

# Wynbur Church Lane Finchampstead

Berkshire



**Archaeological  
Watching Brief Report**



June 2006

**Client: The AED Practice**

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Signed  .....

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**Wynbur,  
Church lane, Finchampstead, Berkshire**

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT***

**CONTENTS**

Summary .....	1
1 Introduction.....	1
1.1 Scope of work .....	1
1.2 Location, geology and topography .....	1
1.3 Archaeological and historical background .....	1
2 Project Aims and Methodology .....	2
2.1 Aims.....	2
2.2 Methodology.....	2
3 Results.....	2
3.1 Description of deposits .....	2
3.2 Finds.....	3
3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains.....	3
4 Discussion and Conclusions .....	3
Appendix 1 Archaeological Context Inventory.....	4
Appendix 2 Bibliography and References.....	4
Appendix 3 Summary of Site Details.....	4

**LIST OF FIGURES**

- Fig. 1 Site location  
Fig. 2 Plan showing extent of foundation excavations and sections



## SUMMARY

*In April 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Wynbur, Church Lane, Finchampstead, Berkshire (NGR: SU 7949 6394). The work was commissioned by the AED Practise in advance of demolition of an existing dwelling and construction of a replacement dwelling and detached garage. The watching brief revealed evidence for post-medieval agricultural practises within the site but no earlier archaeological deposits were observed.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 In April 2006 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Wynbur, Church Lane, Finchampstead, Berkshire (NGR: SU 7949 6394). The work was commissioned by the AED Practise in respect of a planning application for the demolition of an existing dwelling and construction of a replacement dwelling and detached garage (Planning Application No. F/2005/6080).
- 1.1.2 A project brief was set by David Thomason, Archaeology Officer for Berkshire Archaeology (BA) detailing the requirements for the watching brief (BA, 2005).
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (OA, 2006) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief.

### 1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located on level ground sited immediately to the south-west of Church Lane, approximately 250 m east of the junction with White Horse Lane, Finchampstead, 3.5 km south of Wokingham, Berkshire (Fig. 1). The development site occupies an area of 700 m<sup>2</sup> and lies at approximately 85 m above OD. The underlying geology is clay with flints (British Geological Survey sheet 268).

### 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 The site lies in an area of archaeological potential known as the Devil's Highway (London to Silchester Roman Road) is located *c* 50 m to the north of the site. As the true route of the roadway remains inconclusive and the possibility of locating associated accompanying roadside activity in the area exists, further investigative works in this area is necessary. The road was tentatively identified during excavation of a trench across the alignment in 1978. The location of this trench was approximately 200 m to the west of the proposal site.

- 1.3.3 The site is also located some 250 m to the east of the 12th century church of St James (Grade I Listed) and a quadrangular enclosed plateau feature situated immediately adjacent to the church which is likely to be of similar date.
- 1.3.4 In 2004 OA completed an evaluation by trial trenching at the neighbouring site 'The Retreat'. No archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the evaluation, although this does not discount the existence of archaeological deposits in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development.

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To preserve by record any significant archaeological deposits or remains that may be disturbed or destroyed during the course of the development.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The watching brief was conducted as a series of site visits during work likely to penetrate potential archaeological deposits, principally excavation of the foundation trenches. These were excavated using a mechanical excavator fitted with a 0.6 m toothless bucket. Both the sections and any spoil were closely examined to determine the presence of dating evidence, archaeological features or deposits.
- 2.2.2 A plan showing the extent of any excavations was maintained at a scale of 1:100 (Fig. 2) and any recorded sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All excavations and any recorded sections were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was also made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OA Field Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The stratigraphy exposed was homogenous throughout the site and a sample description can be applied throughout.
- 3.1.2 A tenacious yellow-brown sandy clay (4) was encountered at a depth of 1 m below ground level (Fig. 2, Sections 1 and 2). This natural deposit could be seen to be in excess of 1 m in depth within the deeper sections. This was overlaid by a 0.4 m thick layer of friable light grey clay sand (3). This contained numerous lenses of grey-brown clay sand suggesting an alluvial origin. Overlying this was a 0.2 m thick layer of tenacious grey-brown silt clay (2), a probable layer of earlier plough soil which

was supported by the presence a land drain containing 19th/20th century machine made pipes cutting this deposit along the eastern edge of the site. A 0.3 m thick layer of friable dark brown clay loam (1), the present day topsoil and turf completes the sections.

### 3.2 **Finds**

3.2.1 No artefacts (aside from the land drain mentioned), other than those relating to the construction and demolition of the previous dwelling were observed during the course of the watching brief.

### 3.3 **Palaeo-environmental remains**

3.3.1 No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were encountered during the course of the watching brief.

## 4 **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

4.1.1 The watching brief observed soil structures that were indicative of post-medieval agricultural practises. No intrusive features or earlier deposits were encountered. There is the possibility that deep ploughing may have truncated any earlier features or deposits, however the lack of any truncated deep features or any earlier residual finds recovered from within the layers of worked soil would mitigate against this.



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Layer	0.3 m	-	Modern topsoil and turf	Brick	C20th
2	Layer	0.2 m	-	Earlier plough soil	-	C19th/ C20th
3	Layer	0.4 m	-	Alluvial sandy clay	-	-
4	Layer	> 1.0 m	-	Natural clay	-	-

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

- BA 2005 *Brief For an Archaeological Watching Brief*
- IFA 2001 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*
- OA 1992 *Field Manual* (1st edition. ed. D. Wilkinson)
- OA 2004 *The Retreat, Church Lane, Finchampstead, Berkshire: Archaeological Evaluation Report*
- OA 2006 *Wynbur, Church Lane, Finchampstead, Berkshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Wynbur, Church Lane, Finchampstead, Berkshire

**Site code:** FINWCL 06

**Grid reference:** SU 7949 6394

**Type of watching brief:** Machine excavation of foundation trenches for a new dwelling

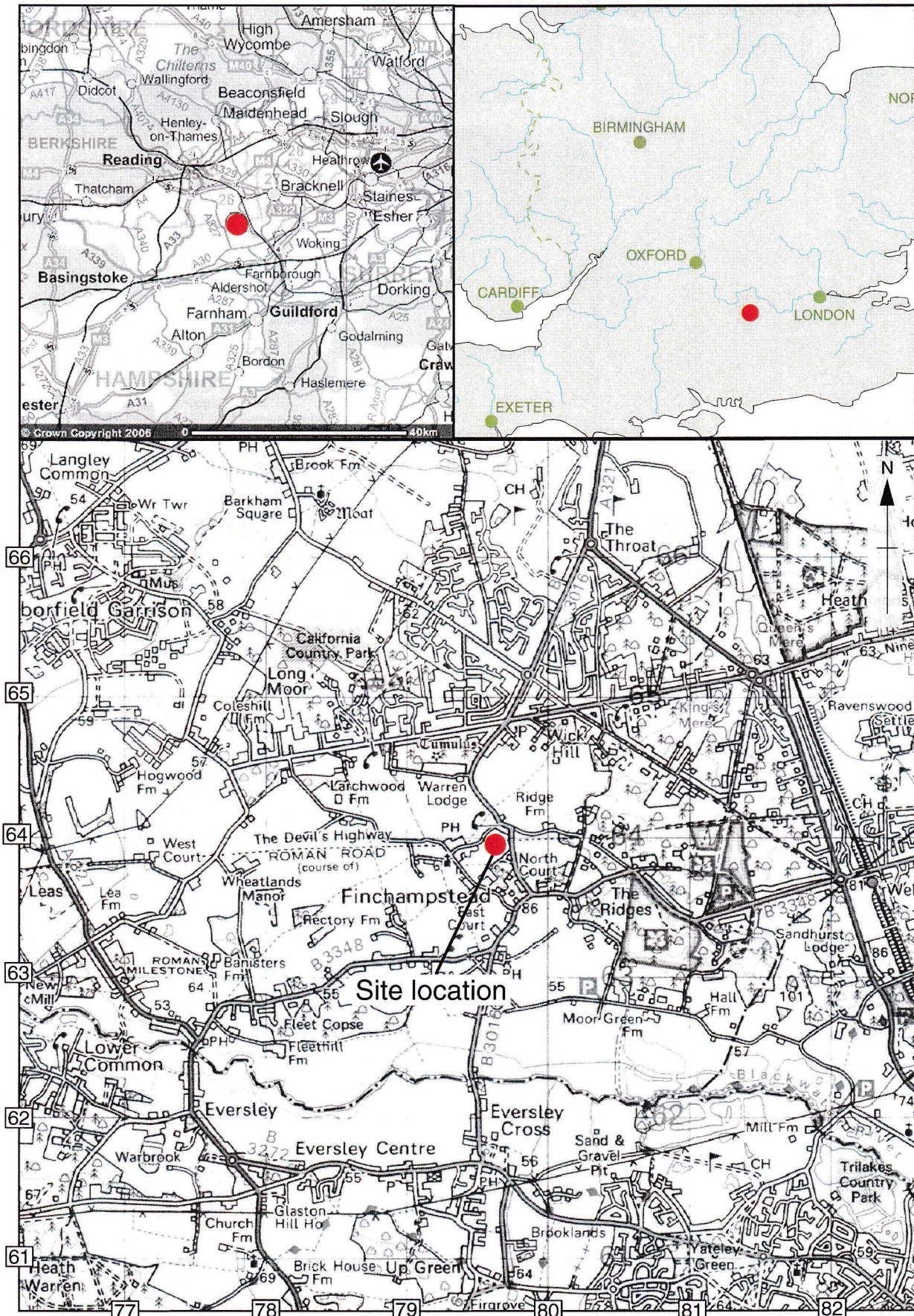
**Date and duration of project:** 31st March, 3rd and 4th April 2006, 3 days

**Area of site:** 700m<sup>2</sup>

**Summary of results:** Evidence for post-medieval agricultural practises, but no evidence for any earlier activity

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Reading Museums Service in due course, under the following accession number: REDMG:2006.188





Scale 1:50,000

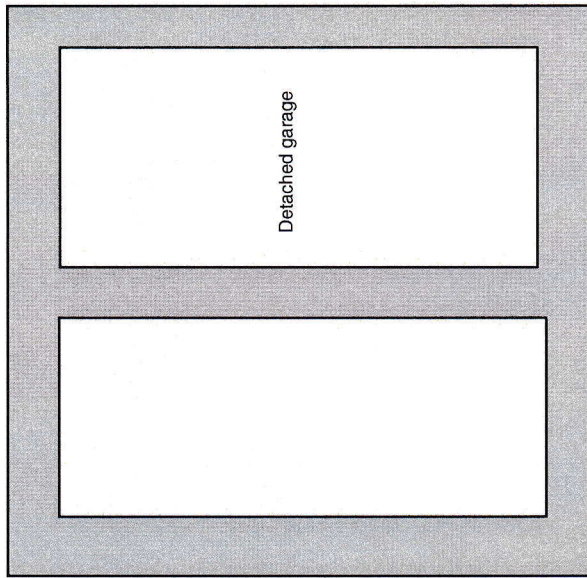
Reproduced from the Landranger 1:50,000 scale by permission of the Ordnance Survey on behalf of The Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office  
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Figure 1: Site location

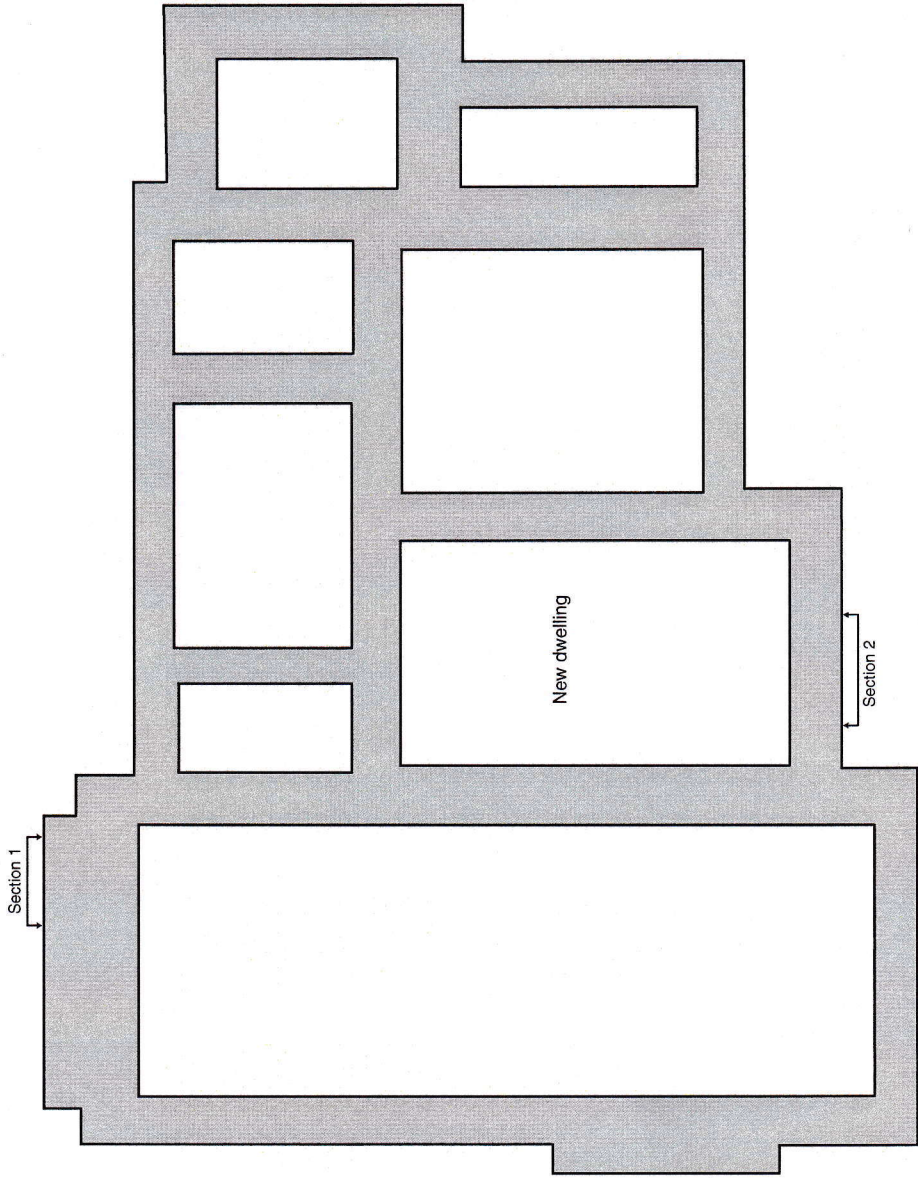




Plan 1



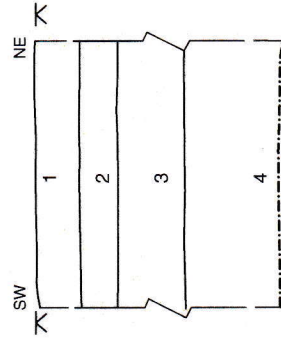
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SW  
⊕



79505 63950  
SW  
⊕



Section 1



Section 2

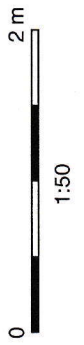
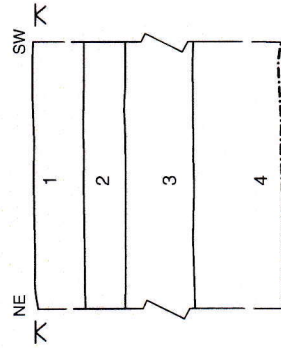


Figure 2: Plan showing extent of foundation excavations and sections.



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