

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

THE OLD FORGE, CHILTON

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE – 09/02467/APP

On behalf of

BSA Chesters Ltd

AUGUST 2010

REPORT FOR BSA Chesters Limited
37 High Street
Long Crendon
Buckinghamshire
HP18 9AL

PREPARED BY Christer Carlsson

ILLUSTRATION BY Eoin Fitzsimons

FIELDWORK 24 April - 14 June 2010

REPORT ISSUED 13 August 2010

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

Tel/Fax 01865 358300
Email: info@jmheritageservices.co.uk

Site Code CHOF 10
JMHS Project No: 2233
Archive Location The archive is currently held by JMHS and will be deposited with Buckinghamshire Museum Service under accession number 2010.90

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	4	
3 STRATEGY	4	
3.1 Research Design	4	
3.2 Methodology	5	
4 RESULTS	5	
4.1 Results	5	
4.2 Reliability of Results	9	
5 FINDS	9	
5.1 Pottery <i>by Paul Blinkhorn</i>	9	
5.2 Environmental Remains	9	
6 DISCUSSION	9	
7 ARCHIVE	10	
8 BIBLIOGRAPHY	10	
 FIGURES		
Figure 1	Site Location	2
Figure 2	Plan of archaeology	6
Figure 3	Sections	8
Figure 4	Photograph of NE wall of store	11
Figure 5	Photograph of SE wall of kitchen	11
Figure 6	Photograph of Pit 30	12
Figure 7	Photograph of Pit 40	12

Summary

John Moore Heritage Services conducted a watching brief during the ground works for two single-storey extensions to the existing building known as The Old Forge. The reduction of the ground level to the west of the house required the removal of an existing retaining wall whilst the machine-excavated foundation trenches at the south of the house revealed two 13th century pits. No new structural elements in relation to The Old Forge building or its previous use as a workshop were detected. Beneath the floor of the Boot Room, Hall & Store, were an older floor level and a posthole, and probably relate to the 17th century forge.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site was located in the historic core of the village of Chilton at the corner of Thame Road and Brill Road at NGR SP 68730 11620 (Figure 1). The underlying solid geology is Amphill Clay. The site is currently in residential use.

1.2 Planning Background

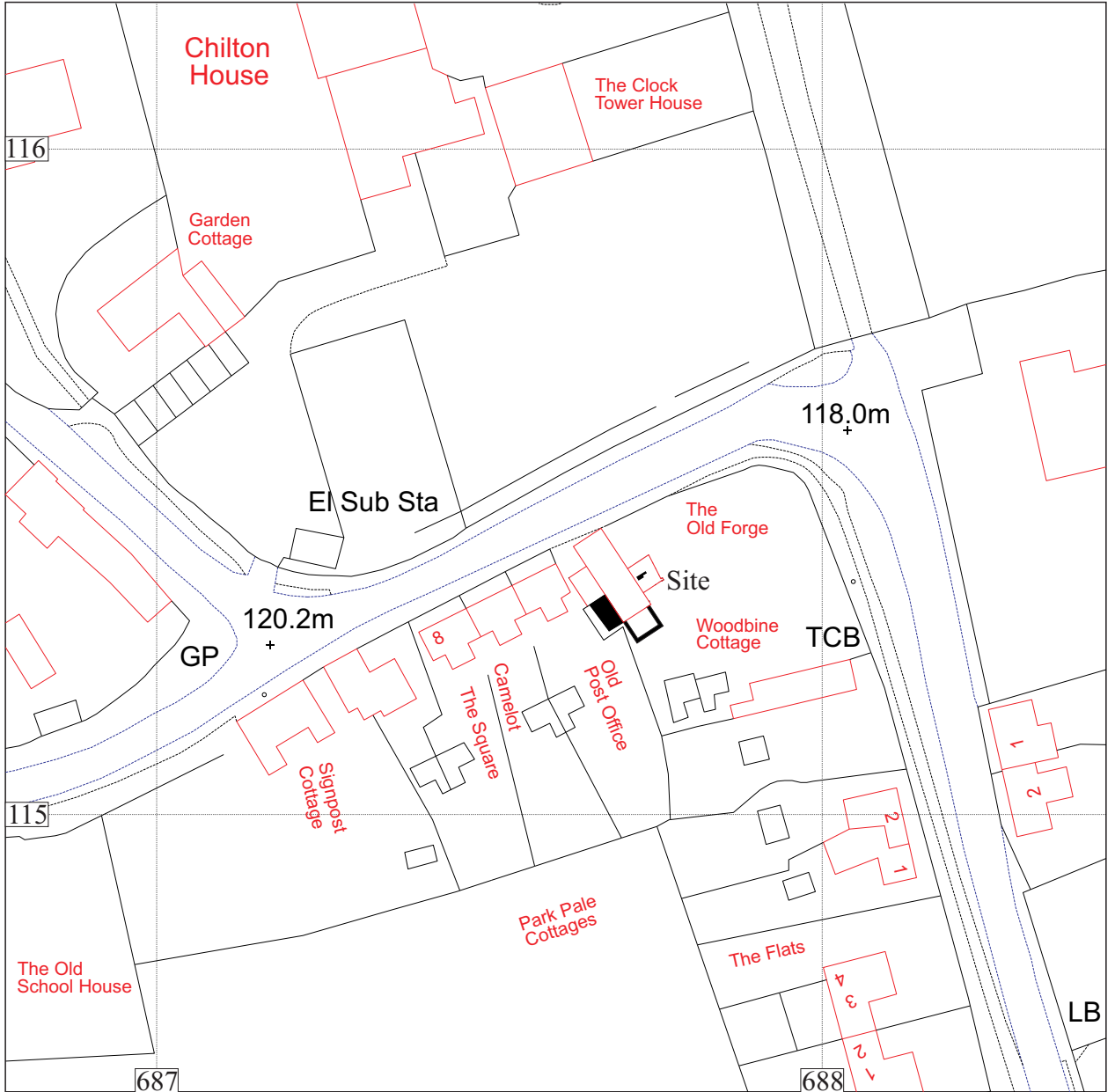
Aylesbury Vale District Council granted planning permission for two single-storey extensions (09/02467/APP). Due to the site's potential to contain archaeological remains a condition was attached to the permission for a programme of archaeological work to be carried out during the ground works. This is in line with Planning Policy Statement 5 (Planning for the Historic Environment) Policy HE12. Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS) issued a generic *Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief*. The work was carried out to a *Written Scheme of Investigation*, approved by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service, which outlined the method by which the watching brief would be carried out in order to preserve by record any archaeological remains of significance.

1.3 Archaeological Background

To the west of the site in an allotment along Brill Road a possible Mesolithic blade (BCAS 04105000000; SP 68430 11470) was found in 1977. South of the site, during redevelopment in 1986 at Chilton school, two sherds of Romano-British pottery were found (BCAS 05542000000; SP 68930 11160).

Chilton (BCAS 08564000000; SP 687 115) features in the Domesday Book when "Walter Giffard holds Chilton himself. It answers 10 hides. Land for 10 ploughs; in lordship 4 hides; 4 ploughs there. 10 villagers with 4 smallholders have 6 ploughs. 3 slaves; meadow for 3 ploughs; woodland, 100 pigs. In total, value £7; when acquired £8; before 1066 as much. Alric, son of Goding, a thane of King Edward's, held this manor".

To the northwest of the site is St Mary's Church (BCAS 02211000000; SP 68680 11610), a Grade I listed building. The nave is 12th century, with a 13th century chancel and south transept, a mid-14th century tower. During the 15th century the nave was widened and the south aisle removed. A 16th century south chapel was added at the



Ordnance Survey (c) Crown Copyright 2010. All rights reserved. Licence number 100020449



Figure 1. Site location

same time as the roof was replaced. It was restored in 1907.

To the west of the site is a late medieval timber-framed house, Wheelwrights (BCAS 0404200000; SP 68683 11546), which was remodelled in the 16th century. It is a Grade II listed building.

The Old Forge (BCAS 1024500000; SP 68768 11535) is a 17th century timber framed house with 18th century alterations. It is a Grade II listed building and is located within the historic core of the village of Chilton. The building comprises a timber framed structure with brick infill in the two north bays, the south bay is clad in brick on the east side. It has an old tile roof and comprises three bays and two storeys. The west elevation comprises two south bays with a brick upper floor, rubblestone lower part. The street, or north, gable elevation comprises a rubblestone ground floor with a tile hung upper floor. There is a southeast single storey brick bay with weatherboard east gable, which is the remainder of the forge: it is now mainly demolished. The west elevation has a north bay with exposed timber framing. There are casement and sash windows. East side has the present door, with a two-light window; the first floor has two-light leaded casements; access to the forge is via a north door. The chimney-stack is located between the south bays. It is shown as a smithy on the 1880 Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map.

To the north of The Old Forge is Chilton House (BCAS 0404401000; SP 68730 11620), a Grade II* listed building dating from the 16th century; it was remodeled in about 1740. The manor was held by Alric before the Conquest and in 1086 belonged to Walter Giffard, passing to the Earls of Pembroke, the Clares, the Pevers and the Zouches. By 1529 it had been sold to John Croke, who built the core of the present house. Chief Justice Carter had it remodeled in 1740 in the fashion of William Winde's Buckingham House, London. There are records of a 17th century dovecote, and two 18th century dovehouses and a malthouse (BCAS 0404402000; SP 68730 11620). The gardens (BCAS 0404403000; SP 68695 11667) at Chilton House date from the 16th century, and were apparently designed by John Croke, who built the core of the present house, part of which are walled (BCAS 0404403002; SP 68693 11628). The 18th century kitchen garden walls (BCAS 0404403003; SP 68757 11548) are Grade II listed, as is the 17th century barn (BCAS 0404404000; SP 68752 11691) on the northeast side of Chilton House. A 19th century stable and hayloft (BCAS 0404405000; SP 68735 11688) and a late 18th or early 19th century timber framed granary (BCAS 0404406000; SP 68730 11681) are also Grade II listed. During the construction of a ha-ha at Chilton Park in 1989 fragments of a stone balustrade were found (BCAS 0404403001; SP 687 117).

East of the site on Thame Road is a Grade II listed telephone box (BCAS 1339500000; SP 68804 11536) designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott. On the east side of Thame Road is The Gatehouse (BCAS 1024700000; SP 68838 11560), a Grade II* listed building dated 1683. Immediately adjacent to the south are 1 and 2 Gatehouse Cottages. 1 Gatehouse Cottages (BCAS 1024800000; SP 68829 11514) is a Grade II listed building from the 18th century; number 2 (BCAS 1024900000; SP 68830 11504) is also Grade II listed, and dates from the 19th century.

East of The Gatehouse in the grounds of Chilton Park is a possible decoy pond or fishpond (BCAS 0258600000; SP 6913 1152) which is marked on the Chilton Grounds estate map (BRO D/BMT/55.R) and on an estate map of c.1700 (BRO MA/AF/50/31). To the southeast of the site also within Chilton Grounds Farm are earthworks and a fishpond (BCAS 0168100000; SP 69100 11400) associated with brick kilns and clay extraction. The kilns are

documented on an 18th century estate map (BRO D/BMT/55R). East of the pond field survey revealed a possible 18th or 19th century icehouse (BCAS 0465000000; SP 69200 11540). Ridge and furrow is present in fields to the north and east of the decoy pond.

South of the site is Woodbine (BCAS 1024600000; SP 68796 11519), a Grade II listed building dating from the 17th century with 18th century alterations and extension. Cannon Court Farm (BCAS 0493100000; SP 68830 11340), which lies south of Woodbine, is the presumed location of the manor given to Notley Abbey in the 13th century. In 1542 it was acquired by John Croke. The Old Vicarage (BCAS 0493101000; SP 68830 11340), a Grade II listed building built in the 17th century, is adjacent to the south. It was refronted in the 18th century and altered on two occasions in the 19th century. Some 250 m south of the Old Vicarage historic Ordnance Survey maps indicate the presence of a gravel pit (BCAS 0906300000; SP 68704 11046).

West of the site on Brill Road is Signpost Cottage (BCAS 1024400000; SP 68719 11515) a 17th century Grade II listed timber framed thatched house with 18th century cladding. Beyond Signpost Cottage is White Cottage (BCAS 1023800000; SP 68618 11490) a Grade II listed building, dating from the 18th century. Northwest of the site on Dorton Road is Orchard Cottage (BCAS 1023900000; SP 68635 11603), a Grade II listed building dating from the 19th century. Just to the north Orchard Cottage is The Thatch (formerly The Thatched Cottage) (BCAS 1024000000; SP 68617 11652), a Grade II listed building dating from the 17th century, with 18th century alterations. On the east side of Dorton Road, north of the Thatch, is Townhill (BCAS 1024100000; SP 68616 11764) a Grade II listed building dating from the 17th century, altered during the 18th and 19th centuries and extended in the 20th century; 17th and 18th century Grade II listed barns and outbuildings (BCAS 1024200000; SP 68600 11800) are associated with Townhill.

To the northwest of the site beneath the present location of St Mary's Church is an artificial mound (BCAS 0221101000; SP 68669 11611) of unknown date.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To record any archaeological remains that will be impacted on by the development with particular regard to the possibility of finds relating to the post-medieval forge.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Services (BCAS). 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 and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was present on site during the course of ground works associated with the development. This included observation of excavation for the footings and the ground reduction. All artefacts were collected and retained except for concentrations of building material, where only a representative sample was retained.

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 context sheet was also produced for each archaeological feature.

4 RESULTS (Figures 2-3)

All features were assigned individual context numbers. Numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material. A general description of the feature fills is given.

4.1 Field Results

Area 1 – West of the house (Figures 2-3)

The natural geological deposit in the area consisted of compact Amphill Clay (19). Over this was a moderately compact dark-yellow-brownish loamy-clay (18) that was on average 0.40 thick and may also be a natural geological layer. Above this it appeared that a 'surface' had been created which was a mixture of this deposit with a combination of dry mortar (08) through which the modern drains and the foundation of the old garden retaining wall of the house had been cut.

The garden retaining wall consisted of two brick builds topped with a coping course; it was built of regular brick stretcher courses 04 set on a single course of thinner, older bricks 09. These in turn rested on a thick joint of mortar (10) and subsequently the foundation made of mortared brick rubble (11). A cut 05 was visible for the wall on the west side. The cut extended 0.12m from the wall and was 0.20m deep. The backfill of the cut was mid brown-yellow sandy clay (03). The wall was removed as part of the operations to reduce the ground level and to create a new patio.

Between the garden retaining wall and the building was a cement layer (15) acting as a drain for rain water.

Area 2 – South Gable; foundation trenches (Figures 2-3)

The natural geological deposit in this area consisted of Amphill Clay (19), the same as recorded in Area 1. However, to the south of the building two further layers existed; a dark-brown-black silty garden soil (1) and a mid-brown clay-silt subsoil (2).

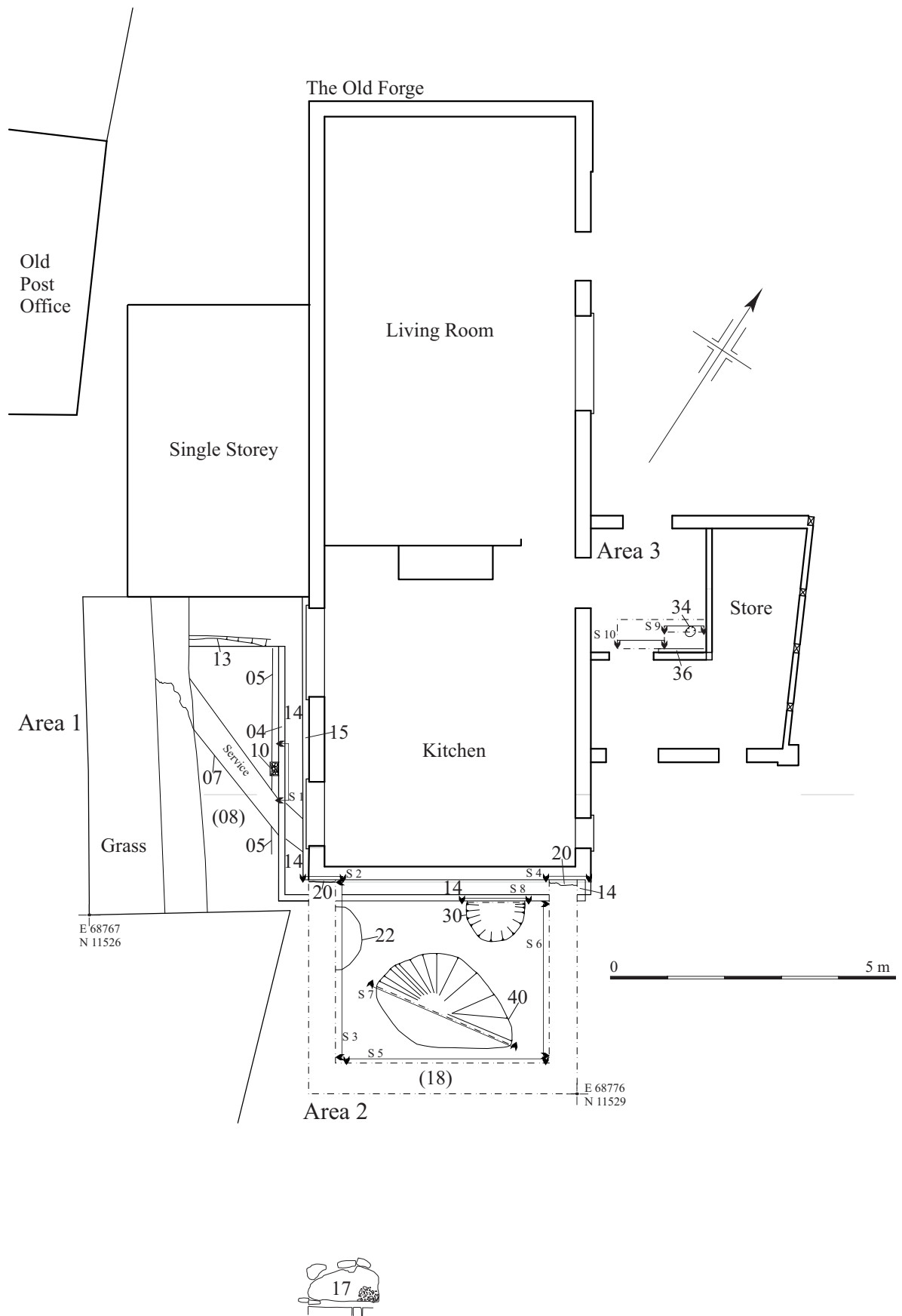


Figure 2. Plan of archaeology

The former contained a large quantity of household refuse including cinders, charcoal and rusted metal objects as well as glass, ceramic and stoneware vessels. The latter contained similar finds - none of which were retained as they were considered to be of little relevance to the dating or understanding of the architectural development of The Old Forge. The compacted surface (8) seen at the west of the building was not apparent to the south. Therefore, in section (see Fig 3. section 5) the subsoil was resting upon a moderately compact dark-yellow-brown loamy-clay (18).

Excavation of the foundation trenches by the mechanical digger revealed three pits in section 22, 26, & 28 whose presence was confirmed once the top and sub soils (1) and (2) had been removed as part of the general height reduction of the ground level in this area. This also revealed further pits 30 & 40 in plan.

Pit 22 was seen as 0.92m wide and 0.26m deep with an irregular profile (Fig. 3, Section 3). The fill was dark brown-black clay silt (21). Pit 26 was 0.68m wide in section and 0.16m deep with a flat base (Fig. 3, Section 5) and filled by mid brown-black clay silt (25). Pit 28 was 0.74m wide, up to 0.34m deep with an irregular profile (Fig. 3, Section 6). It was filled by mid brown-green silty clay (27). Pit 30 was 1m in diameter and 0.30m deep with a rounded profile (Fig. 3, Section 8 & Fig. 6) and filled by dark grey-brown silty clay (29). Pit 40 was sub-circular 2.5m east-west by 1.7m north-south, 0.30m deep with an irregular profile (Fig. 3, Section 7 & Fig. 7). The fill was mid grey-brown silty clay (39).

Two pits, 28 and 30, contained only medieval pottery and must be of 13th century date. The other pits contained household waste including cinders, charcoal, glass, ceramic and stoneware vessels and discarded animal bones. These finds are characteristic of the deposition of normal domestic refuse in relation to the kitchen and living quarters, they have no relevance to the building being used as a forge *per se* but they do illustrate domestic occupation during the post-medieval period.

The foundation trench on the southeast corner of the house revealed a series of footings to the south wall of the building. These were very different in character to those on the opposing southwest corner. The section (Fig. 3, section 4) records up to five or six courses of brick footings 20 as opposed to the two courses found at the southwest. Furthermore, these extensive footings appear to be slightly 'out of true' and appear to continue to the east under the existing pavement. Whether this was to facilitate the building being 'terraced' into the rising ground at the southeast or a mistake on the part of the builders is unknown. Excavation and recording was restricted to the foundation trench and no further investigations could be made. Another explanation for this discrepancy may be that the natural bedrock that was found as an outcrop to the west of the house (as seen in the modern service trench 7) may have provided a solid foundation. Therefore, the brick footings did not have to be as substantial as that of the southeast corner.

Excavation of the foundation trenches at the south of the house and the subsequent soil reduction required to create a work space (at an approximate distance of 4 m from the south gable) revealed a number of modern garden-related surfaces and structures (stone slabs, a mortared surface, etc) which remained undisturbed during the period of the watching brief.

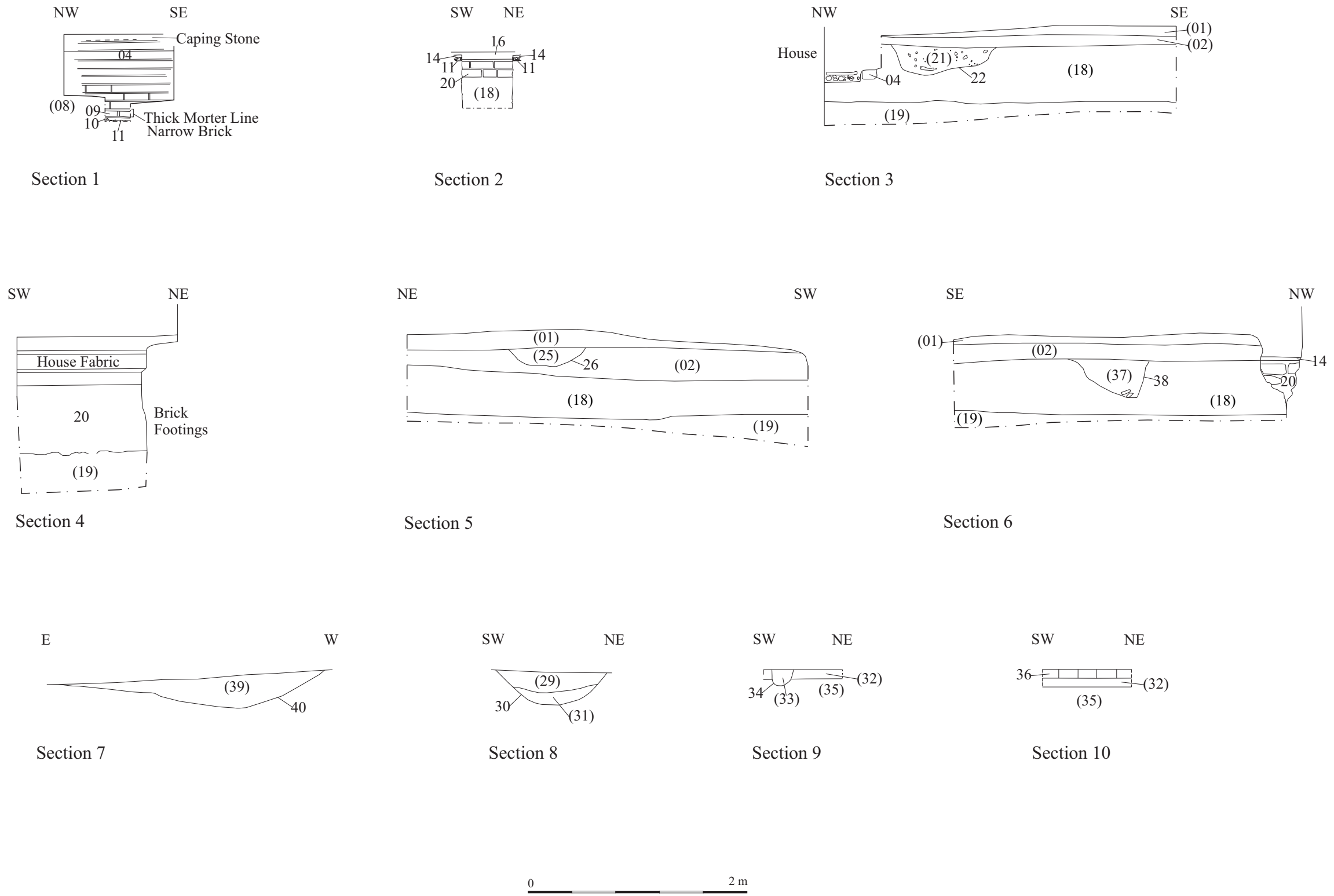


Figure 3. Sections

Area 3 – Interior of Boot Room, Hall & Store (*Figures 2-3*)

The Boot Room, Hall & Store on the eastern side of the Old Forge is an extension of the original house. When the floor in this part of the building was removed in order for it to be replaced with a new floor, a 0.1-0.2 m thick layer of packed sand had to be removed before any older floor layers could be studied. The existing floor tiles and the sand were removed by hand. Beneath the sand was a 0.05m thick layer (32) consisting of firm clay with pieces of charcoal, small stones and crushed brick pressed into the surface. The layer gave an impression of being an older floor, where constant using over the years had pressed different particles into it. Directly beneath this layer (32) was the natural geological deposit (35) of yellow loamy clay similar to context (18) seen outside of the building.

A posthole 34 that was 0.12m in diameter and 0.12m deep (Fig. 3, Section 9) was located in the eastern part of the floor surface (32). It was filled with black-brown sandy-silt (33). The posthole could not be dated, but it is probably contemporary with the use of the clay floor, indicating earlier internal features. Brick wall 36 was built directly on top of floor (32) (Fig. 3, Section 10).

4.2 Reliability of Results

The watching brief was carried out in good conditions with excellent co-operation from the contractors carrying out the ground works and the results are felt to be representative of the extant archaeology.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery *by Paul Blinkhorn*

The pottery assemblage comprised three sherds with a total weight of 88g. It comprised entirely Brill/Boarstall ware, Oxfordshire fabric OXAM (Mellor 1994), and is all of 13th century date. They are all from glazed jugs, a common product of the medieval industry. A single sherd weighing 64g occurred in context 27, and two sherds from another vessel, and weighing 24g occurred in context 29. The latter were decorated with applied strips in body clay. They are in good condition, and typical finds at medieval sites in the region.

5.2 Environmental Remains

No features were considered to warrant environmental sampling.

6 DISCUSSION

Two of the pits discovered to the rear of the house were dated to the 13th century and are evidence for activity on the site prior to the forge being erected.

Ground level reduction to the west of the building revealed a packed clay surface through which the modern services (foul and domestic drains) and the garden retaining wall had been cut. The nature of the building being ‘terraced’ into the hillside and the small size of this area (5m x 2.8m) close to the neighbouring property boundary seems to have prohibited further

development to the south west side. Furthermore, the solid bedrock natural was encountered here less than 0.3m below the original ground surface; it had been noted that the workmen who had installed the modern drains had had to cut through this to get a 'fall' on the drainpipes to the nearest manhole.

The floor level reduction in the Boot Room, Hall and Store showed that an older floor level was preserved beneath the floor tiles. The clay material in the floor was firmly packed together by constant use over the years and particles of charcoal, bricks and small stones were pressed into the surface. There was no evidence of metal working residues. This older floor surface was undated, but probably relates to the 17th century forge as a building, but not the forge area itself. A posthole, close to the centre of the three rooms, could indicate an older layout in this part of the house. The post possibly supported the roof before new inner walls were put up to serve the same purpose.

Views of the building are shown in Figs. 4 & 5

7 ARCHIVE

Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper Record

The project brief	The project report
Written Scheme of Investigation	The primary site records
The photographic and drawn records	

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services. The archive will be transferred to:

Buckinghamshire County Museum, Technical Centre, Tring Road, Halton, Aylesbury HP22 5PJ.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

English Heritage 1991 *Management of Archaeological Projects*

English Heritage 2006 *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment*

Institute for Archaeologists 1994 *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief*. Revised 2008

Mellor, M. 1994 Oxford Pottery: A Synthesis of middle and late Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval pottery in the Oxford Region *Oxoniensia* **59**, 17-217



Figure 4. North-east wall of store



Figure 5. South-east wall of kitchen



Figure 6. Pit 30



Figure 7. Pit 40