

56A Abingdon Rd
Standlake
Oxfordshire



**Archaeological
Watching Brief Report**



June 2006

Client: Carolyn Place

Issue N^o: 1
OA Job N^o: 3197
Planning Ref N^o: 05/1882/P/FP
NGR: SP 3869 0330

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Prepared by: James Mumford

Position: Project Officer

Date: 15th June 2006

Checked by: Dan Dodds

Position: Head of Small Works

Date: 15th June 2006

Approved by: Nick Shepherd

Position: Head of Fieldwork

Date: 15th June 2006

Signed..... *Nick Shepherd* SENIOR PROJECT
MANAGER
PP N. SHEPHERD.

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Oxford Archaeology

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Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800

f: (0044) 01865 793496

e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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Cover Plate: View of the site from the north.

SUMMARY

In May and June 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 56A Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 3869 0330). The work was commissioned by Carolyn Place in advance of construction of a new dwelling. The watching brief revealed a number of undated ditches and features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In May and June 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 56A Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Carolyn Place in respect of a planning application for construction of a new dwelling (Planning Application No. 05/1882/P/FP).
- 1.1.2 A project brief was set by Hugh Coddington, Deputy County Archaeological Officer representing West Oxfordshire District Council (OCAS 2006).
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA 2006).

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located on the south-east side of the A415 (Abingdon Road) in Standlake (Fig. 2). It lies at approximately 64 m OD and the geology is 1st Terrace Gravel. The site was previously a garden with a bungalow fronting onto Abingdon Road but now lies vacant.

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 2006) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 To the south-east of the development area is an extensive area of crop marks. This is the site of a substantial prehistoric settlement with track ways, pits, enclosures and buildings being easily discernible. Nearby recent archaeological investigation has shown that medieval structures fronted on to the Abingdon Road with plots to the rear that supported light industrial activities.

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 The former bungalow was demolished and the site was cleared and the foundation trenches were marked out. The trenches were excavated using a mini excavator fitted with a 0.6 m wide toothless bucket 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 (*Fig. 3*)

- 3.1.1 The trenches cut into the natural, a compact yellowish brown sandy gravel (3). This had been cut by a number of features. This had been cut by a number of features: the earliest was a root hole (17) with sloping side and flat base. It measured 0.6 m x 0.3 m and was filled by a reddish brown silty clay (17). This had been cut by two ditches (8 and 10), which cut across the site north-west to south-east and north to south. Ditch 8 had a 'V' shaped profile measuring 8.5 m x 1.1 m x 0.45 m and was filled by a dark grey brown silty clay loam (9). Ditch 10 was larger, measuring 8 m x 1.6 m x 0.4 m with steep sloping sides, but its base was below impact level of the trenches. It had been filled by a dark grey brown silty clay loam (11).
- 3.1.2 In the west corner of the new building a large feature (14) was recorded. This was a pit or large root hole with sloping sides and a shallow concave base, measuring 2.4 m x 0.6 m x 0.45 m with a fill of light reddish brown silty clay loam (15). This was similar to the large feature (6) observed in the north-east corner of the site. It had sloping sides and uneven base, measuring 2.45 m x 0.65 m x 0.45 m with a fill of light reddish brown silty clay loam (7). A small pit (12) was exposed in the centre of the site with steep sloping sides and narrow concave base. It measured 0.5 m x 0.26 m and was filled by a light grey brown silty clay (13) and only observed in one side of trench.
- 3.1.3 In the eastern corner of the site a ditch (4) aligned east to west. It had steep sloping sides rounding sharply to a flat base and was filled by a light grey brown silty clay (5). Sealing this was a 0.25 m - 0.30 m thick layer mid brown silty clay (2) old plough soil, which was overlain by 0.25 m thick dark grey brown silty clay (1) garden topsoil. Some demolition material from the earlier bungalow on the site was noted along the south side of the new development.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered during the watching brief.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the watching brief.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 The watching brief revealed a number of undated ditches and features. These could either be features relating to the earlier prehistoric settlement or boundary ditches to the medieval tenements fronting Abingdon Road. The soil and fills of the ditches and features were very sterile producing no dating evidence in the form of finds or samples.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	Layer	0.25 m			Topsoil
2	Layer	0.30 m			Old plough soil
3	Natural				Natural gravel
4	Cut	0.38 m	1 m	11.2 m	Ditch
5	Fill				Fill of Ditch
6	Cut	0.45 m	0.60 m	2.40 m	Pit
7	Fill				Fill of Pit
8	Cut	0.45 m	1.10 m	8.50 m	Ditch
9	Fill				Fill of Ditch
10	Cut	0.40 m	1.60 m	8 m	Ditch
11	Fill				Fill of Ditch
12	Cut	0.26 m	0.50 m		Pit
13	Fill				Fill of Pit
14	Cut	0.45 m	0.60 m	2.40 m	Pit
15	Fill				Fill of Pit
16	Cut	0.30 m	0.60 m		Root hole
17	Fill				Fill of root hole

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OA 2006 *56 Abingdon Rd, Standlake, Oxfordshire Written Scheme of Investigation*

OCAS 2006 *Plot A, 56 Abingdon Road, Standlake Design for Archaeological Watching Brief*

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

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: 56A Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire

Site code: STABR 06

Grid reference: NGR SP 3869 0330

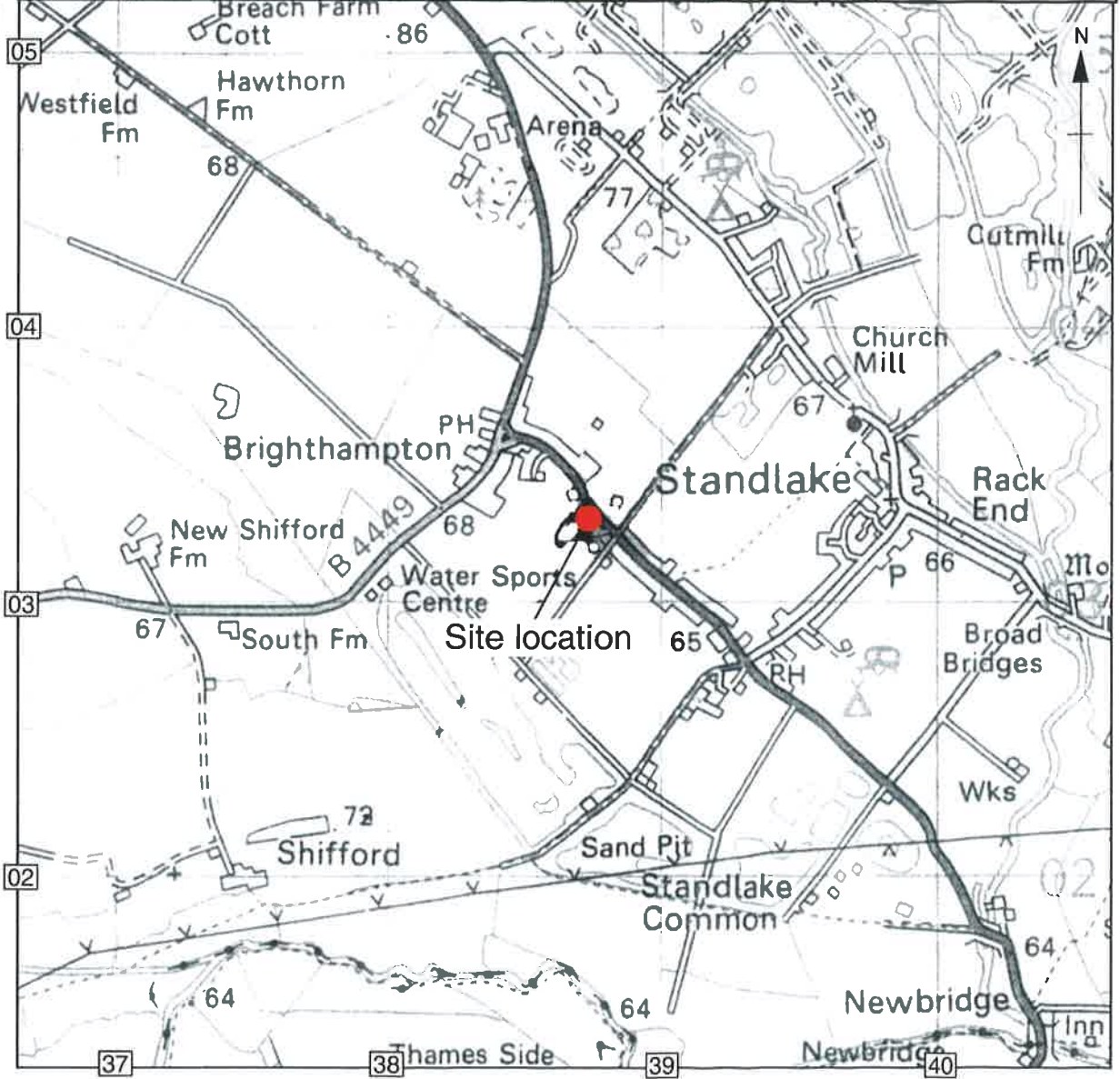
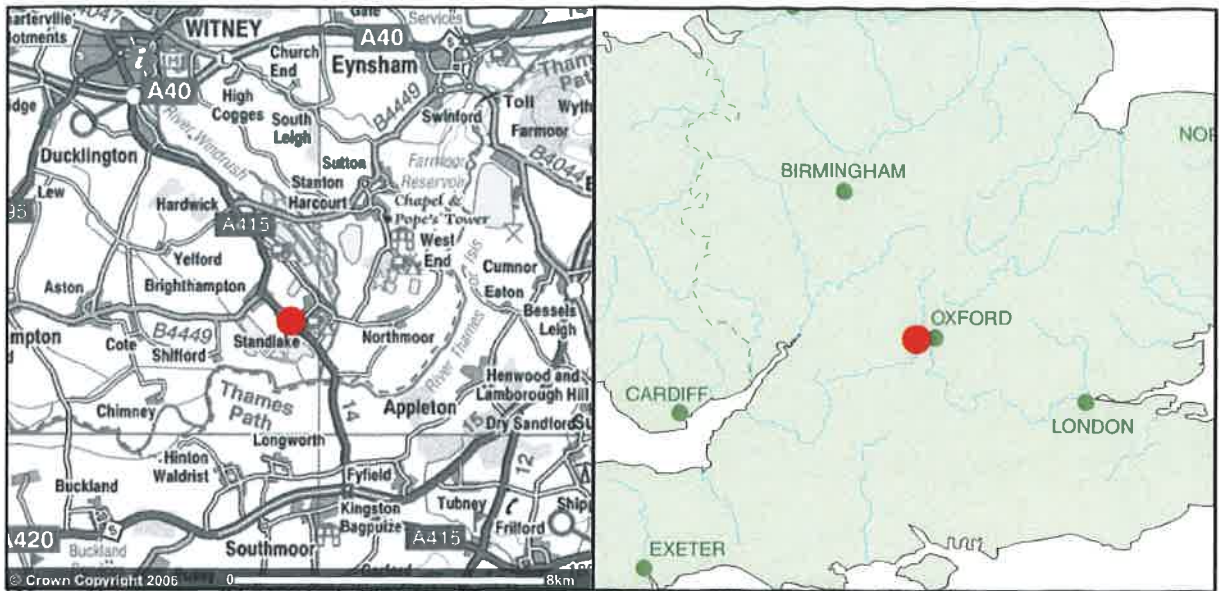
Type of watching brief: Ground works for construction of new dwelling.

Date and duration of project: A total of five visits from the 17/5/2006 to 6/6/2006.

Area of site: 11 m x 15 m

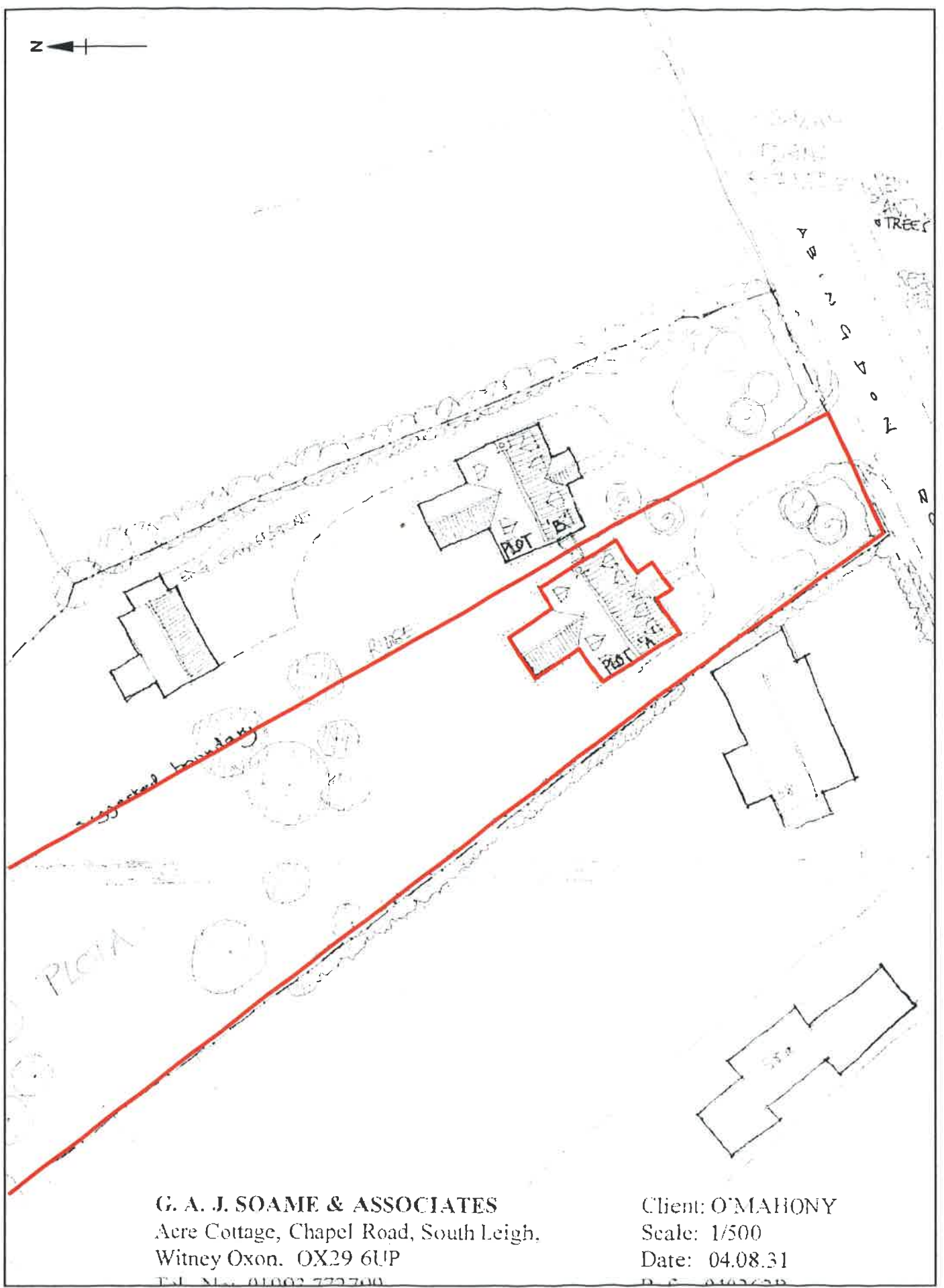
Summary of results: The watching brief revealed a number of undated ditches and features.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: OXCMS 2006.33



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Figure 1: Site location



G. A. J. SOAME & ASSOCIATES
Acre Cottage, Chapel Road, South Leigh,
Witney Oxon. OX29 6UP
Tel. No. 01992 772700

Client: O'MAHONY
Scale: 1/500
Date: 04.08.31
D. C. 0102728

— New development

Figure 2 : Site plan of area of watching brief

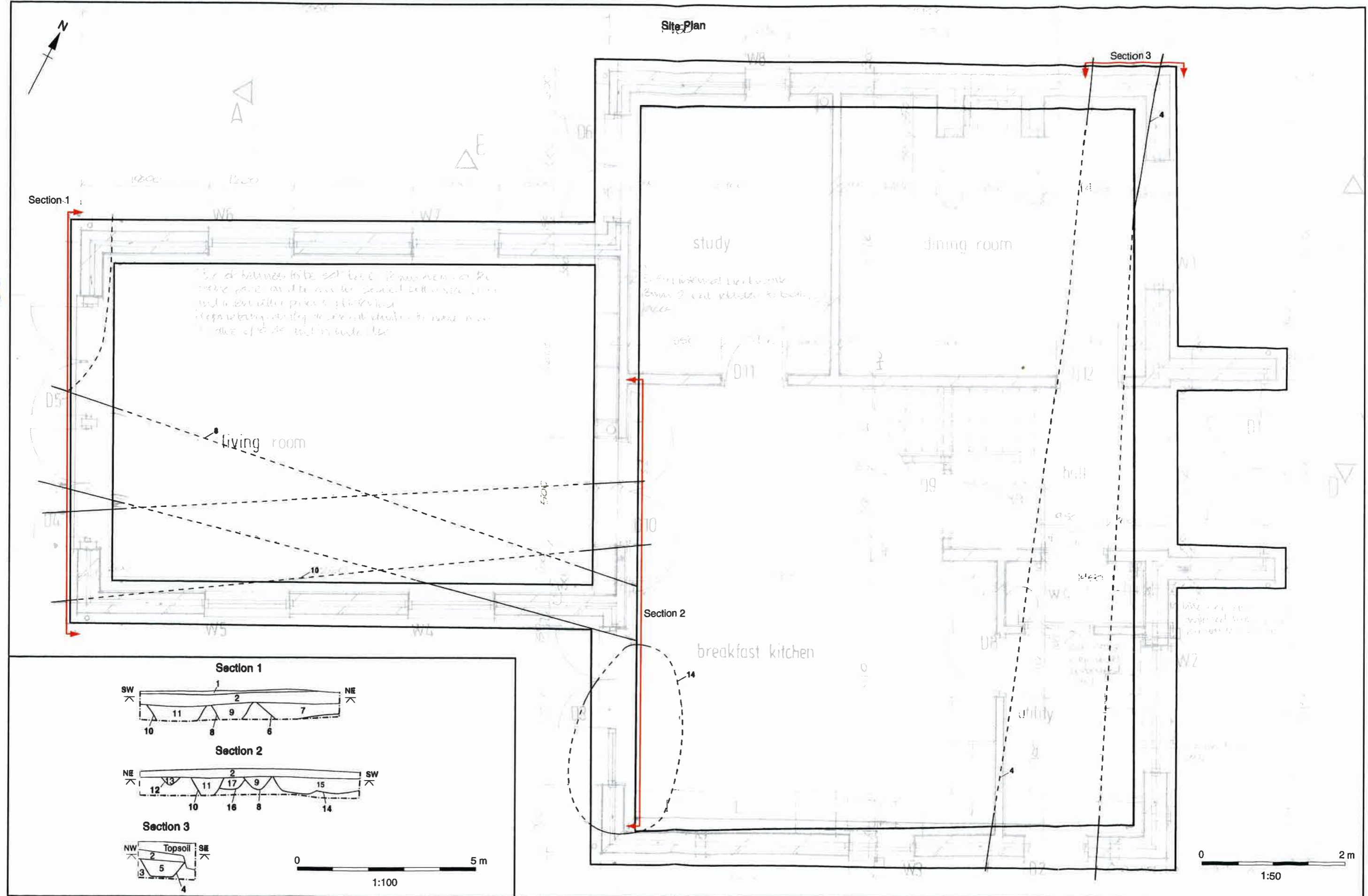


Figure 3 : Site plan showing location of features and sections



Oxford Archaeology

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk



Oxford Archaeology North

Storey Institute
Meeting House Lane
Lancaster LA1 1TF

t: (0044) 01524 541000
f: (0044) 01524 848606
e: lancinfo@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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