

**THE GARDEN HOUSE (OUTBUILDING)
BATTLEDEN
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



**THE GARDEN HOUSE (OUTBUILDING)
BATTLEDEN
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Project: GH2107
Document: 2015/122
Version 2.0

Museum accession no.: LUTNM: 2015/2
Oasis reference: albionar1-176723

3rd September 2015

Compiled by	Checked by	Approved by
J. Oetgen	D. Shotliff	D. Shotliff

Produced for:
Mr & Mrs J Foster



Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Project Background	5
1.2 Site Location and Development Description	5
1.3 Archaeological Background	6
1.4 Project Objectives	7
2. METHODOLOGY	9
3. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS	10
3.1 Description of Features Observed	10
3.1 Discussion of Significance	10
4. BIBLIOGRAPHY	11

List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location plan

Figure 2: Observed groundworks and features revealed

Figure 3: General view of the site after clearance, looking south-east

Figure 4: General view of the site after clearance, looking east

Figure 5: Start of excavation of footings, east side of building

Figure 6: Overburden observed on the east side of the building

Figure 8: Ditch [34], looking north

Figure 9: Remains of the foundations of the demolished stable block, looking west

Figure 10: Natural deposits (36) beneath thin layer of overburden in the north-west corner of the building, looking north

Figure 11: General view of the site after excavation of footings, looking east

Figure 12: General view of the site after excavation of footings, looking south-east

The figures are bound at the back of the report.



Preface

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.

*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

<i>Version</i>	<i>Issue date</i>	<i>Reason for re-issue</i>
1.0	14/08/2015	n/a
2.0	03/09/2015	Photographs inserted as requested by CBCA

Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CBCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
CIfA	Chartered Institute <i>for</i> Archaeologists
HER	Central Bedfordshire Council's Historic Environment Record
LPA	Local Planning Authority
OD	Ordnance Datum
OS	Ordnance Survey
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-technical Summary

Planning permission (CB/13/04094/FULL) was granted by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC) for demolition of an existing building and construction of a new outbuilding in the grounds of the Garden House, Battlesden.

As the development had the potential to contain heritage assets with archaeological interest, a condition was attached to the planning permission. This required that a written scheme of archaeological investigation should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) before any development could take place and that the development should only be implemented in full accordance with the approved archaeological scheme.

Archaeological observation and investigation during the groundworks for the outbuilding took place on 15th July 2015. Groundworks for the main block of the outbuilding were observed, but it was found that the footings of the south-east part of the building were to be constructed on 'made ground' resulting from relatively recent levelling of the site. This demonstrated that groundworks for the south-east part would have no archaeological impact. Therefore, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist agreed that no further archaeological observation was required.

In the north-east corner of the foundation trench a single, potentially medieval, ditch was found on an approximate east-west alignment. The base of this feature lay beneath the formation level for the building. The only dating evidence recovered from it was a small fragment of medieval pottery. Trenches at the south-west side of the building revealed the foundations of the building that had been demolished prior to development. The only other features were in an area of disturbance associated with the roots of recently felled trees.

The possible medieval ditch is most likely to have been a field boundary or possibly a ditch flanking a road or track, approximately on the line of the existing driveway. Along with the undated ditch recorded in 2014 during works to the Garden House itself, this ditch is the only archaeological evidence so far recorded that relates to the landscape predating the establishment of the 19th-century Garden House and its walled garden.

The project archive will be deposited with Luton Museum (accession no. LUTNM: 2015/2). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (ref. albionar1-176723).



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permissions for development at the Garden House, Battlesden were granted by Central Bedfordshire Council (CBC).

- CB/13/04094/FULL was for the demolition of existing outbuildings and the construction of a new detached outbuilding comprising garage, studio, gymnasium and storage.
- CB/13/04923/FULL was for work on the house comprising single-storey side extensions, erection of front porch, dormers to side elevation, erection of a new wall, steps and entrance gates and internal alterations.

As the development had the potential to contain heritage assets with archaeological interest, the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA) recommended that conditions be attached to the planning permissions (CB/13/04094/FULL condition 3 and CB/13/04923/FULL condition 2). The conditions required that a written scheme of archaeological investigation should be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority (LPA) before any development could take place and that the development should only be implemented in full accordance with the approved archaeological scheme. These recommendations were in accordance with paragraph 141 of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and Policy 45 of the Development Strategy for Central Bedfordshire.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to undertake the work in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (Albion Archaeology 2014), which was approved by the CBCA in 2014. Archaeological work for the development affecting the house itself (CB/13/04923/FULL) was completed in July 2014 and a report compiled (Albion Archaeology 2015).

The subsequent development of the detached outbuilding (CB/13/04094/FULL) did not begin until July 2015 and was subject to separate stage of archaeological work, the results of which are set out in the present report.

1.2 *Site Location and Development Description*

The Garden House is part of Battlesden Park to the west of Battlesden village, which lies off the A4012 Hockliffe Road in the southern part of Bedfordshire, between Milton Keynes and Luton. The Garden House lies to the south of the now demolished 19th-century Battlesden manor house and immediately to the south-west of the parish Church of St Peter and All Saints (Figure 1).

The Garden House lies on the southern edge of a spur of land which slopes gently down towards the south and east and forms part of the Greensand Ridge. The southern main façade of the house overlooks a walled kitchen garden. The land slopes down to the A5 highway in the south, where it largely consists of arable



fields and pasture with small areas of woodland and a pond. The house itself lies at c. 130m OD and is centred on grid reference SP 95873 29078.

The underlying geology consists of Oadby Member diamicton over Gault Formation mudstone (British Geological Survey 2015).

The archaeological works discussed in this report focused on an area c. 30m to the south-east of the Garden House itself, where development involved the demolition of an existing stable and construction of a new outbuilding.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The archaeological and historical background to the site was previously reviewed in heritage assessments submitted in support of the planning applications for the works (Albion 2013a and 2013b). These assessments examined data in the CBC Historic Environment Record (HER) within a 500m-radius study area as well as historical maps, records and secondary sources. The results of archaeological monitoring of the development works to the Garden House have been discussed in a separate report (Albion Archaeology 2015).

1.3.1 Prehistoric and Roman

No prehistoric or Roman heritage assets were identified in the study area examined in the heritage assessment.

1.3.2 Saxon and medieval

The settlement of Battlesden originated in the Saxon period, being first recorded in Domesday Book of 1086. The name Battlesden is believed to be derived from the Old English personal name *Badel* and its meaning would therefore be Badel's Hill (Mawer and Stenton 1926, 115–16).

Two foci of medieval settlement are suggested within the parish, both on elevated spurs forming part of the Greensand Ridge. One (HER16875) corresponds to the area around Centre Farm, approximately 900m south-west of the development area. The second (HER16874) is centred on higher ground around the parish church and its possible extent includes the development area. No physical evidence for medieval settlement features has yet been recorded in this area. An archaeological evaluation undertaken in the grounds of Battlesden House in 2009 revealed no medieval features (Albion Archaeology 2009).

The parish church (HER 1017) and churchyard (HER 8854) lie immediately north-east of the development area. A church probably stood on the site as early as the 12th century and a 12th-century font still stands within the nave. The earliest parts of the current building date to the 13th century with additions and alterations undertaken in the following four centuries.

The medieval settlement focus appears to have included a manorial estate centre at Domesday. Lands surrounding the manorial estate were first emparked in 1334 as a deer park (HER 1370), parts of which now survive as Battlesden Park (see below).



1.3.3 Post-medieval

The majority of the known heritage assets near to the development area relate to Battlesden House and its development. The earliest surviving part of the manor house for which details survive (HER 9952) probably dated from the 16th century. The house was extended in the late 17th or early 18th century. In 1864 it was demolished and replaced by a new French Gothic *châteaux* style house (HER 9953). Battlesden House was demolished shortly after it came into the possession of the Duke of Bedford in 1885.

Parts of the estate are represented by a former stable block (HER 10015) which was converted into a house, a walled kitchen garden (HER 10012) and the Garden House (HER 4340). Battlesden Park (HER 9427) is a registered park and garden (English Heritage list entry 1000573). It was first enclosed in 1334 but was not formally laid out until the early 19th century.

The Garden House (Grade II listed) which was built *c.*1860 occupies the site of an earlier gardener's house that is shown on historical maps and engravings dating from the early 19th century.

Several brick structures were revealed during the groundworks undertaken in 2014 (Albion Archaeology 2015). These were interpreted as remains of the 19th-century Garden House. They included the brick footings of greenhouses marked on the OS first edition 25-inch map of 1881 and a well lying near to the corner of the original 19th-century footprint of the house. As physical evidence of structures directly associated with the Grade II listed Garden House and Battlesden Park, the recording of these remains is of particular interest; research into the origins and history of the smaller parks and gardens of Bedfordshire, along with identifying their surviving features, has been identified as an important area for further research (Oake 2007, 15–16).

1.3.4 Undated feature of archaeological interest

An undated ditch revealed during the monitoring a little further to the south-east of the Garden House might potentially predate the house and garden (Albion Archaeology 2015, 11).

1.4 Project Objectives

The general objectives of the investigation were to determine:

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

The local and regional research contexts were provided by Glazebrook (1997), Brown and Glazebrook (2000), Oake *et al* (2007) and Medlycott (2011).



The development area lies within a possible focus of medieval settlement and therefore the focus of research objectives for the site lie in the Saxon and medieval period. The proximity of the parish churchyard also raised the possibility that burials might be present within the grounds of the Garden House, given the tendency of medieval churchyards to shrink over time.

The research framework for Bedfordshire states that, in general, few medieval rural settlements, particularly with Saxon origins, 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 need for investigation into the origins, development and dynamics of medieval rural settlement are also emphasised by Medlycott (2011) in the East of England Research Framework.

Specific objectives of the project were to investigate possible evidence for:

- Saxon/medieval/post-medieval activity and to establish the date range and character of the activity.

Other objectives were to have been devised during the project, in the event that the investigation produced evidence relevant to other themes identified in the published research frameworks.



2. METHODOLOGY

A detailed methodology is provided in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2014). Archaeological observation and investigation during the groundworks took place on 15th July 2015, after demolition of the existing stables and the insertion of piles for the new building. Groundworks observed comprised the excavation of trenches for the foundations of the proposed outbuilding. These were *c.* 0.65m wide and 0.65m deep, with occasional wider excavations to accommodate pile caps.

The CBCA agreed to the following variation in the WSI. Observation of the north-western side of the proposed building demonstrated that the ground to the south and east had been recently built up by more than 0.8m, so there was unlikely to be any archaeological impact. Therefore, the CBCA accepted that the foundations to the south-east part of the proposed building need not be subject to archaeological observation.

Deposits encountered were investigated and recorded in accordance with Albion's *Procedures Manual*. Spoil heaps were checked for artefact recovery.

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

Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd edn, 2001).
ALGAO	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England. EAA Occasional Paper No. 14</i> (2003)
CIfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> (2014)
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)
Luton Culture	<i>Procedure For Preparing Archaeological Archives For Deposition With Luton Culture</i> (2010 - with minor updates July 2013)

The project archive will be deposited with Luton Museum (accession no. LUTNM: 2015/2). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (ref. albionar1-176723).



3. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 *Description of Features Observed*

The features and deposits observed are shown in plan on Figure 2, with photographs presented in Figures 3–12. Numbers in square brackets refer to context numbers for features [**] and round brackets (**) refer to deposits.

The overburden comprised modern make-up layers, sealing topsoil and subsoil. The make-up layers consisted of a friable grey-brown sandy silt with frequent brick rubble and other debris up to 0.15m thick (30) and a dark grey-black clay silt up to 0.1m thick. The topsoil (32) was a firm grey-brown silty clay with occasional brick and tile fragments; it was heavily disturbed in places by tree rooting and modern intrusions. The firm, orange-brown subsoil (33) was present across the extent of the observed groundworks and was up to 0.2m thick. Overall, the total thickness of the overburden increased from 0.3m in the north-west corner of the proposed building to more than 0.65m at the south-east. This demonstrated that the natural scarp of the hillside, falling to the south-east, had been levelled up in relatively recent times by dumping of make-up layers.

Undisturbed geological deposits, observed in the north-west part of the excavations (Figures 8–10), comprised a firm, light yellow-brown clay, with patches of blue-ish colour and moderate amounts of chalk (36).

The only archaeological feature observed was a poorly-defined ditch [34], the top of which was exposed at the base of the foundation trenches on the north side of the proposed building. The ditch was filled with dark brown-grey silty clay (Figure 9). It was not fully excavated, because it lay beneath the formation level and it would not have been safe to do so within the narrow foundation trench. However, a small test excavation (Figures 2 and 8) determined that it was 0.5m deep and a single small, fragment of greyware pottery was obtained from the top of the fill. The form of the pottery could not be determined, but Jackie Wells (Finds Officer) has identified the fabric as early medieval.

The location of the foundations of the demolished former stable block was also recorded. The only other features were in an area of disturbance associated with the roots of recently felled trees.

3.1 *Discussion of Significance*

The possible medieval ditch is most likely to have been a field boundary or possibly a ditch flanking a road or track, approximately on the line of the existing driveway. Along with the undated ditch recorded in 2014 during works to the Garden House itself, this ditch is the only archaeological evidence yet revealed that relates to the landscape predating the establishment of the 19th-century Garden House and its walled garden.



4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albion Archaeology, 2001, *Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork*, 2nd ed.
- Albion Archaeology, 2009, *Battlesden House, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Field Evaluation*, Report No. 2009/41
- Albion Archaeology, 2013a, *The Garden House, Scheme A, Battlesden, Bedfordshire: Heritage Asset Assessment*, Report No. 2013/21 Ver.1.1
- Albion Archaeology, 2013b, *The Garden House, Scheme B, Battlesden, Bedfordshire: Heritage Asset Assessment*, Report No. 2013/24 Ver.1.1
- Albion Archaeology, 2014, *The Garden House, Battlesden, Bedfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication*, Report No. 2014/67
- Albion Archaeology, 2015, *The Garden House, Battlesden, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication*, Report No. 2015/10
- British Geological Survey, 2015 Geology of Britain viewer [online]
<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> (accessed January 2015)
- Brown, N., and Glazebrook, J., 2000, *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy*. EAA Occasional Paper 8
- Glazebrook, J., 1997, *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 1 Resource Assessment*. EAA Occasional Paper 3
- Historic England, 2015, *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*
- Mawer A, and Stenton F.M, 1926, *The Place-Names of Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire*
- Medlycott, M. (ed), 2011, *Research and Archaeology Revisited: A Revised Framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24
- Oake, M., 2007, 'Research Agenda and Strategy' in Oake *et al* (2007) 7-20

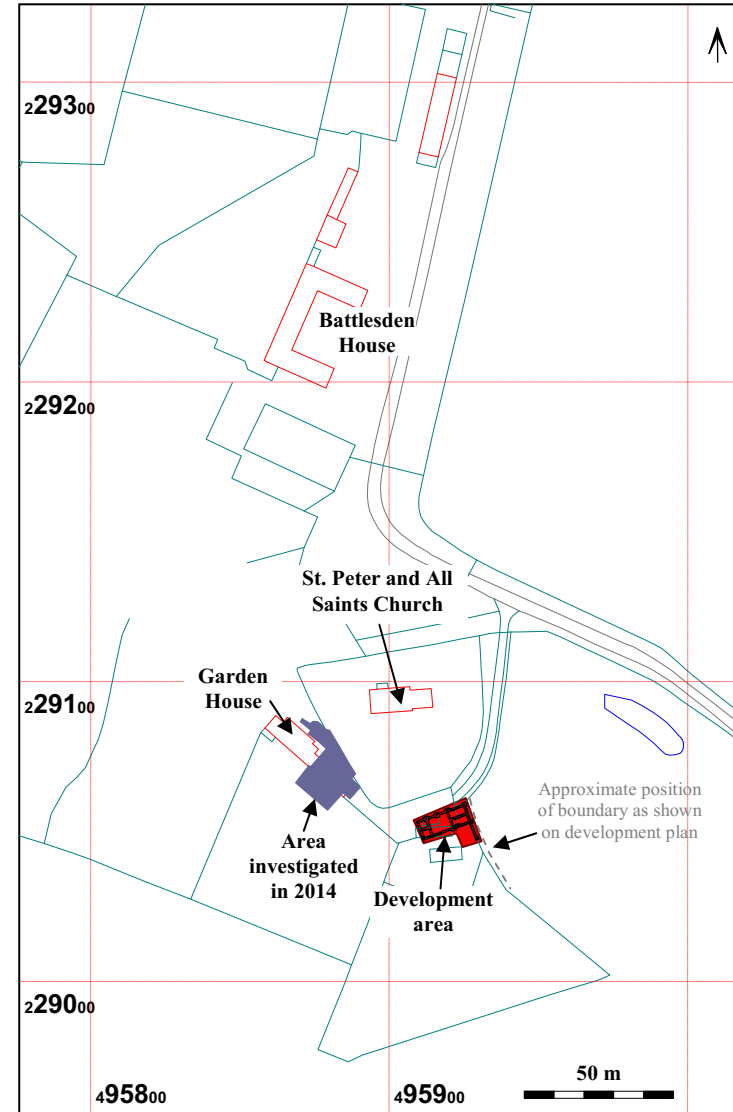
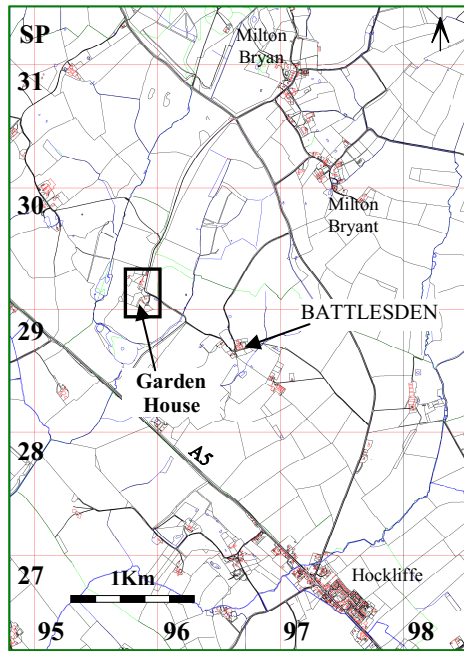
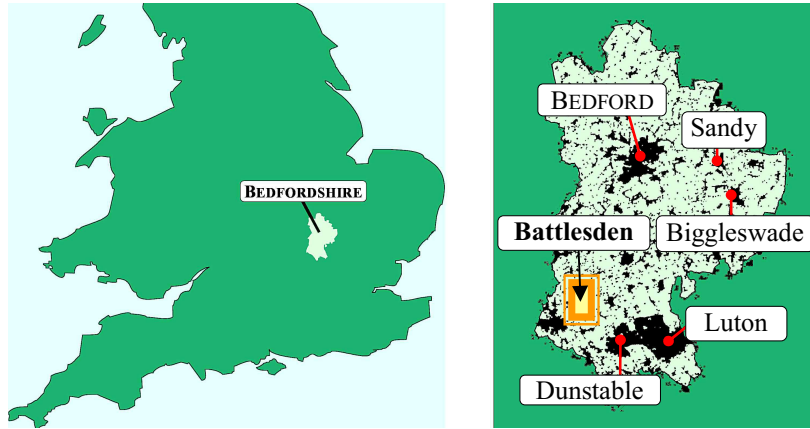


Figure 1: Site location plan

This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Central Bedfordshire Council. Licence No. 100049029 (2011)

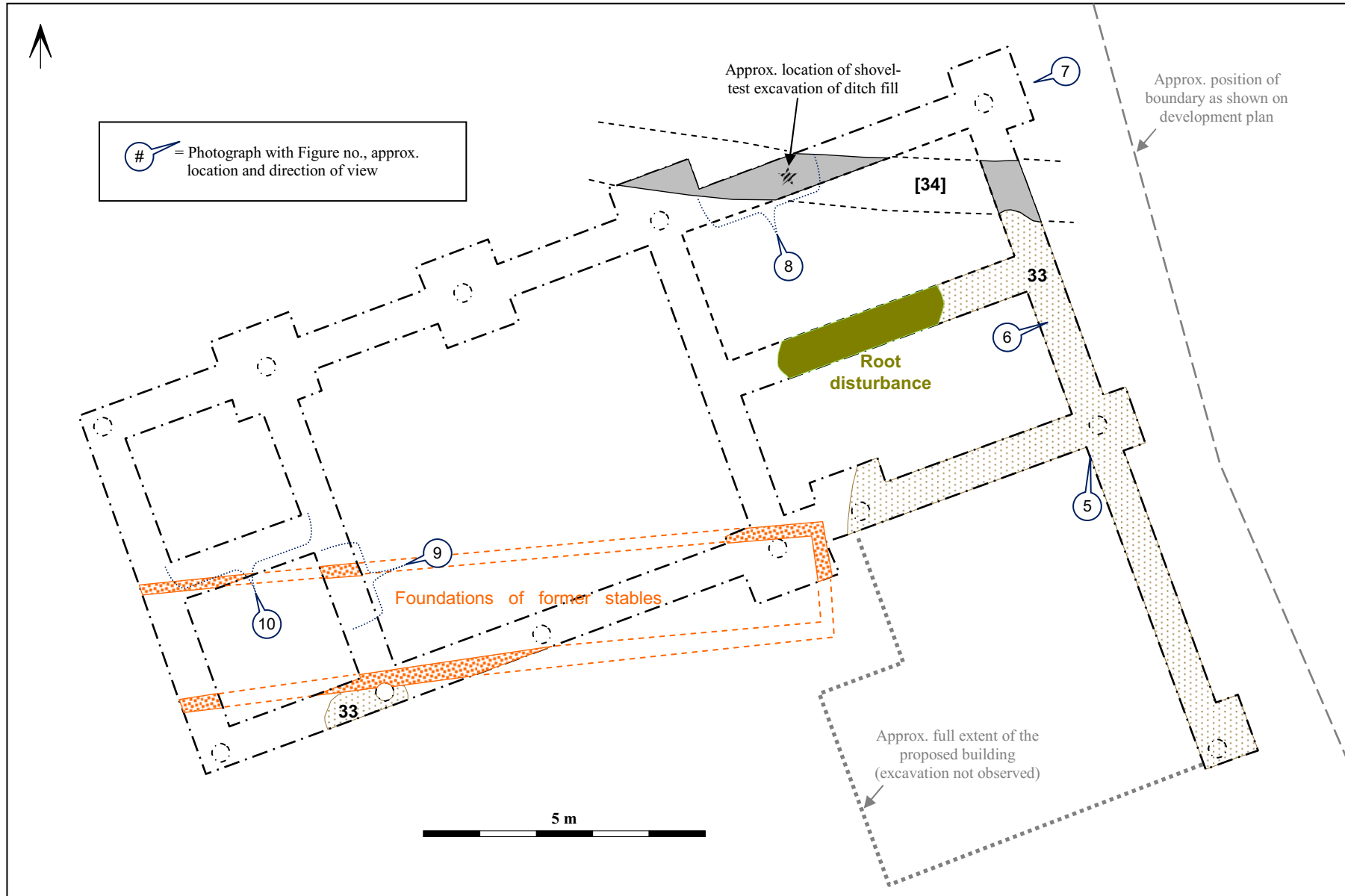


Figure 2: Observed groundworks and features revealed



Figure 3: General view of the site after clearance, looking south-east



Figure 4: General view of the site after clearance, looking east



Figure 5: Start of excavation of footings, east side of building



Figure 6: Overburden observed on the east side of the building



Figure 7: Foundation trench on the north side of the building, showing ditch [34], looking west

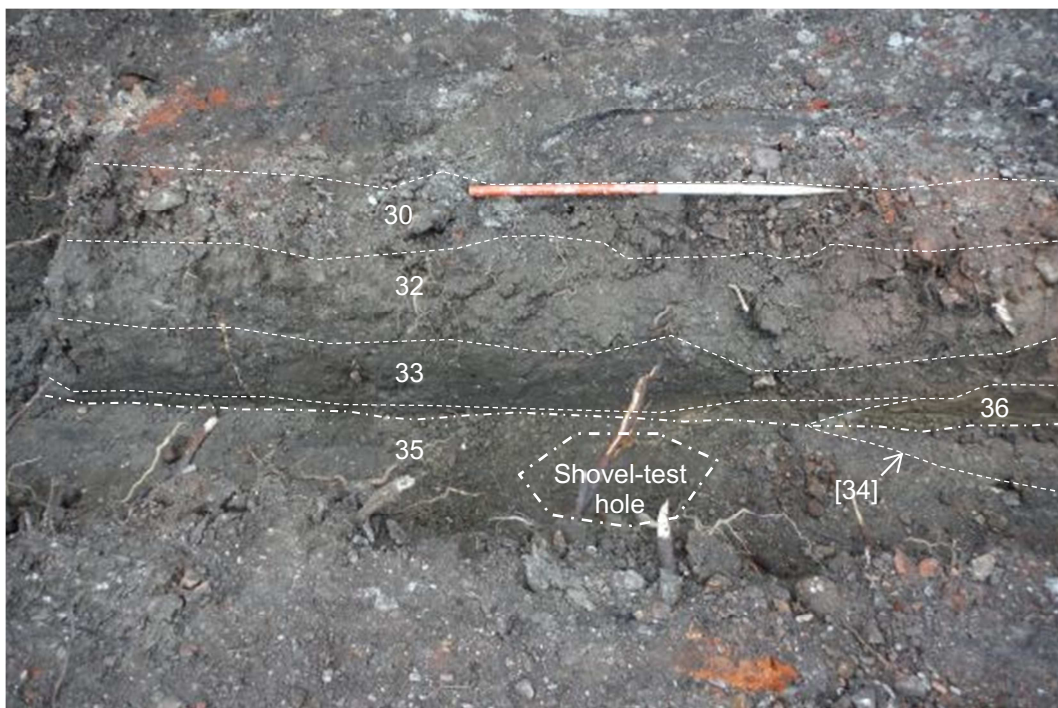


Figure 8: Ditch [34], looking north

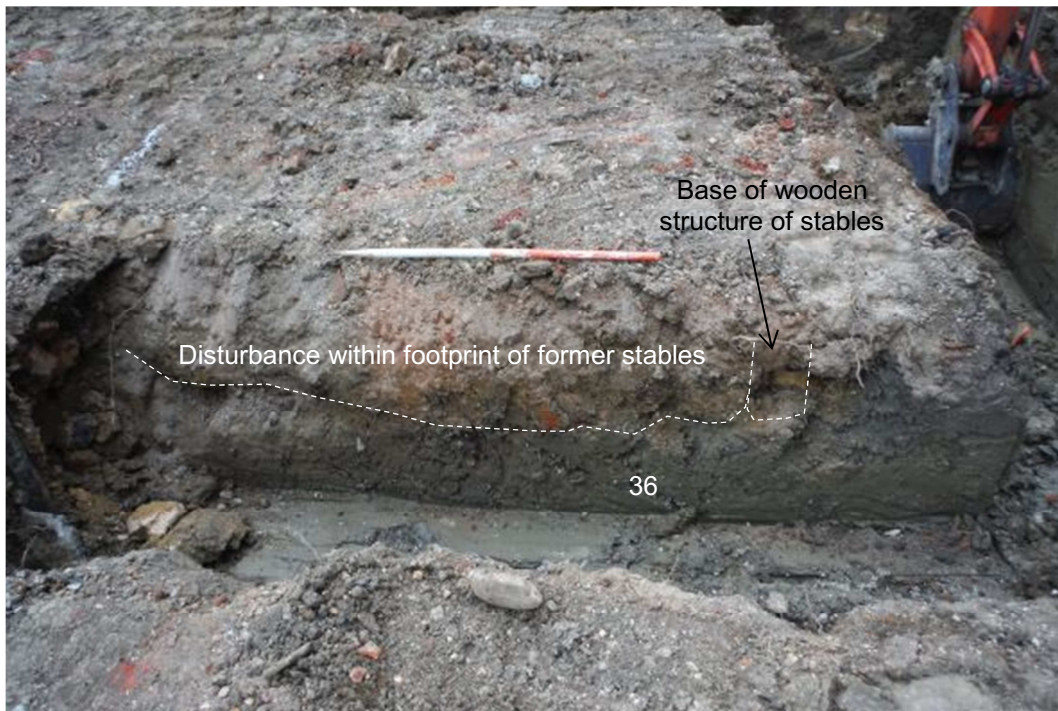


Figure 9: Remains of the foundations of the demolished stable block, looking west



Figure 10: Natural deposits (36) beneath thin layer of overburden in the north-west corner of the building, looking north



Figure 11: General view of the site after excavation of footings, looking east



Figure 12: General view of the site after excavation of footings, looking south-east

Central
Bedfordshire

Albion
archaeology



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

Telephone 0300 300 8141
Email office@albion-arch.com
www.albion-arch.com

