

# The remains of Robert de Waudari's adulterine castle, Castle Street, Luton

*Joe Abrams and Drew Shotliff*

with contributions by Wesley Keir, John Giorgi and Alan Pipe  
and illustrations by Joan Lightning

## SUMMARY

*An adulterine motte and bailey castle was built by the mercenary Robert de Waudari at Luton in 1139. It was only in existence until 1154 when it was demolished under the terms of the Treaty of Winchester, signed the previous year by King Stephen and his agreed successor, Henry of Anjou. In 1963 construction works on the Luton News printing works revealed the remains of a large ditch south-east of Castle Street. It was suggested that this represented part of the bailey ditch of Robert de Waudari's castle. Recent redevelopment of the site has provided a second opportunity to study these remains through open area archaeological excavation.*

*The excavation has confirmed the existence of the castle ditch and an attempt has been made to map its known, and putative, extent. The topographical reasons behind the castle's location are discussed and the later history of this part of Luton is considered.*

## INTRODUCTION

As part of their redevelopment at Luton's Holly Street and Castle Street, Bellway Homes' commissioned Albion Archaeology to carry out a programme of archaeological investigation, consisting of watching brief, trial trenching and open area excavation. All work was carried out between 2004 and 2005 (Albion Archaeology 2005a, 2005b) in accordance with a project design prepared by Albion Archaeology (2004), in response to a brief issued by the County Archaeological Officer of Bedfordshire County Council (2004a, 2004b). The project archive will be deposited with Luton Museum, under accession number 2005/48.

## SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The development area is located *c.* 500m south-west of the historic core of Luton, bordered by Castle Street, Holly Street and Latimer Road (Figs 1 and 2). It is *c.* 0.66ha in extent and centred on grid reference TL 0920 2075. It lies at an average height of *c.* 115m OD.

The historic core of Luton lies on the south side of the Lea where it developed around a series of crossing points over the river (Fig. 3). In contrast to this valley bottom site, the development area lies

higher up the valley side where only a relatively thin deposit of terrace gravel seals the underlying chalk (Fig. 4).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Remains dating to the prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, medieval and post-medieval periods are known to exist within this part of Luton (Albion Archaeology 2003). However, on this particular site, interest mainly focussed on the possibility that the development area preserved part of Robert de Waudari's early medieval, adulterine castle. Robert de Waudari himself was a mercenary who fought for King Stephen against Matilda, during the Anarchy, a period of civil war and unsettled government that characterised Stephen's reign (1135–1154). The king granted both the manor and church at Luton to de Waudari, who subsequently built a castle in 1139 on the strategically important south-western approach to the town (Figs 1 and 3). A large number of castles were constructed during this period; they are collectively known as adulterine, *i.e.* unlicensed.

Such castles were deeply resented by sections of the population, as this extract from the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle for the year 1137 (de Waudari's

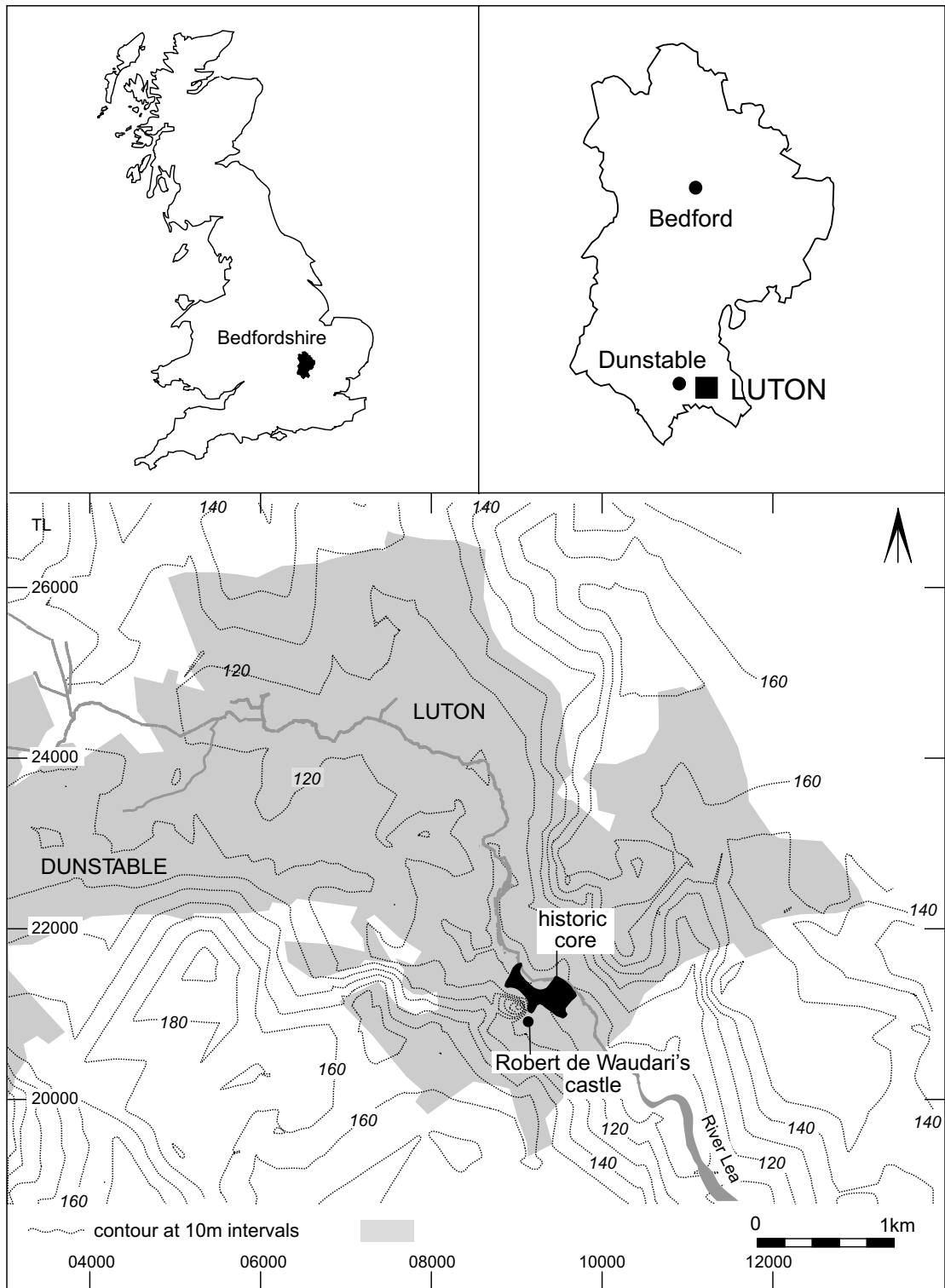


Figure 1: Site location and local topography

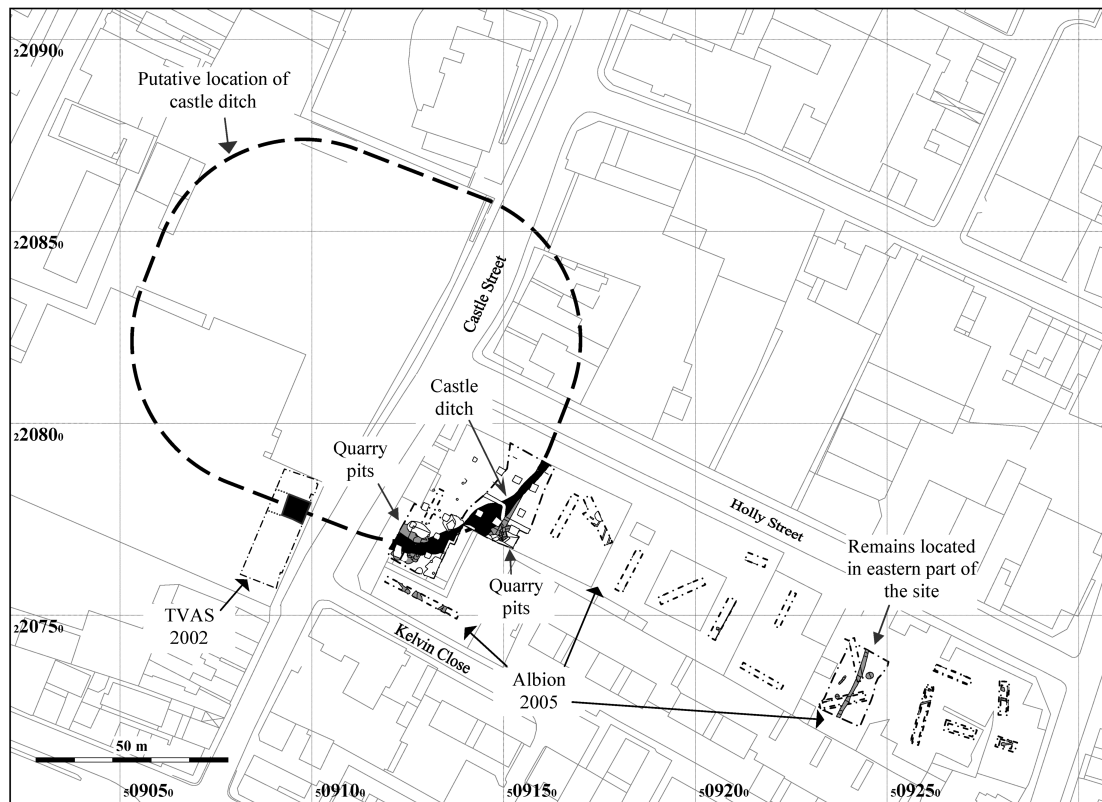


Figure 2: All features plan

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castle was built just two years later) illustrates.

*'And they filled the whole land with these castles. They sorely burdened the unhappy people of the country with forced labour on these castles. And when the castles were made, they filled them with devils and wicked men'* (Austin 1928, 74; Britannia.com website).

In the Treaty of Winchester in 1153, when Stephen recognised Henry of Anjou as heir to the English throne, it was agreed that all adulterine castles would be destroyed (Higham and Barker 1992, 132). Many of them, including de Waudari's, which had only been in existence for fifteen years, were demolished.

The reasoning behind the association of this part of Luton with the site of de Waudari's castle is set out by Austin (1928, vol 1, 74–75 and vol 2, 81–82). Late 18th-century title deeds for a piece of land adjacent to Holly Lodge, which formerly

stood on Castle Street immediately to the south of St Mary's RC Church, state that "the castle ditch" formed part of the boundary of the plot (Figs 5 and 6), which was itself referred to as "Castle Ditches Close" (see also Kennett 1976, 18). The title deeds of Holly Lodge itself state that it stood on an ancient enclosure called "the castle close". Austin suggested that the mound on which Holly Lodge was built might have been the remains of the motte of de Waudari's castle. (In the early 12th century the style and materials with which castles were constructed varied by region. Here, they typically took the form of a motte, or mound, raised from material taken out of a ditch which defined a more extensive bailey, or courtyard. The motte was surmounted by a fortified, two or three storey house, surrounded by a timber palisade (Salter 2000, 5).

It has never been possible to test this hypothesis by archaeological investigation. A possible earthwork was still present on the site around 1948.

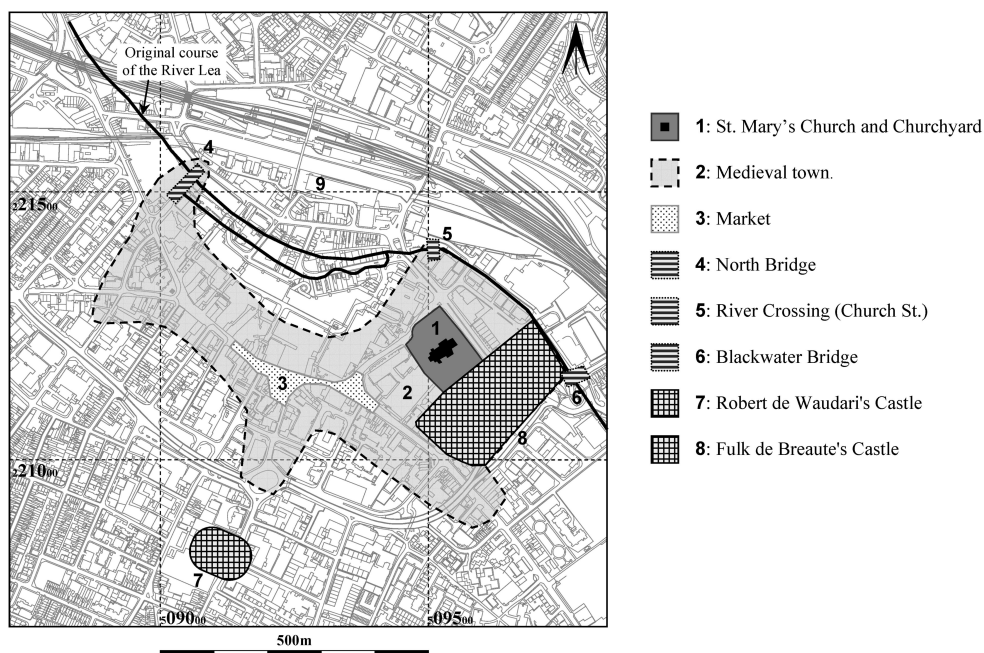


Figure 3: Archaeological components of medieval Luton

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It took the form of a low irregular mound, which supported a number of trees and a modern one-storey building which had replaced the 19th-century Holly Lodge (demolished in the 1930's). Over the next decade, the site was incrementally incorporated into the Luton Bus Depot and the mound was gradually levelled (Fig. 7). Since then the site has been completely redeveloped and all traces of the mound removed. However, if castle ditches were still identifiable in the late 18th century, it is certainly feasible that the motte of de Waudari's castle could also have survived. Unfortunately, it will probably never be known for sure if the Holly Lodge mound can be identified with the motte of the castle.

Archaeological investigation has provided some physical evidence for the location of de Waudari's castle. In 1963, the western end of the present development area was redeveloped. The remains of a substantial ditch, cut into the underlying chalk, were observed. It was suggested that this feature might represent part of the bailey ditch of de Waudari's castle (Dony and Dyer 1975, 40–41). More recent work to the west of the development area, during redevelopment of the former bus depot, also led to the discovery of a

substantial ditch which produced a small quantity of 12th–13th century pottery (Fig. 2). Again, it was concluded that this ditch formed part of de Waudari's castle, although a note of caution was sounded about the dangers of drawing over-ambitious conclusions from relatively slight archaeological evidence (Coles 2005, 206).

However, on the balance of probability, this combination of historical and archaeological evidence leads to the conclusion that Robert de Waudari's castle did indeed straddle this part of present-day Castle Street. It is, therefore, argued that the large ditch running across the western end of the development area, described in this article, represents the south-eastern corner of the castle's bailey ditch.

## RESULTS OF THE INVESTIGATIONS

### PHASE 1: EARLY MEDIEVAL CASTLE DITCH AND ASSOCIATED QUARRYING

The south-eastern corner of the bailey ditch of Robert de Waudari's castle (L1) (Fig. 2) represents the most significant archaeological remains



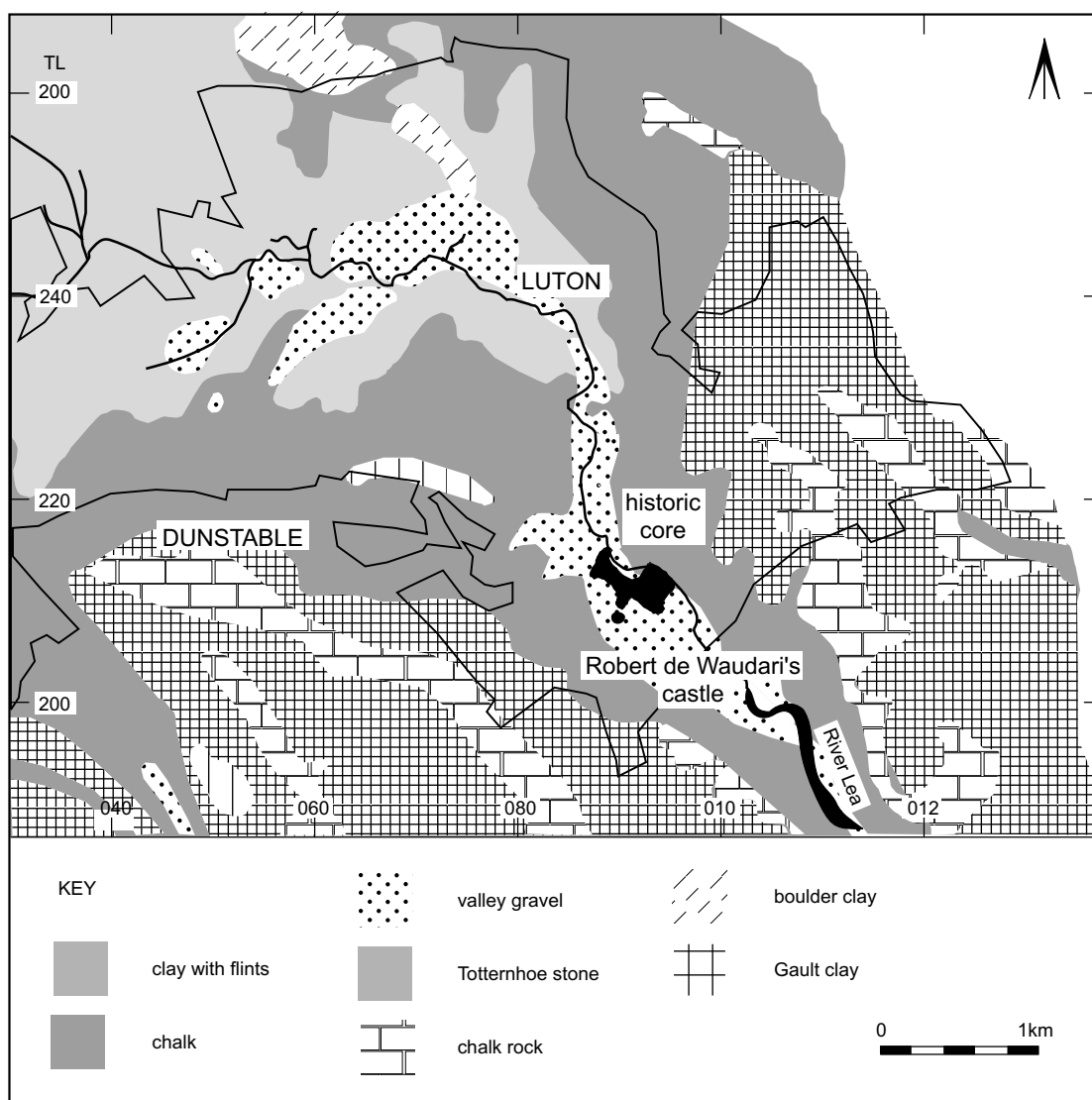


Figure 4: Site location and local geology

encountered in the development area. This part of the ditch became infilled in three distinct episodes, largely as a result of erosional processes but, perhaps, partly as a result of deliberate human action. It was never re-cut but did survive as a distinct depression in the landscape until well into the post-medieval period. The ditch was finally levelled before the construction of various buildings and walls in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Following extensive sampling, only a small quantity of charcoal was retrieved from its fills.

The ditch partly truncated a quarry pit (L1), which had been rapidly backfilled and is assumed

to have been broadly contemporary with the construction of the castle.

#### *The castle ditch L1*

A c. 48m length of the curving castle ditch was recorded. It was aligned WNW–ESE for c. 8m and then turned NE–SW for the remaining c. 40m (Fig. 8). To the NE its surviving extent had been greatly reduced by modern truncation (Fig. 9, Section 3). Where best preserved, it was 4.5m wide and 2.3m deep (Fig. 10, Section 7; Fig 11). The sides had a c. 45 degree slope and the base varied from V-shaped to slightly rounded. A c. 0.4m thick deposit



Figure 5: 1st edition 25-inch OS map with putative castle location

of chalk and silt (G1.00) in the base of the ditch represents material eroded from the sides shortly after it was dug. Environmental sample (7) taken from this deposit produced only occasional flecks of charcoal.

Gradual erosional infilling of the ditch continued with the progressive accumulation of a further *c.* 0.6m of material (G1.01) in its base. This included both chalk and silt derived from the sides of the ditch and soil and organic matter from the surrounding land surface. Although it is assumed that the castle was occupied at this time, no attempt appears to have been made to maintain the ditch through re-cutting. However, its defensive qualities were probably not significantly impaired: it was still steep sided and at least *c.* 1.7m deep.

The next series of deposits within the ditch (G1.02) differed slightly from the gradually accumulated, initial silting. They were more massive in character and appear to have accumulated more rapidly. They may represent more extensive collapse of the upper part of the ditch. However, it is also possible that they represent deliberate partial

infilling of the ditch, associated with the slighting of the castle following the Treaty of Winchester. Unfortunately, no dating evidence was recovered from these deposits to substantiate this possibility. Environmental sample (6) from these deposits produced only very small amounts of very fragmented charcoal.

The final non-modern series of deposits within the ditch (G1.03) were again slightly different in character (Fig. 10, Section 7). They included relatively wide bands of compacted, clean chalk, which may represent deliberate infilling and levelling. By this time, the ditch was only *c.* 0.7m deep and would certainly have ceased to perform a defensive function. Once more, no datable artefacts were recovered from these deposits and it is impossible to know whether or not they were associated with the 12th-century slighting. Similarly, environmental sample (1) also produced only very small amounts of very fragmented charcoal.

The overall paucity of artefacts and ecofacts from all the deposits within the castle ditch is in itself

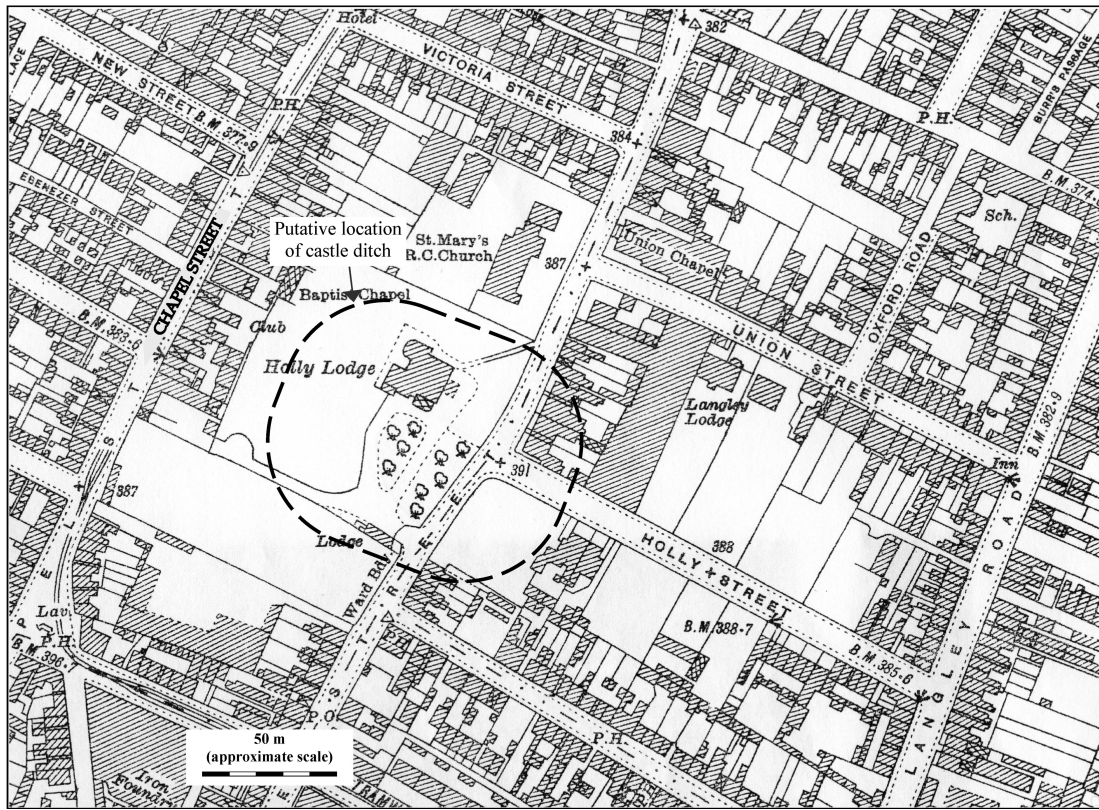


Figure 6: 3rd edition 25-inch OS map with putative castle location

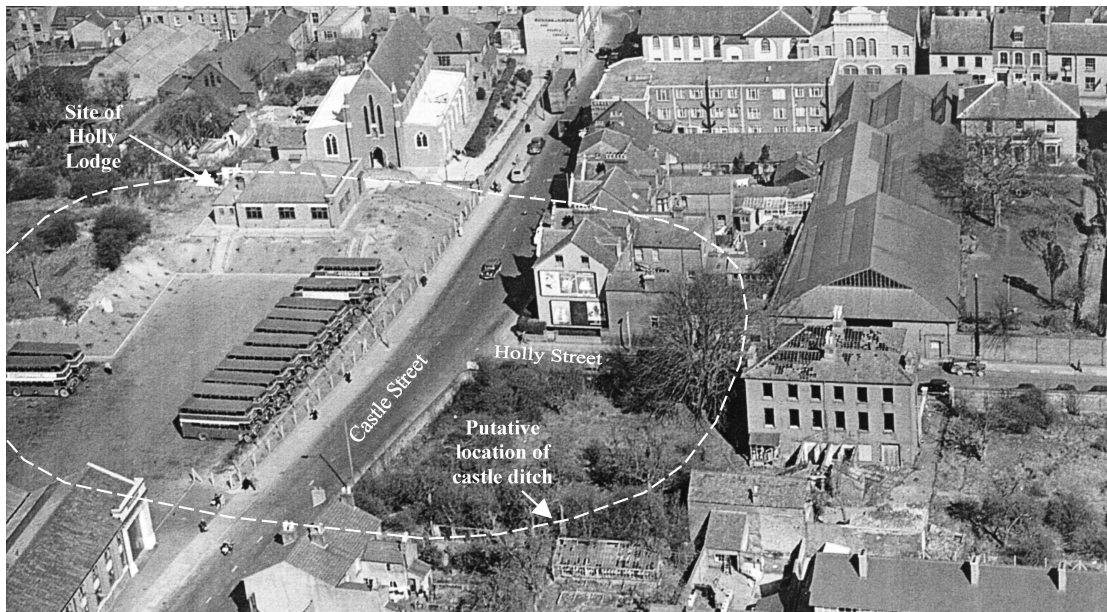


Figure 7: Aerial photograph of Castle Street looking north towards Holly Lodge (1959).  
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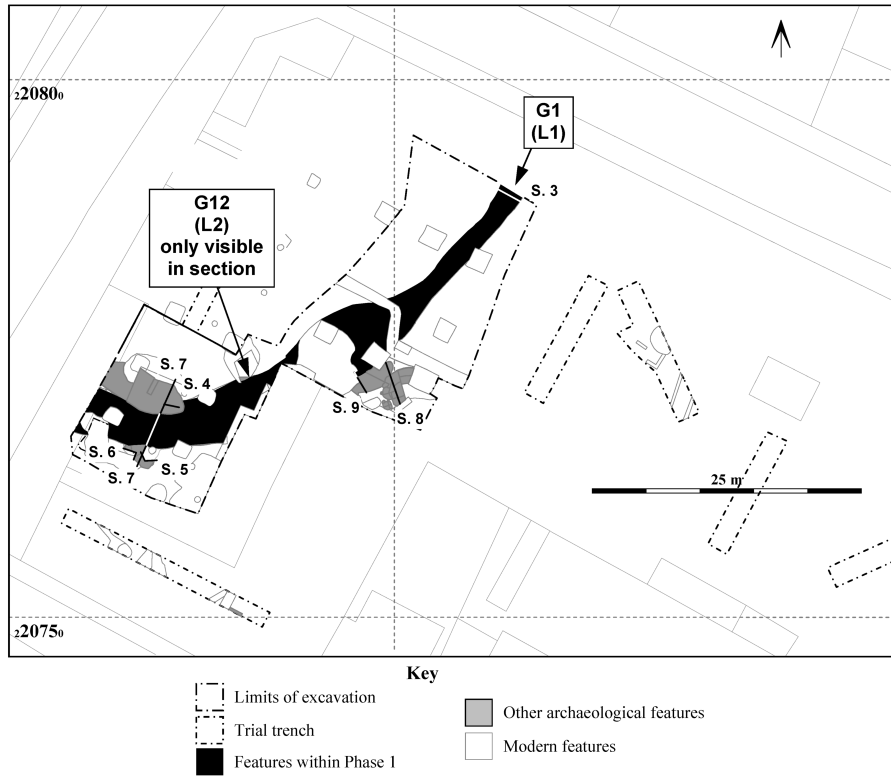


Figure 8: Phase 1 early medieval castle ditch G1 and quarrying G12

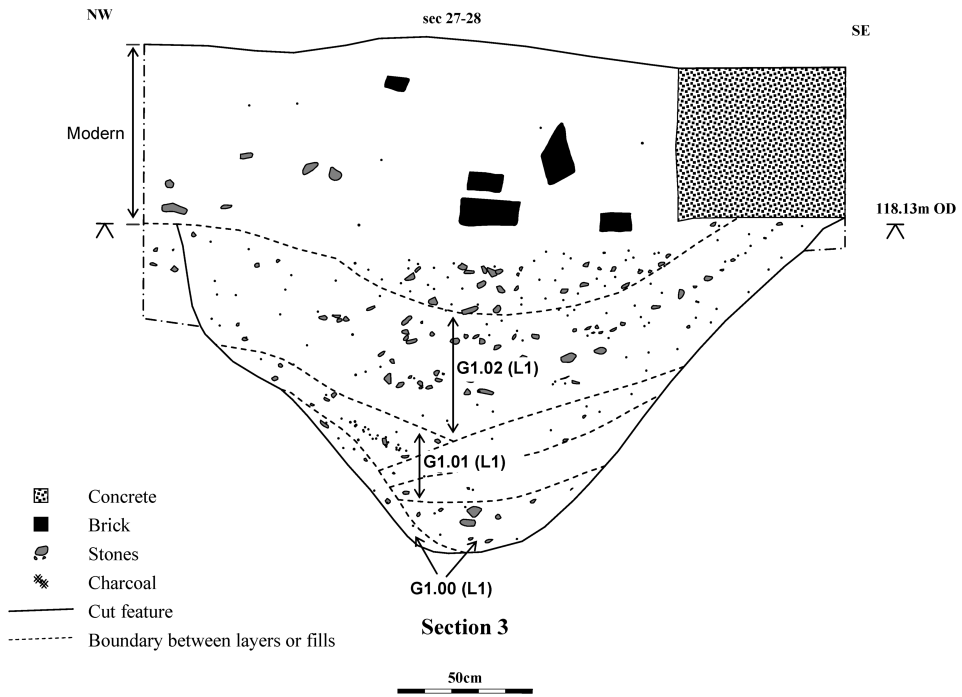


Figure 9: Castle ditch G1, Section 3

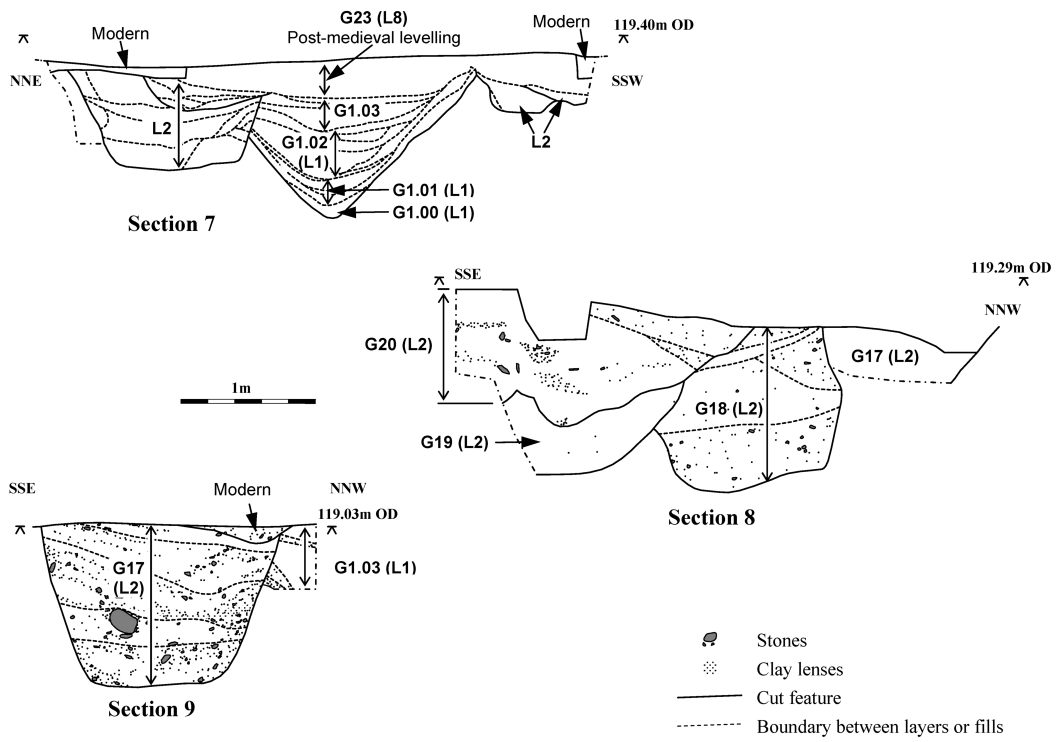


Figure 10: Castle ditch G1, Section 7; quarry pits L2, Sections 8 and 9



Figure 11: The castle ditch during excavation

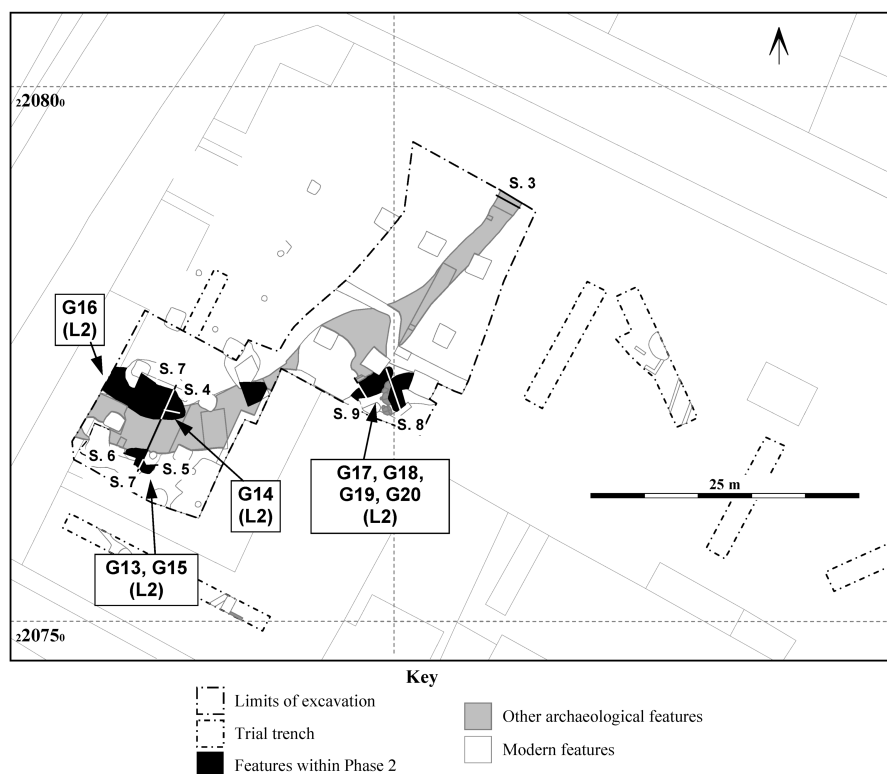


Figure 12: Phase 2 medieval / early post-medieval quarrying L2

significant. The small quantities of fragmentary charcoal probably represent debris blowing around the site, from activities possibly at some distance from the ditch. The absence of artefacts in the rapidly accumulating initial fills (G1.00, G1.01) is not unexpected. However, their absence from the great bulk of the ditch fills (G1.02, G1.03) is more surprising and may be attributable to the fact that the site was some distance from any settlement or human activity of any kind.

#### *Quarrying L1*

Quarry pit G12 was only recorded in section; it was truncated by the castle ditch and a modern intrusion. With gently sloping, straight sides and a flat base, it survived to a depth of 0.90m. Significantly, it had been cut into the underlying chalk, presumably to quarry building material. Its mixed fills suggest it may have been rapidly backfilled. It is assumed to have been broadly contemporary with the excavation of the castle ditch.

#### PHASE 2: MEDIEVAL / EARLY POST-MEDIEVAL QUARRYING

Twelve intercutting quarry pits (L2) were dug on the site of the former castle (Figs 10, 12, 13). Several of them truncated the uppermost deposits within the infilled ditch (Fig. 10, Sections 7 and 9). They may have been dug along the edges of the ditch because it afforded easier access to the underlying chalk. They varied in size but the biggest was at least 4.5m long, nearly 2m wide and 1.20m deep.

The quarry pits were infilled with a mixture of re-deposited chalk and silts, which did not produce any artefactual material. An environmental sample (4) from the fill of one of the pits produced several charred cereal grain fragments including two tentatively identified as oat (*cf. Avena sp.*); the other two cereal fragments were too poorly preserved for further identification. There was also a trace amount of very fragmented charcoal. These remains are interpreted as background debris blowing around the site, possibly from cooking

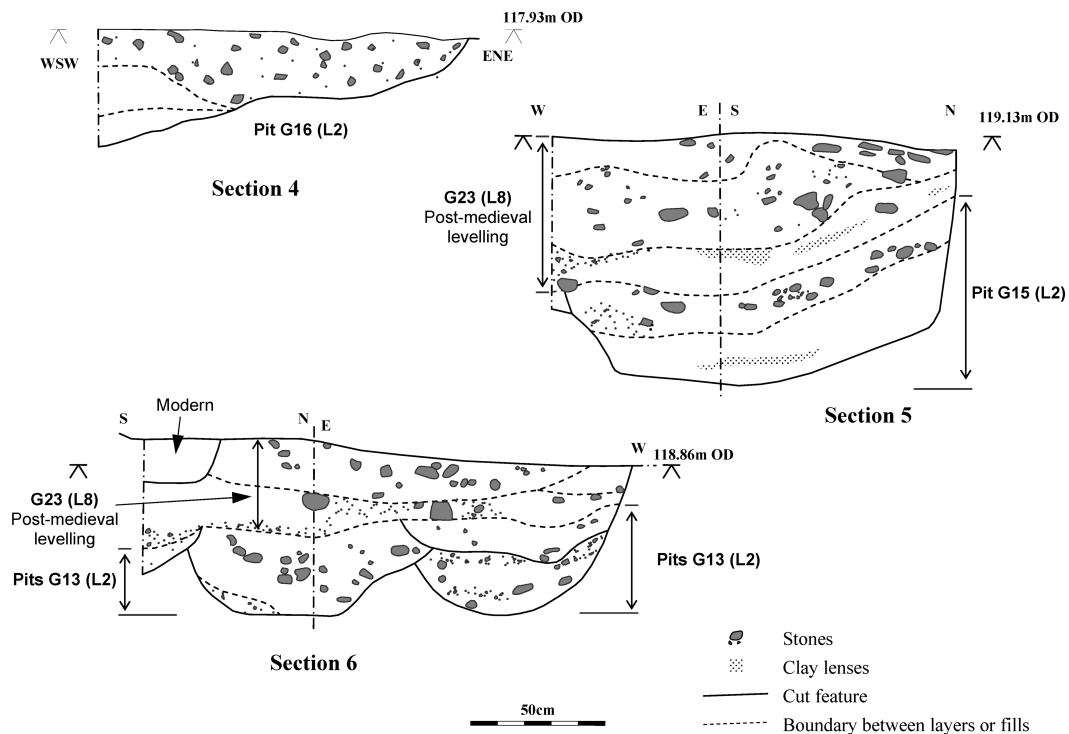


Figure 13: Quarry pits L2, Sections 4, 5 and 6

accidents, which may have taken place at some distance from the quarry pits.

A single shell of blind (or agate) snail *Cecilioides acicula* was recovered. This subterranean species is common in lowland southern England, occurring at depths down to 2m or more in unwooded calcareous places, particularly rock crevices, cracks and rootlet holes in well-drained soils. It commonly occurs in the cavities of buried bones (Kerney 1999, 168) and is commonly recovered from archaeological sites.

Despite the absence of dating evidence, a broadly medieval / early post-medieval date seems probable for these quarry pits. They were relatively small in scale, compared, for example, to the gravel pits shown in the vicinity on the first edition 25-inch OS map (Fig. 5). If they were late post-medieval or modern in date, they would almost certainly have contained brick or tile, which are generally ubiquitous on urban sites of this date. Worked-out quarry pits are also often used for the disposal of rubbish. Its absence here suggests that the pits were dug in what was still essentially a rural location, some distance from the limits of the town.

### PHASE 3: LATE POST-MEDIEVAL

#### *Isolated features*

Two sub-square postholes (L3, G10) were recorded cutting a layer of buried subsoil in the eastern part of the development area (Fig. 14). They were 1.50m apart and were similar in size (0.25m deep and 0.55m wide) and shape. They contained identical deposits, which produced a post-medieval tile fragment and a 17th–18th century pottery sherd (glazed red earthenware, fabric type P01, as defined in the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, held by Albion Archaeology). They are likely to have formed part of a fenceline, possibly demarcating property boundaries in the post-medieval period.

A cluster of three postholes and an associated gully (L3, G21) cut the backfilled quarry pits on the south-eastern corner of the former castle ditch (Fig. 14). The postholes were 0.75m deep and 0.25m to 0.40m wide, and were similar in shape. The gully was 0.80m long, 0.22m wide and 0.14m deep. All these features were infilled with a very similar deposit. They may represent elements of a short-lived structure, built during the late post-medieval period.

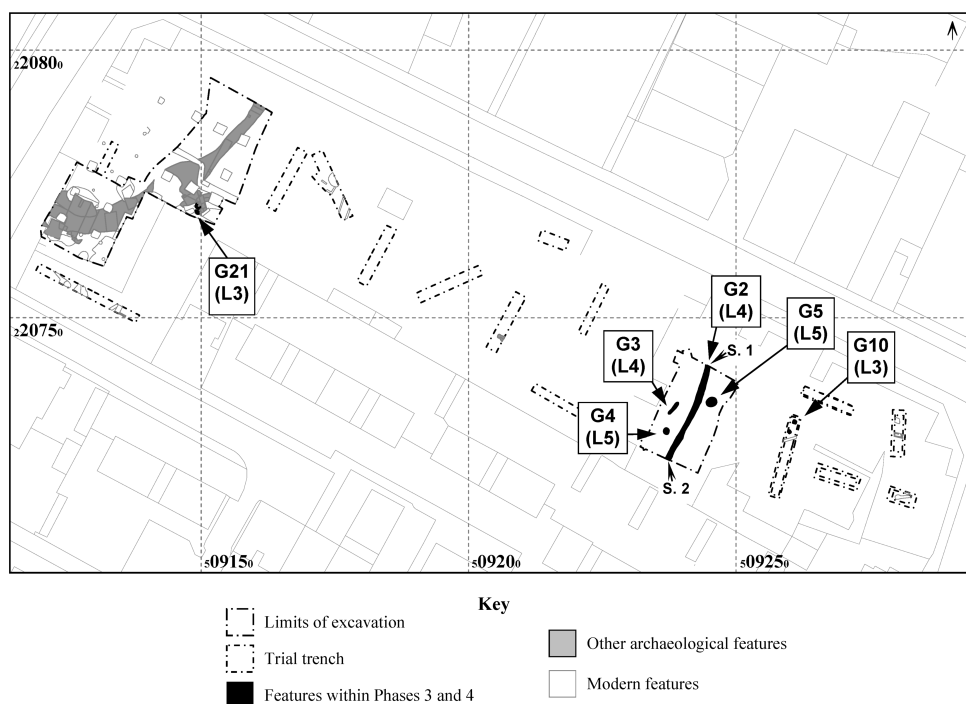


Figure 14: Phases 3 and 4; late post-medieval and undated remains

#### *Final levelling of the site of the castle ditch*

A varied collection of nineteen post-medieval/modern layers (L8, G23) represent a significant levelling episode across the development area (Fig. 15, Section 2; Fig. 9, Section 3; Fig. 10, Section 7). They had a combined maximum depth of 0.90m and incorporated significant quantities of crushed chalk. They were probably associated with the 19th century expansion of Luton. What had until then been a marginal, possibly derelict, piece of land was incorporated into the suburban residential and industrial town, as it spread south-westwards from its historic core.

The significance of these deposits is that they levelled a landscape, pockmarked not only by former quarry pits but also by the castle ditch, which even at this late date still survived (at least in its south-eastern quarter) as a *c.* 0.4m deep linear depression (Fig. 9, Section 7).

#### PHASE 4: UNDATED REMAINS IN THE EASTERN PART OF THE DEVELOPMENT AREA

A significant characteristic of this part of the site is that it contained archaeological remains associated

with use of the area in the pre-modern era before it was subsumed within the rapidly expanding town. Modern truncation was severe but tended to be localised. In places, extensive deposits of subsoil associated with the former ground surface survived beneath more modern levelling. In themselves, the archaeological remains were disparate and difficult to interpret. However, their very presence is important because it indicates that even previously developed parts of the town can still retain considerable archaeological potential.

Two parallel ditches L4 were recorded on a NE–SW alignment (Fig. 14). The bigger and better preserved of the two (G2) was 17m long, 1.2m wide and up to 0.7m deep (Fig. 15, Sections 1 and 2). Both ditches were sealed by subsoil. The only artefactual material for dating, however, was a small, abraded sherd of sand and grog tempered Iron Age pottery (fabric type F09) and a 2nd-century Roman flagon rim sherd (fabric type R03B), which are both likely to be residual. Four residual worked flints of probable late Neolithic/early Bronze Age date were recovered from ditch G2.

Two environmental samples (2) and (3) from ditch G2 produced a small number of charred cereal grains (see Appendix 1). These included



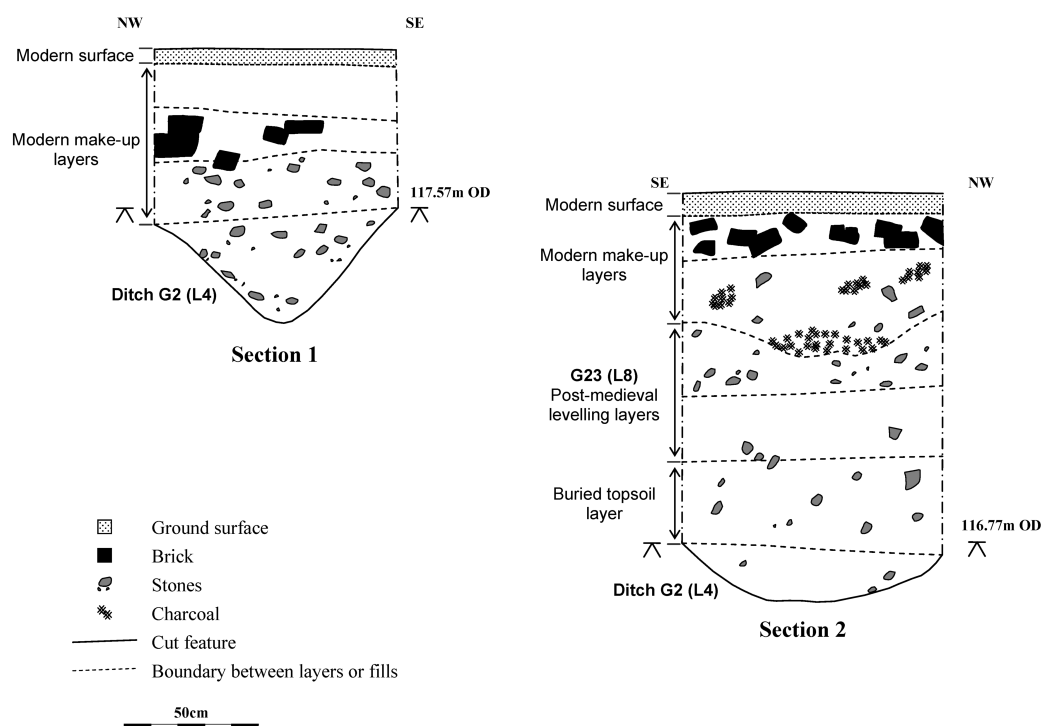


Figure 15: Ditch G2, Sections 1 and 2

four wheat grains, one of hulled wheat, either emmer or spelt, and one possibly belonging to free-threshing wheat. One grain tentatively identified as barley was recovered from sample (3) while the presence of an awn fragment in the same sample also pointed to the presence of oat. A charred fragment of hazelnut shell was also retrieved from sample (2). Small amounts of very fragmented charcoal were also present.

The grains may have become accidentally charred during the latter stages of crop-processing, for instance while being dried before storage or milling or de-husking, or possibly during cooking of whole grains. The small amount of remains suggests that these activities may have taken place at some distance from the ditch. It is possible that the emmer/spelt grain may be residual, like the sherd of Iron Age pottery. Hulled grains, particularly spelt, are common in prehistoric contexts and in the Roman period, with free-threshing wheat becoming the common wheat grain in the post-Roman era (Greig 1991).

Sample (2) also produced a small number of shells of blind or agate snail and a single shell of glass snail *Aegopinella sp.* This is a common and catholic species found under ground litter in a

wide variety of sheltered places (Kerney 1999, 142).

It may be significant that both ditches are aligned perpendicular to Holly Street, and parallel to Castle Street. This suggests that they represent the remains of minor land divisions, which were in use during the post-medieval period (and possibly the medieval period or even earlier). The small quantities of artefactual or ecofactual material within them suggest that they were located some distance from any contemporary settlement.

Two relatively small pits L5, similar in size, shape and sterile fill, were located close to ditch G2 and are likely to have been associated with it. Again, the absence of any domestic refuse in the pits reinforces the conclusion that the whole of this area, including the site of the former castle, lay at a considerable distance from any settlement.

## DISCUSSION

### PHASE 1: ROBERT DE WAUDARI'S CASTLE

Despite extensive disturbance from the piled foundations of the former Luton News printworks,

almost 50m of the bailey ditch of Robert de Waudari's castle survived at the western end of the Bellway Homes' development area. Where best preserved, it was 4.5m wide and 2.3m deep. Its curvature suggests that it represents the south-eastern corner of the bailey. No internal features associated with the use or occupation of the castle, nor any traces of an internal or external palisade were identified.

The sequence of layered chalk and silt within the ditch suggests that it became infilled in at least three distinct episodes. This appears to have been largely as a result of erosional processes but, perhaps, partly as a result of deliberate human action. No datable artefacts, which might have allowed some of these layers to be related to the 1154 demolition of the castle, were recovered. Similarly, extensive sampling only produced a relatively small quantity of fragmentary charcoal. This almost complete absence of evidence for human occupation is surprising and may suggest that this part of the bailey ditch lay at some distance from the main focus of habitation within the castle.

The ditch was never re-cut but did survive as a distinct depression in the landscape until well into the post-medieval period. Still at least 0.4m deep, it was finally levelled before the construction of various buildings and walls in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The recent archaeological investigations have significantly improved our understanding of this part of de Waudari's castle. Limited observations, in far from ideal conditions, were made on the same site in 1963 during construction of the printworks. As a result, it was postulated that the north-eastern corner of the bailey ditch had been identified (Dony and Dyer 1975, 40). However, no evidence for this right-angled corner was found during the recent work. It is, however, now clear that the south-eastern corner of the bailey ditch lay within the development area, rather than beneath Kelvin Close, as previously surmised. More significantly, the curved alignment of the ditch suggests that the bailey encompassed a far greater area than the previously estimated 3,360sqm (see below).

The recent work has also helped to elucidate the results of the 2002 archaeological investigations within the former Luton Bus Depot on the opposite side of Castle Street (Coles 2005). As Figure 2 demonstrates the *c.* 6m length of ditch identified on that site lines up perfectly with the ditch identified within the Bellway Homes' development. It

was slightly better preserved (6.1m wide and 2.9m deep) but is undoubtedly the same feature.

The two pieces of work also produced some contrasting results. In 2002 a shallow re-cut was identified. Its function was uncertain but it was not considered to be associated with the use of the castle as a military stronghold (Coles 2005, 207). This feature was not recorded within the Bellway Homes' development, although it may have been destroyed by the greater degree of truncation. A small assemblage of finds (12th–13th century pottery, part of a cow mandible, and a fragment of probable horse shoe) was also recovered in 2002, although again sampling produced only a very small amount of charcoal. This minor difference may reflect the fact that this part of the ditch was closer to the motte (with, it is assumed, its associated fortified dwelling) and was, therefore, more likely to have been used for the casual disposal of domestic refuse. An alternative explanation for the paucity of finds from the ditch as a whole is that the castle was not permanently occupied, a hypothesis that could only be tested through further archaeological investigation.

The most significant result of the recent archaeological investigations is that (when combined with the 2002 work) the precise location of almost 80m of the castle ditch has been established. Given the curvature of the ditch, it has also been possible to put forward a new suggestion for the size and shape of the castle. The projected line of the ditch shown on Figures 2, 5, 6 and 7 takes in the Holly Lodge mound, which as discussed above might be identified with the castle's motte, and allows for the fact that late 18th-century title deeds refer to the castle ditch in relation to the boundaries of a property to the north of the site of Holly Lodge.

The projected line of the ditch is highly speculative and the area defined by it does not represent an attempt to map the actual location of the castle. However, at *c.* 115m long, *c.* 90m wide and *c.* 1ha in extent, it is considered to be a reasonable approximation of the *minimum* size of the castle. It may have been considerably bigger. For example, it is possible that Chapel Street was laid out to go round the site of the castle. It is even possible, although perhaps unlikely, that the identified length of ditch actually surrounded the motte and that a far more extensive bailey awaits discovery. More precise mapping of its actual shape and extent could only be achieved through further archaeological fieldwork. The fact that the ditch

has already been identified on two sites subject to repeated redevelopment suggests that this may well be achievable, even within the context of a heavily built up urban centre like Luton.

The siting of Robert de Waudari's extra-urban castle (c. 200m south-west of the historic core of Luton) was without doubt purely short-term and military in nature. It occupied a significant, strategic position, straddling the London to Bedford road. From a ridge of high ground, it overlooked the medieval town, which had developed in the valley bottom around a series of crossing points over the River Lea. It was designed to overlook the landscape, with clear defensible vistas and to control the southern approaches to the town.

Although the castle was short-lived, it should not be considered a "failed" castle. Equally, it is misleading to compare the site unfavourably with that of Fulk de Breauté's castle in the centre of the medieval town (Fig. 3). Built next to the church more than half a century later in 1221, the latter appears to represent a re-fortification of a pre-existing late Saxon / Domesday manorial centre (Dr Paul Courtney pers. comm.). Unlike de Waudari's it would have been a classic, multi-functional castle: defensive residence, manorial centre and court centre. The last two, and especially the last, were perhaps the longest-lived functions, as at so many other castles. The manorial function is likely to have declined with the sub-parcelling of the manor of Luton into at least thirty sub-manors from the late 13th century onwards.

Within the context of the Anarchy, the centre of the town may not have been the best strategic location for de Waudari to site his castle. It is also possible that King Stephen did not want his mercenary to occupy the headquarters of what had traditionally been a royal manor. Whatever the reason, the castle was built beyond the limits of the medieval town and had an influence on its subsequent expansion.

#### PHASE 2: MEDIEVAL/EARLY POST-MEDIEVAL QUARRYING

On the basis of the excavated evidence, there is no indication that the site of the castle was re-occupied in the medieval period. It lay some distance from the centre of the medieval town (Fig. 3) in what may, for centuries, have remained an essentially rural setting. A series of intercutting quarry pits were dug along the line of the castle

ditch, presumably because it afforded easy access to the underlying chalk. Even when quarrying ceased, the pits were not backfilled with domestic refuse, reinforcing the conclusion that they lay some distance from a centre of habitation.

#### PHASE 3: LATE POST-MEDIEVAL EXPANSION OF LUTON

The first useful, complete map of the town, the 1842 Tithe map (MAT/30/1 and 2), gives a good indication of the state of this part of Luton on the brink of its enormous expansion in the early industrial period. Holly Lodge is clearly visible in its wooded grounds, which were to remain a feature of this part of the town for the next century. The adjacent stretch of Castle Street displays an intriguing curve, which is still a feature of the road today. It is tempting to see in this the influence of its passage through the site of de Waudari's former castle.

New Town Street (later Newton Street and present-day Kelvin Close) was laid out between 1841 and 1844 for two rows of terraced houses. Speculative developments of this kind, fuelled by a fluid land market and the rapid industrialisation of the hatting trade, were characteristic of the growth of early 19th-century Luton (Bunker 1999, 12, 65). It is noteworthy that the plot of land occupied by the castle ditch on the Bellway Homes' development was not built on at this time. There are many possible reasons for this but it may be that the partially infilled castle ditch and quarry pits made it a less attractive site to prospective, speculative developers.

By 1880 the southern part of the plot was occupied by a row of houses fronting onto Castle Street (Fig. 5). The construction of these buildings may have been the occasion for partial levelling of the site, as seen in the excavated evidence on the Bellway Homes' development. However, the northern half of the plot (*i.e.* what would have been the south-eastern quadrant of the castle's bailey) remained a tree-lined piece of open ground, as did the corresponding plot of land on the opposite side of the newly established Holly Street. The latter had been built on by 1924 (Fig. 6) but as late as 1959 the site of the south-eastern corner of the bailey ditch remained undeveloped (Fig. 7). Only four years later any surviving above-ground evidence for the ditch was swept away by the construction of the Luton News printworks.

## CONCLUSIONS

There are still many unanswered questions about Robert de Waudari's castle. However, since its physical remains were first recorded in 1963, archaeological fieldwork has significantly augmented our knowledge of its size, location and state of preservation. It is clear that it was positioned to provide strategic command of the southern approaches to medieval Luton; it was built for short-term, military reasons. Once the castle had served its purpose, the site slipped back into relative obscurity and, apart from an episode of small-scale chalk quarrying, was probably re-incorporated into the extensive tracts of pasture to the south and west of the town. By combining the results of the investigations on the Bellway Homes' development with cartographic, documentary and photographic sources, it has been possible to demonstrate that, although short-lived (fifteen years), the castle's influence on local land boundaries and the later development of Luton lasted for over 800 years.

If Robert de Waudari's castle remains something of an enigma, the same is true of Fulke de Breauté's castle to the south of St Mary's church, where a substantial mound of earth still survived at the beginning of the 20th century (Dony and Dyer 1975, 47). No archaeological work has yet been carried out on this site. However, the Bellway Homes' development has demonstrated that both substantial features (like the bailey ditch) and smaller features (like the ditches sealed by former subsoil at the eastern end of the site) can survive within modern Luton. It is clear that archaeological investigation can help to redress the effects of what Bunker (1999, 14) has described as a historical lack of appreciation of Luton's heritage, manifested through the wholesale demolition of later buildings and the meagre extent of documentary records.

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Document Reference Number	Title
A174–220	Bundle labelled by Mr Austin “Deeds relating to the Chemist’s Shop, No.20, Market Hill and to the site of Holly Lodge in Castle Street, Luton” 1596–1855
X214/4	Tithe map, 1842
X1/37/1	Luton, Straw Bonnet emporium, surveyor R. Todd, Luton, c. 1862. Ordnance Survey 1st Edition 1880 Ordnance Survey 3rd Edition 1924
G3582T	Luton News aerial photograph, Castle Street, 1959

## APPENDIX 1: CHARRED PLANT REMAINS

John Giorgi, Museum of London Specialist Services

Nine environmental bulk soil samples (ranging in volume from 10 to 20 litres) were collected for the recovery of biological remains including charred plant material and molluscs. Seven of the samples were collected from the western part of the development area: three from the castle ditch, three from putative postholes (later recognised as solution holes) and one from a quarry pit. The other two samples were from a ditch in the eastern part of the development area. The samples were processed by flotation in a peroxide solution onto a flotation mesh of 0.3mm with the residues wet-sieved to 1mm. The dried residues were sorted for artefacts. Further details may be found in the assessment report (Albion Archaeology 2005b).

Only three of the samples (2), (3) and (4) produced identifiable charred plant remains other than

charcoal. The results are shown in Table 1. Most of these grains were poorly preserved and therefore could not be identified to species level.

Samples (2) and (3) were from the same undated ditch fill and the emmer/spelt grain may be residual from the prehistoric period, possibly the Iron Age (which was represented in the sample by a sherd of Iron Age pottery). Free-threshing wheat, on the other hand, is the common wheat grain for the post-Roman period. The other cereals represented in this sample were possible barley and oat, the latter generally considered a weed until the post-Roman period. The possible oat grain in the quarry pit (sample (4)), however, is more likely to be from a cultivated cereal. Hazelnuts (represented by a single charred fragment), a potential food resource, are found on sites of all periods.

It is difficult to comment on the importance of the food remains in the ditch fill given that there is a possibility that some of the material may be residual; all these cereals may have been used for human consumption while both barley and oats could have also been used for animal fodder. The remains probably represent background debris blowing around the site, although they have no direct relevance to the features from which they were recovered.

There was very little charcoal in any of the samples, which again probably represents material blowing around the site. Most of the charcoal is smaller than 4mm except for several fragments between 4mm and 6mm from sample (4) from one of the post-medieval quarry pits (G18.01, Fig. 10, Section 8 and Fig. 12) and sample (1) from the castle ditch (G1.03).

## APPENDIX 2: MOLLUSCAN REMAINS

Alan Pipe, Museum of London Specialist Services

Nine environmental bulk soil samples (ranging in volume from 10 to 20 litres) were collected for the recovery of biological remains including molluscs. Seven of the samples were collected from Area 3, from three castle ditch fills, three possible postholes (later recognised as solution holes) and a post-medieval quarry pit deposit. The other two samples were from a ditch fill in Area 1. The samples were processed by flotation in a peroxide solution onto a flotation mesh of 0.3mm with the residues wet-sieved to 1mm. The dried residues were sorted for artefacts.

LATIN NAME	ENGLISH NAME	Phase	4	4	2
		Landscape	L4	L4	L2
		Group	G2.01	G2.01	G18.01
		Feature	ditch fill	ditch fill	pit fill
		Sample	2	3	4
		vol soil (l)	20	10	20
		vol flot (ml)	8	3	2
<i>Triticum dicoccum/spelta</i>	emmer/spelt wheat grain			1	
<i>T. cf. aestivum</i> type	?free-threshing wheat grain		1		
<i>Triticum</i> sp.	wheat grain		1		
cf. <i>Triticum</i> sp.	?wheat grain			1	
cf. <i>Hordeum</i> sp.	?barley grain			1	
cf. <i>Avena</i> sp.	?oat grain				1
<i>Avena</i> sp.	oat awn fragment			1	
Cerealia indet.	indet. cereal grain fragments		2	1	2
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L.	hazel nut shell fragment		1		
Gramineae indet.	grass seed (large)				1
indeterminate	wood charcoal		++	+++	+

Table 1: Charred plant remains

TAXON	COMMON NAME	Period	Medieval	Medieval	Post-medieval	
		Phase	1	2	4	
		Landscape	L1	L2	L4	
		Feature	Ditch Fill	Pit Fill	Ditch Fill	Solution Hole
		Sample	1	4	2	8
<i>Cecilioides</i>	Blind (Or Agate)					
<i>Acicula</i>	Snail		1	1	5	1
<i>Aegopinella</i> Sp.	Glass Snail		Nil	Nil	1 (Sub-Adult)	Nil
Total			1	1	6	1

Table 2: The Mollusc shells

Only four of the samples (1), (2) (4) and (8) produced identifiable mollusc shell fragments. The results are shown in Table 2. Most of the fragments displayed moderate or good preservation, and could be identified to *genus* or species level. The molluscan assemblage was extremely limited, with samples (3), (5), (6), (7) and (9) producing no mollusc shell at all. Ditch fills (1), (4) and (8) produced

individual examples of the blind (or agate) snail *Cecilioides acicula*, with a maximum of five shells from sample (2). This sample also produced a single sub-adult shell of glass snail *Aegopinella sp.*, the only recovery of this *genus* from any sample group. Recovery of these widespread and often very abundant snail *taxa* does not allow interpretation of local habitat.