

**Rickfield House, Church Road
Liddington
Wiltshire**

Archaeological Watching Brief

for

Mr T Fernandes

CA Project: 3395
CA Report: 11138

May 2011

Rickfield House, Church Road
Liddington
Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

CA Project: 3395
CA Report: 11138

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signed	
date	26 May 2011
issue	01

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140



SUMMARY

Project Name:	Rickfield House
Location:	Church Road, Liddington, Wiltshire
NGR:	SU 2063 8117
Type:	Watching Brief
Date:	27th April to 4th May
Planning Reference:	S/10/1864
Location of Archive:	To be deposited with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery
Site Code:	RHC11

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the residential development of land at Rickfield House, Church Road, Liddington.

The watching brief identified one ditch of possible Anglo-Saxon date and two postholes probably dating to the medieval period. A further three ditches, two pits and four postholes were observed that could not be dated. It is possible that the ditches form part of an agricultural system, acting either as field boundaries and/or drainage features, which might be Anglo-Saxon or medieval in date. A linear alignment of postholes was interpreted as possibly forming part of a structure extending out to the west from the development area and possibly dating to the 11th to 14th centuries. Artefactual material, consisting of Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery together with fragments of animal bone, was recovered from six deposits. A large area in the northern part of the site has suffered significant truncation during the modern period and no archaeological deposits survive in that area.



1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In April and May 2011 Cotswold Archaeology (CA) carried out an archaeological watching brief for Mr T Fernandes at Rickfield House, Liddington (centred on NGR: SU 2063 8117; Fig. 1). The watching brief was undertaken to fulfil a condition attached to a planning consent for the construction of a residence on the site (Swindon Borough Council Planning ref: S/10/1864). The objective of the watching brief was to record all archaeological remains exposed during the development.
- 1.2 The watching brief was carried out at the request of Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger, County Archaeologist for Wiltshire Council (WC) and archaeological advisor to Swindon Borough Council (SBC). The watching brief was carried out in accordance with a subsequent detailed *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI), produced by CA (2011) and approved by Melanie Pomeroy-Kellinger. The fieldwork also followed the *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (IfA 2008), the *Statement of Standards and Practices Appropriate for Archaeological Fieldwork in Wiltshire* (WCC 1995), the *Management of Archaeological Projects 2* (English Heritage 1991) and the *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (MORPHE): Project Manager's Guide* (EH 2006). The fieldwork was monitored by Ms Pomeroy-Kellinger.

The site

- 1.3 The development site encloses an area of approximately 0.4ha, and comprises Rickfield House and associated garden. The site lies at c. 151m AOD and slopes gently from the south to the north. The site is bounded to the north by Parsonage House, to the east and south by open fields and to the west by Parsonage Yard House. The present boundary of the churchyard of All Saints Church lies approximately 50m to the north.
- 1.4 The underlying solid geology of the area is mapped as Lower Chalk of the Cretaceous era (BGS 1974). During the watching brief the undisturbed natural substrate of grey white chalk was revealed at c. 0.58m below present ground level (bpgl). The archaeological features and deposits were overlain by c. 0.40m of subsoil and c. 0.15m of topsoil.

Archaeological background

- 1.6 The proposed development area lies at the southern edge of the village of Liddington, which has Saxon origins (Wiltshire SMR number: SU28SW407). Finds recovered from the vicinity of the site include a Mesolithic macehead (Wiltshire SMR number: SU28SWU01) and Romano-British pottery sherds (Wiltshire SMR number (SU28SW317).
- 1.7 An archaeological evaluation (one trench) undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology in February 2010 at the site identified two ditches of probable post-Roman/Anglo-Saxon date (>1.0m wide and >0.4m deep) and an undated ditch. These were interpreted as the probable remains of field boundary and/or drainage ditches. Eight pottery sherds with organic-tempered fabric, 25 animal bones, flint, ceramic building material and glass fragments were recovered (CA 2010).

Methodology

- 1.7 The fieldwork followed the methodology set out within the WSI (CA 2011). An archaeologist was present during intrusive groundworks, comprising the reduction in ground level across the site by up to c. 0.80m.
- 1.8 Where archaeological deposits were encountered, written, graphic and photographic records were compiled in accordance with CA Technical Manual 1: *Fieldwork Recording Manual* (2007).
- 1.9 Currently, the archive and artefacts from the evaluation are held by CA at their offices in Kemble. Subject to the agreement of the legal the artefacts will be deposited with Swindon Museum and Art Gallery along with the site archive. A summary of information from this project, set out in Appendix C will be entered onto the OASIS online database of archaeological projects in Britain.



2. RESULTS (FIGS. 2-3)

- 2.1 The natural geological substrate 102, consisting of fragmentary greyish white chalk in a dark grey clay matrix, was revealed over the majority of the site at an average depth of 0.58m below present ground level. All archaeological features were cut into this layer. Natural substrate was not observed in the northern part of the site, where a mixed deposit of dark brown and black sandy-silt 140 was the earliest deposit observed. This material was interpreted as a modern dumped deposit laid down at the time of construction of the septic tank 139, manhole and sewer pipe 112, which exist in this area (Fig. 2).
- 2.2 A ditch 103/133 was observed running from north-east to south-west near the eastern limit of the site. The ditch was 0.32m deep and contained a pale grey silty clay basal fill 134 and a dark brownish grey clay secondary fill 104/135. The primary fill was only seen in the south-eastern part of the ditch. A single sherd of Anglo-Saxon pottery was recovered from secondary fill 104, along with a small fragment of animal bone. An undated shallow gully 105/107 appeared to cut ditch 103, although this relationship was not certain. This gully contained a single dark brownish grey clay fill, and terminated just south of the point where it intersected with ditch 103. Gully 105 had a similar alignment to ditch 103/133 and may represent a later phase of that ditch (Figs. 2 & 3)
- 2.3 A further two undated ditches were seen in the development area. A stretch of ditch c. 4.5m long, orientated north west-south east, 113/137, was observed near the centre of the site. It was 0.23m deep and contained a single mid brown clay fill, 114/138. A larger ditch running roughly parallel to ditch 103/133 was also seen. This ditch contained a single homogenous fill 120 of dark grey silty clay (Figs. 2 & 3).
- 2.4 A group of seven postholes were observed near the south-western edge of the site, 115/117/121/123/125/127/129. All of those postholes contained similar mid to dark brownish grey silty clay fills, 116/118/122/124/126/128/130. Two small sherds of medieval pottery were recovered, from postholes 115 and 117 (fills 116 and 118). Four of these postholes appear to be in linear alignment oriented roughly east-west, 115/117/121/123. Postholes 125, 127 and 129 to the south of this alignment are of no obvious arrangement, although 129 may be a right-angled return from posthole 121 or 123. The relationship between intercutting postholes 125 and 127 was uncertain.

- 2.5 Two pits were identified within the development area. A shallow elongated sub-oval pit 131 was seen c. 1m east of the posthole group. It contained a single brownish grey silty clay fill, 132. A much deeper and more regularly shaped sub-circular pit 109 was seen in the section along the eastern edge of the site. Its basal fill 110 consisted of pale grey clay whilst the secondary fill 111 was a dark brownish grey silty clay. No dating evidence was recovered from either pit.
- 2.6 All of the discovered archaeological features were overlain by an organic, chalk-rich clay subsoil, 101, bearing close similarity to the drift geology from which it derived. Over much of the development area, the subsoil was overlain by a loose mid brown clay levelling layer 136, which varied considerably in thickness. This layer also overlaid modern dumping/disturbance 140. A sandy silt topsoil layer covering the site probably was imported from elsewhere, judging by its different composition.

The Finds

- 2.7 Quantities of artefactual material, comprising Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery and animal bone fragments, were recovered from six deposits (Appendix B).
- 2.8 A single Anglo-Saxon pottery sherd was recovered from ditch fill 104. It is a body sherd in an organic-tempered fabric, which is broadly dateable to the 5th to 8th centuries AD.
- 2.9 Small quantities of medieval pottery were recorded from three deposits. A rim sherd of unusual, developed form, possibly from a bowl, was identified from the topsoil 100. It is wheel-thrown, and in a quartz and limestone-tempered fabric, and probably dates from the 13th to 14th centuries. Small body sherds were recovered from postholes 115 and 117. The sherd from posthole 115 is in a Cotswolds type limestone-tempered cooking pot fabric, probably dating to the 11th to 13th centuries. The sherd from posthole 117 is in a limestone/flint-tempered fabric (Kennet Valley type), and probably dates the 11th to 14th centuries.
- 2.10 A single animal bone fragment was recovered from an Anglo-Saxon deposit, 104. Further fragments were recovered from two undated deposits, 120 and 124. The bone assemblage is well-preserved but is too fragmentary to identify to species or element.

3. DISCUSSION

- 3.1 The watching brief identified a ditch of possible Anglo-Saxon date near the eastern limit of the site. This feature runs parallel to another ditch approximately 10m to the west, which was identified as being of post-Roman/Anglo-Saxon origin in the 2010 evaluation, although no further dating evidence was recovered during the watching brief. These parallel ditches may represent field boundaries and/or agricultural drainage features. The site lies directly on the southern edge of the village of Liddington which is known to have Saxon origins making convincing the case for a Saxon agricultural landscape in this location. A further short stretch of ditch orientated north-west to south-east 119 was also identified as the continuation of one of the ditches observed in the evaluation trench and may also form part of this agricultural system, but remains undated.
- 3.2 It is possible that the linear arrangement of postholes formed part of a structure of possible 11th to 14th century date. All of the postholes are relatively small and shallow, suggesting an insubstantial structure, although type and extent of this possible structure could not be established within the limits of the development area. This line of posts may have been a fence. Alternatively, posthole 129 may represent a return of a rectangular structure, indicating its south-eastern side, with 123 or 121 being the remains of the corner. It is possible that the pits to the south of the posthole group are associated with them, but their date and function are unknown.



4. CA PROJECT TEAM

Fieldwork was undertaken by Charlotte Haines, Stuart Joyce and Jess Cook, The report was written by Charlotte Haines. The illustrations were prepared by Lorna Gray. The archive has been compiled by James Johnson. The project was managed for CA by Tom Wilson

5. REFERENCES

BGS (British Geological Survey) 1974 *Geological Survey of England and Wales: Solid and Drift Edition* Sheet 252: Swindon 1: 63,360

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2010 Rickfield House, Church Road, Liddington, Wiltshire: Archaeological Evaluation CA Report No. **10021**

CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 *Rickfield House, Church Road, Liddington, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an Archaeological Watching Brief*



APPENDIX A: CONTEXT DESCRIPTIONS

Area 1

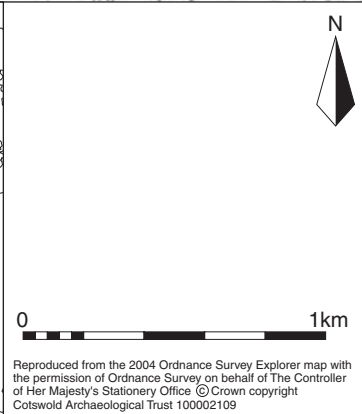
No.	Type	Description	Length (m)	Width (m)	Depth (m)	Spot-date
100	Layer	Topsoil, mid brown grey sand silt			0.15	Modern
101	Layer	Subsoil, mid brown grey clay silt			0.40	
102	Layer	Natural Substrate, grey white chalk in dark grey clay				
103	Cut	NE-SW ditch	>14	0.86	0.33	
104	Fill	Fill of 103, dark brown grey silt clay	>14	0.86	0.33	Anglo-Saxon
105	Cut	NE-SW gully	>5	0.75	0.13	
106	Fill	Fill of 105, dark brown grey silt clay	>5	0.75	0.13	
107	Cut	NE-SW gully terminus	>5	0.50	0.09	
108	Fill	Fill of 107, dark brown grey silt clay	>5	0.50	0.09	
109	Cut	Large circular pit	1.6	-	0.65	
110	Fill	Primary fill of 109, pale grey clay	1.2	-	0.30	
111	Fill	Secondary fill of 109, dark brown grey silt clay	1.6	-	0.25	
112	Structure	Concrete casing for modern sewer pipe and man hole	>13	1	-	Modern
113	Cut	N-S ditch terminus	>1	0.70	0.21	
114	Fill	Fill of 113, pale brown silt clay	>1	0.70	0.21	
115	Cut	Circular posthole	0.45	0.40	0.21	
116	Fill	Fill of 115, dark brown grey silt clay	0.45	0.40	0.21	C11th-13th
117	Cut	Oval posthole	0.38	0.30	0.09	
118	Fill	Fill of 117, dark brown grey silt clay	0.38	0.30	0.09	C11th-14th
119	Cut	N-S shallow ditch	>0.75	0.80	0.20	
120	Fill	Fill of 119, dark grey silt clay	>0.75	0.80	0.20	
121	Cut	Circular posthole	0.35	0.35	0.13	
122	Fill	Fill of 121, mid brown grey silt clay	0.35	0.35	0.13	
123	Cut	Small circular posthole	0.20	0.20	0.15	
124	Fill	Fill of 123, dark brown grey silt clay	0.20	0.20	0.15	
125	Cut	Very small shallow circular posthole	0.32	0.29	0.07	
126	Fill	Fill of 125, mid brown grey silt clay	0.32	0.29	0.07	
127	Cut	Small shallow circular posthole	0.20	0.20	0.07	
128	Fill	Fill of 127, mid brown grey silt clay	0.20	0.20	0.07	
129	Cut	Small shallow irregular posthole	0.20	0.20	0.10	
130	Fill	Fill of 129, dark brown grey silt clay	0.20	0.20	0.10	
131	Cut	Sub-oval shallow pit	1.80	0.80	0.12	
132	Fill	Fill of 131, mid brown grey silt clay	1.80	0.80	0.12	
133	Cut	NE-SW ditch, same as 103	>0.50	0.70	0.35	
134	Fill	Primary fill of 133, pale grey silt clay	>0.50	0.40	0.20	
135	Fill	Secondary fill of 133, dark brown grey silt clay	>0.50	0.70	0.15	
136	Deposit	Levelling layer, loose mid brown silt clay			0.35	
137	Cut	N-S ditch same as 113	4.40	0.60	0.25	
138	Fill	Fill of 137, mid brown silt clay	4.40	0.60	0.25	
139	Structure	Concrete and brick septic tank	5	1.50		Modern
140	Deposit	Mixed dark brown, black silt clay and yellow sand	>12	9.50		Modern

APPENDIX B: THE FINDS

Context	Description	Ct.	Wt.	Date
100	Medieval pottery: quartz and limestone-tempered fabric	1	40	C13-C14
104	Anglo-Saxon pottery: organic-tempered fabric	1	14	C5-C8
	Animal bone: sheep-sized	1	2	
116	Medieval pottery: limestone-tempered fabric	1	2	C11-C13
118	Medieval pottery: flint-tempered fabric (Kennet Valley type)	1	3	C11-C14
120	Animal bone: cow-size, sheep-sized	3	8	-
124	Animal bone: cow-sized	2	12	-

APPENDIX C: OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS	
Project Name	Rickfield House, Church Road, Liddington, Archaeological Watching Brief
Short description (250 words maximum)	<p>An archaeological watching brief was undertaken by Cotswold Archaeology during groundworks associated with the residential development of land at Rickfield House, Church Road, Liddington.</p> <p>The watching brief identified one ditch of possible Anglo-Saxon date and two postholes probably dating to the medieval period. A further three ditches, two pits and four postholes were observed that could not be dated. It is possible that the ditches form part of an agricultural system, acting either as field boundaries and/or drainage features, which might be Anglo-Saxon or medieval in date. A linear alignment of postholes was interpreted as possibly forming part of a structure extending out to the west from the development area and possibly dating to the 11th to 14th centuries. Artefactual material, consisting of Anglo-Saxon and medieval pottery together with fragments of animal bone, was recovered from six deposits. A large area in the northern part of the site has suffered significant truncation during the modern period and no archaeological deposits survive in that area.</p>
Project dates	April – May 2011
Project type (e.g. desk-based, field evaluation etc)	Watching Brief
Previous work (reference to organisation or SMR numbers etc)	Archaeological Evaluation, Cotswold Archaeology, 2010.
Future work	Unknown
PROJECT LOCATION	
Site Location	Rickfield House, Church Road, Liddington, Wiltshire
Study area (M ² /ha)	0.4ha
Site co-ordinates (8 Fig. Grid Reference)	SU 2063 8117
PROJECT CREATORS	
Name of organisation	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Brief originator	
Project Design (WSI) originator	Cotswold Archaeology
Project Manager	Tom Wilson
Project Supervisor	Charlotte Haines
MONUMENT TYPE	
	None
SIGNIFICANT FINDS	
	Anglo-Saxon Pottery, Medieval Pottery
PROJECT ARCHIVES	
	Swindon Museum and Art Gallery
Physical	Pottery, A bone
Paper	Context sheets, Photo registers, Drawings
Digital	Photos, Survey data.
BIBLIOGRAPHY	
<p>CA (Cotswold Archaeology) 2011 Rickfield House, Church Road, Liddington, Archaeological Watching Brief. CA typescript report 11138</p>	




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PROJECT TITLE
 Rickfield House, Church Road
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FIGURE TITLE
 Site location plan

PROJECT NO. 3395	DATE 10-05-2011	FIGURE NO.
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APPROVED BY PJM	SCALE@A4 1:25,000	






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Parsonage Yard

Rickfield

8115

SU

-  site
-  area of groundworks
-  archaeological feature
-  modern intrusion
-  modern truncation



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PROJECT TITLE
**Rickfield House, Church Road
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PROJECT TITLE
**Area of observed groundworks,
 showing archaeological features**

PROJECT NO. 3395 DATE 10-05-2011
 DRAWN BY LG REVISION 00
 APPROVED BY PJM SCALE@A3 1:250

FIGURE NO.

2



Section AA

SW
151.5m
AOD

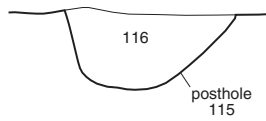
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Section BB

SW
151.5m
AOD

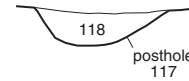
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Section CC

E
151.5m
AOD

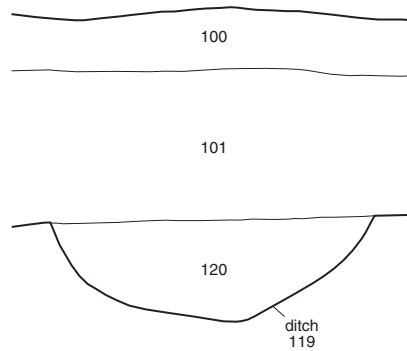
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Section DD

E
152m
AOD

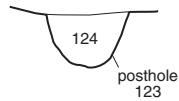
W



Section EE

SE
151.5m
AOD

NW



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FIGURE TITLE
Sections

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FIGURE NO.

3





4



5

4 View north-east of the eastern part of site, showing ditches 133, 113, 105 and 109

5 View north-east of the south-east part of site, showing ditch 119 and disturbance 140



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PROJECT TITLE
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Liddington, Wiltshire

FIGURE TITLE
Photographs

PROJECT NO.	3395	DATE	26-05-2011	FIGURE NO.
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APPROVED BY	PJM	SCALE@A4	N/A	