



Weston Court, Long Compton, Warwickshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

April 2017

Client: Heyford Homes Ltd

Issue No: 1

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oxfordarchaeology

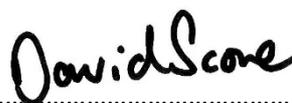


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Prepared by: Lee Sparks (Supervisor)
Checked by: John Boothroyd (Project Officer)
Edited by: Leo Webley (Head of Post-Excavation)
Approved for Issue by: David Score (Head of Fieldwork)
Signature:



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OA South

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford
OX2 0ES

t. +44 (0)1865 263 800

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridge
CB23 8SG

t. +44 (0)1223 850 500

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane Mills
Moor Lane
Lancaster
LA1 1QD

t. +44 (0)1524 880 250

e. info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w. oxfordarchaeology.com

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Weston Court, Long Compton, Warwickshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Written by Lee Sparks

With illustrations by Gary Jones and Magdalena Wachnik

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Summary

On the 5th April 2017 Oxford Archaeology undertook an archaeological evaluation of a proposed housing development on land to the east of Weston Court, Long Compton, Warwickshire. The evaluation comprised the excavation of three trial trenches measuring 20m by 1.8m.

The site is located 1.6km to the north of the Rollright Stones. Several early Neolithic to Bronze Age barrows are located in the vicinity of the Stones, including two visible as earthworks located within 1km of the site. The parish church of Saints Peter and Paul lies 575m to the north-west of the site.

No archaeological remains were identified during the evaluation works, and the site is considered to be of low potential.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Heyford Homes Ltd for commissioning this project.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by John Boothroyd. The fieldwork was directed by Lee Sparks. Survey and digitizing was carried out by Matt Bradley and his team in Geomatics. Thanks is also extended to OA staff that prepared the archive under the management of Nicola Scott (Head of Archives).

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Heyford Homes Ltd to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of a proposed housing development to the east of Weston Court, Long Compton (Fig. 1).

1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref. 15/04317/FUL).

1.1.3 Condition 9 of the Planning Decision Notice stated that:

A) A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for a programme of archaeological evaluative work shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA.

B) The programme of archaeological evaluative work and associated post-excavation analysis, report production and archive deposition detailed within the approved WSI shall be undertaken. A report detailing the results of this fieldwork shall be submitted to the planning authority.

C) An Archaeological Mitigation Strategy document (including a Written Scheme of Investigation for any archaeological fieldwork proposed) shall be submitted to and approved in writing by the LPA. This should detail a strategy to mitigate the archaeological impact of the proposed development and should be informed by the results of the archaeological evaluation.

The development, and any archaeological fieldwork post-excavation analysis, publication of results and archive deposition detailed in the Mitigation Strategy document, shall be undertaken in accordance with the approved Mitigation Strategy document.

1.1.4 The work was undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation produced by Oxford Archaeology (OA 2017), The Chartered Institute for Archeologists' 'Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluation' (revised 2015), and local and national planning policies.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site lies to the east of Long Compton, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire (NGR: SP 29184 32630; Fig. 1). The site lies to the east of Weston Court and is enclosed to the north, east and south by open fields. The Nothercote Brook runs c 80m to the north of the site. The site is approximately 50m to the east of the Long Compton Conservation Area.

1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of single grassed field and lies around 110m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). Although the whole field is scheduled for development, at this time only the northern half, an area of c 0.47ha, is to be developed.

1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as Charmouth Mudstone Formation, a Sedimentary bedrock formed approximately 183 to 197 million years ago, in the Jurassic Period.

These deposits are overlain by superficial river terrace deposits of sand and gravel, formed up to 3 million years ago, in the Quaternary Period (BGS Online).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 No pre-medieval finds or sites are recorded on the Warwickshire HER within the village of Long Compton. On current understanding prehistoric activity within the area appears to be confined to the south of the village.
- 1.3.2 Located 1.6km to the south of the site, crossing the border between Warwickshire and Oxfordshire, are the Rollright Stones. A collection of early Neolithic to late Bronze Age standing stones comprising the King's Men stone circle, the Whispering Knights dolmen and the King Stone monolith (HER MWA2394). Several early Neolithic to Bronze Age barrows are located in the vicinity of the Rollright stones, including two located c 1km south of site which are visible as earthworks (HER MWA 2395 and MWA 2399).
- 1.3.3 Approximately 1.5km south-west of the site, crop marks identified on aerial photographs show a multiphase settlement consisting of three rectilinear enclosures, numerous pits and a curvilinear boundary ditch. Although the date of these features is unknown their form and location suggest they are of prehistoric or Roman origin (HER MWA12395).
- 1.3.4 Excavations in 1982 revealed a number of storage and refuse pits, enclosure ditches, a well and an infant burial located c 1.3km to the south of site. Iron Age pottery, including Droitwich briquetage, animal bone and several small finds were recovered during the excavations (HER MWA 5536).
- 1.3.5 The area surrounding the Rollright Stones continue to be of significance during the Anglo-Saxon period. Excavations have identified an urned cremation burial containing burnt bone and a knife. Twelve inhumations were also found, several with associated grave goods including glass beads, an annular brooch and a possible saucer brooch (HER MW2396).
- 1.3.6 Long Compton is recorded in the Domesday Survey as part of the Barcheston Hundred and it is stated Geoffrey de Mandeville holds Long Compton from the King, with land for 20 ploughs (HER MWA8968).
- 1.3.7 In 1229 a manor house is recorded at Long Compton, built adjacent to Long Compton church. Although the manor house is no longer present the associated earthworks associated with the moat are still visible (HER MWA5269).
- 1.3.8 The parish church of Saints Peter and Paul lies approximately 575m to the north-west of the site. Originating in the 13th century, the church has subsequently undergone significant alterations (HER MWA2367). A total of 52 fragments of 12th- and 13th-century pottery and single fragment of 15th- to 16th-century floor tile were recovered during the excavation of a new foul sewer extending north from the church (HER MWA8968).
- 1.3.9 Archaeological monitoring of foundation trenches and topsoil stripping undertaken during the construction of two new houses at 40 Main Street, Long Compton, revealed only post-medieval features.

- 1.3.10 The core of the village has been designated a Conservation Area. A total of 37 listed buildings are recorded within the village, mostly originating from the 18th century.
- 1.3.11 The OS 1st Edition 1:12500 map published in the 1880s shows the site to be undeveloped, and a footpath is shown crossing the field. By the early 20th century the site was utilised for allotments. No development has occurred within the site subsequently.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The aims and objectives of the evaluation were:

- i. To determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains which may survive.
- ii. To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains.
- iii. To determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means.
- iv. To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains.
- v. To determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy.
- vi. To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape.
- vii. To determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence, and the forms in which such evidence may survive.
- viii. To determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status utility and social activity.
- ix. To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.

2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 Site specific methodologies were as follows:

- The trenches were laid out as shown in Figure 2 using a GPS with sub-25mm accuracy.
- The trenches were excavated using an 11T 360 tracked excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under the direct supervision of an archaeologist. Spoil was stored adjacent to, but at a safe distance from trench edges.
- Machining continued in spits of no more than 150mm down to the top of the undisturbed natural geology or the first archaeological horizon depending upon which was encountered first.
- The exposed surface was sufficiently cleaned to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains.
- The trenches were backfilled with the uprising in reverse order of removal.

2.2.2 All features and deposits are issued with unique context numbers, and context recording was in accordance with established best practice and the OA Field Manual.

2.2.3 Digital photos were taken of any archaeological features, deposits, trenches and evaluation work in general.

2.2.4 Where appropriate both plan and section drawing were produced at a suitable scale.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, and full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. Natural geology was observed within all three trenches between 107.9 and 108.62mOD and consisted of a light brown silty clay. A mid brown silty clay subsoil deposit, between 0.08m and 0.19m thick, was recorded as overlying the natural geology. In turn, the subsoil was overlain by a grey-brown silty clay topsoil measuring up to 0.30m thick.

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were generally good, and the trenches remained dry throughout.

3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 No archaeological features were present.

3.4 Finds summary

3.4.1 No finds were recovered during the course of the evaluation.

4 DISCUSSION

4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The evaluation was carried out in good conditions with good light which allowed any potential archaeological remains to be seen relatively easily.

4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 In summary, the aims of the evaluation were to establish the presence or absence of any archaeological features or deposits and, if present, determine their character, date range and significance. No archaeological remains were identified during the evaluation works.

4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site suggest that pre-medieval activity occurred primarily to the south of the village of Long Compton. Although medieval and post-medieval deposits and artefacts have been recovered during previous archaeological work within the village of Long Compton, there is no evidence indicating that the area of the proposed development has been used for anything other than agriculture. The results of the evaluation support this conclusion and suggest that the site has little to no archaeological potential.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					Orientation	NE-SW
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.31
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
100	Layer	-	0.24	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.08	Subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	20
					Width (m)	1.8
					Avg. depth (m)	0.47
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
200	Layer	-	0.30	Topsoil	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.17	Subsoil	-	-
202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					Orientation	E-W
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty clay.					Length (m)	30
					Width (m)	2
					Avg. depth (m)	0.45
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
300	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-	0.19	Subsoil	-	-
302	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

BGS Online, <http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>

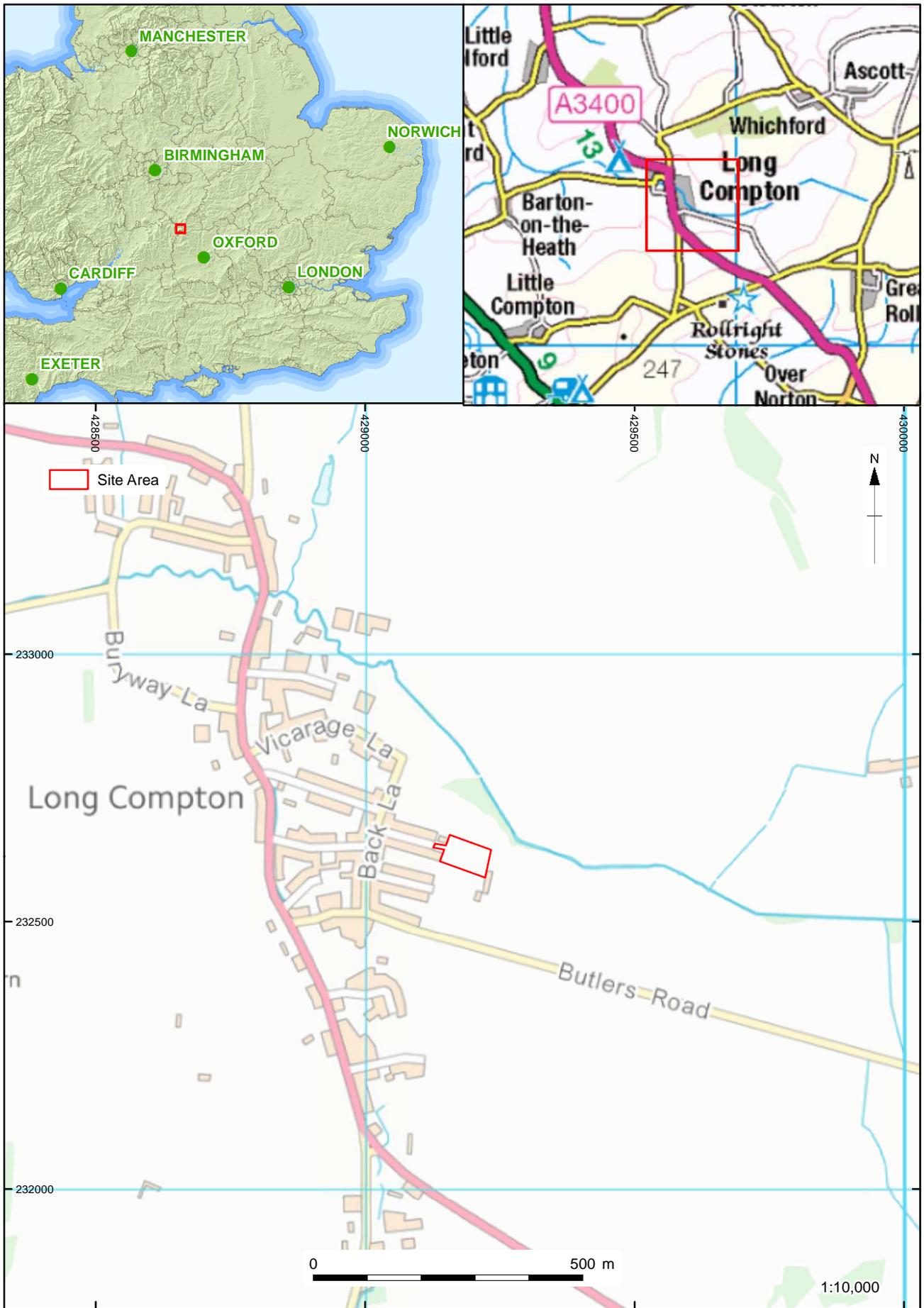
OA 2017, Weston Court, Long Compton, Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation

APPENDIX C**SITE SUMMARY DETAILS**

Site name:	Weston Court, Long Compton
Site code:	LCWC17
Grid Reference	SP 29184 32630
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	5th April 2017
Area of Site	0.47ha
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES
Summary of Results:	Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by Heyford Homes Ltd to undertake an archaeological evaluation of a proposed housing development on land to the east of Weston Court, Long Compton, Warwickshire. The evaluation comprised the excavation of three trial trenches measuring 20m by 1.8m.

The site is located 1.6km to the north of the Rollright Stones. Several early Neolithic to Bronze Age barrows are located in the vicinity of the Stones, including two visible as earthworks located within 1km of the site. The parish church of Saints Peter and Paul lies 575m to the north-west of the site.

No archaeological remains were identified during the evaluation works, and the site is considered to be of low potential.



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Figure 1: Site location



X:\w\Weston Court Long Compton EV\010\Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\Figure2_Proposed Trenches.mxd\benjamin.brown\18/04/2017

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AEX, Getmapping, Aerogrid, IGN, IGP, swisstopo, and the GIS User

Figure 2: Trench locations



Plate 1: Trench 1 view to NW



Plate 2: Trench 2 view to NE



Plate 3: Trench 3 view to SE



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarchaeology.com
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1QD

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oanorth@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500
e: [oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com](mailto: oaeast@oxfordarchaeology.com)
w: <http://oxfordarchaeology.com>



Director: Gill Hey, BA PhD FSA MCifA
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