

Land to the rear of
55 Castle Street
Trowbridge
Wiltshire



**Archaeological
Watching Brief Report**



Oxford Archaeology

March 2005

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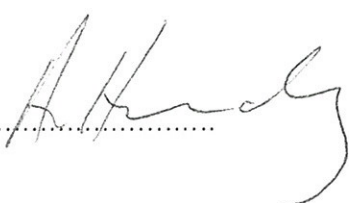
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Land rear of 55 Castle Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire***ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT*****CONTENTS**

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SUMMARY

In February 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at land to the rear of 55 Castle Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire (NGR ST 856 578). The work was commissioned by Food Convertors Ltd in advance of the construction of two flats. The watching brief revealed no archaeological deposits or features.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 In February 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 55 Castle Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Food Convertors Ltd in respect of a planning application for the construction of two flats (Planning Application No. 04/01831/FUL).
- 1.1.2 A project brief was set by Sue Farr, the Assistant Archaeological Officer for Wiltshire County Archaeological Service (WCAS 2005).
- 1.1.3 OA prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) detailing how it would meet the requirements of the brief (OA 2005).

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The site is located to the rear of No 55 Castle Street, immediately to the south of the centre of Trowbridge. The site is bounded to the north, south and west by residential properties and to the east by an access road to the rear of the castle shopping centre (Fig. 2). The site lies at approximately 42 m OD and the underlying geology comprises brashy calcareous fine loams formed from a parent Jurassic Limestone.

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 2005) and is reproduced below.
- 1.3.2 The Extensive Urban Survey for Trowbridge has shown the proposed development area to be within a late medieval settlement area. An earthwork motte and bailey castle was constructed on the site of the Saxo-Norman manorial enclosure and accompanying settlement in or before 1139. Following the disuse and gradual dereliction of the castle, organic settlement developed in five discrete areas around the fringes of the planned core of the town (McMahon 2001). The proposed development area is positioned in one of these areas and it was considered likely that important information on the origins and early development of the town exist on the site.

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 site had been cleared of the garden outbuildings and the ground surface was reduced and levelled by approximately 0.20 m in depth. The foundations were then marked out and excavated with a small excavator using a 0.7 m wide bucket. This was carried out under archaeological supervision.
- 2.2.2 All archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:50 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* (OAU 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits (Fig. 3)

- 3.1.1 The foundation trenches were 0.7 m wide and excavated to a depth of 1.5 m below the surface. These cut into the natural yellowish brown clay (3) with patches of grey clay. Overlying this was a 0.2 m thick layer of mid brown silty clay (2) sub-soil with charcoal inclusions, which was sealed below a 0.1 m thick very dark grey brown (1) cultivated garden soil (Fig. 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 No archaeological features or deposits were uncovered during the watching brief. The natural clay was 0.3 m below the surface and was covered by a thin layer of subsoil (2), which in turn was sealed below a 0.3 m thick well cultivated topsoil (1) from the gardens at the rear of the properties fronting onto Castle Street.
- 4.1.2 This would suggest that the site was in the cultivated and less archaeologically disturbed area of the medieval burghage plots, the main area of occupation for these plots being along the frontage of Castle Street.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

| <i>Context</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Depth</i> | <i>Width</i> | <i>Height</i> | <i>Comments</i> | <i>Finds</i> |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------|--------------|
| 1 | Layer | 0.1 m | | | cultivated garden soil | |
| 2 | Layer | 0.2 m | | | subsoil | |
| 3 | Natural | | | | Natural clay | |

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

OA 2005 *Land at rear of 55 Castle Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire* Written Scheme of Investigation

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

WCAS, 2005 *Land at rear of 55 Castle Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire: Design Brief for an Archaeological Watching Brief*

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: Land rear of 55 Castle Street, Trowbridge, Wiltshire

Site code: TROCA 05

Grid reference: NGR ST 856 578

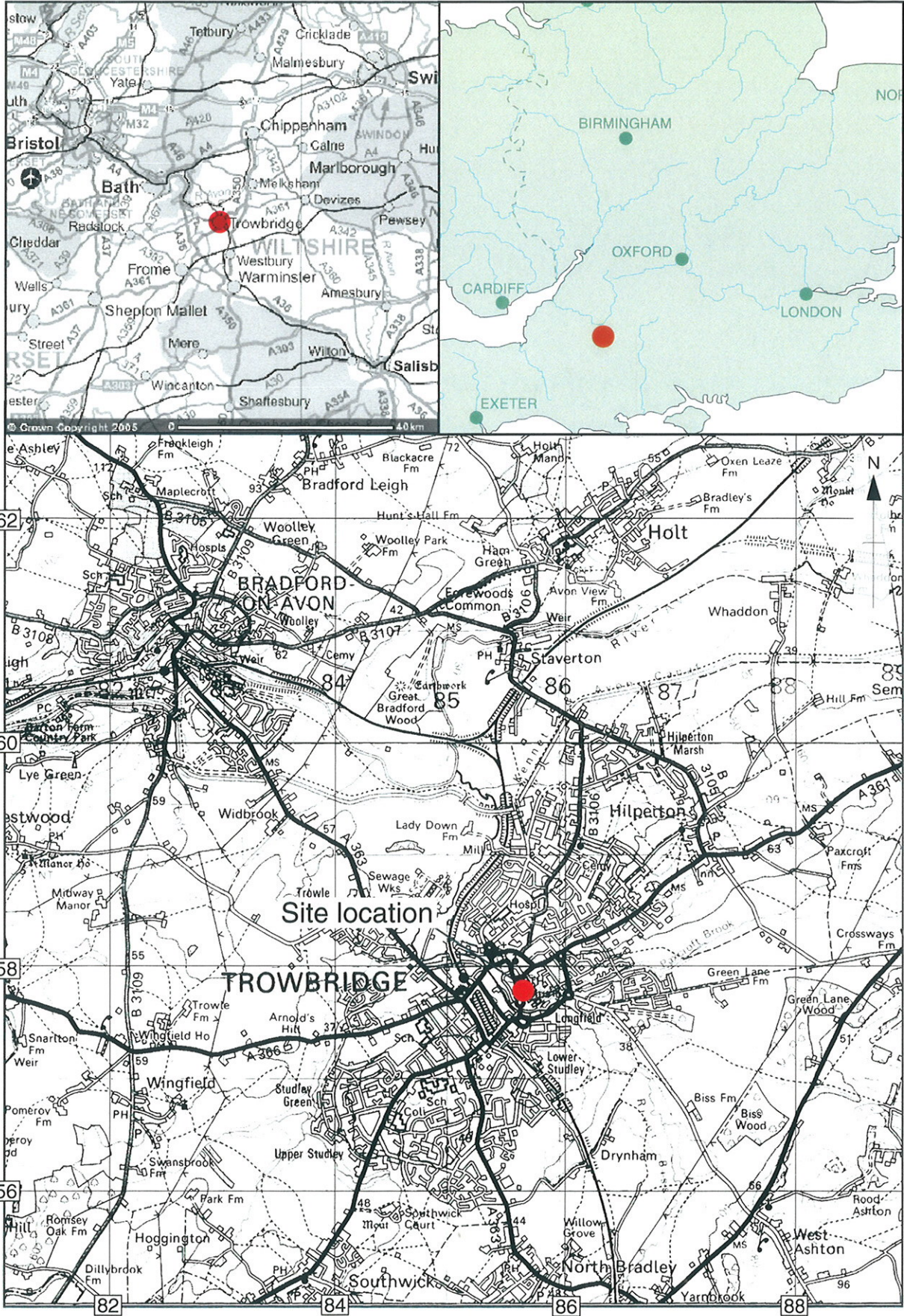
Type of watching brief: Ground works for the construction of a two flat residential development.

Date and duration of project: One day on the 20th February 2005.

Area of site: 13 m x 9 m

Summary of results: No archaeological deposits or features were uncovered during the watching brief.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Trowbridge Museum in due course, under the following accession number: 1560



Scale 1:50,000

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Figure 1: Site location

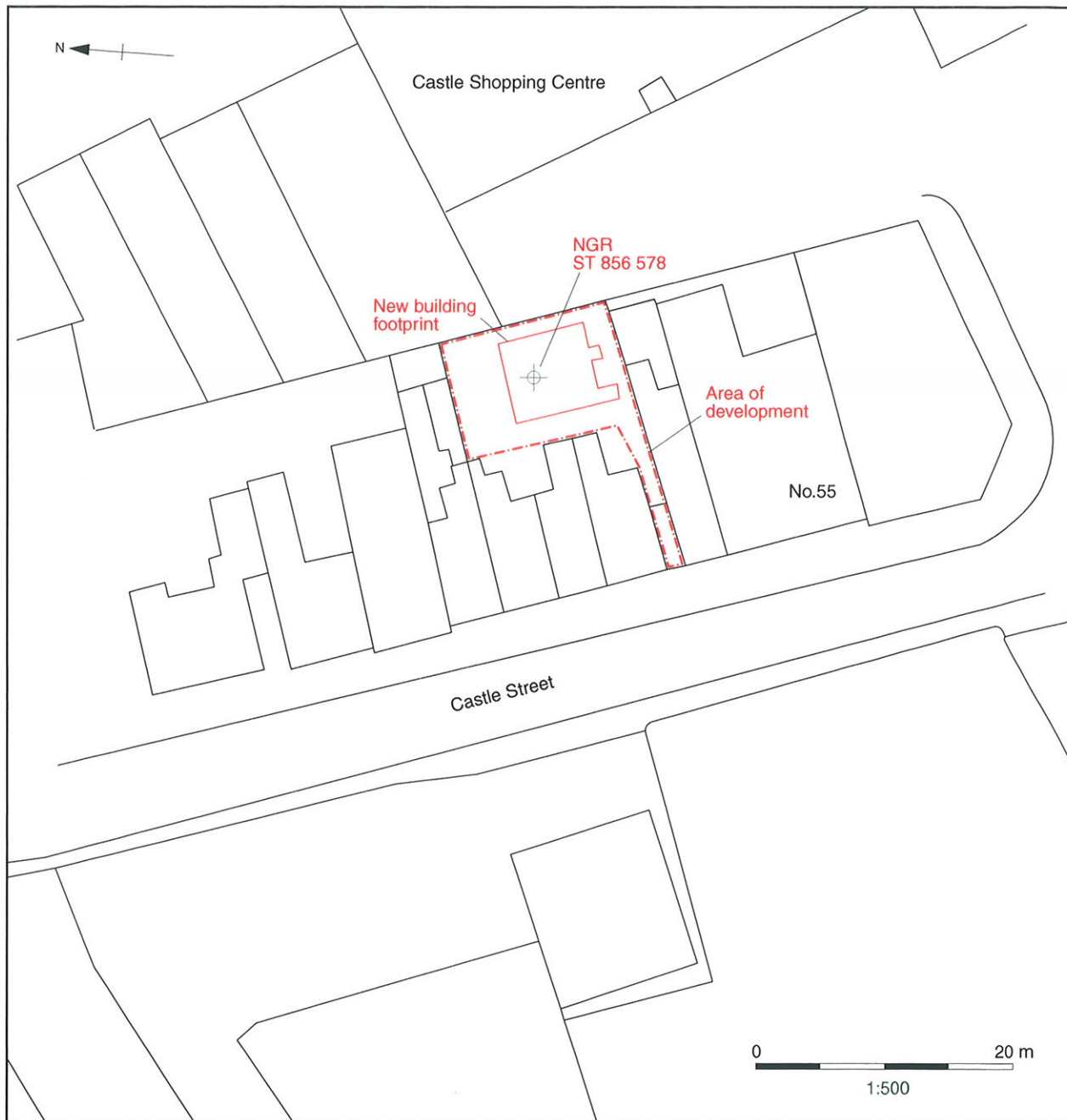
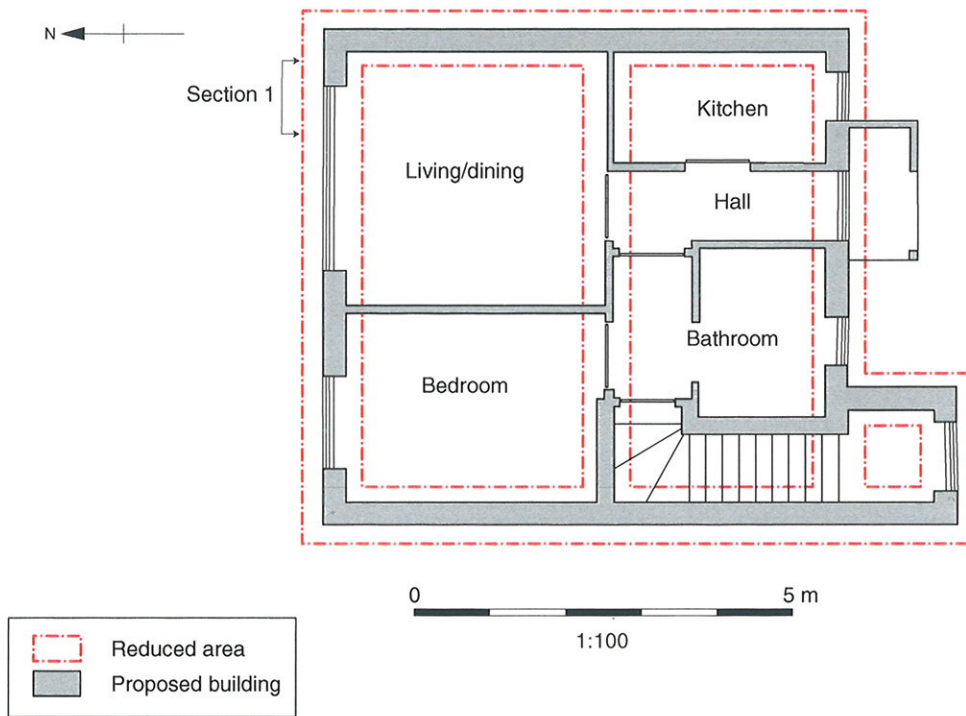


Figure 2: Location of Development



0 5 m
1:100

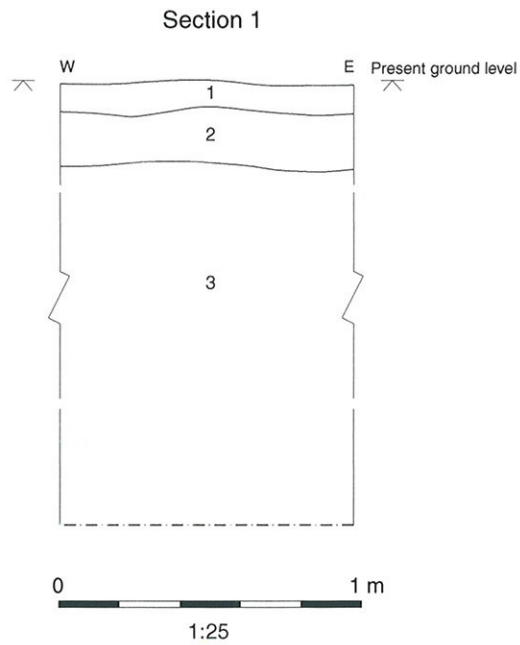
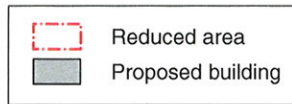


Figure 3: Development footprint showing reduced area in plan and section



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