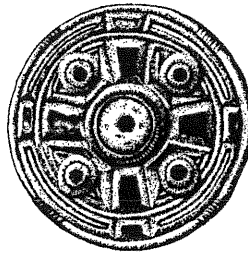


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Archaeological Field Unit

# **An Archaeological Desktop Assessment at Newton Longville, Near Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire**

Rob Atkins

August 2003

**Cambridgeshire County Council**

Report No. 231

Commissioned by Kier Land

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Near Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire**

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2003

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## SUMMARY

*This study is designed to assess the archaeological potential of an area of 19.7 hectares of pasture land to the north-west of Newton Longville (SP 836 318). Within the subject site is surviving Ridge and Furrow of local importance. There are known to have been two pre-18th century structures within the subject site with a public house - the Fox and Goose - recorded at the side of the Whaddon High Way on the 1779 parish map. By the time of the 1841 Enclosure Map the Fox and Goose had been demolished and the course of a road had been realigned to the south of the High Way. Any remains of the Fox and Goose may not survive, as the later Victorian Grange Farm appears to have been built over the same site, although parts of the High Way could survive.*

*There are no other archaeological sites or artefacts known within the development area. The aerial photographs do not show any cropmarks on the site although this may be due to the natural clay masking any features. Romano-British settlement remains and artefacts have been recorded between 100m to more than 400m to the north-west, north and north-east of the subject site.*

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# **An Archaeological Desktop Assessment at Newton Longville, Near Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire (SP 836 318)**

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

The desktop assessment was commissioned by Commissioned by Kier Land. In July 2003 the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council carried out an archaeological assessment of a site of approximately 19.7 hectares to the north-west of Newton Longville, near Milton Keynes (Fig. 1).

The aims of this assessment were to carry out a preliminary desktop archaeological study to ensure that there have not been any significant findings. It is intended that a more detailed desktop study will be submitted at a later stage within representations to the deposit Milton Keynes Local Plan.

## **2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

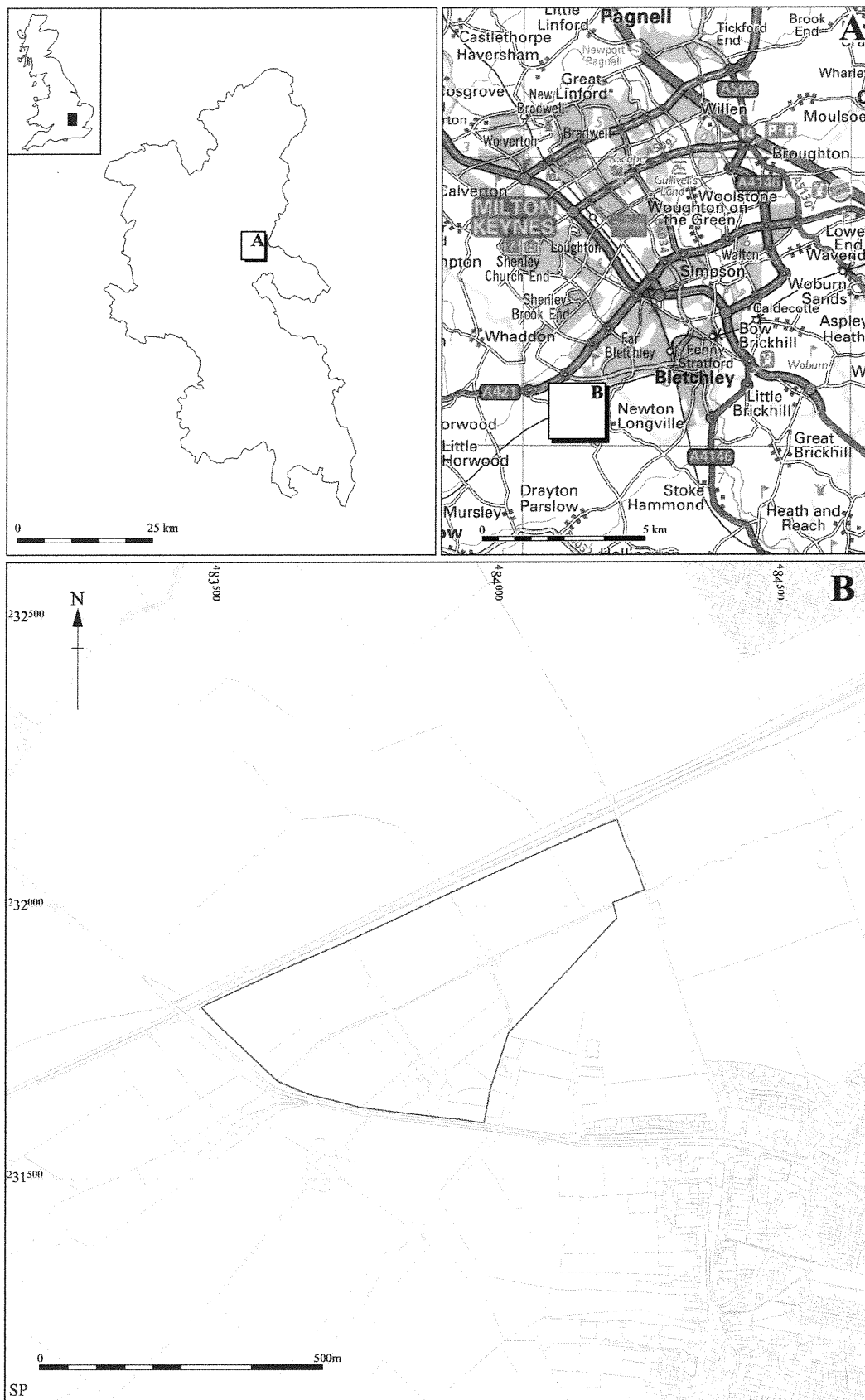
The development area lies to the north of Whaddon Road within Manor Farm land. The underlying geology is clay intermixed with coarse sand. The site rises from 90m OD at the far east of the site to over 100m OD on the western side (Fig. 1). The mapped contours are misleading and Plates 2 and 3 clearly indicate that there is a relatively steep north-to-south slope in the northern part of the site. At the base of this slope there was a brook on the 1779 plan (Fig. 2; see below). There was only a very gentle slope to the south over the rest of the site. The site was visited and viewed from the Whaddon road in July 2003 (Plates 2 and 3). Most of the fields could be seen and these fields were used as agricultural pasture.

## **3 SOURCES**

The sources consulted during the preparation of this report include the Sites and Monument Record Offices at Aylesbury (Buckinghamshire County Council) and Milton Keynes as well as the County Record Offices in Aylesbury.

### **3.1 Sites and Monuments Record (Fig. 1)**

There are no archaeological sites or artefacts recorded within the subject site although Ridge and Furrow was briefly recorded in the initial stages of a



**Figure 1** Location of Development Area.



*Plate 1 Aerial Photograph 3 012 dated June 1963 (Buckinghamshire County Council)*



*Plate 2 Showing Ridge and Furrow and Slope July 2003*





*Plate 3 Manor Farm showing pastoral land July 2003*

related survey in the South and East Midlands (Hall 2001). The subject site was deemed not of a sufficiently high quality to warrant further recording for the survey, falling within the lower levels of importance (Hall 2001, section 7.5). The Ridge and Furrow on the site is, however, of local importance. Aerial photographs held in the SMR show this Ridge and Furrow clearly (Plate1) though no other archaeological cropmarks are visible in other photographs held by the SMR.

The SMR records some activity around the development area with four records within 500m of the subject site (Fig. 1):

- 1) SMR No. 6700 was an area of possible settlement located 300m+ to the north-west of the site (GeoQuest 1999). Prior to proposed development, part of the area was geophysically surveyed and positive anomalies of ditched enclosures, pits and at least one possible kiln or hearth were identified. A uniform spread of significant quantities of Romano-British pottery and tile was also seen in the eastern half of the survey area during the geophysical survey. The southern boundary of the probable Roman settlements may have been found in the survey and is tentatively indicated in Fig. 1;
- 2) SMR No. 6269 was surface finds found less than 100m to the north-east of the site (SP 842 322). Two Romano-British pottery sherds and three sherds of unknown date were found on the surface at the foot of the railway embankment in 1997;
- 3) SMR No. 0736 was a scatter of 20 Roman pottery sherds and medieval tile fragments found c.400m to the north of the subject site in 1966 (SP 8343 3222);
- 4) SMR No. 0196 was a Roman coin found 450m to the south of the subject site (SP 835 312). This was identified by Dr. C. King of Ashmolean Museum, Oxford as being 4th century AD in date though too illegible to be more precisely dated.

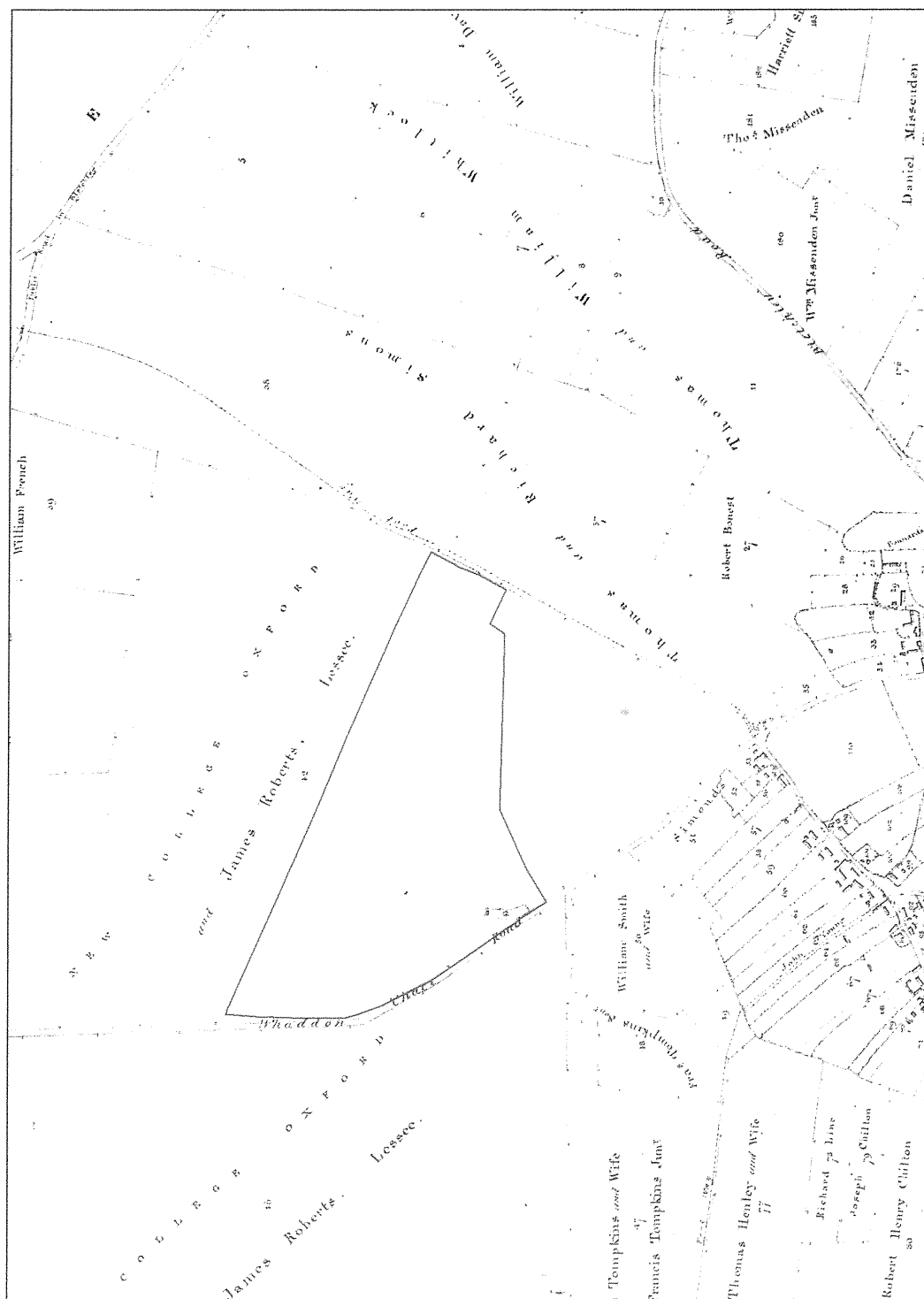
The subject site is 400m to the west of the nearest listed building in Newton Longville: The Crooked Billet, a Grade II listed 17th-century inn (SP 843 315).

### **3.2 Cartographic Evidence (Figs 2-4)**

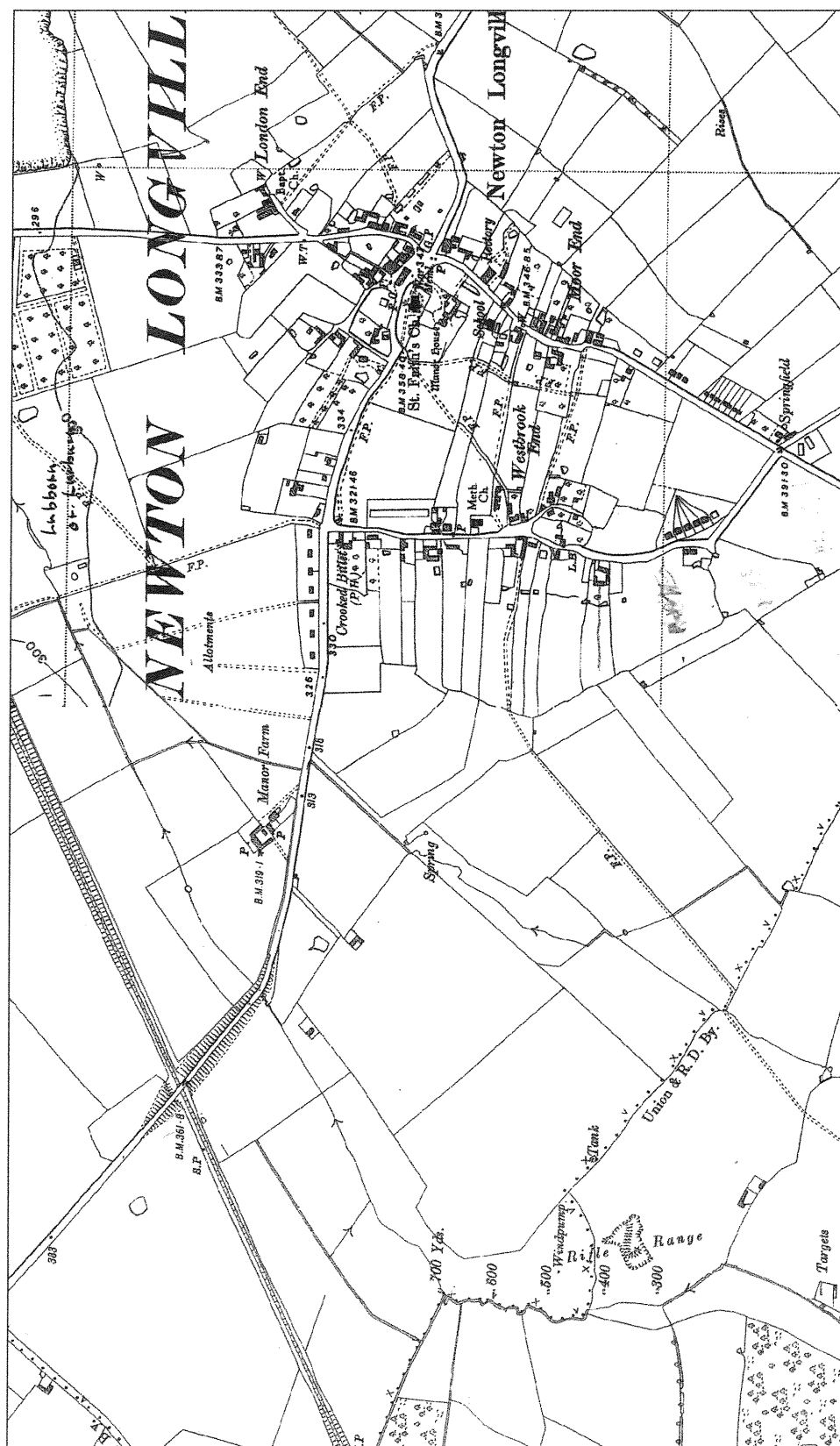
The first map for the site is of the 1779 plan of the Parish (Fig. 2). This map demonstrates that the present Whaddon Road was called High Way, running towards Whaddon to the north-west. The High Way was a wide road, the alignment of which changed at the north-western end of the subject site. Within the subject site on the north side of the High Way was the Fox and



Figure 2 Plan of Parish 1779 with development area outlined (BRO MAR/15T)



**Figure 3** Inclosure Map 10th November 1841 with development area outlined (BRO IR 65)



Goose located at a road T-junction. This inn or hotel was presumably deliberately placed at the junction to receive passing trade. A brook evidently meandered east-to-west through the northern part of the site at the base of a relatively steep north-to-south slope. The furlongs and other land titles are recorded on the map with some indication of land usage. Stable Brook Furlong presumably records the name of the brook and Elder Furlong records that trees were probably growing alongside the brook. This map may reflect land boundaries of the medieval period.

The 1841 Enclosure Map (Fig. 3) shows that the High Way was later renamed and realigned as Whaddon Chace Road, largely to the south of the former High Way. The Fox and Goose had been removed and no trace of it survived in 1841. A small new structure is visible in a small plot partly along the Whaddon Chace Road directly to the south of the former Fox and Goose. Apart from this plot the subject site was part of one large field owned by New College Oxford with James Roberts as the Lessee. The brook was not recorded although later evidence suggest that it was still present. The 1844 Tithe Map is similar to the 1841 Enclosure award map. It indicates that the subject site lay within one large field although the small plot next to the Whaddon Road was not shown.

The later 19th-century New College Map demonstrates the construction of the Bletchley Junction of the London and North Western Railway. The former small plot along the Whaddon Chace Road had developed into several buildings, presumably a farm house and associated structures. Within the subject site there were seven fields or parts of fields with the brook again recorded. The 1926 Third Edition OS map (Fig. 4) shows that the boundaries had not changed, with the farm buildings renamed as Manor Farm. The present OS map (Fig. 1) indicates subdivision of the fields and an increasing number of buildings/structures at Manor Farm.

### 3.3 Documentary Records

The Domesday Book (1086) records that there were 10 hides in Neutone in the ownership of Walter Giffard. The land in Edward The Confessor's time (1066) was owned by Alward Cilt. On his death in 1102, Giffard gave the land to the priory of St. Faith, Longueville, in Normandy. Soon afterwards, the mother priory set up and built a priory in Newton Longville. It enjoyed the manorial rights over the 10 hides and this was called Newton Longville Manor. Some records of the priory survive. In a document of 1311 (an extract of Newington *c.1311 Liber Niger* fol. 41) the land is seen to be divided into two fields with 171.5 acres of arable land in the south field and 112 acres of arable land in the north field. Each acre was worth 6d.

An inquisition held at Stony Stratford on November 12th 1344 before the warden of the houses of aliens recorded some of the details in the manor. It noted that the manor of Newenton had a capital messuage worth 6s 8d, 480 acres of arable land worth 4d an acre, 6 acres of meadow worth 18d an acre,

pasture land worth 6s 8d. There were rents of free tenants 2s 6d, rents of customary tenants £6 9s 1.5d and works of customary tenants £6 11s 2d. The survey of the manor in 1310 and rentals of 1522, 1600 and 1621 list furlongs within the manor. These names do not seem to correlate to the furlongs recorded on the 1779 plan of the parish (Fig. 2). As an Alien House, the priory was dissolved and the land went to New College, Oxford in 1441.

In the post-medieval period there was a move away from arable farming to pastoral. The VCH recorded the figures of the survey of 1905. There were 1,734 acres within the parish, of which 373 were arable and 1206 were permanent grass. The visit to the site in July 2003 demonstrates that pastoral farming continues to the present day.

#### **4 CONCLUSIONS**

Documentary, map and visual evidence have shown that the subject site was within a field system from the Late Saxon period to present day. The former medieval settlement of Newton Longville is highly unlikely to extend as far as the subject site. The Ridge and Furrow that still covers most of the subject site is recorded on the 1779 parish map and indicates the post-medieval change to pastoral farming in Newton Longville.

There are only two pre- 18th-century structures known from within the development area with a probable inn or hotel (the Fox and Goose) recorded located at a road junction at the side of the High Way to Whaddon on the 1779 parish map. It is uncertain when the Fox and Goose dates from although by the 1841 Enclosure Map it had disappeared. The old, presumably medieval roadway, had been replaced in this area by a new narrower section of road built further south. It is possible the old roadway survives within the present subject site. The later 19th-century Grange Farm appears to have been built in the same area as the Fox and Goose and may have destroyed the earlier remains.

Any archaeological remains surviving on the site are likely to pre-date the Late Saxon period. The absence of any recorded artefacts from the development area may result from the fact that the land has not been disturbed by ploughing, having been used as pastoral land since the post-medieval period. Likewise the lack of cropmarks on aerial photographs could be due to the clay soil. It may be significant that the settlement site to the north-west (SMR No. 6700) that was not seen on aerial photographs was found in a geophysical survey. The relatively steep slope along the extreme northern part of the site probably indicates that there are unlikely to be any archaeological remains in this area.

## **5 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The author would like to thank Kier Land who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Judith Roberts. Thanks go to Julia Wise SMR Officer, who gave helpful advice, to Sandy Kidd County Archaeological Officer who gave information concerning Ridge and Furrow and to Crane Begg who drew the illustrations.

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Tithe Map and Award 1844 (BRO PR 155/27/6)

New College, Oxford Estate Map (BRO MAR/5/7)

1926 Third Edition 6" Ordnance Survey Map Sheet XIX NE





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