

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

48 HIGH STREET, MILTON

OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SU 48582 92319

On behalf of

Mr D Crawley

JULY 2015

REPORT FOR Mr D Crawley
48 High Street
Milton
Abingdon
Oxfordshire
OX14 4EJ

PREPARED BY Andrej Čelovský

ILLUSTRATION BY Andrej Čelovský

EDITED BY John Moore

AUTHORISED BY John Moore

FIELDWORK 2nd June 2015

REPORT ISSUED 6th July 2015

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

Site Code: MIHS 15
JMHS Project No: 3263

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
4.1	Field Results	3
4.2	Reliability of Results	4
4	FINDS	6
6	DISCUSSION	6
7	BIBLIOGRAPHY	6
 FIGURES AND PLATES		
Figure 1	Site location	2
Figure 2	Plan and section	5
Plate 1	General overview of foundation trench, looking northeast	4

SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at 48 High Street in Milton, Oxfordshire. Groundwork consisted of the excavation of a foundation trench for an extension to the existing dwelling (Fig. 1). One undated feature and 20th century rubble soakaway were present within the monitored foundation trench. One undated linear feature was found.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site lies west of 48 High Street, Milton (SU 48582 92319) at an approximate height of 59m above OD. The underlying geology is Gault Formation mudstone bedrock with superficial deposits of sand and gravel. The site is in residential use.

1.2 Planning Background

The Vale of White Horse District Council granted planning permission for erection of two storey rear extension (P15/V0168/HH).

Due to the potential for the work to disturb archaeological deposits, the Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team (OHaNET) on behalf of the Local Planning Authority required an archaeological watching brief during groundworks. OHaNET prepared a *Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief* (OHaNET 2015).

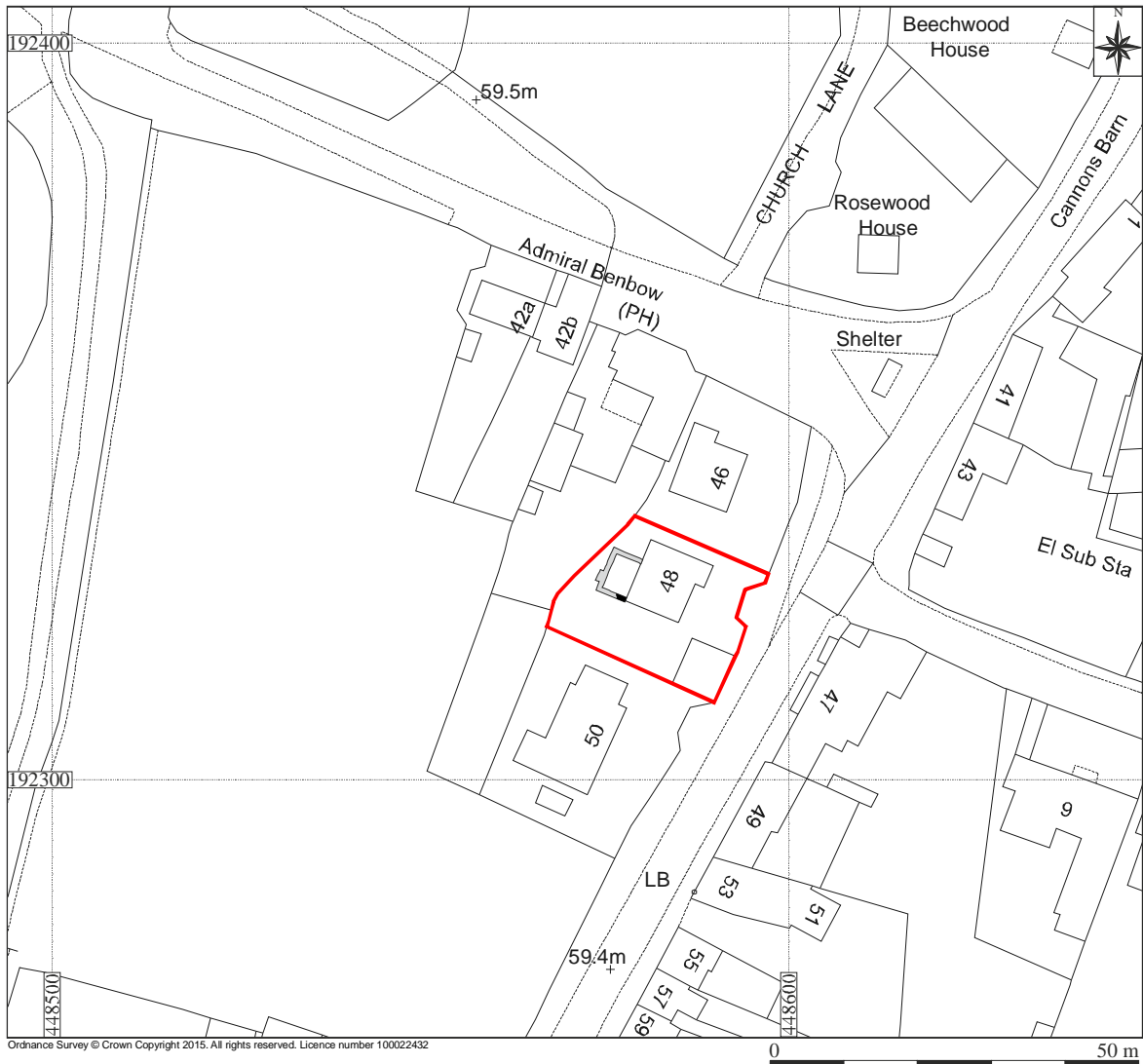
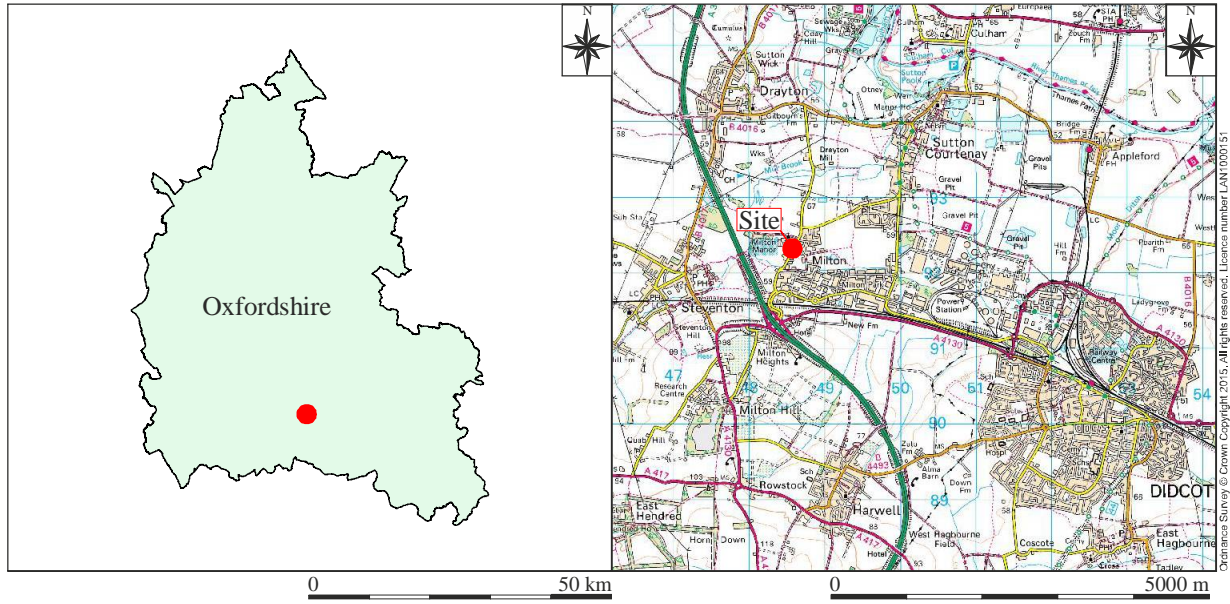
John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS) was commissioned to undertake this work, and a *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2015) was prepared to satisfy the requirements of the *Design Brief*. This *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) proposed the methodology by which the archaeological watching brief was to be carried out.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The proposed development site lies in an area of considerable archaeological potential in the vicinity of an Anglo-Saxon cemetery, which lies just to the north/north-east. An evaluation to the north-east of the site identified an Anglo-Saxon ditch and pits. Further evidence for Anglo-Saxon activity and settlement was found during a watching brief to the east, where sherds of Anglo-Saxon pottery, as well as an undated post-hole were recorded. To the south-east of the site, a further watching brief recorded a pit and linear features which are undated at present (JMHS 2015, OHaNET 2015, 1).

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) were:



Key  Site boundary  Monitored area  Archaeological features

Figure 1: Site location

- To make a record of any significant archaeological remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

In particular:

- To be aware of the possibility of finding Anglo Saxon remains relating to the findings made of that period in the vicinity.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

JMHS carried out an archaeological watching brief in accordance with the WSI (JMHS 2015). Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the WSI (Sections 3.1 – 3.2).

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014) and the principles of MoRPHE (Historic England 2015).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was present on site during excavation of a foundation trench for an extension to the existing dwelling. A three quarter tonne excavator fitted with a toothless 0.60m wide bucket was used to excavate the foundation trench.

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

4.1 Field Results (Figure 2)

All features and deposits were assigned individual context numbers, except of modern features. Context numbers with no brackets indicate feature cuts, numbers in round brackets () show feature fills or deposits of material and numbers in bold indicate any form of masonry.

The foundation trench was excavated in total length of 13.30m; it was 0.70m wide and reached a maximum depth 0.65m from the present ground surface (Fig. 2a; Pl. 1).

The lowest deposit recorded within foundation trench was 0.48m thick (as excavated) light yellowish brown sandy gravel (103), interpreted as natural deposit (Fig. 2b, c).

Cut into deposit (103) was a presumed linear feature 104. It was 1.50m wide with moderate concave sides, partially exposed in the southeast end of foundation trench

(Fig. 2a, b; Pl. 1). The single fill (105) of feature 104 was a 0.31m thick dark brownish grey sandy silt. No finds were recovered from the fill.

Overlying fill (105) was a 0.08 to 0.22m thick deposit of dark brown sandy silt with occasional small well-rounded stones, interpreted as a possible buried cultivation layer (Fig. 2b, c). Deposit (102) was cut by a 1960s rubble soakaway located at the north-northwest corner of foundation trench (Fig. 2a). The soakaway and deposit (102) were overlaid by 0.05m thick levelling layer (101), dark bluish grey fine sandy gravel (Fig. 2c). This deposit covered an area approximately 4.20×4m at the northwest half of the monitored area, and was associated with the construction of the existing dwelling in 1964. The final deposit was a 0.16m thick dark grey sandy loam (100), topsoil.

Originally the southeast part of monitored area was covered by a patio built of concrete slabs removed prior the excavation of foundation trench.



Plate 1: General overview of foundation trench, looking northeast

4.2 Reliability of Results

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The archaeological watching brief took place in good weather conditions with excellent light and visibility. Excellent cooperation from the ground workers and landowner ensured sufficient time to investigate and record the archaeological deposits to the appropriate standards.

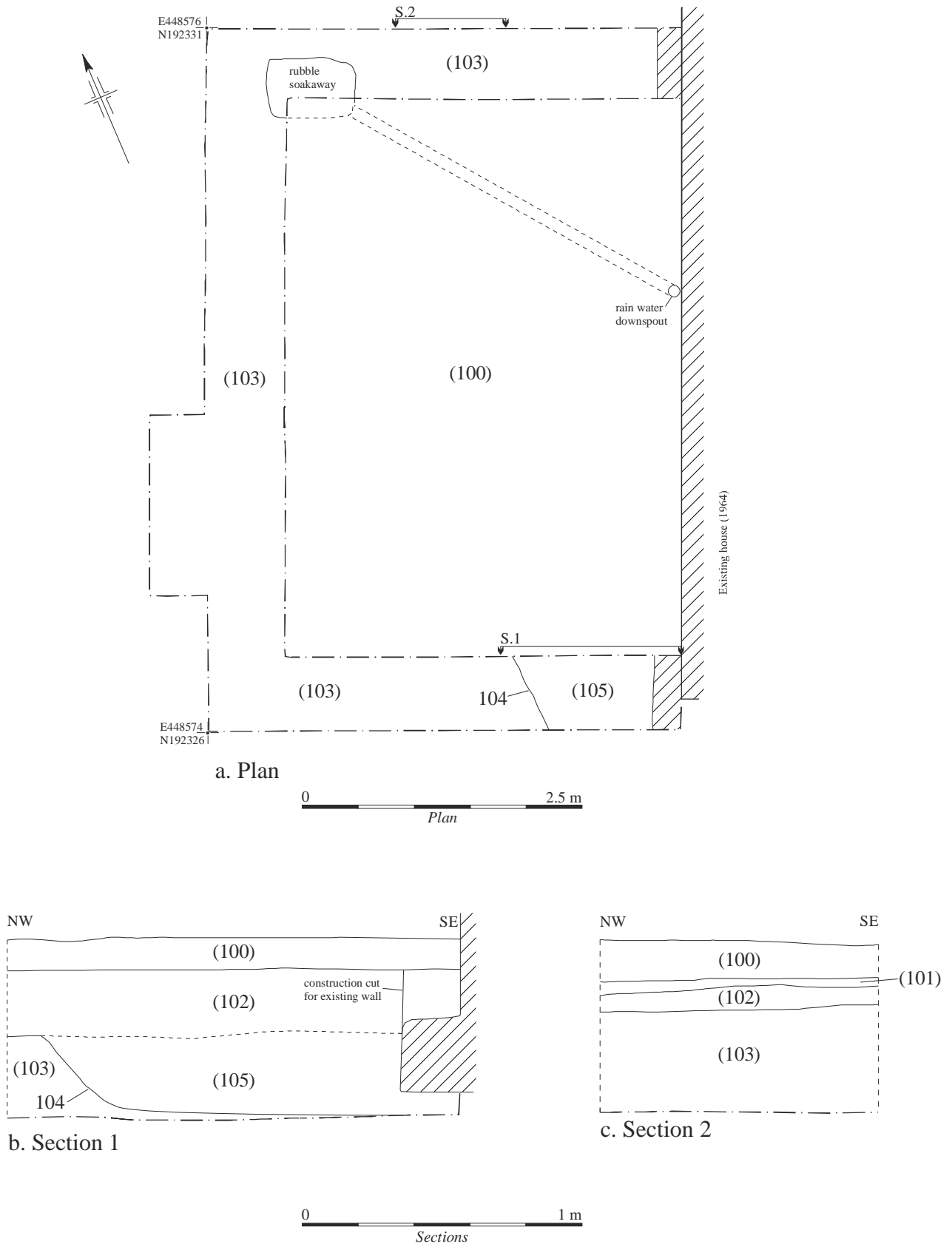


Figure 2: Plan and sections

5 FINDS

No archaeological finds were obtained during the fieldwork, apart from fragments of ceramic building material recovered from the 1960s rubble soakaway.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological field evaluation was successful and meets the aims of the investigations, which were laid out in the WSI.

No archaeological features or finds of significance, especially related to early medieval period were encountered during the fieldwork. Cut feature 104 stratigraphically seems to be earliest feature of uncertain date, truncated by possible post-medieval cultivation layer (102). The rest of the features (rubble soakaway) and deposits were clearly related to the construction of the existing house in 1964.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014). *Standard and Guidance: Archaeological Watching Brief*. Reading: CIfA.

Historic England (2015). *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*. London: HE.

John Moore Heritage Services (2015). *48 High Street, Oxfordshire. Archaeological Watching Brief. Written Scheme of Investigation*. Prepared by John Moore. Unpublished document: JMHS.

Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team (2015). *48 High Street, Milton. Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief*. Prepared by Joanne Robinson. Unpublished document: OHaNET.