

**LAND AT THE GRANGE,
BECKHAMPTON,
WILTSHIRE**

NGR: SU 0832 6917

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

October 2007
Report No. 565

Quality Assurance

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SUMMARY

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken in July and August 2007 by Foundations Archaeology on land at The Grange, Beckhampton, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 8032 6917). The work was commissioned by Mr C.D. Burgin in response to a planning condition.

The archaeological works comprised the monitoring of foundation and soakaway trenches for a new garage building.

No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present within the investigation area. Preservation and visibility conditions were good.

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 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.

Post-medieval

The period from *c.* AD 1500 onwards.

Prehistoric

The period prior to the Roman invasion of AD 43. Traditionally sub divided into; *Palaeolithic* – *c.* 500,000 BC to *c.* 12,000 BC; *Mesolithic* – *c.* 12,000 BC to *c.* 4,500 BC; *Neolithic* – *c.* 4,500 BC to *c.* 2,000 BC; *Bronze Age* – *c.* 2,000 BC to *c.* 600 BC; *Iron Age* – *c.* 600 BC to AD 43.

Romano-British

Term used to define the fusion of indigenous Iron Age traditions with invasive Roman culture. Traditionally dated AD 43 to *c.* AD 410.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July and August 2007 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at The Grange, Beckhampton, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 8032 6917). The work was commissioned by Mr C.D. Burgin.
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2007). The WSI was prepared in accordance with the *Standards for Archaeological Assessment and Field Evaluation in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995), the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994, revised 2001) and Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: *Archaeological Watching Briefs: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region).
- 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 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The study area is located on flat ground approximately 700m northwest of Beckhampton and 130m north of the A4 (Figure 1).

3 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Planning permission, with an archaeological watching brief condition, has been granted to construct a garage on land at The Grange, Beckhampton.
- 3.2 The site is located within an area of significant prehistoric activity and falls within the Avebury World Heritage Site. A long barrow, round barrows and other features are known to lie in very close proximity to the site.
- 3.3 The study area therefore contained the potential for archaeological finds predominantly dating to the Prehistoric period. This in no way prejudiced the monitoring works against the recovery of finds or features relating to other periods.

4 AIMS

- 4.1 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.
- 4.2 These aims were to be achieved by the pursuit of the following specific objectives as stated in the WSI (Foundations Archaeology 2007).

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.

5 METHODOLOGY

5.1 The monitored groundworks comprised the excavation of foundation footing trenches and two soakaway trenches for the garage (Figure 2). This was undertaken by use of a mechanical excavator equipped with a toothless bucket, under constant archaeological supervision. When features or deposits of potential archaeological significance were noted, they were closely examined, defined, manually excavated (where appropriate) and recorded. Spoil heaps were visually scanned for artefacts.

6 RESULTS

6.1 The trenches were excavated to a maximum depth of 0.90m below modern ground surface. The natural deposits, which consisted of chalk, were present at a depth of 0.32m below modern ground surface. These were overlaid by context (103), up to 0.11m thick, which comprised a dark brown clay silt. It is probable that context (103) represents buried topsoil. Layer (103) was overlaid by context (102), up to 0.11m thick, which comprised a pink gravel layer. This was in turn overlaid by context (101), up to 0.10m thick, which consisted of a yellow gravel layer. Contexts (102) and (101) formed an area of hard standing, which extended across the majority of the study area. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present within the trenches.

7 CONCLUSIONS

7.1 Although an area of hard standing had previously been laid across the majority of the study area, topsoil (103) was present in all of the trenches and therefore preservation and visibility conditions were good. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were present within the monitored area.

7.2 The archive is currently held at the offices of Foundations Archaeology, but will be deposited within 12 months with Alexander Keiller Museum. A short note will be submitted for publication in the Wiltshire Archaeological Magazine and an OASIS form will also be submitted to ADS.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

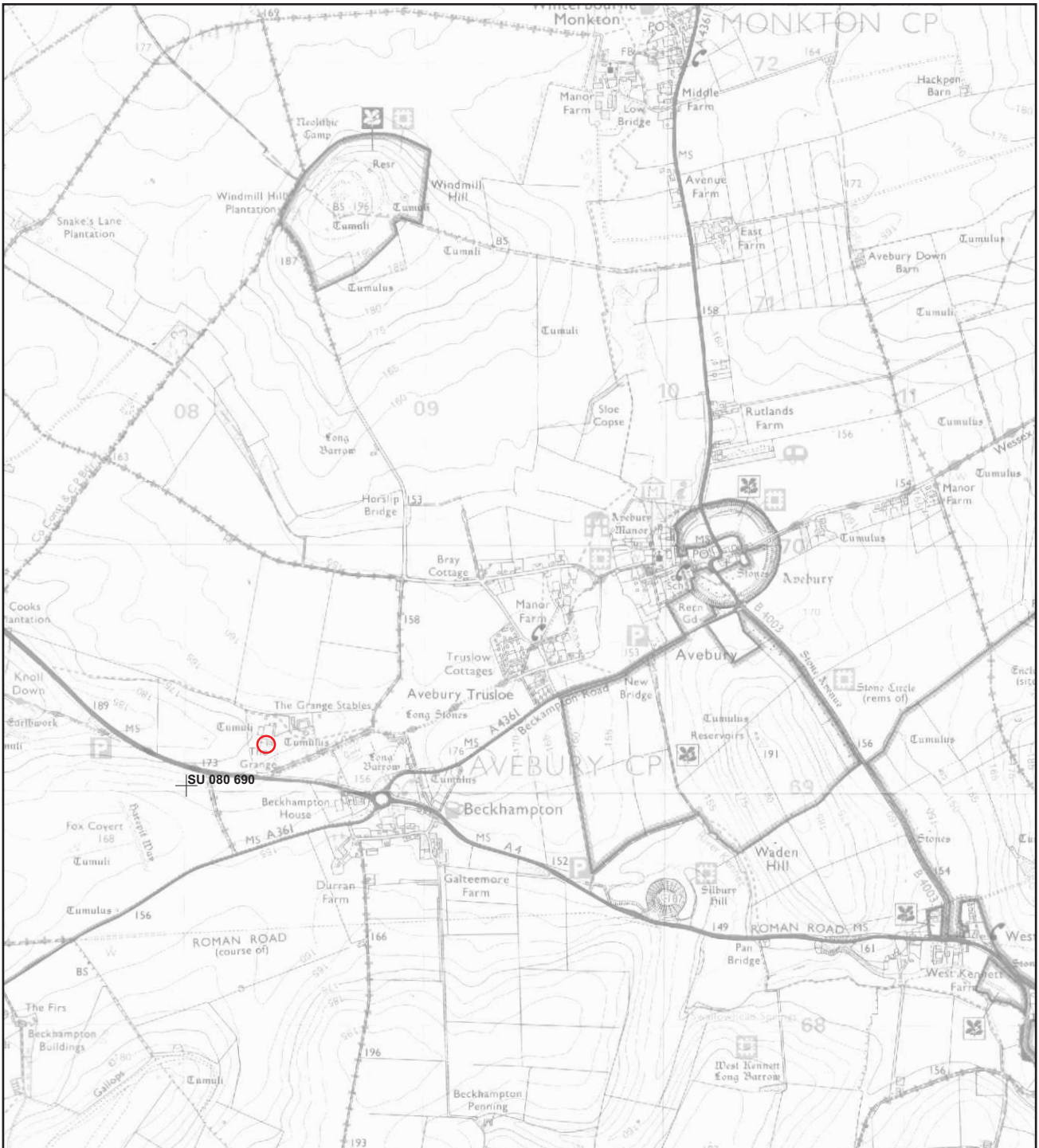
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9 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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FIGURE 1: Site Location

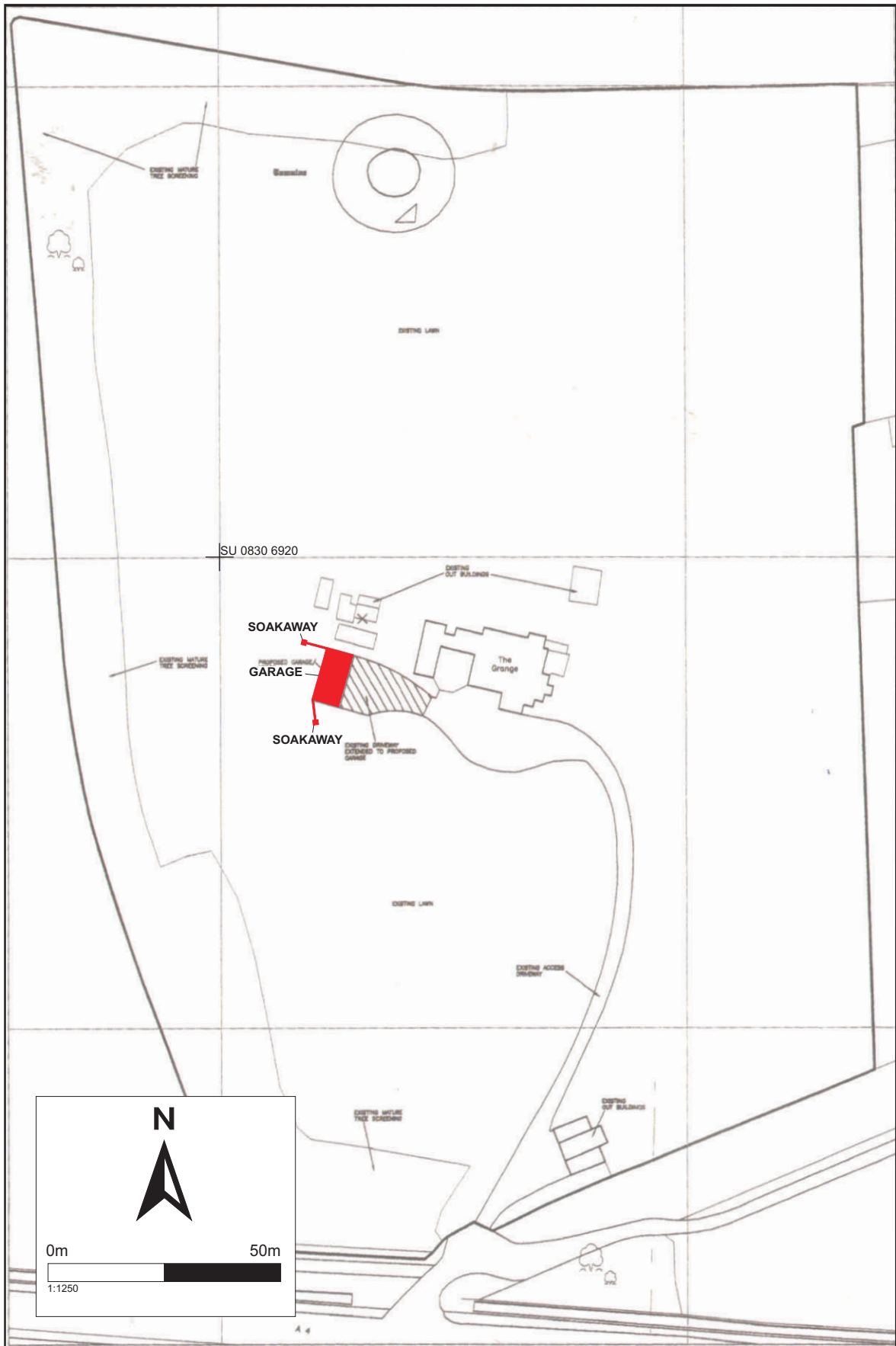


FIGURE 2: Site Plan