

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF ON LAND AT  
CALDECOTE FARM COTTAGE,  
NEWPORT PAGNELL,  
MILTON KEYNES**

*on behalf of Ms Anne Saunders*



**Nicholas A Crank BSc AIFA**

**October 2004**

**ASC: 610/NCF/01**

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## Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	NCF	<i>Project no:</i>	610
<i>SMR reference / Event No:</i>	925		
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>District:</i>	Milton Keynes (Unitary Authority)		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Caldecote		
<i>Parish:</i>	Newport Pagnell CP		
<i>NGR:</i>	SP 8805 4239		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Residential Garden		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of kitchen extension and conservatory		
<i>Extent of development:</i>	c.30 square metres		
<i>Client:</i>	Ms Anne Saunders Caldecote Farm Cottage Willen Road Newport Pagnell MK16 0JJ		

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Nicholas A Crank	<i>Date:</i>	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2004
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	14 <sup>th</sup> October 2004
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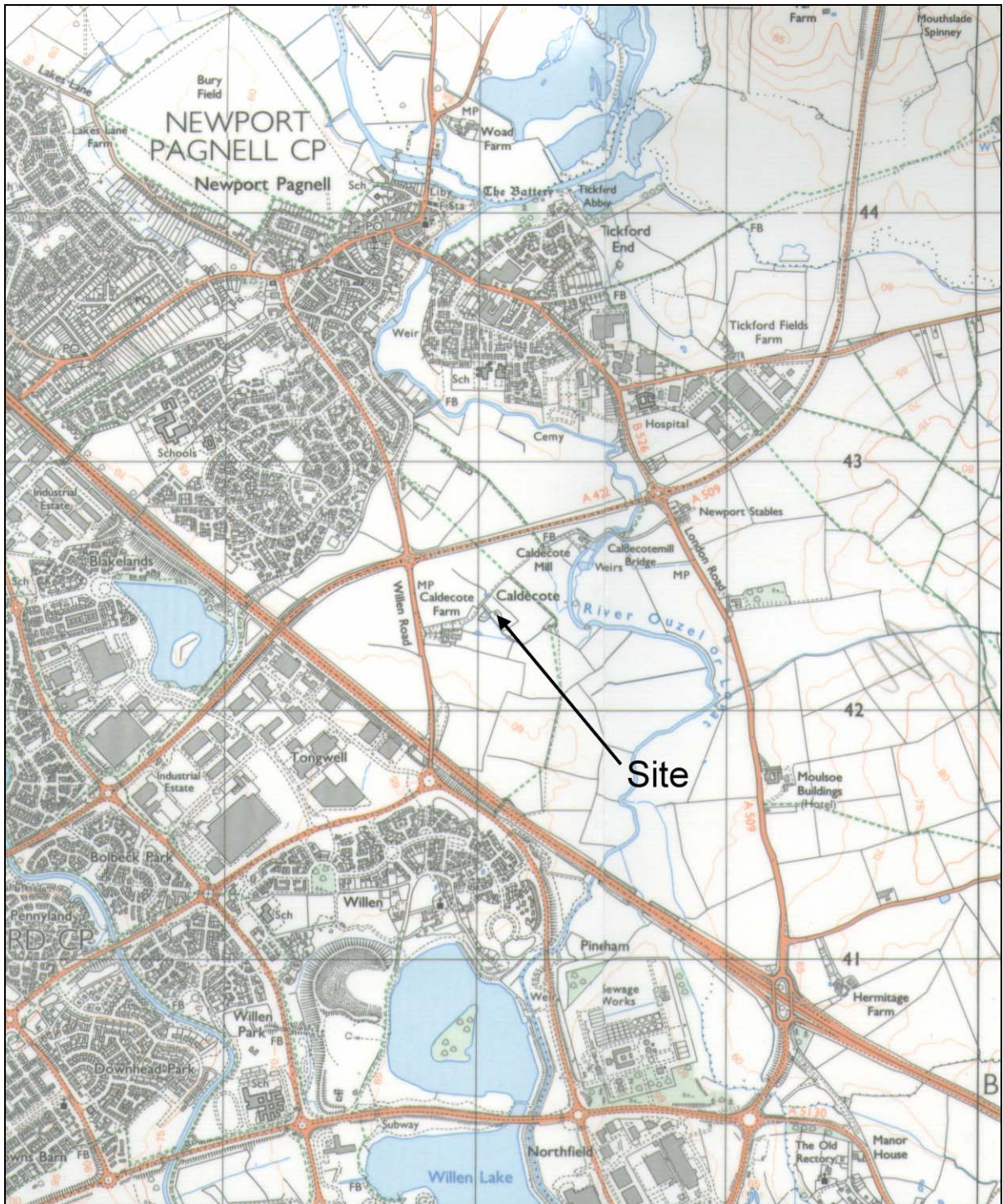
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**Figure 1:** General location (scale 1:25,000)

## Summary

*During October 2004 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on a site at Caldecote Farm Cottage, Willen Road, Newport Pagnell. The project was undertaken during the excavation of foundations for a kitchen extension and conservatory. No archaeological remains were observed during the works.*

## 1 Introduction

1.1 During October 2004 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief on a site at Caldecote Farm Cottage, Willen Road, Newport Pagnell (NGR SP 8805 4239, Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Ms Anne Saunders. In the absence of a brief the work was carried out according to a standard method statement prepared by ASC and agreed with the Milton Keynes Council Archaeologist (MKCA).

### 1.2 *Reason for Work*

Under current planning guidelines, specifically Planning Guidance Note 16 (PPG16), archaeology can be a material factor in deciding planning applications. Ms Saunders has been granted planning consent to construct a kitchen extension and conservatory. As the development is within an area of known archaeological potential, the MKCA acting as archaeological advisor to Milton Keynes Council recommended that a watching brief should be undertaken, to enable archaeological monitoring of the groundworks. This advice was accepted and a condition requiring a watching brief to be commissioned was placed on the development.

### 1.3 *Setting*

1.3.1 The hamlet of Caldecote is located about 1.5km south-east of the centre of Newport Pagnell. The settlement, which comprises a farm, watermill and a few isolated cottages, lies within the floodplain of the river Ouzel (or Lovat), with the river to the east and Willen Road to the west. Caldecote Farm Cottage, which forms the subject of this project, stands c.300m west of the river, at NGR SP 8805 4239 (Fig. 1).

1.3.2 Caldecote Farm Cottage stands on level ground, at an elevation of c.58m AOD. Soils in the area are alluvial, belonging to the Bishampton 2 association (Soil Survey 1986, 572t), described as 'Deep fine loamy and fine loamy over clayey soils with slowly permeable subsoils and slight seasonal waterlogging, associated with similar slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged soils'. The underlying geology comprises river terrace gravels.

1.3.3 Caldecote Farm Cottage is a two-storey brick-built house of 20<sup>th</sup> century date. Access to the site is off a track leading from Willen Road, past Caldecote Farm, approaching Caldecote Farm Cottage from the northwest via a driveway. The cottage is set in a large garden mostly laid to grass, a gravel driveway and turning circle run up to the front of the house to the southwest. The area of the

proposed kitchen extension and conservatory is mostly grassed with a narrow concrete pathway running along the northwest side of the house.

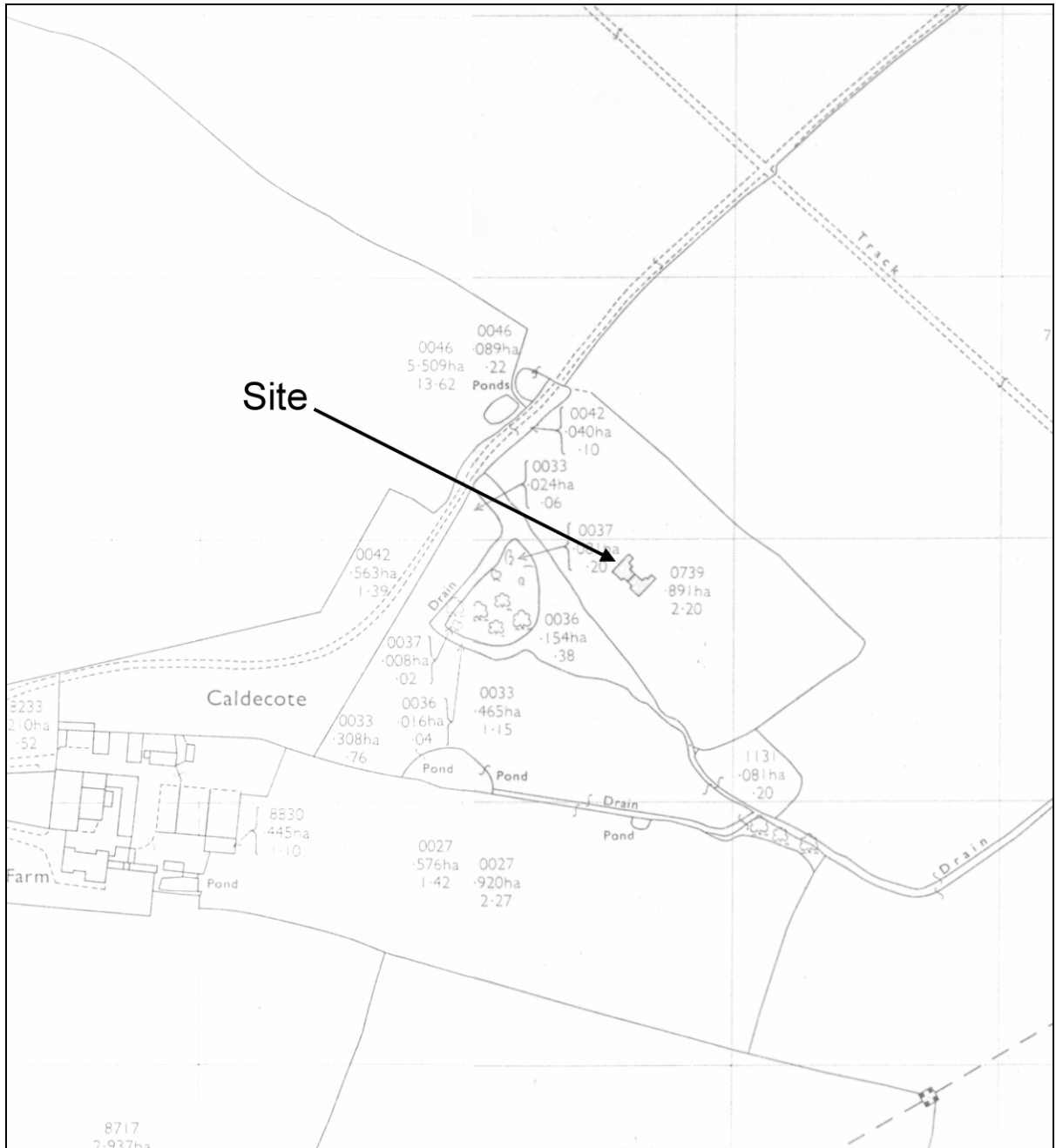


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:2500)

## 2 Aims & Methods

### 2.1 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were:

- To consider the location, extension, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains revealed by the development
- To produce an accurate and full record of any archaeological remains present, such that a permanent record will be made and the results presented in such a way that they can be re-examined and interpreted in the future

### 2.2 Methods

The work was carried out according to the ASC's standard method statement for archaeological watching briefs, which required:

- Observation of soil and overburden stripping under archaeological supervision, on an intermittent basis;
- Inspection of sub-soil for archaeological features;
- The excavation 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;

### 2.3 Standards

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



### 3 Archaeological & Historical Background

#### 3.1 Prehistoric (before 600BC)

The gravel terraces of the Ouzel valley have proved to contain significant evidence of human activity from the earliest periods of prehistory (Croft & Mynard 1993, 5). Mesolithic (c.10,000 – 3,500BC) and Neolithic (c.3,500 – 2,000BC) flints have been recovered from a number of locations, most notably from ploughing near Little Woolstone, and during the construction of Caldecote Lake (*ibid.*).

Evidence in the Ouse and Ouzel valleys for Bronze Age (c.2,000 – 600BC) activity is most commonly in the form of ‘ring ditches’ – ploughed-out burial mounds – located on the gravel terraces. In the Ouzel valley, ring ditches have been identified and excavated at Cotton Valley and at the former Hartigan’s gravel pit, west of Milton Keynes village, 1.7 and 3.4km south of the assessment site respectively (*ibid.*, 7). The recent discovery of a hoard of Bronze Age gold torcs from the gravel terrace at Monkston Park suggests the existence of a religious site there.

#### 3.2 Iron Age (600BC-AD43)

As with earlier periods, Iron Age (c.600BC – AD43) activity and settlement has been found primarily on the river valley gravels in the Milton Keynes area. Extensive Iron Age occupation sites have been excavated at Hartigan’s pit, at Caldecote Lake (*ibid.*, 8), and more recently at Fenny Lock (Ford *et al* 2001). Evidence from the Caldecote excavations indicated that these settlements were engaged in both agricultural and industrial activities.

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

During the Roman period (AD 43 – c.450), most of the settlements established in the Iron Age in the Ouzel valley seem to have continued in existence, albeit suffering from the phenomenon of ‘settlement creep’, whereby the settlement focus shifts as buildings are replaced, and the settlement expands or contracts over time. Evidence of Roman native settlement has been excavated at Cotton Valley, Oakgrove and Caldecote (Croft & Mynard 1993, 11-13). There is some evidence that a Roman road followed the east side of the Ouzel valley northwards to the Roman settlement at Ashfurlong, near Olney, where it crossed the Ouse. This might go some way to explaining the predominance of settlement on the east side of the river.

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

Relatively little is known of the Saxon period (c.AD450 – 1066) in the Ouzel valley. Early Saxon settlements have been excavated at Hartigan’s pit, and evidence of Saxon activity was recorded at Caldecote. It seems likely that most of the villages along the valley were established in the Saxon period. In the Domesday Survey (1086) a water mill, presumably of Saxon origin, is recorded at Caldecote, suggesting that a settlement was in existence on the site by then (Markham 1973, 37).

### **3.5 Medieval** (1066-1500)

There is little readily available historical or archaeological evidence for the settlement at Caldecote. The Domesday Survey records that the manor contained three estates, whose collective tax assessment was for ten hides, and the borough of Newport Pagnell, which had been established in its territory, was rated at another five hides. The name, literally 'cold cottages' has been taken to refer to a shelter for travellers, but has subsequently acquired a more derogatory meaning, being associated with a failed or failing settlement (Croft & Mynard 1993, 47).

The date at which the settlement at Caldecote became deserted is uncertain, though it seems likely to have resulted from the Tudor enclosures of land for sheep pasture, coupled with the relative success of its offspring, Newport Pagnell, which developed in the medieval period into a flourishing market town. The village is believed to have been located in fields to the north of the site.

The site is located 200m to the west of Moat Cottage a probable manorial site bounded by a large moated enclosure, its north side formed by the Ouzel. This site was the subject of a trial trench evaluation conducted by ASC (Pack 2004). This project investigated a portion of the moat revealing it to have been backfilled during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. No earlier archaeological evidence was recovered and it is suggested that the manorial complex may have occupied a more central position within the enclosure (ibid.).

## 4 Results

4.1 A single visit was made to the site on 11<sup>th</sup> October 2004 in order to monitor the excavation of foundation trenches for the proposed new building. No archaeological remains were observed during the works.

4.2 The development is in the garden of Celeste Farm Cottage adjacent to the northwest and northeast side of the cottage (Fig. 3). The area observed had already been partly stripped of topsoil to a depth of c.0.2m (Plate 1). The foundation trenches totalled 18m in length and were excavated to a depth of between 0.9 – 1.2m under close archaeological supervision. Four sample sections (Fig. 3, Plate 2) were recorded along the length of the trenches revealing a consistent stratigraphy, summarised below:

0.00 – 0.60m Topsoil – Mid to light brown sandy loam

0.60 – 1.00m+ River Terrace Gravel – Mid orange sand and coarse flint gravel

4.3 In addition to observing the excavation of the foundation trenches the resulting spoil was also scanned for artefacts revealing none pre-dating the 19<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

### 4.4 *Archaeological impact of the development*

It is unlikely that archaeological remains survive within the area of the new build and consequently the archaeological impact of the development has been minimal.

### 4.5 *Confidence Rating*

Due to the favourable weather conditions and lighting combined with the full cooperation of the client and contractors a high confidence rating is attached to the results of the watching brief.

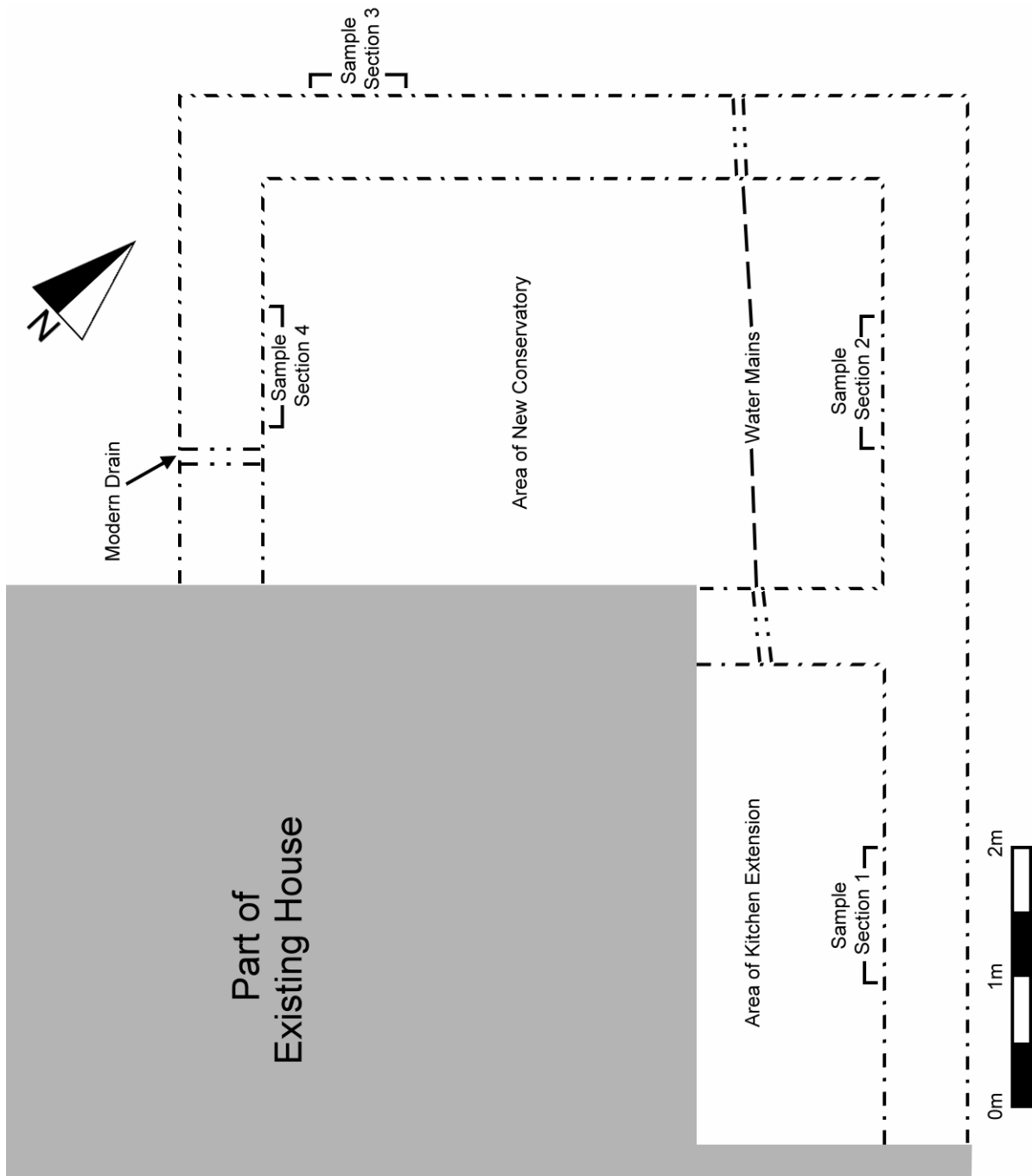


Figure 3: Area of Observation (Scale 1:50)



**Plate 1:** Excavation of the Foundations in Progress, looking East



**Plate 2:** Typical Section of Foundation Trench (*Scales: 1m*)

## **5. Acknowledgements**

The writer is grateful to *Ms Anne Saunders* for commissioning and funding the watching brief. We would also like to acknowledge the co-operation of the groundwork contractor John Johnston. Thanks are also due to the staff of the Milton Keynes library and to Mr Brian Giggins, Archaeological Officer of *Milton Keynes Council* who acted as curatorial officer.

The fieldwork was undertaken for ASC Ltd by Nicholas A Crank BSc AIFA. The report was prepared by Nicholas A Crank and edited by Bob Zeepvat.


## **6. Archive**

- 6.1 No formal archive will be prepared for this project, but a copy of the report and a CD containing the report and digital images will be lodged with the Milton Keynes SMR.

## 8. Bibliography

- Croft RA & Mynard DC 1993 *The Changing Landscape of Milton Keynes*. Buckinghamshire Archaeology Society Monograph **5** (Aylesbury).
- Ford S *et al* 2001 'Iron Age and Roman Settlements, with Prehistoric and Saxon Features, at Fenny Lock, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire', *Records of Buckinghamshire* **41**, 79-124.
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- Markham, Sir F 1973 *A History of Milton Keynes & District. Volume 1 – to 1830*. (Luton)
- Pack K 2004 *Archaeological Evaluation: Moat Cottage, Caldecote, Newport Pagnell* (ASC Archive Report No: 563/CMC/02)
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

# Appendix 1: Field Monitoring Record

 <b>A.S.C. LTD</b>		<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD</b>				
Project: CALDECOTE FARM COTTAGE, NEWPORT PAGNELL		Project No/Code: 1	Sheet: 7 of			
		Date of visit: 11 / 10 / 04				
Client/Developer						
Contact: JOHN JOHNSON			Phone: 07771 991 617			
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 9.00am	Finish: 1.00pm				
Completed by: NAC						
Development Type:						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Footings	<input type="checkbox"/> Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Levelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Quarrying	<input type="checkbox"/> Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: DRY, OVERCAST CLEARING LATER.						
Observations: OBSERVED EXCAVATION OF FOOTINGS FOR NEW KITCHEN EXT + CONSERVATORY (SEE PLAN OVER). FOOTINGS CUT TO DEPTH OF 0.9m - 1.2m AREA ALREADY TOPSOIL STRIPPED TO DEPTH OF c.0.2m. PHOTOS (B&W/DIGI) AND SAMPLE SECTIONS RECORDED ON PLAN (OVER). TYPICAL SECTION = 0.00 - 0.60m TOPSOIL - MID TO LIGHT BROWN SANDY LOAM 0.60 - 1.00m+ NATURAL - MID ORANGE SAND/GRAVEL.  No archaeological features observed in Trenches.  SOIL EXAMINED - NO PRE 19th pottery/artefacts observed.						
Comments:						

For sketch plan, use reverse

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