



Professional Heritage Consultancy



DESK BASED ASSESSMENT & HERITAGE IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Clifton House, Church Street, Clifton, Shefford, SG17 5ET

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1. Introduction

Background

- 1.1. Heritage Planning Services Limited has been commissioned by Michael Hardiman & Associates LLP on behalf of the Developer to prepare an Archaeological Desk Based Assessment (DBA) & Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) for Clifton House, Church Street, Clifton, Shefford, SG17 5ET (hereafter referred to as the Project Site).
- 1.2. Planning permission is being sought for the renovation of Clifton House and associated buildings to form nine new dwellings, with provision of communal gardens and amenity space to the south and east of Clifton House, onsite parking for 20 vehicles and secure cycle store.
- 1.3. This assessment has been undertaken following a request from the Agent, due to the historic environment implications of renovating Clifton House and redeveloping the grounds.
- 1.4. The objective of this assessment was to identify the nature, extent and significance of the Project Site and to assess the impact that any development might have upon the heritage asset.
- 1.5. This document was compiled by Sam Driscoll BA (Hons), MA, MCIfA, Director, Heritage Planning Services Limited and completed under HPS Project Reference HPS-292/19.

The Project Site and Study Area



Figure 1 General Site Location. Project site outlined in red.

- 1.6. The Project Site is located in the village of Clifton, Bedfordshire 15km southeast of Bedford. The centre of the neighbouring town of Shefford is located 2km to the east, however development in the latter half of the 20th century has seen the boundaries of both settlements expand into the hinterland, leaving a single undeveloped field between the westward urbanisation of Shefford and the eastern development of Clifton. Clifton House is access off Church Street to the southeast via a vehicular entrance to the southwest and pedestrian access to the northeast.
- 1.7. The Project site comprises a large dwelling with extensions to the northeast, the Main Block originating in the early 18th century, with double pile plan, red brick elevations and tiled roofs. The building was altered and expanded in the later 19th century. In October 1966 Clifton House was listed by the former Ministry of Public Buildings and Works as Grade II, of special interest.

1.7..1. List Entry Number: 1113830 CLIFTON HOUSE. *"House. Late C18 and early C19, with late C19 additions and alterations. Red brick with clay tile roofs. Original building double-pile plan with 2-span roof, of 2 storeys. Extended to N by 3-storeyed block of same height, with further 2-storeyed additions N of this. Main Block front elevation: 5 - window range, all sashes without glazing bars under slightly cambered gauged brick heads. Central Doric doorcase has part-glazed double doors, moulded surround, fluted pilasters, frieze with triglyphs, and segmental pediment. Dentilled brick cornice surmounted by plain parapet. Rear elevation: 2 canted bay windows flank doorway similar to front. First*

*floor has 3 segmental-headed recesses with sash windows, outer ones tripartite. Rendered first floor band and cornice. Interior: some panelling to front-ground floor rooms, plasterwork ceiling and Adam style fireplace to rear ground floor room, ornamental ironwork staircase, early-mid C19.*¹

1.8. The late 19th century Coach House is connected to the main house by a range of extensions to the northeast. The Coach House is a single storey building of brick with hipped clay tile roof. In August 1985 the former Coach House was listed as Grade II due to the contribution of the building to the group value of the site:

1.8.1. List Entry Number: 1136636 OUTBUILDING APPROXIMATELY 25 METERS NORTH OF CLIFTON HOUSE. *"Coachhouse, belonging to Clifton House. Later C19. Yellow brick with hipped clay tile roof. One storey and attics rectangular block. N elevation: archway to LH with elliptical head, matched by elliptical-headed coach doorway to RH with double plank doors. Between these are C20 inserted garage doors, small single light, and round-headed doorway with plank door. Small single light to L of archway. Original arched openings have colourwashed rendered arches, impost bands and keystones. Attic had central gabled dormer with pierced wavy-edged bargeboards. Wrought iron weathervane. Included for group value.*²

1.9. Geologically the Project Site is defined by Woburn Sands Formation - Sandstone. Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 101 to 126 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. Overlaying Glaciofluvial Deposits, Mid Pleistocene - Sand And Gravel. Superficial Deposits formed up to 2 million years ago in the Quaternary Period.

1.10. The River Ivel and tributaries flow 1.3km to the east of the Project Site and the disused River Ivel Navigation System³ is located 850m to the north.

Planning History

1.11. In October 1979 an application was submitted for Listed Building Consent to demolish and rebuild a wall belonging to Clifton House (Mid Bedfordshire Planning Reference MB/79/0609B/LB). At the time of writing there was no further information available with regards to this application.

¹ Source - <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1113830>

² Source - <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1136636>

³ River Ivel Navigation System was first proposed in 1755 and opened c. 1758. The waterway carried primarily coal, which travelled down the east coast to the mouth of the Great Ouse at King's Lynn. Due to the opening of the Great Northern Railway (1850) and Midland Railway (1857), by 1870 trade on the canal ceased and the locks were soon sold to local mills to pay off company debts.

- 1.12. In May 1981 an application was submitted for Listed Building Consent to demolish a section of the boundary wall to Clifton House, in order to create a new access (Mid Bedfordshire Planning Reference MB/79/0609B/LB). At the time of writing, there was no further information available with regards to this application.
- 1.13. In 2006 an application for the construction of three new dwellings within the grounds of Clifton House to the northeast was granted consent under Mid Bedfordshire Council Planning Reference 06/00458/FULL. At the time a unilateral undertaking to improve / repair the external appearance of Clifton House and to bring it up to weather proof standard was agreed in pre-application discussions with the Local Authority. This work was to be completed prior to the occupation of the proposed new dwellings. See below.
- 1.14. In 2008 Mr D. Lant applied to make external repairs to Clifton House and Coach House (The Project Site) under Mid Bedfordshire District Council Planning Reference MB/08/00761/LB, in association with the above-mentioned planning consent. Permission was granted in June 2008. The proposals comprised the following:
- 1.14..1. Coach House
 - Minor repair work to masonry required;
 - Holes in the roof required immediate remedial action.
 - 1.14..2. Clifton House, historic rear elevation
 - Repair work required to the parapet and right stack on the extension;
 - Minor masonry work elsewhere.
 - Preservation of timber recommended;
 - Sills and damaged lintels on front elevation to be replaced.
 - 1.14..3. Two storey side elevation
 - Remedial repair work required on area of damp brickwork;
 - External timber roof eaves required treatment and decoration;
 - Rear timber framed bay window in need of reconstruction.
- 1.15. In June 2009 Mr J Gill applied to make alterations to the existing boundary wall and access, incorporating replacement piers and gates at Clifton House, Church Street, Clifton under Central Bedfordshire Planning Reference CB/09/01138/FULL. Permission for the work was granted in July 2009. The alterations to the boundary wall were required as part of the implementation of planning consent 06/00458/FULL, for three detached dwellings within the grounds of Clifton House. The changes involved the setting back of the access gates and provision of a splayed access with new entrance.

2. Planning Policy & Development Framework

Preamble

2.1. With regards to the relevant policy and development framework, the following are considered appropriate to the current proposal:

- *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2018;*
- *Central Bedfordshire Adopted Planning Policy, November 2009.*

2.2. Relevant planning policy transcribed from Central Bedfordshire Adopted Planning Policy, November 2009.

2.2..1. Policy CS15: Heritage.

The Council Will:

- *Protect, conserve and enhance the district's heritage including its Listed Buildings, Scheduled Ancient Monuments, Conservation Areas, Registered Parks and Gardens and archaeology and their setting;*
- *Conserve and where appropriate enhance the quality and integrity of the local built and natural environment, including historic structures or open green spaces considered to be of special local interest;*
- *Designate and keep under review Conservation Areas in order to protect or enhance their special architectural or historic interest. This will include the implementation of an on-going programme of Conservation Area Character Appraisals to include a review of their special interest and boundaries;*
- *Monitor and survey the condition of Listed Buildings and periodically review and update a Register of Buildings at Risk, providing appropriate grant assistance to encourage their essential sympathetic repair.*

1.1..1. Policy DM13: Heritage In Development.

The Council will ensure that:

- *proposals for development relating to Listed Buildings and registered Parks and Gardens will pay particular attention to the conservation of locally distinctive features and uses;*

- *planning applications for development within Conservation Areas will be assessed against the Conservation Area appraisals and inappropriate development will be refused.*

2.3. Relevant planning policy transcribed from the National Planning Policy Framework, 2018.

2.3..1. *Paragraph 189: "In determining applications, local planning authorities should require an applicant to describe the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting. The level of detail should be proportionate to the assets' importance and no more than is sufficient to understand the potential impact of the proposal on their significance. As a minimum the relevant historic environment record should have been consulted and the heritage assets assessed using appropriate expertise where necessary. Where a site on which development is proposed includes, or has the potential to include, heritage assets with archaeological interest, local planning authorities should require developers to submit an appropriate desk-based assessment and, where necessary, a field evaluation."*

2.3..2. *Paragraph 190: "Local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal."*

2.3..3. *Paragraph 192: "In determining applications, local planning authorities should take account of:*

- a) the desirability of sustaining and enhancing the significance of heritage assets and putting them to viable uses consistent with their conservation;*
- b) the positive contribution that conservation of heritage assets can make to sustainable communities including their economic vitality; and*
- c) the desirability of new development making a positive contribution to local character and distinctiveness."*

2.3..4. *Paragraph 196. "Where a development proposal will lead to less than substantial harm to the significance of a designated heritage asset, this harm should be weighed against*

the public benefits of the proposal including, where appropriate, securing its optimum viable use."

2.3..5.Paragraph 200: *"Local planning authorities should look for opportunities for new development within Conservation Areas and World Heritage Sites, and within the setting of heritage assets, to enhance or better reveal their significance. Proposals that preserve those elements of the setting that make a positive contribution to the asset (or which better reveal its significance) should be treated favourably."*

3. Aims & Methodology

Aims

3.1. This report will aim to:

- Identify the presence of designated and non-designated cultural heritage assets within the Project Site and Study Area;
- Identify the potential of the Project Site to include known or unknown heritage assets and to determine, where possible, their condition and likely level of survival;
- Provide an assessment of the known or predicted heritage assets considering their archaeological, historic, architectural and artistic interests;
- Provide a statement of significance with regards to the known heritage assets;
- Define the potential impact on both known and potential heritage assets within the Project Site and suggest a possible mitigation strategy.

Methodology

3.2. This document has been prepared in accordance with the CIfA Standard and Guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment (revised Dec 2014), which states that a DBA *'will determine, as far as is reasonably possible from existing records, the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area' and that in 'development context desk-based assessment will establish the impact of the proposed development on the significance of the historic environment (or will identify the need for further evaluation to do so), and will enable reasoned proposals and decisions to be made whether to mitigate, offset or accept without further intervention that impact'* (CIfA 2014: 4).

3.3. All work was carried out in line with the following standards and guidance-

- *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment. The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists Guidance Document, University of Reading, Reading;*
- *The Management of Archaeological Projects-2. English Heritage, 1991;*
- *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2018.*

4. Baseline Survey

Preamble

4.1. The baseline survey was informed by a visit to the Project Site and to Bedfordshire Archives and Records Service in order to consult historic maps and records pertaining to the history of Clifton House and grounds. The following repositories were also consulted:

- Central Bedfordshire Council Historic Environment Record;
- National Heritage List for England (NHLE);
- Geological Maps;
- Ordnance Survey maps of the site and its environs;
- Appropriate archaeological and historical journals and books;
- Unpublished research reports and archives, including those held by relevant museums and local societies.

Site Visit Clifton House

Preamble

4.2. A site visit was carried out on the 3rd January 2019 in grey overcast conditions. The exterior and interior of Clifton House was viewed and photographed, along with the grounds and exterior of the outbuildings where accessible. Access was not gained to the interior of the outbuildings, due to health and safety concerns and issues with accessibility.

Exterior Main Block

4.3. The earliest part of Clifton House is located to the southwest of the Project Site. The double pile plan dwelling is two storeys in height with garret. The principle (front) elevation



Photo 1 ENE facing view of Clifton House front elevation. Main Block in the foreground.

has a five window range of sash windows, with recessed sash boxes. The absence of glazing bars indicates that the windows likely date to the second half of the 19th century or later. A decorative dentilled brick cornice runs the length of the façade and is topped by a brick parapet. A Doric style doorcase is positioned centrally at ground floor level. A similar doorcase is known from Rutland Lodge, Petersham⁴ (dated 1740).

- 4.4. The rear elevation has a three window range, with two tripartite sash windows flanking a single central sash. All first floor windows are housed within decorative segmental arch brick recesses. The first and second floor is divided by a plain stringcourse. Two canted bay windows with tiled roofs flank the Doric style doorway, similar in design to the front porch. A plain cornice runs the length of the rear elevation and is topped with a plain brick parapet.



Photo 2 North facing view of rear elevation, Main Block. Two large cantilever windows flank a Doric style doorcase. Windows are thought to be 19th century additions.

Exterior Northeast Extensions

- 4.5. The main building has been extended to the northeast by a series of stepped bays of varying heights. The principle block comprises a three storey building equal in height to the Main Block, but stepped back a small distance from the principle elevation. The brick extension has a two window range of two over two sash windows with recessed sash box and plain cornice, similar in style to the rear elevation of the Main Block. The plain brick parapet is continued from the southwest range to preserve the visual impact of the roof line. The cornice is set higher than the earlier decorative example and the stepping back of the extension goes some way to compensating for the asymmetry caused by attaching a three storey extension to the two storey Main Block.



Photo 3 ESE facing view of extensions to the northeast of Main Block

⁴ Grade II* listed Rutland Lodge 145 Petersham Road, Peterhsam, London. List Entry Number: 1065338

4.6. To the rear the extension would appear to preserve brickwork belonging to an older part of the building. Evidence of a brick recess beneath a segmental arch at ground floor level may show the location of an older window opening, moved to the northeast. Following this the upper floors appear to have been reconfigured to include a pair of bay windows to the north and south of the ground floor opening. The ground floor window is not centrally located, demonstrating that the opening and upper bays are not contemporary.



Photo 4 Northwest facing view of rear extension.

4.7. From the northwest elevation (front / principle) a second three storey single bay extension can be seen to continue the range to the northeast. Again, the extension is set back. The ground and second floors both have a single window range of two over two sash windows, with recessed sash box. The first floor exhibits three narrow one over one sash windows which are asymmetric to the overall look of the façade. The most south-westerly of the openings is positioned close to a small bay window which looks out to the northeast across its field of vision (see Photo 3). It is therefore assumed that this extension is not contemporary with the adjacent block.

4.8. To the northeast of the main dwelling a collection of smaller extensions to the first and second floor are supported above a narrow jetty projecting above the northeast entrance and kitchen. A series of link buildings extend from here, joining the main dwelling to the Coach House via a series of outbuildings which complete the complex to the northwest.

4.9. The jettied first floor extension forms a first floor enclosed walkway which links the three storey 19th century extension to a two storey converted outbuilding to the northeast.

4.10. The rear northeast elevation was not accessible at the time of the site visit, due to extensive overgrowth in the former garden. It was possible however to pick out initials in a monogrammatic style carved in stone and set into the southwest terminal of the two storey hipped roof extension to the northeast of the plot.

4.11. Patches of cobbled yard were visible beneath a covering of moss in the region of the northeast entrance.



Photo 5 Southwest facing view of jettied first floor extension and southwest entrance. The cobble surface is preserved adjacent to the modern path.

Coach House & Stores

4.12. The 19th century Coach House, adjoining stores and covered link are orientated northwest – southeast at the northeast end of the plot. The Coach House is described as comprising a single storey structure with habitable attic space and hipped roof. A semi-circular arch gives access to the Coach House. Two decorative half circular windows were noted to the northwest of the entrance. The remainder of the building was not visible at the time of the site visit.



Photo 7 East facing view of Store attached to Coach House via link to the northwest.



Photo 6 Bread? oven in converted store.

4.13. The ground floor store to the southeast is of brick, with lathe and plaster attic space finished in rough cast. Whilst the interior was not accessible, a large 18th / 19th century oven was located to the rear. This suggests that other contemporary features may be preserved. Attached to the northwest is a single storey fuel store in brick with one timber slatted elevation.

4.14. The property boundary to the northwest comprises a high brick wall featuring a Gothic style lancet wooden door at the northeast end, giving pedestrian access to the Coach House from Church Street. The boundary to the southwest was partially visible and featured a modern timber panel fence. The boundaries to the northeast and southeast could not be viewed due to restricted access.



Photo 8 South facing view of brick property boundary from Church Street.

Interior Cellar and Ground Floor

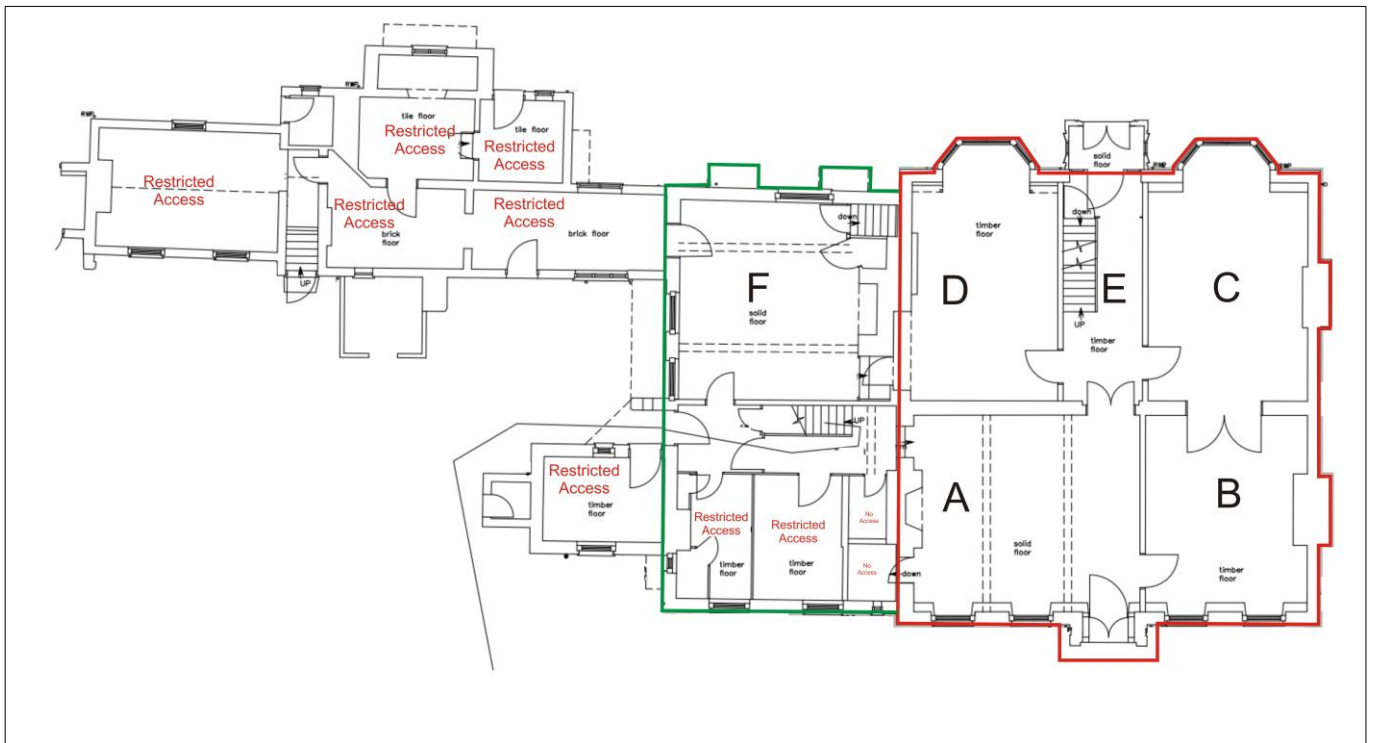


Figure 2 Existing Ground Floor Plan of the Project Site. Main Block outlined in red, main extension outlined in green. Lettering is to aid interpretation of the following description.

4.15. The main access to the oldest part of Clifton House is gained via the Doric doorcase in the principle elevation. The Main Block is set out in classic 18th century plan with four rooms on the ground and first floor divided evenly by the central staircase and hall. The front door leads directly into the Reception Room (Room A) with no obvious signs of a hallway having been removed. The building would appear to have an early Georgian layout with reception rooms on the Ground Floor and entrance leading straight into the living space.

4.16. The Reception Room (Room A) is painted in green with decorative mouldings surrounding plain panels on the walls. A large stone carved fireplace dominates the room against the northeast wall and a solid floor (most likely paved) was evident. The alcove to the right has been knocked through

providing access to a later servant hall and stair, accessed via the northeast entrance. The plaster cornice is badly damaged but preserves its dentilled decoration mirroring that of the external cornice. This is likely to be original.



Photo 9 Northeast facing view of Room A, with stone fire surround and dentilled cornice.

4.17. The doorway in the region of the Reception Room fireplace leads to utility rooms and a boiler room, to the left (as viewed when standing with your back to the Reception Room). The passage and utility rooms housed in the 19th century extensions were not accessible at ground floor level at the time of the site visit.

4.18. Double doors lead through an elegant decorative arch to the hall beyond and a door to the southwest leads through to the Drawing Room at the front of the house (Room B), which is linked to the room directly to the rear by a pair of six panel doors (Room C). When opened the effect is to create a large space for entertaining. The arrangement of ground floor reception rooms is generally regarded as an early feature. The room has ceiling to floor painted wood panelling.

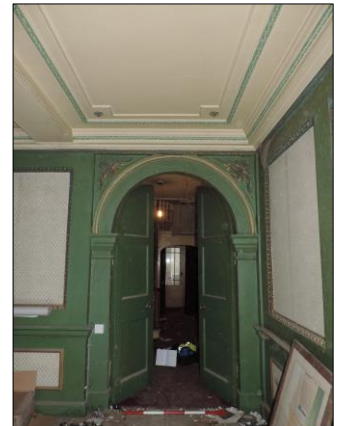


Photo 10 Double doors leading to main stair from Room A (Scale 1m).

4.19. The rear Drawing Room (Room C) decoration is detailed in lighter moulding more in line with the second half of the 18th century. A Neo-classical fire surround is positioned centrally against the southwest wall. A large cantilever bay window (see Photo 2) located to the southeast (rear of the room) is believed to be a later feature. The bay window ceiling is decorated with



Photo 11 Ornate plasterwork above cantilever bay window in the rear Drawing Room (Room C).

ornate plasterwork in the Adam's⁵ style popular in the late 18th century. Husks are depicted hung from ribbons and strung as plaster festoons around a central urn. Whilst most homes still had relatively plain ceilings in the later 18th century, the grander houses exhibited the latest styles, especially in the Drawing Room. Whilst the decoration would suggest a late 18th century date, the wooden bay and glazing appear to be later in date. Water ingress into Room C from the area of the bay window has caused significant damage to the plasterwork in this area of the Drawing Room.



Photo 12 View of Room C ceiling looking towards the bay window and water damage to plasterwork.

4.20. The Morning Room / Family Room (Room D) is adjacent to Room C, overlooking the grounds to the rear of the house. Room D has a matching cantilever bay window to the southeast. It is noted that the plasterwork in this room is plainer with wide panels cornered with botanical decoration. The ceiling within the bay alcove does not display a matching design to the Room C. This is common, in that the Family Room was not intended for the purpose of impressing guests. The ceiling in this room is noted to be (on appearance) in a relatively good state of repair, however water ingress in the region of the bay window was noted and damp has caused significant damage to the plasterwork in the bay window alcove.



Photo 13 Water damage to plasterwork above cantilever bay window in the rear Family Room (Room D).

4.21. A dark wood fire surround is positioned centrally against the northeast wall and a doorway set within a partially blocked arch leads through to the Kitchen (Room F).



Photo 14 Northwest facing view of ceiling Room D.

4.22. The hallway (Room E) dividing Rooms C and D houses the stair leading to the bedrooms on the first floor in the Main Block (Room E). The ceiling decoration is preserved in good condition, with dentilled cornice framing a geometric pattern with corner roses. The staircase comprises cast iron balusters, polished hardwood handrail, finished at the base with a curtail step. Similar examples are known from the 1750's to the Regency Period.

⁵ Architect Robert Adam (1728 – 92) was one of the most influential decorators and interior designers of the late 18th century.



Photo 16 staircase comprising cast iron balusters, polished hardwood handrail, finished at the base with a curtail step



Photo 15 Detail of dentil cornice and geometric plasterwork in stairwell.

4.23. Entrance is gained to the Kitchen (Room F) on the ground floor via the northeast door leading from the courtyard. Access is also gained via the Morning Room / Family Room (Room D) through a much altered doorway in the northeast wall. In this area a single door opens in a blocked-up archway into a small recess which appears to have been created by the insertion of a large alcove for a range which stands against the adjoining wall.



Photo 17 Southwest facing view in Kitchen with range. Stair to the basement to the left of shot.

4.24. A brick stair leads down to the cellar to the left of the range and a second stair leads down to the opposite side of the basement from beneath the main stair. The bottom two treads of the latter are of wood, whilst the remainder is in the same style as the kitchen flight. The cellar is located beneath the Morning Room. Projecting from the cellar, beneath the Reception Room are two smaller stores with vaulted roofs.



Photo 18 Southeast facing view of cellar with stairs to Kitchen to the left of shot.

First Floor

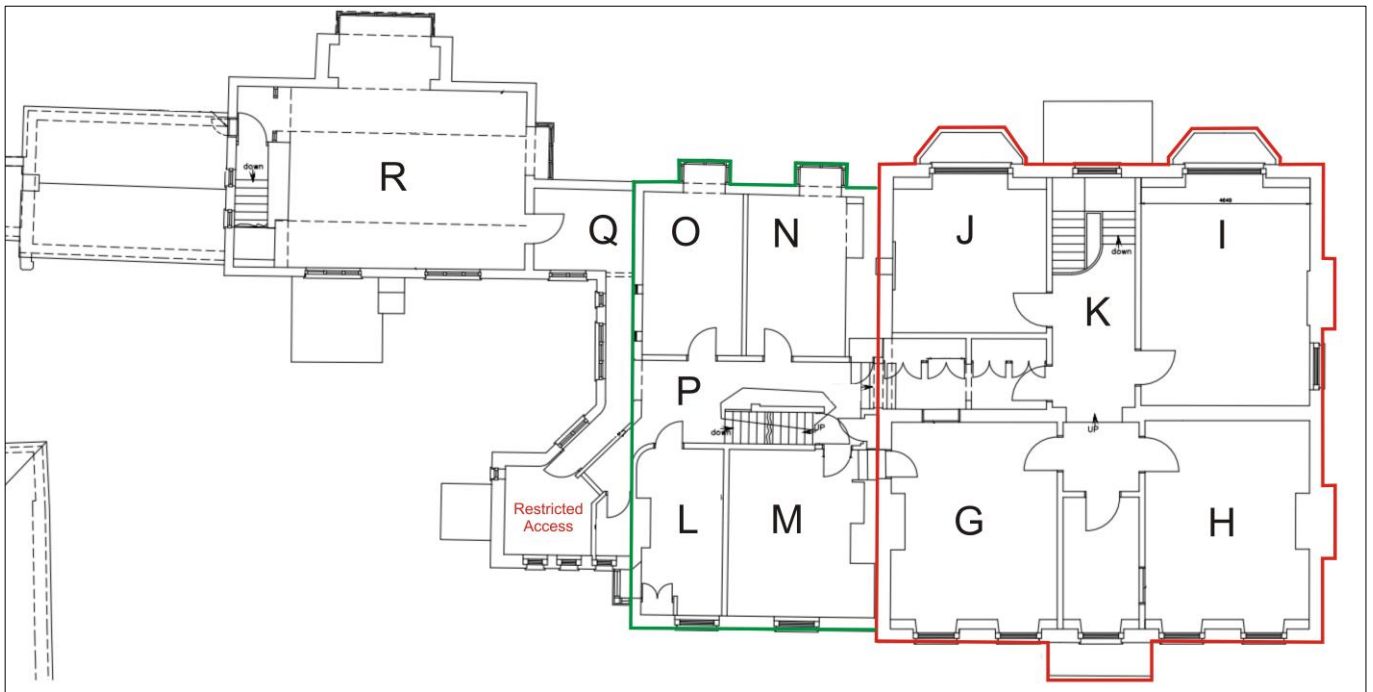


Figure 3 Existing First Floor Plan of the Project Site. Main Block outlined in red, main extension outlined in green. Lettering is to aid interpretation of the following description.

4.25. Four bedrooms are situated above the Main Block and principle access is gained via the central stair. Two bedrooms are situated at the front and two at the rear. The hallway to the rear of the property has been boxed to create a communal bathroom.

4.26. Room G has a pair of recessed sash windows overlooked the ground to the front of the house. This part of the Main Block has suffered badly from damp causing major damage to the ceiling and walls. Wainscoting around the base of the wall and a plain fire surround represent the most significant features in the room. Three doors give access to the former bedroom. The principle hallway door would have been the only point of access when the Main Block was set out in the first half of the 18th century. At this time serving staff did not tend to be segregated from the main house as was the custom in the late Georgian / Regency period and continuing throughout the Victorian era. As the house was extended to the northeast, access was added from the hall (K). An interconnecting door has also been added adjacent to the fireplace between Room M and Room G. The hallway and principle entrance doors are six panel examples and



Photo 20 Northwest facing view of double window. Scale 1m.



Photo 19 East facing view of Room G.

would appear to be earlier in date than the four panel door linking Rooms G and M.

4.27. Room H has a pair of recessed sash windows overlooked the grounds to the front of the house. Again, wainscoting around the base of the wall and a plain fire surround represent the most significant features in the room. A Modern fireplace has been inserted into the period fire surround and a sink with mirror to the right, demonstrating the use of the property as a hostel / rented accommodation following the Second World War. To the left, the period wainscoting has been concealed by a fitted cupboard. The principle access is located opposite the doorway to Room G, which would look to be the original location. A second door in the northeast wall has been boarded shut. Behind this is the location of the 20th century bathroom.



Photo 21 southwest facing view of Room H (Scale 1m)

4.28. Room I has a single tripartite sash window overlooking the garden to the rear and a sash window overlooking the grounds to the southwest. A decorative cornice survives, although modern pelmets fitted to both windows may have caused damage to the plasterwork. A plain fire surround has been fitted with a Modern fire and a sink unit has been installed in the corner of the room.



Photo 22 southwest facing view Room I

4.29. Room J has a single tripartite sash window overlooking the garden to the rear. The original door location has been moved to accommodate the shortening of the room to create a passage linking the Main Block to the 19th century extensions to the northeast. Wooden panelling survives around the window recess and an 18th century fire surround is preserved, although the fire grate has been removed.



Photo 23 Northwest facing view of 18th century fire surround Room J

4.30. The 19th century extension comprises four additional bedrooms and servant's stair allowing access to the ground floor servants entrance and the garret above both the extension and Main Block.

4.31. Rooms L and M overlook the grounds to the front of the house. Room L was not photographed in full due to restricted access. However, it was noted that the east corner of Room L has been rounded,

presumably to allow first floor access to the extended three storey bay to the northeast, confirming that the jettied additions at this end of the property correspond to a third phase of development.

4.32. Room M does not appear to contain any significant period features. A small stair comprising four treads leads to Room G, via an interconnecting door in the corner of the room.

4.33. Rooms N and O overlook the garden to the rear of the house. Room N contains a decorative fire surround and grate. The wood panelled canted bay contains a casement window. Room O contains the matching wood panelled canted bay with casement window. A decorative door gives access to the room. An interesting feature of Room O are two Gothic style windows against the northeast wall, which would have originally been an outer wall.



Photo 24 Northeast facing view of Gothic windows in original external wall.

4.34. A narrow first floor passage connects the main house to a converted barn to the northeast, via the jettied extension that encloses the outer wall of Rooms L and O. This leads to Rooms Q and R which appear to have been most recently in use a nursery / child's bedroom.

4.35. Room R is dominated by a large bay window overlooking the garden to the east. The lower portion of the wall is covered with slated wood panelling and the fire surround is similar to the example in the ground floor Morning Room (Room D). As a departure from the rest of the house, the wooden fixtures and fittings in this room are stained dark brown. The décor in this room would appear to date to the later 19th to early 20th century.



Photo 25 Northeast facing view of Room R with dark wood panelling and fire surround.

Second Floor and Garret

4.36. A stair leads up to the second floor / garret from the 19th century extension to the northeast of the Main Block. The stair gives access to the upper floor of the extension, which would have provided living space for serving staff in the 19th / early 20th century. Rooms to the front of the house have an exposed roof truss with modern joists and RSJ. A partition wall has been partially removed to allow for the roof repairs.



Photo 26 northwest facing view of second storey room. Looking out over the front courtyard.

4.37. A stair to the southwest gives access to the garret above the Main Block.

The Grounds

4.38. Clifton House is accessed via modern double wooden gates to the front (northwest) of the property which gives access to an unmetalled drive to the front of the house. The main entrance, as depicted on maps from the 1880's to 1950's, appears to have been located c. 50m further to the southwest, indicating that the gates have been moved, most likely in line with the development of modern housing to the southwest. The boundary wall is of brick, with a Gothic style door to the northeast. It is therefore likely that the boundary wall is 19th century in date, although the upper courses appear to have been repointed and the height may have been lowered towards the southwest.



Photo 27 Date reputed to mark the death of Norman Earl 1919.

4.39. The year 1919 is inscribed next to an X around 1.8m to the northeast of the left-hand pier. The inscription is reputed to mark the death of Norman Earl who died on the road outside Clifton House aged 8, October-December 1919⁶. The year 1935 is inscribed on the adjacent brick. The corresponding event was not discovered as a result of the research for this report.

4.40. Clifton House is set back around 15m from Church Street, masked from view by an unmanaged copse of mature trees, shrubs and self-setters. Mature woodland continues to around 20m to the southwest of the property.

4.41. To the rear of the property the grounds are overgrown and were largely inaccessible at the time of the site visit. It is likely the remnants of historic outbuildings and evidence of landscaping will be preserved within the grounds.



Photo 28 North facing view of Clifton House from grounds to the rear.

⁶ Civil Registration, 1837-2005 [database online]. TheGenealogist.co.uk 2019 / reeBMD.

5. Archaeological and Historical Baseline Survey

Introduction

- 5.1. The information presented here is derived from sources including the Central Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER), the Historic England National Monuments Record database (PastScape), the National Heritage List for England (NHLE), the Historic England Archive, and surviving cartographic resources, along with other published or documentary sources.
- 5.2. A radius of 1000m from the Project Site was established as the Study Area, for the purpose of the Baseline Survey. Trawls of the National Heritage List for England, Magic.gov.uk, PastScape, the Historic England Archive and the Central Bedfordshire HER have revealed the following:

Conservation Area

- 5.3. The Project Site is included in the Clifton Conservation Area, as designated on the 6th March 1971 (revisions adopted on the 17th March 2004). Within the document Clifton House and grounds are highlighted as one of the "*sites where enhancement is to be encouraged*" (Mid Bedfordshire Council, 2004). The following passage describes the contribution of Clifton House to the conservation area at the time of the reappraisal in 2004:

"The leafy character of Church Street is reinforced by the well treed but poorly managed landscaped grounds to Clifton House, the trees being protected by a woodland tree preservation order. From Church Street there are glimpsed views though to the Coach House, the condition of which gives the perception that the main building may not be particularly well cared for. Clifton House is an important building within Church Street, the setting of which was designed to have a parkland quality and it is an important attribute to this eighteenth century mansion house. Any development affecting the historic setting of Clifton House would need to demonstrate that it preserved or enhanced the setting. Clifton House Close is situated on part of the former landscaped grounds to Clifton House, however the scale and number of dwellings should not be repeated on the remainder of the garden to Clifton House" (Mid Bedfordshire Council 2004, 3).

Listed Buildings



Figure 4 Listed Buildings occurring within a 1km radius of the Project Site

- 5.4. There are 15 listed buildings within the Study Area, of which two are within view of the Project Site. The Parish Church of All Saints is located 90m to the northwest (DesigUID: DBD2786). The Grade II* listed church is dated to the early 14th / 15th century, reworked and enlarged in 1862 by Edward Haycock of Shrewsbury. As the parish Rectory from the early 18th century to c. 1890, the Project Site formed part of the land and property belonging to the church and as such the two buildings are historically linked.
- 5.5. The second building is 25 Church Street / Holly Cottage (DesigUID: DBD4057) located 130m to the southwest of the Project Site. The Grade II listed property is c. 18th century in date and of timber frame construction with red brick infill. The dwelling would have been contemporary with the former Rectory.
- 5.6. Whilst both buildings are within line of sight of the Clifton House and grounds, at the time of the site visit the views to and from Clifton House were significantly impaired by the mature trees and overgrowth to the front of the property.

HER Events

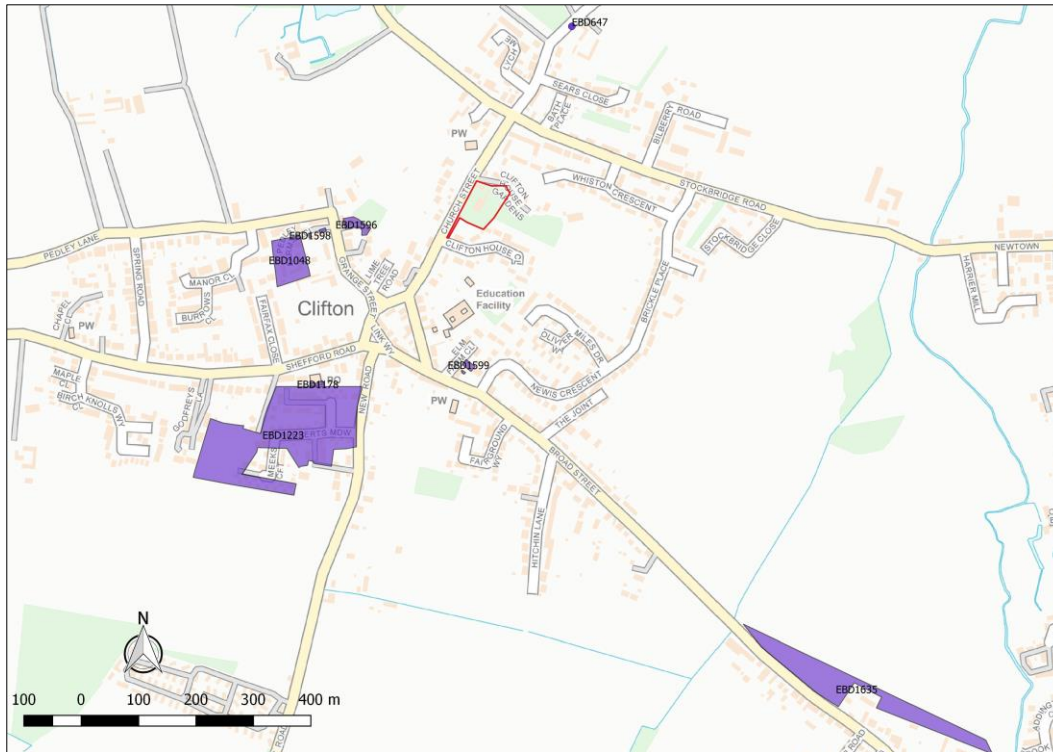


Figure 5 Events occurring within a 1km radius of the Project Site

- 5.7. No archaeological events have occurred on or directly adjacent to the Project Site. The closest activity is an evaluation c. 245m WSW of the Project Site at 28 Grange Street, Clifton (CBCHER 1596), which picked up dated features of the Post-Medieval to modern period and undated but probable Medieval activity.
- 5.8. Other Medieval activity was recorded adjacent to Pedley Farm, c. 310m WSW of the Project Site, during a watching brief (CBCHER 1598).

HER Monuments

Prehistory

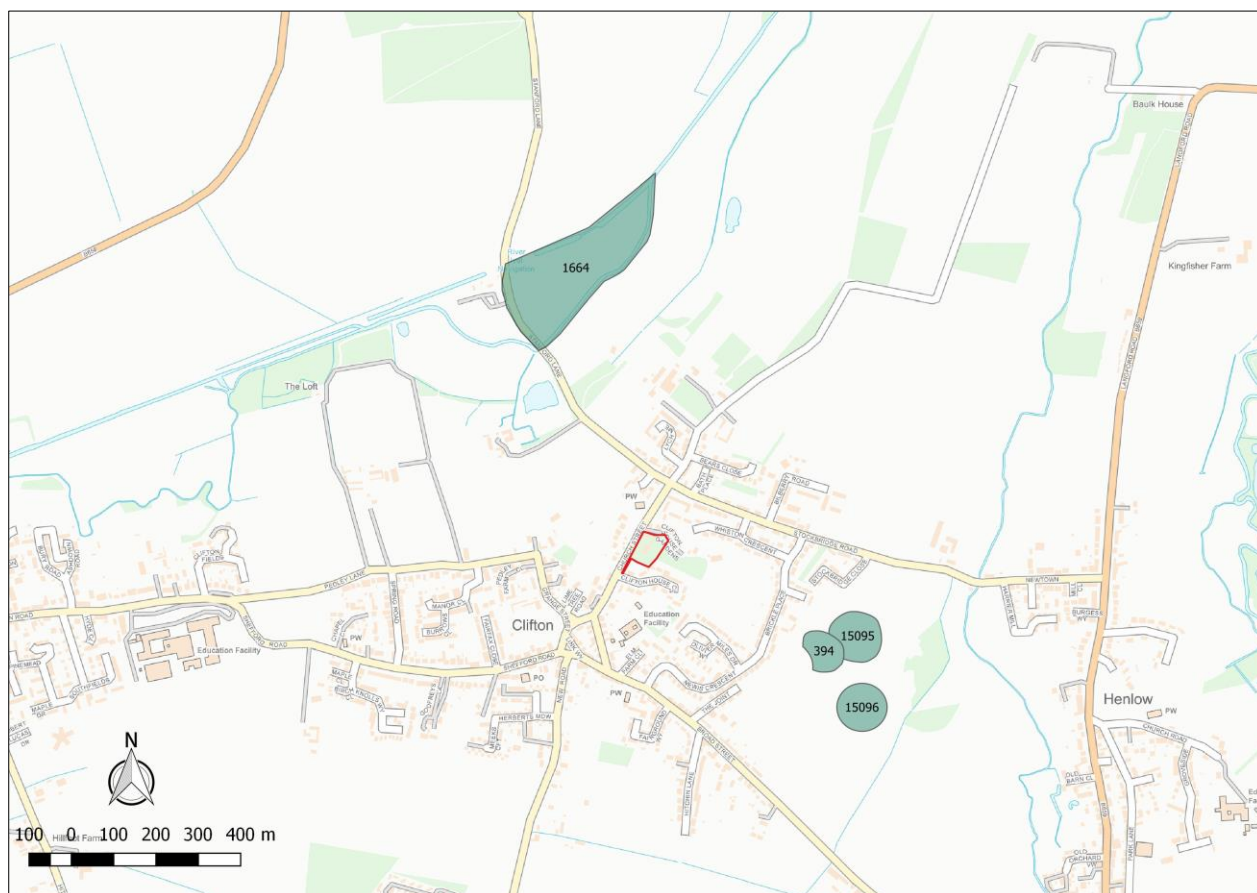


Figure 6 Prehistoric activity within a 1km radius of the Project Site

- 5.9. There are four Prehistoric assets within the Study Area and a further three potentially Iron Age assets, although none occur on the Project Site, or within its immediate vicinity. The closest assets are a sequence of ditches, one of which contained a small abraded sherd of pottery tentatively dated to the Iron Age, located north of Chequers Farm, c.415m southwest of the Project Site (CBCHER 19954).
- 5.10. More definitive Prehistoric evidence is found in the form of a burial site at Clifton, comprising five inhumations, one with an early Bronze Age beaker (CBCHER 394), c. 430m ESE of the Project Site. This asset is located nearby earthwork (CBCHER 15095 and 15096), a little to the east.
- 5.11. One further asset, a Bronze Age ring ditch (CBCHER 1664) located c. 600m to the northwest, was identified through aerial photography although the exact date has not been confirmed by intrusive investigation.

5.12. Whilst there is Prehistoric activity recorded within a 600m radius of the site, these examples are considered to have locally definable boundaries which are not thought to have extended to the Project Site.

Roman

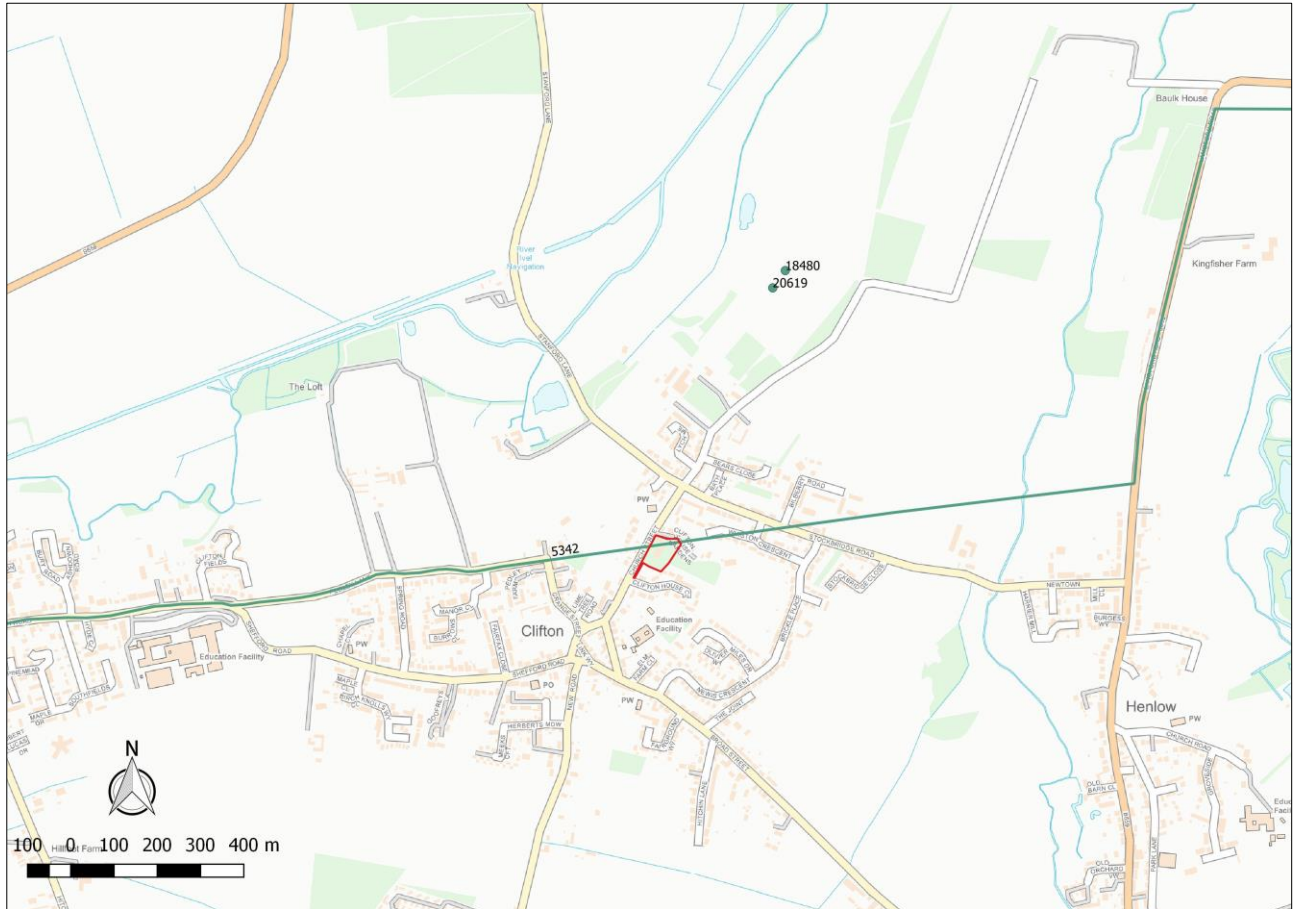


Figure 7 Roman activity within a 1km radius of the Project Site

5.13. Evidence for Roman activity in the Study Area is sparse. The only confirmed information relates to a coin found by metal detecting c.700m NNE of the Project Site (CBCHER18480).

5.14. A putative Roman Road established by Margary and the Viatores is recorded on the HER as passing through the northeast end of the Project Site, but as the description notes, no evidence for this road has ever been identified on the ground.

Anglo-Saxon

5.15. An Anglo-Saxon burial site connected to the Bronze Age burial site of CBCHER 394 was located c. 430m ESE of the Project Site (CBCHER 393).

5.16. Whilst this find is significant to the area, there is no indication that the archaeology would have extended to the region of the Project Site.

Saxo-Norman

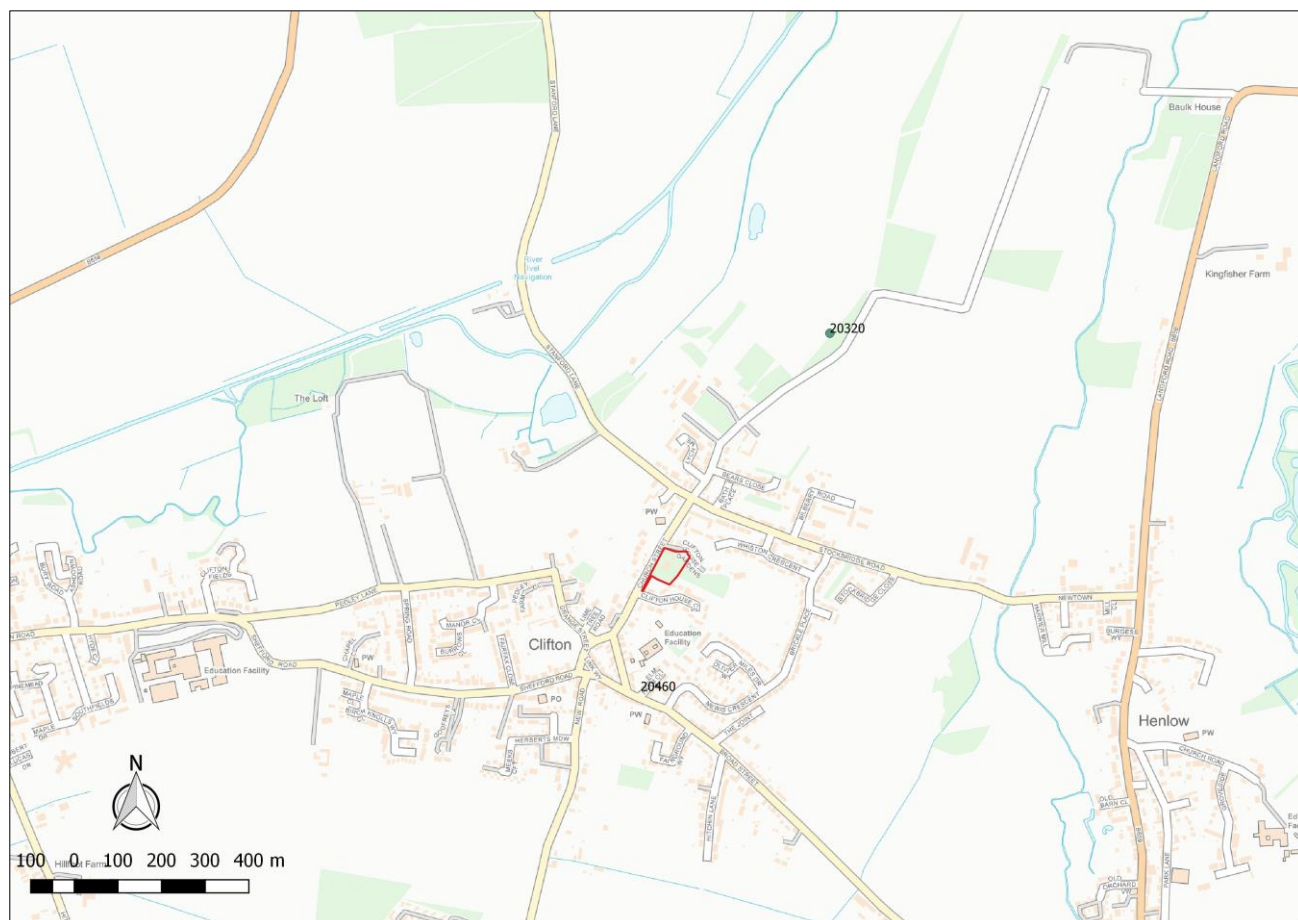


Figure 8 Saxo Norman activity within a 1km radius of the Project Site

5.17. There are two heritage assets dating to the Saxo-Norman period. A pit or end of a gully dated to the Saxo-Norman period was identified c. 280m south of the Project Site (CBCHER 20460) whilst a copper alloy scabbard chape was recorded into the PAS c. 625m NNE of the Project Site (CBCHER 20320).

5.18. The activity relating to this period would appear to be in the vicinity of the development of the main settlement of Clifton. As the Project Site lies on the outskirts of the known northeast extent, there is considered to be potential for truncated features associated with occupation or farming activity preserved within the boundary of the Project Site.

Medieval

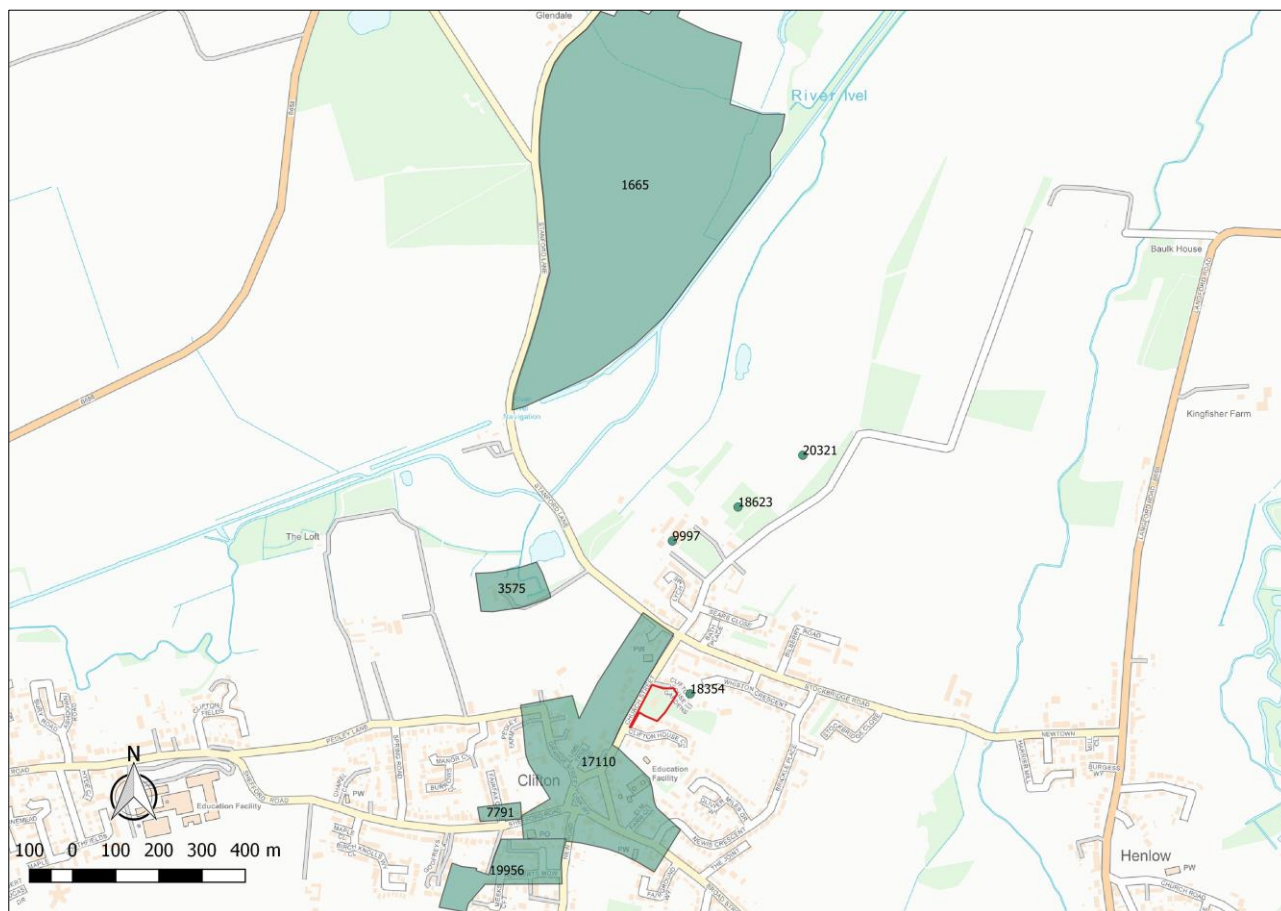


Figure 9 Medieval activity within a 1km radius of the Project Site

- 5.19. The HER plots the occurrence of Medieval coins, buckles and a harness pendant less than 30m from the northern edge of the Project Site (CBCHER 18354). However, the record notes that the information supporting these finds suggests they were from a pub in Clifton Reynes (a considerable distance from the Project Site). As such, this record should be discounted from the current assessment.
- 5.20. The Project Site is located directly to the east of the extent of the Medieval settlement of Clifton Village (CBCHER 17110). Where Medieval activity has been established it appears confined to the west and southwest of the Project Site. This includes the Archery Butts c. 450m WSW (CBCHER 7791) of the Project Site, the moated Manor (CBCHER 3575), c. 430m NW of the Project Site and the ridge and furrow (CBCHER 19956) located c. 450m SW of the Project Site.
- 5.21. As with the above, the activity relating to this period lies within the development of the main settlement of Clifton. As the Project Site lies on the outskirts of the known northeast extent there is considered to be potential for truncated features associated with occupation or farming activity to be preserved within the boundary of the Project Site.

Post-Medieval

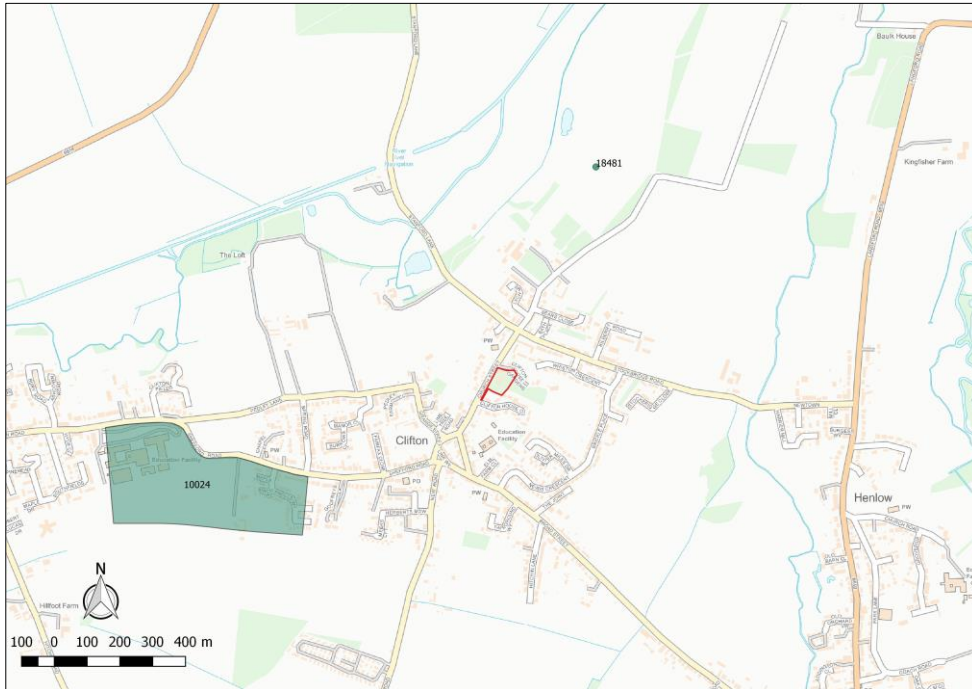


Figure 10 Medieval to Post Medieval activity within a 1km radius of the Project Site

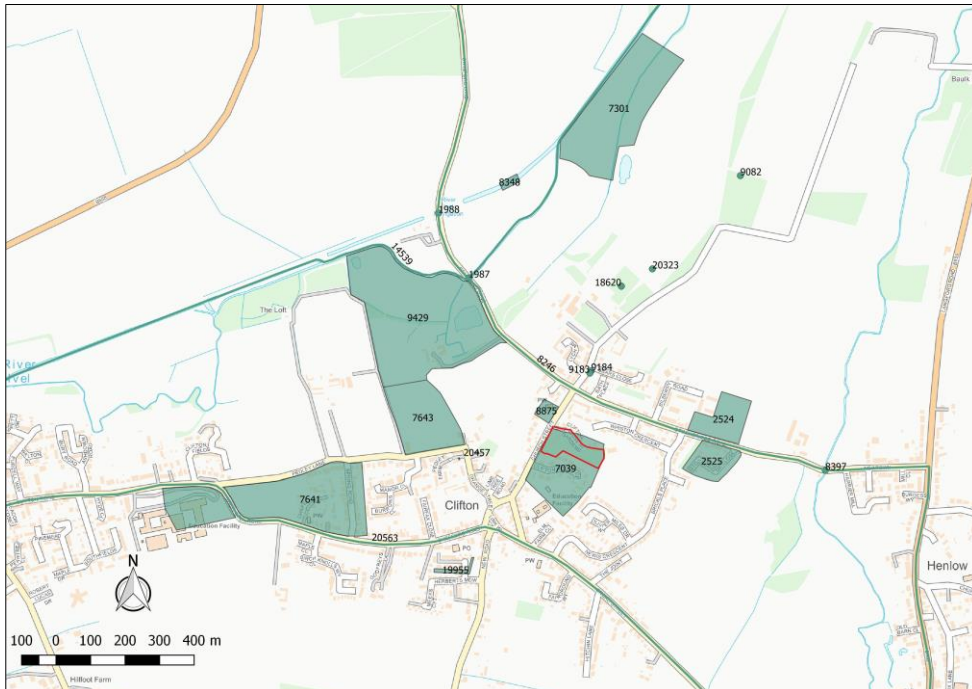


Figure 11 Post Medieval activity within a 1km radius of the Project Site

5.22. The land within the curtilage of the Project Site was previously part of an 18th century small holding relating to Clifton Rectory. Historic documents detail a list of associated buildings within the curtilage comprising brewhouse, woodhouse, bottle house, buttery, two stables, granary barn, wheat barn

and straw barn, hogsties, hen house and dove house in addition to a fruit garden and kitchen garden (1745 Terrier 41). The 1832 Terrier mentions a tiled greenhouse and shed also.

5.23. In the later 19th century the grounds were landscaped to provide an informal parkland setting to the Rectory and subsequently Clifton House private residence (CBCHER 7039). This landscape has been significantly degraded and was not worthy of inclusion on the National Register of Parks and Gardens and is not locally registered.

5.24. It is considered that there is high potential for the Project Site to preserve evidence of previous land use and building activity relating to the 18th century small holding and landscaping in the 19th century.

Summary

5.25. The Project Site is located within the vicinity of significant Prehistoric to Saxon archaeology, However, it is considered that the development of the Project Site in the 18th and 19th centuries would have reduced the potential of the site to preserve any significant archaeology relating to these periods. The potential for the Project Site to preserve evidence of activity relating to these periods is considered low.

5.26. The location of the Project Site adjacent to the known extent of Clifton Medieval settlement raises the potential for related archaeology to be preserved. Whilst significant development throughout the Post Medieval period would have had a detrimental impact on the preservation of any earlier deposits, the potential for the site to preserve evidence of Medieval activity is considered low-medium.

5.27. The documented use of the Project Site throughout the 18th and 19th centuries demonstrates that the area has a high potential to preserve evidence of activity dating to the Post Medieval period. It is suggested that the built heritage may incorporate hitherto undocumented elements of the early farm buildings. Furthermore, truncated footings of earlier structures, paths and cut features relating to the activity on site may also be preserved at a relatively shallow depth.

6. Historic Development of the Project Site

Clifton Manor

Clifton Manor is located to the south of the historic parish of Clifton. The village is recorded in the Domesday Survey of AD 1086 as *Clistone*. At the time of the Domesday Survey Clifton Manor was

recorded as having three hides⁷ and half a virgate⁸ held from Remigius, Bishop of Lincoln by William de Caron (the tenant). The manor remained in the Caron family until the death of Hugh de Caron in the early 13th century, whereupon it was divided between his three daughters. The overlordship of the manor continued to be held by the Bishops of Lincoln throughout the Medieval period (bedsarchives; Clifton Manors).

- 6.1. Caron's daughter Elizabeth eventually came to possess the whole manor and conveyed it to Henry Spigurnel, who held it in 1316. The manor passed to his son Thomas in 1328, who later conveyed it to Sir Gerald Braybroke and his wife Isabella in 1340; remaining in the Braybroke family until 1427.
- 6.2. Whereupon it passed to Sir William Babyngton. William died in 1454 and may have conveyed the manor to his son who conveyed it to Sir John Fisher (d. 1510). The manor eventually passed to his granddaughter and through marriage into the Bletsoe family who owned the manor until 1602. Following which it was conveyed to Walter Rolt the elder.
- 6.3. The history of the manor in the 18th century is not clear, however in 1790 the manor was divided amongst the three daughters of Anne, the daughter of Sir Henry Johnson of Toddington and it is suggested that the daughters sold the manor to John Lord. This is assumed as the executors of Lords will sold the estate in 1798 to Simpson Anderson for £5,150.
- 6.4. In 1806 Anderson sold the estate to Samuel Henley Ongley for £6,100. On his death in 1823 the estate was thought to have been sold to Henry Palmer, who held the manor until 1864. The land then passed from Henry Maclean Pryor to Ralston de Vino Pryor in the 20th century following which Law of Property Acts passed in the 1920's resulted in the abolition of manors in all but name.

Clifton House and Grounds

- 6.5. In 1712 a Licence was issued to demolish the "ancient Rectory" in Clifton and to erect a new building. It has been proposed that this new Rectory may have been sited on the Project Site (Bedfordshire Archives). In June of that year the then Rector of Clifton, Phillip Oddy explained in a letter that he wasn't living in Clifton at the time as the Rectory was too new. This is interpreted to mean that the new building was under construction or at least not habitable at the time (bedsarchives; Clifton/Rectory).

⁷ Anglo-Saxon unit of land holding - generally estimated to be 15 to 30 acres.

⁸ Quarter of a Hide.

6.6. A Glebe Terrier written in 1745 is the next resource to document the new Rectory, at the time home to Rev Thomas Osborn LL.D (Rector from c. 1738 – c. 1790). The site is described as comprising the following, across an estimated two acres of land (the original text is transcribed in Appendix 4):

- Parsonage House built of brick and tiled comprising: Large Hall, paved with stone; three parlours, floored and wainscoted; as many (four) rooms over them; two Garretts; cellar and vault under.
- Adjoining is a kitchen. The south side, east end of the building is timber and roughcast, the rest is brick, comprising: kitchen; pantry; scullery; servants hall paved with brick; rooms over them.
- Yard and outbuildings all tiled, comprising: Small yard pitched with pebbles and fenced with oak pails; on the north and west is a Brewhouse and Woodhouse of timber and clay; brick necessary (privy); adjoining eastward is a bottle house lathed on the south.
- Adjoining the Main House to the east: Small buttry, brick covered with lead.
- Farmyard fenced with buildings: Two stables, next to the street; granary; straw barn between them; to the north is a barn of seven bays. Tiled, part timber and part brick.
- East of Barn: Hovel; two Hogsties; henhouse, thatched and chiefly boarded but timber and clay on north side.
- Adjoining above (east): Wheat barn of four bays. Thatched and boarded; at a small distance is a Dove House of timber and clay plastered and tiled.
- In front of house: Court, walled with brick on both sides and palisades next to the street; to the south is a small a small fruit garden, walled.
- Back of house. Kitchen Garden fenced with oak pail on both sides and the east end with a hedge and a few old pails; adjoining to which the close of pasture fenced with a hedge on the north and elm pails on the east by the rector(y); and with a hedge on the south by the corner of the Close adjoining.

6.7. The survey for the Torrington Estate Map⁹ was carried out in 1745 and is therefore a contemporary of the above account. The location of the Project Site is depicted as enclosed land to the northwest of the Open Field known as *Little Field*. Modern day Church Street is named *Clifton Street*. Land belonging to the Project Site is shown as enclosed comprising a Close, Gardens and Offices to the rear of the plot. The roadside plot doesn't make mention of a Rectory and no buildings are depicted,

⁹ A Survey of the Estate of the Right Hon. Pattee Lord Viscount Torrington Scituate in the Parish of Clifton In the county of Bedford. Surveyed by Joseph Cole 1745.

however *Offices* suggests that the site was developed. Furthermore, the land designation is stated as *Dr Osborn's*. The Rev. Dr. Osbourne held the position of Rector of Clifton prior to 1790. Therefore, it is likely that the map does document a rectory on the Project Site at this time.



Figure 12 Torrington Estate Map 1745 (Source Bedfordshire Archives and Records Service)

- 6.8. Based on the above accounts it is likely that Clifton House preserves part of the new Rectory building that was referred to in Philip Oddy's letter of 1712 and that is described in the 18th century Terrier.
- 6.9. In 1790 the Rev Daniel Stephen Olivier was initiated to the Rectory of Clifton, following the death of Rev Osborne.¹⁰ Rev D S was still incumbent when a second Terrier was written in 1822. This document is considered to describe the Rectory that occupied the Project Site in the early 19th century:

"One Tiled dwelling house with double roof in length 61 Feet, in breadth 41 feet, the Kitchen end 33 feet within the walls, with pantry projecting from the same in length 10 feet in breadth 7 feet. One Tiled Building containing Barn, stable and Coach House in length 62 feet, in breadth 24 feet 6 inches with wash house at the end of the same, in length 25 feet, in breadth 15 feet 6 inches. A Tiled Green house with back towards the yard in length 14 ft; 6 inches, in breadth 10 feet, with shed at the back of the same covered with pan-tiles in length 11 feet 6 inches, in breadth 5 feet 6 inches,

¹⁰ Northampton Mercury - Saturday 17 April 1790.

a privy [sic] near wash house covered with lead, 5 feet square, and another privy at the end of the barn covered with pantiles in length 6 feet in breadth 5 feet".¹¹

6.10. The Parish of Clifton was subject to enclosure c. 1832 and the corresponding map¹² depicts the Rectory as a single dwelling house with projecting building, which corresponds to the description above as the house and pantry. The building containing the barn, stable and Coach House is shown orientated northwest / southeast and it not attached to the main dwelling at this time. The map gives little attention to outbuildings; however, it is assumed that the site was developed as stated in the 1822 Terrier. Land to the southwest of the Project Site is named as occupied by Rev. D. Olivier.



Figure 13 Plan of the Parish of Clifton in the County of Bedford Inclosed under an Act of Parliament in the Year 1832 (Source Bedfordshire Archives and Records Service)

6.11. In a subsequent plan of the Parish of Clifton dated 1832 the Rectory is clearly shown occupying the Project Site, with land to the southwest documented as being occupied by the Rev D. Olivier, however this must refer to Rev Daniel Josias Olivier who was initiated in January 1827, following the death of Reverend Daniel.

6.12. Rev D. J. Olivier continued in residence until c. 1858 when Rev H. Miles was appointed. Miles occupied the house with only one to two servants until the 1870s when he married Elizabeth Mary.

¹¹ Transcribed by [unknown] on behalf of Bedfordshire Record Office. Original document reference P7/2/1/3. Source of transcription <http://bedsarchives.bedford.gov.uk/CommunityArchives/Clifton/CliftonRectories.aspx>

¹² Plan of the Parish of Clifton in the county of Bedford Inclosed under an act of Parliament passes in the year 1832.

By 1881 The Rectory was occupied by Miles, his wife and four young children. Servants are listed as a cook, two nurses and two housemaids.

6.13. The Ordnance Survey of 1881 (published 1886)¹³ depicts a large extension to the northeast of the main dwelling, in place of the pantry. Although little detail is given, it would appear that the extension corresponds to the plan of Clifton House today. The link buildings, joining the main house to the Coach House are also shown, confirming that major alterations to the property were carried out between 1832 and 1881. Landscaped gardens are shown to the rear of the plot, including orchards and formal paths leading around the grounds. A paddock is depicted to the southeast, with walk around the perimeter.

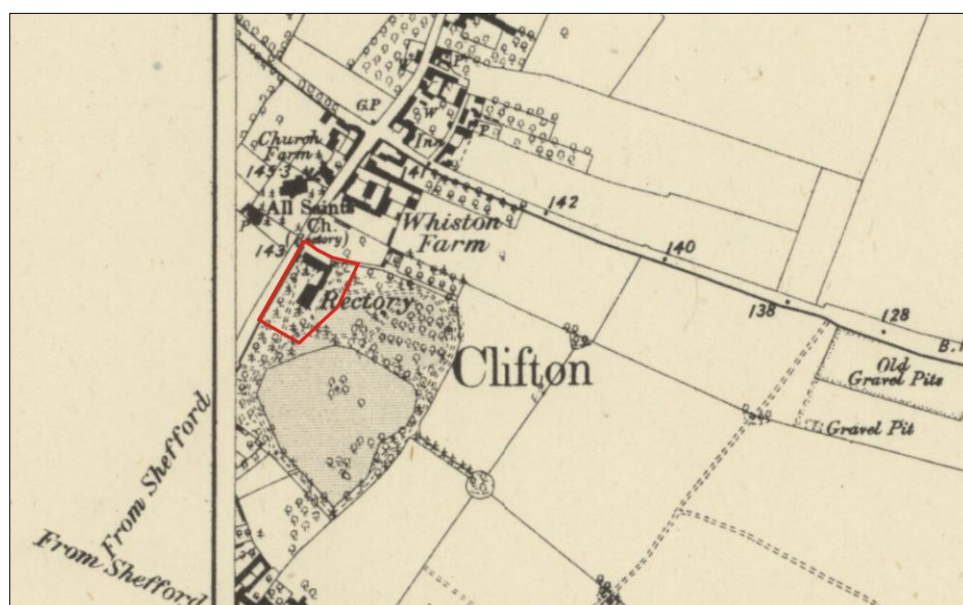


Figure 14 1886 Bedfordshire XXIII.SW (includes Arlesey; Henlow; Langford.) Surveyed 1881

6.14. When he was nearing his retirement, Miles is believed to have considered that his successor (Rev Edmund Clement Alwyn Foster, July 1891) would not have the means to live as he had done and requested that a new Rectory be built (pers com B Livesey). In 1889 a new rectory was given permission and was completed c. 1890, At this time the Project Site became a private residence known as the *Old Rectory*.

6.15. Following this the property is believed to have been purchased by Tom Raban, a general builder from Baldock, North Hertfordshire (pers com B Livesey). According to newspaper articles, it would appear that Raban was trading in the 1850s through to the early 20th century when the business was known as "Raban & Sons".¹⁴ Although the date of the purchase is unknown, it is assumed to have occurred at some point following the passing of the property into private ownership.

¹³ 1886 Bedfordshire XXIII.SW (includes Arlesey; Henlow; Langford.) Surveyed 1881

¹⁴ Tom Raban c. 1827 - 1905. Herts & Cambs Reporter & Royston Crow - Friday 24 February 1905

6.16. In 1901 census records confirm the private tenancy of the Old Rectory which appears to have been divided into two apartments. Jesse Wilson (Widower / Far aged 72) and Ann Wilson (aged 63) are listed as occupants. The rest of the house is occupied by a mother and daughter of independent means and their seven servants comprising a lady's maid, housemaid, butler, cook, domestic servant, motor driver & groom.

6.17. In 1900 the revised Ordnance Survey map (published 1902)¹⁵ names the Project Site as Clifton House. This conflicts with the census taken a year later, suggesting that the house continued to be known locally by its former function.



Figure 15 1902 Bedfordshire XXIII.SW (includes Arlesey; Henlow; Langford.) Revised 1900

6.18. In the 1911 census the main house is recorded as Clifton House and is occupied by Jesse and Ann Wilson, their servant Alice (?) Earl and Baptist Minister William Wileman.

6.19. In 1914 an advert in the Biggleswade Chronicle documented the following at Clifton House:

*"Sale of surplus furniture, billiard table, American Organ, Valuable collection of greenhouse and bedding plants and ferns. Nearly new mowing machine. Harness and stable effects. Pair of Deitz motor lamps and quantity of manure. Well bread COB and four-wheel DOG CART, WAGGONETTE and JAUNTING CAR."*¹⁶

6.20. Whilst the reason for the sale is not stated, local accounts record that Clifton House was used as a hostel by the Australian Army during WWI. Therefore, it is suggested that the property may have

¹⁵ 1902 Bedfordshire XXIII.SW (includes Arlesey; Henlow; Langford.) Revised 1900

¹⁶ Biggleswade Chronicle - Friday 20 March 1914

been requisitioned for the war effort in 1914 prompting the need for the sale of effects. The record demonstrates the high status of the property in the early 20th century.

6.21. Following the war, the house returned to a private residence and was purchased by Col. Wise in 1920. At the time of the report in the Biggleswade Chronicle Wise was supposedly in the middle of a major overhaul and redecoration scheme. Alternations were also reported to be in progress in the grounds surrounding the house.¹⁷

6.22. In May the following year Mrs Wise is reported as being tasked with the dispersal of a valuable Poultry Farm, selling all stock and associated apparatus, including 120 head of poultry at Auction. In June 1924 Mrs Wise is reported to be auctioning off antique furniture, carpets, china, painting and Divan Chairs from Clifton House, due to plans to leave the Country.¹⁸

6.23. The house is sold to Captain and Mrs Gander Dower (1925) and Mr R W Gander Dower (1936) Director of Arnakal Tea Estates Limited.



Figure 16 Taken in the grounds of Clifton House 1914. The residence of Captain and Mrs Gander Dower.

6.24. In 1937 Clarice Joan Ward Gandar Dower conveyed Clifton House to Kathleen Ruthar Mary Fitz Roy, wife of Lord John Fitz Roy.

6.25. In the 1940s the house was once again used for the war effort, this time as a hostel for the Women's Auxiliary Air Force (WAAF) and was known locally as the WAAFERY. However, Lady Charles Fitzroy is recorded as still living there. Following the end of WWII, Clifton House was used as a hostel for the Land Army.

¹⁷ Biggleswade Chronicle - Friday 09 January 1920

¹⁸ Biggleswade Chronicle - Friday 13 June 1924

- 6.26. In 1946 the agents to the owners of Clifton House wrote asking Biggleswade Rural District Council not to requisition the property for a new school, as the County Council in conjunction with the Diocesan Authorities were interested in purchasing it. Requisition would render a sale virtually impossible. Lord Fitzroy had recently died and in order to meet the death duties Lady John Fitzroy was keen to sell the estate. No further action was taken at this time.¹⁹
- 6.27. An offer to sell the property to the Council in 1950 for £8,000.00 fell through as the cost was considered too high.²⁰ The next report of the property documents a theft of lead and malicious damage whilst the house was in the ownership of Kathleen Carr. Therefore, it is assumed that Clifton House remained in private ownership.²¹
- 6.28. The property has remained in private ownership up until the current time. Evidence of modern bathroom fittings in Rooms H and I suggest that the rooms were sublet in the latter half of the 20th century.

7. Summary

Clifton House

- 7.1. The results of the study would appear to support an early 18th century date for the construction of Clifton House. The oldest part of the building being the two bay, pitched roof Main Block to the southwest of the Project Site. Records indicate that this was likely to have been constructed between 1712 and 1745. Decorative details noted in the drawing room and stairwell suggest that the interior was updated in the latter half of the 18th century.
- 7.2. The Main Block was extended to the northeast between 1832 and 1881. This extension provided a larger living space at first floor level, a separate servants stair as had become the custom in the later 18th century (continuing throughout the 19th century), and a link to the outbuildings and Coach House to the northeast of the plot.
- 7.3. The property underwent a second phase of extension, possibly in the late 19th century or even in the early 20th century corresponding to the alterations carried out by Col. Wise. At this time the jetty was added to the first floor above the northwest entrance. This allowed access to the converted outbuilding to the north, which subsequently became a child's nursery /playroom.

¹⁹ Biggleswade Chronicle - Friday 11 October 1946

²⁰ Biggleswade Chronicle - Friday 24 February 1950

²¹ Biggleswade Chronicle - Friday 10 February 1950

- 7.4. Clifton House was in use during the First and Second World War as accommodation for the Australian Army and Women's Auxiliary Air Force, following which it was in use as a hostel for the Land Army. It would appear that the property continued to be divided into multiple occupancy following this period.

Grounds

- 7.5. The grounds have not been maintained for many years and no evidence of the historic parkland layout was evident at the time of the site visit. In the 18th and early 19th century the documentary evidence suggests that the grounds were given over to a small holding, with brewhouse, woodhouse, bottle house, buttery, two stables, granary barn, wheat barn and straw barn, hogsties, hen house and dove house in addition to a fruit garden and kitchen garden (1745 Terrier 45). The 1832 Terrier mentions a tiled greenhouse and shed also.
- 7.6. Cartographic evidence suggests that the small holding was converted to a naturalistic parkland of woodland walks with open pasture by 1881. This was kept up until at least 1947. We also know from the records that a large greenhouse was sited within the garden in 1914 and it is possible that the building was the original 19th century structure. By 1924 at least part of the grounds would appear to have been put aside as a poultry farm.

Archaeological Potential

- 7.7. The evidence suggests that there is a low to medium potential for the preservation of Medieval activity within the Project Site. However, this is likely to be truncated and not of such significance as to preclude planning permission being granted.
- 7.8. It is further considered that there is a high potential for Post Medieval archaeology to be preserved within the fabric of the built heritage and within the grounds of the Project Site. The latter is likely to be preserved at a relatively shallow depth from current ground level. No evidence has been identified to suggest that any archaeology will be of such significance as to preclude planning permission being granted.

8. Heritage Impact Assessment

Preamble

- 8.1. In-line with current planning policy guidelines, a statement outlining the known and unknown heritage assets of the Project Site, together with an assessment of the likely impact upon them of the proposed development, is necessary.
- 8.2. The following assessment criteria and impact assessment methodology has been devised in accordance with the following guidance:
 - *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), 2018;*
 - *Design Manual for Road and Bridges, HA208/07;*
 - Historic England. 2015. *Managing Significance in Decision-Taking in the Historic Environment.*

Proposed Renovation

- 8.3. For the purpose of the proposed renovation a new boundary will be established to the southeast of Clifton House, within the existing grounds. This will leave a plot that is roughly rectangular in shape with an area of 4560 sq m.
- 8.4. The proposed scheme will reconfigure the layout of the existing Clifton House and outbuildings to form nine new apartments. The external appearance will not be altered significantly, save for the removal of a small lean-to, which is not in keeping with the vernacular of the building, and the forming of a small entrance porch to one of the flats.
- 8.5. The existing grounds will be landscaped to provide large communal gardens and amenity space to the south and east of Clifton House. In addition, there will be two private gardens.
- 8.6. The existing access drive will be sealed and a new access for both vehicular and pedestrian access will be formed in the centre of the brick boundary wall along the Church Street side of the plot.
- 8.7. There will be provision for 20 parking spaces and a secure cycle store.
- 8.8. The scheme will incorporate the retention of quality trees. Some trees will be removed to accommodate the reconfiguration of the grounds. These will principally be poor quality trees.

Significance Criteria

8.9. The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) stresses the importance of retaining the heritage asset, rather than retaining a documentary record of it (NPPF 2018, 54-57). In the following scheme therefore, preservation by record of any part of the resource is viewed as an adverse impact where preservation *in situ* cannot be achieved.

Table 1: Significance Criteria

Significance Criteria	Description of Criteria
Substantial beneficial	The cultural heritage resource is retained with: a) enhanced protection and monitoring, b) the removal of identified threats, c) the non-intrusive recording of the resource against unspecified future threat, d) improved accessibility of sites and information to the general public
Moderate beneficial	The cultural heritage resource is retained, with 2-3 of the following: a) enhanced protection and monitoring, b) the removal of identified threats, c) the non-intrusive recording of the resource against unspecified future threat, d) improved accessibility of sites and information to the general public
Minor beneficial	The cultural heritage resource is retained, with 1 of the following: a) enhanced protection and monitoring, b) the removal of identified threats, c) the non-intrusive recording of the resource against unspecified future threat, d) improved accessibility of sites and information to the general public
Negligible	The cultural heritage resource is retained
Minor adverse	The majority of the cultural heritage resource is retained, only peripheral elements cannot be preserved.
Moderate adverse	Some core elements of the cultural heritage resource cannot be retained, but a substantial proportion remain.
Substantial adverse	All or a significant majority of the core cultural heritage resource cannot be retained.

Statement of Significance

8.10. The Project Site derives its significance from two main routes. Firstly, Clifton House has significant historic value, preserving Clifton's 18th century Rectory at the core of the structure. The house's association with the Rector's of Clifton from 1708 gives the building a firm root in the history of the village. Although the grounds are now substantially eroded and the landscaping lost, the built heritage preserves a significant element of the history of the village and an example of a high-status house which would have been at the core of ecclesiastical life.

- 8.11. Clifton House preserves an example of early 18th century Palladian design, incorporating elements of the Doric order in its doorcase. Later Gothic revival elements document the changes in architectural trends through to the 19th century. Internally, Clifton House conserves elements of Neo-classical décor and Regency design, preserved in a building that continued to be influenced by changing trends and historic events into the 20th century, which all left their mark. The result being the much altered modern Clifton House, with a significant historic core and story that records the events of the last three centuries.
- 8.12. Secondly, significance is considered to be derived from the aesthetic value of the Project Site. The elegant symmetry of the Palladian Main Block is preserved in essence throughout the majority of the principle elevation, in which sympathetic design and materials have been utilised to soften the impact of the 19th / 20th century extensions on the overall design. The result is an attractive period brick building set back from Church Street. The plot is fronted by a wooded copse of mature trees and overgrowth, which although neglected softens the street scape providing a green buffer between the road and main house.
- 8.13. However, at present the aesthetic significance has been eroded through neglect leading to the dilapidation of the outbuildings and widespread water damage within the Main Block.

Setting

- 8.14. The setting of the Project Site makes a considerable contribution to the nature of the Conservation Area, as it preserves elements of the historic parkland layout to the rear of the site, where a long plot of wooded land stretches for c. 140m to the ESE. The parkland has been eroded to the north and south by modern development. To the west (front) of the plot, the site retains the belt of trees which buffers the house from plain sight of Church Street, enhancing the views along the main road when approaching the site from the northwest and southeast.
- 8.15. The land has been left unmanaged in recent years resulting in the loss of historic pathways and any evidence of formal landscaping and planting schemes, however the parkland setting is still considered essential to the character of the Project Site.

Impact Assessment

- 8.16. The presence or absence of significant buried archaeological remains has yet to be determined with certainty across the Project Site. For the purposes of this chapter it has therefore been assumed that archaeological remains may be present in those areas of the application site affected by the proposed development.

Table 2 Construction Zones Impact Assessment

Zone	Predicted Impact
Areas within the application site where no construction is proposed	Negligible
Areas where demolition is proposed	Minor Beneficial Removal of a small lean-to, which is not in keeping with the vernacular of the building. Moderate to Substantial adverse impact to decorative plasterwork, wainscoting and fixtures and fittings where removal or concealment of 18th and 19th century detail is proposed.
Areas where building construction is proposed	Substantial adverse , where buried archaeological remains are present.
Construction zone operating areas	Negligible to substantial adverse , where buried archaeological remains are present
Other ground surface and below ground surface modifying operations e.g. landscaping, drainage, roads	Moderate adverse to substantial adverse , where buried archaeological remains are present
Broader study area	Minor adverse impact on views from, to and across the study area during construction

8.17. The long-term impact on the cultural resource is partly defined by the short-term impact. If a resource has been destroyed or modified during the construction phase then it is no longer available in its original form at a later date, i.e. the resource is finite.

Table 3: Operational Phase Impact Assessment

Zone	Predicted Impact on the Heritage Resource
Areas within the application site where no construction or modification is proposed.	Negligible.
Areas where construction / renovation is proposed	Negligible to substantial adverse impact on buried archaeological remains, where present, resulting from potential altered drainage. Moderate to Substantial adverse impact to decorative plasterwork, wainscoting and fixtures and fittings where removal or concealment of 18 th and 19 th century detail is proposed.

Broader study area	Moderate beneficial to views towards the Project Site as a result of thinning and maintaining wooded area to the front of property and sympathetic repairs to historic elevations.
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9. Summary

- 9.1. The Project Site comprises an early 18th century Grade II listed dwelling with 19th / 20th century extensions to the northeast, which link the Main Block to the historic Coach House and stores to the north of the plot. The buildings are set within established grounds, with mature trees and overgrowth providing a green buffer between the house and Church Street to the northwest. The site is included in the Clifton Conservation Area as a site where enhancement is to be encouraged.
- 9.2. There is a high potential for the Project Site to preserve archaeology dating to the Post Medieval period and it is considered that this may be preserved at a shallow depth below current ground level. There is also a low to medium potential for the Project Site to preserve archaeology dating to the Medieval Period, due to the proximity of the plot to the northern extension of the settlement of Clifton. There is no evidence to suggest that any surviving archaeology will be of such significance as to preclude planning permission being granted.
- 9.3. The proposed scheme will seek to restore and repair all heritage assets using sympathetic materials in keeping with original design. The plan to convert the dwelling into nine separate apartments will result in the loss of the historic layout of the Main Block at ground and first floor level. It will be necessary for much of the wooden panelling and decorative plasterwork to be concealed or removed as a result of the proposal. This is due in part to the requirement to partition the existing rooms to provide a modern accessible layout. It is also due in part to the dilapidated state of the Main Block resulting from water incursion which has caused rotting of timber joists and the collapse of lathe and plaster around the building. The extent of the damage is not yet known; however, it is anticipated that further investigation may reveal widespread damage concealed behind the wall and ceiling coverings.
- 9.4. Associated landscaping plans will retain the woodland belt to the front of the property. Quality trees will remain, and new planting will be carried out where the removal of trees is considered necessary. Plans will focus on the retention and enhancement of the green space, which will be thinned and managed to retain the feel and appearance of the historic parkland setting. This will be

complimented by new hedging and grassed areas, cut by gravel paths which are in keeping the 19th century setting.

- 9.5. Two listed buildings are sited within view of the grounds to the front of the Project Site and within partial view of parts of Clifton House. It is considered that the proposals will have a minor beneficial impact with regards to intervisibility, due to the management and enhancement of the landscaping and sympathetic repair of the built heritage.

10. Conclusion & Suggested Mitigation

10.1. The Grade II listed Clifton House, Coach House and associated outbuildings will be retained where possible within this scheme, which will not significantly alter the principle elevations of the Project Site. In addition, landscaping plans will retain and improve the existing green space, with new planting added in order to enhance the setting.

10.2. It is considered that whilst there will be a material loss to the period décor and fixtures and fittings within the Main Block, with regards to the overall impact on the significance of the adjacent Heritage Assets, it is concluded that the proposal will cause less than substantial harm. When weighed against the benefit of providing nine new quality homes whilst at the same time restoring and enhancing the heritage assets, it is considered that the development should be acceptable in heritage terms.

10.3. In the event that the proposal is granted permission it is recommended that a further programme of archaeological investigation, monitoring and recording be carried out which should make provision for the following as a minimum:

- Pre-commencement Level 2/3 Building Recording of the interior and exterior of Clifton House, Coach House and all associated link buildings;
- Provision for a watching brief during the stripping of Clifton House, Coach House and all associated link buildings to record any concealed historic features that may be revealed during the works, in order to further the interpretation and phasing of the Project Site;
- Provision for an archaeological watching brief during all groundwork / landscaping in order to investigate and record any buried archaeological remains.

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12. Appendices

Appendix 1: Listed Buildings within a 1km Radius of the Project Site

PrefRef	Name	Grade
1321771	Church of All Saints	II*
1136672	3 (Sorrento) & 5 Grange Street and building adjoining to south	II
1113832	14 Grange Street	II
1321773	1 Stockbridge Road	II
1136685	10 and 12 Shefford Road (The Alms Cottages)	II
1113829	25 Church Street (Holly Cottage)	II
1136627	Clifton Bury Farmhouse	II
1113873	Barn approx. 20 metres SW of Pedley Farmhouse	II
1113831	Clifton Farmhouse	II
1113830	Clifton House	II
1321770	Clifton Manor House and Manzie	II
1136636	Outbuilding approx. 25 metres N of Clifton House	II
1312679	The Grange, Grange Street	II
1312732	Well Head & War Memorial at Junction with Grange Street	II
1321772	Garden Wall and Entrance Gate at the Grange.	II

Appendix 2: Events within a 1km radius of the Project Site.

EvUID	Name
EBD1048	Pedley Farm, Clifton: Results Of Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation
EBD1178	Clifton Post Office, 27 Shefford Road, Clifton; Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording And Analysis
EBD1197	Land At New Road/Harbrook Lane, Clifton: Archaeological Field Evaluation
EBD1223	Archaeological Geophysical Survey Of Land At Harbrook Lane, Clifton
EBD1596	28 Grange Street, Clifton; Archaeological Evaluation Report
EBD1598	Barn Adjacent To Pedley Farm, Grange Street, Clifton; Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis And Publication
EBD1598	Barn Adjacent To Pedley Farm, Grange Street, Clifton; Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis And Publication
EBD1599	Archaeological Evaluation: Land At 11 Elm Farm Close, Clifton
EBD1635	Land At Town Farm Field, Clifton Road, Henlow
EBD1693	27 Broad Street, Clifton; Archaeological Observation And Recording Report
EBD647	Barn Adjacent To 3 Clifton Farm Barns, Church Street, Clifton; Structural Survey Report

Appendix 3 Monuments within a 1km radius of the Project Site.

PrefRef	Name	Period
15096	Enclosure Cropmarks, South East Of Clifton	Prehistoric
394	Bronze Age Burials	Ba
15095	Enclosure Cropmarks, East Of Clifton Village	Prehistoric
1664	Cropmarks, North Of Clifton Cricket Pitch	Ba
18480	Roman Coin, North East Of Clifton Bury Farm	Roman
20619	Roman-Post Medieval Tack	Roman-Pm

5342	Suggested Roman Road, Viatores No. 176	Roman
393	Anglo-Saxon Pot, East Of Clifton Village	A-S
20460	Saxo-Norman Features, Elm Farm Close	Saxo-Norman
20320	Saxo Norman Scabbard	Saxo-Norman
3575	Manor Site, Clifton Manor House	Med
17110	Clifton Medieval Village	Med
7791	Site Of Archery Butts	Med
1665	Cropmarks & Village Earthworks, South Of Stanford	Med
19956	Ridge And Furrow	Med
9997	Clifton Bury, Site Of Manor	Med
18623	Medieval Mount, Cliftonbury Farm	Med
18354	Medieval Find Spot	Med
20321	Medieval Strap Fitting	Med
20322	Elizabethan Halfgroat	Elizabethan
10024	Street Furlong	Med-Pm
18481	Medieval And Post Medieval Finds, North East Of Clifton Bury Farm	Med-Pm
7641	Gravel Pit	Pm
8875	All Saints' Parish Churchyard	Pm
7039	Clifton House Grounds	C19
7643	Clay Pit Site	Pm
9429	Clifton Manor Grounds	C18-C19
7301	Site Of Chapel	Pm
2525	Gravel Pit	Pm
2524	Gravel Pit	Pm
8348	Pound Lock	1822
19955	Post Medieval Features, Land North Of Chequers Farm	Pm
20459	Post Medieval Features, Pedley Farm	Pm
20457	Post Medieval Pit, East Of Pedley Farm	Pm
8397	Stock Bridge	PM (C1745)
9184	50 Church Street	C19
9183	46-48 Church Street	C19
1987	Bridge Over River Ivel	C16-C20
9082	Gravel Pit	Pm
1988	Bridge (Site Of) Over Ivel Navigation	1823-1968
18620	Post Medieval Finds, Cliftonbury Farm	Pm
18620	Post Medieval Finds, Cliftonbury Farm	Pm
20323	Seventeenth Century Token	C17
14539	Ivel Navigation	C18-C19
8246	Turnpike Road, Girtford Bridge To Henlow	C18
20563	Turnpike Road, Arlesey-Henlow-Shefford	C18
15097	Cropmarks, South West Of Clifton Sewage Works	Undated
19954	Possible Iron Age Ditch & Undated Ditches, Land North Of Chequers Farm	Undated (Poss Ia)
19954	Possible Iron Age Ditch & Undated Ditches, Land North Of Chequers Farm	Undated (Poss Ia)
19954	Possible Iron Age Ditch & Undated Ditches, Land North Of Chequers Farm	Undated (Poss Ia)
4490	Possible Earthwork North West Of Henlow	Unknown
2523	Earthworks	Unknown
1888	Cropmarks, West Of Manor Farm	Unknown

Appendix 4 Excerpt from Glebe Terrier 1745 Documenting Clifton Rectory

"First there is a parsonage house built with brick and tiled, consisting of a large hall, paved with stone and three parlours floored and wainscoted, as many rooms over them, and two garrets, cellar and vault under it. Adjoining is a kitchen, Pantry, Scullery, Servants Hall paved with brick and rooms over them, the south side, East end of the building is timber and roughcast, the rest is brick. Cross a small yard pitched with pebbles and fenced with oak pales on the North and west is a brewhouse and woodhouse of timber and clay, with a brick necessary (toilet) adjoining Eastward, a bottle house lathed on the south, all tiled. Adjoining to the house eastward is a small buttery of brick and covered with lead. The Farm yard is chiefly fenced with buildings, next to the street are two stables and Granary with a straw barn between them on the north is a barn of seven bays²² tiled part boarded and part timber and brick, at the east end thereof is a Hovel, two Hogsties and henhouse, thatched, chiefly boarded, but the North side Timber and Clay. Adjoining to which Eastward is a wheat Barn of four Bays Thatched and Boarded and at a small Distance is a Dove house of Timber and Clay plaister'd and Tiled. Before the House is a Court walled with Brick on both Sides and Pallisadoes next the Street to the South is a small fruit Garden walled. And on the Back of the House is a Kitchen Garden fenced with Oak pales on both sides and the East End with a Hedge and a few old pales adjoining to which is a Close of Pasture fenced with a Hedge on the North and Elm pales on the East by the Rector, and with a Hedge on the South by the corner of the Close adjoining. This Homestall above mentioned contains by estimation about two Acres".²³

Appendix 5 List of Rectors Resident at the Rectory (Clifton House)

Rector	Date	History
Philip Oddy MA	17 th February 1708	on the death of Thomas Cooke MA
Samuel Sparhawke MA	9th February 1733	-
Thomas Osborn LL.D	13th February 1738	on the death of Samuel Sparhawke
Daniel Stephen Olivier LL.B	7th April 1790	on the death of Thomas Osborn
Daniel Josias Olivier MA	30th January 1827	on the death of Daniel Stephen Olivier
Henry Hugh Miles MA	23rd July 1858	on the death of Daniel Josias Olivier

²² Perhaps remnant of 1607 site (see Bedford archive history)

²³ Bedford Record Office Reference P7.2.1.2 Glebe Terrier 1745.



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