

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**BUILDING RECORDING & WATCHING BRIEF:
LOWNDES ARMS, WHADDON
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

on behalf of C.J. Bricknall & Co.



Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA

June 2005

ASC: 684/WLA/2

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Site Data

<i>ASC site code:</i>	WLA	<i>Project no:</i>	684
<i>Event No:</i>	n/a		
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Whaddon		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Whaddon CP		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SP 8058 34250		
<i>Present use:</i>	Public house		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Structural repairs		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Aylesbury Vale District Council		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	not known		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	18 th & 23 rd May 2005		
<i>Client:</i>	C.J. Bricknall & Co 88a Wolverton Road Stony Stratford Milton Keynes MK11 1DT		
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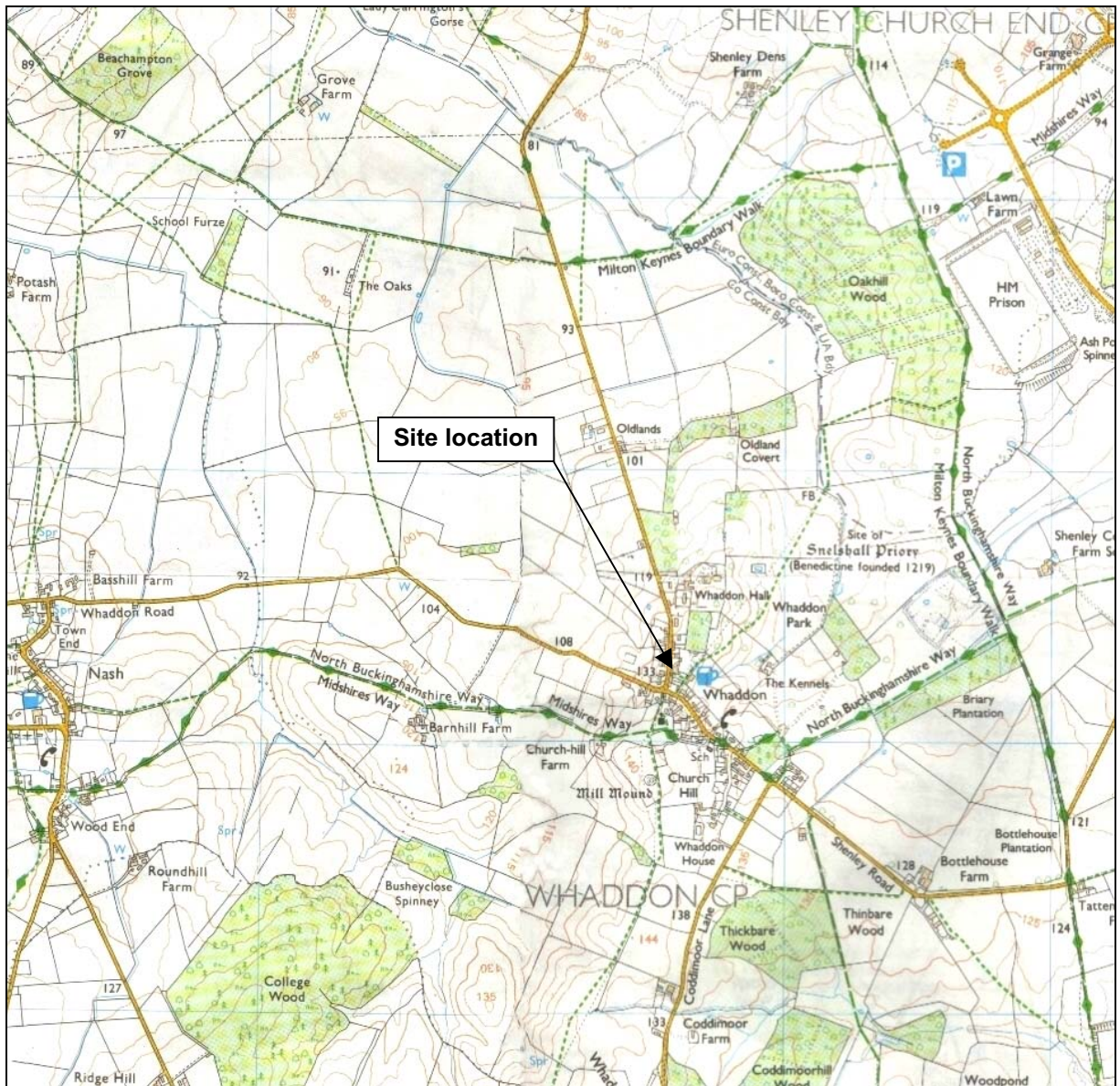


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In May 2005 a programme of archaeological works was carried out during structural repairs to the 'Lowndes Arms' public house in Whaddon, Buckinghamshire. The repairs involved replacement of a section of the box frame and its supporting wall at the north end of the street frontage of the building, which is Grade II listed. Drawn and photographic records were compiled of the section of the box frame undergoing repair, and a watching brief was carried out during removal of the wall and excavations for new footings. The location of a missing rail in the frame was noted. Some evidence was revealed of the construction and the original wattle and daub infill of the box frame. The watching brief provided a view of the strata underlying the floor in this part of the building, though no dating evidence was revealed. No evidence of any earlier structures or other activity was observed.

1 Introduction

1.1 In May 2005 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out historic building recording and a watching brief at the *Lowndes Arms*, Whaddon (Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by *C.J. Bricknall & Co*, and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (Zeervat 2005), and a brief (Kidd 2005) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Aylesbury Vale District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Service*.

1.2 *Planning Background*

The building recording and watching brief have been required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 15* (PPG15), in response to proposals for structural repairs to the *Lowndes Arms*.

1.3 *Location & Description*

Whaddon village lies within the civil parish of that name, west of the new city of Milton Keynes, in the Aylesbury Vale district of Buckinghamshire (Fig. 1). The village is of particular interest as it was the manorial centre of the medieval and post-medieval hunting ground of *Whaddon Chase*. The *Lowndes Arms*, the only public house in the village, is located in the historic core of the village, on the east side of the High Street at NGR SP 8058 3425. The parish church of St Mary's lies about 200 metres to the south of the site, and the site of the manor house, excavated in the 1960s (Griffiths 1979) lay 350 metres to the north. The *Lowndes Arms* itself is a Grade II listed, timber-framed building, thought to date back to the late 16th or 17th century. The brief notes that the site could have been occupied earlier in the medieval period.

1.4 *Proposed Development*

The proposed development comprises remedial works to the north-west corner of the *Lowndes Arms*. As a result of rotting of the corner upright and soleplate beams of the building's frame in this area, and subsidence of the rubble wall on which they stand, the corner of the building has sagged. It is proposed that the rotten sections of framing are replaced by new wood, and the supporting wall is rebuilt on sound footings.

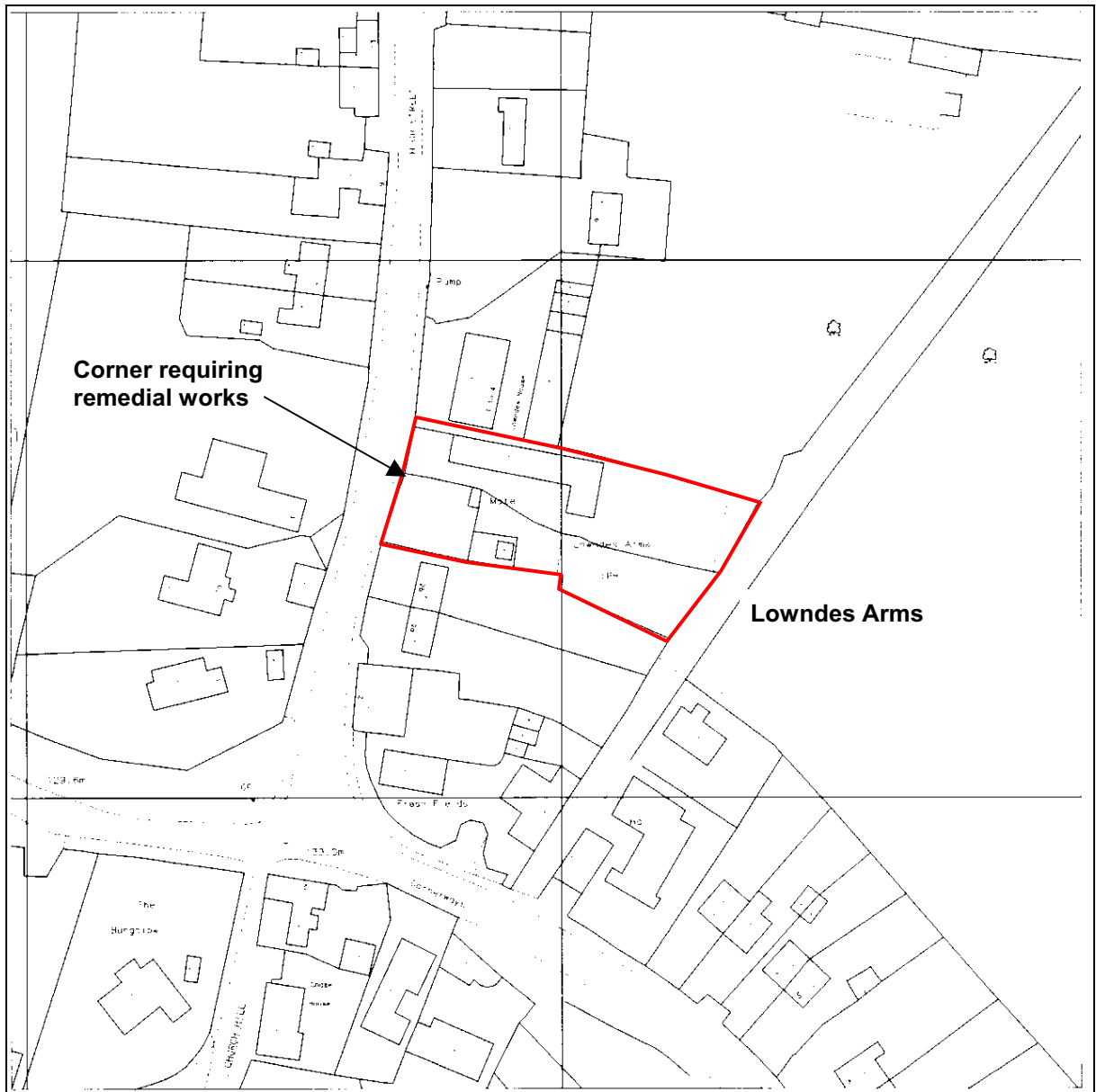


Figure 2: Site location (scale 1:1,250)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 *Aims*

In line with the requirements of the Brief, the aims of the investigation were to investigate the chronology, construction and development of that part of the building and associated below-ground deposits affected by the remedial works, in order to enhance understanding of both the building itself and the development of the village.

2.2 *Standards*

The work undertaken 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), to the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England's *Recording Historic Buildings: a Descriptive Specification*, 3rd Edition (RCHME 1996), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 *Methods*

The work was carried out according to the brief, which required detailed recording of the area of the structure affected by the remedial works to RCHME Level 3 (RCHME 1996), and an intermittent watching brief on associated groundworks.

Detailed CAD drawings of the building elevations were provided by the client. These formed a basis for recording (Fig 5). A detailed drawing of the repair area was digitally prepared from measurements taken on site, initially at a scale of 1:20. A reduced version of this appears in Fig. 6.

2.4 *Constraints*

Because the area of the building under repair was on an exposed front corner, adjacent to the car park entrance and the pavement, hoarding had been erected around the area. This made photography difficult, and it proved impossible to obtain a full frontal view of the repair area.. Access for close examination of the repair area was also restricted by the temporary supports holding up the building, and the temporary partitioning inserted internally to allow the pub kitchen to function.

3 Historical Background

3.1 The following section is based upon information from the Buckinghamshire Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), the County Records Office (CRO), and ASC's reference library.

3.2 *Medieval (1066-1500)*

The manor of Whaddon was probably established in the late Saxon period: at the Conquest (1066) it belonged to Edward Cilt, a thegn of Edward the Confessor (Page 1927, 436). William I awarded the manor to Walter Giffard, whose family held it until 1164. During the 13th century it was held by the Fitz John family, passing in 1297 to Richard de Burgh, Earl of Ulster. The manor descended with the de Burghs until 1616.

Little is known of the development of Whaddon village in the medieval period. Sheep-farming was evidently a major local occupation: during the reign of Henry III (1216-72) Whaddon was one of three manors producing the most wool in Buckinghamshire (Page 1927, 435). The parish church (SMR0518300000) dates from the early part of the 12th century. The manor house was established on the site of the later Whaddon Hall (SMR 0493302000). Village earthworks have been recorded at Pinks End (SMR 0026500000), towards the south end of the present village, and to the east of the Lowndes Arms (SMR 0027000000). A mound on Church Hill, south-west of the village, has been variously interpreted as a Bronze Age burial mound or a medieval motte or windmill mound (SMR 0026300000). At least two extant houses in the village, 15 High Street (SMR 1011500000) and 3 Nash Road (SMR 1012200000) are believed to have 15th-century origins. Both are listed Grade II.

3.3 *Post-Medieval & Modern (1500-present)*

In the mid 16th century, the medieval manor house at Whaddon was enlarged by Arthur, Lord Grey de Wilton, who dismantled the house at Waterhall, Bletchley, and used the materials to build a great hall, embattled porch and other features at Whaddon manor, which subsequently became known as Whaddon Hall. In 1616 James I granted the manor of Whaddon to Sir George Villiers, who was created Lord Whaddon of Whaddon in the same year, and Duke of Buckingham in 1623. The Villiers family had their estates seized by Parliament during the Civil War, but recovered them soon after the Restoration in 1660 (Page 1927, 437). In 1698 the manor was sold to Thomas Willis and James Selby. In 1710 Thomas's son, Browne Willis, purchased Selby's share. He subsequently restored the house, which was by then in a very poor state. Through the 19th and 20th centuries the manor was held by the Selby-Lowndes family.

From the archaeological record, there appears to have been only gradual development of Whaddon village since the 16th century. Whaddon parish was enclosed in 1831 (Markham 1973, 298). The SMR lists a number of extant buildings in the village core that have their origins in the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries. One of these is the *Lowndes Arms* (SMR 1011700000). The village appears to have remained essentially an agricultural settlement until the development of Milton Keynes in the late 20th century.

The only recorded evidence for industrial activity in the parish is a small brickyard (SMR 0566700000), presumably of 19th-century date.

3.4 *Cartographic Evidence*

The earliest to show Whaddon, the Salden estate map of 1599 (BRS 236) does not show the village in any great detail. Early maps of Buckinghamshire (eg. Jeffreys' 1770, Bryant's 181825) also do not show Whaddon in sufficient detail to provide information about individual buildings, though they do both show the High Street as being developed on both sides. The earliest sufficiently detailed view of the village is provided by the Ordnance Survey First Edition 25" sheet of 1881 (Fig. 3). This shows that, by that time, the building that is now the *Lowndes Arms* had been extended to the rear to almost its present-day extent. At that date it was a public house named the *Haunch of Venison*, one of two in the village. The other was the *Fox & Hounds*, located at the south end of the High Street. By 1925 (Fig. 4) the plan of the building appears the same, and the name has changed to the *Lowndes Arms*. The *Fox & Hounds* is now shown as a private house.

3.5 *Listed Building Description*

The *Lowndes Arms* is listed Grade II. The listed building description is as follows:

“Public house. Late C16-C17, altered. Timber frame with diagonal braces, brick and colour-washed plaster infill, rendered and colour-washed plinth and gables. Brick to upper part of first floor below raised eaves. Slate roof, wavy bargeboards, brick chimney between left-hand bays. 2 storeys, 3 bays. 2-light barred wooden casements to ground floor centre bay and first floor. Left bay has no window to ground floor, right bay has canted projection with barred wooden casements. C20 door between left-hand bays has large flat wooden hood on metal posts. C20 extensions to rear.”

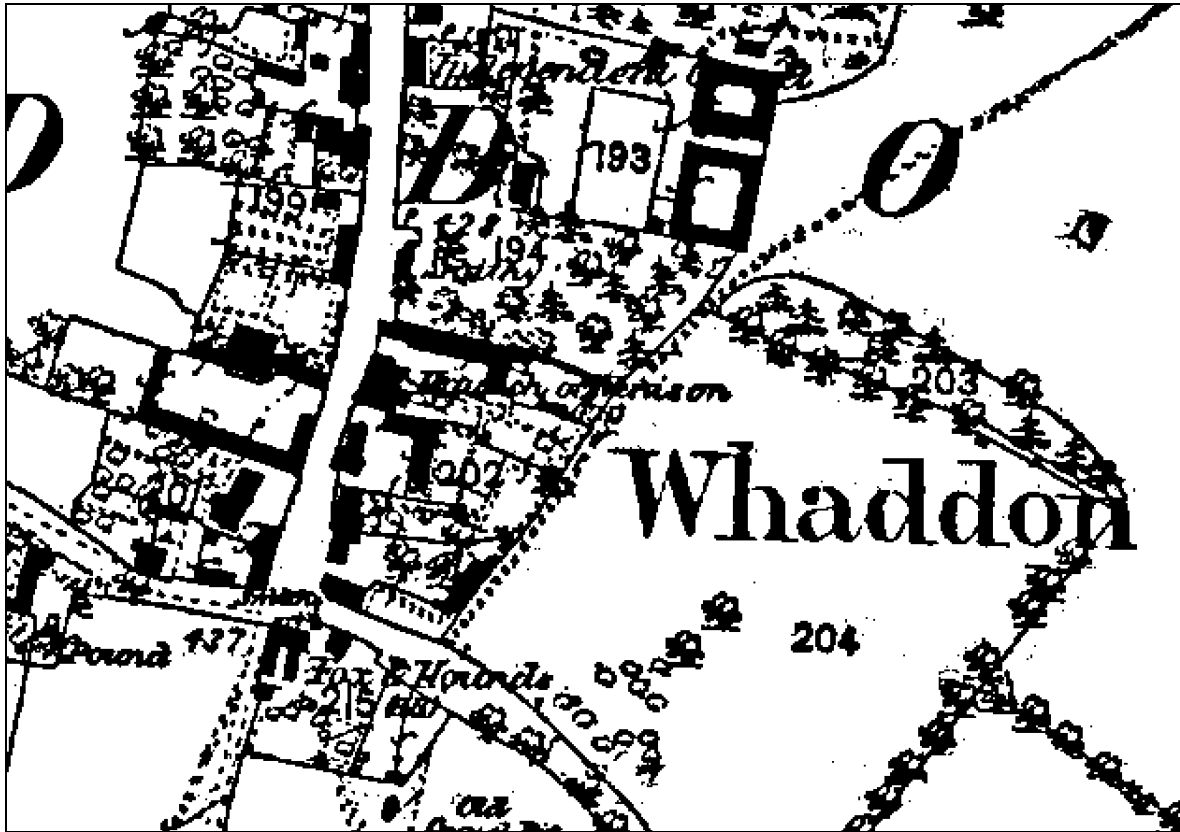


Figure 3: Whaddon in 1881: extract from 1st Edition 25" Ordnance Survey (not to scale)

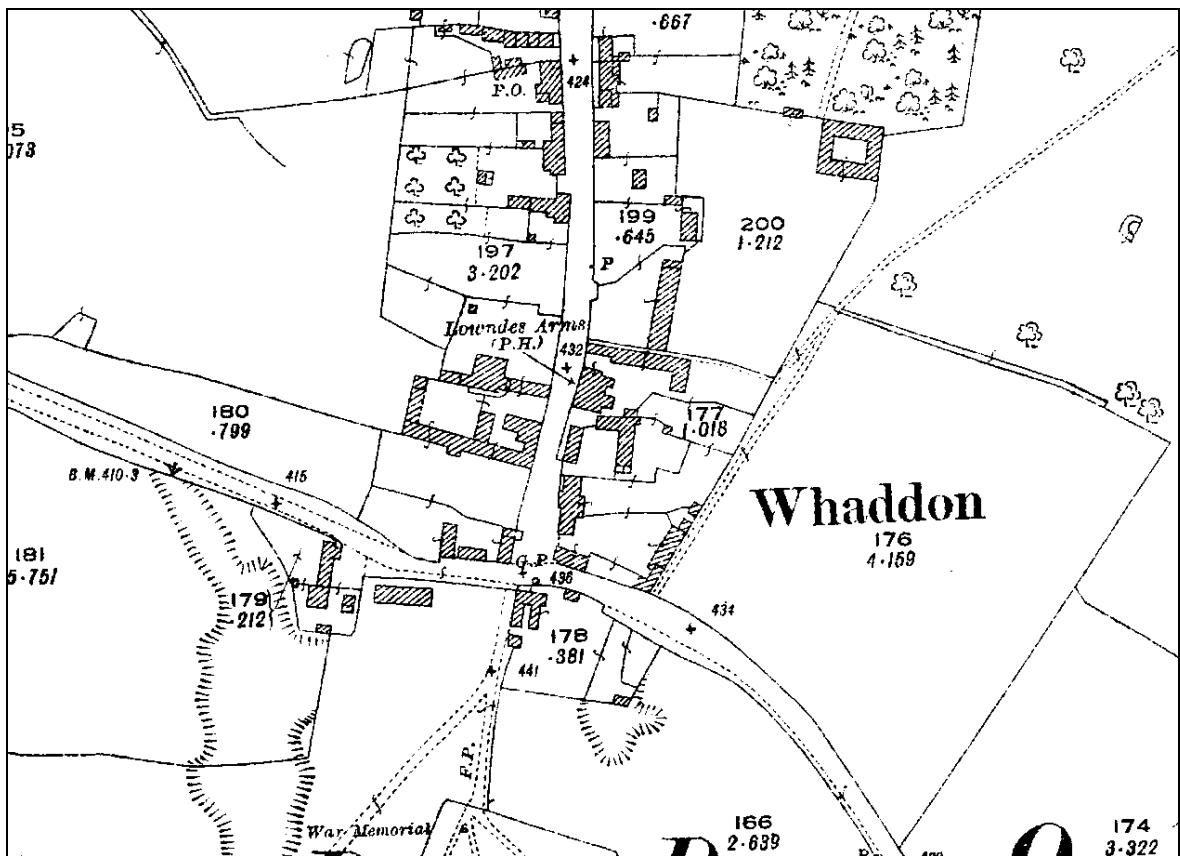


Figure 4: Whaddon in 1925: extract from 2nd Edition 25" Ordnance Survey (not to scale)

4 Results

4.1 *General* (Fig. 5, Plates 1, 2)

The *Lowndes Arms* is a five-bay timber box-framed structure of two storeys, under a slate roof. The frame is infilled partly with brick coursing and partly with plastered/rendered panels: the gable end walls are rendered, obscuring all details of the framing and infill. The box frame stands on a rendered wall of limestone rubble and brick. This is over one metre high along the street frontage, because of the rise in ground level from the High Street to the rear of the building.

The oldest part of the building, dated to the 16th or 17th century, is that fronting the High Street. Extensions to the rear (east) are probably of 19th or 20th-century date. A cursory examination of the building shows that its roof has been raised to allow the insertion of an upper storey. The box frame terminates about one metre below the present eaves at a horizontal beam, which must have been the original roof plate. The west wall above the frame is continuous brick coursing, pierced only by windows. It is likely that the original roof was thatched, and had a steeper pitch. The three casement windows on the first floor have all been inserted with little consideration for the structural integrity of the frame. From the slate roof and the type of bricks used to infill the frame, it appears that these changes are probably all of 19th-century date.

4.2 *Building Recording* (Fig. 6, Plates 3-10)

That part of the building directly affected by the repairs was the west end of the north bay, extending about 2.5m along the frontage (west wall), and to a lesser extent along the north gable wall. That part of the box frame exposed for recording comprised the lower half of the west wall, an area of *c.*2.0 × 2.5m. The timbers recorded (Fig. 6) comprised the sill plate (A), corner post (B), wall post (C), principal post (D), and intermediate rail (E) and side rail (F). While no detailed analysis was possible, the framing appeared to be oak. All external surfaces were covered with a heavy coat of a black paint, possibly bitumen-based.

Sill plate A and the bottom ends of posts B, C and D were all badly rotted, and there was evidence of rot in rail F at its junction with post B, which had been reinforced with iron straps externally and internally. A large gap in the joint area had been filled with modern filler. Post B itself had suffered considerable erosion on its exposed surfaces, and a repair piece *c.*1.0m long had been let into its north face, presumably to make good rot or damage. The repair piece appeared not to be oak, though positive identification could not be made. Nothing remained of the joints between B, C, D and the sill plate.

Moving up the frame, rail E was mortised into post C, and fastened with a single peg, passing right through the post. Two adjoining pegs indicated that there had been a similar rail between posts C and B, a slightly higher level. The mortises for this on the north side of C and the south side of B had been plugged. The joint between E and D was probably also a mortise and tenon, but this could not be confirmed, and no pegs were visible. Post C was mortised into F: two pegs were visible on the inner face. F appeared to be mortised into post B: the joint was pegged on the inside face.

Examination of the upper and lower faces of E and F revealed evidence for the original wattle-and-daub infill panels. Auger holes to take the wattle staves were present in the lower face of F, and the upper and lower faces of E. The stave holes were all eroded by rot, so reliable measurements of diameter and depth could not be obtained. However, it was possible to ascertain the arrangement of staves: this is shown in Fig. 6.

4.2 *Watching Brief* (Plates 11, 12)

The watching brief involved a single visit, made when the collapsed section of rubble wall on the west elevation had been removed, and excavations for new footings completed. The length of wall involved was about 2.5m.

The full height of this section of wall, from the soleplate of the timber frame to the base of its footing trench, was 1.6m. The footing trench itself was 0.6m deep, measured from pavement level. The section on the east side of the trench, below the present internal concrete floor of the building, was as follows:

0.0 - 0.5m	Reddish orange sandy clay and rubble
0.5 – 1.0m	Dark yellowish-brown sand, 1% gravel
1.0 – 1.3m	Yellow clay, slightly sandy
1.3 – 1.6+m	Sandy clay, 15% gravel

No dateable finds were recovered from any of the above contexts.



Plate 1: Lowndes Arms, north-west corner



Plate 2: Lowndes Arms: area undergoing repairs



Plate 3: Repair area, view from north-west



Plate 4: Timbers A, D & E, from north-west



Plate 5: Timber D, junction with F



Plate 6: Timber C, junctions with E and F



Plate 7: Timbers C & E junction, internal view



Plate 8: Timber B, junction with F



Plate 9: Timber B, upper part



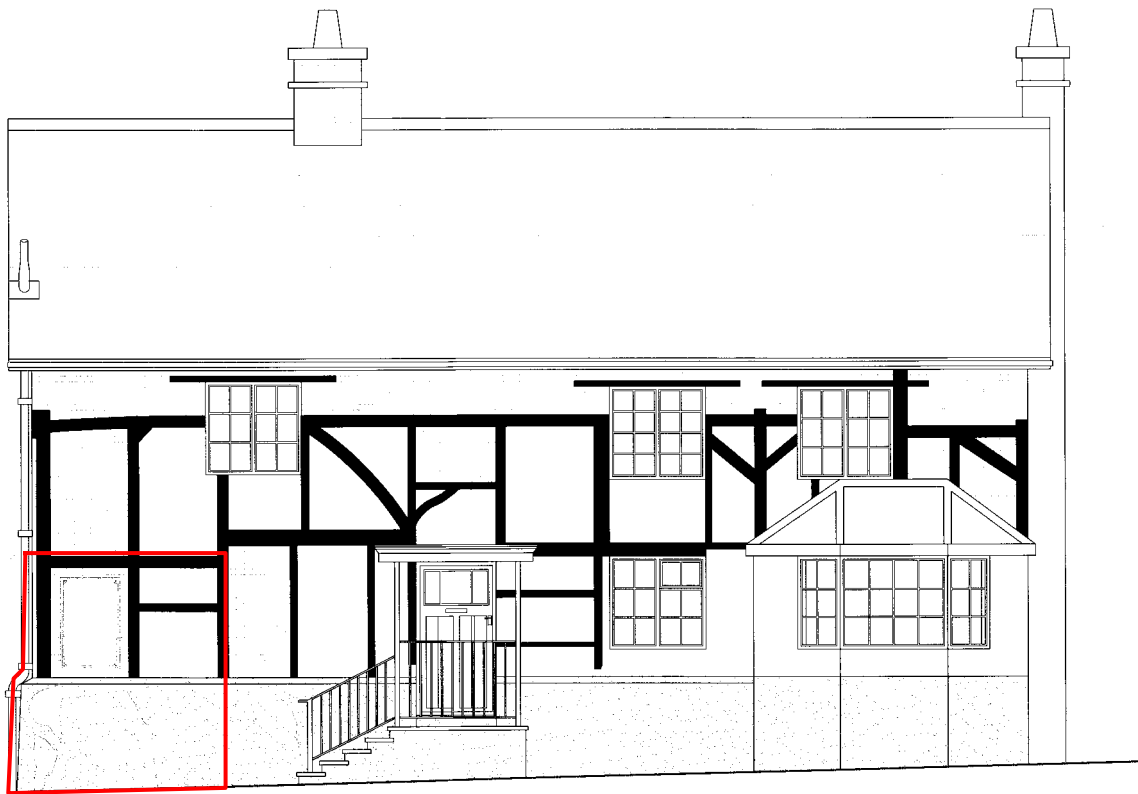
Plate 10: Timber F and wall above repair area



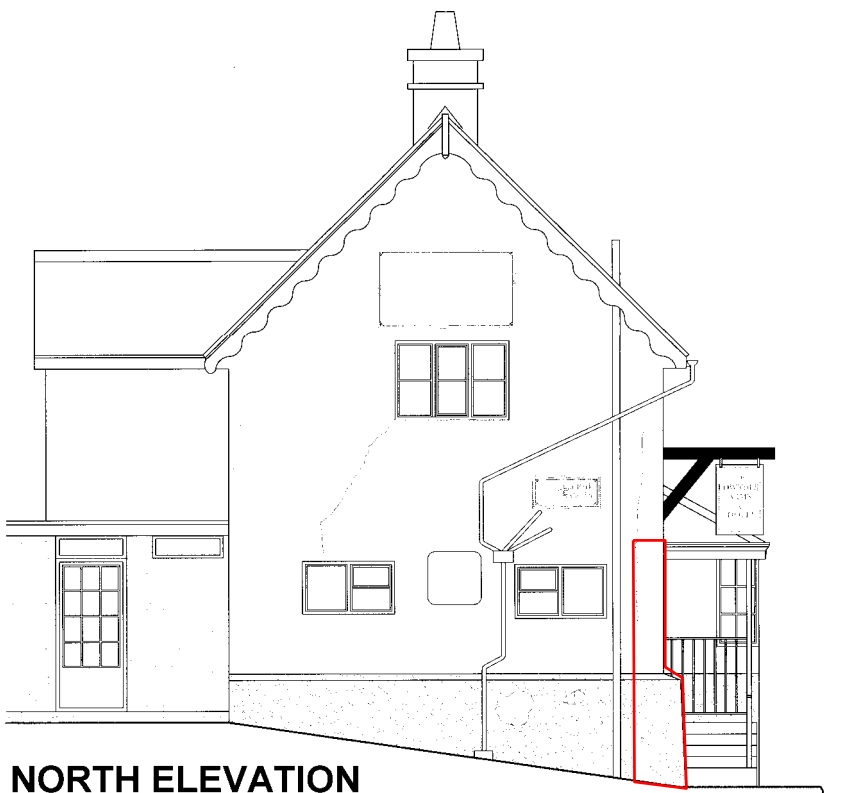
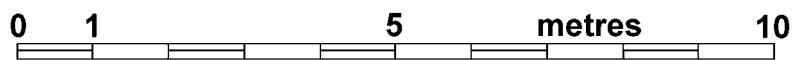
Plate 11: North elevation, west corner



Plate 12: Section revealed by removal of wall



WEST ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION

Figure 5: External elevations, showing extent of repairs in red (*scale 1:100*)

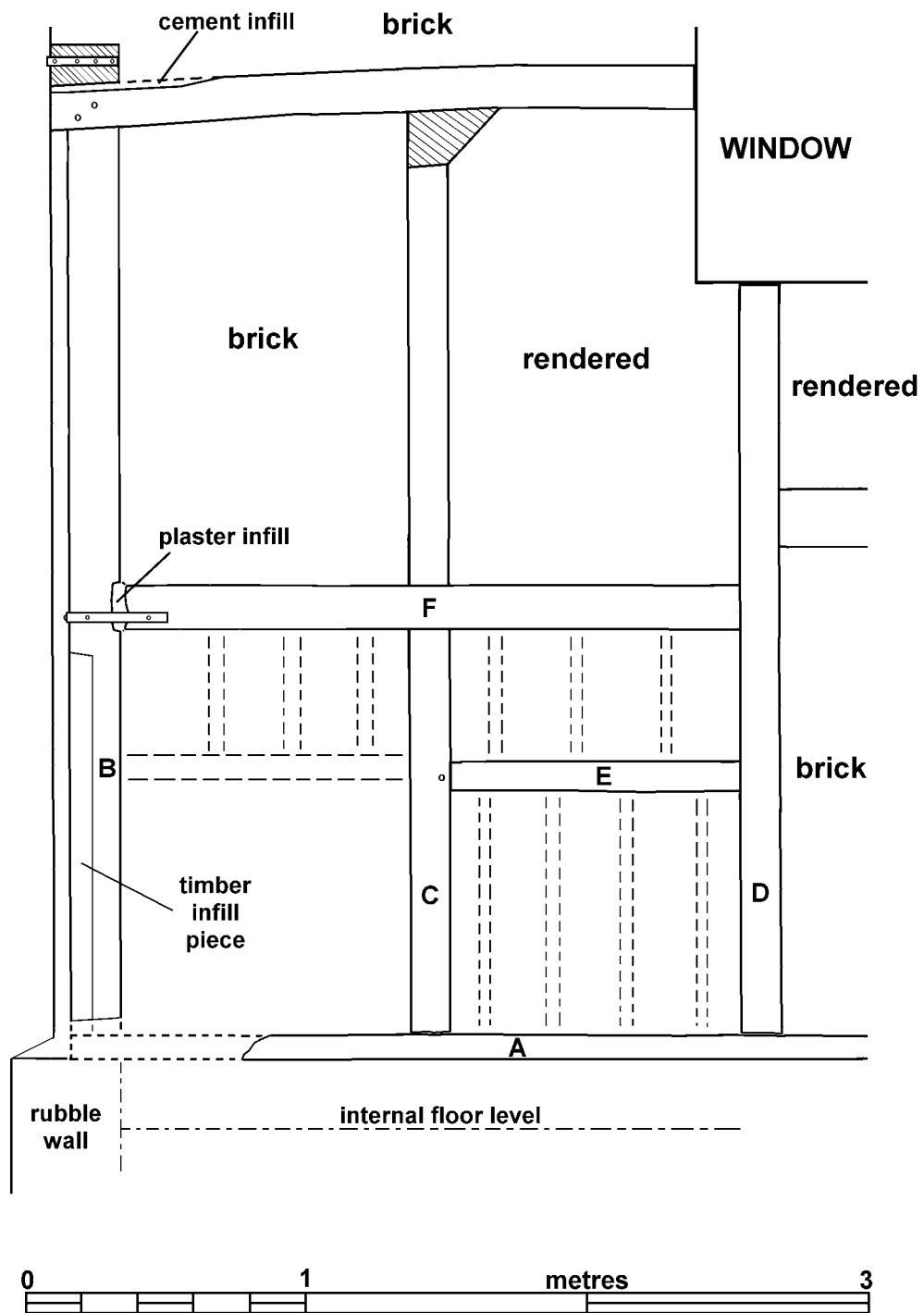


Figure 6: The exposed area of frame (scale 1:25)

5 Conclusions

- 5.1 In most respects, the *Lowndes Arms* appears to be a typical 16th or 17th-century box-frame building. Although detailed examination of the whole structure was beyond the remit of this study, it is clear from a cursory examination that the building has undergone a sequence of additions and alterations, probably mostly of 19th-century date.
- 5.2 The section of the box frame undergoing repair appeared to be original, though it was evident that it had been subject to remedial repair on one or more occasions in the past. Previous problems at the north-west corner of the building were evidenced by the strapping on the B/F joint and at the top of B (Fig. 6), and by the infill piece in B.
- 5.3 Despite the decayed surfaces of most of the timbers, evidence was revealed of a missing rail, presumably removed when the brick infill was inserted. The survey also revealed evidence of the original wattle and daub infill of the box frame, in the form of auger holes for the vertical staves that supported the wattle. No evidence was found for carpenters' marks, probably due to decay, and to the heavy coat of black paint on the exposed surfaces of the timbers. There was little evidence for external joint pegs, though most of the pegs that were identified were visible only on the inner face of the frame. It may be that joints were pegged from the inside to reduce the possibility of water entering the end grain of the pegs.
- 5.4 The watching brief provided a view of the strata underlying the present internal floor of the *Lowndes Arms*. Unfortunately no dating evidence for these deposits was observed. No evidence of earlier structures on the site was noted.

6 Acknowledgements

ASC would like to thank C.J. Bricknall & Co. for commissioning this project, and their site staff for their assistance. The project was monitored on behalf of the LPA by Sandy Kidd of the County Archaeology Service, and Julia Smith, Conservation Officer for Aylesbury Vale District Council. Building recording was undertaken by the writer, with background research by Calli Rouse BA, and the watching brief was carried out by Nigel Wilson HND AIFA. The report was edited by David Fell BA MA MIFA.

7 Archive

7.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Report
4. Historical & Survey notes
5. Architect's survey drawings
6. List of photographs
7. B/W prints
8. B/W negatives
9. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

7.2 The archive will be deposited with the Buckinghamshire County Museum. The accession number is 2005.69.

8 References

Standards & Specifications

IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.

IFA 2000b Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Approved Practice for the Regulation of Contractual Arrangements in Field Archaeology*.

IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standards & Guidance* documents (*Archaeological Watching Briefs, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings*).

RCHME 1996 *Recording Historic Buildings: a Descriptive Specification* (3rd Edition).

Books and Historical Sources:

BAS 2000 *Buckinghamshire in the 1760s and 1820s: the County Maps of Jefferys & Bryant*. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society (Aylesbury).

Croft, R.A. and Mynard, D.C., 1993 *The changing landscape of Milton Keynes*. Buckinghamshire Archaeol. Soc. Monog. Ser. 5 (Aylesbury).

Griffiths, R.W. 1979 'Rescue Excavation of a Medieval House at Whaddon', *Records of Buckinghamshire* 21, 40-76.

Markham, F. 1973 *History of Milton Keynes and District*, vol 1. White Crescent Press (Luton).

Markham, F. 1975 *History of Milton Keynes and District*, vol 2. White Crescent Press (Luton).

Page W (ed) 1927 *The Victoria History of the Counties of England: Buckingham*, vol. 4. Dawsons of Pall Mall (London).

Maps

1599 Salden Estate Map (BAS 236: reproduced in Croft & Mynard 1993, map L11)

1770 Jeffreys' *Map of the County of Buckinghamshire surveyed in 1766-1768*. (BAS 2000)

1825 Bryants' *Map of the County of Buckinghamshire from actual survey in the year 1824*. (BAS 2000)


1881 Ordnance Survey 25" First Edition, Sheet XIV.11

1925 Ordnance Survey 25" Second Edition, Sheet XIV.11

Appendix 1: List of Photographs

No.	View	Description	Plate
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6	NE	Interior of north wall	
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8	E	Timber D, junction with F	5
9	E	Timber D and adjoining timbers to south, below window	
10	E	Timber C, junctions with E and F	6
11	W	Junction of A & D, interior view	
12	W	Timbers C & E junction, internal view	7
13	NW	Junction of B & F, internal view	
14	W	Junction of C & F, internal view	
15	SE	Timber B, junction with F	8
16	SE	Timber F and wall above repair area	10
17	SE	Timber B, upper part	9
18	SE	Junction of B & F, external view	
19	E	North wall, footing and trench	
20	S	West wall, footings and trench	12
21	SE	Detail of 21	

Appendix 2: Watching Brief Record Sheet

 A.S.C. LTD		ARCHAEOLOGICAL FIELD MONITORING RECORD				
Project: LOWNDES ARMS		Project No/Code: 684/WLA		Sheet: 1 of 1		
WHADDON		Date of visit:				
Client/Developer: CS BRICKNALL CO						
Contact:			Phone:			
Duration of Visit (inc. travel):		Start: 10.00		Finish: 11.00		
Completed by: N S WILSON						
Development Type:						
Footings <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Services	Roads	Levelling	Quarrying	Pipelines	Other (specify):
Site & weather conditions:						
DRY & SUNNY						
Observations:						
SMALL TRENCH OPEN (N-S) AT NW CORNER						
OF BUILDING // TO STREET						
W SIDE 0.6m DEEP						
E SIDE 1.6m DEEP						
PROFILE						
0-0.5m SANDY CLAY REDDISH ORANGE SOME STONES						
0.5-1.0m SAND DARK YELLOWISH BROWN 1/2 GRAVEL						
1.0-1.3m SLIGHTLY SANDY CLAY YELLOW						
1.3-1.6m SANDY CLAY 1/2 GRAVEL						
BUILDING FOOTINGS VIZ: SHALLOW SIZE PHOTOS						
Comments:						
NO FURTHER VISITS REQUIRED						

For sketch plan, use reverse

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