



Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:

**CASTLE HOUSE
5 NORTH STREET
CASTLETHORPE
MILTON KEYNES**

NGR: SP 7979 4446

*on behalf of
Mr & Mrs C J Harrison*



G Shane BSC

October 2008

ASC: 1110/CCH/2



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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	CCH	<i>ASC project no:</i>	1110
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeol2-49705	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	1193/AYBCM: 2008.193
<i>County:</i>	Milton Keynes		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Castlethorpe		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Castlethorpe		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 7979 4446		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.1900 square metres		
<i>Present use:</i>	Residential garden		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of pool house		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	Pre-application		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Milton Keynes Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	7 th October 2008		
<i>Commissioned by:</i>	Mr Richard Robinson C/O Atrium MS Apollo House 6 Bramley Road Mount Farm Milton Keynes MK1 1PT		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr C. J Harrison 23 St Mary's Road East Claydon Bucks MK18 2LU		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Michele Ragozzino & Richard Robinson		

Internal Quality Check

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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>	David Fell	<i>Date:</i>	13 th October 2008

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

Summary

In October 2008 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation at Castle House, 5 North Street, Castlethorpe. The work was carried out prior to the submission of an application for planning permission for the construction of a pool house, and was required under the terms of Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG16). The proximity of the site to the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Castlethorpe Castle indicated that the proposed development had the potential to damage or disturb significant archaeological remains. A single trial trench was excavated across the footprint of the proposed development but no archaeological remains were present. It is unlikely that the development will have a significant impact on buried archaeological remains or artefacts.

1. Introduction

1.1 In October 2008 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an archaeological evaluation at Castle House, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes. The project was commissioned by Mr Richard Robinson on behalf of the client, Mr C J Harrison, and was carried out according to a *brief* (Crank 2008) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Milton Keynes Council*, by their archaeological advisor, Nick Crank (AA), and a project design prepared by ASC (Richards 2008).

1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), in order to inform proposals for the development of the site.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

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 Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *Management*

The project was managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA, and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

1.5 *The Site*

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The site is located in Castlethorpe, in the unitary authority of Milton Keynes and in the historic county of Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1). It is situated near the centre of the village, within the grounds of Castle House (Fig. 2). Castle House is a Grade II listed building, and lies immediately south of the earthworks of Castlethorpe Castle, which is a scheduled ancient monument. Access was from the south, off North Street and the site is centred on Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SP 7979 4446.

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the area comprise those of the *Hanslope Association*, namely “slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils, with some slowly permeable non-calcareous clayey soils and a slight risk of water erosion” (Soil Survey 1983, 411d). These overlie an outcrop of Blisworth Limestone within a wider area of Boulder Clay (BGS, Sheet 202). The site is flat and lies at an elevation of *c.* 82m.

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The proposal is for the construction of a detached pool house within the grounds of Castle House (Fig. 3).

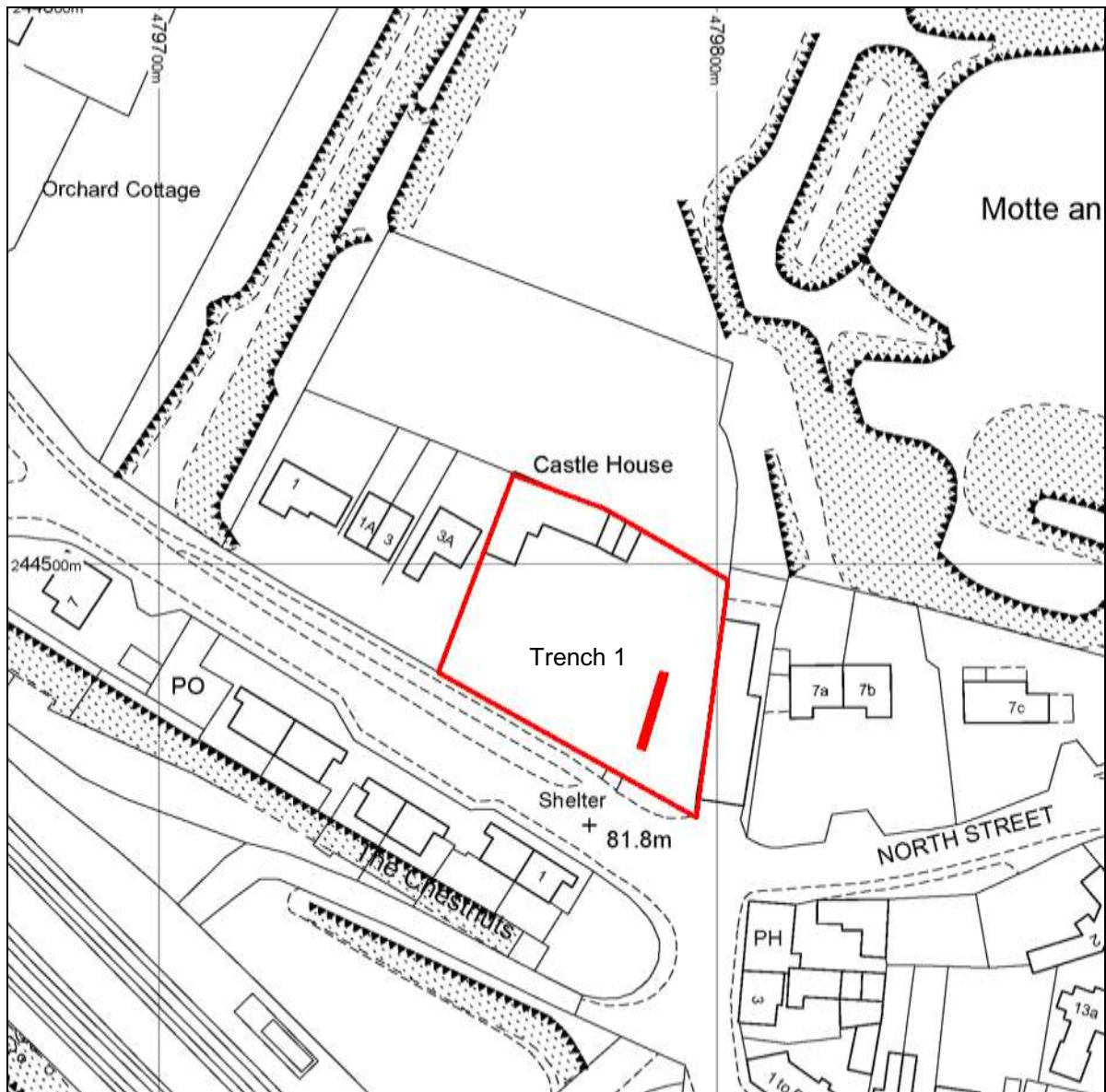


Figure 2: Site plan with trench location (Scale 1:1,250)



Figure 3: Plan of the proposed development (Scale 1:500)

2. Aims and Methods

2.1 *Aims*

As described in the brief (Section 5), the aims of the evaluation were:

- To examine the relationship between the site and the 12th century castle which lies to the north
- To investigate the probable manorial use of the site.
- To inform proposals for the development of the site with regard to minimising or avoiding damage to any archaeological remains that may be present
- To obtain sufficient information to establish the extent, character, quality, date and condition of any archaeological features, structures, deposits, artefacts and ecofacts within the area affected by the proposed development

2.2 *Standards*

The work conformed to the project design (Richards 2008), to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH1991) and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 *Methods*

- A minimum of 30 square metres of trenching within the footprint of the proposed pool house (Fig. 3)

ASC's general methodology for the works required in the *brief* is described in detail in the project brief section 3.4.

2.4 *Constraints*

The trial trench was limited to a length of 15 metres and a width of 1.6 metres due to the presence of extensive tree roots as well as standing trees.

3. Archaeological and 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. However, the focus of interest is likely to lie in the medieval period.

This section has been compiled with information from readily available sources.

RHCME = Royal Commission on Historic Monuments in England

3.2 **Prehistoric** (before AD43)

Little is known of Castlethorpe in the prehistoric period.. The only systematic fieldwork that has been undertaken dealt with areas around the village of Haversham, 3km to the southeast, and Hanslope, 3km to the north. Both are unpublished. A study of settlement and burial in the Ouse valley during the Bronze Age (Green 1974) demonstrates that much of the human activity at that time was limited to the lighter gravel soils in the river valley. A number of cropmarks are known from the area surrounding Castlethorpe, these are of unknown date but are likely to represent ploughed out barrows of Bronze Age date.

3.3 **Roman** (AD43-c.450)

During the Roman period, the area around Castlethorpe formed a part of the tribal territory of the *Catuvellauni*, with its capital at *Verulamium* (St Albans). The nearest Roman town was *Lactodorum* (Towcester) some 11km tot the northwest. The Roman road known as *Watling Street* (now the A5) lies 3.5km to the southwest of Castlethorpe. A string of Roman estates, each centred on a villa, is known to have existed on the north side of the Ouzel valley and a similar situation existed to the south of the Ouse (Zeepvat 1987, 1991). One such site is Stanton Low, c. 4.5km southeast of the site, where several substantial stone buildings and a cemetery were excavated in 1957 and 1958 (Woodfield & Johnson 1989).

During this period the Castlethorpe area was almost certainly rural with scattered Romano-British farmsteads. In Castlethorpe parish two silver bracelets identified as “Celtic” and a pot containing a hoard of 2nd-century Roman coins were found in 1827 by a farmer at Birtles Hill c. 1km southeast of the site (Page 1927).

3.4 **Saxon** (c.450-1066)

A settlement probably existed at Castlethorpe since at least the early 11th century when a large part of eastern England was occupied by the Danes (the *Danelaw*), extending as far south as the Ouse and west to Watling Street (Markham 1973). In 1002 Ethelred the Unready gave orders that all Danes in England should be slain. During this event, which became known as the *Massacre of St Brice*, Danish settlements in the North Bucks area were wiped out, including one at Castlethorpe (*ibid*).

3.5 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

The date at which Castlethorpe was repopulated following the massacre is unknown and the village is not mentioned in the Domesday Survey. During the late Saxon and early medieval period Castlethorpe formed part of the ecclesiastical parish and manor

of Hanslope within Bunsty Hundred (Page 1927). In 1086 the manor of Hanslope was held by Winemar the Fleming and the Domesday Survey records that before the conquest it was held by Healfdene, a housecarl of King Edward (Williams & Martin 2003).

Hanslope was a wealthy manor, valued at £24 in the Domesday Survey, which records that it had land for 26 ploughs, woodland for 1000 pigs and that there was a sizeable population of 36 villains (*ibid*). A mill is also recorded, which may have been located at Castlethorpe (Pevsner 2000).

Castlethorpe Castle was probably erected during the Baronial Wars in the 12th century by William Maudit, a supporter of the Empress Matilda (Page 1927). It appears to have had a short life as it was sacked by Fawkes de Breauté in 1215 (RCHME). It was granted to de Breauté in the following year, but never rebuilt (Page 1927). The site probably remained unoccupied since that time, but has almost certainly suffered several changes subsequently, and its original form and extent is difficult to ascertain. Like much of the land in Castlethorpe, it was held as part of the manor of Hanslope: the castle is sometimes referred to as 'Hanslope Castle' (*ibid*).

In 1292 William Beauchamp was granted a license to build a mortared stone wall around a garden court within his dwelling at Hanslope. It has been suggested (*ibid.*) that this may refer to the site marked by rectangular earthworks to the south of the castle, which have been partly obliterated by the construction of the railway. These earthworks have also been interpreted as a southward extension of the outer bailey of the castle, though they are on a slightly different alignment (Fig. 4).

The church of St Simon and St Jude is situated c.100m northeast of the site. The earliest part of the church is the north arcade, which is of early 13th century date (Pevsner 2000) although it is built on the site of an earlier Saxon church (www.mkheritage.co.uk).

A watching brief at 7 North Street, to the east of the site revealed sections of infilled motte ditch containing 13th century pottery (Crank 2008).

3.6 ***Post-Medieval & Modern*** (1500-present)

The manor of Castlethorpe passed as an appendage of Hanslope from the Maudits to the Beauchamps and Nevilles and eventually to the crown. Charles II granted it to Sir Thomas Tyrrell, whose son procured an act of parliament in 1704 allowing him to sell the manor. The manor was purchased some years later by Sarah, Duchess of Marlborough who willed it to the grandfather of Earl Spencer. A monument to the memory of Thomas Tyrrell, who died in 1671, is in the church at Castlethorpe (<http://met.open.ac.uk>).

Castlethorpe is unusual in that inclosures were laid out from the early 16th century, but the Inclosure Act for the parish was only passed in 1793 (Page 1927) when an allotment of land was assigned to the corporation of Lincoln (<http://met.open.ac.uk>).

The London and North Western Railway which passes through the village 100m south of the site was opened in 1882 although Castlethorpe station closed in 1964. The

Wesleyan Chapel opened in 1888, and the school in 1891, although there was an evening school from at least 1879. Twentieth century development in the village has concentrated on the former allotment site to the north; around Lodge Farm to the northwest and a small development off Station Road to the south of the railway line.

3.7 *Site Specific*

Castle House is a Grade II listed building, and dates from the late 16th or early 17th century with 19th and 20th century alterations (Pevsner 2000, 214). The house is roughly L-shaped in plan with a chimney in the angle between the two wings (*ibid*); a bread oven is also located in this angle adjacent to the front door (www.mkheritage.co.uk). The house has previously been known as “Castle Yard” and “The Dower House” (*ibid*).

After the death of Sir Thomas Tyrrell in 1678 the house passed to the Dukes of Buckingham and subsequently to their descendants the Carrington Family. At some point the house was divided into tenements, and was sold in 1961 to one of the tenants. In 1964 it was sold again and reconverted into a single house (*ibid*).

At the north end of the present garden a revetting wall is built into the earthworks of the castle and a flat stone pavement is known to exist some two feet below the existing garden at the north of the site which may date to the 13th century (*ibid*). The site lies within the postulated outer bailey of Castlethorpe Castle and has the potential to reveal evidence of the castle’s history.

4 Results

4.1 Introduction

This section provides a summary of the results of the evaluation. Detailed information regarding the trial trench appears in Appendix 1 and its significance is discussed in section 5.

- 4.2 A single trial trench was excavated using a toothless bucket, within the footprint of the proposed development. It had a north to south orientation and was *c.*1.5m long, 1.6m wide and *c.*0.9m deep.

No significant archaeological features or artefacts were present within the trench.

4.3 Results (Plates 1 and 2)

4.3.1 The natural stratum (3) was present at a depth *c.*0.85m and consisted of mid brown orange silty clay of firm consistency, broken by outcrops of the underlying Blisworth limestone.

4.3.2 The natural strata was sealed by a layer of modern made ground (2), which was 0.5m thick. It comprised mid to dark greyish brown silt and contained an assemblage of obviously 19th and 20th century stone, tile, other modern debris and a single sherd of 20th century pottery. These artefacts were not of archaeological significance and were not retained.

4.3.3 The overlying topsoil comprised dark greyish brown silt and was *c.*0.4m thick.



Plate 1: Trench 1 north end (*Scale = 2m*)



Plate 2: Trench 1 south end (*Scale = 2m*)

5. Conclusion

- 5.1 No archaeological features were observed in the trench. While the existence of individual isolated archaeological features away from the trench cannot be specifically excluded, it is unlikely that large numbers of archaeological features or artefacts are present on the site. It is unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant impact on archaeological remains.
- 5.2 The location of the proposed development within the site of the outer bailey of the castle and the grounds of Castle House indicated that significant archaeological remains could be disturbed by the proposed development. The only material present within the trench was a layer of modern rubble (2) and no significant archaeological features or artefacts were present in the trench.
- 5.3 *Confidence rating*
The evaluation was undertaken in good weather conditions, and full cooperation was received from all parties involved. As a result, a high confidence rating is attached to the results of the evaluation.

6. Acknowledgements

ASC Ltd is grateful to Mr Richard Robinson for commissioning the evaluation on behalf of Mr C.J. Harrison. The assistance of Mr Michele Ragozzino, of *Michele Ragozzino Ltd* is also gratefully acknowledged. Nick Crank BA AIFA, Archaeological Officer of *Milton Keynes Council* acted as curatorial monitor.

The project was managed for *ASC* by Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA. The fieldwork was led by Jenny Richards BA PIFA assisted by Gareth Shane BSC. The report was prepared by G Shane and edited by David Fell BA MA MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

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

7.2 The archive will be deposited with *Buckinghamshire County Museum* (AYBCM: 2008.193).

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- Allen J L & Holt A St J, 1986 (with later updates) *Health & Safety in Field Archaeology*. Standing Conference of Unit Managers (London).
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Secondary Sources

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Zeepvat, R. J. 1991 *Roman Milton Keynes* Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit / Buckinghamshire County Council (Milton Keynes)

www.mkheritage.co.uk/cv

<http://www.mkheritage.co.uk/cv/docs/Castle/castleinfo.html> (2008)

<http://met.open.ac.uk/GENUKI/big/eng/BMK/Castlethorpe/Index.html#Descriptions>

Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 1						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	15	Width	1.6	Depth	0.72
	Levels					
	Trench top north		82.10 m OD			
	Trench base north		81.65 m OD			
	Trench top south		82.28 m OD			
	Trench base south		81.56 m OD			
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	N	SP 79790 44480		S	SP 79787 44465	
	Orientation		North to South			
Reason for Trench		Testing footprint of proposed development				
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation		Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)
3	Layer	Dark grey brown silt. Topsoil		1600	400	-
2	Layer	Compact mid/dark greyish brown silt with frequent modern tile and stone inclusions. Modern make up layer		1600	500	400
1	Layer	Mid Orange silty clay. Natural substratum		1600	-	850

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Castlethorpe			SITE NO/CODE:1110/CCH/2
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	✓	✓	Trench 1 south end
2	✓	✓	Trench 1 south end
3	✓	✓	Trench 1 north end

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Castle House, 5 North Street, Castlethorpe, Milton Keynes		
Short Description:	In October 2008 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation at Castle House, 5 North Street, Castlethorpe. The work was carried out prior to the submission of an application for planning permission for the construction of a pool house, and was required under the terms of Planning Policy Guidance note 16 (PPG16). The proximity of the site to the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Castlethorpe Castle indicated that the proposed development had the potential to damage or disturb significant archaeological remains. A single trial trench was excavated across the footprint of the proposed development but no archaeological remains were present. It is unlikely that the development will have a significant impact on buried archaeological remains or artefacts.		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Evaluation		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	Grounds of Grade II Castle House and close to SAM Castle Thorpe Castle.	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs) ioe 350907	none
Current land use:	Residential	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	Unknown
Monument type:	Motte and Bailey (ioe 350907)	Monument period:	12 th century
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	none		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Milton Keynes	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP7979 4446
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Castle House, 5 North Street, Castle Thorpe, Milton Keynes		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	30 sq metres	Height OD: (metres)	87.27
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	N. Crank	Project design originator:	J. Richards
Project Manager:	K. Semmelmann	Director/Supervisor:	J. Richards
Sponsor / funding body:	Buckingham County Museum		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	07/10/08	End date:	07/10/08
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Buckingham County Museum (AYBCM: 2008.193)	Pottery, animal bone, Files	
Paper:		Brief, PD, report, site records, b&w prints and negatives	
Digital:		CD containing all digital files	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Archaeological Evaluation: Castle House, 5 North Street, Castle Thorpe, Milton Keynes		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1110/CCH/2		
Author(s):	G Shane		
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