

Shotover View, Craufurd Road, Oxford

**An Archaeological Evaluation
for Oxfordshire County Council**

by James Lewis
Thames Valley Archaeological Services Ltd

Site Code: CRO07/169

July 2008

Summary

Site name: Shotover View, Craufurd Road, Oxford

Grid reference: SP [5548 0469](#)

Site activity: Evaluation

Date and duration of project: 30th June to 1st July 2008

Project manager: Steve Ford

Site supervisor: James Lewis

Site code: CRO07/169

Area of site: c 0.6ha

Summary of results: No finds or features of archaeological interest were observed.

Monuments identified: None

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

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Report edited/checked by:	Steve Ford✓ 10.07.08
	Steve Preston✓ 10.07.08

Shotover View, Craufurd Road, Oxford An Archaeological Evaluation

by James Lewis

Report 07/169b

Introduction

This report documents the results of an archaeological field evaluation carried out at Shotover View, Craufurd Road, Oxford, (SP 5548 0469) (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Mr Jeremy Flawn, of Mouchel Parkman, Stratton Court, 1 Kimber Road, Abingdon, OX14 1SG on behalf of Oxfordshire County Council.

Planning applications are being prepared for submission to Oxford City Council for two potential developments, prior to disposal of the site at Shotover View, Craufurd Road, Oxford. As a consequence of the possibility of archaeological deposits being damaged or destroyed by the proposed development(s), an archaeological evaluation has been requested, which will provide information on the archaeological potential of the site and inform the planning process.

This is in accordance with the Department of the Environment's Planning Policy Guidance, *Archaeology and Planning* (PPG16 1990), and Oxford City Council's policies on archaeology. The field investigation was carried out to a specification approved by Mr Brain Durham, Oxford City Archaeologist. The fieldwork was undertaken by James Lewis and Oliver Brown between the 30th June and 1st of July 2008 and the site code is CRO 07/169. The archive is presently held at Thames Valley Archaeological Services, Reading and will be deposited at Oxfordshire County Museum Service in due course.

A desk-based assessment (Hopkins 2008) highlighted the archaeological potential of the site, which is based on the location of the site in area of east Oxford generally regarded as archaeologically rich, particularly for the Roman period.

Location, topography and geology

The site currently consists of a single building used as a residential nursing home in a residential area (Fig. 2). The building is in the centre of a roughly rectangular piece of land adjacent to and on the same level as the eastern portion of the Oxford Eastern By-pass, which forms the east boundary of the site. Craufurd Road and residential properties fronting Craufurd Road form the west and north boundaries; the south boundary is Horspath Road. The land has been landscaped and the building is surrounded by gardens and car-parking. The development area is centred on SP 5548 0469. The site is located on Upper Jurassic Corallian Formation,

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specifically Wheatley Limestone, including Coral Rag (BGS 1994). It is at a height of approximately 84m above Ordnance Datum and is c. 0.6ha in extent.

Archaeological background

The site lies within a broad zone of archaeological interest on the eastern and southern margins of the historic core of Oxford which is notable for the number of pottery production sites (Young 1977). This Late Roman pottery industry centred on the Cowley and Headington suburbs is comparable to other major production centres in the Nene Valley and the New Forest and the industry was of more than local importance, with products traded widely across southern Britain. The south-eastern part of Oxford may be described as a semi-industrial landscape and four kilns have been found at Cowley alone (Henig and Booth 2000, 166). The pottery works of Cowley are described as ‘huge’ (Blair 1994, xviii). Just 100m north of the current site, Iron Age and Roman occupation has been found (Challis 2006) there are several Roman burials in the surrounding area, and a Roman road passes nearby. The site is thought to have been farmland owned by the Knights of Temple Cowley in the 12th and 13th centuries. The site also lies close to a point on the Cowley and Horspath parish boundary suggested as the site of a hundredal court (moot) (VCH 1957).

Objectives and methodology

The purpose of the evaluation was to determine the presence/absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological deposits within the area of development.

The specific research aims of this project are:

- To determine if the archaeologically relevant levels have survived on this site
- To determine if any prehistoric occupation deposits are present on the site.
- To determine if evidence for Roman occupation or pottery production are present on the site.
- To determine if late Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval deposits are present on the site especially any deposits related to the site of a Saxon moot.

It was proposed to excavate 5 trenches, four of 18m length and one of 5m, each 1.6m wide. Topsoil, turf and any other overburden were to be removed by a JCB-type machine under constant archaeological supervision, to expose archaeologically sensitive levels. Where archaeological features are certainly or probably present, the stripped areas were to be cleaned using appropriate hand tools. Sufficient of the archaeological features and

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deposits exposed were to be excavated or sampled by hand to satisfy the aims of the brief. This work was to be carried out in a manner which would not compromise the integrity of archaeological features or deposits which might warrant preservation *in situ*, or might be better be excavated under conditions pertaining to full excavation. Spoil heaps were to be monitored.

Results

Six trenches were eventually excavated ranging in length from 5m to 18m in the positions shown in Figure 3. A complete list of trenches giving lengths, breadths, depths and a description of sections and geology is given in Appendix 1.

Trench 1 (Pl. 1)

Trench 1 was aligned WNW–ESE and measured 18m in length and was 0.79m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.28m of topsoil over 0.24m of brown sandy clay and this overlay the natural geology which consisted of a brown clay with limestone and peri-glacial stripes. No archaeological finds or deposits were revealed.

Trench 2 (Pl. 2)

Trench 2 was aligned north–south and measured 18m and 0.48m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m of Tarmac and rubble, over 0.13m of brown sandy clay and this overlay the natural geology. No archaeological finds or deposits were revealed.

Trench 3

Trench 3 was aligned NNE-SSW and measured 17m in length and 0.50m deep. The trench was subdivided into two parts due to the presence of buried service. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.29m of Tarmac and rubble overlying 0.20m of brown sandy clay. Underneath this was the natural geology (Fig. 4). No archaeological finds or deposits were revealed.

Trench 4

Trench 4 was aligned east-west and measured 5m in length and was 0.21m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.21m of topsoil directly above the natural geology. No archaeological finds or deposits were revealed.

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Trench 5 (Pls 3 and 4)

Trench 5 was aligned northeast-southwest and measured 18m in length and was 0.75m deep. The stratigraphy consisted of 0.31m Tarmac and rubble over 0.21m of yellow sand, underneath this was 0.22m of compact dark grey clay and this overlay the natural geology. No archaeological finds or deposits were revealed.

Trench 6

Trench 6 was 5m in length and was aligned east-west. The stratigraphy consisted of Tarmac and rubble which was 0.34m thick, this overlay 0.25m of yellow sand and underneath this was 0.22m of compact dark grey clay. This overlay the natural geology. No archaeological finds or deposits were revealed.

Finds

No finds of archaeological interest were recovered.

Conclusion

The trenching revealed no archaeological deposits, features or finds. Subsoil survival across the trenches 1–3 indicates that this area of the site had not been extensively truncated. In trenches 4–6 the absence of subsoil suggests some truncation presumably from the recent episode of landscaping for the present nursing home. Based on the results of this trenching exercise, the site appears to have little or no archaeological potential.

References

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- VCH 1957, *Victoria County History, Oxfordshire V*
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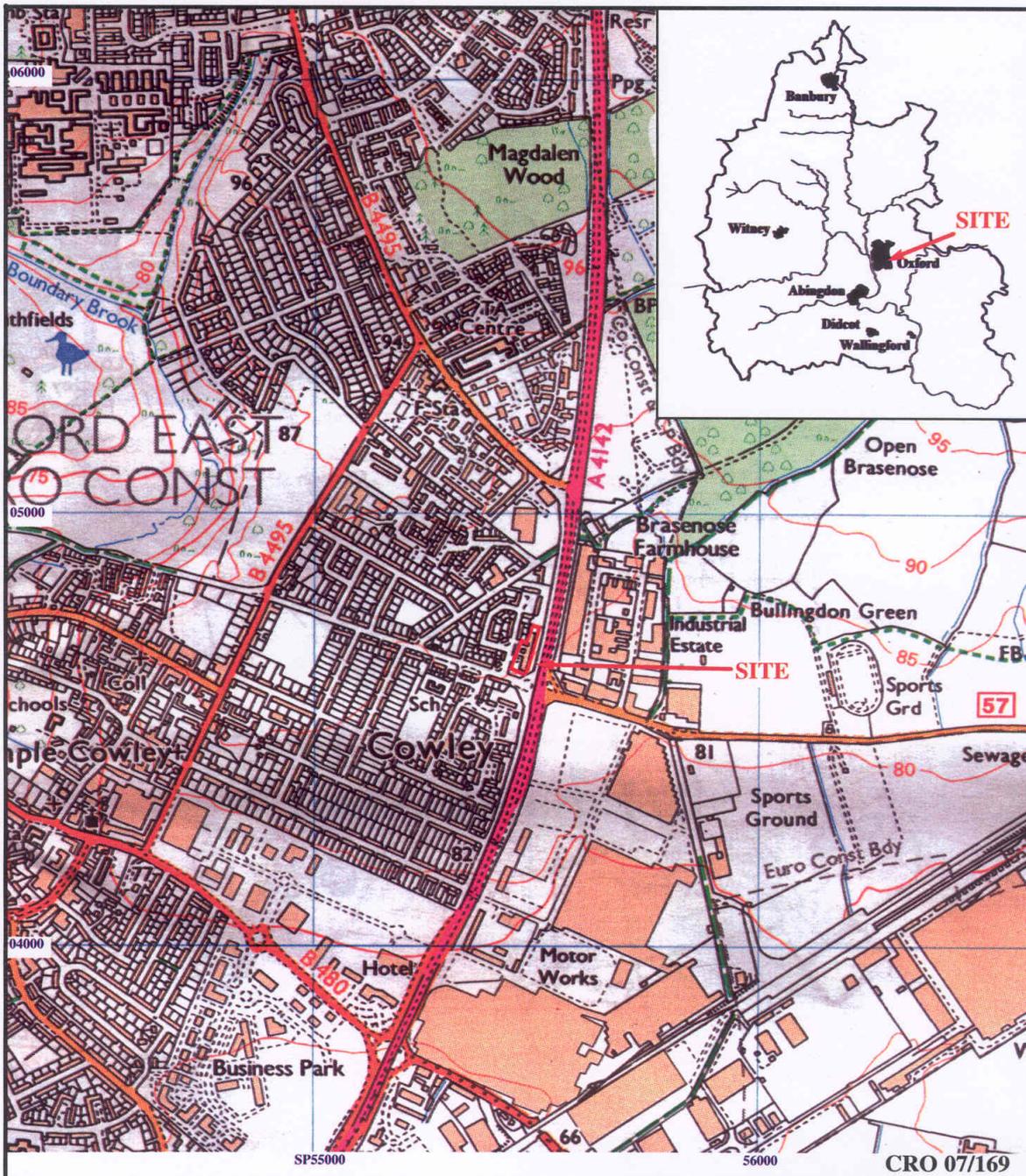
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APPENDIX 1: Trench details

<i>Trench</i>	<i>Length (m)</i>	<i>Breadth (m)</i>	<i>Depth (m)</i>	<i>Comment</i>
1	18.0	1.6	0.79	0-28 topsoil, 0.28-0.62 brown clayey sand, 0.62 + natural geology. [Plate 1]
2	18.0	1.6	0.48	0-0.31 Tarmac and rubble, 0.31-0.44 brown clayey sand, 0.44+ natural geology. [Plate 2]
3	17.0	1.6	0.50	0-0.29 Tarmac and rubble, 0.29-0.49 brown clayey sand, 0.49 + natural geology.
4	5.0	1.6	0.21	0-0.20 topsoil 0.20+ natural geology.
5	17.9	1.6	0.75	0-0.31 Tarmac and rubble, 0.31-0.63 brown silty clay, 0.63-0.75 grey silty clay, 0.75+ natural geology. [Plates 3 and 4]
6	5.0	1.6	0.91	0-0.34 Tarmac and rubble, 0.34- 0.59 yellow sand, 0.59-0.71 brown clayey sand, 0.71+ natural geology.

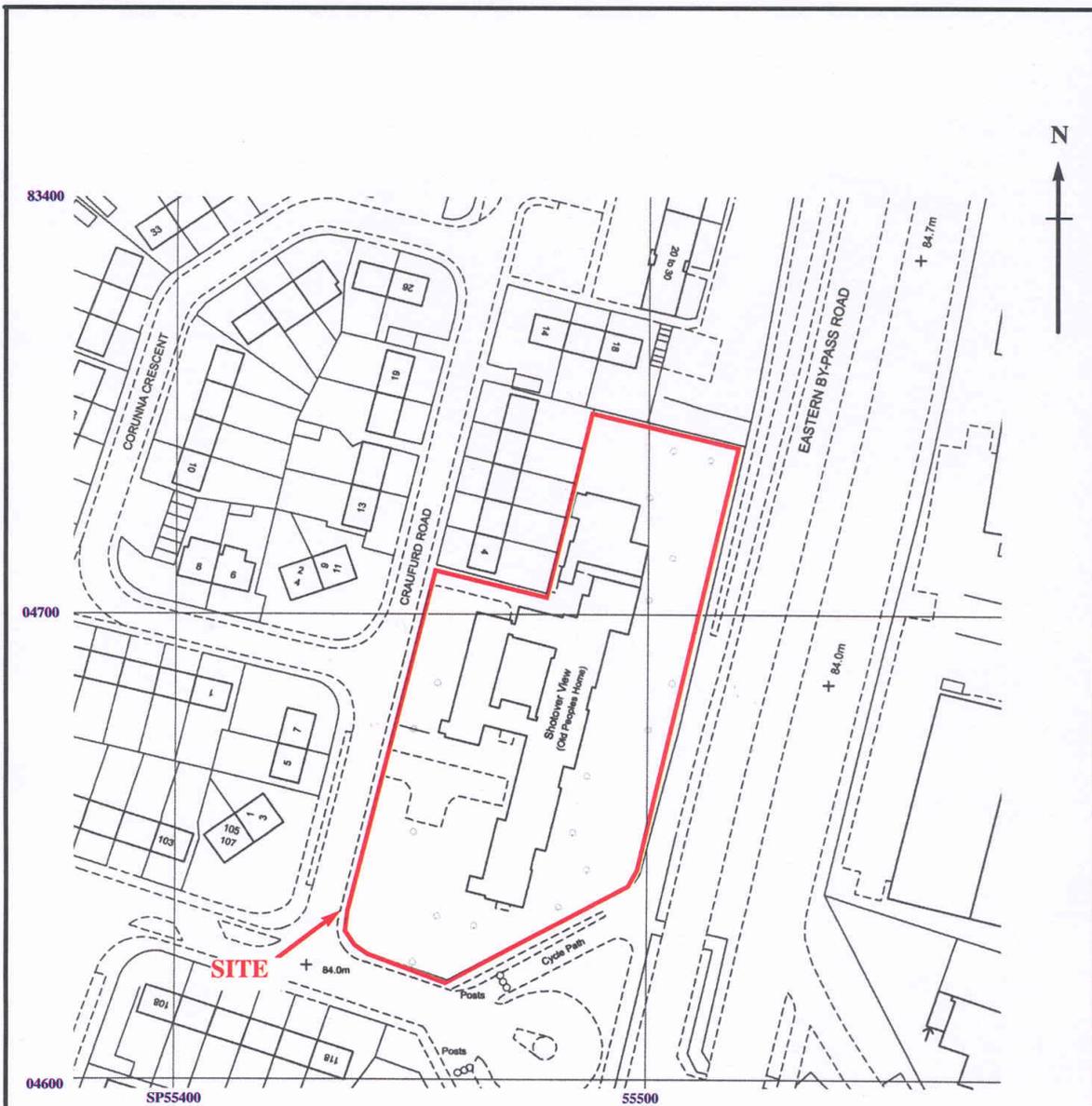


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Figure 1. Location of site within Oxford and
Oxfordshire.

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Figure 2. Detailed location of site on Craufurd Road.

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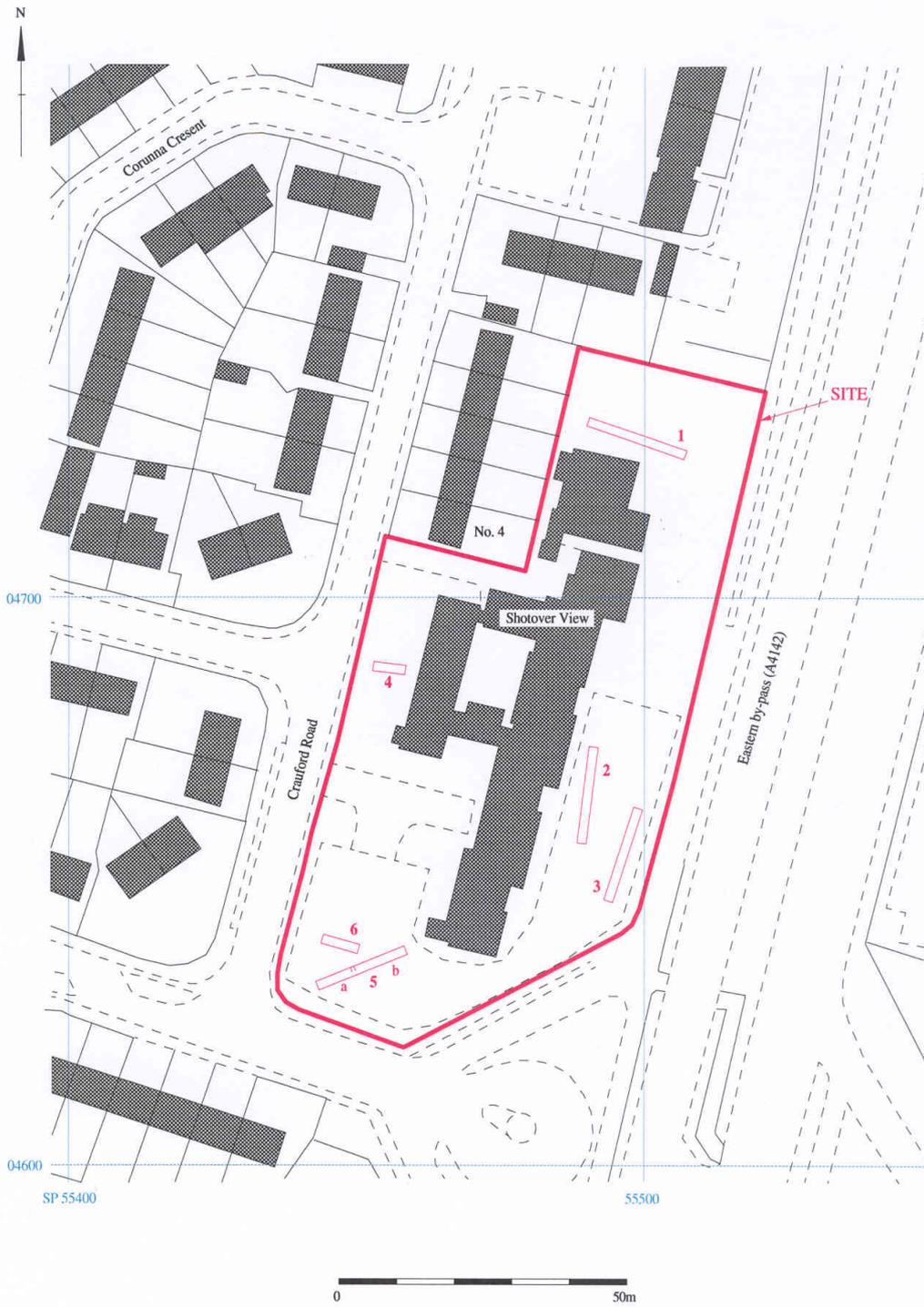


Figure 3. Location of trenches.

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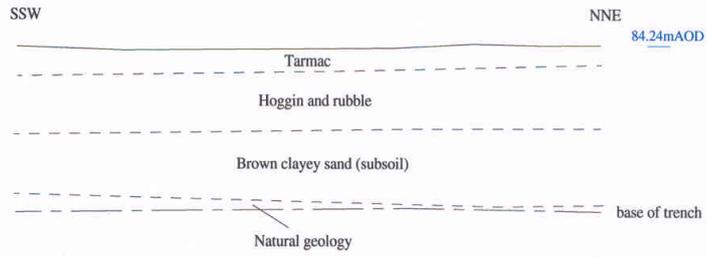


Figure 4. Representative section from Trench 3.

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Plate 1. Trench 1, looking east; horizontal scale 2m; vertical scale 1m.



Plate 2. Trench 2, looking north-northeast; horizontal scale 2m, vertical scale 1m.



Plate 3. Trench 3a, looking north-northeast; horizontal scale 2m, vertical scale 1m.



Plate 4. Trench 5b, looking north-northeast; horizontal scale 2m, vertical scale 1m.