



Iain Soden Heritage Services Ltd

Modern living in an historic environment

**An archaeological watching brief on land to the rear of
Oakwoods House, Green Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire**

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Land at Oxhill, Warwickshire

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Summary

Following a Desk-Based Assessment on a plot in Oxhill, an archaeological watching brief during groundworks showed that the plot contained no archaeology.

Acknowledgements

Many thanks to Piper Homes Ltd for their commission and to Broadway Building Company for their help and good humour on site.

Introduction

A planning application by Piper Homes Ltd (16/00672/FUL) was lodged with Stratford District Council for the construction of two houses in a current garden to the rear of 'Oaklands', a detached home which is one of many in a row along the north side of Green Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire, CV35 0RB (NGR: SP 3138 4562; Fig 1). Although an archaeological Desk-Based Assessment concluded that the land had very low potential to contain significant archaeology, a Planning Condition was attached to the Planning Consent for an archaeological watching brief to take place during groundworks for the two houses. The land was previously the back garden to Oaklands. Beyond it to the north was a square, overgrown paddock which has also been developed for housing.

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation dated 6 October 2017 and took place in fine weather conditions, with overnight rain between attendances.

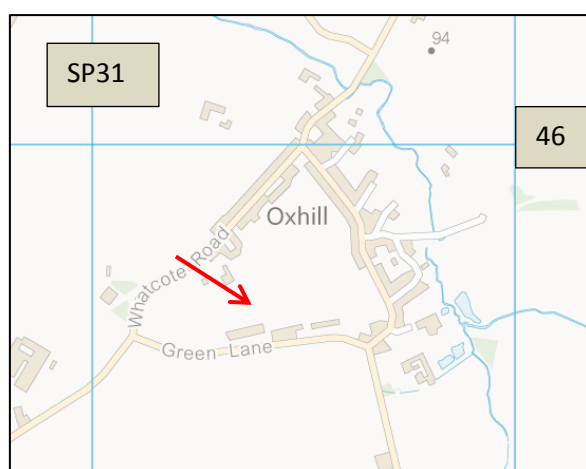


Fig 1: Site location (arrowed). Contains Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright and database right 2018

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Historical background

For the known history of the plot, the reader is referred to the foregoing archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (Soden, I, 2017 *An Archaeological Desk-based Assessment on land to the rear of Oakwoods House, Green Lane, Oxhill, Warwickshire*). This demonstrated that while first depicted on a map of 1797, the plot has remained virtually unchanged since then. The Warwickshire Historic Environment Record showed that there was Roman archaeology at some considerable distance away and the plot lies well outside the historic core of the medieval village. The plot contained no visible vestiges of Ridge and Furrow plough cultivation although there is much locally.

Fieldwork and results

The site was visited on 9 and 10 May 2018 to monitor removal of topsoil and then to note the digging of trenches for the foundations of the two new houses.

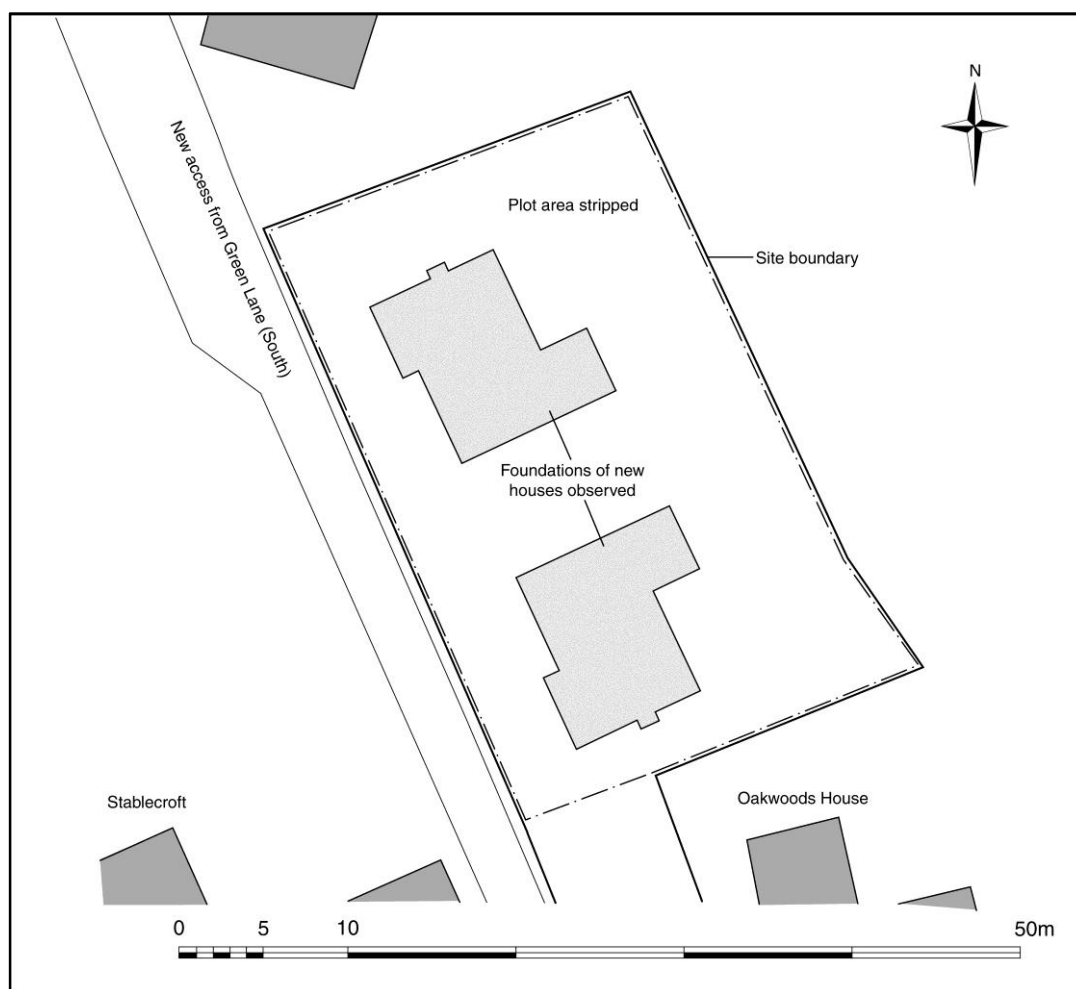


Fig 2: Plan of the site and areas monitored (Andy Isham after Piper Homes)

Approximately 300-400mm of turf and topsoil was stripped from the ground using an 18-ton tracked excavator fitted with a 2m-wide toothless ditching bucket. This process exposed no archaeological features and no pre-modern finds of any sort were present.

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Fig 3: The site stripped of topsoil, looking west

Since this work did not in all areas reliably expose the natural substrate and left a thin topsoil horizon at the base of the topsoil in places, the digging of foundation trenches was then monitored. These cut into certain clay geology mostly to a depth of c1.8m but in places up to 3m. This work was carried out by a 7-ton tracked excavator fitted with a toothless 600mm bucket.



Fig 4: Foundation trenches on the northern plot, looking east, prior to concrete-pouring, scale 2m

This work uncovered no archaeological features or finds, nor were any present in section. Clean natural grey clay geology was present throughout.



Fig 5: Digging the foundation trenches on the southern plot, looking north.

Conclusion

Following the Desk-Based Assessment the watching brief showed that the development plot contained no archaeology of any date. There was no sign of flattened ridge and furrow plough cultivation earthworks in the natural clay.

In the absence of any archaeology, the site has no potential to contribute to wider research themes.

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Appendix

OASIS data

Project Name	Oaklands, Green Lane, Oxhill
OASIS ID	iainsode1-317244
Project Type	Watching Brief
Originator	Iain Soden Heritage Services Ltd
Project Manager	Iain Soden
Previous/future work	Desk Based Assessment/No
Current land use	Garden
Development type	Rural housing
Reason for investigation	Planning Condition
National grid reference	SP 3138 4562
Start/end dates of fieldwork	9-10 May 2018
Archive recipient	Warwickshire Museum
Study area	800 sq m



Iain Soden Heritage Services Ltd

16 May 2018