

CHURCH FARMHOUSE, HOLTON. HO CF93.

The Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook a watching brief at Church Farmhouse, Holton, Oxon (SP460207), on June 12th, 1993, during the machine excavation of a foundation trench for an extension to the present building. Fig1. Fig2

The present building lies within a partly infilled moat, the eastern arm of which still survives. The excavation was to take place over the possible western arm of the moat, and within five metres of the churchyard to the west.

Results. (Fig 3)

A trench 13.6m x 0.60m was machine excavated to a depth of 1.00m alongside the western side of the farmhouse. A modern layer [1] of gravel and sand, up to 0.30m deep, covered a 0.10m deep layer [2] of compact mid-brown silty loam. This overlay a 0.30m deep layer [3] of mid-brown silty clay with inclusions of 19th/20th century pottery and brick and some demolition debris. At a depth of 0.70m was a layer of dark greyish brown silty clay with a high percentage of rubble and tile fragments [4], up to 0.15m deep. In the S half of the trench this sealed a layer [5] of mottled dark grey silty clay which contained some stone. In the N half of the trench this layer appeared to have been dug away over a length of approximately 4.00m, and backfilled with a compact mix of mottled grey/green clay and small rubble, [6]. The depths of [5] and [6] were not recordable, but sounding in places with a metal rod suggested that both layers extended at least 0.40m further than the bottom of the trench. No finds were recovered from [5], but a finger bone was retrieved from layer [6].

Interpretation.

Despite the limited area of excavation, the layers [4] and [5], by their mixed characteristics, would appear to represent an extensive infilling operation, presumably into the disused western arm of the moat. This fill would undoubtedly remain very soft, and layer [6] may represent an attempt to consolidate part of the moat infill, possibly to provide a causeway to the churchyard to the W.

No dating evidence was recovered to indicate when the moat was infilled, but documentary sources suggest that the moat was originally constructed as part of a manorial site, possibly in the 12th century, and may have been a predecessor to the rectangular moat in Holton Park.

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HOLTON CP

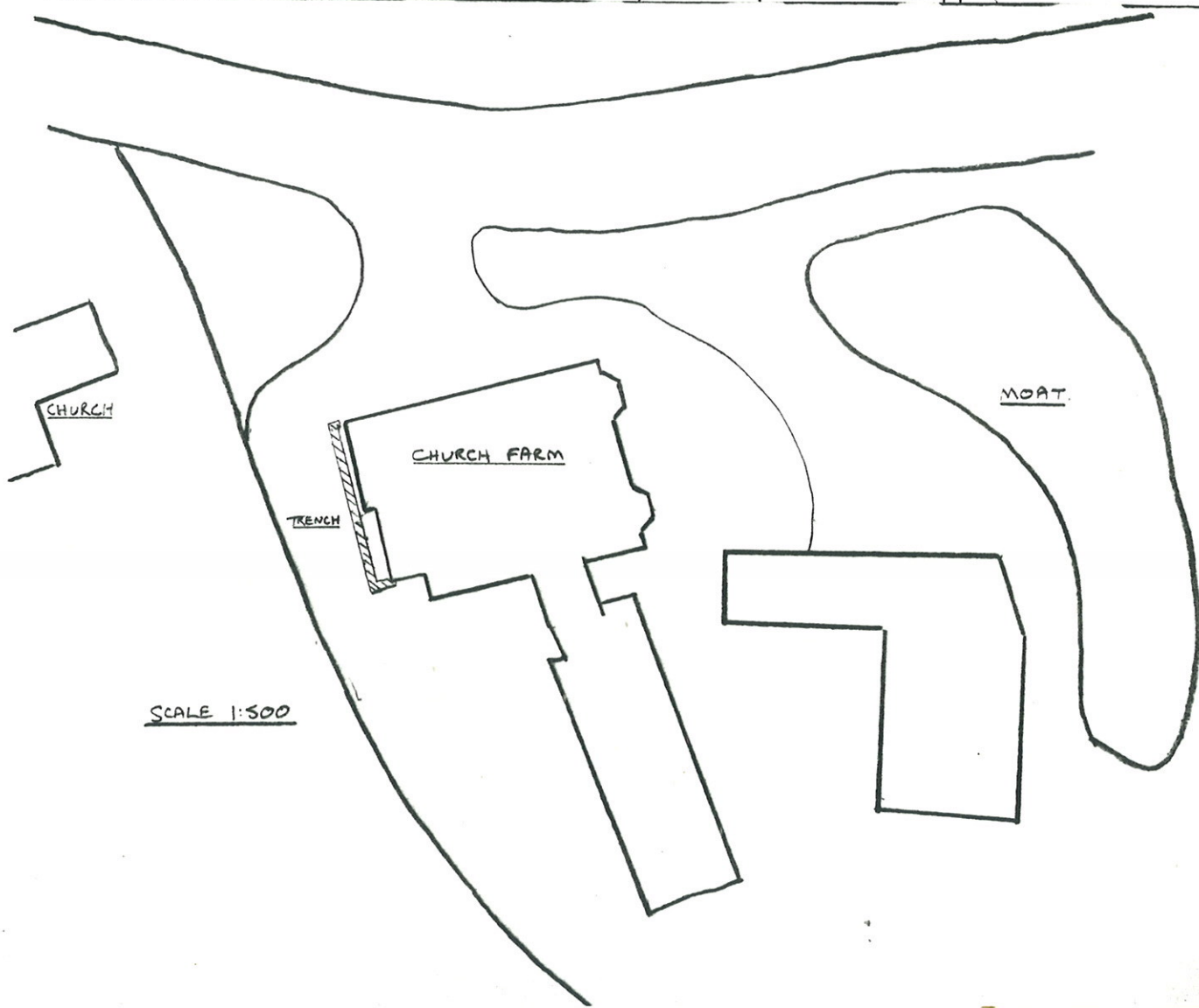
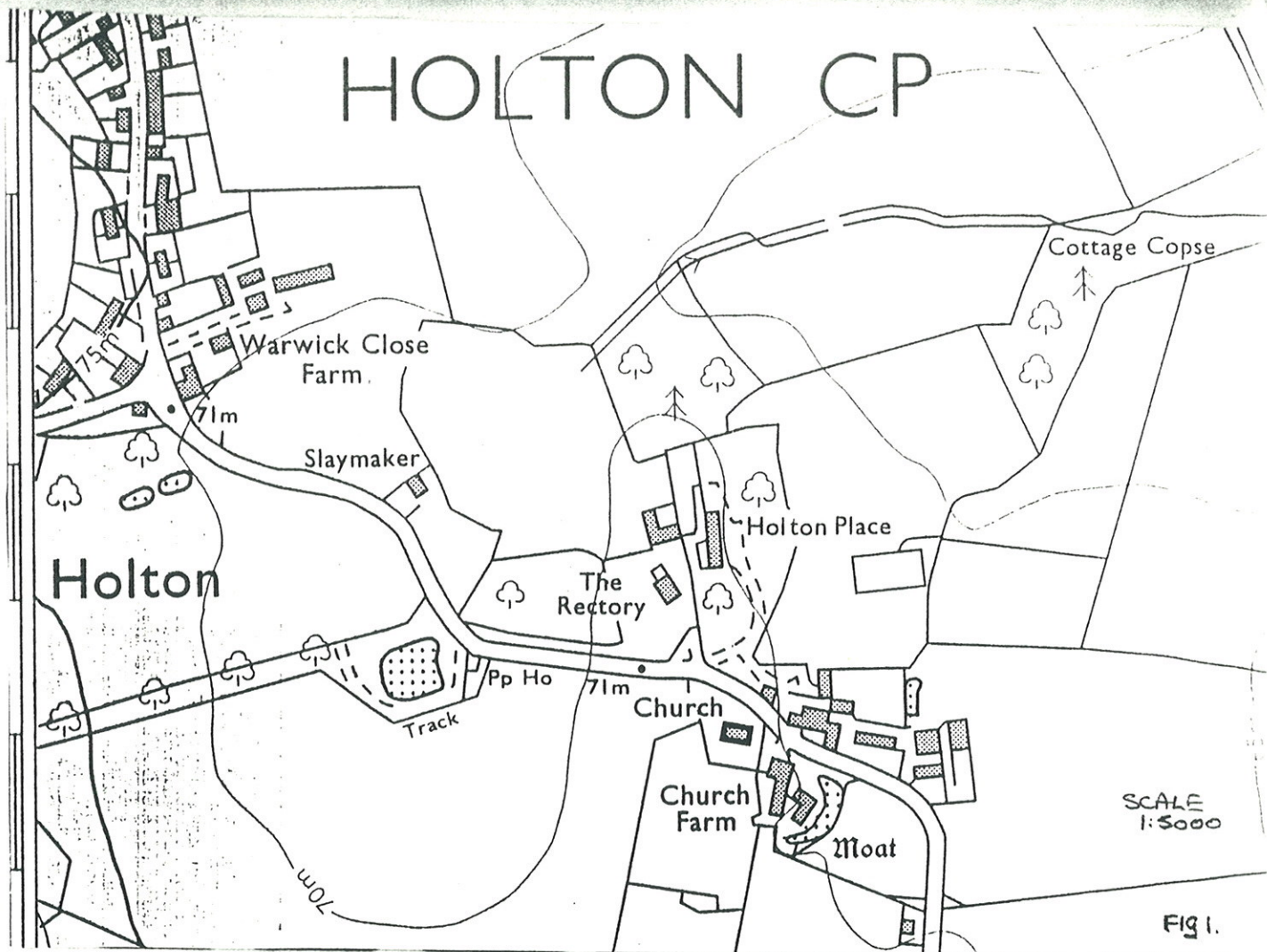
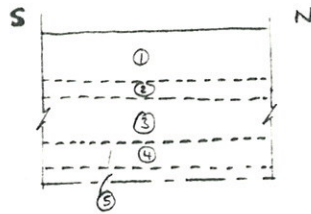
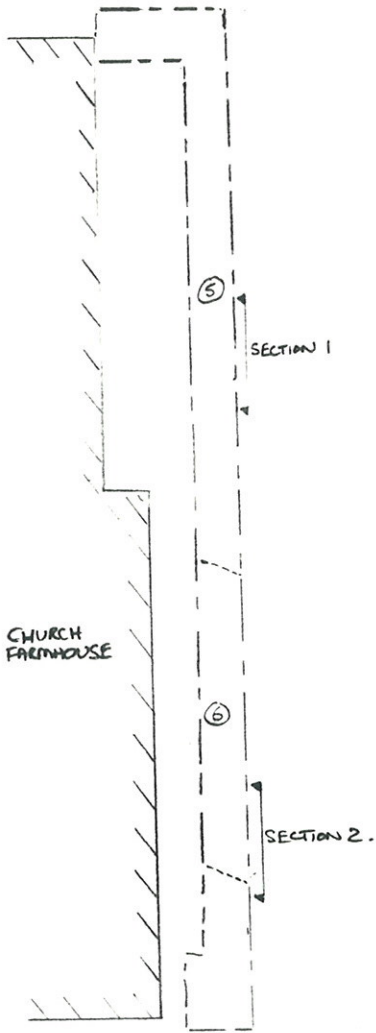


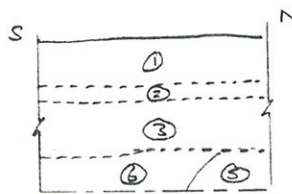
Fig. 3

PLAN. SCALE 1:100

SECTIONS SCALE 1:50.



SECTION 1



SECTION 2.

