

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

LAND ADJACENT BARTON MANOR,

7 BARTON VILLAGE ROAD, OXFORD

NGR SP 5507 0783

JULY 2019

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FIELDWORK 1st July 2019

REPORT ISSUED 11th July 2019

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Site Code: OXBVR19
Archive Location: The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Oxfordshire County Museum Service under accession number OXCMS: 2019.39.



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Summary

The investigation revealed part of a large feature that extended outside the confines of one of the trenches. It is possible that it was a large boundary ditch associated with the manor house. Apart from this feature, a number of other features were identified; two post-medieval gullies and ditches, a post-medieval well, and the remains of construction cut which was likely associated with the two post-medieval cottages that previously occupied the site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is located at 7 Barton Village Road, Barton, Oxford. The site is centred at National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 5507 0783. The underlying geology is Beckley Sand Member, a sandstone band of sedimentary rock formed 154 to 159 million years ago in the Jurassic period. The site is close to the interface with an underlying deposit of the Temple Cowley Member a series of interbedded sandstone and siltstone deposits also considered to be laid down 154 to 159 million years ago in the Jurassic period. Pre-evaluation the development site was an overgrown garden covered by modern refuse.

1.2 Planning Background

Oxford City Council has granted planning permission for Erection of 2 x 2 bed dwelling house (Use Class C3), Provision of private amenity space, bin and cycle storage and car parking (17/01834/FUL and 17/01835/LBC). The following condition has been attached 17/01834/FUL:

9 No development shall commence until a written scheme of investigation (WSI) has been [submitted to and] approved by the local planning authority in writing. For land that is included within the WSI, no development shall take place other than in accordance with the agreed WSI, which shall include the statement of significance and research objectives, and

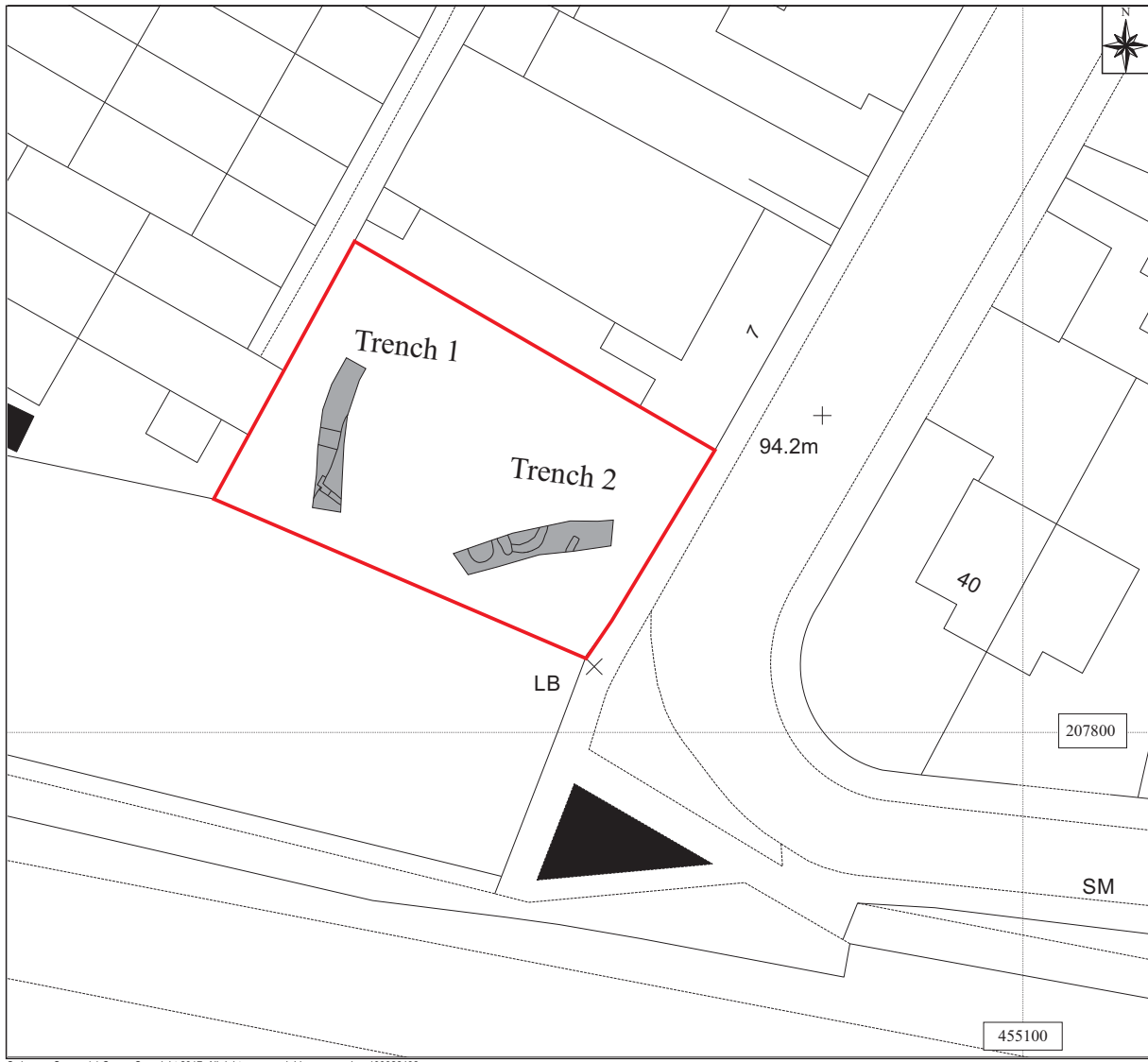
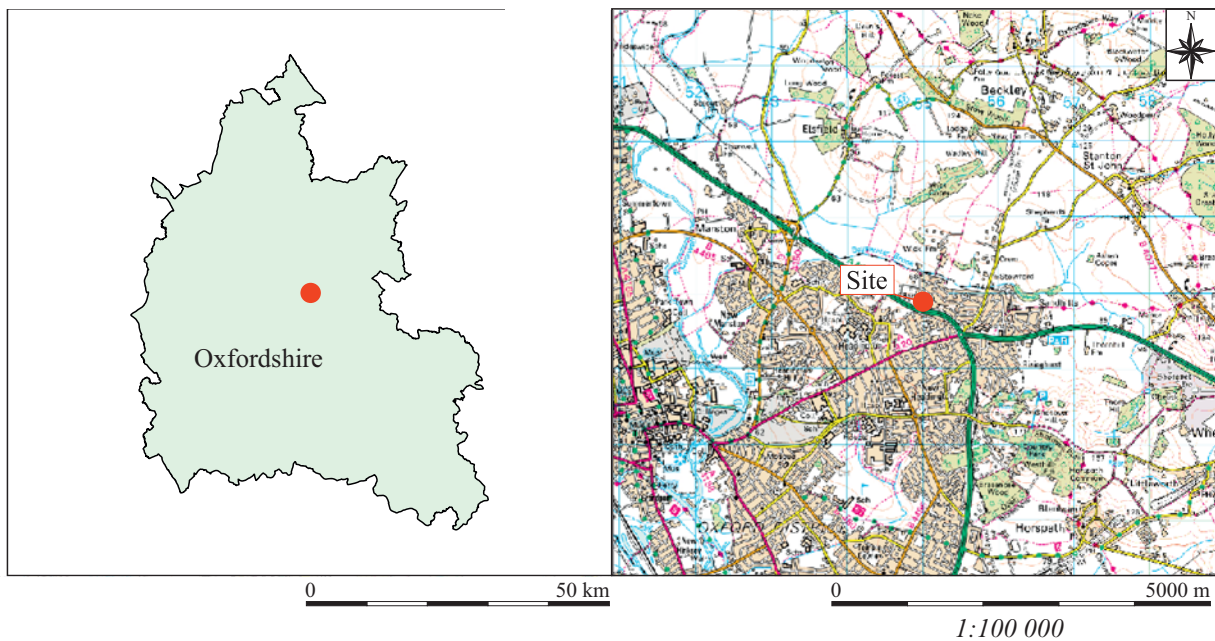
o The programme and methodology of site investigation and recording (including trial trenching followed by further mitigation if required) and the nomination of a competent person(s) or organisation to undertake the agreed works

o The programme for post-investigation assessment and subsequent analysis, publication & dissemination and deposition of resulting material. This part of the condition shall not be discharged until these elements have been fulfilled in accordance with the programme set out in the WSI

Reason: Because the development may have a damaging effect on known or suspected elements of the historic environment of the people of Oxford and their visitors, including Saxon, medieval and post-medieval remains (Local Plan Policy HE.2).

1.3 Archaeological Background

This site is located within the historic core of Barton, adjacent to the 17th century grade II listed Barton Manor. The evolution of the hamlet of Barton is poorly



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Key Site boundary Evaluation trenches
 Archaeological features Study Building

Figure 1: Site location

understood. In 1931 a series of early-Saxon finds and features were identified approximately 40m to the west of this site, including an inhumation burial retrieved at the bottom of a possible sunken featured building (OHER No.3802). The earliest reference to the medieval hamlet of Barton dates to 1246 by which time it is already referred to as 'Old Barton' (Victoria County History Volume v: 158). The Hundred Rolls of 1279 record eleven households in the hamlet.

Two cottages of post-medieval character and a stone built structure of unknown function are known to have occupied the street frontage of this plot until the mid-1950s at least and structures associated with Halls Brewery may also have occupied part of the site in the 20th century as the site was sold to the Brewery.

The desk-based assessment noted the potential for Saxon, medieval and post medieval archaeology in this location and the addendum identified the surviving frontage wall of this property as the standing remains of likely 17th century date, including the front walls of now demolished cottages. A further possible late medieval wall forms the western boundary of the plot, which does not form part of this application.

The current proposal involves the retention of the best preserved section of post-medieval street frontage wall that includes readable features (i.e. window jambs) from one of the original cottages.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To undertake Stage 2 archaeological evaluation of the 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 any horizontal and/or vertical stratigraphy present.
 - To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.

In particular:

- To determine whether any Saxon, medieval or post-medieval remains are present on the site. The evaluation will inform the need for any Stage 3 mitigation resulting from the evaluation report.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation (JMHS, 2019) agreed with Oxford City's Archaeologist, the archaeological advisor to Oxford City Council.

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

3.2 Methodology

Two 10m by 1.6m trenches were opened to the archaeological horizon across the proposed site. Trenches were accurately set out using a GPS system prior to their excavation. This was particularly important as the projected location of trenches were positioned to maximise chances of investigating post-medieval and Saxon remains on site. However, Trench 1 was moved slightly to accommodate space for the machine to dig the trench on site, bending slightly east on at the northern end of the trench.

The removal of topsoil and other overburden was undertaken by a 360° tracked 7-ton machine, using a toothless bucket. The exposed surfaces were cleaned.

Each deposit exposed during the excavation was allocated a unique reference number (context number) with an individual written description. A list of all contexts and their interpretations appears in Appendix 2. A photographic record in both digital and black and white film were also compiled and sections and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All drawings were compiled on permatrace and include context numbers and OD spot heights. Recording of deposits encountered was undertaken according to standard John Moore Heritage Services practice. All records were checked and a stratigraphic matrix produced. Phasing was based on the nature of the deposits and recognisable relationships between them.

The Evaluation was inspected during the excavation by the local planning authority's archaeological advisor, David Radford. Site procedures carried out followed CIfA guidelines and the requirements set out by Oxford City's Archaeologist (OCC 2019).

4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

Two trenches were opened in the course of a single day during this investigation. All contexts that were identified within these trenches are described below. Rounded brackets, (), denote layers or deposits while no brackets indicate the context is a cut number.

4.1 Trench 1 (Figure 2 and Plates 1-3)

The earliest deposit encountered in this trench, named (1/03), is a natural layer composed of compact, mid orangey brown silty sand with frequent stone inclusions (Plate 1). This natural layer was cut by two features; a small gully and a large unidentified feature. The relationship between these two features was identified through a small intersection, which indicated that the small gully, 1/06, was truncated by the large unidentified feature (Fig. 2, S 1.3). This gully was a relatively small, regular linear feature running southeast-northwest, it had moderately sloping, regular symmetrical sides which were slightly concavely curving (Fig. 2, S 1.4, Plate 2). The gully had a distinct break of slope at the base of the feature and a regular concavely curving base. The width was 0.25m and depth 0.24m. It was more than 0.92m in length. The gully was filled by a single fill (1/07) of a friable mid yellowish brown sandy loam with occasional founded stone inclusions. The fill of the gully, (1/07) was cut on its western end by the large unidentified feature.

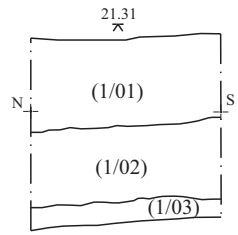
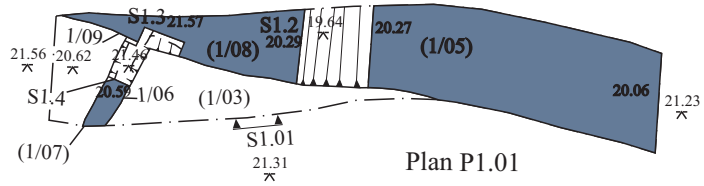


Plate 1: Southwest looking photograph of Trench 1 Pre-excitation

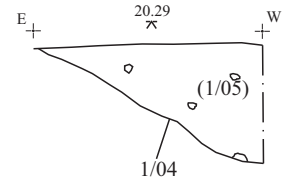


Plate 2: Northwest looking photograph of gully 1/06 and feature 1/09

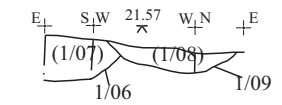
Two partial sections were placed into the large feature, a small one excavated in order to determine its relationship with the previously discussed gully at the southern end of the trench, and a larger, though still only partial section in the central part of Trench 1. As such this feature was given two context numbers, one associated with each. Context number 1/09 refers to the smaller relationship section and 1/04 refers to the larger one. Unfortunately, the size of the feature, combined with the positioning of the trench, meant that the shape of the feature in plan was largely lost – therefore it is not



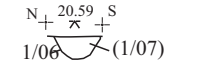
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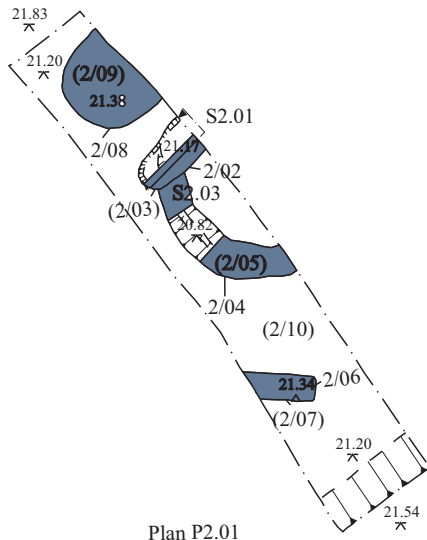
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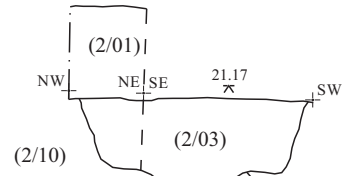
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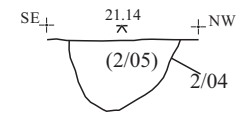
Section S1.4



Plan P2.01



Section S2.1



Section S2.3

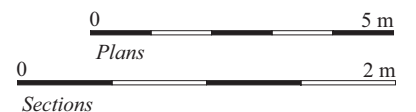


Figure 2: Trenches 1-2 and sections

possible to confirm whether this feature was a linear or a discrete feature, though it can be said that it was a relatively large feature. Intervention 1/09 in this feature was only large enough to evaluate the feature's relationship and is therefore not particularly useful in revealing the shape of the feature. The little of the eastern side of the feature that was revealed within this slot shows a moderately sloping regular side. However, section 1/04 was much larger, and thus reveals much more of the shape of the cut of the ditch, though this is also not a full profile of the feature (Fig. 2, S 1.2). This showed a generally regular, moderately steeply sloping eastern side of the feature with a distinct break of slope at the top of the feature, the base of the feature was not revealed.



Plate 3: South facing photograph of 1/04

The two fills (1/05) and (1/08) seen in the interventions were similar in nature – both being friable sand loams, with occasional stone inclusions – though while (1/05) was a mid-greyish brown, (1/08) was a mid-yellowish brown. Two sherds of pottery were recovered: a residential medieval sherd and a sherd of post-medieval Redware. 37 fragments of animal bone were found as well.

Sealing all these contexts was a large layer of made-ground, associated with a levelling action on the site, (1/02). This context comprises a compact, mid-brown silty clay with moderate amounts of modern rubble inclusions. Immediately above this layer was (1/01) a modern layer associated with demolition and refuse. This layer is the latest one found in Trench 1 and consists of a dark greyish brown, friable silt, with frequent amounts of modern refuse (i.e. plastic, glass, metal, etc.).

4.2 Trench 2

Ten contexts were identified within the confines of Trench 2, the earliest of these was a natural layer (2/10), which comprised a mid-yellowish brown, friable, silty sand (Plate 4). Four features cut into this natural layer within Trench 2. Curving gully 2/04 was likely to be the earliest of these features. This had steeply sloping regular sides, distinct breaks of the slope at the top and base of the feature, and a concave base (Plate 5). Within the trench this was 2.2m in length, 0.60m wide and 0.36m deep. Gully 2/04 was filled by a single context (2/05) of a compact mid-light yellowish grey

clayey silt with moderate amounts of chalk and charcoal inclusions. Limited amounts of fragments of ceramic tile and brick were recovered.



Plate 4: West looking shot of Trench 2



Plate 5: Southwest looking shot of 2/04

Another gully or narrow ditch terminal 2/02, cut into the fill of ditch 2/04, (2/05). This feature had a sharp break of slope at the top of the feature, regular steeply sloping sides and a sharp break of slope at the base, which was flat though slightly irregular. Gully/ditch 2/02 was filled by a friable, dark greyish brown, sandy silt with frequent amounts of chalk and charcoal inclusions (2/03).



Plate 6: North looking shot of ditch 2/02

The other two features found in Trench 2 did not have any physical or stratigraphic relationships with any of the other features in Trench 2. One of these features was the cut for a well 2/08 associated with the construction of this well. This well was not excavated due to its partial and ongoing collapse as well as concerns about the stability of the feature. The well was sealed by context (2/09), a modern fill associated with the disuse of the well. This fill was compact and composed of a dark greyish brown with frequent inclusions of large slabs of concrete.

The last feature in Trench 2 was a linear feature, thought to be associated with the construction of a wall, though the wall itself did not survive. This was a very regular linear feature running north-south 2/06. This construction was filled by a compact light brownish grey, clayey silt with moderate amounts of large chalk inclusions (2/07).

Covering, and sealing all of these contexts was a modern demolition and refuse layer associated the current use of the site, (2/01). This context was constructed of a loose dark greyish brown, clayey silty with frequent amounts of modern refuse inclusions.

4.2 Reliability of Results

The evaluation was undertaken in relatively stable conditions, though rather bright. Given the time of year adequate time was taken in order to ensure that both the excavation and recording were carried out to a high standard on this site. As such the reliability of the results achieved is considered high.

5 FINDS by *Simona Denis, Paul Blinkhorn and Sarah Doherty*

5.1 Environmental Sample

A single environmental sample <1> was collected during the archaeological works, in order to further investigate the nature and dating of ditch 1/04.

The sample was processed through flotation and then manually sorted to recover materials. The heavy residue, weighing 376g, contained animal bone, charred material, and a fragment of high medieval pottery. The burnt material, weighing 3.1g, was very fragmentary, with examples preserved to a maximum length of *c.* 10mm, and probably originated from twigs or small branches.

5.2 Animal Bone

Deposit (1/05), the fill of ditch 1/04, contained 37 fragments of animal bone, of a combined weight of 111.3g. The state of preservation of the material is generally fair, although extremely fragmentary; the only complete items recovered were two pig molars.

Context	Taxon	Type	No. of Items	Weight (g)	Comments
1/05	Pig	Maxilla with M3	1	13.5	Complete molar
		Lower M2	1	6.1	
	?Pig	Mandible	3	14.4	
	Small mammal	Rib	15	42.9	5 fragments with fresh breaks, conjoining, originating from 2 ribs
		Cortex	16	6.3	
		Long bone cortex	1	28.1	
Total			37	111.3	

Only 5 of the remains were identified as pig on the basis of the observation of *Genus*-specific characteristics. The remaining items, representing 84% of the collection, were attributed to 'small mammal' (sheep/goat, pig, roe deer) of undetermined species (O'Connor 2003) exclusively on the basis of the size range of the fragments. No butchering marks were observed.

It is not recommended to retain the animal bone assemblage due to its very limited potential for further analysis.

5.3 Ceramics

5.3.1 Ceramic Building Material

A very limited quantity of ceramic building material was recovered from deposit (2/05), the fill of gully 2/04.

The material consisted in 6 fragments of a combined weight of 6.8g. Four of the fragments, including one that possibly originated from the edge of a brick, showed a

gritty, light orange-pink fabric, with no visible inclusions. The fabric of the remaining two items was equally gritty, but of a darker red colour.

The extremely small size of the fragments prevents from a positive identification of the original function; however, the general aspect of the material suggest it originated from post-medieval bricks.

It is not recommended to retain the ceramic building material fragments due to their very limited potential for further analysis.

5.2.2 Pottery

The pottery assemblage comprised 2 sherds with a total weight of 4g. The medieval material was recorded using the conventions of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1994), while the post-medieval wares used the conventions of the Museum of London Type-Series (eg. Vince 1985). Both sherds occurred in a single context, (1/05), with the following fabrics noted:

- **OXAM: Brill/Boarstall Ware**, AD1200 – 1600. 1 sherd, 2g.
- **PMR: Post-medieval Redware**, AD1550-1900. 1 sherd, 2g.

The fabric types are typical finds in the region. The sherd of OXAM is a plain and unglazed bodysherd, while that in PMR is from the rim of a small bowl or cup, and has an orange-brown glaze on both surfaces. They are both typical of their respective traditions. Both are a little abraded, and clearly the product of secondary deposition, and, from their size, quite possibly residual.

6 DISCUSSION

There are three phases of activity that have been identified on this site; medieval, post medieval, and modern.

Medieval

The only evidence for medieval activity on this site rests upon a two sherds of pottery. One of these was identified as Brill/Boarstall Ware which dates from the AD1200 – 1600, while it was only possible to date the second piece of pottery to the medieval period generally. Both shards were discovered within a fill of the large feature in Trench 1, (1/05). That is not to say that this deposit can be dated to the medieval period, as another find dating to the post-medieval period was also found within this context; however, it does indicate medieval activity in the area. Also due to the size of the feature, it is likely that it may have been open for a significant amount of time, and the presence of this sherd indicates a possibility of medieval activity and might suggest an earlier date for the cut of the feature. Having said this, it is also entirely possible that this piece of medieval pottery is simply residual. An environmental sample was taken from this deposit, which included a shard of medieval pottery, animal bone, and burnt material, the levels of which are all consistent with what one might expect through the slow process of the infilling of the feature through in wash from inbourn particles, including the occasional piece of contemporary refuse.

Although the size of the feature precludes definite classification of this feature as either a linear or discrete feature, the shape of the feature exposed in the trench looks is suggestive of a large linear feature. This combined with the size and location of this feature might indicate

that this is a large boundary ditch associated with the manor house. It appears to be parallel with Barton Village Road.

While the sherd of pottery mentioned above is the only apparent evidence of medieval activity on the site, the stratigraphic relationship between the larger feature and the gully in Trench 1 indicates that the gully must be of an earlier date than the larger feature, thus this small gully is likely to be of medieval date.

Post-Medieval

Most of the rest of the contexts have been identified as post-medieval in date. The large probable ditch in Trench 1, although it may originate in the medieval period, was in use in the post-medieval period through the finding of a sherd of pottery on that period in its fill.

Ceramic building material that was dated to the post-medieval period was found within the fill of the curving gully in Trench 2, (2/05), thus indicating a likely date for both the gully, 2/04, and its fill (2/05). Its function is unknown. As this ditch was cut by another ditch, 2/02, ditch 2/04 clearly precedes ditch 2/02. Thus ditch 2/02, as well as its fill, 2/03, is likely to be either post-medieval or modern in date. This ditch is likely to be associated with drainage, although there is a possibility it may be a construction cut for a structure, which has since disappeared. As the fill of this ditch contained moderate amounts of charcoal inclusions it has been suggested that context (2/03) is a deliberate dump fill associated with the deposition of refuse as well as the disuse of the ditch.

The well, 2/08, also located in Trench 2 is believed to be dated to the post-medieval period, though the instability of the feature prevented sampling or excavating the feature. It is believed that this well is likely associated with the two post-medieval cottages that would have been present within the confines of the site.

The last feature dating to the post-medieval period that should be discussed is the construction cut for a now extinct wall, 2/06. There are two main reasons behind this interpretation of this feature; its regular, parallel sides, and its being on the same alignment as a currently surviving wall mere metres away. This feature appears to be a continuation of this wall. This feature is also likely to be related to the two cottages that were previously positioned above Trench 2.

Modern

There are a number of modern contexts found within the confines of the site. The earliest of these appears to be the deposit which sealed the well, (2/09). This is likely associated with the disuse of the well.

Possibly at a similar time, a larger layer of made-ground appears throughout Trench 1, (1/02). This context is probably associated with levelling the site and seals all the contexts found within Trench 1.

The last layers found on site are layers (1/01) and (2/01) which are essentially the same context, both being the topmost layer identified within Trench 1 and Trench 2 respectively. They are both associated with the demolition of the cottages, as well

as the deliberate deposition of modern refuse, being full of modern refuse inclusions (including plastic, metal, asbestos, glass, etc.).

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

<u>Paper record</u>	<u>Physical record</u>
Written scheme of investigation	None
The primary site record	
The project report	

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Oxfordshire Country Museum Service under accession number OXCMS: 2019.39.

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APPENDIX 1: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	Barton Manor, 7 Barton Village, Oxford, Oxfordshire
Short description	The investigation revealed a large feature, unfortunately, as this feature was significantly larger than the trench and it was not possible to undertake a full investigation of the feature. Though it was believed to be a large boundary ditch associated with the manor house. Apart from this feature, a number of other features were identified; two post-medieval gullys and ditches, a post-medieval well, and the remains of construction cut which was likely associated with two post-medieval cottages that previously occupied the site.
Project dates	1/7/19
Project type	Evaluation
Previous work	None
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	Barton Manor, 7 Barton Village, Oxford, Oxfordshire
Study area	2 Trenches 10m x1.6m
Site co-ordinates	SP 5507 0783
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	John Moore Heritage Services
Project Brief originator	John Moore
Project Design (WSI)	John Moore
Project Manager	Gavin Davis
Project Supervisor	Natasha Djukic
MONUMENT TYPE	Ditch Gully
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	Pottery Bone
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Djukic, N., <i>An Archaeological Evaluation at Barton Manor, 7 Barton Village Road, Oxford, Oxfordshire</i>

APPENDIX 2: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1

Context	Interpretations	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Provisional Date	Samples	Finds
1/01	Demo-layer	Friable, dark greyish brown, silt, with frequent amounts of modern refuse inclusions (i.e. plastic, glass, metal, etc.)	>10.71	>2m	0.5m	Modern	-	-
1/01	Made-ground	compact, mid brown, silty clay, moderate rubble inclusions	>10.71	>2m	0.38	Modern	-	-
1/03	Natural	compact, mid orangey brown, silty sand with frequent amounts of small stone inclusions	>10.71	>2m	>0.05m	-	-	-
1/04	Cut of large linear feature	large linear feature, only partially exposed in Trench 1, with a sharp break of slope at the top, the sides are generally steeply sloping and regular, the base of the feature was not exposed	>10m	>1.6m	>0.62m	Post-Med	-	-
1/05	Secondary fill ass. with disuse of ditch 1/04	Friable, mid greyish brown, sandy loam, with moderate amounts of rooting	>10m	>1.6m	>0.62m	Post-Med	1	Pottery and bone
1/06	Cut of a small gully	Small linear gully running SE-NW, with moderately sloping, regular, symmetrical, concaving curving sides, and a regular concavely curving base	>0.92m	0.25m	0.24m	Undated	-	-
1/07	Secondary fill ass. with disuse of gully 1/06	Friable, mid yellowish brown, sandy loam, occasional stone inclusions	>0.92m	0.25m	0.24m	Undated	-	-
1/08	Secondary fill ass. With disuse of ditch 1/09	Friable, mid greyish brown, loamy sand, occasional stone inclusions	>0.6m	>0.5m	0.12m	Post-Med	-	-
1/09	Cut of large linear feature	Compact-friable, mid-reddish brown, silty clay, with mod-frequent amounts of large sub-angular stone inclusions	>0.6m	>0.5m	0.12m	Post-Med	-	-

Trench 2

Context	Interpretations	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Provisional Date	Samples	Finds
2/01	Demo layer	Loose, dark greyish brown, clayey silt, moderate-frequent amounts of modern refuse	>10m	>1.6m	0.47m	Modern	-	-
2/02	Cut of ditch	Not fully exposed in plan, medium-sized linear feature running SE-NW, with distinct break of slop at the top, very steeply sloping, generally regular sides, irregular but generally flat base	>0.86m	0.74m	0.49m	Modern	-	-
2/03	Dump fill of ditch 2/02	Friable, dark greyish brown, sandy silt, frequent- moderate amounts of chalk and charcoal inclusions,	>0.86	0.74m	0.49m	Modern	-	-
2/04	Cut of gully	Moderately sized linear, with sharp break of slope at the top and generally regular, steeply sloping sides with a distinct break of slope at the base,	>2.2m	0.6m	0.36m	Modern	-	-
2/05	Fill of 2/04	Compact, mid-light yellowish grey, clayey silt, occasional -moderate amounts of chalk and charcoal inclusions	>2.2m	0.6m	0.36m	Modern	-	Ceramic material
2/06	Cut of wall	N-S running linear feature, recorded in plan	>1.25m	0.44m	-	Modern	-	-
2/07	Fill of 2/06	Compact, light brownish grey, clayey silt, moderate amounts of large chalk inclusions	>1.25m	0.44m	-	Modern	-	-
2/08	Cut of well	Sub-circular, only partially exposed in Trench 2, recorded in plan	>1.62m	>1.25m	-	Modern	-	-
2/09	Fill of 2/08	Compact, dark greyish brown, clayey silt, frequent amounts of large slabs of concrete inclusions	>1.62m	>1.25m	-	Modern	-	-
2/10	Natural	Friable, mid yellowish brown, silty sand with moderate chalk flecking	>10m	>1.6m	-	Modern	-	-