



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**LAND TO R/O NORTHFIELD HOUSE,  
11 NORTHFIELD END, HENLEY-ON-THAMES,**

**OXFORDSHIRE RG9 2JG**

**NGR SU 76009 82983**

**SEPTEMBER 2018**

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John Moore Heritage Services.



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## **SUMMARY**

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief to the rear of Northfield House, 11 Northfield End, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 76009 82983). Groundworks consisted of the removal of the current parking surface, the partial reduction of the area and the excavation of footing trenches. No archaeological features or finds were recovered.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The site lies to the rear of Northfield House, 11 Northfield End, Henley-on-Thames. The development site is accessed from Kings Road, which it lies on the south side of, (NGR SU 76009 82983) and was formerly used for parking. It lies at approximately 34.5m AOD and the geology is Second (Summertown-Radley) Terrace River Gravels.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

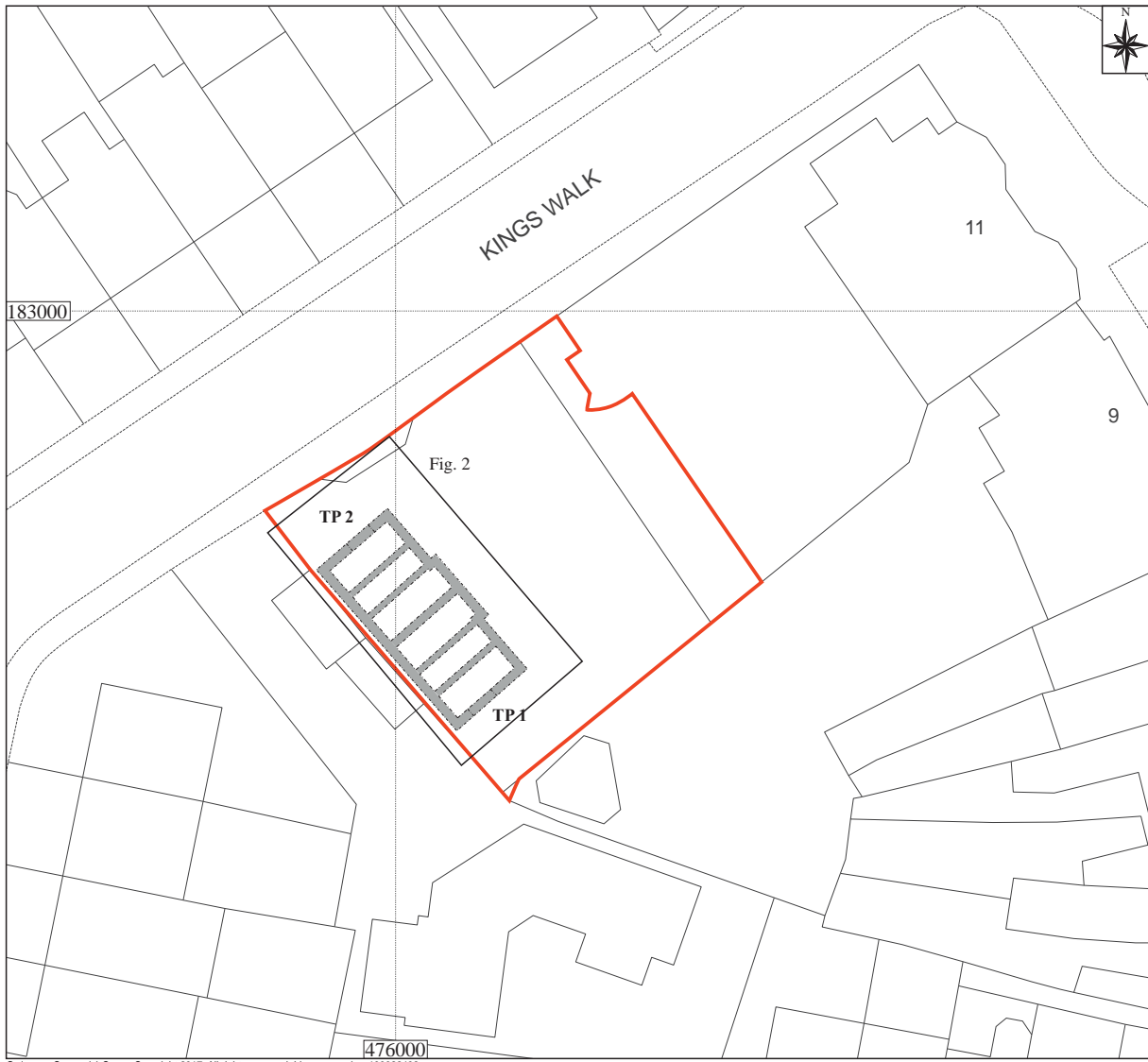
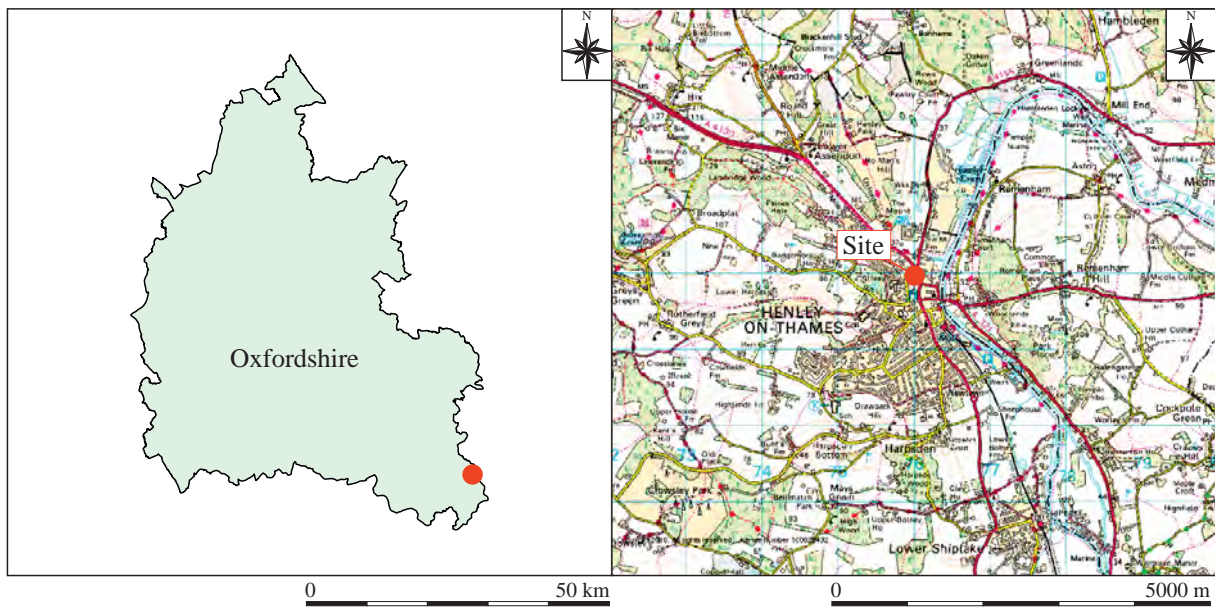
South Oxfordshire District Council has granted planning permission for the erection of a pair of two bedroom houses with associated parking and amenity space provision (as amended by plans 2018\_05\_14 to reduce height of dwellings, move dwellings marginally northward, half hip the rear gable and obscure glaze windows) (P18/0250/FUL). Due to the potential of the site to contain archaeological remains conditions relating to archaeology have been attached:

*12 The applicant, or their agents or successors in title, shall be responsible for organising and implementing an archaeological watching brief, to be maintained during the period of construction/during any groundworks taking place on the site. The watching brief shall be carried out by a professional archaeological organisation in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation that has first been approved in writing by the Local Planning Authority.*

*Reason: To secure the protection of and proper provision for any archaeological remains in accordance with Policy CSEN3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 and Policies CON11, CON13 and CON14 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011.*

*13 Following the approval of the Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 12, no development shall commence on site without the appointed archaeologist being present. Once the watching brief has been completed its findings shall be reported to the Local Planning Authority, as agreed in the Written Scheme of Investigation, including all processing, research and analysis necessary to produce an accessible and useable archive and a full report for publication.*

*Reason: To enable an appropriate level of archaeological investigation of the area including excavation and recording, post excavation analysis and the publication of results in accordance with Policy CSEN3 of the South Oxfordshire Core Strategy 2027 and Policies CON11, CON13 and CON14 of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2011.*



Key  Site boundary  Monitored area  Test pit

Figure 1: Site location

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The site is located within an area of archaeological potential close to the line of the projected routes of the Roman Road from Dorchester. The actual line of his road is uncertain but there are two suggested routes through the Town. One passes immediately to the south west of the site and the other passes approximately 100m to the north. A substantial Roman building and occupation surface was recorded during excavation on Bell Street 200m south of the site (PRN 16736).

It was therefore thought possible that further Roman settlement evidence could survive in the area. The site is shown as undeveloped on the 1st edition OS map and therefore if archaeological deposits were present on the site they can be expected to have survived.

## **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 for relating to Roman activity in this part of Henley-on-Thames.

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the Oxfordshire Historic Environment Team (OHET), the archaeological advisors to the South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC).

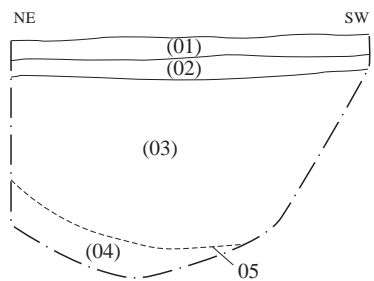
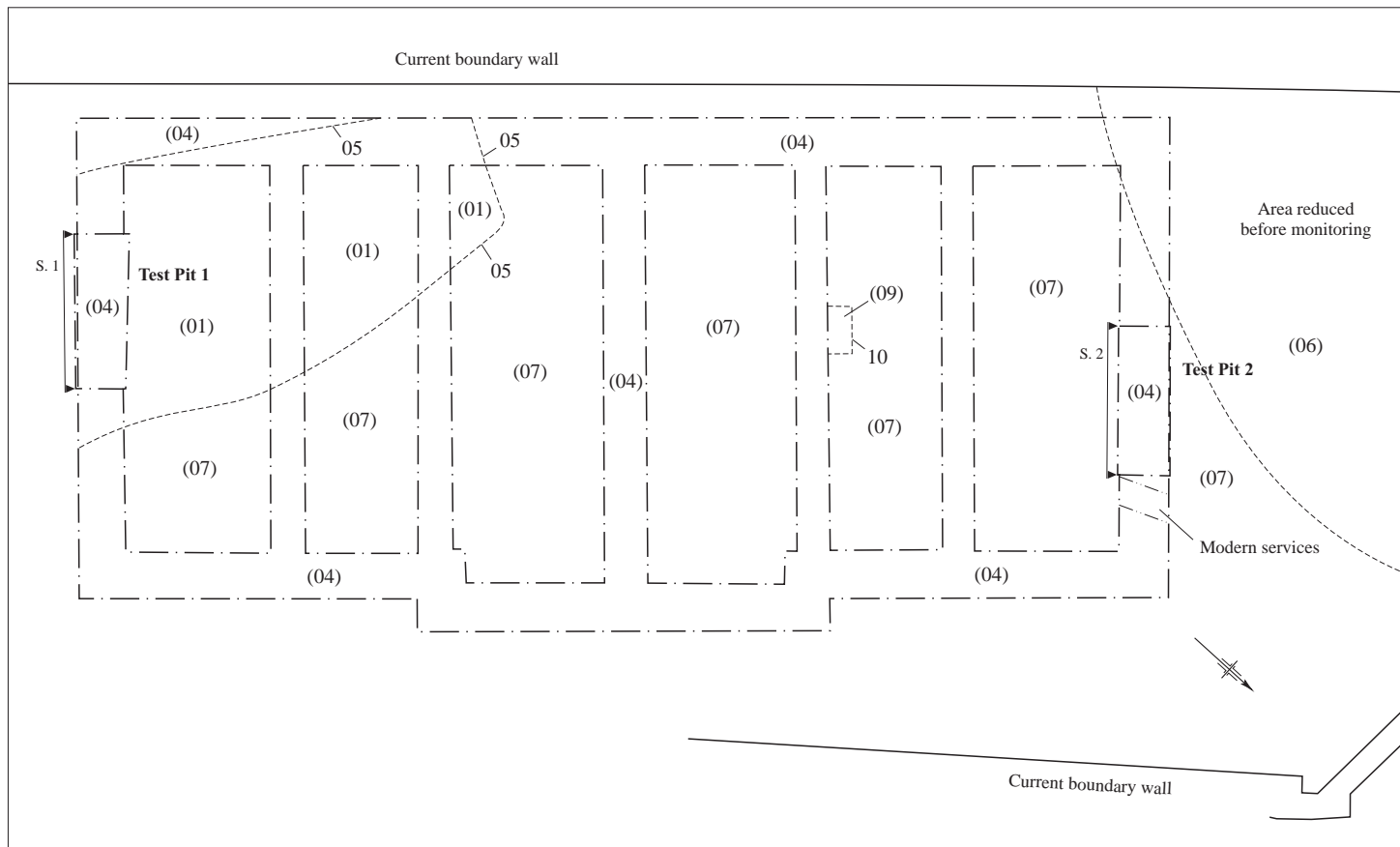
The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

### **3.2 Methodology**

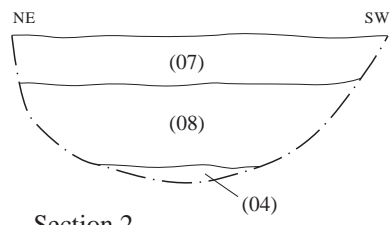
Initial groundwork, conducted without archaeological monitoring, comprised the removal of the current parking area surface and the reduction of ground in the north-western corner of the site by *c.* 350 mm, over an area of *c.* 50 square metres.

An archaeologist was present during the excavation of two test pits, each measuring *c.* 2m x 0.7m, located to the north-west and south-east ends of the footprints of the building. The test pits were dug to a maximum depth of 0.7m and 1.2m, in order to establish the level of the underlying geological deposit, and evaluate the presence of undisturbed archaeological deposits.

The excavation of the foundation trenches was only partially supervised as the test pits revealed modern made ground material down to the natural. The foundation trenches were inspected after their excavation.



Section 1



Section 2

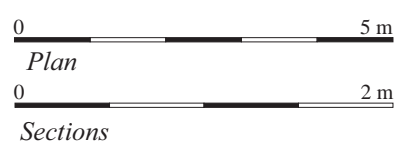


Figure 2: Site plan and sections

geology across the area, obliterating any archaeological deposits. The excavation of services trenches was not monitored as the impact level of the trenches was within the modern made up ground deposits revealed during the previous groundworks.

All deposits and features encountered were recorded to standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques, 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 Roman occupation of the area.

#### 4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

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.

Test pit 1 (Fig. 2, Section 1; Plates 1-2) was located at the south-eastern end of the building footprint, was oriented NE-SW and measured 1.9m in length and 0.7m in width.



Plate 1. Test pit 1

The lowest deposit encountered was (04), a firm, light brown-yellow sand and gravel deposit, identified as the underlying natural geology, visible at a depth of 0.75m below the current surface level.



Truncating (04), and extending beyond the limit of the test pit, was 05, a cut feature with a flattish base. The exact dimensions of the feature remain undetermined due to the ground conditions; however, the observable portions of the feature inside the footing trenches indicate an extent of *c.* 6x3m. Its fill (03), a friable, dark brown-greyish sandy silty loam with frequent stone and flint inclusions, measuring *c.* 0.9m in thickness, was found to be saturated with water and interpreted to be the fill of a modern soakaway.

This deposit was overlain by layer (02), a friable, dark brown-greyish silty sand deposit with occasional stone and flint inclusions. This was identified as a modern made up ground or levelling layer, measuring 0.1m in thickness and extending beyond the limits of excavation. The latest deposit was (01), a loose, light brown-yellow sand and gravel deposit measuring 0.1m in thickness, connected to the construction of the current parking area surface.

Test pit 2 (Fig. 2, Section 2; Plates 3-4) located at the opposite (north-western) end of the building footprint, was orientated NE-SW and measured 2m in length and 0.7m in width. The initial location of the test pit, *c.* 0.7m further north-east, was changed as one modern service pipe trench was encountered *c.* 0.1m below the surface (Plate 3).



Plate 2. Section 1, Test pit 1

The geological layer (04) was encountered at a depth of 0.7m below the current surface. Directly above this, modern made up ground (08) was recorded. This was a compact, mid-brown silty sandy loam deposit, with frequent stone and flint inclusions. A large amount of rubble, consisting of modern brick fragments, was also observed within the deposit. This layer extended beyond the limit of the excavation, and measured between 0.4 and 0.5m in thickness.

The uppermost deposit observed in test pit 2 was a loose, light brown-yellow sand and gravel deposit (07) very similar to (01) but richer in flint inclusions. Interpreted as modern made up ground, it measured *c.* 250mm in thickness and, similarly to (08), contained a large amount of modern brick fragments.

Although not visible in Section 2 as already removed prior to archaeological monitoring, an additional modern made up ground deposit (07) was observed in the

north-western corner of the area. This was a compacted, mid brown-greyish silty sand layer, with frequent flint and stone inclusions, and containing modern brick rubble. Its thickness was recorded at *c.* 0.35m, while its exact extent remains undetermined.



Plate 3. Test pit 2



Plate 4. Section 2, Test pit 2

Following the excavation of the footing trenches, a modern manhole 10 was uncovered, truncating modern made up ground (07). The sub-rectangular feature, measuring *ca.* 0.7m in width, was filled by (09), a loose, mid-dark brown silty sand deposit with frequent flint and stone, and containing rubble.

## **4.2 Reliability of Results**

The excavation was conducted in good weather, with good visibility. The reliability of results is considered to be fair despite the limited extent of the archaeological monitoring of the groundworks.

## **5 FINDS**

The material present on site was limited to brick, both fragmentary and complete. The material was sampled for observation on site, and not retained as identified as machine-made 20<sup>th</sup> century frogged brick (Plate 4).

## **6 DISCUSSION**

The archaeological monitoring revealed no archaeological features. Modern made ground was found above the natural sand and gravels. Modern drainage pipes and a soakaway were encountered. No earlier archaeological remains were observed.

## **7 ARCHIVE**

A digital copy of the primary records will be maintained by John Moore Heritage Services. Digital copies of the report will be deposited with OASIS and a digital summary report with the Oxfordshire County Museum Service.

## **8 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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

# OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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**OASIS ID: johnmoor1-327345**

### Project details

Project name	rear of Northfield House, 11 Northfield End, Henley-on-Thames
Short description of the project	John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief to the rear of Northfield House, 11 Northfield End, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire. (NGR SU 76009 82983). Groundworks consisted in the partial reduction of the area and the excavation of footing trenches. No archaeological features or finds were recovered; however, the numerous modern interventions observed might have obliterated any archaeological remains present.
Project dates	Start: 21-08-2018 End: 22-08-2018
Previous/future work	Not known / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	3990 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	HYNE 18 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	MANHOLE Modern
Significant Finds	BRICK Modern
Investigation type	"Watching Brief"
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

### Project location

Country	England
Site location	OXFORDSHIRE SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE HENLEY ON THAMES rear of Northfield House, 11 Northfield End, Henley-on-Thames
Postcode	RG9 2JG
Study area	105 Square metres
Site coordinates	SU 76009 82983 51.540141948219 -0.903886945417 51 32 24 N 000 54 13 W Point

Height OD / Depth    Min: 0.7m Max: 1.2m

### Project creators

Name of Organisation            John Moore Heritage Services

Project brief originator        South Oxfordshire District Council

Project design originator        JMHS

Project director/manager        John Moore

Project supervisor                Simona Denis

Type of sponsor/funding body    Client

### Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?        No

Digital Archive recipient        JMHS

Digital Archive ID                3990

Digital Contents                  "Stratigraphic"

Paper Archive Exists?            No

Entered by                          Simona Denis (admin@jmheritageservices.co.uk)

Entered on                          3 September 2018

## OASIS:

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