

# The Willows Ham Island Old Windsor Berkshire



## Archaeological Watching Brief Report



**Oxford Archaeology**

November 2005

**Client: Mr and Mrs Armstrong**

Issue N<sup>o</sup>: 1

OA Job N<sup>o</sup>: 2931

Planning Ref N<sup>o</sup>: 04/01764

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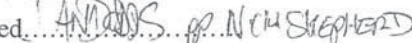
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## The Willows, Ham Island, Old Windsor, Berkshire

NGR: SU 9900 7533

### *ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT*

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## SUMMARY

*In September 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Willows, Ham Island, Old Windsor Berkshire (NGR:SU 9900 7533). The watching brief was required to inspect the footings of an extension to the existing dwelling. No archaeological remains or artefacts were recovered during the fieldwork, however the full depth of the foundation trenches was obscured by recently poured concrete and the beginnings of the new block work. All spoil heaps were scanned but no artefacts were found.*

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Scope of work

- 1.1.1 In September 2005 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at The Willows, Ham Island, Old Windsor, Berkshire (Figs. 1 and 2). The work was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Armstrong in respect of a planning application for a ground floor extension incorporating a kitchen and dining room (Planning Ref: 04/01764).
- 1.1.2 A condition in the form of an archaeological watching brief during ground-works was set by Fiona Macdonald, Principle Archaeologist for Berkshire Archaeology. This was in accordance with PPG 16 and Local Planning Policies.

#### 1.2 Location, geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The development area is located at The Willows, Ham Island, Old Windsor, Berkshire (NGR SU 9900 7533). The development site lies at approximately 20 m OD and the underlying geology is Flood Plain Gravel (British Geological Survey Sheet no. 269).

#### 1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site lies within the Saxon settlement and medieval Royal Palace of Old Windsor (although excluded from the Scheduled Ancient Monument). Excavations carried out in the 1950s have shown that the area appeared to have started out as a very small settlement around AD 600. The site expanded slowly throughout the 7th and 8th centuries until AD 800 when the site suddenly appeared to expand rapidly.
- 1.3.2 The site continued as an important Royal seat until the establishment of Windsor Castle in 1067. From this date the site of Old Windsor began to decline.

## 2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

### 2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.
- 2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

### 2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The foundations for the new extension were excavated prior to the start of the archaeological watching brief and were therefore unavailable for inspection. The attending archaeologist was only able to note the dimensions and locations of the foundations (Fig. 2) and to scan the spoil heaps for archaeological artefacts.
- 2.2.2 The site was photographed using colour slide and black and white print film and a general photographic record of the work was also made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OA Field Manual* (OAU 1992).

## 3 RESULTS

### 3.1 Description of deposits

- 3.1.1 After discussion with the groundwork contractor, it was ascertained that the foundations had been excavated to a depth of 800 mm with a recorded width of 600 mm. The trenches had been filled with concrete to a depth below ground level of 300 mm.
- 3.1.2 The remaining exposed stratigraphy comprised a dark brown alluvial silty gravel deposit. The western portion of the foundation had been cut through a bank formed by the up-cast from the construction of the existing house.

### 3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 No finds were recovered from the watching brief.

### 3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the watching brief.

## 4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The foundation trenches for the new development were already excavated and filled with concrete when the watching brief took place. Examination of the available 300 mm of exposed soil profile did not reveal any archaeological features or deposits. A thorough examination of the spoil heaps for the trenches failed to produce any finds.

It would be impossible to suggest with any certainty that the site did not disturb or damage any features of archaeological significance, despite that apparent lack of artefactual evidence.

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**APPENDICES****APPENDIX 1 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES**

OAU, 1992 Fieldwork Manual (ed. D. Wilkinson)

**APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS**

**Site name:** The Willows, Ham Island, Old Windsor, Berkshire

**Site code:** WITWIL 05

**Grid reference:** NGR SU 9900 7533

**Type of watching brief:** Groundworks for extension

**Date and duration of project:**

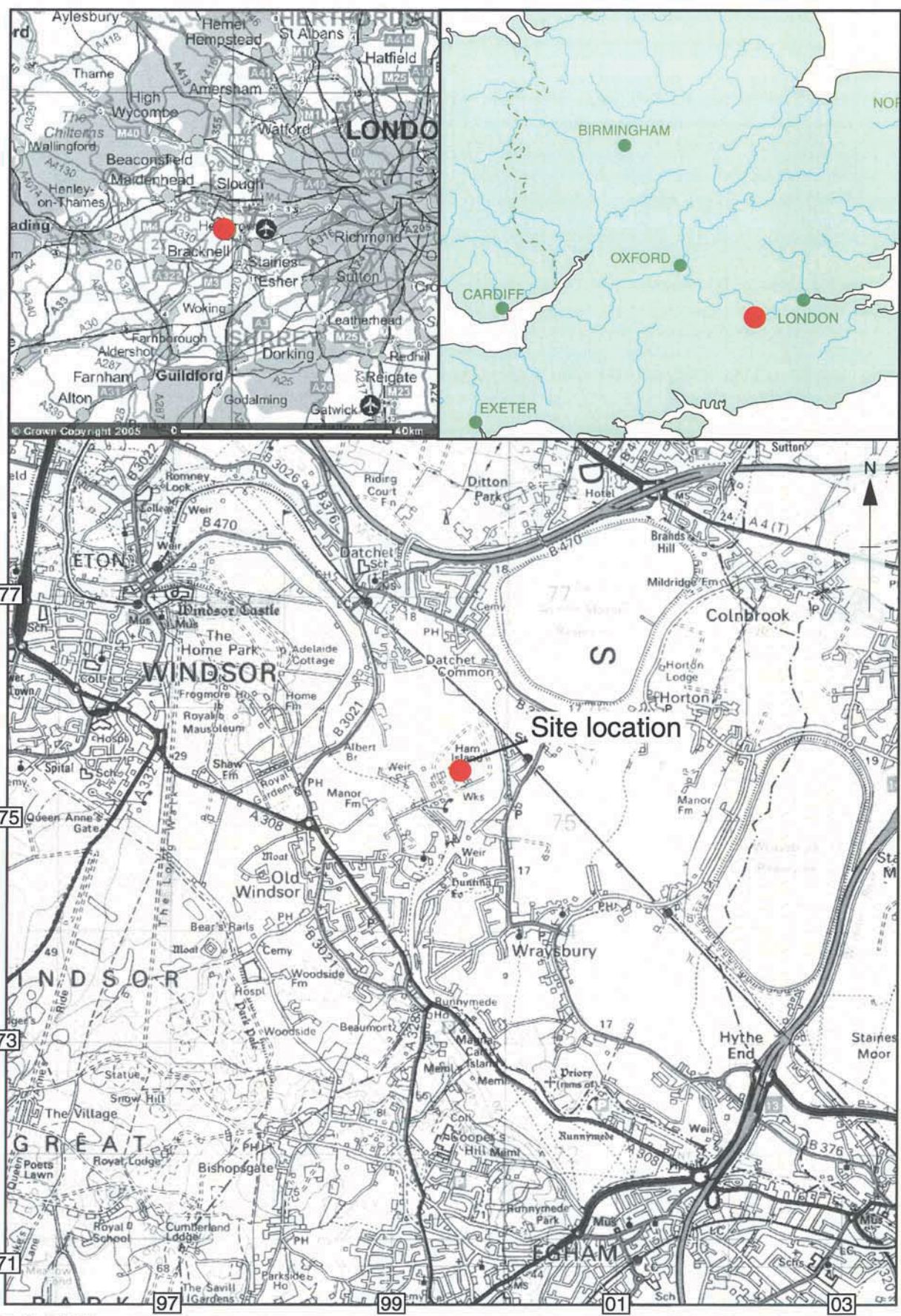
**Area of site:** 25 x 15 m

**Summary of results:** The watching brief revealed no archaeological features or deposits within the area of development as it had already been built.

**Location of archive:** The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Reading Museum in due course, under the following accession number: REDMG:



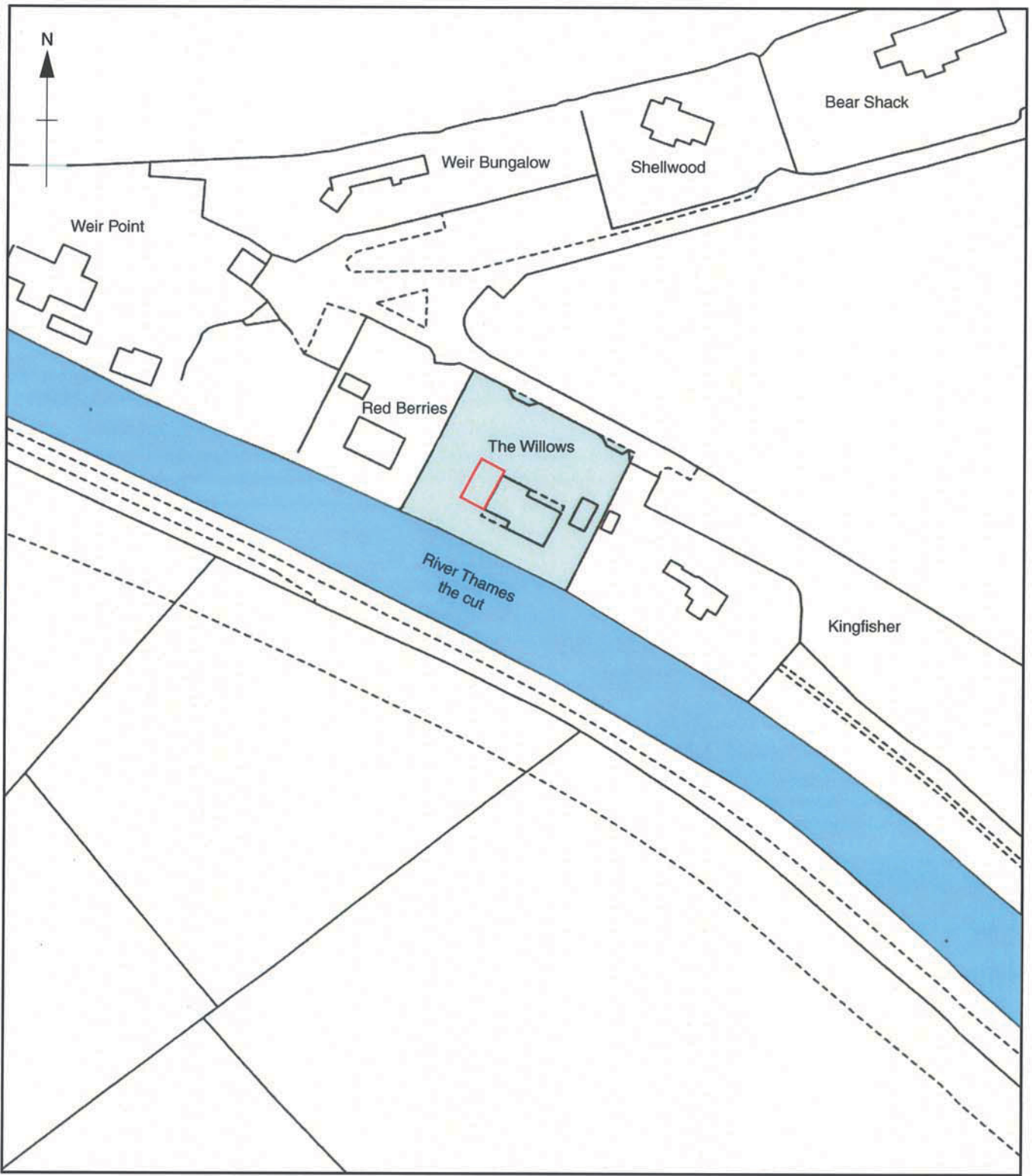




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Figure 1: Site location



KEY  
Application site  
Proposed extension

0 50 m  
1:1250

Figure 2: Location of extension

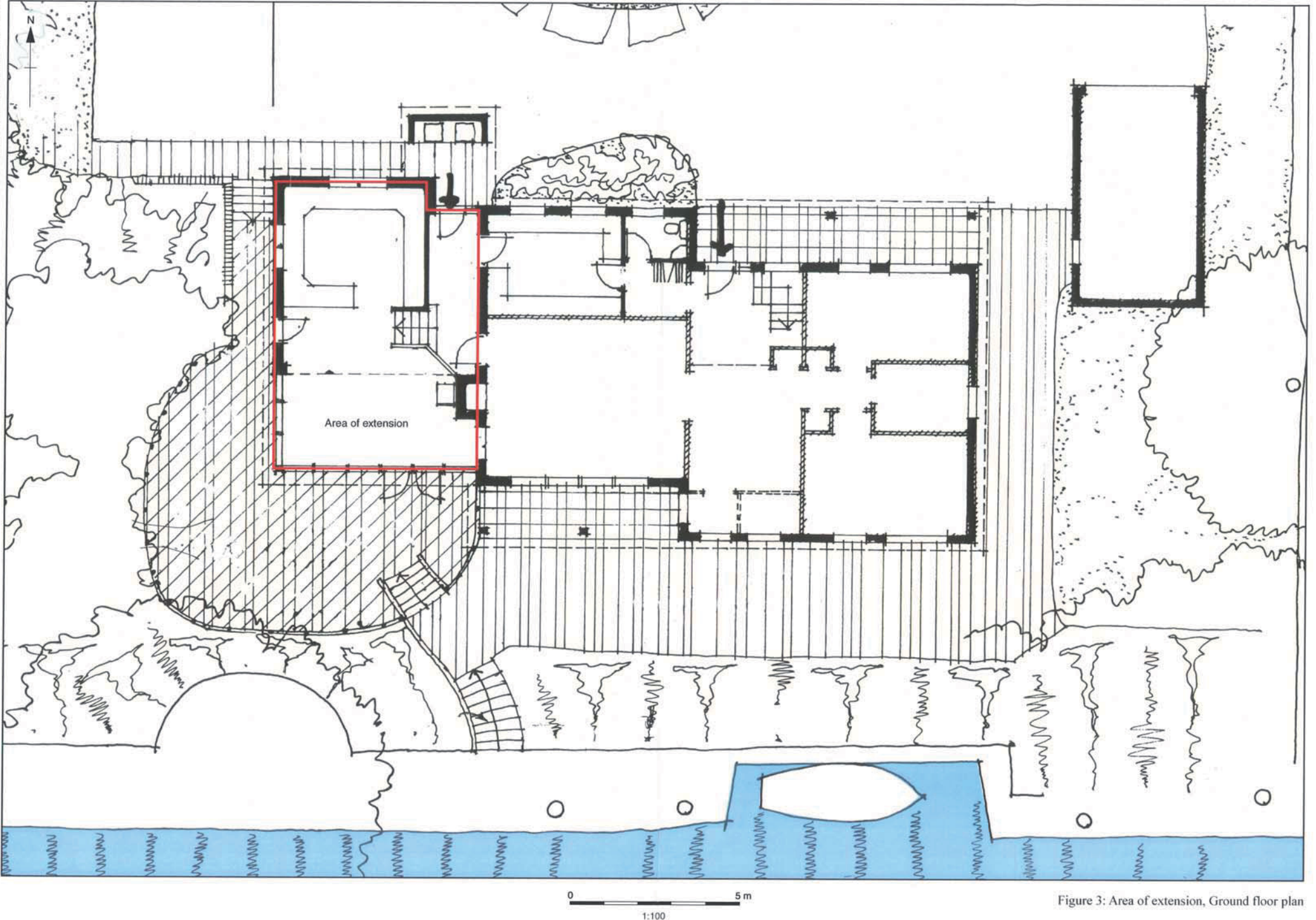


Figure 3: Area of extension, Ground floor plan



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