

**DORWYN,  
AVEBURY, WILTSHIRE**

**NGR: SU 10207 70758**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**March 2009**

**Report No. 635**

**Quality Assurance**

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## SUMMARY

**Site Name:** Dorwyn, Avebury, Wiltshire.

**Grid Reference:** SU 10207 70758

**Site Activity:** Watching Brief.

**Project Manager:** Diana King.

**Site Supervisor:** Diana King.

**Site Code:** DAW08.

**Area of Site:** Approximately 470m<sup>2</sup>.

### Summary of Results:

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken in July and October 2008 by Foundations Archaeology on land at Dorwyn, Swindon Road, Avebury, Marlborough, Wiltshire. The work was commissioned by Bob Keech Design and Build on behalf of Mr. and Mrs Daniel of Dorwyn in response to a condition of planning permission required by Wiltshire County Council.

The watching brief involved the archaeological monitoring of groundworks associated with the construction of a new extension to the existing property and a replacement garage.

The watching brief revealed two possible archaeological features in the house extension footings and no archaeological features, deposits or artefacts within the garage footings. Intact subsoils were observed across the monitored area.

The gully was undated, although could be of some antiquity as it was sealed by the subsoil. It is possible, however, it was a natural feature as opposed to an archaeological feature. The possible pit feature was of more recent origin as it cut the subsoil, however no dating evidence was present within it. It may have related to the construction of Dorwyn. Further conclusions on the origin of the features are not possible due to the restricted size of the area observed.

No artefactual evidence was present in the watched area. There was no clear evidence of archaeological features or deposits relating to the World Heritage Site of Avebury.

## 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.

### *CBM*

Ceramic Building Material.

### *Medieval*

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

### *Natural*

In archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

### *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 *circa* AD 1500 onwards

### *Roman*

The period from AD 43 to AD 410

### *Saxon*

The period from *circa* AD 410 to AD 1066

## 1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In July and October 2008 Foundations Archaeology undertook an archaeological watching brief on land at Dorwyn, Swindon Road, Avebury, Marlborough, Wiltshire (NGR: SU 10207 70758). The work was commissioned by Bob Keech Design and Build on behalf of Mr. and Mrs Daniel of Dorwyn in response to a condition of planning permission required by Wiltshire County Council.
- 1.2 The watching brief was undertaken in accordance with the *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Watching Briefs* issued by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (rev. 1999) and *Standards for Field Evaluation and Assessment in Wiltshire* (CAS 1995), Archaeological Guidance Paper 4: *Archaeological Watching Briefs: (guidelines)* issued by English Heritage (London Region) and the Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by Foundations Archaeology (2008) which was prepared in accordance with the brief (08MPK092br) issued by the Wiltshire County Archaeology Service.
- 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 Research Projects in the Historic Environment* (MoRPHE) (English Heritage 2006).

## 2 SITE LOCATION

- 2.1 The study area is located approximately 800m north of the centre of Avebury stone circle on the eastern side of Swindon Road and is accessed by a short, private driveway. Beyond the road to the west of the study area and to its north and east are cultivated fields. To the south, Dorwyn shares a boundary with the gardens of semi-detached houses 'North Rutlands' and 'Montrose'. The natural geology consists of chalk with flint.

## 3 PROJECT BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Planning permission has been granted for the erection of two storey extension to the side and rear of Dorwyn and a replacement garage (planning application number K/58308/F). A condition requiring a programme of archaeological recording was attached to the planning permission in accordance with PPG16 (DoE 1990) and the policies of Wiltshire County Council.
- 3.2 The proposed development site is located within the World Heritage Site of Avebury (WHS) centred on NGR: SU 10207 70758, approximately 500m to the direct north of the Scheduled Monument of Avebury henge and stone circle (SU17SW104; AM28130) and east of Windmill Hill, a Neolithic causewayed enclosure.
- 3.3 No known archaeology is recorded on the Wiltshire SMR within the proposed development area itself, but the complex of important monuments in this

location, coupled with their number and international importance suggests that the site has archaeological potential.

- 3.4 The site therefore contained the potential for significant archaeological deposits particularly associated with the prehistoric period. This did not prejudice the project against the recovery of evidence 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 Written Scheme of Investigation (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.

iv) to recover any information relating to the World Heritage Site of Avebury.

## **5 METHODOLOGY**

- 5.1 The groundworks comprised the excavation of strip foundation trenches for both the house extension and the garage; the ring-beam trench for the garage was excavated on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2008 and the trenches for the extension were excavated on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2008. Demolition works and a topsoil strip over the garage site took place before the first visit of the monitoring archaeologist, but did not compromise the potential archaeological evidence. In general visibility conditions were good, however, the two trench footings close to the house within the extension were partially flooded.

- 5.2 The excavation was undertaken using a mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless grading bucket under the constant supervision of an experienced archaeologist. Where features or deposits of potential archaeological significance were present, they were closely examined, defined, manually excavated (where appropriate) and recorded. Spoil heaps were visually scanned for artefacts.

5.2 The layout of the groundworks is shown in Figure 2.

## 6 RESULTS

- 6.1 The foundation trenches for the house extension measured approximately 0.60m wide for the external trenches and 0.50m for the internal trenches and by up to 1.0m deep. The trenches for the garage measured 0.60m in width and 1.0m to 1.30m in depth. The natural substrate was exposed across the site and consisted of chalk in the garage footings and of yellowy clay with gravels and degraded chalk in the extension footings. Natural was revealed at a depth of 0.2m to 0.37m from the existing ground level within the garage plot and at a depth of 0.35m to 0.46m within the extension area, except for the southwest corner where the top of the clays was encountered at 0.80m from the existing ground level. The natural substrate was overlain by subsoil (102), a light brown plastic clay with occasional small sub-angular flint inclusions, 0.20m to 0.50m thick, the depth varying across the site. The subsoil was overlain by topsoil (101), a friable mid brown grey clay silt with occasional small sub-angular flints and charcoal and brick flecks, 0.20m thick on average. In the southwest corner of the extension footings the topsoil was overlain by 0.14m of gravel (107) relating to the existing driveway. The brick wall footings from the recently demolished house extension and some modern service trenches were visible in the footings for the new extension. Two possible archaeological features were present in the extension trench footings.
- 6.2 Feature [103] was a small possible gully in the southwest corner of the extension footings. It was north-south aligned and measured 0.28m in width and 0.16m in depth. It was visible in plan but difficult to distinguish in section, but appeared to have steeply sloping sides and a flattened base. It was filled with (104), a mid brown clay with occasional small flint inclusions and was overlain by the subsoil and cut the natural. No artefactual evidence was present within the excavated section.
- 6.3 Feature [105] was a possible pit seen in the centre of the extension footings. It was sub-oval in plan and was east-west aligned. It measured at least 1.0m in length, at least 0.84m in width and 0.38m in depth. It was filled with (106), a mid grey soft, plastic, root disturbed silt clay with a few small flint inclusions. It cut the subsoil and the natural and was cut by a brick wall foundation from the recently demolished house extension. No artefactual evidence was recovered from the feature.

## 7 DISCUSSION

- 7.1 The watching brief revealed two possible archaeological features in the house extension footings. No archaeological features, deposits or artefacts were identified within the garage footings. Intact subsoils were observed across both of the monitored areas.

- 7.2 The gully was undated, although could be of some antiquity as it was sealed by the subsoil. It is possible, however, it was not a feature as it was very difficult to distinguish in section; the likeliest explanation is that it was a natural feature, but further conclusions are not possible with due to the restricted size of the area observed. The possible pit feature was of more recent origin as it cut the subsoil, however no dating evidence was present within it. The origin of this possible feature was not clear although it would seem likely that it related to the construction of Dorwyn.
- 7.3 No artefactual evidence was present in the watched area. There was no clear evidence of archaeological features or deposits relating to the World Heritage Site of Avebury. These results, however, should not be taken as representative of the surrounding area.

## 8 NATURE OF THE RECORD

- 8.1 The on-site methodologies used to recover any evidence were set out in the Foundations Archaeology WSI (2008). In summary the following excavation methods were utilised; observation of groundworks associated with the construction of the new extension and replacement garage. All site recording was undertaken in accordance with the WSI. The records are available in the archive.
- 8.3 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). This archive is currently held at Foundations Archaeology and will be deposited at Avebury Museum under accession code to be supplied on deposit.
- 8.4 A summary of the contents of this report will be made available on Project OASIS at <http://ads.ahds.ac.uk/project/oasis/>

## 9 BIBLIOGRAPHY

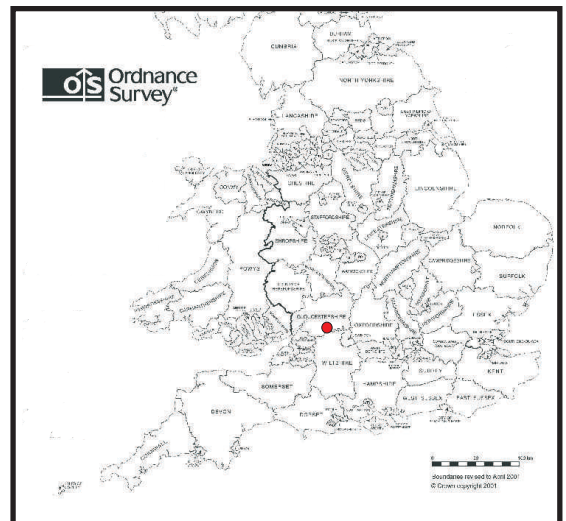
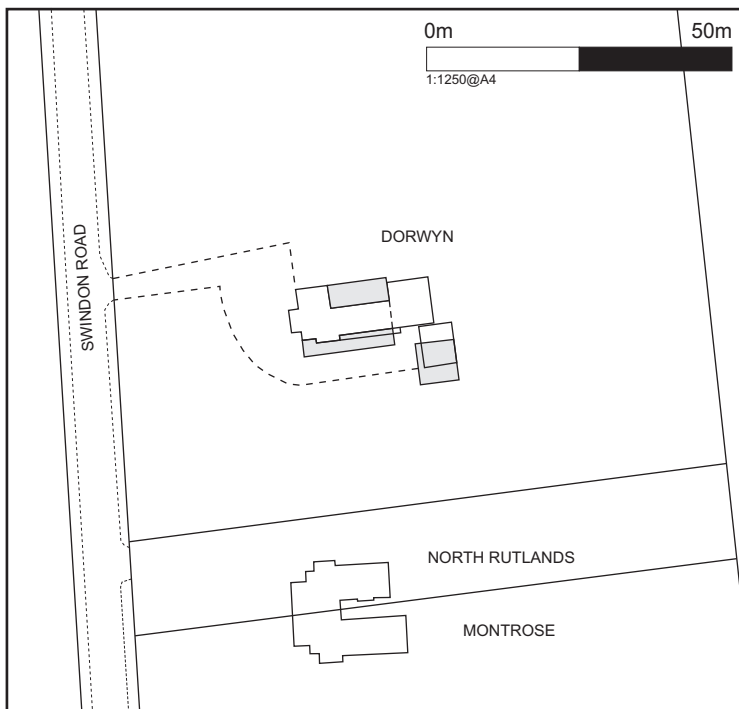
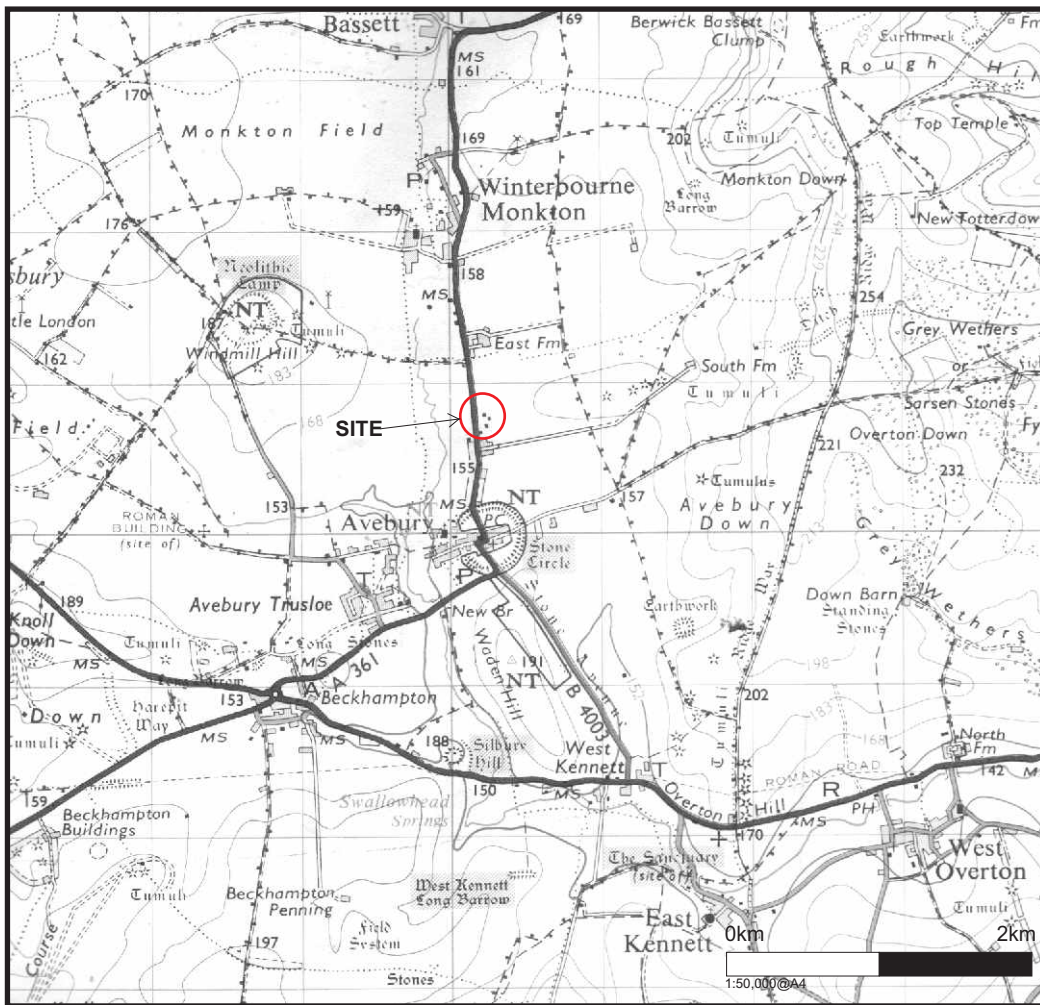
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## 10 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to thank Mr. and Mrs Daniel of Dorwyn, Melanie Pommeroy-Kellinger of Wiltshire County Council, Bob Keech Design and Build and the on-site ground workers for their assistance during the course of the project.







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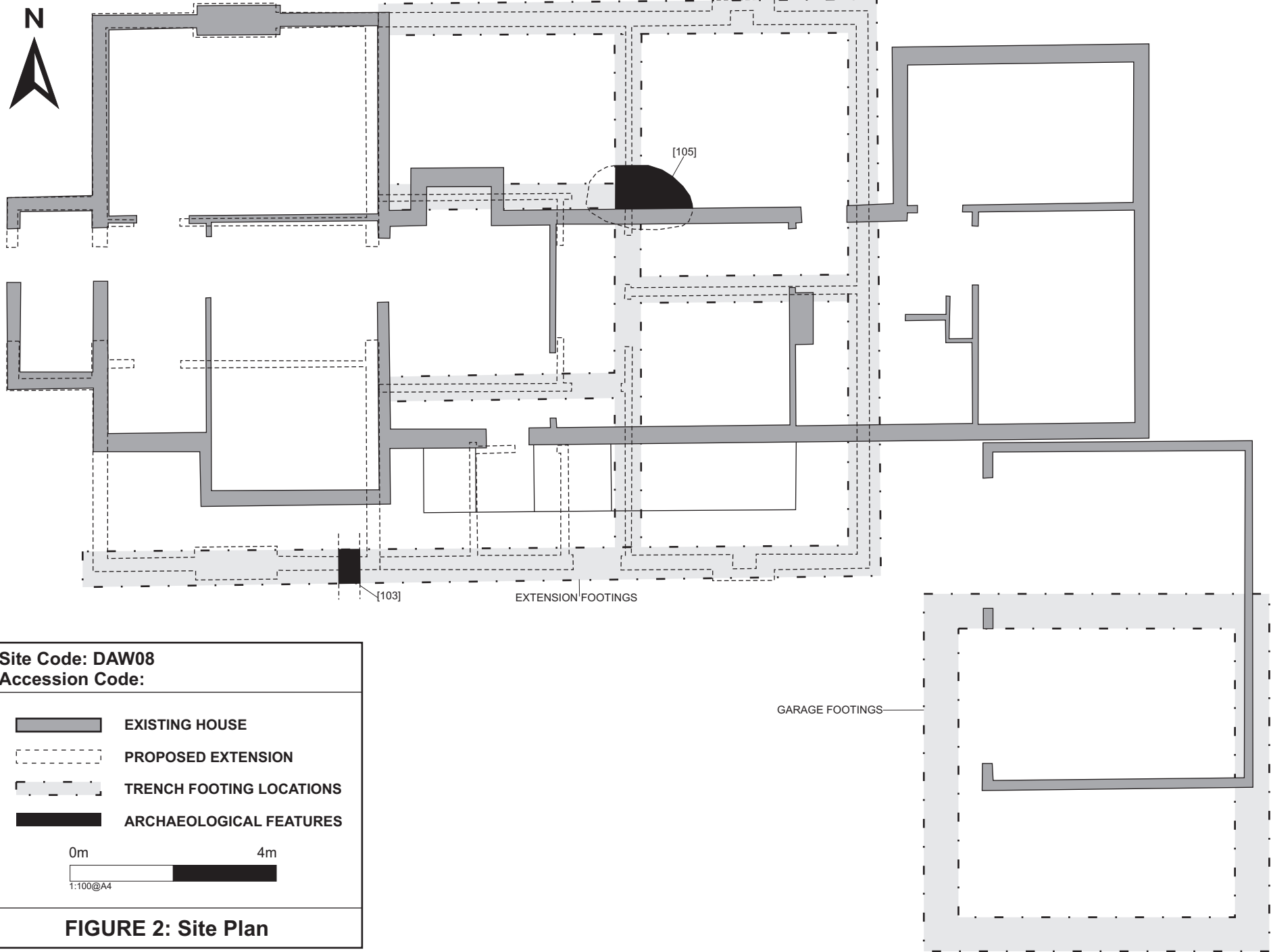
**Site Code: DAW08**

**Accession Code:**



-  EXISTING BUILDINGS
-  PROPOSED EXTENSION AND GARAGE

**FIGURE 1: Site Location**



Site Code: DAW08

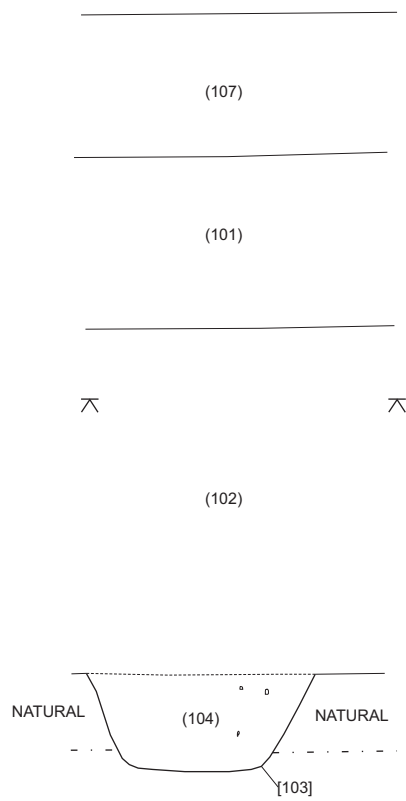
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- EXISTING HOUSE
- PROPOSED EXTENSION
- TRENCH FOOTING LOCATIONS
- ARCHAEOLOGICAL FEATURES

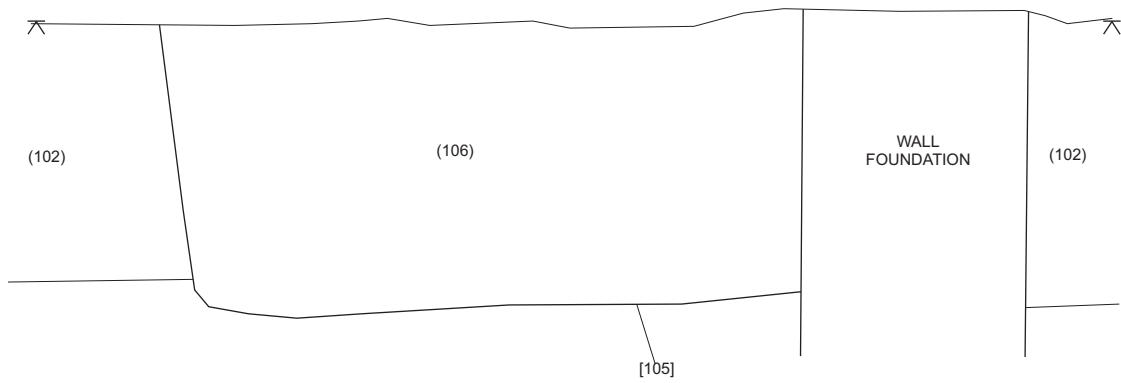


**FIGURE 2: Site Plan**

### NORTH FACING SECTION [103]



### EAST FACING SECTION [105]



Site Code: DAW08  
Accession Code:



**FIGURE 3: Sections**