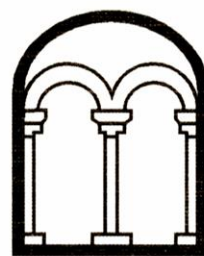


**84 HIGH STREET
CRANFIELD
BEDFORDSHIRE**

STAGE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Albion
archaeology



**84 HIGH STREET
CRANFIELD
BEDFORDSHIRE**

STAGE 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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Produced for:
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Preface

All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and was prepared solely for the benefit of the client. The material contained in this report does not necessarily stand on its own and should not be relied upon by any third party. This document should not be used for any other purpose without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and the prior written authority of Albion Archaeology (a trading unit of Central Bedfordshire Council). Any person/party relying on the document for such other purposes agrees and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Albion Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Albion Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the persons/party by whom it was commissioned. This document is limited by the state of knowledge at the time it was written.

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by Lovat Court Developments Ltd and was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Matt Adams of Central Bedfordshire Council.

The archaeological works were undertaken by Kathy Pilkinton, who also prepared the report, with contributions from Jackie Wells (Finds Officer) and Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). The project was overseen by Gary Edmondson (Project Manager). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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1.0	28/06/2017	n/a

Key Terms

The following abbreviations are used throughout this report:

CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CBCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
Client	Lovat Court Developments
DA	Development Area
HER	Historic Environment Record
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission CB/16/04481/FULL was granted by Central Bedfordshire Council for the demolition of a bungalow and garages, and the erection of one replacement dwelling and one additional dwelling with associated access and car parking at 84 High Street, Cranfield, Bedfordshire.

The village of Cranfield is located c. 10km to the south-west of Bedford, on the south edge of a plateau at a height of c. 111m OD, overlooking the Marston Vale to the east and south-east. The development area (DA) is located towards the southern margin of the village, at the southern edge of Cranfield High Street, centred on grid reference SP 9534 4186. The underlying geology is Till over Oxford Clay Formation Mudstone.

The DA is bordered by residential properties and their gardens to the east and west, and by the residential development of Willow Springs to the south. Land associated with Cranfield Airfield lies to the north. Immediately prior to the fieldwork, the DA comprised a residential plot with a small bungalow and garden, situated behind 86 High Street.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken between 8th and 9th June, in a period of dry and general bright weather conditions. Both trenches revealed post-medieval to modern deposits beneath a thick topsoil deposit, and a possible buried ploughsoil. Apart from activity associated with the modern dwelling, in Trench 1 towards the street frontage, a large feature, possibly a steep-sided quarry was revealed. A small quantity of finds datable to the 17th–18th century was recovered from the associated fill. This feature would have been close to the edge of the original High Street as depicted on the 1840 Enclosure map, and may be similar to the features depicted on the map in the areas to the north and south. Land drains were revealed in both trenches, indicting the former arable utilisation of the area.

Features revealed in Trench 2 included a small modern rectangular pit containing an animal skeleton — probably a pet from the associated bungalow. A single isolated and undated stakehole was also revealed in the trench, as well as several areas of root disturbance associated with trees etc.

The investigation has revealed a series of post-medieval to modern deposits and features associated with the former utilisation of the area. They have no further potential to address research themes associated with the development of medieval and post-medieval Cranfield.

This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website, reference no. albionar1-277596. The project archive will be deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford, under accession number BEDFM 2017.17.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 **Project Background**

Lovat Court Developments Ltd obtained planning permission from Central Bedfordshire Council (CB/16/04481/FULL) for the demolition of a bungalow and garages, and the erection of one replacement dwelling and one additional dwelling with associated access and car parking at 84 High Street, Cranfield, Bedfordshire.

Due to the archaeological potential of the site, a condition (no.5) was attached to the planning consent requiring a staged programme of archaeological investigation in accordance with the guidelines provided in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF). The condition stated:

No development shall take place until a written scheme of archaeological investigation; that adopts a staged approach and includes post excavation analysis and publication, has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The development hereby approved shall only be implemented in full accordance with the approved archaeological scheme."

Reason: Detail is required before commencement in order to secure appropriate archaeological investigation in advance of development (Section 12 NPPF)

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the first stage of the archaeological investigative works, and undertake the trial trench evaluation. The results of this investigation and their appraisal will inform any further works that might be required for the mitigation of construction impacts on archaeological remains.

1.2 **Site Location, Topography and Geology**

Cranfield lies c. 10km to the south-west of Bedford on the south edge of a plateau that overlooks the Marston Vale in the east and south-east (Figure 1). The development area (DA) lies at the south-west end of the village, at the southern end of the High Street. It is bordered by residential properties and their gardens to the east and west, and by the residential development of Willow Springs to the south. A Methodist Church lies on the other side of the road. Land associated with Cranfield Airfield lies to the north.

Immediately prior to the fieldwork, the DA comprised a residential plot containing a small bungalow and garden, situated behind 86 High Street, with access from 84 High Street, centred on grid reference SP 9534 4186. It lies on level ground at a height of c. 111m OD. The underlying geology is recorded as Till over Oxford Clay Formation Mudstone (British Geological Survey 2017).

The proposed development comprises the demolition of existing garages at the street frontage and a bungalow (no. 84) at the rear of the site. Two



replacement dwellings are proposed, together with associated access, landscaping and parking. Immediately prior to the demolition works, the site was also occupied by small dilapidated lean-to sheds at the northern site boundary and areas of hardstanding.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The archaeological and historical background of the site was discussed in detail in a heritage statement (Albion 2016), submitted with the planning application; key elements are summarised below.

84 High Street lies at the south-western end of the village of Cranfield. It is bordered by 19th-century and modern residential properties and their gardens to the east and west, and by the modern residential development of Willow Springs to the south.

Large-scale excavations at Cranfield Airfield to the north and at Cranfield Home Farm directly to the south of the development site have revealed evidence for widespread early to middle Iron Age, Roman and some Saxo-Norman settlement evidence (HER 8725, 11866, 13418). The cores of those settlements lie some distance from the current DA and so the potential for further archaeological remains dating to these periods being present was considered to be low to moderate. If any were found, they would most likely represent peripheral settlement features in the form of ditches, pits and postholes.

The place name, Cranfield, is most likely Saxon in origin, deriving from ‘cranes’ (birds) and ‘feld’ a name for open fields, often within sight of woodland (Gelling in Coleman 1986). The first mention of the manor of ‘Cranfeldinga’ dates to AD 969. In the Domesday Survey of 1086 the manor was assessed at 10 hides with large quantities of arable land and woodland.

The DA lies within the medieval envelope of the village (HER 13961), *c.* 250m west of the Church of St Peter and St Paul. It is possible that medieval buildings once lined the High Street in this part of Cranfield, but no evidence for any such structures has yet been found, as many have been removed as a result of post-medieval redevelopment. An evaluation *c.* 100m to the north-east of the development site adjacent to 69 High Street (HER 15676, EBD 342) revealed an oval-shaped pit with two residual sherds of medieval pottery and evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation.

It was considered that the potential for medieval heritage assets to be present within the DA was low. If any were found, they would most likely represent medieval backyard activity in the form of pits.

A number of post-medieval buildings survive, along this segment of the High Street; one example is a 19th-century Methodist Chapel (NHLE 1321678), located immediately across the road from the DA. Another is a Grade II listed 17th–19th-century building at 94 and 96 High Street (NHLE 1114032), adjacent to the DA in the north.



A dwelling, probably similar in date to 94 and 96 High Street, once stood within the DA, adjacent to 94 High Street, set back the same distance from the street. This was demolished sometime in the early 20th century and the bungalow was built in the mid-20th century. The potential for post-medieval archaeological remains to be present on the DA was therefore considered to be high.

1.4 Enclosure Map of 1840

This is the most relevant of the historical maps, and appears to indicate that the High Street was a significantly wider routeway, which has narrowed in more recent times. At this time the south side of the High Street was lined with buildings, while on the north side they were often set back some distance from the street frontage. Only very few of these buildings survive. One example is a 19th-century Methodist Chapel (NHLE 1321678), located immediately across the road from the development site. Another is a Grade II listed 17th–19th-century building at 94 and 96 High Street (NHLE 1114032), adjacent to the DA in the north.

The map shows several linear features at the street frontage of several properties, which appear to be segments of roadside ditch, whilst several, more irregular pit-like features are also depicted in the street frontage area, including one adjacent to a building (Figure 2).

The DA is shown to contain a large rectangular building, set back slightly from and parallel with the routeway. No features are shown in the area between the building and the routeway.

1.5 Project Objectives

The relevant research frameworks for the area are: *Bedfordshire Archaeology. Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy* (Oake *et al.* 2007) and *A Revised Framework for the East of England* (Medlycott 2011).

Potential heritage assets on the DA could relate to the medieval and post-medieval development of Cranfield village, but the survival of prehistoric and Roman heritage assets could not be discounted. There was considered to be high potential for the evidence of a post-medieval dwelling on the site, pre-dating the current bungalow.

With regards to the investigation of medieval settlement, the regional research framework indicated that few medieval settlements have been investigated archaeologically within Bedfordshire, and research is needed into the diversity, characterisation of settlement forms and the appearance, growth, shift and disappearance of settlements (Oake 2007, 14, Medlycott 2011, 70). This would need to be undertaken at the micro-scale, for investigating the chronology, structure and function of individual settlements (for example the DA) and at the macro-scale of broad patterns of settlement (Oake *et al.* 2007, 14).



Dependent on the nature of any remains revealed, specific research aims would be derived from regional research frameworks (e.g. Brown and Glazebrook 2007; Oake et al. 2007; Medlycott 2011).

In summary, the specific research objectives of the evaluation were:

- To determine if evidence for the medieval and post-medieval periods is present within the DA;
- To assess if any heritage assets relating to earlier periods were present within the DA.

The general purpose of the evaluation was to recover information on the:

- location, extent, nature, and date of any archaeological features or deposits present within the DA;
- integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits present within the DA;
- nature of palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.



2. METHODOLOGY

The archeologically investigations took place between 8th and 9th June 2017.

Any potential archaeological features were cleaned, investigated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets.

The project adhered throughout to the standards prescribed in the following documents:

- Albion Archaeology *Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork* (2nd edn, 2001).
- Bedford Borough Council *Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford* (ver. 2.8, 2010)
- CIfA *Charter and By-law; Code of conduct* (2014)
 Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief (2014)
 Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2014)
- EAA *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (2003)
- English Heritage (now Historic England) *Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation* (2nd edn, 2011)
- Historic England *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment: The MoRPHE Project Managers' Guide* (2015)

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS database under reference number albionar1-277596.



3. RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

The site had been cleared of standing buildings before the evaluation commenced. The two trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket, which was under the supervision of an archaeologist. The investigation was undertaken in a period of generally bright weather.

The results of the evaluation are summarised below, integrating the finds data. Detailed context data is presented in Appendix 1, with additional information on artefacts in Table 1. A plan of the trenches with associated sections is shown on Figure 3, whilst selected images are shown on Figures 4 and 5.

In the following summary, contexts in brackets refer to deposits recorded on site. Each trench was allocated a block of number, commencing at 100 for Trench 1 and 200 for Trench 2. Cut features are in square brackets, e.g. [103] identifies a large feature, possibly a quarry in Trench 1. Deposits or layers are in curved brackets, e.g. (205) defined the fill of the stakehole in Trench 2.

3.2 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits

Topsoil (100) and (200) comprised dark grey-black silty loam that was 0.25–0.3m deep.

The geological strata (109) comprised blue grey clay with orange gravel inclusions.

3.3 Archaeological Remains

On removal of the topsoil a number of modern deposits were revealed.

In Trench 1, a buried soil profile was revealed, comprising dark grey silty clay (101) that appears to be a former cultivation soil. This was above mid brown-grey silty clay (102) and mid orange-brown (108) subsoil, which is thought to reflect the changes in the underlying parent material, with the latter being derived from the underling fills of [103] (Figure 3: section 11 and Figure 4: image 2). These deposits had a combined thickness of up to 0.5m thick and contained moderate amounts of modern ceramic material (not collected).

Both trenches contained land drains on contrasting alignments. In the north-west end of Trench 1 the land drain was truncated by a large modern service trench.

A large steep-sided feature [103], possibly a quarry rather than a ditch, based on the form and nature of the fills, was revealed in the northern part of Trench 1 (Figure 3 – brown feature). It was at least 3m wide and more than 0.65m deep, with the northern extent being truncated by the later service trench (Figure 3 and section 1 and Figure 4: images 1 and 2). The possible quarry was not fully excavated due to its depth within the trench. It was filled with a series of silty clay deposits, which ranged in colour from mid orange-brown to dark blue grey — the deposits becoming darker with depth. The dark lowest exposed fills (104) and (105) showed evidence of waterlogging. The form and



profiles of the fills, particularly (104) and (106) in the south-east suggest backfilling. A small number of finds were recovered from fills (105) and (107) (Table 1). They comprise single pottery sherds of 17th-century glazed red earthenware, 18th-century brown salt-glazed and white salt-glazed stoneware (respectively fabric types P01, P36A and P37¹). Other post-medieval finds are single pieces of ceramic roof tile and brick/paviour (184g), and two vessel glass fragments (25g), one deriving from a wine bottle and one from a possible flask or jar. Three abraded rib fragments (54g) from animals of indeterminate species were also collected.

The location and form of the feature may suggest that it was similar to those depicted on the 1840 Enclosure map, shown in the areas to the north and south. Due to the limited extent of the feature exposed in the trench, it is not clear if it had a linear or pit-like form. The nature of the fills indicates quarrying. Although not bottomed, backfilling would appear to have commenced relatively quickly, with clays from the lower part of the geological strata deposited against the southern edge of the cut.

Other features in Trench 2 included a small, shallow modern rectangular pit 0.4m by 0.32m wide and 0.06m deep (Figure 3 and section 2). The loose fill contained a modern animal burial; once identified as recent, investigation of the burial ceased. The animal was probably a pet from the associated bungalow. A single isolated and undated stakehole [202] some 0.17m across and 0.12m deep with a V-shaped profile (Figure 3 and section 3), as well as several areas of disturbance associated with trees etc. were revealed (Figure 5: images 3 and 4). The fills were relatively dark, being similar in composition to the topsoil, indicating a recent date for the activity.

Tr.	Feature	Description	Fill	Date Range	Finds Summary
1	103	Quarry/ditch	105	Post-medieval	Pottery (12g); ceramic roof tile (49g); vessel glass (12g); animal bone (24g)
	103	Quarry/ditch	107	Post-medieval	Pottery (36g); brick (135g); vessel glass (13g); animal bone (30g)

Table 1: Finds summary

¹ Fabrics defined in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series



4. CONCLUSIONS

The archaeological evaluation revealed post-medieval to modern deposits, related to aspects of the recent development of the site. Several areas of modern disturbance associated with the former bungalow, including a service trench were revealed, together with a small pit containing an animal burial — possibly associated with the residents of the bungalow.

Evidence of the former agricultural nature of the area was revealed by a thick former ploughsoil (101) and associated land drains.

In Trench 1, towards the street frontage, below modern activity associated with the former bungalow, a large feature, possibly a steep-sided quarry that contained a small quantity 17th–18th-century pottery was identified. It may be similar to the features depicted on the 1840 Enclosure map, in the area adjacent to the edge of the original High Street. The form of the feature and nature of the fills suggests that it was backfilled starting from the south-east edge, a process characteristic of quarries.

Other features included a small modern rectangular pit containing an animal skeleton. A single isolated and undated stakehole was also revealed in the trench, as well as several areas of disturbance associated with trees etc.

The features revealed by the evaluation are post-medieval to modern in date. They have no further potential to address research themes associated with the development of medieval or post-medieval Cranfield.

This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website, reference no. albionar1-277596. The project archive will be deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford, under accession number BEDFM 2017.17.



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6. APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARY

**Trench: 1**

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.6 m. Max: 0.8 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: SP (Easting: 53340: Northing: 18758)

OS Grid Ref.: SP (Easting: 53404: Northing: 18680)

Reason: Assess archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
100	Topsoil	Friable, dark grey black, silty loam. Thickness: 0.25m Possible the result of recent landscaping.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
101	Buried topsoil	Firm dark grey silty clay moderate small CBM Thickness: 0.32m. Buried former cultivation soil.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
102	Buried subsoil	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional small CBM Thickness: 0.2m. CBM not retained. Confined to southern part of trench. Contrasts with northern continuation (108) as derived from different underlying material.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
103	Feature	Linear NE-SW dimensions: min breadth 3m, min depth 0.65m, min length 2m Partially excavated, truncated by modern service trench. Possible quarry of uncertain form, rather than a ditch.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
104	Fill	Plastic mid blue grey silty clay Waterlogged, traces of rooting Thickness: 0.05m+	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
105	Fill	Plastic dark blue grey silty clay Thickness: 0.25m. Deposit contains a small assemblage of finds, comprising pottery, ceramic roof tile, vessel glass and animal bone.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
106	Fill	Firm mid brown orange silty clay Thickness: 0.35m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
107	Fill	Firm mid orange brown clay silt Thickness: 0.2m. Deposit contains a small assemblage of finds, comprising pottery, brick, vessel glass and animal bone.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
108	Buried subsoil	Firm mid orange brown silty clay Thickness: 0.3m. Confined to northern part of trench. Contrasts with southern continuation (102) as derived from different underlying material.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
109	Natural	Firm, light grey clay with orange gravelly inclusions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



Trench: 2

Max Dimensions: Length: 10.00 m. Width: 2.00 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.25 m. Max: 0.45 m.

Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: SP (Easting: 53439; Northing: 18680)

OS Grid Ref.: SP (Easting: 53534; Northing: 18711)

Reason: Assess archaeological potential

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
200	Topsoil	Friable, dark grey black, silty loam Thickness: 0.25 - 0.4m	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
201	Natural	Firm, light grey clay with orange gravely inclusions	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
202	Animal grave	Rectangular sides; concave base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.32m, max depth 0.06m, max length 0.4m Modern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
203	Fill	Friable dark grey black silty loam The deposit was very loose. Animal bone not retained.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
204	Stakehole	Oval sides: steep base: v-shaped dimensions: max breadth 0.17m, max depth 0.12m, max length 0.3m Tapering V-shaped profile suggests a vertically driven stake.	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
205	Fill	Friable dark grey black clay silt	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

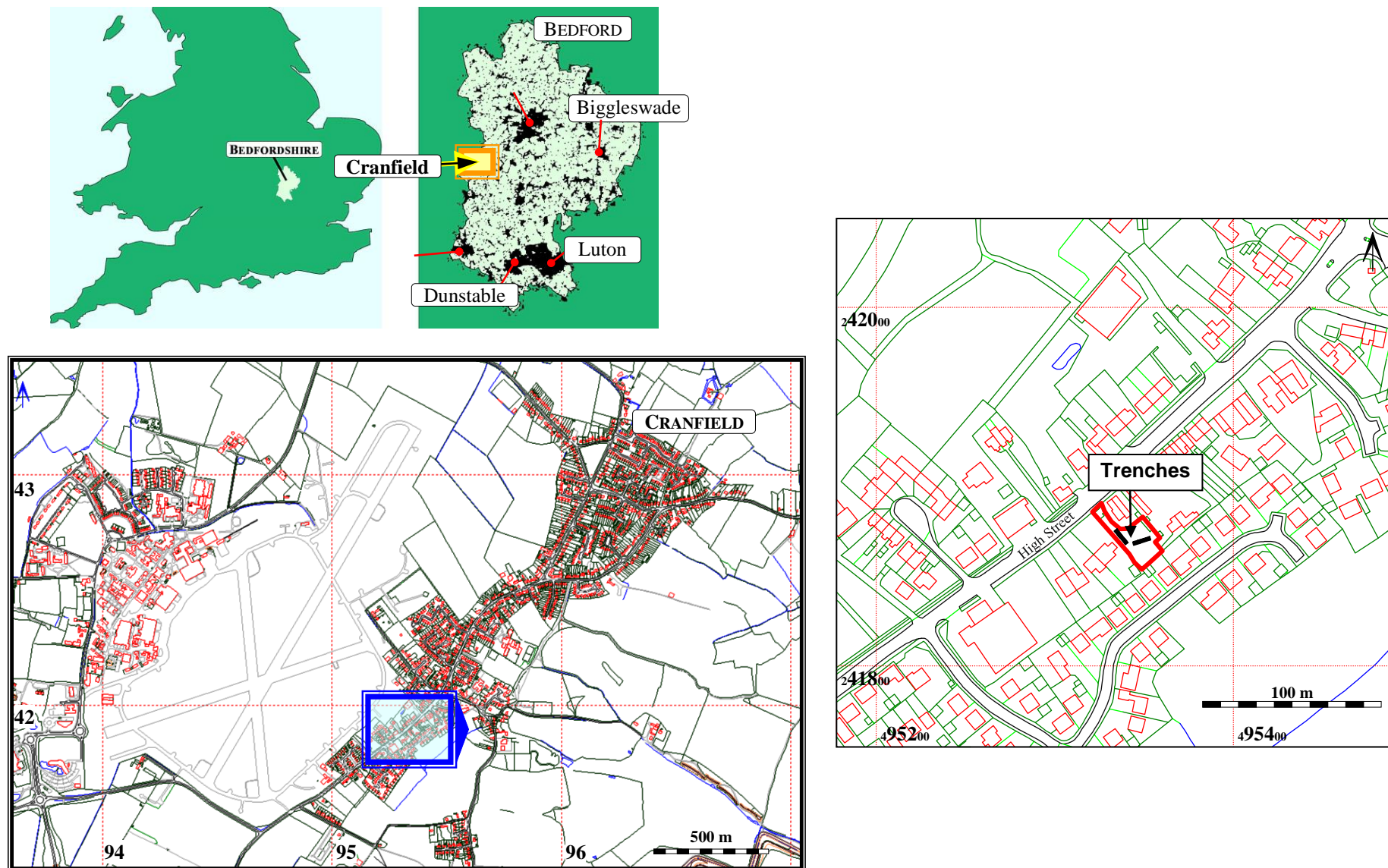


Figure 1: Site location

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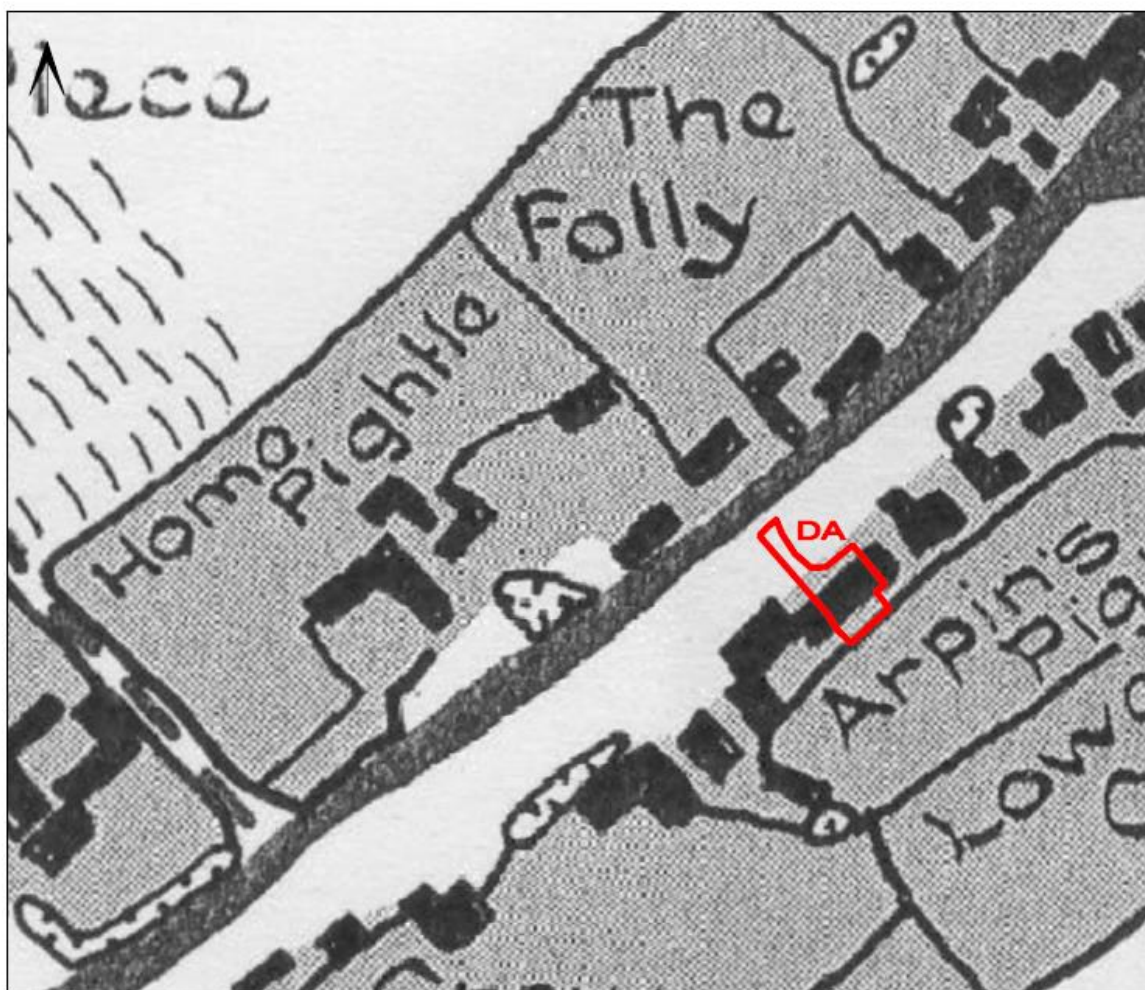
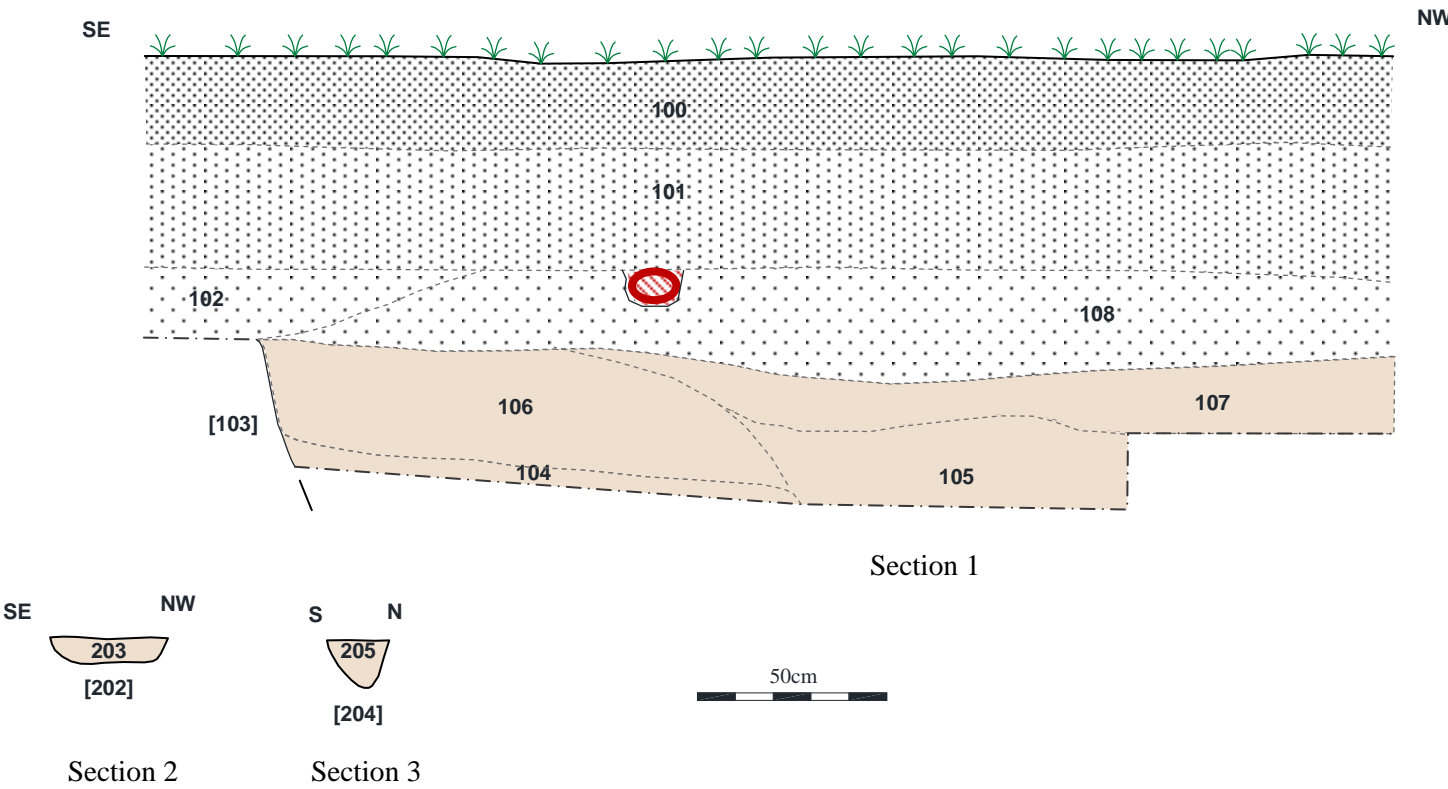
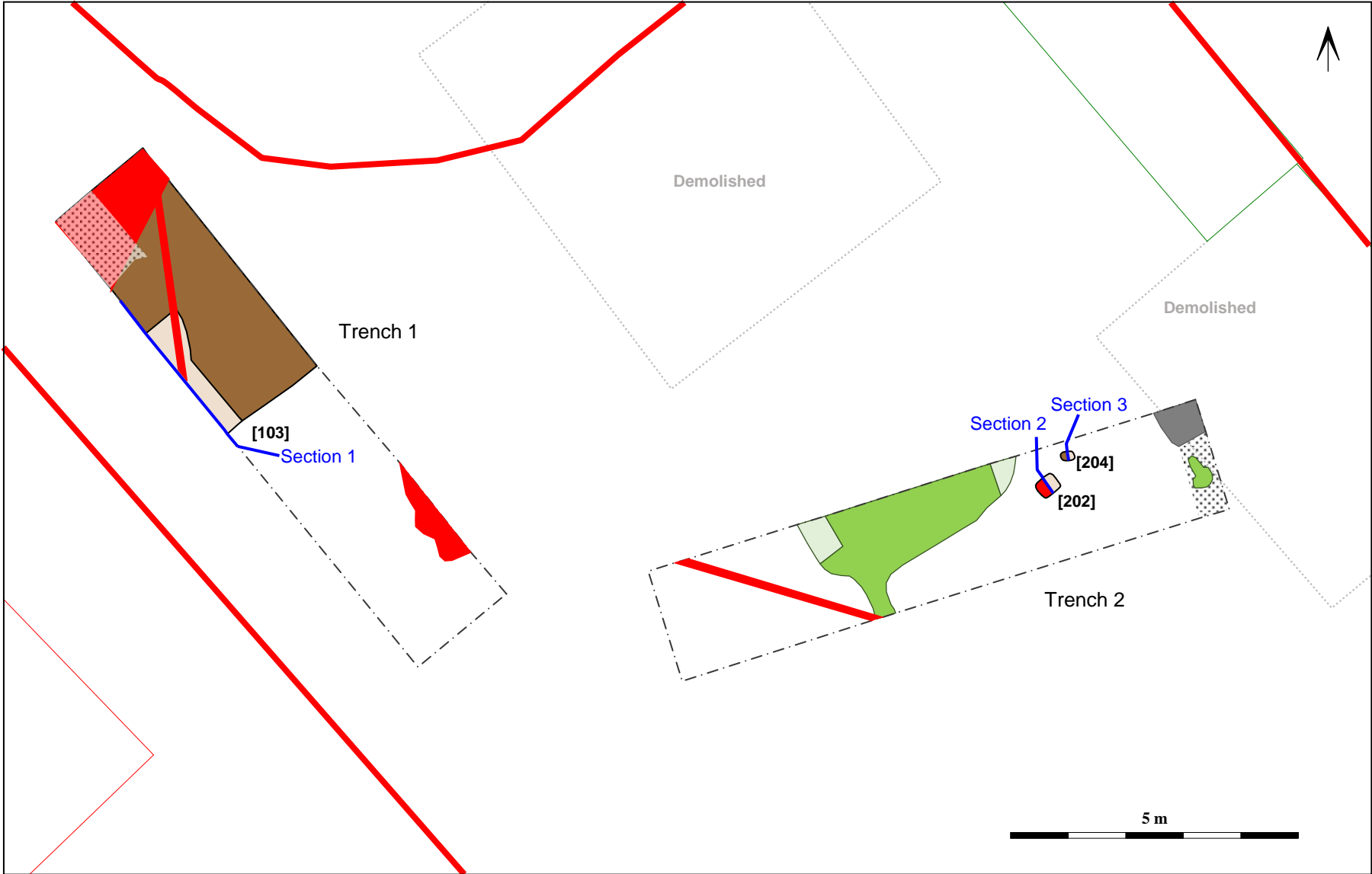


Figure 2: Detail of the 1840 Enclosure map (Showing the approximate location of the development area (DA). Note how the routeway has narrowed over time, with the northern limit of the DA abutting the current street frontage).



- Archaeological feature – unexcavated section
- Archaeological feature – excavated segment
- Tree-throw
- Tree-throw – excavated segment
- Modern feature
- Concrete
- Topsoil
- Buried topsoil
- Subsoil

Figure 3: All-features plan and associated sections

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Image 1: General view of Trench 1 looking southwards with possible quarry [103] in the foreground. Scale 1min 50cm divisions.



Image 2: Excavated section through [103] – not bottomed. This also reveals the thickness of the overburden. Scale 1min 50cm divisions.

Figure 4: Selected images 1 and 2 – Trench 1



Image 3: General view along Trench 2, looking westwards, with the stakehole and animal grave in the middle distance. Scale 1m in 50cm divisions.



Image 4: Excavated section through rectangular modern animal grave [202] at the top of the image and undated, isolated stakehole [204]. Scale 40cm in 10cm divisions.

Figure 5: Selected images 3 and 4 – Trench 2

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