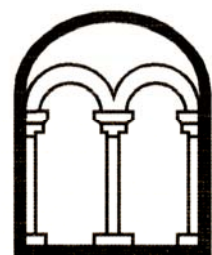


**LAND AT THE GLEBE
RADSTONE ROAD
BRACKLEY
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND
BUILDING RECORDING**

Albion
archaeology



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BUILDING RECORDING**

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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the method statement. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

Acknowledgements

The project was commissioned by CgMs Consulting Ltd and monitored on behalf of the Local Planning Authority by Lesley-Ann Mather, Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council.

This report has been prepared by Christiane Meckseper (Project Officer) and Iain Leslie (Archaeological Supervisor), who also undertook the fieldwork. The finds were analysed by Jackie Wells (Artefacts Officer).

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Key Terms

The following terms or abbreviations are used throughout this report:

AAA	Assistant Archaeological Advisor for NCC
DBA	Desk-based assessment
PDA	Proposed development area
HER	Historic Environment Record
IfA	Institute for Archaeologists
NCC	Northamptonshire County Council
WSI	Written scheme of investigation



Non-Technical Summary

CgMs Consulting is gathering baseline information on behalf of Charles Church Homes for the demolition of the existing building and the development of 51 new dwellings with associated infrastructure at Land at The Old Glebe, Radstone Road, Brackley, Northamptonshire.

As the proposed development area (PDA) lies in an area of archaeological interest a programme of archaeological works was devised to evaluate whether the development would have an impact on any sub-surface archaeological remains. The works also included a building recording survey of the building of The Old Glebe as this is due to be demolished under current development plans.

An extensive programme of archaeological works in 2007/2009 in conjunction with the Radstone Fields residential development revealed good evidence for Iron Age occupation to the north-west, east and south-east of the site. No archaeological remains were identified in trenches located closest to The Old Glebe. The evaluation also revealed evidence for ridge and furrow medieval cultivation.

The results of the earlier evaluation are confirmed by the current trial trenching in the grounds of The Old Glebe. This revealed no archaeological remains apart from three medieval furrows in Trench 1 which survived down slope where the overburden was deepest.

The Old Glebe building lies in the location of Glebe Farm, a mid to late 19th-century farm complex. The current buildings mirror the footprint of the former barn and livestock range which lay in an “L”-shape around the western and northern edges of the farm yard. However, the buildings were extensively re-built from the ground up in 1989 and none of the original form and function or fabric of the original farm buildings survives.



1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *Project Background*

CgMs Consulting is gathering baseline information on behalf of Charles Church Homes for the demolition of the existing building and the development of 51 new dwellings with associated infrastructure at Land at The Old Glebe, Radstone Road, Brackley, Northamptonshire.

As the proposed development area (PDA) lies in an area of archaeological interest, a programme of archaeological works was devised to evaluate whether the development would have an impact on any sub-surface archaeological remains. The scope of the work was agreed with the Northamptonshire County Archaeological Advisor (CAA) by means of their approval of a written scheme of investigation (WSI). This is in accordance with national planning guidelines in the form of the National Planning Policy Framework – Section 12: Conserving and enhancing the historic environment. The following works were carried out:

- Trial trenching of the northern part of the PDA.
- Trial trenching within the gardens of The Old Glebe.
- Building recording of The Old Glebe.

This report presents the results of the works.

1.2 *Site Location, Topography and Geology*

The town of Brackley is situated in south Northamptonshire, 11km west of Buckingham, 17.5km east of Banbury and 34 km south of Northampton. The PDA at The Old Glebe lies c. 1.6km north of Brackley town centre.

The PDA comprises c. 2.2ha. The majority of the site is on fairly level ground, though there is a distinct drop in height at its northern extremity. It lies between 143m OD in the south and 135m OD in the north. The southern part of the PDA is currently occupied by The Old Glebe, a converted farm building, and its gardens; whilst the northern part is formed by a triangular pasture of c. 0.85ha, separated from the southern part by a hedgerow. The PDA borders onto Radstone Road in the east and is surrounded by pasture and farmland on the south-west and north-west sides.

The PDA is centred on grid reference SP 58676 38753. The underlying geology is white limestone formation; the superficial geology is formed of loamy clayey soils¹.

1.3 *Archaeological Background*

The archaeological and built heritage background is described in detail in an archaeological desk-based assessment (CgMs 2013), which was based on a

¹ Contains British Geological Survey materials © NERC [2014]; and material from Land Information System - LandIS © Cranfield University [2014]



500m radius study area around the PDA. Its main points are summarised here.

In the late 2000s the immediate surroundings of the PDA were subjected to an extensive programme of archaeological works in conjunction with the Radstone Fields residential development. This comprised geophysical survey in 2007 and archaeological trial trenching in 2009. The trial trenching largely confirmed the results of the geophysical survey. A number of trenches (Trenches 51, 56, 66 and 67) were located in and around the PDA but did not identify any archaeological remains.

There is good evidence for Iron Age occupation to the north-west, east and south-east of the PDA at a distance of *c.* 300–500m. The settlement to the north-west (HER6986) is dated to the middle to late Iron Age. A similar date was given to the settlement activities (HER153) recorded to the east/south-east of the PDA.

Evidence for the Roman period is known from Brackley Old Town, *c.* 1.5km south of the PDA. Excavations in the 1970s produced Roman artefacts and features. However, none of the recent archaeological investigations in Brackley and the surrounding area have produced evidence for this period.

Brackley is thought to have Saxon origins, though little evidence of Saxon occupation has been found in and around the town. During the medieval period it was a thriving market town due to its association with the wool trade. The landscape around the town was characterised by unenclosed sheep pastures. Evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation — surviving as sub-surface features only — was identified in the 2007/09 geophysical survey and field evaluation.

The PDA remained part of the open field system until 1829 when it was enclosed whilst Glebe Farm was not built until the 1850s. The triangular pasture north of the house was split off from a larger field after 1990.

1.4 Project Objectives

The proposed development has the potential to impact any sub-surface archaeological remains that exist on the site. Research prior to the evaluation suggested Iron Age, medieval and post-medieval remains were the most likely to be encountered.

For the Iron Age the research agendas for the East Midlands and the East of England state that more work and evidence collection is needed to assess the evolution of Iron Age settlements and their hierarchical order (King *et al.* 2012, 59) as well as settlement patterns and the use of the landscape (Medlycott 2011, 30). Evidence associated with the post-medieval occupation of the site could contribute to knowledge on how enclosure affected the management of pasture and the agricultural economy in the area as well as enhance our knowledge of the characteristics of mid 19th-century farm houses and local vernacular architecture (Knight *et al.* 2012, 108).

The specific objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to determine:

- if there was any evidence for prehistoric to medieval occupation on the



site

- if there was any below-ground evidence relating to the post-medieval use of the site prior to the construction of the farm.

The general objectives of the archaeological evaluation were to:

- establish the date, nature and extent of any activity or occupation within the development area;
- establish the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits present at the development area;
- establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
- to recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.



2 RESULTS

2.1 Methodology

2.1.1 Standards

The standards and requirements set out in the following documents were adhered to throughout the project:

• IfA	<i>By-Laws and Code of Conduct</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Evaluation (2009)</i>
	<i>Standard and Guidance for the collection, documentation, conservation and research of archaeological materials (updated 2008)</i>
• EAA	<i>Standards for Field Archaeology in the East of England (2003)</i>
• English Heritage	<i>Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MoRPHE) (2009)</i>
	<i>Understanding Historic Buildings: A guide to good practice (2006)</i>
	<i>Environmental Archaeology: A guide to the theory and practice of methods, from sampling and recovery to post-excavation (2011)</i>
• Albion Archaeology	<i>Procedures Manual: Volume 1 Fieldwork (2001).</i>

2.1.2 Archaeological investigation and recording

Trial trenching took place on 1st and 20th May 2014. Six trenches were excavated in total (Figure 1). Trenches 1 and 2 were 50m long; Trench 3 was 40m long; and Trenches 4, 5 and 6 were 20m long.

The overburden was removed by a mechanical excavator fitted with a flat-edged ‘ditching’ bucket, operating under close archaeological supervision. Once archaeological remains or the upper surface of undisturbed geological strata were reached, machine excavation ceased. The spoil heaps were scanned for artefacts recovery on a regular basis and a metal detector was used both to check spoil and to locate potential metal artefacts in advance of the excavation of features.

All archaeological features were investigated and recorded in according with Albion’s *Procedures Manual*. A full methodology is provided in the WSI (Albion 2014).

2.1.3 Building recording

Building recording took place on 28th April 2014. Only the exterior of the building was recorded as tenants were still living in the building at the time. During the recording of the building it was noted that the majority of the structure had been re-built in 1989 (see Section 2.3 below). This included a total refurbishment and alteration of the interior of the building, which was therefore



not recorded.

2.2 Archaeological Evaluation

2.2.1 Overburden and undisturbed geological deposits

In the field north of The Old Glebe overburden comprised c. 0.2m of dark grey-brown clay silt topsoil, overlying a mid orange brown clay silt subsoil. The subsoil was c. 0.1m thick in Trenches 2 and 3; whilst in Trench 1 it varied from 0.2–0.45m thick. This change in thickness of subsoil corresponds with the break in slope as the generally flat PDA dips down towards the shallow valley to the north.

Within the grounds of The Old Glebe in Trenches 4–6 overburden consisted of a combined c. 0.30m grassy turf with an underlying mid orange brown clay silt, which represented a mix of topsoil and natural interface. This was removed by machine. There was no established subsoil.

Undisturbed geological deposits comprised mid orange silty clay with frequent small to large limestone inclusions.

2.2.2 Furrows

Three furrows [104], [106] and [108] survived towards the NE end of Trench 1 (Figure 2). They were aligned NW-SE, were shallow sided and had a maximum width of 0.7m and depth of 0.1m. Furrows [104] and [106] contained sherds of post-medieval pottery and all contained mid orange-brown clay silt fills, generally indistinguishable in colour and texture from the subsoil.

2.2.3 Other archaeological remains

Trenches 2–6 revealed no archaeological features.

The eastern end of Trench 4 revealed a modern rubbish pit filled with remains of plastic sheeting, bricks and fragmented timber (Figure 2b). The quarry pit marked on the 1884 OS map is still evident to the north of Trench 4 in the general topography of the site.

Several fragments of brick building rubble and low stub walls were visible in areas of overgrown shrubs within the grounds of The Old Glebe. These are most likely the remains of the demolished farmhouse and other possible outhouses. However, it was impossible to record or reconstruct any precise form and function from these remains.

2.3 Building Recording

2.3.1 General description of site and buildings

The Old Glebe in its current form is a private residential building with a garage complex. It lies on the site of Glebe Farm and its layout follows the footprint of the original agricultural buildings which lay in an “L” shape along the northern and western side of a farmyard.



This yard is now a gravel courtyard at the end of a tree-lined access road from Radstone Road (Figure 5). It is edged by a low stone wall and two gateposts topped with architectural carved stone fragments. The Old Glebe lies in generous grounds which are now landscaped gardens with lawns, mature trees and hedges. At the back of the building lies a small ornamental garden with low box hedges and gravel paths.

The residential wing of The Old Glebe lies along the western edge of the courtyard and consists of a two-storey building with a red tiled roof (Figure 6). It is built of golden limestone which is roughly shaped and hammer dressed and laid in regular courses. Two chimneys lie at either end of the main block.

The building has a central two-storey entrance porch facing the courtyard with a recessed main door and a central tri-partite window above. A shorter central porch lies on the opposing side of the building facing into the garden (Figure 7). It has double width doors on the ground floor and four windows with a top and bottom light separated by a stone transom. The corners of the two porches and the surrounds of the main doors are edged with ashlar.

All doors and windows have stone hood moulds and sills. The windows are leaded casement windows with stone surrounds and chamfered mullions. The main east-facing door has a central quoin bearing a coat of arms with a rose. A date plate above bears the lettering “RJW – 1989” (Figure 8).

The garage and utility wing lies along the northern side of the courtyard. It is one storey high and built in the same style with the same type windows and doors as the main wing. The eastern part of this wing has two large garage openings towards the courtyard. The garages are built with concrete breeze blocks with a cladding of golden limestone (Figure 9).

2.3.2 Development and phasing

The desk-based assessment (CgMs 2013) gives a map regression of the development area (reproduced in this report in Figures 3 and 4). This shows that The Old Glebe is first shown on the first edition OS map of 1884 as “Glebe Farm”. The farm most likely was one of the many new farms being built in the mid-19th century as part of the agricultural revolution that was taking place across the country.

The OS map shows it as a farm built in the “regular courtyard style”. This is typical of farms built in the late 19th century which often were carefully planned in order to minimise waste of labour when moving materials, livestock and manure from building to building (English Heritage 2006, 8).

It is difficult to deduce much information of the detailed layout of the farm from the 1884 first edition OS map. The farmhouse lies in the southern corner of the yard, close to a pump, indicated with a “P” on the map. A further square building lies at the end of the access drive from Radstone Road. A long range of agricultural buildings, most likely the barn and livestock accommodation, lie in an “L”-shape along the northern and western sides of the yard.



By 1901 the square building has disappeared and the farmhouse has been extended. Throughout the 20th century the layout of the farm changes little. The main alterations occur to the farmhouse which gains further extensions. The avenue of trees along the access drive was planted sometime before 1927, as this is the date of the OS map on which they are first shown.

The latest edition of the OS map in 1991 still shows a building in the southern corner of the yard, even though by the time of the building survey this had disappeared. On the maps the layout and location of the “L”-shaped range of agricultural buildings looks unchanged until the present day. However, the building recording survey gives a slightly different picture of the current buildings and shows that the seeming survival of the “L”-shaped range is deceptive.

A planning application (S/1989/0121/P) was submitted in 1989 for “Extension To And Conversion Of Barns To Dwelling” at Glebe Farm, Radstone Road, Brackley. The date stone above the main entrance shows that extensive building work did indeed take place in 1989 (Figure 8). In fact, the design and physical components of the building show that little of the original fabric of the barns survives and the building in its current form was entirely re-built in 1989.

A damp course along the porches, southern chimney and northern utility and garage complex shows that these were newly built in 1989. The OS map of 1991 shows the eastern porch for the first time. No damp course is visible in the main residential wing of the building at the western side of the courtyard, apart from underneath one of its windows (Figure 10) and it is possible that some of the original fabric of the barn survives in this wing. However, it is also likely that only the footprint of this building is original and anything from its lowest stone courses upwards was completely rebuilt in 1989.

Whether the original barn was a stone building is unclear. Impressive two-storey stone-built barns certainly did exist, in particular in regions where building stone is readily available, of which Northamptonshire is one (Sutherland 2003, English Heritage 2006). It is possible that stone from the original farm complex was re-used but the import of new stone cannot be ruled out.

All current windows and doors are executed in a 17th-century style, characterised by chamfered mullioned windows and hood moulds (Hall 2005). 19th-century agricultural buildings tend to have fewer and much simpler opening for doors and windows which also indicates that the current windows and doors are new insertions.

A further planning application (S/2003/0521/P) shows that the derelict farmhouse in the southern corner of the courtyard was demolished in 2003. This planning application also covers the erection of a detached music room and garages. This is most likely the northern wing of the building. The concrete breeze block core of the garages shows them to be new-builds (Figure 9). Again, their location on the same footprint as the original agricultural complex is



deceptive.

2.3.3 Function and design

While The Old Glebe is located on the same footprint as the original agricultural barns and buildings of the mid 19th century Glebe Farm, nothing of the original agricultural use, function and design of the buildings survives. The building in its current form was re-built to serve as a private residence with amenities such as a garage complex, music rooms and utility rooms.

The grounds of The Old Glebe were planted to form a wide-ranging garden with ornamental planting and mature trees. A collection of architectural stone fragments provide a number of sculptural elements within the garden. Amongst these are parts of a spiral staircase and the top of a church spire. The origin of these fragments is unclear.

2.4 Archive

Details of the project and its findings will be submitted to the OASIS database (albionar1-175549) in accordance with the guidelines issued by English Heritage and the Archaeology Data Service.

An integrated project archive (including both artefacts/ecofacts and project documentation) will be prepared upon completion of the project. There is currently no archaeological archive depository able to accept material from this part of the county, although the issue is being actively addressed and it is hoped that suitable facilities will be available within 3–5 years.



3 CONCLUSIONS

No archaeological features were revealed during the evaluation, apart from three medieval furrows in Trench 1. These indicate that the area was utilised for ridge and furrow cultivation in the medieval period. The furrows survive only where the overburden is thickest; suggesting the absence of surviving furrows elsewhere within the PDA is most likely due to later plough truncation.

There is no archaeological or surviving architectural evidence of Glebe Farm. The current building of The Old Glebe mirrors the footprint of the original agricultural buildings of the farm; however, apart from this layout, none of the original fabric, form and function of the farm complex survives as The Old Glebe was extensively re-built in 1989. The most noteworthy surviving remainder of the farm layout is the avenue of trees lining the access road which were planted in the first two decades of the 20th century.



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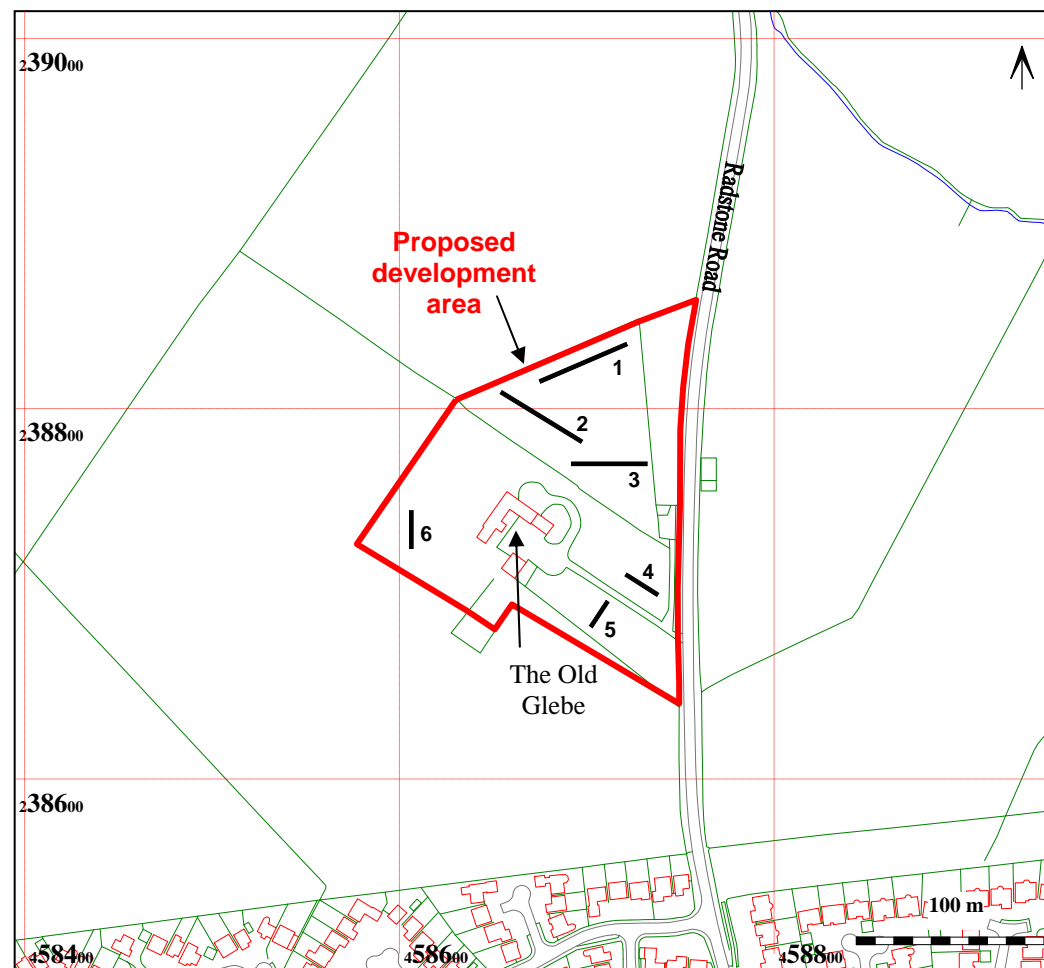
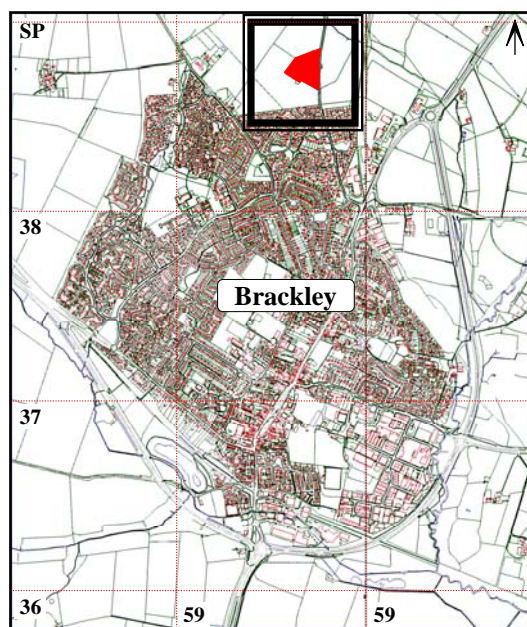
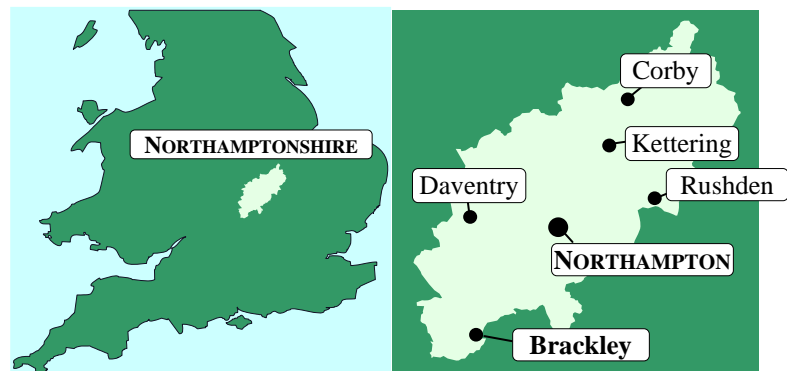


Figure 1: Site location and trench plan

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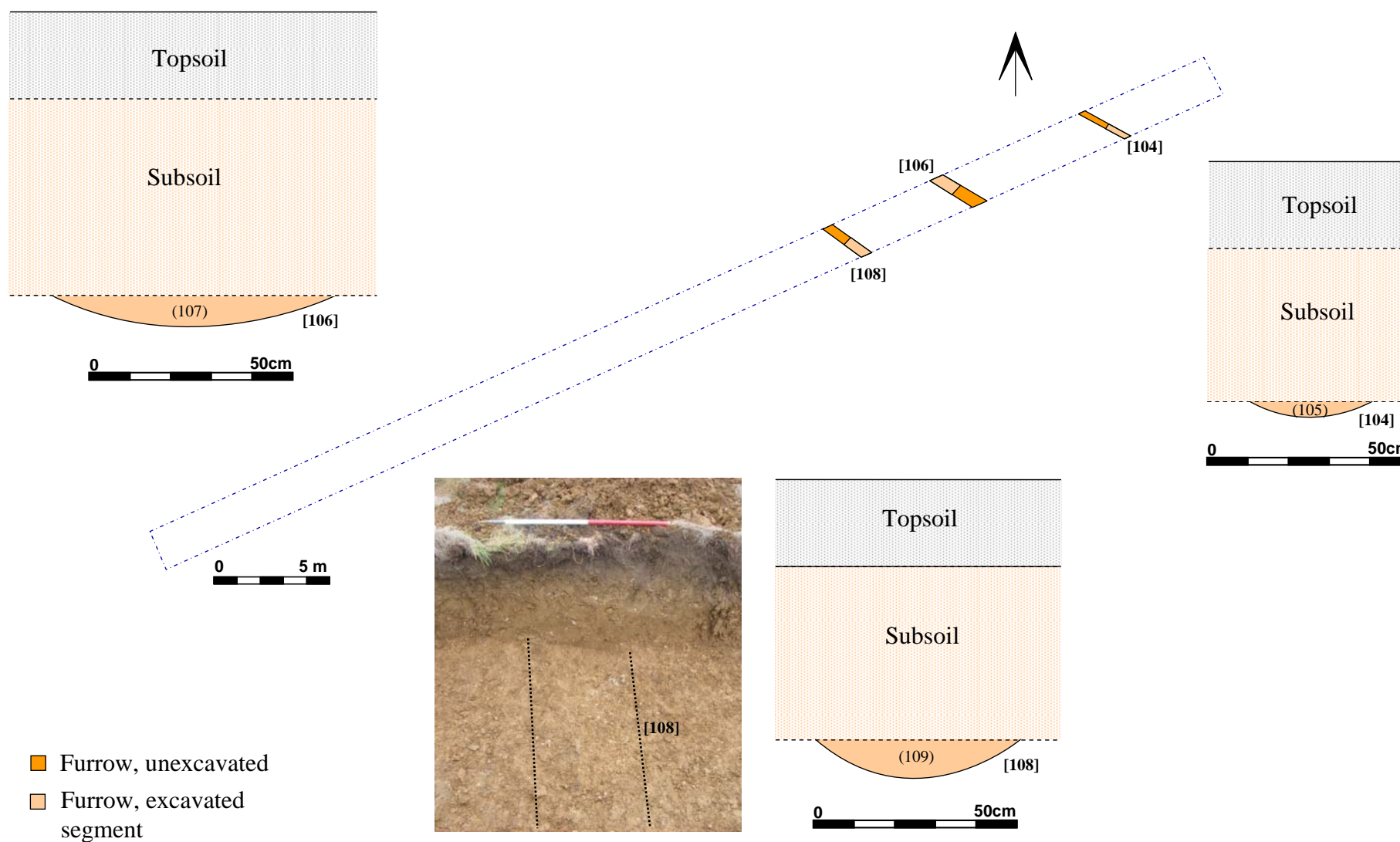


Figure 2a: Trench 1 with selected sections and photograph



Figure 2b: Trench 4 in The Old Glebe grounds, looking east

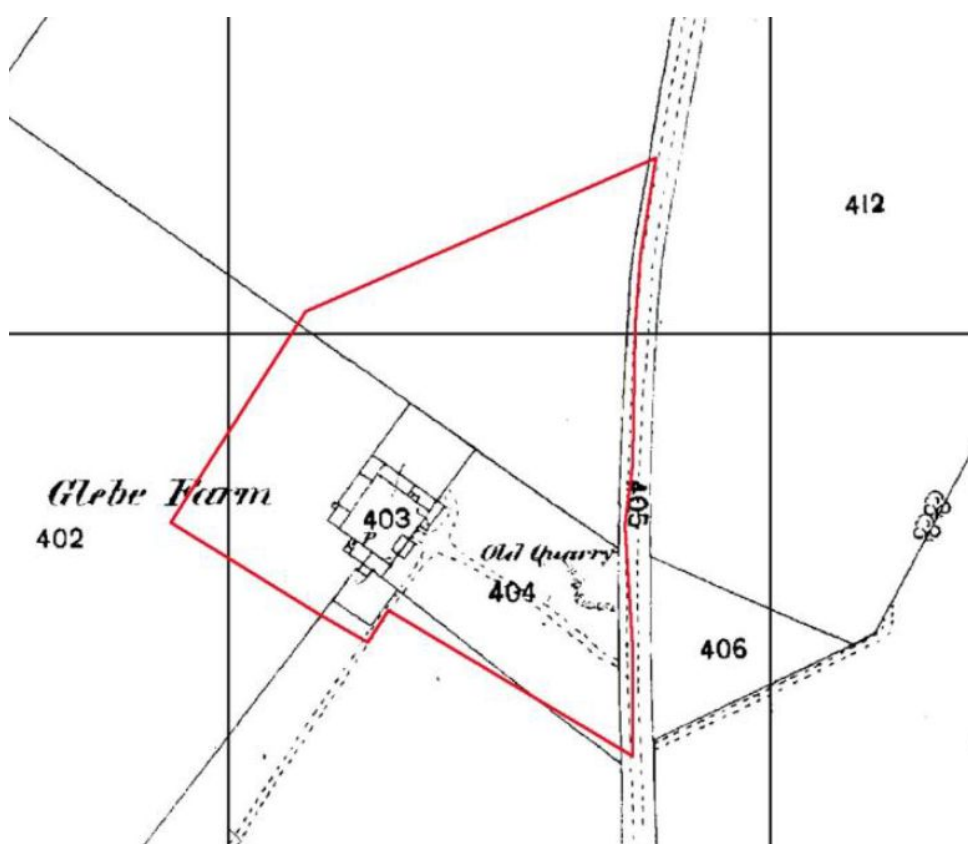


Figure 3: 1884 first edition OS map (from CgMs 2013)

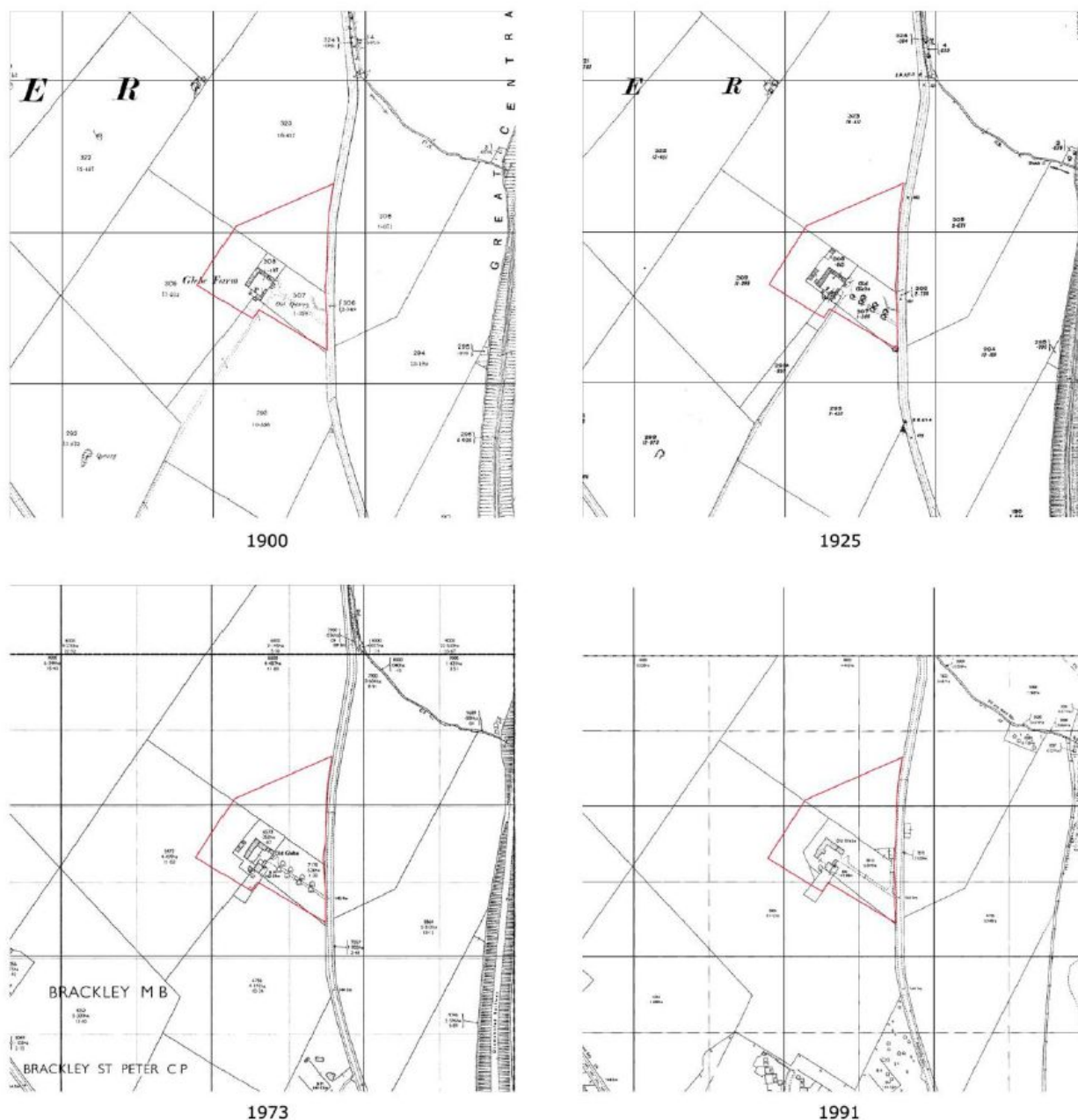


Figure 4: OS maps 1900 to 1991 (from CgMs 2013)

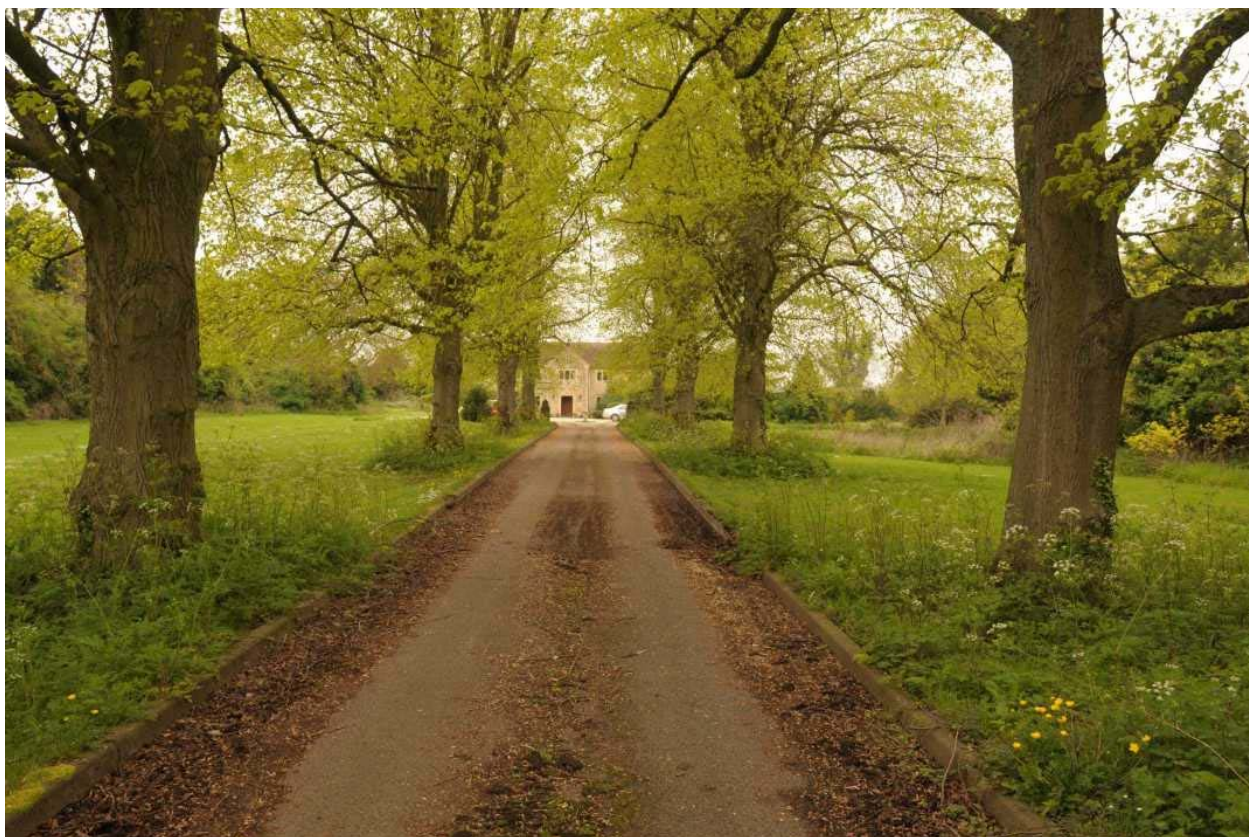


Figure 5: Tree-lined access road



Figure 6: East-facing main façade of The Old Glebe



Figure 7: West-facing garden façade of The Old Glebe

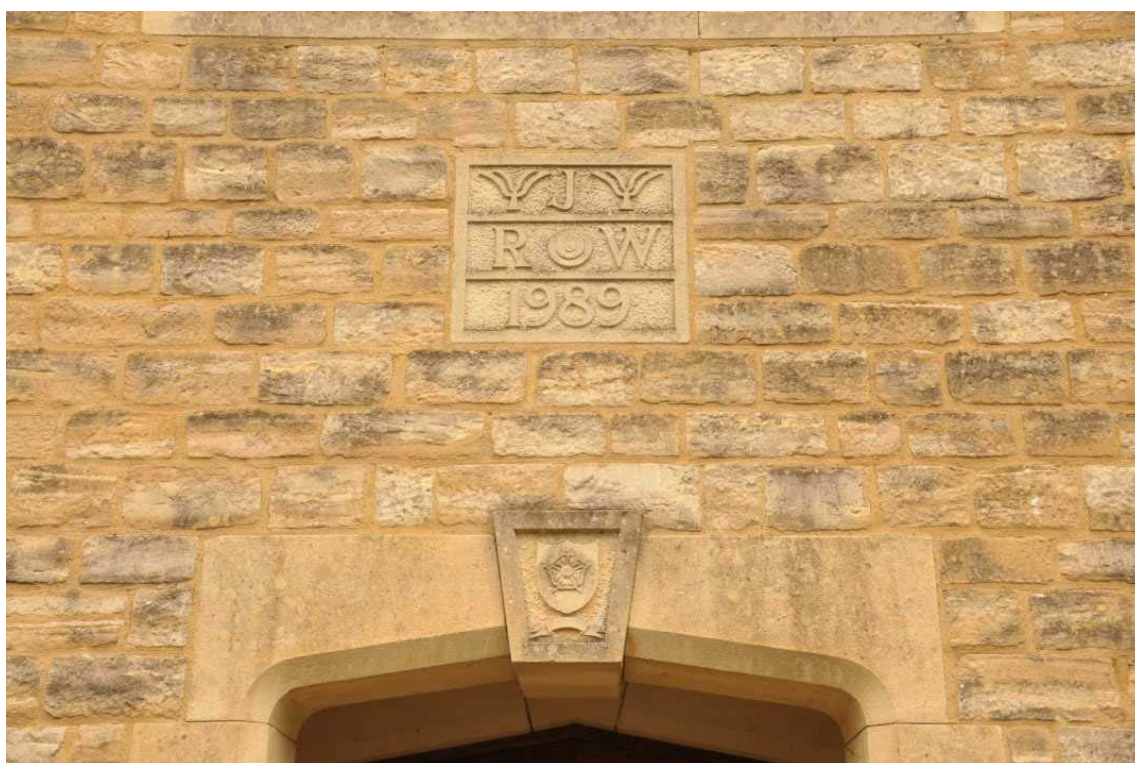


Figure 8: Date stone above main entrance



Figure 9: Breeze block and stone-clad construction of garage complex



Figure 10: Damp course at base of building



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