

Land Adjacent to Wychwold Fulbrook Oxfordshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology

6th June 2003

Client: Greenford

Issue N^o: 1

OA Job N^o: 1809

Planning Ref N^o: 1622/93

NGR: SP 2595 1325

Client Name: Greenford

Client Ref No:

Document Title: Land Adjacent to Wychwold, Fulbrook, Oxfordshire

Document Type: Watching Brief

Issue Number: 1

National Grid Reference: NGR SP 2595 1325
Planning Reference: 1622/93

OA Job Number: 1809
Site Code: FUWYCH 03
Invoice Code: FUWYCHWB
Receiving Museum: Oxfordshire County Meseum Service
Museum Accession No: OXCMS 2003.58


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Document File Location: U:/OAU/wbREPORT/Oxfordshire/FUWYCH.doc
Graphics File Location: Server10:/oaupubs 1/ItoQ*FUWYCHWB*Wychwold, fulbrook*AH*23.5.03

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Signed... 

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Land Adjacent to Wychwold, Fulbrook, Oxfordshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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SUMMARY

In May 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Land adjacent to Wychwold, Fulbrook, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 2595 1325). The work was commissioned by Greenford in advance of a new earth sheltered dwelling and associated garages. The watching brief did not reveal any archaeological features or deposits.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In May 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Land adjacent to Wychwold, Fulbrook, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Greenford in respect of a planning application for an earth-sheltered dwelling with associated garages (Planning Application No. 1622/93).
- 1.1.2 A project brief was discussed between Oxford Archaeology and Hugh Coddington, Deputy County Archaeologist.
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief.

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site comprises a small field which slopes from north to south on the north side of Fulbrook, immediately to the south of Wychwold Cottage and on the east side of the lane leading to Fulbrook Manor. The underlying geology is limestone and the site lies at approximately 115 m OD.

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 2003) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 The 1993 evaluation (OAU 1993) identified extensive artefactual evidence, comprising a total of 192 sherds recovered from all excavated contexts. 185 of these sherds dated from the early medieval period, with most being recovered from a deposit immediately below the topsoil in Trench 1, although some were from the fill of a possible post-hole. The earliest pottery forms date from the Anglo-Saxon period, although the majority dated from the 12th century. The single post-hole was the only archaeological feature identified. Based on the evidence obtained it is thought likely that the site was used as a tip during the Medieval period, or possibly that it represents an attempt to terrace the hillside. In the latter case the pottery-bearing soil would have been redeposited; the post-hole could possibly represent an attempt torevet the slope, and it is possible that other post-holes lie outside the confines of the trench. Trench 2 contained a possible Romano-British pit; the incline of the hillside here is less steep, and no evidence for terracing was found here.

- 1.3.3 The development site is located c. 50 m due east of a series of earthworks (PRN 5019) that have been interpreted as house platforms and hollow ways denoting an area of historic settlement. Aerial photography undertaken by the Royal Commission for Historic Monuments suggests that significant archaeology may survive in the vicinity. Lying due west of the site is a further series of earthworks (PRN 5019) which have been identified as the medieval settlement of Fulbrook; the church in the existing village dates from the Norman period.

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 The site had been stripped of topsoil by a 360⁰ machine down onto the natural limestone brash. This was then excavated to depth for the new development (Fig. 1).
- 2.2.2 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 natural limestone brash (1) was exposed with bands of clay. This was sealed below a 0.30 to 0.40 m thick layer of dark greyish brown silty clay loam topsoil (2) (Fig. 2).

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered from 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 results from the watching brief revealed no archaeological features or deposits sealed below the topsoil. This suggests that the area was used for agricultural purpose's and later a orchard. This confirming with activity found in the evaluation relating to containment of soil erosion of the hill side further down the slope south-east of the development area.

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	Natural				Natural limestone brash	
2	Layer	0.3 -0.4 m			Topsoil	

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OAU 1993 *Land Adjacent to Wychwold, Fulbrook* Archaeological Evaluation Report

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

OA 2003 *Earth Sheltered Dwelling at Fulbrook, Oxfordshire* Written Scheme of Investigation

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Land Adjacent to Wychwold, Fulbrook, Oxfordshire

Site code: FUWYCH 03

Grid reference: NGR SP 2595 1325

Type of watching brief: Topsoil strip and excavation of site for development.

Date and duration of project: One visit on 9/5/03

Area of site: 50 m x 23 m

Summary of results: The watching brief exposed topsoil on top of natural subsoil and 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 2003.58

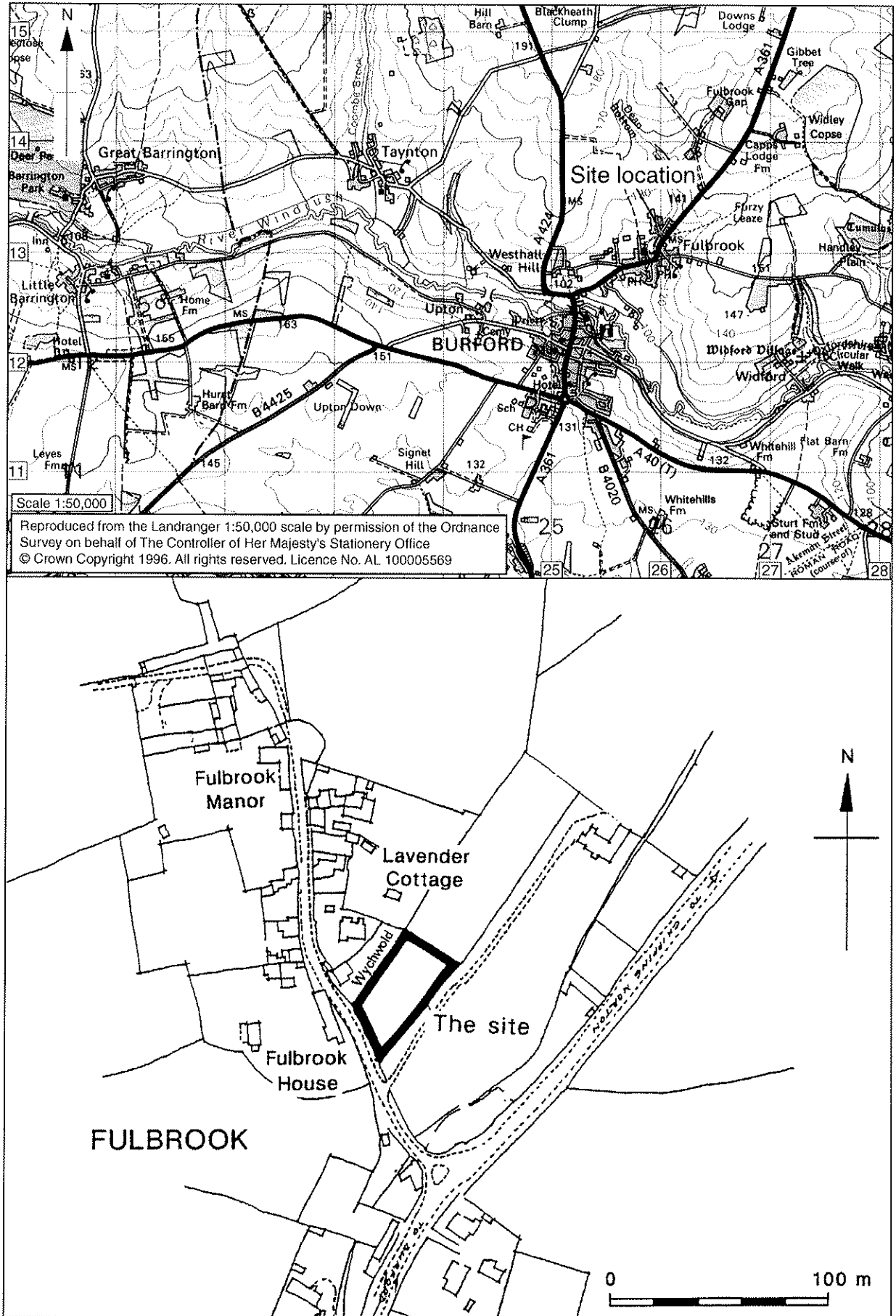
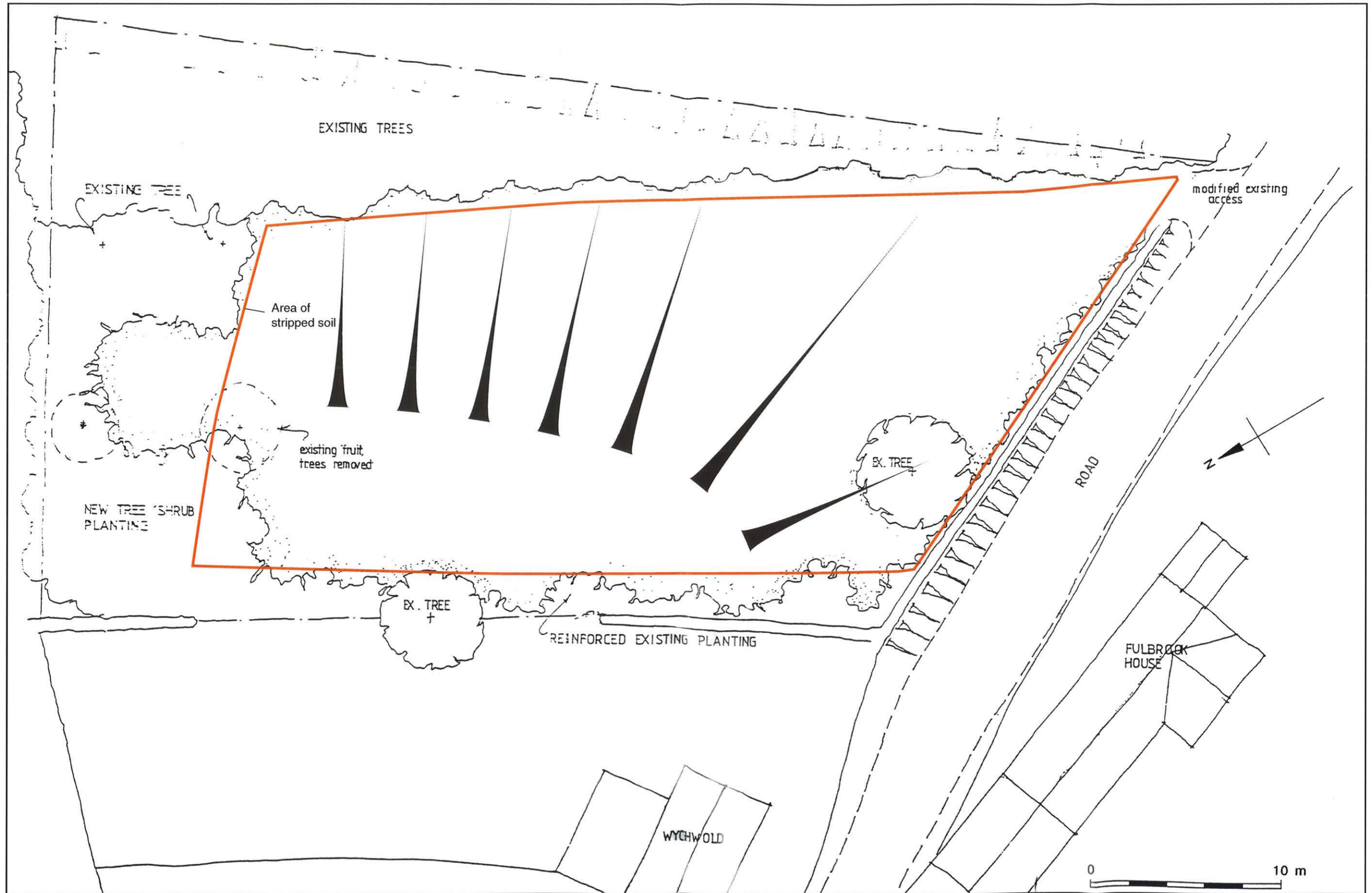


Figure 1: Site location



— Limit of excavation

Figure 2: Excavation area



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