

**THE ROOST, WICK END
STAGSDEN**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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Produced for:
Geoffrey Bunyan Associates
on behalf of
Antony Barrett



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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

This report has been prepared by Matthew Smith (Project Officer) with contributions from Adam Lodoen (Supervisor). The fieldwork was undertaken by Matthew Smith and Adam Lodoen. Joan Lightning (CAD Technician) produced the figures. All Albion Archaeology projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

Version History

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<i>1.0</i>	<i>8/10/07</i>	<i>n/a</i>

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Structure of the Report

After the introduction in Section 1, there is a results summary of the fieldwork in Section 2, followed by a brief conclusion in Section 3. Section 4 is a bibliography.

Key Terms

Throughout this report the following terms or abbreviations are used:

<i>Albion</i>	Albion Archaeology
<i>CAO</i>	County Archaeological Officer
<i>Client</i>	Geoffrey Bunyan Associates on behalf of Antony Barrett
<i>IFA</i>	Institute of Field Archaeologists
<i>BCC</i>	Bedfordshire County Council
<i>Procedures Manual</i>	<i>Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork, 2nd Edition 2001.</i> Albion Archaeology



Non-Technical Summary

Bedford Borough Council has granted planning permission (06/03146/FUL) for the construction of a storage barn at The Roost, Wick End, Stagsden.

A condition attached to the planning consent required a programme of archaeological observation and investigation (watching brief) in order to monitor the groundworks undertaken during the development.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned on 30th August 2007 by Geoffrey Bunyan Associates, on behalf of Antony Barrett, to carry out the archaeological observation and prepare a report on the results.

The development site is centred on NGR SP 9881 5004. It is located to the east of Wick End Farm, at 60m OD within the valley of the River Great Ouse.

The proposed barn lies within an area covered in hardcore used for the parking of vehicle. The land was formerly pasture.

No previous archaeological investigation had taken place in the development area. Known archaeology in the vicinity consisted of a partially infilled moat, at Wick End Farm to the west (HER 80). The moat is known to be of medieval date.

The archaeological watching brief was undertaken between 18th and 19th September 2007. During this period, all the groundworks which required archaeological monitoring were completed using a mechanical excavator.

No significant archaeological features or artefacts were revealed during the works. Topsoil and subsoil had clearly been previously removed down to the underlying drift geology (boulder clay) during the creation of the vehicle parking area.

The accession number for the site is BEDFM 2007/629. The archive will be kept in secure storage at the offices of Albion Archaeology at St Mary's Church, Bedford until deposition with Bedford Museum is completed.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Bedford Borough Council has granted planning permission for the construction of a storage barn at The Roost, Wick End, Stagsden (06/03146/FUL).

Because the site was located in a potentially archaeologically sensitive area, a condition was attached to the planning consent. The County Archaeological Officer (BCC 2007) issued a brief specifying that a programme of archaeological observation, recording and investigation (watching brief) should be undertaken during groundworks associated with the development.

Albion Archaeology was commissioned on 30th August 2007 by Geoffrey Bunyan Associates, on behalf of Antony Barrett to produce a project design (Albion Archaeology 2007). The project design conformed to the archaeological requirements of the brief. This report presents the results of the archaeological fieldwork.

1.2 Site Location and Description

The site is located to the east of Wick End Farm, at 60m OD within the valley of the River Great Ouse. The area subject to the archaeological investigation covered approximately 0.17ha, centred on OS grid reference SP 9881 5004 (Figure 1).

The geology of this part of the Great Ouse valley is the Hanslope Association; the dominant soils are calcareous gley over boulder clay.

The proposed barn lay within an area covered in hardcore, used for the parking of vehicles; the land had previously been under pasture.

1.3 Archaeological Background

No previous archaeological investigation had taken place within the development area. A partially infilled moat located nearby, at Wick End Farm to the west (HER 80), was known to be of medieval date. It was considered possible that the moat was the focus of a larger area of medieval activity which might extend into the development area.

Although the known archaeology within the general vicinity of the site was of medieval date, the Great Ouse valley has been a focus of human activity and settlement from the Palaeolithic period to the modern day. In addition, the previous use of the site as pasture suggested limited modern impact on any buried archaeological remains.



2. RESULTS

2.1 Introduction

Between 18th and 19th September 2007 all groundworks which required archaeological monitoring were completed. A mechanical excavator was used to remove the overlying hardcore and underlying deposits to the required depths.

2.2 Methodology

The programme of archaeological observation adhered to the field methods set out in Section 2.2.1 of the project design:

- 1 The archaeological investigation consisted of continuous observation of the stripping of overburden to clean boulder clay. Potential archaeological features, where revealed, were investigated and recorded.
- 2 Removal of overburden in the development area used an appropriate machine operating under archaeological supervision to expose the top of archaeological deposits. The location and execution of the groundworks was under the control of the client's appointed contractor. The archaeologist observed the groundworks as they took place. Identification and avoidance of any constraints relating to the siting and depth of the groundworks were the responsibility of the client.
- 3 All excavated features and deposits were fully recorded in accordance with the Albion Archaeology *Procedures Manual*.

Throughout the project, the standards set out in the Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* and *Standard and Guidance* documents (specifically *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief*, September 1999), in English Heritage's *Management of Archaeological Projects* (1991) and in Albion Archaeology's *Procedures Manual* were adhered to.

2.3 Results

The groundworks consisted of the excavation of foundations for a storage barn. The layout of the foundation trench was c. 80m in length and was often up to 1m wide (Figure 2). No significant archaeological deposits or artefacts were revealed.

The underlying, undisturbed geological deposit revealed during the groundworks was grey brown boulder clay. This deposit was present across the entire site.

A layer of hardcore up to 0.5m thick was present across the development area. Above this was a modern coarse tarmac surface, which was up to 0.1m thick, covering the whole area under investigation (Figure 1).



3. SYNTHESIS

3.1 Interpretation

No archaeological features were revealed during the groundworks. The foundation trenches did provide sections across the site and revealed that previous works may have had a truncating effect on any archaeological deposits that might once have been present. This disturbance would only be applicable to the area covered by hardcore.

3.2 Summary

Evidence of medieval activity had been recorded in the vicinity of the development area. This land was formerly used as pasture and more recently for parking vehicles.

The groundworks associated with the new barn revealed no significant archaeological features or artefacts. The levelling of the ground to create the parking area had removed all deposits down to the underlying boulder clay. As no archaeological features were encountered, it is difficult to assess if any truncation had taken place when the parking area was constructed. Although, it is likely that any deeper features would have survived beneath the parking area, none were identified during the construction of the barn.



4. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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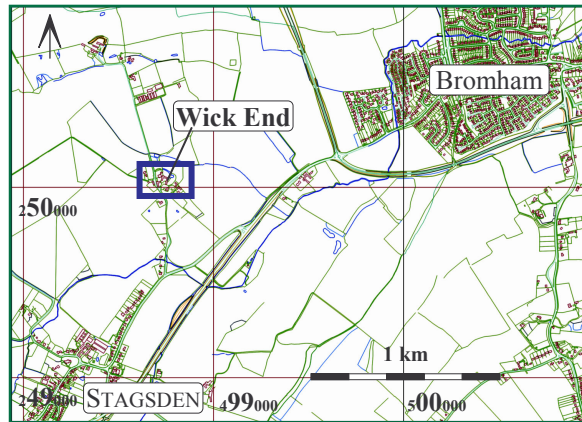
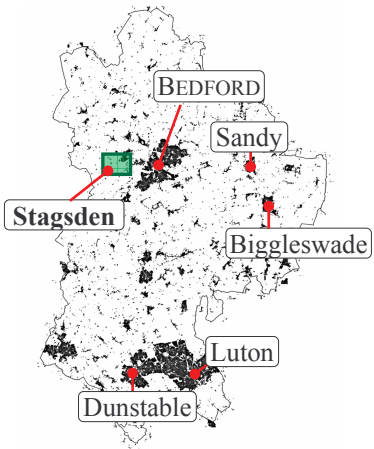
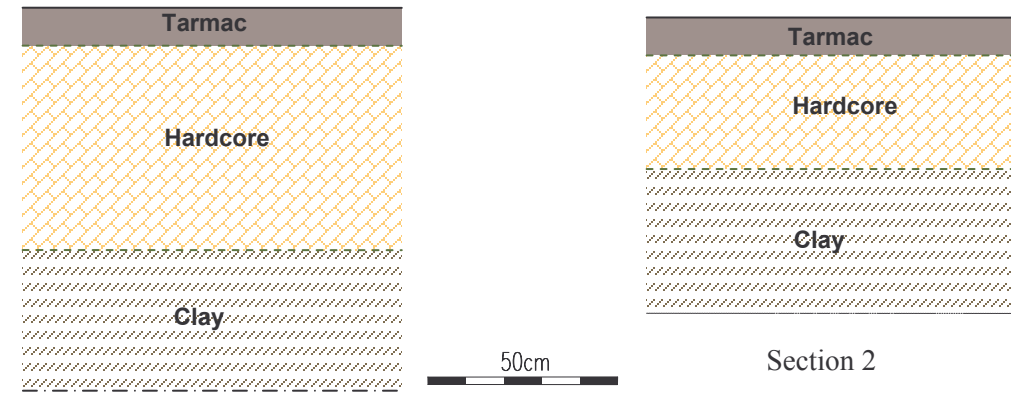
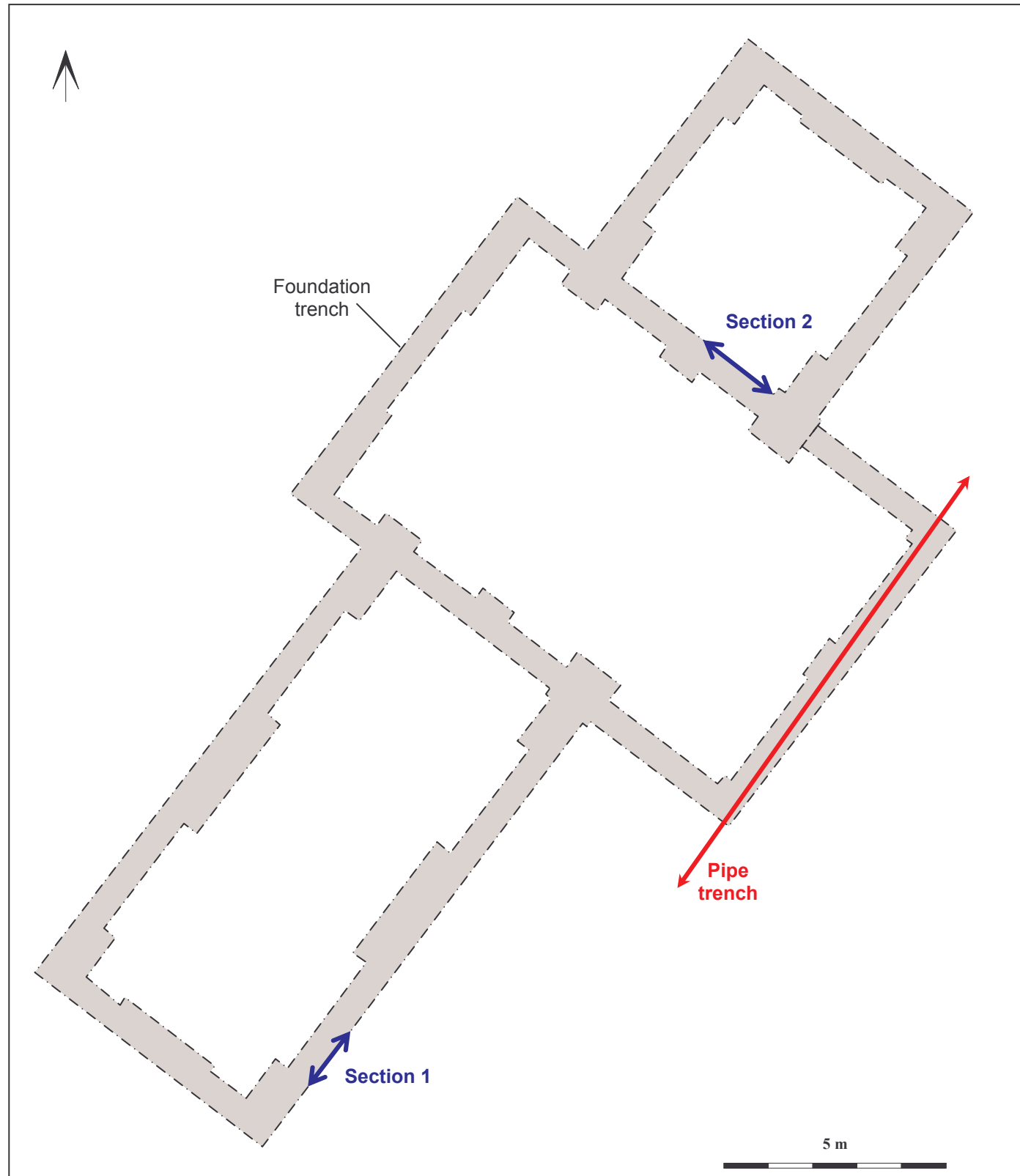


Figure 1: Site location plan

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Photograph of section 1, Scale 1m



Photograph of section 2, Scale 1m



Foundation trench, looking south west.

Figure 2: Foundations plan and photos