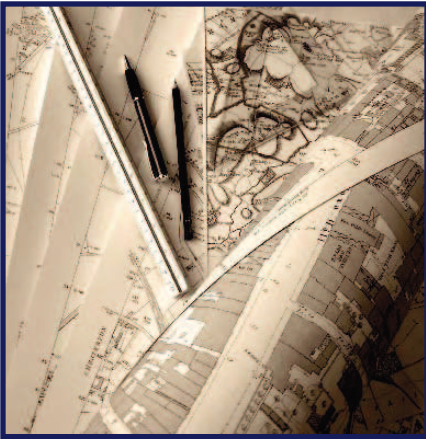
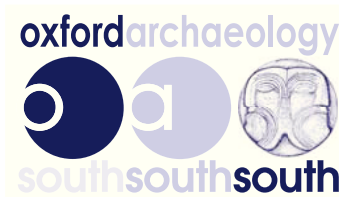


The Old Vicarage

Wormleighton



Archaeological Strip Map and Sample Report



April 2012

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1	Brian Dean Project Officer	Katrina Anker Project Officer	Edward Biddulph Senior Project Manager	

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Janus House

Osney Mead

Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263800

e: oasouth@thehumanjourney.net

f: +44 (0) 1865 793496

w: oasouth.thehumanjourney.net

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The Old Vicarage, Wormleighton, Warwickshire

Archaeological Strip, Map and Sample Report

Written by Brian Dean

and illustrated by Julia Collins

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Summary

On 14th March 2012 Oxford Archaeology, on behalf of Angela Collins, carried out a strip, map and sample excavation on the site of a proposed swimming pool at The Old Vicarage, Wormleighton, Warwickshire. The excavations revealed no archaeological deposits within the footprint of the swimming pool. The area, however, did demonstrate a degree of landscaping which may have previously impacted on any underlying archaeology.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 On the 14th of March 2012, Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out a strip, map and sample excavation during development associated with the construction of a new swimming pool at The Old Vicarage, Wormleighton, Warwickshire (Fig. 1). The archaeological strip, map and sample was carried out as per the agreed Written Scheme of Investigation (OA 2012)
- 1.1.2 The new swimming pool and associated paved area was to be situated in an area to the west of the existing house (Fig. 2). The strip, map and sample area was focused upon the 65m² footprint of the pool (a 12m x 4m footprint, with an additional 0.5m 'engineering' impact). Additional works associated with paving around the pool area were not monitored as construction depths would not exceed 250mm in depth and as demonstrated in the swimming pool footprint excavation, would not impact upon any potential archaeological horizon.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

- 1.2.1 The site is situated in the administrative district of Stratford-on-Avon in the county of Warwickshire.
- 1.2.2 The area of proposed development is part of the gardens associated with The Old Vicarage. The gardens appeared to have been landscaped in the past, with some light terracing apparent. The site is located at c 153m OD.
- 1.2.3 The geology of the area is boulder clay and lower lias clay deposits of the 2nd terrace (BGS solid and drift edition Sheet 2 1:50,000, 1982).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The parish of Wormleighton dates to at least the 10th century when the boundaries were set out in the 956 AD charter of King Eadwy (VCH 1949).
- 1.3.2 The site and current village lies within the probable extent of the medieval settlement at Wormleighton (Warwickshire Historic Environment Record MWA 8995) and as such there is potential for deposits associated with this settlement to survive (WCC 2012). The settlement, deserted by the early 16th century, is still visible today on aerial photographs and consists of earthworks including moats, ditches, banks, fish-ponds, and ridge and furrow. Although the main focus of this activity appears to be situated c 600m north-west of the site, ridge and furrow can clearly be seen in the fields immediately west of the site.



- 1.3.3 The Manor House, situated 100m north east of the site, is listed Grade II* and dates from around 1512. It was built by John Spencer to replace the 'sory thached hows', he found on the estate, and has undergone extensive remodelling and repairs, with the majority of the house having been destroyed during the Cromwellian wars (VCH 1949).
- 1.3.4 The Old Vicarage dates from the late 18th to early 19th century and is listed Grade II. The building and grounds appear on the 1884-1886 1:2500 Ordnance Survey map and appear to have changed little up to the present day.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 The general aims of the project were:

- (i) Preserve by record any archaeological deposits, structures or features encountered;
- (ii) Seek to establish the extent, nature and date of any archaeological deposits, structures or features encountered;
- (iii) Secure the analysis, conservation and long-term storage of any artefactual/ecofactual material recovered from the site;
- (iv) Disseminate results through the production of a unpublished client (grey literature) report and, if appropriate, published in an appropriate journal (including an account of any structures, and full details of significant finds).

2.2 Specific aims and objectives

2.2.1 The specific aims and objectives of the Strip, Map and Sample were:

- (i) Contribute to an understanding of the medieval and later settlement of the area, and understand the date, nature, function and character of the archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

2.3 Methodology

- 2.3.1 The full footprint of the swimming pool was subject to a topsoil strip by a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.3.2 Given the high potential for significant archaeological remains associated with the deserted medieval settlement to be present within the development area, following the removal of the topsoil, a 13m by 1.6m evaluation trench was excavated along one edge of the swimming footprint in order to limit the initial exposure of archaeological deposits. If significant archaeological remains had been present, this method would have allowed the client to decide whether to proceed with the excavation area or to preserve the remains insitu and relocate the swimming pool to a less significant area.
- 2.3.3 As no archaeological remains were present, the remainder of the swimming pool footprint was excavated to the first archaeological horizon, construction depth or the geological horizon, whichever was encountered first.
- 2.3.4 The exposed deposits were recorded in drawn and written form. A black and white film and digital photographic record was maintained.



3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 No archaeological remains were encountered within the footprint of the swimming pool (Fig. 3, plan 100).
- 3.1.2 The area under investigation comprised the modern topsoil deposit of friable dark greyish brown clayey silt (100) to a depth of between 0.4m and 0.5m. Below this was a layer of a firm mid yellowish brown silty clay (101) which was 0.4m thick. This deposit was primarily located at the south-western end of the excavation and appeared to represent an imported deposit associated with the modern landscaping around the Old Vicarage (Plate 1).
- 3.1.3 Below layer 101 was a compact mid-dark greyish brown clay (102) of up to 0.2m thick. This layer was present sporadically throughout the excavation area and may represent remnant ploughsoil truncated by modern landscaping (Fig. 3, section 100).
- 3.1.4 The underlying geology within the excavation area was a compact mid reddish brown sandy clay with patches of mid blueish grey clay (103).
- 3.1.5 The southwestern end of the trench was on very level ground which differed in character from the surrounding landscape. There was a marked upward break of slope towards the northeastern end of the trench, consistent with the surrounding landscape terracing. The north-west facing section of the pool excavation cut through this terrace and a deposit of firm mid-dark brown grey silty clay (104) raised the ground level in this area by up to 0.52m. The deposit was interpreted as modern. However no finds were recovered to confirm this hypothesis (Plate 2).
- 3.1.6 Situated at the north-eastern end of the swimming pool footprint was a ring of round, modern timber stakes, visible immediately below the topsoil (Plate 3). The ring was c 2.5m in diameter with the posts extending to approximately 1m below the current ground level. The posts appeared to act as a retaining wall within a pit, which had subsequently been backfilled with earth. A layer of gravel, probably for drainage, was present within the timber ring at a depth of approximately 0.8m below current ground level. The pit cut into the level of the natural geology and as such, any archaeological remains within this small area may have been truncated away. The groundworkers identified the pit as a trampoline pit. Recent aerial photographs of the site show a trampoline located within this area (<http://maps.google.co.uk>).
- 3.1.7 No archaeological remains were visible within the exposed natural geology (Plate 4). Despite areas of localised flooding from the watertable and land-drains, viability throughout the excavation remained good.

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No artefactual evidence was recovered during excavation.

3.3 Environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits of environmental value were observed during the excavation.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The strip, map and sample exercise demonstrated that no archaeological remains are present within the footprint of the new swimming pool. There is some evidence



suggesting that the area has previously been remodelled which may have resulted in disturbance of any potential archaeological remains. No artefacts were observed or recovered from the development area.

- 4.1.2 No evidence was recovered for any features or artefacts associated with the deserted medieval settlement to the north-west of the site.



APPENDIX A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Depth (m)	Width (m)	Length (m)	Comments	Finds	Date
100	Layer	0.4-0.5	-	-	Clayey silt topsoil	-	-
101	Layer	0.4	-	-	Silty clay subsoil	-	-
102	Layer	0.2	-	-	Clay subsoil/landscape deposit	-	-
103	Layer	-	-	-	Boulder clay and lias clay	-	-
104	Layer	-	-	3m	Silty clay make up layer	-	-



APPENDIX B. BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

WCC 2012. Brief for Archaeological Field Evaluation. Warwickshire County Council.

OA 2012 The Old Vicarage, Wormleighton, Southam. Written Scheme of Investigation for a Strip, Map and Sample. Oxford Archaeology

VCH 1949 A History of the County of Warwick: Volume 5: Kington hundred, pp 218-224. Victoria County History.



APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name:	The Old Vicarage, Wormleighton, Warwickshire
Site code:	SOWV 12
Grid reference:	Centred at NGR SOP 488 537
Type of watching brief:	Watching brief/strip, map and sample during excavation for the installation of a swimming pool.
Date and duration of project:	14/03/2012 for one day
Area of site:	99.82m ² (including area of topsoil strip)
Summary of results:	<i>On 14th March 2012 Oxford Archaeology, on behalf of Angela Collins, carried out a strip, map and sample excavation on the site of a proposed swimming pool at The Old Vicarage, Wormleighton, Southam. The excavation revealed no archaeological deposits within the footprint of the swimming pool. The did, however, demonstrate a degree of landscaping which may have truncated any underlying archaeological remains. Patches of possible former topsoil, truncated by previous landscaping, were also observed sporadically across the area.</i>
Location of archive:	The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead Oxford, OX20ES and will be deposited with the appropriate receiving museum (TBC) in due course under the following accession number: (TBC)

Plates



Plate 1: Contexts 100, 101, 102 and 103



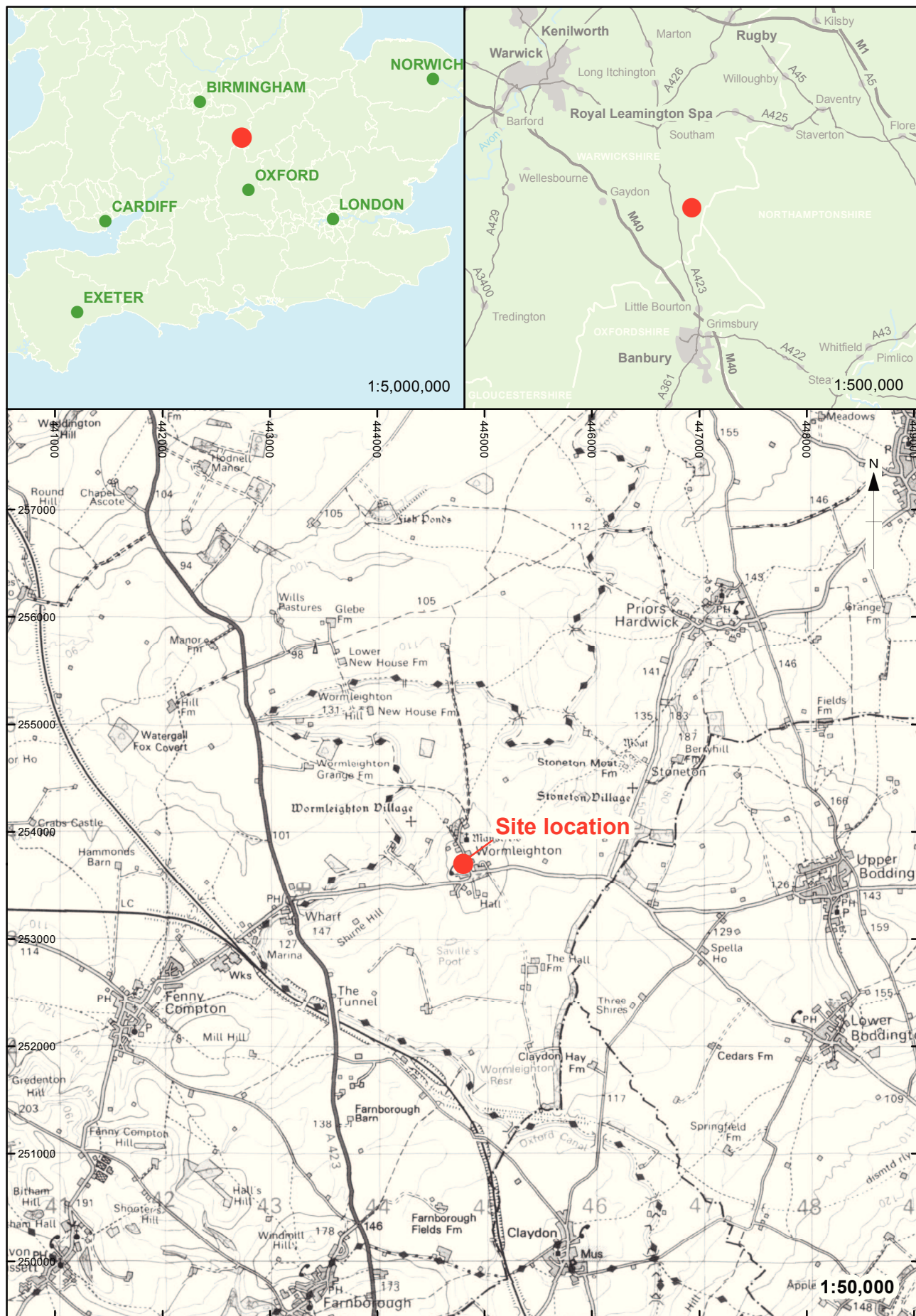
Plate 2: North-west facing section through terrace



Plate 3: Trampoline pit, looking west



Plate 4: Swimming pool footprint excavated to natural geology



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Figure 1: Site location

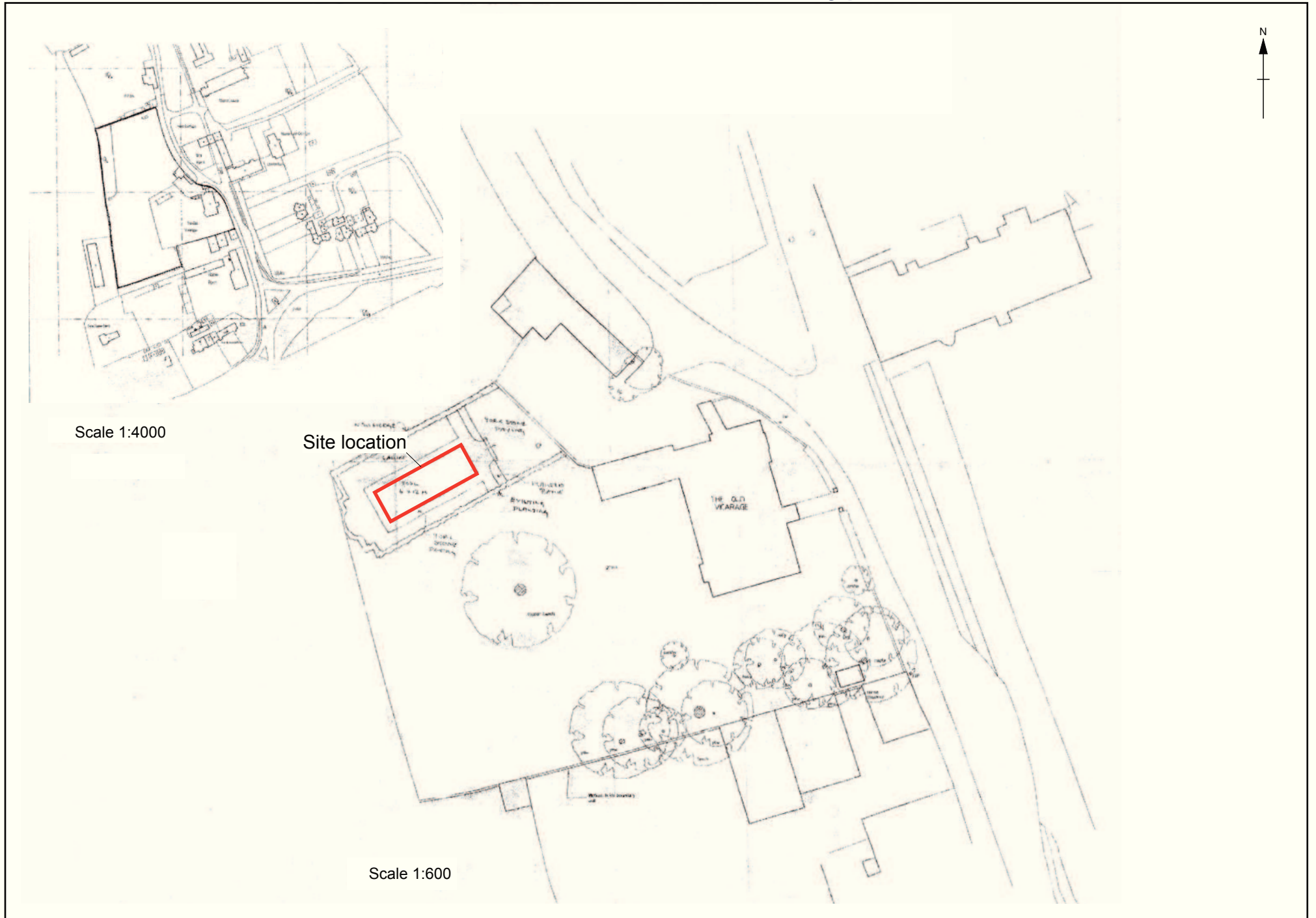
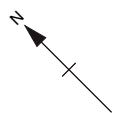
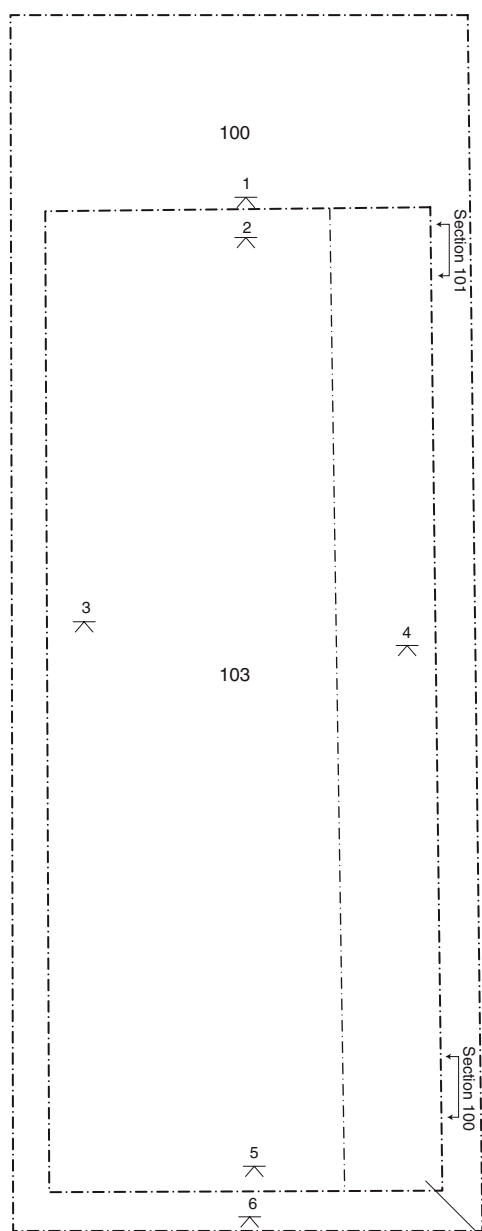


Figure 2: Site plan



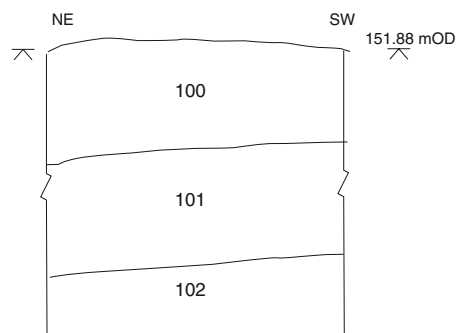
Plan 100



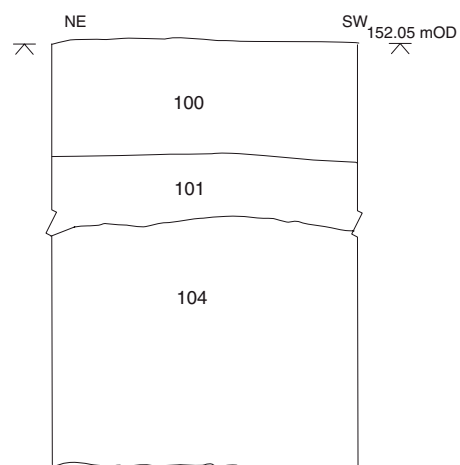
Levels	
1	152.11
2	150.77
3	150.80
4	150.70
5	150.98
6	151.88



Section 100



Section 101



Location of evaluation trench



Figure 3: Excavation plan and sections



**Head Office/Registered Office/
OA South**

Janus House
Osney Mead
Oxford OX2 0ES

t: +44 (0) 1865 263 800
f: +44 (0) 1865 793 496
e: info@oxfordarch.co.uk
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA North

Mill 3
Moor Lane
Lancaster LA1 1GF

t: +44 (0) 1524 541 000
f: +44 (0) 1524 848 606
e: [oanorth@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oanorth@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>

OA East

15 Trafalgar Way
Bar Hill
Cambridgeshire
CB23 8SQ

t: +44 (0) 1223 850 500
f: +44 (0) 1223 850 599
e: [oaeast@thehumanjourney.net](mailto: oaeast@thehumanjourney.net)
w: <http://thehumanjourney.net>



Director: David Jennings, BA MIFA FSA

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