

Environment Agency Yard  
Gatehampton  
Goring  
Oxfordshire



**Archaeological  
Watching Brief Report**



**Oxford Archaeology**

August 2005



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Cover Plate: Machining of the river bank for the new wharf from the west.

## SUMMARY

*In July 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at the EA yard, Gatehampton, Goring, Berks (NGR SU 606 794). The work was commissioned by the Environment Agency in advance of the construction of a wharf along the side of the riverbank. The watching brief revealed no archaeological features or deposits predating mid to late 20th century ground make up from dredging of the river.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In July 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at EA yard, Gatehampton, Goring, Berks (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by the Environment Agency in respect of the construction of a wharf along the side of the riverbank (Fig. 2).

1.1.2 OA carried out the archaeological watching brief at the request of the site owners, The Environment Agency, due to the presence of nearby archaeological remains.

#### 1.2 Location, geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies on alluvium at 42 m above OD. The site is situated on the south bank of the river Thames, south of Goring and just east of the Railway crossing.

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background to the watching brief was prepared from the archaeological report on findings on the Thames Water pipeline at Gatehampton Farm just to the north west of the site and carried out from 1985 to 1992 (OAU 1995) and is summarised below.

1.3.2 The Thames water pipeline works were carried out over a number of years during the construction of a new water supply depot and feeder pipelines on the east and west side of the railway line north of the river Thames. Remains and finds included a number of flint scatters and an enclosure ditch from the middle Neolithic period with later Neolithic causeway activity. In the Bronze Age the site became the focus of cemetery with a number of round barrows aligned south-west to north-east across the north side of the river. There appears to be little Iron Age activity, but the Roman period the area is cultivated with a series of rectangular field enclosures and trackways and a number of farm buildings, one possibly a villa to the south of the river, and a settlement beneath the present Gatehampton Farm. Some Saxon activity was noted on top of some of the excavated Roman features. From the 11th century medieval activity diminished around the hamlet of Gatehampton and it became part of the Goring parish (OAU 1995).

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, 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 watching brief monitored works for the new wharf. The riverbank was cut straight for a line of new piles and then it was battered back at 45° from the water level. The piles were then inserted and the ground made up with hardcore (Fig. 2).
- 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 machine strip exposed a natural (1) of reddish brown silty clay with patches of dark grey and flinty gravel. This was overlain by a 0.2 m thick dark brown silty clay loam, that was a probably an old cultivated topsoil (2). Sealing these layers was a 0.6 m thick of compacted light reddish brown silty clay (3) with patches of chalk, sandy gravel and flint nodules. This was derived from material dredged up from the river bottom and used to make up the ground in the yard area and was sealed below a 0.3 m thick layer of compacted very dark grey brown silty clay loam (4) with gravel, building rubble and hardcore mix (Fig. 3).

### 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 During the watching brief no archaeological features or deposits were exposed. Only the old topsoil horizon was exposed below a mid to late 20th century make up material dredged up from the river and deposited to make up the yard area. This was all sealed under the present topsoil and hard standing of the yard.



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Height</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	Natural				Natural clay
2	Layer	0.2 m			Old topsoil
3	Layer	0.6 m			ground make up
4	Layer	0.3 m			present topsoil

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Allen T, 1995 *Lithics and Landscapes: archaeological discoveries on the Thames Water pipeline at Gatehampton Farm, Goring, Oxfordshire 1985-1992* by Oxford Archaeological Unit

Wilkinson, D (ed.) 1992 Oxford Archaeological Unit Field Manual, (First edition, August 1992).

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** Environment Agency Yard, Gatehampton, Goring, Oxon

**Site code:** GOGATE 05

**Grid reference:** NGR SU 606 794

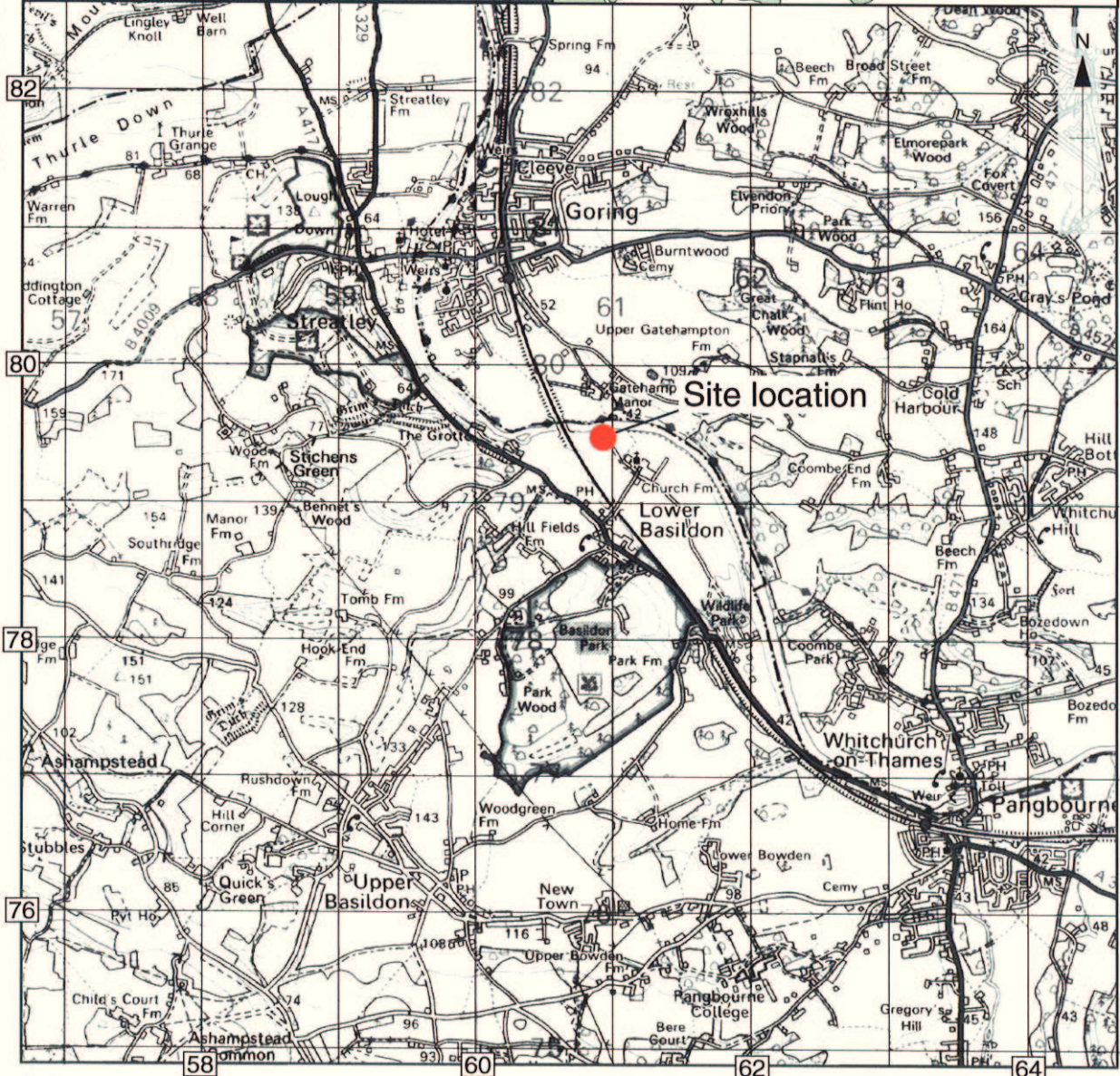
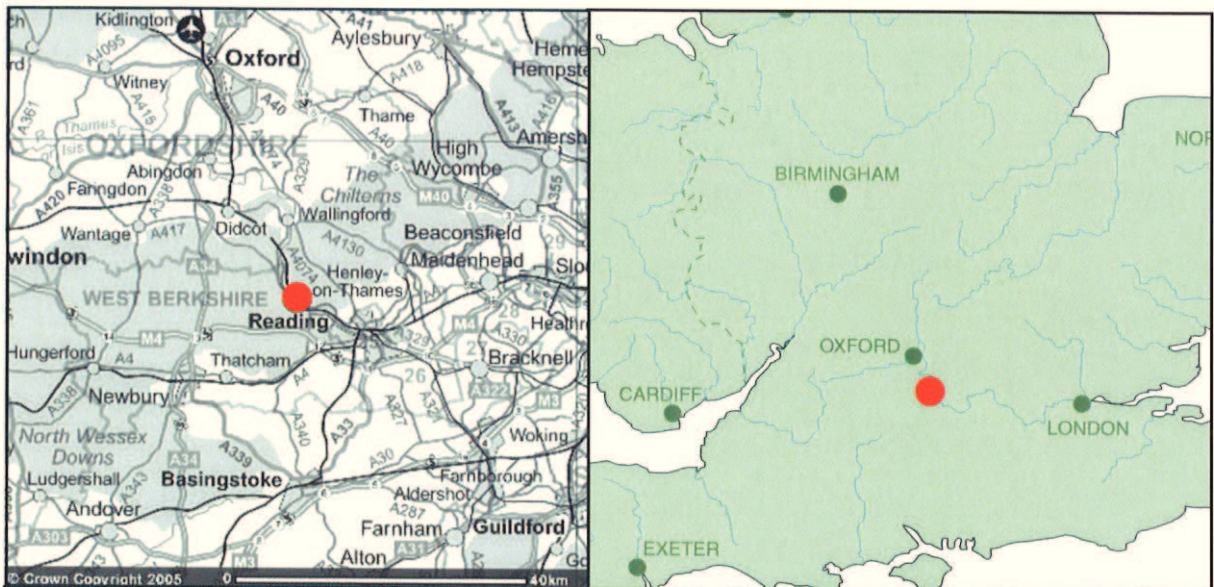
**Type of watching brief:** Construction of new wharf along south bank of Thames.

**Date and duration of project:** One site visit on the 22/7/2005.

**Area of site:** 10 m x 1.2 m x 1.4 m

**Summary of results:** No archaeological features or deposits predating mid to late 20th century ground make up from dredging of the river.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with West Berkshire Heritage Service in due course, under the following accession number: NEBYM 2005.55



Scale 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location



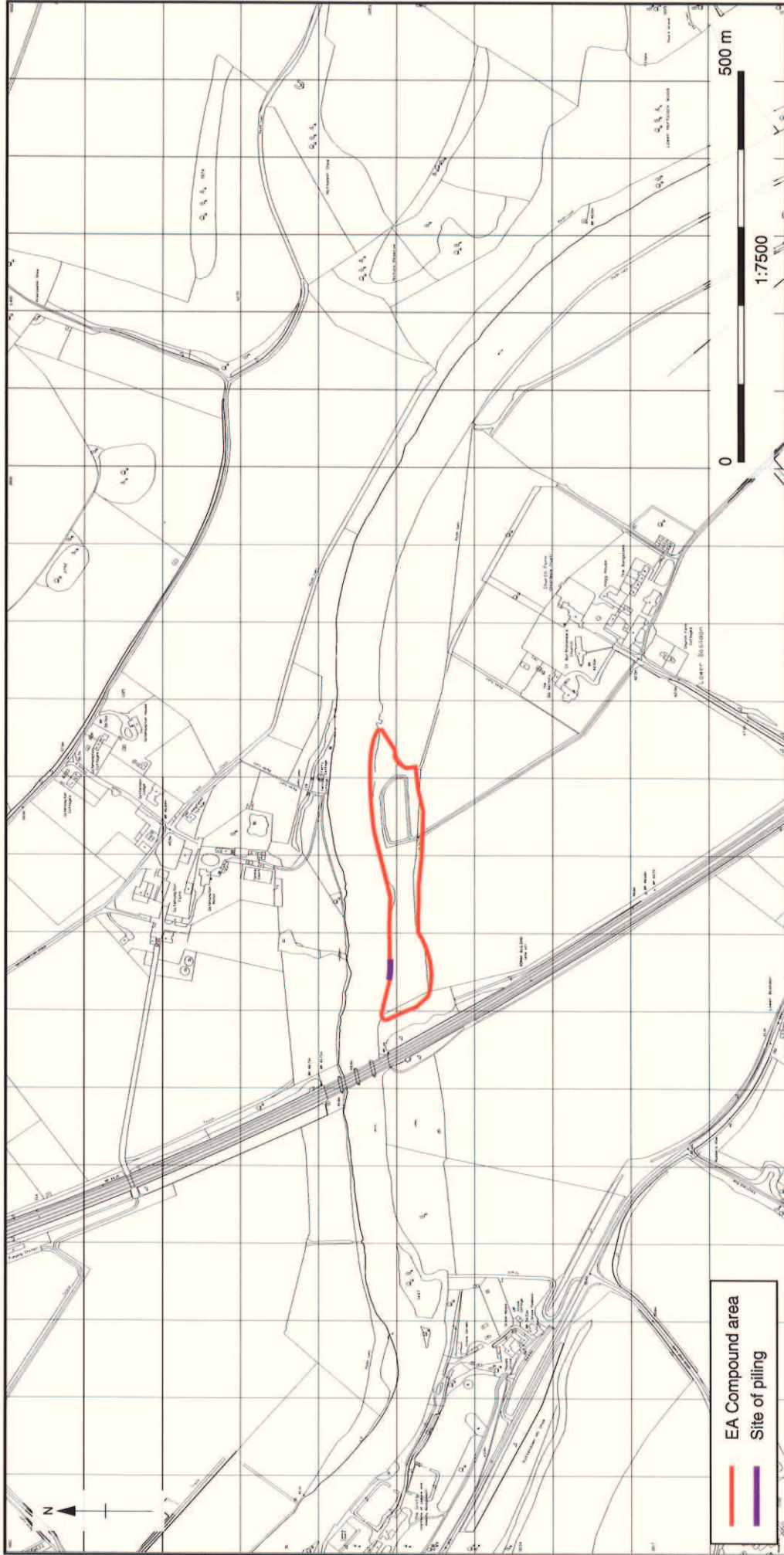


Figure 2: Location of new wharf



### Section 1

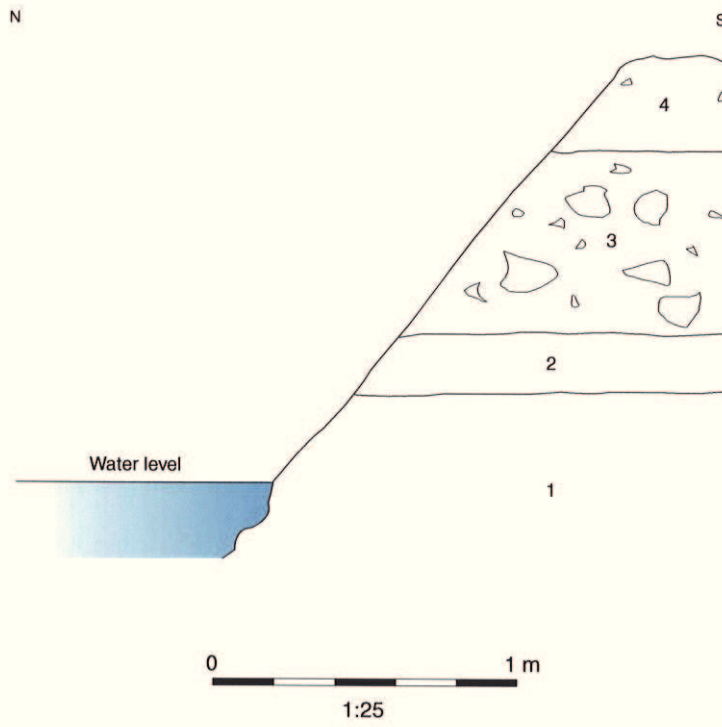


Figure 3: Section 1



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