

2013

Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief at
Red Cross Cottage, Saltern Road, Seaview, Isle of Wight, PO34 5AG



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On behalf of

Michaelis Boyd Associates

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Summary

Absolute Archaeology was commissioned by Michaelis Boyd Associates Ltd to monitor all groundwork associated with the demolition of the two storey extension and associated external works and landscaping at Red Cross Cottage, Salterns Road, Seaview, Isle of Wight, PO34 5AG. (NGR SZ 62512 91580). (Isle of Wight Planning Application Reference P/00883/11). The watching brief was carried out at intervals between December 2011 (Dec 8th. Dec 9th), January 2012 (Jan 11th and Jan 17th). and May 2012 (May 25th).

The results confirmed that there had been two phases of extension to the SW portion of the property, adding a further 5m of floor space which had been used as a kitchen in the 20th century. No artefacts were recovered during the excavation, with which to date the individual phases.

No further archaeology was identified during the excavation of the service trench which spanned the length of the Project Site. Again, no artefacts were recovered during this phase of excavation.

Acknowledgements

Absolute Archaeology would like to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Mark Wheeler (Project Manager, Stoneham Construction Ltd) and the co-operation of all the ground staff during the monitoring of the site. We would also like to thank Mr Owen Cambridge (Planning Archaeologist, Isle of Wight Council) for his help and advice.

Contents

1. Introduction.....	1
1.1. The Project Site.....	1
1.1.1. Location	1
1.1.2. Geology, Topography and Hydrology	2
1.1.3. Archaeological/Historical Background	2
2. Approach to Archaeological Watching Brief	2
2.1. Methodology	3
3. Results	4
3.1. Phase one	4
3.2. Phase Two.....	4
4. CONCLUSION	5
5. REFERENCES.....	6
6. FIGURES	7
7. PHOTOGRAPHS.....	10
8. APPENDIX.....	14
8.1. Appendix 1: Trench Descriptions and Contexts.....	14
8.2. Appendix 2: General chronological table (guide only)	16

Figures

Figure 1: Site Location Showing Areas of Excavation	7
Figure 2: Plan of Site.....	8
Figure 3: Plan of Phase One (Scale Drawn at 1:30 A3)	9

Photographs

Photograph 1: NW Facing View of Extension Pre Demolition of Lower Coursing (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)	10
Photograph 2: SW Facing View of Extension Pre Demolition of Lower Coursing (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)	10
Photograph 3: SE Facing View of Extension Pre Demolition of Lower Coursing (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m).....	10
Photograph 4: NE Facing View of Extension Pre Demolition of Lower Coursing (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)	11
Photograph 5: Demolition of Lower Courses by Hand.....	11

Photograph 6: NW Facing View of Early Foundation [103] (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m).....	11
Photograph 7: NW Facing View of Extension Foundation Wall [108] (Scales 1 x 500mm & 1 x 1m).....	12
Photograph 8: SE Facing View of Foundations [105] & [114] (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)	12
Photograph 9: East Facing View of Service Trench (Scale 1 x 500mm).....	12
Photograph 10: SW Facing View of Service Trench (Scale 1 x 500mm)	13
Photograph 11: NE Facing View of Service Trench (Scale 1 x 1m)	13

Appendices

8.1. Appendix 1: Trench Descriptions and Contexts.....	14
8.2. Appendix 2: General chronological table (guide only)	16

1. Introduction

Absolute Archaeology was commissioned by Michaelis Boyd Associates to carry out an archaeological watching brief, in conjunction with groundwork necessitated by the approved alterations to Red Cross Cottage, Salterns Road, Seaview, Isle Of Wight, PO34 5AG (Isle of Wight Council Planning Reference P/00883/11). The programme of monitoring took place between December 2011 and May 2012.

Permission was granted for the demolition and replacement of the existing two storey extension to the west of Red Cross Cottage and the single storey replacement of the porch, to the east. Plans to establish a swimming pool were abolished (revised scheme).

The watching brief was carried out in accordance with the Isle Of Wight Council Planning Permission Condition 8, stating that *'no development shall take place until the applicant or their agents have secured the implementation of a programme of archaeological works, in accordance with a written scheme of investigation...'* (Isle of Wight Planning Permission, ref P/00833/11: 10/08/2011). It has also been informed by the archaeological consultation response and the comments from the Planning Archaeologist, Mr Owen Cambridge.

1.1. The Project Site

1.1.1. Location

The Project Site is located in the village of Seaview, situated 3 kilometres east of Ryde, on the Isle of Wight's north east coast. Red Cross Cottage is situated within the present day civil parish of Nettlestone and Seaview, characterised predominantly by late 19th- early 20th century development, bordering the Project Site directly to the east. The cottage is located on the western outskirts of the villages of Nettlestone and Seaview, with the land to the west of the Project Site, characterised by low laying salt marsh, with boundaries defined by a large-scale drainage system. The cottage is located c. 200m south of the present day shoreline.

Although not within the boundaries of the Seaview Conservation Area's Historic Core, Red Cross cottage is located in Area 2 'The Outskirts'. With reported origins in the 18th-early 19th

century¹, the building is counted, along with Old Rose Cottage (Steyne Road, less than 350m SE of the Project Site) as a prominent structure, characteristic of the historic development of the area (IOW Council 2007: 7).

1.1.2. Geology, Topography and Hydrology

The Project Site lies less than 5m above sea level. The geology of the development area is characterised by the Palaeogene sequence, with Bembridge Limestone and Marls overlain by alluvium (BGS Sheet 331)

1.1.3. Archaeological/Historical Background

To date, very little evidence of archaeological activity has been identified within a 1km radius of the Project Site. However, this may represent of the lack of research in this area, rather than a true reflection on the archaeological potential of the Project Site.

Some prehistoric activity has been identified within the vicinity of the Project Site, but no permanent settlements have been located within a 500m radius of the proposed development. However, the discovery of finds dating from the Palaeolithic, in the form of two implements found on the shore near Seaview (Gazetteer of Sites Palaeolithic Ref: 40) and two Neolithic polished flint axes, identified in the Parish of St Helen's (Gazetteer of Sites Neolithic Ref: 87 & 88), highlights the potential for prehistoric activity within the development area. In addition, erosion of the cliff at Priory Bay (<700m SE of the Project Site) has revealed a collection of Palaeolithic implements, which have been recovered from the shore. The finds suggest the survival of related archaeology on the cliff edge and raises the archaeological potential of the NE area of the island (Basford, H. V. 1980: 11-12).

The archaeological record for the Project Site is sparse for the end of the Prehistoric period up until the 19th century, when the development of the small harbour of Seaview is documented, due to the establishment of a salt production site, less than 200m to the north of the site.

2. Approach to Archaeological Watching Brief

¹ Whilst a description of the site in the Revision of the Seaview Conservation Area (IOW 2007) dates Red Cross Cottage to the 18th century, cartographic resources suggest a 19th century date for the construction of the property (Michaelis Boyd Associates 2011: 9).

The broad aim of the watching brief was to identify and record features of archaeological interest discovered during groundwork associated with the development, in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource and enable discharge of the planning condition.

Cover of ground disturbance was comprehensive (present during all groundwork): as defined by the IFA Standard and Guidance for an archaeological Watching Brief, revised 2008: 4.

2.1. Methodology

Archaeological monitoring was carried out during the demolition of the lower coursing of the two storey extension to the west of the property and over mechanical ground reduction in order to establish the new extensions to the west and east. Further visits were made to monitor the excavation of service trenches.

The programme of work has been designed to inform the record on the extent of preserved archaeological remains on the Project Site and to allow for the implementation of a suitable strategy in order to mitigate the impact of the works on the archaeological resource and enable the discharge of the planning condition.

Specifically the targeted watching brief sought to:

- Assess the potential for archaeological activity associated with the project site in general;
- Assess the evidence for an earlier extension to exist beneath the structure to the west of the property;
- To provide an opportunity for the watching archaeologist to warn the appropriate parties, before the destruction of the material in question, that an archaeological find has been made for which the resources allocated to the watching brief itself are not sufficient to support treatment to a satisfactory and proper standard.
- Record and identify archaeological features and deposits to a level appropriate to their extent and significance;
- Undertake sufficient post-excavation assessment to interpret archaeological features and phasing identified during site works, and to place these within their local and regional context;
- Create a site archive for deposition in a suitable repository.

The archive has been prepared using the code AARC 54.

3. Results

3.1. Phase one

Phase one comprised the demolition of the 20th century two storey extension to the rear (SW) of Red Cross Cottage, to enable the construction of the replacement structure. The subsequent ground reduction revealed an earlier phase of building activity sealed beneath the later masonry. Three walls were identified belonging to Feature [102] which comprised a small building extended 3m to the SW of the main house. The walls comprised a mix of dressed limestone and sandstone blocks and formed of double skin construction with rubble core and lime mortar. Between one and two courses remained, compacted by demolition material (116). The masonry had been completely removed to the SE, which had been reduced to the truncated subsoil (110). The masonry could not be seen to have been keyed into the main structure and was apparently constructed after the completion of the main dwelling.

In addition, walls [108] and [114] could be seen to extend further to the SW, projecting from the small annex forming the footings of the recently demolished structure. This is interpreted as an extension to Feature [102], adding a further 1.2m to the width. Again, the walls were of double skin construction with rubble core and lime mortar bonding material. Despite the similarity in the construction technique and materials, it was noted that the width of the wall exceeded that of the potential earlier phase. It was also noted that the resulting floor space between wall [114] and [105] was 700mm, which would make a narrow corridor only, should the walls be contemporary.

No finds were recovered from spoil which was monitored throughout the reduction of the area.

3.2. Phase Two

Phase two comprised the mechanical excavation of a service trench which ran the length of the site, leading from the main access to the garage at the rear of the development. The trench measuring 500mm (w) x 500mm (d), truncated hard landscaping [117] which was seen to seal 200mm of topsoil (100) and 300mm of subsoil.

No archaeological features, layers or deposits were identified and no artefacts were recovered from the spoil, which was monitored throughout.

4. CONCLUSION

The results confirmed that there had been two phases of extension to the SW portion of the property, adding a further 5m of floor space which had been used as a kitchen in the 20th century. No artefacts were recovered during the excavation, with which to date the individual phases.

No further archaeology was identified during the excavation of the service trench which spanned the length of the Project Site. Again, no artefacts were recovered during this phase of excavation.

5. REFERENCES

Basford, H.V. 1980. The Vectis Report A Survey of the Isle of Wight Archaeology. Isle of Wight: Isle of Wight County Council

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6. FIGURES

Figure 1: Site Location Showing Areas of Excavation

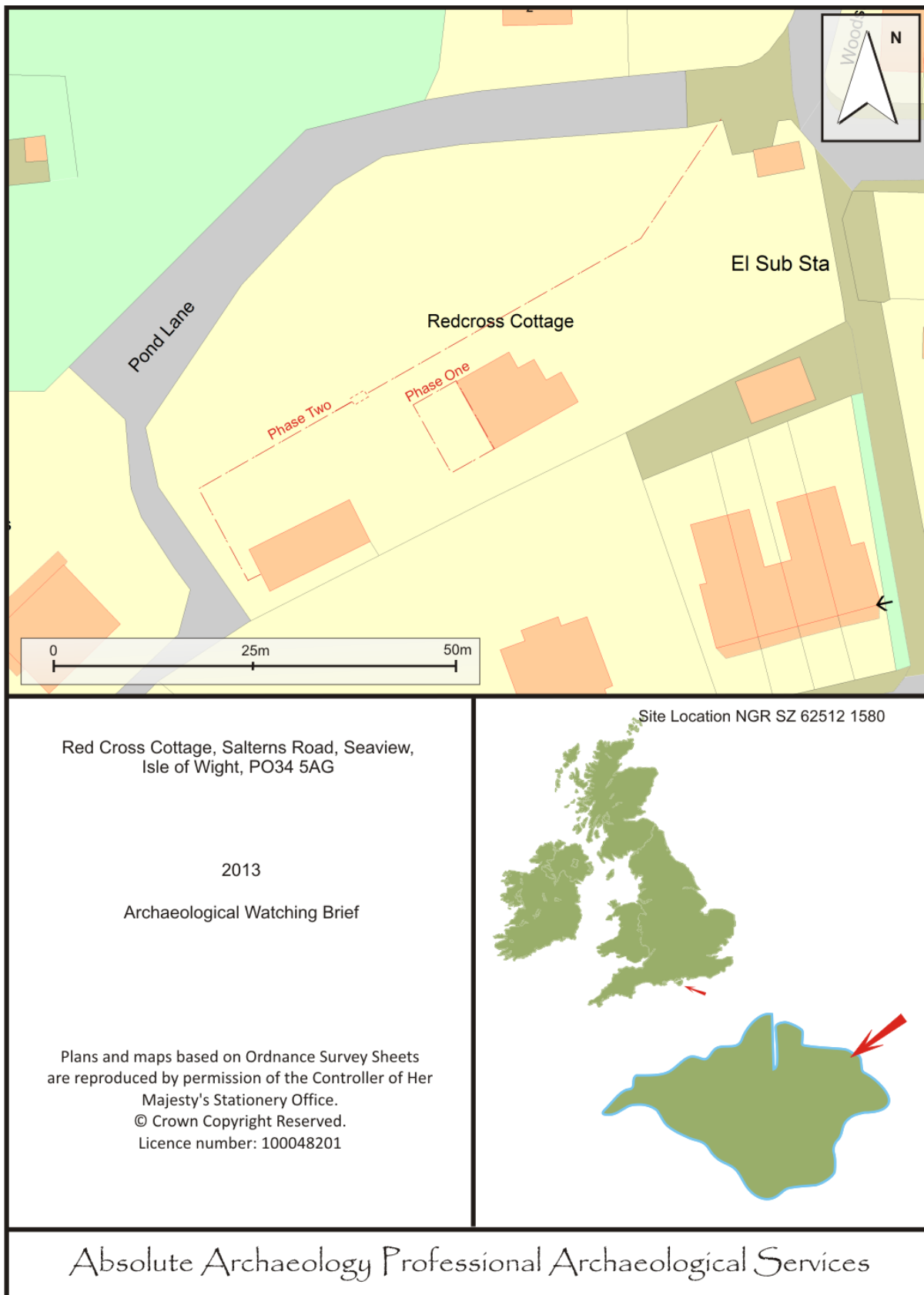
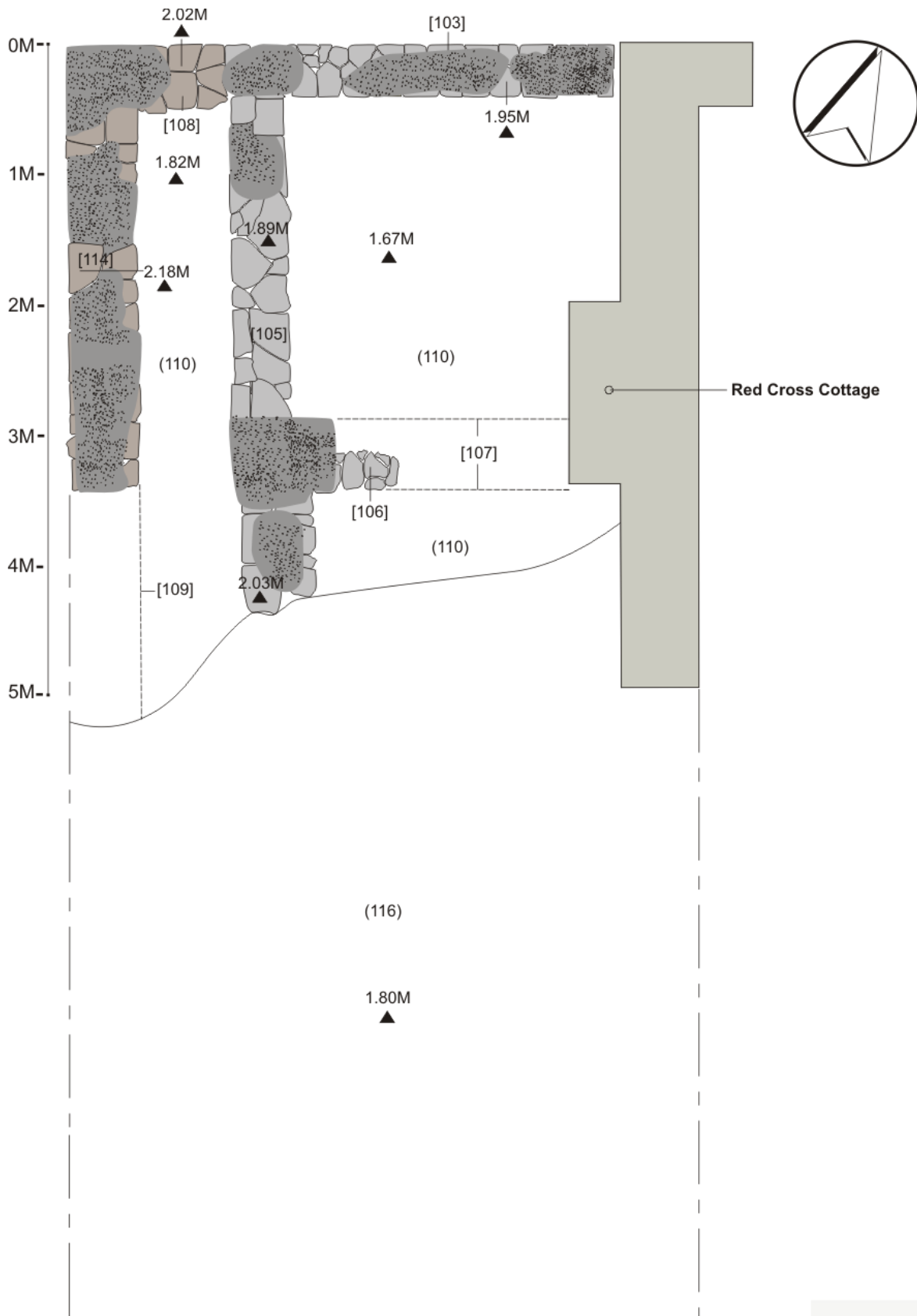


Figure 2: Plan of Site



Figure 3: Plan of Phase One (Scale Drawn at 1:30 A3)



7. PHOTOGRAPHS

Photograph 1: NW Facing View of Extension Pre Demolition of Lower Coursing (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)



Photograph 2: SW Facing View of Extension Pre Demolition of Lower Coursing (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)



Photograph 3: SE Facing View of Extension Pre Demolition of Lower Coursing (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)



Photograph 4: NE Facing View of Extension Pre Demolition of Lower Coursing (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)



Photograph 5: Demolition of Lower Courses by Hand



Photograph 6: NW Facing View of Early Foundation [103] (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)



Photograph 7: NW Facing View of Extension Foundation Wall [108] (Scales 1 x 500mm & 1 x 1m)



Photograph 8: SE Facing View of Foundations [105] & [114] (Scales 1 x 1m & 1 x 2m)



Photograph 9: East Facing View of Service Trench (Scale 1 x 500mm)



Photograph 10: SW Facing View of Service Trench (Scale 1 x 500mm)



Photograph 11: NE Facing View of Service Trench (Scale 1 x 1m)



8. APPENDIX

8.1. Appendix 1: Trench Descriptions and Contexts

Phase One						
Demolition and ground reduction in the region of existing two storey extension (SW of existing dwelling)					Orientation	NW-SE
					Depth	300mm
					Width	4.2m
					Length	10m
Contexts 100-117						
Number	Type	Depth/Height	Width	Length/Diameter	Colour	Date
100	Topsoil/Turfline	150mm-250mm	-	-	Dark Greyish Brown	17.01.2012
101	Subsoil	1.35m	-	-	Mid Reddish Brown	17.01.2012
102	Feature Comprising [103], [105] & [106]	200mm-400mm	3m	4.43m	-	17.01.2012
103	Structure within [104]	200mm-400mm	400mm	2.6m	-	17.01.2012
104	Construction Cut	-	>400mm	2.6m	-	17.01.2012
105	Structure within [112]	200mm-400mm	420mm	>4.43m	-	17.01.2012
106	Structure within [107]	200mm	500mm	660mm	-	17.01.2012
107	Construction Cut	-	>500mm	2m	-	17.01.2012
108	Structure within [109]	200mm-400mm	520mm	3.43m	-	17.01.2012
109	Construction Cut	-	>520mm	>5.2m	-	17.01.2012
110	Natural	-	-	-	Mid Brownish Grey	17.01.2012
111	Void	-	-	-	-	17.01.2012
112	Construction Cut	-	>420mm	>4.43m	-	17.01.2012
113	Feature Comprising [108] & [115]	200mm-400mm	4.2m	>5.1m	-	17.01.2012
114	Structure within [115]	200mm	500mm	600mm	-	17.01.2012
115	Construction Cut	-	>500mm	>600mm	-	17.01.2012

116	Demolition Layer	-	4.2m	5.6m	-	17.01.2012
117	Hard Landscaping	20mm-50mm	4.8m	10m	-	17.01.2012

Phase Two						
Excavation of service trench, leading from the main access to the garage at the rear of the development.				Orientation	NE-SW	
				Depth	500mm	
				Width	300mm-400mm	
				Length	C. 80m	
Contexts 1000-1002						
Number	Type	Depth/Height	Width	Length/Diameter	Colour	Date Excavated
1000	Hard Landscaping	100mm	-	-	-	25/5/2012
1001	Topsoil	200mm	>400mm	>80m	Dark Reddish Brown	25/5/2012
1002	Subsoil	>200mm-300mm	>400mm	>80m	Mid Reddish Brown	25/5/2012

8.2. Appendix 2: General chronological table (guide only)

Period	Date	Information
Prehistoric	800000 – 43 AD	Generalised period from the earliest human activity in Britain (Happisburgh) to the conquest of Britain by Claudius.
Palaeolithic	800000 - 10000 BC	Mobile groups, ephemeral habitation evidence, stone tool technology. Material evidence found predominantly in caves. Earliest evidence for hominins in Britain is at Happisburgh and Pakefield in Norfolk dating to the Pleistocene c.800,000 BP.
Mesolithic	10000 – 4000 BC	Period of major transformation in the European environment and landscape after the end of the last Ice Age. Mobile hunter-gatherer communities, sophisticated tool technology and some semi-permanent settlement, particularly along the east coast of England and in Ireland.
Neolithic	4000 – 2200 BC	Emergence of monumental architecture, such as long barrows and causewayed enclosures. Movement towards more complex society and sedentary lifestyles.
Bronze Age	2200 – 800 BC	Introduction of Bronze, construction of barrows/tumuli for the dead in the early stages replaced by a lack of monuments and the preponderance toward hoard deposition.
Iron Age	800 BC– 43 AD	Introduction of Iron and the return of monumental architecture in the form of hillforts, tribal boundaries and the introduction of coinage.
Romano-British	43-410 AD	Romano-British period including the emergence of villas and Roman infrastructure.
Saxon	410 – 1066 AD	Post-Roman period including Saxon invasions and the arrival of Christianity.
Medieval	1066 – 1650 AD	Medieval period in Britain including Tudor activity, with arbitrary cut off point of 1650 AD.
Post-Medieval	1650 –	Period of rapid industrial development and changes to the English

	1900 AD	landscape.
Modern	1900 – 1950 AD	Including WWI, WWII and Cold War archaeology.

For the purpose of this report some phases have been grouped together (e.g. Early Medieval and Medieval to make one Medieval category).