

7 Lower Green Westcott Buckinghamshire



Archaeological Watching Brief



Oxford Archaeology

7 December 2001



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Planning Ref N^o: 00/2851

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7 Lower Green, Westcott, Buckinghamshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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SUMMARY

In November 2001 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 7 Lower Green, Westcott, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 720 170). The work was commissioned by Garfield Homes in advance of new development of dwellings. The watching brief revealed no archaeological deposit or features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In November 2001 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 7 Lower Green, Westcott, Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Garfield Homes in respect of a planning application for new development on the site (Planning Application No.00/2851)
- 1.1.2 A project brief was set by Sandy Kidd MA MIFA, Senior Archaeological Officer of Buckinghamshire Archaeological Service.
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The application site lies in the vicinity of the eastern green in the medieval village of Westcott. It lies at approximately 84 m OD and the geology is clay. The site is unoccupied and used as a garden.

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, 2001) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 There is no recorded evidence of prehistoric activity in the study area. The Roman road of Akeman St. (SMR 1050) runs to the north through the study area and finds dating to the Roman period from a field c 150 m north of the site of proposed development (SMR 1961) are known.
- 1.3.3 There is little evidence of activity in the early medieval period. Later medieval evidence include the remains of two possibly fortified moated manors (SMRs 0331 & 0444) and medieval house platforms from what once was a larger medieval village (SMR 0653). There was a medieval chapel nearby in a field previously known as 'Church Ground' (SMR 0654), while medieval pottery and tile were unearthed during ploughing of a field known as 'Great Bury' (SMR 1961).
- 1.3.4 From the post medieval period there is a rectangular house platform, slightly raised above its surroundings (SMR 1961) and the site of a possible barn or farmstead

building (SMR 1960). The line between Wootton and Brill passes nearby (SMR 4160) and the church of St. Mary's was built in 1867 (SMR 4170). There are two grade II listed buildings in the village, at 10 and 17/19 Lower Green (SMR 11743 + 11744). These are thatched cottages of the 17th/18th centuries. Also in the village is the grade II* listed formal gardens of Waddesdon Manor, which just intrude into the study area (SMR 20450).

- 1.3.5 Finally in the modern period to the west of the village, is a World War II Airfield (SMR 22153).

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 Instead of the proposed foundations of the new development three small trenches were excavated. This was due to a possible change in number of dwellings on the site. These trenches were excavated by a JCB to evaluate the archaeology within the development area. These were excavated in areas of access due to a number of tree stumps on the site (Fig. 2).
- 2.2.2 All archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:100 and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All excavated features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 Three trenches were excavated through a layer of very dark greyish brown silty clay loam (1) with bricks, fragments of pot, window glass, bottles, slate roofing tile, wood, tin lids and patches of ash. It was 0.6 m to 0.2 m thick sloping from west to east across the site. This was modern garden soil from the late 19th to early 20th centuries (Figs 2 & 3).
- 3.1.2 Sealed below this topsoil was the pre-19th century topsoil of friable greyish brown silty clay loam (2). This was 0.3 thick across the site. It overlaid the natural (3) of dark yellowish clay with patches of grey and manganese specks, and occasional patches of staining from root damage (Fig. 3).

3.2 Finds

3.2.1 No finds were recovered from the site.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

3.3.1 No environmental samples were taken during the course of investigation.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 The trenches revealed that the site had not been disturbed at all until the 19th century when the house at number 7 was constructed and the land became part of its garden. This suggests that the land was used as pasture land for one the nearby manor houses, or common ground of the village.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>
1	Layer	0.6-0.2 m			Garden soil	None
2	Layer	0.3 m			Topsoil	None
3	Layer				Natural	

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

D Wilkinson Ed, 1992; *OAU Fieldwork Manual*

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: 7 lower Green, Westcott, Buckinghamshire

Site code: WELG 01

Grid reference: NGR SP 720 170

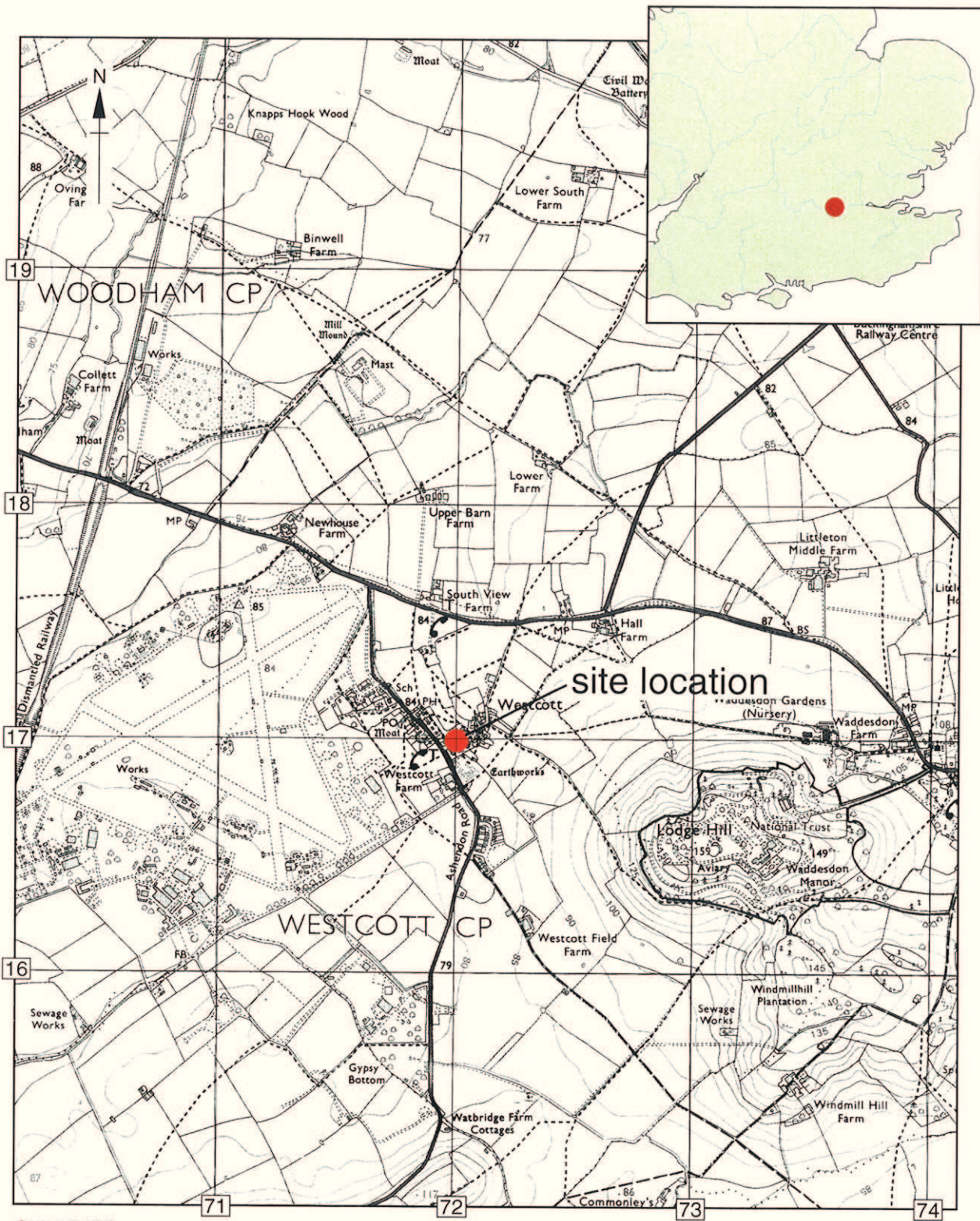
Type of watching brief: Area of land for proposed new development.

Date and duration of project: One site visit 28th November 2001

Area of site: 22 m x 18 m

Summary of results: No archaeological disturbance

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, Technical Centre, Tring Rd, Halton, Aylesbury, Bucks HP22 5PJ in due course, under the following accession number: AYBCM 2001.108.



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location.

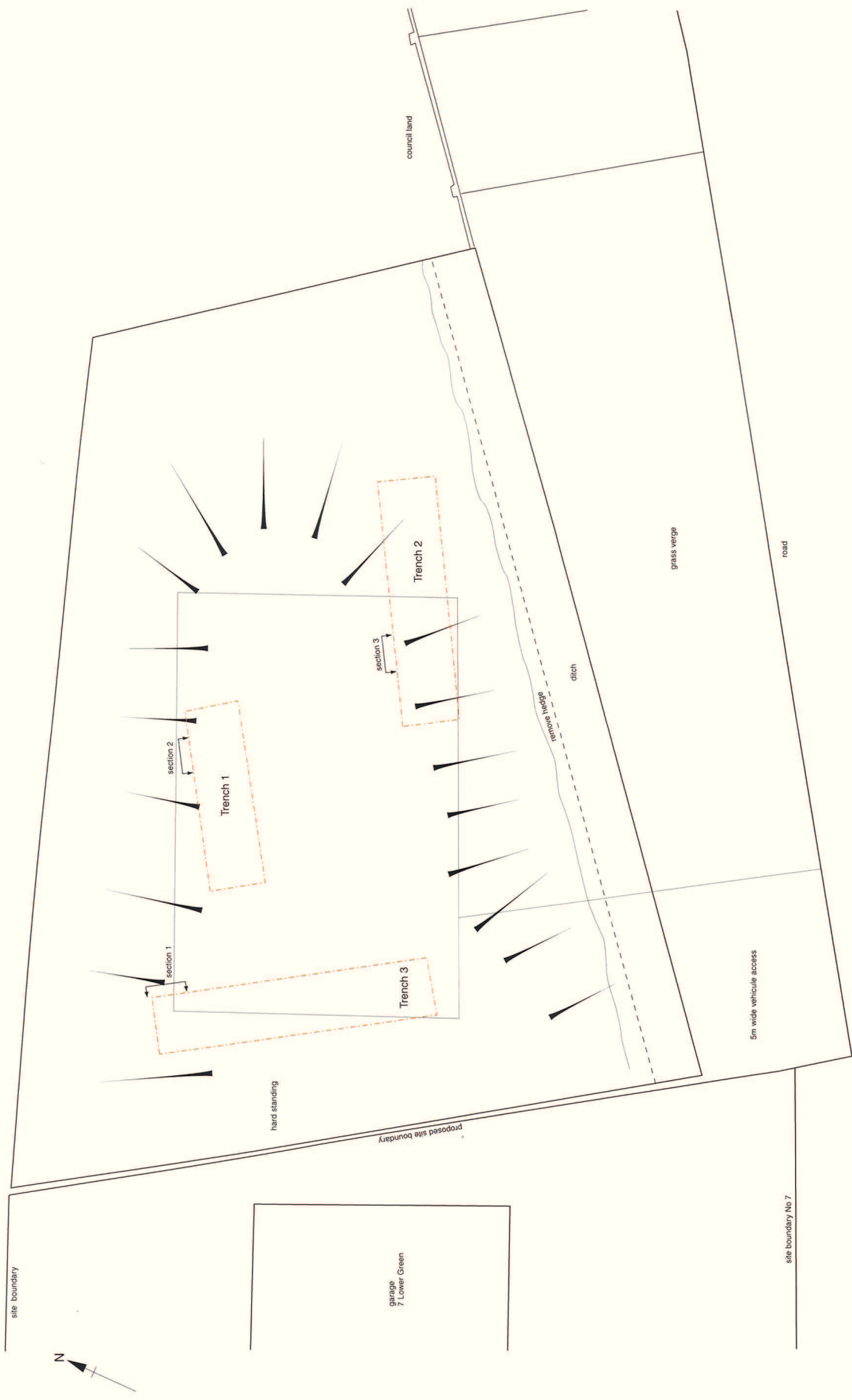


Figure 2: Location of Trenches

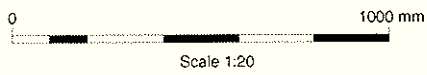
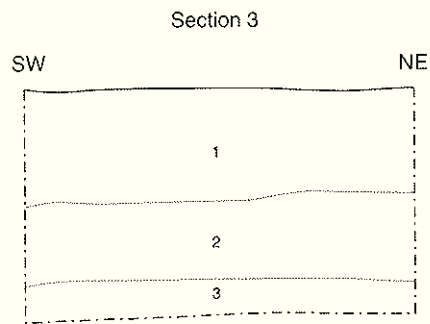
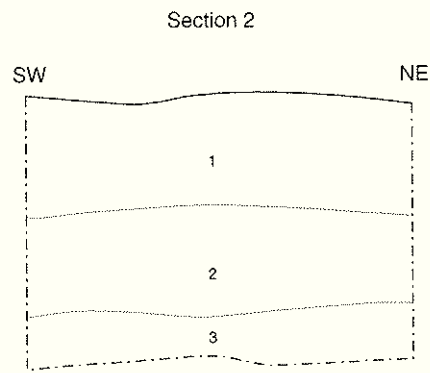
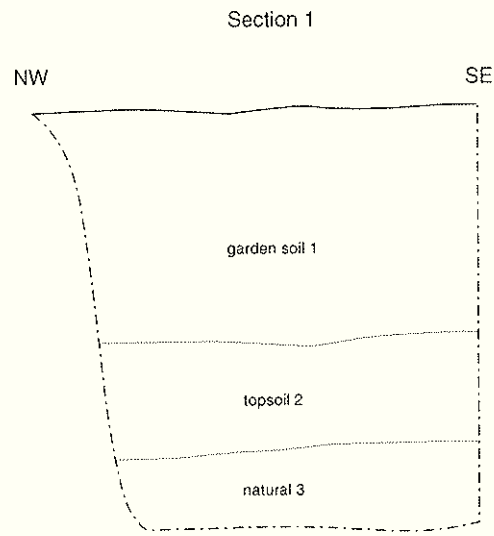


Figure 3: Sections



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