

# The Old Foundry Wilsham Road Abingdon Oxon



## Archaeological Watching Brief Report



**Oxford Archaeology**

21st May 2003

**Client: Thomas and Co**

Issue N<sup>o</sup>: 1

OA Job N<sup>o</sup>: 1247

Planning Ref N<sup>o</sup>: ABG/15854/1

NGR: SU 4956 9663

**Client Name:** Thomas and Co

**Client Ref No:**

**Document Title:** The Old Foundry, Wilsham Road, Abingdon, Oxon

**Document Type:** Watching Brief

**Issue Number:** 1

National Grid Reference: SU 4956 9663

Planning Reference: ABG/15854/1

OA Job Number: 1247

Site Code: ABWRF02

Invoice Code: ABWRFWB

Receiving Museum: OCMS

Museum Accession No: 2002.69

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Document File Location \\Server3\users\jon.hiller\Oa\oa\Wbev\Oxon\OldFoundry  
AbingdonWB\REP.doc  
Graphics File Location Server4\WOAUpubs1\alldrawings\ABWRFwb\*ACT\*  
Illustrated by Amy Charlotte Tucker

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**The Old Foundry, Wilsham Road,  
Abingdon, Oxon**

NGR SU 4956 9663

***ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT***

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## SUMMARY

*In February and April 2003, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at the Old Foundry, Wilsham Road, Abingdon, Oxon (NGR SU 4956 9663). The work was commissioned by Thomas and Co of Hungerford, Berks, in advance of the redevelopment of the site for new housing and services.*

*The site was formerly a wharf providing a loading station off the nearby River Thames or Isis. The watching brief revealed that the site had been extensively raised with imported material to a depth of over 1 m, prior to the construction of the foundry works. No archaeological features or finds were observed.*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In February and April 2003, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at the Old Foundry, Wilsham Road, Abingdon, Oxon (NGR SU 4956 9663).
- 1.1.2 The work was commissioned by Thomas and Co of Hungerford, Berks, in respect of a planning application for the redevelopment of the site for new housing and services (Planning Application No. ABG/15854/1).
- 1.1.3 A project brief was set by Hugh Coddington, Deputy County Archaeological Officer for Oxfordshire (OCAS 2002). OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing it implement the requirements of the *Brief* (OA 2002).

### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the south of Abingdon at the junction of Wilsham Road and Caldecott Road (Fig. 1). The River Thames is situated on the east side of Wilsham Road.
- 1.2.2 The site lies at approximately 53m OD and there are currently buildings occupying part of it. The geology is first terrace gravel overlying Kimmeridge Clay.

### 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 2002).
- 1.3.2 To the south west of the proposed development are a series of cropmarks. These include a possible cursus and a circular enclosure within it. Romano-British pottery has also been found within the area.

### 1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 OA's Bryan Matthews and James Mumford carried out the watching brief.

## 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 Service trenches and groundworks were monitored by an attending archaeologist.
- 2.2.2 All service trenches were located on a plan and sections of the observed stratigraphy recorded at a scale of 1:20. 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 Trenches were excavated to a depth of 1 m and were 0.4 m wide (Fig. 2). A similar soil horizon (1) was observed in all inspected sections of trenches. This comprised a 1 m + thick layer of dark grey sandy loam containing gravel, stones and modern bricks. The material had been imported to level the site prior to the construction of the foundry buildings.
- 3.1.2 A number of service pipes were noted within the trenches and set within the soil (1).

### 3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered from the trenches. Modern materials were not retained.

### 3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The observed deposits relate to the construction of the modern foundry buildings and had been imported to the site to cover what had been a riverside wharf. No deposits of archaeological significance were observed.

## 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	Layer	1 m +	-	-	Modern soil with hardcore	none

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OCMS 2002 *Old Foundry, Wilsham Road, Abingdon, Oxon. Design brief for an archaeological watching brief*

OA 2002 *Old Foundry, Wilsham Road, Abingdon, Oxon. Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief*

OAU 1992 *Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D. Wilkinson, first edition, 1992)

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Old Foundry, Wilsham Road, Abingdon, Oxon.

**Site code:** ABWRF 02

**Grid reference:** SU 4956 9663

**Type of watching brief:** Observation of service trenches

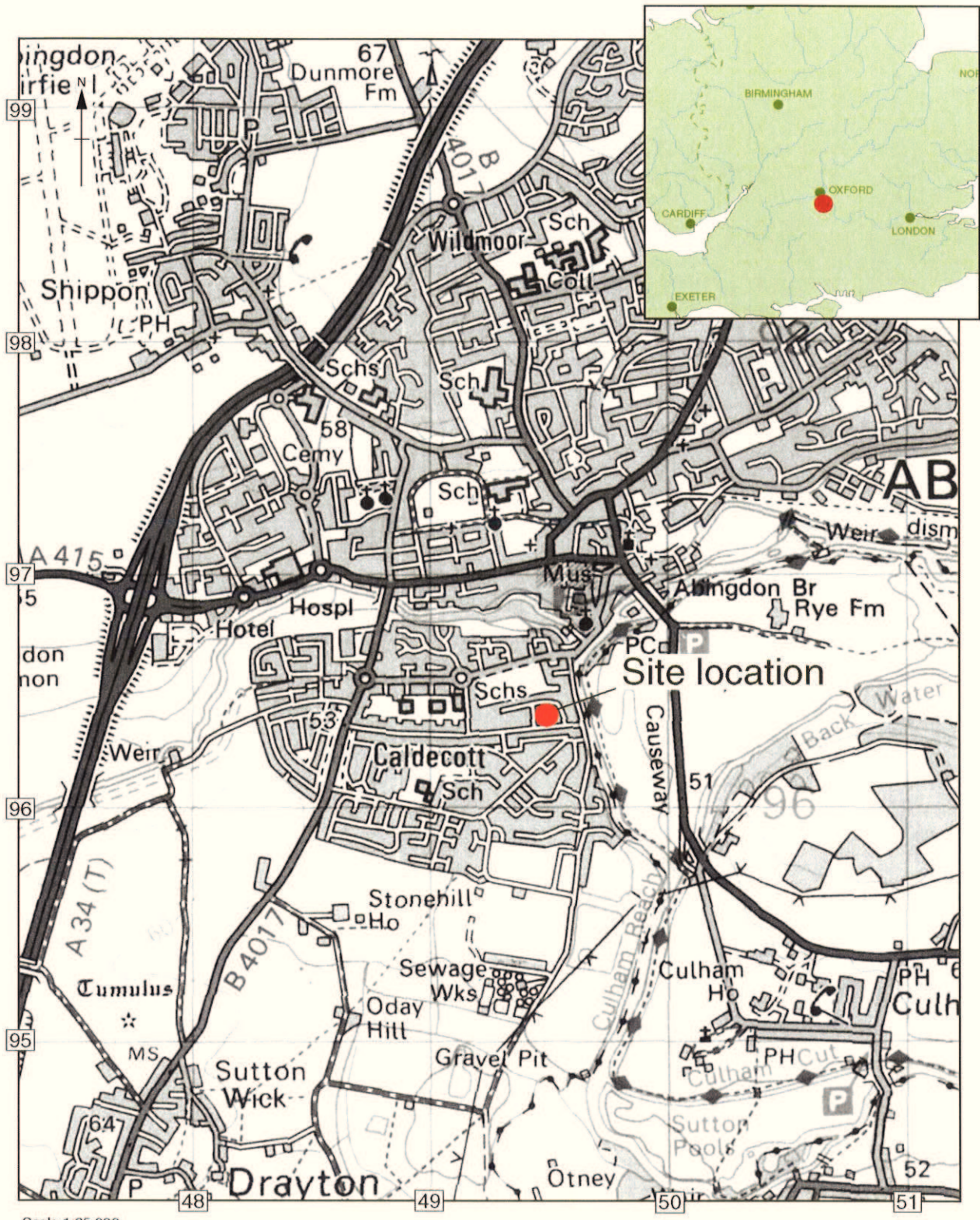
**Date and duration of project:** February-April 2003

**Area of site:** 0.2 ha

**Summary of results:** Modern imported soil and hardcore deposits and services were observed.

**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: OCMS 2002.69





Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location



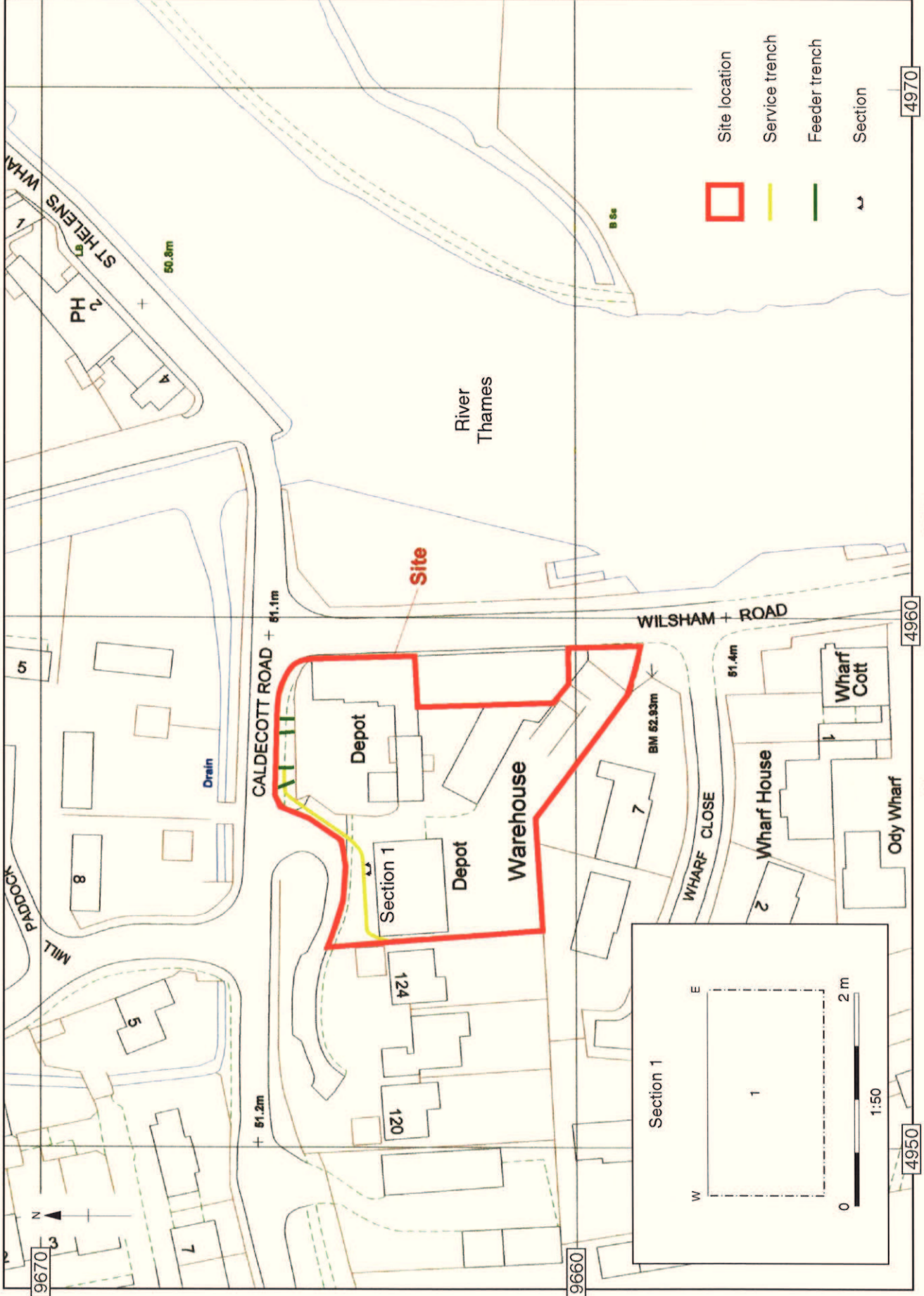
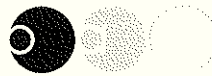


Figure 2: Site plan and trench locations

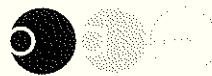




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