

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

GREENACRES, PICKETS LANE,

NORTH STOKE, OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SU 6090 8607

By

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On behalf of

Alan Kayley Associates

DECEMBER 2011

REPORT FOR Alan Kayley Associates
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Site Code NSPL 11
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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>SUMMARY</i>	1
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Site Location	1
1.2 Planning Background	1
1.3 Archaeological Background	1
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	3
2.1 Project objectives	3
3 STRATEGY	3
3.1 Research Design	3
3.2 Methodology	3
4 RESULTS	3
4.1 Field Results	3
4.2 The New Garage Excavations	3
4.3 The Rear Extension Excavations	5
4.4 The Reliability of the Results	5
5 FINDS <i>by Paul Riccoboni</i>	5
5.1 The Metal Finds and other miscellaneous objects	5
5.2 The Environmental Samples	5
6 DISCUSSION	5
7 ARCHIVE	6
8 BIBLIOGRAPHY	6
FIGURES	
Figure 1: Site location	2
Figure 2: Plan and Sections	4
Plate 1: General shot of site looking SW	7
Plate 2: General view of footing trench; rear extension	7
HER Summary Sheet	8

Summary

A watching brief was conducted over five site visits by John Moore Heritage Services during ground works connected with a new garage and rear extension (Planning Ref: P11/W0407) at Greenacres, Pickets Lane, North Stoke, Oxfordshire, OX10 6BU (SU 6090 8607). No archaeological features were discovered. The only historical find was a key of 18th or 19th Century AD date.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is located on the southern side of the village, east of the River Thames (NGR SU 6090 8607). The site lies at approximately 46.1m OD and is currently in domestic use. The underlying geology is First (Flood plain) Terrace Deposits.

1.2 Planning Background

South Oxfordshire District Council granted planning permission for two storey side extension for garages and utility room with playroom/quest bedroom above, two storey rear extension for drawing room, dining area and gym, with master bedroom suite above, and new single storey outbuilding for garden machinery and log store (P11/W0407). Due to the potential presence of archaeological remains an archaeological watching brief has been required as a condition during the groundworks.

The applicant, or their agents or successors in title shall be responsible for organising and implementing an archaeological watching brief, to be maintained during the period of construction/during any groundworks taking place on the site. The watching brief shall be carried out by a professional archaeological organisation in accordance with a written scheme of investigation that has first been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority. REASON: To safeguard features of archaeological importance (Policy BE13 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011 and Planning Policy Statement 5: Planning and the Historic Environment).

Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS) prepared a *Brief* for archaeological work. John Moore Heritage Services prepared a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2011), which outlined the method by which the watching brief would be carried out in order to preserve by record any archaeological remains of significance. This was approved by OCAS.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The property lies within an area of archaeological interest located 30m west of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of North Stoke North barrow cemetery (SM121). The site contains numerous circular features along with a number of rectangular enclosures and trackways. Further ring ditches and trackways have been recorded to the western side of the monument, south of the proposal area. Medieval pottery and a fragment of human skull have been found 132m north-east of the proposal site. The

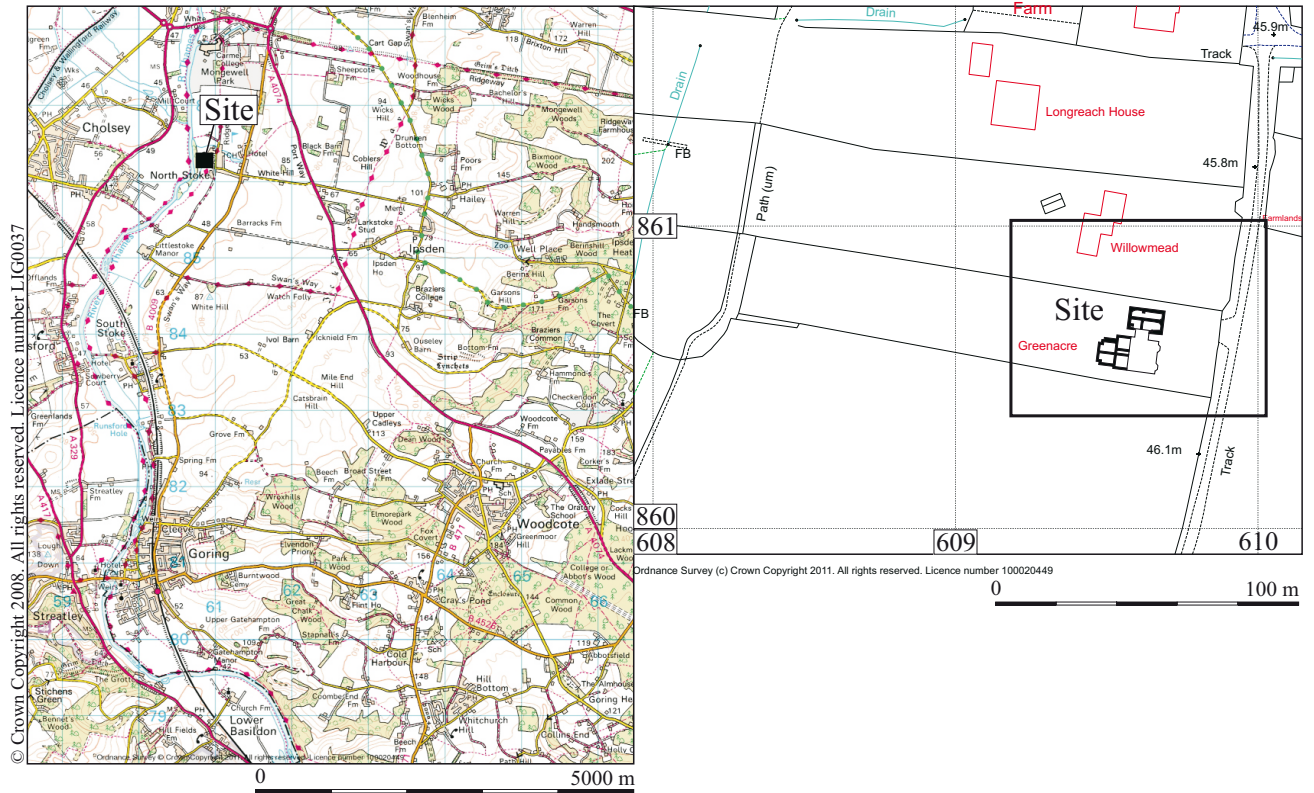


Figure 1. Site location

barrow site was recorded from aerial photographs from the 1930s onwards when the proposal site was under pasture where cropmarks are less likely to be visible.

The above information has been obtained from the OCAS Brief and subsequent Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI).

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims as laid out in the WSI were:

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.
- In particular to record any evidence associated with the cemetery and other prehistoric activity in the area.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994), the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services' Brief (OCC) John Moore Heritage Services' *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2011).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was present on site during all ground reduction connected to the new extensions. All ground reduction was achieved using a 360° tracked excavator fitted with a ditching bucket where practicable.

A journal, recorded on specially designed record sheets, was maintained which detailed times and durations of site visits as well as notes on areas monitored by the archaeologist. Deposits (overburden) were recorded on context recording sheets. A general photographic record of the work was kept and will form of the part site archive to be submitted to the Oxfordshire County Museum Service.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results

Individual context numbers were assigned on site to deposits encountered during the ground reduction. Context numbers in () indicate deposits of material.

4.2 The New Garage Excavations (Figure 1; Figure 2)

The lowest geological horizon attained was the natural yellow sand with gravel inclusions (04). Overlying the natural was c. 0.40m thick orange brown sandy loam

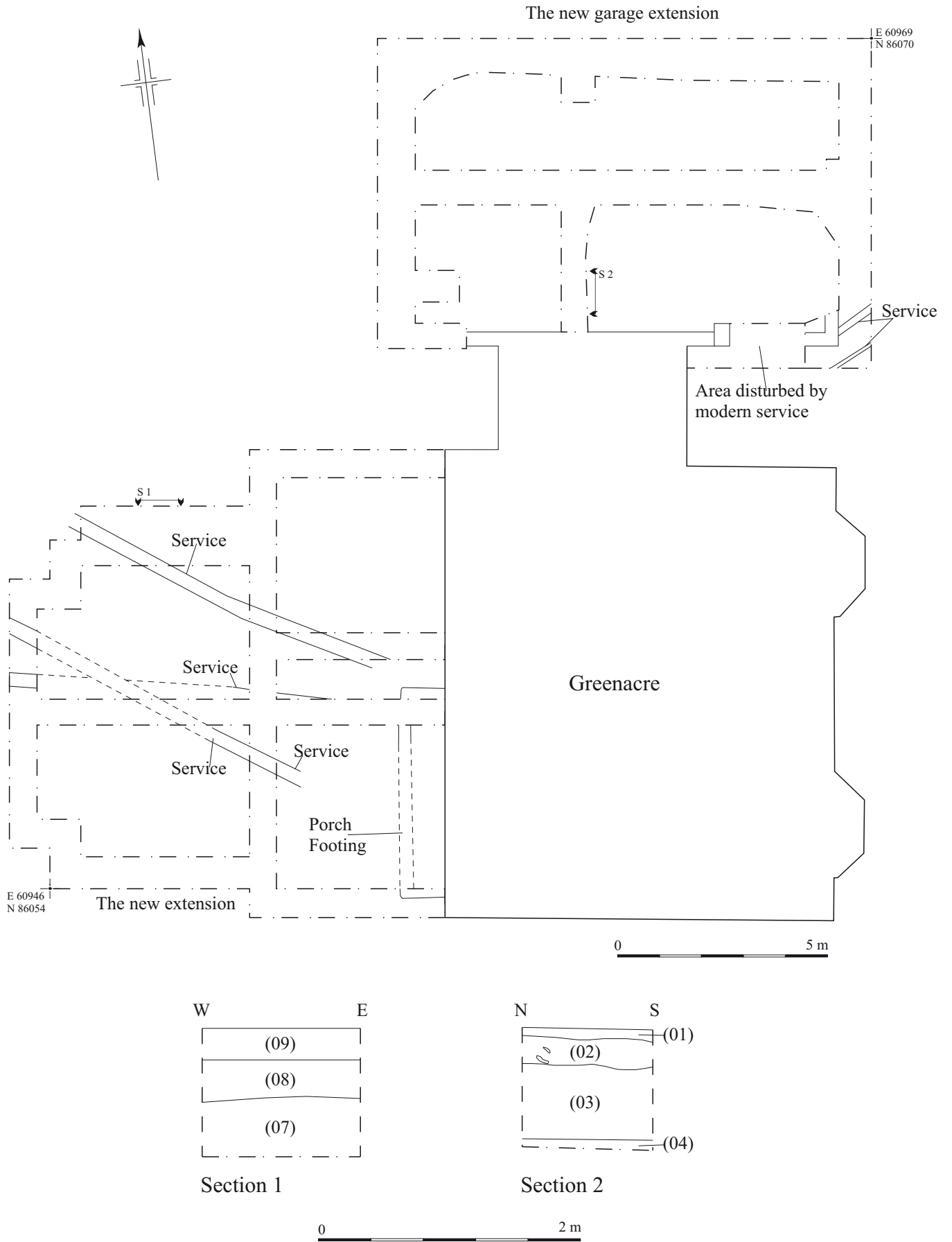


Figure 2. Plan and sections

subsoil (03). The latest layers were *c.* 0.20-0.40m thick dark grey brown silty clay topsoil (02) with modern glass, tile and animal bone. Finally a layer of modern driveway gravels (01) was recorded in section, with one large key of post-medieval date.

No archaeological features were observed

4.3 The Rear Extension (Figure 1; Figure 2)

The lowest geological horizon attained was compact greyish yellow sandy clay (07). This was overlain by orange brown silty clay subsoil (08). The latest deposit was dark grey brown silty clay topsoil with modern finds (not retained) (09).

Modern services were seen across the area and located on the plan (Figure 2).

No features or finds of archaeological interest were encountered.

4.4 Reliability of Results

The watching brief was carried out in winter conditions with good co-operation from the contractor carrying out the groundworks.

A confidence rating is high that the best possible results were achieved considering the excavations were within narrow wall footing trenches.

5 FINDS *by Paul Riccoboni*

5.1 Metal finds and other miscellaneous objects

A small collection of modern finds including a glass bottle, tile and animal bone were initially retained from layer (02) but after cleaning all these finds are considered modern/20th Century AD date and discarded.

The only find of possible historical interest was a large door key considered to be 18th or 19th Century AD in date (parallels in Gorden 2001 & Monk 1999).

5.2 Environmental Remains

No features were considered to warrant environmental sampling.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological watching brief was successful in establishing the aims set out at the start of the project, which were to identify any potential archaeological remains revealed during the course of excavations. As a result no archaeological remains were identified. The recorded stratigraphic sequence is typical of a rural site with subsoil and topsoil deposits overlying undisturbed natural deposits.

The only visible features were modern services orientated across the site in a general north-east south-west direction.

The prehistoric barrow cemetery although very close by in the adjacent field does not extend into the development site.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper Record

The project brief	The project report
Written Scheme of Investigation	The primary site records
The drawn records	

The archive is currently maintained by John Moore Heritage Services.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

English Heritage 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*

Gorden B 2001 *Detector Finds 3* Greenlight publishing.

Institute for Archaeologists, 1999 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* Revised 2008

John Moore Heritage Services 2011 Greenacres, Pickets Lane, North Stoke, Oxfordshire; Archaeological Watching Brief; Written Scheme of Investigation. Unpub JMHS Doc. 2433

Monk E 1999 *Keys; Their History and collection*. Shire publishing

Plate 1: General shot of site looking SW



Plate 2: General view of footing trench; rear extension



HER Summary Sheet

Site Name: Green Acres, Pickets Lane, North Stoke, Oxfordshire,	
Site Address: Green Acres, Pickets Lane, North Stoke, Oxfordshire, OX10 6BU	
Summary: <i>A watching brief was conducted over five site visits by John Moore Heritage Services during ground works connected with a new garage (Planning Ref: P11/W0407) at Green Acres, Pickets Lane, North Stoke, Oxfordshire (SU 6090 8607). No archaeological features were discovered. The only find was a key of 18th or 19th Century AD date.</i>	
District/Unitary: Oxfordshire	Parish:
Period(s): modern	
NGR (centre of site: 8 figures): SU 6090 8607	
Type of archaeological work Watching Brief	
Date of Recording:	
Unit undertaking recording: JMHS	
Geology:	
Title and author of accompanying report: Prepared by Paul Riccoboni BA (Hons) Arch AIFA	
Summary of fieldwork results (begin with earliest period first, add NGRs where appropriate) None	
Location of archive/finds:	
Contact at Unit: <i>Paul Riccoboni</i> <i>info@jmheritageservices.co.uk</i>	Date: 12 th December 2011