

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**DUKES ORCHARD, 7 ORCHARD LANE,**

**EAST HENDRED, OXFORDSHIRE**

**SP 4607 8895**

*On behalf of*

*Cranbourne Homes Ltd*

**MAY 2007**

**REPORT FOR** Cranbourne Homes Ltd  
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## **Summary**

*A watching brief was carried out by John Moore Heritage Services during groundworks for three new houses and access. No archaeological remains apart from the footprint of a building shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> Edition Ordnance Survey map were present.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

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

The proposed development site is located on the south western side of the junction of Orchard Lane and the High Street in East Hendred (NGR SP 4607 8895). The lot is approximately 0.3 hectares in area and previously contained a bungalow and orchard. It lies at about 90m OD and the underlying geology is Upper Greensand.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

The Vale of White Horse Council granted planning permission to demolish an existing bungalow and for the erection of three detached dwellings (EHE/9592/5). Due to the archaeological potential of the site a condition was attached requiring an archaeological watching brief to be maintained during the period of groundworks. This was in line with PPG 16 and HE19 of the Local Plan Policies.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The proposed development site lies within the historic core of East Hendred. There is documentary evidence of a manor at East Hendred being held by the crown during the reign of Edward the Confessor. This suggests that there is the potential for late Anglo Saxon settlement.

The stone Chapel of Jesus of Bethlehem stands to the south. The monks of Sheen Priory built this in the early 15th century. A wooden Priest House was added during the later 15th century. There were later additions in 1690. The adjacent Wheatsheaf Inn is early 17th century in date. Further south is the King's Manor. Possibly this was the royal manor. The existing building is 16th century, but it would appear that this superseded an earlier manor house. The Norman Priory of Hoyon held this until the dissolution of the alien monasteries in 1414. After this Sheen Priory held the manor. The earlier manor probably had a series of outbuildings including barns, a granary and a dovecote.

The first edition OS map of 1883 shows the site lying within an orchard with a building lying in the southern part of the site fronting High Street.

## **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 remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

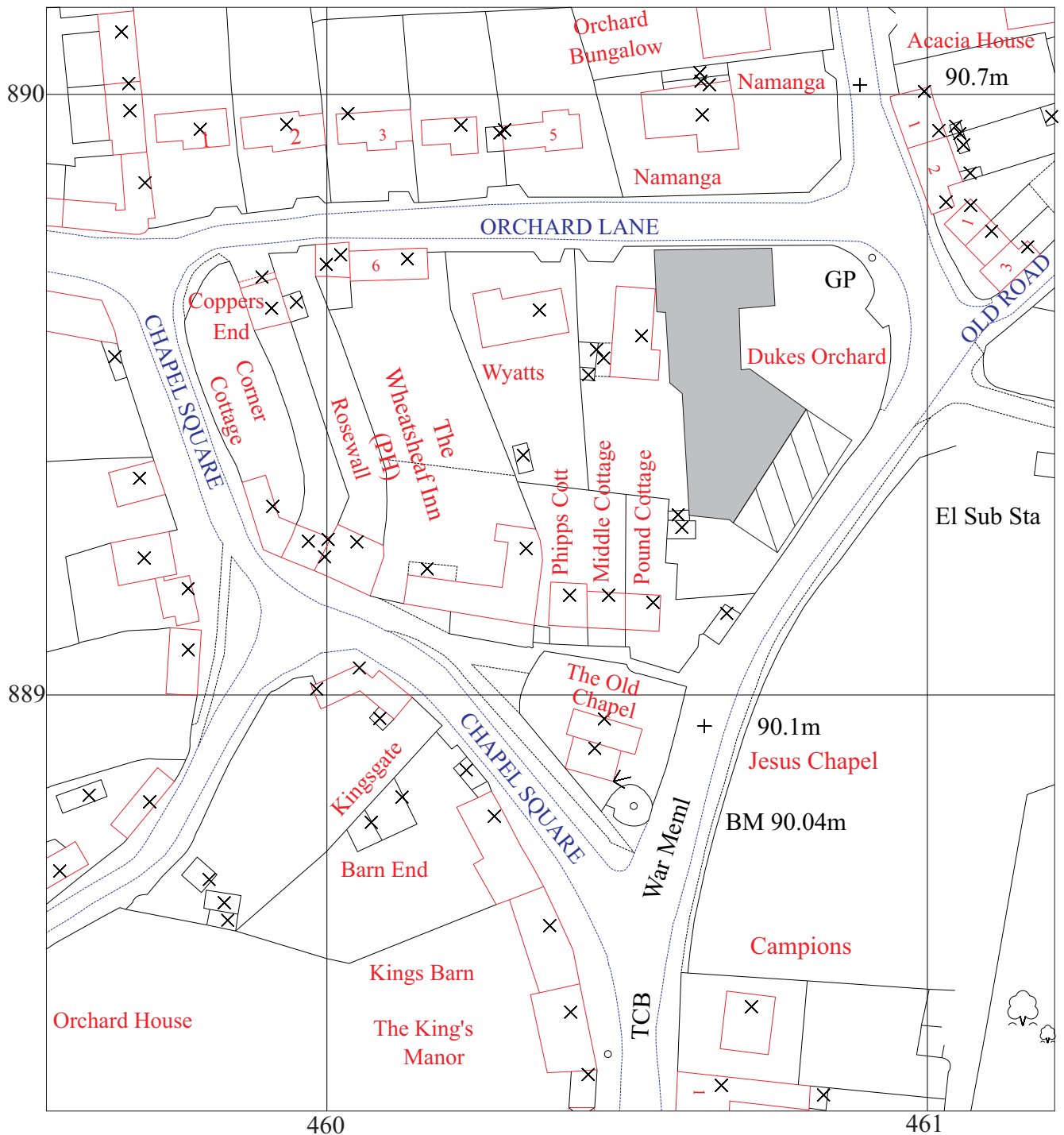


Figure 1. Site Location

- Particular aims were to record any evidence of Anglo Saxon and medieval settlement activity
- To make public the results of the investigation

### **3 STRATEGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services. Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record throughout, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994) and the procedures laid down in MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

#### **3.2 Methodology**

An archaeologist was present during stripping of the topsoil for the building plot in the central part of the site adjacent to Orchard Lane and during the excavation of the northern foundation trench for the same building. Parts of the access were examined after stripping of topsoil (Figure 1, grey tone) The stripping of the topsoil and made ground for the building plot at the southern end of the site was also observed (Figure 1, hatched).

Following the above observations and the obvious lack of evidence for medieval or early post-medieval activity on the site it was agreed with the County Archaeological Services that the watching brief could be terminated.

### **4 RESULTS**

No archaeological features or finds, other than modern material associated with the recently demolished bungalow, were seen in the northern and central parts of the site.

In the south part of the site material associated with the demolition of the building shown on the 1<sup>st</sup> edition Ordnance Survey map were present along with pits containing 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century rubbish. The footprint of the building was also visible infilled with chalky clay and demolition rubble.

No medieval activity in the form of artifacts or features was seen.

### **5 DISCUSSION**

The site was not occupied during the medieval period and was not in agricultural use as there was no evidence of manuring. It appears that this site was either part of a paddock or an orchard in the medieval period. Where the name Dukes Orchard

derives from is unknown but may be indicative of a long lived use of the site as an orchard.

## **6 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

Institute of Field Archaeologists. 1994. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs.*