

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
APPLEGARTH, STOCKS ROAD
ALDBURY, TRING,
HERTFORDSHIRE**

on behalf of Mr & Mrs A. Sykes



by
Jonathan R Hunn BA PhD MIFA

August 2004

ASC: 588/AAS/2

Letchworth House
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall,
Milton Keynes MK6 1NE
Tel: 01908 608989 Fax: 01908 605700
Email: office@archaeological-services.co.uk
Website: www.archaeological-services.co.uk



Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	AAS	<i>Project no:</i>	588
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>District:</i>	Dacorum		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Aldbury		
<i>Parish:</i>	Aldbury CP		
<i>NGR:</i>	SP 96527 12663		
<i>Present land use:</i>	House and garden		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Extension to the present dwelling		
<i>Extent of development:</i>	c. 24 square meters		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	4/0163/00		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr and Mrs A.Sykes Applegarth Stocks Road Aldbury Tring Herts, HP23 5RV		
<i>Contact name:</i>	M Battram (Architect)		
<i>Telephone</i>		<i>Fax:</i>	

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Jonathan R. Hunn	<i>Date:</i>	August 9 th 2004
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

© Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

No part of this document is to be copied in any way without prior written consent.

Every effort is made to provide detailed and accurate information. However, Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies within this report.

© Ordnance Survey maps reproduced with the sanction of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

ASC Licence No. AL 100015154

CONTENTS

Summary	4
1. Introduction	4
2. Aims & Methods	7
3. Archaeological & Historical Background	8
4. Results.	12
5. Conclusions	14
6. Acknowledgements	15
7. Archive	15
8. References	16

Appendices:

1. SMR Summary Sheet	17
----------------------------	----

Figures:

1. General location.....	3
2. Site plan.....	5
3. Proposed development.....	6
4. Plan of village in 1840 (HALS DSA4 2/2.....	10
5. Plan of village in 1898 (OS 2 nd ed 25” scale).....	11

Plates:

Cover: *rear elevation of Applegarth during start of ground works phase*

1. Location of house extension looking south	13
2. View east showing detail of blocked window	13
3. Detail of foundation trench looking north east.....	13
4. View south showing brick built well/cistern	13
5. Detail of brick work, iron water pipe looking west.....	13
6. View west of N-S foundation and brick well/cistern	13
7. Detail of stratigraphy overlying well/cistern.....	14

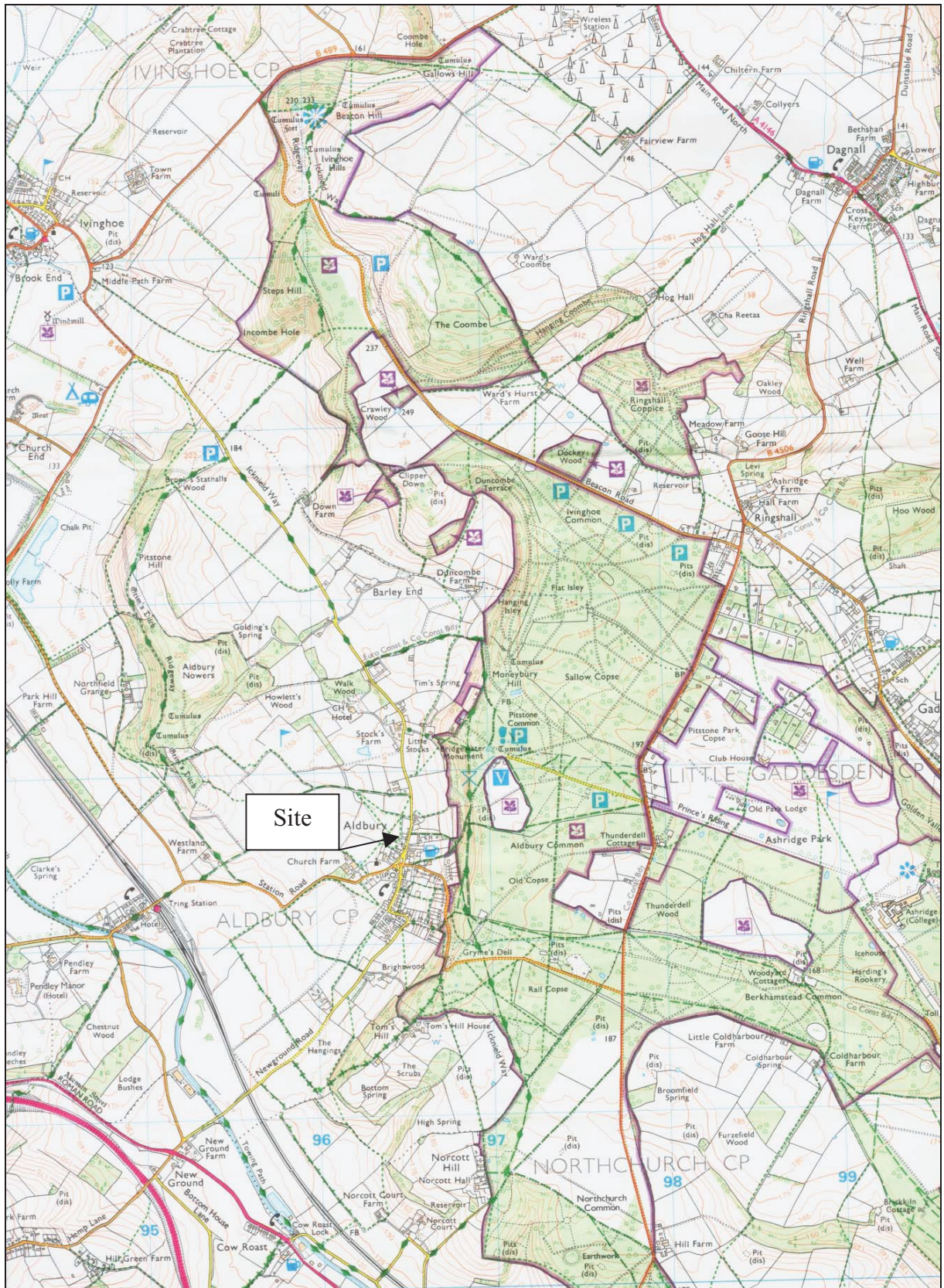


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In late July and early August 2004 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on a building extension to Applegarth, Stocks Road, Aldbury, Hertfordshire. There were no significant archaeological features found with the exception of a fine brick well or cistern at the corner of the development. This is believed to date to the second half of the 19th century and must pre-date the creation of a piped water supply in the early 20th century.

1 Introduction

1.1 During late July and early August 2004 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief on a site at Applegarth, Stocks Road, Aldbury, Hertfordshire (NGR SP 96527 12663: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mark Barttram on behalf of the clients, Mr and Mrs Sykes, and was carried out according to a brief (4/0163/00) prepared by Kate Batt of the County Archaeology Office (CAO), and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ASC (ASC: 588/AAS/01).

1.2 *Reason for Work*

The development lies within the historic core of the ancient village of Aldbury.

1.3 *Setting*

1.3.1 *Applegarth* is located on the west side of Stocks Road to the north of the village of Aldbury (SP 96527 12663). Aldbury is situated at the foot of the Chiltern Scarp, about 4km east of Tring (Fig 1). The village is centered on the junction of Station Road, which leads west to Tring, Toms Hill Road, which leads southwards to New Ground, and Stocks Road, which runs north towards Ivinghoe.

1.3.2 *Applegarth* lies at *c.* 138m AOD. The soils of the area are flinty and chalky drift over chalk, belonging to the Charity 2 association (Soil Survey 1983 571m), described as 'well drained flinty fine silty soils in valley bottoms. Calcareous fine silty soils over chalk or chalk rubble on valley sides, sometimes shallow'.

1.3.3 Access is gained from Stocks Road to the east of the site.

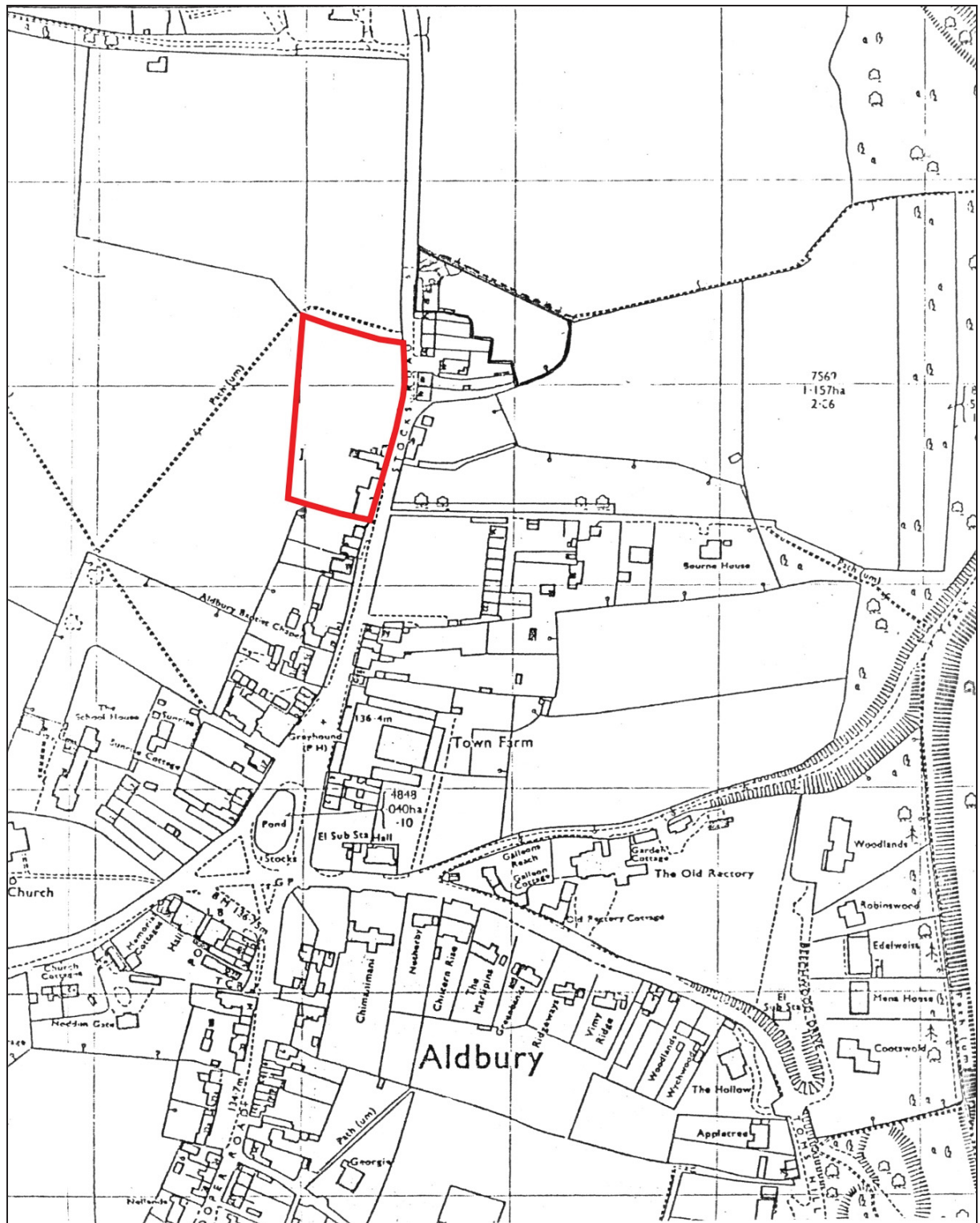


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:2,500)

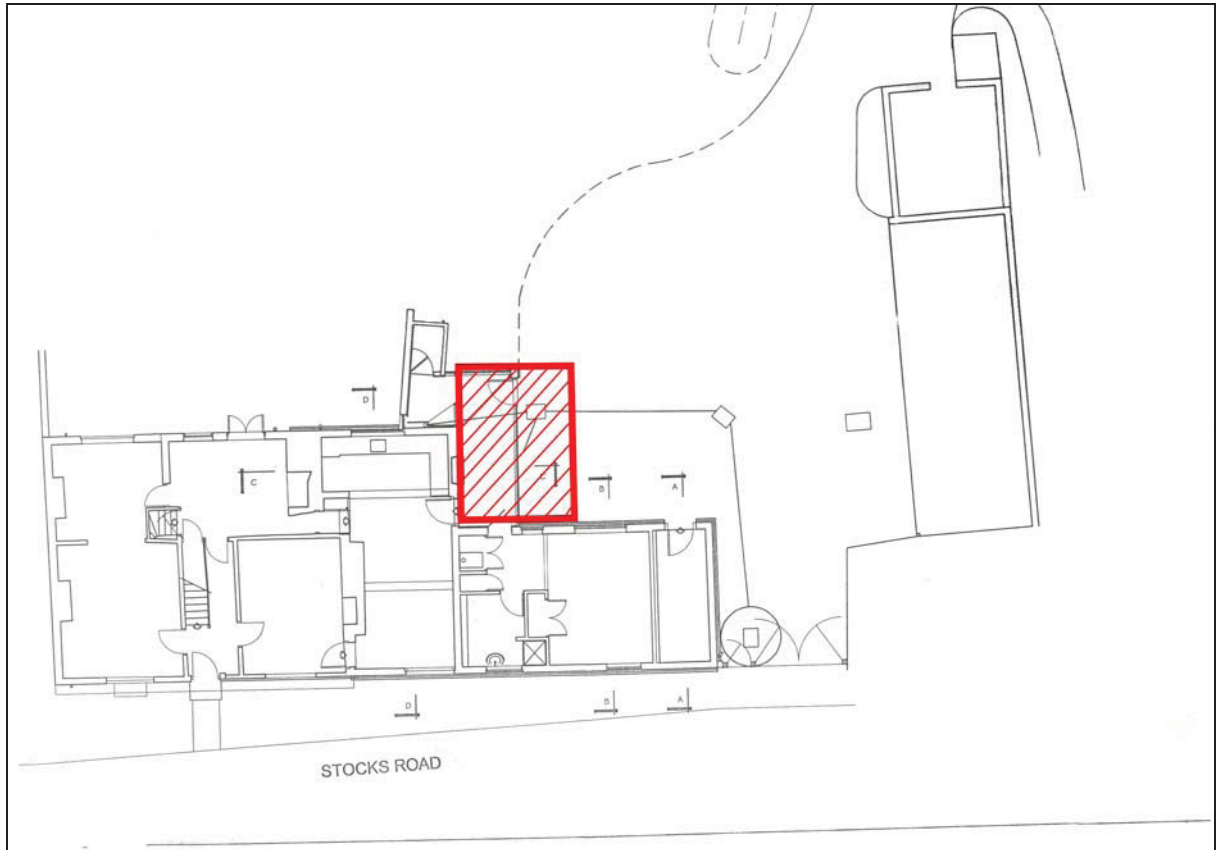


Figure 3: Plan of the proposed development (not to scale)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief (Section 1), the aims of the watching brief were:

- To ensure the archaeological monitoring of all aspects of the development programme likely to affect archaeological remains.
- To secure the adequate recording of any archaeological remains revealed by the development programme.
- To secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site.
- To attempt to place the project findings into their historical and geographical context, having made reference to the relevant regional research agendas (*East Anglian Archaeology occasional paper 8, 2000*), through cartographic and documentary research.

2.2 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 3), which required:

- Monitoring soil and overburden stripping
- Inspection of sub-soil deposits for archaeological features
- The rapid investigation and recording of any archaeological feature/deposits
- Monitoring the stripping of sub-soil
- Examination of any service and foundation trenches and the subsequent recording of any exposed archaeological deposits
- The rapid examination of spoil-heaps for archaeological material
- A programme of post-fieldwork analysis, archiving, and publication

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 Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (ALGAO 2003), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 The site lies in an Area of Archaeological significance (No. 29). Although the Aldbury area has evidence for human activity from the neolithic period onwards there is no direct material, either of artefacts or of physical remains, from the site under consideration. There is a late Iron Age / early Romano-British cremation cemetery nearby to the east (SMR 4242).
- 3.2 The closest physical antiquity is a track way which runs along the edge of the escarpment from just south of a Roman building and tumulus at Moneybury Hill, to the south towards Toms Hill House (Wainwright pers com). The track way passes some 150 m to the east of Ridge House passing Gryme's Dell to the west. Although now barely visible in places it would have been at least 2 kilometres in length and originally must have extended to the north and south. Its precise date is uncertain but seems probable that it was one of the many local track ways that connected the dispersed settlements on the plateau. If proven this would suggest a late Iron Age to early Romano-British date.
- 3.3 The name Aldbury derives from 'The old burh' according to the English Place Name Society (Gover et al 1970, 26). Today there is nothing to suggest how this name came about and it would be unwise to dismiss the lack of physical evidence as being of no significance. All one may deduce is that the name derives from an even earlier settlement in the vicinity. There are several cremation cemeteries in the area, which indicates that there may have been a higher level of settlement than has hitherto been suspected (SMR 9922).
- 3.4 In the medieval period the manor of Aldbury was held of the honour of Berkhamstead by fealty and rent of 5s (Page 1908, II, 143). The Victoria History of the Counties of England for Hertfordshire gives a detailed account of the descent of this manor until the early 20th century (*ibid.*). The exact layout of the landscape at this period is not known but by the 16th century there would have been a mixture of larger open sub-divided fields, smaller hedged closes, small and large parcels of woodland and the common grazing land on the escarpment slope and Chiltern plateau to the east. Within this varying land-use there would have been a mixture of different property holdings. According to Davis (1987, 12) 'it is clear that the strips of manorial lord, rectorial glebe, freeholder, copyhold husbandman and cottager lay side by side, intermingled across the wider landscape'. A manorial document of c. 1271 mentions five customary tenants holding one virgate each (*ibid.*). We do not know whether these holdings were concentrated in the village but by the 16th century there were five small copyhold farmsteads focused on the green (*ibid.*). By the early years of the nineteenth century the old manorial site, situated adjacent to the church to the north east had been replaced by Ashby's farmstead (*ibid.*).
- 3.5 *Applegarth* is a Grade II listed building of 17th – century origin and lies within an Area of Archaeological Significance. The site lies within the historic medieval core of Aldbury and to the south-east of *Applegarth* is the 13th – century church of St John the Baptist. Earthworks lie to the north-west of the village and an Iron Age cemetery to

the north-east. Given the historical features in close proximity to the site, there is potential for the area to contain archaeological deposits and/or artefacts.

- 3.6 It is by no means certain as to the precise origins for the present village of Aldbury. The name occurs in the Domesday Survey of 1086 (Morris 1976, 15.3) and is mentioned throughout the medieval period in relation to taxation lists (both lay and ecclesiastical). This is the only evidence we have that there was a physical entity called Aldbury since many early post-Roman settlements could be dispersed throughout the landscape though described under a single heading. We know that the church was a medieval foundation since it was mentioned in the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291; the same applies to the manor site which was situated just to the north west of the church. The earliest evidence as to the origins of Aldbury is contained within the fabric of existing buildings. However, many of these are of post-medieval date and the only potential evidence that we have will lay either beneath or adjacent to these buildings.
- 3.7 The earliest cartographic evidence we have belongs to the second half of the 18th century when Aldbury was illustrated on the county map by Dury and Andrews (1766). This showed the village in very much the same form it was to retain until the second half of the 20th century. An early 19th century survey of Aldbury by Thomas Godman shows what is now as Applegarth, as a single building (Davis 1987, 15). However, although the boundaries are distinguishable the detail of the building is too small to interpret in a meaningful way. The Tithe map of 1840 is more detailed and shows Applegarth (no. 132 on Fig 4.) lying just to the south of a farm homestead owned by John Fulks (no. 131). At that date it shows Applegarth as two cottages and gardens owned by William Fulks but occupied by Samuel Gravestock junior and another. In the 1851 census, Samuel Gravestock was described as an agricultural labourer with a wife and daughter; his wife was a straw plaiter (Goose 1996, 235 no. 204). By the end of the 19th century the Second Edition Ordnance Survey plan shows some considerable changes have taken place to Applegarth (Fig. 5). Unfortunately, there was no First Edition 25" scale OS map (c. 1878) available at the County Record Office (HALS). However, the 6" scale map seems to suggest that there was very little difference between the 1st and 2nd edition plans. The plan of 1898 shows that Fulks's Farm has disappeared and that Applegarth had been extended to the south. Note also the position of the well (shown as a 'w') adjacent to Stocks Road (Fig. 5).

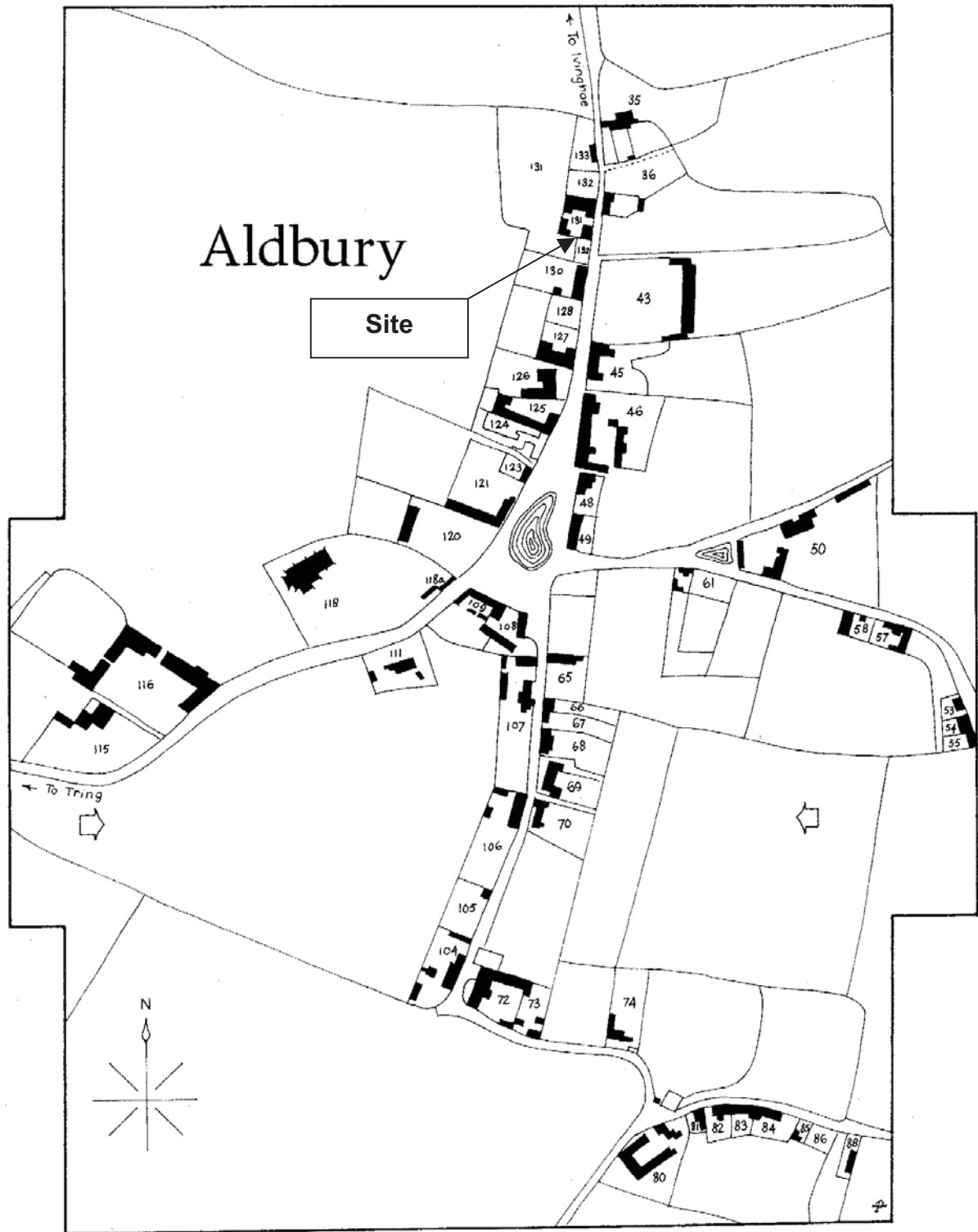


Figure 4: Plan of village in 1840 (HALS DSA4 2/2)

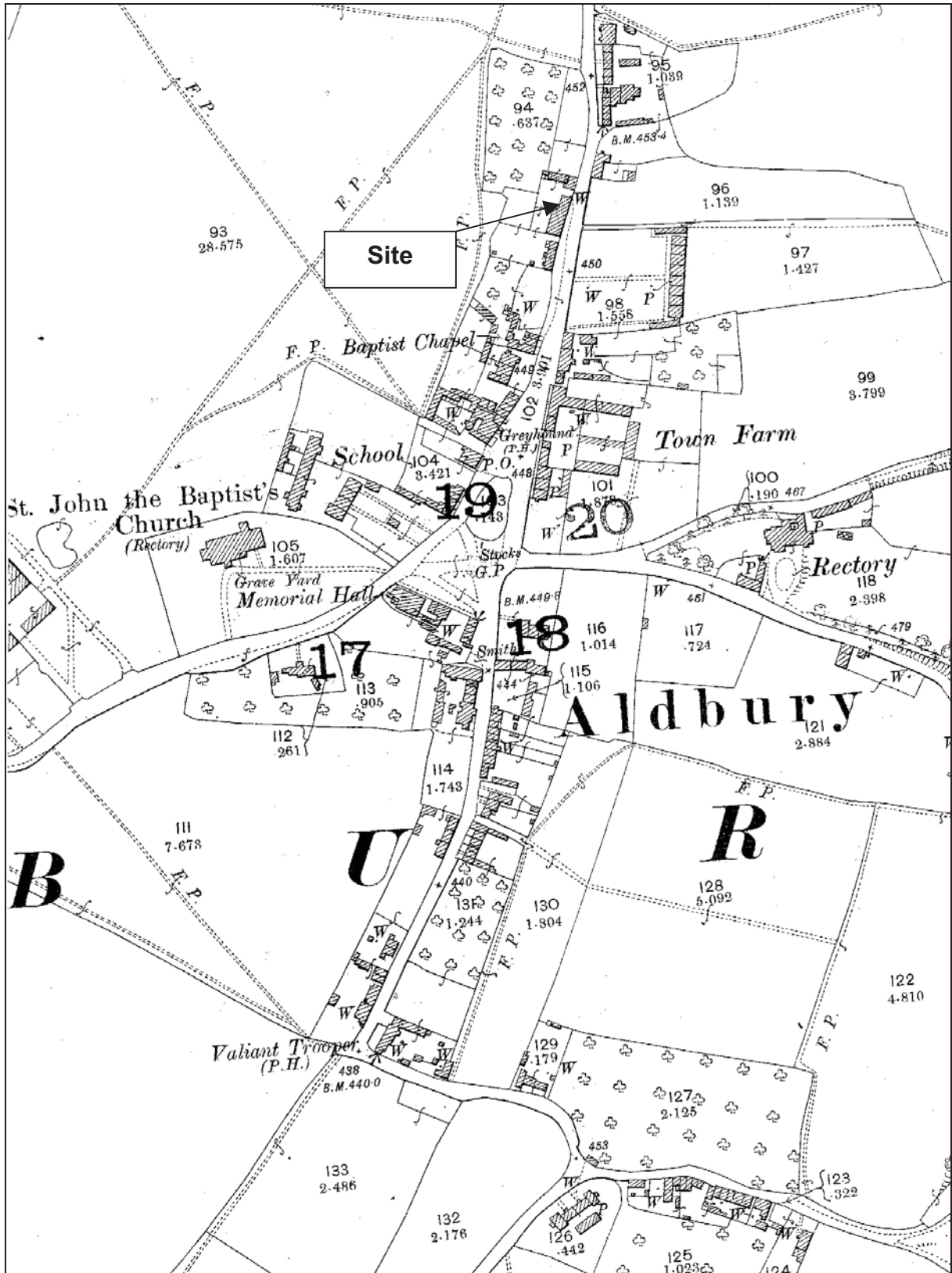


Figure 5: Plan of village in 1898 (OS 2nd ed. 25" scale)

4 Results

- 4.1 The area of the modern extension (Fig. 3) was reduced by about 0.4m and revealed only a natural chalk horizon (Plates 2 – 3). There were no significant features or artefacts revealed with the exception of a brick built domed structure that lay at the south west corner of the new extension (Plates 4 – 6).
- 4.2 The subterranean domed structure had a diameter of approximately 2.6m and its westernmost edge lay 2.9m from the edge of the existing building (Appendix 1, sketch on reverse of sheet 1). It had an internal diameter of about 2m and was built of bricks laid in stretchers (Plate 5). The wall was 220mm thick and composed of frogged, orange red bricks (230mm x 110mm x 68mm) bonded with a greyish brown sandy mortar. The sides appear to have been rendered with a thin layer of mortar and an iron pipe (33mm thick) rose vertically from the western side of the feature (Plate 5). The structure lay approximately 0.35m below the flagged surface (Plate 7) and had been filled with a mix of loose demolition material which included roofing slate. Two apertures for drains were noted on the southern side (*c.* 200mm wide) but were almost certainly later intrusions into the structure.
- 4.3 The new foundations were 1.8m deep to the east and west of the subterranean structure and these will support concrete beams to span the feature (Plate 6). No other features were evident in these strip foundations.
- 4.4 The cut for the well/cistern is shown in Plate 7. Note the remains of a single brick wall in the section and the associated fills. No certain dating was obtained from examining the section though its character, together with the remains of the brickwork points to a late date.



Plate 1: Location of house extension looking south



Plate 2: View east showing detail of blocked window



Plate 3: Detail of foundation trench looking north east



Plate 4: View south showing brick built well/cistern



Plate 5: Detail of brick work, iron water pipe looking west



Plate 6: view west of N-S foundation and brick well/cistern



Plate 7: Detail of stratigraphy infilling the cut for the well/cistern

5. Conclusions

- 5.1** Although no features or artefacts were revealed that pre-dated the present dwelling the observations do demonstrate that much of the historical and archaeological data is to be found within the fabric of the existing building (Plate 3). As far as is known, the dwelling known as *Applegarth* dates can be traced back as far as the 17th century. No evidence was found to either confirm this or to demonstrate a longer antecedence. However, this interpretation can only safely be applied to a small portion of the site (Fig. 3). It should also be accepted that the structural evidence for vernacular dwellings is often hard enough to establish on an open area excavation, never mind the limited conditions of a watching brief.
- 5.2** The only notable feature discovered was a substantial brick built structure cut into the natural chalk. The quality of its construction together with its rendered interior makes it unlikely to have been used primarily as a ‘soak away’. Although several pipes drained into it, these are later intrusions. It seems most likely that the brick feature was originally a well or cistern for the storage and retrieval of water. The iron pipe would seem to confirm this, though this too could be a later addition. The question is, what date is it? The brick work is either of 19th or 20th century date. However, there is no sign of it in its present location on the 2nd Edition Ordnance Survey map of 1898. On present evidence, the inference is that it dates to the early 20th century, prior to the introduction of a piped water supply. How soon water was brought to the house and when the well went out of use has, as yet, not been established, but the first quarter of the 20th century seems the most probable date. It was later used as a soakaway and finally filled in sometime in the second half of the 20th century.

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Mark Battram for commissioning this work on behalf of the clients, Mr and Mrs Sykes. Thanks are also due to Greg Cox, the building contractor, for his cooperation. Thank are due to the ever helpful staff at the Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies library (HALS) and to Kate Batt, the Historic Environment Advisor at the County Archaeology Office for her advice. Finally, my thanks to my colleagues, Claire Griffiths for preparing the project design and Bob Zeepvat for editing this report.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:


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

7.2 The archive will be deposited with the Dacorum Heritage Trust

8. Bibliography

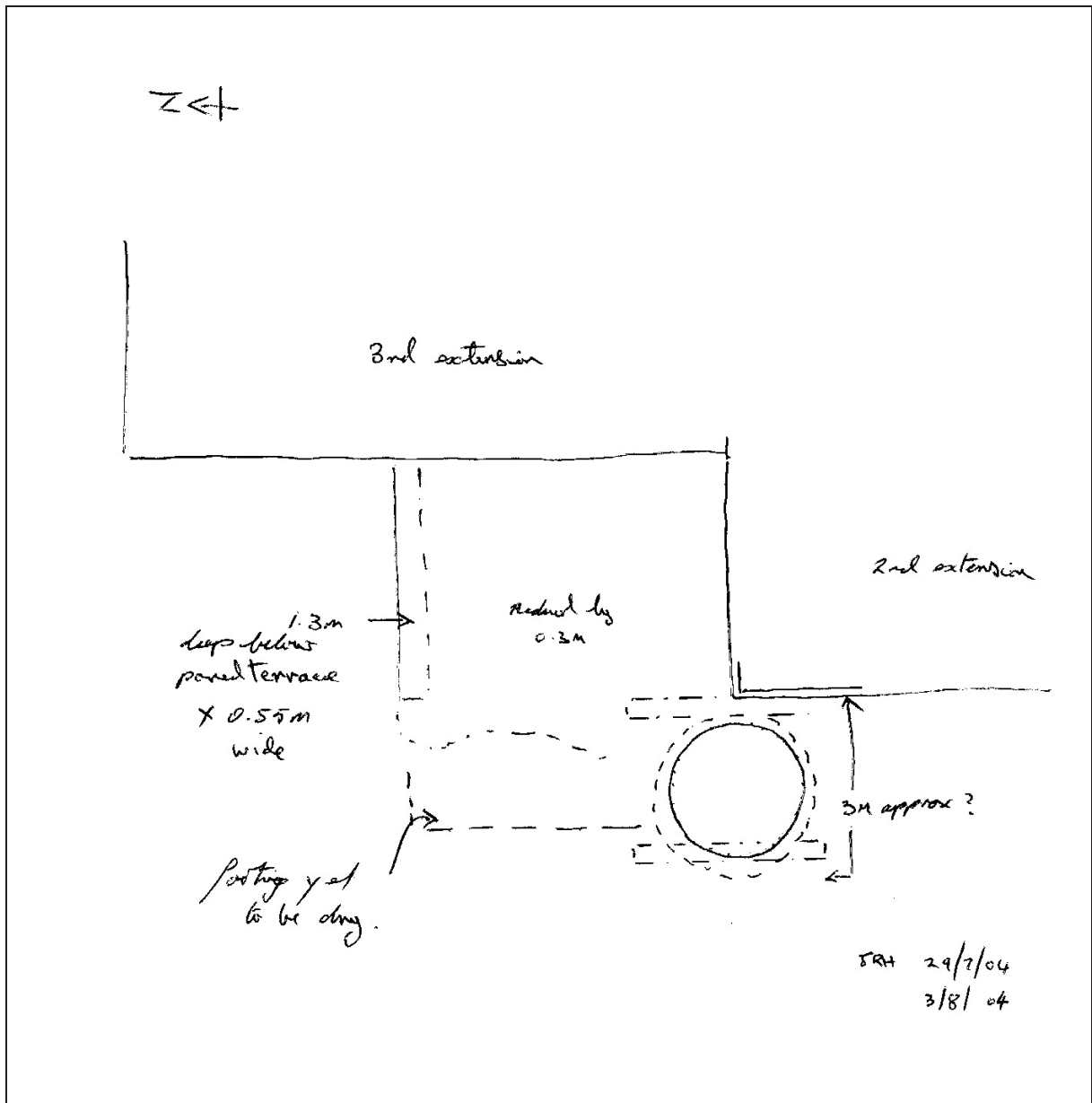
- ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (East of England)
- Davis, J. 1987: *Aldbury: the open village*. Jean Davis (Aldbury).
- Dury, A. & Andrews, J. 1768: *A Topographical map of Hartford-shire*. Hertfordshire Publications 1980.
- Goose, N. 1996: *Population, economy and family structure in Hertfordshire in 1851: The Berkhamsted region.*, University of Hertfordshire Press (Hatfield).
- Gover, J.E.B., Mawer, A. and Stenton, F. M. 1970: *The Place-Names of Hertfordshire*. English Place-Name Society vol XV. Cambridge University Press. Cambridge.
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- Morris, J. 1976: *Domesday Book vol 12 Hertfordshire*. Phillimore. Chichester.
- Page, W. 1908: *The Victoria County History of Hertfordshire*. Dawsons of Pall Mall. Folkestone & London.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

 A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD			
Project: <i>Applegarth, Stocks Rd</i> <i>Aldbury</i>		Project No/Code: <i>588 1AAS</i>		Sheet: <i>1 of 2</i>	
Client/Developer: <i>Mrs & Mrs Sykes</i>		Date of visit: <i>29/7/04</i>			
Contact: <i>Greg Cox</i>			Phone: <i>07836-295417</i>		
Duration of Visit (Inc. travel):		Start: <i>2.15pm</i>		Finish: <i>4.35 approx.</i>	
Completed by: <i>JEFF</i>					
Development Type:					
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services <input type="checkbox"/>	Roads <input type="checkbox"/>	Levelling <input type="checkbox"/>	Quarrying <input type="checkbox"/>	Pipelines <input type="checkbox"/>
Other (specify):					
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dry, warm & overcast</i>					
Observations:					
<p><i>Observed about half the actual footings and approx. 80% of the redoubt level. Mostly all external chalk except in the south west corner where a brick built soakaway or cistern was located. At least 2.6m dia - external; at least 2m dia internal. Domed, which lies about 0.35m below ploughed surface. The walls are c. 230mm thick and laid on edge in stretcher fashion; the bricks are an orange-brown colour and are frogged and measure 230mm x 110mm x 68mm. The bricks are bonded with a greyish-brown sandy mortar & the inside of the feature appears to have been rendered with a thin layer of mortar; there are two openings for drains on the south side c. 200mm wide - they look like later cuts into the feature. The feature is filled with a mass of loose, sorting demolition material; see pieces of slate & tile. An iron pipe 33mm (1 1/4") rises from the western side. Footing of power enters 0.6m below level of the ground.</i></p>					
Comments:					
<p><i>Very similar to the one at Brookmans Place, Abbots Langley! It is not certain whether the later (19) external masonry is a set - sequence is easy to determine. Probably a well which later became used as a soakaway when village had mains water & then later fell out of use.</i></p>					

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003





ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: <i>Applegarth, Stocks Rd</i> <i>Aldbury</i>		Project No/Code: <i>588 1 AAS</i>	Sheet: <i>2 of 2</i>
Client/Developer <i>Mr & Mrs Sykes</i>		Date of visit: <i>4/8/04</i>	
Contact: <i>Craig Cox</i>		Phone: <i>07836-295417</i>	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>midday briefly - 3.45 pm</i>	Finish:	
Completed by: <i>JRH.</i>			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <i>Overcast - Summer Showers Wet.</i>			
Observations: <i>Observed the additional footings to take the ring-beam Section. Dimensions as before but deeper ^{1.8m} Edge if further established as 2.9m. out from the corner of the existing house</i>			
Comments: <i>Nothing of further significance observed.</i>			

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003

Appendix 2: SMR Summary Sheet

HERTS

Site name and address: Applegarth, Stocks Road, Aldbury, Herts, HP23 5RV		
County: Hertfordshire	District: Dacorum	
Village/Town: Aldbury	Parish: Aldbury CP	
Planning application reference: 4/0163/00		
Client name, address, & tel. no: as above		
Nature of application: Building extension		
Present land use: house and garden		
Size of application area: n/a	Size of area investigated: n/a	
NGR (to 8 figures): SP 96527 12663	Site code: 588/AAS	
Site director/Organization: J.R. Hunn/ ASC Ltd		
Type of work: watching brief		
Date of work:	Start: July 29 th 2004	Finish: August 4 th 2004
Curating museum: Dacorum Heritage Trust		
Related SMR nos:	Periods represented: late 19 th early 20 th century	
Relevant previous summaries/reports		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>In late July and early August 2004 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on a building extension to Applegarth, Stocks Road, Aldbury, Hertfordshire. There were no significant archaeological features found with the exception of a fine brick well or cistern at the corner of the development. This is believed to date to the 2nd half of the 19th century and must pre-date the creation of a piped water supply in the early 20th century.</i></p>		
Author: J.R.Hunn	Date: 9/8/04	