 005; Fig.5, Section C, (005)). Apart from ground disturbance caused by modern drainage and service trenches (i.e. [008], [011] and [013]) which run alongside the hall, the main stratigraphic sequence (i.e. apart from (001)) was consistent in all trenches, being the same as that observed previously in the test pit (*ante.* 7.3). Three pieces of 19th/ 20th century pottery and two fragments of 19th / C 20th century brick were recovered from the limestone rubble layer (006/007).

7.6 The geological stratum was encountered at approximately 76.30m.

7.6 There were no archaeological features or deposits or earlier than 19th/ 20th century date.

8. ARTEFACTS

Post-medieval / Modern Pottery

8.1 Three sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from a made-up ground/rubble layer (006/(007)). The types, which include two pieces of stoneware jam jars (different vessels), were common in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

8.2 Table 1. Post-medieval / Modern pottery: types and chronology

Context No.	Feature	Description	Period	Suggested context date
006/007	Made-up ground/rubble layer	1 rim and body sherd, moulded stoneware jam jar.	Late C 19 th – 1920s	1920s
006/007	Made-up ground/rubble layer	1 rim and body sherd, moulded stoneware, jam jar, . c.f. W.P Hartley Melling type	1870s – 1920s	1920s
006/007	Made-up ground/rubble layer	1 body/base sherd, white salt-glazed, press-moulded earthenware, small plate	C 18 th – C 20 th	1920s

Other artefacts

8.3 Other finds comprised four fragments of ceramic building material and three small pieces of concrete render. Three of the brick fragments (context (006)/007)) are of a type and dimension common in the latter part of the 19th century and early 20th century. The fourth has a shallower gauge, more in-keeping with the 16th and 17th century, and would therefore be a residual deposit.

8.4 Table 2. Other finds

Context No.	Feature	Description	Period	Suggested context date
002	Clayey soil layer / made-up ground	X 1 fragment of hand-made red brick; shallow gauge (height) 1 ^{3/8} (0.36mm).	possibly C 16 / C 17 th	1920s
006/007	Clayey soil layer / made-up ground	X 3 fragments of hand-made red brick fragments. 2 ½ gauge (height)	C 19 th – C 20 th	1920s

Context No.	Feature	Description	Period	Suggested context date
006/007	Clayey soil layer / made-up ground	X 3 small fragments of concrete render with inclusions of ceramic building material (<0.12mm) Largest fragment: c.36mm x c.25mm)	Indeterminate	1920s

9. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE & REVIEW OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 9.1 The investigation revealed nothing of archaeological significance.
- 9.2 It is presumed that ground preparation for the construction of the Memorial Hall involved a certain amount of terracing the ground over which make-up layers were then spread (i.e. layers (001), (002), (006/007)).
- 9.3 The investigation established the date, nature and extent of activity in the development site since it did not encounter any evidence of activity earlier than the date of the construction of Memorial Hall in the 1920s it was unable to contribute to archaeological research questions (*ante*. 5.2).

10. ARCHIVE

- 10.1 The Buckinghamshire County Museum's Accessions Number for the project is to be confirmed (applied for on the 14th August 2014). The paper archive comprises field drawings, context descriptions and photographs.
- 10.2 The English Heritage OASIS Data Collection Form ID for this project is **souterra1- 189737**.
- 10.3 The Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record Event Number is **EMK1245**

11. COPYRIGHT

- 11.1 Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retain full copyright of any commissioned reports, tender documents or other project documents under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 with all rights reserved; excepting that it will provide an exclusive licence to the Owner in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).
- 11.2 Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retains the right to be identified as the author of all project documentation and reports as defined in the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.
- 11.3 A licence is to be granted to Historic Environment Record of Milton Keynes Council for the use of all reports arising from projects for planning purposes and *bona fide* research requests.

12. ACCESSIBILITY OF THE RECORD

- 12.1 In accordance with the requirements of WSI, this report is intended as a public-accessible record. A copy of the report is to be available for consultation in the Historic Environment Record. It is also to be made available on appropriate websites (e.g. www.oasis.ac.uk) and a summary of the results is to be submitted to *South Midlands Archaeology*, the on-line annual round-up of archaeological work in the region.

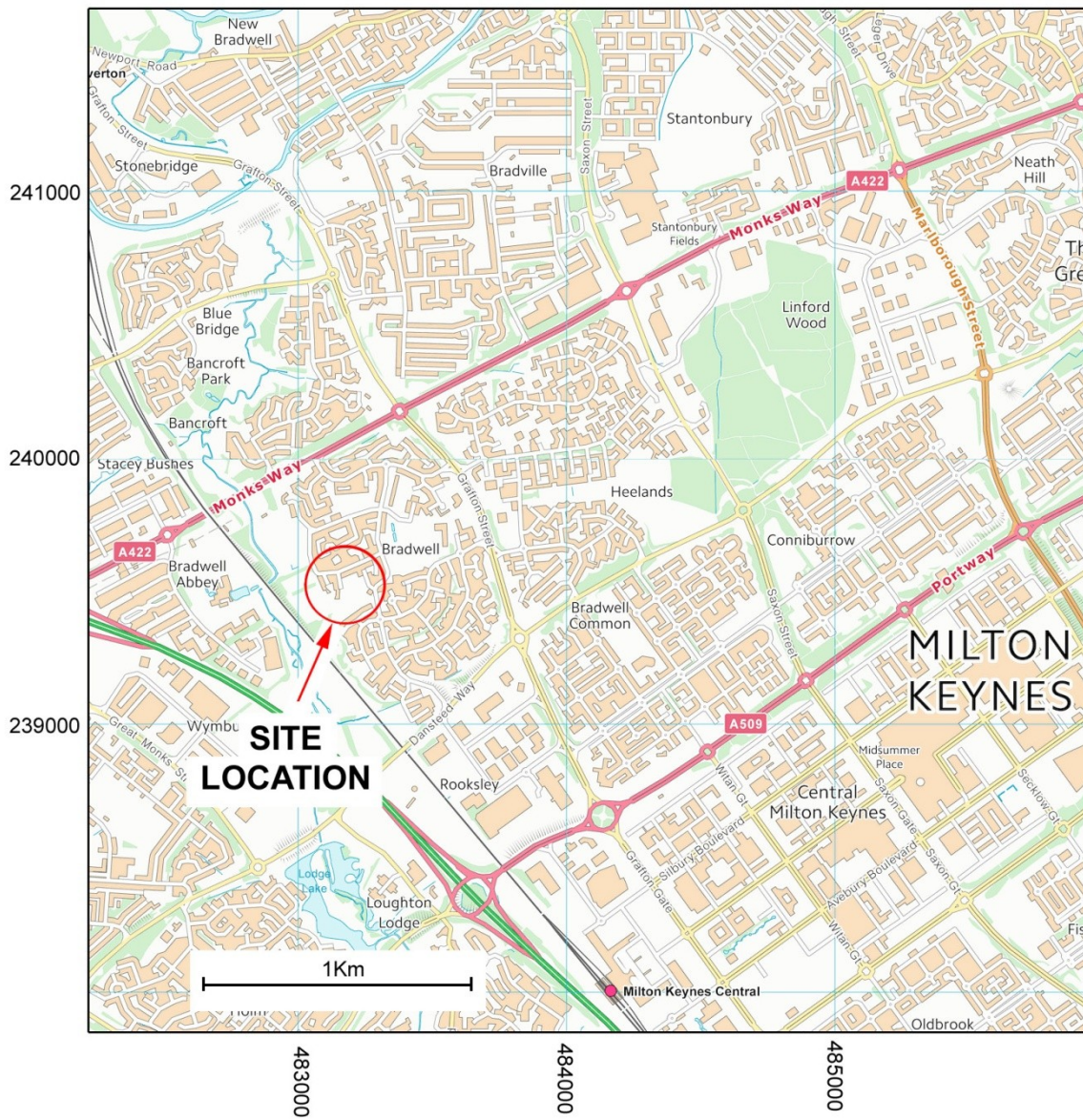


Figure 1. Location of Site

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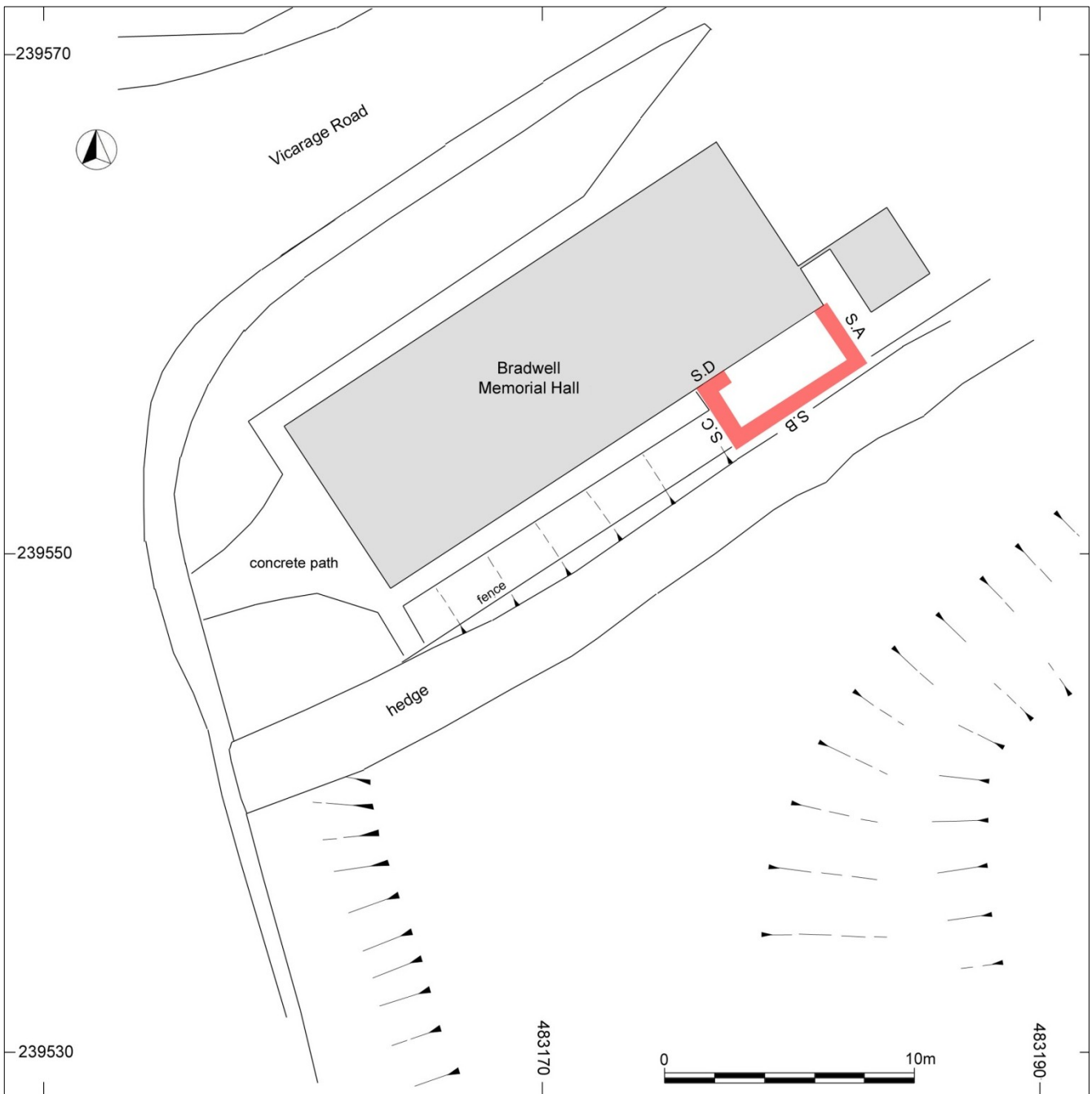


Figure 2. Area of archaeological investigation (red) and location of section drawings (S. A - S.D)

(Grid: Ordnance Survey © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)

Section A

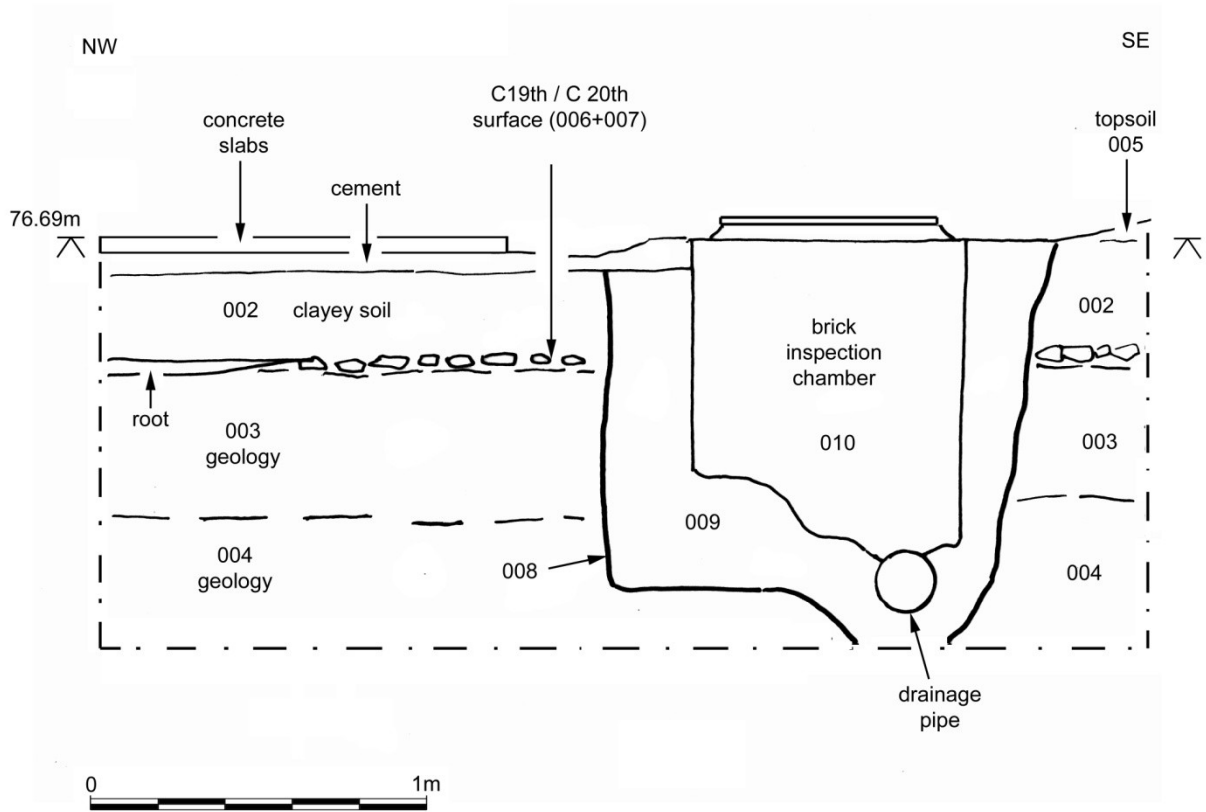


Figure 3. Section A

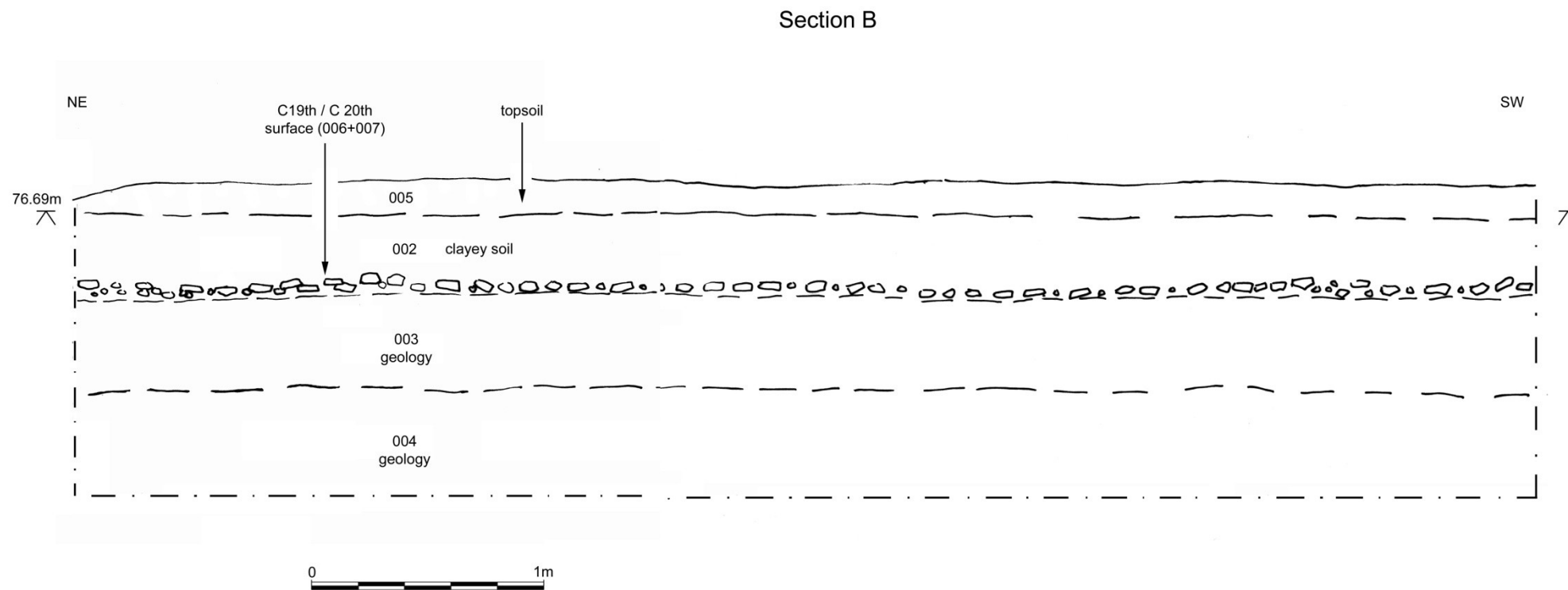


Figure 4. Section B

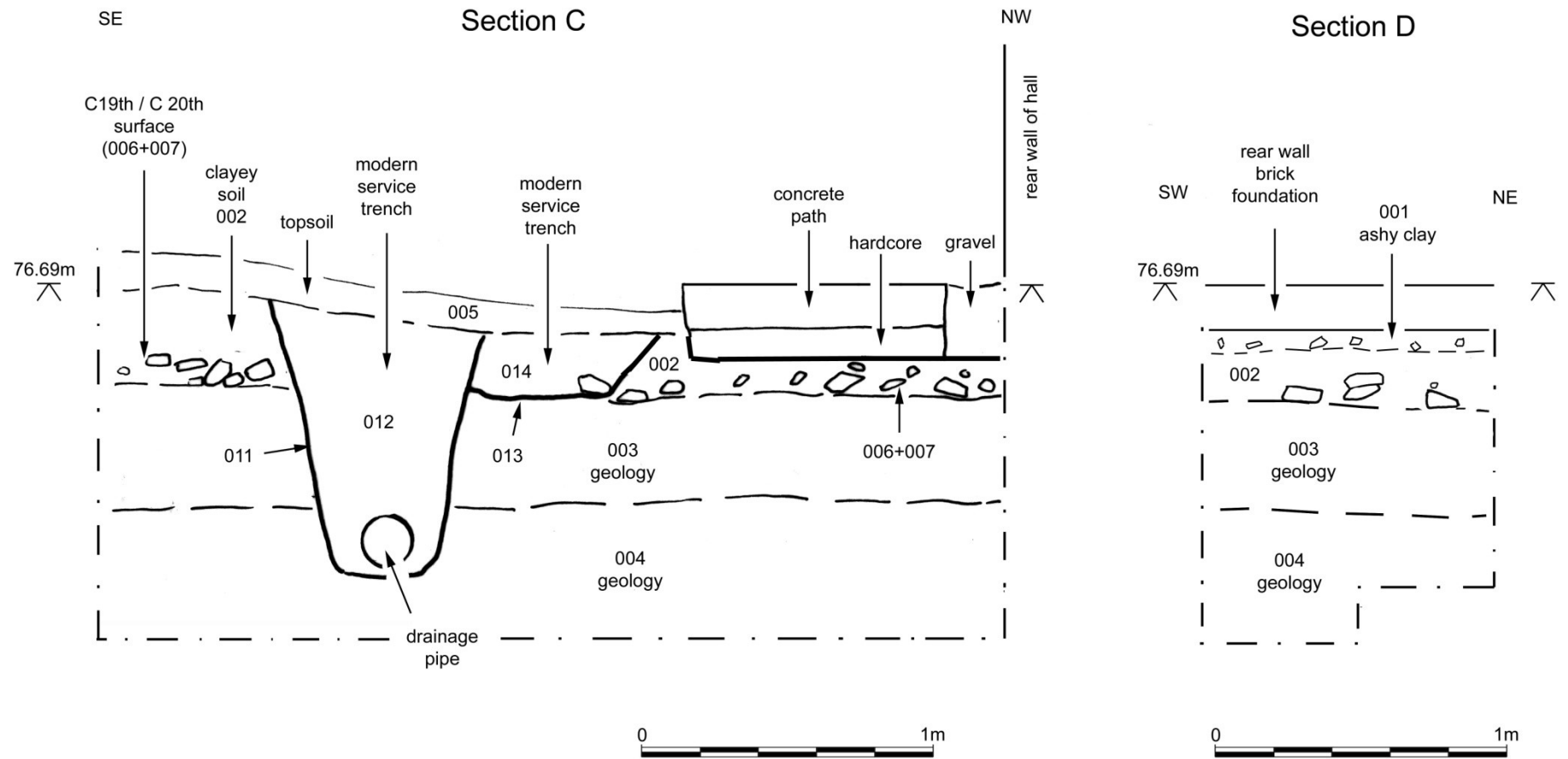


Figure 5. Sections C and D



Figure 6. Laying the foundation stone of Bradwell Memorial Hall c. 1924. Facing south; the bailey earthwork is visible behind the building site. (photograph courtesy of the Bradwell Hall Memorial Hall Committee).

13 PHOTOGRAPHS



**13.1. Overview of site prior to investigation.
Facing NE**



**13. 2. Overview of site prior to investigation.
Facing SW**



13. 3. Section A. Facing N



13. 4. Section B. Facing S



13.5. Section B. General stratigraphic sequence. Facing SE

13.6. Section B. Facing NW



13.7. Section C. Facing NE



13.8. Section D. Facing SE



13.9. Overview of foundation trenches. Facing SW



13.10. Overview of foundation trenches. Facing NE