

CONSERVATION & ARCHAEOLOGY IN MILTON KEYNES

Update, March 2022

DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT

The Conservation & Archaeology Team received 414 planning consultations during the second half of 2021, 170 of which were archaeology related, 244 building conservation related.

FIELDWORK

10 fieldwork projects took place between July and December, full list appended. Projects comprised:

5 excavations; 2 trial trench evaluations, 1 geophysical survey; and 2 watching briefs.

Highlights included excavations in relation to a large mixed-use development to the east of the M1 between Milton Keynes and Newport Pagnell, known as MK East Strategic Urban Extension (MKESUE). This first phase of mitigation excavations carried out by Pre-Construct Archaeology, focused on land to the west of the River Ouzel close to the M1 motorway. A multi-period landscape was revealed spanning early Bronze Age funerary monuments (ploughed out barrows / ring ditches) to Iron Age and Romano-British rural settlement sites. Artefacts recovered included an Iron Age log ladder from the base of a presumed waterhole / well (**image below**):



Iron Age log ladder (centre) in base of waterhole / well

HERITAGE AT RISK

The March 2022 version of the register lists 27 heritage assets that are at risk, down from 31 in 2021. Work continues to decrease the level of identified risk at each of these heritage assets with the aim of removing them from the Heritage at Risk Register.

A recent success is the conservation and repair of the Chapel and Farmhouse at Bradwell Abbey. Respectively a scheduled monument and a grade II listed building, both form part of the medieval monastic complex, one of the key heritage assets in the New Town and home to the Milton Keynes City Discovery Centre. The two-year project to restore the buildings was jointly funded by the Council and Historic England with support from the Conservation & Archaeology and Heritage teams. Both structures have now been removed from the local Heritage at Risk register with the scheduled Chapel also being removed from the national register.

Archaeological work carried out as part of the project revealed reused masonry within the fabric of the 17th century farmhouse, including a carved stone head (**below**) that may have originally formed part of the priory church.



Carved stone head from the farmhouse, Bradwell Abbey

CONSERVATION AREAS

The council is continuing to review its 27 Conservation Areas. During 2021, five more reviews were completed for Castlethorpe (**below**), Hanslope, North Crawley Stoke Goldington and Woughton on the Green. During 2022, five more reviews will be completed for Emberton, Ravenstone, Sherington and Weston Underwood. A report to Cabinet seeking approval of the revised boundaries and supporting documents will be made before the end of the year. This will bring the total number of conservation areas reviewed to 16.



Castlethorpe, medieval motte with church of St Simon and St Jude behind

MK NEW TOWN HERITAGE REGISTER

Invitations have been sent out to potential members of the selection panel that will assess nominated assets against the adopted selection criteria. It is hoped that an introductory session will be held for the panel in April with nominations being considered in the summer of 2022. Outreach projects for spring and summer have been programmed and an architectural drawing strand of the project is nearly complete. Meanwhile, a project officer will be recruited to collate information regarding those nominations to be taken to the panel.

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD (HER)

The Historic England sponsored audit of the HER was completed in late 2021 and a new action plan drawn up.

Report compiled by Nick Crank, Senior Archaeological Officer,
with contributions from:

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& Simon Peart, Conservation & Archaeology Manager

Conservation & Archaeology Team, Placemaking, Milton Keynes Council

Fieldwork Events July to December 2021

Event No.	Site Name / Event type	Organisation	Dates	Results
EMK1454	South Caldecotte, Bow Brickhill - Mitigation Excavations	Albion Archaeology	05/2021 – 12/2021	Ongoing excavations on periphery of Magiovinium Roman town,
EMK1457	Walkers Bridge Farm, Lavendon Road, Olney - Trial trenching	Souterrain	07/2021	1 st to 3 rd century Romano-British ditch and pits
EMK1458	35-37 Vicarage Road, Stony Stratford - Trial trenching	KDK Archaeology	08/2021	Single undated but likely post-medieval pit
EMK1459	Towergate A, Wavendon - Excavation	Headland Archaeology	08/2021	Late Iron Age to Romano-British settlement with small early RB cemetery
EMK1460	Milton Keynes East SUE, west of site - Strip, Map and Sample Excavations	Pre-construct	08/2021	2 Bronze Age ring ditches, Iron Age and RB rural settlement
EMK1461	158 High Street, Stony Stratford - Watching Brief	Bancroft Heritage	09/2021	Negative
EMK1462	Milton Keynes Western Expansion Area, Area 10, Land Parcel D - Excavations	Border Archaeology	10/2021 – 12/2021	LIA settlement
EMK1463	SEMK SUE, Wavendon / Woburn Sands - Geophysical Survey	MOLA Northampton	09/2021	Report awaited, pre-planning.
EMK1464	land west of Warrington Road, Olney - Watching Brief	Oxford Archaeology	10/2021	Negative
EMK1465	Land at Eagle Farm, Lower End Road, Wavendon - Excavation	TVAS	11/2021	LIA to RB settlement

Notes: EBA – early Bronze Age; EIA – early Iron Age; MIA – middle Iron Age; LIA – late Iron Age; RB – Romano-British; Med – Medieval; PM – Post Medieval