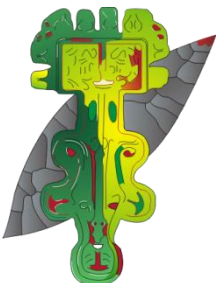


**Absolute
Archaeology LLP
2015**

Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief at
14 Abingdon Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, OX10 7JY



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On behalf of Mr A Whitfield

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Summary

This document sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief designed to monitor all groundwork associated with the erection of a single storey rear extension to the existing property known as 14 Abingdon Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, Oxfordshire, OX10 7JY (hereafter referred to as the Project Site). The work was commissioned by the Mr A Whitfield (the developer) and carried out from the 25th February – 2nd March 2015.

The results of the monitoring were negative. No archaeological layers, features or deposits were identified during the groundwork and no artefacts were recovered from the spoil, which was monitored throughout.

No further investigation was recommended in conjunction with this programme of work.

Acknowledgements

Absolute Archaeology LLP would like to acknowledge the assistance of ground workers Rob Emmett, Ashley Emmett and Lee Stallwood for their co-operation during the ground reduction. We would also like to thank Joanne Robinson (Assistant Archaeological Officer, Oxfordshire County Council) for her help and expertise.

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1. INTRODUCTION

This document sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief designed to monitor all groundwork associated with the erection of a single storey rear extension to the existing property known as 14 Abingdon Road, Dorchester-on-Thames, OX10 7JY (hereafter referred to as the Project Site). The work was commissioned by the Mr A Whitfield (the developer) and carried out from the 25th February – 2nd March 2015.

The programme of work was informed by the document entitled “14 Abingdon Road, Dorchester Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief”, issued by Ms J Robinson, Assistant Archaeological Officer, Oxfordshire County Council, issued on the 14th January 2015.

The programme of work comprised an archaeological watching brief, making provision for the recording of surviving below ground archaeology revealed during ground disturbance associated with the approved development.

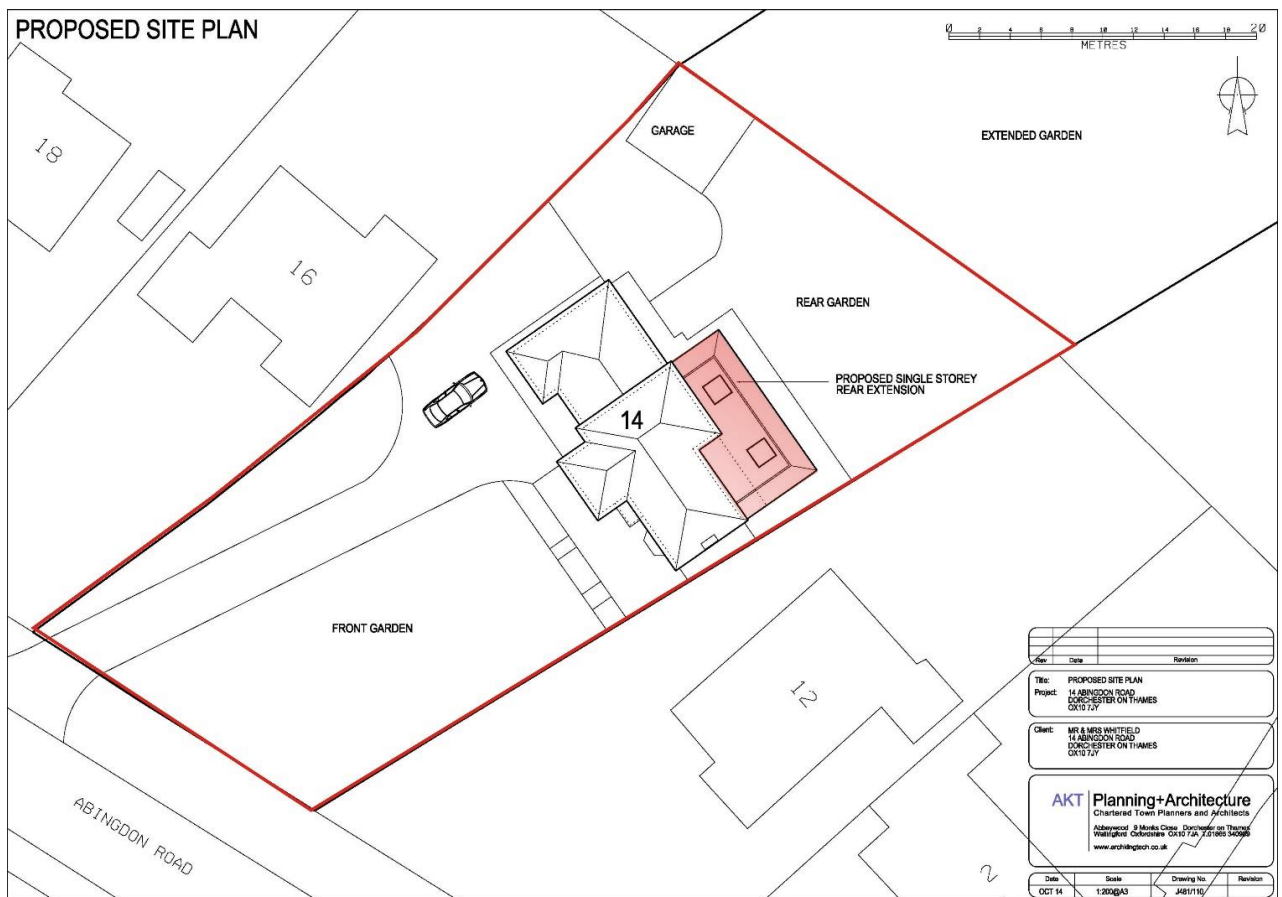


Figure 1 Proposed plan © AKT Planning + Architecture - Project Site outlined in red / Extension shaded in red.

2. THE PROJECT SITE

2.1. Location

The Project Site is located in the village of Dorchester-on-Thames, South Oxfordshire, in an area of high archaeological potential and circa 500m north of the Roman Town of *Dorocium* or *Dorocina* (Rivet and Smith 1981). The development is located to the south of an area of gravel extraction, which marks the former location of a significant Neolithic – Early Bronze Age ritual site (PRN 15323). In addition, records indicate the location of a Roman road running from Dorchester to Alconbury, 120m to the east of the Project Site, the Dorchester Complex of Late Prehistoric concentric circular enclosures visible as cropmarks (MOX11157) 180m to the north-east and Anglo Saxon inhumations and artefacts discovered just 200m to the ESE.

2.2. Geology and Topography

The Project Site lies c.50m aOD and is defined geologically by Quaternary deposit, Northmoor sand and gravel member (NO1B) overlaying early Cretaceous Gault Clay Formation (BGS Sheet 254).



Figure 2 Project Site Location

3. METHODOLOGY

The broad aim of the watching brief was to identify and record features of archaeological interest discovered during groundwork associated with the development, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource and to enable the discharge of the planning condition.

All work was undertaken in accordance with the IFA Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief (revised 2008).

Primary aims:

- Seek to assess the potential for archaeological activity associated with the project site;
- Record and identify archaeological features and deposits to a level appropriate to their extent and significance;

- Undertake sufficient post-excavation assessment to interpret archaeological features and phasing identified during site works, and to place these within their local and regional context;
- Create a site archive for deposition in a suitable repository.

Archaeological control was maintained over the mechanical ground reduction method and all excavation was closely monitored during the reduction of soil, which was undertaken using a Kubota 2.8 ton Mini-Digger with a 600mm wide grading bucket.

The Project Supervisor maintained communication with Ms Joanne Robinson (Assistant Archaeological Officer, Oxfordshire County Council) throughout the project and Ms Robinson was informed of the results following the completion of the fieldwork.

4. RESULTS

The groundwork comprised the initial reduce level excavation, to a depth of 400mm, followed by the excavation of a strip foundation comprising c. 18.8m of mechanically dug trenching. The trenches measured 600mm in width and were excavated to depth of 1.05m. The total area of disturbance measured 10.8m in length x 4m in width.

Excavation revealed 500mm of topsoil/turfline (100), sealing 50mm of subsoil (101), which was seen to overlay 500mm of homogenous silty/sandy clay (102), sealing quaternary sand and gravel deposits (103).

The water table was reached at 700mm, causing the trench to become waterlogged. No archaeological activity was noted on the site and no finds were identified in the spoil, which was monitored throughout.



Photo 1 WSW facing section of foundation trench (Scale 1m)



Photo 2 NNW facing view of foundation trench under excavation

5. CONCLUSION

The results of the archaeological watching brief were negative. No archaeological layers, features or deposits were identified as a result of the excavation and no artefacts were recovered from the spoil, which was monitored throughout.

No further investigation was recommended in conjunction with this programme of work.

6. REFERENCES

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Table 1 Context Descriptions

Trench Description							
Description: Machine excavated footing trenches. Three joining trenches measuring in total 18.8 m in length x <0.8m in width and 1.05m in depth for the foundation of a single storey extension at the rear of the house. Reduction within the footing trenches revealed no archaeological features or finds.					Orientation	NNW-SSE 1x10.8mENE- WSW 2x4m	
					Depth	1.05m	
					Width	<0.8m	
					Length	Circa 18.8m	
Contexts 100-103							
Context Number	Type	Depth/ Height	Width	Length	Colour (Munsell Ref)	Finds	Recorded Date
100	Topsoil/Turfline	500mm	<0.8m	Circa 18.8m	Dark Yellowish Brown	None	2-03-2015
101	Subsoil	50mm	<0.8m	Circa 18.8m	Mid Yellowish Brown	None	2-03-2015
102	Silty/Sandy clay. Upper terrace deposits.	500mm	<0.8m	Circa 18.8m	Mid Yellowish Brown	None	2-03-2015
103	Quaternary Sands and Gravels	-	<0.8m	Circa 18.8m	-	None	2-03-2015