

Orchard Cottage

91 Bishopstone

Stone

Buckinghamshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



May 2009

Client: Mr Roger Jackson

Issue No:1
OA Job No: 2976
NGR: SP 807 101

Client Name: Mr Roger Jackson

Client Ref No:

Document Title: Orchard Cottage, 91 Bishopstone, Stone,
Buckinghamshire

Document Type: Watching Brief

Issue Number: 1

National Grid Reference: SP 807 101
Planning Reference:

OA Job Number: 2976
Site Code: STOCB 05
Invoice Code: STOCBWB
Receiving Museum: Buckinghamshire County Museum Service
Museum Accession No:

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Document File Location H:PROJECTS \Buckinghamshire BU\Aylesbury Vale
AV\6307 Orchard Cottage WB\wbREP.doc

Graphics File Location Severgo*STOCB05*STOCBWB*Orchard
Cottage*jm*20.05.09

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**Orchard Cottage
91 Bishopstone,
Stone, Buckinghamshire**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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SUMMARY

Between the 14th and 15th of November 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Orchard Cottage, 91 Bishopstone, Stone, Buckinghamshire (NGR: SP 807 101). The work was commissioned by Mr Roger Jackson in advance of the proposed demolition of an existing house and garage and the erection of a new house and access. The watching brief revealed worked soils directly overlying the natural Gault Clay. No features, deposits or finds of archaeological significance were uncovered during the watching brief.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 Between the 14th and 15th of November 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Orchard Cottage, 91 Bishopstone, Stone, Buckinghamshire (NGR: SP 807 101). The work was commissioned by Mr Roger Jackson in respect of planning permission for the demolition of an existing house and garage and the erection of a new house and access (Planning Ref: 04/2703/APP).
- 1.1.2 Due to the sites proximity to a known Saxon cemetery and the site of a medieval chapel, a condition requiring an archaeological watching brief was attached to the planning permission.
- 1.1.3 David Radford, the Archaeological Officer representing Aylesbury Vale District Council, produced a brief specifying the requirements for undertaking this condition (BCAS, 2005).
- 1.1.4 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA 2005).

1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The village of Bishopstone is situated approximately 1.5 km south-west of the town of Aylesbury (Fig. 1). The site is located on level land immediately to the north of the Bishopstone Road and lies at approximately 90 m OD. The underlying geology is Upper Greensand and Gault Clay (Geological Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 237).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background to the watching brief was prepared for the WSI for the project (OA 2005) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 The development site lies at the south west end of the village, on the north side of the medieval high street. Almost all of the evidence held in the county SMR relates to the fields to the north of the village. The earliest evidence of human activity in the

vicinity was discovered at the north side of the village and comprised a late prehistoric artefact scatter (SMR 5819).

- 1.3.3 Evidence from the Romano-British period is represented by two findspots: a 4th century coin (SMR 17770) to the north west of the development site at number 71 Bishopstone and finds including a 1st century coin, pottery, glass and building materials (SMR 5622 and 5560) found in fields to the north of the village.
- 1.3.4 Located close to the development site is SMR 1771 - an Anglo Saxon cemetery. Evidence for Anglo Saxon burial was recorded during construction work at Bishopstone Church in 1866.
- 1.3.5 Various findspots and buildings survive in the village dating from the medieval period and later. Notable buildings are Bishopstone Chapel (SMR 068901) dating from the 11th century, the Wesleyan Chapel of the 19th century located close to the north of the development site (SMR 6365). There is a possibility of a burial ground associated with the Wesleyan Chapel (J. Parkhouse, pers.comm.).
- 1.3.6 Previous archaeological works carried out near the proposed development site (77 Bishopstone, ASC 2000 and Dove House, Bishopstone, HAT 2001) revealed no evidence of archaeological activity.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains revealed by the groundworks, paying particular attention to any stratigraphy that will shed light on the nature and date of the adjacent earthwork.
- 2.1.2 To preserve by record any archaeological remains that may be truncated or disturbed during intrusive ground works.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The watching brief was conducted as an archaeological presence during the excavation of the new foundation trenches. The excavated areas were closely examined for any features and the spoil was examined in order to collect dating evidence.
- 2.2.2 A plan of the extent of any excavations was maintained (Fig. 2) at a scale of 1:100 and any recorded sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All excavated features were photographed using digital photography, colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was also made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OA Field Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 Prior to the excavation of the foundation trenching the topsoil was stripped throughout the footprint of the new construction. The topsoil has been included on the sections for completeness.
- 3.1.2 The stratigraphy exposed within the foundation trench was similar throughout its length.
- 3.1.3 A layer of very stiff gray clay (3), the underlying natural Gault clay, was encountered at a depth of between 0.3 m and 0.4 m below the original ground level (Fig. 2, Sections 1 and 2). This was overlaid by a layer of yellow-brown loamy clay containing lenses of gray clay (2). This is a probable earlier worked (plough ?) soil. Overlying this was the topsoil, a dark brown clay loam (1), up to 0.25 m in depth.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 The only dating evidence encountered was associated with the construction and subsequent demolition of the bungalow originally on site. The presence of this material was noted but not retained. No other dating evidence was recovered during the course of the watching brief.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were encountered during the course of the watching brief.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The presence of the layer of earlier worked soil (2) suggests that the area of the development site had been cultivated in the past. The absence of any early dating material or of any truncated deep features in the natural clay (3) would indicate that the site has been agricultural in nature in the past and was not subject to occupation or any other intrusive activities.
- 4.1.2 The results of the working brief correspond with those from sites nearby (77, Bishopstone and Dove House, Bishopstone) which also encountered no significant archaeology.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Layer	0.2 m – 0.25 m	Modern worked topsoil (Ploughsoil)	Brick and tile	C20th
2	Layer	0.15 m – 0.2 m	Earlier worked soil	-	-
3	Layer	> 0.9 m	Natural Gault Clay	-	-

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

ASC, 2000 77 Bishopstone, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Watching Brief Report

BCAS, 2005 Orchard Cottage, 91 Bishopstone, Stone: Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief

HAT, 2001 Dove House, Bishopstone, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Watching Brief Report

IFA, 2001 Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs

OA 2005 Orchard Cottage, 91 Bishopstone, Buckinghamshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

OAU, 1992 Field Manual (ed. D Wilkinson)

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Orchard Cottage, 91 Bishopstone, Stone, Buckinghamshire

Site code: STOCB 05

Grid reference: SP 807 101

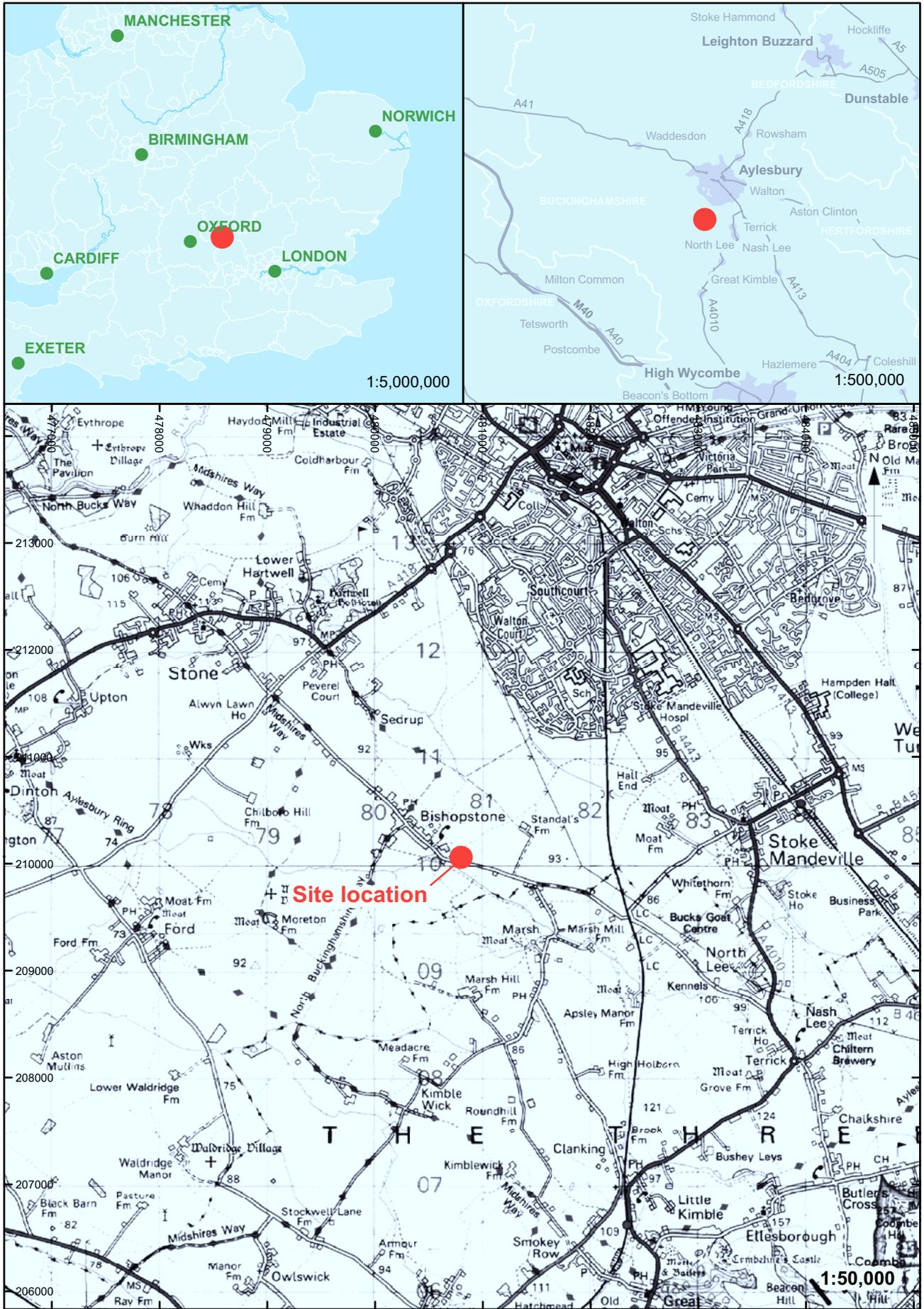
Type of watching brief: Machine excavation of foundation trenches

Date and duration of project: 14th – 15th November 2005, 2 site visits

Area of site: 400m²

Summary of results: Evidence for two phases of cultivation was observed, but no other significant archaeology was encountered.

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



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Figure 1: Site location

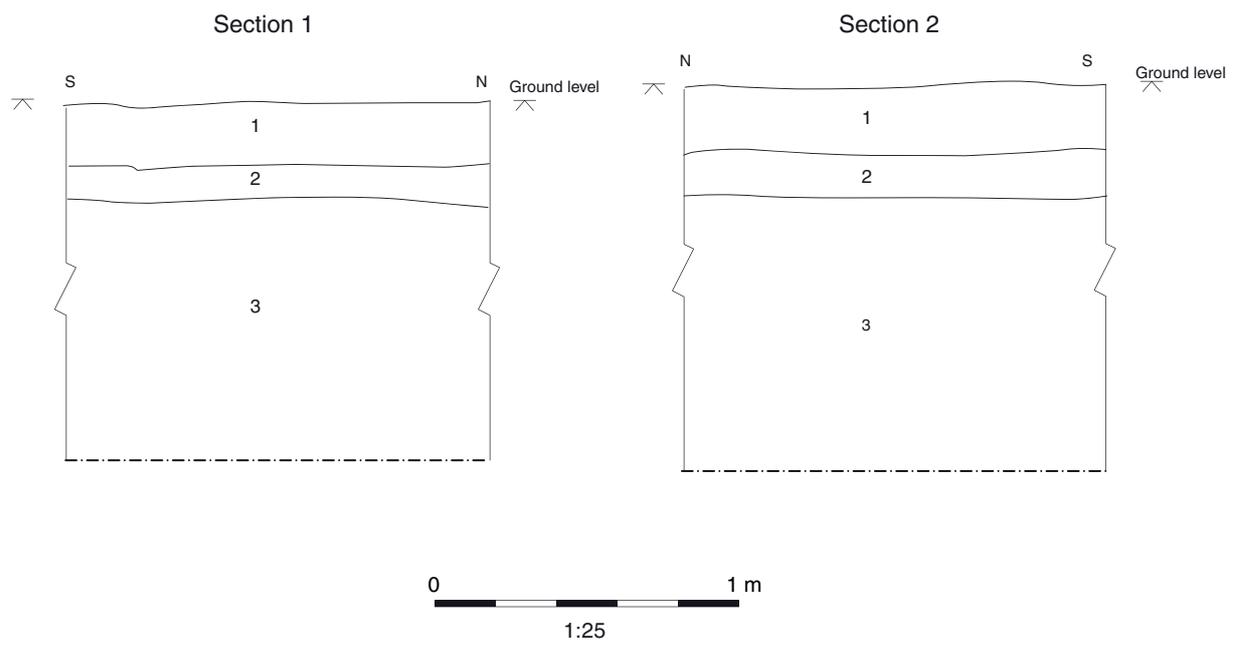
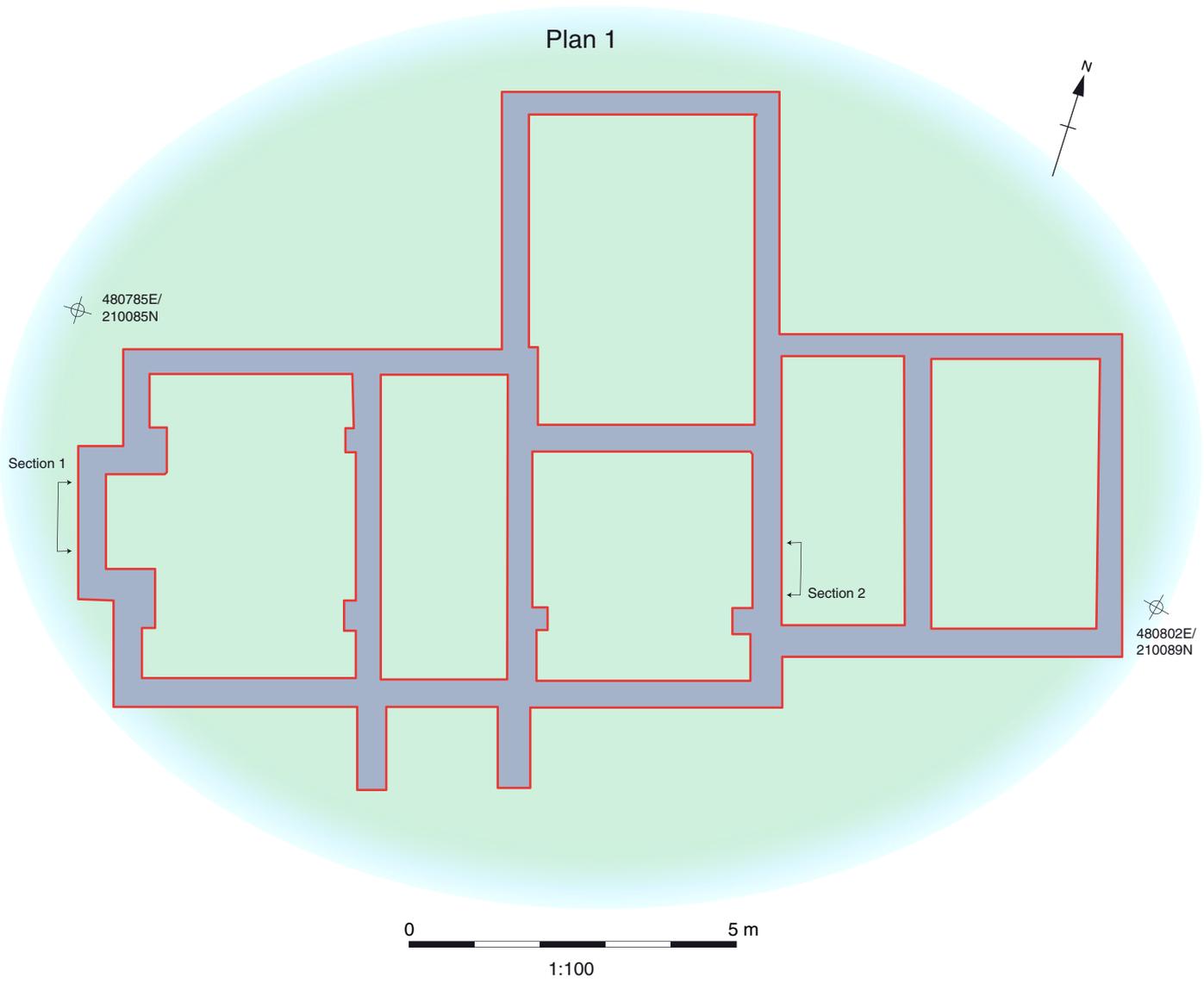


Figure 2: Site plan and sections



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