

ARCHAEOLOGICAL SERVICE IN MILTON KEYNES

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum

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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 25 fieldwork projects (Events) that have been undertaken in the Milton Keynes area between July and December 2005 [30 events in 2004]
3. The Oxley Park West Iron-Age excavation had to be curtailed during the winter of 2004/5 because of poor site access. The developer re-tendered the work for 2005 and a different contractor was appointed. The transfer of information etc. between the two archaeological contractors proceeded very professionally without significantly affecting the archaeology.
4. English Partnerships funded extensive pre-planning archaeological works on a 1.5 ha site at Renny Lodge, Newport Pagnell involving building recording of the foundations of the former workhouse and the excavation of Iron Age / Roman enclosures. The site was subsequently sold to developers.

C. PLANNING

5. Between 1st July and 31st December 2005 there were 134 consultations in respect of archaeology [162 *in 2004*] as a direct result of planning applications, pre-development enquiries, schemes by English Partnerships, the Forestry Commission, Anglian Water, and Eastern Electricity. Although the number of consultations has reduced this has been offset by the increasing size of developments as part of the Milton Keynes & South Midlands Growth Area.
6. An administrative error resulted in the planning consent for land at 27 East Street Olney containing a watching brief rather than an evaluation clause. This could not be rectified and the subsequent watching brief

revealed a probable Roman corn-drier indicating that the error had been to the detriment of the archaeology.

7. Nick Crank commenced work in January 2006 as a second archaeological officer to deal with the Milton Keynes archaeological casework. The post is permanent and the first three years have been partially funded by a grant from English Heritage.
8. The MKI Observatory Website.[www.mkiobservatory.org.uk] has gone online and as well as providing facts and figures on Milton Keynes also has a mapping system with a considerable amount of map based data including planning constraints such as listed buildings, conservation areas, scheduled ancient monuments and areas of archaeological interest. It is proposed to put more archaeological data on this in due course. Utility companies are using this to establish whether schemes are likely to impact on constraints such as archaeology.

D. SITES AND MONUMENTS RECORD

9. The Sites & Monuments Record was visited by researchers 7 times between July and December [*10 in 2004*]
10. 6 Licences have been issued to archaeological Contractors to use digital material from the Sites & Monuments Record [*7 in 2004*].
11. A treasure inquest was held in December concerning a Bronze Age hoard that was probably found in the Milton Keynes Area. This convoluted story included a person known as Louie the Parrot, an untraceable metal detectorist, a Dutch archaeometallurgist, the British Museum and our Finds Liaison Officer, Ros Tyrell. The event attracted media attention and both the FLO and M.K . Archaeological Officer appeared on regional television.

E OUTREACH

12. Milton Keynes Heritage Association has established a small archaeological sub committee which meets bi-monthly and comprises representatives of local archaeological / history societies, both Milton Keynes metal detector groups, archaeological contractors, the Finds Liaison Officer and Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer. It is chaired by Neil Loudon and is currently establishing a web site on local archaeology.

E. PROPOSED ACTION

13. The Committee is asked to note this report.