



KDK ARCHAEOLOGY LTD

Archaeological Observation, Investigation and Recording Report

Pear Tree Cottage
Vicarage Road
Stoneleigh
Warwickshire



Quality Check

<i>Author</i>	Karin Kaye MA MCifA	<i>Version</i>	230/SVR/2	<i>Date</i>	12.10.16
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7b High Street Mews Leighton Buzzard Bedfordshire LU7 1EA
Tel: 01525 385443
Email: office@kdkarchaeology.co.uk
Website: www.kdkarchaeology.co.uk





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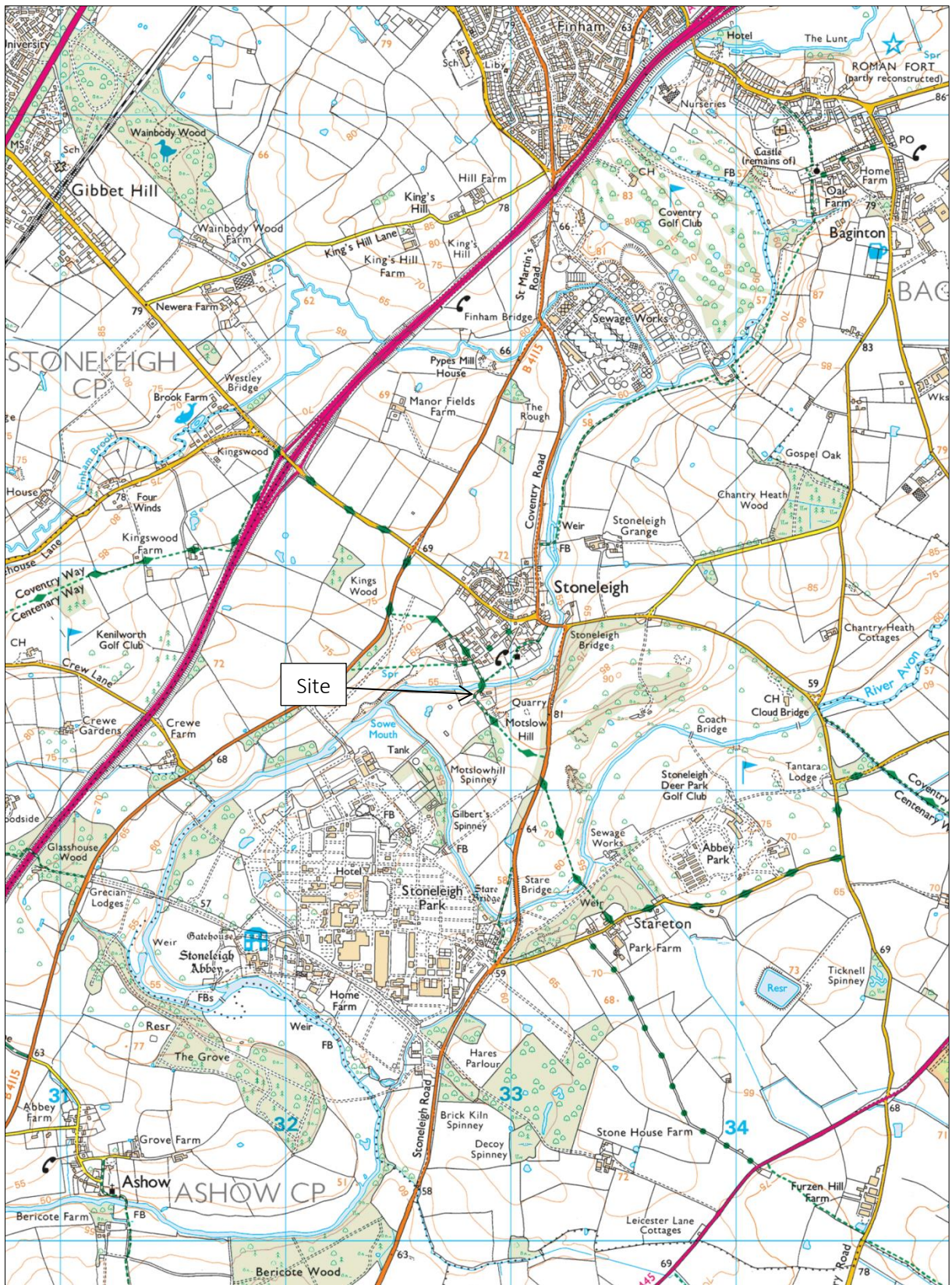


Figure 1: Site location (scale 1:25,000)



Summary

In September 2016 a programme of Observation, Investigation and Recording was undertaken at Pear Tree Cottage, Vicarage Road, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, in order to fulfil Condition 3 of Planning Consent. It was clear that the ground on which the cottage stands had been reduced by at least 0.50m into the natural clay geology. Any archaeological features or deposits within this area would therefore have been destroyed in the 17th century when the cottage was first built. The only disturbance to the natural stratigraphy in the area reduced for this building programme was the material from a modern building that had been demolished fairly recently.

1 Introduction

1.1 In September 2016 KDK Archaeology Ltd undertook a programme of Observation, Investigation and Recording at Pear Tree Cottage, Vicarage Road, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire. The project was commissioned by Mr & Mrs Beaumont, and was carried out according to a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by KDK (Dodd 2016), and approved by Warwickshire County Council Archaeological Information and Advice Team, Archaeological Advisor (AA) to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), Warwick District Council. The relevant planning application reference is W/16/0745.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This project has been required under the terms of National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) as Condition 3 of planning permission for the development of the site.

1.3 *The Site*

Location

Pear Tree Cottage is situated on the western edge of Stoneleigh, in the civil parish of Stoneleigh and the administrative area of Warwick District Council (Fig. 1). The site, which is centred on National Grid Reference SP32 8427 2591, is bounded to the south by Vicarage Road and by private dwellings to the north, east and west.

Description

Pear Tree cottage is a 17th century Grade II listed dwelling (NHLE List entry No. 308205) set in the village of Stoneleigh. The area is surrounded by open field and farm land and is in close proximity to River Sowe to the west and south and the River Avon to the southwest where the two rivers meet. Ancient woodland still survives to the south of the village. The dwelling comprises a two story building with a single story annex to the rear, which has been converted from a stable block (Fig. 2).

Geology & Topography

The underlying bedrock consists of sandstone from the Kenilworth formation. Although the superficial deposits overlying the site are not mapped, there are bands of river terrace sand and gravel as well as alluvial clay silt/sand and gravel in the immediate area (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>).

Development

The development comprises the erection of a single storey rear/side extension, rear dormer window and additional rear wall with a window for the installation of a new WC. A walled patio will be constructed to the side of the house with steps leading up to it (Fig. 3).

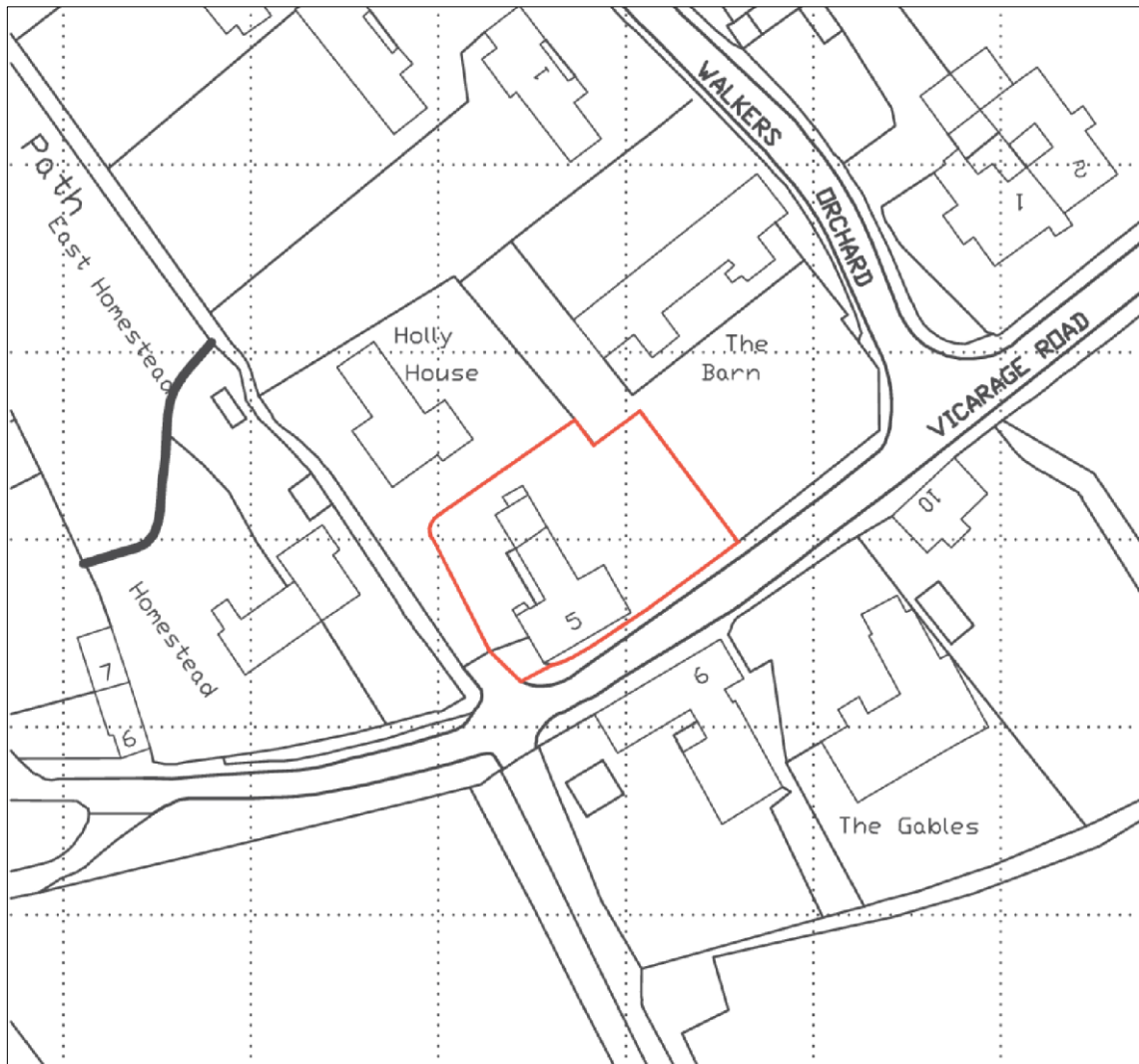


Figure 2: Site layout (scale 1:750)

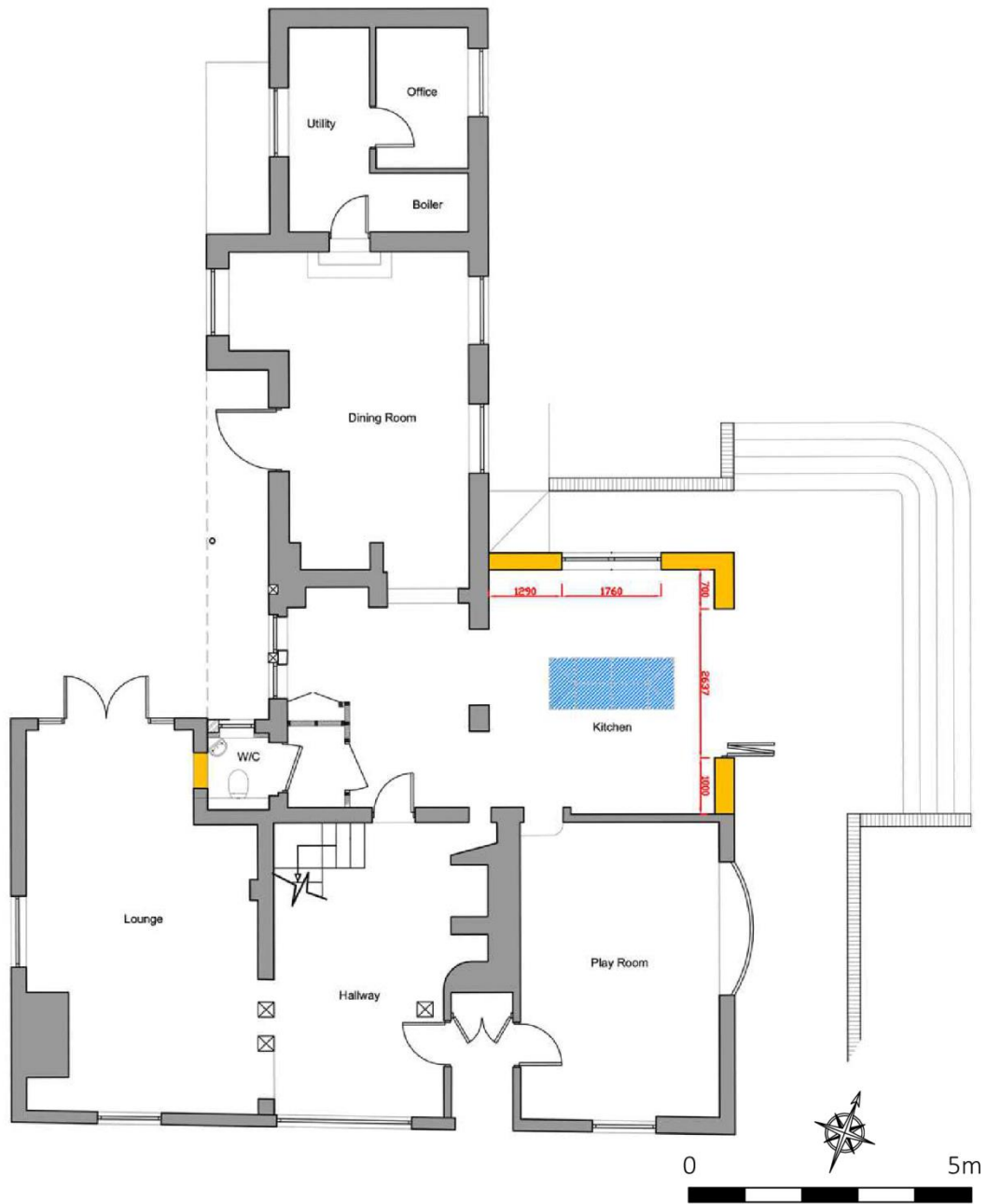


Figure 1: Development plan (scale 1:125)



2 Aims & Methods

2.1 The aims of this project as defined in the approved WSI (Dodd 2016) were:

- To establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the development area
- To establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscape
- To recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions

2.2 *Methods*

In line with the requirements of the brief, the methods used were as follows:

- All ground or other works likely to have an impact on archaeological deposits or remains were done under archaeological supervision using a toothless ditching bucket.

2.3 *Standards*

The work conformed to the following requirements:

- The relevant sections of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance Notes* (CIfA 2014)
- The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (CIfA 2014)
- Current English Heritage guidelines (HE 2015, EH 2008)



3 Archaeological & Historical Background

3.1 Archaeological evidence indicates at least transient human activity in the area before a settlement was established in Stoneleigh in the Saxon period. It was at this time a locale of some significance; it was a Royal Manor and the centre of the local administrative district, the Stoneleigh Hundred. Hundredal meetings were held to the south of the river, which along with the extensive woodland, provided considerable income for the local economy. The post-Conquest settlement flourished with the growth of a number of subsidiary settlements, the establishment of several mills serving the cloth industry in the locality and the foundation of a Cistercian Abbey.

Post-medieval development has been limited with the result that the area has retained its rural aspect.

This section has been compiled with information from the Warwickshire Historic Environment Record (HER), with a search of the data made within a 1km radius of the Pear Tree Cottage. Sites quotes are prefixed with MWA. The Victoria County History (VCH) for Warwick has been used as the basis for historical information

3.2 *Prehistoric* (before 600BC-AD43)

The earliest evidence for human activity in the vicinity is a Paleolithic quartzite pebble tool found in an unspecified location to the south of the River Sowe (MWA4589).

Although no archaeological evidence exists for early occupation in Stoneleigh, the chance find of a round flint scraper and 10 flakes approximately 1km northwest of the village (MWA2894) and a scraper (MWA2886) at Manor Farm, c.200m west of the church suggest that there may have been at least sporadic activity if not settlement in the area, possibly as early as the Neolithic period (c. 4000 – 2500 BC).

An Iron Age coin, a stater of the Dubonni inscribed with the work CORIO was found c.280m northeast of Pear Tree Cottage near Church Lane (MWA2879). Another Dubonni coin, this time of silver was found 300m south of close to Motslow Hill Spinney (MWA2889).

Approximately 300m outside the village of Stoneleigh is a possible enclosure of uncertain date (MWA2937). None of the aerial photographs currently traceable show cropmarks in either of the two locations that it had previously been observed on aerial photographs.

3.3 *Roman* (AD43 - c.450)

Although the Lunt Hillfort is only 3km to the northeast of Pear Tree Cottage, there is no known Roman activity within a 1km radius of the site. However, excavations undertaken in 1971 suggested a possible Roman settlement just over 1km northwest of the village where Romano- British pottery was found in association with ditches and timber beam slots during archaeological investigation (MWA2907).

3.4 *Saxon* (c.450 - 1066)

There is no archaeological evidence for early or mid Saxon settlement within the study area, but Stoneleigh is known to have been established by the late Saxon period. That it was an important settlement is indicated in the fact that the Hundred was named after the village and that it was a Royal Manor (VCH online). The Hundredal meeting place may well have been Motslow Hill, which is listed in the HER as either an artificial mound c.300m to the south of the present church (MWA2878) or possibly 400m south of Stoneleigh, although this is marked as a



quarry on more recent OS maps (MWA5291). The significance of the settlement in the Saxon period may suggest that the church originated as a minster church (MWA13225).

The Saxon economy was no doubt heavily influenced by the presence of the Rivers Avon and Sowe and the extensive woodland. Not only are these features referred to, even if obliquely, in the Domesday Survey, the former use of the name *The Frith* for Kings Wood (MWA9945) may indicate that this dates from the Saxon period.

3.5 **Medieval** (1066 - 1500)

Stoneleigh remained in royal hands after the Norman Conquest, although by this time the original 10 hide estate had been reduced to just 6 (VCH online). At the time of the Domesday Survey (1086) Stoneleigh consisted of 20 acres of meadow and sufficient woodland for 2000 swine. In demesne there were five ploughs and eight slaves, 68 villans and four bordars. The village also contained two mills which made 35s4d per year (*ibid*). Stoneleigh Mill, which was demolished by 1886, is thought to have stood on the site of one of the Domesday mills (MWA2902). The importance of the river was such that by the 16th century there were six mills in the area, providing a combined annual income of £15 10s in 1535 (VCH online). Most of them appear to have been converted to fulling although grain was still being processed in Stoneleigh Mills (*ibid*).

A number of manors and hamlets were established in Stoneleigh during the medieval period, including Fletchamstead, which consisted of a dwelling and chapel built by a hermit named Gerard on a small parcel of land given to him by Henry I. This was later acquired by the Knights Templars and, following the suppression of their order, the Knights Hospitallers (VCH online). At Finbury, Henry I is said to have given land to William his falconer. Simon the Cook was granted land worth 20s by Henry II in Stareton. On his death in 1175 it was awarded to his brother, William the Cook, and was later acquired by Stoneleigh Abbey (*ibid*). Whether the earthworks seen on LIDAR images to the south and west of Pear Tree Cottage are associated with any of these former hamlets or habitations is as yet uncertain (<http://www.geostore.com/environment-agency/survey.html#/survey?grid=SP36>).

The present Church of St Mary the Virgin dates from the 12th century but underwent major rebuilding and alteration in the 14th century with the south aisle being added at this time (MWA2896). Archaeological investigations in recent years have revealed the sandstone foundation wall of the original south wall of the nave, probably dating to the 12th century.

Stoneleigh Abbey was founded by the Cistercians in 1154. Only the Gatehouse, completed in 1346 still remains as the monastery fell into disuse after the Dissolution. The estate exchanged hands several times before it was acquired by the Lord Mayor of London, Sir Thomas Leigh in 1558. A large country mansion was constructed on the site of the monastic buildings in which the Leigh family lived up until 1990. The Manor over the years has attracted many important visitors such as Queen Victoria and Prince Albert and the prince Consort who stayed in Stoneleigh for three days in 1858. The manor is also believed to have provided inspiration for several of the writings of Jane Austin who visited the village several times as the abbey was owned by her mother's cousin (VCH online).

The remains of a medieval road bridge, Stoneleigh Bridge (MWA2856) is located 200m northeast of St Mary's Church.

3.6 **Post-medieval** (1500 - 1900)



The post-Dissolution conversion of Stoneleigh Abbey to desirable residence also led to the establishment of a deer park to the southeast of the village (MWA2865). The gamekeeper is thought to have been house in the Lodge shown on maps dating from 1726 (MWA2866).

During the beginning of the post-medieval period Stoneleigh was a thriving agricultural community whose success lead to the further construction of workers cottages, many of which still survive. A pound was located to the south of Stoneleigh Bridge (MWA2864) and a smithy stood on the village green (MWA2913).

Brick making is thought to have taken place some 200m to the east of Stoneleigh Bridge in the 18th century (MWA2873) and marl pits are marked on an estate map of 1766. The marl pits are still visible as earthworks and are situated 500m north east of Kings Wood (MWA2874).

Alms houses were built to the side of the village green in 1594 (MWA2850) and by the mid 18th century a school house had been built in Stoneleigh.

3.7 **Modern** (1900 - present)

The only entry in the HER for this period is for the remains of a WWII anti aircraft (MWA9620). The control building and earthworks of three battery structures survive 500m southwest of Finham Bridge.



4 Results

The area comprising the north wall of the extension and the patio area was reduced to the level of the natural geology (Fig. 4; Plate 1). The stratigraphy comprised 0.25m of topsoil over 0.20m of reddish brown silty clay, which overlay the reddish brown sandy clay natural (Fig. 5; Plate 2). A change in the stratigraphy was observed c. 0.90m east of the house, where brick and breeze block from a demolished outbuilding had been buried (Figs. 4 & 5). The stratigraphy here comprised 0.20m of topsoil over 0.20m of demolition rubble over the natural geology and extended some 4.20m along the reduced area (Plate 3). No archaeological features or finds were noted.

On the southern side of the reduced area was a modern brick retaining wall, which was to be demolished to make way for the kitchen extension (Plate 4) The ground to the south of the wall, ie within the footprint of the extension, lay approximately 0.80m below the top of the wall as the ground had previously been reduced by at least 0.50m into the natural in order to construct the cottage.



Plate 1: Reduced patio area (1m scale)



Plate 2: General site stratigraphy (1m scale)



Plate 3: Stratigraphy with demolition rubble (1m scale)



Plate 4: Retaining wall and reduced patio level from the footprint of the new extension

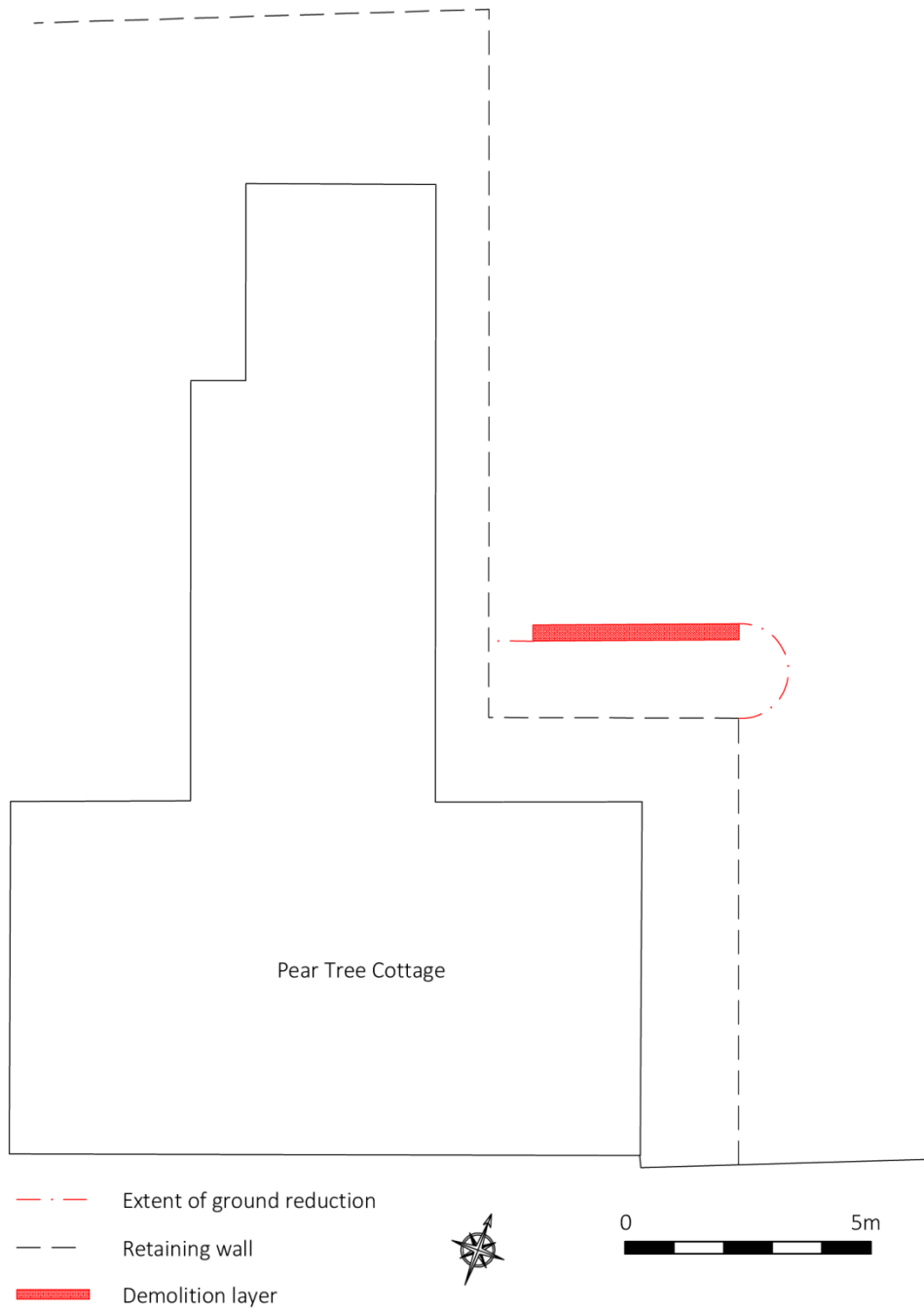


Figure 4: Archaeological works plan (scale 1:150)

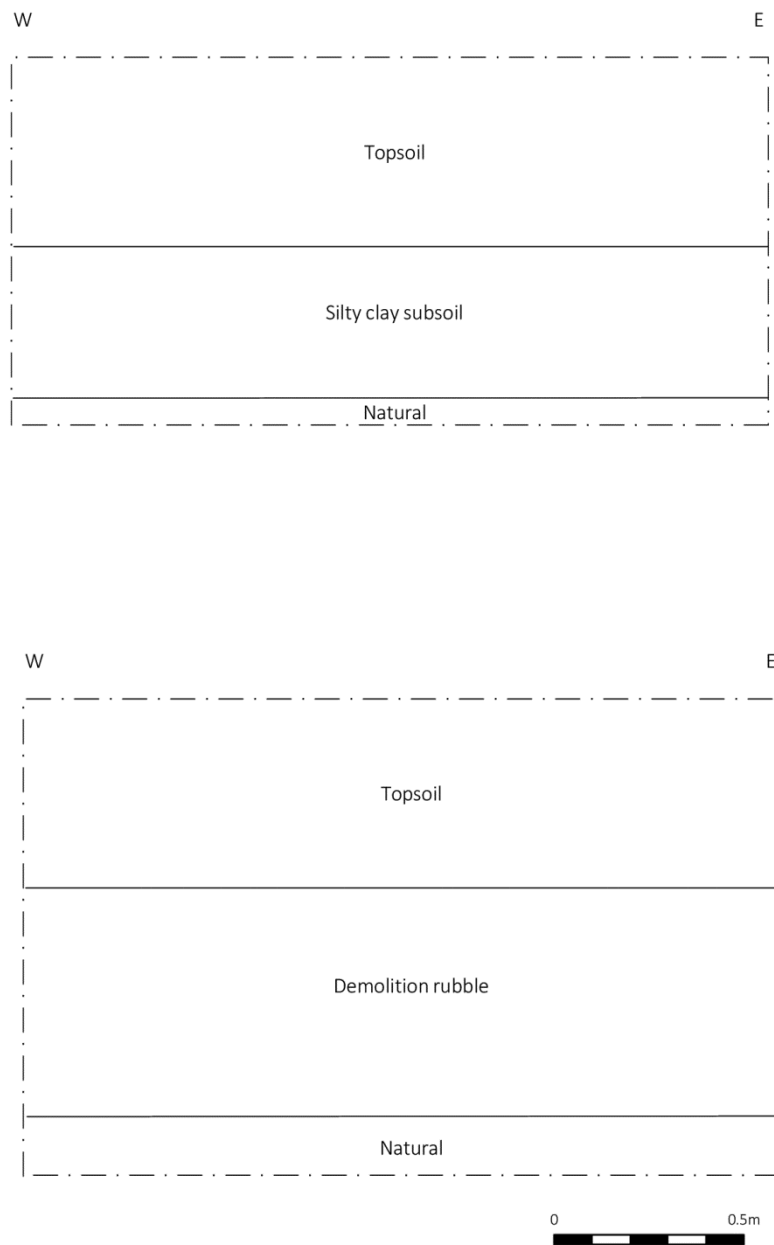


Figure 5: Stratigraphy (scale 1:20)



5 Conclusions

This programme of Observation and Recording demonstrated that the ground on which the cottage stands had been reduced by at least 0.50m into the natural geology. Any archaeological features or deposits within this area would therefore have been destroyed in the 17th century when the cottage was first built. The only disturbance to the natural stratigraphy in the area reduced for this building programme was the material from a modern building that had been demolished fairly recently.

The absence of archaeological cut features, deposits and artefacts within the reduced area may be a result of its relatively small size, and it may be situated between widely dispersed features. Alternatively, it might simply be that there was no notable human activity in that area prior to the 17th century.



6 Acknowledgements

KDK Archaeology is grateful to Kate Beaumont for commissioning this report. Thanks are also due to Ben Wallace and John Robinson of Warwickshire County Council Archaeological Information and Advice for providing historic environment records and monitoring the project.

The fieldwork was carried out by David Kaye BA ACIfA. The report was written by Karin Kaye MA MCIfA, and edited by David Kaye.



7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Written Scheme of Investigation
2. Initial report
3. Monitoring sheets
4. Site drawings
5. Client's site plans
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints & negatives
8. Specialist reports
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with Warwickshire Museum.



8 References

Standards & Specifications

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- Stoneleigh Village Website 2016. <http://www.stoneleighvillage.org.uk/history/>
- Williams A. & Martin G.H. 2002 *Domesday Book: a complete translation*. London: Penguin



Appendix 1: Photograph List

SITE NO/CODE: 230/SVC			Site Name: Pear Tree Cottage, Stoneleigh
Shot	B&W	Digital	Subject
1	x	x	Area of ground reduction and the northern footing for the extension looking east
2	x	x	Stratigraphy with the demolition layer, looking north
3	x	x	General site stratigraphy, looking north
4	x	x	Retaining wall and the patio area beyond from the footprint of the new extension



Appendix 2: OASIS and Site Data

PROJECT DETAILS			
Project Name & Address	Pear Tree Cottage, Vicarage Road, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire	Project Site Code	230/SVR
OASIS reference	kdkarcha1-258581	Event/Accession no	tbc
OS reference	SP32 8427 2591	Study area size	
Project Type	Observation & Recording	Height (mAOD)	60m
Short Description	In September 2016 a programme of Observation, Investigation and Recording was undertaken at Pear Tree Cottage, Vicarage Road, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire, in order to fulfil Condition 3 of Planning Consent. It was clear that the ground on which the cottage stands had been reduced by at least 0.50m into the natural. Any archaeological features or deposits within this area would therefore have been destroyed in the 17 th century when the cottage was first built. The only disturbance to the natural stratigraphy in the area reduced for this building programme was the material from a modern building that had been demolished fairly recently.		
Previous work	No	Site status	Grade II listed
Planning proposal	Erection of a single storey rear/side extension, erection of rear dormer and additional rear wall with window to create W.C.	Current land use	Residential
Local Planning Authority	Warwick District Council	Planning application ref.	W/16/0745
Monument type	n/a	Monument period	n/a
Significant finds	n/a	Future work	No
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	KDK Archaeology Ltd		
Project Brief originator	n/a	Project Design originator	KDK Archaeology Ltd
Project Manager	David Kaye	Director/Supervisor	David Kaye
Sponsor/funding body	Mr & Mrs Beaumont		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date		End date	
PROJECT ARCHIVES			
	Location	Content (e.g. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)	
Physical	Warwick Museum	None	
Paper		Site notes, photos, WSI, report	
Digital		1 CD	
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)			
Title	Archaeological Observation, Investigation & Recording: Pear Tree Cottage, Vicarage Road, Stoneleigh, Warwickshire		
Serial title & volume	KDK Archaeology Ltd 230/WVR/2		
Author(s)	David Kaye BA ACIfA		
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