SADDLERS, 7 SWADEN
SANDY
BEDFORDSHIRE

ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL AND UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

Albion
archaeology

SADDLERS, 7 SWADEN
SANDY
BEDFORDSHIRE

ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL AND UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

Project: SS1907

Document: 2012/85
Version 1.0
OASIS ref: Albionar1-117331

16th November 2012

Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
Iain Leslie	Wesley Keir	Drew Shotliff

Produced for:

Mr and Mrs Martin
Saddlers
7 Swaden
Sandy

Contents

LIST OF FIGURES

The figures are bound at the back of the report.

Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete an assessment as possible, within the terms of the brief and project design. 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

This assessment has been prepared by Iain Leslie (Archaeological Supervisor) with contributions by Jackie Wells (artefacts).

The excavation was supervised by Iain Leslie with investigation and recording carried out by the following staff: Adam Williams and Anna Rebisz-Niziolek (Assistant Archaeological Supervisors), and Jo Ahmed and Gary Manning (Archaeological Technicians). Processing of the finds and ecofact samples were undertaken by Jackie Wells and Slawek Utrata respectively. All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff.

Albion Archaeology is grateful to Mr and Mrs Martin for commissioning the project. The site was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Martin Oake, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist.

Version History

Version	*Issue date*	*Reason for re-issue*
1.0	*16/11/2012*	*n/a*

Albion Archaeology
St Mary's Church
St Mary's Street
Bedford, MK42 OAS
☎: 01234 294006
Fax: 01234 294008
e-mail: office@albion-arch.com

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) granted planning permission (CB/11/02197/FULL) for an extension to replace a barn, new access and detached garage at Saddlers, 7 Swaden, Sandy, Bedfordshire. As the development had the potential to impact on the significance of a locally identified heritage asset with an archaeological interest, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA) advised that a condition should be attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This advice was in accordance with *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* (*PPS 5*).

A brief issued in January 2012 (CBC 2012a) outlined a staged approach to the archaeological investigation of the site. This comprised a Stage 1 field evaluation followed by an assessment of the results of the evaluation (Stage 2) and any further investigation that might be required (Stage 3).

The Stage 1 evaluation (Albion Archaeology 2012) and Stage 2 assessment have been completed. On the basis of the results of the evaluation, and in accordance with *PPS 5*, the CBCA issued a brief detailing the requirement for an archaeological area excavation (Stage 3) of the site of the extension to the west of the house before construction of the extension began (CBC 2012b). The archaeological excavation was undertaken between 19th and 27th April 2012.

1.2 Status and Purpose of this Document

This report presents the results of all stages of the archaeological investigations. It assesses the analytical potential of the recovered data-sets and sets out the further stages required to complete the dissemination and archiving of the results of the fieldwork. The latter will fulfil the requirements of the CBCA's brief and will allow the discharge of the archaeological planning condition.

1.3 Site Location and Description

Sandy lies within the eastern part of Central Bedfordshire adjacent to the A1 Great North Road and the River Ivel (Figure 1). Saddlers lies off the Swaden road to the east of the town between two prominent hills of the Greensand Ridge. It comprises a Grade II listed cottage and a barn lying on land that rises markedly from the road towards Cox Hill to the west.

The excavation area and site of the new extension, comprising *c*. 280m^2, lies immediately to the west of the cottage centred on NGR TL 18204/49059 and at a height of *c*. 42m OD.

The underlying solid geology consists of the Woburn Sands formation with a small deposit of superficial clay, sand and gravel "head" deposits directly underlying the site.

1.4 Archaeological Background

A heritage statement was prepared as part of the documentation supporting the planning application (Heritage Network 2011). This set out the historical and archaeological context of the site and its setting and the impact of the proposed development on any potential heritage assets. A detailed HER search and map regression for a 500m-radius around the site was undertaken as part of the heritage statement.

The archaeological background of Sandy has also been discussed in the Extensive Urban Survey for Sandy (Albion Archaeology 2003), a joint project between English Heritage and Bedfordshire County Council. The main information pertaining to the site is summarised below.

The site lies within a rich archaeological landscape containing remains of past occupation of many periods. Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age flint tools and other artefacts have been found in the wider vicinity of Sandy and the site. The site is located below a hill which is occupied by a hillfort known as Caesar's Camp (HER 442). No archaeological investigations have been carried out within the hillfort but surviving earthworks suggest that it consisted of a single rampart and ditch enclosure of approximately 7 acres in size.

The Roman town of Sandy developed in a location where the main Roman road connecting the settlements of Baldock and Godmanchester met a ford across the River Ivel and a possible meeting of transport routes through the gap in the Greensand Ridge. The main focus of the Roman town lay *c*. 400m to the south-west of the development site in the area of the modern municipal cemetery. It has been suggested that the Baldock to Godmanchester Roman road ran through the site (see below).

No Anglo-Saxon or medieval remains are recorded in the HER in the vicinity of the site. It is likely that the area was part of the agricultural and woodland economy of the manor and estates around Sandy at that time.

In the post-medieval period Sandy expanded along its main roads and several cottages dating to the 17th, 18th and 19th centuries lie along the Swaden road; some of them are listed. The house at 'Saddlers' is a Grade II listed building (HER 7582, NHLE 11137918) dating to the 17th or early 18th century. The house was extended in the 1980s with the adjacent barn dating to between 1903 and 1926.

The trial trench evaluation demonstrated that significant archaeological remains were present within parts of the development site. The greatest concentration of archaeological features was found in two trenches in the vicinity of the proposed new extension. A number of probable pits dating to the Roman period were revealed in Trench 2, suggesting possible settlement activity in the immediate vicinity. However, no evidence for the Baldock to Godmanchester Roman road, suggested to run through the site, was observed in either the trenches or the open area excavation.

2. SUMMARY OF RESULTS

2.1 Introduction

The contextual data was assessed in order to establish whether it would provide a coherent spatial and chronological framework. A total of 158 contexts were assigned to groups, *e.g.* possible structures, pit groups, boundary ditches, *etc*. The decision as to which Assessment Groups contexts were assigned to, was made on the basis of the following criteria:

- Do the contexts form a coherent spatial unit *e.g.* enclosure, pit group *etc*?
- Do the contexts represent key positions within the stratigraphic sequence?
- Do the contexts contain suitable dating material?

Assessment Groups were then assigned to a number of distinct Land-use areas, corresponding to larger, coherent and contemporaneous spatial units. These Land-use areas were then assigned to a number of episodes (Phases) of human activity corresponding to broad, chronological divisions (Periods), *e.g.* medieval or post-medieval, based on their artefactual assemblage. Where more than one distinct episode of human activity was apparent within a chronological period, they were assigned to separate Phases.

The text which follows is structured by chronological period and discussed by Phase. Relevant elements within these Phases are referred to by their Assessment Groups (G). All the archaeological features revealed on the site are illustrated in Figures 2 and 3.

2.2 Phase 1: Late Bronze Age / early Iron Age (c. 1,000–350BC)

A single feature was assigned to this phase of activity. It comprised a large V-shaped ditch G1, which was aligned ENE-WSW; it was *c.* 4.5m wide and 1.65m deep. The size of this ditch suggests that it represents a significant land boundary; it may be associated with the contemporary hillfort (HER 442) which lies *c.* 100m to the NW of the site.

2.3 Phase 2: Roman (2nd–3rd century)

This phase of activity accounts for the majority of archaeological features within the site. There are stratigraphic relationships between some of the groups within this phase. However, they all contained similar assemblages of pottery and are, therefore, seen as broadly contemporary, especially given the speed at which features are likely to have silted up in the sandy soils which characterise the area.

The Phase 2 evidence is dominated by a concentration of pits G3. The pits ranged in size from *c.* 0.5–3m in diameter and 0.15–0.8m in depth. Fills were broadly similar throughout with lighter sandier lower fills overlain by darker siltier upper fills, possibly representing gradual natural infilling followed by intentional backfilling. The pits were present across the entire site, although there was a somewhat denser concentration in the north-east quadrant. Such a concentration of pits is likely to be indicative of nearby settlement activity.

Pit G4 was of similar character to those described above but also contained an urned cremation burial within its upper fill. Given that the pit was similar to the others within the pit cluster, and that the cremation was located within its upper fill, it is likely that the pit was re-used as a grave once its original function had lapsed.

This phase of activity also featured four ditches. SW-NE aligned ditch G2 was *c.* 0.55m wide and 0.3m deep. It ran for *c.* 5.5m towards the centre of the site where it terminated. Two of the pits of G3 truncate this ditch.

Ditches G5 were aligned NW-SE and SW-NE; they were up to *c.* 0.5m wide and 0.25m deep. They did not survive in the south-west quadrant of the site but, given their alignment and similarity in profile and fills, it is likely that they form two sides of an enclosure. These ditches truncated some of the features in pit cluster G3. Ditch G12 was investigated within Trench 1; it probably represents the partially exposed and heavily truncated remains of enclosure G5.

A *c.* 0.5m-wide ditch G10 also aligned NW-SE was recorded in Trench 3.

Three steep, regular-sided, linear features G6 may represent structural slots. They were very similar in profile and plan — *c.* 0.4m wide, 0.2m deep and extending 1m from the south-west limit of excavation. They may have held vertical posts or beams as part of an upstanding structure. Very little of these features was exposed within the excavation area; however, they do point to the presence of at least one structure to the south-west of the site. The structural slots truncated some of the features in pit cluster G3.

A rectangular pit G9, *c.* 2.5m long, 0.8m wide and 0.15m deep, contained a single sherd of 2nd–3rd-century pottery. Although tentatively phased as Roman, the pit was dissimilar in profile and alignment to all other features on the site; it also contained a particularly loose fill. It is, therefore, possible that the Roman pottery is residual and that this pit is considerably later in date than the other Phase 2 features.

Overlying the Phase 2features was a layer of colluvial hillwash, up to 0.6m thick. This layer increased in depth towards the north-east of the site and contained 2nd–3rd-century pottery, suggesting that it is derived from the erosion of Roman features situated further up slope to the north-west.

2.4 Phase 3: Modern

A single rectangular feature G11, containing 19th-century pottery, was recorded in Trench 1.

Overlying the entire site was an upper layer of colluvium, up to *c.* 0.5m thick, sealed by *c.* 0.4m of topsoil.

2.5 Phase 4: Undated

Seven post holes G7 were investigated, although none produced dating evidence. They did not form any coherent pattern or structure. It is possible that they are contemporary with the Roman features of Phase 2; however, their fills were sufficiently different to suggest that this is not likely.

A small, *c.* 0.2m wide and 0.2m deep ditch G8 extended *c.* 1.5m from the south-east limit of excavation. It produced no dating evidence. Although it was on roughly the same NW-SE alignment as the Roman enclosures, its fill and profile were too dissimilar for it to be assigned to Phase 2.

3. ARTEFACT AND ECOFACT ASSEMBLAGES

3.1 Pottery

3.1.1 Introduction and methodology

For each context, pottery was recorded by fabric type and quantified by minimum sherd count and weight. This information was entered onto an Access Table in the project database. Pottery was spot dated by individual fabric and / or form type, and was the principal determinant in assigning contexts to chronological periods. Its presence was also used to assist in the identification of domestic activity.

Beyond this assessment, the assemblage has no potential for further analysis.

3.1.2 Quantification

The stratified assemblage comprises 114 sherds, representing 60 vessels, weighing 2.3kg. All but two sherds derive from features assigned to the Roman period (Phase 2; Table 1).

Phase	Sherd No.	% Sherd	Wt (g)	% Wt
1	1	0.8	196	8.3
2	112	98.4	2178	91.6
3	1	0.8	1	0.1
Total	**114**	**100**	**2,375**	**100**

Table 1: Pottery quantification by Phase

3.1.3 Pottery Type Series

Fabrics are listed below in chronological order (Table 2), using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, currently maintained by Albion Archaeology. No new fabric types were identified.

Fabric Type	Common name	Sherd No.	Wt (g)
Late Bronze Age / Early Iron Age			
F01C	Flint and quartz	1	196
		1	**196**
Late Iron Age			
F06B	Medium grog	2	10
F09	Sand and grog	4	23
		6	**33**
Roman			
R01	Samian	16	333
R03B	Gritty white ware	4	178
R05A	Orange sandy	1	2
R05D	Orange sandy (white-slipped)	3	72
R06B	Coarse grey ware	6	86
R06C	Fine grey ware	16	153
R06D	Micaceous grey ware	5	39
R06F	Grog and sand grey ware	1	7
R06H	White-slipped grey ware	6	54
R06I	Black-slipped grey ware	4	57
R07B	Sandy black ware	15	506
R10A	Buff gritty ware	6	94
R10B	Buff fine ware	1	42
R12B	Nene Valley Colour Coat	3	15

Fabric Type	Common name	Sherd No.	Wt (g)
R13	Shell	10	445
R13B	Shell with limestone and sand	3	54
R18A	Gritty pink ware	6	8
		106	**2,145**
Post-Roman			
P55	White earthenware	1	1
		1	**1**

Table 2: Pottery Type Series

3.1.4 Provenance, phasing and date range

Pottery was collected from thirty features across the site. Twenty-three features (77% of contexts producing pottery) contained less than 100g, and only one feature yielded in excess of 500g. Single sherds were collected from twelve features (40% of contexts yielding pottery). The pottery is generally abraded, and survives in moderate condition. Although the assemblage is fragmentary, indicated by a modest average sherd weight of 21g, a proportion of the Roman vessels are represented by more than single sherds. This suggests that much of the assemblage occurs in its primary context, close to areas where the pottery was being used. The assemblage is summarised below by chronological period, and quantified by group (Table 3).

Phase	Group	Description	Sherd No.	Wt (g)
1	1	V-shaped ditch	1	196
2	2	Ditch	6	45
	3	Pit cluster	92	1575
	4	Pit with urned cremation	5	362
	5	Enclosure	7	170
	6	Structural slots	1	3
	10	Ditch	1	23
	9	Rectangular pit	1	3
3	11	Modern intrusion	1	1

Table 3: Pottery quantification by Phase and Group

3.1.5 Phase 1: Late Bronze Age / early Iron Age

A large, hand-made, flint-tempered body sherd (193g) of late Bronze Age / early Iron Age date was recovered from V-shaped ditch G1.

3.1.6 Phase 2: Roman

Features assigned to Phase 2 yielded 112 sherds, weighing 2.1kg, the majority deriving from pit cluster G3 (Table 3). Six grog-tempered late Iron Age sherds (33g) occurred as residual finds in ditch G2 and pit cluster G3. There are no diagnostic vessel forms, and all sherds are highly abraded.

The remainder of the assemblage is datable to the Roman period (*c.* 2nd–3rd century). The pottery is primarily local in character, and is dominated by sandy grey ware vessels (fabric group R06) and thirteen contemporary shell-tempered sherds (group R13). These wares are supplemented by locally sourced oxidised wares (groups R05, R10). Vessel forms are single examples of a poppyhead beaker, neckless jar with a diameter of 260mm, everted rim jar, straight-sided dish, and bowls with reed and rectangular rims, respectively with diameters of 140mm and 360mm. Fourteen lower body and base sherds (497g) from a steep-sided coarse ware jar (R07B) have burnished, acute lattice

decoration, in the style of south-east Dorset Black Burnished ware, although they probably represent a local imitation.

The urned cremation within pit G4 comprised the intact base and lower body (231g) of a fine-walled, rilled, shelly jar (R13). The vessel is leached and abraded, and the upper portion appears to have been truncated. The condition of the vessel suggests it may have been used in a domestic capacity, prior to selection as a cremation urn.

Regional imports are four white ware flagon or jar sherds (178g) from the Verulamium (St Albans) industries, and three sherds (15g) of Nene Valley colour-coated ware, including one from a rouletted beaker.

Continental imports are 16 samian ware sherds (333g), probably of central Gaulish origin. Forms include two form 33 cups, an abraded form 37R decorated hemispherical bowl, and an abraded footring and body sherd with heavy interior wear, possibly deriving from the same bowl or dish. Lower colluvial deposit G14 in Trench 3 yielded a sherd of probable Romano-British samian (29g). Attempts during the 2nd century were made to produce samian in Britain, although the resulting vessels are highly distinctive, and their fabrics unlike those of continental producers (Webster 1996, 100).

3.1.7 Phase 3: Modern

Rectangular feature G11 yielded a fragment of white earthenware (1g), datable to the 19th century.

3.2 Ceramic Building Material

3.2.1 Introduction and methodology

For each context, ceramic building material (brick and tile) was recorded by fabric type in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, and quantified by minimum fragment count and weight. This information was entered onto the Context Assemblage Table in the project database. Where possible, the ceramic building material was also spot-dated. The assemblage has no potential for further analysis.

3.2.2 Quantification, variety, provenance and date

Five abraded pieces of Roman building material (317g) were recovered from Phase 2. Pit cluster G3 yielded a leached, shell-tempered brick fragment (206g), with a thickness of 42mm, and three pieces (91g) of sand-tempered brick or roof tile (tegula). A shelly tegula with a shallow D-shaped flange (20g) derived from enclosure G5.

3.3 Non-Ceramic Artefacts

3.3.1 Introduction and methodology

Each object was assigned a preliminary identification and quantified by number and/or weight. This data was entered into the project database. All metalwork will be x-rayed by Lincolnshire County Council Heritage Service's Conservation Department as part of the archive requirement. The assemblage has no potential for further analysis.

3.3.2 Quantification, variety, provenance and date

Two iron objects, two glass fragments, a single copper alloy item, and fuel ash/slag (30g), were recovered from features assigned to Phase 2.

Pit cluster G3
Iron objects comprise a broken timber nail shank, and four joining fragments from a tapering(?) strip. Both survive in poor condition and are encased in corrosion by-products. A horizontal rim fragment from a prismatic or cylindrical blue-green glass bottle was also recovered; it is datable to the 1st–3rd century.

Pit with urned cremation G4
Environmental samples taken from the urned cremation yielded a colourless, clear glass fragment of indeterminate form and date.

Enclosure G5
The enclosure yielded a small copper alloy fragment, weighing less than 0.1g. The object is of flat section, one face decorated with a triple linear design, and is possibly part of a coin. A small fragment (30g) of vitrified clay lining, to which shiny black slag adheres, was also collected. It represents either fused fuel ash or possibly lead smelting slag.

3.4 Human Bone

The cremation burial within pit G4 was represented by calcined human bone, weighing 197g, collected from the sieved residues of two environmental samples. The small quantity and poor condition of the bone hampers the recognition of skeletal elements, although cranium, maxilla / mandible, diaphyses (long bone shafts) and epiphyses (long bone heads) can be positively identified. The assemblage has no potential for further analysis.

3.5 Animal Bone

3.5.1 Introduction and methodology

For each context, animal bone was quantified by minimum fragment count and weight. Where possible, diagnostic bone elements and species were identified. This information was entered onto the Context Assemblage Table in the project database. Bone fragments sorted from environmental samples were scanned, but not recorded to the same level of detail as the hand-collected material.

3.5.2 Quantification, variety and provenance

Thirty-three animal bone fragments, weighing 175g, were collected, all but two deriving from pit cluster G3. Individual pieces are small, with an average weight of 5g, and are highly abraded, displaying much surface erosion. The fragmentary condition of the material means that, with the exception of two cattle molars, all are undiagnostic of species. Identifiable bone elements are large mammal limb bones, and a possible pelvis. The assemblage has no potential for further analysis.

3.6 Plant Remains, Insect Remains and Molluscs

Three bulk soil samples were taken during the excavation for the recovery of biological remains including plant remains and molluscs and, in the case of the deposit associated with the cremation burial, human remains. The samples were taken from a range of deposits — a pit G3, an enclosure ditch G5 and the deposit in which the cremation urn was deposited G4. The samples were 30 litres in size for the pit and ditch and 40 litres for the cremation deposit. Of these 10 litres each for the pit and ditch have been processed for assessment purposes. 20 litres have been processed of the deposit surrounding the cremation burial.

Few charred seeds or grain were recovered and no molluscs or insect remains were present in any of the samples. The samples have no potential for further analysis.

4. ANALYTICAL POTENTIAL OF THE DATA

4.1 Research Objectives

Following assessment of the results of the fieldwork and the analytical potential of the recovered data, it is apparent that the original objectives of the project, as set out in the WSI (Albion 2012), are still to a certain extent valid and achievable. These focused on characterising the settlement remains uncovered at the site and endeavouring to understand how these remains fitted in with our understanding of the Roman town of Sandy, thereby contributing to the wider research themes for the region (Oake 2007; Dawson 2007; Going and Plouviez 2000; Medlycott 2011). In addition to this, it is clear that the recovered data can also contribute to research teams relating to characterisation of the later prehistoric landscape of the area (Oake *et al* 2007).

Specific questions about the site include:

- What is the nature of the late Bronze Age / early Iron Age ditch and how does it relate to the surrounding landscape of this period; in particular the adjacent hillfort?
- How does the settlement activity fit in with our understanding of Roman Sandy, spatially and chronologically?

4.2 Contextual Data

The relatively good state of preservation of archaeological deposits and features found at the site indicate that the contextual data has the potential to contribute to the original research objectives of the project as well as additional research objectives relating to the late Bronze Age / early Iron Age.

The small area exposed during excavation does not allow a detailed analysis of the site as a discrete entity, but rather its value lies in its juxtaposition with the wider landscape. The relationship of the site to the surrounding landscape, in particular the adjacent hillfort and the Roman town of Sandy, is described in chronological order. Relevant sites are shown on Figure 6.

4.2.1 Late Bronze Age / early Iron Age (c. 1000-350BC)

The presence of a late Bronze Age / early Iron Age boundary ditch is interesting; however, it offers limited scope for secure interpretation given that only a small length was exposed.

The substantial size of the ditch suggests it represents a major landscape feature. The nearby hillfort of Caesar's Camp (HER 442), *c.* 100m to the north-west, is the most obvious known aspect of the late prehistoric landscape with which this ditch may be associated. Although there is no direct dating evidence for Caesar's Camp, the nearby hillfort at Sandy Lodge produced early Iron Age pottery, and early Iron Age pots were reportedly found in a garden on the slopes of Caesar's Camp in 1905 (Albion Archaeology 2003, 19), indicating that it is quite possible that the ditch was contemporary with the hillfort. It may be directly related to the hillfort, perhaps representing the ploughed out remains of an outlying defensive bank and ditch. However, its distance from the surviving earthworks perhaps makes it more likely that it is

simply a major land boundary. As such, it may still be related to the hillfort, particularly as there is a possible entrance through the ramparts on the south-east side of the hillfort (Heritage Network 2011, 4).

Alternatively, the ditch may represent a settlement boundary, whether directly related to the hillfort or not. Other early Iron Age activity has been noted in the area, including the early Iron Age pots found on the slopes of Caesar's Camp (Albion Archaeology 2003, 19), and a pit containing early Iron Age pottery under a recreation ground 420m to the WNW (HER1496). Other possible contemporary features are linear cropmarks, with possible enclosures, *c.* 700m to the north-east (Albion Archaeology 2003, 19). Late Iron Age activity is also present to the south of the site near present-day Sandy where cremations (HER 1501) were found north of the Roman cemetery. The number of late Iron Age coins found in the town has also led to suggestions that it may have been the site of a tribal mint (Albion Archaeology 2003, 19). Along with the other two hillforts (HER 445, 1164) this shows that the area was heavily utilized during the Iron Age.

The presence of the hillforts highlights the geographical importance of the area and in particular the gap in the Greensand Ridge later exploited for the Roman road. It is possible, of course, that the Roman road follows the course of an already established route, a theory that seems all the more likely when one considers the landscape feature that the road exploits in addition to the presence of the hillforts.

4.2.2 Roman (2nd-3rd century)

Given the small size of the investigation area, the full extent and character of the Roman settlement at Saddlers cannot be defined. The presence of the features observed, in particular the concentrated clustering of pits, is strongly suggestive of dense settlement activity in the area. For example, the foundation slots suggest the presence of structures; ditches suggest land enclosure and management; and the cremation burial indicates the formal deposition of human remains. The finds assemblage indicates a 2nd–3rd-century date for these features. It includes quantities of pottery, animal bone, brick, roof tile, glass, a possible coin and fuel ash/lead smelting slag, which are all consistent with settlement activity. The presence of 2nd–3rd-century pottery in the hillwash on the site is also suggestive of further Roman settlement remains up-slope to the north-west.

The small Roman town at present-day Sandy (HER 1897) developed around a major road intersection at the gap in the Greensand Ridge. It had been postulated that one of these roads — between Baldock and Godmanchester (HER 505) — ran through the site. Although no evidence of the road was revealed during the investigations at Saddlers, it is assumed that it ran close by the site of the settlement. The latter lies *c*. 500m north of the main Roman town. Watching briefs to the north of the Roman town at Stonecroft, Bedford Road and Sandy Lodge (Albion Archaeology 2003, 13) revealed no archaeological deposits, supporting the hypothesis that the town's northern boundary is defined by Potton Road.

No archaeological investigations have taken place along the valley or Roman road leading directly from Roman Sandy to the settlement at Saddlers.

However, given the general lack of evidence for Roman settlement activity to the north of the town, it is likely that the site at Saddlers represents either a discrete roadside farmstead or (and perhaps less likely) suburban ribbon development along the road. In either case, its proximity to the main town would have meant significant interaction. The small finds assemblage from the site is consistent with this, comprising mainly locally produced pottery with some regional and continental imports and rarities such as glass. It is typical of relatively low status domestic activity with good trade links, perhaps what one would expect from a settlement very close to but outside of a small Roman town.

Apart from six residual sherds of late Iron Age pottery, there is no evidence of continuity of settlement between the late Bronze Age / early Iron Age and the Roman period. The absence of Roman artefacts in the upper fills of the late Bronze Age / early Iron Age ditch suggests that it had silted up completely before the Roman settlement was established. The road has been dated to the 1st century AD (Albion Archaeology 2003, 21) and it is likely, therefore, that the settlement was created alongside it in the 2nd–3rd century. The main settlement in Sandy is thought to have Iron Age origins, with the Roman buildings not falling out of use until the 5th century. The settlement at Saddlers, therefore, falls comfortably within the central period of occupation at Roman Sandy.

4.3 Artefactual and Ecofactual Data

The pottery assemblage comprises fabric types and vessel forms which supplement current knowledge of pottery distribution within Roman Sandy. Beyond this, the material has no potential for further analysis.

Similarly, the small assemblages of other finds, human remains and animal bone have no potential for further analysis. The paucity of seed, grain and insect remains from the environmental samples also precludes further analysis.

5. UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN

5.1 Introduction

Assessment of the data from the investigations has indicated that it has no potential for further analysis, principally because of the small size of the site. However, the results of the work do make a modest contribution to understanding of the evolution of the landscape around Sandy in the late prehistoric and Roman periods. Accordingly, the results of the investigations will be disseminated further as set out below.

5.2 Publication

This report will be uploaded onto the ADS Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS ref: Albionar1-117331). In addition, summaries will be prepared for submission to *Britannia* and *South Midlands Archaeology*. The summaries will be cross-referenced to the online OASIS entry.

5.3 Archiving

Following approval of this document by the CBCA the archive of materials (subject to the landowner's permission) and accompanying records will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. 2012.03).

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology 2003. *Extensive Urban Survey for Bedfordshire: The Roman Town of Sandy*. Archaeological Assessment. Report no. 2001/36.

Albion Archaeology, 2012, *Saddlers, 7 Swaden, Sandy, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Trial Trench Evaluation.* Document 2012/21.

Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J., 2000. *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8.

CBC 2012. *Brief for a programme of Archaeological Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication at Land at Saddlers, 7 Swaden, Sandy, Bedfordshire*. V3 3rd January MKO.

CBC, 2012b, Stage 3 *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication at Land at Saddlers, 7 Swaden, Sandy, Bedfordshire*. V1 6th March MKO.

Dawson, M. 1995. "Sandy". In: Brown, A. E. (ed). *Roman Small Towns in Eastern England and Beyond*. Oxbow Monograph 52.

Dawson, M., 2007, *'Late Bronze Age to Roman'* in Oake *et al* (2007), 59-86.

Glazebrook, J. 1997. *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 1 Resource Assessment.* East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 3.

Going, C. and Plouviez, J., 2000, '*Roman*' in Brown and Glazebrook (2000), 19-22

Heritage Network, 2011, *'Saddlers, 7 Swaden, Sandy, Beds. Heritage Statement.* Report no. 671

Medlycott, M. (ed) 2011. Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24.

Oake, M. 2007. "Research Agenda and Strategy" in Oake et al (2007) 7-20.

Oake, M. et al, 2007. Bedfordshire Archaeology – Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy. Bedfordshire Archaeology Monograph 9.

Webster, P. 1996, '*Roman Samian Pottery in Britain*', CBA Practical Handbook 13.

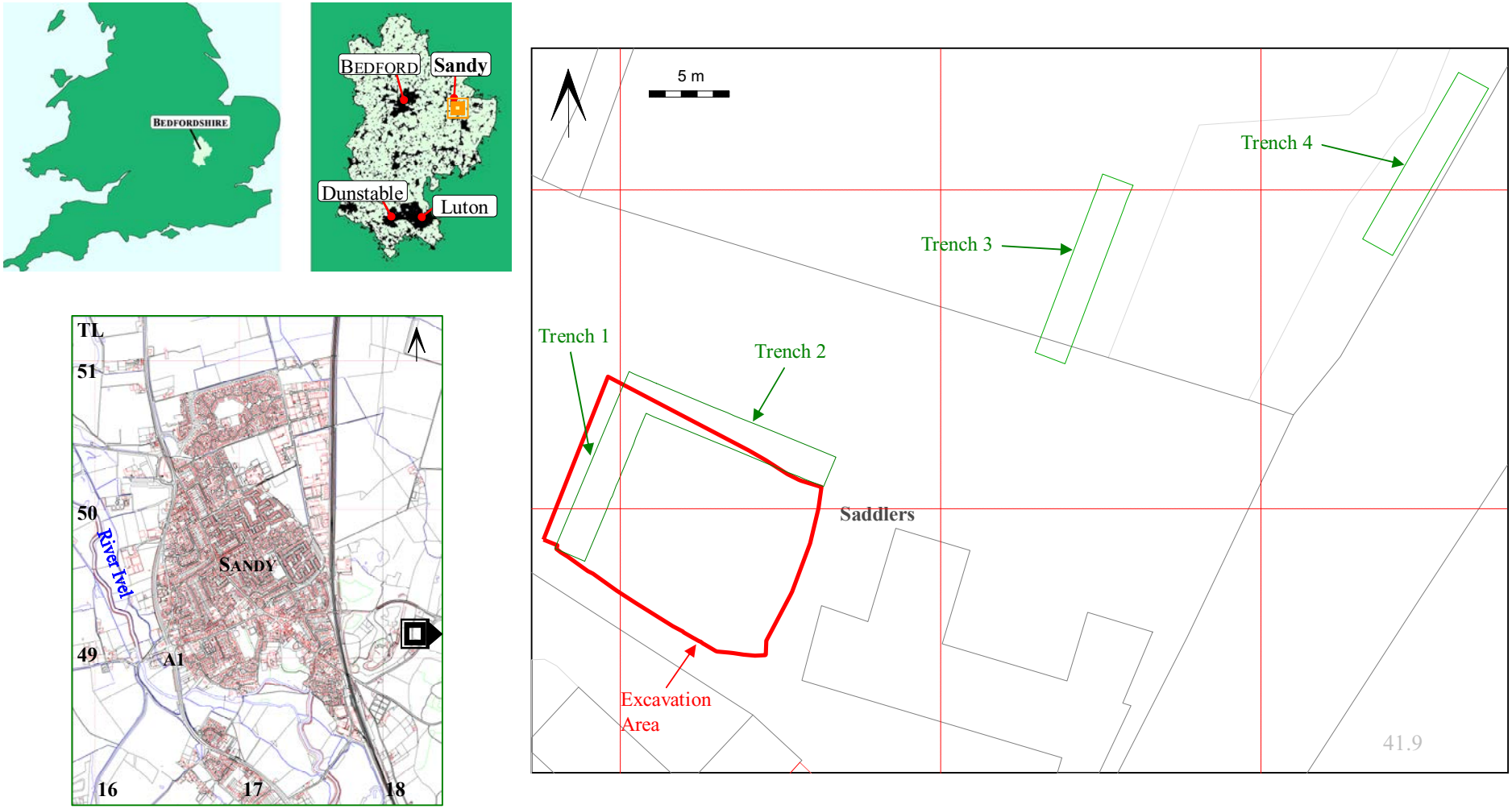


Figure 1: Location of site and excavation area

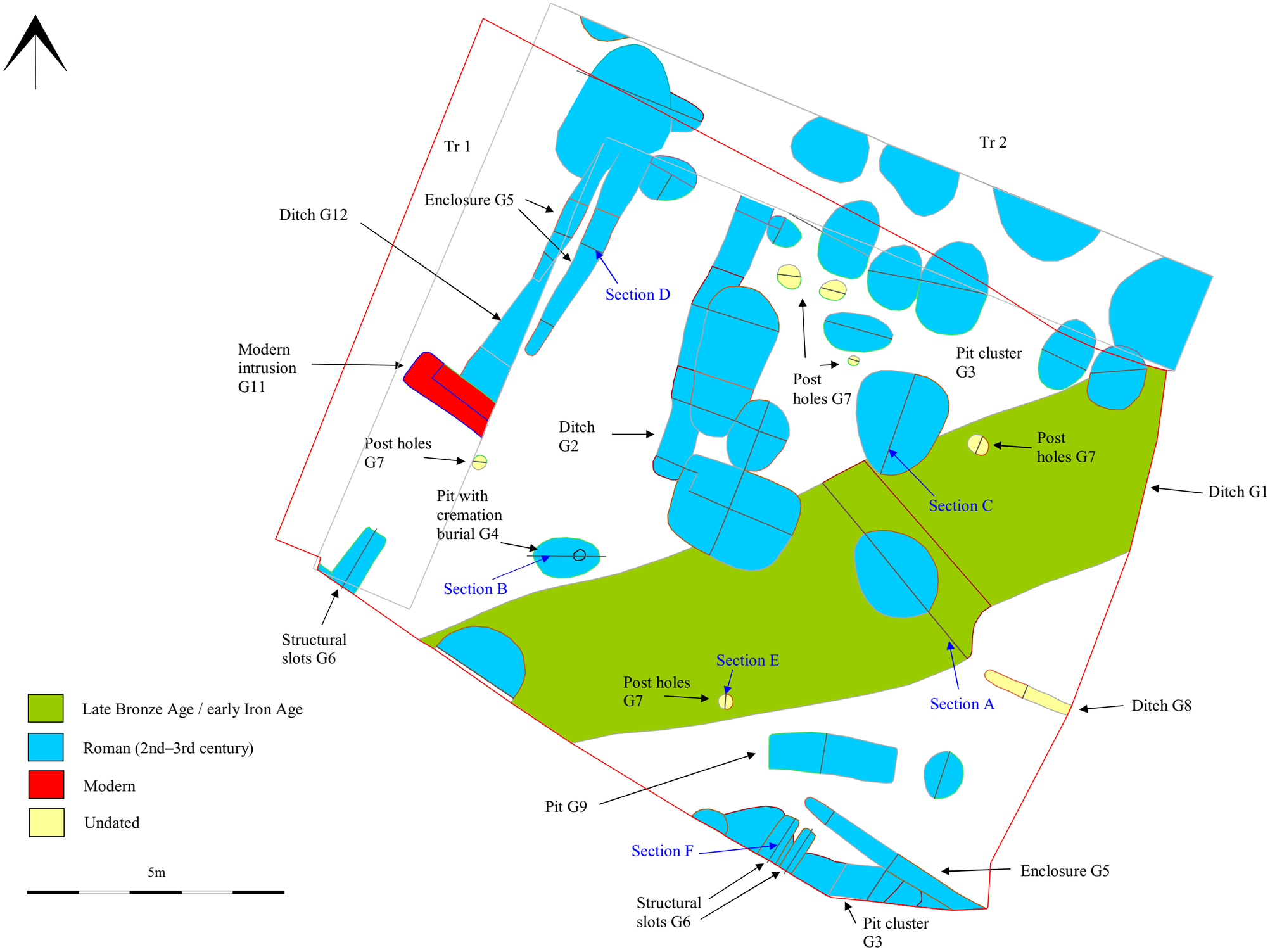
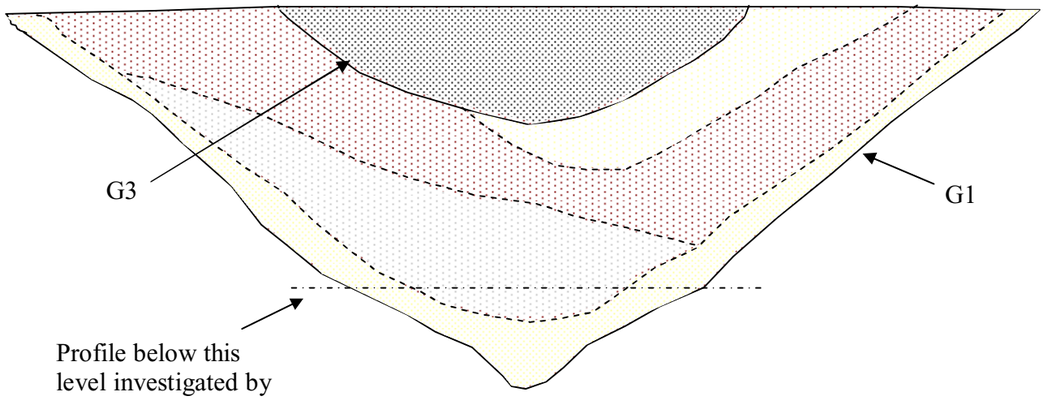
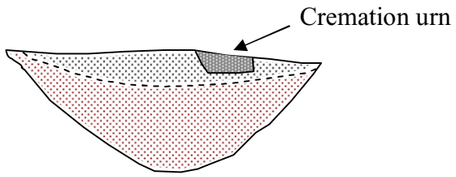


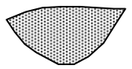
Figure 2: Excavation area – phase plan



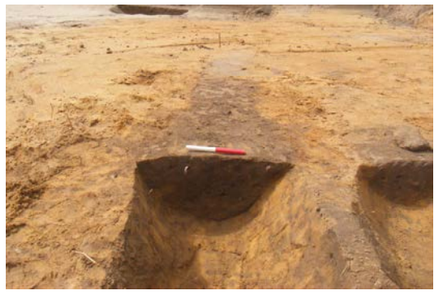
Section A – Ditch G1 and Pit G3



Section B – Pit with cremation burial G4

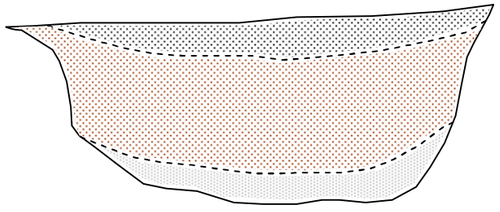


Section D – Enclosure ditch G5

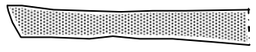


50cm

Section E – Post hole G7

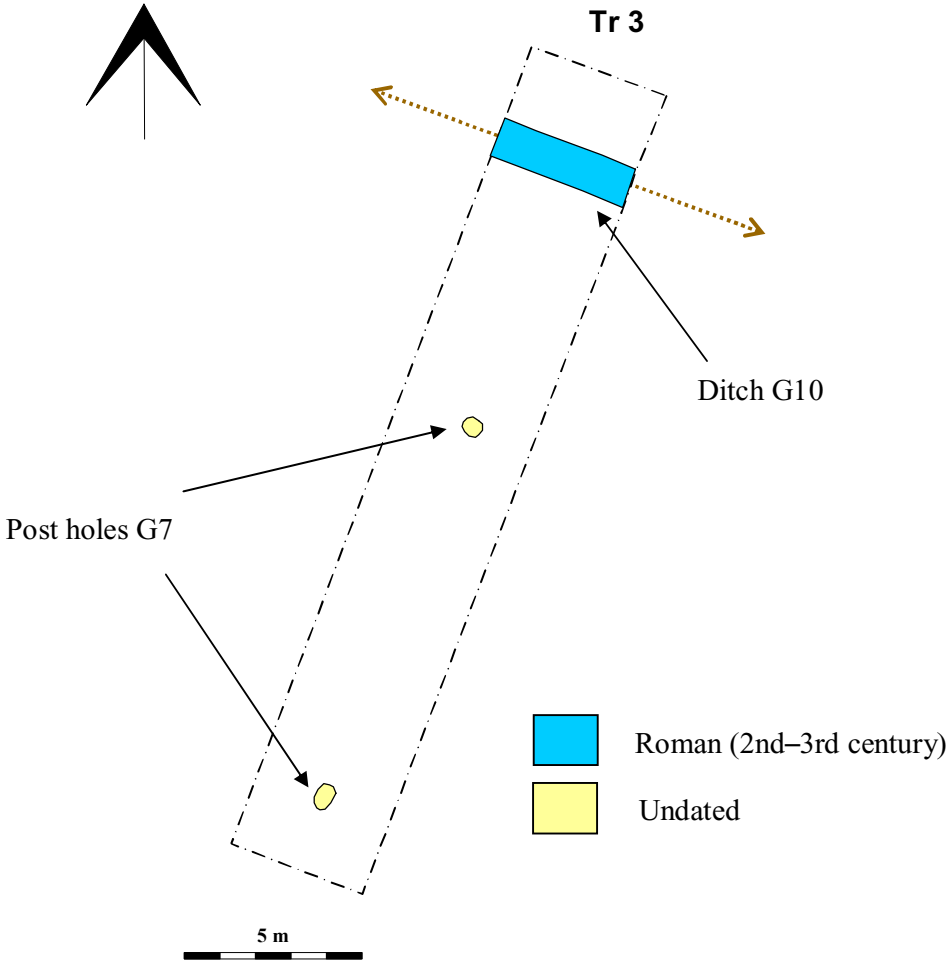


Section C – Pit G3



Section F – Structural slot G6

Figure 3: Selected sections and photographs



Trench 3 looking north-east.
Scale 1m

Figure 4: Plan of Trench 3

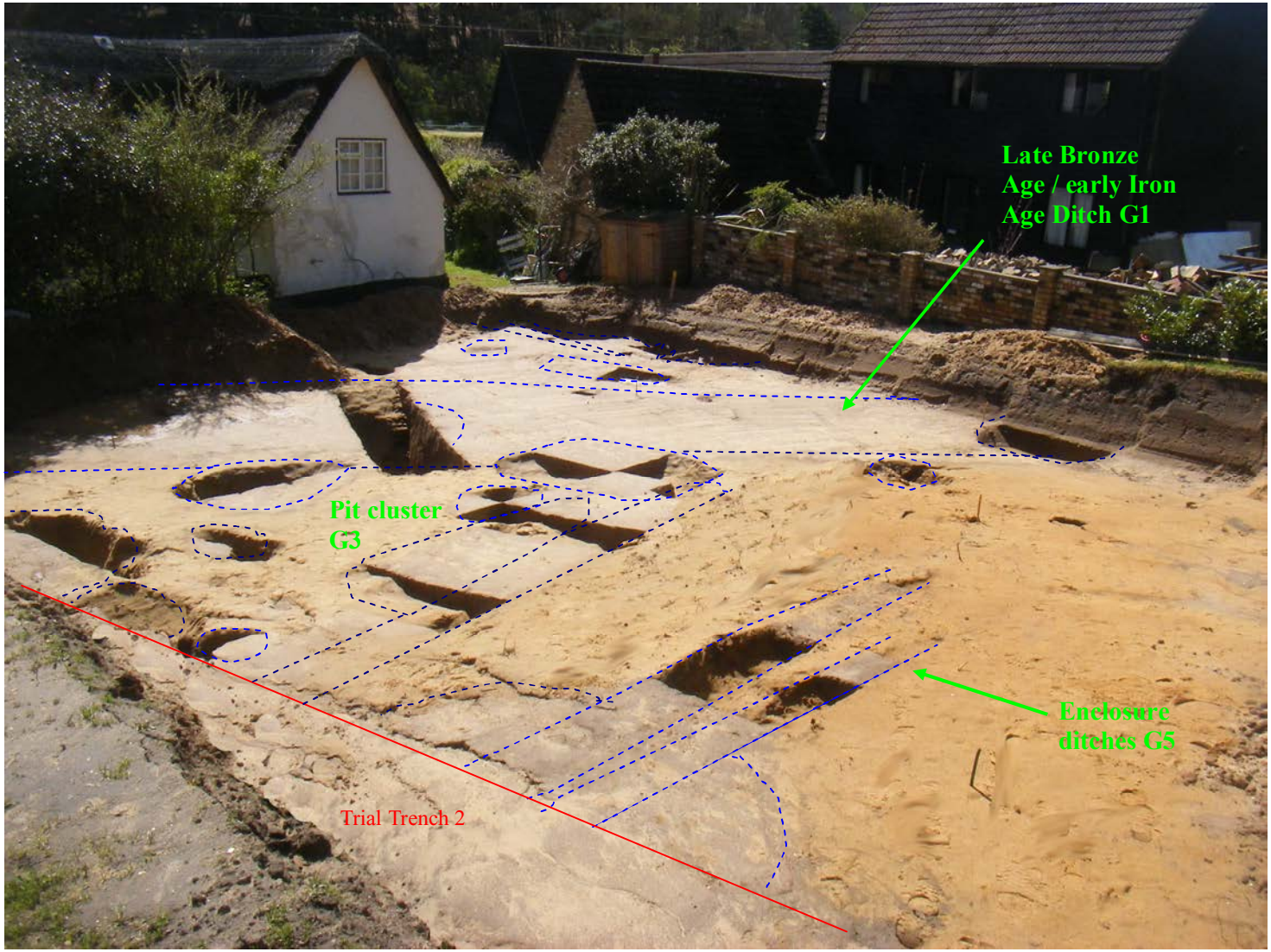


Figure 5: General view of excavation area showing major features (looking south-east)

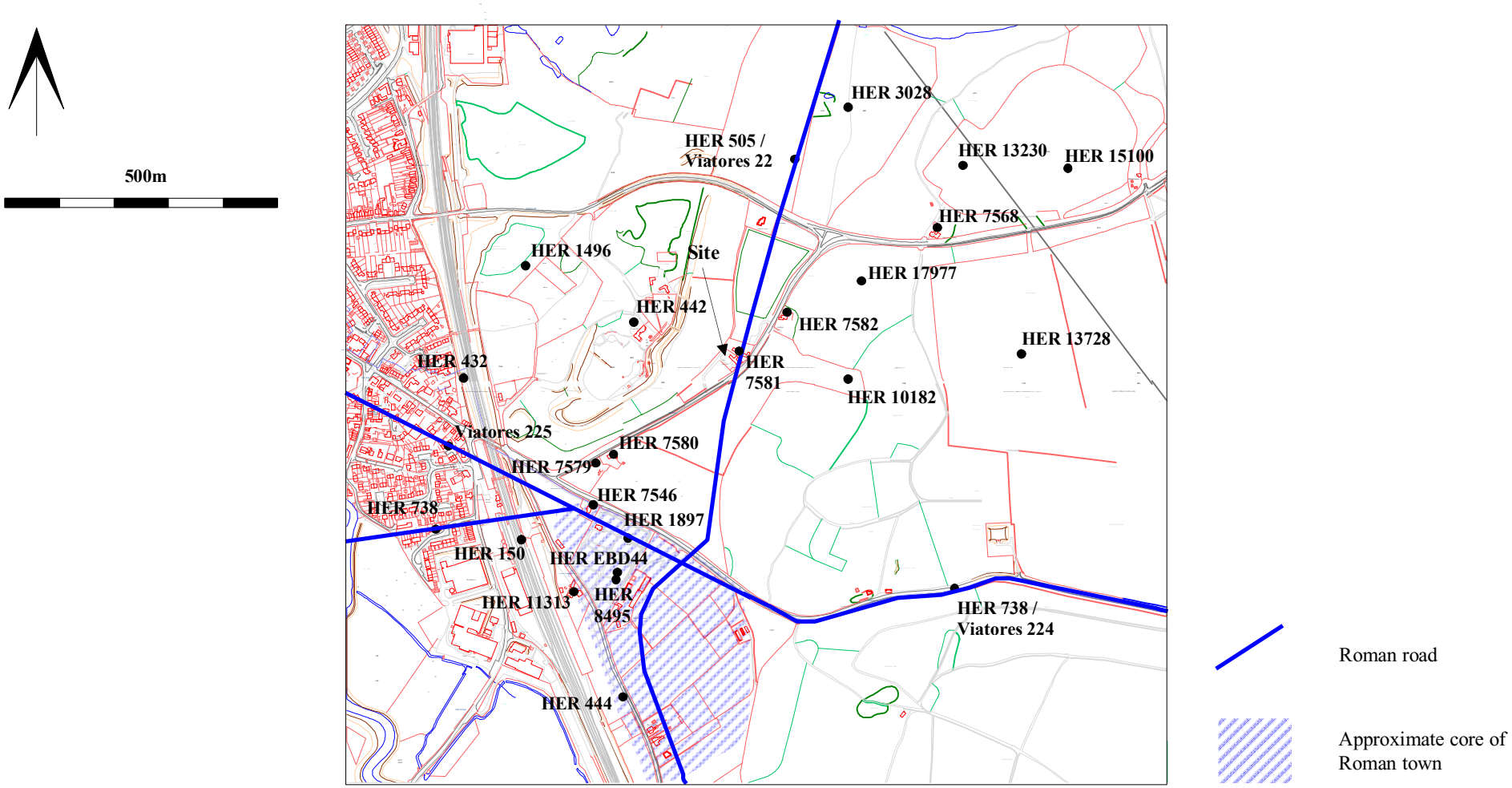


Figure 6: Heritage assets within the vicinity of the site

Central Bedfordshire

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

REGISTERED ORGANISATION IfA