



## The King's Arms, 8 High Street, Market Lavington, Wiltshire

Report of an Archaeological Evaluation





**THE KING'S ARMS,  
8 HIGH STREET,  
MARKET LAVINGTON, WILTSHIRE**

**Report of an Archaeological Evaluation**

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PLANNING APPLICATION REF.		NGR			

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\* I= INTERNAL DRAFT E= EXTERNAL DRAFT F= FINAL

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**Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Wadworth & Co. Ltd. to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of the former King's Arms Public House, Market Lavington, Wiltshire. A single machine dug trench demonstrated that there is a significant depth of archaeological deposit underlying the area of the proposed new building, which can be attributed to two distinct chronological phases.

The earlier phase appears to represent colluvium, which contained a residual sherd of Romano-British pottery and piece of medieval pottery. The latter was in a relatively fresh condition and may be related to the layout of the planned settlement in the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century. A subsequent phase of activity appears to represent a deliberate deposit to raise the level of the ground, probably in the post medieval period

Whilst there is clear evidence of activity on the Site, the lack of material does not suggest intensive medieval settlement within this particular tenement plot.

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**Acknowledgements**

This project was commissioned by Wadworth & Co. Ltd, Northgate Street, Devizes, Wiltshire, SN10 1JW. Wessex Archaeology is especially grateful to Elizabeth Burt of Savills Plc, for acting on behalf of Wadworth & Co. Ltd to ensure a successful completion of the work.

The report was researched and compiled by Phil Harding, who undertook the field work, assisted by Mark Stewart. The finds were examined by Lorraine Mepham and the graphics undertaken by Linda Coleman. The project was managed for Wessex Archaeology by Sue Farr and the report edited by Richard Greatorex.

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**1 INTRODUCTION**

**1.1 Project Background**

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Wadworth & Co. Ltd., to undertake an archaeological field evaluation ahead of development at The Kings Arms, High Street, Market Lavington, Wiltshire, located at National Grid Reference (NGR) 401636, 154161 hereafter 'the Site' (**Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The field evaluation was required prior to the determination of a planning application to convert and subdivide the former public house into three houses, demolish part of the single storey rear range and construct a house in the former beer garden at the rear of the Site.

1.1.3 The Extensive Urban Survey for Market Lavington indicates that the Site lies within the 13<sup>th</sup> century planned settlement. The current layout of the town suggests burgage plots are preserved better to the south of the High Street.

1.1.4 The Assistant County Archaeologist at Wiltshire Council considered that an archaeological evaluation would provide further information on the archaeological potential of deposits which would be compromised by the construction of the new house ahead of the determination of the application.

1.1.5 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was compiled by Wessex Archaeology (Ref No. 75600.01) which set out the strategy and methodology to implement the work. This document was submitted to and approved by the Assistant County Archaeologist prior to fieldwork commencing.

**1.2 The Site, location and geology**

1.2.1 The Site is accessed from the High Street and bounded to the west by 'The Clays', a private access road and to the east and south by residential properties. The burgage plot is an irregular, linear plot of land enclosed by brick walls, fencing and some hedging. The former Kings Arms Public House, a Grade II Listed Building, fronts onto the High Street.

1.2.2 Market Lavington lies predominantly on Upper Greensand, with the southern limits of the village on the rising ground composed of Lower Chalk. (Geological Survey of Great Britain (England & Wales) 1:50,000). The land at this point lies at approximately 89m above Ordnance Datum (aOD).

**1.3 Archaeological Background**

1.3.1 The Wiltshire Sites and Monuments Record references 13 sites, predominantly of Romano-British date within a 500m radius of the Site.

- 1.3.2 Rescue excavations in 1990 at Grove Farm (Wessex Archaeology 1990) approximately 300m to the north-west of the Site recovered evidence dating from the Mesolithic to the medieval period. Residual Mesolithic to Early Bronze Age worked flints were found within much later contexts. The principal features of the excavation identified a Romano-British masonry structure, with an *in situ* mortared floor, and subsequent Anglo-Saxon settlement including three sunken-featured buildings that were broadly contemporary with 42 burials of late 5<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup> century AD date.
- 1.3.3 These excavations suggested that Saxon settlement was concentrated around the church. Documentary and cartographic evidence indicate that the former Kings Arms Public House lay within a subsequent 13<sup>th</sup> century planned settlement (WCC, 2004), although this development has not been confirmed by excavation.
- 1.3.4 The Kings Arms Public House is a Grade II Listed Building of late 16<sup>th</sup> or early 17<sup>th</sup> century date. The front elevation of the building was clad with local red brick during the 18<sup>th</sup> century. The building originally comprised two separate structures, consisting of the larger main frontage building with a smaller cottage, adjoining No. 10, which is also Grade II Listed.
- 1.3.5 The topography of the modern village preserves the characteristic regular burgage plots, especially along the south side of the High Street, where the long narrow land units are bounded by a back lane or service road (*ibid.*). The 1840 tithe map and the 1<sup>st</sup> edition OS mapping indicate that a similar pattern formerly existed along the north side of the High Street, although many of the historic property boundaries have been disrupted by modern developments.
- 1.3.6 The Site lies within the Market Lavington Conservation Area.

## **2 METHODOLOGY**

### **2.1 Aims and scope**

- 2.1.1 The archaeological field evaluation set out to:
- Clarify the presence/absence and extent of any buried archaeological remains within the Site that may be threatened by development.
  - Identify, within the constraints of the evaluation, the date, character, condition and depth of any surviving remains within the Site.
  - Assess the degree of existing impacts to sub-surface horizons and to document the extent of archaeological survival of buried deposits.
  - Produce a report which will present the results of the evaluation in sufficient detail to allow an informed decision to be made concerning the Site's archaeological potential.

### **2.2 Methodology**

- 2.2.1 Owing to the disturbed nature of the remainder of the Site, it was considered that a single machine excavated trial trench (10m x 1.5m), aligned approximately E-W and positioned within the footprint of the proposed house at the rear of the Site (**Figure 1**) would be sufficient to resolve the objectives of the evaluation.



- 2.2.2 The position of the trench was plotted and tied in to the Ordnance Survey using GPS in general accordance with the pattern given in **Figure 1**.
- 2.2.3 The evaluation trench was excavated using a 5 tonne excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket. All excavation was conducted under constant supervision. The WSI required that machine excavation should proceed to the top of archaeological levels or the natural deposits, whichever is the higher.
- 2.2.4 At the completion of the work and following a monitoring visit undertaken by the Assistant County Archaeologist the evaluation trench was backfilled in reverse stratigraphic order.
- 2.2.5 The trench was not expected to exceed 1.2m in depth; however, the deposits were greater than anticipated, making it unsafe to access the base of the trench. The progress of the excavation indicated that there would be no benefit achieved by stepping the sides to permit access and the stratigraphy was recorded from the ground surface.
- 2.2.6 All exposed archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording system.
- 2.2.7 An appropriate drawn record of the deposits was made, documenting the section, at an appropriate scale (1:50), and related to OD heights. This archive was supplemented with an accompanying written record and full digital photographic record.
- 2.2.8 The fieldwork was undertaken and completed on the 7<sup>th</sup> September 2010.

### **3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION TRENCH RESULTS**

#### **3.1 Results**

- 3.1.1 The evaluation trench demonstrated that the depth of archaeological deposit exceeded expectations. The trench was excavated to a depth of 2 m at the West end which prevented access to the base of the excavation (see **Figure 2** and **Plate 1**).
- 3.1.2 Friable dark grey-black fine sandy topsoil (**101**), 0.35 m thick, directly overlay a deposit of light-mid grey/green sandy silt (**102**) with mixed flecks of Lower Chalk. This deposit of 'made-up' ground, which contained a modern teaspoon and piece of china, was also approximately 0.30 m thick.
- 3.1.3 It capped a thin, discontinuous horizon of more densely packed chalk lumps (**103**). This horizon, which may represent a sorted horizon at the base of **102**, included a row of sub angular Lower Chalk blocks (**108**), aligned approximately east/west near the south-west end of the trench. This alignment was sufficiently distinct to suggest that it formed part of a post medieval kerb or rough foundation.
- 3.1.4 The 'made-up ground' sealed an old garden soil (**104**) of dark grey silt, which contained flecks of chalk and charcoal. This deposit contained a sherd of medieval pottery.

- 3.1.5 This soil horizon overlay mid-light grey-green sandy silt (**105**), heavily rich with reworked Greensand, that probably represents colluvium or plough soil material. It contained a heavily abraded sherd of Romano-British pottery and two residual worked flints.
- 3.1.6 The base of this deposit contained a layer of sub angular lumps of iron-rich Greensand ('doggers') (**106**). This material was present across the entire base of the trench, as far as could be determined, and may itself represent a sorted horizon within the colluvium. It contained a sherd of medieval pottery and two residual undiagnostic struck flint flakes.
- 3.1.7 The base of the trench was formed of light grey very sandy silt (**106**), which was not penetrated.
- 3.1.8 No archaeological features were seen at any stage or at any depth throughout the evaluation.
- 3.2 Finds**
- 3.2.1 A very small number of finds were recovered during the evaluation, deriving from four contexts; the finds are quantified by context in **Table 1**.
- 3.2.2 The small assemblage includes material of prehistoric (four pieces of worked flint), Romano-British (one pottery sherd from context **105**), medieval (two pottery sherds, dated as 12th/13th century, from contexts **104** and **106**), and modern date (pottery sherd and metal teaspoon from context **102**). Three pieces of animal bone from context **105** are undated.
- 3.2.3 Given the small quantity of finds recovered, their date range and provenance, retention for long-term curation is not recommended, and the finds will be discarded prior to archive deposition.

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

Context	Animal Bone	Metal	Pottery	Worked Flint
<b>102</b>		1/21	1/6	
<b>104</b>			1/2	
<b>105</b>	3/42		1/12	2/60
<b>106</b>			1/6	2/20
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>3/42</b>	<b>1/21</b>	<b>4/80</b>	<b>4/26</b>

## **4 DISCUSSION**

### **4.1 The presence and survival of archaeological deposits within the Site**

- 4.1.1 The archaeological evaluation has produced evidence of archaeological activity in the area from the prehistoric period. However the principal achievement has been to demonstrate that there is a significant depth of archaeological deposit underlying the area of the proposed new building.
- 4.1.2 This accumulation of deposit can be attributed to two distinct chronological phases. The earlier phase appears to represent colluvium. This deposit contained a sherd of abraded Romano-British pottery, probably derived from field systems adjacent to Romano-British settlement in the area. A piece of medieval pottery in a relatively fresh condition may be related to the layout of the planned settlement in the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century.

- 4.1.3 Nevertheless the density of material from this deposit has not provided convincing evidence for intensive settlement in this tenement.
- 4.1.4 The later phase of activity appears to represent a deliberate deposit to raise the level of the ground, probably in the post medieval period. The presence of Lower Chalk blocks indicates that some material was introduced to the area, although whether this represents discarded building material is purely speculative.

## **5 ARCHIVE**

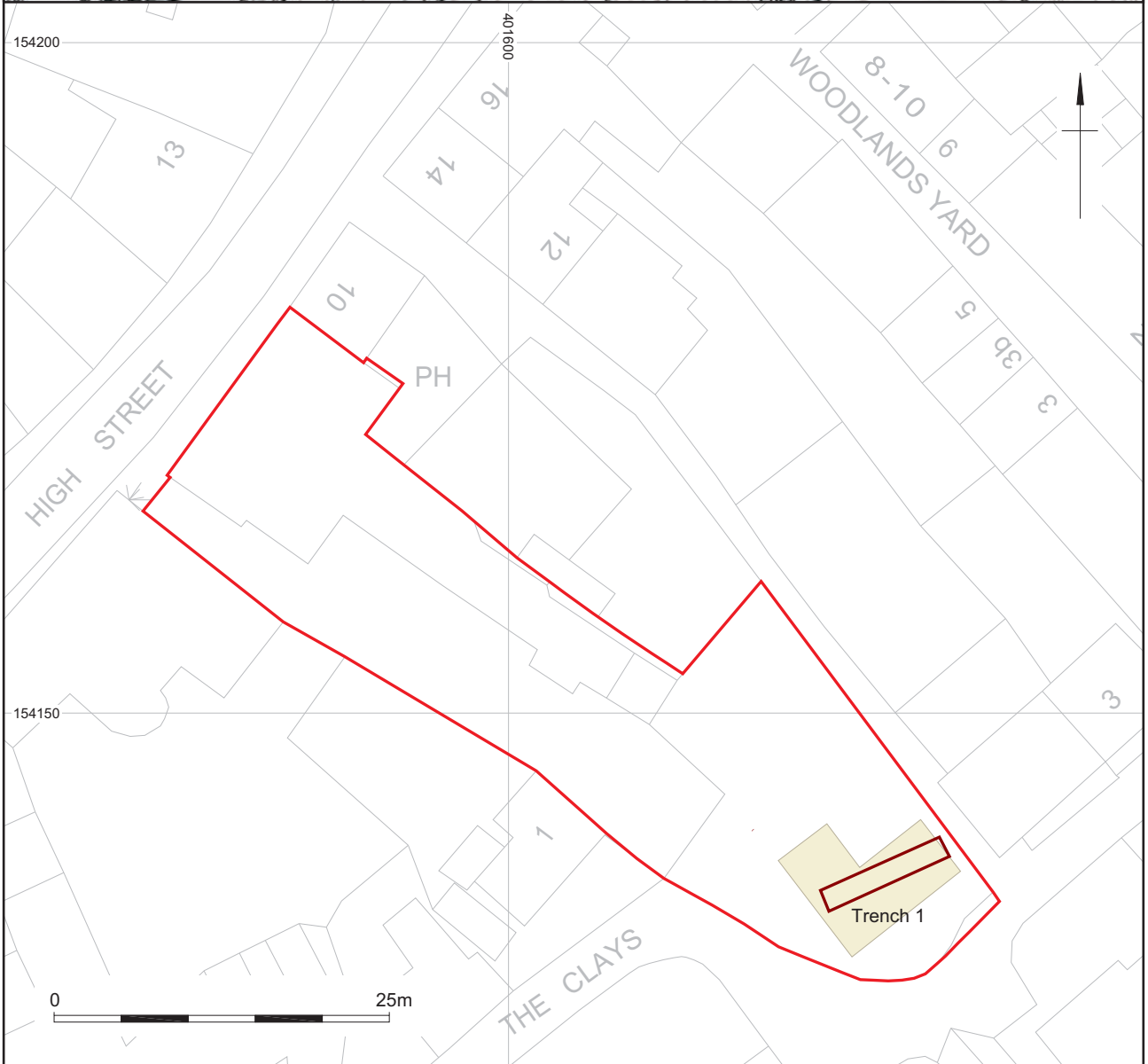
- 5.1.1 The archive, consisting of a single A4 ring-bound folder, is currently housed at Wessex Archaeology's offices in Salisbury, where it will be stored under the project code 75600 until final recommendations regarding its permanent, long term curation have been reached.
- 5.1.2 The retention of the small finds assemblage has not been recommended and these will be discarded with the agreement of all parties concerned.

## **6 REFERENCES**

### **6.1 Bibliography**

Wiltshire County Council 2004 *An Extensive Urban Survey. Market Lavington*. EUS Assessment Report

Wessex Archaeology 2006 Market Lavington, Wiltshire: Anglo Saxon Cemetery and Settlement: Excavations at Grove Farm, 1986-90



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	Date:	10/09/10	Revision Number:	0
	Scale:	1:20,000 & 1:500	Illustrator:	KL/LJC
	Path:	Y:\PROJECTS\75600\Drawing Office\Report Figs\eval\10_09_10\75600_eval.dwg		

Site location plan

Figure 1

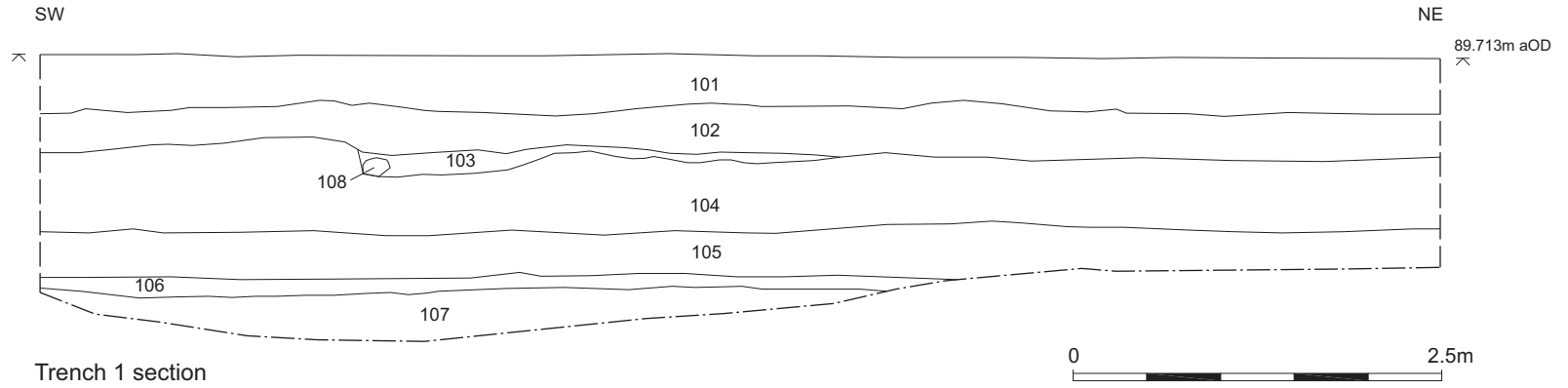


Plate 1: South-east facing section of Trench 1

Date:	16/09/10	Revision Number:	1
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