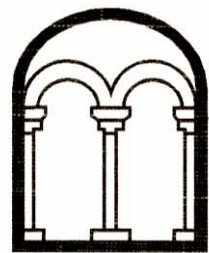


**EAST COTTAGE
HINXWORTH ROAD, EDWORTH
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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AND PUBLICATION**

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Produced for:
Mr & Mrs D Smyth



Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	4
1.1 Project Background	4
1.2 Site Location and Description	4
1.3 Archaeological Background	4
1.4 Project Objectives	5
2. METHODOLOGY	7
3. RESULTS	8
3.1 Introduction	8
3.2 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits	8
4. CONCLUSIONS	9
5. BIBLIOGRAPHY	10
6. APPENDIX: DETAILED CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS	11

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: Archaeological observation results

The figures are bound at the rear of the document.



Preface

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

Acknowledgements

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the archaeological works by Mr & Mrs D Smyth. The project was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Martin Oake, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist.

Fieldwork was carried out by Marcin Koziminski (Archaeological Supervisor) who also prepared this report with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) and Jackie Wells (Finds Officer). It was edited by Robert Wardill (Project Manager).

All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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Key Terms

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

CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CBCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
HER	Central Bedfordshire Council's Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
LPA	Local Planning Authority
PDA	Proposed development area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission (CB/11/04043/FULL) was granted by Central Bedfordshire Council for the erection of a two-storey side extension at East Cottage, Hinxworth Road, Edworth, Bedfordshire.

As the development site lies in an area of archaeological sensitivity, a condition was placed on the planning permission requiring the implementation of a scheme of archaeological investigation during the groundworks.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the archaeological works in accordance with the methodologies described in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2012), produced in response to a brief prepared by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBC 2012)

No archaeological features or deposits of significance were revealed during the observation and investigation of the construction groundworks. Other than geological deposits, only layers associated with past land-use of the area as a garden were revealed. A deposit of former topsoil (3) yielded a single pot sherd, a jar rim dated to the 11th-12th century which is likely to be residual in this context. The small size of the Saxo-Norman pottery assemblage suggests that the development area is situated beyond the probable Saxon and medieval settlement focus at Edworth.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Project Background**

Planning permission (CB/11/04043/FULL) was granted by Central Bedfordshire Council for the erection of a two-storey side extension at East Cottage, Hinxworth Road, Edworth, Bedfordshire. The existing building consists of a semi-detached former farm worker's cottage. The planned extension will measure 5m by 5.4m in width and 7.4m in height to the ridge of the roof. It will also have an open porch.

As the development site lies in an area of archaeological sensitivity, identified and described in a Heritage Statement accompanying the planning application (GC Planning 2012), a condition (3) was placed on the planning permission stating that:

“No development shall take place until the applicant or developer has secured the implementation of a Written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation which has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The said development shall only be implemented in accordance with the scheme thereby approved.”

This recommendation was in accordance with national planning guidelines in the form of Policy 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)* which was published on 27 March this year and has replaced the previous *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment*.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the archaeological works in accordance with the methodologies described in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2012), produced in response to a brief prepared by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBC 2012).

1.2 **Site Location and Description**

Edworth is a small hamlet on the eastern side of the A1 to the south of Biggleswade. The proposed development area (PDA) lies at the junction of Hinxworth Road and a track leading to Manor Farm and is centred on grid reference TL 2223 4099 (Figure 1).

Edworth lies at the base of two low topographical ridges, one immediately to the west, between the hamlet and the Ivel Valley, and one to the north-east. The PDA itself is on level ground at an approximate height of 46m OD. The underlying geology is Gault Clay overlain by deposits of Boulder Clay.

1.3 **Archaeological Background**

The PDA lies in a landscape rich in heritage assets. One of the most important of these in the vicinity of the PDA is the site of Topplers Hill situated on the top of the ridge to the west of the site and the A1. An early to middle Iron Age settlement (HER 524) lies on the eastern side of Topplers Hill, overlooking Edworth, but evidence for an extensive co-axial field system (HER 3545) was



found in the area, indicating that agricultural settlement was established around Edworth from at least the Bronze Age onwards.

The A1 lies on the line of a Roman road heading towards Sandy (HER 505) and a number of cropmarks have been identified around Edworth that on morphological grounds may represent prehistoric or Roman settlement sites (HER 9101 and HER 16825). The existence of a possible Roman villa (HER 522) has been suggested in the vicinity of The Rectory at Edworth. However, this is based on reports of finds of a mosaic and other material of which no evidence survives.

East Cottage lies in the core of the medieval village of Edworth (HER 17168) which is listed in the Domesday survey of 1086 and probably developed from a late Saxon manorial estate. Today Edworth is a deserted or shrunken medieval village. Until the 1980s substantial earthworks in the form of two moated sites, house platforms, croft boundaries and trackways as well as remains of ridge and furrow cultivation marks survived to the north and south of the PDA (HER 1163, 1484, 2579, 2580, 2848, and 9596). Most of the earthworks are now levelled but substantial below-ground heritage assets may remain.

The medieval parish church of St George (HER 1051), a Grade I listed building which dates to the 13th century but may be earlier in origin, lies to the south of the PDA. The site of The Manor and Manor Farm lie in close proximity to the church but it is unclear whether they are the remains of a medieval manorial site. The core of The Manor is 17th century in date and the Manor Farm complex accommodates an 18th-century barn and dovecot.

The remains of gravel pits (HER 1431) west of the Edworth rectory show that some pockets of gravel in the underlying clays were quarried in the post-medieval period.

East Cottage is one of a semi-detached pair of former farm worker's cottages that are associated with Manor Farm to the south.

1.4 Project Objectives

The PDA had the potential to reveal information on a number of research objectives identified in the research framework for Bedfordshire (Oake *et al* 2007). East Cottage lies in the core of the identified medieval settlement at Edworth and therefore the focus of research objectives for the site lay in the medieval period.

The research framework for Bedfordshire states that, in general, few medieval rural settlements, particularly with Saxon origin, have been investigated in the county (Oake in Oake *et al* 2007). Oake states a need for research into rural settlement on a micro-scale of investigation, in order to establish the chronology, structure and function of individual settlements as well as classes of settlement, ranging from the prehistoric to the medieval period.

The specific objectives of the investigation were to determine:

- whether any Saxon activity was present in this part of Edworth;



- whether any medieval activity relating to the levelled earthworks survived below ground on the PDA and to identify its nature.

The general objectives of the investigation were to:

- determine the nature and date of any archaeological remains present at the site;
- determine the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits present at the site;
- add to knowledge and understanding of the nature of rural settlements on the slightly heavier clay soils away from the main river valleys and produce an archive report that fully described the results of the archaeological works (this document).



2. METHODOLOGY

Archaeological observation of the groundworks was undertaken on 18th April 2012. All groundworks that had the potential to impact upon archaeological remains were archaeologically monitored. These comprised the excavation of a foundation trench measuring *c.* 0.6m wide and 1.2–1.4m deep for a two-storey extension to the east of the cottage that covered an area *c.* 5.8m x 5.1m (Figure 2).

The excavations were carried out using a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged ditching bucket, except where digging by hand was required. The works were undertaken under close archaeological supervision. Deposits encountered were investigated and recorded in accordance with Albion's *Procedures Manual*. Spoil heaps were checked on a regular basis for the recovery of artefacts.

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

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2 nd edn, 2001).
• Bedford Borough Council	<i>Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford</i> (1998)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2006)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> , 2nd edition (2011)
• IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs and Field Excavations</i> (updated 2008) and <i>finds</i> (updated 2008)

A detailed methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2012).



3. RESULTS

3.1 *Introduction*

Other than geological deposits, the groundworks only revealed a series of deposits associated with the past land-use of the area as a garden. These are summarised below and detailed in an Appendix. Numbers in brackets refer to the contexts recorded in the Appendix.

3.2 *Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits*

Overburden was similar in all the excavations and consisted of topsoil/garden soil (1) that was up to 0.3m thick, overlying a generally 0.2m-thick subsoil (2). The latter layer in turn, sealed a deposit of former topsoil (3) up to 0.3m thick which yielded a single, probably residual, sherd of a jar rim (6g) of St Neots-type ware (fabric B01C), dated to the 11th–12th century.

The undisturbed geological strata consisted of light grey yellow clay (4) and underlying light blue grey clay (5) (Figure 2).



4. CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological features or deposits of significance were revealed during the observation and investigation of the construction groundworks. The deposits revealed were either geological in origin or soil layers associated with the previous use of the area as a garden.

The small size of the Saxo-Norman pottery assemblage suggests that the site of East Cottage lies beyond the possible Saxon and medieval settlement focus at Edworth.



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6. APPENDIX: DETAILED CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS



Area: 1
Extent (ha): 0.003
OS Co-ordinates: TL2223040990
Description: Foundation trench

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey silty loam occasional small-large CBM, occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.3m thick garden soil deposit - moderately rooted. Ceramic building material (CBM) not retained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Subsoil	Friable mid grey brown clay silt occasional small-large CBM, occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.2m thick, moderately rooted deposit. CBM not retained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Buried topsoil	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional small-medium CBM, occasional small-medium stones. Up to 0.3m thick moderately rooted deposit. CBM not retained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
4	Natural	Firm light grey yellow clay . Moderately rooted, up to 0.25m thick deposit overlying another natural stratum (5).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Natural	Firm light blue grey clay . Deposit overlain by the other natural stratum (4).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

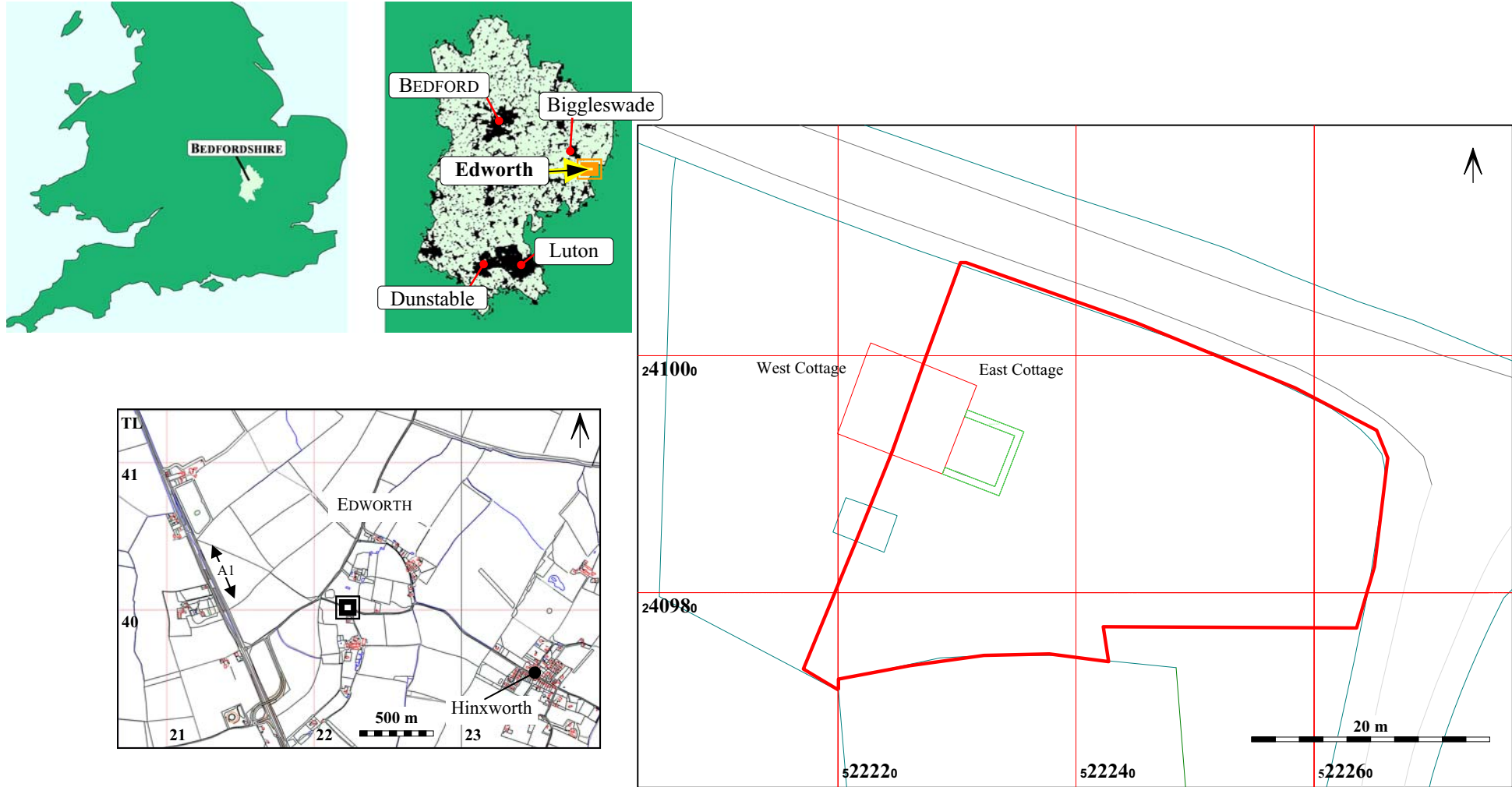
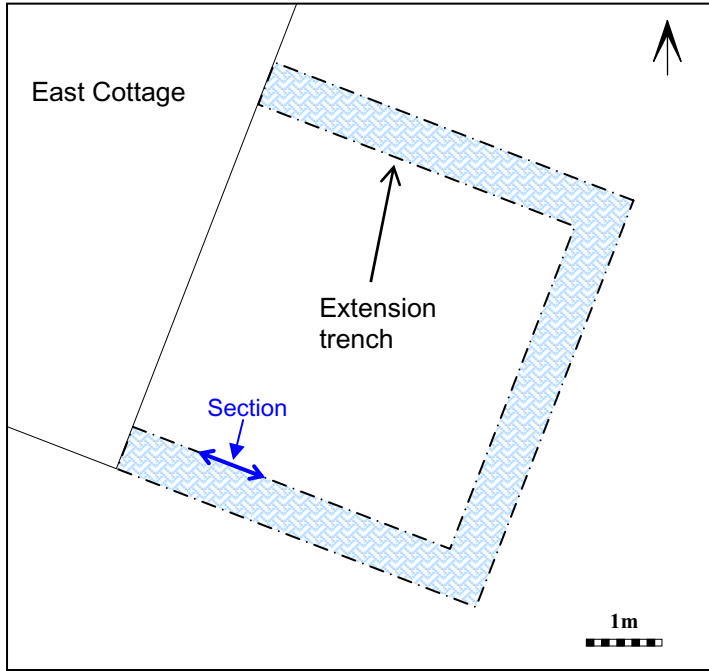


Figure 1: Site location

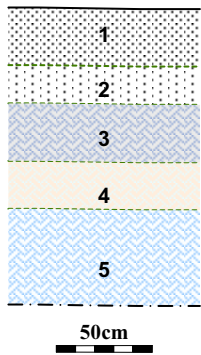
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North edge of foundation trench.
Looking E.



Excavation of trench.
Looking NE



Section drawing



Photograph of drawn section. Scale 1m.
Looking NNE.

Figure 2: Archaeological observation results

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