

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

CARTERTON PHASE II,

OXFORDSHIRE

SP 02470 29200

On behalf of

CgMs Consulting

December 2007

REPORT FOR CgMs Consulting
Burlington House
Lypiatt Road
Cheltenham
Gloucestershire
GL50 2SY

PREPARED BY Gwilym Williams

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ENQUIRES TO *John Moore Heritage Services
Hill View
Woodperry Road
Beckley
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ
Tel/Fax 01865 358300
Email info@jmheritageservices.co.uk*

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SUMMARY

An evaluation was carried out by John Moore Heritage Services on behalf of CgMs Consulting on land east and west of Swinbrook Road, Carterton. Single undated ditches were found in Trenches 3 and 12 – no other remains were observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The study site lies on the northwest edge of Carterton and is centred on NGR 427700 208400, comprising an area of approximately 7.3 hectares. The study site is generally flat, lying at about 100m above Ordnance Datum. The Shill Brook lies 150m to the west. The geology for the site comprises mostly Limestone with some Mudstone both of the Forest Marble Formation (Geological Survey of Great Britain, Sheet 236 1982).

1.2 Planning Background

The Deputy County Archaeologist of Oxfordshire County Council has requested the proposed development site be subject to an archaeological evaluation, comprising the equivalent of twelve 30m x 1.5m trenches across the site, with an emphasis to the western part of the site to enable the Local Authority, West Oxfordshire District Council, making an informed decision on the Application. Oxfordshire County Council Archaeology Service has provided a standard brief for an archaeological field evaluation. This is in line with PPG16 and Local Plan Policies.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

An archaeological desk-based assessment (CgMs 2007) established that a moderate potential for the later Prehistoric and Roman periods has been identified for the study site, with a low potential for all other archaeological periods. This conclusion was based upon the observation of crop marks interpreted as relating to these periods being present to the north of the site. Recent use of the east part of the study site for horticulture may have truncated or removed previously surviving archaeological deposits. A Specification for the evaluation was produced by CgMs Consulting and approved by Hugh Coddington, County Archaeological Services.

To the north of the development site are a series of crop marks (SMR16980). CgMs have since undertaken an assessment of the crop marks including rectified plotting (Carterton Phase II, Aerial Photographic Interpretation and Mapping Report, CgMs 2007). The features appear to represent a late prehistoric and Romano British agricultural landscape

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

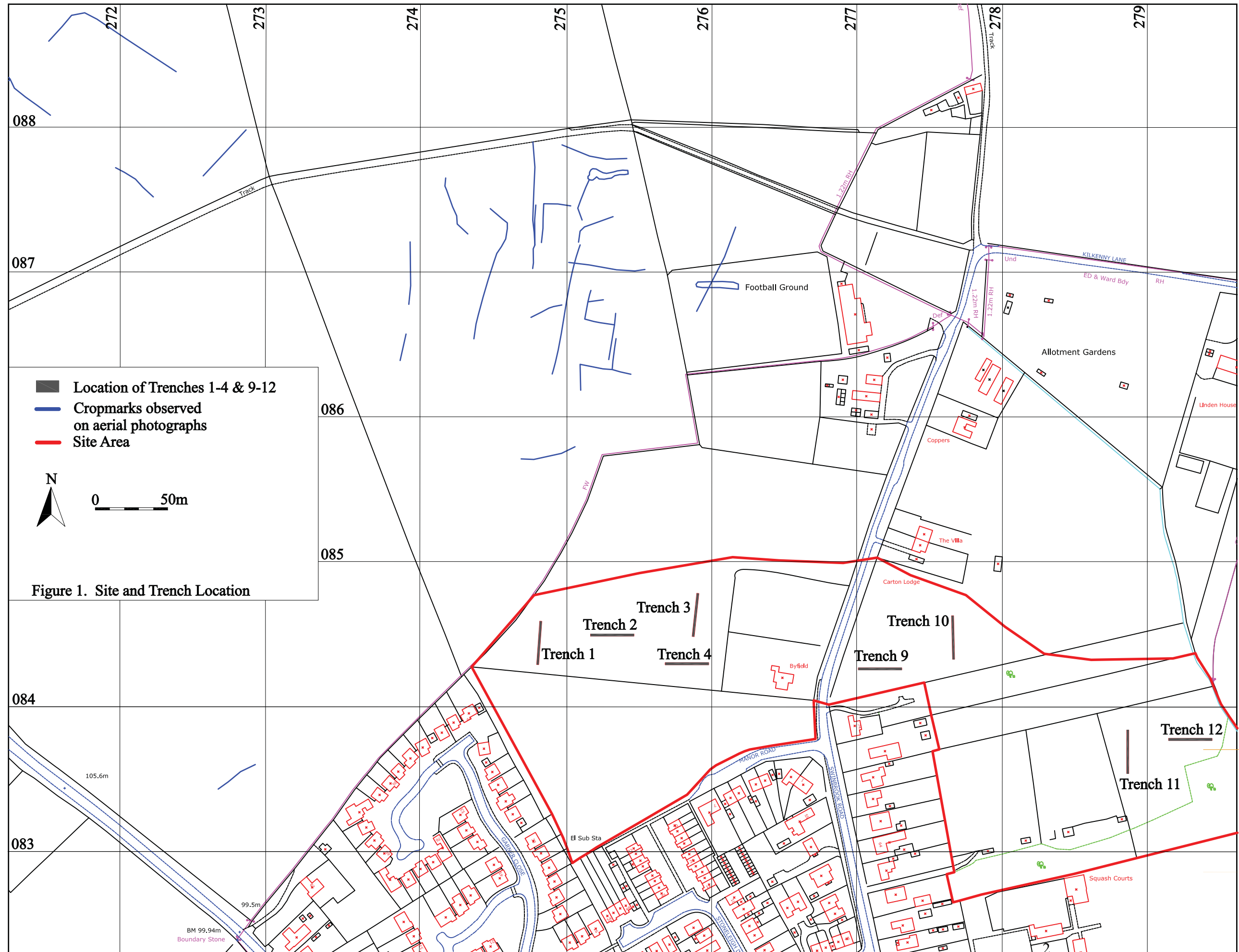


Figure 1. Site and Trench Location

- clarify the presence/absence and extent of archaeological deposits within the Site;
- identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition, significance, quality and depth of any surviving remains within the Site;
- assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In response to a *Specification* designed and issued by CgMs, and agreed with Oxfordshire County Council's Deputy County Archaeologist, JMHS carried out the work, which was to comprise the excavation of twelve trenches across the site; eight trenches were to be excavated in a first phase of evaluation (Fig. 1).

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Specification*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994) and the principles of MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

3.2 Methodology

Eight 1.5m wide trenches were excavated across the site (Fig. 1). These measured 30m in length. They were excavated by a JCB with a ditching bucket. Following a site visit to monitor the first eight of the trenches, it was decided by the Deputy County Archaeologist not to continue with further trenching in a subsequent phase of evaluation.

The trenches were excavated to the top of the archaeology or the natural, whichever occurred first. The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand, where necessary, prior to limited hand excavation of any identified archaeological features.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced.

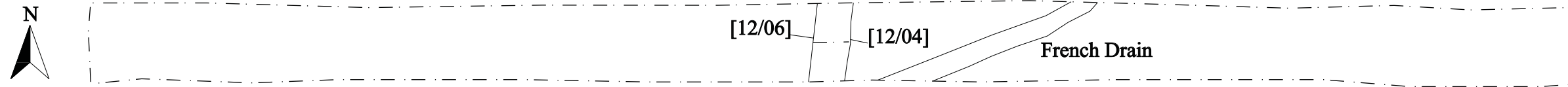
4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results (Figure 2)

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in square brackets - [] - indicate features i.e. cuts; while numbers in parentheses - () - show feature fills or deposits of material. All measurements are given in metres. A general description of the feature fills is given.



Trench 3



Trench 12

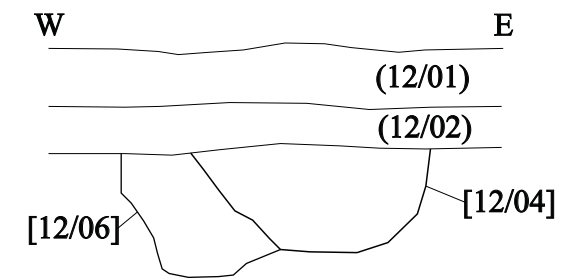
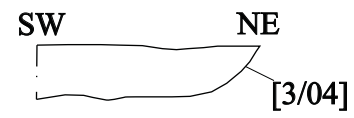


Figure 2. Plans and sections of Trenches 3 and 12

4.1.1 All Trenches

All trenches evidenced a basic similar sequence of natural, subsoil and topsoil.

The natural (Tr. no./03) consisted of limestone pieces in red-brown silty clay – occasionally these were significantly large, and on the southwest side of the site were approximately 1m by 1m; in general, the limestone fragments measured 0.2m by 0.2m (+/- 0.1m). The natural was observed in all trenches.

The subsoil (Tr. no./02) was a red-brown loamy silty clay with small fragments (0.01-0.1m) of limestone spread through it. The subsoil varied in thickness between 0.05m and 0.15m.

In all the trenches topsoil (Tr. no./01) sealed the subsoil. The topsoil was a dark red-brown silty clay loam with small limestone fragments.

4.1.2 Trench 3

In addition to the sequence identified above, the terminal of a shallow northeast/southwest aligned ditch [3/04] was observed at the south end of this trench. This was sealed by the subsoil (3/02).

The ditch was filled with compacted light red-brown silty clay and small limestone pieces up to 0.1m with c. 5% charcoal flecking and some small gravel through it.

The ditch was linear, with a sharp break of slope at the top, more gradual at the base, with concave sides and a flat bottom. It was more than 2.4m in length, 0.75m wide and approximately 0.15m deep. No finds were recovered from the fill.

4.1.3 Trench 12

Cut into the natural (12/03) was a linear gully [12/06], at least 0.4m wide and 0.32m deep. It was aligned north/south, extending beyond the edges of the trench; the break of slope was sharp at the top, gradual at the base and the sides and base were rounded. The cut was filled with (12/07) a firm light orangey brown clay.

The gully [12/06] was cut on its east side by a later gully [12/04] which measured 0.6m wide and 0.28m deep. It had a sharp break of slope at the top and more gradual at the base; the sides and base were rounded. It was filled with (12/05) a firm light orangey brown clay. This later cut was probably a recut of the earlier ditch.

4.2 Reliability of results and methodologies

The evaluation was carried out under good conditions.

5 FINDS

No finds were recovered during the evaluation. No environmental samples were taken during the evaluation.

6 DISCUSSION

Despite the presence of cropmarks to the north of the site, no archaeological remains associated with these were recovered from the evaluation at Carterton. Two linear features, a shallow ditch and a gully, which appeared to have been recut, were observed. None of the archaeological features observed were dated, nor do they correspond to any field boundaries shown as far back as the 1884 OS map for the area.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

CgMs, 2007 Specification for Archaeological Evaluation

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

Institute of Field Archaeologists. 1994 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*. Revised 1999.

APPENDIX 1

CONTEXT RECORD INVENTORY

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Findings	Interpretation
Trench 1							
1/01	Layer	Red brown clay loam.	0.15	1.5m	30m		Topsoil
1/02	Layer	Red brown clay loam	0.10m	1.5m	30m		Subsoil
1/03	Layer	Limestone in silty clay cornbrash yellowish to reddish brown	0.05m	1.5m	30m	-	Natural
Trench 2							
2/01	Layer	Red brown clay loam	0.10m	1.5m	30m	-	Topsoil
2/02	Layer	Red brown clay loam	0.10m	1.5m	30m	-	Subsoil
2/03	Layer	Limestone in silty clay cornbrash yellowish to reddish brown	0.05m	1.5m	30m	-	Natural
Trench 3							
3/01	Layer	Red brown loam clay.	0.25m	1.5m	30m		Topsoil
3/02	Layer	Loamy silty clay.	0.20m	1.5m	30m		Subsoil
3/03	Layer	Limestone in silty clay yellowish to reddish brown	0.05m	1.5m	30m		Natural
3/04	Cut	Linear; clean break of slope at top, gradual at base, rounded sides and base	0.15m	0.75m	2.40m		Poss. boundary ditch.
3/05	Fill	Light reddish brown, silty clay, small stones<0.10m, 5%, charcoal flecking 5% small gravel <0.02m 10%	0.15m	0.75m	2.4m		Fill of ditch

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Interpretation
Trench 4							
4/01	Layer	Red brown clay loam.	0.20-0.25m	1.5m	30m		Topsoil
4/02	Layer	Red brown clay loam	0.11m - .15m	1.5m	30m		Subsoil
4/03	Layer	Limestone in silty clay yellowish to reddish brown	.20m	1.5m	30m		Natural
Trench 9							
9/01	Layer	Red brown clay loam.	0.10m	1.5m	30m		Topsoil
9/02	Layer	Red brown clay loam	0.05m	1.5m	30m		Subsoil
9/03	Layer	Limestone in silty clay yellowish to reddish brown	0.02m	1.5m	30m		Natural
Trench 10							
10/01	Layer	Red brown clay loam.	0.10	1.5m	30m		Topsoil
10/02	Layer	Red brown clay loam	0.10m	1.5m	30m		Subsoil
10/03	Layer	Limestone in silty clay cornbrash yellowish to reddish brown	.02m	1.5m	30m		Natural
Trench 11							
11/01	Layer	Dark Reddish Brown clay. loose.	0.10m	1.5m	30m		Topsoil
11/02	Layer	Medium Reddish brown clay, 15% small gravel < 0.04m.	0.05m	1.5m	30m		Subsoil
11/03	Layer	Silty clay mixed with cornbrash medium greyish brown	0.02m	1.5m	30m		Natural

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Interpretation
Trench 12							
12/01	Layer	Dark reddish brown clay loam	0.10m	1.5m	30m		Topsoil
12/02	Layer	mid reddish brown clay, 15% small gravel <4mm	0.08m	1.5m	30m		Subsoil
12/03	Layer	Silty clay mixed with cornbrush medium greyish brown	0.03m	1.5m	30m		Natural
12/04	Cut	Linear; clean break of slope W side, rounded sides and base	0.30m	0.40m	>1.5m		Cut of Gully
12/05	Fill	Firm, light orangey brown, clay.	0.40m	0.30m	>1.5m		Fill of Gully
12/06	Cut	Linear; clean break of slope at top, rounded at base; rounded sides and base	0.60m	0.28m	>1.5m		Cut of Shallow Gully
12/07	Fill	Firm, light orangey brown, clay.	0.60m	0.28m	>1.5m		Fill of Gully