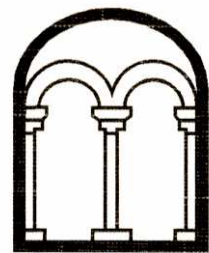


**LAND AT HOME FARM MANOR  
HIGH STREET  
WRESTLINGWORTH  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

**Albion**  
archaeology



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10th June 2013

Produced for:  
Beverley Carr  
Home Farm Manor



## ***Contents***

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<b>1. INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Project Background	4
1.2 Site Location and Description	4
1.3 Archaeological Background	4
1.4 Project Objectives	5
<b>2. METHODOLOGY</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>3. RESULTS</b>	<b>7</b>
3.1 Introduction	7
3.2 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits	7
3.3 Archaeological Remains	7
<b>4. CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>5. BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>9</b>

### ***List of Figures***

Figure 1: Site location

Figure 2: 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 Beverley Carr of Home Farm Manor. The project was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Martin Oake, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist.*

*Fieldwork was carried out by Richard Gregson (Archaeological Supervisor) who also prepared this report with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) and Jackie Wells (Finds Officer).*

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## **Version History**

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
<i>1.0</i>	<i>10th June 2013</i>	<i>n/a</i>

## **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
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Planning permission was granted for the construction of a stable block and sand school (CB/12/02471/FULL) on land at Home Farm Manor, High Street, Wrestlingworth.*

*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 produced in response to a brief prepared by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist*

*No archaeological remains were revealed in any of the groundworks associated with the development. This suggests that the development area is situated beyond the extent of the possible Saxon and medieval settlement at Wrestlingworth. This conclusion is in accordance with the findings of a previous nearby trial trench evaluation that indicated that site was on the periphery of the medieval village away from the core occupation area.*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission was granted for the construction of a stable block and sand school (CB/12/02471/FULL) on land at Home Farm Manor, High Street, Wrestlingworth.

A condition was attached to the planning consent (Condition 5) requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation as a consequence of the development. This is in line with the requirements of paragraph 141 of the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF) which states that Local Planning Authorities should require developers to record and advance understanding of the significance of heritage assets before they are lost, this can be achieved by imposing planning conditions or obligations as appropriate (CLG 2012). It is also in line with Policy 45 of the *Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire* (Pre-submission version January 2013). In this instance the heritage assets referred to represent those with archaeological interest comprising the remains of the Saxon, medieval and post-medieval settlement of Wrestlingworth.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out the archaeological works in accordance with the methodologies described in a Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2013a), produced in response to a brief prepared by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBC 2013).

### 1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Home Farm Manor lies at the southern end of the village of Wrestlingworth on the east side of the High Street. It is centred on NGR TL2585 4709 with the ground height being around 35m OD.

The development site measures *c.* 500 m<sup>2</sup> in area and is within a field to the north-west of Home Farm Manor house (Figure 1).

The geology of the area is Gault Clay overlain with Boulder Clay.

### 1.3 *Archaeological Background*

An Archaeological and Heritage Assessment for the proposed development was produced, on behalf of the applicant, by David Hall Associates (2012).

Home Farm Manor lies within the core of the medieval village of Wrestlingworth (HER17167), *c.* 200m to the south of the 12th-century Parish Church of St Peter (HER1155). The origins of the village are not well known. It is first documented in the mid 12th century, although the place name suggests Saxon origins (Lock 1976).

Home Farm Manor House is a 16th-century timber-framed building with later reworkings (HER6058). The adjacent Home Farm complex, immediately to the north of the development area, includes a 17th-century timber-framed dovecote (HER6059).



One hundred metres to the north-west of the site, on the opposite side of the High Street, lies a complex of earthworks in a pasture field (HER3421). These remains represent an area of settlement deserted in the late medieval or early post-medieval period and comprise at least two house platforms and two hollow ways. Further earthworks representing medieval ridge and furrow are located in fields at the northern end of the village (HER588).

Outside the village are a number of cropmark sites (HERs 16841–16843 and 16846–16848) containing linear and enclosure features possibly representing later prehistoric or Roman settlement evidence.

Recent trial trenching within the adjacent farm (Albion Archaeology 2013b) revealed a number of sub-surface archaeological features probably dating to the early medieval period. The trial trenching also produced sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery, most of which were residual in early medieval features. The features were all found in two trenches located in the north-west corner of the site, at least *c.* 150m from the current development area. The evidence was suggestive of activity on the periphery of the medieval village away from the core occupation area.

#### **1.4 Project Objectives**

The purpose of the mitigation works was to record and investigate any post-medieval, medieval, Saxon, or earlier, settlement remains that might be impacted by the development.

Such remains can contribute to our developing understanding of the origins and development of medieval rural settlement in Bedfordshire. As such, they have relevance both to Wrestlingworth itself and contemporary settlements in Bedfordshire as a whole. An understanding of the character and diversity of medieval settlement has been identified as an important research topic in the published Research Frameworks for both in Bedfordshire and the East England (Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Oake *et al.* 2007; Medlycott 2011).

As required by the Brief (CBC 2013), the project aimed to:

- establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area;
- establish the relationships of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.



## 2. METHODOLOGY

Archaeological observation of the groundworks was undertaken on 24th and 25th April 2013. All groundworks that had the potential to impact upon archaeological remains were archaeologically monitored. These comprised ground reduction in the northern part of the site and the excavation of two land drain trenches.

The excavations were carried out using a mechanical excavator operated 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 <sup>nd</sup> 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, 2nd edition</i> (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 2013a).





### 3. RESULTS

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#### 3.1 *Introduction*

The footprint of the stables in the north and the sand school in the south were within a field that sloped gently to the south (Figure 2). In order to create a level area, the northern part of the site was reduced and the material removed was used to build-up the southern part. The area for the stables was reduced to the same level. The stables were to be constructed on top of a concrete pad, with no footings trenches. The northernmost two of four land drain excavations were monitored because they had the potential to reveal archaeological remains. The southernmost two of the four were not monitored because they would be excavated into the material deposited on the southern half of the site and had no potential to reveal archaeological remains.

#### 3.2 *Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits*

Overburden was similar across the site and consisted of 0.32m-thick topsoil (1) comprising dark grey brown clay silt, overlying 0.32m-thick subsoil (2) comprising mid grey brown clay silt. This deposit yielded a single piece of post-medieval ceramic roof tile (149g).

The undisturbed geological deposit comprised light grey brown silty clay (3) and was encountered at depths of 0.55–0.65m.

#### 3.3 *Archaeological Remains*

No archaeological remains were revealed in any of the groundworks associated with the development. The only visible feature was a 2m by 1.5m sub-oval tree-throw [4] located in the north-east corner of the site.



## 4. CONCLUSIONS

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No archaeological remains were revealed in any of the groundworks associated with the development. This suggests that the development area is situated beyond the extent of the possible Saxon and medieval settlement at Wrestlingworth.

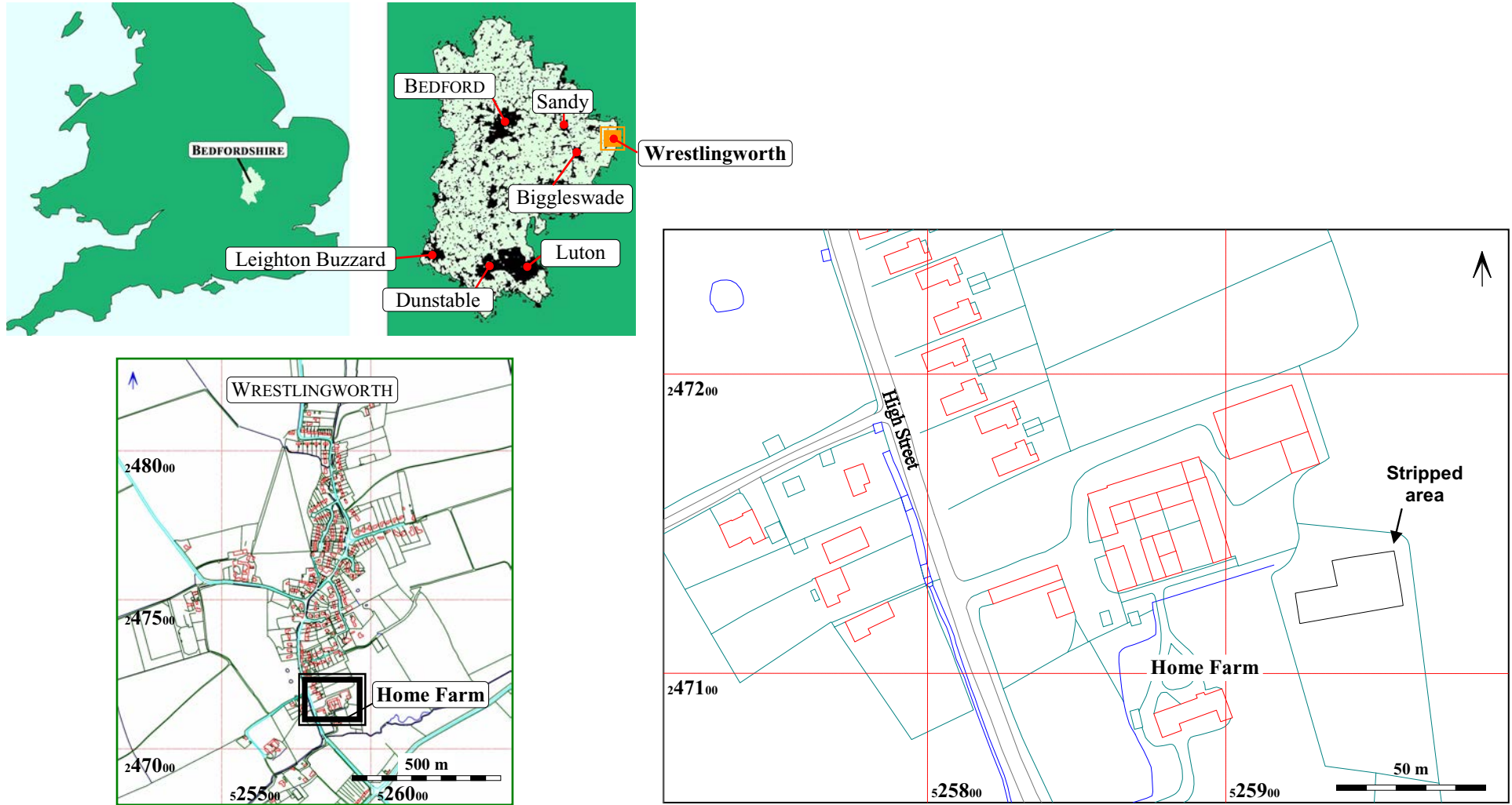
This conclusion is in accordance with the findings of the trial trench evaluation (see Section 1.3) located *c.* 150m to the north of current development, which indicated that the site was on the periphery of the medieval village away from the core occupation area.



## 5. BIBLIOGRAPHY

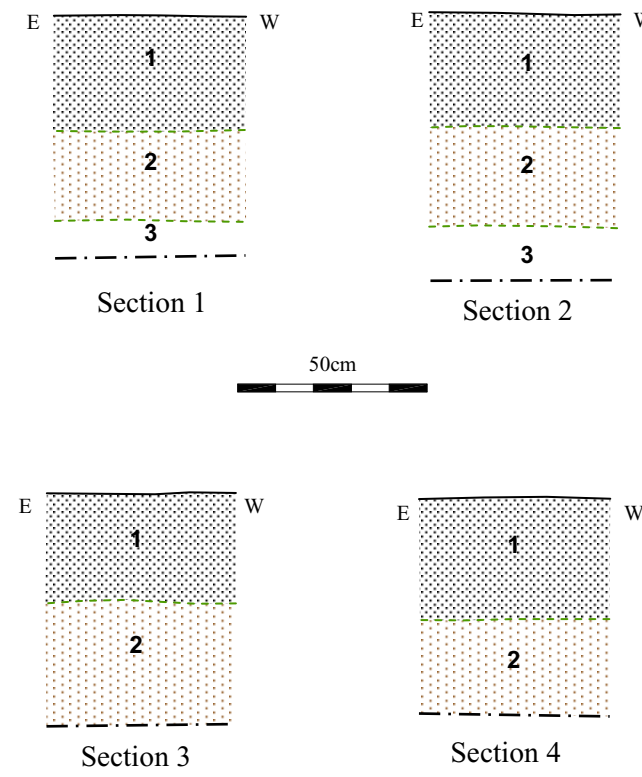
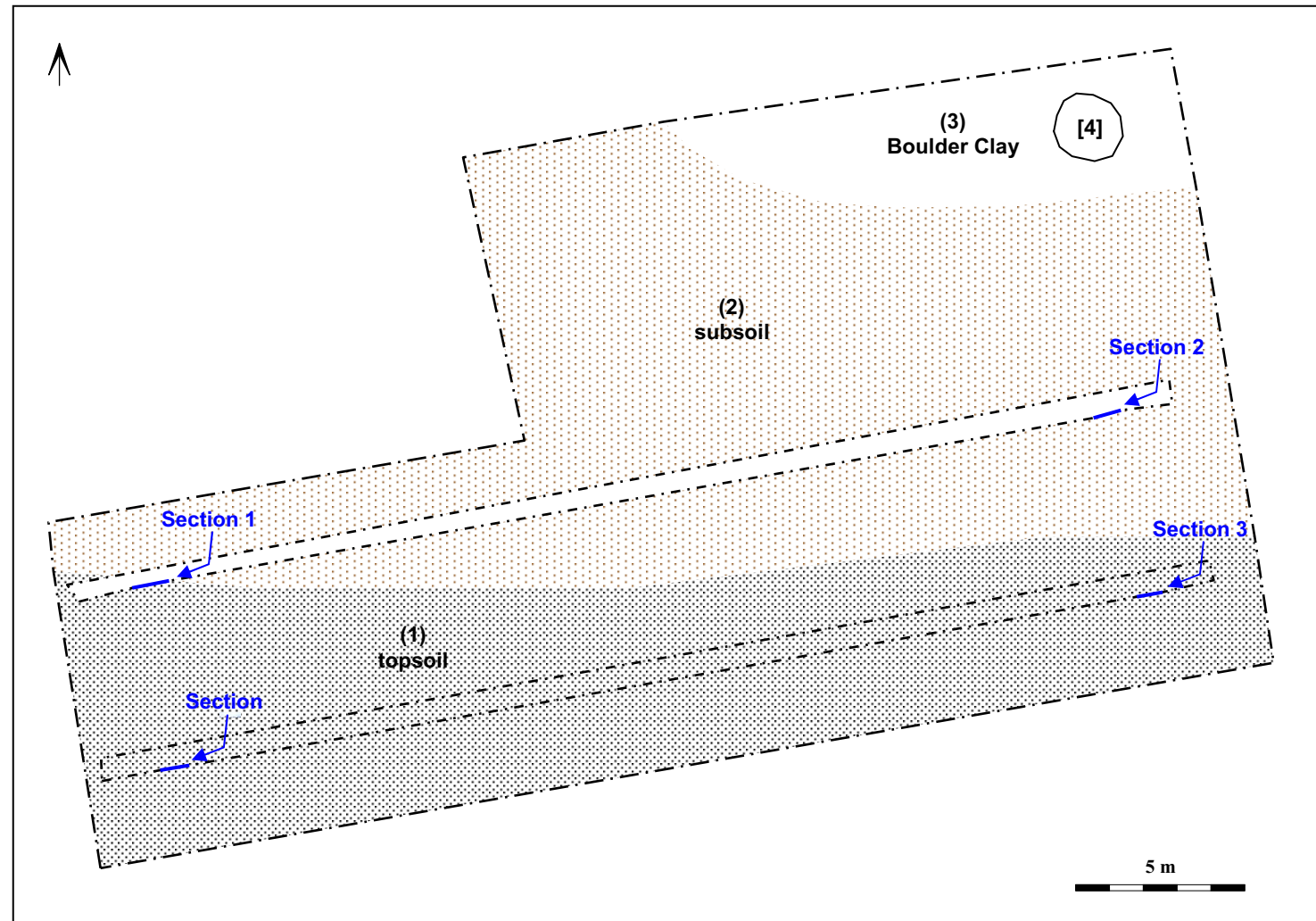
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**Figure 1: Site location**

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Southern land drain trench



Northern half of stripped area showing subsoil and Boulder Clay



Southern half of stripped area showing subsoil and topsoil



Tree root disturbance [4]

**Figure 2: Results**

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