

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

EASINGTON FARM, EASINGTON, OXFORDSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

NGR SU 66165 97125

(NGR SP 51170 07511)

On behalf of

A M Nixey Farms

OCTOBER 2015

REPORT FOR A M Nixey Farms
Easington Manor
Easington
Watlington
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CONTENTS

	Page
<i>SUMMARY</i>	1
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Site Location	1
1.2 Planning Background	1
1.3 Archaeological Background	1
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	3
3 STRATEGY	3
3.1 Research Design	3
3.2 Methodology	3
4 RESULTS	3
5 FINDS	3
6 DISCUSSION	3
7 BIBLIOGRAPHY	6
APPENDIX A Archaeological Context Inventory	6
 ILLUSTRATIONS	
Figure 1 Site Location	2
Figure 2 Sections of monitored area	4

Summary

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief on behalf of Mr N Nixey at Easington Farm, Easington, Oxfordshire. The watching brief was conducted as part of a planning condition (P14/S3839/FUL) for the erection of Biomass units, consisting of straw store and straw burner, small heat hut and the excavation of associated service trenches. Four monitoring visits were made between the 26th January and 7th September 2015.

A layer containing a moderate quantity of 18th-19th century roof tiles was recorded close to The Old Rectory, and almost certainly associated with its construction or repairs to its roof.

No other significant archaeological remains or deposits were recorded during the course of the watching brief.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location and Geology (Figure 1)

The site is located at Easington farm, Easington, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 66165 97125). Currently the land is part of the farming complex and residential use. The underlying geology is Gault Formation mudstone. The site lies on ground sloping to the northeast at c. 90m AOD.

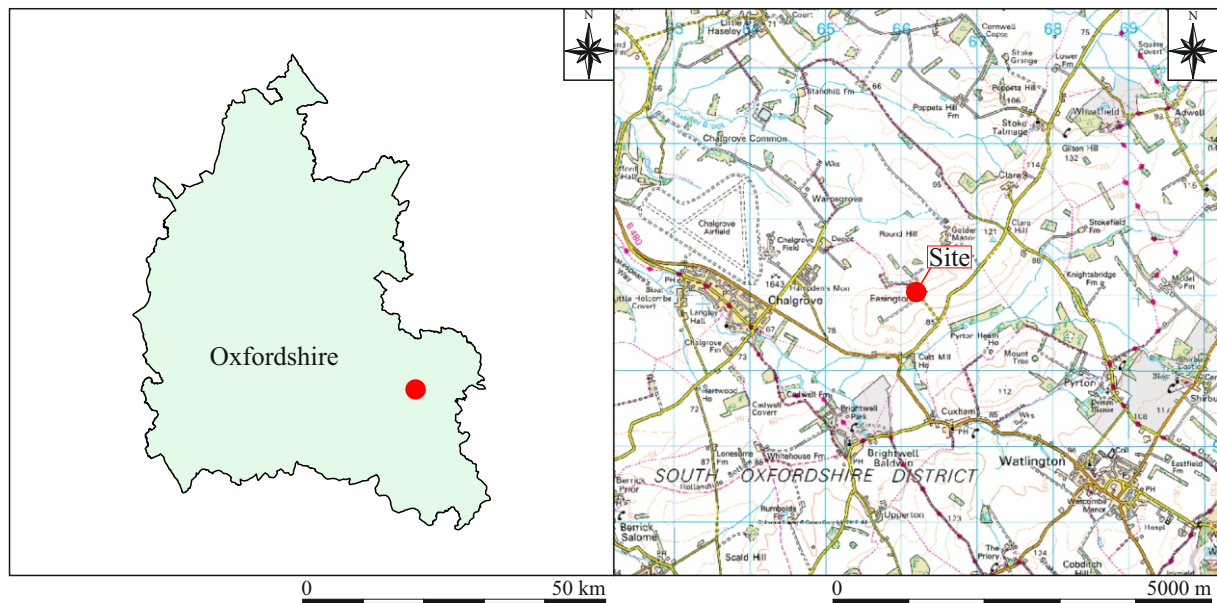
1.2 Planning Background

South Oxfordshire District Council granted planning permission for demolition of existing store building, erection of straw store, straw burner and small heat hut (P14/S3839/FUL). Due to the potential for the works to disturb/damage archaeological remains and deposits a condition requiring archaeological monitoring of intrusive works was attached to the permission.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The site is located in an area of archaeological potential within the historic core of the settlement and close to the early 14th century church (County Historic Environment Record PRN 3957). There is a church mentioned in Easington c. 1150AD and it is likely that it was located on the same site. The medieval Rectory House was also mentioned in 1150AD as being next to the church and it is likely that it was located in the area of the current rectory. The early 16th century manor house is located c. 40m northeast of the site (PRN 21355).

An evaluation conducted on the Old Rectory site in 2014 (JMHS 2014) recorded the corner of a masonry structure and a large pit or well-like structure. Both features may be related to the medieval rectory mentioned in 1150AD.



Key Site boundary Monitored area Previous evaluation trenches (2014)

Figure 1: Site location

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To make a record of any significant 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 (JMHS 2015) agreed with the Oxfordshire Historic and Natural Environment Team (OHaNET).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was present during, or inspected, groundworks that had the potential to reveal or disturb archaeological remains. Monitoring or inspection of ground reduction for the heat hut, straw burner and straw shed, and connecting service trenches was carried out.

Four monitoring visits were made between the 26th January and 7th September 2015.

4 RESULTS (Figure 2, Appendix A)

No significant archaeological features or deposit were recorded during the course of the watching brief.

During the monitoring of a service trench immediately to the northeast of the boundary for St Peters graveyard a layer of silty clay (7), 0.5m thick, was recorded. The layer contained up to 3% CMB, comprised predominantly of roof tiles.

5 FINDS

Ceramic building material (predominantly roof tile) of post-medieval date was noted during the excavation of a service trench to the northeast of St Peters graveyard and to the southwest of the Old Rectory, although not retained.

No other finds were noted or retained during the course of the watching brief.

6 DISCUSSION

A watching brief was carried out on two relatively large areas of the straw shed and straw burner, and the heat hut, amounting to *c.* 612m². In addition *c.* 250m of service trenches were monitored. During the course of the works no significant archaeological

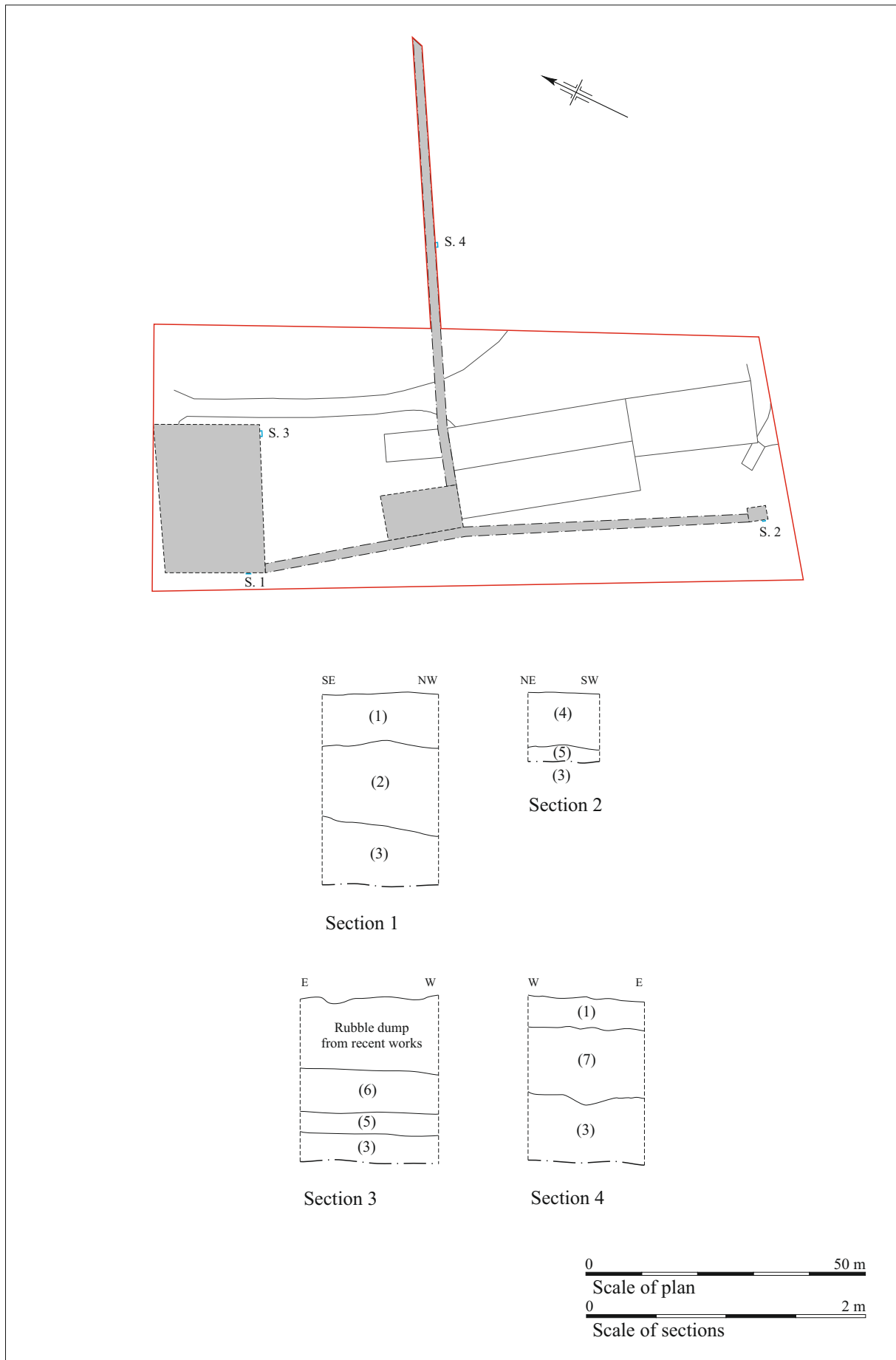


Figure 2: Sections of monitored area



Service trench to the northeast of St Peters (graveyard boundary on the right, the Old Rectory on lower terrace to the left).



Location of new straw shed. View to southwest.

features or deposits were recorded. In general visibility was adequate and as such there is a high degree of confidence in the results.

The layer identified to the southeast of The Old Rectory which contained a moderate percentage of 18th/19th century roof tile fragments is almost certainly associated with its construction or repairs to its roof.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

John Moore Heritage Services, 2014, *An Evaluation at The Old Rectory, Easington, Oxfordshire*.

John Moore heritage Services, 2015, *Written Scheme of Investigation (Project No 3209)*.

Appendix A

Context Inventory

Summary- Length: 7.6m. Average depth: 0.6m. Aligned: N-S.								
Cntxt	Type	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Finds	Interpretation	Date
1	Layer	Loam			0.2m	None	Topsoil	Modern
2	Layer	Clay silt			0.28m	None	Dump deposit	Modern
3	Layer	Clay				-	Mudstone geology	-
4	Layer	Loam				-	Ploughsoil	Modern
5	Layer	Clay				None	Plough disturbed geology	Modern
6	Layer	Silt				-	Culluvium	-
7	Layer	Loam				Tile	Dump	18 th – 19 th Century