

**58 PARK ROAD
STEVINGTON
BEDFORDSHIRE**

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

Albion
archaeology



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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.

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Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

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



Non-technical Summary

Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (18/02301/FUL) for single-storey side extensions, front porch and external alterations at 58 Park Road, Stevington, Bedford, MK43 7QG.

The permitted development area (PDA) was located in an area of archaeological interest. For this reason, the Historic Environment Team (HET) advised that a condition (no. 3) should be attached to the permission. The HET advised that the archaeological mitigation strategy should comprise a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation and to carry out the archaeological works.

Despite the site's potential for Roman or medieval remains, no archaeological features or deposits earlier than the modern period (post-1750) were present within the footprint of either extension.

The topsoil layer from the north-east extension contained a moderate amount of 19th-century artefacts and some residual 17th–18th-century pottery. The topsoil layer from the south-west extension contained sparse 19th–20th-century artefacts.

The project archive will be deposited with The Higgins Art Gallery & Museum under accession no. BEDFM 2019:07. This report will be uploaded onto the OASIS website under reference number albionar1-342507.



1. BACKGROUND TO THE PROJECT

1.1 *Planning Background*

Bedford Borough Council granted planning permission (18/02301/FUL) for single-storey side extensions, front porch and external alterations at 58 Park Road, Stevington, Bedford, MK43 7QG.

The permitted development area (PDA) was located in an area of archaeological interest. For this reason, the Historic Environment Team (HET) advised that the following condition (no. 3) should be attached to the permission:

No development shall take place until an archaeological mitigation strategy has been submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

The archaeological mitigation strategy shall include a timetable and the following components (the completion of each to the satisfaction of the Local Planning Authority will result in a separate confirmation of compliance for each component):-.

- (i) fieldwork and/ or preservation “in situ” of archaeological remains;*
- (ii) a post-excavation assessment report (to be submitted within six months of the completion of fieldwork);*
- (iii) a post-excavation analysis report, preparation of site archive ready for deposition at a store approved by the Local Planning Authority, completion of an archive report, and submission of a publication report (to be completed within two years of the completion of fieldwork).*

The archaeological mitigation strategy shall be carried out in accordance with the approved details and timings.

REASON: To safeguard archaeological assets within the approved development boundary from impacts relating to any groundworks associated with the development scheme and to ensure the proper and timely investigation, recording, reporting and presentation of archaeological assets affected by this development, in accordance with Saved Policies BE24 & BE25 of the Bedford Borough Local Plan 2002, Policy CP23 of the Bedford Borough Core Strategy and Rural Issues Plan (2008) and according to national policies contained in the National Planning Policy Framework (DCLG 2012). The Local Planning Authority is satisfied that the timing of compliance is fundamental to the development permitted and that the permission ought to be refused unless the condition is imposed in this form.

The HET advised that the archaeological mitigation strategy should comprise a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication.



Albion Archaeology was commissioned to prepare a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (Albion Archaeology 2019) and to carry out the archaeological works, which are described in this report.

1.2 Location, Topography and Geology

Stevington is a village and civil parish in the north-west of the Borough of Bedford. It lies *c.*7km to the north-west of the centre of Bedford. The crossroads at the centre of the village lies *c.*600m south-west of the River Great Ouse. Park Road enters the village from the south-east; no. 58 lies on the south side of the road, close to the central crossroads at NGR SP 9920 5306.

The PDA lies at *c.*45m OD on higher ground above the Great Ouse (Figure 1). No superficial deposits are recorded for the PDA itself but Quaternary Head Clay, Silt, Sand And Gravel is present in the immediate vicinity. The underlying bedrock comprises Great Oolite Group - Limestone And Argillaceous Rocks, Interbedded¹.

1.3 The Development

The development comprised two separate extensions to the north-east and south-west ends of the existing dwelling

The existing building is an L-shaped structure. The earlier part to the north-east is an 18th-century thatched cottage. A large extension at the south-west end was added in the later 20th century; it is rendered and thatched in a style similar to the earlier building.

1.4 Archaeological Background

No. 58 Park Road itself is recorded in the HER as an unlisted, 18th-century, thatched cottage (HER 1755).

The PDA is located within the postulated extent of the medieval settlement of Park End (HER16948). Park End was one of four “ends” or hamlets within medieval Stevington, the others being Church End, Duck End and West End. The PDA lies *c.*320m south-east of the crossroads (at the centre of the modern village); the latter represents the core of the linear, medieval village (HER 16949), which is also reflected in the present-day Conservation Area that extends along Church Road and Silver Street. At the crossroads is the restored medieval market cross (HER 989), which is also a scheduled ancient monument.

A number of records of medieval ridge and furrow (HER 9993, 9998, 10001, 10005) around the PDA highlight the fact that the Park End hamlet was a separate area of settlement from the main village.

The HER also records the postulated route of a Roman road from Irchester to Kempston (HER 58; Viatores 170a) as crossing the PDA. In the vicinity of

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



Stevington, this road has been identified by surviving remains of a metalled road surface (HER 10482) and roadside ditches. However, many of the roads identified by the Viatores in the 1960s have since been discounted and the presence of this road in Stevington is by no means certain.



2. RESULTS

2.1 *Nature of the Works*

The groundworks were undertaken in stages at various times between 5th and 20th November 2019. Each stage was subject to archaeological monitoring.

The groundworks were associated with two separate extensions to north-east and south-west ends of the building. To the south-west, the noticeably higher level of the back garden and surrounding landscape indicated that the 20th-century extension and patio had been constructed on a levelled and reduced platform that had been cut into the natural slope.

The larger extension to the south-west was rectangular in plan, measuring 12m long x 6.1m wide. Groundworks included the removal of both a 4m-wide paved patio (which abutted the extant dwelling) and *c.*0.25m of sub-base, exposing the underlying geological stratum. A further 0.9m of ground reduction in the garden to the south-west also exposed the geological stratum. The machining of the footings was not monitored as the ground reduction had demonstrated that no archaeological remains were present in this area.

The smaller extension to the north-east was rectangular in plan, measuring 7m long x 4m wide. Initial groundworks comprised the removal of *c.*0.3m of topsoil and some of the subsoil. The geological stratum was not exposed and, therefore, in this case the machining of the 1.7m-deep footings was monitored.

2.2 *Modern Layers and Features*

The south-west extension did not reveal any archaeologically significant features or layers, only shallow modern disturbance associated with the former patio (Figure 2). The three layers exposed by the groundworks were:

- Topsoil (1): *c.*0.33m of dark brown-grey clay-silt with moderate coal and 'coke' inclusions and occasional willow-pattern china, bottle glass and red roof tile fragments (Figure 4). The artefacts indicate a modern period date (post-1750) for this layer; they were not retained.
- Relatively undisturbed subsoil (2): *c.*0.28m of mid-brown-grey clay-silt with occasional coal flecks and stones.
- Undisturbed geological stratum (3): light grey-orange clay-silt.

The north-east extension contained only features and layers of modern date. The three layers exposed by the groundworks were:

- Topsoil (4): *c.*0.25m of dark brown-grey clay-silt with frequent willow-pattern china, bottle glass and red roof tile and occasional metal fragments (Figure 4). The artefacts generally indicate a 19th/20th-century date; they were not retained. The earliest pottery present were fragments of 17th–18th-century, brown, salt-glazed stoneware.
- Subsoil (5): *c.*0.18m of mid-brown-grey clay-silt with occasional coal flecks and stones.
- Undisturbed geological layer (6): light grey-orange clay-silt.



Two modern period pits [7] and [8] truncated the subsoil (Figures 2 and 3).

Pit [7] was located towards the centre of the area. It was oval in plan, 1.35m long and 1m wide. It contained china and metal fragments of 20th-century date and was not further investigated.

Pit [8] was located towards the north corner of the area and continued beyond the limit of excavation. It appeared to be oval in plan and measured at least 3m long and 3m wide. It was revealed within the footings trench to be 0.38m deep with a shallow concave profile. It also contained china and metal fragments of 20th-century date.



3. CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological features or deposits earlier than the modern period (post-1750) were present within the footprint of either extension.

The topsoil layer from the north-east extension contained a moderate amount of 19th-century artefacts and some residual 17th–18th-century pottery. The topsoil layer from the south-west extension contained sparse 19th–20th-century artefacts.

With regards to the minor Roman road conjectured to be located in this area, the Viatores suggested a broadly NW–SE aligned road linking the Roman settlements at Irchester and Kempston. The evidence for its existence is somewhat weak with no connecting Roman road, bearing in that direction, known at either the Kempston or Irchester end.

However, there is an HER record (10482) of road-surface metalling exposed by ploughing at NGR SP 996 521. If correctly identified, this Roman road would logically run along the higher ground to the south-west of the PDA, slightly south-west of the Stevington windmill, heading at an angle towards the centre of Stevington, somewhere south of the T-junction between Park Road and Silver Street.

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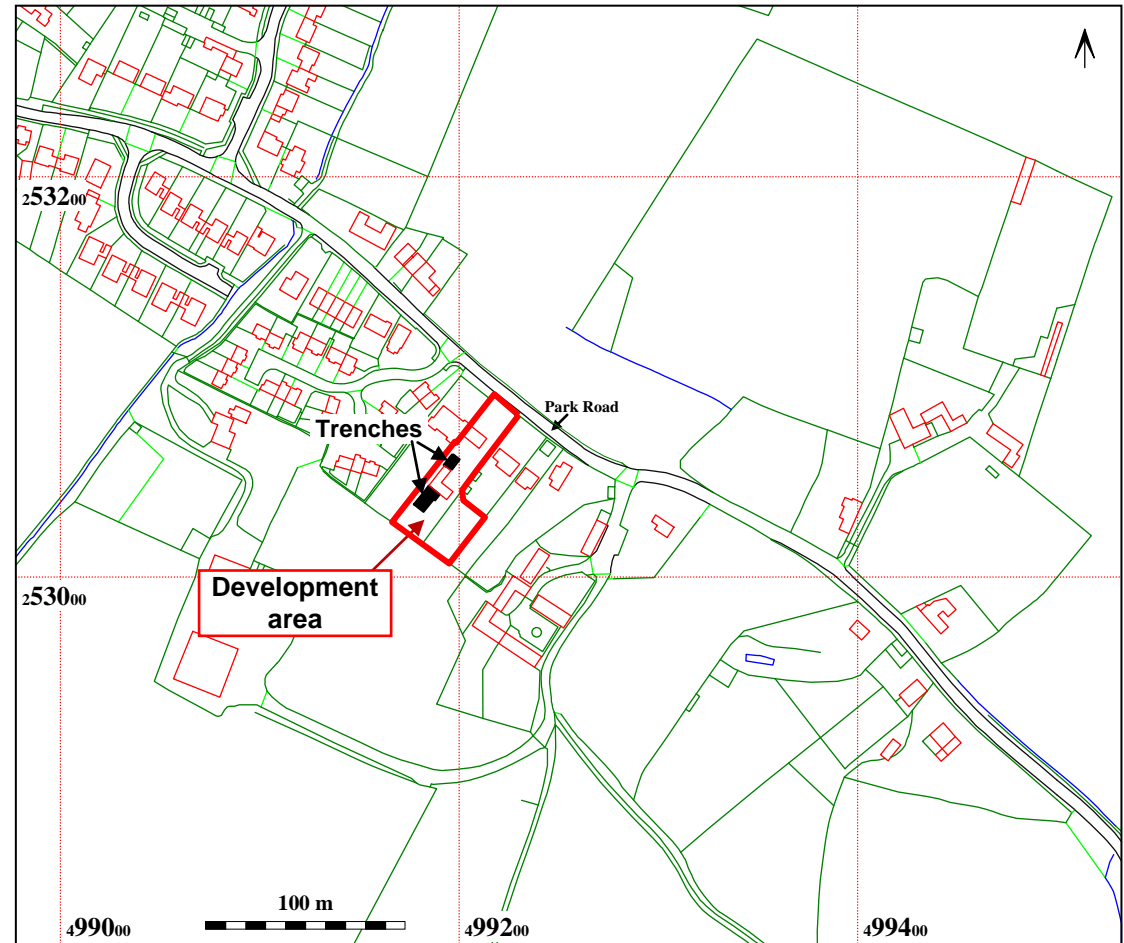
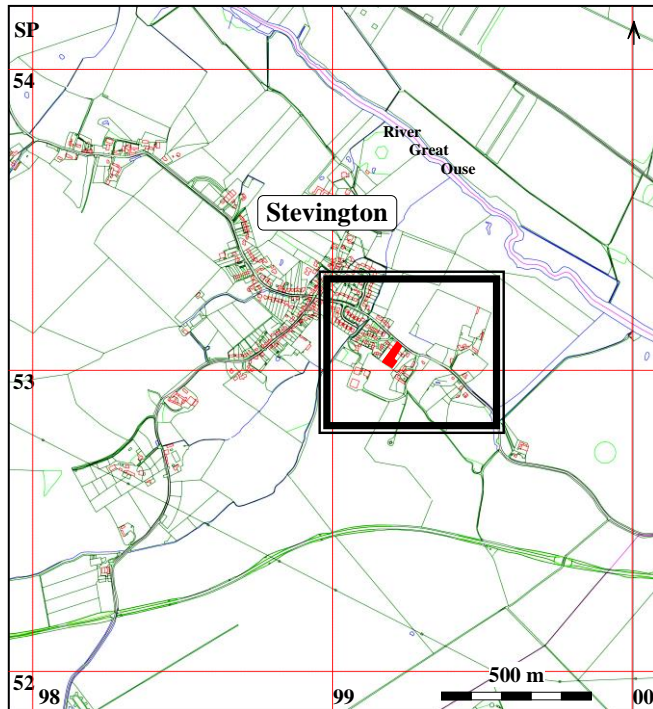
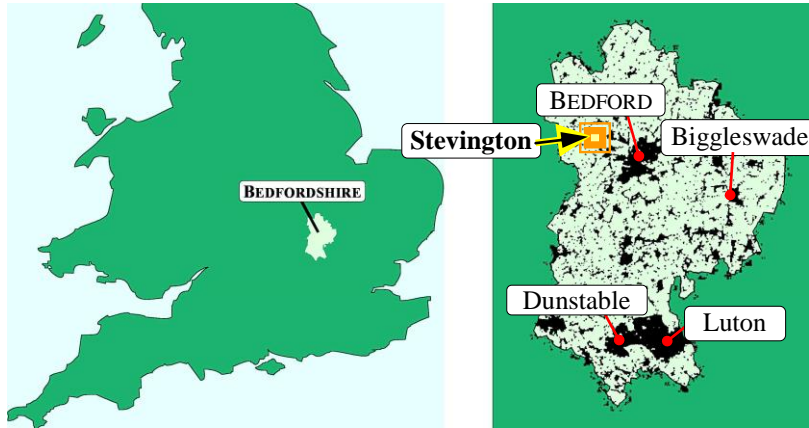
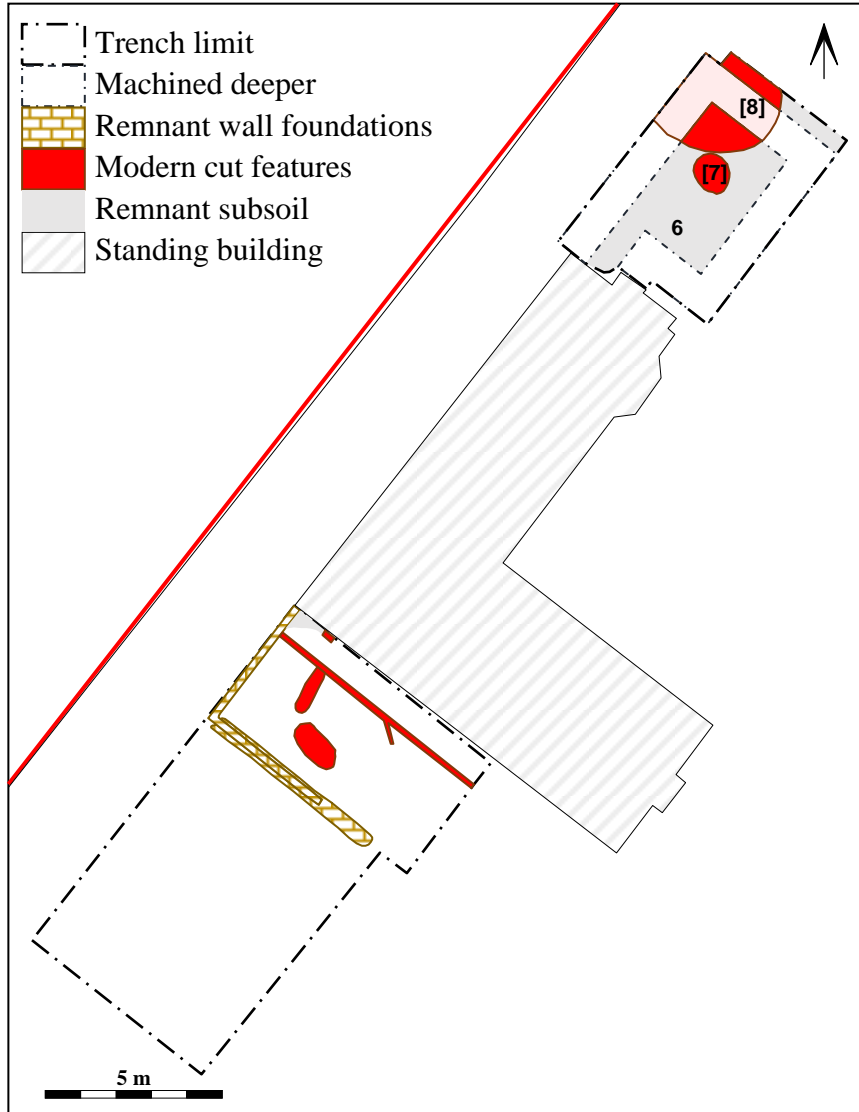


Figure 1: Site location plan

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SW trench prior to removal of patio, looking south (scale 1m)

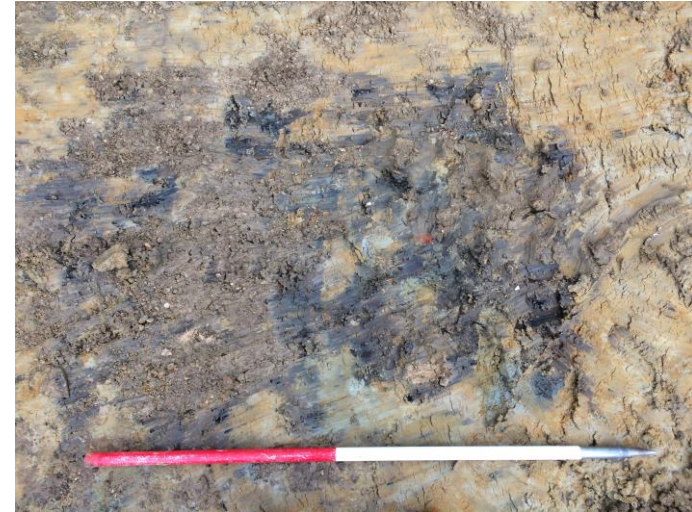


NE trench, looking SW (scale 1m)

Figure 2: All-features plan and general photographs of trenches



Patio area after stripping, looking SE (scale 1m)



Close-up of disturbance in patio area (scale 1m)



Pit [7], looking south (scale 1m)



Pit [8] in section of footings, looking west (scale 1m)

Figure 3: Selected photographs



Figure 4: Topsoil finds (scale 0.4m)



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