

Gurkha Tavern, 83 Bicester Road, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire; An Archaeological Watching Brief Report

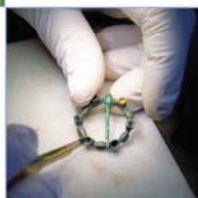
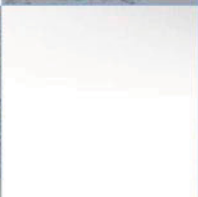
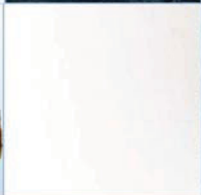
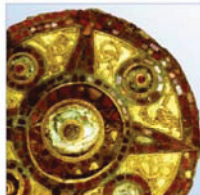
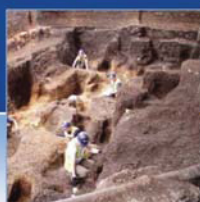
Planning Permission Number: 11/01877/APP

National Grid Reference Number: SP 6894 0896

Site Code: AYBCM: 2012.12

AOC Project No: 32118

Date: February 2012



Gurkha Tavern, 83 Bicester Road, Long Crendon: An Archaeological Watching Brief Report.

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Fieldwork:	17 th February 2012
Date:	February 2012

This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Date: February 2012

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Draft Report Stage

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Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group, on behalf of Wolff Architects on the 17th February 2012 at the site of the Gurkha Tavern, 83 Bicester Road, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire. The archaeological investigation was carried out during the ground reduction within the former tavern building.

The sequence of deposits identified during the watching brief were recorded as a natural clay and stone horizon, overlaid by the heavily truncated vestiges of a previous tile and brick floor layer. This was overlain by a hardcore and gravel bedding layer for the modern concrete floor layer.

No features or finds of archaeological interest were identified during the watching brief.

Publication of the watching brief findings will be carried out through a short summary of the fieldwork submitted to the local fieldwork roundup. An OASIS form has also been completed and an electronic copy of the evaluation report will be deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS). The site archive will be prepared in accordance with local and national guidance and will be deposited with the County Museum Resource Centre.

1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document presents the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken at the site of the Gurkha Tavern, 83 Bicester Road, Long Crendon, Buckinghamshire.
- 1.2 The site, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SP 6894 0896, currently comprises of a Grade II Listed thatched cottage, with a listed coach house to the rear. The site is located to the west of Bicester Road, which is located within the western limits of Long Crendon.
- 1.3 The proposed development comprises the demolition and replacement of a single storey element to the rear of the thatched cottage, alterations to fenestration and internal alterations to facilitate conversion from a mixed A4 (Public House) and C3 (residential property) use, to a C3 (Dwelling house) with attached B1 (Offices).

2. Planning Background

- 2.1 The local planning authority is the Aylesbury Vale District Council. Archaeological advice to the council is provided by Eliza Alqassar, Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer, Buckinghamshire County Council.
- 2.2 Planning permission was granted by Aylesbury Vale District Council in 2011 (Planning Reference: 11/01877/APP). The consent was granted with no archaeological conditions; however, due to alterations in the ground work design, a phase of intrusive of ground reduction within the properties was be required. As such, the developers initiated an archaeological watching brief to monitor the works.
- 2.3 The site does not lie within or within the immediate vicinity of any Scheduled Ancient Monuments and Conservation Areas. No World Heritage Sites, Registered Parks and Gardens or Registered Battlefields lie within 1km of the site.
- 2.4 This report details the results of the archaeological watching brief. The archaeological watching brief conformed with current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines.
 - English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
 - English Heritage – Archaeological Guidance Paper 3: Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (EH 2009).
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief (IfA 2008)
 - Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).
 - United Kingdom Institute for Conservation – Guidance for Archaeological Conservation Practice (UKIC 1990).

3. Geology and Topography

- 3.1 The British Geological Survey map indicates the site is located over Kimmeridge Clay formations with siltstone and sandstone (BGS 1979).

4. Archaeological And Historical Background

Prehistoric (c. 500,000 BC – AD 43)

- 4.1 According to the Buckinghamshire Historic Towns Project (BCC 2008), Long Crendon has an archaeological record that stretches back to the Neolithic period. An evaluation carried out by John Moore Heritage Services in 2006 at Harroell End, located in the southeast of Long Crendon, uncovered an early Neolithic to Late Bronze Age settlement, formed of ditches, pits and postholes (HER 0943700000).
- 4.2 Iron Age pottery was uncovered in 1978-9 during the excavation of new pipe trenches to the east of the parish church (HER 0443700000). The pottery sherds were thought to have been deposited in a pit and a ditch. The sherds showed signs of burning which may indicate a local settlement nearby (Heritage Gateway 2012). Further Iron Age pottery was recorded along with an occupation horizon during the excavations for a new water main at the southern end of Long Crendon to Chersley Road (HER 0540400000). A watching brief carried out at the same site revealed a large ditch, three pits which included a possible grain storage pit and a mid Iron Age hearth (HER 05404030000, 05404050000 & 05404010000).

Roman (c. AD 43 – 410)

- 4.3 A route of a possible Roman road is thought to cross through the parish of Long Crendon; however no evidence has yet been discovered (HER 0203500000). The road is thought to be part of the Viatores route, which travels from Dorchester on Thames to Alconbury House.
- 4.4 Excavations at Peppershill to the west of Long Crendon, carried out by Thames Valley Archaeological Services in 1999, uncovered ditches, pits and three cremation urns dating to the Roman period (HER 0207700000). During the late 1800s, Roman to early medieval burials and cremations were thought to have been recorded during the excavation of a new road off Chersley Road. A Roman sarcophagus was believed to be amongst the finds however no record of the finds can be found (HER 0056400001).
- 4.5 Located southeast of Long Crendon, an archaeological evaluation uncovered a possible Roman farmstead or similar small rural domestic site. Features included eleven or twelve enclosure ditches, two shallow gullies and two possible pits. The pottery recovered dates from the later 1st or early 2nd century to the 4th century AD (HER 0709100000).

Early Medieval (c. AD 410 – 1066), Medieval (c. AD 1066 – 1485) and Post-Medieval (c. AD 1485 - Modern)

- 4.6 The earliest reference to Long Crendon comes from the Domesday Book of 1086 which indicated that shows that the Lord of Crendon held land for '25 ploughs, in lordship 10 hides, 5 ploughs there', (HER 0857000000) The records also suggest that there were 52 villagers with 10 smallholders. A deer park was also known to exist in the manor (BCC 2008).
- 4.7 Ownership of the town throughout the medieval period was divided between royal, aristocratic and ecclesiastical lords. Long Crendon was given a market grant, in 1215, the location of which is the present square at Lower End. Despite possessing a market Long Crendon does not appear to have developed a thriving economy, perhaps due to the proximity of Thame (BCC 2008).
- 4.8 Very little Anglo Saxon features or finds have been recorded in Long Crendon. Possible human remains were recorded during the excavation of a new road off Chersley Road (HER0056400000). The majority of evidence for the medieval period surrounds ecclesiastical properties such as Notley

Abbey located to the east of Long Crendon, which dates to the 13th century and St Mary's Church, whose origins are likely to date to the medieval period.

- 4.9 Long Crendon is also renowned for its concentration of historic buildings. Particular characteristics are 'cruck' constructed timber framed buildings and the use of witchert as a building material (BCC 2008). These include Long Crendon Manor House, which is thought to have been originally constructed between the 14th-16th centuries (HER 0056701000), a possible 15th century cruck built timber framed house located at North End Farmhouse (HER 0468500000) and the 15th-16th century timber framed house at Thompson's Farm (HER 1089700000).
- 4.10 Historical records suggest that Long Crendon was the location for a local skirmish between Parliamentary and Royalist forces on the 27th January 1645 (HER 0405300000). The site is thought to be located north of Chearsley Road. Legend has it that swords and spears have been excavated from that location.
- 4.11 Excavations carried out by John Moore Heritage Services in 2006, at Land to the rear of 25 High Street, uncovered ten pits, two of which date to the 17th-18th century and are likely to be domestic in nature (HER 0953500000). During the post-medieval period, brickworks were established along with brick fields and sand pits. Their exact location cannot be confirmed (HER 0101400000).
- 4.12 The current site building is Listed under the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. The site appears to have been originally called the Chandos Arms public house. The site of 83 Bicester Road is noted as being a Grade II listed property probably of 18th century origin. The building has colour washed brick with some modern applied timber-framing and a thatched roof.

5. Strategy

5.1 Aims of the Investigation

- 5.1.1 The aims of the watching brief were defined as being:
- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
 - To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
 - To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
 - To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of any archaeological features and deposits.
 - To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits.
 - To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation.
- 5.1.2 The specific aims of the watching brief were defined as being:
- To determine the presence of any features or artefacts which may indicate prehistoric activity.
 - To identify any evidence of medieval activity in the area of the proposed development.
- 5.1.3 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions, through ADS OASIS website.

5.2 Methodology

- 5.2.1 Site procedures were defined in the Written Scheme of Investigation (AOC 2012). All work was carried out in accordance with national guidelines (English Heritage 2009, IfA 2008).

- 5.2.2 The watching brief was carried out during ground reduction within the main thatched structure (Figure 2). The area reduced measured approximately 6.50m x 2.70m. The ground reduction was carried out by hand by the ground workers on site.
- 5.2.3 The site code TBC was obtained from the County Museum Resource Centre and was used as the site identifier for all records produced.
- 5.2.4 All recording was in accordance with the standards and requirements of the Museum of London's *Archaeological Field Manual* (MoL 3rd edition 1994).
- 5.2.5 All of the work was carried out in line with:
- Archaeological Guidance Papers (AGP): 2-4, Standards and Practices in Archaeological Fieldwork (English Heritage 2009)
 - IfA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Brief (IfA 2008).
- 5.2.6 A continuous unique numbering system was employed.. In this report the archaeological fills and layers are represented in curved brackets i.e. (), whilst the cut numbers are represented in square brackets i.e. [].
- 5.2.7 Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardised sheets.
- 5.2.8 The archaeological watching brief was conducted by the author under the overall management of Paul Mason, Project Manager. The site was monitored by Eliza Alqassar, Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer at Buckinghamshire County Council.

6 Results

6.1 Trench 1

Table of the stratigraphic sequence (Figure 3 & 4)

Context No	Depth	Height below ground height	Description/Interpretation
100	0.11m	0-0.11m	Modern concrete floor surface.
101	0.21m	0.11m-0.31m	Crushed brick, tile in yellow sandy gravel. Hardcore.
102	0.04m	0.31m-0.35m	Red tile and brick layer. Heavily truncated floor surface.
103	0.20m	0.35m-0.55m	Dark and light brown sandy clay with medium to very large natural stone nodules. Natural horizon.

- 6.1.1 Trench 1 covered the complete site area that had been affected by this phase of ground reduction activity. A previous phase of reduction and underpinning had already been carried out within the later extension of the building. Both areas are illustrated on Figure 3.
- 6.1.2 The earliest deposit recorded during the site works was a layer of dark grey and lighter brown clay with inclusions of medium to very large natural stone (103). This deposit was a natural horizon.
- 6.1.3 Overlying (103) were the heavily truncated remains of a previous and possibly original floor surface composed of red tile with occasional red brick (102). The tiles measured 0.20m x 0.20m x 0.04m whilst the bricks measured 240mm x 120mm x 70mm. Only one and a half rows of the floor

remained *in situ*, with the better preserved row located in front of and below the later inserted fireplace in the western part of the room. The remainder of the floor was probably removed during the construction of the later concrete floor.



Plate 2 - (102) Red Tile and Brick Floor

6.1.4 Overlying the remains of (102) was a 0.21m thick layer of crushed brick and tile within a layer of yellow sandy gravel (101). This layer was deposited in preparation for the laying of a 0.11m thick layer of concrete (100) forming the modern surface horizon.

6.1.5 No significant archaeological remains were recorded on site.

7 Finds

7.1 No finds were collected during the course of the watching brief.

8 Conclusions

8.1 The watching brief was successful in establishing the presence or absence of archaeological remains on site. No archaeological remains were recorded on site.

8.2 The natural horizon was a dark grey and light brown sandy clay with inclusions of medium to very large natural stone. No intruding finds or features were recorded cutting into the natural. Overlying the natural was a heavily truncated layer of red tile and brick, interpreted as being the remnants of the original floor surface. Only two non-abutting rows remained *in situ* suggesting that the remainder of the floor was removed. Overlying the tile and brick floor horizon was a layer of hardcore make up, laid prior to the pouring of a later concrete floor.

8.3 No archaeological remains or stray finds were recovered from the site.

9 Publication and Archive Deposition

9.1 A paper copy of the evaluation report will be issued to Eliza Alqassar, Archaeological Planning and Conservation Officer and to the Buckinghamshire HER on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period of time. A third digital copy of the report will also be submitted to the Buckinghamshire HER.

- 9.2 A short summary of the results of the watching brief will be submitted to the South Midlands Archaeology Fieldwork roundup, and grey literature added to the online ADS OASIS project (Appendix B).

10 Archive Deposition

- 10.1 Following completion of the project the site archive will be prepared in the format agreed with London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre. The archive will be security copied and a copy deposited with the National Archaeological Record (NAR).
- 10.2 The archive will be prepared in accordance with the guidelines provided by London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre and the Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long-term storage (UKIC 1990).
- 10.3 An OASIS form has been completed initiated (Appendix B) and this will be completed and deposited with the Archaeological Data Service (ADS).

11 Bibliography

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GURKHA TAVERN, 83 BICESTER ROAD, LONG CRENDON, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE:
AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

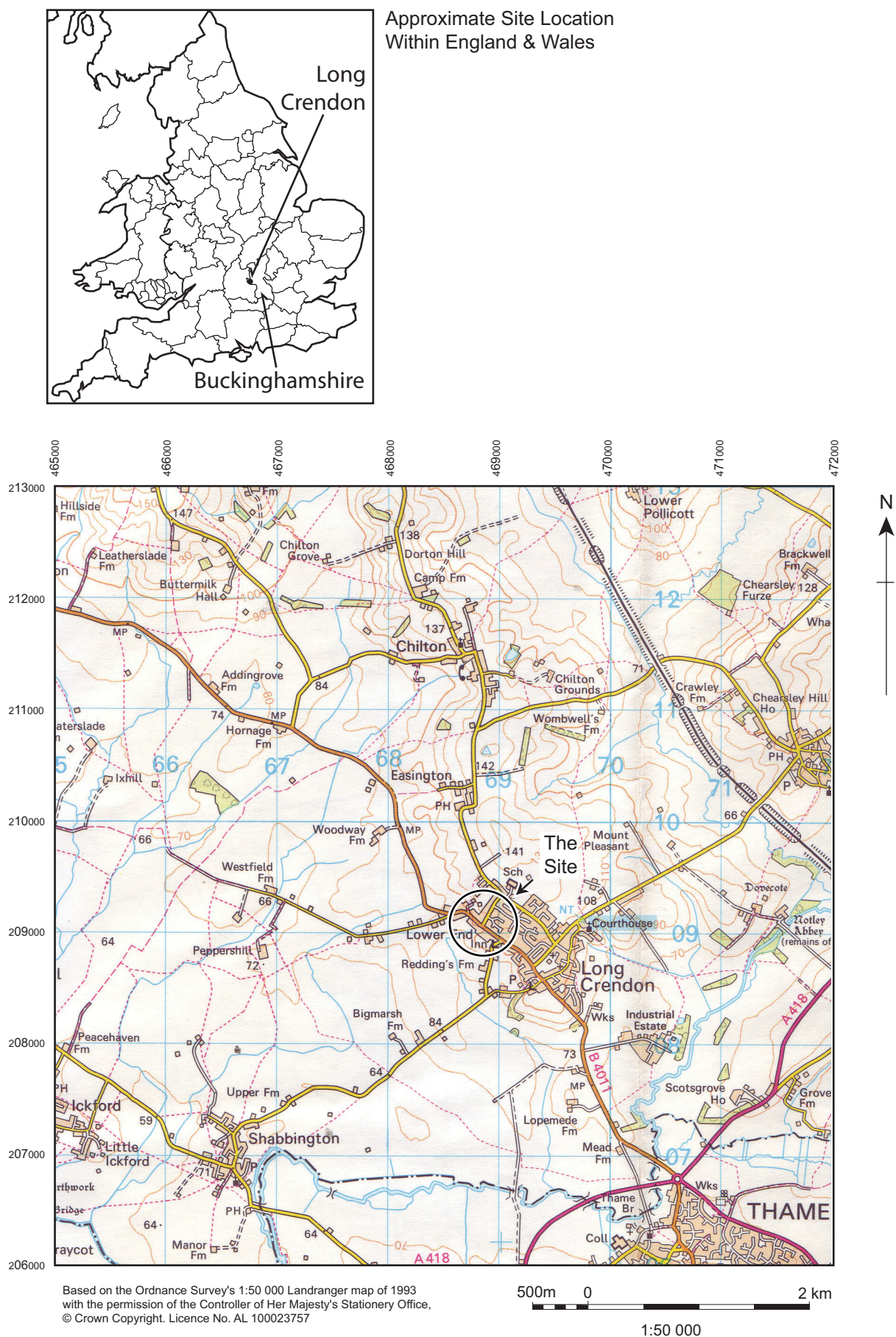
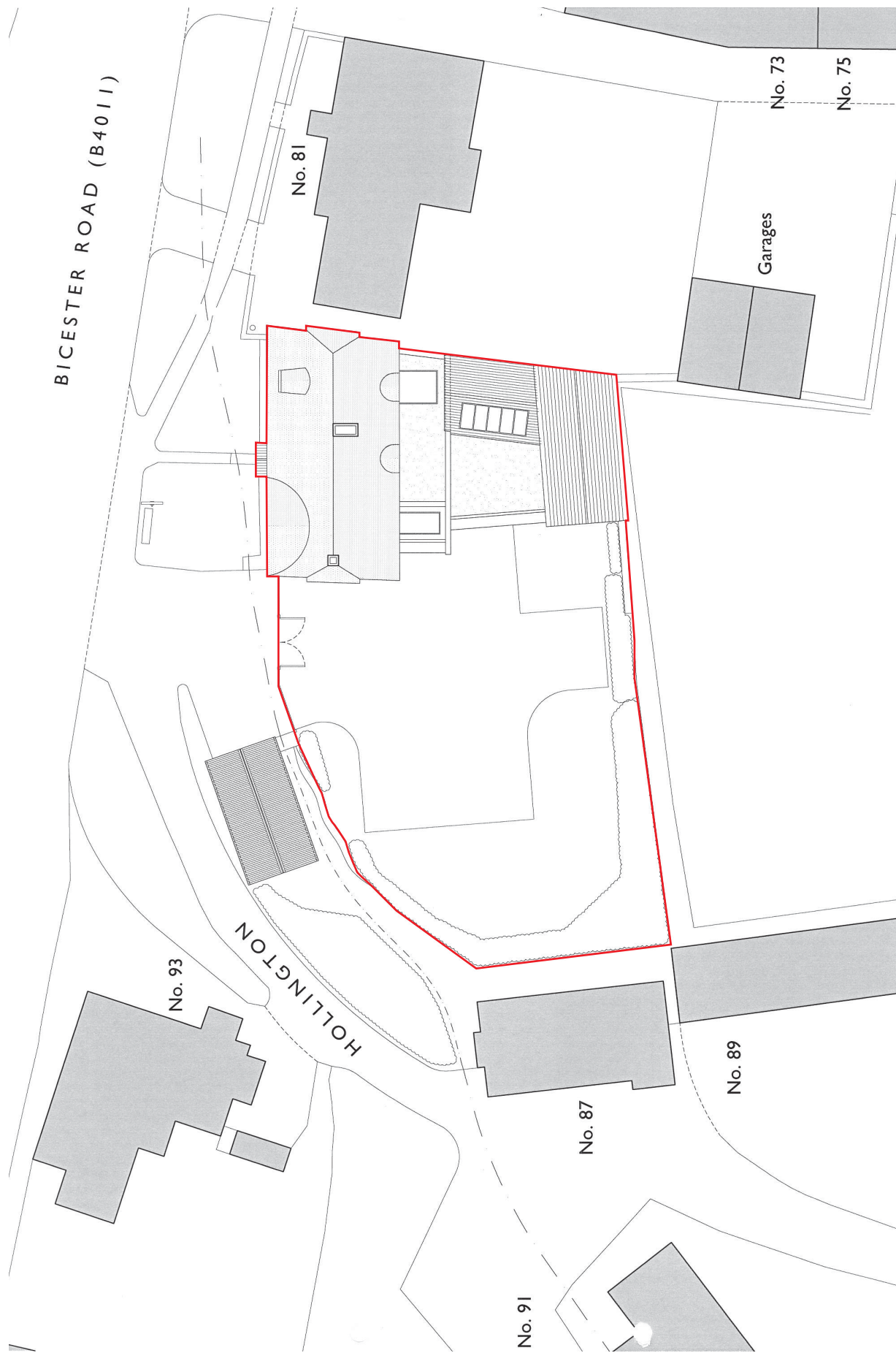


Figure 1: Site Location

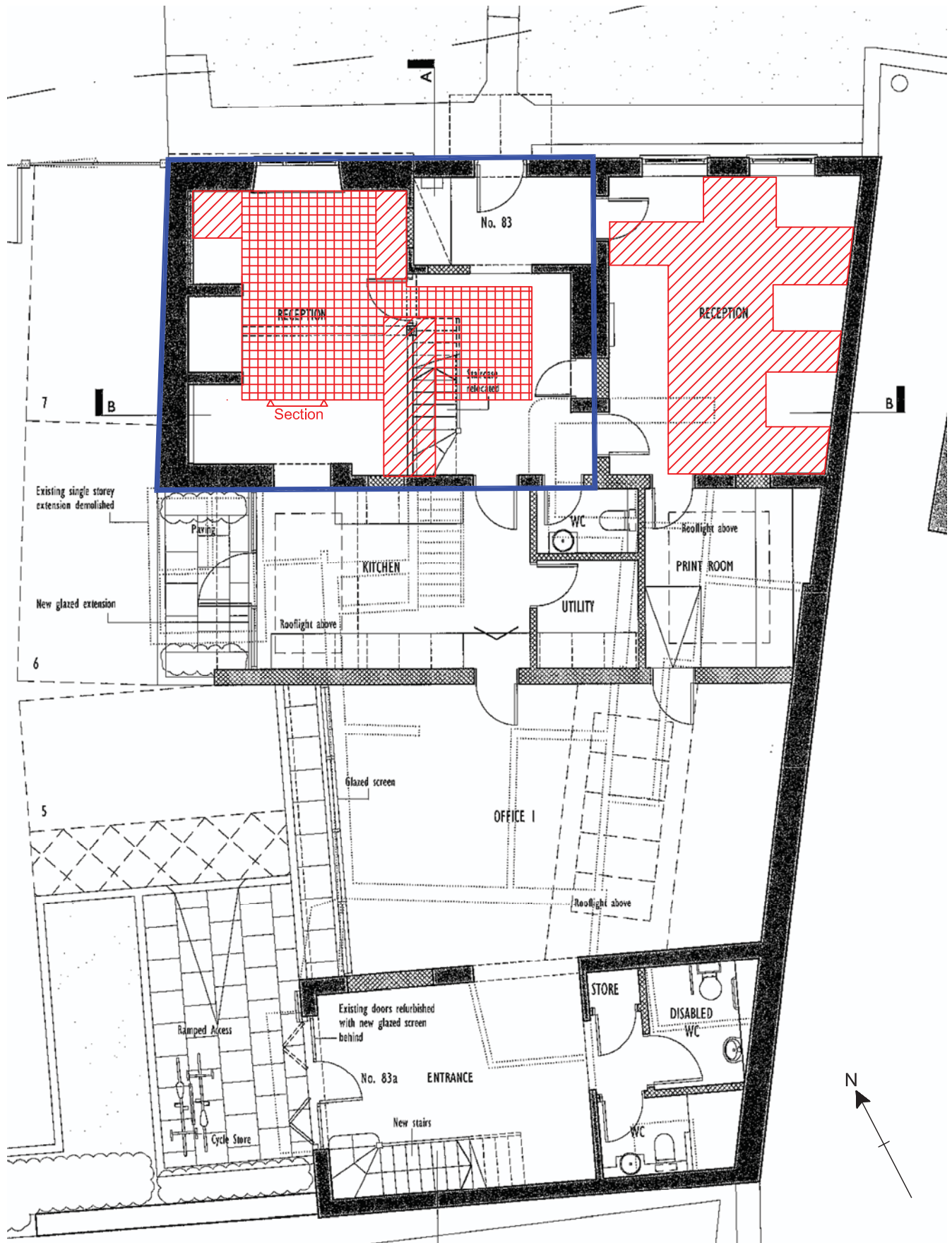


Based on the Plan Produced by Wolff Architects

Figure 2: Detailed Site / Watching Brief Location Plan

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AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT



Based on the Plan Produced by Wolff Architects

Extent of Watching Brief Area

Previously Excavated

Under Watching Brief

Figure 3: Watching Brief Area Plan

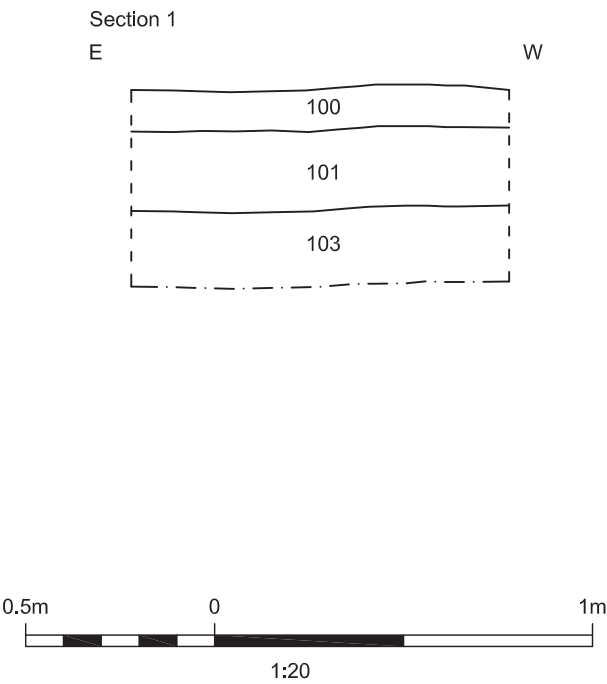


Figure 4: Sample Section

Appendices

Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth
100	Modern Concrete Floor	6.00m	4.00m	0.11m
101	Hardcore Makeup	6.00m	4.00m	0.21m
102	Red tile and Brick floor	6.00m	0.20m	0.04m
103	Natural horizon.	6.00m	4.00m	0.20m

Appendix B – OASIS Form

OASIS ID: aocarcha1-119456

Project details

Project name Gurkha Tavern, 83 Bicester Road

Short description of the project an archaeological watching brief on ground reduction was undertaken at this former public house The sequence of deposits identified during the watching brief were recorded as a natural clay and stone horizon, overlaid by a previous tile and brick floor layer which in turn was overlaid by a hardcore and gravel layer laid as a preparation layer for the modern concrete floor layer. No features or finds of archaeological interest were identified during the watching brief.

Project dates Start: 17-02-2012 End: 17-02-2012

Previous/future work No / No

Any project codes associated reference 32118 - Contracting Unit No.

Any project codes associated reference AYBCM:2012.12 - Museum accession ID

Type of project Recording project

Site status None

Current Land use Other 2 - In use as a building

Monument type PUBLIC HOUSE Modern

Significant Finds NONE None

Investigation type 'Watching Brief'

Prompt Listed Building Consent

Project location

Country	England
Site location	BUCKINGHAMSHIRE AYLESBURY VALE LONG CRENDON Gurkha Tavern, 83 Bicester Road
Postcode	HP18 9EE
Study area	12.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 6894 0896 51.7746070956 -1.000686192920 51 46 28 N 001 00 02 W Point

Project creators

Name Organisation	of AOC Archaeology
Project originator	brief AOC Archaeology
Project originator	design AOC Archaeology Group
Project director/manager	Paul Mason
Project supervisor	Catherine Edwards
Type sponsor/funding body	of Developer
Name sponsor/funding body	of Wolff Architects

Project archives

Physical Exists?	Archive No
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Digital Archive recipient Buckinghamshire County Museum

Digital Archive ID AYBCM:2012.12

Digital Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography'

Digital Archive notes jpeg images

Paper Archive recipient Buckinghamshire County Museum

Paper Archive ID AYBCM:2012.12

Paper Contents 'Stratigraphic'

Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Drawing'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title GurkhaTavern,83 Bicester Road,Long Crendon,Buckinghamshire; an archaeological watching brief report

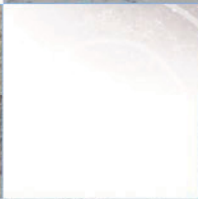
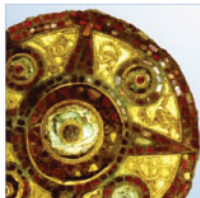
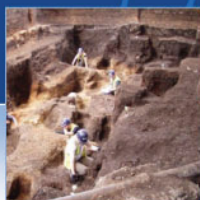
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