

Lashbrook House, Mill Lane, Shiplake, Oxon.

SU 7775 7909

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Oxford Archaeological Unit
January 1997

LASHBROOK HOUSE,
MILL LANE, SHIPLAKE, OXON
SU 7775 7909

CONTENTS

SUMMARY	1
INTRODUCTION	1
LOCATION	1
GEOLOGY	1
ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND	2
STRATEGY	2
RESULTS	2
CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATION OF THE METHODOLOGY	3
APPENDIX 1: Table of contexts	
LIST OF FIGURES	
Fig. 1 Location of site	
Fig. 2 Location of new building	
Fig. 3 Sample section	

OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

JAN. 1997

LASHBROOK HOUSE,
MILL LANE, SHIPLAKE, OXON

SU 7775 7909

SUMMARY

A watching brief during construction work for a nursing home at Lashbrook House revealed no archaeological features or finds. A former ploughsoil was observed, which was truncated by modern disturbance. A circular brick-lined well and boundary wall are probably associated the 19th/20th century phase of Lashbrook House.

INTRODUCTION

The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) undertook a watching brief during the construction of a nursing home at Lashbrook House in Shiplake in January and February 1996. The development was undertaken by Delta Developments Ltd and the construction work by Jex Construction Ltd.

LOCATION (see Fig. 1)

The 1.21 hectare area under development is situated immediately east of Lashbrook Farm and just east of Mill Lane. The Lashbrook runs along the western side of Lashbrook House and the railway runs just beyond the eastern boundary.

The work consists of the conversion of Lashbrook House and the construction of a new building to form a 48 bed nursing home. The new wing comprises an area of approximately 550 square metres.

GEOLOGY

The site is situated on the edge of the gravel terrace. The river Thames is situated 300 metres from the site and at the eastern boundary of the site the ground drops steeply down to the floodplain.

Lashbrook House, Shiplake, Oxon

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The proposal is near to a number of known sites recorded in the Oxfordshire County Sites and Monuments Record :

- (1) Immediately to the south a cropmark indicates a sub-rectangular enclosure of unknown date (PRN 2161; SU 7780 7890).
- (2) In 1907 a site produced Roman remains which was located 300 metres to the south west of the development (PRN 2077; SU 7738 7882) (see Fig. 1).
- (3) Palaeolithic and Neolithic implements have been found to the south of Shiplake (see Fig 1).
- (4) A Saxon cemetery is situated within Lower Shiplake itself at SU 772795. Two cremation urns are now extant from 'saxon remains' recorded in 1949 and which probably date to the 6th century AD (T. Dickinson 1976).

STRATEGY

Due to the presence of Archaeological sites in the vicinity, an archaeological watching brief was required by the County Archaeological Officer in accordance with PPG16. The Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services prepared a brief for the work (P95/SO214).

The archaeological monitoring objectives were to maintain a watching brief during topsoil stripping and the excavation of the building foundation trenches and service trenches.

RESULTS (see Fig. 2 & Fig. 3)

For dimensions of deposits, features and trenches see Appendix 1.

The building foundations were excavated with a small Kubota (tracked excavator) and were generally 0.70m wide and between 1.10m and 1.40m in depth. The northern half of the site was heavily disturbed by modern material which truncated the natural gravel.

An earlier soil was recorded in the foundation trench immediately to the east of Lashbrook House. This reddish brown sandy silt (102) was between 0.25 and 0.30m thick. The silt had a fairly 'clean' appearance apart from the occasional charcoal fleck.

Further topsoil stripping within the footprint of new building exposed a small area of natural sandy gravel in the far south-east of the building footprint. The fact that layer 102 was not removed across the majority of the area, however meant no archaeological features

Lashbrook House, Shiplake, Oxon

were observed within the area of the new building. The foundation of an old brick boundary wall ran approximately east west across the site. To the north of this the topsoil stripping exposed a circular brick lined well. Two brick courses were visible and the inside was filled with rubble; the internal diameter measured 1.4m.

No archaeological finds were recovered from the site and finds which were clearly of modern date were not collected.

CONCLUSIONS AND CONSIDERATION OF THE METHODOLOGY

No archaeological features were revealed during the construction work. The only features noted were the foundation of an old boundary wall and a brick-lined well. Both these features are likely to be Victorian or later in date (a date stone on Lashbrook House records a date of 1856).

There is potential for undisclosed archaeological features; especially in the southern half of the building's footprint for the following reasons:

- (1) The presence of an earlier soil in the southern area of the building footprint masked any potential archaeological features.
- (2) The small width of the foundation trenches and the depth (in excess of 1m) did not allow access to most of the trenches for Health and Safety reasons; although in the northern half of the site the modern disturbance was self evident from the surface.
- (3) The foundation trenches in the southern end and west side of the new building were filled with concrete shortly after excavation and so could not be monitored; however the spoil from the trenches indicates this area was less disturbed than the northern half of the site.

The site archive will be deposited with the Oxfordshire Museum Service.

References:

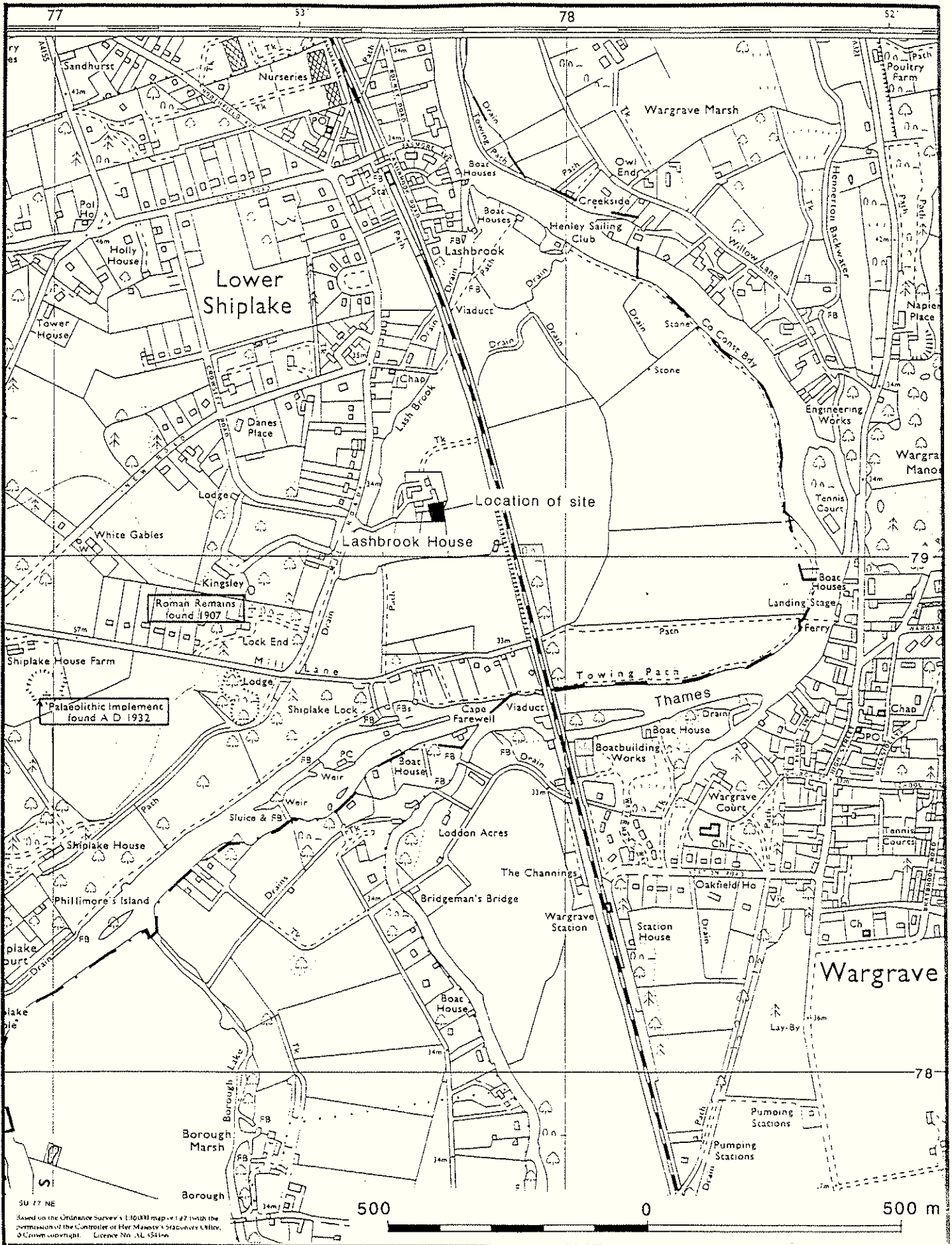
Dickinson Tania M. 'The Anglo-Saxon Burial Sites of the Upper Thames Region and their bearing on the history of Wessex circa AD400-700 Vol. II 179 (Oxford D. Phil. thesis unpublished).

OAU
A Parkinson
JAN 1997

Lashbrook House, Shiplake, Oxon

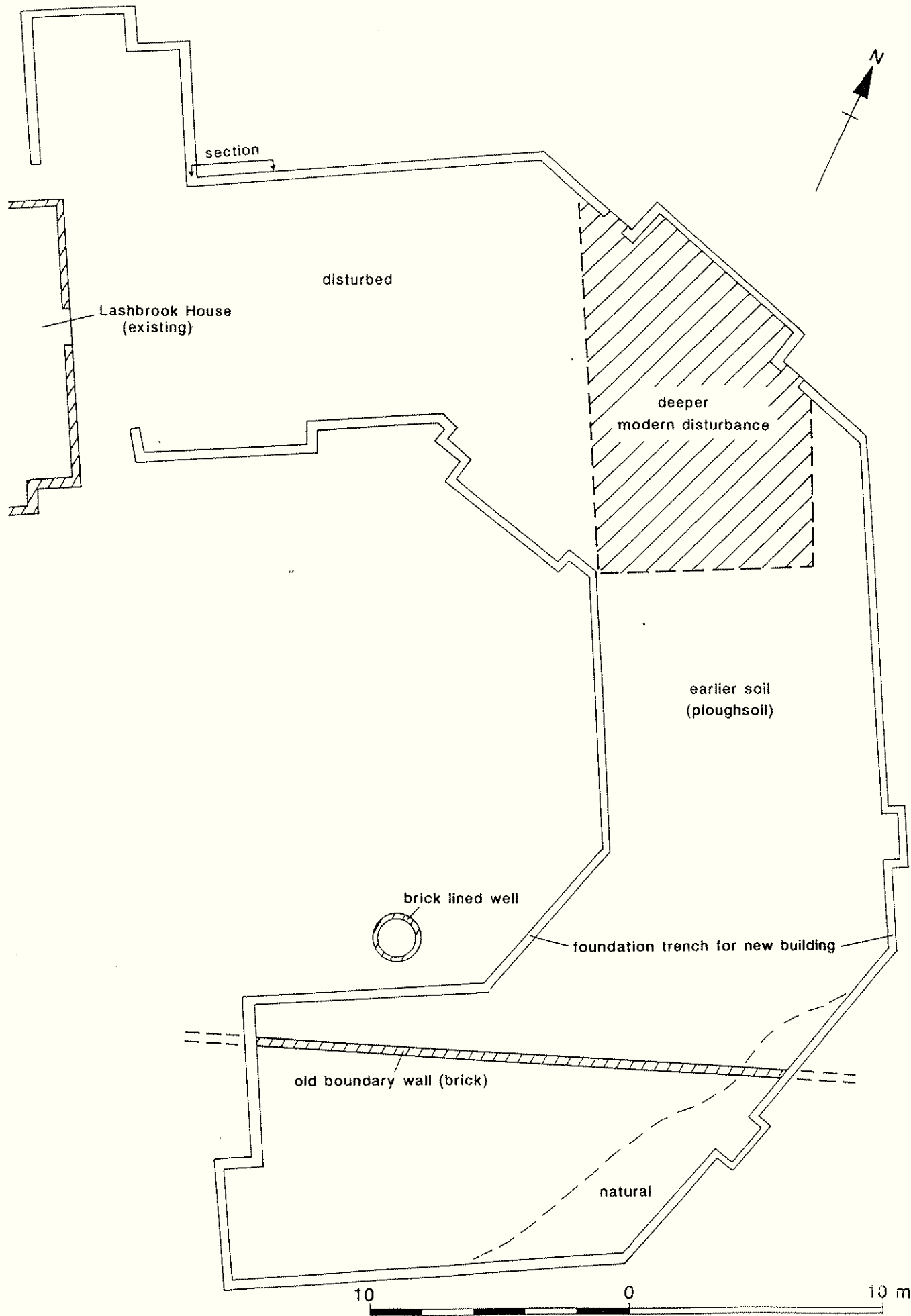
APPENDIX 1: Table of Contexts and Finds

LASHBROOK HOUSE, SHIPLAKE, OXON (SHLH 96)						
SU 7775 7909						
Context	Type	Depth (m)	Length (m)	Width (m)	Comments	Finds
101	Layer	0.60-1.10	-	-	Modern rubble	
102	Layer	0.25-0.30	-	-	Ploughsoil	
103	Layer	-	-	-	Natural sand and gravel	



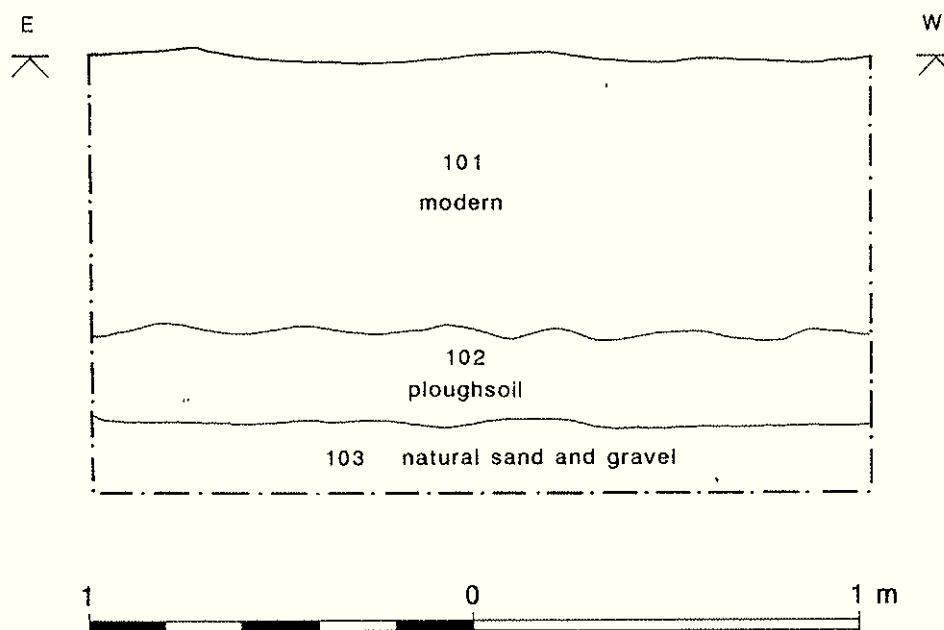
Location of site

figure 1



Plan of area for new building

figure 2



Sample section



OXFORD ARCHAEOLOGICAL UNIT

Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES
Telephone: 01865 243888 Fax: 01865 793496



Director: David Miles B.A., F.S.A., M.I.F.A.
Oxford Archaeological Unit Limited. Registered Office: Janus House, Osney Mead
Registered Charity Number: 285627 Private Limited Company Number: 1618597