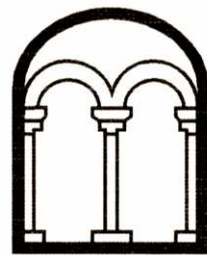


**62A HIGH STREET
HAROLD
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



**62A HIGH STREET
HARROLD
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Project: HSH2596
Museum accession No.: BEDFM 2015.35
OASIS no.: albionar1-206239

Document: 2015/158
Version 1.0

12th November 2015

Compiled by	Authorised by
Ben Barker	Drew Shotliff

Prepared for:
Mr and Mrs J Kirkup



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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.

The project was commissioned by Mr and Mrs J Kirkup and was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Geoff Saunders (Bedford Borough Council Archaeological Officer).

The fieldwork was undertaken by Ben Barker and Mark Phillips (Project Officers). This report was prepared by Ben Barker. The illustrations are by Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

Albion Archaeology
 St Mary's Church
 St Mary's Street
 Bedford, MK42 0AS
 ☎: 0300 300 8141
 Fax: 0300 300 8209
 E-mail: office@albion-arch.com
 Website: www.albion-arch.com

Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	12/11/2015	N/A

Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

BBC	Bedford Borough Council
CBM	Ceramic building material
CifA	Chartered Institute <i>for</i> Archaeologists
HER	Historic Environment Record
HET	Historic Environment Team of BBC
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-technical Summary

Planning consent (14/00435/FUL) for a single-storey rear extension at 62A High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire was granted by Bedford Borough Council (BBC).

The development area lies within the historic core of the village, in a locally designated Area of Archaeological Interest, based on the postulated extent of medieval Harrold (HER16942). Accordingly, a condition (no. 3) was attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of an archaeological mitigation strategy. Albion Archaeology prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (setting out a strategy for a programme of archaeological works), which was approved by the Historic Environment Team (HET).

Demolition work commenced on 03/08/2015; the groundworks requiring archaeological observation were completed on 14/08/2015. The foundations for the new building consisted of traditional strip foundation trenches, 0.6m wide by c. 1m deep. Interior ground reduction did not extend below the level of made-ground associated with the existing conservatory.

Two archaeological features that pre-dated the existing late 18th-century building were revealed within the foundation trenches — a substantial, undated, E-W aligned ditch, located beneath the foundations of the existing building, and a large pit which produced two sherds of early medieval pottery. The ditch may be the remains of an extensive early medieval boundary that is likely to extend beyond the limits of the development area. The pit may be associated with localised limestone quarrying.

The small size of the investigation area and the small number of securely dated features preclude any further analysis beyond that presented in this report, which will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-206239). The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM 2015.35).



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Background**

A planning application (14/00435/FUL) for a single-storey rear extension at 62A High Street, Harrold, Bedfordshire was approved by Bedford Borough Council (BBC).

Due to the high archaeological potential of the site, a condition (no. 3) was attached to the planning consent requiring the implementation of an archaeological mitigation strategy. This was done on the advice of the Historic Environment Team (HET), in accordance with the guidelines provided in the *National Planning Policy Framework*.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) in accordance with the requirements of the planning condition, and to carry out the subsequent programme of archaeological works. This report details the results of that programme of works.

1.2 **Site and Development Description**

62A High Street comprises a detached, two-storey property, set back from the street frontage on the north side of the High Street and within the Harrold Conservation Area (Figure 1). The site is situated on level ground at a height of c. 43m OD at grid reference SP 9520 5681.

The river Great Ouse lies c. 210m to the south. The underlying geology consists of argyllic brown earths over fine loams with a substrate of alluvial valley gravels, which in turn overlie solid geology of oolitic limestone.

The proposed development comprises the removal of an existing conservatory and the construction of a single-storey rear extension (garden lounge and dining area) with a footprint of c. 9.7m by 5.6m (Figure 2).

1.3 **Archaeological Background**

The historical and archaeological background to Harrold has been summarised in the Extensive Urban Survey, undertaken by English Heritage and Bedfordshire County Council (Albion Archaeology 2003).

The proposed extension lies in a locally designated Area of Archaeological Interest, based on the postulated extent of medieval Harrold (HER16942). Medieval remains were also found to the north of the site on the Meadway and Bridgman Joinery investigations; extensive earlier remains of prehistoric, late Iron Age / Romano-British and Saxon settlement were also present (Ingham and Shotliff 2012). A small late Iron Age cremation cemetery was found on land off Barley Kiln Lane, c. 65m to the north-east of the proposed extension (Luke and Barker 2012).



Similarly, on the south side of the High Street work at Long Ridge revealed a series of archaeological remains, ranging in date from the Iron Age to the post-medieval period (Brown 2009; Burke and Bassir 2009).

Given the potential for the proposed development to disturb or destroy archaeological remains associated with earlier occupation of the village, condition no. 3 was attached to the planning permission.

1.4 Project Objectives

The purpose of the archaeological investigation was to make a full record of any archaeological remains impacted by the development, and to place them within their cultural and environmental setting. The specific aims of the archaeological fieldwork were to:

- monitor all groundworks that had the potential to reveal archaeological remains; and
- investigate the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of archaeological deposits encountered within them.

It was assumed that research aims most probably relating to medieval settlement were likely to be relevant; these are derived from regional research frameworks (e.g. Brown and Glazebrook 2007; Oake et al. 2007; Medlycott 2011).



2. METHOD STATEMENTS

The methodological approach to the project is summarised below. A full methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion 2015).

2.1 Methodological Standards

The project adhered throughout to the standards set out in the following documents:

• 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> (ver. 2.8, 2010)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• Historic England (formerly English Heritage)	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2015)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> , (2nd edn, 2011)
• ClfA	<i>Charter and by-law; Code of Conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)

2.2 Observation, Investigation and Recording

All groundworks that had the potential to expose archaeological remains, e.g. foundations, service trenches and ground reduction below the level of modern make-up, were monitored by a professional archaeologist.

2.3 Post-fieldwork Analysis

During and immediately after fieldwork all records were checked and cross-referenced to ensure that they were internally consistent.

Data gathered during the fieldwork was consolidated into an archive. This archive has been assessed and analysed to an appropriate level to undertake this report. This analysis work was carried out using Albion's networked Access-based database system and GIS.

2.4 Reporting

This report is intended to be sufficiently detailed to allow the results of all aspects of the fieldwork to be interpreted without recourse to the site archive. Where appropriate, it aims to place the results of the investigation in their local, regional and national context.



The archaeological remains uncovered at the site are not deemed to be sufficiently significant or extensive to require a higher level of analysis than that presented in this report.

2.5 Archiving

The archive of finds and records generated during the project will be kept secure at all stages of the operation. All records and materials produced will be archived to the standards outlined in English Heritage's *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* and those set out by Bedford Borough Council.

Permission will be sought from the landowner for transfer of title of all finds to Bedford Museum on completion of post-excavation analysis and reporting.

On completion of the project the archive will be deposited at Bedford Museum (accession number BEDFM 2015.35).

Albion Archaeology employs a full time Archives Officer to ensure that all archives are completed to the correct standards and deposited according to the relevant guidelines.

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database in accordance with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service (ref. albionar1-206239).

2.6 Liaison with the Historic Environment Team (HET)

Monitoring of the archaeological work was carried out on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by the HET. The HET were given regular updates regarding the progress of the fieldwork.



3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

Demolition work commenced on 03/08/2015; the groundworks requiring archaeological observation were completed on 14/08/2015. Their location is shown on Figure 2. The majority of the area had been reduced during the construction of the terrace to the rear of the property which may have had an impact on the survival of shallower features within the development area.

The foundations for the new building consisted of traditional strip foundation trenches, 0.6m wide by *c.* 1m deep. Interior ground reduction did not extend below the level of made-ground associated with the existing conservatory.

A small number of undated archaeological features were identified along with the foundations of the now demolished conservatory, earlier drainage and the extant well. Detailed descriptions of the deposits and features encountered are provided in Section 5.

3.2 Overburden and Geological Deposits

Prior to the excavation of the foundations, the pre-existing conservatory had been demolished and the surrounding patio slabs removed. The development area was then striped to a level approximately 0.15m below the floor level of the conservatory. A well, located adjacent to the planned northern wall of the extension, was to be backfilled to maintain the structural integrity of the foundation.

The ground reduction exposed a layer of made-ground (1) that appeared to be a highly disturbed and truncated layer of topsoil-like material. It was cut by the foundations of the previous conservatory and an earlier ceramic foul drainage run. The deposit was largely devoid of finds but did include the occasional fragment of brick and tile, likely to be contemporary with the adjacent house. Layer (1) was consistent with made-ground comprising building rubble and possibly imported topsoil.

Undisturbed geological deposits (2) were encountered at a depth of 0.3–0.5m below ground level. The thickness of the overburden increased to the east.

3.3 Archaeological Features

The earliest feature identified within the development area was a large ditch [3]. It was located below, and parallel to, the northern foundation of the existing house. It was in excess of 1m deep and extended 1.2m to the north of the property. The foundation for the house itself was less than 0.5m deep. There was no visible cut for this and it is likely that the foundation was confined within a trench that was the same width as the wall. The fill (4) of the ditch was devoid of finds or building material and it is likely that it was backfilled prior to the construction of the house and any occupational or constructional activity within the site.



Towards the eastern edge of the site, ditch [3] was truncated by a large pit [9]. This measured *c.* 3.25m N-S and at least 1m wide; it was more than 0.7m deep. The pit contained at least two distinct fills — mid-grey sandy silt, with occasional small stones towards the base, and a very dark grey sandy silt with occasional small to medium stones and charcoal flecks towards the top. Two 12th–13th-century, wheel-thrown, shell-tempered¹ pottery rim sherds (68g) date the backfilling of the pit to the early medieval period. The sherds derive from jars with simple everted rims, ranging in diameter from 150–180mm, and are of wares commonly occurring throughout the village.

A second ditch [5] was located immediately to the north of ditch [3] in the westernmost foundation. It cut the larger ditch to the south and appeared to be backfilled with material similar to the made-ground. No finds were recovered, but it is likely that the backfilling of the ditch post-dated the construction of the building.

A posthole [7] containing similar material was identified in the westernmost section, 3.5m to the north of the house. No dating evidence was present, but its backfilling must be assumed to post-date the construction of the building.

An extant brick-lined well (Figure 3) was backfilled as part of the construction of the new extension. Excavation of the adjacent foundation trenches revealed the well to be bell-mouthed in profile, with a significantly narrower opening that flared out to a 1.42m-diameter shaft at a depth of 0.5m below ground level. A six-inch diameter ceramic pipe was observed, feeding into the shaft, in the foundation trench to the south-east. The integration of the pipe into the design of the well and its construction from un-frogged soft red bricks would suggest a construction date contemporary with that of the adjacent building (late 18th century).

A modern ceramic sewer pipe was identified at a distance of 1.5m to the north of, and parallel to, the north wall of the house.

3.4 Interpretation and Conclusions

The archaeological observation of the groundworks at 62A High Street Harrold located two archaeological features that are likely to predate the existing property — a substantial ditch [3] and a large pit [9].

Stratigraphically, ditch [3] is the earlier of the two features. The absence of artefacts and the sterile nature of its fills suggest that it was located some distance from a focus of domestic activity. This may indicate that it was dug and backfilled prior to the development of Harrold's medieval urban core. It is not quite on the same alignment as the late Iron Age / early Romano-British enclosure system identified to the north (Luke and Preece, fig. 2) and it appears more likely that it was established in the early medieval period to define the rear of a property.

¹ Fabric types B01A and B05: defined in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series



The 1797 pre-Enclosure map (Figure 3) hints that such a boundary possibly extended beyond the limits of the current property and may have influenced the limits of many of the buildings that fronted on to the High Street. The ditch may have helped to facilitate drainage of the area adjacent to the stream to the north prior to the canalisation of the watercourse.

Dating of the large pit [9] is dependent on the recovery of just two sherds of early medieval pottery. The function of the pit is also elusive. Its otherwise sterile fill did contain fragments of limestone, which may indicate that it was dug to quarry building stone. This would account for its relatively large size and the fact that it appeared to “target” ditch [3], the lower parts of which are likely to have exposed the limestone bedrock.

The remaining features are of minor significance. They are of relatively recent origin, post-dating the construction of the present-day house. The alignment of ditch [5] is at odds with the layout of the building. It is possible that it functioned as a drain, similar to the six-inch pipe that fed into the well. The deliberate draining of surface water into a well perhaps suggest that its primary function was as a soakaway or to provide for the livestock once housed in the former stable block that was converted into Barham Cottage (P. Kirkup 2015 pers. comm.).

3.5 Assessment of Significance

The results of the investigation indicate that the site contains remains dating from the early medieval period — remains which have been substantially impacted by 18th–20th-century development. The medieval remains make a minor contribution to research priorities for the medieval period as highlighted in regional and county strategy documents (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

However, the small size of the investigation area and the small number of securely dated features preclude any further analysis. This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service’s OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-206239). The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM 2015.35).



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5. CONTEXT DATA

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1	Make up layer	Firm dark grey brown sandy silt occasional medium-large CBM, occasional small-medium stones. A layer of disturbed topsoil that was generally between 0.3m to 0.5m deep - becoming thicker to the east of the development area.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2	Natural	Firm light yellow brown sandy clay frequent small chalk, frequent small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3	Ditch	Linear E-W sides: convex dimensions: min breadth 1.2m, min depth 1.m. Only the northern side of the ditch was visible and base was not fully excavated	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4	Fill	Friable mid brown grey sandy clay occasional large stones, occasional small-medium stones. Large stones concentrated towards the base of the ditch, plus very rare flecks of charcoal.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5	Ditch	Linear ENE-WSW sides: concave base: flat dimensions: max breadth 1.3m, max depth 0.6m. Slightly assymetric profile with steeper northern side. Wider in eastern section than western trench section. Cuts ditch [3].	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6	Fill	Firm dark grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Indistinguishable from make-up layer (1).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7	Posthole	Circular sides: irregular base: flat dimensions: max depth 0.6m, max diameter 0.45m. Stepped profile with deepest part of posthole to the north.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8	Fill	Firm dark grey brown sandy silt occasional small-medium stones. Indistinguishable from make-up layer (1).	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9	Pit	Sub-circular sides: assymetrical dimensions: min breadth 1.m, min depth 0.7m, max length 3.25m. Not bottomed.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10	Upper fill	Friable dark grey sandy silt moderate flecks charcoal, occasional small-medium stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
11	Main fill	Loose mid grey sandy silt occasional small stones	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

6. FIGURES

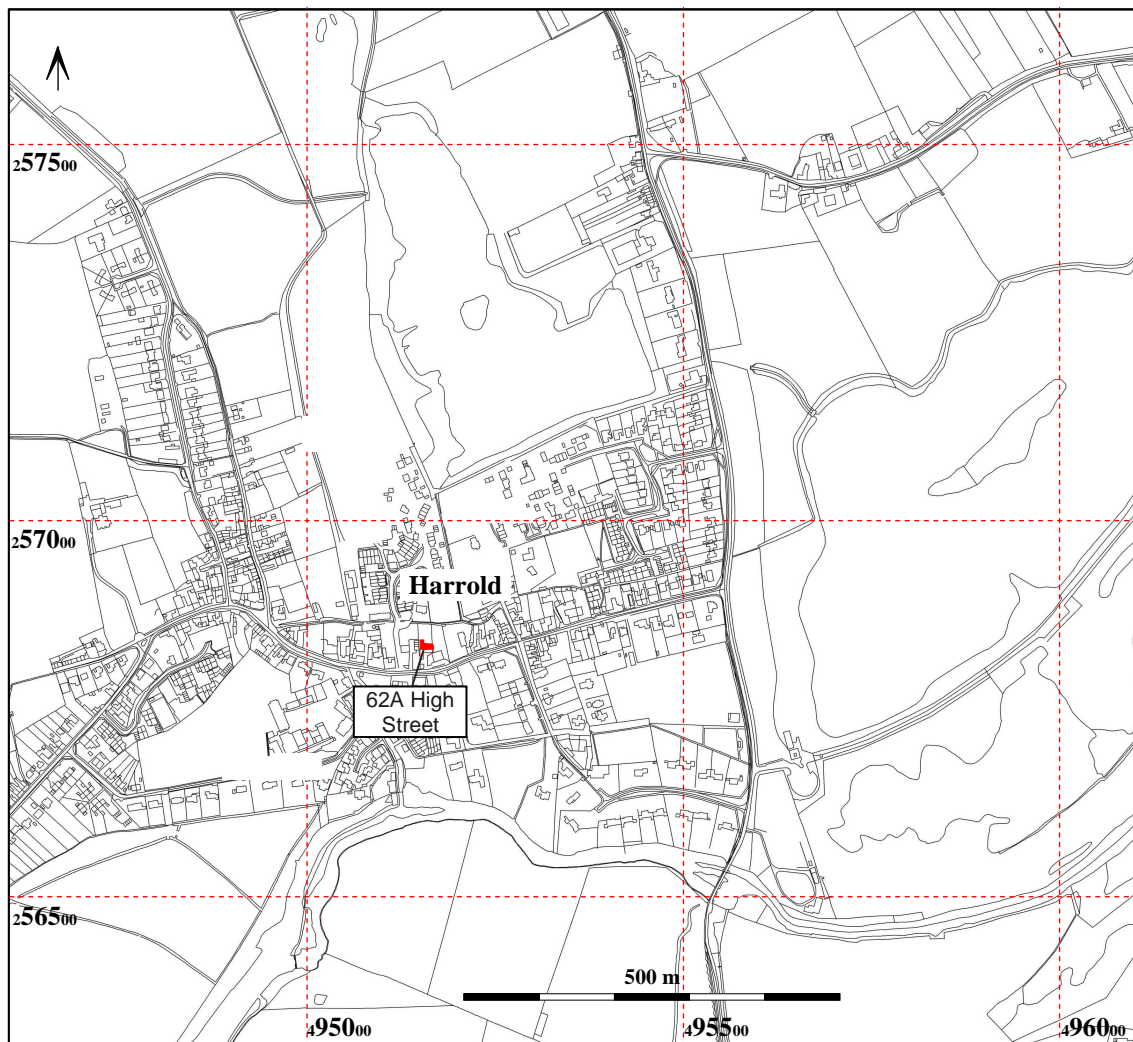
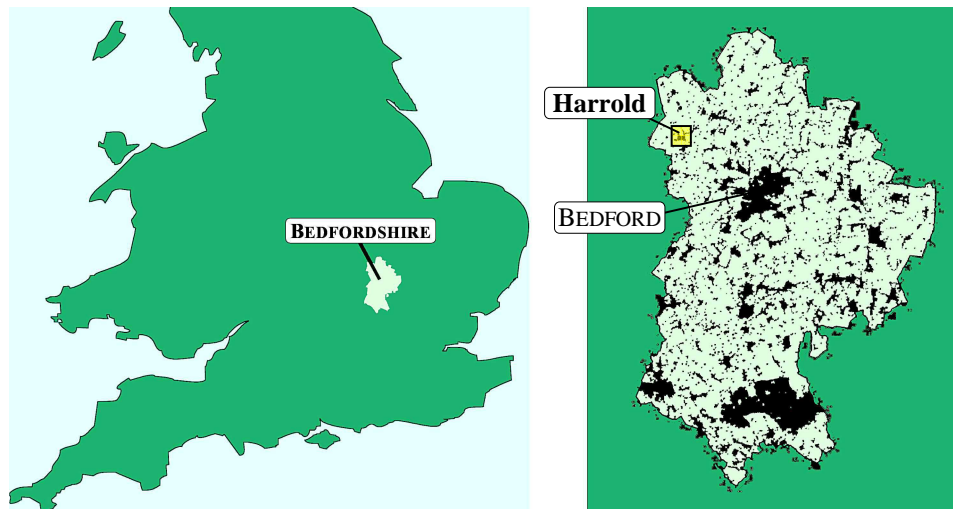
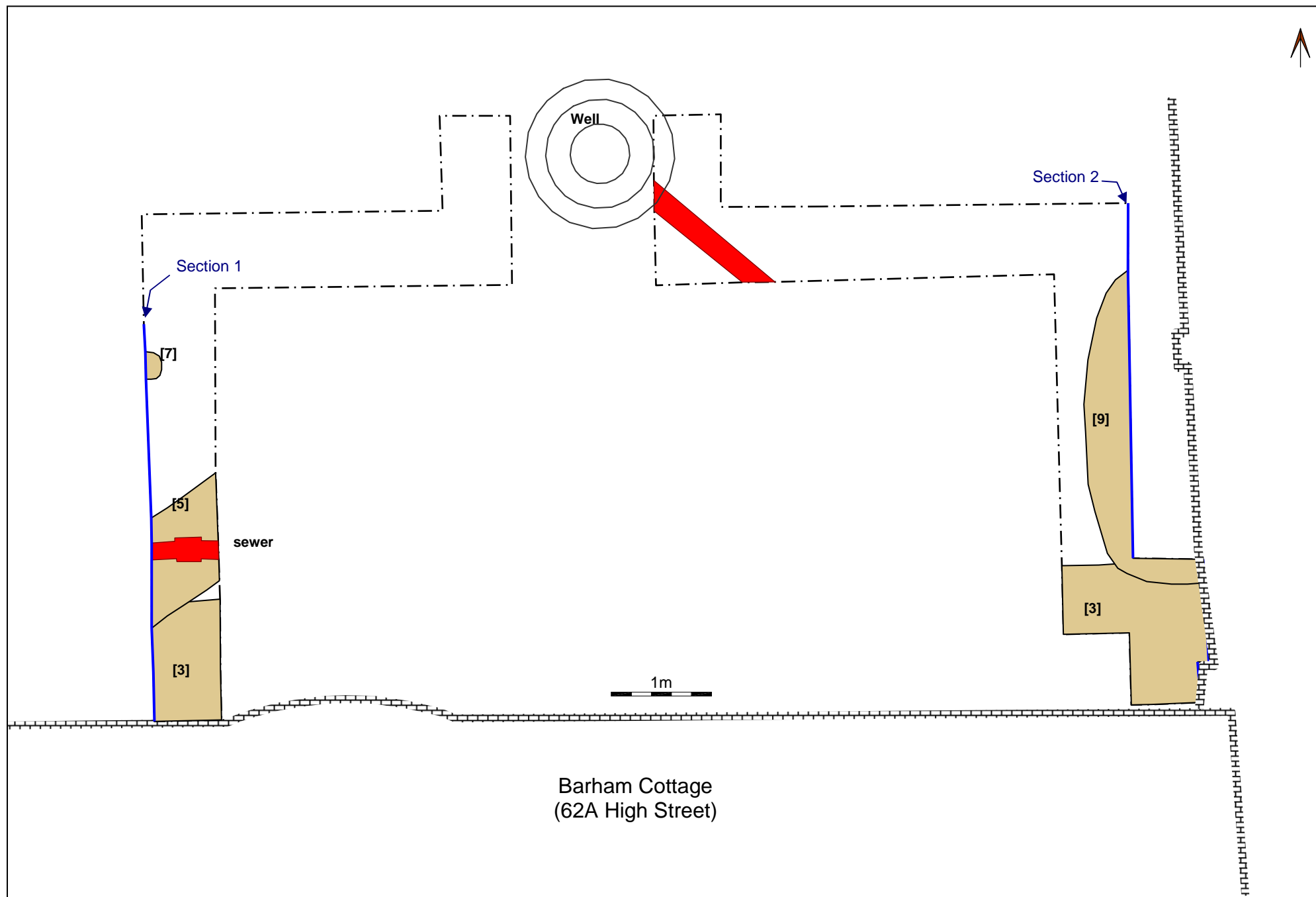


Figure 1: Site location plan

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, by Albion Archaeology, Central Bedfordshire Council. OS Licence No. 100017358(LA). © Crown Copyright.



- Excavated feature
- Modern pipe
- Topsoil
- Concrete
- Standing wall
- * * Charcoal

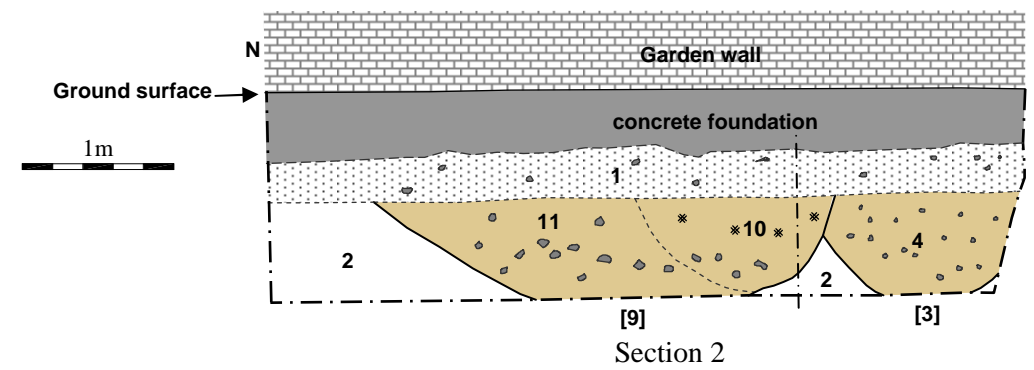
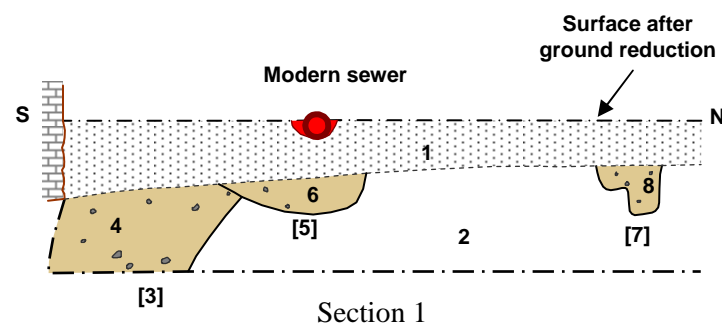


Figure 2: All features plan and sections
(based on GNP Chartered Architects drawing 5276.14.10 B)



Figure 3: 1797 pre-Enclosure map of Harrold (BLARS ref. GA2587)

Central
Bedfordshire

Albion
archaeology



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

Telephone 01234 294000
Email office@albion-arch.com
www.albion-arch.com

