

**6 NORTH WALL,  
CRICKLADE,  
WILTSHIRE**

**NGR: SU 099 938**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

July 2015  
Report No. 1067



**ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONSULTANCY, MANAGEMENT & FIELD SERVICES**

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**Quality Assurance**

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Author: Natasha Moakes

Date: 17<sup>th</sup> July 2015.

Approved: R. King

QA Checked: T. Michaels

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## **SUMMARY**

Between 22<sup>nd</sup> June and 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at 6 North Wall, Cricklade, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 099 938). The project was commissioned by Hayley and David Cook.

The watching brief identified a large archaeological deposit to the east of the existing property. This had been disturbed, most likely during construction of the property in the 1980's, however, an undisturbed part was exposed and recorded during the works. This undisturbed area contained Roman pottery dating from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries and one fragment of *tegula* roofing tile.

Modern disturbance in the form of service cuts and footings for the existing building was present throughout the watched area. Dark grey-blue clay very similar in appearance to the identified archaeological deposit was present within mixed layers overlying Modern services across the site. It is therefore possible that the identified archaeological deposit containing Roman material represents part of a larger, truncated feature. The mixed layers also contained re-deposited natural clay, which suggests that the area around the existing house had been significantly disturbed and possibly stripped, most likely during the construction of the 1980's building, with the stripped material then reused at a later date. This activity, along with the excavation of the original house footings had the potential to truncate any archaeological deposits which may have been present within the study area.

## GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

### *Archaeology*

For the purpose of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

### *CBM*

Ceramic building material.

### *LOE*

Limit of excavation

### *Medieval*

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *c.* AD 1500.

### *Natural*

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

### *NGR*

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

### *OD*

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level.

### *OS*

Ordnance Survey.

### *Post-medieval*

The period from *c.* AD 1500 onwards.

### *Romano-British*

Term used to define the fusion of indigenous Iron Age traditions with invasive Roman culture. Traditionally dated AD 43 to *c.* AD 410.

### *Saxon*

The period between AD 410 and AD 1066.

### *Tegula*

Roman roof tile.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 Between 22<sup>nd</sup> June and 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2015 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at 6 North Wall, Cricklade, Wiltshire (NGR SU 099 938). The project was commissioned by Hayley and David Cook.
- 1.2 The project was conducted in accordance with the approved Written Scheme of Investigation, prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2015), the standard brief issued by Wiltshire Council and Cifa Standards and Guidance on Archaeological Watching Brief (2008).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief and complies with the specification set out in MoRPHE (English Heritage, 2006).

## 2 BACKGROUND

- 2.1 Planning permission (**Planning Ref: 15/01055/FUL**) was granted for the construction of front and rear extensions at 6 North Wall, Cricklade.
- 2.2 The underlying geology comprises *Oxford Clay Formation* (BGS – on-line viewer).
- 2.3 There is archaeological evidence for a Roman settlement at Cricklade, although its full extent is not known. Cricklade was an important local centre in the late Saxon period and large parts of the town are designated as a Scheduled Monument (1004679). The site itself is situated within the Scheduled Monument and, as such Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) was sought and granted (**Historic England Ref: S00108021**).
- 2.4 The site therefore contained the potential for significant archaeological features and deposits, predominantly associated with the Roman, Saxon and Medieval periods. This did not prejudice the works against the recovery of finds or features associated with other periods.

## 3 AIMS

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains; as well as to make recommendations for management of the resource, including further archaeological works if necessary. In turn this will allow reasonable planning decisions to be taken regarding the archaeological provision for the areas affected by the proposed development.
- 3.2 These aims were achieved through pursuit of the following specific objectives:

## 6 North Wall, Cricklade: Archaeological Watching Brief

- i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible;
- ii) to attempt to characterise the nature and preservation of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning and extent of features present on the site;
- iii) to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence which will attempt to determine the complexity of the horizontal and vertical stratigraphy present, and to recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples;
- iv) to determine the potential of the site to provide palaeoenvironmental and/or economic evidence and the forms in which such evidence may be present.

## 4 METHODOLOGY

- 4.1 Intrusive groundworks were carried out under the constant direction of the attending archaeologist and were recorded in order to identify archaeological finds and deposits. Both the non-significant overburden and the footing trenches were excavated by a mechanical excavator using a toothless grading bucket. Spoil tips were visually scanned for finds.
- 4.2 All excavation and recording work was undertaken in accordance with the WSI and the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual.

## 5 RESULTS

- 5.1 Footings to the front of the existing property were dug partly through turf and topsoil, and partly through the existing tarmac driveway.
- 5.2 Stratigraphy within the area of turf and topsoil consisted of a layer of dark grey brown friable silty clay topsoil (1001) and turf up to 0.21m thick, which sealed a mixed layer of grey-beige clay and dark grey clay (1002) up to 0.35m thick. This layer contained Modern concrete breezeblocks and sealed the natural pale grey-beige clay. A Modern cut for a water pipe was present in this part of the footing.
- 5.3 Stratigraphy within the area of tarmac consisted of a layer of tarmac (2001) up to 0.10m thick, which sealed yellow sand and gravel underlay (2002), up to 0.16m thick. The underlay sealed a mixed layer of grey-beige clay and dark grey clay (2003), which was 0.32m thick and sealed the natural pale grey-beige clay. Four Modern services crossed the northern part of these footings preventing their excavation to the intended depth of 1.10m. The footings were therefore left in part at the level of 0.31m, which partially exposed the mixed layer but did not reach the natural clay.
- 5.4 No archaeological finds or features were present in the footings at the front of the existing property.

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- 5.5 Footings to the rear of the existing property were dug partly through a patio and partly through a gravel area adjacent to the patio.
- 5.6 Stratigraphy within the area of the patio consisted of patio slabs (3001), up to 0.04m deep, which were laid on top of yellow builder's sand and grit (3002), up to 0.07m thick. In the northern part of the footing this sealed a layer of Modern concrete (3003), 0.13m thick, which was laid on top of yellow builder's sand and grit (3004), up to 0.05m thick. This sealed a layer of dark grey-blue clay which contained patches of pale grey clay (3005), up to 0.35m thick. This mixed deposit sealed dark grey-blue plastic clay (3006), up to 0.40m thick. This layer contained occasional flecks of crushed ceramic material and sealed the pale grey plastic clay natural.
- 5.7 Stratigraphy within the gravel area consisted of 0.02m of white landscaping gravel (4001), which partly overlaid yellow builders sand and grit (4002), up to 0.23m thick. This layer contained Modern frogged brick fragments and sealed dark grey-brown silty clay (4003), up to 0.28m thick. This sealed a mixed layer of pale grey clay and dark-blue grey clay (4004), up to 0.50m thick. In the western part of this footing, this sealed a layer of Modern concrete (4006), which most likely represented over-spill from the house footings. The western part of the footing did not exceed the level of the Modern concrete (0.72m). In the central part of the footing, the mixed layer sealed a Modern plastic pipe which was operational at the time of the watching brief; again the footing did not exceed this level (0.62m). In the eastern part of the footing, the mixed layer sealed very moist dark grey-blue plastic clay (4007) which was at least 0.40m deep. This layer contained a number of sherds of Roman pottery ranging in date from the 2<sup>nd</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> centuries, one fragment of *tegula* roofing tile, one piece of possible worked flint and animal bone. This deposit was very similar in appearance to the dark grey-blue clay in footings dug through the patio. The depth of the footings did not penetrate through this dated layer.

## 6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 6.1 The watching brief identified an archaeological deposit (4007) which dated to the Roman period. This contained a number of sherds of Roman pottery, a piece of possible worked flint, animal bone and a single fragment of *tegula* roofing tile. The latter suggests the possibility of buildings in the vicinity.
- 6.2 Dark grey-blue plastic clay (3006) was very similar in appearance to archaeological deposit (4007) and could possibly represent an extension of the deposit. However, no finds were recovered from (3006) to support this hypothesis.
- 6.3 A dark grey-blue clay very similar in appearance to the archaeological deposit was present within the mixed layers (1002), (2003), (3005), (4004), which sealed Modern services present across the site. It is therefore possible that the archaeological deposit from which the Roman artefactual evidence was recovered represents part of a larger, truncated feature. The mixed layers also contained re-deposited natural clay, which suggests that the area around the existing house had been significantly disturbed and



## 6 North Wall, Cricklade: Archaeological Watching Brief

possibly stripped during its construction, with the stripped material then reused at a later date.

- 6.4 Modern disturbance in the form of service cuts was present throughout the watched area. This may have previously truncated archaeological deposits within the study area.
- 6.5 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with Swindon Museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the relevant journal and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

## 7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists. 2008. *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs*.

Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG), 2012. *National Planning Policy Framework*.

English Heritage. 2006. *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE)*.

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## 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Hayley and David Cook, Hugh Beamish of Historic England, Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger at Wiltshire Council and the on-site workers for their assistance during the course of this project.

## **Appendix 1: The Pottery**

## 6 North Wall, Cricklade: Archaeological Watching Brief

Summary by Dr Jane Timby

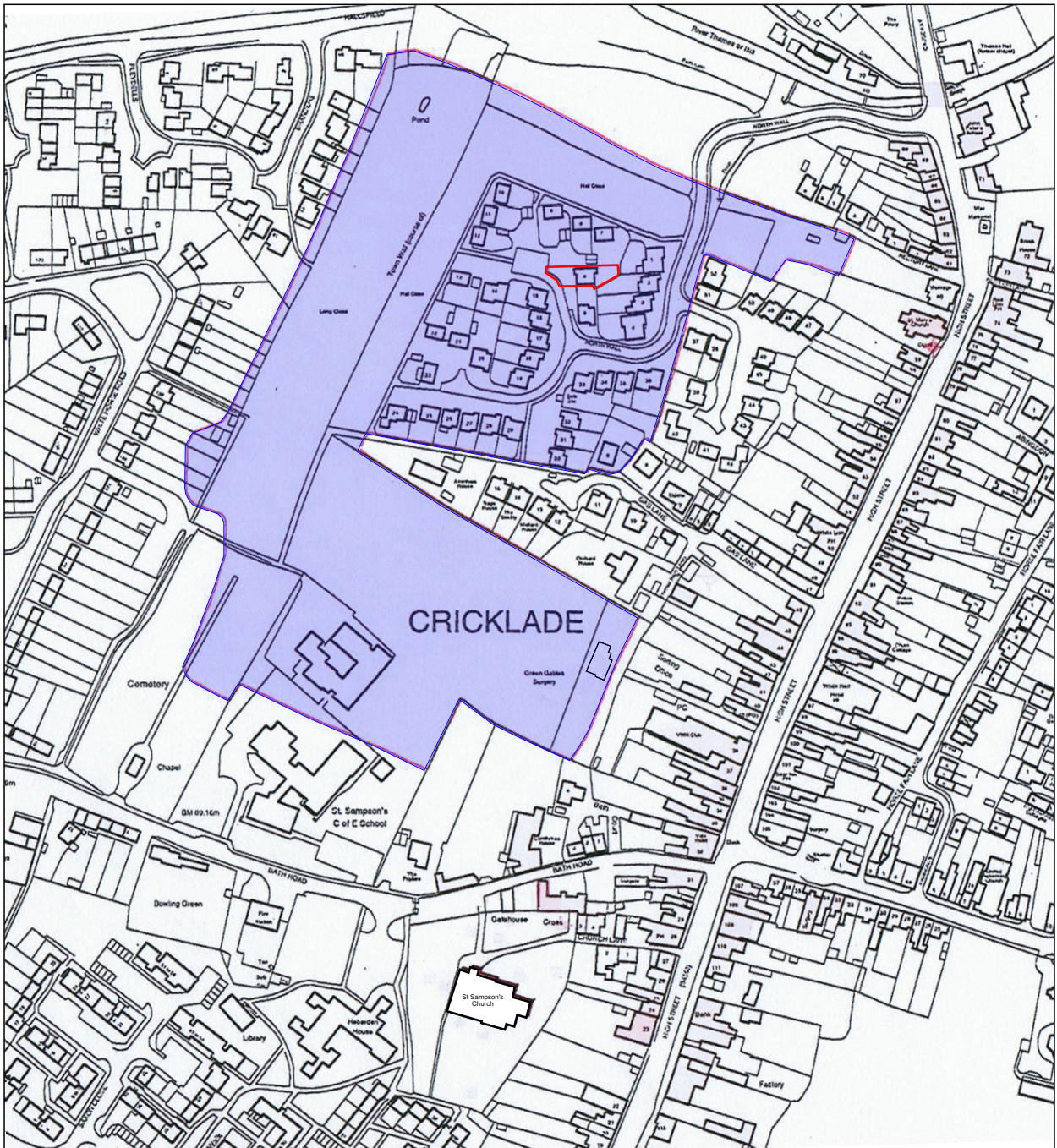
The archaeological work resulted in the recovery of a small assemblage of six sherds of pottery weighing 70 g and one fragment of ceramic building material. The complete group came from context (4007). Although the assemblage contains a mixture of material the latest sherd, a piece of Oxfordshire colour-coated ware, dates it to the later Roman period. The sherds are in relatively good condition in terms of preservation although the group contains no diagnostic rim sherds.

The pottery comprises three sherds of Dorset black burnished ware jar made in the Poole Harbour area; one (broken) sherd of Wiltshire oxidised ware; one sherd of Oxfordshire colour-coated ware and one sherd of local colour-coated ware. The tile fragments is from a *tegula* (roofing tile).

No further work is recommended.


### Catalogue



1. Two joining (fresh break) sherds of Wiltshire oxidised ware. Wt. 23 g. Date: 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century.
2. Three sherds of Dorset black burnished ware. Wt. 31 g. Date: 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century.
3. One sherd local colour-coated ware. Wt. 2 g. Date: 2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> century.
4. One sherd Oxfordshire colour-coated ware. Wt. 14 g. Date: mid-3<sup>rd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> century.
5. One fragment *tegula* roofing tile. Wt. 48g. Date: Roman.




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**N**

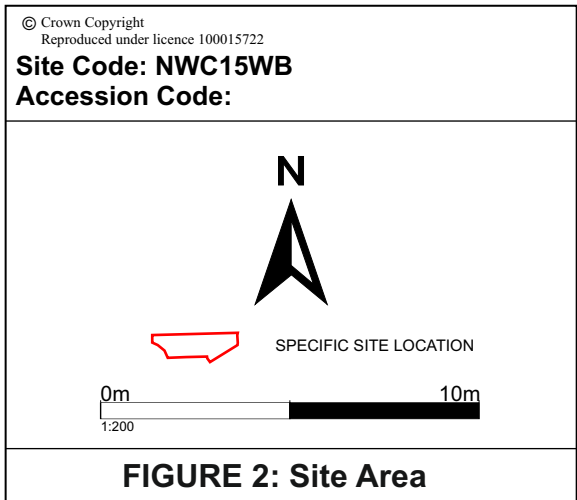
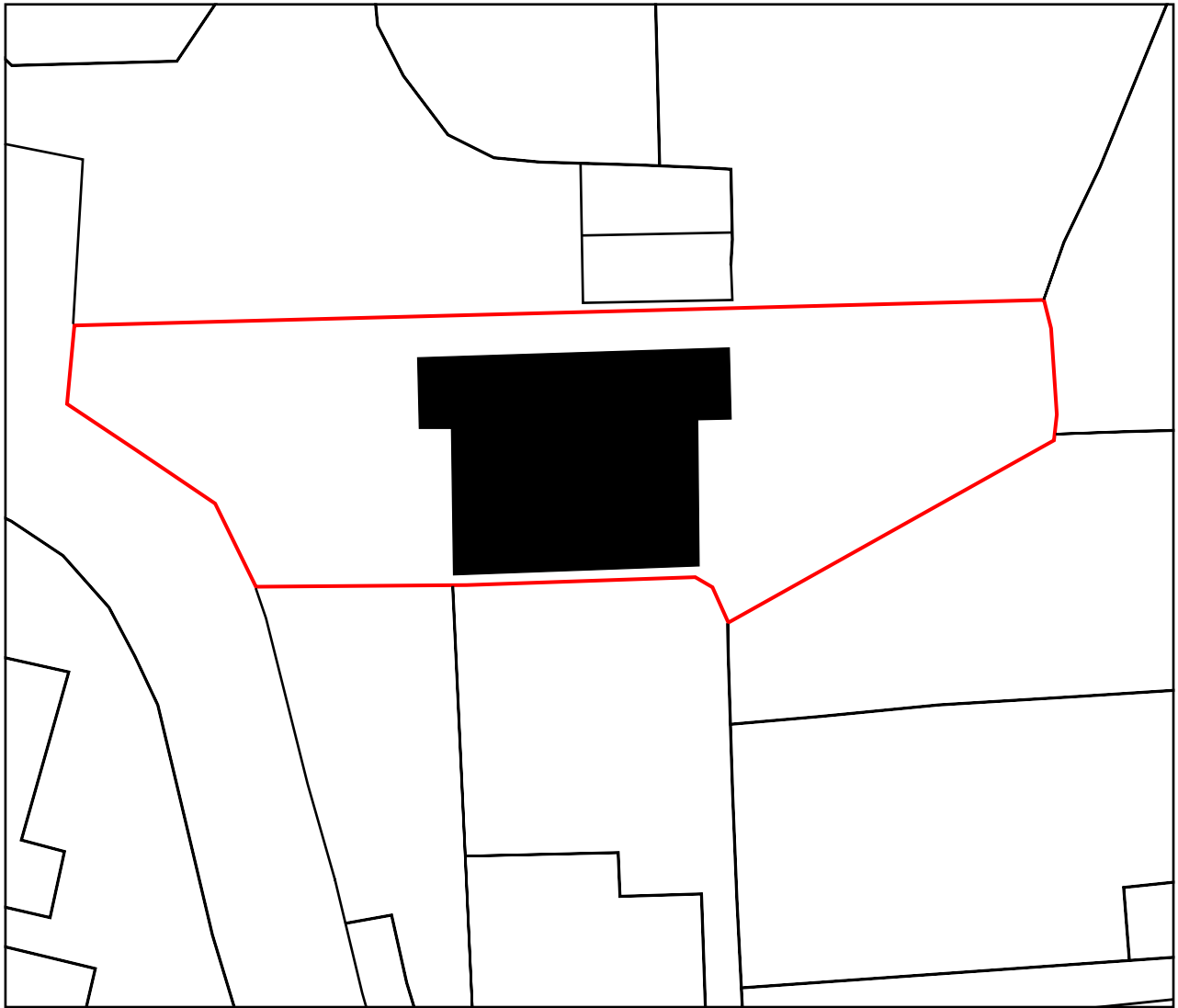


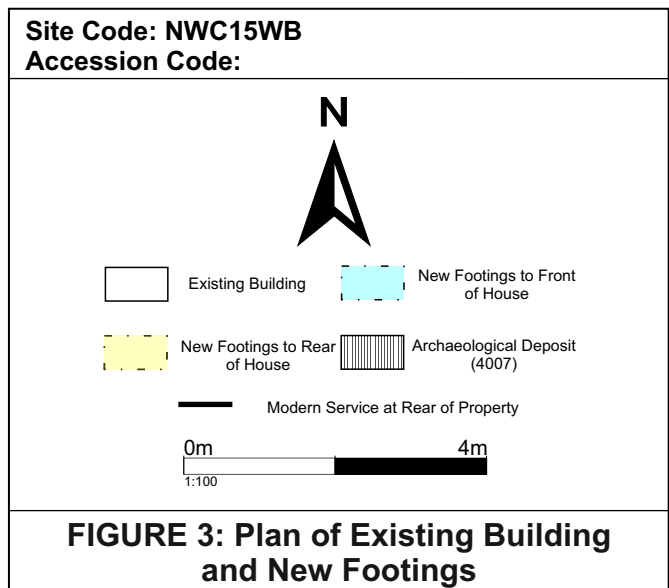
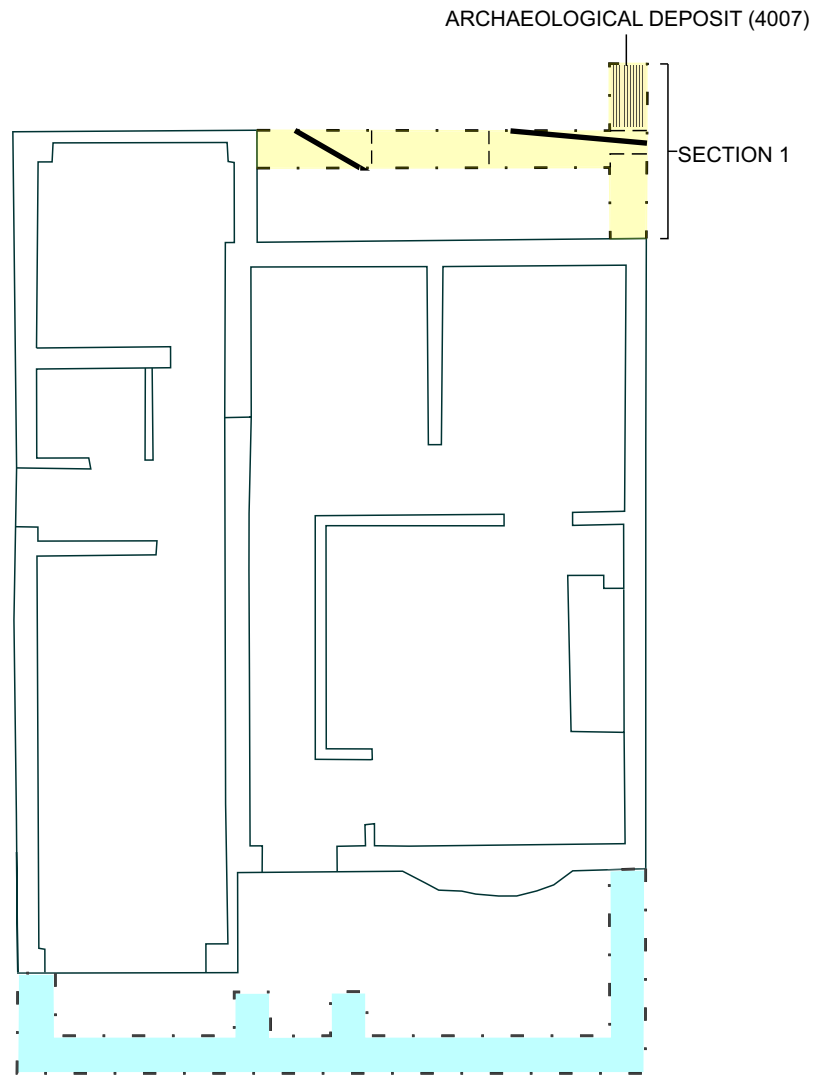
 SCHEDULED ANCIENT MONUMENT  
 SITE LOCATION

0m 100m



**FIGURE 1: Site Location**





**NORTH FACING SECTION OF FOOTING AT REAR OF HOUSE**

