Carswell Golf Course, Buckland, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Carswell Golf Course, Buckland, Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

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Summary

On 23rd October 2017 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an evaluation on behalf of Carswell Golf Course on the site of a proposed motorcycle assembly shop and showroom. The site lies within the hamlet of Carswell, approximately 1.7km south-west of Buckland village (NGR: SU 32822 97302). The site is bounded to the north by the A420 which links Oxford and Swindon, and to the east, south and west by agricultural land.

The works comprised the excavation of three 30m trenches targeted on the footprint of the proposed development. No archaeological features or artefacts were present.

Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank Carswell Golf Course for commissioning this project. Thanks is also extended to Hugh Coddington who monitored the work on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council for his advice and guidance.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by John Boothroyd. The fieldwork was directed by Ashley Strutt. Survey and digitizing was carried out by Ashley Strutt and Aidan Farnan . Thanks is also extended to the team of OA staff that prepared the archive under the management of Nichola Scott.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by Carswell Golf Course to undertake a trial trench evaluation at the site of Carswell Golf Course .

1.1.2 The work was undertaken as a condition of Planning Permission (planning ref. P17/V1277/FUL). A brief was set by Hugh Coddington and a written scheme of investigation was produced by OA detailing the Local Authority's requirements for work necessary to discharge the planning condition (OA 2017). This document outlines how OA implemented the specified requirements.

1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archeologists' 'Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation' (CIfA 2014) and local and national planning policies, including the Oxfordshire County Council Evaluation Brief Annexes.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The site lies within the hamlet of Carswell, approximately 1.7km south-west of Buckland village (NGR: SU 32822 97302). The site is bounded to the north by the A420 which links Oxford and Swindon, and to the east, south and west by agricultural land.

1.2.2 The area of proposed development consists of single arable field of approximately 1.6 hectares (ha). The site generally flat but slopes gradually from the north-east to the south-west, with heights ranging between 110m and 108m above Ordnance Datum.

1.2.3 The geology of the area is mapped as the Kingston Formation, Limestone, Ooidal, a Sedimentary Bedrock formed approximately 157 to 164 million years ago in the Jurassic Period (BGS Online 2017)

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site shows that limited archaeological investigation has occurred within the vicinity of the proposed development. The following archaeological and historical background has been compiled through a search of the Heritage Gateway and PastScape websites. Reference numbers provided relate to the PastScape monument number.

1.3.2 A 13-trench evaluation undertaken prior to the construction of Carswell Golf Course identified a single Roman ditch. No further intrusive archaeological investigations have been undertaken within 1km radius of the site.

1.3.3 Sherds of Neolithic or Bronze Age pottery have been recovered approximately 675m and 950m to the north of the proposed development are (229493 and 229496). A Bronze Age flint scatter including arrow heads, scrapers and flakes has also been recovered in this area (229498).

1.3.4 A number of crop marks have been recorded from aerial photographs of the site and its surrounding area. An undated trackway is recorded immediately to the south of the site and a single linear feature immediately to the east. Cropmarks of linear features

have also been recorded in the vicinity of the find spots of the aforementioned Neolithic or Bronze age pottery (1058156). Cropmarks representing pits in this area have been interpreted as medieval quarrying (1058158).

1.3.5 The densest area of cropmarks lies approximately 500m to the north of the site (1594497) and comprises an irregular linear feature, possibly a field boundary with a number of right-angle bends and directional changes. Traces of further associated ditches are also present, and are indicative of a late prehistoric or Roman field system.

1.3.6 A prehistoric or Roman hut circle, or a small Bronze Age Barrow is represented by a single ring ditch recorded approximately 740m to the south-west.

1.3.7 The deserted medieval villages of Carswell (229601) and Barcote (229504) lie approximately 600m and 1km to the north of the site respectively. Both villages were abandoned with the establishment of parkland and agricultural re-organisation. No trace of either village is visible in the ground or from aerial photographs.

2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The project aims and objectives were as follows:

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 appropriately powered excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under the direct supervision of an archaeologist. Spoil was stored adjacent to, but at a safe distance from the trench edges.
- Machining continued down to the top of the undisturbed natural geology. Once archaeological deposits had been exposed, further excavation proceeded by hand.
- The exposed surface was sufficiently clean to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains. Excavation was sufficient to resolve the principle aims of the evaluation.
- All deposits were issued with unique context numbers, and context recording was in accordance with established best practice and the OA Field Manual.
- Digital photographs, were taken of the trenches and evaluation work in general.
- Plans were drawn at an appropriate scale (normally 1:50 or 1:100) with larger scale plans of features as necessary. Sample sections of stratigraphy were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All section drawings were located on the appropriate plan/s. The absolute height (m.OD) of all the principle strata and features, and the section datum lines shall be calculated and indicated on the drawings.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, and include a stratigraphic description of the trenches that contained archaeological remains. The full details of all trenches with dimensions and depths of all deposits can be found in Appendix A.

3.1.2 Context numbers reflect the trench numbers unless otherwise stated e.g. pit 102 is a feature within Trench 1, while ditch 304 is a feature within Trench 3.

3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence between all trenches was fairly uniform. The natural geology was recorded as weathered limestone with patches of mid reddish-brown sandy clay in all three trenches. In Trenches 1 and 2, the natural geology was overlain by a dark reddish-brown subsoil with a varying percentage of angular limestone fragments., In turn this was overlain by a dark grey-brown sandy silt topsoil.

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

3.2.3 All three trenches were devoid of archaeological features and no artefacts were recovered during 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 would have allowed for any archaeological remains had they been present, to be seen 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 As discussed in the Archaeological and Historic background above, the site lies within an area of known archaeological activity, ranging from the late prehistoric period to post-medieval eras. The absence of archaeological features and artefacts recorded during the evaluation works suggest that this activity does not continue into the development area and there is little to no archaeological potential.

APPENDIX A TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description					**Orientation**	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of light to mid yellowish brown sand and weathered bedrock with lighter patches of light yellow and grey sand.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.32
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
100	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	-	0.08	Subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					**Orientation**	SWW-NEE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of natural angular bedrock with patches of mid reddish brown clayey sand.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.35
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
200	Layer	-	0.26	Topsoil	-	-
201	Layer	-	0.12	Subsoil	-	-
202	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

Trench 3						
General description					**Orientation**	NNW-SSE
Trench devoid of archaeology. Consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying natural geology of silty sand and angular natural stone.					**Length (m)**	30
					Width (m)	1.6
					Avg. depth (m)	0.32
Context No.	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Description**	**Finds**	**Date**
300	Layer	-	0.32	Topsoil	-	-
301	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-

APPENDIX B BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX C SITE SUMMARY DETAILS

Site name:	Carswell Golf Course, Buckland, Oxfordshire
Site code:	BUCGC17
Grid Reference	BUCGCEV
Type:	Evaluation
Date and duration:	23rd October 2017
Area of Site	1.6 hectares (ha)
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS:2017.159.
Summary of Results:	On 23rd October 2017 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an evaluation on behalf of Carswell Golf Course on the site of a proposed motorcycle assembly shop and showroom. The site lies within the hamlet of Carswell, approximately 1.7km south-west of Buckland village (NGR: SU 32822 97302). The site is bounded to the north by the A420 which links Oxford and Swindon, and to the east, south and west by agricultural land. The works comprised the excavation of three 30m trenches targeted on the footprint of the proposed development. No archaeological features or artefacts were present.

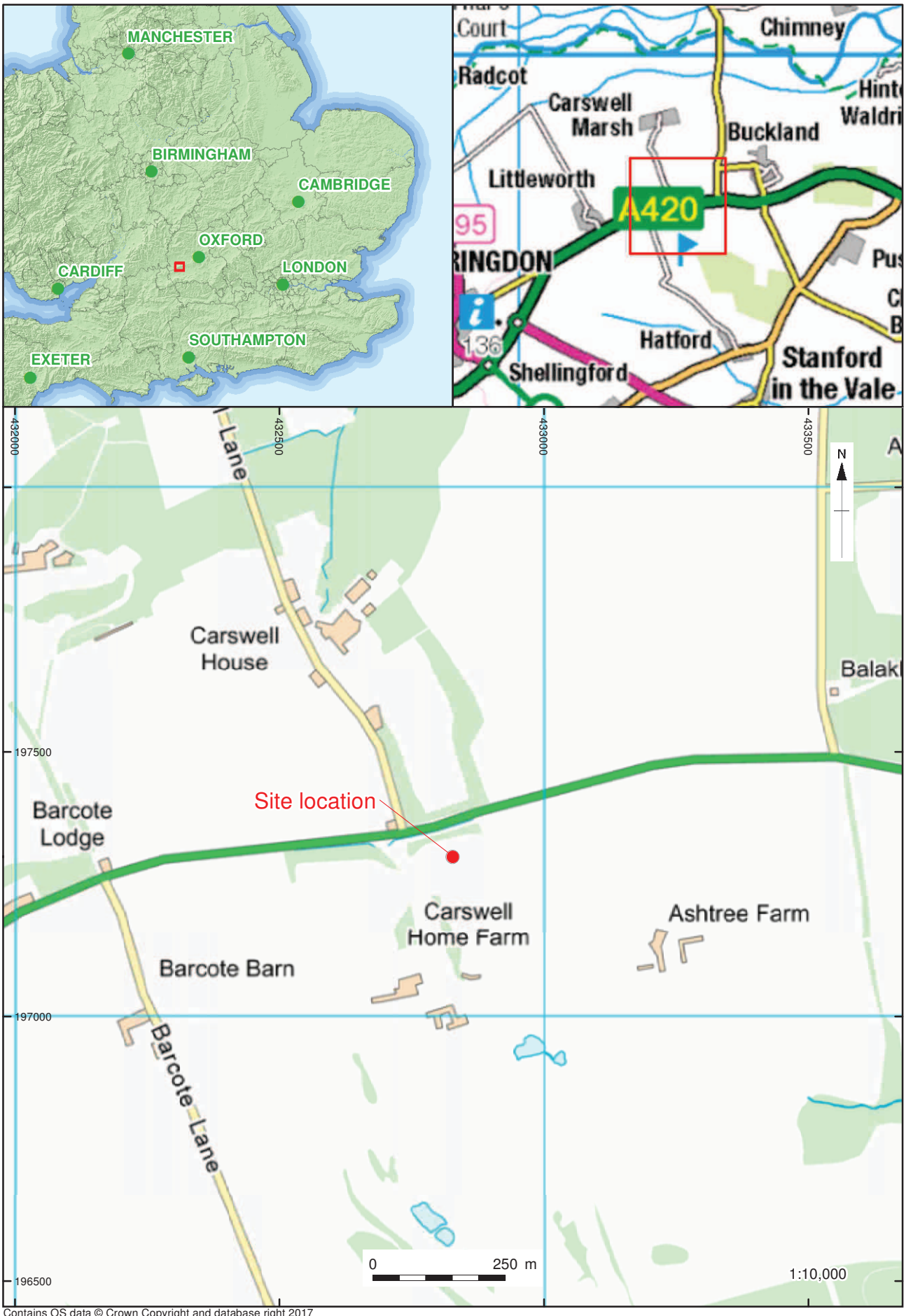

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Figure 1: Site location

X:\b\Buckland_Carswell Golf Course\010Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\BUCGCEV_WSI_Figure1_2017-10-11.mxd*gary.jones*24/10/2017

X:\b\Buckland_Carswell Golf Course\010Geomatics\03 GIS Projects\BUCGCEV_report_Figure2_2017-10-24.mxd*matt.bradley*17/11/2017

Source: Esri, DigitalGlobe, GeoEye, Earthstar Geographics, CNES/Airbus DS, USDA, USGS, AeroGRID, IGN, and the GIS User Community

Figure 2: Trench locations

N:\B_invoice codes\BUCGCEV*Carswell Golf Course*mw*15.11.17

Plate 1: Trench 1 - view to NW

Plate 2: Trench 1 - soil sequence, view to SW

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Plate 3: Trench 2 - view to NE

Plate 4: Trench 2 - soil sequence, view to SE

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Plate 5: Trench 3 - view to SE

Plate 6: Trench 3 - soil sequence, view to NE

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