

# Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:  
THE MOAT HOUSE  
CHURCH ROAD  
COLMWORTH  
BEDFORDSHIRE**

NGR: TL 1085 5866

*on behalf of Point Three Design*



Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MSc

August 2009

ASC: 1001/CCR/4



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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	CCR	<i>ASC project no:</i>	1001
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeol2-63109	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	2008.320
<i>County:</i>	Bedfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Colmworth		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Colmworth		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	TL 1085 5866		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.1330 sq. metres		
<i>Present use:</i>	Garden		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	New residential development and vehicular access, including bridge		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	Bedford Borough Council		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	06/0193/FUL		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	05/08/09 – 06/08/09		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr M Plant C/o Point Three Design 3 Cowper Road London SW19 1AA		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mr David Mean		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Carina Summerfield-Hill	<i>Date:</i>	14/08/09
<i>Revisions:</i>	Carina Summerfield-Hill	<i>Date:</i>	24/11/09
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>	Bob Zeepvat	<i>Date:</i>	24/11/09

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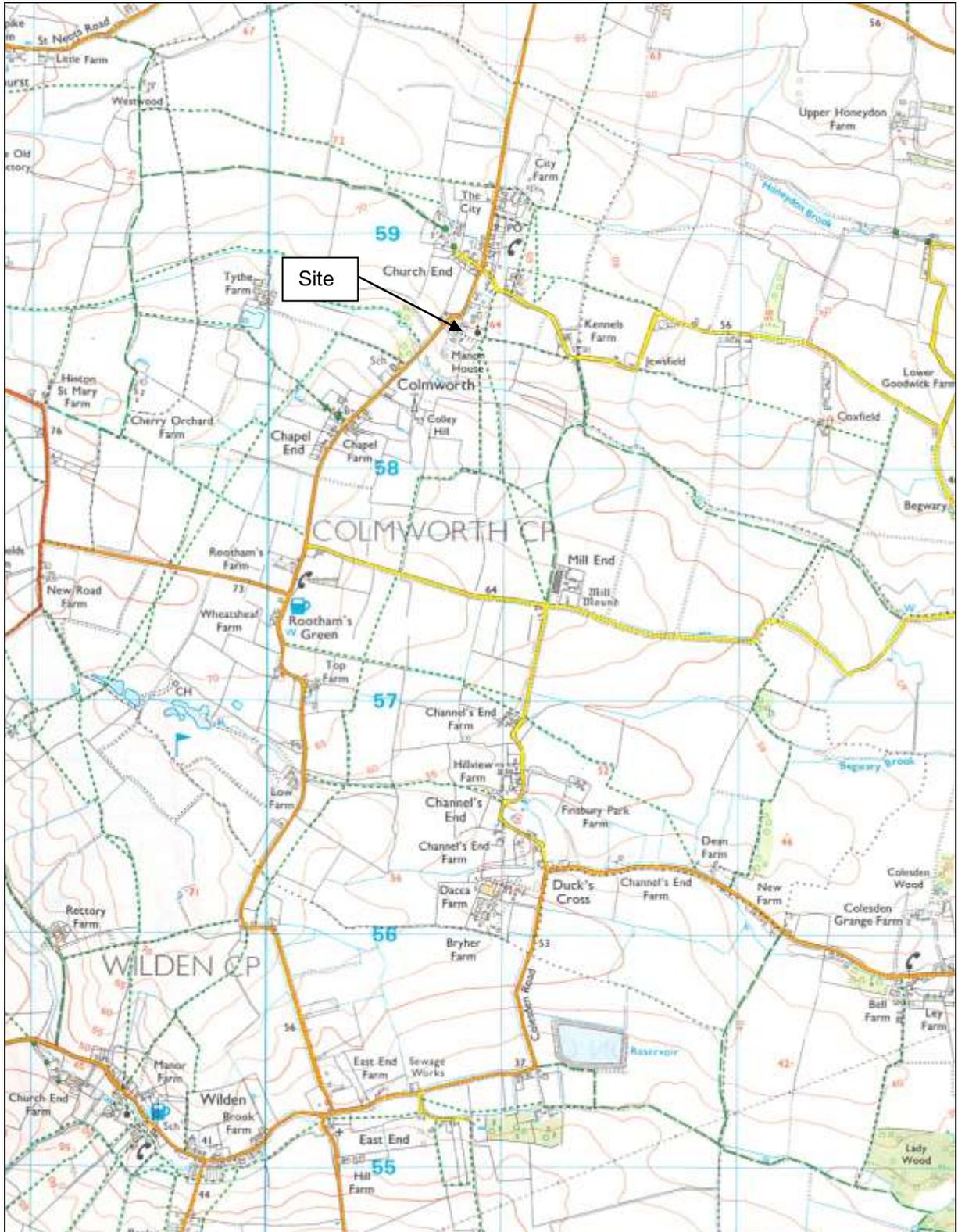


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

## Summary

*In August 2009 an evaluation was undertaken on the land adjacent to the Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire, prior to the construction of a new residential development. Two trenches were excavated uncovering the remains of a wall and stone surface area, along with evidence of ceramic building material and medieval pottery dated to the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century, pointing to the existence of a structure of some sort.*

### 1. Introduction

1.1 In August 2009 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation on the land adjacent to the Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire. The project was commissioned by Point Three Design, and was carried out according to a brief (Mather 2007a and Mather 2007b) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Bedford Borough Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), the *Heritage and Environment Section, Bedfordshire County Council*, and a project design prepared by ASC (Richards 2007). The relevant planning application reference is 06/1937/FUL.

#### 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 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 development site lies on the east side of Church Road at the centre of the village of Colmworth in the administrative district of Bedford Borough. It currently forms part of the garden of Moat House, being situated between the house and the moat, and is centred on NGR TL10855866 (Fig. 2).

##### 1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

Moat House is situated on the crest of the north side of the valley of Colmworth Brook. The surrounding landscape rises from east to west, although the site itself is relatively flat and lies at a height of c.65m AOD. The

geology of the site comprises calcareous clayey soils of the *Hanslope* association (Soil Survey 1983:411d) overlying Oxford Clay (Geological Survey 1983).

### 1.5.3 Proposed Development

The proposed development is for the construction of a dwelling with attached garage and the formation of a new vehicular access and bridge over the moat (Fig. 3).

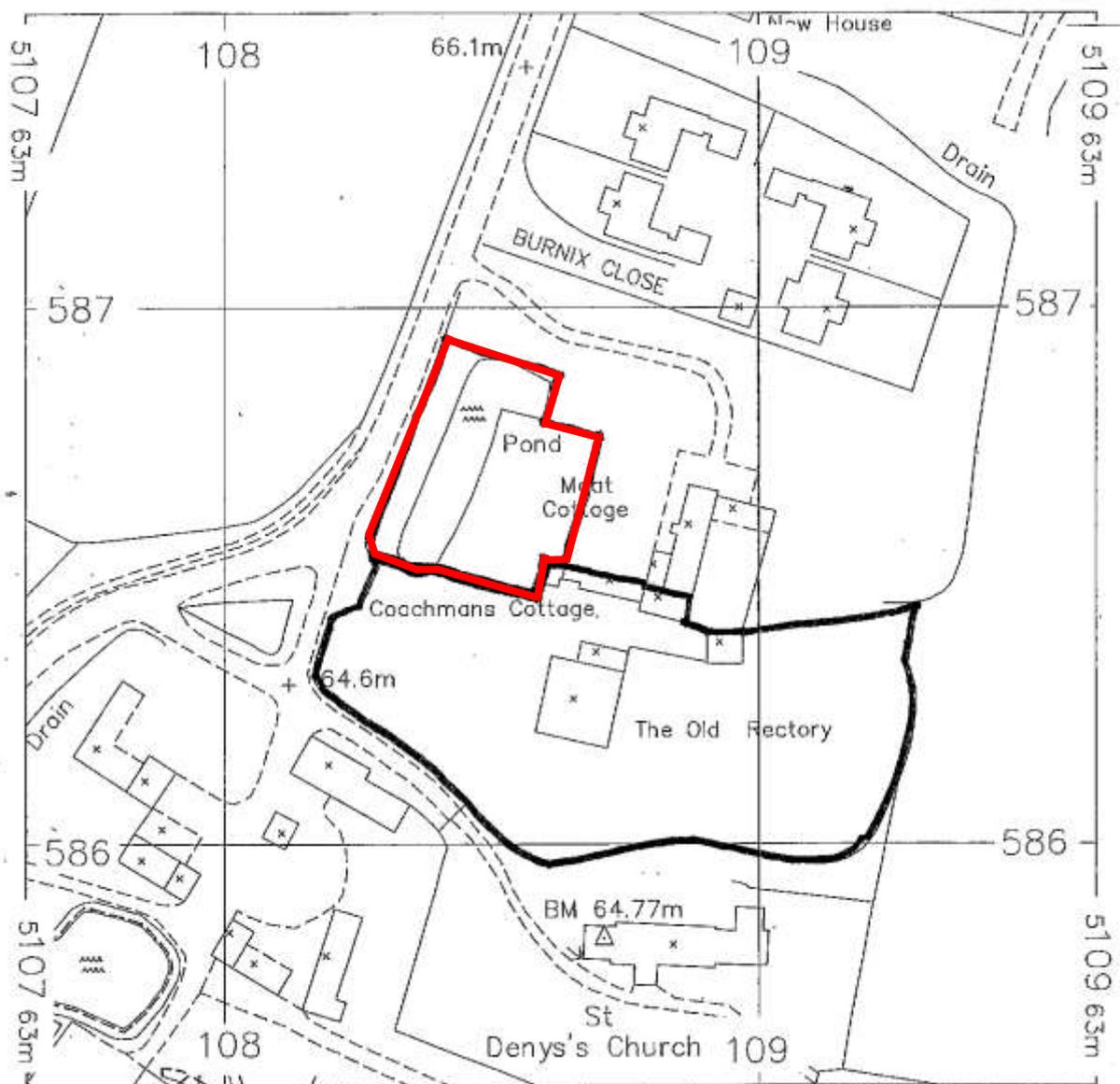
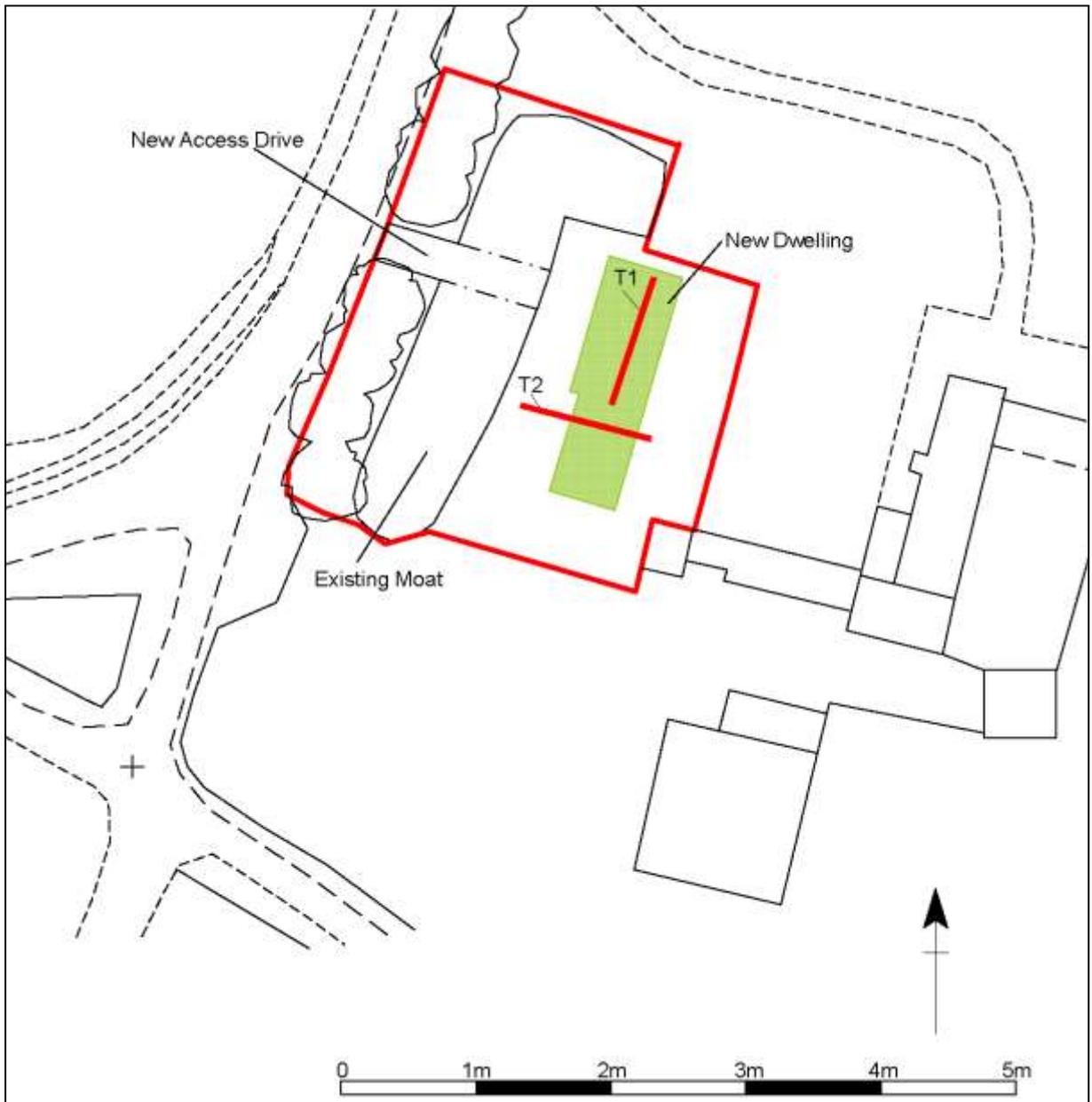


Figure 2: Site Plan (scale 1:1250)



**Figure 3:** Proposed development and trench locations (scale 1:500)

## 2. Aims & Methods

### 2.1 *Aims*

As described in the brief (Section 2), the aims of the evaluation were:

- to establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site
- to establish the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits that may be present

### 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), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH1991; EH 1995), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

### 2.3 *Methods*

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

- trial trenches totalling 65 square metres were excavated
- trenches were excavated under archaeological supervision by a suitable machine with a toothless bucket no less than 1.60m wide
- trench locations are shown in Figure 3

### 2.4 *Constraints*

The work was carried out in good conditions and in line with the project design and no constraints were encountered.

### 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.

A number of sources are taken from the HER – Historical Environment Record.

3.2 Colmworth is recorded in the Domesday Survey and the recorded population suggests that it was a substantial settlement by 1086 and as such is likely to have Saxon origins (Mather 2007a). The present village church of St Denys (HER 1040), 100m south of the development site, is late medieval in date, although it is on the site of an earlier church.

3.3 There is evidence of earlier settlement in the area around the village, including finds of Roman material at Manor Farm, adjacent to the church (HER 469), and cropmarks of probable prehistoric or Roman date (HER 8053, 14019, 14020, 14021, 16730, 16731, 16732, 16733, and 18019).

3.4 The development site is within the Saxon core of the village, being 100m north of the church. The site is also within the remains of a possible medieval moated site (HER 3402); the pond to the west of the site is the only substantial remnant of the moat.

3.5 There is a second moated site to the south of the development area at Manor Farm. This forms part of a Scheduled Ancient Monument (HER 471/9), which also includes three medieval fishponds (HER 471) and a swannery (HER 8021).

3.6 To the south east of Manor House, a series of rectilinear cropmarks suggest the presence of a deserted medieval village centred on NGR TL109584 (HER 712).

3.7 An archaeological evaluation in 2004 at Burnix Close immediately to the north of the development area revealed a series of boundary ditches and gullies of tenth to thirteenth century date (Saunders 2004). This possible field system may extend into the development area.

3.8 The 1835 One Inch Ordnance survey map of Colmworth (Sheet 52) shows the moat and the possibly the existing dwelling within the excavation area, as well as two further structures that are no longer present (Fig. 4). One of the latter is within the trench 1 area.

3.9 Today the existing dwelling to the immediate southwest of the development area dates from the 1800's and is a Grade II listed building.



**Figure 4:** Extract from 1835 One Inch Ordnance Survey sheet for Colmworth, showing development area (*enlarged*)

## 4 Results

### 4.1 General

Two trial trenches measuring *c.*10m in length x 1.60m in width targeted the proposed development area (Fig. 3). Both trenches were excavated down to the natural strata. The evaluation findings are summarised below. Detailed descriptions of the trial trenches and their contents are provided in Appendix 1.

### 4.2 Trench 1 (Fig. 3 and 5: Plates 1-4)

The trench was aligned north to south and measured 10m long x 1.60m wide x 0.92m depth.

At the northern end of the trench the stratigraphy consisted of:

- 340mm in depth - Topsoil (100)
- 240mm in depth - Subsoil (101): mid black/brown, friable clay silt containing frequent flecks of charcoal, and small-medium rounded, sub-rounded/angular stone, flint and chalk
- 100mm in depth – Natural strata (104): light yellowy brown, firm clay with frequent small-large rounded, sub-rounded/angular stone, flint and chalk

At the southern end of the trench the stratigraphy consisted of:

- 340mm in depth – Topsoil (100)
- 240mm in depth – Subsoil (101)
- 180mm in depth – Redeposited natural strata (102): light yellowy brown, firm clay with frequent small-medium chalk nodules and small rounded, sub-rounded/angular stones
- 16mm in depth – Deposit (103): mid brown, firm clay with frequent flecks of charcoal, small-medium, rounded, sub-rounded/angular stone, flint, and chalk
- Natural strata (104)

The subsoil (102) and deposit (103) contained not only flecks of charcoal, but also flecks of ceramic building material. Deposit (103) also contained two sherds of medieval pottery, 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century (see specialist report Appendix 4).

At the northern end of Trench 1, orientated east to west, the remains of a wall and surface area were excavated. The wall [106] consisted of sub-angular and rounded flint and pebbles. Maximum size of stones measured 0.15m in width, and 0.19m in length. No bonding material was used. The wall measured 1.60m in length x 0.40m in width x 0.24m in depth and ran beyond the limit of excavation; an actual cut for the wall was not visible.

The surface area [105] to the north of the wall orientated east to west, consisted of sub-angular and rounded chalk nodules and chalky limestone. Maximum size of stones measured 0.10m in width, and 0.13m in length. No bonding material was used. The

surface area measured 1.60m in length x 1.40m in width x 0.10m in depth and ran beyond the limit of excavation.

A deposit layer (107) was found overlaying the surface area [105], that measured 1.60m in length x 1.40m in width x c.20mm in depth and ran beyond the limit of excavation. The deposit consisted of mid brown grey silty clay, containing five fragments of ceramic building material, two pieces of which derived from brick and three pieces possibly derived from tile, also one body sherd of medieval pottery dating to the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century (see specialist report Appendix 4).

The stratigraphy for the wall [106] and surface area [105] at the northern end of the trench consisted of:

- Topsoil (100)
- Subsoil (101)
- 100mm in depth - Deposit (107): mid brown grey, silty clay
- 240mm depth - Wall [106], and 100mm depth - Surface area [105]
- Natural strata (104)

#### 4.3 **Trench 2** (Fig. 3: Plates 5 and 6)

The trench was aligned east to west and measured 10m long x 1.60m wide x 0.70m depth.

The stratigraphy consisted of:

- 400mm in depth – Topsoil (200)
- 300mm in depth – Subsoil (201): light brown-beige yellow, firm, clay, frequent flint and chalk nodules
- Natural strata (202)

No archaeological features or deposits were observed within the trench.



**Plate 1:** Trench 1, looking south (*scales: 2m*)



**Plate 2:** Stratigraphy of trench 1, depicting contexts (100-104), looking east (*scales: 1m*)



**Plate 3:** Wall [106] and surface area [105], trench 1, looking east (*scales: 1 & 2m*)



**Plate 4:** Wall [106], trench 1, looking west (*scales: 1m*)



**Plate 5:** Trench 2, looking east (*scale: 1m*)



**Plate 6:** Stratigraphy of trench 2, looking north (*scales: 1m*)

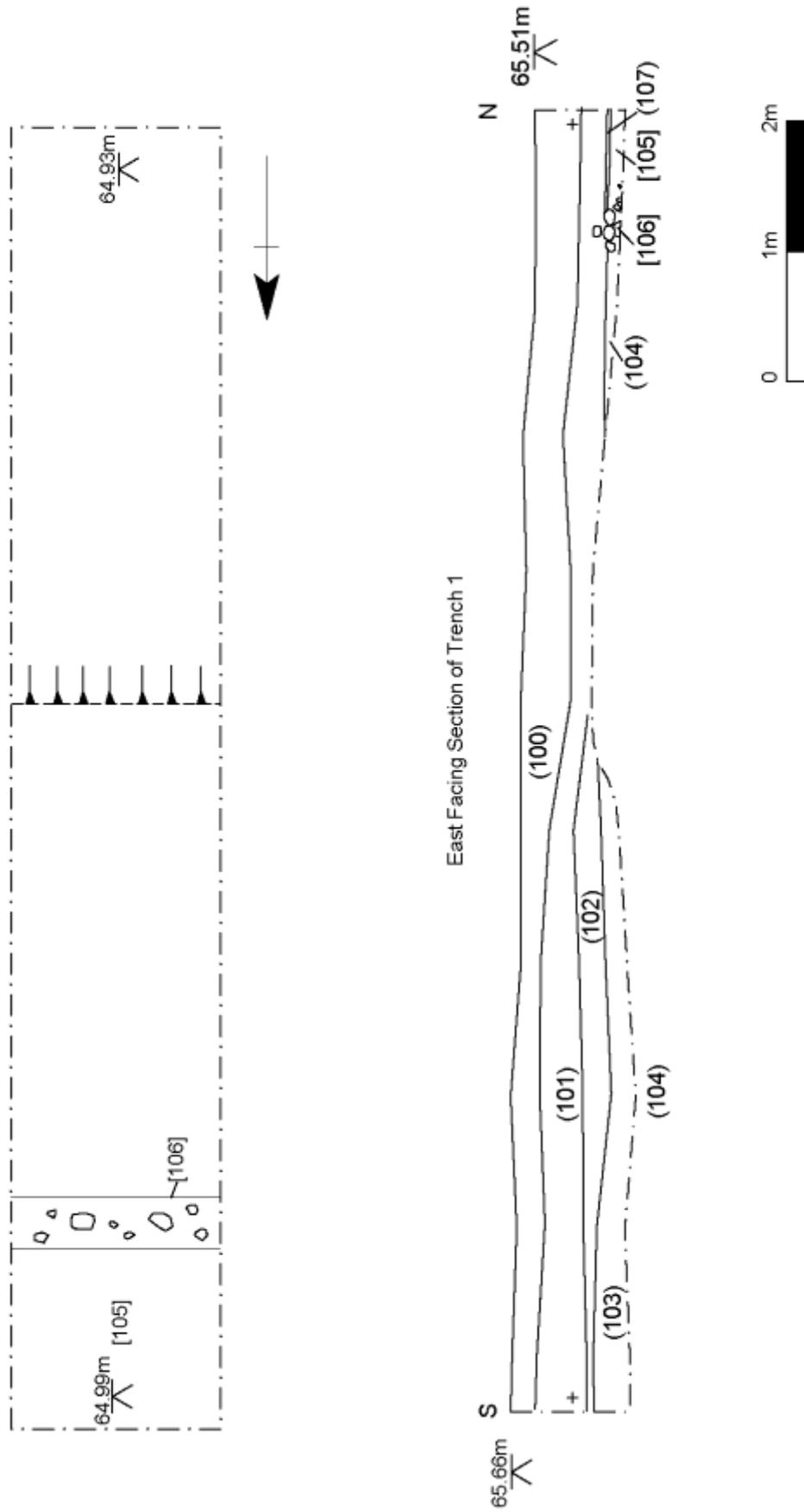


Figure 5: Plan and section drawing of trench 1 (scale 1:50)

## 5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The stratigraphy in trench 1 revealed that underlying the subsoil (101); a redeposited natural layer (102) was present, underlying which was deposit (103) that contained two sherds of medieval pottery, 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century. A likely explanation for such layering is that initially the ground in the area was undulated, and in order to level the ground surface, redeposited natural was brought into the area. Deposit (103) contained evidence of medieval pottery 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century that may provide an indication as to when the ground was levelled.
- 5.2 The excavation of trench 1 also uncovered the remains of a wall [106], and a stone surface area [105], which continued beyond the limit of excavation. Both features lacked the remains of a bonding material. The surface area [105] was overlaid with deposit (107) that contained one sherd of medieval pottery, 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century, and five pieces of ceramic building material, two of which derived from brick, and three pieces possibly derived from tile. The ceramic building material is likely to be of a comparable date as the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century pottery as both materials were found within the same deposit.

The 1835 ordnance survey map of Colmworth (Fig. 4) depicts the moat and possibly the existing dwelling, as well as two further structures that are no longer present. One of such structures is within the trench 1 area, and may possibly be linked to the wall [106] and surface area [105], excavated in trench 1.

- 5.3 Overall the presence of the wall, surface area and ceramic building material point to a structure of some sort, possibly dating to the medieval period or thereafter, that extends beyond the limit of excavation.
- 5.4 There were no archaeological features or deposits observed in trench 2.
- 5.5. **Confidence Rating**  
The work was carried out in good conditions and the results can be given a high confidence rating.

## 6. Acknowledgements

The evaluation was commissioned by Mr M Plant, of Point Three Design. The writer is grateful to Mr David Mean for his assistance. The project was monitored by Isobel Lisboa on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to contractors Jeffrey Smith and pottery specialist Lucy Whittingham.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann MA AIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Martin Cuthbert BA PIFA and Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MSc. The report was prepared by Carina Summerfield-Hill and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA 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 records
7. Finds
8. Site record drawings
9. List of photographs
10. B/W prints & negatives
11. Specialist report
12. CDROM with copies of all digital files

7.2 The archive will be deposited with *Bedford Museum* (2008.320).

## 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*, 2<sup>nd</sup> 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)*.
- Mather, L-A. 2007a *Brief for a programme of archaeological investigation of land adjacent to Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire* (Bedfordshire County Council).
- Mather, L-A. 2007b *Brief for an archaeological field evaluation of land adjacent to Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire* (Bedfordshire County Council).
- Richards, J. 2007 *The Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire*. Project Design 1001/CCR/1 (ASC Ltd).

### *Secondary Sources*

- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Saunders, G. 2004 *Burnix Close, Church Road Colmworth: Archaeological Evaluation Report* (Heritage Network Ltd).
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

### *Maps*

- 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey Map 1835 *Colmworth*. Cassini Historical Map Old Series 1805-1836, sheet 153, Bedford & Huntingdon, scale 1:50,000, originally taken from One-Inch 'Old Series' sheet no. 52.

## Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 1						
	<b>Max Dimensions (m)</b>					
	<b>Length</b>	10.40m	<b>Width</b>	1.60m	<b>Depth</b>	0.46-0.92m
	<b>Levels</b>					
	<b>Trench base north</b>		64.99m OD			
	<b>Trench top north</b>		65.51m OD			
	<b>Trench base south</b>		64.93m OD			
	<b>Trench top south</b>		65.66m OD			
	<b>NGR Co-ordinates</b>					
	<b>N</b>	TL 10858 58672		<b>S</b>	TL 10858 58663	
	<b>Orientation</b>			N-S		
<b>Reason for Trench</b>			Evaluation			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Width (max: mm)	Thickness (max: mm)	Depth (BGL: mm)	
(100)	Deposit	Mid brown, friable, silty, fairly sterile – topsoil.	1.60m	340mm	0mm	
(101)	Deposit	Mid brown, friable, clay silt, frequent flecks of charcoal and CBM, small-medium rounded, sub-rounded/angular stone/flint/chalk – subsoil.	1.60m	240mm	340mm	
(102)	Deposit	Light yellowy brown, firm, clay, frequent small-medium chalk nodules, small rounded, sub-rounded/angular stones – redeposited natural.	1.60m	180mm	580mm	
(103)	Deposit	Mid brown, firm, clay, frequent flecks of charcoal and CMB, small-medium rounded, sub-rounded/angular chalk/flint/stone.	1.60m	160mm	760mm	
(104)	Deposit	Light yellowy brown, firm, clay, frequent small-large rounded, sub-rounded/angular stone/flint/chalk – natural strata.	1.60m	/	920mm	
[105]	Layer	Surface of limestone and chalk fragments discovered north of wall [106], no mortar. Rounded chalk nodules, sub-angular limestone fragments, c. 0.13m max length, and 0.10m max width.	1.40m	100mm	450mm	
[106]	Structure	Wall made up of sub-angular and rounded flint and pebbles. No bonding material used, c. 0.19m max length, and 0.15m max width.	400mm	240mm	400mm	
(107)	Layer	Mid brown-grey, silty clay - Subsoil layer overlaying surface area [105].	1.40m	20mm	430mm	

<b>Trench 2</b>						
	<b>Max Dimensions (m)</b>					
	<b>Length</b>	10m	<b>Width</b>	1.60m	<b>Depth</b>	0.70m
	<b>Levels</b>					
	<b>Trench base east</b>			65.06m OD		
	<b>Trench top east</b>			65.62m OD		
	<b>Trench base west</b>			64.95m OD		
	<b>Trench top west</b>			65.65m OD		
	<b>NGR Co-ordinates</b>					
	<b>E</b>	TL 108.55/586.56		<b>W</b>	TL 108.47/586.58	
	<b>Orientation</b>			E-W		
<b>Reason for Trench</b>			Evaluation			
<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description and Interpretation</b>	<b>Width (max: mm)</b>	<b>Thickness (max: mm)</b>	<b>Depth (BGL:mm)</b>	
(200)	Deposit	Dark brown, moderately soft, silty-clay loam and turf – topsoil.	1.60m	400mm	0mm	
(201)	Deposit	Mid brown, moderately firm, silty clay, occasional small chalk nodules, occasional-frequent chalk flecks, rare tile fragments – subsoil.	1.60m	300mm	400mm	
(203)	Deposit	Light brown-beige yellow, firm, clay, frequent flint and chalk nodules – natural strata.	1.60m	/	700mm	

## Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: The Moat House, Colmworth			SITE NO/CODE: 1001/CCR
Shot	B&W	Shot	Subject
1	√		ID SHOT
2	√	√	Trench 1, looking south
3	√	√	Trench 1, looking south
4	√	√	Trench 1, looking north
5	√	√	Trench 1, looking north
6	√		ID SHOT
7	√	√	Trench 2, general shot 1m scale, looking ese
8	√	√	Trench 2, general shot 1, scale, looking ese
9	√	√	Trench 1 section 1x1m scale, looking e
10	√	√	Trench 1 section 1x1m scale, looking e
11	√	√	Trench 2 section 2x1m scale, looking s
12	√	√	Trench 1 section 2x1m scale, looking e
13	√	√	Dry stone Wall and Collapsed [106], looking e
14	√	√	Dry stone wall and collapsed [106], looking e
15	√	√	Dry stone wall [106], looking w

## Appendix 3: Finds Concordance

Context	Pottery		Other Finds		
	(no)	(g)	Type	(no)	(g)
(103)	2	11g	-	-	-
(107)	1	7g	Ceramic Building Material	5	75g

## Appendix 4: Specialist Report – Pottery

*Lucy Whittingham*

Three small and abraded sherds of medieval pottery have been identified by x20 binocular microscope from two contexts. Two sherds in context [103] are the body sherd (4g) of an indeterminate form and the lid-seated rim of a cooking pot/ rounded jar (5g). Context [107] also contains a body sherd (5g) from a flat-bottomed vessel, probably a dish/bowl. The two body sherds, in context [103] and [107], are examples of a shelly fabric in the 'Developed St Neots-type ware' tradition (B07). This is a characteristically smooth-textured, soapy fabric with abundant white calcareous material including fossil shell. Also small sub-rounded quartz of 0.2-0.3mm in size and abundant specks of red iron oxide. Vessels can have reddish brown external surfaces and a dark core or are a dark brown colour throughout. The lid-seated rim in context [103] is a quartz-tempered fabric with calcareous limestone temper and is more likely to be a product of the Harold/Olney Hyde kilns in Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire (B05). This fabric contains small sub-rounded quartz of 0.2-0.4mm in size and abundant specks of red iron oxide. This vessel has reddish brown internal and external surfaces and a dark core. The external surface is reduced in colour.

Both these fabric types are dated as 12th to 13th century in the Bedfordshire ceramic type series.

## Appendix 5: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	The Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire		
Short Description:	<i>In August 2009 an evaluation was undertaken on the land adjacent to the Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire, prior to the construction of a new residential development. Two trenches were excavated uncovering the remains of a wall and stone surface area, along with evidence of ceramic building material and medieval pottery dated to the 12<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century, pointing to the existence of a structure of some sort.</i>		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Evaluation		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	Adjacent to a grade II listed building	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None
Current land use:	Garden	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	Unknown
Monument type:	Moated site	Monument period:	Moat – Medieval Listed building – 1800's
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	Wall and stone surface area		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Bedfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	TL 1085 5866
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire, MK44 2JU		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c. 1330 sq. m	Height OD: (metres)	67.06
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	LA Mather, Beds CC	Project design originator:	J Richards BA PIFA
Project Manager:	Karin Semmelmann MA MIFA	Supervisor:	Martin Cuthbert BA PIFA
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr M Plant		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	05/08/09	End date:	06/08/09
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Bedford Museum (2008.320)	Pottery, CBM	
Paper:		Site records, report, site plans, B&W prints and negatives,	
Digital:		Images, report	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	The Moat House, Church Road, Colmworth, Bedfordshire		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1001/CCR/2		
Author(s):	Carina Summerfield-Hill		
Page nos	23	Date:	14/08/09