



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

ORCHARD HOUSE, CHAPEL CLOSE,

CLIFTON, OXFORDSHIRE OX15 0PT

NGR SP 49016 31677

On behalf of

Mr J Haynes

OCTOBER 2017

REPORT FOR Mr J Haynes
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Chapel Close,
Clifton,
Oxfordshire

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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at the west side of Chapel Close, Clifton, Oxfordshire (NGR SP4901631677). The two 10m long trenches consisted of a garden soil overlying a made ground layer that overlay the natural and both trenches were devoid of any archaeological features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is situated off the west side of Chapel Close, Clifton, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 49016 31677 centred). The geology is Upper Lias Clay and the land is currently part of the garden of Orchard House. The site lies at c. 90m OD.

1.2 Planning Background

Outline planning permission has been granted by Cherwell District Council for Outline - Erection of two detached dwellings and associated garages and hard standing (means of access, scale and layout to be assessed) (15/01032/OUT). Due to the potential for the site to contain archaeological remains, as advised by the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Team (OHET), two conditions relating to archaeology have been attached:

10 Prior to any demolition on the site, the commencement of the development and any archaeological investigation, a professional archaeological organisation acceptable to the Local Planning Authority shall prepare a first stage archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation, relating to the application area, which shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.

Reason - To safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological importance on the site in accordance with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

11 Prior to any demolition on the site (other than in accordance with the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation) and prior to the commencement of the development and following the approval of the first stage Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 10, a programme of archaeological evaluation, investigation and recording of the application area shall be carried out by the commissioned archaeological organisation in accordance with the approved first stage Written Scheme of Investigation.

Reason - In order to determine the extent, character and significance of the surviving remains of archaeological interest and to safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological importance on the site in accordance with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

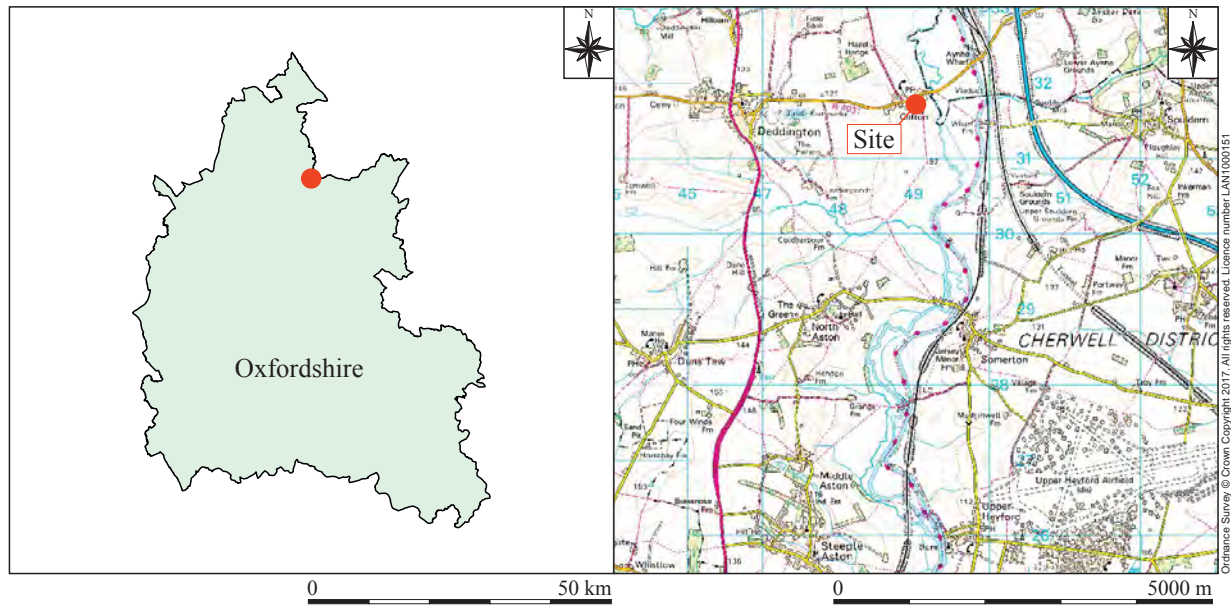


Figure 1: Site location

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site is located in an area of archaeological interest immediately north of the site of a shrunken medieval village. The site consists of a series of earthworks representing house platforms and trackways identified from Lidar held by the Environment Agency. Below ground archaeological remains associated with these earthworks are also very likely to survive. It was considered possible that these archaeological features could continue into the application area.

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 proposed development 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.
- To determine the degree of complexity of the horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.
- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of any artefactual evidence present.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any 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 (Stage 2) to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.

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 (OHET), the archaeological advisors to Cherwell District Council.

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

3.2 Methodology

Two evaluation trenches each 10m long by 1.6m wide was excavated across the proposed site of the development. Excavation of the trenches was undertaken by a machine fitted with a toothless bucket that carefully removed all modern overburden to the top of the natural.

A 2m long and 1.8m deep sondage was excavated at the southeastern end of Trench 2 to evaluate the depths of natural deposits.

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 (Figs. 1 & 2)

4.1 Trenches

Trench 1 (Fig. 1) was orientated northeast – southwest, 10m long and 1.6m wide. It comprised of a 0.25m thick layer of a mid-brown / grey silty clay (1/01), a garden soil that contained modern debris that was not retained. This overlay a 0.3m thick layer of a light orange / brown silty clay (1/02), a made ground layer that was heavily bioturbated by tree roots. This overlay the yellowish orange sandy clay natural (1/03) that was also heavily bioturbated by tree roots. The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

Trench 2 (Fig. 1 & 2) was orientated northwest – southeast, 10m long and 1.6m wide. It comprised of a 0.48m thick layer of a mid-brown / grey silty clay (2/01), a garden soil that contained modern debris that was not retained. This overlay a 0.4m thick layer of a light orange / brown silty clay (2/02), a made ground layer that was heavily bioturbated by tree roots. This overlay a 0.5m thick layer of yellowish orange sandy clay, the upper natural horizon (2/03) that was also heavily bioturbated by tree roots. Underlying the upper natural layer was a light grey clay (2/04) that represented the lower natural layer. The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

4.2 Reliability of Results

The evaluation was undertaken in good weather conditions and the natural horizon was clear, thus the reliability of the results is considered to be good.



Plate 1. Trench 1



Plate 2. Section of sondage in trench 2

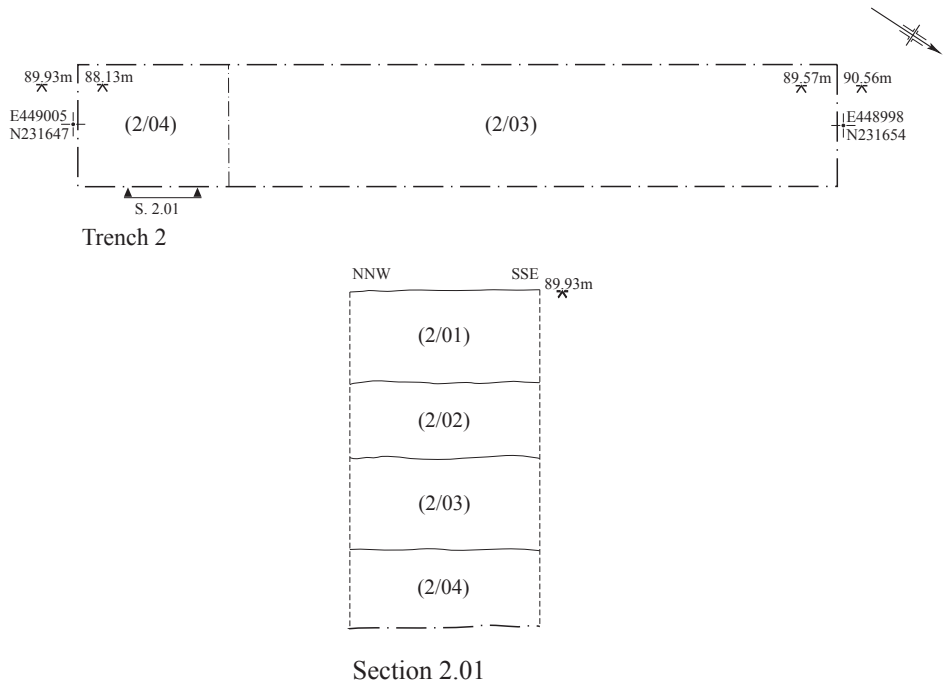
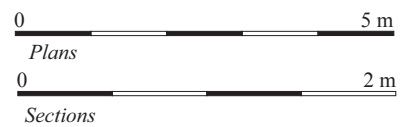


Figure 2: Trench 2 with section



5 FINDS

No finds were recovered from the site

6 DISCUSSION

Both trenches were located within the garden on a platform c. 1m higher than the existing property of Orchard house. The trenches consisted of a garden soil overlying a layer of redeposited natural / made ground, presumably deposited during terracing works before the construction of Orchard Cottage. This overlay the natural deposits and both trenches, heavily disturbed by tree rooting, were devoid of any archaeological features.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

John Moore Heritage Services 2017 *Orchard House, Chapel Close, Clifton, Oxfordshire Archaeological Evaluation Written Scheme of Investigation*

Context	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Finds	Interpretation	Date
Trench 1								
1/01	Deposit	Mid-brown / grey silty clay	0.25m	1.6m	10m	-	Topsoil	modern
1/02	Deposit	Light orange / brown silty clay	0.3m	1.6m	10m	-	Subsoil	-
1/03	Deposit	Yellowish orange sandy clay	-	1.6m	10m	-	Natural	-
Trench 2								
2/01	Deposit	Mid-brown / grey silty clay	0.48m	1.6m	10m	-	Topsoil	modern
2/02	Deposit	Light orange / brown silty clay	0.4m	1.6m	10m	-	Subsoil	-
2/03	Deposit	Yellowish orange sandy clay	0.5m	1.6m	10m	-	Upper natural layer	-
2/04	Deposit	Light grey clay	-	1.6m	10m	-	Lower natural layer	-