

**DUCKSTONE HOUSE,
STOKE ORCHARD,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**

NGR: SO 9215 2828

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
DSO03**

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SUMMARY

In July 2003 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological evaluation on the land at Duckstone House, Stoke Orchard, Gloucestershire at NGR: SO 9215 2828 (centred). The project was commissioned by P.E. Duncliffe Ltd on behalf of Moseley Estates Ltd.

The evaluation comprised the excavation and recording of two 15m by 1.8m trenches and one 5m by 1.8m trench, across the proposed development area (Figure 2)

All the trenches displayed varying degrees of root and plough disturbance. No archaeological features were present although sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from Trench 2.

No other archaeological features were present within the study area.

The potential of the study area may, therefore, be considered low.

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.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *circa* AD 1500.

Natural

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

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.

Saxon

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Foundations Archaeology in July 2003 on the land at Duckstone House, Stoke Orchard, Gloucestershire at NGR: SO 9215 2828 (centred). The project was commissioned by P. E. Duncliffe Ltd on behalf of Moseley Estates Ltd.
- 1.2 It had been proposed to construct three new dwellings and access road at the development site. A programme of archaeological works was required by Gloucestershire County Council prior to the determination of planning permission in accordance with the principals of Planning Policy Guidance Note 16: Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990) and the archaeological policies of Gloucestershire County Council.
- 1.3 This report constitutes the results of the archaeological works. The project was undertaken in accordance with the Project Design prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2003), based upon the Brief by Gloucestershire County Council and agreed by the Senior Archaeological Officer of Gloucestershire County Council. The fieldwork was undertaken in accordance with IFA *Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Evaluation* (1999, revised 2001).

2 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 2.1 The site is bounded to the north by Dean lane and by built environment to the east, west and south. The planned access is from the south via a narrow strip of land. The proposed development works cover an area of approximately 2850m².
- 2.2 No archaeological finds or features are known from the study area, although it lies close to an area of earthworks indicative of medieval settlement.
- 2.3 The main archaeological potential for the site was therefore for medieval activity. This did not prejudice the evaluation to the recovery of features from other periods.

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; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. 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 project required the excavation of two trenches measuring 15m by 1.8m and one trench measuring 5m by 1.8m, comprising just over a 3% sample of the study area. Trench locations are shown on Figure 2.
- 4.2 Topsoil and non-significant overburden was removed to the top of archaeological deposits or natural, whichever was encountered first. This was achieved with the use of a mechanical excavator with a toothless grading bucket. Thereafter the trenches were cleaned and all additional excavation was conducted by hand.
- 4.3 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the Foundations Archaeology Project Design and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

5 RESULTS

- 5.1 All the trenches were excavated in land consisting of overgrown orchard/paddock. On-site constraints required a minor relocation of all trenches. Final trench locations are illustrated on Figure 2. Natural consisted of grey clay with occasional patches of gravel.
- 5.2 **Trench 1** (5.6m long by 2m wide) was aligned northwest-southeast and was excavated onto the natural grey clay substrate at an average depth of 0.73m (23.61m OD) from the modern ground surface. These natural deposits were sealed beneath (103), a layer of post-medieval brick and stone building debris up to 0.34m thick. This layer was sealed beneath a mid-dark grey brown silty clay subsoil (102), up to 0.20m thick. The subsoil was sealed beneath (101), a mid grey brown humic topsoil, up to 0.19m thick. The trench was disturbed at the southeastern end by a modern pipe trench. No archaeological finds or features were present within this trench.
- 5.3 **Trench 2** (15m long by 1.9m wide) was aligned approximately northwest-southeast and was excavated onto the natural grey clay substrate at an average depth of 0.74m (23.75m OD) from the modern ground surface. These natural deposits were sealed beneath (204), a layer of brick and stone building rubble. This layer was overlain by a layer of mid grey brown silty clay subsoil (203)

with gravel inclusions, up to 0.31m thick. Subsoil (203) was overlain by an orange brown silty clay (202) with gravel inclusions and root disturbance. This layer was sealed beneath a patch of orange sand (205) at the southeastern end of the trench. The topsoil, overlying (205) and (202) consisted of a mid grey brown silty loam, up to 0.23m thick. No archaeological features were present within this trench.

- 5.4 **Trench 3** (15m long by 2.1m wide) was aligned northeast-southwest and was excavated onto the natural grey clay substrate at an average depth of 0.45m (24.93m OD) from the modern ground surface. The natural deposits were sealed beneath (303), a mid grey brown silty clay subsoil, up to 0.15m thick. It was sealed beneath a mid-dark grey brown silty clay subsoil (302) up to 0.17m thick, which may represent a buried topsoil. Subsoil (302) was sealed beneath a dark grey brown silty clay topsoil, up to 0.20m thick. The trench was heavily root disturbed throughout. No archaeological features were present within this trench.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1 No archaeological features were present in any of the excavated trenches. A small assemblage of medieval pottery dating to the late 12th-mid 14th century recovered from the top of the natural clay in Trench 2. The Medieval pottery consisted of North Wiltshire and South Gloucestershire limestone tempered ware, produced at a number of sources, the best-known being at Minety in Wiltshire.
- 6.3 On the basis of the evaluation evidence the site appears to have previously stripped with Post-medieval/modern building rubble spread across the top of the natural clays, particularly in the western part of the site. This is likely to have occurred during the construction of the buildings fronting onto the existing roads. As a result the archaeological potential of the site appears to be low.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

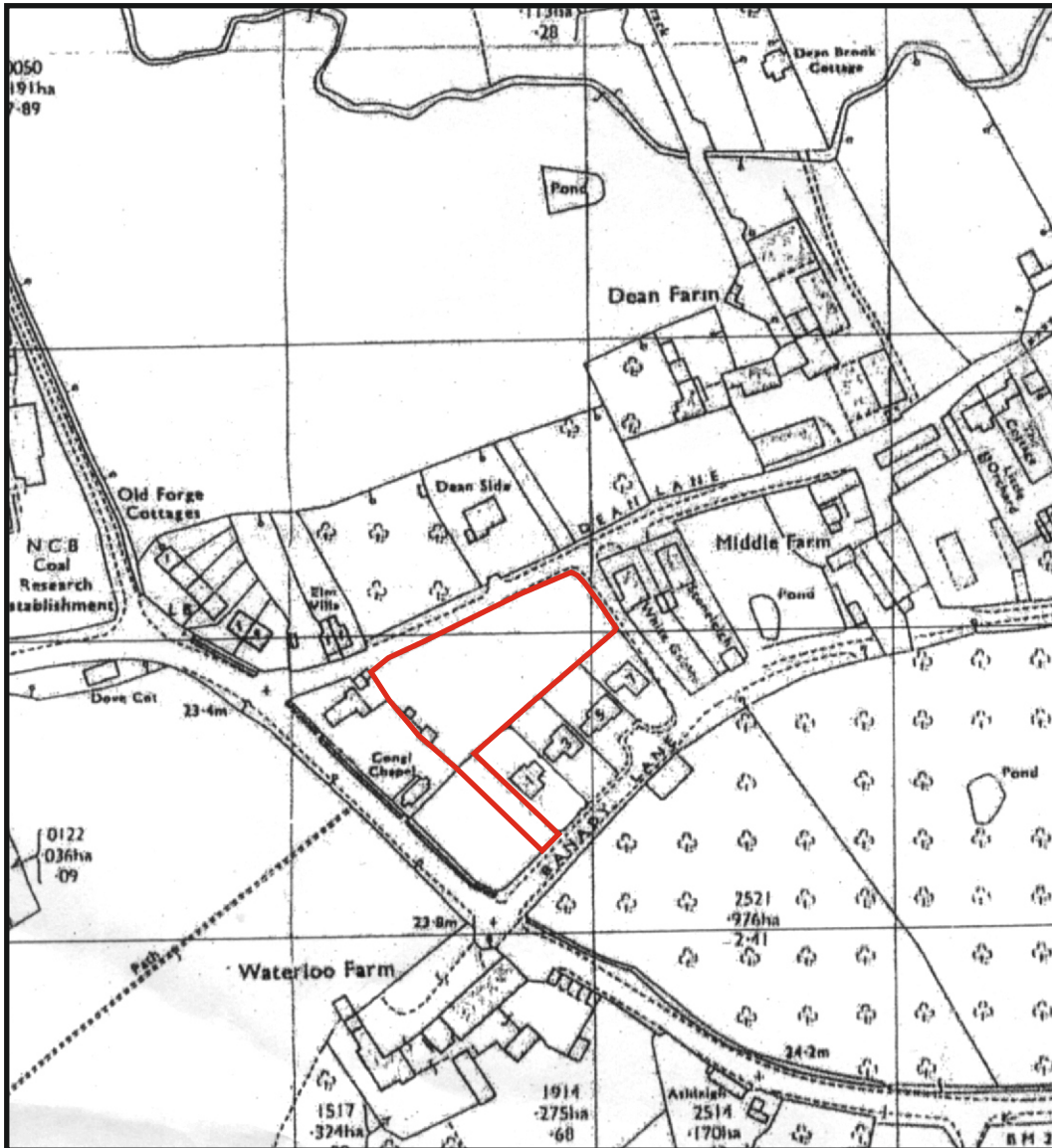
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8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

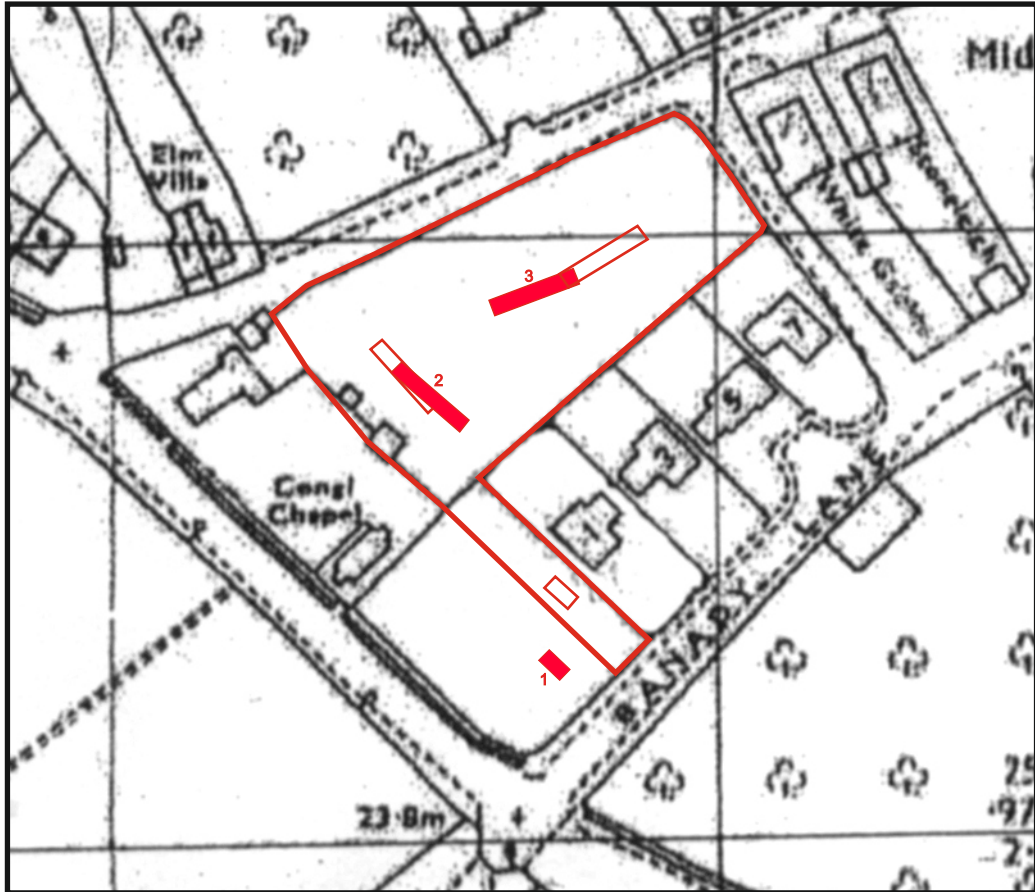
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FIGURE 2: Study Area



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0m 50m




KEY	
	DELINEATION OF SITE AREA
	ORIGINAL TRENCH LOCATIONS
	REVISED TRENCH LOCATIONS

FIGURE 3: Trench Locations