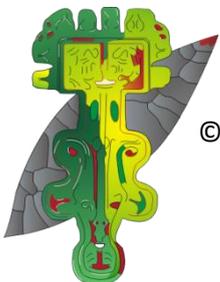


**Absolute
Archaeology LLP
2015**

Results of an Archaeological Watching Brief ~
Dyrham Park, South Gloucestershire, SN14 8ER



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On Behalf of

The National Trust

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Summary

Absolute Archaeology LLP was commissioned by the National Trust to carry out an archaeological watching brief to the east of the Orangery, belonging to Dyrham House, Dyrham, Gloucestershire, SN14 8ER. The programme of work was carried out in conjunction with the excavation of a drainage trench designed to alleviate the pressure of the existing pipe system. The work was carried out on the 1st December 2014.

The excavation revealed a small feature comprised of reused ashlar blocks of limestone [101] to the NW of the trench and adjacent to a line of modern concrete bollards. Although only partially exposed in plan, the feature was seen to measure 300mm in length and is interpreted as Post Medieval in date and potentially belonging to the base of a garden feature.

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

Acknowledgements

Absolute Archaeology LLP would like to acknowledge the assistance of Barry King the contractor/digger driver and the co-operation of National Trust staff during the monitoring of the site.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Absolute Archaeology LLP was commissioned by the National Trust to carry out an archaeological watching brief to the east of the Orangery, belonging to Dyrham House, Dyrham, Gloucestershire, SN14 8ER (hereafter referred to as the Project Site). The programme of work was carried out in conjunction with the excavation of a drainage trench designed to alleviate the pressure of the existing pipe system. The work was carried out on the 1st December 2014.

The programme of work was regarded as permitted development and therefore did not require planning permission.

The archive has been prepared under site code AARC164.

2. THE PROJECT SITE

The Project Site was located within a landscaped area, to the east of the Orangery attached to Dyrham Park House. The National Trust owned Grade I listed Baroque Mansion is set within 274 acres (1.1km²) of parkland and gardens, which sit on the escarpment of the southern Cotswolds. The house is situated at the foot of the slope, in a natural amphitheatre, with parkland rising steeply to the east and north.

2.1. Geology and Topography

Geologically the area is defined as Lower Jurassic Bridport Sand Formation (BGS Sheet 265). The area in question comprises colluvial deposits mixed with made ground. The Project Site lies approximately 128m aOD and is defined by a level lawn area, cut by a trackway leading to the main house.

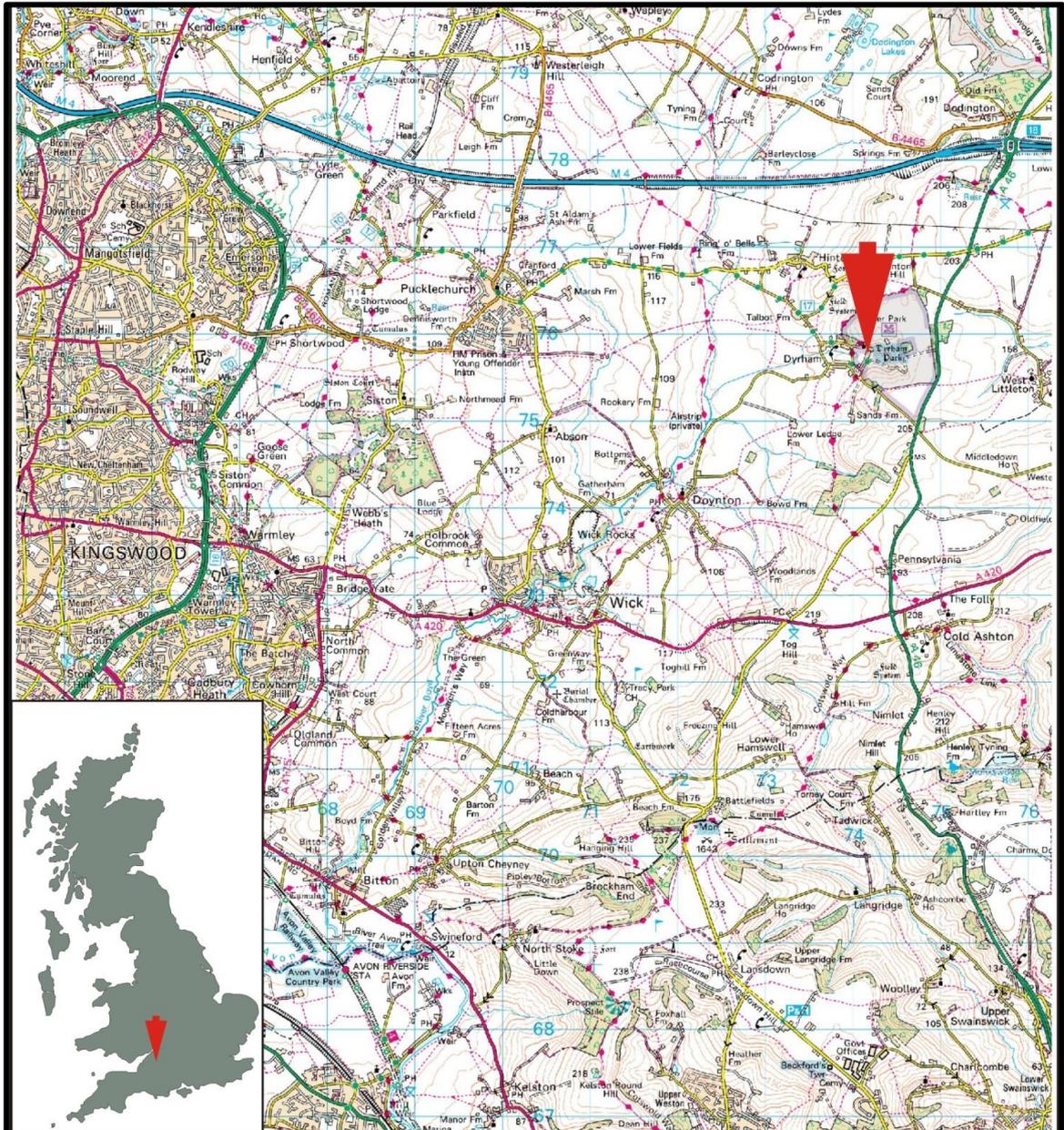


Figure 1 Project Site Location

3. METHODOLOGY

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.

All work was undertaken in accordance with the IFA *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (revised 2008/updated 2013).

4. RESULTS

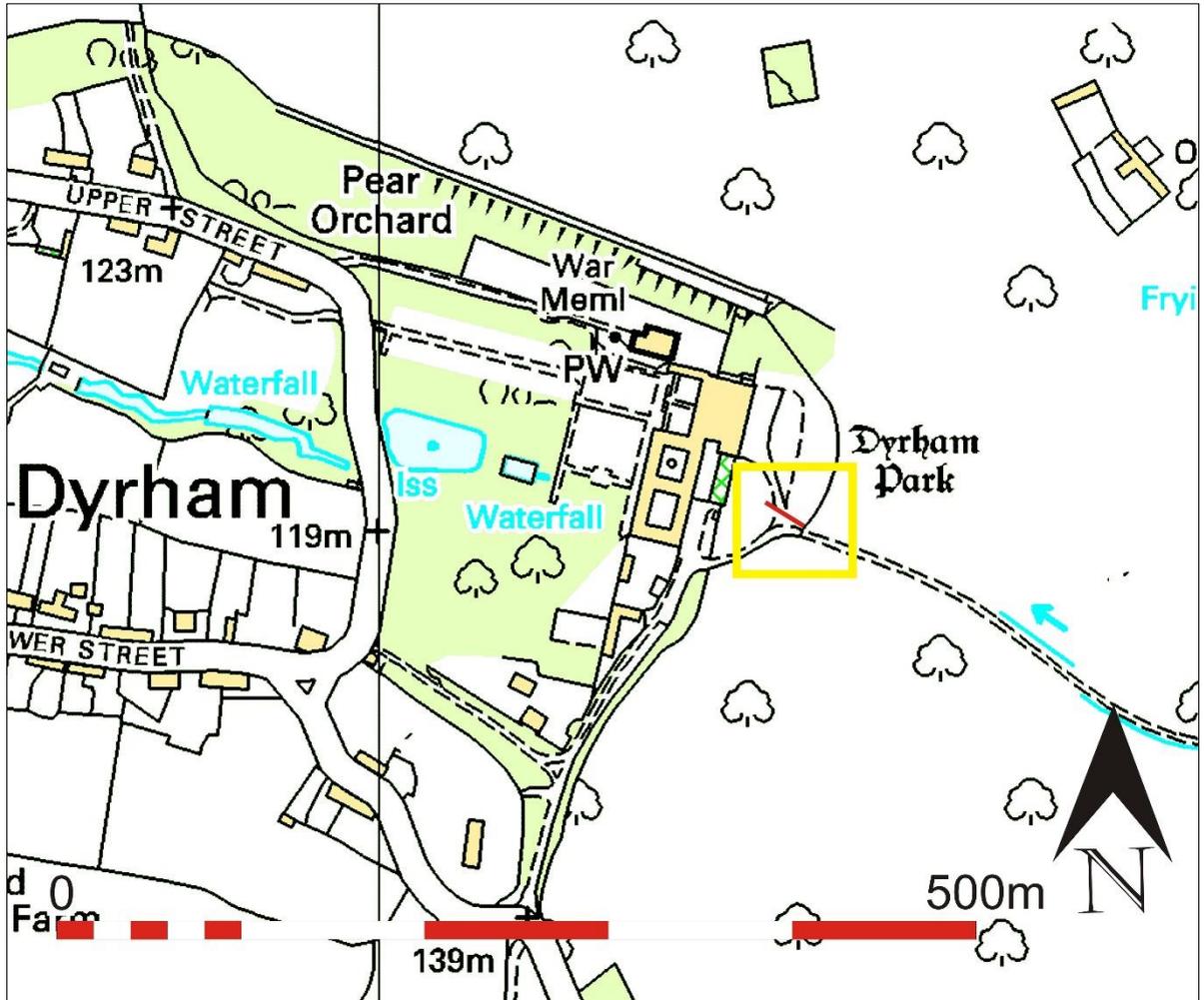


Figure 2 Trench location marked in red

All groundwork was closely monitored during the mechanical reduction of 20m of drainage trench. The trench was aligned NW-SE and measured 500mm in width x 700mm in depth. The excavation revealed 300mm of topsoil (101), overlaying a small feature comprising reused ashlar blocks of limestone [101] to the NW of the trench, adjacent to a line of modern concrete bollards. Although only partially exposed in plan, the feature was seen to measure 300mm in length and is interpreted as Post Medieval in date and potentially belonging to the base of a garden feature. The stone feature was seen to be set into >400mm of colluvial calcareous silty clay, natural (102).

Apart from the small limestone feature, no further archaeological layers, features or deposits were identified and no artefacts were identified in the spoil, which was monitored throughout.



Photo 1 NW facing view of drainage trench



Photo 2 Plan view of reused ashlar feature (Scale 1 x 300mm)



Photo 3 NW facing view of reused ashlar feature (Scale 1 x 300mm)

5. CONCLUSION

The results of the archaeological watching brief were negative. No significant archaeological activity was identified as a result of the excavation and no further work is recommended in conjunction with the project.

6. REFERENCES

BGS Bath: England and Wales. Sheet 265 (Solid and Drift Edition): 1:50000 Series

Institute for Archaeologists. 2008. Standard and guidance for an archaeological Watching Brief. Reading: IFA