JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT

ON LAND AT

GRANDSLET FARM, NORTHEND,

WARWICKSHIRE

SP 399 525

On behalf of

Isobel Hoseason & Peter Butzelaar

MAY 2010

REPORT FOR	Isobel Hoseason & Peter Butzelaar C/o Julian Philcox JP Planning Shenington OX15 6NF
PREPARED BY	Jenny Winnett
EDITED BY	Gwilym Williams
ILLUSTRATION BY	Eoin Fitzsimons & Jenny Winnett
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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

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation at Grandslet Farm, Northend, Southam. Two trenches revealed land drains. A further trench revealed surfacing possibly associated with the current barn. No archaeology earlier than the 19th century was present.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site location (Figure 1)

The site is located on land at Grandslet Farm, Northend, Warwickshire. The site is centred at SU 3994 5252, and is in the parish of Burton Dassett.

1.2 Planning Background

Planning permission has been granted by Stratford on Avon Borough Council for the change of use of the barn to dwelling at Grandslet Farm, Northend, Southam (08/00373/FUL). A condition of the planning permission required, before the development commenced, that the applicant should secure the implementation of a programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which had been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. This condition was implemented as the proposed development was within an area of archaeological potential. This is in line with PPS 5. Warwickshire Museum's Planning Archaeologist prepared a Brief for the first phase of the work, namely a field evaluation. A *Written Scheme of Investigation* agreed with the county planning archaeologist proposed a method to satisfy the requirements of the Brief.

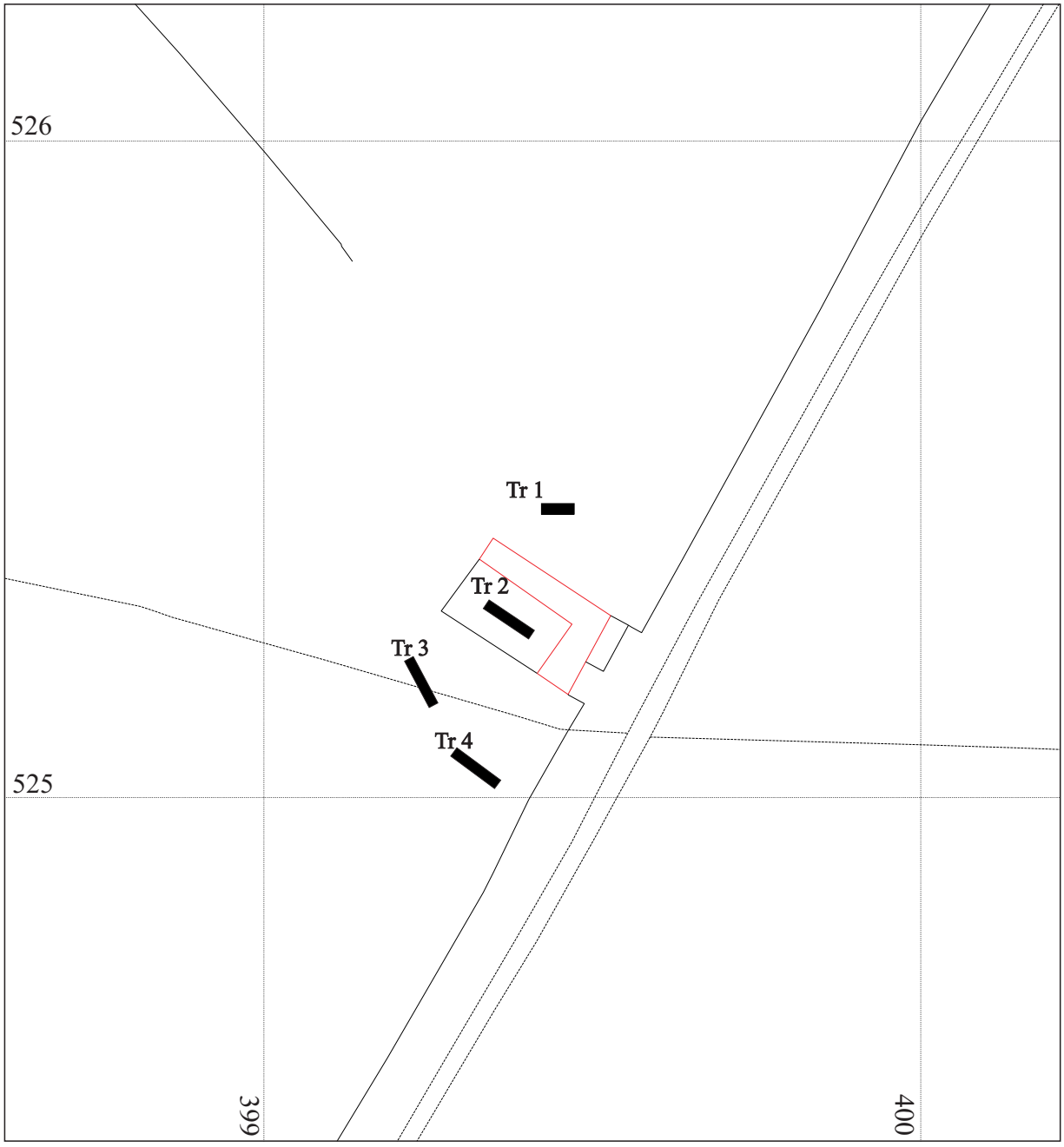
1.3 Archaeological Background

The earliest references to the area refer to Harold son of Earl Ralph of Hereford who held 15 hides in Dassett under both the Confessor and the Conqueror. His son John took his name from Sudeley in Gloucestershire and was succeeded by Ralph de Sudeley. When Sir John de Sudeley died in 1367 a quarterfee in Northend was held of him by William Mabot, who seems to be otherwise unrecorded.

Ongoing work by the Feldon Archaeological Society has recorded a settlement site 250m to the east of the proposed development, first indicated by a wall uncovered by a farmer (MWA 10258). A Romano-British ailed-building has been excavated (Eames 2002). The pottery assemblage spans the middle Iron Age to the late 4th century (Eames 2001). Further sherds of Roman pottery have been found in the vicinity (MWA 7317)

Other fieldwork across the area, including aerial photography and geophysical survey suggest that this site extends significantly further than the excavated area, possibly into the proposed development area.

In 1908 men quarrying for ironstone (MWA 8917) discovered the remains of about 35 skeletons on the summit of Mount Pleasant, approximately 500m to the southwest.



0 50 m

Figure 1. Trench locations

Some of them were buried with objects, which included various pots and a seax (MWA649). Further sherds of Saxon pottery have been found in the locality (MWA 6186)

The possible site of a gibbet lies 500m to the south-southwest, a number of skeletons were uncovered here in 1850 (MWA 6815). A well of brick beehive construction of unknown date is located 450m to the south of the proposed development (MWA 7518)

The barn is shown within an area almost the same as the present day on the 1:10,560 first edition OS map

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 or absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* designed by JMHS and agreed with Warwickshire County Planning Archaeologist, JMHS carried out the work, which comprised the excavation of four trenches across the site.

The first trench was 5 metres long by 1.6 metres wide and sampled the area to be disturbed by the proposed underground rain reservoir. The second trench was 7 metres long by 2.1 metres wide, located south of the existing barn, within the concrete courtyard. The third trench was 8 metres long by 1.5 metres wide, located south of the existing barn in the area to be disturbed by trenching associated with the underground heat source. The fourth trench was also located in this area, and measured 8.3 metres long by 1.5 metres wide.

3.2 Methodology

The investigation involved the mechanical excavation of four trenches by a 5-tonne excavator equipped with a ditching bucket, supplemented by limited hand investigation of archaeological deposits.

The four trenches were to be 26 metres in total length. However, the removal of concrete in Trench 2 created a wider trench then initially planned. The Trench 4 was moved to the north as the location agreed in the WSI was not presently owned by the client, and not available for evaluation. As a consequence, Trench 3 was slightly reoriented in order to accommodate both Trenches 3 and 4 within the developer's property.

Site procedures carried out followed IfA guidelines and the requirements of the JMHS 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 MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material. All contexts numbers are preceded by trench number and /.

Trench 1 (Figure 2)

Trench 1 sampled the area to be disturbed by the proposed underground rain reservoir, north of the existing barns and oriented east/west.

Trench 1 measured 26.8m long. The trench was machined to the top of the natural clays (1/03). An east/west aligned linear disturbance was cut into the natural in the western part of the trench, extending beyond the limits of excavation. This was a modern machine cut probably for a geotechnical pit. This modern hard standing (1/01) composed of compacted crushed modern brick and tile with 40% rough irregular gravels was constructed directly on the natural clays (1/03), although ephemeral patches of remnant grey brown silty topsoil (1/02) was observed in places.

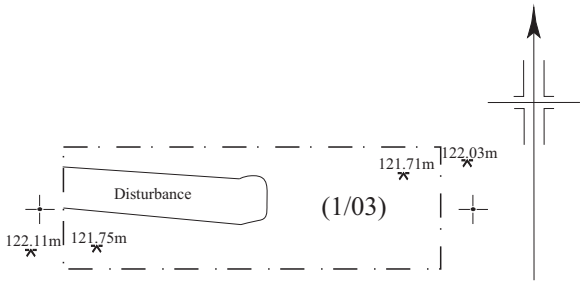
Trench 2 (Figure 2)

Trench 2 was located south of the existing barn within the concrete courtyard and was oriented northwest/southeast.

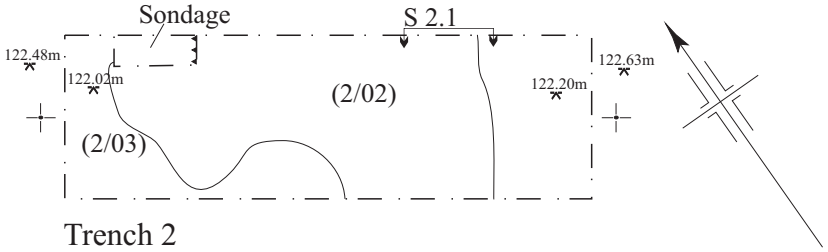
Trench 2 measured 7 metres long. The trench was machined to the top of the natural clay (2/03) at the southeast end. A layer of dark grey loosely compacted gravels (2/02), which overlay the natural clay, was uncovered containing up to 25% angular and irregular limestone pieces (<0.2m) and rare crushed machine made brick fragments. A section excavated through the deposit in the northwest end of the trench confirmed that it sat on top of the natural clay (2/03). The metalled layer was overlain by approximately 0.31m deep deposit of broken concrete, stone and organic matter (2/04) which was most likely associated with levelling for the current concrete surface associated with the field barn. This was sealed by a layer of modern concrete approximately 0.13m in thickness.

Trenches 3 & 4 (Figure 2)

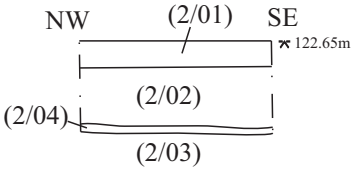
Trenches 3 and 4 were located south of the existing barn in the area of the ground source heating. They were oriented north by northwest-south by southeast (Trench 3)



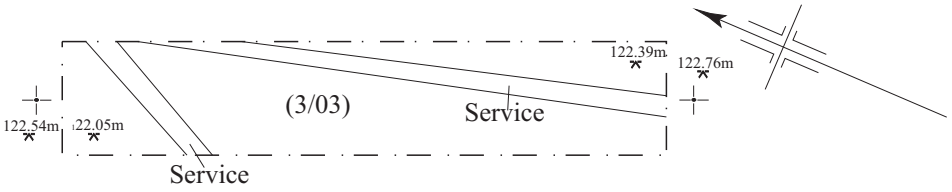
Trench 1



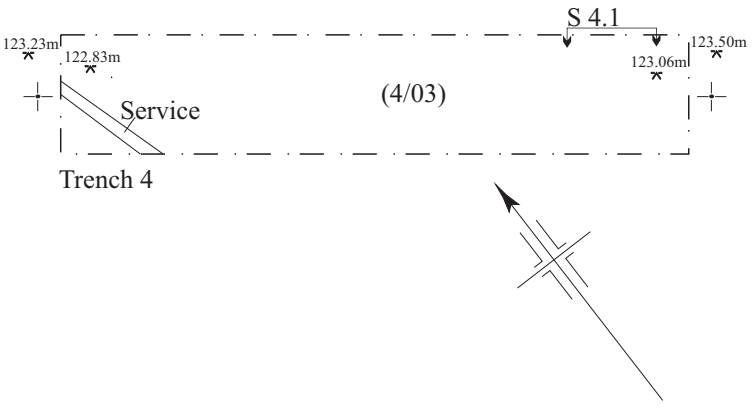
Trench 2



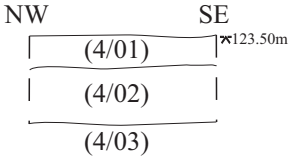
Section 2.1



Trench 3



Trench 4



Section 4.1

Scale for all trenches

Scale for all sections

Figure 2. Trenches 1-4 Plans and sections

and 8m long; and northwest-southeast (Trench 4) measuring 8.3 metres in length.

Both trenches were machined to the top of the natural clay (3/03)/(4/03) to a depth of approximately 0.25-0.35m. The natural clay was sealed by a layer of subsoil (3/02)/(4/02) consisting of grey brown clay silt with no inclusions (approximately 0.15-0.20m in depth).

In Trench 3, two land drains were cut into the natural clay (3/03)/(4/03) and through the subsoil (3/02)/(4/02), one oriented north/south passing through the western part of the trench, and the other southeast/northwest and running almost the entire length of the trench, exiting at the north and south ends. In Trench 4, a land drain was located running beyond the extent of the trench in the west and south, running north-south.

The topsoil (3/01)/(4/01) consisted of loose, slightly humic, grey brown silt containing <20% sand, <2% crushed limestone gravels with occasional pieces of crushed modern tile. It sealed the land drains.

4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The archaeological evaluation took place during good weather conditions.

5 FINDS AND ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

5.1 Finds

No finds were recovered from any of the deposits observed on site.

5.2 Environmental Remains

No environmental samples were taken as the potential of the deposits was not felt to be sufficient to warrant sampling.

6 DISCUSSION

The evaluation undertaken at Granslet Farm, Northend, Southam, Warwickshire revealed little evidence for past use of the site beyond the 19th century.

Land drains in Trenches 3 and 4 indicate the presence of modern farming activity on the site. The land drains were located at the break of slope from the hill to the south and the plateau on which the present field barn was located.

The dark grey limestone layer in Trench 2 could have functioned as a previous cobbled yard surface, possibly associated with an earlier phase of use of the current, or a previous, barn. The lack of dating evidence beyond the presence of machine made brick fragments, suggests this layer could also represent imported material used as a levelling fill prior to the laying of the current concrete slab.

No other archaeological activity was in evidence.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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JMHS 2010 *Grandslet Farm, Northend, Southam, Warwickshire. Archaeological Field Evaluation. Written Scheme of Investigation.*

Appendix 1: Archaeological Context Inventory

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Finds	Interpretation
Trench 1							
1/01	Layer	Compacted crushed modern brick and tile, 40% gravel.	0.30	>1.6	>5	No	Modern hard standing
1/02	Layer	Grey brown silt.	>0.1	>1.6	>5	No	Remnant topsoil
1/03	Layer	Dark grey brown silty clay; 5% sand.	Unk.	>1.6	>5	No	Natural
Trench 2							
2/01	Layer	Modern concrete.	0.13	>2.1	>7	No	Modern concrete
2/02	Deposit	Limestone gravels	0.04	>2.1	5	No	Metalled surface
2/03	Layer	Grey brown plastic clay. Nil inclusions.	Unk.	>1.6	>7	No	Natural
2/04	Layer	Very dark grey gravel; 5% clay; 25% angular limestone.	0.31		>7	No	Levelling layer for concrete or earlier surface.
Trench 3							
3/01	Layer	Loosely compacted, slightly humic, grey brown silt. 20% sand. 2% crushed limestone.	0.10	>1	>8	No	Topsoil
3/02	Layer	Grey brown clay silt; 10% clay.	0.15	>1.6	>8	No	Subsoil
3/03	Layer	Orange brown clay; 20% silt. Nil inclusions	Unk.	>1.6	>8	No	Natural
Trench 4							
4/01	Layer	Dark grey brown, humic, silty loam; Modern tile inclusions.	0.15	>1.6	>8.3	No	Topsoil
4/02	Layer	Grey brown clay loam; 10% clay.	0.20	>1.6	>8.3	No	Subsoil
4/03	Layer	Light brown clay; 20% silt. Nil inclusions	Unk.	>1.6	>8.3	No	Natural