

# HERITAGE NETWORK



## **7 STRATFORD ROAD, Sandy, Beds.**

HN820

### *Archaeological Evaluation Report*



# *THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD*

*Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation*

Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

7 STRATFORD ROAD  
Sandy, Bedfordshire

Project ref.:HN820  
Accession no.: BEDFM.2009.54  
LPA ref.: MB/TP/09/164

## *Archaeological Evaluation*

*Prepared on behalf of Mr Darren Brooker*

Report no. 562

*November 2009*

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*The cover illustration shows the site looking north-east*

## Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by Mark Winter and Mick James. The report was edited by David Hillelson.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Darren Brooker; Richard Sheen, Triad Planning; Peter Wilson Plant Hire; and Hannah Firth, Conservation and Design Team, Central Bedfordshire Council, for their help and co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

## Summary

<b>Site name and address:</b>	7 Stratford Road, Sandy, SG19 2AA		
<b>County:</b>	Bedfordshire	<b>District:</b>	Central Bedfordshire
<b>Village/town:</b>	Sandy	<b>Parish:</b>	Sandy
<b>Planning reference:</b>	MB/TP/09/164	<b>NGR:</b>	TL 1806 4832
<b>Client name and address:</b>	Darren Brooker, 7 Stratford Road, Sandy, Beds. SG19 2AA		
<b>Nature of work:</b>	Rear extension	<b>Former land use:</b>	Garden
<b>Site status:</b>	n/a	<b>Reason for investigation:</b>	Direction of LPA (PPG 16)
<b>Position in planning process:</b>	Pre-determination	<b>Project brief originator:</b>	Local authority
<b>Size of affected area:</b>	209m <sup>2</sup>	<b>Size of area investigated:</b>	30.5m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Site Code:</b>	HN820	<b>Accession no. :</b>	BEDFM2009.54
<b>Organisation:</b>	Heritage Network	<b>Site Director:</b>	David Hillelson
<b>Project type, methods etc.:</b>	Evaluation	<b>Archive recipient:</b>	Bedford Museum
<b>Start of work</b>	29/09/2009	<b>Finish of work</b>	1/10/2009
<b>Related SMR Nos:</b>	n/a	<b>Periods represented:</b>	Roman; modern
<b>Oasis UID</b>	heritage1-62830	<b>Significant finds:</b>	Pottery; coin; animal bone
<b>Monument types:</b>	Ditch; posthole; pit		
<b>Physical archive:</b>	Pottery; animal bone; coin		
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b>	n/a		

### Synopsis:

In order to determine the archaeological risk posed by a proposal to construct a single storey rear extension to the existing house at 7 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned by Darren Brooker to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation.

The site is located within the Roman small town at Sandy and a series of linear boundary features, with postholes cut into their bases, was identified in all three of the evaluation trenches. Pottery collected from their fills demonstrates that these features were in use from at least the immediate post-Conquest period to the 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. No evidence for post-Roman or medieval activity was present.



# 1. Introduction

**1.1** This report has been prepared on behalf of Darren Brooker, as part of the archaeological evaluation of a development site located at 7 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire.

**1.2** The investigation was a pre-determination requirement for a planning application submitted to Central Bedfordshire District Council (ref: MB/TP/09/164), following the provisions set out in Planning Policy Guidance Note No.16 (PPG16) on Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990). The extent of the work was defined in a *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Field Evaluation*, prepared by the Archaeological Officer (AO) from the Conservation and Design Team of Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC), the unitary authority covering the site.

**1.3** The study area is centred on NGR TL 1806 4832 to the south-east of Sandy's modern centre. It is bounded to the northwest by no. 5 Stratford Road, to the southwest by Stratford Road itself, to the south east by 7a Stratford Road and to the northeast by open fields. The development proposes the construction of a new single storey, rear extension with associated landscaping.

**1.4** 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 local and regional research agenda (Glazebrook 1997; Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Oake et al 2007), if they were discovered.

**1.5** The present 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 to allow the development to proceed.

## 2. Fieldwork

### *SITE TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY*

**2.1** The study area consists of a small area of land to the north-east of the existing house. The site lies on a gentle south-west facing slope, just above the floodplain within the valley of the River Ivel, at approximately 30m AOD. The land rises sharply to the Greensand Ridge to the east.

**2.2** Locally the soils belong to the Frilford Association (554a) described as ‘Deep well drained sandy and coarse loamy soils. Some ferruginous sandy and some coarse loamy soils affected by groundwater. Risk of water erosion.’ (SSEW 1984).

**2.3** The site lies on the western edge of the Frilford Association, close to its junction with the soils of the Thames Association (814a).

**2.4** The underlying geology comprises Lower Greensand.

### *METHODOLOGY*

**2.5** All work was carried out in accordance with the approved *Project Design*, current health and safety legislation, and both IFA and ALGAO standards.

**2.6** Three trenches were opened using a tracked mini-digger fitted with a 0.8m wide toothless bucket, under close archaeological supervision. Spoil from the machining was inspected for archaeological artefacts.

**2.7** All potential archaeological features and deposits were sampled to ascertain their nature, depth, date, and quality of preservation.

**2.8** All identified contexts were photographed and recorded using the appropriate pro-forma. Scaled plans and sections were drawn on drafting film at scales of 1:20 and 1:50.

### *Artefacts*

**2.9** Where appropriate, bulk finds such as pottery and ceramic building material have been carefully washed in clean water to remove the soil, and quantified. All pottery has been marked with the site code and context number.

### *Ecofacts*

**2.10** Five bulk samples, measuring approximately 30 litres each, were taken from features on the site. Approximately 1 litre from each sample has been processed and examined to assess its potential.

- Sample 1 was collected from fill (103) in cut [110]
- Sample 2 was collected from fill (202) in cut [201]
- Sample 3 was collected from fill (204) in cut [203]
- Sample 4 was collected from fill (302) in cut [301]

- Sample 5 was collected from fill (111) in cut [110]

## RESULTS

### Stratigraphy

**2.11** A slight variation in stratigraphy was encountered across the site. The sections in Trenches 1 and 2 revealed a dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) silty sand turf layer, 0.10m deep, above a yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sand layer, 0.08m deep. Below this was dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) silty sand subsoil, 0.48m deep, which contained occasional small stones. A variety of features recorded in section in trenches 1 and 2 were not observed during machining because the similarity of their fills gave the impression of representing a single homogeneous sub-soil layer.

**2.12** The sections in Trench 3 revealed a layer of dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) silty sand topsoil, between 0.40 and 0.60m deep, similar to the subsoil recorded in Trenches 1 and 2. Below this was a strong brown (7.5 YR 4/6) clayey sand with evidence of much root disturbance. Feature [301], which was recorded in the section of trench 3, was not observed during machining because of the concreted nature of the topsoil and subsoil in this area.

### Trench 1

Length (m):	3.90	Width (m):	2.60	Maximum Depth (m):		Orientation	NW-SE	
Level at Northwest End of Trench (mOD)			Top	28.91	Level at Southeast End of Trench (mOD)		Top	29.01
			Base	28.18			Base	28.34
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)					
			Length	Width	Depth			
	Layer	Dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) silty sand turf	3.90	2.60	0.10			
	Layer	Yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sand	3.90	2.60	0.08			
	Layer	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) silty sand with occasional small stone inclusions	3.90	2.60	0.48			
101	Cut	Sub-rectangular cut with sloping sides & irregular base. NE-SW aligned linear feature, appears to terminate in centre of trench, but visible in E section as cut [120]. Stratigraphically latest cut in the sequence.	1.10+	1.06	0.16			
102	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/6) firm silty sand. Fill of [101]. Contained pottery dated LIA to 2 <sup>nd</sup> -3 <sup>rd</sup> C AD.	1.10+	1.03	0.16			
103	Fill	Black (10YR 2/1) soft sooty material. Burnt layer on S side of ditch [110]. Contained pottery dated 2 <sup>nd</sup> to 4 <sup>th</sup> C AD.	0.40	0.80+	0.04			
104	Cut	Sub-circular cut with sloping sides & concave base. Possible posthole	0.25	0.25	0.10			
105	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/4) silty sand with frequent hard packed stones. Fill of [104]. No finds.	0.25	0.25	0.10			
106	Cut	Sub-circular cut with near vertical sides & concave base. Probable posthole	0.32	0.32	0.29			
107	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/6) silty sand with frequent hard packed stones. Fill of [106]. Contained 1 sherd of RB shell-tempered ware.	0.32	0.32	0.29			



108	Cut	Irregular feature with steep sides & irregular base. Base of NE-SW linear feature, stratigraphically earliest in sequence of recut ditches	0.65+	0.48	0.26
109	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/4) firm silty sand with occasional small flints. Fill of [108]. Contained pottery dated LIA to c.70AD.	0.65+	0.48	0.26
110	Cut	SW-NE aligned linear feature with steep sides & irregular base. Probable ditch. Same as [116]	2.50++	1.40	0.27
111	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/6) firm silty sand with occasional small flints & pebbles. Fill of [110]. Contained pottery dated LIA to c.70AD.	2.50++	1.40	0.27
112	Cut	Square feature with concave sides & U-shaped base. Pit (probably modern)	0.50	0.53	0.08
113	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) loose silty sand with occasional small stones. Fill of [112].	0.50	0.53	
114	Cut	Circular cut with slightly concave sides & U-shaped base. Posthole cut through linear [116]	0.25+	0.49	0.33
115	Fill	Brown (10YR 4/3) firm silty sand with frequent small stones. Fill of [114]	0.25+	0.49	0.33
116	Cut	Very irregular linear (probably badly root damaged) aligned NE-SW. Same as [110]	0.58 LoE	1.34	0.40
117	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/6) loose silty sand. Fill of [116]	0.58 LoE	1.34	0.40
118	Cut	Sub-circular cut with sloping sides & concave base. Possible posthole	0.32	0.22	0.25
119	Fill	Dark brown (10YR 3/3) silty sand with hard packed pebbles & flints. Fill of [118]. Contained pottery dated LIA to c.70AD.	0.32	0.22	0.25
120	Cut	NE-SW aligned linear feature with concave sides & U-shaped base. Probable ditch seen in trench section. Appears to be same as [101] & part of the latest cut in the sequence.	Not known	1.30	0.27
121	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) loose silty sand with moderate small stones. Fill of [120]	Not known	1.30	0.27
122	Cut	Possible linear with straight sloping sides & flat base.	0.70+	0.77+	0.28
123	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/6) loose sand. Fill of [122]	0.70+	0.77+	0.28
124	Cut	Shape in plan unknown. Has straight sides, undercut on the eastern side, & flat base. Possible natural feature	Not known	0.26	0.31
125	Fill	Yellowish brown (10YR 5/8) friable silty sand. Fill of [124], mix of subsoil and natural	Not known	0.26	0.31

**2.13** Trench 1 was located at the north-western corner of the site, within the sunken area close to the existing house (Figure 2). It was aligned north-west to south-east and contained a series of potential archaeological features of late Iron Age to Roman date, all of which were located on the eastern side of a north-east to south-west aligned linear feature, ditch [110]/[116] (Figure 3; Plate 1). The features in this trench had been severely truncated by landscaping to create the sunken area adjacent to the house.

**2.14** The features recorded in Trench 1 appear to represent a series of recuts of a north-east to south-west aligned ditch (Plates 2 & 3). The sequence was most clearly visible on the western side of the trench where the earliest cut appears to be [108]. This was truncated on its eastern side by [101] and to the west by [110]. Cut [101] also truncated the western side of cut

[122]. Although [101] appears to terminate in the centre of the trench this may reflect the irregular base in the soft sandy nature of the natural as cut [120], on the eastern side of the trench, appears to represent the continuation of [101].

**2.15** The pottery recovered from the fills of these features was predominantly late Iron Age or early Roman in date. However, sherds dating to between the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries AD were recovered from layer (103), a layer of burnt material on the southern edge of linear [110], indicating that this feature is the latest in the sequence.

**2.16** A number of postholes had apparently been excavated through the bases of the ditches (Figure 3). These include posthole [104] in [101], posthole [106] in [108] and posthole [118] in [116]. The combination of linear ditches with postholes indicate that these features represent an outer boundary to a possible enclosed occupation site.

**2.17** Cut [112] is a modern pit. It was cut through the earlier ditch system and contained significant quantities of chicken bone (Plate 4). The client's family kept chickens and those that died were buried in the back garden (Darren Brooker, pers. comm.).

**2.18** Cut [124] was seen in the southern section only. Its fill consisted of a mixed natural sand and the overlying subsoil, suggesting that this was a natural feature.

### Trench 2

Length (m):	7.70	Width (m):	1.50	Maximum Depth (m):	1.12	Orientation	NW-SE
Level at Northwest End of Trench (mOD)		Top	29.82	Level at Southeast End of Trench (mOD)		Top	29.96
		Base	28.77			Base	29.27
Context	Type	Description	Dimensions (m)				
			Length	Width	Depth		
	Layer	Dark greyish brown (10YR 4/2) silty sand turf	7.70	1.50	0.16		
	Layer	Yellowish brown (10YR 5/6) sand	7.70	1.50	0.07		
	Layer	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) silty sand with occasional small stone inclusions	7.70	1.50	0.43		
201	Cut	NE-SW aligned linear feature with irregular sides and a flat base. NW side is near vertical from base, becoming convex. NE side is near vertical, but with small ledge halfway up. Probable boundary ditch	1.50+	2.00	0.98		
202	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 3/4) loose silty sand, with occasional small stones. Fill of [201]. Contained pottery dated LIA to c.70AD.	1.50+	2.00	0.98		
203	Cut	NE-SW aligned linear feature with gently sloping, slightly irregular sides and a flat, slightly irregular, base.	1.50+	3.80	0.60		
204	Fill	Dark brown (10YR 3/3) loose clayey sand with moderate small stones. Fill of [203]. Contained 2 sherds of LIA / early RB shell-tempered ware.	1.50+	3.80	0.60		
205	Cut	Shallow sub-circular cut with rounded base. Base of posthole observed below [203]. May cut [203]	0.40	0.23	0.07		
206	Fill	Dark brown (10 YR 3/3) loose silty sand with frequent stones. Fill of [205].	0.40	0.23	0.07		

**2.19** Trench 2 was located on higher ground towards the eastern side of the site (Figure 2). It was aligned north-west to south-east and contained two parallel linear features, cuts [201] and [203], and the base of a probable posthole, cut [205] (Figure 4; Plate 5).

**2.20** The linear features were aligned north-east to south-west, and had survived better than those in Trench 1 as they were further up the slope and had been subject to less landscaping. Ditch [201] was approximately 1m in depth and 2m wide (Plate 6). Feature [203], which was over 3m wide and 0.60m deep, is a northeast-southwest orientated ditch which may be related to features [110]/[116], the western ditch in the series of recut linears in Trench 1 (Plate 7). Posthole [205] may have been excavated through its base (Plate 8).

**2.21** Pottery collected from the fills of these features has been dated to the late Iron Age or early Roman period.

### **Trench 3**

<b>Length (m):</b>	5.30	<b>Width (m):</b>	2.00	<b>Maximum Depth (m):</b>	0.63	<b>Orientation</b>	NE-SW	
<b>Level at Northeast End of Trench (mOD)</b>			<b>Top</b>	30.04	<b>Level at Southwest End of Trench (mOD)</b>		<b>Top</b>	29.58
			<b>Base</b>	29.27			<b>Base</b>	28.98
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Dimensions (m)</b>					
			<b>Length</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Depth</b>			
	Layer	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) silty sand topsoil with occasional small stones	5.30	2.00	0.40-0.60			
	Layer	Strong brown (7.5YR 4/6) concreted clayey sand subsoil with possible root disturbance	5.30	2.00	0.30			
301	Cut	NW-SE aligned linear feature with sloping concave sides & flat base.	Not known	1.12	0.25			
302	Fill	Dark yellowish brown (10YR 4/4) loose, slightly clayey, silt with occasional small stones. Fill of [301]. Contained pottery dated LIA to c.70AD.	Not known	1.12	0.25			

**2.22** Trench 3 was located on higher ground in the south-west corner of the site (Figure 2). It was aligned north-east to south-west and contained one feature, cut [301] (Figure 5; Plate 9). This was only seen in section owing to the problems with the differing levels and the very hard nature of the topsoil and subsoil (Figure 5; Plate 10).

## **ARTEFACTS AND ECOFACTS**

### **Pottery**

**2.23** A total of 95 sherds, weighing 971g, have been recovered from the archaeological investigations at 7 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire. The average sherd weight is fairly good, standing at just over 10g and the condition of the pottery may be described as abraded to slightly abraded. However, the diagnostic element of the assemblage is quite low, consisting solely of four beaded-rim jars, two of which are storage jars (these cannot be identified beyond their general class).

**2.24** The bulk of the assemblage consisted of sherds of southern British grog-tempered ware (SOB GT/Beds Fabric F06B-C), a fabric that straddles the conquest period (AD43 to c AD70). Other contemporary fabrics included a number of sherds of late Iron Age / early Roman shell-tempered wares (UNS SH/Beds Fabric R13). Thereafter a small number of

abraded sherds, relating to the later Roman period are present in two contexts (102 & 103); these also contain earlier pottery too. These comprise sherds of Lower Nene Valley colour coat (LNV CC/ Beds Fabric R12B) and Oxford red/brown slipped ware (OXF RS/ Beds Fabric R11G).

**2.25** The preponderance of the assemblage is dated between c 20/15 BC and c AD70 and probably represents some form of low status rural activity.

#### *Recommendations*

**2.26** Given the small size and abraded nature of the material, no further work is recommended on this assemblage.

#### ***Brick/CBM***

**2.27** Two fragments of ceramic building material, weighing 105g, were collected from the present site. The assemblage comprised a single modern brick fragment, weighing 95g, from the topsoil in Trench 2 and a small abraded fragment of probable Roman date from fill (204).

#### *Recommendations*

**2.28** Given the small size and abraded nature of the material, no further work is recommended on this assemblage.

#### ***Oyster Shell***

**2.29** Five pieces of oyster shell, weighing 3g, were collected from two contexts, 102 and 103.

#### *Recommendations*

**2.30** Given the small size and fragmentary nature of the material, no further work is recommended on this assemblage.

#### ***Animal Bone***

**2.31** A total of 360 pieces of bone, weighing 1110g, was collected during the present evaluation. The bulk of the assemblage (289 @ 385g) was recovered from context (113). The bones are all from chickens, representing at least three individuals. The client reported a number of pits were dug in the back garden to bury chickens and this appears to have been one of these features.

**2.32** The remainder of the assemblage consisted largely of butchered bone fragments from cattle and sheep/goat. Part of the lower jaw of a bovine was also recovered from fill (202).

#### *Recommendations*

**2.33** Given the fragmentary and largely modern nature of the assemblage no further work is recommended.

## ***Glass***

**2.34** A total of three pieces of glass, weighing 5g, was recovered from the present site. Two very abraded pieces were collected from the fill of the modern pit [112]. The third fragment was recovered from the topsoil in Trench 2.

### *Recommendations*

**2.35** Given the modern date of the material, no further work is recommended on this assemblage.

## ***Rubber***

**2.36** A single very worn piece of modern rubber (1g) is present in context (113).

### *Recommendations*

**2.37** No further work this material is recommended.

## ***Slag***

**2.38** A total of 11 pieces of ferrous slag, weighing 195g, was recovered from fill (109) in ditch [108]. The pieces vary in size and may indicate iron working in the vicinity in the late Iron Age or early Roman period.

### *Recommendations*

**2.39** Given the small size and abraded nature of the material, no further work is recommended on this assemblage.

## ***Flint***

**2.40** A total of 10 pieces of flint, weighing 45g, was recovered from the site. Six of the pieces, weighing 25g, were collected from context (103). These were all burnt. The remaining four pieces proved, on examination, to be natural.

### *Recommendations*

**2.41** No further work on this material is recommended.

## ***Fe Objects***

**2.42** A total of 10 iron objects, weighing 120g, was recovered from one unstratified and four stratified contexts. The objects, which represent iron nails, are heavily corroded.

### *Recommendations*

**2.43** Given the small size and corroded nature of the material, no further work is recommended on this assemblage.

### ***Cu Alloy Coin***

**2.44** One copper alloy coin, weighing 2g, was recovered from fill (102) in ditch [101]. It measures 18mm in diameter and is very worn. The outline of a head can be made out on the obverse and standing figure, possibly female, on the reverse. Its size and weight indicates a later Roman date (3<sup>rd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD).

#### *Recommendations*

**2.45** The object should be submitted to a specialist for cleaning, identification and closer dating.

### ***Stone***

**2.46** A total of 12 stone fragments, weighing 3255g, was recovered from two unstratified and three stratified contexts. All of the examples are sandstone, which is locally available, and appear to be naturally eroded.

#### *Recommendations*

**2.47** Given the small size and abraded nature of the material, no further work is recommended on this assemblage.

### ***Bulk Soil Samples***

**2.48** Approximately 1 litre of each of the bulk soil samples was processed and examined under a binocular microscope at x10 magnification in order to assess their potential. Two of the samples (samples 1 and 5 – both collected from the fills of cut [110]) were charcoal rich. The remaining samples produced small amounts of charcoal. No piece of charcoal was large enough for identification of the wood.

**2.49** Small fragments of animal bone and pottery were present in the residues of all five samples.

**2.50** No evidence for carbonised seeds was observed.

**2.51** No evidence for insect remains was observed.

**2.52** A magnet passed across both the flots and the residues produced no evidence of hammer scale.

#### *Recommendations*

**2.53** Given the lack of ecofacts in the processed samples, or significant quantities of ferrous residue, no further work is proposed.

## 3. Discussion

### *Archaeological and historical background*

**3.1** As few archaeological investigations have been undertaken in Sandy since the publication of the EUS (see Albion Archaeology 2003, Fig.2), much of the information relevant to the Roman period that is listed below has been drawn from that document. The HER includes a number of entries from within 500m of the site, and these have been listed below in date order:

- Remains of prehistoric origin consist of a Late Bronze Age/Early Iron Age beaker wrist guard recovered near to the railway station 400m to the northwest (HER1505); a Late Iron Age Belgic cemetery, identified 400m to the northwest (HER 1501); evidence for Belgic and Roman occupation near The Bungalow, Stratford Road, 100m to the southeast (HER 11311); and Belgic pottery and a Roman bronze pin recovered from 5 Stratford Road, immediately to the northwest (HER 11323).
- The area has yielded a number of high status finds and provided evidence for a Roman settlement (HER 1897) focused on Chesterfield (HER 444). Evidence in the vicinity of the present site consists of a Roman cemetery, identified 500m to the northwest (HER 11313); Roman settlement activity on the road frontage with a cemetery to the rear, identified during archaeological trenching on land to the northwest of 6 Stratford Road, 400m to the southeast (HER 13407); and Roman coins recovered from Stratford Road, 200m to the northeast (HER 14816).
- Victorian activity in the area is demonstrated by buildings such as those at The Gas Works, 400m to the northwest (HER 3240); Sandy Station, 500m to the northwest (HER 3294); 4 Stratford Road, 500m to the south (HER 7571); The Cemetery Chapel, 500m to the north (HER 7547), The Cemetery Lodge, 400m to the north (HER 7546); 2 Station Road, 400m to the north (HER 7553); The Bell Public House, located near to Sandy Railway Station, 500m to the northeast (HER 16439); Potton Road Cemetery, which opened in 1891, 400m to the north (HER 8495); and the 19<sup>th</sup> century barns adjoining 2 Stratford Road, 300m to the northwest (HER 7570).
- Significant remains of 20<sup>th</sup> century origin in the area consist of a Second World War tank trap, 400m to the west (HER 17974); a pill box on New Road, 400m to the west (HER 17176); and the present property, recorded as a Victorian-style 20<sup>th</sup> century house (HER 12739).
- Remains of unknown date in the area include a possible building complex, represented by cropmarks, 100m to the east (HER 13715); the interpretation of a number of square and circular cropmarks, 200m to the southeast (HER 13714), and a series of cropmarks to the west of Chesterfield, 300m to the west (HER 13719) is now considered uncertain (Hannah Firth, pers.comm.).

### *Research Aims*



**3.2** The general aims of the present evaluation have been to consider the location, depth, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any remains that would be 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 local and regional research agenda (Glazebrook 1997; Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Oake et al 2007), if they were discovered.

**3.3** The study area is located in a well-defined archaeological landscape to the southeast of Sandy, at a break in the Greensand Ridge which gives the area its topographical character. There is evidence for activity in the area dating from the Mesolithic period onwards, and its strategic value in the Iron Age is reflected in the presence of three hillforts (Caesar's Camp (HER 442), Galley Hill (HER 445) and Sandy Lodge (HER 1164)) nearby.

**3.4** The present site lies within the proposed core of the Roman town, as defined in the Extensive Urban Survey (EUS) for Sandy, which developed at the point that the Roman road linking Baldock and Godmanchester bends to pass through the Greensand Ridge (Albion Archaeology 2003). Although the limits of Roman Sandy have not been securely identified, the collected evidence indicates that it extended at least from the railway station in the north-west to the present site in the south and to Woodside Farm in the west (Albion Archaeology 2003, Fig.6). Further south, ribbon development appears to follow the Roman road to Baldock (HER 505), with burial activity to the rear.

**3.5** It was considered that the present evaluation would give an opportunity to investigate further the southern limits of the town, and gain an understanding of the nature of activity flanking the road.

**3.6** A number of site specific research aims were also identified:

**3.7** It was considered that, given the site's location within the identified core of the Roman small town at Sandy, the present evaluation had the potential to contribute to gaining a greater understanding of patterns of settlement nucleation and dispersal.

- Evidence for activity of late Iron Age and Romano-British activity was encountered in all three trenches during the evaluation. The finds recovered from the fills of the features indicates that the main phase of activity on the site was from c.15BC to c.70AD, with a low level of activity in the later Roman period.

**3.8** It was considered that, given the site's location within the identified core of the Roman small town at Sandy, the present evaluation had the potential to contribute to the investigation of landscape development and settlement patterns.

- No evidence for activity between the late Roman period and the modern period was encountered during the present evaluation.
- The late Iron Age and Roman features in Trench 1 were much shallower than those in Trenches 2 and 3 as a result of modern landscaping for the existing house.

**3.9** It was considered that, given the site's location within the identified core of the Roman small town at Sandy, the present evaluation had the potential to contribute to the investigation of time lags in the adoption of trends between areas and to characterise regional variation.



- The small sample area made it difficult to judge any trends other than in the adoption of material objects. The artefacts recovered during the present evaluation are commonly found on other sites of the period in the wider region.

**3.10** It was considered that the present evaluation had the potential to contribute to a greater understanding of post-Roman stratigraphic levels, and the reasons for a settlement shift in the medieval period.

- No evidence for post-Roman or medieval activity was present on the site.

**3.11** It was considered that the present evaluation had the potential to contribute to determining the nature of the Roman small town at Sandy.

- The present site was located within the defined core of the Roman small town at Sandy. Although the sample area was limited, evidence for activity dating to the late Iron Age and Roman periods was encountered. A series of parallel linear features was revealed, which had apparently been subject to recutting. Postholes had been excavated through the bases of these ditches, suggesting that they represented a significant boundary.
- No evidence for domestic occupation, in the form of pits, structural features or occupation layers, was recorded. The pottery assemblage was also fairly small and abraded, and no high status artefacts, such as jewellery, were recovered, suggesting that the site lay close to the southern edge of the Roman small town.

**3.12** It was considered that, given the site's location within the identified core of the Roman small town, the present evaluation had the potential to provide further information that will assist in establishing the role and function of the Sandy Roman town in the wider Roman landscape.

- Evidence for activity dating to the Roman period was encountered during the present evaluation. This comprised a series of parallel linear boundary features, with postholes cut through their bases. These ditches had been subject to several phases of recutting throughout the Roman period.

## **Conclusions**

**3.13** On the basis of the known archaeology in the immediate vicinity, the evaluation was considered to have the potential to contribute to an understanding of the development of the Roman settlement and its place in the wider Roman landscape. There was considered to be a high risk of encountering features, deposits, and artefacts from the late prehistoric period onwards in the course of the investigation.

**3.14** The trial trenches represent a 10% sample, approximately, of the development site by area. This was considered adequate to meet the aims of the evaluation, and assess the risk that development of the site would encounter archaeological remains of significance. The investigation showed that modern landscaping had occurred in the immediate vicinity of the existing house. This had affected the relative depths of the surviving archaeological features. Within the trenches a number of features were identified, all but one of late Iron Age and Roman date. These comprised a series of linear boundary features, which had apparently undergone several phases of recutting. A number of postholes had been cut through the bases of the ditches. A single modern pit, cut [112] was encountered in Trench 1. This contained a

large number of chicken bones and had apparently been excavated by the client's family to bury hens.

**3.15** The evaluation of the site has revealed evidence which can contribute to the research aims previously identified. The site is located within the Roman small town at Sandy and a series of boundary features, in use from at least the immediate post-Conquest period to the 3<sup>rd</sup> / 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, were identified. No evidence for post-Roman or medieval activity was present. Taking this evidence alongside the evidence for archaeological activity in the general vicinity of the site, the overall risk that the proposed development would disturb archaeological remains of any significance may be considered to be *High*.

### **Confidence Rating**

**3.16** In the course of the fieldwork the weather was acceptable for the identification of potential features and deposits, and for their investigation. The ground conditions were difficult, with differing levels of topsoil across the individual trenches, a striated natural and evidence for root activity. As a result the confidence rating for the work has been reduced to *Moderate*.

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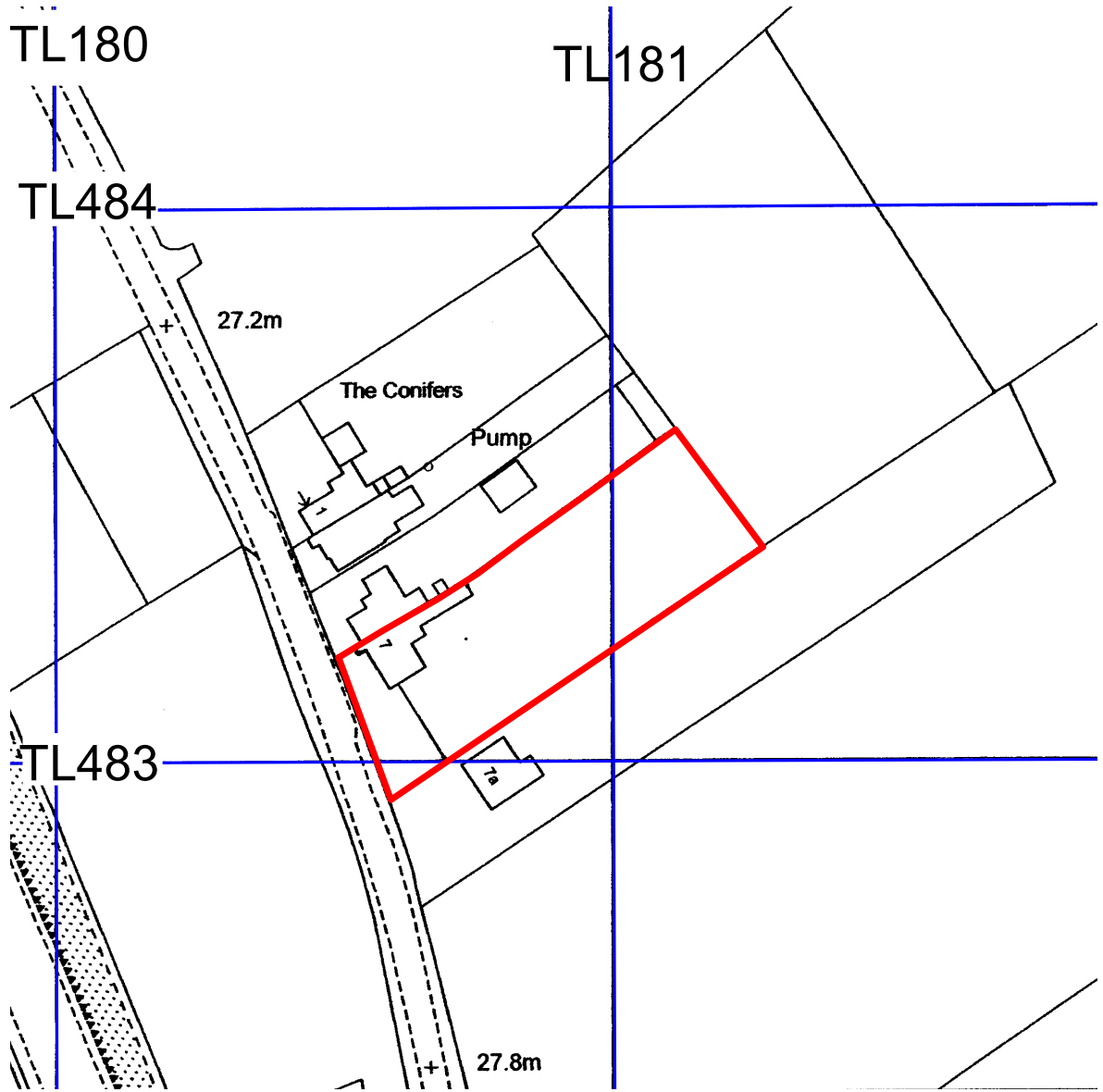
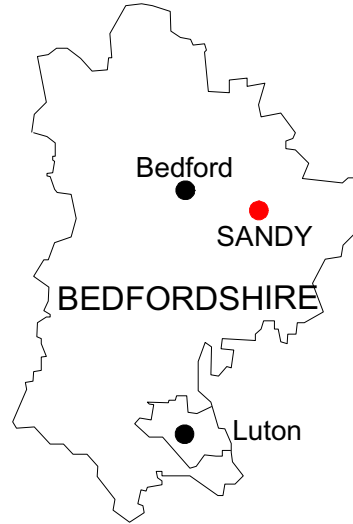
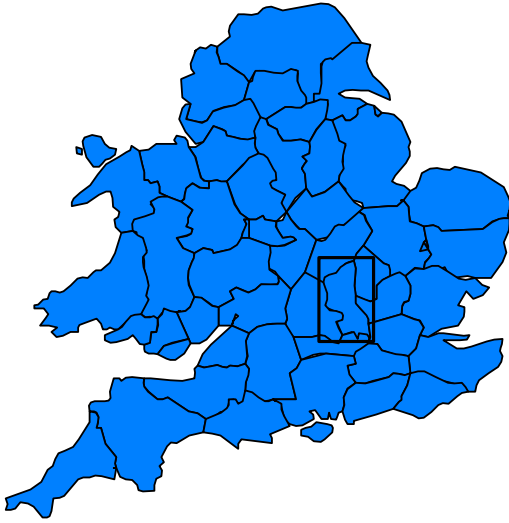
## 4. Illustrations

Figure 1 .....	Site Location
Figure 2 .....	Site Layout
Figure 3 .....	Trench 1: Plan and sections
Figure 4 .....	Trench 2: Plan and sections
Figure 5 .....	Trench 3: Plan and section
Plate 1 .....	Trench 1, looking southwest
Plate 2 .....	Trench 1, NE facing section, showing cuts [101] to [110]
Plate 3 .....	Trench 1, SW facing section, showing cuts [114] to [118]
Plate 4 .....	Trench 1, pit [112] looking NE
Plate 5 .....	Trench 2, looking NW
Plate 6 .....	Trench 2, ditch [201] looking NE
Plate 7 .....	Trench 2, ditch [203] looking NE
Plate 8 .....	Trench 2, posthole [205] looking W
Plate 9 .....	Trench 3, looking W
Plate 10 .....	Trench 3, cut [301] lo

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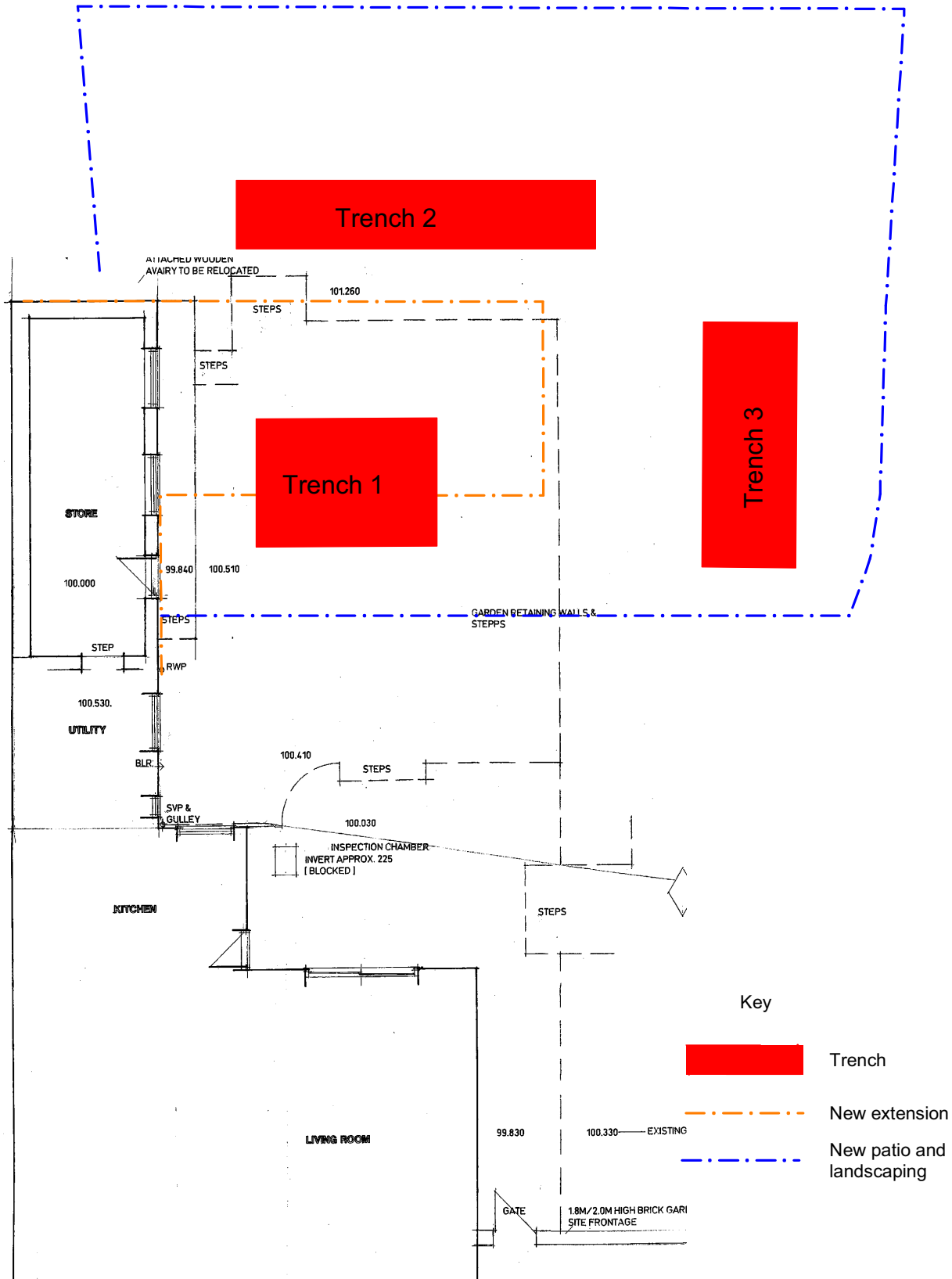


Site Location

Scale 1:1250

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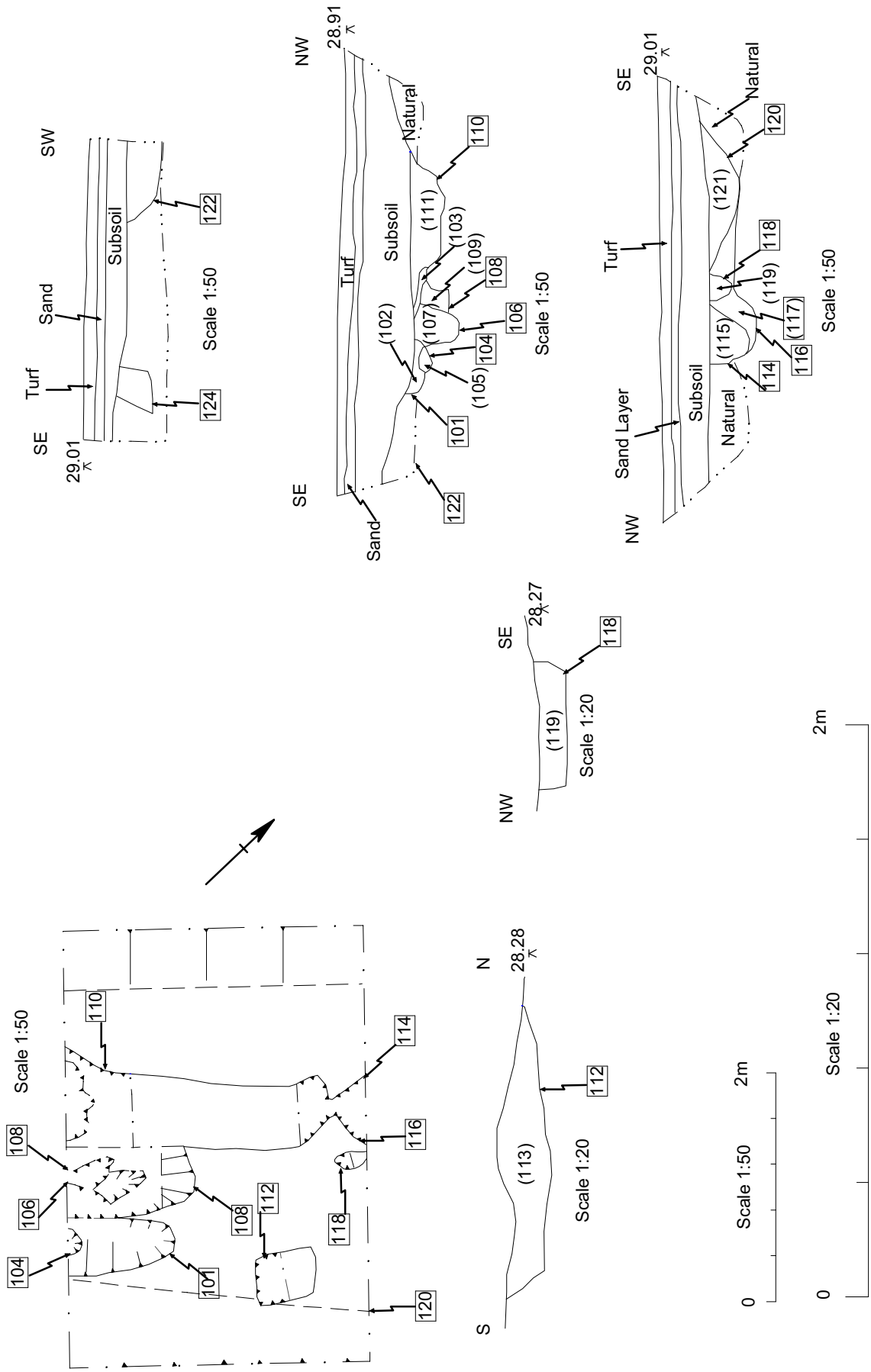
Figure 1



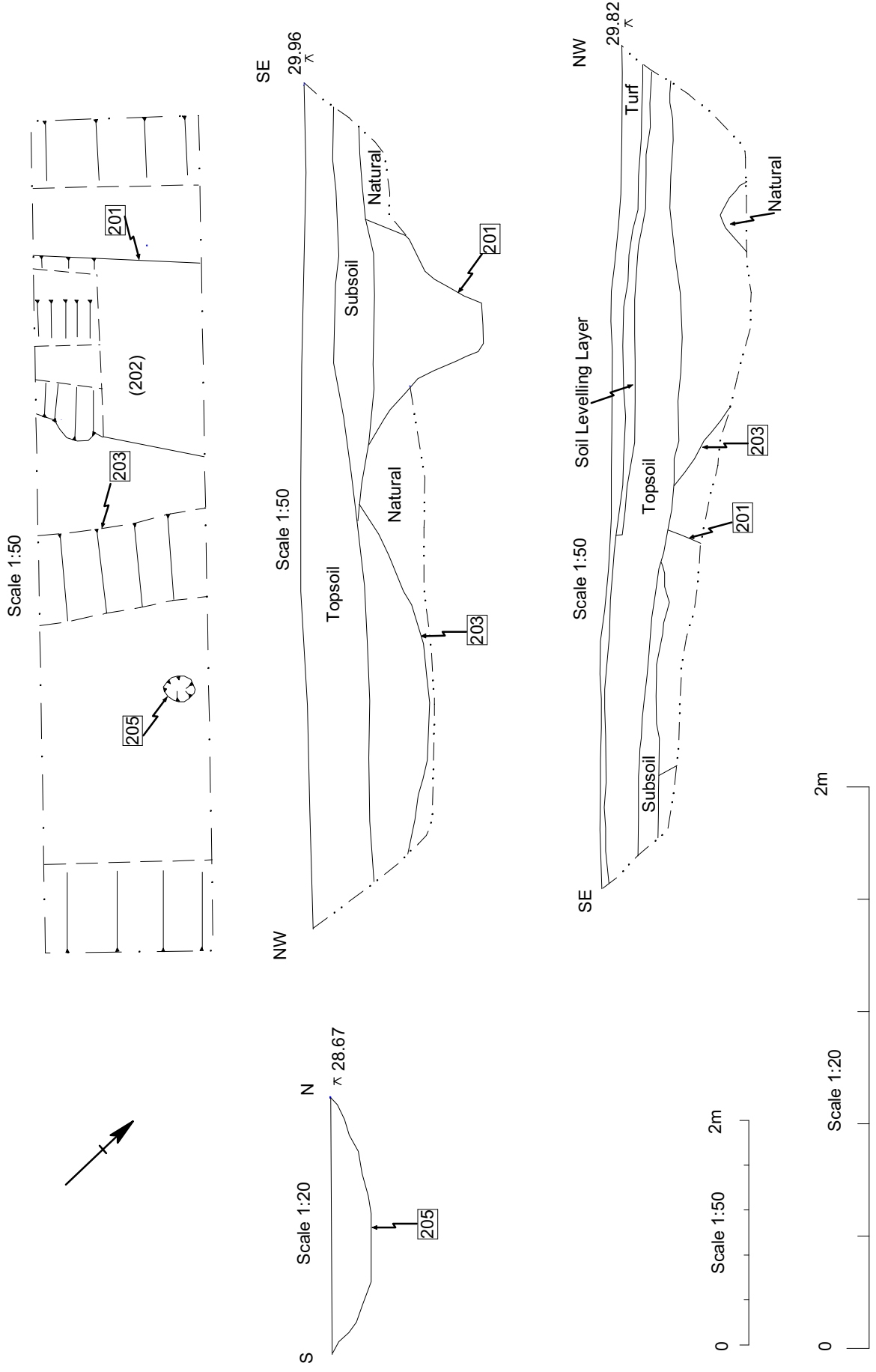
Trench location

Scale 1:125

Figure 2

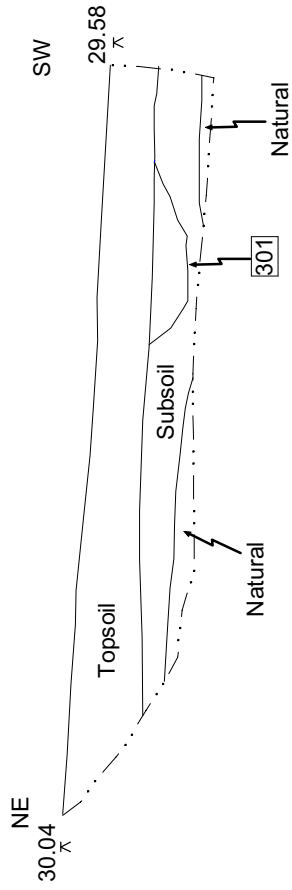
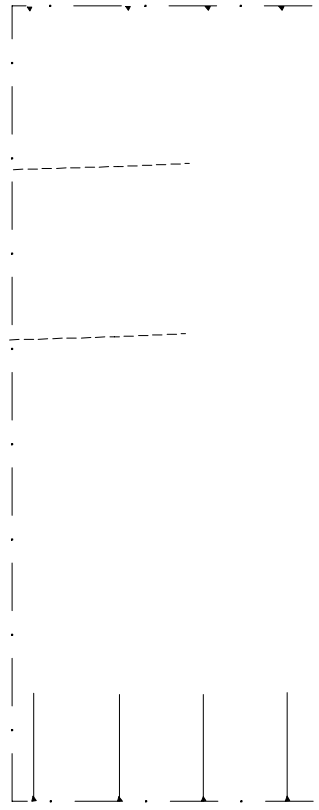


Trench 1: Plan and sections



Trench 2: Plan and sections

Scale 1:20 and 1:50  
Figure 4



Trench 3: Plan and section





Plate 1: Trench 1, looking south-west



Plate 2: Trench 1, NE facing section, showing cuts [101], [104], [106], [108] & [110]





Plate 3: Trench 1, SW facing section, showing cuts [114], [116] & [118]



Plate 4: Trench 1, Pit [112], looking NE

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Plate 5: Trench 2, looking NW





Plate 6: Trench 2, ditch [201] looking NE



Plate 7: Trench 2, ditch [203] looking NE





Plate 8: Trench 2, posthole [205] looking W



Plate 9: Trench 3, looking W

# Appendix 1

## OASIS Data Record

OASIS ID: heritage1-62830

### Project details

Project name	7 Stratford Road, Sandy
Short description of the project	In order to determine the archaeological risk posed by a proposal to construct a single storey rear extension to the existing house at 7 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire, the Heritage Network was commissioned by Darren Brooker to undertake a programme of archaeological evaluation. The site is located within the Roman small town at Sandy and a series of linear boundary features, with postholes cut into their bases, was identified in all three of the evaluation trenches. Pottery collected from their fills demonstrates that these features were in use from at least the immediate post-Conquest period to the 3rd / 4th century AD. No evidence for post-Roman or medieval activity was present.
Project dates	Start: 29-09-2009 End: 01-10-2009
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HN820 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Monument type	POSTHOLE Roman
Monument type	PIT Modern
Significant Finds	POTTERY Late Iron Age
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Methods & techniques	'Targeted Trenches'
Development type	Small-scale extensions (e.g. garages, porches, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of application and determination

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE MID BEDFORDSHIRE SANDY 7 Stratford Road
Postcode	SG19 2AA
Study area	209.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 1806 4832 52.1201507950 -0.275425129764 52 07 12 N 000 16 31 W Point

### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Heritage Network
Project originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Heritage Network

Project director/manager David Hillelson  
 Project supervisor Mark Winter  
 Type of sponsor/funding body Developer

#### Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Bedford Museums  
 Physical Archive ID BEDFM 2009.54  
 Physical Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental'  
 Digital Archive recipient Bedford Museum  
 Digital Archive ID BEDFM 2009.54  
 Digital Contents 'none'  
 Digital Media available 'Database','Images raster / digital photography','Text'  
 Paper Archive recipient Bedford Museums  
 Paper Archive ID BEDFM 2009.54  
 Paper Contents 'none'  
 Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Diary','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section'

#### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  
 Title 7 Stratford Road, Sandy, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation  
 Author(s)/Editor(s) Ashworth, H.  
 Other bibliographic details Report Number 562  
 Date 2009  
 Issuer or publisher Heritage Network  
 Place of issue or publication Letchworth, Hertfordshire  
 Description A4 comb bound booklet, green cover, 19 pages, 5 figures, 10 photographic plates

## APPENDIX 2

### Finds Concordance

Context	Pottery		CBM		Cu Alloy		An bone		Shell		Fe object		Stone		Flint		Glass		Slag		Rubber		
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
Tr 1. U/S											2	30											
Tr1 Clean	3	40											1	100									
Tr 2. U/S	1	3	1	95									1	950			1	3					
Tr 3 U/S	2	55																					
102	12	56			1	2	2	25	1	2	5	20											
103	28	145					5	25	4	1					6	25							
107	1	24					1	15															
109	10	90					9	20			1	60	1	10	1	10				11	195		
111	22	205					13	95							2	5							
113							289	385									2	2				1	1
117													6	1400	1	5							
119	1	8									1	5											
202	11	265					28	285															
204	2	51	1	10			9	135			1	5	3	795									
302	2	29					4	125															
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>360</b>	<b>1110</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>3255</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>	