

Summary

An evaluation of this site was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services on 16th April 2008. Two trenches, totalling 25 metres in length, were excavated to the natural geology. A sequence of modern made ground was recorded and no archaeological features observed.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is within the western part of the grounds of Castle View, which is located at the north end of Spring Street and west of the junction with the Over Norton Road (NGR SP 3138 2746). The area evaluated is north of the ambulance Station and west of the buildings of Castle View Nursing Home. It is approximately 200m² in area. The geology is Upper Lias Clay and it lies at approximately 189m OD.

1.2 Planning Background

Mouchel, on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council, are investigating the possibility of redeveloping the site of Castle View Nursing Home once the current use has become surplus to requirements. Due to the potential presence of archaeological remains a field evaluation was required to determine whether there are any possible restrictions on development of the site.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The evaluation site lies approximately 150m to the east of Chipping Norton castle, an early medieval motte and bailey castle that survives as a pronounced earthwork. The Castle fell into disuse in the later medieval period and was totally abandoned by the Tudor period. Between the castle and the evaluation site is an area of ridge and furrow that runs on an east west axis. This appears to respect the outer ditch of the castle.

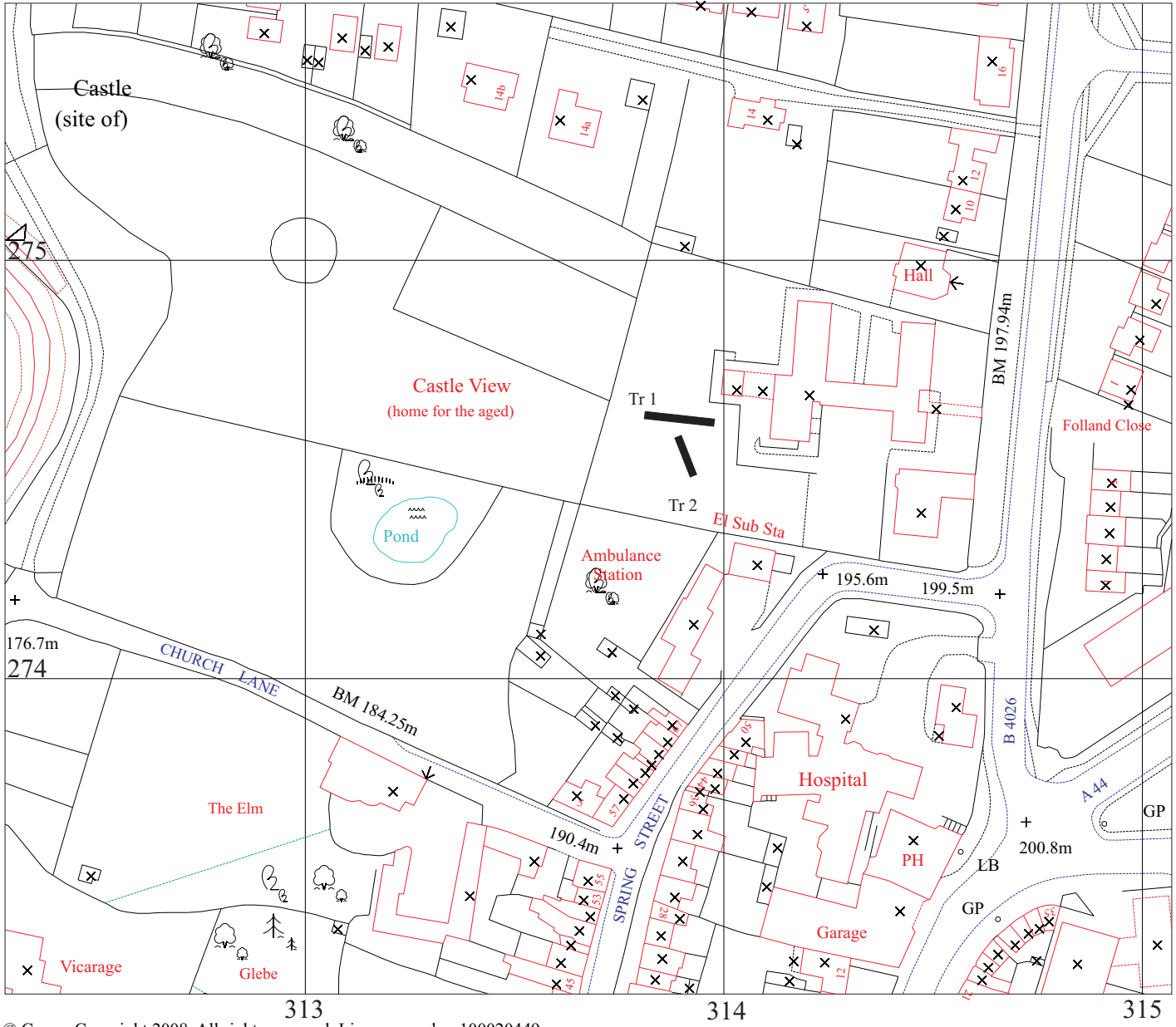
Spring Street, formerly known as Tite End, is a well established post medieval and probably earlier route that may have defined the extent of the later medieval township. An evaluation carried out at the Ambulance Station did not reveal any archaeological features.

On the Ordnance Survey map of 1885 the site is shown as occupying an open field.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.



© Crown Copyright 2008. All rights reserved. Licence number 100020449

Figure 1. Site and trench location

- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In response to a *Brief* issued by Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services a scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and agreed with the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services and the applicant. The work was carried out by JMHS and involved the excavation of a total of two trenches across the site (Fig. 1).

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994) and the principles of MoRPHE (English Heritage 2006).

3.2 Methodology

The trenching sample was two trenches; one 15m and the other 10m in length (Fig. 1). Both trenches were 1.6 m wide and were excavated by a 3 tonne excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand prior to limited hand excavation of any identified archaeological deposits.

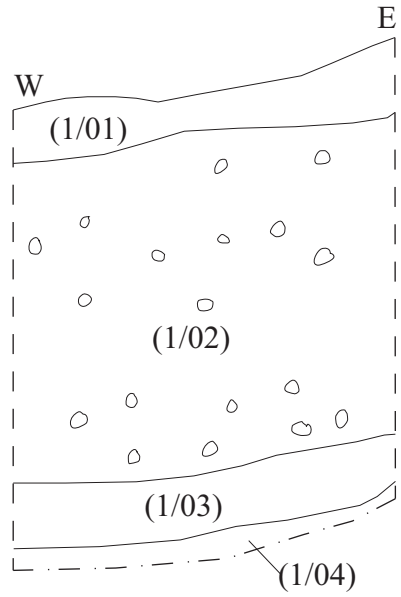
Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced. The trenches were backfilled after recording.

4 RESULTS (Figures 2)

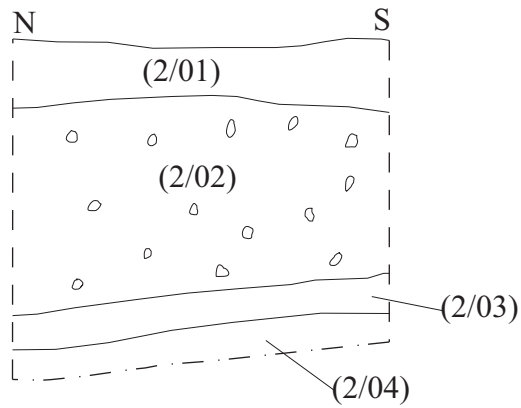
All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in [] indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

The deposits recorded were the same in both trenches.

The natural geological deposit in the area was an orange-brown clay with large sub-angular slabs of sandstone (1/04) and (2/04) - Upper Lias Clay with outcropping Clypeus Grit. Above this was a preserved soil horizon of friable dark orange-brown silty-clay that varied between 0.1m and 0.2m thick (1/03) and (2/03). Overlying this was a deposit 0.5m to 0.9m thick of dark grey-brown silty-clay with lenses of dark grey clay and rubble, including concrete and modern bricks (1/02) and (2/02). The uppermost layer was 0.1m thick topsoil of mid-brown silty-clay with gravel (1/01) and (2/01).



Section 1



Section 2



Figure 2. Sections of trenches 1 and 2

5 FINDS

The modern topsoil across the site contained sherds of White mass produced earthenwares dating to the 19th and 20th century.

6 DISCUSSION

All trenches showed a very uniform soil sequence. The modern brick debris within deposits (1/02) and (2/02) would suggest that the ground had been built up during the building of Castle View Nursing Home. This material had been placed directly on to the pre-existing topsoil which was preserved as layer (1/03) and (2/03). No archaeological features were recorded sealed beneath this layer. No sign of ridge and furrow agriculture that can be seen in fields to the west was noted. The modern topsoil is either imported or had come from the areas of the nursing home buildings and parking areas.

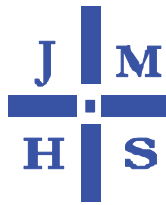
7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*.

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

APPENDIX – ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 1			1.1	1.6	15		
1/01	Layer	Topsoil	0.1	Tr.	Tr.	-	Modern
1/02	Layer	Dark grey - brown silty clay	0.9	Tr.	Tr.	CBM	Modern
1/03	Layer	Orange-brown silty clay	0.1	Tr.	Tr.	-	
1/04	Natural	Orange-brown clay	-	Tr.	Tr.	-	Natural
Trench 2			0.8	1.6	10		
2/01	Layer	Topsoil	0.1	Tr.	Tr.	-	Modern
2/02	Layer	Dark grey - brown silty clay	0.5	Tr.	Tr.	CBM	Modern
2/03	Layer	Orange-brown silty clay	0.2	Tr.	Tr.	-	
2/04	Natural	Orange-brown clay	-	Tr.	Tr.	-	Natural



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

CASTLE VIEW,

SPRING STREET/OVER NORTON ROAD,

CHIPPING NORTON, OXFORDSHIRE

SP 3138 2746

On behalf of

Mouchel

April 2008

The deposits recorded were the same in both trenches.

The natural geological deposit in the area was an orange-brown clay with large sub-angular slabs of sandstone (1/04) and (2/04). Above this was a preserved soil horizon of friable dark orange-brown silty-clay that varied between 0.1m and 0.2m thick (1/03) and (2/03). Overlying this was a deposit 0.9m thick of dark grey-brown silty-clay with lenses of dark grey clay and rubble, including concrete and modern bricks (1/02) and (2/02). The uppermost layer was 0.1m thick topsoil of mid-brown silty-clay with gravel (1/01) and (2/01).