



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION ON LAND OFF
LITTLE LANE, HORLEY, OXFORDSHIRE**

SU 4161 4377

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On behalf of
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services conducted a pre-determination archaeological evaluation in advance of the proposed construction a new two plot development at Little Lane, Horley, Oxfordshire (SP 4161 4377). Six trenches, totalling approximately 80 metres in length were excavated to the underlying natural geology. No archaeological features or finds were discovered. Stone outcropping was investigated across the site, but was proven as natural.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location and Geology (Figure 1)

The application area is located close to the centre of the village, south of St Etheldreda's Church on the south side of Little Lane and west of The Steps (SP 4161 4377). The site lies at approximately 155m OD and the underlying geology is Middle Lias with second terrace gravel overlying it in the vicinity. The land is currently agricultural and topographically is somewhat raised, presumably by the upcast from the suspected Holloway which traverses the eastern side of the site (north-south)

1.2 Planning Background

Planning permission is to be sought from Cherwell District Council for a development for the construction of two new dwellings. Due to the potential presence and disturbance of heritage assets an archaeological field evaluation has been requested. This is in line with the NPPF (2012) and the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS) produced a brief outlining their requirements for the evaluation. This was followed by a *Written Scheme of Investigation* which outlined the method by which the work would be carried out in order to achieve the aims of the evaluation.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The proposal concerned lies within an area of some archaeological interest located to the south west of the current settlement. The site is located within the area of a deserted medieval village (DMV) (PRN 5986) recorded in the early 1970s. The DMV was recorded as consisting of a series of well-preserved earthworks consisting of holloways, house platforms, croft boundaries and a village boundary bank. The full extent of this settlement has not been identified. An east-west orientated track way was found to the east during a watching brief (JMHS 2002). It heads in the direction of this proposal site. Early edition OS maps show that this site has not been developed in the last 100 years and it is therefore likely that any archaeological deposits that do survive on the site can be expected to be fairly well preserved.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the archaeological evaluation were to:

- 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; and

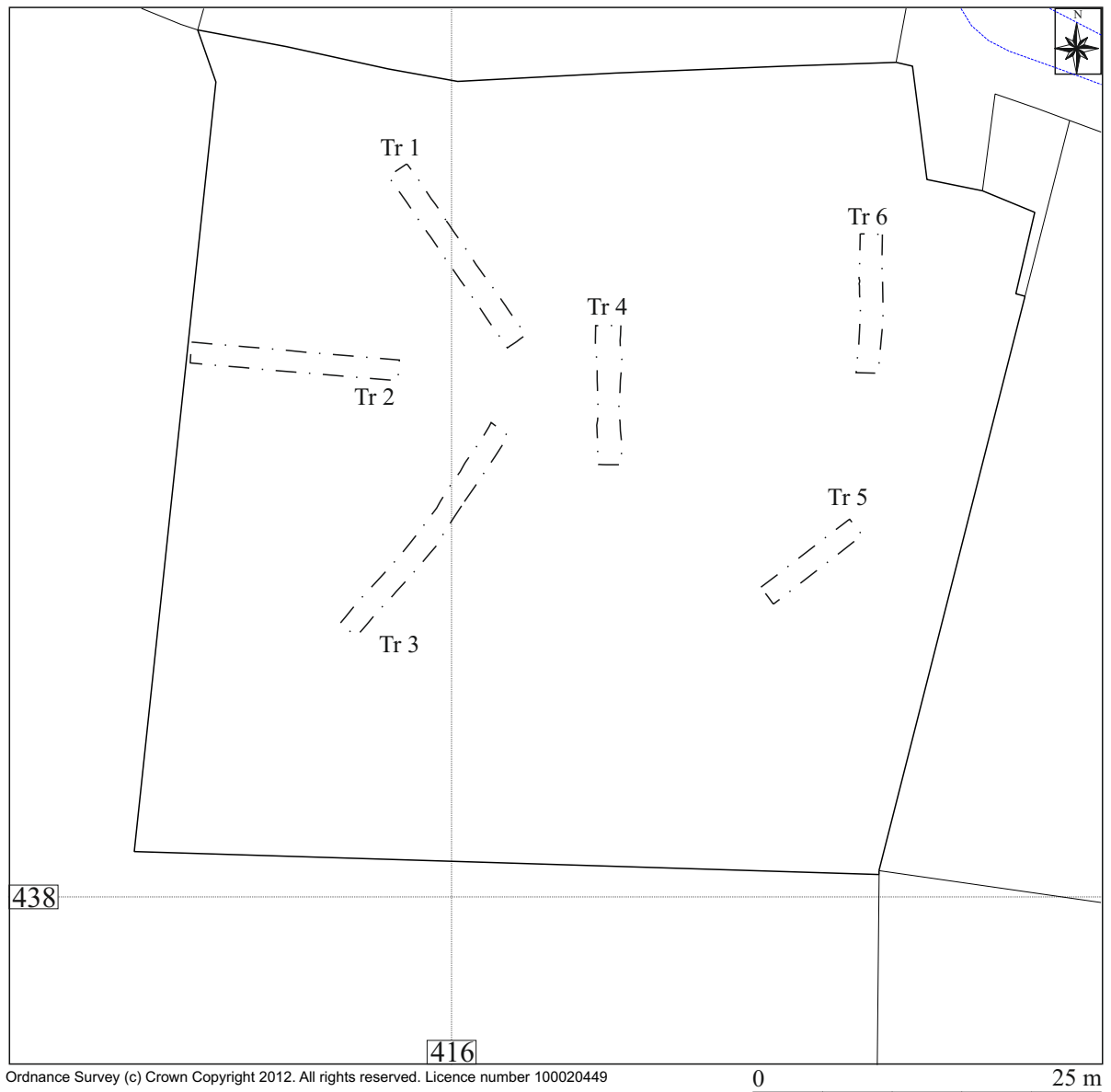
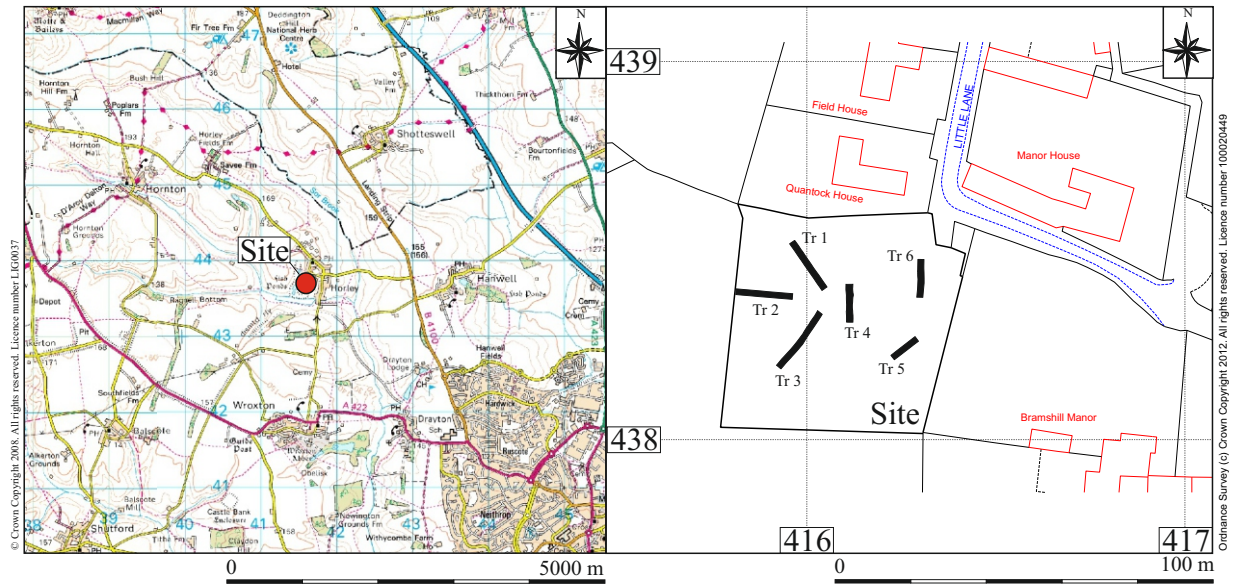


Figure 1. Site location

- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.

In particular the aim was to:

- To establish whether features relating to the known cropmark activity in the area extend onto this site

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2012). The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the *Institute for Archaeologists* (revised 1999) and the procedures laid down in MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

3.2 Methodology

The trenching sample required was achieved through the excavation of six trenches (1.8m wide).

The trenches were excavated by a 360° type tracked excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand where necessary prior to hand excavation of the potential archaeological deposits and features.

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. The trenches were levelled in relation to a spot height of 148.50m opposite Stone Croft house. The Planning Archaeologist Richard Oram for OCC monitored the work.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Excavation Results (Figure 1)

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

The excavation produced no archaeological features or finds and the stratigraphic sequence in each trench was very similar with natural clay at the base of the trench overlain by topsoil deposits. A summary of results is given in appendix 1 after the Bibliography.

4.1.1 Trench 1 (Plate 1)

This trench was 210m in length and excavated to varying depths of 0.41m (151.81m OD) at the south eastern end and 0.64m (151.57m OD) at the north western end. The earliest deposit encountered was the light brownish orange clay silt natural clay with rare stone

(1/03) grading into a slightly darker material with height (1/02). The latest deposit was *c.* 0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (1/01).

4.1.2 Trench 2

This trench was excavated to varying depths of 0.39m (151.70m OD) at the eastern end and 0.54m (150.76m OD) at the western end. The earliest deposit encountered was the light brownish orange clay silt natural clay with rare stone (2/03) grading into a slightly darker material with height (2/02). The latest deposit was *c.* 0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (2/01).

4.1.3 Trench 3

This trench was excavated to varying depths of 0.41m (151.45m OD) at the north-eastern end and 0.26m (150.65m OD) at the south-western end. The earliest deposit encountered was the light brownish orange clay silt natural clay with stone (3/03) grading into a slightly darker material with height (3/02). The latest deposit was *c.* 0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (3/01).

4.1.4 Trench 4

This trench was excavated to varying depths of 0.54m (151.89m OD) at the northern end and 0.26m (151.58m OD) at the southern end. The earliest deposit encountered was the light brownish orange clay silt natural clay with stone (4/03) grading into a slightly darker material with height (4/02). The latest deposit was *c.* 0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (4/01).

4.1.5 Trench 5

This trench was excavated to varying depths of 0.35m (151.10m OD) at the north eastern end and 0.42m (150.93m OD) at the south-western end. The earliest deposit encountered was the light brownish orange clay silt natural clay with stone (5/03) grading into a slightly darker material with height (5/02). The latest deposit was *c.* 0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (5/01).

4.1.6 Trench 6

This trench was excavated to varying depths of 0.36m (152.21m OD) at the northern end and 0.37m (151.80m OD) at the southern end. The earliest deposit encountered was the light brownish orange clay silt natural clay with stone (6/03) grading into a slightly darker material with height (6/02). The latest deposit was *c.* 0.20m thick dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (6/01).

4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The excavation of the trench took place in hospitable weather conditions, which turned better on day two.

5 FINDS

There were no finds recovered from the archaeological investigation.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation at Little Lane, Horley, Oxfordshire was useful in determining the negative character of the below ground remains. There were no archaeological features or finds discovered across the development site.

Many features originally considered on site as walls and pits, were re-interpreted during post-excavation analysis as natural outcropping of stone. The field was probably unsuitable for ploughing due to the stone within the geology, leaving high stone outcrops across the site just beneath the topsoil. It appears that an attempt at ploughing had been made as the occasional stone had been disturbed from the outcrops into the top of the natural clay material.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper Record

The project brief

Written Scheme of Investigation

The drawn records

The project report

The primary site records

The archive is currently maintained by John Moore Heritage Services but will be deposited with the County Museum Service under accession number OXCMS: 2012.81.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

Institute of Field Archaeologists. 1994. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation. Revised 1999*

John Moore Heritage Services 2002 *An Archaeological Watching Brief on Land East of Bramshill Manor, Horley, Oxfordshire*. JMHS Unpub Doc. 1230.

John Moore Heritage Services 2012 *An Archaeological Watching Brief on Land East of Bramshill Manor, Horley, Oxfordshire; Written Scheme of Investigation*. Unpub JMHS Doc. 2632.

APPENDIX 1; Summary of Trenches

Trench Number	Trench length	Topsoil depth (m)	Features	Finds	Heights (m) OD
1	20	0.20	NONE	NONE	151.87 151.57
2	20	0.20	NONE	NONE	151.70- 151.76
3	20	0.20	NONE	NONE	151.45- 151.65
4	10	0.20	NONE	NONE	151.89- 151.58
5	10	0.20	NONE	NONE	150.93- 151.10
6	10	0.20	NONE	NONE	151.80- 152.21

Plate 1; Trench 1; showing natural outcrop of stone

