

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

CROWN HOUSE, CHURCH LANE, BARFORD ST JOHN, OXFORDSHIRE OX15 0PR

NGR (SP 43924 33204)

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available on OASIS.



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SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Crown House, Church Lane, Barford St John OX15 0PR (NGR SP 43924 33204). The purpose of the archaeological watching brief was for a single-storey extension, external amendments, re-roofing works and associated landscaping. During the course of the groundworks, an area of ground reduction took place, as well as a separate square-pit for the purpose of tree transplantation. This particular area had potential for medieval and post-medieval remains. Over the course of the watching brief, a single modern refuse pit was uncovered, as well as other modern features; a land drain, soakaway pit, manhole drain, stone-built garden wall and a cut for a pre-existing garden or similar feature. No archaeological remains relating to the medieval, Post-medieval or any other period was uncovered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located to the east of St John's Church in Barford St John (SP 43924 33204). The site lies at approximately 155m OD and the underlying geology is Marlstone Rock Formation – Ferruginous Limestone and Ironstone.

1.2 Planning Background

Cherwell District Council granted planning permission for a single storey extension, external amendments, re-roofing works and associated landscaping (20/01599/F). Due to the potential of the site to contain archaeological remains conditions have been attached:

Prior to the commencement of breaking ground on site, a written Scheme of archaeological Investigation, to include details of an Archaeological Watching Brief, prepared by a suitably qualified archaeologist, must be submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority. Thereafter the watching brief shall be carried out by a suitably qualified archaeologist in accordance with the approved written Scheme of Archaeological Investigation

Reason - To safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological importance on the site in accordance with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

Following the approval of the Written Scheme of Investigation referred to in condition 4, 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 which shall be submitted to the Local Planning Authority within two years of the completion of the archaeological fieldwork.

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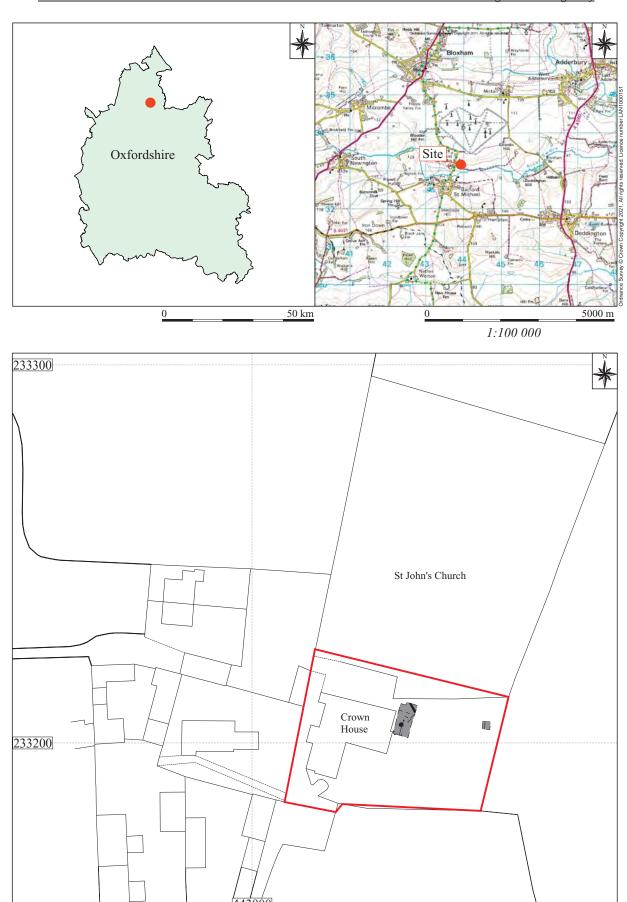


Figure 1: Site location

Archaeological features

Key Site boundary Excavated Areas

Reason - To safeguard the recording and inspection of matters of archaeological importance on the site in accordance with Government guidance contained within the National Planning Policy Framework.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site lies adjacent to the historic core around the church and Manor House, and is described in the design and access statement as being previously a public house and associated with the other nearby buildings, some of which are Listed. The site therefore has the potential to contain remains from these and earlier periods.

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 of archaeological remains relating to the medieval use of the area.

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 the archaeological advisor to Cherwell District Council.

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

3.2 Methodology

The monitored groundworks consisted of the reduction of an area to the south-east of the standing Crown House building, it measured 9m in length and had a maximum width of 4.5m. The maximum depth of the ground reduction was 1.6m, as observed in the north-eastern corner. Additionally, one 2x2m pit, measuring 1.2m in depth, was also excavated in order to transplant a tree; this was located outside the footprint of the new build, approximately 25m to the east of Crown House.

Six underpinning pits (1x1m, 2.8m in depth) supporting the eastern wall of the standing building were excavated with intermittent archaeological monitoring, as they were located in an area already severely truncated by the foundations of the building.

Where archaeological features were encountered they were cleaned by hand and examined 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 post-medieval 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.

The earliest recorded deposit was a firm, light-brown yellowish-clay (03) (Figure 2; Plans 02-04; Sections 01 and 02; Plate 1). This deposit was observed throughout the full extent of the ground-reduction area, as well as the tree transplanting-pit to the east. It measured greater than 0.20m in thickness. Deposit (03) was identified as being the natural clay geology.

Overlying the natural clay geology (03) was a firm, mid reddish-brown silty-clay (02) (Figure 2; Plans 02-04; Sections 01 and 02; Plate 1). It contained inclusions of occasional small and rounded gravels as well as frequent rooting throughout. Additionally, this deposit contained Post-medieval and Modern pottery, glass bottles and brick rubble. However, these finds were not retained, as they were dated on site. Deposit (02) was observed throughout the full extent of the ground reduction area, as well as within the tree transplanting-pit to the east. It had a maximum thickness of 0.50m. This deposit was identified as the subsoil layer.



Plate 1: Section 02. Looking south-east.

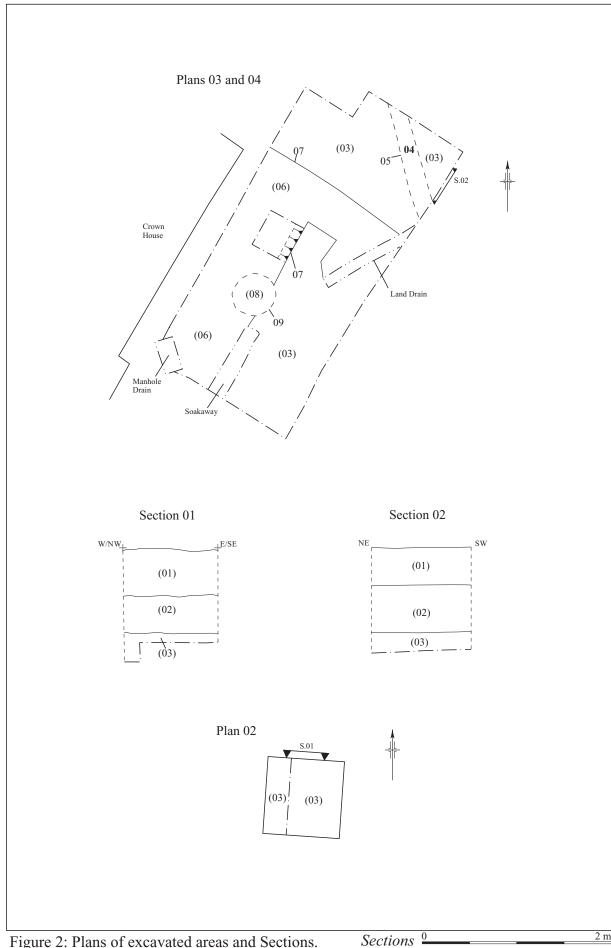


Figure 2: Plans of excavated areas and Sections.

Truncating the subsoil deposit (02) in the north-eastern corner of the site was a linear cut 05 for a garden wall **04** (Figure 2; Plans 03 and 04). The linear feature 05 measured greater than 3m in length and had a maximum width of 0.50m. It was orientated north-west by south-east. The depth of the cut is unknown, as it was not observed during the initial excavation. As a result, the sides, the break-of-slope at the top and base, and the base itself were also not observed.

Constructed within cut 05 was a stone-built garden wall **04** (Figure 2; Plans 03 and 04). It measured greater than 3m in length and 0.50m in width. The depth of the wall was not observed. Wall **04** was constructed of stone of varying sizes. It was a linear wall, roughly three rows wide and greater than three courses in depth. The finish of the stones was poor, and was weakly bonded. **04** was identified as a cheaply-built, modern garden wall.

Truncating the subsoil deposit (02) centrally within the site was an irregularly-shaped cut 07 (Figure 2; Plans 03 and 04). It measured great than 4.30m in length and greater than 3m in width. The depth of the cut was 0.30m. A 1m by 1m intervention sondage was excavated to establish the depth and shape of the cut. It had a moderate break-of-slope at the top and at the base. The base itself was flat with regular and shallow sides. This large irregular cut extended beyond the south-western and north-western limit of excavation, beyond the limits of the existing Crown House. The north-eastern extent of cut 07 is along the same north-west/south-east alignment as the house, as a result, cut 07 was identified on site as being associated with a possible pre-existing garden or similar feature.

Foundation cut 07 contained a single fill deposit of firm, mid to dark-brown clayey-silt (06) (Figure 2; Plans 03 and 04). Deposit (06) contained occasional small stones and occasional charcoal flecks, as well as patches of darker grey silt. Additionally, this deposit also contained Post-medieval to Modern pottery sherds and a fragment of glass. Fill deposit (06) measured greater than 4.30m in length and greater than 3m in width. The thickness of this deposit was 0.30m.

Truncating the foundation cut 07 at the central, eastern edge was a circular pit 09 (Figure 2; Plans 03 and 04). It measured 1.10m in length and 1m in width, the depth of the pit was not observed. Pit 09 had rounded edges, but was not excavated. As a result, the sides, break-of-slope at the top and base and the base itself were not observed.

Pit 09 contained a single fill deposit of friable, mid greyish-brown clayey-silt (08) (Figure 2; Plates 03 and 04). It contained inclusions of occasional small, rounded stones. Fill deposit (08) also contained Modern pottery, brick rubble and broken glass. This deposit measured 1.10m in length and 1m in width. The thickness of the deposit was not observed. The presence of the Modern pottery and rubble confirmed that pit 09 was a modern refuse pit.

Truncating subsoil (02) elsewhere within the site was a modern land drain, a modern soakaway and a modern manhole drain. These features were not ascribed individual context numbers, and were minimally recorded (Figure 2; Plans 03 and 04).

The latest observed deposit was a friable, dark greyish-brown silty-loam (01) (Figure 2; Plans 03 and 04; Sections 01 and 02; Plate 1). It contained frequent small, rounded

gravels. This deposit was observed throughout the full extent of the ground reduction area, as well as the transplanting tree-pit to the east. Deposit (01) was identified as the current garden-soil layer.

Reliability of Results

The watching brief was undertaken in mixed weather, though with excellent cooperation from site staff; as such the results are considered to be reliable. Additionally, the horizon clarity of the features, where present, was also considered to be good.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery *by Paul Blinkhorn*

The pottery assemblage comprised 20 sherds with a total weight of 3887g. It was all modern, and was recorded using the conventions of the Museum of London Type-Series (e.g. Vince 1985), as follows:

ENGS: English Stoneware, 1700-1900. 1 sherd, 44g.
PMR: Post-medieval Redware, 1550+. 5 sherds, 3115g.
REFW: Refined Whiteware, 1800-1900. 5 sherds, 74g.

TPW: Transfer-printed Whiteware, 1830-1900. 6 sherds, 52g.

WHIST: White Stoneware, 1790-1900. 3 sherds, 562g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region.

The sherds of WHIST are from a rum-jar and those of PMR are from a single very large vessel (rim diameter = 600mm). It is either a plant-pot or a bread-bin. Both are typical 19th century products of their respective traditions. The fragment of ENGS is a spout from a "Brown Betty" tea-pot. The assemblage is a typical group of late 19th – early 20th century domestic pottery.

Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

	PMR		ENGS		WH	WHIST		REFW		W	
Cntxt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
6	2	395			3	562	4	60	6	52	MOD
8	3	2720	1	44			1	14			MOD
Total	5	3115	1	44	3	562	5	74	6	52	

5.2 Glass

A single fragment of glass, weighing 7.1g, was collected from deposit (06), the fill of foundation cut 07. The flat glass item measured 35x30mm, was aqua in colour with dark amber surfaces, and was positively identified as a fragment of window pane.

It is not recommended to retain the glass fragment due to its extremely limited potential for further investigation.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological watching brief aimed to prove the presence, or absence, of significant archaeological remains. Especially for remains relating to the medieval and Post-medieval periods. Despite the proximity of the site to St John's Church and Manor House, and the potential for remains associated with the medieval occupation of Barford St John, no significant archaeological remains were encountered during the watching brief. A single modern refuse pit, and structures associated with gardening activities were observed. These included a stone-built garden wall, and a foundation cut for a pre-existing garden structure. Additionally, modern services including a land drain, soakaway drain and manhole drain were also uncovered.

7 ARCHIVE

A Digital Archive is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services (ID 4398) and will be made available upon request (to admin@jmheritageservices.co.uk). Digitised copies of all the primary records will be made publicly available as appendix to the Final Report submitted to OASIS (ID johnmoor1-426530).

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

John Moore Heritage Services, 2020 20/01599 F – Crown House, Church Lane, Barford St John OX15 0PR. Archaeological Watching Brief. Written Scheme of Investigation. Unpublished.

Vince, A.G., 1985 The Saxon and Medieval Pottery of London: A review. Medieval Archaeology **29**, 25-93

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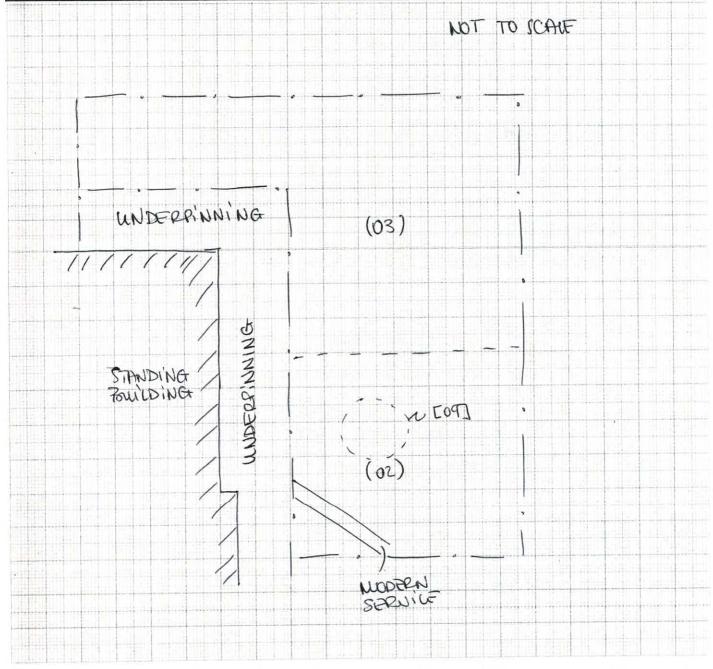
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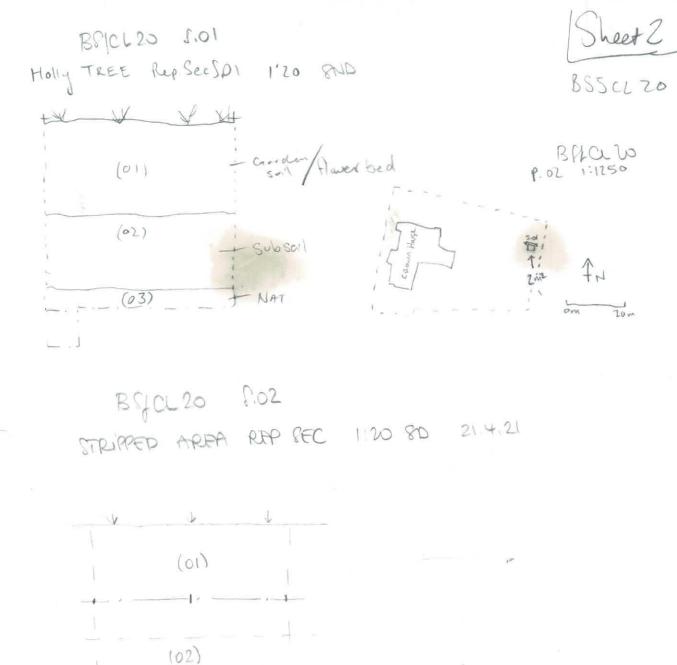
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OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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Printable version

OASIS ID: johnmoor1-426530

Project details

Project name Crown House, Church Lane, Barford St John

the project

Short description of John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Crown House, Church Lane, Barford St John. The purpose of the archaeological watching brief was for a single-storey extension, external amendments, re-roofing works and associated landscaping. During the course of the groundworks, an area of ground reduction took place, as well as a separate square-pit for the purpose of tree transplantation. This particular area had potential for medieval and post-medieval remains. Over the course of the watching brief, a single modern refuse pit was uncovered, as well as other modern features; a land drain, soakaway pit, manhole drain, stone-built garden wall and a foundation cut for a pre-existing garden feature. No archaeological remains relating to the

medieval, Post-medieval or any other period was uncovered.

Project dates Start: 20-04-2021 End: 15-05-2021

4398 - Contracting Unit No.

BSJCL 20 - Sitecode

Previous/future

work

No / No

Any associated project reference

codes

Any associated

project reference codes

Any associated

project reference

codes

Any associated project reference codes

johnmoor1-426530 - OASIS form ID

20/01599/F - Planning Application No.

Type of project Research project

Site status None

Current Land use Residential 1 - General Residential

RUBBISH PIT Modern Monument type

Significant Finds **POTTERY Modern GLASS Modern** Significant Finds Investigation type "Watching Brief"

Prompt Conservation/ restoration

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Project location

Country England

Site location OXFORDSHIRE CHERWELL BARFORD ST JOHN AND ST MICHAEL Crown House,

Church Lane, Barford St John, Oxfordshire

Postcode OX15 0PR

Study area 20 Square metres

Site coordinates SP 43924 33204 51.99511746663 -1.360184769993 51 59 42 N 001 21 36 W Point

Lat/Long Datum Unknown

Height OD / Depth Min: 1m Max: 1.2m

Project creators

Name of Organisation John Moore Heritage Services

Project brief originator

Cherwell District Council

Project design originator

JMHS

Project

John Moore

director/manager

Christopher Whitehead

Project supervisor
Project supervisor

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i Tojoot Supervis

Simona Denis

Type of

sponsor/funding

body

client

Project archives

Physical Archive

Exists?

No

Digital Archive

recipient

John Moore Heritage Services

Digital Archive ID

ID 4398

Digital Contents

"Ceramics","Glass","Stratigraphic","other"

Digital Media available

"Images raster / digital photography", "Images vector", "Spreadsheets", "Text"

Digital Archive

notes

Digital files related to the project are maintained by John Moore Heritage Services (ID 4398) and will be made available upon request (to admin@jmheritageservices.co.uk).

Paper Archive Exists?

No

Project bibliography 1

Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Publication type

Title Archaeological Watching Brief at Crown House, Church Lane, Barford St John,

Oxfordshire OX15 0PR.

Author(s)/Editor(s) Whitehead, C.

Author(s)/Editor(s) Moore, J.

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Author(s)/Editor(s) Denis, S.

Other bibliographic JM

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