



**B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
Beeston
Central Bedfordshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

for

DLP Consulting Group Limited

on behalf of

Bartram Timber Limited

CA Project: 660089

CA Report: 12318

January 2013

B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
Beeston, Central Bedfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation

CA Project: 660089
CA Report: 12318
Bedford Museum Accession Number: BEDFM 2012.58

prepared by	Peter James, Project Supervisor
date	26 October 2012
approved by	Roland Smith, Regional Manager
signed	
date	May 2013
issue	Version 02

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SUMMARY

Project Name:	B G Timber Yard
Location:	Beeston, Central Bedfordshire
NGR:	ST 6662 8043
Type:	Evaluation
Date:	16-17 October 2012
Planning Reference:	CB/12/00293/Full and CB/12/01201/FULL
Museum:	Bedford Museum
Accession Number:	BEDFM 2012.58
Site Code:	BGT12

In October 2012, an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology at 64 High Street, Beeston, Bedfordshire, at the request of DLP Consulting Group Limited on behalf of Bartram Timber Limited. Three trial trenches were excavated.

The evaluation revealed three post-medieval field boundary ditches, which appear to correspond to field boundaries shown on 18th-century maps. Post-medieval, probably 19th century, material was recovered from two of the three ditches.

Some evidence of recent of ground disturbance was recorded in one trench and deep soil deposits were recorded in the north-east of the site.

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In October 2012, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for DLP Consulting Group Limited (DLP), acting on behalf of Bartram Timber Limited, at 64 High Road, Beeston (centred on NGR: ST 6662 8043; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken following the granting of planning permission for the development of the site. The site has received permission for the construction of two new warehouses (CB/12/2012/01201/FULL) and for the change of use and extension of an existing building (CB/12/2012/00239/FULL). The permissions have been granted subject to conditions requiring a programme of archaeological investigation. Hannah Firth, Central Bedfordshire Council's Archaeological Advisor (CBCAA) has advised that a two-stage programme of archaeological investigation is required. This evaluation comprises the first stage of archaeological investigation.
- 1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by CA (2012a) and approved by the CBCAA prior to the commencement of the fieldwork. The fieldwork also followed best practice as set out in *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 2008), *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006) and *MORPHE; Project Planning Note 3: Archaeological Excavation* (EH 2008). The fieldwork was monitored by Martin Oake, CBCAA, on 17th October 2012.

The site

- 1.3 The site is approximately 1.5 ha in size, occupying a rectangular plot orientated north-east to south-west. The site is located immediately south of the village of Beeston, fronting on to the A1 trunk road (High Road). The site is currently a disused horticultural nursery with various buildings *in situ* including a residential bungalow and a warehouse at its south western end, along with areas of hard standing.
- 1.4 The site is essentially flat, around the 25m OD contour, and lies less than 400m to the west of the River Ivel.

- 1.5 The site is located on bedrock of Jurassic Oxford Clay mudstones covered by superficial deposits of river terrace gravels and alluvial clays, sands and gravels.

Archaeological background

- 1.6 An account of the historical and archaeological background to the site and its surrounding area is presented in a desk-based assessment prepared by CA (2012b). The site lies within a landscape that has been subject to many archaeological surveys and investigations which have demonstrated the rich, wide-spread and varied history of settlement and land use along the gravel terraces of the River Ivel.
- 1.7 Research for the desk-based assessment considered the site and a 500m study area around it. The assessment established that there are no Scheduled Monuments located within the site or study area. There are no Grade I or Grade II* Listed buildings within the site or study area but three Grade II Listed buildings lie within the village of Beeston.
- 1.8 The assessment also established that there are no undesignated heritage assets within the site, although the study area contains 18 heritage assets recorded on the National Monuments Record (NMR) and the Central Bedfordshire Historic Environment Record (CBHER).
- 1.9 Extensive areas of crop marks have been recorded to the east, west and south of the site. The crop marks to the east of the site have been interpreted as representing features of many periods from the Neolithic to medieval. These include ring-ditches of a probable barrow cemetery and a medieval moated site (CBHER 1495). To the west of the site, crop marks of irregular enclosures and linear features have been interpreted as activity of prehistoric and Roman date (CBHER 624), while to the south a further area of crop marks has been interpreted as a prehistoric settlement (CBHER 13724).
- 1.10 The prehistoric and Roman potential in the vicinity of the site is demonstrated by archaeological excavations at Warren Villas Quarry, Sandy, undertaken throughout most of the 1990s. These works recorded finds from the Palaeolithic to medieval periods, including evidence of Iron Age agriculture, Roman settlement, medieval activity and also two palaeo-channels of the River Ivel (CBHER EDB459).

- 1.11 An archaeological evaluation at New Road, Sandy identified a series of substantial ditches, along with pits, post holes and gullies containing pottery from the Saxon to late medieval periods (CBHER EDB79). This site lies close to an earthwork suggested to be a Danish earthwork from the 9th century, possibly part of a fort to protect a crossing of the River Ivel (NMR 362678). There is no archaeological evidence to support this interpretation.
- 1.12 The village of Beeston is first mentioned in the Domesday Book compiled in 1086 (CBHER 17132; CBHER 14862). The village may have originated prior to the eleventh century, although some poorly provenanced Roman finds from around the village (CBHER 548) do not suggest it was a focus of settlement in the Roman period.
- 1.13 In the post-medieval period the site lay in the agricultural hinterland of Beeston and historic maps suggest no buildings occurred within the site until the early 1970s. Towards the end of the 18th century, market gardening had become the predominant activity between Sandy and Beeston and the village contains several 'onion drying sheds' which, although undesignated, are buildings of local interest (CBHER 14803, 14804, 13369, 14805).
- 1.14 The desk-based assessment concluded that, although the site contains no known remains of archaeological or historical interest, it lies within an area of known and extensive buried archaeological remains. Despite 20th century development within the site, there is the potential that as yet unrecorded buried archaeological remains may survive. The remains could take the form of archaeological deposits indicative of domestic activity (pits, ditches, hearths etc.) and funerary activity (burials, monuments etc.). If any such deposits do survive they are mostly likely to date to the prehistoric and Roman periods.

Archaeological objectives

- 1.15 The objectives of the evaluation, as set out in the WSI, were to establish the location, extent, nature, character and date of any buried archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site and to establish the integrity and state of preservation of any buried archaeological features that may be present. This information will assist the CBCAA in making an informed judgement on the

significance of the archaeological resource, and the likely impact upon it of the proposed development.

- 1.16 The WSI acknowledged that the archaeological potential of the site was very broad with the possibility of buried remains from the prehistoric to post-medieval periods. However it set some broad objectives as follows.
- 1.17 The site has the potential to contain settlement, land use and field systems from the prehistoric to Roman periods within the floodplain and gravel terraces of a regionally important river valley. If such evidence survives, it may contribute to understanding the pattern and distribution of settlements, field systems and rural economies, and especially contribute towards differentiating patterns in the river valleys and non-valley locations, which is a local and regional research objective (Oake 2007, 11; Bryant 2000, 16; Going and Plouviez 2000, 21).
- 1.18 The site also has the potential to contain archaeological deposits relating to the Saxon, medieval and post-medieval development of the village of Beeston. The investigation of rural Saxon and medieval settlements to examine diversity, characterise settlement forms and understand how they appear, grow, shift and disappear is a local and regional archaeological research objective (Wade 2000, 24-25; Oake 2007, 14; Medlycott 2011, 70).

Methodology

- 1.19 The evaluation comprised the excavation and investigation of three trial trenches positioned within the footprints of the proposed new buildings within the site (Fig. 2). Trench 1 was 12m long, Trench 2 was 35m long and Trench 3 was 15m long. All trenches were 1.5m wide. Trench 1 was moved 1m to the south due to the presence of a septic tank and Trench 3 was relocated four metres to the east of its intended location because of various obstructions and a concrete road. These minor alterations to trench locations were agreed on site with the CBCAA. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using a Leica Viva GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA's *Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual* (2009).
- 1.20 All trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or

the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA's *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).

- 1.21 Deposits were assessed for their palaeo-environmental potential in accordance with CA's *Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* (2003). No deposits were identified that merited sampling and no artefacts were retained from the evaluation.
- 1.22 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Milton Keynes. On completion of the project, the archive will be deposited with Bedford Museum (Accession Number: BEDFM 2012.58). A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

2. RESULTS (FIGS 2-9)

- 2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts by trench are to be found in Appendix A.
- 2.2 The geological substrate across the site generally comprised a medium yellow brown sand, with areas of clays and gravels, containing frequent sub-rounded gravel flints with rare pockets of degraded chalk. The subsoil, pronounced in Trench 2 and present in Trench 3, but not in Trench 1, was a medium yellow brown sandy loam with the occasional sub-rounded gravel flint. Topsoil was uniform throughout the site and comprised a medium grey brown sandy loam with moderate sub rounded gravel flint.

Trench 1 (Fig. 3)

- 2.3 No pre-modern archaeological features or deposits were encountered in Trench 1. Topsoil (100), 0.34m thick, lay above subsoil (101), 0.42m thick, which lay above a possible buried soil horizon (102), 0.2m thick. The possible buried soil lay above a light yellow brown sandy clay substrate. These deep soil deposits, totalling nearly 1m thick, were not identified in Trenches 2 and 3. It was unclear if they resulted from deliberate landscaping or they reflected the buried topography and a natural

deepening of deposits towards the floodplain of the River Ivel. A modern ceramic pipe trench (104) cut across the trench on a north-west to south-east alignment and was cut through the subsoil and buried soil horizon.

Trench 2 (Figs 4, 5 & 6)

- 2.4 In Trench 2 topsoil (200), 0.35m thick, overlay subsoil (201), 0.3m thick, which overlay the geological substrate. Three ditches were cut through the substrate.
- 2.5 Ditch 203 was 1m wide and 0.23m deep and it was on an approximately north-west to south-east alignment. It contained two fills (204 and 205) from which post-medieval ceramic tile and brick was recovered. The location and alignment of the ditch appears to correspond to a field boundary shown on the 1781 Northhill Enclosure Map (Fig. 10).
- 2.6 Ditch 206, which was on a north-east to south-west alignment, measured 2.5m wide by 0.54m deep. It was filled with three layers from which no finds were recovered. The ditch was subsequently re-cut on the same alignment by ditch 208, which contained two fills from which a fragment of probably nineteenth century glass bottle neck and an iron object were recovered. A modern service trench (211) had cut through the north edge of ditch 208 and had been cut from just below the topsoil.
- 2.7 Ditches 206 and 208 are interpreted as re-cut field boundaries in view of their broad and shallow nature and lack of material finds. Their location and alignment also appear to correspond to a boundary between two plots recorded on the 1748 Beeston Lordship Farm Map (Fig. 9).

Trench 3 (Fig. 7)

- 2.7 No archaeological features or deposits were recorded in Trench 3. Topsoil (300), 0.3m thick, lay directly above a light yellow sandy clay substrate. The absence of a subsoil horizon suggests this part of the site has previously been truncated.

The Finds

- 2.8 A small assemblage of post-medieval finds, probably of 19th century date, was collected on site but was not retained. The material comprises ceramic tile and brick

from fill 205 of ditch 203 and a glass bottle neck and iron object from fill 209 of ditch 208.

3. DISCUSSION

3.1 The evaluation revealed three post-medieval field boundary ditches relating to previous agricultural land use. One ditch corresponds to a field boundary shown on the 1781 Northill Enclosure Map (Fig. 10) and the other two ditches, one being a re-cut of an earlier ditch, correspond to a boundary shown on the 1748 Beeston Lordship Farm Map (Fig. 9). Post-medieval, probably 19th century material, was recovered from two of the three ditches.

3.2 Despite the proximity of extensive crop mark complexes to the east, west and south of the site, no archaeological features or deposits that certainly pre-date the post-medieval period were recorded. Some evidence of ground disturbance was recorded in Trench 3 and a thick layer of overburden was recorded in the north-east of the site. However it should be noted that the trenches represent a small overall sample of the total site area.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

4.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Peter James, assisted by Mark Patenall. This report was written by Peter James and the illustrations were prepared by Peter Moore. The archive has been compiled by Peter James, and prepared for deposition by Derek Evans. The project was managed for CA by Roland Smith.

5. REFERENCES

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Cotswold Archaeology 2012a *B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road, Beeston, Central Bedfordshire. Written Scheme for an Archaeological Evaluation* unpublished document reference 660089

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APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy loam with frequent sub rounded and sub angular gravel flint.	-	-	0.34	-
101	Subsoil	Grey brown sandy loam with frequent sub rounded gravel flint.	-	-	0.42	-
102	Layer	Grey brown sandy loam with frequent sub rounded gravel flint	-	-	0.20	-
103	Geology	Medium yellow brown sand with gravel.	-	-	-	-
104	Cut	Cut of sewer pipe	1.50+	0.40	-	Modern
105	Fill	Fill of sewer pipe	-	-	-	Modern

Trench 2

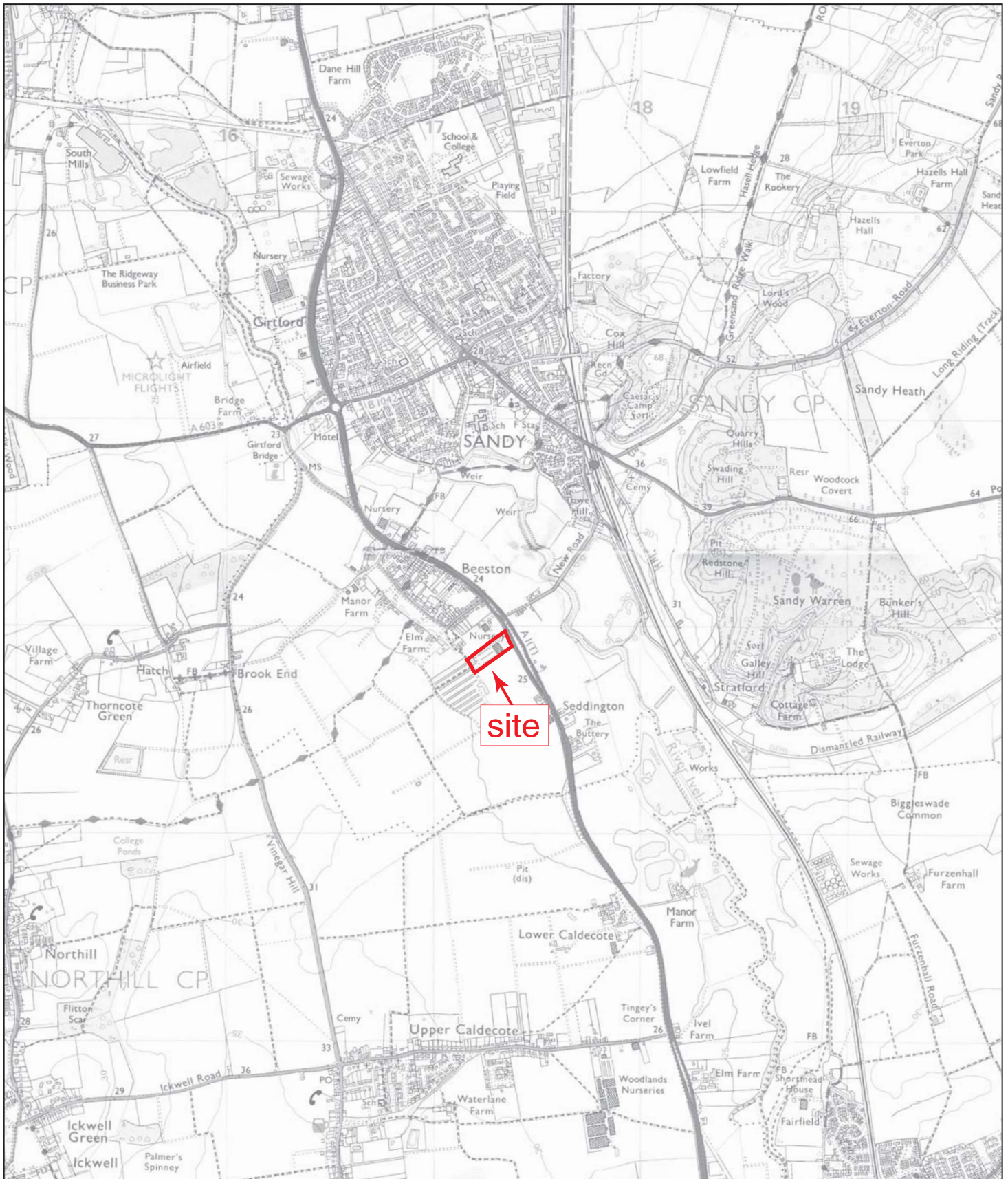
No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot date
200	Topsoil	Dark grey brown sandy loam with frequent sub rounded gravel flint.	-	-	0.35	-
201	Subsoil	Grey brown sandy loam with frequent sub rounded gravel flint.	-	-	0.30	-
202	Geology	Medium yellow brown sand with gravel and clays.	-	-	-	-
203	Cut	Linear ditch on a NW-SE alignment	4.50+	1.00	0.23	-
204	Fill of 203	Primary deposition. Yellow brown sand with occasional sub rounded gravel flint.	-	0.15	0.05	-
205	Fill of 203	Secondary deposition. Medium grey brown silty sand with occasional sub rounded gravel flint.	-	1.00	0.23	19 th C
206	Cut	Linear ditch on a NE-SW alignment	1.50+	2.50	0.54	-
207	Fill of 206	Secondary deposition. Grey brown silty sand with frequent sub rounded gravel flint.	-	2.50	0.31	-
208	Cut	Re-cut of linear ditch on a NE-SW	1.50+	2.00	1.02	-
209	Fill of 208	Deliberate backfill. Dark grey brown silty sand with frequent sub rounded gravel flint.	-	1.60	0.62	19 th C
210	Fill 208	Deliberate backfill. Yellow brown sandy clay with occasional sub rounded gravel flint.	-	1.30	0.40	-
211	Cut	Cut of modern service trench.	1.50+	0.90	0.60	Modern
212	Fill of 211	Deliberate backfill. Mottled dark grey brown sandy loam with frequent sub rounded gravel flint.	-	0.90	0.60	Modern
213	Fill of 206	Primary deposition. Medium yellow brown silty sand with moderate sub rounded gravel flint.	-	1.40	0.10	-
214	Fill of 206	Primary deposition. Medium grey brown silty sand with frequent sub rounded gravel flint.	-	2.00	0.20	-

Trench 3

No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
300	Topsoil	Medium grey brown sandy loam with moderate sub rounded gravel flint.	-	-	0.30	-
301	Geology	Light yellow brown sandy clay with gravel and chalk.	-	-	-	-

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	B G Timber Yard, 64 High Street, Beeston, Central Bedfordshire
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>In October 2012 an archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology at 64 High Street, Beeston, Bedfordshire, at the request DLP Consulting Group Limited on behalf of Bartram Timber Limited. Three trial trenches were excavated.</p> <p>The evaluation revealed three post-medieval field boundary ditches, which appear to correspond to field boundaries shown on 18th-century maps. Post-medieval, probably 19th century material, was recovered from two of the three ditches.</p> <p>Some evidence of recent ground disturbance was recorded in one trench and a thick layer of overburden was recorded in the north-east of the site.</p>
Project dates	16-17 October 2012
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Evaluation
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	N/a
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	64 High Road, Beeston, Central Bedfordshire, SG19 1PB
Study area (M ² /ha)	1.5 ha
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	ST 6662 8043
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	Central Bedfordshire Council
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Roland Smith
Project Supervisor	Peter James
MONUMENT TYPE	N/a
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	N/a
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.)	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Bedford Museum BEDFM 2012.58	
Physical	None
Paper	Context sheets, registers and drawings
Digital	Survey data, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
Cotswold Archaeology 2012 <i>B G Timber Yard, 64 High Street, Beeston, Central Bedfordshire. Archaeological Evaluation</i> , unpublished report number 12318	



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PROJECT TITLE

**B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
 Beeston, Bedfordshire**

FIGURE TITLE

Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 660089	DATE 31-10-2012	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY JB	REVISION 00	1
APPROVED BY PJM	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	

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- evaluation trench
- proposed development
- proposed buildings
- archaeological feature
- modern



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PROJECT TITLE
B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
Beeston, Bedfordshire

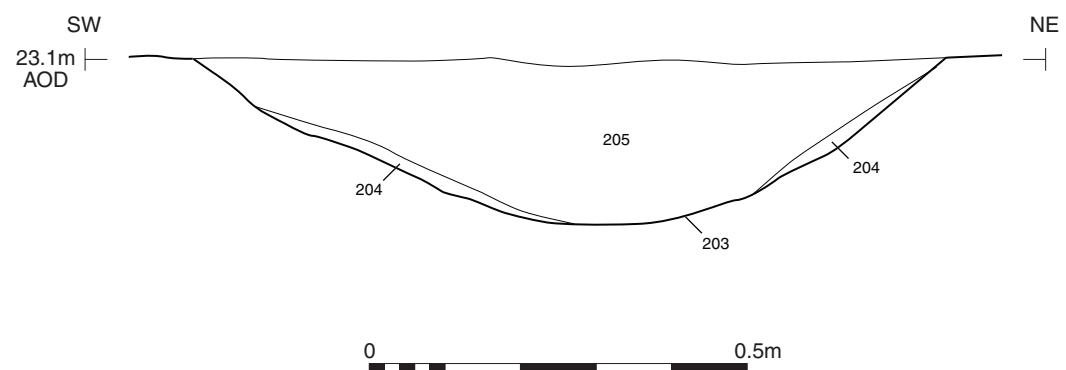
FIGURE TITLE
Trench location plan, showing
archaeological features

PROJECT NO. 660089	DATE 28-05-2013	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY JB	REVISION 00	2
APPROVED BY PJM	SCALE@A3 1:500	

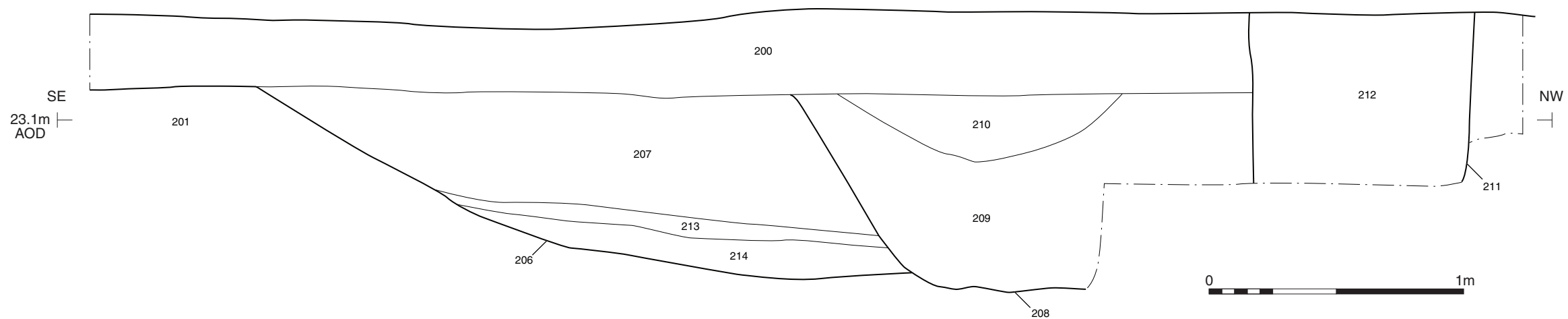
P:\660089 BG Timber Yard 64 High Road Beeston Beds EVAL\Illustration\Drawings\660089 Timber Yard Fig 2.dwg

TL

Section AA



Section BB





4

4 Trench 1, general shot, looking north-east (scales 1m)



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PROJECT TITLE

B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

<i>PROJECT NO.</i>	660089	<i>DATE</i>	31-10-2012	<i>FIGURE NO.</i>	4
<i>DRAWN BY</i>	JB	<i>REVISION</i>	00		
<i>APPROVED BY</i>	PJM	<i>SCALE@A4</i>	N/A		



5

5 Trench 2, general shot, looking south-west (scales 1m)



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B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

PROJECT NO.	660089	DATE	31-10-2012	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY	JB	REVISION	00	5
APPROVED BY	PJM	SCALE@A4	N/A	



6



7

6 Ditch 203, looking north (scale 0.4m)

7 Ditches 206 and 208, looking north (scale 2m)



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PROJECT TITLE

B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

PROJECT NO. 660089 DATE 31-10-2012
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FIGURE NO.

6 & 7



8

8 Trench 3, general shot, looking south-west (scales 1m)



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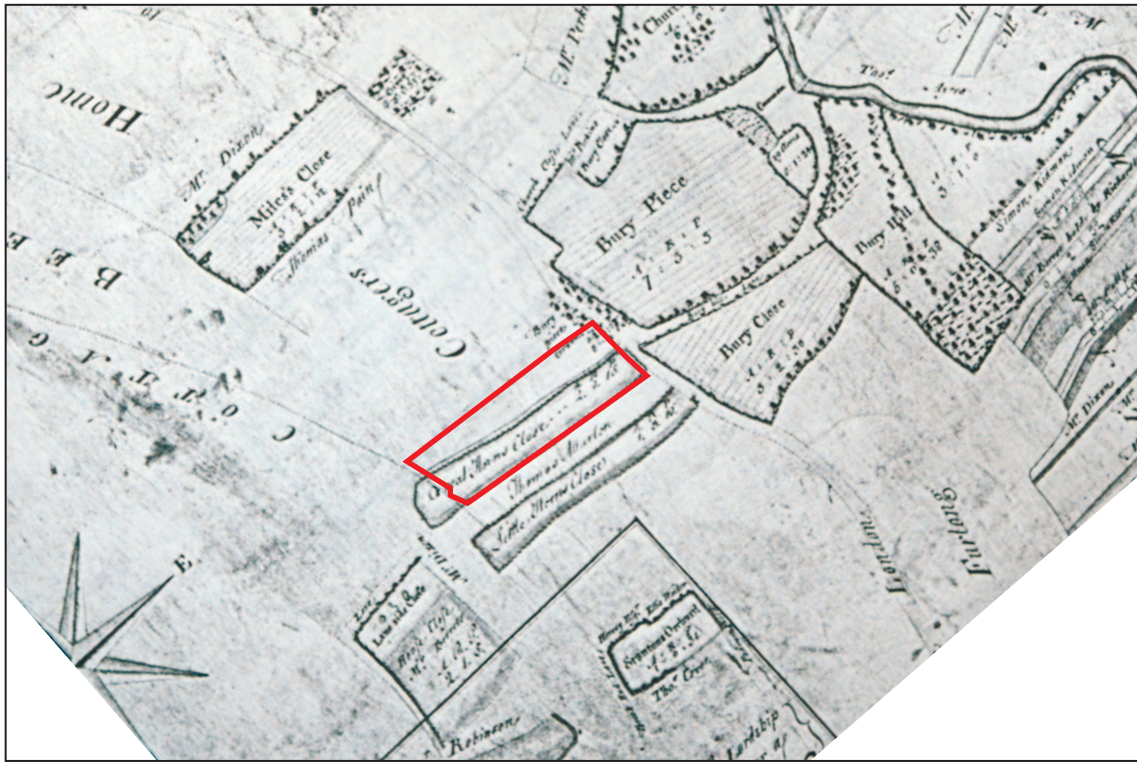
PROJECT TITLE

B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
 Beeston, Bedfordshire

FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

<i>PROJECT NO.</i>	660089	<i>DATE</i>	31-10-2012	<i>FIGURE NO.</i>	8
<i>DRAWN BY</i>	JB	<i>REVISION</i>	00		
<i>APPROVED BY</i>	PJM	<i>SCALE@A4</i>	N/A		



9



10

9 Extract from the 1748 Beeston Lordship Farm Map

10 Extract from the 1781 Northhill Enclosure Map (transcription)



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PROJECT TITLE

B G Timber Yard, 64 High Road
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FIGURE TITLE

Historic Mapping

PROJECT NO. 660089	DATE 28-05-2013	FIGURE NO.
DRAWN BY LG	REVISION 00	9 & 10
APPROVED BY PJM	SCALE@A4 1:7500 (approx)	