

CRTB13



CHURCH ROAD, TOTTERNHOE

Archaeological Watching Brief

for Nick Bignell

CB/12/02671

May 2013



HEADLAND
ARCHAEOLOGY Ltd



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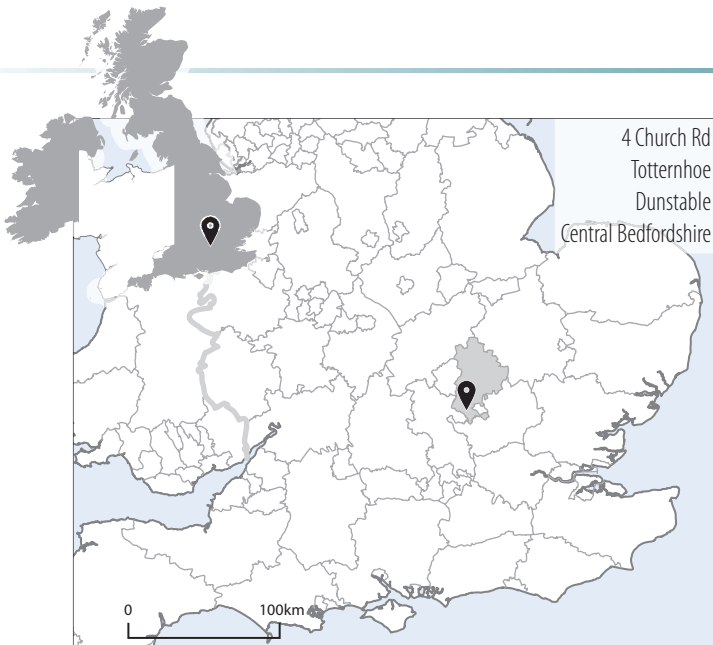


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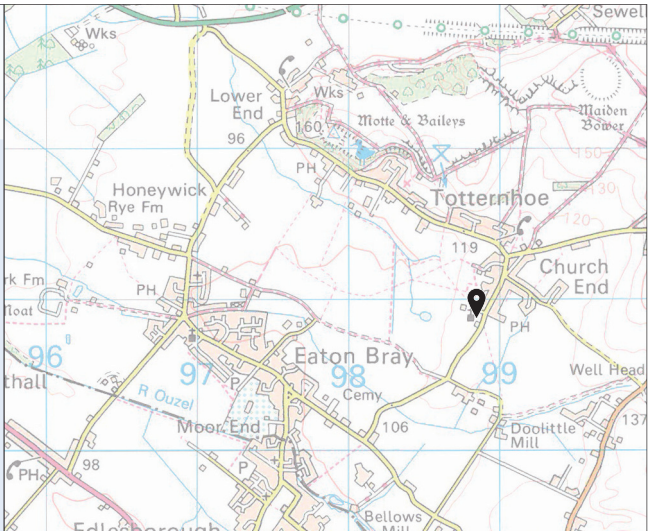
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4 Church Rd
Totternhoe
Dunstable
Central Bedfordshire



- Key**
- monitored foundation
 - boiler house
 - area previously occupied by garage

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scale 1:250 @ A4

N

0 10m

Illus 1
Site location

CHURCH ROAD, TOTTERNHOE

Archaeological Watching Brief

Headland Archaeology Ltd conducted a program of observation, investigation and recording during the excavation of foundation trenches required ahead of the construction of an extension to 4 Church Road, Totternhoe. This was carried out in order to satisfy a requirement by Central Bedfordshire Council and the work was commissioned by Nick Bignell. The observations on the rear extension resulted in no significant sub-surface archaeological remains being discovered. No observations were made on the side extension as existing foundations were re-used, negating the need for further groundworks.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning background

Central Bedfordshire Council has granted planning permission for the erection of single storey and two storey rear extensions at 4 Church Road, Totternhoe in south Bedfordshire (CB/12/02671). A condition attached to that permission (no.3) required the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation. The Central Bedfordshire Archaeological Officer (AO) advised that development at this site may impact negatively upon heritage assets. Therefore, under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) it was considered that the proposed development had the potential to impact upon heritage assets with archaeological interest. This is in line with the requirements of paragraph 141 of the NPPF which states that Local Planning Authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of any heritage assets to be lost (wholly or in part) in a manner appropriate to their importance and the impact, and to make this evidence (any archive generated) publicly accessible (CLG 2012).

The AO issued a brief (CBC 2012) which required a program of archaeological observation, investigation and recording to take place during any ground reduction works which consisted of the excavation of foundations for the extensions. The fieldwork took place on 28th January 2013 and this report outlines the results.

1.2 Site location and geology

The site lies within Church End, located at the south-east end of the village of Totternhoe, on a ridge between the Dunstable Downs to

the east and lower lying arable land to the south-west. Previously used as a patio and a garage (now demolished), the DA comprises two square areas measuring 5.7m and 7m across centred on SP 9903 2118. The site lies at a height of c. 118m AOD and the underlying geology comprises West Melbury, marly, chalk formation limestone (British Geological Survey).

1.3 Archaeological background

A Heritage Assessment was produced for the site (Albion 2011) and an updated search of the HER was conducted (10/1/2013) in order to check for significant changes to the HER since the assessment was completed (there were none). The brief (CBC) also provided useful detail on the background. These sources were consulted in preparing this WSI and copies of each were available on site and used in report production.

The Heritage Assessment summarises the archaeological potential of the site as follows (Albion 2011, Section 3.5, Summary of the Archaeological Potential of the PDA, 12–13):

Several prehistoric and Roman heritage assets, comprising both sites and find spots, lie within 500m of the PDA. However, most lie at some considerable distance from the PDA, suggesting the potential for their presence is low. There being little recorded evidence, the potential for Saxon remains is also low.

The PDA lies within the historic core of the medieval settlement of Church End, within which several heritage assets are recorded. The PDA's location within a likely



area of backyard activities to properties that fronted onto Church Road suggests a moderate to high potential for the presence of medieval remains.

Similarly, the PDA's location within a house and garden plot marked on early 19th century maps and the proximity of several Grade II listed buildings, suggests the likely presence of post-medieval remains within the PDA. Heritage assets post-dating 1900 comprise seven extant buildings of historical interest that are not listed. Within the PDA the potential for significant heritage assets of this period being encountered is low.

Therefore overall, there is a high potential for the presence of medieval and post-medieval remains within the PDA; if they exist, such remains could be of local or regional significance.

The CBC brief (2012, Section 3) contained the following text on the archaeological background of the land surrounding the site:

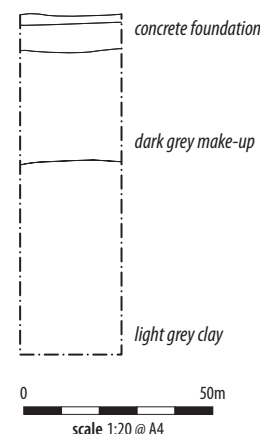
- The development site lies within the historic core of the village of Church End, Totternhoe (HER 16890) and under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), this is a heritage asset with archaeological interest.
- In addition Roman activity has been found to the south-west and south of the development site (for example HER 1410 and HER 6817) and includes the Scheduled remains of a 3rd to 4th century AD villa approximately 350 metres to the south (HER 534 and SM BD57).
- Totternhoe is mentioned in the Domesday survey of 1086AD and is therefore likely to have at least late Saxon origins. While the settlement became polyfocal (comprising a number of interlinked "Ends") during the medieval period, the focus of the pre-conquest occupation is likely to have been at Church End. This is supported by the recording of a rubbish dump dating to the late 5th or 6th century AD and the recovery of a reasonable quantity of Saxon potsherds at the Totternhoe villa (Matthews, Schneider & Horne, 1992).

2

Having been appointed to conduct observation works during construction and having reviewed the above documents, we (Headland Archaeology) felt the site may contain below ground heritage assets of various periods (Headland Archaeology 2013). For example, Roman remains associated with a Villa (SM BD57) or activity close to it could have occurred on the site. Also, Church End may have been the focus of settlement during the Saxon period; a small quantity of physical evidence in the form of rubbish pits having been recorded (Matthews, Schneider & Horne, 1992). In both cases, physical remains occurred within a few hundred metres of the development area, making them relevant to the works we were monitoring. Remains associated with the Medieval and post-medieval periods were felt to be the most likely to be recorded as there was certainly settlement and other associated activities taking place in both periods, whereas the specific character of earlier activity is somewhat uncertain.

It was also pointed out (Headland Archaeology 2013) that if remains from none of these periods were revealed, that in itself, does not disprove that activity of Roman-post-medieval date was taking place on, or close to the site (it seems highly likely that activity would have occurred in all these periods upon the development area).

Illus 2
Sample section



Not all activity leaves sub-surface remains and some remains are very temporary, leaving no, or very little trace.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Objectives

The objectives of the observations were:

- to record and enhance understanding of the significance of heritage assets before they are lost;
- to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any remains on the site, in their cultural and environmental setting; and
- to analyse any evidence retrieved during the works in light of the objectives contained in local, regional and national research contexts; which, in this case, are provided by Oake et al (2007), Glazebrook (1997), Brown & Glazebrook (2000), Medlycott & Brown (2008) and Medlycott (2011).

Also, the specific objectives of the project were:

- to establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the DA. In particular whether any remains pre-dating the standing structures and post-medieval farm survive within the disturbed areas;
- to establish the relationship of any remains to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- to recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region; and
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

2.2 Methodology

Foundation trenches required for the construction of the extension were excavated by the client. A mini-excavator equipped with a toothed bucket excavated the trenches to the depth required by the client. This was aided by hand excavation. All ground reduction was carried out under continuous and constant archaeological supervision.

A full photographic record comprising colour slide, black and white print and digital photographs was taken. All recording was in accordance with the Code of Conduct Institute of Field Archaeologists 2010; and Standard and Guidance for

Headland Archaeology

Illus 3

Garage area (now demolished, ground reduced prior to garage erection)

Illus 4

Typical results of excavations for foundations (north facing section)

Archaeological Field Evaluations (Institute of Field Archaeologists 1994, rev 2008). All contexts were given unique numbers, were required, and all recording was undertaken on *pro forma* record cards that conform to accepted archaeological standards. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.

3. RESULTS

The soil profile comprised 0.30m of mid grey silty clay (make-up deposit) overlying natural deposits of light grey clay (0.30m – 0.50m) and light grey/white chalk (Illus 2 and 4). A thin layer of orange sand was observed above the grey make up layer in the area directly outside the rear entrance to the house. This was a levelling layer for the conservatory and patio (now removed).

No archaeological remains were revealed in any of the foundation trenches.

3.1 Description of the significance of the Heritage Assets

The local and regional research contexts that are provided by Oake et al (2007), Medlycott (2011), Glazebrook (1997), Brown & Glazebrook (2000) and Medlycott & Brown (2008) outline various gaps in knowledge in the Bedfordshire area. Due to no archaeological remains being identified during the observations, the site does not contribute to these research aims.

4. DISCUSSION

The observations on the rear extension resulted in no significant sub-surface archaeological remains being discovered. No observations were made on the side extension as existing foundations were re-used, negating the need for further groundworks.

With regard to the rear extension, it may be the case that the construction of the house, garage, conservatory and patio may have impacted on the potential of the DA to contain archaeological remains. The nature of the deposits suggests that the area the conservatory and patio previously occupied had been stripped and the ground reduced, then subsequently remodelled with re-deposited (make-up) material. However, the constraints of the



foundation trenches do not demonstrate by how much the ground was reduced making it hard to determine the impact of the former development; therefore, it is unknown whether or not the paucity of remains indicates a genuine reflection of the archaeological potential of the DA. It is possible that these footings were blank but that remains lie elsewhere on the site, beyond the confines of the footings.



5. REFERENCES

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5.2 Websites

British Geological Survey Website <www.bgs.ac.uk> Accessed: 29.01.2013.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Site records

Appendix 1.1 Photographic register

Frame	Direction	Description
001	NE	Area of previously reduced ground (Previously garage) (Illus 3)
002	E	Foundation Area
003	E	Foundation Area
004	E	North side of house foundations
005	SE	NFS of foundations
006	NW	EFS of foundations
007	SE	NFS of foundations
008	SE	NFS of foundations (Illus 4)
009	SE	NFS of foundations with concrete
010	SE	NFS of foundations
011	E	Area of previously reduced ground
012	E	House (4 Church Road)
013	NE	House (4 Church Road)
014	N	Section where garage previously was positioned
015	W	Section where garage previously was positioned



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