

BISHAM ABBY:WATCHING BRIEF

A watching brief was maintained during the construction of a new access road, car park, building extension and associated drainage works at the National Sports Centre.

A presence was maintained during groundworks on 22 and 28 February and 2, 3 and 18 March.

The clearance of the car park area and access road revealed no medieval features. There had been little later disturbance - it seems likely the area was open ground in the medieval period.

As expected, the excavation of the new soakaway, marked in red on the plan revealed the filling of the moat. Beneath the modern overburden (0.5 m thick) was a 2 m thick deposit of chalk rubble, representing the in-filling of the moat with material derived from the construction of the nearby motorway. Beneath the chalk was a 1m thick zone of compressed organic material and dark-grey clay - the contents of the moat at the time of the in-filling. This contained modern material and it appears the moat in this area had been cleared out in comparatively recent times. Certainly there was no evidence of earlier deposits. The base of the moat was 3.5 m below the modern ground surface.

Central Excavation Unit

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