

PARK FARM HOUSE, MERTON RD, AMBROSEDEN, OXFORDSHIRE**ADDENDUM REPORT****Site Location** (Figure 1)

The site is located at Park Farm House, Merton Road, Ambroseden, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 6035 1926). The underlying geology identified to the southeast of the Merton Road, on British Geological Survey maps, is classed as Kellaways Clay Member, a mudstone sedimentary bedrock deposited 161 to 165 million years ago in the Jurassic (mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html). To the north of the Merton Road the bedrock is a Cornbrash Formation, a limestone deposited 161 to 168 million years ago. The natural detected in the watching brief would appear to include both of these deposits. Topographically, the site lies on the plain of the river Ray between 62 and 65m OD.

Planning Background

Cherwell District Council granted planning permission and Listed Building Consent for the removal of the existing link between the front and rear stone built structures at Park Farmhouse. Permission was granted for the construction of a new single storey link and a new first floor link corridor between them, along with a single storey extension to the west of the rear stone structure, and the internal refurbishment of existing buildings (ref. 13/00693/F). Due to the archaeological and historical importance of the surrounding area a condition was attached to the permission requiring a watching brief to be maintained during the course of building operations or construction works on the site. John Moore Heritage services carried out an archaeological watching brief on 13th and 16th of September and 9th and 21st of October 2013 (Yeates 2014). A further phase of watching brief was required in 2018 to monitor the excavation of base for the air conditioning unit, a base for the patio and a soakaway for drainage for the new extension.

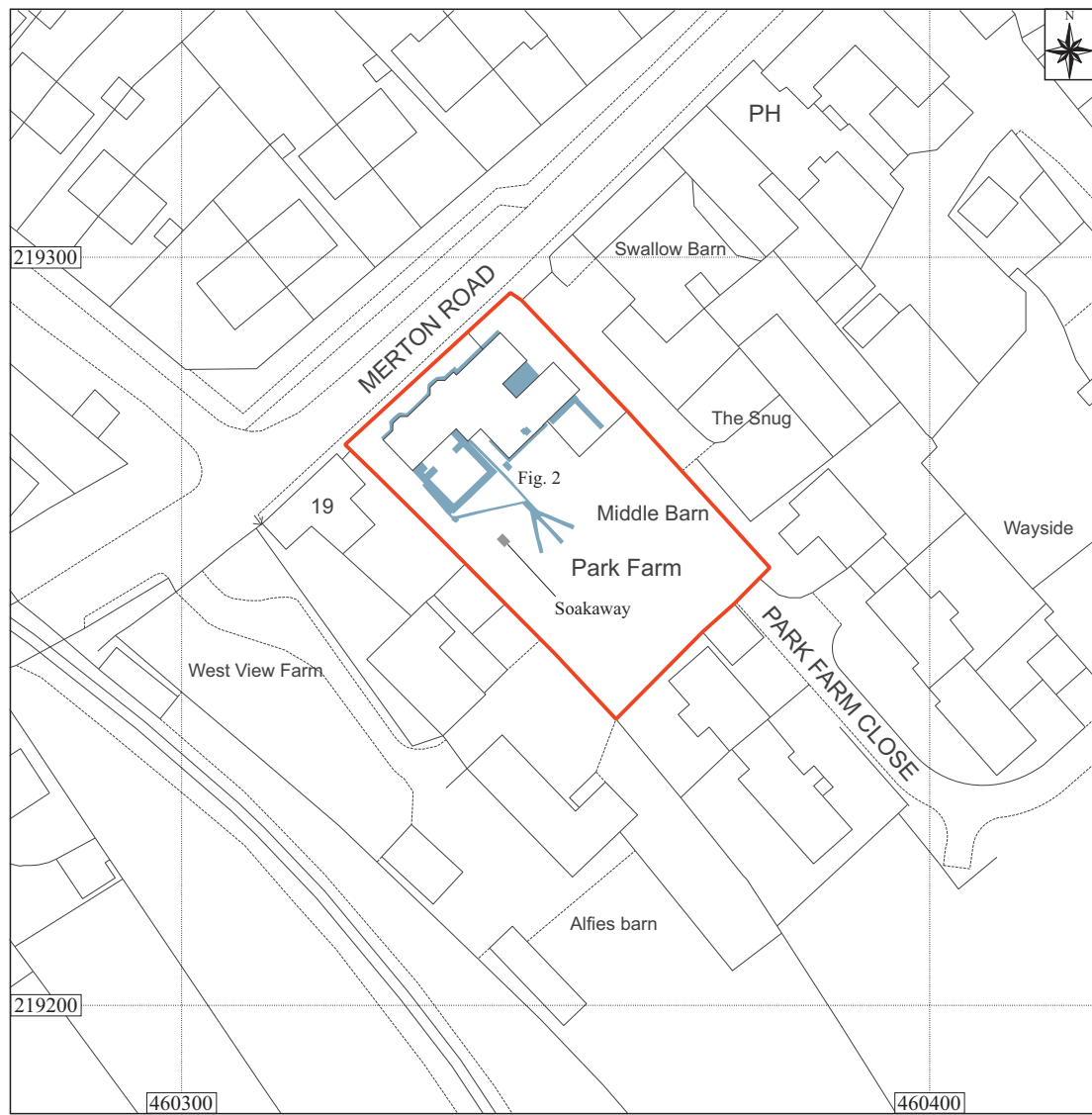
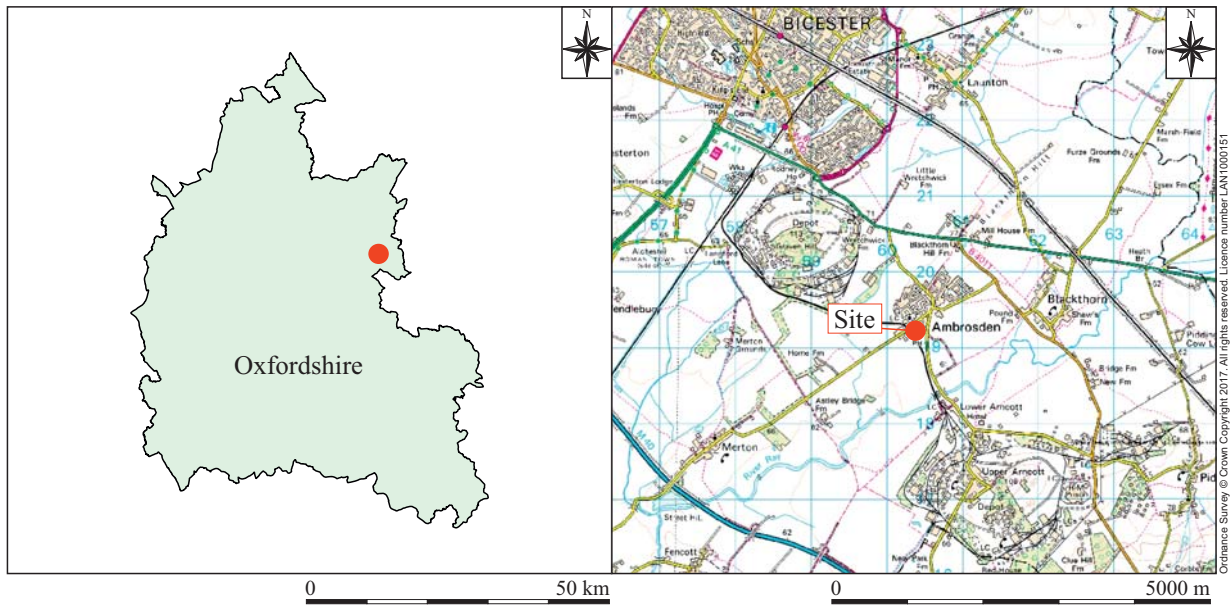
Archaeological Background

Pre-medieval archaeology of any type in Ambroseden parish is rare or non-existent. Only one site has been identified; an area of intensive Roman period pits and ditches in an area to the northwest of the road leading to Blackthorn, within 500m from the site located at Park Farm (EH 340914: SP 6057 1967).

During the excavation of the foundations of an extension, 6 phases were identified stratigraphically spanning from the 15th century to the modern period (Yeates 2014).

Results (Figure 2, plan and sections 1 and 2; Plates 1 and 2)

John Moore Heritage services carried an archaeological watching brief on 12 April 2018 during the excavation of the soakaway to the southwest of the extension and porch (Figures 1 and 2). The stratigraphy was relatively straight forward as the soakaway was approximately 5m to the SW of the structure in the managed garden/lawn area.



Key Site boundary Monitored area 2018 Monitored areas (2014)

Figure 1: Site location

The lowest level excavated was the natural clay geology,(53), 0.3m or less in thickness and identified towards the north-east and south-west ends of the soakaway, at a depth of 0.94m below surface. Cut into the natural was the base of a possible cut feature 51. It was encountered at a depth of 0.8m below the surface and was filled with (52), comprised of degraded rubble, dark black streaks mottled with red degraded brick or pot staining, which was a maximum of 0.22m thick and measured >1.5m by >1m in area, extending outside the limit of the excavation to the north-east and to the south-west. A single sherd of Samian pottery was recovered from within the fill (52). The certainty of whether this was a feature is impeded by the limited area excavated, and the fact that the feature appears to have been heavily truncated by a levelling action associated with the layer above it, (50). Deposit (50) was a more recent layer of made ground with demolition material, 0.52m thick. Above this there was a layer of garden soil (49) which was 0.22m thick, above which lay the turf and topsoil (48). Context (48) extended to a depth of 0.12m below the surface. No other archaeological features or finds were recovered from the excavation.

The area to the north of the soakaway was being stripped to lay hardcore in advance of building up the porch. The maximum depth of the stripping was just below grass of the turf (not even below the rooting), approximately 0.03m below the surface. As such, no archaeology was in danger of impact thus it was deemed unnecessary to monitor this area.

Finds

THE POTTERY *by Jane Timby*

The archaeological work at Ambroseden, Oxfordshire resulted in the recovery of a single sherd of Central Gaulish (Lezoux) samian weighing 24g (Plate 3). The sherd is from a shallow dish possibly a Dragendorff 18 or 18/31 and is likely to date to the early-mid 2nd century. It is a moderately large sherd with no other associated Roman pottery and could conceivably be a curated curiosity.

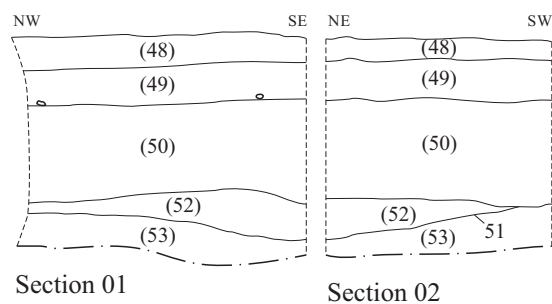
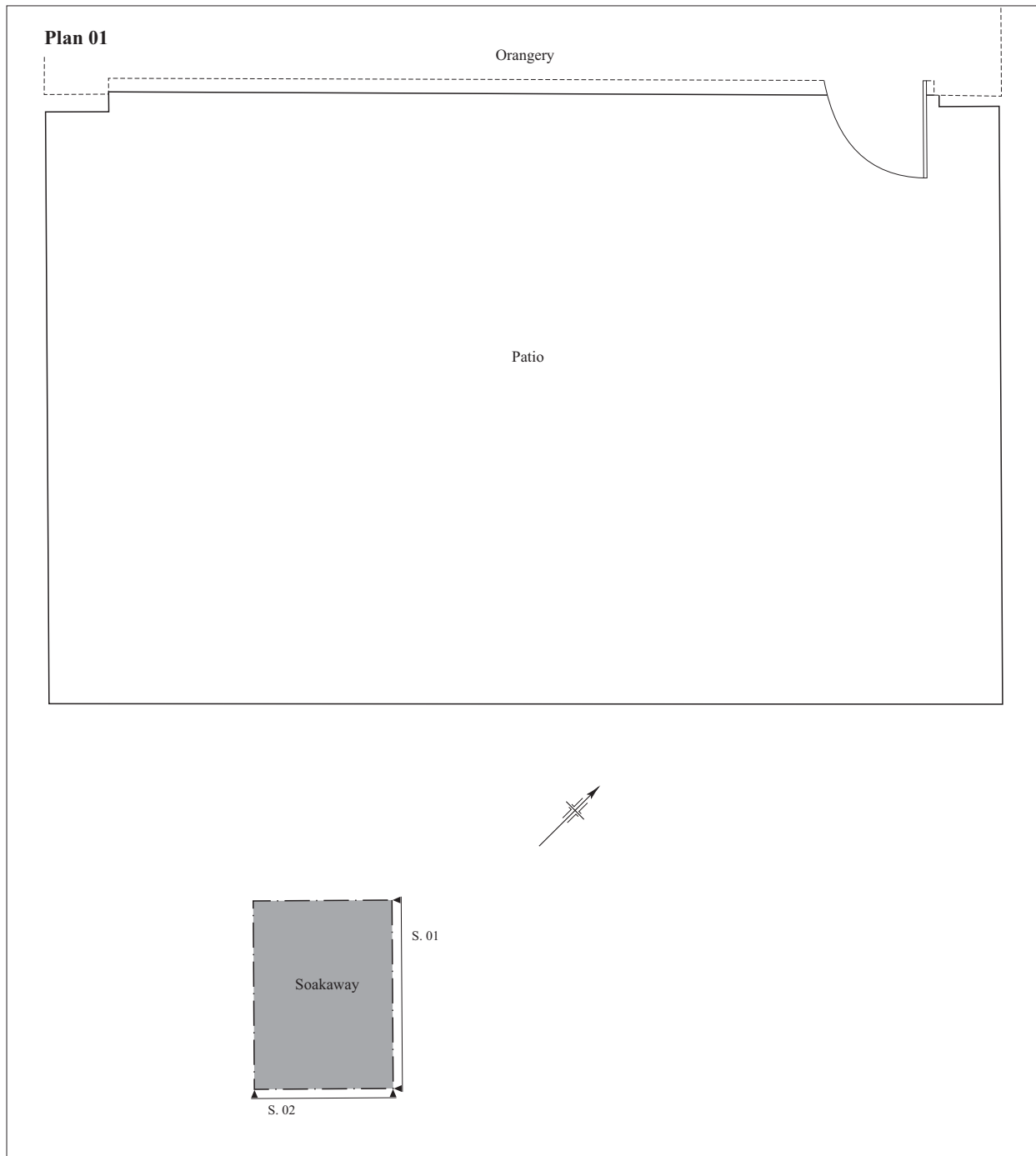
No further work recommended.

Bibliography

John Moore Heritage Services, 2013, 13/00693/F – *Park Farm House, Merton Road, Ambroseden, Oxfordshire. Archaeological Watching Brief. Written Scheme of Investigation.* Unpublished. JMHS.

Yeates, S, 2014, *An Archaeological Watching Brief at Park Farm. Merton Road, Ambroseden, Oxfordshire.* Unpublished. JMHS.

Stephanie N. Duensing
John Moore Heritage Services
19th April 2018



Key
 ■ Monitored area

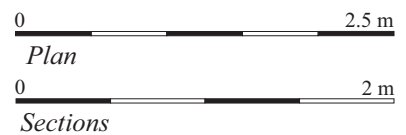


Figure 2: Soakaway area plan with sections



Plate 1. S.01 SW view.



Plate 2. S.02. SW view.



Plate 3. Samian pot sherd.