

**Pump Close, 45 Abingdon Road,
Standlake, Oxfordshire**

An Archaeological Watching Brief

For Horne Building Services

by Stephen Hammond

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code PCB 02/47

January 2003

Summary

Site name: Pump Close, 45 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire

Grid reference: SP 3864 0351

Site activity: Watching Brief

Date and duration of project: 22nd January 2003

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: Stephen Hammond

Site code: PCB 02/47

Area of site: c. 1250 m sq

Summary of results: Three test pits were dug under archaeological supervision within the site boundaries. None of these produced any evidence of archaeological activity

Monuments identified: None

Location and reference of archive: The site archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 47-49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5NR and will be deposited with the Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 30.01.03
	Steve Preston✓ 30.01.03

Pump Close, 45 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire

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Report 02/47

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at Pump Close, 45 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire (SP 3864 0351) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Phil Horne, Horne Building Services, Unit 4F, New Yatt Business Centre, New Yatt, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 6TJ.

Planning permission (W2002/0131) has been granted by West Oxfordshire District Council for the demolition of an existing building on the site and the erection of two new detached houses. This permission was subject to a condition relating to archaeology. A watching brief was requested during groundworks as a result of the possibility of damage or destruction of archaeological deposits.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and the District's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Hugh Coddington, of Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service.

The fieldwork was undertaken by Stephen Hammond on the 22nd January 2003 and the site code is PCB 02/47. The site archive is currently held by Thames Valley Archaeological Services, 47–49 De Beauvoir Road, Reading, Berkshire RG1 5NR and will be deposited with the Oxfordshire Museum Service in due course.

Location, topography and geology

The site is located on the north side of Abingdon Road, Standlake approximately 250m east of the B449 Aston Road, lying at height of *c.* 67m above Ordnance Datum on a relatively flat plot of land. The geology according to the British Geological Survey (BGS 1982) is floodplain river gravel. This was confirmed by the watching brief.

Archaeological background

The site lies within the historic core of Brighthampton, a hamlet within Standlake, which according to documentary evidence existed at least as early as the later Anglo-Saxon period. An excavation to the west of the site at 'The Orchard' revealed dense medieval activity concentrated to the north of the site along the road frontage (Ford and Preston, in press). Between the 11th and 14th centuries, a building fronted the road, with pits and a cobbled surface to the rear.

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the construction of the new buildings. This was to involve examination of areas stripped of topsoil/overburden and excavation for foundation trenches, service runs and any other ground intrusive work.

Results

It was not possible to investigate the foundation trenches during groundworks. However, a photographic record was maintained by the groundworks contractor during their completion. These photographs were closely examined and failed to show any evidence of archaeological activity.

Three test pits were dug in the positions shown on Figure 3, using a 360° type excavator fitted with a toothless bucket to check for archaeology after the house had been completed. No access was available to the rear of the properties facing north-west.

Test pit 1

Test pit 1 was dug near to house plot 45a and was 1.45m x 1.40m in plan. The pit revealed 0.30m of made ground covering 0.30m of grey/brown clay/silt. This in turn overlay an orange gravelly sand natural. The pit was dug to a depth of 0.90m. Tree root disturbance was noted in the south-east section. No finds or features were discovered.

Test pit 2

Test pit 2 was dug near to house plot 45b and was 2.00m by 1.40m in plan. The pit revealed 0.30m of made ground covering 0.20m of dark grey/brown clay/silt buried topsoil. This covered 0.29m of grey/brown clay/silt with frequent gravel inclusions. Below this lay orange gravel natural. The pit was dug to a depth of 0.87m. A modern service run was noted in the north-east corner running NW–SE. No finds or features were observed.

Test pit 3

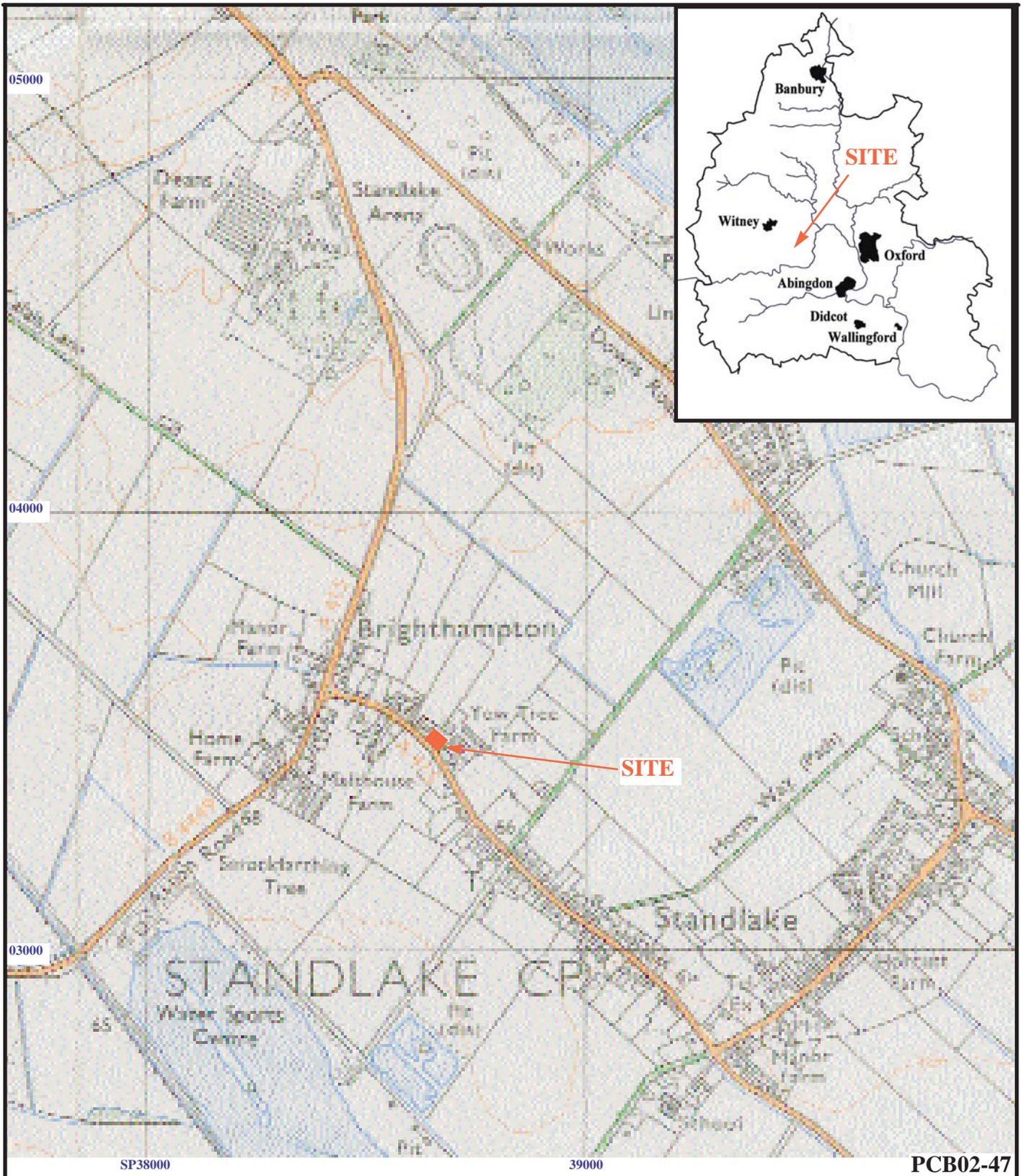
Test pit 3 was dug near to Abingdon Road towards the south-west corner of the site and was 1.70m x 1.40m in size. Observations made from the sections showed 0.30m of grey/brown silty clay with frequent gravel inclusions overlying orange/yellow sandy gravel natural. This pit was dug to depth of 0.40m. Tree root disturbance was noted in the northern end of the pit. No finds or features were noted.

Conclusion

From observations made after digging the test pits and from examining the photographic record kept during the groundworks no archaeological deposits appear to have been disturbed. In particular, no evidence was found to suggest the presence of medieval features fronting onto the north side of Abingdon Road. It is unlikely therefore that any archaeological activity has taken place on the site.

References

BGS, 1982, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50000, Sheet 236, Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
Ford, S and Preston, S (in press), 'Excavation of medieval features at The Orchard, Brighthampton, Oxfordshire'
(*Oxoniensia*)
PPG 16, 1990, *Archaeology and Planning*, Dept of the Environment Planning Policy Guidance 16, HMSO



45 Abingdon Road, Standlake, Oxfordshire, 2002

Figure 1. Location of site within Standlake and Oxfordshire.

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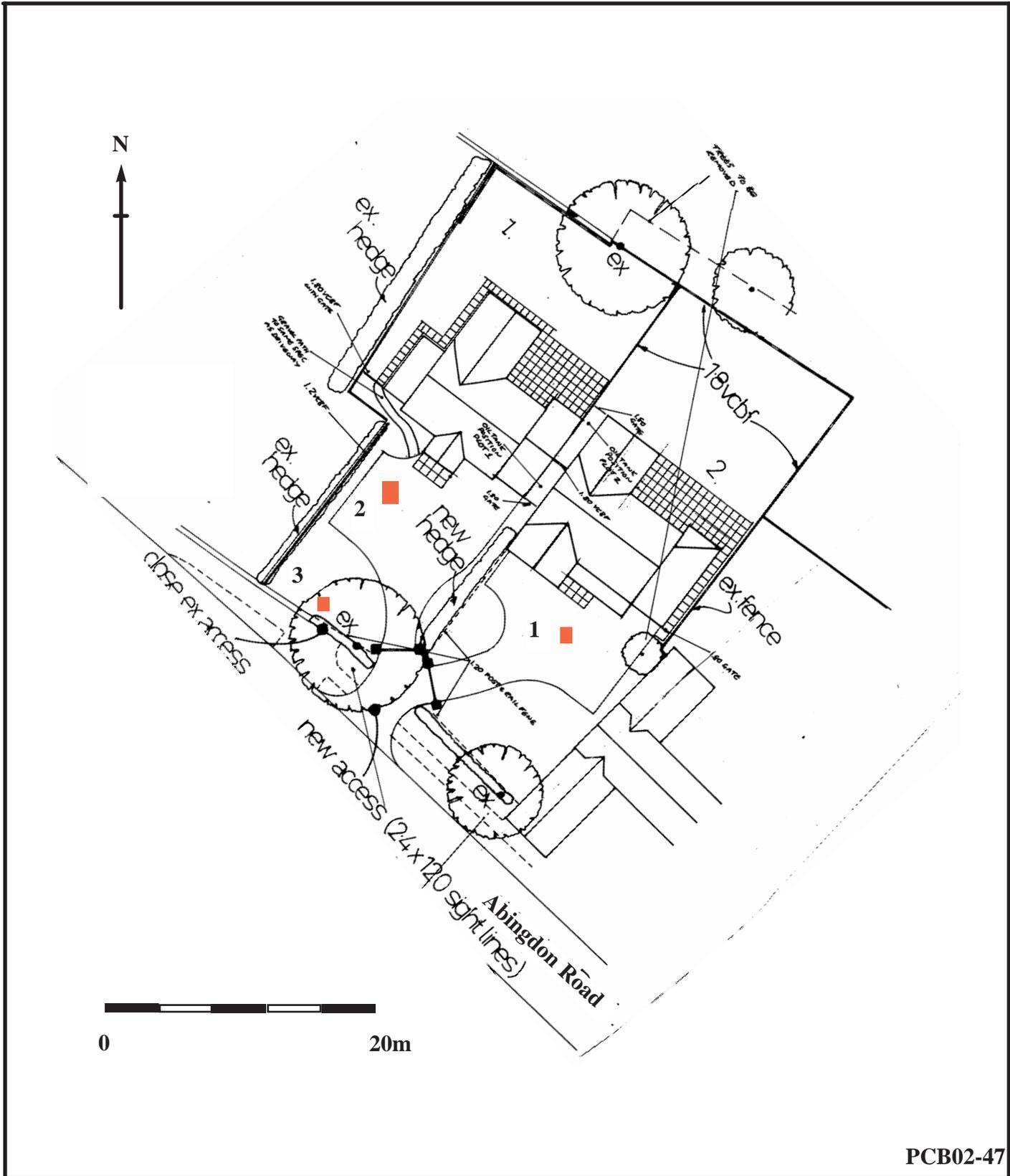


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Figure 2. Detailed location of site within Standlake.





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Figure 3. Detailed location of house plots and test pits.

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