

**JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**CASTLE DENE, CASTLE STREET,**

**DEDDINGTON, OXFORDSHIRE**

**SP 4695 3169**

*On behalf of*

*Mr R C Spencer*

**February 2005**

**REPORT FOR**

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# CONTENTS

|                                    | <b>Page</b> |
|------------------------------------|-------------|
| <b><i>SUMMARY</i></b>              | <b>1</b>    |
| <b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>              | <b>1</b>    |
| 1.1 Site Location                  |             |
| 1.2 Planning Background            |             |
| 1.3 Archaeological Background      |             |
| <b>2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION</b> | <b>3</b>    |
| <b>3 STRATEGY</b>                  | <b>3</b>    |
| 3.1 Research Design                |             |
| 3.2 Methodology                    |             |
| <b>4 RESULTS</b>                   | <b>3</b>    |
| <b>5 FINDS</b>                     | <b>4</b>    |
| <b>6 DISCUSSION</b>                | <b>4</b>    |
| <b>7 BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>              | <b>5</b>    |
| <br>                               |             |
| Figure 1      Site Location        | <b>2</b>    |
| Figure 2      Detailed Plan        | <b>4</b>    |

## **Summary**

*A watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services during the excavation for a new indoor swimming pool. Nothing of significance was found.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The development site is located on the north side of Castle Street, in the north eastern part of Deddington (NGR SP 4695 3169). The underlying geology is Marlstone and the site lies at c. 123m OD. The area of the development lay in a yard to the rear of buildings fronting Castle Street.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

Cherwell District Council granted planning permission for internal alterations to incorporate Deeley's Barn and an extension to form an indoor swimming pool. Due to the potential presence of below ground archaeological deposits a condition was attached to the planning consent that required the implementation of an archaeological watching brief during the course of the groundworks in order to preserve by record any archaeological remains of significance. Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS), on behalf on Cherwell District Council, provided a *Brief* for the work. John Moore Heritage Services undertook the work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by OCAS.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The development site lay within the historic core of Deddington. The name Deddington is probably Saxon in origin and is first mentioned in 950 AD in the *Codex Diplomaticus Aevi Saxonici* ed. J M Kemble 1839-48. The town retains its medieval street plan, which can be divided into two main components; the irregular pattern of the original settlement in the streets to the south and east of the Market place, and New Street, a planned extension, which had been laid out by the early 13<sup>th</sup> century along the pre-existing Oxford-Banbury Road (Rodwell 1974).

The site lies 70m to the north of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Deddington Castle (SM21807), which is an 11<sup>th</sup> century motte and bailey castle that may have been built on the orders of Bishop Odo of Bayeux. The castle was abandoned in the fourteenth century (English Heritage information board). Less than 100m to the north of the site is an area of earthworks relating to the Shrunken Medieval Village of Deddington. The earthworks include the remains of a holloway, which is confluent with Castle Street to the south.

It was therefore considered possible that archaeological deposits relating to the earlier Saxon settlement at Deddington, the later Norman Castle, and/or to the shrunken medieval settlement could have been disturbed during groundworks.

Deeley's Barn was converted into residential use in 1982.

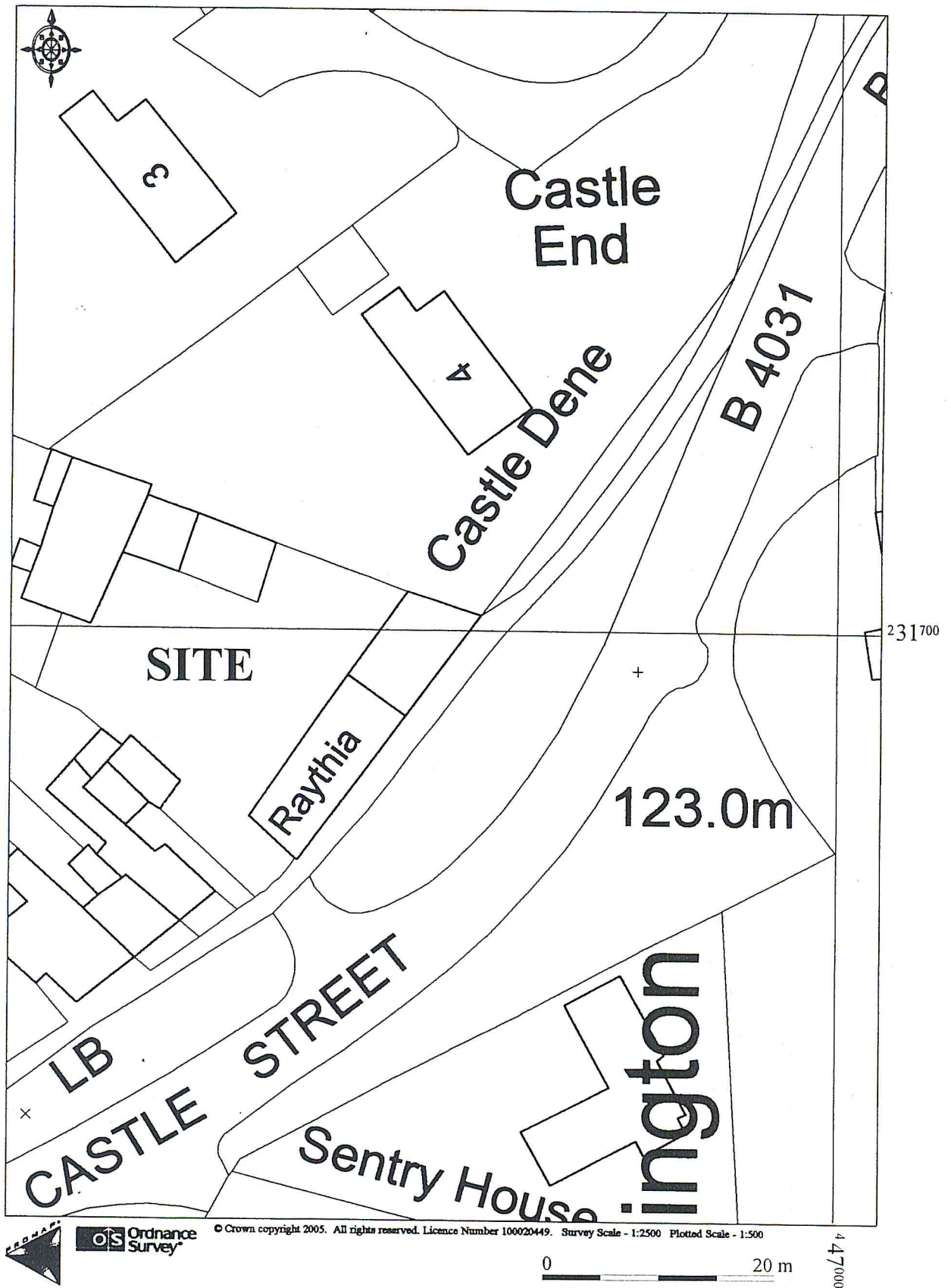


Figure 1. Site location.

## **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 and date any Saxon, medieval and post-medieval settlement on the site.
- To make public the results of the investigations.

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services, on behalf of the local planning authority.

### **3.2 Methodology**

An archaeologist monitored the removal of material down to the top of natural deposits. A JCB equipped with a 5 foot wide ditching bucket carried out the excavation.

The area of reduction for the pool and associated pool room was partly within the former barn at the southern end.

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.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994).

## **4 RESULTS**

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

Natural deposits associated with the Marlstone Rock Bed were the lowest deposit seen. These comprised brown-orange clay with large patches of small fractured Marlstone Rock and small lenses of blue-grey clay (03). Overlying these was a



Figure 2. Detailed plan

250mm thick deposit of brown-orange clay, which was slightly dirty in appearance in places (02). This last was only present external to the former barn. The uppermost deposit, overlying 02 externally and directly overlying natural deposits within the former barn, was a layer of made ground (01). This included a make-up layer for a former surface in the barn building and brown-orange slightly silty clay with rubble outside of the barn. This was *c.* 200mm thick and where it formed the upper deposit in a heavily disturbed yard it contained late post-medieval and recent finds including bricks, breeze blocks, and bottles.

## 5 FINDS

The only finds present were late post-medieval and recent rubbish in the form of bricks, breeze blocks and bottles.

## 6 DISCUSSION

Deposit 02 is considered to be a cultivation deposit to the rear of the former barn. If there was medieval settlement along this part of Castle Street it was fronting the road

and any associated rubbish pits or 'backyard' activity was further to the rear of the site.

## 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*

Rodwell K. ed. *Historic Towns in Oxfordshire. A Survey of the New County* 1974