SRLB/002

NEW ROUNDABOUT, EAST OF LEIGHTON LINSLADE, BEDFORDSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

for CgMs Consulting Ltd

CB/11/03450

April 2012

HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IfA

NEW ROUNDABOUT, EAST OF LEIGHTON LINSLADE, BEDFORDSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

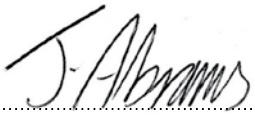
for CgMs Consulting Ltd

CB/11/03450

April 2012

HA Job no.: SRLB/002
NGR: 495480 223040
Parish: Leighton-Linslade
Council: Bedfordshire
OASIS ref.: headland4-122777
Archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum

Project Manager	Joe Abrams
Author	James McNicoll-Norbury
Fieldwork	James McNicoll-Norbury & Simon Mayes
Graphics	Caroline Norrman
Approved by	Joe Abrams – Project Manager



Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd

South & East

Headland Archaeology
Technology Centre, Stanbridge Road
Leighton Buzzard LU7 4QH
01525 850878
leighton.buzzard@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com

CONTENTS

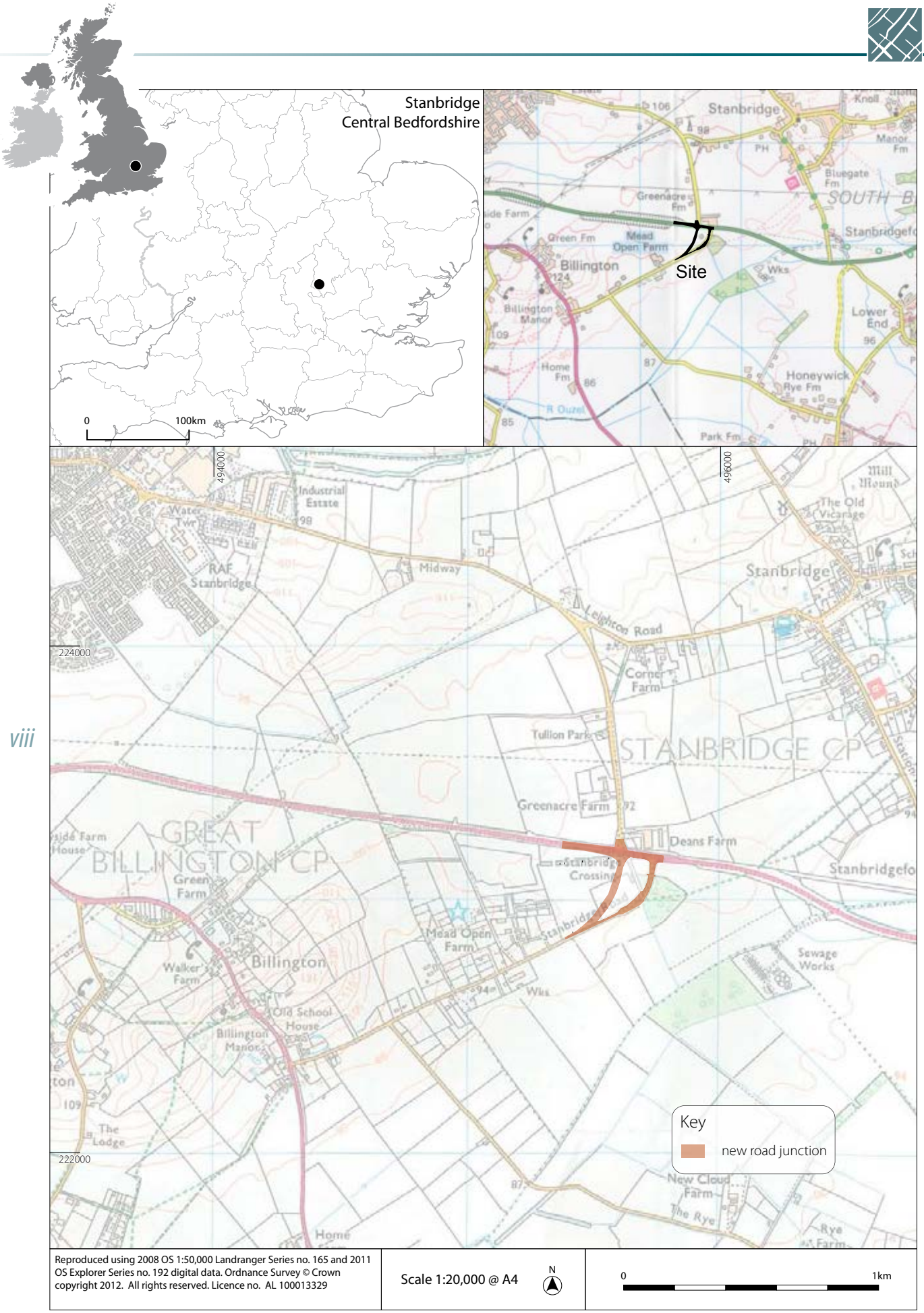
1. INTRODUCTION 1
1.1 Planning background 1
1.2 Site location and background 1
1.3 Archaeological background 1
2. METHODOLOGY 2
2.1 Objectives 2
2.2 Methodology 2
2.3 Recording 2
3. RESULTS 2
3.1 Introduction 2
3.2 Description of the significance of the Heritage Assets 7
Medieval 7
Post-medieval 7
4. DISCUSSION 7
4.1 Assessment of the impact of development on the significance of Heritage Assets 8
5. REFERENCES 9
5.1 Bibliography 9
6. APPENDICES 10
Appendix 1 – Site registers 10
Trench register 10
Photographic register 10

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

Illus 1 viii
Site location
Illus 2 3
Trench locations and earthwork survey results
Illus 3 5
Redefined earthwork survey results
Illus 4 7
Trench 2 facing NE
Illus 5 7
SE facing section of Trench 2 through Hollow 4
Illus 6 8
Trench 4 facing NW
Illus 7 8
S facing section of Trench 3 through Bank 5

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1 7
Significance of Heritage Assets (HA)
Table 2 8
Impact on Heritage Assets (HA)



Scale 1:20,000 @ A4

Illus 1

Site location

NEW ROUNDABOUT, EAST OF LEIGHTON LINSLADE, BEDFORDSHIRE

Archaeological Evaluation

HEADLAND ARCHAEOLOGY (UK) LTD CONDUCTED AN EVALUATION AT A PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AREA (PDA) OFF STANBRIDGE ROAD, LEIGHTON BUZZARD IN ORDER TO PROVIDE FURTHER INFORMATION ON THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL POTENTIAL OF THE SITE, INCLUDING THE MEDIEVAL FIELD SYSTEM IDENTIFIED THROUGH PREVIOUS EARTHWORK SURVEY. THE WORK WAS COMMISSIONED BY CGMS CONSULTING LTD. A TOTAL OF FOUR TRENCHES WERE EXCAVATED IN THE PDA. NO ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES WERE IDENTIFIED, BUT THE RESULTS OF THE PREVIOUS EARTHWORK SURVEY WERE REFINED AS A RESULT OF THIS TRIAL TRENCHING.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning background

Willis Dawson Holdings (the Client) in conjunction with the development east of Leighton-Linslade (Ref: CB/11/01370) is proposing a new roundabout scheme to the south of the A505 near Leighton-Linslade (Ref: CB/11/03450) which henceforth will be known as the proposed development area (PDA).

CgMs Consulting Ltd (the consultant) who is acting on behalf the Client produced a desk-based assessment for the PDA (CgMs 2011) and an earthwork survey (Headland Archaeology 2012a) was recently carried out. In order to build on the results of these non-intrusive techniques, CgMs contracted Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) and undertake the works it describes. This document was approved by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeological Officer (AO).

The AO have advised that the area covered by the proposed development area (PDA) is potentially archaeologically sensitive and, therefore, the AO have requested that the results of an archaeological evaluation are submitted. This is in accordance with current Planning Policy.

1.2 Site location and background

The PDA is located between the settlements of Billington and Stanbridge at the junction of the A505 and Billington Road. The natural topography of the PDA slopes gently from the west to the east with the west side lying at a height of 90m Above Ordnacne Datum (AOD) and the east side lying at 85m AOD. The A505 bounds the PDA to the north and is raised above natural ground level; Stanbridge Road forms the eastern boundary. The fields are currently in use as agricultural land.

The geology of the area is identified as mainly Gault Formation Mudstone with lenses of Woburn Sands Formation sandstone overlain by Alluvium, River Terrace and Head deposits represented by clay, silt, sand and gravel (British Geological Survey website).

1.3 Archaeological background

The background of the PDA is covered in detail in the DBA (CgMs 2011). Heritage assets within the PDA are confined to the remains of ridge and furrow (elements of field systems), banks, hollows and '*levelled*' areas. Earthwork survey (Headland Archaeology 2012a) suggested that all these anomalies are of medieval-modern date and of local significance.

Aerial photographs have identified a cropmark (HER11120) north of the PDA, the form of which suggests a later prehistoric date. A hillfort at Billington lies *c* 950m to the west of the PDA.

The A505 immediately to the north of the PDA was subject to fieldwalking and a watching brief in the 1980s and 1990s (BCAS 1990 and Jones 1992: 32-40). No heritage assets were recorded within the study site but some activity was noted nearby such as a post-medieval horseshoe (HER 16170) and evidence of Roman occupation to the east.

The PDA lies between Stanbridge and Billington, two known medieval settlements and it is likely that the area covered by the PDA was associated with agricultural activity during this period.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives

In general the objectives of the evaluation are presented in the WSI (Headland Archaeology 2012b, Section 4).

The local and regional research contexts are provided by Bedfordshire Archaeology: Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy (Oake et al, 2007). These are supported by Research and Archaeology Revisited: a Revised Framework for the East of England, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24 (Medlycott, M. 2011, ed.); Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties (Glazebrook 1997; Brown & Glazebrook 2000), Exploring Our Past (English Heritage 1991), and English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda (English Heritage 1997). Evidence retrieved during the works has been analysed in light of the objectives contained in these frameworks.

Specifically the aims of the investigation included:

- establishing the depth and character of archaeologically '*sterile*' overburden;
- identifying, characterising and dating any potential archaeological remains within the site; and
- defining any constraints encountered during the evaluation and any potential constraints for further archaeological fieldwork (*eg* areas of disturbance, service locations, *etc*)

The resulting archive (finds and records) will be organised and deposited in a registered museum (Luton Museum, Accession Number applied for: Luton Museum are not issuing at this time) to facilitate access for future research and interpretation for public benefit.

2.2 Methodology

Fieldwork took place on the 23rd April 2012. A total of four trenches were excavated between 20 and 40m in length and 1.8m wide (Illus 2). Trenches were laid out in order to test land within zones of proposed development impact. They were targeted on features highlighted in the earthwork survey and in order to test blank areas.

A JCB equipped with a flat-bladed bucket was used to remove topsoil under direct archaeological control. Excavation continued until clean geological sediments, significant archaeological deposits or structures were encountered or until the limit of safe excavation was reached, whereupon sondages were dug to establish the depth of the natural geology.

Further excavation required to satisfy the objectives of the evaluation was continued by hand. A representative sample of identified features, sufficient to meet the objectives of the evaluation, was investigated by hand and all identified features were recorded. The stratigraphy of each trench was recorded in full.

The evaluation was monitored and approved by Central Bedfordshire Council's AO and CgMs. Backfilling of the trenches was undertaken following approval from the AO.

2.3 Recording

All recording was in accordance with the code of practice of the Institute *for* Archaeologists (I*f*A). All trenches and contexts were given unique numbers and all recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological standards. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.

An overall site plan at an appropriate scale and relative to the National Grid was recorded by digital survey using a differential GPS.

A full photographic record comprising colour slide and black and white print photographs was taken, supplemented with digital photography. A metric scale was clearly visible in record photographs of contexts.

3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

Full trench descriptions, including orientation, length and depth of overburden are presented in Appendix 1.1. Technical details of individual contexts are presented in Appendix 1.2. Context numbers are expressed according to the trench in which they were found; *ie* Trench 1 - [100], [101]; Trench 2, [200], [201] etc. The results are described in chronological order and grouped by feature type.

Overburden generally comprised topsoil between 0.15m and 0.20m in depth which in turn overlay subsoil between 0.10m and 0.15m in depth. These directly overlay the undisturbed geology, which comprised of clays.

No additional (sub-surface) archaeological remains were identified in any of the trenches. Instead, we augmented our data on the earthworks identified in our previous survey (Headland Archaeology 2012a).

Illus 2
Trench locations and earthwork survey results

Illus 3
Redefined earthwork survey results

◄ **Illus 4**
Trench 2 facing NE

▲ **Illus 5**
SE facing section of Trench 2 through Hollow 4

3.2 Description of the significance of the Heritage Assets

The local and regional research frameworks are provided by Medlycott (2011) Glazebrook 1997, Brown & Glazebrook 2000). Due to the small size of the area covered the remains within the PDA offer limited potential to address research topics within these documents. These features were previously identified during the earthwork survey (Headland 2012a) and are considered of local interest.

Medieval

The large number of medieval sites recorded by the National Mapping Programme (NMP) represents a substantial body of data which remains largely unanalysed. There is huge potential for further research into topics such as field systems, in particular utilising historic maps and documents.

Post-medieval

The large number of post-medieval sites recorded by the NMP represents a substantial body of data which remains largely unanalysed. There is huge potential for further research into topics such as field systems, in particular utilising historic maps and documents.

Description of HA	**Trench nos**	**Feature nos**	**Significance of HA** *(Local, Regional, National, International scale)*
Ridge and Furrow (HA1)	1, 2 4	1 (Headland 2012a)	Local
Post-medieval banks (HA2	3, 4	4, 5 (Headland 2012a)	Local

Table 1
Significance of Heritage Assets (HA)

4. DISCUSSION

The earthwork survey (Headland 2012a) highlighted that up to eight fields separated by banks and different aligned ridge and furrow may have existed on the PDA (Illus 2). Two of these banks (5 and 7 – Illus 2) identified during the earthwork survey were targeted by the trial trenchin. However, no evidence of such dividing banks was revealed suggesting possible recent/natural build up of these features. The sub-rectangular hollow (3) also proved to be a depression in the topsoil rather than a cut feature.

Illus 6

Trench 4 facing NW

8 Based on this evidence Fields 1, 3, 8, 9, 10 and 15 that were highlighted during the earthwork survey are now considered to be one single field (Field 1, Illus 3) with the small banks being much later additions to the landscape but probably not serving as actual divisions in the Field. Fields 2, 9 and 10 although not examined by the trial trenching remain as separate fields based on the alignment of the ridge and furrow in those areas. Given that Banks 4, 5 and 6 are the result of modern/natural activity it would also suggest that features 7, 8 and 11 are also recent additions to the landscape but ultimately serving no role in farming processes or land division due to their absence from maps of the area.

Illus 7

S facing section of Trench 3 through Bank 5

4.1 Assessment of the impact of development on the significance of Heritage Assets

The change of use of the PDA to a new road will involve destructive groundworks. These groundworks would remove the ridge and furrow from the PDA and the post-medieval banks along the course of the proposed road, these features though have been mapped and the absence of any datable evidence suggests they would only contribute a small amount to the research frameworks. The remainder of the features previously identified during the earthwork survey would be unaffected by these groundworks.

Description of HA	**Trench nos**	**Description of development affecting**	**Significance of HA** *(Local, Regional, National, International scale)*	**Impact of development on HA** *(None, Low, Medium, High)*
Ridge and Furrow	1, 2, 4	Development, intrusive groundworks	Local	Medium
Post-medieval banks	3, 4	Development, intrusive groundworks	Local	Medium

Table 2

Impact on Heritage Assets (HA)

5. REFERENCES

5.1 Bibliography

BCAS 1990 *Leighton Linslade Southern Bypass.*

British Geological Survey website: http://www.bgs.ac.uk.

Brown, N & Glazebrook, J 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A framework for the eastern counties – 2; Research agenda and strategy,* East Anglian Archaeology Occassional Paper 8.

CgMs 2011 *Heritage Assessment for New roundabout east of Leighton-Linslade, Bedfordshire.*

English Heritage 1991 *Exploring Our Past.*

English Heritage 1997 *English Heritage Archaeology Division Research Agenda.*

Glazebrook, J 1997 *Research and archaeology: A framework for the eastern counties – 1; Resource assessment,* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 3.

Headland Archaeology 2012a *New roundabout, East of Leighton Linslade, Bedfordshire; Results of an Earthwork Survey,* unpublished client report.

Headland Archaeology 2012b *Archaeological Evaluation, Land East of Leighton-Linslade, Bedfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation,* unpublished specification.

Jones, JB 1992 *Leighton Buzzard Southern Bypass,* Journal of the Mansfield Archaeological Society of Dunstable.

Medleycot, M 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England,* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24.

Medleycot, M & Brown, N 2008 *Revision of the regional archaeological framework for the eastern region,* ALGO east of England (Avalaible on East Anglian Archaeology website: http://www.eaareports.org.uk).

Oake *et al* 2007 *Bedfordshire Archaeology: Research and archaeology: Resource assessment, research agenda and strategy,* Bedfordshire Archaeology Monograph 9.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Site registers

Trench register

Trench no.	Length (m)	Orientation	Description	Min. depth to archaeology
1	20.0	NW-SE	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20–0.30m subsoil; 0.30m+ natural geology	0.30
2	40.0	NE-SW	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20–0.35m subsoil; 0.35m+ natural geology	0.35
3	40.0	NNE-SSW	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20–0.40m subsoil; 0.40m+ natural geology	0.40
4	20.0	NW-SE	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20–0.40m subsoil; 0.40m+ natural geology	0.40

Photographic register

Photo no.	Direction	Description
1	E	Trench 2
2	S	Trench 2 Section
3	N	Trench 4
4	N	Trench 4 Section
5	E	Trench 3
6	S	Trench 3 Sondage
7	S	Trench 3 Section
8	N	Trench 1
9	N	Trench 1
10	E	Trench 1

South & East

Headland Archaeology
Technology Centre, Stanbridge Road
Leighton Buzzard LU7 4QH
01525 850878
leighton.buzzard@headlandarchaeology.com

Midlands & West

Headland Archaeology
Unit 1, Premier Business Park, Faraday Road
Hereford HR4 9NZ
01432 364 901
hereford@headlandarchaeology.com

North East

Headland Archaeology
13 Jane Street
Edinburgh EH6 5HE
0131 467 7705
office@headlandarchaeology.com

North West

Headland Archaeology
10 Payne Street
Glasgow G4 0LF
0141 354 8100
glasgowoffice@headlandarchaeology.com

www.headlandarchaeology.com