



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

LAND ADJACENT TO FRANKLINS FARM,

DUKES CLOSE, SHABBINGTON,

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE, HP18 9HN

NGR SP664067

NOVEMBER 2019

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CONTENTS

	Page
SUMMARY	1
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Site Location	1
1.2 Planning Background	1
1.3 Archaeological Background	3
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	4
3 STRATEGY	4
3.1 Research Design	4
3.2 Methodology	4
4 RESULTS	5
5 DISCUSSION	10
6 ARCHIVE	11
7 BIBLIOGRAPHY	11
 FIGURES AND PLATES	
Figure 1. Site Location.	2
Figure 2. Plans and sections for the stripped area for the proposed road and parking.	6
Figure 3. Plan and section for the footings for plots 7 and 8.	9
Plate 1. Section 01; possible linear 04, looking southeast.	7
Plate 2. Section 02; possible linear 06, looking southeast.	7
Plate 3. Section 03, looking northeast.	8
Plate 4. Trench shot of plots 7 and 8, looking northwest.	8
 APPENDICES	
Appendix 1. OASIS Report Form	12

SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services conducted an archaeological watching brief at land adjacent to Franklins Farm, Dukes Close, Shabbington, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP664067). The watching brief encompassed an area stripped for the proposed road and parking, as well as the excavation of footings for housing plots 7 and 8. The watching brief identified two possible linear features in the stripped area of the road, which are probably natural features, potentially formed due to gleying. No archaeological features were identified during the excavation of the footings for the housing plots 7 and 8.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located to the west of a track leading to Franklins Farm, between the farm and Dukes Close (NGR SP664067).

The site lies at approximately 69m OD. The geology is superficial sand and gravel deposits, which form part of the Third River Terrace Deposits, formed approximately 3 million years ago. Underlying this, the bedrock forms part of the Kimmeridge Clay Formation, which is a sedimentary deposit formed approximately 152 to 157 million years ago (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

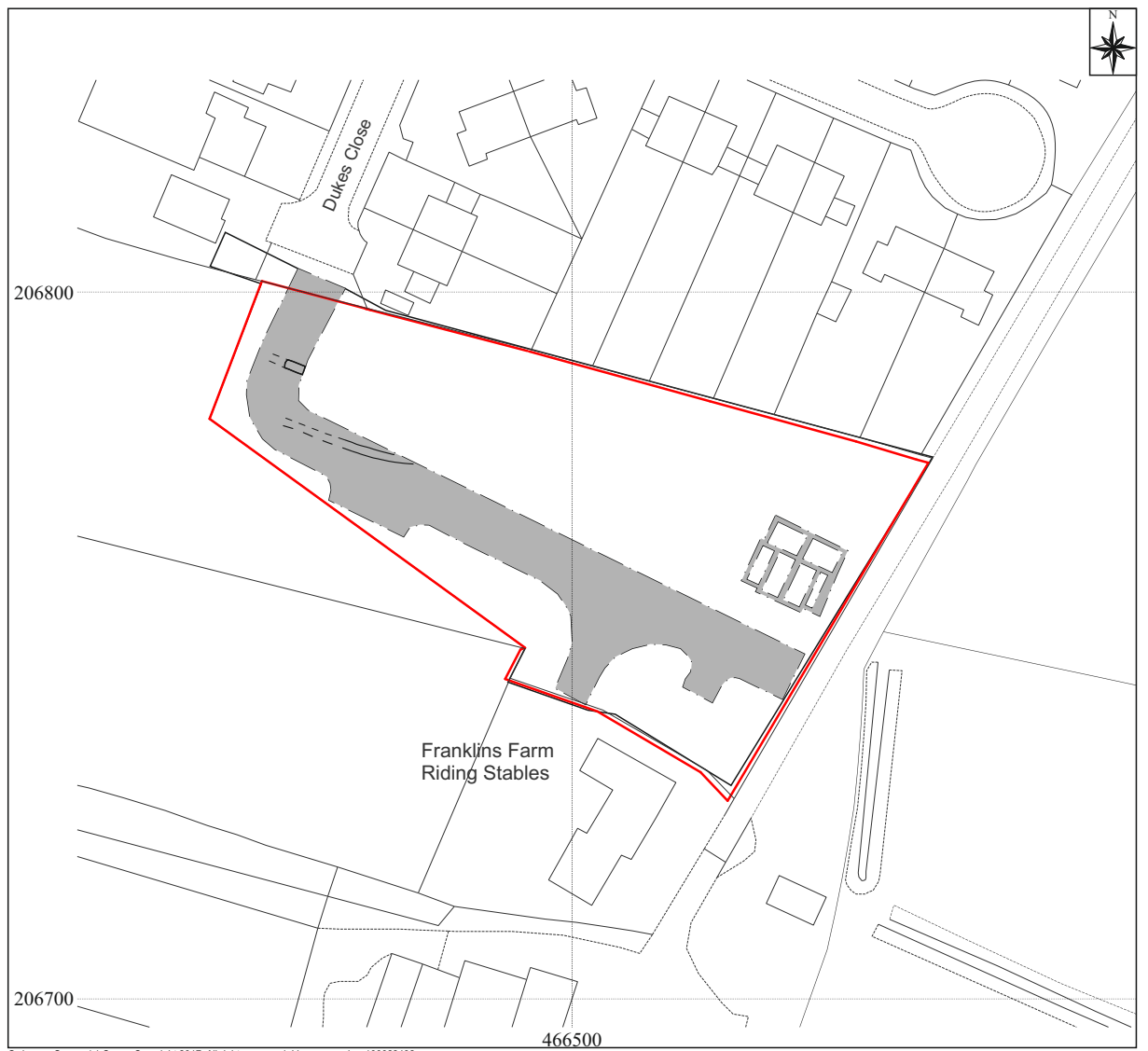
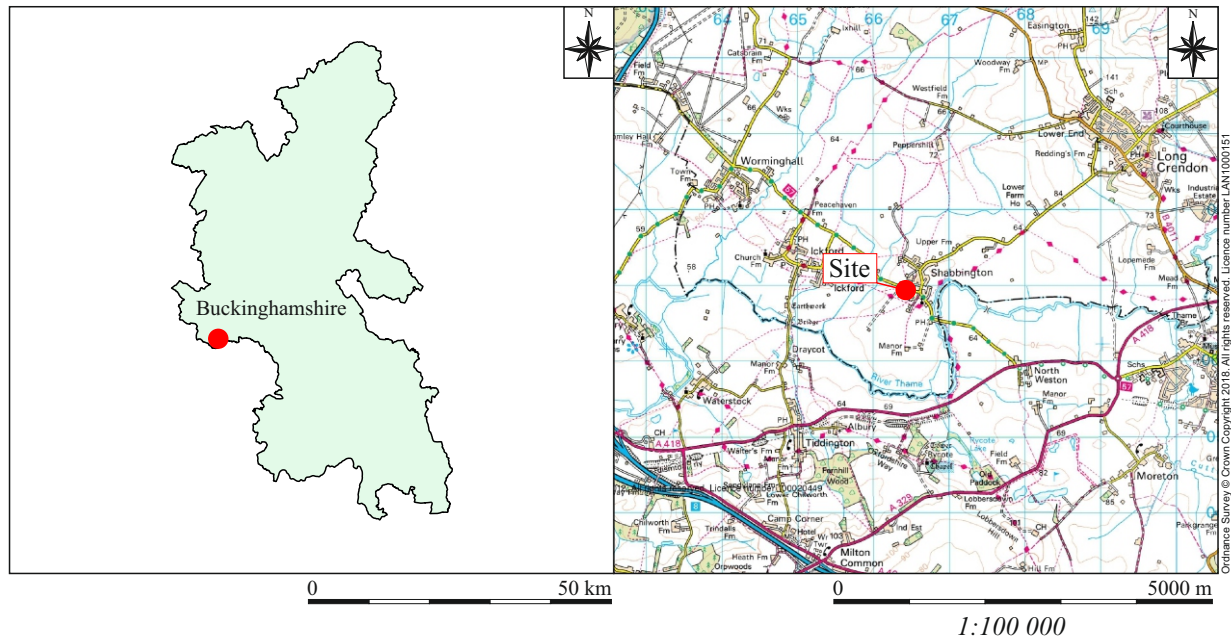
1.2 Planning Background

Aylesbury Vale District Council (AVDC) granted planning permission for a residential development comprising 8 dwellings along with access and amenity space provision and re-alignment of an existing public footpath (17/02204/APP). Due to the archaeological and historical importance of the surrounding area, and following the results of an archaeological evaluation, the Archaeological Officer for Buckinghamshire County Council suggested that the previous archaeological condition was extended to encompass a watching brief to be maintained during the course of building operations or construction works on the site:

Condition 4 (17A2204/DIS): Given the archaeological potential for this site, we recommend that an archaeological watching brief is undertaken on the groundworks, to record any further archaeological features that are likely to be impacted by the development. This work should be detailed in a written scheme of investigation, to be submitted by the County Archaeology Service.

The archaeological condition (Condition 4) should therefore remain in place until the programme of archaeological work (the watching brief) has been fully implemented including the including the receipt of a satisfactory report detailing the results.

This was in line with NPPF (2018) and the explanatory PPG and other Local Planning policies that were current at the time.



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Key Site boundary Watched Area
 Archaeological features

Figure 1: Site location

1.3 Archaeological Background

A search of the Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record (HER) has been carried out. The search area encompassed a 500m radius centred on NGR SP664067. The results are discussed in chronological order. Information on the parish is taken from the Victoria County History (VCH 1927) and the results of the evaluation of the site are summarised.

Prehistoric

The only prehistoric feature known in the search area is a Late Bronze Age - Middle Iron Age pit found to the rear of Franklins Farmhouse, Ickford Road (HER 0707800000, SP665930656).

Roman

Roman pottery sherds have been found north of the churchyard (HER 0056504000, SP66720683 point). There is a conjectured route of a Roman road from Dorchester-on-Thames to Ermine Street (HER 02035000000, SP78391881 centred).

Medieval

In the Domesday Survey of AD 1086, a manor of Shabbington is mentioned as being held by Wigod of Wallingford before the conquest, and by AD 1086 being descended to Miles Crispin. Overlordship remained the honour of Wallingford and from the mid-16th century of Ewelme. Around the 13th century it was held by De Valognes, then in AD 1299 it was given to Knights Hospitallers. This was disputed during the early 14th century and from then it was held by Grey, later Lord Grey of Rotherfield (VCH 1927). This was around the churchyard (HER 0056500000, SP66750670 point), with the possible location of the manor house being south of the churchyard (HER 0056501000, SP666066).

Evidence of the shrunken village of Shabbington survives as earthworks (HER 0056502000, SP66700674 - 343m x 470m), which include house platforms (HER 0056502001, SP66690689).

The route of a medieval track possibly on an earlier Roman alignment is also known at Kimbells Close (HER 0056502002, SP6673006884 point).

A medieval fishery is documented around the churchyard with Domesday recording a fishery of 100 eels from the manor of Sobintone and the fishing rights in the Thame having descended with the manor (HER 0056503000, SP6678706659 point). A group of three fishponds survive as earthworks (HER 0056503001, SP6680806708 - 37m x 61m).

A medieval fishpond and house platform are known north of Mill Road (HER 00565020023 SP6679606829 point). Medieval pottery sherds, along with post-medieval sherds, have been collected north of the churchyard (HER 0056504001 and 0056504002, SP66700689). A further medieval pottery scatter is known (HER 0209000000, SP66790701).

The church of St Mary Magdalene dates from the 12th century with later rebuilding and additions (HER 0225900000, SP666606794). Medieval settlement ditches, pits, a gully, and pottery have been found during an evaluation at Land at The Vine (HER 0771100000, SP6659007120) while a medieval gully and pits were found north of Rose Cottage (HER 0958400000, SP6661806875). To the Rear of Franklins Farmhouse an excavation uncovered late Saxon and medieval boundary ditches, gullies, pits, pottery, and animal bones of 11th to 16th century date (HER 0963300000, SP6658806864).

An archaeological evaluation (JMHS 2017) at *Land Off Franklins Farm, Ickford Road, Shabbington, Buckinghamshire* (NGR SP 66495 06781) revealed a series of linear features representing the remains of a series of undated boundary or enclosure ditches overlain by ridge and furrow cultivation of Medieval and Post-Medieval date. Extant ridge and furrow earthworks were visible within the field. A single small pit containing an iron nail of Post-Medieval date was also recorded.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To undertake an archaeological watching brief during invasive ground works on the site that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality, and date of the archaeological remains encountered during the previous evaluation and any further archaeological features encountered.

In particular:

- To understand more fully the remains of undated boundary or enclosure ditches found during the evaluation works.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with the Archaeology Officer for Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC), the archaeological advisors to the Aylesbury Vale District Council.

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

3.2 Methodology

Groundworks were undertaken in two stages: the first encompassed the stripping of the area of the proposed road and parking, which also included the excavation of

service trenches, the excavation of a fuel tank trench, and ground reduction for an access road. The second phase of groundworks comprised the excavation of the footings for housing plots 7 and 8.

The resultant spoil from the works was visually scanned, especially for finds relating to the medieval and post-medieval periods.

Where archaeological horizons were encountered they were cleaned by hand and excavated appropriately. Standard John 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. A photographic record was also produced.

During the groundworks, it was clear that features identified in the evaluation did not appear to continue into the stripped area as expected. Furthermore, the features within the stripped area of the road were ephemeral, and no archaeological features were identified during the excavation of the footings for housing plots 7 and 8. This, combined with the poor ground conditions during the second stage of the watching brief, resulted in the Archaeological Officer for Buckinghamshire County Council being contacted, and it was ultimately decided that it was not necessary to continue the watching brief for housing plots 1-6 (Pers. Comm. Lucy Lawrence 8/11/2019).

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts, numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material, while numbers in bold indicate structural features.

Across both stages of the watching brief, the topsoil (01), subsoil (02), and natural (03) deposits were found to be uniform in their physical properties. The lowest deposit encountered on the site was the natural clay (03); this was a firm clay deposit, which was mid-greyish orange closer to the subsoil horizon, but a mid-greyish blue below this. This deposit had rare small stone inclusions, often found close to the subsoil horizon, and had a thickness greater than 1.10m.

Stratified above this was a subsoil deposit, which was a friable, mid-greyish orange clay loam, with rare small stone inclusions, and a thickness ranging between 0.15-0.20m across the site (02).

Overlying the subsoil was the topsoil, a friable mid-greyish brown silty clay loam which had very rare inclusions of small stone and grit (01). This deposit varied slightly in thickness across the site, between 0.10-0.15m.

Stripping of the Area of the Proposed Road and Parking

An area of ground approximately 100m x 10m was stripped in preparation for the construction of the new road and parking area, service trenches and fuel tank. The area was stripped to a depth of approximately 0.40m. The groundworks took place

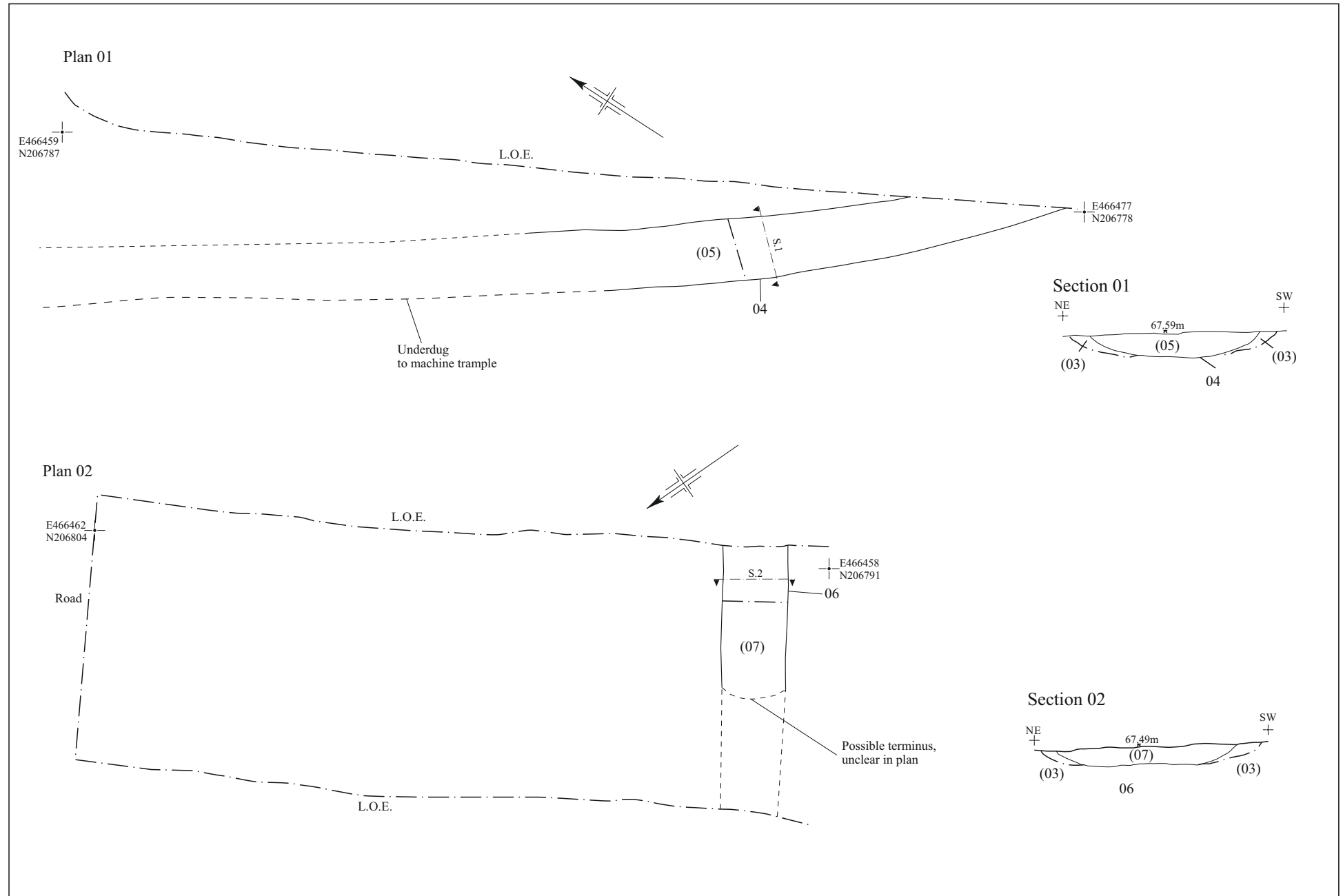
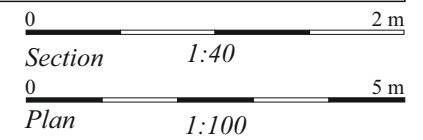


Figure 2: Plans and sections for the stripped area for the proposed road and parking.



over the course of four days, during which time, two potential linear features were identified.

Potential linear feature 04 (Figure 2: Plan 1, and Section 1; Plate 1), had a NW-SE orientation, which entered the stripped area from the northeast bulk. The feature was more than 20m in length, approximately 1.30m in width, and had a maximum depth of 0.20m. The potential linear 04 had a single fill, (05), which was a firm, dark bluish-orange brown, clay loam, with rare stone inclusions. No finds were recovered from this feature.



Plate 1: Section 01; possible linear 04, looking southeast.



Plate 2: Section 02; possible linear 06, looking southeast.

Potential linear feature 06 (Figure 2: Plan 2, and Section 2; Plate 2), was more than 5m in length, approximately 1.40m in width, and had a maximum depth of 0.12m. There was a potential terminus 2m northwest of the intervention into this feature, but

this was unclear in plan, and the feature may have continued through the area. The feature had a single fill, (07), which was a firm dark bluish-brown silty clay loam with no inclusions, which potentially formed due to gleying. No finds were recovered from this feature.

Both of these features were cut into the natural clay (03), and the fills of both were overlain by the subsoil (02), and topsoil, (01), which are discussed above.

Excavation of Footings for Housing Plots 7 and 8

The footings trenches for the new housing plots 7 and 8 were observed, which enclosed an area of approximately 12m in length by 11m in width (Figure 3; Plates 3 and 4). The footings were excavated to a depth of approximately 1.40m and measured



Plate 3: Section 03, looking northeast.



Plate 4: Trench shot of plots 7 and 8, looking northwest.

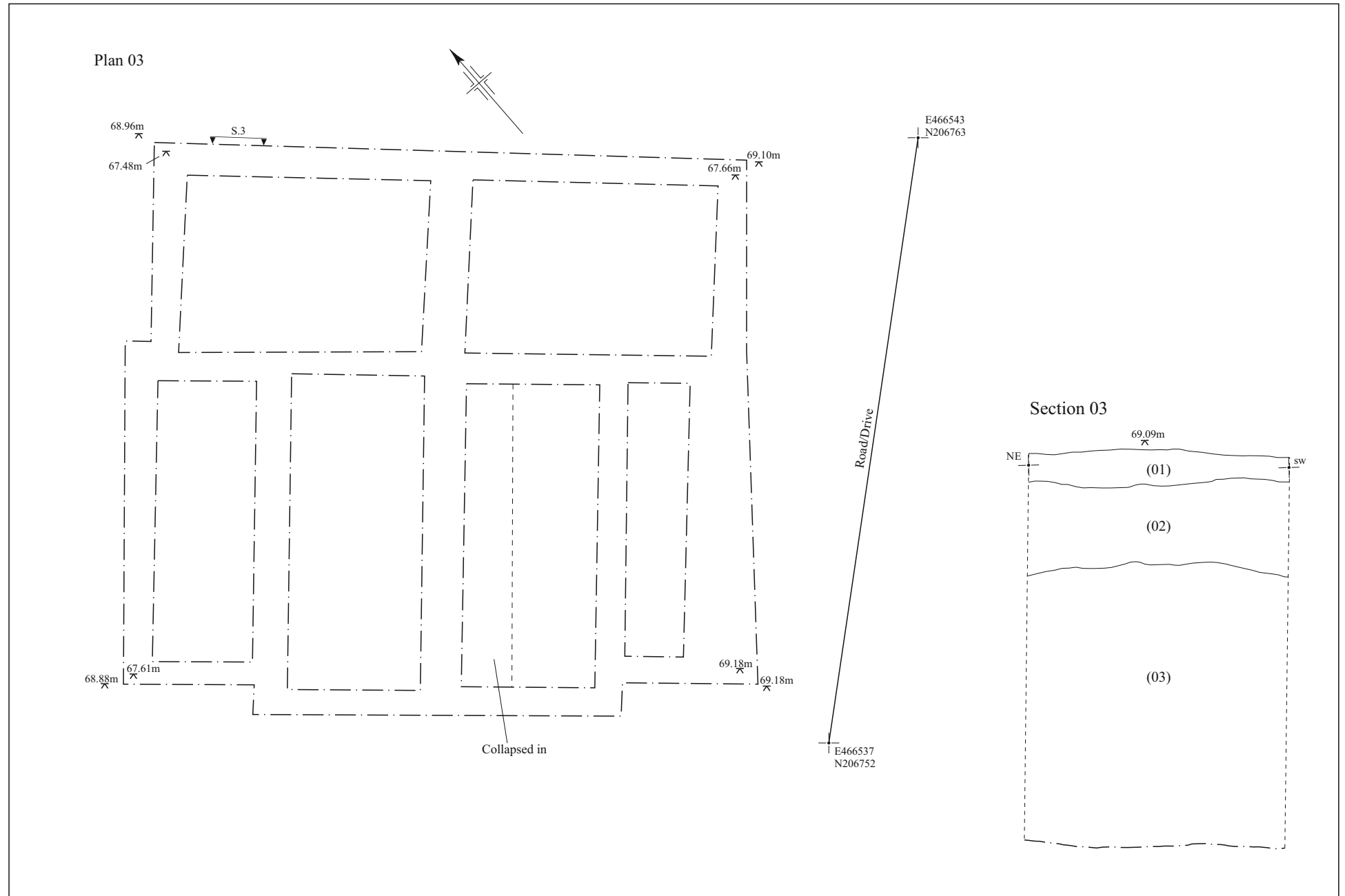
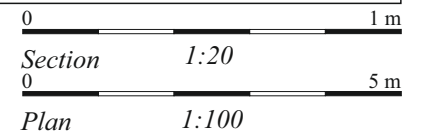


Figure 3: Plan and section for the footings for plots 7 and 8.



between 0.90m and 0.70m in width. The groundworks took place over the course of three days, during which time no archaeological features or deposits were identified in this area. The only deposits present were the topsoil (01), subsoil (02), and natural (03), which are discussed above, and were consistent with those found during the stripping of the road.

Reliability of Results

The monitored work during the stripping of the road was undertaken in good conditions, with good cooperation from site staff, ensuring that the archaeological investigation could be undertaken without impediment. During the excavation of the footings, despite good cooperation from the site staff once more, the ground conditions were poor due to bad weather. This resulted in areas of the excavated footings collapsing, which may have impacted upon any archaeology present, although unlikely.

5 DISCUSSION

During the previous archaeological evaluation undertaken at the site, a number of undated features were identified, some of which may have been natural due to their irregular shape and shallow nature. Although some of these features were on the same alignment as the furrows, these are probably soil marks left by standing water in furrows, rather than ditch fills.

Furthermore, a number of possible ditch features identified during the evaluation would have been expected to continue into the stripped area for the road but these were not identified during the watching brief. Two possible linear features, 04 and 06, were identified during the stripping of the road, though once more these are unlikely to be archaeological features. The fill of potential linear 04 is unlikely to be a ditch fill, and may instead be a soil mark which has formed due to gleying, or may be a variation in the natural. Similarly, potential linear 06 was not well-defined in plan, but was even less so in section, and is once more a probable natural feature, or soil mark. There were additional natural clay patches, irregular in shape, identified within the area stripped for the road.

During the previous archaeological evaluation, sherds of medieval and post-medieval pottery were recovered from parallel ditches 3/06 and 3/08 in Trench 3. These ditches were very shallow, only 50mm deep, and were not identified in the excavation of the building plots 7 and 8, indicating that these may have been potential subsoil deposits, rather than linear features. The watching brief in the area of the footings did not identify any evidence of archaeological activity at the site.

Across the site, a series of natural deposits were observed, demonstrating the geological processes which formed the landscape. These included the natural clay (03), overlain by a naturally-accumulated subsoil (02). Overlying this was a topsoil deposit (01), which probably formed due to processes resulting from the agricultural use of the site for pasture in recent years.

6 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive will be combined with the evaluation archive and consists of the following:

Paper record

Written scheme of investigation

The project report

The primary site record

Physical record

Finds

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the Buckinghamshire County Museum with accession number AYBCM:2017.37.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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London

APPENDIX 1: OASIS REPORT FORM

OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM: England

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OASIS ID: johnmoor1-373737

Project details

Project name	Land Adjacent to Franklins Farm, Dukes Close, Shabbington
Short description of the project	John Moore Heritage Services conducted an archaeological watching brief at the land adjacent to Franklins Farm, Dukes Close, Shabbington, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP664067). The watching brief encompassed an area stripped for the proposed road and parking, as well as the excavation of footings for housing plots 7 and 8. The watching brief identified two possible linear features in the stripped area of the road, which are probably natural features, potentially formed due to standing water in a furrow. No archaeological features were identified during the excavation of the footings for the housing plots 7 and 8.
Project dates	Start: 17-09-2019 End: 06-11-2019
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	17/02204/APP - Planning Application No.
Any associated project reference codes	3936 - Contracting Unit No.
Any associated project reference codes	SHFF19 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	AYBCM:2017.37 - Museum accession ID
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 15 - Other
Monument type	RIDGE AND FURROW Uncertain
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	NONE None
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF

Project location

Country	England
Site location	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AYLESBURY VALE SHABBINGTON Land Adjacent to Franklins Farm, Dukes Close, Shabbington

Postcode HP18 9HN
 Study area 1482 Square metres
 Site coordinates SP 66456 06919 51.756557498323 -1.037077746879 51 45 23 N 001 02 13 W Point
 Height OD / Depth Min: 67.48m Max: 69.18m

Project creators

Name of Organisation John Moore Heritage Services
 Project brief originator Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Services
 Project design originator JMHS
 Project director/manager John Moore
 Project supervisor Grace Griffith
 Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists? No
 Digital Archive recipient John Moore Heritage Services
 Digital Archive ID 3936
 Digital Contents "Stratigraphic","other"
 Digital Media available "GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Text"
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