

Land Adjacent to  
The Rookery  
Church Lane  
Stanton Fitzwarren  
Wiltshire

**Archaeological Evaluation Report**



**Oxford Archaeology**

February 2004

**Client: Mr. J. Goodheart**

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Illustrated by Robin Latour

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# Land adjacent to the Rookery, Church Lane, Stanton Fitzwarren, Wiltshire

## *ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION REPORT*

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Cover Plate: View of evaluation trench from the south-east.

## SUMMARY

*Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a field evaluation at land adjacent to the Rookery, Church Lane, Stanton Fitzwarren, Wiltshire (NGR SU 179 901) on behalf of Mr J. Goodheart. The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits or features. The site had been heavily truncated by the construction of the garden buildings on the site.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In January 2004 OA carried out a field evaluation at land adjacent to the Rookery, Church Lane, Stanton Fitzwarren, Wiltshire (Fig. 1) on behalf of Mr J. Goodheart in respect of a planning application for construction of a single storey dwelling (Planning Application No. S//03/03234ABB) and a brief set by Mr Roy Canham, the County Archaeologist for Wiltshire County Council's Archaeological Service (WCAS) and a WSI agreed with by Oxford Archaeology (OA). The development site is currently a greenhouse in the grounds to the northwest of the Rookery and measures approximately 80 m<sup>2</sup> in area.

#### 1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies on Coral Rag with overlying sand and gravels (BGS *Soil Survey of England and Wales* sheet 252) at 115 m above OD.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The archaeological background to the evaluation was prepared for the WSI for the project (OA 2003) the results of which are presented below. The site itself has previously produced no archaeological evidence. There are however some known sites with archaeological remains adjacent to the development site.
- 1.3.2 The development site lies approximately 100 m south of the Norman Church of St Leonard (Pevsner 1963).
- 1.3.3 Approximately 500 m southwest of the development site is a Roman villa located within Stanton Park. This scheduled ancient monument (NMR 28983) is situated on undulating land between Swindon and Highworth and is in a secluded position in a valley half a kilometre west of Stanton House.
- 1.3.4 During the construction of a railway line in the 19th century wall foundations and two tessellated pavements were discovered. In 1969 a small scale excavation revealed the remains of a bath house consisting of at least three rooms and a stoke-hole and in 1997 a geophysical survey detected a range of features over an area of 110m by 100m, the majority of which accord with the alignment of the bath house and are therefore interpreted as the remains of the main dwelling, extending eastwards from the original 19th century discoveries and northwards from the site of the bath house. It is therefore likely that the bath house forms the southern wing of a villa of courtyard type and with the potential for external buildings existing within the villa

complex. It was considered that further Roman remains might survive within the development site.

## 2 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Scope of fieldwork

2.1.1 The evaluation consisted of a trench measuring 16 m (northwest to southeast) and 1.8 m wide (Fig. 2). The trench was placed 2.5 m away from the boundary wall in the area of the old garden green house. The overburden was removed by a JCB mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket under close archaeological supervision.

### 2.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

2.2.1 The trenches were cleaned by hand and the revealed features were sampled to determine their extent and nature, and to retrieve finds and environmental samples. All archaeological features were planned and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures laid down in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

### 2.3 Description of deposits

2.3.1 The trench was excavated to a depth of 0.6 m and cut into the natural sand (5), which contained geological features of dark blue clay and reddish brown sand (10 and 11). Overlying this was a 0.28 m thick layer of light greyish brown silty clay loam (4) of relict topsoil (Fig. 3, section 2). This was sealed by a 0.2 m thick layer of disturbed soil (3) from the construction of the green house, which had been cut by the foundation trench (7) for the greenhouse walls. The trench had vertical sides and flat base, measuring 15.5 m x 0.4 m x 0.5 m with the 0.24 m wide brick greenhouse wall (8) and backfill (9) between the cut and the wall. Butting against this on the west side of the wall was a compact layer of crushed brick hardcore (6) for the courtyard surface. On the east side of the wall a thin layer of ash (2) was overlain by a cultivated green house soil (1) (Fig. 3, section 1).

### 2.4 Finds

2.4.1 No finds were recovered during the evaluation.

### 2.5 Palaeo-environmental evidence

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

### 3 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

- 3.1.1 The results from the evaluation did not reveal any archaeological features or deposits. A number of natural features were sealed below an old soil horizon, which had been badly truncated by the construction of greenhouse and garden buildings. These structures appear to date from the late 19th to early 20th century and were elements within the gardens of Stanton Park.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Comment</i>	<i>Finds</i>
1	Layer	0.16 m			Cultivated soil of greenhouse floor	
2	Layer	0.03 m			Ash and cinder layer	
3	Layer	0.22 m			Disturbed soil	
4	Layer	0.28 m			Old topsoil	
5	Natural				Green sand natural	
6	Layer	0.1 m			hardcore of courtyard surface	
7	Cut	0.6 m	0.4 m	16 m	Foundation trench	
8	Structure	0.55 m	0.24 m	16 m	Brick wall	
9	Fill				Back fill of trench	
10	Deposit				natural deposits in sand	
11	Cut	0.08 m	0.45 m	0.6 m	Natural features	
12	Fill				Fill of feature	

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OA 2003 *Land Adjacent to the Rookery, Church Lane, Stanton Fitzwarren, Wiltshire* Written Scheme of Investigation

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

Pevsner, N, 1963 *The Buildings of England. Wiltshire*. Penguin Books

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Land adjacent to the Rookery, Church Lane, Stanton Fitzwarren, Wiltshire

**Site code:** SFZCL 04

**Grid reference:** NGR SP 179 901

**Type of evaluation:** Single trench evaluation to determine archaeological remains prior to development on the site.

**Date and duration of project:** One day on site on the 29th January 2004

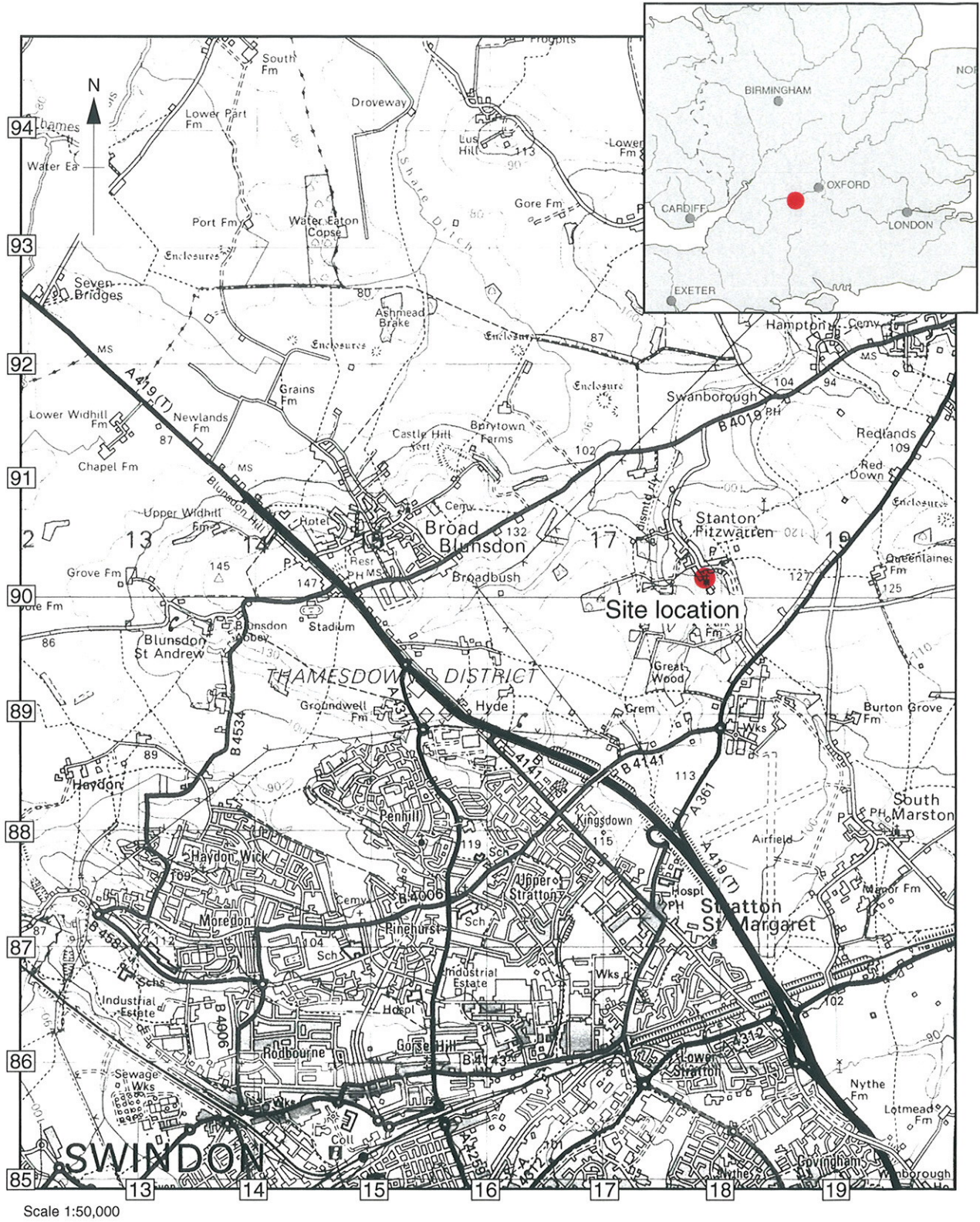
**Area of site:** One 16 m x 1.8 m trench

**Summary of results:** The evaluation revealed no archaeological deposits or features and that the site had been badly truncated by the construction of the garden buildings on the site.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Swindon Museum & Art Gallery in due course, under the following accession number:







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Figure 1: Site location

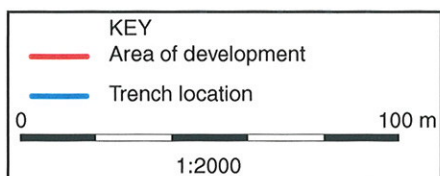
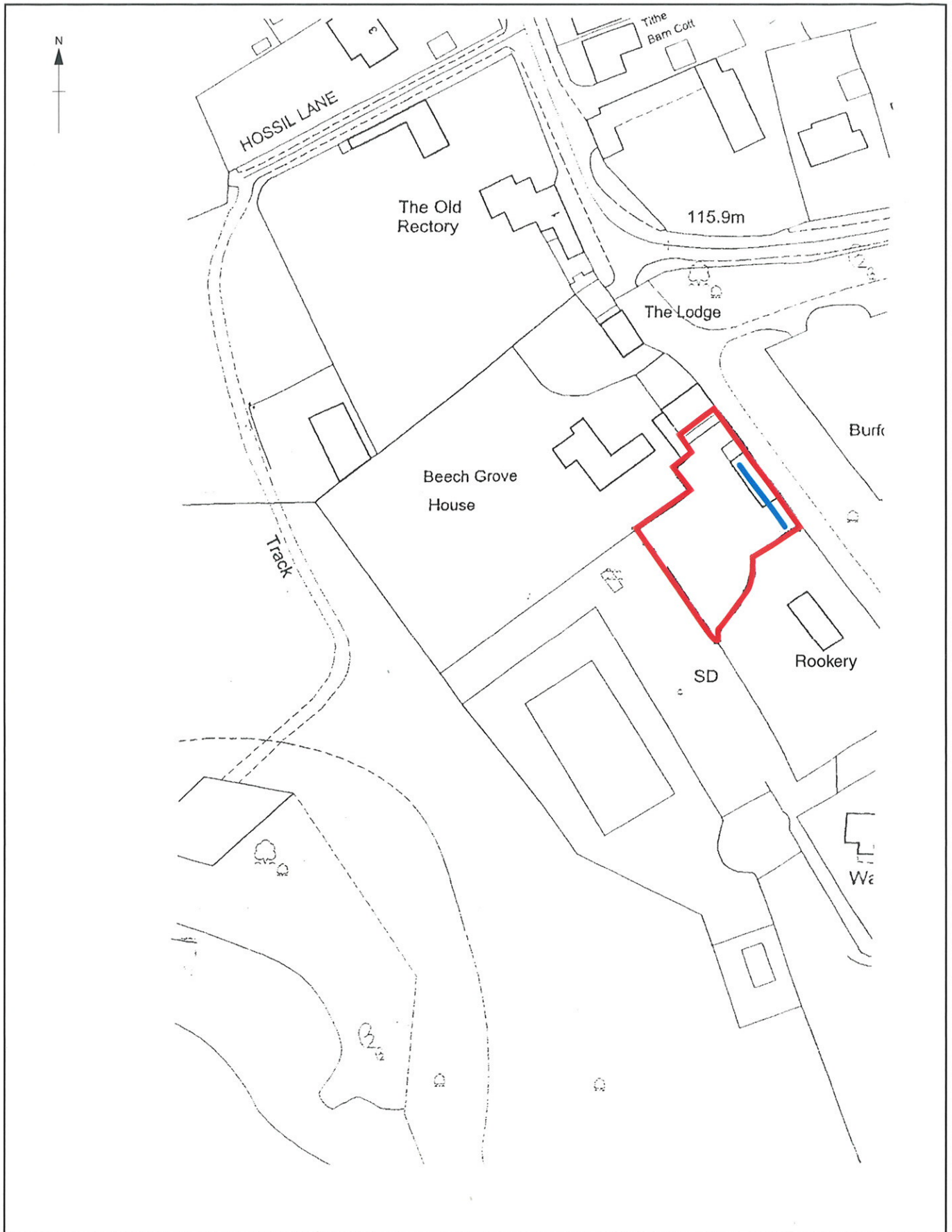


Figure 2: Trench location and area of development





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