

**EASTWYKE FARMHOUSE
ABINGDON ROAD
OXFORD**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

For

BUILDERS EDE LTD


CA PROJECT: 3155
CA REPORT: 10172

OCTOBER 2010

EASTWYKE FARMHOUSE
ABINGDON ROAD
OXFORD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

CA PROJECT: 3155
CA REPORT: 10172

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signed	
date	5 October 2010
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Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)

Fig. 2 The site, showing location of groundworks (1:500)

DRAFT

SUMMARY

Project Name: Eastwyke Farmhouse
Location: Abingdon Road, Oxford
NGR: SP 5165 0495
Type: Watching Brief
Date: 28 May–29 June 2010
Planning Reference: 06/02069/FUL
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Oxford Museum Service
Accession Number: OXCMS: 2010.82
Site Code: EFO 10

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of the farmhouse and garden as a hotel at Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford.

No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May and June 2010 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Builders Ede Limited at Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford (centred on NGR: SP 5165 0495; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil Condition 14 attached to a planning consent for the redevelopment of the farmhouse and garden as a hotel (Planning ref: 06/02069/FUL). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.

1.2 The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a *Brief* for an archaeological earthwork survey and salvage recording (OCCPCC 2010) prepared by Mr David Radford, Oxford City Archaeologist, the archaeological advisor to Oxford City Council (OCC), and with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) produced by CA (2010a) and approved by OCC acting on the advice of Mr Radford. The earthworks survey was undertaken by CA in July 2010, and was subject to a separate WSI and report (CA 2010b; see *Archaeological Background* below). The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* issued by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008), the *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MORPHE; English Heritage 2006).

The site

1.3 The site is approximately 0.7ha in area, and comprises Eastwyke Farmhouse, its garden, which is covered by trees and dense undergrowth, and outbuildings (Fig. 2). The site is adjacent to the Oxford Spires Four Pillars Hotel and lies at approximately 56m AOD.

1.4 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as alluvium of the River Thames or Isis (BGS 1982). The alluvium post-dates the last Ice Age and episodes of alluviation are thought to have occurred during the Roman and Anglo-Saxon periods (CA 2005). Yellow silty clay alluvium was exposed during the watching brief.

Archaeological background

1.5 The full archaeological background to the site is contained within a desk-based assessment undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology to which reference for more detail

should be made (CA 2005). In summary, architectural analysis and documentary research suggests that the farmhouse originated between 1528 and 1541, with the core of the existing building having been constructed between 1649 and 1652 (ibid.). A wall of possible post-medieval or early modern date defines part of the north-western boundary of the site (ibid.). Later phases of the building have been dated to the early to mid 19th century and the late 19th to early 20th centuries, as well as more modern extensions and outbuildings depicted on historic maps (ibid.). The farmhouse itself is now a Grade II Listed building (ibid.).

- 1.6 Eastwyke Farm appears to have been a defended outpost to the city of Oxford in the Civil War, and was the site of a skirmish (CA 2005). De Gomme's map of 1644 shows the site as protected by star work defences but it is unclear whether these were actually constructed (ibid.). No evidence of the defences was seen on later maps, aerial photographs, during the desk-based assessment's site visit or during a recent earthworks survey undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology (CA 2010b), although this potentially reflects slighting of the defences immediately after the surrender of the city (CA 2005). No below-ground evidence of defensive ditches was observed during a watching brief at the site in 2000 (ibid.).
- 1.7 A tollbooth depicted on the St Aldate's Tithe Map of 1847 at the north-western corner of the site has since been demolished, and no evidence of it was observed during the desk-based assessment's site visit in 2005 (CA 2005). It is possible that remains of this structure survive below ground.
- 1.8 An earthworks survey of the site undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in July 2010 identified one of two possible moat ditches depicted on an 1815 plan of the site as well as garden features shown on the 1876 first edition Ordnance Survey map and, possibly, on the 1815 plan (CA 2010b). The survey also showed that the ends of the possible moat ditch are infilled.

Methodology

- 1.9 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2010a). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks comprising the excavation of service trenches (Trenches 1 and 3) and an area of ground reduction within the existing farmhouse (Trench 2; Fig. 2).

- 1.10 Where archaeological deposits were encountered written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.11 The archive the watching brief is currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble and will be deposited with Oxford Museum Service under accession number OXCMS: 2010.82. 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.

2. RESULTS (FIG. 2)

- 2.1 Within the drainage trenches (Trenches 1 and 3) a similar sequence of deposits was exposed. The earliest of these was the natural geological substrate, 103/303, consisting of yellow-brown silty clay alluvium, which was revealed at an average depth of 0.4m below present ground level. This was overlain by the subsoil and garden soil, which together measured 0.4m in thickness.
- 2.2 Within Trench 2, modern concrete surface 201 was exposed, overlying gravel make-up layer 202. The make-up layer was not excavated.
- 2.3 Despite visual scanning of spoil, no artefactual material was recovered.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 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 structural remains associated with the farmhouse and the possible Civil War defences either do not extend as far as, or were not exposed within, the relatively limited runs of drainage trenching observed. The groundworks within Trench 2 were of insufficient depth to expose any potential archaeological deposits which may have lain below.

4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Jonathan Hart. This report was written by Jonathan Hart with illustrations prepared by Pete Moore. The archive has been compiled by Jonathan Hart and prepared for deposition by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Simon Cox.

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1982 *Geological Survey of England and Wales. Sheet 236: Witney. Solid and Drift Edition. 1:50,000 series*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2005 *Eastwyke Farmhouse, Oxford, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment* CA typescript report No. **05181**

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010a *Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010b *Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford: Earthworks Survey* CA typescript report No. **10126**

OCCPCC (Oxford City Council Planning Control and Conservation) 2010 *Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford: Brief for an archaeological earthwork survey and salvage recording*

APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Trench 1

No.	Type	Description	Depth (m)
101	Layer	Topsoil: mid grey-brown clay silt garden soil	0.1
102	Layer	Subsoil: mid brown sandy silt with gravel	0.3
103	Layer	Natural: yellow-brown silty clay alluvium	-

Trench 2

No.	Type	Description	Depth (m)
201	Layer	Concrete surface within room	0.25
202	Layer	Limestone gravel make-up for 201. Not excavated	-

Trench 3


No.	Type	Description	Depth (m)
301	Layer	Topsoil: mid grey-brown clay silt garden soil	0.1
302	Layer	Subsoil: mid brown sandy silt with gravel	0.3
303	Layer	Natural: yellow-brown silty clay alluvium	-

APPENDIX B: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project Name	Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford: Archaeological Watching Brief	
Short description	An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the redevelopment of the farmhouse and garden as a hotel at Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford. No features or deposits of archaeological interest were observed during groundworks, and no artefactual material was recovered.	
Project dates	28 May–29 June 2010	
Project type	Archaeological Watching Brief	
Previous work	Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment (CA 2005) Archaeological Earthworks Survey (CA 2010)	
Future work	Unknown	
PROJECT LOCATION		
Site Location	Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford	
Study area	0.7ha	
Site co-ordinates	SP 5165 0495	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Brief originator	Oxford City Council	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology	
Project Manager	Simon Cox	
Project Supervisor	Jonathan hart	
PROJECT ARCHIVES		
	Intended final location of archive	Content
Physical	n/a	n/a
Paper	Oxford Museum Service	Context records, plans
Digital	Oxford Museum Service	report
BIBLIOGRAPHY		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010b <i>Eastwyke Farmhouse, Abingdon Road, Oxford: Archaeological Watching Brief</i> CA typescript report No. 10172		



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 COTSWOLD ARCHAEOLOGY			
PROJECT TITLE Eastwyke Farmhouse Abingdon Road, Oxford			
FIGURE TITLE Site location plan			
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SP

-  site
-  observed groundworks



PROJECT TITLE
Eastwyke Farmhouse
Abingdon Road, Oxford

FIGURE TITLE
The site, showing location of groundworks

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