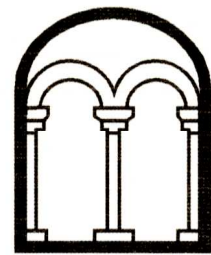


**85 HIGH STREET  
HAROLD  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL AND UPDATED  
PROJECT DESIGN**

**Albion**  
archaeology



**85 HIGH STREET  
HARROLD  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ASSESSMENT OF POTENTIAL AND UPDATED  
PROJECT DESIGN**

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*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 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**

*The project was commissioned by Mr A. Price and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Geoff Saunders of Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team.*

*The fieldwork was undertaken by Kathy Pilkinton (Archaeological Supervisor) and Chris Tombe (Archaeological Technician). Kathy Pilkinton also prepared this report with contributions from Joan Lightning (illustrations), and Jackie Wells (finds). The report was edited by Ben Barker (Project officer) and approved by Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).*

Albion Archaeology  
 St Mary's Church  
 St Mary's Street  
 Bedford, MK42 OAS  
 ☎: 0300 300 8141  
 Fax: 0300 300 8209  
 e-mail: [office@albion-arch.com](mailto:office@albion-arch.com)

## **Version History**

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## **Key Terms**

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

BBC	Bedford Borough Council
HER	Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Record
HET	Historic Environment Team of Bedford Borough Council
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



## 1. INTRODUCTION

---

### 1.1 *Project Background*

Conditional planning permission (08/00588/FUL) was granted by Bedford Borough Council for the erection of a detached dwelling on land adjacent to 85 High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire in July 2008.

As the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological sensitivity, near the medieval core of Harrold, a condition (20) was attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological work. This was in line with *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment* and saved Local Plan policy BE24.

An archaeological trial trench evaluation of the site was undertaken in two stages during 2009 and 2010; it demonstrated the presence of significant medieval remains on the site (Wolframm-Murray, 2011). On the basis of the evaluation results a recommendation was made for full archaeological excavation of the site prior to any development groundworks taking place. Subsequent to this, development groundworks were completed without the required archaeological investigation taking place.

To compensate for this the Historic Environment Team (HET) of Bedford Borough Council specified that a programme of archaeological excavation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication should take place on suitable land within the plot. The work was undertaken in January 2013, in accordance with an approved written scheme of investigation (Albion 2012). It was carried out at a stage where the construction of the new house and associated services were nearing completion. The final excavation area included the maximum area possible given the constraints of space and ground disturbance associated with construction of the new building.

### 1.2 *Status and Purpose of this Document*

This report presents the results of all stages of the recent archaeological investigation. 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 HET's brief and will allow the discharge of the archaeological planning condition.

### 1.3 *Site Location and Description*

The development site lies on the south side of the west end of Harrold High Street (Figure 1). It is approximately 0.04ha in area and is centred on National Grid Reference 494801 256834. The plot formerly comprised garden land adjacent to 85 High Street but has recently undergone a change of use involving the construction of a new dwelling house and associated landscaping.

The site is relatively level (although extensive ground level reduction has taken place in the new building footprint) at approximately 45.8m OD. The



underlying geology of the area consists of Oolitic limestone overlain by gravels and alluvium of the Ouse Valley Formation.

#### **1.4 Archaeological Background**

85 High Street (Nunswood) is a Grade II listed building dating to 1726. It was originally part of Priory Farm. The archaeological trial trench evaluation (Northamptonshire Archaeology 2011) demonstrated that remains dating from the 12th to 16th centuries survived within the development area; these included a partially stone-lined pit. Significant localised truncation was also recorded, caused by the digging of later 19th-century domestic rubbish pits.

Since the 1950s, several substantial archaeological investigations have been carried out in and around Harrold (Figure 1). These have revealed evidence for settlement and funerary activity from the early Neolithic to the post-medieval period. Many of the earlier investigations are either awaiting publication or were only the subject of interim-style reports.

A watching brief during the 1950s at the time of quarrying *c.* 500m to the north-east revealed evidence of activity from the Bronze Age through to the Anglo-Saxon period (Eagles and Evison 1970). This included Bronze Age ring ditches, an Iron Age farmstead and Saxon burials. Separate late Iron Age/Roman farmsteads, along with some middle Saxon features, were located *c.* 800m to the east in the Harrold Pit, Odell (Dix 1980; 1981).

In the late 1990s Albion Archaeology (then Bedfordshire County Archaeology Service) carried out an open area excavation off Meadway and Dove Lane (HM519), 350m to the north-east of the development area. This located a Bronze Age ring ditch and part of a Saxon settlement (BCAS 1999; Shepherd *et al.* 2012).

In 2003 excavations to the south of the High Street, at Harrold Priory Middle School (HPM874), identified extensive medieval remains including evidence of building foundations possibly associated with Harrold Manor, less than 100m to the south-east of the development site.

Excavations in 2003 in advance of redevelopment of the former Bridgman Joinery Works were located 300m to the east (Albion 2005; Luke and Preece 2012). Late Neolithic/early Bronze Age activity was testified by the presence of three small pits and a small residual flint assemblage. However, the earliest firm evidence for settlement dated to the late Iron Age/early Romano-British period when a system of enclosures was established adjacent to an active stream channel. It seems likely that the enclosures continued in use as fields or paddocks into the Romano-British period. Dispersed evidence was also recovered for early Saxon activity, including a single sunken-featured building, and Saxo-Norman activity including a cluster of pits.

Other investigations carried out by Albion Archaeology in the vicinity include Projects HSH913, ORH959 and CW1017, which were all located to the east of the development area and have no direct bearing on it.



## 2. FIELDWORK RESULTS

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### 2.1 Introduction

The results of the archaeological excavation are detailed in the following section. Detailed summaries are provided for all archaeological contexts in Appendix 1. The results are shown in Figure 3.

On arrival on site it was clear the investigation area proposed in the WSI had been compromised by the construction of a soak-away and associated drainage system. In consultation with the BBC Archaeological Officer, the decision was made to target the remaining undisturbed area along the southern edge of the site. Due to the limited space available for spoil storage the area was examined in two overlapping trenches that were excavated in two phases of work.

### 2.2 Overburden and Geological deposits

The topsoil (101) was an average of 0.3m thick and comprised dark grey sandy silt with extensive rooting present at the east end of the site. This was overlain by a layer of mid brown sandy silt (100) that is likely to have been thrown up by the construction activity. Deposits at this level had been removed at the west end of site during the construction of the soak-away.

The natural geological deposit (103) comprised loose yellowish orange sandy gravel. Overlying this, an orange brown sandy silt (102) was present at the west end of site but had been truncated by modern disturbance at the east end.

### 2.3 Modern Activity

The majority of activity on site proved to be modern. Two sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from ditch terminus [106] and ditch segment [108], but both were found in association with later artefacts and are likely to be residual.

Deposits at the east end of site suggest the ground level was significantly altered during the 20th century. A layer of grey sandy silt (119) containing modern material directly overlay truncated geological deposits (103).

Two pits containing modern material were excavated; the westernmost one [104] proved to be very shallow. The pit to the east [110] was square-shaped, vertical-sided, and reached a depth of 1.25m below the top of geological deposits. It contained a large amount of 19th–20th-century rubbish, largely crockery and kitchen ware. 19th-century pottery included a stoneware bottle stamped 'STREET & DAY, LONDON', and a paste or ointment jar, the latter a product of the Maling pottery in Newcastle. Glassware comprised an embossed late 19th-century medicine bottle from 'ANTHONY AND BISS', Chemists and Dentists of 48 High St, Bedford; and an early 20th-century 'HOLBROOK & CO.' Worcestershire Sauce bottle.

The depth of pit [110], and the fact that it did not appear to cut the deposit above (119), suggests it was in use when the ground was at a reduced level in this area.





The geological deposits at the west end of site were less disturbed. Two NW-SE aligned linear features were identified: ditches [106] and [108]/[117] both of which contained fragments of modern brick and tile. The ditches were shallow, less than 0.2m deep, and are likely to have been insubstantial modern garden features. A modern posthole [113] was cut through the top of ditch [117].

#### **2.4 Undated**

A single posthole [115] filled with orange grey sandy silt produced no dating evidence. It measured 0.65 x 0.45m in plan and was 0.27m deep. The similar dimensions and slightly disturbed nature of the fill may suggest that it corresponds with a 12th-century pit [210] that was excavated as part of the evaluation (Northamptonshire Archaeology, 2011). No further artefacts were recovered. A definite correlation between the two features could not be established due to the shifting nature of the site boundaries.

### 3. ARTEFACT ASSEMBLAGE

#### 3.1 Introduction, Methodology and Quantification

A small assemblage comprising mainly pottery and ceramic roof tile was retained. The material was examined to ascertain its nature, condition and, where possible, date range (Table 1).

Feature	Description	Context	Date Range	Finds Summary
104	Pit	105	Modern	Flower pot (48g)
106	Ditch	107	Post-medieval	Pottery (6g); ceramic roof tile (21g); animal bone (4g)
108	Ditch	109	Modern	Ceramic roof tile (297g); roof slate (9g); mortar (54g)
117	Ditch	118	Late med/early post-medieval	Pottery (64g)

**Table 1:** Artefact Summary by trench and feature

#### 3.2 Ceramics

Three pottery sherds, (118g) and three peg tiles (318g), were recovered. These were classified using type codes and common names in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, currently maintained by Albion Archaeology (Table 2). All are commonly occurring types in the county.

Fabric Type	Common name	Date Range	Quantity	Wt (g)
<i>Pottery</i>				
B05	Harrold shelly ware	12th-13th centuries	1	6
E03	Late medieval oxidised ware (smooth)	Mid 14th-16th centuries	1	64
MOD	Terracotta flower pot	19th-20th centuries	1	48
<i>Roof tile</i>				
CAL	Calcareous sandy	16th century +	3	318

**Table 2:** Ceramic Type Series

The earliest pottery is a 12th–13th-century shell-tempered body sherd (fabric B05) occurring as a residual find in post-medieval ditch [107]. Examples of this ware are well attested throughout the village; 56 sherds derived from the trial trench evaluation (Wolframm-Murray 2011, 9); and areas of kiln activity are known in Harrold High Street (SP 947567) and in Brook Lane (SP 948569; Hall 1972). A sizeable pottery assemblage weighing in excess of 290kg was excavated at the Priory Middle School (Duncan *et al.*, 2012); it is thought to derive from nearby, as yet unlocated kilns.

A sherd of late medieval oxidised ware (64g) was recovered from the surface of ditch [108] (recorded as unexcavated segment [117]) and pit [104] yielded a piece of modern terracotta flower pot (48g).

Pieces of three peg tiles (318g) in a sand and calcareous fabric were collected from ditches [106] and [108]. All measure approximately 13mm in thickness, and are likely to date from the 16th century onwards.

#### 3.3 Non-Ceramics

Faunal remains comprise a worn sheep molar (4g) recovered from ditch [106]. Ditch [108] contained a piece of modern roofing slate (9g), and a lime mortar fragment (54g).

## **4. ANALYTICAL POTENTIAL OF THE DATA**

---

### **4.1 Original Research Objectives**

The overall purpose of the archaeological works was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the site in its cultural and environmental setting, and to prepare and disseminate a report that fully described the findings.

The results of the trial trenching had suggested that the site would produce remains dating from the medieval period with some 19th-century disturbance. Such evidence could contribute to important fields of research into the medieval period as highlighted in research strategy documents for the region and county (Glazebrook 1997, Brown and Glazebrook 2000, Oake *et al* 2007, Medlycott 2011):

- understanding settlement form and pattern
- settlement character – origins and development of villages
- settlement continuity – evidence for earlier and later settlement at the site
- chronology – development of regional pottery sequences, clarification of the dating of pottery sequences
- environment – improve understanding of local environmental conditions

The extent to which the individual data-sets can address these objectives is assessed below.

### **4.2 Contextual Data**

The small size of the excavation area reduces the legibility of the remains and hampers their interpretation. 19th- and 20th- century activity on the site has also resulted in significant disturbance of the area, reducing the analytical potential of any remains present. However, in the small areas free of later truncation no significant earlier remains were found. The contextual data have merely served to suggest limited medieval activity and extensive later truncation in this particular area of the site. They have no potential for further analysis.

### **4.3 Artefactual Data**

The small size and limited range of the artefact assemblage mean that it cannot address the original research objectives; it, therefore, has no potential for further analysis.

### **4.4 Summary Analytical Potential**

Previous work clearly indicated that this part of the village has considerable potential to preserve significant archaeological remains which could potentially contribute to understanding of its origins and development.

The trial trenching indicated a greater potential for archaeological remains on the northern side of the plot, adjacent to the High Street. The lack of significant archaeological features in the latest excavation would appear to bear this out.

## **5. UPDATED PROJECT DESIGN**

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### **5.1 Introduction**

Assessment of the data from the investigations has indicated that it has no potential for further analysis. However, the results of the investigations are relevant to any further work undertaken in Harrold. Accordingly, they 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: albionar1-141585). In addition, a summary will be prepared for submission to *South Midlands Archaeology*. The summary will be cross-referenced to the online OASIS entry.

### **5.3 Archiving**

Following approval of this document by the HET, the archive of materials (subject to the landowner's permission) and accompanying records will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. 2012.74) in accordance with IFA (2001) and Museum (1998) guidelines.

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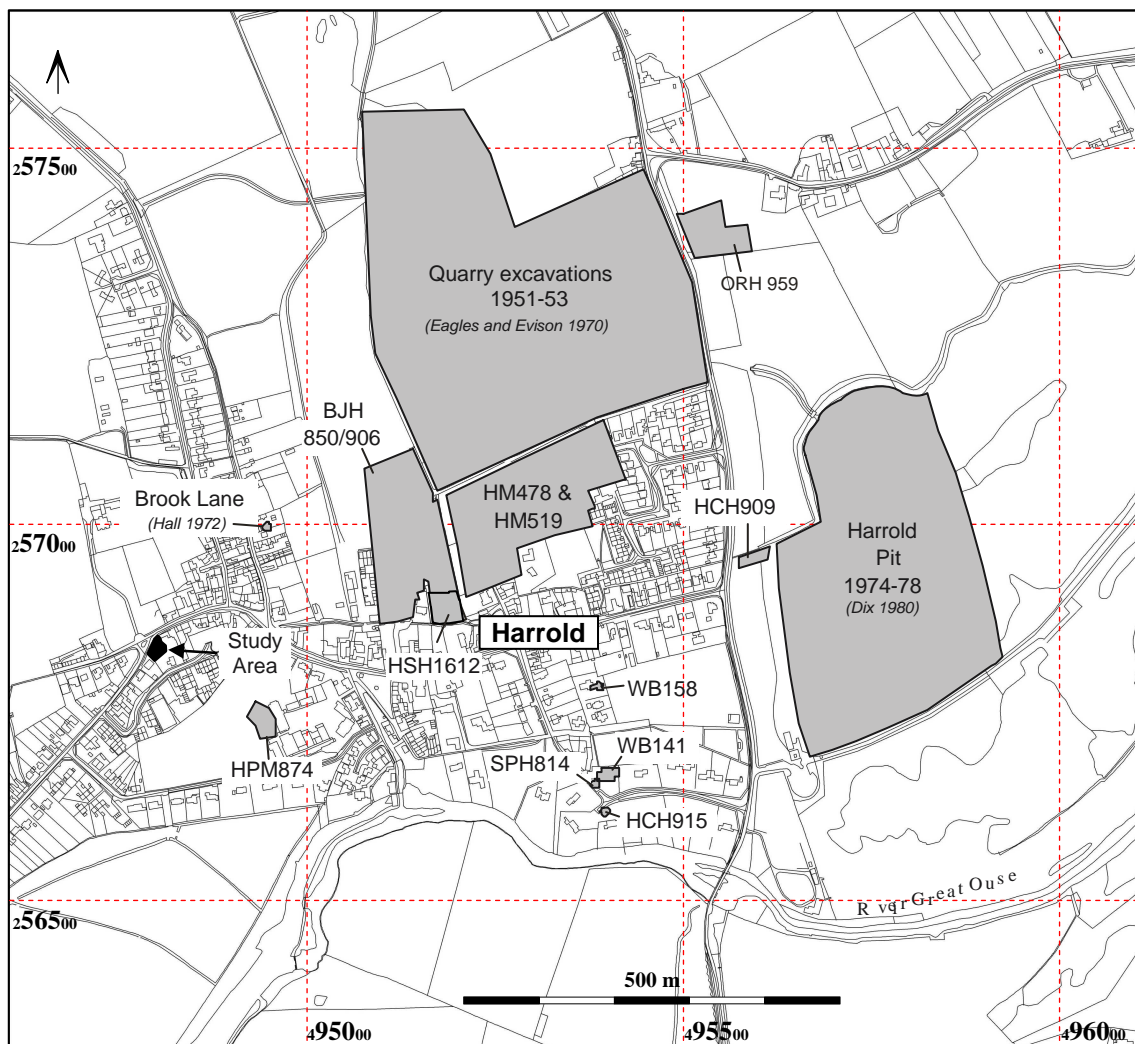
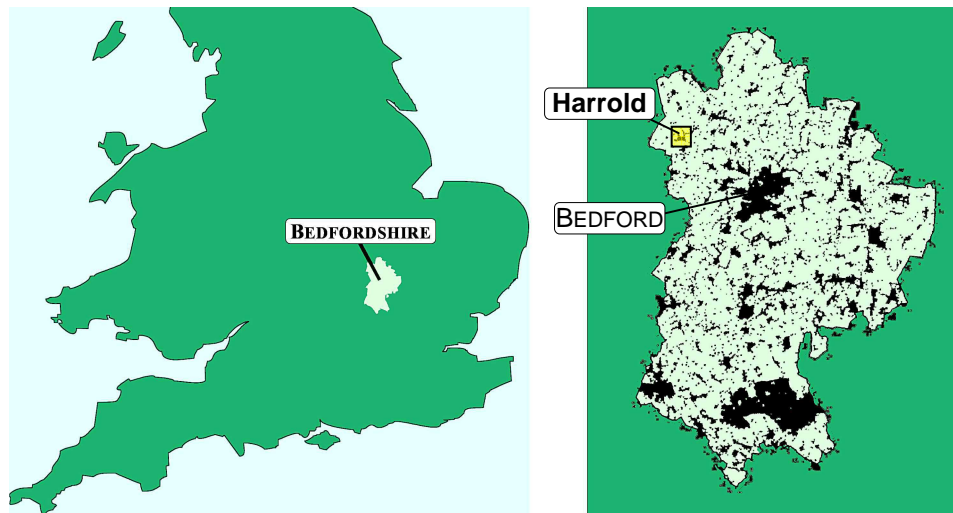
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## 7. APPENDIX 1 – CONTEXT SUMMARY

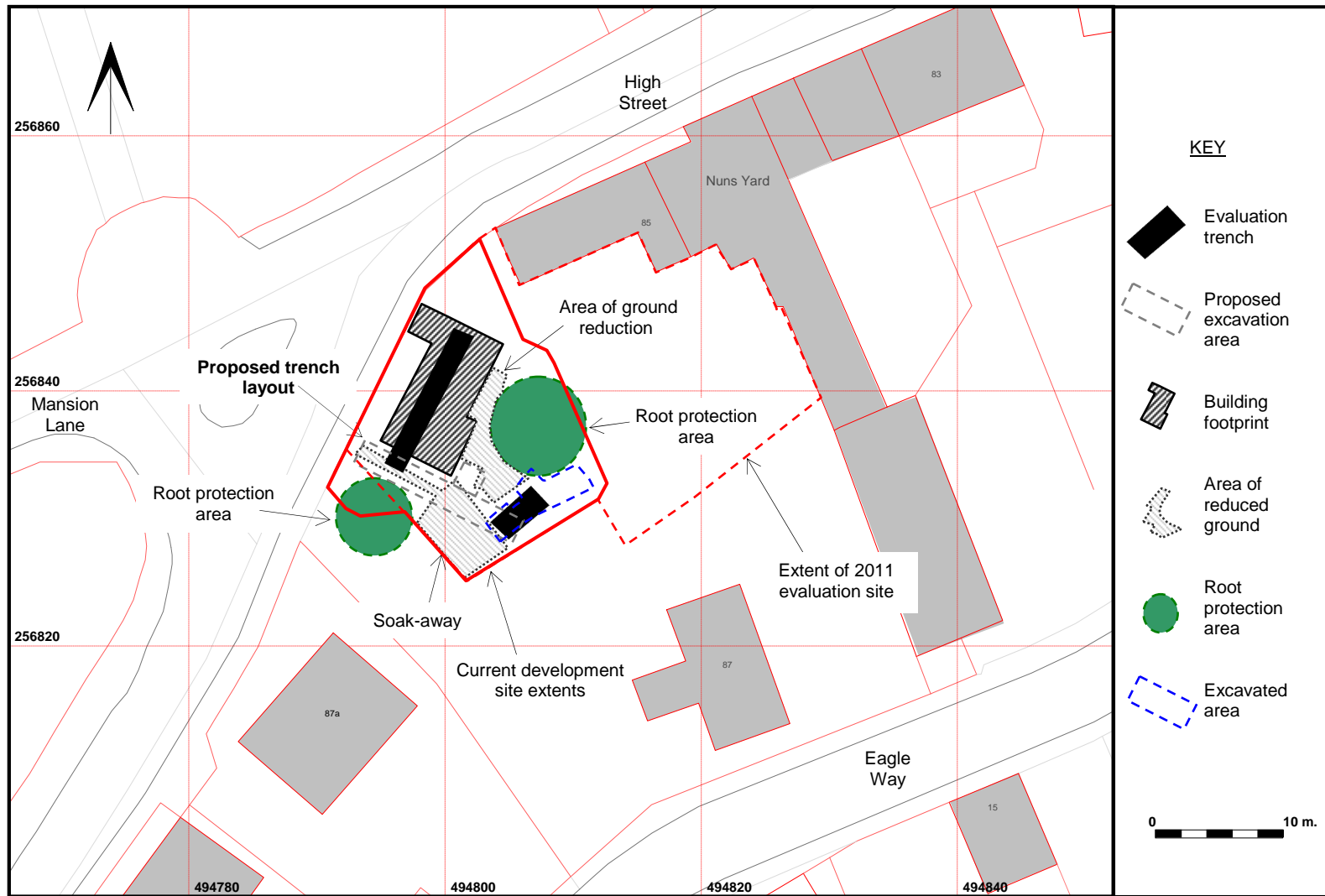
Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Modern overburden	Loose mid brown grey sandy silt moderate small stones. Thickness: 0.35m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Topsoil	Friable dark grey black sandy silt occasional small stones. Thickness: 0.3m Heavily rooted	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Subsoil	Friable mid red brown sandy silt moderate small-medium stones. Thickness: 0.15m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Natural	Loose mid yellow orange sandy gravel	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Pit	Sub-circular sides: convex base: flat dimensions: max breadth 1.m, max depth 0.1m, max length 1.36m. Contained modern debris. Possibly part of layer above (119) filling a hollow.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Fill	Loose mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Thickness: 0.1m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
106	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: convex base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.95m, max depth 0.13m, min length 1.m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Thickness: 0.13m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
108	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: concave base: flat dimensions: max breadth 1.1m, max depth 0.08m, max length 2.m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
109	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt moderate small-medium stones. Thickness: 0.13m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
110	Pit	Rectangular sides: vertical base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.95m, max depth 1.25m, max length 1.1m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
111	Refuse deposit	Loose dark grey black sandy silt moderate small stones. Thickness: 1.17m Large amount of modern refuse	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
112	Fill	Friable dark grey black sandy silt occasional small stones. Thickness: 0.08m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
120	Backfill	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt moderate small stones. Thickness: 0.28m Possible capping of refuse pit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
113	Posthole	Circular sides: concave base: flat dimensions: min depth 0.07m, max diameter 0.3m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
114	Fill	Friable mid brown black clay silt occasional small-medium stones. Thickness: 0.07m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
115	Pit	Sub-circular sides: concave base: uneven dimensions: max breadth 0.45m, max depth 0.27m, max length 0.65m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
116	Fill	Compact mid orange grey sandy silt occasional small stones. Thickness: 0.27m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
117	Ditch	Linear NW-SE dimensions: max breadth 1.1m. Unexcavated segment. Same as [108].	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
118	Fill	Friable mid grey brown sandy silt moderate small-medium stones. Unexcavated fill. Same as (109). Contained surface find.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
119	Make up layer	Friable mid brown grey sandy silt moderate small stones. Thickness: 0.65m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>





**Figure 1: Site location plan**

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**Figure 2: Location of excavation area**

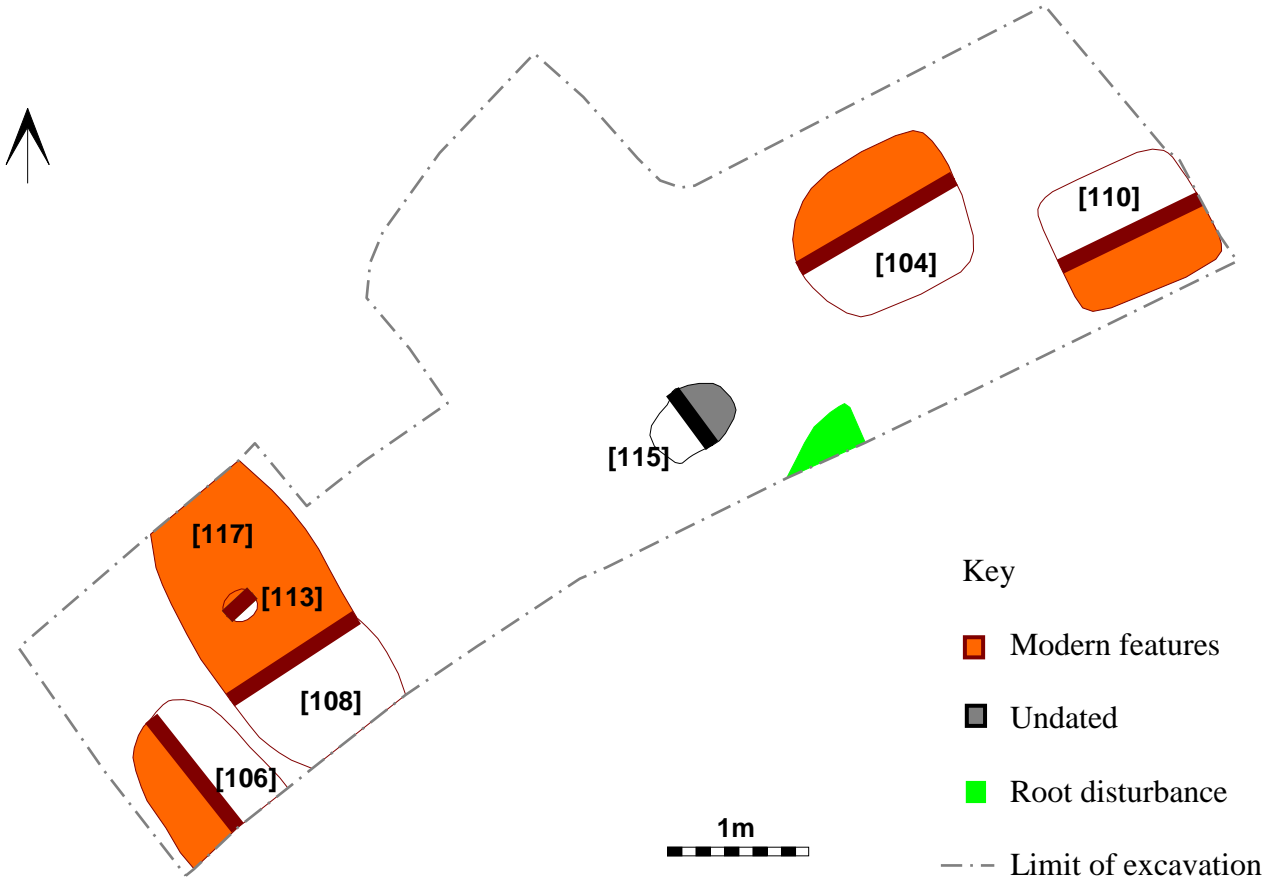
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Rubbish pit [110] looking SE



Excavation area looking SW  
Pits [104] and [110]

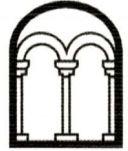


Excavation area looking north

**Figure 3:** Results of fieldwork



**Albion**  
archaeology



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

**Telephone** 01234 294000  
**Email** [office@albion-arch.com](mailto:office@albion-arch.com)  
[www.albion-arch.com](http://www.albion-arch.com)

