



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
EVALUATION REPORT**

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**WINDRUSH VIEW,
LANSDOWNE, BOURTON ON
THE WATER,
GLOUCESTERSHIRE**



SEPTEMBER 2005



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EVALUATION REPORT**

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**LOCAL PLANNING AUTHORITY:
COTSWOLD DISTRICT COUNCIL**

SITE CENTRED AT: SP 16210 20995

SEPTEMBER 2005

CONTENTS

SUMMARY

- 1 INTRODUCTION
- 2 EVALUATION AIMS
- 3 METHODOLOGY
- 4 RESULTS: GENERAL
- 5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS
- 6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION
- 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Figures

Fig. 1 Site location plan	1:2500
Fig. 2 Trench location plan	1:500
Fig. 3 Plans of Trenches 1-5	1:20 (reduced)
Fig. 4 Sections 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5	1:20 (reduced)

APPENDIX 1 Report on the Romano-British pottery

TABLES Table 1: Pottery identification

PLATES Plates showing Trenches 1-5

**Archaeological Evaluation at
Windrush View, Lansdowne,
Bourton-on-the-Water**

SP 16210 20995

SUMMARY

110 Archaeology carried out a field evaluation consisting of six hand-excavated trenches each measuring approximately 1.5 m² in respect of a planning application for residential development of the site. Roman deposits were found in five trenches located in the garden area to the rear of the existing property. In each trench Roman remains dated to between the 2nd and 3rd century AD were sealed by a post-medieval cultivation soil that was in turn overlain by the modern topsoil. The remains themselves are probably related to Roman settlement deposits unearthed during excavations at Leadenwell House in the 1930s bounding the south and west side of the site and again in the 1990s when substantial excavations were carried out to the north of the site during the construction of a new housing estate and access road at Green Lane Close.

In Trench 1, a Roman surface was exposed at the base of the trench constructed from varying sizes of limestone and gravel compacted to form a yard or road layer. Many of the stones were worn through repeated use.

In Trench 2, the remains of a heavily disturbed stone wall orientated east to west was observed beneath a thick rubble layer associated with its collapse. Butting the south side of this wall was a compacted limestone and gravel floor overlain by a thin occupation layer containing Roman pottery and animal bone.

The natural substrate consisting of terrace gravel was partially observed at the base of the Trench 3 where a Roman feature, possibly a ditch was constructed with an alignment suggesting an orientation north east to south west.

In Trench 4 one side of a stone wall was partially exposed aligned north west to south east indicating the presence of a former structure. The north east side of this wall was obscured by a seemingly thick layer of material with a large component of stone rubble; some fragments burnt red.

Trench 5 revealed a series of Roman deposits and these were again exposed immediately below the post-medieval and modern layers. The latest of these was initially interpreted as the fill of a shallow pit like feature; this was partially sampled to reveal an underlying gravel surface and further Roman deposits.

Trench 6 was located near the south east corner of Windrush View, but revealed no archaeological deposits. A modern service pipe had been constructed in the east side of the trench whilst the west side was obscured by a thick layer of tarmac orientated north to south and probably associated with a former dairy

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work (Fig.1

1.1.1 This document details the results of an archaeological evaluation by 110 Archaeology on land to the rear of Windrush View, Lansdowne, Bourton-on-the-Water carried out on behalf of CgMs and their client. The site is the subject of a planning application for the erection of a single dwelling and the local authority has requested that an archaeological evaluation is carried out in order that an informed decision may be made in respect to the impact on archaeological deposits. The site (Centred at NGR SP 16210 20995) is situated on the western edge of Bourton-on-the-Water to the rear of Windrush View and covers an area measuring approximately 420 m² in extent.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site is generally flat and is situated on the north side of Lansdowne lying at about 130 m above ordnance datum (AOD). The River Windrush lies 15 m to the south. The underlying geology of the site is terrace gravel associated with the River Windrush.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The south-western part of the parish is on the Inferior Oolite (gravel) that has been extensively quarried. Most of the parish is on the Lower Lias, but along the rivers are relatively wide alluvial deposits and between the rivers are patches of river gravels. The presence of gravel is largely responsible for the early use of Bourton for human occupation and the earliest activity was Neolithic settlement features discovered in the north end on the Slaughter Bridge gravel-spread. Evidence in the

same area included a Bronze Age burial. The early Iron Age camp known as Salmonsbury Camp was built at the highest part of the vale on the largest gravel-spread between the Rivers Dickler and Windrush. It is four sided, defended by double ramparts and ditches and is 56 acres (23 ha.) in size.

- 1.3.2 Claudian pottery from soon after the Roman conquest of AD 43 is found at Salmonsbury; dense occupation continued in the camp and spread outside it.
- 1.3.3 The Fosse Way by-passes the camp by half a mile and near the crossing of the Windrush at Bourton Bridge there grew up another settlement dominated by the mansio or posting-house built beside the road, the ruins of which lie mostly under the railway embankment. Trade was drawn to the new settlement, and in time an area stretching from the bridge to the camp was covered with Romano-British buildings.
- 1.3.4 The Roman remains discovered during the evaluation at Windrush View probably represent an extension of the excavated remains recorded during previous work in the area. Archaeological excavations in the 1930s in advance of the construction of Leadenwell House, bounding the west and south side of the site revealed a well appointed Roman House (Donovan, 1934). A large Roman settlement was also discovered during excavations in 1993 in connection with the construction of a new housing development along Green Lane Close adjacent to the northern boundary of the site where walls, surfaces and associated settlement deposits were recorded.
- 1.3.5 Further expansion also took place along the south side of the camp where native huts have been found. An outlying settlement of the same period lies lay on the Santhill gravel-spread, a narrow stretch of land between the confluence of the Windrush and the Dickler at the south-east corner of the parish.
- 1.3.6 There is some evidence of Saxon occupation after the Roman period and again during the medieval period, but overall the archaeological evidence suggests that

Bourton flourished and probably developed as a significant market town due to an important and economically strategic location.

2 EVALUATION AIMS

2.1 The objectives of the evaluation are to:

- i) clarify the presence/absence, location and extent of archaeological deposits on the site;

- ii) identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition, depth, significance and quality of any surviving remains within the site.

- iii) assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits.

3 EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

3.1 Sample size and scope of fieldwork (Fig.2)

3.1.1 The evaluation exercise consisted of six hand excavated trenches measuring approx. 1.5 m². These were distributed across the application area in order to establish the affect of any potential development on the underlying archaeological deposits. Trenches 1-5 were located in the vegetable garden whilst Trench 6 was located within the proposed access road.

3.2 Fieldwork methods and recording

3.2.1 The evaluation was carried out in accordance with the Institute of Field Archaeologist's (IFA) Guidance and Standards relating to archaeological evaluations.

3.2.2 All deposits were hand excavated by experienced archaeological staff. The trenches were cleaned by hand and investigated for archaeological deposits.

4 RESULTS: GENERAL

4.1 Soil and ground conditions

4.1.1 Conditions were generally dry during the evaluation and the deposits showed little moisture retention.

4.2 Distribution of archaeological deposits

4.2.1 Trenches 1-5 were not fully excavated, but revealed Roman deposits indicating the presence of stratified settlement remains through out the existing garden area.

4.2.2 This sequence of deposits are overlain by a two homogenous layers throughout the site; a post-medieval cultivation soil consisting of a dark yellowish brown sandy silt with a small component of limestone fragments overlain by the modern garden topsoil, a greyish black loam. Both layers produced a quantity of residually deposited Roman pottery sherds.

4.3 Presentation of results

4.3.1 The results of the evaluation are described from the earliest to the latest deposits. The descriptions of the deposits refer to the individual trench.

5 RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS

5.1 Description of deposits (Figs. 2, 3, 4)

5.1.1 Trench 1

Surface 102

In Trench 1, a Roman road or yard surface (102) was observed throughout the base of the trench at a height of approx. 131.64 m AOD. The deposit was not excavated but appeared to consist of varying sizes of compacted limestone within a gravel matrix; the surface of many of these stones appeared worn through repeated use.

Layers 101 and 100

The surface 102 was sealed by a layer of post-medieval cultivation soil (101) to a depth of 0.20 m, in turn overlain by the existing topsoil at 0.17 m thick.

5.1.2 Trench 2

Wall 204 and surface 205

The earliest deposits exposed during the excavation of the trench were Wall 204 and surface 205. These contexts were not excavated. The wall itself appears to have been constructed entirely from oolitic limestone and also to have been subjected to considerable disturbance; the large dislodged stones at the base and in the section of the trench are probably an indication of later robbing activities. The exposed remains measured 0.70 m wide; the south edge was defined by the line of a gravelly surface (205), and perhaps also by the first indications of a construction trench for the wall.

The surface itself (205) appears to have been constructed from numerous small fragments of limestone and gravel compacted to form a floor layer butting the south side of the wall 204.

Layer 203

Overlying the surface 205 and also butting the south side of wall 204 was layer 203, a light yellowish brown sandy-silt measuring 0.16 m thick. The layer was interpreted as an occupation debris associated with the underlying Roman surface (205). Within the deposit were an inclusion of charcoal flecking and an even larger inclusion of white flecking that appear to represent the residue from a period of significant burning. Numerous fragments of Roman pottery including a roof tile and some animal bone were also recovered from the deposit.

Layer 202

The occupation deposit (203) was sealed by a thick layer of dark yellowish brown sandy silt measuring approx. 0.40 m thick and containing a large component of stone rubble, some stones discoloured red from burning. There was also the equivalent white flecking observed in layer 203 and nine sherds of Roman pottery. This deposit is probably associated with the abandonment and final collapse of the structure.

The rubble layer 202 was overlain and sealed by the post-medieval cultivation soil (201) and the modern topsoil (200). Layer 201 produced five sherds of Roman pottery.

5.1.3 Trench 3

Natural substrate (303)

The natural gravel (303) was encountered at a height of approximately 131.20 m AOD in the south west corner of the trench following the excavation of a small sondage. A single ditch or pit like feature (305) was recorded within the surface of this layer.

Feature 305 and fill 304

Only the west edge of this ditch like feature was exposed and consisted of a sloping linear edge, with an alignment suggesting an orientation north east to south west.

The feature was only partially exposed and was excavated to a depth of 0.32 m at which the slope appears to break to a flat base.

The feature was filled by context 304, a dark yellowish brown sandy clay, with the occasional limestone fragment and some charcoal flecking. Two sherds of Roman pot were retrieved from this fill deposit.

Layer 302

Overlying the natural gravel and sealing feature 305 and its fill (304) was the layer 302, a light yellowish brown sandy silt measuring approx. 0.58 m thick. A total of 14 fragments of Roman pottery were recovered from this deposit.

Layers 301 & 300

Sealing layer 302 was the Post-medieval cultivation soil (301) up to 0.46 m thick. This produced 23 sherds of Roman pottery, three fragments of animal bone and was overlain by the modern topsoil (300).

5.1.4 Trench 4

Wall 404

Identified at the base of the trench was wall 404. Only one edge of the wall was exposed, the remainder continuing beyond the southern side of the excavation. The wall was orientated north west to south east and appeared to have been constructed from Oolitic limestone with fragments of varying sizes. Some of the stones were burnt red.

Layer 402

The north east side of the wall was butted by a layer of light yellowish brown sandy silt (402) and this was partially excavated to reveal some of the exterior face to wall 404. Three sherds of Roman pottery and two fragments of animal bone were retrieved from this deposit.

Layers 401 & 400

Overlying deposit 402 throughout the trench was the post-medieval cultivation soil (401) measuring 0.16 m thick. This was in turn overlain by the modern topsoil to a depth of about 0.46 m. A total of five sherds of Roman pottery were retrieved from this layer.

5.1.5 Trench 5

Following removal of the modern topsoil (500) and the underlying post-medieval cultivation layer (501), a series of Roman deposits were exposed at the base of the trench.

Deposit 503

The earliest deposits to be recorded within the trench was the unexcavated context 503, a dark yellowish brown sandy clay with frequent small fragments of limestone observed with in the surface of the deposit.

Surface 504 & Deposit 505

Overlying 503 in the south east corner of the trench was what appears to be a thin gravel surface (504) approx. 0.05 m thick. Fragments of Roman pottery and small pieces of animal bone were observed within this deposit.

The same gravel layer appears to overly 503 in the north east corner of the trench, but is in turn overlain by the deposit 505 consisting of a light yellowish brown sandy silt. Deposit 505 was only partially exposed during sample excavation of context 502 and the results suggest that this was a relatively thin layer possibly overlying a gravel layer similar to the surface 504.

Deposit 502

The latest in this sequence was deposit 502, a light greyish brown sandy silt with a small stone, but slightly larger gravel component. This deposit was initially interpreted as the fill of a possible pit like feature, but sample excavation suggested a rather shallow depression within the layer 505. This produced five sherds of Roman pottery and a single piece of animal bone

Context 506

Within the layer (502) were three stones in a linear alignment (506) orientated north west to south east.

5.1.6 Trench 6

Trench 6 was located near the south east corner of Windrush View, but revealed no archaeological deposits. A modern service pipe had been constructed in the east side of the trench whilst the west side was obscured by a thick layer of tarmac orientated north to south and probably associated with a former dairy

5.2 Finds

i) Pottery

A reasonably large assemblage of pottery was recovered during the evaluation and amounted to a total of 94 sherds weighing approx. 2.2kg. Details of the assemblage are outlined in Appendix 1

ii) Metalwork

Context 101

x1 nail (fe) complete, highly corroded, square head and shaft. Length 70 mm, width 7 mm.

Context 301

x1 nail (fe) head missing, slightly bent and highly corroded. Length 80 mm, width 7-10 mm.

ii) *Animal bone*

A total of 10 fragments of animal bone were retrieved from four contexts and these are described below.

Context 301

Three fragments weighing 51g sheep

Context 203

Four fragments weighing 41g sheep

Context 502

One fragment weighing 76g sheep

Context 402

Two fragments weighing 47g sheep/cow

5.3 Environmental data

No deposits suitable for palaeo-environmental sampling were identified during the evaluation.

6 DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION

6.1 Reliability of field investigation

6.1.1 Only Trench 6 produced evidence of disturbance to underlying deposits from the construction of a modern drain. In the remaining five trenches located in the garden area and forming the focus of the proposed development there was no evidence of truncation other than that associated with post-medieval cultivation. Modern cultivation of the topsoil appears to have had little or no affect on the underlying deposits.

6.2 Overall interpretation

6.2.1 The results of the evaluation suggest that Roman deposits generally dated from the 2nd to 4th century survive *in situ* within the area of the existing garden to the rear or north side of the site. The surface of the natural substrate, a terrace gravel of the River Windrush was observed in one of the trenches (Trench 3) and revealed 2nd/3rd century Roman occupation deposits at this level. This layer is shown to be overlain by a sequence of further stratified Roman deposits consisting of walls (Trenches 2 and 4), surfaces (Trenches 1 and 2) and associated occupation layers (Trenches 2 and 5) indicating that occupation of the site continued until the 4th century following which the area appears to have been abandoned and returned to cultivation.

6.2.2 A worn Roman road or yard area of cobbled limestone (102) was revealed in the centre of the garden area. This appears to have been straddled by Roman buildings with at least one of these structures (wall 204) showing signs of occupation. The presence of a single large fragment of imbrex roof tile and fine ware pottery suggests a wealthy settlement. These remains probably represent an extension of the

settlement remains discovered on the adjacent sites at Leadenwell House and Green Lane Close.

6.3 Summary of results

6.3.1 Five of the six excavated trenches produced results showing that 2nd to 4th century Roman deposits survive *in situ* across the site and that these deposits consisting of walls and road/yard surfaces are indicative of a complex Roman settlement. These remains appear to have survived intact sealed beneath a post-medieval cultivation layer and the modern garden topsoil.

6.4 Significance

6.4.1 Roman archaeological deposits were found on the site indicating the presence of stratified settlement remains dated to between the 2nd and 4th centuries AD. These remains should be considered as at least of regional importance.

6.5 *Impact of development*

6.5.1 The impact of the development on archaeological deposits will depend on the nature of the development design proposal. Any such design that impacts on the ground below the level of the of-medieval cultivation layer is likely to impact on such deposits.

6.6 Archive Location

6.6.1 The archive resulting from the work will be deposited with the Corrinium Museum.

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APPENDIX 1 Report on the Romano-British pottery

By Annette Hancocks

A total of 94 Romano-British pottery sherds weighing 2.2kg were recovered and spot-dated to the late 2nd – 3rd century AD. All of this material was fresh in appearance with no evidence of abrasion or wear present. Where fresh breaks were encountered these were counted as one sherd where joins were possible, thereby reducing the number of sherds present amongst this small assemblage. The pottery was recovered from five of the six 1.5m² hand dug evaluation trenches. The principal dating evidence and diagnostic dating is detailed in Table 1 below.

In addition a sherd of post-medieval pottery of 19th century AD date was recovered from context 400, the topsoil in Trench 4 and a large fragment of Roman imbrex tile from layer 203, Trench 2.

From the information available it would appear that Trenches 2 and 3 suggest a concentration of material and activity of 2nd to 4th century date. This assumption is based wholly on the density of Romano-British pottery recovered. The ware groups represented are principally regionally traded wares such as Black-Burnished ware 1 and imported fine wares such as Samian and imported coarse wares like Dressel 20 amphorae. The latter has a distinctive and rare stamp on its surviving handle, which upon further investigation may allow the contents to be traced to a particular workshop or production area. This process may reveal the date or capacity of the vessel in question too.

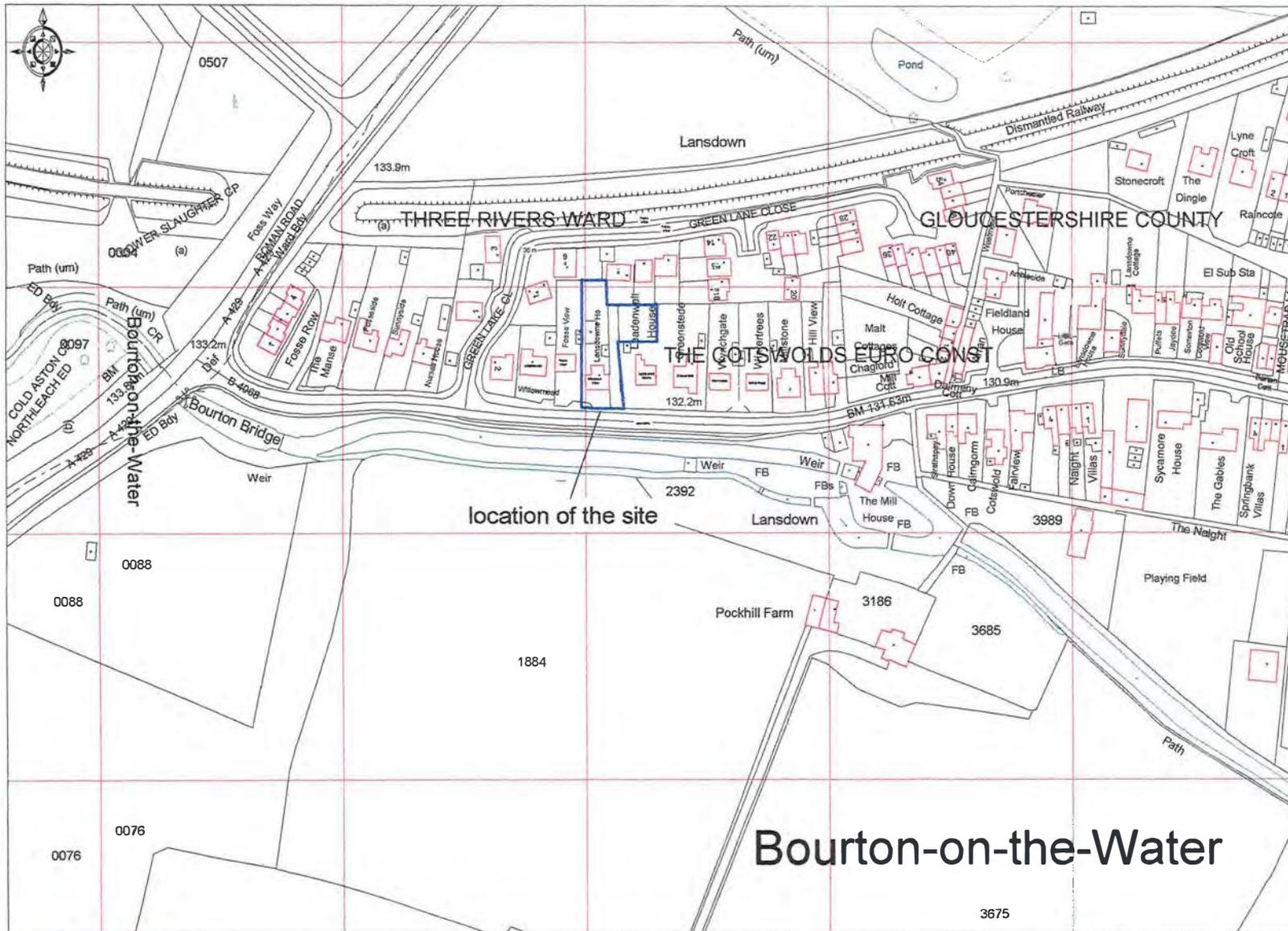
Table 1: Pottery identification

Trench	Context	Feature Type	Description	Quantification	Spot-date
1	101	Layer	2 x greyware 1 x Severn valley ware (GTF 11B)	3 (22g)	2nd to 3rd century AD
2	201	Layer	4 x Severn valley ware (GTF 11B) 1 x oxidised red slipped ware	5 (83g)	2nd to 3rd century AD
2	202	Layer	3 x Black-burnished ware (GTF 4) 2 x Oxfordshire colour-coated ware 3 x greyware 1 x grog tempered ware	9 (149g)	2nd to 3rd century AD
2	203	Layer	1 x imbrex tile 20 x Dorset Black burnished ware, including dog dish and jar forms (GTF 4) 8 x oxidised wares 2 x Oxfordshire colour-coated wares 2 x Samian	1 (452g) 32 (272g)	2nd to 3rd century AD

3	301	Layer	4 x Samian 3 x greyware 2 x mortaria 3 x oxidised ware 2 x grog tempered ware 1 x Black burnished ware (GTF 4)	15 (387g)	2nd to 3rd century AD
3	302	Layer	1x Dressel 20 Amphorae with stamp (GTF 10A) 4x Samian, Drag. 45 mortaria 2 x Black burnished ware 5 x oxidised ware 2 x greyware	14 (962g)	Antonine (Mid 2nd to Mid 3rd century AD)
3	304	Fill of 305	2 x Black burnished ware (GTF 4) 1 x greyware	3 (35g)	2nd to 3rd century AD
4	400	Topsoil	1 x post-medieval manganese ware 1 x Black burnished ware (GTF 4)	2 (29g)	19th century with residual late 2nd to 3rd century AD

4	402	Layer	1 x Samian 2 x oxidised ware	3 (17g)	2nd to 3rd century AD
5	501	Layer	1 x greyware 1 x Savernake ware (GTF 6) 1 x oolithic ware	3 (77g)	2nd to 3rd century AD
5	502	Layer	3 x greyware 1 x Samian with indet partial base stamp 1 x grog tempered ware	5 (141g)	2nd to 3rd century AD

Archaeological evaluation at Windrush View, Lansdowne, Bourton-on-the-Water.



Ordnance Survey

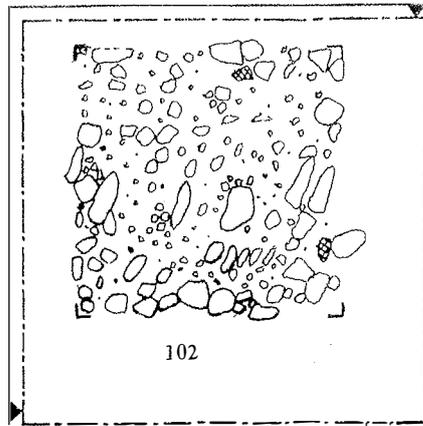
© Crown copyright 2005. All rights reserved. Licence Number 100020449. Survey Scale - 1:2500 Plotted Scale - 1:2500

Figure 1: site location plan

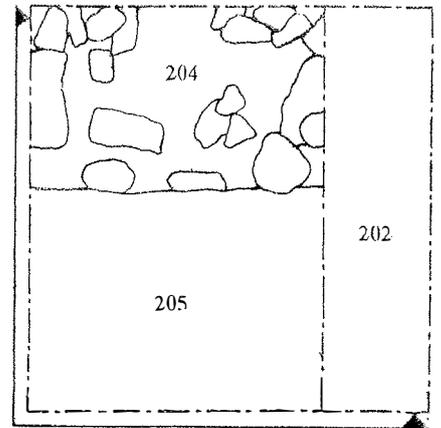
Archaeological evaluation at Windrush View, Lansdowne, Bourton-on-the-Water.



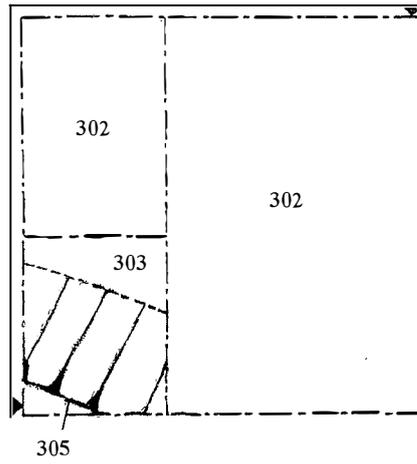
Figure 2: Trench location plan



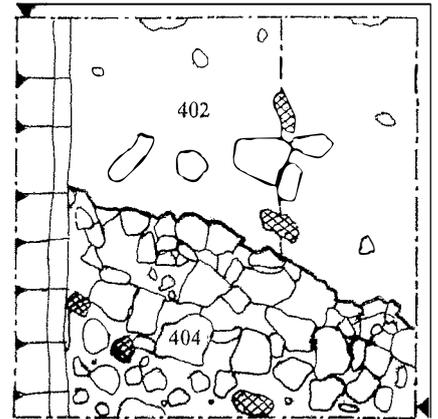
Trench 1: plan



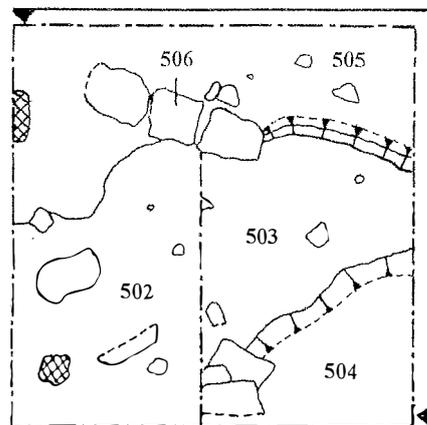
Trench 2: plan



Trench 3: plan



Trench 4: plan



Trench 5: plan

KEY



Burnt stone



Line of section

0

2 m

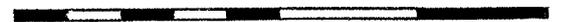


Figure 3: Excavated trenches (1-5) showing latest archaeological deposits

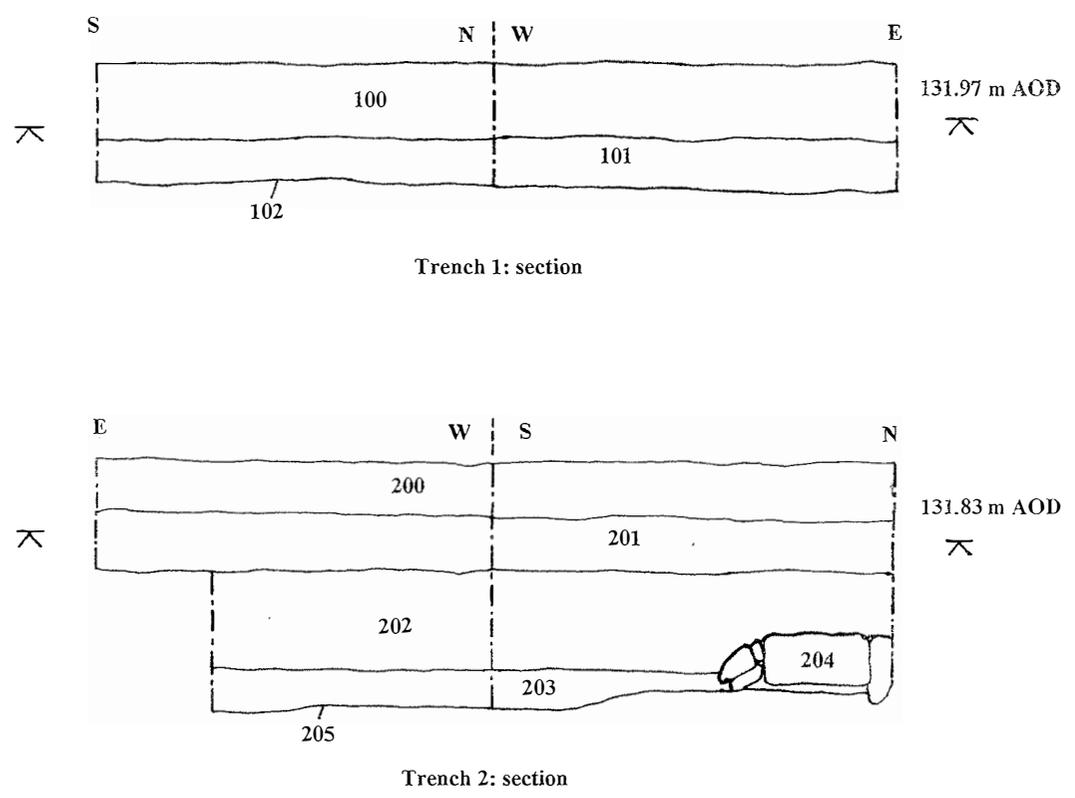
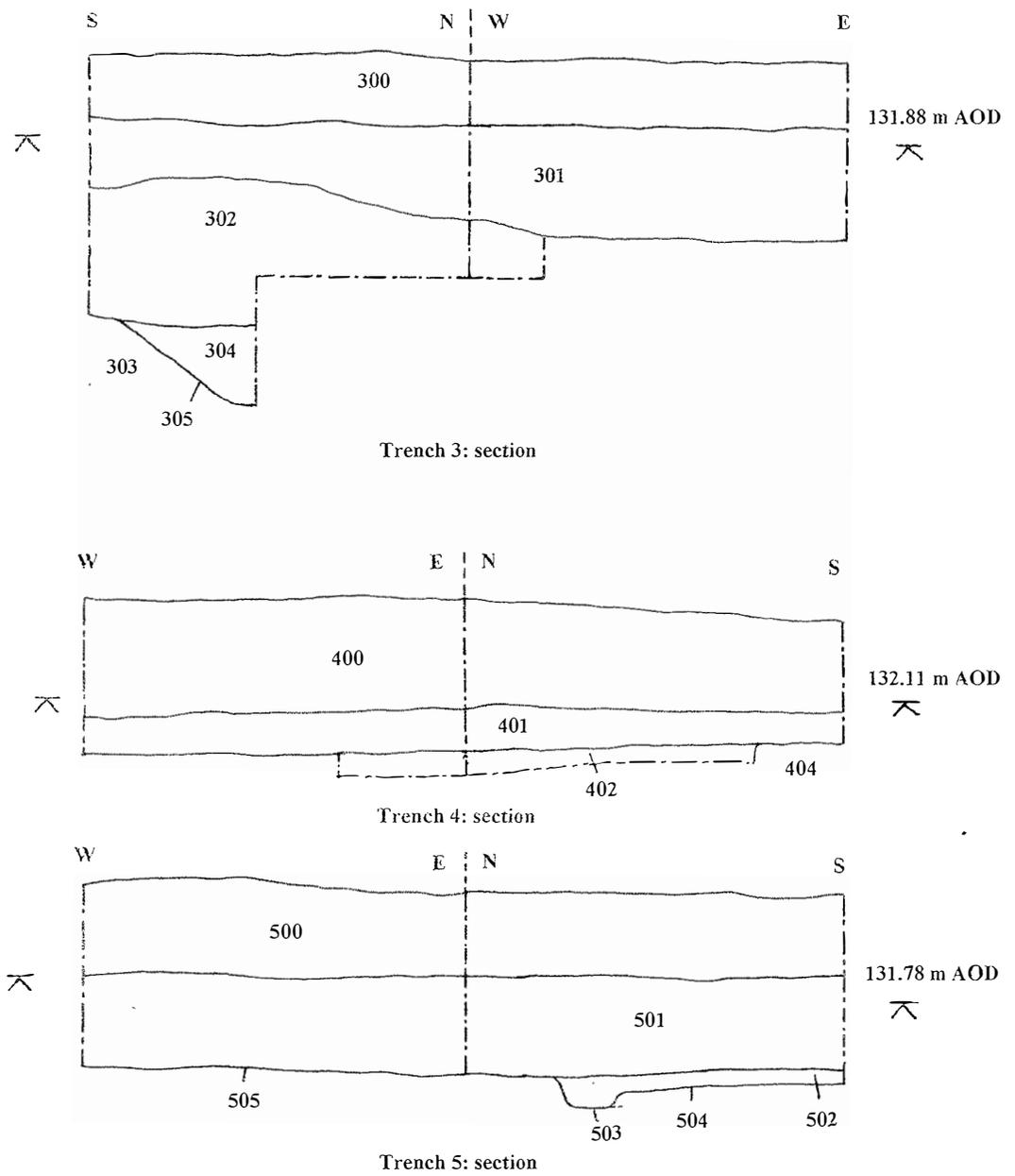


Figure 4: Sections, Trenches 1-5

PLATES



PLATE 1: Trench 1. View north showing surface 102 (Roman road/yard, 2nd/3rd century) in situ. This deposit was sealed by the post-medieval cultivation layer and the existing garden topsoil.



PLATE 2: Trench 2, view north. The rubble remains of wall 204 can be seen in the north side of the trench with the slightly lighter floor surface 205 butting the south side. The excavated occupation layer overlying the surface produced 2nd/3rd century pottery.



PLATE 3: Trench 3, view north west showing the exposed gravel in the bottom left side of the image sealed by the thick layer 302.



PLATE 4: Trench 4 showing a Roman wall (404) orientated north west to south east. One edge of the wall can be seen partially revealed on the north side of the trench. Excavation of the trench produced 2nd/3rd century pottery.

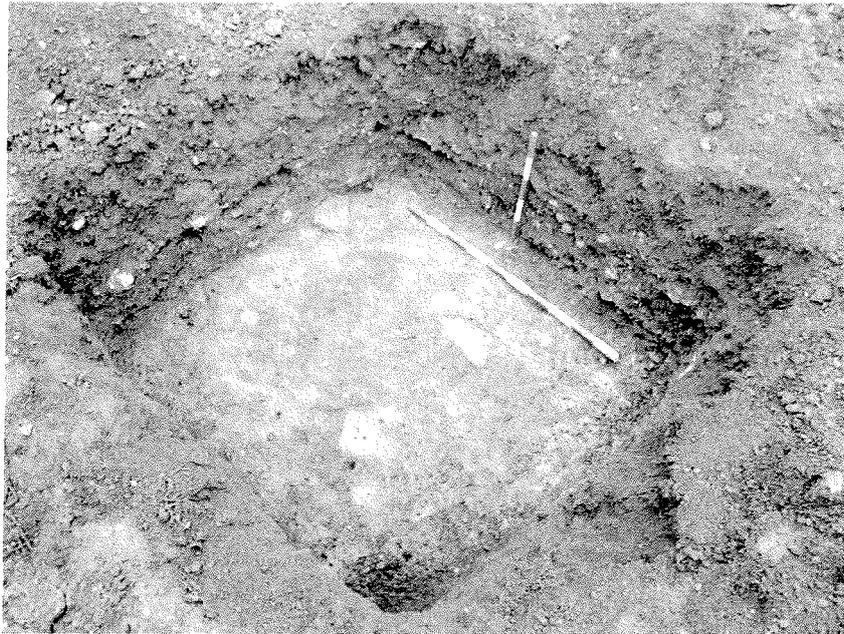


PLATE 5: Trench 5 showing depth at which Roman deposits survive *in situ*. These were dated by partial excavation to the 2nd/3rd century AD.