

SITE AT MILL LANE, CHALGROVE - WATCHING BRIEF**Introduction**

A watching brief was undertaken by the Oxford Archaeological Unit on behalf of South Oxfordshire District Council during the excavation of foundations for a building on land adjacent to 'The Great Barn', Mill Lane, Chalgrove (Grid Ref. SU 631971 approx.). The site lies at the western end of the present village outside the moat of Chalgrove Manor.

The site was visited on two occasions; on 12th March, when only a small area of footings had been dug, and on 14th March, when the work had been half completed. The visits were made with the co-operation of the developer, Mr Mark Lawrence of Abingdon.

Results

The foundation trenches, covering an area of c.12 x 12 m, were 0.6 m wide and machine-excavated to a depth of 1.4 - 1.5 m. In general terms, the soil profile showed 0.3 - 0.5 m of modern dumping over 0.1 - 0.2 m of dark grey-brown peaty soil which also contained modern material.

This overlay a grey gravelly silty clay which was very variable in depth. At the eastern end of the site (ie. the Mill Lane side), the bottom of this deposit was not reached, and the trench sections suggested a large feature or features running approximately N-S and NE-SW. Their opposing edges lay outside the site, and so their dimensions in this, or any other direction were not retrievable.

Towards the W end of the site, the natural gravel and sand geology rose and lay within 1 m of the surface.

No dating evidence came from these features. They appear to be natural stream channels associated with the present stream bounding the northern edge of the site. The nature of their sediments indicate that they were deliberately infilled, although this event cannot be dated.

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