

**LAND AT DITCHFORD MILL FARM,
BLOCKLEY,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

NGR: SP 2250 3656

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

Roy King BA MIFA

July 2005
Report No. 426

Quality Assurance

This Document has been compiled and authorised in accordance with
AMS's Quality Procedures (BS EN ISO 9001: 2000)

Author: Michaels, T

Date

Approved

QA Checked

This report has been compiled with all reasonable skill care and attention to detail within the terms of the project as specified by the client and within the general terms and conditions of Archaeological Management Services Ltd trading as Foundations Archaeology but no explicit warranty is provided for information and opinions stated. AMS Ltd accepts no responsibility whatsoever to third parties to whom this report or any part thereof is made known. Any such party relies on this report at their own risk. Copyright of this document is retained by AMS Ltd, but unlimited licence to reproduce it in whole or part is granted to the client and/or their agents and/or assignees on payment of invoice.

CONTENTS

Summary

Glossary of Archaeological Terms and Abbreviations

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 PROJECT BACKGROUND
- 3 AIMS
- 4 METHODOLOGY
- 5 RESULTS
- 6 CONCLUSION
- 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY
- 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

FIGURE LIST

Figure 1: Site Location

Figure 2: Trench Location

SUMMARY

During June 2005 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on land at Ditchford Mill Farm, Blockley, Gloucestershire (NGR: SP 2250 3656). The project was commissioned by D&G Graham & Son.

The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of a single 20m long trench within the proposed development area.

No archaeological finds or features were present within the evaluation trench.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project, archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

CBM

Ceramic Building Material.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

Neolithic

Division of the prehistoric period dated approximately between 4500 BC and 2000 BC.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level. (AOD Above Ordnance Datum).

OS

Ordnance Survey.

Prehistoric

For the purpose of this report Prehistoric is defined as being the period prior to the Roman invasion of AD43.

Romano-British

The period between AD 43 – *circa* AD 410.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology during June 2005, on a plot of land at Ditchford Mill Farm, Blockley, Gloucestershire (NGR: SP 2250 3656). The project was commissioned by D&G Graham & Son.
- 1.2 A programme of archaeological works was required by Gloucestershire County Council in advance of development, in accordance with the principles of Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990) and the archaeological policies of Cotswold District Council.
- 1.3 This report constitutes the results of the archaeological works. The work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (Foundations 2005) which complied with the brief (GCC 2005) and was agreed with the Council's archaeological advisor. The evaluation was undertaken in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2001). The code of conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists was adhered to throughout.

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There has been a proposal to construct a new agricultural workers dwelling on land at Ditchford Mill Farm. The study area is located within an area of archaeological importance.
- 2.2 Historical maps do not show any significant changes to the site or the general landscape from the mid-19th century. The maps available for consultation were the Tithe Map of Todenham Parish dated 1840 and First, Second and Third Edition Ordnance Survey maps dated 1885, 1902 and 1923 respectively.
- 2.3 The site is bounded to the Northeast by the deserted Medieval village (DMV) of Lower or Middle Ditchford (SMR no: 374/SAM no. 28857), which is thought to have been abandoned some time between AD 1450 and 1520. The site is visible on aerial photographs as a series of streets and boundary ditches and a number of housing platforms have been identified, including one which may represent an important building such as a manor house. Ridge and furrow has also been identified, but the earthworks do not appear to continue into the proposed development area.
- 2.4 Ditchford Mill and pond (SMR no: 6466) is located to the South of the proposed development area. The earliest reliable record of a mill on this site is as a reference in the will of John de Ditchford in AD1376, but it is thought that this site may have been occupied earlier, possibly since Domesday.
- 2.5 To the northwest of the site is the Fosseway (SMR no: 6561), a Roman Road which links Exeter to Lincoln.

- 2.6 To the northeast of the study area is the Stratford and Moreton tramway (SMR no: 15487), which was opened in 1826. To the East of the site is the Oxford, Worcester and Wolverhampton railway (SMR no: 15488), which was opened in 1853. The Stratford-Moreton tramway was adapted as a branchline of the railway and was converted for steam in 1889. The line was closed in 1960.
- 2.7 The study area therefore contains the potential for significant archaeological features and deposits, predominantly associated with the Roman, Medieval and Post-medieval period.

3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits, in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains. In turn this would allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:
- i) To define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
 - ii) To attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site;
 - iii) To recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The archaeological specification required the excavation of a 20m by 1.8m evaluation trench. The trench location is shown on Figure 2.
- 4.2 Non-significant overburden was removed, under constant archaeological supervision, to the top of the archaeological deposits or the underlying natural deposits, whichever were encountered first. This was achieved through the use of a JCB-type mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket. Thereafter cleaning and excavation was conducted by hand. Spoil tips were scanned for finds.
- 4.3 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 **Trench 1** (22m by 2m) was aligned east-west and was excavated onto the natural orange brown clay and gravel at an average depth of 0.65m (83.56m OD) from the modern ground surface. The natural clays and gravels were sealed beneath a mid brown clay silt subsoil (102), up to 0.43m thick, from which four sherds of 18th-19th century pottery were recovered. This was sealed by a dark brown silty clay ploughsoil (201), up to 0.31m thick. No archaeological finds or features were present within this trench.

6 CONCLUSION

- 6.1 The archaeological evaluation trench was excavated onto clean natural clays and gravels beneath an intact subsoil and ploughsoils. No archaeologically significant finds or features were present within the area of the trench.
- 6.2 The results of the evaluation work would suggest that features associated with the deserted medieval village did not extend into the site and that the potential of the study area to contain archaeologically significant deposits is low-negligible.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

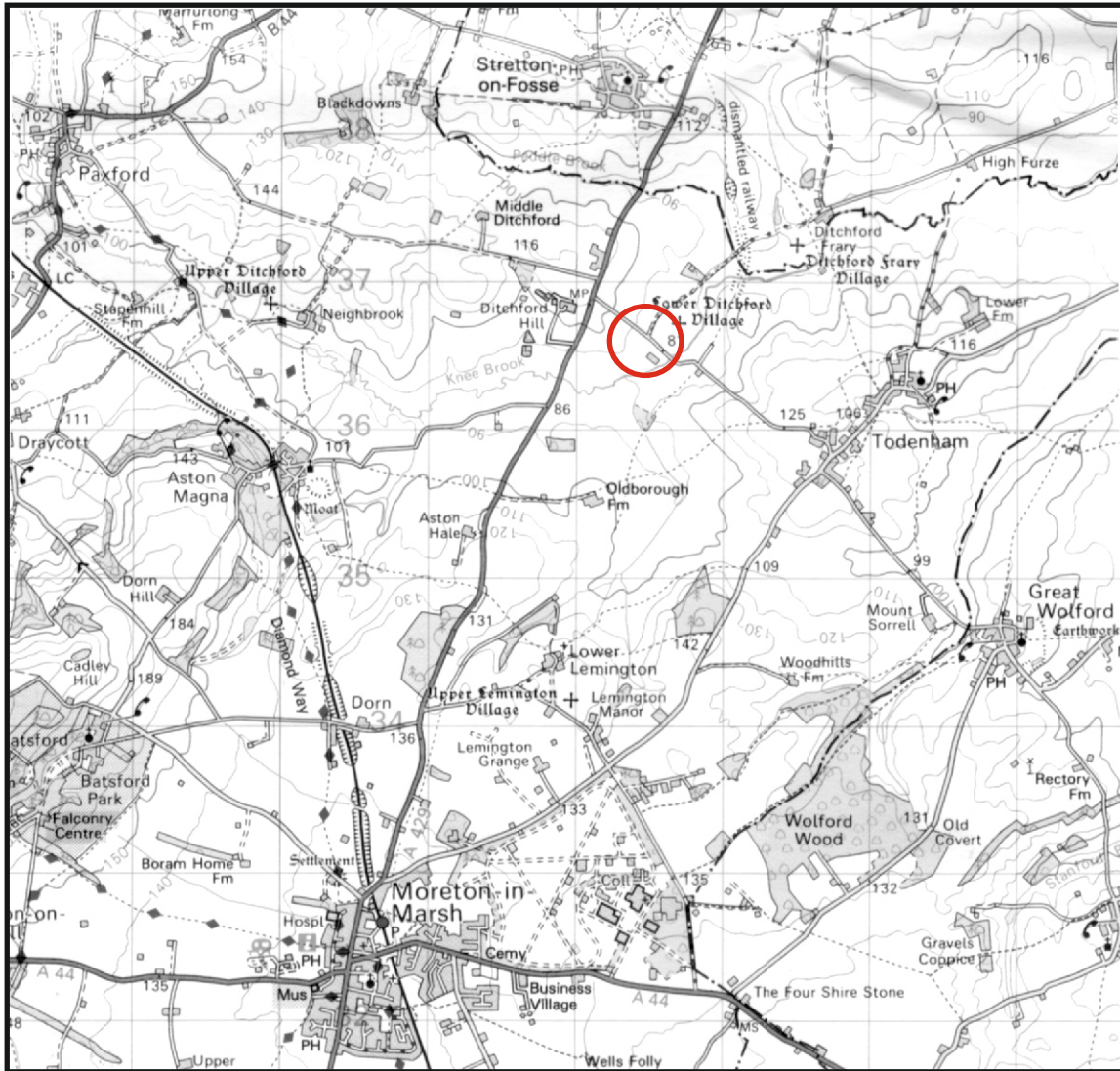
Foundations Archaeology 2005 *Land at Ditchford Mill Farm, Blockley, Gloucestershire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished

Gloucestershire County Council Archaeology Service 2000 *Brief for an Archaeological Field Evaluation*. Unpublished

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994 (revised 2001) *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation*. Unpublished.

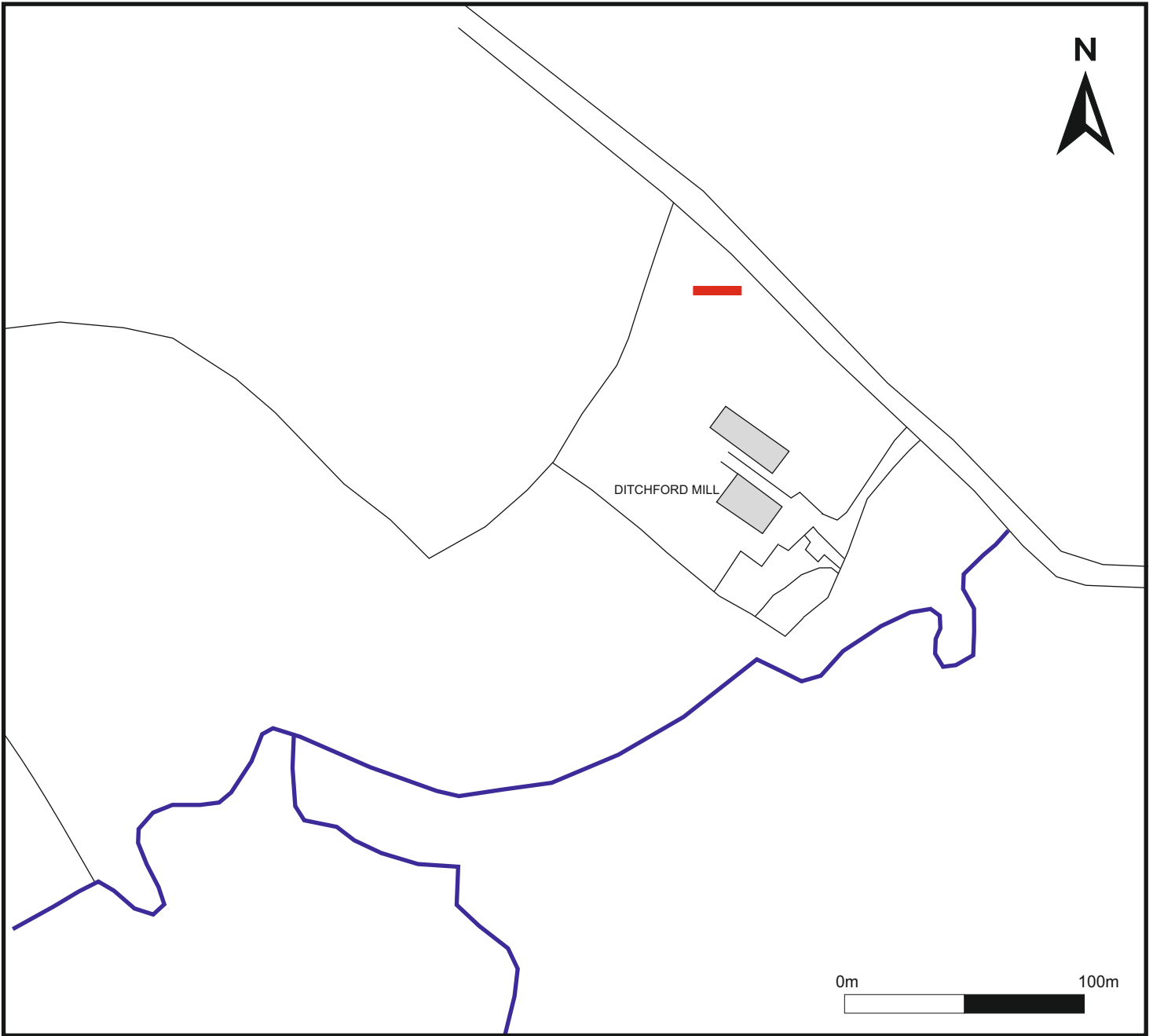
8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Charles Parry of Gloucestershire County Council, Alastair Graham of D&G Graham & Son and Ben Knight of Humberts Chartered Surveyors.



© Crown Copyright
Reproduced under licence AL523064A

FIGURE 1: Site Location



— EVALUATION TRENCH

FIGURE 2: Trench Location