

Peppers Cottage 71
71 Watling Lane
Dorchester on
Thames
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**Archaeological
Watching Brief Report**



June 2007

Client: Mr Fisher

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Peppers Cottage, 71 Watling Lane, Dorchester on Thames, Oxfordshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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Cover Plate: Excavation of the foundation trenches viewed from the south-west.

SUMMARY

In May 2007 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Peppers Cottage, 71 Watling Lane, Dorchester on Thames, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 578939). The work was commissioned by Mr T.R. Fisher in advance of the construction of a new extension built within the footprint of a previous extension. The watching brief revealed no archaeological deposits or features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In May 2007 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at Peppers Cottage, 71 Watling Lane, Dorchester on Thames, Oxfordshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr T. R. Fisher in respect of a planning application for a new extension built within the footprint of a previous extension (Planning Application No. P05/W0191).

1.1.2 A project brief was set by Paul Smith of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service (OCAS, 2005).

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 development site is located in the south of Dorchester-on-Thames at 71 Watling Lane, between Bridge End and Samian Way (NGR: SU 578 939). It is a domestic site with the new extension being built within the footprint of the previous extension. The site is located at approximately 48 m above OD and the underlying geology is Thames Valley river gravel.

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, 2007) and is reproduced below.

1.3.2 Although the site of the proposed development lies within an area previously disturbed by development it was considered possible that archaeological remains might be discovered during ground works as this is in an extremely archaeologically sensitive area. To the north and west of the site lies the Scheduled Ancient Monument of Dorchester Roman Town. The extent of the settlement at Dorchester is known to extend beyond the scheduled area. The site lies at the southern boundary of the civilian settlement at Dorchester, although the exact line of the southern boundary of the town is unknown. A little further to the south in the Bridge End area Roman burials have been found, some from areas within the footprints of existing

buildings. It is likely that these burials relate to a Roman cemetery immediately outside of the town defences. The extent of the burial ground is unknown.

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 old extension was demolished, the foundations removed and the site cleared. The new foundations were marked out and the trenches were excavated with a mini excavator fitted with a 0.4 m wide toothless bucket under archaeological supervision (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 foundation trenches were 0.6 m wide and 0.6 m in depth with an internal wall of 0.45 m width and 0.4 m in depth. The trenches cut into the top of the natural gravel (4). This was overlain by a 0.12 m thick compact dark reddish brown silty sand loam (3) cultivated soil. A 0.30 m thick layer of compact crushed stone, concrete and building debris was laid over this for the construction and floor make up (2) of the earlier extension. Around the outside of the extension a 0.15 m thick layer of very dark grey brown silty sand loam (1) garden soil (Fig. 2, section 1) overlaying layer 2.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were retained 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 watching brief revealed no archaeological deposits or features. The site had been disturbed by the construction of the earlier extension and possibly from a 19th century quarry in the rear of the Chequer public house just to north of the site.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Comments</i>
1	Layer	0.15 m	Topsoil
2	Layer	0.30 m	make up layer
3	Layer	0.12 m	Cultivated soil
4	Natural		Natural

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OA, 2007 Peppers Cottage, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief

OCAS, 2005 P05/W0191-Peppers Cottage, Dorchester-on-Thames Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief

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

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Peppers Cottage, 71 Watling Lane, Dorchester on Thames, Oxon

Site code: DOPEPP 07

Grid reference: NGR SU 578 939

Type of watching brief:

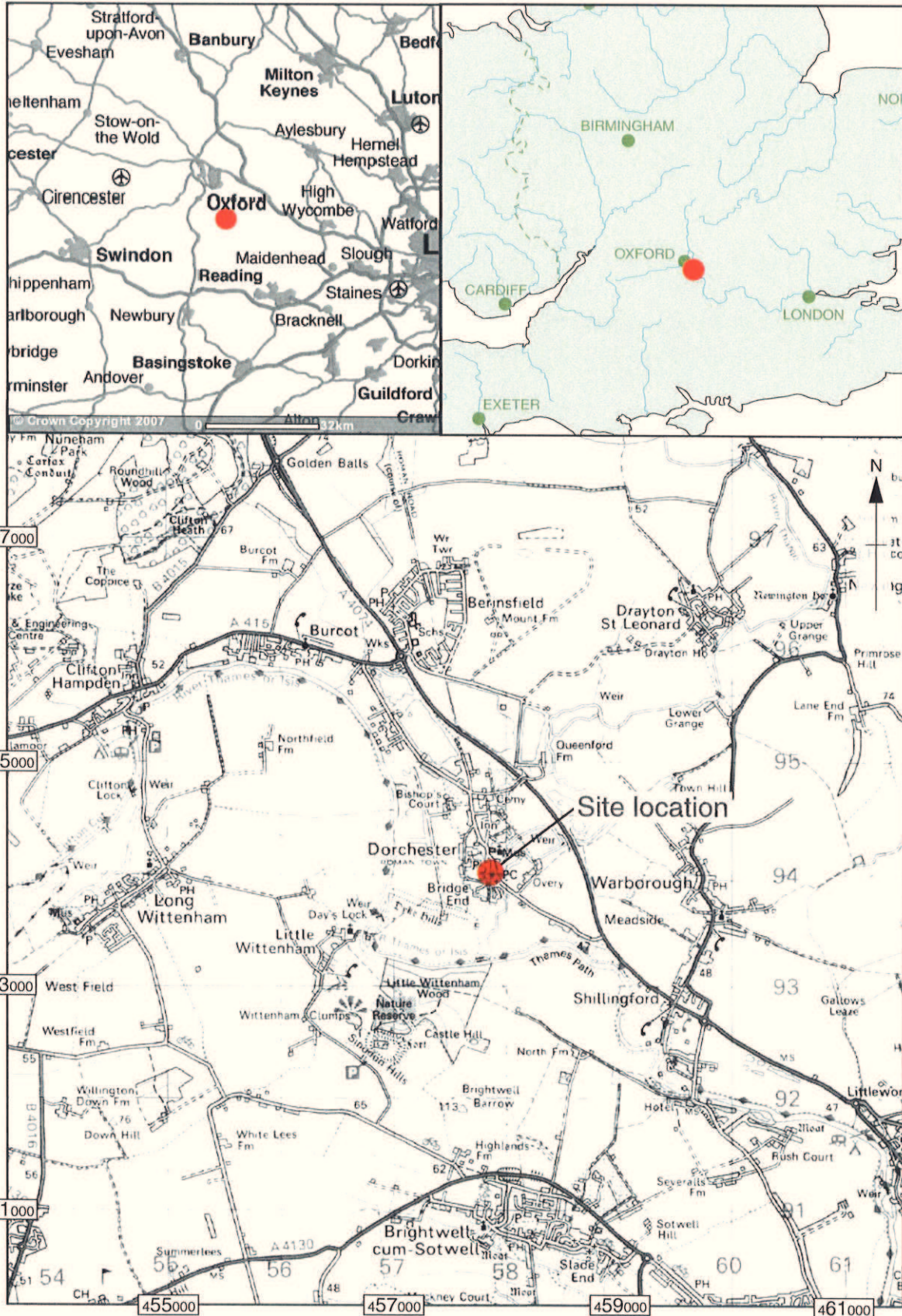
Date and duration of project: A one-day site visit on the 4/5/2007.

Area of site: 4.7 m x 5.50 m

Summary of results: The watching brief revealed no archaeological deposits or features.

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:2007.68

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Figure 1: Site location

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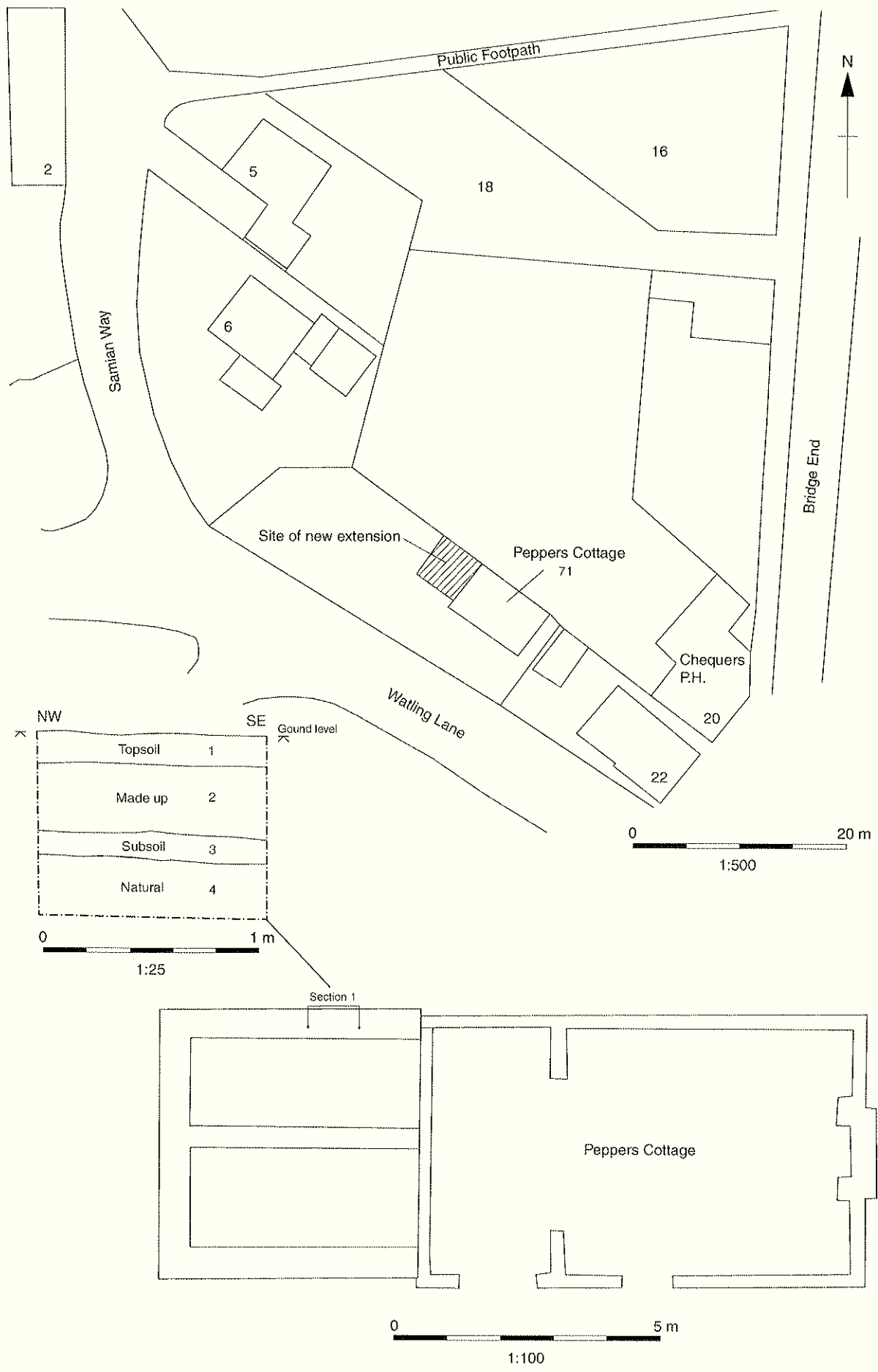


Figure 2: Site plan of area of watching brief and section



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