

83 Burford Road  
Chipping Norton  
Oxfordshire



**Archaeological  
Watching Brief Report**



**Oxford Archaeology**

February 2004

**Client: J P Quinn Ltd.**

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

OA Job N<sup>o</sup>: 2180

Planning Ref N<sup>o</sup>: 03/1879/P/FP

NGR: SP 31482651

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## SUMMARY

*On the 11th of February 2004 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 83, Burford Road Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire. The work was commissioned by J P Quinn Ltd. in advance of excavation of foundations for a house extension. The watching brief encountered no evidence for archaeological remains or activity predating 20th century agricultural use of the site.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 On the 11th of February 2004 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 83 Burford Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire (Fig.1). The work was commissioned by J P Quinn Ltd. in respect of a planning application for a house extension. (Planning Application No. 03/1879/P/FP)
- 1.1.2 A project brief was set by, and a WSI (OA 2004) was agreed with Hugh Coddington, the Deputy County Archaeologist, representing West Oxfordshire District Council.
- 1.1.3 The site is situated on the south-west side of the A361 Burford Road on the south side of Chipping Norton approximately 120 m north of the junction between the A361 and the B4206. The site is bounded to the north-east by the A361, to the north-west by a residential dwelling and to the south-east and south-west by a building plot.

#### 1.2 Landuse, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site lies at approximately 212 m above OD on the crest of a hill and is roughly 0.1 hectares in area. The site at present contains an empty dwelling in the process of renovation. The area of the proposed extension had previously been covered by garages which have now been demolished. The underlying geology is Chipping Norton Limestone, overlaid by silty 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 2004) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 A large number of Roman coins, dating to the later third and fourth centuries AD have been found in the gardens of 87-89, Burford Road and on the other side of the A361 in the allotments. The quantities would seem too great to be random finds and the spread too extensive to have been a hoard. The inference is therefore that there was either a small farmstead or settlement in the immediate vicinity of the development site.

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area.
- 2.1.2 To identify and record the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The foundations for the new extension were excavated under archaeological supervision using a 13 ton tracked excavator fitted with a 0.8 m wide bucket. The excavated material was removed in 0.1 m deep spits within the archaeologically sensitive strata. Both the base and the sections of the excavation were closely observed during the work and the spoil was examined for artefacts and dating evidence.
- 2.2.2 A plan of the extent of the excavations was drawn at a scale of 1:200 (Fig.2) and a number of sample sections were recorded at a scale of 1:20. A full photographic record of the work was made using colour slide and black and white print film. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The natural (4) was a orange brown silt clay containing many large angular fragments of limestone (Fig.3, sections 1 and 2) which was excavated to a depth of 1.1m below ground level but was not bottomed. This was overlaid by a yellow brown silt clay (3), between 0.25 and 0.35 m deep which contained many small subangular fragments of limestone and represents a layer of frost damaged and weathered natural. Overlaying this was a layer of dark yellow brown clay silt (2) varying in depth from 0.25 m along the northern edge of site down to 0.1 m along the southern edge and representing a subsoil, possibly an earlier plough soil. Within the south-east and southern extent of the site this was sealed by a lens of red brown silt clay (5) up to 0.25 m in depth, it's interface with (2) was very irregular suggesting a probable tree root origin (Fig.3 Section 2). Both 2 and 5 were then sealed by a 0.15 m thick layer of a dark brown silty loam (1). This contained many fragments of modern brick and concrete (presumably from the demolition of the garages) and represents the truncated remnants of the garden soil.

### 3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 Finds were recovered by hand during the course of the watching brief. All the finds recovered were of 20th century origin and were evaluated on site but not retained.

### 3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

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

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The watching brief showed that only a limited amount of activity has taken place within the area of the site, all of which would have been confined to the last century. The standing building is of mid 20th century construction, sited on land previously in agricultural use. No significant or earlier archaeological remains were observed during the course of the watching brief.

## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i> Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Layer	0.0 m - 0.15 m	Garden topsoil	Brick	C20th
2	Layer	0.15 m - 0.4 m	Subsoil, Probable earlier plough soil	-	-
3	Layer	0.4 m - 0.7 m	Weathered natural	-	-
4	Layer	0.7 m - >1.1 m	Natural limestone in clay matrix	-	-
5	Lens	0.15 m - 0.4 m	Tree root disturbed lens	-	-

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

IFA, 1992 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

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

OA, 2004 *83 Burford Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire - Written Scheme of Investigation*

OCAS, 2004 *83 Burford Road, Chipping Norton. Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief*

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** 83 Burford Road, Chipping Norton, Oxfordshire

**Site code:** CHBU 04

**Grid reference:** SP 3148 2651

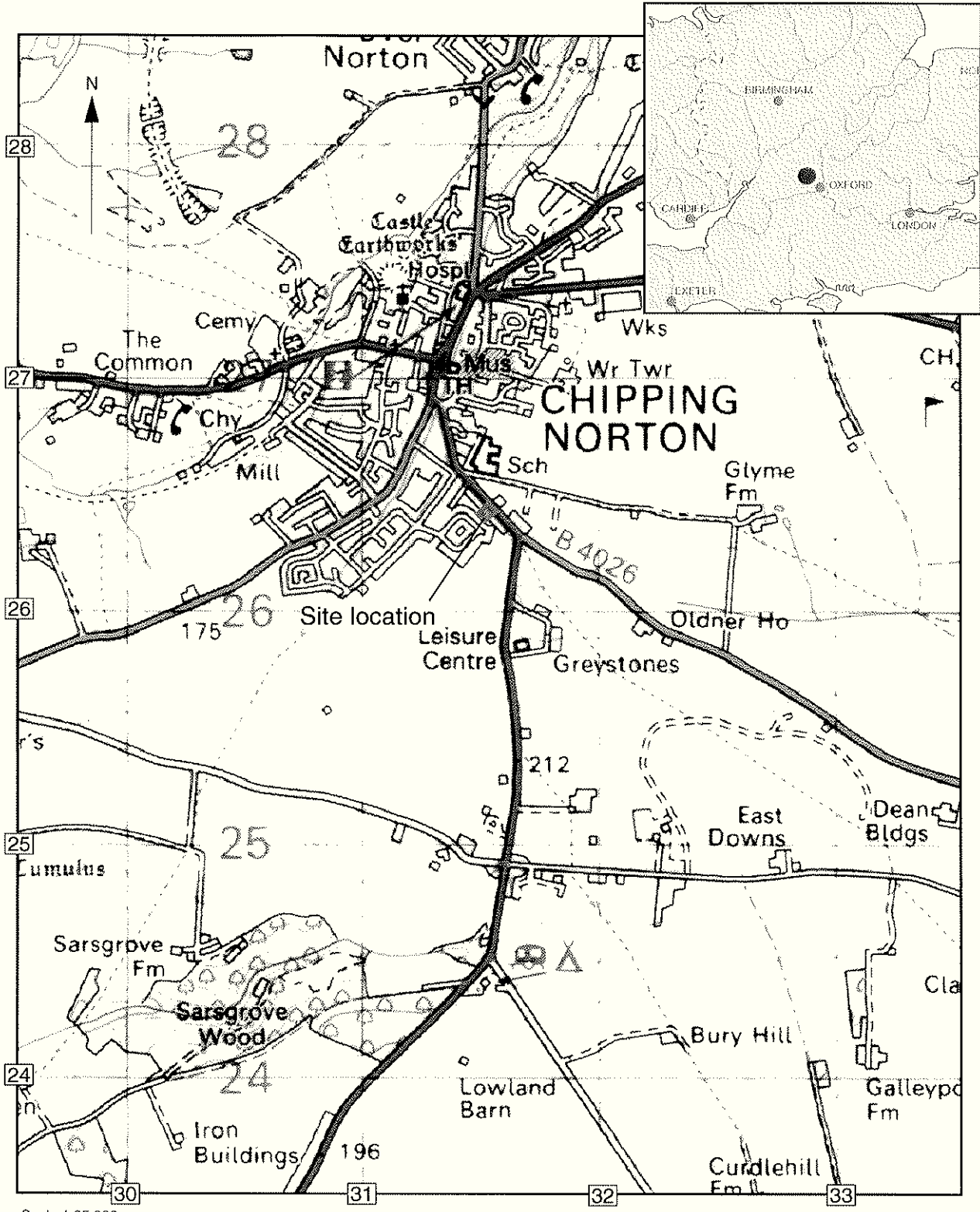
**Type of watching brief:** Excavation of foundations for house extension

**Date and duration of project:** 11th of February 2004, Half day

**Area of site:** 0.1 Hectares

**Summary of results:** No archaeology earlier than 20th century activity was 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



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Figure 1: Site location

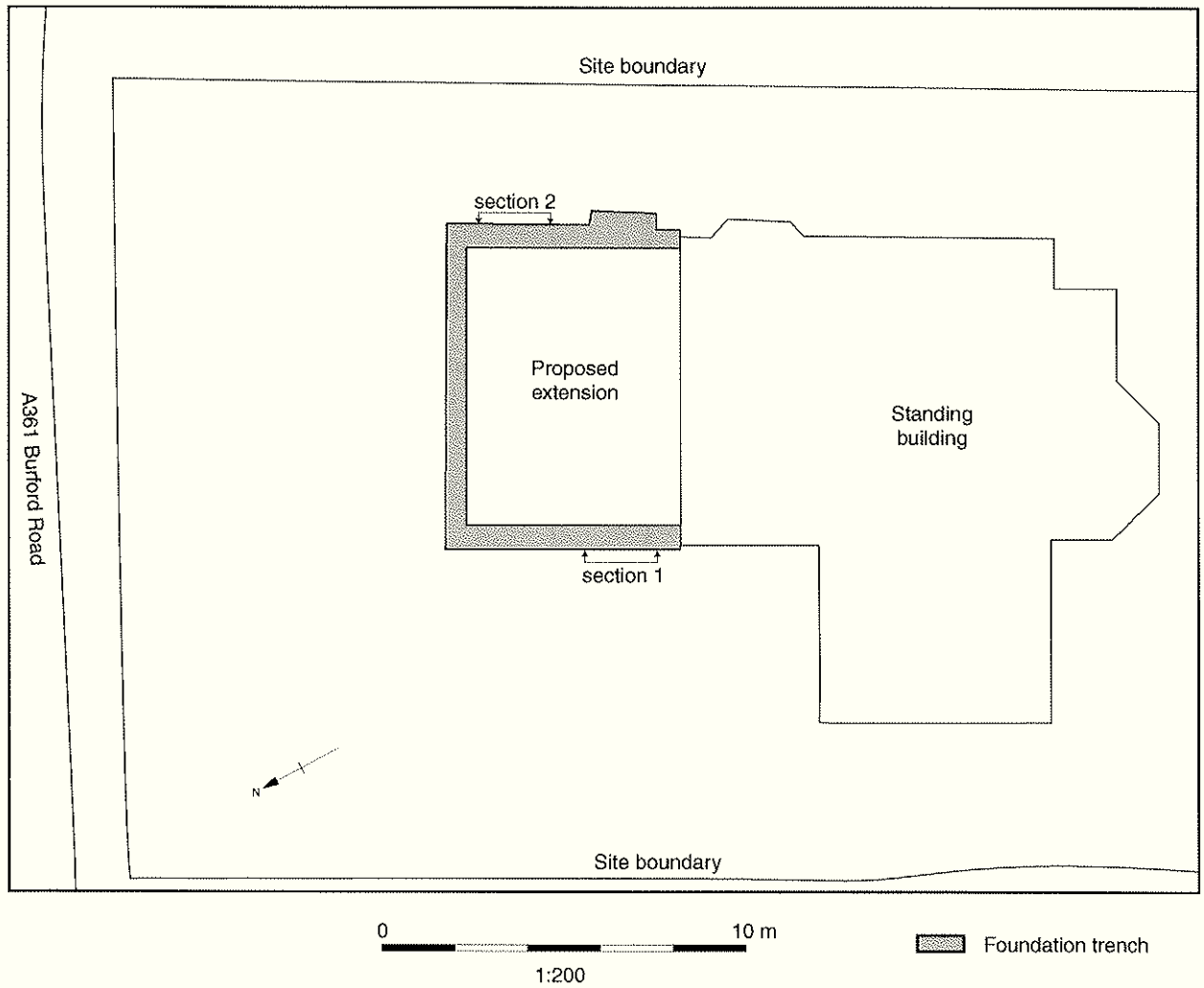


Figure 2: Extent of watching brief and location of sections

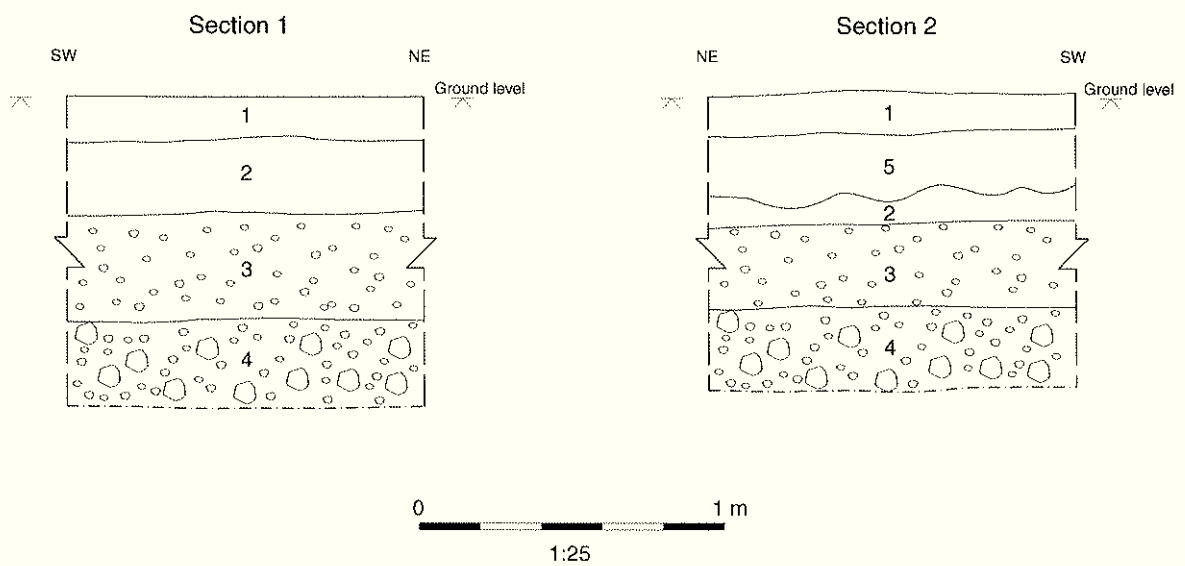


Figure 3: Sections





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