

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

LUDGERSHALL FARM, LUDGERSHALL,

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

SP 66411 17342

On behalf of

Mr J. Dinsdale

SEPTEMBER 2006

REPORT FOR	Mr J Dinsdale 27 Old Gloucester Street London WC1N 3XX
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FIELDWORK	13 th February – 12 th September 2006
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Summary

A watching brief on this site was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services from 13th February – 12th September 2006. All ground disturbance work was monitored.

Archaeological deposits were limited; the only feature was an undated ditch. However, it possibly pre-dates the 17th century or later surface of the farmyard that was recorded in 2005.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site of Ludgershall Farm is located in the southeast of the village of Ludgershall at SP 66411 17342. The farm is currently unoccupied and the out buildings currently unused. The underlying geology is Oxford Clay and the site lies at approximately 75m OD. The property lies on a west-facing slope.

1.2 Planning Background

Planning permission had been granted for the redevelopment of the site of Ludgershall Farm. A condition had been placed upon this permission, due to the sites potential for archaeological remains, that an archaeological assessment and excavation be carried out. The Archaeological Officer of Buckinghamshire County Council recommended that the site should be monitored for archaeology after an initial investigation by trial trenching. This is in line with PPG 16 and Local Plan Policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site of proposed development lies within an area of considerable archaeological potential. The medieval landscape of Ludgershall is considered to be a national importance because of the exceptional survival of the village's open field system and of the important settlement earthworks with the village. These comprise a scheduled moated site (CAS0033), the site of a post-medieval mansion and fishponds (CAS2134) and areas of shrunken settlement earthworks (CAS2332 & 2366). To the north of Ludgershall Farm are more earthworks and a possible house platform (CAS2331).

Ludgershall is first recorded in the Domesday Book when it comprised two manors (Morris, 1976). There is documentary evidence for the second manor and possibly, a medieval hospital in the village (Page, 1927). The regionally important Brill/Boarstall pottery industry was also practised in Ludgershall. Recent work in the area to the south of Ludgershall Farm has produced quantities of 13th – 14th century pottery and evidence for two phases of ridge and furrow cultivation (JMHS, 2004).

An examination of the aerial photographs of the area show evidence for a hollow way at the rear of the plots going east and another running north to south towards Wotton

End. A strong linear feature running east to west is also visible to the north of the farm house. Ridge and furrow is easily recognisable in all the fields to the east of the buildings (British Gas, 1976 - 3362; Farley, 2000 - 523/17, 523/18 & 523/21). These areas of cultivation match the plots of the 1780 map.

A review of the local historic maps suggest that the medieval village had a green-based plan form with a church-manor core in its south-western corner and peasant tenements on both sides of a U-shaped linear green. A pre-1600 (1564-1586) rights of commons lawsuit map (BAS Maps 86 in HEHL) appears to confirm this linear structure. The Inclosure map of 1780 (IR/109.R) shows the linear feature noted on aerial photographs to the north of the farm to be a field boundary dividing plots 37 and 156. This map also shows a smaller farm house than present and the barn aligned north-south with a possible second barn to the east. These buildings are also visible on the first edition OS map of 1885. The 2" surveyors map from the early 19th century shows a densely occupied land running parallel with Solter's Lane. Ludgershall Farm lies at the junction of these two lanes.

The evaluation conducted on this site in 2005 located a 17th century or later farmyard surface, and some limited evidence for pottery production in the area between the 13th to 16th centuries (JMHS 2005).

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.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

In particular

- To establish the presence or absence of pottery production in the area.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In response to a *Brief* issued by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service a scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and agreed with the Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Services and the applicant. The work was carried out by JMHS and was to involve the monitoring of all ground work on the site.

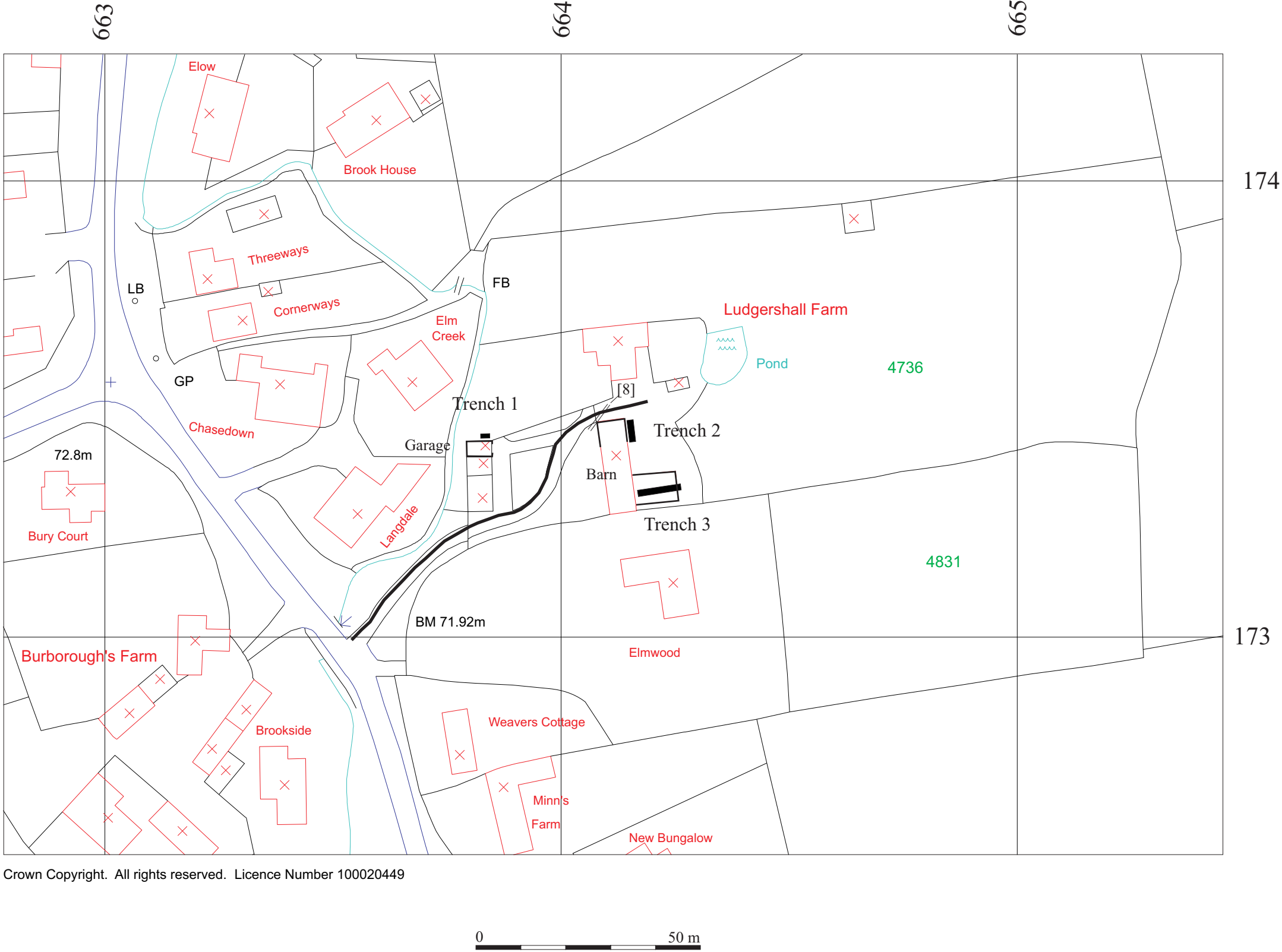


Figure 1. Site Location

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 (1994).

3.2 Methodology

All invasive ground work was monitored by an archaeologist and all resulting surfaces were then inspected for any significant archaeological 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.

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in [] indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

The lowest recorded deposit comprised natural Oxford Clay. This natural geology on the site and was seen to slope down slightly from a maximum height of 74.26m OD in the east to 71.52m OD in the east.

Towards the west of the site there was a topsoil of dark brown soil on average 0.05m deep covering the entire area (1/01), at an average height of 72.39m OD. Below this was a mid-brown sandy clay loam subsoil (1/02), which was on average 0.2m thick. This layer covered a secondary subsoil, 0.25m thick, of mid-brown silty clay (1/03). Below this was the natural Oxford Clay. These deposits were similar to those noted during the previous evaluation (JMHS 2005) and have been assigned the same number for simplicity.

The new garage in this area had its foundation dug on the foot print of an existing building. The modern concrete floor sat upon a make up layer of gravel sand and brick fragments, which in turn lay directly above the natural.

A service trench was cut along the length of the access track. This track way was constructed directly onto the brown silty clay (1/03). The lowest deposit of the track had obvious modern inclusions within its matrix, including tarmac.

In the east, foundations were dug for an extension to the barn. Here the natural mottled yellow-grey Oxford Clay was recorded at a height of 74.26m OD. This was covered with a compact deposit, 0.4m thick, of dark brown sandy clay (3/01). Again this deposit was similar to the one noted during the previous evaluation (JMHS 2005) and has been assigned the same number.

The barn was also extended north in the vicinity of the 2005 Trench 2. A modern lean-to in the area was demolished. The cobbles (2/04) recorded in 2005 did not

continue into this area. However the make up layer (2/06) of sticky grey-brown clay was noticed within the foundation trench. This deposit was directly above the natural yellow-grey clay (2/07). Here the make up layer was only 0.1m thick indicating that it had probably been truncated when the flooring of the lean-to was constructed. It contained some brick fragments and some large stones resting just on top of the natural.

In the north-east corner of the foundation trench for this extension a linear ditch [08] was noted (figure 2). It was also noted in the service trench just to the north. The ditch was U-shaped 1.4m wide at the top, 0.9m deep, at least 4m long and aligned south-west to north-east. It was filled with a brown-grey clay flecked with charcoal (09) with some small stone and brick fragments.

The ground reduction to the east of Trench 2 was not sufficient to expose or record the extant of the cobbles.

5 FINDS

No finds were recovered during the watching brief.

6 DISCUSSION

The ditch [08] located had a uniform homogeneous fill possible suggesting deliberate back-filling. The fill (09) contains brick fragments suggesting a later date. It is possible that it pre-dates the cobbled (2/04) farm yard and maybe back-filled before this surface was laid.

It is possible that this is a drainage ditch. It is certainly on a different alignment to that of the ridge and furrow field systems in the area (JMHS 2004).

No evidence for pottery production in the area was recorded; in fact there was a marked absence of finds from the deposits.

The extant of the cobbled farmyard that was located in Trench 2 in 2005 could not be defined. It did not appear to extend to the north and if it extended to the west it had been removed by later activity.

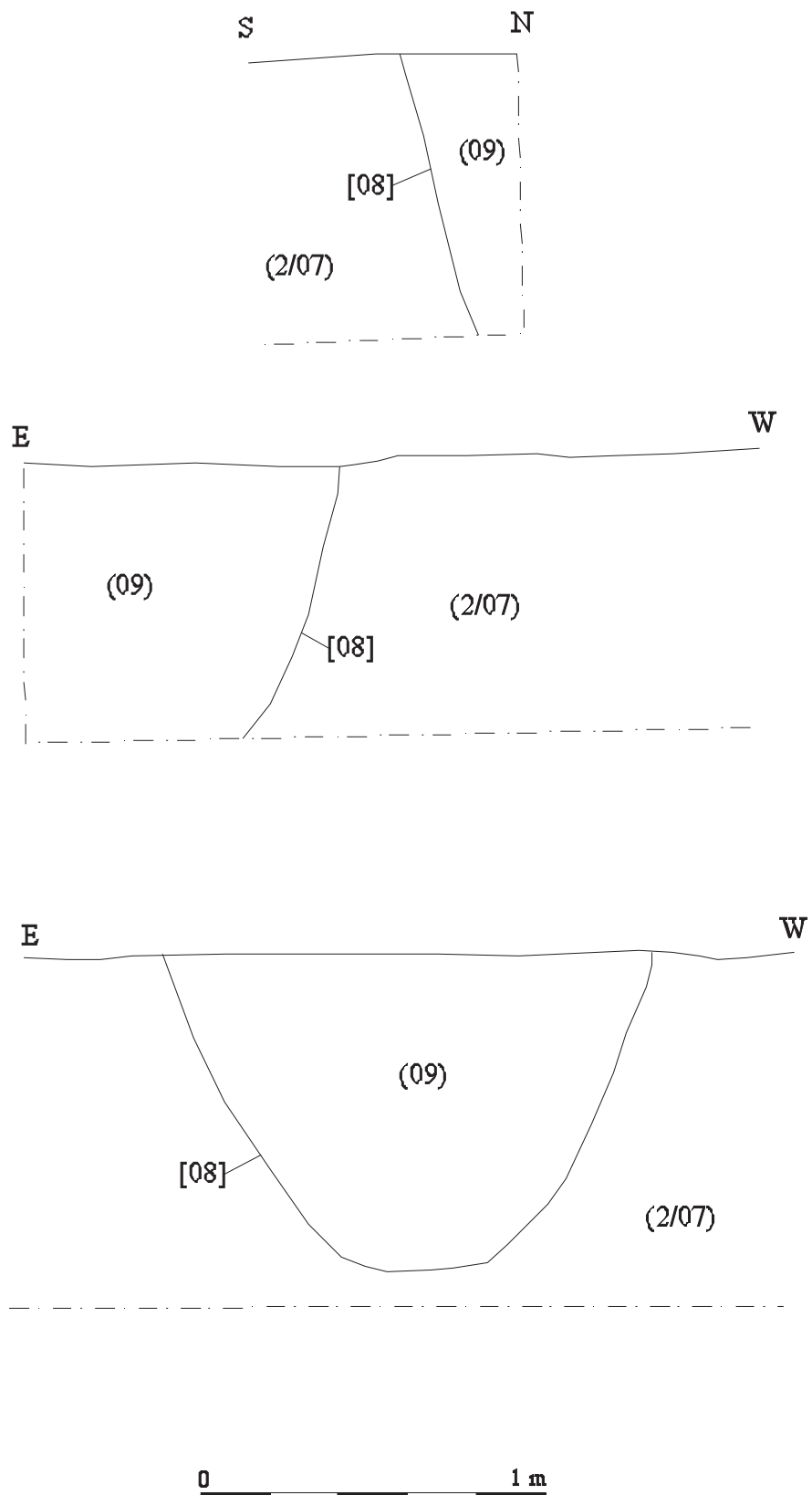


Figure 2. Sections of Ditch [08]

7 ARCHIVE

The archive consists of the following:

The project brief
Written scheme of investigation
The project report
The primary site records
The photographic and drawn records

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services. The archive will be transferred to:

Buckinghamshire County Museum, Technical Centre, Tring Road, Halton, Aylesbury HP22 5PJ.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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