



# 14-18 Manor Farm Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire

## Archaeological Evaluation Report

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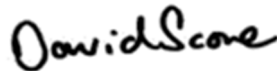


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# 14-18 Manor Farm Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire *Archaeological Evaluation Report*

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## Summary

Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by RPA Architects to conduct an archaeological test pit evaluation prior to the construction of an extension and remodelling of 14-18 Manor Farm Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, in Oxfordshire. The site is centred on SU 57940 94357. The work was carried out to inform the Planning Authority in advance of submission of a Planning Application. The site is situated on the south side of Manor Farm Road, c 150m to the east of the centre of Dorchester-on-Thames, close to the confluence of the rivers Thames and Thame. The property lies partly within Dorchester Roman Town scheduled monument although the proposed new building work itself is outside the scheduled boundary. The site is believed to lie outside the core of the Roman town, in the area between the medieval abbey buildings and their associated fishponds. The site is also within the grounds of the post-medieval Manor Farm.

Two test pits, which measured 2 x 1m and 2 x 2m, were excavated using a 1 Tonne excavator. The test pits were designed to fit within various site constraints, including buried utilities. Test Pit 1, on the north side of the present building, was excavated to 1.55m below ground level and revealed a sequence of post-medieval to modern garden and driveway deposits and no significant archaeology. Test Pit 2, on the west side of the present building, revealed a similar upper sequence of post-medieval to modern made-ground deposits. The lower part of the sequence, in contrast, revealed a series of archaeological features including a ditch, a pit, a possible robbed-out wall and a clay surface, which were first visible at a depth of 1.0m. The associated artefacts suggest that these deposits were infilled in the post-medieval period, but they could have originated in the medieval period. The features appeared to overlie or were cut into a possible alluvial deposit which continued to the bottom of the trench where river terrace deposits (Northmoor Sand and Gravel Member) were exposed at a depth of 1.85m below ground level.

The investigation met its aims of establishing the presence, depth, extent, condition, character, and date of archaeological deposits within the application area.

## Acknowledgements

Oxford Archaeology would like to thank RPA Architects for commissioning this project. Thanks are also extended to Steve Weaver who monitored the work on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council.

The project was managed for Oxford Archaeology by Stuart Foreman. The fieldwork was directed by Mariusz I Górnjak, who was supported by Daniel Taylor. Survey and digitising were carried out by Caroline Souday. Thanks are also extended to the teams of OA staff that cleaned and packaged the finds under the supervision of Leigh Allen, and prepared the archive under the supervision of Nicola Scott.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Oxford Archaeology (OA) was commissioned by RPA Architects to conduct an archaeological test pit evaluation prior to the construction of an extension and remodelling of 14-18 Manor Farm Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, in Oxfordshire, henceforth known as ‘the site’. The site is centred on SU 57940 94357 and its location is shown on Figure 1.
- 1.1.2 The work was to inform the Planning Authority in advance of the submission of a Planning Application. While the Local Planning Authority has not set a brief for the work, discussions and a site meeting with the Oxfordshire County Council Planning Archaeologist (Steve Weaver) have established the scope of work required. This document outlines how OA implemented those requirements.
- 1.1.3 All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists’ Code of Conduct and relevant Standards and Guidance, and local and national planning policies (CfA 2014a; CfA 2014b; NPPF 2021; SODC 2020; DoTNDP 2018).

### 1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site is situated on the south side of Manor Farm Road, c 150m to the east of the centre of Dorchester-on-Thames, a village in South Oxfordshire. The site lies within the parish of Dorchester-on-Thames, in South Oxfordshire District. The site comprises a roughly square 940m<sup>2</sup> area of land with a north-west projection towards Manor Farm Road. The site is bounded by Manor Farm Road to the north and by residential properties and gardens on all the other sides. The River Thame is situated c 85m to the south-east of the site at its closest point.
- 1.2.2 The site is situated within the Thames Valley, approximately 50m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), close to the confluence of the rivers Thames and Thame.
- 1.2.3 The site lies over the Gault Formation, a sedimentary bedrock which comprises mudstones formed between 113 and 100.5 million years ago in the Cretaceous Period. The bedrock is overlain by superficial geology consisting of the Northmoor Sand and Gravel Member, which was formed between 2.588 million years ago and the present day during the Quaternary Period (BGS nd).

### 1.3 Planning policy context

- 1.3.1 The planning context of the proposed development is detailed in the Archaeological Desk-based Assessment, the key conclusions of which are summarised below (DBA, OA December 2022).

#### Conservation Areas

- 1.3.2 There are two conservation areas in the immediate vicinity, focused upon the settlements of Dorchester and Overy. The site falls within the first.



- 1.3.3 The Dorchester Conservation Area has no centre, as there is no village green or market square. The conservation area includes ninety-seven listed buildings and the scheduled Roman Town of Dorchester. The earliest surviving domestic buildings in the village are timber-framed, but the conservation area also contains stone-built structures such as the Abbey Church of St Peter and St Paul. The use of stone was indicative of the building's earlier wealth and status (Dorchester Conservation Area Character Appraisals 2005, 9-10). The site is situated on the eastern edge of the conservation area (*ibid.*).
- 1.3.4 The Overy Conservation Area comprises the small hamlet of Overy, which is situated at the junction of the River Thames, the River Thame, and the Hurst Water Meadow. It lies c 75m to the south-east of the site at its closest point.

### **Scheduled Monuments**

- 1.3.5 There is only one scheduled monument close to the site, and this is the Roman Town of Dorchester. The gravel access drive which forms part of the site is situated within the scheduled monument. The rest of the site is situated immediately to the south-east of it. The content of the Act does not confer any protection on the 'setting' of scheduled monuments, just their physical remains. The settings of scheduled monuments are protected by National Planning Policy Framework paragraph 200. The archaeological test pits and proposed extension do not, therefore, require scheduled monument consent (OA 2022).
- 1.3.6 Dorchester is one of the two Romano-British towns in Oxfordshire. Both documentary sources and archaeological evidence suggest that Dorchester was occupied until the very end of the Roman period, and occupation of the settlement may have continued after the fall of the empire. The placename Dorchester is reported by Bede in the early 8th century in the forms of *Dorcic*, *Dorchiccaestræ*, with *ceaster* usually referring to a Roman station in Old English.
- 1.3.7 The core of the Roman Town is situated within the town's allotments, which were purchased by the Parish Council in 1950 to ensure the Roman town's protection in perpetuity. The occasional Roman coin still comes to light when the soil is turned (Dorchester Conservation Area Character Appraisals 2005, 13).

### **Listed Buildings**

- 1.3.8 There are one hundred and four listed buildings within the ADBA study area, of which two are listed Grade I, six are listed Grade II\*, and all the others are listed Grade II (OA 2022).
- 1.3.9 Within the site boundary is the northern extension of the Grade II listed Manor House. The Manor House dates from the early 17th century and was remodelled and extended in the 18th century. The northern extension is a 3-storey hipped-roofed service wing of about 1800 (now three flats), and this is the part that lies within the site.

## **1.4 Archaeological and historical background**

- 1.4.1 The archaeological and historical background of the site has been described in detail in the separate Archaeological Desk-based Assessment (ADBA; OA December 2022)

and will not be reproduced here. The following section briefly summarises the archaeological potential of the site based on the results of the ADBA.

- 1.4.2 Substantial prehistoric activity has been recorded within the study area, to the north and to the south of the site on the gravel terraces of the rivers Thame and Thames, and close to the oppidum of Dyke Hills. These remains demonstrate activity within this area throughout the prehistoric period.
- 1.4.3 The property falls partially within the scheduled Dorchester Roman Town, although the proposed extension itself is not located in the scheduled area. Archaeological work in the vicinity of the site suggests that the extent of the Roman town was not limited to the area of the allotments, the High Street and the Abbey. Roman settlement activity has been recorded in close proximity to the site. In an adjacent site Roman archaeology has been found in certain areas 0.30m below the current ground level (John Moore Heritage Services 2011, 6).
- 1.4.4 Dorchester saw a continuity of inhabitation after the Roman period and the subsequent Anglo-Saxon village is believed to have been located within the Roman walls of the town away from the site. It has not been possible to assess with certainty the site's function in the medieval period. The site was located between the medieval abbey and its associated fishponds, and it is possible that it was used for some activity related to monastic life.
- 1.4.5 The site contains part of a post-medieval Grade II listed building (formerly known as the Manor House) and its grounds. Such remains will have been disturbed by the later development of the site and re-landscaping of the gardens. The site has been part of the grounds associated with the Manor House since the 16th or 17th century. Since this time the house has seen numerous extensions and additions.

## 2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the archaeological evaluation were:

- To establish the presence/absence, extent, condition, character and date of any archaeological deposits within the application area. This evidence will form the basis of any proposals for appropriate mitigation measures that may seek to limit the damage to significant archaeological deposits and aims to define any research priorities that may be relevant should further investigation be required.

2.1.2 The specific aims and objectives of the evaluation were:

- To determine or confirm the general nature of any remains present;
- To determine or confirm the approximate date or date range of any remains by means of artefactual or other evidence.

### 2.2 Methodology

2.2.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of two test pits (TPs). TP 1 was approximately 2 x 1m in plan and TP 2 was 2 x 2m in plan, as shown on Figure 2. The TPs were designed to fit within various site constraints, including buried utilities, rather than being a percentage sample of the site area. The dimensions and locations were discussed and agreed upon at a site meeting with Steve Weaver (Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services).

2.2.2 The trenches were laid out as stated in the WSI, except for an adjustment to the Test Pit 1 location to avoid a service pipe exposed within the initial location of the test pit. The test pit was moved c 1m to the north-west, as shown on Figure 2.

2.2.3 The trenches were excavated using an appropriately powered (1 tonne) mechanical 360°-mini-excavator fitted with rubber tracks and a toothless bucket, under the direct supervision of an archaeologist. Spoil was stored adjacent to, but at a safe distance from, the test pit edge.

2.2.4 Machining continued in even spits down to the top of the first archaeological horizon or, in the absence of overlying archaeological deposits, to the maximum depth that could be reached with the machine bucket. Archaeological deposits were exposed in TP 2, but, for safety reasons, they could only be partially excavated by hand tools because their depth exceeded a safe working depth of 1.0 m BGL.

2.2.5 Each exposed surface was sufficiently clean to establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains. Where this was not achieved by machine excavation, the deposit was cleaned by hand. Excavation works were sufficient to resolve the principal aims of the evaluation.

2.2.6 All features and deposits were issued with unique context numbers and were recorded in accordance with established best practice and the OA field manual. Small finds were not present and environmental samples were not taken. The only potentially significant deposits encountered were believed to be of post-medieval

date and below the safe depth for personnel access into the test pits. Bulk finds were collected by context.

- 2.2.7 Spoil produced from machine excavation of the surface or archaeological features and spoil from hand excavation were scanned by a metal detector to enhance finds retrieval.
- 2.2.8 Digital photos were taken of all archaeological features, deposits, trenches and the evaluation work in general.
- 2.2.9 Plans were produced at an appropriate scale (normally 1:50 or 1:100) with two larger scale plans of features in 1:20. Sections of features were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All section drawings were located on the plans. The absolute height (m aOD) of all principal strata and features, and the section datum lines, was calculated and indicated on the drawings.
- 2.2.10 Sample sections were located using a GPS unit. Coordinates relative to Ordnance Survey and Ordnance Datum were obtained for each sampling location.
- 2.2.11 Upon completion of the works and in agreement with Steven Weaver, Planning Archaeologist for OCC, the trenches were backfilled with the arising in reverse order of excavation.
- 2.2.12 The fieldwork took two days to complete by a team consisting of a Supervisor directing one Archaeologist and a 1T tonne mechanical mini-excavator. The machine was operated by an archaeologically experienced driver supplied by David Beecroft Plant Hire.

## 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. Finds data and spot dates are tabulated in Appendix B.

### 3.2 General soils and ground conditions

3.2.1 The soil sequence in both test pits had some similarities, but the natural geology (river terrace gravel) was exposed only in TP 1 (Fig. 5). The natural gravel was overlain by a yellowish-brown clayey silt (alluvium?) which was also present in TP 2 (Fig. 5; Plate 2). Archaeological features in TP 2 were cut into this deposit. The alluvium was overlain by several layers of post-medieval to modern made-ground (present in both test pits; Figs 4 and 5; Plates 1 and 2).

3.2.2 Ground conditions throughout the evaluation were good, and the site remained dry throughout. Archaeological features, where present, were easy to identify. However, the depth of the archaeological sequence (exceeding 1m BGL) did not allow for hand excavation and sampling of the lower levels. Artefacts were recovered by careful use of the machine bucket.

### 3.3 General distribution of archaeological deposits

3.3.1 The depth of post-medieval and modern made-ground deposits in TP 1 exceeded 1.55m, and no archaeological features were exposed (see Fig. 4; Pl. 1). *In situ* archaeological features were uncovered in TP 2 at a depth of 1.0m BGL, as described in the relevant section below.

### 3.4 Test Pit 1

3.4.1 TP 1 was located on the northern side of the current building (Fig. 2). The test pit was excavated to a depth of 1.55m BGL. Several deposits of post-medieval made-ground were revealed (Fig. 4; Plate 1). The bottom of the lowest of the exposed deposits (layer 104) was not reached. This layer consisted of dark brown silty sand with occasional pieces of ceramic building material (CBM) and pottery sherds. Lenses of fine charcoal were present within the upper part of the layer. Pieces of CBM from this deposit were of post-medieval date, but one intrusive Roman pottery sherd was also present. The deposit was overlain by layer 103, a gravelly brown silty sand, which contained frequent pieces of post-medieval CBM and one piece of residual medieval roof tile. The post-medieval tiles and bricks were of 16th- to 17th-century date and later. Occasional post-medieval pottery sherds (one piece dated to 1760-1830) were also recovered from this layer. Layer 103 was overlain by another post-medieval made-ground deposit (layer 106), a thick lens of brown silty sand with angular stones and bands of charcoal. Layer 106 was overlain in turn by Layer 102, a brown silty sand with moderate amounts of gravel, pieces of charcoal, and fairly frequent post-medieval CBM fragments.



3.4.2 Above layer 102 was a sequence of modern garden and driveway deposits (Fig. 4; Plate 1). These comprised layer 107, a dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent angular stones and occasional pieces of post-medieval CBM (forming a surface). Pit 105, which cut layers 107 and 102, was only partially exposed within the test pit. Its fill contained no finds. Both layer 107 and the fill of pit 105 were sealed by surface 101, made of compacted sand and mortar. Surface 101 was sealed by modern topsoil (context 100), consisting of gravel with dark sandy silt.

### 3.5 Test Pit 2

3.5.1 TP2 was located west of the existing building (Fig. 2). The natural geology (river terrace gravel, context 211) was exposed at a depth of 1.85m BGL. It was sealed by layer 207, a 0.4m thick, yellowish brown silty sand with occasional small sized pebbles (Plates 2 and 3). This layer appears to equivalent to a layer interpreted as probable alluvium laid down by the river Thames.

3.5.2 Four features were cut into layer 207 (Fig. 3; Plates 2 and 3).

3.5.3 Ditch 209 was aligned NW-SE, and was 0.6m wide and 0.5m deep, with steep sides and a slightly concave base. Its single olive brown silty fill contained one white glazed post-medieval pottery sherd dated to 1700-1840 and pieces of CBM.

3.5.4 The ditch was cut by possible robbed-out wall foundation trench 208. This trench was aligned NW-SE and turned almost at right angles to run NE-SW. It was only partially exposed in TP2. The trench had a straight edge and a steep side. It was 0.35m deep and had a flattish base. Its fill, 205, consisted of dark brown silty sand with frequent CBM fragments (including medieval roof tile and post-medieval bricks), angular medium sized stones and frequent chunks of mortar. Although difficult to be sure in the narrow confines of a test pit, this could potentially be a medieval feature that was robbed of masonry in the post-medieval period.

3.5.5 Ditch 209 cut a 0.2m thick layer of grey clay, surface 204. This surface was exposed in the south-eastern part of the test pit, but it extended west and southward beyond the edges of TP2. No finds were associated with the deposit, which was sealed by layer 202.

3.5.6 In the south-western corner of TP2, part of a pit (206) was exposed. It was 0.4m deep, and had steep sides and a flattish base. Its single fill, 203, contained pieces of CBM (including medieval roof tile), two clearly residual Roman pottery sherds, and a fragment of cattle bone fragment. The pit cut surface 204 and layers 207 (alluvium) and 211 (natural).

3.5.7 The archaeological deposits were sealed by layer 202, a brown sandy silt. This layer was 0.4m thick and was overlain by layer 201, a sandy silt with fairly frequent pieces of charcoal, small pebbles and pieces of medieval and post-medieval CBM. Both layers formed made-ground deposits, similar to the deposits exposed in TP1.

3.5.8 Topsoil layer 200 in TP2 was similar to topsoil 100 in TP1.

## 3.6 Finds summary

- 3.6.1 The finds consisted of pieces of medieval and post-medieval CBM, Roman and post-medieval pottery sherds and fragments of animal bones. The Roman and medieval material was all residual in contexts otherwise dated to the post-medieval period. The full specialist reports on Roman and post-medieval pottery and medieval and post-medieval CBM can be found in Appendix B. The animal bone assemblage (two fragments) is reported on in Appendix C.

## 4 DISCUSSION

### 4.1 Reliability of field investigation

4.1.1 The ground conditions were good throughout the investigation. Topsoil and post-medieval made-ground layers were excavated with a 1 tonne 360° mini-digger and the ground was fairly stable. Recording and cleaning up sections and the exposed surfaces in TP2 were done manually to the depth of 1.0m BGL thus providing a reliable stratigraphic picture with sufficient finds to date the deposits encountered. For safety reasons deeper excavation in both test pits was carried out by the machine only, and recording was completed from ground level. Some stratigraphic interpretations in the lower part of TP2 may therefore be questionable, but overall the results provide a reliable characterization of the archaeological sequence within the proposed development.

### 4.2 Evaluation objectives and results

4.2.1 The general aims of the archaeological evaluation were met. The investigation established the presence, extent, condition, character and date of archaeological deposits within the application area. The specific aims of determining the general nature of any archaeological remains present and of confirming their approximate date or date range by means of artefactual or other evidence were also fulfilled.

### 4.3 Interpretation

4.3.1 The two test pits revealed broadly comparable sequences of post-medieval to modern made-ground deposits in the upper part of the sequence, interpreted as garden and driveway deposits. The natural terrace deposits were not reached in TP 1 so must have been at greater depth or (more likely) had been truncated by post-medieval landscaping or construction activity. The surface of the terrace deposits would probably have been at a broadly similar level to that recorded in TP 2 (1.85m below ground level).

4.3.2 Test Pit 1 contained two surfaces of probably fairly modern date below the current topsoil, and several layers of made-ground with one clearly residual Roman pottery sherd, medieval tiles and post-medieval CBM. The test pit was excavated to a depth of 1.55m below ground level and no potentially significant archaeology was encountered, nor was the natural terrace gravel reached.

4.3.3 The lower part of the sequence in TP 2 was different in that had evidence for a layer of *in situ* archaeology, which was first encountered at a depth of 1.0m below ground level. After sample excavation and recording of the *in situ* features in TP 2 they were removed by further machine excavation so that excavation could continue to the maximum reach of the machine bucket (1.85m). One ditch, one possible robbed-out foundation trench, a pit, and a clay surface were recorded, all of which were dated to the post-medieval period by artefacts from their fills and/or stratigraphic relationships. The clay surface contained no finds while the possible robber trench contained medieval and post-medieval CBM. It is not impossible that they were features of medieval origin that were infilled in the post-medieval period. They overlay

or were cut into a probable alluvial deposit which continued to the bottom of the test pit at 1.85m.

#### 4.4 Significance

- 4.4.1 The deposits encountered were, for the most part, post-medieval to modern made-ground and garden/driveway layers of very limited archaeological significance, other than for characterizing the deposit sequence in this part of Dorchester. No contexts of even potential Anglo-Saxon, Roman or earlier date were exposed. The ground level in the vicinity of the former Manor House seems to have been built up substantially in the post-medieval period. Natural river terrace deposits were encountered in TP 2 at a depth of 1.85m below ground level.
- 4.4.2 The only deposits of potential interest are the *in situ* features encountered at a depth of 1m below ground level in TP 2, located on the south-east side of the present house, especially the possible wall robber trench. The interpretation of this feature is uncertain given the small size of the test pit and limited exposure of the feature. The artefactual dating evidence indicates that the possible robber trench was infilled in the post-medieval period, but it could potentially be the last surviving trace of a medieval wall, demolished and/or robbed of masonry in the post-medieval period. Medieval structural remains would be entirely expected given the proximity of the site to the former manor house and Dorchester Abbey, and the documentary and cartographic evidence for extensive remodelling of the manorial complex in the post-medieval period.

## APPENDIX A ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

Test Pit 1						
General description					Orientation	NW-SE
Sequence consists of topsoil, a modern surface, and several layers of made up post-medieval ground. Natural geology not exposed. Trench excavated below 0.3m only for 1.5m length (a plastic cable running across the eastern part of the trench).					Length (m)	2.38
					Width (m)	1.23
					Avg. depth (m)	1.55
Context No.	Type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Description	Finds	Date
100	Layer	-	0.1	Topsoil. Gravel with dark sandy silt. Overlying 101	-	Modern
101	Layer	-	0.08	Compacted sand and mortar. Surface. Overlain by 100 and overlying 107 and 108	-	Modern/late Post-medieval
102	Layer	-	0.55	Brown silty sand with moderate amount of gravel, bits of charcoal and fairly frequent CBM fragments. Made-ground. Overlain by 107, overlying 103 and 106; cut by 105	CBM	Post-medieval
103	Layer	-	0.3	Brown silty sand with gravel, fairly frequent pieces of CBM. Overlain by 102 (diffused/gradual interface) and 106; overlying 104	Pottery sherd (dated 1760-1830), CBM (incl. medieval roof tile, post-medieval brick fragments – 16 <sup>th</sup> -17 <sup>th</sup> century and later), animal bone fragment (cattle)	Late post-medieval
104	Layer	-	+0.2	Dark brown silty sand with occasional pieces of CBM and pottery sherds, lenses of fine charcoal within the upper part of the layer. Made-ground. Overlain by 103.	Roman pottery sherd, CBM	Post-medieval



Test Pit 1						
				Bottom of the deposit not reached.		
105	Cut	+1.5	0.45	Possible cut for a pit – or a thick lens. A moderately steep side, a base not exposed. Cutting layer 107 and 102, filled with 108	-	Post-medieval/modern ?
106	Layer	+1.3	0.3	A lens of brown silty sand with angular stones and bands of charcoal; sealed by 102 and sealing 103		Post-medieval
107	Layer	-	0.18	Dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent angular stones and occasional pieces of CBM – a possibly hardcore layer for surface 101. Overlain by 101, overlaying 102, cut by 105	CBM – post-medieval	Post-medieval
108	Fill	+1.5	0.45	Fill of 105. Patches of sandy material – dark greyish brown, brown, yellowish brown, charcoal flecks – intentional backfill. Overlain/sealed by 101		Post-medieval/modern ?

Test Pit 2						
<b>General description</b>				<b>Orientation</b>	NE-SW	
<p>The sequence consists of topsoil and subsoil overlying a sequence of post-medieval layers, including some <i>in situ</i> archaeology, first encountered at a depth of 1m and interpreted as a ditch, a pit and a possible wall robber cut. The dating evidence for the <i>in situ</i> deposits is limited to CBM (incl. medieval roof tile and a post-medieval brick fragment). It is not impossible that they could be of medieval origin. The archaeology/overlay or was cut into a layer interpreted as Holocene alluvium. Underlying the alluvium was a silty sand identified as Pleistocene terrace deposits, the surface of which was exposed following further machine excavation at 49.92m OD (1.85m below ground level).</p>				<b>Length (m)</b>	2.24	
				<b>Width (m)</b>	1.98	
				<b>Avg. depth (m)</b>	1.85	
<b>Context No.</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>

Test Pit 2						
200	Layer	0.1	0.10	Topsoil. Gravel and sandy silt. Overlying 201	-	Modern
201	Layer	-	0.4	Sandy silt with fairly frequent bits of charcoal, small pebbles, pieces of CBM. Made-ground.	CBM (post-medieval)	Post-medieval
202	Layer	-	0.4	Brown sandy silt – slightly darker than the overlying layer 201 (gradual transition). Overlying 203, 207, 204, 205, and 210. Made-ground.	CBM (incl. medieval roof tile and post-medieval brick fragment)	Post-medieval
203	Fill	+0.75	0.4	Fill of pit 206. Dark brown with lenses of fine charcoal, occasional small sized pebbles. Single (deliberate) fill of a partially exposed pit. Sealed by 202	CBM ((incl. medieval roof tile), 2 Roman pottery sherds, animal bone fragment (cattle)	Post-medieval
204	Surface	+2.0 x +0.95	0.2	Layer of clay partially exposed in the SE part of the test pit (extending west and southward beyond TP2). Overlying 207. Probably abutting 208 (relationship unclear).		Medieval/Post-medieval ?
205	Fill	+0.65	0.4	Dark brown silty sand with frequent CBM fragments, angular medium sized stones, chunks of mortar. Within cut 208 but spilling over a wider area just above the cut. Partly overlying deposit 207 and ditch fill 210. Sealed by 203. Interpreted as material a from robbed out foundation wall, although difficult to be sure in a small test pit.	CBM (incl. medieval roof tile and post-medieval brick fragment)	Post-medieval
206	Cut	+0.75	0.4	Partially exposed pit in the SW corner of the		Post-medieval

Test Pit 2						
				test pit. Steep sides, a flattish base. Cuts layer 207, filled with 203		
207	Layer	+1.3 x +1.6	0.4	Yellowish brown silty sand with occasional small sized pebbles. No other inclusions. Geological layer interpreted as alluvium of Holocene date. Sealed by 202, overlaying 211. All anthropogenic features in TP2 are cut into 207		Geological
208	Cut	+0.3 x +2.0	0.35	Aligned-NW and turning at an almost right angle to run NE-SW. Only partially exposed in TP2. Straight edge, steep side, a flattish base. Filled with 205, cuts 207 and probably truncates 209. Possible robbed out foundation wall cut?		Medieval/Post-medieval?
209	Cut	0.6 x +2.0	0.5	Linear (ditch?) aligned NW-SE. Steep sides and a slightly concave base. Cut into 207, truncated by 208 (relationship not clear), filled with 210		Post-medieval
210	Fill	0.6 x +2.0	0.5	Fill of ditch? 209. Dark olive brown silty deposit with rare inclusions. Sealed partially by 205 and 202, cut by 208, extending beyond TP2.	Pottery sherd (c. 1700-1840), CBM	Post-medieval
211	Layer	-	+0.2	1.35m BGL, compacted gravel – natural geology – sealed by 207		Geology

## APPENDIX B FINDS REPORTS

### B.1 Roman pottery

#### *Roman and Post-Roman Pottery*

*By John Cotter*

#### *Introduction and methodology*

B.1.1 A total of 5 sherds of pottery weighing 105g were recovered from four contexts. Of these, 3 sherds (49g) were Roman, and two sherds (56g) were post-medieval. Given the small quantity present, these have not been separately catalogued but are fully described below. Post-medieval fabric codes used here are those of the Museum of London (MoLA 2014), which can be applied to most post-medieval types in south-east England. The Roman pottery was identified by Kate Brady (pers. comm.) and uses the fabric codes described in Booth (nd).

#### *Description*

B.1.2 Context (103) Spot-date: c 1760-1830. Description: 1 sherd (6g). Late Creamware (CREA DEV). Body sherd possibly from a dish.

B.1.3 Context (104) Spot-date: Roman. Description: 1 sherd (7g). Roman grey sandy ware (R30). Body sherd.

B.1.4 Context (203) Spot-date: Roman (residual). Description: 2 sherds (42g). 1x Roman grey sandy ware (R30), everted rim from a jar. 1x body sherd from jar in late Iron Age/early Roman grog-tempered greyware with limestone and sparse white flint/chert (E810). The grog inclusions are unusually angular and dark grey in colour. The external surface of the vessel is decorated with a broad horizontal band of burnishing. These sherds must be residual/redeposited as they were found with several large pieces of late medieval/early post-medieval peg tile (perhaps 14-16th century?).

B.1.5 Context (210) Spot-date: c 1700-1840. Description: 1 sherd (50g). English tin-glazed earthenware (TGW). Body sherd possibly from base/lower wall of a large dish/bowl. Plain white tin glaze all-over internally and externally.

#### *Discussion*

B.1.6 The pottery comprises ordinary domestic Roman and post-medieval wares typical of this part of Oxfordshire. The sherds are generally in a good condition, though fragmentary.

#### *Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material*

B.1.7 The pottery here has some potential to inform research through re-analysis, particularly when reviewed alongside other assemblages from the same general area. It is therefore recommended that the pottery be retained.

## B.2 Ceramic Building Material

By Kirsty Smith

### Introduction

- B.2.1 A small assemblage of ceramic building material (CBM) amounting to 38 fragments (7119g) was recovered from the contexts shown in Table 1. The CBM is medieval and post-medieval in date. The majority of the assemblage is moderately abraded with a mean fragment weight of 197g.
- B.2.2 The assemblage has been fully recorded on an Excel spreadsheet in accordance with guidelines set out by the Archaeological Ceramic Building Materials Group (ACBMG 2007). Fabrics were characterised with the aid of x20 hand lens.
- B.2.3 The numbers and weights of fragments of CBM per context are shown in Table 1 and forms and spot dating have been summarised in Table 2 below.

Context	Sum of Nos	Sum of Wt (g)
103	8	3792
202	20	2028
203	6	286
205	4	1013
Total	38	7119

Table 1: Summary of CBM by number and weight per trench

Class/form/spot date	Med	PM	PM (C16-17)	Total
Brick (solid)		6	1	7
Roof tile - flat	25			25
Roof tile - peg	4			4
Roof tile - ridge	1			1
Indeterminate		1		1
Total	30	7	1	38

Table 2: Summary of CBM by numbers and spot dates per trench

### Fabrics

- B.2.4 The medieval and post-medieval fabrics were assigned using the Oxford fabric series housed by Oxford Archaeology which has been described in a number of publications such as Westgate (eg Poole and Smith 2022). The medieval and post-medieval fabrics found on the site are described below:
- *IIIA*. Off-white, cream, yellowish cream, or pale buff with a faint pale brownish core (late 12th-14th century)
  - *IIIB*. Coarse red sandy fabric. The inclusions include a high density coarse white quartz sand and small dark coarse sand sized ferruginous grits 1-2mm diameter (late 12th-14th century)
  - *VIIIBB*. An orange- pink or orange buff colour with a reduced grey core and abundant quartz (late 12th-14th century)



- **OXP3.** A red-orange coarse sandy fabric which, when used for roof tiles, often has a thick grey core. When used for bricks it tended to be red or purple in colour. It contains abundant medium-coarse quartz sand together with inclusions of dark red-maroon iron oxide grits and calcareous grits up to 2mm (post-medieval)
- **OXP4.** An orange, mixed sandy fabric characterised by streaks of white clay or marl and occasional cream marl clay pellets and red ferruginous clay pellets up to 6mm long (post-medieval)

### ***Medieval CBM***

B.2.5 The majority of the assemblage comprised later medieval roof tile (30 fragments, 1337g) from contexts 103, 202, 203 and 205. These were made from fabrics IIIA, IIIB and VIIBB and can be dated as late 12th-14th century. Most of these were fragments of flat roof tile (no. 25) which were around 13-14mm thick. There were also four fragments of peg tile with holes that were between 9-12mm in diameter. A fragment of ridge tile was also recorded in context 202 and this was made from fabric IIIA. This fragment was thicker than the flat tile (17mm) and had angled edges once rested on a flat surface.

### ***Post-medieval CBM***

B.2.6 Seven fragments of post-medieval brick were recorded in contexts 103, 202 and 205 and these were made from fabrics OXP3 and OXP4.

B.2.7 The earliest of these bricks was recorded in layer 103. This brick (1198g) was made from fabric OXP4 and was roughly mixed with large cream pellets up to 12mm long. It had two side edges and one end edge intact and was 45mm (2inches) thick, 112mm (4½ inches) wide and 153mm+ long. The dimensions of this brick and the roughly mixed clays suggest it dates to the 16th-17th century (Harley 1974, 74). A smaller fragment (470g) from the same context was a similar thickness (48mm) but was incomplete. Another brick (1578g) from context 103 was also made from fabric OXP4 and was 58mm (2½ inches) thick, 106mm (4¼ inches) wide and 149+mm long. The clay used for this was roughly mixed, but the dimensions suggest it dates from the later post-medieval period.

B.2.8 One fragment of brick (296g) was recorded within context 202 and this was 40 (1¾ inches) thick and may also have been an early post-medieval brick. This had a vitrified black and white coating on one side edge, which may have been deliberate decoration for exterior brickwork. This coating was also recorded on the side edge and top surface of a brick fragment from context 205 but in that case the brick was 51mm thick (2 inches). Two further fragments of brick were recorded from context 205 and these were 49mm and 51mm thick (around 2 inches).

### ***Indeterminate CBM***

B.2.9 One indeterminate fragment (14g) was recorded in context 103 and was made from fabric OXP4. This may have been a highly abraded fragment of brick.

### ***Conclusions***

- B.2.10 The medieval roof tile fragments were residual and were recovered from contexts 103, 202, 203 and 205. These roof tile fragments date from the 12th-14th century and may have originated from a medieval building located within or close to the site. The manor house and the site may have been located in an area occupied by the wider complex of the medieval Dorchester Abbey (Lobel 1962, 39-64).
- B.2.11 The seven fragments of post-medieval brick were recorded in contexts 103, 202 and 205. The earliest brick recorded in context 103 and the dimensions of it suggest it dates from the 16th-17th century. The trenches are located to the north of a Grade II listed manor house (NHLE: 1047805) which dates from the early 17th century with 18th and 19th century remodelling. It is possible that this brick is contemporary with the early 17th century primary build of the manor house or associated outbuildings. This brick is residual, as layer 103 contained pottery dating to 1760-1830.
- B.2.12 Five further thin bricks around 2 inches thick were also recorded in contexts 103, 202 and 205 and two of these had a black/white vitrified coating layer on one or more sides. These may also be early post-medieval bricks. A thicker brick (58mm) was also recorded in context 103 which may be contemporary with the pottery recorded in this layer.

### ***Recommendations***

- B.2.13 The 16th-17th century brick from context 103 should be retained (Id:1) as it may have been part of the early 17th-century Grade II listed manor house or associated outbuildings within the site. One of the vitrified bricks (Id:9) from context 202 should also be retained along with the fragment of medieval ridge tile from the same context.
- B.2.14 The medieval roof tile (flat and peg) is ubiquitous for the area and is moderately to highly abraded, and so can be discarded.

## APPENDIX C ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

### C.1 Animal bone

C.1.1 The evaluation recovered 3 animal bone fragments by hand from two contexts.

#### *Description*

C.1.2 Context 103 contained two specimens: a gracile right cattle (*Bos taurus*) tibia in good condition, and the vertebral end of a large mammal rib in moderate condition. The tibia is gracile, lacks the proximal end and the tibial crest but is fused distally.

C.1.3 Context 203 contained a single specimen, the proximal half of a left cattle tibia in good condition. The bone is proximally unfused and is from a larger animal than the example from context 103. A few shallow carnivore gnaw marks are present.

C.1.4 The recovered material demonstrates the survival of bone in good condition on the site. Any future excavations would have the potential to recover potentially informative assemblages.

#### *Recommendations regarding the conservation, discard and retention of material*

B.1.1 The material has no research potential and may be discarded.

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**APPENDIX B SITE SUMMARY DETAILS / OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>APPENDIX C Site name:</b>	14-18 Manor Farm Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire
<b>Site code:</b>	DOTMAR23
<b>Grid Reference</b>	SU 57940 94357
<b>Type:</b>	Evaluation – test pits
<b>Date and duration:</b>	02-03.05.2023
<b>Area of Site</b>	940m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Location of archive:</b>	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, OX2 0ES and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museum in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS.2023.42
<b>Summary of Results:</b>	Oxford Archaeology was commissioned by RPA Architects to conduct an archaeological test pit evaluation prior to the construction of an extension and remodelling of 14-18 Manor Farm Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, in Oxfordshire. The site is centred on SU 57940 94357. The work was to inform the Planning Authority in advance of the submission of a Planning Application. The site is situated on the south side of Manor Farm Road, c 150m to the east of the centre of Dorchester-on-Thames, close to the confluence of the rivers Thames and Thame. The property lies partly within Dorchester Roman Town scheduled monument although the proposed new building work itself is outside the scheduled boundary. The site is believed to lie outside the core of the Roman town, in the area between the medieval abbey buildings and their associated fishponds. The site is also within the grounds of the post-medieval Manor Farm.

Two test pits, which measured 2 x 1m and 2 x 2m, were excavated using a 1 tonne excavator. These test pits were designed to fit within various site constraints, including buried utilities. Test Pit 1, on the north side of the present building, was excavated to 1.55m below ground level and revealed a sequence of post-medieval to modern garden and driveway deposits and no significant archaeology. Test Pit 2, on the west side of the present building, revealed a similar upper sequence of post-medieval to modern made-ground deposits. The lower part of the sequence, in contrast, revealed a series of archaeological features including a ditch, a pit, a possible robbed-out foundation trench and a clay surface, which were first visible at a depth of 1.0m. The associated artefacts suggest that these deposits were infilled in the post-medieval period, but they could have originated in the medieval period. The features appeared to overlie or were cut into a possible alluvial deposit which continued to the bottom of the trench where river terrace deposits (Northmoor Sand and Gravel Member) were exposed at a depth of 1.85m below ground level.

The investigation met its aims of establishing the presence, depth, extent, condition, character, and date of archaeological deposits within the application area.





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Sources: Esri, HERE, Garmin, USGS, Intermap, INCREMENT P, NRCan, Esri Japan, METI, Esri China (Hong Kong), Esri Korea, Esri (Thailand), NGCC, (c)

Figure 1: Site location



X:\d\DOTMAREV\_Dorchester\_Manor\_Farm\_Road\_Oxfordshire\Geomatics\02\_GIS Projects\Figures\2023-05-04\DOTMAREV23\_Figure2.mxd\*caroline.souday\*05/05/2023

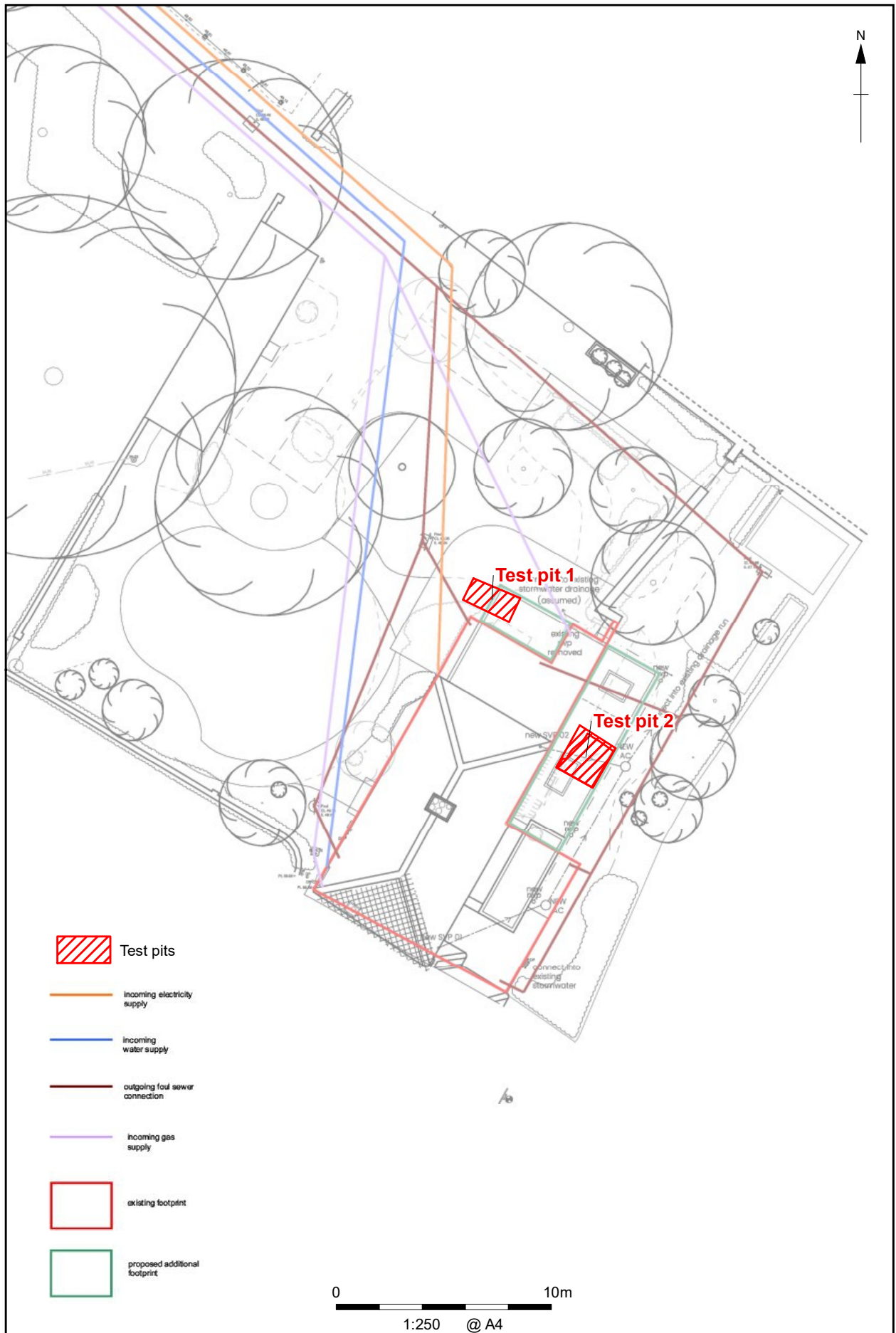


Figure 2: Test pits location

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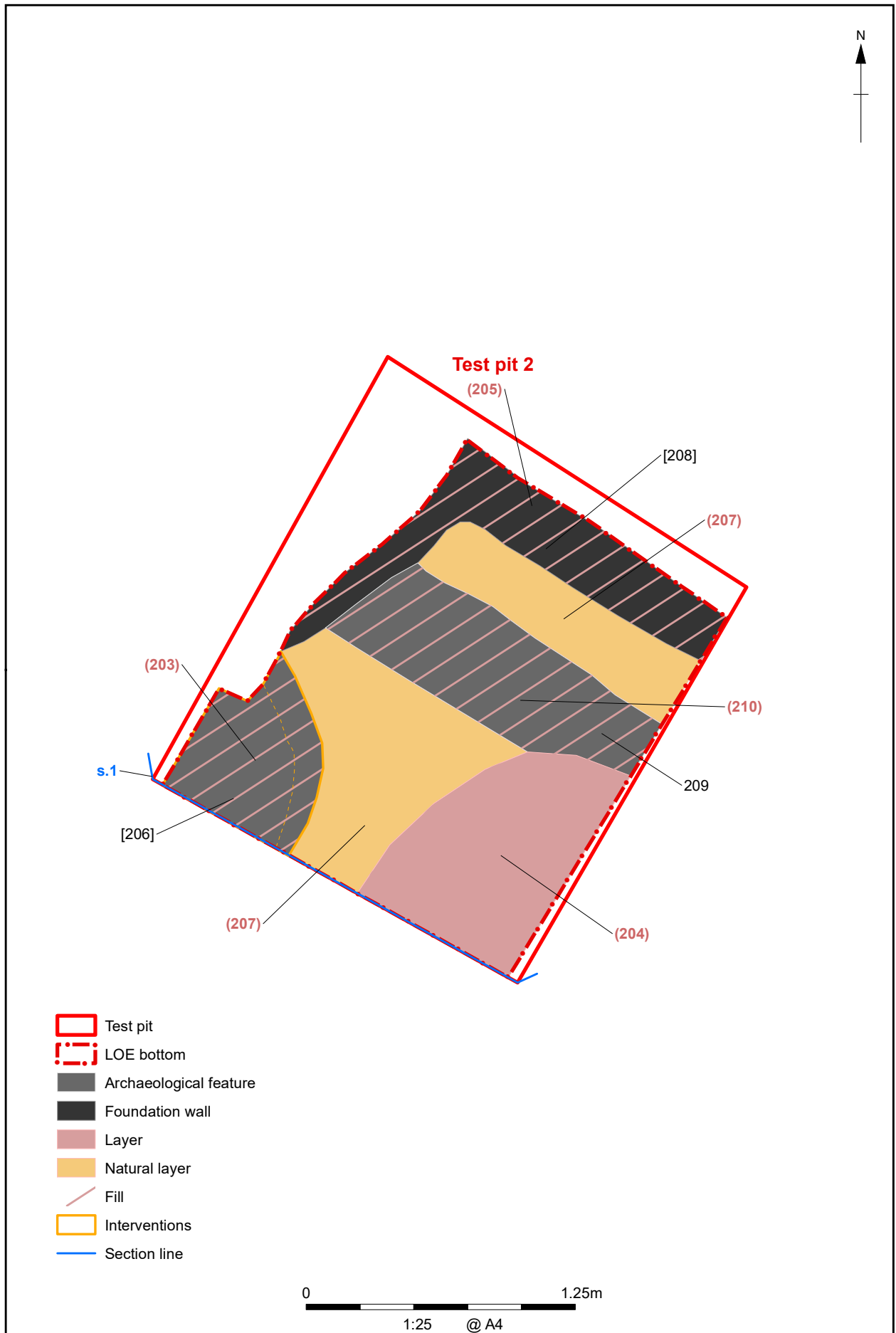


Figure 3: Test Pit 2 plan

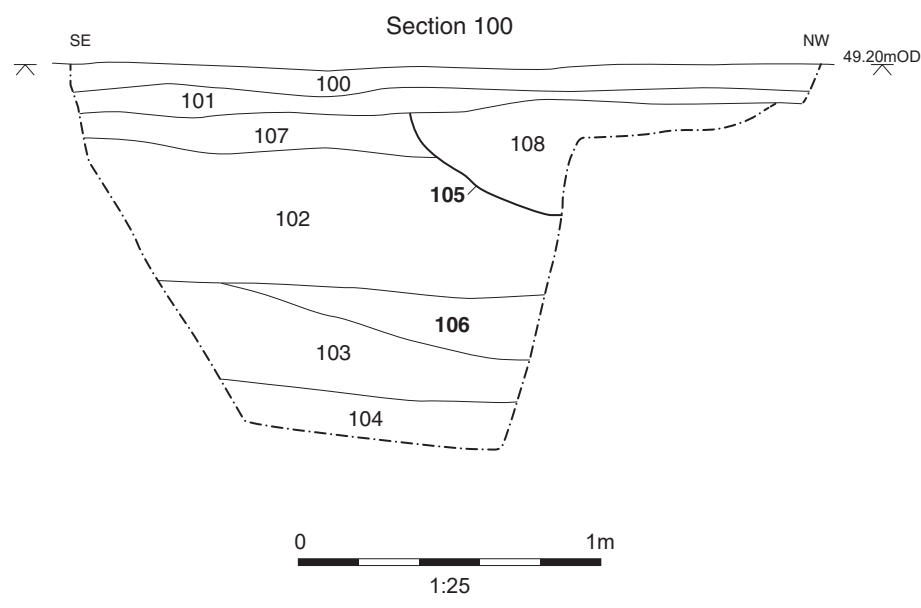


Figure 4: Test Pit 1 section

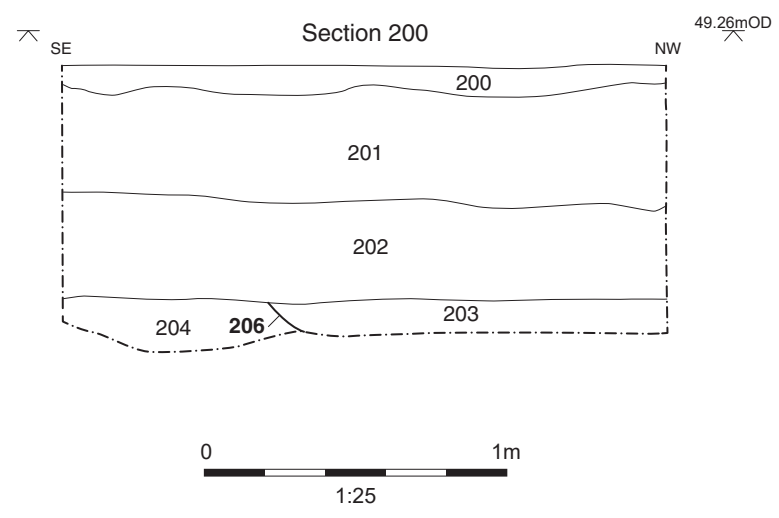


Figure 5: Test Pit 2 section





Plate 1: Test Pit 1 section – looking south east



Plate 2: Test Pit 2 north east facing section





Plate 3: Test Pit 2 plan view – looking north east



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