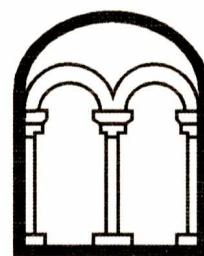


**HEATHLEY CHASE
WOLVERTON ROAD
MILTON KEYNES**

ARCHIVE SUMMARY REPORT

Albion
archaeology



**HEATHLEY CHASE
WOLVERTON ROAD
MILTON KEYNES**

ARCHIVE SUMMARY REPORT

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Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Status of this Report	3
1.3 Site Location and Description	4
1.4 Archaeological Background	4
1.5 Project Objectives	5
2. METHODOLOGY	6
2.1 Standards	6
2.2 Archaeological Area Excavation	6
2.3 Watching Brief	6
2.4 Monitoring	7
2.5 Archiving	7
3. RESULTS	8
3.1 Fieldwork Summary	8
3.2 Scientific Dating	8
3.3 Quantification of the Archive	10
4. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	15
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY	16
Figure 1: Location of archaeological investigations within the development	17

List of Figures

Figure 1: Location of archaeological investigations within the development

Figure 2: Calibration curve for bone from human skeleton (12)

Figure 3: Calibration curve for bone from human skeleton (13)

Figure 1 is bound at the back of this document. Figures 2 and 3 appear on page 9.



Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation and submission of this document and all statements 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.

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Key Terms

Throughout this project design the following terms or abbreviations are used:

Client	Milton Keynes Council
HER	Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
MKAO	Milton Keynes Council Archaeological Officer
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This document has been prepared by Albion Archaeology in accordance with a project outline provided by the Milton Keynes Council Archaeological Officer (MKAO). It details archaeological work comprising area excavation and watching brief at Heathley Chase, Wolverton Road, Milton Keynes. The archaeological investigations were requested by the MKAO following the unexpected discovery of human remains during the construction of a residential development.

The Taylor Wimpey (South Midlands) housing development at Heathley Chase, Wolverton Road, Stantonbury, Milton Keynes is situated within an archaeologically sensitive part of Milton Keynes. The surrounding area, particularly northwards in the valley of the River Great Ouse, has produced extensive evidence for Roman and medieval settlement. The development was subject to an archaeological planning condition, under PPG16.

The development area had been subject to three episodes of archaeological evaluation: in 1991, part of it was trial trenched by the Oxford Archaeological Unit in connection with an earlier proposed development; in 2004 the site was included in a wider, non-intrusive study carried out by Albion Archaeology as part of the Environmental Statement for the present development proposal; and in April 2007 Albion Archaeology undertook an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching.

The most significant discoveries were two field boundary ditches, a drainage gully and a shallow depression that were dated to the mid-late Iron Age. However, the overall paucity of artefacts and occupational debris suggested that these remains were not located in the immediate vicinity of a domestic settlement and the planning condition was discharged.

During construction works, in early 2012, unexpected human remains were discovered. The remains were subject to forensic investigation, which judged that the remains were of “ancient origin and not of forensic interest”. Following consultation with the Milton Keynes Council Archaeological Officer, Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey South Midlands to carry out an emergency area excavation and watching brief. All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with an agreed written scheme of investigation (Albion, 2012 *Heathley Chase, Wolverton Road, Milton Keynes: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief*). The fieldwork concluded in February 2012.

1.2 Status of this Report

This report presents an archive summary following the decision of Taylor Wimpey not to fund the post-fieldwork Assessment, Analysis and Reporting stages outlined in the WSI. It has been funded by the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum Emergency Recording Fund. It outlines the



circumstances of the project and aims to quantify the remains and summarises the context of the findings.

1.3 Site Location and Description

The site lies in the southernmost part of the partially completed residential development of Heathley Chase at grid reference SP8418/4192 (Figure 1). It is adjacent to the northern limit of Wolverton Road, and is located some distance to the south of the meandering course of the River Great Ouse and the Grand Union Canal, and to the west of the former Stantonbury Park Farm.

The land in the vicinity of the site lies at *c.* 77m OD and the geology of the area is variable. The limestone promontory to the north of the site, around which the canal loops, is capped by Boulder Clay.

1.4 Archaeological Background

The Heathley Chase development is located within the valley of the river Great Ouse, which has been the focus of intensive human activity and settlement from the prehistoric period to the present-day. For example, Stantonbury Lake to the north of the Grand Union Canal was the site of substantial Roman and medieval settlements destroyed by late 20th-century quarrying. Just to the south-west of the lake, the ruinous church of medieval Stantonbury still survives, as do a series of medieval, and later, manorial earthworks.

On the promontory to the north-west, geophysical survey has revealed a series of well-defined enclosure ditches, centred on SP 837 423. Within at least one of the enclosures, traces of a rectilinear building as well as possible industrial activity were defined.

Until the Second World War, the fields between Wolverton Road and the Canal preserved ridge and furrow earthworks characteristic of medieval cultivation.

In 1991, twenty-five trial trenches were opened in an area immediately to the west of Stantonbury Park Farm. Limited evidence of Roman and later activity was revealed. Archaeological features were exposed at a depth of 0.45–0.7m below the existing ground level. Six of the trenches contained archaeological features, predominantly ditches, with the main concentration being situated close to the western boundary of the evaluation area. Pottery indicated evidence for Roman and medieval activity; a single pottery sherd of possible Saxon date was also recovered (Oxford Archaeological Unit 1991).

Further trenching of the area was carried out in 2007 (Albion Archaeology 2007). The majority of the trenches contained the backfilled remnants of furrows with at least two medieval/post-medieval field systems being identified within the development area.

The remaining archaeological features were concentrated within the north-western part of the area. They consisted of ditches and gullies with the occasional pit and posthole. The majority of the features were undated.



Two field boundary ditches, a drainage gulley and a shallow depression were dated to the mid-late Iron Age. The overall paucity of artefacts and occupational debris would suggest that these remains were not located in the immediate vicinity of a domestic settlement but on its periphery. They were probably associated with farming activities.

1.5 Project Objectives

The principal purpose of the archaeological works was to record and recover all archaeological remains in the vicinity of the initial archaeological find and to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the remains in their cultural and environmental setting.



2. METHODOLOGY

The methodologies for the archaeological fieldwork are outlined below and described in detail in the WSI (Albion 2012).

2.1 Standards

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were be adhered to:

IfA	<i>Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2009)</i>
Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork (2nd edn, 2001)</i>
English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (2009)</i>

2.2 Archaeological Area Excavation

The excavation area comprised a c. 5m x 5m area centred on the human remains that had been found by the house builder (Figure 1).

A licence to exhume human remains was obtained from the Ministry of Justice (No. 12-003) prior to commencement of the archaeological investigations.

All soil and overburden were removed by a mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless bucket, operating under close archaeological supervision. Machine stripping ceased at the level at which archaeological remains were revealed.

The area was cleaned with hand tools, as required, to define archaeological features and deposits. Pre-excavation plans of the remains were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and above and used as the framework for the detailed excavation sampling strategy. All archaeological features and deposits of interest were investigated by hand and recorded. All stratigraphic relationships between features and deposits were investigated and recorded.

Artefacts were collected and treated in accordance with IfA Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (updated 2008), and the Albion Archaeology *Procedures Manual*.

2.3 Watching Brief

The watching was carried out on construction groundworks within a 50m radius of the findspot, excluding areas already substantially built up or where the levels had been significantly reduced (Figure 1).

If archaeological remains were encountered groundworks were to be suspended, as necessary, to allow recording and investigation as required. Any



revealed archaeological deposits or features were to be investigated and recorded. Spoil heaps were checked on a regular basis for archaeological artefacts.

2.4 Monitoring

Monitoring of the site was carried out by the MKAO, Nick Crank during site visits on 24th January and 1st February 2012.

2.5 Archiving

A full project archive has been compiled in accordance with English Heritage (MoRPHE) standards.

In principle permission has been obtained for the transfer of title of all finds to Buckinghamshire Museum (accession no. AYBCM:2012.1).

Albion Archaeology adheres to strict archiving standards and ensures that all archive is stored appropriately. All storage material is of archival-quality and includes archival-quality photographic storage sleeves. As part of the archiving process all records are micro-fiched.

An on-line OASIS form (ref. albionar1-118054) will be completed in accordance with the guidelines provided by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service.



3. RESULTS

3.1 *Fieldwork Summary*

Detailed plans of the excavation and watching brief areas are recorded on five sheets of permatrace within the project archive. These plans include detailed drawings of the spreads of human bone, a site matrix and smaller scale drawings of the watching brief areas. Also, all the works were recorded using digital photography. The photographs are contained in five separate folders (Films 1-5 and 101) within the project archive.

The majority of the human remains were disarticulated and had been disturbed by ploughing and modern services. However, in places, the remains appeared to have been protected by in-situ placed stones (see Plates 1 and 2 below). The material recovered from these contexts appeared to suggest the deposition of multiple individuals. It is likely the remains have been recovered from a highly truncated burial monument. The communal nature of the burials and their placement within a monument is highly suggestive of an early Neolithic date, an interpretation that has been supported by scientific dating and lithic typology.



Plates 1 & 2: The human remains and placed stones under excavation

3.2 *Scientific Dating*

Two fragments of human bone were subject to AMS ^{14}C dating by the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) radiocarbon laboratory. The dated material derived from two discrete spreads of human bone, contexts (12) and (13). The results give a radiocarbon age of 4762 ± 37 BP for the bone from context (12) and 4752 ± 37 BP for the material from context (13).

The calibration curves are provided below. They suggest a consistent calibrated date of the middle of the fourth millennium BC for both samples. The closeness of the two dates may suggest that the monument was in use for



a relatively short period of time but further analysis would be necessary to prove this any with statistical confidence.

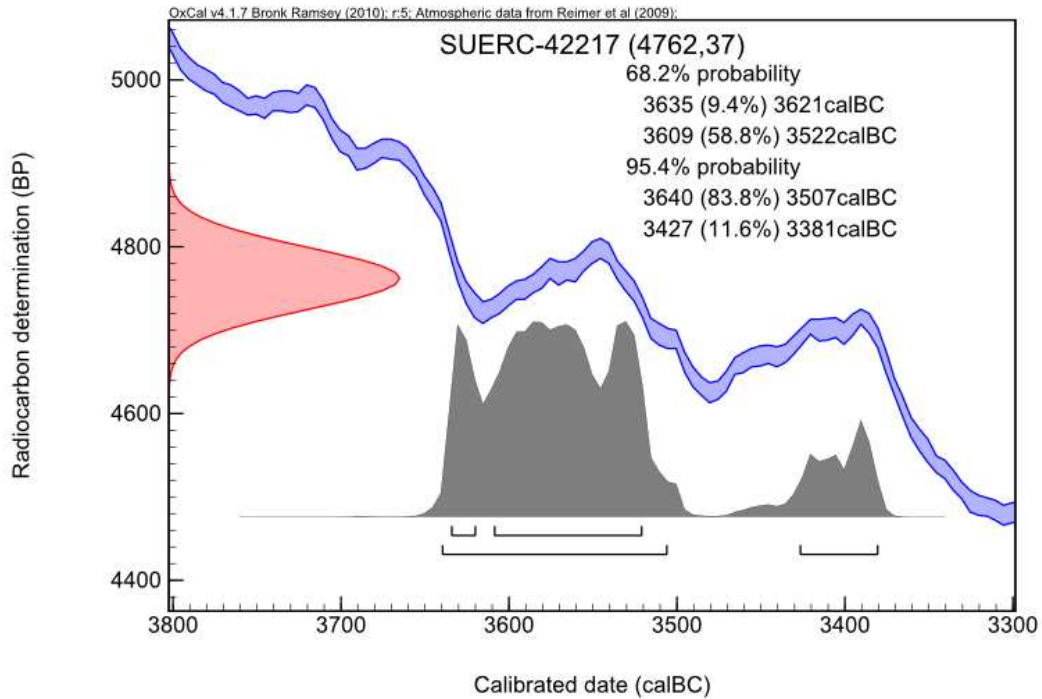


Figure 2: Calibration curve for bone from human skeleton (12)

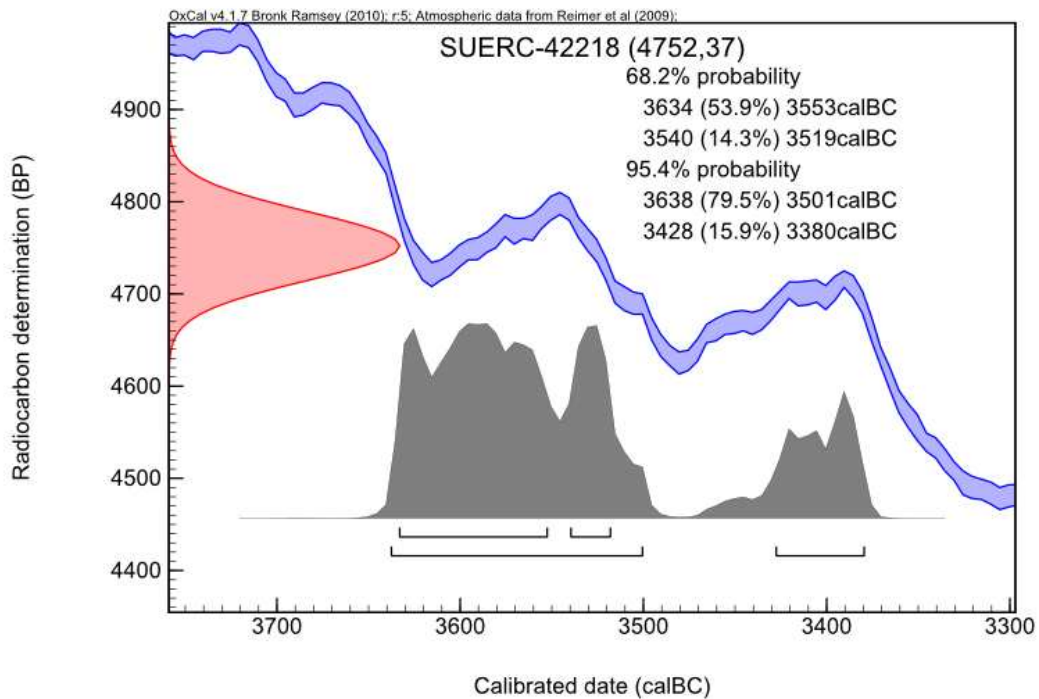


Figure 3: Calibration curve for bone from human skeleton (13)



3.3 Quantification of the Archive

3.3.1 Contexts

A total of 43 contexts were identified: 12 related to deposits of human skeletal material; 15 related to layers; 3 related to stone deposits; 6 related to 'cut' features; and 7 related to 'fill' deposits. A total of 36 unique contexts were identified within the open area excavation (1-3; 5-22; 24-38); a further 7 contexts relate to the watching brief area (101-107). Details are provided below:

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.3m thick deposit. Contained occasional limestone slabs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.39m thick deposit. It is cut by tree bole [24] and overlaid by layer (21) and stone setting MS (15). Registered artefact no. 9 recovered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Natural	Friable mid yellow grey clay sand moderate small stones, occasional medium stones. Contained moderate amount of large limestone slabs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Dump material	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt. Up to 0.23m thick deposit contained frequent (up to 30%) limestone slabs as well as small-medium limestone, between 0.1m and 0.4m. Moderately contaminated at the top - disturbed by ploughing. Originally likely deposited over human remains, but ground disturbance means this fill was intermingled with human remains HS no's (6) to (11) underlying the deposit, therefore stratigraphically later than them. The layer possibly formed capping or 'cairn' over human remains, which has been disturbed, spread and/or collapsed, mixing with human bones. No cut of possible grave visible - the deposit of disarticulated bones was artificially split into six different human skeleton numbers within a grid. HS no's (6) to (11) were predominantly disarticulated human remains mixed with frequent limestone slabs. The remains no's (6)-(11) were spread over an area of c. 4.0m x 1.0m. The layer contains the remains of many (5+ ?) individuals with the bones seemingly deposited in a disarticulated state, later likely disturbed by ploughing. Some large rounded boulder stones are also present, which form a rough boundary for the presence of human remains. These stones likely represent stone setting MS(14). Below the layer of mixed bone and stones and also further to the East, some partially articulated human remains were present (HS no's (12), (13) and (18)), supporting the idea that the upper layer had been disturbed. However, the general level of disarticulation still suggests the majority of remains were deposited in a disarticulated state (possible exhumation burials).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Human skeleton	Disarticulated human remains, with the occasional articulated vertebrae and ribs in a semi-articulated state. Although there is evidence of disturbance, the level to which the remains are disarticulated suggests they were deposited in this state. Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The remains are likely disturbed by heavy machinery and earlier ploughing given they are mixed with possible capping / 'cairn' stones (5). Likely to have been placed originally on stone setting MS(14). The same deposit as (7), (8), (9), (10), (11). Likely more than 1 individual in this block.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The same deposit as (6), (8), (9), (10), (11). Likely more than 1 individual in this block.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The same deposit as (6), (7), (9), (10), (11). Likely more than 1 individual in this block.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The same deposit as (6), (7), (8), (10), (11). Likely more than 1 individual in this block.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The same deposit as (6), (7), (8), (9), (11).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



11	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid ✓ The same deposit as (6), (7), (8), (9), (10).	✓
12	Human skeleton	Part of larger multiple burial. Partially articulated remains consisting of jaw, ✓ fragments of skull, vertebrae and ribs which may suggest the remains were buried with fragments of flesh still attached to the bones (?). Likely more than 1 individual represented here - located below jumbled up remains HS no's (6) to (9) and placed on stone setting (14). These remains are much more coherent than the remains found higher up. Possibly contemporary with HS's (13) and (18).	✓
13	Human skeleton	Part of larger multiple burial. Partially articulated remains consisting of ✓ fragments of pelvis, vertebrae, ribs and femur which may suggest the remains were buried with fragments of flesh still attached to the bones (?). Registered artefact no 4 recovered directly from under the pelvis. Likely more than 1 individual represented here - located below jumbled up remains HS's (8) and (9) and placed on stone setting (14). These remains are much more coherent than the remains found higher up. Possibly contemporary with HS's (12) and (18).	✓
14	Stone setting	Stone setting placed on top of layers (19) and (20) as well as the top of features [26] ✓ and [29]. Multiple human remains HS no's (6) to (13) were placed within its perimeter. The upper part of the setting has been disturbed by later ploughing. The setting consists predominantly of rounded boulder stones with some limestone slabs also present. The stones were between 100-350mm diameter laid in an irregular course on a NE-SW alignment. The stone setting covered an area of c. 4.0m x 1.0m x 0.3m deep. Likely the same or contemporary with stone setting MS (31).	☐
15	Stone setting	Stone setting piled on top of subsoil (2), located approximately 2m to the SW from ✓ burials HS (6) and (7). The setting consists of boulder stones with some limestone slabs also present, that generally were between 100-300mm in size and piled in no particular arrangement. Whether or not the stones were associated with human remains (in a form of grave markers?), remains unclear.	☐
16	Ditch	Linear NE-SW base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.8m, min depth 0.3m, min ✓ length 14.25m. Modern roadside ditch that truncates the following archaeological features: (5), (21), HS no's (18), (6), (8), (10) and ditch [29].	☐
17	Fill	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt occasional small-medium CBM, occasional small- ✓ medium stones. Also contained occasional limestone slabs. Naturally accumulated deposit - similar to topsoil (1).	☐
18	Human skeleton	Semi articulated remains of inhumation truncated by modern road side ditch [16] ✓ Remaining portion consists of right arm bones, partial left arm, skull fragments including partial lower jaw, pelvis and various fragmentary miscellaneous bones. These bones are located c. 1m to the NE from HS (10). The remains were placed on stone setting (31) and under and within layer (5). They likely represent the same event as placing of HS's (12) and (13)	✓
19	Buried subsoil	Friable light yellow brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. A 0.1m ✓ thick spit of the deposit was excavated. It is slightly diffuse with layer (20). Both layers are cut by features [29], [26], [32], [34]. Also stone settings MS (14) and (31) were placed on top of these deposits. Registered artefact no 5 was recovered from this deposit. No immediate relationship with alluvial deposit (25) was revealed during excavations. The relationship is known from later watching brief observations.	✓



20	Buried subsoil	Friable mid red brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. A 0.1m thick spit of the deposit was excavated. It is slightly diffuse with layer (19), due to the presence of heavy rooting. Both layers are cut by features [29], [26], [32], [34]. Also stone settings MS (14) and (31) were placed on top of these deposits. Registered artefacts no's 6, 7 and 8 were recovered from this deposit. No immediate relationship with alluvial deposit (25) was revealed during excavations. The relationship is known from later watching brief observations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
21	Dump material	Friable mid red brown silty sand. Up to 0.1m thick deposit, slightly diffuse with subsoil (2). Deposit represents a possible dump of burnt material. Relationship with layer (5) is unclear due to the earlier excavation of human remains in this area undertaken by forensic officers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Treethrow	Sub-oval NW-SE sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.65m, max depth 0.36m, max length 0.88m. Tree throw cut into subsoil (2).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Fill	Friable mid red brown silty sand moderate flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. A possible burnt material filling tree bole [24], quite heavily rooted and diffuse with underlying subsoil (2). The deposit is similar in composition and texture to layer (21).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
25	Alluvium	Friable light grey brown silty sand occasional small stones. Up to 0.31m thick deposit underlying former subsoils (19) and (20) {the relationship was revealed during watching brief observations}.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	Pit	Oval NW-SE sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.65m, max depth 0.4m, max length 0.9m. The feature pre-dates the human remains' burying activity. Also truncates earlier ditch [29] and is truncated by modern gas main trench.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	Upper fill	Firm mid brown orange silty sand occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.3m thick deposit - a possible dump of burnt material with heavy orange mottling {similar to deposits (21) and (22)}.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	Lower fill	Friable dark orange brown silty sand moderate flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.12m thick deposit of burnt material but with no signs of burning 'in situ' at the base of the feature.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
29	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: Assymetrical base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.71m, max depth 0.44m, min length 0.72m. Feature cut by [26] and cut into layers (19) and (20). Possibly the same as [34] on the other side of the gas main trench.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30	Fill	Friable mid brown grey silty sand occasional medium-large burnt stones, occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-large stones. Deposit contained an animal skull and few scattered disarticulated human bones as well as registered artefacts no's 1, 2 and 3.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
31	Stone setting	Stone setting placed on top of layers (19) and (20). Human remains (18) were placed within its perimeter. Part of the setting was truncated by ditch [16]. The setting consists predominantly of rounded boulder stones with some limestone slabs also present. The stones were between 100-200mm diameter laid in an irregular course on a NE-SW alignment. The stone setting covered an area of c. 1.25m x 0.5m. Likely the same or contemporary with stone setting MS (14).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: irregular base: uneven dimensions: min breadth 0.41m, max depth 0.14m, min length 0.65m. Gully is truncated by [34] and terminates c. 0.5m towards NW from the excavated segment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33	Fill	Friable light orange brown sandy silt occasional small stones. Heavily rooted deposit - naturally accumulated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: irregular base: uneven dimensions: max breadth 0.82m, max depth 0.2m, min length 0.78m. Feature cuts [32], possibly the same as [29].	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Naturally silted up deposit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36	Human skeleton	Disarticulated human remains likely disturbed by heavy machinery and earlier ploughing. Surface collection of bones carried out by forensic officers. The remains consist of fragments of skull, pelvis, vertebrae, limb bones, ribs and toe and finger bones. These remains overlie deposit HS (37).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
37	Human skeleton	Disarticulated miscellaneous small human bone fragments recovered by forensic officers. The remains recovered by using hand trowel and sieve from context 0100 (assigned by forensic officers) which may be related to deposits (1), (2) and (5), which were disturbed and compacted by heavy machinery. These remains overlie deposit HS (38).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
38	Human skeleton	Disarticulated human remains recovered by forensic officers from deposit 0101, which likely relates to layer (5). The remains were likely disturbed by both heavy machinery and earlier ploughing. The human bones were recovered from directly above HS's (6) to (9).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



101	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.25m thick deposit. The same as (1) encountered during excavations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.45m thick deposit - the same as (2) encountered during excavations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Alluvium	Friable light grey brown silty sand occasional small stones. Up to 0.32m thick deposit - the same as (25) encountered during excavations. Underlies former subsoil deposit (107).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Natural	Friable mid yellow grey clay sand moderate small stones, occasional medium stones. Also moderate amount of large limestone slabs. The same as (3) encountered during excavations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Make up layer	Hard mid red grey clay sand frequent medium-large CBM, moderate small-large concrete, moderate small-large stones. Up to 0.19m thick deposit of hardcore rubble covering the majority of the site - placed after topsoil and most of subsoil had been removed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Dump material	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt . Up to 0.21m thick stony deposit - the same as (5) encountered during excavations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Buried subsoil	Friable mid yellow grey sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.48m thick deposit - the same as (19) and (20) encountered during excavations. Overlies alluvial deposit (103).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3.2 Bone

A total of 32.2kg of human bone was recovered, in addition to 52 fragments (477g) of animal bone, mainly cattle skull and vertebra fragments.

3.3.3 Artefacts

No pottery was recovered during the investigations.

Six worked flints, including three flakes, one bladelet and a single core were recovered. The core (RA 7) is typologically dated to the late Mesolithic/early Neolithic period. Details of all the lithic materials recovered are shown in Table 1 below listed by Registered Artefact (RA) number:

RA No.	Context	Type	Description	Weight (g)
1	30	Bladelet	Bladelet. Flint grey-brown translucent. Thin, possibly secondary damage. L. 27.2mm; w.9mm	0.5
2	30	Flake fragment	Flake. Flint grey-brown translucent. Fragment only, appears hard hammer-struck	0.8
4	13	Tertiary flake patinated	Flake. Flint - patinated. Tertiary flake, soft-hammer struck? Damage to lateral edges (one more than the other). Found immediately beneath HS13	3.1
7	20	Core	Core. Flint patinated. Exhausted flakelet core; single platform, core keel shaped, overhangs present.	28.3
8	20	Tertiary flake	Flake. Grey brown flint, one lateral edge patinated. Tertiary flake, utilised previously struck flint, proximal end damaged, edges fairly sharp	3
9	2	Flake (possibly rejuvenation)	Flake. Flint (grey-brown with chert-like imperfection). Cortex on distal end; striking platform appears patinated (re-use of previously struck flint? Or more reflective of deposition conditions?). Narrow flake	8.5



RA No.	Context	Type	Description	Weight (g)
			removal scars on dorsal surface. Possibly removed from core due to sizeable chert imperfection. Butt thick, but appears SHS (thickness due to wish to remove imperfection?).	

Table 1: Lithic assemblage details



4. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Well dated and recently excavated early prehistoric monuments are rare within the Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire area. Although better preserved examples, such as Whiteleaf Hill do exist, the remains unearthed at Heathley Chase are still of considerable significance within the county. A recent resource assessment of the Neolithic to Early Bronze Age in Buckinghamshire (http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/assets/content/bcc/docs/archaeology/A_ST_Bucks_4_Neo-EBA_Bucks_resource_assessment_final.pdf, accessed 18/04/2012) notes only four long barrows, one oval barrow, and seventeen burials as being listed in the HER. Rapid assessment of the site records suggests that, although severely truncated, the remains at Heathley Chase do not easily fit into either the chambered tomb, long or oval barrow typology of monuments.

The Solent Thames Research framework (http://thehumanjourney.net/pdf_store/sthames/phase3/Research%20Agendas/Neolithic%20and%20Early%20Bronze%20Age%20Research%20Agenda.pdf, accessed 18/04/2012) states that: “A much better understanding is needed of the date range of the very varied burial monuments of the 4th millennium”.

In this light, the record of the investigation, and the remains within the project archive, are likely to be of significant regional importance. The human remains have value as a resource for early prehistoric population studies and potential evidence for mortuary practices, such as excarnation, which would provide a greater understanding of the function of the monument itself.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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Albion Archaeology 2012, *Heathley Chase, Wolverton Road, Milton Keynes: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Area Excavation and Watching Brief*. Document ref. 2012/11

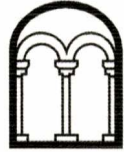
Oxford Archaeological Unit 1991, *Great Linford Country Park Environmental Statement*.



Figure 1: Location of archaeological investigations within the development

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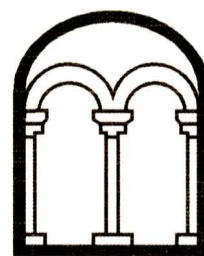
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**HEATHLEY CHASE
WOLVERTON ROAD
MILTON KEYNES**

ARCHIVE SUMMARY REPORT

Albion
archaeology



**HEATHLEY CHASE
WOLVERTON ROAD
MILTON KEYNES**

ARCHIVE SUMMARY REPORT

Project: HC1909
Document: 2013/19
Version 1.0

22nd January 2013

Prepared by	Checked by	Approved by
Ben Barker	Robert Wardill	Drew Shotliff

Produced for:

Milton Keynes Council



Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	3
1.1 Background	3
1.2 Status of this Report	3
1.3 Site Location and Description	4
1.4 Archaeological Background	4
1.5 Project Objectives	5
2. METHODOLOGY	6
2.1 Standards	6
2.2 Archaeological Area Excavation	6
2.3 Watching Brief	6
2.4 Monitoring	7
2.5 Archiving	7
3. RESULTS	8
3.1 Fieldwork Summary	8
3.2 Scientific Dating	8
3.3 Quantification of the Archive	10
4. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE	15
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY	16
Figure 1: Location of archaeological investigations within the development	17

List of Figures

Figure 1: Location of archaeological investigations within the development

Figure 2: Calibration curve for bone from human skeleton (12)

Figure 3: Calibration curve for bone from human skeleton (13)

Figure 1 is bound at the back of this document. Figures 2 and 3 appear on page 9.



Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation and submission of this document and all statements 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.

This document has been prepared by Ben Barker BSc MA (Project Officer).

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Key Terms

Throughout this project design the following terms or abbreviations are used:

Client	Milton Keynes Council
HER	Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
MKAO	Milton Keynes Council Archaeological Officer
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Background**

This document has been prepared by Albion Archaeology in accordance with a project outline provided by the Milton Keynes Council Archaeological Officer (MKAO). It details archaeological work comprising area excavation and watching brief at Heathley Chase, Wolverton Road, Milton Keynes. The archaeological investigations were requested by the MKAO following the unexpected discovery of human remains during the construction of a residential development.

The Taylor Wimpey (South Midlands) housing development at Heathley Chase, Wolverton Road, Stantonbury, Milton Keynes is situated within an archaeologically sensitive part of Milton Keynes. The surrounding area, particularly northwards in the valley of the River Great Ouse, has produced extensive evidence for Roman and medieval settlement. The development was subject to an archaeological planning condition, under PPG16.

The development area had been subject to three episodes of archaeological evaluation: in 1991, part of it was trial trenched by the Oxford Archaeological Unit in connection with an earlier proposed development; in 2004 the site was included in a wider, non-intrusive study carried out by Albion Archaeology as part of the Environmental Statement for the present development proposal; and in April 2007 Albion Archaeology undertook an archaeological field evaluation by trial trenching.

The most significant discoveries were two field boundary ditches, a drainage gully and a shallow depression that were dated to the mid-late Iron Age. However, the overall paucity of artefacts and occupational debris suggested that these remains were not located in the immediate vicinity of a domestic settlement and the planning condition was discharged.

During construction works, in early 2012, unexpected human remains were discovered. The remains were subject to forensic investigation, which judged that the remains were of “ancient origin and not of forensic interest”. Following consultation with the Milton Keynes Council Archaeological Officer, Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Taylor Wimpey South Midlands to carry out an emergency area excavation and watching brief. All fieldwork was carried out in accordance with an agreed written scheme of investigation (Albion, 2012 *Heathley Chase, Wolverton Road, Milton Keynes: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Excavation and Watching Brief*). The fieldwork concluded in February 2012.

1.2 **Status of this Report**

This report presents an archive summary following the decision of Taylor Wimpey not to fund the post-fieldwork Assessment, Analysis and Reporting stages outlined in the WSI. It has been funded by the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum Emergency Recording Fund. It outlines the



circumstances of the project and aims to quantify the remains and summarises the context of the findings.

1.3 Site Location and Description

The site lies in the southernmost part of the partially completed residential development of Heathley Chase at grid reference SP8418/4192 (Figure 1). It is adjacent to the northern limit of Wolverton Road, and is located some distance to the south of the meandering course of the River Great Ouse and the Grand Union Canal, and to the west of the former Stantonbury Park Farm.

The land in the vicinity of the site lies at *c.* 77m OD and the geology of the area is variable. The limestone promontory to the north of the site, around which the canal loops, is capped by Boulder Clay.

1.4 Archaeological Background

The Heathley Chase development is located within the valley of the river Great Ouse, which has been the focus of intensive human activity and settlement from the prehistoric period to the present-day. For example, Stantonbury Lake to the north of the Grand Union Canal was the site of substantial Roman and medieval settlements destroyed by late 20th-century quarrying. Just to the south-west of the lake, the ruinous church of medieval Stantonbury still survives, as do a series of medieval, and later, manorial earthworks.

On the promontory to the north-west, geophysical survey has revealed a series of well-defined enclosure ditches, centred on SP 837 423. Within at least one of the enclosures, traces of a rectilinear building as well as possible industrial activity were defined.

Until the Second World War, the fields between Wolverton Road and the Canal preserved ridge and furrow earthworks characteristic of medieval cultivation.

In 1991, twenty-five trial trenches were opened in an area immediately to the west of Stantonbury Park Farm. Limited evidence of Roman and later activity was revealed. Archaeological features were exposed at a depth of 0.45–0.7m below the existing ground level. Six of the trenches contained archaeological features, predominantly ditches, with the main concentration being situated close to the western boundary of the evaluation area. Pottery indicated evidence for Roman and medieval activity; a single pottery sherd of possible Saxon date was also recovered (Oxford Archaeological Unit 1991).

Further trenching of the area was carried out in 2007 (Albion Archaeology 2007). The majority of the trenches contained the backfilled remnants of furrows with at least two medieval/post-medieval field systems being identified within the development area.

The remaining archaeological features were concentrated within the north-western part of the area. They consisted of ditches and gullies with the occasional pit and posthole. The majority of the features were undated.



Two field boundary ditches, a drainage gulley and a shallow depression were dated to the mid-late Iron Age. The overall paucity of artefacts and occupational debris would suggest that these remains were not located in the immediate vicinity of a domestic settlement but on its periphery. They were probably associated with farming activities.

1.5 Project Objectives

The principal purpose of the archaeological works was to record and recover all archaeological remains in the vicinity of the initial archaeological find and to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the remains in their cultural and environmental setting.



2. METHODOLOGY

The methodologies for the archaeological fieldwork are outlined below and described in detail in the WSI (Albion 2012).

2.1 Standards

Throughout the project the standards set out in the following documents were be adhered to:

IfA	<i>Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (2009)</i>
Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork (2nd edn, 2001)</i>
English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (2009)</i>

2.2 Archaeological Area Excavation

The excavation area comprised a c. 5m x 5m area centred on the human remains that had been found by the house builder (Figure 1).

A licence to exhume human remains was obtained from the Ministry of Justice (No. 12-003) prior to commencement of the archaeological investigations.

All soil and overburden were removed by a mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless bucket, operating under close archaeological supervision. Machine stripping ceased at the level at which archaeological remains were revealed.

The area was cleaned with hand tools, as required, to define archaeological features and deposits. Pre-excavation plans of the remains were drawn at a scale of 1:10 and above and used as the framework for the detailed excavation sampling strategy. All archaeological features and deposits of interest were investigated by hand and recorded. All stratigraphic relationships between features and deposits were investigated and recorded.

Artefacts were collected and treated in accordance with IfA Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (updated 2008), and the Albion Archaeology *Procedures Manual*.

2.3 Watching Brief

The watching was carried out on construction groundworks within a 50m radius of the findspot, excluding areas already substantially built up or where the levels had been significantly reduced (Figure 1).

If archaeological remains were encountered groundworks were to be suspended, as necessary, to allow recording and investigation as required. Any



revealed archaeological deposits or features were to be investigated and recorded. Spoil heaps were checked on a regular basis for archaeological artefacts.

2.4 Monitoring

Monitoring of the site was carried out by the MKAO, Nick Crank during site visits on 24th January and 1st February 2012.

2.5 Archiving

A full project archive has been compiled in accordance with English Heritage (MoRPHE) standards.

In principle permission has been obtained for the transfer of title of all finds to Buckinghamshire Museum (accession no. AYBCM:2012.1).

Albion Archaeology adheres to strict archiving standards and ensures that all archive is stored appropriately. All storage material is of archival-quality and includes archival-quality photographic storage sleeves. As part of the archiving process all records are micro-fiched.

An on-line OASIS form (ref. albionar1-118054) will be completed in accordance with the guidelines provided by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service.

3. RESULTS

3.1 *Fieldwork Summary*

Detailed plans of the excavation and watching brief areas are recorded on five sheets of permatrace within the project archive. These plans include detailed drawings of the spreads of human bone, a site matrix and smaller scale drawings of the watching brief areas. Also, all the works were recorded using digital photography. The photographs are contained in five separate folders (Films 1-5 and 101) within the project archive.

The majority of the human remains were disarticulated and had been disturbed by ploughing and modern services. However, in places, the remains appeared to have been protected by in-situ placed stones (see Plates 1 and 2 below). The material recovered from these contexts appeared to suggest the deposition of multiple individuals. It is likely the remains have been recovered from a highly truncated burial monument. The communal nature of the burials and their placement within a monument is highly suggestive of an early Neolithic date, an interpretation that has been supported by scientific dating and lithic typology.



Plates 1 & 2: The human remains and placed stones under excavation

3.2 *Scientific Dating*

Two fragments of human bone were subject to AMS ^{14}C dating by the Scottish Universities Environmental Research Centre (SUERC) radiocarbon laboratory. The dated material derived from two discrete spreads of human bone, contexts (12) and (13). The results give a radiocarbon age of 4762 ± 37 BP for the bone from context (12) and 4752 ± 37 BP for the material from context (13).

The calibration curves are provided below. They suggest a consistent calibrated date of the middle of the fourth millennium BC for both samples. The closeness of the two dates may suggest that the monument was in use for



a relatively short period of time but further analysis would be necessary to prove this any with statistical confidence.

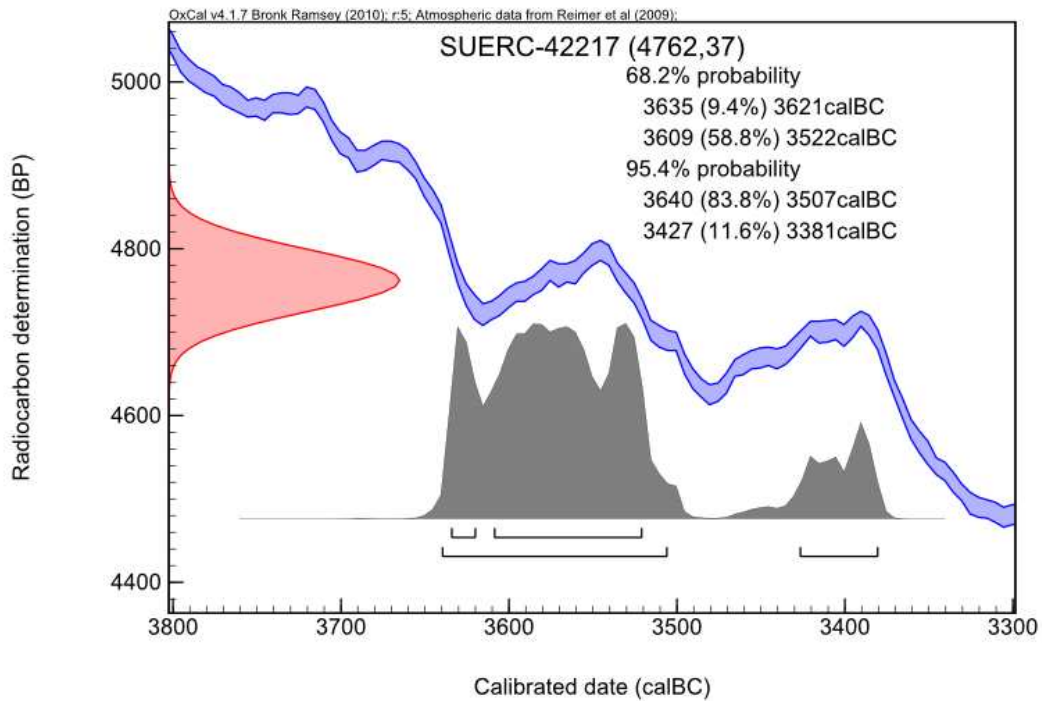


Figure 2: Calibration curve for bone from human skeleton (12)

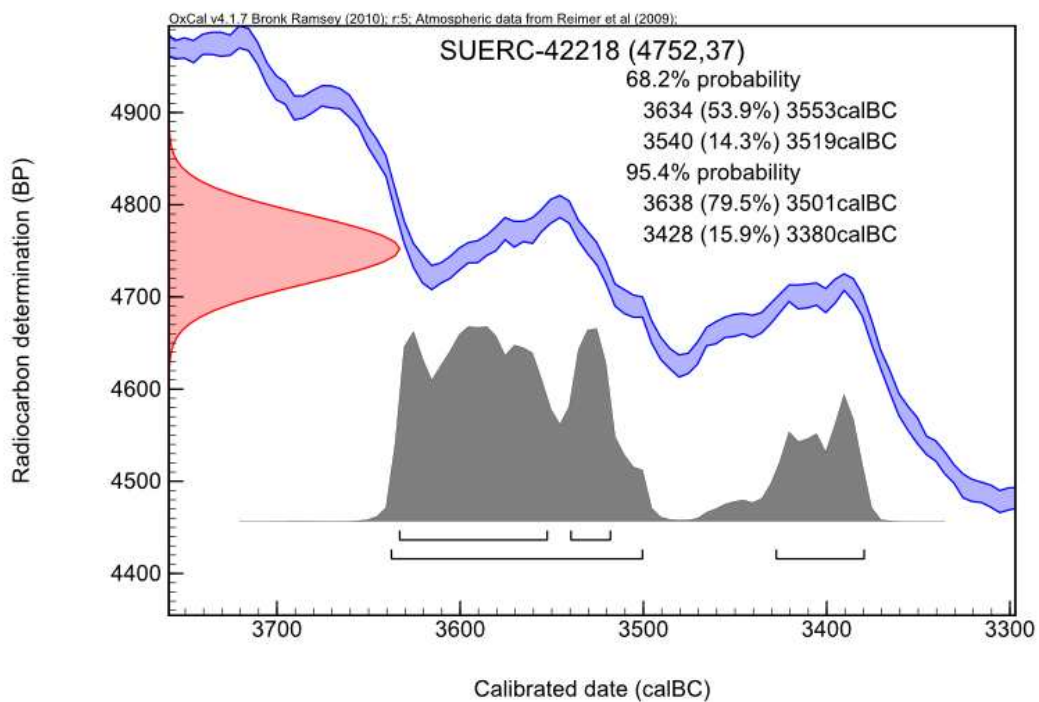


Figure 3: Calibration curve for bone from human skeleton (13)



3.3 Quantification of the Archive

3.3.1 Contexts

A total of 43 contexts were identified: 12 related to deposits of human skeletal material; 15 related to layers; 3 related to stone deposits; 6 related to 'cut' features; and 7 related to 'fill' deposits. A total of 36 unique contexts were identified within the open area excavation (1-3; 5-22; 24-38); a further 7 contexts relate to the watching brief area (101-107). Details are provided below:

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.3m thick deposit. Contained occasional limestone slabs	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
2	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.39m thick deposit. It is cut by tree bole [24] and overlaid by layer (21) and stone setting MS (15). Registered artefact no. 9 recovered.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
3	Natural	Friable mid yellow grey clay sand moderate small stones, occasional medium stones. Contained moderate amount of large limestone slabs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Dump material	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt. Up to 0.23m thick deposit contained frequent (up to 30%) limestone slabs as well as small-medium limestone, between 0.1m and 0.4m. Moderately contaminated at the top - disturbed by ploughing. Originally likely deposited over human remains, but ground disturbance means this fill was intermingled with human remains HS no's (6) to (11) underlying the deposit, therefore stratigraphically later than them. The layer possibly formed capping or 'cairn' over human remains, which has been disturbed, spread and/or collapsed, mixing with human bones. No cut of possible grave visible - the deposit of disarticulated bones was artificially split into six different human skeleton numbers within a grid. HS no's (6) to (11) were predominantly disarticulated human remains mixed with frequent limestone slabs. The remains no's (6)-(11) were spread over an area of c. 4.0m x 1.0m. The layer contains the remains of many (5+ ?) individuals with the bones seemingly deposited in a disarticulated state, later likely disturbed by ploughing. Some large rounded boulder stones are also present, which form a rough boundary for the presence of human remains. These stones likely represent stone setting MS(14). Below the layer of mixed bone and stones and also further to the East, some partially articulated human remains were present (HS no's (12), (13) and (18)), supporting the idea that the upper layer had been disturbed. However, the general level of disarticulation still suggests the majority of remains were deposited in a disarticulated state (possible exarnation burials).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Human skeleton	Disarticulated human remains, with the occasional articulated vertebrae and ribs in a semi-articulated state. Although there is evidence of disturbance, the level to which the remains are disarticulated suggests they were deposited in this state. Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The remains are likely disturbed by heavy machinery and earlier ploughing given they are mixed with possible capping / 'cairn' stones (5). Likely to have been placed originally on stone setting MS(14). The same deposit as (7), (8), (9), (10), (11). Likely more than 1 individual in this block.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
7	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The same deposit as (6), (8), (9), (10), (11). Likely more than 1 individual in this block.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
8	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The same deposit as (6), (7), (9), (10), (11). Likely more than 1 individual in this block.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
9	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The same deposit as (6), (7), (8), (10), (11). Likely more than 1 individual in this block.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
10	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid. The same deposit as (6), (7), (8), (9), (11).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



11	Human skeleton	Artificially separated into blocks with different HS numbers on site, based on grid ✓ The same deposit as (6), (7), (8), (9), (10).	✓
12	Human skeleton	Part of larger multiple burial. Partially articulated remains consisting of jaw, ✓ fragments of skull, vertebrae and ribs which may suggest the remains were buried with fragments of flesh still attached to the bones (?). Likely more than 1 individual represented here - located below jumbled up remains HS no's (6) to (9) and placed on stone setting (14). These remains are much more coherent than the remains found higher up. Possibly contemporary with HS's (13) and (18).	✓
13	Human skeleton	Part of larger multiple burial. Partially articulated remains consisting of ✓ fragments of pelvis, vertebrae, ribs and femur which may suggest the remains were buried with fragments of flesh still attached to the bones (?). Registered artefact no 4 recovered directly from under the pelvis. Likely more than 1 individual represented here - located below jumbled up remains HS's (8) and (9) and placed on stone setting (14). These remains are much more coherent than the remains found higher up. Possibly contemporary with HS's (12) and (18).	✓
14	Stone setting	Stone setting placed on top of layers (19) and (20) as well as the top of features [26] ✓ and [29]. Multiple human remains HS no's (6) to (13) were placed within its perimeter. The upper part of the setting has been disturbed by later ploughing. The setting consists predominantly of rounded boulder stones with some limestone slabs also present. The stones were between 100-350mm diameter laid in an irregular course on a NE-SW alignment. The stone setting covered an area of c. 4.0m x 1.0m x 0.3m deep. Likely the same or contemporary with stone setting MS (31).	☐
15	Stone setting	Stone setting piled on top of subsoil (2), located approximately 2m to the SW from ✓ burials HS (6) and (7). The setting consists of boulder stones with some limestone slabs also present, that generally were between 100-300mm in size and piled in no particular arrangement. Whether or not the stones were associated with human remains (in a form of grave markers?), remains unclear.	☐
16	Ditch	Linear NE-SW base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.8m, min depth 0.3m, min ✓ length 14.25m. Modern roadside ditch that truncates the following archaeological features: (5), (21), HS no's (18), (6), (8), (10) and ditch [29].	☐
17	Fill	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt occasional small-medium CBM, occasional small- ✓ medium stones. Also contained occasional limestone slabs. Naturally accumulated deposit - similar to topsoil (1).	☐
18	Human skeleton	Semi articulated remains of inhumation truncated by modern road side ditch [16] ✓ Remaining portion consists of right arm bones, partial left arm, skull fragments including partial lower jaw, pelvis and various fragmentary miscellaneous bones. These bones are located c. 1m to the NE from HS (10). The remains were placed on stone setting (31) and under and within layer (5). They likely represent the same event as placing of HS's (12) and (13)	✓
19	Buried subsoil	Friable light yellow brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. A 0.1m ✓ thick spit of the deposit was excavated. It is slightly diffuse with layer (20). Both layers are cut by features [29], [26], [32], [34]. Also stone settings MS (14) and (31) were placed on top of these deposits. Registered artefact no 5 was recovered from this deposit. No immediate relationship with alluvial deposit (25) was revealed during excavations. The relationship is known from later watching brief observations.	✓



20	Buried subsoil	Friable mid red brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. A 0.1m thick spit of the deposit was excavated. It is slightly diffuse with layer (19), due to the presence of heavy rooting. Both layers are cut by features [29], [26], [32], [34]. Also stone settings MS (14) and (31) were placed on top of these deposits. Registered artefacts no's 6, 7 and 8 were recovered from this deposit. No immediate relationship with alluvial deposit (25) was revealed during excavations. The relationship is known from later watching brief observations.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
21	Dump material	Friable mid red brown silty sand. Up to 0.1m thick deposit, slightly diffuse with subsoil (2). Deposit represents a possible dump of burnt material. Relationship with layer (5) is unclear due to the earlier excavation of human remains in this area undertaken by forensic officers.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
24	Treethrow	Sub-oval NW-SE sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.65m, max depth 0.36m, max length 0.88m. Tree throw cut into subsoil (2).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
22	Fill	Friable mid red brown silty sand moderate flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. A possible burnt material filling tree bole [24], quite heavily rooted and diffuse with underlying subsoil (2). The deposit is similar in composition and texture to layer (21).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
25	Alluvium	Friable light grey brown silty sand occasional small stones. Up to 0.31m thick deposit underlying former subsoils (19) and (20) {the relationship was revealed during watching brief observations}.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
26	Pit	Oval NW-SE sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.65m, max depth 0.4m, max length 0.9m. The feature pre-dates the human remains' burying activity. Also truncates earlier ditch [29] and is truncated by modern gas main trench.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
27	Upper fill	Firm mid brown orange silty sand occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.3m thick deposit - a possible dump of burnt material with heavy orange mottling {similar to deposits (21) and (22)}.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
28	Lower fill	Friable dark orange brown silty sand moderate flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.12m thick deposit of burnt material but with no signs of burning 'in situ' at the base of the feature.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
29	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: Assymetrical base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.71m, max depth 0.44m, min length 0.72m. Feature cut by [26] and cut into layers (19) and (20). Possibly the same as [34] on the other side of the gas main trench.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
30	Fill	Friable mid brown grey silty sand occasional medium-large burnt stones, occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-large stones. Deposit contained an animal skull and few scattered disarticulated human bones as well as registered artefacts no's 1, 2 and 3.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
31	Stone setting	Stone setting placed on top of layers (19) and (20). Human remains (18) were placed within its perimeter. Part of the setting was truncated by ditch [16]. The setting consists predominantly of rounded boulder stones with some limestone slabs also present. The stones were between 100-200mm diameter laid in an irregular course on a NE-SW alignment. The stone setting covered an area of c. 1.25m x 0.5m. Likely the same or contemporary with stone setting MS (14).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
32	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: irregular base: uneven dimensions: min breadth 0.41m, max depth 0.14m, min length 0.65m. Gully is truncated by [34] and terminates c. 0.5m towards NW from the excavated segment.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
33	Fill	Friable light orange brown sandy silt occasional small stones. Heavily rooted deposit - naturally accumulated.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
34	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: irregular base: uneven dimensions: max breadth 0.82m, max depth 0.2m, min length 0.78m. Feature cuts [32], possibly the same as [29].	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
35	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones. Naturally silted up deposit.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
36	Human skeleton	Disarticulated human remains likely disturbed by heavy machinery and earlier ploughing. Surface collection of bones carried out by forensic officers. The remains consist of fragments of skull, pelvis, vertebrae, limb bones, ribs and toe and finger bones. These remains overlie deposit HS (37).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
37	Human skeleton	Disarticulated miscellaneous small human bone fragments recovered by forensic officers. The remains recovered by using hand trowel and sieve from context 0100 (assigned by forensic officers) which may be related to deposits (1), (2) and (5), which were disturbed and compacted by heavy machinery. These remains overlie deposit HS (38).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
38	Human skeleton	Disarticulated human remains recovered by forensic officers from deposit 0101, which likely relates to layer (5). The remains were likely disturbed by both heavy machinery and earlier ploughing. The human bones were recovered from directly above HS's (6) to (9).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>



101	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.25m thick deposit. The same as (1) encountered during excavations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.45m thick deposit - the same as (2) encountered during excavations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Alluvium	Friable light grey brown silty sand occasional small stones. Up to 0.32m thick deposit - the same as (25) encountered during excavations. Underlies former subsoil deposit (107).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Natural	Friable mid yellow grey clay sand moderate small stones, occasional medium stones. Also moderate amount of large limestone slabs. The same as (3) encountered during excavations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Make up layer	Hard mid red grey clay sand frequent medium-large CBM, moderate small-large concrete, moderate small-large stones. Up to 0.19m thick deposit of hardcore rubble covering the majority of the site - placed after topsoil and most of subsoil had been removed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
106	Dump material	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt . Up to 0.21m thick stony deposit - the same as (5) encountered during excavations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Buried subsoil	Friable mid yellow grey sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.48m thick deposit - the same as (19) and (20) encountered during excavations. Overlies alluvial deposit (103).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

3.3.2 Bone

A total of 32.2kg of human bone was recovered, in addition to 52 fragments (477g) of animal bone, mainly cattle skull and vertebra fragments.

3.3.3 Artefacts

No pottery was recovered during the investigations.

Six worked flints, including three flakes, one bladelet and a single core were recovered. The core (RA 7) is typologically dated to the late Mesolithic/early Neolithic period. Details of all the lithic materials recovered are shown in Table 1 below listed by Registered Artefact (RA) number:

RA No.	Context	Type	Description	Weight (g)
1	30	Bladelet	Bladelet. Flint grey-brown translucent. Thin, possibly secondary damage. L. 27.2mm; w.9mm	0.5
2	30	Flake fragment	Flake. Flint grey-brown translucent. Fragment only, appears hard hammer-struck	0.8
4	13	Tertiary flake patinated	Flake. Flint - patinated. Tertiary flake, soft-hammer struck? Damage to lateral edges (one more than the other). Found immediately beneath HS13	3.1
7	20	Core	Core. Flint patinated. Exhausted flakelet core; single platform, core keel shaped, overhangs present.	28.3
8	20	Tertiary flake	Flake. Grey brown flint, one lateral edge patinated. Tertiary flake, utilised previously struck flint, proximal end damaged, edges fairly sharp	3
9	2	Flake (possibly rejuvenation)	Flake. Flint (grey-brown with chert-like imperfection). Cortex on distal end; striking platform appears patinated (re-use of previously struck flint? Or more reflective of deposition conditions?). Narrow flake	8.5



RA No.	Context	Type	Description	Weight (g)
			removal scars on dorsal surface. Possibly removed from core due to sizeable chert imperfection. Butt thick, but appears SHS (thickness due to wish to remove imperfection?).	

Table 1: Lithic assemblage details



4. ASSESSMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

Well dated and recently excavated early prehistoric monuments are rare within the Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire area. Although better preserved examples, such as Whiteleaf Hill do exist, the remains unearthed at Heathley Chase are still of considerable significance within the county. A recent resource assessment of the Neolithic to Early Bronze Age in Buckinghamshire (http://www.buckscc.gov.uk/assets/content/bcc/docs/archaeology/A_ST_Bucks_4_Neo-EBA_Bucks_resource_assessment_final.pdf, accessed 18/04/2012) notes only four long barrows, one oval barrow, and seventeen burials as being listed in the HER. Rapid assessment of the site records suggests that, although severely truncated, the remains at Heathley Chase do not easily fit into either the chambered tomb, long or oval barrow typology of monuments.

The Solent Thames Research framework (http://thehumanjourney.net/pdf_store/sthames/phase3/Research%20Agendas/Neolithic%20and%20Early%20Bronze%20Age%20Research%20Agenda.pdf, accessed 18/04/2012) states that: “A much better understanding is needed of the date range of the very varied burial monuments of the 4th millennium”.

In this light, the record of the investigation, and the remains within the project archive, are likely to be of significant regional importance. The human remains have value as a resource for early prehistoric population studies and potential evidence for mortuary practices, such as excarnation, which would provide a greater understanding of the function of the monument itself.



5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

Albion Archaeology 2007, *Stantonbury Park, Milton Keynes: Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Document ref. 2007/53

Albion Archaeology 2012, *Heathley Chase, Wolverton Road, Milton Keynes: Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Area Excavation and Watching Brief*. Document ref. 2012/11

Oxford Archaeological Unit 1991, *Great Linford Country Park Environmental Statement*.



Figure 1: Location of archaeological investigations within the development

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