LAND SOUTH OF ROOKERY FARM COTTON END BEDFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

Albion archaeology





LAND SOUTH OF ROOKERY FARM COTTON END BEDFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD EVALUATION

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Contents

ľ	Non-T	echnical Summary	4
1.	INT	RODUCTION	5
1	.1	Planning Background	5
1	.2	Site Location and Geology	5
1	.3	Archaeological and Historical Background	5
1	.4	Project Objectives	6
2.	ME	THODOLOGY	7
3.	RE	SULTS	8
3	8.1	Introduction	8
3	3.2	Overburden and Geological Deposits	8
3	3.3	Early Medieval Remains	8
3	5.4	Late Medieval/Early Post-Medieval Remains	9
3	8.5	Post-Medieval/Modern Remains	10
3	8.6	Undated Features	10
3	5. 7	Tree-throws	10
4.	со	NCLUSIONS	11
4	1.1	Summary of Results	11
4	1.2	Significance of the Results	11
4	1.3	Impact of the Proposed Development	12
5.	BIB	SLIOGRAPHY	13
6.	AP	PENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES	14
7.	AP	PENDIX 2: FINDS SUMMARY	21
7	.1	Pottery	21
7	7.2	Ceramic Building Material	22
7	7.3	Iron Objects	22
7	7.4	Ecofacts	22



List of Figures

Figure 1: Site location Figure 2: All-features plan Figure 3: Trenches 1, 6–9 Figure 4: Trenches 10–14 Figure 5: Selected photos – Trench 1 Figure 6: Selected photos – Trenches 8 and 9 Figure 7: Selected photos – Trenches 10 and 11

The figures are bound at the back of the report.



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The fieldwork was undertaken by Ben Carroll, Marcin Kozimiński (Archaeological Supervisors) and Adrian Woolmer (Assistant Supervisor). The report has been prepared by Marcin Kozimiński with contributions from Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) and Jackie Wells (Finds Officer). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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Key Terms

The following terms and abbreviations are used throughout this report:

BBC	Bedford Borough Council
BBHER	Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
HET	Bedford Borough Council Historic Environment Team
PDA	Proposed development area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



A pre-application enquiry (16/1028) for residential development with a new primary school was made to Bedford Borough Council in relation to land at Rookery Farm, High Road, Cotton End, Bedfordshire. Kier Construction is gathering baseline information for the school site, henceforth referred to as the proposed development area (PDA).

As the PDA is located to the south of medieval settlement and ridge and furrow earthworks that have the potential to be of national significance the Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation work be carried out to provide the information required to support a planning application. Subsequent to the evaluation described within this report being carried out, the proposed development scheme has been re-submitted to include a 'drop-off' car park located in the field neighbouring the main school site.

Archaeological trial trenching took place within the proposed school site (the PDA) between 17th and 23rd August 2017. Archaeological features were identified in seven of the fourteen trenches excavated which provided evidence of activity on the site dating from the early medieval to post-medieval periods.

An area of medieval settlement activity was identified within the north end of the PDA (within the vicinity of Trench 1) which is a continuation of the settlement activity which survives as earthworks immediately to the north-west. As such, these remains are of particular interest in light of regional research objectives relating to the layout and development of medieval settlement. The revealed late medieval and post-medieval activity is of less significance; the features were confined to areas near the south and east boundaries of the PDA and are associated with rural land management and division away from the main settlement focus.

Groundworks associated with the proposed development of the school site are likely to have a negative impact on the sub-surface archaeological remains within the PDA; any groundworks within the northern part of the PDA would potentially have a negative impact upon the medieval settlement remains identified in this location. The proposed development would have a less significant impact upon the later medieval and post-medieval features revealed within the PDA, which though of interest, are considered to be of less archaeological significance.

It is intended that the proposed 'drop-off' car park adjacent to the main school site, which has not been subject to trial trenching, will effectively be a 'no-dig construction' with self-draining surfacing. However, if any ground reduction were required, it would have a negative impact upon the ridge and furrow earthworks that survive in this area. The value of ridge and furrow earthworks has been recognised nationally by Historic England (formerly English Heritage), of which relatively little survives in Bedfordshire.

Any significant impacts of the proposed development on sub-surface archaeological remains could be mitigated by measures designed to ensure the continued preservation in-situ of the identified archaeological remains or, where this is not possible, by the implementation of a further programme of archaeological works.



1.1 Planning Background

A pre-application enquiry (16/1028) for residential development with a new primary school was made to Bedford Borough Council in relation to land at Rookery Farm, High Road, Cotton End, Bedfordshire. Kier Construction is gathering baseline information for the school site, henceforth referred to as the proposed development area (PDA).

As the PDA is located to the south of medieval settlement and ridge and furrow earthworks that have the potential to be of national significance the Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) advised that a programme of archaeological evaluation work be carried out to provide the information required to support a planning application. This was in accordance with *National Planning Policy Framework – Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment* (NPPF) (DCLG 2012).

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Kier Construction to carry out the evaluation in response to a brief issued by the HET (BBC 2016). The scope of work was described in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI), agreed with the HET (Albion 2017a).

Subsequent to the evaluation described within this report being carried out, the proposed development scheme has been re-submitted to include a 'drop-off' car park located in the field neighbouring the main school site (see Figure 1).

1.2 Site Location and Geology

Cotton End is a village within the unitary Borough of Bedford and is situated in the centre of Bedfordshire. The county town of Bedford lies 5km to the north-west, and the A1 (Great North Road) and Biggleswade are located *c*. 10km to the east. Cotton End is a linear development situated on the east side of the A600.

The PDA lies on the west side of the A600 (High Road), centred on NGR TL 08400 45292. It comprises a 2.8ha field bounded by the A600 to the south and east and by fields to the north and west.

The underlying bedrock comprises Stewartby Member and Weymouth Member (undifferentiated) Mudstone¹. This is overlain by a mix of sands, gravels, silt and clay. The PDA lies on fairly flat ground at c. 30.6m OD.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

The following section is based on the archaeological and historical background provided in the brief issued by the HET.

The PDA is situated to the south of known medieval settlement (BBHER 15518) and ridge and furrow earthworks (BBHER3291). The former comprise

¹ http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html

holloways, ponds and at least one possible moated site. Recent LIDAR data and aerial photographs have highlighted that both sets of earthworks are well preserved and have the potential to be of national significance, equivalent to a scheduled monument. No earthworks exist within the PDA, as a result of modern ploughing, but activity associated with the adjacent earthworks could potentially survive as below-ground archaeological remains within the site.

Cropmarks of probable Iron Age origin have been identified at the northern edge of Cotton End (BBHER 16659). They correspond to an extensive area of cropmarks (BBHER 1181) that lies to the north and west — double-ditched trackways, small enclosures and ring ditches. Finds of late Iron Age and Roman pottery, roof and floor tiles, quern fragments and metal objects have also been recorded in this area. No such cropmarks have been identified within the PDA, but there is a possibility that below-ground archaeological remains pertaining to Iron Age and Romano-British activity could be present.

1.4 Project Objectives

The principal purpose of the archaeological field evaluation was to recover information on the:

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

This information will be used by the HET and the Local Planning Authority to evaluate the significance of the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains that might survive within the site.



The methodological approach to the project is summarised below; a full methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion 2017).

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

Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (2nd ed., 2001).
Bedford Museum	Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedfordshire (2010).
• CIfA	Charter and By-law; Code of Conduct (2014). Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation (2014). Standard and guidance for the collection,
	documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (2014).
• Historic England	Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment PPN3: Archaeological Excavation (2015) Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery
	to post-excavation (2nd ed.) (2011).

Trial trenching took place within the proposed site of the school (the PDA) between 17th and 23rd August 2017 (Figure 1). Ten 50m-long and four 25m-long trenches, all measuring 1.8m wide, were opened, equating to a 4% sample of the *c*. 2.8ha site. In addition, Trench 10 was extended eastwards by *c*. $3.5m \times 4m (14m^2)$ to clarify initial findings within the trench. The trial trenches were positioned to give even coverage across the site.

The trenches were opened by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged bucket, operated by an experienced driver under close archaeological supervision. Overburden was removed down to the top of the archaeological deposits or undisturbed geological deposits, whichever were encountered first. All excavation and recording was carried out by experienced Albion staff. The bases and sides of the trenches were cleaned by hand. Any potential archaeological features were cleaned, excavated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro forma* sheets. All features and deposits were assigned a unique context number commencing at 100 for Trench 1, 200 for Trench 2 *etc*. Each trench was subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate. The trenches were inspected by a representative of the HET on 18th August 2017.

The project archive will be deposited at The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford (accession no.: BEDFM 2017.24). Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database (reference no.: albionar1-279709) in accordance with the guidelines issued by Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service.



3.1 Introduction

All significant deposits and features found within the trial trenches are summarised below and shown on Figures 2–7. Context numbers in square brackets refer to cuts [***] and round brackets to fills or layers (***). Archaeological features were identified in seven of the fourteen trenches; Trenches 2–5 were devoid of archaeological features, whilst Trenches 6, 12 and 14 only revealed the remains of tree-throws.

Details of all observed deposits and archaeological features are provided in Appendix 1, whilst detailed finds information is contained in Appendix 2.

3.2 Overburden and Geological Deposits

In the vast majority of trenches the overburden consisted of topsoil and subsoil. A generally 0.28–0.35m thick topsoil of dark brown-grey to greybrown clay silt was present across the PDA, though it was up to 0.48m thick within the centre of Trench 9. The subsoil comprised mid orange-brown to grey-brown silty clay and was 0.09–0.36m thick. In addition, a former subsoil (123) was revealed in Trench 1 (Figure 3) and alluvial layers (1006) and (1011/1012) were recorded beneath the subsoil in Trench 10 (Figure 4); late medieval/early post-medieval brick fragments were recovered from alluvial deposit (1011).

The combined depth of overburden was 0.34–0.65m; the greater depths were generally seen in the southern part of the PDA. The vast majority of archaeological features were sealed by the overburden; the only exceptions were a sub-rectangular feature [1007] and some layers filling depressions cut into the subsoil within Trench 10.

Undisturbed geological strata within the northern part of the PDA comprised yellow-orange sandy silt; deposits of predominantly grey-blue to orange-blue silty clay were revealed within the remainder of the PDA.

3.3 Early Medieval Remains

A number of archaeological features across the site yielded artefacts datable to the early medieval period. Some features containing no dating material have also been assigned to this chronological period based on a combination of their stratigraphical and/or spatial association and similarity of deposits to the features securely dated to the early medieval period.

The area around Trench 1 in the north of the PDA appears to have been a focus of early medieval activity; Trench 1 contained eight ditches and a pit (Figure 3).

Ditches [103], [107] and [110] were aligned E-W; the remainder were either aligned NW-SE² or NNW-SSE³ and two, [112] and [118], appeared to

² [105], [112], [116] and [118].

³ [114].

terminate within the trench. The ditches were 0.36–1.35m+ wide and had Uto V-shaped profiles; they were 0.13–0.55m deep (Figures 3 and 5). Pit [121] was *c*. 0.5m in diameter and contained a similar fill to the neighbouring early medieval features; due its obvious association with the adjacent early medieval activity it was agreed with the HET that it could remain unexcavated. The features were generally filled with light to mid yellow-brown silty clay and dark brown-grey to grey-black clay silt deposits. Pottery dating to the early medieval period was recovered from the majority of these features, along with small quantities of animal bone and some residual late Saxon pottery fragments.

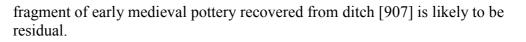
An E–W aligned gully [803] and two pits [805] and [807] were recorded in Trench 8 in the centre of the PDA. The gully was 0.45m wide by 0.1m deep, whilst the pits ranged from 0.52–1.35m in diameter and were no more than 0.17m deep; all these features shared shallow and concave profiles (Figures 3 and 6) and were filled with similar deposits comprising mid brown-grey silty clay. The gully and pit [805] contained sherds of early medieval pottery.

3.4 Late Medieval/Early Post-Medieval Remains

Late medieval/early post-medieval features were confined to the areas nearest the eastern and southern boundaries of the PDA. Features [1015] and [1105], in Trenches 10 and 11 respectively, appear to form part of the same broadly NW–SE aligned ditch. It was of substantial size, measuring 6.6m wide and 0.62m deep, with a stepped, broad profile; it contained a number of artefacts datable to the late medieval/post-medieval period along with fragments of animal bone (Figure 4).

Though feature [1013] (Figure 4) contained a single sherd of highly abraded Roman mortarium, its similar fill to the nearby ditch [1015] suggests it is of a similar, late medieval/early post-medieval date. It measured up to 5.25m wide and at least 0.75m deep; though it could be a part of a ditch, its somewhat irregular shape and the presence of overlying alluvial deposits suggests it could alternatively be a part of a pond-type feature. Similarly, a small feature [1017] (or perhaps a small part of a larger feature containing a similar fill to nearby feature [1013]) could be a part of a discrete pit or perhaps more likely be a part of the same potential water feature.

A number of linear features were also revealed within the trenches located nearest to the eastern boundary of the PDA. A series of broadly NE–SW aligned ditches were revealed within Trench 9 (Figures 4 and 6) — ditch [909] contained a piece of floor tile datable to the late medieval/early post-medieval period and is likely to represent a re-cut of the similarly aligned, though larger, ditch [911]. The nearby and similarly aligned ditch [905] appeared to be connected to and partially truncate a perpendicular ditch [907], whilst a further, adjacent ditch [903] was also broadly aligned NE–SW. The ditches were generally 0.70–1.28m wide and 0.16–0.24m deep, though the most substantial ditch [911] was 1.80m wide by 0.61m deep; all shared similar concave profiles and were infilled by homogenous mid blue-grey silty clay deposits. The similar fills and appearance of these ditches suggests they are all likely to date to the late medieval/early post-medieval period; a tiny



Though unexcavated with the agreement of the HET, the alignment of ditches [703] and [1303] revealed within the trenches to either side of Trench 9 suggest they are likely to be a continuation of the same NE–SW aligned boundary revealed within Trench 9.

3.5 Post-Medieval/Modern Remains

Layers of yellow-brown sandy silt and brown-blue clay (1003, 1004, 1005 and 1010), 0.12–0.68m thick, were revealed filling depressions cut into the subsoil within the northern part of Trench 10 (Figure 4).

A smaller, sub-rectangular feature [1007] measuring 0.9m by 0.65m and 0.73m deep was revealed cutting the alluvial layers revealed beneath the subsoil within Trench 10 (Figures 4 and 7). A large fragment of limestone (1008), still with mortar adhering to it, had been deposited within the pit along with friable dark grey-brown clay silt (1009) which contained a residual very small fragment of late medieval pottery.

In addition, a number of field drains were revealed across the PDA.

3.6 Undated Features

No artefacts were recovered from the NW–SE aligned ditch [1103] in Trench 11, though it is quite likely to date to either the early medieval period or late medieval/early post-medieval period given the features of these dates located in the vicinity.

3.7 Tree-throws

A total of eleven tree-throws were recorded within the trenches, nine of which were investigated by hand.

The tree-throws were generally sub-oval or irregular in shape and shared similar asymmetrical and irregular profiles with uneven to concave bases; none of them yielded artefactual or ecofactual evidence.



4. CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Summary of Results

Archaeological features were identified in seven of the fourteen trenches. These features have provided evidence of activity on the site dating from the early medieval to post-medieval periods.

The vast majority of features dating to the early medieval period were revealed within Trench 1 located at the north end of the PDA. These features included a number of boundary ditches and a pit, which together produced a reasonably substantial amount of pottery and other finds, suggesting that they represent a continuation of the medieval settlement activity surviving as earthworks immediately to the north-west.

In contrast, the few early medieval artefacts recovered from the ditch and two pits revealed within Trench 8 suggest that they represent peripheral activity away from the main settlement focus. Located within the centre of the PDA, they lie closer to the neighbouring ridge and furrow earthworks of the medieval fields bordering the settlement.

The revealed late medieval/early post-medieval activity largely consists of ditches confined to the areas nearest the eastern and southern boundaries of the PDA. The series of ditches revealed within Trenches 7, 9 and 13 appear to define a NE–SW aligned boundary, whilst the nature of a number of features within Trenches 10 and 11 suggest they may be associated with the management and drainage of water within this area of the PDA. Alluvial deposits were also revealed within Trench 10 and an existing watercourse lies immediately to the west. The small amount of artefacts collectively recovered from all the late medieval/early post-medieval features tends to confirm their association with land management/division on the periphery of any settlement focus; their location within the PDA is more in line with the ridge and furrow earthworks of the medieval fields immediately to the north-west rather than the settlement remains further to the north.

The small amount of revealed post-medieval activity was confined to Trench 10 in the south-west part of the site, consisting of a pit and layers perhaps deposited to level/make-up the ground in this part of the site.

4.2 Significance of the Results

The trial trenching has identified an area of medieval settlement activity within the north end of the PDA (within the vicinity of Trench 1) which is a continuation of the settlement activity which survives as earthworks immediately to the north-west. As such, these remains are of particular interest in light of regional research objectives relating to the layout and development of medieval settlement (see Oake 2007, 14). The origins and development of the different rural settlement types along with the dynamics of rural settlement has in particular been identified as needing further research (Medlycott 2011, 70). Being principally associated with rural land management and division away from the main settlement focus, the later medieval and post-medieval activity revealed within the PDA is of less significance.

4.3 Impact of the Proposed Development

The proposed development within the area of trial trenching will comprise a primary school, together with its associated access roads, green spaces, play areas, sports pitch and car parking. Associated groundworks are likely to have a negative impact on the sub-surface archaeological remains within the PDA; any groundworks within the northern part of the PDA would potentially have a negative impact upon the medieval settlement remains identified in this location. The proposed development would have a less significant impact upon the later medieval and post-medieval features revealed within the PDA, which though of interest, are considered to be of less archaeological significance.

It is intended that the proposed 'drop-off' car park adjacent to the main school site, which has not been subject to trial trenching, will effectively be a 'no-dig construction' with self-draining surfacing. However, if any ground reduction/levelling were required it would have a negative impact upon the ridge and furrow earthworks which survive in this area. The value of ridge and furrow earthworks have been recognised nationally by Historic England (formerly English Heritage) — in the 1990s it commissioned mapping of surviving ridge and furrow across much of the Midlands as part of its national Monuments Protection Programme in order to identify areas of statutory protection. This clearly demonstrated that, out of the eight counties surveyed, ridge and furrow is the least well preserved in Bedfordshire. Bedford Borough Council has also recently carried out a study of ridge and furrow within the bounds of the unitary authority; the study highlighted the value of the ridge and furrow at Rookery Farm (Albion Archaeology 2017b).

Any significant impacts of the proposed development on sub-surface archaeological remains could be mitigated by measures designed to ensure the continued preservation *in-situ* of the identified archaeological remains or, where this is not possible, by the implementation of a further programme of archaeological works.



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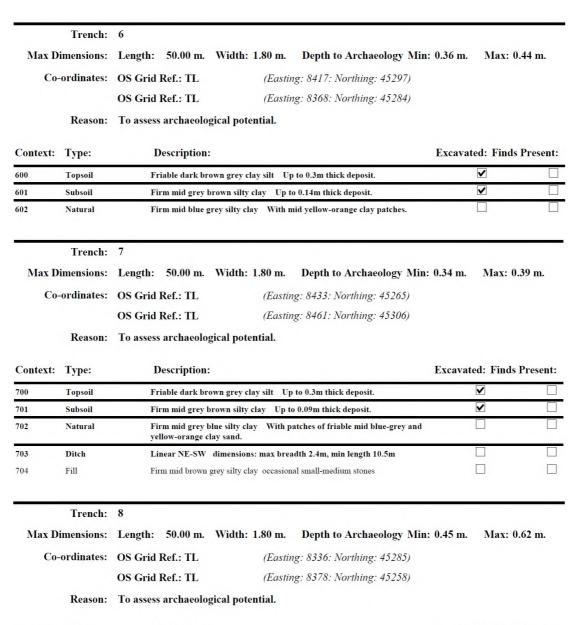
6. APPENDIX 1: TRENCH SUMMARIES

Trench: 1		an Sar a		
Max Dimensions: Ler	ngth: 50.00 m.	Width: 1.80 m.	Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.42 m.	Max: 0.44 m.
Co-ordinates: OS	Grid Ref.: TL	(Easting	g: 8463: Northing: 45397)	
OS	Grid Ref.: TL	(Easting	g: 8429: Northing: 45360)	

Context:	Туре:	Description:	Excavated: Finds	Present:
100	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt frequent small-medium stones Up to 0.28n thick deposit.	n 🗹	
101	Subsoil	Firm mid orange brown silty clay Up to 0.16m thick deposit.	>	\checkmark
102	Natural	Firm mid yellow orange sandy silt occasional small-medium stones		
103	Ditch	Linear E-W sides: U-shaped base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.7m, min depth 0.13m, min length 2.m Truncated by ditch [105] and parallel to ditche [107] and [110].	s 🗹	
104	Fill	Firm mid yellow brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones		\checkmark
105	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: concave base: flat dimensions: min breadth 1.12m, max depth 0.19m, min length 1.8m Truncated by ditch [107] and it truncates ditch [103].		
106	Fill	Friable dark brown grey clay silt occasional small stones		
107	Ditch	Linear E-W sides: V-shaped base: concave dimensions: min breadth 1.35m, max depth 0.55m, min length 2.35m It truncates ditch [105] and is truncated by [110].		
108	Lower fill	Firm mid yellow brown silty clay occasional small stones Up to 0.23m thick deposit.		✓
109	Upper fill	Friable dark brown grey clay silt $\mbox{occasional small stones}$ Up to 0.32m thick deposit.		
110	Ditch	Linear E-W sides: steep base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.36m, max depth 0.21m, min length 2.35m It truncates ditch [107] and is truncated by a land drain. It is parallel to [107] and [103].		
111	Fill	Firm dark grey brown silty clay	\checkmark	
112	Gulley	Linear NW-SE sides: V-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.55m, max depth 0.23m, min length 0.75m	\checkmark	
113	Fill	Friable dark brown grey clay silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small stones		\checkmark
114	Ditch	Curving linear NNW-SSE sides: V-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.95m, max depth 0.27m, min length 2.1m		
115	Fill	Friable dark grey black clay silt moderate flecks charcoal, occasional small- medium stones		✓
116	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.7m, max depth 0.27m, min length 2.m Truncated by ditch [118] and parallel with it.		
117	Fill	Firm mid yellow brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones		\checkmark
118	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.28m, max depth 0.4m, min length 1.6m It truncates parallel ditch [116] and terminates within trench.		
119	Lower fill	Firm light yellow brown silty clay occasional small stones Up to 0.06m thick deposit.		✓
120	Main fill	Friable dark grey black clay silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small- medium stones Up to 0.35m thick deposit.		\checkmark
121	Pit	Sub-circular dimensions: max breadth 0.5m		
122	Fill	Friable dark grey black clay silt occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small ston	es 🗌	~
123	Buried subsoil	Friable mid yellow brown clay silt occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.12m thick deposit that seals linear features [112] to [118].		



	Trench:	2		
Max D	imensions:	Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0	.38 m. Max: 0	.4 m.
Co	-ordinates:	OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8465: Northing: 45377)		
		OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8465: Northing: 45327)		
	Reason:	To assess archaeological potential.		
Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated: Finds	Present
200	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt frequent small stones Up to 0.3m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
201	Subsoil	Firm mid orange brown silty clay moderate small-medium stones Up to 0.1m thick deposit.		
202	Natural	Firm mid yellow orange sandy silt occasional small-medium stones		
	Trench:	3		
Max D	imensions:	Length: 25.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0).4 m. Max: (.4 m.
Co	-ordinates:	OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8424: Northing: 45342)		
		OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8449: Northing: 45342)		
	Reason:	To assess archaeological potential.		
Context:	Туре:	Description:	Excavated: Finds	Present
300	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt frequent small stones Up to 0.28m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
301	Subsoil	Firm mid orange brown silty clay Up to 0.12m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
302	Natural	Firm mid yellow orange sandy silt occasional small-medium stones		Ľ
302	Natural Trench:			
	Trench:		□ 0.41 m. Max: 0	.5 m.
Max D	Trench: Dimensions:	4	□ 0.41 m. Max: 0	.5 m.
Max D	Trench: Dimensions:	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0	D.41 m. Max: 0	.5 m.
Max D	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates:	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0 OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333)	D.41 m. Max: 0	.5 m.
Max D Co	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason:	4Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333)OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298)To assess archaeological potential.	D.41 m. Max: 0 Excavated: Finds	
Max D Co Context:	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason:	4Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333)OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298)To assess archaeological potential.		
Max D	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason: Type:	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0 OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333) OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298) To assess archaeological potential. Description: Description: Description: Friable dark brown grey clay silt moderate small-medium stones Up to	Excavated: Finds	
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Max D Co Context: 400	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason: Type: Topsoil Subsoil	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0 OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333) OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298) To assess archaeological potential. Description: I Friable dark brown grey clay silt moderate small-medium stones Up to 0.29m thick deposit. Firm mid orange brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.21m thick deposit. Firm mid yellow orange sandy silt occasional small-medium stones	Excavated: Finds 🔽	
Max D Co Context: 400 401 402	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason: Type: Topsoil Subsoil Natural Trench:	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0 OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333) OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298) To assess archaeological potential. Description: I Friable dark brown grey clay silt moderate small-medium stones Up to 0.29m thick deposit. Firm mid orange brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.21m thick deposit. Firm mid yellow orange sandy silt occasional small-medium stones	Excavated: Finds	Present
Max D Co Context: 400 401 402 Max D	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason: Type: Topsoil Subsoil Natural Trench: Dimensions:	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0 OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333) OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298) To assess archaeological potential. Description: Friable dark brown grey clay silt moderate small-medium stones Up to 0.29m thick deposit. Firm mid orange brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.21m thick deposit. Firm mid yellow orange sandy silt occasional small-medium stones	Excavated: Finds	Present
Max D Co Context: 400 401 402 Max D	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason: Type: Topsoil Subsoil Natural Trench: Dimensions:	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0 OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333) OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298) To assess archaeological potential. Description: D Friable dark brown grey clay silt moderate small-medium stones Up to 0.29m thick deposit. Firm mid orange brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.21m thick deposit. Firm mid yellow orange sandy silt occasional small-medium stones 5 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0	Excavated: Finds	Present
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Max D Co Context: 400 401 402 Max D Co	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason: Type: Topsoil Subsoil Natural Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason:	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0 OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333) OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298) To assess archaeological potential. Description: Image: Description in the image of the ima	Excavated: Finds	Present
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Max D Co Context: 400 401 402 Max D	Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason: Type: Topsoil Subsoil Natural Trench: Dimensions: -ordinates: Reason: Type:	4 Length: 50.00 m. Width: 1.80 m. Depth to Archaeology Min: 0 OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8391: Northing: 45333) OS Grid Ref.: TL (Easting: 8356: Northing: 45298) To assess archaeological potential. Image: Description:	Excavated: Finds	Present



Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated: Finds	Present:
800	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt Up to 0.32m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
801	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.3m thick deposit.		✓
802	Natural	Firm light grey blue silty clay With friable patches of mid brown-orange clay silt.		
803	Gulley	Linear NE-SW sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.45m, max depth 0.1m, min length 1.m	\checkmark	
804	Fill	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional flecks charcoal, occasional small- medium stones		✓
805	Pit	Sub-circular sides: U-shaped base: flat dimensions: max depth 0.09m, max diameter 0.52m	V	
806	Fill	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones	\checkmark	\checkmark
807	Pit	Sub-circular sides: U-shaped base: uneven dimensions: max depth 0.17m, max diameter 1.35m	\checkmark	
808	Fill	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones	\checkmark	



Trench: 9

Max Dimensions:Length:50.00 m.Width:1.80 m.Depth to Archaeology Min:0.34 m.Max:0.39 m.Co-ordinates:OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting:8410:Northing:45280)OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting:8410:Northing:45230)

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated: Finds	Present:
900	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.48m thick deposit (in the centre of the trench).		
901	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.28n thick deposit (in the centre of the trench).	n 🔽	
902	Natural	Firm light grey blue silty clay With patches of friable brown-orange clay silt.		
903	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.28m, max depth 0.24m, min length 3.5m It runs parallel to linears [905] asnd [911].		
904	Fill	Firm mid blue grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones	\checkmark	
905	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: U-shaped base: flat dimensions: max breadth 0.75m, max depth 0.17m, min length 2.2m Possibly contemporary with, or later tha linear [907] at right angles. It runs parallel to [903] and [911].	∠	
906	Fill	Firm mid blue grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones	\checkmark	\checkmark
907	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: min breadth 0.7m, max depth 0.16m, min length 0.9m Possibly contemporary with, or truncated by linear [905].		
908	Fill	Friable mid blue grey clay silt occasional small-medium stones	\checkmark	\checkmark
909	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 0.9m, max depth 0.21m, min length 2.m It truncates ditch [911] on the same alignment. It had a land drain inserted into the SE edge.		
910	Fill	Firm mid brown grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones	\checkmark	\checkmark
911	Ditch	Linear NE-SW sides: U-shaped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.8m, max depth 0.61m, min length 2.m Truncated by [909]. It runs parallel to [903] and [905].		
912	Lower fill	Firm mid blue grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.3m thick deposit.		
913	Upper fill	Firm mid blue grey silty clay occasional small-medium stones With patches of orange-brown clay silt. Up to 0.35m thick deposit.		\checkmark



Trench: 10

Max Dimensions:Length:25.00 m.Width:1.80 m.Depth to Archaeology Min:0.58 m.Max:0.6 m.Co-ordinates:OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting:8311: Northing:45232)OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting:8315: Northing:45257)

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1000	Topsoil	Friable dark brown grey clay silt frequent small stones Up to 0.32m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1001	Subsoil	Firm mid orange brown clay silt moderate small-medium stones Up to 0.28 thick deposit.	n 🗸	
1002	Natural	Firm light yellow blue clay occasional small-medium stones		
1003	Dump material	Firm mid brown blue clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.68m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1004	Dump material	Firm mid brown blue clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.34m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1005	Dump material	Loose mid yellow brown sandy silt frequent small stones Up to 0.22m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1006	Alluvium	Friable mid yellow brown clay silt occasional small stones Up to 0.38m thic deposit.	k 🗸	
1007	Feature	Sub-rectangular sides: near vertical base: flat dimensions: min breadth 0.65m, max depth 0.73m, max length 0.9m Possible foundation remains or dump of material. It was cut into or dumped from the top of subsoil (1001).		
1008	Limestone slab	Hard light yellow grey limestone frequent small-large mortar Up to 0.6m thick deposit.	\checkmark	V
1009	Backfill	Friable dark grey brown clay silt occasional small stones Up to 0.73m thick deposit around limestone (1008).	\checkmark	\checkmark
1010	Dump material	Loose mid yellow brown sandy silt frequent small stones Up to 0.12m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1011	Alluvium	Friable mid brown grey clay silt occasional small stones Up to 0.4m thick deposit.	\checkmark	\checkmark
1012	Alluvium	Friable mid brown grey clay silt occasional small stones Up to 0.33m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1013	Feature	Linear NE-SW sides: concave dimensions: max breadth 5.25m, min depth 0.75m, min length 4.9m Ditch or possible water feature/pond. Not fully excavated.	\checkmark	
1014	Fill	Friable mid yellow brown clay silt occasional small-medium stones	\checkmark	\checkmark
1015	Ditch	Linear NW-SE dimensions: min breadth 6.5m, min length 2.m It may form part of the same feature as [1105].		
1016	Fill	Firm dark grey brown clay silt occasional small stones		\checkmark
1017	Feature	Sub-oval dimensions: min breadth 0.7m, min length 1.5m Part of a pit or possibly part of a water feature/pond		
1018	Fill	Friable mid yellow brown clay silt occasional small-medium stones		



Tour	11
Trench:	11

Max Dimensions:Length:50.00 m.Width:1.80 m.Depth to Archaeology Min:0.48 m.Max:0.56 m.Co-ordinates:OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting:8330: Northing:45211)OS Grid Ref.: TL(Easting:8342: Northing:45260)

Reason: To assess archaeological potential.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated:	Finds Present:
1100	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt frequent small stones, occasional medium stones Up to 0.28m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1101	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate small stones, occasional medium stones Up to 0.28m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1102	Natural	Firm light orange blue silty clay occasional small stones		
1103	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: steep base: concave dimensions: max breadth 1.1m, max depth 0.36m, min length 2.15m	\checkmark	
1104	Fill	Friable mid yellow brown clay silt occasional small stones	\checkmark	\checkmark
1105	Ditch	Linear NW-SE sides: stepped base: concave dimensions: max breadth 6.6m, max depth 0.62m, min length 2.2m		
1106	Primary fill	Firm mid brown yellow silty clay occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.1m thick deposit.		\checkmark
1107	Secondary fill	Firm mid brown grey clay silt occasional small-medium stones Up to 0.38m thick deposit.		\checkmark
1108	Tertiary fill	Firm mid yellow brown silty clay occasional small stones Up to 0.24m thick deposit.		
1109	Upper fill	Firm dark grey brown clay silt occasional small stones Up to 0.28m thick deposi	it. 🗸	\checkmark

Trench: 12

 Max Dimensions:
 Length:
 25.00 m.
 Width:
 1.80 m.
 Depth to Archaeology Min:
 0.4 m.
 Max:
 0.65 m.

 Co-ordinates:
 OS Grid Ref.: TL
 (Easting:
 8355: Northing:
 45239)

 OS Grid Ref.: TL
 (Easting:
 8380: Northing:
 45239)

Reason: To assess archaeological potential.

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated: Finds Present:		
1200	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt frequent small stones, occasional medium stones Up to 0.29m thick deposit.	\checkmark		
1201	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate small stones, occasional medium stones Up to 0.36m thick deposit.			
1202	Natural	Firm light orange blue silty clay occasional small stones			

Trench: 13

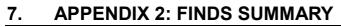
Max Dimensions:	Length:	25.00 m.	Width: 1.80 m.	Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.48 m.	Max: 0.62 m.
Co-ordinates:	s: OS Grid Ref.: TL		(Easting: 8374: Northing: 45226)		
	OS Grid Ref.: TL		(Eastin	g: 8386: Northing: 45204)	

Context:	Type:	Description:	Excavated: Finds	xcavated: Finds Present:		
1300	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt frequent small stones, occasional medium stones Up to 0.32m thick deposit.				
1301	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate small stones, occasional medium stones Up to 0.3m thick deposit.	\checkmark			
1302	Natural	Firm light orange blue silty clay occasional small stones				
1303	Ditch	Linear NE-SW dimensions: min breadth 3.m, min length 1.8m				
1304	Fill	Friable mid yellow brown clay silt occasional small stones				



Trench:	14					
Max Dimensions:	Length:	50.00 m.	Width: 1.80 m.	Depth to Archaeology Min: 0.55 m.	Max: 0.55 m.	
Co-ordinates:	Co-ordinates: OS Grid Ref.: TL			(Easting: 8353: Northing: 45212)		
OS Grid Ref.: TL		(Eastin				
Reason:	To assess	archaeolo	gical potential.			

Context:	Туре:	Description:	Excavated: Finds I	Present:
1400	Topsoil	Friable dark grey brown clay silt frequent small stones, occasional medium stones Up to 0.35m thick deposit.		
1401	Subsoil	Firm mid grey brown silty clay moderate small stones, occasional medium stones Up to 0.2m thick deposit.	\checkmark	
1402	Natural	Firm light orange blue silty clay occasional small stones		



Twenty deposits across five trenches yielded an assemblage comprising pottery, animal bone, ceramic building material and five iron objects (Table 1). No artefacts were recovered from Trenches 2–7, or 12–14.

Tr.	Feature	Description	Fill	Date range	Finds Summary
1	101	Subsoil	-	12th-13th century	Pottery (124g)
	103	Ditch	104	12th–13th century	Pottery (31g)
	107	Ditch	108	12th-13th century	Pottery (10g), animal bone (48g)
	112	Ditch	113	12th-13th century	Pottery (53g)
	114	Ditch	115	12th-13th century	Pottery (161g), iron nail x1, animal bone (3g)
	116	Ditch	117	12th-13th century	Pottery (469g)
	118	Ditch	119	12th-13th century	Pottery (121g), animal bone (562g)
	118	Ditch	120	12th-13th century	Pottery (260g)
	121	Pit	122	10th-11th century	Pottery (9g)
8	801	Subsoil	-	12th–13th century	Pottery (13g)
	803	Ditch	804	12th–13th century	Pottery (40g)
	805	Pit	806	12th-13th century	Pottery (3g)
9	905	Ditch	906	Undated	Animal bone (1g)
	907	Ditch	908	12th–13th century	Pottery (4g)
	909	Ditch	910	15th–16th century	Ceramic floor tile (137g)
	911	Ditch	913	Undated	Animal bone (22g)
10	1007	Feature	1009	15th–16th century	Pottery (4g), animal bone (21g)
	1011	Alluvium	-	15th–16th century	Brick fragments (344g)
	1013	Ditch	1014	Roman	Pottery (57g)
	1015	Ditch	1016	15th–16th century	Brick fragments (67g); iron horseshoe (RA3 & 4),
					animal bone (163g)
11	1103	Ditch	1104	Undated	Animal bone (54g)
	1105	Ditch	1106	Late 13th–15th	Iron horseshoe (RA1), animal bone (456g)
				century	
	1105	Ditch	1107	Undated	Animal bone (16g)
	1105	Ditch	1109	Undated	Iron swivel or harness ring (RA2)

Table 1: Artefact summary by trench and feature

7.1 Pottery

The assemblage totals 140 sherds (1.3kg), representing a minimum of 92 vessels, mainly datable to the early medieval period. Sherds have a mean weight of 10g, and are moderately abraded. Eleven fabric types were identified in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series (Table 2).

The earliest pottery comprises a battered and highly abraded Roman whiteware mortarium sherd (57g), representing the sole find from ditch [1013]. Late Saxon pottery is represented by 13 shell-tempered St Neots-type sherds (109g), most occurring residually in early medieval ditches [114] and [116]. Forms are two jars with simple everted rims and an upright rim bowl.

An assemblage of 125 sherds (1.1kg) is datable to the early medieval period, mostly deriving from Trench 1 features, in particular ditches [116] and [118]. Pottery mainly comprises shell-tempered wheel-thrown vessels of 12th–13th century date known to derive from production centres on the Beds. / Bucks. / Northants. borders. Contemporary local sandy wares also occur, in both handmade and wheel-thrown forms. Vessels are mainly undecorated jars with everted or square rims, and two jugs, one with a thumbed and stabbed rod handle. Jar rim diameters range between 160mm and 200mm. One vessel has linear combed decoration and a second has an applied faintly thumbed strip. An abraded sherd of late medieval oxidised ware (4g) derived from the backfill of deposit [1007].

Fabric code	Common name	No. Sherd	Wt. (g)	Fill / No. Sherd
Roman				
R21	Mortaria (unsourced)	1	57	(1014):1
Late Saxon				
B01A	St Neots-type (orange)	10	101	(115):3, (117):6, (120):1
B01C	St Neots-type (mixed)	3	8	(122):3
Medieval				· · ·
B07	Shell	62	631	(101):8, (104):1, (113):3, (115):12, (117):24,
				(119):6, (120):4, (122):1, (801):3
C01	Sand	8	41	(108):1, (115):1, (117):1, (119):1, (120):4
C03	Fine sand	9	55	(117):2, (119:2, (120:5
C05	Sand (red margins)	8	77	(117):4, (119):3, (120):1
C59A	Coarse sand	7	85	(108):1, (113):1, (115):5
C59B	Gritty sand	29	273	(101):3, (117):3, (119):2, (120):14, (804):5,
	-			(806):1, (908):1
C67	Mixed inclusions	2	27	(104):2
E03	Late medieval smooth	1	4	(1009):1

Table 2: Pottery type series

7.2 Ceramic Building Material

Seven abraded and poorly preserved late medieval / post-medieval brick fragments (411g) were collected from ditch [1015] and alluvium (1011), and a piece of unglazed floor tile (137g) with a smoothed, worn upper surface from ditch [909].

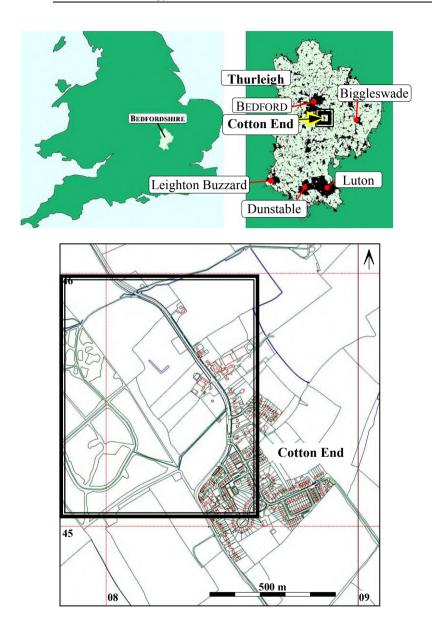
7.3 Iron Objects

The primary and upper fills of ditch [1105] respectively contained a complete later medieval horseshoe (RA1) and an undatable annular harness or swivel ring (RA2) of rounded rectangular cross-section and oval plan, measuring 67 x 80mm. Two horseshoe web/branch fragments (RA3 & 4) were collected from the fill of late medieval/post-medieval ditch [1015] and two joining pieces of a flat-headed timber nail from early medieval ditch [114].

7.4 Ecofacts

Forty-nine animal bone fragments (1.3kg) were collected, the largest assemblage (562g) from early medieval ditch [118]. Fragments have a mean weight of 27g and display variable surface condition and preservation. Most are indeterminate limb, pelvis and mandible fragments, although two joining pieces of horse radius were identified, the latter deriving from ditch [118].





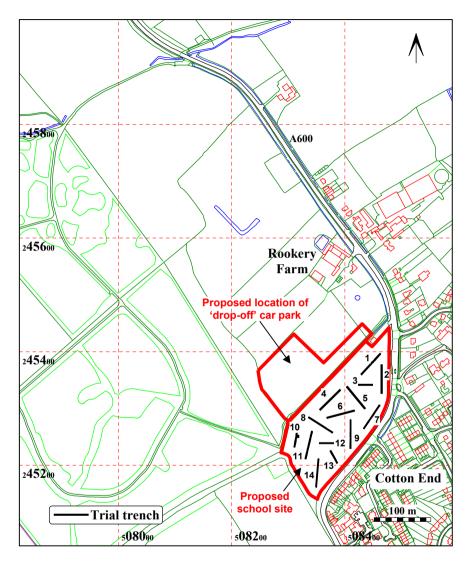


Figure 1: Site location This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Central Bedfordshire Council. Licence No. 100049029 (2011)

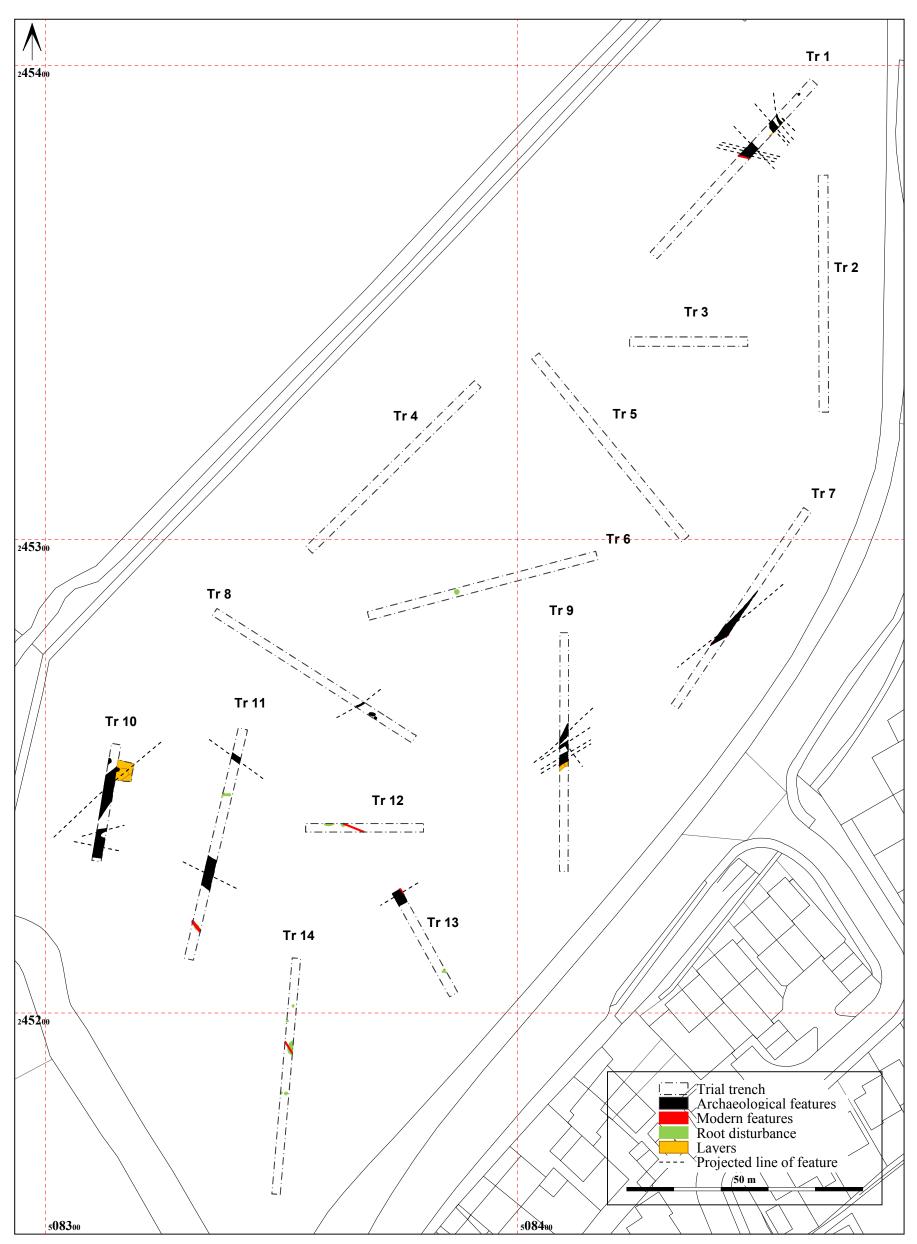
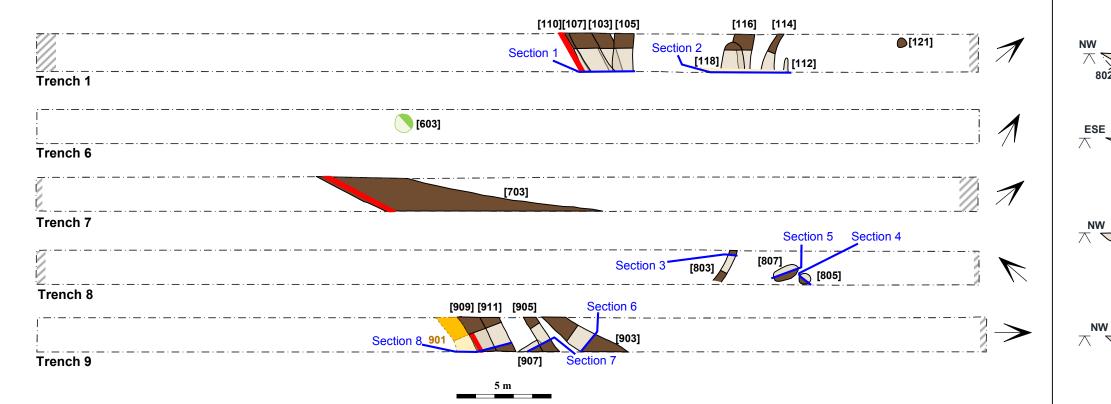


Figure 2: All-features plan This map is based upon Ordnance Survey material with the permission of Ordnance Survey on behalf of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright. Unauthorised reproduction infringes Crown Copyright and may lead to prosecution or civil proceedings. Central Bedfordshire Council. Licence No. 100049029 (2011)

Land South of Rookery Farm, Cotton End, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Field Evaluation

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NE



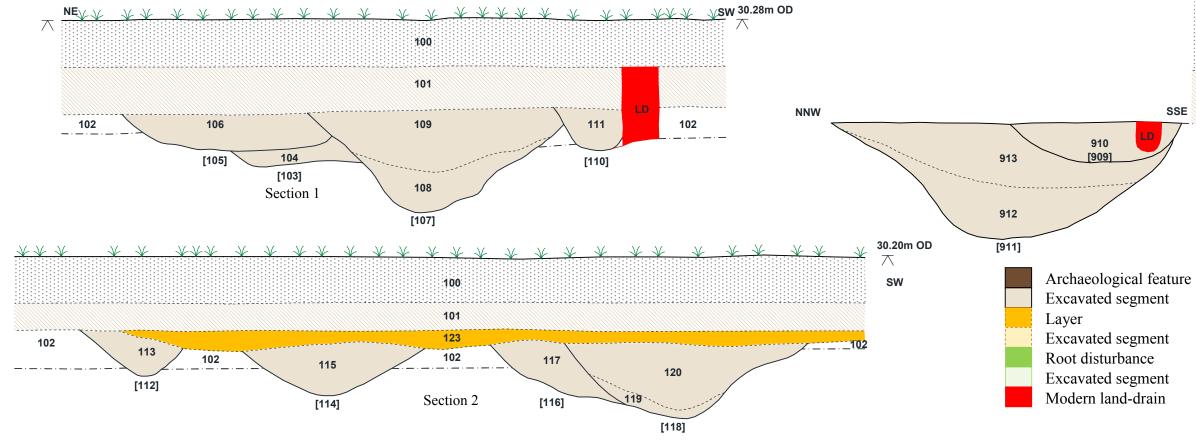
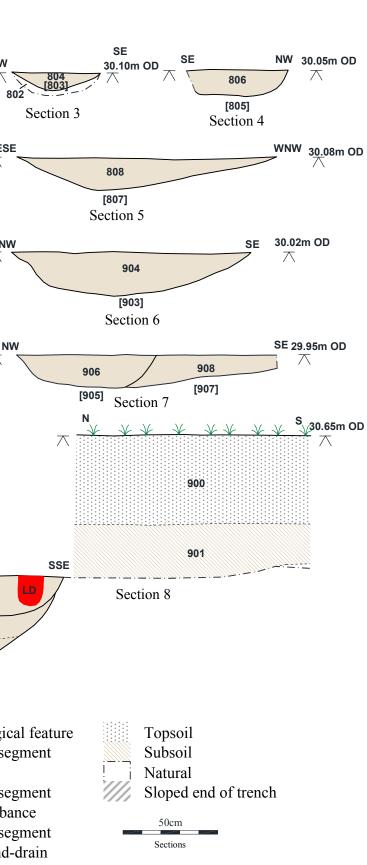


Figure 3: Trenches 1, 6–9

Land South of Rookery Farm, Cotton End, Bedfordshire: Archaeological Field Evaluation



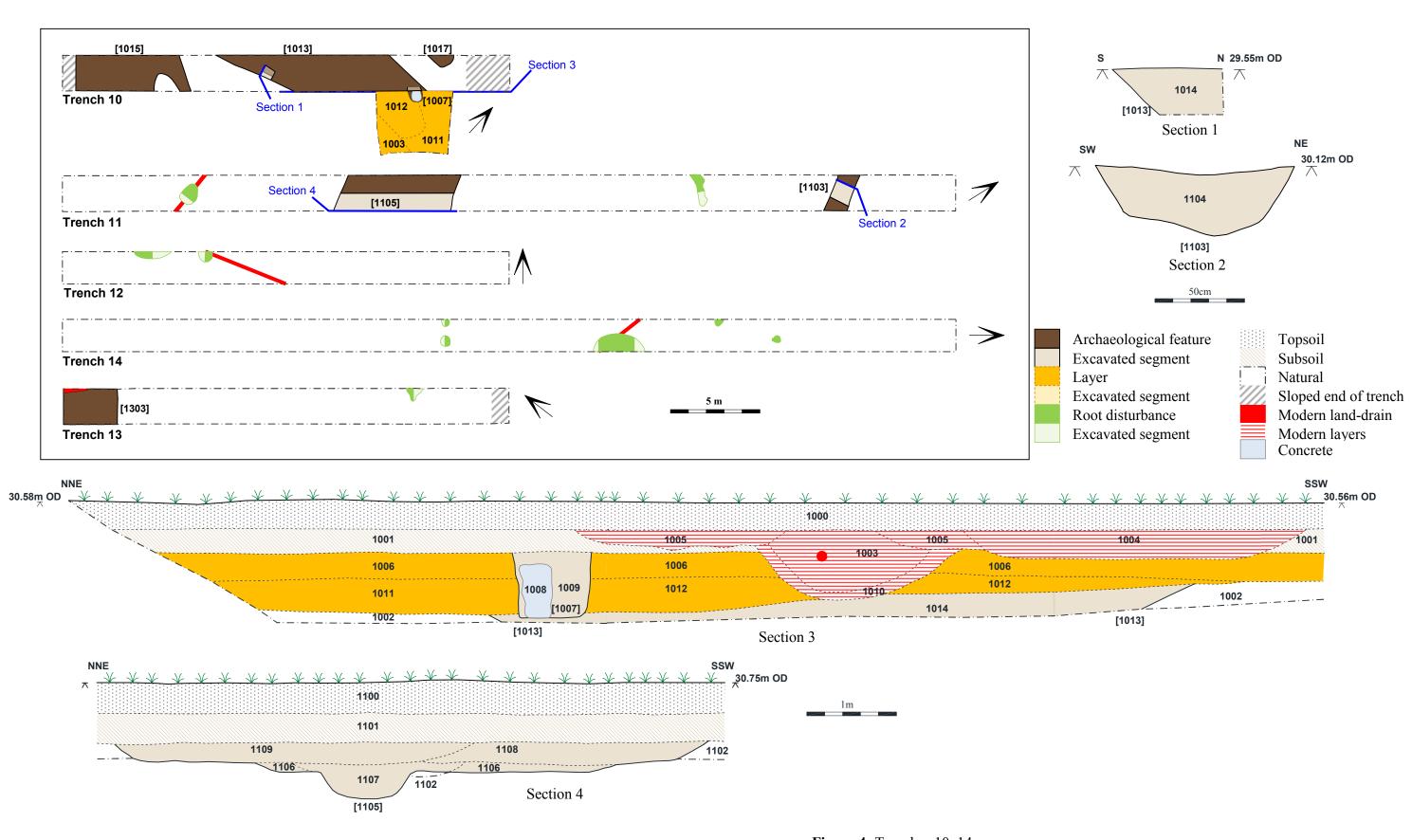


Figure 4: Trenches 10–14

A A



Features: [103], [105], [107] and [110] Looking SE Scale 1m Features: [112], [114], [116] and [118] Looking E Scale 1m

Figure 5: Selected photos – Trench 1

Albion Archaeology



Feature: [803] Looking NE Scale 40cm



Features: [805] and [807] Looking NE Scale 40cm





Features: [903], [905] and [907] Looking NE Scale 1m

Features: [903], [905], [907], [909] and [911] Looking NE Scale 1m Fi

Figure 6: Selected photos – Trenches 8 and 9



Features: [1007], (1011) and (1012) in box extension. Tr 10 Looking E



Feature: [1105] Looking SE Scale 1m



Feature: [1105] Looking NE Scale 1m



Feature: [1103] Looking NW Scale 1m

Figure 7: Selected photos – Trenches 10 and 11





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