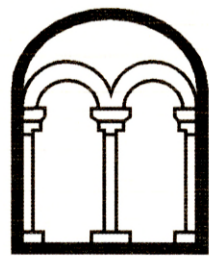


**GLOBE HOUSE
84-88 HIGH STREET SOUTH
DUNSTABLE
BEDFORDSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP AND
SAMPLE EXCAVATION, ANALYSIS AND
PUBLICATION**

Albion
archaeology



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PUBLICATION**

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Produced for:
Mr Alan Pegram



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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).

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The project was monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Hannah Firth, (Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist). The fieldwork was undertaken by Allan King (Archaeological Supervisor). This report has been prepared by Allan King with contributions from Jackie Wells (Finds Officer) and Joan Lightning (CAD Technician). The project was managed by Tori Guy (Project Officer). All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

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Key terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

Albion	Albion Archaeology
CBC	Central Bedfordshire Council
CBCA	Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist
CIfA	Chartered Institute for Archaeologists
Client	Mr Alan Pegram
HER	Central Bedfordshire's Historic Environment Record
PDA	Permitted development area
WSI	Written Scheme of Investigation



Non-Technical Summary

Planning permission was granted by Central Bedfordshire Council for the demolition of existing outbuildings, relocation of the car park entrance and construction of two new semi-detached dwellings at Globe House, 84-88 High Street South, Dunstable LU8 3HD (CB/18/03362/FULL).

The permitted development area (PDA) lies within the Roman core of Durocobrivis, and inside the limits of medieval Dunstable, as recorded in the Historic Environment Record. Accordingly, a condition (no. 4) was attached to the planning consent, requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation, which was carried out by Albion Archaeology in accordance with a written scheme of investigation, approved in writing by the local planning authority.

Archaeological strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken between 29th August and 5th September 2019, within the footprint of the new buildings; it measured c.11m x 9.5m. The original soil profile had largely been removed from the PDA during previous development. A buried subsoil survived beneath the modern make-up layers, sealing post-medieval features. The archaeological investigation revealed post-medieval and modern remains, but no Roman or medieval remains.

The post-medieval features consisted of two pits, a ditch and a potential wall foundation. The purpose of the two substantial pits in the west corner of the investigation area is uncertain; however, the quantity of post-medieval material recovered from the later pit (including animal bone, brick and Totternhoe Stone (clunch)), suggests reuse as a rubbish pit. The short length of foundation was constructed of re-used peg tile. It was heavily truncated by a curving post-medieval ditch, which represented a later phase of land division.

The site was presumably levelled prior to the construction of a modern building, represented by two parallel foundations. One of these was truncated by a later wall foundation, which was probably associated with the police station that formerly occupied the site. A modern drainage ditch running parallel to Friars Walk may have been contemporary with one or both of these buildings.

Whilst the archaeological investigation did not reveal evidence for Roman or medieval occupation within the PDA, it did show clear evidence of pre-modern land-use, demonstrating the potential for the survival of earlier features.

No further analysis of the results of the investigation is required beyond that presented in this report, which will be uploaded onto the OASIS website (ref: albionar1-350731). The archive of materials (subject to the landowner's permission) and records will be prepared for deposition at Luton Culture (accession no. LUTNM: 2019/60).



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

Planning permission was granted by Central Bedfordshire Council for the demolition of existing outbuildings, relocation of the car park entrance and construction of two new semi-detached dwellings at Globe House, 84-88 High Street South, Dunstable LU8 3HD (CB/18/03362/FULL).

The permitted development area (PDA) lies within the Roman core of *Durocbrivis*, and inside the limits of medieval Dunstable, as recorded in the Historic Environment Record (HER).

As the development could impact on potential below-ground archaeological remains of prehistoric, Roman and medieval date, a condition (no. 4) was attached to the planning consent, requiring the implementation of a programme of archaeological investigation. The Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologist (CBCA) advised that the work should comprise strip, map and sample excavation, followed by post-excavation analysis, publication and archiving. This was in accordance with national planning guidelines in the form of the *National Planning Policy Framework – Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment*, issued on 24th July 2018¹ (and subsequently reissued on 19th February 2019).

The work was carried out in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) (Albion Archaeology 2019), approved in writing by the local planning authority.

This report represents the results of the strip, map and sample investigation.

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

Dunstable is situated in the south of the historic county of Bedfordshire, with Luton 7km to the east and Leighton Buzzard 9.7km to the north-west. The north-eastern edge of Dunstable merges with Houghton Regis. High Street South lies to the south of the centre of Dunstable.

The PDA is c.275m south-east of the intersection of the town's two principal roads — the High Street/Watling Street (A5) and West Street/Church Street (A505). The PDA is bounded on its north-western edge by Friars Walk, which extends south-west from the High Street. It lies on the southern side of the High Street and Friars Walk junction (Figure 1).

At the time of the fieldwork, the PDA comprised a red-brick building (Globe House), outbuildings and a block-paved car park, of which only the outbuildings and car park would be subject to development. To the south-west and south-east the site is bounded by a neighbouring dwelling and garages, respectively.

Dunstable lies on the northern edge of the chalk escarpment of the Chiltern Hills, with an underlying solid geology of Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit

¹ National Planning Policy Framework, Available at:
<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/nppf>.



Chalk Formation². The topography of the area is undulating with a number of ridges and valleys. Dunstable town centre lies on relatively level, higher ground and the PDA lies at c.149m OD. It is centred on grid reference TL 02045 21613.

1.3 **Archaeological and Historical Background**

The archaeological and historical background of Dunstable, in particular the area within a 250m-radius study area around the PDA, was discussed in a heritage statement produced in support of the planning application (CFA 2018). In preparation of the WSI an updated search of the HER was carried out (ref.: 201920/030). The most salient information from both is reproduced below.

1.3.1 **Prehistoric (before AD 43)**

Prehistoric activity within Dunstable is best represented by the route of Icknield Way (HER 353), which follows the line of West Street, c.275m to the north-west of the PDA. There were no significant prehistoric sites recorded within the study area; however, it is worth noting that a long barrow (HER129) and round barrow (HER128) have been recorded c.700m to the north-west of the PDA.

1.3.2 **Roman (AD 43–410)**

Dunstable lies at the crossroads of the Roman Watling Street (HER 5508) — running through Bedfordshire on its route from London to Holyhead on the line of the present-day A5 and the prehistoric Icknield Way. It is named as *Durocobravis* (HER 135) in the Antonine Itinerary, a Roman road book describing routes throughout the Roman Empire and the towns along them (Simco 1984, 30). *Durocobravis* was the name given by the Romans to the settlement at the crossroads of Watling Street and the Icknield Way, which is today called Dunstable.

Since the large-scale re-development and expansion of Dunstable from the mid-20th century onwards a considerable quantity of Roman remains have been excavated and recorded within the centre of the town, particularly near the central crossroads, proving the existence of a sizable regional centre. The core of the Roman town seems to have radiated out for a distance of around 400m from the Icknield Way/Watling Street crossroads, which includes the PDA. The roads naturally divide Roman *Durocobravis* into quadrants, referred to in many HER records.

The PDA lies c.275m to the south-east of the crossroads and adjacent to Watling Street (HER 5508) on its south-western side. The presence of Roman remains is, therefore, a strong possibility. Excavations from 1965 onwards in an area known as Friary Fields c.75m west of the PDA initially targeted the Dominican Friary. They also identified remains of Romano-British occupation from the 2nd to early 5th century AD. This included wells, building post holes, latrines, potential ditches and artefacts (EBD 723), and parts of a Roman cemetery (EBD 743/749).

An excavation and watching brief were carried out at 24 Friary Fields, c.150m west of the PDA (EBD 185/480). They uncovered further remains of the Roman cemetery, along with pits and ditches, which spanned the period of Roman occupation.

² <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>



Excavations centred at the crossroad of Watling Street and Icknield Way were carried out between 1963 and 1975 (EBD740/742/747). They revealed Roman pits, ditches and post holes along with cess pits and wells providing evidence for the domestic core of Roman *Durocbrivis*. There was also evidence of what may have been the Roman metalled surface of Icknield Way (HER11270). This settlement core produced evidence of occupation from the early 1st to late 4th centuries AD.

1.3.3 Anglo-Saxon (410–1066)

The decline of Roman *Durocbrivis* is likely to have taken place during the late 4th or 5th century when Roman urban life essentially came to an end. Dunstable is not mentioned as such in the Domesday Survey of 1086, because it was part of the Royal Manor of Houghton Regis at this time. Evidence of Saxon activity identified so far has been restricted to the north-west part of the modern town (*e.g.* the Marina Drive cemetery, HER 152), some 2km from the PDA, and *c.*2.5km to the north at Puddlehill. At present, there is little evidence for continuity between the Roman and Saxon settlements.

1.3.4 Medieval (1066–1550)

Henry I deliberately created Dunstable (HER 16986) as a market town in the early 1100s and encouraged settlers to the area by the promise of land and privileges. The town developed around the same Icknield Way/Watling Street crossroads as Roman *Durocbrivis*.

In 1109 he established a royal residence within the town, known as Kingsbury (HER 148), probably located on the north side of Church Street, east of the crossroads. At Christmas 1131–32 Henry I founded the Augustinian Priory of St Peter (HER 131, NHLE 1004676), *c.*200m to the east of the PDA. The priory no longer exists, but the scheduled earthworks of the church (HER 132), Priory House (HER 6311) and the gateway (HER 6329) are all part of the upstanding priory remains, located within Priory Gardens. The proximity of the PDA to the priory means that the identification of associated remains cannot be ruled out.

The site of a Dominican Friary (HER141), founded in 1259 lies to the south-west of High Street South, *c.*150m to the north of the PDA. Excavations from 1965 exposed three periods of construction, including timber-framed living quarters and Totternhoe Stone and flint-built rooms. Two later stone and tile ovens were uncovered as well as waste pits dating to the dissolution of the monasteries (EBD748). Notably, these excavations uncovered the medieval Gold Swan Badge with its enamel plumage (Matthews 1966); it is currently held by the British Museum.

Archaeological investigations at 24 Friary Fields uncovered several cross-shaped pits which are thought to be formal gardens originating in the medieval period (EBD185).

The PDA lies in the southern part of the medieval core (HER 16986), as defined in the HER. Britain Street, *c.*150m to the south of the PDA, is considered likely to mark the southern boundary of the town (enclosed by a ditch); however, the presence of a town ditch in this location is yet to be confirmed through archaeological investigation.

Buried features, such as kilns, pits and ditches, have been recorded at a number of locations in Dunstable town centre, including on Chapel Walk (HER 11280,



EBD740), St Mary's Street (HER 11273, 17723/EBD742, 746), 21-23 High Street South (EBD 725/726), West Street (EBD959) and to the west (HER 14964/EBD727, HER16077/EBD720) and east (HER 15212/EBD1262) of High Street North.

In the second half of the 12th century a cross (HER 134) was erected at the crossroads to commemorate Queen Eleanor, whose body was carried along this route to London. It was demolished during the Civil War in 1644.

1.3.5 Post-medieval (1550–1900)

Dunstable's position on the A5 (Watling Street) meant that from the medieval period it prospered as a stopping point for coaches on the way from London to the north-west. From the 17th century onwards many coaching inns were constructed along High Street North and High Street South. A number of Inns and hotels that still exist along the High Street and West Street, are now designated Grade II listed buildings, e.g. the Old Sugar Loaf Inn (HER 6255) and the Plume of Feathers (HER 6312).

One of the earliest plans of the town dates to 1762 and shows that it was relatively small at that time. By the beginning of the 19th century it had a population of only 1,296 people. The majority of the extant Grade II listed and undesignated buildings along the four main roads are of 18th–19th-century date. The nearest listed building to the PDA is the Grade II listed Cart Almshouses, 65-75 High Street South (HER4294), located directly opposite Globe House, and founded by Jane Cart of the Chew family. This along with the front wall (HER6261) and the Grade II* listed Chew House, a former school built c.1715 (HER6251) form a group. Located c.150m to the north of the PDA, the Grade II* listed Priory House (HER6311), formerly The Rectory/Priory, mostly dates to the 18th century and contains a medieval vaulted undercroft relating to the 13th-century Priory of St Peter.

The arrival of the railway in 1848 led to huge expansion of the town, particularly around the London and North-Western Station; it also resulted in the rapid decline of the coaching industry. Towards the end of the 19th century the straw hat industry became one of the town's principal businesses. In many cases the factories took over redundant coaching inns and a number are known along High Street South, e.g. the Waggon & Horses (HER 6264), a public house with 19th-century origins at 183 High Street South.

Other buildings of note are The Grey House Hat Factory, High Street South (HER4548), The Little Theatre, High Street South (HER17770) and The Star Inn, High Street South (HER1738), now demolished, which was also the Maltings Farm and parish workhouse from 1780–1836. Buildings at 61 and "Railings", High Street South are 19th-century constructions with cast-iron railings (HER6260).

A watching brief conducted in 2007 to the rear of 84-88 High Street South recorded the presence of two late 19th- or early 20th-century cellars along with an undated ditch/pit (EBD67).

1.3.6 Modern (1900-present day)

A number of modern designated and undesignated buildings are recorded in the HER and comprise mostly public buildings. The largest category of public buildings is religious houses. A Grade II listed Methodist Church (HER 15109) and associated



churchyard (HER 9008) survives on the west side of High Street South. Other examples include the Grade II listed Strict Baptist Chapel (HER12308), St Mary's Gate and the West Street Baptist Churchyard (HER9009).

There are a number of WW2 public air raid shelters in the centre of Dunstable, as the nearby Vauxhall Works, Park Street bus depot and Luton Airport made the vicinity a target. Within the study area two examples have been excavated and later demolished. These are at Chapel Walk (HER17724) and The Saracens Head public house, High Street South (EBD852). Additionally, the WW1 and WW2 Dunstable War Memorial stands to the south-west of Priory Church of St Peter (HER17736).



2. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

2.1 *Fieldwork Data Collection Aims*

The primary objective of the archaeological investigation work was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any archaeological remains in their cultural and environmental setting.

Overall, the data collected during the fieldwork aimed to determine the following:

1. the date, nature and extent of any activity or occupation within the PDA;
2. the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
3. the local environmental conditions (through the recovery of palaeo-environmental remains).

2.2 *Research Strategies*

In addition to the primary aims of the fieldwork, wider research objectives were formulated based upon expected archaeological remains and could be linked to existing research strategies.

Historic England has produced an extensive library of national guides covering a wide range of topics, most of which are available for free download from the Historic England website³.

2.2.1 *Regional and county-based strategies*

A number of research frameworks have been devised for the region. The earliest comprises *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties 1. resource assessment* (Glazebrook 1997). This was complemented by *Research and Archaeology: a Framework for the Eastern Counties 2. research agenda and strategy* (eds Brown and Glazebrook 2000), which set out research priorities.

These documents were reviewed and revised in *Revision of the Regional Research Framework for the Eastern Region* (eds Medlycott and Brown 2008). Finally, the regional research framework was again reviewed and augmented in *Research and Archaeology Revisited: a revised framework for the East of England* (ed. Medlycott 2011).

In addition to these regionally focussed documents, work has also specifically been done on the county of Bedfordshire: *Bedfordshire Archaeology. Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy* (Oake et al. 2007).

2.3 *Project Research Objectives*

The general objectives of the archaeological investigation were to:

- establish the date, nature and extent of any activity or occupation within the PDA;
- establish the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits within the PDA;

³ <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/advice-and-guidance/>



- establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

The specific objectives of the archaeological investigation were to determine if there was any evidence within the PDA for:

- Roman and/or medieval occupation alongside Watling Street (Oake 2007, 11);
- the layout and/or development of the medieval friary (Oake 2007, 14);
- the layout, development and urban character of medieval Dunstable in areas away from the priory (Oake 2007, 14);
- post-medieval use of the PDA (Medlycott 2011, 79).



3. METHODOLOGY

The methodological approach to the project is summarised below. A full methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion Archaeology 2019).

3.1 Methodological Standards

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> , 3rd edition (2017)
CIfA	<i>Charter and By-law; Code of Conduct</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for archaeological excavation</i> (2014)
	<i>Standard and guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials</i> (2014)
EAA	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment PPN3: Archaeological Excavation</i> (2015)
Historic England	Archaeology Guidelines and Standards ⁴ ;
	<i>The MoRPHE Project Managers Guide</i> (2015)
Luton Culture	<i>Procedures for preparing archaeological archives for deposition with Luton Culture</i> (2013)

The project archive will be deposited at Luton Culture (accession no.: LUTNM: 2019/60). Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database (reference no.: albionar1-350731) in accordance with the guidelines issued by Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service.

3.2 Archaeological Investigation

The archaeological strip, map and sample excavation was undertaken between 29th August and 5th September 2019, within the footprint of the new buildings; it measured c.11m x 9.5m (Figure 1). Due to the depth of the archaeological deposits, it was agreed with the CBCA that no excavation was required within the parking spaces to the north-west and the rear gardens. Equally the outbuildings were only demolished to c.150mm below the external ground level and, therefore, their removal was not subject to archaeological monitoring.

The archaeological strip was carried out by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged bucket, operated by an experienced driver under close archaeological supervision. All excavation and recording was carried out by experienced Albion staff with internal specialists also consulted. Any potential archaeological features were investigated by hand and recorded using Albion Archaeology's *pro*

⁴ Historic England guidelines on a number of specialist fields and materials, including environmental archaeology, are available at: <https://historicengland.org.uk/images-books/advice-and-guidance/>



formae sheets. The features were subsequently drawn and photographed as appropriate.



4. RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

All significant deposits and features revealed within the stripped area are described below by chronological period and shown on Figure 2, with selected photographs in Figures 3 and 4. Context numbers in square brackets refer to the cuts [***] and round brackets to fills or layers (***).

The investigation was focussed on the footprint of the proposed buildings. The majority of the area was reduced to the top of the undisturbed natural geology *c.*0.9m below ground level. Within the south-eastern extent of the footprint, the natural geology was not reached due to the presence of a modern wall foundation [33]. This reduced the excavation area by *c.*17m². Additionally a *c.*1m stand-off was maintained between the neighbouring dwellings and the excavation area due to the depth of the investigation.

4.2 Overburden and Geological Stratum

The overburden consisted of modern make-up layers, along with a buried subsoil. A single course of modern brick paving (1) formed the car park surface with associated levelling layers of sand (2) and brick rubble/tarmac (3), forming a total depth of *c.*0.4m. These sealed an earlier make-up/modern surface layer (4) comprised of brown-grey silt-clay with inclusions of chalk and modern brick up to *c.*0.3m thick. Underlying the modern layers was a grey-brown chalk-clay buried subsoil (5), which was *c.*0.2m thick.

The undisturbed geological stratum (6) was revealed within the excavation area. It consisted of a relatively friable yellow-white clay-chalk. The archaeological features were clearly visible cutting this layer.

4.3 Post-medieval Features

Two pits, a wall foundation and a curving ditch produced post-medieval dating evidence.

Two pits were recorded in the western corner of the investigation area. Pit [7] was only partially revealed but it appeared to be circular in shape with steep sides and a concave base. It was *c.*3.6m long and *c.*1.3m wide, as exposed. It was *c.*0.85m deep and filled with a single deposit of brown-grey silt-clay that appeared to be derived from natural processes (Figure 2, Section 1; Figure 3).

Pit [7] was truncated on its south-east side by pit [9], which was oval in shape on a NE-SW alignment, with near vertical sides and a flat base. It was *c.*3.2m long, *c.*1.1m wide and *c.*0.95m deep. Its fills were brown-grey clay-silt with moderate inclusions of brick and Totternhoe Stone (clunch), suggesting that the feature had been deliberately backfilled with debris and material from the surrounding area (Figure 2, Section 3; Figure 3).

A potential linear wall foundation [19] was recorded in the northern corner of the investigation area; it was truncated by ditch [21] at its western extent. The surviving remains were *c.*0.8m wide and extended *c.*1.75m from the north-east



limit of the investigation area on a NE-SW alignment. The foundation cut had vertical sides and was excavated to a depth of *c.*1.1m; however its full depth was not reached (Figure 2, Section 4; Figure 4). The foundation construction itself (20) consisted of randomly coursed peg tiles, laid flat with a brown-yellow silt-sand mortar. A mixture of complete and fragmented tiles, showing minimal signs of abrasion, had been re-used in the construction. Recovered whole tiles measured approximately 300mm x 150mm x 20mm, a sample of which was retained (Appendix 1).

Ditch [21] extended *c.*4m into the investigation area from the north corner. It was on a N-S alignment, curving south-east. It was *c.*2.6m wide and *c.*0.7m deep with steep sides, stepped on the western side, and a flat base (Figure 2, Section 4; Figure 4). It was truncated to the north-west and south-east by a modern ditch [11] and a modern foundation [29] respectively. The ditch did not continue beyond foundation [29] where it presumably terminated. Its fill primarily consisted of grey-brown clay-silt with frequent inclusions of tile throughout, presumably derived from wall foundation [19].

4.4 Modern Features

Three modern wall foundations and a modern ditch were recorded; they were all cut into make-up layer (4).

Ditch [11] was located adjacent to the north-west limit of the investigation area on a NE-SW alignment, truncating pits [7] and [9], and ditch [21]. It was at least 2.3m wide and *c.*0.5m deep with concave sides and base. It contained a number of mixed-use fills, ranging from light to dark grey silt-clay (Figure 2, Section 1).

Foundations [29] and [31] ran parallel on a NE-SW alignment *c.*2.7m apart and were presumably part of the same building. They were both *c.*0.8m wide and filled with brown-grey silt-clay, containing moderate inclusions of brick. Partial excavation of [29] revealed at least one course of bricks surviving *in-situ*.

Foundation [33] crossed the south-east side of the investigation area on an ENE-WSW alignment and truncated modern foundation [31]. It was *c.*0.7m wide with at least seven courses surviving up to make-up layer (3). Its alignment suggests that it formed part of the former police station that occupied the site (now Globe House).

4.5 Undated Features

Two undated features were recorded cutting the undisturbed geological stratum, both truncated by modern foundation [31].

Pit [15] appeared to be circular in shape, but was heavily truncated. The surviving remains measured *c.*2m long, *c.*0.4m wide and *c.*0.15m deep. It had vertical sides and a flat base (Figure 2, Section 5; Figure 3). The fill contained a small quantity of animal bone, but no datable artefacts were recovered.

Feature [17] had an irregular shape in plan and was located directly north-east of pit [15]. It was *c.*2.5m long, *c.*0.75m wide and *c.*0.15m deep, with shallow sides and an uneven base (Figure 2, Section 6). No finds were recovered from the



disturbed grey clay-silt fill. The feature's irregular form suggests that it may be a tree throw.



5. CONCLUSIONS

The PDA lies within the Roman core of Durocobravis, and inside the limits of medieval Dunstable; therefore, the survival of archaeological remains of this date was a distinct possibility. The majority of the building footprint was reduced to the level of the undisturbed geological stratum, with the exception of the south-east extent, which was disturbed by a modern wall foundation. The archaeological investigation revealed post-medieval and modern remains. No Roman or medieval remains were identified.

The post-medieval features consisted of two pits, a ditch and a potential wall foundation. The purpose of the two substantial pits in the west corner of the investigation area is uncertain; however, the quantity of post-medieval material recovered from the later pit [9] (including animal bone, brick and Totternhoe Stone (clunch)), suggests reuse as a rubbish pit.

A short length of foundation [19] constructed of re-used peg tile was recorded in the north corner of the investigation area. No return or opposing foundation was identified and as such the form of this construction is uncertain, although its considerable depth suggests that it is most likely to be a building foundation. It was heavily truncated by a curving post-medieval ditch [21], which presumably formed a later boundary, though the surviving length again provides little basis for interpretation.

The original soil profile had largely been removed from the PDA during previous development. A buried subsoil survived beneath the modern make-up layers, sealing the post-medieval features.

The site was presumably levelled prior to the construction of a modern building, represented by two parallel foundations [29] and [31]. One of these was truncated by a later wall foundation, which was probably associated with the police station that previously occupied the site. A modern drainage ditch [11] running parallel to Friars Walk may have been contemporary with one or both of these buildings.

Whilst the archaeological investigation did not reveal evidence for Roman or medieval occupation within the PDA, it did show clear evidence of pre-modern land-use, demonstrating the potential for the survival of earlier features. With the concentrated development in and around Dunstable these results are important in adding to the knowledge of changing occupation within the town and will aid any future work in the vicinity.

No further analysis of the results of the investigations is required beyond that presented in this report, which will be uploaded onto the OASIS website (ref: albionar1-350731). The archive of materials (subject to the landowner's permission) and records will be prepared for deposition at Luton Culture (accession no. LUTNM: 2019/60).



6. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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7. APPENDIX 1: FINDS SUMMARY

7.1 Introduction

Five features yielded an assemblage comprising mainly ceramic roof tile, with smaller quantities of pottery, clay tobacco pipe, vessel glass, animal bone, oyster shell and fragmentary clunch blocks. Most of the finds derived from the fills of pit [9] and ditch [21] (Table 1).

Feature	Fill	Date range	Finds summary
7 Pit	8	Post-medieval	Pottery (53g); ceramic roof tile (60g)
	25	Post-medieval	Ceramic roof tile (2.8kg); clay tobacco pipe (5g); worked stone x2; animal bone (99g); oyster shell (9g)
9 Pit	10	Post-medieval	Ceramic roof tile (59g); clay tobacco pipe (13g); animal bone (20g); oyster shell (55g); coal (7g)
	26	Post-medieval	Brick (853g); vessel glass (20g); oyster shell (54g)
	28	Post-medieval	Pottery (236g); ceramic roof tile (352g); vessel glass (93g); clay tobacco pipe (120g); worked stone x2; animal bone (565g); oyster shell (119g)
15 Pit	16	Undated	Animal bone (5g)
19 Wall foundation	20	Post-medieval	Ceramic roof tile (2.4kg)
21 Ditch	24	Post-medieval	Pottery (1kg); ceramic roof tile & brick (3.1kg); vessel glass (1.4kg); clay tobacco pipe (146g); worked stone x4; oyster shell (19g); animal bone (1.4kg)

Table 1: Finds summary by feature

7.2 Pottery

Twenty-two sherds (1.3kg) representing 15 vessels, the majority deriving from ditch [21], were identified in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series (Table 2). The material is robust and well-preserved, demonstrated by a mean sherd weight of 60g. The earliest pottery derives from pit [7] and comprises oxidised sand-tempered ware (E03) of transitional late medieval/early post-medieval date. Locally manufactured 17th–19th-century glazed red earthenware forms (P01, P03) are represented by large bowls/pancheons. Eleven sherds of unsourced late 17th–18th-century English brown stoneware (P36A) represent tankards or mugs, some with lathe-turned combing/wheel-turned grooves on the lower body/base. A single sherd of 17th–18th-century mottle/speckle-glazed ware (P19) was also identified. The latter is likely to derive from production centres in the Midlands, such as Staffordshire or Nottingham.

Fabric type	Common name	Qty.	Wt. (g)	Feature:sherd no.
E03	Smooth oxidised ware	1	53	[7]:1
P01	Glazed red earthenware	6	469	[9]:2; [21]:4
P03	Black-glazed earthenware	3	208	[21]:3
P19	Mottle/speckle glazed ware	1	14	[16]:1
P36A	Brown salt-glazed stoneware	11	575	[21]:11

Table 2: Pottery quantification by ware type



7.3 Ceramic Building Material

Twenty-two pieces of sand-tempered peg tile (7.5kg) were collected from pits [7] and [9], wall foundation [19] and ditch [21]. Most have double circular peg holes and extant dimensions of 254mm (length) x 145–180mm (width) x 15–18mm (thickness). Mortar on the broken edges of a few examples associated with the wall foundation indicates their reuse in the construction of this feature.

The use of peg tiles is known to span the mid-13th–16th century (McCornish 2015, 33). Their association, however, on this site, with post-medieval bottle glass, clay tobacco pipes and pottery suggests they are likely to fall at the later end of this range and can be confidently assigned a post-medieval date.

Portions of three stock-moulded bricks (width 100mm x depth 55mm) weighing 2.2kg derived from pit [9] and ditch [21]. A suggested date range of between the 17th and late 18th centuries is likely.

7.4 Totternhoe Stone

Seven crudely dressed rectangular Totternhoe Stone (clunch) blocks, all with at least one roughly tooled surface were collected from pits [7], [9] and ditch [21]. Dimensions range between 200–280mm (length) x 155–180mm (width) x 110–150mm (thickness). Ditch [21] also contained a roughly dressed slightly tapering, sub-rectangular clunch pivot stone (420mm (length) x 210–220mm (width) x 100–120mm (thickness)) with a worn, centrally placed square pivot hole c.40 x 40mm (depth 30mm). None have been retained.

7.5 Vessel Glass

Twelve translucent, dark green, vessel glass fragments (1.6kg) deriving from late 17th–early 18th-century wine bottles were collected from pit [9] and ditch [21]. They comprise portions of three short necks with string rims, six kick bases, two indeterminate body sherds and a circular bottle seal (diameter 37mm) decorated with stamped initials 'E I S' and a large fish (possibly a pike).

7.6 Clay Tobacco Pipe

Portions of 28 stems and five pipe bowls (four complete) derived from pits [7], [9] and ditch [21]. Stems are straight with bores measuring between 2.4–3mm in diameter. All bowls have flat heels: four are plain and one has a poorly executed partially milled rim. One heel is stamped either 'W' or 'M', with an illegible initial on the opposing side. Diagnostic features suggest the pipes span the late 17th to early 18th centuries in date.

7.7 Ecofacts

Pits [7], [9], [15] and ditch [21] yielded 35 animal bone fragments (2.1kg). Pieces are generally well-preserved, with a mean fragment weight of 61g. Diagnostic elements are limb bones, including four complete cattle metapodials (ditch [21]), large-medium mammal pelvis, vertebra, rib, and skull fragments, a cattle astragalus, and a sheep/goat molar. Cut marks occur on a few pieces of limb bone and rib.



Twenty-one oyster shell fragments (256g) were collected from pits [7], [9] and ditch [21]. None have been retained.

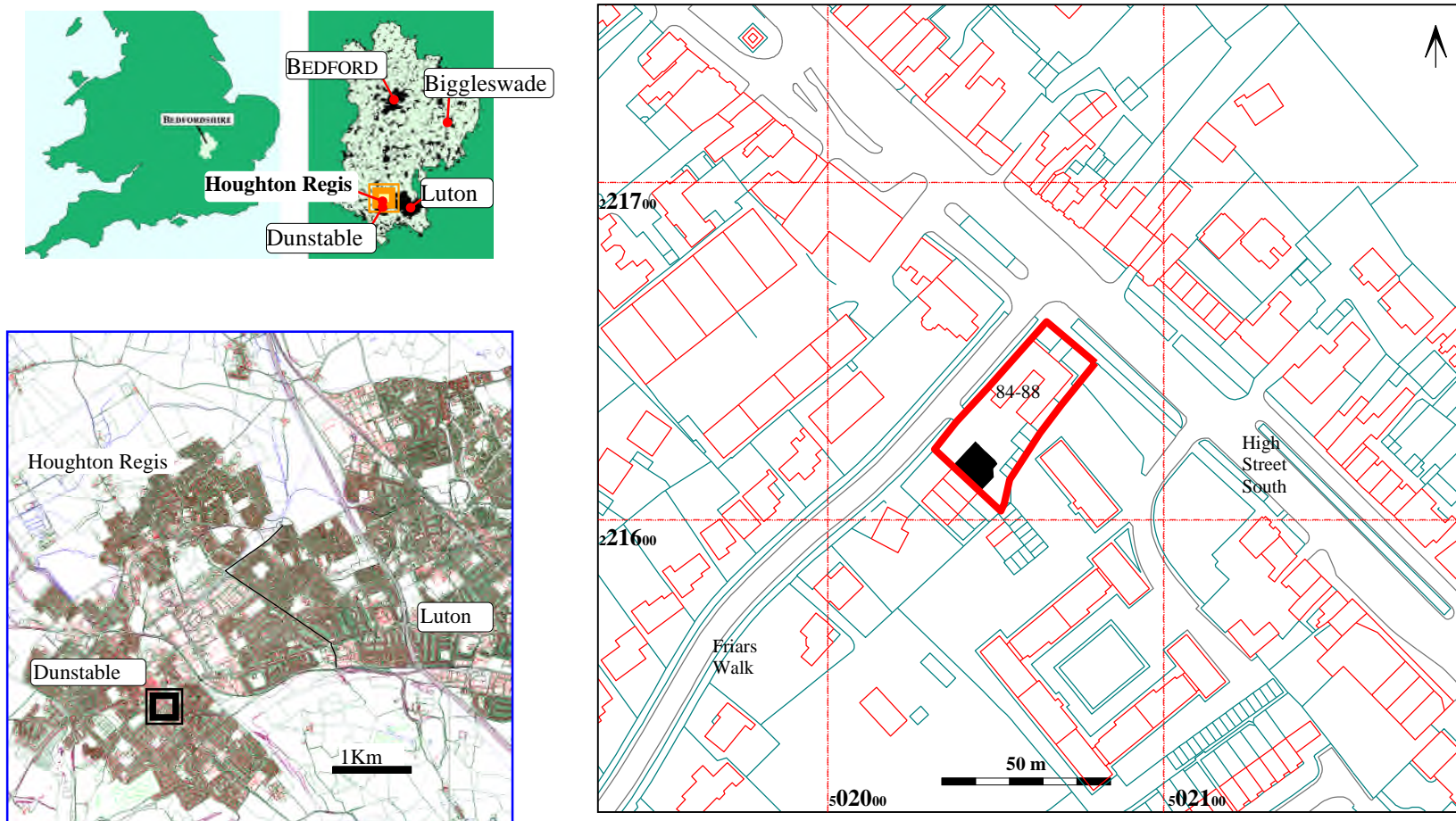
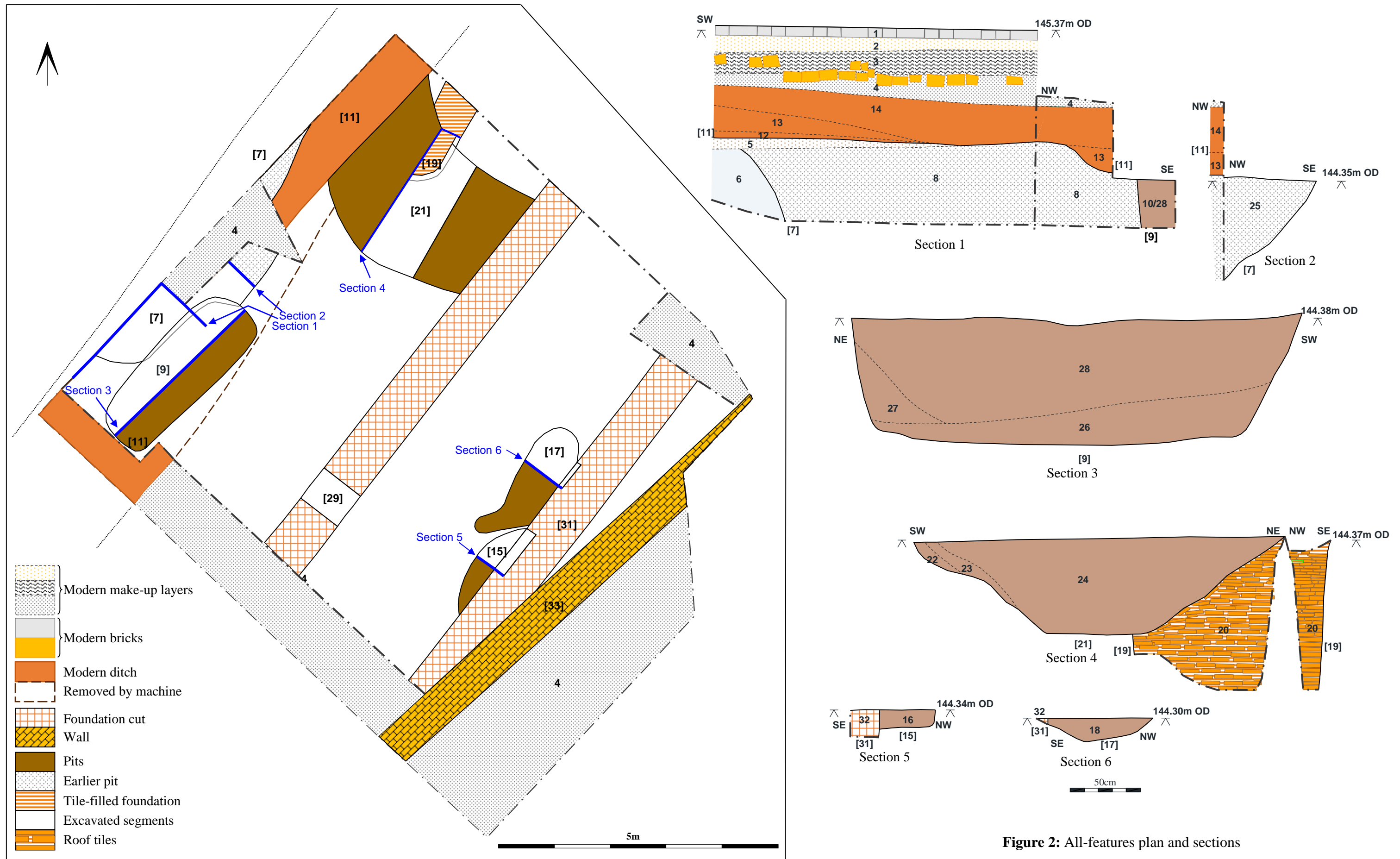


Figure 1: Site location

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SE-facing baulk section of pit [7] and modern ditch [11]



NW-facing section of pit [9]



NE-facing section of pit [15]



Site overview looking north

Figure 3: Selected photographs



SW-facing section of foundation [19]



SE-facing section of foundation [19]



SE-facing section of foundation [19] and ditch [21]

Figure 4: Selected photographs

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