



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

BUTCHERS GROUND,

(LAND SOUTH OF NEW YATT ROAD),

NORTH LEIGH, OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SP 438220 213000

On behalf of

CgMs Consulting Ltd

DECEMBER 2017

REPORT FOR CgMs Consulting Ltd
Burlington House
Lypiatt Road
Cheltenham
GL50 2SY

PREPARED BY Steve Leech

ILLUSTRATION BY Autumn Robson

EDITED BY John Moore

AUTHORISED BY John Moore

FIELDWORK 5th December 2017

REPORT ISSUED 7th December 2017

ENQUIRES TO John Moore Heritage Services
Pasture Farm
Boarstall
Aylesbury
HP18 9UR

Tel: 01865 358300
Email: info@jmheritageservices.co.uk

JMHS Project No: 3799
Site Code: NLBG 17



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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at Butchers Ground, New Yatt Road, North Leigh, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 438220 213000). The four trenches were devoid of any archaeological features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site occupies a single pasture field situated on the western periphery of North Leigh. It is bounded to the north by New Yatt Road, to the east by housing situated off Perrott's Close and to the south and west by agricultural fields. The site is defined by mature hedgerows and occupies a gentle north-west facing slope, sloping from 138m AOD at its south eastern boundary to 130m AOD at its north western limits. It is approximately 3.1ha in area and is centred at National Grid Reference SP 438220 213000. The underlying solid geology of the site is identified as mudstone belonging to the undifferentiated Oxford Clay and West Walton Formations. Overlying superficial deposits of Quaternary sands and gravels are identified across its south eastern extents.

1.2 Planning Background

West Oxfordshire District Council has granted outline planning permission for residential development (15/01934/OUT). Due to the potential for the site to contain archaeological remains an archaeological trenching evaluation is required as Stage 2 of a programme of archaeological works.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site has been the subject of a formal desk study (CgMs October 2015) and will not be repeated here. It highlights a broadly limited archaeological potential for the site to contain any previously unrecorded below ground remains dating to all periods. The report does however recognise the site to lie within an area known to have been occupied and/or utilised from the Prehistoric period onwards, but to have likely been forested / heathland or in agricultural use from the Early Medieval period to present.

As Stage 1 of the programme of archaeological works a geophysical survey of the site has been carried out by SUMO Survey (2017). A detailed magnetometry survey was conducted over approximately 3.1 ha of pasture. No definite archaeological responses were identified. Several linear anomalies were of uncertain origin, while the remaining responses were agricultural, natural or modern. These included a former footpath, ploughing effects and disturbance from nearby ferrous objects.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Stage 2 Method Statement were as follows:

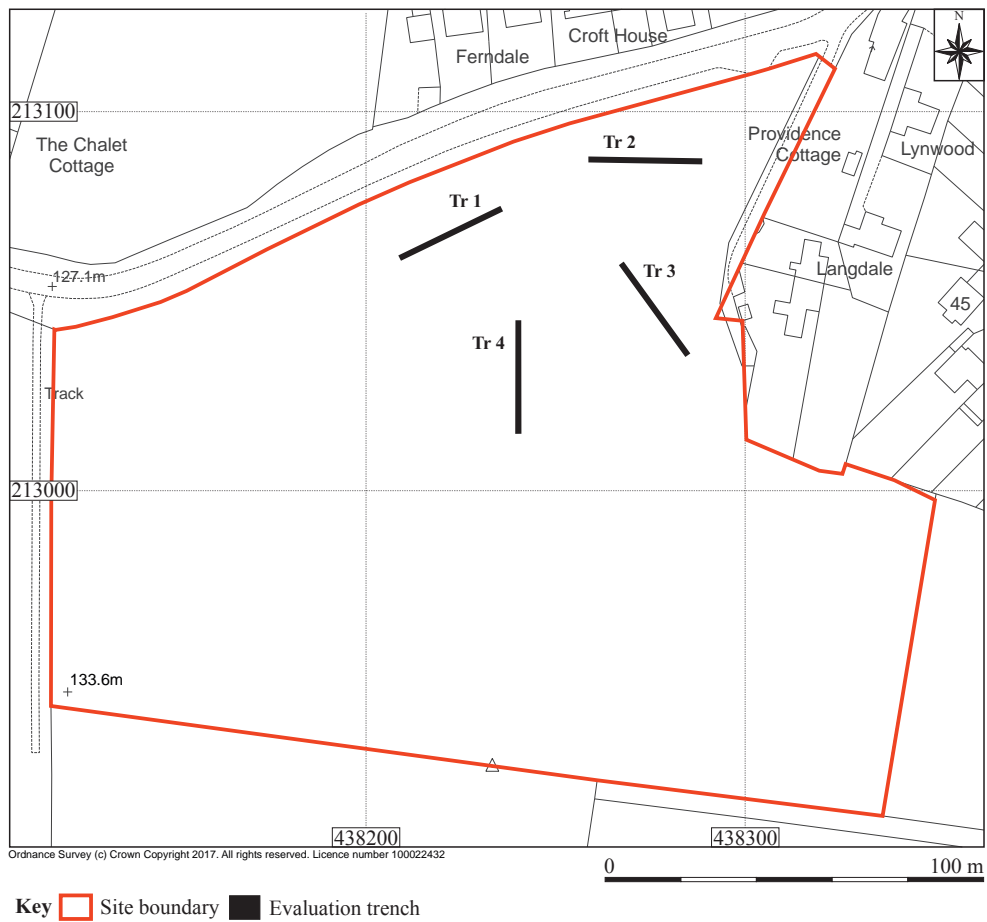
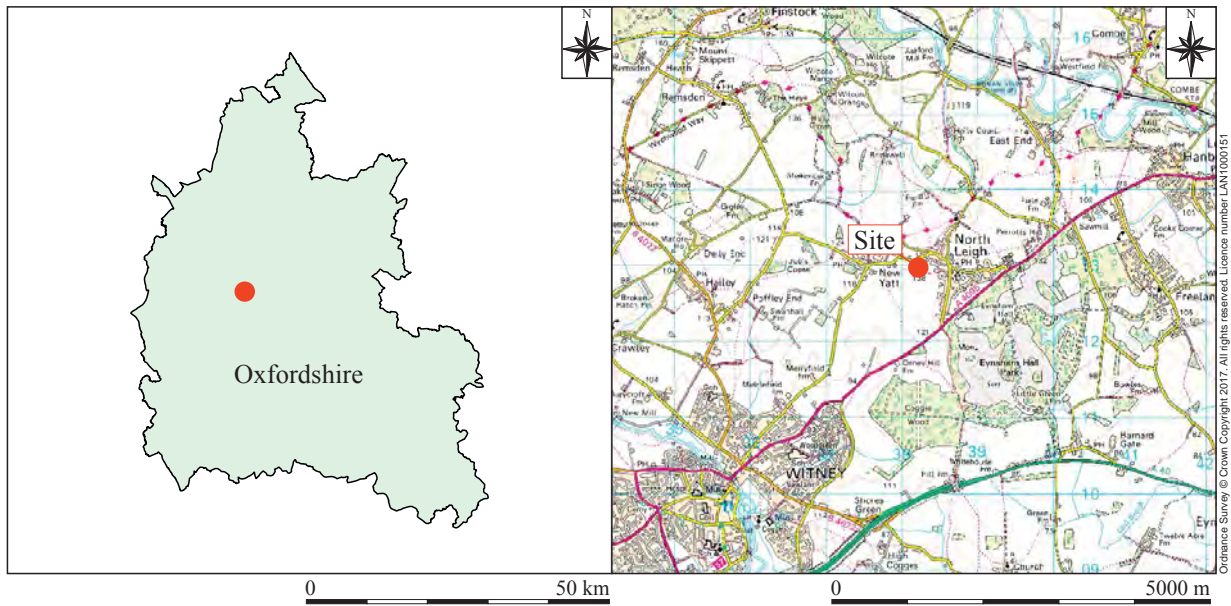


Figure 1: Site location

- 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 to mitigate the impact of the proposed development.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Stage 2 Method Statement (JMHS 2017) agreed with the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Team (OHET) the archaeological advisors to the West Oxfordshire District Council.

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

3.2 Methodology

Four evaluation trenches 30m long by 1.6m wide were excavated within the northern area of the proposed site of the development (Fig. 1). Excavation was undertaken by an 8t excavator using a ditching bucket. Mechanical excavation was taken down to the top of "natural" deposits.

A qualified Project Officer and two archaeologists undertook the evaluation trenching work and re-instatement in one day under the overall direction of John Moore MCIfA.

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 (Figure 1)

4.1 Trenches 1 - 4

Trench 1 (Fig. 1) consisted of a 0.08m thick layer of a mid-brown silty clay (1/01) with frequent grass roots and formed a turf layer of the rough grassland and contained no finds. This overlay a 0.2m thick layer of a mid-brown silty clay (1/02) a subsoil that represents a former ploughsoil that contained no finds. Underlying this were the orange / brown natural gravels and clay (1/03). The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

Trench 2 (Fig. 1) consisted of a 0.08m thick layer of a mid-brown silty clay (2/01) with frequent grass roots and formed a turf layer of the rough grassland and contained no finds. This overlay a 0.22m thick layer of a mid-brown silty clay (2/02) a subsoil that represents a former ploughsoil that contained no finds. Underlying this were the orange / brown natural gravels and clay (2/03). The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

Trench 3 (Fig. 1 & Plates 1 & 2) consisted of a 0.11m thick layer of a mid-brown silty clay (3/01) with frequent grass roots and formed a turf layer of the rough grassland and contained no finds. This overlay a 0.23m thick layer of a mid-brown silty clay (3/02) a subsoil that represents a former plough-soil that contained no finds. Underlying this were the orange / brown natural gravels and clay (3/03). The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

Trench 4 (Fig. 1) consisted of a 0.1m thick layer of a mid-brown silty clay (4/01) with frequent grass roots and formed a turf layer of the rough grassland and contained no finds. This overlay a 0.19m thick layer of a mid-brown silty clay (4/02) a subsoil that represents a former plough-soil that contained no finds. Underlying this were the orange / brown natural gravels and clay (4/03). The trench was devoid of any archaeological features.

4.2 Reliability of Results

The evaluation was undertaken in good weather conditions and the deposits were clearly defined, thus the reliability of the results is considered to be good.



Plate. 1 Trench 3



Plate. 2 Representative section of Trench 3

5 FINDS

No finds were recovered from any of the trenches.

6 DISCUSSION

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation recently on land north of New Yatt Road, located directly northwest of this site (JMHS 2017a). All seven trenches there were devoid of any archaeological remains except for the partial remains of a series of ridge and furrow earthworks that were noted in the southwestern extent of site.

This tallies with the results from this site; there was no evidence for any ridge and furrow cultivation or any land improvements (such as land drains) and all four trenches were devoid of any archaeological features.

The former ploughsoil overlying the natural gravels and clay indicates that some form of agricultural activity occurred in the past, however the lack of any ridge and furrow within the trenches or surviving as earthworks does suggest that the area was utilised as pasture land or forested / heathland from the Early Medieval period to present.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- CgMs Consulting, 2015 *Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment. Land off New Yatt Road, North Leigh, Oxfordshire*. Unpublished document
- CgMs Consulting, 2017 *Written Scheme of Investigation for a Programme of Mitigation. Butchers Ground, North Leigh, Oxfordshire*. Unpublished document
- Chartered Institute for Archaeologists 2014 *Standards and Guidance for an archaeological field evaluation*
- John Moore Heritage Services 2017 *Butchers Ground, North Leigh Oxfordshire Stage 2 - Archaeological Trenching Evaluation Method Statement*. Unpublished document
- John Moore Heritage Services 2017a *An Archaeological Evaluation at Land North of New Yatt Road, North Leigh Oxfordshire*. Unpublished document
- Sumo Survey 2017 *Geophysical Survey Report. Butchers Ground, New Yatt Road, North Leigh, Oxfordshire*. Unpublished document

Context	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Findings	Interpretation	Date
Trench 1								
1/01	Deposit	Mid-brown silty clay with frequent grass roots	0.08m	1.6m	30m	-	Topsoil	-
1/02	Deposit	Mid-brown silty clay	0.2m	1.6m	30m	-	Subsoil	-
1/03	Deposit	Orange / brown gravels and clay	-	1.6m	30m	-	Natural	-
Trench 2								
2/01	Deposit	Mid-brown silty clay with frequent grass roots	0.08m	1.6m	30m	-	Topsoil	-
2/02	Deposit	Mid-brown silty clay	0.22m	1.6m	30m	-	Subsoil	-
2/03	Deposit	Orange / brown gravels and clay	-	1.6m	30m	-	Natural	-
Trench 3								
3/01	Deposit	Mid-brown silty clay with frequent grass roots	0.11m	1.6m	30m	-	Topsoil	-
3/02	Deposit	Mid-brown silty clay	0.23m	1.6m	30m	-	Subsoil	-
3/03	Deposit	Orange / brown gravels and clay	-	1.6m	30m	-	Natural	-
Trench 4								
4/01	Deposit	Mid-brown silty clay with frequent grass roots	0.1m	1.6m	30m	-	Topsoil	-
4/02	Deposit	Mid-brown silty clay	0.19m	1.6m	30m	-	Subsoil	-
4/03	Deposit	Orange / brown gravels and clay	-	1.6m	30m	-	Natural	-