

# Archaeological desk-based assessment of the site of a proposed pond east of Goose Farm, Fritwell, Oxfordshire



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Project reference: P3978  
Report reference: 2076



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## **Archaeological desk-based assessment of the site of a proposed pond east of Goose Farm, Fritwell, Oxfordshire**

Author Elizabeth Connolly

### **Summary**

A desk-based assessment for the historic environment was undertaken at Goose Farm, Fritwell, Oxfordshire (National Grid reference SP52452919). It was undertaken on behalf of Lady Georgina Bowman-Shaw, who intends the creation of a new pond at Goose Farm and landscaping of the resulting spoil on site. A planning application for this development is in preparation for submission to Cherwell District Council.

This report describes and assesses the significance of the heritage assets (and potential heritage assets) that are potentially affected by the application. The setting of heritage assets is considered. The potential impact of the application, and the need for further on-site evaluation, is assessed.

The site of the proposed pond is located on the western side of the village of Fritwell to the south of the Church of St Olave whose dedication suggests an 11<sup>th</sup> century. It lies in the Fritwell Conservation Area, to the east of Goose Farm outbuilding which, prior to residential conversion, were the outbuildings for Heath farm, a Grade II listed 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse. Heath Farm is depicted on the 1808 Inclosure map and remains relatively unchanged in plan since then. The site is currently part of a pasture field.

Fritwell is an attractive village, the historic core of which is built largely of Cotswold stone. The village is oriented along two axes, one running east-west along North Street, and one running roughly north-south, along East Street, indicating two settlements dependent on two manorial estates, with the church between the two.

An archaeological watching brief undertaken on a sewer pipeline within the same field as the proposed site of the pond recorded two shallow pits and a section of a ditch, all filled with fragments of limestone. A possible area of medieval settlement has been identified to the west of the church, c 150m north-west of the site. There are slight earthworks within the field containing the site of the proposed development.

The construction of the pond is considered to have the potential to disturb or destroy archaeological cut features; however the addition of a pond sympathetic to an agricultural landscape has the potential to enhance the setting of the listed buildings in its vicinity.

It is recommended that an archaeological watching brief of groundworks associated with the pond and related landscaping or planting is appropriate mitigation to offset harm to potential heritage assets.



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## Report

### 1 Background

#### 1.1 Reasons for the project

A desk-based assessment for the historic environment was undertaken at Goose Farm, Fritwell, Oxfordshire (National Grid reference SP52452919) (Figure 1). It was undertaken on behalf of Lady Georgina Bowman-Shaw, who intends the creation of a new pond at Goose Farm and landscaping of the resulting spoil on site. (Figure 2). A planning application for this development is in preparation for submission to Cherwell District Council.

The proposed development site is considered to include heritage assets and potential heritage assets, the significance of which may be affected by the application.

The project conforms to a brief prepared by Richard Oram of the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (Oxfordshire Archaeological Service, 2012) and for which a project proposal (including detailed specification) was produced (WA 2012).

The project also conforms to the *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment* (IfA 2012).

#### 1.2 Planning background

Present government planning policy is contained within the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012). This is supplemented by detailed guidance which had related to earlier government policy but which is at least partially still relevant to the present policy (DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010).

The following is from the Draft Submission Cherwell Local Plan as endorsed by Full Council, accessed through the Cherwell District Council website, at <http://www.cherwell.gov.uk>

*We will protect our historic environment; it is a major resource contributing to the local distinctiveness of the District. Conservation Areas and other heritage assets (including both designated and undesignated assets) form part of the historic fabric of the district and contribute to the character of the area and will be maintained. We will protect our Conservation Areas and other heritage assets from harmful growth as these help to define how the area looks and feels, both in the towns and villages.*

### 2 Aims

The general aims of this assessment are to:

- collect relevant information relating to the archaeological potential of the proposed development area;
- assess the potential significance of any archaeological remains and the built heritage;
- assess the impact of the proposed development on these archaeological remains and the built heritage;
- recommend mitigation measures to offset detrimental effects of the development

### 3 Methods

#### 3.1 Personnel

The assessment was undertaken by Elizabeth Connolly MA; who joined Worcestershire Archaeology in 2013 and has been practicing archaeology since 1999. The project manager

responsible for the quality of the project was Tom Rogers MSc. Illustrations were prepared by Laura Templeton.

### 3.2 Documentary research

All relevant information on the history of the site and past land-use was collected and assessed. Records of known archaeological sites and monuments were obtained from Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record (HER). Historic maps and published sources were consulted at Oxfordshire Record Office and Oxfordshire HER office.

The results are mapped on Figure 3 and the details of individual features of the historic environment are given in Appendix 1. Event records have been omitted where this would repeat information in other record types, and would not materially affect the assessment. HER references have been used throughout this assessment but during its preparation additional heritage assets have been identified and their details are given in Appendix 2 (reference numbers have the prefix AHA).

### 3.3 List of sources consulted

#### *Cartographic sources*

- 1808 Inclosure map of Fritwell Parish
- Ordnance Survey 1<sup>st</sup> Edition North Oxfordshire scale 1:2,500; 1875
- Ordnance Survey, 1878, North Oxfordshire, scale 1:2,500
- Ordnance Survey, 1921, North Oxfordshire, scale 1:2,500
- Ordnance Survey, 1955 North Oxfordshire, scale 1:10,560
- Ordnance Survey, 1976 Northamptonshire, scale 1:2500

#### *Documentary sources*

- British Geological Survey, online, viewed 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2013
- Cherwell District Council Conservation Area Appraisal for Fritwell, dated January 2008, accessed online.
- DCLG 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*, Department for Communities and Local Government
- DCLG/DCMS/EH 2010 *PPS5 Planning for the historic environment: historic environment planning practice guide*, Department for Communities and Local Government/Department for Culture, Media and Sport/English Heritage
- English Heritage 2011 *The setting of heritage assets*, English Heritage
- IfA 2012 *Standard and guidance for historic environment desk-based assessment*, Institute for Archaeologists, updated 16 November 2012
- Oxford Archaeological Unit, 1995, *St Olave's Church, Fritwell, Archaeological Watching Brief Report* Unpublished document dated June 1995
- Phoenix Consulting 1997 *Report on an archaeological watching brief, Fritwell Sewerage Pipe, Bicester* Unpublished document dated 30 June 1997
- Pugh, R.B. (Ed.) 1959 *Oxfordshire VI, Ploughley Hundred*, Victoria County History
- WA 2013 *Proposal for an archaeological desk-based assessment at Goose Farm, Fritwell, Oxfordshire* Worcestershire Archaeology, Worcestershire County Council, unpublished document dated 18<sup>th</sup> October 2012, P3978



- Oxfordshire Archaeological Service *Brief for Archaeological Survey at Goose Farm, Fritwell, Oxfordshire*, Planning Advisory Section, Oxfordshire County Council unpublished document dated 15<sup>th</sup> October 2012

### 3.4 Other methods

A site visit was undertaken on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> December 2013.

This assessment is limited to consideration of heritage assets and potential assets that are relevant to the application site.

### 3.5 Impact assessment criteria

The criteria cited in Table 1 have been used.

**Major Beneficial:** Demonstrable improvement to a designated heritage asset of the highest order (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. Designated assets will include scheduled monuments, grade I/II\* listed buildings, grade I/II\* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks or World Heritage Sites. Improvement may be in the asset's management, its amenity value, setting, or documentation (for instance enhancing its research value). It may also be in better revealing a World Heritage Site or Conservation Area's significance.

**Beneficial:** Demonstrable improvement to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of improvement will demonstrably have a minor affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level. Improvement may be in the asset's management, its amenity value, setting, or documentation (for instance enhancing its research value).

**Not Significant:** Impacts that have no long-term effect on any heritage asset.

**Minor Adverse:** Minor harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm will demonstrably have a minor affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.

**Moderate Adverse:** Minor harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II\* listed buildings, grade I/II\* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks or World Heritage Sites.

Harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm will demonstrably affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.

<p><b>Major Adverse:</b> Harm to a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks, World Heritage Sites or harm to a building or other element that makes a positive contribution to the significance of a Conservation Area as a whole.</p> <p>Substantial harm to, or loss of, a designated heritage asset (or its setting), or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest such that the level of harm or loss will demonstrably affect the area and its heritage resource, either at a local or regional level. For instance grade II listed buildings, Conservation Areas and undesignated heritage assets important at a sub-national level.</p>
<p><b>Severe Adverse:</b> Substantial harm to, or loss of, a designated heritage asset (or its setting) of the highest significance, or non-designated asset (or its setting) of archaeological interest of demonstrable significance equal to that of a scheduled monument. For instance scheduled monuments, grade I/II* listed buildings, grade I/II* registered parks and gardens, registered battlefields, protected wrecks, World Heritage Sites or the loss of a building or other element that makes a positive contribution to the significance of a Conservation Area as a whole.</p>
<p><b>Unknown:</b> Where there is insufficient information to determine either significance or impact for any heritage asset, or where a heritage asset is likely to exist but this has not been established, or where there is insufficient evidence for the absence of a heritage asset. For instance where further information will enable the planning authority to make an informed decision.</p>

Table 1: Impact assessment criteria for heritage asset

## 4 The application site

### 4.1 Location and size

The proposed site is a pond approximately 55m x 25m and roughly figure of eight in shape together with areas to the south and east for landscaping of spoil and the creation of a meadow.

The study area included the application site (Figure 1), though heritage assets were considered within 500m of the site in order to provide a broader understanding of the local context (Figure 3). In addition an extended area of search (500m) was made to encompass the settings of scheduled ancient monuments and listed buildings.

### 4.2 Topography, geology and soils

The village of Fritwell lies on bedrock from Great Oolite group, comprised of limestone and argillaceous rocks. The sedimentary bedrock was formed approximately 165-168 million years ago in the Jurassic period. The soil is stonebrash with a subsoil of clay and marl.

### 4.3 Current land-use

The proposed development site (Plates 1 and 2) lies to the south east of the buildings of Heath Farm and Goose Farm, midway between the two arteries that make up the village of Fritwell. The site is overlooked by the Church of St Olave's to the north and is bounded by pasture from the north east to the south west. The site is currently set to grazing. Two piles of spoil (one soil, one rubble stone) from works at the Goose Farm complex are stored at locations adjacent to the site of the proposed pond, and the area is used for access by foot and by vehicle to these piles. The area of pasture to the north of the proposed pond is bounded by the southern stone wall of St Olave's churchyard and to the west by an untarred track and post and rail fence which encloses the converted outbuildings of Goose Farm. A public footpath runs along the western extent of the field

from a stone stile in the churchyard wall to a stone stile and a footbridge in the south western corner of the field.

Immediately to the east of the proposed pond, the site is bordered by a dilapidated hedgerow and shallow ditch, the hedgerow comprising mature hawthorn trees. To the north east this hedgerow is no longer evident; although a slight ditch shows the old field boundary continuing towards the church. Spoil is being stored at this location. The land rises gently towards the south of the site towards a ditch that forms the southern boundary of the field, with a post and wire fence just to the north of the ditch.

#### 4.4 Historic land-use and archaeological character

The village of Fritwell is located in the Parish of Fritwell, in the north east of the Hundred of Ploughley. The landscape setting is gently undulating and largely agricultural. The village is oriented along two axes, one running east-west along North Street, and one running roughly north south, along East Street, indicating two settlements dependent on two manorial estates, with a church in between the two (VCH VI).

The original manor of Fritwell is thought to have been the former Ormond Manor on East Street (174 - MOX4808; Site of Post Medieval Mansion), which had disappeared by the time Plot wrote his Natural History of Oxfordshire, c 1672-7. It lay beside Aves Ditch, a possibly Iron Age boundary earthwork (see Section 5.2 below), and close to a spring which probably gave the village its name of *Fyrht-w(i)elle* or wishing well, and which was known in the 19<sup>th</sup> century as the Townwell. Lodge Farm stands on the site of the Ormond Manor House and incorporates part of it.

The larger of the two manors of Fritwell was centred on North Street. After the Norman Conquest William FitzOsbern, Earl of Hereford, held an estate assessed at 10 hides in Fritwell. but according to the VCH the original estates of this De Lisle manor had long been split up and manorial rights seem to have lapsed by 1876.

The Domesday survey of 1086 records two manorial estates: the larger, which was to become the De Lisle manor, had 8 ploughlands, but only 6 plough-teams. The demesne had 2 plough-teams and 2 serfs at work, while 8 villeins (villani), and 6 bordars shared 4 plough-teams. There had been a drop in value since the Conquest from £7 to £6. The smaller manor, the later Ormond manor, had 4 plough-teams and was worth £3 as before the conquest. Only 1 plough-team and 1 serf are recorded on the demesne and there were 4 villeins and 1 bordar with 1½ plough-teams (VCH VI).

The settlement associated with the De Lisle Manor, along North Street, retains the character of a closed settlement while the settlement associated with the Ormond Manor, having lost its manor house in the 17<sup>th</sup> century has developed as an open village (Fritwell Conservation Area Appraisal).

A medieval pottery scatter (16116 - MOX4876) was recorded during a watching brief in the field to the east of St Olave's Church. This scatter contained a number of heavily sand tempered 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century vessels. A second scatter (16117 - MOX4877) was recorded in a field south of North Street, this contained 14 sherds of heavy grit-tempered pottery of 12 to 14<sup>th</sup> century date and one sherd of sand tempered green glaze ware. An area of darker soils was recorded in the vicinity of the pottery, suggesting the potential for below ground features. A medieval foundation plinth and ridge and furrow (17484 - MOX23023) was recorded in the course of a watching brief in the vicinity of Heath Farm (18657-MOX14682). A medieval ditch (27454 - MOX23963) was recorded at 19 East Street. It contained 51 sherds of medieval pottery, all well preserved. One small piece of animal bone was also recovered. A post medieval wall foundation (16786 - MOX12547) in line with a boundary marked on the OS 1<sup>st</sup> Edition map was recorded at Wheatcroft.

In the course of a watching brief in advance of the Fritwell sewerage pipeline, two shallow pits and a section of a ditch were excavated. The report on the watching brief (Phoenix Consulting, 1997) is summarised as follows; both of the shallow pits were filled with a high percentage of limestone fragments, together with a substantial ditch cut, similarly containing a fill of limestone. Exploratory

excavation of these features failed to retrieve any finds. The larger cut, interpreted as a field edge ditch, was slightly visible as an earthwork running up to the churchyard wall. The excavator considered that it was likely that these features represent efforts to level an area of undulating ground along the eastern edge of Heath Farm. It was suggested in the report that in the past a large ditch was infilled and the uneven ground made good. Easily accessible limestone pieces were used for this purpose. Excavation in this area was limited to the corridor of the sewerage scheme, with some of the area having previously been disturbed by an earlier sewerage scheme. It is possible that these earthworks represent medieval settlement, given their location in proximity to the church of St Olave, and to other recorded medieval archaeology in the area.

On Davis's 1797 map of Oxfordshire (not illustrated) the church of St Olave is shown in a large irregular shaped enclosure immediately north east of a downward-curving boundary which delineates the extent of Fritwell Common which lay to the west of the village. Some buildings are shown along this boundary, while with regards to Fritwell as a whole, some small plots have been enclosed, but this is not the case in the wider countryside. It is possible that the building shown closest to the church yard in the south east might be the present day Heath Farm.

On the 1808 Inclosure map (Figure 4) the proposed pond site is shown as part of a large irregular shaped field, labelled No. 39. The award for No 39 could not be found in the terrier, but was possibly misnumbered as No 38, which appeared twice in the terrier, and so was probably titled Rick Yard Close which along with 'Farm House Buildings Rick Yard &c' (the present Heath Farmhouse and Goose Farm,; No 38 on the map) was held by Rev'd W.S. Willes. The site is located just to the north and west of a tiny corner where the boundary of the field below juts in.

On the First Edition Ordnance Survey Oxfordshire map (Figure 5) the boundary to the south of the site is shown as a drain running north-west by south-east towards an irregular terminus, possibly a pond, at the location of the jutting in of the southern field mentioned above. The buildings of Goose farm and Heath farmhouse are depicted to the north west of the proposed site. The field the site is in has been regularised with regard to shape and a boundary instated immediately to the east of the site of the proposed pond, running roughly north east by south west towards a trackway emanating from the churchyard, which runs roughly east-west. The western boundary of the field is shown running north east by south west in a straight line towards the churchyard wall, with a footpath depicted running along the line of the boundary within the field.

On the 1878 1:2,500 map the boundary is shown as irregular in the location of the pond.

On the 1921 1:2,500 map (Figure 6) the pond to the south east is still depicted.

On the 1955 1:10,560 map the pond is still visible.

On the 1976 Northamptonshire 1:2500 map the boundary to the south of the site is depicted as a slightly curved drain with no pond visible to the south east, while the western boundary of the site has been removed from between the complex of farm buildings and the churchyard wall.

## **5 Heritage assets**

### **5.1 Designated heritage assets**

The proposed development site is located within the Fritwell Conservation Area. The site lies in the 'Church Character Area' as designated in the Conservation Appraisal. This area includes St Olave's Church and 'Heath Farm', now Heath Farm and Goose Farm. The appraisal includes the following:-

- 9.8 Heath Farm is almost unique in the village for retaining its farmyard layout without large numbers of modern additions or infill housing.
- 9.9 Heath farm and its outbuildings are an important part of Fritwell's historic past and their conversion and any later work should be done sympathetically.

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There are 17 Grade II listed buildings within the search area, four of which are within 100m of the proposed pond site.

St Olave's Church (5090 - MOX4820) (Plates 3 and 4) , c 70m north of the site of the proposed pond, is a stone building comprising chancel, nave, north and south aisles, western tower, and south porch. The Romanesque chancel arch, now inserted in the north wall of the chancel, the nave arcades, and the north and south doorways are the oldest parts of the church. The north door has cable mouldings on the dripstone terminating in two grotesque animal heads, and the south door is surmounted by a tympanum with a carving representing two monsters on either side of a tree.

The church is dedicated to St Olaf (995-1030) a Norwegian king and devout Christian, who fought in England against the Danes in c1010 and was opposed to slavery and pagan worship. In the 11<sup>th</sup> century he had attained cult status throughout Europe; there were several churches in England dedicated to him by 1066, mostly in urban locations. The church was restored in 1865 by George Edward Street.

Excavations carried out at the church in advance of a soakaway revealed offset footings at the east side, which may indicate that the ground was less stable at this location, with the footings spreading the weight of the load bearing walls. The excavator suggested that it is possible that the offset footings might relate to an earlier building at this site, but that evidence for this is thin (Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit 1995)

The Churchyard Cross (5092-MOX4822) stands approximately 10m to the south of the church. It is described in the HER as medieval, and restored in 1913. Made of marlstone and limestone, it has a tapering octagonal shaft approximately 1.5m high with broach stops, it rises from a chamfered square base on a two step square marlstone plinth. The shaft has a restored head carved with the Crucifixion.

Two headstones in the churchyard (18656 - MOX14779) located approximately 4m north east of the churchyard cross date from 1628 and 1668.

Heath Farmhouse (18657 - MOX14682) (Plate 5) c100m north-west of the proposed development site is dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> century possibly partly earlier, on the HER. The farmhouse was previously associated with the Goose Farm outbuildings, on the Inclosure map of 1808 they are all referred to as a single award (No 38), associated with No 39 the field in which the development is proposed.

There are several Grade II listed post medieval houses along North Street and East Street, built mainly in limestone rubble, or shaped limestone blocks, with ashlar dressings, with roofs of slate. Wheatcroft (18667-MOX14246) is the most westerly of these. Formerly the W heatsheaf Inn, now a house, it dates from the early to mid 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries; altered and extended in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Manor Farmhouse (18664 - MOX13659) further east on North Street dates from the late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century

Fritwell Manor (5455 - MOX4827) on North Street, was built in 1609 for George Yorke, restored in 1893 by Thomas Garner, again in 1910 and enlarged in 1921 for Sir John Simon. The Manor House is constructed of coursed squared limestone with ashlar dressings, it has a Stonesfield-slate roof with stone and brick stacks.

A garage and stables (18663-MOX14269) approximately 40m south east of Fritwell Manor, dates from the 17<sup>th</sup> Century. Its original function is uncertain. Court Farmhouse and Court Farmhouse Flat (18666 - MOX14533), North Street, can be found to the south east of Fritwell Manor on the opposite side of the road. This is a farmhouse, dating from the early to mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, and was remodelled c1800. A barn (18665 - MOX13761) approximately 10m south east of Court Farmhouse dates from the late 17<sup>th</sup> to early 18<sup>th</sup> century. Farther east on North Street, May's House (18662-MOX13762) has '1835' on the datestone.

Mid-way down East Street, on the east side, Nos 39/41 East Street (17161 - MOX14412) are described on the HER as a mid-late 16<sup>th</sup> century house, possibly partly earlier, altered and partially

rebuilt in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Further down East Street, on the west side, No 80 (The Hollies) (18658 - MOX14578) is a house with '1636' on the datestone. South of this is No 86 (St Olave's) (18659 - MOX13657) which dates from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century to the early 19<sup>th</sup> century. Immediately to the south is No 88 East Street (11712 - MOX4841) described as an early 17<sup>th</sup> or late 16<sup>th</sup> century house, for some time a vicarage. The Victoria County History for Oxfordshire mentions that a tithe barn associated with this building 'still stands', however there is no mention of such a building within the study area on the HER or other sources consulted for this appraisal.

Further down East Street, almost on the southern edge of the village, The Limes (18660 - MOX13660) dates from the late 17<sup>th</sup> or early 18<sup>th</sup> century, and the late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century. The most southerly house listed on the HER is 100 East Street (18661 - MOX13658), a house, with '1637' on the datestone, extended in the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

## **5.2 Undesignated heritage assets**

While the earliest archaeological remains recorded on the HER for a 500m radius of the proposed pond location are possibly Iron Age in date, there is evidence of a prominent round barrow on nearby Ploughley Hill, the meeting place of the hundred, which had been levelled early in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. In 1845 human bones were found on its site. The pre-Roman Portway crosses Ploughley Hill.

The road between Fritwell and Middleton Stoney follows the line of Aves Ditch (8925 - MOX4830), a linear feature also known as Ashbank or Wattlebank. It is evident to the south of Fritwell as a ploughed down bank (Figure 3) along a track known as Raghouse Lane; East Street is thought to follow its line. It has been interpreted as a Roman road or Saxon boundary earthwork, while recent work on the feature has supported an idea of an Iron Age boundary earthwork, perhaps extending its use until the Anglo-Saxon period. A trackway (16021 - MOX4875) running parallel to East Street on the same alignment as Aves Ditch, and field boundary ditches were recorded during a Watching Brief in 1996 and 1997. The trackway was undateable, with post medieval pottery found from upper levels considered to come from disturbance.

The original manor of Fritwell is thought to have been the former Ormond Manor on East Street (174 - MOX4808; Site of Post Medieval Mansion), it is thought to have disappeared by the time Plot wrote his Natural History of Oxfordshire, c 1672-7.

The earthwork of a medieval fishpond (2969-MOX4816) can be found near the site of the former mansion, and is near the present farm. A post medieval dovecote (5400 - MOX4825) stood adjacent to the former manor site. It was probably built in 1702 and was still standing in 1897 but had been demolished by 1955.

Surrounding St Olave's Church are several areas of possible earthworks including possible platforms and enclosures which are probably associated with medieval settlement of the village. Earthworks are partly concentrated in the field immediately to the west, where platforms, ditches, a possible Holloway and suggested fishpond existed (Phoenix Consulting 1997).

The outbuildings of Goose Farm (AHA 001) (Plate 5), originally associated with Heath Farmhouse, are depicted on the 1808 Inclosure map. Heath farmhouse site is dated to the 17<sup>th</sup> century or partly earlier, suggesting that the outbuildings may date to the same period.

There were several former Methodist Chapels in the village. The Independent Methodist Chapel (5091 - MOX4821) can be found on the south side of North Street, near the junction with East Street. The stone plaque reads 'Fritwell Chapel 1892 Temperance Hall'. The Former Methodist Chapel (11534 - MOX4837), East Street, now consists of a shop, private house and flats. Its original date is not known, but it is probably 19<sup>th</sup> century. Further south on East Street is another Former Methodist Chapel (521 - MOX4809); a reformed Methodist chapel built in 1853 and still in use in 1953. It is now a private house called Chapel House.

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### 5.3 Potential heritage assets

The field to the south of St Olave's Church, the location of the site of the proposed development, contains several possible earthworks (AHA 002), including ridge and furrow (running north west by south east) immediately south east of the churchyard as well as a possible platform close to the south east corner of the field; within the proposed location of the development (Plates 6 and 7).

The shallow pits and ditch excavated in advance of the Fritwell Sewerage Pipeline were located in the same field as that of the proposed development and there is a moderate potential that these features extend into the proposed development area.

## 6 Assessment of the significance of heritage assets

### 6.1 Designated assets

#### 6.1.1 Scheduled ancient monument

There are no scheduled ancient monuments in the study area.

#### 6.1.2 Listed building

*Setting is the surroundings in which an asset is experienced. All heritage assets have a setting, irrespective of the form in which they survive and whether they are designated or not. Elements of a setting may make a positive or negative contribution to the significance of an asset, may affect the ability to appreciate that significance, or may be neutral (from English Heritage 2011).*

There are 17 Grade II listed buildings within the study area. Of these the following are to be found on East Street; Nos 39-41; No 80 (The Hollies); No 86; No 88, The Limes, 100 East Street. Although East Street is visible from the site of the proposed pond development (Plate 8), this is considered to have a **Not Significant** effect on the setting of these buildings.

The following listed buildings can be found on North Street; Fritwell Manor; Manor Farmhouse; Court Farmhouse and Flat; Barn approximately 10m south east of Court Farmhouse; May's House; Wheatcroft; Garage and Stables. The proposed pond development is considered to have a **Not Significant** effect on the setting of these buildings.

The Church of St Olave (5090-Mox4820) occupies a very prominent position in the landscape of Fritwell, being located roughly mid-way between the two axes of settlement that form the distinctive lay out of the village. The Church and churchyard with its cross (5092-MOX4822) and the group of two headstones (18656-MOX14779) are visible from the site of the proposed development and the site of the proposed development is visible from the Church. The site forms part of the tranquil agricultural landscape which characterises the central area of the village, and a pond, sympathetically landscaped in the manner of an agricultural feature, could be considered to enhance this. It is considered that the proposed pond would have a **Not Significant** effect on the setting of the Church of St Olave, the Cross of St Olave and the Group of 2 headstones.

Heath Farmhouse is located c150m to the north east of the proposed pond site. Heath Farm house and the outbuildings and land of Goose Farm no longer share ownership, and a high stone wall now divides the farmhouse from its former outbuildings, but the proposed pond would be visible from the upper storey of Heath Farm and Heath Farm is clearly visible from the site of the pond. The conservation plan for Fritwell clearly states that Heath Farm and its outbuildings are an important part of Fritwell's historic past and their conversion and later work should be done sympathetically. It is considered that the development conforming to a sympathetic agricultural design of a pond in an area that was traditionally farmland would have a **Not Significant to Beneficial** effect on the setting of Heath Farm.

### 6.1.3 Conservation Area

The study area falls within the Fritwell Conservation Area, lying in the Church character area designated by the Conservation appraisal. This area includes St Olave's Church and Heath Farm, the outbuildings of which were being changed to Goose Farm at the time of the appraisal. The conservation plan refers specifically to Heath Farm;

9.8 Heath Farm is almost unique in the village for retaining its farmyard layout without large numbers of modern additions or infill housing.

9.9 Heath Farm and its outbuildings are an important part of Fritwell's historic past and their conversion and any later work should be done sympathetically.

The fields within this character area contribute to the open feel of the village centre and with possible archaeological interest any development on them would be detrimental to Fritwell.

The sympathetic development of a pond in the proposed location could be in keeping with the openness of the setting. It is considered that the proposed development would have a **Not Significant** to **Beneficial** effect on the setting of the Church character area of the Fritwell Conservation Area.

## 6.2 Undesignated assets

### 6.2.1 Historic buildings

The outbuildings of Goose farm (AHA001) while no longer the buildings of a working farm, nevertheless retain the picturesque agricultural setting of a possibly 17<sup>th</sup> century farm, in addition with Grade II listed Heath Farm house with which they are associated, though now separated by a high stone wall. The proposed pond will be visible from the Goose Farm complex and the complex will be visible from the pond. It is considered that a sympathetically constructed pond would have a **Not Significant** to **Beneficial** effect on the setting of the Goose Farm outbuildings.

### 6.2.2 Sites of archaeological interest

#### *Nature of the archaeological interest in the site*

There is a potential for the survival of buried archaeological remains in the area of the proposed development. These may take the form of negative features such as pits and ditches cut into the natural substrate. These may relate to activity associated with Heath Farm or former habitation in this area. The site was formerly the edge of Fritwell Common and may have been subject to encroachment on the side closest to the village.

Possible earthworks may survive within the development site but these are of poor quality and are likely to represent agricultural activity rather than activity related to habitation and may provide scant evidence of the period they represent.

#### *Relative importance of the archaeological interest in the site*

Buried archaeological features have the potential to contain material culture from which the date and nature of the feature could be determined from which information relating to past occupation of Fritwell may be determined.

#### *Physical extent of the archaeological interest in the site*

Potential earthworks (AHA002) in the field in which the proposed pond site is located may represent former agricultural or habitation activity. Excavated features in the north west of the field were shown to be shallow pits filled with a high percentage of limestone fragments together with a substantial ditch cut containing a similar fill. No finds or samples were recovered from the excavation which could date the features, however it was considered by the excavator that the



ditch is likely to have represented a field edge ditch (Phoenix Consulting 1997). There is a potential for these features to continue into the area of the proposed pond.

## 7 The impact of the development

Although the Bicester Sewerage Scheme and its precursor will have disturbed potential archaeological remains along its corridor, it is possible that archaeological remains may survive in the area of the proposed pond development. These would likely take the form of features cut into the natural substrate (e.g. ditches and pits containing material culture). The excavation of a pond and planting of trees would have a **Minor Adverse** effect on these potential features.

The landscaping of spoil created from the excavation of the pond is unlikely to have a negative effect on buried archaeological features instead preserving them *in situ*.

The proposed construction of a pond sympathetic to its location in an area of agricultural land overlooked by historic agricultural buildings would have a **Not Significant** to **Beneficial** effect on their setting.

### 7.1 Impacts during construction

The proposed development will affect following heritage assets and the impact has been categorised as described in Table 1.

The construction works required for the excavation of a pond and landscaping of spoil will be relatively minor and shortlived and are considered to have a **Not Significant** effect on the setting of listed buildings.

### 7.2 Impacts on sustainability

The NPPF emphasises the importance of sustainability (DCLG 2012, section 131).

The setting of the Church characterisation area in Fritwell Conservation Area is aesthetically pleasing; Heath Farm and its former outbuildings (Goose Farm) having retained their farmyard layout without large numbers of modern additions or infill housing. Similarly the church of St Olave and its churchyard features overlook the predominantly agricultural landscape between the two axes of the village of Fritwell. This setting would be enhanced by the excavation of a pond and the sympathetic landscaping of the spoil associated with the groundworks.

The historic environment is a non-renewable resource and therefore cannot be directly replaced. However mitigation through recording and investigation also produces an important research dividend that can be used for the better understanding of the area's history and contribute to local and regional research agendas (cf NPPF, DCLG 2012, section 141).

### 7.3 Residual impacts

The proposed development will have the following impacts on setting of heritage assets outside of the development area.

Implementation of the mitigation proposed below should ensure that there are no residual effects on the historic environment and archaeological resource from the proposed development. Mitigation should ensure that adverse impacts are restricted in scope to **Not Significant**.

### 7.4 Unknown impacts

The potential for impacts on unknown archaeological sites is considered to be low to medium.

## 8 Recommendations

In order to mitigate the impacts identified above, the following actions are recommended: excavations associated with the proposed pond should be subject to an archaeological watching brief. Should the area for spoil storage be stripped of topsoil prior to the deposition of material, this too should be subject to the watching brief as there is a potential for archaeological features to be revealed.

The watching brief would be concluded by production of an archaeological report (and appropriate publication) to be deposited for public consultation with the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Record and a project archive to be deposited at a local museum.

## **9 Publication summary**

Worcestershire Archaeology has a professional obligation to publish the results of archaeological projects within a reasonable period of time. To this end, Worcestershire Archaeology intends to use this summary as the basis for publication through local or regional journals. The client is requested to consider the content of this section as being acceptable for such publication.

*A desk-based assessment for the historic environment was undertaken at Goose Farm, Fritwell, Oxfordshire (National Grid reference SP52452919). It was undertaken on behalf of Lady Georgina Bowman-Shaw, who intends the creation of a new pond at Goose Farm and landscaping of the resulting spoil on site. A planning application for this development is in preparation for submission to Cherwell District Council.*

*This report describes and assesses the significance of the heritage assets (and potential heritage assets) that are potentially affected by the application. The setting of heritage assets is considered. The potential impact of the application, and the need for further on-site evaluation, is assessed.*

*The site of the proposed pond is located on the western side of the village of Fritwell to the south of the Church of St Olave whose dedication suggests an 11<sup>th</sup> century. It lies in the Fritwell Conservation Area, to the east of Goose Farm outbuilding which, prior to residential conversion, were the outbuildings for Heath farm, a Grade II listed 17<sup>th</sup> century farmhouse. Heath Farm is depicted on the 1808 Inclosure map and remains relatively unchanged in plan since then. The site is currently part of a pasture field.*

*Fritwell is an attractive village, the historic core of which is built largely of Cotswold stone. The village is oriented along two axes, one running east-west along North Street, and one running roughly north-south, along East Street, indicating two settlements dependent on two manorial estates, with the church between the two.*

*An archaeological watching brief undertaken on a sewer pipeline within the same field as the proposed site of the pond recorded two shallow pits and a section of a ditch, all filled with fragments of limestone. A possible area of medieval settlement has been identified to the west of the church, c 150m north-west of the site. There are slight earthworks within the field containing the site of the proposed development.*

*The construction of the pond is considered to have the potential to disturb or destroy archaeological cut features; however the addition of a pond sympathetic to an agricultural landscape has the potential to enhance the setting of the listed buildings in its vicinity.*

*It is recommended that an archaeological watching brief of groundworks associated with the pond and related landscaping or planting is appropriate mitigation to offset harm to potential heritage assets.*

## **10 Acknowledgements**

Worcestershire Archaeology would like to thank the following for their kind assistance in the successful conclusion of this project: Lady Georgina Bowman Shaw, David Hignell of Jeffrey Charles Emmett Planning Consultancy and Susan Lisk of Oxfordshire HER.



## Appendix 1 Heritage assets registered with the Historic Environment Record (those within the application site are indicated in bold)

HER number (and legal status)	Site name	Grid reference	Record type	Date	Description
174-MOX 4808	Site of post medieval mansion at Ormond Farm	SP 528 289	Monument	Post Medieval	The old mansion formerly existing at Ormond Farm had disappeared by 1762-7, when Plot wrote his history of Oxfordshire, but had existed in James 1 <sup>st</sup> 's time. A pond, a substantially built stable with a carved doorway and a dove house remained on site by 1889
521-MOX4809	Former Methodist Chapel	SP 5279 2922	Building	Post Medieval	Reformed Methodist Chapel built in 1853. Now a private house called Chapel House.
2969-MOX4816	Remains of fishpond south of Dovehouse Farm	SP 5281 2887	Monument	Medieval to Post Medieval	Pond remains near site of former mansion at Ormond Farm, demolished before end of 17 <sup>th</sup> Century, and site of present Dovehouse Farm.
5090-MOX 4820	St Olave's Church	SP 5245 2930	Building	Medieval	12 <sup>th</sup> , 13 <sup>th</sup> and 14 <sup>th</sup> Century Church, restored and partly rebuilt in 1864.
5091-MOX4821	Independent Methodist Chapel	SP 5266 2944	Building	Post-Medieval	Rectangular building roughly 12m by 8m with exterior stone porch. Stone plaque reads 'Fritwell Chapel 1892 Temperance Hall'
5092-MOX4822	Churchyard cross, Church of St Olave	SP 5247 2928	Building	Medieval	Medieval, restored 1913, Marlstone and limestone, tapering octagonal shaft approx 1.5m high...shaft has a restored head carved with the crucifixion.
5400-MOX4825	Site of Post Medieval Dovecote, Dovehouse Farm	SP 5280 2901	Monument	Post Medieval	Existed adjacent to former manor site (PRN 174). Probably built 1702 and still standing in 1897 but gone by 1955. Appears to be the same as PRN 13456.
5455-MOX4827	Fritwell Manor, North Street	SP 5240 2947	Building	Post Medieval	Originally 1619, restored in 1893, Modernised 1910, enlarged 1921.

8925-MOX4830	Aves Ditch	SP 5127 2582	Linear	Iron Age/Roman	<p>Scored as a Roman Road for MPP. Excavated by OUAS because of its reported function as a Roman Road (runs straight for 4.2kms) IA pottery found in ditch fill and ditch banks, and depth of singular ditch confirmed Iron Age date. 2nd season of excavation confirmed conclusions above; this earthwork and 2 Grims ditches may have may have formed west edge of Catuvellauni. (CBA South Midlands group)</p> <p>Recent work on Aves Ditch has supported theory of IA tribal boundary, perhaps extending its use until Anglo Saxon Period (Eberhard Sauer, 2005)</p> <p>Ditch-complex association of three Roman Roads and a droveway. (CBA South Midlands Group)</p>
11534-MOX4837	Former Methodist Chapel, East Street	SP 5278 2937	Building	Post Medieval	Date not known, probably 19 <sup>th</sup> Century, Now consisting of a shop, private house and flats.
11712-MOX4841	No 88, East Street	SP 5272 2904	Building	Post Medieval	<p>House, now vicarage. Early/mid C17.</p> <p>Limestone rubble with wooden lintels; Stonesfield-slate roof with brick gable stacks. Lplan. 2 storeys.</p>
16021 - MOX4875	Undated Field Boundaries and Features	SP 5276 2913	Monument	Undated	<p>Field walking and planning of stripped surfaces yielded a number of undated features, including ditches. Pottery was post medieval or undateable. Trackway found parallel to East Road; post medieval pottery found in overlying levels possibly resulting from disturbance. Trackway is on same alignment as Aves Ditch</p>
FOX1965	Associated with above		SHERD	(Post Medieval - 1540 AD to 1900 AD)	

16116 - MOX4876	Medieval Pottery Scatter, Field F	SP 5257 2927	Find Spot	Medieval - 1066 AD to 1539 AD	Fieldwalking of pipeline easement identified 2 main areas of pottery scatter, which probably have below ground features
16117 - MOX4877	Medieval Pottery Scatter, Field L	SP 5232 2937	FINDSPOT	Medieval - 1066 AD to 1539 AD	This is the second and larger collection, consisting of 14 sherds of heavy grit-tempered pottery of C12th-C14th date and one sherd of sand tempered green glaze ware. Area of darker soils was recognised in vicinity of pottery suggesting the presence of below ground features
16786 - MOX12547	Wall Foundation	SP 5227 2941	Wall Foundation	Element	Wall foundation in line with boundary between two paddocks on 1st ed OS.
18659 - MOX13657	NO 86 (ST OLAVE'S), EAST STREET	SP 52723 29053	Building	Post Medieval	House. Late C18/early C19, and mid C19. Coursed squared limestone with some ashlar dressings; Welsh-slate roof with brick gable stacks.
18661 - MOX13658	One Hundred, East Street	SP 52665 28929	Building	Post Medieval	House. 1637 on datestone, extended C20
18664 - MOX13659	Manor Farmhouse , North Street	SP 52303 29443	Building	Late C17/early C18	Grade II Listed Farmhouse. Limestone rubble with wooden lintels: Stonesfield-slate roof with rebuilt brick ridge stack. 3- unit plan plus added bay. 2 storeys plus attic.
18660 - MOX13660	The Limes, East Street	SP 52690 28970	Building	Late C17/early C18, and late C18/early C19	Listed Building, Grade II. House. Limestone rubble with wooden lintels
18665 - MOX13761	Barn, Approx 10 m South East of Court Farmhouse , North Street	SP 52488 29417	Building	Late C17/early C18	Listed, Grade II. Coursed limestone rubble with wooden lintels
18662 - MOX13762	May's House, North Street	SP 52618 29496	Building	Post medieval	House. 1835 on datestone Coursed squared limestone with ashlar dressings; Welsh- slate roof with brick stacks.
18667 - MOX14246	Wheatcroft, North Street	SP 52248 29421	Building	Post Medieval	Listed Building, Grade II. Inn, now house. Early/mid C17 and C18, altered and extended

					C20 Coursed limestone rubble with wooden lintels; Welsh-slate roof with stone-and-brick gable stacks. L-plan. 2 storeys.
18663 - MOX14269	Garage and stables approx 40m south east of Fritwell Manor, North Street.	SP 52440 29454	Building	Post Medieval to Modern	Garage and stables; original function uncertain. C17, altered C20 Coursed limestone with some ashlar dressings and some wooden lintels; Stonesfield-slate and thatch roofs. L plan. One storey plus loft. Road front has, to left, the gable of the return wing with a restored marlstone 3-light mullioned window; the remainder of the openings are C20 except for a small marlstone window at first floor. The roof of the lower right bay, a separate build, is thatched. The left return wall, facing the forecourt of Fritwell Manor (q.v.), contains two 4-light stonemullioned windows, one in marlstone; both have leaded glazing, one with old diamond quarries. Rear of wing has 2 blocked carriage entrances with lintels.
17161 - MOX14412	Nos 39/41 East Street	SP 52780 29148	Building	Medieval to Post medieval	Mid/late C16 house, possibly partly earlier; altered and partially rebuilt in C20 House. Mid/late C16, possibly partly earlier; altered and partly rebuilt C20. Part-coursed limestone rubble with renewed wooden lintels.
18666 - MOX14533	Courth Farmhouse and Courth Farmhouse Flat, North Street	SP 52465 29432	Building	Post Medieval	Farmhouse. Early/mid C17, remodelled and extended c.1800 Limestone rubble, partly squared and coursed, with ashlar dressings; Welsh-slate roof with brick stacks, T-plan. 2 storeys plus attic, and one storey plus attic
18658 - MOX14578	No 80, The Hollies	SP 52732 29094	Building	Post medieval	House, 1636 on datestone Coursed limestone rubble with wooden lintels and some marlstone-ashlar dressings; Welsh-slate roof with rebuilt rubble-and-brick gable stacks. 2-unit plan. 2 storeys plus attic.
18657 - MOX14682	Heath Farmhouse	SP 52362 29246	Building	Post Medieval	Listed Grade II. Limestone rubble and marlstone rubble with wooden lintels; asbestos-slate roof with stone-and-brick stacks. 4-unit plan with

					<p>rear wing. 2 storeys. 4-window front has doorways to right of bays one and 3, and at ground floor has casements of 3, 3 and 2 lights, the fourth bay being obscured by a small outbuilding. The upper part of the first floor steps back in places and has been raised in marlstone; the 3-light casements are all C20. Steep-pitched roof has stone-based stacks to left gable and in the centre. Rear of main range and lower rear wing have further casements, some C18. Interior: 2 large back-to-back open fireplaces, one with inglenooks and small cupboards; stop-chamfered beams; panelled shutters; butt-purlin roof includes a heavy truss with curved feet to the principals which may be a raised cruck</p>
18656 - MOX14779	Church of St Olave, Group of 2 headstones approx 4m to north east of churchyard cross	SP 52462 29291		c.1628 and 1668	<p>Listed Grade II. Limestone and marlstone. Earlier stone, to left, is in limestone with a shallow shield-shaped inscription panel which includes the date 1628. The rear is inscribed with a shell pattern and the initials "I.A.". The later stone, in Baroque style, has a limestone top, with a winged cherub supporting swags, and a marlstone lower section which has an inscription panel between carved drops. The inscription commemorates Robert Kilby (died 1668).</p>
17484 - MOX23023	Medieval foundation plinth and ridge and furrow found at Heath Farm	SP 52351 29293	Element	Building-Medieval?  Ridge and Furrow-Post Medieval?	<p>Watching brief recorded a shallow cut feature; 0.8m wide which ran for about 5m and was filled with a single layer of medium sized limestone cobbles. Not dated but interpreted as medieval. Flattened remnants of ridge and furrow to the east of the site.</p>



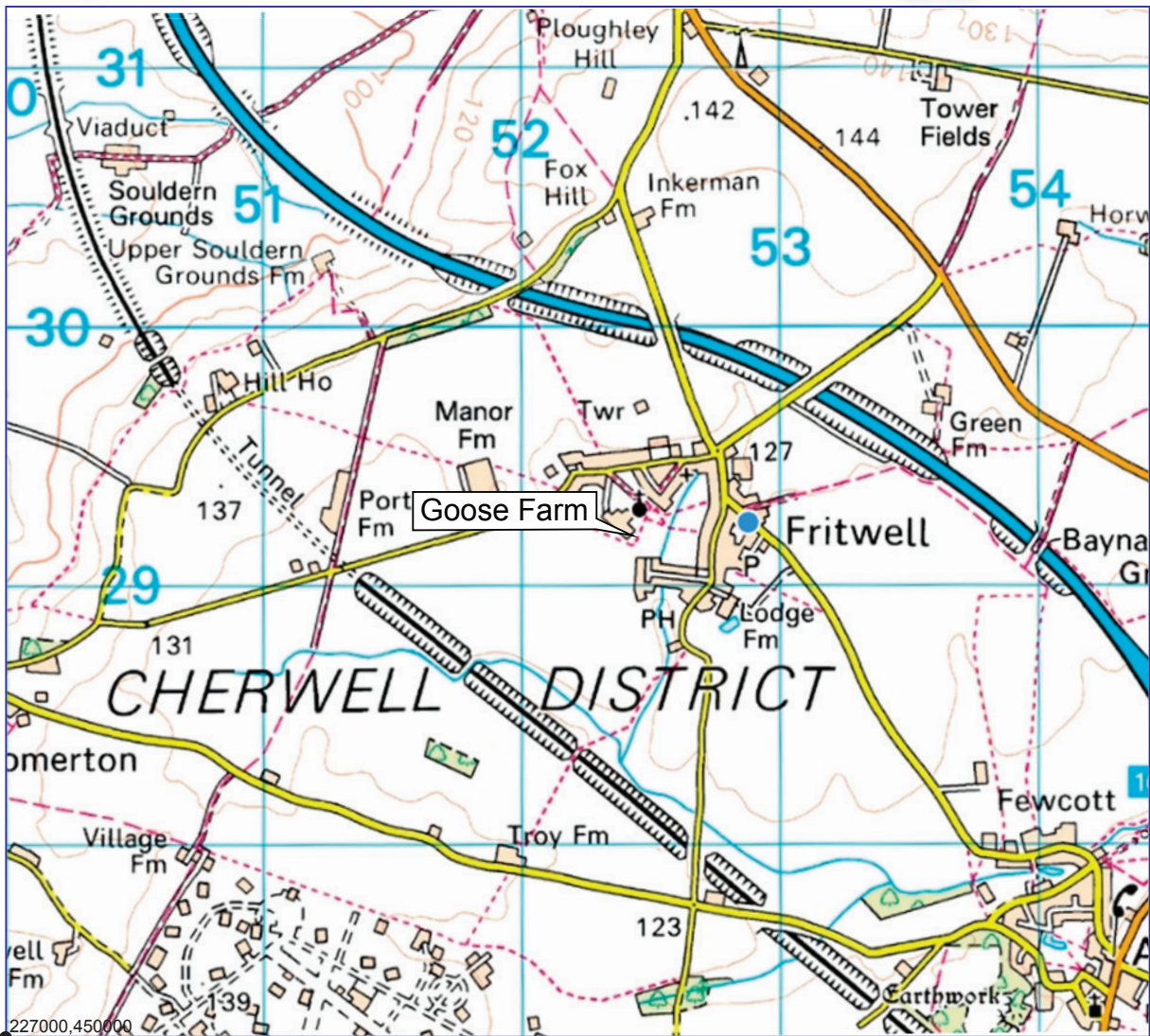
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27454 - MOX23963	Medieval ditch at 19, East Street	SP 52808 29252	Element	Medieval	Watching brief recorded medieval ditch containing pottery of C13-14 date. WB revealed the southern edge of a ditch, thought to project outside the trenching across the northern part of the development area; it contained 51 sherds of medieval pottery, all well preserved. One small piece of animal bone was also recovered. Due to the density of pottery recovered from the relatively small part of the feature's exposed fill, it is thought that there is potential for significant domestic remains of C13-14 occupation to exist nearby on this side of East St.
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## Appendix 2 Additional heritage assets identified by the desk-based assessment (those within the application site are indicated in bold)

Additional heritage asset	Site name	Grid reference	Source	Date	Description
AHA 001	Goose Farm outbuildings	SP52402923	Extant buildings and Cartographic  Evidence from the 19 <sup>th</sup> century	17 <sup>th</sup> Century or earlier	The outbuildings of Goose Farm, originally associated with Heath Farmhouse, are depicted on the 1808 Inclosure map. Heath farmhouse site is dated to the 17 <sup>th</sup> century possibly partly earlier, suggesting that the outbuildings may date to the same period.
AHA 002	Earthworks in field south of St Olave's Church	SP52462918 SP52492923	Site visit	Potentially medieval	Potential ridge and furrow evidence (running north west by south east) immediately south east of the churchyard; possible platform close to the south east corner of the field.



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Location of the site

Figure 1



Plan of proposed works

Figure 2

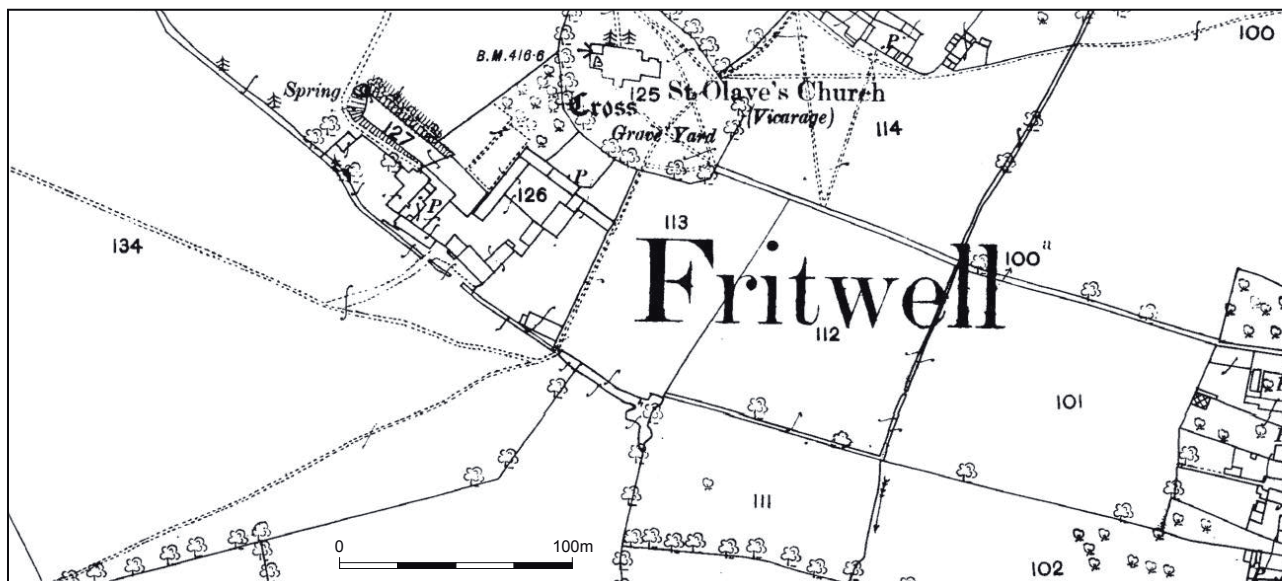






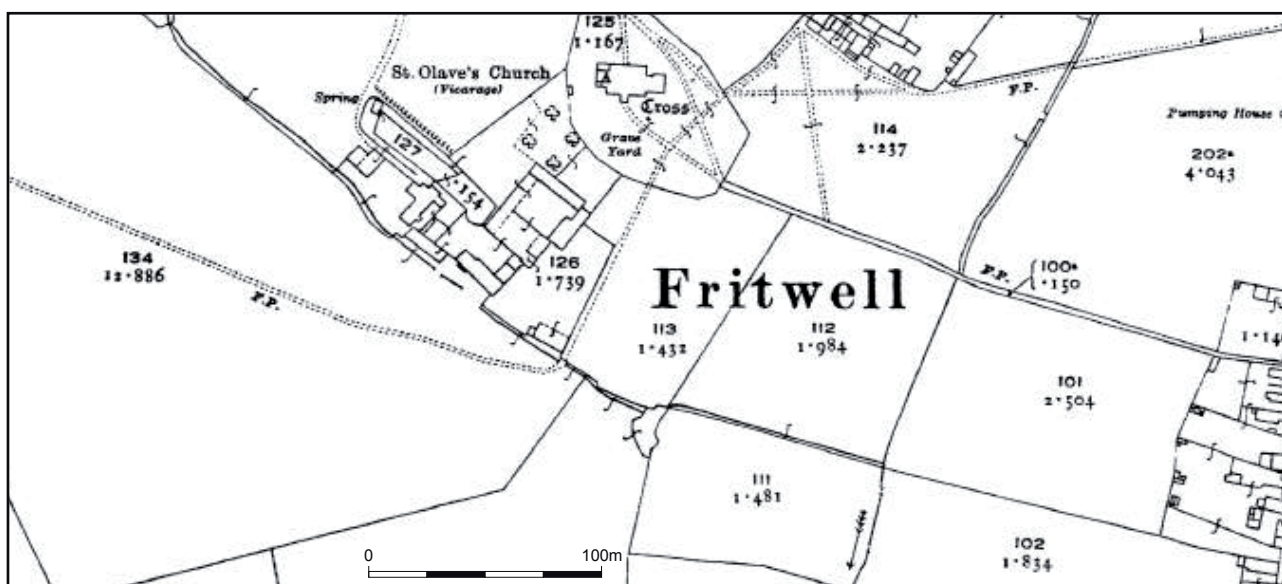
Detail from Inclosure Map, 1808

Figure 4



Ordnance Survey 1:2500, 1875

Figure 5



Ordnance Survey 1:2500, 1921

Figure 6

## Plates



*Plate 1 Site of the proposed pond development, from west*



*Plate 2 View of site from east*

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*Plate 3 View north towards churchyard from proposed pond site*



*Plate 4 Church of St Olave and Cross, from south east*



*Plate 5 Goose Farm buildings and Heath Farmhouse from east*



*Plate 6 Possible earth work platform from east*

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*Plate 7 Possible earthwork platform from west*



*Plate 8 View north east towards village from proposed pond site*