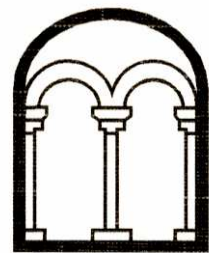


**GLEBE COTTAGE  
KNOTTING  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

**Albion**  
archaeology



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## **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 Architectural Design Services. The project was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Vanessa Clarke, the Bedford Borough Council's Archaeological Officer (BBC AO).*

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

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## **Key Terms**

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

BBC AO	Bedford Borough Council's Archaeological Officer
DA	Development Area
HER	Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Planning consent was granted for the construction of one- and two-storey extensions to Glebe Cottage, Knotting, Bedfordshire.*

*As the development lies in an area of archaeological sensitivity, a condition was attached to the planning permission requiring a programme of archaeological observation and 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 Bedford Borough Council Archaeological Officer.*

*A ditch of probable early medieval date and a modern pit were revealed in easement and foundation trenches on the north-west side of the development. The location of the ditch suggests it could well be associated with the medieval settlement of Knotting; its presence, at only c. 0.15m beneath the ground surface, suggests there is reasonable potential for the survival of further contemporary remains within the vicinity.*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Project Background*

Planning consent (12/02381/FUL) was granted for the construction of one- and two-storey extensions to Glebe Cottage, Knotting, Bedfordshire.

As the development was located in an area of archaeological interest, a condition was attached to the planning consent by the Local Planning Authority, following advice received from Bedford Borough Council's Archaeological Officer (BBC AO). This was in accordance with national planning guidelines in the form of the *National Planning Policy Framework – Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, which was published on 27 March 2012<sup>1</sup>. This replaced the previous *Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning for the Historic Environment*, although the latter's associated *Historic Environment Planning Practice Guide* remains current.

The condition required a programme of archaeological observation and investigation on any groundworks associated with the construction of the new extensions.

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

### 1.2 *Site Location and Description*

Glebe Cottage is located on Melchbourne Road, Knotting and is centred on NGR 500231 263490. Knotting is a small village situated on high ground some 10 miles north of Bedford on the north-west border of the county. Glebe Cottage lies immediately to the north-west of the medieval Church of St Margaret.

The solid geology comprises Mudstone, part of the Oxford Clay Formation. It is overlain by glacial till, correlated with the Oadby Member, which used to be commonly known as 'Chalky Boulder Clay' (Geology of Britain Viewer<sup>2</sup> and BGS sheet 186).

### 1.3 *Archaeological and Historical Background*

Glebe Cottage lies within a locally designated, Area of Archaeological Interest, within the postulated extent of the shrunken medieval village of Knotting (HER 747). An area of building debris, including worked stone and pottery dating from the 15th–18th century has been recorded to the south of Manor Farm (originally the manor house), suggesting that the village has shrunk. This is corroborated by a correspondent of Daniel Lysons writing in 1801 who stated

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<sup>1</sup> National Planning Policy Framework, published by the Department for Communities and Local Government (2012). Available at:

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>.

<sup>2</sup> contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC 2013 (<http://bgs.ac.uk/opengeoscience/home.html>)



that from an old map and survey of Knotting it appeared that the parish was much more populous in the 17th century than at that time<sup>3</sup>. Knotting Manor is of pre-Conquest origin and was assessed at 5 hides at Domesday (1086).

The Church of St Margaret lies immediately adjacent to Glebe Cottage on a substantial mound. It has 12th-century origins with later 13th-, 16th- and 17th-century work (HER 1086). It was originally a chapel, subordinate to Melchbourne Church and is first mentioned in a document of 1176. The site of the rectory lies in the area immediately to the south of the cottage. Records indicate that it was demolished in 1793 (HER 2781). The demolition material was apparently taken to be reused at Glebe Farm, Souldrop.

The only recorded archaeological investigation within Knotting village took place at the church (EBB679). It comprised archaeological monitoring and recording of internal and external excavations associated with the refurbishment and repair of the church. The excavation of a French drain enabled the full circuit of the church's foundations to be recorded. Several variations in construction were noted. Excavation within the nave revealed an early floor level, architectural elements of the chancel and transept arches, and the remnants of the demolished south wall of the nave.

#### **1.4 Project Objectives**

The archaeological and historical background of the area around Glebe Cottage suggested that the groundworks had particular potential to reveal remains associated with the medieval or later occupation of Knotting.

The research framework for Bedfordshire states that, in general, few medieval rural settlements have been investigated in the county. The emphasis also lies on study of settlements of any period which are situated on the more heavy claylands, like the village of Knotting, rather than the more intensively studied gravel sites of the river valleys (Oake 2007, 14).

For the post-medieval period the local research framework sketches a number of general research themes that concentrate on the investigation of the social, economic and intellectual meaning and context of any study undertaken (Oake 2007, 15).

The general objectives of the investigation were to determine:

- the nature of any archaeological remains present at the site;
- the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits present at the site.

The specific objectives of the investigation were to determine:

- if there was any evidence for medieval occupation pre-dating the construction of Glebe Cottage;
- if there was any evidence relating to the post-medieval use of the site.

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<sup>3</sup> 'Parishes: Knotting', A History of the County of Bedford: Volume 3 (1912), 139–142. URL: <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42400> Date accessed: 15 March 2013.



## 2. METHODOLOGY

Archaeological observation of the groundworks was undertaken on 26th June 2013. Groundworks monitored during this time comprised easement and foundation trenches excavated close to the original footprint of Glebe Cottage and its later extensions.

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> (2nd edn, 2001).
• Bedford Borough Council	<i>Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford</i> (2010)
• 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>
	Standard and Guidance documents for: <i>an Archaeological Watching Brief</i> (updated 2008); <i>Excavation</i> (updated 2008); and <i>the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (updated 2008)

A detailed methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2013).





## 3. RESULTS

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### 3.1 Introduction

The groundworks comprised the following:

- Removal of the shallow foundation courses and concrete floors associated with the demolished 18th-century building;
- Ground reduction by *c.* 0.25m within the footprint of the development;
- Machining of a 1.75m-wide, 0.52m-deep easement trench along the north-west side of the retained modern extensions;
- Machining of 0.60m-wide, 0.80m-deep foundation trenches along the south-west and north-west edges of the retained modern extensions;
- Machining of 0.60m-wide, 0.80m-deep foundation trenches for the new building to the south-east and within the centre of the development area.

The results of the archaeological work are summarised below.

### 3.2 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits

The overburden consisted of a 0.15–0.25m-thick topsoil (100), comprising mid brown grey silt that directly overlay the undisturbed geological deposits.

Two distinct, undisturbed geological deposits were observed: a 0.3–0.53m thick light orange-yellow clay (101) overlying a dark brown-grey clay (102), which was at least 0.60m thick.

### 3.3 Archaeological Remains

A ditch and a pit were identified within an easement trench and a foundation trench on the north-west side of the development (see Figure 2).

#### 3.3.1 Medieval ditch

Based on its profile, a feature likely to be the remnants of a ditch was identified in the baulk of a previously excavated easement trench on the north-west side of the development; it was not observed in plan. It measured 1.60m wide and 0.34m deep and contained a lower deposit of light brown-grey clay (104) and an upper deposit of grey-brown silty clay (105). Two undiagnostic pottery sherds (3g) datable to the early medieval period (fabric types B07<sup>4</sup> (shelly ware) and B09 (Lyveden-Stanion ware)) were recovered from the upper deposit.

#### 3.3.2 Modern pit

A modern pit [106] was also identified beneath the topsoil in both the easement trench and foundation trench on the north-west side of the development. It had an uneven, stepped profile measuring 2.4m wide and 0.60m deep and was filled with a dark grey-black silt (107) containing a number of 20th-century pottery sherds.

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<sup>4</sup> Pottery fabrics defined in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, currently maintained by Albion Archaeology.



## 4. CONCLUSIONS

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The only archaeological features revealed during the groundworks were a ditch and a modern pit. Two pottery sherds recovered from the upper fill of the ditch suggest it dates to the early medieval period, though their very small size leaves the possibility that they could be derived from elsewhere and therefore cannot be used to date the ditch with complete certainty.

The location of the ditch within the postulated original extent of Knotting's medieval settlement suggests it could well be settlement-related. Its presence, at only *c.* 0.15m beneath the ground surface, suggests there is reasonable potential for the survival of further contemporary remains within the vicinity.



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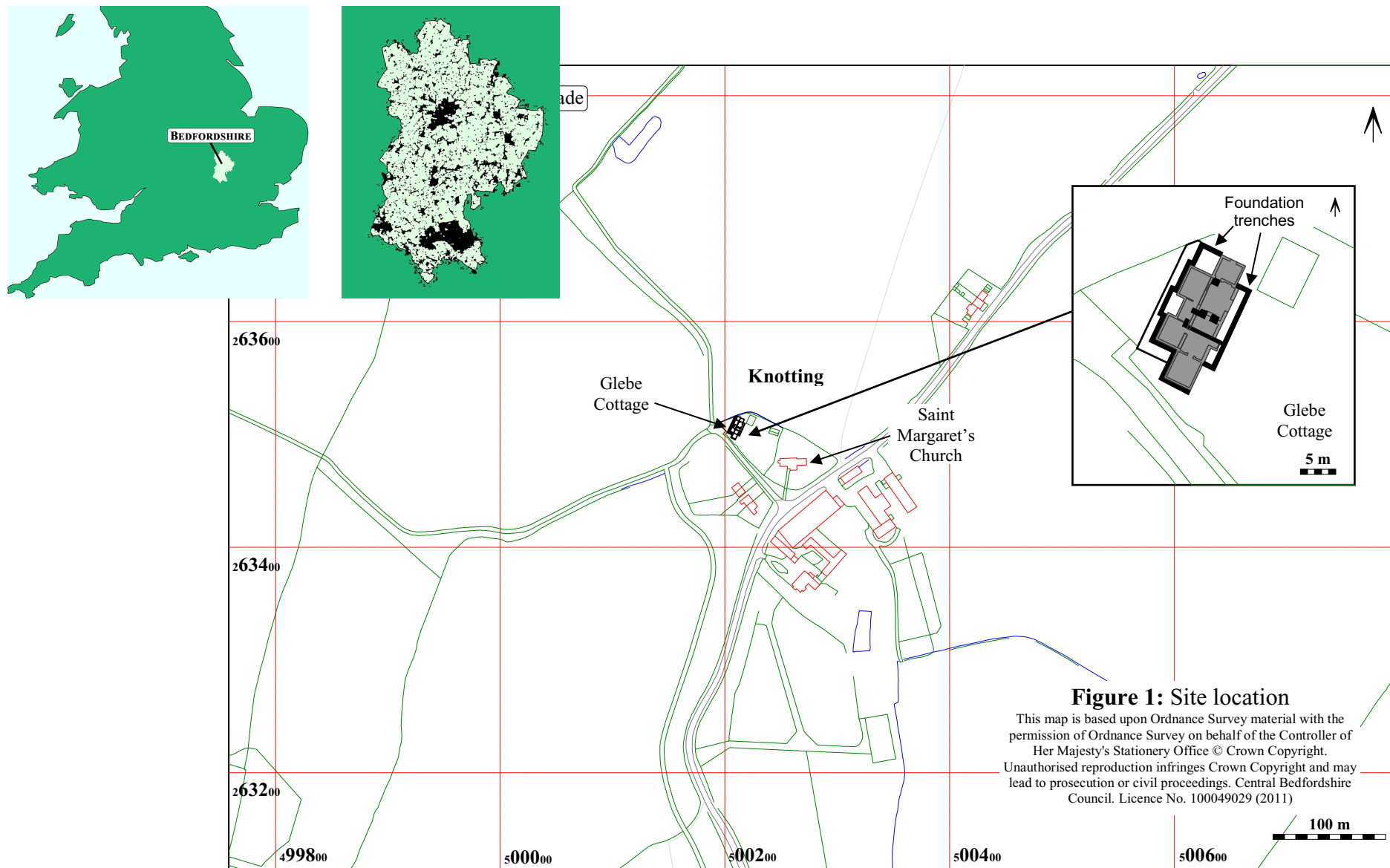
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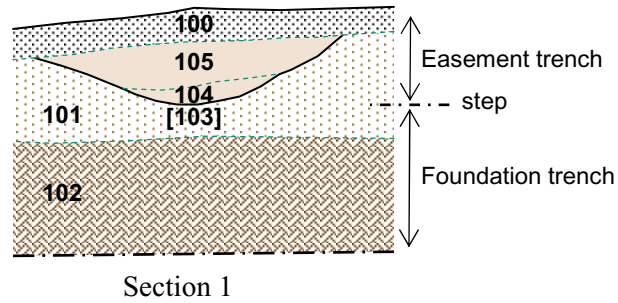
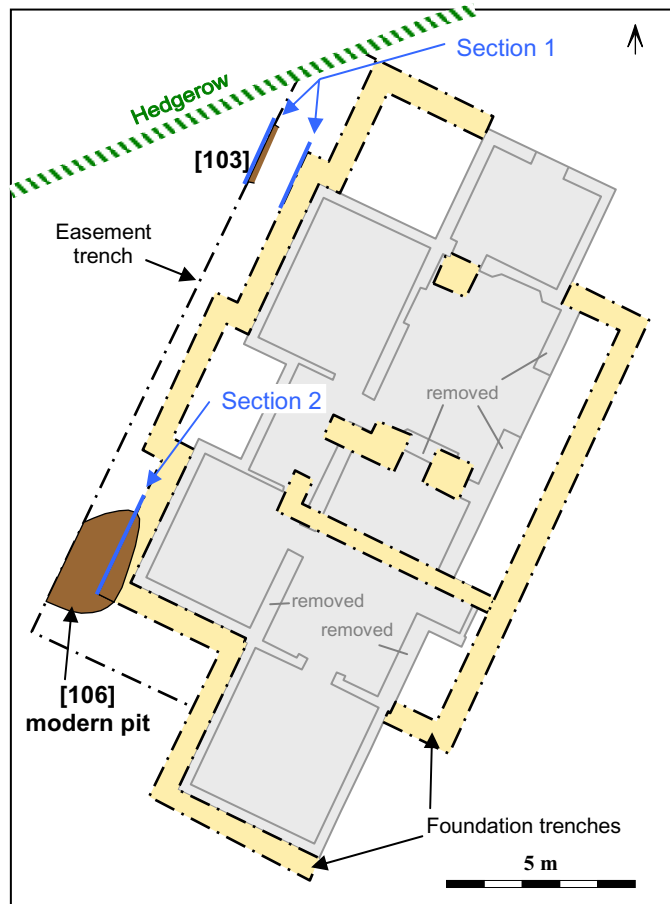
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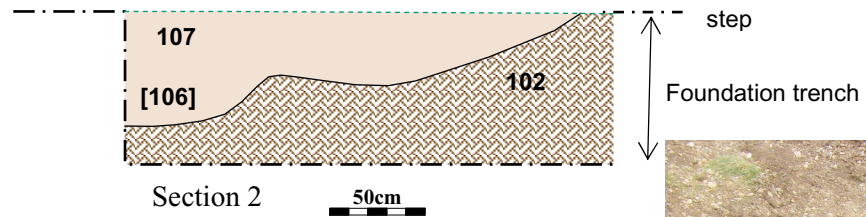
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Ditch [103] looking west. Scale 1m



Modern pit [106] looking north-west.

Figure 2: All features

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