

WARFIELD (BR)

WAMKWB
7/97.

St Michael's Church

**St Michael the Archangel, Church Lane, Warfield,
Bracknell, Berks.**

NGR SU 896 705

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

Oxford Archaeological Unit

February 1998

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Date: *12/3/98*

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Date: *9/4/1998*

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Summary

In late 1997 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook a watching brief at St Michael's Church, Warfield, Bracknell, Berkshire (NGR SU 896 705). No archaeological features were seen and no finds were retrieved. No human remains were exposed or disturbed during the course of the works.

1 Introduction

The development proposal comprised the excavation of new drainage channels in the churchyard and the refurbishment of existing drains parallel to the north wall of the church.

The watching brief was commissioned by Mr Ian Camp of the Warfield Parochial Church Council, on behalf of St Michael's Church. It was undertaken in consultation with Mr David Miles, the Diocesan Advisory Committee's archaeological advisor.

2 Background

The site lies in East Berkshire, in the village of Warfield, within the churchyard of the church of St Michael the Archangel.

St Michael's Church itself is an impressive building, partly of Early English style, containing some 14th century stained glass in the form of censuring angels in its east window. To the south-east of the church is the vicarage, built in 1862; to the south is the Parish Room, a 17th-century timber framed building, with the 16th-century St Michael's Cottage at right angles to it, also timber framed.

A number of archaeological evaluations and excavations have taken place in the vicinity of the site. At Fairclough Farm (SU 873 708) evaluation and excavation revealed Iron Age pottery and prehistoric flints and at least two ring gullies forming part of a Middle Iron Age occupation site (Ford 1992; Torrance and Durden 1994). An evaluation at Stable Lodge, Priory Lane produced Bronze Age and medieval finds, although they were sparse and suggestive of a very low level of activity in the area (Ford 1994)

Small prehistoric and Roman sites have also been discovered during archaeological evaluations (Ford 1989; Moore 1989) at Park Farm, Warfield (SU 865 705). The SMR records for the area include two stray finds, one a 15th century silver groat, found to the south of the site, and a prehistoric flint flake found to the south west. To the west there are also two rectilinear enclosures of unknown date, although it has been theorised that they may be post-medieval (Ford, 1992).

3 Aims

The aims of the watching brief were to minimise any accidental exposure of and disturbance to human remains during the course of the works; to record any archaeological remains exposed on site during the course of the works to established

standards (Wilkinson 1992); to secure the preservation by record of any archaeology, the presence and nature of which could not be established in advance.

4 Methodology

Separate inspection visits were made to the site as work progressed; all excavation was by hand. Within the constraints imposed by Health and Safety considerations the deposits exposed were cleaned, inspected and recorded in plan, section and by colour slide and black and white print photography. Written records were also made on proforma sheets.

5 Results

Two deposits were exposed in the drainage trench and manhole excavations; neither of them produced any artefactual evidence, nor any human bone.

(1) was a friable mid-dark gray silty clay loam with 5% fine silt, with an average thickness of 0.20 m. This deposit was very heavily rooted.

(2) was a hard gray clay loam with 10% medium-coarse silt and 10% medium gravel, with an average thickness of 0.70 m to the base of the excavation.

6 Discussion

The excavations in the churchyard disturbed neither human remains, nor any *in situ* archaeology.

John Dalton
OAU
February 1998

References.

Ford B 1994 Priory Lane, Warfield, Berkshire. An Archaeological Evaluation for Village Homes. Thames Valley Archaeological Services Report 94/44. Reading.

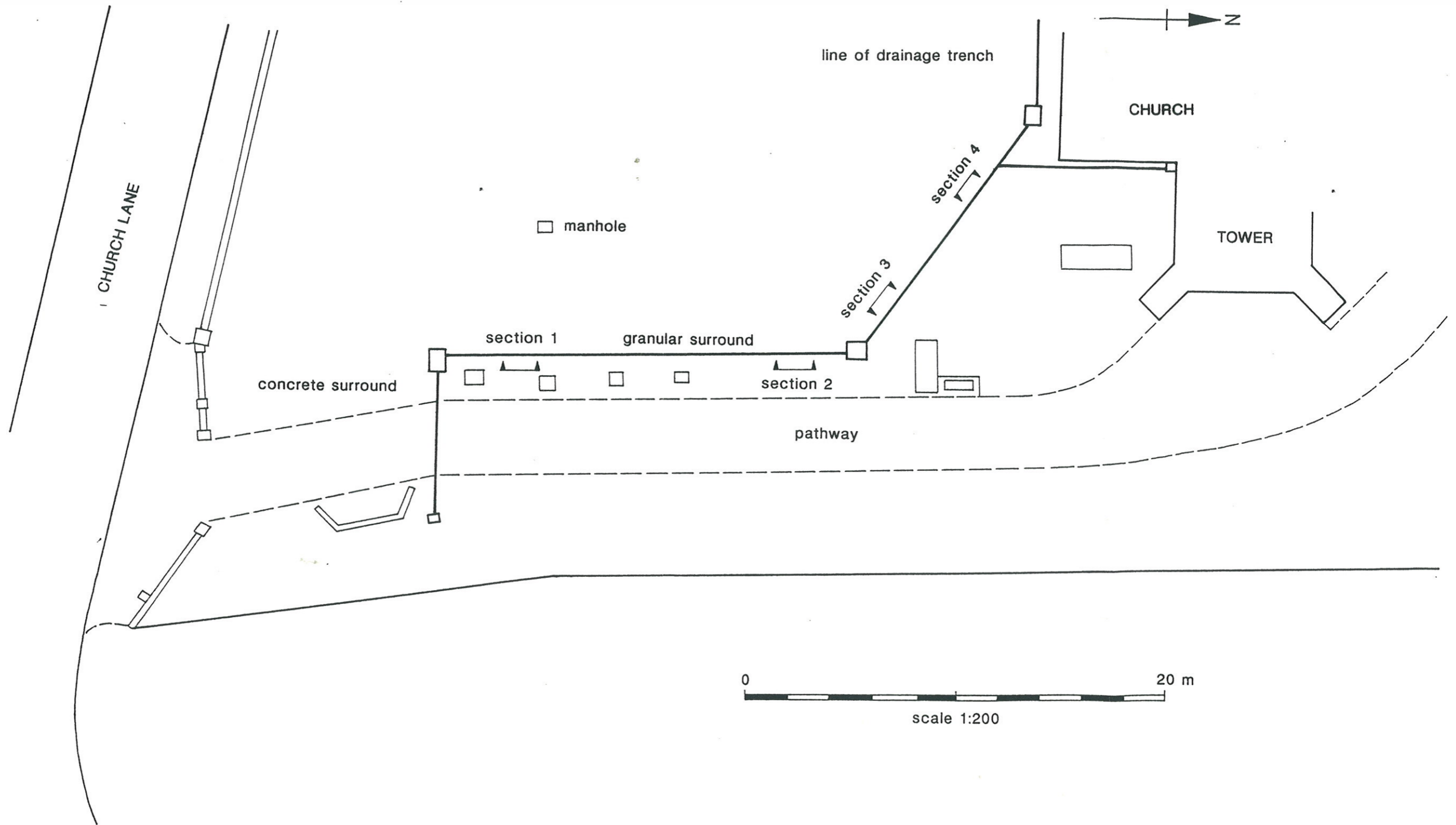
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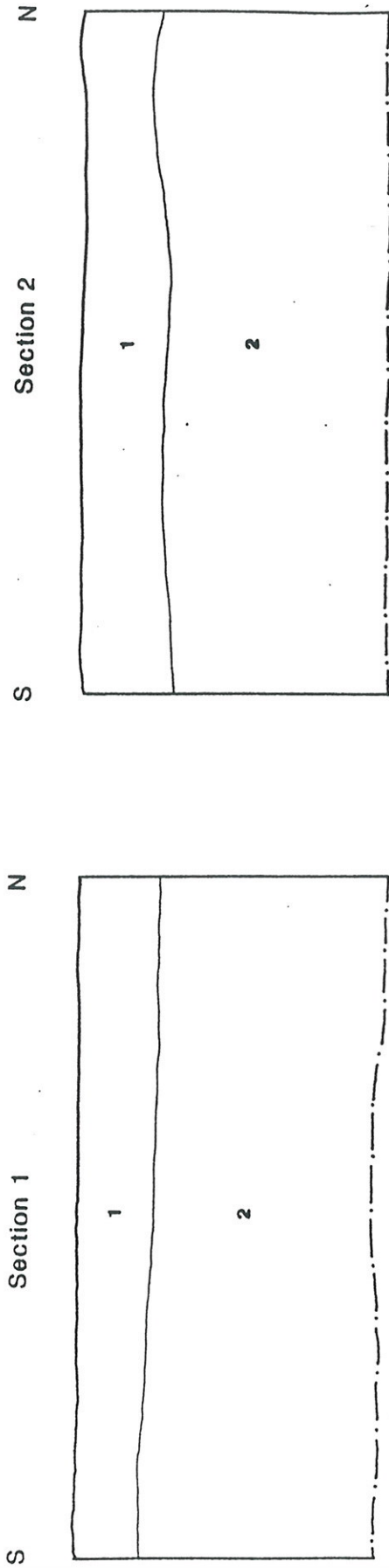
Torrance L J and Durden T 1994 A Middle Iron Age Site at Fairclough Farm, Bracknell, Berkshire. An Archaeological Excavation for Quelm Lane Consortium. Thames Valley Archaeological Services Report 92/6A. Reading.

Wilkinson, D (ed) 1992 Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual, (First edition, August 1992).



Site plan

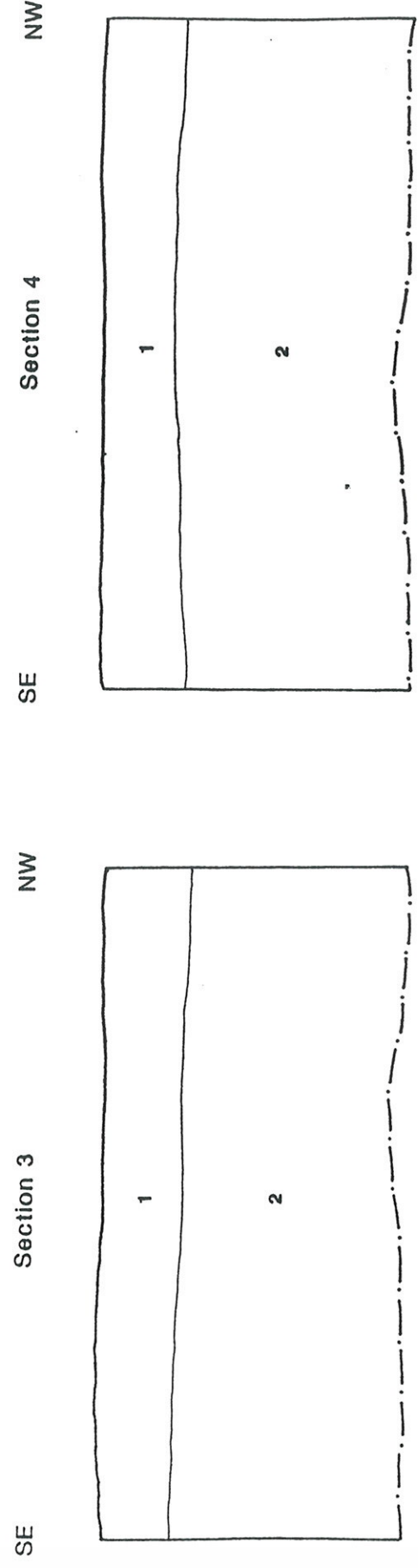
Figure 1



scale 1:20



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Sections

Figure 2

