



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological watching brief at Waiting for the Sun
Farm, Bletsoe, Bedfordshire June 2010
BEDFM 2010.37



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BLETSOE, WAITING FOR THE SUN FARM

OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project title	Archaeological watching brief at Waiting for the Sun Farm, Bletsoe, Bedfordshire, June 2010
<i>A watching brief was carried out during an excavation for a sewerage tank at Waiting for the Sun Farm, Bletsoe, Bedfordshire. No archaeological features were present in the area of investigation.</i>	
Project type	Watching brief
Previous work	None
Future work	Unknown
Monument type and period	None
PROJECT LOCATION	
County	Bedfordshire
Site address	Waiting for the Sun Farm, Rusden Road, Bletsoe, Bedfordshire MK44 1QN
Easting / Northing	TL 02018 58279
Site area	10m ²
Height	44m aOD
PROJECT CREATORS	
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology
Project brief originator	Vanessa Clarke Bedfordshire Borough Council Archaeological Officer
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology
Director/Supervisor	Tim Upson-Smith
Project Manager	Steve Parry
Sponsor or funding body	Mr T Allen
PROJECT DATE	
Start date	June 2010
End date	June 2010
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
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Fig 3: The hole for the sewerage tank after excavation

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF AT
WAITING FOR THE SUN FARM,
BLETSOE, BEDFORDSHIRE,
JUNE 2010
BEDFM 2010.37**

Abstract

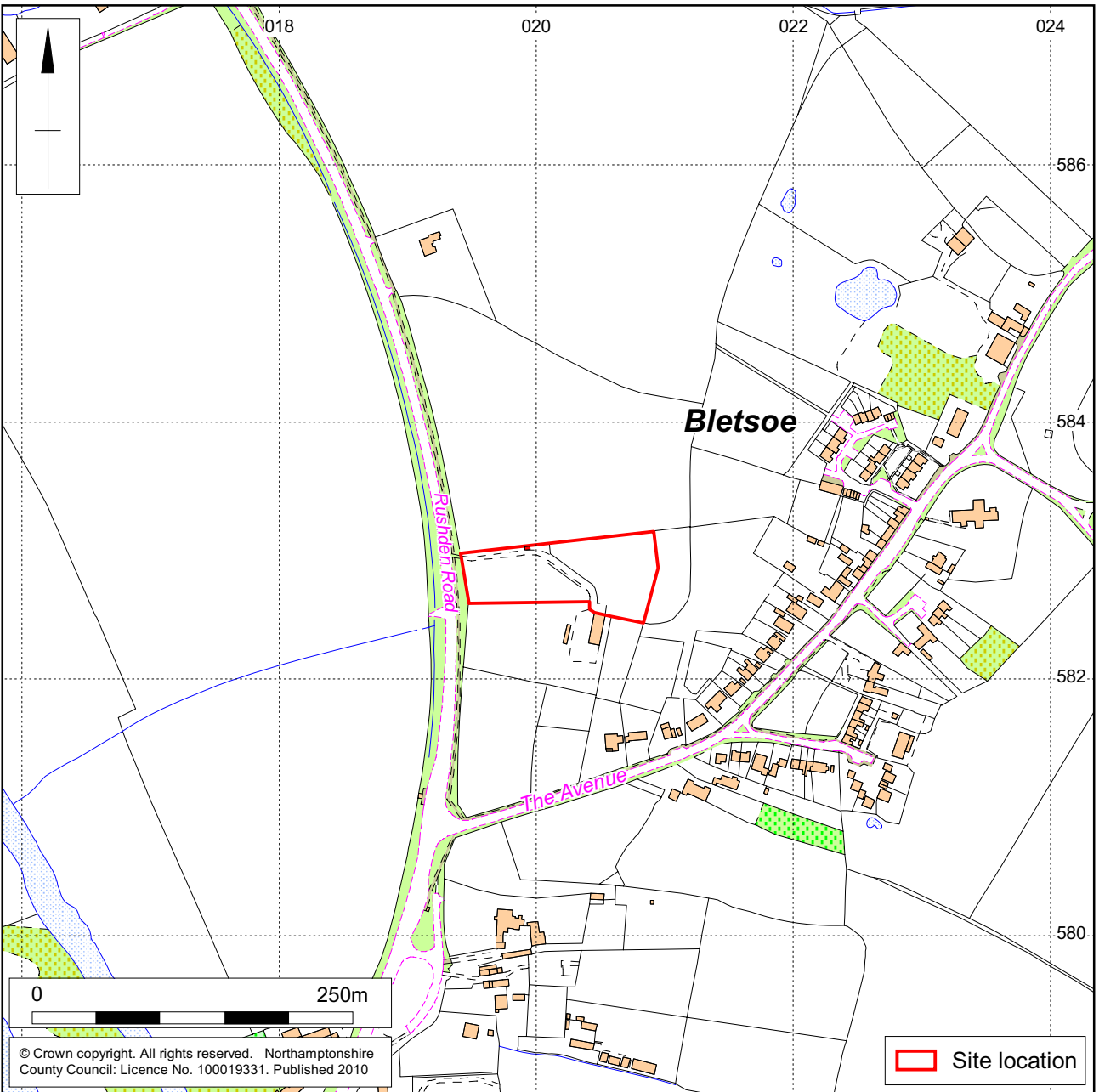
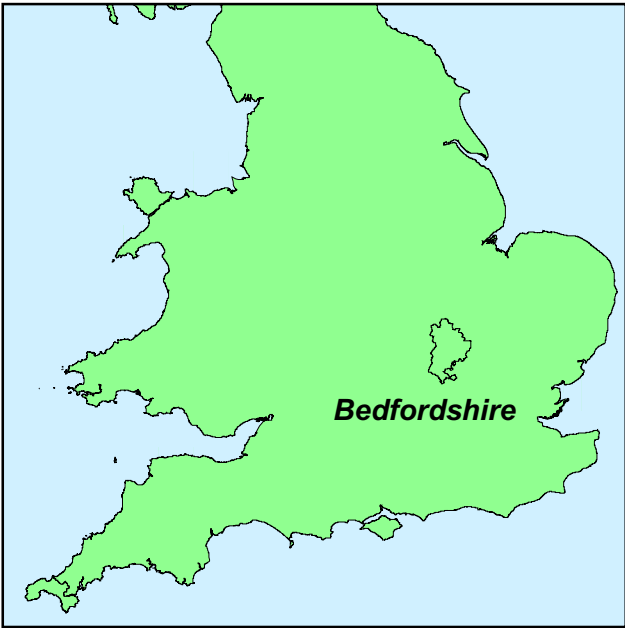
A watching brief was carried out during an excavation for a sewerage tank at Waiting for the Sun Farm, Bletsoe, Bedfordshire. No archaeological features were present in the area of investigation.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology were commissioned by Mr Allen to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation for a sewerage tank (Application No: 07/03706/FUL), on land at Waiting for the Sun Farm, Bletsoe, Bedfordshire (NGR: TL 02018 58279, Fig 1).

The work was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2010) which was prepared in response to a brief issued by the Archaeological Officer, Bedfordshire Borough Council (Clarke 2009).

Northamptonshire Archaeology is an Institute of Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation (RAO No 48). This report has been prepared in accordance with current best archaeological practice as defined in the Institute of Archaeologists' Standard and Guidance for field evaluation (IfA 1994b, revised 2008), the procedural document Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP 2) (EH 1991) and the Guidelines and procedures for archaeological work in Leicestershire and Rutland (LCC 1997).



Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1

1.1 Background

The development area is located within an area of archaeological interest. Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record lists two sites of particular archaeological interest close-by. A series of crop-marks lie immediately opposite the development site (Historic Environment Record No: 576). Approximately 100m to the north is the site of a Romano-British villa (HER No: 307). This is associated with a number of burials of possible late Romano-British or middle Saxon date, indicating the presence of a large cemetery.

About 350m from the eastern edge of the site lie the earthwork remains of Bletsoe Castle (HER No: 308), which is a Scheduled Monument. The complex of Bletsoe Castle is considered to be of major historical importance and is thought originally to have been occupied by a Norman castle and subsequently developed into a medieval moated site. Documentary evidence suggests Bletsoe Castle to have been the birthplace of the mother of Henry VII.

Up to the present application the site has been in agricultural use. No previous archaeological work is recorded as having been carried out within the development area.

1.2 Location and geology

The development area lies on the north-western edge of the village of Bletsoe, approximately 9.5km north of Bedford. The site is on generally level ground at c44m above Ordnance Datum. The underlying geology has been mapped by the British Geological Survey of Great Britain as comprising Boulder and Oxford Clay (<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeolIndex/index.htm>).

2 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

In order to examine the archaeological resource within the proposed development area the objectives of the watching brief were to:

- Observe, investigate and record all archaeological deposits uncovered during the groundworks for the new sewage and drainage system along with any other associated groundworks.
- Determine and record the date, extent, character, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits.

- Create a permanent archive and record of the archaeological information collected during the course of the fieldwork and analysis.

2.1 Methodology

The work was undertaken as a single visit to observe the ground works associated with the new sewerage and drainage works.

The location of the site was plotted on the ground and tied into the Ordnance Survey. Excavation was carried out under archaeological supervision by mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.

Photographs were taken as 35mm monochrome negatives in the traditional manner. The photographic record was compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing. Digital photographs were taken to supplement the record for reporting purposes.

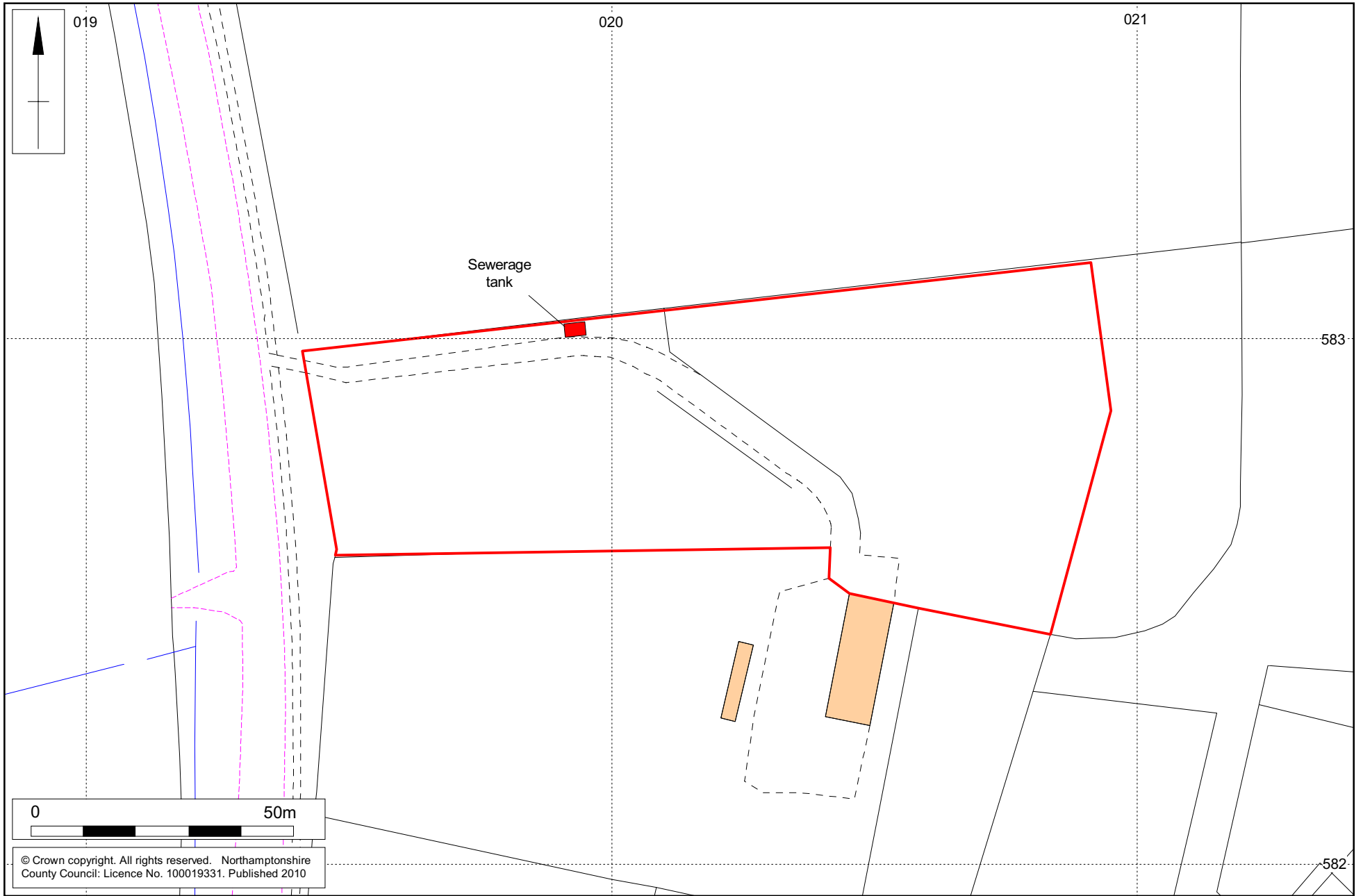
3 WATCHING BRIEF RESULTS

The excavation for the new sewerage tank measured 4m by 2.5 by 1.8m deep (Fig 2). Natural buff boulder clay was exposed at a depth of 0.5m below present ground surface; as no archaeological features were observed cutting the natural, excavation continued to a depth of 1.8m below present ground surface. The natural was overlain by a 0.5m deep layer of mixed topsoil and made ground containing modern brick rubble (Fig 3).

Scale 1:1000

General site plan

Fig 2





The hole for the sewerage tank after excavation

Fig 3

4 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological features were observed during the excavation for the sewerage tank. Mr Allen possessed a number of photographs from the 1970s which showed that the site had been much disturbed during the construction of the now semi-derelict brick buildings on the site. This activity may account for the modern made ground.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Clarke, V 2009 *Brief for a programme of archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication land at Waiting for the Sun Farm Rushden Road Bletsoe Bedfordshire* Bedford Borough Council

NA 2010 *Specification for a archaeological watching brief on land at Waiting for the Sun Farm, Bletsoe*, Northamptonshire Archaeology

Web pages

<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/GeoIndex/index.htm>



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