



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING

AT

ST MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS CHURCH,

GREAT TEW, OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SP 3976 2849

On behalf of

PCC St Michael and All Angels Great Tew

MARCH 2018

REPORT FOR PCC St Michael & All Angels Great Tew
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SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological monitoring at St Michael and All Angels' Church, Great Tew, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 3976 2849). The work consisted of the monitoring of the excavation of five small test pits that cut through the topsoil and graveyard soils. No articulated human remains were encountered and any charnel bone was reinterred into the test pits. No other archaeological features were present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located directly east of New Road, Great Tew within the churchyard of St Michael and All Angels Church (NGR SP 3976 2849). The site lies at approximately 175m OD. The underlying geology is the Chipping Norton Limestone Formation, a sedimentary ooidal limestone formed in the Jurassic 165 to 168 million years ago (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_of_Britain/home.html). Overlying this in places is the Sharp's Hill Formation, an Argillaceous Rock with subordinate sandstone and limestone bands also formed 165 to 168 million years ago in the Jurassic Period.

1.2 Planning Background

It is proposed to construct an extension to the church with associated drainage.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The Avenue across the park is believed to be the location of a Roman road running to Beaconsfield Farm (VCH 1983, 223-47).

Aelfric is the earliest known holder of Great Tew, he was later Bishop of Ramsbury c. 990 and Archbishop of Canterbury 995-1005 (VCH 1983, 223-47).

The earliest reference to Great Tew was in 1004 in an early medieval will, where the name *Tiwan* was recorded (Gelling 1954, 288-9). Gelling suggested that the etymology is related to *-tæwe*, in good health or excellent', which is related to Old English *teohh*, race, generation or troop. These are also associated with Middle High German *zeche*, row or order, thus Gelling suggests that it is the name of the ridge on which the three Tews are located. The VCH (1983, 223-47) considers the derivation of the name uncertain. The original church lands were absorbed by other Godstow Abbey holdings, and that monastery appointed the vicars.

The village is referred to as *Cyrictiwa* in 1050-2 (Gelling 1954, 289), thus indicating that there is a church in the village in the mid-11th century. The name *Chyrchwey* recorded in 1436 (Gelling 1954, 290) was a route from the chapelry of Little Tew leading towards the mother church of Great Tew (VCH 1983, 223-47). Nether Worton is known to have been a dependent chapel till the 17th century and Little Tew till c. 1857. The road running west from Duns Tew is called Churchway, which is also considered to indicate a former dependency of Duns Tew on the village of Great Tew.

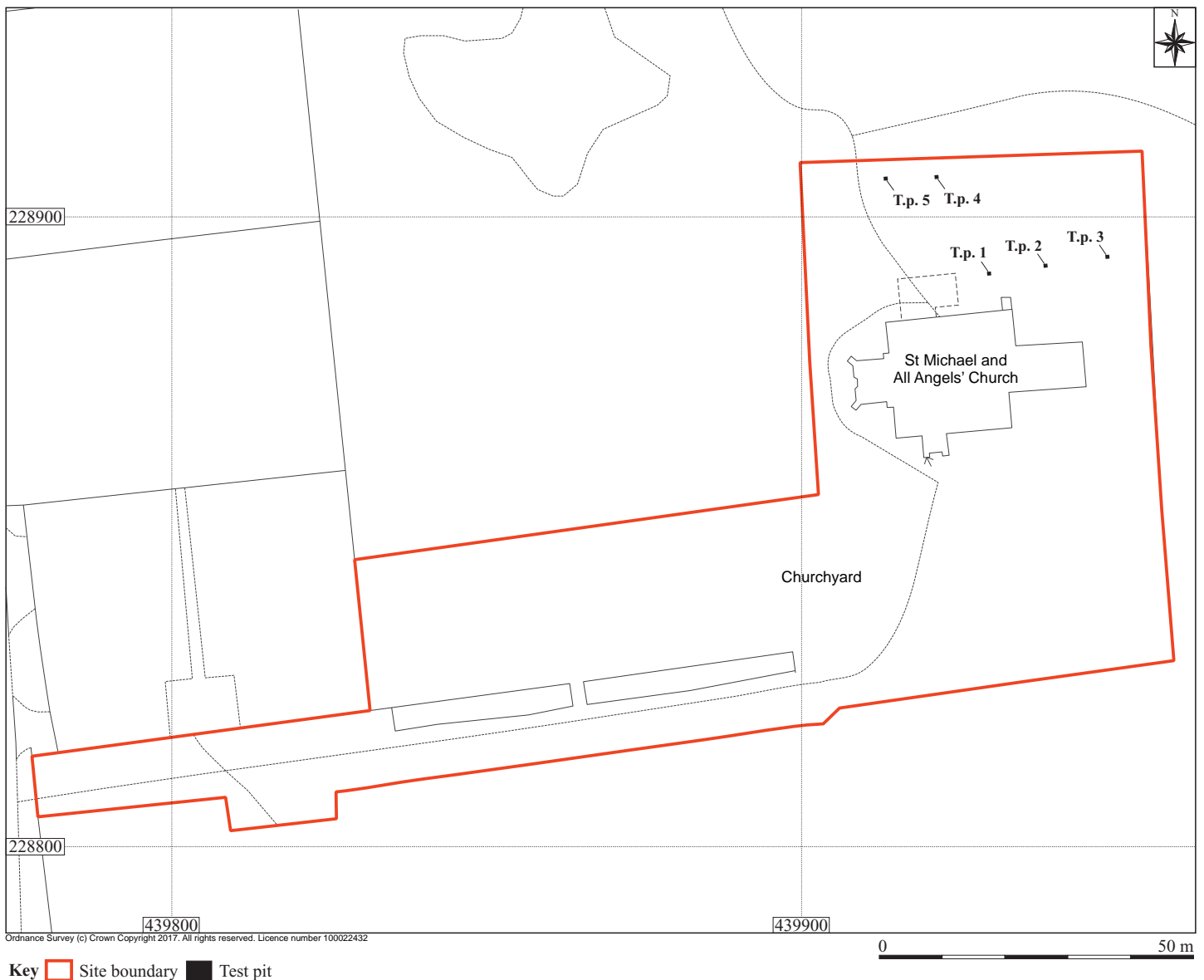
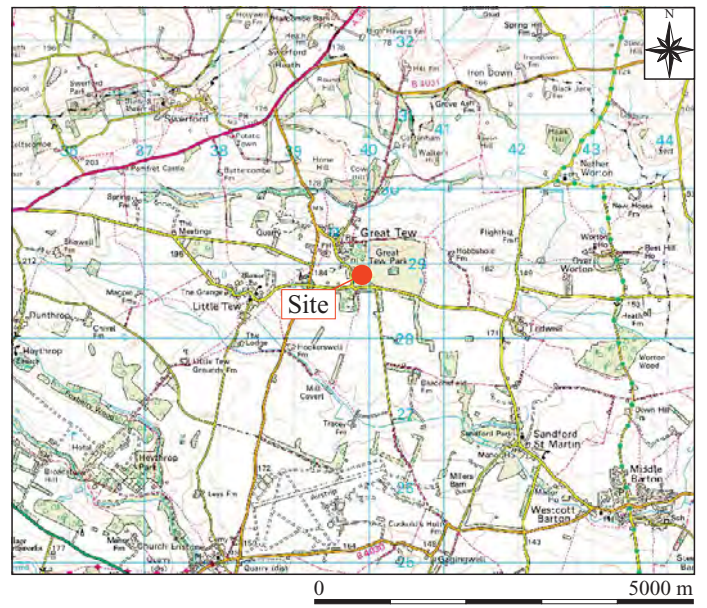
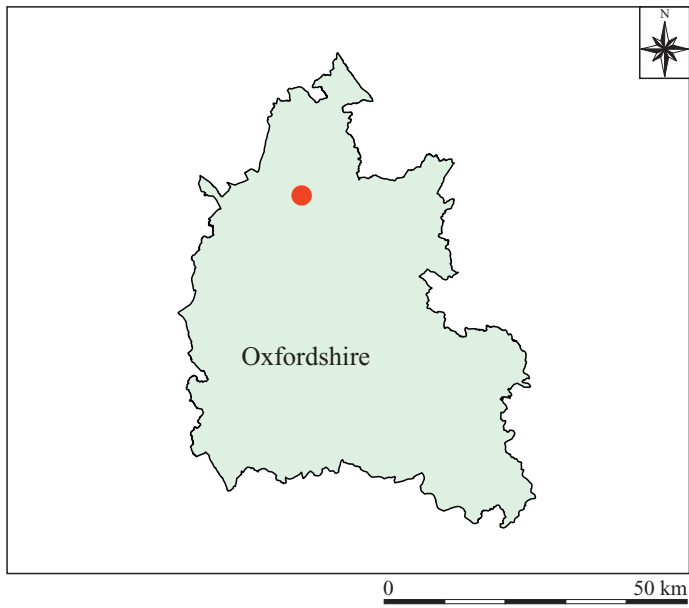


Figure 1: Site location

In 1066 the estate of Great Tew was held by Alnoth of Kent (Morris 1978, 7.4).

The Bishop of Bayeux held Great Tew in 1086 (Morris 1978, 7.4). This estate contained 16 hides with 31 villagers, 8 smallholders, 14 slaves, 288 acres of meadow and 101 acres of pasture.

Hugh de Envermen held the manor until 1111-18, from whence it passed to the king (VCH 1983, 223-47). The manor had been divided into three components by the 13th century.

The form *Tiwa Magna* first occurs from 1165, with English forms *Great Tuwe* developing from 1333 (Gelling 1954, 289). The additional suffix means great, but the context is not defined, either a larger settlement or a settlement with a superior status, for example a church, or a major manor.

In 1279 the village had 75 households, and in 1377 some 165 adults paid poll tax (VCH 1983, 223-47). Maps of the late 18th and 19th centuries indicate that the village street plan was altered.

The village operated a two course cultivation system, which operated in four open fields (VCH 1983, 223-47). In 1877 the parish was regarded as one of the best farmed in the Midlands.

The name *Swayneshegg* is referred to in 1436 (Gelling 1954, 290). The name has an etymology of Swine-herder's hedge. This implies that Great Tew was the location of a woodland enclosure for pigs. The name Grimsditch is recognised as the name of an earlier field name (VCH 1983, 223-47), which is a name that could also be associated with a woodland enclosure of prehistoric date. Imparkment that took place before the 16th century led to the isolation of the church and the manor. The later park boundary is known to have encroached upon the village.

The New Garden or Kitchen Garden has a central walled area covering c 1ha, and an outer boundary covering c 5ha (Worledge 2014). This garden was laid out in c. 1852 by P W Boulton, and in 1866 there was an associated gardner's cottage. The plans at the record office in this report are associated with a date of 1872, when there was a re-arrangement of the site. The garden is listed as part of the grade II listed park and as such is considered to be a site of national importance and a heritage asset. With references on the Oxford History Centre plans it is more likely that the plans were created while under the garden was construction.

The medieval church of Great Tew dedicated to Saint Michael and All Angels has various component parts dated to the 12th, 13th, 14th, and 15th centuries (**JMHS 3**, PRN 4898-MOX770: SP 39925 28874). The building was restored in 1827. A hollow way has been identified running from Chipping Norton to Great Tew (**JMHS 4**, PRN 16423-MOX11258: SP 3941 2907).

The landscape was emparked in the late 16th century (**JMHS 5**, PRN 8887-MOX1283: SP 4033 2897). The deer park was created in the 18th century. The Jacobean House in Great Tew Park was located on the site of Great Tew Park Mansion (**JMHS 6**, PRN 10534-MOX821). The structure was demolished c. 1790.

The churchyard walls to the north and east of the church are of a 16th to 17th century date (**JMHS 7**, PRN 23677-MOX21617: SP 39929 28908).

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation were as follows:

- To record any archaeological remains that would be impacted on by the groundworks.

In particular:

- To note the presence of any burials and relocate the test pits accordingly.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

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 the Medieval and later periods.

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.

This initial stage of works involved the monitoring of five test pits each 0.6m wide, 0.8m long and 1m deep for soil percolation tests. These were located in the northern extent of the churchyard (Fig. 1). All the test pits had a 0.2m thick layer of a grey /brown silty loam (01), a topsoil that overlay a +0.8m thick layer of an orange / brown clay with fragments of limestone (02) that contained small amounts of disarticulated human bone. Test pit 2 was extended down to a depth of 2m where it revealed the natural limestone (03) surface at 1.1m below the ground surface of *c.* 175.61m.

4.2 Reliability of Results

The excavations were conducted in changeable weather conditions and the soil horizons were clear, thus the reliability of the results is considered to be good.

5 FINDS

The few small fragments of disarticulated human bone (charnel) was re-interred in the trenches and no other finds were recovered from the trenches.

6 DISCUSSION

The watching brief consisted of the excavation of five small test pits that cut through the topsoil and graveyard soils. No articulated human remains were encountered and any charnel bone was reinterred into the test pits. No other archaeological features were present.

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