



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological evaluation on land at
Icknield Farm, Ipsden, Oxfordshire,
November 2013



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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		Oasis No. 165560	
Project title	Archaeological evaluation on land at Icknield Farm, Ipsden, Oxfordshire		
Short description	An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at Icknield Farm, Ipsden, Oxfordshire. Five trenches were excavated within the development area. No archaeological remains were identified.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Site Status	None		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Arable		
Future work	No		
Monument type and period	None		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Oxfordshire		
Site address	Icknield Farm, Ipsden, Oxfordshire		
Post code	OX17 6AS		
OS co-ordinates	NGR SU 6225 8408		
Area (sq m/ha)	1.6 hectares		
Height aOD	60m – 65m aOD		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)		
Project brief originator	Richard Oram, Oxfordshire, Planning Archaeologist, County Archaeological Services		
Project Design originator	Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA)		
Director/Supervisor	Mo Muldowney (NA)		
Project Managers	Adam Yates (NA)		
Sponsor or funding body	David Bermingham		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	18/11/2013		
End date	18/11/2013		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	Oxfordshire County Museums OXCMS:2013.156	None	
Paper		Site records	
Digital		Report, photographs	
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)			
Title	Archaeological Evaluation on land at Icknield Farm, Ipsden, Oxfordshire November 2013		
Serial title & volume	13/234		
Author(s)	Mo Muldowney		
Page numbers	10 pages, 4 figs		
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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION ON LAND AT
ICKNIELD FARM, IPSDEN, OXFORDSHIRE
NOVEMBER 2013**

Abstract

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology on land at Icknield Farm, Ipsden, Oxfordshire. Five trenches were excavated within the development area. No archaeological remains were identified.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) was commissioned by CgMs Consulting, on behalf of David Bermingham, to carry out archaeological trial trenching on land at Icknield Farm, Ipsden, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 6225 8408; Fig 1).

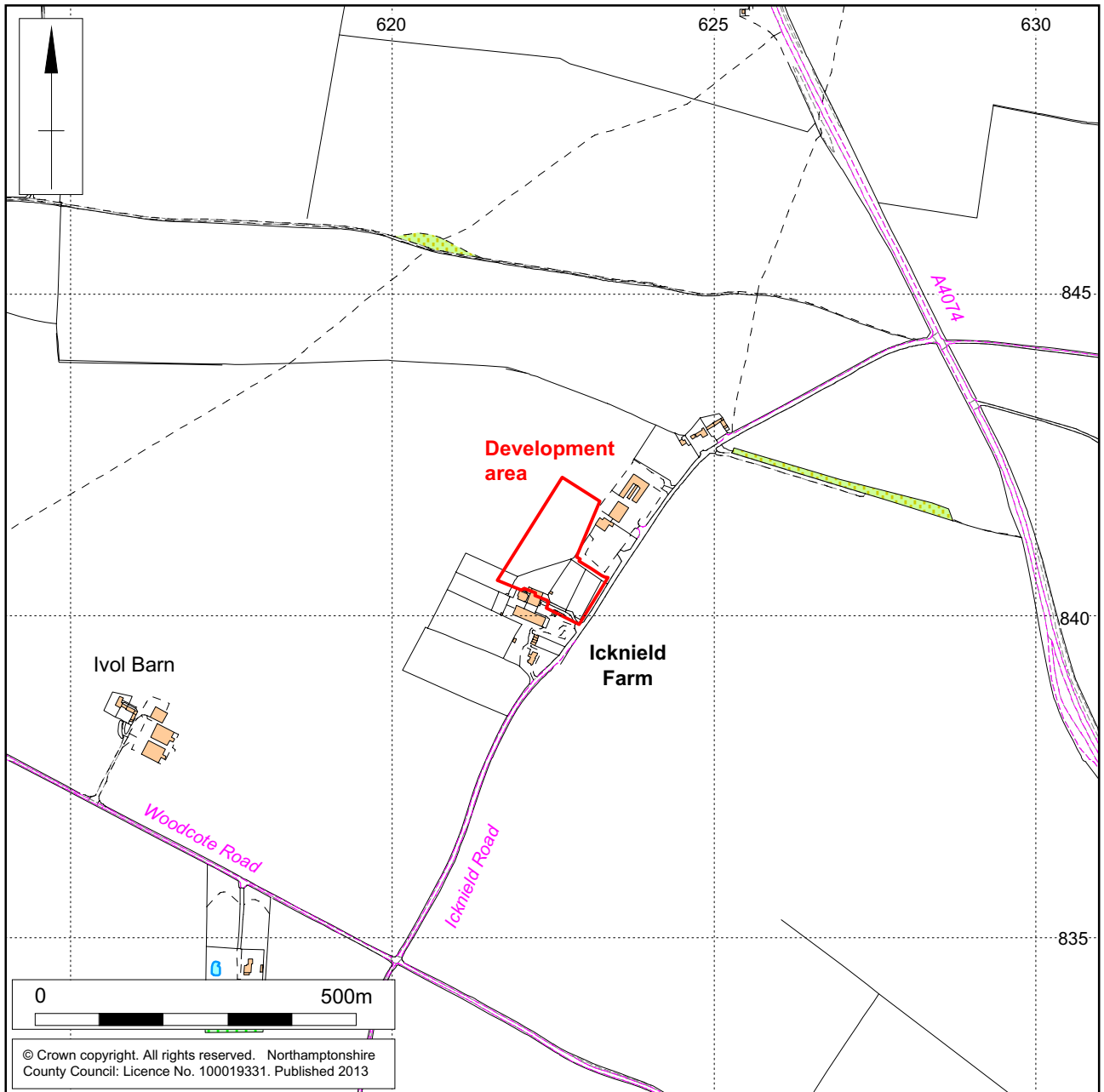
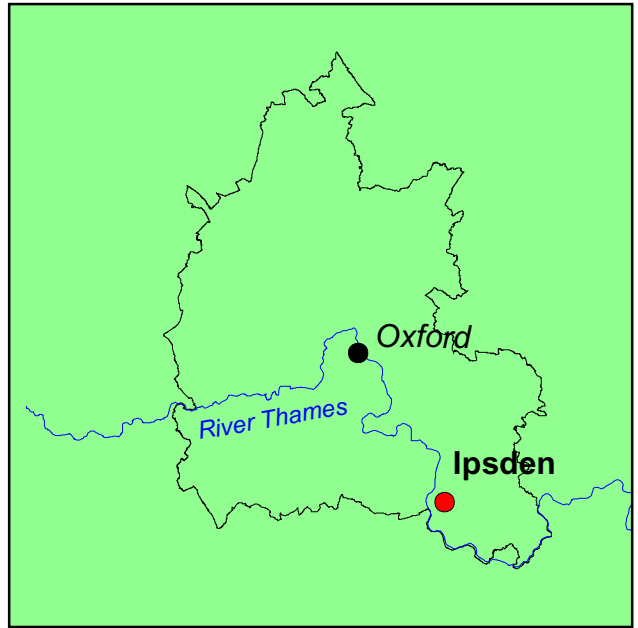
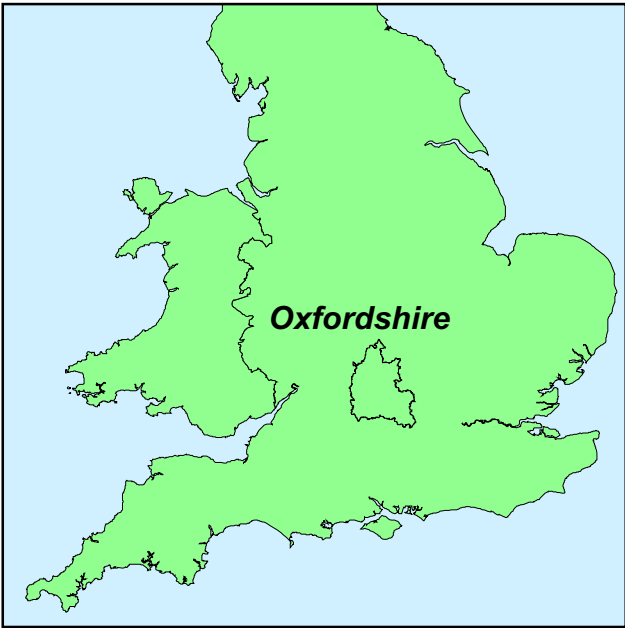
The work was commissioned to assess the archaeological impact of a proposed planning application for an anaerobic digester facility. The development area comprises 1.6 ha of land. The trenching was designed to evaluate the footprints of the proposed structures.

All works were undertaken in accordance with *the National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012) and followed the Brief issued by Richard Oram (Oxfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist (Oram 2013)), and a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2013).

2 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

The development area lies 1.7km south-west of the village of Ipsden, off the A4074 on the west side of Icknield Lane, the course of the Icknield Way. It lies between the existing premises and is bounded on the east side by the road and on the west side by open farmland.

Topographically the site is predominantly flat and is at a height of 60-65m aOD. It is centred on grid ref NGR SU 6225 8408. The site contained Zag chalk formation, overlain by some colluvial silts and other eroded materials (BGS-<http://www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/>).



Scale 1:10,000

Site Location Fig 1

3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The main aim of the investigation was to determine if archaeological remains were present within the proposed development area.

The specific objectives of the project were to determine:

- *the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within those areas affected.*

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The site lies within an area of known archaeological potential identified from cropmarks shown on aerial photographs and fieldwalking surveys. Concentrations of prehistoric flint tools have been recovered by fieldwalking 270m north of the application site (PRN 15512), 300m west (PRN 15511) and 380m north-west (PRN 15510). The flint tools have been dated to the Neolithic and Bronze Age periods. A Bronze Age barrow cemetery has also been identified through aerial photography approximately 470m south west of the proposal area (PRN 15344). Evidence of Neolithic and Bronze Age settlement pre-dating the barrow cemetery was recorded during an archaeological evaluation in 2002 (PRN 16499) and Iron Age and Roman settlement evidence was recorded 700m west of the proposed development during the excavation of the Newbury Reinforcement Pipeline in 2001 (PRN 17329, Timby et al 2005). The site is also adjacent to the proposed route of the Icknield Way, Viatores Route 168c, a prehistoric trackway from Salisbury Plain to Norfolk (PRN 8929). The route is believed to have changed over time, creating parallel routes and possible alternate routes. It is therefore possible that further archaeological features related to these sites could survive within the application area.

Historic maps from 1877 onwards show Icknield Farm with the site being open agricultural land until the Ordnance Survey (OS) map of 1961 (old-maps.co.uk), which shows that the south-eastern part of the site had been previously disturbed by a gravel quarry which would have removed any surviving archaeological features.

5 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

A programme of evaluation was carried out in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA 2013) in response to brief provided by the Oxfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist. This required the excavation of five trenches, 30m long by c1.6m wide, all sited to investigate the potential impact of the proposed development on any archaeological remains within the development area (Fig 2).

The trench layout was arranged with consideration for the intermediate pressure gas main which runs along the site's western boundary and the presence of overhead power cables along the south-west boundary. The trenches were set out using differential GPS (Leica GS08). None of the trenches required moving after set out.

All trenches were excavated using a JCB excavator, fitted with a 1.6m wide toothless ditching bucket, operated under constant archaeological supervision. The excavation and recording were carried out in accordance with NA guidelines and all records were created using NA pro-forma (NA 2011). Photographs were taken of all relevant deposits on 35mm monochrome print film, high resolution digital images were also



Scale 1:1250

The excavated trenches Fig 2

taken. Work was carried out in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and guidance for archaeological field evaluation* (IfA 2008).

The trenches were excavated to the top of the natural geological horizon or the upper archaeological levels whichever was the highest.

Levels in metres above Ordnance Datum were established for all trenches using GPS.

No artefacts were recovered.

All records will be compiled in a structured archive in accordance with the guidelines of Appendix 3 in the English Heritage procedural document, *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991).

6 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The natural horizon in trenches 1 to 4 was predominantly mid orange-brown silt with frequent medium fractured flint nodules and rare chalk flecks (Fig 3). The amount of flint decreased towards Trenches 1 and 2. White chalk was observed in Trenches 4 and 5 only but not across the entire trench. In Trench 5 it was overlain by light orange brown colluvium (Fig 4).

Each trench also contained mid orange-brown silty sand subsoil varying in depth between 0.03m in Trench 1 to 0.25m in Trench 5, overlain by topsoil, or plough soil. The topsoil was dark greyish-brown sandy silt with an average thickness of 0.20m.

No archaeological features were present in the evaluation trenches.



Trench 4, flint-rich natural looking, north-east Fig 3



Trench 5, natural chalk and colluvium, looking south-south-east Fig 4

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7 CONCLUSION

The trench evaluation did not identify any archaeological features despite the development area's proximity to the Icknield Way, a major prehistoric routeway across the south-Midlands and into East Anglia. There was also no evidence for the former quarry site.

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APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
1	30m x 1.6m, NE-SW	462224 184091	59.40m	0.30m deep 59.10m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
101	Topsoil	Dark greyish-brown sandy silt	0.19m thick	
102	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy silt	0.05m thick	
103	Natural	Mid orange brown sandy silt with frequent small to medium flint		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
2	30m x 1.6m, NW-SE	462243 184108	59.60m	0.31m deep 59.29m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
201	Topsoil	Dark greyish-brown sandy silt	0.23m	
202	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy silt	0.04m	
203	Natural	Mid orange brown sandy silt with frequent small to medium flint		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
3	30m x 1.6m, NNE-SSW	462283 184121	59.70m	0.32m deep 59.38m aOD
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
301	Topsoil	Dark greyish-brown sandy silt	0.23m	
302	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy silt	0.06m	
303	Natural	Mid orange-brown sandy silt with frequent small to medium flint		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
4	30m x 1.6m, NE-SW	462283 184153	60.00m	0.30m deep 59.70m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
401	Topsoil	Dark greyish-brown sandy silt	0.20m	
402	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy silt	0.08m	
403	Natural	Mid orange-brown sandy silt with frequent small to medium flint and white chalk		

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height (aOD)	Depth & height of natural (aOD)
5	30m x 1.6m, NNW-SSE	462269 184183	60.20m	0.46m deep 59.74m aOD
<i>Context</i>	<i>Context type</i>	<i>Description</i>	<i>Dimensions</i>	<i>Artefacts/Samples</i>
501	Topsoil	Dark greyish-brown sandy silt	0.23m	
502	Subsoil	Mid orange-brown sandy silt	0.25m	
503	Natural	Mid orange-brown sandy silt with frequent small to medium flint and white chalk		



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