LAND AT MANOR FARM  
LIDDINGTON  
WILTSHIRE  

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  

CA PROJECT: 1972  
CA REPORT: 05094  

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<thead>
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<th>Derek Evans</th>
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<tr>
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<td>Signed:</td>
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CONTENTS

SUMMARY ............................................................................................................................................. 2

1. INTRODUCTION .................................................................................................................................. 3
   The site .................................................................................................................................................. 3
   Archaeological background ......................................................................................................................... 3
   Archaeological objectives ............................................................................................................................. 4
   Methodology ........................................................................................................................................... 4
   The Finds and Biological Evidence ............................................................................................................ 5

3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS ..................................................................................................... 5

4. CA PROJECT TEAM ............................................................................................................................... 6

5. REFERENCES ........................................................................................................................................ 6

APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS .................................................................................................. 7
APPENDIX 2: LEVELS OF PRINCIPAL DEPOSITS AND STRUCTURES ......................................................... 7

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS
Fig. 1 Site location plan (1:25,000)
Fig. 2 The site, showing trench locations (1:500)
SUMMARY

Site Name: Land at Manor Farm
Location: Liddington, Wiltshire
NGR: SU 2102 8139
Type: Evaluation
Date: 24-25 May 2005
Location of Archive: To be deposited with Swindon Museum
Site Code: LML 05

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in May 2005 at the request of Earthline Ltd at Manor Farm, Liddington, Wiltshire. This was to accompany a planning application for the construction of a residential building on the site. In compliance with an approved written scheme of investigation (CA 2005), three evaluation trenches were excavated within the proposed development area.

The evaluation showed that the site had been substantially truncated during the construction of the modern farm, with the existing modern surfaces directly overlying the natural substrate. No archaeological features or deposits were recorded.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 In May 2005 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation for Earthline Ltd on land at Manor Farm, Liddington, Wiltshire (centred on NGR: SU 2102 8139; Fig. 1). The evaluation was undertaken to accompany a planning application for the construction of a residential building on the site.

1.2 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with a brief for archaeological recording prepared by Roy Canham, County Archaeologist for Wiltshire County Council and archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), and with a subsequent detailed written scheme of investigation (WSI) produced by CA (2005) and approved by the LPA acting on the advice of Mr Canham. The fieldwork also followed the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1999), the Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation (WCC Archaeology Service 1995) and the Management of Archaeological Projects II (EH 1991). It was monitored by Mr Canham, including a site visit on 25th May.

The site

1.3 The proposed development area is approximately 0.25ha and comprises modern agricultural buildings and associated yards (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 140m AOD and is significantly lower than the surrounding landscape (the field immediately to the east of the site lies at approximately 142.27m AOD).

1.4 The underlying geology of the area is mapped as Lower Chalk of the Upper Cretaceous period (BGS 1962).

Archaeological background

1.5 The site lies within an area of archaeological potential. In particular, cropmarks and earthworks are recorded immediately to the east of the proposed development area (Wiltshire SMR SU28SW407). Documentary sources indicate settlement at Liddington from at least the mid 8th century AD. The Church of All Saints contains Norman features although later Perpendicular and 19th century alterations are evident. The Manor House is Jacobean.
Archaeological objectives

1.6 The objectives of the evaluation were to establish the character, quality, date, significance and extent of any archaeological remains or deposits surviving within the site. This information will assist the Local Planning Authority in making an informed judgement on the likely impact upon the archaeological resource by the proposed development.

Methodology

1.7 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of three evaluation trenches measuring 1.5m in width and between 5m and 15m in length. It was necessary to move Trench 3 from the location proposed in the WSI due to the proximity of protected trees; this was done with the approval of Mr Canham. The revised trench layout is shown in Fig. 2.

1.8 Once the concrete and tarmac was removed from Trenches 1 and 2 with a mechanical breaker, all trenches were excavated by mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless grading bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the natural substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with the CA Technical Manual 1: Excavation Recording Manual (1996).

1.9 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with the CA Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other samples from Archaeological Sites (2003). All artefacts recovered were processed in accordance with the CA Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation (1995).

1.10 The archive and artefacts from the evaluation are currently held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner the site archive (including artefacts) will be deposited with Swindon Museum.
2. RESULTS (Fig. 2)

2.1 This section provides an overview of the evaluation results; detailed summaries of the recorded contexts are to be found in Appendix 1. Details of the relative heights of the principal deposits expressed as metres Above Ordnance Datum (m AOD) appear in Appendix 2.

2.2 The natural substrate, comprising clayey chalk, was exposed between 0.2 and 0.7m below the modern ground surface. It was cut in Trenches 1 and 3 by shallow gullies 104 and 305; Trench 3 also contained a modern wooden post in a shallow stone-filled cut (303/304). The natural substrate was sealed in all trenches by up to 0.7m of modern overburden, consisting of concrete, tarmac and associated bedding deposits (Trenches 1 and 2) and modern building waste in a sandy matrix (Trench 3).

The Finds and Biological Evidence

2.3 No finds were retrieved from the site, and although assessed for their palaeoarchaeological potential, no deposits were sampled during the course of this archaeological evaluation.

3. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

3.1 The presence of modern overburden deposits directly overlying the natural substrate and the abrupt reduction of ground level by over 2m at the farm’s eastern and south-eastern boundaries indicate that Manor Farm has been terraced into the surrounding countryside. Such activity was common practice in the 1960s when it was recommended as a method of minimising a farm’s visual impact upon the landscape. The shallow features recorded in Trenches 1 and 3 contained no dating evidence but in all likelihood post-date this process, suggesting that they are modern features. Any earlier archaeological layers which might once have been present will almost certainly have been removed during this reduction of ground level. Although the discrepancy in ground level between the farm and its surroundings is less pronounced in the west of the site, it is highly probable that the ground here will have been extensively disturbed by the deep concrete floors of the modern farm buildings, as illustrated by Trench 1.
4. **CA PROJECT TEAM**

Fieldwork was undertaken by Derek Evans, assisted by Andrew Loader. The report was written by Derek Evans. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by Derek Evans, and prepared for deposition by Sam Inder. The project was managed for CA by Clifford Bateman.

5. **REFERENCES**


CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2005 *Land at Manor Farm, Liddington, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Evaluation*
APPENDIX 1: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Trench 1</th>
<th>Trench 2</th>
<th>Trench 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101 Modern farm building concrete floor surface. Depth 0.2m</td>
<td>201 Modern concrete and tarmac surface. Depth up to 0.5m</td>
<td>301 Modern surfacing deposit – brown clayey sand with frequent modern building waste. Depth 0.1m-0.3m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>102 Hardcore bedding for 101. Depth 0.35m</td>
<td>202 Natural substrate – pale clayey chalk</td>
<td>302 Natural substrate – pale clayey chalk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>103 Band of brown-grey silty clay. Depth up to 0.19m</td>
<td></td>
<td>303 Shallow rectangular cut. Length 0.85m, width 0.6m, depth 0.12m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>104 Cut of shallow gully. Orientated NE/SW. Width 0.3m, depth 0.1m</td>
<td>304 Fill of 303 – base of wooden post surrounded by irregular chalk fragments</td>
<td>305 Cut of shallow gully. Orientated NE/SW. Width 0.27m, depth 0.19m</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>105 Fill of 104 – brown-grey silty clay</td>
<td>306 Fill of 305 – pale grey sandy clayey chalk</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>106 Natural substrate – pale clayey chalk</td>
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APPENDIX 2: LEVELS OF PRINCIPAL DEPOSITS AND STRUCTURES

Levels are expressed as metres below current ground level and as metres Above Ordnance Datum (AOD), calculated using the spot height located at the north-eastern end of Bell Lane (126.5m AOD).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current ground level</th>
<th>Trench 1</th>
<th>Trench 2</th>
<th>Trench 3</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0.00m</td>
<td>0.00m</td>
<td>0.00m</td>
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<tr>
<td>(139.57m)</td>
<td>(139.52m)</td>
<td>(139.77m)</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Natural substrate (limit of excavation)</td>
<td>0.69m (138.88m)</td>
<td>0.25m (139.27m)</td>
<td>0.2m (139.57m)</td>
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Upper figures are depth below modern ground level; lower figures in parentheses are metres AOD.