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**MILTON COTTAGE, MILTON, OXFORDSHIRE  
SU 48709225**

**RECORD OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING VISIT**

**SITE CODE MIMC 94**

**OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT**

**OCTOBER 1994**

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Oxford Archaeological Unit undertook an archaeological monitoring visit to Milton Cottage, School Lane, Milton, Oxfordshire at the request of Oxfordshire County Council's Archaeology Service. They had been informed that a quantity of animal bone had been found, apparently in a pit, during groundworks for the construction of a house extension.

## **BACKGROUND**

Milton is a medium-sized village to the north-west of Didcot. The village has been in (South) Oxfordshire since local government reorganisation in 1974, but historically it lay in Berkshire. Milton has medieval origins, but only three buildings of this date were noted by Currie (1992, 171-3); there are several fine post-medieval buildings, however, and numerous Victorian cottages. Comparison of the 19th-century 1st edition 1" Ordnance Survey map and its modern equivalent (Bond and Over 1988, Map 26) shows that the village plan has largely retained its post-medieval shape through the last two centuries, although the Milton Park industrial/trading estate has encroached up to the south-east edge of the village.

## **SITE LOCATION**

Milton Cottage lies on School Lane, close to Manor Farm at the south-east edge of the village. The cottage appears to have a post-medieval core, but has been much altered and extended.

## **REASON FOR THE MONITORING VISIT**

A small collection of animal bone was recovered by labourers during the excavation of foundation trenches for a new extension to the west of the existing cottage. The groundworks also involved a considerable amount of excavation on the south and west sides of the extension area, where the ground had to be lowered to provide a level site for the foundation trenches. The site was visited by Graham Keevill of OAU on 29 July 1994.

## **RESULTS**

The site was rapidly examined; exposed faces were manually cleaned locally where the ground level had been lowered. The area where animal bones had been recovered was also investigated. The building contractor has retained the bones, and these were passed on to OAU. A sketch plan of the site was made, showing the location of the features which were seen and recorded. Photographs were also taken.

The initial stage of groundwork had involved removal of existing topsoil, exposing (and probably truncating) the natural gravel surface. The pit was found at the junction of two foundation trenches on the north side of the extension area. Perhaps half of the sub-circular pit had been exposed, and this was rapidly cleaned and recorded. The pit would have had a diameter of approximately 0.5 m, and a depth of perhaps 0.4 m. The pit was filled with a light medium-brown silty sand, which was sealed by a 0.02 m-thick lens of lime mortar. The nature of this lens could not be determined in the limited exposure

available, but it should be stressed that no structural features were present in the vicinity.

The groundworks had involved the excavation of more than 1 m of soil from the south side of the foundation area. Examination of the exposed face here revealed two V-profiled, silty sand-filled features cutting the gravel and sealed by the topsoil. No finds were recovered, and it could not be proved that the features were archaeological. These seems most likely, however, as the sides and bottoms of the features were notably regular. If the features were linear, they might extend southwards into the adjacent playing field.

## CONCLUSION

The groundworks had exposed an undated pit containing a small quantity of domestic rubbish. Two possible linear features (also undated) had also been exposed in the south face of the deep excavations. It is impossible to determine the significance of these features.

## REFERENCES

- Bond C J and Over L 1988, *Ordnance Survey Historical Guides: Oxfordshire and Berkshire* (George Philip/Ordnance Survey)
- Currie C R J 1992, Larger medieval houses in the Vale of White Horse, *Oxoniensia* lvii, 81-244

Graham D Keevill BA MIFA  
Oxford Archaeological Unit  
October 1994

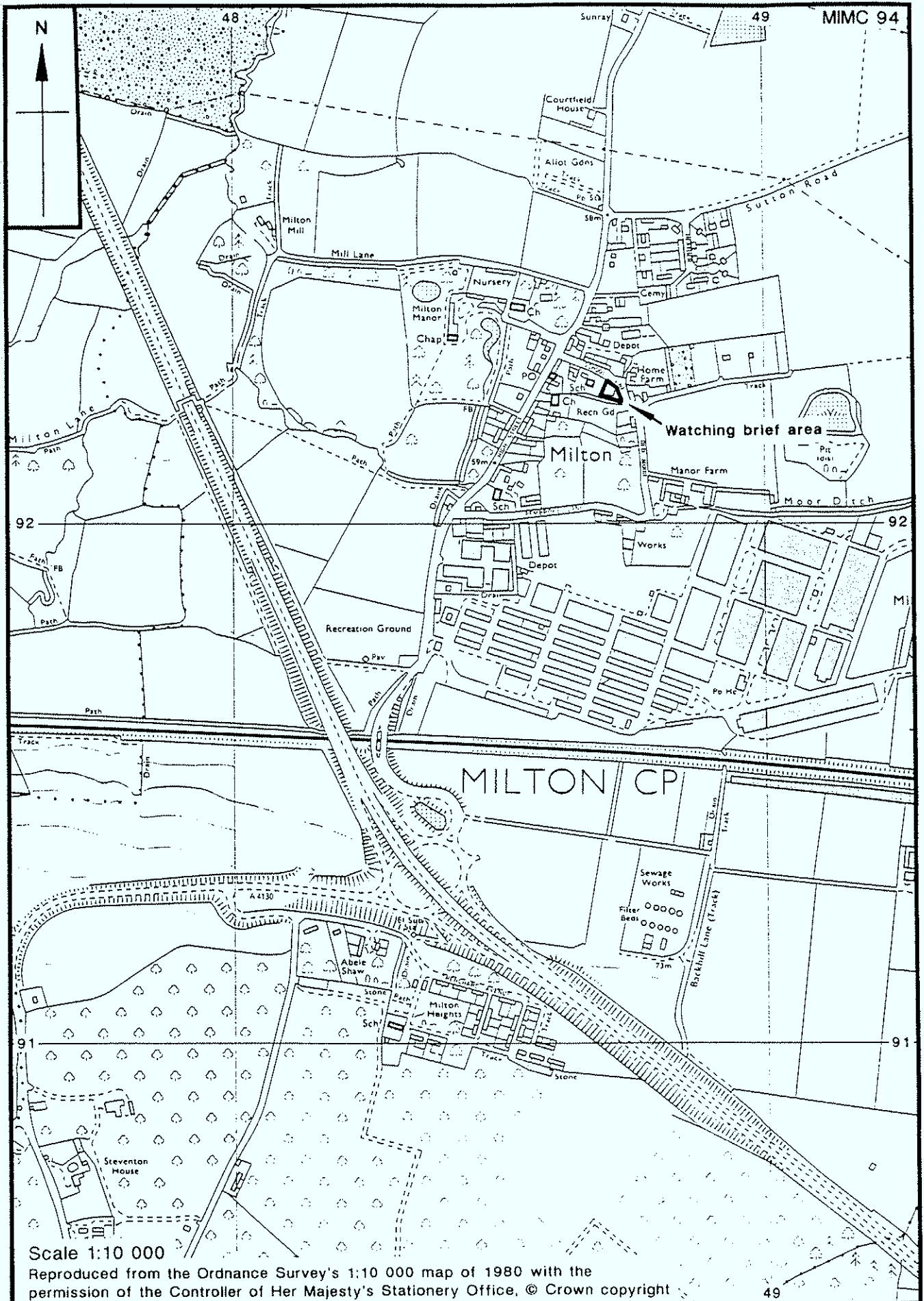


figure 1

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