

**Wykham Park Farm  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire**

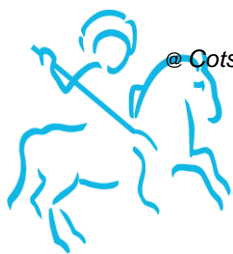
Archaeological Evaluation (Phase II)

Accession no: OXCMS: 2013.115

Site Code: WYP 15

*for*  
**Gallagher Estates Ltd.**

CA Project: 660401  
CA Report: 15037




Wykham Park Farm  
Banbury  
Oxfordshire

Archaeological Evaluation (Phase II)

Accession no: OXCMS: 2013.115

CA Project: 660401  
CA Report: 15037

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date	19 January 2015
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issue	01

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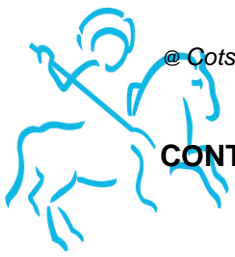
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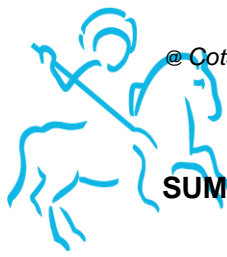
# Cotswold Archaeology

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# Cotswold Archaeology

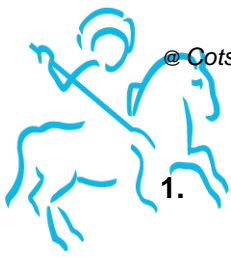
## SUMMARY

**Project Name:** Wykham Park Farm  
**Location:** Banbury, Oxfordshire  
**NGR:** SP 4471 3869  
**Type:** Evaluation  
**Date:** 5-7 January 2015  
**Planning Reference:** 14/01932/OUT  
**Location of Archive:** Oxfordshire Museum Services  
**Accession Number:** OXCMS: 2013.115  
**Site Code:** WYP 15

In January 2015, Cotswold Archaeology carried out an archaeological evaluation of farmland at Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire. The evaluation, which was commissioned by Gallagher Estates Ltd, forms the final stage of a programme of archaeological evaluation that has been undertaken in support of an outline planning application [14/01932/OUT](#), :Land at Wykham Park Farm. The evaluation comprised the excavation of nine 30m trial trenches in a field at the eastern end of the proposed development area.

In the northern part of the field and corresponding with linear anomalies shown on the results of a geophysical survey, five shallow ditches were investigated. Two of the ditches may have formed the sides of a north-east to south-west aligned track, although the ditches were not identified in the trenches to the south-west. There was no artefactual material in the excavated fills of the features but they predate the medieval furrows that were also encountered in this field, so a prehistoric or Roman date is likely. Medieval furrows, on an east to west alignment, were encountered across the entire site. Other features were associated with modern crop-planting activities.





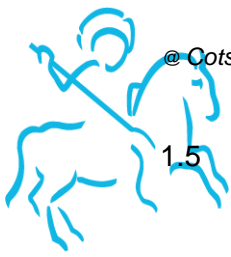
# Cotswold Archaeology

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In January 2015, Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological evaluation of farmland at Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire (site centred on NGR: SP 4542 3850; Fig. 1). The evaluation, which was commissioned by Gallagher Estates Ltd, forms the final stage of a programme of archaeological evaluation that has been undertaken in support of an outline planning application for the residential development of land at Wykham Park Farm.
- 1.2 The site comprises six arable fields, five of which were evaluated by CA in 2013. At that time, the field at the eastern end of the site (the current site) could not be accessed, so evaluation of this area was postponed until access could be arranged. Following discussions with Richard Oram, Oxfordshire County Council's Planning Archaeologist (OCCPA), the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) prepared in 2013 was considered to still be valid for the current evaluation (CA 2013a). The trenching strategy was informed by the results of a geophysical survey undertaken by Wardell Armstrong (WA 2012), which was included in the *Environmental Statement* (ES) issued by Wardell Armstrong in 2014.
- 1.3 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the WSI (CA 2013), the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (CIfA 2008), and the English Heritage procedural documents *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (EH 1991) and *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006). The fieldwork was monitored by Richard Oram, with a site visit being made on 6 January 2015.

### **The site**

- 1.4 The proposed development area, which covers an area of c. 47.7ha, comprises six arable fields on the outskirts of Easington, a suburb on the southern edge of Banbury, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). It is bounded to the north by a track known as the 'Salt Way', to the west by Bloxham Road (A361) and to the south and east by open farmland. The site lies at approximately 130m above Ordnance Datum (aOD), on land that slopes gently to the south and east, towards the valley of Sor Brook.



1.5 The current site, which covers c. 5ha, comprises part of a rectangular field at the eastern end of the proposed development area, immediately to the east of Wykham Farm and bordering 'Salt Way'. The ground lies at c. 125m aOD and there are clear views of the valley of Sor Brook to the south. At the time of the evaluation the field was planted with asparagus beds, arranged in low ridges on a north to south alignment.

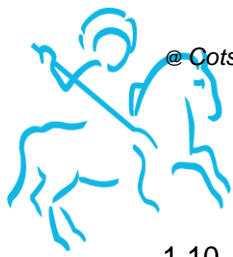
1.6 The geology of the site comprises Jurassic ferruginous limestone and mudstone of the Marlstone Rock Formation (BGS 2013).

### ***Archaeological background***

1.7 A full account of the archaeological background to the proposed development area has been presented in the ES prepared by Wardell Armstrong (2013) and a summary is given in the report on the first phase of the evaluation (CA 2013b). In brief, the ES established that the site was set within an archaeological landscape containing prehistoric, Roman and medieval remains. Cropmarks identified from aerial photographs and the results of a geophysical survey showed several areas of archaeological potential within the site, possibly relating Neolithic and Iron Age activity.

1.8 Three areas of archaeological interest were identified by the first phase of the evaluation of the proposed development area, undertaken by CA in 2013. Part of a Late Iron Age settlement, including parts of an enclosure ditch which had previously been investigated by CA in a field adjacent to the site (CA 2011), were identified close to the Salt Track, in the north-east part of the site. The other two areas consisted of a small enclosure near the northern edge of the site and a concentration of features in the south-east corner, which included a possible third enclosure and part of a possible Neolithic causewayed enclosure. They are undated, but were seen to predate the furrows of a medieval open field system.

1.9 Within the current part of the site, at the eastern end of the proposed development area, geophysical survey shows parallel linear anomalies, spaced c. 25m apart, extending across the field on a north-east to south-west alignment (WA 2012). Several anomalies of possible archaeological significance are also shown in the north-east corner of the field. The current evaluation has confirmed that these anomalies are archaeological features, probably of Roman or prehistoric date. Medieval furrows were also identified by the geophysical survey.



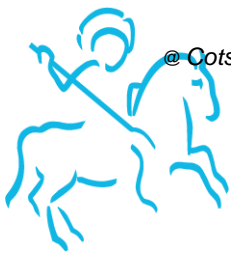
## **Archaeological objectives**

- 1.10 The objectives of the evaluation, as set out in the WSI (CA 2013a), were to provide information about the archaeological resource within the site, including its presence/absence, character, extent, date, integrity, state of preservation and quality. This information will enable OCCPA, archaeological advisor to Cherwell District Council, to identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage assets, consider the impact of the proposed development upon it and to avoid or minimise conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the development proposal, in line with the *National Planning Policy Framework* (DCLG 2012).

## **Methodology**

- 1.11 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of nine 30m trenches in the locations shown in Figure 2. They were positioned to investigate possible archaeological features identified from cropmarks, geophysical survey anomalies and to test apparently archaeologically "blank" areas of the site. Trenches were set out on OS National Grid (NGR) co-ordinates using Leica GPS and surveyed in accordance with CA's *Technical Manual 4: Survey Manual* (CA 2009).
- 1.12 The trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless ditching bucket. All machine excavation was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision to the top of the first significant archaeological horizon or the geological substrate, whichever was encountered first. Where archaeological deposits were encountered they were excavated by hand in accordance with CA's *Technical Manual 1: Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.13 Deposits were assessed for their palaeoenvironmental potential in accordance with *Technical Manual 2: The Taking and Processing of Environmental and Other Samples from Archaeological Sites* (CA 2003). No archaeological deposits were encountered that were suitable for environmental sampling. The artefacts were processed in accordance with *Technical Manual 3: Treatment of Finds Immediately After Excavation* (CA 1995); as the finds are modern and of no archaeological significance they will not be retained.
- 1.14 The archive from the evaluation is currently being held by CA at their office in Milton Keynes, prior to deposition with Oxfordshire Museums Service (accession number





OXCMS: 2013.115). A summary of information from this project, as set out within Appendix C, will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.

## 2. RESULTS

### *Summary*

2.1 The evaluation comprised the excavation of nine 30m trial trenches in a field at the eastern end of the proposed development area (270 linear metres; Fig. 2). In the northern part of the field and corresponding with linear anomalies shown on the geophysical survey results (WA 2012), four shallow ditches were identified in Trenches 7-9. Two of the ditches may have formed the sides of a north-east to south-west aligned track, although the ditches were not identified in the trenches to the south-west. There was no artefactual material in the excavated fills of the features but they predate the medieval furrows that were also encountered in this field, so a prehistoric or Roman date is likely. The medieval furrows were encountered in Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7-9. There were no archaeological features in Trenches 3 and 6. Details of the features and deposits recorded by the evaluation are presented in Appendix A and are summarised below.

### *General stratigraphy*

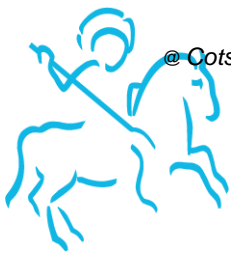
2.2 The geological substrate, comprising brashy ferruginous limestone in an orangey-brown silty clay matrix, was encountered at a depth of c. 0.25m below current ground level (Fig. 4). The topsoil, mid reddish-brown silty clay, lay directly over the geological substrate. Due to the shallow soil cover the surface of the geological substrate was marked by regular lines of shallow, soil-filled hollows, occasionally containing modern brick fragments; it is likely that these were formed by modern crop-planting activity.

### *Medieval furrows*

#### **Trenches 1, 2, 4, 5 and 7-9**

2.3 The geophysical survey results show a regular grid-like pattern of parallel linear anomalies, interpreted as furrows, extending over most of the site. The evaluation demonstrated that the anomalies on an east to west alignment were the remains of medieval furrows, whilst those on a north to south alignment were formed by modern





crop planting practices.  
0.12m deep.

The furrows were spaced c. 9m apart and were up to

### ***Undated features***

#### **Trench 5**

- 2.4 At the southern end of the trench was the eastern terminal of a small ditch (502). It measured 0.4m wide by 0.16m deep (Fig. 5).

#### ***Trench 7***

- 2.5 Two ditches, which corresponded with features identified by the geophysical survey, were investigated at the north-west end of the trench. There was no corresponding feature for the parallel anomaly at the south-east end of the trench.

- 2.6 Ditch 702, which was aligned north-west to south-east, measured 1.5m wide by 0.44m deep and had moderately steep sides and a relatively flat base (Fig. 7). The adjacent ditch, 704, was wider and shallower, measuring 3.0m wide by 0.14m deep.

#### ***Trench 8***

- 2.7 Ditch 804, which was cut by a furrow, corresponded with a linear anomaly shown on the geophysical survey results. It was aligned north-east to south-west, measured 0.89m wide by 0.13m deep and had short, steep sides and a flat base.

#### ***Trench 9***

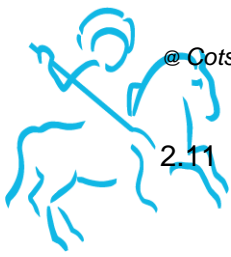
- 2.8 Passing through the north-east end of Trench 9 was ditch 902, which corresponded with a slightly curvilinear anomaly detected by the geophysical survey. It was aligned north-west to south-east, measured 2.8m wide by 0.26m deep and had a shallow concave profile with a broad, shallow ledge on its eastern side (Fig. 7).

### ***The finds by Jacky Somerville***

- 2.9 Finds recovered from evaluation include pottery, glass, clay tobacco pipe and a metal object.

#### ***Pottery***

Furrow fill 204 contained two bodysherds of Creamware, a type dateable to the mid to late 18th century.



2.11 Two sherds of Pearlware, which date to the late 18th to mid 19th centuries, were recorded in two deposits. The sherd from furrow fill 204 featured transfer-printed decoration and that from ditch fill 705 was a rimsherd from a shell-edged dish.

2.12 Single bodysherds of brown-glazed and black-glazed earthenware were recovered from furrow fill 204 and ditch fill 705 respectively. Both are 18th to 19th-century in date.

2.13 *Glass*

Furrow fill 803 produced a fragment of vessel glass of post-medieval date and a fragment of modern window glass.

*Clay tobacco pipe*

2.14 A fragment of clay tobacco pipe stem, dating to the late 16th to late 19th centuries, was recorded in furrow fill 204.

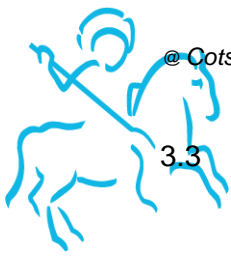
*Metal object*

2.15 An iron nail of uncertain date was recovered from furrow fill 803.

### 3. DISCUSSION

3.1 The results of the geophysical survey of the site, undertaken by Wardell Armstrong in 2012, show two parallel linear anomalies, spaced c. 25m apart, extending across the field on a north-east to south-west alignment. Several other features interpreted as being of possible archaeological significance are also shown in the north-east corner of the site. The evaluation has demonstrated that these anomalies are archaeological features, although their date is tentative as there was no artefactual material in the excavated fills. However, one of the parallel ditches was cut by a furrow, suggesting that they pre-date the medieval period.

3.2 The parallel ditches, possibly the side ditches of a prehistoric or Romano-British trackway, were generally very shallow and in places were entirely ploughed-out by medieval and later farming. The ditch forming the north-west side of the track appears to have been recut, although it was slightly offset; the paired ditch can be clearly seen on the geophysical survey results, extending for a distance of c. 60m.



3.3 The slightly curvilinear ditch in the north-east corner of the site, which corresponds with a geophysical anomaly, is also likely to predate the medieval furrows, although this wasn't confirmed by excavation. The ditch was relatively ephemeral and had largely been ploughed-out.

3.4 A series of plough furrows, the remains of a medieval open field system, were recorded across the site by the geophysical survey; the furrows were investigated in several of the trial trenches. They were aligned east to west, spaced c. 10m apart and ran parallel to Wykham Lane. A medieval origin for these features is suggested by the spacing of the selions (individual strips) and the reversed S-shaped curve evident in their alignment (Taylor 1975, 82; Rackham 1986, 167-9). The slight curvature can be seen on the geophysical survey results at the western end of the furrows, suggesting that there was a headland along the western boundary of the field. The furrows extend beyond the hedgerow forming the eastern boundary of the modern field, so the opposing headland lies within the adjacent field.

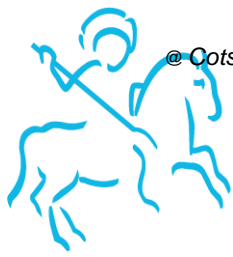
3.5 Due to the shallow soil cover the surface of the geological substrate was marked by regular lines of shallow, soil-filled hollows, occasionally containing modern brick fragments. It is likely that these are the bases of planting holes for former crops; it was noted that they approximately aligned with the ridges for the current asparagus crop that was growing at the time of the evaluation.

#### 4. CA PROJECT TEAM

The fieldwork was undertaken by James Coyne, assisted by Ralph Brown, Leah Harding and Jonathan Whitmore. The report was written by James Coyne and Ralph Brown, with a contribution from Jacky Somerville, and the illustrations were prepared by Dan Bashford. The archive has been compiled by James Coyne and prepared for deposition by Emily Evans. The project was managed for CA by Simon Carlyle.

#### 5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 2013 Geology of Britain Viewer [http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology\\_viewer\\_google/gooleviewer.html](http://maps.bgs.ac.uk/geology_viewer_google/gooleviewer.html) Accessed 22 October 2013



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CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2013b *Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation*, report **13581**

DCLG (Department of Communities and Local Government) 2012 *National Planning Policy Framework*

Rackham, O, 1986 *History of the Countryside*, London, Phoenix Press

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WA (Wardell Armstrong) 2013 *Wykham Park Farm, Oxfordshire: Environmental Statement*, report **WM10671**



## APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

### Trench 1

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
100	Topsoil	Soft mid orange brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.24	
101	Geology	Firm light orange brown silty clay, moderate subangular stones inclusions	-	-	-	
102	Furrow	Linear with straight 35° sides and flat base				Medieval
103	Fill of 102	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, occasional sub angular stone inclusions				
104	Furrow	Linear with straight 35° sides and flat base				Medieval
105	Fill of 104	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, occasional sub angular stone inclusions				

### Trench 2

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
200	Topsoil	Soft mid red brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.31	
201	Furrow	Linear with shallow straight sides and flat base	>1.8	1.2	0.05	Medieval
202	Root disturbance	Soft light reddish brown silty clay, occasional charcoal flecks	0.87	0.55	0.11	Modern
203	Geology	Bedrock of large mid brown yellow stone	-	-	-	
204	Fill of 201	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, no inclusions	-	-	0.05	

### Trench 3

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
300	Topsoil	Soft mid red brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.21	
301	Geology	Firm mid red brown silty clay no inclusions, changing to firm mid brown yellow clay silt and limestone in the southern third of the trench	-	-	-	

### Trench 4

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
400	Topsoil	Soft mid orange brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.26	
401	Geology	Firm light orange brown silty clay, frequent sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	-	
402	Furrow	Linear cut, aligned E-W	>30.0	>0.6	n.e.	Medieval
403	Fill of 402	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, occasional sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	n.e.	

### Trench 5

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
500	Topsoil	Soft mid yellow brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.28	
501	Geology	Firm light yellow brown silty clay, moderate sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	-	
502	Gully terminus	Linear with rounded end and straight steep sides. Aligned E/W	>0.9	0.4	0.16	
503	Fill of 502	Firm mid grey brown silty clay, moderate sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	0.16	

**Trench 6**

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
600	Topsoil	Soft mid orange brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.24	
601	Geology	Firm light orange brown silty clay, frequent sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	-	

**Trench 7**

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
700	Topsoil	Soft mid grey brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.25	
701	Geology	Firm light orange brown silty clay, frequent sub angular stones	-	-	-	
702	Ditch	Linear with straight 50°-60° sides and flattish base	>1.8	1.5	0.44	Undated
703	Fill of 702	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, moderate sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	0.44	
704	Ditch	Linear with straight 10°-40° sides and flat base	>1.8	3.0	0.14	Undated
705	Fill of 705	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, occasional sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	0.14	
706	Furrow	Linear with straight 35° sides and flat base				Medieval
707	Fill of 706	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, occasional sub angular stone inclusions				
708	Furrow	Linear with straight 35° sides and flat base				Medieval
709	Fill of 708	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, occasional sub angular stone inclusions				

**Trench 8**

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
800	Topsoil	Soft mid grey brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.29	
801	Geology	Firm light orange brown silty clay, frequent sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	-	
802	Furrow	Linear with straight 35° sides and flat base	>0.8	>1.6	0.12	Medieval
803	Fill of 802	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, occasional sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	0.12	
804	Ditch	Linear with straight 45° sides and flat base	>3.8	0.89	0.13	Medieval
805	Fill of 804	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, with occasional sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	0.13	

**Trench 9**

Context	Context interpretation	Description	L (m)	W (m)	D/T (m)	Spot-date
900	Topsoil	Soft mid orange brown silty clay, no inclusions	-	-	0.26	
901	Geology	Firm light orange brown silty clay, moderate sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	-	
902	Ditch	Linear with straight shallow to moderate sides and concave base	>1.8	2.85	0.26	Undated
903	Fill of 902	Friable mid orange brown clay silt, moderate small sub angular stone inclusions	-	-	0.26	
904	Furrow	Linear with straight 35° sides and flat base				Medieval
905	Fill of 904	Soft mid orange brown clay silt, occasional sub angular stone inclusions	-	-		

## APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Table 1: Quantification of finds by context

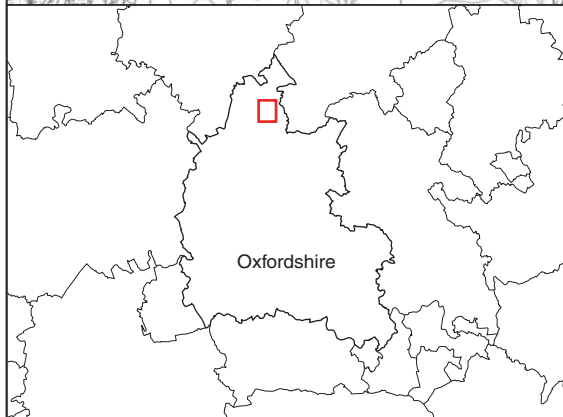
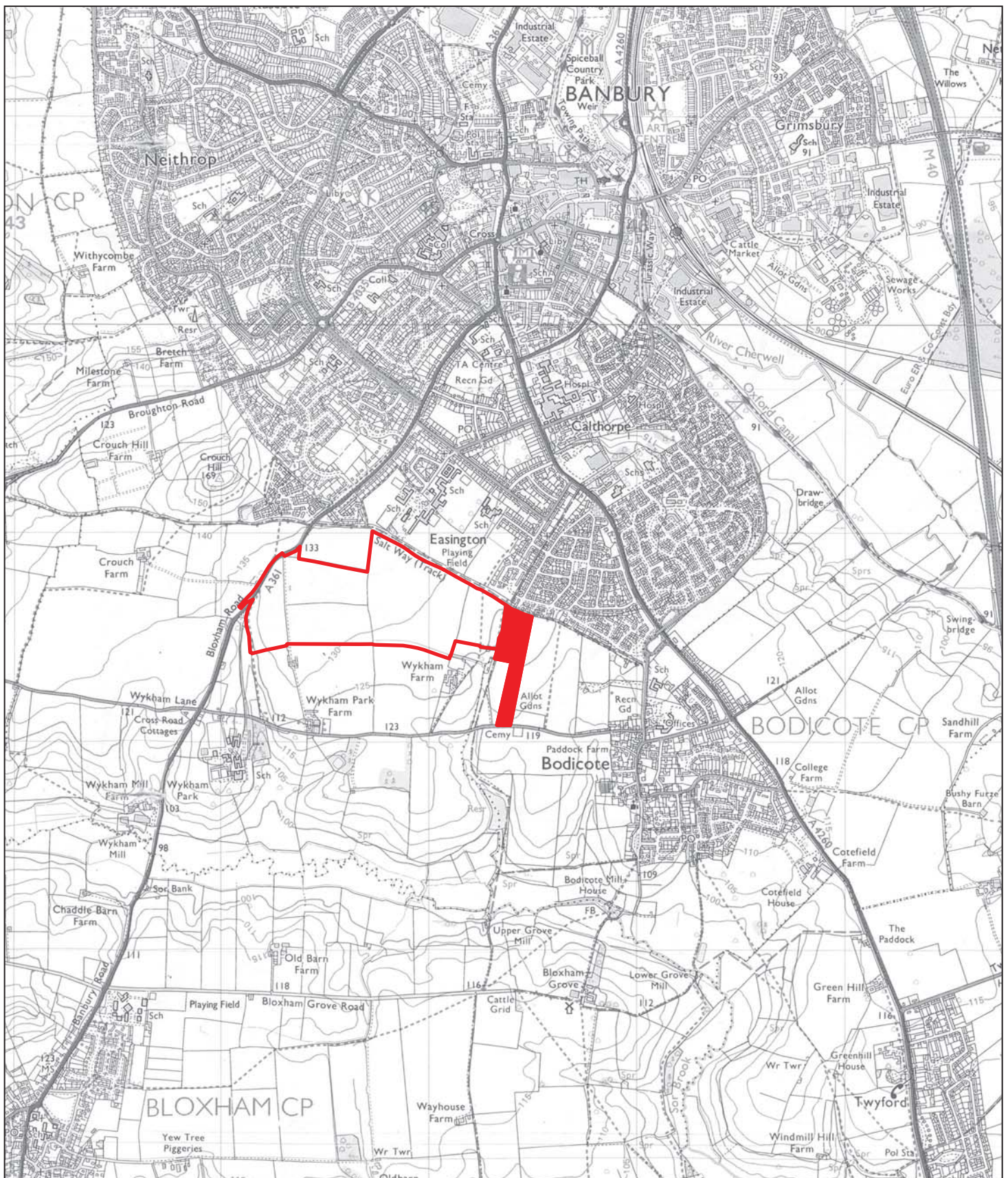
Context	Description	Count	Weight (g)	Spot-date
204	Post-medieval/modern pottery: Creamware; Pearlware; brown-glazed earthenware	4	3	LC18-C19
	Clay tobacco pipe: stem	1	1	
503	Shell	1	23	-
705	Post-medieval/modern pottery: Pearlware; black-glazed earthenware	2	53	LC18-C19
803	Post-medieval glass: vessel	1	<1	Modern
	Modern glass: window	1	<1	
	Iron nail	1	7	
	Industrial waste	1	3	



**APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM**

<b>PROJECT DETAILS</b>		
Project name	Wykham Park Farm, Banbury (Phase II)	
Short description	In the northern part of the site and corresponding with linear anomalies shown on the results of a geophysical survey, five shallow ditches were investigated. Two of the ditches may have formed the sides of a north-east to south-west aligned track, although the ditches were not identified in the trenches to the south-west. There was no artefactual material in the excavated fills of the features but they predate the medieval furrows that were also encountered in this field, so a prehistoric or Roman date is likely. Medieval furrows, on an east to west alignment, were encountered across the entire site. Other features were associated with modern crop-planting activities.	
Project dates	5-7 January 2015	
Project type	Field evaluation	
Previous work	Geophysical Survey (WA 2012); Environmental Statement (WA 2013)	
Future work	Unknown	
Monument type	Prehistoric or Roman ditches, medieval furrows	
Significant finds	None	
<b>PROJECT LOCATION</b>		
Site location	Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire	
Study area	c. 5ha	
Site co-ordinates	SP 4542 3850	
<b>PROJECT CREATORS</b>		
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology (CA)	
Project Brief originator	-	
Project Design (WSI) originator	CA	
Project Manager	Simon Carlyle (CA)	
Project Supervisor	James Coyne (CA)	
<b>PROJECT ARCHIVE</b>		
	Accession no: OXCMS: 2013.115	Content
Physical	Oxfordshire Museum Services	None
Paper		Site records
Digital	Oxfordshire HER	Report, digital photos
<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>		
CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2015 <i>Wykham Park Farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire: Archaeological Evaluation (Phase II)</i> . CA typescript report <b>15037</b>		







-  site boundary
-  current evaluation area

0  1km

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**PROJECT TITLE**

Wykham Park Farm, Banbury  
Oxfordshire

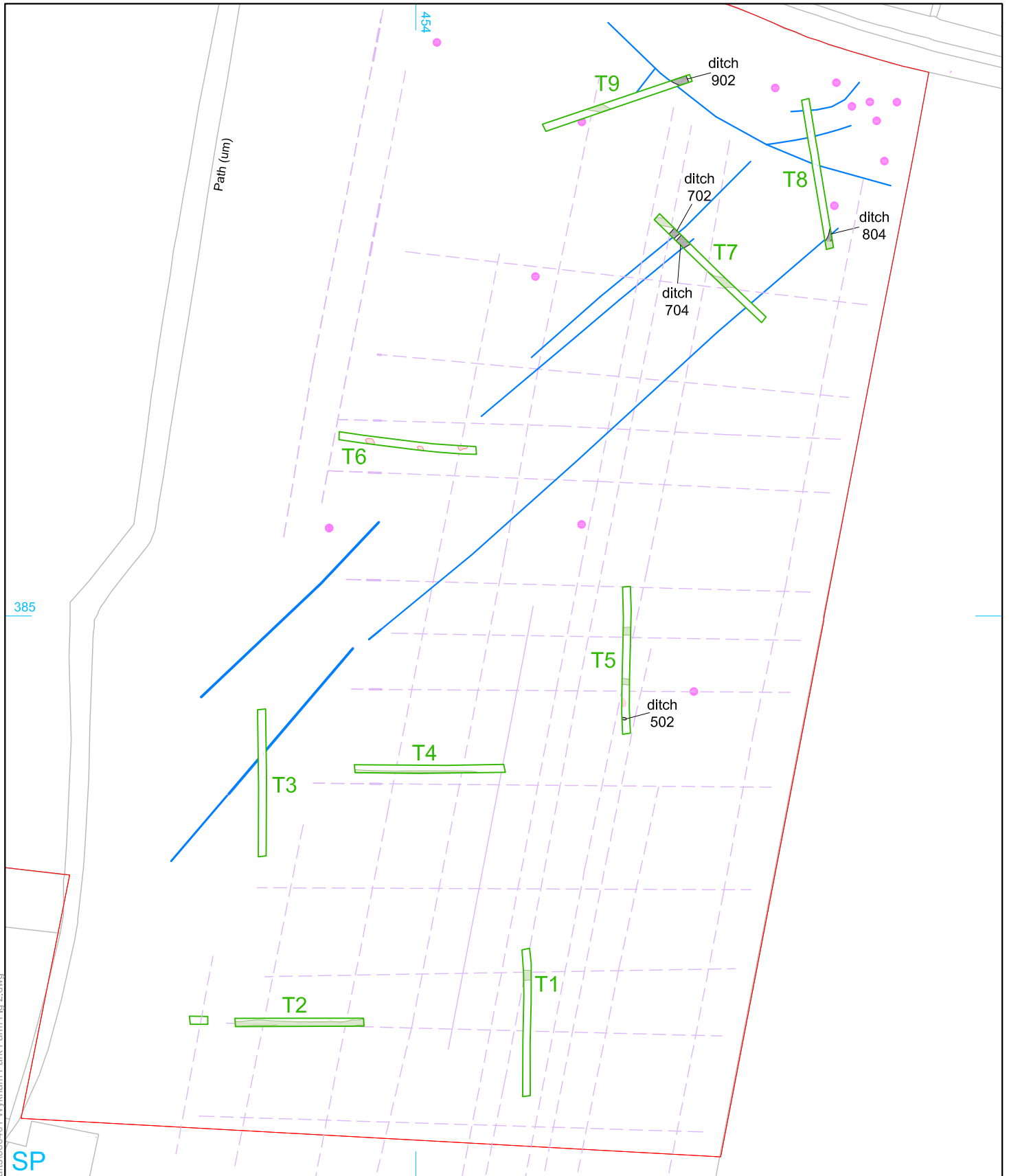
**FIGURE TITLE**

Site location plan

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APPROVED BY SCC SCALE@A4 1:25,000

FIGURE NO.

1



385

SP

- site boundary
- evaluation trench
- archaeological feature
- furrow
- agricultural feature

- GEOPHYSICAL SURVEY RESULTS**
- positive magnetic anomaly
  - dipolar magnetic anomaly
  - ridge and furrow



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**PROJECT TITLE**  
 Wykham Park farm, Banbury, Oxfordshire

**FIGURE TITLE**  
 Trench location plan showing archaeological features and geophysical survey results

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 APPROVED BY SCC SCALE@A3 1:1000

FIGURE NO.

2

0 500m





3



4

**3** General view of the site, looking south

**4** General soil profile, looking north-east (scale 1m)



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FIGURE TITLE

**Photographs**

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FIGURE NO.

**3 & 4**





5



6

5 Ditch 502, looking west (scale 1m)

6 Ditch 702, looking north-east (scale 2m)



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FIGURE TITLE

Photographs

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FIGURE NO.  
**5 & 6**



7 Ditch 902, looking north-west (scale 1m)



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FIGURE TITLE

Photograph

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FIGURE NO.

7