

126 Abingdon Road Standlake Oxfordshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeology

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Prepared by: James Mumford
Position: Supervisor
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Checked by: Jon Hiller
Position: Senior Project Manager
Date: 31st March 2003

Approved by: Nick Shepherd
Position: Head of Fieldwork
Date: 31st March 2003

Signed.....

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Oxford Archaeology

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Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800

f: (0044) 01865 793496

e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk

w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk

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126 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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SUMMARY

In March 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 126 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire (NGR SP 3915 0278). The work was commissioned by Mr G Bannell in advance of the construction of a new house. The watching brief revealed a undated ditch and pit sealed below medieval ridge and furrow.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In March 2003 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 126 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire (Fig 1). The work was commissioned by Mr G Bannell in respect of a planning application for the construction of a new house (Planning Application No. W2002/0774).

1.1.2 A project brief was set by Hugh Coddington the Deputy County Archaeologist for Oxford County Council (CAS, 2002).

1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA, 2003).

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies at c. 64 m OD and the underlying geology is gravel beneath fine loam.

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 This development site is located adjacent to a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM 140), comprising a complex of cropmarks identified through aerial photography. Those visible include enclosures, ring ditches, hut circles, trackways and pits, all of possible prehistoric date.

1.3.3 An evaluation at 122 Abingdon Road identified medieval remains comprising linear features and postholes suggesting medieval activity in the locality (OA, 1996 - formerly Oxford Archaeological Unit, OAU), with properties fronting on to the Witney-Abingdon Road; medieval deposits and overburden may conceal further prehistoric features.

1.3.4 A recent watching brief at 128 Abingdon did not locate any archaeology.

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 area of the site was levelled by 0.2 m and hardcore laid around the foot print of the building. The foundations were then laid out and excavated by a JCB using a 0.45 m and 0.60 m wide bucket ready for concrete (Figs 2 and 3).
- 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 trenches cut into a natural of compact gravel (1). This had been cut by a linear ditch (4 and 6) running north-west to south-east across the site, which was recorded in two sections. It had a concave profile and measured 6 m x 0.5 x 0.24 m. It contained a fill of dark brown silty sand loam (5 and 7) with patches of gravel and red sand (Figs 3 and 4, sections 1 and 2).
- 3.1.2 A sub circular pit (8) was partly exposed in two of the foundation trenches. It had a concave profile and measured 1.6 m x 1.2 m x 0.45 m. It was filled by a light reddish brown silty sand (9). These features were sealed below a reddish brown silty sand loam (2), in which the profile of medieval ridge and furrow could be seen running north-west to south-east parallel with the road (Figs 3 and 4, sections 3 and 4).
- 3.1.3 In the south-east corner of the house footprint, the foundation trench cut along a modern pit (10) measuring 2.5 m x 0.20 m x 0.80 m, which was filled with a compact mid brown silty clay (11) (Fig. 3). Along the foundation trench of the north-east side of the house, a hollow way (12) leading to a former gateway to the field was observed. This had a steep sloping side rounding to a flat base measuring 6 m x 1 m x 0.6 m (Fig. 3). This was filled by a mixed reddish brown silty sand (13) getting darker near the top with bands of cinder and ash. These fills were sealed below a 0.2 m thick layer of dark greyish brown silty sand loam (3).

3.2 Finds

3.2.1 No finds were recovered during 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 recorded two archaeological features. These were an undated ditch and a pit, which were sealed below medieval ridge and furrow. Two other later features were also recorded and consisted of a modern pit and a hollowway formed by traffic through the gateway into the field.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Length</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i>Finds</i>
1	Natural				Gravel	
2	Layer	0.14 - 24 m			Subsoil	None
3	Layer	0.2 m			Topsoil	None
4	Cut	0.14 m	0.5m	0.6 m	Ditch	
5	Fill				Fill of Ditch	None
6	Cut	0.3 m	0.55 m	0.6 m	Ditch	
7	Fill				Fill of Ditch	None
8	Cut	0.45 m	1.2 m	1.6 m	Pit	
9	Fill				Fill of Pit	None
10	Cut	0.8 m	0.2 m	2.5 m	Modern Pit	None
11	Fill				Fill of Pit	None
12	Cut	0.6 m	1 m	6 m	Hollow of gateway	
13	Fill				Fill of gateway	None

APPENDIX 3 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

CAS 2002 Design Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief

OAU 1996 Land at 122 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxon. Archaeological Evaluation Report.

OA 2003 126 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire, Written Scheme of Investigation

OA 2003 128 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire, Watching Brief Report

APPENDIX 4 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: 126 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire

Site code: STAB 03

Grid reference: NGR SP 3915 0278

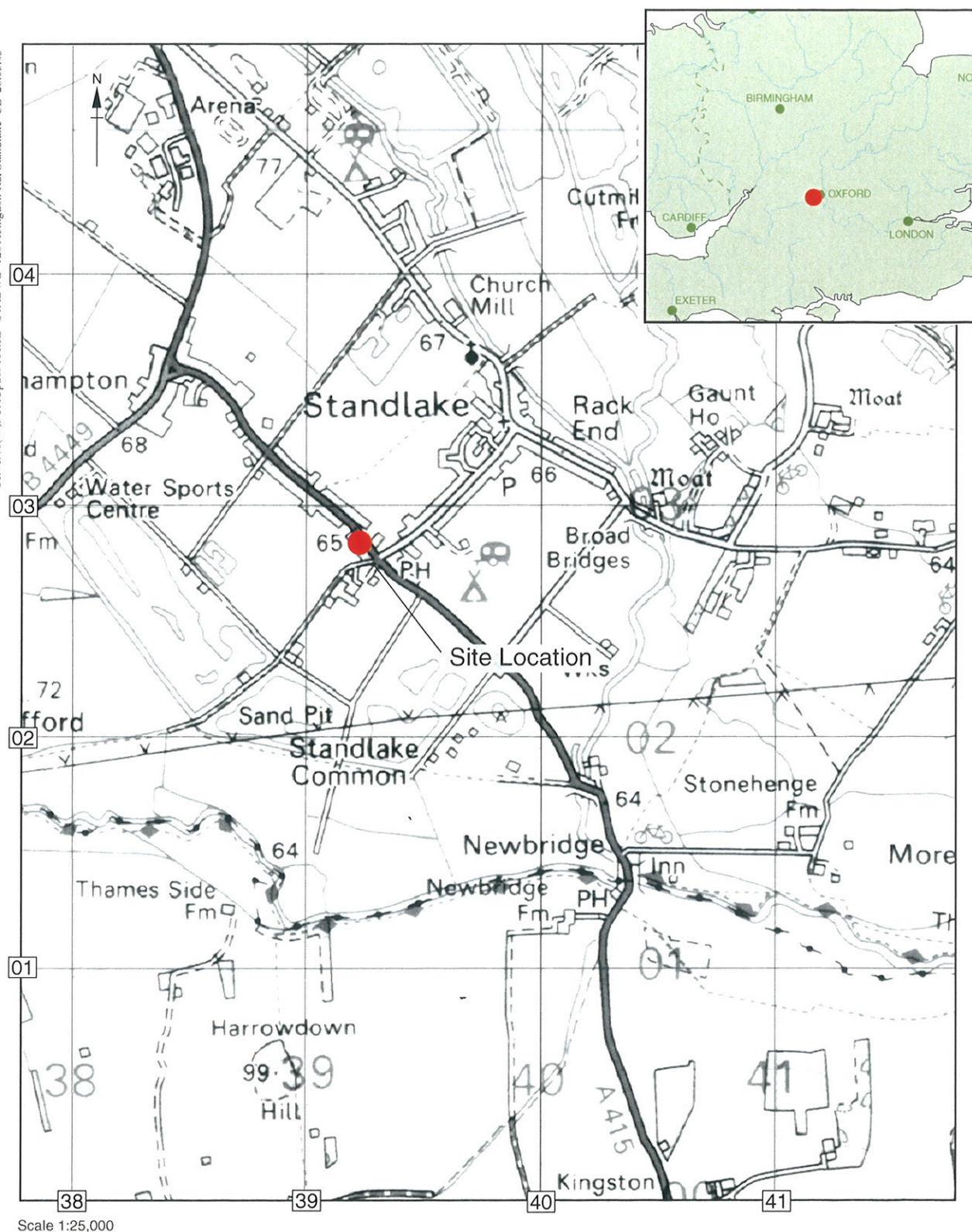
Type of watching brief: Excavation of foundation for new house.

Date and duration of project: Two site visits on the 24th and 26th March 2003.

Area of site: 19 m x 14 m

Summary of results: Two undated features sealed below medieval ridge and furrow.

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 2003.39



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Figure 1: Site location

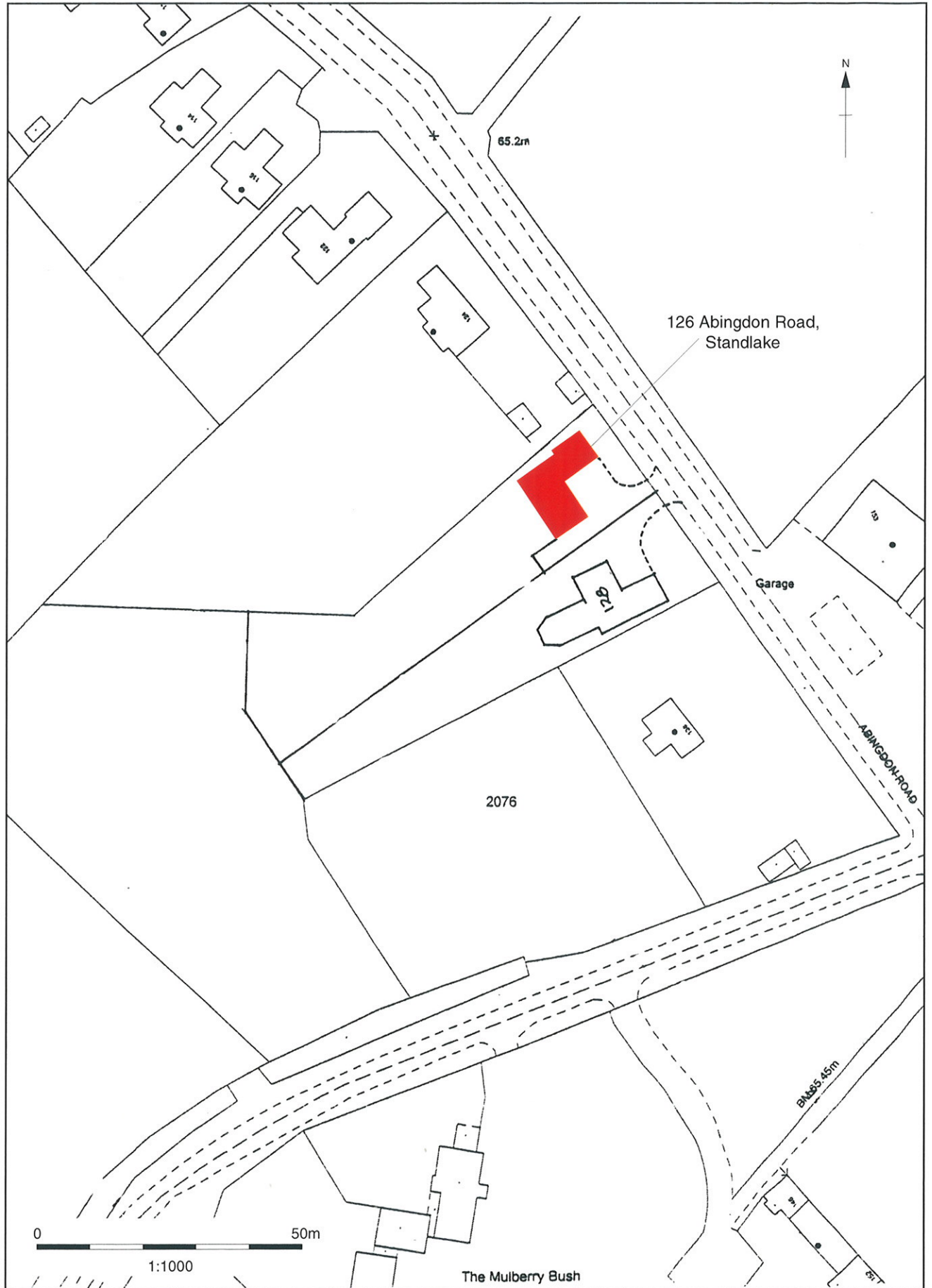


Figure 2: Site Plan

Figure 3: Site plan showing sections and features

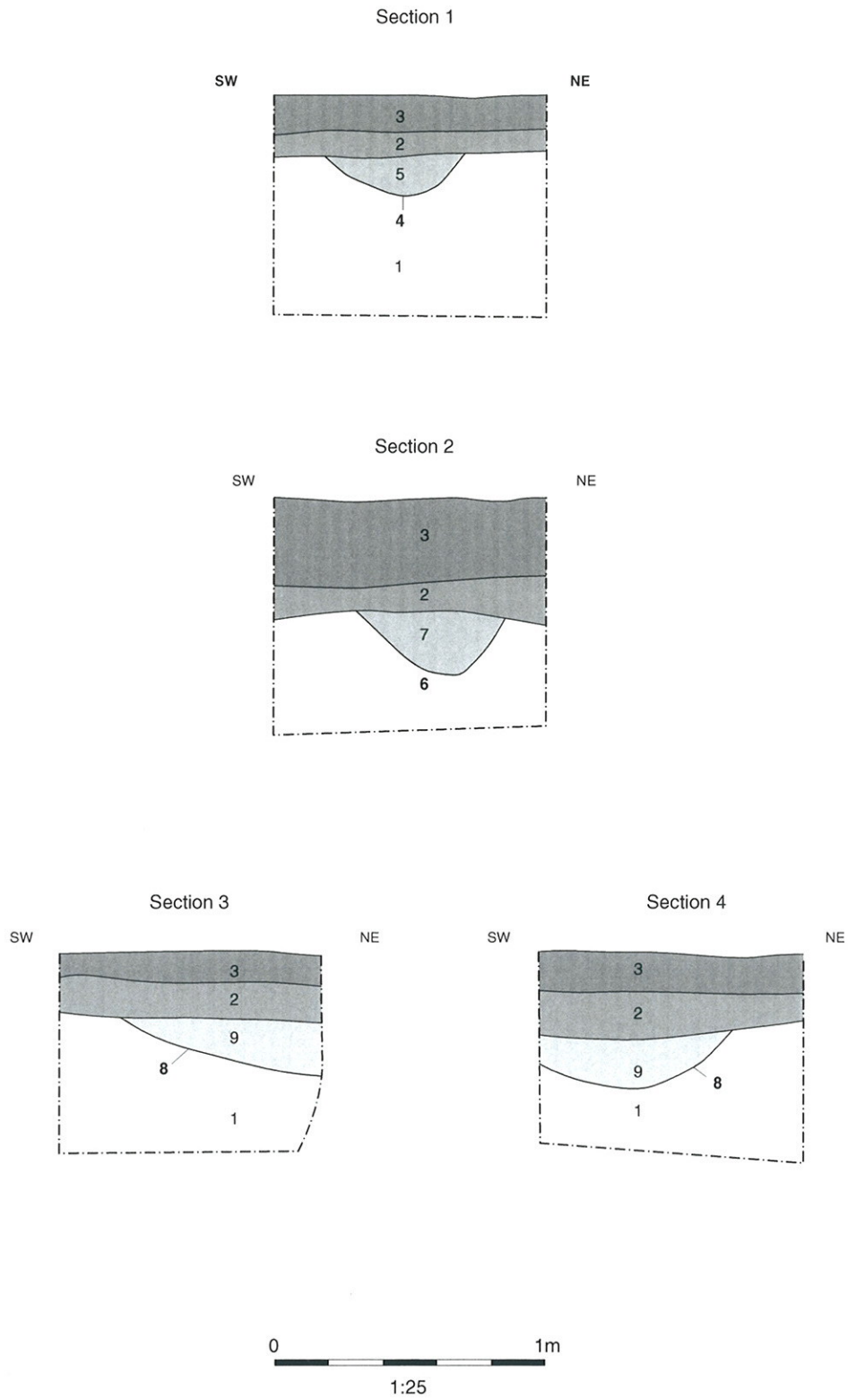


Figure 4: Sections 1 - 4



Section line and number



Interior section line and number



Limit of excavation



Sondage / Interior limit of excavation



Fill line and number



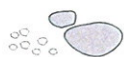
Cut line and number



Structure number



Unclear boundary



Stones



Hachures indicate inclination of slope
inside excavated feature



Levels



Grid point



Oxford Archaeology

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: (0044) 01865 263800
f: (0044) 01865 793496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk



Oxford Archaeology North

Storey Institute
Meeting House Lane
Lancaster LA1 1TF

t: (0044) 01524 541000
f: (0044) 01524 848606
e: lancinfo@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: www.oxfordarch.co.uk



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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