



Phase 2 trial trench evaluation on land at Nursery Bungalow, West Street Buckingham, Buckinghamshire November 2016

Report No. 16/205

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Illustrator: Joanne Clawley



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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS molanort1-269575	
Project title	Phase 2 trial trench evaluation on land at Nursery Bungalow, West Street, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire, November 2016		
Short description	MOLA was commissioned by Neil Tanner Associates to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Nursery Bungalow, West Street, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire prior to proposed development. Two trenches along the southern boundary of the development area had previously been excavated in the first phase of evaluation. These identified successive layers of alluvium and areas of made ground. The second phase comprised three trenches and identified modern disturbance from the buildings associated with the former nursery. No archaeological features were identified and no finds were recovered.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Previous work	Trial trench evaluation 2015		
Current land use	Garden/nursery site		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	None		
Significant finds	-		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Buckinghamshire		
Site address	Nursery Bungalow, Buckingham		
Easting Northing	SP 69280 33987		
Area (sq m/ha)	0.35 ha		
Height aOD	c 82m AOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	MOLA		
Project brief originator	Buckinghamshire County Council		
Project Design originator	MOLA		
Director/Supervisor	Paul Clements		
Project Managers	Liz Muldowney (MOLA)		
Sponsor or funding body	Neil Tanner Associates		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	15/11/2016		
End date	16/11/2016		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	AYBCM: 2015.139		
Paper		Site records (1 archive box)	
Digital		Client report PDF. Survey Data, Photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Title	Phase 2 Trial trench evaluation on land at Nursery Bungalow, West Street, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire, November 2016		
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Fig 2: Phase 1 and 2 excavated trenches

Fig 3: Trench 5, former nursery structure, looking east

Phase 2 trial trench evaluation on land at Nursery Bungalow, West Street Buckingham, Buckinghamshire November 2016

Abstract

MOLA was commissioned by Neil Tanner Associates to carry out an archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Nursery Bungalow, West Street, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire prior to proposed development. Two trenches along the southern boundary of the development area had previously been excavated in the first phase of evaluation. These identified successive layers of alluvium and areas of made ground. The second phase comprised three trenches and identified modern disturbance from the buildings associated with the former nursery. No archaeological features were identified and no finds were recovered.

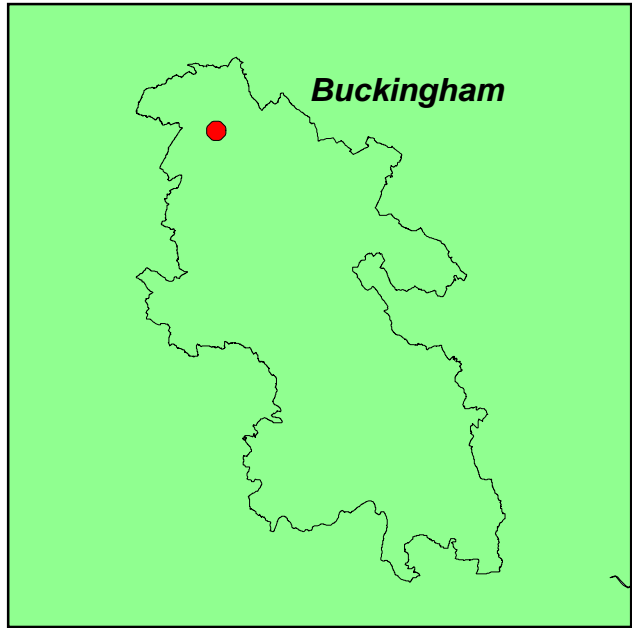
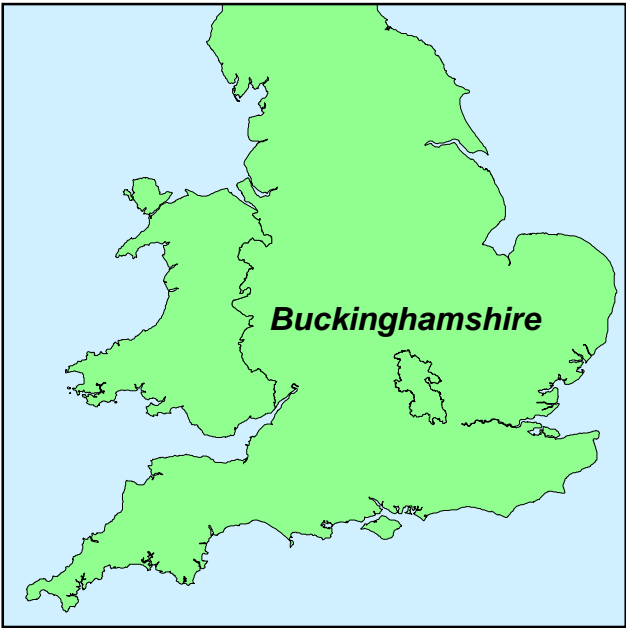
1 INTRODUCTION

In November 2016, MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) was commissioned by Neil Tanner Associates to undertake the second phase of archaeological trial trench evaluation on land at Nursery Bungalow, West Street, Buckingham, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 69280 33987, Fig 1). The work was undertaken in advance of proposed residential development as requested by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service.

The scope of works was outlined and detailed in the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by MOLA Northampton (2016). The evaluation was carried out following the guidelines suggested by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Standards and guidance; Archaeological field evaluation (ClfA 2014b) and the MOLA Fieldwork Manual (2014).

The objectives of the evaluation were to establish:

- the date, nature, significance and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
- the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- the potential for the recovery of artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
- the potential for palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions;
- the impact of the proposed works upon any surviving archaeological remains;
- to inform any future excavation and/or preservation in-situ strategy.



Scale 1:25,000

Site Location Fig 1

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Location and geology

The development area occupies approximately 0.35ha of garden and a small scale derelict nursery located on the west side of Buckingham. The site is bounded to the north by West Street, the River Great Ouse to the south and housing to the west and east (Fig 1).

The underlying geology comprises Forest Marble Formation limestone and mudstone (BGS 2016). Soils across the site are recorded as loamy (Landis 2016).

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The historical background was summarised in the Written Scheme of Investigation (MOLA 2016) and is reproduced here.

There is little evidence of prehistoric and Roman settlement in the vicinity although it is likely that the area was settled during these periods.

The name of Buckingham is mentioned in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle in 915, where, it is stated that Edward the Elder constructed two fortifications, or 'burhs', one on each side of the river during his time there. Although there are other sites in the country where double burhs are thought to have been constructed, it is difficult to interpret the evidence with any confidence. It seems most likely that the principal burgh lay in the bend of the river occupied by Castle Hill and the site of the medieval church to the southwest of the hill. The church is believed to have originated as a late Saxon minster- it became an important place of pilgrimage associated with the cult of St. Rumbold (McAree 2011).

In Domesday Buckingham was referred to as *Bochingheha* and had the status of a Borough. A castle was built during the 11th century and had become ruinous by the 17th century. The successive lords were never in residence and it ceased being a focal part of the settlement. Buckingham as a whole never appeared to prosper as much as Aylesbury to the south, although a market and a mint were situated here.

Two hospitals were founded in the town. Following the collapse of the medieval church tower, a new church was built on Castle Hill in 1777-81, although the graveyard remained on its medieval site.

In 1725 the town was devastated by a major fire that destroyed 138 of its 387 houses. Despite efforts to retain its power and pre-eminence, through the late medieval and post-medieval periods Buckingham slowly relinquished its status of principal county-town to Aylesbury.

Several listed buildings and local buildings of note lie to the east and south-east of the site. The only Grade I listed building in the near vicinity is Castle House which was built in the early 15th century. It was residence of the Bartons from the late 14th century, then of the Fowlers from mid-15th century until 1590. William Fowler, MP for Buckingham in 1467 and Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, who died in 1477 may have been the client for the 15th-century house. The Lambards were owners in the early 17th century when important alterations were made; the initials on the datestones are those of William and Mary Lambard. The front range was rebuilt for Matthias Rogers, who succeeded to the property in 1706.

Many of the other listed buildings are Grade II and largely comprise domestic dwellings on West Street, Bristle Hill and School Lane. Nursery Cottage lies adjacent to the eastern boundary of the site. It is an 18th-century timber-framed thatched house, formerly used as a toll-house. Opposite the northern boundary of the site lies Avenue

House and Barracks House, built in 1802. Stowfields gravel pit lies immediately to the north-west of the site and is marked on the First Edition Ordnance Survey maps of 1880. There are also the sites of two statues, a sleeping shepherd and shepherdess which have been relocated to Stowe.

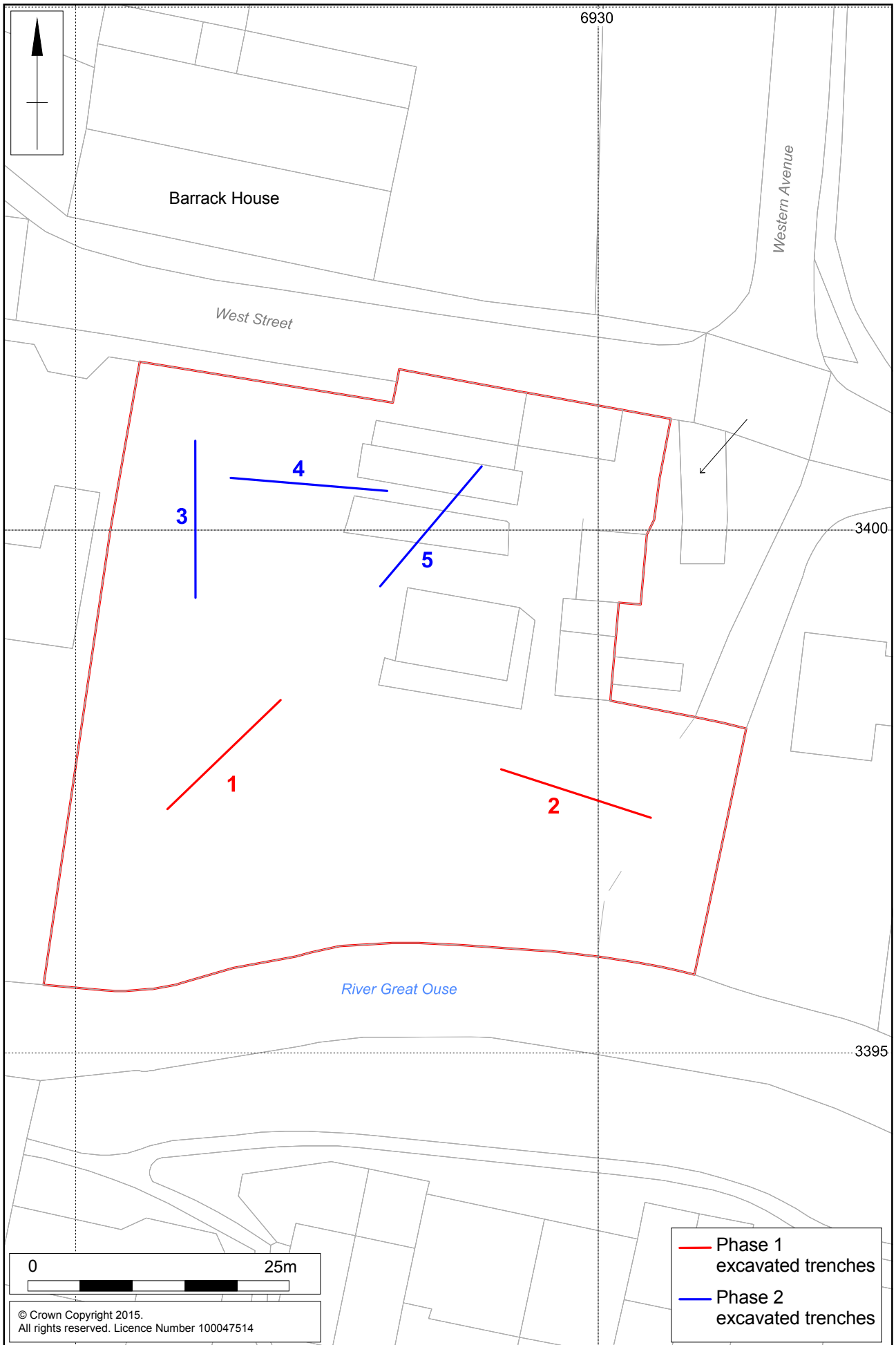
Two trenches were excavated in the garden area of the property in 2015 (Crothers and Kidd 2015), no archaeological features were encountered however, the undisturbed geological horizon was not exposed across the length of the trenches due to the depth of alluvium and post-medieval or modern layers deposited to level the garden.

3 METHODOLOGY

Three trial trenches were excavated in accordance with a trench plan prepared by MOLA and approved by Phil Markham (Senior Archaeology Officer at Buckinghamshire County Council). The trench plan was designed to provide a general coverage of the proposed development area (Fig 2). All trenches were 15m long and 1.80m wide. A total area of 81 square metres was excavated. Trenches were positioned using a Leica Viva RTK GPS.

A JCB 3CX mechanical excavator fitted with a 1.80m wide toothless ditching bucket was used to remove overburden to archaeological levels or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. The trenches were cleaned sufficiently to enable the identification and definition of archaeological features. Recording followed standard MOLA Northampton procedures as described in the Fieldwork Manual (MOLA 2014). Deposits were described on *pro-forma* sheets to include measured and descriptive details of the context, its relationships, interpretation and a checklist of associated finds. Photography was with digital images.

All works were conducted in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014a) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2014b).



Scale 1:500

Phase 1 and 2 excavated trenches Fig 2

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

General stratigraphy

The trench locations are shown in Figure 2 and an inventory of contexts is provided in the Appendix.

The natural geology was encountered at an average of 1.00m below the modern ground surface. It comprised mid orange-brown sandy-clay with mixed sized limestone pieces. The subsoil, 0.60m thick, consisted of mid to dark grey-brown sandy-clay loam with occasional limestone pieces and modern debris (bricks, plastic, and metal). The topsoil comprised very dark brown-grey loam, 0.40m thick. It also contained brick fragments and other modern debris.

No archaeological features or deposits were identified within the three trenches. However, within Trenches 4 and 5 remnant foundations were observed of former buildings associated with the nursery (Fig 3). The areas of these buildings had been terraced and the level of the natural geology reduced.



Trench 5, former nursery structure, looking east Fig 3

6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation has identified no archaeological features or deposits and no residual finds were recovered from the topsoil or subsoil to indicate features within the vicinity.

The alluvial deposits encountered in the first phase of trenching were only evident at the very south-western end of Trench 5. Showing that the northern area is outside of the limit of the floodplain (Crothers and Kidd 2015).

Trench 3 was the only trench to reveal undisturbed natural geology. Trenches 4 and 5 showed clear signs of terracing for the nursery buildings that once stood and occupied a large part of the northern development area, likely removing any potential archaeological features.

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APPENDIX: CONTEXT INDEX

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
3	15m x 1.80m N-S	469261 234006	82.86m aOD	81.86m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
301	Topsoil	Dark brown loam.	0.50m thick	-
302	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy clay	0.50m thick	-
303	Natural	mid orange-brown sandy-clayey with mixed sized limestone pieces		-



Trench 3, Looking north

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
4	15m x 1.80m E-W	469264 234004	82.63m aOD	81.63m aOD
Context	Context type Feature & type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/ Samples
401	Topsoil	Dark brown loam	0.40m thick	-
402	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy-clay	0.60m thick	-
403	Mixed natural	Mid brown sandy-clay	0.30m thick	-
404	Natural	mid orange-brown sandy-clayey with mixed sized limestone pieces.	1.20m wide 0.15m deep	-



Trench 4, looking east

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
5	15m x 1.80m N-S	469288 234005	82.91m aOD	82.36m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type Feature & type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/ Samples</i>
501	Topsoil	Dark grey-brown loam	0.25m thick	-
502	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy-clay.	0.30m thick	-
503	Natural	mid orange-brown sandy-clayey with mixed sized limestone pieces.	-	-
504	Wall	Modern brick wall foundation	-	-
505	Fill	Mixed modern material between walls 504 and 506	0.60m thick	-
506	Wall	Modern brick wall foundation	-	-
507	Modern levelling layer	Dark red sand.	0.13m thick	-
508	Modern levelling layer.	Black ashy layer.	0.10m thick	-
509	Modern levelling layer.	Compacted sand and gravels.	0.20m thick	-
510	Alluvial deposits	Dark brown silty clay.	0.25m thick	-



Trench 5, looking north-east



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