

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

WATCHING BRIEF: MILL MOTORS, CHURCH STREET, WING, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

on behalf of Broadpace Ltd



Jonathan R. Hunn BA PhD MIFA

May 2004

ASC: 529WCS/2

Letchworth House
Chesney Wold, Bleak Hall,
Milton Keynes MK6 1NE
Tel: 01908 608989 Fax: 01908 605700
Email: office@archaeological-services.co.uk
Website: www.archaeological-services.co.uk



Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	WCS	<i>Project no:</i>	529
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>District:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Wing		
<i>Parish:</i>	All Saints (ancient parish)		
<i>NGR:</i>	SP 88125-22575		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	24m x 50m		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Former paddock		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Construction of three dwellings		
<i>Extent of development:</i>	44m x 9m approx		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	02/3422		
<i>Client:</i>	Broadpace Ltd, c/o Derek C.E. Mills, Little Chapel Farm, Crafton Bedfordshire LU7 OQL		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Derek Mills		
<i>Telephone</i>	01296-660166	<i>Fax:</i>	01296-660133

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Jonathan R. Hunn	<i>Date:</i>	4/5/04
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	

© Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

No part of this document is to be copied in any way without prior written consent.

Every effort is made to provide detailed and accurate information. However, Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd cannot be held responsible for errors or inaccuracies within this report.

© Ordnance Survey maps reproduced with the sanction of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

ASC Licence No. AL 100015154

CONTENTS

Summary	5
1. Introduction	5
2. Aims & Methods	6
3. Archaeological & Historical Background	7
4. Results	8
5. Conclusions	11
6. Acknowledgements	12
7. Archive	12
8. References	13

Appendices:

1. Monitoring/Recording sheets	14
--------------------------------------	----

Figures:

1. General location	3
2. Site plan	4

Plates:

Cover: View across the site before the commencement of the ground reduction phase

1. View east across part of the new access road.....	9
2. Western end of the site after ground reduction	9
3. View east across reduced level.....	9
4. Looking north with ground reduction underway	9
5. Looking west with ground reduction in progress	9
6. View north of western end showing boundary slot	9
7. View east of middle section	10
8. Garage area on eastern end of site	10
9. Detail of boundary slot	10
10. View looking north west to the church from the site	10

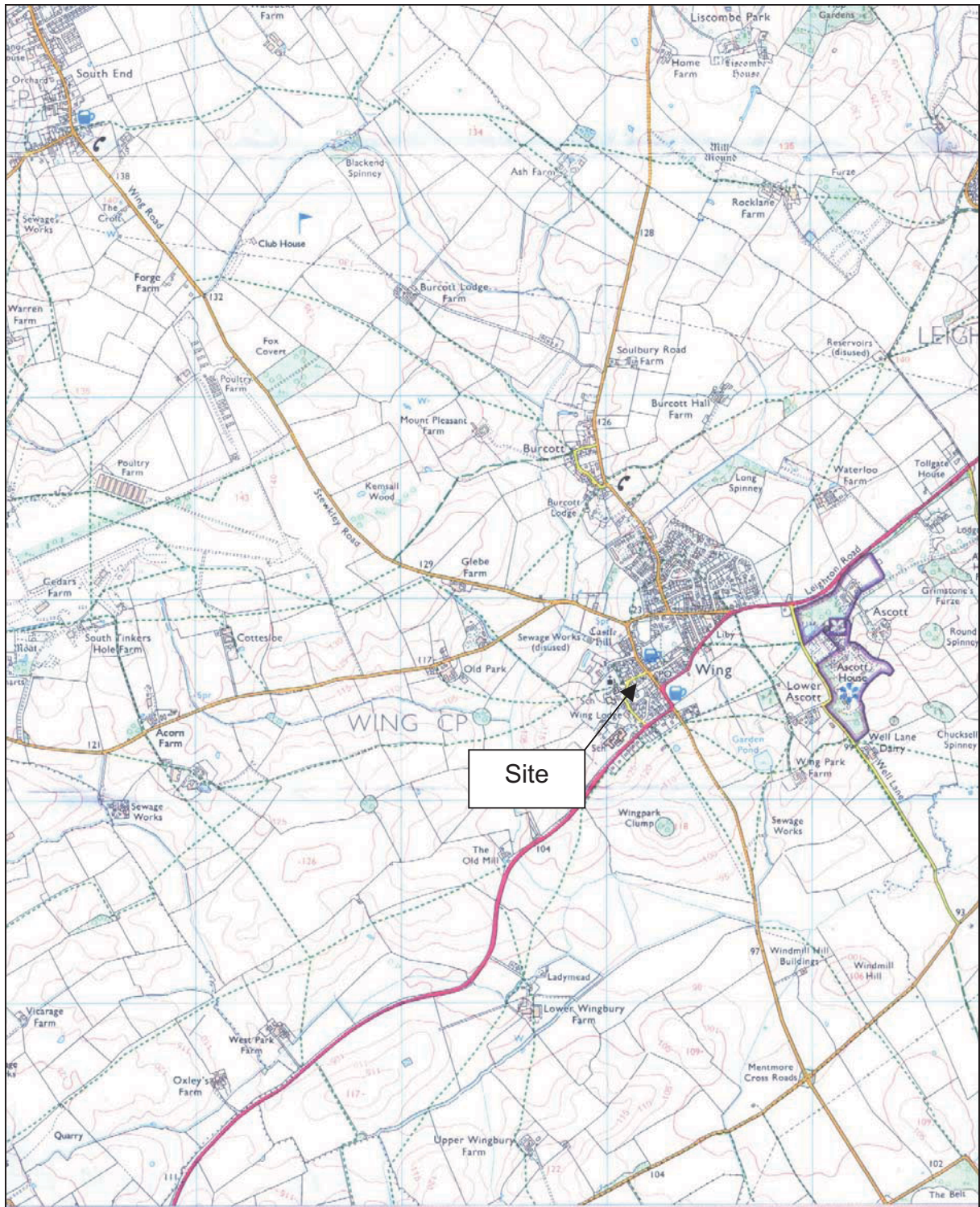


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

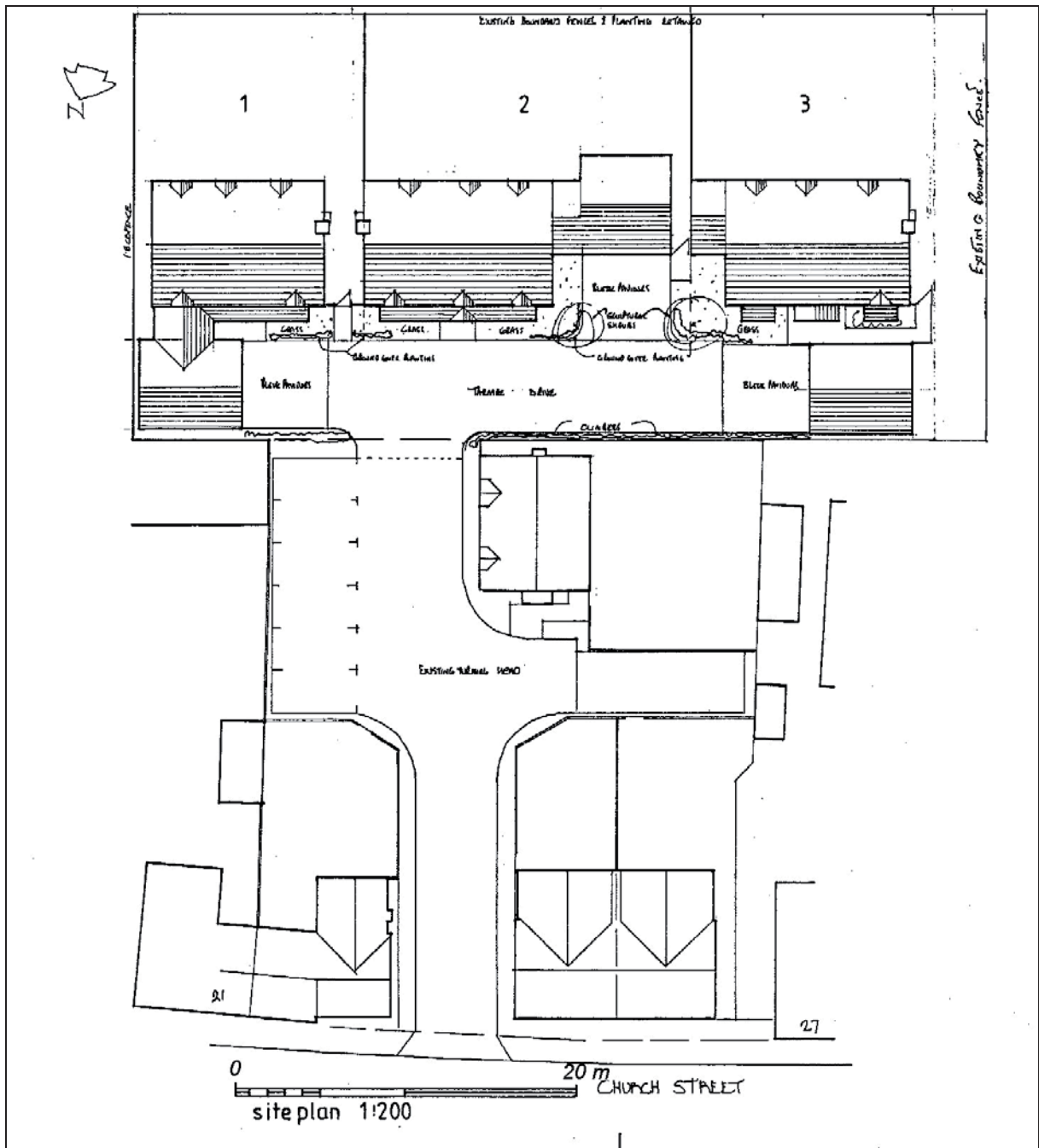


Figure 2: Site plan

Summary

During the early spring of 2004 ASC Ltd undertook an enhanced watching brief on a block of land to the rear of the former Mill Motors in Church Street, Wing, Buckinghamshire. In practical terms this implemented a 'strip and record' procedure across more than fifty percent of the site. There was no evidence that the site had ever been directly settled in the past. The only feature observed, apart from two modern waste dumps was a post-medieval boundary slot, artefacts were identified predating the 19th century.

1 Introduction

1.1 During late March and early April 2003 Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd (ASC) carried out a watching brief on a site to the rear of Church Street, Wing in Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 88125-22575; Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Derek Mills on behalf of Broadpace Ltd, and was carried out according to a brief (02/3422 issued on 21/10/03) prepared by David Radford of the Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service (BCAS), and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ASC (529WCS/1).

1.2 Reason for Work

The work was required, in line with the advice contained within PPG16, that due to the location of the site within the historic core of the ancient village of Wing, a programme of work should be implemented to record any potential archaeology that might be exposed or destroyed by the development.

1.3 Setting

1.3.1 The site is situated on the south side of Church Street, less than 50m to the east from the burial ground of All Saints church. Its area is 0.12 ha and is devoid of any structures. It lay to the south of the site of the former Mill Motors. It is bounded by brick walls and wooden panelled fences.

1.3.2 The terrain is flat and lies within the 120 m contour OD, some 550 m SE from a tributary of the Great Ouzel. The soils have been considerably modified during the course of the last century. In their natural state they would be derived from river terrace gravels (Soil Survey of England and Wales 1:250,000 Soil Map, Lawes Agricultural Trust). They are classified as belonging to the *Sutton 1 Association*, and are *'fine loamy typical argillic brown earths over gravel at moderate depth'* (Jarvis *et al* 1984, 267).

1.3.3 The site is empty and covered with topsoil. There are no known services crossing the area and access is from the north side from Church Street.

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief, the aims of the watching brief were:

- to consider the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains which are liable to be threatened by the development.
- to produce an accurate and full record of the archaeology present, such that a permanent record will be made and the results presented in such a way that they may be re-examined and interpreted in the future.

2.2 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief, which required:

- Monitoring of the removal of the overburden from the area of the footprint of the development (dwellings, garages and access road).
- The excavating machine to be fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.
- No machinery to cross the area of the overburden strip.
- Sufficient time to be allowed to permit the recording and excavation of archaeological features within the cleared area.

2.3 Standards

The work conforms to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 The village of Wing was recorded in Domesday Book as being held by the Count of Mortain (Morris 1978 section 12,7). It had arable that was assessed at 40 ploughs and meadow for 25 ploughs, a smaller area of pasture (shares for 5 ploughs) but no woodland. Its population (51 villagers and 20 smallholders) and value (£31) was considerable (*ibid.*). This was almost double the value of the Count's holding at Berkhamsted in Hertfordshire, a third more valuable than St Albans and equal to the borough of Hertford (Morris 1976). While it is advisable to be cautious in comparing Domesday Book values, the figures do underline the importance of Wing in the 11th century. The village was the centre of a hundred in the Norman period (Hadfield 1970, 542) and the *English Place Name* volume for the county hints at a possible early Anglo-Saxon origin for the settlement itself (Mawer and Stenton 1925, xiii).
- 3.2 The physical evidence for Wing's former importance can be seen in the fabric of its church. This building is largely pre-Conquest and is arguably one the most important Anglo-Saxon buildings in the country (Pevsner *et al* 1994, 749). The settlement's importance is also further underlined by the remains of a motte and bailey castle that lay some 200m to the north. There is no record of this castle but its character points to an early date, probably of Conquest date.
- 3.3 There is archaeological evidence to show that the present churchyard was once more extensive than it is today. Burials have been recorded to the east and south of the burial ground (Parry *et al* 1998). The excavations undertaken in 1998-9 lie just over 40m to the west from the Mill Motors site and while the present site is unlikely to contain further burials it must be considered a potential settlement area (*ibid.*).
- 3.4 Up to the middle of the 20th century the present site backed onto the backyards that belonged to a row of 19th century terraced dwellings (Lightfoot 2002). There was a narrow entrance to a rear yard in which was situated a corn mill. The corn mill became a garage sometime in the 1950s.

4 Results

- 4.1 The observations demonstrated that, with one minor exception, the site was devoid of archaeological interest. The significance of this will be discussed further on.
- 4.2 The ground was reduced from its present level by an average of 0.3m (Plates 1-8); this went down to the *'fine loamy typical argillic brown earths over gravel at moderate depth'* (Jarvis *et al* 1984, 267).
- 4.3 The only feature of interest was a narrow boundary slot cut into the sub-soil (Plates 6 & 9). It was situated 4.6m from the western side of the development area. It was about 5m long by 0.5m wide and orientated approximately N-S. A small segment was excavated at its northern end. It proved to be quite shallow, being no more than 0.18m deep and filled with a brown, loamy fill; the fill contained a single fragment of very abraded brick.
- 4.4 Despite a close scrutiny of the excavated soil, which was washed by several rain showers, no artefacts pre-dating the late 19th century was observed.



Plate 1: View east across part of the new access road



Plate 2: Western end of the site after ground reduction



Plate 3: View east across reduced level



Plate 4: Looking north with the ground reduction underway



Plate 5: Looking west with ground reduction in progress



Plate 6: View north of western end showing boundary slot



Plate 7: View east of middle section



Plate 8: Garage area on eastern end of site



Plate 9: Detail of boundary slot looking north



Plate 10: View to the north east from the site to the church at Wing.

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The area observed was approximately 1000 sq. m. (i.e. about a quarter of an acre) which contained one north-south linear feature. This is believed to be the remains of a post-medieval boundary or gully. There was a complete absence of any other structural remains, and even pits, apart from demonstrably modern ones, were absent. What was also absent was the sort of back-ground material one might expect to find on a site so close to the celebrated Anglo-Saxon church (Plate 10). This outcome is unexpected and requires some sort of explanation.
- 5.2 To date, the only archaeological evidence relating to the settlement at Wing is derived from the church and its associated cemetery (Parry 1998). We know very little about the layout of the village in the Anglo-Saxon period. There is no particular reason for the dwellings of the inhabitants of Wing to have clustered around the site of the church. It might be expected of the lay-lord or founder of the church to lie adjacent to his or her foundation, but even this is by no means certain. The layout of the roads may preserve the original plan of Anglo-Saxon Wing, but this has yet to be demonstrated. The location of the castle mound 300m to the north of the church may be significant, at least in terms of the post-Conquest (1066) development of the settlement.
- 5.3 Based on the author's observations it can be argued that this area of Wing was never built upon; and one might go further than that and suggest that the area was open ground in the Anglo-Saxon and even medieval periods. If this was so then there is an obvious question as to where the early settlement was actually located? The short answer is that we do not know, but perhaps it may have lain more towards the north, towards the castle mound that survives at the junction of the Stewkley and Soulbury roads. If it does not lay there then perhaps it might be found towards or, conceivably, within the park associated with Ascott House to the south.

6. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to Broadpace Ltd for funding this project and to Derek Mills for commissioning the work on behalf of the client. Thanks are also due to David Radford, the planning archaeologist for Buckinghamshire County Council, for his advice and pragmatic approach throughout this project.

7. Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site Monitoring Sheets
6. List of photographs
7. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum.

8. Bibliography

Hadfield, J (ed) 1970: *The Shell Guide to England*. Rainbird Reference Books Ltd (London).

IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.

IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.

IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.

Jarvis, M. G., Allen, R. H., Fordham, S. J. , Hazelden, J., Moffat, A. J. and Sturdy, R. G. 1984: *Soils and their Use in South East England*. Harpenden. Soil Survey of England and Wales Bulletin No. 15.

Lightfoot, M. 2000: An Archaeological Evaluation at Mill Motors, Church St, Wing, Buckinghamshire. *Unpubl. Rep. (ASC/M/WCS02/2)*

Mawer, A and Stenton, F. M. 1925: *The Place-Names of Buckinghamshire*. Cambridgeshire University Press (Cambridge).

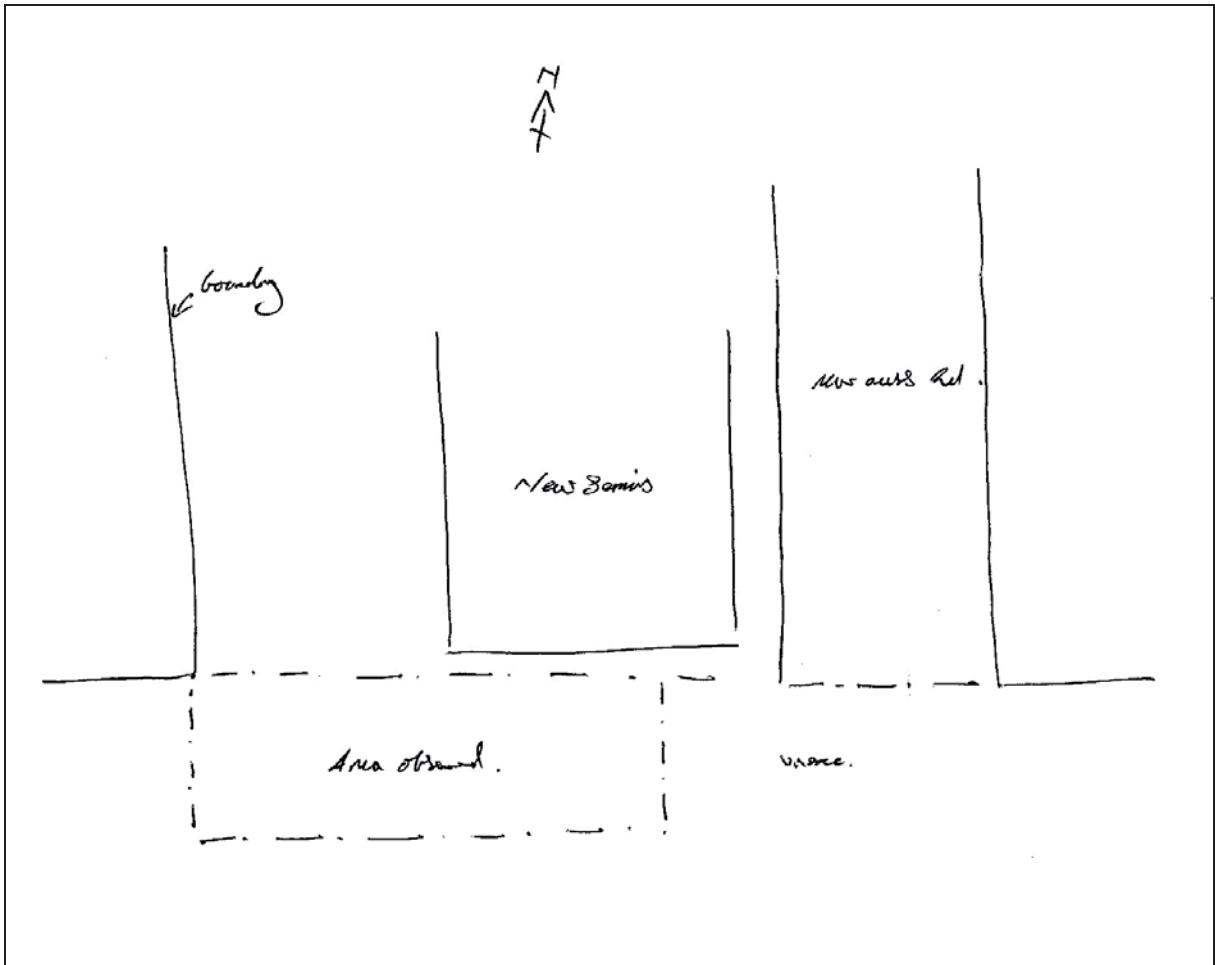
McKinley J.I. & Roberts C. 1993 *Excavation and Post-Excavation Treatment of Cremated and Inhumed Human Remains*. Institute of Field Archaeologists Technical Paper 13.

Morris, J. 1978: *Domesday Book vol 13 Buckinghamshire*. Phillimore (Chichester).

Parry *et al* 1998: *The Old Victorian School, Wing, Buckinghamshire: Archaeological Evaluation*. Northamptonshire Archaeology, December 1997. Northamptonshire County Council Planning and Transportation Department.

Pevsner, N., Williamson, E. and Brandwood, G.K., *Buckinghamshire: The Buildings of England*. Penguin Books (London).

Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).





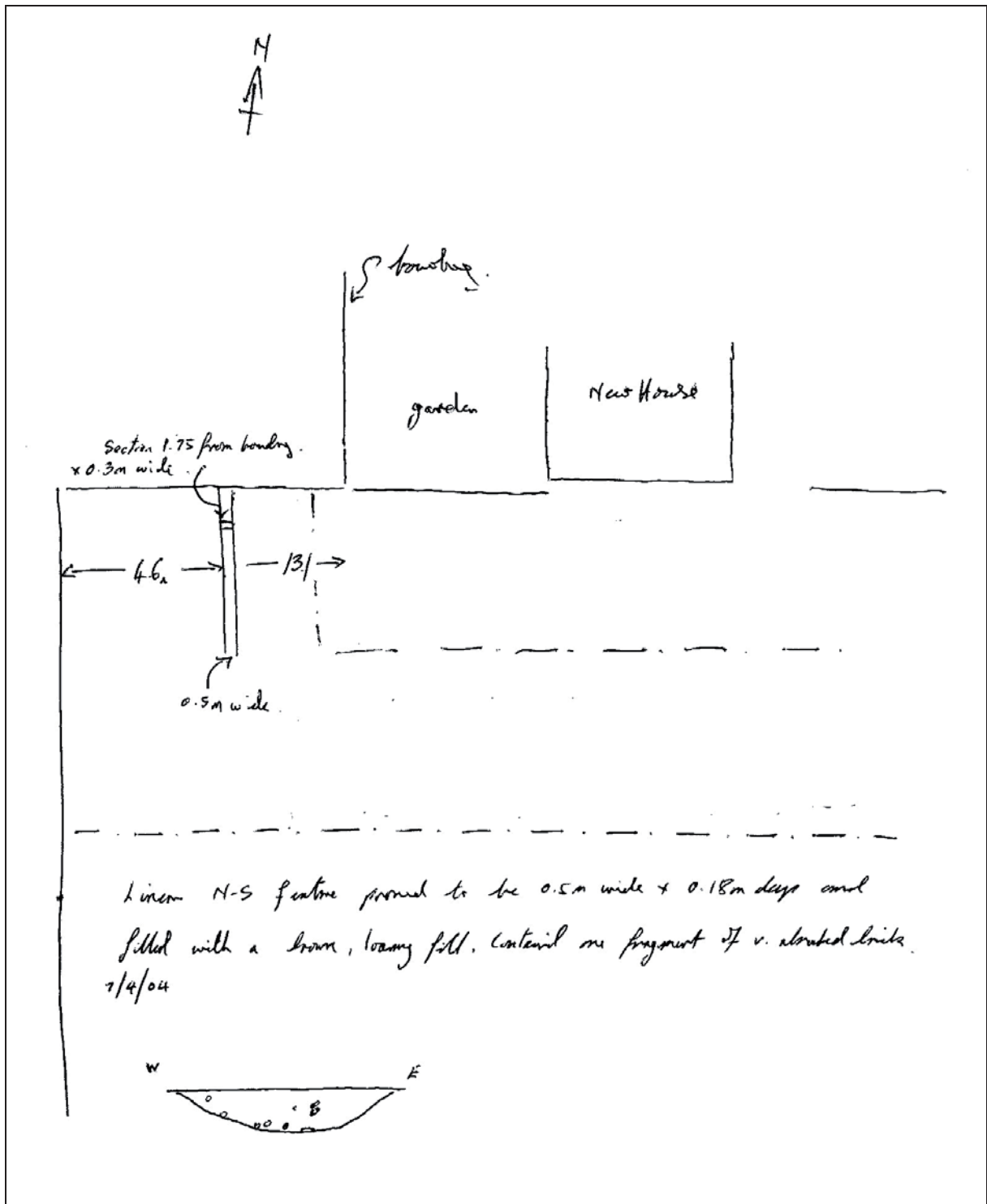
A.S.C. LTD


ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project Name: <i>Mill Motor</i>		Project Code: <i>WCS</i>		Date of visit: <i>6/4/04</i>	
Location: <i>25, Church Street</i>					
Client/Developer: <i>Oakroyal Properties Ltd</i>					
Architect: <i>D. Mills</i>					
Site Manager/Farmer: <i>Ian Cordell</i>			Phone:		
Development Type:					
Foundations	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Other:
Site conditions (weather, ground condition, etc) <i>Shony with on sunny spells.</i>					
Observations made: (e.g. length of trench/foundation; depth/width; soil descriptions, archaeological features) <i>Observed the footprint of all the buildings including the garage at the eastern end of the site. The ground was marked by about 0.3m. No signs of anything particularly significant; there were some modern depressions or pits but these were ignored. There was what appeared to be a single N-S linear feature 0.4m wide of fill with a fairly uniform dark brown, pebbly soil. Its centre lay 4.6m from the eastern boundary, lay parallel to a similar linear feature which was 13.1m from eastern boundary.</i>					
Comments: <i>Longly blank except one linear feature</i>					
Completed by: <i>[Signature]</i>					

For sketch plan, use reverse

ASACFM26, revised 1999



 A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD			
Project Name: <i>Mell Stone</i>		Project Code: <i>WCS</i>		Date of visit: <i>7/4/04</i>	
Location: <i>25, Church Street</i>					
Client/Developer: <i>Brookvale Ltd</i>					
Architect: <i>D. Hills</i>					
Site Manager/Farmer: <i>Tan Cordell</i>			Phone:		
Development Type:					
Foundations	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Other:
Site conditions (weather, ground condition, etc) <i>over Showers</i>					
Observations made: (e.g. length of trench/foundation; depth/width; soil descriptions, archaeological features)					
<p><i>Observed the eastern most part of the garage (ie at E. end of main road) ground revealed by between 0.25 and 0.4m. Consists of mostly typical. In this area the ground will be 'slabbed' due to the proximity of an existing C19 beam ground work area but is still relatively early & therefore visibility not ideal.</i></p>					
Comments: <i>Nothing of note observed</i>					
Completed by: <i>JRA</i>					

For sketch plan, use reverse

ASACFM26, revised 1999

