

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:
LAND ADJACENT TO
12 MONKS CLOSE
REDBOURN
HERTFORDSHIRE**

NGR: TL 1077 1219

on behalf of Mr Andrew Clinch



David Kaye BA AIFA

March 2009

ASC: 1153/RMC/2



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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	RMC	<i>ASC project no:</i>	1153
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeol2-56938	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	
<i>County:</i>	Hertfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Redbourn		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Redbourn		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TL 1077 1219		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c 400 sq. m		
<i>Present use:</i>	Garden		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of a detached dwelling and alterations to the current car park		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	5/2008/1710		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	St Albans District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	10-11 th March 2009		
<i>Commissioned by:</i>	Andrew Clinch 1 Plovers Barn Hatching Green Harpenden Herts AL5 2JY		
<i>Client:</i>	As Above		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Andrew Clinch		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	David Kaye BA AIFA	<i>Date:</i>	17 th March 2009
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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>	Bob Zeepvat	<i>Date:</i>	17 th March 2009
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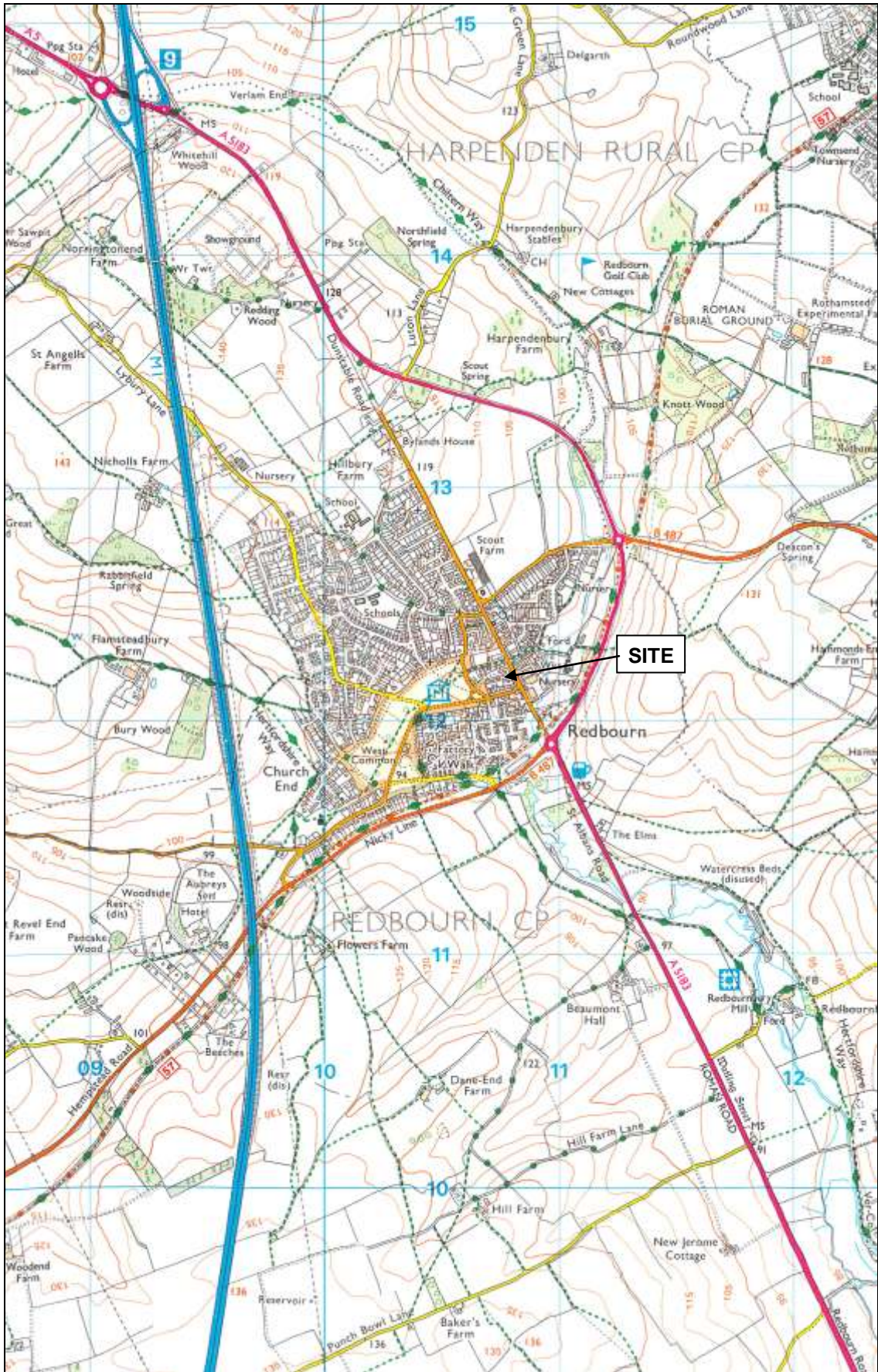


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In March 2009 ASC carried out a programme of evaluation trenching and test pitting on land adjacent to 12 Monks Close, Redbourn, Hertfordshire, to assess its archaeological potential prior to the construction of a new house.

One trench and two test pits were opened within the footprint of the proposed building. No archaeological cut features or deposits were observed in the trench or the test pits. The trench appears to cut through the remains of a gravel extraction pit.

1. Introduction

1.1 In March 2009 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation on land adjacent to 12 Monks Close, Redbourn, Hertfordshire. The project was commissioned by Mr Andrew Clinch, and was carried out according to an agreed brief defined in discussion with *St Albans District Council's* Archaeological Officer (AO) and a project design prepared by ASC (1153/RMC/1). The relevant planning application reference is 5/2008/1710.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission 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 Organisation* by the Institute for Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *Management*

The project was managed by Karin Semmelmann 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 the district of St Albans, in the parish and town of Redbourn, at NGR TL 1077 1219 (Fig. 1). It is roughly rectangular in shape and currently comprises of garden with a few trees. It is bordered by a car park to the north, and neighbouring gardens on all other sides. There are currently no buildings on the site, and access is either from the car park to the south or through the garden of Archers Cottage to the southwest (Fig. 2).

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The site lies in the lower slopes of the river Ver valley, at an elevation of c.100m OD. Soils in the site area belong to the Charity 2 association, described as 'Well drained flinty fine silty soils in valley bottoms' (Soil Survey 1983, 571m). The underlying geology comprises Upper Chalk (BGS 1991, ktkc), which, in this part of the valley, is overlain by gravel and sand drift geology.

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The proposed development comprises the construction of a detached dwelling and alterations to the current car park (Fig. 3).

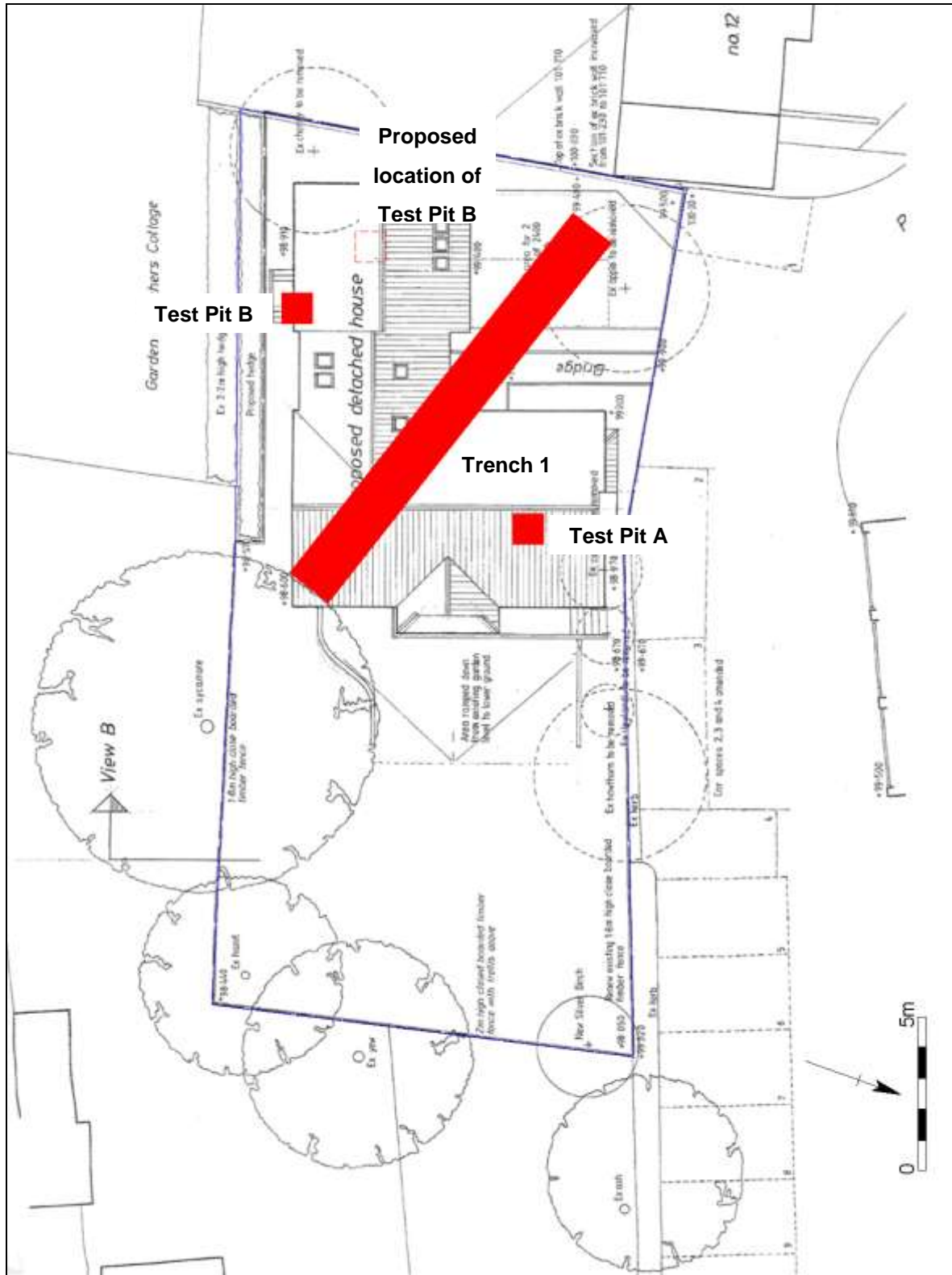


Figure 3: Proposed development and trench location (scale 1:200)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As agreed with *St Albans District Council's* Archaeological Officer (AO), the aim of the evaluation was:

- To determine the location, extent, date, nature, condition, significance and quality of any archaeological remains present on 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

As agreed with the AO, the methods adopted for this project were:

- The excavation of two 1m x 1m test pits and one 15m x 1.6m trial trench, targeted on the area of the proposed development. Trench locations are shown in Fig. 3.
- ASC's general methodology for the works required in the brief is described in detail in Sections 3.4 *et seq.*

2.4 Constraints

Due to the presence of a large shrub, Test Pit B had to be relocated approximately 3m southeast of its intended position (Fig. 3). After subsequent consultation with the District Archaeology Officer, it was abandoned as the additional data that may have been retrieved was unlikely to add significantly to that already obtained from the trench.

3. Archaeological & 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.

This section has been compiled with information from readily available sources, including Hertfordshire's Historic Environment Record (HER).

3.2 **Prehistoric** (before 600BC)

During an excavation of the Redbourn High Street medieval street frontage, a collection of Mesolithic flints was recovered close to the development site. All the flints were found in contexts that contained later material, but were all in a 'fresh' condition, suggesting a single industry in the area in the later Mesolithic period (HER 6495).

3.3 **Iron Age** (600BC-AD43)

The Aubreys is a probable Iron Age hillfort, located c2km to the southwest of the development site. It has been suggested as the possible site of the main stronghold of British resistance during the Roman invasion in 54 BC, but no direct evidence has been found to confirm this theory (Niblett 1995).

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

A small ditch containing Romano-British pottery and nails, and a cobbled area dating to the 1st-2nd century AD were uncovered close to the site, during the aforementioned excavations on Redbourn High Street (HER 6496).

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

A possible Anglo-Saxon cemetery is recorded c250m west of the development site. Two barrows were excavated by Benedictine monks in 1178, and were found to contain ten inhumations, some of which were accompanied by iron weapons, suggesting an Anglo-Saxon date for the burials.

3.6 **Medieval** (1066-1500)

In the Domesday Survey (1086) it is recorded that the manor of Redbourn was held by the abbey of St Albans prior to the Conquest (Williams & Martin 2003, 376). At this time it is likely that the parish was largely wooded, and that settlement was located in clearings in the woodland, represented today by a number of 'ends' within the parish (Munby 1977, 88-90). A small Benedictine cell was established by the Abbot of St Albans in 1178, on part of the Common where the remains of St Amphibalus were allegedly discovered. At this time the focus of the village appears to have moved away from the parish church, towards Watling Street. A priory was subsequently established, and maintained until at least 1492. However, by 1535 the building appears to have been abandoned. The manor at Redbourn was held by the abbey until the Dissolution (1539).

3.7 **Post-Medieval - Modern** (1500-present)

By the 16th century, settlement at Redbourn on its present Watling Street focus was well established, only the distant church and the common providing an indication of its previous layout (*ibid*, 106). During the 17th and 18th centuries, the status of Watling Street as a major communication route further encouraged development of Redbourn: timebills for 1797 show that coaches to Birmingham, Carlisle and Liverpool all stopped in Redbourn, and that over seventy coaches passed through the settlement every day (*ibid*, 202). The Extensive Urban Survey for Redbourn (Thompson 2002) details the sites of 19 inns of 16th and 17th century date, nearly all on the High Street (Watling Street). The Prior had been rebuilt in the early 18th century as a seven bay, two storey, brick-built building, complete with frontage onto Watling Street.

In the 19th century Redbourn suffered a setback in its fortunes, following the opening of the London & Birmingham Railway in 1837. In 1842 it was noted that “Barnet, Redbourn, and other towns ...are mere shadows of the past” (Thompson 2002, 16). Consequently the town, which had almost doubled in size between 1801 and 1831, saw no further growth for the following century (*ibid*).

During the 19th century various small-scale industries grew up to provide employment in Redbourn. The making of straw plait, watercress growing, a silk mill, brewing and malting, and the manufacture of jam and brushes, all provided employment in the locality (*ibid*, 18). In 1877 Redbourn was linked to the railway system by the opening of the Harpenden to Hemel Hempstead branch of the Midland Railway, a single-track branch line constructed to the east and south of Redbourn, along a similar line to the modern bypass. The line of the railway still marks the extent of the settlement on that side.

4 Results

4.1 General

A single trench was opened using a mechanical excavator with a 0.8m wide toothless ditching bucket, and two 1m² test pits were to be excavated by hand. The spoil from trench and the test pits was scanned with a metal detector, but no significant finds were recovered.

Detailed information regarding the trial trenches and their contents appears in Appendix 1.

4.2 Trench 1 (Fig. 4; Plate 1)

Trench 1 ran diagonally across the site in a northwest to southeast orientation, and was located within the footprint of the proposed building. It was 15m long by 1.6m wide, and varied in depth from 0.6 - 1.5m. The stratigraphy observed fell into two distinct formations. At the northwest end of the trench there was a 6m length of undisturbed ground, consisting of 0.4m of very dark brown silty clay topsoil, overlying 0.3m of mid brown silty, sandy, clay subsoil.

The rest of the trench had made ground underlying the topsoil, to a total maximum depth of 1.5m. The natural geology throughout was yellowish orange gravel with frequent inclusions of sub-angular flints <100mm in diameter (Fig. 4).

Three shallow, sub-circular features were noted in the trench at the northwest end (Fig. 4). Cuts [101] and [106] had maximum diameters of 0.42m and 0.34m respectively, and depths of 0.11m and 0.05m (Plates 2 & 3). They both contained the same single, mid brown, friable, silty clay fill. Cut [103] was a similar diameter but was deeper and contained two fills (Plate 4). The primary fill was a very dark brown clay and peat, and the secondary fill was the same as that in Cuts [101] and [103]. These three features probably represent modern or post-medieval planting holes, though no dating evidence was recovered from any of them. The fills appear to be topsoil and subsoil.

The southeast end of the trench had two relatively steep steps within it, and the natural gravel geology was overlain by up to 1.5m of made ground and topsoil (Plate 5). This suggests that a substantial degree of levelling has occurred on the site, probably a result of backfilling a small gravel quarry (Plate 6). The made ground contained artefacts including Roman pottery sherds, peg tile and the base of a 18th or 19th century wine bottle.

4.2 Test Pits (Fig. 3; Plate 7)

The stratigraphy of Test Pit A consisted of 0.2m of topsoil overlying at least 1.2m of made ground. The natural geology was not reached due to the physical constraints of the pit. Test Pit B was abandoned after consultation with the District Archaeology Officer as no additional data was likely to be retrieved.

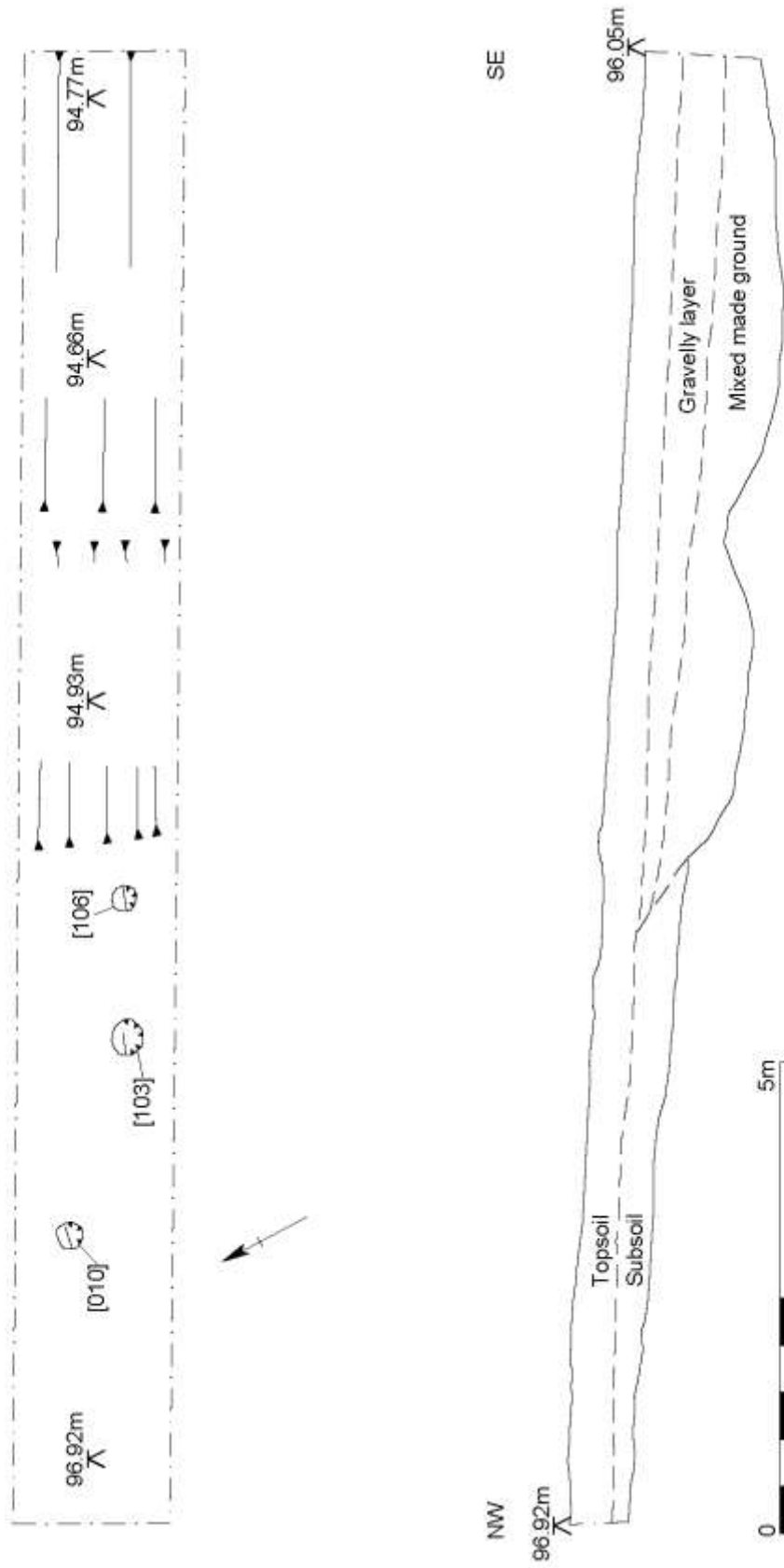


Figure 4: Trench 1, plan and section (scale 1:75)



Plate 1: Trench 1, facing southeast



Plate 2: Planting hole [101]



Plate 3: Planting hole [106]



Plate 4: Planting hole [103]



Plate 5: Stratigraphy of Trench 1



Plate 6: Trench 1, facing northwest



Plate 7: Test Pit A, facing southeast

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The site is situated close to the centre of Redbourn village, approximately 30m west of Roman Watling Street, and within the grounds of the former Priory.
- 5.2 At least part of the site appears to have been quarried for gravel, and the subsequent pit was backfilled sometime before the Ordnance Survey 1st edition map of 1874 was drafted. The extent of the quarrying could not be determined. As the land formed part of the Priory estate, it is probable that the levelling took place as part of the wider development associated with its construction around 1750. The artefacts present in the fill included Roman pottery sherds and the base of an 18th or 19th century wine bottle. As the provenance of the fill cannot be ascertained, no significance can be attached to the presence of the Roman artefacts.
- 5.3 Significant archaeological features were not 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 are present on the site. It is unlikely that the proposed development will have a significant impact on archaeological remains.
- 5.4 Conditions for the excavation of archaeological features were good, and therefore a high confidence rating can be applied to the findings of this evaluation.

6. Acknowledgements

The evaluation was commissioned by Mr Andrew Clinch, and the writer is grateful to him for his assistance. The project was monitored by Simon West on behalf of the local planning authority.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann MA, MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by David Kaye BA AIFA and Martin Cuthbert BA. The report was prepared by David Kaye and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA, MIFA.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Project Design
2. Initial Report
3. Clients site plans
4. Site records
5. Site record drawings
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 *Verulamium Museum*.

8. References

Standards & Specifications

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

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

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

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

Rouse, C. 2009 *Project Design for Archaeological Evaluation: 12 Monks Close, Redbourn, Hertfordshire* (ASC Report 1153/RMC/1)

Secondary Sources

BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.

Munby L 1977 *The Hertfordshire Landscape*. Hodder & Staughton (London).


Niblett, R 1995 *Roman Hertfordshire* Dovecote Press

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

Thompson I 2002 *Redbourn: Extensive Urban Survey Project Assessment Report*. Herts County Council.

Williams A & Martin GH (eds) 2002 *Domesday Book: a Complete Translation*. Penguin (London).

Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 1						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	15	Width	1.6	Depth	1-1.5
	Levels					
	Trench base northwest		96.92m OD			
	Trench top northwest		94.18m OD			
	Trench base southeast		96.06m OD			
	Trench top southeast		94.77m OD			
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	Orientation		NW-SE			
	Reason for Trench		Evaluation			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: m)	Length (max: m)	Depth (BGL: m)	
101	Cut	Sub-circular planting hole	0.37	0.42	0.11	
102	Fill	Mid-brown, silty clay, subsoil	0.37	>0.12	0.11	
103	Cut	Sub-circular planting hole	0.43	0.46	0.22	
104	Fill	Dark brown, peaty clay	0.30	>0.30	0.17	
105	Fill	Mid-brown, silty clay, subsoil	0.43	>0.20	0.05	
106	Cut	Sub-circular planting hole	0.30	0.34	0.12	
107	Fill	Mid-brown, silty clay, subsoil	0.30	>0.17	0.12	

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Land adjacent to 12 Monks Close, Redbourn			SITE NO/CODE: 1153/RMC
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
001		√	General view, facing southwest
002		√	General view, facing southwest
003		√	Archer's cottage, facing east
004		√	Archer's cottage, facing east
005		√	Archer's cottage, facing east
006	√	√	Panting hole [101], facing north
007		√	Panting hole [101], facing north
008	√	√	Panting hole [103], facing north
009		√	Panting hole [103], facing north
010		√	Panting hole [106], facing north
011	√	√	Panting hole [106], facing north
012		√	Trench 1 section, facing northeast
013		√	Trench 1 section, facing northeast
014		√	Test pit A, facing southeast
015		√	Test pit A, facing southeast
016		√	Test pit A, facing southeast
017	√	√	Test pit A, facing southeast
018	√	√	Trench 1, facing northwest
019	√	√	Trench 1, facing northwest
020	√	√	Trench 1, facing southeast
021	√	√	Trench 1, facing southeast

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Land adjacent to 12 Monks Close, Redbourn, Herts		
Short Description:	One trench and two test pits were opened within the footprint of the proposed building. No archaeological cut features or deposits were observed in the test pits or the trench, which appears to cut through the remains of a gravel extraction pit.		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Trial Trenching		
Site status:	None	Previous work:	None
Current land use:	Garden	Future work:	Unknown
Monument type:	-	Monument period:	-
Significant finds:	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Hertfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TL 1077 1219
Site address:	Land adjacent to 12 Monks Close, Redbourn, Herts		
Study area:	c 400 sq. m	Height OD: (metres)	c.100
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	St Albans District Council	Project design originator:	ASC Ltd
Project Manager:	Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA	Director/Supervisor:	Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA
Sponsor / funding body:	-		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	10.03.09	End date:	11.03.09
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Verulamium Museum.	None	
Paper:	"	Site plans, site records, site record drawings	
Digital:	"	CD containing digital images, list of photographs, B/W prints & negatives, project design, report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Land adjacent to, 12 Monks Close, Redbourn, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1153/RMC/2		
Author(s):	David Kaye BA AIFA		
Page nos	20	Date:	16.03.09