

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN EARTHWORK SURVEY**  
**AT**  
**THE WILLOWS,**  
**SHABBINGTON, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE.**

**SP 66552 06843**

*On behalf of*  
*ODL Consulting*

**FEBRUARY 2006**

**REPORT FOR**

ODL Consulting  
The Barn  
Seed Road  
Doddington  
Kent  
ME9 0NN

**PREPARED BY**

John Moore

**REPORT ISSUED**

1 February 2006

**ENQUIRES TO**

John Moore Heritage Services  
Hill View  
Woodperry Road  
Beckley  
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ

*Telephone/Fax 01865 358300*

*Email: [info@jmheritageservices.co.uk](mailto:info@jmheritageservices.co.uk)*

**JMHS Project No:**

1614

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## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Origins of the Project

A planning application has been submitted for the construction of new stables, tack room, storage and workshop. Due to the presence of remains of archaeological interest Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service has advised that a programme of archaeological work should be carried out prior to determination of the application. The archaeological work, in the first instance, is to consist of background research and an earthwork survey.

### 1.2 The Site

The site is located within a paddock to the east of The Willows, Mill road, Shabbington (NGR SP 66552 06843). Currently there is a small stable block, a loose block and various temporary buildings. Part of a small pond lies across one end of the proposal area.

### 1.3 Archaeological Background

Before the Norman Conquest Shabbington was held by Wigold of Wallingford and at Domesday the settlement was held by Miles Crispin and comprised 12 villagers, 7 smallholders and 6 slaves, a fishery with 100 eels and a mill from the manor of Sobintane. After the Conquest it was incorporated into the forest of Bernwood. From 1299 it was held by the Knights Hospitallers, who lost control of it in the 14<sup>th</sup> century (VCH, 1969, 102).

Extensive village earthworks survive south and east of the church and a street and four house platforms north-east of the church were surveyed prior to being developed in the 1960's. From this development a number of Roman, 13<sup>th</sup> century and post-medieval pottery sherds were recovered (CAS 565). The medieval manor is thought to have been located on the south side of the churchyard where three fishponds are located and where stone and tile have been noted (also CAS 565).

An archaeological desk-based assessment, evaluation and excavation have been undertaken at The Bungalow, Ickford Road, Shabbington in 2004. The evaluation produced evidence for significant 11-13<sup>th</sup> century activity including a rectangular enclosure ditch, substantial amounts of 11-13<sup>th</sup> century pottery, traces of iron working and well-preserved charcoal plant remains including cereal grain and wood charcoal. (Oxford Archaeology 2004, Oxford Archaeology 2004a). The results suggest that the boundary ditch enclosed an area of early settlement within the village. The subsequent excavation revealed further curvilinear ditches and large pits of medieval date along with quantities of slag and animal bone (TVAS, report forthcoming).

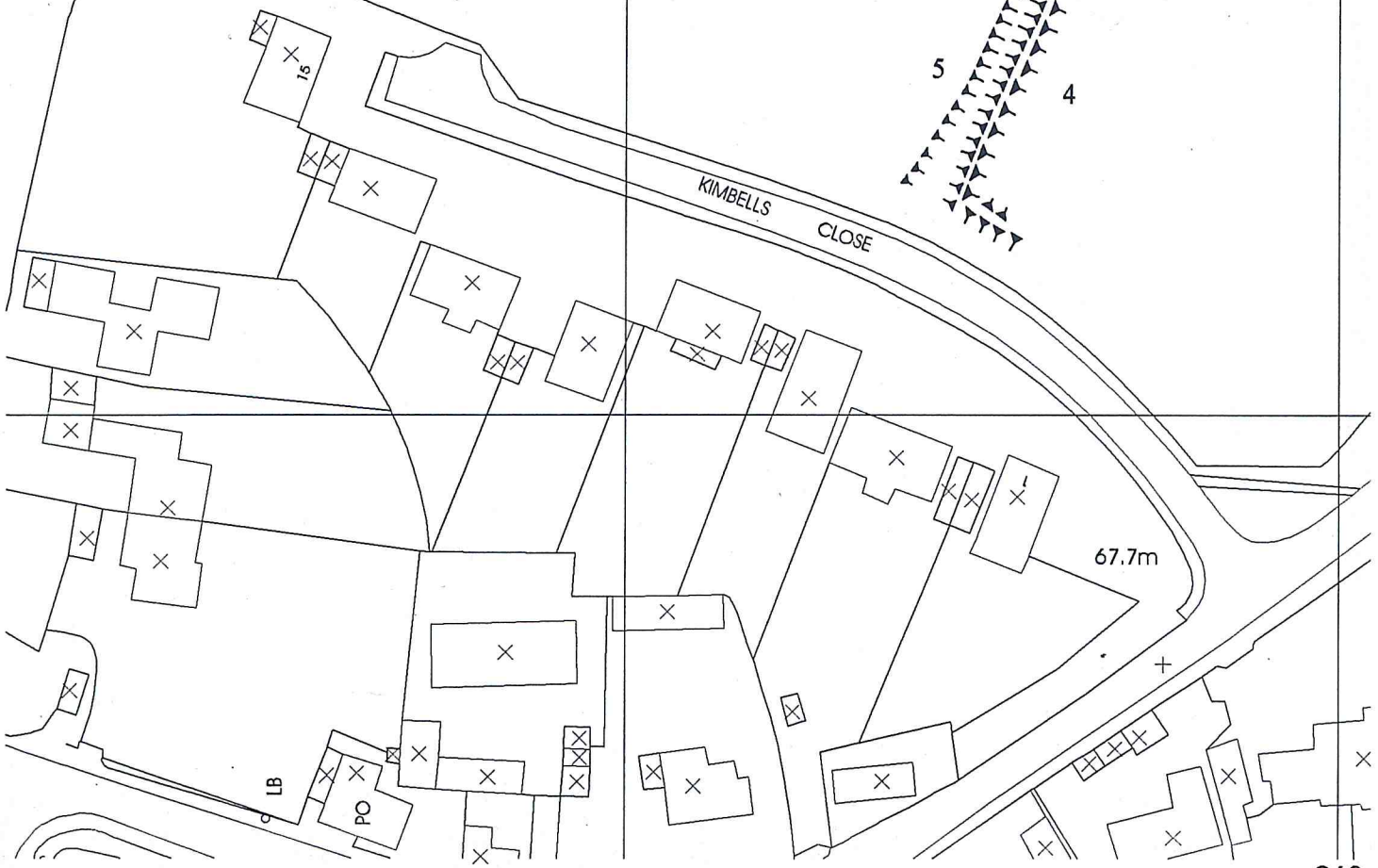
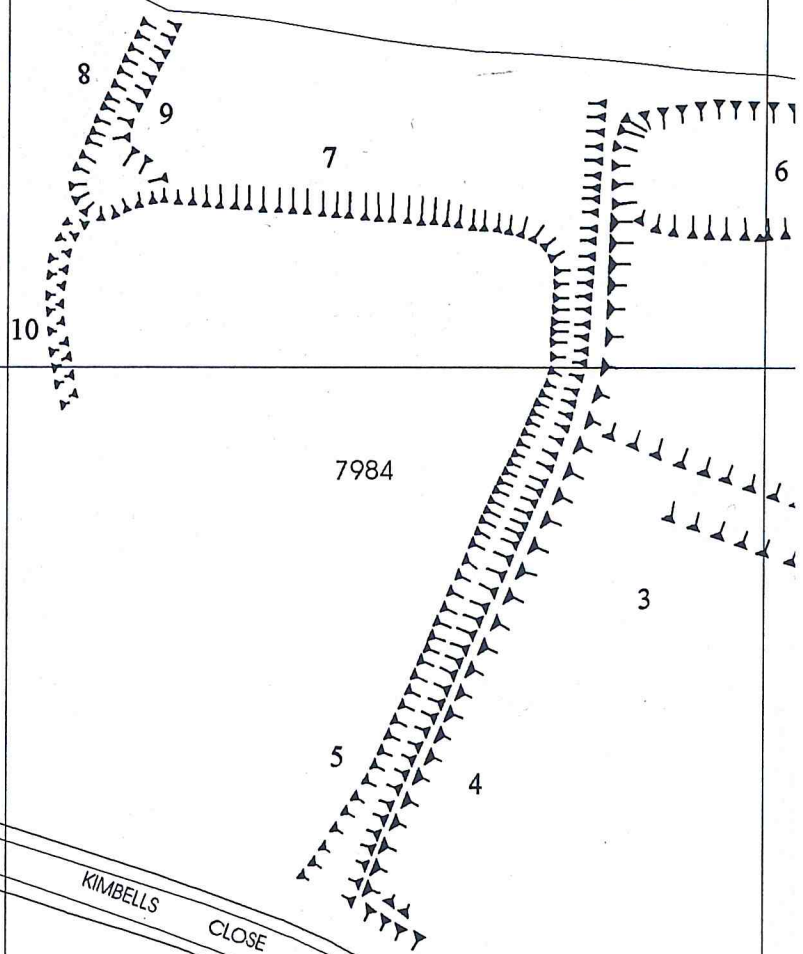
The initial assessment of the village morphology at Shabbington suggests a loosely nucleated single row plan stretching northwards from the church. There is probably a more complex sequence of development. Two straight (early/roman?) roads would also intersect at Shabbington Church and there are hints of a 'lost' lane to the west of the main street. The line of one of the Roman roads (CAS 2035) crosses the north-west side of the field surveyed. An earthwork survey held by the SMR and carried out before the construction of Kimbells Close shows a slight holloway.

# Shabbington

7984

KIMBELLS  
CLOSE

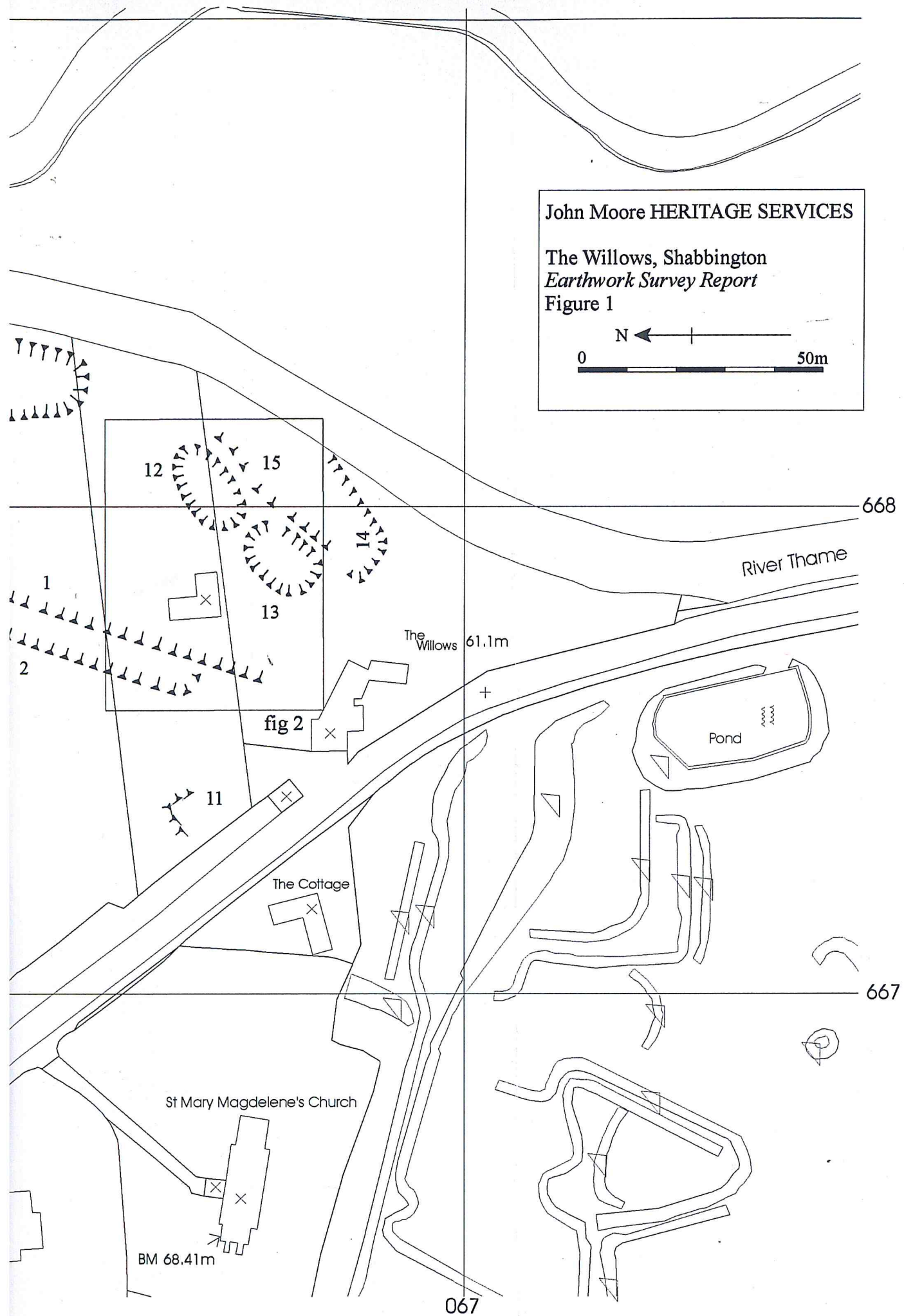
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The Willows, Shabbington  
*Earthwork Survey Report*  
Figure 1



## 2 METHODOLOGY

Research was carried out at the County Sites and Monuments Record and the County Record Office. Surprisingly the aerial photographs did not show the visible earthworks within the field to the east of Mill Road.

A detailed survey of an approximately 50x50m area centred on the proposal site was carried out by Souterrain Archaeological Services (Figs. 2-4). Ordnance Survey data and a walkover survey has been used to produce a measured sketch of the earthworks east of the church (Fig. 1).

## 3 RESULTS

The walkover survey and Ordnance Survey data has identified several earthworks within the field east of Mill Road. Details on each element are given below. The numbers refer to the earthworks shown on Figure 1.

1 A slight 'bank' probably created by wear of the area between 1 and 2 which appears to have been a footpath. Top lies *c.* 400-500mm above the level of the path.

2 This is probably a slight natural break of slope emphasised by use of the footpath. Appears *c.* 350mm high.

3 The north end of 2 shown on OS mapping as curving to the north-west but not visible now on the ground.

4 Bank forming south side of a ?ditch. 6m wide. Steeper on the inside (north). Bank *c.* 150-200mm high above ground to south, 500 mm high above bottom of ?ditch. Inside slope 2m wide, top of bank 2m wide, outside bank slope 2m wide. West end inside slope 1.5m wide and outside slope 2.5m wide. Cuts 1.

5 3-4m wide slope.

4/5 Shown continuing the other side of the holloway to the north-west on the SMR plan. East part of the ditch deeper with steeper sides. Extreme east part of ditch not straight. If considered as a path it is illogical for a path to be dug out and not to be straight as it approaches the river.

6 Pond. Bank on north side *c.* 300-350mm high, east side *c.* 450-5000mm high, south side *c.* 250-300mm high, west side very slight *c.* 100-150mm high. Sub-rectangular in plan. Bank on north side is also bank of 4. West edge in line with 7 (see below).

7 This is considered to be natural, formed at the edge of valley bottom by the river. It is not apparent north of 8 but the land slope here is less steep. To the south the west side of pond 6 may have utilised a similar, lower, natural edge. Between the river and 7 the ground slopes very slightly down from the river to half way across the width between the river and 7. It appears that a former river course run further west of the present course, utilised by 6, and is just traceable to the south of 6 running into the present course.

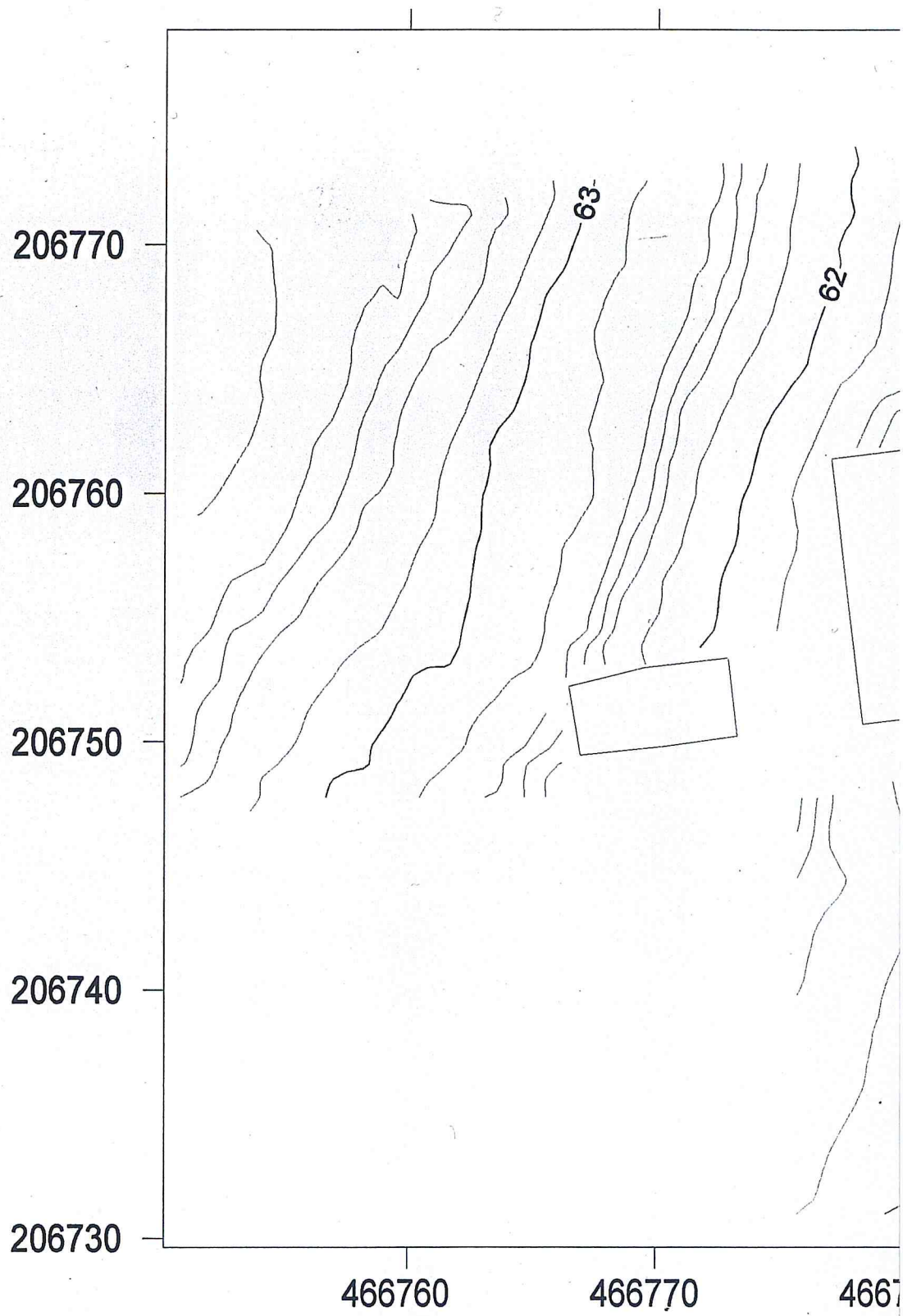
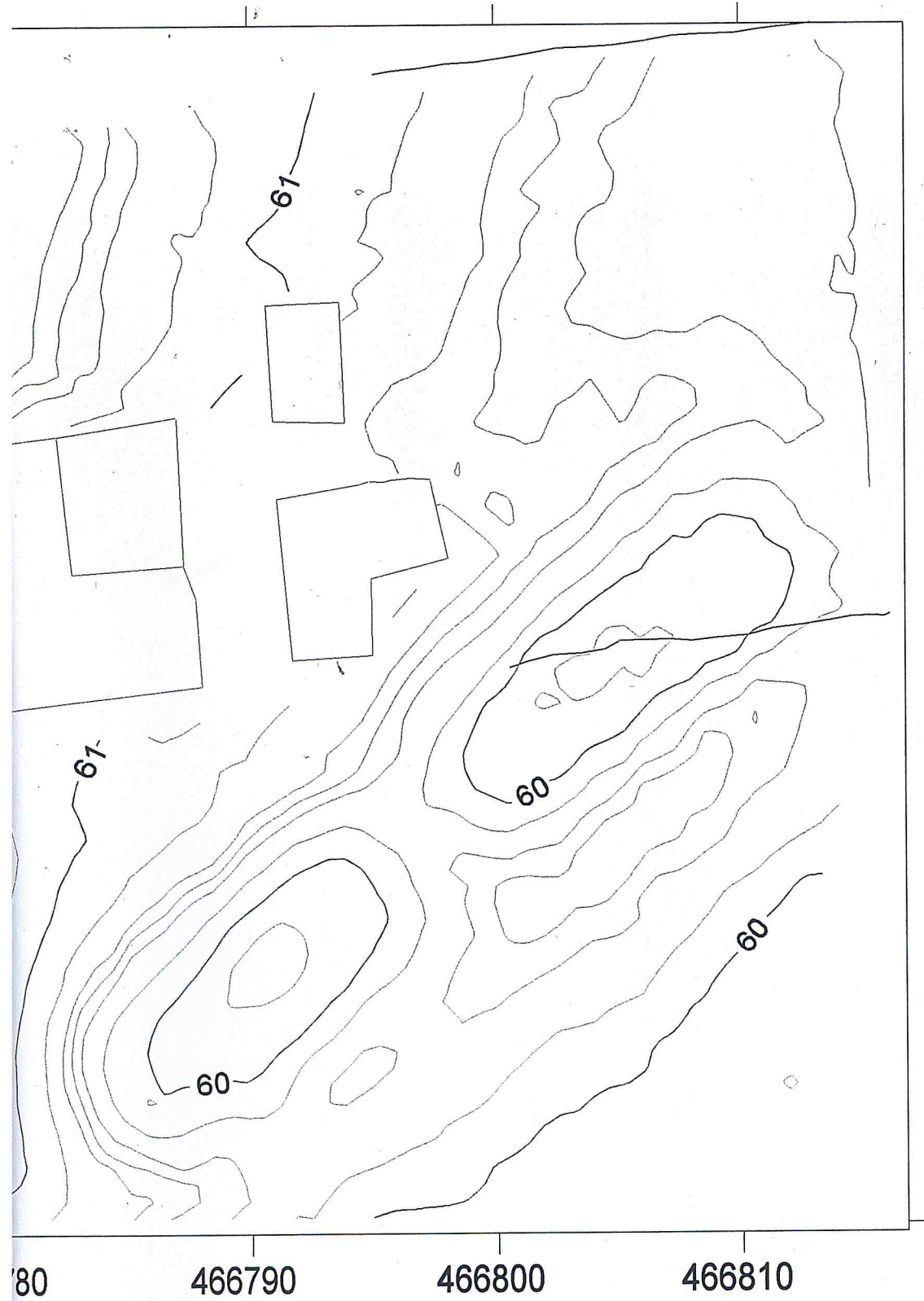


Figure 2. Detailed earthwork survey





- 8 Slight bank, c. 400-450mm high above ditch bottom, 100-150mm above ground to north.
- 9 Slope down to ditch bottom. Slope c. 300mm deep.
- 8/9 These form a ditch leading from the river to a small pond at the west end.
- 10 Natural run-off gulley down slightly steep part of slope into pond.
- 11 Possible building platform suggested by very slight slopes on two sides. c. 100mm high.
- 12 Pond c. 700-800mm deep with bank (15) on south-east side.
- 13 Pond c. 700-800mm deep with bank (15) on south-east side.
- 12/13 Known locally as eel ponds. Appear to be two distinct ponds, not joined.
- 14 Bank. Looks recent in that north-west side is too abrupt for old bank to have weathered. 400-450mm high.
- 15 Bank created by excavated spoil from 12 and 13. Bank is continuous and may have led to the suggestion that the two ponds were linked.

#### 4 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Oxford Archaeology 2004 *The Bungalow, Ickford Road, Shabbington: Desk Based Assessment.*

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VCH, 1969 *Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire*

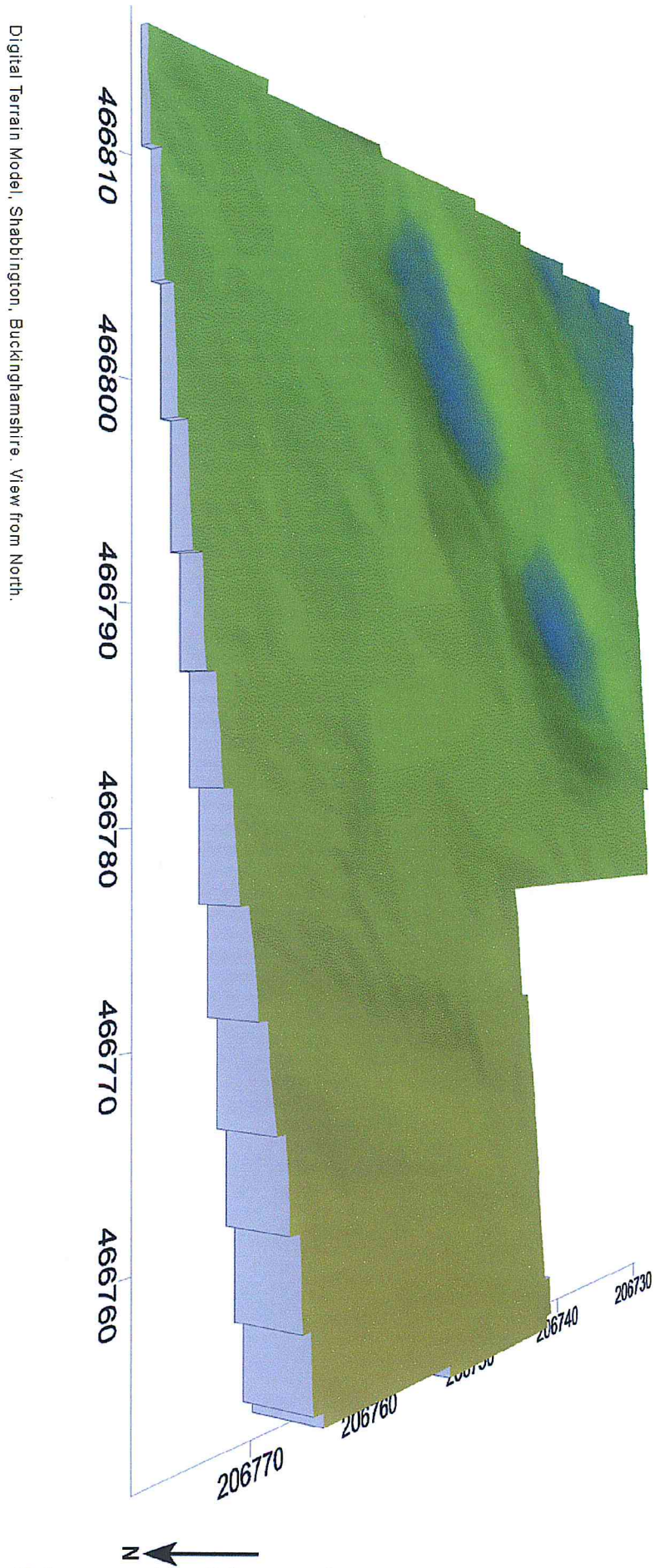


Figure 3. Detailed survey viewed from south



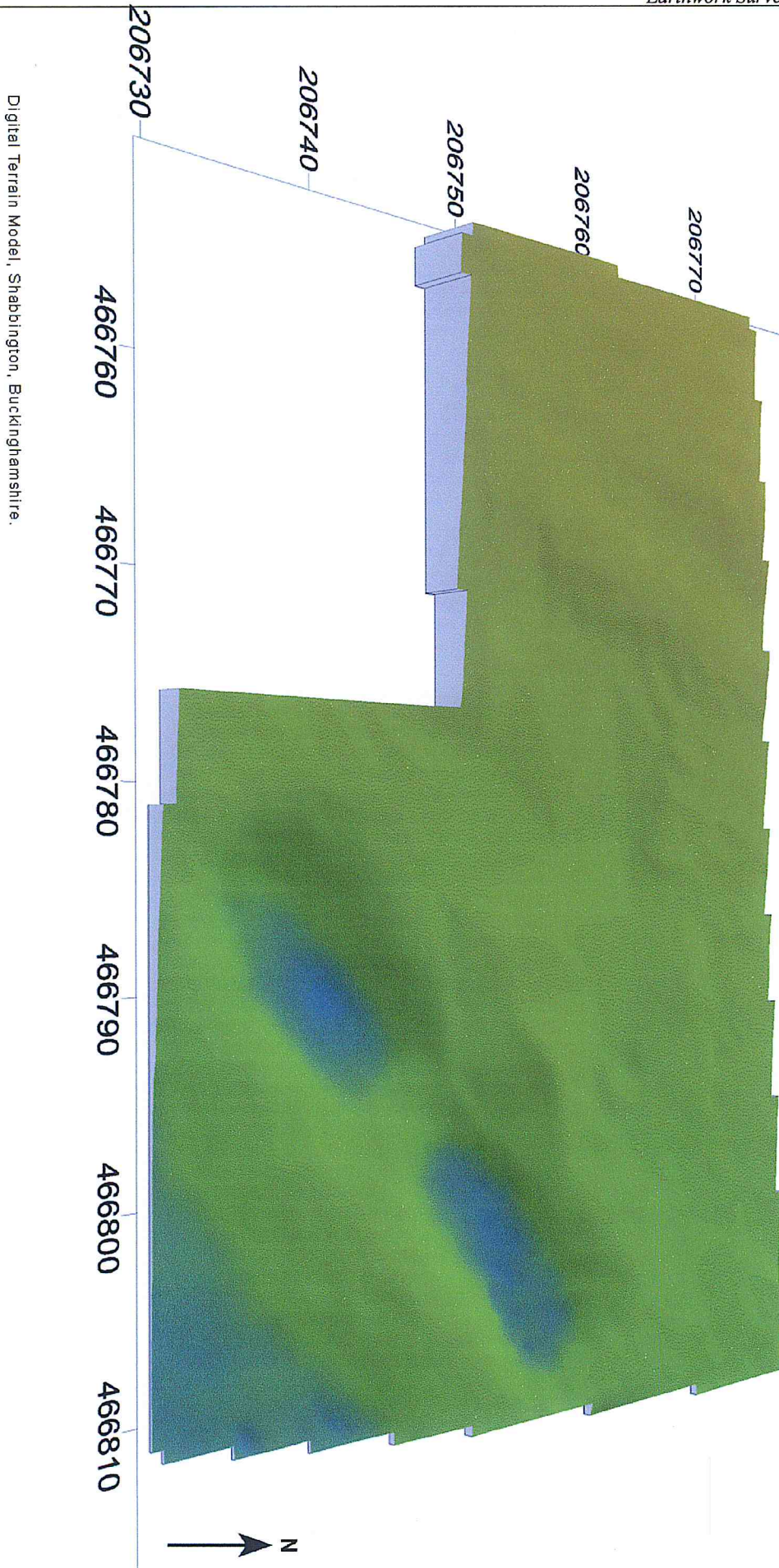


Figure 4. Detailed survey viewed from north