JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

# AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

# AT

# CLACK'S FARM, CLACK'S LANE,

# CROWMARSH GIFFORD, OXFORDSHIRE

**(NGR SU 63797 89820)**

***On behalf of***

***BK Grain Handling Engineers***

**JANUARY 2016**

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| **REPORT FOR** | BK Grain Handling Engineers,<br>Littlecote Road,<br>Froxfield,<br>Nr Marlborough,<br>Wiltshire |
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## FIGURES AND PLATES

***Summary***

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation within the farmyard of Clack's Farm, Clack's Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford (NGR SU 63797 89820 centred). The evaluation consisted of two trenches; Trench 1 contained a small prehistoric pit cut into a treehole and Trench 2 was devoid of any archaeological features.*

# 1 INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located within the farmyard of Clack's Farm, Clack's Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford (NGR SU 63797 89820 centred). The site lies at approximately 95m OD. The underlying geology is the Lower Chalk.

## 1.2 Planning Background

An application has been submitted to South Oxfordshire District Council for the erection of a 26.5m wide x 57.8m long steel portal framed building for the purpose of storing Grain and Farm machinery. The proposal also includes a concrete apron weighbridge and the relocation of existing silos. The Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team (OHaNET) has recommended that should planning permission be granted a programme of archaeological work should be undertaken. The applicant wishes to carry out an evaluation stage prior to determination. This was in line with PPG 16 (the planning policy current at the time) and other Local Planning policies.

## 1.3 Archaeological Background

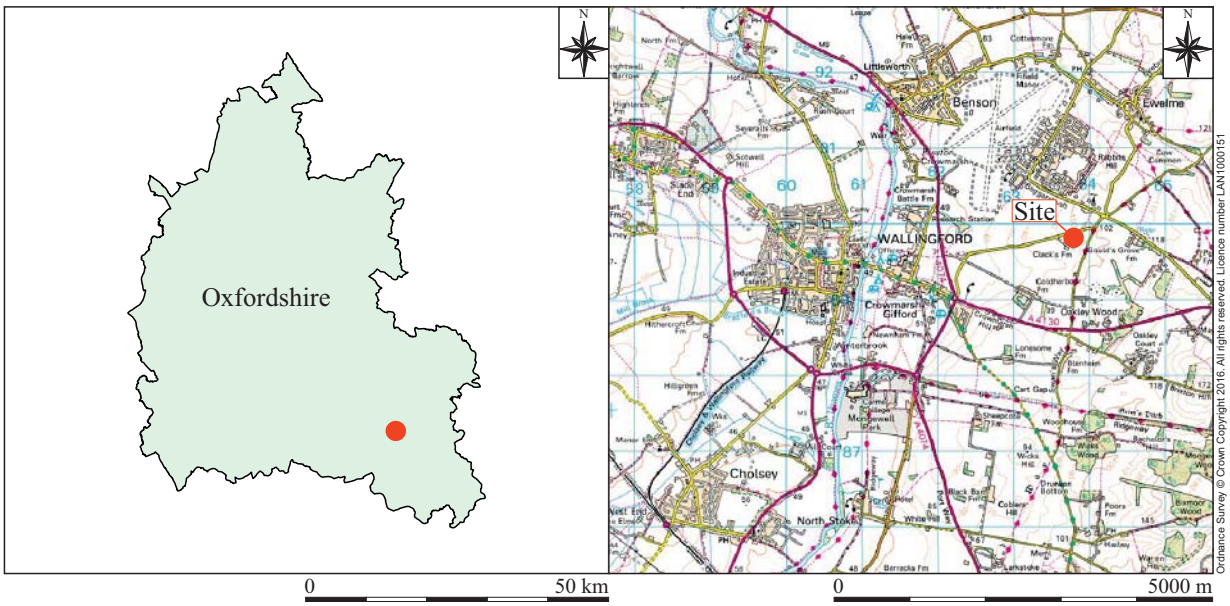
The site is located in an area of archaeological interest adjacent to the Icknield Way, a prehistoric trackway. A Bronze Age barrow has been recorded from aerial photographs to the south of the site and a Neolithic to Bronze Age scatter has been identified from field-walking 500m to the south of the proposed development. Cropmarks of a Roman rectangular enclosure have been recorded 500m east of the site and prehistoric finds have been recovered from the area.

The above archaeological background has been taken from OHaNET's advice note

# 2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To undertake an archaeological evaluation of the site.
- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site and the depth of soil deposits that overlie these remains.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.



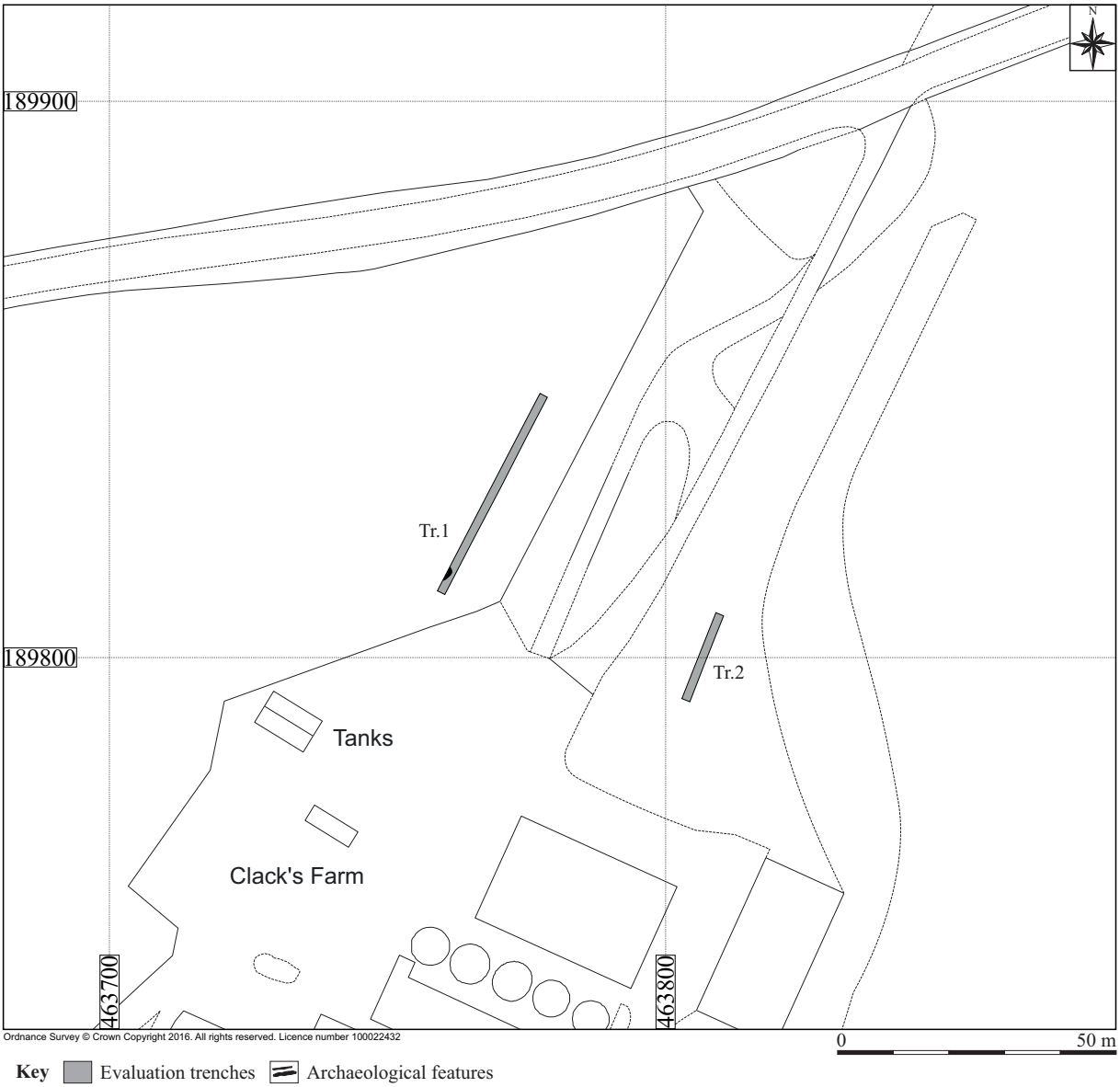




Figure 1: Site location

- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.

- To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the prehistoric and Roman landscape.

- To determine the implications of the remains with reference to economy, status, utility and social activity.

- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.

- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.

- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits. The forms in which such evidence may be present will be determined in accordance with the guidelines set out in English Heritage's Environmental Archaeology: *A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation and Geoarchaeology: Using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record*.

- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.

- To inform the need for, and scope of, further phases of work to mitigate the impact of the development under consideration.

# 3 STRATEGY

## 3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team (OHaNET).

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

## 3.2 Methodology

The investigation involved the mechanical excavation of two trial trenches supplemented by sample hand excavation of any features (Fig. 1). Trench 1 was 40m in length while Trench 2 was 17m long. The trenches were 1.5m wide. Part of the proposal area has trees, areas of hardstanding currently in use and overhead cables which limit the amount of available land for trenching. The integrity of any archaeological features or deposits was not compromised. Initially consideration was given to preservation *in situ* and the Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environmental Team's (OHaNET) Planning Archaeologist was consulted in all matters.

Excavation was by a 5t excavator using a ditching bucket. Mechanical excavation was taken down to the top of "natural" deposits or any higher archaeological horizon.

During the trial trenching sufficient features were sampled by hand excavation to achieve the objectives. For discrete features such as pits and postholes this normally involved half-sectioning a representative sample. Linear features were sectioned.

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 (Fig.2)

Trench 1 was orientated northeast – southwest, 40m long 1.5m wide and 0.24m deep. It contained a 0.24m thick layer of a dark brown silty clay ploughsoil (1/01) that overlay the natural chalk, (1/02). Cut into the natural chalk was treehole 1/05 that was sub-oval in shape with shallow sloping sides and a concave base. It was filled by a mid-brown silty clay (1/06) that contained no finds. Cut into the northern extent of the treehole was sub-circular pit 1/03. It had moderately sloping sides and a concave base and was filled by a dark grey / brown silty clay (1/04) that contained two pieces of burnt flint.

Plate 1. Trench 1 looking northeast

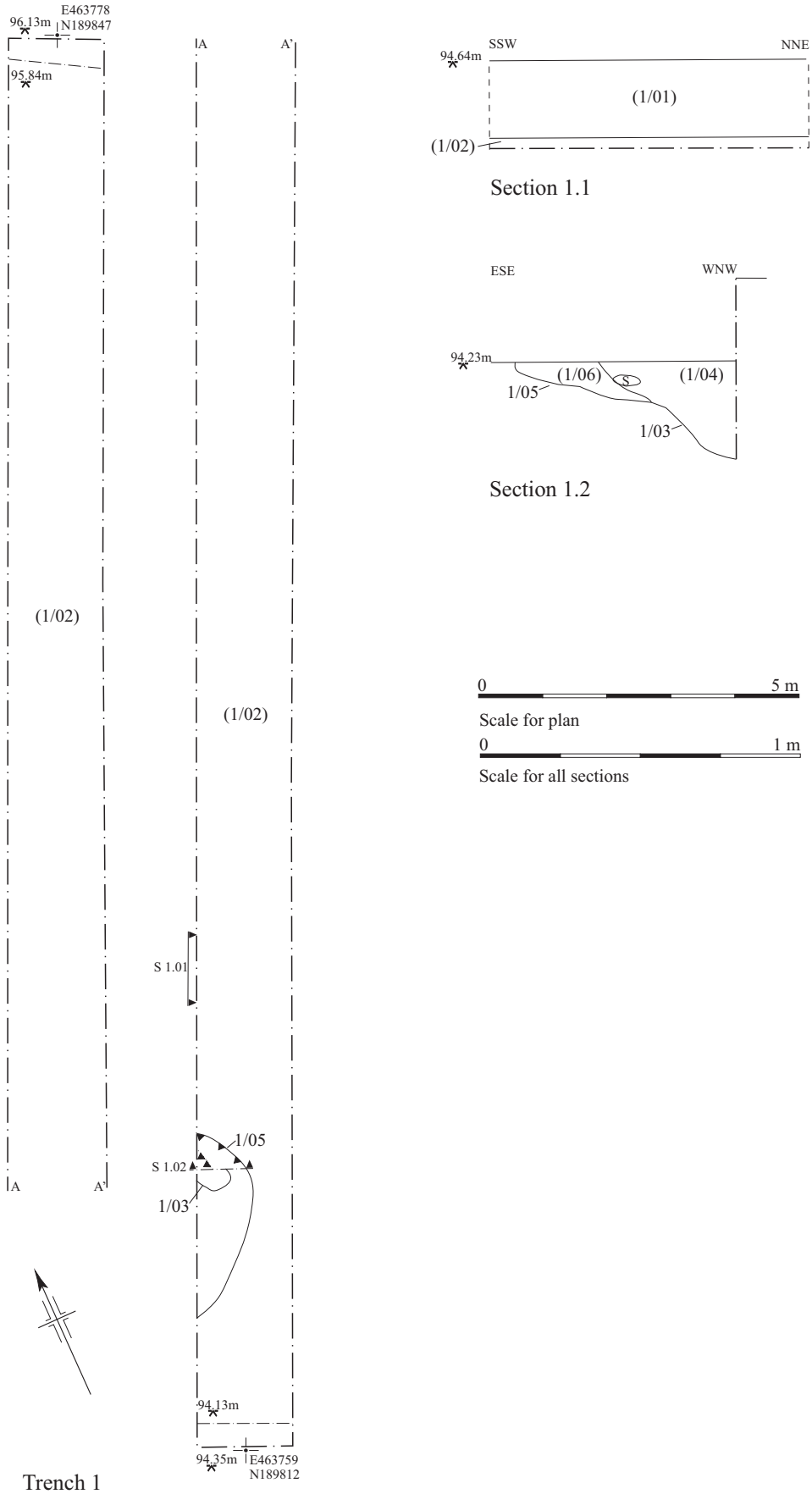



Figure 2: Trench 1 - plan and sections

Trench 2 was moved from its original position to avoid power cables and was orientated northeast – southwest, 17m long, 1.5m wide and 0.5m deep. It contained a 0.1m thick layer of topsoil (2/01) that overlay two layers of subsoil. The upper subsoil layer (2/02) a dark brown silty clay, 0.2m thick and lower subsoil (2/03) a mid-orange / brown silty clay 0.23m thick that overlay the natural chalk (2/04). The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

Plate 2. Trench 2 looking southwest

The evaluation was conducted in fair weather conditions in good light with the natural surface clearly visible, thus it is assumed that the results are reliable.

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Burnt Flint

Two flint chips, of a combined weight of 15.9 gr, were recovered from context (1/04). The items were positively identified as unworked, burnt flint, believed to have been used to heat water. Such limited quantities of material are probably waste incorporated in the fill, therefore not necessarily contemporary with the feature.

It is not recommended to retain the burnt flint due to its very limited potential for further analysis.

## 6 DISCUSSION

Trench 1 contained a single small pit 1/03, containing two fragments of burnt flint, indicating a prehistoric date that was cut into the northern extent of treehole 1/05. The rest of the trench was devoid of any other archaeological features. The lack of presence of any subsoil in the trench is probably due to ploughing.

Trench 2 was devoid of any archaeological features, however it did contain two layers of subsoil, indicating that the area around this trench has not been subject to less ploughing.

## 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

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Oxfordshire Resource Centre with the accession number 2016.6.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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| Context | Type | Description | Depth | Width | Length | Finds | Interpretation | Date |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Trench 1** | | | | | | | | |
| 1/01 | Deposit | Dark brown silty clay | 0.24m | - | - | - | Topsoil | |
| 1/02 | Deposit | White chalk | - | - | - | - | Natural | |
| 1/03 | Cut | Sub-circular pit | 0.3m | 0.42m | 0.5m | - | Pit | Prehistoric |
| 1/04 | Fill | Dark grey / brown silty clay | 0.3m | 0.42m | 0.5m | Burnt flint | Pit fill | Prehistoric |
| 1/05 | Cut | Sub-oval feature | 0.1m | 0.9m | 2.85m | - | Treehole | |
| 1/06 | Fill | Mid-brown silty clay | 0.1m | 0.9m | 2.85m | - | Treehole fill | |
| **Trench 2** | | | | | | | | |
| 2/01 | Deposit | Dark brown silty clay | 0.1m | - | - | - | Topsoil | |
| 2/02 | Deposit | Dark brown silty clay | 0.2m | - | - | - | Subsoil | |
| 2/03 | Deposit | Mid-Orange / brown silty clay | 0.23m | - | - | - | Subsoil | |
| 2/04 | Deposit | White chalk | - | - | - | - | Natural | |