

# 3 Austyn's Place Ewell Surrey



## Archaeological Watching Brief Report



June 2007

**Client: Mrs L Seymour**

Issue N<sup>o</sup>: 1  
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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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## **3 Austyn's Place, Ewell, Surrey**

### ***ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT***

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## SUMMARY

*On June 6th 2007, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 3 Austyns Place, Ewell, Surrey (NGR: TQ 220 627). The work was commissioned by Mrs L. Seymour in advance of the construction of a Garden Room within the rear garden. The watching brief revealed post-medieval worked soil overlying natural sand deposits. No continuation of the archaeology recorded during the 2003 evaluation was observed.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 On June 6th 2007, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief within the rear garden of 3 Austyns Place, Ewell, Surrey (NGR: TQ 220 627). The work was commissioned by Mrs L. Seymour in respect of a planning application for a Garden Room.
- 1.1.2 As part of the planning consent Epsom and Ewell Borough Council requested that an Archaeologist be present on site during the excavation of the foundations.
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation detailing how it would meet this requirement (OA, 2007).

#### 1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The Town of Ewell is located approximately 7 km south of Greater London (Fig. 1). The proposed development area is located within the rear garden of the house, which was part of the Coach House associated with Glyn House. This house, together with its grounds formerly occupied the site. The site is situated almost within the centre of the historic settlement of Ewell.
- 1.2.2 The development occupies an area of 10 m by 3m and is an area of level ground at roughly 35 m above OD. The site is bounded to the south-east by the original boundary wall for Glyn House, to the north-east and north-west by a garage and outbuildings and to the south-east by a domestic garden.
- 1.2.3 The Ordnance Survey 1:50,000 geological map (sheet 270) indicates that the site is underlain predominately by Upper Chalk, with a thin band of Thanet Beds just to the north of the site. However, a recent geotechnical survey indicates that the layer of Thanet Sands lies further south and underlies the entire site at a minimum depth of 0.4 m below present ground level. Immediately to the north of the site is a spring, which flows northwards, forming the Hogsmill River.

### 1.3 **Archaeological and historical background**

- 1.3.1 A desk-based assessment of the site was produced by OA in June 2002, the archaeological implications of which are summarised below.
- 1.3.2 The area of proposed development has an uncertain but probably high potential to contain archaeology dated to the prehistoric period. This is based on the considerable number of known sites and finds in the study area, including the discovery of Iron Age pottery on the site, and the site's topographic location beside two natural water sources, which would have provided a predictable source of food (hunting and fishing) and water.
- 1.3.3 The area of proposed development has a demonstrated potential to contain archaeology dated to the Roman period. Ewell developed as a small market town within a well-settled landscape during this period. Roman pottery, possibly representing an area of settlement, was found at a depth of 1-2 ft across the whole of the Glyn House gardens during landscaping in 1959-63. A concentration of pottery was noted in the western part of the area of proposed development. The settlement would appear to have been located between Stane Street Roman road, the course of which probably ran along the eastern boundary of the proposed development site, and the Hogsmill Spring immediately to the north-west of the site.
- 1.3.4 The area of proposed development has an uncertain potential to contain archaeology dated to the early medieval period. Ewell is mentioned as a manor in Domesday Book. The exact location of settlement within the manor is uncertain, although it is likely that the historic village centre, located immediately to the south of the area of proposed development, grew up on, or in the vicinity of, the centre of early medieval settlement in the manor.
- 1.3.5 The area of proposed development has a high potential to contain archaeology dated to the later medieval period. The area of proposed development is located on the very edge of the medieval settlement core. It is possible that during this period roadside settlement extended further northwards along High Street, suggesting a potential for tenements along the western side of the area of proposed development, with backyard plots extending back from the street frontage. Backyards have the potential to contain rubbish pits, outbuildings and small-scale industrial activity.
- 1.3.6 The area of proposed development has a high potential to contain archaeology dated to the post-medieval period. As with the later medieval period, there is a potential for roadside settlement along the road in the western part of the site. The backyards of these properties may have extended a considerable way into the centre of the proposed development site, and may have contained rubbish pits, garden features, outbuildings or small-scale industrial activity.
- 1.3.7 An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on the site of Glyn House in 2003 by Oxford Archaeology. The results of the evaluation included a ditch of probable

Bronze Age origin, a series of Romano-British pits and gullies and a late post-medieval horse burial.

- 1.3.8 Trench 3 of the 2003 evaluation was located immediately to the north-west of the development site and examination of its plan suggests there is the potential for previously observed features to continue across the footprint of the development.

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence or absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To preserve by record any archaeological features or deposits that the development may disturb or destroy during the course of the groundworks.
- 2.1.3 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The area had been previously stripped of topsoil by a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. The foundations were hand-excavated down to a maximum depth of 0.8 m.
- 2.2.2 A plan showing the extent and location of any excavations was maintained at a scale of 1:100 (Fig. 2) and any recorded sections were drawn at a scale of 1:20. All excavations and recorded sections were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was also made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OA Field Manual* (ed. D Wilkinson, 1992).

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 The stratigraphy observed was similar within all the recorded sections and a generalised description can be applied throughout.
- 3.1.2 In the excavations at the south-eastern end of the site (Fig. 2, sections 3 and 4) a layer of fine green-grey sand (4) was encountered at a depth of 0.85 m below the original ground level. Overlying this, and appearing in the base of the other excavations (Fig. 2, sections 1 and 2) was a layer of orange brown coarse sand (3) 0.3 m deep. This was overlaid by a layer of pale yellow-brown silt sand (2) measuring between 0.2 m and 0.3 m in depth. This was sealed by a layer of light brown sandy loam (1), between 0.05 m and 0.3 m deep, the original garden soil. This layer had been truncated by machine stripping within the centre of the development area (Fig. 3, section 4), but retained its full depth elsewhere.

### 3.2 **Finds**

- 3.2.1 No dating evidence or artefacts were recovered during the course of the watching brief.

### 3.3 **Palaeo-environmental remains**

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were observed during the course of the watching brief.

## 4 **DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS**

- 4.1.1 The watching brief produced no fresh evidence of activity or occupation within the area under observation. The excavations all showed a layer of post-medieval worked (garden) soil overlying layers of naturally occurring sand.
- 4.1.2 Positioning a plan of the 2007 excavations relative to the 2003 evaluation, Trench 3 (Fig. 2), showed that any possible continuation of the features observed within the evaluation trench were outside the location of the foundation excavations.



## APPENDICES

## APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

<i>Context</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Depth</i>	<i>Width</i>	<i>Comments</i>	<i> Finds</i>	<i>Date</i>
1	Layer	0.05 m - 0.3 m	-	Old garden soil	-	Post-medieval
2	Layer	0.2 m - 0.3 m	-	Natural sand, some bio-perturbation	-	-
3	Layer	0.15 m - 0.3 m	-	Natural sand	-	-
4	Layer	> 0.25 m	-	Natural sand	-	-

## APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

IFA, 2001 *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*

OA, 1992 *Field Manual* (ed. D. Wilkinson)

OA, 2007 *3 Austyn's Place, Ewell, Surrey: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Investigation*

## APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

**Site name:** 3 Austyn's Place, Ewell, Surrey

**Site code:** GHO2007

**Grid reference:** TQ 220 627

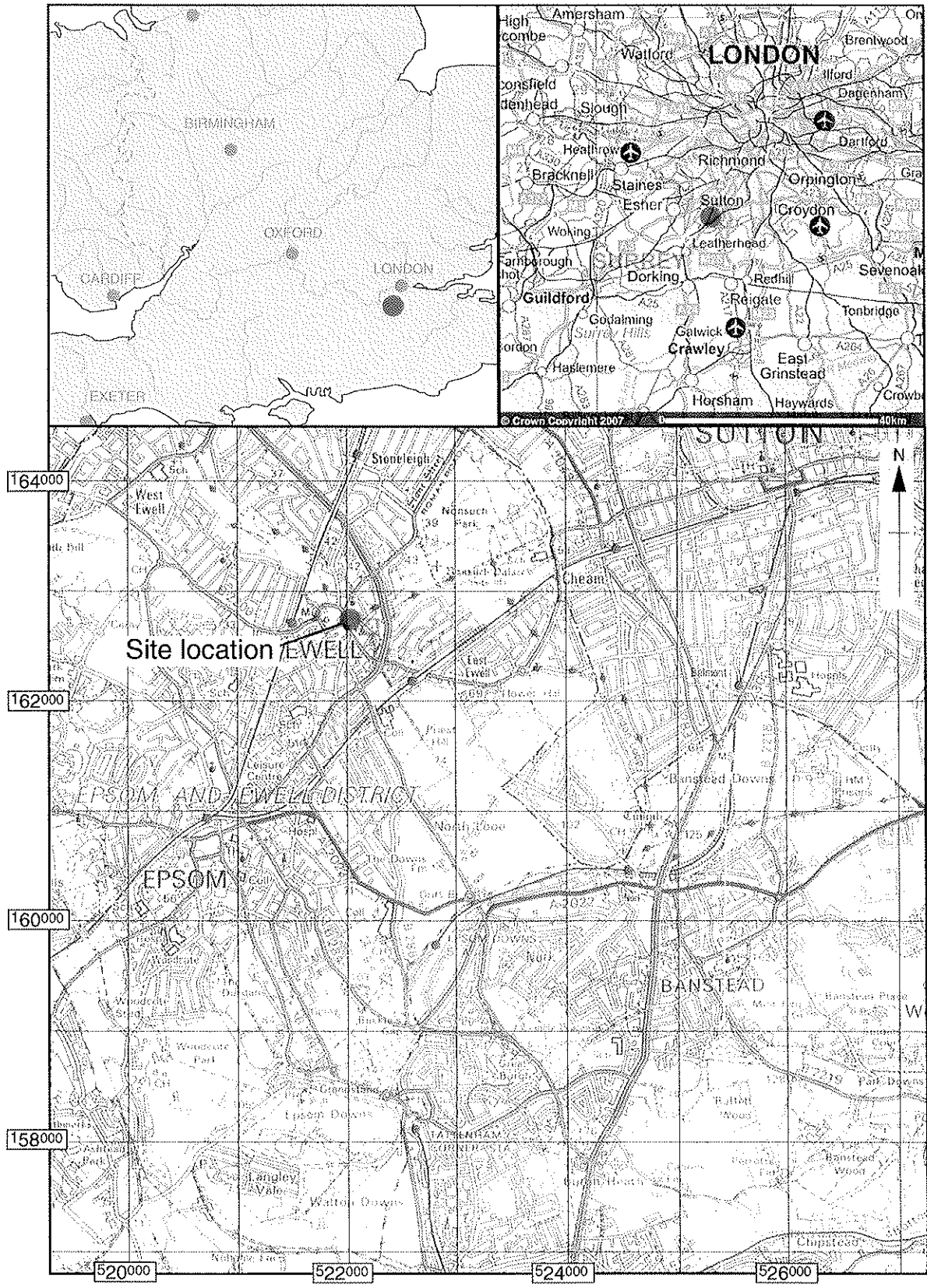
**Type of watching brief:** Hand excavation of foundation trenches for a garden room

**Date and duration of project:** 6/6/07, One day

**Area of site:** 35 m<sup>2</sup>

**Summary of results:** The watching brief revealed layers of post-medieval worked soil overlying natural sand deposits. No continuation of the archaeology recorded during the 2003 evaluation was observed.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Bourne Hall Museum in due course, under the following accession number: GHO2007.



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Figure 1: Site location



### Plan of excavations (and 2003 excavations)

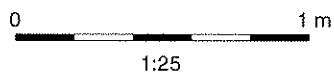
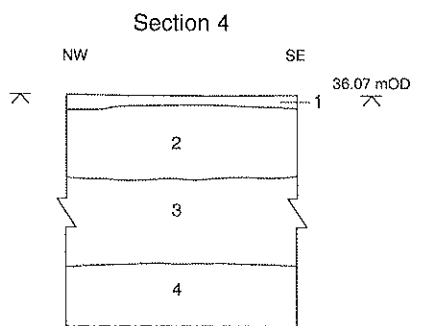
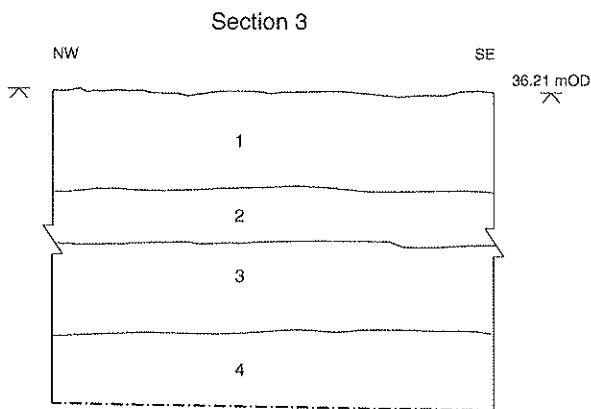
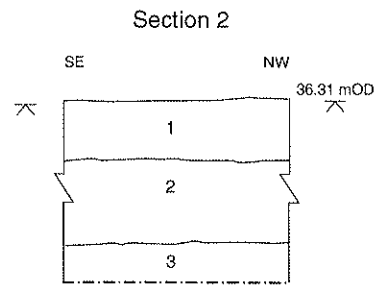
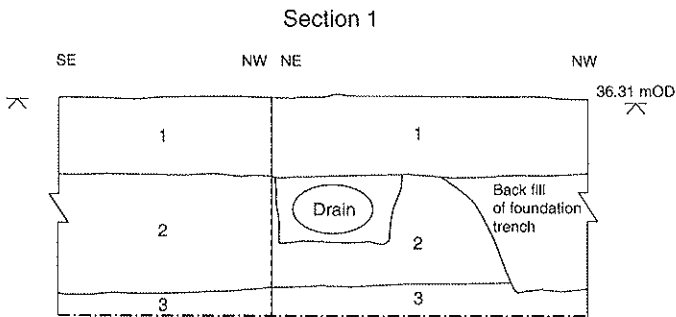
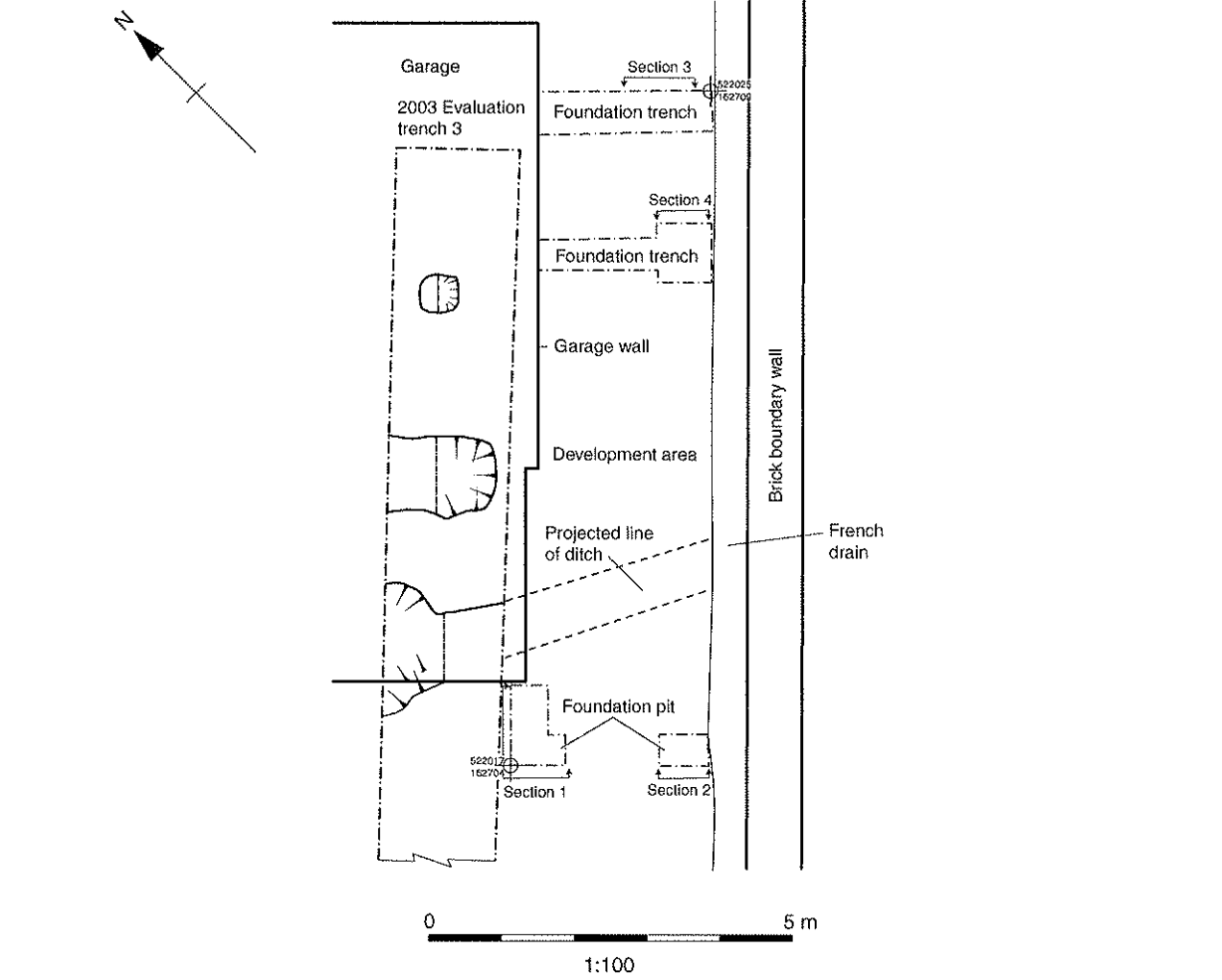


Figure 2: Site plan and sections





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