



making sense of heritage

The Red House, 51 High Street, Durrington, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report



Planning Ref: 13/00511/FUL
Ref: 102640.02
October 2015



**The Red House,
51 High Street,
Durrington, Wiltshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

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Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Summary

Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by David Parry to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a new development proposal on land to the south of The Red House, 51 High Street, Durrington, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 415565 144762.

The Site lies to the immediate south of Red House, a Grade II Listed Building located within the Durrington Conservation Area and is located within the archaeologically rich landscape of Salisbury Plain. The Site is less than 1km north of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, which contains considerable evidence for prehistoric settlements and activity, including funerary monuments. The fact that the River Avon is situated c.200 m north of the Site is additionally of archaeological significance as the Avon Valley represents a key north–south transit route across the Plain and was consequently a focal point for prehistoric activity in the area. The Site also lies within the Anglo-saxon and medieval core of Durrington.

Wessex Archaeology undertook a phased programme of archaeological excavation directly to the west of the Site at the former MOD Headquarters, prior to the site being developed for residential housing. The investigations revealed complex evidence spanning the post-glacial period to the post-medieval period. The excavations revealed Late Neolithic activity associated with natural solution hollows and two intersecting alignments of pits and postholes. A Late iron Age enclosure ditch with an early Romano-British recut was identified, and it is possible both enclosures may have extended into the current site's boundary.

The archaeological watching brief however, revealed no archaeological features or finds pre-dating the post-medieval period. A single post-medieval rubbish pit was the only feature revealed during the groundworks. The level of modern truncation and the size of the area subject to groundworks and archaeological monitoring on the site, are thought to be key factors in the lack of archaeological remains identified on the site.



The Red House, 51 High Street, Durrington, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

Acknowledgements

Wessex Archaeology is grateful to Mr David Parry for commissioning the work. Wessex Archaeology would like to thank Clare King from Wiltshire Council for monitoring the work.

The fieldwork was carried out by Darryl Freer and Tom Burt. This report was compiled by Piotr Orczewski with finds assessment by Lorraine Mephram. Report illustrations were prepared by Kitty Foster. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Andy King and Andy Crockett.



The Red House, 51 High Street, Durrington, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief Report

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by David Parry (the Client) to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a new development proposal on land to the south of The Red House, 51 High Street, Durrington, Wiltshire (hereafter 'the Site'), centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 415565 144762 (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 An application (Ref No.13/00511/FUL) for planning permission was made to Wiltshire Council (WC) for the construction of a garage block with two-bedroom apartment above. This application was an amendment to the previous approved scheme (Ref No. S\2011\0235). The previous application contained a condition (condition 8) for an archaeological watching brief to be undertaken on the proposed development.

1.1.3 Following discussions with Clare King the Assistant County Archaeologist at WC, the archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority (LPA), an archaeological watching brief was recommended as an appropriate response to this application. The watching brief was to comprise of archaeological monitoring of all below-ground works on the Site.

1.1.4 The following recommendations were made:

Recommendation: Full condition

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;*
- *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.

1.1.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (WA 2014) for the Site detailing the methodologies and standards to be employed in order to undertake the watching brief, was issued to and approved by the Wiltshire Assistant County Archaeologist in January 2014.

1.1.6 This document sets out the results of the archaeological watching brief which took place between the 10th and 19th February 2014 and on the 1st July 2015.



1.2 The site

- 1.2.1 The Site comprises an irregular block of land covering an area of 0.48 ha. The Site lies to the immediate south of Red House, a Grade II Listed Building located within the Durrington Conservation Area. The Site is bounded by a new housing development to the west and by existing buildings to the east.
- 1.2.2 The surrounding landscape comprises rolling downland typical of Salisbury Plain, which in the vicinity of the Site is bisected by the meandering course of the River Avon. The Site lies to the south-west of a notable bend in the river, close to the valley floor, with high ground to the east and west. To the south, at Bulford, is the confluence of Nine Mile River with the River Avon.
- 1.2.3 The Site is situated on generally level ground at c.82 m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The basal geology of the area is mapped as Upper Chalk. The soils are mainly brown rendzinas over the Upper Chalk, with typical calcareous brown earths over alluvium and flinty subsoils within the Avon Valley (Jarvis *et al* 1984).

2 ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 The Site location has previously been the subject of a Desk Based Assessment (DBA) (WA 2004), which details the likely archaeological potential of land to the north-west of Durrington. The Site lies within the archaeologically rich landscape of Salisbury Plain and is less than 1 km north of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site, which contains considerable evidence for prehistoric settlements and activity, including funerary monuments. The fact that the River Avon is situated c.200 m north of the Site is additionally of archaeological significance as the Avon Valley represents a key north-south transit route across the Plain and was consequently a focal point for prehistoric activity in the area.
- 2.1.2 The modern parish of Durrington contains the sites of two very significant Neolithic monuments; the Great Henge enclosure at Durrington Walls (Wainwright and Longworth 1971) and the site of Woodhenge, which sits beyond the eastern end of the Stonehenge Cursus. Evidence of contemporary activity including flint working and quarrying has been found to the north of here (Cleal *et al* 2004).
- 2.1.3 Also in this area are finds of Grooved Ware pits, barrows and flint mines (Lawson 2007). Neolithic and Bronze Age material is predominantly represented by ceremonial and burial monuments, as well as stray finds. Neolithic long barrows are present on the slopes of the valleys within Salisbury Plain, and Bronze Age round barrows are found on the floodplain gravels and on the adjacent terraces. There is Bronze Age activity c. 400 m to the south-west of the Site in the form of a barrow (Monument No. 219392) and two Late Iron Age/Romano-British settlement sites are known – the Packway enclosure just north of Durrington Walls, and at Figheldean/Netheravon to the north (WA 2012).
- 2.1.4 The Packway enclosure lies c. 600 m to the south of the Site and was partly investigated in 1968 during the works on Durrington Walls, and again in 1991 during the laying of a gas pipeline (Graham and Newman 1993). A steep 'V'-sided ditch, 3.5 m wide and up to 2 m deep, defined a trapezoidal enclosure of 0.5 ha. Its interior was heavily truncated by ploughing, although material collected from the ditch and the few remaining features indicates that it is likely to have been constructed and occupied in the Late Iron Age.



- 2.1.5 At Figheldean/Netheravon, c.2 km to the north of the Site, there is a second enclosed settlement and associated Romano-British villa. The substantial trapezoidal enclosure has been only partially investigated, but it appears to cover an area of c.9 ha, with the enclosure ditch measuring at least 7m wide and up to 3m deep. It appears to date to the Late Iron Age, with occupation from the Late Iron Age/early Romano-British period to the late Romano-British period (Graham and Newman 1993; McKinley 1999).
- 2.1.6 The Site lies within the Anglo-Saxon and medieval core of Durrington, and within a designated Conservation Area. In the medieval period, Durrington village was the only settlement in Durrington parish, but it was in two parts, related to the presence of two separate manors – East End and West End. This was the origin of the division of the village into two separate groups of buildings, each with a main north–south street, and the village church between these two streets at the northern end of the village. Most farmsteads in the village were on the western street, now called High Street, and perhaps seven of the farmhouses standing in 1839 still survive.
- 2.1.7 Although no known archaeological finds have to date been located within the development footprint, the significant levels of prehistoric and Romano-British features and deposits immediately to the west of the Site revealed in previous archaeological investigations, indicate a strong potential for the presence of archaeological remains on the Site (WA 2012).

2.2 Previous investigations in the area

- 2.2.1 In 2006, an evaluation comprising of 12 trenches was undertaken to the immediate west of the Site, on land which was formerly the MOD Headquarters complex (WA 2006). Iron Age and Romano-British pits and ditches, together with evidence of a possible Late Glacial Allerød deposit were identified in the northern section of the Site. Of additional significance was the likelihood that these features were cut into, and sealed by, deep colluvial deposits, which indicated the potential for complex multiphase activity.
- 2.2.2 Wessex Archaeology undertook a phased programme of archaeological excavation at the former MOD Headquarters, prior to the site being developed for residential housing (WA 2012). The investigations revealed evidence spanning the post-glacial period to the post-medieval period, although remains from some periods is slight or absent.
- 2.2.3 The earliest evidence identified was a relatively deeply buried post-glacial Allerød soil. There was evidence of Late Neolithic activity focused around a number of natural hollows, including one that had been altered and possibly monumentalised. A small number of other features also appear related to the largest solution hollow, and include Grooved Ware pits and possibly cremation burials. Also of significance are two intersecting alignments of pits and post-holes. One, aligned north–south, extended over a distance of 130 m. The other was aligned WNW–ESE and extended over a distance of at least 230 m; a radiocarbon date of 2860–2470 cal BC was obtained on an oak post from this alignment. A number of the features in the alignments were associated with Grooved Ware and fine flint objects, including arrowheads. Collectively the evidence suggests a more ephemeral aspect to the local ritual and monumentalised landscape within the hinterland of Stonehenge and Durrington Walls.
- 2.2.4 Little trace of human activity prior to the later Iron Age was seen during the excavations, with a near absence of Early Bronze Age funerary activity on the excavation site that is otherwise so dominant and visible in the surrounding area. Shallow gullies and ditches defined a system of enclosures and fields that would have belonged to a small farmstead. This activity was then replaced by the construction of a large (up to 7m wide) ditch that

crossed the site over a distance of 270m. This ditch evidently defines a much larger site and could belong to a type of valley fort settlement of Late Iron Age date. Continuation of its projected course to the north and south-east indicates that it could extend under the present village of Durrington.

- 2.2.5 In the Romano-British period the enclosure was recut and a number of activities were undertaken as attested by corn driers/ovens, kilns and quarry pits. There may have been some zoning of these activities. The possible presence of a Romanised building is hinted at by the recovery of painted plaster and Portland tiles. Two inhumation burials, and possibly some cremation burials indicate funerary activity occurred, possibly towards the end of occupation of the Site.
- 2.2.6 Very little evidence was recovered for post-Roman occupation. However, a large concentration of medieval to post-medieval features was recorded on the extreme eastern limits of the excavations, likely to relate to properties that fronted onto the High Street. These included boundary ditches, postholes and gullies, as well as a number of post-medieval pits containing animal burials, including pigs and the partial skeleton of a horse.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Aims and objectives

- 3.1.1 The aim of the watching brief was to provide further information concerning the presence/absence, date, nature and extent of any buried archaeological remains and to investigate and record these within the proposed development area.
- 3.1.2 The specific objectives of the watching brief were to;
- *If significant archaeological features or deposits were located, then the evaluation would establish, where possible, the extent, date, character, relationship, condition and significance of archaeological features, artefacts and deposits within the area impacted, and;*
 - *To inform the scope and nature of any requirements for potential future mitigation.*

3.2 Fieldwork methodology

- 3.2.1 The monitored works consisted of the excavation by a tracked machine of footing trenches for a garage building in the north of the Site, the garage block in the south and a soakaway pit in between using a 0.60 m toothless bucket.
- 3.2.2 The depth of footings in the north of site varied between 0.7 m to 1.4 m. The south garage block footings were 0.6 m deep and the soakaway measured 2.50 m by 3.50 m and was 1.0 m deep.

3.3 Recording

- 3.3.1 All archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets with a unique numbering system for individual contexts. All recording was supported by daybook entries.
- 3.3.2 A full photographic record was compiled using digital images. Digital images have been subject to a managed quality control and curation process which has embedded appropriate metadata within the image and ensures the long term accessibility of the image set.
- 3.3.3 Monitored works were referenced to the OS mapping.



3.3.4 A unique site code **102640** was allocated to the Site, and was used on all records and finds.

4 ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESULTS

4.1 Soil sequence

4.1.1 Stratigraphy throughout the site was consistent and comprised 0.10 – 0.20 m of topsoil directly overlying made ground deposits. Natural chalk was encountered at depths between 0.30 – 0.70 m (**Plates 2 and 3**).

4.2 Archaeological feature

4.2.1 A single archaeological feature was revealed during the watching brief. The Pit **104** was observed in the western section of footings for the garage in the north part of Site (**Plate 1**). It was 1.30 m deep and was interpreted as a late post-medieval rubbish pit. The fills of the pit contained a selection of domestic waste material, including pottery, glass, brick, a roof tile, animal bones and an oyster shell.

5 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Background and summary quantification

5.1.1 The evaluation produced a very small quantity of finds, in a restricted range of material types; all datable material is post-medieval. The quantified breakdown of all finds by material type and by context is given in **Table 1**.

Table 1: All finds by context (number / weight in grammes)

Context	Animal Bone	CBM	Glass	Pottery	Shell
105	3/13	3/83	2/84	5/283	1/24
107		1/253		1/326	
Grand Total	3/13	4/336	2/84	6/609	1/24

5.2 Pottery

5.2.1 The six sherds of pottery recovered are all in the same ware type: Verwood-type earthenware from east Dorset. This ware has a lengthy currency, from at least the mid-17th century (and almost certainly earlier) until the mid-20th century. These sherds do not lend themselves to closer dating, but a date after the mid 18th century is most likely, at a point when the distribution of Verwood wares became more widespread outside the core area of east Dorset.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material

5.3.1 This category comprises fragments of brick and flat (peg) roof tile, all post-medieval.

5.4 Glass

5.4.1 The two pieces of glass recovered from context 105 conjoin to form part of the neck and shoulder of a green glass wine bottle or later 17th or 18th century date.

5.5 Other finds

5.5.1 Other finds comprise animal bone (sheep vertebra) and oyster shell.



6 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 No material suitable for environmental analysis was present within the Site.

7 DISCUSSION

7.1.1 The archaeological watching brief revealed no archaeological features or finds pre-dating the post-medieval period.

7.1.2 The only feature recorded was a post-medieval rubbish pit, Pit **104**, containing typical domestic waste material.

7.1.3 Previous investigations (WA 2012) reveal that there was a higher level of truncation immediately to the west of the current Site. A concentration of modern disturbance is recorded in the eastern end of the excavation area, as was a concentration of medieval to post-medieval features. The medieval to post-medieval features have been related to properties that fronted onto High Street, with two north–south aligned ditches, marking the rear boundaries to properties.

7.1.4 The high level of archaeological features ranging in date from the Late Neolithic through to the post-medieval revealed in the previous excavations imply that it is entirely possible that there was archaeological activity within the present Site's boundary, but that it has been truncated by more recent activity and thus has not survived to the present day. The presence of a Late Iron Age enclosure ditch with an early Romano- British recut and associated features identified in the excavations (WA 2012), also implies that it is likely there was past activity on the Site. The north-eastern extents of both enclosures were not identified in the excavations and it is possible that the enclosures extended to cover the area of the present Site.

7.1.5 However, it should be noted that the area subject to groundworks and monitored during the watching brief works on the Site covered a small area, (the proposed development footprints and associated service trenching illustrated in **Figure 1**). Hence it is possible there are archaeological remains present within the Site boundary which are outside of the area monitored in the archaeological works.

8 STORAGE AND CURATION

8.1 Museum

8.1.1 The site falls within the collecting area of the Salisbury Museum, which at present is not accepting archaeological archives. The project archive will therefore be retained at the offices of Wessex Archaeology in Salisbury until such time as this situation can be resolved.

8.2 Archive

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

8.2.2 An OASIS online record <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/projects/oasis/> will be initiated and key fields completed on Details, Location and Creators Forms. All appropriate parts of the



OASIS online form will be completed for submission to the Wiltshire HER. A copy of the OASIS entry has been included in this report (**Appendix 1**).

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

- 1 plastic box of artefacts (which will not be retained; see below)
- 1 file of paper records

8.3 Discard policy

8.3.1 WA follows the guidelines set out in *Selection, Retention and Dispersal* (Society of Museum Archaeologists 1993), which allows for the discard of selected artefact and ecofact categories which are not considered to warrant any future analysis. In this instance, given the small size of the archive, and its date and nature (commonly occurring types of relatively recent date), the finds are not considered to warrant retention for long-term curation, and they will be discarded prior to archive deposition. This process will be fully documented in the project archive.

8.4 Copyright

8.4.1 The full copyright of the written/illustrative archive relating to the Site will be retained by WA under the *Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988* with all rights reserved. The Heritage Centre, however, will be granted exclusive licence for the use of the archive for educational purposes, including academic research, providing that such use shall be non-profit making, and conforms to the *Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003*.

8.5 Security copy

8.5.1 In line with current best practice (e.g. 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.

9 REFERENCES

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10 APPENDIX 1: OASIS FORM

OASIS ID: wessexar1-225683

Project details

Project name	The Red House, 51 High Street, Durrington, Wiltshire
Short description of the project	Wessex Archaeology (WA) was commissioned by David Parry to undertake an archaeological watching brief during groundworks associated with a new development proposal on land to the south of The Red House, 51 High Street, Durrington, Wiltshire, centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) 415565 144762. The Site lies to the immediate south of Red House, a Grade II Listed Building located within the Durrington Conservation Area and is located within the archaeologically rich landscape of Salisbury Plain. The Site is less than 1km north of the Stonehenge World Heritage Site. The Site also lies within the medieval core of Durrington. Wessex Archaeology undertook a phased programme of archaeological excavation directly to the west at the former MOD Headquarters, prior to the site being developed for residential housing (WA 2012). The investigations revealed complex evidence spanning the post-glacial period to the post-medieval period. The archaeological watching brief however, revealed no archaeological features or finds pre-dating the post-medieval period. A single post-medieval rubbish pit was the only feature revealed during the groundworks
Project dates	Start: 10-02-2014 End: 01-07-2015
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	102640 - Contracting Unit No.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Residential 1 - General Residential
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POT Post Medieval
Significant Finds	GLASS Post Medieval
Investigation type	""Watching Brief""
Prompt	Planning condition

Project location

Country	England
Site location	WILTSHIRE SALISBURY DURRINGTON The Red House, 51 High Street, Durrington, Wiltshire
Postcode	SP4 8AE
Study area	0.48 Hectares



Site coordinates SU 41558 14455 50.927499623628 -1.408611424905 50 55 39 N 001 24 31 W
Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 81m Max: 82m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Wessex Archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	Wessex Archaeology
Project director/manager	A Crockett
Project supervisor	Darryl Freer
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr. D. Parry

Project archives

Physical Archive Exists?	No
Digital Archive recipient	Not yet transferred
Digital Archive ID	102640
Digital Contents	"other"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography", "Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Not yet transferred
Paper Archive ID	102640
Paper Contents	"other"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet", "Drawing", "Map", "Notebook - Excavation", " Research", " General Notes", "Plan", "Report"




Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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	<p>  The Site  Trench </p>		<p> Reproduced from the 1998 Ordnance Survey 1:25 000 © map with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office © Crown copyright, Wessex Archaeology, Portway House, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire. SP4 6EB. Licence Number: 100028190. Digital data reproduced from Ordnance Survey data © Crown Copyright 2015 All rights reserved. Reference Number: 100023432. This material is for client report only © Wessex Archaeology. No unauthorised reproduction. </p>	
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	Path:	X:\PROJECTS\102640\Graphics_Office\Rep figs\WB\2015_07_16		

Location and site plan

Figure 1



Plate 1: Pit 104, view from the east



Plate 2: Example trench section in the north of site, view from the east



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Plate 3: Example trench section in the south of site, view from the west



Plate 4: Excavated soakaway pit

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