



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
AT
THE MANOR HOUSE, CHURCH STREET,
GREAT SHEFFORD, HUNGERFORD, BERKSHIRE

NGR (SU 38026 75288)

On behalf of

Ms M Armstrong

NOVEMBER 2016

REPORT FOR Ms M Armstrong
The Manor House
Church Street
Great Shefford
Hungerford
Berkshire
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief within the grounds of The Manor House, Church Street, Great Shefford, Hungerford, Berkshire (NGR SU 38026 75288). Two phases of work involved monitoring an area for a garage extension. There were no archaeological features exposed and the trench consisted of modern disturbed ground overlying the natural chalk and clay.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located within the grounds of The Manor House, Church Street, Great Shefford, Hungerford, Berkshire (NGR SU 38026 75288). The site lies at approximately 117.3 OD. The underlying geology is the Seaford Chalk Formation (BGS Geology Viewer).

1.2 Planning Background

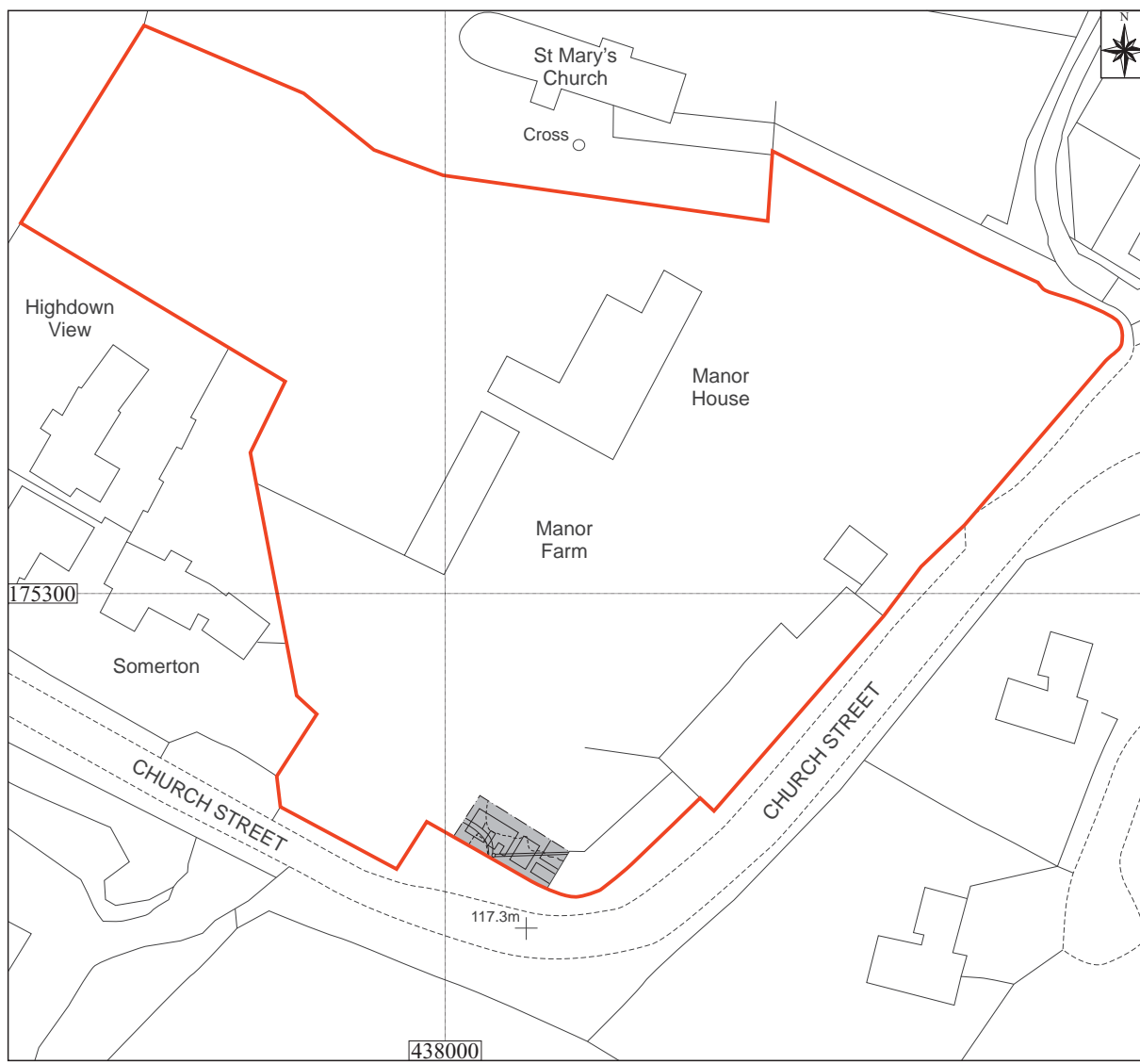
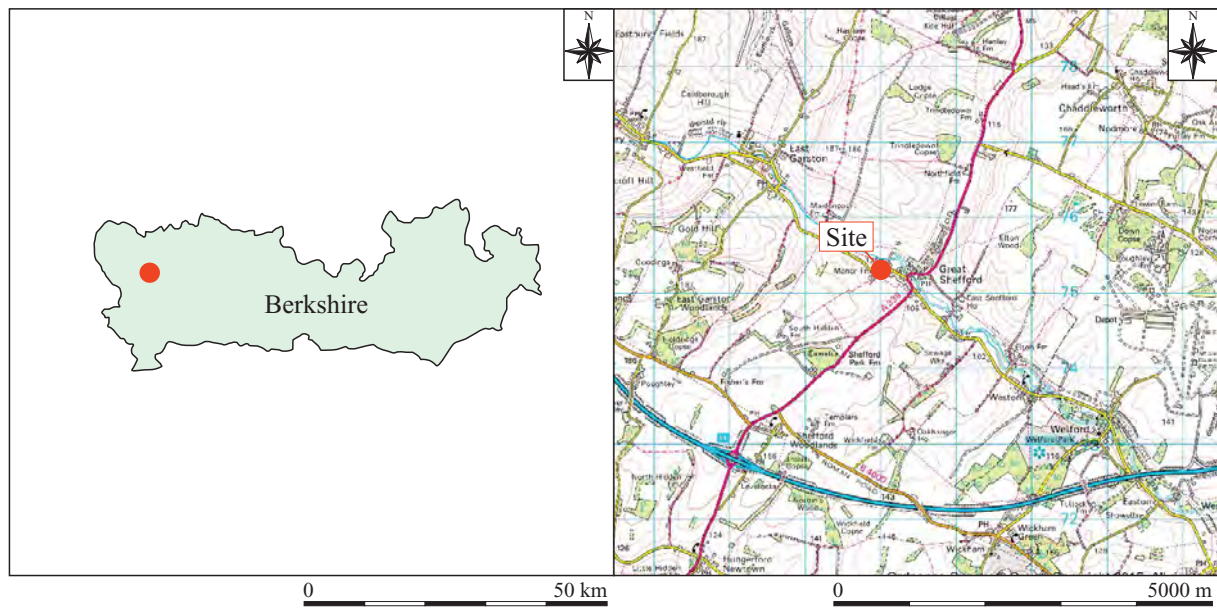
West Berkshire Council granted planning permission for new garages linked to the existing barns (15/03446/HOUSE). Due to the archaeological and historical importance of the surrounding area a condition was attached to the permission requiring a watching brief to be maintained during the course of building operations or construction works on the site. This was in line with NPPF and Local Planning policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

Manor Farm West is a historic farmstead that most likely has its origins in the medieval period. The Manor House itself was originally a 15th timber framed hall house and the barns are of 17th and 18th century date, although may have earlier origins. The proximity of the farmstead to the 11th century church suggests that the immediate area may also have been the historic settlement core of the original medieval village mentioned in the Domesday book.

The site of the new garage is on the site of a previously demolished building; this building is shown on 1st edition Ordnance Survey mapping as being attached to the 17th /18th century barns, and therefore may have been of a comparative date. As such, there is a potential that below ground archaeology may exist that can shed light on the potential Medieval origins of the farmstead.

The archaeological background has been taken from the West Berkshire Council Archaeological Officer's advice note.



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Key Site boundary Monitored area

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 record any archaeological remains revealed by the groundworks.

In particular:

- To identify any remains relating to the previous use of this site and establishing a date when this commenced.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with West Berkshire Council. The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

An archaeologist maintained a continuous presence on site during the course of all groundworks relating to the groundworks for the development which will potentially disturb or destroy archaeological remains. This involved the observation of any ground reduction, excavation for footings and services and any other significant invasive works.

3.2 Methodology

Where archaeological horizons were encountered they were cleaned by hand and excavated appropriately. 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 resultant spoil from the works was visually scanned any for finds.

The first phase of work involved the monitoring of a machine strip of the area of the new building located adjacent to the western side of the existing building (Fig. 1). The stripped area was 7m wide, 15m long and 0.3m deep.

The second phase of work involved the monitoring of a foundation trench within the footprint of the previously stripped area (Fig. 1).

The third phase of work should have involved the monitoring of a service trench and a soakaway nearby. However JMHS was not contacted when the work took place.

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts, numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material, while numbers in bold indicate structural features.

The first phase of work involving the 7m x 15m machine strip of the garage footprint (Fig. 1) revealed a 0.3m thick layer of disturbed ground overlying the natural chalk (01). The disturbed ground layer (02), was a grey brown silty sand (02) with frequent amounts of chalk and building debris together with plastic sacks laid upon the interface with the chalk and clay and the disturbed ground (Plate 1).

Due to the sloping nature of the ground dropping down northwards the northern extent of the trench still contained disturbed ground (02) that was 13.3m long and 3.3m wide and overlay the natural chalk and clay (01) (Fig. 1). The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

The second phase of work involving the monitoring the excavation of the foundation trench along the northern extent of the trench (Fig. 1 & Plate. 2). The trench was 0.8m – 1.6m wide and 1.2m deep and consisted of the disturbed ground layer (02) overlying the natural chalk and clay (01). The depth of the disturbed ground layer increased to 1m deep along the north-western extent of the trench (Fig. 1 and Plate 2).



Plate 1. Disturbed layer (02) in foundation trench



Plate 2. General shot of foundation trench looking west

5 FINDS

The only finds were building debris and plastic sacks. No finds were retained from the site.

6 DISCUSSION

The watching brief for the garage extension did not identify any archaeological features within the footprint of the development. There was a 0.3m – 1m thick layer of modern disturbed ground (02) overlying the natural chalk and clay (01). Due to the sites location on the north facing side of a fairly steep slope within an already landscaped garden (Plate. 2), it seems likely that the disturbed ground layer results from previous landscaping work within the garden.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

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 West Berkshire Museum Service.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

JMHS, 2016 *The Manor House, Church Street, Great Shefford, Hungerford Archaeological Watching Brief Written Scheme of Investigation* (unpublished document)