

# Chain Hill Wantage Oxfordshire



## Archaeological Evaluation Report

oxfordarchaeology



southsouthsouth

March 2013

**Client: CgMs Consulting**

Issue No: 1

OA Job No: 5543

NGR: SU 40336 87508





Client Name: CgMs Consulting  
Document Title: Chain Hill, Wantage, Oxfordshire  
Document Type: Evaluation Report  
Issue/Version Number: 1  
Grid Reference: SU 40336 87508  
OA Job Number: 5543  
Site Code: WACL13  
Invoice Code: WACLEV  
Receiving Museum: Oxfordshire County Museum Service

| Issue | Prepared by              | Checked by                       | Approved by                    | Signature |
|-------|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------|
| 1     | Kevin Moon<br>Supervisor | Gerry Thacker<br>Project Officer | Dan Poore<br>Head of Fieldwork |           |

Document File Location X:\Chain Hill - Wantage\Report  
Graphics File Location Server8\invoice codes r thru z\W\_codes\WACLEV  
Illustrated by Julia Collins, Markus Dylewski and Hannah Kennedy

**Disclaimer:**

*This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.*

© Oxford Archaeology Ltd 2013

Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263800

e: oasouth@thehumanjourney.net

f: +44 (0) 1865 793496

w: oasouth.thehumanjourney.net

Oxford Archaeology Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627





## **Chain Hill, Wantage, Oxfordshire**

### *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

*Written by Kevin Moon and Gerry Thacker*

*with contributions from John Cotter, Geraldine Crann, Paul Booth and Rebecca Nicholson and illustrated by Julia Collins, Markus Dylewski and Hannah Kennedy*

### **Table of Contents**

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| <b>Summary.....</b>   | <b>4</b>  |
| <b>1 Introduction.....</b>  | <b>5</b>  |
| 1.1 Location and scope of work.....                               | 5         |
| 1.2 Geology and topography.....                                   | 5         |
| 1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....                 | 5         |
| 1.4 Acknowledgements.....   | 6         |
| <b>2 Evaluation Aims and Methodology.....</b>                     | <b>7</b>  |
| 2.1 General aims .....  | 7         |
| 2.2 Specific aims and objectives.....                             | 7         |
| 2.3 Methodology .....   | 7         |
| <b>3 Results.....</b>   | <b>8</b>  |
| 3.1 Introduction and presentation of results.....                 | 8         |
| 3.2 General soils and ground conditions.....                      | 8         |
| 3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits.....          | 8         |
| 3.4 Finds summary.....  | 9         |
| <b>4 Discussion.....</b>  | <b>10</b> |
| 4.1 Reliability of field investigation.....                       | 10        |
| 4.2 Evaluation objectives and results.....                        | 10        |
| 4.3 Interpretation.....   | 10        |
| <b>Appendix A. Trench Descriptions and Context Inventory.....</b> | <b>11</b> |
| <b>Appendix B. Finds Reports.....</b>                             | <b>16</b> |
| B.1 The pottery.....  | 16        |
| B.2 The flint.....  | 17        |



---

|   |           |
|---|-----------|
| B.3 The stone.....                                  | 17        |
| B.4 The animal bone .....                           | 17        |
| <b>Appendix C. Bibliography and References.....</b> | <b>18</b> |
| <b>Appendix D. Summary of Site Details.....</b>     | <b>19</b> |



## List of Figures

Fig. 1 Site location

Fig. 2 Trench locations showing archaeological features and geophysics results



## **Summary**

*From the 28th to the 31st of January 2013, Oxford Archaeology carried out a trial trench evaluation on the behalf of CgMs Consulting on a site to the east of Chain Hill on the southern edge of Wantage in Oxfordshire.*

*The trenches revealed a single pit of medieval date, and a ditch that contained a fragment of lava quern of likely Roman or mid- to late-Saxon date. Other features including ditches and postholes were undated, although a tree-throw hole contained a single piece of flint debitage. Plough furrows of possible medieval date were also noted, as was evidence of made ground of recent date within the extreme north-western corner of the site.*





## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA), was commissioned by CgMs Consulting to undertake a trial trench evaluation of the site of a proposed housing development, incorporating public open space.
- 1.1.2 The site lies to the east of Chain Hill on the southern edge of Wantage in Oxfordshire, and is centred on SU 40336 87508 (Fig. 1). The area evaluated was approximately 2.73 hectares in area.
- 1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with local and national planning policies, and to a Written Scheme of Investigation (OA 2013) agreed with Hugh Coddington of Oxfordshire County Council.

### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The geology of the area is the West Melbury Marly Chalk Formation. The site slopes down from the south (c. 113.75m AOD) to the north (c. 110.5m AOD).
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development is currently an arable field, crossed by a high voltage overhead electricity cable. All trenches were sited within the area to the north of the cable, in the location of the proposed housing development. The area to the south of the cable is intended to be an area of public open space.

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The following is extracted from the Oxfordshire Historic Towns Survey (OA 2006), and is a brief description of the development of the historic core of the town to the north of the site.
- 1.3.2 The site lies to the south of the historic core of Wantage, and appears to have a long history of agricultural use, with no evidence for any settlement shown on historic maps of the area.
- 1.3.3 A geophysical survey (Bartlett-Clark Consultancy, 2013) of the site was carried out by the Bartlett Clark Consultancy in 2013. The survey identified cultivation marks (from ridge and furrow), and magnetic anomalies indicative of features with the potential to be both of archaeological and of more recent origin.
- 1.3.4 The survey also identified anomalies likely to indicate the presence of a number of buried ferrous objects. These anomalies may be related to the demolition of the former foundry (established in 1847) that was situated on Ormond Road, to the north of the site.
- 1.3.5 Present-day Wantage is a product of the town's historic development, its origins, evolution and topographical history. The town's proximity to the prehistoric Ridgeway and the growing evidence of a substantial roadside Romano-British settlement testify to occupation from an early date. By the Anglo-Saxon period Wantage had distinguished itself as a 'central place' and although the settlement never gained legal Borough status, deliberate promotion of the market during the 12th century saw the town establish the role it continues today, as essentially a country market town.



- 1.3.6 Wantage is set within a wider landscape of prehistoric activity, testified by the proximity of the Ridgeway, one of the oldest roads in Europe, 4km to the south of the town. Although there is little recovered evidence of prehistoric activity within the urban area itself, it is likely that the area was in use from the earliest times.
- 1.3.7 Evidence for a sizeable Romano-British settlement on the west bank of the Letcombe Brook represents the first confirmed settlement. Archaeological evidence suggests a roadside settlement associated with a cross roads of two Roman roads. The Icknield Way, the east-west running route, survives as the current Ormond Road (also known as the Portway a significant early medieval name referring to a road to a 'port' or market town).
- 1.3.8 The Anglo-Saxon chronicle records that Wantage was a royal residence by the 9th century, and the town is celebrated as the birthplace of Alfred the Great in 849. No archaeological evidence for the location of this residence has as yet been recovered, although many sites have been suggested.
- 1.3.9 Although the extent and form of the Saxon settlement is unknown it is likely that the origins of today's urban form were established during this period. The distinctive semi-circle in the town plan formed by Ormond Road and Garston Lane seems to respect the remains of a bank and ditch which survives within the grounds of St Katherine's School.
- 1.3.10 Wantage is referred to in a list of Berkshire boroughs and towns of 1177 demonstrating its urban status by this date. No written grant of market rights has been found for the settlement although a fair was granted in 1213. Wantage quickly established itself as a successful place of trade and commerce, due to its location on major communication routes in a rich agricultural area.
- 1.3.11 The 12th century market town continues to fundamentally shape the town today and its character is still predominantly that of a market town. The mainstays of the town's economy were established by this time, namely the market, wool trade and weaving, tanning and leather production. These industries would continue to shape the town's fortunes until their decline in the 20th century.
- 1.3.12 The Wantage Engineering Works was a new industry for the town. This foundry was established in 1847 at Ormond Road, formerly Foundry Street (OA 2006). The works made mainly ploughs, haymaking implements and threshing machines and also undertook general foundry and blacksmithing work for local customers.

## **1.4 Acknowledgements**

- 1.4.1 OA would like to acknowledge William Bedford, the consultant for CgMs who commissioned the work, and Hugh Coddington of Oxfordshire County Council, who monitored the archaeological fieldwork. The evaluation was managed for OA by Gerry Thacker, and the archaeological fieldwork was directed by Kevin Moon with the assistance of Christof Heistermann, Michael McLean and Matt Fenn.

## 2 EVALUATION AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 General aims

2.1.1 The aims of the evaluation as stated in the WSI (OA 2013) were:

- To determine the presence or absence of any archaeological remains which may survive.
- To determine or confirm the approximate extent of any surviving remains.
- To determine the date range of any surviving remains by artefactual or other means.
- To determine the condition and state of preservation of any remains.
- To determine the degree of complexity of any surviving horizontal or vertical stratigraphy.
- To assess the associations and implications of any remains encountered with reference to the historic landscape.
- To determine the implications of any remains with reference to economy, status, utility and social activity.
- To determine or confirm the likely range, quality and quantity of the artefactual evidence present.

### 2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 The specific aims and objectives of the evaluation as stated in the WSI were:

- To test the various types of anomaly identified during the geophysical survey.

### 2.3 Methodology

2.3.1 The evaluation consisted of eleven trenches measuring 30m long by 2m wide (Fig. 2), and which were opened by a tracked 360° excavator fitted with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket under close archaeological supervision.

2.3.2 The trenches were targeted both on the results of the geophysical survey, and to provide an even coverage of the site.



## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Introduction and presentation of results

3.1.1 The results of the evaluation are presented below, beginning with a general description of soils, and a stratigraphic account of those trenches which contained archaeological remains. This is followed by an overall discussion and interpretation. An index of trenches giving the extent and depths of all deposits is presented in tabular form in Appendix A. A description and quantification of the finds forms the content of Appendix B.

### 3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The underlying geology was reached in all trenches with the exception of Trench 11, and consisted of a firm light grey/brown clay with occasional patches of soft chalk. All trenches contained topsoil which was between 0.19m and 0.30m thick with an average thickness of 0.25m. A grey-brown clay-rich subsoil was also present within all trenches except Trench 11, and varied in depth between 0.13m and 0.38m with an average thickness of 0.20m. All features were sealed by subsoil, with the exception of a modern feature within Trench 10, which was not further investigated, although 19th century pottery was recovered from the fill.

### 3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 Potential archaeological features were present within Trenches 1 and 2 to the east of the evaluated area, and also within Trenches 7 and 9 (Fig. 2). Trenches 4 and 5 contained plough furrows of uncertain but potentially medieval date. Trench 10 contained a service-trench of recent date, and Trench 11 contained layers of made ground also of recent date. Trenches 3, 6 and 8 were devoid of any features (Fig. 2).

#### ***Trench 1***

3.3.2 Trench 1 contained two small postholes (105 and 107), both approximately the same size and circular in shape with similar mid-grey silty-clay fills. The trench also contained an undated NW-SE orientated ditch (109) the northern end of which terminated within the trench. A tree-throw hole (103) at the SE end of the trench was also investigated, and contained a single piece of flint debitage.

#### ***Trench 2***

3.3.3 Trench 2 contained an N-S aligned ditch (203) which was filled by a light-brown silty-clay (204), similar in nature to the overlying subsoil. The ditch contained no finds.

#### ***Trench 4***

3.3.4 Trench 4 contained a plough furrow (403) at a NE-SW alignment. This is likely to be a continuation of a plough furrow identified by the geophysical survey, and contained no datable material.

#### ***Trench 5***

3.3.5 Trench 5 contained an undated plough furrow (503) on a E-W alignment. This was also identified during the geophysical survey. A tree-throw hole (505) in the centre of the trench was also investigated, but contained no datable material.

**Trench 7**

- 3.3.6 Trench 7 contained a single steep sided pit (703) which was located towards the SE end of the trench. A single sherd of medieval pottery and some small fragments of animal bone were recovered from the single fill (704) (see section 700, Fig. 2). The pottery had a spot-date of AD 1170-1350.

**Trench 9**

- 3.3.7 Trench 9 contained a large ditch running NW-SE (905), from which a fragment of lava quern, two residual pieces of struck flint and some fragmented animal bone were recovered. The fill 906 was fairly similar to the overlying subsoil. A second, shallower ditch (903) was situated further to the west and was also orientated NW-SE. No finds were recovered from the single fill (904).

**Trench 10**

- 3.3.8 Trench 10 contained a linear feature (1003) which was orientated NE-SW, and which had been identified by the geophysical survey. The feature is likely to be a former service-trench, and contained pottery with a spot date of 1850-1890 (see below).

**Trench 11**

- 3.3.9 Trench 11 contained a thick layer of made ground of recent date (1101) which was sealed beneath the topsoil, and which may have been associated with the demolition of the former foundry which was located to the north of the trench. Deposit 1101 was excavated by machine to a depth of 1 m and contained pottery with a date range of 1840-1880 (see below), but also more recent objects including the majority of a twentieth-century bicycle.

**3.4 Finds summary**

- 3.4.1 Finds were recovered from Trenches 1, 7, 9, 10 and 11. A small piece of flint debitage was recovered from a tree-throw hole within Trench 1. A pit within Trench 7 contained a single sherd of medieval pottery, and fragments of animal bone. A fragment of lava quern was recovered from a ditch within Trench 9, in addition to struck flint and animal bone. Pottery of Victorian date was recovered from features within Trenches 10 and 11.



## 4 DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The trenches were opened during good weather conditions and the revealed features were generally easy to identify against the underlying geology. The trenches remained dry throughout the evaluation. Anomalies that were identified by the geophysical survey were generally present within the trenches, although pit 703, and ditches 109 and 905 were not previously identified.

### 4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 The presence of the surviving archaeological remains was established, their extents and depths investigated, and their stratigraphic positions noted. Finds were recovered from three archaeological features, and two more recent deposits.

4.2.2 Geophysical anomalies that had been highlighted by the magnetometry survey were investigated.

### 4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 The evaluation uncovered a low density of archaeological features, and this is reflected by the results of the geophysical survey. The fills of the excavated features were generally fairly 'clean', with few finds, and as such do not appear to indicate the presence of settlement within the immediate vicinity.

4.3.2 Plough furrows of probable medieval date were identified in several trenches, and ditch 203 within Trench 2, although on a different alignment to other furrows, was morphologically similar, and contained a near identical fill to that of the furrow examined within Trench 4. The pit (703) within Trench 7 also attests to activity during the medieval period, although this feature is dated on the presence of a single pot sherd.

4.3.3 The small postholes within Trench 1 were undated, although the adjacent tree-throw hole contained a single piece of struck flint. However, further struck flints within ditch 905 (Trench 9) were clearly residual.

4.3.4 Ditch 905 ran at almost 90° to the prevailing direction of the plough furrows, and could represent an associated former field boundary. However the only datable object (the fragment of lava quern) could indicate that the ditch is of some antiquity.



## APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

| Trench 1  |       |           |           |                       |       |             |
|---|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-------|-------------|
| <b>General description</b>  |       |           |           | <b>Orientation</b>    | NW-SE |             |
| Trench contained two postholes, a tree throw and a NW-SE ditch which terminated within the trench. All features were sealed by topsoil and subsoil which overlay a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |       |           |           | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> | 0.50  |             |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Width (m)</b>      | 2.00  |             |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Length (m)</b>     | 30.00 |             |
| Contexts  |       |           |           |                       |       |             |
| context no  | type  | Width (m) | Depth (m) | comment               | finds | date        |
| 100   | Layer | -         | 0.26      | Topsoil               | -     | -           |
| 101   | Layer | -         | 0.17      | Subsoil               | -     | -           |
| 102   | Layer | -         | -         | Natural               | -     | -           |
| 103   | Cut   | 1.25      | 0.15      | Tree-throw            | -     | -           |
| 104   | Fill  | 1.25      | 0.15      | Fill of 103           | Flint | Prehistoric |
| 105   | Cut   | 0.44      | 0.06      | Posthole              | -     | -           |
| 106   | Fill  | 0.44      | 0.66      | Fill of 105           | -     | -           |
| 107   | Cut   | 0.35      | 0.09      | Posthole              | -     | -           |
| 108   | Fill  | 0.35      | 0.09      | Fill of 107           | -     | -           |
| 109   | Cut   | 0.80      | 0.15      | Ditch                 | -     | -           |
| 110   | Fill  | 0.80      | 0.15      | Fill of 109           | -     | -           |

| Trench 2  |       |           |           |                       |       |      |
|---|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-------|------|
| <b>General description</b>  |       |           |           | <b>Orientation</b>    | NE-SW |      |
| Trench contained a shallow N-S ditch sealed by topsoil and subsoil which overlay a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |       |           |           | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> | 0.25  |      |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Width (m)</b>      | 2.00  |      |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Length (m)</b>     | 30.00 |      |
| Contexts  |       |           |           |                       |       |      |
| context no  | type  | Width (m) | Depth (m) | comment               | finds | date |
| 200   | Layer | -         | 0.25      | Topsoil               | -     | -    |
| 201   | Layer | -         | 0.13      | Subsoil               | -     | -    |
| 202   | Layer | -         | -         | Natural               | -     | -    |
| 203   | Cut   | 2.10      | 0.19      | Ditch                 | -     | -    |
| 204   | Fill  | 2.10      | 0.19      | Fill of 203           | -     | -    |

| Trench 3                   |                    |       |
|----------------------------|--------------------|-------|
| <b>General description</b> | <b>Orientation</b> | NE-SW |



|   |             |                       |                  |                |              |             |
|---|-------------|-----------------------|------------------|----------------|--------------|-------------|
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consisted of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |             | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> | 0.36             |                |              |             |
|   |             | <b>Width (m)</b>      | 2.00             |                |              |             |
|   |             | <b>Length (m)</b>     | 29.30            |                |              |             |
| <b>Contexts</b>   |             |                       |                  |                |              |             |
| <b>context no</b>   | <b>type</b> | <b>Width (m)</b>      | <b>Depth (m)</b> | <b>comment</b> | <b>finds</b> | <b>date</b> |
| 300   | Layer       | -                     | 0.28             | Topsoil        | -            | -           |
| 301   | Layer       | -                     | 0.22             | Subsoil        | -            | -           |
| 302   | Layer       | -                     | -                | Natural        | -            | -           |

|   |             |                  |                  |                       |              |             |
|---|-------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| <b>Trench 4</b>   |             |                  |                  |                       |              |             |
| <b>General description</b>  |             |                  |                  | <b>Orientation</b>    | NW-SE        |             |
| Trench contained a NE-SW plough furrow which was sealed by topsoil and subsoil which overlay a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |             |                  |                  | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> | 0.42         |             |
|   |             |                  |                  | <b>Width (m)</b>      | 2.00         |             |
|   |             |                  |                  | <b>Length (m)</b>     | 30.00        |             |
| <b>Contexts</b>   |             |                  |                  |                       |              |             |
| <b>context no</b>   | <b>type</b> | <b>Width (m)</b> | <b>Depth (m)</b> | <b>comment</b>        | <b>finds</b> | <b>date</b> |
| 400   | Layer       | -                | 0.23             | Topsoil               | -            | -           |
| 401   | Layer       | -                | 0.18             | Subsoil               | -            | -           |
| 402   | Layer       | -                | -                | Natural               | -            | -           |
| 403   | Cut         | 2.50             | 0.07             | Furrow                | -            | -           |
| 404   | Fill        | 2.50             | 0.07             | Fill of 403           | -            | -           |

|  |             |                  |                  |                       |              |             |
|--|-------------|------------------|------------------|-----------------------|--------------|-------------|
| <b>Trench 5</b>  |             |                  |                  |                       |              |             |
| <b>General description</b>   |             |                  |                  | <b>Orientation</b>    | NW-SE        |             |
| Trench contained a plough furrow running NE-SW and a tree-throw. Both features were sealed by topsoil and subsoil which overlay a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |             |                  |                  | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> | 0.50         |             |
|  |             |                  |                  | <b>Width (m)</b>      | 2.00         |             |
|  |             |                  |                  | <b>Length (m)</b>     | 30.00        |             |
| <b>Contexts</b>  |             |                  |                  |                       |              |             |
| <b>context no</b>  | <b>type</b> | <b>Width (m)</b> | <b>Depth (m)</b> | <b>comment</b>        | <b>finds</b> | <b>date</b> |
| 500  | Layer       | -                | 0.30             | Topsoil               | -            | -           |
| 501  | Layer       | -                | 0.38             | Subsoil               | -            | -           |
| 502  | Layer       | -                | -                | Natural               | -            | -           |
| 503  | Cut         | 1.52             | 0.13             | Furrow                | -            | -           |
| 504  | Fill        | 1.52             | 0.13             | Fill of 503           | -            | -           |
| 505  | Cut         | 1.72             | 0.26             | Tree-throw            | -            | -           |





|     |      |      |      |             |   |   |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------|---|---|
| 506 | Fill | 1.72 | 0.26 | Fill of 505 | - | - |
|-----|------|------|------|-------------|---|---|

| Trench 6  |       |           |           |                       |       |       |
|---|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
| <b>General description</b>  |       |           |           | <b>Orientation</b>    |       | NE-SW |
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consisted of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |       |           |           | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> |       | 0.30  |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Width (m)</b>      |       | 2.00  |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Length (m)</b>     |       | 29.60 |
| Contexts  |       |           |           |                       |       |       |
| context no  | type  | Width (m) | Depth (m) | comment               | finds | date  |
| 600   | Layer | -         | 0.20      | Topsoil               | -     | -     |
| 601   | Layer | -         | 0.18      | Subsoil               | -     | -     |
| 602   | Layer | -         | -         | Natural               | -     | -     |

| Trench 7  |       |           |           |                       |                      |             |
|---|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|----------------------|-------------|
| <b>General description</b>  |       |           |           | <b>Orientation</b>    |                      | NW-SE       |
| Trench contained a single medieval pit which was sealed by topsoil and subsoil which overlay a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |       |           |           | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> |                      | 0.52        |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Width (m)</b>      |                      | 2.00        |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Length (m)</b>     |                      | 30.00       |
| Contexts  |       |           |           |                       |                      |             |
| context no  | type  | Width (m) | Depth (m) | comment               | finds                | date        |
| 700   | Layer | -         | 0.26      | Topsoil               | -                    | -           |
| 701   | Layer | -         | 0.28      | Subsoil               | -                    | -           |
| 702   | Layer | -         | -         | Natural               | -                    | -           |
| 703   | Cut   | 2.07      | 0.37      | Pit                   | -                    | -           |
| 704   | Fill  | 2.07      | 0.37      | Fill of 703           | pottery, animal bone | c 1170-1350 |

| Trench 8  |      |           |           |                       |       |       |
|---|------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|-------|-------|
| <b>General description</b>  |      |           |           | <b>Orientation</b>    |       | NW-SE |
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consisted of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |      |           |           | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> |       | 0.43  |
|   |      |           |           | <b>Width (m)</b>      |       | 2.00  |
|   |      |           |           | <b>Length (m)</b>     |       | 30.10 |
| Contexts  |      |           |           |                       |       |       |
| context no  | type | Width (m) | Depth (m) | comment               | finds | date  |



|     |       |   |      |         |   |   |
|-----|-------|---|------|---------|---|---|
| 800 | Layer | - | 0.19 | Topsoil | - | - |
| 801 | Layer | - | 0.24 | Subsoil | - | - |
| 802 | Layer | - | -    | Natural | - | - |

| Trench 9  |       |           |           |                       |  |                           |
|---|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|--|---------------------------|
| <b>General description</b>  |       |           |           | <b>Orientation</b>    |  | NE-SW                     |
| Trench devoid of archaeology. Consisted of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |       |           |           | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> |  | 0.49                      |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Width (m)</b>      |  | 2.00                      |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Length (m)</b>     |  | 30.00                     |
| Contexts  |       |           |           |                       |  |                           |
| context no  | type  | Width (m) | Depth (m) | comment               | finds                                    | date                      |
| 900   | Layer | -         | 0.19      | Topsoil               | -  | -                         |
| 901   | Layer | -         | 0.24      | Subsoil               | -  | -                         |
| 902   | Layer | -         | -         | Natural               | -  | -                         |
| 903   | Cut   | 1.35      | 0.11      | Ditch                 | -  | -                         |
| 904   | Fill  | 1.35      | 0.11      | Fill of 903           | -  | -                         |
| 905   | Cut   | 5.25      | 1.00      | Ditch                 | -  | -                         |
| 906   | Fill  | 5.25      | 1.00      | Fill of 905           | Quern stone fragment, flint, animal bone | Roman, mid to late Saxon? |

| Trench 10   |       |           |           |                       |         |           |
|---|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------------------|---------|-----------|
| <b>General description</b>  |       |           |           | <b>Orientation</b>    |         | NW-SE     |
| Trench contained a service trench of recent date which was not excavated. Consisted of topsoil and subsoil overlying a natural of clay with occasional soft limestone inclusions. |       |           |           | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> |         | 0.44      |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Width (m)</b>      |         | 2.00      |
|   |       |           |           | <b>Length (m)</b>     |         | 29.70     |
| Contexts  |       |           |           |                       |         |           |
| context no  | type  | Width (m) | Depth (m) | comment               | finds   | date      |
| 1000  | Layer | -         | 0.28      | Topsoil               | -       | -         |
| 1001  | Layer | -         | 0.16      | Subsoil               | -       | -         |
| 1002  | Cut   | 0.70      | -         | Service trench        | Pottery | Victorian |
| 1003  | Layer | -         | -         | Natural               | -       | -         |

| Trench 11  |  |  |  |                       |  |       |
|--|--|--|--|-----------------------|--|-------|
| <b>General description</b>   |  |  |  | <b>Orientation</b>    |  | NW-SE |
| Trench consisted of topsoil overlying a thick layer of recent made ground which was excavated by machine, some subsoil still |  |  |  | <b>Avg. depth (m)</b> |  | 1.00  |
|  |  |  |  | <b>Width (m)</b>      |  | 2.00  |



| remained at the base of the trench. |             |                  |                  |                    | <b>Length (m)</b>       | 30.00                    |
|-------------------------------------|-------------|------------------|------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| <b>Contexts</b>                     |             |                  |                  |                    |                         |                          |
| <b>context no</b>                   | <b>type</b> | <b>Width (m)</b> | <b>Depth (m)</b> | <b>comment</b>     | <b>finds</b>            | <b>date</b>              |
| 1100                                | Layer       | -                | 0.25             | Topsoil            | -                       | -                        |
| 1101                                | Layer       | -                | 0.75             | Modern Made Ground | Pottery, glass, bicycle | 20 <sup>th</sup> Century |
| 1102                                | Layer       | -                | 0.30             | Subsoil            | -                       | -                        |
| 1103                                | Layer       | -                | -                | Natural            | -                       | -                        |



## APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

### B.1 The pottery

*By John Cotter*

- B.1.1 A total of 8 sherds of pottery weighing 156g was recovered from three contexts. This comprises a single sherd of medieval pottery and several sherds of 'Victorian' pottery. Given the small size of the assemblage a separate catalogue has not been constructed and instead the pottery is simply described and spot-dated below. No further work is recommended

#### **Context 704 Spot-date c 1170-1350**

- B.1.2 Description: A single medieval sherd (12g) from the sagging base of a jar/cooking pot in Newbury B ware (Fabric OXAQ), in a fairly fresh condition. It has a light grey sandy fabric with sparse coarse inclusions of flint and limestone - typical of the ware. The external surface is a light brown colour as opposed to light grey internally. Also known as Kennet Valley B ware and East Wiltshire ware, it is now known that pottery of this tradition was produced at a number of locations along the Kennet valley between Marlborough in east Wiltshire and Newbury in Berkshire - where kilns have been excavated. The distribution of the ware includes most of the southern half of Oxfordshire. A Newbury source is geographically the more likely for this piece.

#### **Context 1002 Spot-date c 1850-1900**

- B.1.3 Description: Three sherds (71g). Fairly fresh condition but edges slightly chipped/battered. Includes two vessels in Staffordshire-type refined white earthenware (REFW): a dish rim with moulded decoration and the rim of a cylindrical preserve (? marmalade) jar with early-style corduroy ribbing externally - suggesting a mid 19th-century date. Also a sherd from a modern English stoneware 'ginger beer' bottle with a white Bristol-type glaze all over (c 1835+).

#### **Context 1101 Spot-date c 1840-1880**

- B.1.4 Description: Four sherds (73g). Condition as above, fairly fresh. Four separate vessels. Includes a single dish sherd in refined white earthenware (REFW) and two rim sherds/profiles in Staffordshire-type transfer-printed white earthenware (TPW), both with oriental-style border decoration in blue transfer printing (c 1840-1860?). Also a large fresh body sherd in a porcellaneous ironstone china-type whiteware (also REFW) - probably from a cylindrical vase or mug with a broad band of pink painted decoration towards the rim and a hand-painted 'swag' design in silver (platinum) lustre below this (mid to late 19th century?).

## B.2 The flint

by Geraldine Crann

| Context | Description  |
|---------|--|
| 104     | A single debitage flake, recent edge damage, 4g.   |
| 906     | Debitage flake, recent edge damage, 10g;<br>?Debitage flake, or possible plough shattered piece, struck from white patinated flint, 5g |

### **Description/recommendations.**

B.2.1 The flint assemblage is a small collection of prehistoric debitage flakes which retain no diagnostic features to aid dating. All have recent damage, most likely plough shatter given the nature of the site. The assemblage is of low potential and requires no further work.

## B.3 The stone

by P Booth

| Context | Description                                    |
|---------|--|
| 906     | 2 fragments burnt stone, 13g                   |
| 906     | A single curved piece of worn lava quern, 693g |

### **Description**

B.3.1 The single piece of lava quern may be either Roman or mid-late Saxon based on shape and dimensions.

## B.4 The animal bone

By Rebecca Nicholson

B.4.1 Two indeterminate fragments of large mammal bone came from context 704, which contained pottery dated to 1170-1350. One fragment had been chopped through.

B.4.2 Sixteen fragments of bone, in fair condition, came from context 906, which also contained a lava quern fragment of Roman or mid to late Saxon date. The fragments included ungulate tooth fragments, indeterminate large and medium-sized mammal fragments and a cattle carpal bone.



## APPENDIX C. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Bartlett-Clark Consultancy, 2013. Geophysical Survey, Chain Hill, Wantage.

Oxford Archaeology, 2006. Oxfordshire Historic Towns Survey. Historic Environment Assessment and Characterisation.

Oxford Archaeology, 2013. Written Scheme of Investigation for an evaluation. Chain Hill Wantage. OA unpublished document.



## APPENDIX D. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Chain Hill, Wantage, Oxfordshire

**Site code:** WACL13

**Grid reference:** SU 40336 87508

**Type:** Trial trench evaluation

**Date and duration:** 28/01/2013 - 31/01/2013

**Area of site:** c. 2.73 hectares

**Summary of results:** The trenches revealed a single pit of medieval date, and a ditch that contained a fragment of lava quern of likely Roman or mid to late Saxon date. Other features including ditches and postholes were undated, although a tree-throw hole contained a single piece of flint debitage. Plough furrows of possible medieval date were also noted, as was evidence of made ground of recent date within the north-western end of the site.

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







Reproduced from the Explorer 1:25,000 scale by permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright 2005. All rights reserved. Licence No. AL 100005569

Figure 1: Site location



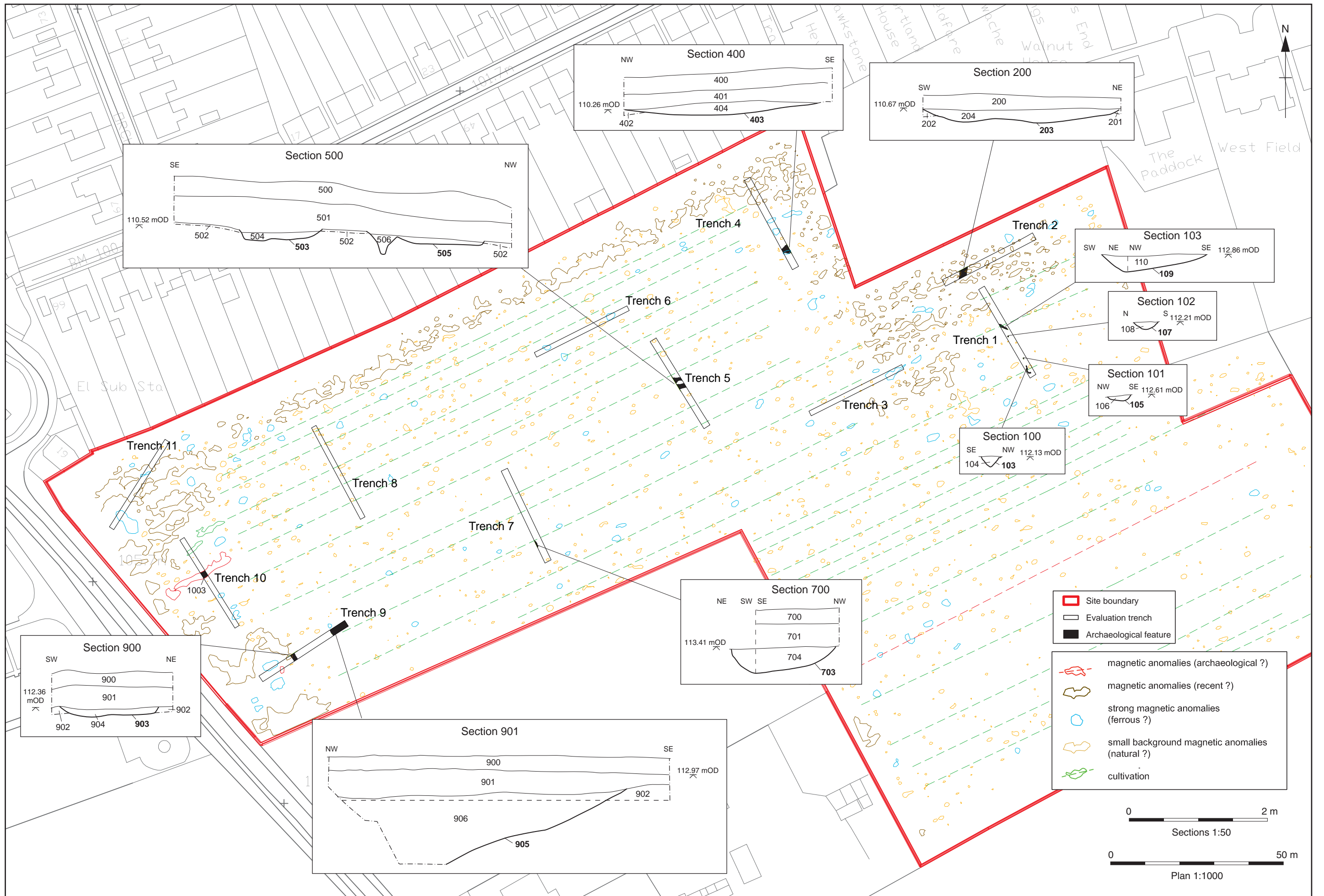


Figure 2: Trench locations showing archaeological features and geophysics results (Bartlett-Clark Consultancy, 2013)







**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@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

**OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1GF

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

**OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500  
f: +44 (0) 1223 850599  
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>



**Director:** David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

*Oxford Archaeology Ltd is a  
Private Limited Company, N<sup>o</sup>: 1618597  
and a Registered Charity, N<sup>o</sup>: 285627*