



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**P16/S1582/HH - OAK COTTAGE, RYCOTE FARM,  
TIDDINGTON, OXFORDSHIRE OX9 2PF**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT**

*On behalf of*

*Mr & Mrs Michaelis*

**SEPTEMBER 2016**

**REPORT FOR** Mr & Mrs P Michaelis  
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**JMHS Project No:** 3580  
**Site Code:** TARF 16

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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation within the rear of the property of Oak Cottage, on the south side of the A418 located between Thame and Tiddington centred on national grid reference NGR SP 66164 04808. The two trenches excavated were devoid of any archaeological features.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

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

The development site is located at the site on the south side of the A418 located between Thame and Tiddington. Oak Cottage lies to the west of Rycote Farm (centred on national grid reference NGR SP 66164 04808). The underlying geology is Lower Greensand Formation.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

Planning permission was granted by South Oxfordshire District Council for two storey link attached rear extension; removal of outbuilding and provision of new pool house and swimming pool and associated landscaping works. Two conditions relating to archaeology were attached requiring a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a programme of archaeological evaluative work to be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA, and a programme of archaeological evaluative work and associated post-excavation analysis, report production and archive deposition detailed in the WSI to be undertaken with a report detailing the results of this fieldwork submitted to the planning authority.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The site is located in an area of archaeological potential 120m south east of the site of an Iron Age and Early Saxon settlement. The site, identified ahead of a pipeline construction, consisted of a series of later prehistoric gullies and two Saxon sunken featured buildings, ditches and pits. A ring ditch and a series of linear ditches have been observed from aerial photographs have been recorded 300m south of the proposed site. It is therefore considered possible that this development could encounter further aspects of these sites.

## **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 or absence of archaeological remains within the site.

In particular:

- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any

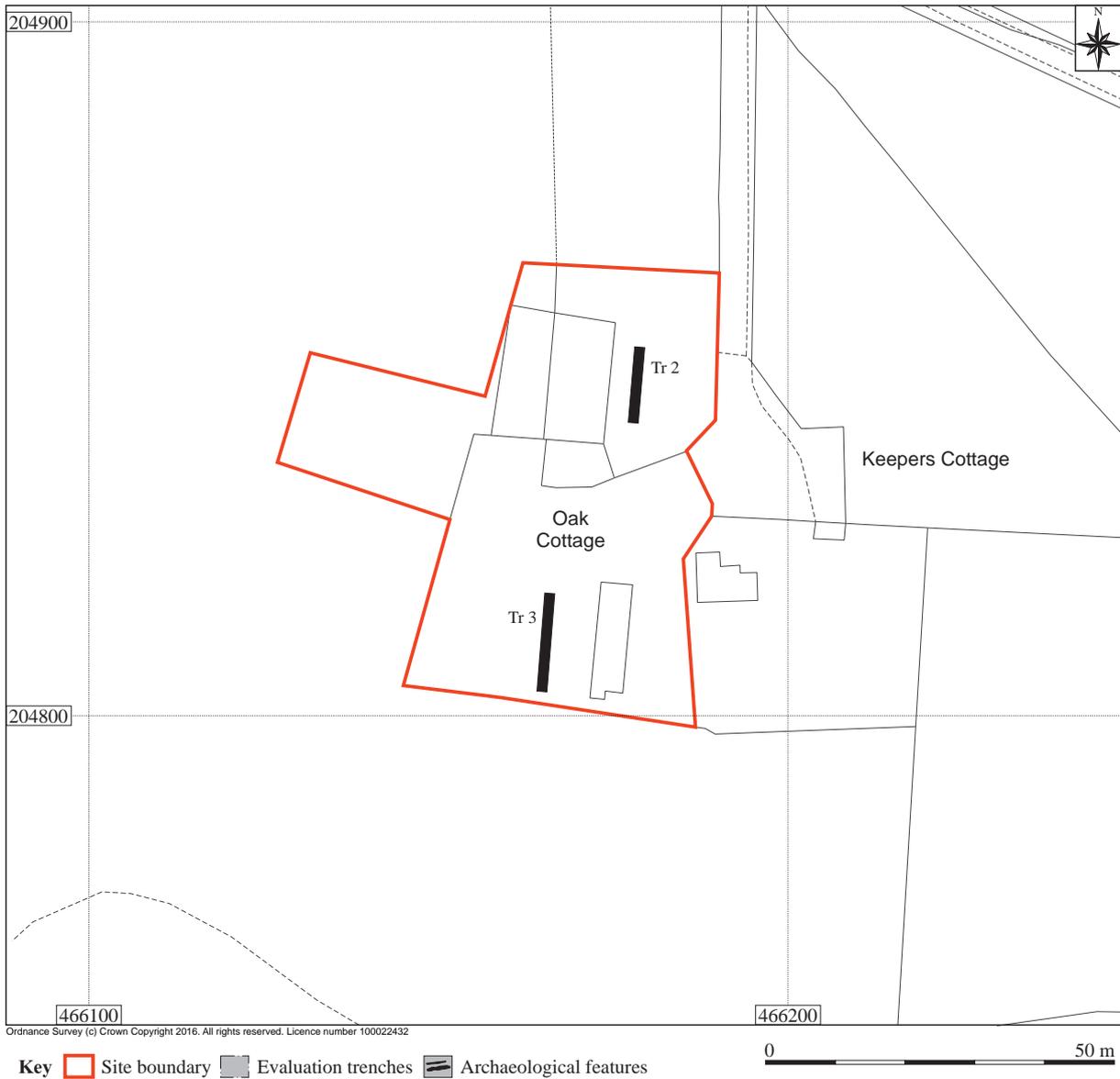
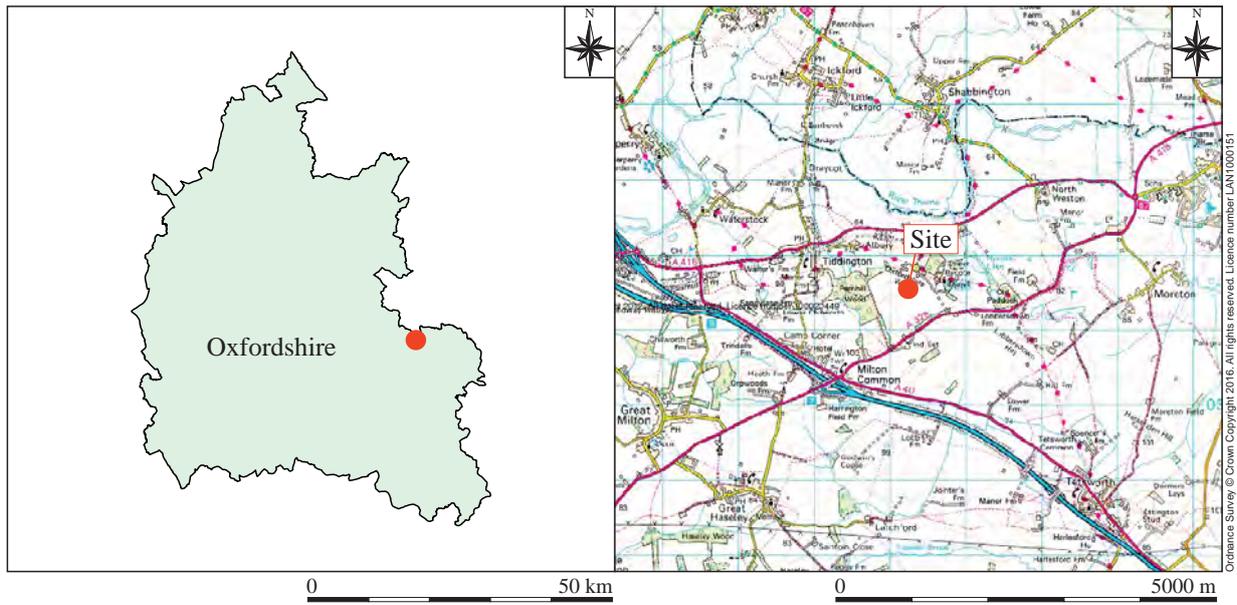


Figure 1: Site location

archaeological remains relating to the nearby Iron Age and Saxon settlement.

- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.

### **3 STRATEGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxfordshire Historic Environment Team advisor to South Oxfordshire District Council.

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

#### **3.2 Methodology**

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 investigation involved the mechanical excavation of two trenches each 1.65m wide (Fig. 1) supplemented by limited hand investigation of any archaeological deposits. Trench 2 originally 15m long (but shortened to 11.0m, due to limited access because of services) orientated N/S, was excavated on the east side of the proposed pool room. Trench 3 was 15m long and was excavated northwards from the south edge of the proposed two-storey rear extension. An intended third trench (Trench 1) proposed along the northern edge of the existing Oak Cottage barn was not excavated due to modern structural and overgrowth obstructions.

Excavation was undertaken by a 5 ton 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.

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 trenches were backfilled after recording.

#### 4 RESULTS (Figure 1)

Trench 2 was orientated north – south 11m long, 1.65m wide and 0.4m deep. It contained yellow / brown sand (2/04), the natural horizon, overlain by 0.20m thick layer of yellow / brown silty sand (2/03), a subsoil which was probably an old ploughsoil. This was overlain by made ground (2/02) beneath a tarmac surface (2/01). The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.



Plate 1. Trench 2 looking south

Trench 3 was orientated north – south 15m long, 1.65m wide and 1.2m deep. It contained a yellowish orange / compact sand (3/03), the natural horizon, overlain by a 0.10m thick layer of dark brown / orange silt sand (3/02), a subsoil. Which was probably an old ploughsoil. This was overlain by a 0.40m thick layer of a dark brown sandy loam (2/01) topsoil. Bioturbation and very heavy rooting was present throughout the trench from a former modern tree. The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

The evaluation was conducted in good weather conditions and the natural horizon was clearly defined and it is considered that the reliability of the results are good.



Plate 2. Trench 3 looking south

## **5 FINDS**

No finds were recovered from any of the contexts from both trenches.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

Both trenches were devoid of any archaeological features.

## **7 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014 *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological field evaluation*