

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Rose Cottage, Chapel Lane, Akeley,
Buckinghamshire**

Archaeological watching brief

by Andrew Muddin

Site Code: RCA 11/31

(SP 7094 3785)

Rose Cottage, Chapel Lane, Akeley, Buckinghamshire

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Mr and Mrs Burgess

by AndrewMundin
ThamesValleyArchaeologicalServices
Ltd

SiteCodeRCA11/31

May 2011

Summary

Site name: Rose Cottage, Chapel Lane, Akeley, Buckinghamshire

Grid reference: SP 7094 3785

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 18th–19th May 2011

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Andrew Munding

Site code: RCA 11/31

Summary of results: No deposits of archaeological interest were recorded with modern made ground overlying the natural geology. Two residual sherds of early post-medieval date were recovered.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire Museum Service in due course.

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Rose Cottage, Chapel Lane, Akeley, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andrew Muddin

Report 11/31

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Rose Cottage, Chapel Lane, Akeley, Buckingham Buckinghamshire, MK18 5HU (SP 7094 3785) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Ben Burgess, of the same address.

Planning permission (10/02490/APP) has been gained from Aylesbury Vale District Council to add both a rear and an eastern extension to the existing cottage. As the site is situated on the edge of the historic core of the village and within the Akeley Conservation Area, this permission has a condition attached (4) requiring the implementation of a watching brief during intrusive groundworks, with a written scheme of investigation submitted and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. This is also in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's Planning Policy Statement, *Planning for the Historic Environment* (PPS5 2010), and the District Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Eliza Alqassar of Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service on behalf of the District Council. The site work was undertaken by Andrew Muddin, on 18th and 19th May 2011, and the site code is RCA 11/31.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Buckinghamshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the north side of Chapel Lane, a road leading north-eastwards out of the village in part of the village known as Duck End (Fig. 1). Rose Cottage is on the edge of development on this side of the village, with open fields to the north and north-east, with the centre of the village 100m to the south-west. The house is situated on the western side of the land parcel, with garden between it and the road (Fig. 2). The location of the new extensions was also, until recently used as garden. The depression from an old pond is still visible in the northern corner of the site (Fig. 3), which was filled in during the course of the works. The site is located at *c.* 106m above Ordnance Datum (OD). The underlying geology is Glacial Till (clay) over Kellaways Sand (BGS 2002).

Archaeological background

The archaeological potential of this site, and also in general for the village, has been highlighted in a briefing note produced by Ms Eliza Alqassar of Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service and in the Akeley Conservation Area Documentation (AVDC 2008). In summary, the site is located on the north-eastern edge of the historic core of Akeley, which contains buildings of 16th or 17th century date though Rose Cottage itself is no older than 1850. There is a potential that older parts of the settlement could be present below ground for this part of the village, especially in Duck End, as the settlement is thought to have contracted from this area after Medieval times (Jones and Page 2003).

Akeley lay within the Medieval Forest of Whittlewood and recent research has characterized much of the surrounding settlements in this part of Buckinghamshire (Jones and Page 2003). As a part of this research, a test pit (TP 41) was dug in the front garden of this site, which identified mostly sherds of 18th to 20th century china, but also found sherds of a Late Medieval pottery.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by groundworks. This would involve examination of all areas of intrusive groundworks, in this instance, observation of the digging of foundation trenches.

The specific research aims of the project were:

- to determine if archaeological relevant levels have survived on the site;
- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period were present; and
- to determine whether archaeological deposits or heritage assets relating to Medieval or Post-Medieval settlement are present on the site.

Results

Two areas of new foundation trenching were observed being excavated (noted as Rear and East on Fig. 3). These were dug with a 360° small mechanical excavator with a toothed bucket which was 0.8m wide. All sections were available to view, apart from a small portion of the eastern footing.

Rear extension

The footings at the rear of the cottage were 5.8m (W-E) by 6.2m (N-S), and reached a depth of 1.2m in the west and 1.6m deep in the east. Before excavation, it was noted that part of a concrete base was visible at ground level behind the house. This was the base of a demolished out-building plotted on old Ordnance Survey maps (B.

Burgess, pers com). In section, a layer (50) was noted being beneath this concrete slab, which extended to a depth of 0.65m. This contained pottery, glass, bricks and floor tile and slate of 19th/20th century date. On the northern extent of the area of the outbuilding slab (Fig. 3), a drain was noted at a depth of 1.1m. This was filled with a mixed rubble deposit with finds similar to layer 50. Only the base of the pipe trench was noted to cut into the natural geology. To the north, from the edge of this cut, two layers were identified.

Layer (51) was made ground comprising a grey-brown clayey silt, which contained white stoneware pottery of 19th century date, glass fragments and brick/tile to a depth of 0.8m. Beneath this was a thinning layer (52) of grey-brown silty clay, interpreted as another layer of made ground, but which could also have been a layer of surviving buried subsoil. This contained three sherds of post-medieval pottery, date to the 17th century or later, and the base fragment of a large glass bottle.

East extension

The eastern footings extended from the east side of the rear extension and back to the existing house and were 1.5m deep. This footing was 7m long (SW–NE) and 5.2m (NW–SE). A short ‘dog-leg’ section of footing dug from the existing porch was also observed (Fig. 3).

The stratigraphy observed in these footings was very similar to the rear extension. Both layers 51 and 52 were noted in section. Layer 50 reached a maximum depth of 0.7m and layer 51, beneath this to a depth of 1.1m towards the house. This thickened slightly in the NW-SE footing to a depth of 1.4m, but natural clay was still uncovered throughout.

At the northern corner of the footings a large pit was discovered. This contained large pieces of metalwork, such as a broken bucket and a garden rake head, hob-nailed shoe-sole and complete glass bottles and is considered to be a late 19th or early 20th century soakaway.

Finds

Though large quantities of china, stoneware, building material (brick, slate and tile), glass and metal with some animal bone were noted within layers 50 and 51 and the soakaway a sample of pottery was retained.

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 29 sherds with a total weight of 483g (Appendix 1), which are representative of the types of material identified in the layers of made ground (layers 50 and 51). It was all post-medieval, with most of the material dating to the 19th century, although a single context produced only pottery of late 16th –

17th century date. The group was recorded using the coding system of the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit type-series (e.g. Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat *et al.* 1994), as follows:

MS9: Brill/Boarstall Ware. 1200-?1600. 1 sherds, 6g.
PM8: Red Earthenware. 16th–19th century. 1 sherd, 5g.
PM16: Black-glazed coarsewares. L 16th–17th century. 1 sherd, 6g.
PM25: White Earthenware. Late 18th–20th century. 26 sherds, 466g.

The single sherd of MS9 is in an early post-medieval fabric and appears to be contemporary with the rest of the pottery from that context (52) rather than being a residual medieval sherd.

Glass by Andrew Muddin

Three pieces of glass were temporarily retained as they contained identifiable makers marks. Two were complete bottles, found in the soakaway, one is a large mallet-shaped green glass bottle stamped L.S CARLSBAD on the base, which has been identified as being a distributor from Austria of water and beer, dated from the 1880s onwards. This bottle would once have had a paper label. The other bottle is a rounded-based clear-glass bottle, stamped WILMER and NEWPORT PL on the reverse. This was from Wilmer and Sons of Newport Pagnell, who were water distributors, active during the late 19th century. The other piece of stamped, clear glass was recovered from Layer 50, had an oval stamp on its body reading H.D.HICKINBOTTOM, BUCKINGHAM, a local soft drinks or mineral water distributor.

Metal find by Steve Crabb

A single piece of metalwork was retained for reporting and it weighed 16g. It is a small decorative pewter fitting, possibly a piece of decorative horse furniture. It consists of a ring containing a simplified triple feather decoration reminiscent of a *fleur de lis* or the Prince of Wales feathers, both stock decorative motives of the 19th and 20th centuries. It has two arms and a hemispherical ball leading from the ring. The arms terminate in smaller rings with a diameter of 13mm, one of the arms is broken and the ring is no longer present. The piece has a flat back with the remains of a central mount which has broken off. It has been cast in a flat mould and the mount brazed to the back slightly off centre and aligned towards one of the arms.

Conclusion

This watching brief during digging of the foundation trenches for the new extensions only revealed modern made ground with no cut features of medieval or earlier date. Much pottery and other material of 19th and 20th

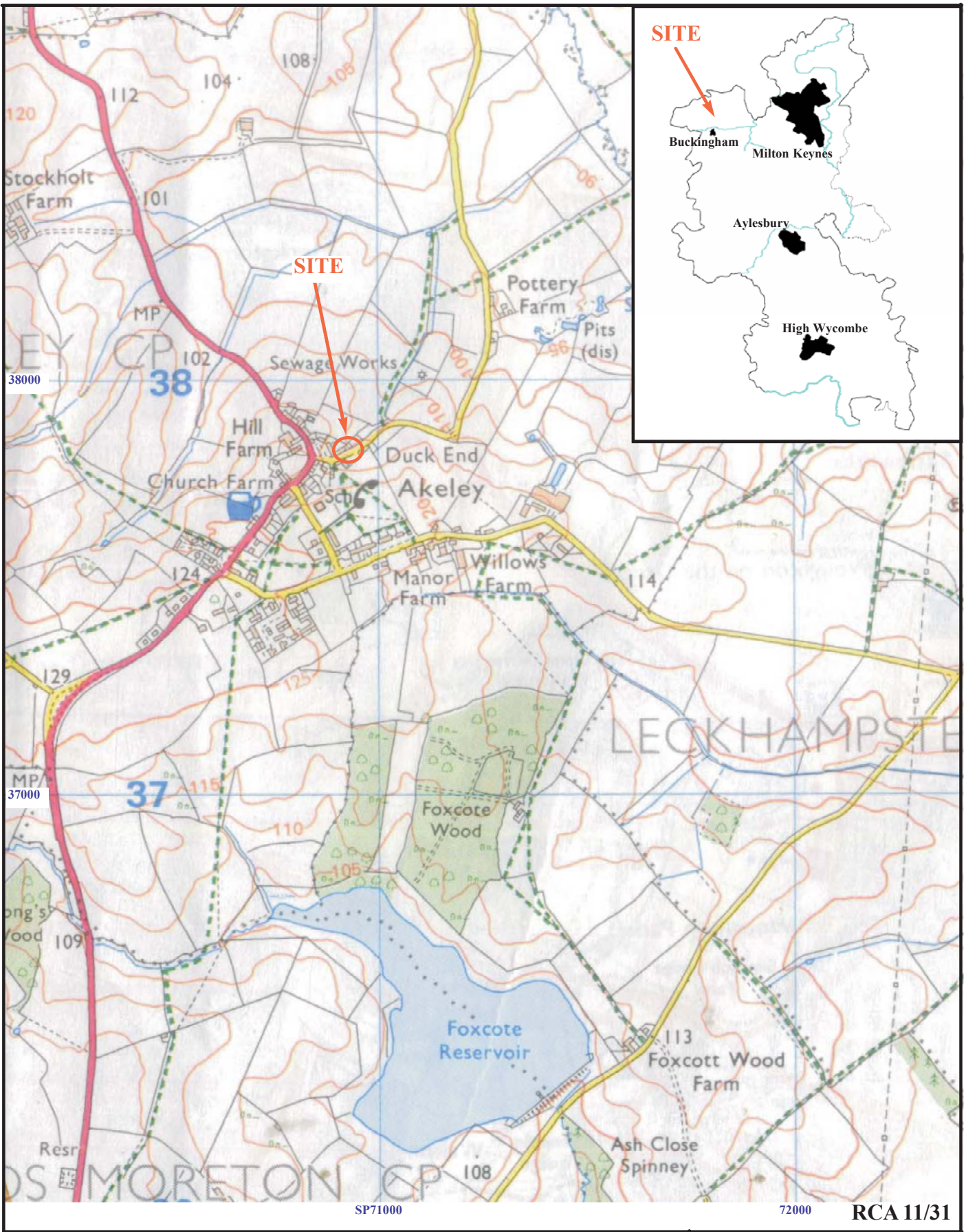
century date was observed but only two residual sherds of early post-medieval pottery were of any archaeological interest.

References

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- Jones, R and Page, M, 2006, *Medieval Villages in an English Landscape*, Macclesfield
- Mynard, D C and Zeepvat, R J, 1992, *Great Linford*, Buckinghamshire Archaeol Soc Monogr Ser **3**, Aylesbury
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APPENDIX 1: Pottery catalogue

<i>Deposit</i>	<i>MS9</i>		<i>PM8</i>		<i>PM16</i>		<i>PM25</i>	
	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt</i>
50 (Rear ext)	-	-	-	-	-	-	12	155
50 (East ext)	-	-	-	-	-	-	10	205
51	-	-	-	-	-	-	4	106
52	1	6	1	5	1	6	-	-
Total	1	6	1	5	1	6	26	466



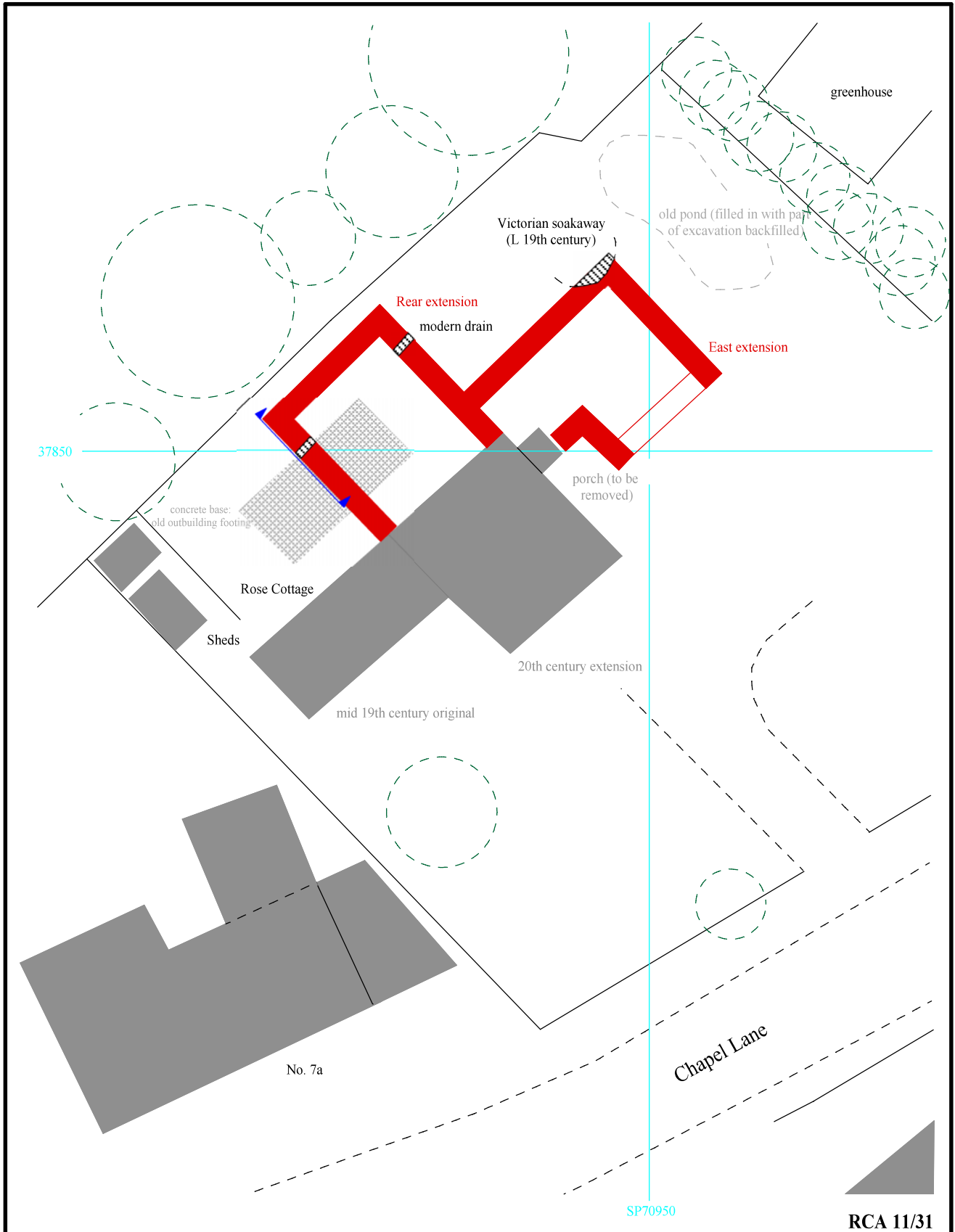
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Archaeological watching brief

Figure 1. Location of site within Akeley and Buckinghamshire.

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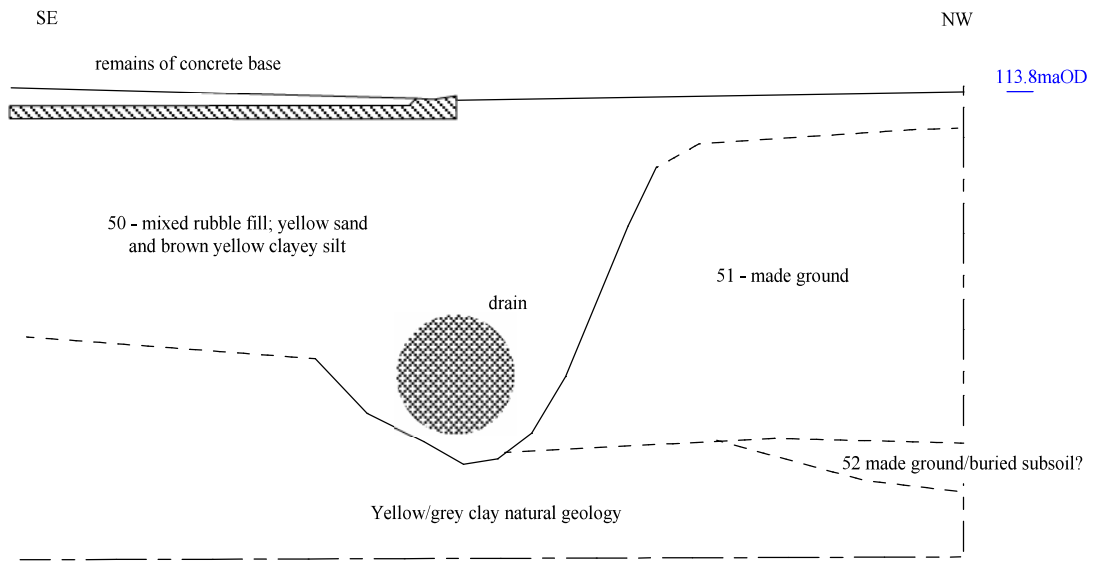
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Figure 3. Location of areas observed during watching brief.





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Figure 4. Representative sections.





Plate 1. Area of rear and east extension, before footing excavation.



Plate 2. Representative section of footing trench, looking north-west, Scale: 1m.

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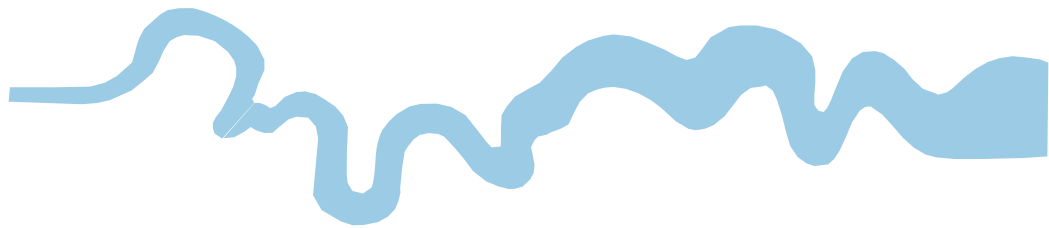
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Plates 1 and 2.

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43
Iron Age _____	BC/AD 750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC
↓	↓



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