

# 131 Slough Road Datchet Berkshire



## Archaeological Attendance Report

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## **131 Slough Road, Datchet**

*Archaeological Attendance Report*

*Written by Mark Gibson*

*and illustrated by Markus Dylewski*

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## Summary

*On 19th August 2013 Oxford Archaeology carried out the archaeological excavation and recording of a single human inhumation burial at 131 Slough Road, Datchet. The undated burial was discovered during the excavation of footing trenches as part of extension works to the property.*

### 1 LOCATION AND SCOPE OF WORK

- 1.1.1 On the 19<sup>th</sup> of August 2013 Oxford Archaeology (OA) were commissioned by Victoria Beacon to carry out the archaeological excavation and recording of an inhumation burial at 131 Slough Road, Datchet, Berkshire, SL3 9AE.
- 1.1.2 The human remains were discovered within a hand-dug footing trench, excavated as part of extension works to the property. The trench was aligned north-west to south-east and was excavated through the ground floor of 131 Slough Road, Datchet, Berkshire (Figure 1).

### 2 METHODOLOGY

- 2.1.1 Excavation, recording and lifting of human remains was undertaken in accordance with the methods detailed in the OA Fieldwork Manual (Wilkinson 1992) and in line with the BABAO Code of Practice and Code of Ethics (2010). All archaeological deposits were recorded using *pro-forma* recording forms.
- 2.1.2 The skeleton was planned at a scale of 1:20 (Figure 2) and a digital photographic record was made.
- 2.1.3 Osteological recording was undertaken on site by a qualified osteoarchaeologist. An estimation of age and sex was carried out, and all bones were rapidly scanned to look for evidence of pathology. All osteological recording was undertaken in accordance with standard guidelines (Brickley and McKinley 2004).

### 3 DESCRIPTION OF DEPOSITS

- 3.1.1 The burial was revealed within a 2.6m long, 0.6m wide footing trench, with a depth of up to 0.76m below the current floor level.
- 3.1.2 The soil horizon encountered below the floor level comprised a mid yellow-brown, alluvial sandy silt (4) of at least 0.3m thick. The grave (2) was dug through this soil, but due to the similarity between the grave backfill (3) and the alluvium (4) the grave cut could not be defined. No dating evidence was recovered from the grave fill.
- 3.1.3 Within the grave was a single adult skeleton. The skeleton, orientated with the head to WNW and feet to ESE, was laid in a supine (on the back) position, with the legs extended and left arm flexed. The left arm was flexed at the elbow, with the forearm positioned across the abdomen (Plates 1 and 2). The skull and right arm lay beyond the limits of the trench.

### 4 OSTEOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

- 3.1.1 The skeleton (1) was estimated to be that of an adult female, based on sexually dimorphic features of the pelvis. In addition, the bones were notably gracile, a feature also in keeping with a female individual.



- 3.1.2 Whilst the skeleton was clearly adult, features of the auricular surface (a joint surface of the pelvis) indicated that the individual was probably less than 35 years of age at death.
- 3.1.3 The stature of the individual could not be estimated due to the absence of a complete long bone. No lesions of pathology were observed.

## 5 CONCLUSION AND NOTE ON THE REBURIAL OF THE HUMAN REMAINS

- 3.1.1 No artefactual evidence was recovered from the single inhumation burial revealed at 131 Slough Road, thus the burial remains undated. However, whilst it cannot be confirmed, its roughly east-west orientation and supine burial position are consistent with a Christian burial.
- 3.1.2 In line with the conditions outlined in the Ministry of Justice Burial Licence for the excavation of the skeleton at 131 Slough Road, all human remains excavated from the trench were reburied at the property. The remains were buried within a newly excavated grave in the rear garden of the property, outside the footprint of the new extension (Figure 3). A cherry tree will be planted on its location.





## APPENDIX A. ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Thickness / depth below GL	Width	Length	Comments	Finds	Date
001	Skeleton	0.76m BGL			Skeleton	/	?
002	Cut	0.3m +	?	?	Grave cut - arbitrary	/	?
003	Fill	0.3m +			Grave fill	None	?
004	Layer	0.3m +			Alluvial deposit	None	



## APPENDIX B. REFERENCES

BABAO 2010 *British Association of Biological Anthropology and Osteoarchaeology Code of Practice and Code of Ethics*, online at: <http://www.babao.org.uk/index/ethics-and-standards>

Brickley, M, and McKinley, J, 2004 *Guidelines to the Standards for Recording Human Remains*, IFA Paper, 7, Oxford

Wilkinson, D (ed.) 1992 *OA Fieldwork Manual*, Unpublished document (Oxford Archaeology)



## APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name:	131 Slough Road, Datchet
Site code:	DASR13
Grid reference:	SU 983 780
Type of archaeological work:	Archaeological attendance to record, lift and oversee reburial of a single articulated human skeleton.
Date and duration of project:	1 day – 19 <sup>th</sup> August 2013
Area of site:	c. 1.5m <sup>2</sup>
Summary of results:	A single articulated human skeleton was revealed during extension works to the property. The skeleton was laid in a supine position on a roughly east-west orientation. No dating evidence was recovered from the burial. Following excavation the skeleton was reburied within the rear garden of the property.
Location of archive:	No museum currently available. Archive temporarily retained at Oxford Archaeology.





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Figure 1: Site location



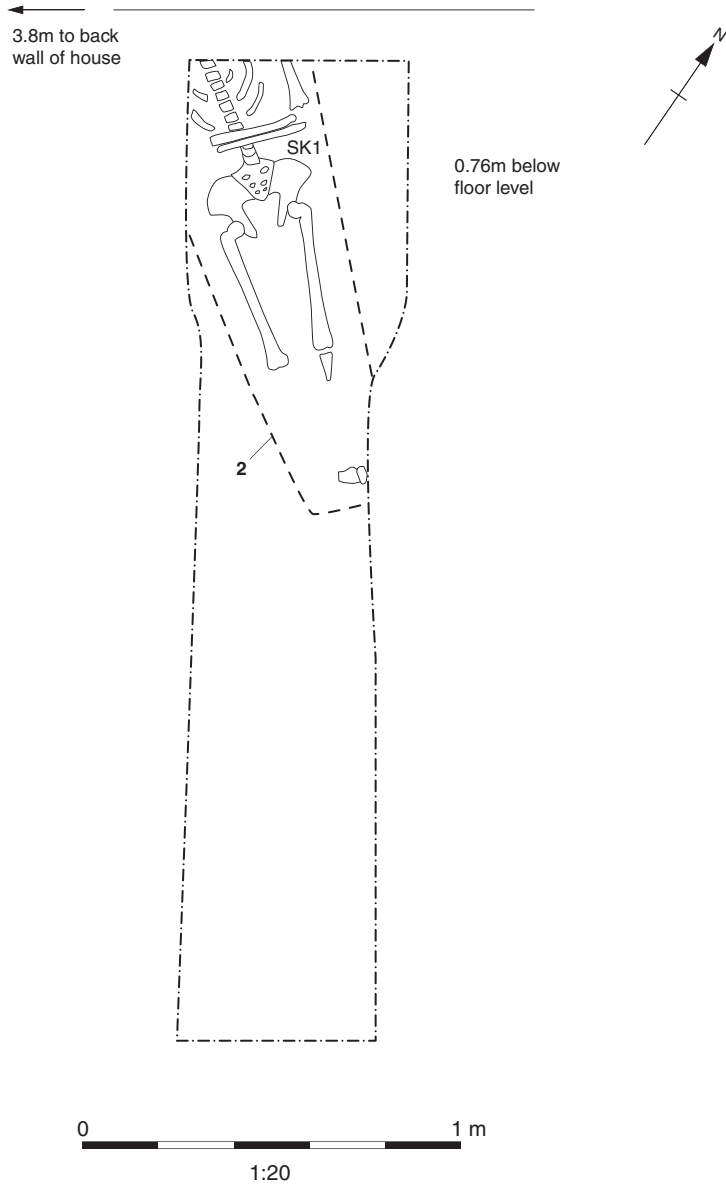


Figure 2: Plan of trench







Figure 3: Location of reburial







Plate 2: View of trench looking north-west



Plate 1: Skeleton 1







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