



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**THE OLD MILL, POPE'S HILL,**

**KINGSCLERE, HAMPSHIRE**

**NGR SU 5240 5874**

*On behalf of  
Mr T Cooksey*

**August 2010**

**REPORT FOR** Mr T Cooksey  
The Old Malt House  
Pope's Hill  
Kingsclere  
Newbury  
RG20 5SJ

**PREPARED BY** Jenny Winnett

**ILLUSTRATION BY** Jenny Winnett

**EDITED BY** David Gilbert

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

Tel/Fax 01865 358300  
Email: [info@jmheritageservices.co.uk](mailto:info@jmheritageservices.co.uk)

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## **Summary**

*A watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services after the excavation of foundation trenches and other groundwork associated with the construction of a house extension at the Old Mill, Pope's Hill, Kingsclere.*

*The reduction of the site revealed a wall and feature associated with an earlier phase of building and possible earlier millstream orientation on the property.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

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

The development site was located in Kingsclere, south of Newbury on the south side of Popes Hill (NGR SU 5240 5874), Hampshire. The proposed new building was a single storey extension to be constructed against the south elevation. The geology of Kingsclere lies on the junction between Reading Beds clay, with Upper chalk to the south and London clay in the north (Institute of Geological Sciences, sheet 51° N - 02° W). The natural geology on the site was found to be London clay. The development area lies to the south of an existing building, the history of which dates to the 18<sup>th</sup> century.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

A single storey extension is to be constructed against the south elevation. There was a possibility that associated or earlier structures may be revealed during the groundworks. Accordingly Basingstoke and Deane District Council applied a condition to the planning consent (BDB/72045) requiring the carrying out of an archaeological watching brief during the course of the groundworks.

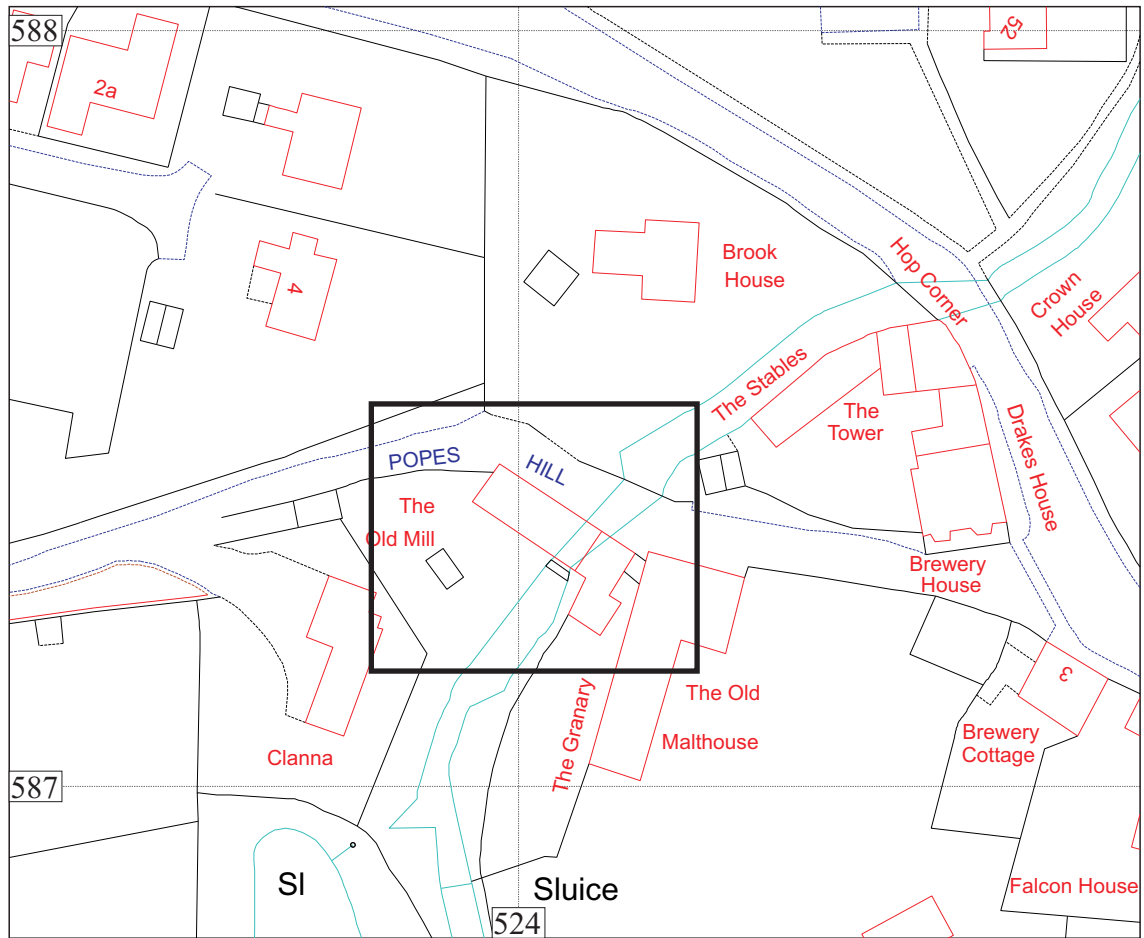
### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

The majority of the following information was taken from the Hampshire Extensive Urban Survey project's entry for Kingsclere (Hampshire County Council 2003).

Kingsclere contains several Scheduled Monuments, although most of these are standing medieval buildings. An excavation was undertaken on Swan Street and several undated inhumations were recovered during the construction of classrooms on the site of the old school on North Street.

Some prehistoric artefacts have been recovered surrounding fields and an inhumation burial found on the east side of Swan Street (SU 5246 5850) may date to the Bronze Age. Some isolated Roman coins have also been recovered from the Swan Hotel. There is sparse evidence for Saxon settlement in the area. Documents show that there was a church at Kingsclere in the late Saxon period but there is little other evidence.

It is believed that the town of Kingsclere was first recorded in the will of King Alfred (c.880 AD) who left the estate of *Cleran* to his daughter, the Abbess of Shaftesbury. There are several tenth century wills and grants referring to land at *Cleran* (Sawyer



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0 50 m

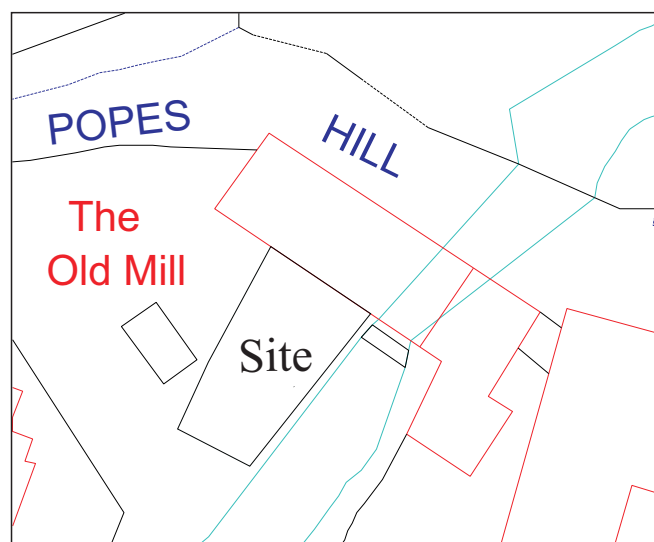


Figure 1. Location

0 25 m

1968, 1515 in Hampshire County Council 2003). The origin of the place name is not known, but *clær* from the Welsh for 'bright', referring to a clear stream, is a possibility although the three *Cleres* lie on different streams (Coates 1993: 55-6 in Hampshire County Council 2003). The first recorded use of the name *Kyngesclere* occurs in 1167 (Hughes 1976: 79 in Hampshire County Council 2003).

At the time of the Domesday Survey the principal estate of Kingsclere was held by the king and the land was not assessed in hides but paid one days farm towards the upkeep of the royal household. Kingsclere contained fifty-nine villagers, smallholders and slaves. Two freedmen were also recorded, as were two mills and 15s that was received from tolls. A second estate, which had been held by Queen Edith in 1066, had been granted to the New Minster, Winchester before 1086 by King William in exchange for land in Winchester where he built his palace. The estate included a church, a recorded population of nineteen, and a mill. Three other smaller estates identified as being part of Kingsclere had a total recorded population of twenty-nine and a further two mills (Munby 1982, fols 39b, 43b, 45b, 50c in Hampshire County Council 2003). The Domesday reference to tolls may indicate that there was a market being held on the estate in the late eleventh century (Hughes 1976, 80 in Hampshire County Council 2003).

There were in total five mills in Kingsclere and its estates recorded in Domesday. Town Mill (as it was known by 1444), called Pope's Mill in the mid-nineteenth century, belonged to the Canons of St Mary's, Rouen who were granted the demesne manor in 1107. A grant of a tenement in 1358 records that the road made by Sir William de Melton formed the northern boundary of the mill (Himsworth 1984, 12373 in Hampshire County Council 2003). In 1736 an inhabitant of the town was presented at the manor court for 'digging down the bank belonging to Town Mill and destroying the road to the church and mill' (HRO 11M40/329).

In the Post-medieval period Kingsclere was one of the Hampshire towns most affected by the outbreak of plague in 1665-6. The churchwarden's accounts record payments for watching over families with the plague, and the construction of a pest-house (Taylor 1984, 105-119 in Hampshire County Council 2003). This contributed to the limited growth of the town through this period. There appears to have been little in the way of industry in the town apart from that associated with the mills, tanning, or with brewing.

Town, or Pope's, Mill is shown on a map of 1725. In 1868 the bread oven caught fire and the mill was partially destroyed. It was used for grain storage after 1911.

## **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.

In particular;

- To record any evidence of earlier or associated earlier structures.

- To make the results of the investigations public.

### **3 STRATEGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Basingstoke and Deane District Council applied a condition to the planning consent requiring the carrying out of an archaeological watching brief during the course of groundworks. JMHS carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by Hampshire County Council (Archaeology and Historic Buildings).

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1994) and the requirements of the Hampshire County Council (Archaeology and Historic Buildings).

#### **3.2 Methodology**

It was agreed with Hampshire County Council (Archaeology and Historic Buildings) that an archaeologist was required to attend site immediately following any operations that had the potential to disturb or destroy archaeological remains. This included surface stripping, a single episode of large scale ground reduction, the excavation of new foundations and services and any other invasive groundworks.

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. A photographic record was compiled.

### **4 RESULTS**

#### **4.1 Field Results (Figure 2)**

The site was excavated to reveal the natural underlying London clay (006). This was mottled grey and red brown, highly plastic and compacted clay. This was not excavated.

Cut into the natural clay (006) was a linear feature 007 this was partially obscured in plan, but it appeared to be oriented approximately northeast by southwest. It measured over 0.60m in length and 0.40m in width. It had a gradual break of top slope, near vertical sides to a sharp break of base slope and an uneven base, 0.60m deep. It contained two fills. The lower fill (004) consisted of dark grey alluvial silt with charcoal pieces throughout. This fill contained waterlogged wood and was on average 0.20m in thickness. The uppermost fill (003) consisted of a band of grey brown alluvial silt, approximately 0.37m in thickness. This contained numerous charcoal pieces and flecking throughout, as well as large pieces of waterlogged wood and large rounded flint nodules. Occasional large pieces of white chalk were pressed into the surface of the deposit. It contained pieces of Post-medieval lead glazed pottery and tile.

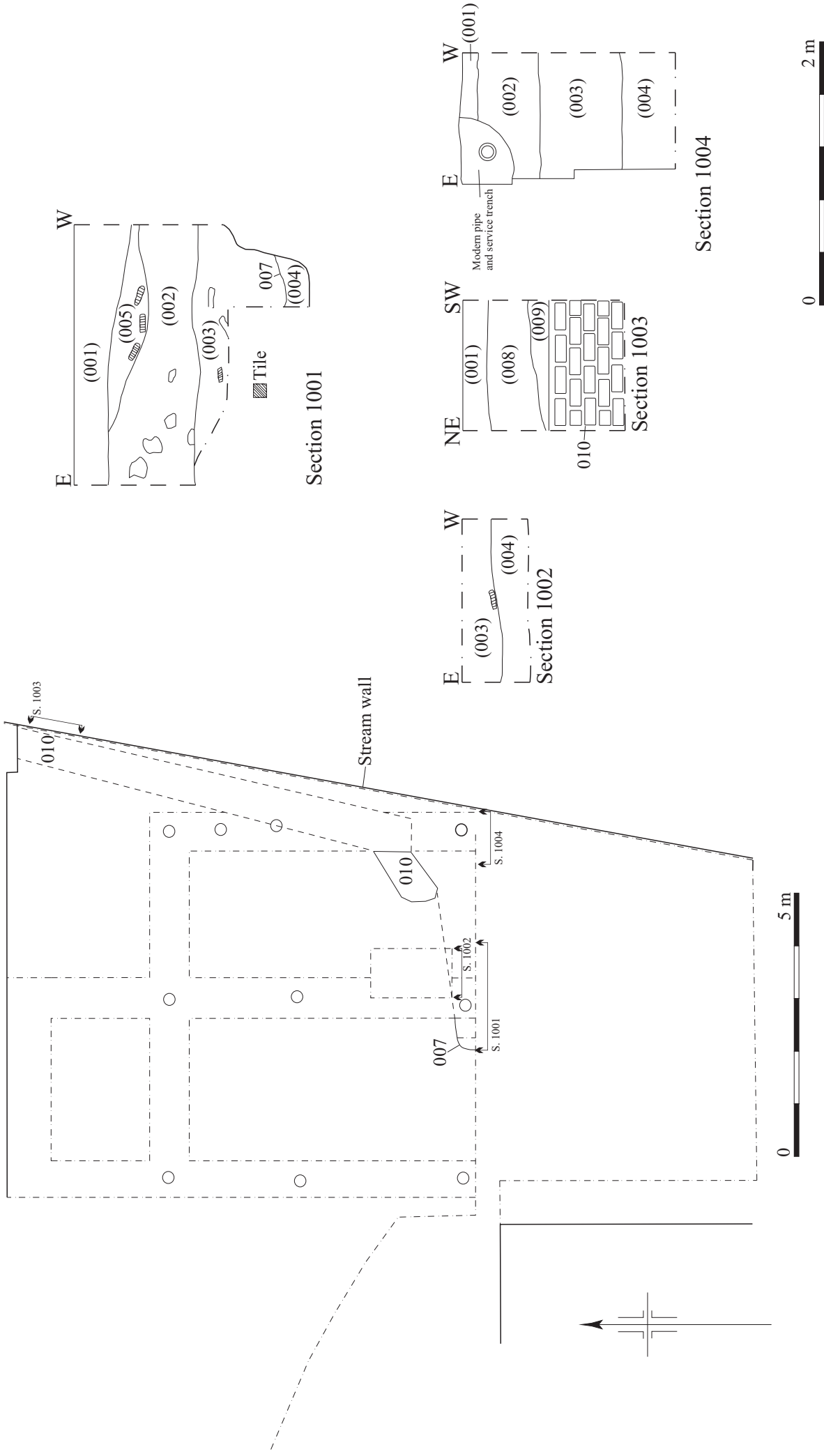


Figure 2. Plans and sections



The linear feature 007 was sealed by a demolition layer (002), that was on average 0.55m thick and consisted of highly compacted grey brown gravel and silt containing numerous irregularly shaped chalk blocks and pieces, with larger pieces located toward the base of the deposit. Sandy beige mortar was concentrated throughout this layer, although the chalk was not mortared *in situ*. This was apparent only in the southern portion of the site.

Above this was layer (005) that was similar to layer (002) but with an overall smaller particle size and greyer in colour. Numerous whole and partial tiles were present throughout this layer.

In the northeast, of the site a remnant brick structure 010 was visible approximately 0.80m below the current ground level in the east of the site. It was probably cut into the natural, although any remnant construction cut was obscured. This was oriented north northeast by south southwest, with a remnant of a return oriented east by west (this was partially removed by a small test pit). There also appears to be an entrance, or lower finished and faced on the upper course in the south (under water at time of visit). Wall 010 survived to approximately 5 courses. It was constructed of flat bricks, hand made from a well-mixed red firing clay. An early semi-hard white grey concrete containing lime bonded the bricks. In places this mortar appeared to be sand based and softer, suggesting different phases of construction or repair.

Sealing structure 010 in the northeast section, a layer of light mid brown clay (009) was present. This layer contained rare building/demolition rubble throughout and was 0.18m in thickness. Above this was rubble layer (008) consisting of light grey brown sandy gravel containing numerous large pieces of brick and tile 0.20m in thickness. It may be associated or the same as layer (005) seen to the south.

The uppermost layer was topsoil (001), 0.20m thick, consisting of dark grey brown silty loam containing numerous CBM pieces and flecking throughout. It also contained a large amount of modern debris (plastic, modern piping, glass, etc), redware flowerpot sherds and sub-angular stone. It covered the entire area.

## **4.2 Reliability of Results**

The watching brief was carried out in clement conditions although the clay and alluvial nature of the site meant that water tended to pool following wet weather. In addition, the initial archaeological inspection of the site occurred a week after the initial deep cut had occurred (despite being informed that the archaeologist would be required immediately after this work had occurred). Demolition debris and machinery obscured the site and wet weather between visits meant that the surface was highly trampled. On the second visit piling had already been carried out, despite the archaeologist being told that they would be given access to the site prior to this. The piles themselves had caused minimal disturbance but work on the wet surfaces had obscured any possible discrete features. Poor cooperation from the ground-workers and the large amount of time left between the carrying out of major groundwork and the notification of the archaeologist means that the results have been somewhat compromised.

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Post-medieval pottery

The pottery assemblage comprised 22 sherds with a total weight of 492g.

Context (001) contained 20 sherds of unglazed redware flowerpot weighing 249g in total. The sample contained bases (some with drainage holes), curved body and folded straight rim sherds and represented pots of varying sizes. All of the sherds were made of a well mixed red firing fabric occasional sand inclusions <0.5mm in length and rare sub angular quartzite pieces <2.00mm in length. One of the body/base sherds had a reduced interior.

Context (003) contained 2 sherds of conjoining redware weighing 243g in total. A light orange brown glaze covered the interior of the vessel. An entire profile was present for the vessel, with a height of 54mm and rim diameter of 280mm. It had a slightly clubbed, everted rim with concave body and flat base. The fabric consisted of a well mixed red firing clay, slightly reduced in the centre, with rare rounded gravel inclusions. The sherds appear to represent a shallow bowl, or small deep pan. These are typical vessel types in domestic, food preparation related contexts.

### 5.2 Environmental Remains

No features were considered to warrant environmental sampling.

## 6 DISCUSSION

The site at the Old Mill, Kingsclere, contained evidence of an earlier phase of construction, most likely dating to the Victorian period based on brick and mortar present. The extant walling represents an earlier structure associated with the current house and mill stream. Feature 007 is oriented alongside wall 010. The alluvial nature of the two fills (003) and (004) suggests that wall 010 may be an earlier orientation of the current millstream, or a smaller diverted stream running off it. The lead glazed redware from fill (003) dates to the 18<sup>th</sup>/19<sup>th</sup> centuries, coinciding with the Victorian wall. It is therefore also a possibility that structure 010 was a retaining wall for this watercourse.

The remainder of the site was highly disturbed by previous work, consisting of layers of made ground containing large amounts of demolition/construction material.

## 7 ARCHIVE

### Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

#### Paper Record

The project brief

Written Scheme of Investigation

The drawn records

The project report

The primary site records

Physical Record

The finds

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First visit



Second visit



Figure 3. Photographs