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**ARCHAEOLOGICAL**

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

**Land to the rear of The Old Vicarage, The Green,  
Warborough, Oxfordshire**

**Archaeological Watching Brief**

**by Andy Muddin**

**Site Code: NWO17/176  
(SU 5987 9376)**

**Land at the rear of The Old Vicarage, The Green,  
Warborough, Oxfordshire**

**An Archaeological Watching Brief**

**For Ms H Young**

by Andrew Muddin

Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code NWO 17/176

**January 2018**

## Summary

**Site name:** Land to the rear of The Old Vicarage, The Green, Warborough, Oxfordshire

**Grid reference:** SU 5987 9376

**Site activity:** Watching Brief

**Date and duration of project:** 6th November 2017 to 4th January 2018

**Project manager:** Steve Ford

**Site supervisor:** Andrew Munding

**Site code:** NWO 17/176

**Summary of results:** Observations were carried out on areas of topsoil stripping and the digging of footing trenches for a dwelling. Most of the area of the new dwelling was occupied by a backfilled pond. No archaeological deposits nor finds of interest were encountered.

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

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[www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp](http://www.tvas.co.uk/reports/reports.asp).*

Report edited/checked by: Steve Ford ✓ 08.01.18 Steve Preston ✓ 05.01.18
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# Land to the rear of The Old Vicarage, The Green, Warborough, Oxfordshire An Archaeological Watching Brief

by Andrew Munding

Report 17/176

## Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological watching brief carried out at on land to the north-west of The Old Vicarage, The Green, Warborough, Oxfordshire, OX10 4DW (SU 5987 9376) (Fig. 1). The works were commissioned by Mr Adam Dodgson, of Matthew T. Young Architects, 25 Hunts Hill, Goldsmiths Lane, Wallingford, OX10 0DN on behalf of Ms Helen Young, c/o her land agents, JPPC, Bagley Court, Hinksey Hill, Oxford, OX1 5BD.

Planning permission and Listed Building Consent (16/S2850/FUL) and (16/S2851/LB) have been gained from South Oxfordshire District Council for the construction of a new dwelling, with associated parking and access. Previous planning consents have expired. Due to the potential of below ground archaeological deposits being destroyed, conditions 12 and 13 have been attached to the consent, which require the production of a written scheme of investigation (WSI) prior to groundworks commencing, and works to be observed with an archaeologist in attendance. This is in accordance with the Department for Communities and Local Government's *National Planning Policy Framework* (NPPF 2012) and the District Council's policies on archaeology. A heritage impact assessment addressed the curtilage of the Grade II Listed boundary wall and adjoining stables (1181330) (Pl.1) in relation to this development, and found they would not be adversely effected, though two gateways in the wall between the garden and the development area (previously an orchard for the property) would require sealing (Maguire 2016).

The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Richard Oram, Planning Archaeologist for Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service, the archaeological adviser to the District. The fieldwork was undertaken by Andrew Munding on 6th November 2017 and 4th January 2018. The site code is NWO 17/176.

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

## **Location, topography and geology**

The site is located centrally within the village (Fig.1). The land was once part of a larger plot which belonged to The Old Vicarage (Fig. 2). This house is located immediately to the south-east of the proposed new development. The Old Vicarage is fronting The Green, on the opposite side of the road to St Laurence Church, A lane on the eastern boundary of the Vicarage, once called Butcher's Lane (as seen on historic maps), was to be extended to the site. The natural geology is Northmoor Sand and Gravel Member, a variant of the First Gravel Terrace of the River Thames (BGS 1980), and the site lies at a height of c.47m above Ordnance Datum. The River Thames is located less than 1km to the south-west.

## **Archaeological background**

Warborough parish is an area rich in remains from Neolithic to Roman settlement and funerary activity, some of which are Scheduled Ancient Monuments (SAM) (Benson and Miles 1974, maps 17-18, 36 and 40). Of buildings present in the village itself, the centre is covered by a Conservation Area, which includes the Old Vicarage which is 18th century and Grade II\* Listed (1048082). The Grade II\* Listed Church of St Laurence, on the opposite side of the Green, is mostly 14th century, with some 13th century elements and later parts, particularly the tower which is of 17th century date. Other properties on the north side of the Green are Grade II listed. The village was not referred to until 12th century texts, though it was thought to be a dependency of the earlier royal Saxon manor of Benson from before the Domesday Survey (1086). In 1140, a charter mentions a 'chapel' at Warborough, which was granted to Dorchester Abbey by Empress Matilda, along with one at Nettlebed (VCH 1962).

More specifically, the development site is adjacent to the Grade II Listed Stables and boundary wall (1181330) (Pl.1) of The Old Vicarage. These are both believed to be of 18th century date.

## **Objectives and methodology**

The purpose of the watching brief was to excavate and record any archaeological deposits affected by the ground works. This would involve mostly below ground deposits, that could be affected by ground reduction, landscaping and excavation footing trenches, services runs and drainage. All excavation was undertaken by mechanical excavator, fitted with a toothed ditching bucket, 0.9m wide. Topsoil removal was undertaken with a 1.5m bladed grading bucket.

## **Results**

### *House footprint*

An area of c. 470 sq m, was initially stripped of 0.29m of topsoil which did not fully exposed subsoil. Digging of the footing trenches then took place. There were c.1m deep and 0.7m wide. The undisturbed stratigraphy exposed in the southern sections revealed a further 0.1m of topsoil above 0.36m of soft light brown silty clay subsoil, above gravel natural geology. No archaeological deposits nor finds were encountered.

Observation of the majority of the foundation trenches (Fig. 5; Pl.3 and 4) noted a large continuous truncation on the north and central parts of the new excavation (Fig. 3). The liner of a pond was uncovered towards the base of the excavation at a depth of 0.9m. The fill was an homogenous mix of redeposited natural gravel and large areas of dark grey brown clayey silt. This contained occasional finds, much of which was brick and glass and metal of 20th-century date. Under this liner the natural gravel was exposed. No archaeological deposits nor finds were encountered.

### *Topsoil strip adjacent to Stables*

An area of topsoil was stripped to a depth of 0.25m against the southern and eastern boundary wall of the site, covering 120 sq m. (Pl.2). It revealed four inspection covers for drains and also a septic tank. No further groundworks took place in this area. No archaeological deposits nor finds were encountered.

### *Spoil dump*

A hollow in the adjoining paddock to the north was used to store surplus topsoil. This area had topsoil removed to a depth of 0.22m deep but did not remove subsoil nor exposed the natural geology. Spoil was dumped here and the original topsoil replaced. No archaeological finds or features were noted.

### *New access*

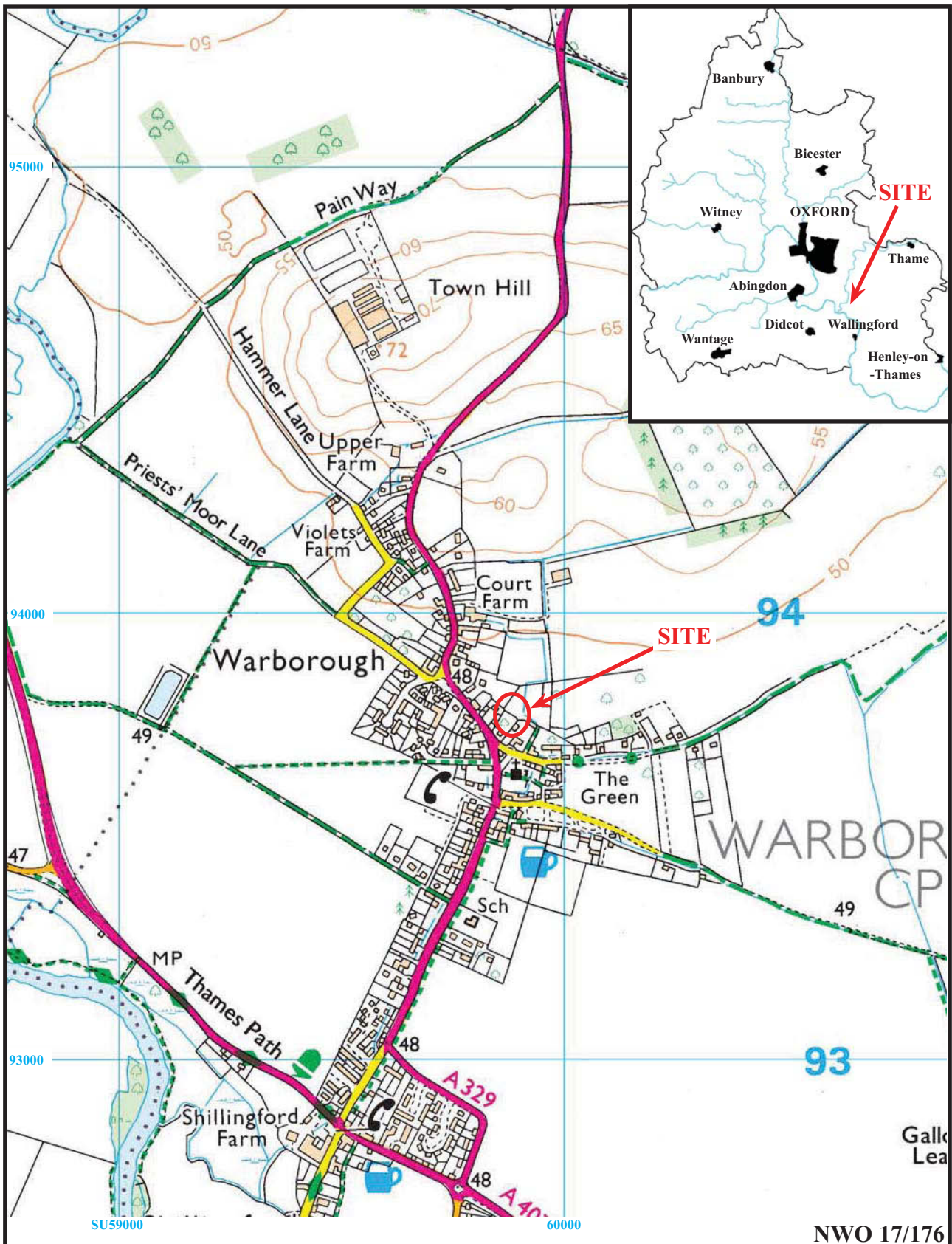
The new gravelled access land a turning circle linking with the existing access to the Old Vicarage was removed of topsoil to a depth no greater than 0.25m. This did not expose the archaeologically relevant levels and no archaeological finds were encountered.

## Conclusion

Despite the site's archaeological potential no deposits of 18th century date, nor earlier were encountered during the ground works. A large backfilled pond, had truncated the natural geology over much of the area new house footings. Other groundwork components of the project at other locations only removed topsoil without exposing the archaeologically relevant levels.

## References

- Benson, D and Miles, D, 1974, *The Upper Thames Valley: an archaeological survey of the river gravels*, Oxford Archaeological Unit Survey No. 2, Oxford
- BGS, 1980, *British Geological Survey*, 1:50 000, Sheet 254 (Henley-on-Thames), Solid and Drift Edition, Keyworth
- Maguire, P C, 2016, 'Land adjacent to The Old Vicarage, The Green North, Warborough, OX10 7DW (heritage impact assessment)', Asset Heritage Consulting client rep 9482, Oxford
- NPPF 2012, *National Planning Policy Framework*, Dept Communities and Local Govt, London
- VCH, 1962, Parish 'Dorchester', *A History of the County of Oxford: Vol. 7, Dorchester and Thame Hundreds*. Lobel, M (ed), British History Online <http://www.british-history.ac.uk/oxon/vol7/pp37-64> [accessed 7th Nov 2016]



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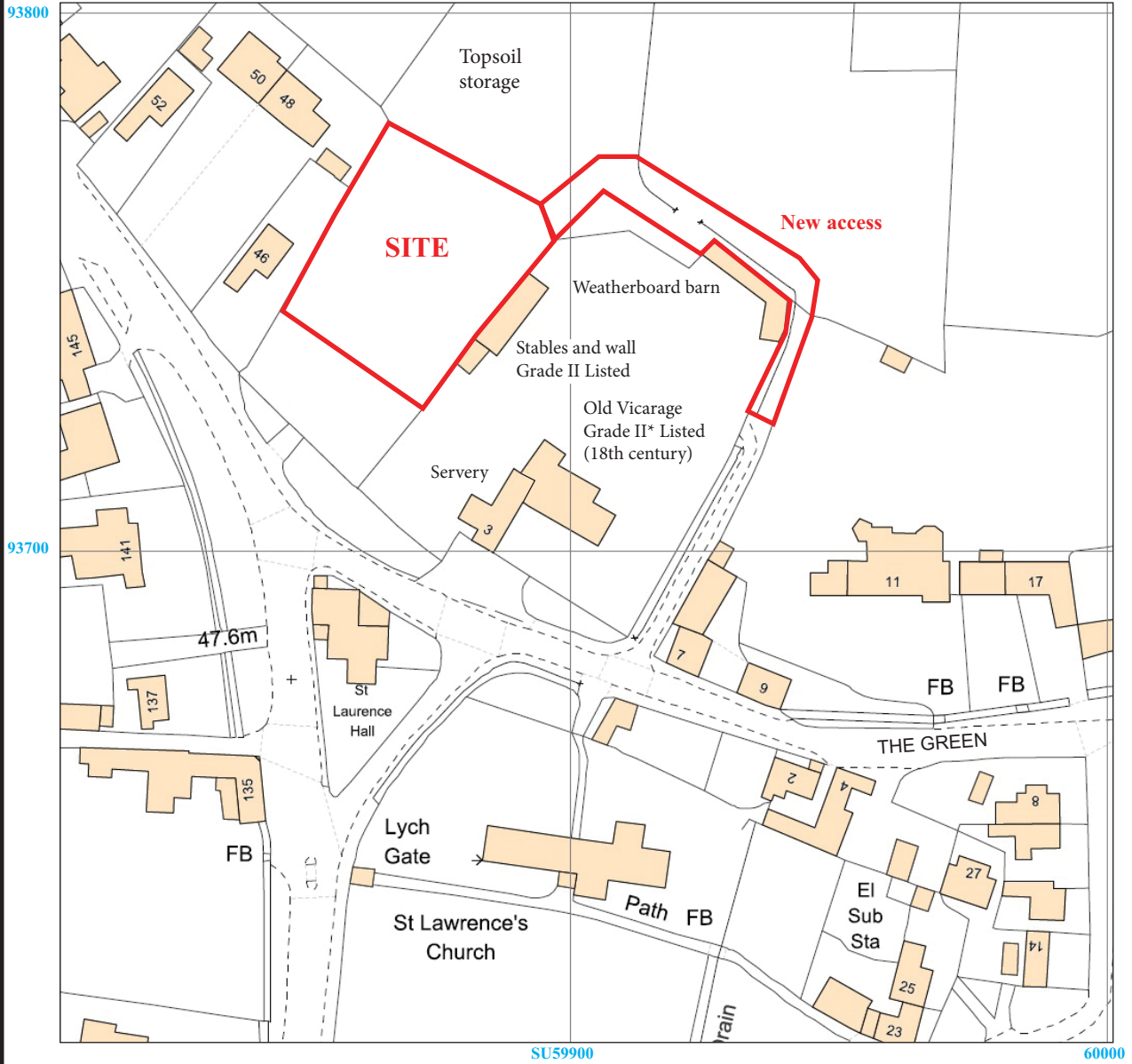
**Figure 1. Location of site within Warborough and  
Oxfordshire.**

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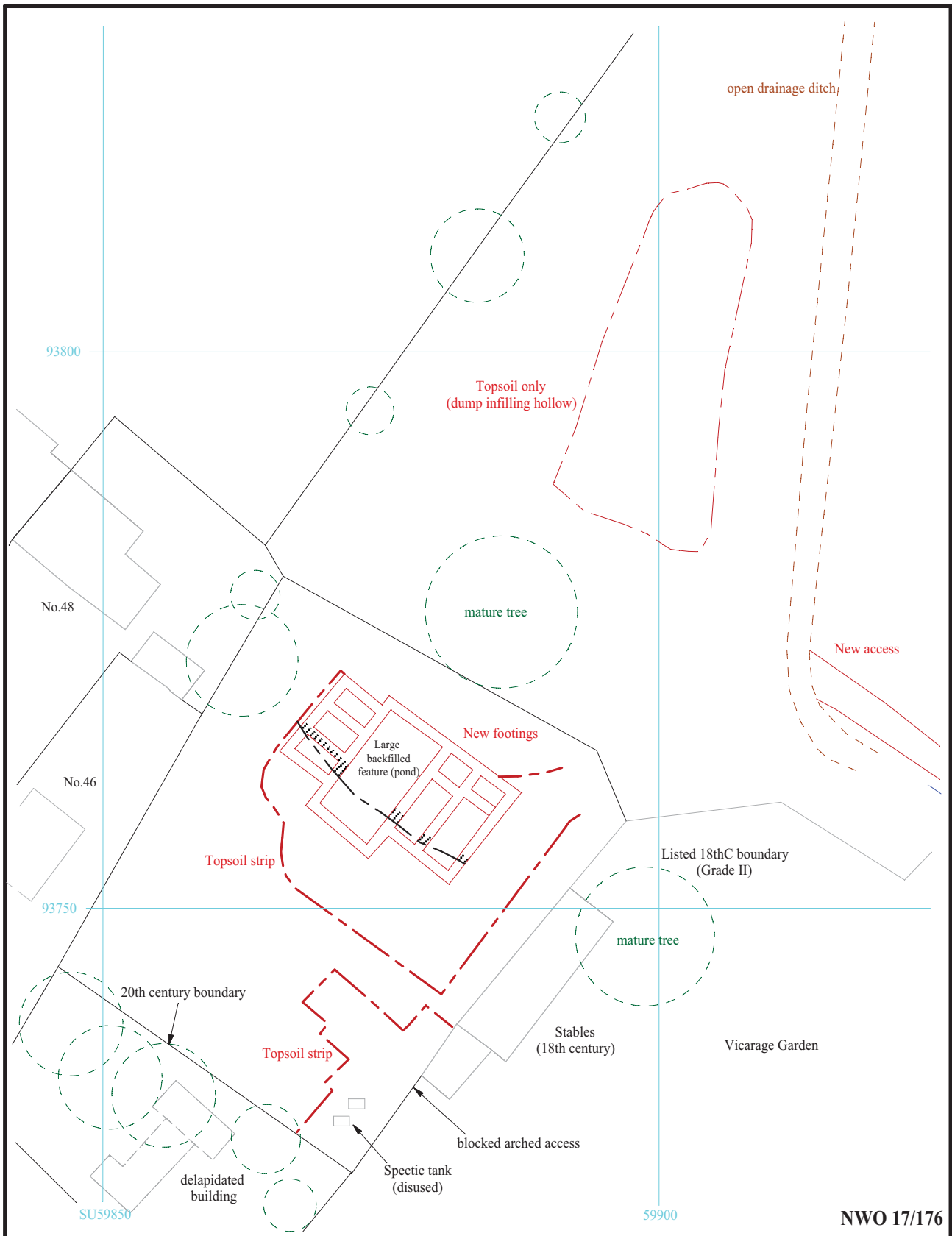
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 Figure 2. Detailed location of site.

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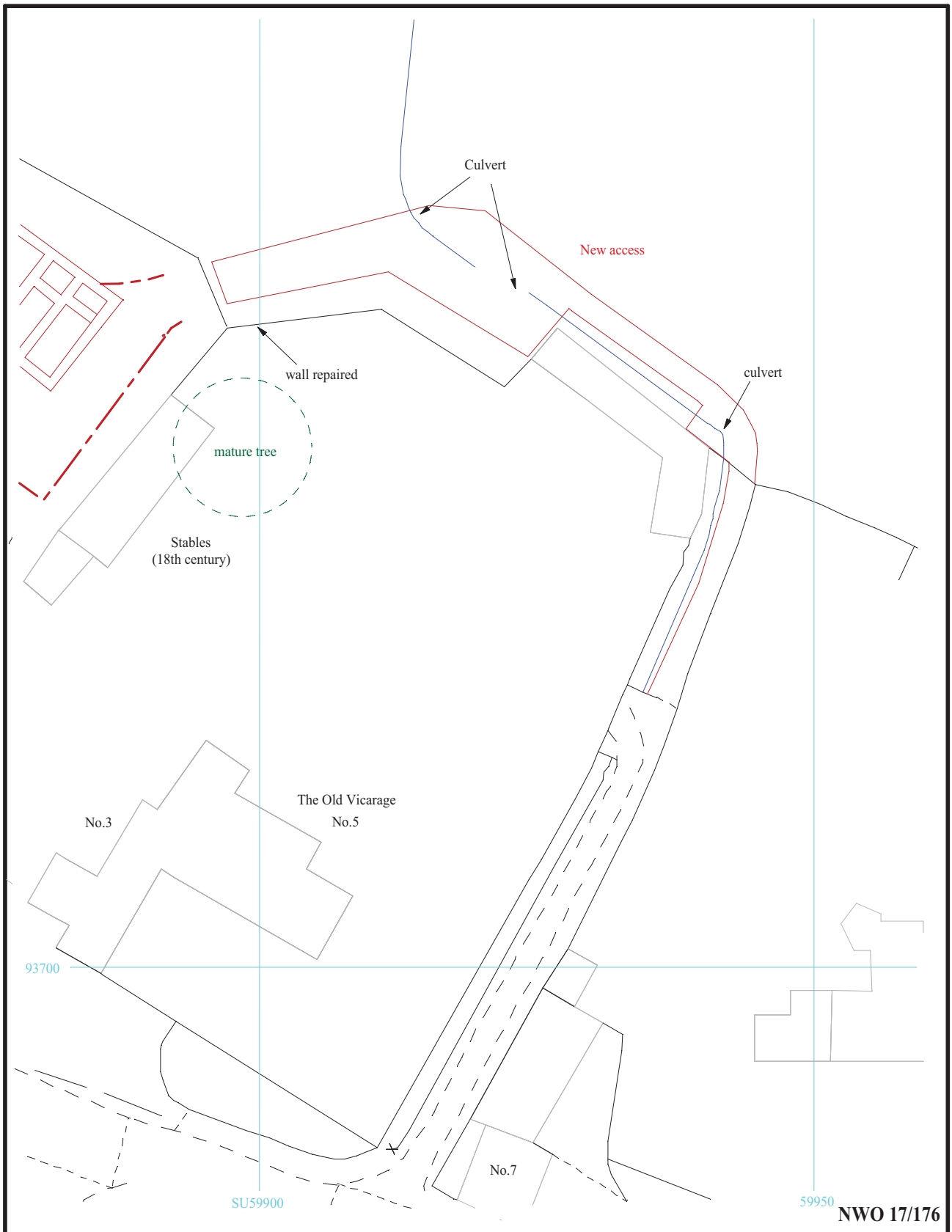


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Figure 3. Location of observed areas.



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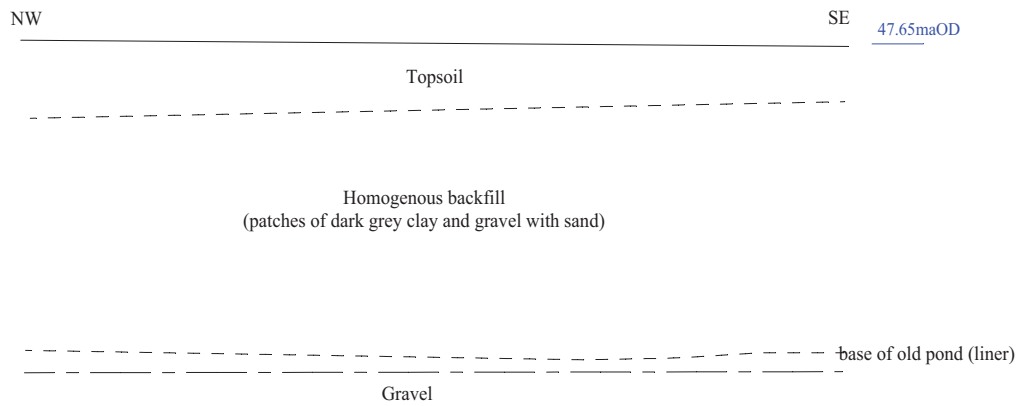


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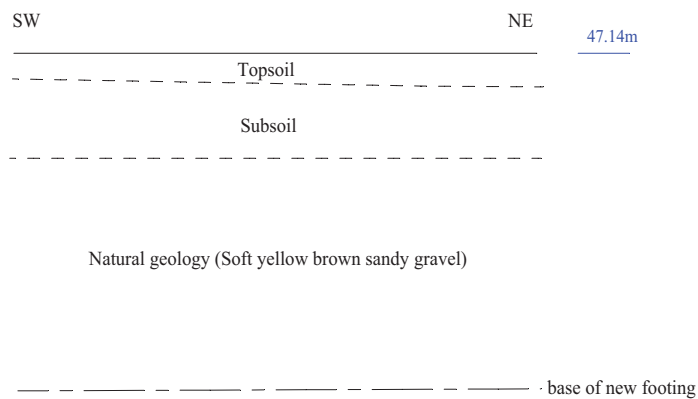
Figure 4. Location of new access.



*Truncated section*



*Non-truncated section (southern side)*



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Figure 5. Sections.





Plate 1. West elevation of adjoining Listed building, looking north east.



Plate 2. Topsoil stripped area for car parking, looking south east, Scales: 2m and 1m.

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Plates 1 and 2.

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Plate 3. Western side of new footings, looking north west, Scales: 1m and 0.5m.



Plate 4. Representative non-truncated section, looking north west,  
Scales: horizontal 0.5m, vertical 1m.

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Plates 3 and 4.

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Plate 5. New access, looking south east, Scale: 1m.



Plate 6. New access and turning circle, looking north west, Scale: 1m.

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Plates 1 and 2.**

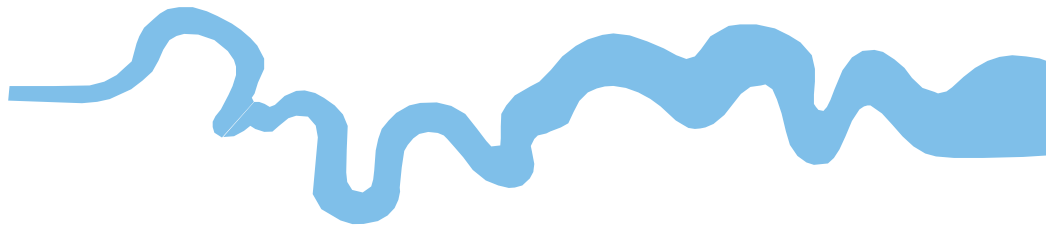
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## TIME CHART

	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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