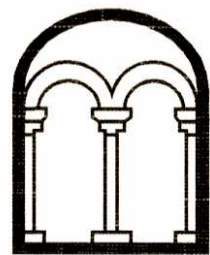


**RUTTERS FARM  
OLD MILTON ROAD  
THURLEIGH  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING  
AND  
HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING**

**Albion**  
archaeology



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Produced for:

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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 specification. 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.*

*The project was commissioned by Mr Simon Butcher. Fieldwork was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Lesley-Ann Mather, formerly Archaeological Officer of Bedfordshire County Council. The reporting was monitored by Geoff Saunders of Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team.*

*The fieldwork was undertaken by Lennard Anderson (Albion Archaeology: Archaeological Supervisor) and Hester Cooper-Reade (Albion Archaeology: Business Manager) with a photographic survey by Nigel MacBeth (Heritage Photography). The project was managed for Albion by Robert Wardill (Project Manager). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).*

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<i>1.0</i>	<i>17/2/2015</i>	<i>n/a</i>
<i>1.1</i>	<i>24/03/15</i>	<i>Curatorial Comments: 6.3.2 (p 16) del '4-bay to avoid confusion, fig. 20 (p.23) corrected caption, view to north, 6.3.8 (p. 25) corrected compass direction to northern,</i>

## Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this document:

BCC	Bedfordshire County Council
CAO	Bedfordshire County Council Archaeological Officer
CBM	Ceramic building material (brick and tile)
Client	Mr Simon Butcher
HER	Historic Environment Record
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion Archaeology 2007)



## **Non-Technical Summary**

*Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (04/3408) for the part demolition, conversion and extension of redundant farm buildings at Rutters Farm, Old Milton Road, Thurleigh, Bedfordshire. As the farm complex was of architectural and historical interest, and lay in an area of potential for the presence of earlier archaeological remains, a condition was attached to the planning permission specifying that a programme of archaeological and architectural recording and observation was required.*

*The developer, Mr Simon Butcher, commissioned Albion Archaeology to carry out the archaeological work. This was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation that had been approved in advance by Bedfordshire County Council's Archaeological Officer (Albion Archaeology 2007).*

*An architectural photographic survey was carried out on 21st February 2007, and the groundworks were monitored between 12th and 25th April 2007. Several archaeological features were identified, but all were of relatively modern origin, and probably relate to earlier construction works at Rutters Farm. Topsoil and subsoil had been removed within the farmyard down to the level of the geological boulder clay, and had been replaced by levelling layers of rubble in order to create hard surfaces.*

*The buildings on the site can be assigned to four phases of construction. Discounting the recent 20th-century buildings, the farm complex was formed in the 17th century and developed largely into its current form during the late 18th /early 19th centuries. The farmyard continued in active use up until recent times, the buildings being regularly added to and repaired as time went by.*

*The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM 2007.46). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-27528).*



## 1. INTRODUCTION

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### 1.1 *Planning Background*

Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (04/3408) for the part demolition, conversion and extension of redundant farm buildings at Rutters Farm, Old Milton Road, Thurleigh, Bedfordshire. This included the demolition of three modern barns and the construction of a number of extensions, linking structures and walls (Fig. 1). Existing buildings were to be converted into accommodation, with associated services installed. In addition, open areas were to be surfaced or made into gardens, although initial plans to excavate a 'moat' were not carried out.

As the farm complex was of architectural and historical interest, a condition was attached to the planning permission specifying that a programme of archaeological and architectural recording and observation was required.

Bedfordshire County Council's Archaeological Officer (CAO) issued a Brief outlining the requirements for the programme of recording and observation (BCC 2006), and also monitored the fieldwork stage of the project on behalf of Bedford Borough Council. The Client commissioned Albion Archaeology to carry out the work, which was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) that had been approved in advance by the CAO (Albion Archaeology 2007).

This report presents the results of the archaeological and architectural recording and observation works.

### 1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

Rutters Farm lies approximately 2km south-west of Thurleigh at NGR TL 0432 5677, on a plateau of land overlooking the valley of the River Great Ouse to the west (Fig. 1). The farm complex comprises a range of agricultural structures, including two large barns and assorted outbuildings. The underlying geology is Oxford clay overlain by boulder clay.

### 1.3 *Archaeological Background*

Rutters Farm is situated within the medieval settlement of Rutters End (HER 2708), which lies at a nodal point on a number of historic routeways, perhaps suggesting that the settlement's origins were of some importance.

The buildings within the complex at Rutters Farm range in date from the 17th to the 20th centuries. Two of the buildings (HER 8844 and 8845) are Grade II Listed, while a number of features associated with animal husbandry have also survived within the complex.

The wider landscape is also of archaeological interest: the land surrounding Rutters Farm contains a number of crop-marks that are characteristic of Iron Age or Roman remains.



#### **1.4 Project Objectives**

The full project objectives are detailed in the WSI. The general objectives were to identify and characterise any archaeological remains present, to photograph and record the buildings of historic interest that would be affected by the development, and to produce an archive report detailing the results.

The limited results of the investigation are insufficient to support further post-excavation analysis, and the full results are presented in this report.

#### **1.5 Methodology**

The methodology for the archaeological works is set out in full in the WSI. The trenches that were excavated were all *c.* 0.5m wide, and 0.7–1.2m deep.



## 2. RESULTS

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### 2.1 *Introduction*

The architectural photographic survey was carried out on 21st February 2007, and the groundworks were monitored between 12th and 25th April 2007.

Observations made during the groundworks are summarised below, with detailed information on the deposits encountered in Appendix 1. Details from the photographic survey are given in Appendix 2.

### 2.2 *Overburden and Geological Deposits*

The topsoil was *c.* 0.4m deep where it survived, and the subsoil up to 0.3m, but they seem to have been entirely removed within the farmyard prior to this development. Extensive levelling layers of rubble had been laid in order to create hard surfaces. Topsoil and subsoil were consequently observed only in the trenches around the edge of Barn 4 and to the north of the loggia (Fig. 1), where the low level of modern artefacts suggests that they were relatively undisturbed by previous construction works. The character of the subsoil indicates that it derived from the underlying geological stratum, which comprised chalky boulder clay.

### 2.3 *Post-medieval / Modern Features*

No features were identified that are likely to have pre-dated the construction of Rutters Farm. Modern artefacts (mostly CBM) were widespread within the built-up area; these were not retained.

At 4m wide, feature [104] to the north of the buildings was the largest observed. Its location corresponded exactly with that of an east–west farm track — it may have been a ditch that was filled in before the track was constructed, or its origin may have related to construction of the track itself. A metal pipe had been inserted into it near its southern side, within its own pipe trench [106]. Nearby feature [108] may have been a pit associated with construction of the loggia, although the volume of roots observed suggests it may have been a tree-hole.

Foundation trenches [131] and [132] both related to an earlier structure south of Barn 10. The masonry remains within them had been built using machine-cut bricks, while pieces of plastic were found in the backfill of the foundation trenches, both facts implying a 20th-century origin.

Pit / post-hole [138] probably relates to an earlier phase of Barn 4, and perhaps held a large timber post. The compaction of its fill indicates that it had been deliberately backfilled, presumably straight after its post had been extracted.



### 3. CONCLUSIONS

---

Several archaeological features were identified, but all were of relatively modern origin, and probably relate to earlier construction works at Rutters Farm. Only modern artefacts (mostly CBM) were observed; these were not collected.

Although narrow trenches such as these offer limited opportunities to make archaeological observations, they were sufficiently extensive to indicate that the interior of the built-up area had already been heavily disturbed by construction work associated with the farm. Topsoil and subsoil within the farmyard had been extensively removed down to the level of the geological boulder clay and replaced by rubble in order to create hard surfaces.

No construction-related disturbance was evident in the area beyond the farmyard and its associated farm tracks, although only the trench to the north of the farm offered a significant opportunity to examine this area.

The project archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (accession no. BEDFM 2007.46). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (OASIS ID no. albionar1-27528).



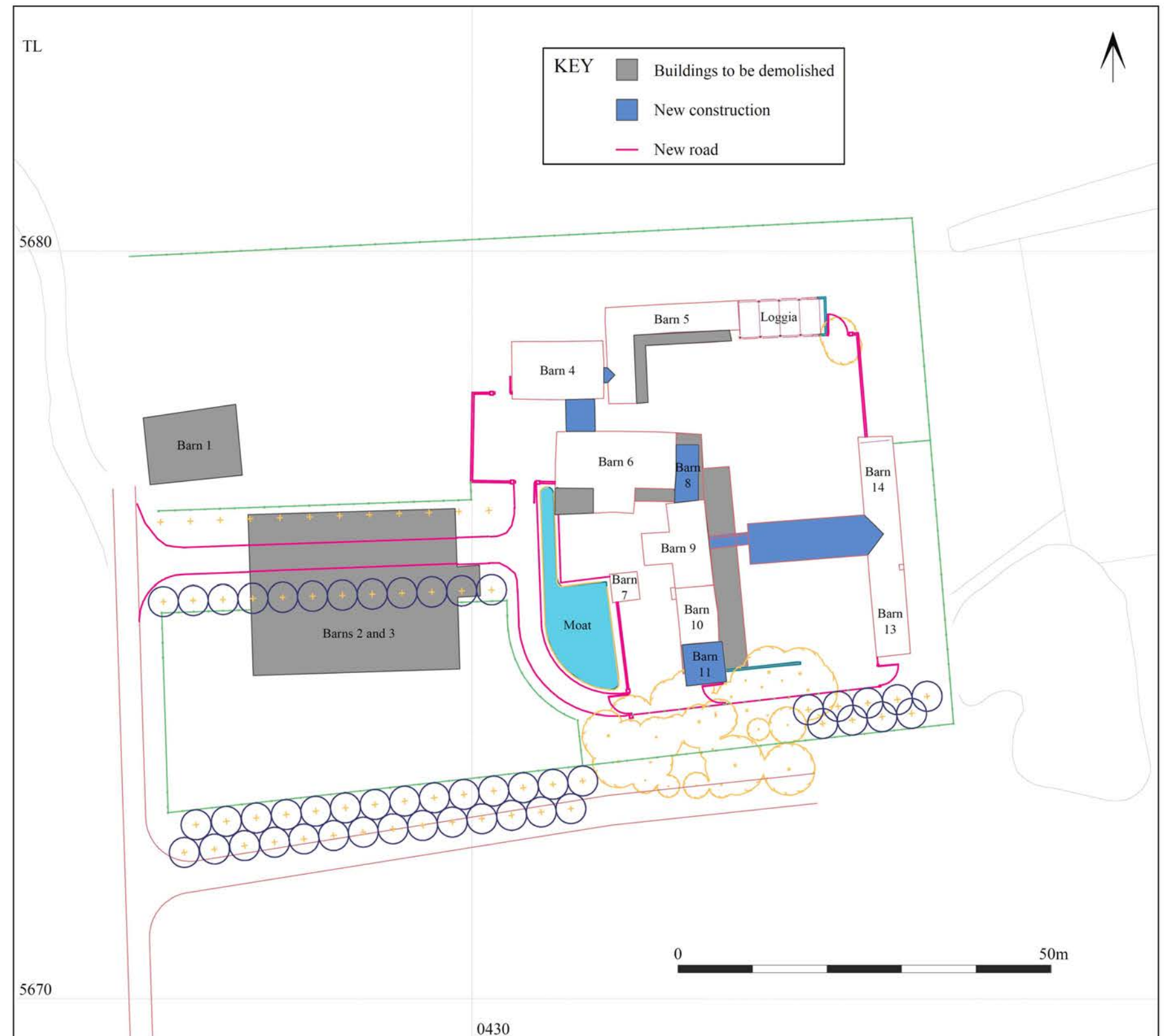
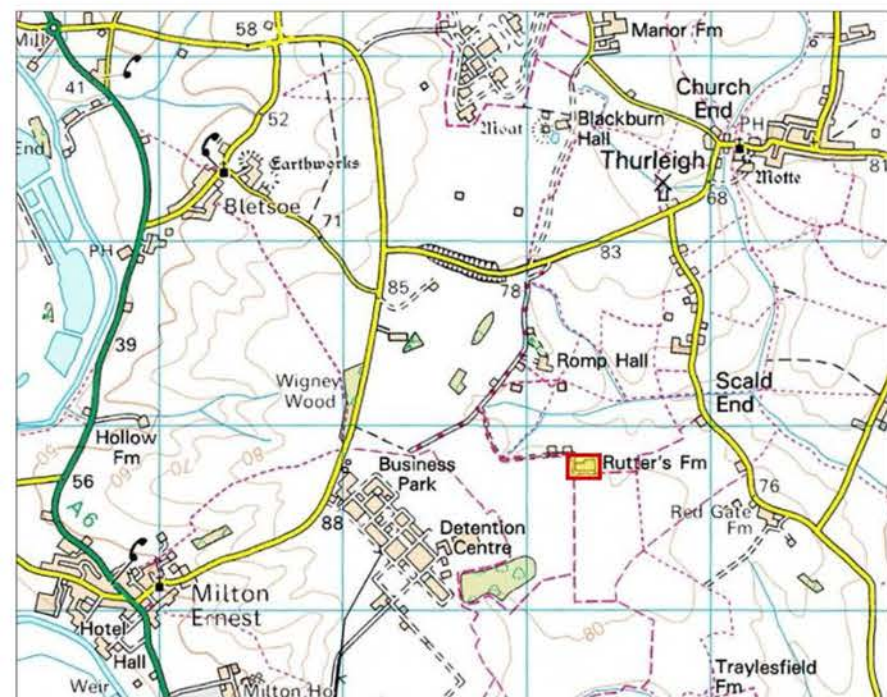
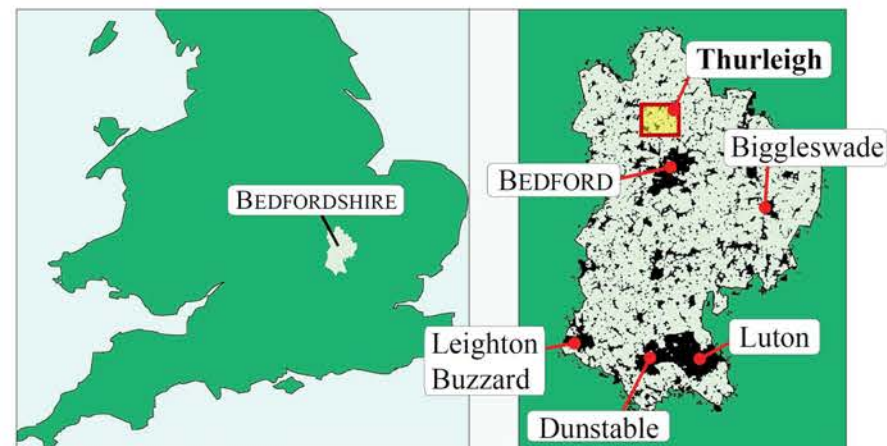
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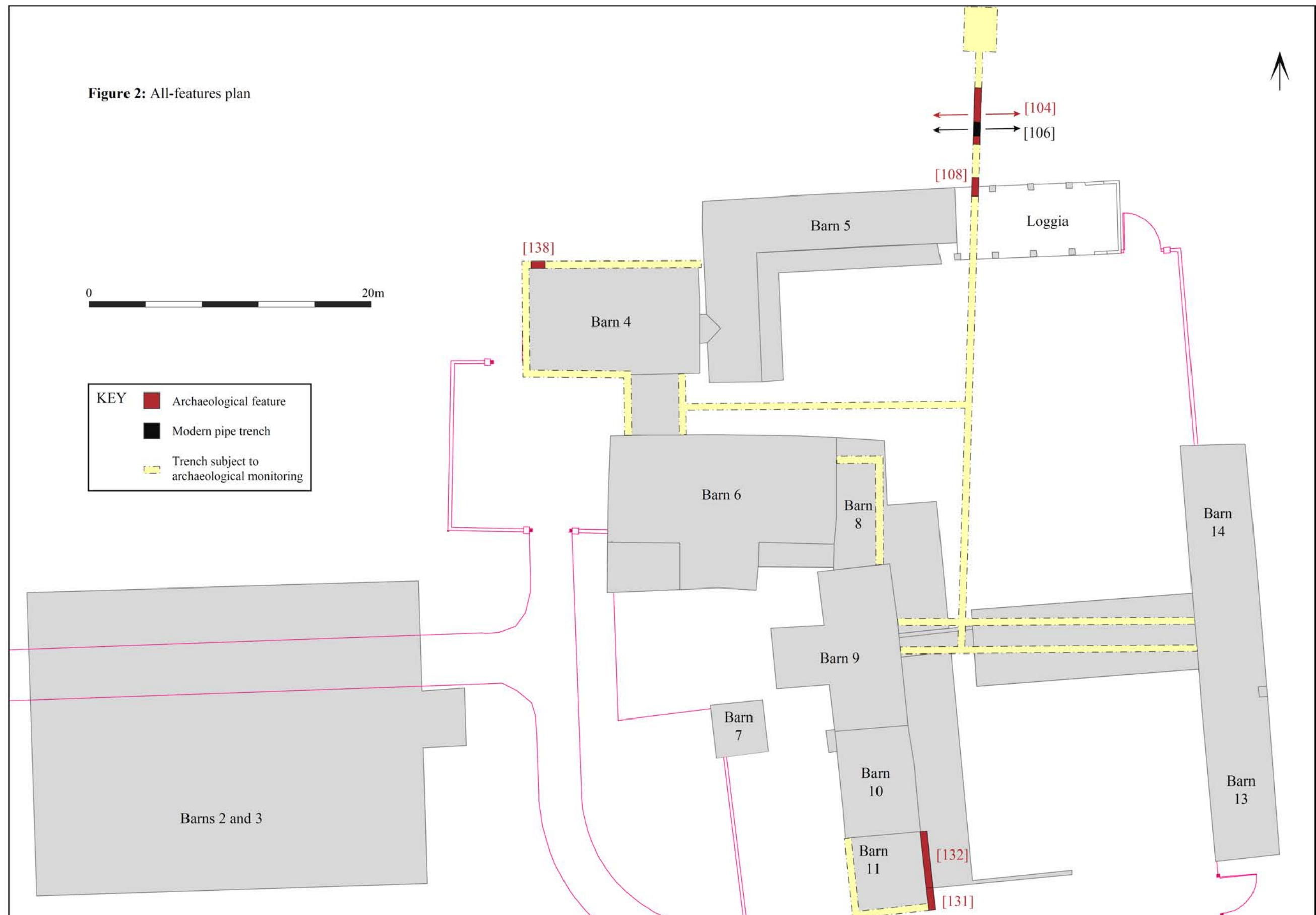
BCC 2006: *Brief for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Land at Rutters Farm, Old Milton Road, Thurleigh, Bedfordshire*

Rogers, D. 2004: *Appraisal of the Agricultural Complex at Rutters Farm, Thurleigh, Bedfordshire*



**Figure 1: Site and buildings location plan**

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**Photograph 1:** Trench south of Barn 5, looking east



**Photograph 2:** Excavation of pit in northernmost trench, looking south-west



**Photograph 3:** Trenches at western end of Barn 4, looking south

**Figure 3:** Selected photographs



## 5. APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT SUMMARY

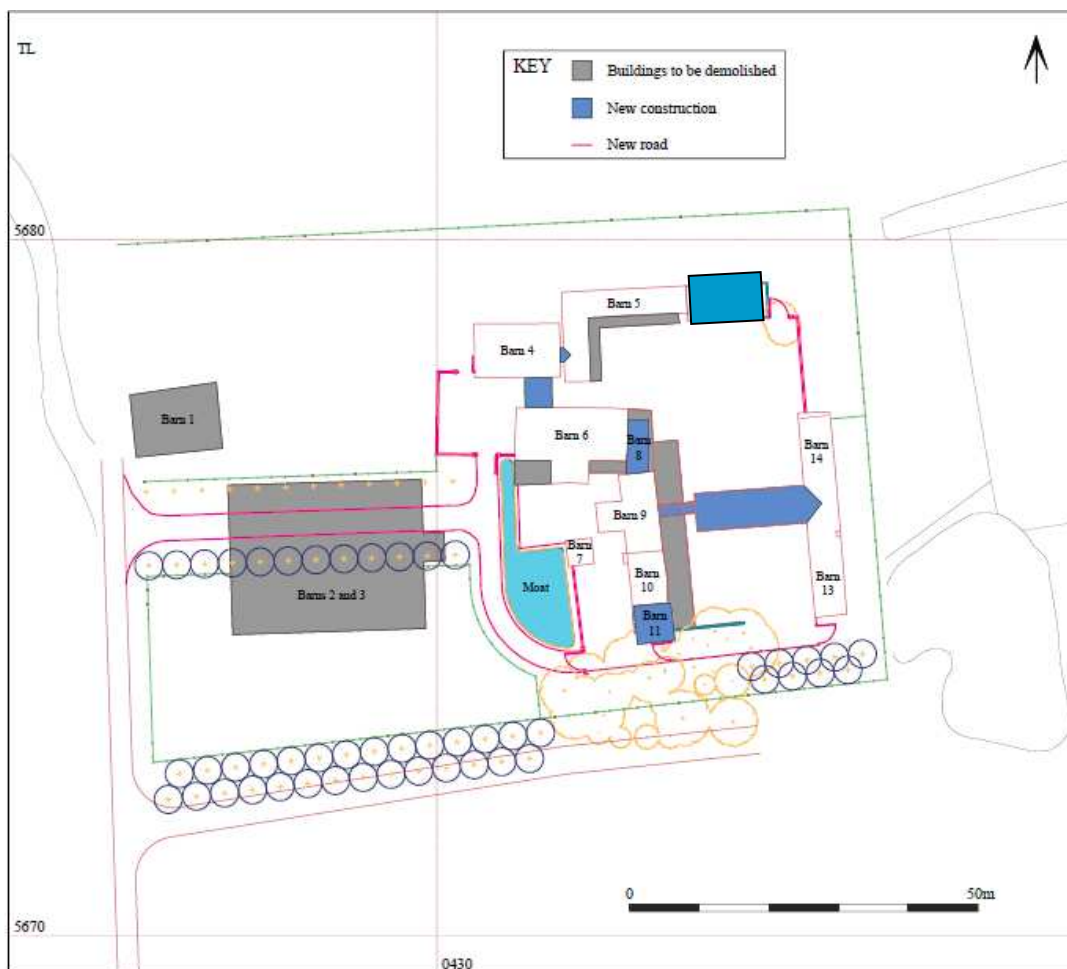
Context	Type	Description
101	Topsoil	Friable dark grey clay-silt, occasional small pieces of chalk. 0.4m thick
102	Subsoil	Firm brown clay, frequent flecks of chalk, frequent small stones. 0.1–3m thick
103	Natural	Firm brown clay, frequent small pieces of chalk
104	Ditch?	Linear, E–W, concave sides, breadth 4m, min depth 1m
105	Fill	Firm brown-black silty clay
106	Pipe trench	Linear, E–W, concave sides and base, breadth 1m, depth 0.4m
107	Fill	Friable black silty clay around metal pipe
108	Pit	Circular, concave sides and base, diameter 1.3m, depth 0.5m
109	Upper fill	Compact yellow sandy clay
110	Main fill	Loose orange sand
111	Levelling layer	Loose rubble, frequent medium-sized pieces of CBM. 0.2–0.5m thick
112	Natural	Compact grey-yellow, clay frequent flecks of chalk
113	Levelling layer	Friable orange sandy rubble, frequent small pieces of CBM. 0.35m thick
114	Refuse deposit	Firm green-black silt, occasional small stones, occasional lumps of burnt wood
115	Levelling layer	Loose grey sandy silt, frequent medium-sized pieces of CBM. 0.2m thick
116	Natural	Compact grey-yellow clay, frequent flecks of chalk
117	Subsoil	Firm light grey clay-silt, frequent small pieces of chalk. 0.3m thick
118	Natural	Compact grey-yellow clay, frequent flecks of chalk
119	Levelling layer	Friable orange silty clay, frequent small pieces of CBM. 0.25m thick
120	Natural	Firm dark yellow-blue clay, frequent flecks of chalk
121	Levelling layer	Friable orange silt frequent small ceramic building material, moderate medium stones. 0.2m thick
122	Natural	Brown grey clay moderate medium chalk
123	Levelling layer	Friable orange silt, frequent small pieces of CBM, moderate small pieces of chalk. 0.3m thick
124	Natural	Blue-grey clay, moderate small pieces of chalk
125	Levelling layer	Friable orange silt, frequent small pieces of CBM, moderate small stones. 0.1m thick
126	Natural	Blue-grey clay, frequent small pieces of chalk
127	Natural	Compact grey-yellow clay, frequent flecks of chalk
131	Foundation trench	Linear, E–W, concave sides, flat base, breadth 2m, depth 1m
130	Wall	Cemented orange clay, frequent small pieces of concrete
133	Backfill	Friable grey silty clay, frequent small pieces of CBM, pieces of plastic
132	Foundation trench	Linear E-W sides: concave base: flat dimensions: max breadth 2.5m, max length 5.m
128	Levelling layer	Friable grey sandy limestone, frequent small pieces of CBM, patch of mortar
129	Brickwork	Cemented orange clay, frequent small pieces of concrete
134	Levelling layer	Friable orange silty clay, frequent small pieces of CBM. 0.2m thick
135	Natural	Blue-grey clay, frequent small pieces of chalk
136	Topsoil	Firm mid-grey silty clay, moderate small pieces of chalk. 0.4m thick
137	Subsoil	Firm light grey-yellow silty clay, moderate small pieces of chalk. 0.15m thick
138	Pit / post-hole	Circular, steep sides, flat base, breadth 0.85m, depth 0.56m
139	Upper fill	Compact grey-yellow clay-silt, frequent small-medium pieces of chalk
140	Main fill	Compact grey-red clay, moderate small pieces of charcoal, frequent medium-sized stones

## 6. APPENDIX 2: BUILDING SURVEY

### 6.1 Introduction

The farm complex comprises a range of agricultural structures, including two large barns and assorted outbuildings. The buildings within the complex range in date from the 17th to 20th centuries. Two of the buildings (HER 8844 Barn 6 and 8845 Barn 9) are Grade II Listed threshing barns; other buildings within the complex are associated with animal husbandry.

The conversion proposals for the farm included the demolition of modern structures and the conversion of the remaining barns. Included in the development are the construction of a number of extensions, linking structures and walls (Fig. 1).



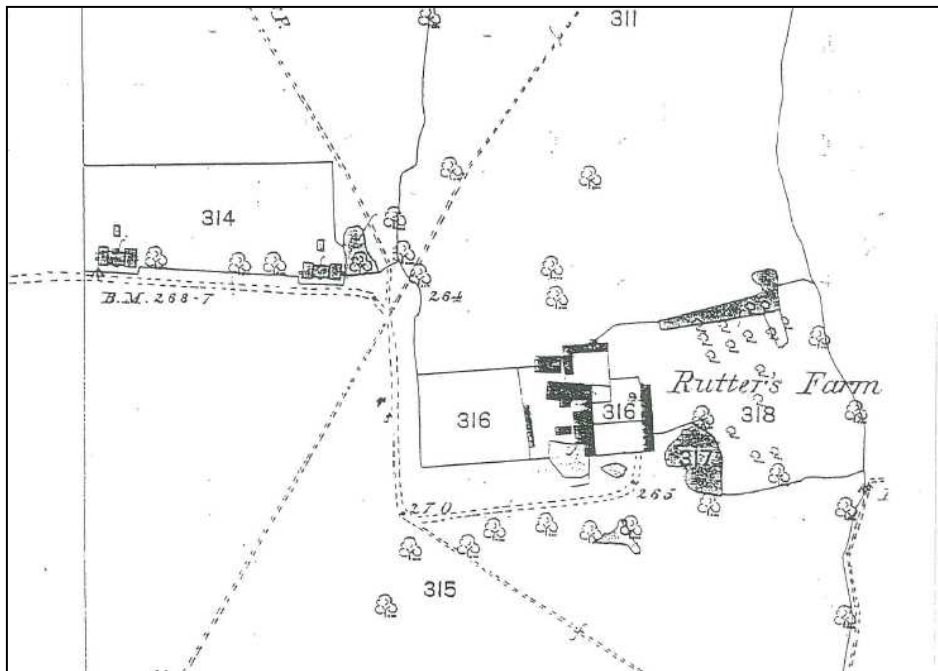
**Figure 4:** Site plan showing location of barns

The objectives of the building recording were to record evidence of the agricultural heritage of the complex, principally through a photographic survey. HER record 8844-5 contains a comprehensive measured survey of the site and an appraisal of the farm buildings (Rogers 2004). The appraisal provides an architectural description and interpretation of the buildings. For clarity, the building labels and numbers used in this report are those used in the planning application and the previous report (Fig. 4).



## 6.2 General Description

The agricultural complex at Rutters Farm comprises two 17th-century, listed threshing barns (Barns 6 and 9); one, Barn 9, with another two-bay structure at its southern end (Barn 10). These front onto a yard area at the western end of the complex. Yard areas to the north and east are partially enclosed by stock sheds and storage buildings, mostly dating to the late 18th/19th century. Although a number of more modern buildings have been added during the 20th century, the existing arrangement of buildings is largely that shown on the First Edition OS map dating to 1880 (Fig. 5).



**Figure 5:** Rutters Farm on 1880 OS map (first edition)

The OS map shows two pairs of 19th-century farmworkers' cottages to the north-west of the farm complex, though there is no cartographic evidence for an associated farm house.



**Figure 6:** Panoramic view of barns at Rutters Farm (Barns 4, 6 and 9/10)



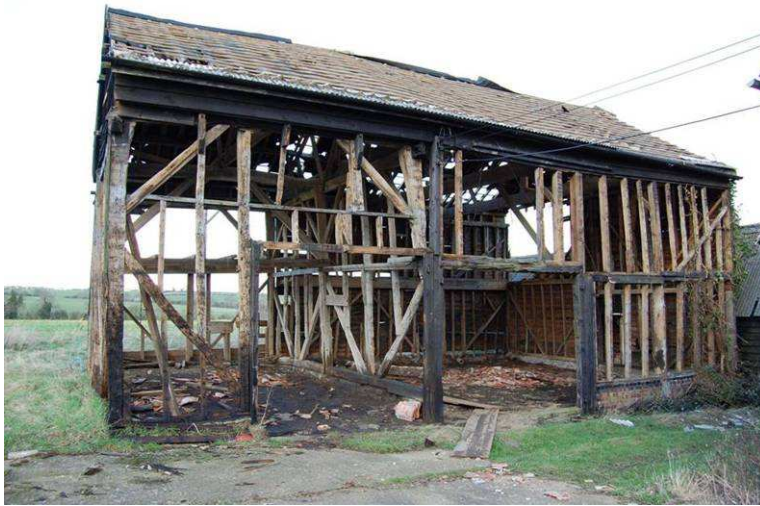
### 6.3 Building Descriptions

#### 6.3.1 Barns 1, 2 and 3 (20th century)

These barns are of 20th-century date and were to be demolished as part of the development. Barn 1 is a two-bay pole barn with a softwood timber frame and corrugated iron roof; Barns 2 and 3 are large modern grain stores.

#### 6.3.2 Barn 4 (Late 18th/19th century and late 19th century)

Barn 4 is an oak and softwood-framed building, partially clad in weatherboard and sitting on a low brick plinth (Fig. 7). At the time of the survey the roof covering and much of the cladding had been removed. The barn had also suffered from some fire damage. As Rogers notes, the barn is of unusual construction and proportions being tall and wide for its length and with a relatively low pitched roof (2004).



**Figure 7:** Barn 4: southern elevation

The western half of the barn is framed in oak and in its original form was a square structure with two bays, north and south. This was later extended to the east with a machine-sawn softwood extension with king post trusses and comprising 3 bays, east to west. The roof would have been changed to the opposite pitch at the time of the extension. During modern times the walls were heightened to provide a straight wall plate to accommodate a new roof. Rogers suggests an 18th-century date for the earlier building. The carpentry style of the oak-framed portion of the building would be consistent with an 18th- or early 19th-century date. The height of the earlier oak-framed building suggests it might have been used as a slaughterhouse — the height required to give sufficient room to hang a cow. The machine-sawn wood of the extension suggests a 19th-century date.

#### 6.3.3 Barn 5 (Late 18th century / 19th century)

Barn 5 is an 'L'-shaped livestock building (Figs 8–10). The eastern end of the eastern arm of the range comprises three enclosed individual animal sheds; otherwise the building is open-fronted with mangers running along the back walls. The frame is in oak and much of the original oak cladding remains. The

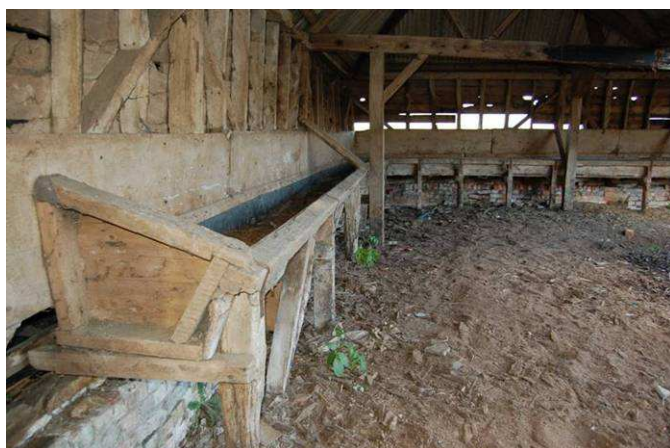


easternmost gable end has collapsed and the roof has been replaced in recent times.



**Figure 8:** Barn 5 view towards north-west

The wall farming comprises original pit-sawn oak studs, plates and primary bracing, largely nailed. The manger is likely contemporary with the original structure as is the partitioning within the building.



**Figure 9:** Barn 5: open-fronted shed



**Figure 10:** Barn 5: stock sheds/stables at eastern end



#### 6.3.4 Barn 6 (17th century, phase II) and Barn 8 (19th century)

Barn 6 is one of the two listed barns on the site. It is a three-bay, oak-framed threshing barn over a stone plinth, partially patched with brick (Figs 11–16). The barn has a central porch in the southern elevation and a smaller, draught door in the opposite, northern elevation. The roof was partly clad in corrugated cement sheeting with integral roof lights. Clay pan tiles covering the remainder of the roof had been removed at the time of the survey. Barn 8 is a partially demolished lean-to-shed against the eastern end of Barn 6.

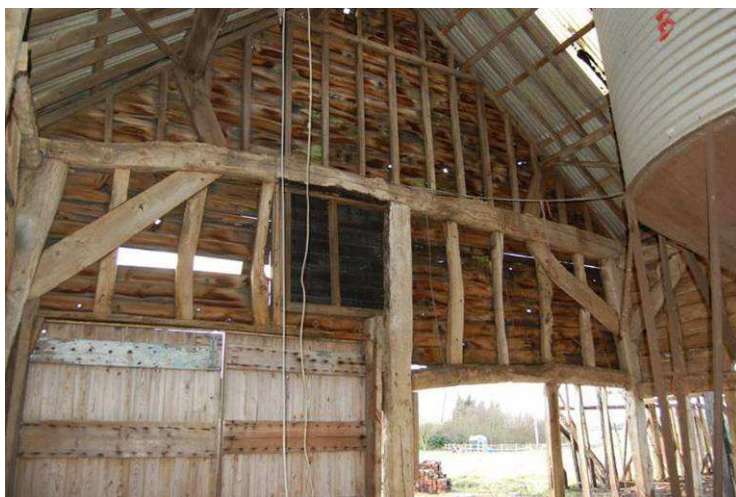
The list description for barn 6 describes it as a 17th-century threshing barn:

*Timber framed and weatherboarded C20 roof structure. Three-bay plan, with projecting central bay providing threshing floor/entrance. Framing detail similar to that in eastern barn, but two central trusses have double knee braces.*



**Figure 11:** Barn 6:  
southern elevation

Although the barn is reasonably complete, it has had a number of more recent alterations including double doors inserted in western gable end. Internally there is brick-lined pit and grain hopper at the western end. A number of timbers are missing or have been repaired with modern insertions.



**Figure 12:** Barn 6: western  
gable end



There is no evidence for holes or slots to support wattles for wattle and daub infill and it is therefore likely that the barn was built with wooden cladding.

The oak timbers are relatively substantial and each bay contains a full-height mid post and a mid rail runs around the building. The principal posts have swept jowls. The posts, including those in the porch have straight braces morticed to the underside of the wall plates; those forming the mid stray each have double braces. As Rogers notes the pegs here are larger than normal (>35mm in diameter). There is a single ogee brace in the north-west corner of the barn, similar to those seen in Barn 9 (see below).



**Figure 13:** Barn 6: internal view towards eastern gable



**Figure 14:** Barn 6: double bracing

There are carpenters' marks on the opposing faces of the cross frames at the midstray. The joints of the four braces to the tie beam on the western and eastern frame of the midstray are similarly numbered I and II and III and IIII.



**Figure 15:** Barn 6: View from porch towards northern wall

Although a number of posts in the wall opposite the porch are missing, the alignment of the original posts indicates that the door opening in this side was always small and the barn did not therefore have a similar sized opening opposite the porch as was often the case. The use of a smaller draught door may be partly explained by the drop down to the external ground level against this wall necessitating a flight of steps, now patched and rendered in concrete.



**Figure 16:** Barns 6 and 8: view towards south-west

Barn 8 is a lean-to against the eastern wall of Barn 6. Little of the structure remains other than the frame and its northern side wall sitting on a brick plinth (Fig. 16). The machine-sawn timbers are indicative of a 19th-century date. A shed in the angle between the porch and the external wall of westernmost bay had been demolished at the time of the survey; only its concrete base remained.

### 6.3.5 Barn 7 (late 18th/early 19th century)

Barn 7 is a small oak-framed building with a door in its northern elevation. At the time of the survey the weatherboarding and roofing material had been removed. Ground clearance and the removal of the weatherboarding revealed that the building stood on small brick piers, not seen at the time of Rogers' survey (2004).

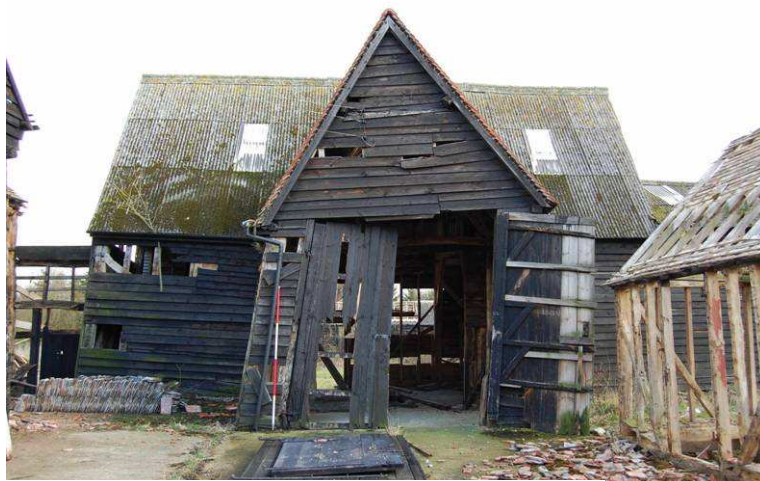


**Figure 17:** Barn 7

The shape of the building and the brick piers suggest that it was built as a granary. Later in date than the threshing barns but earlier than the Victorian farm buildings on the site, it is likely that Barn 7 dates to the later 18th or early 19th century.

#### 6.3.6 Barn 9 and 10 (17th century, Phase I) and Barn 11

The style of carpentry in Barns 9 and 10 is very different to that used in Barn 6 and indicates that these barns are the earliest buildings on the site (Figs 18–26). Barns 9 and 10 represent two associated structures: a threshing barn and adjacent storage barn/stock barn. Barn 11, a ruined lean to dated by Rogers to the 18th century (2004), no longer existed at the time of the survey.



**Figure 18:** Barn 9: view towards east

The list description of Barns 9 and 10 describes them together as a 17th-century threshing barn.

*Timber-framed and weather-boarded with C20 roof covering. Five-bay plan, with gabled entrance/threshing floor projecting W from second bay from N. Main trusses have curved braces between main beams and wall posts and between main beams and principal rafters just above lower purlin level*



Barn 9 is a small, three-bay barn with weatherboard cladding. It sits on a plinth mostly constructed of stone but with some brick patching. The roof pitch is very steep. The western porch is not integral to the barn indicating that it is either a replacement or later addition. A first floor storage area with grain bins has been added to the northern bay in recent times. The fourth and fifth bays of the list description form a separate two-bay space to the south of the threshing barn. This has a replacement roof with a ridge height set much lower than the adjacent barn.

The main posts in this barn have gently swept jowls and there are full height mid posts and a mid rail all constructed from hewn studs. The wall plates are joined using side-halved scarf joints with bridled abutments. Many of the timbers show evidence of re-use. The re-used timbers are domestic in character, suggesting that they are timbers from an earlier house that once stood nearby. The re-used timbers show evidence for stave holes, as well as redundant mortices.



**Figure 19:** Barn 9: section of east wall showing scarf joint in wall plate and re-used timbers

The central bay of the eastern wall does not contain a mid post nor mid rails, but instead contains inserted sawn oak studding. The later insertion of this studding suggests that it represents the position of a full-width door, opposite the porch entrance in the western side. There is a double plate at eaves level, indicating the head of the doors and a notch in the north-east post where the locking beam for the doors would have been inserted. When the larger door was blocked, a smaller draught door was added, mirroring the arrangement in Barn 6,

More of the original roof structure exists than in Barn 6, with the replacement roof supported on blocks above the earlier frame. The roof has double purlins, the upper being clasped by the collar and principal rafter. The lower purlin is clasped by the principal rafter but, unusually, there is a yoke below the strut on each of the tie beams.



**Figure 20:** Barn 9: roof structure, view to north

There are wide braces under the tie beams and downward, ogee braces above the mid rail.

Carpenters' marks are visible on the principal junctions on the midstray tie beams. The south tie beam has junctions marked III and III and the north beam V and VI.

The porch is not integral to the barn and at the time of the survey was at risk of collapse. It is not clear whether the porch was added, or re-built at a later date. There is some indication that the mid rail may have been removed to insert a porch; however, the posts adjacent to the porch are re-used timbers and it is not clear whether the empty mortices are simply associated with a previous use.



**Figure 21:** Barn 9: internal view of porch

Graffiti on a segment of plank walling and some more modern boarding show a tradition of writing notes, mostly detailing the harvest and weather. The notes range in date from the 1960s up to the 1980s and provide an interesting record of the more recent history of the farm. Photographs and a transcript of the inscriptions are included in the archive.

Barn 10 is a two-bay structure sharing the southern wall of Barn 9. Although the ridge height is much lower than the adjacent barn, this is a replacement roof and does not, therefore, represent the level of the original roof.



**Figure 22:** Barns 9 and 10: view towards north-east

Barn 10 is built in a similar style to Barn 9 with evidence of the re-use of domestic timbers, full height mid posts, a mid rail and ogee bracing. The mid post within the eastern wall of the northernmost bay is not central, possibly placed to support the scarf joint above. Wooden troughs against the north and south end walls indicate the building's former use as a stock shed. Most of the studs below the mid rail have been infilled with brick, no doubt to protect the structure from damage by the cattle that would have been housed in this building.



**Figure 23:** Barn 10: internal view of eastern wall

The barn has a window in the western wall and an inserted door in the eastern wall. In order to allow room for tying stock on either side, the door was inserted centrally, by cutting the centre post and dropping the mid rail within each of the adjacent studs. The window in the western wall probably represents the position of a door which was subsequently blocked by the insertion of a stud and brick infill. This re-alignment probably took place when buildings to the east of the main complex came into use.

Rogers (2004) suggests that Barn 10 was an early extension to Barn 9; however at the time of this survey it was noted that the wall plate along the eastern wall of



**Figure 24:** Barn 10:  
internal view of western  
wall

Barn 9 continues through into Barn 10 where it is joined to the next length of wall plate just beyond the dividing wall. This indicates that the barns were contemporary, possibly more likely built south to north.



**Figure 25:** Barn 9: southern wall,  
shared with Barn 10, 'shadow'  
marking apex of Barn 10 roof can be  
seen in end wall



**Figure 26:** Barn 10: northern  
wall, shared with Barn 9, scarf  
joint in north-east corner

### 6.3.7 Barn 12 (20th century)

Barn 12 is an open-sided, 10-bay lean-to built against the eastern wall of Barns 9 and 10. It is roughly constructed out of softwood with a corrugated metal roof and would have formed a storage area. The date "1912" has been written onto one of the roof timbers. The lean-to is clearly of 20th-century date and it is, therefore, likely that the date was written onto the timber at the time of construction.

### 6.3.8 Barns 13 and 14 (late 18th century / early 19th century)

These barns form a range of stock sheds built during the later 18th or early 19th century and, therefore, contemporary with the main phase of post-17th-century development at the farm (Figs 27–30).

Barns 13 and 14 form a single range divided into a 4-bay open-sided stock shed (Barn 13), with livestock sheds in the remaining 6 bays at the northern end of the range (Barn 14). Barns 13 and 14 were built as a single structure and have an oak frame sitting on a brick plinth. The buildings have a softwood roof made of king post trusses.



The building is partially clad with bitumen-coated weatherboarding, although most of this had been removed at the time of the survey.



**Figure 27:** Barns 13 and 14: view towards south-east

The open stock shed at the southern end (Barn 13) has a manger along its eastern wall and at the time of the survey was in a poor stage of repair, with most of the gable end collapsed.



**Figure 28:** Barn 13: view towards north-east

At the northern end Barn 14 had been divided into a number of compartments. The northern three bays comprised a cattle shed, probably for over-wintering stock. Most of the cladding had been removed meaning that the only parts remaining were the timber frame, elements of the internal boarding and a manger running along the eastern wall. There was evidence for an inserted door frame in the northern gable end.

The southernmost three bays of the six bays making up Barn 14 were divided into three separate compartments. The first two bays were livestock sheds separated from each other and the 3-bay section by plank boarding up to eaves height. The northern of these two bays contained a manger against the western wall and had door openings with a stable door, in both the western and eastern walls.



**Figure 29:** Barn 14:  
enclosed stock shed at  
northern end

The third and southernmost bay was boarded on each side to full height and contained a chimney and hearth in its north-west corner. This is suggestive of a nursery unit with fireplace for overnight use by the stockman. At one stage this compartment had functioned as a chicken coop as the boarding between it and the compartment to the north contained a small hen door which could be raised and secured on a short length of chain.



**Figure 30:** Barn 14: internal views of  
sheds at southern end

### 6.3.9 Other buildings

Rogers' report (2004) mentions two other buildings on the site; namely the ruins of a 20th-century pole barn and a partially collapsed brick gable representing a building with two adjacent pens. The latter is shown on the 1910 OS map but not on the 1880 first edition. Neither of these ruins was evident during the current survey.



## 6.4 Interpretation and Phasing

The buildings on the site can be assigned to four phases of construction (Fig. 31). Discounting the recent 20th-century buildings, the farm complex was formed in the 17th century and developed largely into its current form during the late 18th /early 19th centuries. The farmyard continued in active use up until recent times; the buildings being regularly added to and repaired as time went by.

The development of the buildings to include a range of stock sheds demonstrates the increase in importance of livestock and the new more scientific methods of husbandry that resulted in more intensive farming. The new techniques led to widespread construction of stock yards, often with open-fronted sheds, where cattle could be over wintered and fattened. An important by-product of this type of husbandry was the production of manure which could be spread on the arable fields of the traditional mixed farm. It is clear that throughout its history, arable continued to form a significant part of the farming regime at Rutters Farm, as attested by the graffiti in Barn 9.

The farm yard was remote, although the use of domestic timbers in Barn 9 is suggestive of a nearby farmhouse, derelict, or at least unused, by the time that Barn 9 was constructed. Remote farmyards, particularly those based around 16th- and 17th-century threshing barns were, however, fairly common.

### 6.4.1 17th-century Phase 1 / 17th-century Phase II

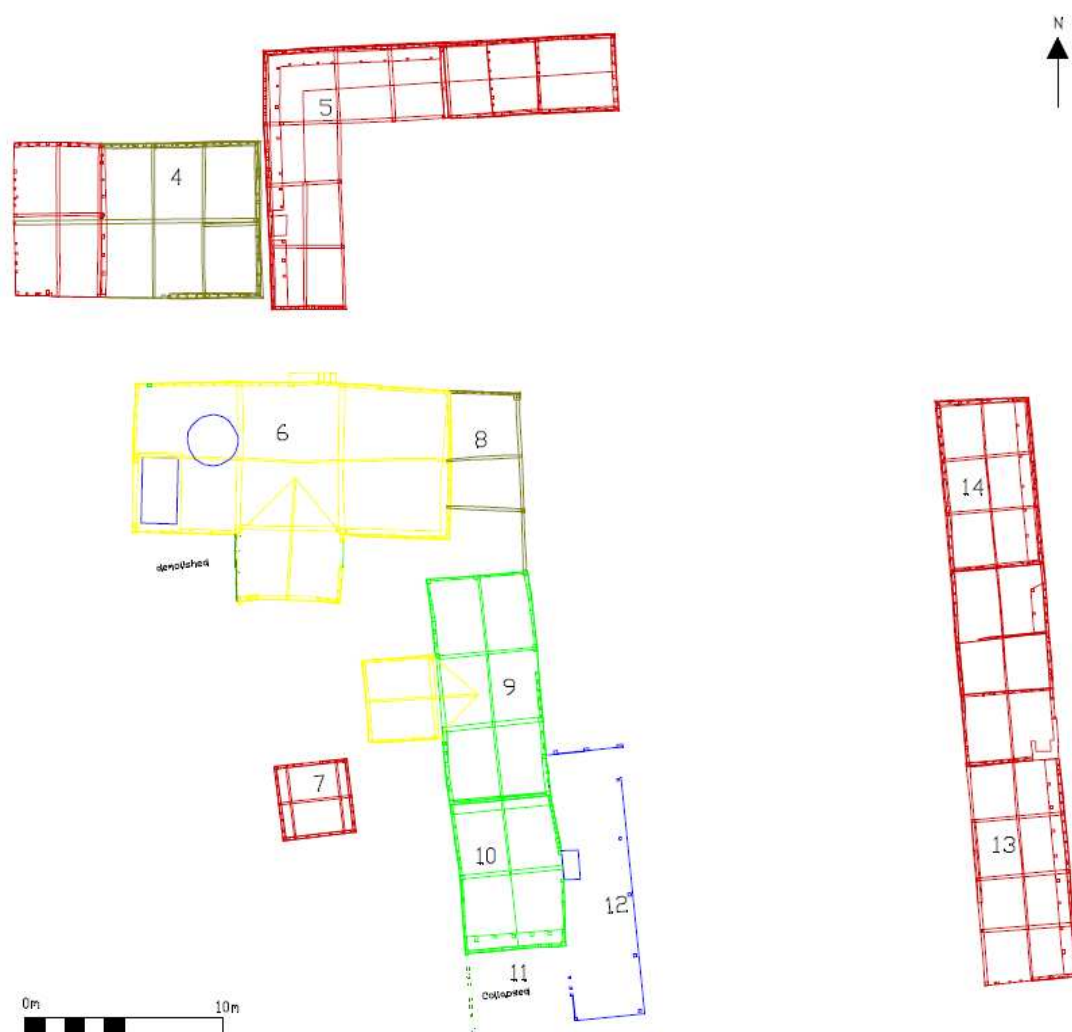
#### *Barn 6, Barn 9, Barn 10*

Both threshing barns were built during the 17th century. The style of carpentry used in Barns 6 and 9 is, however, very different. The style of Barn 9 is earlier in character, though this may largely be on account of the re-use of timbers from a demolished domestic building. Logically, Barn 9 is the earliest as it makes use of second hand timbers. Barn 6 is less ornate, although it does have a single ogee style brace. It is tempting to speculate that this was one of the salvaged timbers left over after Barn 9 had been built.

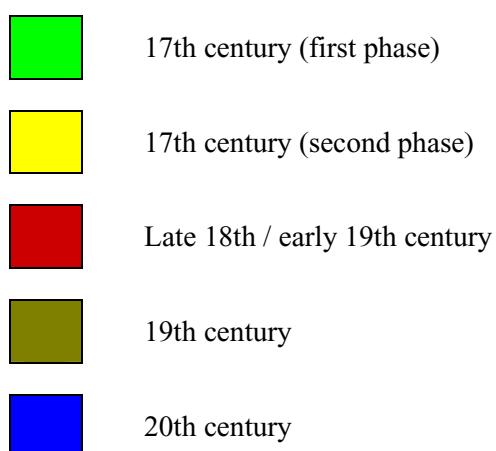
There are a number of stylistic differences such as the use of yokes in the angle beneath strut and purlin in Barn 9 and the double bracing in Barn 6 which may be suggestive of a different carpenter and a slightly longer period of time between the completion of Barn 9 and the construction of Barn 6.

Barn 9 was built to include a livestock shed at its southern end. The style of carpentry and the continuation of the wall plate from Barn 10 through into Barn 9 suggest that they were contemporary.

These barns were built at a time when farmers were increasing productivity to supply new urban markets. Threshing barns were often built at convenient points in fields isolated from the farmhouse and, although the complex at Rutters Farm also contained a number of stockyards and livestock sheds, it was not uncommon for these to be built away from the home farm.



**Figure 31: Principal building phases**





The stock shed adjacent to the threshing barn indicates that the farm associated with these buildings also kept cattle in significant numbers to require more intensive husbandry.

#### **6.4.2 Late 18th / early 19th century**

Barn 4 (western end), Barn 5, Barn 7, Barns 13/14

Barn 4 and Barn 5 show the continued development of the livestock element of the farm, at a time when new scientific methods of farming resulted in the wholesale building of stock yards with open-sided cow sheds. An L-shaped open-fronted stock shed (5) and a range containing an open shed (13) and a number of closed stock barns and sheds (14) extended the farmyard to the north and east of the threshing barns.

Barn 4 when first built was a tall square building and its height suggests it was possibly used as a slaughter house, again indicative of the importance of cattle.

Barn 7 appears to have been built as a granary on account of its size and the fact that the building rests on brick piers.

#### **6.4.3 19th century**

Barn 4 (eastern half), Barn 8

During the 19th century Barn 4 was re-configured to form a storage barn/workshop and a lean-to was added to the eastern wall of Barn 6. The latter had mostly collapsed at the time of the survey.

#### **6.4.4 20th century**

Barn 1/2, Barn 3, Barn 12

These are a mixture of pole barns and modern structures that were added to the farm at various times during the 20th century.

#### **6.4.5 Observed in 2004 survey but no longer extant**

Barns 11, 15, 16.



## 7. APPENDIX 3: OASIS SUMMARY

### OASIS ID: albionar1-27528

#### Project details

Project name	Rutters Farm, Old Milton Road, Thurleigh - Watching brief 2007
Short description of the project	Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (04/3408) for the part demolition, conversion and extension of redundant farm buildings at Rutters Farm, Thurleigh, Bedfordshire. Due to the farm's architectural and historical interest, a condition was attached that required a programme of archaeological and architectural recording and observation. Albion Archaeology was commissioned to carry out an archaeological watching brief during the groundworks in 2007. Several archaeological features were identified, but all were of relatively modern origin, and probably relate to earlier construction works at Rutters Farm.
Project dates	Start: 21-02-2007 End: 12-04-2007
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	RF1230 - Contracting Unit No. 2007/46 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	Listed Building
Current Land use	Other 3 - Built over
Monument type	BARN Post Medieval
Monument type	BARN Modern
Significant Finds	BRICK Modern
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	Planning condition

#### Project location

Country	England
Site location	BEDFORDSHIRE BEDFORD THURLEIGH Land at Rutters Farm, Old Milton Road, Thurleigh
Postcode	MK44 2DJ
Study area	8535.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 0432 5677

#### Project creators

Name of Organisation	Albion Archaeology
Project brief originator	City/Nat. Park/District/Borough archaeologist
Project design originator	Albion Archaeology
Project	Robert Wardill



director/manager  
Project supervisor Lennard Anderson

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No  
Digital Archive recipient Albion Archaeology  
Digital Contents "other"  
Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography', "Text"  
Paper Archive recipient Bedford Museum  
Paper Archive ID BEDFM 2007.46  
Paper Contents "other"  
Paper Media available "Context sheet", 'Drawing', "Microfilm" "Photograph", "Report"

### Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)  
Title RUTTERS FARM, OLD MILTON ROAD, THURLEIGH, BEDFORDSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING AND HISTORIC BUILDING RECORDING  
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