



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

**AT**

**1 FORT END, HADDENHAM,**

**BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

**NGR SP 7407 0879**

*For*

*Mr R. Carslake*

**DECEMBER 2009**

**REPORT FOR** Mr R Carslake  
1 Fort End  
Haddenham  
Buckinghamshire  
HP17 8EJ

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**FIELDWORK** 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009

**REPORT ISSUED** 31<sup>st</sup> December 2009

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**Site Code:** HMFE 09  
**JMHS Project No:** 2150  
**Archive Location:** Buckinghamshire County Museum Service  
**Accession No:** Awaited

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## ***Summary***

*An evaluation of this site was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services on 10<sup>th</sup> December 2009. One trench, 10 metres in length, was excavated to the natural geology. No archaeological features were recorded.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

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

The site is located to the rear of 1 Fort End, Haddenham at NGR SP 7407 0879 and at an approximate height of 78m OD. Geologically the site is situated on the junction of the Portland Stone and alluvium (*pers. comm.* Rex Carslake) associated with the stream at the south end of the proposal site.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

A planning application (09/01272/APP) has been submitted for the erection of one single storey detached dwelling to the rear of 1, Fort End, Haddenham. Due to the potential for archaeological remains to be present on the site, Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS) has advised that a pre-determination programme of archaeological work should be carried out. Planning Policy Guidance 16 (Archaeology and Planning) states that local planning authorities can expect developers to provide the results of field evaluations as part of their planning applications for sites where there is good reason to believe there are remains of archaeological importance.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

Fort End, Haddenham, is one of the several foci of the polyfocal village of Haddenham. The town itself has been the subject of a Historic Town Assessment Report (HTAR), which is in the final consultation phase (Beckley & Green 2008), and in which it is suggested that Fort End may have been one of a series of green-based settlements along a north-south axis between Church End and Townsend that date to the late Saxon period. The site lies within the Archaeological Notification Area for Haddenham's historic core.

Little archaeological fieldwork has been carried out in Fort End. To the north at Townsend some Saxon pottery has been recovered (HER 0959400000; SP 74146 09126). In the HTAR it is noted that the origins of Fort End are as yet unclear. The name Fort End may refer either to a 'ford' – this part of the village is near the stream, a tributary of the Thames, which runs through Haddenham – or to an earthwork of, as yet, unknown date.

Fort End comprises a number of irregularly disposed plots surrounding a central green, in contrast with the adjacent quarter of High St where the properties are more regularly laid out off the straight road, High St. Properties around the green at Fort End date from the 15<sup>th</sup> century onwards.

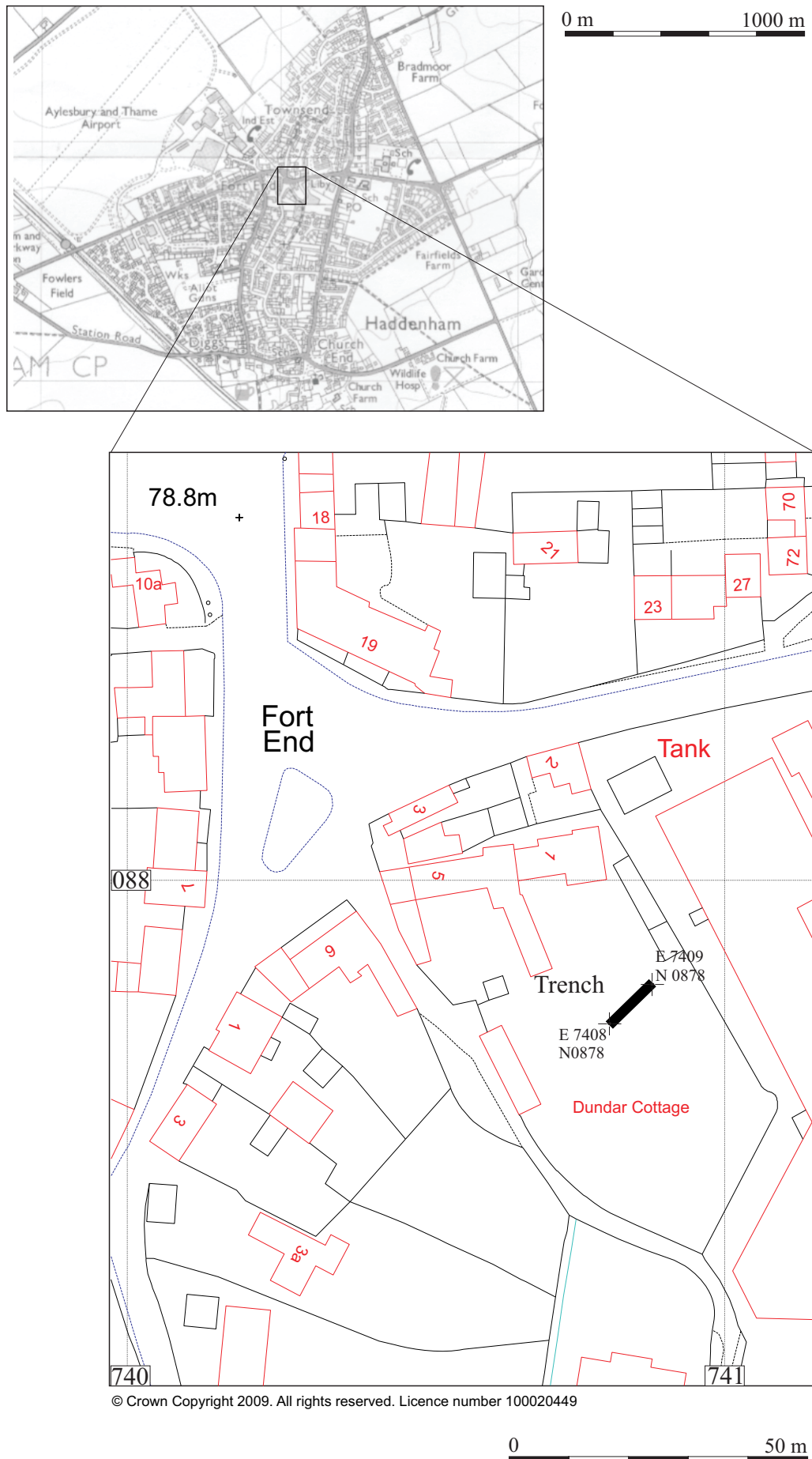


Figure 1. Site location

No. 1 Fort End is a 17<sup>th</sup> century Grade II listed building with earlier origins. It is built in the witchert style. No 5 Fort End is immediately adjacent to No 1 and dates to the medieval period with 17<sup>th</sup> century additions. It is also Grade II listed.

Due to the fact that the proposal site lies on alluvial deposits it was suggested that early occupation was unlikely to have been situated here although it was thought possible that rubbish disposal may have occurred in the area or that it was a paddock or orchard to the rear of early medieval plots.

Following discussion with Julia Wise, HER Officer for BCAS, it was deemed not necessary to carry out an HER search due to there having been no changes in the HER holdings since JMHS previously carried out work within the vicinity of the proposal site at Haddenham.

## **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.
- Establish the potential for Saxon and medieval remains in order to further the research agenda for Haddenham defined in the Town Report (Beckley and Green 2008)
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits. The forms in which such evidence may be present will be determined in accordance with the guidelines set out in English Heritage's *Environmental Archaeology: A Guide to the Theory and Practice of Methods, from Sampling and Recovery to Post-excavation and Geoarchaeology: Using earth sciences to understand the archaeological record.*
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- To inform the need for, and scope of, further phases of work to mitigate the impact of the development

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS). 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 and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994).

### **3.2 Methodology**

The trenching sample was a single trench 10m in length (Fig. 1). This trench was 1.7 m wide and was excavated by a 1.5 tonne mini-excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant surfaces were not cleaned by hand due to inundation of ground water.

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.

Ruth Beckley of Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS) monitored the work.

## **4 RESULTS** (*Figures 2 & 3*)

All features were assigned individual context numbers. This number covered both the feature cut and the fill for pits, unless the feature was sample excavated by hand. Context numbers in ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material.

### **4.1 Excavation Results**

The natural geological deposit in the area was a pale green-grey clay containing limestone fragments (05) that was related to the Portland Stone formations in the area. Towards the west of the trench solid bedrock was encountered.

Above this was a 0.1m thick alluvial layer of mid grey silt-clay (04) containing a very small quantity of stone fragments and flecked with charcoal. Over this was a layer up to 0.4m thick of dark grey-brown silty-clay (03) that contained small quantities of animal bone.

Overlying (03) was a dark grey silty-clay loam (02) layer containing fragments of ceramic roof tile. It was up to 0.3m thick, but the average thickness was 0.2m. Cut into this layer was a modern French drain and two planting pits for trees or shrubs.

The uppermost layer was a dark grey-brown silty loam 0.2m thick, which contained small fragments of brick (01).

## 4.2 Reliability of Results and Techniques

The work was conducted after a period of heavy rain this effectively raised ground water levels and caused the trench to rapidly flood. The resultant surfaces were closely observed but hand cleaning could not take place. The reliability of the results is still considered good despite this.

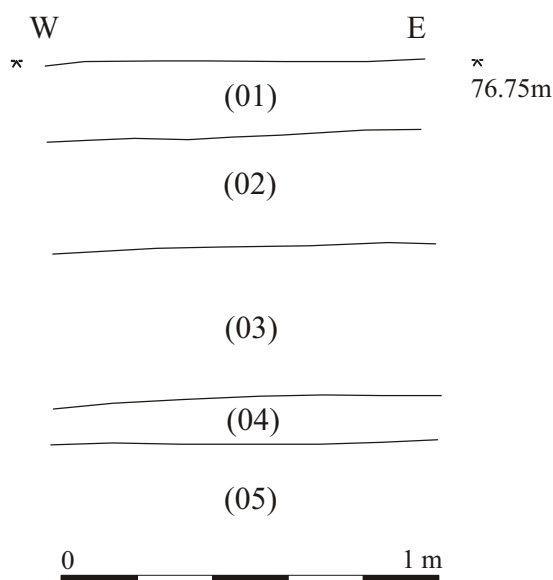


Figure 2. Sample section showing soil profile

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Pottery

The following pottery was recorded in contexts (01) and (02)

PM25: *White Earthenware*. Late 18<sup>th</sup> – 20<sup>th</sup> century

The material was recorded using the coding system of the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit type-series (e.g. Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat et al. 1994). It was not retained after identification.

### 5.2 Environmental Remains

No environmental samples were taken due to the nature of the deposits encountered.

## 6 DISCUSSION

Shallow alluvial deposits were seen to lie above the geological Portland Stone formation. Above this was a thick dark silty clay layer (03) that may suggest the area was wet or marshy for some time during the past. More recent activity would suggest a cultivation soil (02) was present in the area. This might indicate the reclamation of



marginal wet ground for horticultural use. The date of this is uncertain, it may have started far earlier than the 19<sup>th</sup> century pottery would suggest, with these sherds indicating only the final phase of associated soil disturbance.



Figure 3. Trench Photograph

## 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Beckley, R. & Green, D., 2008 *Haddenham Historic Town Assessment Report November 2008 Final Consultation Report*

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**APPENDIX – ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY**

<b>ID</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth</b>	<b>Width</b>	<b>Length</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Trench 1</b>								
1/01	Deposit	dark grey-brown silty loam	0.2m	Tr.	Tr.	Pottery	Topsoil	Modern
1/02	Deposit	dark grey silty-clay loam	0.3m	Tr.	Tr.	Pottery	Cultivation soil	19 <sup>th</sup> Century?
1/03	Deposit	dark grey-brown silty-clay	0.4m	Tr.	Tr.	Bone		
1/04	Deposit	mid grey silt-clay	0.1m	Tr.	Tr.		Alluvial	
1/05	Natural	pale green-grey clay	-	Tr.	Tr.		Natural	