

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
THE COACH HOUSE
CHURCH LANE
POTSGROVE
BEDFORDSHIRE**

NGR: SP 9519 2993

on behalf of Lord Innes Ker



Bob Zeepvat BA MfA

August 2012

ASC: 1545/PCH/2



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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	PCH	<i>Project no:</i>	1545
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeol2-129071	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	tbc
<i>County:</i>	Bedfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Potsgrove		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Potsgrove		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 9519 2993		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.56 sq m		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Converted coach house		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Two storey extension and alterations to dwelling		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Central Bedfordshire Council		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	CB/12/01001/FUL		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	25 – 26/07/12		
<i>Client:</i>	Lord Robin Innes Ker The Coach House Church Lane Potsgrove MK17 9HG		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Lord Robin Innes Ker		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Bob Zeepvat	<i>Date:</i>	9 August 2012
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>	R. Semmelmann	<i>Date:</i>	10 August 2012

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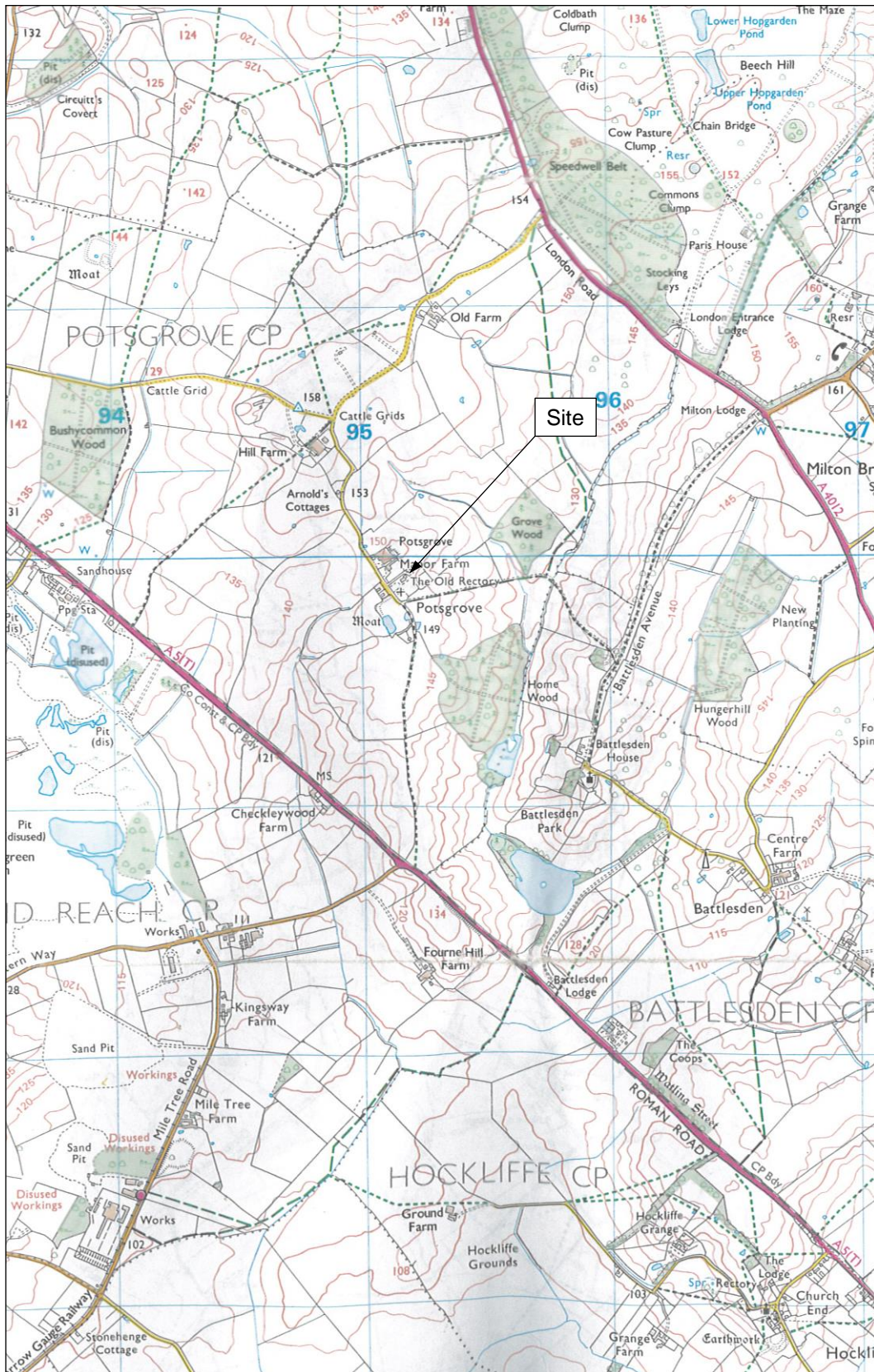


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In July 2012 a continuous archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks for an extension to The Coach House, Church Lane, Potsgrove, Bedfordshire. The watching brief revealed only evidence of modern services and an earlier modern surface of brick setts in front of the building. The house stands on a gentle south-east facing slope, and there was evidence for levelling up the area in front of the building. No features or deposits were found predating the construction of the house, which dates to the 1960s or early 1970s.

1. Introduction

1.1 In July 2012 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at The Coach House, Church Lane, Potsgrove, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by *Lord Robin Innes Ker*, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Rouse 2012), and approved by the *Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologists*, archaeological advisors (AA) to the local planning authority (LPA), *Central Bedfordshire Council*. The relevant planning application reference is CB/12/01001/FUL.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief was required under the terms of the *National Planning Policy Frameworks* (NPPF), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

ASC is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists and is also accredited ISO 9001, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *The Site*

1.4.1 *Location & Description*

The site is situated in the village and civil parish of Potsgrove in the Central Bedfordshire district, centred on NGR SP 9519 2993 (Fig. 1). The Coach House is located to the north east of 'The Rectory', and is accessed by a track which connects to an unnamed lane to the south east. The site is surrounded immediately by gardens, and farmland beyond that (Fig. 2).

1.4.2 *Topography & Geology*

The site stands on a gentle south-east facing slope, at an elevation of c.150m AOD. Soils of the area belong to the Hanslope association, characterised as *slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils. Slight risk of water erosion* over chalky till (Soil Survey 1983, 411d). The underlying geology comprises Quaternary Till (BGS, Sheet 220).

1.4.3 Proposed Development

Planning permission has been granted for a two-storey extension at the front of the building, and for an extension to the rear (Fig. 3). At this stage, only the front extension is being constructed, and this report covers only that stage of work.

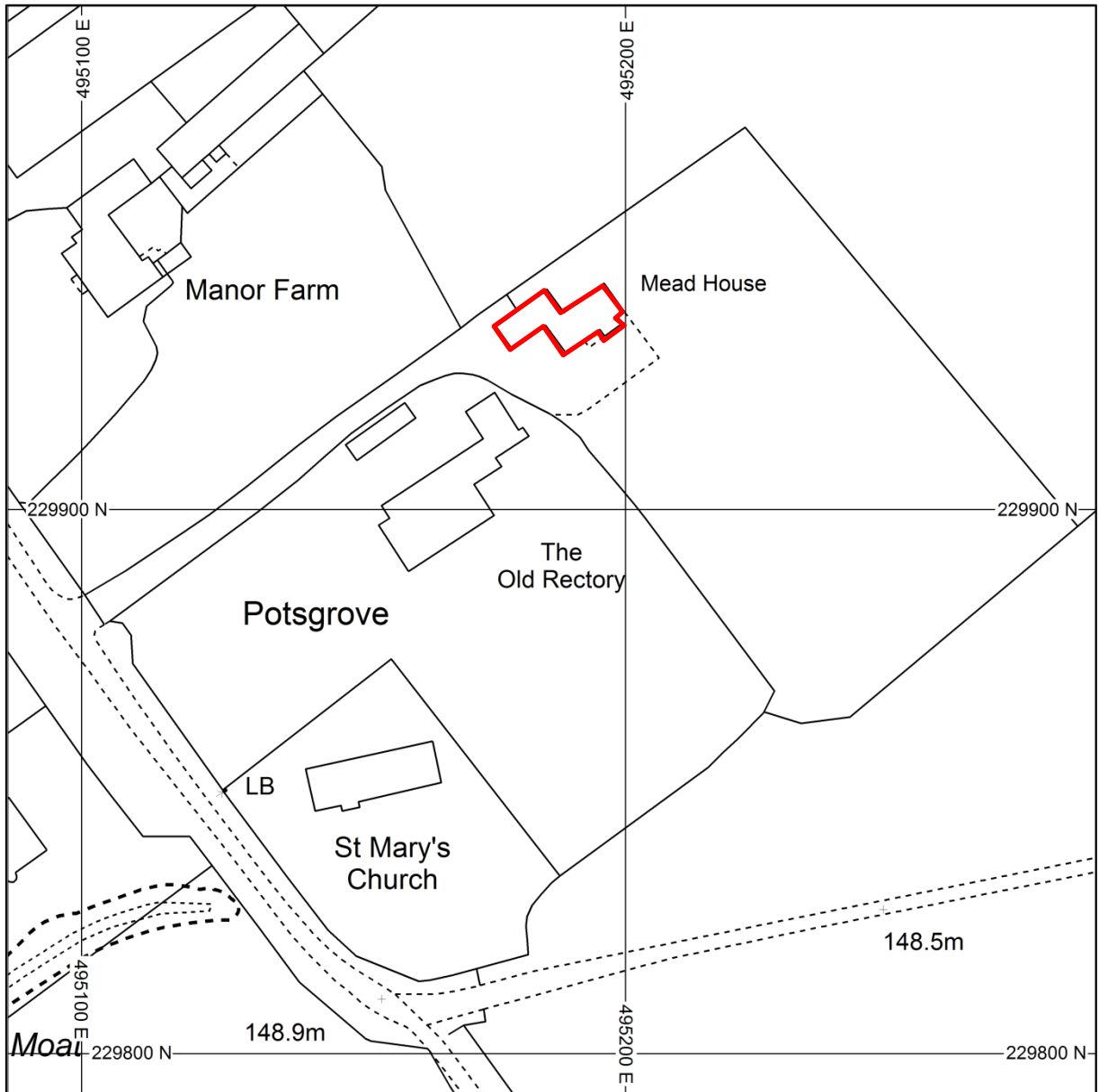


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

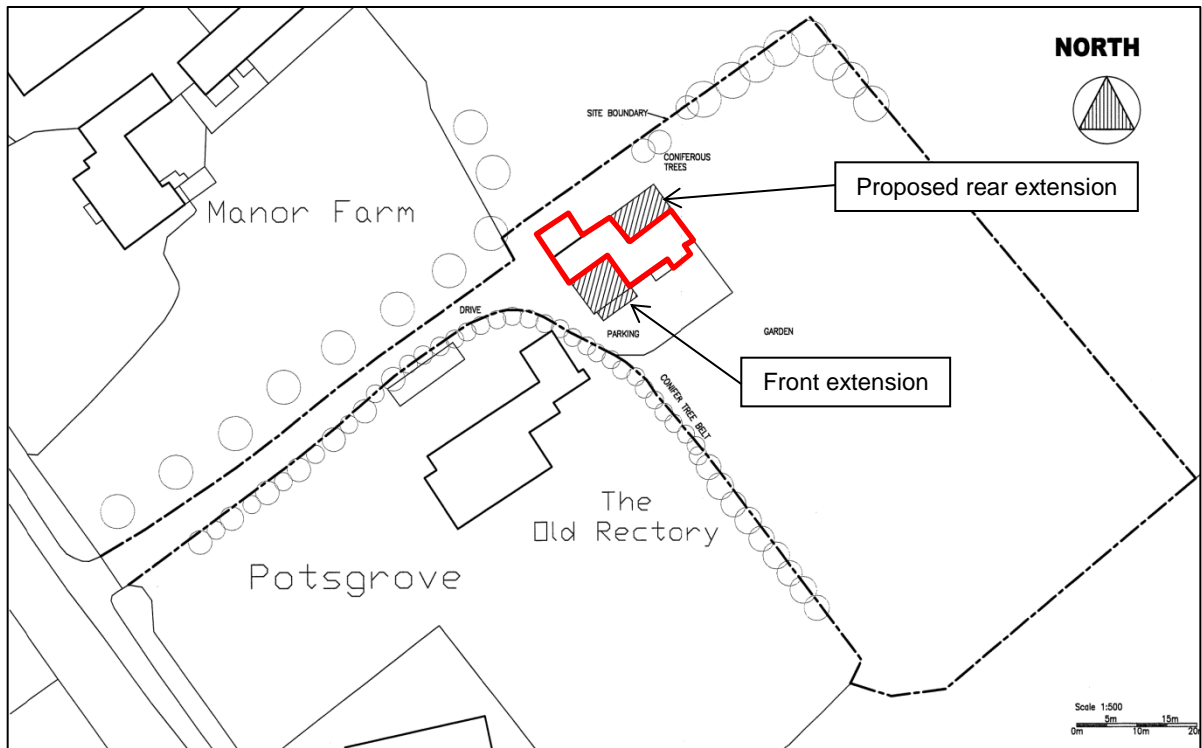


Figure 3: Proposed extensions (*scale as shown*)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the project design, the aims of the watching brief were:

- To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions
- To investigate medieval rural settlement in order to examine medieval settlement diversity and characterise rural settlement forms (Wade 2000; Oake 2007)

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IfA 2008a & b) and *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH 1991; EH 2006), to the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the project design, which stated that:

- Any groundworks likely to have an impact on archaeological deposits will be undertaken under continuous and constant archaeological supervision.

2.4 Constraints

The watching brief was carried out in fine, dry weather, with full co-operation from the client's groundworks contractors, and no constraints were encountered.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest, and has the potential to reveal evidence of a range of periods. This section has been compiled with information from with information from the Central Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and other readily available sources.

3.2 *Prehistoric – Roman* (before c.AD450)

Evidence for prehistoric to Iron Age activity is lacking in Potsgrove. Looking at the bigger picture, activity of this period is recorded in this part of Bedfordshire. For example, a number of earthen burial mounds have been found at Dunstable, c.10km south-east of Potsgrove, known as the Five Knolls. An ancient prehistoric trackway known as *Ickniel Way*, which has been traced from Dorset to the Norfolk coast, likely follows the main road between Dunstable and Luton. Just to the west of Dunstable at Maiden Bower an Iron Age banked enclosure and a Neolithic causewayed camp are present (Bigmore 1979, 32-37).

There is currently no known evidence for Roman activity within Potsgrove. However, following the Roman invasion in AD43, the route followed by the 14th Legion to the Midlands and Wales is believed to have been formalised as the road now known as *Watling Street* (A5), which passes to the south of Potsgrove. During the Roman period, a settlement known as *Dvrocobrivis* (HER135) grew up at the junction of Watling Street and the Ickniel Way. Further to the north-west, also along the route of Watling Street, is the site of the Roman town of *Magiovinium*, located close to Fenny Stratford.

3.3 *Saxon - Medieval* (c.450 - 1500)

It is likely that Potsgrove had its origins in the Saxon period. The Domesday survey of 1086 records the manor of Potsgrove as being made up of 7½ hides, held by Gozelin the Breton (Page 1912, 421-423).

The site is within the core of the rural medieval settlement of Church End, Potsgrove (HER 16881). It is adjacent to an upstanding earthwork medieval moat (HER 13), and c.100m north of St Mary's Church (HER 1099). The church dates back to the 14th century, although 12th and 13th-century masonry has been found within the fabric of the current building, possibly suggesting an earlier structure (Page 1912, 421-423).

The moated site (HER 13) may be that of Potsgrove Manor, and originally consisted of a rectangular moat within which was a house. Today the site is only partially enclosed by water-filled ditches to the south and west. The northern arm of the moat survives as an earthwork and extends into the development area, and is also partially filled with water. A large pond on the south-western side of the moat is unlikely to be part of the original earthworks.

To the south-west of the development site a series of soilmarks representing ridge and furrow cultivation and closes have been identified through aerial photography (HER 1822).

3.4 ***Post-Medieval - Modern*** (1500-Present)

In the Bedfordshire and Luton Archives and Records Service (BLARS) is a watercolour print dating to 1813, entitled “The remains of Pottsgrove House, with pond and man fishing” (BLARS Z102/57). The print depicts the moat and the house, showing the house to have been constructed from brick and roofed tile. The 1845 Tithe Map (BLARS MAT 36) depicts at least six buildings within the enclosure.

The 1889 Ordnance Survey map for Bedfordshire shows the site as a paddock adjacent to the Rectory. The Coach House was constructed in the 1960s or early 1970s. Today Pottsgrove remains a small village surrounded by agricultural fields.

A watching brief carried out by ASC in 2010 at The Old School, c.0.2km to the south-east of the development site, did not reveal any pre-modern finds or features (Hunn 2010).

4. Results & Conclusions

4.1 Results

Groundworks for the extension were completed in two days. The work was carried out under continuous archaeological supervision, as stated on the project design. The recording sheets are reproduced in Appendix 1.

The existing surface of modern slabs was removed mechanically, revealing a bedding layer of modern building rubble *c.*0.3m thick. Passing through this layer from the surface above was a square brick-built manhole, located near the south corner of the existing building (Plate 1). Beneath the building rubble a surface of brick setts extended south-eastwards from the front of the house for *c.*2.7m. The stripped area south of the setts comprised very dark greyish brown silty clay, with occasional patches of clinker or ash. The southern edge of the development area appeared to have been built up with redeposited clay, presumably when the house was built, as it contained pieces of wooden planks. Removal of the setts revealed that they had been laid directly on the natural clay (Plate 2).

Following clearance and levelling of the site, the excavation of footing trenches for the south-west and south-east sides of the extension was observed (Plate 3). The NW-SE aligned trenches were cut into natural clay: the SW-NE trench at the south end of the extension cut through up to 0.2m depth of redeposited clay overlying the natural.

No evidence was found for pre-modern features, deposits or artefacts.

4.2 Conclusions

The watching brief on the southern extension to The Coach House revealed only evidence of modern services and an earlier modern surface of brick setts in front of the building. The house stands on a gentle south-east facing slope, and there was evidence for levelling up the area in front of the building. No features or deposits were found predating the construction of the house, which dates to the 1960s or early 1970s. However, it is possible that buried archaeological features or deposits may survive elsewhere on the site.



Plate 1: Development area after removal of turf & modern surfaces



Plate 2: Ground reduction in progress, looking north-west



Plate 3: General view of the site on completion of footing trenches



Plate 4: Stratigraphy in the south-west corner of the extension



Plate 5: Stratigraphy on the south side of the extension

5. Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by the client, Lord Robin Innes Ker. ASC is grateful to him and his wife for their assistance. The project was monitored by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeologists on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to the groundworks contractors for their co-operation.

The project was managed for ASC by David Fell BA MA MifA. Fieldwork was carried out by Jonathan Hunn BA PhD FSA MifA. The report was prepared by Bob Zeepvat BA MifA and edited by David Fell.

6. Archive

6.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plan
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. Original specialist reports and supporting information
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

6.2 The archive will be deposited with Luton Museum.

7. References

Standards & Specifications

- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.
- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition. English Heritage (London).
- EH 2006 *The Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2010 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2008 Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA (various dates) Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance* documents (*Desk-Based Assessments 2011, Watching Briefs 2008, Evaluations 2009, Excavations 2008, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings 2008, Finds 2008, Archiving 2009*).
- Rouse C 2012 *The Coach House, Church Lane, Potsgrove, Bedfordshire: Project Design for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. ASC doc. ref. 1545 PCL/1

Secondary Sources

- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Bigmore P 1979 *The Making of the English Landscape, The Bedfordshire and Huntingdonshire Landscape*. Hodder and Stoughton Ltd (London).
- Brown N & Glazebrook J 2000 *Research and Archaeology: A Framework for the Eastern Counties – 2 Research Agenda and Strategy*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 8.
- Hunn J 2010 *Watching Brief: the Old School, Potsgrove, Bedfordshire* ASC/1257/POS/2r
- Medlycott M & Brown N 2008 *Revision of the Regional Archaeological Framework for the Eastern Region*. ALGAO East of England.
- Oake M 2007 'Research Agenda and Strategy' in Oake *et al* 2007, 7-20
- Oake M, Luke M, Dawson M, Edgeworth M, & Murphy P 2007 *Bedfordshire Archaeology – Research and Archaeology: Resource Assessment, Research Agenda and Strategy*. Bedfordshire Archaeology Monograph 9.
- Page W (ed.) 1912 *The Victoria History of the County of Bedfordshire: Volume 3*. Dawsons of Pall Mall, 421-423.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Wade K 2000 'Anglo-Saxon and Medieval (Rural)' in Brown & Glazebrook 2000, 23-26

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

A.S.C. LTD		WATCHING BRIEF RECORD				
Project: <i>Coach House, Potesgrove</i>		Project No/Code: <i>1545 1 PCH</i>	Sheet: <i>1 of 2</i>			
Client/Developer <i>Lord Robin Innes Kerr</i>		Date of visit: <i>25/7/12</i>				
Contact: <i>Laurie Right</i>		Phone: <i>07712170633</i>				
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>7.00 am</i>	Finish: <i>1.30 pm</i>				
Completed by: <i>JRH</i>						
Development Type:						
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify): <i>ground reduction</i>
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dry & Sunny. 21.5°C @ 7am.</i>						
Observations: <i>The first phase of the ground reduction of the rear kitchen/breakfast room saw the area reduced by c. 0.4m. This was all made up ground consisting of hardwearing rubble and slabs. This revealed the buried surface of stone cobbles. There were 100mm square dark grey/black ceramic 'Sats'. These extended out about 2.7m from the existing edge of the Coach House (this had been extended out previously by 0.9m). The remainder of the ground consisted of a very dark greyish brown silty clay (Mu 10 YR 3/2). There are also occasional patches of chert & ash. The area has been disturbed by a modern Service inspection box. These are frogged & highly fired bricks with central, indented division. Each is 230 x 110 x 75mm; the top edges are chamfered.</i>						
Comments: <i>Some natural obsidian chert 3/4 of ground is modern make-up.</i>						



A.S.C. LTD

WATCHING BRIEF RECORD

Project: <i>Coach House, Potsgrove</i>		Project No/Code: <i>1545 1 PCH</i>	Sheet: <i>2 of 2</i>
		Date of visit: <i>26.7.12</i>	
Client/Developer <i>Lord Robin Innes Ker</i>			
Contact: <i>Laurie Right</i>		Phone: <i>07712170633</i>	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>8.00a</i>	Finish: <i>4.25</i>	
Completed by: <i>JRA</i>			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dry & Sunny</i>			
Observations: <i>Observed an L-shaped foundation at the NE corner of the site & a central footing. The depth was 1.3m below present ground level & 0.6m wide. About 0.6m of upper berms were mainly artificial build up - no sign of original soil surface - the lower 0.7m was cut into the natural clay which was a smooth very fine compact clay - greyish brown (Muns 10YR 5/2). Saw the central N-S foundation trench, the eastern half of Southern E-W Foundation and the northern half of western N-S foundation - all these were cut into the natural greyish brown clay. The dark grey, c. 0.2m thick soil on the South side is all 20th century made up ground (contains plants of wood).</i>			
Comments: <i>No sign of anything of pre-modern age. Machine stopped (broke down). Re-started c. 10.30. Rob: 07934-768952. The site is devoid of archaeological interest.</i>			

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: The Coach House, Potsgrove, Bedfordshire			SITE NO/CODE: 1545/PCH
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		1140	Ground reduction under way in area of development 25.7.12
2		1141	State of ground looking NNW
3		1142	South facing elevation of existing property
4		1143	Setting of existing dwelling view west
5		1150	General view of garden looking south from existing dwelling
6		1151	Northern side of property looking west
7		1152	Detail of original brick cobbled surface of the Coach House, view west
8		1153	Detail of made up ground to south of brick cobbles view west
9		1154	General setting of house looking WNW
10		1155	Ground reduction underway looking west
11		1156	Removal of cobbles looking south
12		1158	Detail of brick cobble
13		1159	Vertical view of ground reduction on NE side of extension
14		1160	Landscape setting of the existing house looking NW
15		1161	Ground reduction underway looking NW
16		1162	Vertical view of ground reduction on NE side of site
17		1185	Detail of soil horizons on the SW corner of the development 26.7.21
18		1186	View along southern side of foundation trench
19		1187	Detail of clay in the central N-S foundation
20		1188	Central N-S trench under excavation
21		1189	Central foundation under excavation looking east
22		1191	Completed central trench foundation view NNW
23		1192	Southern most foundation trench
24		1193	Detail of soil horizons on southern side of new extension
25		1194	Detail of clay sub-soil on western side of new extension
26		1195	General view of the site looking NNW

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Coach House, Church Lane, Potsgrove	OASIS reference:	archaeol2-129071
Short Description:	In July 2012 a continuous archaeological watching brief was maintained during groundworks for an extension to The Coach House, Church Lane, Potsgrove, Bedfordshire. The watching brief revealed only evidence of modern services and an earlier modern surface of brick setts in front of the building. The house stands on a gentle south-east facing slope, and there was evidence for levelling up the area in front of the building. No features or deposits were found predating the construction of the house, which dates to the 1960s or early 1970s.		
Project Type:	Watching Brief		
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	none	Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)	none
Current land use:	garden	Future work: (yes/no/unknown)	no
Monument type:	n/a	Monument period:	n/a
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	none		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Bedfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 9519 2993
Site address: (+ postcode if known)	The Coach House, Church Lane, Potsgrove, Beds MK17 9HG		
Study area: (sq. m. / ha)	56 sq m	Height OD: (metres)	c.150
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Martin Oake (CBCA)	Project design originator:	Calli Rouse (ASC)
Project Manager:	David Fell MA MifA (ASC)	Director/Supervisor:	Jonathan Hunn (ASC)
Sponsor / funding body:	Lord Robin Innes Ker		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	25/07/12	End date:	26/07/12
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Luton Museum	none	
Paper:		Brief, WSI, plans, site records, photos, report	
Digital:		CD with all digital files	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: The Coach House, Church Lane, Potsgrove, Bedfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1545/PCH/2		
Author(s):	Bob Zeepvat BA MifA		
Page nos	19	Date:	9 August 2012