

33 & 35 Barkham Rd
Wokingham
Berkshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology

July 2005

**Client: Mr Ian Jones, on behalf of
Mr S King and Mr K Turner**

Issue N^o: 1

OA Job N^o: 2777

Planning Ref N^o: F/2005/3858

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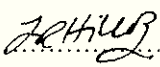
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**33 & 35 Barkham Road,
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NGR SU 8048 6852

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SUMMARY

In June 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief at 33 and 35 Barkham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire (NGR SU 8048 6852). The work was commissioned Ian Jones on behalf of Mr S King and Mr K Turner in advance of the construction of house extensions to the rear of the properties. The Watching Brief revealed made ground and natural brickearth, clay and gravel under the rear patio area of the two properties. No significant archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In June 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief to the rear of 33 & 35 Barkham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire (NGR: SU 8048 6852). The work was commissioned by Mr Ian Jones on behalf of the home owners Mr S King and Mr K Turner to in respect of an archaeological planning condition placed on the demolition of part of the rear patio area and the construction in that area of an extension to both properties.
- 1.1.2 A brief was set by David Thomason, Archaeological Officer for Wokingham District Council outlining the requirements of the project (BA, 2005).
- 1.1.3 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was produced by OA detailing how the requirements of the Brief would be met (OA, 2005).

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the rear of numbers 33 and 35 Barkham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire (Fig. 1). The site is located approximately 130 m to the west of the Wokingham to Bracknell railway on the junction with Havelock Street. The site is currently used as a residential site.
- 1.2.2 The underlying geology is Bagshot Beds.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential as several find spots dating from the prehistoric to post-medieval are located in the area. The site is within close proximity to the medieval core of the town of Wokingham to the east. The site of an undated tannery is located 240 m to the south-west of the proposed development
- 1.3.2 An Archaeological Desk Based Assessment was completed by John Moore Heritage Services in 2003 for 11 Park Avenue, located approximately 230 m to the east of numbers 33 and 35 Barkham Road. Although this document concluded little potential for encountering significant archaeological deposits existing at 11 Park Avenue, there

has been little in the way of investigative work undertaken during previous developments in this area of Barkham Road to clarify the potential existence of archaeological remains on the site.

2 WATCHING BRIEF AIMS

- 2.1.1 To preserve by record any archaeological remains (if present) that the development may remove or damage within the impacted area.
- 2.1.2 To monitor all groundwork that may have affected or revealed archaeological deposits. This included monitoring foundation and service trenches,
- 2.1.3 To establish the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any remains within the development site.
- 2.1.4 To establish the eco-factual and environmental potential of archaeological deposits and features.
- 2.1.5 To make available the results of the investigation.

3 WATCHING BRIEF METHODOLOGY

3.1 Scope of fieldwork, methods and recording

- 3.1.1 The fieldwork comprised of 4 site visits during the breaking out of the rear patio area and the excavation of the footings for the proposed extension (Fig.2). Photographic and drawn observations of the site were made.
- 3.1.2 The removal of the patio area was carried out by hand under archaeological observation, the footings were excavated using a mechanical excavator and the underlying surface was examined for archaeological features at impact level. A site plan was drawn at a scale of 1:50 and two sample sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. Both sections and the trench were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OA Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

4 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

4.1 Description of deposits

- 4.1.1 The top of the gravel terrace (103) was reached at a depth of 0.8 m below ground level (Fig. 3, Sections). This was overlaid by a 0.4 m thick layer of yellow clay, (102) and (107), a natural deposit. These layers were sealed by a 0.18 m thick layer of yellow-grey sandy silt brickearth, contexts (101) and (106) respectively. Within the area of Section 2 both the natural clay and the brickearth had been cut by a French drain (105), which was backfilled with gravel and is probably associated with the house foundations for No. 33.

- 4.1.2 Overlying 101, 106 and 105, and immediately below the level of the patio foundations was a layer of made ground, (100) and (104), of between 0.05m and 0.15 m in depth. This layer was composed of a grey-brown sandy silt and contained numerous fragments of brick, stone and roofing slate. This was most likely laid down in order to level the ground surface immediately behind the properties. This layer was sealed below the patio constructions.

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1.1 The absence of any topsoil or subsoil within the sections suggests that this area had been reduced in level, either during the construction of the houses or in preparation for the laying of the patios. The depth of truncation is unknown, but appears to be such that only deeper intrusive features would have survived. While the absence of these features or of any earlier residual finds suggests that little activity has taken place within the development area there is the probability that any evidence has been completely truncated. The only feature seen during the watching brief was the remains of a modern brick built soakaway uncovered during the excavation of the trench.
- 5.1.2 No deposits of archaeological interest or potential were located or observed during this watching brief.

APPENDICES

6 APPENDIX 1 CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context No.	Type	Depth	Comment	Finds	Date
		(m)			
100	Layer	0.14 m	Made-up ground	Brick, tile	C20th
101	Layer	0.22 m	Brickearth	-	Natural
102	Layer	0.53 m	Clay	-	Natural
103	Layer	-	Gravel Terrace	-	Natural
104	Layer	0.17 m	Made-up ground	Brick, tile	C20th
105	Cut	0.48 m	French drain	-	C20th
106	Layer	0.16 m	Brickearth	-	Natural
107	Layer	0.55 m	Clay	-	Natural

7 APPENDIX 2 REFERENCES

Berkshire Archaeology, 2005 *Proposed Extensions to 33 & 35 Barkham Road, Wokingham : Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

OA, 2005 *33 & 35 Barkham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

OAU, 1992 *Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D. Wilkinson)

IFA 2001 *Standard and Guidance for archaeological watching briefs*

8 APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: 33 & 35 Barkham Road, Wokingham, Berkshire

Site code: WOBARD05

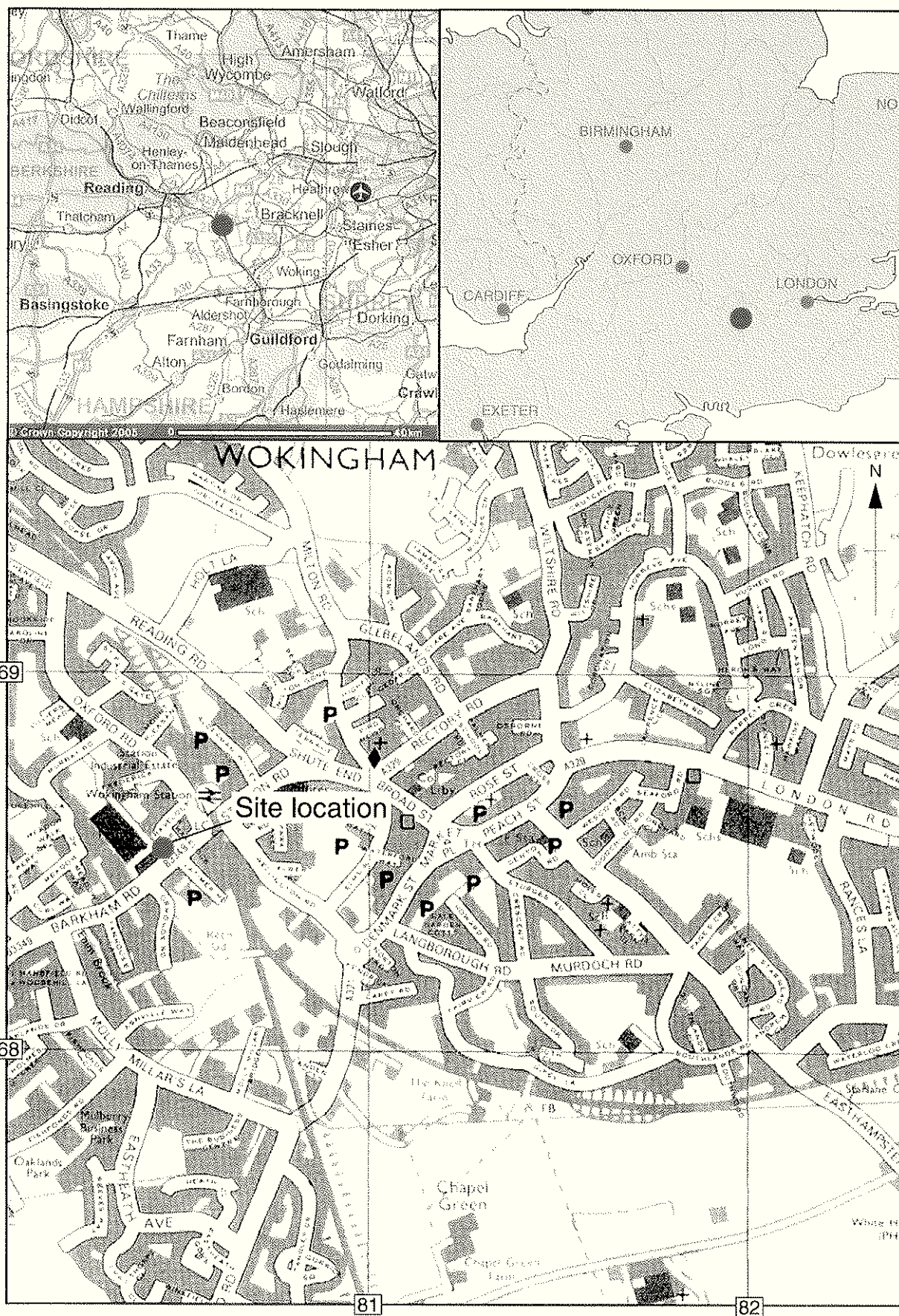
Grid reference: SU 8048 6852

Type of Mitigation: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 20/06/2005 to 24/06/2005 - 4 visits to site.

Summary of results: No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the course of the watching brief.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course.



Scale 1: 15,000

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Figure 1: Site location

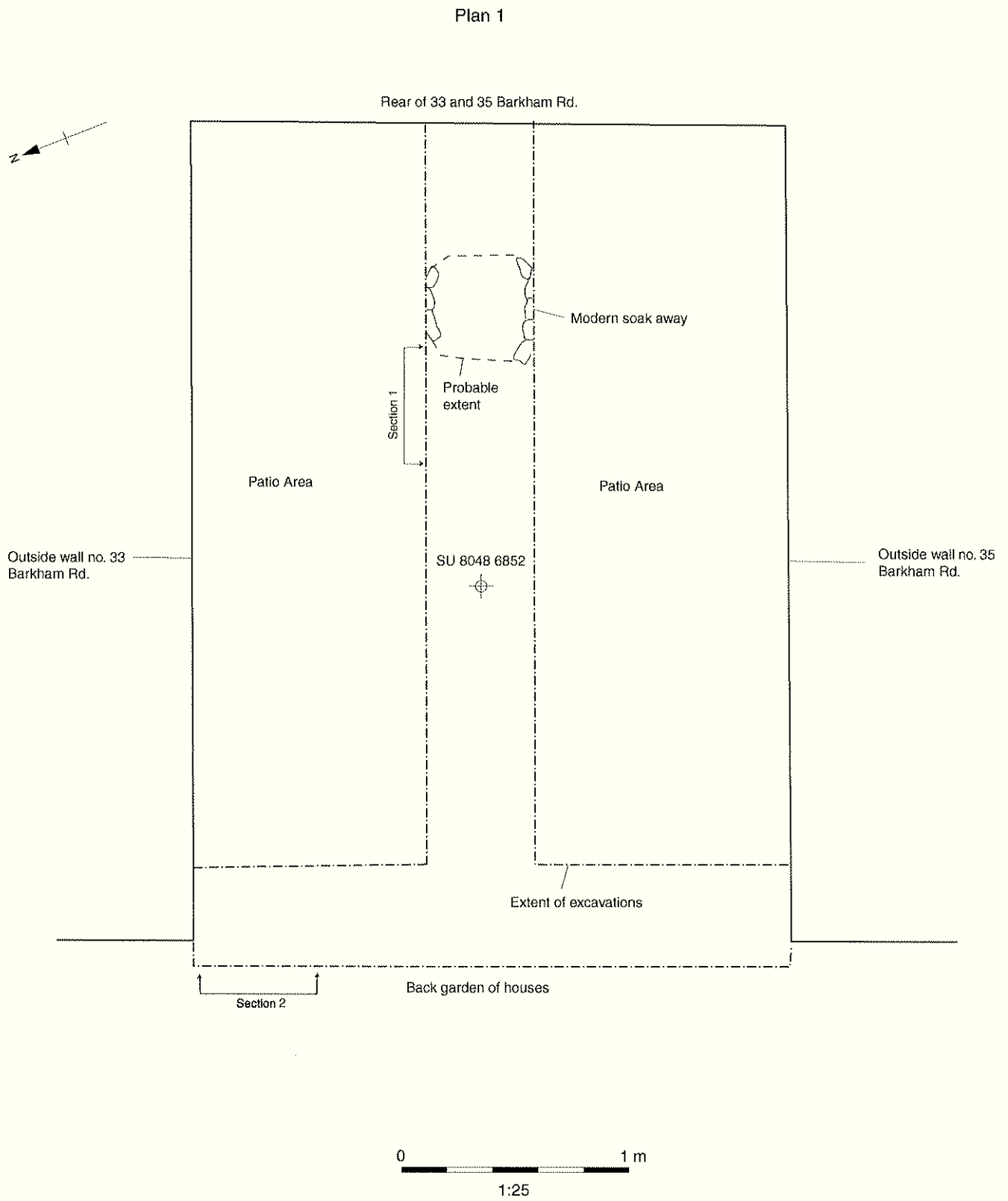


Figure 2: Area of watching brief

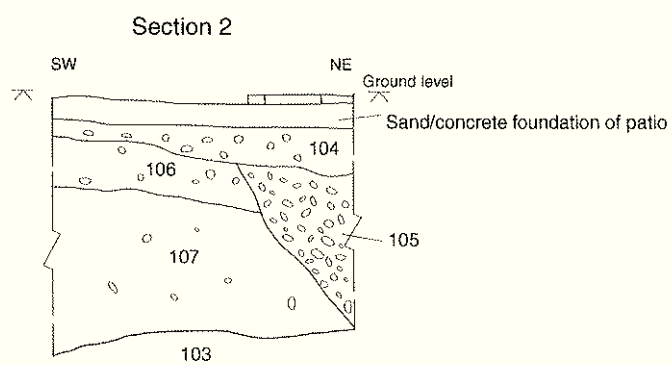
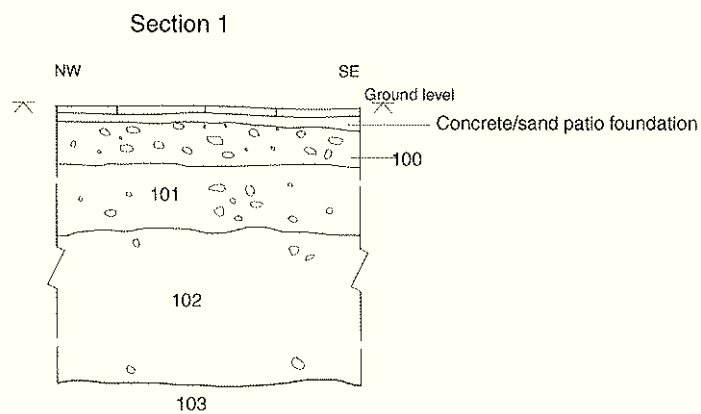


Figure 3: Sections



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