

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**WATCHING BRIEF:
THE OLD RECTORY
BAINTON ROAD
BUCKNELL
OXFORDSHIRE**

NGR: SP 5609 2562

on behalf of Mr & Mrs Curry



Martin Cuthbert BA

April 2009

ASC: 1173/BBR/2



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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	BBR	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	1173
<i>OASIS ref:</i>	archaeo12-57613	<i>Event/Accession no:</i>	OXCMS: 2009.70
<i>County:</i>	Oxfordshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Bucknell		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Bucknell CP		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 5609 2562		
<i>Extent of site:</i>	c.40 sq m		
<i>Present use:</i>	Garden		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Replacement of existing conservatory with single-storey extension		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	08/01706/F		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Cherwell District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	March 2009		
<i>Commissioned by:</i>	John Thornton (Architect) 4 Millfield Close Marsh Gibbon Oxon OX27 OHR		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr & Mrs Curry The Old Rectory Bainton Road Bucknell OX27 7LT		
<i>Contact name:</i>	John Thornton		

Internal Quality Check

<i>Primary Author:</i>	Martin Cuthbert	<i>Date:</i>	9th April 2009
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<i>Revisions:</i>		<i>Date:</i>	
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<i>Edited/Checked By:</i>	Bob Zeepvat	<i>Date:</i>	9th April 2009
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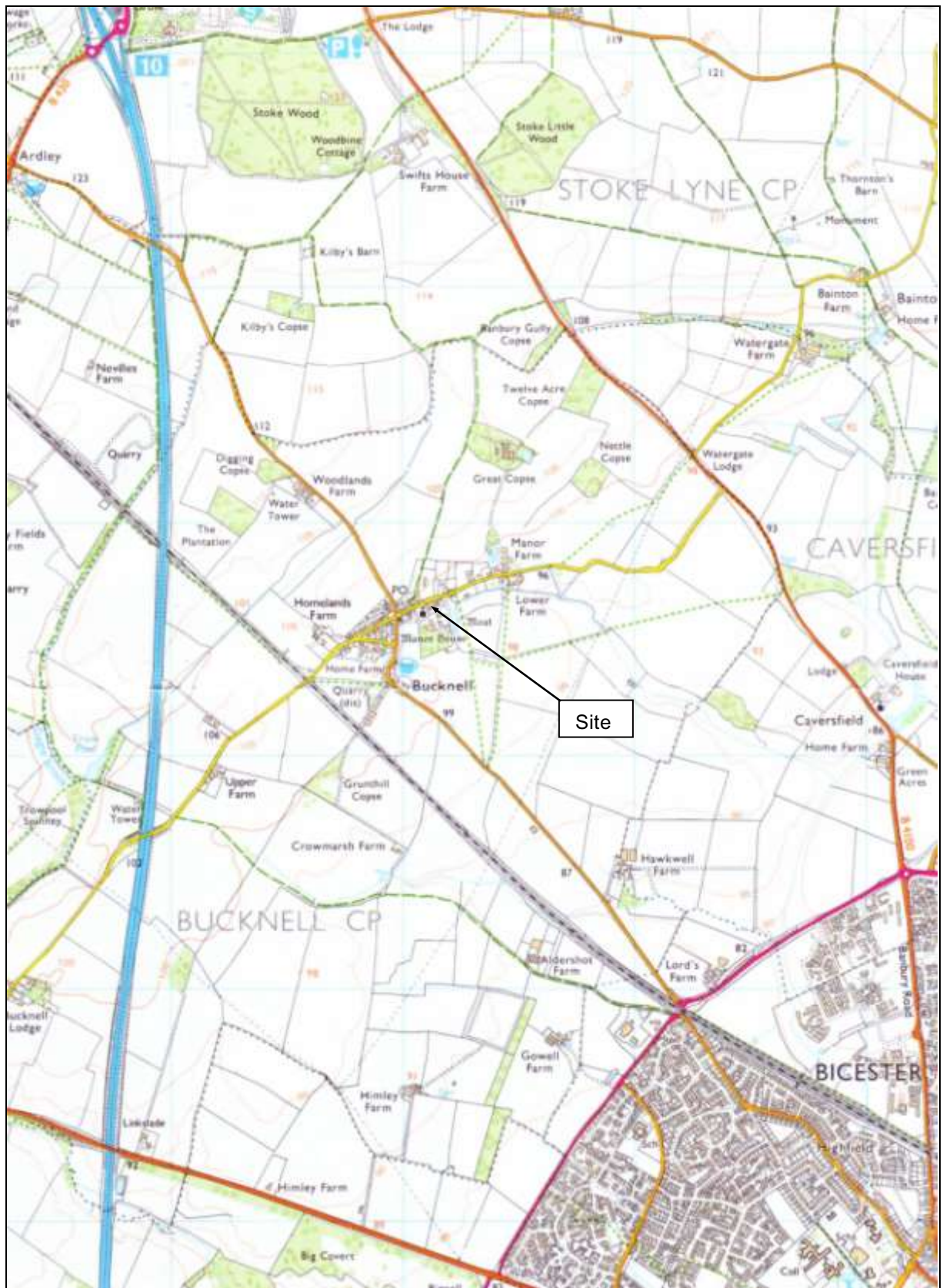


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In March 2009 a watching brief was carried out at the Old Rectory, Bucknell, Oxfordshire, during the excavation of an open area, in relation to the construction of a garden room. One possible wall a post hole and two stone lined drains were revealed.

1. Introduction

1.1 In March 2009 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a watching brief at The Old Rectory, Bainton Road, Bucknell, Oxfordshire. The project was commissioned by the architect John Thornton on behalf of his clients Mr and Mrs Curry, and was carried out according to a brief (Oram 2009) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Cherwell District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), the *Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service*, and a project design prepared by ASC (Zeepvat 2009). The relevant planning application reference is 08/01706/F.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This watching brief was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), as a condition of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd*

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd (ASC) is an independent archaeological practice providing a full range of archaeological services including consultancy, field evaluation, mitigation and post-excavation studies, historic building recording and analysis. ASC is recognised as a *Registered Archaeological Organisation* by the Institute of Field Archaeologists, in recognition of its high standards and working practices.

1.4 *Management*

The project was managed by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA, and was carried out under the overall direction of Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

1.5 *The Site*

1.5.1 *Location & Description*

The site is located in the village and civil parish of Bucknell, in the Cherwell district of Oxfordshire, at Ordnance Survey National Grid Reference SP 5609 2562 (Fig. 1). The Old Rectory is situated near the centre of the village, on the south side of Bainton Road, to the immediate north of the church, occupying an irregular plot of c.800 sq. m. (Fig. 2).

The Old Rectory is Grade II listed. The listing description is as follows:

‘Rectory, now house. Early C17, altered and extended C18 and C19. Limestone rubble with wooden lintels; Stonesfield-slate roof with brick gable stacks. L-plan. 2 storeys plus attic. Front, facing garden, breaks forward in the larger left section which has, at first floor, two 2-light leaded casements plus a blocked central

window, and at ground floor has a central doorway, with a leaded overlight and pyramid chamfer stops to the lintel, plus a 2-light casement and a C19 canted bay window. Right section has an old 3-light casement at first floor, with very old leaded glazing, but the ground floor is obscured by a low link to a 2-storey rubble service wing which retains an old plank door and is probably C18. Left gable wall of train range is rendered and was probably once an internal wall. Rear has an outshut, but the right section retains 3-light casements. Right gable wall has a bread-oven projection and faces the road. Interior: Smaller section has a wide open fireplace with stop-chamfered lintel and restored jambs; larger section has a large ground floor roan (formerly sub-divided) containing 2 ovolo-moulded cross beams with diamond and fleur-de-lys stops. Replaced as the rectory in 1833 and probably partly demolished. (VCH; Oxfordshire; Vol VI; 72).’

1.5.2 *Geology & Topography*

The site lies on more or less level ground, at an elevation of *c.*98.7m AOD. Soils in the site area have been assigned to the Aberford association, described as ‘shallow, locally brashy, well drained calcareous fine loamy soils over limestone’ (Soil Survey 1983, 511a). The underlying geology comprises Middle Jurassic cornbrash limestone (BGS 2002, sheet 219).

1.5.3 *Proposed Development*

The development (Fig. 3) comprised demolition of the existing modern conservatory to the rear of the house, and construction of a single-storey rear extension with associated patio and paving, and alterations to hip dormer roofs to form roofs with gables to ensuite windows.

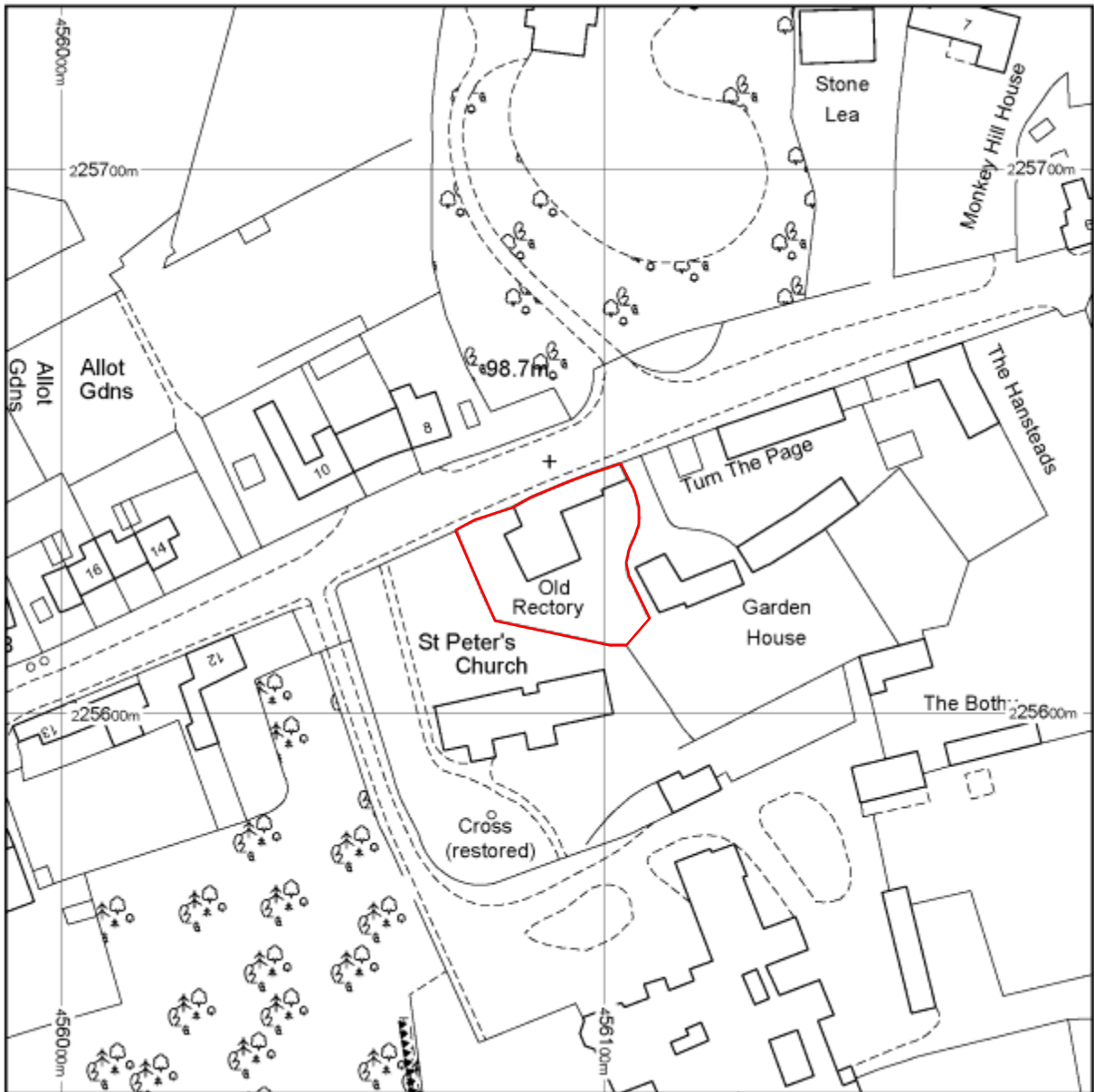


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:1250)

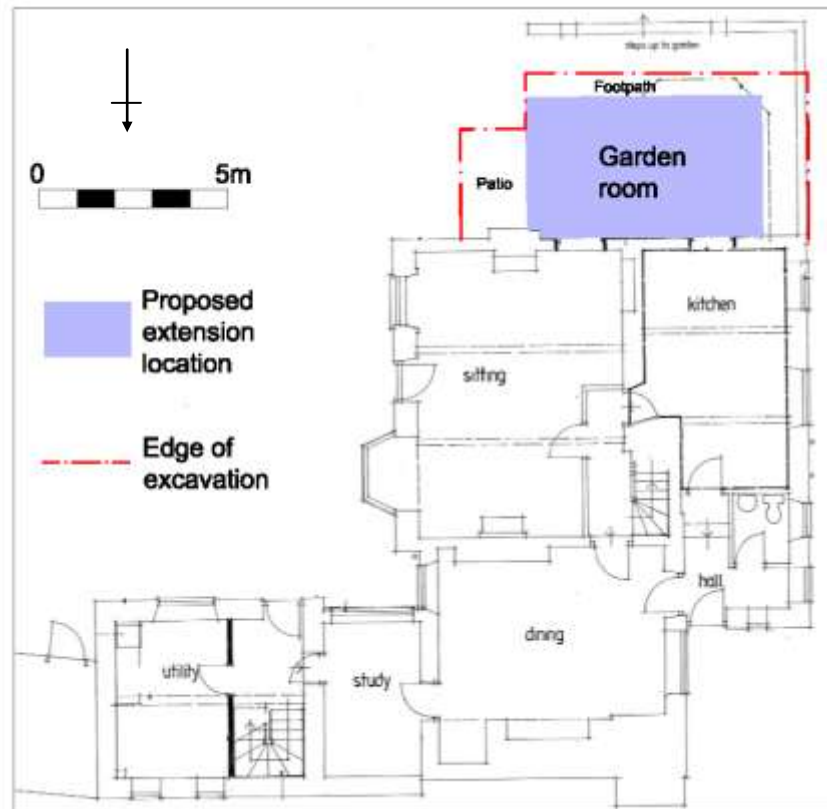


Figure 3: Location of proposed extension and area of excavation (1:200)

2. Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief (Section 3), the aims of the watching brief were:

- To conduct a formal programme of observation and investigation during any operations on site that may disturb or destroy archaeological deposits
- To allow the preservation by record of archaeological deposits in advance of development or other potentially disruptive works.

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), to current English Heritage guidelines (EH1991), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 4), which required:

- A formal programme of archaeological monitoring and recording permanently maintained during any groundwork for the development including the stripping of overburden and excavation of foundation trenches or service trenches.
- Any archaeological deposits revealed to be cleaned by hand and recorded in plan before being excavated and recorded at an appropriate level.

2.4 Constraints

No constraints were identified prior to the watching brief fieldwork and none were encountered during the monitoring visits.

3. Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 The following section provides a summary of the readily available archaeological and historical background to the development site and its environs. The site lies within an area of archaeological and historical interest comprising the village core, and has the potential to reveal evidence of primarily Saxon to post-medieval date.
- 3.2 Bucknell is located within the Saxon hundred of Pyrton, and probably has its origins in the late Saxon period. In the Domesday Survey (1086) it is recorded that the manor of Bucknell (*Buchehelle*) formed part of the lands of Robert d'Oilly, and was held by Gilbert (Williams & Martin 2003, 434).
- 3.3 The Old Rectory is located immediately north of St Peter's Church, which dates to the 12th century (Oram 2009, 1). As previously noted (*Para. 1.4.1*), the Old Rectory itself is a Grade II listed building, built in the 17th century and extended in the 18th and 19th centuries. It was replaced as the rectory in 1833 and probably partly demolished. The Davis map of Oxfordshire of 1797 appears to show that the graveyard was originally rectangular, and it appears that the rectory was built within its north eastern corner. It is therefore possible that the house could have been built over existing graves. Although the site of the new extension is located in the area of the current conservatory, there is to be significant ground reduction for the extension and it is therefore possible that this development could encounter human remains of 16th century or earlier date.
- 3.4 The site is also located within the enclosed area of two arms of a moat, thought to have been constructed around the site of the manor house (Oram 2009, 2). The manor house and the church probably formed the focus of the medieval settlement, and it is likely that further houses and buildings existed in this area during that period.

4. Results

- 4.1 The watching brief consisted of two full days and a half day visit to monitor a rectangular area on the footprint of the proposed development. The area was excavated by a mini digger prior to the construction of a garden room with associated paving and patio area (Fig 3).
- 4.2 The development area measured c.4.2m x 8.9m and was located south of the Old Rectory (Plate 1). Excavation revealed possible structural remains comprising a possible wall, posthole and a stone lined drain (Fig 4).
- 4.3 The ground makeup underneath the demolished conservatory consisted of c.0.25m of concrete and modern brick rubble overlying c.0.35m of mid brown yellow silty subsoil with frequent limestone fragment inclusions. The natural geology of orange clay overlying cornbrash limestone was reached 0.60m below the current ground level. The areas undisturbed by the previous structure were only different in that the modern debris from the conservatory was replaced by dark brown silty topsoil to a depth of 0.25m (Plate 2). The subsoil layer contained medieval and post-medieval pottery as well as medieval floor tile and bone fragments (not retained).
- 4.4 **Structural Remains** (Fig 4, Plates 3-6)

4.4.1 Possible Limestone Wall (Plate 3)

The possible north-south wall began 1.7m from the current house. It was cut by the footing trench for the southern wall of the Old Rectory. The wall was 0.7m in width and consisted of only one course of limestone fragments set in a beige-yellow clay mortar with frequent chalk inclusions. The eastern face of the wall was worked and faced.

4.4.2 Posthole

The posthole was located c.0.5m east of the possible limestone wall, at its most southerly point. It measured 0.26m in diameter, 0.08m deep and was roughly circular in shape. It was filled with mid-dark brown silty clay with occasional charcoal flecks. No archaeological finds were recovered from the fill.

4.4.3 Stone Lined Drain (Plates 4-6)

Two stone lined drains were revealed, c. 0.60m below the current ground level. They were of dry limestone construction 0.45m wide and 0.2m deep, with a limestone base. They were capped with large limestone fragments c.500mm across and these ran along the full length of both drains.

The western drain ran out of what is now the kitchen area of the old rectory, and its exit point from the house could be seen below the floorboards within the southern wall. It ran south away from the house and then turned west after 3m and continued beyond the excavated area

The eastern drain also ran out of the house. This drain continued south beyond the excavated area

No other archaeological finds or features were observed throughout the rest of excavated area

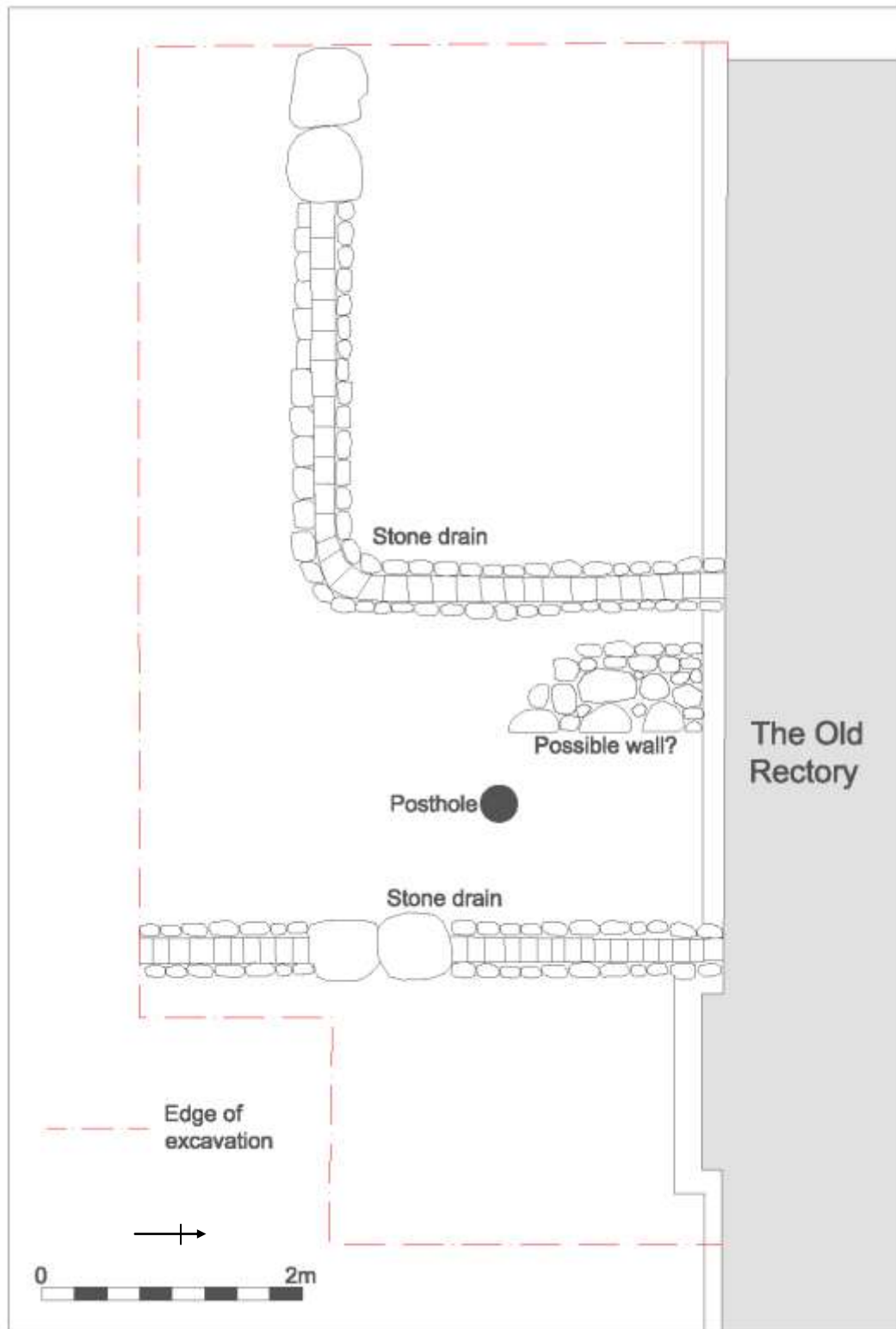


Figure 4: Archaeological remains (scale 1:50)



Plate 1: Development area, looking southwest 2x1m scale



Plate 2: Stratigraphic makeup of the site, looking south, 1m scale



Plate 3: Possible wall, looking north, 2x1m scale



Plate 4: Stone lined drain, looking southeast, 2x1m scale



Plate 5: Capping stones over limestone drain, looking south, 1m scale



Plate 6: Internal exit point of drain, running out of the kitchen

5. Conclusions

- 5.1 The conditions for the evaluation were good and the work took place in predominantly dry weather conditions. Full co-operation was received from the contractors and a high degree of confidence is attached to the results of the evaluation.
- 5.2 The possible wall was cut by the current southern wall of the Old Rectory indicating it is of earlier date. The significance of the wall though cannot be determined due to its limitations in length and that only one course of stone remained.
- 5.3 The posthole may be evidence of an earlier structure, but this cannot be proven as it was revealed at the same depth as the rest of the archaeology within the trench, and no archaeological finds were recovered from the fill.
- 5.4 The stone lined drains are contemporary or possibly later than the present house as they cut the foundation trench for its southern wall and the drains exit point was discovered below the floorboards within the current kitchen.

6. Acknowledgements

The watching brief was commissioned by architect John Thornton on behalf the clients, Mr and Mrs Curry. The writer is grateful to Mrs Curry for her assistance. The project was monitored by Richard Oram of the *Oxfordshire County Archaeological Service* on behalf of the local planning authority. Thanks are also due to the builders for their cooperation.

The project was managed for ASC by Karin Semmelmann BA MA MIFA. Fieldwork was carried out by Martin Cuthbert BA. The report was prepared by Martin Cuthbert and edited by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

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. Site record drawings
7. List of photographs
8. B/W prints & negatives
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Oxfordshire County Museums Service (OXCMS: 2009.70).

8. References

Standards & Specifications

- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition. English Heritage (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)*.
- Oram R, 2009 08/01706/F – *Old Rectory, Bainton Road, Bucknell. Design Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief (with annexes)*. Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services.
- Zeepvat B 2009 *Project Design for Archaeological Watching Brief at the Old Rectory, Bucknell, Oxon*, ASC ref: 1173/BVM/1.

Secondary Sources

- BGS *British Geological Survey 1:50,000 Series, Solid & Drift Geology*.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpenden).
- Williams A & Martin GH 2003 *Domesday Book, a Complete Translation*. Penguin Books (London).

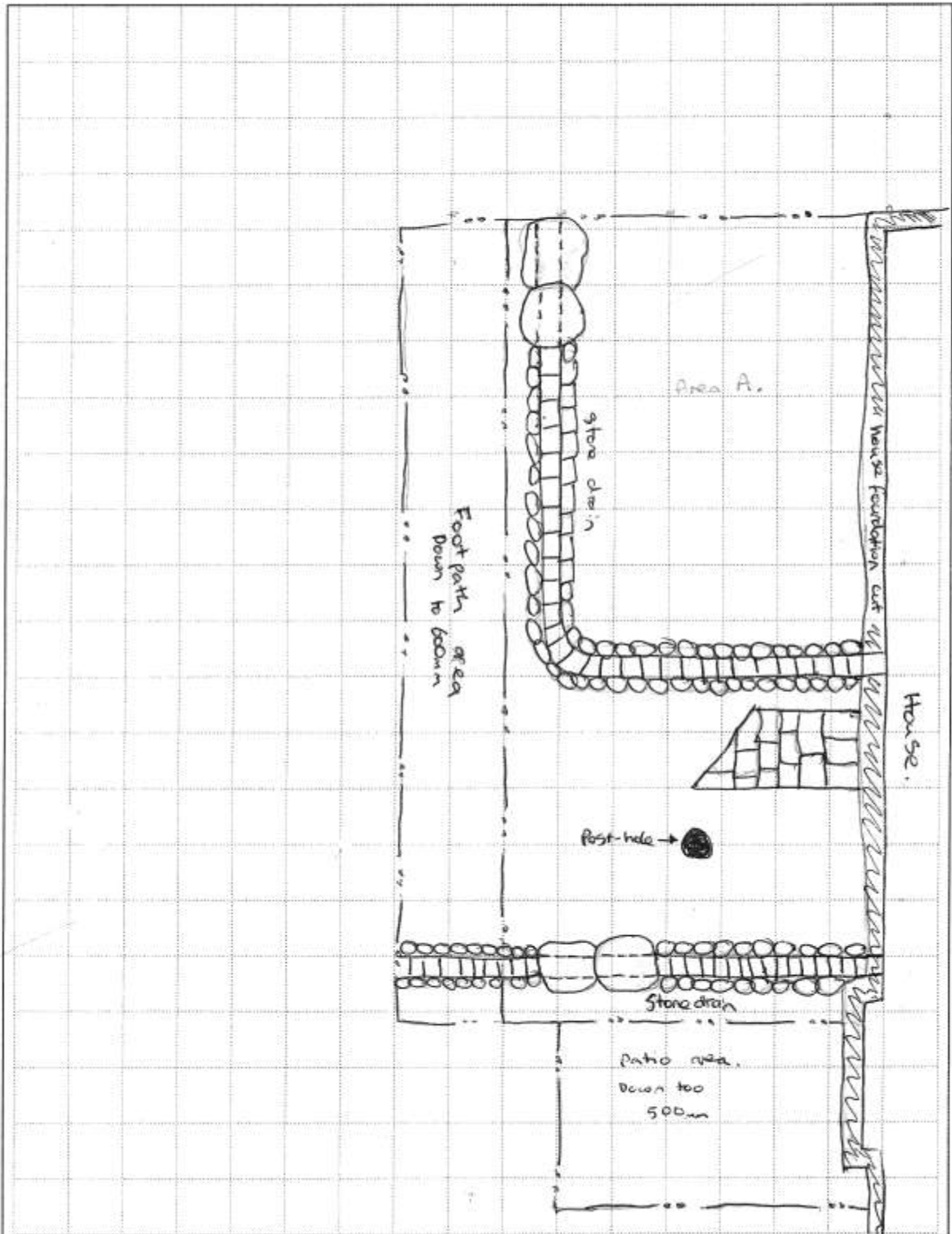
Appendix 1: Monitoring Sheets

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: Bucknell - old Rectory		Project No/Code: 1173 1 BBR		Sheet: 1 of 4		
Client/Developer		Date of visit: 23/3/09				
Contact: CART-builder		Phone: 07867804928				
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 13:15		Finish: 1400		
Completed by: M.C						
Development Type:						
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Footings	<input type="checkbox"/> Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Levelling	<input type="checkbox"/> Quarrying	<input type="checkbox"/> Pipelines	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: wet + windy.						
Observations: builders have demolished previous structure. and are reducing the ground level by 300mm over whole area The area being reduced is c.3m (E-W) x 7.5m (N-S) See sketch.						
Area reduced under previous structure = Topsoil (200mm) Or base of previous structure down to 350mm then rubble and made ground down to level of drain (see below) c.300mm stone lined drain hit within ground reduction c.650mm below ground level. - 450mm wide and 200mm deep. (see sketch) limestone frags used for construction. No mortar used. drain filled with a dark brown water-lain deposit. Silty-mudch. lg stone frags cover drain. drain runs N-S and turns west at its southern end within area of ground reduction.						
Comments: Continuing 1st thing 7:30am on 24/3/09.						



SKETCH SHEET

Site Name: <i>Bucknell - old Rectory</i>	Site Code: <i>1173 / BBR</i>	Orientation: <i>1:50</i>
Context:		



RECORDING NOTES

Recorded by: <i>M.C</i>	Date: <i>23/3/09</i>	Digitised by:	Date:	Sheet number: <i>2</i> of <i>4</i>
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A.S.C. LTD

ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Bucknell - Old Rectory		Project No/Code: 1173 1BBR	Sheet: 3 of 4
Client/Developer		Date of visit: 24/3/09	
Contact: Carl - builder		Phone: 07957604926	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 07:00	Finish: 16:00	
Completed by: M.C			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: dry + windy			
Observations: Continued levelling of area - rest of stone drain uncovered A. under modern rubble - orange-brown clay layer (Surface) ↑ about 30mm deep under this a layer of laid flat limestone fragments, poss floor surface but they don't seem to be set into mortar. max 150mm in diameter drain cuts both layers. - layer of orange clay at 650mm deep (discovered to be natural) (see sketch on sheet 2.) Posthole ① - 260mm in diameter filled with dark ^{mid} brown silty (30%) clay (70%) rare charcoal flecks. - only 80mm deep. Wall - 700mm wide - N-S aligned 1-2 course thick - made of large limestone boulders - mortar = beige-yellow lime clay mortar freq. chalk flecks wall cut away by current house and seems to finish 1.7m away from house. East of wall is flat limestone frag surface. (natural).			
Comments: told to arrive at 7:30am by builders and they'll continue lowering the area. They didn't arrive till 10:00am!!! and then it was decided they would mark out these trenches. work didn't start till = 10:30am Back 2 more 25/3/09 after phone call from builder prob about 11am			

A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD					
Project: Bucknell - old rectory		Project No/Code: 1173 / BBR			Sheet: 4 of 4		
		Date of visit: 25/3/09					
Client/Developer							
Contact:				Phone:			
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 11:00am		Finish: 15:00			
Completed by:							
Development Type:							
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):	
Site & weather conditions: dry + very windy							
Observations: lowering of path area around footprint of building Eastern drain continued to head South. no other arch.							
patio area = 500mm / footpath = 600mm / foundation 750mm							
All arch seen at 600mm							
section - 240mm - topsoil - (under patio area)							
240mm - subsoil							
120mm - orange clay							
onto natural - limestone bedrock.							
Comments: no more visits needed.							

Appendix 2: List of Photographs

SITE NAME: The Old Rectory, Bucknell, Oxon			SITE NO/CODE: 1173/BBR
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	√	√	Stone lined drain, looking southeast, 2x1m scale
2	√		Natural layers, 2x1m
3	√	√	Close up of natural, 1m
4	√	√	Wall, looking north, 2x1m
5	√	√	Wall, looking north, 2x1m
6	√	√	Whole area stripped, looking southwest 2x1m
7		√	Covering stones for stone drain, looking south 1m
8		√	General shot, looking north
9		√	Close up of stone drain, looking southeast 2x1m
10		√	Close up of stone drain, looking southwest 2x1m
11		√	Wall, looking north, 2x1m
12		√	Drain hole within internal house wall
13		√	Mega close up of stone drain, looking southeast 2x1m
14		√	Stratigraphic makeup of the site, looking south, 1m
15		√	Wall, looking north, 2x1m
16		√	Wall, looking north, 2x1m

Appendix 3: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name:	Watching Brief Report: The Old Rectory, Bainton Road, Bucknell, Oxon.		
Short Description:	In March 2009 a watching brief was carried out at the Old Rectory, Bucknell, Oxfordshire, during the excavation of an open area, in relation to the construction of a garden room. One possible wall a post hole and two stone lined drains were revealed.		
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	Watching Brief		
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	House-Grade II listed	Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)	no
Current land use:	House and garden	Future work: (yes / no / unknown)	no
Monument type:	none	Monument period:	N/a
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	none		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County:	Oxfordshire	OS reference: (8 figs min)	
District:	Cherwell	Parish:	Bucknell
Site address: (with postcode if known)	The Old Rectory, Bainton Road, Bucknell, OX27 7LT		
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	800 sq. m	Height OD: (metres)	98.7m
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd		
Project brief originator:	Richard Oram	Project design originator:	ASC Ltd
Project Manager:	Karin Semmelmann	Director/Supervisor:	Martin Cuthbert
Sponsor / funding body:	Mr and Mrs Curry		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date:	23/3/09	End date:	25/03/09
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location (Accession no.)	Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical:	None	None	
Paper:	Oxfordshire museum (OXCMS: 2009.70)	Site records, report, photographs	
Digital:		CD-ROM with copies of all digital files	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title:	Watching Brief Report: The Old Rectory, Bainton Road, Bucknell, Oxon.		
Serial title & volume:	ASC Ltd Report ref. 1173/BBR/2		
Author(s):	Martin Cuthbert BA		
Page nos	21	Date:	09/04/09