

South Wing  
Lavendon Grange  
Lavendon  
Olney  
Buckinghamshire



**Archaeological  
Evaluation Report**



August 2006

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**South Wing, Lavendon Grange, Lavendon, Buckinghamshire**

NGR: SP 9021 5355

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION*****CONTENTS**

Summary .....	2
1 Introduction.....	2
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	2
1.2 Geology and topography.....	2
1.3 Archaeological and historical background .....	2
2 Evaluation Aims .....	2
3 Evaluation Methodology .....	3
3.1 Scope of fieldwork.....	3
3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording .....	3
3.3 Finds .....	3
3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence .....	3
3.5 Presentation of results.....	3
4 Results: Descriptions .....	3
4.1 Description of deposits .....	3
4.2 Finds .....	4
5 Discussion and Interpretation .....	5
5.1 Reliability of field investigation .....	5
5.2 Overall interpretation.....	5
Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory.....	6
Appendix 2 Bibliography and References.....	6
Appendix 3 Summary of Site Details .....	6

**LIST OF FIGURES**

- Fig. 1 Site location.  
Fig. 2 Trench locations and sections

## SUMMARY

*In June 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation within the plot of a proposed garage within the grounds of Lavendon Grange, Buckinghamshire. The evaluation revealed post-medieval made-ground deposits overlying natural, but no in situ earlier deposits or features.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In June 2006, OA carried out a field evaluation at Lavendon Grange (Fig. 1) in respect of an application for Scheduled Ancient Monument Consent (HSD 9/2/8067) and a brief set by Nick Crank, Archaeological Officer for Milton Keynes. The plot for the proposed garage measures 49 m<sup>2</sup>.

#### 1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies between the villages of Lavendon and Olney, Buckinghamshire, at a height of approximately 70 m OD. The underlying geology is boulder clay.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The development lies within the grounds of Lavendon Grange, which is on, or near the site of Lavendon Abbey. The Abbey was founded in 1154-58 by John de Bidun, the sheriff of Buckinghamshire.

1.3.2 The Abbey was dissolved in 1536, and very little survives today to locate its former position or layout, but it is thought likely that the present Grange buildings were at least partly built over the remnants of the former Abbey buildings. The grange itself was originally built c1625, probably with re-used stone from the Abbey. The Grange was subsequently extensively modified and added to, the South Wing was built in the 18th/early 19th century, and the East Wing was built in 1911.

1.3.3 A recently published earthwork survey of the site (Records of Buckinghamshire 2005) notes remnants of a 17th century formal garden and fishponds.

### 2 EVALUATION AIMS

2.1.1 To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the proposal area and to determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.

2.1.2 To establish if a subsequent mitigation strategy would be necessary.

2.1.3 To establish the ecofactual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.

2.1.4 To define any relevant research priorities if additional investigation proves necessary.

2.1.5 To make available the results of the excavation.

### 3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

#### 3.1 Scope of fieldwork

3.1.1 The evaluation consisted of a 7 m x 1.6 m trench and a 3 m x 1.6 m trench (Fig. 2), and were placed to avoid services which were detected running diagonally (NNE-SSW) across the site.

#### 3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.2.1 The overburden was removed under close archaeological supervision by a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket.

3.2.2 The trenches were cleaned by hand as appropriate, and examined for finds. The trenches were planned and their sections drawn at a scale of 1:20. The trenches were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

#### 3.3 Finds

3.3.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the excavation and bagged by context.

#### 3.4 Palaeo-environmental evidence

3.4.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified.

#### 3.5 Presentation of results

3.5.1 Each trench is individually described. The descriptions are followed by a discussion and interpretation of the results, together with a summary of the results. A table of contexts is given within Appendix 1.

## 4 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

### 4.1 Description of deposits

#### *Trench 1 (Fig. 2, Section 1)*

4.1.1 Trench 1 was aligned north-south within the north-western corner of the plot and measured 3 m long.

4.1.2 The underlying natural was encountered at a depth of 0.8 m beneath the present ground level (71.45 m OD) and consisted of a firm broken limestone 'cornbrash' in a matrix of orange silty clay (102).

- 4.1.3 The natural was overlain by a 0.7 m thick deposit of limestone in brownish orange gritty silty clay (101) which contained occasional tile and medieval pottery as well as post-medieval clay pipe stems. It was overlain by 0.2 m of dark brown silty clay topsoil (100).

### ***Trench 2 (Fig. 2, Section 2)***

- 4.1.4 Trench 2 was aligned north-south along the eastern side of the plot and measured 7 m long. It's stratigraphic sequence was similar to that found within Trench 1.
- 4.1.5 A firm broken limestone cornbrash in a matrix of dull orange silty clay (202) was found at a depth of 0.9 m beneath the present ground level (70.57 m OD) and was overlain by up to 0.75 m of mixed broken limestone in brownish orange gritty silty clay (201). This layer corresponds to layer (101) in Trench 1 and also contained occasional tile, brick, and pottery. It was overlain by 0.18 m of dark brown silty clay loam topsoil (200).

## **4.2 Finds**

### ***Introduction***

- 4.2.1 Ceramic building material was recovered from contexts 101 and 201. This amounted to a total of 16 fragments weighing 1355 g. The assemblage has been visually examined and recorded in the table below. Fabrics have not been examined or characterised, except in the broadest terms.

### ***Roofing***

- 4.2.2 The majority of the fragments were roof tile, all similar in character made in a fairly coarse sandy fabric. They were crudely finished, often with coarse moulding sand on the underside and measured 14-18 mm thick. One fragment had the scar from a nib broken off the underside indicating these to be nib tiles rather than peg tiles. There were also possible claw marks on the edge of this nib tile and part of a large paw print on the surface of another fragment.

### ***Flooring***

- 4.2.3 A single fragment of glazed floor tile was found. This had a streak of white slip along the edge of the tile and was overlain by brown - green glaze, which had also dribbled down the bevelled side. This is a Flemish style floor tile probably of local manufacture.

### ***Brick***

- 4.2.4 Part of a single well made brick, with even flat sides and sharp arrises. It measured 45 mm thick by 120 mm wide (1 ¾ x 4 5/8 ") and all except the top surface were coated in the same very coarse moulding sand as the roof tile. The top surface was very smooth, flat and unworn. It was possibly a special brick, made for an architectural feature.

### ***Discussion***

- 4.2.5 All the material is of medieval or Tudor date. The roof tile and brick is all likely to have been made at the same tilery as fabric and moulding sand appears similar for both. The floor tile possibly derived from a different source, which perhaps specialised in floor tiles. They are likely to derive from one of the tileries in the area of Penn in Buckinghamshire, which was a major producer of floor tiles during the medieval period. The brick and roof tile was probably produced more locally in the Milton Keynes area, which has a long tradition of brick production. The material is of interest as it appears to derive from the earlier abbey buildings, rather than the Grange built in 1625 and can shed light on the character and status of the original abbey.

### ***Pottery***

- 4.2.6 Two sherds of Pottery were recovered, These have been provisionally identified as one fragment of Potterpury Ware (black-burnished) c-1250-1450, and one fragment of shelly-ware rim sherd, probably Olney type, which is 13th- 14th C.

### ***Other Finds***

- 4.2.7 Also recovered were several pieces of animal bone, some with butchers marks, and a single piece of worked limestone, possibly from one of the Abbey's window arches. Two fragments of clay pipe stem were recovered. Their relatively large bore and diameter suggests a late 18th, early 19th century date.

## **5 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION**

### **5.1 Reliability of field investigation**

- 5.1.1 The two trenches represent a 33 % sample of the garage plot and give a good indication of the archaeological potential of the immediate area.
- 5.1.2 Both trenches were machined down through a thick re-deposited layer (101 and 201) to reveal a clean underlying natural (102 and 202). No discrete features were found.

### **5.2 Overall interpretation**

#### ***Summary of results***

- 5.2.1 The underlying natural was found at a depth of approximately 0.9 m beneath the present ground level and was overlain by a thick layer of what appears to be a re-deposited limestone natural (101 and 201) which contains both medieval and post-medieval finds. It seems likely that this was deposited as part of the general landscaping of the Grange in the post-medieval period. Buried soils or other layers overlying the natural were absent, indicating that the former topsoil/ subsoil had been previously removed, again probably as part of the landscaping. No features were identified.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Description	Depth (m)	Finds	Date
Trench 1					
100	Layer	Topsoil	0.2		
101	Layer	Re-deposited natural	0.66	CBM, pottery, pipe stem	Post-med
102	Layer	Stoney natural			
Trench 2					
200	Layer	Topsoil	0.18		
201	Layer	Re-deposited natural	0.75	CBM, pottery	Post-med
202	Layer	Stoney natural			

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OAU, 1992 *Field manual* (ed. Wilkinson D.)

OA, 2006 *South Wing, Lavendon Grange, Lavendon, Milton Keynes: Written scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*

MKC, 2006 *South wing, Lavendon Grange, Lavendon : Design Brief for Archaeological watching brief.*

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Lavendon Grange, Lavendon, Buckinghamshire

**Site code:** LAVSW 06

**Grid reference:** SP 9021 5355

**Type of evaluation:** Two trenches in garage plot

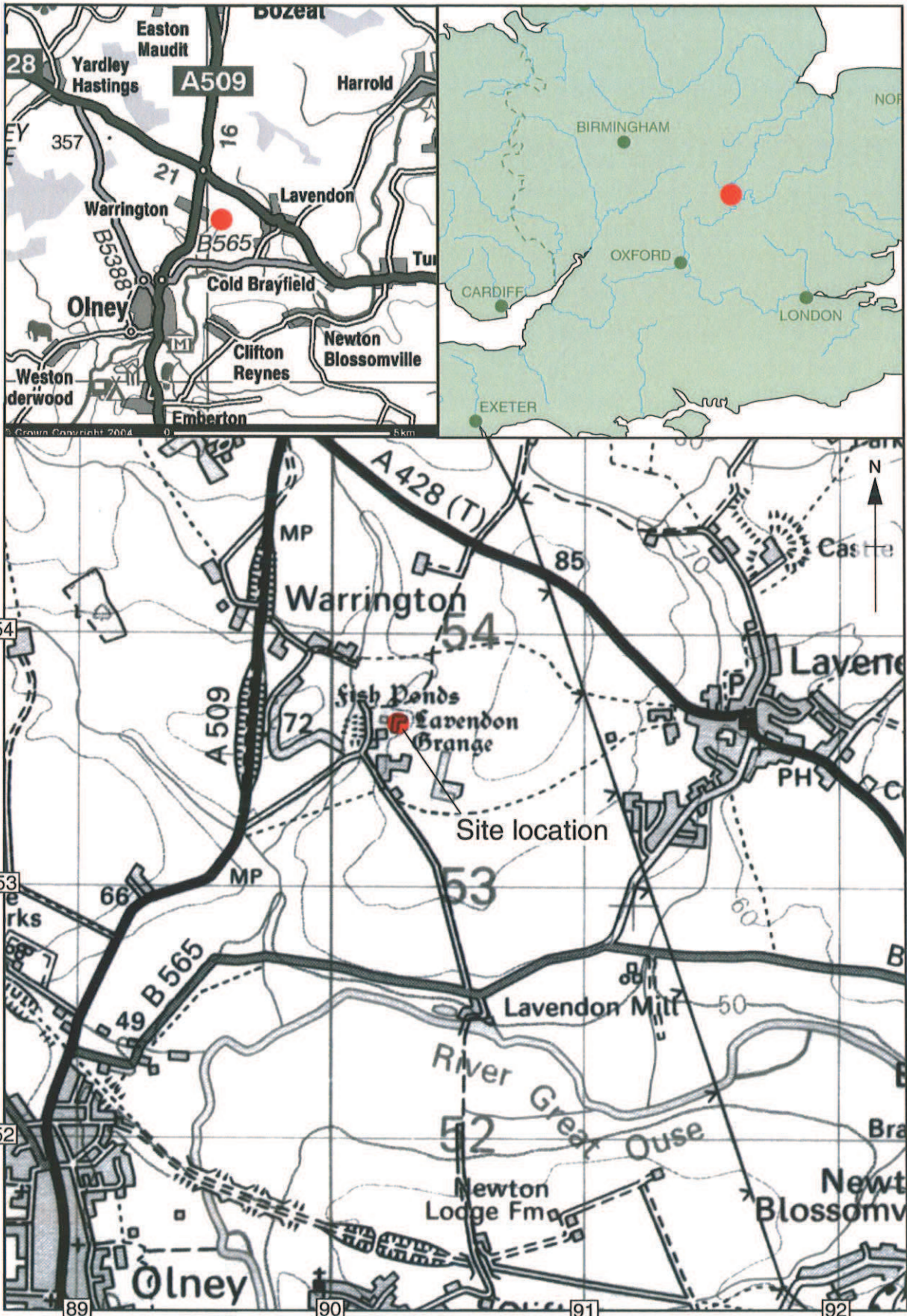
**Date and duration of project:** 12-13th June 2006

**Area of site:** 7 x 7 m square.

**Summary of results:** A thick post-medieval re-deposited natural overlying natural cornbrash.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museums Service in due course.





Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location

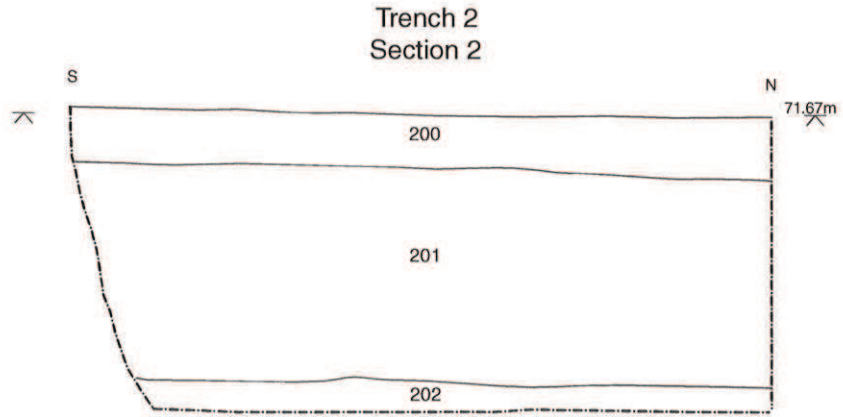
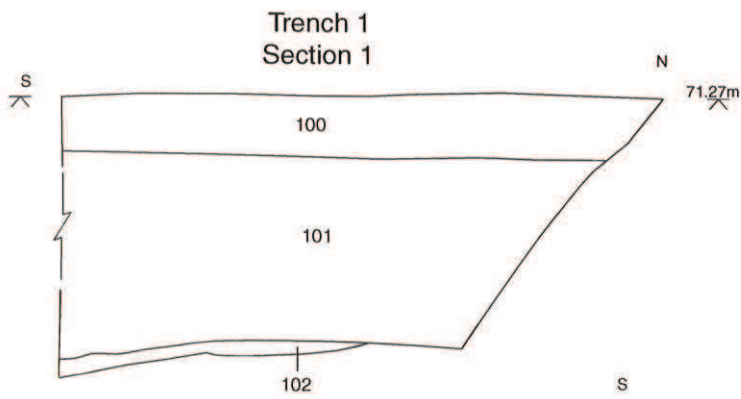
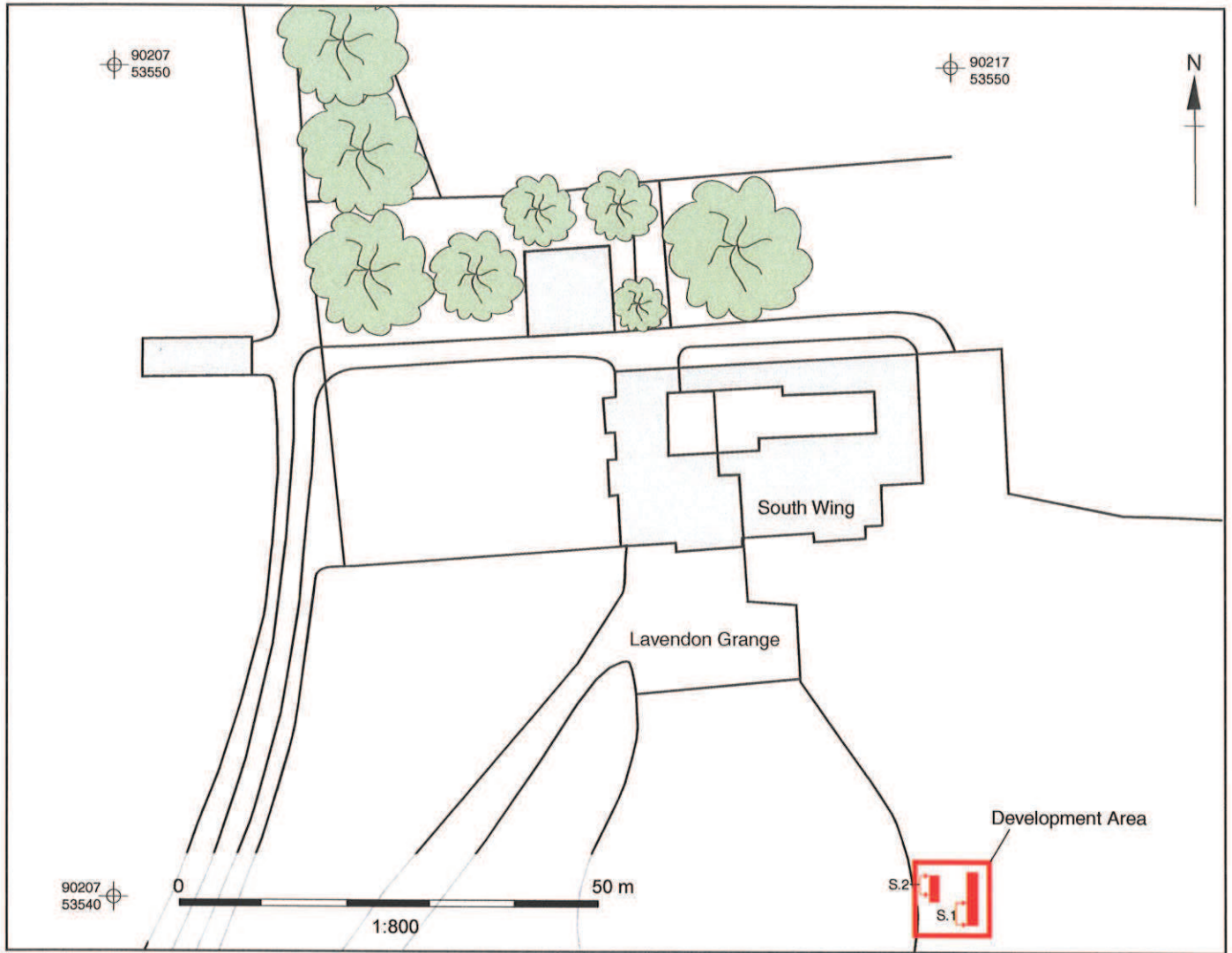


Figure 2: Trench location and sections



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