

HERITAGE NETWORK



38 NEWBURY LANE
Silsoe, Beds

HN451

Archaeological Evaluation



THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

Land to the rear of
38 NEWBURY LANE
Silsoe, Beds.

HN451

Archaeological Evaluation

Prepared on behalf of Peter Wilkinson Esq

by

David Hillelson, BA MIFA

Report no.225

February 2004

© The Heritage Network Ltd

12 ROYSTON ROAD, BALDOCK, HERTS. SG7 6NT
TEL: (01462) 893288 FAX: (01462) 893562

THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD

Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

12 ROYSTON ROAD, BALDOCK, HERTS. SG7 6NT
TEL: (01462) 893288 FAX: (01462) 893562

Contents

	Summary	Page i
Section 1	Introduction.....	Page 1
Section 2	Fieldwork	Page 2
Section 3	Discussion & Conclusion	Page 4
Section 4	Bibliography.....	Page 4
Section 5	Illustrations.....	following Page 4

The cover photo shows the study area from the north-west

Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Karin Semmelmann and Mark Winter. The report text and illustrations were prepared by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Peter and Lyn Wilkinson; Robert Robertson, Architect; Eric Porter, groundworks contractor; and Martin Oake, County Archaeological Officer, BCC, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

Summary

Site name and address:	Land to the r/o 38 Newbury Lane, Silsoe		
County:	Bedfordshire	District:	Mid Beds.
Village/town:	Silsoe	Parish:	Silsoe
Planning reference:	n/a	NGR:	TL 0778 3626
Client name and address:	Peter and Lyn Wilkinson, 38 Newbury Lane, Silsoe		
Nature of work:	New development	Present land use:	Garden
Size of affected area:	c.2725m ²	Size of area investigated:	c.100m ²
Site Code:	HN451	Other reference:	n/a
Organisation:	Heritage Network	Site Director:	David Hillelson
Type of work:	Evaluation	Curating Museum:	Bedford Museum
Start of work	17/02/2004	Finish of work	19/02/2004
Related HER Nos:	HER 217 & 218	Periods represented:	n/a
Previous summaries/reports:	n/a		

Synopsis:

In order to determine the archaeological risk posed by an application to construct a new dwelling on land to the rear of 38 Newbury Lane, Silsoe, the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation.

Despite the proximity of the site to a Scheduled Ancient Monument consisting of two moated enclosures, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered in the course of the fieldwork.

1. Introduction

1.1 This report has been prepared on behalf of Peter Wilkinson, Esq, as part of the archaeological evaluation of a proposed development site on land to the rear of 38 Newbury Lane, Silsoe, Beds. The determination of the planning application for the development by the Mid Beds District Council (MBDC), has been referred back to the applicants for further information on the archaeological potential of the site. This is in accordance with the provisions set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note No.16 (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning. The scope of the required investigation was set out in a Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation dated 4 December 2003 prepared by the County Archaeological Officer (CAO) of Bedfordshire County Council, acting as adviser to the planning authority. The evaluation followed the provisions set out in the Heritage Network's approved Project Design dated January 2004.

1.2 The site lies on the north-western edge of the village, centred on NGR TL 0778 3626. The proposed development area is formed from the north-western end of the rear garden of no.38 Newbury Lane (Newbury Barn). It is bounded on the west by a Scheduled Ancient Monument consisting of two moated enclosures (HER 217 & 218) and other features associated with Newbury Manor; on the south-west by the rear gardens of nos. 40 and 42 Newbury Lane; and on the north-east by the rear garden of no. 36b Newbury Lane. The development area is approximately 2725m² in size including the access. The construction of a detached dwelling, with associated access, services and landscaping, is proposed.

1.3 Although apparently outside the core of the medieval settlement of Silsoe, focused on the High Street, the proximity of the site to the Scheduled Ancient Monument, which is likely to be manorial in origin, suggested that there was a high potential for the discovery of archaeological remains, particularly of medieval date. The aim of the evaluation has been to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any such remains which are liable to be threatened by the development, and to provide a local and regional archaeological and historical context for them, in accordance with the current published regional research agenda (Glazebrook 1997, Brown and Glazebrook 2000), if they were discovered.

1.4 The present Evaluation Report is intended to provide the planning authority with sufficient data to allow it to consider the archaeological implications of the proposed development, and to determine what further, if any, mitigation measures may be required should the development proceed.

2. Fieldwork

SITE TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

2.1 The site is situated on relatively ground level around the 60m contour, rising gently to the north and west. It is currently laid to lawn with flower beds and shrubbery.

2.2 The underlying geology of the area is lower Greensand with local outcrops of boulder and gault clays.

2.3 No geo-technical test pits had been excavated on the site prior to this archaeological evaluation.

RESULTS

Stratigraphy

2.4 The stratigraphy was broadly similar across all three trenches. It consisted of:

- topsoil of very dark brown (10 YR 2/2) silty clay, measuring between 0.20 and 0.30m in depth;
- a subsoil of dark yellowish brown (10 YR 3/6 - 4/4) sandy clay, measuring between 0.15 and 0.30m in depth;
- undisturbed natural of yellowish brown (10 YR 4/6 - 5/6) clay and sandy clay with occasional lenses of gravel, encountered at 0.40-0.60m below the existing surface.

2.5 All trenches were affected by rising groundwater at the level of the natural horizon.

Trench 1

2.6 Trench 1 was 19.90m in length and 2.10m in width, aligned north-east – south-west within the proposed development area.

2.7 No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

Trench 2

2.8 Trench 2 was 9.60m in length and 2.25m in width, aligned north-west - south-east within the proposed development area, to the south east of, and perpendicular to the mid-point of Trench 1.

2.9 A small sondage, into the natural subsoil, was excavated at the south-eastern end of this trench to investigate the possible presence of a buried archaeological horizons. None was evident.

2.10 No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

Trench 3

2.11 This trench was located along the line of the proposed access drive. It was orientated north-west - south-east and measured 19.60m in length and 1.90m wide.

2.12 No archaeological features or deposits were observed within this trench.

Concordance of finds

2.13 No artefacts were identified or recovered from any trench, suggesting an absence of archaeological activity on this site.

3. Discussion & Conclusion

3.1 Despite the proximity of the site to two medieval moated enclosures to the west of the site, no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were encountered.

3.2 The additional machining of a sondage at the south-eastern end of Trench 2 confirmed the absence of any buried horizons which might have suggested the masking of archaeological activity across the site.

3.3 The lack of disturbance across the site suggests that little use of this area has been made in recent times, either for cultivation or for garden features. The limited cartographic evidence which has been consulted suggests that the area was not built up until the construction of the present properties, which are mid-20th century in date.

Conclusion

3.4 The evaluation of the site suggests that any archaeological activity associated with the adjacent moat lies elsewhere.

3.5 The overall risk that the proposed development will disturb archaeological remains of any significance may be considered to be Very Low.

Confidence Rating

3.6 Although there was intrusive groundwater in all three trenches and intermittent rain in the course of the fieldwork, the conditions were generally acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation. There were no circumstances which would lead to a confidence rating for the work which was less than High.

4. Bibliography

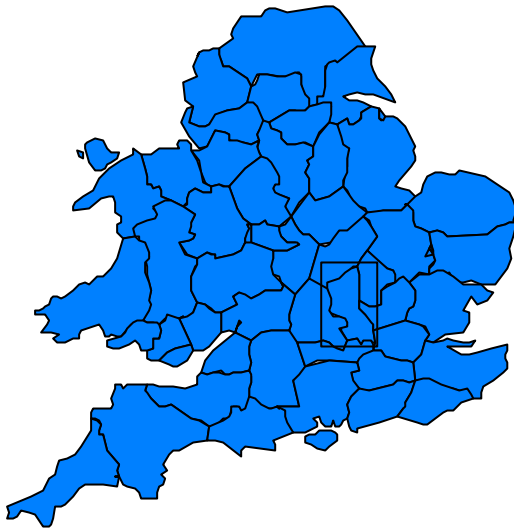
Hillelson, D, 2004 *Land to the rear of 38 Newbury Lane, Silsoe, Beds.* Project Design: Archaeological Evaluation. Heritage Network.

Oake, M, 2003 *Brief for the Archaeological Field Evaluation of land at Newbury Barn, 38 Newbury Lane, Silsoe.* Bedfordshire County Council.

5. Illustrations

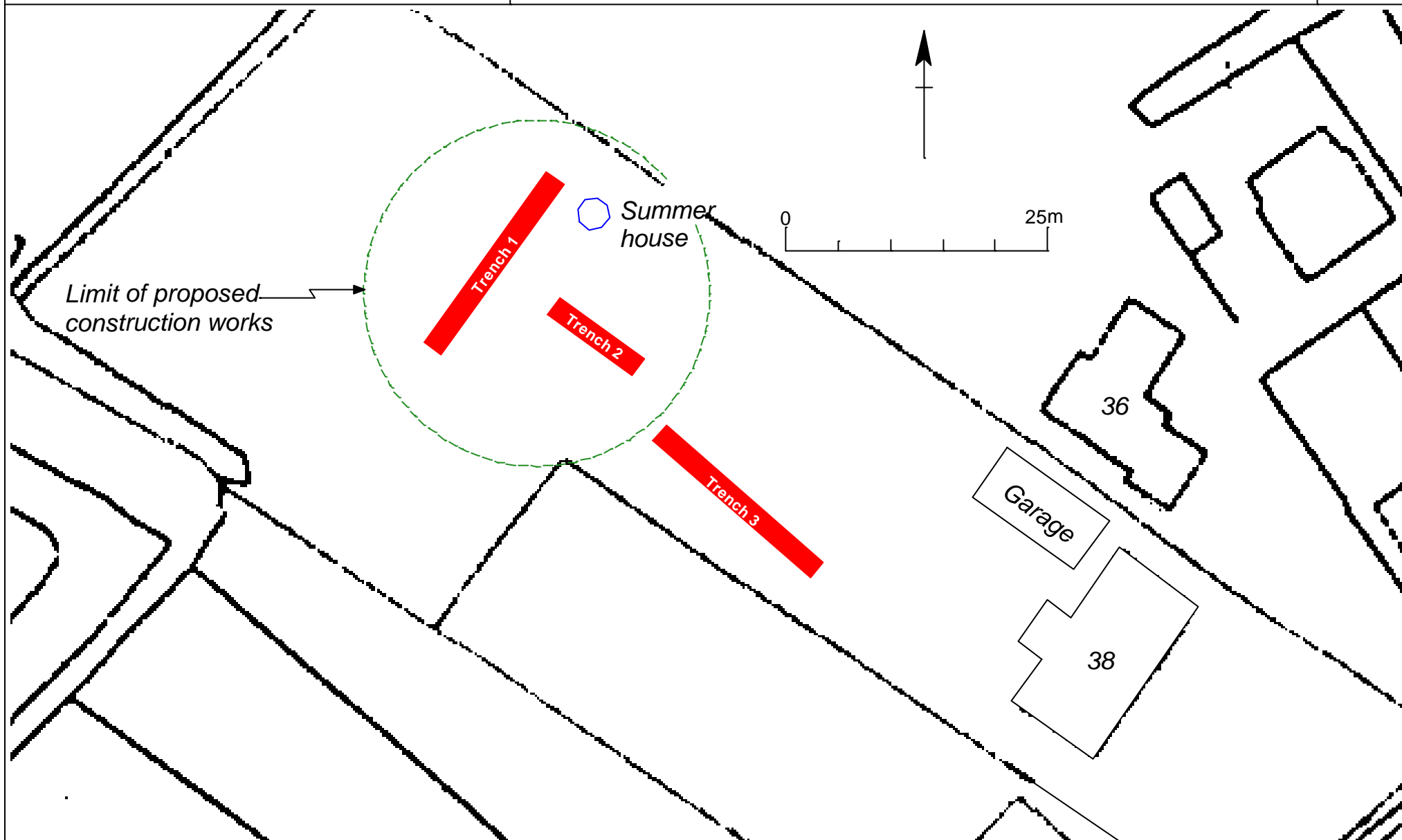
Figure 1Site location

Figure 2Site layout



Site Location

Scale 1:1250



Site layout

Scale 1:500

Figure 2