Home Farm

Old School Lane, Lighthorne, Warwickshire

one ten archaeology

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Old School Lane, Lighthorne, Warwickshire

Archaeological evaluation

NGR: SP 34099 55770

Site code: HFL16

OASIS ID: 110archa1-269381

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December 2016

one ten archaeology

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Front cover; Home Farm from the north-west

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out during October 2016 at Home Farm, Old School Lane, Lighthorne, Warwickshire in connection with a proposal for development of the site.

The study site is to situated on the south-eastern edge of the village, currently comprising a field south of Home Farm, itself a 19th century development. Excavation revealed no significant archaeological remains, but instead a sequence of three homogenous stratified deposits indicating an open rural landscape. Residually deposited finds from the subsoil layers in trenches 2 and 3 indicates early and later medieval activity probably associated with the agricultural use of the land.

Modern pitting had previously truncated deposits to the west and south-west as and this was followed by the re-deposition of natural clay across the southern half of the site to a depth of at about 0.50m. The overall effect of this was increase the gradient of the slope within the natural topography of the study site which rises from north to south.

Fig.1; site location (circled in red)

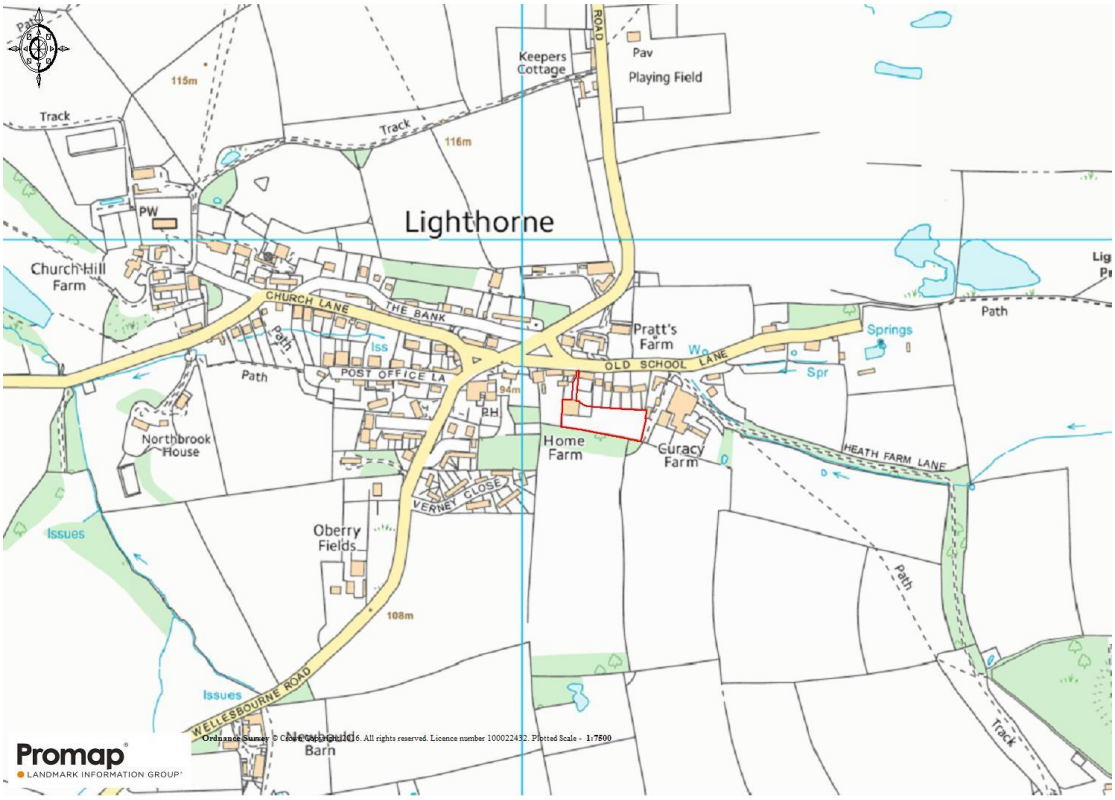

Fig. 2; study site (outlined in red)

INTRODUCTION

Location and scope of work (Figs. 1 & 2)

This document details the results of an archaeological evaluation during 11th to 13th October 2016 at Home Fam, Old School Lane, Lighthorne, Warks. CV35 0AU carried out as part of planning permission (planning Ref: 15/03006/FUL) granted for the erection of four detached dwellings on the site conditional on a programme of archaeological work comprising initially of an evaluation. A new application is to submitted for the erection of 5 detached dwellings on the site by Stephen Kelly at Projectpart Homes Ltd and this report is accompanying the new proposal.

The proposed development lies within an area of archaeological potential, within the extent of the early medieval settlement of Lighthorne. The earliest reference to Lighthorne is from Domesday clearly indicating that a manorial settlement had already been established there by 1086.

The results of the evaluation would be used to determine the likely nature, extent, preservation and importance of any archaeological remains, and how these may be affected by development of the site so that appropriate mitigation strategies could be devised. The evaluation represented an initial investigation and in the event, that archaeological deposits were encountered during the trial trenching then an approved programme of archaeological work would be required to record the deposits prior to development.

Geology and topography

The parish of Lighthorne is a rough triangle, of which the northern point is formed by the junction of the Fosse Way, its western, and the road from Warwick to Banbury, its eastern boundary. The ground rises from about 90m in the north to rather over 130m on the southern edge, two miles. The church lies centrally, with the village extending east of it with a small triangular green at its east end, from which radiate five small roads (VCH, 1949).

The study site (approx. 4,000m^2) is situated on the south-east edge of the village, south of Home Farm which itself straddles Old School Road. It lies at approximately 105m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and currently consists of an open field with an agricultural building occupying the north-west corner. Preliminary investigations show that the site lies in an area where underlying

geology comprises a variation in a solid geology between Rhaetic beds and White Lias (BGS, 1982). This was confirmed during excavation.

Archaeological and historical background

A total of 24 monument records and two event records are identified from the HER within the 1km search area centred on the site. A summary of the significant information is outlined below.

Prehistoric
MWA4460; The site of a possible long barrow of Neolithic date. It is located 300m south of Lighthorne

Roman
MWA2299; Site of Roman Villa 100m N of Hill Farm, Lighthorne.
The site of a Roman villa. Various finds, including fragments of tile, bone, pottery and part of a whetstone, have been found at the site. Enclosures and boundaries are visible as earthworks. The site lies 500m south west of Chesterton Wood

MWA678; Findspot - a Roman coin, of the Emperor Severus Alexander, was found on the west side of Lighthorne

Saxon/early medieval
The name Lighthorne means 'light-coloured thorn-tree', derived from 'leoht (Old English); light, bright, light coloured (used substantively of a light place) and pyrne (Old English); a thorn bush.

The earliest reference to Lighthorne is from Domesday clearly indicating that a manorial settlement had already been established there by 1086.

MWA680; The possible site of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery, dating to the Migration or Early Medieval period. Two skeletons, one of a woman and one a child, were found 300m north of the church at Lighthorne.

MWA8666; Part of an Early Medieval trackway known as the 'Salt way' running east from Wellesbourne. It is mentioned in a charter of 969 AD. It is part of a major routeway across the country heading east from Stratford upon Avon. It may have originated during the Roman period.
EWA7323

A single trial trench excavated prior to the excavation of 'send and receive' pits for a new gas pipeline on the line of the track to Heath Farm, part of an old salt way in use in the medieval period (Titley, 2003).

Medieval

MWA9012; The possible extent of Medieval settlement of Lighthorne. The area of settlement is suggested by documentary evidence and the remains of ridge and furrow cultivation. The possible extent of Medieval settlement, based on the first edition map of 1886. The 1886 map shows all the settlement to the east of the church. The plots (some of which are empty) look rather small. Ridge and furrow survival to the north and east helps to define the boundary. The church (WMA674) dates from the C13th, and the fishponds (WMA 681) west of the church, are medieval.

MWA674; The first record of the church of St Laurence which was built of stone in late 13th century style, is in 1291. It was rebuilt in 1771.

MWA681 Medieval/Post Medieval fishponds, used for the breeding and storage of fish. They are still visible as earthworks and are situated 200m west of the church.

Post-medieval

MWA679; Findspot - a hoard of silver coins, all dating to the Post Medieval period, were found in Old School Lane.

MWA676; The site of a cemetery of unknown date. Several skeletons were found when quarrying was taking place. The cemetery site was located 400m south of the church at Lighthorne.

EXCAVATION METHODOLOGY

Aims of the work

The objective of the trial trenching was to determine the date, character, quality, survival and extent of the archaeological deposits within the application area likely to be threatened by the proposed development. Should significant finds or features had been identified then an appropriate excavation strategy would be implemented as a final stage of mitigation.

Sample size and scope of fieldwork

The evaluation comprised four trenches at various lengths amounting to 105m of linear trenching at 1.50m wide, each trench located within or proximity to the main areas of impact (house plots).

Fieldwork methods and recording

The archaeological field work and post-excavation was carried out in accordance with standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluations produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2014). All deposits were excavated removing the overburden under close archaeological supervision and investigated for archaeological features. A plans and sample sections of the trenches were made and recorded during excavation.

RESULTS: GENERAL

Soil and ground conditions

Conditions were generally dry during excavation, the deposits showing some moisture retention. Excavation was relatively smooth being made through alternate layers of topsoil and underlying subsoil leaving a clean and visible surface on the natural substrate. In trenches 1 and 2, and partly in trench 3, excavation was necessarily deeper than anticipated due to need to remove deposited clay (up to 0.50m deep) to reach the underlying historic stratigraphy.

Reliability of field investigation

Previous truncation of the underlying deposits was evident in trench 1 where a series of modern pitting (112, 110, 106, & 113) throughout most the trench left little of the earlier stratigraphy surviving to any great extent. Another large modern pit truncated underlying deposits within the end of trench 2, but within the remaining length of trenching deposits survived mostly intact, albeit sealed by a thick layer of redeposited natural clay.

Distribution of archaeological deposits

Archaeological deposits comprised a relict subsoil that sat within a stratigraphic sequence comprising natural clay (102, 202, 302 & 402) overlain by a homogenous layer of relict subsoil (101, 201, 301 & 401) situated throughout the study site that was in turn sealed by the existing topsoil. This topsoil was itself covered by a thick layer of redeposited clay (103) within the south and west part of the study site as evidenced throughout trenches 1, 2 and the west half of trench 3.

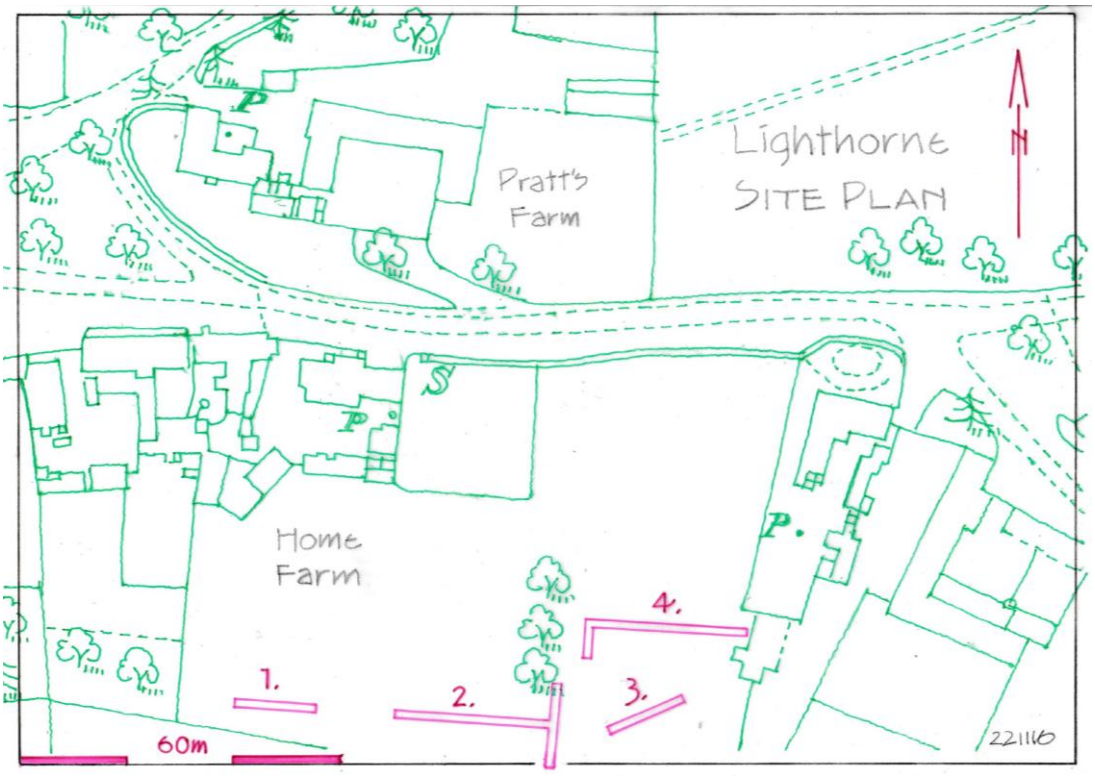

Fig. 3; Trench plan. Green; OS 1886

Presentation of results

The results of the excavation (below) are described from the earliest to the latest deposits. The trench was attributed context numbers with a numerical value equivalent to the number of the trench.

RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS (Figs. 3 & 4)

TRENCH 1

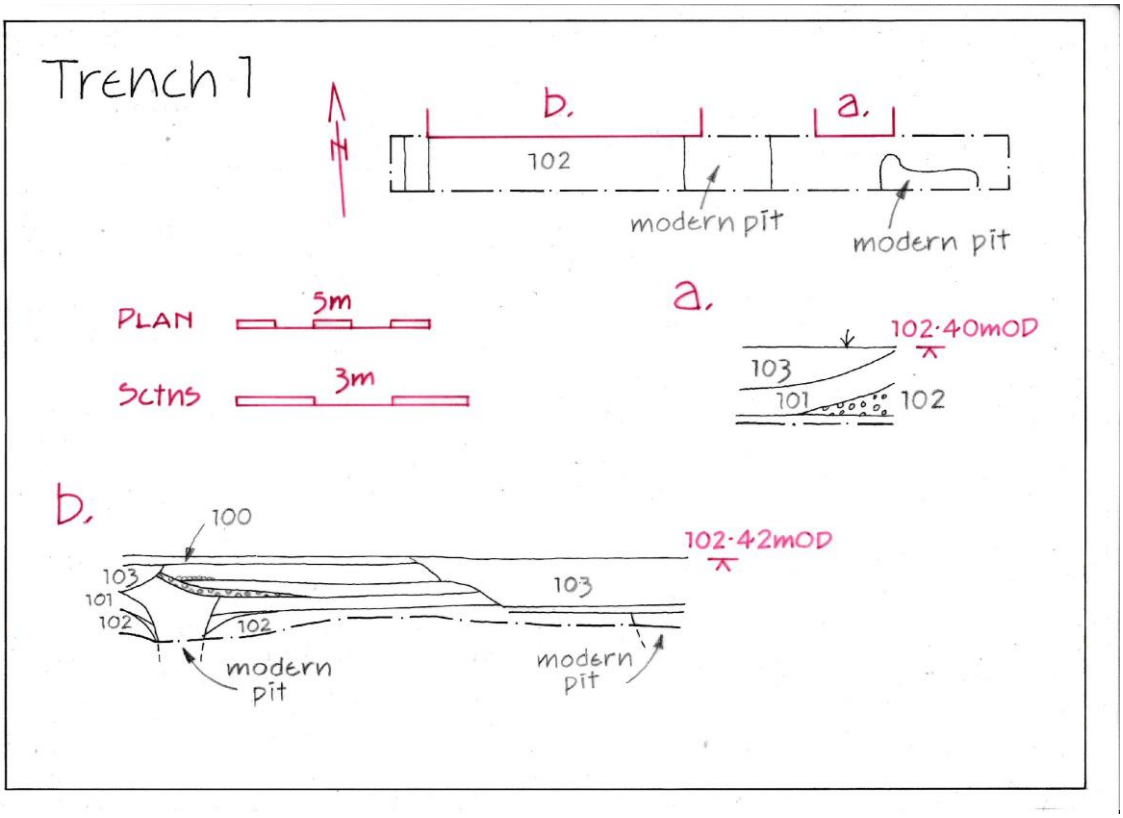

Figure 4;

Contexts 102 (natural substrate) & context 101 (relict subsoil layer)

The natural substrate comprised a brown clay, with a reddish tinge. The surface of this deposit was situated at approx. 101.40m AOD at the west end of the trench rising to about 101.80m at the east end. No significant archaeological deposits were revealed cut into or overlying this deposit. Instead it was overlain to a depth varying between 0.15-25m by an undated relict subsoil deposit (101) consisting of a greyish-brown silty-clay. The relict subsoil layer and the underlying natural brown clay were truncated by a series of modern pits (106, 112, 113 & 114) described below.

Context 115 & context 116 (fills of 106?)

Overlying the natural clay at the west end of the trench was a sloping stoney layer (116), comprising small fragments of limestone. This was in turn sealed by a deposit (115) equivalent in texture and colour with the relict subsoil layer 102. However, these deposits were only partially exposed at the west end of the trench and could be connected to modern disturbance associated with pit 106.

Context 101 (relict subsoil)

Overlying the natural clay to a depth varying between 01.15 and 0.30m throughout some of the eastern half of the trench (where it was not truncated), was an undated relict subsoil deposit comprising a greyish-brown silty-clay. It was not observed at the west end of the trench where instead the natural clay was overlain by sloping deposits (115 & 116) that appear to be associated with pit 106.

Context 112 (modern trench), filled by context 111

A narrow linear, north-south aligned feature (112) recorded at the east end of the trench and represents what is possibly, the earliest of four 20th century pits truncating underlying deposits within the trench. It was filled by a single deposit (111) comprising a dark greyish-brown clayey-silt with a component of small fragments of limestone. Finds comprised a few fragments of red brick and a piece of iron associated with modern machinery.

Contexts 110 (modern pit), filled by contexts 107, 108 & 109 & context 114 (modern pit) filled by context 103

Truncating the modern trench-like feature 112 across the width of the trench and for about 3m, was a modern pit (110). This was filled by alternate layers of limestone (stoney layer 109) and soil. This east side of this feature was itself truncated by another, partially exposed, modern pit (114) itself backfilled with redeposited natural clay (103). Sealing these features was the existing topsoil deposit (100).

Context 106 (modern pit), filled by contexts 103, 104 & 105.

Truncating the natural substrate and the west end of pit 110 was another large modern pit feature situated within the central area of the trench. It was filled by a sequence of deposits comprising clayey-silt (105) sealed by a thin humic deposit (104) which was itself overlain by a thick deposit of redeposited natural clay (103).

Context 113 (modern pit)

Situated at the west end of the trench was another amorphous shaped modern pit (113) filled by a single deposit consisting of a dark greyish brown clayey silt with a large component of stone rubble. Fragments of brick were observed within the fill.

TRENCH 2

Context 202 (natural substrate); context 201 (relict subsoil); context 204 (buried topsoil)

The natural substrate (brown clay with reddish tinge) was exposed throughout most the east-west arm of the trench and the north end of the north-south arm at a height varying between approx. 101.25m and 101.65m AOD. No significant archaeological deposits were revealed cut into or overlying this deposit. Instead it was sealed by (201) a relict homogenous subsoil deposit (equivalent to deposit 101 in trench 1) comprising a greyish-brown silty-clay with a small component of limestone fragments. At the west end of the east -west trench arm, the layer was 0.30m thick increasing to 0.45m at the east end where it included a much larger component of limestone fragments. Within the south end of the north-south trench arm this deposit was 0.55m thick. The deposit produced two sherds of pottery dated to the 11th-12th century and the other dated c.1200-1650. Two unidentifiable fragments of animal bone, a small sherd of 20th century pottery and a large fragment of brick were also recorded.

Context 204 (buried topsoil); Context 203 (redeposited clay) & context 200 (existing topsoil)

Sealing the relict subsoil was a buried topsoil (204) comprising a dark-greyish brown clayey-silt approx. 0.20m thick. This was in turn sealed by a 0.50m thick layer of redeposited clay (203) and overlying this was the existing topsoil and turf (200) to a depth of about 0.10m.

A large modern pit was partially exposed across the width of the trench truncating the underlying deposits at the west end of the main east-west trench arm.

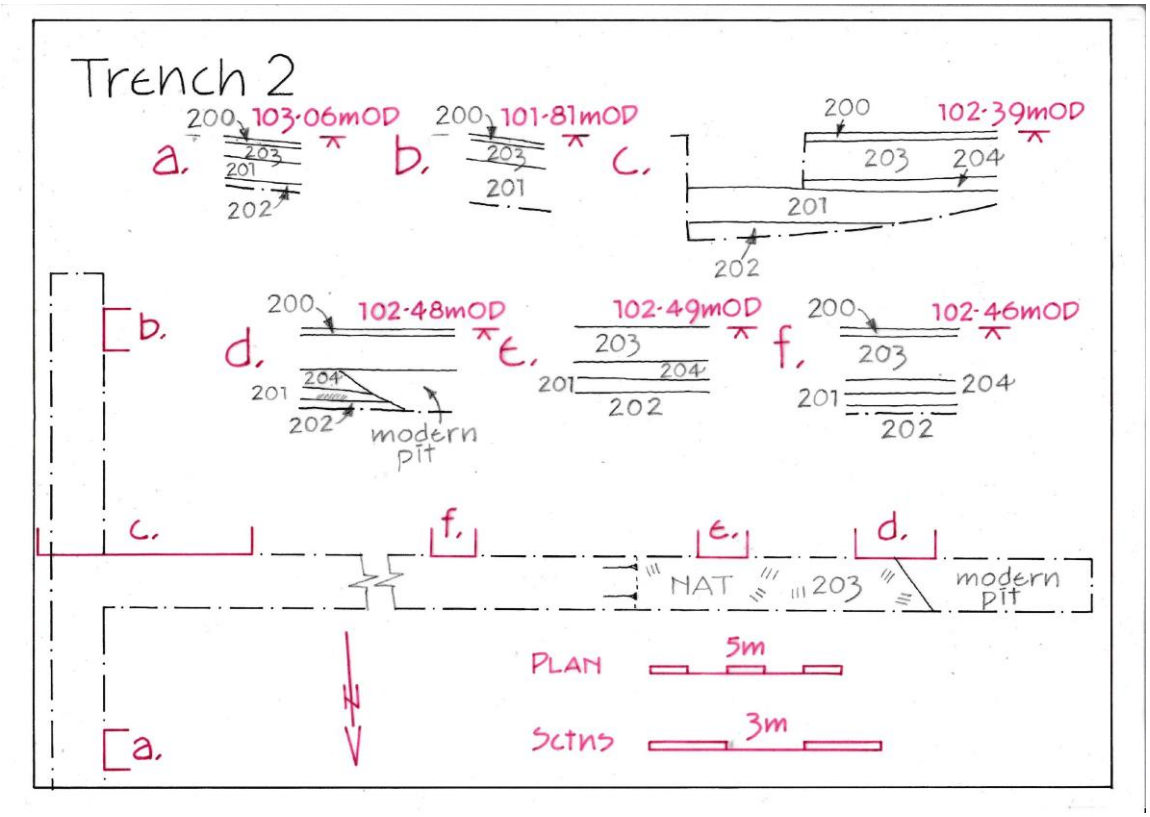

Figure 5; trench 2 plan and sections

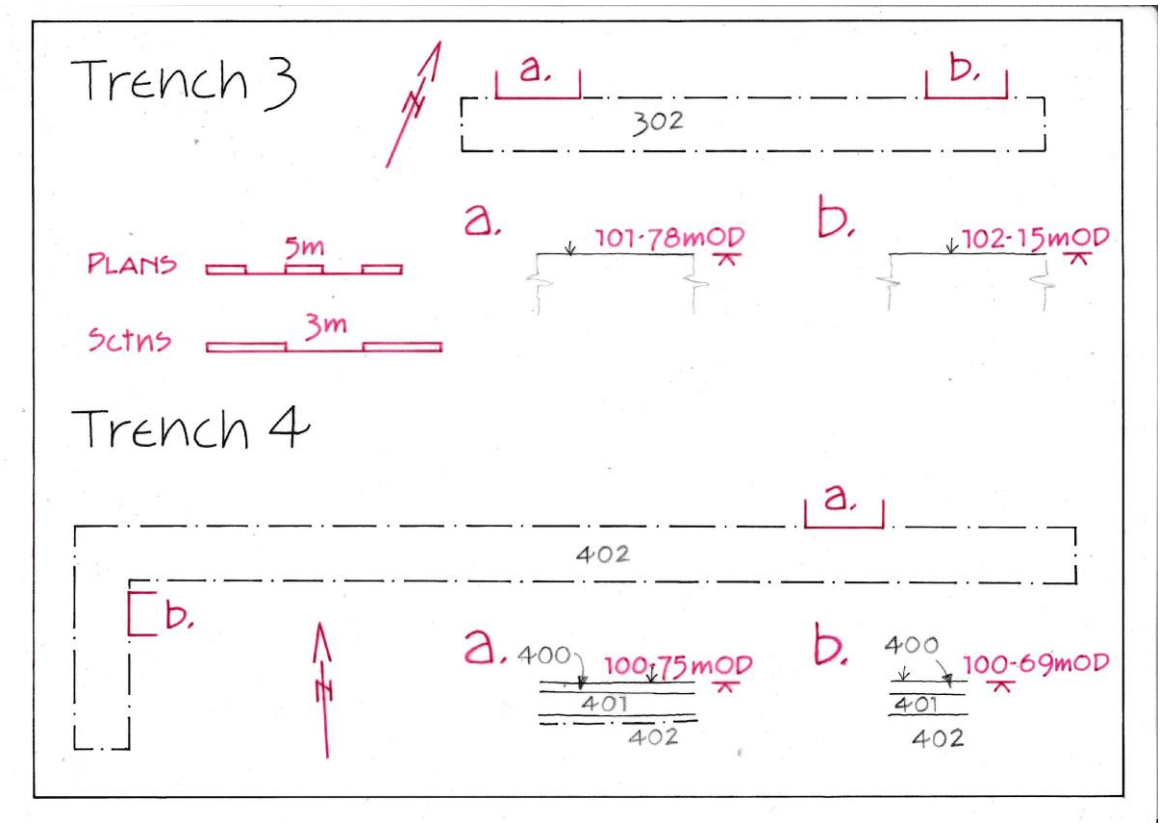

Figure 6; trenches 3 & 4 plans & sections

TRENCH 3

Context 302 (natural substrate); context 301 (relict subsoil); context 300 (topsoil) & 303 (redeposited natural clay)

The surface of the natural brown clay was recorded throughout the trench at a level height of approx. 101.40m AOD. No significant archaeological deposits were revealed cut into or overlying this deposit. Instead it was overlain to a depth varying between 0.20-0.35m, by a homogenous relict subsoil deposit (301) equivalent to contexts 101 and 201 in trenches 1 and 2 and which produced a single sherd of 10th-12th century pottery.

TRENCH 4

Context 402 (natural substrate); context 401 (relict subsoil); context 400 (topsoil)

The surface of the natural brown clay was recorded throughout the trench at a level height of approx. 100.30m AOD. No significant archaeological deposits were revealed cut into or overlying this deposit. Instead it was overlain to a depth of 0.30m, by an undated homogenous relict subsoil deposit equivalent to contexts 101, 201 & 301 in trenches 1-3. This was in turn sealed by the existing topsoil deposit (400).

FINDS

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 3 sherds with a total weight of 97g. It was all late Saxon or medieval, and was recorded using the codes and chronology of the Warwickshire Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery Type-Series (Ratkai and Soden, in archive), as follows:

CO01: Calcareous Oolitic Ware, 11th – 12th century. 1 sherd, 61g.

WW10: Potterspury Ware, 1250-1600. 1 sherd, 13g.

WW20: Stamford Ware, 10th – 12th century. 1 sherd, 23g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

Two rimsherds were noted. The sherd of CO01 is from a jar with a "club" rim, a very typical form (Mellor 1994). The fragment of WW20 is from the rim of a small unglazed jar in a reduced grey fabric with a simple everted and slightly lid-seated profile. These are very typical early (*i.e.* 10th century) products of the tradition (Kilmurry 1980). The Potterspury sherd has a thumbed applied strip, suggesting it is from a large jar or storage vessel. The sherds are all in reasonably good condition, indicating that they are reliably stratified.

	WW20		CO01		WW10		
Cntxt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
201			1	61	1	13	M13thC
301	1	23					10thC
Total	1	23	1	61	1	13	

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

Environmental data

Palaeo-environmental evidence

none of the deposits exposed during the excavation proved suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling.

Plate 1; view from the east towards the west end of the study site showing significant truncation (terracing) associated with the construction of the large shed.

Plate 2; view from the west towards the east end of the study site

Plate 3; view of the study site from the south-east corner

Plate 4; trench 1, west end, from the north-east

Plate 5;

Plate 6;

Plate 7; trench 2, north-south arm, from the north-east

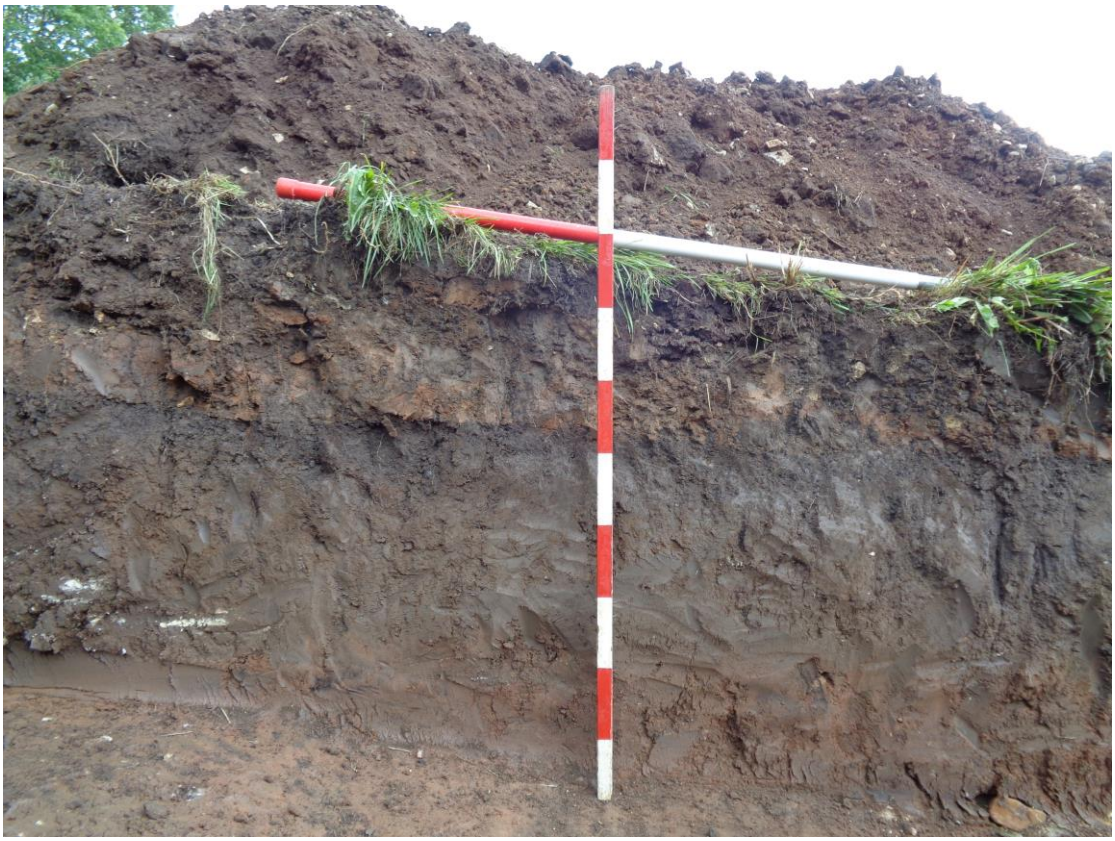

Plate 8; section 2a

Plate 9; section 2b

Plate 10; section 2c

Plate 11; section 2d

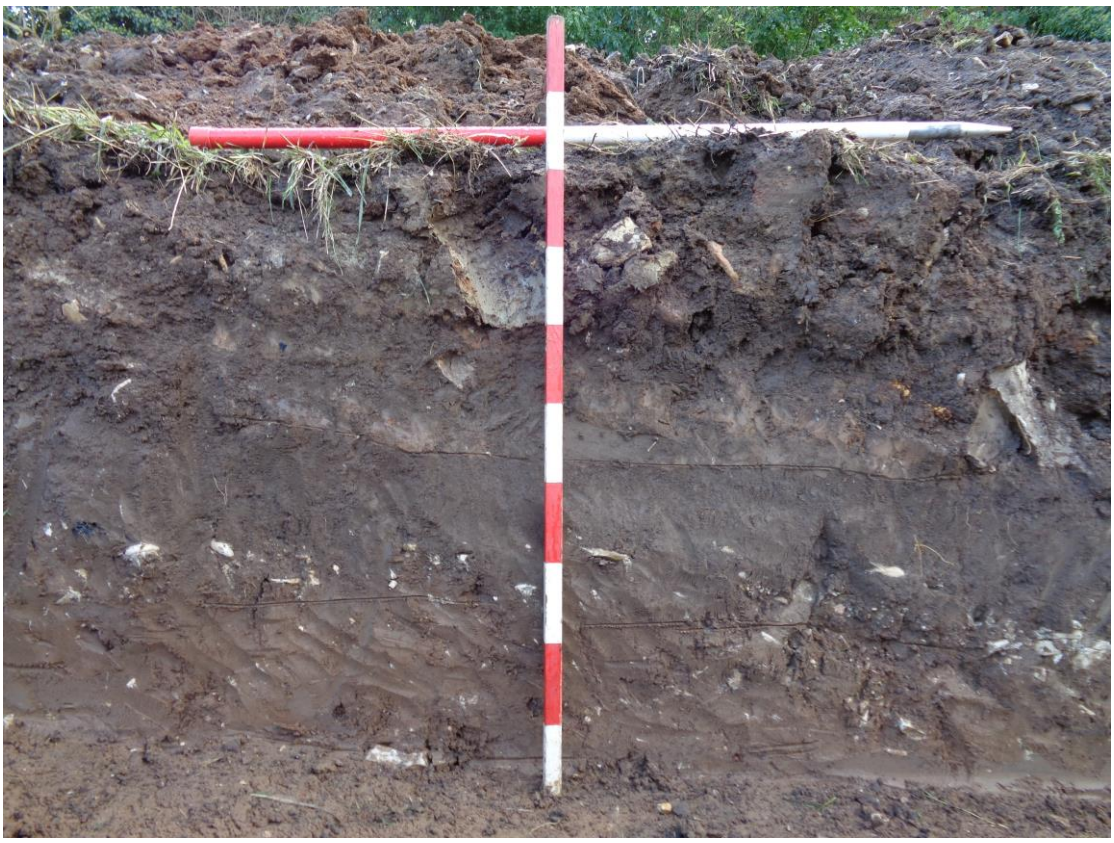

Plate 12; section 2e

Plate 13; section 2f

Plate 14; trench 3, from the north-east

Plate 15; section 3a

Plate 16; section 3b

Plate 17; trench 4 (north-south arm), from the east

Plate 18; section 4a

DISCUSSION

The earliest reference to Lighthorne is from Domesday clearly indicating that a manorial settlement had already been established there by 1086. Evidence for Anglo-Saxon occupation is supported by the discovery of two inhumations 300m north of the church dating to the Migration or Early Medieval period.

The possible extent of the Medieval settlement of Lighthorne is based on the first edition map of 1886 which shows the village, as small plots extending east from the church along the main east-west axis road. The historic core appears to be centred around the church of St Laurence which dates from the 13th century and Church Hill Farm to the south, which may be the site of the medieval manor. Fishponds west of the church are also medieval and the remains of agricultural earthworks (ridge and furrow cultivation) to the north and east of the village helps to define the boundary of the medieval settlement.

The study site is to situated on the south-eastern edge of the village, currently comprising a field south of Home Farm, itself a 19th century development. Excavation revealed no significant archaeological remains, but instead a sequence of three homogenous stratified deposits indicating an open rural landscape. No evidence of ridge and furrow was observed within the topography of the study site or the stratigraphy of the trenches. Residually deposited finds from the subsoil layers in trenches 2 and 3 indicates early and later medieval activity that was probably associated with the agricultural use of the land.

Modern pitting had previously truncated deposits to the west and south-west as evidenced in trench 1 and the end of trench 2. This was followed by the re-deposition of natural clay across the southern half of the site to a depth of about 0.50m, tapering off towards the north and north-east half of the study site. The overall effect of this was increase the gradient of the slope within the natural topography of the study site which rises from 101m OD at the north end to about 102m OD at the south, eventually reaching 110m beyond the study site.

Summary of results

The results of the evaluation have shown that there is unlikely to be significant archaeological deposits surviving within the study site. Instead, a sequence of three homogenous stratified deposits were recorded throughout the site indicating an open rural landscape. A handful of residual pottery finds suggests that the earliest activity is medieval and is probably associated with agricultural use of the land. Modern truncation of the underlying deposits was observed within the eastern half of the study site and significant re-deposition of natural clay was evident throughout most the southern half.

Significance

The results of the evaluation suggest that there has been little activity within the study site other than that associated with agricultural activities. The earliest date for this activity is suggested by the few residual finds recovered from the relict subsoil deposit.

Impact of development

The impact of the development is likely to be from the excavation of strip foundations, services and for the access roads and drives. The results of the trial trenching suggest that significant archaeological deposits are unlikely to be present within the areas of proposed development and that further excavation will have no impact.

Recommendation

The results of the evaluation suggest that significant archaeological deposits are unlikely to be present within the study site. Instead the evidence suggests little human activity other than modern disturbance. The development is therefore unlikely to have any impact and in view of this no further work is recommended.

Archive Location

The digital archive arising from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS)

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APPENDIX 1; OASIS

Project name	Home Farm, Old School Lane, Lighthorne, Warwickshire; archaeological evaluation
Project dates	Start: 11-10-2016 End: 13-10-2016
Previous/future work	No / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	HFL16 - Site code
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Grassland Heathland 2 - Undisturbed Grassland
Monument type	NONE None
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Methods & techniques	'''Sample Trenches'''
Development type	Rural residential
Prompt	Planning condition
Position in the planning process	Between deposition of an application and determination
Country	England
Site location	WARWICKSHIRE STRATFORD ON AVON LIGHTHORNE Home Farm, Old School Road, Lighthorne
Postcode	CV35 0AU
Study area	4000 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 34099 55770 52.198704585157 -1.5010344421 52 11 55 N 001 30 03 W Point
Name of Organisation	one ten archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	one ten archaeology
Project director/manager	sean cook
Project supervisor	sean cook
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS
Paper Archive Exists?	No
Paper Contents	''none''

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	Home Farm, Old School Lane, Lighthorne
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cook, S
Date	2016
Place of issue or publication	Warks.
URL	http://www.oasis.ac.uk
Entered by	sean cook (seancook@btinternet.com)
Entered on	9 December 2016