

**JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES**

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION  
ON LAND ADJACENT TO MOAT VIEW,  
RISBOROUGH ROAD,  
TERRICK,  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.**

**SP 8372 0828**

*On behalf of*

*Mr. David Gomme.*

**JANUARY 2003**

**REPORT FOR** Mr. David Gomme  
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Terrick House  
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**FIELDWORK** 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> January 2003

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**CONTENTS**

	<b>Page</b>	
<b><i>SUMMARY</i></b>	<b>1</b>	
<b>1 INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>1</b>	
1.1 Site Location	1	
1.2 Planning Background	1	
1.3 Archaeological Background	1	
<b>2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION</b>	<b>2</b>	
<b>3 STRATEGY</b>	<b>4</b>	
3.1 Research Design	4	
3.2 Methodology	4	
<b>4 RESULTS</b>	<b>5</b>	
<b>5 FINDS</b>	<b>9</b>	
5.1 Pottery	9	
5.2 Other Finds	9	
<b>6 DISCUSSION</b>	<b>9</b>	
<b>7 CONCLUSIONS</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>8 BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	<b>12</b>	
<b>APPENDICES</b>	<b>13</b>	
<b>FIGURES</b>		
<b>Figure 1</b>	Site and trench location	3
<b>Figure 2</b>	Trench 1 Plan and Sections	7
<b>Figure 3</b>	Trench 2 Plan and Section and Trench 3 sample section	8
<b>Figure 4</b>	Trench locations with superimposed tracing of Ellesborough Inclosure map of 1805	11

## **Summary**

*An evaluation of this site was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services from 7<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> January 2003. Three trenches were excavated, totalling 20 metres in length, to reveal the underlying greensand geology at a maximum height of 99.47m. Two north-south ditches, cut into the underlying natural deposits, were encountered to the east of the proposed development area (Trench 1). To the north and west (Trench 2) excavation revealed a probable infilled extension to a scheduled medieval moat that lies to the south of the area of investigation. To the far west in Trench 3 no archaeological deposits were encountered.*

*The subsoil of the site was seen to seal the features in Trench 1 and the natural deposits in Trench 3. This was in turn sealed by a potential yard surface composed of rammed chalk cobbles, which was seen to directly seal the moat sequence revealed in Trench 2 but noticeably absent from Trench 3. Modern concrete capped the sequences in Trenches 1 and 2, whereas topsoil and turf sealed the sequence in Trench 3.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The proposed development site lies within the grounds of Terrick House which is located to the southwest of Risborough Road, Terrick. The eastern area of the site is currently a yard, whilst the western area lies partly under grass and partly under a concrete slab and foundations of a former barn. An access to a house to the north crosses the latter area. The underlying geology is Lower Greensand.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

An application has been submitted for the demolition of unwanted buildings and the extension and conversion of an existing barn to form a single storey dwelling with new garage/office/gym block. The proposed development will also include a new access. Due to the potential for archaeological remains to be present on the site an archaeological evaluation of the sites of the proposed new building and access was required.

Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service prepared a *Brief* for such an evaluation and a *Written Scheme of Investigation* was subsequently prepared in response to this document, which outlined a method that would satisfy the requirements of the brief. The fieldwork was carried out by John Moore Heritage Services.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The proposal site is adjacent to a Scheduled Moat (Scheduled Ancient Monument 32116). The medieval moated site includes a roughly square island measuring a maximum of 24m northeast-southwest by 20m northwest-southeast. This is surrounded by a steep-sided water-filled ditch, which measures approximately 1m deep and approximately 8m in width. A narrow leat extends for approximately 10m from the east corner of the moat.

The 1805 Ellesborough Inclosure Map shows a northwest extension to the northeastern arm of the moat, a small pond immediately to the southeast of the moat and two further ponds 120m to the east. The ponds are thought to represent medieval fishponds associated with the moated site. The extension to the moat and the three ponds have all been infilled and built over and are not included within the scheduling.

There is potential, given the characteristics of the settlement pattern in the parish, for the moat to be associated with a manor site and related settlement to which the grade II listed Terrick House may be the successor.

Documentary sources indicate that a succession of farm buildings have stood on the development site throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. Many are still standing though a large modern barn was demolished in 1992.

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

In particular

- To establish the presence or absence of medieval or post-medieval structures/water management features associated with the manorial/moated site.

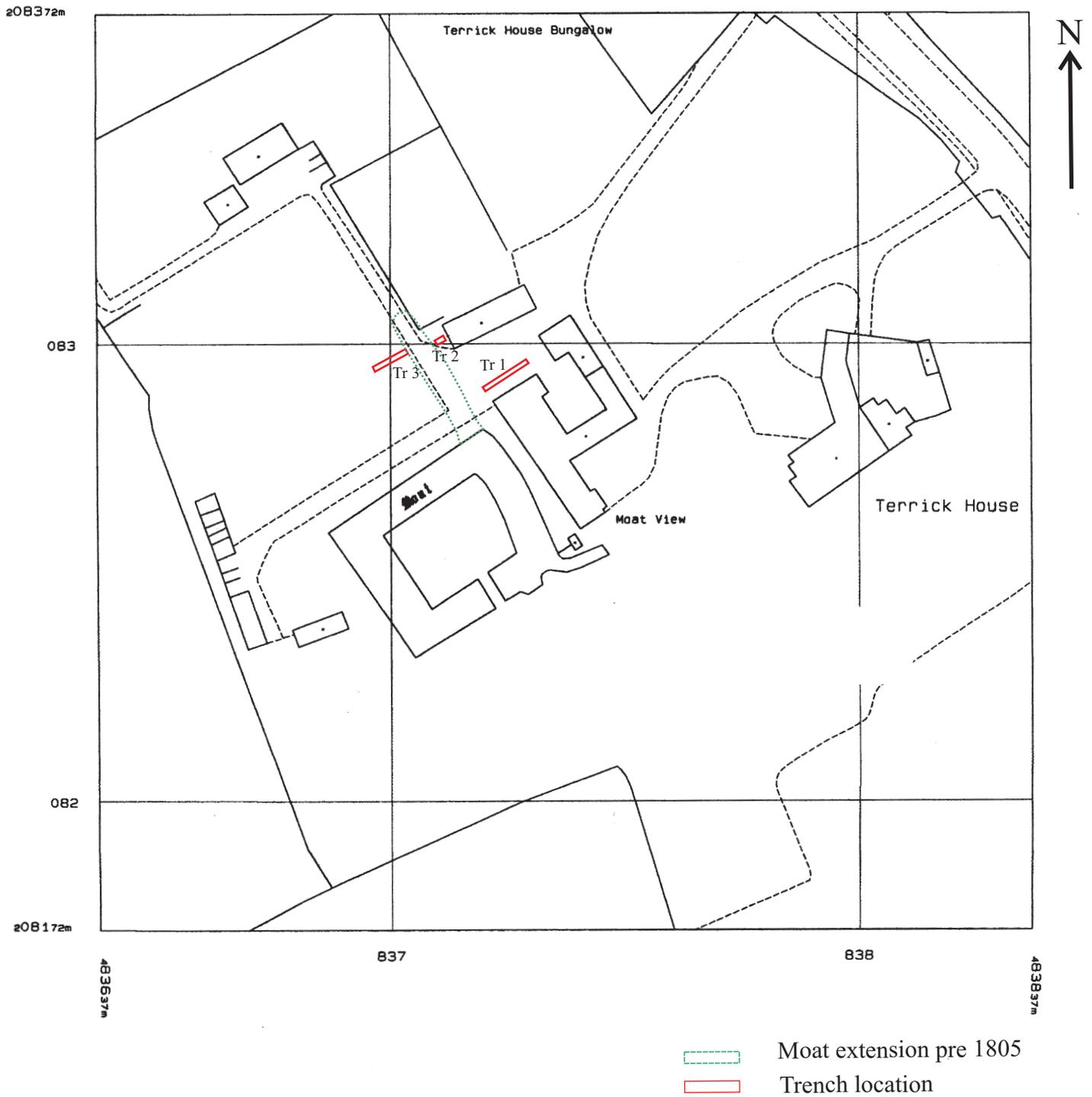


Figure 1. Site and Trench Location

Scale 1:1250

### **3 STRATEGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

In response to a *Brief* issued by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service a scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and agreed with the Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Services and the applicant. The work was carried out by JMHS and involved the excavation of a total of three trenches across the site (fig. 1).

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994).

#### **3.2 Methodology**

The trenching sample of 20.0 x 1.20m specified within the brief was achieved through the excavation of one 10.0m trench (see fig. 1) one 8.0m trench and a 2.0m trench, the latter two of which were located each side of the existing access.

Subsequent to the issue of the Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service's Brief it was agreed that a third trench along the line of the proposed access drive adjacent to the position of a pond shown on the 1805 Ellesborough Inclosure Map need not be excavated. This is due to the shallow depth of proposed impact. This area would be dealt with under a watching brief during construction.

All trenches were 1.2 m wide and were excavated by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. The resultant surfaces were cleaned by hand prior to limited hand excavation of any identified archaeological deposits

An assessment of the site's palaeo-environmental potential was made in consultation with the County Archaeological Service and a subsequent sampling strategy agreed in consultation with English Heritage's Regional Adviser in Archaeological Science.

Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced. The trenches were backfilled after recording. The work was monitored by Mr. David Radford of Buckinghamshire County Council Archaeological Service.

## 4 RESULTS

The lowest recorded deposit in Trenches 1 and 3 comprised a variable greenish grey or yellow clay (1/09), (3/02), (3/04), in which occasional pockets of reddish yellow sandy clay were noted (3/03). This constituted the natural geology of the site and was seen to slope down slightly from a maximum height of 99.72m in the west (Trench 3) to 99.47m in the east (Trench 1). This natural geology was not reached in Trench 2.

### *Trench 1 (Figure 2)*

Two northwest-southeast aligned linear features were seen to cut into the underlying natural clay (1/09) in this trench. The easternmost of the two was by far the more substantial, comprising a large cut [1/06] with a square profile and a primary fill of mid grey clayey silt (1/05) overlain by a fill of dark brown clayey silt (1/04) that may be dating to the 16<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> centuries on the basis of pottery retrieved from it. Some waterlogged wood was also noted in this upper fill but upon excavation these proved to be consist of roots and fragments of re-deposited timber. Both fills had the appearance of water-lain deposits and it is possible that the feature constituted a water channel.

To the west a small gully was encountered. This comprised a shallow rounded cut [1/08] filled with light greenish brown silty clay with occasional pebbles (1/07). This fill did not possess the same qualities as those of the larger feature to the east and is thus likely to have functioned as a small boundary marker or some such feature.

Both these features were sealed by a layer of mid greenish brown silty clay with occasional pebbles (1/04), which represents the subsoil of the site. Occasional lenses of crushed brick overlying this subsoil may indicate the demolition of a relatively recent outbuilding in the vicinity, though the material could as easily represent localised infilling of potholes or the like with hardcore. A far more substantial layer of rammed chalk cobbles that sealed the brick and subsoil (1/02) may represent a former yard surface later replaced by the modern concrete slab (1/01) which seals the sequence. No footings associated with the large barn known to stand on the site until 1992 were seen and it is probable that these lay beyond the limits of the excavation.

### *Trench 2 (Figure 3)*

No evidence of the natural geology was encountered within this small trench, despite excavation to a depth of 1.50m below the current ground level. Rather, the investigation revealed a substantial sequence of deposits that are likely to relate to the purported northwest extension to the moat indicated on the Ellesborough Inclosure map of 1805.

The lowest deposit (2/04) - a light brownish grey clayey silt with occasional pebbles was not only clearly water-lain in character but indeed, still waterlogged, giving rise to good organic preservation. Much of this organic material comprised fragments of wood and other vegetation though the discovery of a massive oak tree stump in the lower reaches of the trench deserves particular mention here. Set at an angle of c. 10-15° from horizontal and at such a depth, it seems unlikely that this unconverted tree

bole was *in situ* and it is perhaps more likely to represent the stump of a felled tree that was then grubbed out and pushed into the moat.

This deposit was sealed by a layer of light yellowish brown clayey silt with moderate pebbles (2/03). Though similar in character to (2/04) beneath, no waterlogging was evident at this level and thus the environmental potential of the deposit is considered to be relatively low in comparison with (2/04). Nevertheless, following consultation with Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service and the English Heritage Regional Advisor on Archaeological Science, a program of environmental sampling was implemented, involving the collection of a 20 litre bulk sample from deposit (2/04) and monolith sampling of the entire exposed moat sequence.

The potential yard surface of rammed chalk (1/02) identified in Trench 1 was also present within this trench as (2/02) where it was seen to seal deposit (2/03). This was in turn capped by the concrete slab of the present yard (2/01).

### *Trench 3 (Figure 3)*

No archaeological features were encountered within this trench. Given the depth of the sequence exposed immediately to the east in Trench 2, a sondage was machined at the eastern end of this trench in order to test the natural deposits. This revealed a sequence of natural deposits comprising a basal deposit of light grey silty clay (3/04) sealed by a layer mid reddish yellow sandy clay (3/03), in turn overlain by a further layer of light greenish grey silty clay (3/02). This was sealed by a layer of topsoil composed of dark brown clayey silt with frequent small pebbles (3/01).

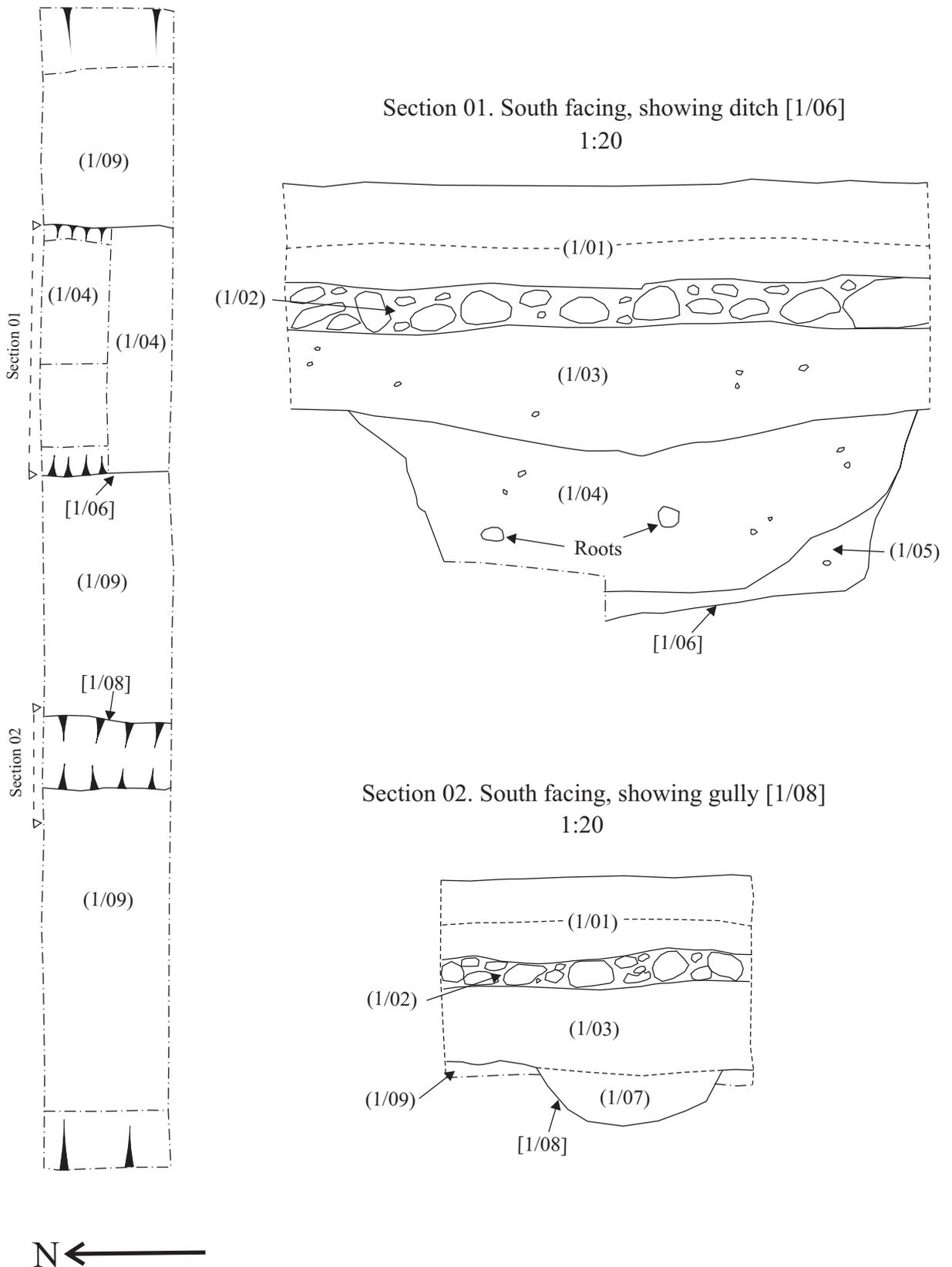


Figure 2. Trench 1 Plan (1:50) and Sections (1:20)

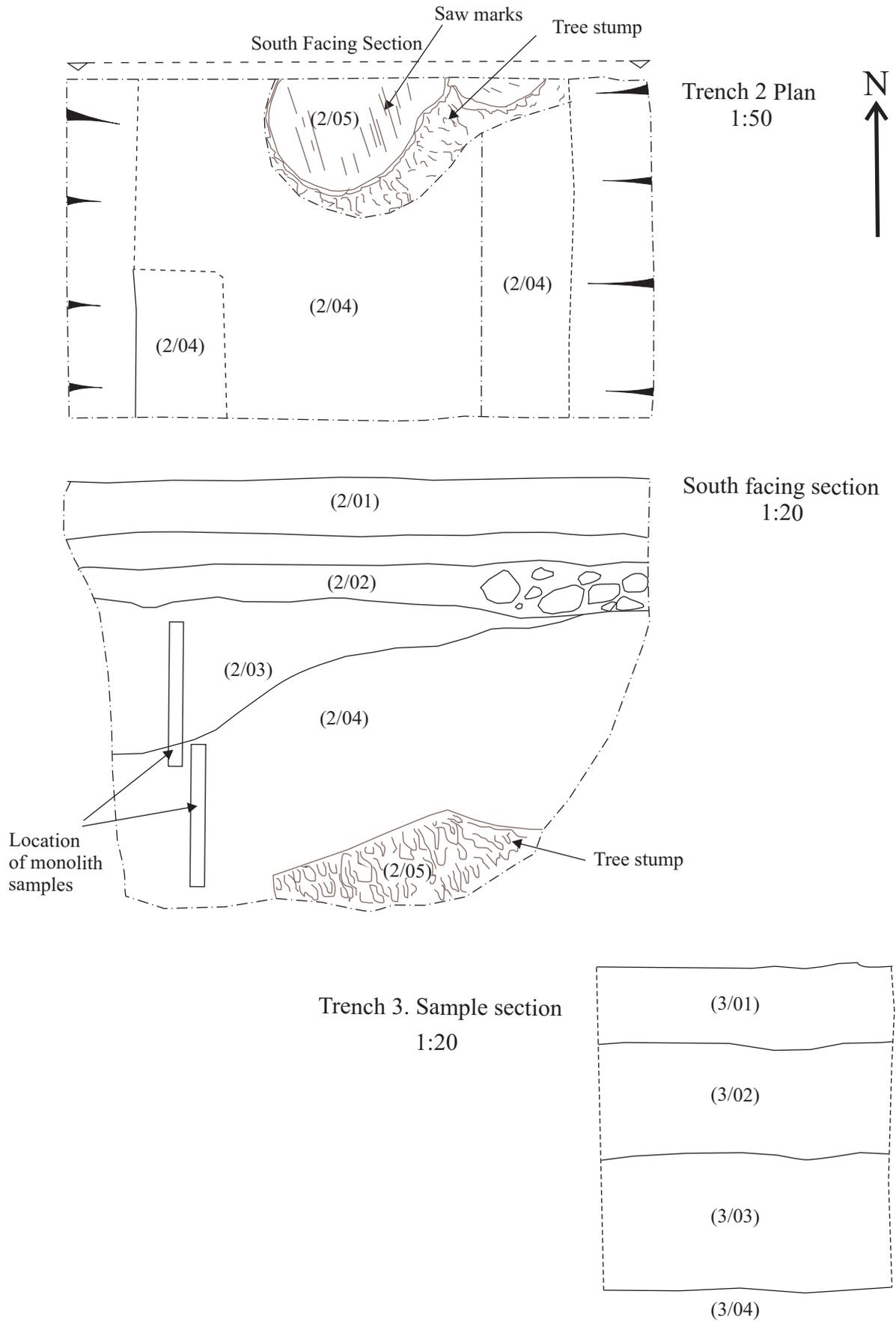


Figure 3. Trench 2 Plan (1:50) and Section (1:20), Trench 3 Sample Section (1:20)

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Pottery

**Paul Blinkhorn**

The pottery assemblage comprised two sherds (weight 89g) of an internally glazed Red Earthenware pancheon, both from context 1/04, and likely to be fragments of the same vessel. Such pottery is classified as fabric TLMS 12 in the Milton Keynes Archaeology Unit type-series (Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat et al. 1994), and is given a date range of 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is not possible to date these sherds any more closely than this.

#### *Bibliography*

Mynard, DC and Zeepvat RJ, 1992 *Great Linford* Bucks Archaeol Soc Monog Ser 3

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### 5.2 Other Finds

**Diccon Hart**

A single fragment of green glass was recovered from context (1/04). This comprised the base of a large wine bottle, probably a magnum, and is likely to be of 17<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup> century date.

A total of 24 fragments of animal bone were also recovered from context (1/04). All fragments were in poor-moderate condition, showing a high degree of post-mortem damage. Mature pig is represented by single examples of metacarpals, phalanges and scapulae, whereas a large immature animal, probably horse or cow is represented in two unfused lumbar vertebrae. No butchery marks are evident on any of the pieces. The remaining fragments comprise undiagnostic ribs in various states of preservation.

A single fragment of peg-tile was recovered from context (1/04). Though undiagnostic, the fabric indicates a post-medieval date not dissimilar to that indicated by the pottery.

## 6 DISCUSSION

The investigation of these three trenches has provided clear evidence of post-medieval activity on this site, albeit restricted to the eastern half of the site, with potential watercourses such as the large ditch revealed in Trench 1, sealed by a probable yard surface related more to the recent agrarian usage of the site. That there was medieval activity in the vicinity of the site is clear from the scheduled moated platform that lies directly to the south of the investigated areas but a lack of available dating makes it difficult to define activity of this date within these areas.

Perhaps the most significant aspect of this investigation, however, is the tentative identification of the sequence revealed in Trench 2 as representing the now infilled northern extension to the moat depicted on the Ellesborough Inclosure Map of 1805. Certainly, the sequence reflects by far the most substantial feature encountered during

the evaluation and the water-lain character of the lower deposits provides a compelling argument in favour of such a premise. Nevertheless, it is essential to establish the precise location of the trench in relation to the features shown on the map.

Though it has not proved possible to obtain a copy of the document due to its age and fragility, a tracing of the pertinent details has been superimposed over the trench location drawing (Figure 4) to show that Trench 2 seemingly lies just beyond the limits of the moat extension. Given the vagaries inherent in both the tracing and scaling of such a map, to say nothing of the accuracy of the original survey, this does not, perhaps, come as a complete surprise. As stated above, the sequence exposed in this trench clearly indicates a feature of considerable magnitude and given that this map, nor any other known maps, shows any other features of sufficient size or in such proximity it is likely that this sequence does indeed represent the infilling of an extension to the existing moat.

On the basis of such an association to a known medieval monument it is tempting to postulate a comparable date for the sequence in Trench 2, though a lack of artefactual dating and no pictorial depictions earlier than 1805 makes it difficult to support such an argument. Nevertheless, the environmental potential of the waterlogged deposits towards the base of the sequence should not be underestimated and it is likely that medieval deposits with such potential survive within the feature.

Similarly, it is difficult to reach a detailed understanding of the exact form and function of the features encountered during this investigation, particularly in relation to the moat extension. Perhaps the most likely explanation for the feature is as a partially backfilled feeder stream for the moat. Many moats were fed by means of diverted streams (Rackham 1995:361) and early edition Ordnance Survey maps such as the 1899 edition appears to show a probable outlet stream at the eastern corner of the moat, though by the 1921 revision this feature had all but disappeared, surviving only as a small spur on the current edition (figure 1). Such a feature would imply the existence of an inlet stream and the extension to the north would make a convincing candidate for such a stream. Furthermore, in the light of such a premise it is not difficult to perceive the possible watercourse [1/06], which seemingly runs parallel to this potential inlet stream, as also feeding into an outlet channel to the south.

The abandonment of these potential water management features seems to have been a fairly piecemeal affair. The probable watercourse [1/06] does not appear on the 1805 enclosure map and may have been backfilled by this time. The northern extension to the moat was infilled by 1880 and the southern stream had also disappeared by 1921. This is likely to reflect an increasing emphasis on agricultural practices, reflected not only in the possible yard surface seen to seal these features but also in the many farm buildings depicted on the maps, many of which still stand today.

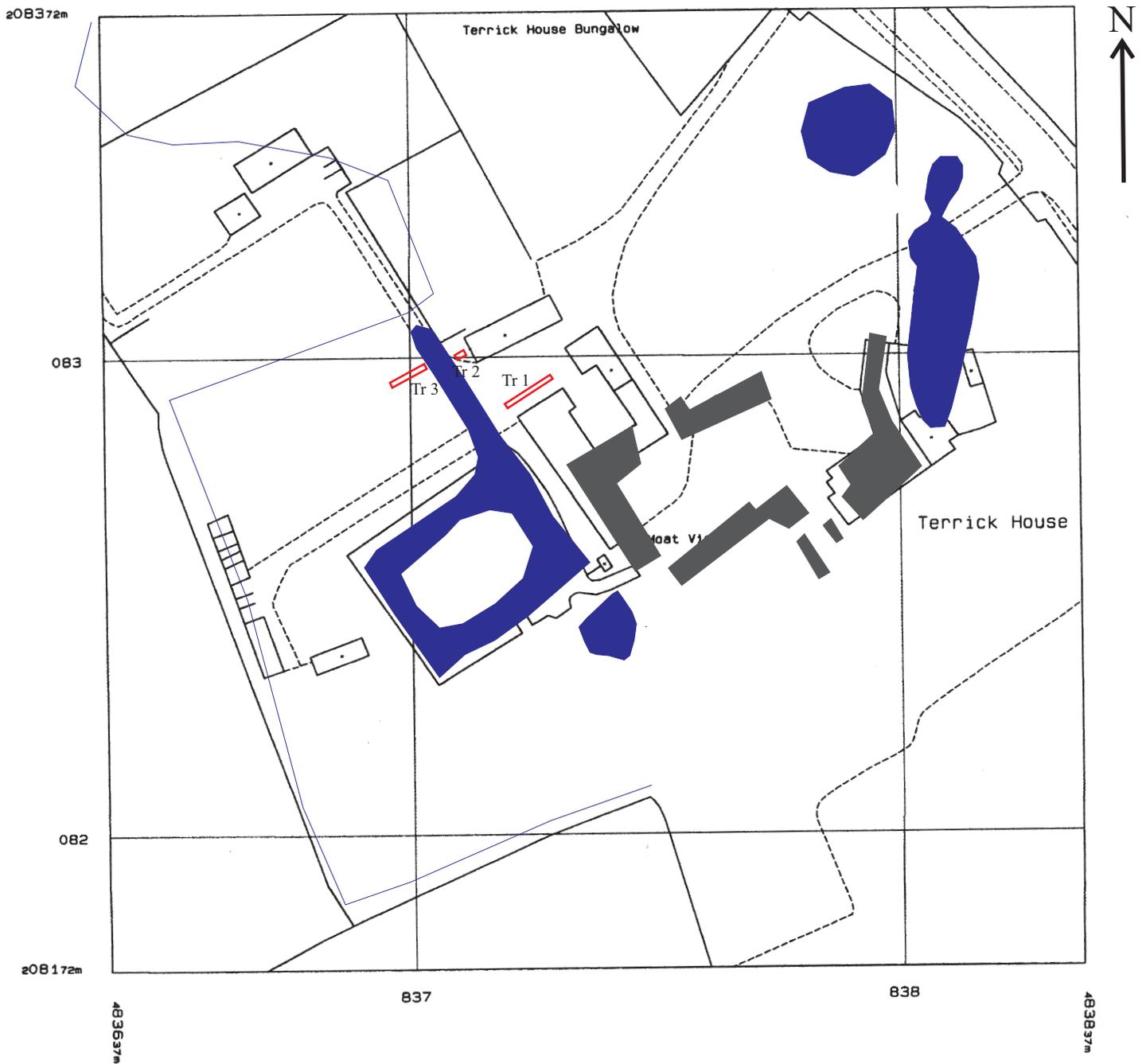


Figure 4. Trench locations with superimposed tracing of Ellesborough Inclosure map of 1805

(Scale 1:1250)

## 7 CONCLUSIONS

To conclude, it can be seen that probable water management features, certainly of post-medieval and probably of medieval date, survive on the site. Furthermore, some deposits within these features, particularly waterlogged deposits such as those preserved towards the base of Trench 2 are likely to have a high palaeo-environmental potential with regards to a study of medieval and post-medieval settlement in the region.

Whilst any decision regarding further work on the site must rest with Mr. David Radford of Buckinghamshire County Council Archaeological Service, it is the opinion of John Moore Heritage Services that any future development work on the site be accompanied by an appropriate mitigation strategy. Such a strategy may take a number of forms but it is the opinion of John Moore Heritage Services that any such mitigation exercise includes two principle components.

Firstly, a watching brief should be undertaken in the eastern half of the site to reach a better understanding of the form and function of the linear features encountered in Trench 1. Secondly, mitigation should be undertaken to protect the waterlogged deposits known to exist in the northern extension to the moat (Trench 2). This may be achieved either through shifting the proposed building beyond the limits of the moat or altering the foundation design to minimise the impact of the proposed construction.

The latter scheme is the preferred option as it does not necessitate further evaluation of the site and may be achieved through rafting over the moat deposits. Such an approach is understood to have a maximum impact of 0.60m, which would effectively affect only the upper 0.10m of deposit (2/03), which is known to be of limited environmental potential.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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**APPENDICES****APPENDIX 1 – ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY**

<b>Context</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Length (m)</b>	<b>Finds</b>	<b>Date</b>
<b>Trench 1</b>			0.50	1.65	15.00		
1/01	Layer	Concrete	0.30	Tr.	Tr.	-	Modern
1/02	Layer	Possible surface	0.12-0.20	Tr.	Tr.	-	-
1/03	Layer	Subsoil	0.46 max.	Tr.	Tr.	-	-
1/04	Fill	Ditch fill	0.46	2.00	1.20 exposed	-	P. Med.
1/05	Fill	Ditch fill	0.20	0.90	1.20 exp.	-	P. Med.
1/06	Cut	Ditch cut	0.70	2.00	1.20	-	P. Med.
1/07	Fill	Gully fill	0.16	0.60	1.20	-	-
1/08	Cut	Gully Cut	0.16	0.60	1.20	-	-
1/09	Layer	Natural	-	Tr.	Tr.	-	-
<b>Trench 2</b>			1.50	1.20	1.80		
2/01	Layer	Concrete	0.30	Tr.	Tr.		Modern
2/02	Layer	Possible surface	0.17	Tr.	Tr.		Modern
2/03	Fill?	Moat infilling	0.55	1.20	1.80	-	-
2/04	Fill?	Moat infilling	0.76	1.20	1.80	-	-
2/05	Timber	Tree stump	0.25	0.25	0.20	-	-
<b>Trench 3</b>			1.16 max	1.20	1.80		
3/01	Layer	Topsoil	0.28	Tr.	Tr.	-	-
3/02	Layer	Natural?	0.40	Tr.	Tr.	-	-
3/03	Layer	Natural?	0.45	Tr.	Tr.	-	-
3/04	Layer	Natural	-	Tr.	Tr.	-	-