

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

WATCHING BRIEF: LADYMAN BARN STOCKS ROAD ALDBURY HERTFORDSHIRE

on behalf of Mr and Mrs Brown



Jonathan R. Hunn BA PhD MIFA

February 2007

ASC: 841/ALB/2

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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	ALB	<i>Project no:</i>	841
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Aldbury		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Aldbury		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 9654 1241		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Residential		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Development to existing property		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Dacorum Borough Council		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	4/00432/06		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr And Mrs Brown Ladyman Barn Stocks Road Aldbury Herts. HP23 5RU		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Julian Francis		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Jonathan R Hunn	<i>Date:</i>	26/2/07
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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

Summary

During February 2007 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on an extension to Ladyman Barn, Aldbury, Hertfordshire. The site is situated on the southern side of the former Town Farm, first recorded in the late 17th century. The ground disturbed by the extension was made up of a semi-dissolved chalk with no evidence for any pre-modern features or activity in the form of artefacts.

1 Introduction

1.1 In February 2006 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at Ladyman Barn, Aldbury, Hertfordshire (NGR SP96541241: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Julian Francis on behalf of Mr and Mrs Brown, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (841/ALB/1), and a brief (Batt 2006) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Dacorum Borough Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Hertfordshire County Council*. The relevant planning application reference is 4/00432/06.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief has been required as a planning condition under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), in response to proposals for the construction of a sunken extension to the existing dwelling.

1.3 *Location*

The village of Aldbury is located at the foot of the Chiltern scarp, c.4km east of Tring (Fig. 1). The village is centred on the junction of Station Road, which leads west to Tring; Toms Hill Road, which climbs the scarp eastwards to Berkhamsted Common; Trooper Road, which leads southwards to New Ground, and Stocks Road, which runs north towards Ivinghoe. Ladyman Barn is on the east side of Stocks Road, c.100m north of the above junction, within the historic core of the village.

1.4 *Description*

The site (Fig. 2) lies within a landscaped garden belonging to Ladyman Barn. To the south and west lie the rear plots or gardens belonging to adjoining properties; to the east is a beech hedge separating the property from the adjoining access track to Foxhayes and Toms Barn.

1.5 *Geology & Topography*

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'. The site is flat and lies at an elevation of c.136m OD.

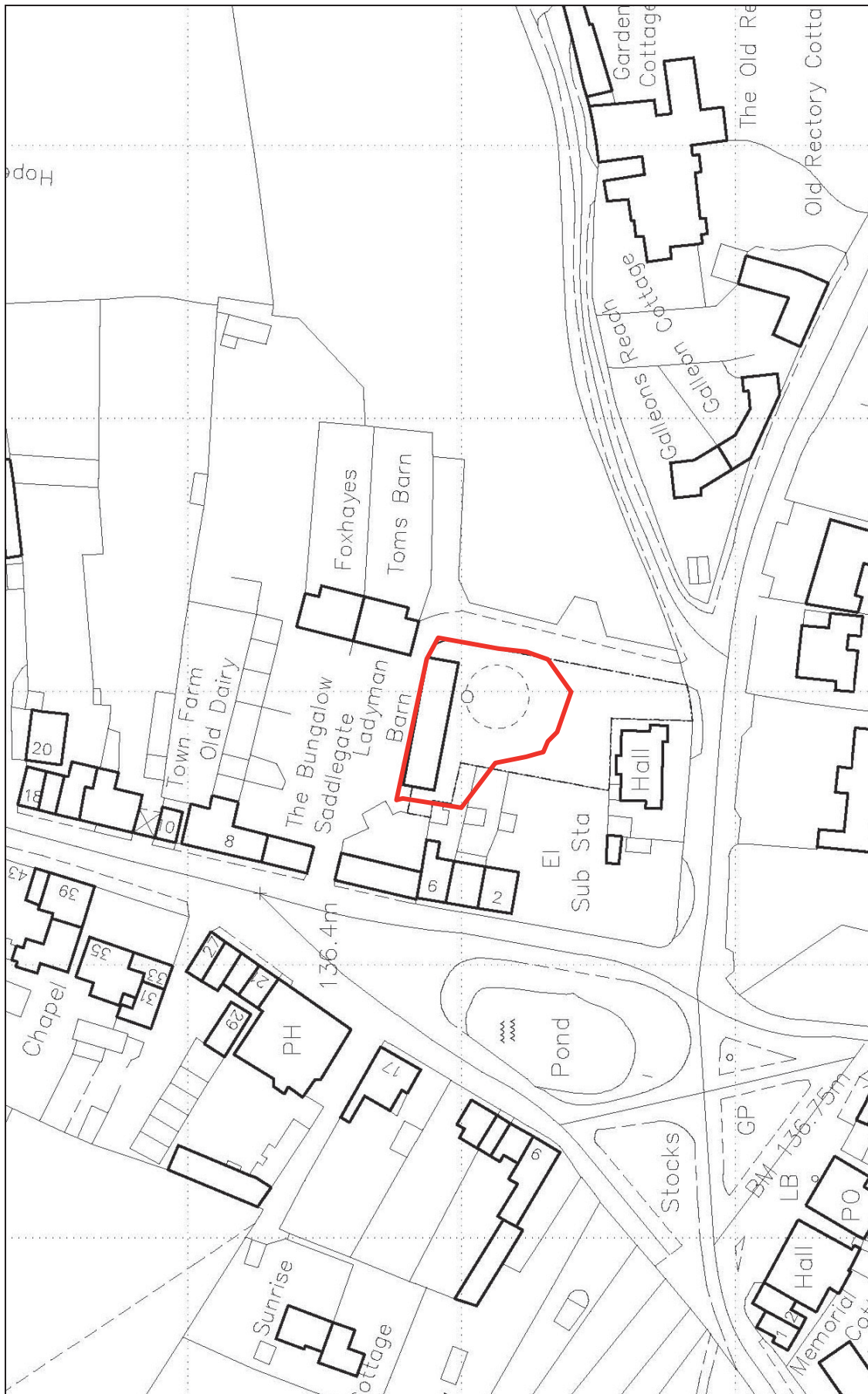


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1000)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

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.

2.2 Standards

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

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the following method:

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

2.4 Constraints

There were no constraints encountered during the execution of the project design.

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

Aldbury is located within an area of considerable archaeological and historical interest (Page 1908), which has resulted in it being designated by Hertfordshire County Council as *Area of Archaeological Significance 29*. The village of Aldbury is first mentioned in the Domesday Survey, which was compiled in 1086 (Morris 1976), and the written history of the village covers over nine centuries.

3.1 Prehistoric (before 600BC)

There is evidence to suggest human occupation at Aldbury from at least the late Neolithic period. A Neolithic flint axe (SMR 0205) and Bronze Age barrows (SMR 2997, 4152, 4153 and 4154) are present in the surrounding area.

3.2 Iron Age (600BC-AD43)

There is considerable evidence for occupation of the area in the Iron Age, including a possible farmstead located at Aldbury Golf Course (SMR 9922), where ditches, pits and postholes have been excavated. There are also Iron Age burials, including a cemetery to the northeast of the village (SMR 1051). The burials generally consist of cremations (sometimes within urns), and the cemetery also had burials containing brooches. Some isolated burials were found in an adjacent area (SMR 4242), again with urned cremations, and associated with some prehistoric vessels. There are also several Iron Age ditches in the area, the most notable of which is Grim's Ditch (SMR 1479), situated to the northwest of the site.

3.3 Roman (AD43-c.450)

The evidence for Roman occupation in the area around Aldbury is considerable. There was a small Romano-British settlement, now known as Cow Roast, located to the south of Aldbury, which is a Scheduled Ancient Monument. Within the immediate area of Aldbury itself, a Roman building (SMR 6068) was discovered on Moneybury Hill, along with a Roman coin hoard (SMR 1128) and there is other evidence of occupation within the immediately surrounding area (SMR 1050). In addition to this, the remains of a Roman road still exist today as a footpath between Aldbury and Tring Station.

3.4 Saxon (c.450-1066)

It seems likely that the village of Aldbury was founded during the Saxon period, and the Domesday Survey records that the land belonged to the Count of Mortain (Morris 1976, 15.3), who was given it after the Norman Conquest. Prior to that, Alwin, a thane of King Edward, held it. There are several Saxon cremation cemeteries in the area, but as yet little is known about them, and their size is still to be determined.

3.5 Medieval (1066-1500)

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.*).

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.

3.6 Post-Medieval (1500-1900)

On the east side of the Green were several small copyhold farms. William Ladyman appears to have added 16 acres to the 10 acres of copyhold, which went with what was later to be called Town Farm in c.1664 (Davis 1987, 24). At the time of his son’s death in 1734 his son was described as ‘yeoman’ (*ibid.*). The farm was enlarged when William Ladyman III acquired a house to the north (Tim’s Spring) and 30 acres of land (Davis 1987, 25). The farm was sold to the Duncombe family at Stocks in 1757 and a short time later acquired its present name of ‘Town Farm’ (*ibid.*). In 1803 John Thorn was the tenant of Town Farm but he also rented another farm at Tom’s Hill (*ibid.*).

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. A near contemporary of this map is a plan of the Ashridge estate (1762), which shows the location of Town Farm (Fig. 4). An early 19th century survey of Aldbury by Thomas Godman shows what was once Town Farm, 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 Town Farm (no. 46 on Fig. 5) as one of only two farms surviving in the village. At that date it was owned by J.A. Gordon and occupied by William Ashby. In the 1851 census he is recorded as farming 170 acres and employing 6 men (Goose 1996, 236 no. 307). His household consisted of a wife, six children ranging in age from 4 to 28 years, and one horse keeper (*ibid.*). By the end of the 19th century the Second Edition Ordnance Survey plan shows some considerable changes have taken place to Town Farm (Fig. 6).

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.



Figure 4: Extract from the Ashridge estate map, 1762 (HALS: AH 2770)

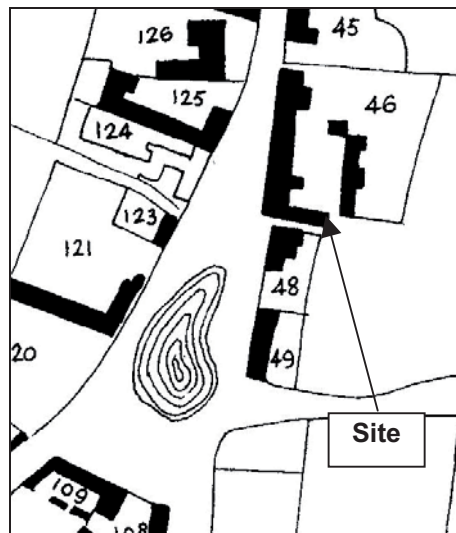


Figure 5: Extract from the Aldbury Tithe map, 1840

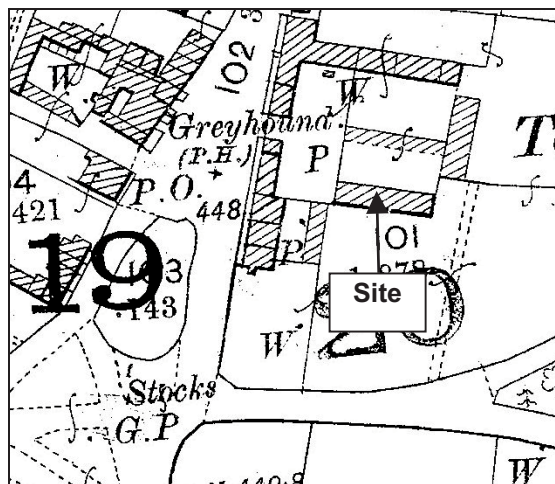


Figure 6: Town Farm as shown on the OS Second Edition 25" map, 1898

4 Results

- 4.1 Two monitoring visits were made to the site, on February 12th and 19th respectively (Appendix 1).
- 4.2 The footprint of new extension was cut into the sloping terrain and so the ground was higher to the east than to the west (Plates 1-4). The topsoil was 0.9m deep on the east side and 0.25m deep on the west side. The ground was taken down to the natural semi-dissolved chalk. With the sole exception of a shallow soil-filled depression (see Appendix 1) two metres to the south of the proposed access to the existing building, no cut features were observed.
- 4.3 The spoil heaps were inspected on two occasions revealing only occasional fragments of brick and burnt flint. No datable material was observed.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The observations carried out during the excavation of the foundation for the new extension to Ladyman Barn confirmed that there were no archaeological deposits present on the site
- 5.2 Cartographic evidence of the 18th and 19th centuries reveals that Town Farm underwent considerable changes prior to its conversion to modern dwellings (Figs 4-6). Comparison between the modern plan (Fig. 2) and that of 1898 (Fig. 4) confirms the continuation of the courtyard arrangement. No buildings or structures were shown lying within the footprint of the present development. Nevertheless, it was always possible that, given its proximity to the centre of the village, it might have contained medieval or earlier archaeological evidence. As it was no such information was revealed and the lack of 'background debris' in the form of artefacts suggests the area was never directly occupied in the past.



Plate 1: The site looking south east



Plate 2: The site looking north west



Plate 3: Soil profile looking east



Plate 4: Detail of soil profile looking east

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Mr and Mrs Brown for commissioning the watching brief. Thanks are due to Nigel Lawrence of NPL Planthire for his cooperation during the project and to Kate Batt (Historic Environment Advisor) for her advice. Finally my thanks to my colleague Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA 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
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with the Dacorum Heritage Trust.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

ALGAO 2003 *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 14.

IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.

IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.

Secondary Sources

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.


Morris, J. 1976 *Domesday Book Vol 12 Hertfordshire*. Phillimore. Chichester

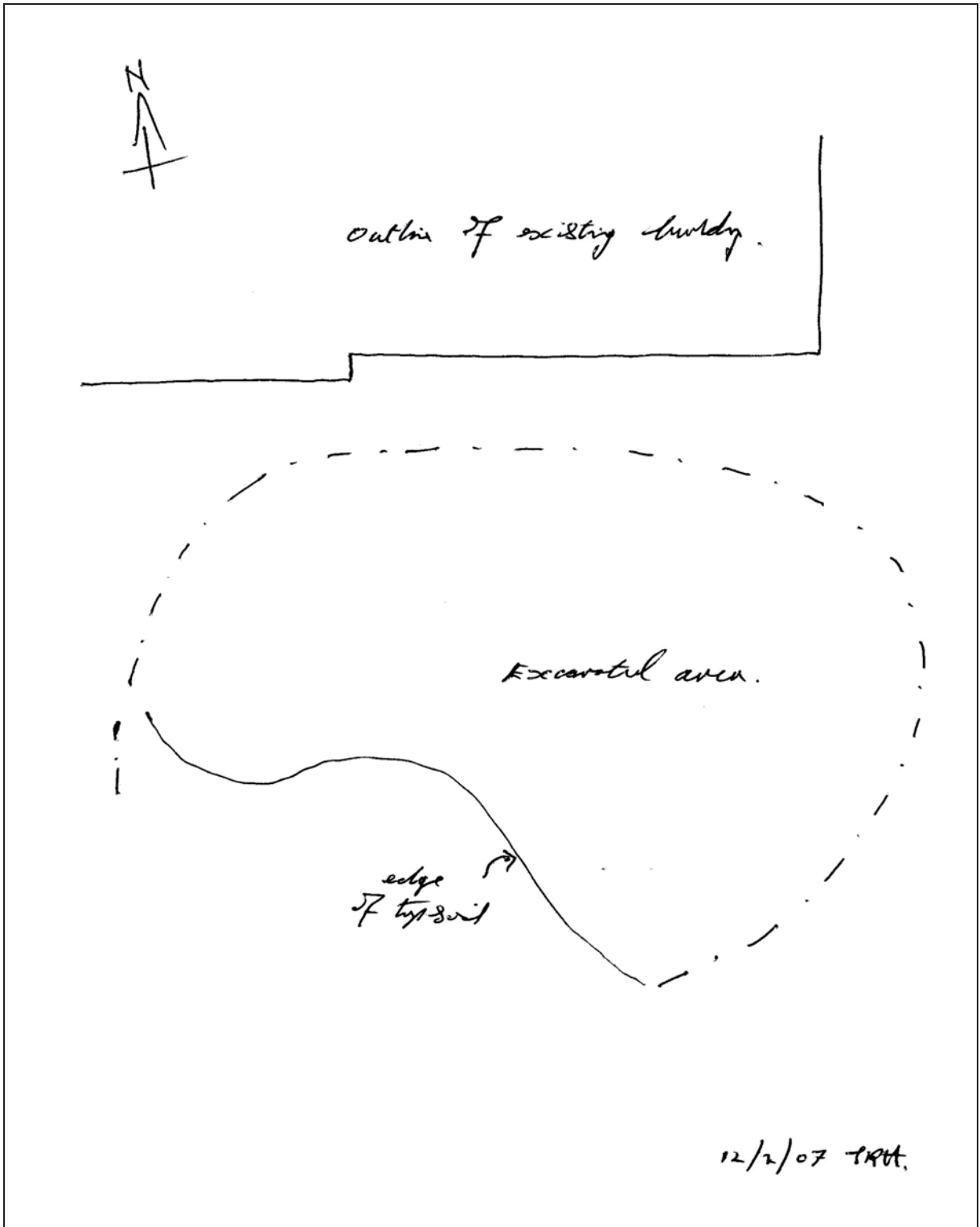
Page, W. (ed.) 1908 *The Victoria County History of Hertfordshire Vol II*. Dawsons of Pall Mall. Folkestone and London.

Pevsner, N. and Cherry, B. 2002 *The Buildings of England. Hertfordshire*. Yale University Press. 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>Ladyman Barn</i> <i>Aldbury</i>		Project No/Code: <i>841 1 ALB</i>		Sheet: <i>1</i> of <i>1</i>		
Client/Developer: <i>Mr & Mrs Brown</i>		Date of visit:				
Contact: <i>Nigel Lawrence</i> <i>NPC Plantline</i>		Phone: <i>MOB: 07836-627819</i> <i>01752-840678</i>				
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: <i>10.35 am.</i>		Finish:		
Completed by: <i>JRA</i>						
Development Type:						
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <p style="text-align: center;"><i>Wet, mild</i></p>						
Observations: <p><i>Observed a roughly circular area (10m approx) on the South side of Ladyman Barn. The upper or eastern side was deeper with the topsoil being 0.9m deep and about a further 0.2m to top of flinty chalk. The lower, or western side was shallower; topsoil c. 0.25m and subsoil c. 0.6m deep. About two thirds of this area had been cleared down to chalk. Nothing of significance observed. See over for sketch.</i></p>						
Comments: <p><i>Topsoil examined after rain - blank</i> <i>only broken brick & burnt flint observed among subsoils.</i></p>						





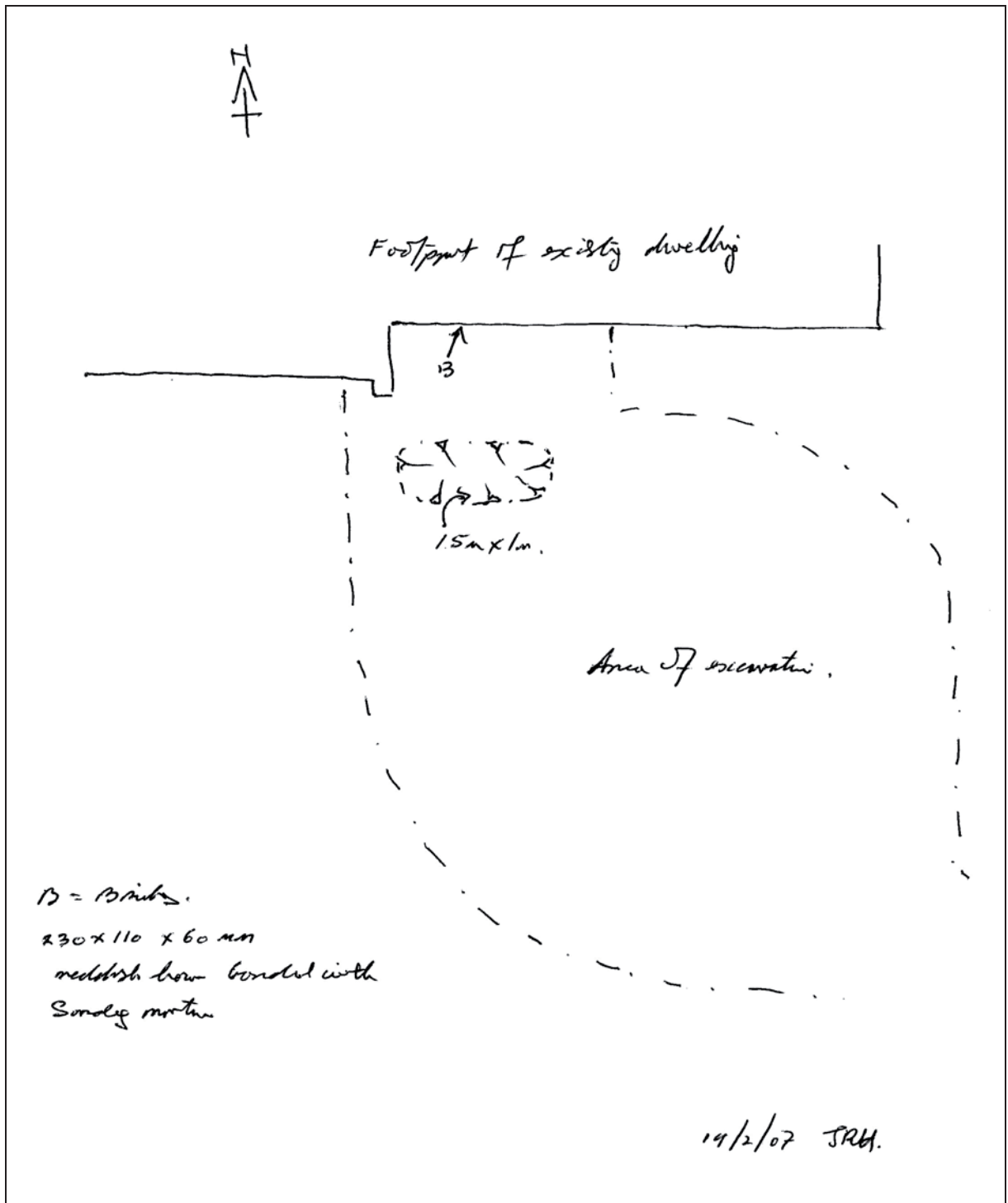
A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: <i>Ladyman Barn</i>		Project No/Code: <i>841 1 ALB</i>	Sheet: <i>2 of 2</i>
<i>Aldbury</i>		Date of visit: <i>19/2/07</i>	
Client/Developer: <i>Mr & Mrs Brown</i>			
Contact: <i>Nigel</i>		Phone: <i>01753-840678</i>	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: <i>2.40pm</i>	Finish:	
Completed by: <i>SRA</i>			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: <i>Dull but dry.</i>			
Observations: <i>Saw the entire footprint of the development taken down to the natural semi-chalk on the eastern side this was c. 2m deep while on the western, lower slope, this was c. 1.2m. The area next to the edge of the barn has also been cleared. Apart from a rectangular soil filled depression no features of any kind were noted.</i>			
Comments: <i>The entire area has the 'look' of being virgin ground. Very few man made objects are around.</i>			

For sketch plan, use reverse

©ASC, 2003



Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Ladyman Barn, Stocks Road, Aldbury			SITE NO/CODE: 841/ALB
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	1	0088	General view of site looking north
2	2	0090	The site looking north west – plate 2
3		0093	Detail of soil horizons NW
4		0094	Detail of soil horizons N
5		0098	The site looking south east – plate 1
6		0099	View west to Ashridge
7		0100	View north along access track
8		0101	View NW into the site
9		0177	General view of site looking north - cover
10		0178	West side of foundation area
11		0179	General view of site, looking north
12		0180	View of soil profile looking east – plate 3
13		0181	Detail of soil profile looking east – plate 4
14		0182	Detail of foundations of existing dwelling looking north

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Ladyman Barn, Aldbury, Hertfordshire		
Short Description:	<i>During February 2007 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on an extension to Ladyman Barn, Aldbury, Hertfordshire. The site is situated on the southern side of the former Town Farm, first recorded in the late 17th century. The ground disturbed by the extension was made up of a semi-dissolved chalk with no evidence for any pre-modern features or activity in the form of artefacts.</i>		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	WB		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	In AAS	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	none
Current land use:	residential	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	no
Monument type:	N/a	Monument period:	N/a
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	none		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (to at least 8 figures)	SP96541241
District:	Dacorum	Parish:	St John the Baptist
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Ladyman Barn Stocks Road Aldbury Herts HP23 5RU		
Study area (sq. m. or ha):	20m sq.	Height OD (metres):	136m AOD
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	HER (HCC)	Project design originator:	ASC Ltd
Project Manager:	D. Fell	Director/Supervisor:	J.R. Hunn
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr and Mrs Brown		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	12/2/07	End date:	19/2/07
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Dacorum Heritage Trust		
Paper:	Yes	1 box file	
Digital:	Yes	CD with box file	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief: Ladyman Barn, Stocks Road, Aldbury, Hertfordshire		
Author(s):	Jonathan Hunn		
Page nos		Date:	27 th February 2007

Appendix 4: SMR Summary Sheet

Site name and address:		
Ladyman Barn Stocks Road Aldbury Herts. HP23 5RU		
County: Hertfordshire		District: Dacorum
Village/Town: Aldbury		Parish: St John the Baptist
Planning application reference: 4/00432/06		
Client name, address, & tel. no: Mr and Mrs Brown Ladyman Barn Stocks Road Aldbury Herts. HP23 5RU		
Nature of application: extension to existing dwelling		
Present land use: garden		
Size of application area: n/a		Size of area investigated: n/a
NGR (to 8 figures): SP96541241		Site code: 841/ALB
Site director/Organization: J.R. Hunn		
Type of work: Watching brief		
Date of work:	Start: 12/2/07	Finish: 19/2/07
Curating museum: Dacorum Heritage Trust		
Related SMR nos: tba		Periods represented: modern
Relevant previous summaries/reports n/a		
<p>Summary of fieldwork results:</p> <p><i>During February 2007 an archaeological watching brief was undertaken on an extension to Ladyman Barn, Aldbury, Hertfordshire. The site is situated on the southern side of the former Town Farm, first recorded in the late 17th century. The ground disturbed by the extension was made up of a semi-dissolved chalk with no evidence for any pre-modern features or activity in the form of artefacts.</i></p>		
Author: J.R. Hunn		Date: 26/2/07