



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**SPRINGFIELD'S, TROWES LANE, SWALLOWFIELD,**

**BERKSHIRE**

**NGR SU 72546 63987**

*On behalf of*  
*Mr D. Meakin*

**OCTOBER 2010**

**REPORT FOR** Mr D Meakin  
The Garage  
Back Lane  
Spencer's Wood  
Reading  
RG7 1JB

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**FIELDWORK** 18<sup>th</sup> October 2010

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**Site Code:** SWTL 10  
**JMHS Project No:** 2240  
**Accession number:** Reading Museum 2010.58

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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services conducted an archaeological watching brief during the groundwork for a house. No archaeological features were present.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

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

The site is located at Trowe's Lane (NGR SU 72546 63987). The underlying geology is River Terrace Deposits - Third Terrace.

### **1.2 Planning Background**

Wokingham Borough Council granted planning permission for the demolition of the existing building and replacement with a two-storey dwelling (F/2008/2751). Due to the potential for the work to disturb archaeological deposits and human remains, a planning condition was attached to the permission requiring that an archaeological watching brief be maintained. This was in line with PPS5 and Local Plan policies.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

This site was of interest because of the proposed development area proximity to a possible medieval moated site (SMR 06472.00.000). This was shown on the 19<sup>th</sup> century Tithe map of the area as two L-shaped ponds in the fields.

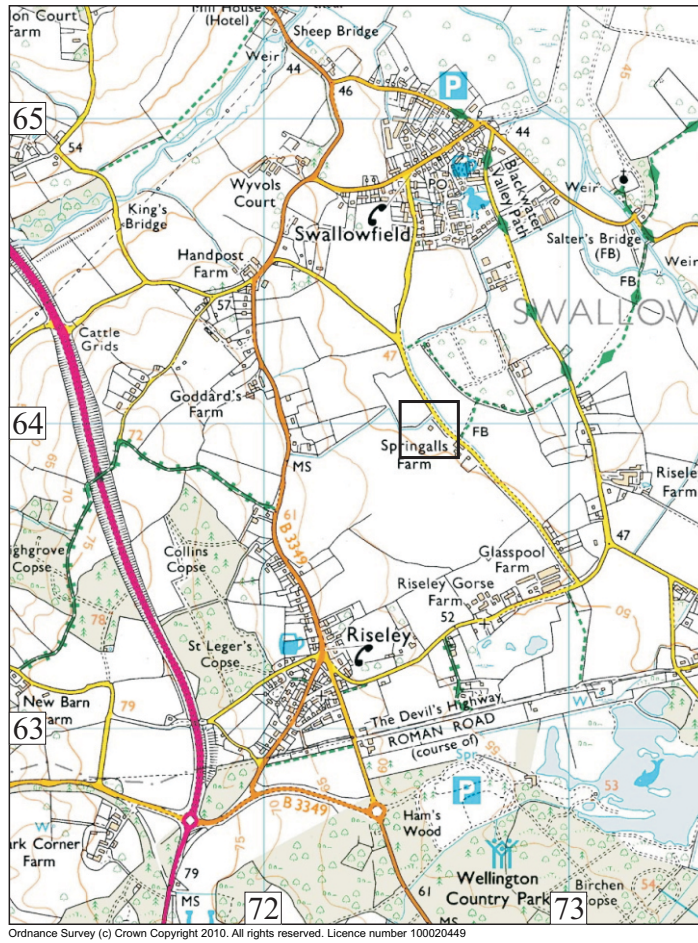
The OS 1:10,560 map of 1900 shows the area very similar to that of the present. Field names in the area are "Pond Pightle" and "Moat Field", which are indicative of the presence of a moated site. The Berkshire Sites and Monuments Record indicates that no other known sites of archaeological interest are located within 300m of the proposed development.

Before the Conquest the manor of Swallowfield was held in alod of King Edward the Confessor by Sexi. In 1086 it was said to be held by the king himself in demesne. Early in the year 1354 the king sent workmen to Swallowfield to repair the houses, inclose the park and till the fields (VCH 1923).

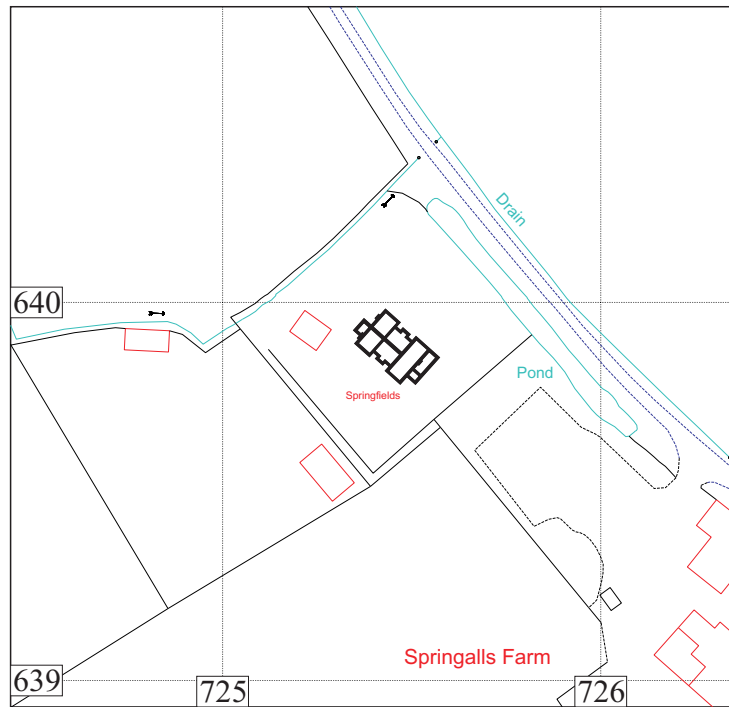
## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

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.
- In particular to record the potential for features relating to medieval moated site.



0 m 1000 m



0 100 m

Figure 1. Site location

### **3 STRATEGY**

#### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Berkshire Archaeology.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008).

#### **3.2 Methodology**

An archaeologist monitored the course of all invasive groundworks that had the potential to disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

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.

### **4 RESULTS**

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

#### **4.1 Excavation Results**

The lowest deposit encountered in the area was orange-brown sand and gravels (03) related to the natural geological River Terrace - Third Terrace deposits in the area.

Above this was a 0.2m – 0.3m thick layer of pale-mid grey sand and gravel (02). This showed signs of podsolation with thick concretions in patches along its lower horizon.

Overlying this was a 0.15m thick layer of mid grey-brown sandy-clay (04) with the rare fleck of charcoal. This deposit was patchy and not present across the entire area due to truncation associated with building and demolition of the previous house.

The uppermost layer was a dark brown-grey sandy-clay up to 0.5m thick (01) with patches of sand and hardcore. It contained numerous fragments of modern brick and is associated with the demolition of the previous building.

#### **4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results**

The results are considered to be good, although building and demolition had caused truncation and disturbance to the soil sequence over more than half the area. The archaeologist was alerted to all invasive groundworks being undertaken on site and was given full access to the site. The work took place on a dry day with excellent co-operation from the ground workers.

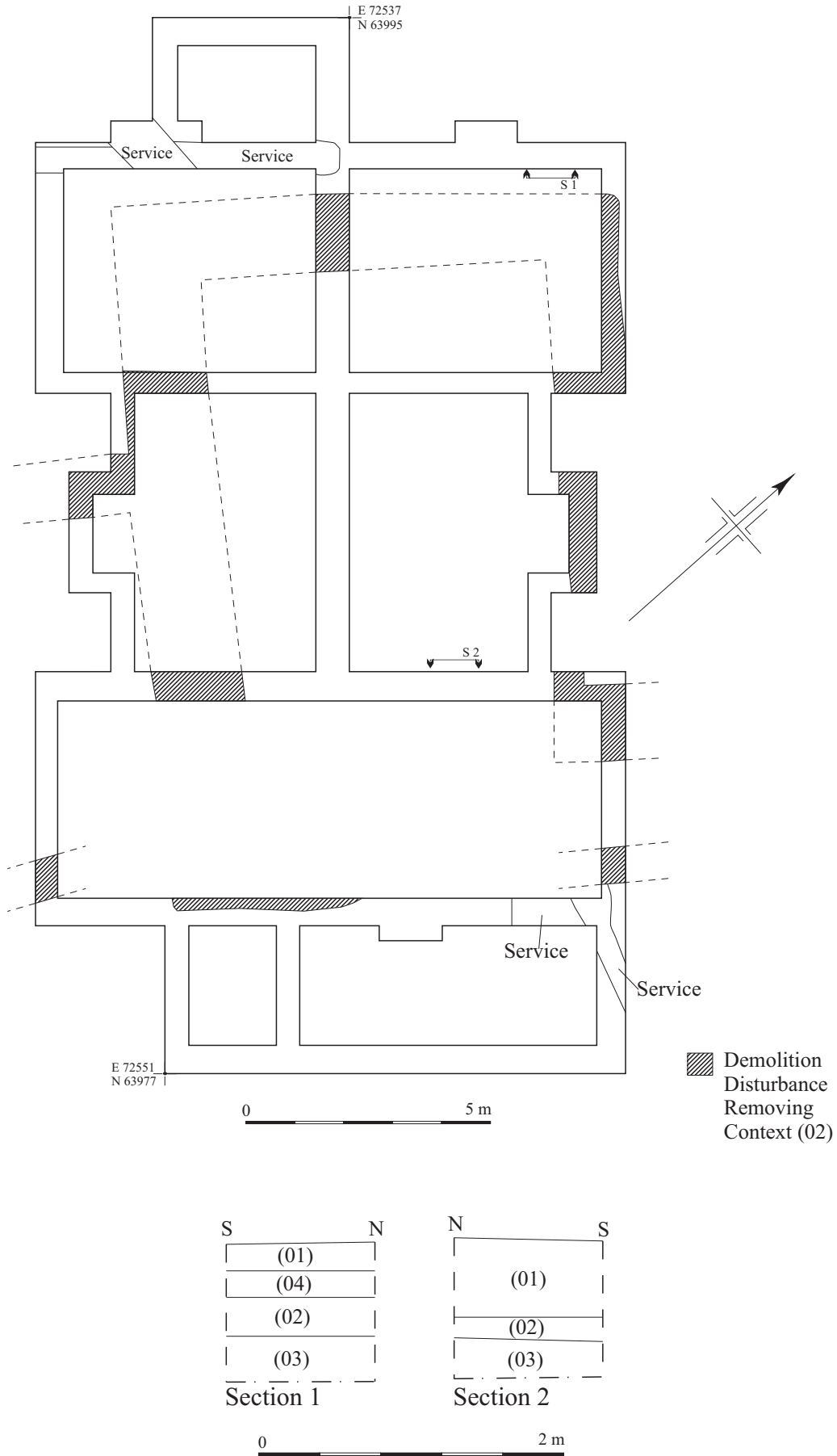


Figure 2. Plan and Sections

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Pottery

The pottery finds on the site were sparse and all from the demolition layer (01). The following fabric was noted, but not retained:

Miscellaneous 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century wares. Mass-produced white earthenwares etc.

### 5.2 Environmental Remains

No environmental samples were taken.

## 6 DISCUSSION

The layer (02) is an example of a sandy and excessively well-drained Spodosol. The area would likely to have been poor in agricultural terms and the lack of finds within contexts (01) and (04) may indicate that the area was marginal land for a considerable period. Indeed Gelling (1973) notes that its name Sualewefeld recorded on pipe rolls in 1167 and as Swalwefeld on the *Rotuli Chararum* in 1252 both indicate, "open land by the river *Swealwe*."

Although it is recorded that the King sent workmen to till the land in 1354, there is also a record of an established fulling-mill by 1542 (VCH 1923), which may indicate land used for sheep husbandry and that the main wealth of the manor lay in cloth-making.

## 7 ARCHIVE

### Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief

Written scheme of investigation

The project report

The primary site records

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to Reading Museum.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Gelling, M 1973 *The Place-Names of Berkshire*, volume 1 Cambridge: Cambridge University Press

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

VCH 1923 *The History of the County of Berkshire*, volume 3, London: Saint Catherine's Press