

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:
WALNUT TREE SCHOOL,
HAZELEY, MILTON KEYNES**

on behalf of Milton Keynes Council



Nigel Wilson HND AIFA

October 2005

ASC: 724/HSS/01

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Site Data

<i>ASC Site code:</i>	HWT	<i>Project no:</i>	7244
<i>MKC Event No:</i>	1001		
<i>District:</i>	Milton Keynes (Unitary Authority)		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Hazeley		
<i>Parish:</i>	Shenley Church End		
<i>NGR:</i>	SP 81485 36245		
<i>Extent of Site:</i>	2 hectares		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Redundant farmland		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Special needs school		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	04/00121/MKCOD3		
<i>Client:</i>	Milton Keynes Council PO Box No 116, Civic Offices 1 Saxon Gate East Central Milton Keynes MK9 3ZG		
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Internal Quality Check

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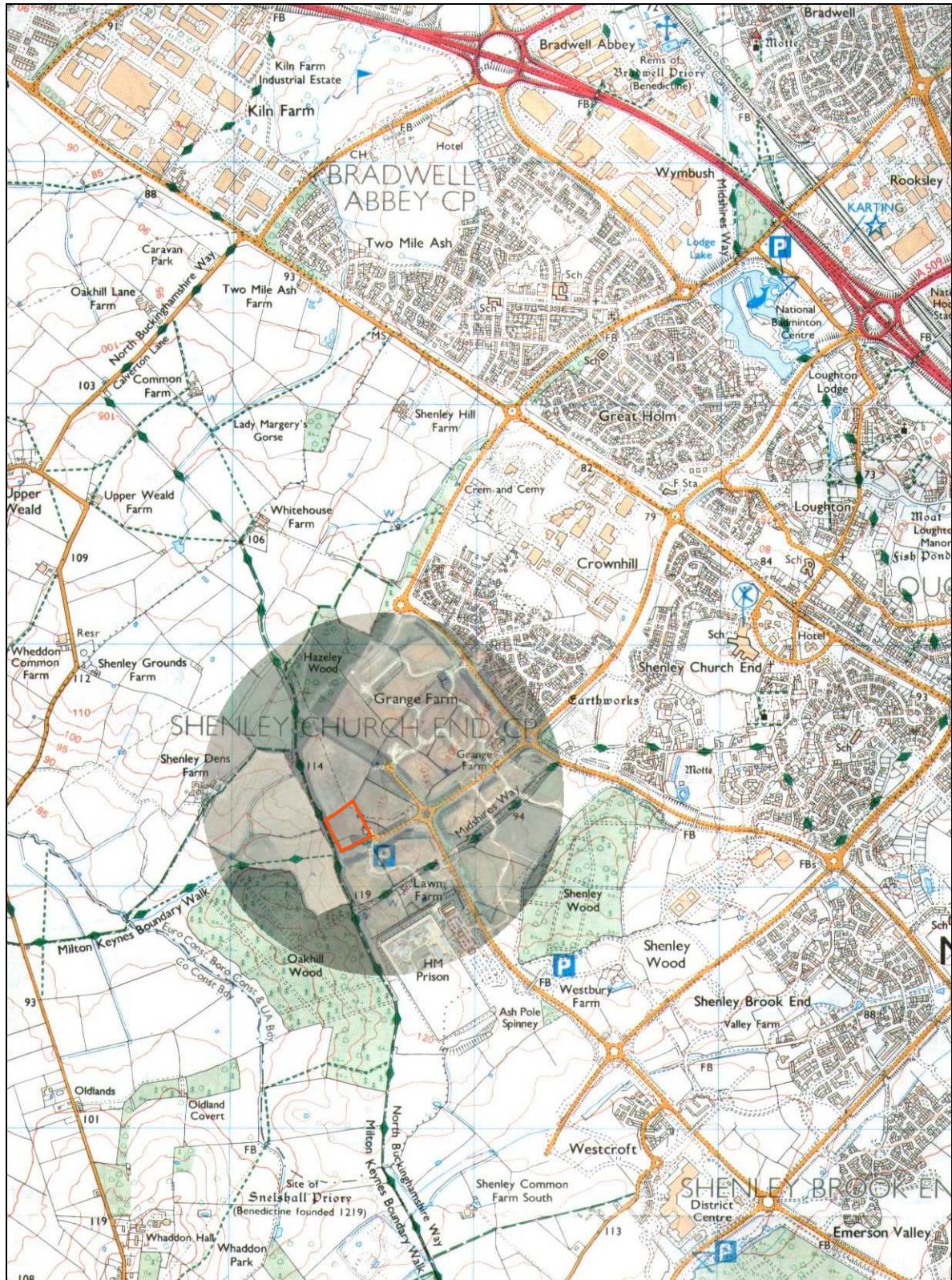


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

During October 2005 ASC Ltd carried an evaluation on the proposed site for Walnut Tree School, Hazeley, Milton Keynes. Six trenches were excavated, and they were all found to be totally devoid of archaeology.

1 Introduction

1.1 During October 2005 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation on the proposed site of Walnut Tree Special Needs School on the Hazeley grid square, Milton Keynes (NGR SP 81485 36245 Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Milton Keynes Council, and was carried out according to a brief prepared by the Milton Keynes Council Archaeologist (MKCA), and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ASC (Pack 2004).

1.2 Reason for Work

Under current planning legislation archaeology can be a material factor in deciding the outcome of planning decisions. Planning Guidance Note 16 (PPG16) specifically covers archaeology. When plans to build a “secondary school” and a “special needs school” on the Hazeley grid square were submitted to Milton Keynes Council (planning ref. 04/00121/MKCOD3) the MKCA recommended that an archaeological evaluation should be undertaken to determine whether any archaeology was going to be disturbed during the development. A condition to this effect was placed on the development requiring a programme of trenching. The evaluation of the secondary school site, and a subsequent watching brief, were completed in August 2004 (Wilson 2004a; 2004b).

1.3 Setting

1.3.1 The site is located near Hazeley Wood, within the parish of Shenley Church End. It lies c.3km west of Central Milton Keynes, at NGR SP 81485 36245. The area is redundant arable farmland.

1.3.2 The surface geology of the area is chalky till, described as slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils (Soil Survey 1986, 411d). The site is generally flat open arable farmland, at an elevation of c.115m above ordnance datum. This boulder clay comprises the higher ground to the west of the River Ouzel floodplain (Croft & Mynard, 1993, 1).

1.3.3 The site is rough grassland, bounded to the east and north by Hazeley secondary school south by H5 Portway and to the west by Hazeley Wood. Access is from Portway.

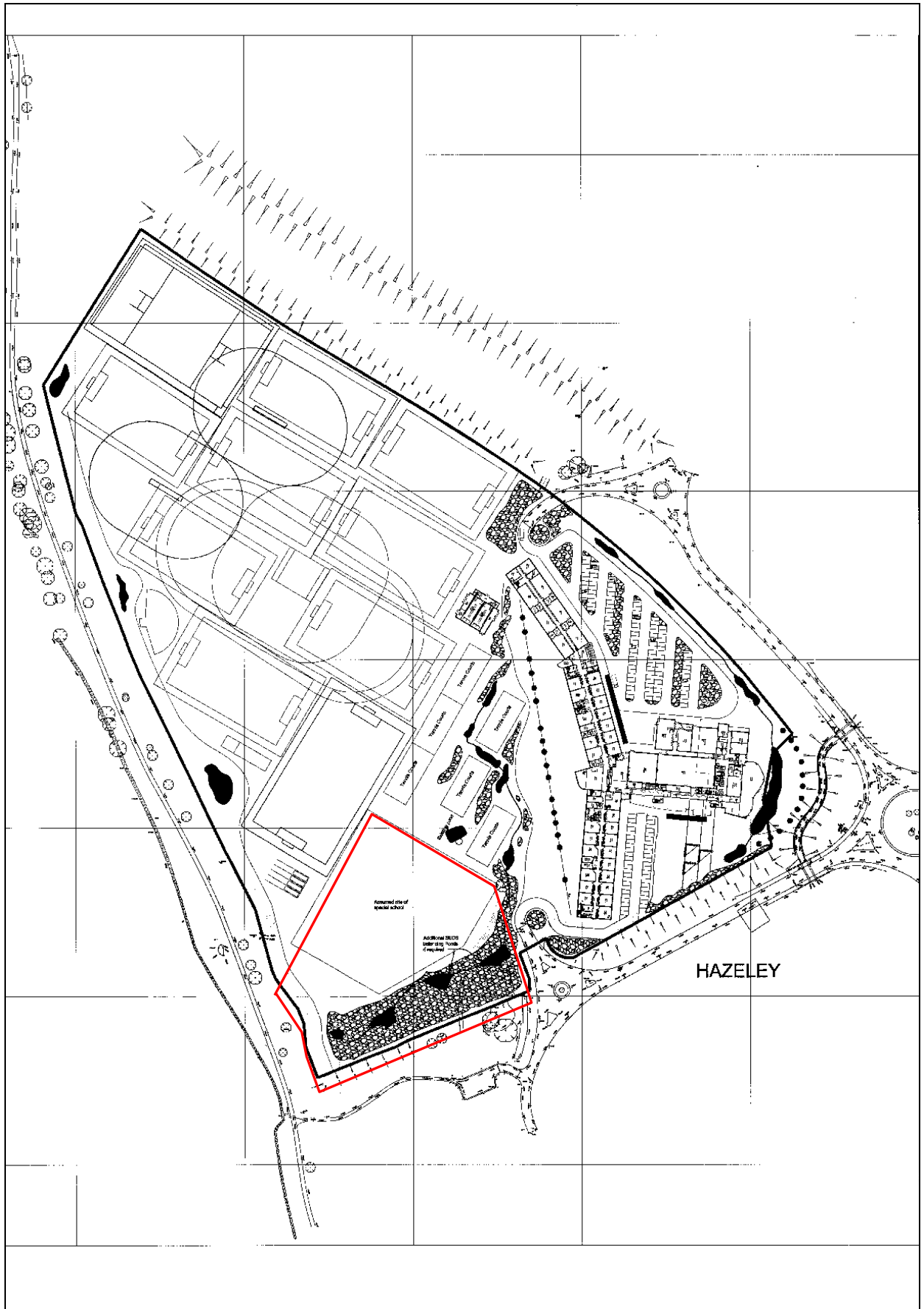


Figure 2: Site plan (Scale: 100m grid squares)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

In line with the requirements of the Brief (Section 5), the aims of the archaeological evaluation were to:

- Obtain information on the extent and character of the development site, together with information on the state of preservation and relative quality.

2.2 Methods

In line with the requirements of the Brief (Section 5), the methods adopted for this project were:

- An examination of earthworks, hedgerows, boundaries and structures, with appropriate records and assessments of any historically significant evidence.
- The trenching sample amounted to *c.*2% of the site. The trench pattern was agreed with the MKCA in advance of the evaluation.

2.3 Standards

The work conforms to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.4 Constraints

The geophysical survey described in the brief was not undertaken on this phase of the evaluation, due to the general rough nature of the ground and numerous disturbances where new fences had been removed.

The trench location plan indicated that five 50m trenches were to be excavated. On laying out the trenches it was decided to add an additional short trench to investigate a substantial bank. Trench 1 was shortened accordingly to maintain the overall sample.

3 Results

3.1 Each trench was excavated mechanically using a wheeled JCB type excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The trenches were mechanically excavated through topsoil (former ploughsoil) and about 150mm depth of subsoil, which comprised heavy clay ranging in colour from blue grey to pale yellowish brown. Previous experience on similar sites in Milton Keynes has indicated the need to remove this subsoil layer to confirm that it does not mask any archaeological features.

None of the trenches revealed any significant archaeology. However modern rubble from a demolished building was observed at the southern end of Trench 3 (Plate 1). Full descriptions of the trenches and individual trench plans appear in Appendix 1.

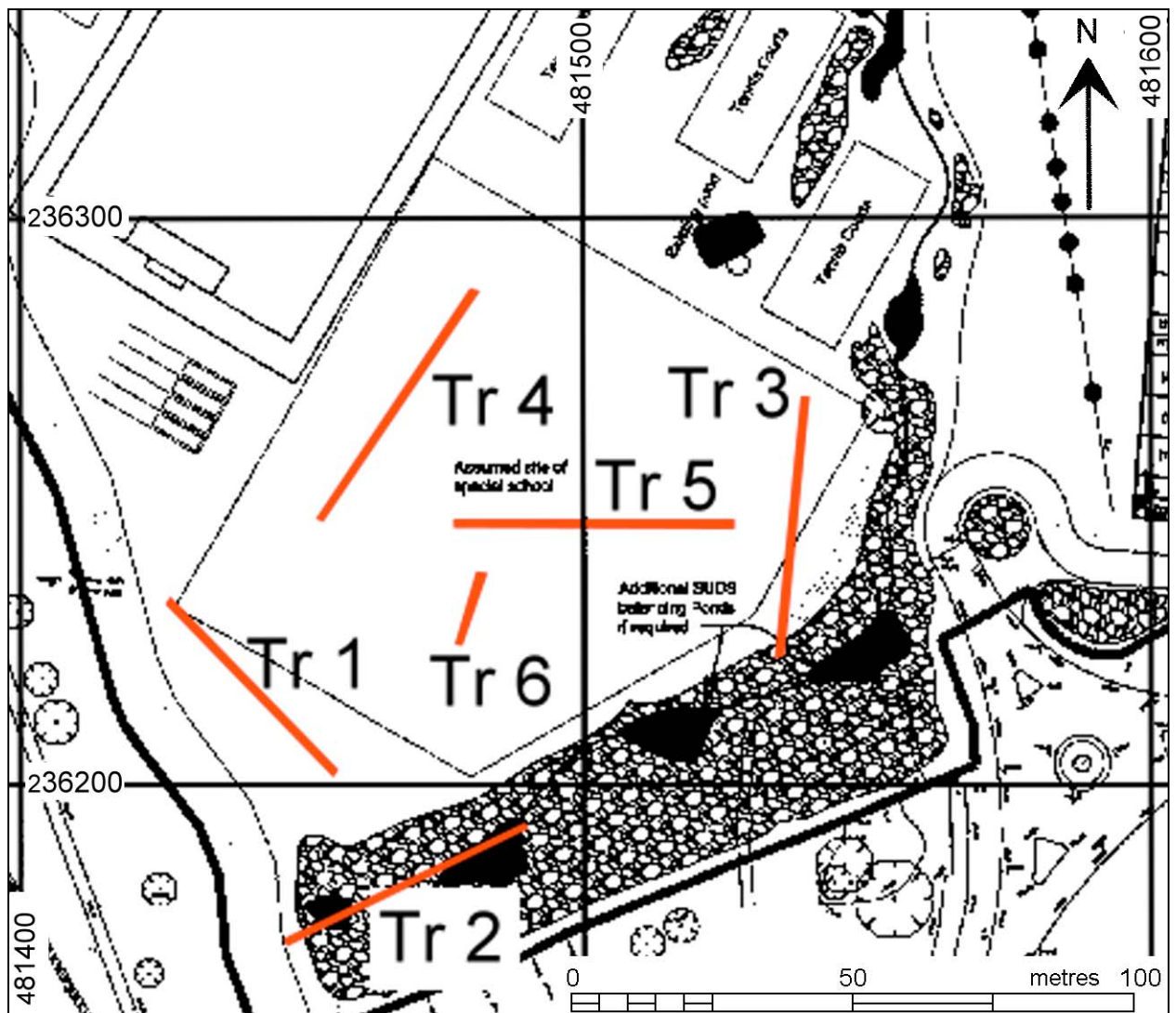


Figure 3: Trench location plan (scale 1:1250)



Plate 1: Rubble in the southern end of Trench 3 from the demolished building



Plate 2: Trench 6 and the bank

4 Conclusions

- 4.1 The evaluation at Walnut Tree sampled *c.*2% by area of the proposed development. Though nothing of archaeological significance was revealed during the evaluation, it is always possible that trenching may have missed isolated features.
- 4.2 No evidence was found for activity of Roman or earlier date. This suggests that the Roman features and finds recovered during the 2004 evaluation and subsequent watching brief to the immediate north-west of the present site were an isolated feature, and that the Iron Age activity recorded to the immediate west of Hazeley by ASC (Wilson 2004c) and others does not extend onto the site.
- 4.3 The evaluation and subsequent watching brief carried out in 2004 on the secondary school site revealed evidence of ridge and furrow ploughing of medieval or earlier date, while evidence of more recent agriculture was provided by 19th-century field drains. During the present evaluation no evidence for redge and furrow was revealed. On the Lordship of Shenley map of 1771 a small farmstead is shown in the SE corner of the site. This farmstead was rebuilt in the 19th or 20th century using stock LBC bricks. Inspection of the farmstead site during the evaluation shows that the only evidence for the earlier farmstead consists of a few small handmade bricks.

5. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Jim Dorsett of Architecture MK for commissioning the evaluation on behalf of Milton Keynes Council. We would also like to thank Brian Giggins the Milton Keynes Council Archaeologist who assisted in determining the trench locations and monitored the project. Hewden Plant supplied the JCB and driver. The project was managed by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA and the fieldwork was carried out by: Nigel Wilson assisted by other members of ASC staff.

6. Archive

6.1 The project archive comprises:


1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site records
6. List of photographs/slides
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

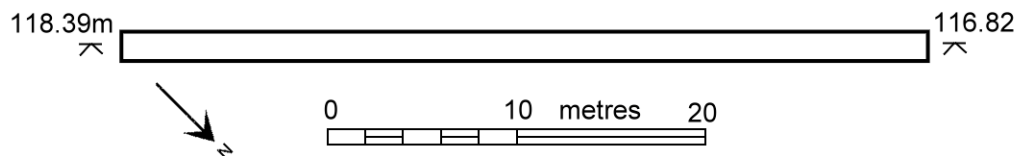
6.2 The archive will be amalgamated with the earlier work at Hazeley and deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum, under Accession Number 2004.35.


7. Bibliography

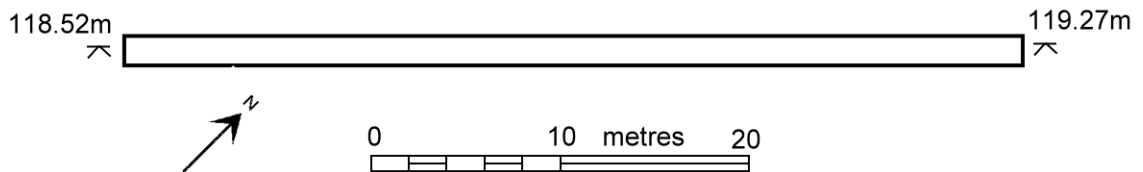
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- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance* documents (*Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds*).
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- Pack K 2004 *Hazeley Secondary School, Hazeley, Milton Keynes*. Project Design for Evaluation. (ASC: 564/HSS/01)
- Salmon G 1771 *Map of Part of the Lordship of Shenley* belonging to John Knapp Esq.
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- Wilson N 2004b *Archaeological Watching Brief: Hazeley Secondary School Hazeley Milton Keynes* (ASC 6-05/HSS/02)
- Wilson N 2004c *Watching Brief: Shenley Dens to Oakhill Reinforcement Main, Milton Keynes* (ASC: 545/SDO/1)


Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

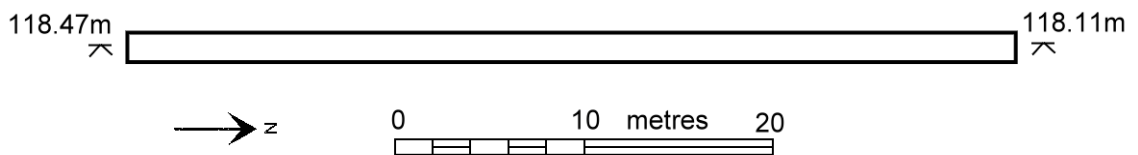
Trench 1											
						Max Dimensions					
						Length	43.14 m	Width	1.6m	Depth	0.4
						Levels					
						Trench base SE			118.02		
						Trench top SE			118.39		
						Trench base NW			116.44		
						Trench top NW			116.82		
						NGR Co-ordinates (all SP)					
						SE	81456 36207		NW	81426 36238	
						Orientation			SE-NW		
Reason for Trench			General evaluation of site								
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)					
100	Layer	Plough soil		>1600	350	0-300					
101	Layer	Subsoil		>1600		350-					




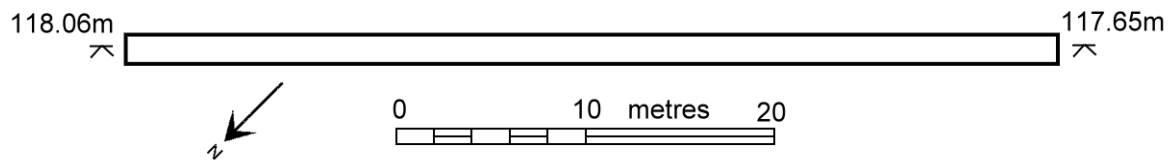
Trench 2											
						Max Dimensions					
						Length	47.85	Width	1.8m	Depth	0.45m
						Levels					
						Trench base NE			118.09		
						Trench top NE			118.52		
						Trench base SW			118.81		
						Trench top SW			119.27		
						NGR Co-ordinates (all SP)					
						SW	81447 36177		NE	81490 36198	
						Orientation			SW-NE		
Reason for Trench			General evaluation of site								
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)					
200	Layer	Plough soil		>1600	300	0-300					
201	Layer	Subsoil		>1600		300-					




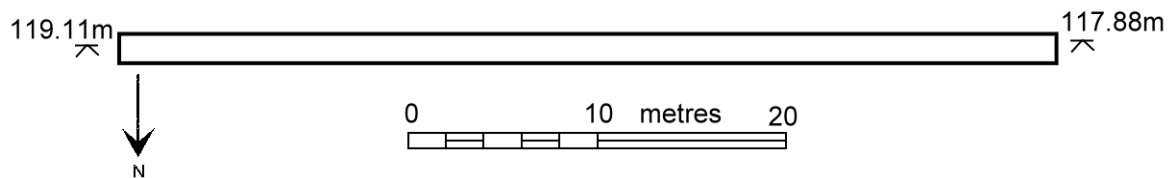
Trench 3						
	Max Dimensions					
	Length	47.27	Width	1.6m	Depth	0.65m
	Levels					
	Trench base S		118.03			
	Trench top S		118.47			
	Trench base N		117.65			
	Trench top N		118.11			
	NGR Co-ordinates (all SP)					
	S	81535 36227	N	81540 36274		
	Orientation		S-N			
Reason for Trench		General evaluation of site				
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)	
300	Layer	Plough soil	>1600	300	0-300	
301	Layer	Demolition material (bricks, concrete etc) and other rubbish from the demolished farmstead to the south of Trench 3. Extends northwards for about 14m.	14000	550	100-650	
302	Layer	Subsoil (north end of trench)	>1600		300-	




Trench 4						
	Max Dimensions					
	Length	49.65	Width	1.6m	Depth	0.5m
	Levels					
	Trench base NE		117.62			
	Trench top NE		118.06			
	Trench base SW		117.14			
	Trench top SW		117.65			
	NGR Co-ordinates (all SP)					
	SW	81453 36252	NE	81481 36293		
	Orientation		SW-NE			
Reason for Trench		General evaluation of site				
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)
400	Layer	Plough soil		>1600	330	0-330
401	Layer	Subsoil		>1600		330-



Trench 5						
	Max Dimensions					
	Length	50	Width	1.6m	Depth	0.4m
	Levels					
	Trench base E		118.79			
	Trench top E		119.11			
	Trench base W		117.44			
	Trench top W		117.88			
	NGR Co-ordinates (all SP)					
	E	81527 36251	W	81477 36252		
	Orientation		E-W			
Reason for Trench		General evaluation of site				
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)	
500	Layer	Plough soil: yellowish brown topsoil, grass cover	>1600	300	0-300	
501	Layer	Mixed blue grey clay some orange sandy gravel areas	>1600		300-	



Trench 6						
	Max Dimensions					
	Length	13.6	Width	1.6m	Depth	0.3m
	Levels					
	Trench base S		118.94			
	Trench top S		119.22			
	Trench base N		117.62			
	Trench top N		117.84			
	NGR Co-ordinates (all SP)					
	S	81478 36230	N	81482 36243		
	Orientation		S-N			
Reason for Trench		Investigate bank				
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)
700		Plough soil		>1600	300	0-300
701		Subsoil		>1600		300-

