

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:
CRAFTON STUD FARM
CRAFTON
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

on behalf of Derek Mills



Jonathan R. Hunn BA PhD MIFA

August 2006

ASC: 832/CSM/1

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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	CSM	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	832
<i>Event No:</i>		<i>Accession No:</i>	
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Crafton		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Mentmore		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 89295-19090		
<i>Present use:</i>	paddock		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Manege and replacement barn		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	Tba		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	1/8/06		
<i>Client:</i>	Derek Mills Crafton Stud Farm Crafton Mentmore LU7 0QJ		
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Internal Quality Check

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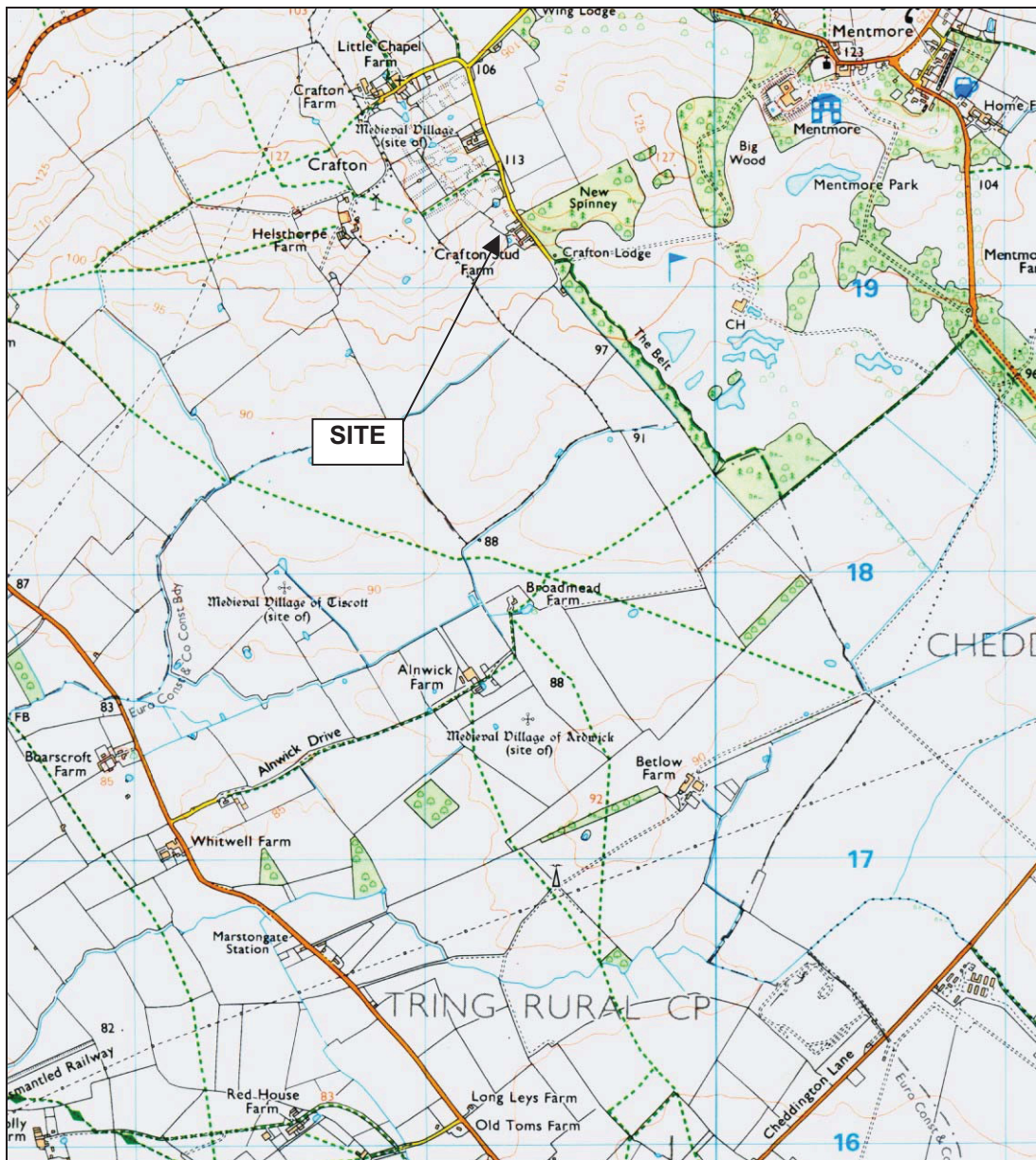


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

On August 1st 2006 a series of trial trenches were excavated in a small paddock lying immediately to the west of Crafton Stud Farm, on behalf of Derek Mills. Apart from two clay pipe land drains no man made features or artefacts were noted within, or adjacent to, the excavated trenches.

1 Introduction

1.1 In early August 2006 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation at Crafton Stud Farm, Crafton, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 89295-19090: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Derek Mills, and was carried out in the absence of a project design, though the report follows ASC's standard format for an evaluation in anticipation of being submitted to the local planning authority (LPA), *Aylesbury Vale District Council*.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation was requested by the client in order to advise the curatorial authority (Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service) of the presence or absence of archaeological deposits being present on the site.

1.3 *Location*

The site of the proposed development is located *c.*650m to the southeast of the centre of Crafton village (Fig. 1), on the southern edge of the earthworks discussed below (Section 3).

1.4 *Description*

The site is situated in a small paddock to the west (WNW) of Crafton Stud Farm. It is defined by open wooden fences to the north and east of the enclosure. To the east and south the paddock is defined by overgrown hedges (see front cover). There are no obvious distinguishing characteristics to this particular area (see below).

1.5 *Geology & Topography*

The site lies at an elevation of *c.*110m AOD on terrain that is gently sloping from west to east. No significant topographic features were noted within the enclosure. The soils of the area are of the *Evesham 2 Association* (Soil Survey, 1983, 411b), consisting of *slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged non-calcareous clayey and fine loamy or fine silty over clayey soils. Landslips and associated irregular terrain locally (ibid).* The underlying geology consists of Jurassic and Cretaceous clay.

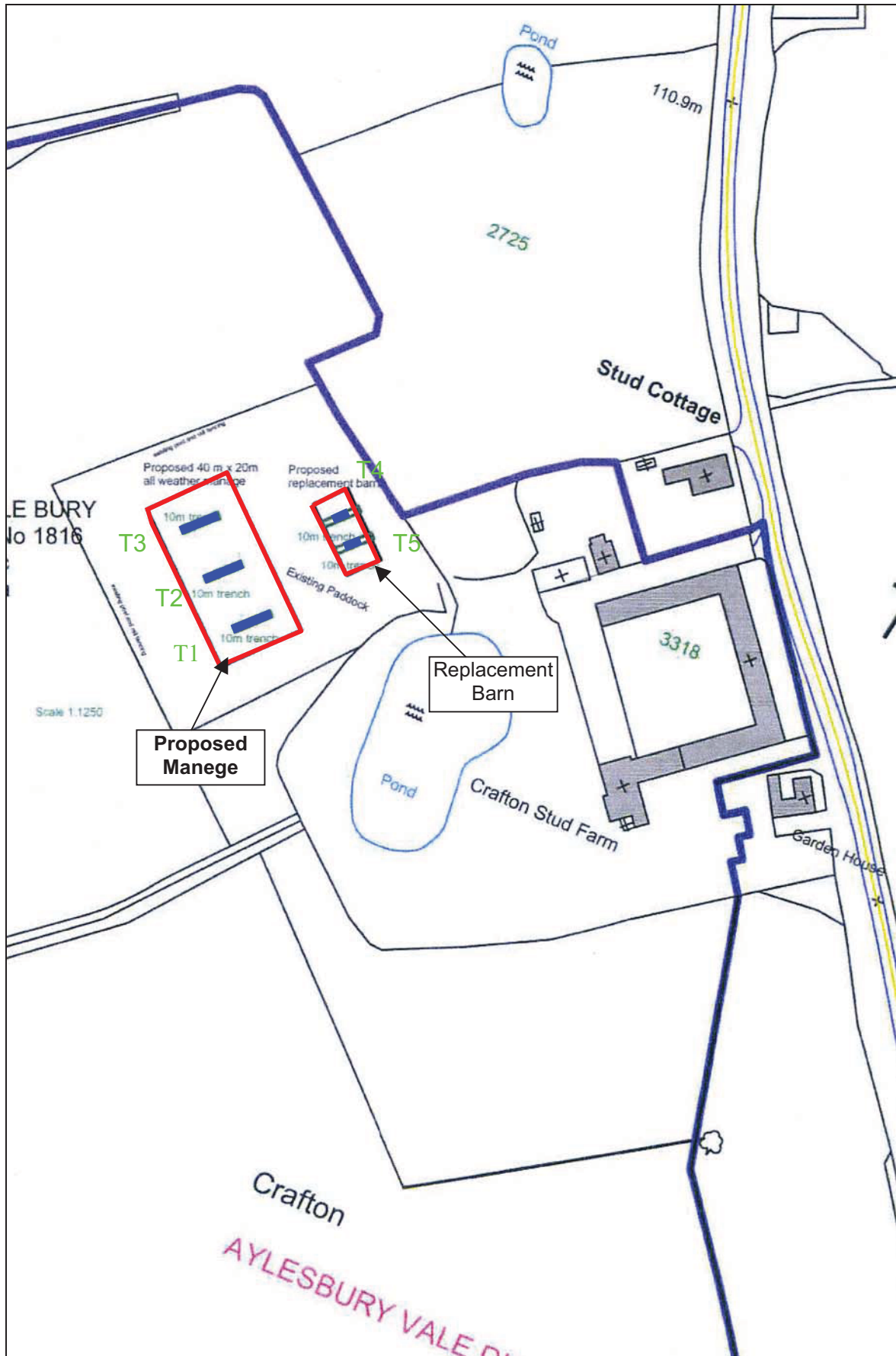


Figure 2: Site plan showing trench locations shown in blue (scale 1:1250)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

The aims of the evaluation were to establish the presence/absence of archaeological deposits within the footprint of the development.

2.2 Standards

This document conforms to a standard report format, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001).

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the instructions of the client following advice from the author of this report:

- Three trenches each 10m x 2m excavated across the footprint of the manege.
- Two trenches each 5m x 1m cut across the footprint of the proposed barn
- Formal inspection and summary recording of the evaluation trenches.

2.4 Constraints

There were no constraints placed on the excavation of the aforesaid trial trenches.

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1** Little information is recorded in the Buckinghamshire Sites & Monuments Record of the area in the prehistoric and Roman periods.
- 3.2** The village of Crafton is likely to have its origins in the Saxon period. It is mentioned in the 1086 Domesday Survey as being divided equally between the Bishop of Lisieux and the monks of Saint Nicholas (Morris, 1978). Extensive earthworks are recorded at Crafton, and are said to be the remains of the Theed family mansion, built by John Theed, *c.*1680. The building itself was pulled down in the early 19th century, and the earthworks are all that remain (CASS1009).
- 3.3** About 500m west of the proposed development site, is the site of a chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity, last recorded in 1388 (CASS2237). Helsthorpe Farm is the only remaining building in the area, but the Medieval Village Research Group maintain that Helsthorpe (formerly *Helpesthorp* or *Elstrop*), was 'evidently a substantial hamlet in medieval times' (Jenkins 1971).
- 3.4** Mentmore Towers (CASS1067) is situated *c.*1km to the east of the proposed development site. The house was built 1852-54 by Sir Joseph Paxton and G.H. Stokes for Baron Mayer Amschel De Rothschild. It is currently a Grade I listed building. Many of the associated outbuildings are also listed.

4 Results

- 4.1 Three parallel trenches (10m x 2m) orientated roughly east-west were excavated along the axis of the menege (Fig. 2). The topsoil rarely exceeded 0.2m and lay directly over grey clay which was the local parent material (B horizon) (Plates 1-4).
- 4.2 In Trench 2, two clay pipe land drains were observed aligned on an east-west axis situated at the eastern end of the trench.
- 4.3 Two trenches (5m x 1m) were excavated within the footprint of the proposed barn (Plates 5-6). Both of these went down onto the natural clay (0.2m deep) and no features were evident..
- 4.4 The spoil from the excavated trenches was inspected and on a visual inspection no artefacts were found.



Plate 1: Trench 1, view east



Plate 2: Trench 1 detail, view east



Plate 3: Trench 2, view east



Plate 4: Trench 3, view east



Plate 5: Trench 4, view east



Plate 6: Trench 5, view east

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The five trial trenches demonstrated that the area of the proposed manege and replacement barn contained no archaeological deposits. Whatever other constraints may exist on the site, the author believes that there are no arguments against the development proceeding on the grounds of archaeology.

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Derek Mills for commissioning this report and to David Radford for discussing the proposed project. The author is grateful to Calli Rouse BA, PIFA for assisting in the preparation of this report and to David Fell BA, MA, MIFA for editing this document.

7. Archive

- 7.1 The nature of this document is to advise the curatorial authority as to the presence/absence of archaeological deposits within the footprint of the proposed development. It is not proposed to compile a project archive unless requested by the planning authority following the approval of the project.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition. English Heritage (London).

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Radford, D 2005a: *Brief for an Archaeological excavation: Stud Cottage, Crafton*. Bucks County Archaeological Service (Planning Appl. 04/2055/APP).

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Rouse, C 2005: *Project Design for archaeological evaluation at Garden Cottage and Stud Cottage, Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire* (ASC:735/CSF/1)

Secondary Sources

Jenkins, J.G. 1971 *Medieval Village Research Group index*. 1971.

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Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpندن).