



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

HAGBOURNE HILL FARM,

WEST HAGBOURNE,

OXFORDSHIRE OX 11 0NS

NGR SU 497870

On behalf of

Mr & Mrs N Lay

APRIL 2016

REPORT FOR Mr & Mrs N Lay
Hagbourne Hill Farm
West Hagbourne
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Hagbourne Hill Farm, West Hagbourne, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 497870). No archaeological evidence were recorded. Some fieldwalking to the south of the excavated area revealed some prehistoric and later potsherds, confirming ancient occupation in the immediate vicinity of the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located at Hagbourne Hill Farm, West Hagbourne in Oxfordshire (NGR SU 497870). The site lies at approximately 130m above OD. The underlying geology is Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation.

1.2 Planning Background

South Oxfordshire District Council granted planning permission for new garden room at the rear of property and external works to form new patio area. Due to the potential for the work to disturb archaeological deposits a condition was attached to the permission requiring the submission and approval of a Written Scheme of Investigation and a condition requiring the implementation of this full archaeological watching brief during the period of construction works. This is in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF).

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site is located in an area of archaeological potential immediately north of the site of a possible Bronze Age and Iron Age cemetery identified in the 19th century. Traces of a possible prehistoric field system have also been recorded from aerial photographs. An archaeological evaluation was undertaken in 1999 70m west of the proposed extension which recorded a number of Iron Age pits and ditches which were interpreted as a probable settlement site. It was therefore thought likely that further archaeological deposits could be disturbed by this development.

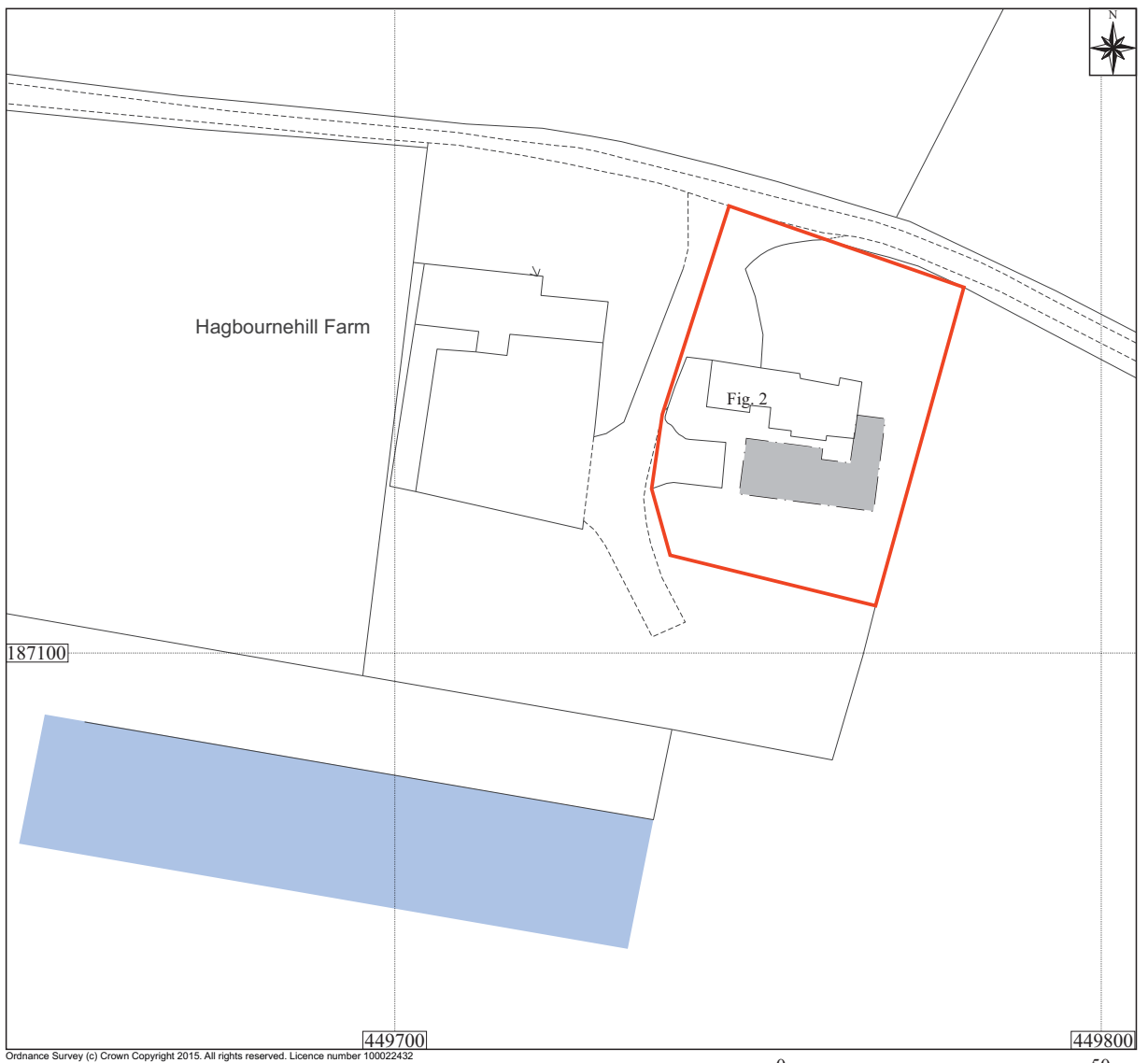
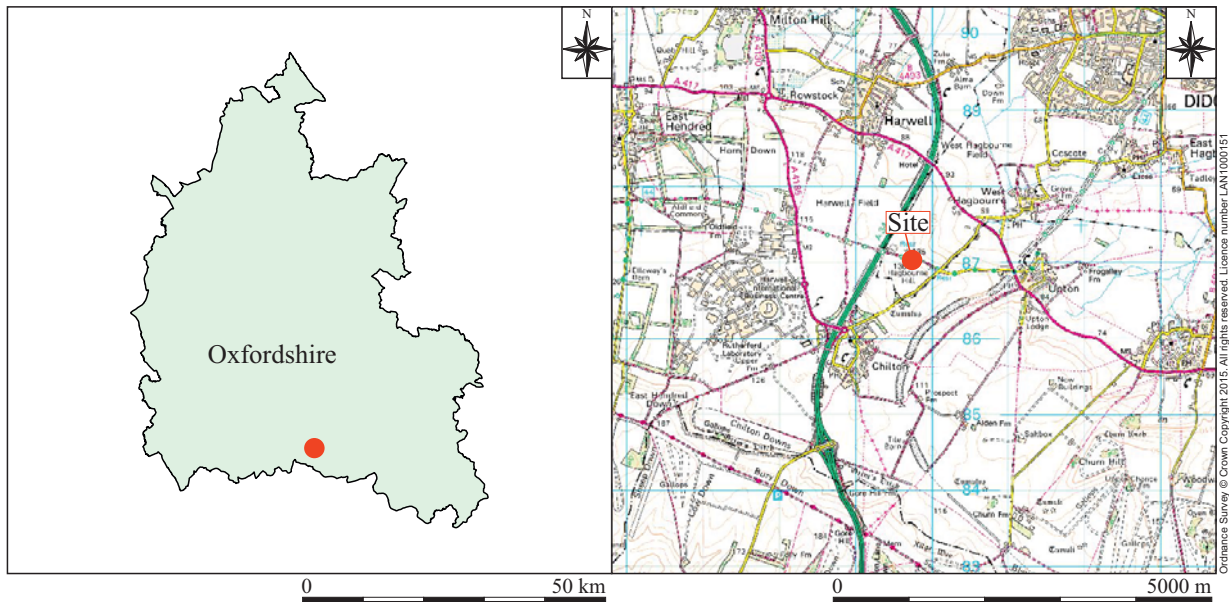
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- to make a record of any significant archaeological remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

In particular:

- to record any evidence relating to the known prehistoric activity in the area while noting the possibility of burials being located.



Key  Site boundary  Monitored area  Fieldwalking area

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 Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team, the archaeological advisors 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

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, especially for finds relating to Bronze and Iron Age.

The machine used was a Volvo EC55C (5.7t), equipped with a 1.48m wide ditching bucket for soil stripping and with a 0.60m wide digging bucket for the foundation trenches.

As the project takes place on a sloping lawn, foundations for a retaining wall were first excavated and partially backfilled with concrete. The area affected by the new room and patio was stripped lower than top geological horizon.

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 lowest deposit (02) encountered was the geological chalk, present over all the excavated area. Above this there was a topsoil (01) consisting of a firm dark brown silty loam with occasional chalk and flint flakes, approximately 0.20m thick. The only other deposits encountered were related to the construction of the existing house, dating from 1990-1991: a water service ditch, another blue cable service ditch and backfill of the house foundations. No archaeological features pre-dating the construction of the house were observed.

The reliability of the results is considered to be fine, despite a weather alternatively sunny or rainy, not always offering good light and visibility. Full cooperation of the groundworkers and project manager ensured an appropriate record.

Plan 1



Key
□ Site boundary ■ Monitored area

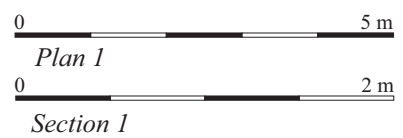


Figure 2: Plan and section

5 FINDS

No finds were collected during the course of the ground reduction neither during the excavation of foundations for a retaining wall.

On the contrary, fieldwalking in a field 70m south-west of the site resulted in the collect of some surface finds, detailed below. Dating remains uncertain and appropriate specialised study should be undertaken to clarify the time range.

Type	Description	Nb. of items	Weight (g)	Datation
Flint	flake	5	30	Unknown
Pottery	Wheel-thrown bodysherd with thumb impression, grey coarse grey with large stone inclusions	1	33	Prehistoric?
Pottery	Bodysherds, grey fabric with shell inclusions, some with orange/reddish surface	8	59	Prehistoric?
Pottery	Bodysherd, dark grey fabric and surface	1	4	Prehistoric?
Pottery	Bodysherds, dark grey fabric, small sand and flint inclusions	3	28	Prehistoric?
Pottery	Bodysherds, light grey to dark grey fabric with creamy to orange surface	11	50	Prehistoric?
Pottery	Wheel-thrown base sherd, creamy surface, grey fabric	1	15	Medieval?

These will be sent the PAS Officer.

6 DISCUSSION

Though the nearby prehistoric activity was verified by fieldwalking, the excavated area contained no archaeology at all.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

WHHH 15 Context Register

JMHS Project No.	Accession No.	Site Code	Site Name										
Context No.	Type	Relationships	Description	Thickness (m)	Extent (m)	Finds	Interpretation	Date	Section No.	Plan No.	Drawing Sheet No.	Levels	Photograph
3364	2015.188	WHHH 15	West Hagbourne, Hagbourne Hill Farm										
01	deposit	ol 02	dark brown silty loam with common chalk flakes and scarce flint	ca. 0.20m	> Area	No	topsoil	N/A	S.01	P.01	1	03	2015.188_WHHH15_1 - 2015.188_WHHH15_3
02	deposit	ul 01	chalk	>1.10m	> Area	No	top geological layer	N/A	S.01	P.01	1		
03	deposit	ol 02 ul 01	same as 01, with occ. building material, plastic	N/A (unexcavated)	> 1.2m x 9m	No	backfill of excavated area for building of actual house	20th		P.01	1		