



**LAND ADJACENT TO TREE TOFT, SALISBURY ROAD, MARLBOROUGH, WILTSHIRE**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**Author: T. Michaels**

**December 2000**

**Report No: 150**



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Land Adjacent to Tree Toft, Salisbury Rd, Marlborough, Wilts.

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**Land Adjacent to Tree Toft, Salisbury Rd, Marlborough, Wilts.**

## **SUMMARY**

Between February and July 2000 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief to monitor the excavation of footings for a new residential property and garage on land at Tree Toft, Salisbury Road, Marlborough, Wiltshire, (NGR SU 1926,6860), on behalf of Archway Design and Build Ltd.

The Archaeological Officer at Wiltshire County Council identified the proposed area of development as being of known archaeological potential. The site falls within an area connected with a medieval Priory and its associated cemetery. Previous archaeological evaluation had identified undated features.

The watching brief revealed no significant archaeological deposits and little artefactual evidence. The artefact assemblage recovered comprised exclusively post-medieval material mainly associated with Victorian housing and a barn, which were known to have existed on the site.

**1 INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1 Between February and July 2000 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on behalf of Archway Design and Build Ltd.
- 1.2 The proposed development site was located on land adjacent to Tree Toft, Salisbury Road, Marlborough, Wiltshire, (NGR SU 1926, 6860). The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the *Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994), *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (1995) issued by the County Archaeological Service and the Project Design prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2000).
- 1.3 This document presents the findings of the archaeological watching brief and conforms to the specification set out in Appendices 4 and 5 of The Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991).

**2 PROJECT BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The owner of the study area proposed to construct a new residential property and garage on land adjacent to Tree Toft. The proposed development fell within an area identified as being of known archaeological potential associated with a medieval Priory and its graveyard.
- 2.2 Previous archaeological evaluation (Heaton M, 1999) on the site had revealed a number of undated features, which were potentially linked to the Priory. As a result a watching brief condition was placed on the planning proposal.

**3 AIMS**

- 3.1 The aims of the archaeological watching brief were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of the appropriate groundworks in order to provide a record of any surviving archaeological remains revealed within the development area. This would allow recommendations for the management of the resource to be made, including further archaeological works if necessary.
- 3.2 These aims were to be achieved by the pursuit of the following specific objectives as stated in the Project Design (Foundations Archaeology 2000).
  - i) to define, identify and record any archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible.
  - ii) to attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of features present on the site.

iii) where possible to recover a well dated stratigraphic sequence and recover coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples.

**4 METHODOLOGY**

- 4.1 All groundworks were monitored and recorded in order to identify further archaeological deposits and to provide further information on the deposits previously identified. The groundworks monitored included the removal of overburden and the excavation of foundation trenches. Artefactual material from spoil tips was recovered and adequately located.
- 4.2 During the monitoring of the groundworks any deposits of archaeological significance were to be identified and fully recorded to the standards set out in the Foundations Archaeology Technical Manual 3: Excavation Manual. This included 20% samples of all linear features, and 50% samples of all non-linear features identified.
- 4.3 The excavation of foundation trenches and the removal of overburden were carried out using a mechanical mini-digger equipped with a 0.60m bucket.

**5 DISCUSSION**

- 5.1 The initial watching brief carried out in February 2000 monitored the cutting of the foundations of the residential property and a boundary wall. Monitoring work carried out in July 2000 observed the removal of overburden from the site and the excavation of foundations for the garage. No deposits of archaeological significance were present.
- 5.2 The foundation trenches monitored in February were excavated to the natural chalk substrate at a depth of 0.60m from the modern ground surface. The natural chalk was overlain by 0.40m of mid brown-grey subsoil. This was heavily disturbed and contained a high percentage of chalk rubble and brick infill. This subsoil was sealed beneath a dark grey-brown, clay loam topsoil, 0.20m in depth. The stratigraphy was fairly uniform across the major part of the site, with soil depths varying slightly due to undulations in the natural chalk substrate.
- 5.3 During the excavation of a wall trench which ran the length of the new northern property boundary several modern features were identified. The first of these features comprised a layer of Sarcen stone cobbling, 1.8m in width, located 6m from the western end of the boundary wall foundation trench. Modern glass and broken ceramics were found in the subsoil directly beneath this layer of cobbling, clearly suggesting that this feature was of modern date. The second feature was located midway along the walls length and was identified as a modern brick culvert. The culvert was constructed from two courses of brick 1.0m apart with the central cavity being filled by bricks and

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rubble. This feature was dated by the modern brick construction and ceramics identified within the brick and rubble fill of the cavity.

5.4 The foundation trenches for the garage monitored in July 2000, were all 5.50m in length forming a square, and were excavated to a uniform depth of c.1.0m. The natural chalk substrate was encountered at a depth of approximately 0.80m. The natural chalk substrate was sealed beneath a mid brown-grey, silty clay subsoil (105), with a depth of 0.40m. This was in turn overlain by a layer of dark grey-brown, clay loam buried topsoil (104), 0.20m in depth. This buried topsoil layer represented an earlier ground surface and was sealed by a layer of mixed backfill material (102), dumped soil, chalk rubble and building debris. The depth of this material varied between 0.20m and 0.40m, with the greater depth present along the southern boundary with Salisbury Road. A significant amount of overburden had been removed from the area of the garage to bring the ground surface level with that of the house and it was clear that the route of Salisbury Road had itself been built up by over 1.0m.

5.5 Further evidence that Salisbury Road had been built up was identified in the north-west facing section of the southern most foundation trench of the garage. This trench ran parallel to the boundary with Salisbury Road, and was cut through a bank of made-up ground, which rose to the present level of the pavement. This created a section 2m in depth, in which a layer of rammed chalk (103) was visible. This followed the contour of the hill on the line of Salisbury Road. The rammed chalk layer sealed the buried topsoil (104) and was in turn overlain by the mixed backfill material of (102) (Figure 3). In this section only a deep layer of heavily root disturbed, loose, dark brown-grey, sandy loam topsoil (101) was visible. This topsoil layer had built up to a depth of 1.0m around several conifers, which lined the boundary with Salisbury Road.

**6 CONCLUSION**

6.1 The watching brief was implemented due to the perceived archaeological potential of the study area due to its proximity to a medieval Priory and undated features located during previous evaluation works. No deposits, features or finds of archaeological significance were present within the development area.

6.2 The success of the watching brief and the objectives set out in Section 3 were severely limited by the large scale modern disturbance present across the site. It is known that several structures including a barn had previously occupied the site and a layer of demolition rubble and backfill was evident, notably in the southern part of the development site.

6.3 The cobbled layer and the brick culvert identified in the boundary wall trench were both dated by modern ceramics and may be associated with Victorian structures or farmyard activity on the site.



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- 6.4 The rammed chalk layer (103) almost certainly represents an earlier surface of metaling associated with Salisbury Road, although the presence of Willow Pattern china and post-medieval bottle glass found within this layer place it no earlier than the C18<sup>th</sup> or C19<sup>th</sup>.
- 6.5 The artefact assemblage recovered from the site was relatively poor comprising exclusively post-medieval and modern ceramics and several associated pieces of bone. The site yielded no artefacts of medieval or earlier date and it can only be suggested that post-medieval construction had destroyed any such deposits that might previously have existed in the areas monitored by the watching brief.

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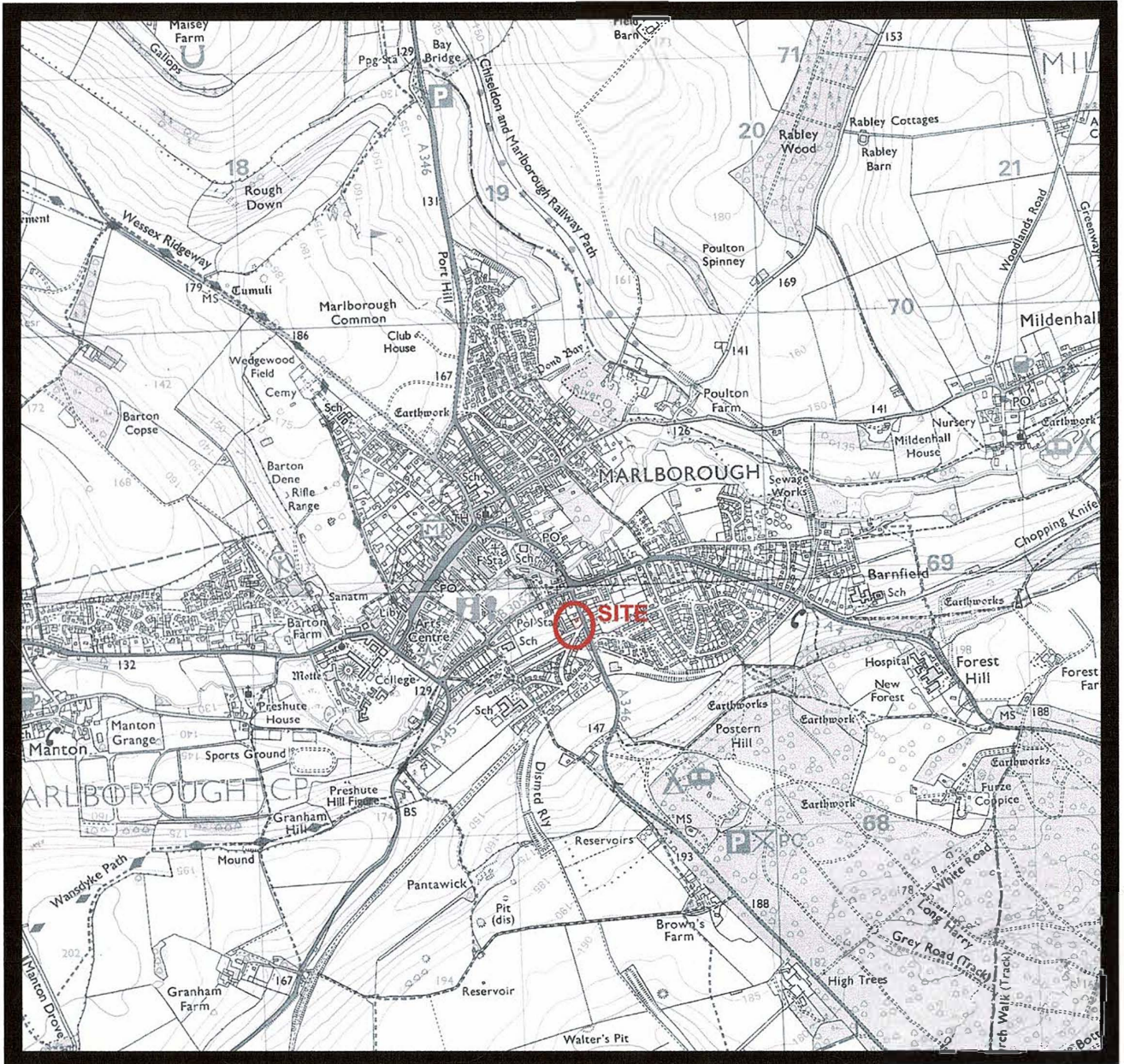
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## 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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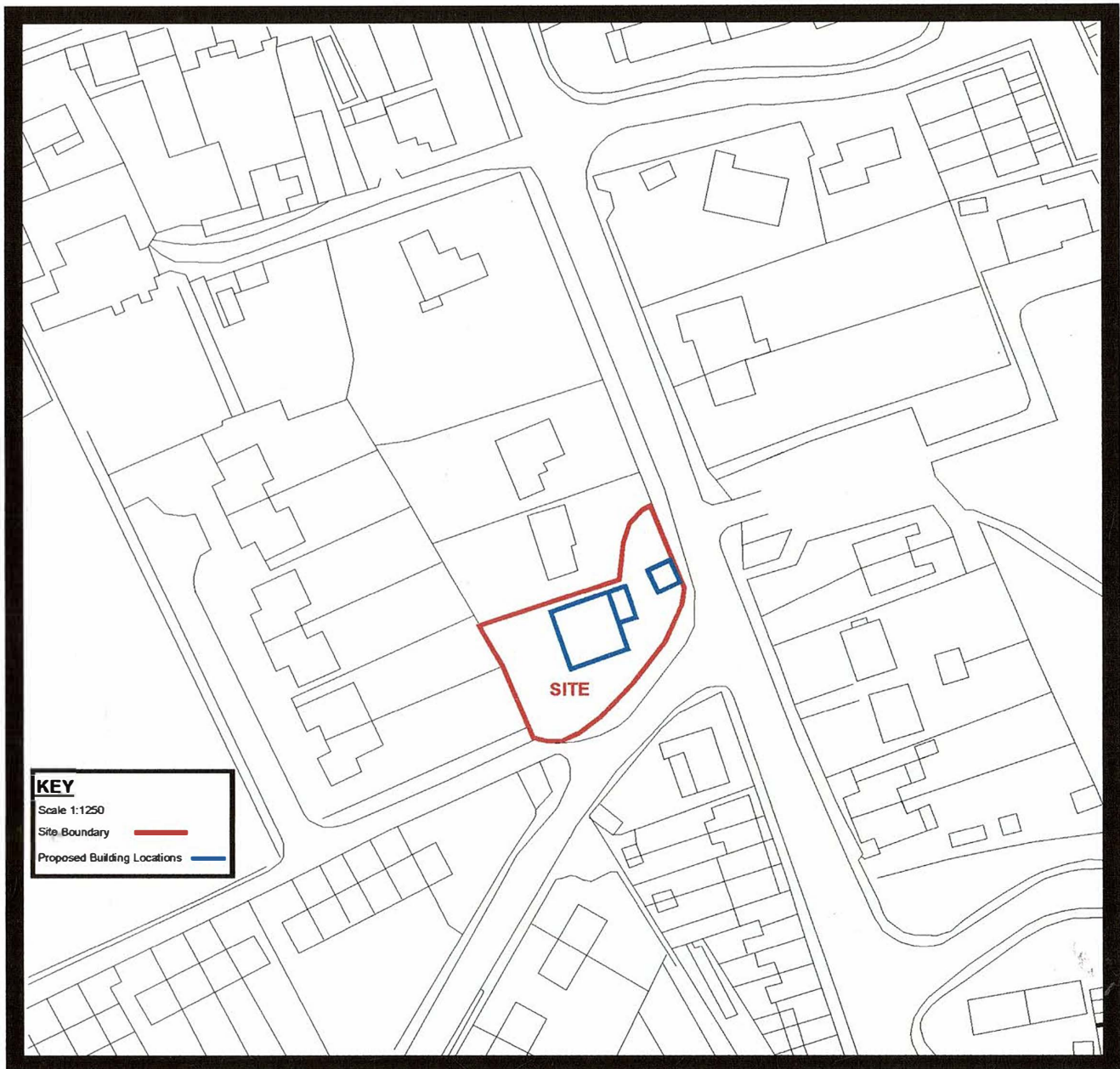




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FIGURE 1: Site Location





**KEY**  
Scale 1:1250  
Site Boundary ————  
Proposed Building Locations ————

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**FIGURE 2: Development Area**

# SW FACING SECTION OF NE GARAGE FOUNDATION TRENCH

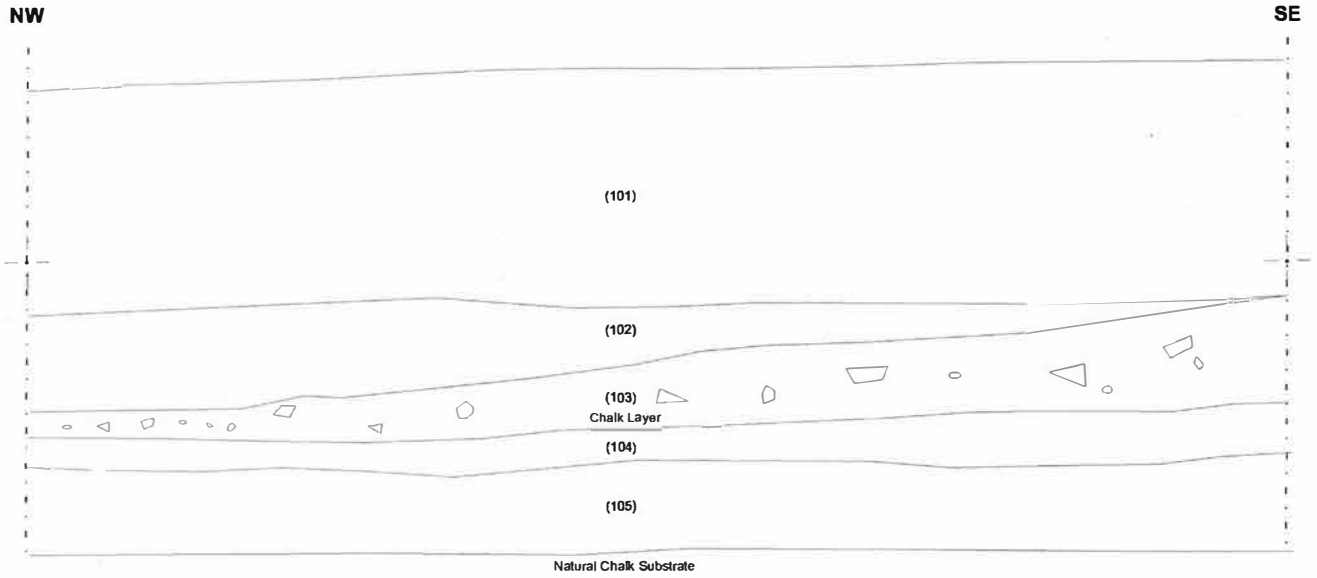


FIGURE 3: Section of Garage Foundation