

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL INTERVENTIONS**  
**ON LAND AT LOWER CADLEY'S WOOD**  
**SOUTH STOKE, OXFORDSHIRE**

**SU 6172 8350**

*On behalf of*

*Maybourne Properties*

**AUGUST 2011**

**REPORT FOR** Maybourne Properties  
Lower Farmhouse  
Preston Crowmarsh  
Wallingford  
OX10 6SL

**PREPARED BY** Gwilym Williams

**ILLUSTRATION BY** Eoin Fitzsimons

**FIELDWORK** 15<sup>th</sup> June & 4<sup>th</sup> July 2011

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**ENQUIRES TO** *John Moore Heritage Services  
Hill View  
Woodperry Road  
Beckley  
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ  
Tel/Fax 01865 358300  
Email [info@jmheritageservices.co.uk](mailto:info@jmheritageservices.co.uk)*

**Site Code** SSCR 11  
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**ARCHIVE LOCATION** The is currently held at JMHS will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Services in due course with accession number 2011.130

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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services concluded an archaeological evaluation of three trenches on land at Lower Cadley's Wood, South Stoke on the 15<sup>th</sup> June 2011. The evaluation revealed no archaeological remains. On the 4<sup>th</sup> July, a monitoring action on the strip of the drive for the new build dwelling revealed the postulated medieval trackway visible on air photographs, although no dating was recovered.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The site of the proposed development is located 1.6km to the east of South Stoke, on the southern side of Woodcote Road (NGR SU 6172 8350). The site lies at approximately 59m OD and the geology is First Terrace River Gravels. There is an existing house and garden.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

Planning permission (P11/W0619) was sought from South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) for the construction of a replacement dwelling, garage and access. Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS) advised that an archaeological evaluation should be undertaken prior to determination of the application.

OCAS, on behalf of SODC, has prepared a Brief for the evaluation to establish the presence/absence and condition of any archaeological deposits thought to present within the site in order to help formulate any future mitigation strategies, if necessary. This is in line with PPS5 and Local Plan Policies.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The proposal site lies in an area of some archaeological potential. A Bronze Age barrow cemetery identified through aerial photographs is recorded 150m north of the site (County Historic Environment Record PRN 15344; NGR SU 6167 8377). Small evaluation and watching brief carried out within the cemetery, 380m to the NW, recorded pits, ditches and postholes considered to be Neolithic or early Bronze Age in date (PRN 16499; SU 6161 8380).

Excavations ahead of the Newbury reinforcement Main pipeline recorded Iron Age and Roman settlement 600m west of the site (PRN 17329; SU 6124 8379).

Further cropmarks have been recorded in the area, including an east-west trackway which crosses the area immediately north of the proposed new dwelling and a rectangular enclosure 200m to the west (PRN 26105; SU 6155 8351).

Cropmarks of a series of rectangular enclosures show on 1999 aerial photographs to the west of the property. The date of them is unknown but they are not recorded on 20<sup>th</sup> century maps so could be post-medieval or earlier date.

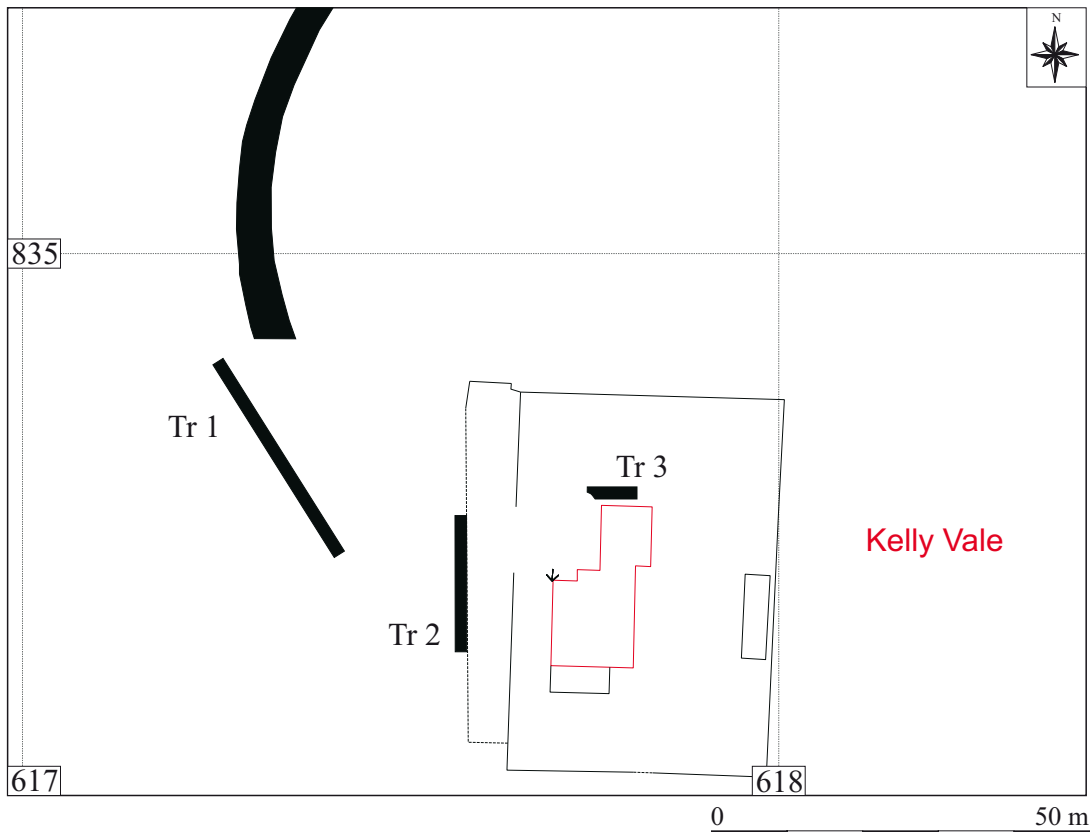
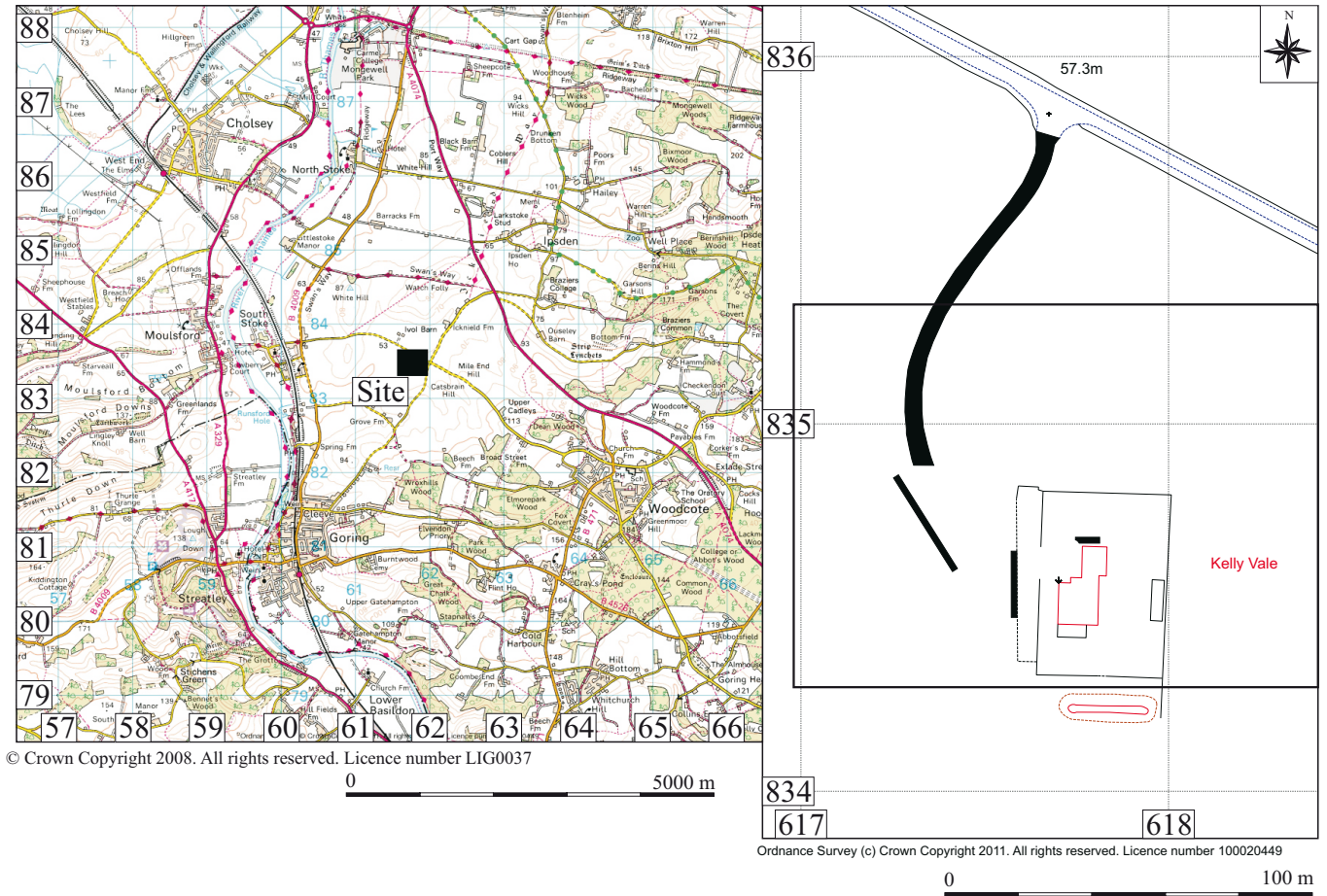


Figure 1. Site location

It is therefore probable that further elements of the enclosures, settlement and trackway would be encountered during the evaluation and possible that further aspects of the barrow cemetery may exist on the site.

The above has been obtained from the OCAS Brief.

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.

In particular:

- o To try to date the rectangular enclosures seen on the 1999 aerial photographs
- o To determine the level of preservation of the known trackway and enclosures
- o To determine the presence/absence of further aspects of the barrow cemetery and known settlements

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

In response to South Oxfordshire District Council's request, a scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and agreed by OCAS and the applicants. The work was carried out by JMHS and involved the excavation of three trial trenches across the site

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999) and the procedures laid down in MoRPHE (English Heritage 2006).

### **3.2 Methodology**

In order to satisfy the aims of the investigation it was decided to excavate three trenches, totalling 54.5m; one 18m long, one 6.5m long and the other 30m long and all 1.6m in width (Fig. 1) across the site using a tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket. The resulting surfaces were hand cleaned before any potential

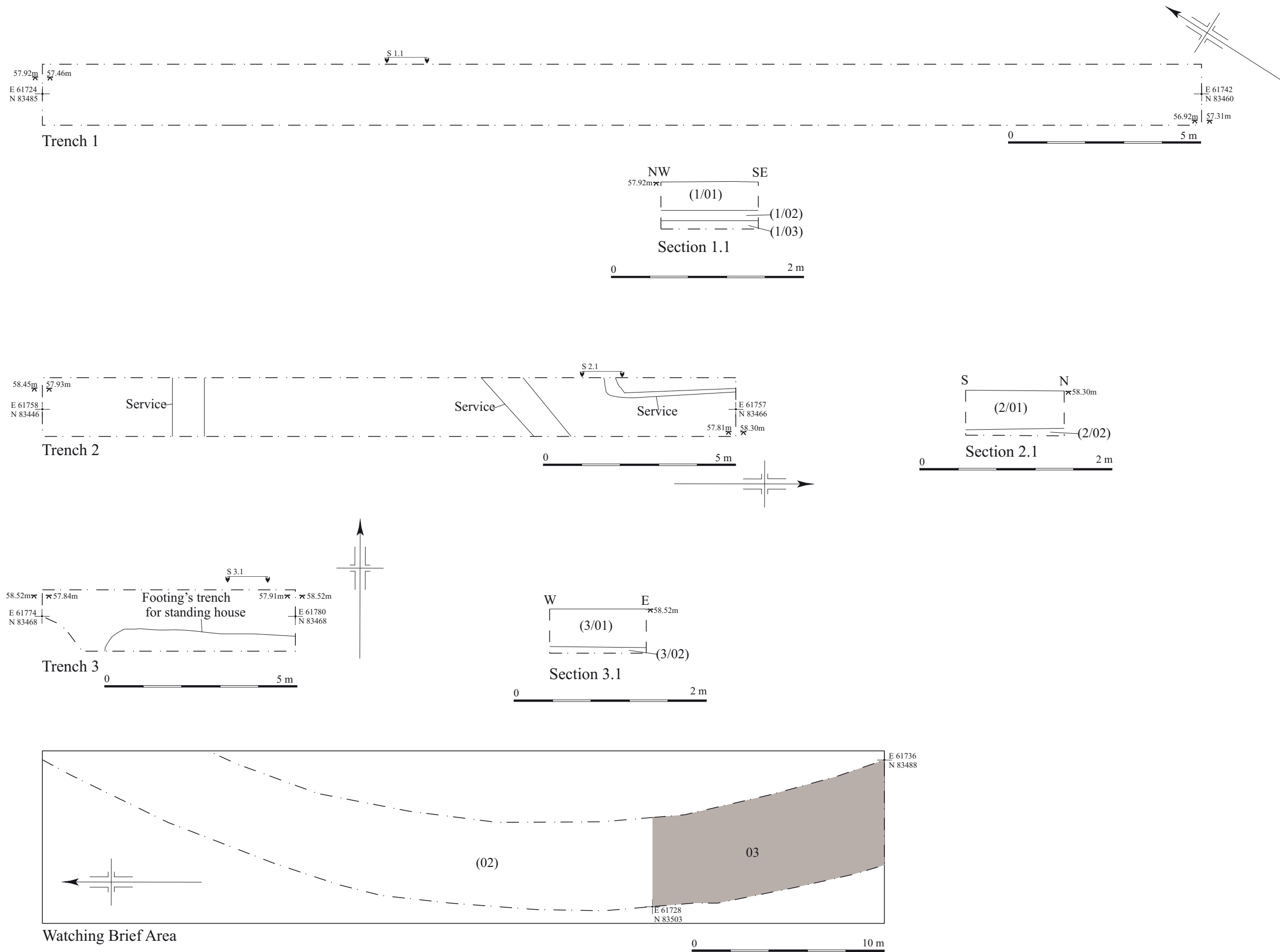


Figure 2. Trenches 1-3 plans and sections and Watching Brief plan

archaeological features were investigated by hand in order to meet the aims as defined above. A watching brief was undertaken during the stripping for the new drive.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced.

## **4 RESULTS**

All deposits were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in ( ) indicate deposits of material.

### **4.1 Evaluation Results (Figures 2 & 3)**

The trenches were located close to the positions indicated on the Written Scheme of Investigation, but due to services small emendations to the precise locations were necessary.

#### **Trench 1 (Figure 2)**

Trench 1 was oriented northwest/southeast. It was 30m long, 1.6m wide and between 0.46m (northwest) and 0.39m (southeast) deep. The top of the trench at the northwest end was 57.92m OD, the base was 57.46m OD. The top at the southeast end was 57.31m OD, the base 56.92m OD. The trench was machined to the top of the First Terrace Gravels (1/03), which were sealed by a deposit of subsoil (1/02), up to 0.1m thick and topsoil (1/01), up to 0.3m thick. No archaeological features were present.

#### **Trench 2**

Trench 2 was oriented north/south. It was 18m long, 1.6m wide and *c.* 0.49m deep. The top of the trench at the south end was 58.45m OD, the base was 57.93m OD. The top at the north end was 58.30m OD, the base 57.81m OD. The trench was machined to the top of the First Terrace Gravels (2/02), which were sealed by a deposit of topsoil (2/01), up to 0.4m thick, with much building materials (brick, concrete, heavy-duty polythene, etc.) spread through the deposit. No archaeological features were present.

#### **Trench 3**

Trench 3 was oriented east/west. It was 6.5m long, 1.6m wide and between 0.61m and 0.66m deep. The top of the trench at the east end was 58.52m OD, the base was at 57.91m OD. The top of the trench at the west end was 58.52m OD and the base was 57.84m OD. The trench was machined to the top of the First Terrace Gravels (3/02), which were sealed by a deposit of topsoil (3/01), up to 0.65m thick, with much building materials (brick, concrete, heavy-duty polythene, etc.) spread through the deposit. No archaeological features were present.





Trench 1. Looking northwest



Trench 2. Looking north



Trench 3. Looking east



Watching brief.  
Track (3), looking south

Figure 3. Trenches 1-3 and monitoring photographs

## **4.2 Watching Brief Results (Figures 2 & 3)**

On Monday July 4<sup>th</sup> 2011, a monitoring action was carried out along the line of the drive for the proposed new build dwelling. The drive was to the west of the pre-existing drive across the former meadowland laid out by the previous owner.

The drive was stripped to the gravel (2), seen in the evaluation trenches and sealed by topsoil (1); there was no subsoil. As the current owner, Mr John Ingram, indicated, the current meadowland had been recently rotorvated. The area of the strip did not reveal any archaeological remains. At the south end of the stripped area, however, in the vicinity of the medieval track which runs east/west from South Stoke to the Chilterns, was an area 12m wide (north/south) and extending beyond the edges of the strip of slightly siltier gravel (3). This undoubtedly represents the trackway, although no ditch was visible either north or south of the postulated track.

## **4.3 Reliability of Techniques and Results**

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The excavation of the trenches took place in bright conditions with occasional moderately heavy rain. The evaluation was monitored by Richard Oram of OCAS.

The archaeological monitoring of the strip took place in good meteorological conditions, with excellent co-operation from the contractors.

## **5 FINDS**

No finds were recovered during the evaluation or during the watching brief.

### **5.1 Environmental Remains**

No environmental samples warranted being taken.

## **6 CONCLUSIONS**

No evidence was found during the intervention for any archaeological remains associated with the barrow cemetery to the north.

Evidence for the medieval track was not forthcoming due to Trench 1 being south of the track, and Trench 3, which should have yielded evidence for the track, being entirely disturbed in association with building works on the standing house. Evidence for the track was seen during the watching brief, where it appeared as a slightly siltier gravel deposit than the natural.

The cropmarks seen on the 1999 air photograph, which were a focus of investigation of the evaluation, were not present within any of the trenches. It is probable that these are 20<sup>th</sup> century agricultural activities, such as drainage or the tracks of tractors. Without investigation in the field to the west it is not possible to be sure of what they represent.

## **7 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

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

Institute of Field Archaeologists. 1994. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations.*

**Archaeological Context Inventory**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Trench 1</b>								
1/1	Deposit	Mid/dark grey-brown sandy silt gravel.	0.3	>1.6	>30	–	Topsoil	Modern
1/2	Deposit	Hard, dark grey brown sandy silt.	0.10	>1.6	>30	–	Subsoil	-
1/3	Deposit	Hard, mid orange brown gravel	–	>1.6	>30	–	Natural; First Terrace Gravels	-
<b>Trench 2</b>								
2/1	Deposit	Mid/dark grey-brown sandy silt gravel; building materials, gaffer tape, polythene sheeting etc.	0.4	>1.6	>18	–	Topsoil	Modern
2/2	Deposit	Hard, mid orange brown gravel	–	>1.6	>18	–	Natural; First Terrace Gravels	-
<b>Trench 3</b>								
3/1	Deposit	Mid/dark grey-brown sandy silt gravel; building materials, gaffer tape, polythene sheeting etc.	0.65	>1.6	>6.5	–	Topsoil	Modern
3/23	Deposit	Hard, mid orange brown gravel	–	>1.6	>6.5	–	Natural; First Terrace Gravels	-