

T H A M E S V A L L E Y

ARCHAEOLOGICAL

S E R V I C E S

**Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons,
Great Milton, Oxfordshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

Site Code: MQS21/146

(SP 6295 0229)

Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, Great Milton, Oxfordshire

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Blanc Restaurants Ltd**

by Pierre-Damien Manisse
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code MQS 21/146

October 2021

Summary

Site name: Le Manoir aux Quat’Saisons, Great Milton, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SP 6295 0229

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 23/08/2021 – 06/10/2021

Project coordinator: Tim Dawson

Site supervisor: Pierre-Damien Manisse

Site code: MQS 21-146

Area of site: c. 9ha

Summary of results: A limited number of archaeological features were uncovered during a 16-trench evaluation at Le Manoir aux Quat’Saisons. In the garden and its dependencies a retaining wall was observed, as well as three gullies and three ditches in four trenches. Two of the ditches were of Late Roman date and the third one likely slightly later (Saxon). The trenches located in the orchard did not contain any archaeological features while the field to the north-east had two trenches revealing two undated ditches and two late 19th-20th century ditches. Overall the site’s archaeological potential is limited except in the vicinity of trenches 12 and 15, and possibly trench 16.

Location and reference of archive: The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

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www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp.*

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	Steve Preston ✓ 27.10.21

Le Manoir aux Quat’Saisons, Great Milton, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Evaluation

by Pierre-Damien Manisse

Report 21/146a

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Le Manoir aux Quat’Saisons, Church Road, Great Milton, Oxfordshire, OX44 7PD (centred on SP 62945 02295) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Andy Mayes of AECOM, Portwall Place, Portwall Lane, Bristol BS1 6NA on behalf of Blanc Restaurants Ltd, Church Road, Great Milton, Oxford OX44 7PD.

A planning application (P21/S0343/FUL) has been submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council for the erection of various buildings (wellness spa, bistro, Raymond Blanc Academy, garden rooms and villas, pavilions and storage barns) on the site. A programme of archaeological trial trenching was required to determine the archaeological potential of the site in order to inform the planning process. This is in accordance with the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2019) and the District Council’s policies on archaeology.

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram, lead archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council, the archaeological advisers to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by Pierre-Damien Manisse, assisted by Daniel Hadded, Mike Murray, Michael Paine and Beth Tucker between 23rd August and 6th October 2021. The site code is MQS 21/146. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Oxfordshire Museum Services in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located at the south entrance of Great Milton village, South Oxfordshire, off the A329 road between Thame and Wallingford and off Church road (Fig. 1). The site is within a 10.7ha estate comprising a manor house and associated outbuildings, garden, orchard, carparking and a grassed field. The site is occupied by a hotel/restaurant complex. It is a relatively flat area with landscaping creating some variations in elevation, overall between 72–85m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), highest in the north corner. The underlying geology is Portland Formation from the Upper Jurassic bedrock (sandstones and limestones) in the west and Whitchurch Sand Formation from the Lower Cretaceous (fine to medium-grained sand with sporadic beds of clay), mostly in the south-east.(BGS 1994) At the very north bands of sand within the Kimmeridge Clay Formation of the Upper Jurassic period could enter the site limits.

Archaeological background

The site's potential was addressed in an archaeological desk-based assessment (OA 2021). To summarize, the archaeological potential of the site stems from its location close to the medieval core of the village, in particular the 11th-century church of St Mary immediately north of the manor house, while the manor is mentioned in Domesday Book (Williams and Martin 2002). The manor house itself, Grade II* listed (no.1369260) in its earliest part dated back from the late 15th century with later additions mainly from the 17th century, like the garden walls and the Grade II listed dovecote (no.1047485). There has not been much investigation, nor finds in the immediate vicinity of the site itself, but one of two watching briefs in the grounds revealed two undated features (the other revealed only modern disturbance). The presence of a Roman road through the site, suggested by the Viatores, has since been doubted but not disproved. There is a villa at Little Mlilton to the south-west and Roman burials have been found around 900m to the west of the site. The field at the south-east is considered to have been farmland since medieval times.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the proposed area of development.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- to determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present; and
- to provide information to allow the preparation of a mitigation strategy if necessary.

The potential and significance of any deposits located will be assessed according to the research priorities such as set out in Historic England Research Agenda (HE 2016) or any more local or thematic research priorities as necessary such as the Solent Thames Research Agenda (Hey and Hind 2014).

It was proposed to machine-excavate a total of 16 trenches (Fig. 2), eleven being 30m long and the remaining five 15m long, and all 1.80m wide, at the locations of the footprints of new structures. They were to be dug under constant archaeological supervision and all spoil heaps were to be monitored. If archaeology is present, the trenches would be hand-cleaned and features sufficiently hand-excavated to fulfil the objectives of the project. This work was to be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which warrant preservation *in situ*, or might better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation.

Results

The project was divided in two phases. Initially the four trenches inside the garden (no. 11; 12; 14 and 15) were dug using a mini-excavator equipped with a bladed bucket 1m wide. Those trenches' breadths were 1.8 to 2m. Later on, the remaining trenches in the car park (no. 9), orchard and surroundings (no. 1-6; 8) and grassland (no. 7; 10; 13 and 16) were excavated with a 360° excavator, fitted with a 1.5m wide toothless bucket. Those trenches' breadth was 1.6m. A metal detector (Minelabs Vanquish 540) was used throughout to enhance finds recovery, although without result.

The trenches were more or less dug as intended, with minor modifications due to site constraints (Fig. 2). Trench 2 orientation was shifted from SW-NE to SSW-NNE to avoid disrupting some fences. Trench 4 in the middle of the orchard was reduced in length due to the lack of space for spoil amidst the apple trees. Trench 8 was re-orientated SSE-NNW and Trench 5 was moved further SE to avoid a public footpath. Trench 14 had to be split into two parts because of the trees, bushes and slope limiting machine accessibility. The trenches ranged in length from 8.55m to 36m and in depth from 0.35m to 1.50m. Open trenches were fenced to allow continuing safe access to the grounds. After consultation with county archaeologist, blank trenches were backfilled as soon as possible to avoid disruption.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1. A list of the archaeological features, with dating evidence, are summarized in Appendix 2.

Trench 1 (Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned NW - SE and was 33m long and 0.37m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of *c.* 0.22m of topsoil (a soft dark grey brown silt with occasional unsorted small stones) and *c.* 0.15m subsoil (a mottled mid grey and orange brown silt) overlying natural geology (a light orange, yellow and pale grey silty clay with scarce iron oxides inclusions). No finds were recovered and no archaeological features were present.

Trench 2

Trench 2 was aligned SSW - NNE and was 24.80m long and 0.57m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of *c.* 0.27m of topsoil and *c.* 0.30m subsoil overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered and no features were present, except a land drain.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned SW - NE and was 33.80m long and up to 0.35m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.26m of topsoil directly overlying natural geology. No finds were recovered and no archaeology was present. A land drain was observed from 0 to 8m from the SW end of the trench.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned NW - SE and was 17.30m long and 0.40m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20-0.25m of topsoil and 0.15m subsoil overlying natural geology. No archaeological finds or features were present.

Trench 5 (Pl. 5)

Trench 5 was aligned NW - SE and was 17.30m long and 0.65m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of disturbed topsoil, a light to mid greyish brown silt with occasional gravels and 0.40m buried topsoil, a mid to dark brown loamy silt overlying natural geology, an orange brown silt. Both topsoils contained lots of modern rubbish, especially at the NW end (orange netting, broken electric cable, road signs...). A land drain crossed the trench at 10m and another one at 19.70m. Three disused foul water drains were noted close to the NW end. No finds were recovered and no archaeology was present.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was aligned SW - NE and was divided in two parts to preserve the footpath leading to the heliport. It was 31.2m long in total (15m and 16.2m) and on average 0.45m deep (with a deeper slot at SW end 0.85m deep to confirm the interpretation of the natural). The stratigraphy consisted of 0.20m of topsoil and 0.20m subsoil (a pale yellow, brownish yellow silt) overlying natural geology, a mix of very frequent compact ironstone gravels in a sandy orange and brown matrix and common ferruginous gravels in yellow sand, likely matching the Whitchurch Sand Formation. Below was a light grey sandy clay, still with those ferrous gravels. No finds were recovered and no archaeological features were seen.

Trench 7

Trench 7 was aligned SE - NW and was 35m long and 0.65-0.70m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of *c.* 0.30m of topsoil and *c.* 0.30m subsoil overlying natural geology (a soft orange brown sandy silt with occasional grey clay patches, more frequent with depth). Land drains were noted from 15.20 to 21.30m and from 17.20m to 18.30m. No finds were recovered and no archaeology was observed.

Trench 8

Trench 8 was aligned SSE - NNW and was 16.30m long and 0.75m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil and 0.45m subsoil (a light orange greyish brown sandy clay) overlying natural geology (orange and light grey sandy clay with rare to occasional sandstones). At 6.30m from the south end of the trench, a service trench was noted and a land drain crossed the trench at 10m. No finds were recovered and no archaeology was present.

Trench 9

Trench 9 was aligned NW - SE and was 18.20m long and on average 0.65-0.70m deep, with a deeper slot at NW end at 0.93m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.25m of made ground (0.05-0.10m fine light yellowish grey sandy gravels over 0.15-0.20m coarser stones) and *c.* 0.28m buried topsoil overlying natural geology (bands of yellow and light bluish grey clay and orange brown sandy clay). Nothing of any archaeological interest was noted.

Trench 10

Trench 10 was aligned SW - NE and was 33.20m long, 0.95m deep at SW and 0.60m deep at NE as located on a slight slope. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil and 0.30m subsoil (mid mottled yellowish grey silty clay) overlying natural geology. At the SW end colluvium, a light yellow and grey silty clay, had accumulated under the subsoil, up to 0.30m thick. Three land drains were noted crossing the trench but no archaeological features were observed, nor finds recovered.

Trench 11 (Fig 3 and 5; Pl. 7)

Trench 11 was aligned SE - NW and was 14.40m long and 0.75m deep on average with a minimum of 0.45m with a deeper slot towards the SE end 1.37m deep. Located amidst crops and hedges it had to be reduced slightly in length and bent a little bit to the north at the NW end. The stratigraphy consisted of *c.* 0.50m of topsoil (dark brownish grey sandy silt with rare gravels) and *c.* 0.25m subsoil (a dark reddish brown sandy clay with common sub-angular limestone) overlying natural geology (a mid-reddish brown sandy clay with common to frequent sub-angular limestones). No less than five truncations were noted (drains at 0.2m, 1.1m, 2m, 12m and a service trench around 9.9m).

At 3.9m from the SE end of the trench and going NNE to 4.3m, gully 11 was recorded which was 0.27m wide and 0.13m deep and filled with a soft mid greyish brown silty clay (74) with common sub-angular limestones. No finds were recovered and the gully is not necessarily of archaeological origin.

Trench 12 (Fig 3 and 5; Pls 3 and 8)

Trench 12 was aligned SE - NW and was 12m long, 1.90m wide and 1.50m deep at most. The stratigraphy was complex, with several made ground deposits. It consisted of 0.10m of turf and gravel in a mid reddish brown sandy clay (50) overlaying *c.* 0.26m of modern made ground (51) (rubble in a mid reddish brown clay and sand, plastic rubbish). Below was *c.* 0.19m of another made ground (52) (dark grey brown clayey sand with rocks and demolition rubble).

In the NW half of the trench modern rubbish went down to 1.50m deep. It was not possible for the mini-excavator to reach deeper safely to assess the full depth of the modern deposits. From a hand-dug slot, they were at least an extra 0.20m deep and continued deeper.

In the SE half the deposits below the made ground were a *c.* 0.30-0.50m subsoil (54), a mid reddish brown silty clay with rare gravels. Geology was observed at *c.* 1.21m below the modern level and is best described as a light reddish brown sandy clay with no inclusions. A land drain was noted in the SSE corner of the trench.

Ditch 1 was recorded between 1.9m and 4.6m from the south-east end of the trench, at the base, aligned SW-NE. In section its estimated width reached 4.15m for a depth of at least 0.70m as the base was not reached. The hand-excavated slot stopped at 1.90m below ground level for safety reasons. Ditch 1's upper and main fill (55) was a mid greyish brown silty clay deposit with very rare gravels. On the NW side two lower deposits were noted against the slope, a dark brownish/black sandy clay (57) with occasional charcoal above a mid bluish grey sandy clay (58). On the other side, deposit 56 was probably the same as 57. Late Roman pottery and tiny fragments of burnt animal bones were recovered from this ditch, while a small potsherd, likely of the same date was collected from deposit (54) above, but this also contained one large and one smaller piece of late medieval or early post-medieval peg-tile.

Trench 13 (Fig 3)

Trench 13 was aligned NW-SE and was 35.30m long and 0.87m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil and 0.50m subsoil overlying natural geology. At the NW end and going obliquely WNW-ESE was 19th-20th century ditch 13, mostly filled with frequent unsorted limestones (0.03-0.12m) in a mid grey brown silt matrix, cutting the subsoil. A fragment of mass produced transfer printed 'china' pottery provided the dating. This ditch was about 0.85m deep and at least 1m wide. At 10m from the same end was ditch 12, perpendicular to the trench and also dug into the subsoil. It was at least 1.80m long, 2.5m wide and 0.85m deep. Its fill was a dump of Victorian/early 20th century rubbish (glass bottle, stoneware, scrap metal, shoe soles, etc). It was a dark grey brown silt with rare bits of chalk inclusions. It was dug by machine. None of these finds were retained.

Trench 14 (Fig 3 and 5; Pl. 9)

Trench 14 was divided into two parts, one aligned WNW - ESE and the other SSW – NNE due to various site constraints (sloping area, bushes and low branching trees, lack of space for spoil). They were respectively 3.30m and 5.50m long and 1.35-1.40m deep each. The stratigraphy consisted of a thin turf patch over various made grounds (69, 71 and 75) probably related to modern landscaping of this area, sloping down towards an artificial pond. In both parts, retaining wall 68 was observed, maintaining deposits (72 and 73) in place. Made ground 69 was a light greenish yellow silt with scarce stones and very rare tile fragments. Under it was a friable mix of unsorted stones and tiles in a dark brown silt with common roots (75). These respectively overlay, a dark brown loamy silt (71) and, a soft mid brown silt with rare roots (70), likely an original subsoil. Beneath soil layer 70 were a soft orange brown sand with occasional unsorted stones (72), from which a tile similar to that in subsoil 54 was collected; and a firm mid grey clayey sand with very rare limestones inclusions (73). It is uncertain if this constituted already a deposit, it may have been redeposited. Wall 68 separated deposit 71 from 72 and 73. It was made of flattish limestones of all sizes. There was apparently no mortar. The wall was aligned SSE-NNW. An estimated length of at least 9m can be suggested. It was 0.55m wide and 0.65m high.

Trench 15 (Fig 3 and 5; Pls. 4-5 and 10-11)

Trench 15 was aligned SE - NW and was divided in two bits to preserve a gravelled garden path used by gardeners and guests. The northern part was devoid of archaeology. It was 12.2m long and 0.94m deep. Its stratigraphy consisted of 0.48m of garden soil, a dark brown or black sandy silty loam with rare gravels, which overlay a first subsoil, 0.27m thick, a dark greyish brown silty clay. Beneath was a second subsoil, 0.19m thick, a mid greyish brown silty clay. Natural geology was observed below this as mottled mid orange brown and light bluish grey sandy clay. Two south-north land drains were observed.

The southern part of the trench contained two ditches and two gullies. Gully 2 was aligned SW-NE until cut by ditch 7. It had a shallow concave profile, 0.48m wide and 0.10m deep and at least 0.31m long. A few metres apart on the same orientation and also cut by ditch 7 was another shallow concave gully, 5. It was 0.85m wide and 0.13m deep and at least 0.33m long. Ditch 7 was only partially visible in the trench, orientated SSE-NNW. It was at least 1m wide and 0.50m deep with an irregular side at the WSW. It had two fills with lower deposit 65, a soft dark bluish grey clayey sand, covering the WSW side. It was overlain by a dark brownish grey sandy clay (64) with occasional sub-angular limestones (0.01m-0.08m) which contained a single pottery sherd likely of Late Roman date. Cut 6 was considered as a shallow ditch at the end of this part of the trench, thought it might have

just been a spread as its full profile was not visible. It was at least 1.13m wide and 0.23m deep and seemingly aligned E-W. A Saxon sherd and a possible late Roman potsherd were recovered from it.

Trench 16 (Fig 4 and 6; Pls. 6 and 12)

Trench 16 was aligned SSW - NNE and was 36m long and 0.67m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.30m of topsoil and 0.35m subsoil overlying natural geology. The geological horizon alternated between orange brown silt, sandstone and yellow sand. At 16m from the south end of the trench, ditch 14 was recorded which was 1.26m wide and 0.63m deep with two fills. The upper fill (78) was a firm light brown silty sand in a concave deposit with occasional sandstone inclusions. It was not clear if deposit 79 below this was properly a basal fill of the ditch or the result of root disturbance. It was a light yellowish brown silty sand with occasional sandstones.

At 26m from the south end of the trench, ditch 15 was recorded which was 1.22m wide in plan and 0.60m deep and filled with a firm light brown silty sand (80) with occasional to common unsorted sandstones. Animal bones were the only finds from the features in this trench.

Finds

Pottery by Jane Timby

The archaeological evaluation resulted in the recovery of 25 sherds of pottery weighing 445.5g largely dating to the later Roman period accompanied by a single piece of Saxon date (Appendix 3). The pottery was recorded using selected recommendations outlined in Pottery Standards (Barclay *et al.* 2016). Sherds were sorted macroscopically aided with an x20 microscope into provisional fabric groups based on the principal inclusions present in the clay, along with the frequency and grade of the inclusions. Known or traded Roman wares are coded with reference to the National Roman fabric reference series (Tomber and Dore 1998). Other Roman wares were coded using a similar format to that used in the NRFC or more generically according to the firing colour and texture. The sorted assemblage was quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context. Rim-sherds were identified to broad form type.

<i>Fabric code</i>	<i>Description</i>
BUFFCC	buff fine sandy with trace of a colour-coat
BWFMIC	fine black micaceous ware
DORBB1	Dorset black burnished ware
GYSY	grey sandy ware
OXFBWH	Oxon burnt whiteware
OXFOX	Oxon oxidised ware
OXFRE	Oxon reduced ware

OXFREF	Oxon fine reduced ware
OXFRS	Oxon red-slipped ware
SXOR	handmade organic-tempered

Pottery was recovered from five contexts. Quantities ranged from single sherds to a maximum of 21 fragments from ditch 1 (55). The sherds are moderately well-preserved with an overall average sherd weight of 17.8 g.

Roman

The Roman assemblage is dominated by wares of presumed local origin with only one recognisable regional import: a flanged rim conical bowl in Dorset black burnished ware (DOR BB1) from Poole Harbour, Dorset. Most of the remaining wares are products of the local Oxfordshire industry, with examples of grey, oxidized, burnt white and colour-coated ware. Recognisable forms include dishes forms C45 and C47/8 (Young 1977). Other wares include a fine sandy black micaceous ware and grey sandy wares, the latter featuring as an everted rim jar and a flanged rim bowl.

Saxon

A small sherd of black, handmade ware from ditch 6 with a fabric containing burnt out organic matter suggests the presence of some Saxon activity at the location.

Chronology and distribution

Where datable the Roman pottery assemblage appears to largely belong to the late Roman period, i.e. the later 3rd-4th century. Most of this came from ditch 1. Of the two sherds recovered from ditch 6 one is probably late Roman, the other is of Saxon date. The pottery recovery was limited to just two of the sixteen trenches excavated, suggesting a moderately low occurrence of material.

Struck flint by Steve Ford

A single struck flint was recorded during from the spoilheap of Trench 11 It is a flake made on brown flint It is not closely datable but probably of Neolithic or Bronze Age date.

Ceramic Building Material by Danielle Millbank

A small quantity of brick and tile fragments were recovered during the evaluation, a total of five pieces weighing 871g (Appendix 4).

Subsoil deposit 54 (trench 12) contained a large piece of roof tile in addition to a smaller fragment, both in a fairly hard fabric with small sandy inclusions, a slightly laminated texture and a medium red colour. The thickness is 14mm and the form of the larger piece is slightly uneven and very gently convex on the upper side,

with pronounced edge-thickening, and with a peg hole present on the smaller piece. They represent peg (roof) tile of likely later medieval to early post-medieval date.

A further piece in a similar fabric was recovered from deposit 72, which is also likely to be of similar later medieval to early post-medieval date range.

Wall 68 comprised mainly unbonded limestone blocks, however two fragments of tile were recovered from the wall fabric. These are fairly small, in a hard fabric with sparse groggy inclusions and a pale orange red colour, 18mm thick, and a piece in a hard fabric with very sparse sand inclusions and a dark red colour, with a thickness of 16mm. Both are likely to be broadly post-medieval (pre-19th century) in date.

Summary

The ceramic building material encountered in the evaluation was of late medieval or early post-medieval date, with the pieces recovered from the wall only tentatively dated. No Roman material was identified, and no later (19th century or modern) material was retained. The range of forms is limited to peg type roof tile, and is characterised as domestic.

Animal Bones by Ceri Falys

A small assemblage of non-human bone was recovered from three contexts within the evaluated area: ditch slots 1 (55), 14 (79), and 15 (80). Weighing 557.0g, a total of 24 pieces of bone were present for analysis (Appendix 5). The remains were generally well preserved, with minimal damage to the cortical bone surfaces, although a moderate degree of fragmentation was noted. No complete skeletal elements were present at the time of analysis.

The small assemblage represented a minimum of three animals: one 'large' (a cow), one sheep/goat and a pig. A total of 22 fragments (91.7%) were allocated to the "large" sized animal category, although the majority of fragments were not able to be identified to specific species of origin (i.e. horse or cow). A single fragmented cow left tibia was identified in ditch 15 (80). A pig rib shaft fragment came from ditch 1 (55), and a fragmented portion of a sheep/goat mandible from ditch 14. The pig rib displayed a minimum of seven transverse chop and cut marks to the visceral surface, suggestive of butchery practices.

A single pathological alteration was observed within the small assemblage. A small patch of grey coloured woven bone was identified on the visceral surface of the "large" rib shaft fragment recovered from ditch 14 (79). Signs of active bone remodelling, such as this, indicate the skeletal element was in the process of repairing itself following a localized infection or incidence of trauma at the time the animal died.

Burnt Bone by Ceri Falys

A total of nine pieces of burnt bone were recovered from ditch 1 (57). Weighing just 2g, all fragments were poorly preserved and displayed chalky and fragile textures. It was not possible to identify the skeletal elements or animal(s) of origin based on the small fragments present, and no further information could be retrieved from the remains except that the uniformly white colour suggests the fragments were exposed to temperatures in excess of *c.* 600°C.

Conclusion

The presence of archaeological deposits is limited to five trenches. With the closeness of St Mary's Church and the medieval Manor, medieval deposits or artefacts had been expected. Surprisingly it was the Late Roman era possibly extending to Saxon times which was represented as the earliest and most evident period.

A massive ditch was present in trench 12, with several deposits present below modern made grounds and a possible Medieval/Post-Medieval subsoil. It appeared at 1.08m below ground level and its base was not reached at 1.90m deep. The remaining part of the trench was heavily truncated by deep modern rubbish dumps. No obvious continuation of the ditch was seen in trench 13, where the features were much less massive. The ditch would not be far off the line of the suspected Roman road as originally projected but is well north of the most recent projection (OA 2021, figs 2 and 13). The presence of a greenhouse to the south-west, a hedge to the east and north-east limited the possibilities to investigate further. Dating was provided by a small but consistent pottery assemblage (21 sherds).

In the south-part of trench 15, two gullies radiating from a ditch with scarce Roman dating evidence possibly belonged to the same phase while a bit further north a spread-like deposit contained very rare Saxon material. It is not impossible that the ditch relates to ditch 1, but the area between trenches 12 and 15 is a wooded garden with an artificial water course so any more extensive investigation of this possible connection was not possible. Features were apparent at 0.75m below ground level.

The gully in trench 11 is undated but compared to the previously discussed features it was apparent at a much higher level and given its location amidst multiple other modern services, drains and pipes, it might not be of any great antiquity but it is difficult to be certain. There were also two undated ditches in trench 16. One of them is possibly visible on Lidar images (OA 2021, fig. 14) and has been interpreted as a former field boundary or headland and is also on the orientation of ridge and furrow in this field. It is just possibly a continuation of the perpendicular Roman ditch in trench 12 but is nothing like as massive.

Finally the wall portions seen in the two parts of trench 14 likely belonged to more recent landscaping development of this area. The pond below was not visible on the 1842 Tithe map but is present on the 1st Ordnance Survey map of 1881. It is thought that the retaining wall is related to that pond creation.

There was no trace at all in trench 5 of the Roman road plotted to cross the site from Dorchester-on-Thames in the south-west to Alconbury to the north-east (NMR 992825). The alignment of the ditch in trench 12 was close to the line of the road as originally projected, but the projected course of the road (recently revised), locates it further south (though not seen either in trench 7).

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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	33	1.6	0.37	0–0.22m topsoil; 0.22-0.37m subsoil; 0.37m+ natural geology. [PI. 1]
2	24.80	1.6	0.57	0–0.27m topsoil; 0.27-0.57m subsoil; 0.57m+ natural geology.
3	33.80	1.6	0.35	0–0.26m topsoil; 0.26m+ natural geology.
4	17.30	1.6	0.40	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.40m subsoil; 0.40m+ natural geology.
5	28.80	1.6	0.60	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.65m subsoil; 0.65m+ natural geology. [PI. 2]
6	15 + 16.2	1.6	0.45	0–0.20m topsoil; 0.20-0.40m subsoil; 0.37m+ natural geology.
7	35	1.6	0.65-0.70	0–0.30m topsoil; 0.30-0.60m subsoil; 0.60m+ natural geology.
8	16.30	1.6	0.75	0–0.30m topsoil; 0.30-0.75m subsoil; 0.75m+ natural geology.
9	18.20	1.6	0.65-0.70	0–0.25m topsoil; 0.25-0.53m subsoil; 0.53m+ natural geology.
10	33.20	1.6	0.60-0.95	0–0.30m topsoil; 0.30-0.60m subsoil; 0.60-0.90m colluvium; 0.90m+ natural geology.
11	14.40	1.8	0.75	0–0.49m topsoil; 0.49-0.74m subsoil; 0.74m+ natural geology. Gully 11 [PI. 7]
12	12	1.9-2	1.50	0–0.10m turf and humus; 0.10-0.36m made ground; 0.36-0.55m made ground; 0.55-1.08m subsoil; 1.08-1.21m upper fill of ditch 1; 1.21m+ natural geology. Ditch 1 [PI. 3, 8]
13	35.30	1.6	0.87	0–0.30m topsoil; 0.30-0.80m subsoil; 0.80m+ natural geology. Ditches 12 and 13 [PI. x]
14	3.30 + 5.25	1.8	1.35 / 1.40	0–0.10m turf and humus; 0.10-0.70 made grounds 0.70-1.35m subsoils; 1.35m+ natural geology. Wall (68) [PI. 9]
15	12.7 + 12.2	1.8	1.08 / 0.94	0–0.48m garden soil; 0.48-0.75m subsoil; 0.75-0.94m subsoil; 0.94m+ natural geology. Ditch 4-7-9, ditch(?) 6, gullies 2-3 and 5-10 [PI. 4-5, 10-11]
16	36	1.6	0.67	0–0.30m topsoil; 0.30-0.65m subsoil; 0.65m+ natural geology. Ditches 14 and 15 [PI. 6, 12]

APPENDIX 2: Feature details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
2	1	55-58	Ditch	Late Roman	Pottery
15	2	59	gully	Roman?	Association with 3
15	3	60	gully	Roman?	Stratigraphy (cut by 4)
15	4	61	Ditch	Late Roman	Association with 7
15	5	63	Gully	Roman?	Association with 10
15	6	62	Ditch or spread	Saxon?	1 Saxon potsherd and 1 late Roman potsherd?
15	7	64-65	Ditch	Late Roman	1 late Roman potsherd; same as 4 and 9
14		68	Wall	Undated	
15	9	66	Ditch	Late Roman	Association with 7
15	10	67	Gully	Roman?	Stratigraphy (cut by 9)
11	11	74	Gully	undated	
13	12	76	Ditch	19th – 20th century	Pottery
13	13	77	Ditch	19th – 20th century	Pottery, glass, metal...
16	14	78-79	Ditch	Undated	
16	15	80	Ditch	Undated	

APPENDIX 3: Catalogue of Pottery

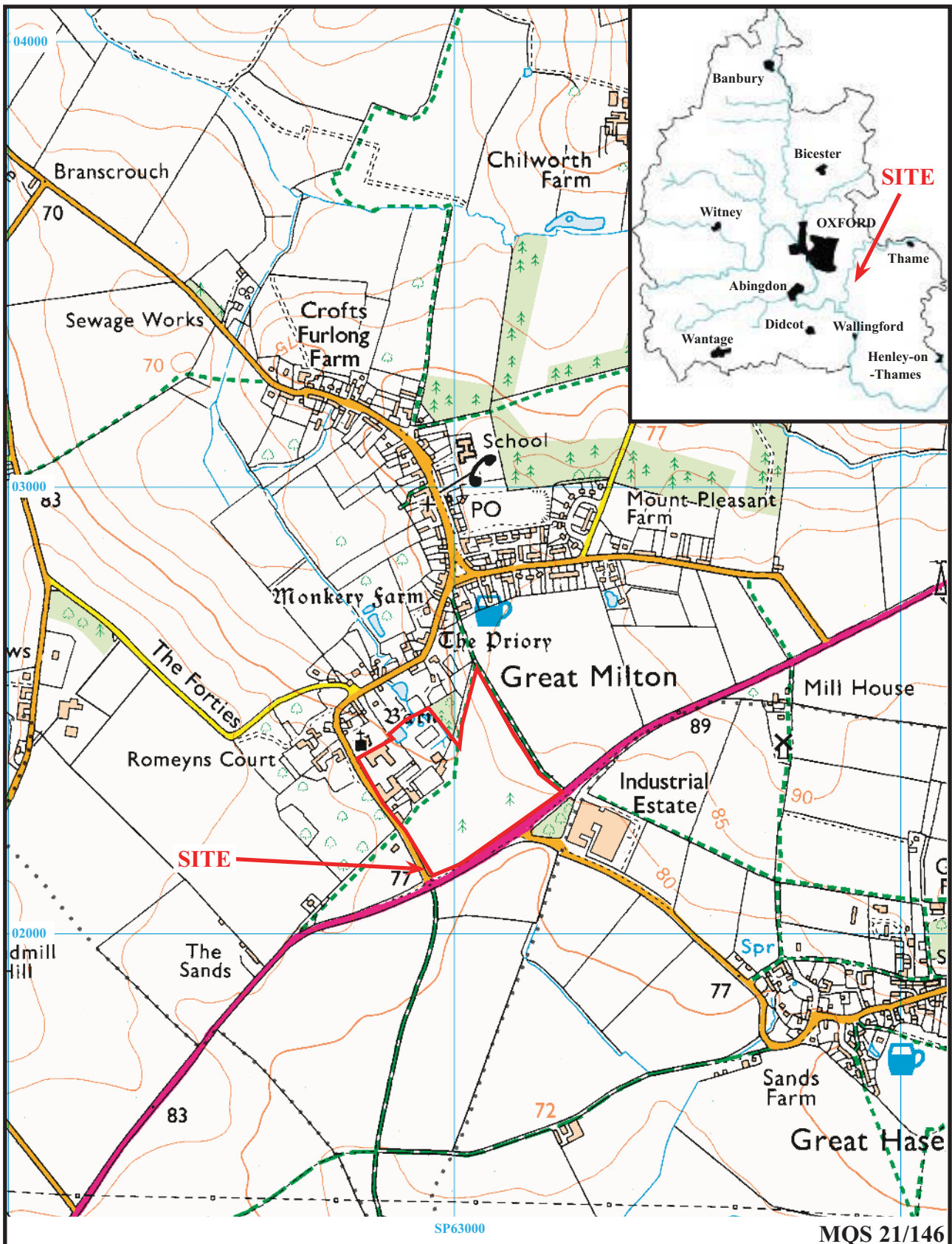
<i>Tr</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Cxt</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Fabric *</i>	<i>Form</i>	<i>Wt</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Rim</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Date</i>
12		54	subsoil	OXFRE		2	1	0		Roman
12	1	55	ditch	DORBB1	flanged rim bowl	123	1	2		IC3-C4
12	1	55	ditch	OXFOX	base	111	2	0		Roman
12	1	55	ditch	OXFRS	Young C45	20	0	2		mid C3-C4
12	1	55	ditch	OXFRS	Young C47/8	8	0	1		mid C3-C4
12	1	55	ditch	OXFBWH		10	5	0		mid C3-C4
12	1	55	ditch	OXFRE		50	3	0		Roman
12	1	55	ditch	BWFMIC		23	1	0		Roman
12	1	55	ditch	GYSY	everted rim jar	19	0	1		Roman
12	1	55	ditch	GYSY	flanged rim bowl	16	0	1		IC3-C4
12	1	57	ditch	OXFREF		18	2	0		Roman
15A	6	62	ditch	BUFCC		42	1	0	trace of cc ; OXFRS?	C4?
15A	6	62	ditch	SXOR		3	1	0		Saxon
15A	7	64	ditch	OXFRS?		0.5	1	0		IC3-C4

APPENDIX 4: Catalogue of ceramic building material

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>
12		54	Subsoil?	2	674
15B		68	Wall	2	112
15B		72	Made ground	1	85

APPENDIX 5: Inventory of animal bone. Key: lbsf = long bone shaft fragment

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Large</i>	<i>Pig</i>	<i>Sheep/goat</i>	<i>Comments</i>
2	1	55	9	219	8	1	-	"Large" fragmented scapula, lbsf; Pig rib shaft with a minimum of 7 cutmarks on the visceral surface
16	14	79	2	64	1	-	1	"Large" rib shaft (with grey, woven bone formation on the visceral surface); Sheep/goat mandibular fragment (fragile)
16	15	80	13	274	13 (cow)	-	-	Cow: fragmented left tibia

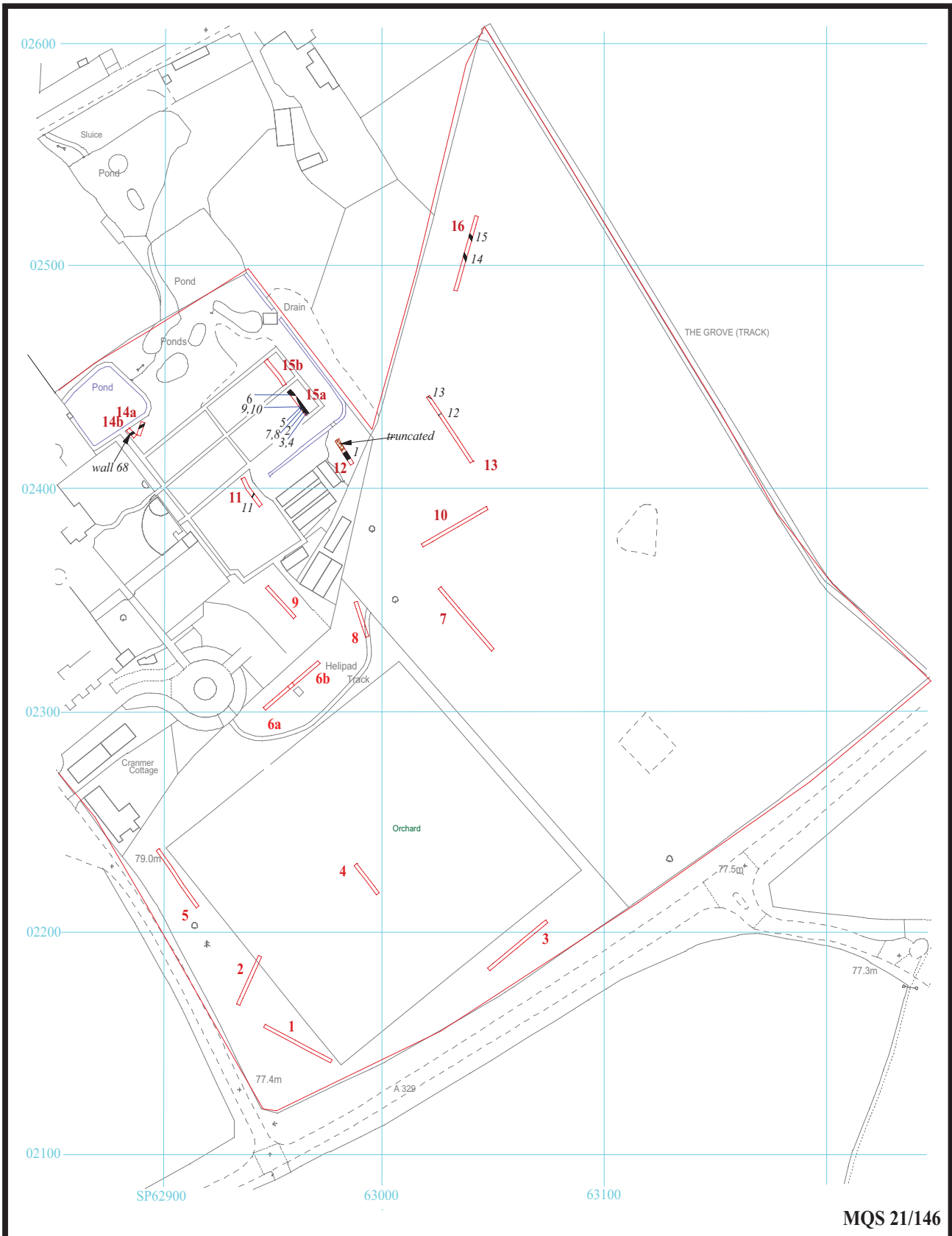


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Figure 1. Location of site within Great Milton and Oxfordshire.

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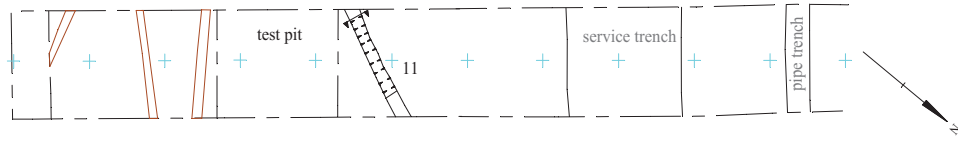
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Figure 2. Location of features.

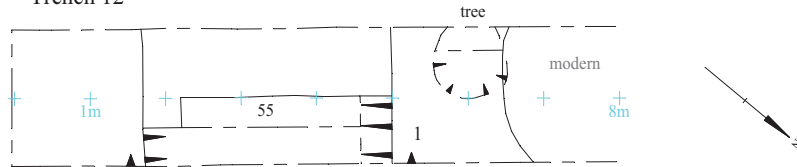


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Trench 11



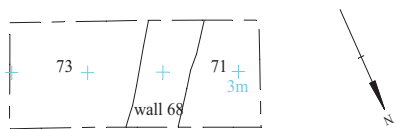
Trench 12



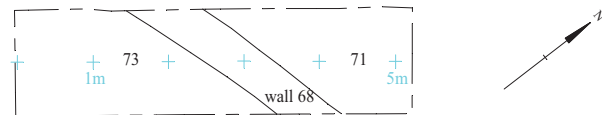
Trench 13



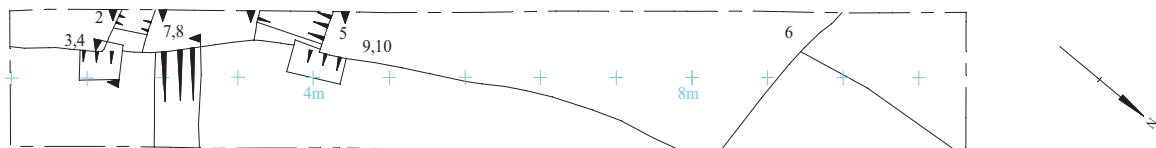
Trench 14a



Trench 14b



Trench 15a



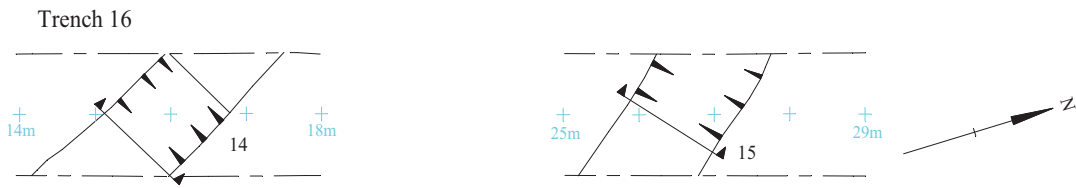
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Figure 3. Detail of trenches.



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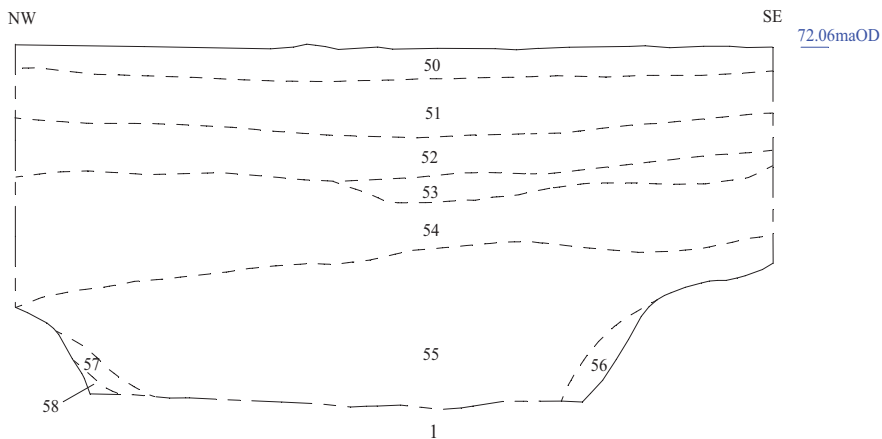
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Figure 4. Detail of trenches.

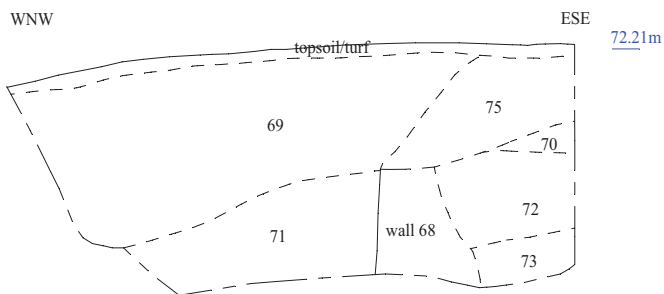


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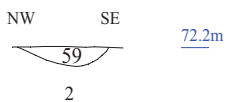
Trench 12



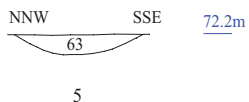
Trench 14



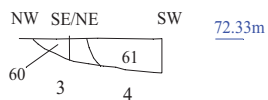
Trench 15a



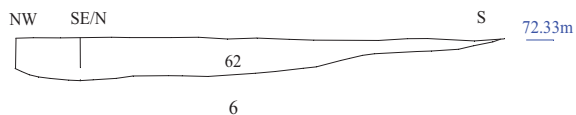
Trench 15a



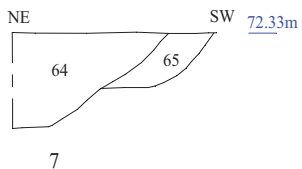
Trench 15a



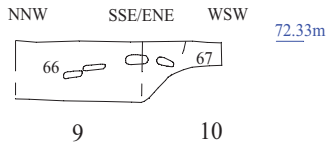
Trench 15a



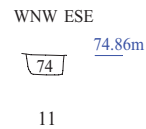
Trench 15a



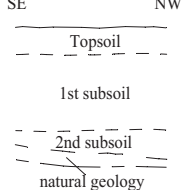
Trench 15a



Trench 11



Trench 15a



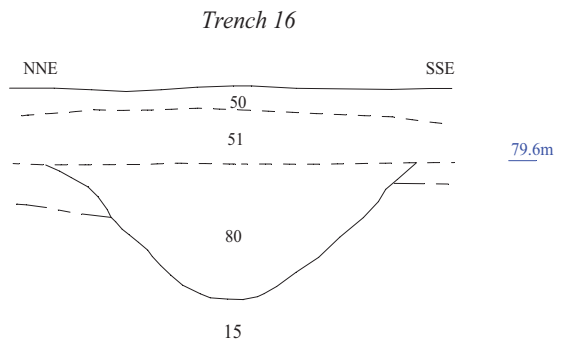
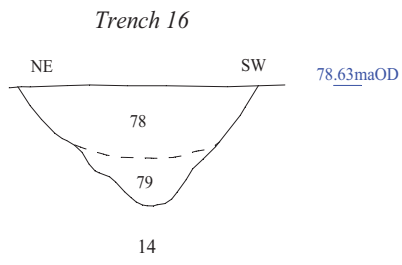
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Figure 5. Sections.



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Figure 6. Sections.



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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking North West, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 2. Trench 5, looking North West, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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**Belmond Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons,
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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. Trench 12, looking North West, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 4. Trench 15A, looking North West, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 3 and 4.**

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Plate 5. Trench 15B, looking South East, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.



Plate 6. Trench 16, looking North East, Scales: horizontal 2m and 1m, vertical 0.5m.

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Plates 5 and 6.**

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Plate 7. Trench 11, gully 11, looking North East, Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.



Plate 8. Trench 12, ditch 1, looking North East, Scales: horizontal 1m, vertical 1m.

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Plates 7 and 8.**

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Plate 9. Trench 14a, wall 68, looking North East, Scales: horizontal 1m, vertical 1m.



Plate 10. Trench 15A, ditch 3 cut ditch 4, looking North West, Scales: 0.3m and 0.1m.

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Plates 9 and 10.**

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Plate 11. Trench 15a, ditch 7 and 8, looking South East, Scales: 1m and 0.3m.



Plate 12. Trench 16, ditch 14, looking South East, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.

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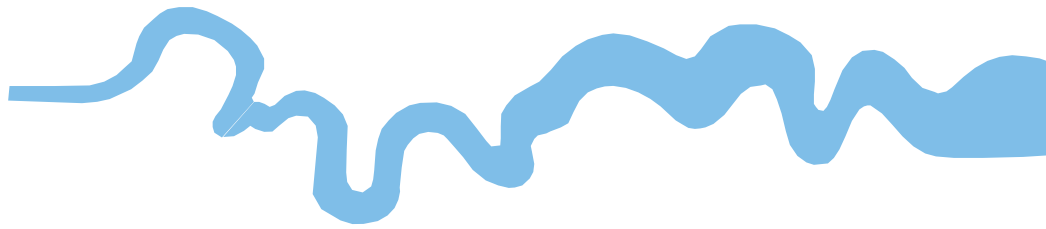
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Plates 11 and 12.**

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TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower	2,000,000 BC





**Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd,
47-49 De Beauvoir Road,
Reading RG1 5NR**

**Tel: 0118 9260552
Email: tvas@tvas.co.uk
Web: www.tvas.co.uk**

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