

Bisham Abbey Golf Club Bisham Berkshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology

December 2003

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Issue N^o: 1

OA Job N^o: 2090

Planning Ref N^o: SU 8490 8510

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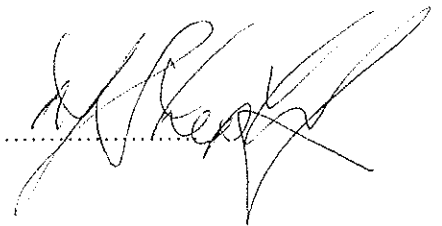
Date: 17th December 2003

Approved by: Nick Shepherd

Position: Head of Fieldwork

Date: 22th December 2003

Signed.....



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**Bisham Abbey Golf Club,
Bisham, Berkshire**

NGR SU 8490 8510

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SUMMARY

In December 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief at Bisham Abbey Golf Club, Bisham, Berkshire (NGR SU 8490 8510), on behalf of George W. Knox. The Watching Brief revealed turf and topsoil deposits buried below the foundations of the golf clubhouse. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In December 2003, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an Archaeological Watching Brief at Bisham Abbey Golf Club, Bisham, Berkshire on behalf of George W. Knox in respect of an archaeological planning condition placed on the demolition of the existing club house and replacing it with a new building.

1.1.2 A brief was set by and a Written Scheme of Investigation, produced by OA (OA 2003a) was agreed with Kevin Beachus (Senior Archaeologist for Babtie).

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The development area is located adjacent to the River Thames, bounded to the west by Bisham Abbey and the National Sports Centre and to the west by Marlow Road (NGR SU 8490 8510)(Fig.1).

1.2.2 The site lies at approximately 29 m OD and comprises a modern golf course. The underlying geology is Flood Plain Gravel overlying Upper Chalk and Middle Chalk.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 To the north of the development site is the Church of All Saints at Bisham that dates to the 12th century and it is likely that a small medieval hamlet grew up around the church. Immediately west of the site is Bisham Abbey, a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 148) that includes the remains of a monastic and manorial complex located on the south bank of the River Thames. It was founded as a preceptory of the Knights Templar during the reign of King Stephen (1135-64) and was occupied by that order until their dissolution in 1307.

1.3.2 In 1337 an Augustinian Priory, dedicated to Jesus Christ and St Mary, was founded on the site and the monastery remained Augustinian until its dissolution in 1536. It was briefly re-founded in 1537 as a Benedictine Abbey, but again surrendered in 1538, subsequently becoming the private residence of the Hoby family. Earthwork remains consist of the surviving part of a surrounding rectangular moat, enclosing an area some 400 m sq. Although most of the moat has been infilled, it can be seen to be steep sided with an earthen inner bank.

1.3.3 To the south west of the Abbey is Temple Mills, which date to the 1790s and are attributed to Samuel Wyatt (Pevsner 1966, 89-90).

- 1.3.4 Trial trenching by Thames Valley Archaeological Services in the early 1990s, approximately 1 km south-west of the site at Bradenham Lane, Temple, revealed a series of Roman features dating from the 2nd to 4th centuries (Archaeology in Berkshire 1991, 10) and a recent evaluation by OA at the Temple Estate revealed evidence for a Late Iron Age settlement (OAb 2003). At Stubbings House in Bisham, Bronze Age flints, Iron Age pottery and part of a burnt flint mound were revealed during trial trenching (*ibid*).

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 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 site visits prior to the breaking out of the clubhouse concrete foundation raft of to ascertain current impact levels. Photographic and drawn observations of the site were made. The site is located on a thick sandy loam. The ground conditions were good during the investigative works and the weather conditions were fine and dry.
- 3.1.2 The concrete plinth of the old clubhouse was removed using a mechanical breaker under archaeological observation and the underlying surface was examined for archaeological features at impact level. Any archaeological features located were to be planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were to be 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 Below the level of the concrete raft was a sandy loam topsoil (2) measuring up to 0.4 m thick, which was overlain by turf (1).
- 4.1.2 A single square post-hole/socket (3) associated with the concrete foundations was seen to cut the topsoil to the south-west. No finds were recovered.

5 DISCUSSION

- 5.1.1 No deposits of archaeological interest or potential were located or observed during this watching brief.

APPENDICES

6 APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

| Context No. | Type | Width (m) | Depth (m) | Comment | Finds | Date |
|-------------|-------|-----------|-----------|-----------------|-------|--------|
| 1 | Layer | | 0.08 m | Turf | - | Modern |
| 2 | Layer | | 0.4 m | Topsoil | - | Modern |
| 3 | Cut | 0.6 m | 0.5 m | Foundation post | - | Modern |

7 APPENDIX 2 REFERENCES

Babtie, 2003 *Bisham Abbey Golf Club, Bisham: Brief for an Archaeological Evaluation*

OA, 2003a *Bisham Abbey Golf Club, Bisham, Berkshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

OA, 2003b *Manor Cottage and Temple Cottage, Temple Lane Bisham, Berkshire: Archaeological Evaluation Report*

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

Pevsner, 1966 *The Buildings of England: Berkshire*, Penguin

8 APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Bisham Abbey Golf Club, Bisham, Berkshire

Site code: BIAGC 03

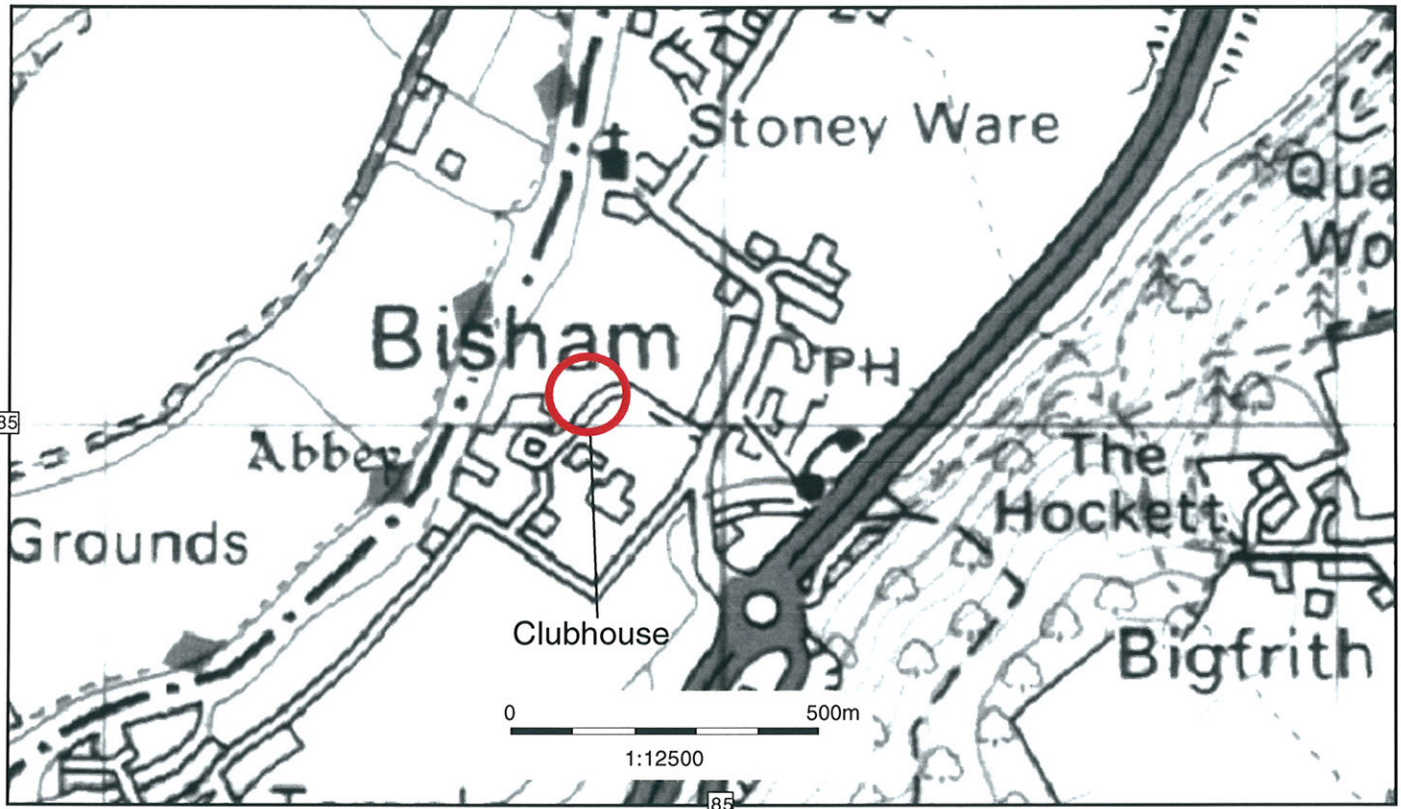
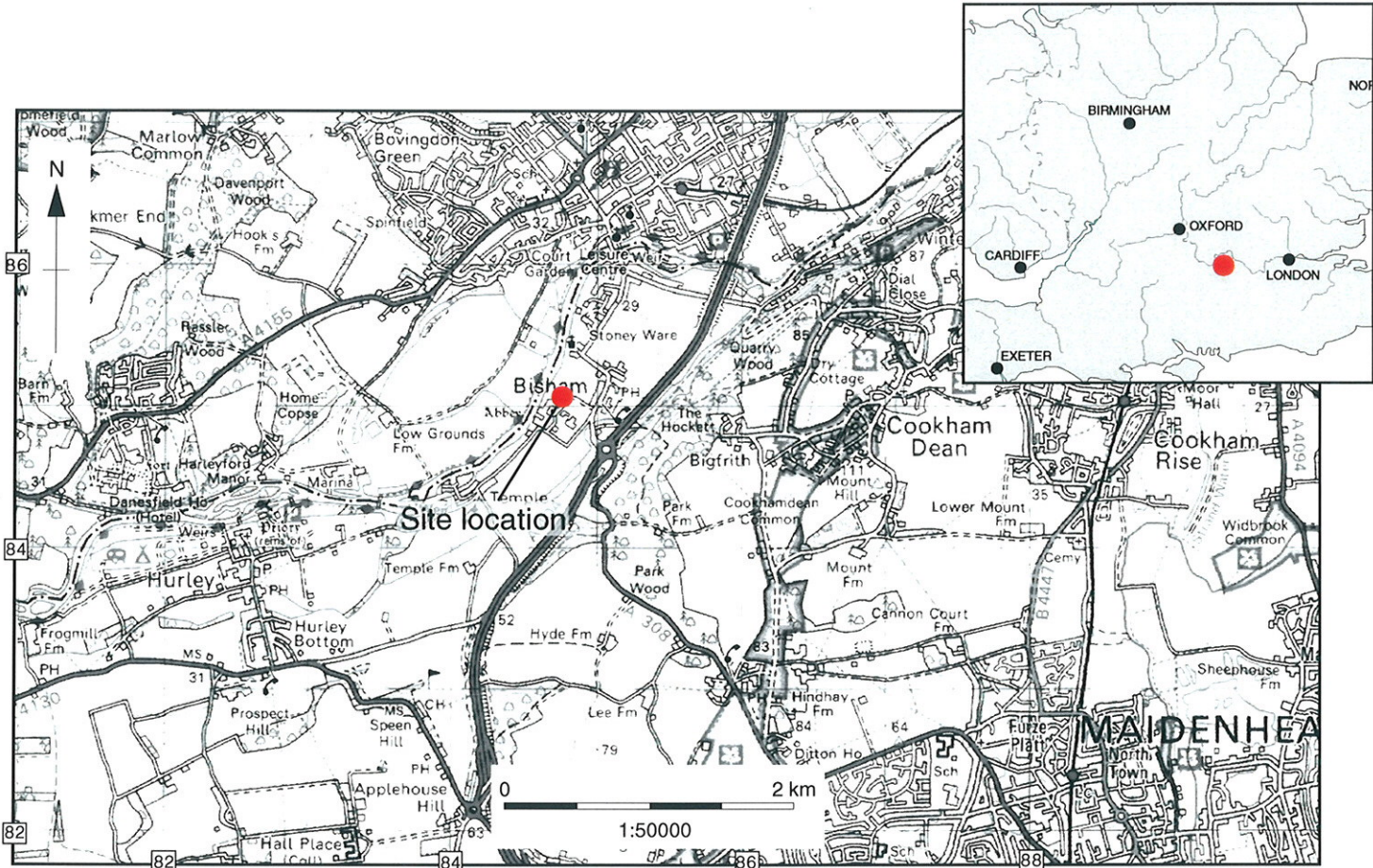
Grid reference: SU8490 8510

Type of Mitigation: Archaeological Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 26/11/03 - 04/12/03

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.



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Figure 1 : Site location

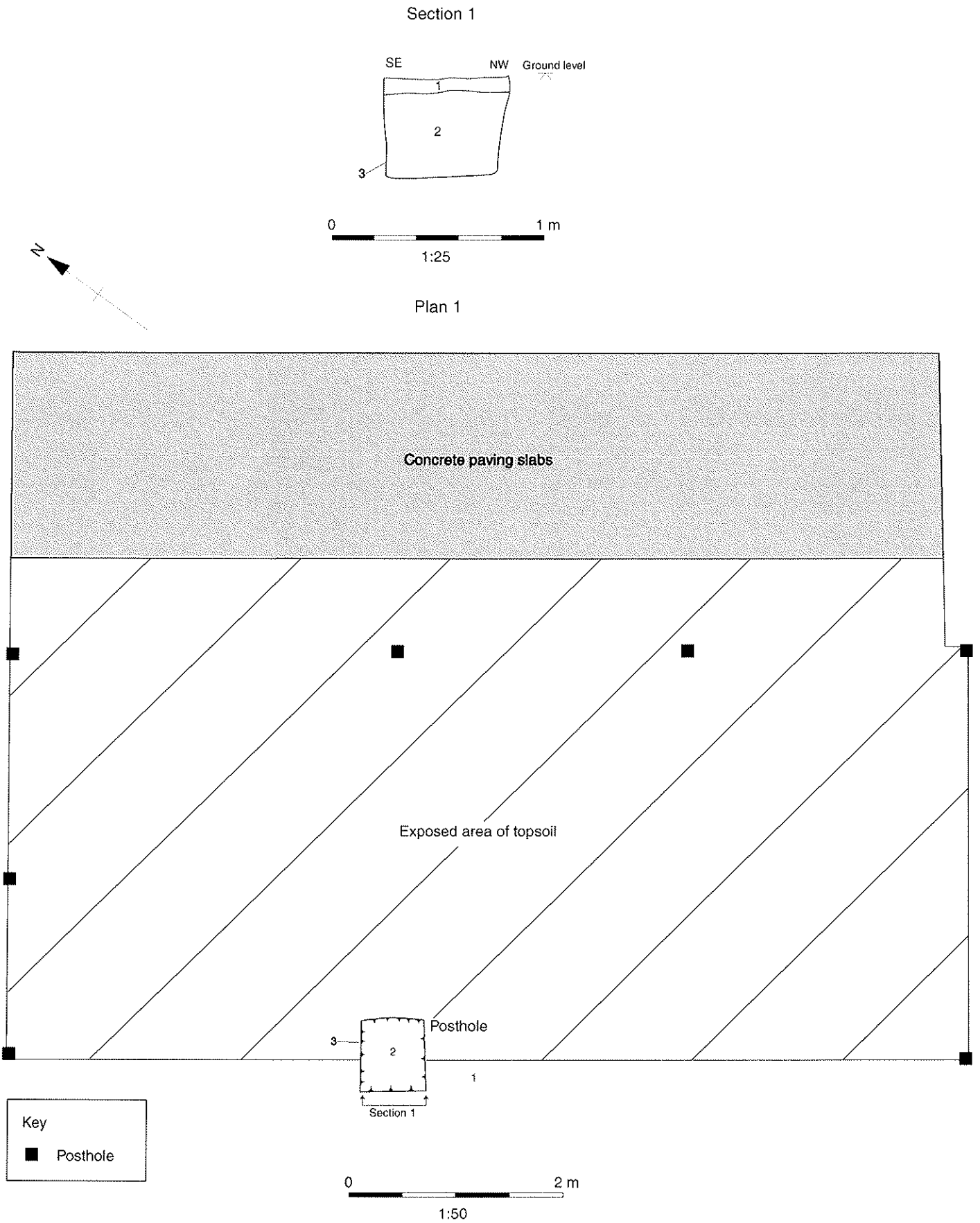


Figure 2: Clubhouse foundation area



Plate 1: North-west view of Clubhouse foundation area following removal of concrete slab



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