

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF
& PHOTOGRAPHIC RECORDING:
2 WOOD END, LITTLE HORWOOD
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

on behalf of Julian Marsh



Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA

November 2004

ASC: 603/LHW/02

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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	LHW	<i>Project no:</i>	603
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>District:</i>	Aylesbury Vale		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Little Horwood		
<i>Parish:</i>	Little Horwood		
<i>NGR:</i>	SP 793 307		
<i>Present land use:</i>	Disused house and garden		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Demolition of existing building & erection of new house and detached garage		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	03/2499		
<i>Client:</i>	Mr Julian Marsh 47 Folly Fields Wheathampstead St Albans Hertfordshire AL4 8HJ		
<i>Contact name:</i>	Julian Marsh		
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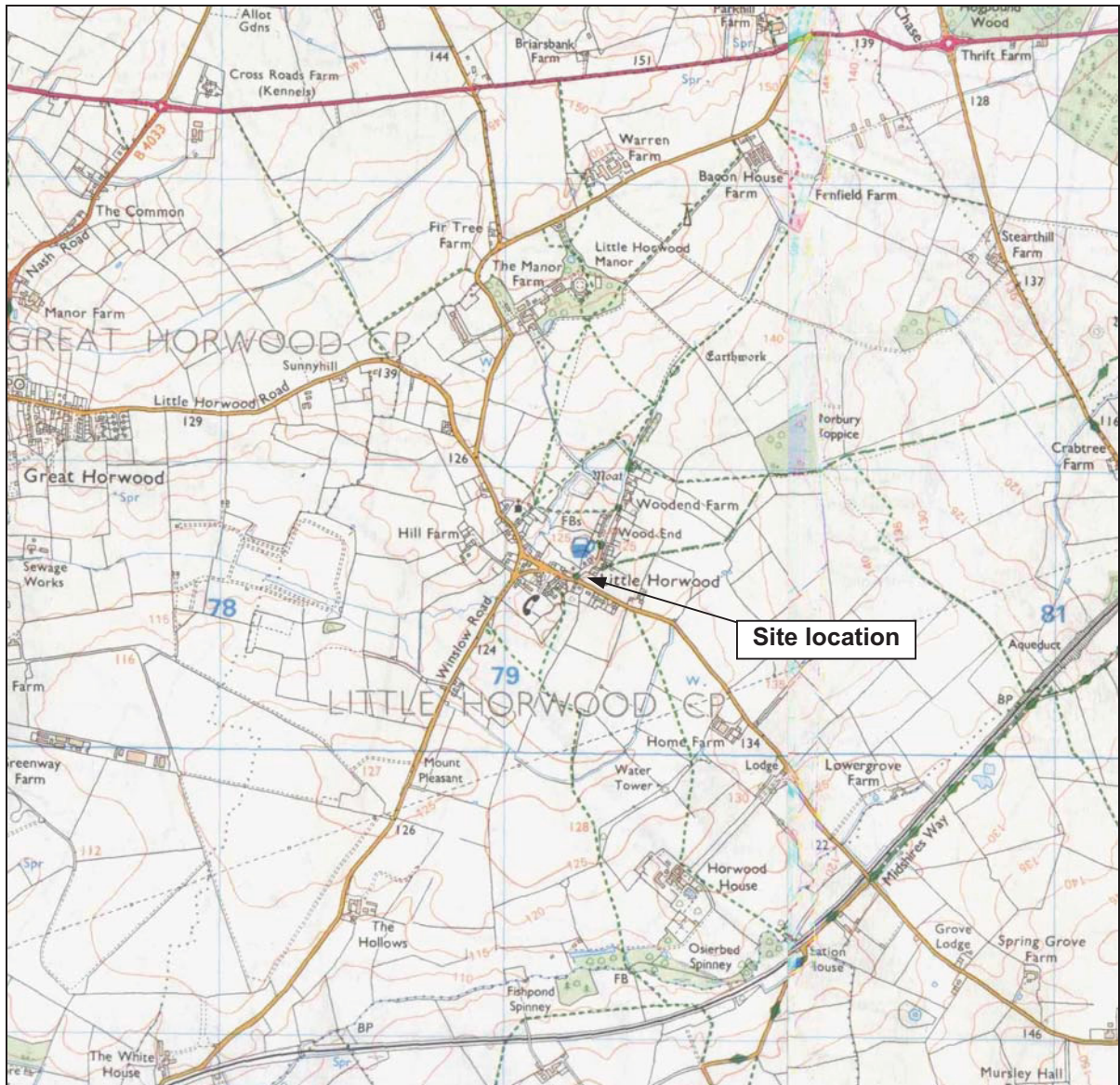


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In September 2004 a record was made of a cottage at 2 Wood End, Little Horwood, prior to its demolition and replacement by a detached house. The two-storey nucleus of the cottage appeared to be of late 18th or 19th-century origin, with 20th-century extensions at its north and south ends. The south extension probably replaced an earlier structure, also incorporating the substantial chimney breast at its south end.

In November, following demolition of the cottage, a watching brief was maintained on groundworks for the construction of the detached house. It demonstrated that the earlier parts of the cottage had been built on insubstantial footings, but did not reveal any features or finds of archaeological significance.

1 Introduction

1.1 In September 2004 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out a programme of photographic recording on a cottage at 2 Wood End, Little Horwood, Buckinghamshire (NGR SP 793 307: Fig. 1), prior to demolition. This was followed in November by a watching brief on the site during construction work. The project was commissioned by the owner, Mr Julian Marsh, and was carried out according to a brief (Radford 2004) prepared by the *Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service* (BCAS) on behalf of the local planning authority, *Aylesbury Vale District Council* (AVDC), and a written scheme of investigation prepared by ASC (Fell 2004).

1.2 *Reason for Work*

The work was required by AVDC, acting on the advice of BCAS, as a planning condition (planning application no. 03/2499) in line with the guidance contained in the document PPG16 *Archaeology and Planning*. It was thought that the site had the potential for the survival of evidence of earlier activity, notably of Iron Age, Roman or medieval date.

1.3 *Setting*

1.3.1 *Site Location, Extent & Description*

The site is situated in Little Horwood, in the administrative district of Aylesbury Vale, Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1). It lies on the east side of the village, close to the junction of Wood End and Mursley Road, and is centred at Ordnance Survey NGR SP 793 307. Access to the site is from the west, through a gate leading from Wood End (Fig. 2).

The site comprises a sub-rectangular plot *c.*40 × 18 metres, aligned NE-SW. To the south, west and north it is bounded by Wood End, and to the east by open farmland. Towards the north end of the plot stands the present house, a two-storey cottage with single-storey extensions to north and south. North of the cottage is a gravelled parking area, and to the south are lawns and flower beds. There are substantial mature trees at the north and south extremities of the site.

1.3.2 *Geology and Topography*

The soils of the site comprise the *Hanslope Association*; typically slowly permeable calcareous clayey soils over chalk till (Soil Survey 1983, 411d). The site slopes slightly down from south to north and lies at an elevation of c.135m OD.

1.3.3 *Proposed Development*

The development proposed for the site comprises demolition of the existing cottage on the site, and construction of a detached house and garage (Fig. 3), with a footprint largely covering the site of the cottage.



Figure 2: Detailed location plan (scale 1:2,500)

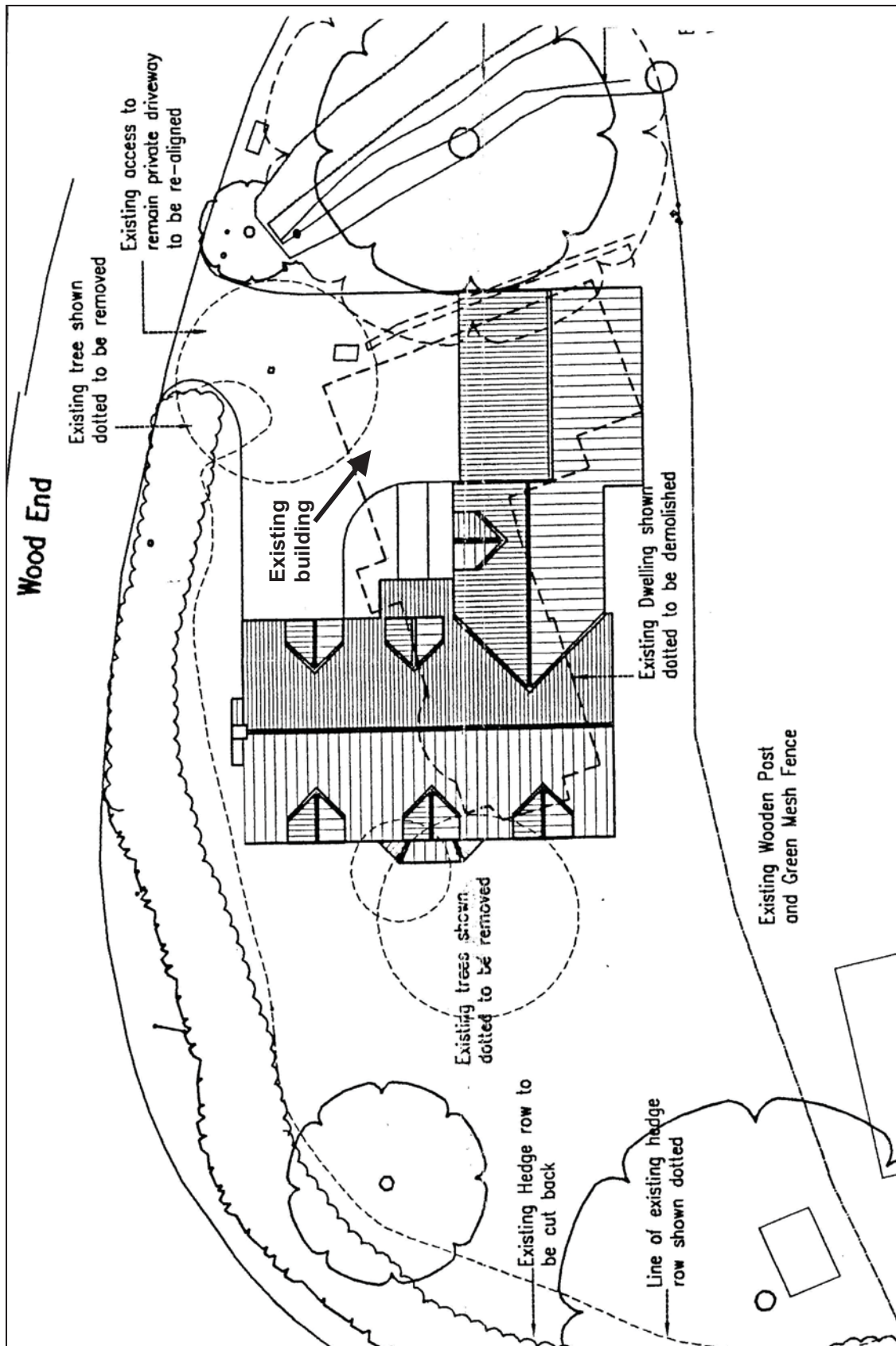


Figure 3: Proposed development (not to scale)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

In line with the requirements of the *brief*, the aims of the watching brief and photographic recording were:

- To provide a photographic record of 2 Wood End
- To identify and record any archaeological features revealed by the groundworks. Particular regard will be paid to the potential for Iron Age, Roman and medieval deposits and artefacts

2.2 Methods

In line with the requirements of the *brief*, the methods adopted for this project were:

Evaluation:

- A photographic record was made of the existing cottage. The survey concentrated on the central part of the building and did not include the modern extensions to the south-west and north-east. Photographs were taken of all external elevations and a record was made of the interior.
- Following demolition of the existing cottage, a continuous watching brief was maintained during the groundworks phase of construction of the new house and garage. The presence/absence of archaeological features was noted. Any significant archaeological features/artefacts identified were characterised, recorded and dated (if possible) in accordance with the project objectives.

Building Recording:

- In the absence of specific guidelines for photographic recording in the brief, each room was photographed (B&W, colour slide, digital) diagonally from each corner in order to achieve as complete coverage of the house as possible. Additional photographs were taken of specific details, for example fireplaces, where it was thought relevant. Experience has shown this to be the most effective approach, especially where the rooms are small. A full list of the photographs taken appears in Appendix 1. A selection of the photographs is reproduced in this report: a full set will be retained in the site archive.

2.3 Standards

The work conforms to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

3 Archaeological & Historical Background

- 3.1 Little Horwood is an area of considerable archaeological and historical importance (Page 1927, 376-9) and the *Leverhulme Medieval Settlements and Landscapes Project* has identified the Horwood parishes as an area of particular research interest. The site has the potential to reveal evidence of a variety of periods but the focus of interest is likely to lie in the late Iron Age/Roman to medieval periods.
- 3.2 In line with the requirements of the brief, the primary source used in compiling this section was the Buckinghamshire Sites & Monuments Record (SMR). Additional information was sourced from Milton Keynes Library, and ASC's reference collection.
- 3.3 The origin of the village of Little Horwood is uncertain, but the area was occupied from the prehistoric periods and a number of worked flints have been found there. The area was of considerable importance during the Iron Age and an enclosure of this period, known as *Norbury Camp* (SMR 0030) is situated *c.*700m north-east of the site. A nationally important hoard of Iron Age coins was discovered during the 19th century in an adjacent field (SMR 0006; Markham 1973, 1-2).
- 3.4 The origin and nature of Roman period settlement in the Little Horwood area is not fully understood but there is an increasing body of evidence to suggest that the area may have been important during this period. A major Roman road, linking *Magiovinium* (Dropshort) with Tingewick passed *c.*2km north of the site and a temple and Roman barrows (burial mounds) have been investigated at Thornborough, to the north west of the village (Johnson 1975).
- 3.5 North Buckinghamshire was extensively settled during the Roman period but to date large-scale archaeological investigation has tended to concentrate in the river valleys, notably that of the Great Ouse, to the north of Little Horwood (*eg* Woodfield & Johnson 1989). In contrast, the clay-land villages of the area have received comparatively less attention and little is known of the pattern of Roman settlement in the Little Horwood area.
- 3.6 In recent years a number of small-scale archaeological projects have taken place within and around Little Horwood and it is likely that the area was heavily settled during the Roman period. Observations along Wood End about 100m north of the site (SMR 0024, 1967 & 2490; Lisboa 2003) have revealed the presence of significant quantities of Roman archaeological features, pottery and other artefacts, and it is possible there was a Roman settlement in this area. An important hoard of Roman metal artefacts, including a 4th-century spoon has been recorded in the village, although the exact location is uncertain (SMR 0084). Further evidence of the significance of the area is provided by the presence of an extensive site *c.*500m south of the site, where an assemblage of *c.*150 coins, much pottery and a votive (?) axe have been recorded.
- 3.7 The village of Little Horwood may have developed during the Saxon period. A number of Saxon sources refer to 'Horwood' and it has been suggested that the

- proximity of known Roman sites to Saxon and later settlement points to settlement continuity (Reed 1979, 71-2).
- 3.8 The place name 'Horwood' occurs from the late 8th century and is thought to mean 'filthy' or 'muddy wood'. In 795 a wood known as *Horwudu* was granted by King Offa to St Albans Abbey (Page 1927, 376). Horwood is included in the Domesday survey (1086) as *Hereworde* (Morris 1979). The villages of Little and Great Horwood were not differentiated and the present area of Little Horwood may have been included with Winslow, which was also held by St Albans Abbey (*ibid*).
- 3.9 The medieval settlement pattern in the parish of Little Horwood is of considerable interest. The parish church is situated on the west side of the present village and dates from the 14th century (Pevsner & Williamson 2000, 438-9). This area of the village was clearly a focus of activity during the medieval period and a complex of earthworks is preserved adjacent to the church at Hill Farm (SMR 0079). Medieval pottery sherds have been found at a variety of locations throughout the village and disturbed house platforms have been identified south of Wood End (SMR 6172). A sub-rectangular moat, possibly the seat of the lord of the manor, is situated west of the site (SMR 0081; Scheduled Ancient Monument 32108).
- 3.10 Wood End may have developed as a separate settlement or 'end' away from the original centre of the village. Settlement may have been encouraged by the presence of *Whaddon Chase*, which was situated north-east of the site and which retained its form into the 19th century (Fell 2002, 15-19). The route through Wood End was of greater significance during the 16th to early 19th centuries than it is today and is shown on maps of this period (*e.g.* Salden Estate Map 1599, Jefferys 1770, Bryant 1825) as a major ride into *Whaddon Chase*.
- 3.11 A watching brief was undertaken at 3 Wood End, 80m north of the site, in 2003 (Hunn 2003). No evidence for settlement predating the 20th century was recorded at this site (*ibid*, 12) and on its southern side (*i.e.* that closest to 2 Wood End), the natural strata was present close to the modern ground surface. The northern end comprised *c.* 1m of made-up ground, suggesting the area had been terraced or made up prior to the construction of the 20th century buildings on the site. The site slopes slightly down from south to north and has also been terraced, and similar truncation and areas of made-up ground might be present. It has been suggested that sand extraction may have taken place in the area (*ibid*) and the uneven nature of the present ground surface may indicate the presence of former extraction pits.
- 3.12 The First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:10,560 map of 1878 shows the site with a small rectangular building on the site of the present cottage (Fig. 4). Against the north boundary of the site is a separate, smaller building (this can be seen on the original map: not distinct in Fig. 4). The 1976 OS 1:2,500 sheet, on which Fig. 2 is based, shows an 'L' shaped building which is virtually a mirror image of the present cottage. The present north extension is thought to have been built in the 1960s or 1970s, and so could post-date the map. However, there was no evidence on site for the east-facing extension that is shown on the south part of the cottage. Whether this is a now demolished part of the building or a surveyor's error is uncertain.

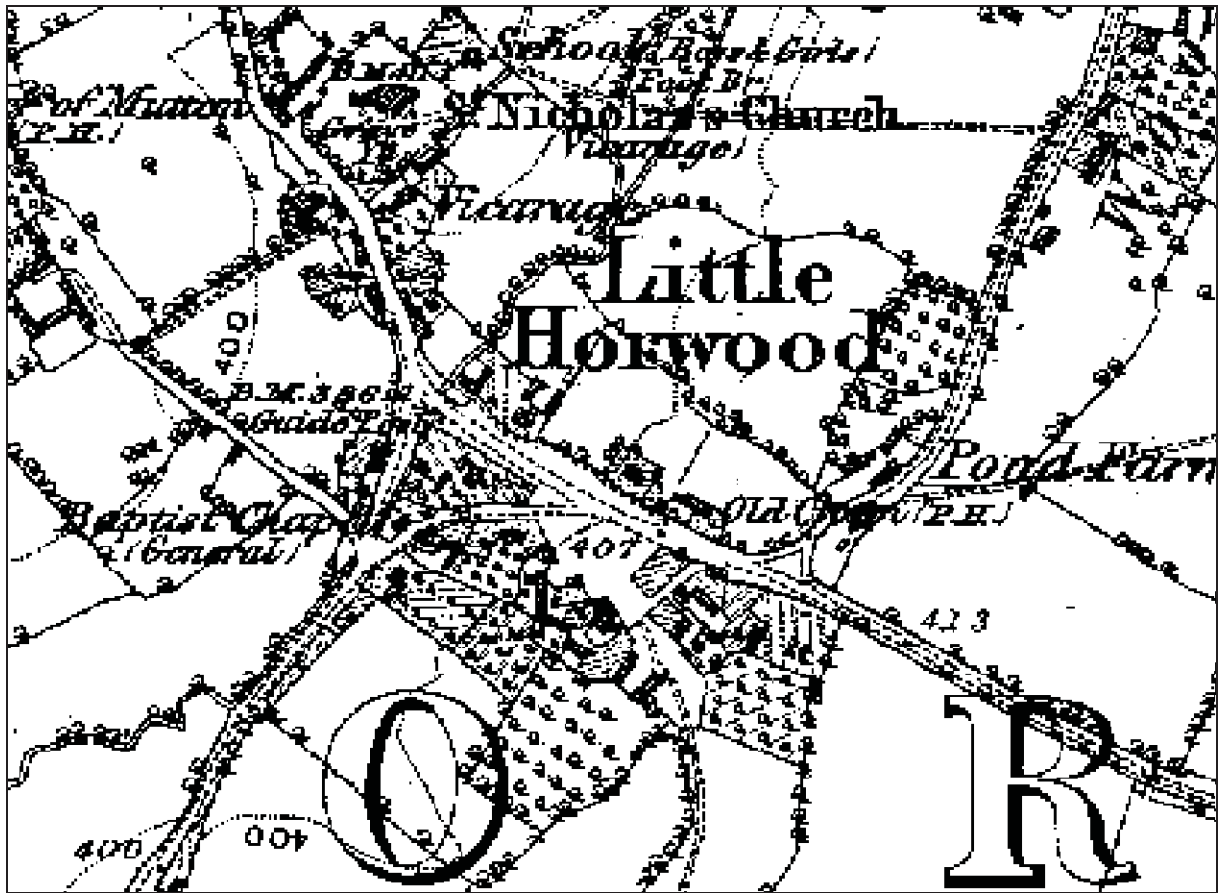


Figure 4: Extract from 1878 Ordnance Survey First Edition 1:10,560 sheet

4 Photographic Recording

Building Description

2 Wood End is a two-storey cottage of brick, partly timber-framed, beneath a pitched gable roof clad with wooden shingles. The upper part of the cottage is also clad in shingles. The building consists of three elements: a central two-storey core, a single storey extension to the south and modern single-storey brick extensions to the north and east. The latter were not recorded, in line with the requirements of the brief.

With regard to the chronology of the cottage, the central core is most likely late 18th or early 19th century in date. The south end, with its large bay window, appears to be at least partly 20th-century, though the presence of the substantial projecting stone chimney breast at its south end, and some timber framing in the east wall, appear to suggest it is a rebuild of an earlier structure. Without a detailed examination and background research it is not possible, or advisable, to attempt to assign firmer dates to the building.

Internally, the core of the cottage comprises two rooms (north and central) at ground level, separated by a common central chimney breast with fireplaces in both rooms. Both fireplaces are modern insertions. The floor is of quarry tiles throughout. Ceilings are at most only 2.0m high. Windows are small simple wooden or metal-framed casements: few, if any, appear to be original. Due to the degree of internal alterations and extensions it was difficult to assign functions to the rooms.

From the central room, a modern staircase (machine planed timbers) rises to a small first floor landing, and two small bedrooms. Its banisters had been removed, prior to the survey. Both bedrooms have a single small window, boarded floors (not particularly sound) and low ceilings, but no internal features of note. Neither has a fireplace.

Returning to the central room, a door in its south-west corner leads to the south ground-floor room, which occupies the single-storey south extension. The main features in this room are the broad, near full-height bay window occupying most of the west wall, and the large stone chimney breast that dominates the south end of the room. The fireplace in it is modern, though the quarry tile hearth appears original. The north and east walls contain timber framing, but this is absent from the west and south walls. The roof structure is unusual, comprising a single purlin on each side supporting the rafters, supported in turn by diagonal struts from a central north-south beam carried by a corbel in the north wall, and set into the chimney breast at its south end. A modern door has been inserted in the east wall, alongside the chimney breast.



Plate 1: West elevation



Plate 2: West elevation: bay window at south end



Plate 3: South elevation



Plate 4: Ground floor, north room, view NW



Plate 5: Ground floor, north room, view SE



Plate 6: Ground floor, central room, view NE



Plate 7: Ground floor, central room, view SW



Plate 8: Stairs and landing



Plate 9: North bedroom, view SE



Plate 10: South bedroom, view NE



Plate 11: Ground floor, south room, view south.



Plate 12: Ground floor, south room, view north

5 The Watching Brief

- 5.1 The watching brief was undertaken over two days, 16th and 17th November. Most of the footings were excavated and concreted on the first day: a short visit was necessary on the morning of the second day to observe the excavation of the final section of footing trench.
- 5.2 The footing trenches were excavated to a depth of *c.*2 metres, because of the mature trees present on and adjacent to the site. Soil profiles in all the trenches were similar, comprising undisturbed grey-green clay containing occasional lenses of orangey gravel, directly beneath the remaining topsoil and overburden.
- 5.3 Surprisingly few traces of the cottage remained on the site, following its demolition. At the north end of the new building, concrete footings of the late 20th-century extensions were encountered. Footings of the rest of the building were shallow, for the most part either lying on or just cutting into the natural clay.
- 5.4 Excavation of the footing trenches did not reveal any features or finds of archaeological significance. The heap of topsoil and overburden remaining on site (clay from the trenches was loaded directly into lorries and taken away) was examined for finds, but none were noted.



Plate 13: General view of site during groundworks



Plate 14: Typical soil profile in footing trench (east side)

6. Conclusions

- 6.1 The location of the site within Little Horwood, and recent work on adjoining sites in Wood End, indicated the potential for archaeology of Roman or medieval date being present on 2 Wood End. However, no archaeological features or finds were observed during the watching brief. Considering that the footprint of the new house occupies a large part of the centre of the plot, it seems unlikely that any significant archaeology is present on the site.
- 6.2 The cottage which stood on the site prior to redevelopment was recorded as required in the brief. From the structural evidence, it appeared to be of late 18th or 19th-century date, with mid/late 20th-century additions to the north, and an extension to the south that was in part of 20th-century date, but was probably a rebuild of an earlier structure, of which the east wall and the chimney stack at the south end were surviving parts. Without more detailed historical research it is not possible to be more precise about the dating of this structure.
- 6.3 Both the building recording and the watching brief were undertaken in good weather and ground conditions, good co-operation was received from the groundworks contractors, and no significant problems were encountered. A high confidence rating is therefore assigned to the project.

7. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to the site owner, Julian Marsh, for commissioning and funding the watching brief, and for his ready assistance and interest. SMR information was provided by Julia Wise of BCAS, and the project was monitored by for BCAS by David Radford.

The project was managed for ASC by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA, who also undertook the watching brief, the photographic recording (assisted by Nigel Wilson HND AIFA) and prepared this report.

8. Archive

8.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site records
6. Site record drawings
7. List of photographs/slides
8. Colour slides
9. B/W prints & negatives
10. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

8.2 The archive will be deposited with the Buckinghamshire County Museum

9. References


- Fell D 2004 *2 Wood End, Little Horwood, Buckinghamshire: Project Design for Archaeological Watching Brief & Photographic Recording*. ASC document, ref. ASC: 603/LHW/01.
- Hunn JR 2003 *Watching Brief: 3 Wood End, Little Horwood, Buckinghamshire*. ASC Report ref. ASC:LHW03/02
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.
- Johnson AE 1975 'Excavations at Bourton Grounds, Thornborough, 1972-3' in *Records of Buckinghamshire* **20.1**, 3-57
- Lisboa I 2003 *Watching Brief: Stables at 25 Wood End, Little Horwood*. Archaeologia.
- Markham F 1973 *History of Milton Keynes*. White Crescent Press (Luton).
- Morris J 1978 *The Domesday Book. Buckinghamshire*. History from the Sources. Phillimore.
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- Pevsner N & Williamson E 2000 *The Buildings of England. Buckinghamshire*. Penguin.
- Radford D 2004 *Brief for Archaeological Watching Brief and photographic recording. 2 Wood End, Little Horwood*. Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service. BCC.
- RCHM 1913 *Royal Commission on the Historic Monuments of Buckinghamshire*. North Buckinghamshire. HMSO.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend (Harpenden)*.
- Reed M 1979 *The Buckinghamshire Landscape*. Hodder and Stoughton.
- Woodfield C & Johnson C 1989 'A Roman Site at Stanton Low, on the Great Ouse, Buckinghamshire, Excavated by Margaret Jones 1957-58'. *Archaeological Journal* **146**, 135-278.

Appendix 1: List of Building Photographs

SITE NAME: 2 Wood End, Little Horwood			SITE CODE: 603/LHW
Black and White / Digital			Film No: 1 of 1 (B&W)
Shot No.	Neg No.	View	Subject
1		NW	1 st floor: north bedroom, NW corner
2		NE	1 st floor: north bedroom, NE corner
3		SE	1 st floor: north bedroom, SE corner
4		SW	1 st floor: north bedroom, SW corner
5		NW	1 st floor: south bedroom, NW corner
6		NE	1 st floor: south bedroom, NE corner
7		SE	1 st floor: south bedroom, SE corner
8		SW	1 st floor: south bedroom, SW corner
9		N	Stairs looking up
10		S	Stairs looking down
11		NW	Ground floor: south room, NW corner
12		NE	Ground floor: south room, NE corner
13		SE	Ground floor: south room, SE corner
14		S	Ground floor: hearth & chimney breast
15		SW	Ground floor: south room, SW corner
16		-	Ground floor: south room, ceiling detail
17		NW	Ground floor: central room, NW corner
18		NE	Ground floor: central room, NE corner
19		SE	Ground floor: central room, SE corner
20		SW	Ground floor: central room, SW corner
21		NW	Ground floor: north room, NW corner
22		NE	Ground floor: north room, NE corner
23		SE	Ground floor: north room, SE corner
24		SW	Ground floor: north room, SW corner
25		S	Exterior: upper north-facing gable
26		SE	Exterior: west elevation
27		NW	Exterior: west elevation (3 digitals, a-c)
28		N	Exterior: south elevation
29		W	Exterior: south elevation: detail of chimney breast
30		NW	Exterior: east elevation
31		W	Exterior: east elevation

ASC Ltd 2000

Appendix 2: Field Monitoring Record Sheets

 A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD	
Project: 2 WOOD END LITTLE HORWOOD		Project No/Code: 8031 LHW	Sheet: 1 of 2
Client/Developer: JULIAN MASH.		Date of visit: 16/11/04	
Contact:		Phone:	
Duration of Visit (Inc. travel):	Start: 10.30	Finish:	
Completed by: R.			
Development Type:			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Footings	<input type="checkbox"/> Services	<input type="checkbox"/> Roads	<input type="checkbox"/> Levelling
			<input type="checkbox"/> Quarrying
			<input type="checkbox"/> Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: FINE, CLEAR.			
Observations:			
<p>COTTAGE DEMOLISHED, SITE CLEARED</p> <p>FOOTING TRENCHES c 2m DEEP (REMOVE OF ADJACENT TREES) - SAW c 2/3 OF THEM OPENED & EXCAVATED. CONCERNING CONCRETE BECAUSE OF DEPTH OF TRENCHES.</p> <p>TRENCHES CUT THROUGH REMAINING OVERBURDEN, INTO UNDISTURBED GREEN CLAY CONTAINING OCCASIONAL THIN LENSES OF GLEW. NO FEATURES OR FINDS.</p> <p>V. FEW TRACES OF FOOTINGS FOR COTTAGE, EX. AT NORTH END OF SITE (MODERN EXTENSION).</p> <p>PHOTOS: OF TYPICAL SOIL PROFILE + GEN SHOT OF SITE.</p>			
Comments:			
<p>FINAL VISIT TOMORROW c 9.00am.</p>			

For sketch plan, use reverse

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ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD

Project: Z WOOD END		Project No/Code: 603 / LHW	Sheet: 2 of 2
LITTLE HORWOOD		Date of visit: 11/11/04	
Client/Developer: JULIAN MARSH.			
Contact:		Phone:	
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):	Start: 8.20	Finish:	
Completed by: R2.			
Development Type:			
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling
			Quarrying
			Pipelines
			Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions: FINE, CLEAR.			
Observations: REMAINING TRENCHES COMPLETED, STRATEGICALLY AS BEFORE. NO FEATURES OR FINDS.			
Comments: NO FURTHER VISITS. SERVICE TRENCHES WILL BE OPENED IN SAME AREA AS THOSE SERVING EXISTING COTTAGE, ∴ DISTURBED GROUND			

For sketch plan, use reverse

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