

**Marsh Farm, Marsh Lane, Wanborough,  
Swindon, Wiltshire**

**An Archaeological Evaluation  
for Bower Mapson Ltd**

by Andy Taylor

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code: MFW07/109

**September 2007**

## Summary

**Site name:** Marsh Farm, Marsh Lane, Wanborough, Swindon, Wiltshire

**Grid reference:** SU 2010 8370

**Site activity:** Evaluation

**Date and duration of project:** 5th–7th September 2007

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Andy Taylor

**Site code:** MFW 07/109

**Area of site:** c. 1.1 hectares

**Summary of results:** Two ditches dated to the medieval period and an undated gully

**Monuments identified:** Two medieval ditches

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

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford✓ 20.09.07 Steve Preston✓ 20.09.07
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# **Marsh Farm, Marsh Lane, Wanborough, Swindon, Wiltshire**

## **An Archaeological Evaluation**

by Andy Taylor

**Report 07/109**

### **Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out Marsh Farm, Marsh Lane, Wanborough, Swindon, Wiltshire (SU 2010 8370) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Peter Mapson of Bower Mapson Ltd, Willow House, 7 The Avenue, Stanton Fitzwarren, Wiltshire, SN6 7SE.

Planning permission (S/07/1651/ROBI) is being sought from Swindon Borough Council to redevelop the site for five new houses and associated landscaping and car parking. A field evaluation has been requested in order to provide information on the archaeological potential of the site, with which to inform the planning process.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the Borough Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, Archaeological Officer with Wiltshire County Council, advisers to the Borough on matters relating to archaeology. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andy Taylor and Aidan Colyer and Ceri Falys between the 5th and 7th September 2007 and the site code is MFW 07/109. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Swindon Museum in due course.

### **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located on an irregular parcel of land on the north side of Marsh Lane, Wanborough, Wiltshire (Fig. 2). The land is currently used for commercial wholesale purposes and comprises turf with occasional small trees. The underlying geology consists of Gault clay (BGS 1974), which was observed in all trenches. The site lies at a height of *c.* 100m above Ordnance Datum.

### **Archaeological background**

The archaeological potential of the site stems from its location close to the line of the Roman road from Cirencester to Silchester. However, of more significance is that the site lies to the south east of the Roman town of Wanborough with other Roman deposits to the east adjacent to the road. Although the site lies away from the

main cluster of structures forming the village of Wanborough, it does lie adjacent to a medieval moated site and in an area where various undated earthworks are known to be present. It is possible that additional medieval occupation deposits related to use of the moat lie on the proposal site.

## **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 area of development.

Specific aims of the project were;

- To determine if archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site;
- To determine if archaeological deposits of any period are present;
- To determine if any earthworks are still present on the site are representative of medieval settlement;
- To provide information in order to draw up an appropriate mitigation strategy if required.

A total of seven trenches were to be dug measuring 1.60m wide and 20m in length, using a JCB-type machine fitted with a toothless ditching bucket and under constant archaeological supervision. All spoilheaps were monitored for finds.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

## **Results**

A total of seven trenches were dug between 19m and 20.5m in length. These were dug as near as possible to their intended locations, although the presence of live services resulted in some small alterations, in consultation with the monitor.

A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

### Trench 1 (Plate 1; Figures 4 and 5)

This trench measured 20.20m in length and 0.68m deep. It consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil overlying clay natural. A ditch was located between 7.30 m and 10.70m. A slot (3) was excavated through it measuring 0.77m in length, 1.17m wide and 0.50m deep. Its mid grey brown silty clay (55) contained one sherd of 13th-15th

century pottery and a single piece of glazed roof tile.. A gully was also located between 17.40m and 18.50m. A slot (4) was dug across it measuring 0.75m in length, 0.50m wide and 0.27m deep. Its mid grey brown silty clay fill (56) did not contain any dating evidence.

#### Trench 2 (Plate 2; Figures 4 and 5)

This trench measured 20.30m in length and 0.90m deep. It consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil. This overlay a yellow brown sandy clay overlying clay natural. A gully (1) and a ditch (2), inter-cutting, were located between 12.90m and the north western end of the trench. Excavation of a slot showed that ditch 2 cut gully 1. Gully 1 did not contain any dating evidence. Ditch 2 was found to contain four pieces of late 12th-14th century pottery. Above the ditch in the subsoil of this trench, seven further sherds of late 12th-14th century pottery were recovered.

#### Trench 3

This trench measured 20.30m in length and 1.20m deep. It comprised topsoil overlying subsoil overlying clay natural. No archaeological finds or deposits were encountered.

#### Trench 4

This trench measured 19.00m in length and 1.50m deep. It consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil. This overlay an orange brown silty clay overlying clay natural. No archaeological finds or deposits were encountered.

#### Trench 5

This trench measured 19.70m in length and 0.90m deep. It comprised topsoil overlying subsoil overlying clay natural. No archaeological finds or deposits were encountered.

#### Trench 6

This trench measured 20.50m in length and 0.82m deep. It consisted of topsoil overlying subsoil overlying clay natural. No archaeological finds or deposits were encountered.

#### Trench 7

This trench measured 20.00m in length and 1.14m deep. It consisted of topsoil overlying brick rubble overlying subsoil. This overlay an orange brown silty clay overlying clay natural. No archaeological finds or deposits were encountered.

## **Finds**

### *Pottery by Jane Timby*

The archaeological evaluation resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of 12 sherds of pottery, weighing 72g, and a single piece of roofing tile, all dating to medieval period. Pottery was recovered from three contexts, one of which is subsoil. The low quantity of finds means that dating can only be provisional and cannot take into account any potential residuality. For the purposes of the assessment the assemblage was scanned to assess its likely chronology and quantified by sherd count and weight for each recorded context.

The subsoil in Trench 2 (51) produced seven sherds from the base of a jar in a flint and quartz sand tempered ware typical of the Kennet Valley and likely to date somewhere in the later 12th-14th centuries.

Ditch 2 (fill 54) produced four very small, abraded, sherds. One larger piece is in a flint and sand tempered ware similar to that from subsoil (51); the other three pieces are little more than crumbs in a vesicular fabric suggesting a calcareous-tempered fabric. Date: Late 12th-14th century.

Ditch 3 (fill 55) produced one very small sherd of green glazed jug. A date in the 13th-15th century is possible for this feature.

### *Brick and Tile by Jane Timby*

A large fragment of curved roofing tile (174g) was recovered from ditch 3 (fill 55). This has a thin green glaze on the upper surface and is in an oxidized sandy fabric.

## **Conclusion**

The evaluation has shown that the site does have some archaeological potential, in the form of two ditches and two gullies which were identified at the northern end of the site. These were dated to between the 13th-15th centuries. It is likely that they represent field or paddock boundaries, although it is difficult to ascertain their full extent and purpose at present. They may be related to the nearby medieval moated site, which lies just beyond the proposal area.

## **References**

BGS, 1974, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 252, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth  
PPG16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO

## APPENDIX 1: Trench details

0m at S or W end

Trench	Length (m)	Breadth (m)	Depth (m)	Comment
1	20.20	1.60	0.68	0.00m-0.20m; 0.20m-0.64m subsoil; 0.64m-0.68m+ clay natural. Ditch 3; Gully 4 [ <b>Plate 1</b> ]
2	20.30	1.60	0.90	0.00m-0.20m topsoil; 0.20m-0.70m subsoil; 0.70m-0.90m yellow brown sandy clay; 0.90m+ clay natural. Gully 1; Ditch 2 [ <b>Plate 2</b> ]
3	20.30	1.60	1.20	0.00m-0.55m topsoil; 0.55m-1.15m subsoil; 1.15m-1.20m+ clay natural.
4	19.00	1.60	1.50	0.00m-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-1.05m subsoil; 1.05m-1.45m orange brown silty clay; 1.45m-1.50m+ clay natural.
5	19.70	1.60	0.90	0.00m-0.30m topsoil; 0.30m-0.85m subsoil; 0.85m-0.90m+ clay natural.
6	20.50	1.60	0.82	0.00m-0.25m topsoil; 0.25m-0.80m subsoil; 0.80m-0.82m+ clay natural.
7	20.00	1.60	1.14	0.00m-0.10m topsoil; 0.10m-0.22m brick rubble; 0.22m-0.75m subsoil; 0.75m-1.12m orange brown silty clay; 1.12m-1.14m+ clay natural.

**APPENDIX 2: Feature details**

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Fill (s)</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Dating evidence</i>
1	3	55	Ditch	Medieval	Pottery
1	4	56	Gully	Undated	None
2	1	53	Gully	Undated	None
2	2	54	Ditch	Medieval	Pottery



### APPENDIX 3: Pottery catalogue

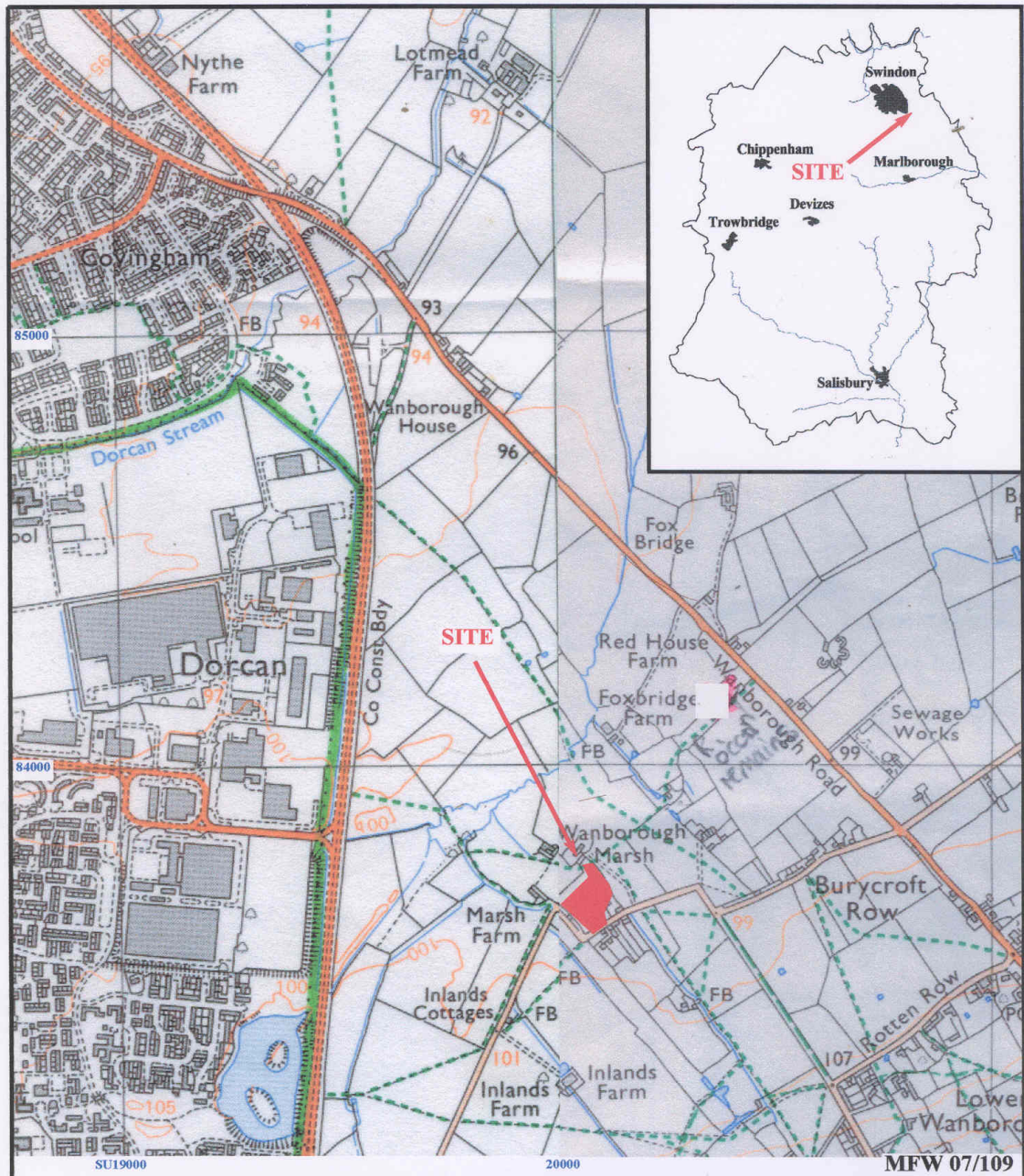
<i>Trench</i>	<i>Cut</i>	<i>Deposit</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Wt (g)</i>	<i>Date (century AD)</i>
2		51	Subsoil	10	66	Late 12th–14th
2	2	54	Ditch	4	4	Late 12th–14th
1	3	55	Ditch	1	2	13th–15th



Plate 1. Trench 1, Ditch 3 looking west, horizontal scale 1m, vertical scale 0.30m.



Plate 2. Trench 2 looking north west, Scales 2m and 1m.

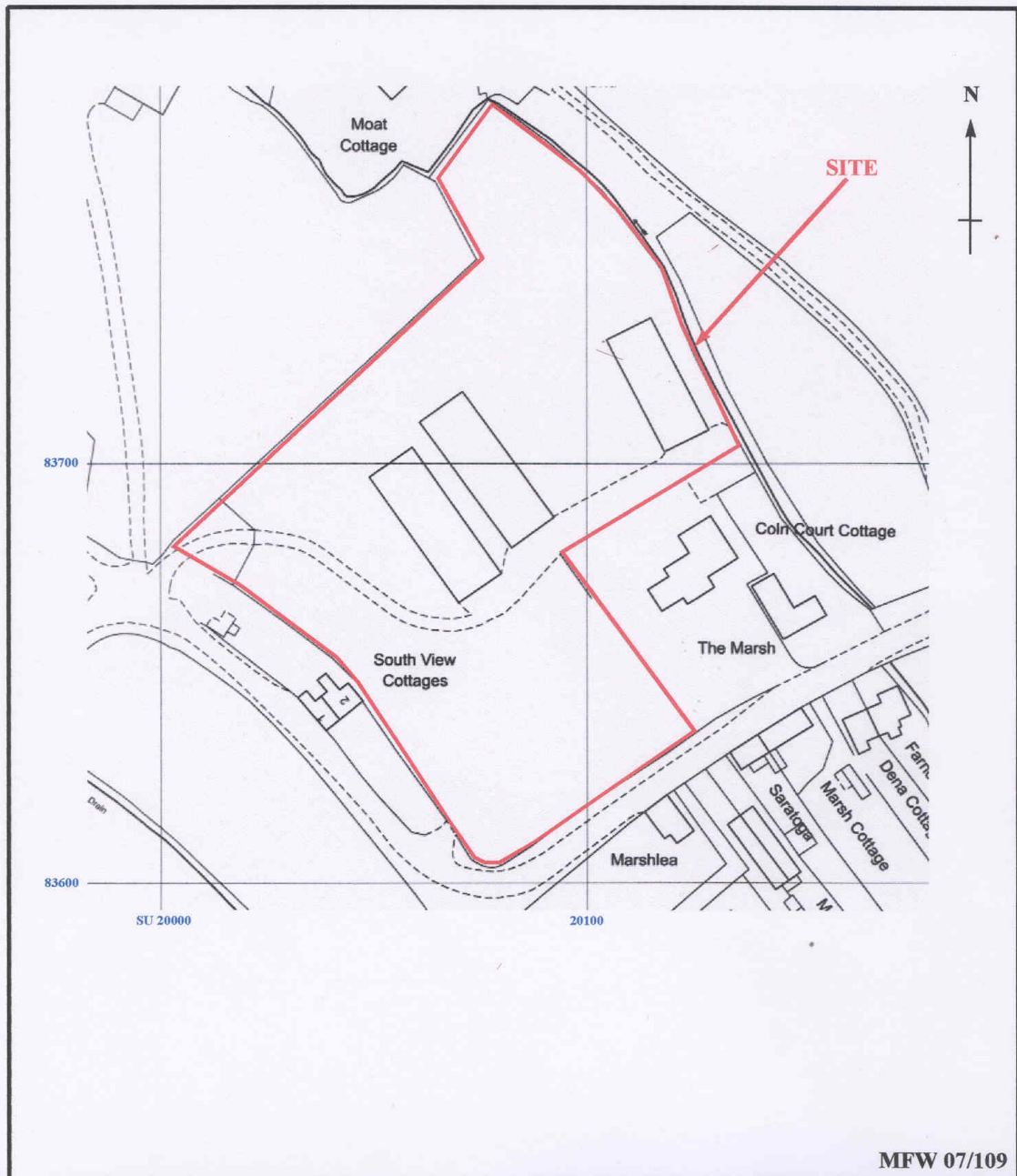


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Figure 1. Location of site within Wanborough and Wiltshire.

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SU 08/18 and SU 28/38 at 1:12500  
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Figure 2. Location of site within Wanborough.

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Figure 3: Trench locations and archaeological features.

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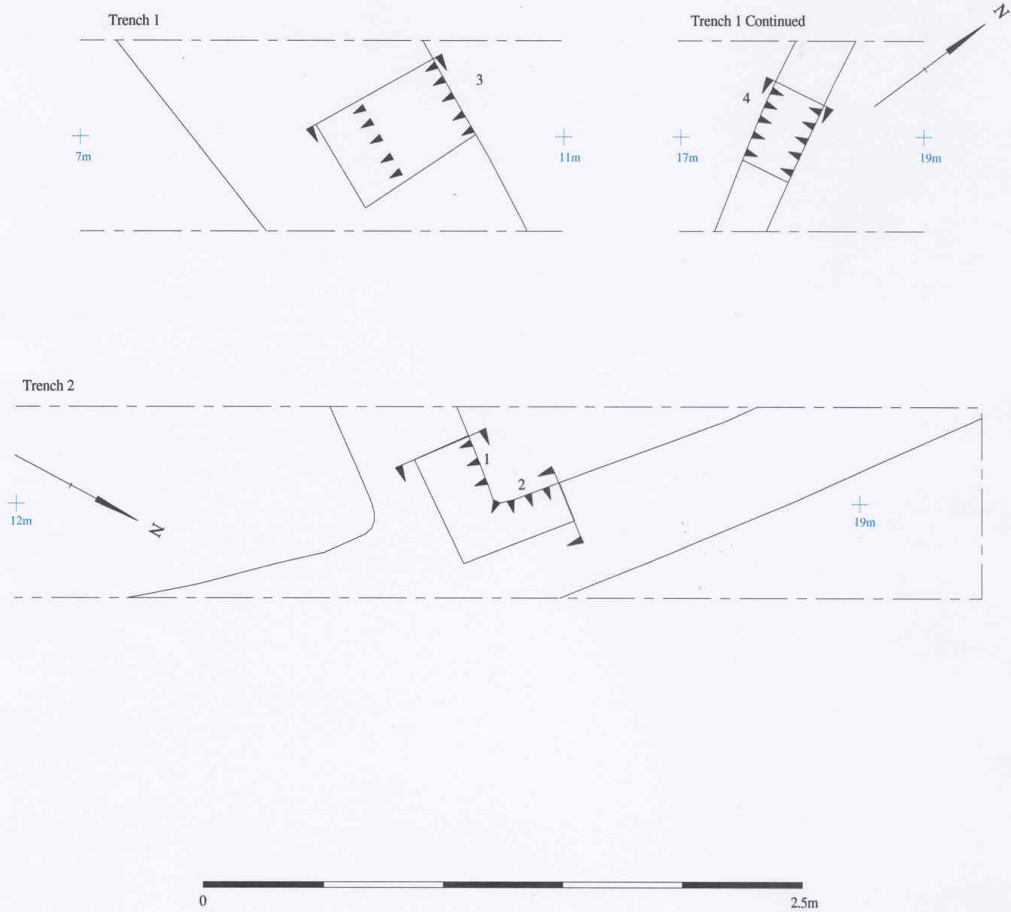


Figure 4: Trench plans

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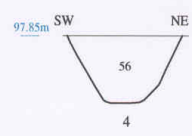
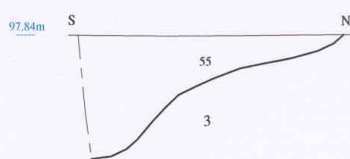
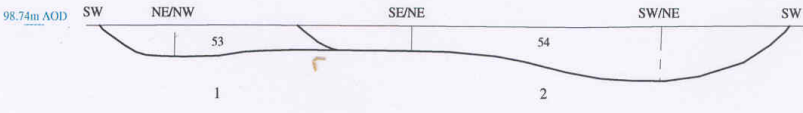


Figure 5: Sections



Plate 1. Trench 1, Ditch 3 looking west, horizontal scale 1m, vertical scale 0.30m.



Plate 2. Trench 2 looking north west, Scales 2m and 1m.