



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Land adjacent to 148 High Street
Kimpton
Hertfordshire

Event/Accession No. KIM/148HS'24



Quality Check

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Summary

In August 2024, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire, in order to discharge a previously unfulfilled archaeological condition. The evaluation comprised 5 test trenches excavated within open areas situated within the boundary of the nearly completed housing development. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were revealed within any of the five evaluation trenches, which were all excavated to the natural geology. The stratigraphy in Trenches 1-4 appeared to be undisturbed with topsoil and subsoil overlying the natural geology, whereas Trench 5 had a layer of modern made-ground deposited over the natural indicating that this area, at least, had probably been truncated, mostly likely during the construction of the adjacent houses and area landscaping. It is possible that archaeological remains could have been impacted by construction activities in this pocket of the site, though given the sparsity of heritage assets locally the development site was probably situated outside of the core settlement/activity area.

1 Introduction

1.1 In August 2024, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation on Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire. This project was commissioned by Richard Taaffe, of Jarvis Homes Ltd, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Watson 2024), and approved by Hertfordshire Historic Environment Team (HHET), Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), North Herts Council. The relevant planning application reference is 20/00667/FP.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (DLUHC 2023) and as condition 11 of the planning permission for the development of the site. In September 2022, Jarvis Homes Ltd was given planning permission to develop the site, which included a requirement for an Archaeological Evaluation to take place before commencement of any building. However, due to a series of unforeseen circumstances, the fulfilment of this condition did not take place as outlined in the original WSI (Landon 2022). Consequently, an Archaeological Evaluation was undertaken by KDK Archaeology Ltd in August 2024 in the areas available for trenching within the boundary of the nearly completed development.

1.3 *The Site*

Location

The development site is in the village and civil parish of Kimpton, and is within the administrative district of North Herts Council at National Grid Reference TL 1675 1811 (Fig. 1).

Description

The site comprises c.0.19ha of land adjacent to 148 High Street, which is located near the south-western edge of the village of Kimpton. It is bounded to the north and west by agricultural land, to the south by the High Street, to the southwest by private residences at Nos 148 and 150 High Street, and to the northwest by Luton Road (Fig. 2).

Geology and Topography

The bedrock geology of the site comprises chalk of the Lewes Nodular Chalk and Seaford Chalk Formations, underlying the northern portion of the site, with chalk of the Holywell Nodular Chalk and New Pit Chalk Formations, and the Chalk Rock Member in the southern portion of the



site; no superficial deposits have been recorded (<https://geologyviewer.bgs.ac.uk/>). The development site is situated at an approximate elevation of 97m AOD.

Proposed Development

The proposal called for the erection of six 4-bed dwellings and three 3-bed dwellings along with associated parking, a turning area, amenity space and various alterations to the existing vehicular access off of the High Street (Fig. 3).

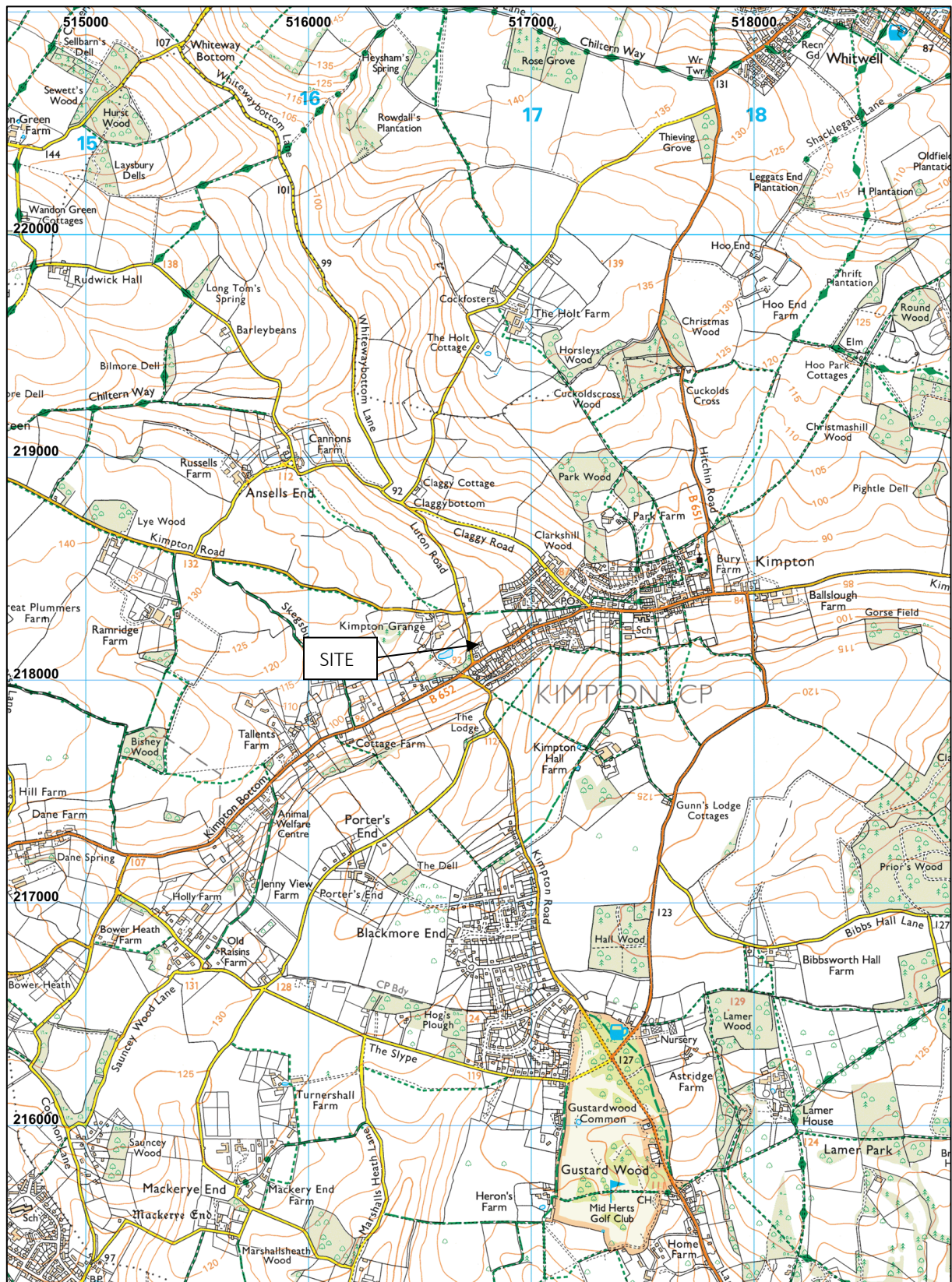


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



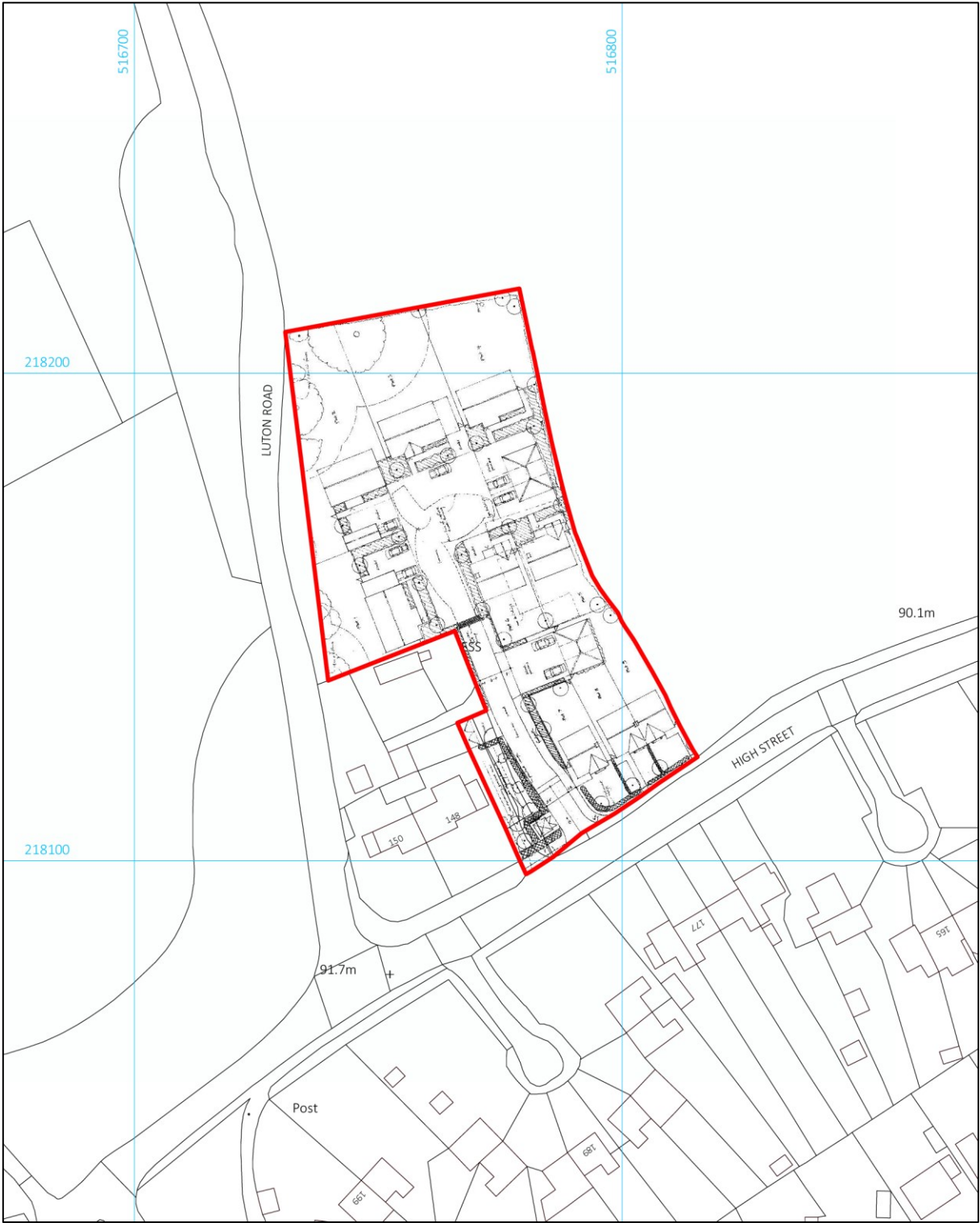


Figure 3: Proposed development (scale 1:1250)



2 Aims and Methods

2.1 Aims

The aims of the project are:

- To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

As the development site is situated near the south-western edge of the village of Kimpton it is not within the Kimpton Conservation Area and the few heritage assets located nearby predominantly date from the post-medieval period. However, as the village of Kimpton has its origins in, at least, the late Saxon period and numerous remains from the medieval period are situated immediately beyond the limits of the study area the additional research aims included as follows (ALGAO East of England, 2021):

- MSax-Lsax 02: How can we better characterise Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlement types and forms?
- Med (Rural) 09: How can we characterise medieval rural settlement morphology and relationships?
- P-Med 13: What can archaeology add to our understanding of well-documented periods?

2.2 Methods

The methods used were as follows:

- The original proposal for the archaeological field evaluation of the site comprised a minimum of 180m² of trial trenching: equivalent to two 25m x 1.8m, two x 15m x 1.8m, and one 20m x 1.8m, plus an appropriate contingency (Fig. 4). However, due to areal limitations within the site, the size and location of the trenches was modified as shown in Section 4.

2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2022)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2023a)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Universal Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2023ab)
- Current Historic England guidelines (HE 2008, HE 2015b)
- The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers East of England Region *Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England* (ALGAO 2003)



Figure 4: Proposed trench plan (scale 1:750)



3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 3.1 The village of Kimpton is situated between the Mimram and Lea river valleys, about 4.8km northeast of Harpenden. The toponym means the ‘farm/settlement connected with Cyma’, derived from compounding the Old English elements *personal name* + *-ingtūn* (a settlement called after, or connected with...) (KEPN 2024; SEPN 2024). The development site is not situated within the Kimpton Conservation area.

This section has been compiled with information from the Hertfordshire County Council Historic Environment Report (HER; Search Ref: 76.24). The HER data, with a 500m search radius, is shown in Fig. 5.

Prehistoric (before 600BC)

No remains from this period are listed in the HER search area.

Iron Age (600BC - AD43)

No remains from this period are listed in the HER search area.

Roman (AD43 - c.450)

No remains from this period are listed in the HER search area. It had been suggested, though disproven, that a Roman road (Viatores 1964), running from Verulamium to Baldock, was connected to a possible Roman road that ran from Gustard Wood through Kimpton (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020:5; Landon 2022: 15).

Saxon (c.450 - 1066)

The area was settled from at least the Late Saxon period as the manor of Kimpton Manor was listed in the Domesday Book 1086 as *Kamintone* (SEPN 2024). At the time of the Norman conquest, it was held by Ælfgifu, the widow of Earl Ælfgar, mother of Earls Eadwine of Mercia and Mōrcæþ of Northumbria, and mother-in-law of Harold II (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020: 3; Landon 2022: 15; Powell-Smith 2024).

No remains from this period are listed in the HER search area

Medieval (1066 - 1500)

Post-conquest, the manor of Kimpton was held by William I's half-brother Odo, the Bishop of Bayeux and Earl of Kent, who let it to Ralph Courbespine (Fitzpatrick-Matthews 2020: 3; Powell-Smith 2024).

The village contains the Church of St Peter and St Paul (Grade I, NHLE: 1093222), which dates from the 13th century, and several local estates and buildings have medieval origins. Additionally, numerous potentially medieval earthworks have been revealed by Lidar (a survey method using light detection and ranging with a pulsed laser). However, no remains from this period are listed in the HER search area.

Post-medieval (1500 - 1900)

Only a few heritage assets are listed in the HER search area. The nearest Listed Buildings are the 17th century ‘The Commons’ (Grade II, NHLE: 1102757), situated c.200m north on Luton Road; and beginning c.200m southwest on Kimpton Bottom (road) lie the 18th century Bottom Cottage (No. 20; Grade II, NHLE: 1347273), the 17th – 18th century ‘Stoneheaps’ (Grade II, NHLE: 1174113), ‘Stoneheaps Cottage’ (NHLE: 1102793) and the barn and adjoining outbuildings at



'Stoneheaps' (NHLE: 1102751). Approximately 200m northwest of the development is Kimpton Grange (HER 15979) a 19th century brick house that replaced an earlier timber-framed house.

Modern (1900 - present)

At the south-eastern edge of the search area is an undated large macula or Circular Enclosure at Porter's End (HER 16162). It is a large roughly circular mark, about 60m across, which is visible from the air and lies in a field between Porter's End and Blackmore End. It is located c.175m northeast of a chalk pit recorded at The Dell, and might be another pit; there are further similar features in the fields immediately to the east and all are likely to be part of a series of large chalk pits.

3.2 ***The Known Archaeology and History of the Site***

No site-specific information is listed in the HER search area.



Figure 5: HER data plan (scale as shown)



4 Results

4.1 Introduction

A total of five evaluation trenches with an area of 129.5m², equivalent to c. 2.5% of the total site area, were excavated using a 3-tonne digger fitted with a 1.5m toothless ditching bucket in the areas available within the boundary of the development (Fig. 6; Plates 1-12). As the trenches had to be 'fitted' around the development the project encountered some areal constraints (e.g., fencing, services, ground stability) on the placement and size of the trenches as originally proposed (Fig. 4; Watson 2024). Consequently, they had to be repositioned and resized accordingly; this also decreased the area excavated from the proposed 180m². Trench 4 was especially problematic as the depth required to reach the natural geology made it particularly dangerous as the sides began to collapse, so the whole trench had to be abandoned.

The dimensions of the trenches varied and were as follows:

- Trench 1:** 29m (L) x 2m (W) x 0.45m (D)
- Trench 2:** 17.5 (L) x 1.8m (W) x 0.7m (D)
- Trench 3:** 11.2m (L) x 1.8m (W) x 0.7m (D)
- Trench 4:** 3m (L) x 1.8m (W) x 1.73m (D)
- Trench 5:** 8m (L) x 1.8m (W) x 0.9m (D)

The stratigraphy revealed within each trench was numbered beginning with the trench number.

The stratigraphy encountered, despite some variations, was fairly uniform across the site and comprised (Fig. 7; Plates 3, 7, 9, 10 & 12):

- Topsoil** (100, 200, 300 & 401): Mid greyish brown sandy clay
- Subsoil 1** (101, 201, 301 & 402): Mid yellowish brown slightly sandy clay with chalk flecks
- Subsoil 2** (102): Mid yellowish brown slightly sandy clay with chalk fragments
- Made-ground 1** (400): Re-deposited topsoil
- Made-ground 2** (500): Broken modern rubble mixed with redeposited natural
- Natural geology** (103, 202, 302, 403 & 501): Mid reddish-brown clay with flints

On completion of the fieldwork, no archaeological features, deposits, or finds were encountered within any of the evaluation trenches.



Figure 6: Modified trench plan (scale 1:750). Please note that the numbering of the trenches also differs from the proposed layout shown in Fig. 4

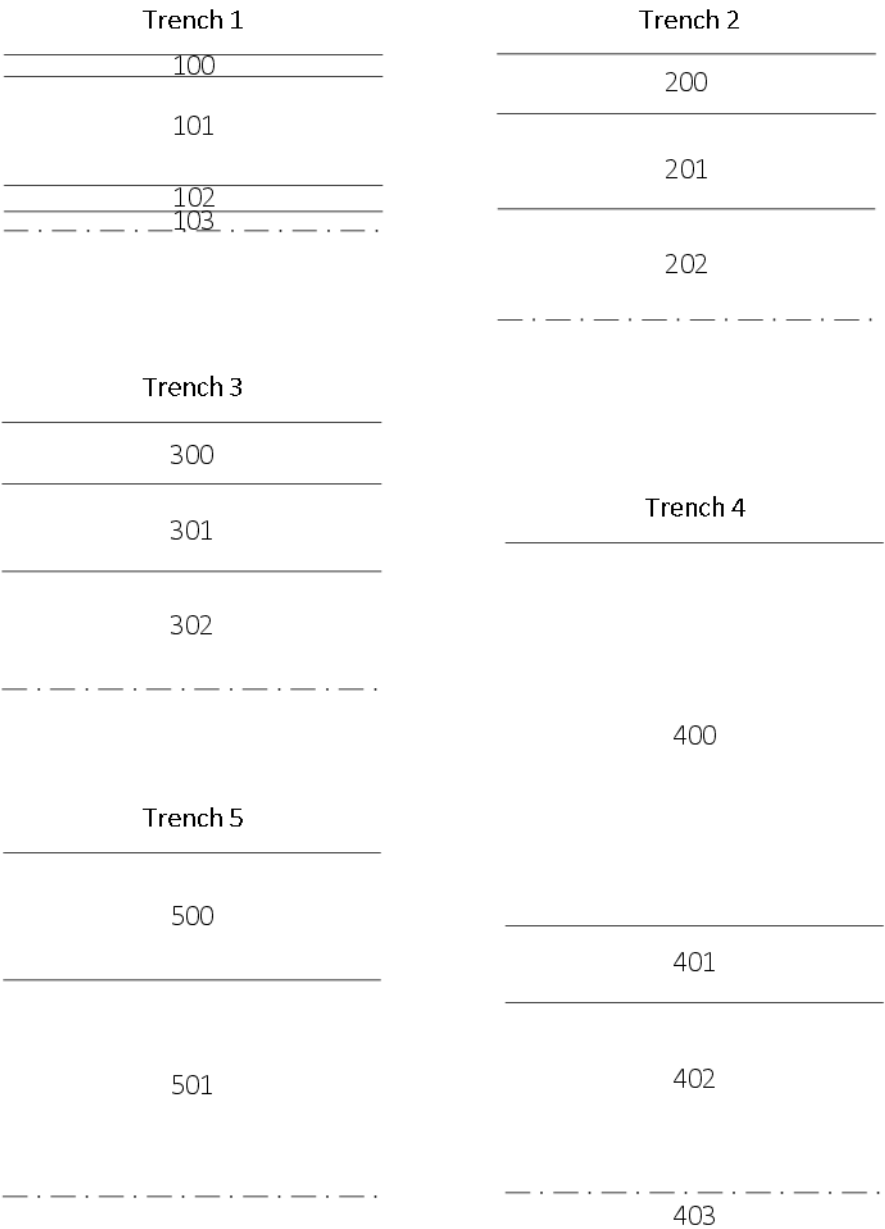


Figure 7: Trench stratigraphy (scale 1:20)



Plate 1: Trench 1, looking NE



Plate 2: Trench 1, looking SE



Plate 3: Trench 1 stratigraphy



Plate 4: Trench 2, looking NE



Plate 5: Trench 2, looking SE



Plate 6: Trench 2, looking SW



Plate 7: Trench 2 stratigraphy



Plate 8: Trench 3, looking NW



Plate 9: Trench 3 stratigraphy



Plate 10: Trench 4 (& stratigraphy), NW



Plate 11: Trench 5, looking SW



Plate 12: Trench 5 stratigraphy



5 Conclusions

In August 2024, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire, in order to discharge a previously unfulfilled archaeological condition. The evaluation comprised 5 trenches excavated within open areas situated within the boundary of the nearly completed housing development.

No archaeological finds, features or deposits were revealed within any of the five evaluation trenches, which were all excavated to the natural geology. The stratigraphy in Trenches 1-4 appeared to be entirely natural with a topsoil/subsoil overlying the natural; the topsoil (401) in Trench 4 was sealed under a layer of modern made-ground (400). Conversely, Trench 5 had a layer of modern made-ground deposited over the natural indicating that this area may have been truncated, mostly likely during the construction of the adjacent houses and area landscaping. It is possible that archaeological remains could have been impacted by construction activities in this pocket of the site, though given the sparsity of heritage assets within the HER search area (Fig. 5) the development area was probably situated outside of the core settlement/activity area. Consequently, it has not been possible to further any of the stated research aims for this investigation.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Richard Taaffe, for commissioning this report on behalf of Jarvis Homes Ltd. Thanks are also due to Mark Landon of HHET for providing historic environment records, and to Andy Instone of HHET for monitoring the project.

The fieldwork was carried out by Barney King PCIfA & Chris Martin-Taylor BSc. The report was written by Derek Watson PhD and edited by David Kaye BA ACIfA.



7 Archive

- 7.1 The project archive will comprise a digital version of the Evaluation Report which will contain the following:
- List of photographs
 - Site Records
 - OASIS summary report
- 7.2 The archive will be deposited with OASIS kdkarcha1-527043 (Event/Accession no: KIM/148HS'24).



8 References

Standards & Specifications

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Medlycott M. (ed) 2011 *Research and Archaeology Re-visited: A Revised Framework for the East of England*. East Anglian Archaeology Occasional Paper 24

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<http://epns.nottingham.ac.uk/browse/Hertfordshire/Kimpton/53285ba0b47fc40ace0007a2-Kimpton>



Appendix 1: Photograph List

Shot	View	Subject
1	NW	Trench 1
2	SE	Trench 1
3	SW	Trench 1 Stratigraphy
4	NW	Trench 4
5	W	Trench 4
6	NE	Trench 2
7	SE	Trench 2
8	SW	Trench 2
9	NW	Trench 3
10	NW	Trench 2 Stratigraphy
11	NE	Trench 3 Stratigraphy
12	SW	Trench 5
13	NW	Trench 5 Stratigraphy



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire	Project Site Code	870/KHS
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-527043	Event/Accession no	KIM/148HS'24
OS reference	TL 1675 1811	Study area size	129.5m ²
Project Type	Archaeological Evaluation	Height (mAOD)	97m
Short Description	In August 2024, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire, in order to discharge a previously unfulfilled archaeological condition. The evaluation comprised 5 test trenches excavated within open areas situated within the boundary of the nearly completed housing development. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were revealed within any of the five evaluation trenches, which were all excavated to the natural geology. The stratigraphy in Trenches 1-4 appeared to be undisturbed with topsoil and subsoil overlying the natural geology, whereas Trench 5 had a layer of modern made-ground deposited over the natural indicating that this area, at least, had probably been truncated, mostly likely during the construction of the adjacent houses and area landscaping. It is possible that archaeological remains could have been impacted by construction activities in this pocket of the site, though given the sparsity of heritage assets locally the development site was probably situated outside of the core settlement/activity area.		
Previous work	None	Site status	None
Planning proposal	Erection of six 4-bed dwellings and three 3-bed dwellings including associated parking, turning area, amenity space and alterations to existing vehicular access off High Street (amended plans received 19/06/20)	Current land use	Residential
Local Planning Authority	North Herts Council	Planning application ref.	20/00667/FP
Monument type	None	Monument period	None
Significant finds	None	Future work	Unknown
RESEARCH AIMS			
Research framework	Section /Question	Summary of outcome	



ALGAO East of England, 2021	To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions. MSax-Lsax 02: How can we better characterise Middle and Late Anglo-Saxon settlement types and forms? Med (Rural) 09: How can we characterise medieval rural settlement morphology and relationships? P-Med 13: What can archaeology add to our understanding of well-documented periods?	None. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were revealed within any of the five evaluation trenches.	
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator		Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	David Kaye BA ACIFA	Director/Supervisor	Chris Martin-Taylor BSc
Sponsor/funding body	Richard Taaffe, Jarvis Homes, Burgundy House, 21 The Foresters, Harpenden, Herts AL5 2FB		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	27.08.2024	End date	29.08.2024
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	OASIS (kdkarcha1-527043; Event/Accession no: KIM/148HS'24)	None	
Paper		None	
Digital		Report, WSI, Photographs, Drawings	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Evaluation: Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire		
Serial title & volume	870/KHS/2.1		
Author(s)	Derek Watson PhD		
Page no's	24	Date	05.09.2024



Appendix 3: Hertfordshire Historic Environment Record Sheet

Site name and address: Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire		
County: Hertfordshire	District:	
Village/Town: Kimpton	Parish: Kimpton	
Planning application reference: 20/00667/FP		
Client's name, address, & tel. no: Richard Taaffe, Jarvis Homes, Burgundy House, 21 The Foresters, Harpenden, Herts AL5 2FB		
Nature of application: Erection of six 4-bed dwellings and three 3-bed dwellings including associated parking, turning area, amenity space and alterations to existing vehicular access off High Street (amended plans received 19/06/20)		
Present land use: Residential		
Size of application area:	Size of area investigated: 129.5m ²	
NGR (to 8 figures): TL 1675 1811	Site code:	
Site director: Chris Martin-Taylor BSc	Organization: KDK Archaeology Ltd	
Type of work: Archaeological Evaluation		
Date of Work:	Start: 27.08.2024	Finish: 29.08.2024
Curating museum: North Hertfordshire Museum		
Related HER no's: None		Periods represented: Modern
Relevant previous summaries/reports: Watson, D 2024 <i>Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Mitigation Strategy; Stage 1: Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire</i> . KDK Archaeology Ltd, Report No. 870/KHS/1.1		
Summary of fieldwork results: In August 2024, KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation of Land adjacent to 148 High Street, Kimpton, Hertfordshire, in order to discharge a previously unfulfilled archaeological condition. The evaluation comprised 5 test trenches excavated within open areas situated within the boundary of the nearly completed housing development. No archaeological finds, features or deposits were revealed within any of the five evaluation trenches, which were all excavated to the natural geology. The stratigraphy in Trenches 1-4 appeared to be undisturbed with topsoil and subsoil overlying the natural geology, whereas Trench 5 had a layer of modern made-ground deposited over the natural indicating that this area, at least, had probably been truncated, mostly likely during the construction of the adjacent houses and area landscaping. It is possible that archaeological remains could have been impacted by construction activities in this pocket of the site, though given the sparsity of heritage assets locally the development site was probably situated outside of the core settlement/activity area.		
Author: Derek Watson PhD	Date: 05.09.2024	