

HERITAGE NETWORK



**OLD BOWLING FORGE COTTAGE**  
**Cottered, Herts.**

(HN374)

*Archaeological Monitoring Report*



# **THE HERITAGE NETWORK LTD**

*Registered with the Institute of Field Archaeologists as an Archaeological Organisation*  
Archaeological Director: David Hillelson, BA MIFA

## **OLD BOWLING FORGE COTTAGE** **Cottered, Herts.**

HN374

*Archaeological Monitoring Report*

*Prepared on behalf of Dan Collins Esq*

by

Karin Semmelmann, BA MA PIFA

Report No.178

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## Acknowledgements

The fieldwork for this project was carried out by David Hillelson and Karin Semmelmann.

The Heritage Network would like to express its thanks to Mr.& Mrs. D. Collins, owners; Tony Warner, contractor; and the staff of the County Archaeology Office, Hertfordshire County Council, for their co-operation and assistance in the execution of this project.

## Summary

<b>Site name and address:</b>	Old Bowling Forge Cottage, Cottered, Herts.		
<b>County:</b>	Hertfordshire	<b>District:</b>	East Herts
<b>Village/town:</b>	Cottered	<b>Parish:</b>	Cottered
<b>Planning reference:</b>	3/1887/02	<b>NGR (to 8 figures):</b>	TL3181 2926
<b>Client name and address:</b>	Mr & Mrs D. Collins, as above		
<b>Nature of work:</b>	Extension	<b>Present land use:</b>	Garden
<b>Size of affected area:</b>	20m <sup>2</sup>	<b>Size of area investigated:</b>	20m <sup>2</sup>
<b>Site Code:</b>	HN 374	<b>Other reference:</b>	n/a
<b>Organisation:</b>	The Heritage Network	<b>Site Director:</b>	David Hillelson
<b>Type of work:</b>	Monitoring & recording	<b>Finds location/Museum:</b>	Hertford Museum
<b>Start of work</b>	19/07/02	<b>Finish of work</b>	05/12/02
<b>Related SMR Nos:</b>	277	<b>Periods represented:</b>	Modern
<b>Previous summaries/reports:</b>	n/a		

**Synopsis:** As the result of an archaeological condition on the planning permission for the extension of the Old Bowling Forge Cottage, Cottered, Herts, the Heritage Network was commissioned by the owners to carry out the archaeological monitoring of the groundworks.

The property lies immediately beyond to the north-eastern boundary of the parish church of St. John the Baptist. No evidence was found to suggest that the churchyard had originally extended into the study area. The only archaeological features observed on the site were related to the underpinning of the building in recent years.



# 1 Introduction

*1.1* This report has been prepared on behalf of *Dan Collins Esq* as part of a programme of archaeological monitoring of development groundworks at the Old Bowling Forge Cottage, Cottered, Herts. The planning permission for the development, granted by the East Hertfordshire District Council (EHDC), has been subject to a standard archaeological condition, according to the provisions of the Department of the Environment's *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16). The scope of the required work follows the model *Design Brief for Archaeological Monitoring and Recording* issued by the *County Archaeology Office* (CAO) of Hertfordshire County Council, acting as advisers to EHDC, and the approved *Project Design* prepared by the Heritage Network.

*1.2* Old Bowling Forge Cottage is situated on the west side of the former bowling green which lies in the junction of the A507 Baldock to Buntingford Road, and the B1037 to Ardeley. It lies immediately east of the parish church of St John the Baptist which dates to the 14th century, and within the core of the medieval settlement as defined by Area of Archaeological Significance no.35 (AAS35) in the District Local Plan.

*1.3* The development involved the construction of a 4 x 5m extension on the rear side of the existing cottage together with associated landscaping and drainage.

*1.4* The aim of the monitoring programme has been to identify and record any archaeological features and deposits which may have been uncovered, and to retrieve artefactual and ecofactual elements which would allow the date, character, and significance of the site to be assessed, subject to the limitations of reasonable safety and practicality.

*1.5* The present report details the findings of the fieldwork programme. It will be submitted to the planning authority and the archive will be deposited with the Hertford Museum, thus completing the requirements of the planning condition.

## 2 Fieldwork

### *METHODOLOGY*

2.1 The timetable for the fieldwork followed the client's groundwork schedule. A number of site visits were made to supervise the ground reduction and the excavation of the footings trenches.

2.2 The machining was undertaken using a mini-digger. This was variously fitted with a 0.45m toothed bucket, and a toothless bucket, as appropriate .

2.3 Spoil from the various stages of groundworks was inspected for archaeological artefacts.

2.4 All work was carried out in accordance with the requirements of the LPA Model Design Brief and followed the Heritage Network's approved Project Design, and the provisions.

### *MONITORING AND RECORDING*

#### *Topography and geology*

2.5 The site lies on ground which slopes down to the northwest, between the parish church and the former bowling green. The natural subsoil is light olive brown (2.5Y 5/4) clay with frequent chalk inclusions.

#### *Ground reduction*

2.6 The initial ground reduction of between c.0.40m and c.0.60m for the rear extension had been undertaken and the area covered with hard core without archaeological supervision. The contractors removed the hard core on request so that the area could be inspected. No archaeology was visible.

2.7 Further ground reduction of c.1.0m took place without supervision for the patio. The section edges were inspected and no archaeology was observed.

#### *Footings trenches*

2.8 The footings trenches measured approximately 0.45m in width and varied in depth from 1.0m in the south-east corner of the rear extension to 2.0m for the side extension.

2.9 The footings for the side extension revealed evidence for recent activity, presumably associated with the underpinning of the building, including modern pottery and glass fragments and building debris in the overburden. No archaeology was observed.

**2.10** The rear extension also revealed evidence for underpinning in the western trench. This measured 0.80m in length and reached a depth of approximately 0.27m. The fill consisted of very dark grey (7.5YR 3/1) soft silty clay.

**2.11** A modern land drain ran across the site and was revealed in the eastern and western trenches, approximately 1.30m south of the building.

**2.12** A chalk layer measuring greater than 0.63m in length, greater than 0.11m in width and approximately 0.10m in depth was visible in the south-east corner of the footings trenches approximately 0.90m below the ground surface.

**2.13** A sub-circular area packed with a stone resembling Reigate Firestone was revealed in the southern trench, 1.90m west of the south-east corner. This area measured 0.43m in length, 0.20m in depth and lay 0.80m below the ground surface, which had been reduced by c.0.60m at this point.

#### *Drainage trenches and soakaway*

**2.14** The first section of the drainage trench which lay adjacent to the building was also dug and backfilled without archaeological supervision. The excavation of the section of the drainage trench connecting the soakaway with the patio area was monitored and no archaeology was observed. This trench measured 0.45m in width and 1.20m in depth.

**2.15** The soakaway measured 1.50m in length, 0.90m in width and 2.00m in depth. The stratigraphy was much as had been observed in the footings trenches of the rear extension, in that the overburden reached a depth of approximately 0.60m, below which was the natural clay. Some root disturbance from the neighbouring hedge was evident, as was some modern brick and glass within the overburden.

### 3 Discussion

**3.1** A visual inspection of the present churchyard suggests that, at an earlier period, it may have extended beyond its current limits. Although the churchyard lies to the rear of the study area, no evidence was collected which might suggest that it had previously been encompassed by it. The presence of a Reigate Firestone-type building stone is not altogether surprising as this was a favoured building material in the medieval period due to its fire resistant properties and the ease with which it could be carved (cf. Clifton-Taylor, A. 1986, *The Pattern of English Building*: pp116-7). Similar building material is present in parts of the church.

**3.2** The full extent of the chalk layer observed in the southeast corner of the footings trench was not revealed. The fact that it was not apparent in the full length of the trench would suggest that this did not represent a yard surface. Its stratigraphic location, bounded on three sides by natural, is perhaps indicative of a natural formation process, particularly considering the lack of a cut.

**3.3** The slope of the land to the rear of the property meant that the garden had been terraced prior to the present building works. This combined with the presence of modern inclusions in the overburden and the fact that the level of the garden in the study area was higher than that of its neighbour to the north, suggests that a reasonable degree of landscaping had taken place in fairly recent times.

#### *Conclusion*

**3.4** The degree of the slope behind the property was sufficiently steep to explain both the presence of building material from the church in the footings trench and the need for terracing. The absence of any cut features, other than those associated with the underpinning of the property, suggests that the burial activity within the churchyard did not extend this far even if the churchyard had originally encompassed the study area.

**3.5** Although some groundworks were undertaken without archaeological supervision, it is considered that the amount of archaeology observed on the site was fairly representative of the archaeological potential across the site, and it is unlikely that any significant data has been lost.



## 4 Schedule of Site Visits

Date	Staff	Hours	Comments
19/07/02	DJH	1	Preliminary visit
21/07/02	KS	1	ditto
22/07/02	KS	4	Extension footings
24/07/02	KS	6	Footings - utility room
05/12/02	KS	2	Drainage and soakaway

## 5 Illustrations

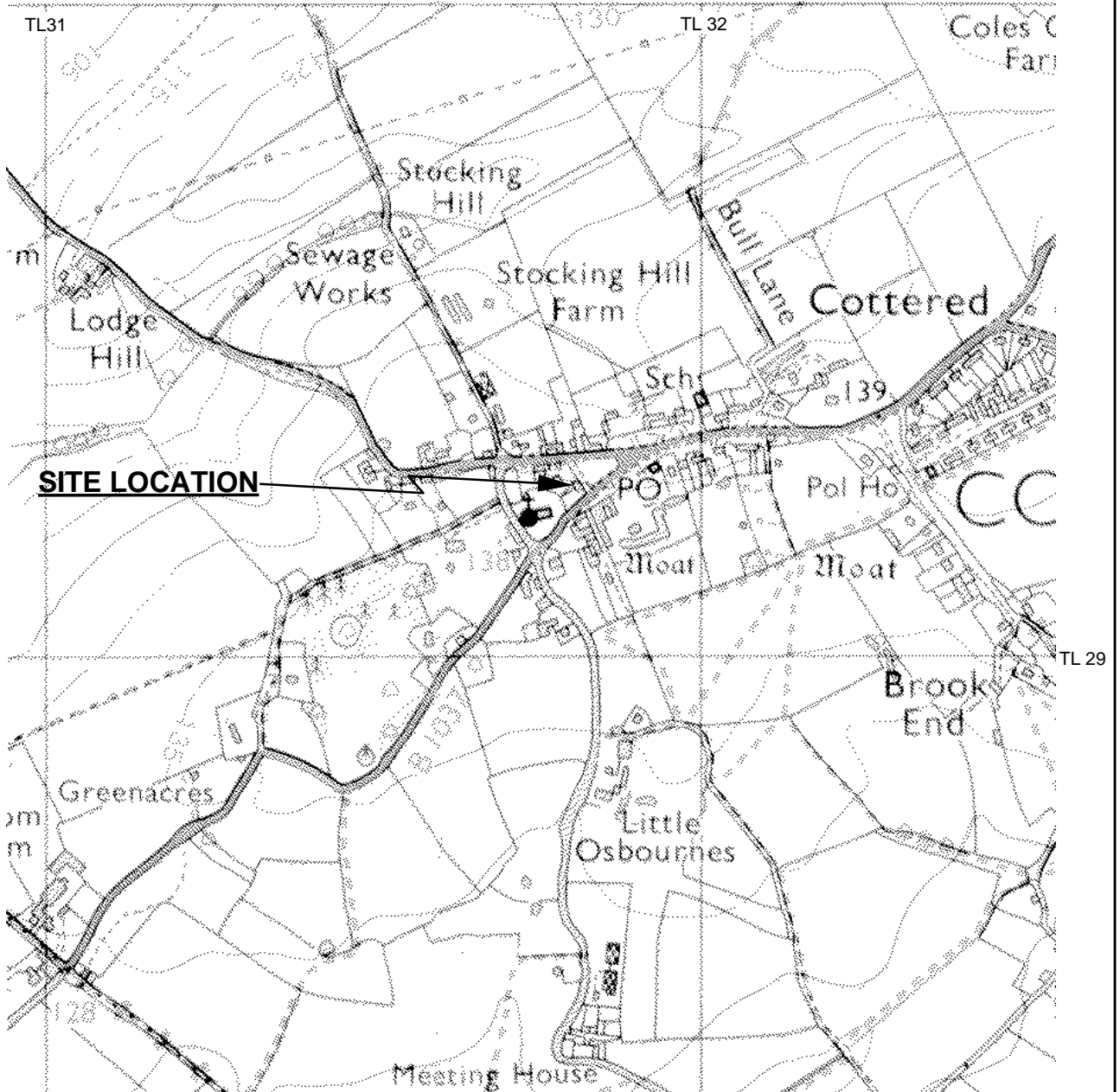
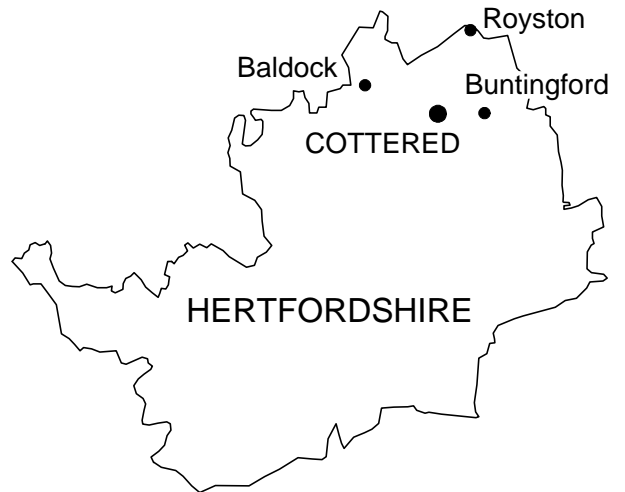
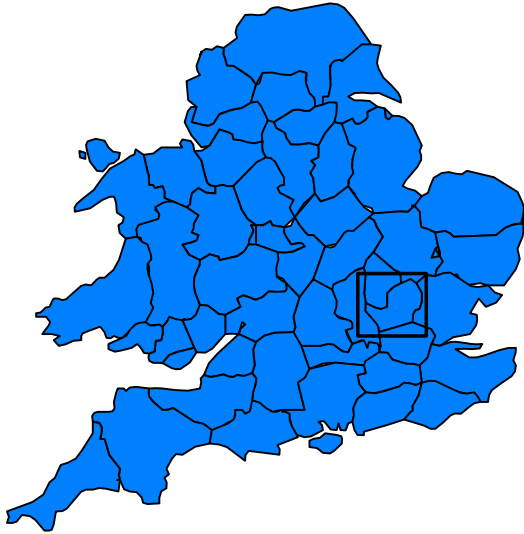
Figure 1 ..... Site location

Figure 2 ..... Site layout

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Old Bowling Forge Cottage, Cottered

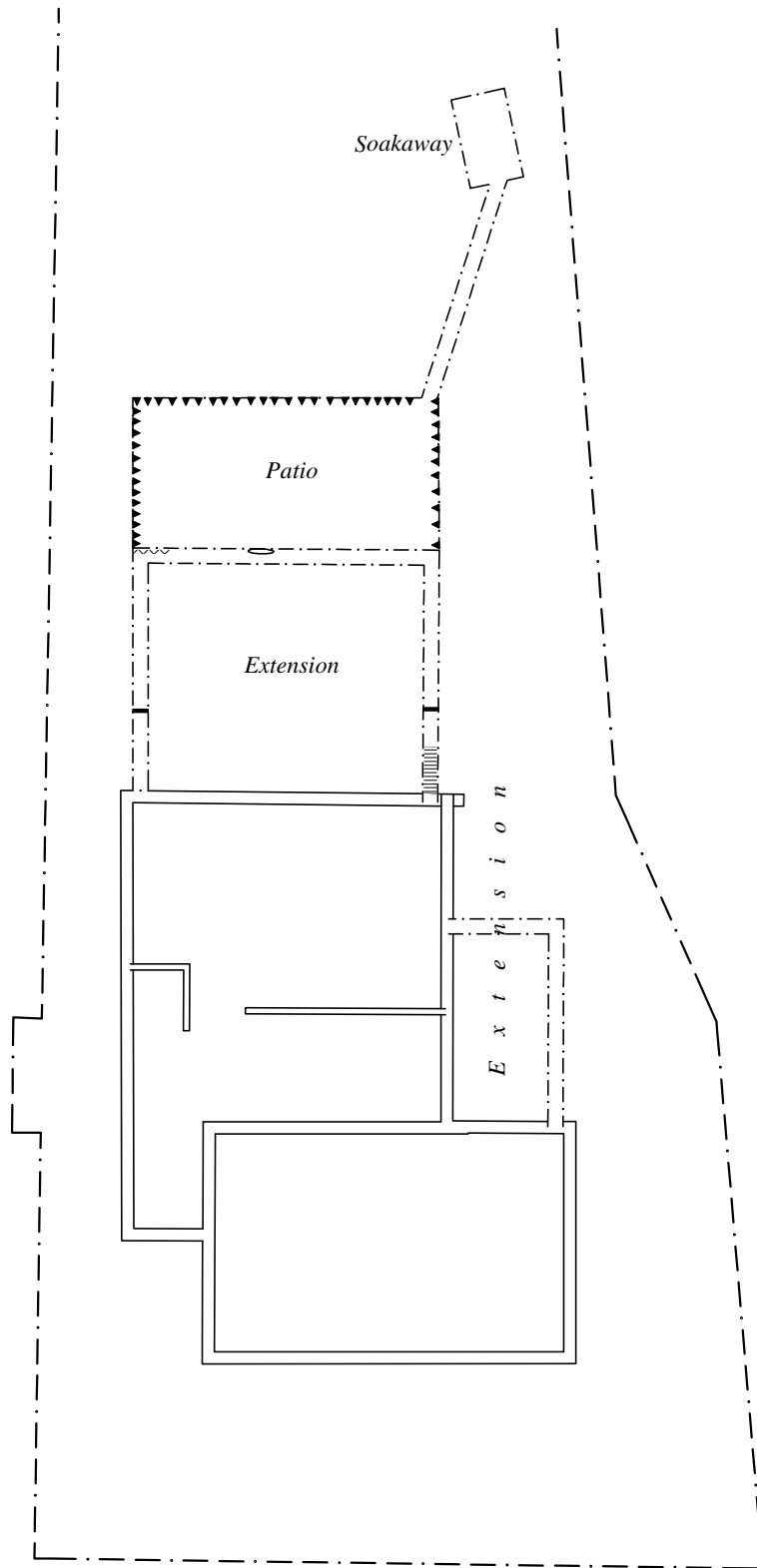
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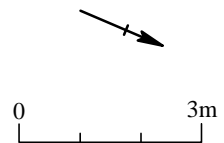
Site Location

Scale 1:10,000

Reproduced from OS mapping with the permission of the controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, Licence no. AL100014861 Figure 1



- |  |              |  |                   |
|--|--------------|--|-------------------|
|  | Stone        |  | Land drain        |
|  | Chalk layer  |  | Property boundary |
|  | Underpinning |  | Trenches          |



Site plan

Scale 1:100

Figure 2