Archaeological Investigation at Old Rectory Cottage Broughton, Milton Keynes (NGR 489366, 240145)

Historic Environment Record Event No. EMK1447 Planning App. Ref. 20/03387/FUL Souterrain Project SOU21-727


April 2021

Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd for

Karl Barton \& Denise Aaron
(Broughton, Milton Keynes)

## Souterrain

Archaeological Services Ltd


# Archaeological Watching Brief at Old Rectory Cottage, Broughton, Milton Keynes, MK10 7AD 

(NGR 489366, 240145)

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Produced for:

Karl Barton and Denise Aaron
(The Planning Applicant)
(cover map extract: 1886 Ordnance Survey 6" map of Buckinghamshire.)
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## Summary

An archaeological watching brief was carried out by Souterrain in March 2021 during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new carriage house in the rear garden of The Old Rectory, Broughton, Milton Keynes.

The site falls within the historic core of Broughton, where previous excavations in proximity to the site have revealed significant Romano-British, Saxon and later remains.

The foundation trenches were, however, excavated in modern made-up ground, largely formed of rubble from a fairly recently demolished brick-built outbuilding. Other than the surface of a possible $19^{\text {th }}$ century/ $20^{\text {th }}$ century feature which was skimmed over in the base of the northern trench at 62.33 m OD , the trenches were not deep enough to expose any significant archaeology.

The Application Site and development area thus preserves its potential for buried archaeology.

## Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) cannot accept responsibility for errors of information 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 statements or opinions expressed in this document.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document presents an illustrated record of archaeological observations made during groundwork for a small development at Old Rectory Cottage, Broughton, Milton Keynes (hereafter 'the Application Site').
1.2 It has been prepared by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) on behalf of for Karl Barton and Denise Aaron, the Planning Applicants, in accordance with a Condition attached to a Planning Permission.

## 2. PLANNING BACKGROUND

2.1 Milton Keynes Council Planning Permission 20/03387/FUL has been granted subject to conditions on the $17^{\text {th }}$ of February 2021, for the Construction of a 3 bay carriage house / garage at: Old Rectory Cottage London Road Broughton Milton Keynes MK10 9AA'. In view of the archaeological sensitivity of the locality, planning consent has been granted with a Condition (No. 4) attached for a programme of archaeological mitigation work. The reason for the Condition is to ensure that features of archaeological interest are properly examined and recorded in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 199 and Policy HE1 of Plan: MK.
2.2 Prior to consent the SAO was consulted by the Planning Officer and duly advised, as follows ${ }^{1}$ :
"The site lies within the medieval core of Broughton village, close to the parish church and churchyard and also to excavations that have revealed significant Romano-British, Saxon and later remains. As such the proposed development may reveal significant buried archaeology. However, given the small scale of the proposed structure it is felt that a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording (a 'watching brief') would comprise appropriate mitigation in this instance. This may be secured by the following pre-commencement condition:
"Prior to the commencement of development hereby approved, a Written Scheme of Investigation for a programme of archaeological monitoring and recording (a watching brief) shall be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. The works shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and the Local Planning Authority given five days' notice of the commencement of the watching brief. A report with plans, sections, and detailed drawings of the findings shall be produced within three months of the completion of the works.

Reason: To ensure the appropriate recording of any archaeological remains affected by the development in accordance with: Paragraph 199 of the National Planning Policy Framework and Policy HE1 of Plan:MK."
2.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) ${ }^{2}$ was prepared by Souterrain on behalf of the Planning Applicant for the approval of the SAO, and the Local Planning Authority.

[^0]
## 3. SITE LOCATION \& ASPECT

3.1 The Application Site is located in the parish of Broughton and Milton Keynes, on the northeastern edge of Buckinghamshire, bordering Bedfordshire (Fig. 1). The village of Broughton is located about 4.3 km east-northeast of Central Milton Keynes.
3.2 The Application Site is situated at the northern end of historic core of the village, on the west side of London Road (Fig. 2), which is the old northwest/southeast road between Newport Pagnell and Woburn. The historic core contains the church, the rectory and Broughton House. The site is located about 24 m to the north of St Lawrence's Church, at NGR 489366, 240145.

## Topography \& Geology

3.3 The topography of the Application Site is around 62 m OD . The underlying superficial geology is understood to comprise fluviatile gravel with sand, which may be 3 m to 8 m thick ${ }^{3}$. The bedrock is silicate-mudstone of the Oxford Clay Formation, which is "grey, generally smooth to slightly silty, with sporadic beds of argillaceous limestone nodules".

## The Proposed Development

3.4 The new carriage house is located in a former area of hard-standing with shingle gravel, near to the southwest corner of the site, with a footprint of 9 m by 6 m (Fig. 2).

## 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL

4.1 Based on the historic location of the Application Site and archaeological discoveries made in and around Broughton village, the site is considered to have potential to contain buried archaeological remains from the Iron Age, the Romano-British British period, and the Early Medieval settlement at Broughton. The primary source of archaeological information in this section is derived from reports on archaeological excavations, most of which occurred in the first decade of the $21^{\text {st }}$ century.

## Iron Age to Romano-British periods

4.2 Evidence of the Iron Age to Romano-British periods is well-attested in the parish. The nearest discovery to Old Rectory Cottage was at Dean Forest Way, about 65 m to the northwest (Fig. 2), where open-area excavation took place in 2007 in advance of housing-building. A late Roman grave and series of enclosures containing pottery and other artefacts dating from $2^{\text {nd }}$ to $4^{\text {th }}$ centuries AD, suggested that an occupation site lay nearby (Thompson, 2008). Figure 2 shows the broad plan of Roman ditches and features (in magenta), which suggest their southern continuation, towards the Application Site. There was a possibility of activity during the Iron Age, in the form of two gullies in the southeast corner of the site, although there is chance that these may have been Anglo-Saxon in origin, on account of the similarity of the pottery fabric in the two periods.
4.3 In the wider area, large open-area excavations at Broughton Manor Farm, 2006 to 2008 (Fig. 3; c. 780-1000 m SE of the Application Site) have revealed settlement remains spanning the middle and late Iron Age and the Roman period (see Atkins \& Drummond Murray 2007 \& 2008); and occasionally some Bronze Age features. The archaeology of the middle Iron Age consisted predominantly of enclosures, huts and pits. A Late Iron Age settlement was

[^1]overlain by a Roman-period farmstead with evidence of continuity of occupation. Rectangular buildings replaced round houses and a late Iron Age cemetery continued in use throughout the $1^{\text {st }}$ century AD. The site is thought to have been part of large villa farming estate, which was abandoned in the $4^{\text {th }}$ century. The land was cultivated throughout the medieval period.
4.4 Between 2007 and 2009, a further series of excavations took place in advance of housebuilding at Brooklands, to the east of the Application Site (Fig. 3). As at Broughton Manor Farm, settlement evidence was found to range from the middle Iron Age to the late Roman period. Middle Iron Age features comprised at least fifteen penannular enclosures, with many pits and water holes. The late Iron Age to early Romano-British features included a ditched enclosure, a trackway and various animal pens. Overall, it was considered to be a part of the villa farming estate found at Broughton Manor Farm.

## Settlement Origins

4.5 The origin of Broughton is undocumented. It may, however, be reasonably inferred that the nucleated settlement originated around the mid-10 th century (late Anglo-Saxon period), when a large-scale physical re- structuring of the landscape is believed to have taken place across the central Midlands (e.g. Lewis, 2006, 191, Edgeworth 2007, 93). Essentially, numerous dispersed communities are thought to have been brought together to form a vill, centralized around a church and manor house and surrounded by a planned open-field system, the underlying purposes of which would be control, improved social cohesion, and increased productivity.
4.6 The earliest record of Broughton (Brotone) is found in the Domesday Survey of $1086^{4}$. There were two lordships (manorial estates). King William's tenant-in-chief was Walter Giffard and the lord of the manor was Hugh de Bolebec. Prior to the Conquest the estate was held by a thegn (Anglo-Saxon nobleman) called Oswy, for the overlord, Alric son of Goding. At the time of the Survey there were 15 households ( 8 villagers, 5 smallholders, 2 slaves). Based on the above landscape reorganisation hypothesis (ante, 4.5), it is presumed that most tenements were in proximity to the village core. There was arable land sufficient for five plough teams, including one team on the manorial demesne. Other assets comprised meadowland and a mill. The tenant-in-chief of the other estate was Countess Judith, with Morcar of Clifton, the pre-Conquest lord, as the incumbent in 1086. There were just two households (a villager and a small holder) with a single ploughland and a meadow. The overall population of Broughton parish was possibly five times the number of recorded households (c.f. Powell-Smith 2021). The spatial layout of the manorial estates is not known.
4.7 The foundation of the parish church of St Lawrence is unknown. Its earliest visible components are its nave and chancel, which are understood to have been 're-modelled' in the $14^{\text {th }}$ century (Page, 1927), indicative of a much earlier foundation.
4.8 The descent of each manor has been traced, as far as possible, by Victoria History of the Counties (Page, 1927, 303-308); from which the following information is summarised. By the $12^{\text {th }}$ century, manor ownership in fee was held by the de Broughton family, who styled their name from the place. They held the lordship until the early $14^{\text {th }}$ century, by which time it was known as Broughton Manor. In 1334, the manor was alienated to the Aylesbury family who remained in possession until 1424. However, Robert de Broughton is understood have held on to some of the land, so for almost 150 years there were apparently two estates that went by the name of Broughton Manor. Robert had also acquired the land that had previously been Countess Judith's manor (ante, 4.6), which he joined to his retained land. At some point

[^2]in the early $15^{\text {th }}$ century the main Broughton Manor was acquired (together with the lordship of Milton Keynes) by the Stafford family. In 1573, Thomas Dunscombe bought the manor and is thought to have united the two manors. The manor was held by the Dunscombe's until 1747, when Anne Dunscombe married John Robinson of Cransley (Northants). The following year, Robinson sold the manor and manor house to Barnaby Backwell. In the latter half of the $19^{\text {th }}$ century the manor was held by Backwell's descendant, William Backwell Praed, Sheriff of Buckinghamshire and Justice of the Peace for Buckinghamshire and Cornwall, who later adopted the surname and arms of Tyringham. In 1909, Praed's son, Roger William Giffard Tyringham, sold the manor to Lieut. Col. A. W. H. Good.

## Early Medieval to Medieval Archaeology in the vicinity of the Site

4.9 The aforementioned open-area excavation at Dean Forest Way in 2007 (ante, 4.2) revealed an array of medieval enclosures and features, which would appear to continue southeastwards, towards the Application Site. Figure 2 shows the broad plan of medieval features (in green) in relation to the proposed development area. In addition, there was slight evidence of activity during the early medieval period (Anglo-Saxon), identified by a meagre pottery assemblage from two isolated pits. Two gullies in the south-eastern corner of the site may also have been created during the period, although the pottery they contained was indistinguishable from that produced in the Iron Age.
4.10 The main medieval feature was a large rectilinear ditched enclosure, or close (the Roman enclosures were apparently disused by this time), the boundary of which had been reaffirmed at least twice of over a long period of time. The ditches of the earliest phase ( $11^{\text {th }}-$ $12^{\text {th }}$ century) were generally between 1.26 m and 1.9 m wide and up to 0.48 m deep. Those of the later two phases were, respectively, $0.75-2.96 \mathrm{~m}$ wide and $0.58-0.70 \mathrm{~m}$ deep and $0.90-$ 2.35 m wide, and between 0.10 m deep. The remains of a large stone-built circular oven (c. 2.30 m across by 0.23 m deep, or malting kiln, was found inside the intermediate enclosure.
4.11 On account of the $11^{\text {th }}-12^{\text {th }}$ century enclosure's proximity to the church, it was tentatively suggested that it may have been associated with one of the two early manors (ante, 4. 6, 4.8) (Thompson, 2008, 63).

## 5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

5.1 The broad objectives of the investigation were to attempt to:

1) establish the date, nature and extent of past activity or occupation at the development site;
2) establish the relationship of any archaeological remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes, and;
3) gain an understanding of former land-use in this part of the village.
5.2 A main objective was to ascertain whether there was a continuation of the (possible) Iron Age, Roman- British and Medieval archaeology found at Dean Forest Way, c. 65 m to the northwest.

## 6. INVESTIGATION RESULTS

## Field Procedure

6.1 The excavation of the foundation trenches was monitored by an archaeologist on $18^{\text {th }}$ March 2021. The archaeological work was conducted in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation and observed the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2014).
6.2 The trenches were 0-6 m wide and dug by $360^{\circ}$ tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. All buried deposits, features and foundation trenches were surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and height datum using RTK differential GNSS.

## Observations

6.3 Foundations for the new carriage house were dug in a former area of hard-standing with shingle gravel (c. $50 \mathrm{sq} . \mathrm{m}$ ), in the southwest corner of the Application Site (photo 1). The archaeologist was informed that a modern outbuilding had been demolished from the area some years earlier.
6.4 The site was fairly level, the existing ground height between 62.82 m and 65.85 m OD. The foundation trenches were excavated to a depth of generally between 0.53 m and 0.57 m OD. Figure 4 shows the location of the foundation trenches with representative levels ( m OD) and the direction of photographs contained in this report.
6.5 The shingle and hard-core (brick rubble) was generally up to c. 0.3 m thick. Below it, in the southern part of the new garage footprint, was a homogeneous deposit of very dark brown to black (10YR $2 / 2$ to 10YR 2/1) loose sandy and ashy soil (002), up to c. 0.2 m thick (Fig. 4; photo 6). This appeared to be garden soil with hearth or bonfire ash. In the western trench the layer much disturbed by tree roots. It thinned out mid-way along the trench exposing fairly firm subsoil (003), the latter comprised of dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4 to 10YR 3/4) (photo 4). In the eastern trench it overlay a dark brown (10YR 2/2) gravelly, sandy subsoil (006).
6.6 In the western trench, the subsoil (003) was scarred by a narrow modern building foundation (004), denoted by a band of clay and mortar (photo 5), which was likely to have been remains of the aforementioned demolished outbuilding. Notably, a parallel concrete wall of the demolished building was encountered at the north end of the trench (Fig. 4).
6.7 Along the northern foundation trench, the removal of made-up ground layer (002) exposed the upper horizon of the subsoil layers (003) and (006) to a greater or lesser degree (Fig. 4, photo 2). At the base of the trench, (c. 62.33 m OD ) the surface of a possible pit feature (005) was skimmed over in the compact sandy subsoil. This was denoted by a slight change of colour to dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) (photo 3). Two sherds of blue and white transfer printed pottery indicated a late $19^{\text {th }}$ century/ $20^{\text {th }}$ century date for the feature, which was not further investigated beyond the required construction level.

## 7. INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

7.1 Overall, the foundation trenches for the new carriage house were not deep enough to expose any significant archaeology. The Application Site and development area thus preserves its potential for buried archaeology.

## 8. ARCHIVE \& REPORT

8.1 The archive is intended as a public-accessible record: the report is to be housed in the Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record; the site record and artefacts to be held in appropriate repository. A photographic record was made and the site was surveyed to Ordnance Survey National Grid co-ordinates and height datum; all data is contained in this report.
8.2 A digital copy of the report is to be made available for academic and public readership via the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations website (OASIS: www.oasis.ac.uk). The OASIS identification number for this project is souterra1-420534.

## 9. COPYRIGHT

9.1 Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd retains 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 commissioning organisation in all matters directly relating to the project as described in the approved Written Scheme of Investigation (ante 2.3).
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9.3 A licence is to be granted to the Milton Keynes Historic Environment Record for the use of all reports arising from projects for planning purposes. Bona fide research requests will be granted a licence upon written request to Souterrain.

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Figure 1. Location of the Application Site
(based on Ordnance Survey Open Data mapping, © Crown Copyright 2021 All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)


Figure 2. The proposed development area shown in relation to the plan of the excavated site in 2007 (after Thompson, 2008)
(Contains Ordnance Survey data, © Crown copyright and database right 2021. All rights reserved.Licence number AL


Figure 3. Excavated Iron Age to Romano-British sites at Broughton
(based on Ordnance Survey Open Data mapping, © Crown Copyright 2021 All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)


Figure 4. Plan of excavated foundation trenches, showing the nature of exposed deposits, levels (OD m) and direction of photos 1 to 6


Photo 1. Pre-excavation overview of the development area. Facing $S$


Photo 3. Overview of northern foundation trench with possible C19 feature. Facing ESE


Photo 4. Overview of western foundation trench. Facing $\mathbf{N}$


Photo 6. Overview of southern foundation trench. Facing W


Photo 5. Late Post-medieval / Modern foundation in westernmost foundation trench. Facing SW

## APPENDIX 1: List of Contexts

KEY: Relationships: a. above; abt. abuts; adj. adjoins; b. below; c. cuts; cub. cut by; co. contains; wi within
Dimensions: le. length; wid. width; de. depth; th. thickness

| Context No. | type | Description and Interpretation | relationships | dimensions | drawing | Finds | Suggested period | Date of record |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 001 | LAYER | Shingle above brick rubble (hard-core) in dark brown soil matrix. Existing surface ( 62.82 and 65.85 m OD) above rubble from an outbuilding demolished in the modern period. <br> Modern made-up ground | a. (002) | $\begin{aligned} & \text { Th. < c. } 0.3- \\ & 0.5 \mathrm{~m} \end{aligned}$ | - | - | C20 | 18.03.2021 |
| 002 | LAYER | Very dark brown to black (10YR 2/2 to 10YR 2/1) loose sandy, ashy soil (002) with abundant roots. Located in the $S$ part of the new garage footprint. Thins out mid-way along the W trench, exposing subsoil (003). <br> Probably a former garden soil, possible with hearth waste or bonfire waste | $\begin{aligned} & \text { b. (001) } \\ & \text { a. (003) } \end{aligned}$ | Th. <c. 0.3 m | Plan | - | C20 | 18.03.2021 |
| 003 | LAYER | Compacted sand, dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4 to 10YR 3/4) Exposed in N half of W trench and the W two thirds of the N trench. <br> Geological stratum | b. (002) | - | Plan | - | Geological | 18.03.2021 |
| 004 | STRUCTURE | Narrow band of clay and mortar, aligned ENE/WSW at the base of the trench. Notably, a parallel concrete wall of the modern building was present at the northern end of the trench. <br> Probably the foundation of the brick wall of a demolished outbuilding. | b. (002) <br> a. / wi. (003) | $\begin{aligned} & \text { wid. <c. } 0.1 \mathrm{~m} \\ & \text { Le. }>0.6 \mathrm{~m} \end{aligned}$ | Plan | - | C19/ C20 | 18.03.2021 |
| 005 | DEPOSIT/ <br> ?FILL | Dark greyish brown (10YR 3/2) deposit in the base of the northern trench at c. 62.33 m OD. Possibly a pit or rubbish deposit. Two sherds of late $19^{\text {th }} / 20^{\text {th }}$ century, blue and white transfer-printed pottery in the surface, indicated the date of the feature, which was not further investigated beyond the required construction level. | (002) | wid. < c. 0.1 m | Plan | Pottery sherds | $\begin{gathered} \hline \text { Late C19/ } \\ \text { C20 } \end{gathered}$ | 18.03.2021 |


| Context No. | type | Description and Interpretation | relationships | dimensions | drawing | Finds | Suggested period | Date of record |
| :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: | :---: |
| 006 | LAYER | Layer of dark brown (10YR 2/2) gravelly sandy soil (006). Exposed towards in the northeast corner of the garage footprint. More friable than subsoil layer (003). <br> Differential geological stratum | b. (002) | - | Plan | - | Geological | 18.03.2021 |


[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ Extract from Planning Consultation/Notification from Milton Keynes Council regarding 20/03387/FUL, $21^{\text {st }}$ January 2021
    ${ }^{2}$ Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd. 2021. Scheme Of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief: Old Rectory Cottage, Broughton, Milton Keynes, MK10 7AD (NGR 489366, 240145), (Application Ref. 20/03387/FUL), SOU21-727, V. 1. $5^{\text {th }}$ March 2021

[^1]:    ${ }^{3}$ British Geological Survey http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html [accessed 30.10.2019]

[^2]:    ${ }^{4}$ Information derived from Open Domesday https://opendomesday.org/ [accessed 03.03.2021]

