

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

THE FORMER CENTURION PH,

LEACH ROAD, BICESTER,

OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SP57472267

On behalf of

Lakehouse Properties

JULY 2015

REPORT FOR	Lakehouse Properties Lakehouse Chilton Road Upton Oxfordshire OX11 9JL
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CONTENTS

	Page
SUMMARY	1
1. INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Site Location	1
1.2 Planning Background	1
1.3 Archaeological Background	1
2. AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	1
3. STRATEGY	3
3.1 Research Design	3
3.2 Methodology	3
4. RESULTS	3
5. FINDS	5
6. DISCUSSION	5
7. BIBLIOGRAPHY	5
 FIGURES AND PLATES	
Figure 1. Site Location	2
 Plate 1. Trench in northeastern extent of site, looking southeast.	4
Plate 2. Trench in southwestern extent of site, looking southeast.	5

SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at a development of nine houses situated on the junction of Leach Road and Ashdene Road, Bicester, Oxfordshire. This involved the monitoring of a service trench for drainage around the footprints of the new development. No archaeological features were identified in the trench.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site was located on the junction of Leach Road and Ashdene Road, Bicester (NGR SP57472267). The geology was Cornbrash and the site was in use previously as a public house with parking.

1.2 Planning Background

Cherwell District Council hds granted planning permission for demolition of the former Centurion Public House and erection of nine two storey dwellings and associated parking (14/00010/F). Due to the potential for the work to disturb archaeological deposits planning conditions were attached to the permission requiring the implementation of an archaeological watching brief. This was in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team (OHaNET) had advised on the scope of work required.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site is located in an area of archaeological potential to the northeast of an area of known Roman settlement. A number of Roman features were encountered 160m west of the proposal site in the late 1970s during the development of the current housing estate (County Historic Environment Record PRN 11204). Further aspects of this settlement were recorded 550m to the west (PRN 16294). Extensive Roman deposits have been excavated 350m to the south of the proposed development site during development of a housing estate along with Anglo Saxon remains (PRN 26347). The proposal site is also located 500m west of the line of the Roman road from Alcester to Towcester (PRN 8922)

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

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 relating to known Roman and Anglo Saxon remains in this part of Bicester.

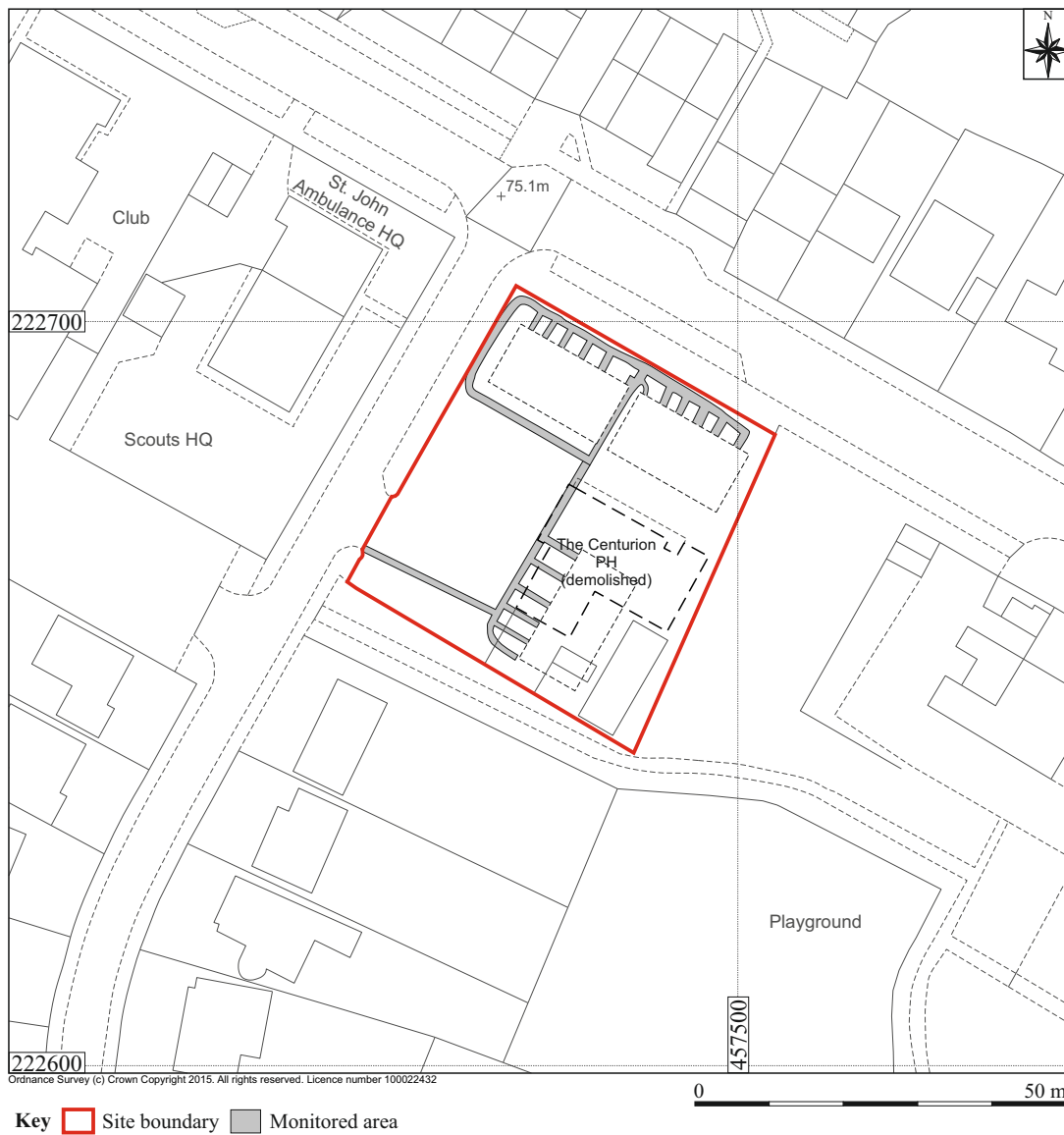
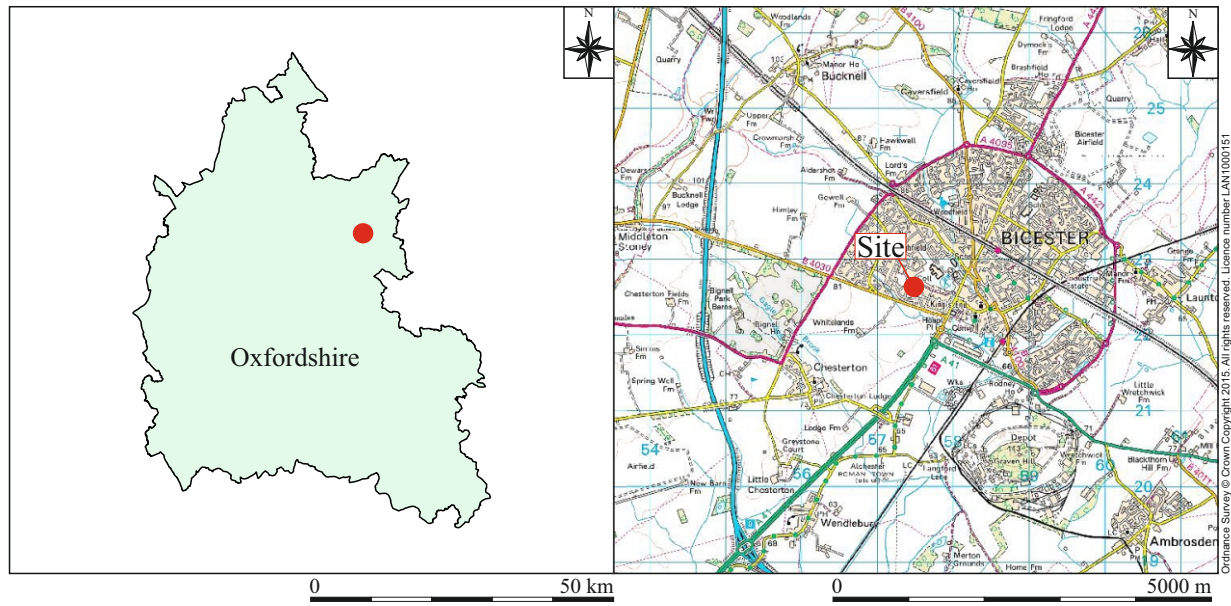


Figure 1: Site location

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Richard Oram, OHaNET.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was to be present on site during the course of any groundwork that had the potential to reveal or disturb archaeological remains. However JMHS was called out after the construction of the nine houses, so only the service trenches for the waste water pipes were monitored.

Any archaeological deposits and features revealed were to be cleaned by hand and recorded in plan before being excavated and recorded at an appropriate level. Any archaeological features or other remains i.e. concentrations of artefacts, were to be recorded by written, drawn and photographic record. Where archaeological features were exposed during any ground reduction but otherwise would remain unaffected they were to be recorded only by plan and written description. Where remains would be impacted on then they would be sample excavated. Any variation to this was to be agreed with OHaNET, on behalf of the local planning authority. All artefacts were to be collected and retained except for concentrations of building material where a representative sample would be kept.

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

4 RESULTS (Figure 1)

The excavation of a service trench for water pipes was monitored around the existing new build properties. The trench was 0.6m deep and 0.6m wide. Along the northeastern extent of the site the ground was undisturbed and consisted of a 0.2m thick brown silty clay subsoil overlying the natural limestone. Overlying the subsoil was a 0.1m thick layer of grey / brown topsoil, that was overlain by a 0.1m thick layer of modern rubble (see plate 1).

As the service trench headed southwest there was increasing levels of modern disturbance from the demolition of the former public house (see plate 2).

No archaeological features were present in the trench.



Plate 1. Trench in northeastern extent of site, looking southeast.



Plate 2. Trench in southwestern extent of site, looking southeast.

5 FINDS

No finds were recovered.

6 DISCUSSION

No archaeological remains were present in the trench.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2014. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.