Rye Farm
Culham
Oxfordshire

Geophysical Survey

for

Andrew Lay
High Lodge Farm
Culham
Oxfordshire

Report number 16/2010

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Carried out by

Roger and Sally Ainslie
Abingdon Archaeological Geophysics
4 Sutton Close, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 1ER
tel. 01235 529720
website www.archaeologicalgeophysics.co.uk

Introduction

This report has been requested by Charlotte Lay of High Lodge Farm to address the question of why the report on the archaeological evaluation of this area concluded :-

" The ring ditch speculated by cropmarks in the area of trench 5 was not seen, however the circular positioning of some of the features as well as natural depressions or features may have given the impression of a ring ditch"
An Archaeological Evaluation at High Lodge Farm, Culham, Oxfordshire, John Moore Heritage Services, July 2010 p16

Background

I have read that report which also states in section 4.2 that the evaluation was carried out in good conditions and the results are felt to be representative of the extant archaeology.

I have also seen the Google Earth air photo of the area dated 6 February 2009 where a ring ditch is shown at 51deg 40'06.38''N and 1deg 16'14.26'' W.

This feature was also on the plan given by the Oxfordshire County Archaeology Service at the start of the work and was apparently crossed by John Moore's Trench 5.

It also appears in Benson and Miles book of air photograph plots of the upper Thames.

I was impeded from seeing what the trench had found by the lack of any photographs in the John Moores report, although I understand that the brief for the work required these.

Similarly that report gives the height of the ground in the areas of the evaluation trenches but does not give their national grid or latitude and longitude to enable their positions to be accurately located.

Fieldwork

GPS

On 26 June 2010 we used our Trimble Pro XR gps to get the position of the evaluation trench which had been backfilled. Its position was (to approx 0.7m) :-

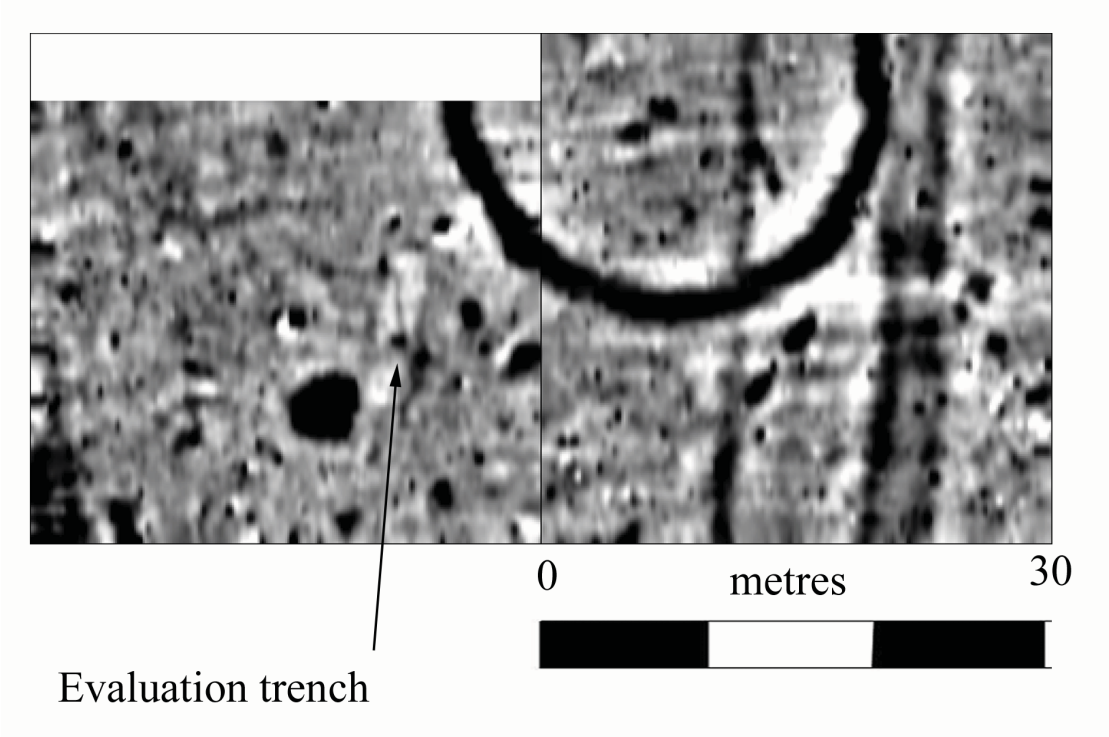
SW 450520.0E, 196868.5N
SE 450522.3E, 196868.5N
NW 450520.9E, 196875.9N
NE 450522.9E, 196876.2N

Magnetometry

We laid out 2 grids on the National Grid each 30 metres square with the north western corner at
450500.00E 196890N

These were surveyed with our Bartington Grad 601/2 fluxgate gradiometer.

Here is the result:-



Conclusions

From the above I can only conclude that the barrow ditch does exist.
The failure to locate it is probably due to the evaluation trench being put in the wrong place if it was supposed to cross the barrow ditch. I am told that Bob Eeles, a local amateur archaeologist, told this to the people carrying out the excavation at the time.

Roger Ainslie
27 July 2010