

KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Scotts Farm Towcester Road Maids Moreton Buckinghamshire

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June 2016



Quality Check

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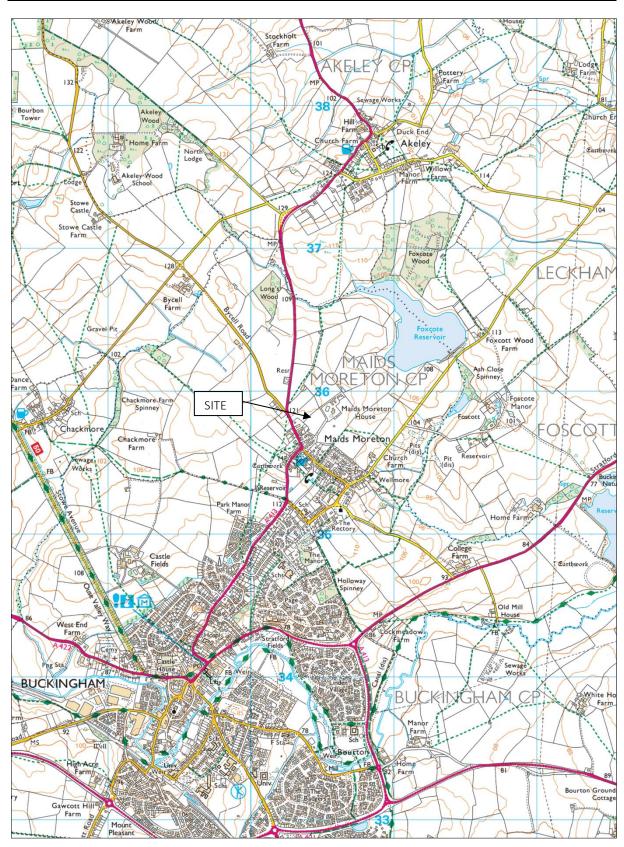


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)



Summary

In May 2016 an Archaeological Evaluation was undertaken at Scotts Farm, Towcester Road, Maids Moreton in order to inform development proposals. The evaluation comprised 14 trenches across the site, which was covered by upstanding ridge and furrow, and revealed two small ditches within a single trench in the eastern field. These appear to pre-date the medieval field system and are possibly outliers forming part of a hinterland to the Iron Age / Romano- British farmstead located to the south east of the site.

1 Introduction

1.1 In May 2016 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook an Archaeological Evaluation of Scotts Farm, Towcester Road, Maids Moreton. The project was commissioned by Gavin Wright of Bycell Fields and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (210/MMS), and approved by Phil Markham, Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Buckinghamshire County Council Archaeological Service (BCAS).

1.2 Planning Background

This evaluation has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) in order to inform development proposals.

1.3 *The Site*

Location

The site is located at the north end of the village (and civil parish) of Maids Moreton, in the county of Buckinghamshire. It is situated at National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 7043 3580 (Fig. 1).

Description

The development is bounded to the south by the access road, Walnut Drive, with open fields beyond and to the south-east by a small copse surrounding the Vitalograph Business Park. The north and north-eastern boundaries consist of open fields. The western boundary is formed by the rear gardens of Scotts Farm Close and the houses that line Towcester road.

Geology & Topography

The bedrock geology is predominantly sedimentary, formed of sandstone, siltstone and mudstone of the Kellaways Formation with superficial deposits of glacial sands and gravels (http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html).

Proposed Development

The proposed consists of twelve 4-5 bedroom detached dwellings with garages and associated landscaping (Fig. 3).



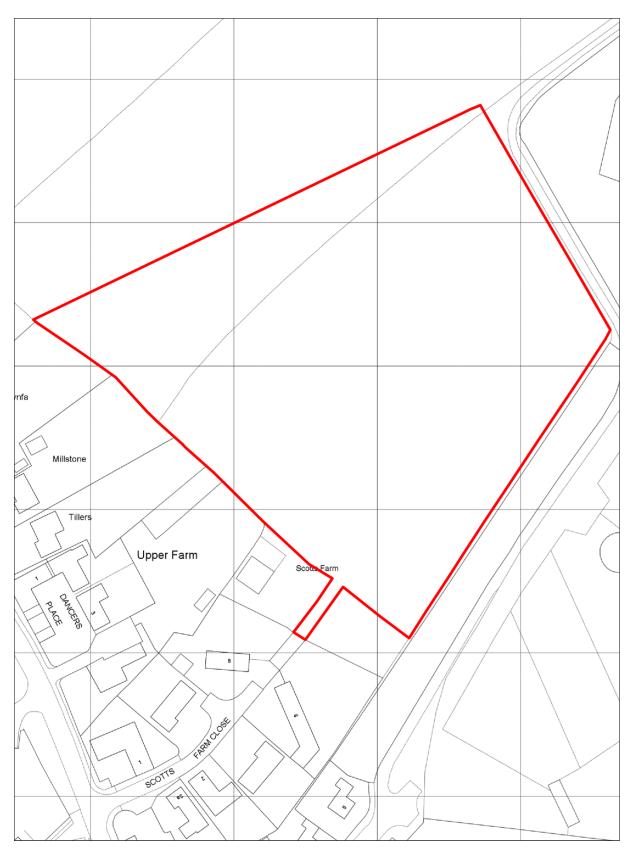


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:1250)



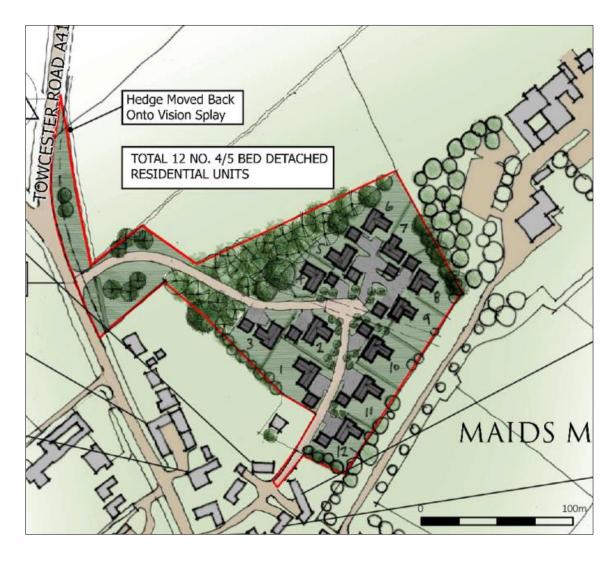


Figure 3: Proposed development (scale as shown)



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

The aims of this evaluation as defined in the approved WSI (210/MMS) were:

- 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 landscapes.
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

2.2 Methods

In line with the requirements of the brief, the methods used were as follows:

- The excavation of 4, 20m x 1.8m trenches
- The excavation of 2, 30m x 1.8m trenches
- The excavation of 2, 35m x 1.8 m trenches
- The excavation of 2, 40m x 1.8m trenches
- The excavation of 4, 50m x 1.8m trenches

2.3 Standards

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The WSI
- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA, 2014)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct (CIfA, 2014)
- Current Historic England guidelines (HE 2015, 2008)



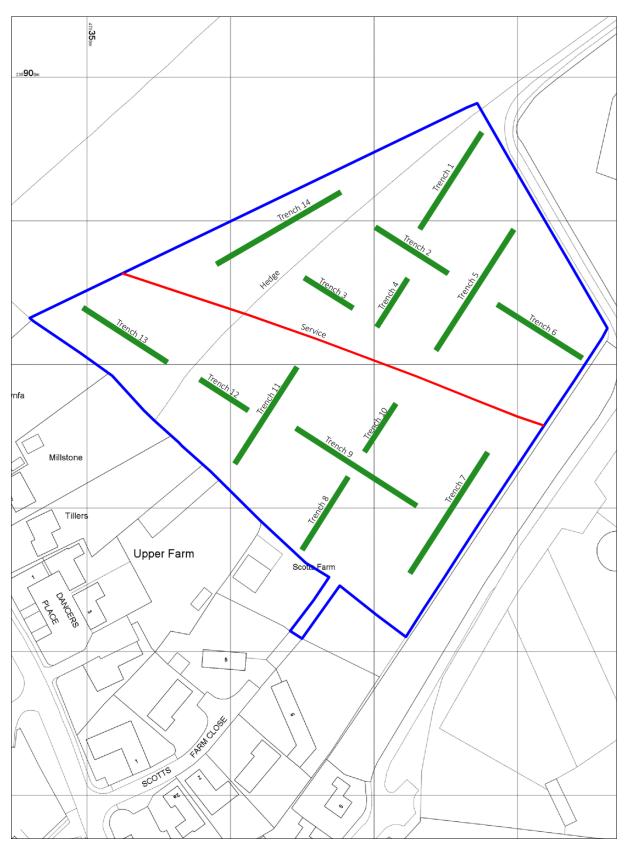


Figure 4: Trench location plan (scale 1:1250)



3 Archaeological and Historical Background

3.1 Although there is evidence for Iron Age and Roman settlement just over 1km from the proposed development site, the village of Maids Moreton has little evidence for occupation before the Saxon period. The name Maids Moreton is derived from the Old English words mor meaning a marsh or barren upland and tūn Old English for an enclosure; a farmstead; a village or an estate (http://kepn.nottingham.ac.uk/).

The proposed development area and the land around it is still marked with the characteristic ridge and furrow of medieval cultivation (HER 007700000).

This section has been compiled with information from the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (CBS), KDK's own library, and reputable online sources. The Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) has been consulted for the study area, which covers a 1km radius of the site.

3.2 **Prehistoric** (before 600BC)

No evidence for a prehistoric presence has been found within the study area. However beyond the study area there is much evidence for settlement along the Ouse Valley.

3.3 *Iron Age* (600BC - AD43)

The solitary evidence for Iron Age activity in the study area comes from several sherds of pottery recovered during the excavation of a pipe trench in the field to the east of the proposed development area, adjacent to Walnut Drive (HER 0659200000). However a possible slight univalate hillfort does sit just beyond the 1km study area to the south of Foscott, overlooking the river Great Ouse (https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1018453).

3.4 **Roman** (AD43 - c.450)

There is limited evidence for Roman occupation in the study area. A Roman settlement has been suggested 1km north of the proposed development area (HER 0679000000) and a single denarius of Hadrian has been found South of Maids Moreton (HER 0076900000). Several Roman roads are also suggested to have run close to the village; Viatores 166 (HER 0297900000) and Viatores 177 (HER 0297400000) which run to the south of the village.

3.5 **Saxon** (c.450 - 1066)

Although there is no archaeological evidence for the Saxon period, documentary sources indicate a settlement of at least 2 manors had been established by the late Saxon period. Leofwine of Nuneham held a 5 hide manor, which he was free to sell. Although it had a fairly low population, there were in addition 5 slaves and a mill (William & Martin 2002: 421). A second, 4 hide manor, was split between Aelfric, son of Goding, Eadric who was part of Esgar the Staller's retinue, and Sæweard, a man of Azur, son of Toti. They held 2, 1½ and ½ hide each respectively. Wulfric, who was part of Aelfric's father's retinue held a further 2 hides in Moreton (*ibid*: 405-6).All of this land, other than Leofwine's holding, which he was allowed to keep, was granted to Walter Giffard after the Norman Conquest (*ibid*).

3.6 *Medieval* (1066 - 1500)

The Domesday Survey of 1086 makes no mention of land used for the holding or rearing of livestock suggesting that although a wealthy settlement, assessed at 11 geld units (opendomesday.org), the primary business of Maids Moreton may have been crop cultivation. The area was well settled in the medieval period and cropmarks shown in aerial photography



suggest that Maids Moreton in fact shrank sometime in the late-medieval or post-medieval period (HER 0281700000).

There may also be a deserted medieval village (DMV) situated near the present day hamlet of Foscott, an area with more upstanding ridge and furrow similar to that observed at the proposed development area (HER 007700000).

Further settlement is indicated in a possible medieval house platform recorded during a field survey on land adjacent to the Chackmore to Maids Moreton road (HER 0281700000).

Religion is a curious omission from the Buckinghamshire Domesday folios with only 4 locations being linked to churches so it is entirely possible that there was a religious presence in the village at that point too (Darby & Campbell 1962:177). Lists of rectors for Maids Moreton go as far back as 1242 (Lipscomb 1847 v3:43) and the present church although a predominantly 15th century construction retains some elements of a 12th century predecessor such as the font and some moulded stone work around the rear windows (http://www.british-history.ac.uk/vch/bucks/vol4/pp198-205#h3-0003). Local tradition has it that two maidens of the local Pever family funded the construction of the church, which gave rise to the prefix Maids in Maids Moreton. There is also mention of a Richard Fowler bequeathing 40s in 1477 to the churches of 'Moreton and Foscott', the date of this and it's naming of Maids Moreton as merely 'Moreton' fits with the timeline proposed by the local legend (Lipscomb 1847:43).

3.7 **Post-medieval** (1500 - 1900)

The two largest landowners in Maids Moreton in the post-medieval period were Christ Church and All Souls colleges Oxford; both colleges gained these lands by grant from Henry VIII following the dissolution of Oseney Abbey (Lipscomb 1847:41). The proposed development area seems to fall beyond the bounds of the college holdings into a broad area marked as Rodwell Fielde (Langdon 1955 Fig 5). This is in contrast to the 1803 inclosure act which shows the land, labelled as 'allotment in upper field', held by Thomas Scott under copyhold from Christ College Oxford.

In 1770 Maids Moreton is largely depicted as a linear settlement hugging the lanes with little projecting beyond. Two buildings are shown as more than a single line, St Edmunds church in the far south of the village and Maids Moreton manor slightly to the north of it, both of which are still extant (HER 1370200000, 0179800000).

The HER data suggests land to the east of the village, along Foscott road may have been the location of several 19th century gravel pits (HER 0909800000 & 0914300000).

From 1844 to 1864 further entries can be found relating to the Scott family farming from Maids Moreton House or, as it became known, Scotts Farm (Pigot & co. 1844:132; Post Office Directories for 1854:116 & 1864:474).

In 1879 the farm and 'close of land' totalling 58 acres was sold at auction for £4570, the name of the purchaser was not listed (Inland Revenue document D 136/26, CBS). Between 1899 and 1907 Henry Edward Bull JP farmed the estate with the aid of a bailiff named Alfred Jones (Kelly 1899:142; *ibid* 1903:121).

3.8 *Modern* (1900 - present)

In 1907 Henry died leaving Mrs H E Bull as proprietor with Alfred Jones still farm bailiff (Kellys 1907:140). This situation remained unchanged in 1923 when The London Gazette for 29th June records the death of Mrs Bull, Caroline Florentia to give her her own name, on 29th March 1923 (https://www.thegazette.co.uk/London/issue/32838/supplement/4568/data.pdf).



Presently the land is used as pasture for sheep. The surviving ridge and furrow demonstrates that this has been the case for some considerable time, possibly since the medieval period.

3.9 *Recent Interventions*

Geophysical survey was undertaken in three fields to the south east of the proposed development site (Dindol & Walford 2015). This revealed a probable Iron Age or Romano British farmstead with enclosures and associated trackways, as well as at least one possible dwelling. The greatest activity was in the field furthest away with diminishing activity towards the proposed development site. However, this was masked somewhat by the dense ridge and furrow in the field immediately east of the development area.



4 Results

4.1 *Introduction*

Fourteen trenches were excavated using a 15 tonne tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The site stratigraphy comprised light grey-brown sandy silty topsoil c. 0.30m deep overlying subsoil of red-orange moderately compacted clayey silt with frequent gravel inclusions. The subsoil, which was 0.28m deep, overlay gravel rich, orange-brown clayey sand natural geology.

4.2 Trenches 1-8 & 10-14

No archaeological finds or features were observed within these trenches.

4.3 *Trench 9* (Figs 5-7, Plates 1 & 5)

Two ditches were revealed in Trench 9. Ditch [906], which was orientated NE-SW, contained two fills. Fill (904) was slightly friable pale-mid grey-brown silty clay with frequent small sub-angular/sub-rounded stone and rare charcoal inclusions. Fill (905), which partially overlay (904) comprised redeposited stiff orangey-grey silty clay with occasional small-medium sub-rounded/sub-angular stone.

Ditch [908] was orientated roughly N-S and had a single fill **(907)** of slightly friable mid greybrown moderately compacted silty clay with frequent sub-rounded to rounded medium sized stones and pebbles.

No finds were present in either feature, which prohibited close dating of the ditches. Nonetheless, as neither ditch was aligned with, nor disturbed the overlying ridge and furrow it is likely that they were earlier than the medieval strip farming

Context no.	Туре	Dimensions	Description	
(901)	Deposit	D: 0.2m	Light grey-brown sandy silt topsoil. Fairly loose.	
(902)	Deposit	D: 0.3m	Red-orange moderately compacted clayey silt with frequent gravel inclusions.	
903	Natural	D: 0.2m	Orangey-brown clayey sand, gravel rich. Abundant flint nodules. Natural geology	
(904)	Fill	D: 0.35m W: 0.28m	Pale-mid grey-brown silty clay. Some friability with frequent small sub-angular/sub-rounded stones with rare charcoal inclusions. Some bioturbation. Fill of [906]	
(905)	Fill	D: 0.35m W: 0.50m	Stiff orangey-grey silty clay. Occasional small-medium sub- rounded/sub-angular stone. Contains re-deposited material.	
[906]	Cut	W: 0.72 L: 1.28m	U-shaped ditch, steep sided with sharp upper break of slope and smooth rounded lower break of slope. Rounded base. Orientated NE-SW. Contained fills (94) & (905)	
(907)	Fill	D: 0.18m W: 0.75m	Mid grey-brown moderately compacted silty clay with some friability. Frequent sub-rounded-rounded medium sized stones/pebbles. Fill of [908]	
[908]	Cut	W: 0.75U-shaped ditch terminus. Regular slope, roughly 35°, rL: 2.43mbase. Orientated N-S. Contained fill (907).		

Summary of Trench 9 contexts





Plate 1: Trench 9 looking southeast





Plate 3: Trench 9 Stratigraphy



Plate 4: Ditch [906]



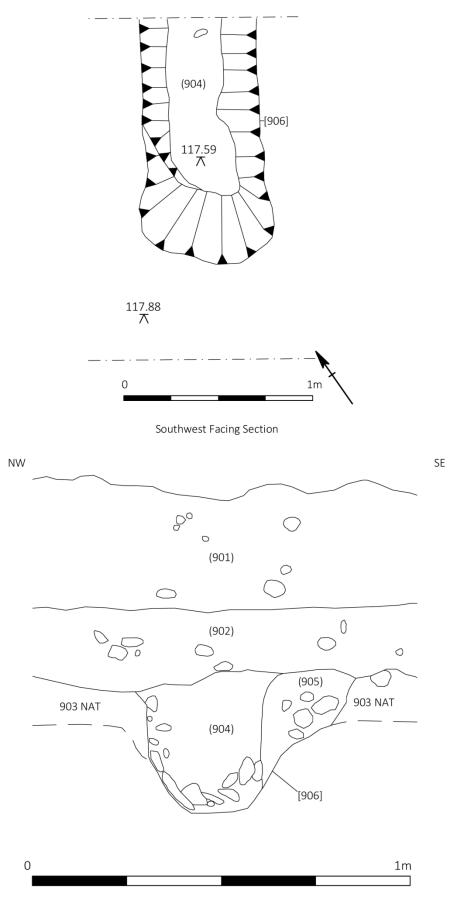
Plate 5: Ditch [908]

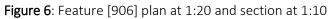




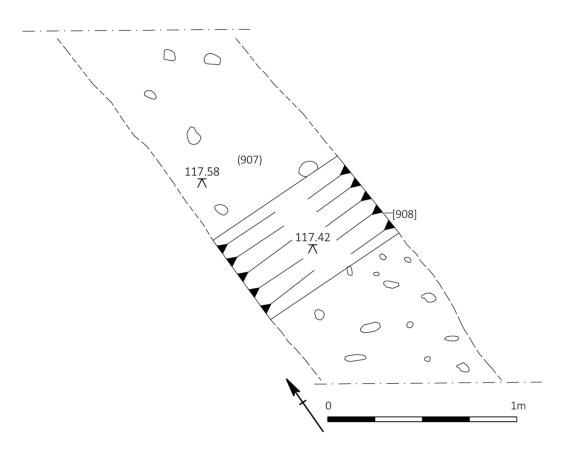
Figure 5: Trench plan detailing feature location











South Facing Section

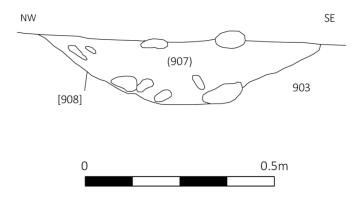


Figure 7: Feature [908] plan at 1:20 and section at 1:10



5 Conclusions

The archaeological evaluation revealed only two small features that were on a different alignment to the overlying ridge and furrow. The dearth of artefacts precluded closer dating of the features, which stratigraphically appear to per-date the medieval field system.

As such, these may be outliers forming part of a hinterland to the Iron Age / Romano- British farmstead located to the south east of the site. The paucity of archaeological remains, particularly in Trench 7, placed along the boundary between the proposed development site and the recent geophysical survey carried out in the adjacent land to the southest, supports the hypothesis that little of the occupation associated with the farmstead extended as far west as the proposed development site.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Gavin Wright for commissioning this report on behalf of Kevin Cozens Thanks are also due to Julia Wise of the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record for providing historic environment records and other relevant documents, the staff at the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies and to Phil Markham of Buckinghamshire County Council for monitoring the project.

Further thanks to Mike Carry of Llynch plant for his assistance on site.

The fieldwork was carried out by Timothy Lewis BA with assistance from John Hardisty. The report was written by Timothy Lewis BA and edited by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA.



7 Archive

- 7.1 The project archive will comprise:
 - 1. Brief
 - 2. Written Scheme of Investigation
 - 3. Initial report
 - 4. Trench recording sheets
 - 5. Site drawings
 - 6. Client's site plans
 - 7. List of photographs
 - 8. B/W prints & negatives
 - 9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.
- 7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum (Accession Number AYBCM : 2016.61).



8 References

Standards & Specifications

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Cartographic Sources

Bryants Map 1825	CBS – Ma/324/1
Jefferys Map 1770	CBS – Ma/327
Langdons Map 1595 Maids Moreton Inclosure Map	CBS CBS – D AD/5/8



Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO/C	CODE: 210/MN	MS Site Name: Scotts Farm, Towcester Road, Maids Moreton		
Digital B&W		Subject		
1	1	Trench 1 Looking SW		
2		Trench 1 Looking NE		
3	2	Trench 2 Looking SE		
4		Trench 2 Looking NW		
5	3	Trench 5 Looking SW		
6		Trench 5 Looking NE		
7	4	Trench 6 Looking SE		
8		Trench 6 Looking NW		
9	5	Trench 4 Looking SW		
10		Trench 4 Looking NE		
11	6	Trench 3 Looking NW		
12		Trench 3 Looking SE		
13	7	Trench 7 Looking SW		
14		Trench 7 Looking NE		
15	8	Trench 8 Looking SW		
16		Trench 8 Looking NE		
17	9	Trench 9 Looking SE		
18		Trench 9 Looking NW		
19	10	Trench 10 Looking NE		
20	11	Trench 11 Looking SW		
21	12	Trench 12 Looking SE		
22	13	Trench 13 Looking NW		
23	14	Trench 14 Looking NE		
24		Trench 1 stratigraphy		
25		Trench 2 stratigraphy		
26		Trench 3 stratigraphy		
27		Trench 4 stratigraphy		
28		Trench 5 stratigraphy		
29		Trench 6 stratigraphy		
30		Trench 7 stratigraphy		
31		Trench 8 stratigraphy		
32		Trench 9 stratigraphy		
33		Trench 10 stratigraphy		
34		Trench 11 stratigraphy		
35		Trench 12 stratigraphy		
36		Trench 13 stratigraphy		
37		Trench 14 stratigraphy		
38 15		Trench 9 ditch [906]		
39	Trench 9 ditch [908]			



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project Name & Address	Scotts Farm, Towcester Road, Maio Moreton, Buckinghamshire	Project Site Code		210/MMS		
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-248928	Event/Accession no	Event/Accession no			
OS reference	SP 7043 3580	Study area size		18.8ha		
Project Type	Evaluation	Height (mAOD)		121m AOD		
Short Description In May 2016 an Archaeological Evaluation was undertaken at Scotts Farm, Towcester Road, Maids Moreton in order to inform development proposals. The evaluation comprised 14 trenches across the site, which was covered by upstanding ridge and furrow, and revealed two small ditches within a single trench in the eastern field. These appear to pre-date the medieval field system and are possibly outliers forming part of a hinterland to the Iron Age / Romano-British farmstead located to the south east of the site.						
Previous work	n/a	Site status		n/a		
Planning proposal	Construction of 14 dwellings with associated garages.	Current land use		Arable farmland		
Local Planning Authority	Aylesbury Vale District Council	Planning application ref.	Planning application ref.			
Monument type	Ridge & Furrow	Monument period		Medieval		
Significant finds	n/a	Future work	Future work			
	PROJECT C	REATORS				
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd					
Project Brief originator	Gavin Wright	Project Design originator	oject Design originator KDK			
Project Manager	Karin Kaye MA MClfA	Director/Supervisor Time		othy Lewis BA		
Sponsor/funding body	Bycell Fields Ltd					
	PROJECT	Γ DATE				
Start date	24/05/2016	ind date 26/0		05/2016		
	PROJECT A	RCHIVES				
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, a	bone, files/sheets)			
Physical		n/a				
Paper	KDK Archaeology Ltd	VSI, report, site records, B&W photographs				
Digital		D containing all digital data				
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)						
Title Scotts Farm, Towcester Road, Maids Moreton, Buckinghamshire						
Serial title & volume	Serial title & volume KDK Archaeology Ltd Report ref. 210/MMS					
Author(s)	Timothy Lewis BA					
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