

LECHLADE (GL)

LEBOXWB  
283/00

Mr & Mrs Cobb

**Box Tree House, High Street  
Lechlade, Gloucestershire**

*NGR SP 2155 9985*

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING  
BRIEF REPORT**

Planning Application  
Ref. No. CT.7812/A

Oxford Archaeological Unit  
May 2001

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BRIEF REPORT**

Planning Application  
Ref. No: CT. 7812/A

Prepared by: J. Dalton

Date: 2001

Checked by: J Hiller

Date: May 2001

Approved by:

*R. Williams*

*ASSISTANT DIRECTOR*

Date:

*16/5/2001*

*Summary*

*In July 2000 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook a watching brief at Box Tree House, High Street, Lechlade, Gloucestershire (NGR SP 2155 9985). A substantial accumulation of garden soil up to a depth of 1 m covered the site. This soil overlay further 'made ground', through which was cut a buried foundation wall associated with an outbuilding previously occupying the site.*

*Some medieval (and one possibly Roman) pottery sherds were recovered from the exposed section of the garden soil; none of the sherds was found in-situ. Quantities of butchered pig bones were present from the 'made ground' sealing the buried foundation; the bones probably date to the 18th-19th centuries.*

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**1 Introduction**

- 1.1 In July 2000 the Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook a watching brief at Box Tree House, High Street, Lechlade, Gloucestershire (Fig. 1). The site is situated in the centre of the town at NGR SP 2155 9985. The development proposal (Planning Application ref. no: CT. 7812/A) comprised the excavation of a foundation trench prior to the construction of a new extension to the property. An archaeological watching brief was required in accordance with the local planning consent granted under PPG 16, as the site lies within the historic core of Lechlade.
- 1.2 The watching brief was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Cobb. It was undertaken to a brief set by and a WSI agreed with Gloucestershire County Council and Cotswold District Council.

**2 Background**

- 2.1 Box Tree House dates to *c* 1720, and the present owner has deeds dating from 1725. The house comprises two cottages, probably joined in the Victorian period. A dining room and upstairs bedroom were added in *c* 1860. The building between the location of the proposed extension and the High Street has been a shop for 100 years or so.
- 2.2 An outhouse or boiler house that was demolished after WW II formerly occupied the site of the proposed extension. The footings of the building were up to 1 m deep.
- 2.3 The site lies on loamy topsoil sealing the gravel, at *c* 75 m OD.

**3 Aims**

- 3.1 The aims of the watching brief were to identify any archaeological remains exposed on site, to establish their extent, condition, character, quality and date
- 3.2 To record these to established OAU standards (OAU, 1992), in order to secure their preservation by record.
- 3.3 To make available the results of the investigation.

**4 Methodology**

- 4.1 The watching brief was maintained by means of separate inspection visits by an archaeological supervisor; all excavation was undertaken by hand by the main contractor.

- 4.2 Within the constraints imposed by health and safety considerations the deposits and features exposed were cleaned, inspected and recorded in plan, section and by colour slide and monochrome print photography. Written records were also made.

## 5 Results (Fig. 2)

- 5.1 A substantial accumulation of garden soil up to a depth of up to 1 m formerly covered the site. This material had been removed from the investigation area by the time of the site inspection.
- 5.2 The earliest deposit overlying the natural gravel was a layer of 0.6 m thick soil; probably imported 'made ground' that butted up against the wall of the house. This soil was cut by a stone foundation wall that was 0.5 m wide and stood to a height of 0.4 m. The wall was aligned east-west and presumably formed the superstructure for the known outbuilding previously occupying the site. A secondary layer of soil overlay the site of the wall and the 'made ground', which was also overlain by the present garden wall.
- 5.3 Some medieval (and one possibly Roman) pottery sherds were recovered from the exposed section of the garden soil; none of the sherds was found *in-situ* or associated with features of those periods. Presumably these finds were from occupation deposits previously destroyed when the soil was imported to the property. The finds were not retained after on-site analysis, as they were clearly residual in a late context.
- 5.4 A quantity of butchered pig bones was retrieved from the made ground deposits sealing the buried foundation; the bones were undated, but probably date to the later 18th/19th century. Likewise the bones were not retained for further analysis.

## 6 Discussion

- 6.1 The watching brief identified substantial amounts of made ground within the garden, possibly deposited in order to remedy the flooding problems to which the area was historically prone. The made ground, through which the buried foundation was cut, by implication predates this, and possibly dates from the construction of Box Tree House, around the early-middle 18th century.
- 6.2 The area to the rear of the High Street was the location for the slaughtering of livestock, so this factor probably accounts for the quantity of bones.

## Reference

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

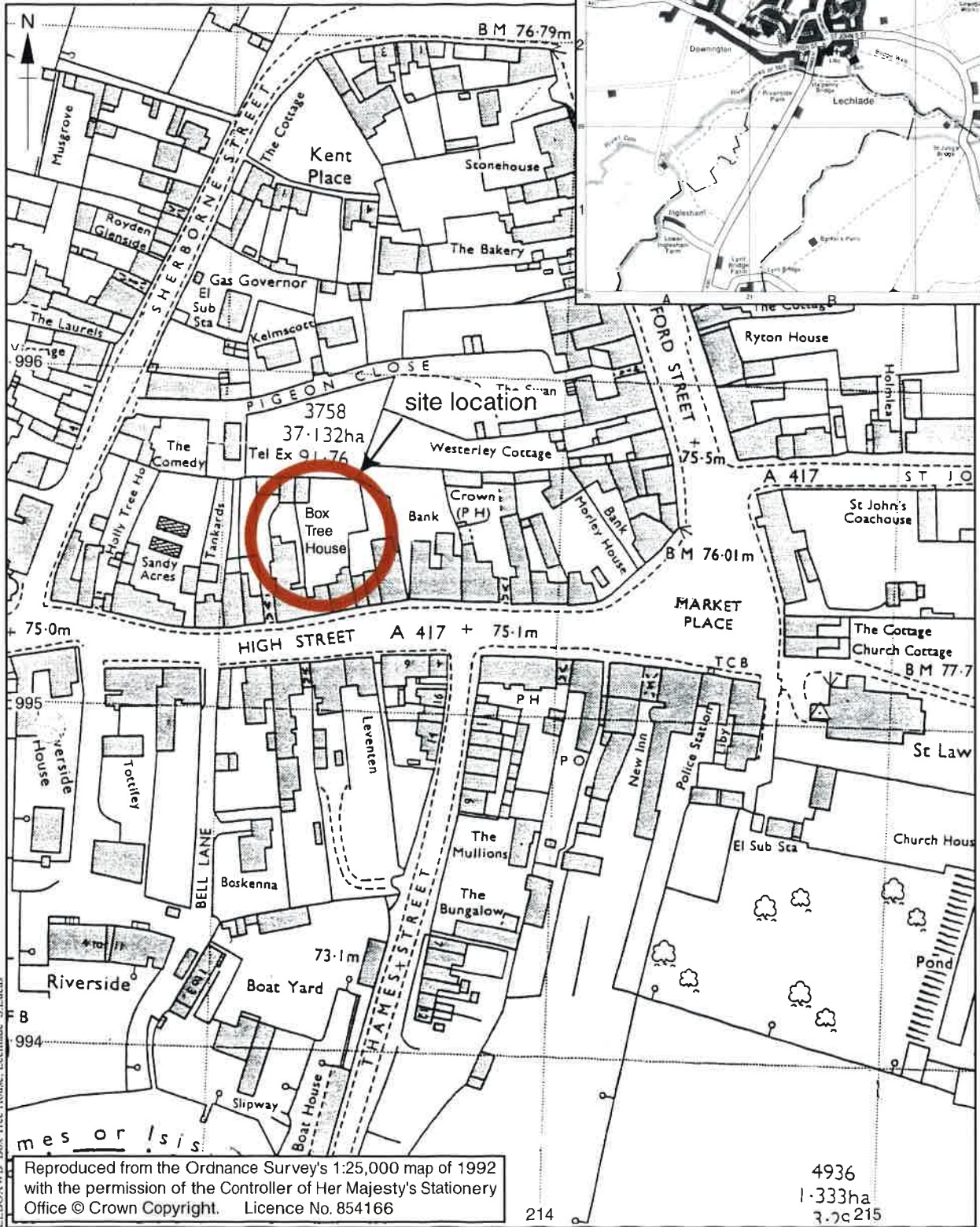
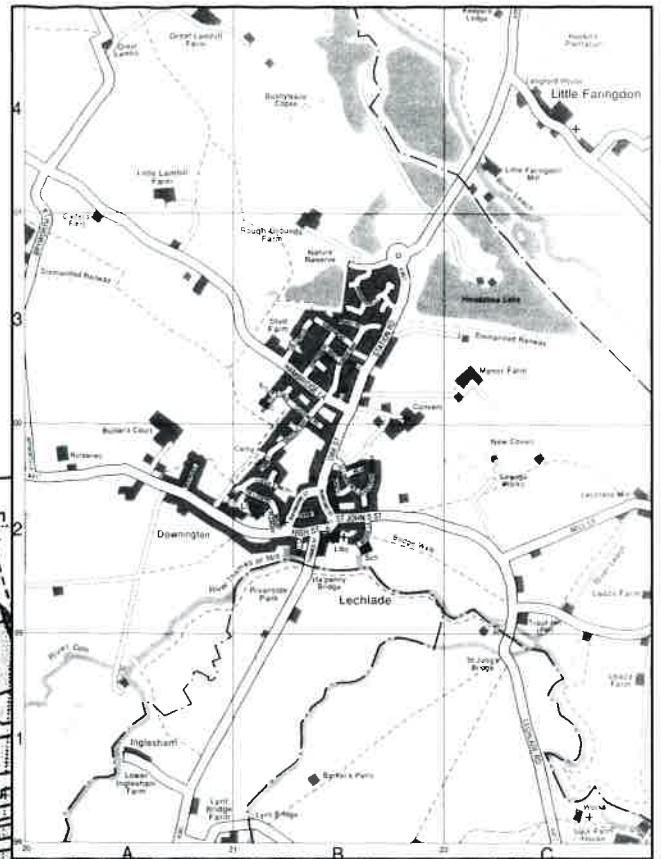


Figure 1: Site location plan.

Section

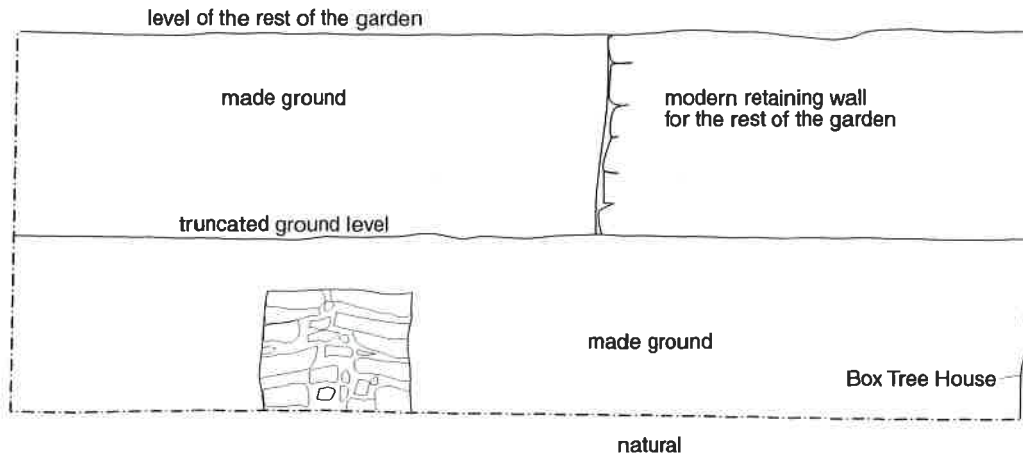


Figure 2: Trench section



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