

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**POINT TO POINT COURSE**

**LOCKINGE ESTATE, ARDINGTON,**

**WANTAGE, OXFORDSHIRE**

**NGR SU 41692 85717**

*On behalf of*

*White Horse Contractors Ltd.*

**MARCH 2015**

**REPORT FOR**                      White Horse Contractors Ltd  
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**Site Code:**                        LOPTP15  
**JMHS Project No:**                3236

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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at land on the Lockinge Estate, approximately 3.2km SE of Wantage (NGR SU 41692 85717). Monitored work consisted of a topsoil strip and reduction in ground level prior to the construction of a small reservoir. No archaeological features or deposits were present.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

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

The development site is located approximately 3.2km SE of Wantage on the B4494, in an area of arable farmland (NGR SU 41692 85717).

The site lies at approximately 140m OD. The underlying geology is the Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

Vale of White Horse District Council granted planning permission for a small water storage reservoir constructed with earth banks and a 1.8m high chain link fence surround with access gate for the purpose of irrigation of point to point race course (P14/V2824/FUL). Due to the archaeological and historical importance of the surrounding area a condition was attached to the permission requiring a watching brief to be maintained during the course of building operations or construction works on the site. This was in line with NPPF and Local Planning policies.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

There are two Bronze Age round barrows recorded to the north and north-west of the site, as well as extensive but currently undated field systems. A probable Roman villa is recorded to the south-west. The villa was originally identified through aerial photographs, and Roman artefacts have been recovered in this location.

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aim of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation was as follows:

- To make a record of any significant archaeological remains revealed during the course of any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team, the archaeological advisors to the Vale of White Horse District Council. Standard John

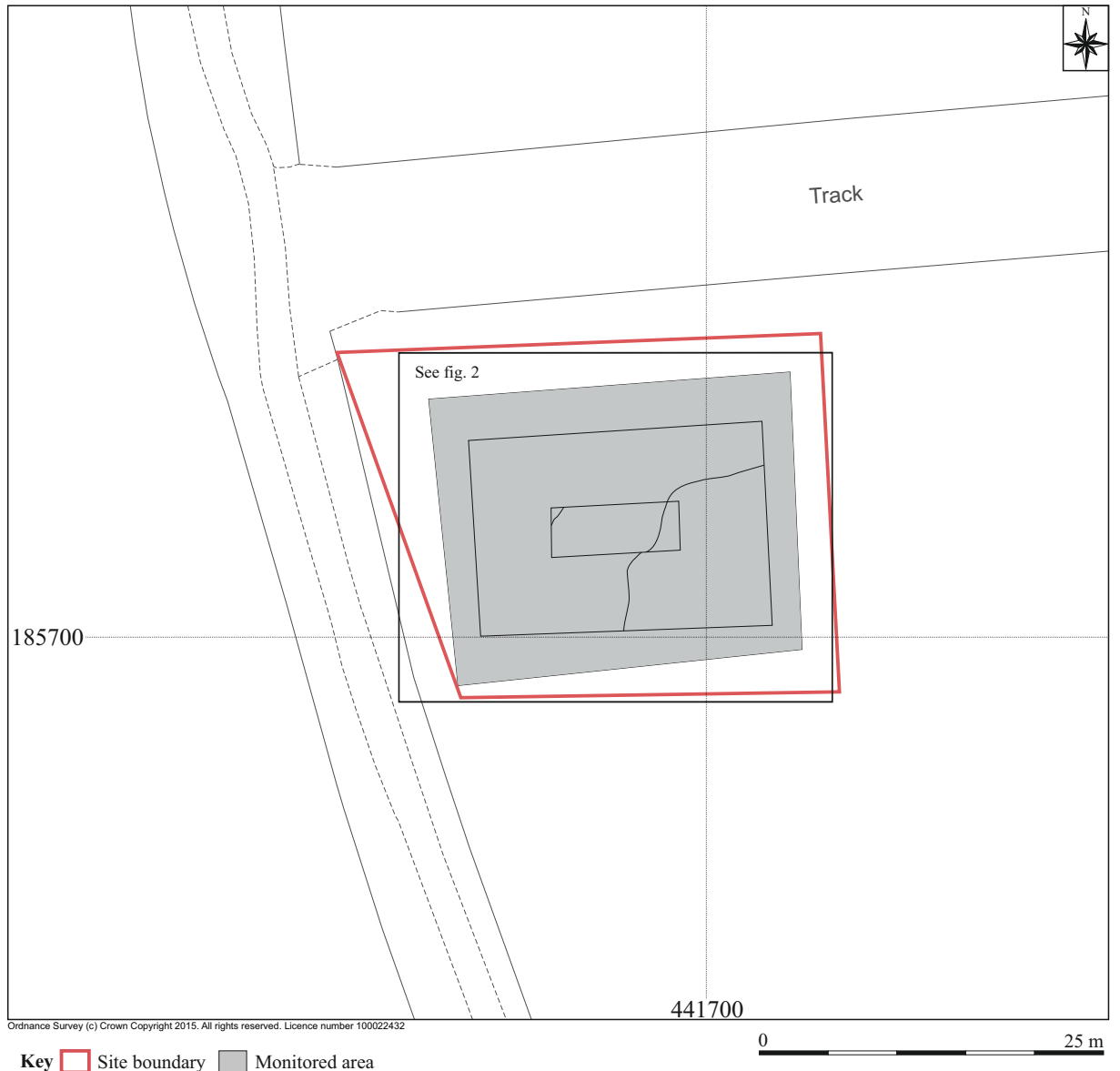
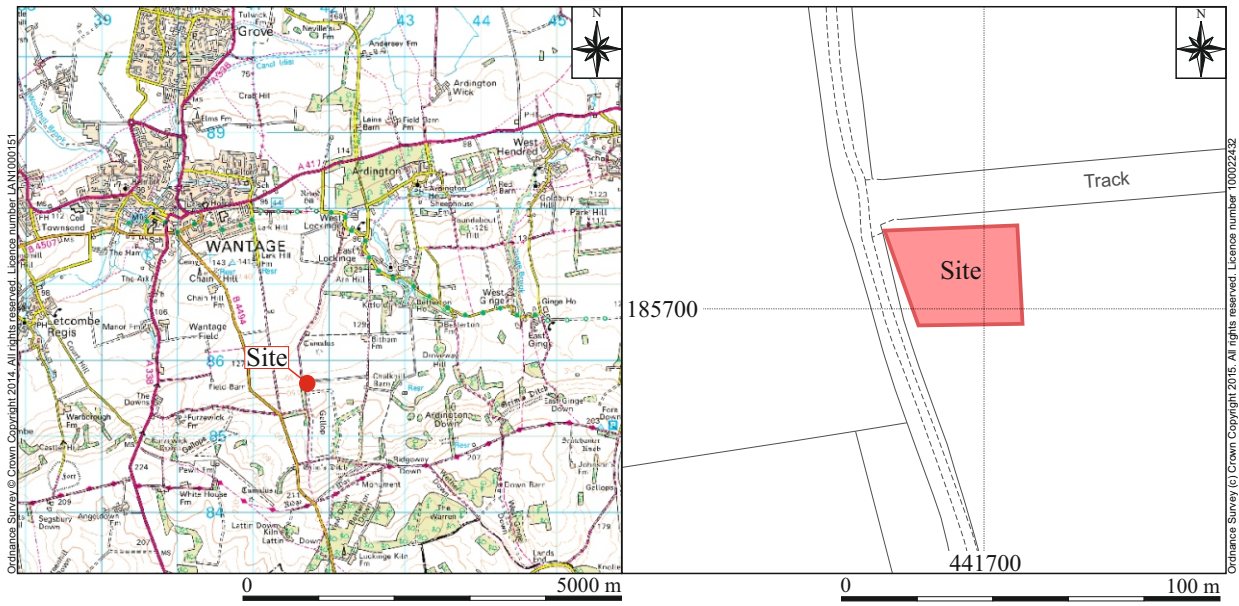


Figure 1: Site location

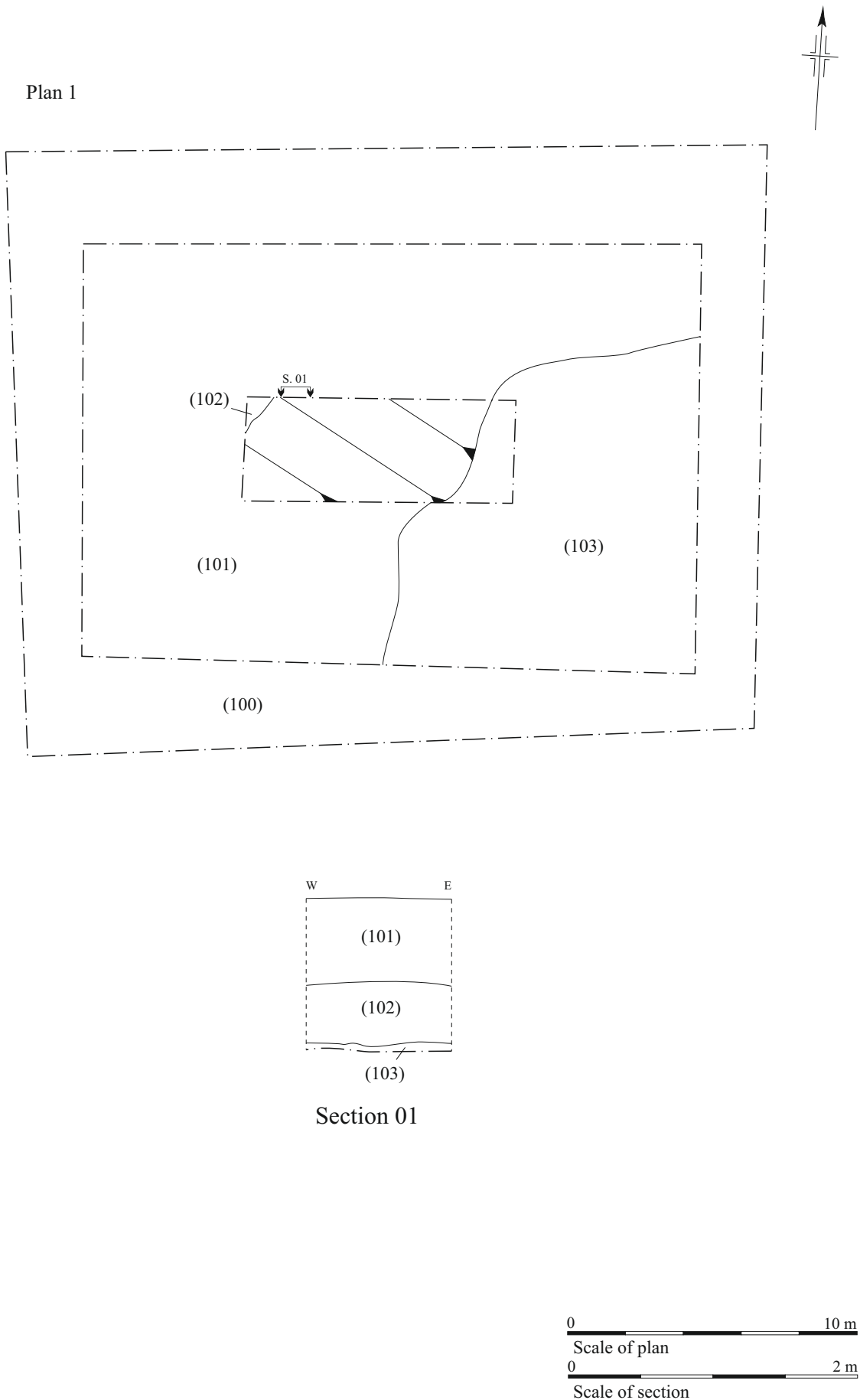


Figure 2: Plan 1 with section

Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (2014).

### **3.2 Methodology**

Excavation was undertaken by a 20 tonne 360° excavator fitted with a bladed ditching bucket.

## **4 RESULTS**

Topsoil was stripped from an area of 26m by 21m (546m<sup>2</sup>). In the centre of site an area of 9.5m by 3.5m was reduced by 1m, before being graded upwards toward the outer edges of the site.

The lowest horizon encountered was the natural chalk bedrock, recorded as (103). In the north-western area of the site the bedrock was overlain by two thick layers of colluvium: (102), a compact light grey silty clay with a thickness of 0.4m; this was overlain by (101), a compact light brownish grey silty clay containing occasional, poorly sorted sub-angular stones under 50mm in size, with a thickness of 0.6m. Subsoil (101) was overlain by ploughsoil (100), a soft mid grey silty clay loam containing occasional sub-angular stone under 50mm in size, with a thickness of 0.3m.

## **5 FINDS**

No artefactual evidence was recovered.

## **6 DISCUSSION**

The site lies on the lower slopes of a spur of higher ground, and as a result two thick layers of colluvially deposited subsoil were present across most of the site. These layers had a combined depth of at least 1m, extending beyond the lowest limit of excavation. Excavation revealed no archaeological features sealed below the colluvium.

## **7 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, 2014 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

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