

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

17 KIMBELLS CLOSE, SHABBINGTON,

BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

NGR SP 6678 0697

*On behalf of
Mr M Inglis*

NOVEMBER 2012

REPORT FOR Mr M Inglis
17 Kimbells Close
Shabbington
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FIELDWORK 23rd October 2012

REPORT ISSUED 7th November 2012

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Site Code: SHKC 12
JMHS Project No: 2721
Accession number: AYBCM 2012.99

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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services conducted an archaeological watching brief during the groundwork for a new stable block. No archaeological features or remains were recorded.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The site is located on the east side of Kimbells Close at the northern extremity at NGR SP 6678 0697. The underlying solid geology is Kimmeridge Clay. The site is currently pasture.

1.2 Planning Background

Aylesbury Vale District Council has granted planning permission for the erection of stables and hay storage on land adjacent to 17 Kimbells Close, Shabbington (12/01466/FUL). 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 is in line with the NPPF and Local Plan policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

Before the Norman Conquest Shabbington was held by Wigold of Wallingford and at Domesday the settlement was held by Miles Crispin and comprised 12 villagers, 7 smallholders and 6 slaves, a fishery with 100 eels and a mill from the manor of Sobintane. After the Conquest it was incorporated into the forest of Bernwood. From 1299 it was held by the Knights Hospitallers, who lost control of it in the 14th century (VCH, 1969, 102). The site lies close to the line of a Roman road (CAS2035).

Extensive village earthworks survive south and east of the church and a street and four house platforms north-east of the church were surveyed prior to being developed in the 1960's. From this development a number of Roman, 13th century and post-medieval pottery sherds were recovered (CAS565). The medieval manor is thought to have been located on the south side of the churchyard where three fishponds are located and where stone and tile have been noted (also CAS565).

An archaeological desk-based assessment, evaluation and excavation have been undertaken at The Bungalow, Ickford Road, Shabbington in 2004. The evaluation produced evidence for significant 11-13th century activity including a rectangular enclosure ditch, substantial amounts of 11-13th century pottery, traces of iron working and well-preserved charcoal plant remains including cereal grain and wood charcoal. (Oxford Archaeology 2004, Oxford Archaeology 2004a). The results suggest that the boundary ditch enclosed an area of early settlement within the village. The subsequent excavation revealed further curvilinear ditches and large pits of medieval date along with quantities of slag and animal bone (TVAS 2006).

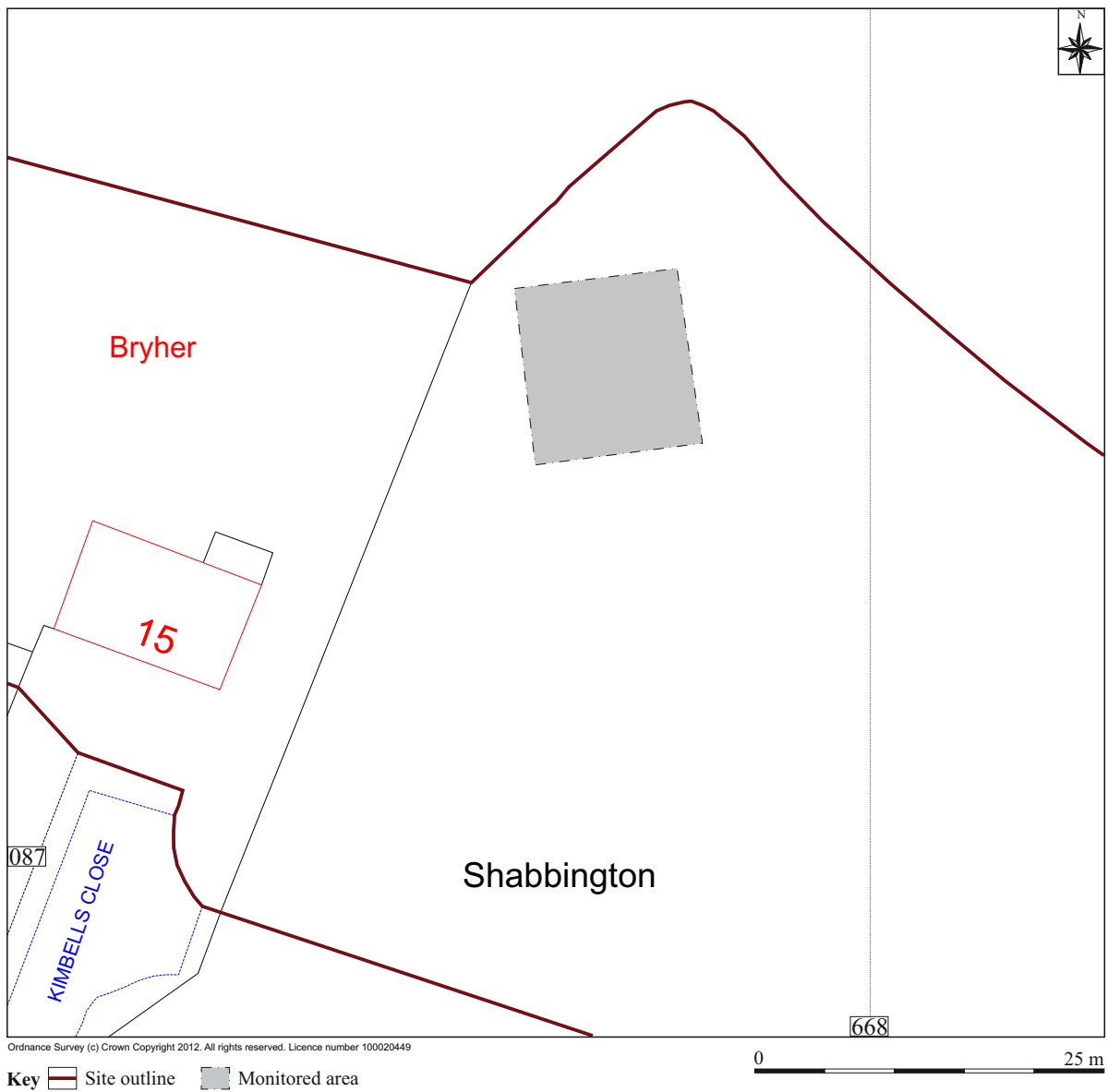
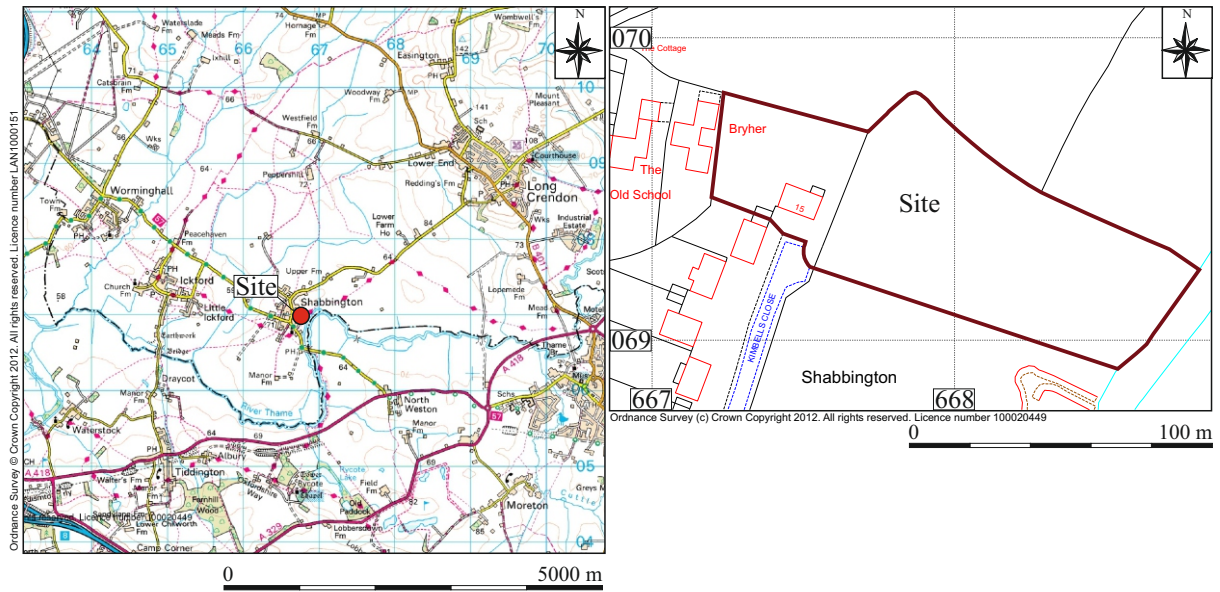


Figure 1. Site location

The initial assessment of the village morphology at Shabbington suggests a loosely nucleated single row plan stretching northwards from the church. There is probably a more complex sequence of development. Two straight (early/roman?) roads would also intersect at Shabbington Church and there are hints of a 'lost' lane to the west of the main street. The line of one of the Roman roads (CAS 2035) crosses the north-west side of the field surveyed. An earthwork survey held by the SMR and carried out before the construction of Kimbells Close shows a slight holloway that would continue close the proposed development site.

The proposed development area is to the north of fields containing well preserved village earthworks, including eel ponds, a probable fish pond, holloway and earthwork terrace. These lie within the historic core of Shabbington (CAS5650), which has been identified as an Archaeological Notification Area. An earthwork survey on fields immediately to the south was carried out by John Moore Heritage Services (2006) prior to a watching brief for the construction of a ménage towards Willow Cottage close to the river. The watching brief found late Iron Age to early Roman and 2nd to 4th century activity in the form of drainage and boundary ditches with some pits present. Medieval drainage and boundary ditches were also present dating to 11th to 13th centuries.

Other recent work includes an evaluation and excavation at Franklin's Farmhouse which found evidence of intensive use of the rear of the plot. This included Saxon and medieval boundary ditches, gullies, pits, with pottery and animal bone from the 10th to late 13th century. A nearby evaluation just north of Rose Cottage found a gully and two pits containing pottery dating from the 13th to 16th century.

The HER shows the possible line of a Roman road (Viatores route 173A-D) just to the east of the development site.

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 settlement.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Buckinghamshire Archaeological Service.

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 are given below.

4.1 Excavation Results

The lowest deposits encountered was a mottled blue-grey to pale yellow-grey clay, with occasional pockets or bands of orange-brown sandy clay (03), this geological deposit is related to the Kimmeridge Clay formation in the area.

Above this was a 0.1m - 0.2m thick layer of mid-dark brown silt-clay (02) containing the occasional fragment of animal bone and represents a lower plough soil. Overlying this was a 0.3m thick dark grey-brown silt-loam (01) ploughsoil that was very sterile and devoid of artefacts.

4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results

The results are considered to be good. 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.

5 FINDS

No finds were recovered or environmental samples taken.

6 DISCUSSION

Historic maps show this area to have been under fields. It would appear that the development site lies away from the former medieval settlement and would have been used for agriculture/pasture.

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 Buckinghamshire Museum.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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

John Moore Heritage Services 2006 *An Earthwork Survey at The Willows, Shabbington, Buckinghamshire*

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VCH, 1969 *Victoria County History of Buckinghamshire*