

# Morton Barn Ford Dinton and Ford Upton Buckinghamshire



## Archaeological Watching Brief Report



April 2006

**Client: Michael Short**

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## Morton Barn, Ford, Dinton and Ford Upton, Buckinghamshire

*ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT*

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## SUMMARY

*In March 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Morton Barn, Ford, Dinton and Ford Upton, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 7903 0976). The work was commissioned by Michael Short in advance of the construction of new stable. The watching brief revealed traces of ridge and furrow relating to farmland surrounding the medieval village of Moreton.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In March 2006, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Morton Barn, Ford, Dinton and Ford Upton, Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Michael Short in respect of a planning application for construction of new stable (Planning Application No. 05/2380).

1.1.2 A project brief was set by David Radford, Buckinghamshire's Archaeological Officer.

1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief.

#### 1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The development site lies within the deserted medieval settlement of Moreton (CAS326). The stable block lies within the Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 29400).

1.2.2 The underlying geology is Kimmeridge Clay formation (British Geological Survey sheet 237). The site lies in a rural setting at approximately 78 m OD.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the watching brief was prepared for the WSI for the project (OA 2006) and is reproduced below.

1.3.2 The remains of the deserted medieval settlement of Moreton comprises extensive earthworks covering approximately 6 hectares, encompassing a medieval moated site and manorial enclosure. The village is thought to derive its name either from its setting, the settlement by the moor or fen, or Earl Moreton, who held the estate from the Bishop of Winchester at Domesday. A roll of accounts from 1521-2 provides a picture of a thriving pastoral economy through sales of large numbers of cattle and quantities of wool. The conversion from an arable economy to one dominated by pasture may have occurred within the life of the village given the expansion of the village enclosures over earlier ridge and furrow, although by 1521 this process may

have led to the replacement of the village by a single farm. The village was abandoned by the time of the 1660 estate map (DCMS, 1997).

- 1.3.3 An extensive geophysical survey was undertaken on land directly south of the village revealing traces of ridge and furrow, extraction pits and a number of localised earthworks (Network Archaeology, 2001).

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The area of the concrete slab for the new stable block was marked out then the ground was reduced and levelled by 0.30 m. This was carried out by a JCB fitted with a 0.60m wide toothless bucket under archaeological supervision.
- 2.2.2 All archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:100 and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All excavated features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The 8.4 m x 5.1 m x 0.1 m thick concrete slab for the old out building on the site was broken up, but the 0.3 m hardcore base it was laid on was retained (Fig. 2). This lay on a deposit of made ground of dark grey brown silty clay loam (1) with gravel and stone hardcore. This appears to fill in and level up a dip along the north-east side of the site. This sealed a 0.2 m thick layer of very dark grey brown silty clay loam (2) topsoil, which overlying the natural of light reddish brown clay (3) with limestone fragments. The natural was partly exposed in the west corner of the site.

### 3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered during the watching brief.

### 3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the watching brief.

#### 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The watching brief revealed no significant archaeological deposits or features. The location of the site and the contours of the reduced area suggest that the site was at the north-west end of ridge and furrow. This system of ridge and furrow was clearly observed running north-west to south-east and across the site and in the paddock at the front of the 'Morton Barn' property. The ridge and furrow was part of the medieval farmed landscape surrounding the village of Moreton located by the geophysical survey was undertaken in 1997 on land directly south of the village.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1    *ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY*

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	Layer				Modern ground make up
2	Layer	0.20 m			Topsoil
3	Natural				Natural clay

APPENDIX 2    *BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES*

BCAS, 2005 *Morton Barn, Water Lane, Ford, Dinton and Ford Upton: Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

DCMS 1997 *Scheduling Description*

Network Archaeology, 2001 *Archaeological Field reconnaissance Survey and Geophysical Survey, Proposed Forestry Planting, Ford, Aylesbury*

OAU, 1992 *Field Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson)

OA 2006 *Morton Barn, Water Lane, Ford, Dinton and Ford Upton, Buckinghamshire Written Scheme of Investigation*

APPENDIX 3    *SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS*

**Site name:** Morton Barn , Ford, Dinton and Ford, Buckinghamshire

**Site code:** DINFMB 06

**Grid reference:** NGR SP 7903 0976

**Type of watching brief:** Ground works for concrete slab for new stable block.

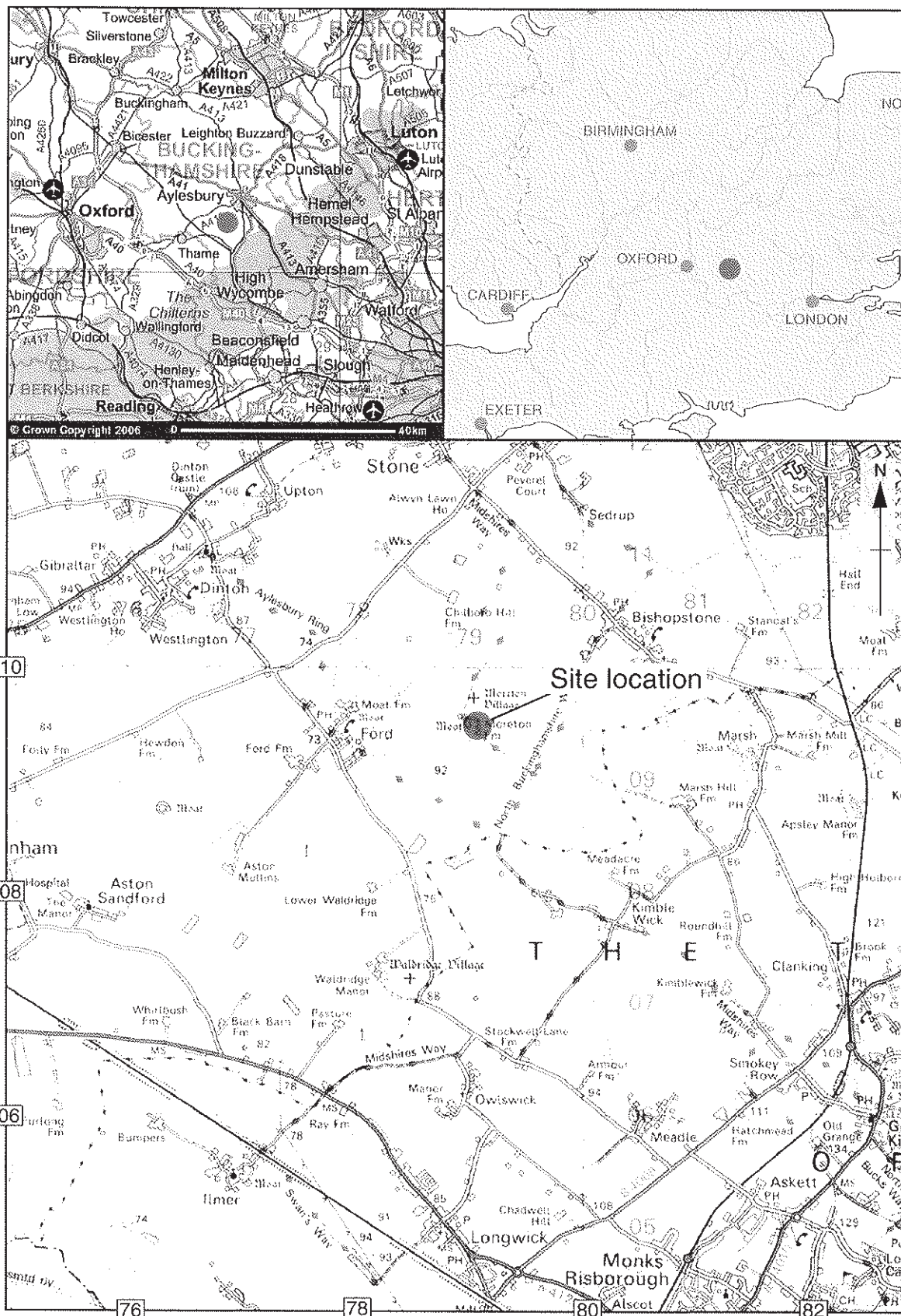
**Date and duration of project:** One site visit on the 27/3/2006.

**Area of site:** 10.8 m x 9.85 m

**Summary of results:** The watching brief revealed traces of ridge and furrow relating to farmland surrounding the medieval village of Moreton.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: AYBCM 2006.45





Scale 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location



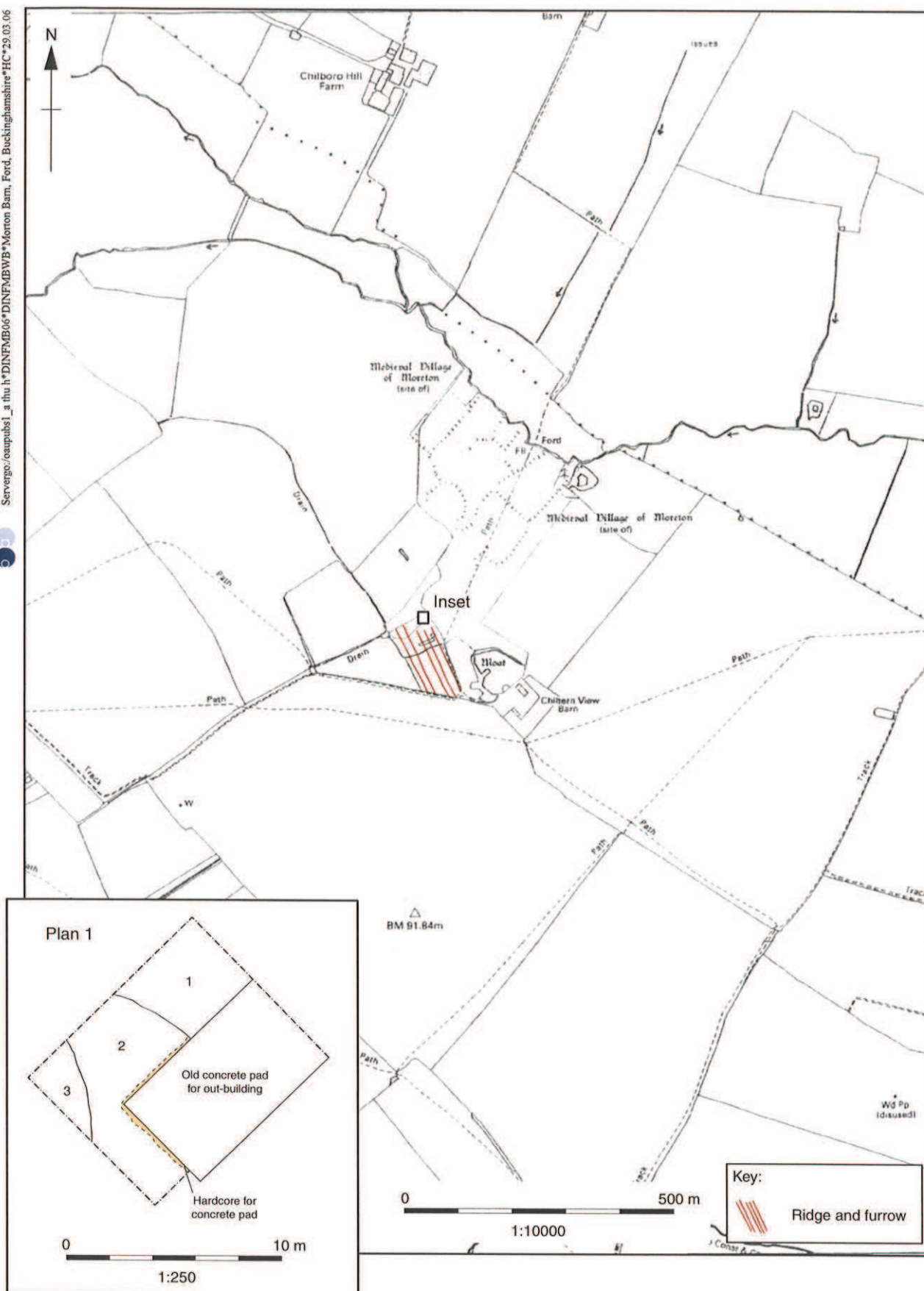


Figure 2: Site location and Plan 1



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