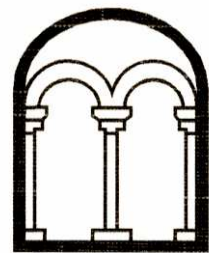


**38 LOWER SHELTON ROAD
LOWER SHELTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL OBSERVATION,
INVESTIGATION, RECORDING, ANALYSIS
AND PUBLICATION**

Albion
archaeology



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Marcin Koziminski	Robert Wardill	Drew Shotliff

6th September 2011

Prepared for

J & A Architectural Construction Services Ltd

on behalf of

Mr & Mrs Preston-Dye
38 Lower Shelton Road
Lower Shelton
Bedfordshire



Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

Acknowledgements

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the archaeological works by Joe Vacchio of J & A Architectural Construction Services on behalf of Mr and Mrs Preston-Dye of 38 Lower Shelton Road, Lower Shelton. The project was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Martin Oake, Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist.

Fieldwork was carried out by Marcin Koziminski (Archaeological Supervisor) who also prepared this report with figures by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician).

*Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford, MK42 0AS
☎: 0300 300 8141
Fax: 0300 300 8209
E-mail: office@albion-arch.com
Website: www.albion-arch.com*

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<i>1.0</i>	<i>06/09/2011</i>	<i>n/a</i>



Introduction

Planning permission (CB/10/04451/FULL) was granted for the construction of a porch and rear extension to the existing house at 38 Lower Shelton Road, Lower Shelton, Bedfordshire.

As the proposed development had the potential to impact upon a significant heritage asset, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA) recommended to the Local Planning Authority that a scheme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording should be implemented on groundworks associated with the development, as a condition of planning consent.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the programme of archaeological works in accordance with the methodologies described in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2011), produced in response to the brief prepared by the CBCA (CBC 2011).

Site Location and Description

Lower Shelton lies approximately 5km to the south-west of Bedford. The village principally comprises a ribbon of settlement along 650m of the Lower Shelton Road.

38 Lower Shelton Road lies at the south-east end of this settlement with the property being centred on OS grid reference SP99887 42570 (Figure 1).

Topographically the site is situated on the northern edge of the Marston Vale at a height of around 39m OD.

The geology of the area comprises Oxford Clay overlain by head deposits of clay, silt, sand and gravel.

Archaeological Background

The CBC brief (2011) describes the archaeological context of the site as follows:

“The development lies within the core of the medieval settlement of Lower Shelton (HER16936) and this is a locally identified heritage asset as defined by PPS5.

The Domesday survey of AD1086 suggests the presence of a hamlet at Shelton within the vill of Marston Moretaine.

Recent archaeological investigations have been undertaken in two locations with proximity to the site.

At the land adjacent to 175 Lower Shelton Road (approximately 500 metres north-west of the development site) an archaeological evaluation, excavation and watching brief produced evidence of property boundaries and a building dating to the medieval period; background Iron Age activity was also recovered. The earliest medieval period activity related to the creation of an open plot of land; it was fairly quickly sub-divided before a building, possibly representing a bake-house or kitchen was constructed in the later medieval period. The excavator concluded that the bake-house/kitchen may have been associated with the Grade II Listed Shelton Manor (HER 4309), a timber framed 16th-century house which lies adjacent to the site (Archaeologica 2004).



In 2008 and 2009 archaeological evaluation and excavation were undertaken approximately 100 metres to the east of the development site as part of the A421 improvement works. At the south-western end of the excavation area (close to where Lower Shelton Road joins the A421) the archaeological investigations demonstrated the presence of a small late Iron Age settlement; this comprised at least two possible round houses and associated pits. During the early Roman period the investigations suggested this area had formed part of a field system and traces were also recorded of the medieval ridge and furrow agricultural cultivation remains (HER2791) recorded from aerial photographs and cartographic evidence on the Central Bedfordshire and Luton HER (Oxford Archaeology 2009a and 2009b).

The development site lies within a documented archaeological landscape which archaeological investigations have demonstrated relate to the prehistoric, Roman and medieval settlements of this area. Consequently it has the potential to produce multi-period remains.”

A heritage statement was prepared on behalf of the client by G C Planning Partnership Ltd (2011) to accompany the planning application. The study consulted the HER, Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and the National Monument Record (Swindon) for archaeological and historical information located within 500m of the development site. No additional information to that detailed above was identified.

Project Methodology

A detailed methodology is provided in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2011). Methods employed during the project complied with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (2009), English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)* (2009), and Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual* (2001).

Works Description

Archaeological observation of the groundworks took place between 2nd and 3rd August 2011. The works comprised the excavation of strip trenches for building foundations and service runs, prior to the construction of the two- and one-storey extension to the rear of the house and a porch to the front (Figure 2).

The excavations were carried out by a mechanical excavator with digging by hand taking place when buried services were encountered. The base and sides in all trenches were cleaned by hand. Exposed archaeological features were investigated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets.



Results

The trench excavated at the rear of the building covered an area of c. 8m x 7.30m. Its depth varied from 1.10–1.50m and was deepest to the NW. The porch foundation trench covered an area of 2.30m x 2m and was up to 0.90m deep. The width of both trenches was 0.60m.

Overburden was similar in both trenches (Figure 3) and consisted of up to 0.35m of topsoil (1) and a clay sandy subsoil (2) that was generally 0.25–0.30m thick. Undisturbed geological strata were represented by mid yellow grey sandy gravel (3) and underlying dark grey blue Oxford Clay (4), which was revealed only in the trench to the rear of the house.

The only possible archaeological remains were revealed in the eastern part of the porch foundation trench in the form of what appeared to be a N-S aligned linear ditch [5]. It was at least 1.2m wide with a concave profile and was at least 0.55m deep at formation level. Although the feature produced no finds, it is thought to be post medieval/modern in date as it was cut into the subsoil (Figure 3).

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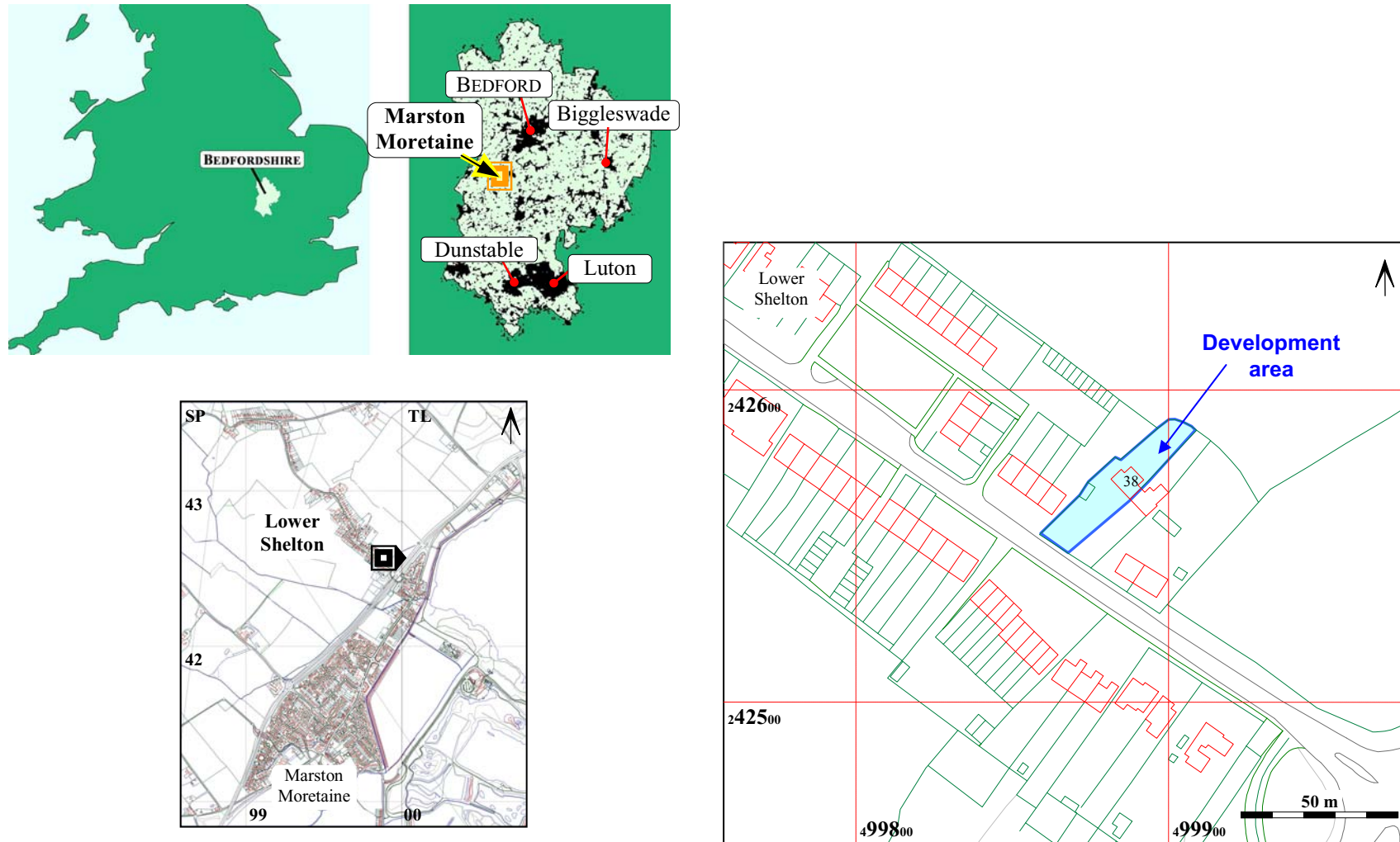


Figure 1: Site location plan

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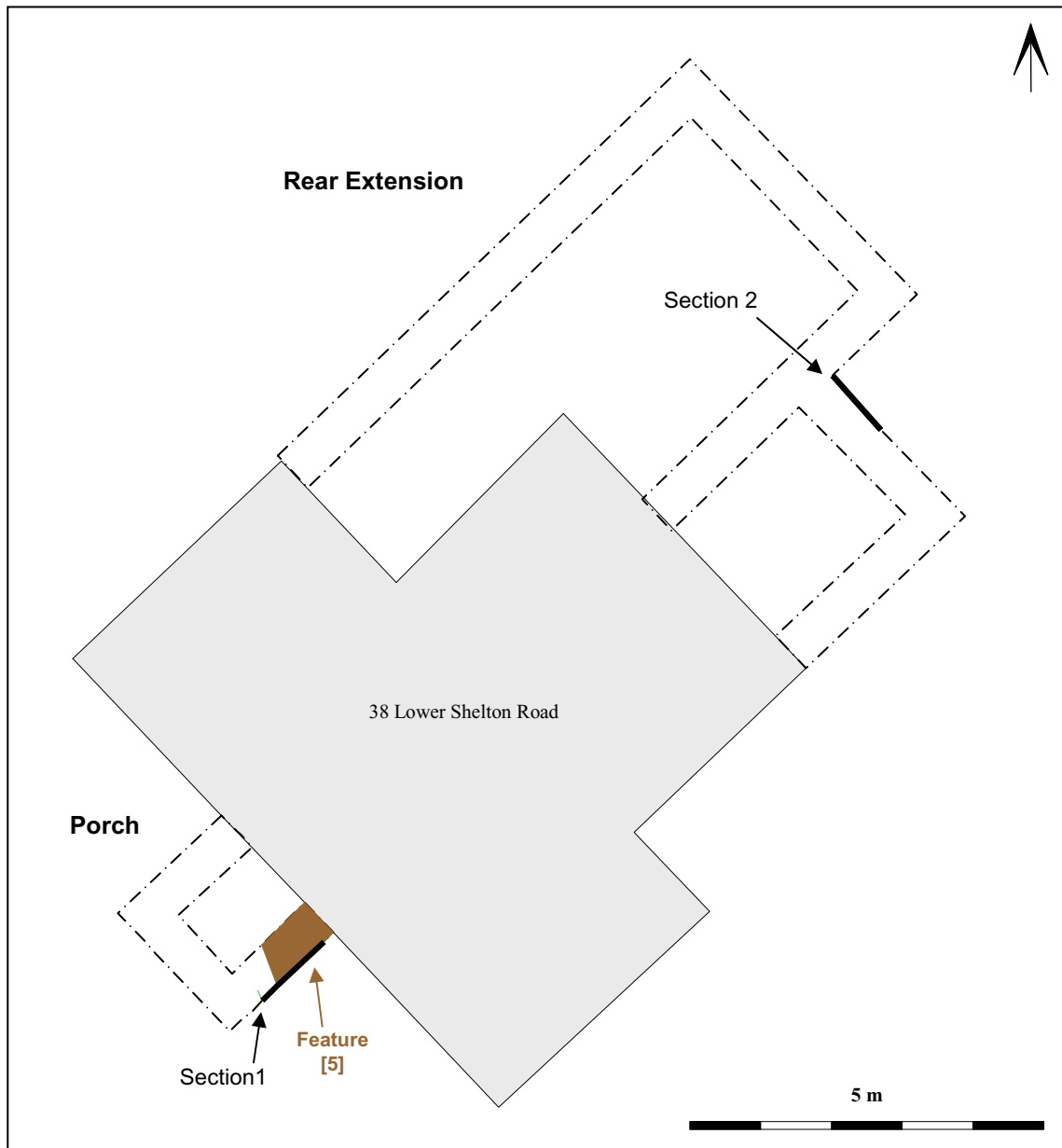
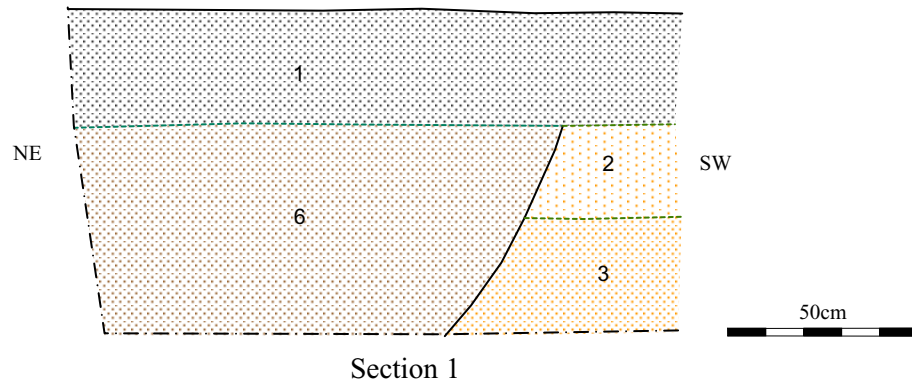


Figure 2: Results



Photograph of feature [5], scale 1m.

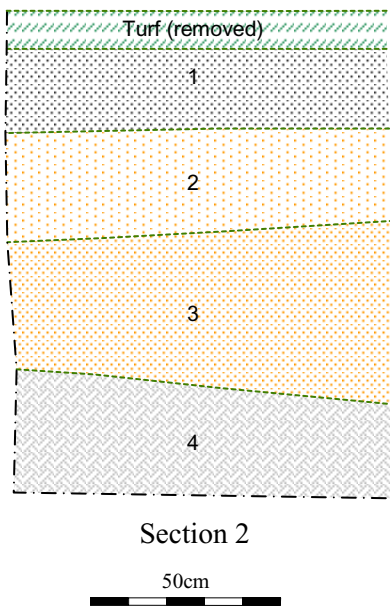


Figure 3: Section illustrations



Albion
archaeology



Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford
MK42 0AS

Telephone 01234 294000
Email office@albion-arch.com
www.albion-arch.com

