

Springfield  
Church Road  
Penn  
High Wycombe  
Buckinghamshire



Archaeological  
Watching Brief Report



**Oxford Archaeology**

25th September 2003

**Client: PSS Construction**

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## SUMMARY

*In September 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Springfield, Church Road, Penn, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire (NGR SU 923 960). The work was commissioned by PSS Construction in advance of the construction of a new house and double garage. The watching brief revealed no archaeological features or deposits within the area of the development.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In September 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Springfield, Church Road, Penn, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by PSS Construction in respect of a planning application for the construction of new house and double garage (Planning Application No. 03/798)
- 1.1.2 A project brief was set by David Radford, Archaeological Officer with Buckinghamshire County Council.
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA 2003).

#### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on pebbly clay and sand over chalk with flint at 60 m above OD. The site is situated on the south side of Church Road, and is private grounds.

#### 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 2003) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 Penn lies on the dip-slope of the Chilterns, overlooking the Thames Valley, and forms an elongated 'ribbon-like' tail to High Wycombe merging at its north end imperceptibly with Tyler's Green. Penn's origins lie in the medieval period and it is first recorded in the 13th century.
- 1.3.3 By the 14th century Penn had become famous for its production of floor tiles (Pevsner, Sherwood and Williamson, 1994, 594). The industry supplied high status sites such as Windsor Castle and the Palace of Westminster (Hohler, 1941).
- 1.3.4 Artefactual evidence recovered in the vicinity of this development site suggests that the main focus of the industry was situated near the junction of Beacon Hill, Stumpwell Lane and Church Road. Finds from here include roof tiles and decorated floor tiles (CAS reference numbers 4244-6 incl; 4761; 5156). A probable tile kiln is known near to this development site (CAS 4244).

- 1.3.5 A summary of finds relating to the tile industry in Penn has previously been compiled (Green, 2003). The compiler also noted tile fragments in the garden of Beam End Cottage.
- 1.3.6 The nearby Church of the Holy Trinity has a west tower of early 14th century date with additions to the roof and porch in the 15th century. Church Road is flanked by several fine gabled buildings dating after the turn of the 18th century (Pevsner, Sherwood and Williamson, 1994, 594-6).
- 1.3.7 In early 2003 OA carried out an archaeological watching brief at Beam End cottage in Penn. The works revealed a sequence of settlement activity dating from the 16th century.

## 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 After the earlier house and garage (Fig. 2) dating from the 1930's were demolished, the area of the new site was cleared and ground level was reduced. The foundation trenches were then marked out and excavated in two phases. These phases of work were carried out under archaeological supervision.
- 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 The groundworks were excavated into the natural (1) of dark yellowish brown clay and to the north-east of the site, a yellowish brown sand. This had been cut by the foundations (2) and associated services for the earlier house. These foundations were 0.7 m in depth with vertical sides and flat base. The areas within the old house foundation trenches had been reduced to 0.5 m in depth. These were filled by a dark reddish brown silty sand (3) with brick rubble. A number of rectangular soakaways were also observed at the corners of the old house. These had been filled by loose brick and tile, and were sealed by a 0.2 m thick layer of dark greyish brown silty clay topsoil (4).

- 3.1.2 It was noted that around the south side of the house the ground had been made up and levelled for garden landscaping (Fig. 2) with a dark grey brown silty sand loam (5) with a lot of building debris which was sealed below a 0.1 m thick turf line.

### 3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered during the watching brief.

### 3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No environmental samples were taken during the watching brief.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The results from the watching brief revealed no archaeological deposits or features within the area of the development, the depth of the foundations from the earlier house constructed in the 1930s may have removed any earlier archaeological features.

## 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	Natural				Clay	
2	Cut	0.7 m			Foundation trenches	
3	Fill				Fill of foundation trenches	
4	Layer	0.2 m			Topsoil	
5	Layer	0.1 m			Ground make up	

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OA 2003 *Springfield, Church Road, Penn, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire Written Scheme of Investigation*

Green, M 2003 *Penn Tiles* (Unpublished Report quoted in BCAS)

Hohler, C 1941 *Medieval Paving tiles in Buckinghamshire, in Recs of Bucks*, 16 (1), 1-49

OA 1992 *Fieldwork Manual* (1st edition, ed. D Wilkinson)

Pevsner, N, Sherwood, J with Williamson, E 1994 *The Buildings of England, Buckinghamshire*. Penguin.

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Springfield, Church Road, Penn, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire

**Site code:** PECH 03

**Grid reference:** NGR SU 923 960

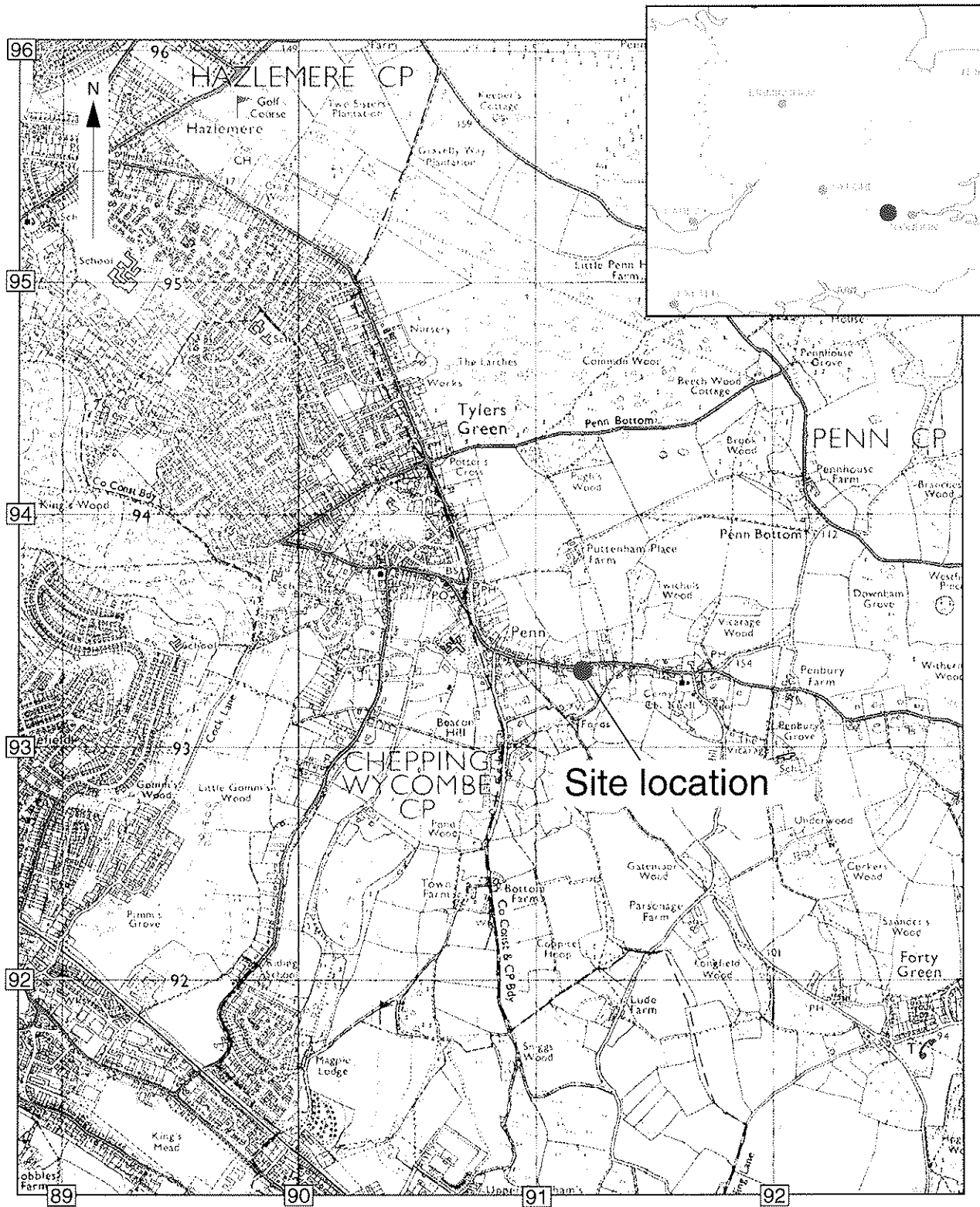
**Type of watching brief:** Ground works for the construction of new house and garage.

**Date and duration of project:** Four site visits from 2/9/03 to 10/9/03.

**Area of site:** 30 m x 30 m

**Summary of results:** No archaeological features or deposits were observed within the area of the development.

**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: ABYCM 2003.142



Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location



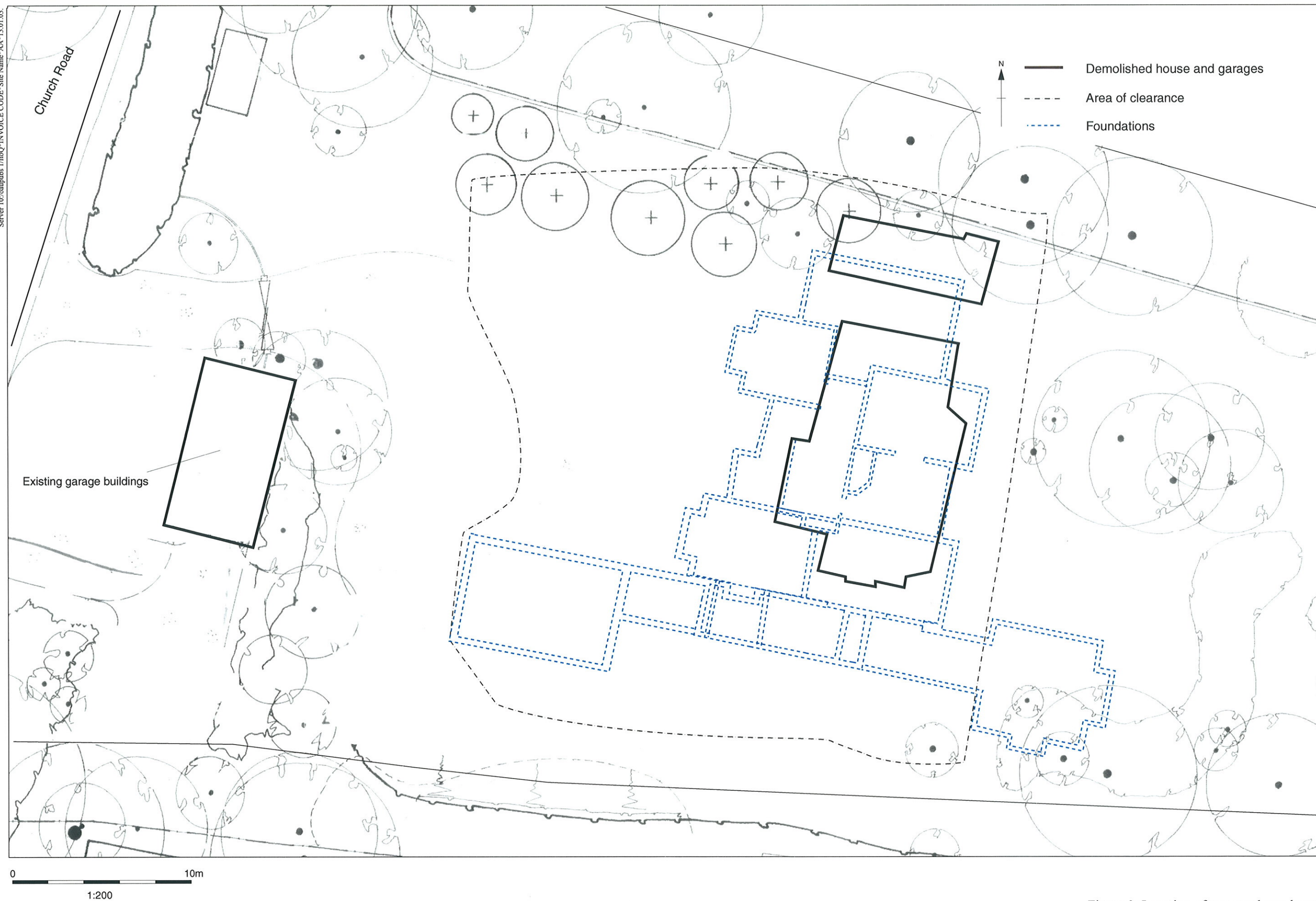


Figure 2: Location of proposed new house



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