

# Old Vicarage Moulsford Oxfordshire



**Archaeological Watching Brief Report**



February 2010

**Client: Care of the Elderly**

Issue No: 1  
OA Job No: 4516  
NGR: SU 589 839

**Client Name:** Care of the Elderly

**Client Ref No:**

**Document Title:** The Old Vicarage, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire

**Document Type:** Archaeological Watching Brief Report

**Issue Number:** 1

Grid Reference: SU 589 839

Planning Reference: P09/W0028

OA Job Number: 4516

Site Code: MOUOV09

Invoice Code: MOUOVWB

Receiving Museum: Oxfordshire County Museums Service

Museum Accession No: tbc

Event No: tbc

Prepared by: Ian Cook  
Position: Supervisor  
Date: 19-2-10 2009

Checked by: David Wilkinson  
Position: Senior Project Manager  
Date: 23/02/10

Approved by: David Wilkinson Signed.....  
Position: Senior Project Manager  
Date: 23/02/10

Document File Location [X:\MOUOV09\\_Old Vicarage, Moulsoford\report\Moulsoford Report.odt](#)

Graphics File Location  
Illustrated by

**Disclaimer:**

*This document has been prepared for the titled project or named part thereof and should not be relied upon or used for any other project without an independent check being carried out as to its suitability and prior written authority of Oxford Archaeology being obtained. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for the consequences of this document being used for a purpose other than the purposes for which it was commissioned. Any person/party using or relying on the document for such other purposes agrees, and will by such use or reliance be taken to confirm their agreement to indemnify Oxford Archaeology for all loss or damage resulting therefrom. Oxford Archaeology accepts no responsibility or liability for this document to any party other than the person/party by whom it was commissioned.*

**Oxford Archaeology**

© Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd 2009

Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800

f: (0044) 01865 793496

e: [info@oxfordarch.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordarch.co.uk)

w: [www.oxfordarch.co.uk](http://www.oxfordarch.co.uk)

Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited is a Registered Charity No: 285627



## **The Old Vicarage, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire**

### *Archaeological Watching Brief Report*

*Written by Ian Cook*

### **Table of Contents**

<b>1 Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	4
1.2 Geology and topography.....	4
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	4
1.4 Acknowledgements.....	4
<b>2 Watching Brief Aims and Methodology.....</b>	<b>5</b>
2.1 Aims.....	5
2.2 Methodology.....	5
<b>3 Results.....</b>	<b>6</b>
3.1 Presentation of results.....	6
3.2 Finds Summary.....	7
<b>4 Discussion And Conclusions.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Appendix A. Context Inventory.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Appendix B. Bibliography and References.....</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Appendix C. Summary of Site Details.....</b>	<b>11</b>



---

## List of Figures

- Fig. 1            Site location map  
Fig. 2            Location of Area 1 and Area 2  
Fig. 3            Plans of Area 1 and Area 2, Sections 1 and 2  
Plate 1          Section 1  
Plate 2          Section 2



## **Summary**

*Between November 4th 2009 and December 3rd 2009 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at the Old Vicarage, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 589 839). The work was commissioned by Baqus Boxall Sayer on behalf of Friends of the Elderly in response to a planning condition (application No. PO9/W0028) imposed by South Oxfordshire District Council.*

*The watching brief revealed topsoil overlying modern demolition deposits. The demolition deposits were probably laid down to level off and landscape the gardens surrounding the care home on completion of the construction of the existing extensions. No archaeological deposits or features were encountered during the course of the watching brief.*



## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 Between 4<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2009 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at the Old Vicarage, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 589 839). The work was commissioned by Baqus Boxall Sayer on behalf of Friends of the Elderly in response to a planning condition imposed by South Oxfordshire District Council (P09/W0028; Letter SODC to Friends of the Elderly, 11-3-09). A design brief for the watching brief was prepared by the Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (Richard Oram) and a Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared by OA and approved by Richard Oram.

### 1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site is located in the centre of the village of Moulsoford, on the western side of the River Thames (Fig. 1) and is currently in use as a care home. The site lies at 50 m OD and the underlying geology is Lower Chalk (Geological Survey of England and Wales, Sheet no. 254).

### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 Unless otherwise stated, the archaeological and historical background has been reproduced here from the Written Scheme of Investigation (OA October 2009) for the report unless otherwise stated.

1.3.2 During the 1930s Roman coins were recovered from the grounds of the Old Vicarage and Roman pottery was recovered from the playing fields immediately south of the site.

1.3.3 The site is known to lie to the west of the Roman road from Dorchester to Silchester and Roman pottery has been found along the line of the road to the south of the site.

1.3.4 Crop marks seen in fields 90 m to the west of the site show linear features and possible enclosures, and these may continue into the built-up area of the village, including the application area. A number of coffin burials, coins and pottery, all dating to the Roman period, as well as a Bronze Age gold torc were found near to the crop marks,. A second gold torc was recovered 600 m south-west of the site.

1.3.5 A Bronze Age spear-head, now in Reading Museum, was found within Moulsoford Parish (VCH, 1923, pg. 504).

1.3.6 Excavations 300 m south-west of the site have revealed a ring ditch, pits, post holes and a linear ditch which probably relate to a Late Iron Age to Roman settlement.

1.3.7 The site lay within the old medieval manor of Moulsoford. The manor house was situated between the main road through the village and the River Thames, immediately to the east of the Old Vicarage (VCH, 1923, pg. 504). A ferry across the River Thames, which appears to have been present during the 13th Century (VCH, 1923, pg. 506), existed to the south of the site and would have contributed to the strategic importance of the village.



## 2 WATCHING BRIEF AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence (if any), extent, condition, quality and date of any archaeological remains in the impacted area.
- 2.1.2 To preserve by record any archaeological remains (if present) that the works may remove or damage within the impacted area.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 An archaeological supervisor was in attendance to monitor all ground reductions for the proposed extensions. This included the excavation of foundation and service trenches and a generalised reduction of the surface level within the footprints of the new extensions.
- 2.2.2 Two areas, Areas 1 and 2 (Fig. 2) , were excavated to an average depth of 0.40 m below ground surface level within the proposed footprints of the new extensions as well as foundation and service trenches. Area 1 was at the western end/rear of the Old Vicarage and covered an area of 19 m x 10 m. Area 2 was at the northern end/side of the Old Vicarage and covered an area of 6m x 6 m. A JCB Site Master 3CX and a small dumper/ tipper were used by the contractors in the ground reductions.
- 2.2.3 Plans showing the extent and location of the excavations were prepared (Figs. 2 and 3). A digital photographic record was made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D. Wilkinson, 1992).

### 3 RESULTS

#### 3.1 Presentation of results

- 3.1.1 Area 1 (Figs 2 and 3) was situated at the western end and to the rear of the care home. It was a 19 m x 10 m trench excavated to a depth of 0.40 m below the ground surface level and was reduced to accommodate footings for a new extension to the existing building.
- 3.1.2 A service trench measuring 19.5 m x 1 m was excavated parallel to and 1 m from the southern edge of Area 1.
- 3.1.3 The trench was dug through 0.15 m of topsoil (100) and into a layer of demolition rubble (101) which consisted of modern brick, tile and the remains of concrete footings (probably related to buildings/outhouses that once occupied the site). A concrete footing measuring roughly 3 m x 4 m and around 0.30 m thick was observed at the eastern end of the trench. The presence of frogged bricks adjacent to the concrete suggests that this was the footings to a now demolished modern building. A natural pale yellow/brown sandy silt deposit (103) was seen when the concrete was removed and subsequent service trenches excavated. This was a natural alluvial deposit overlying the natural chalk.
- 3.1.4 Deposit (101) was most likely laid down after the existing extensions to the care home were built in an attempt to landscape the gardens. No archaeological features or deposits were observed in this area.
- 3.1.5 Area 2 (Figs. 2 and 3) was situated against the northern end side of the care home. It measured 6 m x 6 m and was excavated to a depth of approximately 0.40 m below the ground surface level. A 0.60 m wide and 0.60 m deep trench was dug around the entire footprint of the area to accommodate the foundations of the new building.
- 3.1.6 Area 2 was reduced through 0.15 m of topsoil (100) and into a layer of what appeared to be a landscaping/levelling deposit (102). This deposit was a friable, brown silt at a depth of 0.26 m with <1% sub angular stone and brick fragment inclusions (Fig 3 and Plate 1) and was probably part of the landscaping of the gardens after the existing extensions to the care home were constructed. Deposit 102 lay over a pale yellow/brown silty sand deposit (103), as in Area 1. It was only seen in the section of the foundation trench.
- 3.1.7 A possible pit-like feature (104; Fig. 3, Plate 2) was seen in the north-east facing section of the foundation trench; it contained modern brick fragments and was therefore modern in date. It was 0.60 m wide and 0.26 m deep and contained a hard brown silty deposit (105) with stone and brick fragment inclusions. It may have been associated with the construction of the extensions to the vicarage.
- 3.1.8 No other archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the ground reduction in this area

#### 3.2 Finds Summary

- 3.2.1 No finds were retained from the watching brief.
- 3.2.2 No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were observed.





## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

### 4.1 General

- 4.1.1 Layers (101) and (102) were exposed which seemed to relate to landscaping the surrounding ground surface after the construction of the existing extensions.
- 4.1.2 Where alluvial deposits were observed in either new footings and service trenches, and where old concrete footings were removed, no archaeological features or deposits were observed.
- 4.1.3 The absence of archaeological features observed during the course of the ground works is probably attributable to previous building works that were carried out at the Old Vicarage. The the construction of extensions to accommodate the care home would have severely truncated if not destroyed any archaeology that may have once been present in the area.



## APPENDIX A. CONTEXT INVENTORY

<b>Contexts</b>						
<b>context no</b>	<b>type</b>	<b>Width (m)</b>	<b>Depth (m)</b>	<b>comment</b>	<b>finds</b>	<b>date</b>
100	Layer	-	0.15	Topsoil/Turf Line	-	Modern
101	Layer	-	-	Demolition Rubble	Brick & Tile	Modern
102	Layer	-	0.25	Levelling Deposit	-	Modern
103	Layer	-	-	Pale yellow/brown Sand/Silt (Alluvial?)	-	-
104	Cut	0.6	0.26	Modern Ditch/Pit	-	Modern
105	Fill	0.6	0.26	Modern Ditch/Pit Fill	-	Modern



## APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- Ditchfield, P.H & Page, W, 1923 *Victoria History of the County of Berkshire*, 4, 504-507, London
- IFA, 2008 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*
- OA, October 2009 *Old Vicarage, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire - Written Scheme of Investigation*
- OAU, 1992, *Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, first edition, August 1992)
- OCAS, 2009 *P09/W0028 - Old Vicarage, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire – Design Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief*



## APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** The Old Vicarage, Moulsoford, Oxfordshire

**Site code:** MOUOV09

**Grid reference:** NGR SU 589 839

**Type:** Archaeological Watching Brief

**Date and duration:** 4<sup>th</sup> November to 10<sup>th</sup> November 2009, 23<sup>rd</sup> November to 24<sup>th</sup> November 2009 and 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2009

**Summary of results:** The watching brief revealed topsoil overlying demolition deposits used as levelling off/landscaping for gardens surrounding care home most likely laid down upon construction of existing extensions to the care home.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with the Oxfordshire County Museum Services in due course, under the following accession number: tbc



Reproduced from the Landranger 1:50,000 scale by permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown Copyright 1999. All rights reserved. Licence No. AL 100005569

Figure 1: Site location

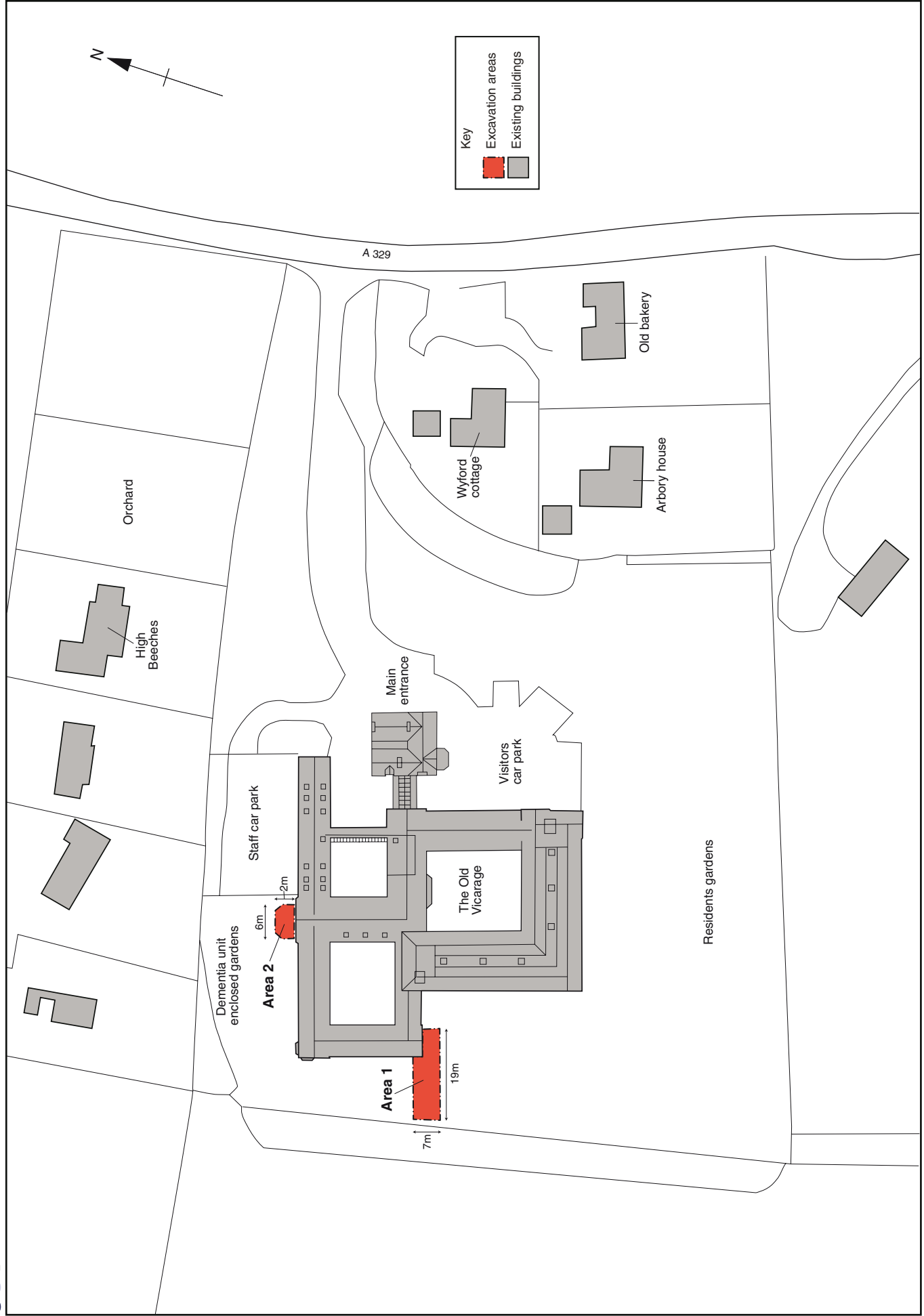


Figure 2: Location of areas 1 and 2

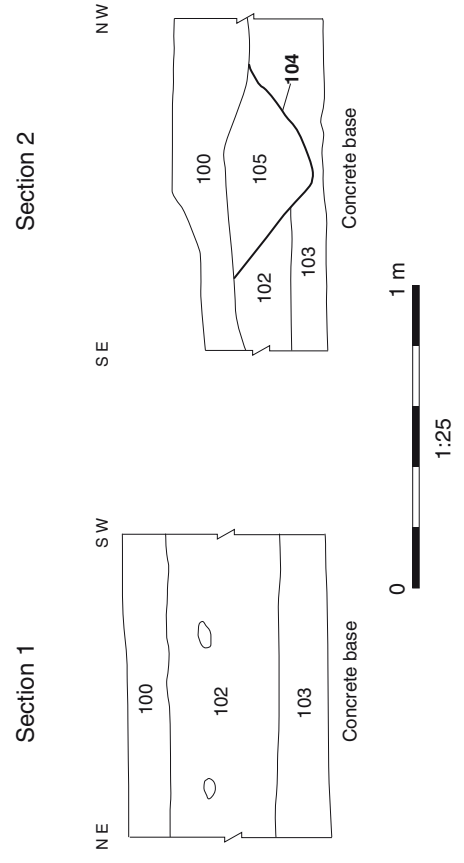
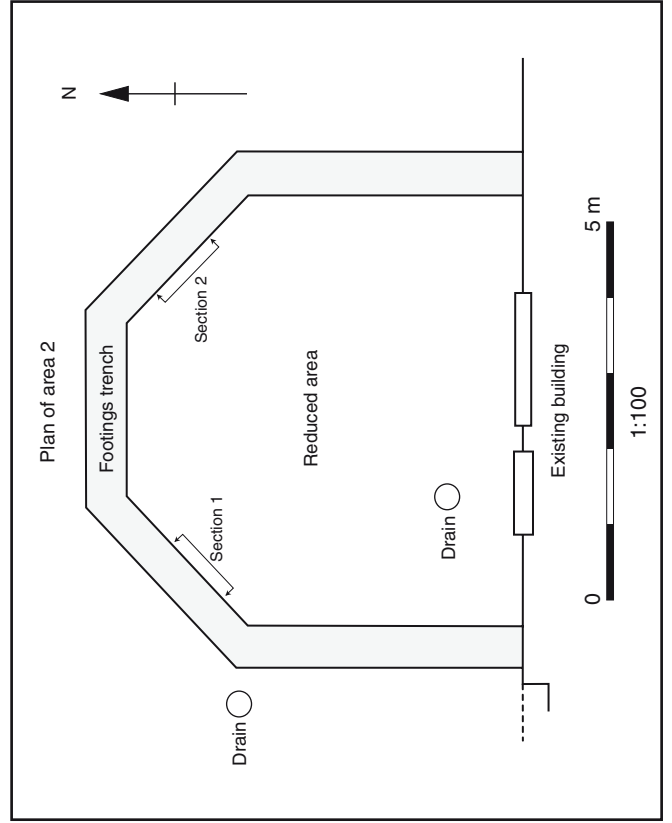
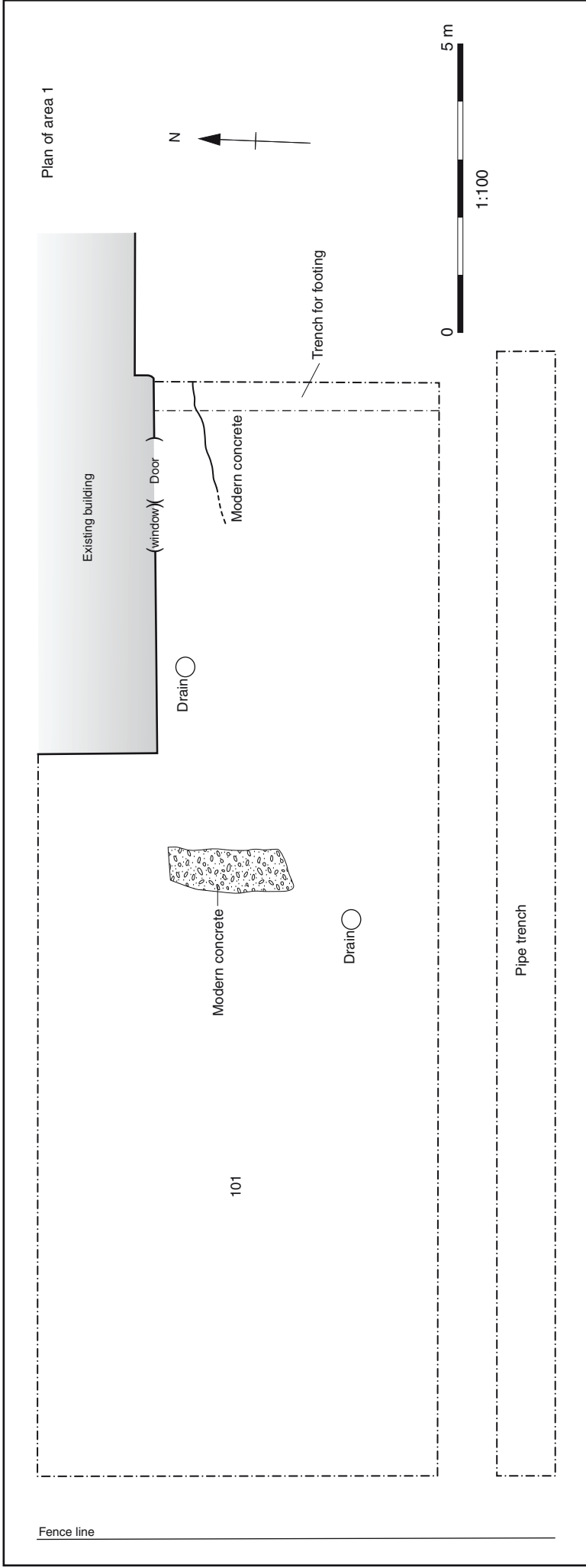


Figure 3: Plans of area 1 and 2 and sections





Plate 1: Section 1



Plate 2: Section 2





#### **OA East**

15 Trafalgar Way  
Bar Hill  
Cambridgeshire  
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850500  
f: +44 (0) 1223 850599  
e: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

#### **OA North**

Mill 3  
Moor Lane Mills  
Moor Lane  
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000  
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606  
e: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

#### **OA South**

Janus House  
Osney Mead  
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800  
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496  
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk  
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

#### **OA Grand Ouest**

7 Rue des Monderaines  
ZI - Ouest  
14650 Carpiquet  
France

t: +33 (0) 249 88 01 01  
f: +33 (0) 249 88 01 02  
e: info@oago.fr  
w: <http://oago.fr>

#### **OA Méditerranée**

115 Rue Merlot  
ZAC La Louvade  
34 130 Maugeio  
France

t: +33 (0) 4.67.57.86.92  
f: +33 (0) 4.67.42.65.93  
e: oamed@thehumanjourney.net  
w: <http://oamed.fr/>

**Director:** David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA



*The Oxford Archaeological Unit Ltd is a Private Limited Company, N<sup>o</sup>: 1618597 and a Registered Charity, No: 285627  
Head Office: Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800*