

**CHAWSTON CROSS ROADS
CHAWSTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



**CHAWSTON CROSS ROADS
CHAWSTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Project: CC3091
Document: 2018/85
Version 1.0

Museum accession no.: BEDFM 2018.01
OASIS no.: albionar1-305546

3rd July 2018

Compiled by	Edited by	Approved by
Marcin Kozimiński	Gary Edmondson	Drew Shotliff

Produced for:
T Watson & C A Brookman
Watson and Brookman (Engineers) Ltd
Chawston Cross Roads
Chawston
Bedford, MK44 3BL



Contents

1. INTRODUCTION	5
1.1 Background	5
1.2 Site Location and Development Description	5
1.3 Archaeological Background	5
1.4 Project Objectives	7
2. METHODOLOGY	8
3. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS	9
3.1 Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits	9
3.2 Post-medieval Activity	9
3.3 Undated Remains	9
3.4 Significance of Results	10
4. BIBLIOGRAPHY	11

List of Figures

- Figure 1: Site location plan
- Figure 2: All-features plan and selected sections
- Figure 3: Selected images 1 and 2
- Figure 4: Selected images 3 and 4
- Figure 5: Selected images 5 and 6
- Figure 6: Selected images 7 and 8

The figures and plates are bound at the back of the report.



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 document 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.

Albion Archaeology
 St Mary's Church
 St Mary's Street
 Bedford, MK42 0AS
 ☎: 0300 300 6867
 E-mail: g.edmondson@albion-arch.com
 Website: www.albion-arch.com

Version History

Version	Issue date	Reason for re-issue
1.0	03/07/2018	n/a

Key Terms

Throughout this document the following terms or abbreviations are used:

AO	Bedford Borough Council's Archaeological Officer
BBC	Bedford Borough Council
CI/A	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
HER	Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Record
HET	Bedford Borough Council's Historic Environment Team
LPA	Local Planning Authority
NHLE	National Heritage List for England
PDA	Permitted development area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-technical Summary

Planning permission (16/03036/FUL) was granted by Bedford Borough Council for the erection of a new single-storey, steel-framed and clad industrial building together with associated car parking at Watson and Brookman (Engineers) Ltd, Chawston Cross Roads, Chawston, Bedford, MK44 3BL.

Due to the high archaeological potential of the permitted development area (PDA), a condition (no. 4) was attached to the planning consent, requiring the implementation of an archaeological mitigation strategy. Archaeological monitoring works took place between 11th and 18th June 2018. The monitored groundworks comprised the reduction and levelling of the sloping ground over an area of 49 x 23m. The northern section was reduced by c. 1m and the southern section by c. 0.2m, revealing made-ground, incorporating modern construction debris. Even at a depth of 1m in the north, the made-ground deposit was still present. The material is likely to be associated with previous on-site construction works. A layer of stone rubble was deposited across the stripped area, to create a level surface. Subsequently, 17 square foundation pad pits for the building were machine-excavated; they were c. 1.4–1.8m across by c. 1m deep and were dug into the underlying geological strata.

Excavation of the pad pits revealed a post-medieval ditch and an undated large pit (possibly a quarry). The E-W aligned ditch at the northern extent of the PDA contained a post-medieval brick fragment. The possible quarry pit was identified in two adjacent pad pits. Although undated, it may also date to the post-medieval or later period, given the dark, unmineralised nature of its fill.

If any less substantial archaeological remains had formerly been present, they would probably have been destroyed by extensive levelling and landscaping works carried out previously within the PDA in the modern period.

The recorded remains are considered of no more than local significance and have no potential to address regional research objectives. No further analysis of the results of the fieldwork beyond that presented in this report is required.

The project archive will be deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford (accession no. BEDFM 2018.01). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (ref. albionar1-305546).



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Planning permission (16/03036/FUL) was granted by Bedford Borough Council for the erection of a new single-storey, steel-framed and clad industrial building together with associated car parking at Watson and Brookman (Engineers) Ltd, Chawston Cross Roads, Chawston, Bedford, MK44 3BL. The footprint of the building measures 30m by 12m.

Due to the high archaeological potential of the permitted development area (PDA) a condition (no. 4) was attached to the planning consent, requiring the implementation of an archaeological mitigation strategy. This was done on the advice of the Borough Council's Archaeological Officer (AO), in accordance with the local planning policies¹ as well as national policies contained in the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Albion 2018) and undertake the archaeological works in accordance with the requirements of the planning condition. This report presents the results of the archaeological monitoring works carried out on site.

1.2 Site Location and Development Description

The PDA lies in Chawston, a small hamlet within the combined parish of Wyboston, Chawston and Colesden in eastern Bedfordshire. The settlement lies approximately 12km north-east of the centre of Bedford, c. 5.2km south-west of St Neots, c. 800m south of Wyboston and just c. 250m west of the Great North Road (A1). The PDA lies in western part of the hamlet in the north-western quadrant of the crossroads of Roxton Road with Chawston Lane and Colesden Road (Figure 1).

The PDA is centred on NGR TL 1526 5617 and lies at a height of c. 26–27m OD. The solid geology comprises Peterborough Member Mudstone that is overlain by superficial river terrace deposits of sand and gravel with lenses of silt².

The new building with associated car parking and hard standing will be set back from the road (Figure 1). Prior to the commencement of the groundworks the terrain was gently sloping down to the south and also to the west (Figure 3: image 1).

1.3 Archaeological Background

The Bedford Borough Historic Environment Record (HER) and the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) record several entries for the area around the

¹ Saved Policies BE24 & BE25 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan (2002) and Policy CP23 of the Bedford Borough Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan (2008).

² Contains British Geological Survey materials ©NERC [2014]



PDA. The following summary is drawn from the information provided through the HER, Heritage Gateway³ and Historic England⁴ websites.

The PDA lies within the medieval settlement envelope of Chawston, as defined by the HER (HER17144). Most importantly, it lies *c.* 70m to the east of Chawston Manor House (NHLE1114919), Chawston Manor moated site and fish pond (NHLE1010114) and Chawston Manor Farm (HER15679).

Undated cropmarks as well as more tangible evidence for prehistoric, mainly Iron Age, and Roman occupation are known from the landscape to the north, west and south of the hamlet (HER745, HER1651, HER1834, HER1836, HER8818, HER15046 and HER16147). Archaeological investigations undertaken in the area in conjunction with a gas pipeline and the Great Barford Bypass (A421) identified mainly late Bronze Age to Iron Age, Roman and late Saxon to post-medieval activity in the area. Evidence for prehistoric and early Bronze Age occupation was scarce (EBB687, EBB688, EBB697, EBB792 and EBB908).

According to the 1086 Domesday Survey, Chawston was part of a rich early medieval settlement landscape along the river Great Ouse and the Great North Road. All the recorded settlements in the vicinity are of considerable size, which suggests that they have at least late Saxon origins (Eaton Socon, Wyboston, Little Barford, Roxton, Tempsford and Great Barford). The same can be said for Chawston which is recorded as comprising 27 households, a taxable value of 10 geld units, woodland for 70 pigs and one mill.⁵ However, no evidence for Saxon occupation has been recorded within the HER data in the vicinity of the PDA. The closest evidence for Saxon activity in the wider area has been recorded west of Roxton (HER13413), *c.* 890m south of the PDA.

Evidence for the medieval period in Chawston is recorded through isolated blocks of medieval ridge and furrow cultivation that have survived in the fields around the hamlet (MBB21767), and the postulated extent of Chawston medieval settlement (HER17097). In addition to the scheduled Chawston Manor moated site and fish pond there is the medieval settlement of Wyboston (HER17149) and two related moated sites (HER3407, and HER2831 / NHLE1012076) within 1km to the north of the PDA.

Other evidence for the medieval period in Chawston is scarce; some late medieval artefacts were retrieved alongside Roman and post-medieval artefacts (HER16147) some 250m to the east of the PDA. This lack of evidence for medieval activity is partially due to continuous occupation within the bounds of the settlement.

The post-medieval period is represented by a number of designated and undesignated buildings and sites of former buildings within the hamlet; they are mainly located to the east of the PDA on Chawston Lane. The closest designated

³ <http://www.heritagegateway.org.uk/> [Accessed 09/01/2018]

⁴ <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/> [Accessed 09/01/2018]

⁵ <http://opendomesday.org/place/TL1556/chawston/> [Accessed 09/01/2018]



heritage asset of this period to the PDA is Chawston Manor House (NHLE1114919) within the moated site, which dates to the 17th century. The closest undesignated heritage asset to the PDA is Chawston Manor Farm (MBD15679), a 19th-century model farm, which comprises a combination of historic buildings and modern steel-framed buildings immediately west of the PDA. The farm is depicted on early 19th-century maps. The maps also show that part of the current PDA was part of the farm's access drive and yard.

1.4 Project Objectives

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

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

The PDA had limited potential to contain prehistoric remains but moderate to high potential to contain Saxon, medieval and post-medieval remains based on its location within the medieval settlement envelope and the assumption that the settlement has some Saxon origins. The PDA's proximity to Chawston Manor and Manor Farm also suggested the potential for medieval and post-medieval sub-surface remains to be present.

The regional research framework states that generally few medieval rural settlements have been investigated within the county. It also highlights the potential for acquiring information about the origins and development of villages from within or around the edges of existing settlements (Oake 2007, 14).

Broader research objectives regarding the origins and development of medieval rural settlements may be derived from regional research frameworks (*e.g.* Brown and Glazebrook 2000; Oake et al. 2007; Medlycott 2011).



2. METHODOLOGY

A detailed methodology is provided in the Written Scheme of Investigation (Albion 2018) and summarised below.

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

• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> (3rd edn, 2017).
• Bedford Borough Council	<i>Preparing Archaeological Archives for Deposition in Registered Museums in Bedford</i> (ver. 2.8, 2010)
• CfA	<i>Charter and by-law; Code of conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for an archaeological watching brief</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England</i> (2003)
• Historic England	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) Project Managers' Guide</i> (2015)
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation</i> , (2nd edn, 2011)

Archaeological observation and investigation works took place between 11th and 18th June 2018. The monitored groundworks comprised the ground reduction and levelling of the sloping ground for the proposed building and associated car parking over an area of c. 49 x 23m. The northern section was reduced by c. 1m and the southern section by c. 0.2m (Figure 3: image 2; Figure 4: image 3), which was followed by the laying of stone rubble to create a level surface (Figure 4: image 4). Subsequently, 17 square foundation pads for the proposed building were machine-excavated. The pads were c. 1.4–1.8m across by c. 1m deep.

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

The project archive will be deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum, Bedford (accession no. BEDFM 2018.01). This report will be uploaded onto the Archaeology Data Service's OASIS website (ref. albionar1-305546).



3. RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS

The features and deposits observed are described below with associated plan, sections and images shown in Figures 2–6. Numbers in square brackets refer to cut features [**] and round brackets (**) refer to deposits.

3.1 *Overburden and Undisturbed Geological Deposits*

Topsoil/turf-line (1) comprised dark brown-grey sandy silt up to 0.15m thick. This overlay a c .0.4–1.1m thick modern deposit of made-ground (2), that comprised mixed material of mid to dark grey-brown to orange-brown clayey silt and sand, with inclusions of modern building material fragments, plastic and concrete (Figure 3: image 2). The lower part of this deposit was still present at the formation level after the initial ground reduction works (Figure 4: image 3). Stone rubble layer (8) was laid onto it to create a level surface (Figure 4: image 4).

Undisturbed geological deposits (3) comprised light yellow-grey clay with small to moderate amounts of stone and flint inclusions and pockets of sand. The undisturbed geological strata were revealed in all of the foundation pads.

3.2 *Post-medieval Activity*

An E-W aligned linear feature [4], [13] and [16] was revealed towards the northern extent of the PDA in Pads 1, 8 and 9 respectively (Figure 2). These probably formed parts of the same substantial ditch, which was in excess of 1.8m wide and had a gradually sloping U-shaped profile that was at least 0.6m deep (Figure 2; sections 1, 4 and 5; Figure 5: images 5 and 6). Initial fill (5) comprised a mid-grey silty clay deposit, whereas the intermediate deposit (6/14/17) comprised mid grey-blue clay with small amount of stone inclusions. The upper fill (7/15/18) comprised dark brown-grey silty clay — peat-like material that yielded an abraded Gault clay stock moulded brick fragment (64g) of post-medieval date (not retained). All the deposits infilling the ditch seem to have formed in wet conditions, suggesting poorly drained land.

A 0.4m thick deposit (19) was recorded beneath layer (2) in Pad 13 (Figure 6: image 7). It consisted of dark brown-grey silty clay with pockets of yellow-grey sandy clay; it contained a sand-tempered post-medieval stock moulded brick fragment (375g: depth 70mm) and a piece of coarse lime mortar (17g). Neither was retained. The mixed nature of the layer may suggest the deliberate deposition of this material in an attempt to raise the level of the ground, possibly in response to wet ground conditions. This activity may relate to the 19th-century Chawston Manor Farm.

3.3 *Undated Remains*

Archaeological deposits [9] and [11] were revealed in Pads 3 and 4 respectively; they are thought to have possibly formed parts of the same substantial feature. The feature was 1.8m+ wide with a length greater than 6m; its gradual concave profile measured in excess of 0.6m in depth (Figure 2: sections 2 and 3; Figure 6: image 8). Its sole fill (10/12) comprised mid brown-grey silty clay that produced



no dating evidence. Considering the size and shape of the possible pit it seems plausible to suggest it was dug to extract clay.

3.4 Significance of Results

Although the PDA is located in an archaeologically sensitive area — close to the medieval Chawston Manor House, the moated site and an associated fish pond — no evidence was recovered for activity pre-dating the post-medieval period.

The substantial ditch would appear to have been dug in wet conditions, as indicated by the character of its fills. It does not appear on available historical maps of the area. Layer (19) in Pad 13 may have been another attempt to utilise the wet ground, in this instance by raising the ground level.

Although undated, the large, possible quarry pit may also date to the post-medieval or later period, given its relatively dark fill, which lacked mineralisation.

If any less substantial archaeological remains had formerly been present, they would probably have been destroyed by extensive levelling and landscaping works carried out previously within the PDA in the modern period.

The recorded remains are considered of no more than local significance and have no potential to address regional research objectives. No further analysis of the results of the fieldwork beyond that presented in this report is required.



4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Albion Archaeology, 2018 *Chawston Cross Roads, Chawston, Bedfordshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Archaeological Observation, Investigation, Recording, Analysis and Publication*. Report no. 2018/004, v. 1.0.
- Brown, N. and Glazebrook, J. (eds.), 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A framework for the Eastern Counties: Research Agenda and Strategy*, East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper **8**
- DCLG, 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*
- Medlycott, M., 2011 *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the east of England*, EAA Occasional Paper no. **24**
- Oake, M., Luke, M., Dawson, M., Edgeworth, M. and Murphy, P., 2007 *Bedfordshire Archaeology. Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy*, Bedfordshire Archaeology Monograph **9**

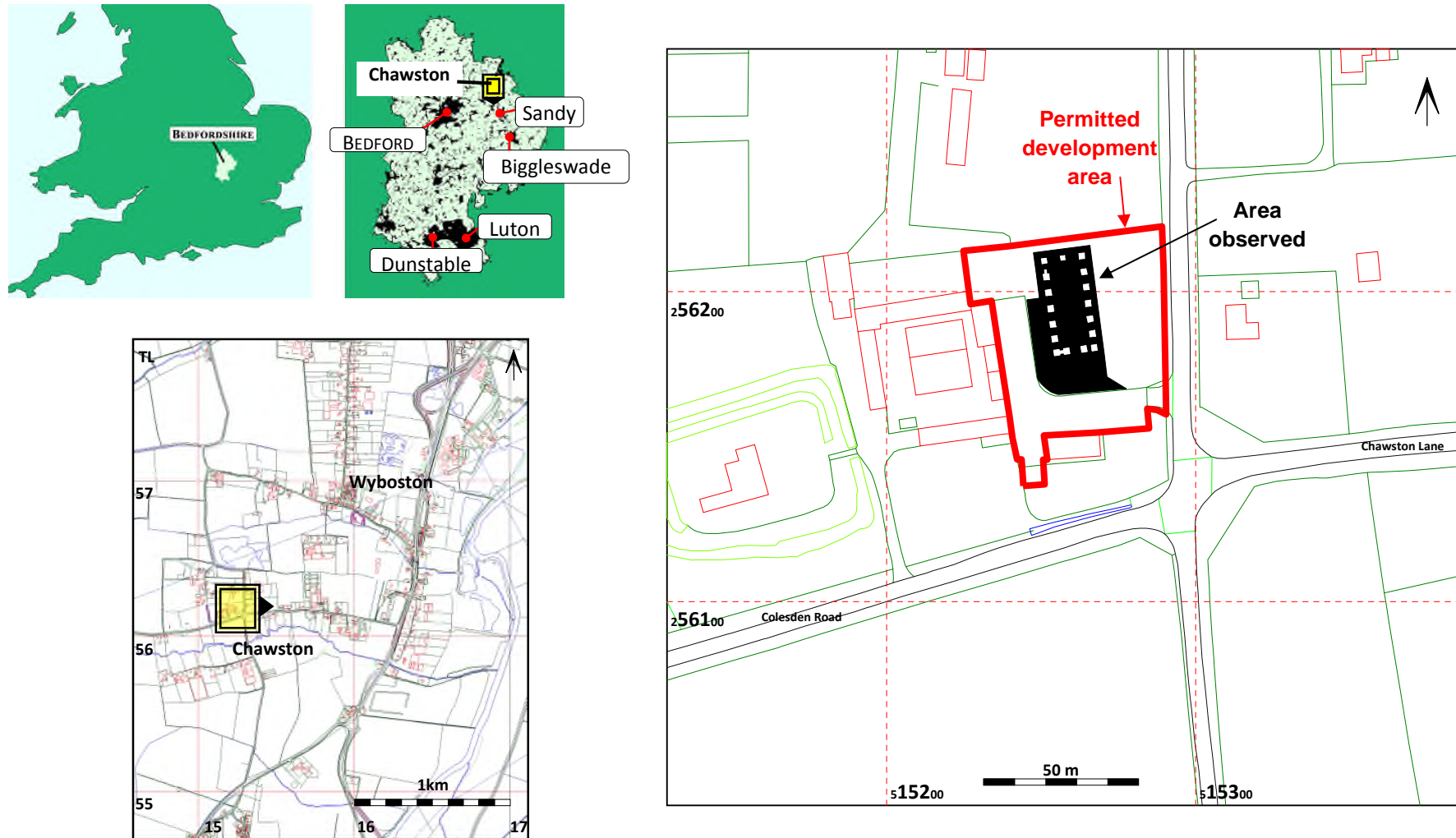


Figure 1: Site location plan

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

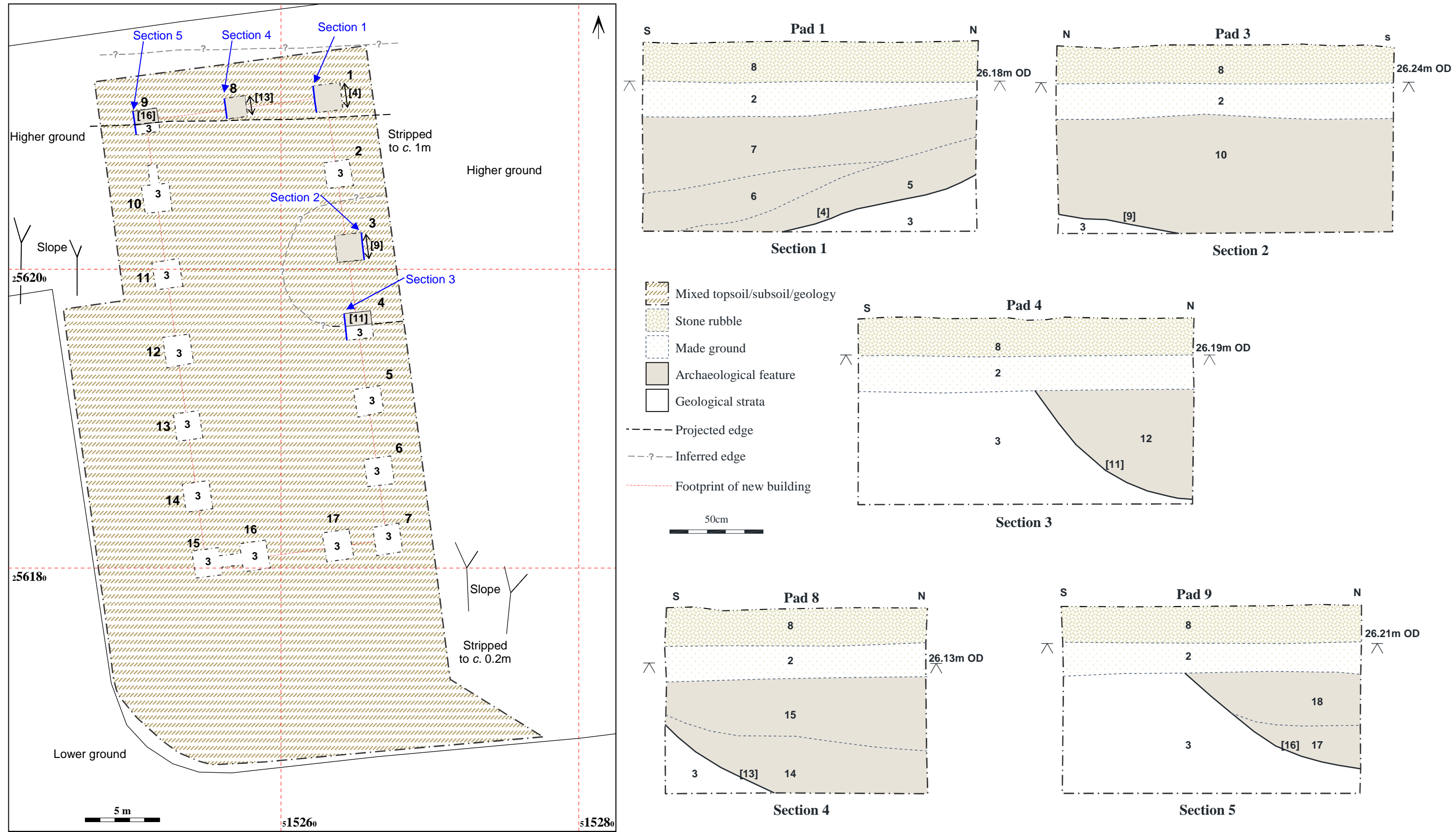


Figure 2: All-features plan and selected sections

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)



Image 1: General view of the site prior to stripping, looking north with the ground sloping down to the south and west



Image 2: Deep section of made-ground (2) containing modern building materials (scale 1m in 50cm divisions)

Figure 3: Selected images 1 and 2



Image 3: General view of the building footprint stripped to the formation level, which is within made-ground deposit (2) (scale 1m in 50cm divisions)



Image 4: Stone spread (8) within the building footprint

Figure 4: Selected images 3 and 4



Image 5: Ditch [4] in Pad 1 (scale 1m in 50cm divisions)



Image 6: Ditch [13] in Pad 8 (scale 1m in 50cm divisions)

Figure 5: Selected images 5 and 6



Image 7: Made-ground layer (19); the more friable deposit is visible in the upper part of the section in Pad 13, having a more open soil structure (scale 1m in 50cm divisions)



Image 8: The sloping edge of the possible quarry pit [11] in Pad 4, visible in the right side of the image, defined by the relatively dark fill (scale 1m in 50cm divisions)

Figure 6: Selected images 7 and 8

Central
Bedfordshire

Albion
archaeology



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

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

