

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE IN MILTON KEYNES

To: Buckinghamshire County Wide Archaeological Advisory Committee

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A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform the Committee of current archaeological matters in Milton Keynes.

B. FIELDWORK PROJECTS

2. Attached is a list of fieldwork projects (Events) that have been undertaken in the Milton Keynes area between January and June 2001.
3. The watching brief of 126 High Street, Newport Pagnell was significant in identifying the position of a small section of the Civil War defences that surrounded the town. By using this information in conjunction with the 1644 map of the defences and the surviving earthworks in Bury Field, it has been possible to identify the location of the northern defences from the West Gate to Newport Pagnell Mill. This aligns with a small section of earthworks, now destroyed, shown existing close to Queens Avenue on the 1881 Ordnance Survey map. The Civil War West Gate appears to be further south than previously considered at the north end of Bury Avenue and it is possible that the southern faces of the 'Gravell Bulworke' are preserved in the angle formed by Spring Gardens and Caldecote Street.
4. English Partnerships (EP) have liaised with the Archaeological Officer in respect of the development of Monkston Park Grid Square. At the request of the Archaeological Officer, EP arranged for trial trenching to be carried out on the northern section of the site. This revealed a series of pits and ditches of both prehistoric and Iron Age / Roman periods. These were insufficient to identify the boundaries of the two main sites and EH was requested to have a geophysical survey carried out of the surrounding area. This was undertaken and revealed a series of enclosures extending outside the evaluated area. The geophysical survey is now being extended to the majority of the grid square and the results of this are awaited. Once this has been obtained a further programme of evaluations will be undertaken.

C. PLANNING

5. Between 1 January and 30 June 2001 there have been 116 consultations in respect of archaeology as a direct result of planning applications, pre-development enquiries, schemes by English Partnerships, the Forestry Commission, Anglian Water, Eastern Electricity and FRCA. This is an increase of 57 consultations (96%) over the same period last year.

D. SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

6. 13 Researchers used the Sites & Monuments Record between January and June
7. 3 Licences have been issued to archaeological Contractors to use digital material from the Sites & Monuments Record
8. Anna McEvoy, a volunteer, has assisted in developing a filing system for the Archaeological Events
9. Paul Kessler-Lyne, a planning student, has researched and produced a parish history file for Little Brickhill under the supervision of the Archaeological Officer. The information has been produced in advance of the area being considered for Conservation Area Designation.
10. 75 Records have been added or altered on the Sites & Monuments Database
11. The GIS mapping system now includes digitised Ridge & Furrow maps for 18 parishes.
12. The GIS system has been developed to enable Field names to be shown as a GIS layer
13. There have been 4 additions to the List of Historic Buildings for Newport Pagnell and 20 additions for Wolverton.

E. PROPOSED ACTION

14. The Committee is asked to note this report.