

**WADEN COTTAGE,
WEST KENNET**

NGR: SU 1104 6838

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
WC00**

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**WADEN COTTAGE, WEST KENNET,
WILTSHIRE**

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

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August 2000

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SUMMARY

In July 2000 Foundations Archaeology was commissioned to undertake an archaeological watching brief to monitor the digging of foundations during the construction of a new kitchen and study at Waden Cottage, West Kennet (NGR: SU 112 682). The archaeological works comprised the monitoring of foundation trenches for the new building.

The monitoring work did not reveal any significant archaeology except for a Post Medieval well and cobbled surface, which was revealed when the concrete floor of the outhouse was removed. No artefacts were recovered from the watched area.

GLOSSARY OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Archaeology

For the purpose of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era. No rigid upper date limit has been set, but AD 1900 is used as a general cut-off point.

Medieval

The period between the Norman Conquest (AD 1066) and *c.* AD 1500.

Natural

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site, in this case the natural is chalk.

NGR

National Grid Reference from the Ordnance Survey Grid.

OD

Ordnance datum; used to express a given height above sea-level.

OS

Ordnance Survey

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July 2000 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief commissioned by Mr G Merrill, in response to the planning application K/093253.
- 1.2 The watching brief comprised of the land containing the outhouse, situated to the rear of Waden Cottage. The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994), Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: *Archaeological Watching Briefs: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region), the Project Design prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2000) and *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (1995).
- 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 area around West Kennet and Avebury consists of one of the most important ritual landscapes in Britain, part of which has been awarded the status of a World Heritage Site. Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Neolithic and Bronze Age finds and monuments have all been identified from within the parish of Kennet, testifying to its continuing importance during the prehistoric period. Waden Cottage itself lies less than 100 metres from a Neolithic palisaded enclosure, the full extent of which is unknown. Roman pottery was also recovered from the same site. A Neolithic stone axe is recorded as having been found immediately to the south of the development area. The cottage also lies within the area of the medieval settlement of West Kennet, recorded as 'chenete' in the Domesday Book of AD 1086. A watching brief carried out in 1997 at the adjoining Honeysuckle Cottage identified a gully and postholes that may represent features of Neolithic date, indicating there was potential for significant archaeological deposits to be present at Waden Cottage.

3 AIMS

3.1 The aims of the watching brief were to gather high quality data from the direct observation of archaeological deposits in order to provide sufficient information to establish the nature, extent, preservation and potential of any surviving archaeological remains.

3.2 These aims were to be achieved by the pursuit of the following specific objectives as stated in the Project Design (Foundations Archaeology 1999).

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 The construction of the extension required that the existing outhouse be demolished. Foundation trenches were then cut for the new study on the exposed area; foundation trenches for the extension were cut in an area that had previously been a garden.

4.2 The site area was reduced to the level of disturbance by the outhouse and then the foundation trenches were cut to the depth of one metre. The foundation trenches were not deep enough to expose a clean chalk natural. At the base of the cut 0.80m of a chalky silt clay was revealed, overlying this to a depth of 0.20m was a much chalkier clay silt of colluvial origin. The Post Medieval cobbled floor of the study capped this deposit. In the area of the kitchen extension topsoil survived to a depth of 0.15m.

5 RESULTS

5.1 The watching brief identified only a single feature of archaeological significance.

5.2 When the cobbled flooring of the outhouse was removed a Post Medieval well was revealed. The well had a diameter of 0.8m and depth of 3.2m. No other archaeological features or artefacts were revealed in the study area.

6 NATURE OF THE RECORD

6.1 The stratigraphic archive for the site consists of the following elements:

Context Sheets
Sections
Black & White photos
Colour slides

6.2 The on-site methodologies used to recover any evidence were set out in the Foundations Archaeology Project Design (1999a). In summary the following excavation methods were utilised; observation of all groundworks associated with the construction of the new building. The groundworks were undertaken by mechanical excavator equipped with a wide toothless bucket. All site recording was undertaken in accordance with the Project Design. The records are available in the archive.

6.3 Following the completion of the Watching Brief an ordered, indexed, and internally consistent site archive has been compiled in accordance with Appendix 3 of The Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991).

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 The only archaeological features identified in the watching brief were the Post Medieval well and cobbled surface capped under the flooring of the outhouse.

7.2 The success of the watching brief was limited by the small study area and the Post Medieval disturbance associated with the outhouse. A number of services were also present within the observed areas.

7.4 The watching brief was the most appropriate response because of the location of Waden Cottage to previously identified archaeological evidence in the grounds of the cottage next door. The potential for further archaeological deposits must therefore continue to be considered moderately good, despite the disappointing lack of finds and features from the specific area of the watching brief.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

Foundations Archaeology 2000 *Waden Cottage, West Kennet: Archaeological Watching Brief Project Design*.

IFA 1994 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations*. Institute of Field Archaeologists

9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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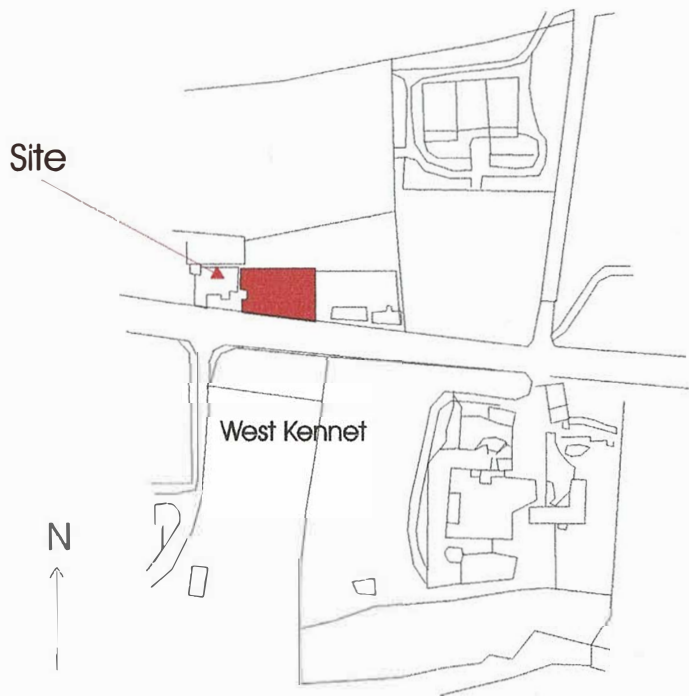


Fig 1 Site Location Plan

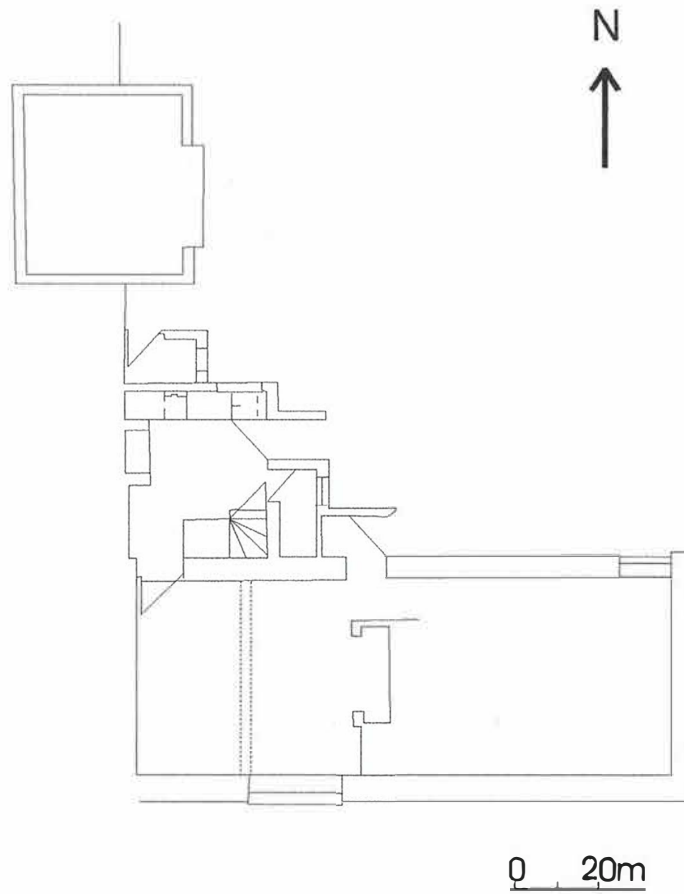


Fig 2 Pre-existing Plan

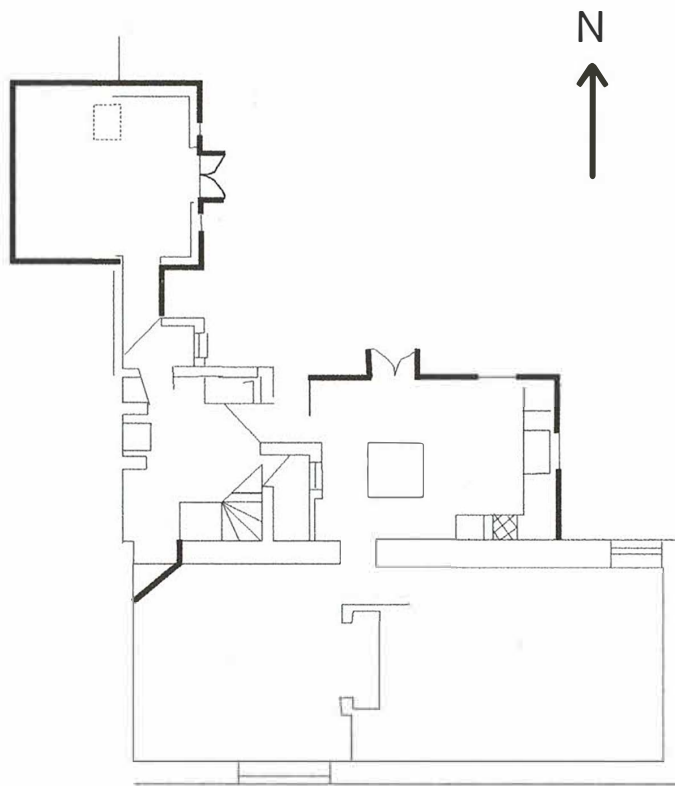


Fig 3 New Building Plan

