

## Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP, MAP & SAMPLE EXCAVATION:  
'WOODLANDS'  
CRAFTON ROAD  
MENTMORE  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

NGR: SP 8922 1978

*on behalf of Mr & Mrs Crothers*



Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MSc

June 2010

ASC: 1305/CCR/2



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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	CCR	<i>ASC project no:</i>	1305
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeol2-78399	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	TBC
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Crafton		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Mentmore		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 8922 1978		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c. 3000 sq m		
<i>Present use:</i>	Fields		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Erection of a stable block and associated buildings		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	09/01178/APP		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	10/06/10-16/06/10		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr & Mrs Crothers Woodlands Crafton Road Mentmore Bucks		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Mrs L. Crothers		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Carina Summerfield-Hill	<i>Date:</i>	16/06/10
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

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*Cover:* Ground reduction of stable block, looking SW

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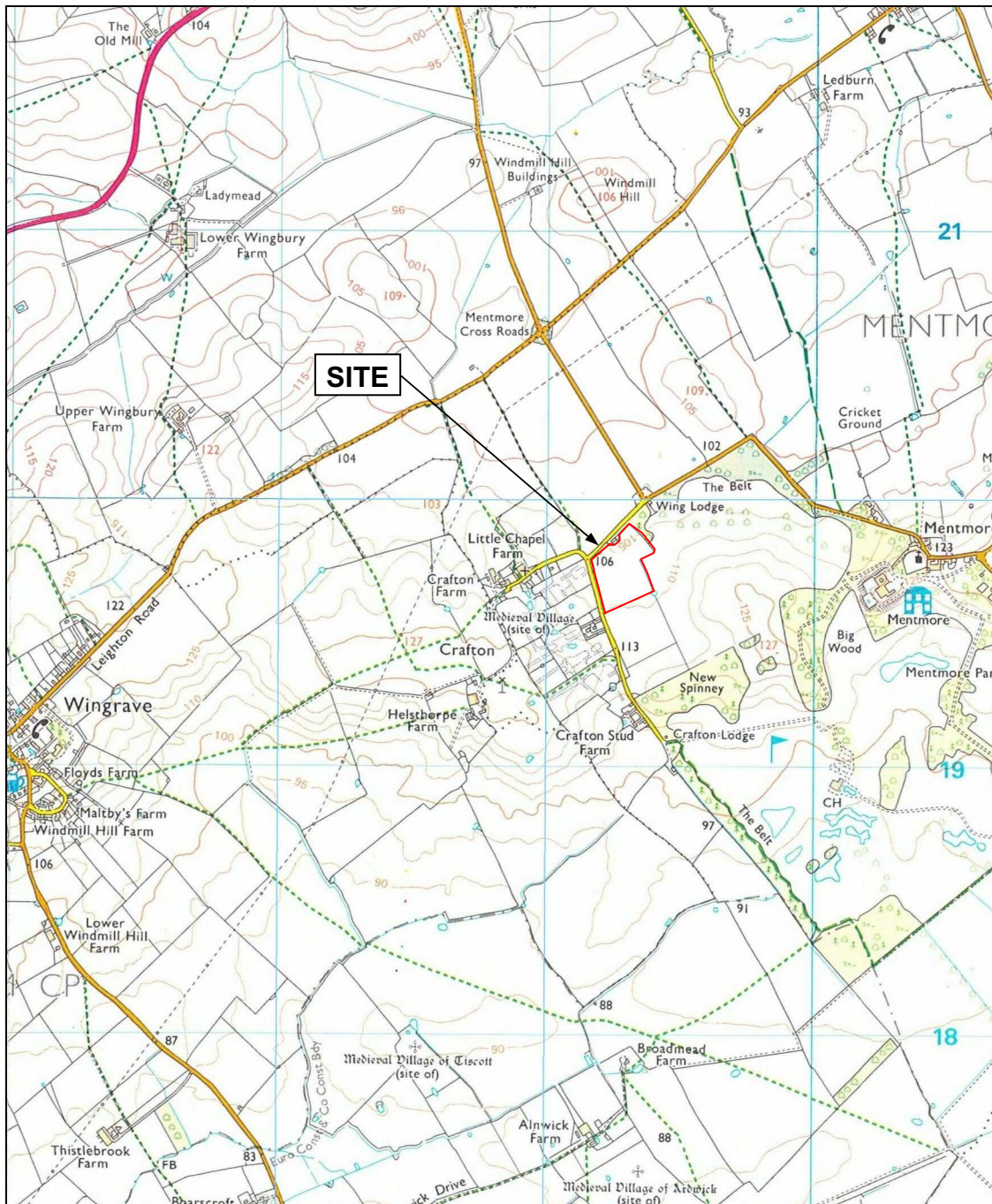


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

## Summary

*In June 2010 a strip, map & sample excavation was carried out prior to the erection of a stable block and manege at Woodlands Crafton Road, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire. The site is adjacent to the deserted village earthworks of Crafton. No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered.*

### 1. Introduction

1.1 In June 2010 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a strip, map and sample excavation at Woodlands, Crafton Road, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire. The project was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Crothers, and was carried out according to a brief (Beckley 2010) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Aylesbury Vale District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service*, and a project design prepared by ASC (Zeepvat 2010). The relevant planning application reference is 09/01178/APP.

#### 1.2 *Planning Background*

This excavation was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Statement 5* (PPS5), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

#### 1.3 *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 and is also accredited ISO 9001, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

#### 1.4 *The Site*

##### 1.4.1 *Location & Description*

The site is situated in the village of Crafton, within the parish of Mentmore, in the administrative district of Aylesbury Vale, Buckinghamshire, and is centred on NGR SP 8922 1978 (Fig. 1).

The site comprises an irregularly shaped area of land on the south side of Crafton Lodge Road. Access is from Crafton Lodge Road, and the site is surrounded on all remaining side by open fields (Fig. 2).

##### 1.4.2 *Geology & Topography*

The site is located on a shallow north-facing grass-covered slope, between 106–108m AOD. The soils of the area belong to the *Evesham 2 Association* described as *slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils* (Soil Survey 1983, 411b). The underlying geology is Gault clays and mudstones (BGS, sheet 220).

### 1.4.3 Proposed Development

The proposed development comprises the construction of a manege and stable block, with associated access (Fig. 3). The areas affected by development cover c.3000 sq m in total.

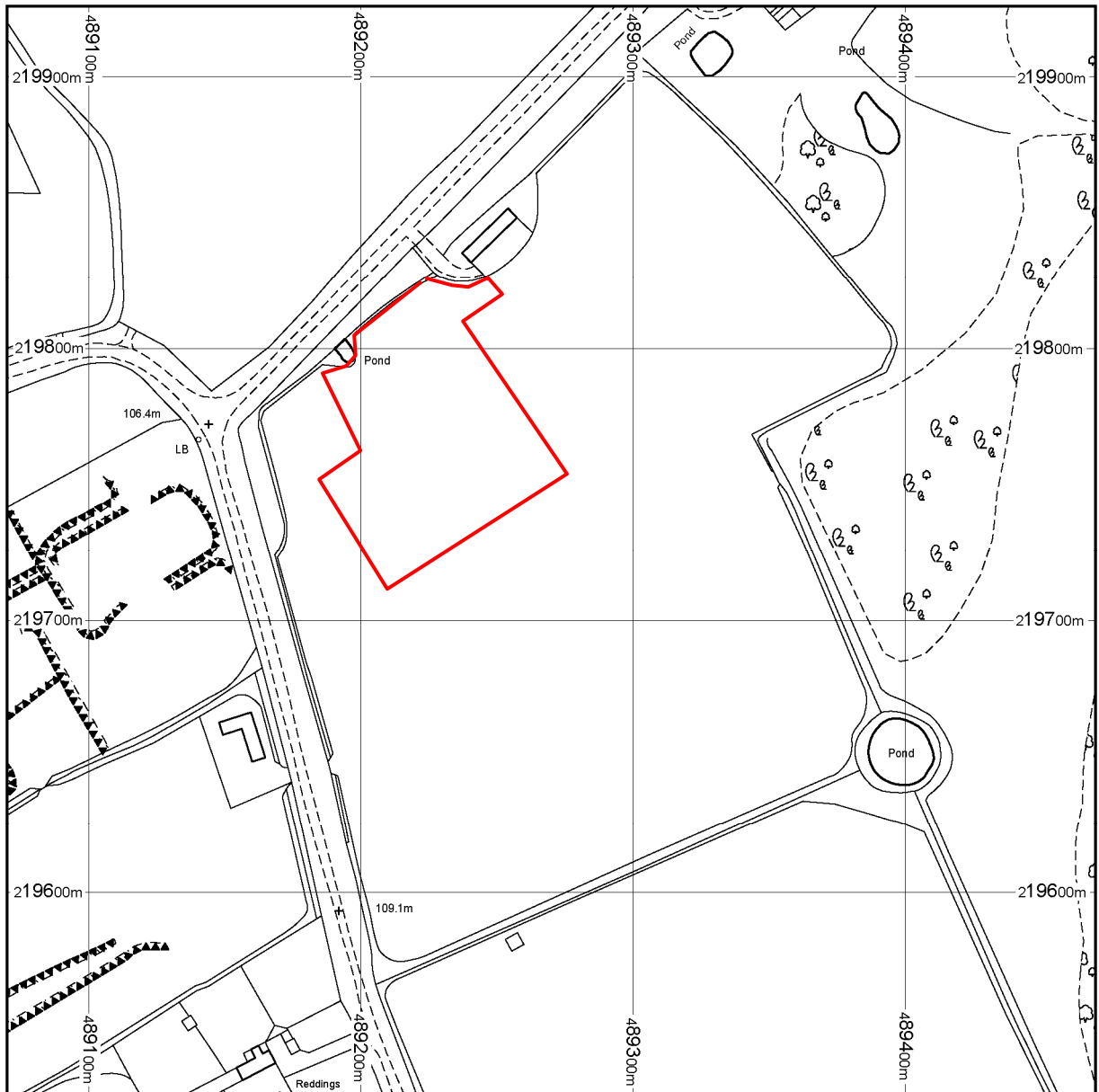
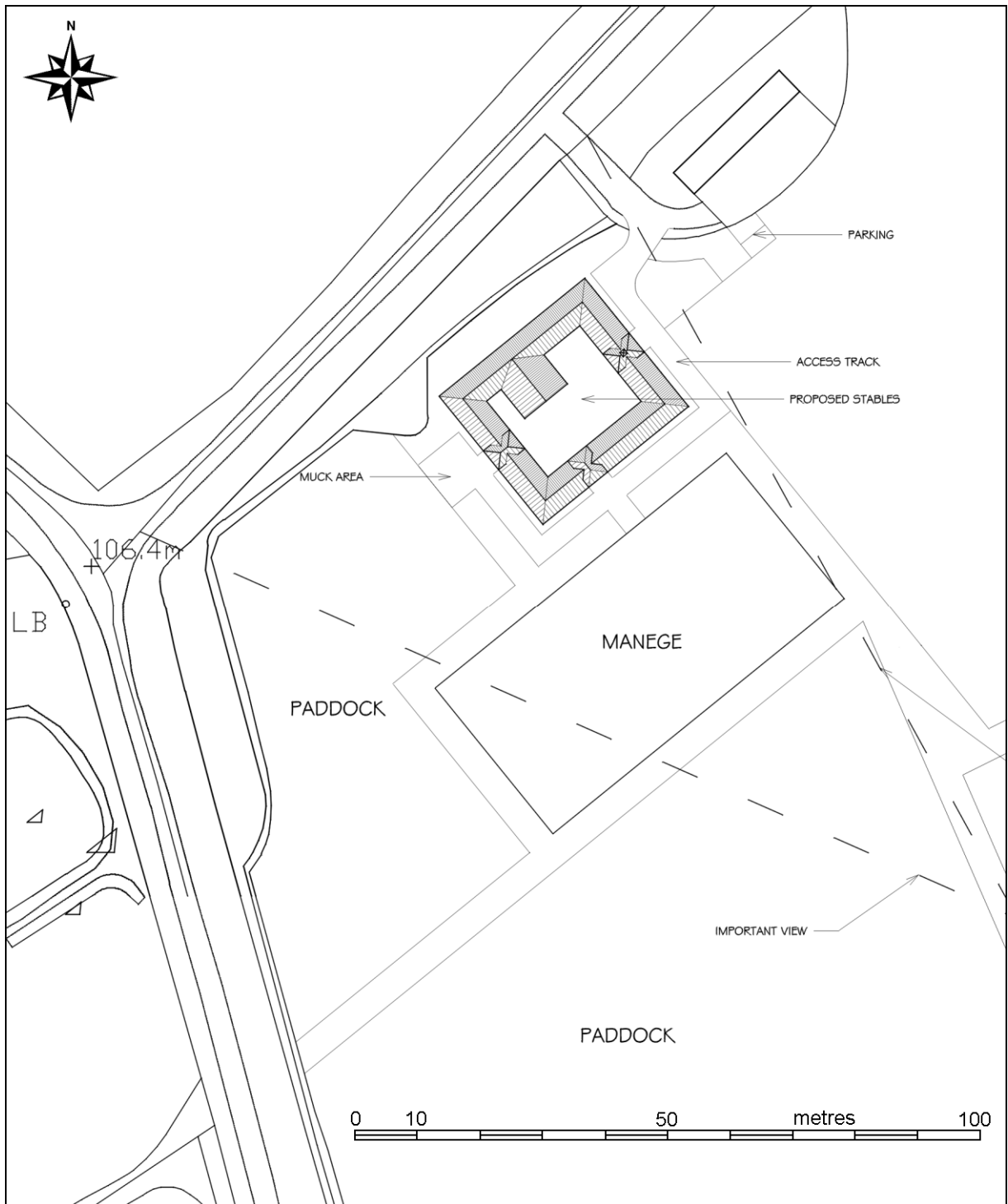


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:2,500)



**Figure 3:** Original proposed development (scale 1:1,000)

## **2. Aims & Methods**

### **2.1 Aims**

As described in the project design (Section 6), the aims of the excavation were:

- To establish whether there are medieval and post medieval remains relating to the shrunken village within the development site, or if it lay within the village's open fields
- To establish the date, character and extent of any occupation
- To consider and advise upon options for preserving any in-situ any particularly significant remains discovered
- To establish whether there are any remains from earlier periods surviving on the site and conduct an appropriate investigation.

### **2.2 Standards**

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

### **2.3 Methods**

The work was carried out according to the project design (Section 8), which required:

- The archaeological monitoring of ground reduction within the development area.

### **2.4 Constraints**

Due to an error in the architectural plans, the area stripped differed from that shown in the project design (Fig. 3). The stable block and the manege were newly orientated on a more north-south alignment (Fig. 4).



### 3. Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 Crafton is an area of considerable archaeological and historical importance (RCHM 1913). The focus of interest lies in a former medieval village which survives, in the form of an extensive area of earthworks, to the west of the site. An assessment of the surviving earthworks has recently been prepared by the *Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service* (Kidd 2005). The village earthworks are currently under consideration for scheduling (pers. comm. S Kidd).

This section has been compiled with information from the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER), ASC's own library and other readily available sources.

3.2 ***Prehistoric - Roman*** (before 600BC- c.450)

Little is known of the area prior to the development of the village. The HER does not record the presence of prehistoric or Roman sites and artefacts in the area, although little large-scale archaeological work has taken place in the area. In comparison with the river valleys of north and south Buckinghamshire, the claylands of Aylesbury Vale have received relatively archaeological attention and the earlier settlement history of Crafton and the surrounding area is currently undefined.

3.3 ***Saxon to Medieval*** (c.450-1500)

The village of Crafton is probably of mid to late Saxon date, though the extent to which it was a nucleated settlement is not known. It is mentioned in the *Domesday Survey* (1086) when the land was divided equally between the *Bishop of Lisieux* and the *monks of Saint Nicholas* (Morris, 1978, sections 6.1, 12.8). There was land for 10 ploughs and 5 plough lands of meadow, which indicates a relatively high ratio of pasture (*ibid.*). Significantly, there was no mention of woodland (*ibid.*).

3.4 ***Post-Medieval*** (1500-1900)

The extensive earthworks at Crafton largely lie west of the site and are said to be the remains of a mansion built by John Theed, c.1680. The building was demolished in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century, and the earthworks are all that remain (HER 1009). A number of small-scale archaeological watching briefs and evaluations have been carried out in recent years within the earthwork complex, and the earthworks in one field, east of the site of the mansion, have been surveyed (Albion Archaeology 2005; Gill & Hunn 2006; Rouse & Hancock 2006; Semmelmann 2005). None of the above interventions have revealed significant archaeology. The site of the proposed development appears from current air photographs to be in an area of ridge and furrow.

3.5 ***Modern*** (1900-present)

Recent work in the vicinity of the proposed development has not detected any signs of previous settlement (Rouse 2005). This may suggest that the creation of the Stud Farm in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century was merely a continuation of the traditional land use of the area, which was predominantly pastoral in character.

## 4. Stratigraphic Report

### 4.1 *Site Stripping* (Fig. 4; Plates 1 & 2)

Ground reduction for the new stable block and manege was mechanically stripped of topsoil under close archaeological supervision, as required in the brief. The stratigraphy encountered comprised:

Topsoil: c.0.20m in depth.

The underlying natural strata comprised mid yellowish brown/bluish grey firm clay, excavated to a level of c.0.10m-0.25m max in depth.

### 4.2 *Sampling Strategy*

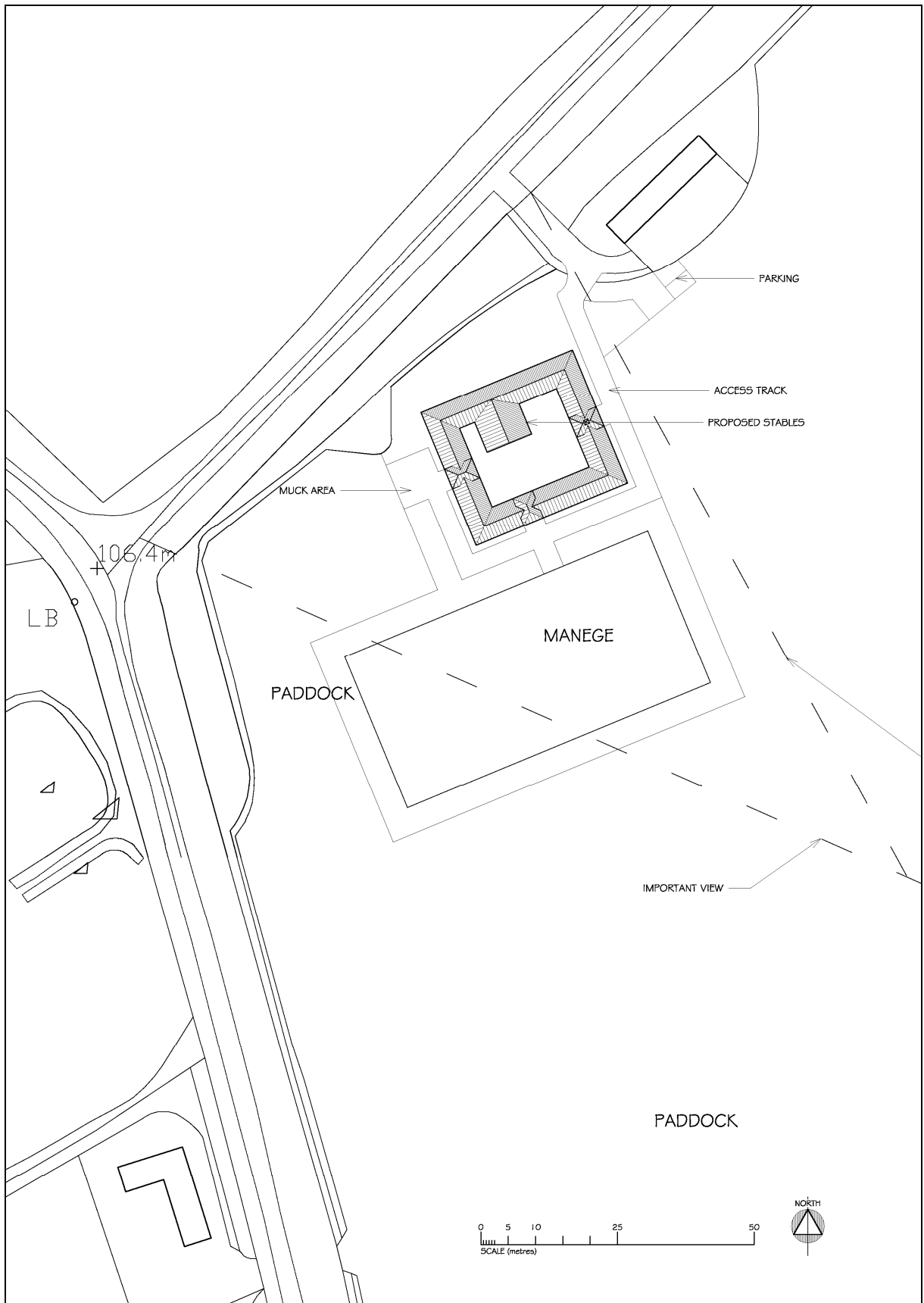
On completion of the site strip, no archaeological features were revealed within the stripped area, and no finds of archaeological significance were noted in the spoil removed during stripping. With the agreement of the AA no further archaeological works were undertaken on the site.



**Plate 1:** Stable block: east facing section of stratigraphy (scale 1m)



**Plate 2:** Manege: west facing section of stratigraphy (scale 1m)



**Figure 4:** Revised location of development

## **5 Conclusions**

- 5.1 The main aim of the project was to ascertain as to whether traces of the medieval and post-medieval shrunken village, west of the site, were visible within the site area. No archaeological features or deposits were observed within the excavation area, likely a result of the shallow depth of the excavation. In conclusion traces of the shrunken village were not observed, which aids in establishing the extent of the medieval and post-medieval village.
- 5.2 The works were carried out with full cooperation of the client and in good conditions and are assigned a high confidence rating.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

The project was commissioned by clients Mr & Mrs Crothers. The writer is grateful to Mr & Mrs Crothers for their assistance. The project was monitored by Sandy Kidd of *Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service* on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to contractors Ian and Pat.

The project was managed for ASC by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MSc. The report was prepared by Carina Summerfield-Hill and edited by Bob Zeepvat.

## **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. List of photographs
  7. B/W prints & negatives
  8. CDRom with copies of all digital files.
- 7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum.

## 8. References

### ***Standards & Specifications***

- Beckley, R 2010 *Brief for an Archaeological Excavation: Woodlands, Crafton Road, Mentmore*. BCAS Consultation Reference: cbc 8132.
- 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)*.

### ***Secondary Sources***

- Albion Archaeology 2005. *EDF Energy Cable, Crafton Stud Farm, Crafton: Archaeological Watching Brief*.
- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Gill, E & Hunn, J 2006 *Archaeological Evaluation: Crafton Stud Farm, Crafton*. ASC report 832/CSM/2.
- Kidd A M 2005 *Crafton Conservation Area* Buckinghamshire County Council.
- Morris J, 1978: *The Domesday Book*. Buckinghamshire section. Phillimore (Chichester).
- Rouse, C 2005 *Watching Brief: Garden Cottage & Stud Cottage, Crafton*. ASC report 735/CSF/2
- Rouse, C & Hancock, A 2006 *Earthwork Survey and Watching Brief: 2 Crafton, Mentmore*. ASC report 812/MTC/2.
- Semmelmann, K 2005 *Watching Brief: 2 Crafton, Mentmore*. ASC report 694/MTC/2.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

## Appendix 1: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: Woodlands, Crafton Road, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire		SITE NO/CODE: 1305/CCR	
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1		√	Mechanical stripping of stable block area, looking south-west (10/06/10)
2		√	Mechanical stripping of stable block area, looking west (10/06/10)
3	√	√	Stable block: east facing section of stratigraphy, looking west (11/06/10)
4	√	√	Stable block: east facing section of stratigraphy, looking west (11/06/10)
5	√	√	Manege: west facing section of stratigraphy, looking east (15/06/10)
6	√	√	Manege: west facing section of stratigraphy, looking east (15/06/10)
7		√	Manege: fully excavated, looking south-west (15/06/10)
8		√	Manege: fully excavated, looking west (15/06/10)
9		√	Manege: fully excavated, looking north-west (15/06/10)
10		√	Stable block: fully excavated, looking north-west (15/06/10)
11		√	Stable block: fully excavated, looking north (15/06/10)

## Appendix 2: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Woodlands, Crafton Road, Mentmore, Bucks	OASIS reference:	archaeol2-78399
Short Description:	In June 2010 a strip, map & sample excavation was carried out prior to the erection of a stable block and manege at Woodlands Crafton Road, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire. The site is adjacent to the deserted village earthworks of Crafton. No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered.		
Project Type:	Strip, Map & Sample Excavation		
Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	N/a	Site status: (eg. none, SAM, listed)	N/a
Current land use:	Fields	Future work: (yes/no/unknown)	Unknown
Monument type:	N/a	Monument period:	N/a
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Buckinghamshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	SP 8922 1978
Site address: (+ postcode if known)	Woodlands, Crafton Road, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire, LU7 0QJ		
Study area: (sq. m. / ha)	c.3000 sq m	Height OD: (metres)	106.4-109.1 m OD
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Ruth Beckley	Project design originator:	Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA
Project Manager:	Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA	Director:	Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr & Mrs Crothers		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	10/06/10	End date:	15/06/10
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	Buckinghamshire County Museum	N/a	
Paper:		Brief, PD, Report, B&W photos and negs, site records, plans	
Digital:		All digital files on a CD including digital photos	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Archaeological Strip, Map & Record Excavation: Woodlands, Crafton Road, Mentmore, Bucks		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1305/CCR		
Author(s):	Carina Summerfield-Hill BA MSc		
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