

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
ON LAND EAST OF
OXLEAZE FARM LANE, MAUGERSBURY,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE
NGR SP 2015 2482

On behalf of
Sheldon Bosley

JULY 2011

REPORT FOR Sheldon Bosley
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out a six-trench evaluation on land to the west of Oxleaze Farm Lane, Mangersbury. A postulated field boundary represented by a hedgeline possibly forming a close and probably associated remnant ridge and furrow were present. The ridge and furrow was early post-medieval, coming out of use in the latter part of the 18th century.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site location (Figure 1)

The site is located on a land parcel to the east of Oxleaze Farm Lane, Mangersbury and is centred on NGR SP 2015 2482. Geologically it is situated on the border of Whitby Mudstone Formation, Marlstone Rock and mudstone of the Dyrham Formation (BGS 217).

1.2 Planning Background

Planning application CDC/11/02122/FUL for the relocation of farmstead, erection of new agricultural buildings and stable building and landscape restoration of existing site required the implementation of a staged programme of archaeological works. The first stage was an archaeological evaluation. The Archaeological Officer of Gloucestershire County Council prepared a Brief for the work and recommended that the site should be evaluated by trenching. A *Written Scheme of Investigation* proposing the methodology by which the archaeological evaluation was to be carried out by John Moore Heritage Services to satisfy the requirements of the Brief and agreed with the Archaeological Officer.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The application site is within the North Cotswolds, notable for extensive archaeological remains relating to prehistoric and Roman activity and settlement.

The A436 lies roughly 400m to the north of the site, this follows the line a secondary Roman road designated *Cynges Ferdstraet* in Saxon charter (HER 9230). Two undated but possibly Saxon boundary stones (HER 5789 and 26454) lie within 150m to the north of the site. A third (HER 5788) lies roughly 350m to the northwest. These may represent the edge of the former village green.

Mangersbury was historically in the parish of Stow-on-the-Wold. Evesham Abbey claimed to have received Stow, Mangersbury, and Donnington from King Coenred in AD 708, and Mangersbury was among the vills that Bishop Ecgwine said he had acquired for Evesham. Mangersbury was given in AD 949 by King Edred to his *miles* Wulfric, but later it was part of Evesham's estate again, perhaps by grant from King Ethelred. In AD 1086 Mangersbury and Stow apparently was one unit of the abbey's estate (VCH 1965).

In the 12th century Mangersbury manor was assigned to the abbey's chamber; rents from Stow went to the infirmary, and market profits to the kitchen. The abbey was

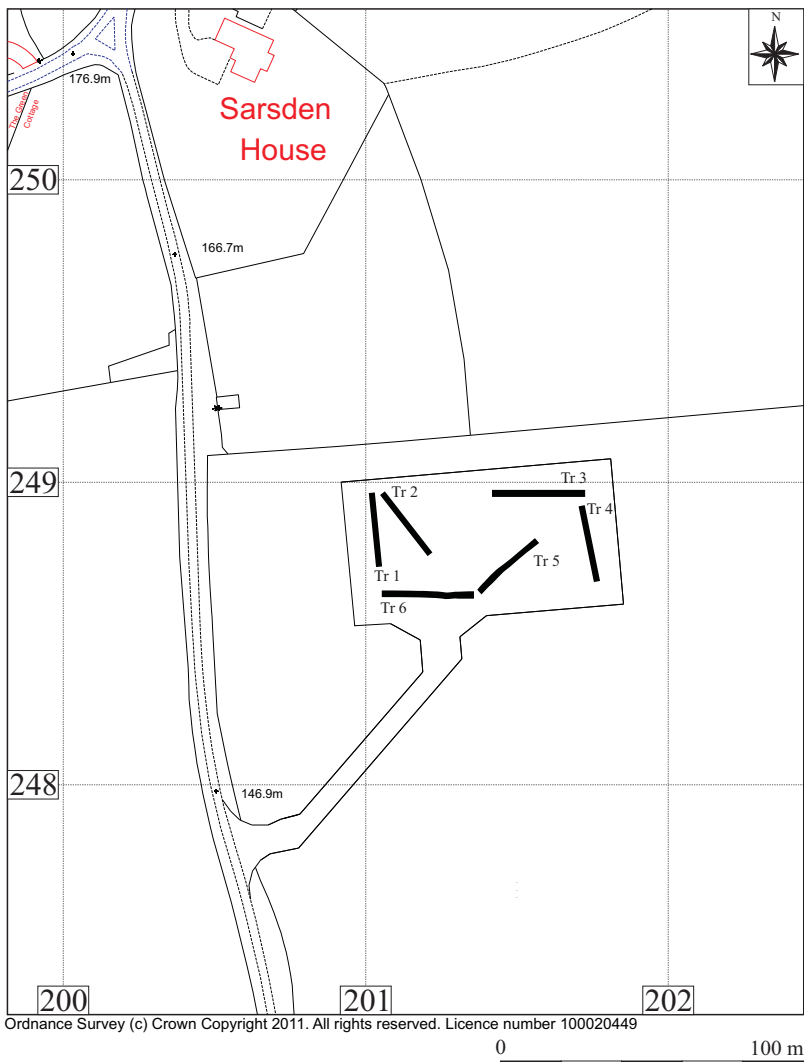


Figure 1. Site location

granted free warren in Donnington, Mangersbury, and Stow in 1251, and by 1276 had assize of bread and ale. The abbey's estate increased its holdings in Mangersbury during the 13th century. In the 14th century several estates in the parish, held freely by others, were acquired by the abbey. In AD 1547 Mangersbury manor and the tithe portion there were granted to Sir Richard Lee, who later sold the property to Sir Rowland Hill and Thomas Leigh (VCH 1965).

Ridge and furrow is noted in the immediate vicinity of the site. The site is depicted on the 1:2,500 1903 OS map to be very similar to that of present.

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 or 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.
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- To inform a decision regarding the need for a further stage of archaeological work.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In response to a Brief issued by the Archaeological Officer of Gloucestershire County Council, JMHS carried out the work, which comprised the excavation of six trenches within the proposal area (Fig. 1).

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in JMHS's *WSI* agreed with the Archaeological Officer of Gloucestershire County Council.

3.2 Methodology

The investigation involved the mechanical excavation of six trenches, two measuring 30m in length and four measuring 25m in length all 1.6m at the base, by a 5-tonne excavator equipped with a ditching bucket, supplemented by hand investigation of the revealed deposits. This comprised a total of 160m of trenching, with a further 32m of trenching available should needs have required. This contingency was not used.

Site procedures carried out followed IfA guidelines. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994) and the principles of MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results (Figs. 2 & 3)

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material. All context numbers are preceded by trench number and /. Details of individual trenches are in Appendix 1 – the context inventory – at the rear of report.

The remains of an east/west hedgeline, represented by the undefined cut 1/6 filled with a dark brown humic clay, were recovered from the southern end of Trench 1, which extended to the east and was present in Trench 5; no north/south hedgeline was present, although this could possibly have been west of Trench 3 in line with the north/south boundary within the field to the north. This may well have been a boundary to a small close or field.

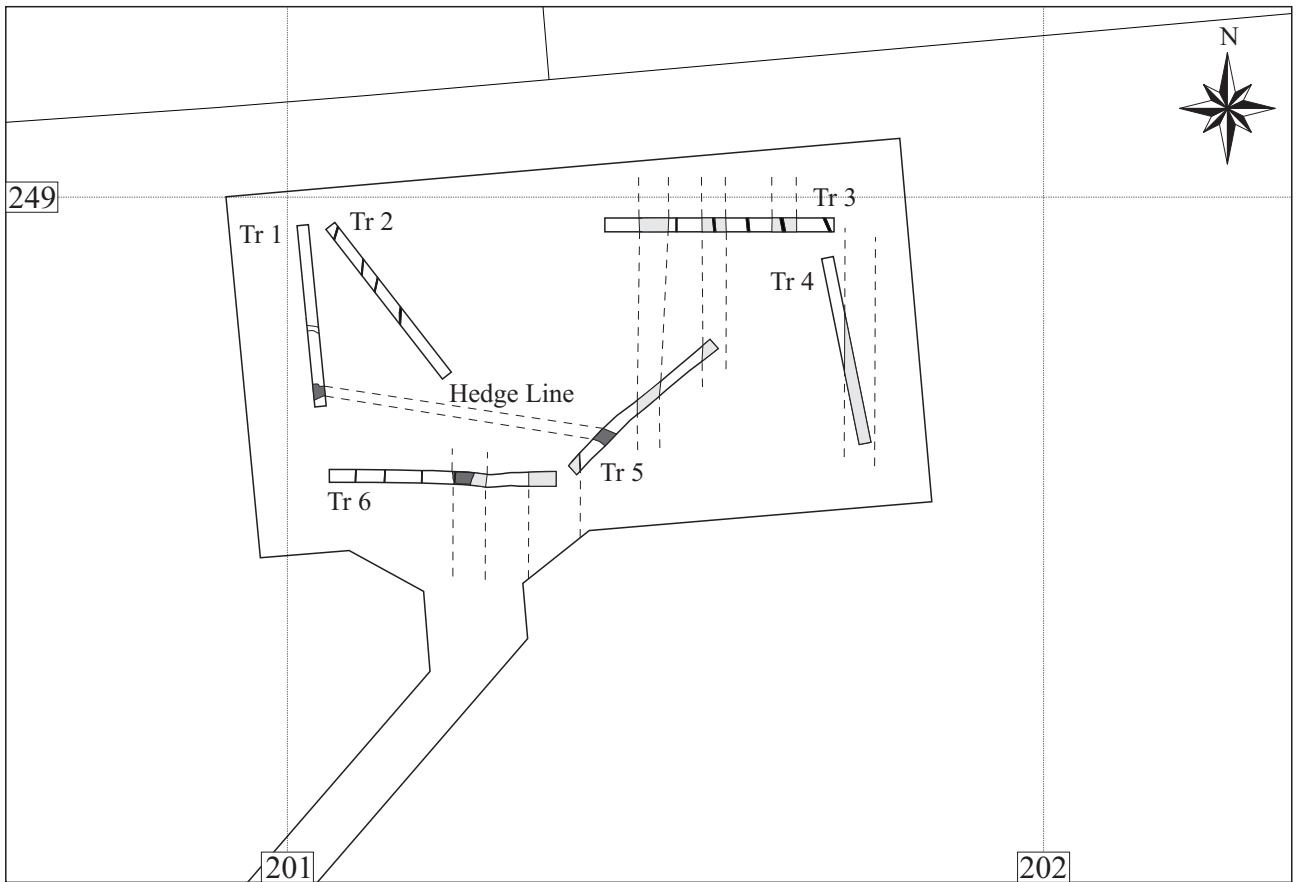
To the north of, and parallel with, the hedgeline 1/6 was also an east/west oriented, shallow ditch 1/3. Trench 2 was empty, except for four north/south oriented french drains. The postulated hedge appeared to define an area without evidence for remnant ridge and furrow.

Trenches 3, 4, 5 and 6 all yielded evidence for ridge and furrow. In Trench 3 three furrows were revealed, which were in line with the furrows in the field – Cow Field – to the north; the two westernmost furrows were also seen to extend into Trench 5, one of which 5/5 yielded a fragment of glazed tile. The easternmost furrow 3/4 in Trench 3 yielded a fragment of 17th or 18th century bottle glass and a small piece of iron slag. A furrow from Trench 4 was east of the east end of Trench 3, but was part of the post-medieval ridge and furrow observed during the evaluation. A further two furrows were observed in Trench 6, the westernmost of which was cut by later tree activity. There was no evidence for archaeological activity on site predating the proposed close in the northwest corner of the site and the possibly associated ridge and furrow; no clearly residual finds were recovered either.

The post-medieval ridge and furrow was cut by undated french drains. All features and deposits were sealed by topsoil. No finds were recovered from the topsoil. This had clearly been ploughed and harrowed recently, as harrow lines were visible running east/west at the north end of the field.

4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The archaeological evaluation took place in clement conditions. Charles Parry, the Archaeological Officer for Gloucestershire County Council, was informed of the preliminary results on the first day of the evaluation.



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Key:

- Furrow
- Hedge Line
- Land Drain

0 ————— 50 m

Figure 2. Plan showing ridge and furrow & hedgeline of close

5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

5.1 Finds

Ceramic Building Material by *Gwilym Williams*

A single fragment of glazed tile, weighing 210 g and 15mm thick (110mm × 90mm; no full dimensions), in an orange sandy fabric, with occasional haematite flecks, was recovered from (5/4) the fill of a furrow. The upper face is a chipped brown glaze; the chipping is probably post-depositional. The underside is smoothed, with no apparent keying scoops or stabs. A small part of a single edge is present, which is at c. 60°. It is probably a floor-tile, although given the small size of the fragment it may well be a fragment of roof-tile, which are occasionally glazed.

Slag by *Gwilym Williams*

A single fragment, weighing 16 g, of undiagnostic slag was recovered from layer (3/6). Such slags, while indicative of ironworking, lack diagnostic surface morphological traits, and therefore cannot be used to determine the nature of the ironworking (smithing or smelting).

Glass by *Gwilym Williams*

A small sherd, weighing 2 g and 3mm, of green bottle glass was recovered from layer (3/6). The patination indicates that it was post-medieval, and the colour is typical of 17th to 18th century wine bottles. Although the size of the sherd was too small to assert unequivocally that it was hand-blown, it is typical of such early modern bottles.

5.2 Environmental Remains

No environmental samples were taken as the potential of the deposits was not felt to be sufficient to warrant sampling.

6 DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

The evaluation carried out on land west of Oxleaze Farm Lane yielded evidence for the upstanding ridge and furrow extant to the north of the evaluation extending into the field in which the evaluation was undertaken. This was dated to the post-medieval period by glass and glazed tile from the furrows; the open fields of Maugersbury were inclosed in 1766 (VCH 1965).

The postulated field boundary, represented by the relict hedgeline, which ran east/west was not observed to have had a corresponding north/south oriented eastern length to form a close, but is believed to have probably had such. No ridge and furrow was present within the area of the proposed close, which indicates that the ridge and furrow was either contemporary or later than the close defined by the hedgeline.

Ridge and furrow is visible to the north of the field where the proposed farmstead is to be located; an aerial photograph, dating from 2002, shown to the author by Janet Bartlett, wife of the landowner shows that the area of the evaluation is very denuded of ridge and furrow in comparison with the southern end of the field, where they are

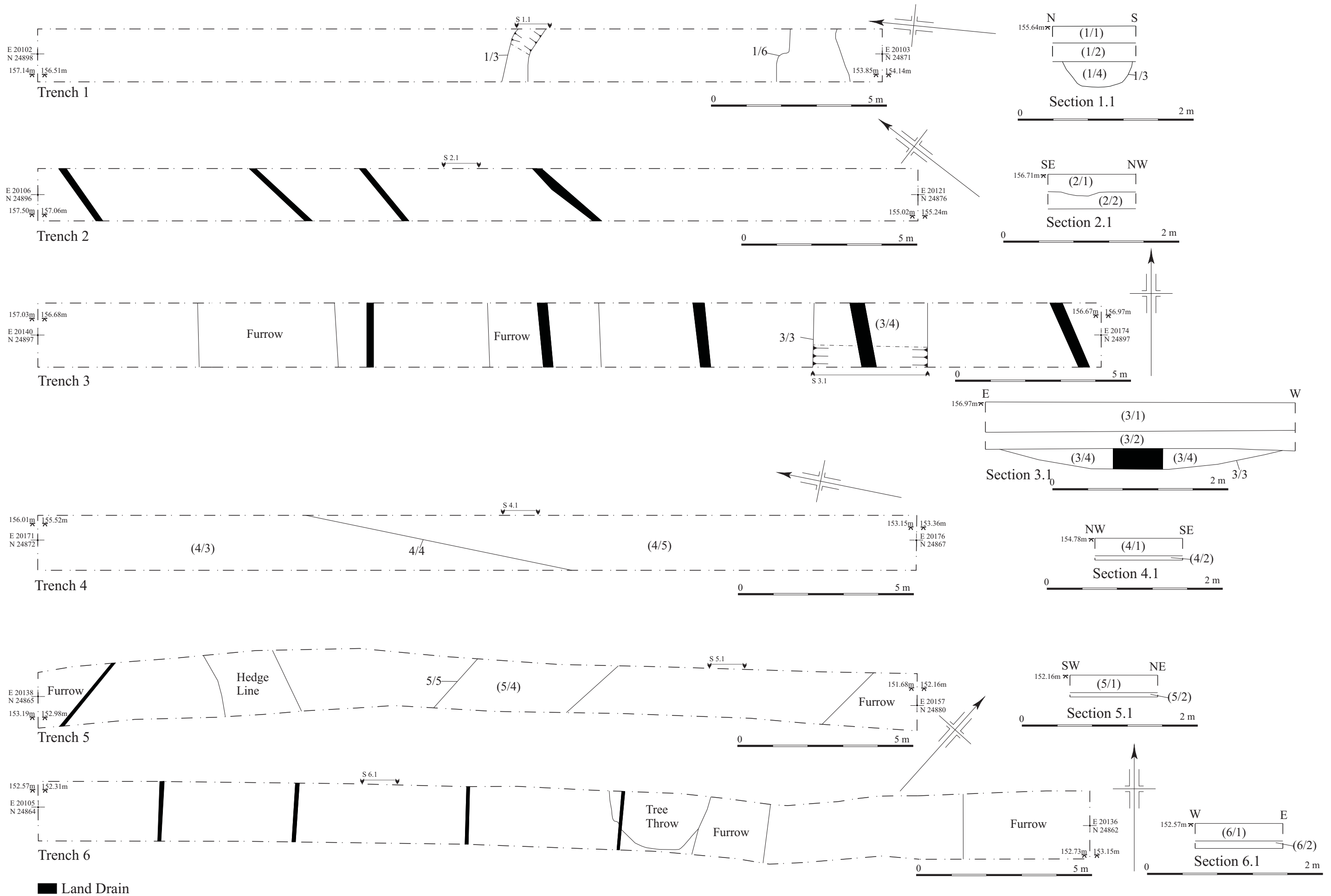


Figure 3. Trenches 1-6 plans and sections



Trench 1, looking north



Trench 2, looking north



Trench 3, looking west



Trench 4, looking south



Trench 5, looking northeast



Trench 6, looking west

Figure 4. Trench photographss

still visible from above; on the ground the area is reasonably flat and it must be presumed that the ridge and furrow are sealed by hill-wash from uphill.

The ridge and furrow and associated close in the northwest of the field in which the development area is, are related to the early post-medieval exploitation of the valley in which the proposal is located. Oxleaze Farm, itself, post-dates the inclosure of the open fields (VCH 1965), and the area of the evaluation, it must be concluded, was probably little used prior to the 17th century.

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Appendix 1: Archaeological Context Inventory

Trench	Context	Type	Description	L (m)	B (m)	D(m)	Finds	Date	Interpretation
Trench 1									
	(1/1)	Layer	Moderately compact yellow brown sandy clay humus	>24	>1.6	c. 0.2		Modern	Topsoil
	(1/2)	Layer	Firm yellow brown sandy clay occ small stone	>24	>1.6	c. 0.2		Unk.	Natural
	1/3	Cut	Linear, clean BoS of slope @ top, gradual @ base; concave sides, flat base	>1.6	1.5	0.26		Post-medieval	Furrow
	(1/4)	Fill	Sticky orange/red clay silt	>1.6	1.5	0.26		Post-medieval	Furrow
	(1/5)	Fill	Soft, dark brown humic clay	>1.6	1.5	0.26		Post-medieval?	Hedgeline
	1/6	Cut	Irregular linear, sharp BoS at top (not bottomed); sides irregular and penetrated by rooting	>1.6	1.5-2	>0.3		Post-medieval?	Hedgeline
Trench 2									
	(2/1)	Layer	Moderately compact yellow brown sandy clay humus	>24	>1.6	c. 0.2		Modern	Topsoil
	(2/2)	Layer	Firm yellow brown sandy clay occ small stone	>24	>1.6	c. 0.2		Unk.	Natural
Trench 3									
	(3/1)	Layer	Moderately compact yellow brown sandy clay humus	>24	>1.6	c. 0.3		Modern	Topsoil
	(3/2)	Layer	Firm yellow brown sandy clay occ small stone	>24	>1.6	c. 0.2		Unk.	Natural
	3/3	Cut	Linear, clean BoS of slope @ top, gradual @ base; concave sides, flat base	>1.6	1.5	0.26		Post-medieval	Furrow
	(3/4)	Fill	Sticky orange/red clay silt	>1.6	1.5	0.26		Post-medieval	Furrow
Trench 4									
	(4/1)	Layer	Dry red brown clay humus, with occasional stone	>25	>1.6	c. 0.2		Modern	Topsoil
	(4/2)	Layer	Compact red brown silty clay	>25	>1.6	c. 0.05		Unk.	Interface

	(4/3)	Layer	Compact brown red clay v. occ. stone	>25	>1.6	Unk.		Unk.	Marlstone
	(4/4)	Fill	Compact and indurated pale red brown clay silt & stone	>25	>1.6	0.15		Post-medieval	Furrow
	4/5	Cut	Compact brown red clay v. occ. stone	>25	>1.6	0.15		Post-medieval	Furrow
Trench	Context	Type	Description	L (m)	B (m)	D(m)	Finds	Date	Interpretation
Trench 5									
	(5/1)	Layer	Dry red brown clay humus, with occasional stone	>25	>1.6	c. 0.2		Modern	Topsoil
	(5/2)	Layer	Compact red brown silty clay	>25	>1.6	c. 0.05		Unk.	Interface
	(5/3)	Layer	Compact brown red clay v. occ. stone	>25	>1.6	Unk.		Unk.	Marlstone
	(5/4)	Fill	Compact and indurated pale red brown clay silt & stone	>25	>1.6	0.15		Post-medieval	Furrow
	5/5	Cut	Compact brown red clay v. occ. stone	>25	>1.6	0.15		Post-medieval	Furrow
Trench 6									
	(6/1)	Layer	Dry red brown clay humus, with occasional stone	>25	>1.6	c. 0.2		Modern	Topsoil
	(6/2)	Layer	Compact red brown silty clay	>25	>1.6	c. 0.05		Unk.	Interface
	(6/3)	Layer	Compact brown red clay v. occ. stone	>25	>1.6	Unk.		Unk.	Marlstone