



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

FIELDSIDE, MACKNEY LANE,

BRIGHTWELL-CUM-SOTWELL, OXFORDSHIRE

SU 5821 8992

MARCH 2010

REPORT FOR Brookes Cavendish Ltd
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Summary

An evaluation of this site was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services on 1st of March 2010. One trench, 20 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 on the eastern side of Mackney, south of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell (NGR SU 5821 8992). The underlying geology is shown as Second (Summertown-Radley) Terrace Deposits overlying Upper Greensand (Geological Survey of Great Britain. Henley-on-Thames Sheet 254. Solid and Drift Geology 1:50,000). The site lies at approximately 47.7m OD and is currently in domestic use.

1.2 Planning Background

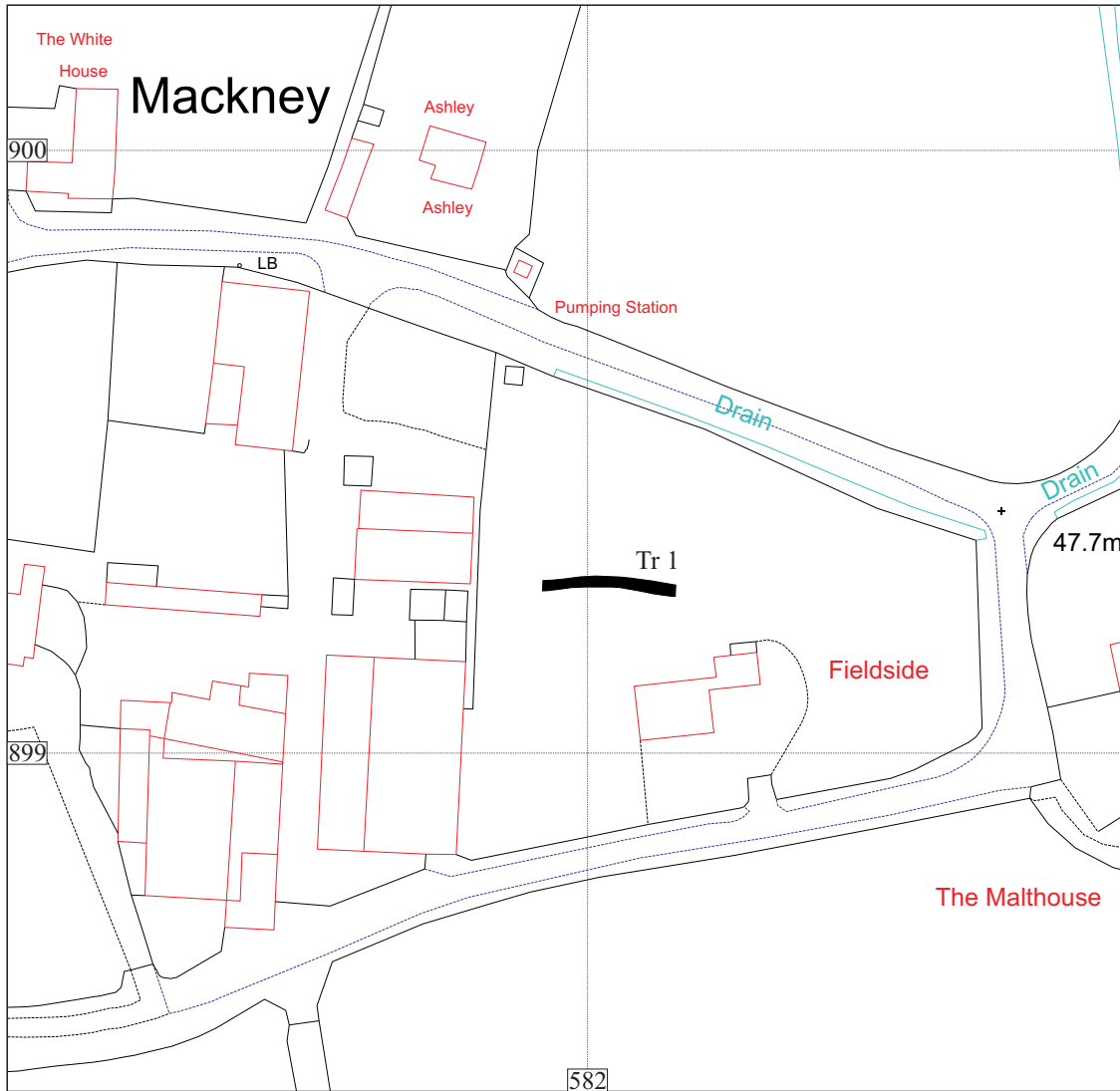
There is a proposal to demolish the existing 1960s bungalow and provide a replacement dwelling in an alternative location. Due to design reasons a planning application made to South Oxfordshire District Council had to be withdrawn. As part of the consideration of a future planning application an archaeological field evaluation is required. Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS) prepared a *Brief* for the field evaluation. The evaluation was designed and carried out by John Moore Heritage Services (JMHS) to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with OCAS.

1.3 Archaeological Background

Mackney is a hamlet lying south of Brightwell and the proposal site lies within the medieval core of the hamlet. The 1761 Rocque map of Berkshire shows a series of five buildings on the site. These are not present on the first edition Ordnance Survey map so there is no information as to their original date. Two other buildings shown on the map date to the 17th century and a portion of Mackney Court, the house built by Robert Court before 1509, is 16th century. It also has remains of a moat (VCH 1923). It is therefore possible that the buildings originally on the site were medieval or early post-medieval in date and therefore medieval remains may be present.

A foot-path, which may have been known as a cattle track as early as the 10th century, continues the line of Mackney Lane to the brook at Tadsey Bridge (ibid).

The site is located 100m west of the Roman road from Dorchester to Silchester (PRN 8924; SU 5832 8992). A series of linear field systems have been recorded 275m west of the site (PRN 15365; SU 5774 9000) and Roman finds have been recorded from this area suggesting that these could be of Roman date. During excavations for the Walling reinforcement main a Bronze Age pit was found 290m south of the site (PRN 15844; SU 5816 8974). It is therefore considered possible that prehistoric and/or Roman remains could be present on the site.



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Figure 1. Site location

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.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.

In particular:

- To establish whether there are any remains associated with the medieval and/or early post-medieval occupation of Mackney.
- To establish whether there are any prehistoric and/or Roman remains associated with those known 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 Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (OCAS). 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 20m in length (Fig. 1). This trench was 1.8m wide and was excavated by a 5 tonne excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.

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.

It was agreed by telephone with Richard Oram of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (OCAS) that he would not need to monitor the work due to the lack of any archaeological features.

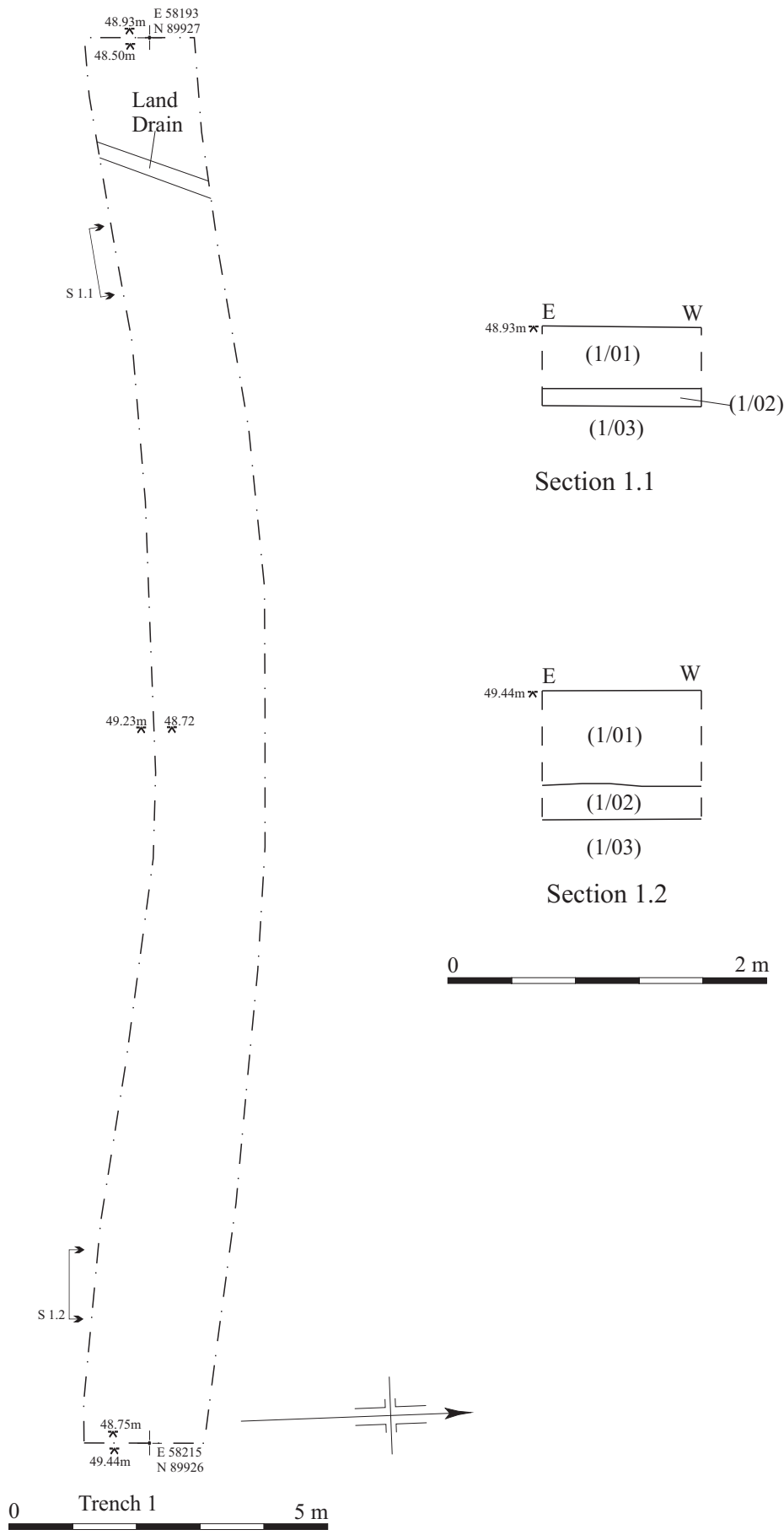


Figure 2. Trench 1 plan and sections

4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in () indicate fills or deposits of material whilst numbers referring to features themselves are shown without brackets.

4.1 Excavation Results

Trench 1

The natural geological deposit in the area was a pale yellow to white-brown silty clay with occasional stone fragments (1/03), the Upper Greensand.

Above this was a thick pale yellow-brown clay silt subsoil 0.20m thick containing very occasional small stone (1/02). Cut into this layer was a modern land drain.

The uppermost layer (1/01) was a soft dark grey-brown silty clay with very occasional small stone. It was 0.60m thick at the western end gradually shrinking to 0.40m thick at the east end.

4.2 Reliability of Results and Techniques

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The excavation of the trenches took place during good weather.

5 FINDS

No finds were recovered during the course of the investigation

5.1 Environmental Remains

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

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological investigation was unsuccessful in locating any finds or significant archaeological features; only a modern land drain cut into the subsoil (1/02).

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

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

Institute of Field Archaeologists. 1994. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluations* (revised 2008).

Victoria County History 1923 A History of Berkshire, Vol. 3.

APPENDIX – ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

ID	Type	Description	Depth	Width	Length	Finds	Interpretation	Date
Trench 1								
1/01	Topsoil	a soft dark grey brown silty clay with very occasional small stone.	0.60m	1.80m	20m	None	Topsoil	
1/02	Subsoil	thick pale yellow brown clay silt subsoil containing very occasional small stone.	0.20m	1.80m	20m	None	Subsoil	
1/03	Natural	a pale yellow to white brown silty clay with occasional limestone fragments.		1.80m	20m	None	Natural	