

**T H A M E S      V A L L E Y**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

**S E R V I C E S**

**Land adjacent to 12 Oxford Street,  
Aldbourne, Wiltshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Andy Mundin**

**Site Code: OSA16/245**

**(SU 2660 7575)**

**Land adjacent to 12 Oxford Street,  
Aldbourn, Wiltshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Mr George Spence**

by Andrew Munding

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code OSA 16/245

**July 2017**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land adjacent to 12 Oxford Street, Aldbourne, Wiltshire

**Grid reference:** SU 2660 7575

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 14th to 27th June 2017

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Rebecca Constable, Andrew Munding

**Site code:** OSA 16/245

**Area of site:** c. 400 sq m

**Summary of results:** Observations were undertaken during excavations of the existing banking to the rear of the site and the excavation of footing trenches. No archaeological deposits were present on the site nor finds of archaeological interest recovered.

**Location and reference of archive:** The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Devizes Museum in due course.

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Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 11.07.17 Steve Preston ✓ 11.07.17
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# Land adjacent to 12 Oxford Street, Aldbourne, Wiltshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andrew Muddin

Report 16/245

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out on land adjacent to 12 Oxford Street, Aldbourne, Wiltshire, SN8 2DQ (SU 2660 7575) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by the landowner, Mr George Spence, Weathercock Cottage, Maddle Farm, Lambourn, Hungerford, Berkshire, RG17 8RA.

A planning consent (16/06699/VAR) has been granted by Wiltshire Council to construct a new dwelling fronting the street and associated off street parking, with terracing of an area to the rear. The consent is subject to a condition (5), which requires a watching brief to be carried out during groundworks.

This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Ms Rachel Foster of Wiltshire Council and was monitored by her. The fieldwork was undertaken by Rebecca Constable, Andrew Muddin and Michael Johnson between 14th and 27th June 2017. The site code is OSA16/245.

The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Devizes Museum in due course.

## Location, topography and geology

Aldbourne is situated in a dry valley bottom, around 5km north of Ramsbury, and 7km north-east of Marlborough on the Wiltshire/Berkshire Downs (Fig. 1). The site is located at the bottom of a gently sloped road (Oxford Street) with the plot of land on its southern side, between two properties (Fig. 2). Oxford Street is on the east side of the village with most of the older core of the housing centred around the village green which is to the west. The parish church of St Michael's lies to the north of the Green. The underlying geology is New Pit Chalk Formation (BGS 2006) and the site is located approximately 129m above Ordnance Datum (aOD)

## **Archaeological background**

Aldourne lies in the archaeologically rich North Wessex Downs with large numbers of sites, finds and landscape features (such as field systems and boundary ditches), several of which are upstanding as earthworks but with many others recorded by aerial photography (Richard 1978).

Aldbourn has late Saxon origins with a charter of AD 970 naming *Aldincburnan*, a name which is thought to be derived from 'Ealda's *burna*' or stream. Saxon remains have also been found within the village itself relatively recently. A cemetery was located north of the Marlborough Road and a small multi-phased site showed continual land use of the west side of the village since Roman times (Stoodley *et al.* 2012; Holt *et al.* 2013). The village contains many Post-Medieval buildings of interest. The adjacent property to this development, is Grade II Listed (12 Oxford Street) and is thought to have originally been a 17th-18th century Farmhouse (Pl. 1).

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the groundworks. This was to involve examination of all areas of intrusive groundwork, in particular ground reduction, overburden stripping, the digging of foundation trenching and drainage. Most focus would be paid to areas where natural geology would be disturbed. Any archaeological relevant levels would be fully investigated in the footprint of the new building.

## **Results**

All excavation was undertaken with a 360° mechanical excavator fitted with a bladed bucket.

### *Terrace extension*

Initially, an area of terracing was inserted into the slope at the rear of the plot. A thin skim of topsoil was removed to expose the chalk natural geology prior to further ground reduction (Fig. 3; Pl. 2). No archaeological deposits were exposed and no archaeological finds were encountered.

### *Overburden removal*

For the footprint of the new development 0,2m of topsoil, a chalky, brown silty clay, was also removed to expose the chalk natural geology. No archaeological deposits were exposed and no archaeological finds were encountered.

#### *Footing trenches*

The excavation of footing trenches was also monitored. These were 0.9m deep but revealed no archaeological deposits (Pls 3 and 4).

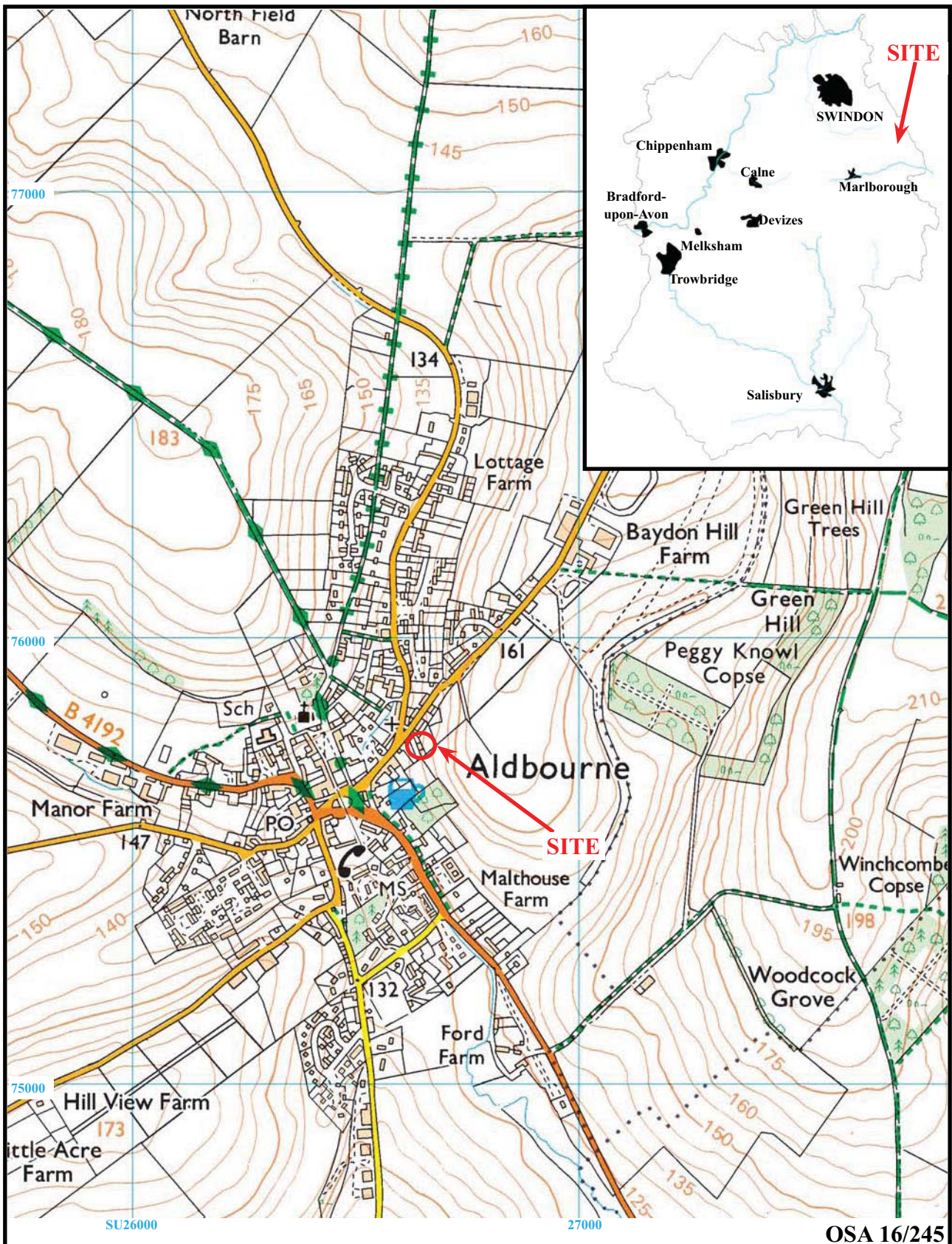
### **Conclusion**

Observations were successfully undertaken during excavation at the site. However no archaeological deposits were present and no archaeological finds recorded.

### **References**

- BGS, 2006, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 267 (Newbury), Bedrock and Superficial Deposits Edition, Keyworth
- Holt, R, Geber, J and McSloy, E R, 2013, 'Excavation of a multi-period site at Barnes Coaches Depot, Aldbourne, Wiltshire', *Wilts Archaeol Natur Hist Mag* **106**, 89–100
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- Richards, J C, 1978, *The Archaeology of the Berkshire Downs*, Berkshire Archaeol Comm Pubn **3**, Reading
- Stoodley, N, Boylston A and McKinley, J, 2012, 'An early Saxon cemetery at Aldbourne, Wiltshire', *Wilts Archaeol Natur Hist Mag* **105**, 58–95





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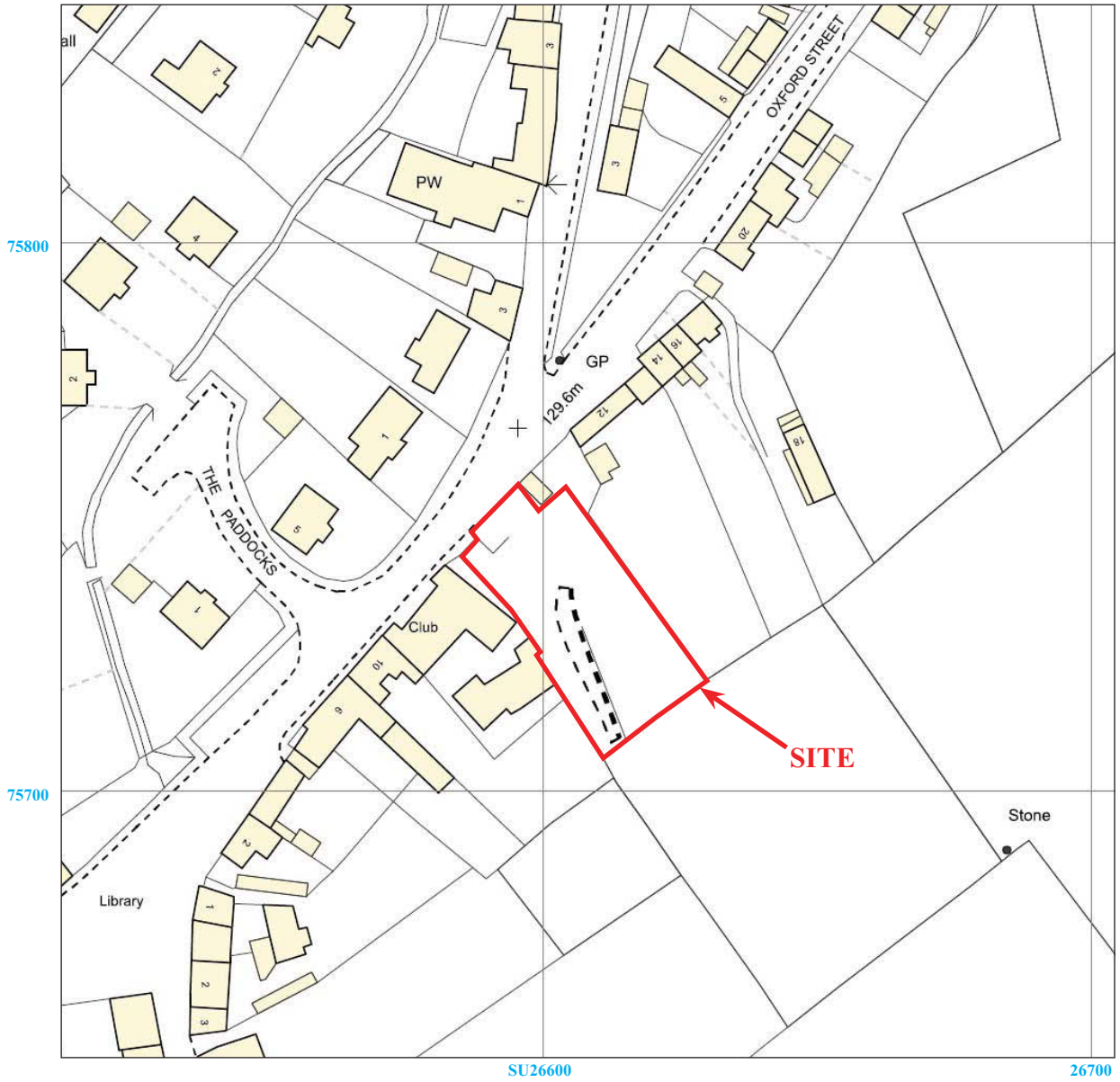
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Figure 1. Location of site within Aldbourne and Wiltshire.

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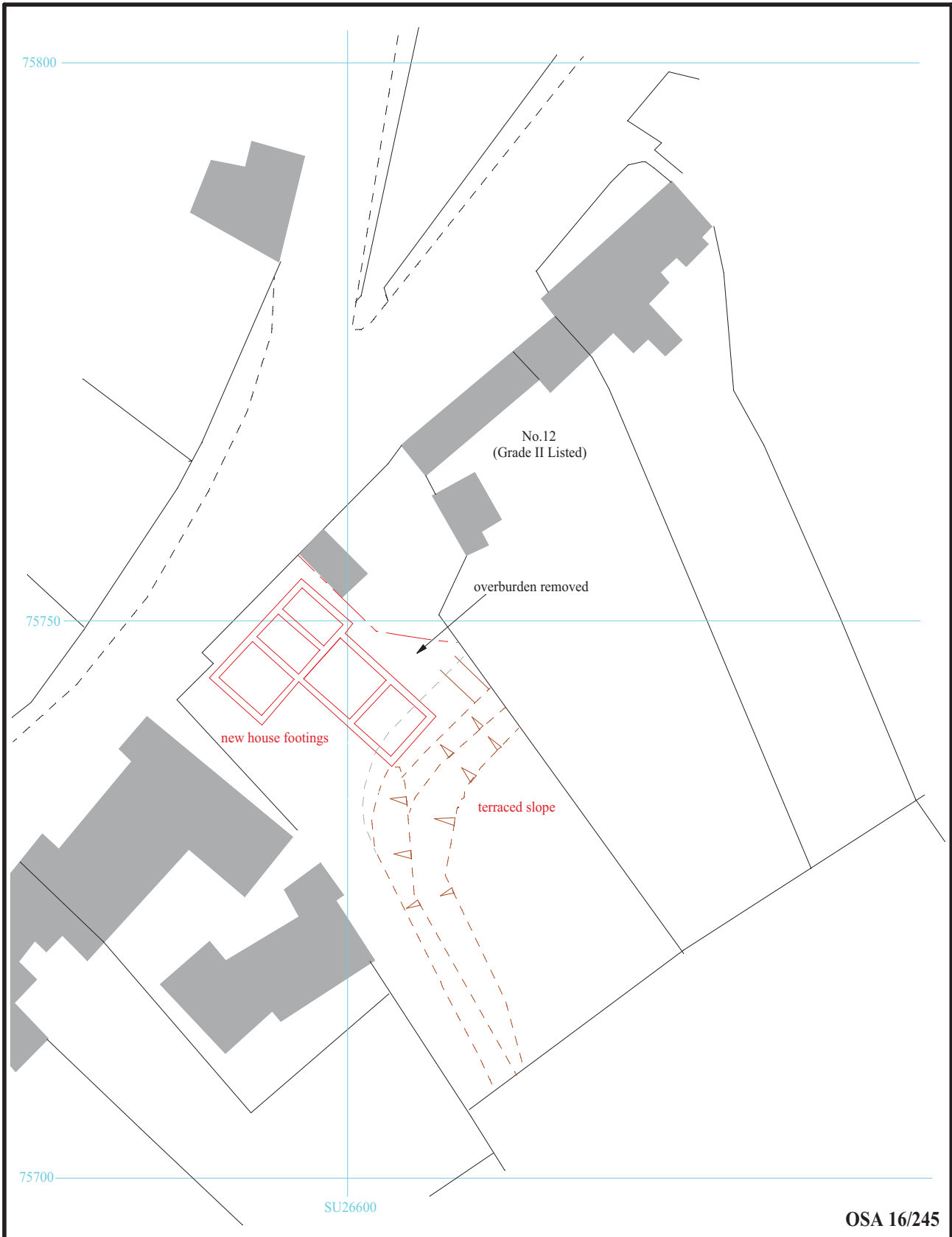
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Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



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Plate 1. The Grade II Listed property 12 Oxford Street, looking south east.



Plate 2. The terraced slope at the rear of the plot, looking south south east.

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Plates 1 and 2.**

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Plate 3. The excavated footings, looking north west.



Plate 4. Representative section, looking south east, Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 1m.

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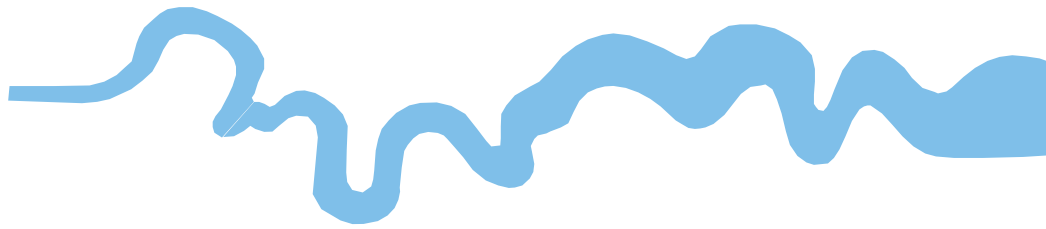
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Plates 3 and 4.**

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## TIME CHART

	Calendar Years
Modern _____	AD 1901
Victorian _____	AD 1837
Post Medieval _____	AD 1500
Medieval _____	AD 1066
Saxon _____	AD 410
Roman _____	AD 43 AD 0 BC
Iron Age _____	750 BC
Bronze Age: Late _____	1300 BC
Bronze Age: Middle _____	1700 BC
Bronze Age: Early _____	2100 BC
Neolithic: Late .....	3300 BC
Neolithic: Early .....	4300 BC
Mesolithic: Late .....	6000 BC
Mesolithic: Early .....	10000 BC
Palaeolithic: Upper .....	30000 BC
Palaeolithic: Middle .....	70000 BC
Palaeolithic: Lower .....	2,000,000 BC





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