

**An Archaeological Evaluation at Wren Cottage
13 High Street, Winchelsea
East Sussex**

NGR 59055 11740

Planning Application No: RR/2011/819/P

**Project No: 5042
Site Code: WCW11**

**ASE Report No. 2011217
OASIS id: archaeo16-**

**By Greg Priestley-Bell
With contributions from Gemma Ayton, Trista Clifford
Karine Le Hégarat and Sarah Porteus
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Abstract

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Jonathan Dunn Architects to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of Wren Cottage, 13 High Street, Winchelsea, East Sussex. One hand-dug evaluation trench was excavated.

The work revealed a remnant of an external hard standing or yard surface either relating to the 15th- to early 16th-century building (Wren Cottage) or possibly to an earlier building previously located on the site. A section of collapsed wall was also found, probably relating to the demolition of a medieval or early post-medieval wall. It is likely that this wall would have stood broadly in the same alignment as the nearby east-west return of the western garden wall. The garden walls perhaps represent the remains of a now demolished building which could have predated the present 15th to early 16th century structure.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Background

1.1.1 Archaeology South-East (ASE) (a division of The Centre for Applied Archaeology at the Institute of Archaeology, University College London) was commissioned by Jonathan Dunn Architects (hereafter referred to as 'the client') to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of Wren Cottage, 13 High Street, Winchelsea, East Sussex (NGR 590550, 117400, Fig. 1) (hereafter referred to as 'the site').

1.2 Geology and Topography

1.2.1 The site lies within the historic town of Winchelsea in East Sussex within the civil parish of Icklesham, and occupies the rear garden of a private residence, Wren Cottage which fronts onto the High Street.

1.2.2 According to current data from the British Geological Survey, the underlying geology consists of Wadhurst Clay Ashdown Sand; no superficial geology is specified.

1.3 Planning Background

1.3.1 A planning application (Planning Ref: RR/2011/819/P) has been submitted to Rother District Council for the construction of a single storey extension to the south elevation of the existing building ('Wren Cottage'). Due to the archaeological potential of the site Greg Chuter, the East Sussex County Council Assistant County Archaeologist (in his role as archaeological advisor to the Local Planning Authority) has recommended that an archaeological evaluation should be undertaken.

1.3.2 A Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) was prepared by ASE (Dawkes 2011). All work was carried out in accordance with the WSI and the *Recommended Standard Conditions for Archaeological Fieldwork* (ESCC 2008).

1.4 Aims and Objectives

1.4.1 The general aims of the archaeological investigation, as detailed in the WSI, were to:

- i) Establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the proposed development area*
- ii) Determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present.*
- iii) Establish the ecofactual/environmental potential of archaeological features*
- iv) Appraise the likely impact of the development proposals on any archaeology*
- v) To enable the County Archaeologist to make an informed decision as to the requirement for any further archaeological work should planning permission be granted.*

1.4.2 Specifically the aims were:

- vi) Is there any evidence of a back-filled medieval cellar below Wren Cottage?*
- vii) Are there any cut features or deposits relating to backplot activity of the medieval house such as boundary ditches, yard surfaces, industrial waste or rubbish pits?*

1.5 Scope of Report

- 1.5.1 The fieldwork was undertaken by Greg Priestley-Bell (Senior Archaeologist) and Gary Webster (Archaeologist) on the 10th – 12th of August 2011. This report details the results of this work.

2.0 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

2.1 Winchelsea and Quarter 13

- 2.1.1 The site lies within the medieval planned town of Winchelsea. Following the near destruction of Old Winchelsea during the exceptional storms of the mid 13th century, Edward I decided to establish a new town at a safer location on Iham hill. Edward's commissioners were instructed to lay out the town to a single plan incorporating streets, lanes, market and churches, and in 1292 New Winchelsea was founded. The streets were set out in a grid pattern that divided the town into 39 so called 'quarters'.
- 2.1.2 The site is situated in Quarter 13 of the town, a quarter that though apparently not occupied by high ranking residents, remained the most densely built up throughout the history of the town. Quarter 13 as initially laid out in 1292, consisted of 26 holdings (plots); the site is located within plot 16. Some of the town's properties became temporarily abandoned during the troubles of the mid 14th century, but plot 16 is not included in the schedule of decayed rents prepared in 1344/5 and 1363/4 (Martin & Martin, 2002, 33).

2.2 Wren Cottage

- 2.2.1 Wren Cottage occupies the eastern half of Homan's (1949) plot 16, the western half of which is occupied by the east wing of 'Firebrands', a large, stone-built house of c. 1300 date, possessing a medieval barrel-vaulted cellar (undercroft) (Martin, 2002, 34). There is a possibility that the site of Wren Cottage was originally occupied by an outbuilding extending from the east wing of Firebrand, perhaps a kitchen (pers. comm. David Martin).
- 2.2.2 Wren Cottage is a 15th- or early 16th-century timber-framed building that had a specialised function, perhaps that of a shop with a chamber above. Originally the building itself was built between stone eastern and western firebreak walls; the eastern party wall has been removed (Martin & Martin, 2002, 34).
- 2.2.3 The rear garden is 'L' shaped in plan, bounded by rubble masonry walls on the east and west side and a modern wall to the south. (Martin & Martin, 1985)
- 2.2.4 The property does not appear in the 1543 town rental, having apparently been given to the church free of its King's rent, all of which was paid by the adjacent Firebrands. The property is recorded in the 1529 church survey as having been given to the church by Gounore Chelberton in 1423-4 (Martin & Martin, 2002, 34).
- 2.2.5 Various alterations were carried out during the 16th and 17th centuries including the insertion of chimneys. The main post c. 1750 alteration, perhaps around 1800, was the addition of a rear range behind the 15th- to early 16th-century range (Martin & Martin 1985, 3-4).

3.0 ARCHAEOLOGICAL METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 A single hand-dug evaluation trench (TP1) measuring c. 1.2m x 1.7m was excavated. The originally proposed two 1m x 1m test pits could not be excavated in their intended positions due to the presence of buried drains and a manhole. The trench location was scanned prior to excavation using a Cable Avoidance Tool (CAT). The spoil heap, spoil derived from excavated features and trench base were scanned with a metal detector.
- 3.2 All encountered archaeological deposits, features and finds were recorded according to accepted professional standards in accordance with the approved ASE WSI using pro-forma context record sheets.
- 3.3 A full photographic record of the trenches and associated deposits and features was kept (including monochrome prints, colour slides and digital), and will form part of the site archive.
- 3.4 On completion of the excavation and recording, the base of the trench was covered with plastic sheet and the trench left open, at the request of the client.
- 3.5 The site archive is currently held at ASE offices in Portslade and will be offered to Hastings Museum in due course. Hastings Museum have been contacted but have not replied as yet.

Number of contexts	14
No. of files/paper record	1
Plan and sections sheets	1
Bulk Samples	1
Photographs Digital	32
B+W	6
CS	6
Bulk finds	1 box
Registered finds	1 box
Environmental flots/residue	2 sample

Table 1: Quantification of site archive

4.0 RESULTS

4.1 Test Pit 1 (Figs 3 and 4)

Context	Type	Description	Max. Length	Max. Width	Deposit Thickness	Height m.AOD
01	Layer	Paving slabs	TP	TP	0.04m	34.69
02	Layer	Concrete base	TP	TP	0.15m	34.65
03	Deposit	Garden soil	TP	TP	0.40m max	34.25
04	Deposit	Dump deposit	TP	TP	0.37m min	33.85
05	Cut	Rubbish pit	1m+	!m+		33.94
06	Fill	Upper fill of pit [05]	0.50m+	0.50m+	0.30m	
07	Deposit	Natural?	TP?	TP?	n/a	33.88 highest
08	Masonry	Hardstanding	1m	0.25m	0.10	34.03
09	Deposit	Shelly Dump deposit	0.40m	0.30m	?	33.88
10	Layer	Sand bedding below [08]	1m	0.03m	0.05m	33.93
11	Fill	Lower fill of pit [05]	0.7m?	1m?	0.05m	33.87
12	Masonry	Collapsed wall?	0.70m	0.65m	?	33.67
13	Cut	Modern? disturbance	1.5m+	0.20m		34.65
14	Fill	Fill of [13]	1.5m+	0.20m	0.50m min	-

Table 2: TP1 contexts

- 4.1.1 Cast concrete flagstones, [01], overlay a concrete base, [02]. Layer, [02], overlay garden soil/topsoil, [03], consisting of dark blackish brown slightly clayey silt that produced a large quantity of mixed artefacts dating from mid-15th century to the mid-19th century.
- 4.1.2 An area of modern disturbance [13] along the northern edge of the test pit was cut into deposit [004] and contained a fill [14] of very dark grayish brown clayey silt with occasional charcoal and concrete fragments.
- 4.1.3 Deposit, [03], overlay a dump deposit, [04], consisting of light/mid grayish brown clayey silt with occasional small pebbles and a large quantity of mixed finds including pottery, CBM, stone, bone and shell dating to between c. 1525 -1625.
- 4.1.4 Most of the test pit apparently lay within a large cut [05], which measured at least 1m in diameter. Cut [05] lay below deposit [04] and cut masonry [08]. Cut [05] contained an upper fill [06] of mid/dark greyish brown clayey silt with a large quantity of mixed finds including pottery, CBM, stone, bone and shell dating to between c. 1450 - 1550. Lower fill [11] BS<1> consisted of mid grayish brown clayey silt that produced a single large sherd of pottery and a small quantity of CBM dating to between c. 1400 – 1525.
- 4.1.5 A discontinuous area of brick and Tilgate sandstone, [08], lay above a deposit [10], of mid brownish yellow very fine sandy silt/silty sand with occasional charcoal. A small

deposit [09] (not seen in section) of mid grayish brown clayey silt with very frequent comminuted shell lay below fill [06].

- 4.1.6 A section of masonry [12] (not seen in section) consisting of mortar bonded Tilgate sandstone, yellow sandstone, brick and broken ceramic roof tile lay below fill [11].
- 4.1.7 Layer [10], deposit [09] and masonry [12] overlay a deposit [07] of light/mid yellowish brown very clayey silt with occasional pebbles and charcoal.

5.0 THE FINDS

5.1 Summary of finds assemblage

5.1.1 A surprisingly large assemblage of finds was recovered during archaeological work at Wren Cottage, Winchelsea, summarised in Table 3 below.

Cxt	Pot	wt (g)	CBM	wt (g)	Bone	wt (g)	Shell	wt (g)	Stone	wt (g)	Fe	wt (g)	Glass	wt (g)	CTP	wt (g)	Pb	wt (g)	Cu Alloy	wt (g)
3	65	612	32	169 8	11	92	6	32 6	6	198	2	14	5	24	34	14 2	2	78	1	6
4	20	230	46	279 8	22	168	5	16 4	23	194 8			1	<2	1	<2				
6	6	70	65	444 0	51	902	5	20 0	22	351 4										
11	1	136	9	848																
Total		104	15	978		116		69		566						14		78	1	6
I	92	8	2	4	84	2	16	0	51	0	2	14	6	24	35	2	2	78	1	6

Table 3: Quantification of finds

5.2 The Pottery by Luke Barber

5.2.1 Introduction

The archaeological work at the site recovered a relatively large assemblage of pottery. Sherd sizes tend to range between small (> 30mm across) to medium (30 to 60mm across) but all of the pottery, regardless of period, appears to be in quite fresh condition. As such the material does not appear to have been subjected to repeated reworking.

5.2.2 Results

The earliest pottery consists of three residual pieces dating to between the mid/late 13th and mid/late 14th centuries. These include a bodysherd from a green glazed jug in an off-white/buff fine sandy fabric, possibly of French origin from [04] and body sherds from a well-fired Winchelsea Black-type vessel and oxidised Rye jug from [06]. The latter is decorated with external white slip but is internally glazed in part.

There is notably more pottery from the Transitional period (c. 1375 to 1525/50) with a combined group of some 18 sherds. Context [11] produced a large sherd from an oxidised bunghole pitcher in hard-fired sandy earthenware and context [06] produced a further three sherds in similar wares as well as an early medium-fired sandy glazed redware (a pipkin handle, possibly of Dutch origin). Context [04] produced further Transitional sherds, most notably hard-fired fine and medium/coarse earthenwares (including a glazed jug bodysherd), some early medium fired glazed redwares and the base of a probable Cheam whiteware jug. Two residual Transitional sherds in fine and medium sandy hard-fired earthenware were also recovered from [03].

The site produced a notable early post-medieval (c. 1525/50 – 1750) group of 30 sherds. Although context [04] produced some early glazed redwares of the 16th century, and a possible tin-glazed earthenware sherd (with no glaze surviving) the

vast majority of the early post-medieval assemblage was recovered from [03]. As well as seven sherds of glazed redware this context also produced two high-fired earthenware sherds (of later 16th- to 17th- century types), a trailed slipware body sherd (of mid 17th- to mid 18th- century date) and six sherds from Border and Wealden whitewares with green or yellow glazing. Three sherds of tin-glazed earthenware were also recovered, including a porringer handle, as well as three Frechen stoneware sherds. The latest sherd in this group consists of part of a moulded plate in Staffordshire-type white salt glazed stoneware (c. 1725-1775).

With the exception of an intrusive grey transfer-printed ware sherd from [04] all of the late post-medieval (c. 1750-1900+) pottery was recovered from [03]. Most of these sherds can be placed between 1750 and 1850 and a typical range of domestic kitchen and table wares is represented. There is a single sherd from an unglazed earthenware flower pot as well as five sherds from plates and jars in glazed redware and part of a mug handle in English stoneware. The earliest tablewares consist of 11 sherds of creamware (plates and mugs) that can be placed between c. 1760 and 1820. There are also 13 pearlware sherds from blue shell-edged plates, hand-painted tea bowls and transfer-printed plates and saucers. A single sherd of Chinese porcelain is present and two sherds of English porcelain (the latter including a teacup with purple sprigged thistle. The two refined white earthenware sherds, including a mug with blue marbled decoration, probably date between 1825 and 1850 and may be the latest pieces in the group.

5.3 The Ceramic Building Material by Sarah Porteus

5.3.1 Introduction and Methodology

A total of 155 fragments of ceramic building material (CBM) with a combined weight of 10972g were recovered from four contexts. The assemblage contained a range of medieval and post-medieval fragments with the majority being of uncertain date, probably later medieval or early post-medieval (Table 4), including brick, hearth brick, nibbed peg tile, delft wall tile, ridge tile and peg tile.

Date	Count	Weight (g)
Medieval	18	2846
Late medieval to early post-medieval	132	6876
Post-medieval	1	16
undated	4	1144
Total	155	10972

Table 4: Summary of quantity of ceramic building material by period

The assemblage has been quantified and recorded on pro-forma recording forms for archive and entered into an excel database by context. Fabric descriptions have been created with the aid of a x10 binocular microscope. Samples of each fabric and items of interest have been retained and the bulk of the peg tile has been discarded.

5.3.2 Medieval

The medieval assemblage consisted predominantly of brick in fabric B1 of probable Flemish origin. Slight variations were observed between brick dimensions, brick thickness was fairly uniform at between 42 and 46mm with three complete widths of 92, 96 and 105mm. The bricks were common imports to the south-east of England from Holland during the medieval and into the early post-medieval period. The examples recovered from Wren cottage are more likely to be of 13th to 15th-century origin reflecting the early arrival of these bricks into the port of Winchelsea.

Also of medieval date was a thin hearth brick or tile in fabric T2 (Table 5) from context [06], unglazed with a thickness of 25mm with vertical edges and stabbed nail hole keying in the underside, the tile was probably used to line a hearth and is likely to be of 12th to 14th-century date. Two abraded sandy fragments of nibbed peg tile and unidentified tile were also noted within the assemblage in fabrics T2 and T5, of 13th to 15th-century date and 12th to 15th-century date respectively.

Fabric	Description	Spot date
T2	Orange sandy fabric with moderate micaceous speckling	C13th-C15th
T3	Coarse sandy fabric with abundant fine and sparse medium quartz inclusions	C12th-C14th
T5	Sandy orange fabric with abundant medium sized quartz with moderate voids (burned organics?) and moderate medium flint temper and black sand	C12th-C15th
B1	pinkish yellow fine sandy fabric with cream and pink silt	C13th-C15th

Table 5: Medieval fabrics

5.3.3 Late medieval to early post-medieval

The majority of the assemblage of later medieval to early post-medieval date is peg tile, with a few fragments of ridge tile in fabric T1, a highly calcareous fabric. Tile in a similar fabric is common across the far south east of England and the dating of the fabric is broad and appears to continue in use from the medieval period well into the post-medieval period. Square peg holes within the peg tile suggest a post-medieval date though a potentially slightly earlier date is possible. A few fragments of peg tile in fabrics T4 were also recovered though in far smaller quantities. A single fragment of brick in fabric B2 is too incomplete to allow assessment of form for accurate dating.

Fabric	Description	Spot date
T1	Earlier than it looks? Nr CAT32 common to kent and far south east, pinkish orange fabric with abundant calcareous speckling	C15th-C17th?
T4	fine orange fabric with sparse fine quartz and sparse micaceous speckling	C15th-C18th?
B2	Orange sandy fabric with moderate black iron rich inclusions and cream silt speckling	C15th-C17th

Table 6: Later medieval to early post-medieval fabrics

5.3.4 Post-medieval

The single fragment of blue and white tin glazed delft wall tile was recovered from context [03] RF<1>. Similar tiles recovered from London are dated to between 1720 and 1770, though this fragment may represent an original import rather than a London copy of the style and therefore may potentially date to the later 17th century.

5.3.5 Undated

A small assemblage of white sandy lime mortar with moderate black sand inclusions was also recovered which has no certain date.

5.3.6 Summary

The assemblage contains a range of forms ranging from the 12th to 18th century (Table 7). The earliest material originated from context [06] suggesting a possible later medieval date. The assemblage from contexts [04] and [11] is later medieval or early post-medieval in date. Context [03] is likely to be of 18th-century date based upon the presence of a delft wall tile within the assemblage.

Context	Forms	Date range
03	Brick, peg tile, delft wall tile, mortar	C13th-Mid C18th
04	Brick, peg tile, nibbed peg tile	C13th-C17th
06	Brick, peg tile, hearth brick, nibbed peg tile, ridge tile, mortar	C12th to C17th, probably earlier end of bracket
11	Peg tile (also recovered from sample <1>)	C15th-C17th

Table 7: Summary of ceramic building material recovered by context

5.4 The Clay Tobacco Pipes by Luke Barber

5.4.1 The archaeological work recovered a small assemblage of clay pipes. Context [04] produced a single stem fragment, albeit the earliest from the site – probably dating between the very late 16th and early 17th centuries. The remaining pipes were recovered from [03] where 32 stem and two bowl fragments were recovered. All of the pieces are quite fresh and do not show signs of extensive abrasion. They range in date between the early/mid 17th and 19th centuries, with the two bowl fragments being of mid 18th- to early 19th- century types.

5.5 The Glass by Luke Barber

5.5.1 Glass was only recovered from contexts [03] and [04]. The single fragment from [04] consists of a badly degraded fragment of window glass that could be placed anywhere between the 16th and 17th centuries. Context [03] contained a slightly less weathered window glass fragment likely to be of 17th- to mid 18th- century date and a small fragment from an aqua-coloured glass phial of 18th- to early 19th- century date. The remaining glass from this deposit is all of 19th- century date and includes a wine/beer bottle fragment and three pieces of window glass.

5.6 The Metalwork by Trista Clifford

- 5.6.1 A single iron nail with circular head and square section stem came from context [03]. The same context produced a piece of copper alloy sheet and two fragments of lead waste. None are inherently datable.

5.7 The Geological Material by Luke Barber

- 5.7.1 The archaeological work recovered a relatively large assemblage of stone. The most common type consists of the local grey Tilgate sandstone. This stone type was recovered from [03] (1/64g), [04] (9/987g) and [06] (11/3121g) and is the standard building material at Winchelsea (some of the current pieces have adhering lime mortar). The thicker beds (up to 35mm thick) could have been used in walling and flooring but some of the thinner pieces (eg 12mm in [03]) may have been used for roofing slabs. The other main stone type consists of West Country roofing slate. This was recovered from [03] (3/115g), [04] (10/631g) and [06] (364g) and was one of the main roofing materials in the medieval town. Its longevity frequently means that the material was still on buildings as late as the 16th century, some 200 years after the main period of importation. The other stone consists of a few pieces of fine-grained non-calcareous Wealden sandstones (contexts [03] and [04]), a piece of coal (context [03]) and a single fragment of Caen stone (context [04]). The latter is from part of an octagonal cresset lamp of High Medieval type.

5.8 Animal bone by Gemma Ayton

5.8.1 Introduction

The hand-collected animal bone assemblage derives from contexts [3], [4] and [6] which also contain post-medieval pottery and medieval and post-medieval CBM. These contexts produced 86 fragments of animal bone of which 73 could be identified to taxa. Alongside the hand-collected bone, a relatively large quantity of mammal and fish bones were retrieved from sample <1>, pit fill [011].

5.8.2 Method

Wherever possible the hand collected bone fragments have been identified to species and the skeletal element represented. The bone was identified using ASE's in-house reference collection and Schmid (1972). Elements that could not be confidently identified to species, such as long-bone and vertebrae fragments, have been recorded according to their size. The larger fragments are recorded as cattle-sized and the smaller fragments as sheep-sized. The state of fusion has been noted and each fragment has then been studied for signs of butchery, burning, gnawing and pathology. The assemblage did not provide metrical or tooth wear data. The bone assemblage from the environmental sample has yet to be identified.

5.8.3 Assessment

The majority of the assemblage is in a good to moderate condition with little surface weathering though few complete bones were remaining. A variety of taxa have been identified (Table 8) including cattle (*Bos taurus*), sheep/goat (*Ovis/Capra*), pig (*Sus*) and medium-sized galliform.

TAXA	NISP
Cattle	8
Sheep/Goat	13
Pig	7
Chicken/Guinea Fowl/Pheasant	1
Large Mammal	28
Medium Mammal	17

Table 8: NISP (Number of Identified Specimens) counts

Both meat bearing and non-meat bearing and fused and unfused bones were present. Canid gnawing has been noted on two specimens and the assemblage may represent domestic food and butchery waste associated with nearby buildings.

The animal bone assemblage retrieved from sample <1> contains 342g of mammal bone and 74g of fish bone which is in a relatively good condition. The fish assemblage contains both head and a vertebra remains.

5.8.4 Discussion

Although the hand-collected animal bone assemblage from the evaluation is too small to provide significant information, it is of a reasonable size given the small nature of the intervention. In addition, given the quantity of fish bone recovered from just one 20l sample, it is possible that any future sampling undertaken at the site will produce a significant assemblage that will provide detailed information regarding the exploitation of marine resources and diet.

5.9 The Marine Molluscs by Trista Clifford

5.9.1 Common oyster shell, *Ostrea Edulis*, with a total weight of 690g was recovered from three separate contexts, outlined in Table 9. Both juvenile and mature specimens are present. Some parasitic activity was noted on valves from contexts [03] and [06]. An undiagnostic common mussel valve (*Mytilus edulis*) was also recovered from [03].

Cxt	Upper	Lower	Undiag.	Total
03	2	3		5
04	1	2	2	5
06	2	3		5

Table 9: Quantification of common oyster valves by context

5.10 The Registered Finds by Trista Clifford

5.10.1 Introduction

A small assemblage of registered finds was collected from context [03]. These are summarised in Table 10. The finds are well preserved in good condition. RF<1>, a delft tile fragment, is described in Section 5.3.6, the Ceramic Building Material.

RF	Cxt	Object	Material	Wt (g)	Period
1	03	TILE	CERA	18	PMED
2	03	THIM	COPP	4	PMED
3	03	AMMU	LEAD	24	PMED
4	03	MOUNT	COPP	12	PMED
5	03	BUCK	COPP	6	PMED
6	03	BUCK	COPP	2	PMED
7	03	BUTT	COPP	<2	MOD
8	03	COIN	COPP	<2	PMED

Table 10: Summary of the Registered Finds

5.10.2 Dress Accessories

A 17th-18th-century acorn shaped mount, RF<4>, was recovered, together with a double looped shoe/spur buckle, RF<6>, and a fragment from a larger buckle of similar date, RF<5>. A modern machine made button, RF<7> was also recovered.

5.10.3 Textile equipment

Context [03] produced a possibly machine made copper alloy thimble, RF<2>, probably of 19th-century date.

5.10.4 Ammunition

A lead musket ball, of 16th-century or later date came from context [03], RF<3>.

5.10.5 Numismatica

A possible Jetton was also found, RF<8>. It is illegible, therefore impossible to date accurately beyond a broad range of 17-19th century.

6.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLE by Karine Le Hégarat

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 A single 20L bulk soil sample was taken as part of the evaluation work at Wren Cottage to establish the presence of environmental indicators such as charcoal, macrobotanical remains, fauna and mollusca. Sample <1> was taken from primary pit fill context [011], an archaeological feature which produced a sherd of pottery dated to the Transitional Period (c. 1375 to 1525/50) as well as some peg tiles dated to the later medieval or early post-medieval period.

6.2 Method

6.2.1 The sample was processed in its entirety in a flotation tank and the flot and residue were retained on 250 and 500µm meshes respectively. Residue was sieved through 2mm and 4mm geological sieves and each fraction sorted for artefact and environmental remains (Table 11). The flot was scanned under a stereozoom microscope at x7-45 magnifications and an overview of its content recorded (Table 12). Preliminary identifications of macrobotanical remains have been made using modern comparative material held in reference texts (Cappers *et al.* 2006, Jacomet 2006 and NIAB 2004). Nomenclature used follows Stace (1997).

6.3 Results

6.3.1 Sampling confirmed the presence of a wide array of environmental remains including charcoal, uncharred and charred plant remains, unburned faunal remains including fish and mammal bones as well as some marine mollusca.

6.3.2 The sample produced a relatively rich assemblage of fish and mammal bones. Although a large proportion of the mammal bones were very fragmented, the fish remains were in a good state of preservation. A small amount of common oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) shell fragments was also present in the deposit.

6.3.3 Charcoal fragments were common in both the flot and residue. Although the assemblage of charred wood fragments consisted principally of small-sized fragments <4mm (and often less than 2mm), larger well preserved pieces >4mm in size were also present.

6.3.4 Charred macrobotanical remains included a small quantity of charred cereal remains and a single seed from the pea (Fabaceae) family. The charred crop remains consisted mainly of indeterminate cereal (Cerealia) grains with a smaller number of grains of barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.). The caryopses were in a poor state of preservation. They were heavily puffed up, very fragmented and pitted, preventing any identification beyond the genus level. The residue produced an uncharred nut shell fragment suggestive of pistachio (cf. *Pistacia vera*). This half shell was well preserved and it is almost certainly intrusive as a relative large quantity of modern pistachio shells were noticed on the patio.

6.3.5 Context [011] also produced a wide range of artefacts including ceramic and stone building material, sherds of pottery, metallic material, stone fragments, a single copper pin as well as a some fragments of glass.

6.4 Discussion

6.4.1 A relatively rich assemblage of environmental and artefactual remains was present in the basal pit fill context [011]. The assemblage of charred macroplants was small and poorly preserved and can only provide limited information regarding the use of crop remains. Nonetheless, the deposit contained a large quantity of fish bones and a slightly smaller amount of mammal bones. These uncharred faunal remains could provide useful information regarding consumed foodstuffs or domestic livestock. Wood charcoal fragments were moderately frequent. Many of the fragments were well enough preserved for identification and could provide some information regarding the woody taxa targeted for fuel. The assemblage might also contain material suitable for radiocarbon dating. Although the wide range of artefacts recorded in the primary fill of the pit and the differential preservation of the environmental remains suggest that the material present within context [011] originate from a number of different sources, the remains could provide some interesting information regarding past diet and activities.

Table 11: Residue Quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250) and weights in grams.

Sample Number	Context	Context / deposit type	Sample Volume litres	sub-Sample Volume	Uncharred fruit stone	Weight (g)	Charcoal >4mm	Weight (g)	Bone and Teeth	Weight (g)	Fishbone and	Weight (g)	Marine Molluscs	Weight (g)	Other (eg ind, pot, cbm)
1	11	Pit	20	20	cf. <i>Pistacia vera</i> *	<2	***	32	***	342	***	76	*	18	Metal **/74g - Pins */<2g - Mortar */296g - Glass **/4g - Pottery **/40g - Stone */82g - Slate */80g - Tiles **/946g

Table 12: Flot Quantification (* = 1-10, ** = 11-50, *** = 51-250, **** = >250) and preservation (+ = poor, ++ = moderate, +++ = good)

Sample Number	Context	weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred %	sediment %	seeds uncharred	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm	crop seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	weed seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	fish, amphibian, mammal	Marine molluscs
1	1	6	4	10	10	<i>Sambucus nigra</i> (*), unident. seeds (*)	*	**	***	**	Cerealia, <i>Hordeum</i> sp., <i>Triticum</i> sp.	+ + +	*	Fabaceae	+	*	*

7.0 DISCUSSION

7.1 Original specific aims

- *Is there any evidence of a back-filled medieval cellar below Wren Cottage?*
- *Are there any cut features or deposits relating to backlot activity of the medieval house such as boundary ditches, yard surfaces, industrial waste or rubbish pits? (Dawkes 2011)*

7.1.1 The work did not reveal any evidence for a back-filled cellar although a large (probably 2m diameter+) pit [05] or depression was identified in the test pit location.

7.1.2 A yard surface [08] was identified at 660mm below the paved surface at 34.03m AOD. A substantial section of probably medieval collapsed wall [12] was also identified at c. 1m below the flagstones at 33.67m AOD. A large rubbish pit [05] or depression produced significant quantities of 15th- to 16th- century pottery together with large quantities of CBM, bone and shell. No evidence for boundary ditches was identified, and no industrial waste was recovered.

7.2 Excavation results

7.2.1 Cut [13] with fill [14] related to the removal of a modern ceramic and concrete drain.

7.2.2 Dump deposit [04], possibly dating to the 16th to early 17th century, perhaps relates to external works associated with alterations made during this period, including the insertion of chimneys (Martin, 1985, 3-4). Alternatively deposit [04] *may* have been the fill of a large rubbish pit that cut earlier rubbish pit [05]; the edges of the postulated pit were not seen or lay beyond the area of the test pit.

7.2.3 Cut [05] was a rubbish pit or perhaps depression, measuring at least 1m x 1m, and probably dating to between the mid 15th and mid 16th century, with pottery from the base of the pit dating to the 15th to early 16th century. The dating suggests that the rubbish pit is associated with the earliest domestic use of the existing 15th- to early 16th-century building.

7.2.4 Masonry [08] on a sand base [10] was an external hard standing or yard surface either relating to the 15th- to early 16th-century building or *possibly* to an earlier building on the site (pers. comm. David Martin).

7.2.5 Masonry [12] was probably a section of collapsed wall relating to the demolition of a medieval or early post-medieval structure. The elements were mortar bonded and included fragments of roof tile that had apparently been used as spacers to level courses, strongly suggesting that the masonry had at one time stood vertically. If this were the case, it is likely that the postulated wall would have stood broadly in the same alignment as the nearby E-W return of the western garden wall (Fig 4). The following is an extract from an architectural survey carried out by David and Barbara Martin (1985) that discusses the western garden wall:-

'... the western (garden) wall measures 670mm ... thick, which seems excessive for a mere garden wall. This wall off-sets towards its northern end, the return wall being fully jointed into the southern wall of Firebrands, with which it appears contemporary. The return at the off-set is formed out of dressed ashlar. Even if the garden walls do represent the remains of a now demolished building, that building could well have predated the present period A (15th to early 16th century) structure,

and thus need not imply the former existence of a rear range at Wren Cottage.'

- 7.2.6 Deposit [09] was a discrete dump deposit of shellfish remains, probably mussel that was over natural [07] and *perhaps* at the base of rubbish pit [05].
- 7.2.7 Natural [07] was encountered at 33.88m AOD. The top of this deposit was dirty and disturbed, probably by trampling and/or bioturbation.

8.0 CONCLUSION

- 8.1 The fieldwork has revealed significant archaeological remains, relating to not only the 15th-to early 16th-century northern range of the present 'Wren Cottage', but also *potentially* to a late 13th- to early 14th-century structure built on this plot soon after the foundation of (New) Winchelsea after 1292. The large quantity of datable finds and the rich assemblage of environmental and faunal remains recovered during the evaluation underlines the potential of the site to further our understanding of the early beginnings of this area of Homan's (1949) Quarter 13 of Winchelsea.

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Acknowledgements

ASE would like to thank Jonathan Dunn Architects for commissioning the work and Greg Chuter for his continued guidance throughout the project.

HER Summary Form

Site Code	WCW11					
Identification Name and Address	Wren Cottage, 13 High Street, Winchelsea, East Sussex					
County, District &/or Borough	Rother District, East Sussex					
OS Grid Refs.	NGR 59055, 11740					
Geology	Wadhurst Clay Ashdown Sand					
Arch. South-East Project Number	5042					
Type of Fieldwork	Eval. X	Excav.	Watching Brief	Standing Structure	Survey	Other
Type of Site	Green Field	Shallow Urban X	Deep Urban	Other		
Dates of Fieldwork	Eval. 10 th – 12 th of August 2011.	Excav.	WB.	Other		
Sponsor/Client	Jonathan Dunn Architects					
Project Manager	Andy					
Project Supervisor	Greg Priestley-Bell					
Period Summary	Palaeo.	Meso.	Neo.	BA	IA	RB
	AS	MED X	PM X	Other Modern X		

Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Jonathan Dunn Architects to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of Wren Cottage, 13 High Street, Winchelsea, East Sussex (NGR 590550, 117400). One hand-dug evaluation trench was excavated.

The work revealed a remnant of an external hardstanding or yard surface either relating to the 15th- to early 16th-century building (Wren Cottage) or possibly to an earlier building previously located on the site. A section of collapsed wall was also found, probably relating to the demolition of a medieval or early post-medieval wall. It is likely that this wall would have stood broadly in the same alignment as the nearby east-west return of the western garden wall. The garden walls perhaps represent the remains of a now demolished building which could have predated the present 15th to early 16th century structure.

OASIS Form

OASIS ID: archaeol6-109616

Project details

Project name An Archaeological evaluation at Wren Cottage, Winchelsea, East Sussex

Short description of the project Archaeology South-East was commissioned by Jonathan Dunn Architects to undertake an archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of Wren Cottage, 13 High Street, Winchelsea, East Sussex (NGR 590550, 117400). One hand-dug evaluation trench was excavated.

The work revealed a remnant of an external hardstanding or yard surface either relating to the 15th- to early 16th-century building (Wren Cottage) or possibly to an earlier building previously located on the site. A section of collapsed wall was also found, probably relating to the demolition of a medieval or early post-medieval wall. It is likely that this wall would have stood broadly in the same alignment as the nearby east-west return of the western garden wall. The garden walls perhaps represent the remains of a now demolished building which could have predated the present 15th to early 16th century structure.

Project dates Start: 10-08-2011 End: 12-08-2011

Previous/future work No / Not known

Type of project Field evaluation

Site status Conservation Area

Current Land use Other 5 - Garden

Monument type HARDSTANDING Medieval

Monument type MASONRY Medieval

Significant Finds POT Medieval

Significant Finds POT Post Medieval

Methods & techniques 'Test Pits'

Development type Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)

Prompt Planning condition

Position in the planning process Pre-application

Project location

Country England

Site location EAST SUSSEX ROTHER RYE Wren Cottage, 13 High Street, Winchelsea, East Sussex

Postcode TN36 4EA

Study area 40.00 Square metres

Site coordinates TQ 9055 1740 50.9239278934 0.711605003978 50 55 26 N 000 42 41 E Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 33.67m Max: 34.68m

Project creators

Name of Organisation Archaeology South East

Project brief originator East Sussex County Council

Project design originator Archaeology South-East

Project director/manager Andy Leonard/Jim Stevenson

Project supervisor Greg Priestley-Bell

Type of sponsor/funding body Client

Name of sponsor/funding body Jonathan Dunn Architects Ltd

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient Local Museum

Physical Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Metal','other'

Digital Archive recipient Local Museum

Digital Contents 'other'

Digital Media available 'Images raster / digital photography','Text'

Paper Contents 'other'

Paper Media available 'Context sheet','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Unspecified Archive'

Project bibliography 1

Publication type Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)

Title An Archaeological Evaluation on land to the rear of Wren Cottage, 13 High Street, Winchelsea, East Sussex

Author(s)/Editor(s) Priestley-Bell, G.

Other bibliographic details 2011217

Date 2011

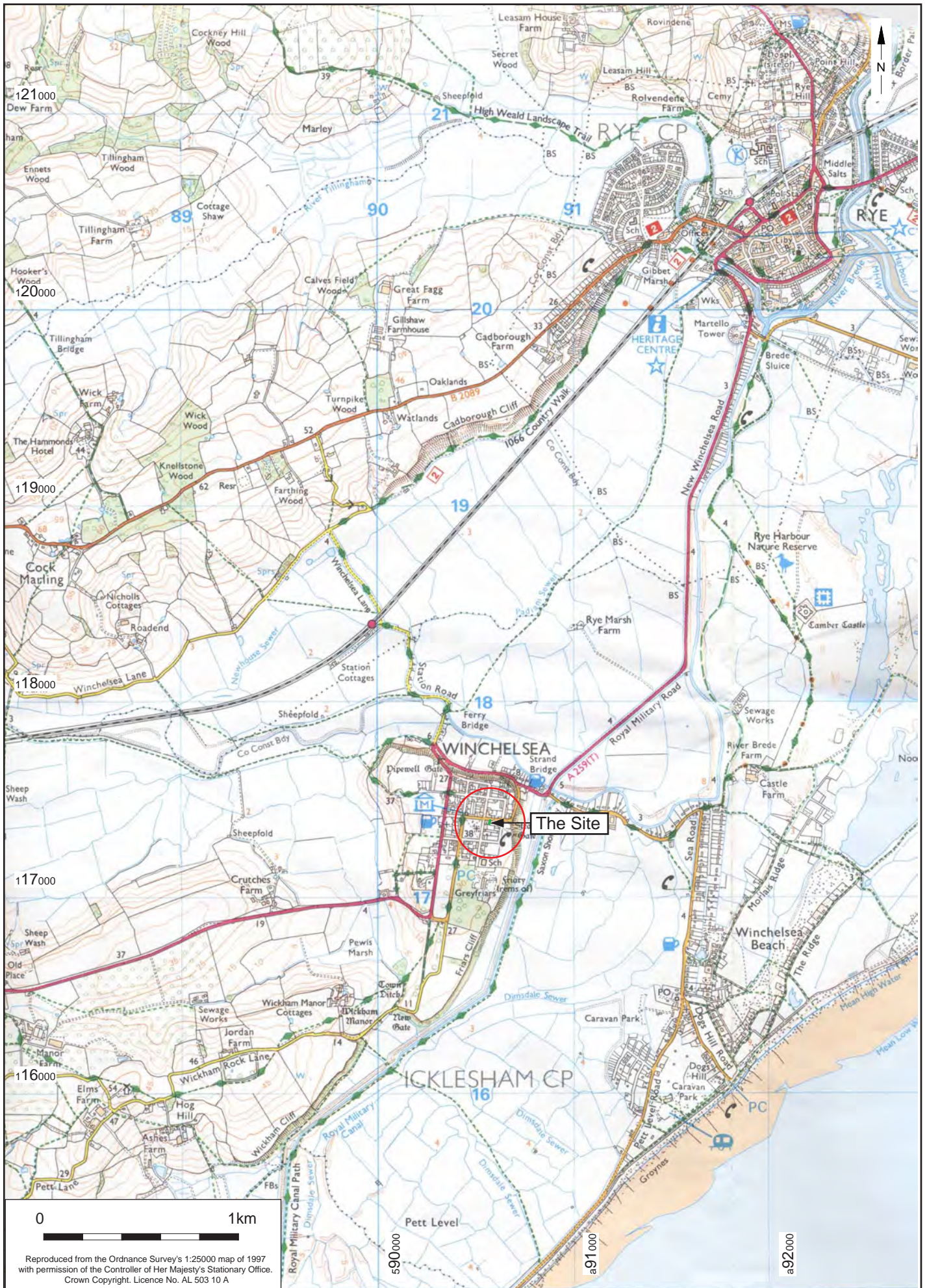
Issuer or publisher Archaeology South-East

Place of issue or publication Portslade

Description Booklet

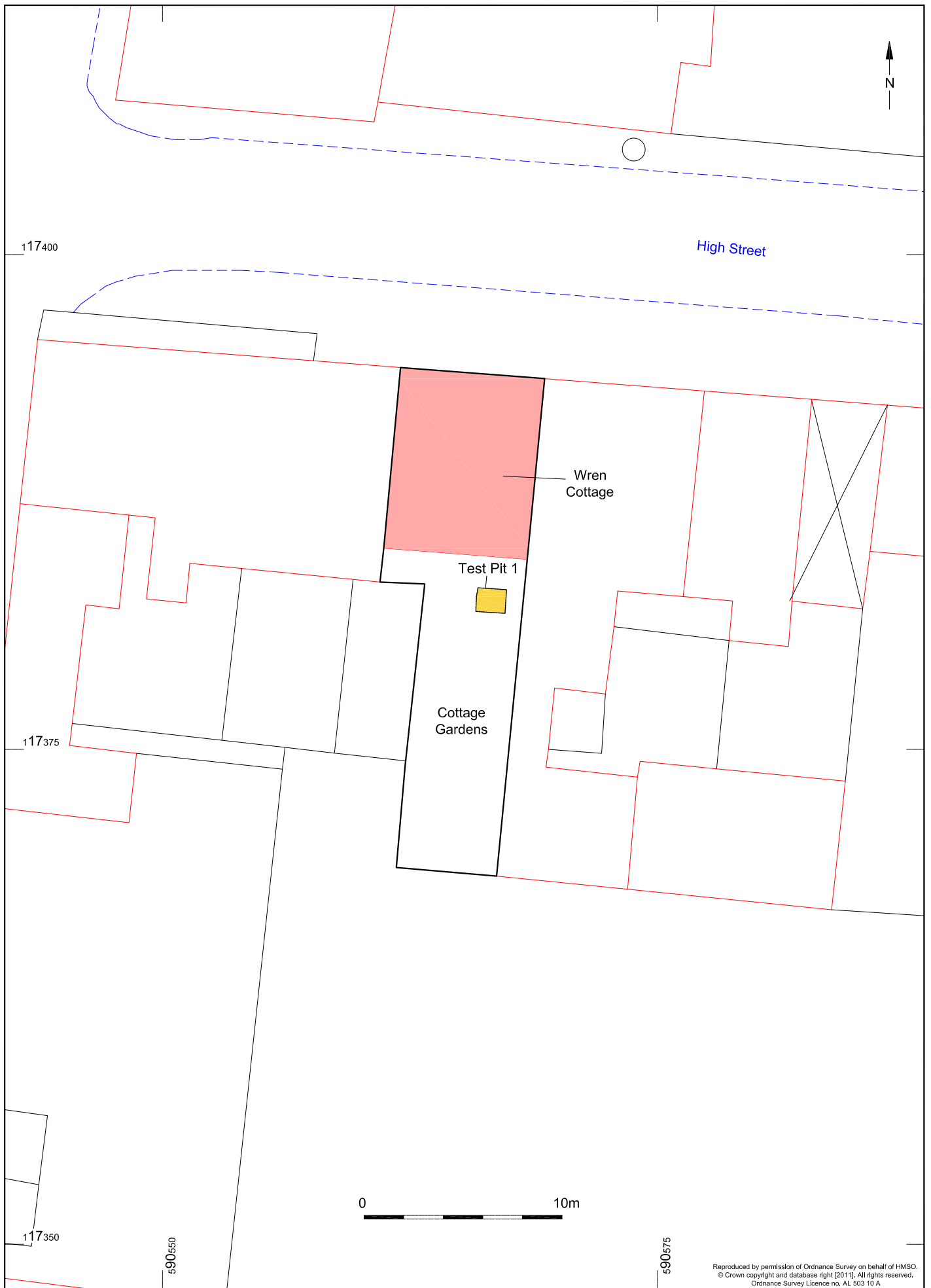
Entered by Greg Priestley-Bell (gregpbell@btinternet.com)

Entered on 8 September 2011



© Archaeology South-East		Wren Cottage, Winchelsea	
Project Ref: 5042	Aug 2011	Site location	
Report Ref: 2011217	Drawn by: JLR		

Fig. 1

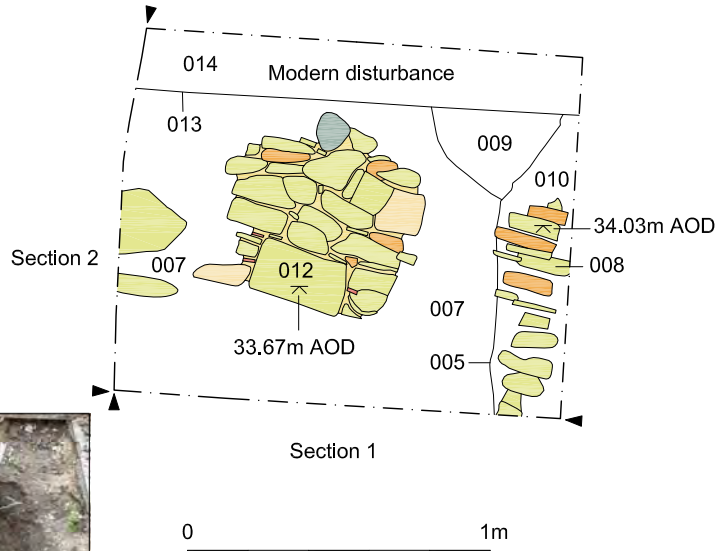
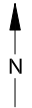


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© Archaeology South-East		Wren Cottage, Winchelsea		Fig. 2
Project Ref: 5042	September 2011	Test pit location		
Report Ref: 2011217	Drawn by: DJH			

117384

- Key:
- Tilgate sandstone
 - Brick
 - Flint
 - Sandstone (Caen?)
 - Tile



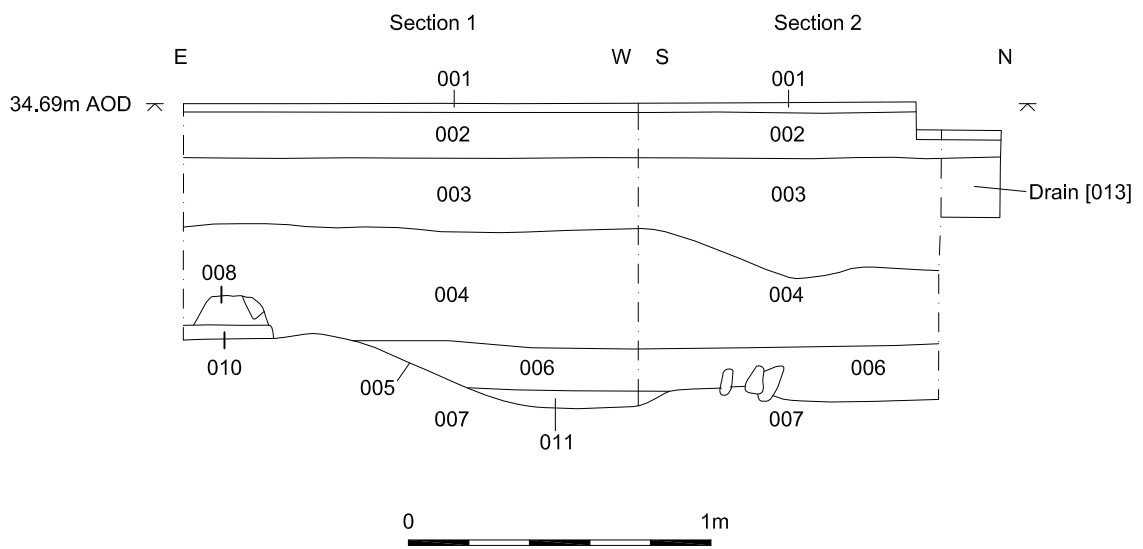
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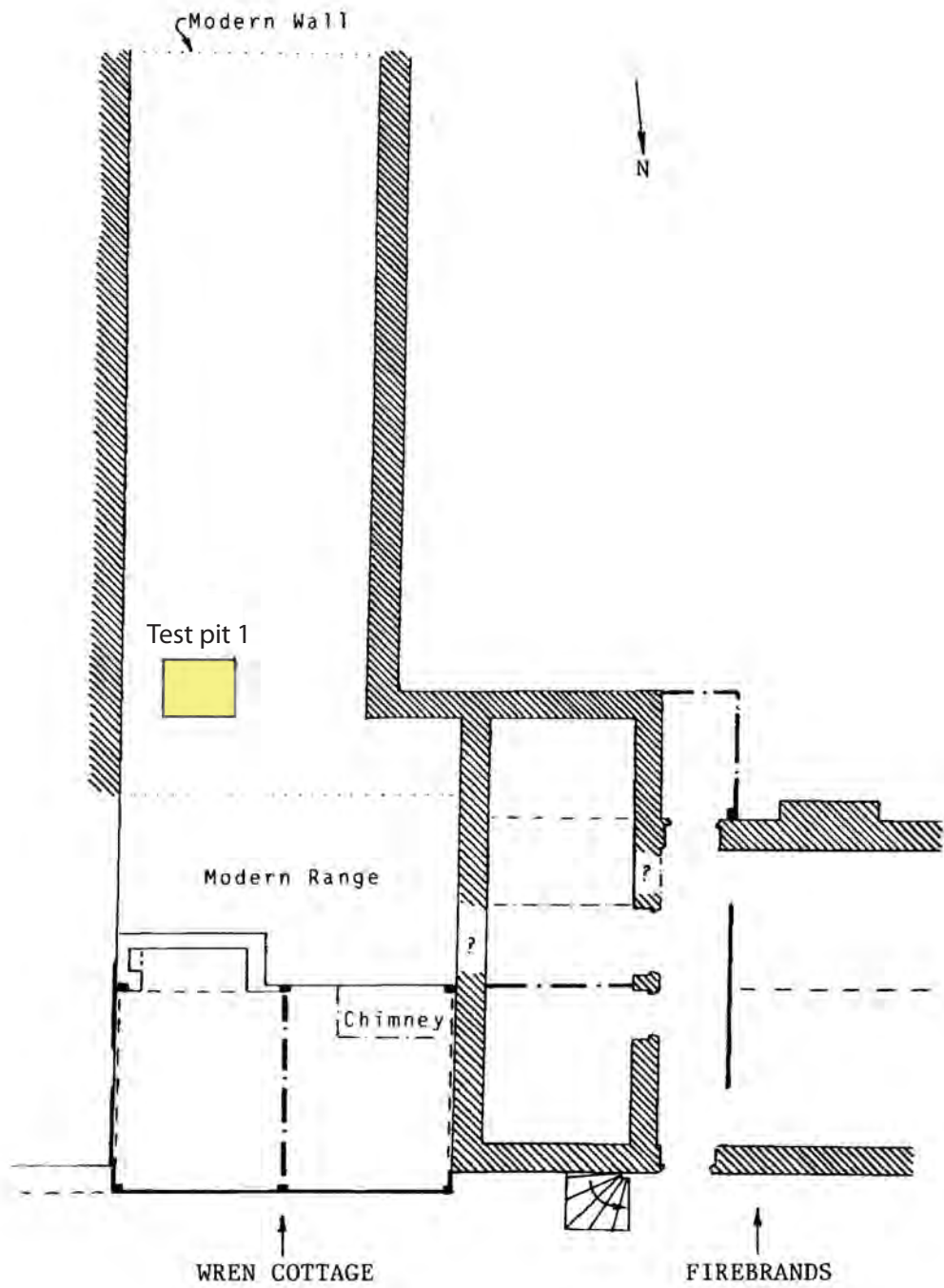


Photograph of test pit 1 looking south

590566

590568





WINCHELSEA - WREN COTTAGE, HIGH STREET

DETAILS OF THE PLOT

922/5 - 1985

© Archaeology South-East		Wren Cottage, Winchelsea	Fig. 4
Project Ref: 5042	Aug 2011	Plan of Wren Cottage and Gardens - from Martin, D, and Martin, B, 1985	
Report Ref: 2011217	Drawn by: DJH		

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