

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
MOAT COTTAGE
CALDECOTE
NEWPORT PAGNELL**

on behalf of Mr & Mrs Koracevic



Katie Pack BA MA

March 2004

ASC: 563/CMC/02

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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	CMC	<i>Project no:</i>	563
<i>SMR reference / Event No:</i>	884		
<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 8828 4234		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	144 square metres (exc. barn)		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Garden & concrete hardstanding		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of residential extension		
<i>Extent of development:</i>	144 square metres (exc.barn)		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	03/02226/FUL		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr & Mrs Koracevic 20 Warmington Gardens Downhead Park Milton Keynes MK15 9BP		
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Internal Quality Check

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Summary

During March 2004 ASC Ltd undertook an archaeological evaluation at Moat Cottage, Caldecote, near Newport Pagnell, Milton Keynes, in advance of development. The site was located within a moated enclosure, possibly of a medieval manor. The fieldwork revealed the northwestern segment of the moated complex. The section of the infilled moat showed it was 1.75m deep and 9m wide. The earliest fill of the moat contained Victorian material. This evidence suggests that this segment of the moat had been well managed and kept clean up until this period, when the partial silting up of the moat occurred. The Victorian dumping is likely to be from the adjacent Moat Cottage. No other features were encountered within the evaluation trench. The manor is thought to be situated more centrally within the moated area.

1 Introduction

1.1 During March 2003 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out an archaeological evaluation on a site at Caldecote, near Newport Pagnell, Milton Keynes (NGR SP 8828 4234: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Koracevic, and was carried out according to a brief prepared by the Archaeological Officer, Milton Keynes Council (MKC) on behalf of the local planning authority (16 March 2004 / ref. PS/537/2/A/C1283) and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ASC (Zeervat, 2004).

1.2 Reason for Work

The evaluation was commissioned in response to a post-determination planning condition imposed by Milton Keynes Council, acting on advice from their archaeological advisor (planning ref. 03/02226/FUL). This is in line with the guidelines of Planning Guidance Note 16 (PPG 16).

1.3 Setting

1.3.1 The hamlet of Caldecote is located about 1.5km south-east of the centre of Newport Pagnell, in the civil parish of that name. 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. Moat Cottage, which forms the subject of this evaluation, stands about 100m west of the river, at NGR SP 8828 4234 (Fig. 1). The development site area is 144 square metres (exc. Barn).

1.3.2 Moat 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 Moat Cottage is a two-storey brick-built house of 19th-century date, with a detached limestone barn to the east. Access to the site is off a track leading from Willen Road, past Caldecote Farm to Caldecote Mill, approaching Moat Cottage from the north-west. On the north-east side of the cottage, a concrete hardstanding lies between the house and barn. The remainder of the cottage garden is mostly down to grass, as are the surrounding fields.

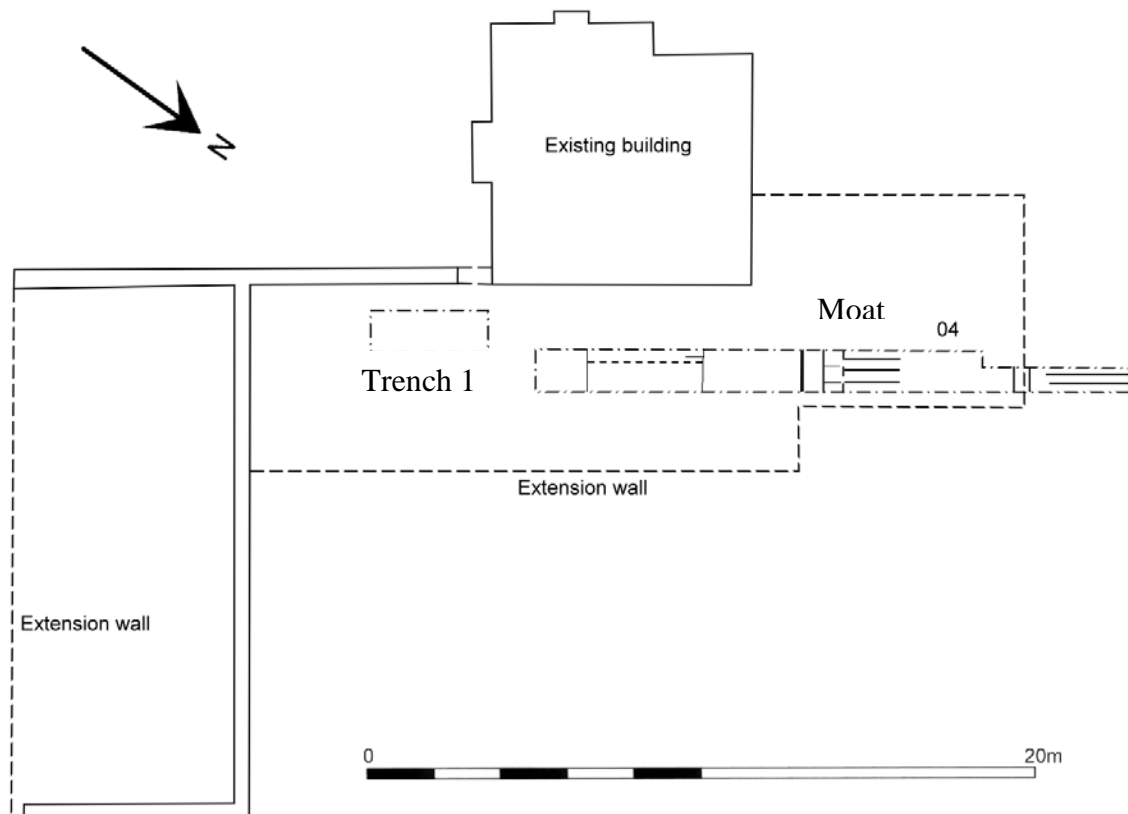


Figure 2: Site plan

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

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

- to obtain information on the extent and character of the potential archaeology of the development site, its state of preservation and relative quality.

2.2 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 5), which required:

- A machine based trial trench, not less than 20m in length and 1.4m in width, followed by hand cleaning and recording.

2.3 Standards

The work conforms to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), English Heritage's *The Management of Archaeological Projects* (EH 1991) 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 Moat Cottage 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 Moat Cottage.

Moat Cottage is located within the west corner of a large moated enclosure, its north side formed by the Ouzel. This enclosure is thought to have been a manorial site. Such moated sites are common in the Ouzel valley: some, such as that at Caldecote, have been shown to contain buildings, and therefore likely to be manorial, while others, such as that at Willen, did not, and must have had another function (Mynard 1994, 108).

3.6 Post-Medieval (1500-1900)

Cartographic sources record the site, including the Ordnance Survey 2" = 1 mile map C.1815, which shows ponds on three sides of the enclosure and an avenue of trees along the present access road to the north of the site, extending to Willen Road. There is also a building recorded on the site of Moat Cottage (Giggins, 2004). The 1881 OS map records surviving sections of moat still open and visible, with Moat Cottage adjacent to the northwestern segment.

3.7 Modern (1900-present)

Although much of the moat now no longer contains water, its line is preserved by modern field boundaries.

4 Results

- 4.1 One trench was excavated, being 23.5m in length, 1.5m in width and orientated southeast – northwest.
- 4.2 The natural geology (5) was reached across the trench, being interleaved alluvial gravel.
- 4.3 At the northwest end of the trench a large linear feature was revealed that was orientated northeast – southwest. This was the expected moat (as seen on the 1881 OS map), which the trench had cut through at a right angle.
- 4.4 The moat cut [4] was 1.75m in depth and 9m in width (Figure 3. The earliest fill (3) was comprised of humic fine black sandy silt and contained Victorian china and bottles, being 0.5m thick. This represents Victorian dumping, likely from the adjacent Moat Cottage.
- 4.5 The secondary fill (2) was homogenous light brown clay, 1.25m thick, representing the modern infilling of the resulting depression. This event is associated with the construction of a modern drainage pipe that was seen to follow the course of the moat.
- 4.6 The trench was sealed with topsoil and modern rubble (1), 0.25m in thickness.
- 4.7 No finds were recovered or samples taken, as it was not deemed necessary with the modern deposits encountered.

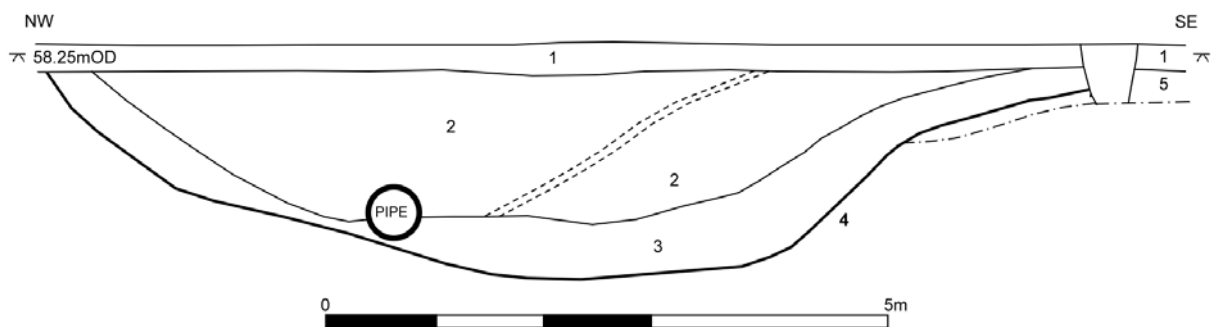


Figure 3 : Southwest Facing Section of Moat [4]



Plate 1: Southwest Facing Section of Moat [4] (southeast side of cut)



Plate 2: Southwest Facing Section of Moat [4] (northwest side of cut)

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The archaeological evaluation revealed the northwestern segment of a moated complex. The section of the moat was observed and recorded.
- 5.2 The earliest fill of the moat contained Victorian material. This evidence suggests that this section of the moat had been well managed and kept clean up until this period, when the partial silting up of the moat occurred.
- 5.3 No other features were encountered within the evaluation trench, which was located within the moated complex, alongside the southwestern length of moat. The associated manor is thought to be situated more centrally within the moated area, as indicated by the tree-lined entrance way recorded on the OS 2" map (C.1815).

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Mr & Mrs Koracevic for commissioning this project and to Brian Giggins, Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer, for his assistance with this project.

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. Site record drawings
7. List of photographs/slides
8. Colour slides
9. B/W prints & negatives
10. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with the Buckinghamshire County Museum Service.

8. Bibliography

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Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 1						
	Max Dimensions					
	Length	23.5m	Width	1.5m	Depth	0.5m
	Orientation		SE-NW			
	Reason for Trench		Investigate extension footprint			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)	
01	Layer	Topsoil	Tr	250	0	
02	Fill	Clay backfill of moat	8500	1250	250	
03	Fill	Black sandy silt of moat (Victorian)	9000	500	1500	
04	Cut	Moat cut	9000	-	2000	
05	Layer	Natural alluvial gravel	Tr	-	250	