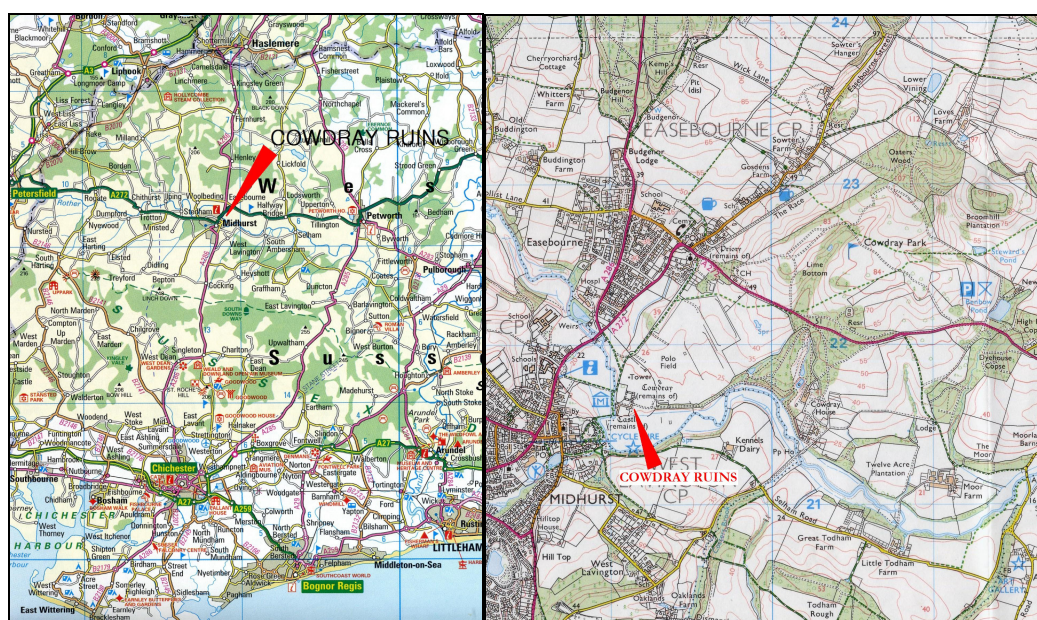


# Report On An Archaeological Watching Brief at the Old Kitchen Tower, Cowdray Ruins, Midhurst, West Sussex.

## Background

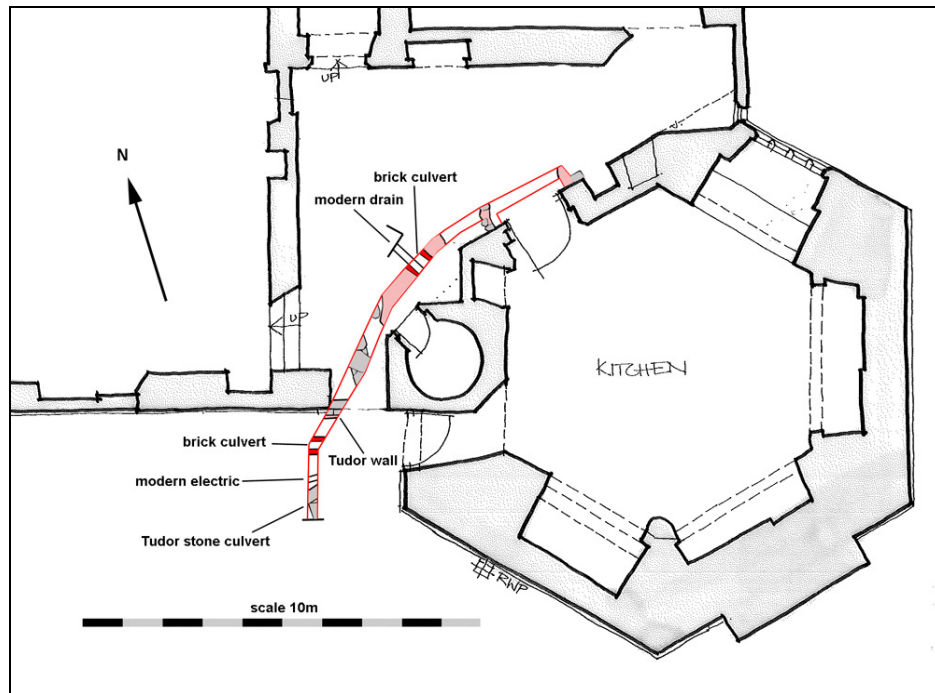
Cowdray Heritage Trust was granted Scheduled Monument Consent (SMC) to excavate a drainage trench from the door of the kitchen tower at the Cowdray Ruins (SAM no: 29300) to the exterior of the ruins, through the kitchen court. The kitchen tower is situated at the south-east corner of the quadrangular Tudor mansion. One of the conditions of this SMC was for an archaeological watching brief to be maintained on the associated groundworks. West Sussex Archaeology Limited was appointed by Cowdray Heritage Trust to carry out this work. The watching brief took place on the 11<sup>th</sup> May 2011. The results of this work are set out below. The project archive will be deposited with West Sussex Records Office.



**Figure 1** Maps showing the location of the Cowdray Ruins. © Crown Copyright. All rights reserved. Licence No. AL100036068.

## Results

The limited size of the trench, which was nowhere more than 0.4m wide and deepened from only 0.25m deep by the kitchen door to 0.4m deep at its southern end, means that little can be said with any certainty about the remains revealed. Previous work in the kitchen court had found traces of a pink mortar and rubble foundation believed to be associated with the kitchen tower (Oxford Archaeology. 2008. **Cowdray House, Midhurst, W.Sussex, Report on the Archaeological Investigations & Recording**. Unpublished. p.46 & 54). Patches of this were again recorded in the drainage trench (see Fig. 2) and would appear to confirm by their extent the suggestion (Ibid. p.54) that these foundations used to underlie a now demolished part of the north-west side of the tower.



**Figure 2** Plan of the Old Kitchen Tower, showing the drainage trench. The Tudor mortar is shaded in pink, with stones in grey.

In addition to these foundations, part of the foundations of the southern wall of the Tudor kitchen court was recorded beneath the sill of the current door, again set in pink mortar. The other probable Tudor feature was a large stone built culvert running from the west door of the Tudor kitchen to the west. Other similar culverts have been noted elsewhere around the ruins and it is assumed that this one formed part of the same network, presumably taking waste water from the kitchens to the river.

Aside from modern services, the only other identifiable features revealed were two smaller brick culverts, one within the kitchen court and the other outside the ruins to the south. Both are clearly later than the Tudor remains and are probably associated with 18<sup>th</sup> century or later surface-water drainage. Neither was currently in use, having been superseded by more modern arrangements.



**Figure 3** The Tudor stone culvert, as seen under a man-hole in the tarmac immediately to the south of the drainage trench.