

Former Garage Site Queen Street Hook Norton Oxfordshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology

September 2003

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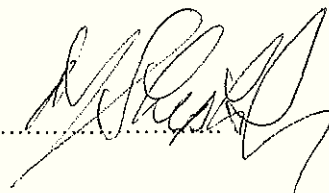
Date: 19th August 2003

Approved by: Nick Shepherd

Position: Head of Fieldwork

Date: 8th September 2003

Signed.....



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Cover Plate: Working shot of site looking to the south-east.

SUMMARY

From May to June 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at the Former Garage Site, Queen Street, Hook Norton, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 3555 3324). The work was commissioned by Mansel Architects in advance of the construction of a new store/Post Office and five terraced dwellings on the site. The watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features or deposits.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 From May to June 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at former garage site, Queen Street, Hook Norton, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mansel Architects in respect of a planning application for the construction of store/Post Office and five terraced dwellings on the site (Planning Application No. 02/00395/F) (Fig. 2).
- 1.1.2 A project Brief was set by Hugh Coddington, Deputy County Archaeological Officer for Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (OCAS 2002).
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (OA 2002) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on ironstone at 150 m above OD. The site is situated on the east side of the junction between Queen Street and Mobbs Lane, Hook Norton.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background to the watching brief was prepared for the WSI for the project and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 The area of the development area is located in the historic core of Hook Norton. A settlement at Hook Norton is first mentioned as 'Hocneratune' in the Anglo Saxon Chronicle (c.925) suggesting it has its origins in the late Anglo-Saxon period. The proposed development is situated approximately 100 m to the north of the parish church of St. Peters that is likely to have acted as a focus for the development of the early settlement. St Peters Church dates to the 12th century, although, archaeological investigations undertaken within its interior have identified architectural elements suggesting an Anglo-Saxon origin. Evidence of earlier activity in the Roman period and of medieval settlement has been recorded immediately to the north of the church at Talbot house. A number of Roman coins were recovered near a well found at Talbot House, which in itself produced a number of pottery sherds.

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 old garage buildings were demolished, the site was levelled and covered in a 0.3 m thick layer of crushed stone, brick and concrete. The foundations were then marked out and excavated with 360° and JCB machines to the depth of solid Geology using a 0.80 m wide toothed bucket (Fig. 3). This was done in a number of phases and were each archaeologically observed and recorded.
- 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 foundation trenches cut into a natural of bright orange brown clay with sandstone fragments (4) (Fig. 4). This had been overlain by a 0.55m thick dark reddish brown silty clay loam (3) subsoil, which was covered with a 0.20 - 0.40 m thick old topsoil of dark brown silty clay loam (2). This layer sloped from north-west to south-east following the natural slope towards the centre of the village. This layer had been cut by the foundation and services for the former garage, with 0.40 m thick deposits of brick and mechanical auto parts forming bases for the floors. The whole area was covered in 0.20-0.30 m thick layer of crushed stone and brick (1), which forms a hardcore base across the site.

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 site contained no archaeological features or deposits. This could suggest that the land was cultivated garden land at the rear of tenements off the high street, until built upon in the late 19th century.

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	0.20 - 30 m			demolition layer	
2	Layer	0.20 - 40 m			Old topsoil	
3	Layer	0.55 m			Subsoil	
4	Natural				Clay with sandstone	

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OA 2002 *Former Garage Site, Queen Street, Hook Norton, Oxfordshire Written Scheme of Investigation*

Wilkinson D (ed.) 1992 *Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual*

OCAS 2002 *Former Garage Site, Queen Street, Hook Norton Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief*

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Former Garage Site, Queen Street, Hook Norton, Oxfordshire

Site code: HNPO 02

Grid reference: NGR SP 3555 3324

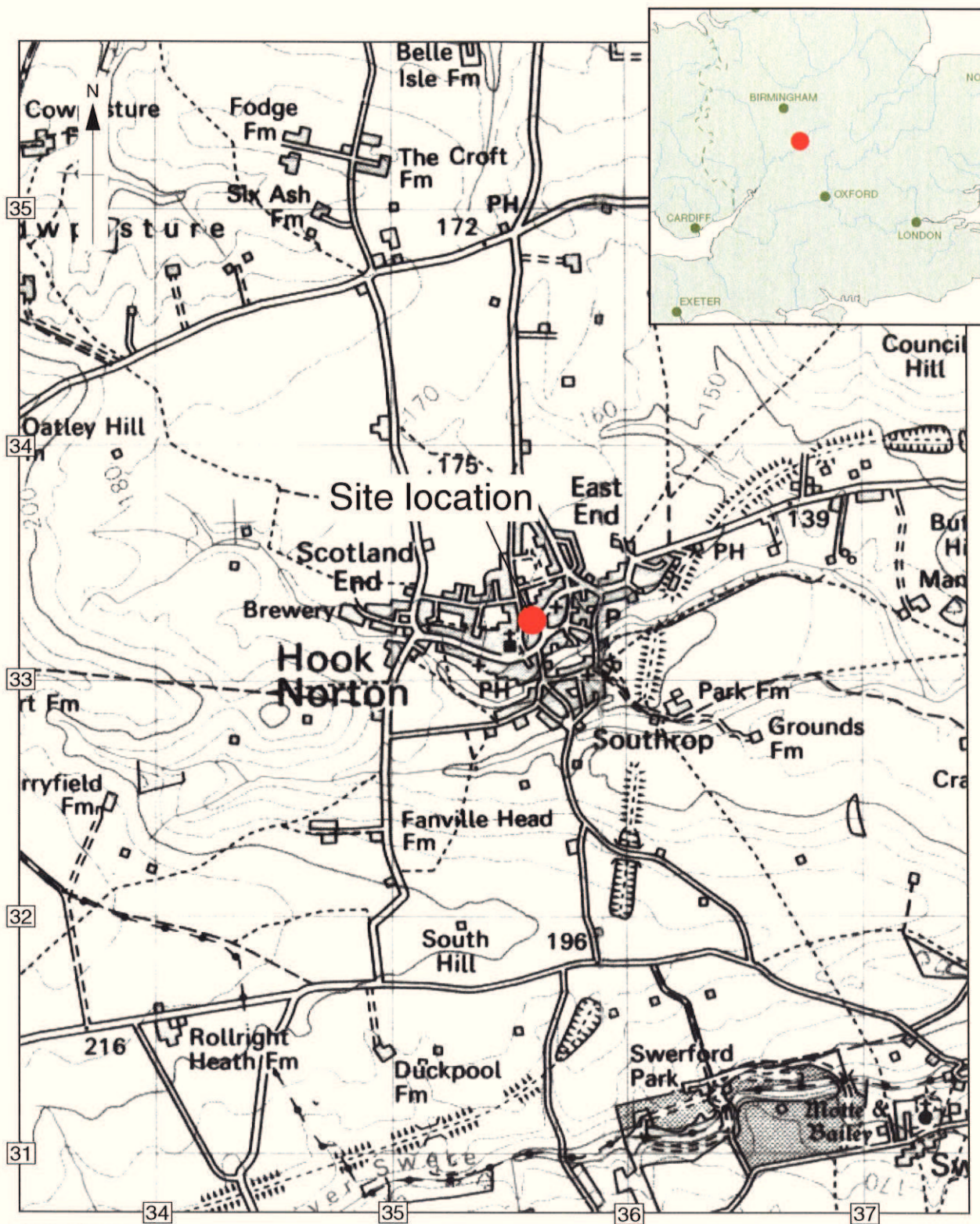
Type of watching brief: Excavation of foundations for new development.

Date and duration of project: Nine site visits from the 22/5/2003 to the 18/6/2003.

Area of site: 35 m x 27 m

Summary of results: The watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features or deposits.

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 2002.194



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Figure 1: Site location

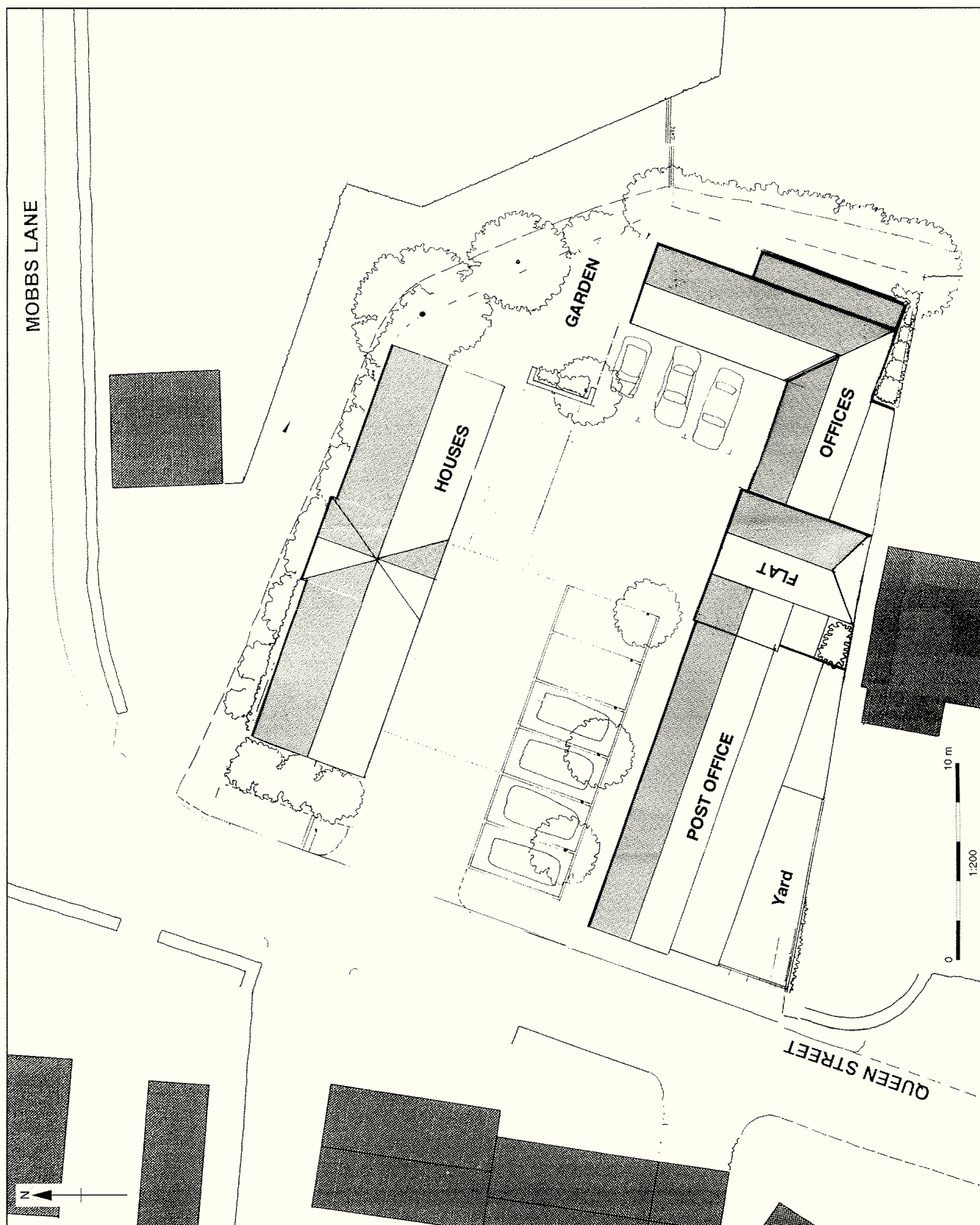


Figure 2: Site plan of area of watching brief

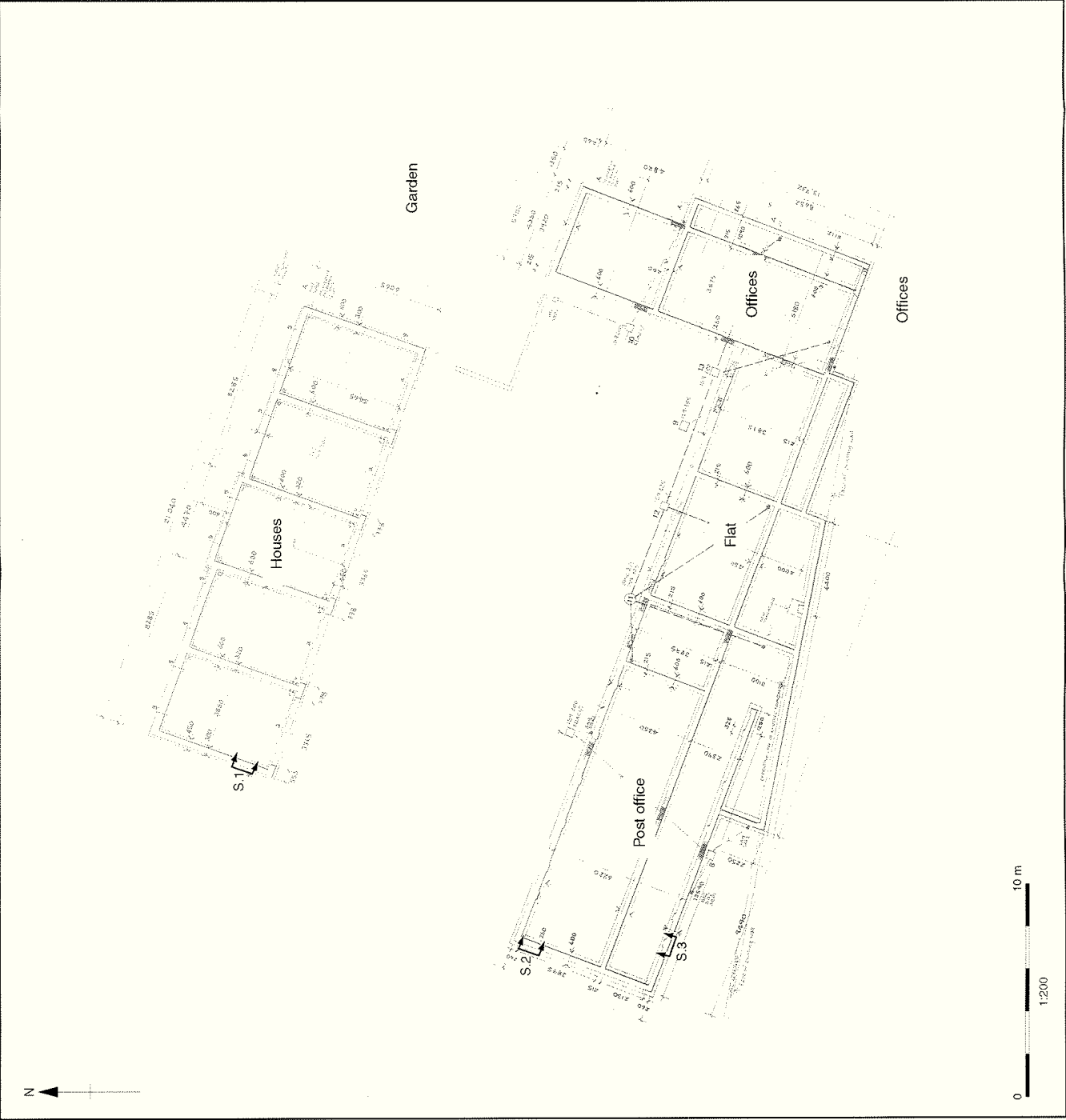
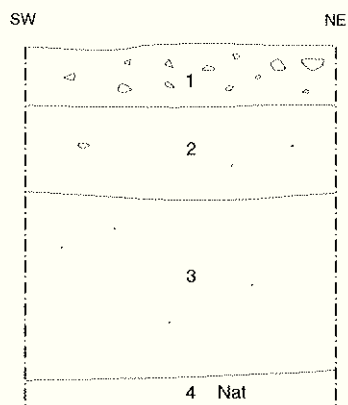
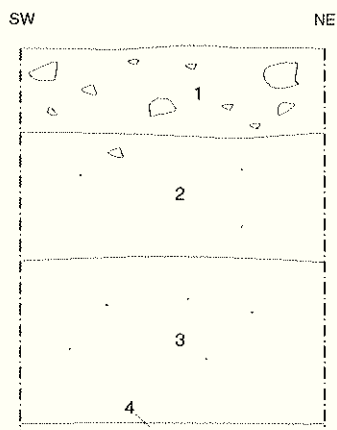


Figure 3: Foundation plan showing sections

Section 1



Section 2



Section 3

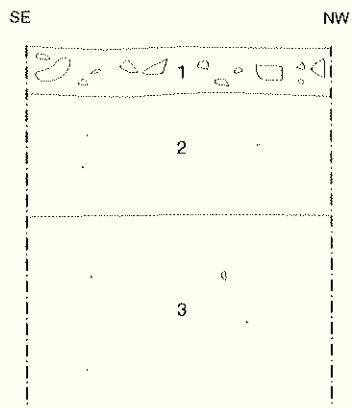
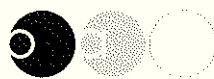


Figure 4: Sections 1-3



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