

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**PRIORS COURT, CHURCH STREET,
WEST HANNEY, OXFORDSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

**NGR
SU40439273**

*On behalf of
J, A and D Cottrell*

APRIL 2015

REPORT FOR J, A and D Cottrell
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REPORT ISSUED 27th April 2015

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Site Code: WHCS 15

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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at Priors Court, Church Street, West Hanney, Oxfordshire (NGR SU40439273). The only identified feature was a shallow furrow identified in section.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located to the south of Church Street between Manor Farm and Deans Farm (NGR SU40439273). The underlying geology is Amptill Clay. No superficial layers are recorded for the site but Northmoor Sand and Gravel Member is recorded within the village and in fields surrounding the site (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>. Accessed 22/04/2015).

1.2 Planning Background

Planning permission has been granted by the Vale of White Horse District Council for erection of six dwellings (P15/V0039/FUL). Due to the potential disturbance of below ground archaeological features a programme of archaeological work was required. A condition was attached to the permission requiring the submission and approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation and condition requiring an evaluation and mitigation of the proposed development. This is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

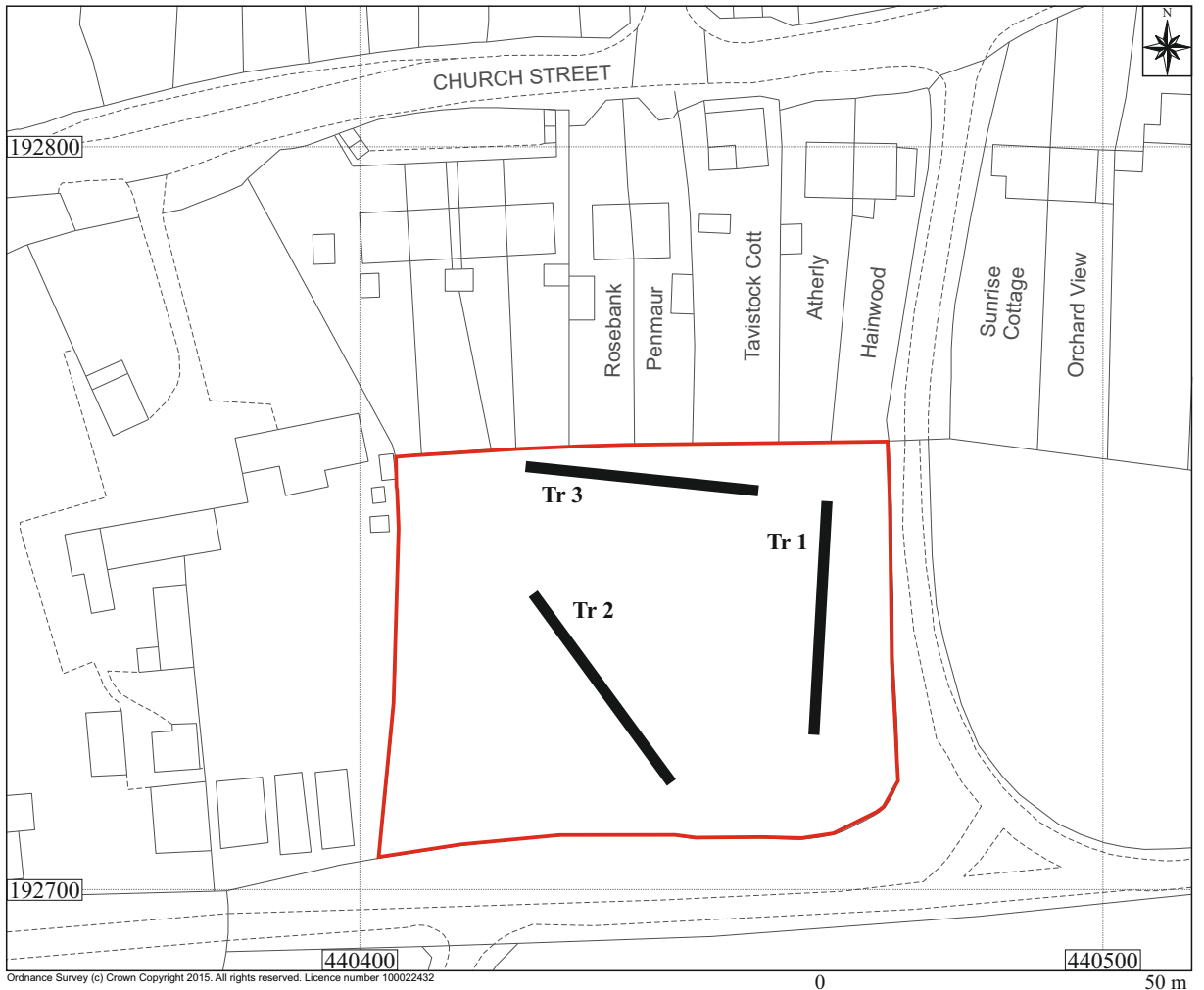
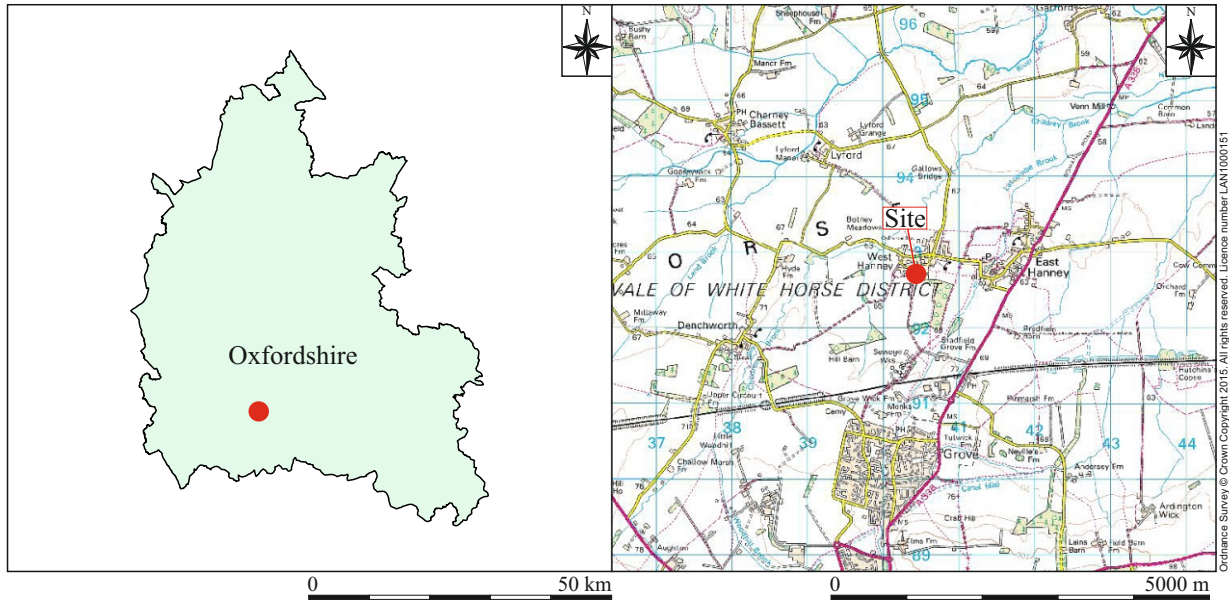
1.3 Archaeological Background *(by Stephen Yeates)*

The proposed development lies within the historic core of West Hanney and, based on early OS mapping, has remained undeveloped. It lies to the west of the site of Prior's Court, a manor belonging to the priory of Newton Longville, located at Manor Farm. Very little is known about the manor aside from the fact that it remained in ownership of the priory until its confiscation during the reign of Henry V, after which it became the property of the crown and was later granted to New College, Oxford. The site is south-west of St James Church, which retains elements dating to the mid-12th century. Due to its proximity to some of the earliest settlement features of West Hanney, it was considered possible that elements relating to the manor, church and related structures could be present.

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.



Key Site boundary Evaluation trenches

Figure 1: Site location

- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.

And in particular

- To establish if features relating to the medieval settlement of West Hanney are present.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation (JMHS. 2015) agreed with the Oxfordshire Archaeological Service archaeological advisors to the Vale of White Horse District Council. 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 and possible.

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

3.2 Methodology

A five ton excavator was used to excavate three 30m long by 1.6m wide evaluation trenches at the proposed site.

The trenches were to be excavated down to the top of the archaeology or to the top of the natural if no archaeology was present.

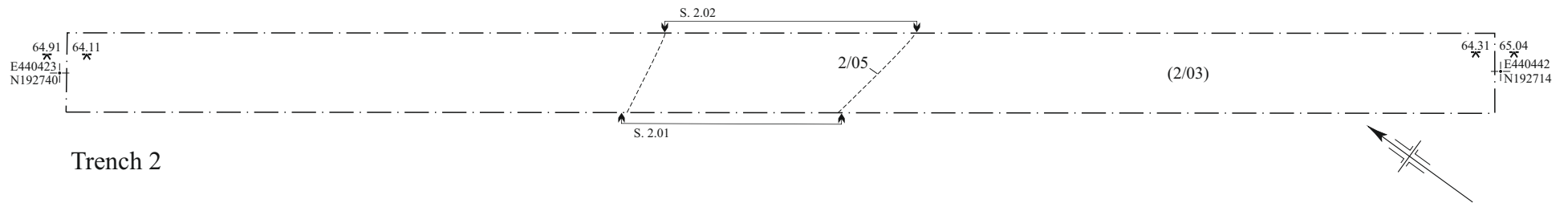
Any archaeological deposits and features revealed were to be cleaned by hand and recorded in plan before being excavated and recorded at an appropriate level. Any archaeological features or other remains i.e. concentrations of artefacts, were to be recorded by written, drawn and photographic record.

All deposits were allocated a unique context number which referred to the trench number followed by the context number *e.g.* (1/02). Cut features were allocated section numbers without brackets.

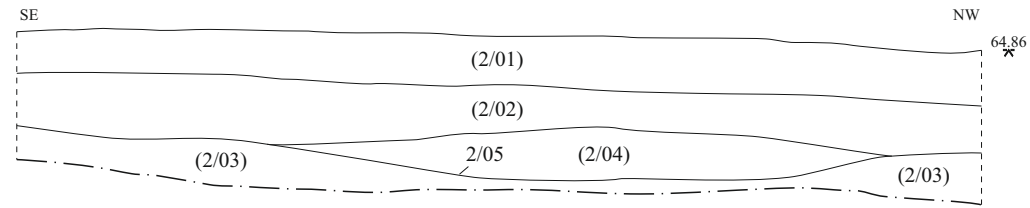
4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

4.1 Trench 1

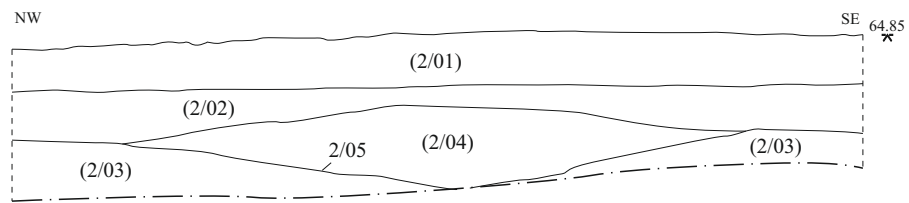
The lowest layer in Trench 1 was a firm light brown and light grey, sand and gravel with frequent flint inclusions and moderate clay content, (1/03). This layer was



Trench 2



Section 2.01



Section 2.02

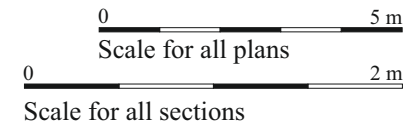


Figure 2: Trench 2 plan and sections

identified as a natural superficial layer, and above this was a 0.22m thick, compact layer of mixed mid brown, loamy sand and gravel (1/02). This was identified as a subsoil layer and deposited above this was a 0.28m thick layer of dark brown topsoil. The topsoil ranged in texture from loamy sand to sandy loam and had a very occasional inclusion of small stone.

4.2 Trench 2

This stratigraphy was uniform across the site. In Trench 2 the lowest natural gravel layer, (2/03) appeared in section to be cut by a furrow, 2/05 which was running east west across the site (Fig. 2 plan; S2.01 & S2.02). The furrow was 3.7m wide and greater than 1.7m in length and had a depth of 0.45m. The furrow was filled by a light brown sandy silt loam with occasional gravel (2/04). Deposited above this was a 0.24m thick layer of mixed mid brown, loamy sand and gravel subsoil (2/02) and above this a 0.24m thick layer of dark brown, loamy sand topsoil (2/01).

4.3 Trench 3

The lowest layer in Trench 3 was a firm, light brown and grey sandy gravel (3/03). Deposited above this was a 0.15m thick layer of loamy sand and gravel (3/02) and above this a 0.25m thick layer of dark brown, loamy sand topsoil (3/01)

5 FINDS

Two fragments of bone were recovered from the topsoil but were not retained. No other finds were recovered from the site.

6 DISCUSSION

No archaeological features were identified during the evaluation. A furrow like feature was identified in both sections of Trench 2 and other furrows were evident outside the trench at ground level. Two fragments of bone were recovered from the topsoil but no other artefacts were recovered.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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