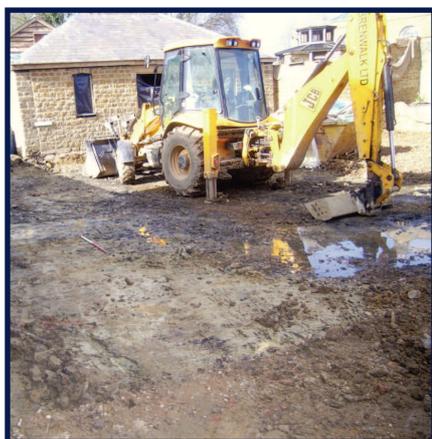
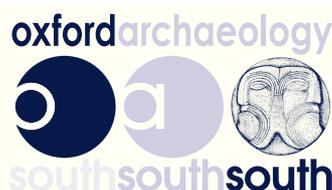


Manor Farm Hardwick Road Priors Marston Warwickshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



May 2011

Client: Johnston Cave Associates

Issue No: 1

OA Job No: 4710

NGR: SP 488 570



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Manor Farm, Hardwick Road, Priors Marston, Warwickshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Written by Mike Sims

and illustrated by Julia Collins

Table of Contents

Summary.....	2
1 Location and scope of work.....	2
2 Methodology.....	2
3 Description of deposits.....	2
4 Discussion and conclusions.....	3
5 Bibliography and references.....	3



Summary

In March 2011 OA conducted an archaeological watching brief during the mechanical excavation of the farmyard at Manor Farm, Hardwick Road, Priors Marston, Warwickshire (NGR: SP 488 570). The watching brief showed that the western half of the farmyard had been truncated during the yard's construction below the level of any potential archaeology, while the eastern half showed evidence of 19th and 20th century disturbance. No significant archaeology was observed.

1 LOCATION AND SCOPE OF WORK

- 1.1.1 The village of Priors Marston is located approximately 8 km south-east of the town of Southam (NGR: SP 488 570) (Fig. 1). Manor Farm is situated on the southern edge of the village. The farmyard is bounded to the south, west and east by farm buildings and to the north by a walled garden. The yard is sited at the bottom of a gentle slope rising to the north-west at a level of approximately 138 m above OD. The underlying geology is Lower Lias Clays (Geological Survey of England and Wales, sheet no. 201).
- 1.1.2 The work was commissioned by Johnston Cave Associates in respect of a planning application for a barn conversion (Planning Application No. 09/01627/FUL)
- 1.1.3 Due to the possibility of disturbance to below ground archaeological deposits a condition requiring that an Archaeological Watching Brief be maintained during the period of intrusive ground works was attached to the permission.
- 1.1.4 A project brief was set by Anna Stocks, the Warwickshire County Planning Archaeologist detailing the requirements of Warwickshire Museum Field Services (WMFS, 2010) and OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA, 2010a). The barn conversion was covered in a separate report (OA, 2010b).
- 1.1.5 This phase of work was a continuation of that watching brief.

2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 The watching brief was conducted as a series of site visits during those works which had the potential to disturb or destroy archaeological deposits. These works included the reduction in level of part of the yard and the excavation of a service trench. The excavated areas were closely examined for any features and the spoil was examined in order to collect dating evidence.
- 2.1.2 A plan of the extent of any excavations was maintained (Fig. 2) at a scale of 1:200. All excavated features were photographed using digital photography 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 DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITS

- 3.1.1 Within the western and southern portions of the yard a layer of yellow-brown clay with grey clay mottling (30) was exposed at a depth of 0.25 m below the current yard surface. Excavations to connect with an existing drain within the north-western corner of the yard showed this deposit to be in excess of 0.25 m deep.



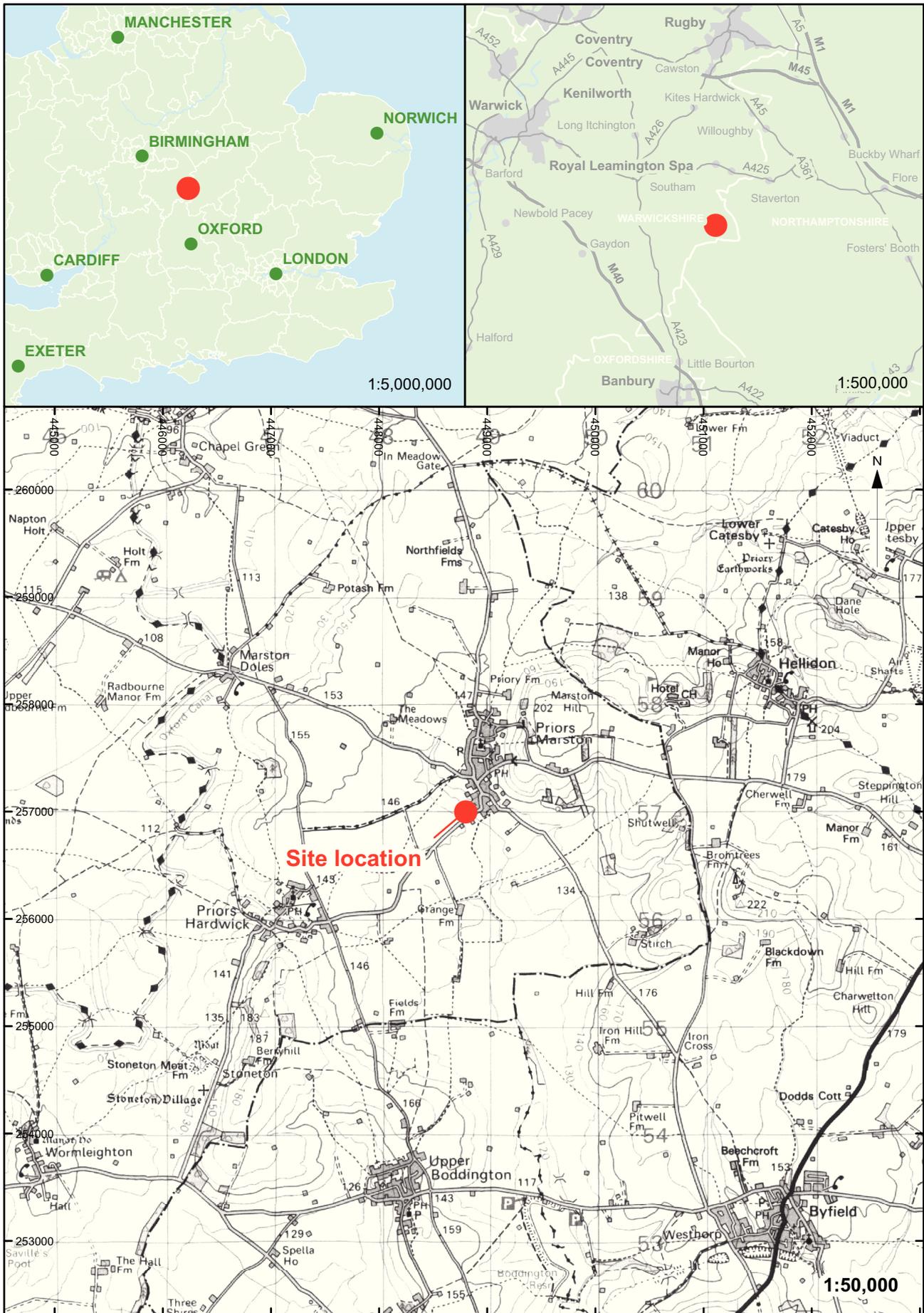
- 3.1.2 Overlying this layer was a layer of grey-brown silty clay (31). This layer contained a large percentage of subangular stones and formed the farmyard surface. Fragments of brick and a fragment of glazed earthenware were recovered from this layer both suggesting a 19th – early 20th century date.
- 3.1.3 As the ground reduction proceeded towards the eastern side of the farmyard it rose in relation to the underlying slope with the reduced level not impacting on layer 31. In the north-eastern corner of the yard an area of surviving cobbling (32) was observed butting up to the tackroom. No other features or deposits were observed.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The watching brief showed that the western and southern quadrants of the yard had been terraced, probably during the farm's original construction in the 18th and 19th centuries, exposing the underlying natural clay (30).
- 4.1.2 It is probable that the yard had been originally cobbled as indicated by the surviving area of cobbles (32). Later 20th century use of the yard by increasingly heavier machinery has probably displaced the cobbles with the later deposit of stone fragments and clay 31 being laid to replace it. No archaeological deposits or features predating the farm's construction and working life were observed.

5 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- OA 2010a Manor Farm, Hardwick Road, Priors Marston, Warwickshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief
- OA 2010b Manor Farm, Hardwick Road, Priors Marston, Warwickshire: Archaeological Watching Brief Report
- OAU, 1992 Field Manual (ed. D Wilkinson)
- WMFS 2010 Manor Farm, Hardwick Road, Priors Marston: Brief for Archaeological Work



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Figure 1: Site location

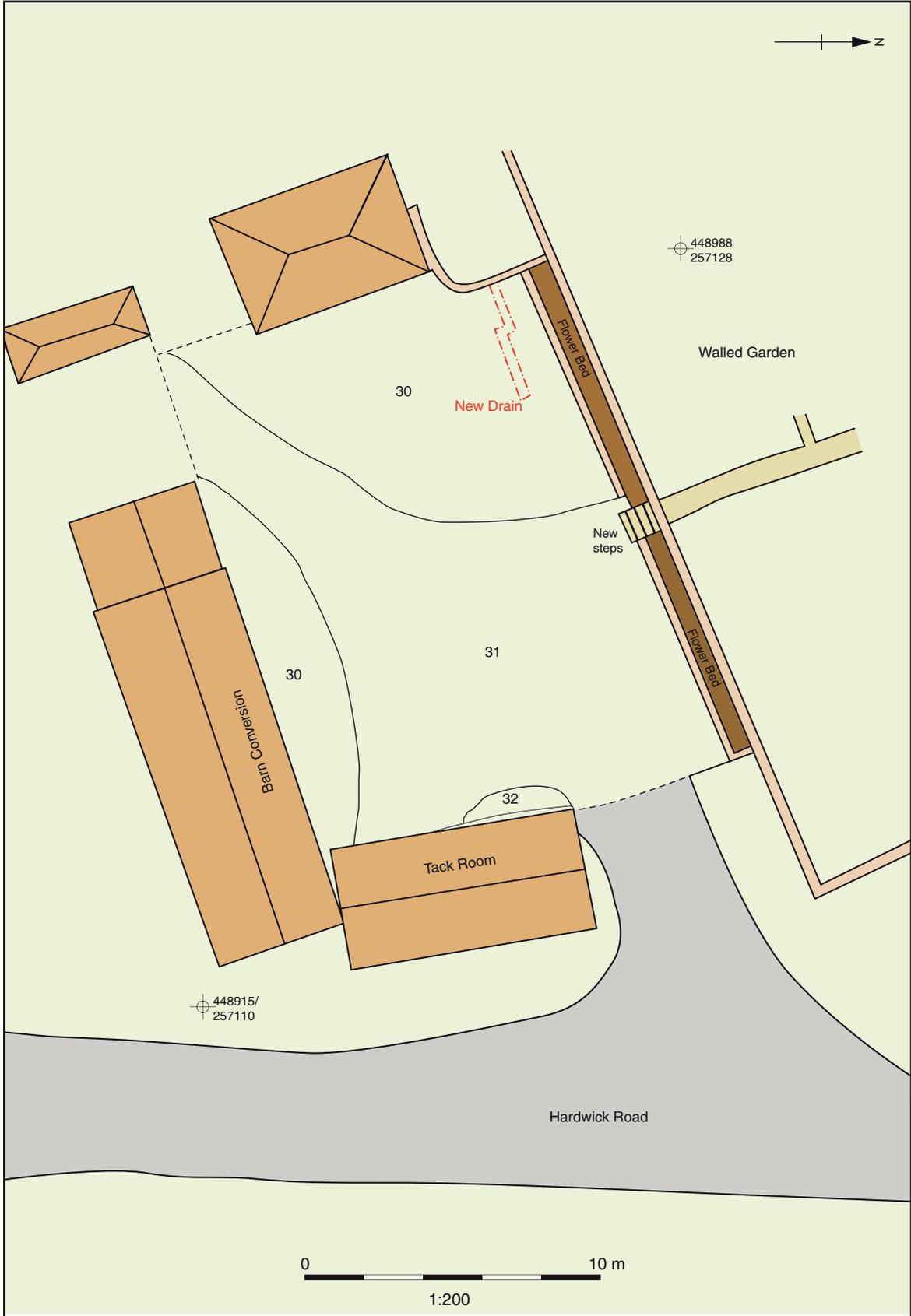


Figure 2: Site plan



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