

**Peewit Farm,  
Sutton Courtenay**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

for

Mr. Graham Gibson

August 1997

**Peewit Farm, Sutton Courtenay,  
An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Adam Croney**

**Report 97/49**

**Introduction**

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Peewit Farm, 95 Drayton Road, Sutton Courtenay (SU 4925 9399) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr. G. Gibson, Pilgrims Lodge, London Road, Blewbury, Didcot, Oxfordshire, OX11 9NY.

Planning permission was sought in 1996 for the construction of a single dwelling on pasture land at Peewit Farm. A condition of the planning permission from Oxfordshire County Council was that an archaeological watching brief should be carried out during stripping of the topsoil and excavation of the foundation trenches. This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Policy and Planning Guidance Note, **Archaeology and Planning** (PPG 16, 1990). The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Hugh Coddington, Deputy County Archaeologist. The field work was undertaken by Adam Croney on the 1st August, 1997 and the site code is PFSC 97/49.

**Location, Topography and Geology**

The site is located on the southern side of the B4016, Drayton Road (Fig. 2), which runs between Drayton in the west and Sutton Courtenay in the east. It lies adjacent to Peewit Farm at 95 Drayton Road. The site is approximately 51 m. above Ordnance

Datum, and is at present rough pasture. The geology is natural gravels with chalk inclusions (BGS, 1971).

### **Archaeological Background**

The site at Peewit Farm appears to lie in an area of considerable archaeological potential. A substantial Anglo-Saxon settlement has been excavated in the vicinity of Sutton Courtney and is thought to overlie an earlier Bronze Age settlement. A Romano-British settlement has been identified through stray finds and limited excavation to the east of the development area. To the south a series of cropmarks, including various linear features and pits, could represent a broad range of periods of occupation.

### **Objectives and Methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits likely to be affected by the construction of the new works. This would involve observation of areas of topsoil stripping and trenches for foundations and service runs. All spoilheaps were to be monitored for finds. A plan of the foundation trenches is shown in Figure 3.

### **Results**

The foundation trenches were dug to depths of between 0.85 m. and 1.05 m. They all revealed a fairly consistent topsoil layer of between 0.3 m. and 0.4 m. Within this layer there was a considerable amount of modern building debris, including small pieces of modern ceramic, brick, tile, glass and clay pipe, but also a single sherd of probable

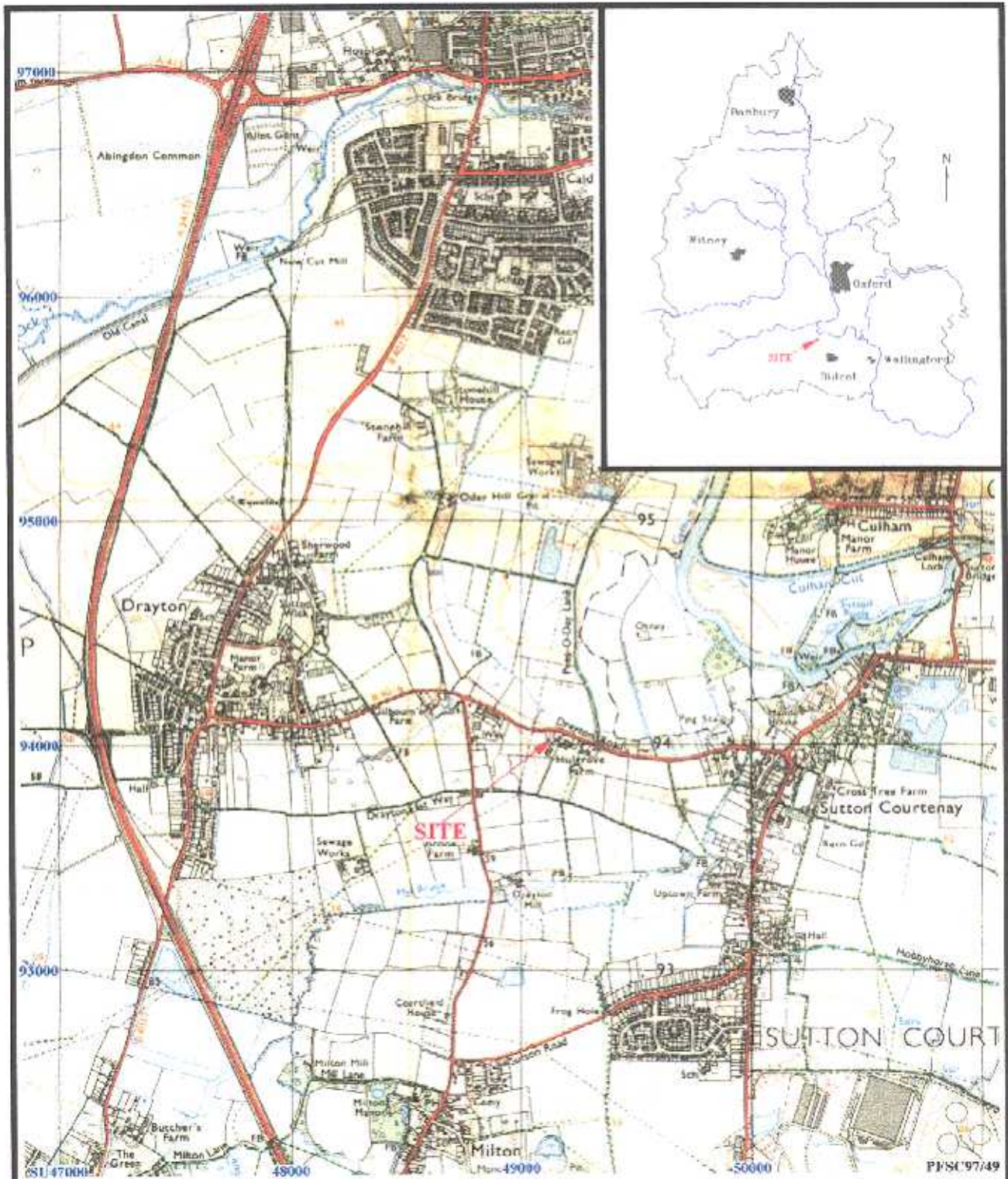
Anglo-Saxon pottery (60/50mm) and two pieces of struck flint. The subsoil was very sandy, of a similar depth to the topsoil and overlay natural clay with gravel. Only one feature was present in the foundation trenches. This was elongated in shape (F3) but it is unclear whether it represents a pit or a linear feature orientated north-west/south-east. It was approximately 2.3 m. across the top but was visible only in section. The sides sloped gently at first, then quite steeply (around 45 degrees) to a well rounded base (Fig. 4). It contained what appeared to be a peaty-humic fill (50), within which were the waterlogged remains of small twigs and branches. It also contained the skull and part of the pelvis of a dog. No dating evidence could be found on examination of the pit contents. The spoilheaps were monitored for artefacts but none were present.

### **Conclusion**

The only apparent archaeological feature observed was the single pit/ditch. Although sealed by topsoil and subsoil, the level of the cut was not readily visible and the lack of any pottery unfortunately make it undateable. The two pieces of struck flint and single sherd of possible Anglo-Saxon pottery were unstratified and are probably derived from elsewhere. From observations made during the watching brief it would not appear that the groundworks for construction of the dwelling had destroyed or damaged any features or deposits of archaeological significance apart from the one undated feature.

## References

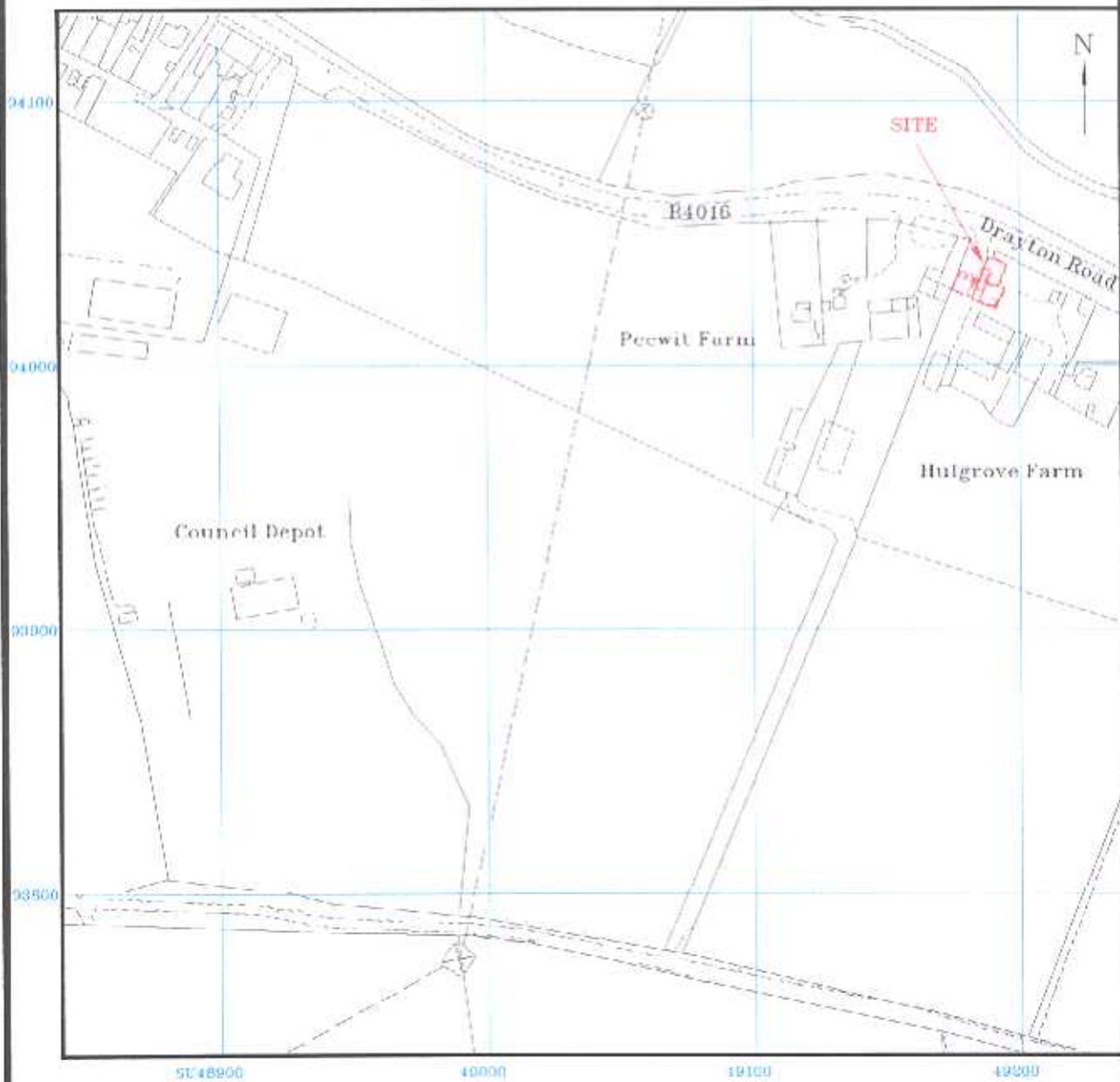
- BGS, 1971: **British Geological Survey**, 1 inch to 1 mile, Sheet 253, Drift Edition. Keyworth.
- PPG 16, 1990: **Archaeology and Planning**. Department of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance Note 16. (HMSO)



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Oxfordshire, 1997

Figure 1. Location of site within Sutton  
Courtenay and Oxfordshire.

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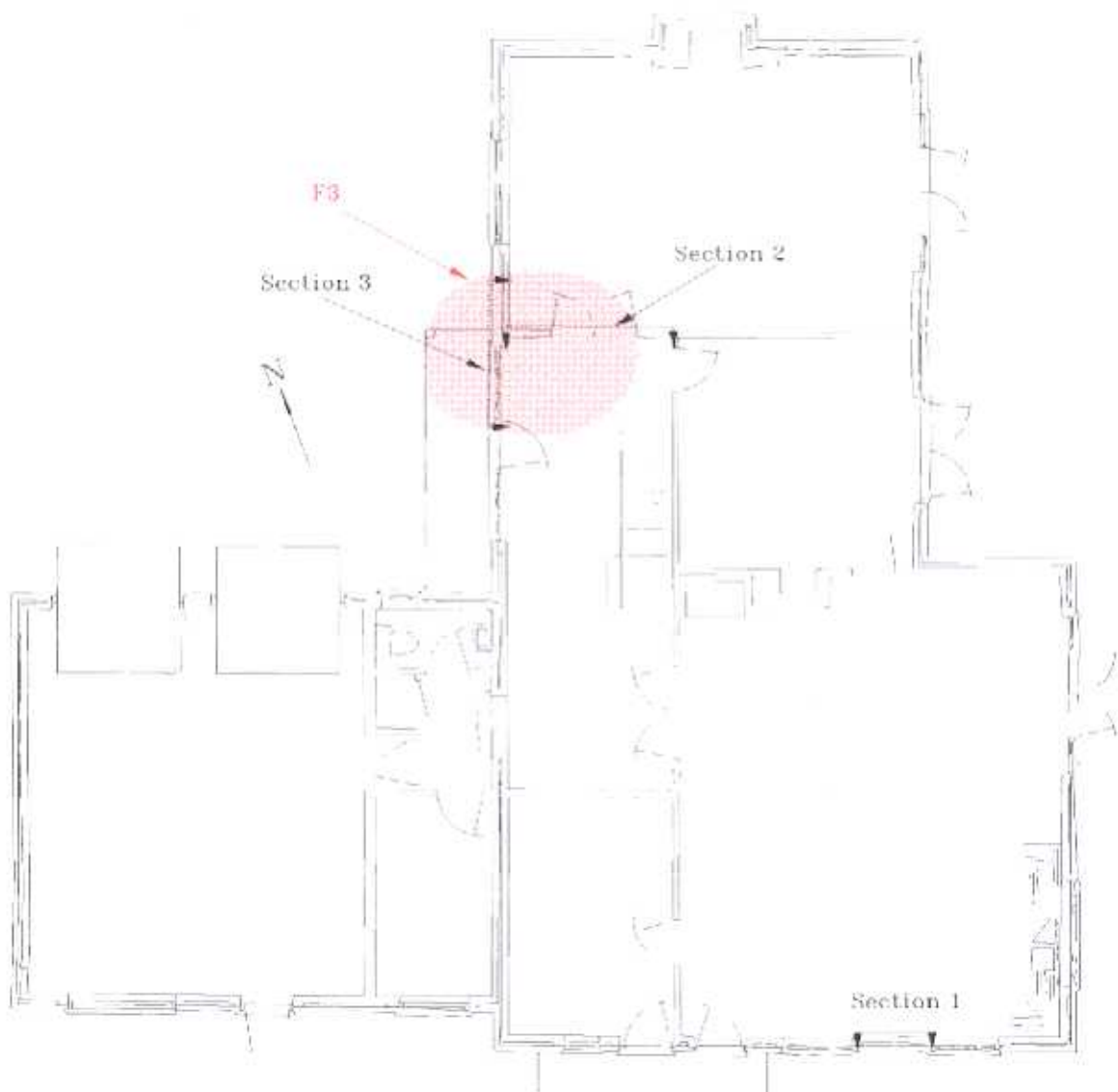
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Figure 2. Location of watching brief.



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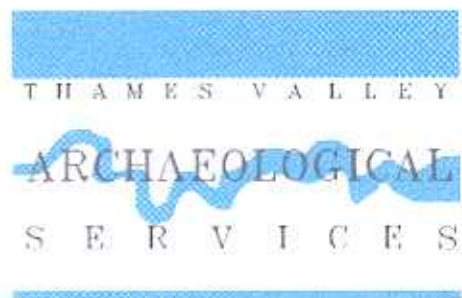


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Figure 3. Plan of foundation trenches.





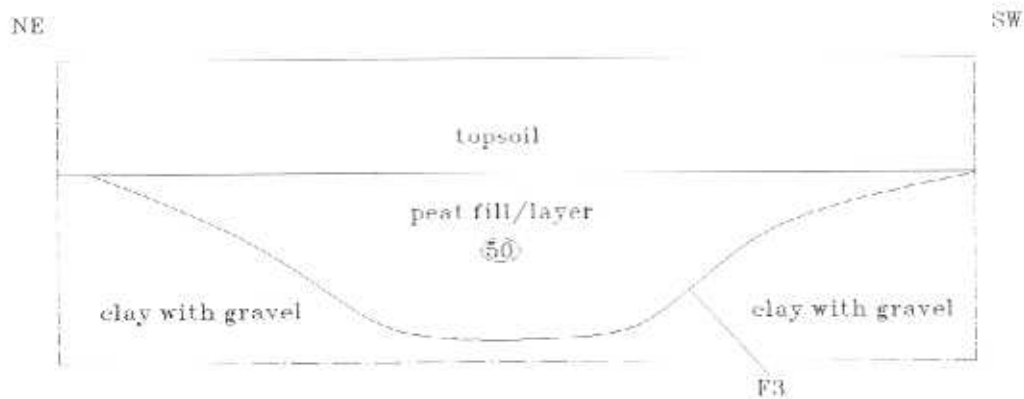
Section 1



Section 2



Section 3



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Figure 4. Representative sections.

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