



East Farm Fovant, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief
Statement of Results

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On behalf of The client (private individual)

Site location East Farm, Fovant
County Wiltshire
National grid reference 401132 128515 (SU 01132 28515)
Planning authority Wiltshire Council
Planning reference 19/04978/FUL
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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION	1
1.1	Project background	1
1.2	Location, topography and geology	1
1.3	Scope of report.....	2
2	WATCHING BRIEF METHODS AND RESULTS.....	2
2.1	Introduction.....	2
2.2	Results	2
3	PROPOSALS FOR ANALYSIS AND REPORTING	4
3.1	Statement of potential	4
3.2	Proposals for analysis	4
3.3	Proposals for publication	4
3.4	Programme for analysis and publication	5
4	ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION	5
4.1	Museum.....	5
4.2	Preparation of the archive	5
4.3	Selection policy	5
4.4	Security copy	6
4.5	OASIS	6
5	COPYRIGHT	6
5.1	Archive and report copyright	6
5.2	Third party data copyright.....	6
	REFERENCES	7

List of Figures

Figure 1 Site location

List of Plates

- Plate 1** South-east facing view towards the watching brief/development area
Plate 2 Cremation urn, grave 102, immediately prior to lifting (scale: 0.20 m)
Plate 3 Cremation urn, grave 102, during laboratory excavation (scale: 0.10 m)
Plate 4 Pottery exposed during excavation of cremation grave 109 (scale: 0.20 m)



East Farm Fovant, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Statement of Results

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Michael Lyons Architecture, on behalf of the client, to maintain an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the development of a single dwelling at East Farm, Fovant, Wiltshire, SP3 5JD, centred on NGR 401132 128515 (Figure 1).

1.1.2 The watching brief was carried out as a condition of planning permission granted by Wiltshire Council (ref. 19/04978/FUL) on 31 July 2019, namely:

Condition 5

No development shall commence within the area indicated (proposed development site) until:

A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site work such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and

The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: To enable the recording of any matters of archaeological interest.

1.1.3 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (WSI) which detailed the aims, methodologies and standards to be employed (Wessex Archaeology 2020). The Wiltshire County Archaeology Service (WCAS) approved the WSI prior to the fieldwork on behalf of the Local Planning Authority (LPA).

1.1.4 The watching brief was conducted on 3–5 and 10–12 August 2020.

1.2 Location, topography and geology

1.2.1 The watching brief area/development site lies within previously undeveloped grassland to the east of Fovant and within the northern portion of the Cranbourne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). It lies at the base of Fovant Down, approximately 350 m north-west of the Fovant military badges and 600 m NNW of Chiselbury Camp hillfort. East Farm is to the north, with agricultural land to the south. The site lies at approximately 95 m OD. The bedrock geology is Boyne Hollow Chert Member – Siltstone and Limestone, interbedded. No superficial deposits are recorded in this location (British Geological Survey online viewer).



1.3 Scope of report

- 1.3.1 This document describes the provisional results of the watching brief, which principally relate to the discovery of the remains of three well-preserved prehistoric cremation burials, and sets out proposals for further analysis and publication.
- 1.3.2 This document, and the proposals contained herein, are intended to enable the discharge of the archaeological condition cited in section 1.1.

2 WATCHING BRIEF METHODS AND RESULTS

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 All works were undertaken in accordance with the detailed methods set out within the WSI (Wessex Archaeology 2020) and in general compliance with the standards outlined in ClfA guidance (ClfA 2014a).
- 2.1.2 The watching brief was maintained during mechanical reduction of the development area to formation level and the subsequent excavation of trenches (approximately 0.6 m wide) required for the placement of foundations.
- 2.1.3 The human remains were removed under the terms of the Ministry of Justice licence held by Wessex Archaeology (Ref: 20-0153, dated 10 August 2020). The excavation and post-excavation processing and assessment of human remains was in accordance with Wessex Archaeology protocols and undertaken in line with current guidance documents (eg, McKinley 2013) and the standards set out in ClfA Technical Paper 13 (McKinley and Roberts 1993).

2.2 Results

- 2.2.1 Mechanical reduction of the topsoil/overburden proceeded to the formation level (94.80–94.40 m OD), which coincided approximately with the upper surface of the natural substrate (Plate 1). The substrate (101), which seems to be Holocene colluvium, consisted of a relatively homogeneous light–mid yellow/grey brown silt clay loam with sparse small stone inclusions. The colluvium was observed to attain a thickness of at least 1 m within the foundation trenches; no underlying deposits were observed during the watching brief.
- 2.2.2 During the mechanical reduction of the development area, the attendant archaeologist identified what was initially suspected, and subsequently confirmed to be a grave (102) containing the remains of an urned cremation burial (106). This was cut into the colluvium from approximately 94.70 m OD. The feature first became apparent when the rim of the ceramic vessel containing the burial remains was exposed; the cut of the grave was indistinct. The vessel – a bucket-shaped urn of Middle Bronze Age date with fingertip-impressed decoration on the rim top, and fingertip-impressed applied cordons on the body – had been placed upright in the grave (Plate 2). It seems to be largely complete, although the rim was very slightly disturbed on exposure and the body had split vertically in antiquity. The vessel containing the burial remains was block lifted and removed from the site to be excavated by an osteoarchaeologist under controlled laboratory conditions (Plate 3).
- 2.2.3 The subsequent excavation of the foundation trenches revealed a further two graves (109 and 111) set 0.2 m apart and around 3.5 m to the ESE, which contained the remains of unurned cremation burials. The graves were fully excavated in the field, their fills being divided into quadrants and 100 mm or 50 mm spits and comprehensively sampled. Graves 109 and 111 were encountered at greater depth than the urned example (grave 102), both having been cut into and sealed by the continuously accumulating colluvium. Grave 109,



fully exposed within the foundation trench, was encountered at 94.35 m OD. It was 0.35 m in diameter and 0.14 m deep. Twenty-four sherds of probable Middle Bronze Age pottery (395 g) were found in the fill of the grave (Plate 4). Several are clearly burnt, indicating that they are likely to derive from pyre goods. The upper part of the feature was probably slightly, and inevitably truncated during excavation of the foundation trench, as had happened with the western half of grave 111. The top of grave 111 was exposed in section at the trench edge at approximately 94.45 m OD – 0.1 m higher than the truncated western half of the feature. The trench edge was cut back to enable the feature to be fully excavated, revealing that it was 0.45 m in diameter and 0.3 m deep.

2.2.4 Despite some possible minor truncation, the remains of the burials, particularly those in graves 102 and 111, survived to an unusual depth. This is presumably because the graves were cut into and sealed by colluvium, protecting them from post-depositional disturbance.

2.2.5 The samples from all three cremation graves have been processed and a rapid scan of the residues/human remains was conducted by the Principal Osteoarchaeologist at Wessex Archaeology (Table 1).

Table 1 Summary of results from scan of the human bone

Context	Cut	Deposit Type	Bone Weight	Age/Sex	Comment
103	102 (0.28m)	rpd in grave fill	28.8 g	adult >21 yr	quads; white, trabecular & compact
106		urned burial	168.5 g	adult >25 yr ?male	9 spits, 7 quadranted; white, trabecular & compact; uniformly small fragments MBA urn
107	109 (0.14m)	unurned burial + rpd	384.3 g	adult >18 yr	2 quadranted spits; white, trabecular & compact; uniformly small fragments; MBA pottery
110	111 (0.30m)	unurned burial ?inc. rpd	1104.8 g	adult >18 yr ??female	5 quadranted spits; white, trabecular & compact; uniformly small fragments ?sherds

KEY: rpd – redeposited pyre debris

2.2.6 No obvious pyre goods – with the possible exception of the pottery from grave 107 – were noted during the scan of the assemblage, although their absence cannot be confirmed at this stage. A few sherds of pottery, pieces of worked flint, slag and burnt flint, all potentially residual, were recovered during excavation of the graves and processing of the samples (Table 2).

Table 2 Quantification of finds

Context	Pottery		Flint		Burnt flint		Slag		Stone		Cremated human bone	
	No.	Wg (g)	No.	Wg (g)	No.	Wg (g)	No.	Wg (g)	No.	Wg (g)	No.	Wg (g)
100			4	15								
101			1	4								
103	41	37	3	37							N/A	28.8
106	8	3351	1	1	1	2			2	21	N/A	168.5
107	24	395	2	3					1	1	N/A	384.3
110	3	7	1	1	3	7	2	2			N/A	1104.8
Total	76	3790	12	61	4	9	2	2	3	22		1686.4



- 2.2.7 No other archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the watching brief. The only other finds are a flint blade recovered from the surface of the colluvium and four other pieces of worked flint from the topsoil.

3 PROPOSALS FOR ANALYSIS AND REPORTING

3.1 Statement of potential

- 3.1.1 Analysis of the human remains and associated finds and burial contexts will provide demographic, pathological and anthropological data as well as insights into the mortuary practises of later prehistoric communities in Wiltshire, allowing the evidence to be set in its regional and temporal contexts. This will contribute to a growing corpus of data which, coupled with other archaeological evidence, enhances our understanding of social, cultural and environmental issues during prehistory. Consequently, the findings of the project are sufficiently important to merit dissemination through publication.

3.2 Proposals for analysis

- 3.2.1 Analysis of the cremated bone will follow the standard procedure of the Principal Osteoarchaeologist at Wessex Archaeology (McKinley 1994, 5–6; 2004). All unsorted <4mm residues will be subject to a rapid scan at this stage to extract any identifiable material, osseous or artefactual.
- 3.2.2 Taphonomic factors potentially affecting differential bone preservation will be assessed. The age of the individuals will be estimated using standard methodologies (Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Scheuer and Black 2000). Sex will be confirmed from the sexually dimorphic traits of the skeleton (Bass 1987; Buikstra and Ubelaker 1994; Gejvall 1981). Non-metric traits will be recorded (Berry and Berry 1967; Finnegan 1978). Pathological lesions are recorded in text and via digital photography.
- 3.2.3 Examination and comparative study of the mortuary rites will contribute to widening our understanding of attitudes to the dead in later prehistory. Aspects of pyre technology and the cremation mortuary rite will be considered within their regional and temporal contexts.
- 3.2.4 A sample of human bone from the remains of one of the unurned burials will be submitted for radiocarbon analysis to enable the remains to be set and discussed in their correct temporal context.
- 3.2.5 The pottery will be fully recorded, according national guidelines (PCRG 2011, Barclay *et al* 2016). This will include description of the fabrics of the vessels, form, decoration and any other salient features. Appropriate analysis will be carried out of the other material types. The artefactual assemblage will be considered in its regional context during reporting; the urn from grave 102 will be illustrated.
- 3.2.6 The sample residues will be sorted and assessed, and the palaeoenvironmental evidence summarised for inclusion in the proposed publication (refer to section 3.3).

3.3 Proposals for publication

- 3.3.1 It is proposed that the results of the watching brief and the analytical work recommended above are set out in the form of a short, illustrated article, to be submitted for publication in the regional journal, the *Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine*.

Provisional synopsis of Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Magazine publication:



Working title: *Middle Bronze Age cremation burials at East Farm, Fovant*

by Jacqueline I McKinley, with specialist contributions

Total: approximately 4000 words, 2 figures, 2 plates (estimated to be 8–10 pages in length)

3.4 Programme for analysis and publication

3.4.1 The client has committed to financing the proposed analysis and publication, and to appoint recognised archaeological professionals to undertake this work on their behalf.

3.4.2 Work on the analysis and publication will commence when this document and the proposals therein have been approved by the WCAS on behalf of the Local Planning Authority.

3.4.3 Typically, the analysis and publication programme for a project of this scale and complexity will take around nine months but will vary depending on the availability of specialists and external laboratories. A project-specific programme will be developed and agreed at the time of commission.

4 ARCHIVE STORAGE AND CURATION

4.1 Museum

4.1.1 The archive resulting from the excavation is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury. The Salisbury Museum has agreed in principle to accept the archive on completion of the project, under the accession code **SBYWM:2020:35**. Deposition of any finds with the museum will only be carried out with the full written agreement of the landowner to transfer title of all finds to the museum.

4.2 Preparation of the archive

4.2.1 The archive, which includes paper records, graphics, artefacts, ecofacts and digital data, will be prepared following the standard conditions for the acceptance of excavated archaeological material by Salisbury Museum, and in general following nationally recommended guidelines (SMA 1995; ClfA 2014b; Brown 2011; ADS 2013).

4.2.2 All archive elements will be marked with the site/accession code and a full index will be prepared. The physical archive comprises the following:

- two cardboard boxes or airtight plastic boxes of artefacts and ecofacts, ordered by material type; and
- one file of paper records and A3/A4 graphics

4.3 Selection policy

4.3.1 Wessex Archaeology follows national guidelines on selection and retention (SMA 1993; Brown 2011, section 4). In accordance with these, and any specific guidance prepared by the museum, a process of selection and retention will be followed so that only those artefacts or ecofacts that are considered to have potential for future study will be retained. The selection policy will be agreed with the museum and fully documented in the project archive.



4.4 Security copy

- 4.4.1 In line with current best practice (eg, Brown 2011), on completion of the project a security copy of the written records will be prepared, in the form of a digital PDF/A file. PDF/A is an ISO-standardised version of the Portable Document Format (PDF) designed for the digital preservation of electronic documents through omission of features ill-suited to long-term archiving.

4.5 OASIS

- 4.5.1 An OASIS (online access to the index of archaeological investigations) record (<http://oasis.ac.uk/pages/wiki/Main>) will be completed. Subject to any contractual requirements on confidentiality, copies of the OASIS record will be integrated into the relevant local and national records and published through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) ArchSearch catalogue.

5 COPYRIGHT

5.1 Archive and report copyright

- 5.1.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative/digital archive relating to the project will be retained by Wessex Archaeology under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The client will be licenced to use each report for the purposes that it was produced in relation to the project as described in the specification. The museum, however, will be granted an exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*. In some instances, certain regional museums may require absolute transfer of copyright, rather than a licence; this should be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.
- 5.1.2 Information relating to the project will be deposited with the Historic Environment Record (HER) where it can be freely copied without reference to Wessex Archaeology for the purposes of archaeological research or development control within the planning process.

5.2 Third party data copyright

- 5.2.1 This document and the project archive may contain material that is non-Wessex Archaeology copyright (eg, Ordnance Survey, British Geological Survey, Crown Copyright), or the intellectual property of third parties, which Wessex Archaeology are able to provide for limited reproduction under the terms of our own copyright licences, but for which copyright itself is non-transferable by Wessex Archaeology. Users remain bound by the conditions of *the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with regard to multiple copying and electronic dissemination of such material



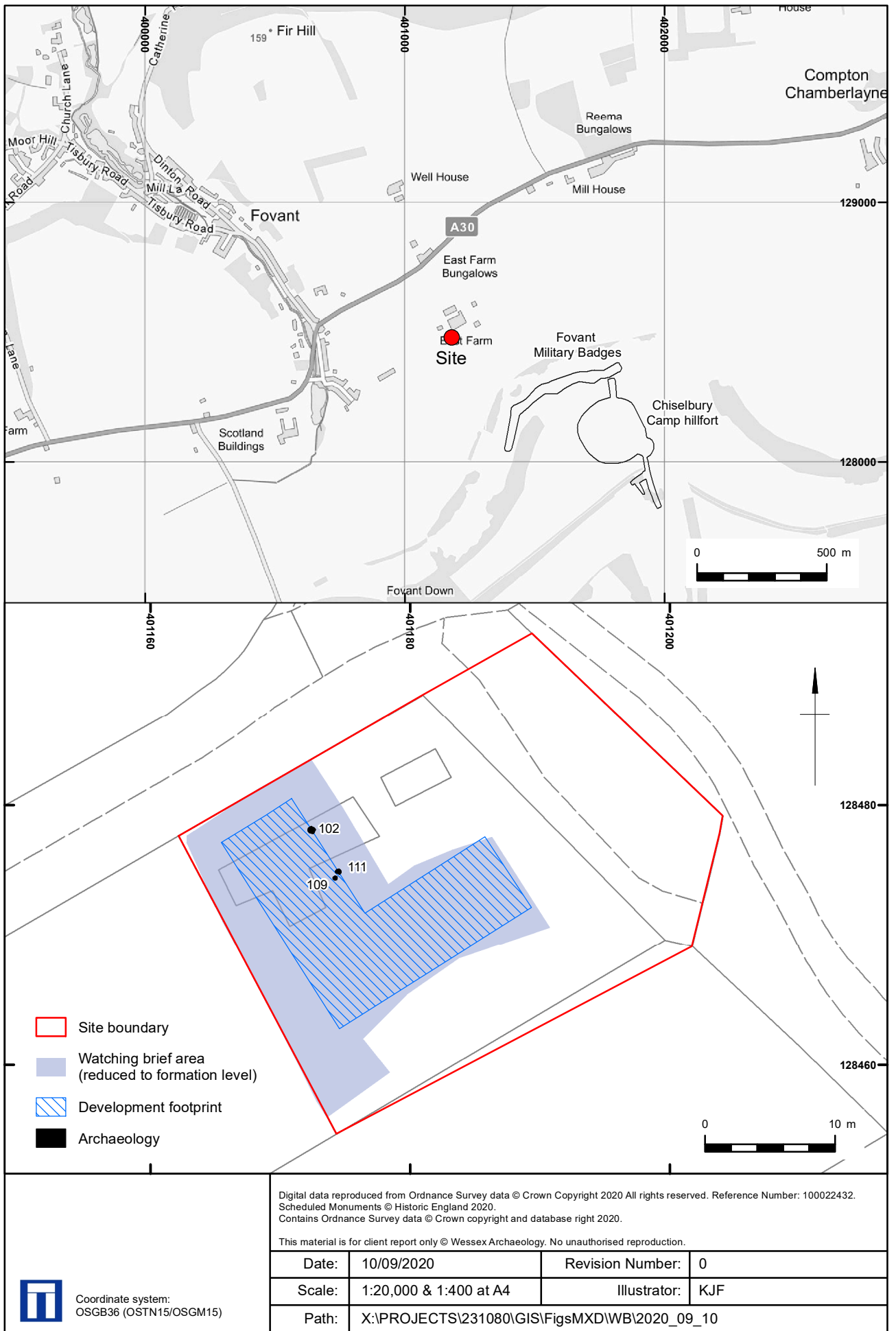
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Wessex Archaeology 2020 *East Farm Fovant, Wiltshire. Written Scheme of Investigation:
Archaeological Watching Brief*, unpublished report ref 231080.1



Site location

Figure 1



Plate 1: South-east facing view towards the watching brief/development area



Plate 2: Cremation urn, grave 102, immediately prior to lifting (scale: 0.20 m)



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Plate 3: Cremation urn, grave 102, during laboratory excavation (scale: 0.10 m)



Plate 4: Pottery exposed during excavation of cremation grave 109 (scale: 0.20 m)

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OASIS Summary for wessexar1-425843

OASIS ID (UID)	wessexar1-425843
Project Name	East Farm, Fovant, Wiltshire
Sitename	East Farm, Fovant, Wiltshire
Sitecode	
Project Identifier(s)	231080, SBYWM:2020.35
Activity type	WATCHING BRIEF
Planning Id	19/04978/FUL
Reason For Investigation	Planning: Post determination
Organisation Responsible for work	Wessex Archaeology
Project Dates	03-Aug-2020 - 12-Aug-2020
Location	East Farm, Fovant, Wiltshire NGR : SU 01132 28515 LL : 51.0559765529805, -1.98522484637767 12 Fig : 401132,128515
Administrative Areas	Country : England County : Wiltshire District : Wiltshire Parish : Fovant
Project Methodology	Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Michael Lyons Architecture, on behalf of the client, to maintain an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with the development of a single dwelling at East Farm, Fovant, Wiltshire, SP3 5JD, centred on NGR 401132 128515. The watching brief was carried out as a condition of planning permission granted by Wiltshire Council (ref. 19/04978/FUL). The watching brief was conducted on 3-5 and 10-12 August 2020.
Project Results	During the mechanical reduction of the development area, the attendant archaeologist identified what was initially suspected, and subsequently confirmed to be a grave containing the remains of an urned cremation burial. The subsequent excavation of the foundation trenches revealed a further two graves set 0.2 m apart and around 3.5 m to the ESE, which contained the remains of unurned cremation burials. Despite some possible minor truncation, the remains of the burials, survived to an unusual depth. This is presumably because the graves were cut into and sealed by colluvium, protecting them from post-depositional disturbance. No other archaeological features or deposits were encountered during the watching brief. The only other finds are a flint blade recovered from the surface of the colluvium and four other pieces of worked flint from the topsoil.
Keywords	CREMATION GRAVE - MIDDLE BRONZE AGE - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Cinerary Urn - MIDDLE BRONZE AGE - FISH Thesaurus of Monument Types Sherd - MIDDLE BRONZE AGE - FISH Archaeological Objects Thesaurus
Funder	Private or public corporation
HER	Wiltshire and Swindon HER - unRev - STANDARD

Person Responsible for work	Gareth Chaffey
HER Identifiers	
Archives	Digital Archive - to be deposited with Archaeology Data Service Archive; Accession Id(s): SBYWM : 2020.35 Physical Archive, Documentary Archive - to be deposited with Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum; Accession Id(s): SBYWM: 2020.35

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