



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

THE SCOUT HUT,

CHEARSLEY ROAD, LONG CRENDON,

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

NGR SP 6947 0884

On behalf of

1st Bernwood Forest Scout Group

AUGUST 2010

REPORT FOR 1st Bernwood Forest Scout Group
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services conducted an evaluation prior to the construction of the New Scout Hut at Long Crendon. The site was previously part of Grendon Park, where earthworks are accounted in antiquarian sources. The evaluation found that the site appeared to have been quarried and contained a number of make-up layers, the earliest of which was of an ill-defined date, but the later fills more recent. There were also three modern features truncating these deposits.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located at the site of the Old Scout Hut on Chearsley Road, Long Crendon (NGR SP 6947 0884). The site lies between 105-107m OD. The underlying geology is limestone.

1.2 Planning Background

The Vale of Aylesbury District Council granted planning permission for the erection of a new Scout Hut (ref. 08/02479/APP). Due to the archaeological and historical importance of the surrounding area a condition was attached to the permission requiring a watching brief to be maintained during the course of building operations or construction works on the site. This was in line with PPG 16 (the planning policy current at the time) and other Local Planning policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The earliest occupation observed in the parish of Long Crendon consists of a number of Neolithic find spots (English Heritage 2009), which are spread outside the 500m radius of the new build. Bronze Age activity has also been noted in the town (HER 0101300000 SP 69000 08800).

In the Iron Age and Roman periods further activity is evident, a hill-fort once lay to the north of the village (HER 0668700000 SP 6908 0969). Nearer to the site, some 450m to the northeast north of the church, the remains of an Iron-Age/Roman cemetery site has been identified on a number of occasions (HER 0443700000 SP 6990 0915, HER 0540400000 SP 6983 0926, HER 0056400000 SP 69900 09380, HER 0056400001 SP 69900 09380, HER 0435300001 SP 70102 09940). Further Roman material has been recovered from the village (HER 0101500001 SP 69840 09060 and HER 0553200000 SP69900 09300) around the church; while the Chearsley Road to the north of the site has been claimed as the course of a Roman road (HER 0703500000 SP7911 1944), an agar has been described by antiquaries running along the north side of the present road.

The antiquarian Lipscombe described the remains of a Saxon burial in the cemetery (Donald 1973, 3), while Long Crendon church, has an unusual relationship with Notley Priory, and the churches of Ashendon, Chilton, Chearsley, Dorton, and Lower Winchendon (VCH 1925, 7, 21, 38, 45, 48, 50, 121). This is circumstantial evidence that Long Crendon may be the location of an earlier high status minster or lay church.

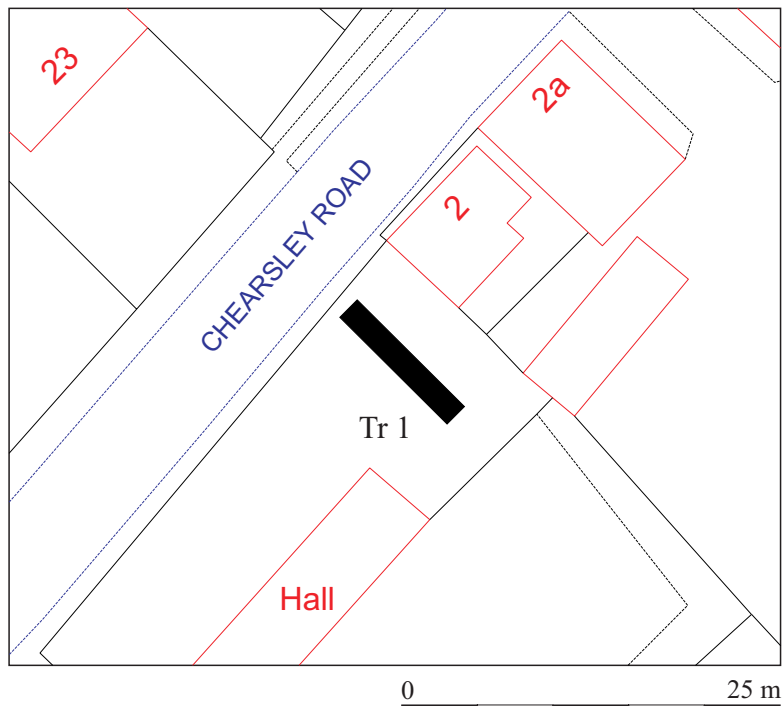
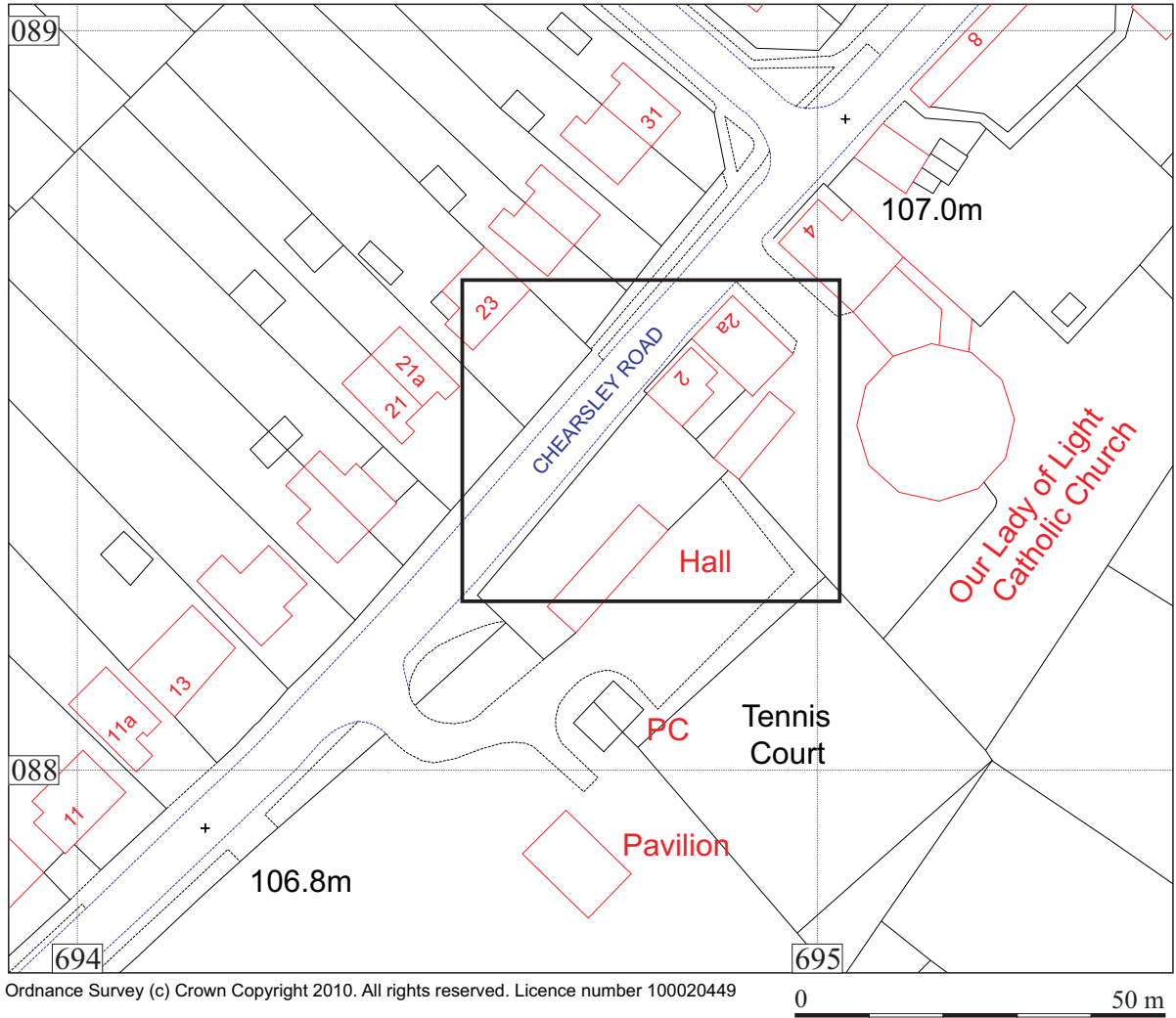


Figure 1. Site location

At the end of the early medieval period the village is described as fully developed (Morris 1978, 14.5). High Medieval activity (1066-1480) has also been recognised at Long Crendon (English Heritage 2009). Walter Giffard held the manor in 1086 and his castle is considered to be located near the church (Donald 1973, 3, HER 0201400000 SP70200 09000), some 450m to the east of the site. The present manor site lies at the southwest end of the village (HER 0056700000 SP 6930 0849), some 400m from the site. This area and the zone around the church are seen as the locations of medieval focus in Long Crendon. The area, on which the scout hut is to be built, lies in a possible early enclosure as later field boundaries respect its boundaries. The curving corner on the north-west side looks as if it could be a relic of an earlier enclosure. This area has been suggested as the location of the earliest manor of Long Crendon (Donald 1973, 7). It is probably Grendon Park on which earlier ruins and relic earthworks are described (Shenham 1862, 368).

The earliest map, of 1591, of the town shows a number of houses along the High Street, Burts Way, The Chearsley Road, besides a close by the land of the wardens of All Souls (BRO MaR/1/8-11.T). A number of the buildings along these roads have been Listed, mainly Grade II (DoE 1981, 11-15); although a medieval barn (grade II*) and a probable 16th-17th century house (grade I) on the Chearsley Road have been given a higher cultural importance. It is this group of buildings which have led to the designation of Long Crendon as a conservation area. Also to note in the post-medieval period are the traditions concerning a Civil War battlefield site (HER 040500000 SP 69500 08900) claimed to lie near or on the site, and the 19th century Baptist Chapel (HER 0558000000 SP 69580 08730), which lies adjacent to the site. Certain post-medieval industrial activities have been noted around the town, for example a limekiln (HER 0222200000 SP 69600 08430), and a number of buildings around the town were associated with the needle making industry (English Heritage 2009, 43). None of these have been identified in the immediate vicinity, but this does not mean that this type of activity did not occur on the site.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To identify and record any archaeological and historic remains exposed during the course of building operations or construction works on the site.

In particular:

- To identify and characterise any evidence for medieval occupation and identify the potential for deposits to contribute to our understanding of how Long Crendon developed as a town.
- To establish whether there is any evidence for the date of the routeway, which is important to understanding medieval settlement morphology.
- To establish the potential for archaeological evidence relating to Iron Age or Roman activity recognised in the area.

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 Services* (BCAS) the archaeological advisors to the Vale of Aylesbury District Council. 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

A single evaluation trench 10m long by 1.6m wide was excavated across the proposed site of the new Scout Hut.

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.

4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

4.1 Field Results

The evaluation trench 10m long x 1.6m wide identified a series of make-up layers to a maximum depth of 1.19m. In three locations along the north east side of the trench the deposits had been truncated by post-medieval and modern cuts.

The natural geological deposit (1/05) was a loose light grey white sand with limestone fragments (40% inclusions). Above this lay a firm mid red brown sandy clay deposit (1/04) which had gravel and charcoal flecking along with rounded limestone fragments accounting for some 10% of the fill. This deposit was 0.5m thick. This was overlain by layer (1/03) that was a moderately compact mid brown grey layer with Ceramic Building Material and charcoal flecking. The depth of the deposit was approximately 0.31m thick. A modern deposit at the southeast end of the trench was ill defined being truncated on the west side by a later cut and lying beyond the bulk on the southeast side. Sealing this deposit was layer (1/02) a moderately compact mid brown grey loam with gravel and charcoal (22%) inclusions 0.22m thick. This was interpreted as the subsoil. This layer was cut by pit 1/06. This was 4.5m across at the top, with a gentle upper break of slope and gentle sides before a second break of slope with vertical sides below this, and a flat base. It was 0.75m deep, it is possible that the cut originally had vertical sides all of the way up and that the resulting profile of a cone shape was due to weathering. Its fill (1/07) was a moderately compact brown yellow sandy clay with some rubble inclusions. The fill was sealed by a loose dark grey brown sandy clay topsoil, which had gravel inclusions and was approximately 0.15m thick (1/01). A rectangular feature had been cut through the topsoil. This was filled with a black loam and contained large blocks of rubble. The last feature was interpreted as a soakaway.

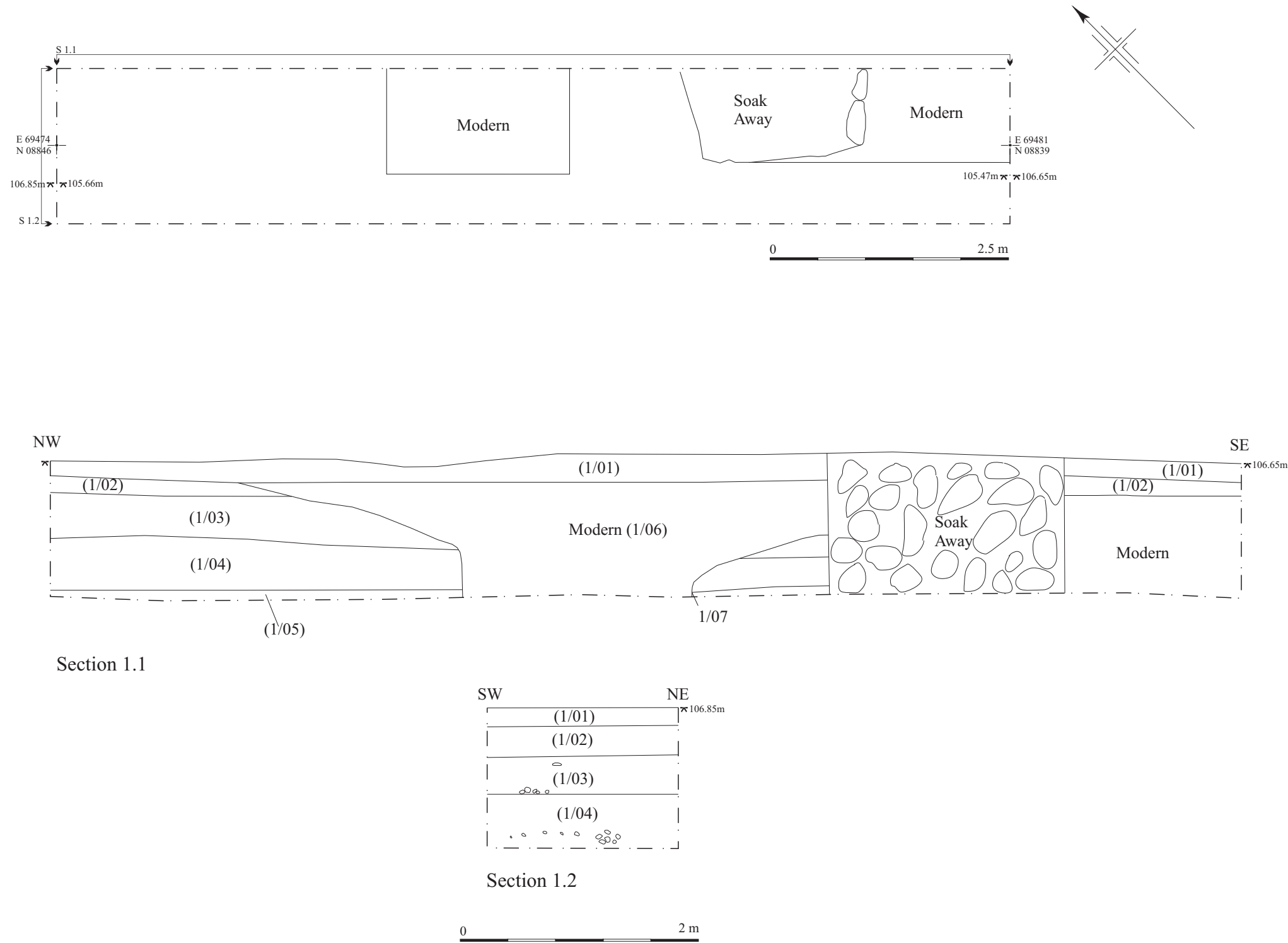


Figure 2. Trench Plan and sections

The depth of soil and make-up in this area was considerable. A number of the deposits produced finds, but these are late in date.

4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results

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

5 FINDS (by Jenny Winnett)

5.1 Pottery

The pottery assemblage comprised 3 sherds with a total weight of 167g. This assemblage consists of 18th and 19th century domestic ceramic food related types and a single sherd related to personal hygiene. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

Fill (1/01) contained a single rim sherd of red earthenware weighing 50g. The fabric is a well-mixed red firing clay containing occasional angular ironstone gravels and occasional quartzite sand inclusions. The interior had a brown lead based glaze.

Fill (1/01) also contained a single sherd of yellow ware weighing 23g. This sherd is probably from a chamber pot, with a remnant bulbous body and flat rim. The exterior has remnant decoration incorporating a thin blue slipped line delimiting a white slipped field. Although this decoration is not complete it is likely to be from a mocha type decorative band. Mocha decoration dates from the 1780's. Yellow ware dates from the 1820's onwards.

Fill (1/02) contained a sherd of undecorated whiteware weighing 94g. This appears to be from a food storage jar, being cylindrical in shape and with the remnant of a restricted neck.

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

Cntxt	No	Wt	Milton Keynes Post-Roman pottery type number	Date
(1/01)	1	50	PM8	17 th C onwards
(1/01)	1	23	PM38	17 th C onwards-
(1/02)	1	94	PM25	Late 18 th onwards
Total	3	167		

5.2 Building Material

The building material assemblage comprised 4 sherds with a total weight of 468g. The building material occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

A fragment of tile was recovered from context (1/03), weighing 25g. It consisted of a red firing fabric containing quartzite sand with occasional ironstone gravel.

Three unidentifiable CBM pieces were recovered from 2 contexts. Context (1/02) contained a single fragment weighing 7g that consisted of a red firing fabric containing sand and ironstone gravel inclusions. 2 fragments were recovered from context (1/04), weighing 11g, also consisting of a red firing clay containing numerous sand and occasional ironstone inclusions.

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

Cntxt	No	Wt	Description	Date
(1/03)	1	25	Tile	19th/20thC
(1/02)	1	7	CBM fragment	17 th /20thC
(1/04)	2	11	CBM fragments	17th/20thC
1 Total	4	43		

5.3 Environmental Remains

Due to the lack of archaeological features and limited potential, no samples were taken.

6 DISCUSSION

The fieldwork determined that the ground consisted of a deep deposit of make-up with addition of sub and topsoil. Three modern pits had been cut from the highest layers in the sequence. The depth of make-up was thought excessive on the site and it was considered that the ground might have been quarried in the past for the nodules of limestone found on the site. Two possible periods of quarrying could have occurred on the site. The first possible quarrying activity on the site could be for the construction of a road, indeed if an early road did run along the line of the Cheersley Road. This road is considered by some sources to be the line of a Roman road, which has not been confirmed. The second possible period of quarrying may be of the post-medieval period as a limekiln (HER 0222200000 SP 69600 08430) has been identified in the village, near the Thame Road. This kiln must have had its raw material to burn sourced locally, either from an abandoned building or quarry sites within the proximity of the village. That the pottery assemblage points to a 17th to 19th century date, and the ceramic building material a 17th to 20th century date, it is highly

likely that the site was used as a post-medieval lime quarry in which the nodules of limestone from the bedrock were removed for burning.

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief

Written scheme of investigation

The project report

The primary site record

Physical record

Finds

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the County Museums' Store.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Donald, J 1973 Long Crendon: a short history, part 1, Marlow: H E Simpson

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Shenhan, J J 1862 History and topography of Bucks, London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts

VCH 1925 A history of the County of Buckinghamshire, volume 3, Oxford: Oxford University Press

APPENDIX: Context Inventory

ID	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Finds	Interpretation	Date
Trench 1								
01/01	Deposit	Loose, dark grey brown, sandy clay.	0.15m	1.6m	10.0m		Topsoil	
01/02	Deposit	Moderately compact, mid-brown grey, silty sandy clay.	0.22m	1.6m	10.0m		Subsoil	Late C18th +
01/03	Deposit	Moderately compact, mid brown grey, sandy clay.	0.31m	1.6m	10.0m		Make-up layer	
01/04	Deposit	Firm, mid red brown, sandy clay.	0.50m	1.6m	0.40m		Make-up layer	
01/05	Deposit	Loose, light grey white, sand with limestone fragments.					Natural	
01/06	Cut	Rectangular, with cone erosion at top.	0.75m	1.8m	4.5m		Modern cut	
01/07	Fill	Moderately compact, light brown yellow, silty sand.	0.75m	1.8m	4.5m		Fill of 01/06	