

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT ORCHARD FARM TURKEYS, BANBURY ROAD,
BISHOPS TACHBROOK,
WARWICKSHIRE CV33 9QJ
(NGR SP 3135 5925).**

*On behalf of
Heart of England Farms*

**SITE CODE: BTBR 14
PROJECT CODE: 2928
PLANNING REF: W/13/1607**

APRIL 2015

REPORT FOR	Heart of England Farms c/o Stansgate Planning 9 The Courtyard Timothy's Bridge Road Stratford upon Avon CV37 9NP
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out a watching brief on behalf of Heart of England Farms at Orchard Farm, Bishops Tachbrook, Warwickshire, during topsoil stripping for a new agricultural building and access road. The work was carried out in single visit on the 20th April 2015. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the course of the watching brief.

1 INTRODUCTION

Site Location (Fig.1)

The site is centred on national grid reference SP 3135 5925 immediately east of Tollgate Farm, in the parish of Bishops Tachbrook. The geology is the junction of Wolston Sand and Gravel with Thrussington Member.

1.2 Planning Background

Planning permission has been granted by Warwick District Council for the erection of turkey rearing building and access road at Orchard Farm Turkeys, Banbury Road, Bishops Tachbrook, CV33 9QJ (ref. W/13/1607).

Due to the possible presence of archaeological features a condition was attached requiring that a geophysical survey should be carried out and an archaeological watching brief be maintained during the period of ground works. This is in line with the NPPF and Local Plan policies. In addition it is expected that further applications will be made in the future for similar development and as such a geophysical survey was undertaken over a wider area.

A Written Scheme of Investigation (JMHS, 2015) was submitted to Warwickshire County Council outlining the method by which the watching brief and geophysical survey would be carried out in order to preserve by record any archaeological remains of significance or aid the location of future developments.

1.3 Archaeological Background

A 1km search area around the site of the proposed development site uncovered some eight sites, two of which are duplicated. These allegedly date from the Mesolithic to the 18th century.

Archaeological investigation prior to the construction of Tollgate House recovered a Mesolithic or Neolithic flint (EWA9666). This was on land adjacent to the proposed development. Undated linear features and enclosures (MWA4778: SP 3121 5969) have been identified on the eastern edge of the field in which is being proposed for partial development. These features could be of a later prehistoric origin or Roman date. A possible Bronze Age barrow cemetery, a Scheduled Monument, (MWA6200: SP 3164 5931) has been

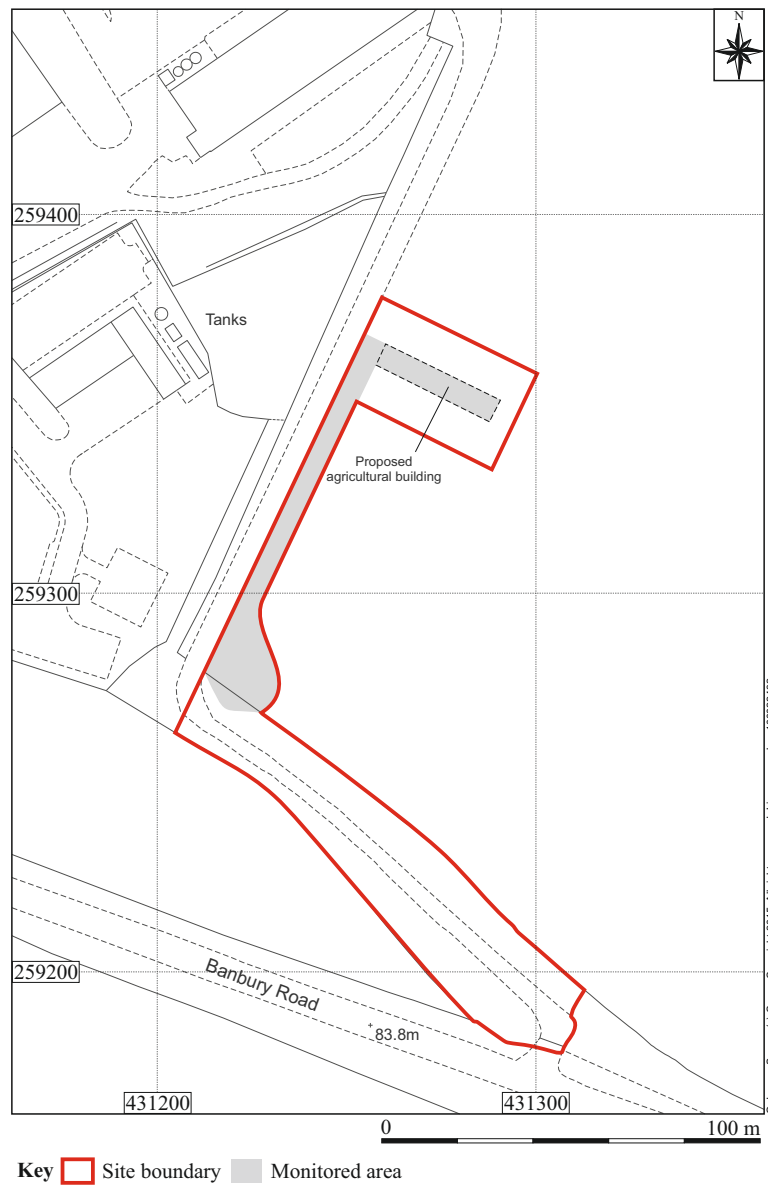
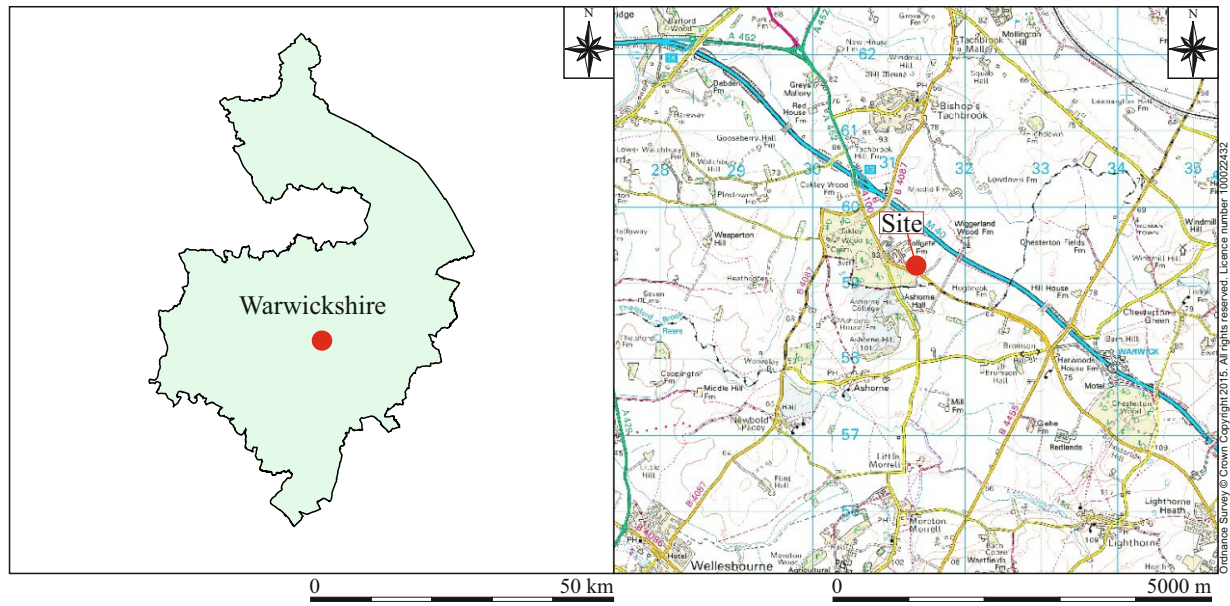


Figure 1: Site location

identified from cropmarks, however, elsewhere the site has been suggested as a World War II search light battery (MWA710: SP 3164 5931).

Substantial banks and ditches have been claimed as the location of an Iron Age hill-fort in Oakley Wood (MWA715: SP 3067 5928), elsewhere these features have been assumed to be medieval woodland boundary banks (MWA6201: SP 3067 5928). Major wood banks dated to c 1300 have been located at Oakley Wood (MWA13162: SP 3073 5944). Further smaller banks are known at Moreton Wood and Wiggerland Wood.

The estate of Tæcelesbroc is first recorded as an estate in 1033 (Gover, Mawer et al. 1936, 258-9). Tæcels is seen as a derivative of tæcan, which has an etymology of to show the way or direct the way. It is thought to indicate the use of the brook as a boundary between the diocese of Worcester or the Hwicce and Lichfield or Mercia. Oakley Wood is recorded from 1262 and Wiggerland Wood from c 1840.

In 1066 part of the parish had been held by Saint Chad's church, but by 1086 it was a 7 hide estate held by the Bishop of Chester (Morris 1976, 2.3). The manor at that time contained 11 villagers, a priest, 7 smallholders, and 2 mills. The other part of the parish some 8 hides less 1 virgate was held by Balwin in 1066 (Morris 1976, 16.58), and was held by Roger from the Count of Meulan. This manor had 5 villagers and 7 smallholders.

The bishop's manor remained with the see until in 1549 Richard Sampson, bishop of Coventry and Lichfield, sold it to Thomas Fisher (VCH 1949, 160-5).

The remaining features catalogued on the Historic Environment Record include features of an 18th century date or later. The Banbury to Warwick toll road was constructed c 1725-50 (MWA4774: SP 3309 5819), while the gardens at Ashorne Hill House at Ashorne (MWA8517: SP 30948 35374) are listed.

Cartographic information of the area commences in 1777 when there is a plan of what later became the Wiggerland Farm estate (WRO CR1908/204). Here the proposed development site is located in a triangular field called the Three Cornered Ground. The north end of the current field has been placed into a triangular shaped wood or coppice. The linear boundary on the west side of the field marks the edge of land held by Wiggerland Farm, and as such may be a relic line of earlier land divisions in the way it creates a boxed area in the landscape. The map of the parish dated c 1800 (WRO CR1886/M33) also shows the northern part of the field as forming a small wood or coppice. The Tithe Map of c. 1844 (WRO CR569/236) shows the proposal site as field as a triangular shaped piece of ground. Two further plans of the mid 19th centuries exist for Wiggerland Farm, one undated but possibly c 1850 (WRO CR1886/M198) and the other c. 1855 (WRO CR1886/M901A). The field of the proposed development site is numbered 556.

The remaining maps are Ordnance Survey maps of the 1: 2,500 series of which the first edition is dated 1887 (OS FE 39.11). Here the field is again

shown as an open triangular piece of ground. The same is the case for the second edition dated 1905 (OS SE 39.11), and the third edition of 1925 (OS TE 39.11).

The archaeological investigation of the adjacent property at Tollgate House (EWA9666) identified medieval ridge and furrow and two pits that were on the map of c. 1800, which were backfilled in the 20th century (WMFS 2008).

In March 2013 a detailed gradiometry survey was conducted over 2.5 hectares at the site (Stratascan 2013). The survey did not identify any anomalies characterised as being either of a probable or possible archaeological origin. The results did show areas of magnetic disturbance, strong magnetic debris and a number of spikes which are all of modern origin, caused by ferrous and other metallic objects. A large area of natural magnetic variation caused by underlying geology or pedology was present in the southern half of the survey area.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims as laid out in the WSI were 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 potential features relating to the prehistoric to medieval periods and any later activity in the area. In addition the results would aid the location and methodology for any future applications.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

An archaeologist was to be present on site during the course of all groundwork associated with the development that could potentially impact archaeological remains: including surface stripping, excavation for new foundations and services and test pits.

Archaeological features or other remains i.e. concentrations of artefacts, were to be recorded by written, drawn and photographic record. All artefacts were to be collected and retained except for concentrations of building material, post medieval and later ceramics where a representative sample was to be kept.

3.2 Methodology

For the approved new turkey rearing building and new access road, an archaeologist was present on site to control any groundwork that had the potential to reveal or disturb archaeological remains. This included the topsoil strip for the new agricultural building and new access road.

The watching brief was carried out by an experienced archaeological Project Officer under the overall direction of J Moore MifA.

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

4 RESULTS

The geological horizon (1) was observed at a depth of c. 0.4m and consisted of mottled, mid brown and light grey brown silty sand with 10% rounded pebbles. Occasional patches of mid reddish brown clay were also observed.

Overlying the geological horizon (1) was up to 0.4m of agricultural soils (2), consisting of moderately compact mid grey sandy silt. Towards the southern extent of the access road modern deposits and disturbance associated with the current access road were identified; corresponding to the area of high magnetic disturbance identified in the geophysical survey.



Location of turkey rearing shed (view to SE).

5 FINDS

No finds of any date were observed during the course of the watching brief.

6 DISCUSSION

No significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the watching brief. The conditions were dry and the visibility adequate.

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