

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**EARTHWORK SURVEY AND WATCHING BRIEF:  
2 CRAFTON  
MENTMORE  
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

*on behalf of Andrew Whitehouse*



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&  
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**August 2006**

**ASC: 812/MTC/2**

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## Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	MTC	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	812
<i>Event No:</i>		<i>Accession No:</i>	2006.185
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Mentmore		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Mentmore		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 8915 1961		
<i>Present use:</i>	Pasture		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of manege		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	06/00388 APP		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	30 <sup>th</sup> June & 25 <sup>th</sup> July 2006		
<i>Client:</i>	Andrew Whitehouse 2 Crafton Cottages Mentmore Bedfordshire LU7 0QL		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Andrew Whitehouse		
<i>Telephone</i>		<i>Fax:</i>	-

## Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Calli Rouse & Alastair Hancock	<i>Date:</i>	11/08/2006
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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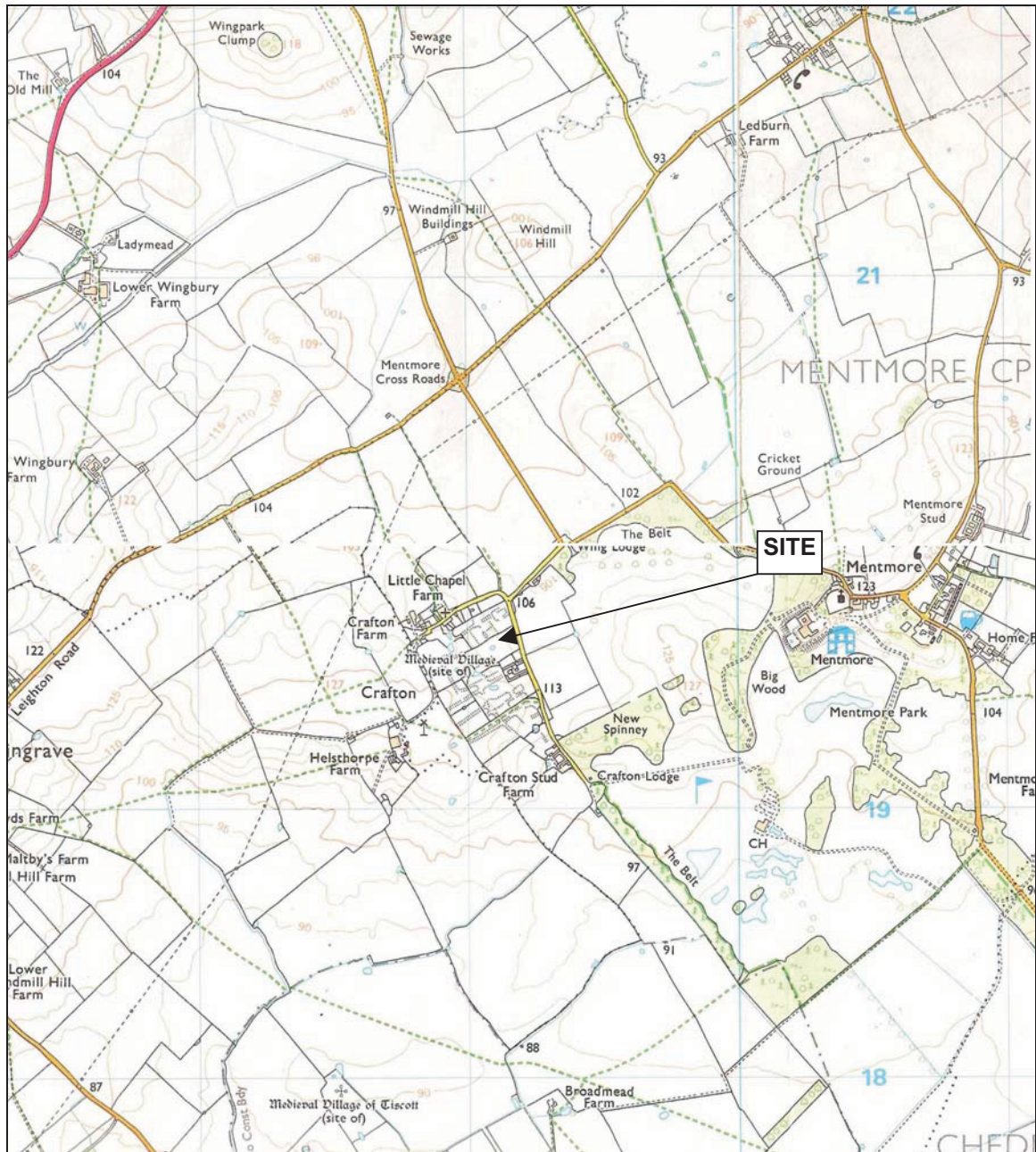


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

## Summary

*An earthwork survey and archaeological watching brief were carried out on land at 2 Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire, on 30<sup>th</sup> June and 25<sup>th</sup> July 2006 respectively, in advance of the construction of a manege. The earthwork survey was expanded to encompass the entirety of the field within which the development was proposed, and recorded the existence of a southwest-northeast aligned hollow way, several platforms, borrow pits and an infilled pond. The watching brief revealed no archaeologically significant finds or features, as the soil was only removed down to the subsoil horizon.*

## 1. Introduction

1.1 In June and July 2006 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC)* carried out an earthwork survey and subsequent watching brief at 2 Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 8915 1961: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Andrew Whitehouse, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Rouse 2006), and a brief (Radford 2005) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Aylesbury Vale District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service*. The relevant planning application reference is 06/00388 APP.

### 1.2 *Planning Background*

The earthwork survey and watching brief were required as a planning condition under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16 (PPG16)*, in response to proposals for the construction of a manege.

### 1.3 *Location*

The site of the development is located within a rectangular field *c.*250m to the southeast of the centre of Crafton village (Fig. 1). The fields north, south and west of the development contain extensive earthworks, which are discussed in sections 3.5 and 3.6 of this document.

### 1.4 *Description*

Access to the site is from Lower Crafton Lane, which runs to the east of the site (Fig. 2). A recently constructed complex of stables, tackroom and a haystore is located immediately to the north of the position of the manege. The field containing the manege exhibits a gradual southwest-northeast trending slope and at the time of field work it was under pasture.

### 1.5 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the area are of the *Evesham 2 Association* (Soil Survey, 1983, 411b), consisting of *slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils. Some slowly permeable seasonally waterlogged non-calcareous clayey and fine loamy or fine silty over clayey soils. Landslips and associated irregular terrain locally.* The underlying geology consists of Jurassic and Cretaceous clay. The site lies at an elevation of *c.*110m AOD.



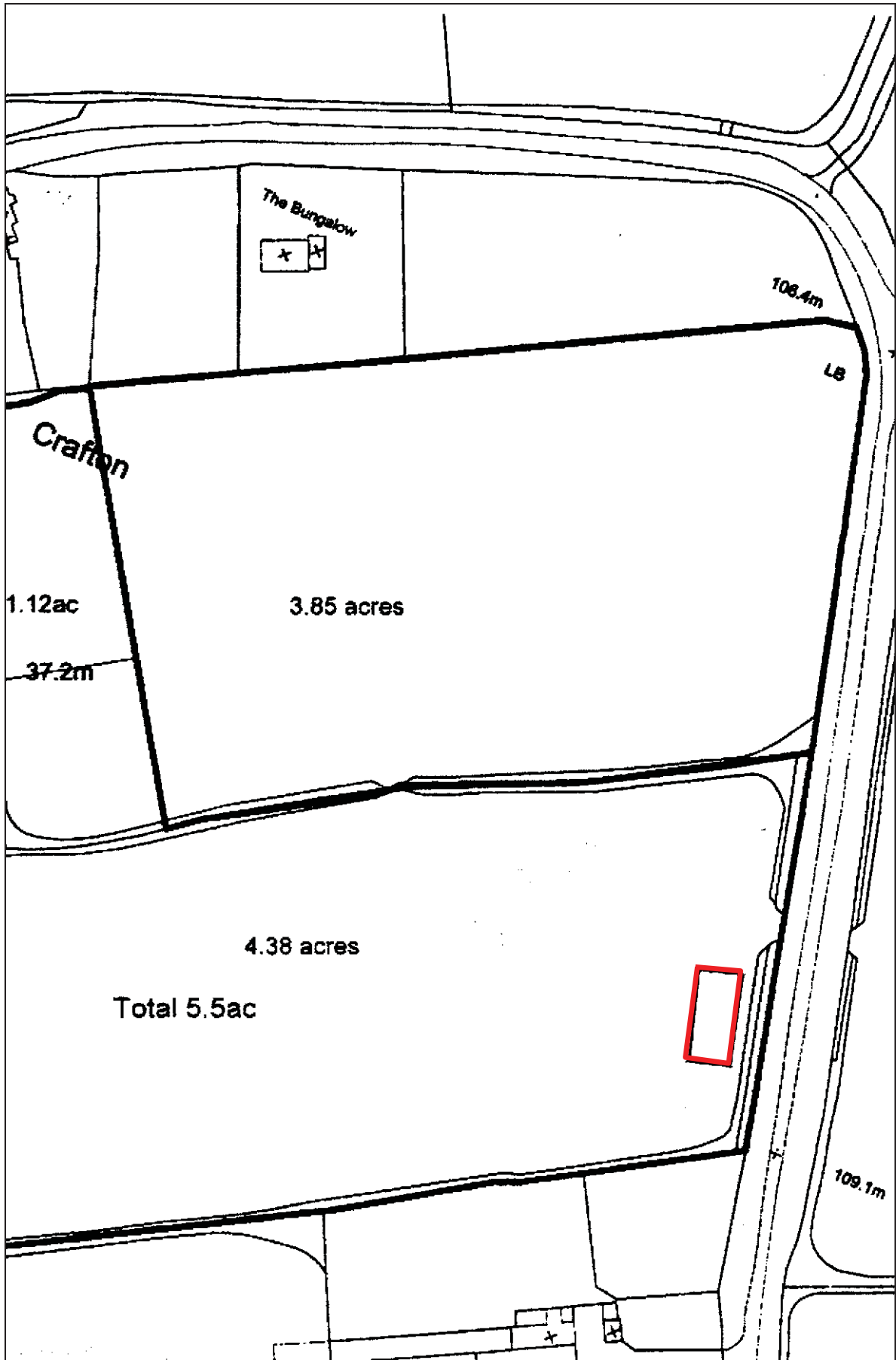


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

## **2. Aims & Methods**

### **2.1 Aims**

As described in the brief (Section 6), the aims of the watching brief were:

- To gather sufficient information to record and interpret the form and function of the earthworks within the survey area and relate them to the wider settlement. A brief summary of their historical context and landscape will be provided.
- The watching brief sought to identify and record any important archaeological remains revealed by groundwork, paying particular attention to the potential for medieval remains. Of specific interest was whether the settlement extended to the east of the north-south hollow way or whether this was the outer boundary of the occupied area.

### **2.2 Standards**

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

### **2.3 Methods**

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 8), which required:

- The earthwork survey of the manege site and the adjacent hollow way were completed to RCHME Level 2 standard (RCHME 1999) involving the creation of a measured plan of at least 1:500 (or at an appropriate scale to record the identified features). Sufficient information was recorded so that the affected earthworks could be related to the wider settlement earthworks and modern boundaries. The report will seek to relate the results to existing OS survey of Crafton and the available aerial photographic evidence.
- A detailed watching brief was maintained during the topsoil strip for the manege.
- The presence or absence of archaeological features was noted. If features were identified then sufficient work was done to date, characterise and record the remains in accordance with the project objectives.

### **2.4 Constraints**

An earthwork survey was originally requested only on the area affected by the proposed manege. As this area was too small to effectively characterise the earthworks topographic survey of the entire field was undertaken.

### 3. Archaeological & Historical Background

#### 3.1 Prehistoric - Roman (*before 600BC – c. 450*)

Crafton is an area of considerable archaeological and historical importance (Kidd 2005) although little is known about the area during the prehistoric and Roman periods.

#### 3.2 Saxon (*c.450-1066*)

The village of Crafton is likely to have its origins in the Saxon period. It is mentioned in the 1086 Domesday Survey as being divided equally between the Bishop of Lisieux and the monks of Saint Nicholas (Morris, 1978).

#### 3.5 Medieval (*1066-1500*)

Earthworks are located in fields immediately north, south and west of the proposed development (Fig. 3). The earthworks indicate that the core of the medieval village of Crafton was located south-southeast of the present village to the west of Lower Crafton Lane, which is the current access road to the development site.

The earthworks suggest the presence of a well-preserved example of a medieval ‘gridded cluster settlement’ (CAS1009) and define the position of a row of southwest to northeast aligned rectilinear closes fronting a lane or narrow green situated a little way to the west of Lower Crafton Lane. The closes seem to have been laid out within a pre-existing pattern of open field furlongs, suggesting that the settlement’s origins post-date the laying out of the open fields, which may have occurred in the 9<sup>th</sup>/10<sup>th</sup> centuries. Peasant houses would have existed within the closes and fronted on to the old lane, indeed cottages continued to do so up until the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

Well preserved examples of ridge and furrow forming part of the medieval villages open field system surround the remnants of the medieval village and respect its suggested borders. North of the present village are a north-south aligned row of rectilinear earthworks suggesting the position of building platforms.

About 500m southwest of the proposed development site is the suggested site of a chapel dedicated to the Holy Trinity, which was last recorded in 1388 (CASS2237). Helsthorpe Farm is the only remaining building in the area, but the Medieval Village Research Group maintain that Helsthorpe (formerly *Helpesthorp* or *Elstrop*), was ‘evidently a substantial hamlet in medieval times’ (Jenkins 1971).

#### 3.6 Post-Medieval (*1500-1900*)

Some of the earthworks recorded at Crafton are said to be the remains of the Theed family mansion, built by John Theed, c.1680. The building was demolished in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century and the earthworks in “wick” field are all that remain (CASS1009).

#### 3.7 Modern (*1900-present*)

Up until very recently, the field containing the development site was part of Crafton Stud Farm, and was used as a paddock. A stables, tackroom and haystore were constructed at the NE corner of the field in 2005 and ASC undertook a negative watching brief during this work (Semmelmann 2005)



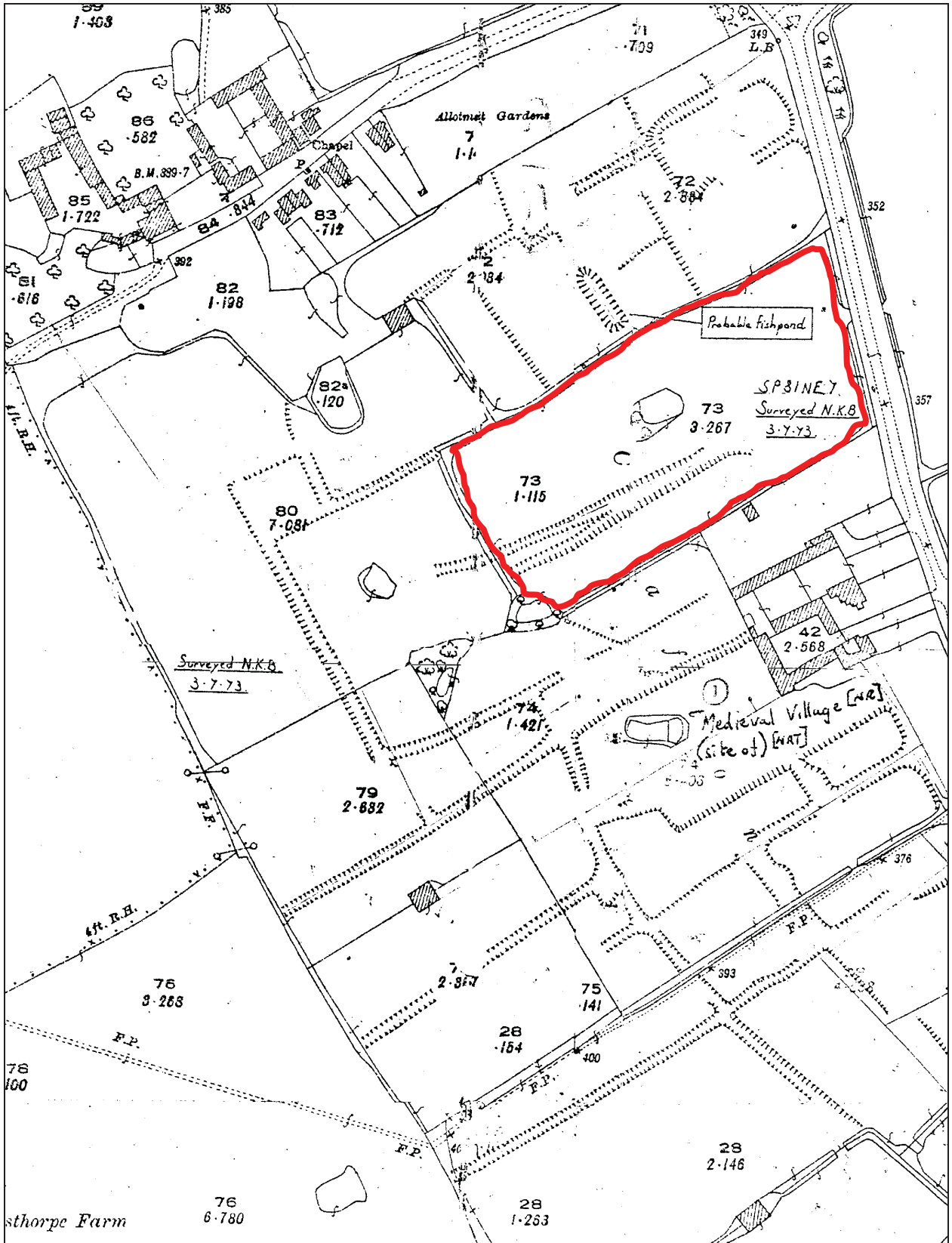


Figure 3: Site of 2006 earthwork survey (not to scale)

## **4. Results**

### *4.1 Earthwork Survey*

The planning condition specified earthwork survey of the area affected by construction of the manege. However, the field containing the site of the manege was limited in size and Andrew Whitehouse graciously accepted ASC's suggestion that survey of its entirety was possible within a day and would be more suitable for characterisation of the extant earthworks. The following paragraphs detail the results of the survey, which are illustrated in Figure 4.

Three irregular poorly developed platforms (A, B and C) are located on a level area at the eastern third of the field. A northwest-southeast aligned shallow hollow way (D) bounds the western edge of the area of platforms, a northeast aligned hollow way branches from it adjacent to the northern field boundary and a later pit (F) appears to have been cut into hollow way (D) near the southern field boundary. A north-south aligned shallow hollow way (E) divides the two westernmost platforms (B and C) from the easternmost platform (A) which is located at the area affected by construction of the manege. The platforms are close to the entrance to the field and the shallow depression dividing platforms B and C could have eroded as a consequence of relatively modern activity.

The most pronounced earthwork within the area surveyed is a southwest-northeast aligned hollow way (G) that runs from the southwestern field boundary to terminate at the hollow way (D) bounding the area of platforms. The base of the southwestern half of hollow way G is eroded to suggest that two paths have merged to form one. The function of oval depression (H) at the easternmost end of the northern bank of the hollow way is unclear although it appears contemporary with it.

A sub-circular hollow (I) defines the position of a recently infilled field pond marked on current 1:25,000 Ordnance Survey mapping. A flat path way is eroded into a slope north of the pond and leads from it to a gate in the northern field boundary.

Earthworks are located north and south of hollow way (G) in the western third of the field. The exact function of these features is unclear although part of a possible platform and a sub-circular hollow are present at the northwest corner of the field (J) and a sub-oval hollow (K) is overlain by the southern field boundary.

### *4.2 Watching Brief*

The topsoil strip was undertaken in two phases: during the first phase, the topsoil was removed to a depth of 30cm on the western side of the manege area. Groundworks on the eastern side were limited to grass removal at this point (Plate 1). The topsoil consisted of a mid brown sandy silt, and some tile fragments were recovered. The subsoil was not encountered during this phase, and no features were observed.

During the second phase, the topsoil was reduced by a further 20cm at the southern end of the site, and the area of ground reduction was extended to the fenceline on the western side (Plate 2). Ironwork, consisting of post medieval nails and latches, pottery, comprising post medieval stoneware and brown glazed red earthenware, and animal bone were recovered from the topsoil during the second phase of topsoil stripping. The subsoil was reached in the southern half of the site, and consisted of a mid grey silty sandy clay.

No pre-modern features were observed, and none of the finds were kept, as they were unstratified.

The total area of the manege was not subjected to ground reduction, as any hollows within the development area were to be levelled up.

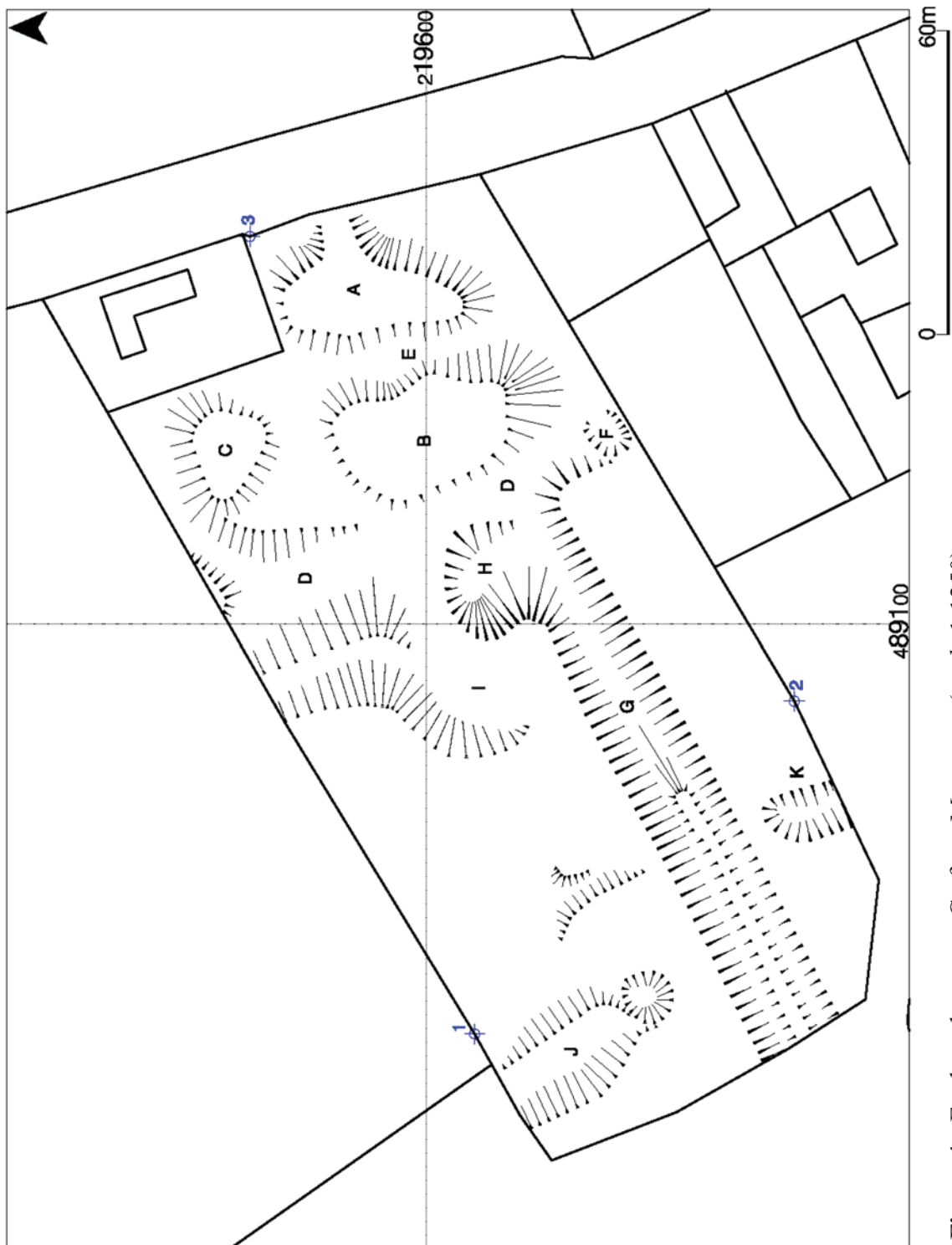


Figure 4: Earthwork survey, Crafton, Mentmore (scale 1:1250)





**Plate 1:** Area of manege after first stage of stripping, looking south



**Plate 2:** Area of manege after second stage of stripping, looking south east



## **5. Conclusions**

### 5.1 *Earthwork Survey*

The survey has recorded extant medieval earthworks thus expanding the spatial scope of earlier survey work and enabling more holistic interpretation of the form of the medieval village.

The presence of a deep southwest-northeast aligned hollow way plus three poorly developed platforms and two shallow hollow ways illustrate that the surveyed field was within the limits of the medieval village. Ridge and furrow is recorded in the field immediately east of the development area and this suggests that the platforms could define the locations of ephemeral agricultural buildings or enclosed areas at the periphery of the village rather than more substantial houses.

Other earthworks at the west of the field are harder to characterise although the presence of part of another platform and two borrow pits seems probable. A recently infilled pond was formerly located at the centre of the surveyed field, unfortunately the earthworks offer no indication whether it formed part of the medieval landscape or was established after the village was abandoned.

The results of the earthwork survey are supported by the recent *Crafton Conservation Area* report (Kidd 2005).

### 5.2 *Watching Brief*

No pre-modern features were observed during the course of the watching brief. A number of finds were recovered from the topsoil, including two rim sherds, most of which is likely to be post medieval in date. However, due to the unstratified nature of these finds, they tell us little about the human activity on the site.

In conclusion, an insufficient amount of soil was removed from the area of the manège to enable any useful conclusions to be drawn about the nature of the archaeology on the site. However, as the development goes no deeper than the horizon between the topsoil and subsoil, any archaeological remains beneath this level are highly unlikely to be disturbed.

### 5.3 *Confidence Rating*

Both the earthwork survey and watching brief were undertaken in sunny, dry conditions, and in both cases full co-operation was received from the client and the contractor. Because of this, a high confidence rating is attached to both stages of archaeological work.

## **6. Acknowledgements**

The writer is grateful to Andrew Whitehouse for commissioning the evaluation. We would also like to thank David Radford for preparing the brief and monitoring the project on behalf of Aylesbury Vale District Council. The historical and archaeological background was researched by the author assisted by Julia Wise the Buckinghamshire County Council SMR Officer. The project was managed by Bob Zeepvat BA, MIFA, and the fieldwork was undertaken by the authors and Karin Semmelmann BA MA AIFA.

## **7. Archive**

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. Site record drawings
7. List of photographs/slides
8. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum.

## **8. References**


### ***Standards & Specifications***



- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition*. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- Radford, D 2006 *Brief for an archaeological Earthwork Survey and Watching Brief at land at No 2 Crafton, Mentmore* Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service
- Rouse, C 2006 *Project Design for Earthwork Survey and Watching Brief at 2 Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire* ASC 812/MTC/1

### ***Secondary Sources***

- Jenkins, J.G. 1971. *Medieval Village Research Group index*. 1971.
- Kidd, A 2005 *Crafton Conservation Area* Buckinghamshire County Council
- Morris J, 1978: *The Domesday Book*. Buckinghamshire section. Phillimore (Chichester).
- Pevsner N & Williamson E 1960 *The Buildings of England: Buckinghamshire* Penguin.
- Semmelmann K, 2005 *Watching Brief at 2 Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire* ASC 694/MTC/2
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).

### Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

 <b>A.S.C. LTD</b>		<b>ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD</b>	
Project: 2 Crafton, Mentmore		Project No/Code: 812 1 MTC	Sheet: 1 of 1
		Date of visit: 25/07/06	
Client/Developer: Andrew Whitehouse			
Contact: " "		Phone: 020 7629 6669	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8.20	Finish: 2.45	
Completed by: C. Rouse			
Development Type:			
Footings	Services	Roads	Levelling <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: Sunny & dry			
Observations: Topsoil stripped to max depth of 30cm on W side - purely grass removed on E. Med brown fairly silty topsoil found <sup>lime</sup> CBM (file flags) subsoil was not reached  A second phase was undertaken, reducing topsoil by additional 20cm @ S end extended gravel reduction to face line on W subsoil reached @ S end, consisted of med grey silty sandy clay found - roots, latches, rot <del>...</del>			
Comments: Only a small area was reduced, as the hollow are being levelled up.			
Dr:			
For sketch plan, use reverse			
©ASC, 2003			

 <b>A.S.C. LTD</b>		<b>SKETCH SHEET</b>	
Site Name: 2 Crafton, Mentmore	Site Code:	Orientation: 	
Context: TOPDOWN SURVEY			

GP1 TO A: 33.40M

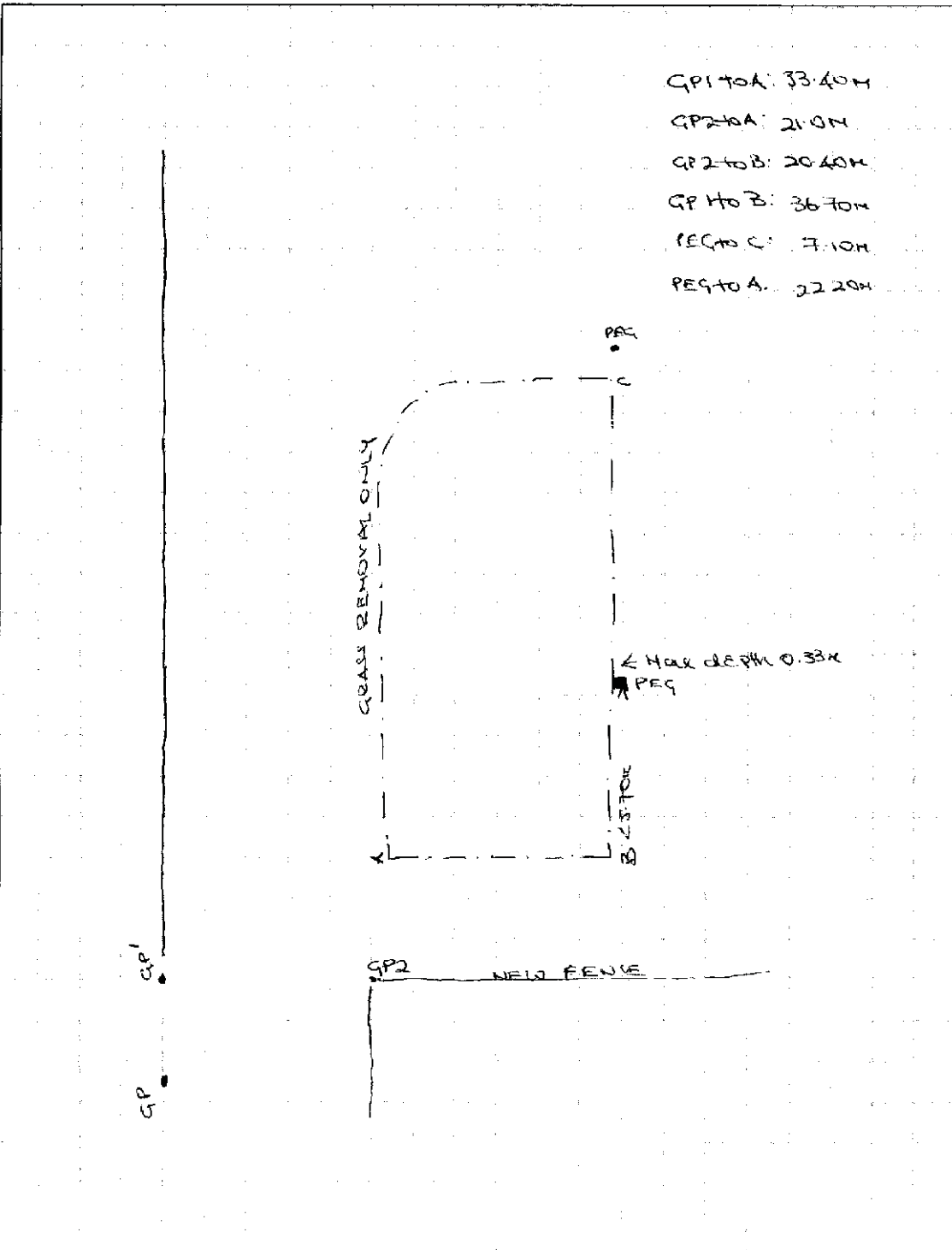
GP2 TO A: 21.0M

GP2 TO B: 20.40M

GP TO B: 36.70M

PEG TO C: 7.10M

PEG TO A: 22.20M



<b>RECORDING NOTES</b>				
Recorded by:	Date:	Digitised by:	Date:	Sheet number: of



## Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: 2 Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire				SITE NO/CODE: 812/MTC
Shot	B&W	Slide	Digital	Subject
1			✓	Area of manege after first stage of stripping, looking south
2			✓	Area of manege after first stage of stripping, looking south west
3			✓	Area of manege after second stage of stripping, looking south east
4			✓	Newly constructed stables, adjacent to development area, looking north

### Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project Name:	An Earthwork Survey and Watching Brief at 2 Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire					
Short Description:	<i>An earthwork survey and archaeological watching brief were carried out on land at 2 Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire, on 30<sup>th</sup> June and 25<sup>th</sup> July 2006 respectively. The earthwork survey was expanded to encompass the entirety of the field within which the development was proposed, and recorded the existence of a southwest-northeast aligned hollow way, several platforms, borrow pits and an infilled pond. The watching brief revealed no archaeologically significant finds or features, as the soil was only removed down to the subsoil horizon.</i>					
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	DBA	FW	Geophys	<u>Survey</u>	Bldg Rec	Post-Exc
	<u>WB</u>	Strip&Rec	Trenching	Test pits	Exc	Other
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	None		Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	None		
Current land use:	Pasture		Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	No		
Monument type:	-		Monument period:	-		
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	-					
PROJECT LOCATION						
County:	Buckinghamshire		OS reference: (to at least 8 figures)	SP 8915 1961		
District:	Aylesbury Vale		Parish:	Mentmore		
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Land at 2 Crafton Mentmore Bedfordshire LU7 0QL					
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	-		Height OD: (metres)	c.110m		
PROJECT CREATORS						
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd					
Project brief originator:	David Radford		Project design originator:	Calli Rouse		
Project Manager:	David Fell		Director/Supervisor:	Bob Zeepvat		
Sponsor / funding body:	Andrew Whitehouse					
PROJECT DATE						
Start date:	30/06/06		End date:	25/07/06		
PROJECT ARCHIVES						
	Location (Accession no.)		Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)			
Physical:	Buckinghamshire County Museum (TBC)		None			
Paper:			Brief/PD/Report/Record Sheets/Plans			
Digital:			CD with all digital files			
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)						
Title:	An Earthwork Survey and Watching Brief at 2 Crafton, Mentmore, Buckinghamshire					
Serial title & volume:	ASC Report 812/MTC/2					
Author(s):	Calli Rouse & Alastair Hancock					
Page nos	19		Date:	11 <sup>th</sup> August 2006		