

FORM FWB (BU)  
303/98

**Oxcroft Limited**

**Moreton Farm, Ford, Buckinghamshire**

*NGR SP 7910 0950*

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

**Planning Ref. No. A/97/1936**

**Oxford Archaeological Unit**

**July 1998**

Oxcroft Limited

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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT**

**Planning Ref. No. A/97/1936**

Prepared by: *John Duff*

Date: *10/7/98*

Checked by: *M R Roberts*

Date: *10/7/98*

Approved by: *R. Williams* HEAD OF FIELDWORK

Date: *10/7/1998*

**Oxford Archaeological Unit**

**July 1998**

## *Summary*

*In May 1998 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook a watching brief at Moreton Farm, Ford, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 7910 0950). No archaeological features were seen and no finds were retrieved.*

### **1 Introduction (Fig. 1)**

The development proposal (Planning Application No. A/97/1936) comprised the excavation of footings prior to the construction of a new cart shed.

The watching brief was commissioned by Mr Claudio Santos Pedrosa of Oxcroft Limited. It was undertaken to a brief set by and a WSI agreed with Mr Jonathan Parkhouse, the County Archaeological Officer.

### **2 Background**

Moreton Farm lies immediately to the south of the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Moreton Deserted Medieval Village (SAM Bucks 119), the period of desertion of which remains unknown. A medieval moated manorial site also lies beside the farm; the house has disappeared and the farm was last in use in the mid 1980's, and has since been demolished. The moat is partly still in existence and water-filled; the well is also still visible. The interior platform stands to approximately 2 m above the base of the ditch, on a slight rise looking out over the DMV. The interior has been heavily colonised by elm trees and hawthorn bushes; the ground is covered in nettles and thick grass.

Moreton is located in the parish of Dinton-with-Ford. The earthworks of the DMV are located both on and above the 80 m contour line on a slope which faces north-east and is bounded by the Ford Brook (Chalkley 1985). They comprise a pattern of sunken ways and enclosures surrounded by irregular ditches to an average depth of 0.40 m; typically the bottoms of these ditches were heavily waterlogged. The underlying geology comprises Gault clay, which typically also is waterlogged and extremely difficult to work, particularly prior to the advent of mechanised farming.

### **3 Aims**

The aims of the watching brief were to record any archaeological remains exposed on site during the course of the works to established standards (Wilkinson 1992), in order to secure the preservation by record of any archaeology, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance.

### **4 Methodology**

One inspection visit was made to the site, by prior arrangement with the project architect, to monitor the excavation of footings for the new cart shed. All excavation was undertaken by the main subcontractor using a 360 degree mechanical excavator.

Within the constraints imposed by Health and Safety considerations the deposits exposed were cleaned, inspected and recorded in plan, section and by colour slide and

monochrome print photography. Written records were also made on proforma sheets. Soil descriptions use *estimated* percentages based on the use of standard charts for the approximation of percentage of inclusion types in soil deposits.

## **5 Results (Figs 2 and 3)**

The footings were dug to an average depth of 1.40 m; all sections displayed the following sequence:

- (1) – topsoil; 0.19 m of dark brown/gray clay loam with 2% fine subangular silt, sealing:
- (2) – a mottled buff/gray clean clay with 5% fine subangular silt, sealing:
- (3) – a mid orange/gray mottled clay, exposed in the base of the trench and seen only in plan.

No cut features were seen and no finds were retrieved.

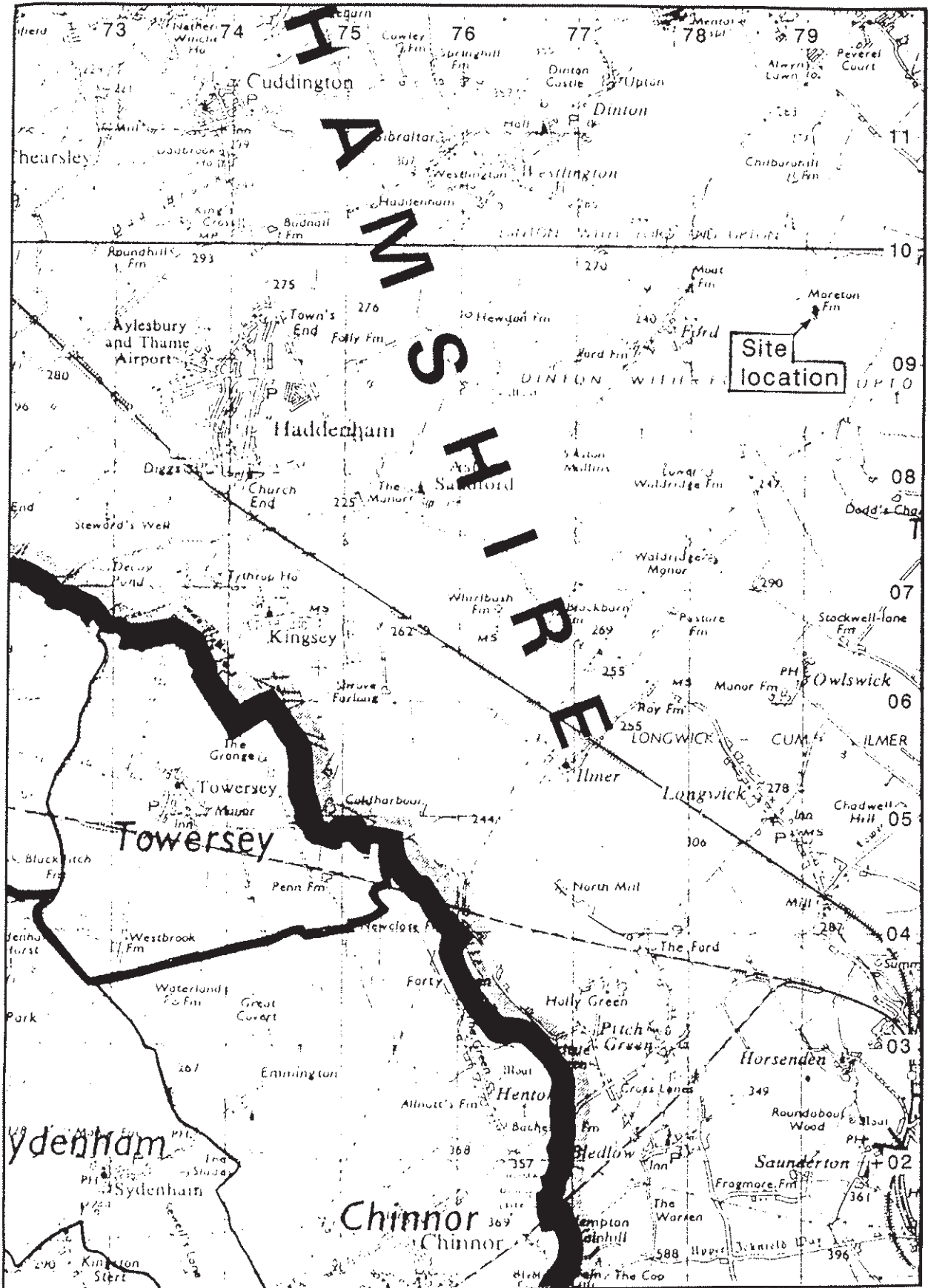
## **6 Discussion**

The topsoil was removed revealing natural clay directly beneath; despite careful cleaning and inspection no cut features were seen. The spoil was inspected for artefactual evidence but none was seen.

## **References.**

Chalkley, B 1985 Three Deserted Medieval Villages in the Vale of Aylesbury: Burston, Moreton, Pitchott.

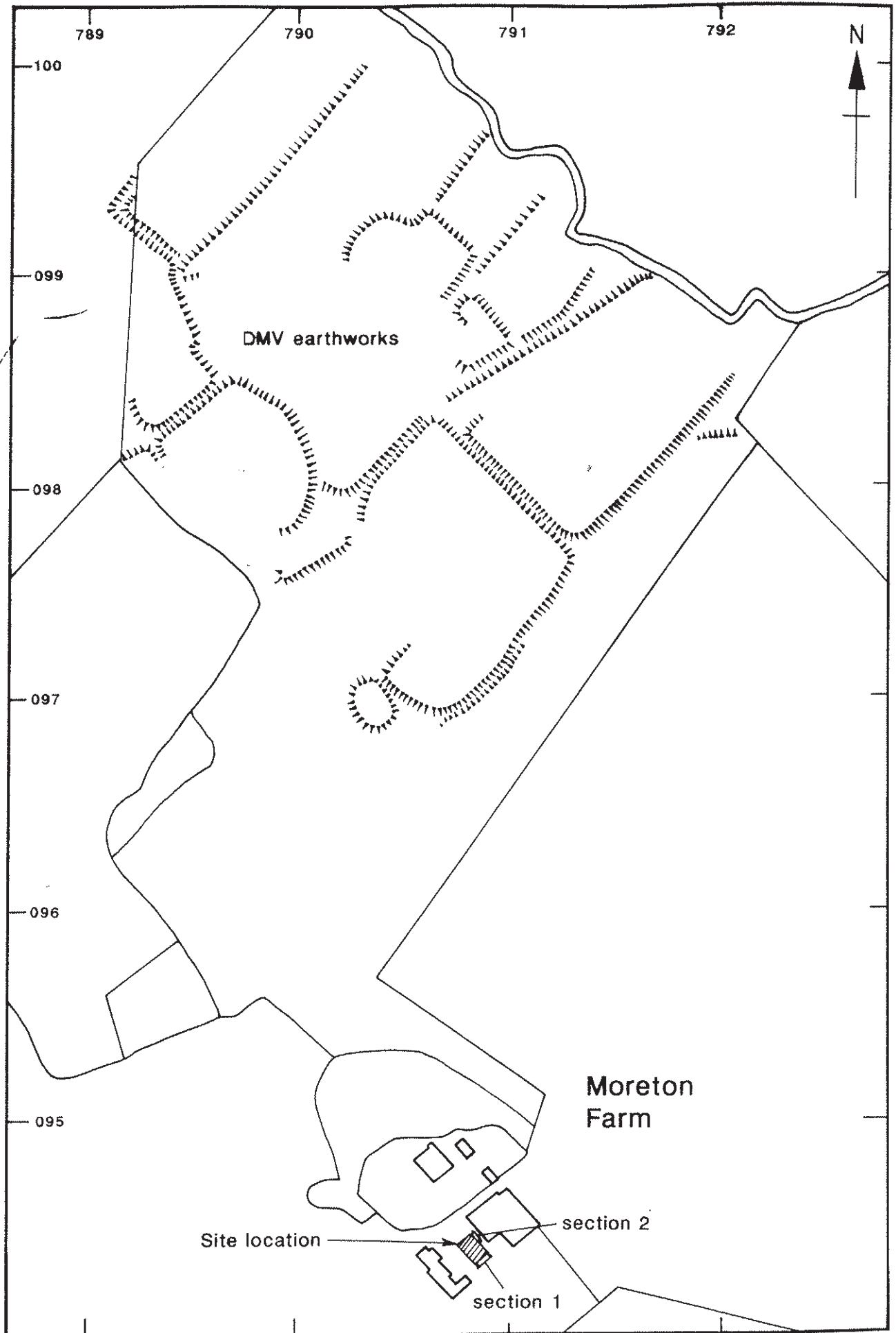
Wilkinson, D (Ed) 1992 Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual, (First edition, August 1992).



scale 1:50,000

Figure 1

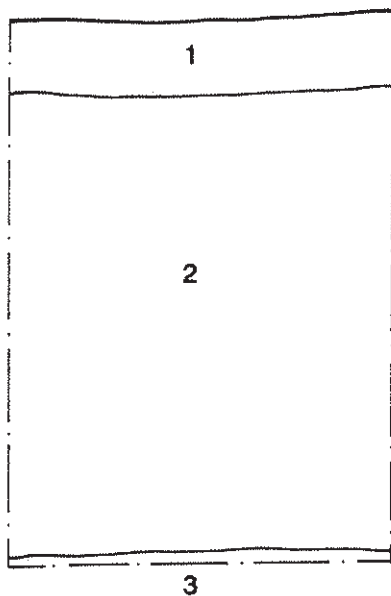
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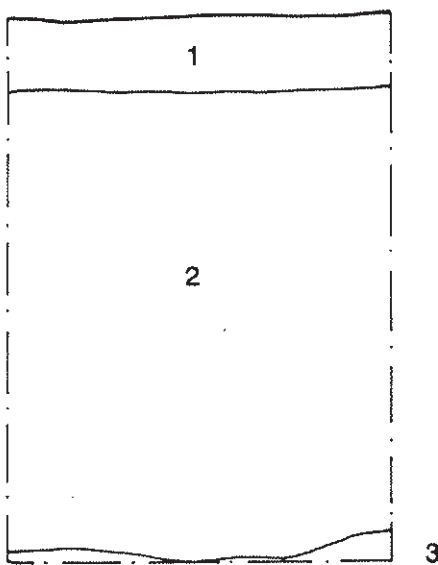
scale 1:2500

Figure 2

section 1



section 2



scale 1:20

Figure 3



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