

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

LAND EAST OF NO 1 LOBB HILL, LONDON ROAD,

MILTON COMMON, OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SP 65985 03120

*On behalf of
Mr N Nixey*

SEPTEMBER 2015

REPORT FOR Mr N Nixey
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SUMMARY

This document represents an investigation of the potential for archaeological remains on land at the south side of London Road, east of No 1 Lobb Hill (SP6598503120 centred), Oxfordshire . The evaluation consisted of two trenches; Trench 1 was 20m long and had one NW – SE ditch and Trench 2 was devoid of any archaeological features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located on the south side of London Road, east of No 1 Lobb Hill (SP6598503120 centred). The site lies between 97.8m OD. The underlying geology is Gault Formation (BGS, Sheet 237), and is currently agricultural land.

1.2 Planning Background

Planning consent was refused by South Oxfordshire District Council for erection of 4-bed dwelling and garden store P14/S2602/FUL. This was granted on appeal (APP/Q3115/W/14/3001995). A condition (6) was attached:

Prior to any demolition and the commencement of the development on site, a professional archaeological organisation first approved by the Local Planning Authority in writing, shall prepare an Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation, relating to the application site area, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Due to the potential presence of archaeological features a pre-determination field evaluation has been requested by Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team (OHaNET) as a first stage of a potentially larger programme of archaeological work. This was in line with PPG 16 (the planning policy current at the time) and other Local Planning policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The proposed development site lies in an area of considerable archaeological potential, immediately south of a complex of cropmarks of undated ditches and enclosures. Very little is known about the exact nature and extent of these features, as such it is possible that they continue into the current proposal site.

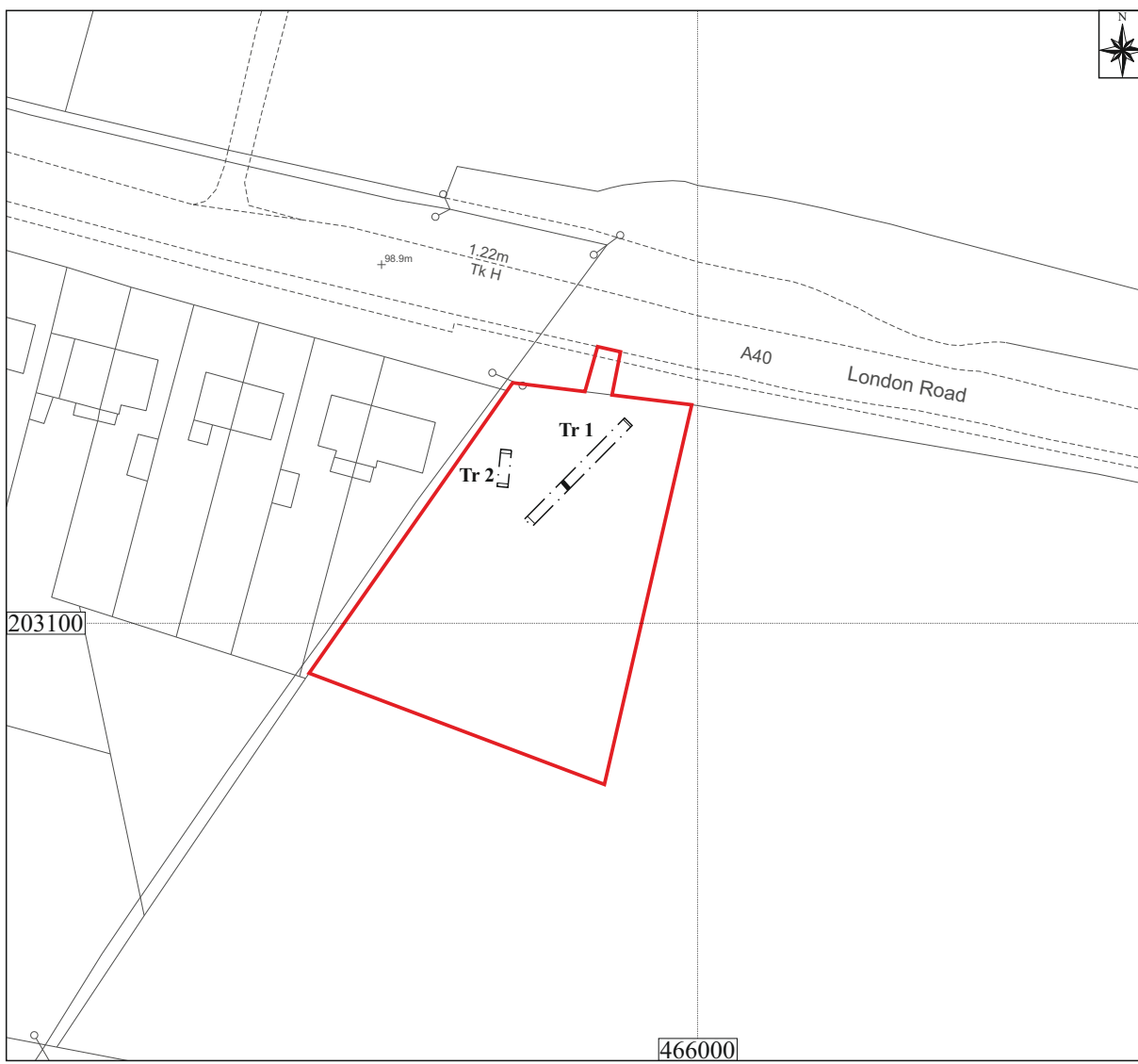
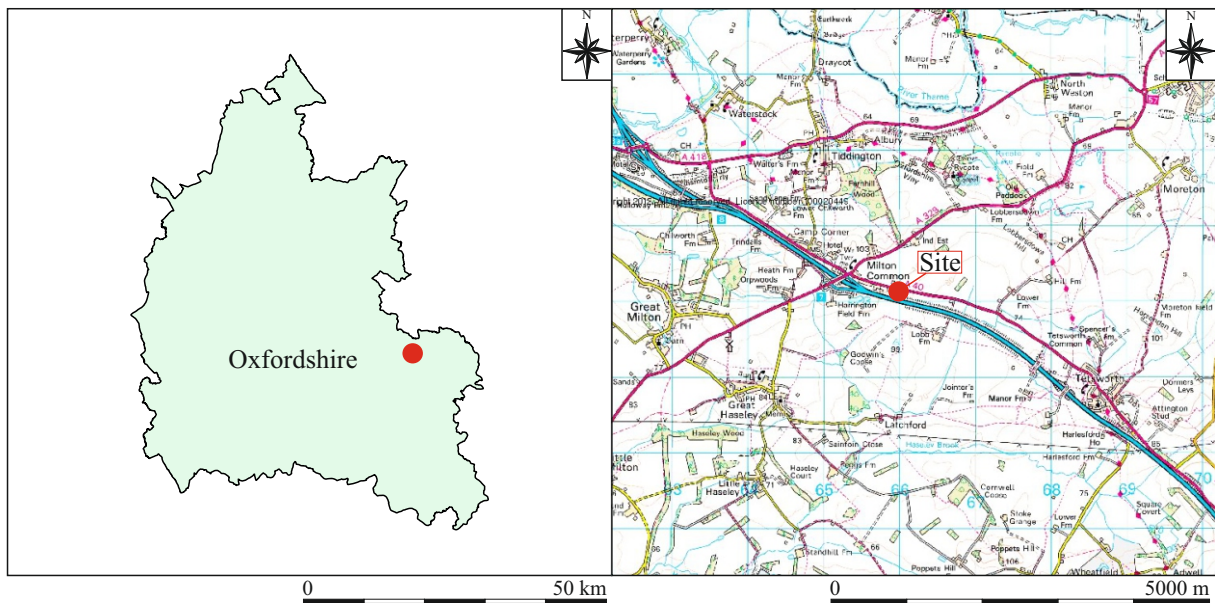
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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.

In particular:

- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits
- To establish if features related to the cropmark site to the north continue into the proposal site.



Key Site boundary Evaluation trenches Archaeological features

465900 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 OHaNET the archaeological advisors to South Oxford District Council.

3.2 Methodology

One evaluation trench 20m long by 1.5m wide and one evaluation trench 5m long by 1.5m wide were excavated across the proposed site of the development. They both had slightly sloping ends to the trenches.

Excavation was by a 7 tonne excavator equipped with a ditching bucket. Mechanical excavation was taken down to the uppermost archaeological horizon or geological horizon under direct archaeological supervision. The machine excavation was used only for the removal of non-archaeologically significant material.

During the trial trenching sufficient deposits and features were sampled by hand excavation to achieve the objectives. For discrete features such as pits and postholes this involved half-sectioning a representative sample. Linear features were sectioned. Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately with, during backfilling, soils returned in reverse order to that excavated. The surface was compacted by the excavator to ground surface level.

Site procedures carried out followed Cifa guidelines. The resulting surfaces were cleaned where appropriate. All surfaces and excavated spoil were scanned with a metal detector.

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

4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

4.1 Trench 1

The trench was orientated northeast – southwest, 20m long and 1.5m wide and 0.34m deep. It contained one linear ditch cut into the natural clay (1/02). Overlying this was a 0.34m thick layer of dark grey silty clay topsoil / ploughsoil (1/01).

Linear ditch 1/03 was orientated northwest – southeast, 0.7m wide and 0.34m deep with moderately sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled by an orange / brown silty clay (1/04), and contained one sherd of Late Iron Age / Early Roman pottery.

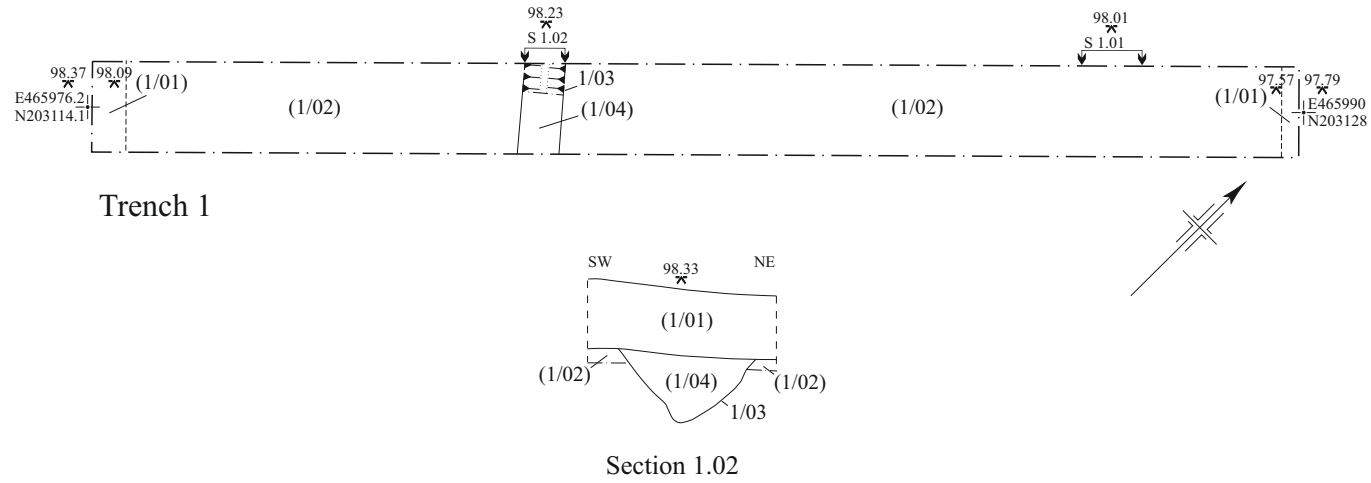
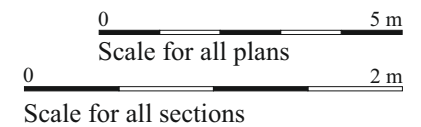


Figure 2: Trench 1 Plan and section



4.2 Trench 2

The trench was orientated north – south, 5m long, 1.5m wide and 0.3m deep. It was devoid of any archaeological features. One modern field drain was noted in the northern extent of the trench orientated northwest – southeast. That cut into the natural clay (2/02). Overlying this was a 0.3m thick layer of dark grey silty clay topsoil / ploughsoil (2/01).

4.3 Reliability of results

The evaluation was undertaken on a dry clear day allowing for all relevant surfaces to be archaeologically monitored.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery by Jane Timby

The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of a single bodysherd from the fill of a ditch (1/04). The sherd is from a handmade closed vessel (jar) and has post-depositional brown iron-stained surfaces. The vessel wall thickness is 8-10 mm. The dark grey paste contains a common frequency of sub-angular black grog up to 1 mm and sparse calcareous inclusions of less than 1 mm in size. The nature of the fabric would suggest it is likely to date to the later Iron Age or early Roman period.

6 DISCUSSION

Only one NW – SE linear ditch 1/03, was present and contained one sherd of Late Iron Age / Early Roman pottery. This could indicate that some of the complex of cropmark features identified immediately north of the field could extend into the development area.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief
Written scheme of investigation
The project report
The primary site record

Physical record

Finds

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Oxfordshire Museums Service with the accession number OXCMS: 2015.161.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute of Field Archaeologists, 2014 Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations

