

**Cranford House School,
Moulsford
Oxfordshire**
Archaeological Watching Brief



Cranford House School Trust, Ltd.

CA Project: 770471
CA Report: 17408

July 2017



Cranford House School, Moulsford Oxfordshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

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SUMMARY

Project Name: Cranford House School
Location: Moulsoford, Oxfordshire
NGR: SU 5881 8410
Type: Watching Brief
Date: July 2017
Planning Reference: P16/S2353/FUL
Location of Archive: Oxfordshire Museum Service
Site Code: WALL 17

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundwork associated with the construction of a single storey extension to an existing art block within Cranford House School, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundwork, and no artefacts pre-dating the modern period were recovered. The absence of archaeological deposits may indicate that activity associated with the prior evaluation (TVAS 2012) either diminishes further away from the main road, was not exposed by the development, or may have been removed during previous development.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July 2017 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Cranford House School Trust, Ltd at Cranford House School, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire (centred at NGR SU 5881 8410; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for the construction of a single storey extension to an existing art block (Planning ref: P16/S2353/FUL).
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a brief (OCC 2016) prepared by Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Council (OCC), archaeological advisor to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC), and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)* produced by CA (2016) and approved by the SODC acting on the advice of Richard Oram. The fieldwork also followed *Standard and guidance: Archaeological watching brief* (ClfA 2014), and the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991), the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006).

The site

- 1.3 The proposed development area is approximately 1.8ha in extent. The eastern edge of the site is bounded by the A329, the northern extent by Willow Court Lane, the school buildings stand to the west, and housing to the south.
- 1.4 The underlying bedrock geology of the area is mapped as West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation with no superficial deposits recorded (BGS 2017) though superficial deposits were encountered and recorded, see section 5.2. The site lies at approximately 55m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) sloping down towards the river to 50m aOD in the east.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The information given below is a succinct summary of archaeological information provided within a previous evaluation of the site (TVAS 2012) and also provided by Richard Oram within his archaeological brief for the site (OCC 2016).

- 2.1 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential (OCC 2016). To the west, cropmarks visible from the air indicate the presence of a trackway and field system, perhaps of Iron Age or Roman date. A Roman cemetery was also located in the same area and partially explored following a chance discovery of a Bronze Age gold torc during ploughing in the 1960s. Elsewhere, Roman coins have been recovered 150m to the west of the site and within the grounds of the Old Vicarage, while Roman pottery was recovered from the playing fields immediately to the south. Two Neolithic axes have also been recovered to the south-west (OCC 2016). Fieldwork in advance of a pipeline located an Iron Age and Roman settlement on Halfpenny Lane to the west, with another Late Iron Age settlement to the south (Ford 1990). Finally, the projected course of the Roman road from Dorchester to Silchester lies somewhere in the vicinity of the site and may follow the main road forming the eastern boundary of the school (Margary 1955, 151).
- 2.2 An archaeological evaluation by TVAS carried out on the proposed site of the artificial turf pitch and water treatment area to the east of the proposed development recorded a number of archaeological features including a ditch, a gully and a grave. Although these are undated it is likely that they are related to the archaeological features identified in the wider area and are therefore probably Roman or Iron Age in date (TVAS, 2012).

3. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the archaeological works were:
- to monitor groundworks, and to identify, investigate and record all significant buried archaeological deposits revealed on the site during the course of the development groundworks;
 - at the conclusion of the project, to produce an integrated archive for the project work and a report setting out the results of the project and the archaeological conclusions that can be drawn from the recorded data.



4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2016). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising all intrusive groundworks, including the excavation of foundations and service trenches (Figure 2).
- 4.2 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual*.
- 4.3 The archive from the evaluation is currently held by CA at their offices in Andover. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the archive will be deposited with Oxfordshire Museum Service. A summary of information from this project, set out within Appendix B, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

5. RESULTS (FIGURES 2-4)

- 5.1 No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundwork and despite visual scanning of spoil; no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.
- 5.2 The natural geology was confirmed to be a weathered chalk at between 1.04m and 1.6m below present ground level between trenches 3 and 1. In **Trench 2** 0.4m of calcareous clayey-silt made ground (201) overlay this before 0.4m of mid-brown clayey-silt topsoil (200). In **Trenches 1 and 3**, the chalk (105/ 303) was overlain by an average of 0.3m natural mid-greyish brown silty clay and gravel (104/302), which was in turn overlain by a natural/subsoil of mid greyish brown silty clay (103/301) with an average thickness of 0.47m. A buried topsoil (102) of dark greyish brown silty clay lay above this with a depth of 0.29m only in **Trench 1**, and this in turn was overlain by an average 0.47m of light greyish brown silty clay made ground (101/300) and a further 0.13m of topsoil (100) only in **Trench 1**.



6. DISCUSSION

- 6.1 Despite the archaeological potential of the application area (see archaeological background above), the watching brief identified no archaeological remains within the area of observed groundworks. The absence of archaeological deposits may indicate that activity associated with the prior evaluation (TVAS 2012) either diminishes further away from the main road (A329 – supposed course of Roman road) and was not exposed by the current development, or may have been removed during previous development.

7. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Jeremy Clutterbuck, assisted by Steve Bush and Adam Howard. The report was written by Sam Wilson and Jeremy Clutterbuck. The illustrations were prepared by Esther Escudero. The archive has been compiled by Zoe Emery, and prepared for deposition by Hazel O'Neill. The project was managed for CA by Ray Kennedy.



8. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2017 *Geology of Britain Viewer* <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html> Accessed 17 May 2017

Cotswold Archaeology, 2016, *Cranford House School, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire*, Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

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TVAS, 2012, *New Artificial Turf Pitch, Cranford House School, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire, Archaeological Evaluation*, CSM12/05

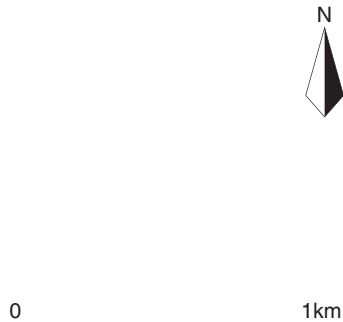
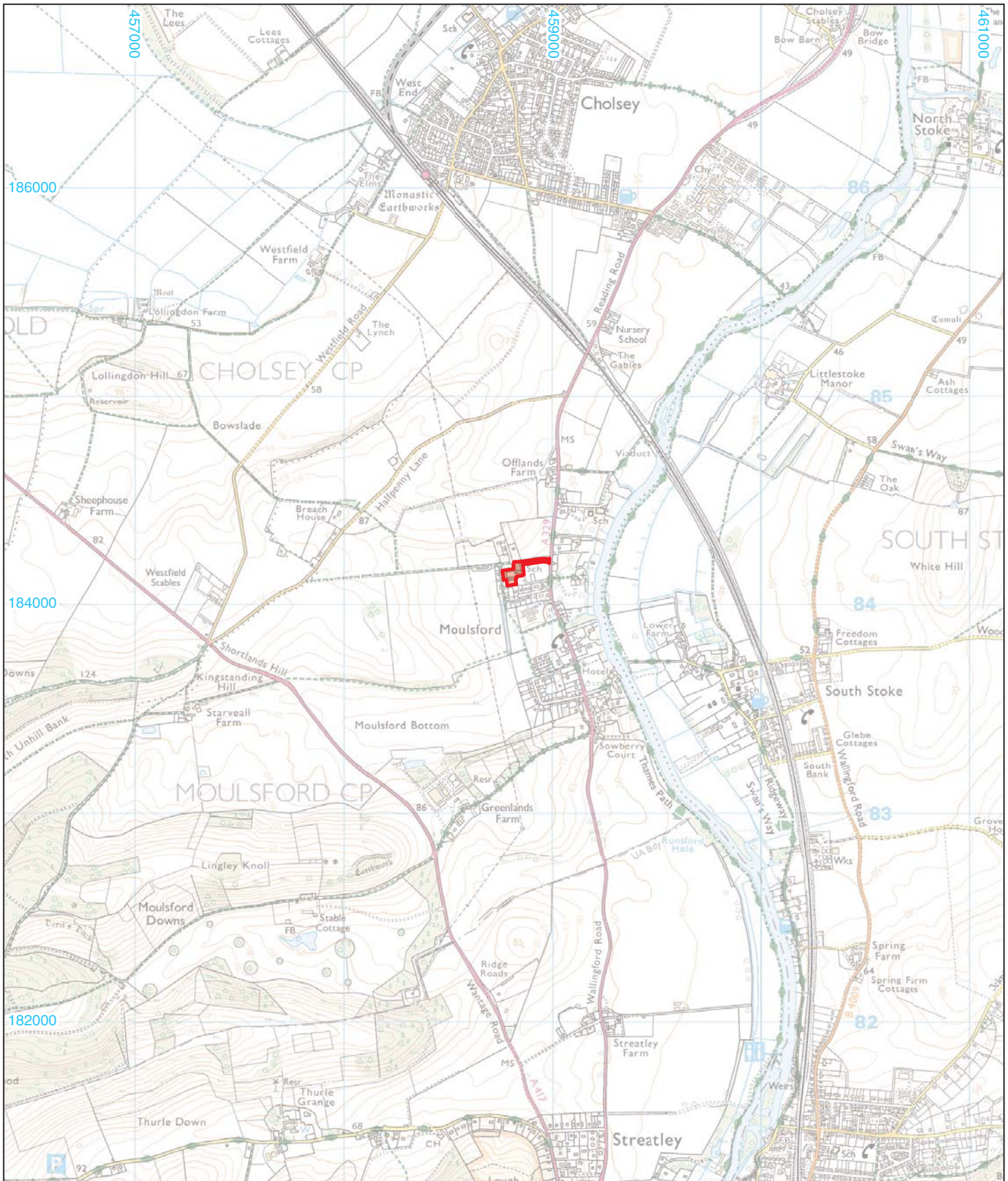


APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench No.	Context No.	Type	Fill of	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	Depth /thickness (m)	Spot-date
1	100	Layer		Topsoil	Mid brownish grey silty clay	40	0.6	0.13	Modern
1	101	Layer		Made Ground	Light greyish brown friable silty clay with 20% ≤30mm sub angular flint gravel	40	0.6	0.43	Modern
1	102	Layer		Buried Topsoil	Dark greyish brown silty clay	40	0.6	0.29	Modern
1	103	Layer		Subsoil	Mid greyish brown silty clay	40	0.6	0.55	
1	104	Layer		Natural	Mid greyish brown silty clay with 50% ≤70mm sub rounded flint gravel	40	0.6	0.2	
1	105	Layer		Natural	Weathered Chalk	40	0.6	>0.2	
2	200	Layer		Topsoil	Mid brown clayey silt	8.1	1.1	0.4	Modern
2	201	Layer		Made Ground	Light brown calcareous clayey silt with slate and cbm	8.1	1.1	0.64	Post-Med
2	202	Layer		Natural	Mid brown silty clay and chalk	8.1	1.1	>0.16	
3	300	Layer		Made Ground	Mid grey clayey silt	5	0.6	0.5	Modern
3	301	Layer		Subsoil	Mid greyish brown clayey silt	5	0.6	0.3	
3	302	Layer		Natural	Mid brown silty clay with chalk patches	5	0.6	0.4	
3	303	Layer		Natural	Light greyish white silty chalk	5	0.6	>0.3	

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	Cranford House School, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire, Archaeological Watching Brief
Short description (250 words maximum)	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the construction of a single storey extension to an existing art block within Cranford House School, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material pre-dating the modern period was recovered.
Project dates	
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Watching Brief
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Evaluation – TVAS 2012
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	Cranford House School, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire
Study area (M ² /ha)	
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig Grid Reference)	SU 5881 8410
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	Oxfordshire County Council
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Ray Kennedy
Project Supervisor	Jeremy Clutterbuck
MONUMENT TYPE	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	None
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
Intended final location of archive (museum/Accession no.) Oxford Museum Service	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone etc)
Physical	
Paper	Context sheets, matrices
Digital	Database, digital photos
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2017 <i>Cranford House School, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> . CA typescript report 17408	



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PROJECT TITLE
 Cranford House School, Moulsoford,
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

DRAWN BY	EE	PROJECT NO.	770471	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	13/07/2017	
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE@A4	1:25,000	1

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- site boundary
- evaluation trench



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PROJECT TITLE
 Cranford House School, Moulsoford,
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FIGURE TITLE
 Trench location plan

DRAWN BY	CP	PROJECT NO.	770471	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	10/08/2017	2
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE@A3	1:750	

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Oblique view of Trench 1, looking south-east (1m scales)



Baulk in Trench 2 soakaway, looking south-east (1m scales)



Trench 3, looking north-west (1m scale)



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PROJECT TITLE

Craford House School, Moulsoford,
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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

DRAWN BY	EE	PROJECT NO.	770471	FIGURE NO.
CHECKED BY	DJB	DATE	13/07/2017	
APPROVED BY	RK	SCALE@A4	NA	4

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