

# Holmes Cottage, 56 Enford Hill, Enford, Pewsey, Wiltshire:

Results of an archaeological watching brief

NGR SU 13901 51520

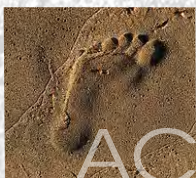
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Prepared by:  
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On behalf of:  
Mr. J. Field

Document No: ACW1025/2/0

Date: August 2017



AC archaeology

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# HOLMES COTTAGE, 56 ENFORD HILL, ENFORD, NEAR PEWSEY, WILTSHIRE:

**NGR SU 13901 51520**

**Results of an archaeological watching brief**

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## **Summary**

*Archaeological monitoring and recording was undertaken during development works to the rear of Holmes Cottage, 56 Enford Hill, Enford, near Pewsey, Wiltshire. These comprised the demolition of part of the rear extension to the principal building and replacement with a new extension alongside the construction of an associated retaining wall and the enlargement of an existing turning area. The groundworks involved the removal of part of the rear extension and the reduction of the immediate sloping ground by up to c. 2.00m. This activity revealed chalk bedrock at a depth of between 1.00-1.20m directly sealed by a deep subsoil/ploughsoil measuring 0.70-0.90m in depth. Interspersed within this deposit were moderate amounts of clinker fragments and a single ceramic body sherd of late post-medieval Bristol/Staffordshire slipware. Positioned to the centre of the exposed bank section was the profile of a probable late post medieval extant track hollow-way. This had a broad shallow profile up to 0.40m wide and was still visible in plan and continued to the north before turning to the west beyond the site. The ground reduction also revealed two extant structural features relating to a 19th century bake house formerly attached to the rear of the property.*

*In addition, the interior of the building was subject to several alterations with these revealing five distinct built phases extending from the 17th century through to the mid-20th century and including an undetermined period of construction.*

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

- 1.1** This document sets out the results of archaeological monitoring and recording during development works at Holmes Cottage, 56 Enford Hill, Enford, near Pewsey, Wiltshire (NGR SU 13901 51520). These comprised the removal of part of the rear extension and replacement with a new extension for use as a utility and bedroom. The tiled roof on the extension to the north east will be replaced with thatch and rooms created in the roofspace; two windows are proposed for the front elevation at first floor level. Also included was the construction of a retaining wall and the enlargement of an existing turning area, also to the rear of the principal building (Site location Fig. 1; Plate 1).
- 1.2** The archaeological monitoring was undertaken by AC archaeology Ltd. on behalf of the site owner, Mr J. Field, in compliance with the requirements of a planning consent granted by Wiltshire Council (Ref. 16/11865/FUL).
- 1.3** The site is located at the southwestern extent of Enford, just off a lane called Enford Hill, some 3.4km south of Upavon and 8.8km SSW of Pewsey. Standing at c. 100m OD, the site slopes down from west to east, overlooking the valley of the River Avon. The underlying solid geology

comprises Cretaceous Chalk of the Lewes Formation, with alluvium and head deposits mapped at the base of the slope by the river floodplain (BGS DiGMapGB625).

## **2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

- 2.1** The cottage is not a listed building. There are nine listed buildings within 250m of the site, of which the Grade I listed Church of All Saints and St. Margaret lies 175 to the northeast. The scheduled monument of Enford Roman Villa (ref. 1003253) lies c. 500m to the north.
- 2.2** The Wiltshire Historic Environment Record (WHER) notes the presence of an undated ring ditch (MWI13998) some 250m to the west of the site, the Enford Royal Observer Corps Post (MWI31832) 200m to the west, and the findspot of a Neolithic axe head (MWI13876) to the west of Enford Bridge. The village of Enford (MWI13909) is noted as having Saxon origins, with the church demonstrating Norman characteristics; earthworks are noted to the east and north of the village.
- 2.3** A previous Historic Impact Assessment (HBAS 2017) considered the methods of construction of the building, its current condition and the impact of the development on the building and surroundings. The presence of a former trackway of possible archaeological interest was noted.
- 2.4** The OS 1st edition 1:1250 map, surveyed in 1886 shows the building in detail and indicates its near complete plan form by this date.

## **3. MONITORING METHODOLOGY**

- 3.1** The principal aims of the archaeological watching brief were;
  - To establish the presence/absence, extent, date, nature, function and phasing of any archaeological remains present;
  - To make a full and detailed archaeological record; and
  - To produce a report on the results of the archaeological investigation.
- 3.2** The site works were undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (Urmston, 2017) approved by the Wiltshire Council Assistant County Archaeologist (WCACA). Attendance by the site archaeologist was comprehensive, i.e. an archaeologist was *present during all relevant ground disturbance*.
- 3.3** The archaeological monitoring commenced during the excavation of foundations, the removal of existing footings and the reduction of a slope to the rear of the building. All continued until the site archaeologist was satisfied that no further exposure of archaeological deposits was possible. Furthermore, monitoring was undertaken within the building during its renovation.
- 3.4** Site observations were recorded using the standard AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system, comprising written and graphic records and in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2* (2012). A digital photographic record was also made.
- 3.5** The archive has been prepared using the unique site code ACW1025.

## 4. RESULTS

- 4.1 The groundworks for the construction of the retaining wall and enlargement of existing turning circle comprised the reduction of sloping ground immediately to the rear of the building by up to c. 2.00m revealing a chalk bedrock at a depth of between 1.00-1.20m. Directly overlying the chalk was a 0.70-0.90m deep subsoil (207) composed of a light grey clayey silt interspersed with moderate amounts of poorly sorted flecked clinker waste and abundant chalk fragments. A single ceramic body sherd of late post-medieval Bristol/Staffordshire Slipware was recovered from the mid-level of this deposit.

### *Track/hollow-way*

- 4.2 The hollow-way lay in the centre of the exposed soil section. It was U-shaped in profile and up to 0.40m wide and wholly contained within the subsoil layer (207). No associated banks flanking the feature were noted. This feature was still visible in plan and continued beyond the immediate area of the groundworks, extending to the north before turning to the west beyond the site (see HBAS 2017).

### *Oven feature S214 (Figs 2 & 3; Plate 2)*

- 4.3 The demolition the rear extension exposed the remnants of an oven structure (S214) within the NW elevation of the building. The feature steps out from the plane of the building's rear elevation by 1.00m, and was contained within a regularly-sided construction cut (F208). This cut measured c. 4.40m wide and up to 1.16m in height and appeared to truncate subsoil layer (207), while exposing the chalk bedrock in the centre of the exposure. The construction cut was defined by side walls 200 and 212, both relating to the demolished outhouse. Wall 200 was constructed in 20th century red stock brick, laid stretcher bond that survived to a height of 1.00m. Originally, this would have continued to the eaves height of the Period III gable as shown by the remnant mortar scar. The opposing side wall, 212 survived to 0.50m with a maximum width of 0.45m and was simply constructed of irregularly coursed flint nodules bonded by a lime type mortar. Positioned towards the centre of the oven and at the base of construction cut (208) was a flue measuring 0.60m wide and 0.40m in height comprising side walls of irregularly coursed flint nodules (209) surmounted by a red brick cambered arch (204) with all displaying signs of low level scorching. Originally this would have continued towards the NW but had been truncated during the present groundworks.
- 4.4 Sealing the flue were two consolidation layers (205 & 210) laid down during the construction of the oven feature. With a combined depth of c. 0.55m, both were of similar composition combining a clay silt interspersed with flint nodules and fragmentary red stock brick, the uppermost of the layers (210) having been laid to a uniform level to aid the construction above of an additional chamber (213) to the oven. This centrally positioned chamber measured c.1.30m wide and 0.60m in height and was wholly constructed of unfrogged red brick comprising a single stretcher bonded surface and cambered roof with a rear face and side walls in a soldier bond. During the construction of the chamber, the feature and the immediate area of construction cut (208) appeared to have been gradually sealed and built up by a single make up layer (211) comprising a clay silt with coarse components of flint and chalk fragments. Directly above this make up layer was an aggregate sub base (203) measuring up to 0.30m in depth and laid down for extant concrete floor (206), the surface associated with the flooring of the recently demolished outhouse.

### *Outline Development of Holmes Cottage (Plates 3-5)*

- 4.5** From the external and internal observations of the building it is possible to suggest it evolved to its current form over at least five distinct phases extending from the 17th to 20th centuries. The following summaries of phases (Fig. 3) is intended to illustrate probable stages in the overall development of the site.

#### Period I

- 4.4** In its primary form Holmes Cottage is a box-frame type construction with gables of at least three bays all predominately contained within the central to southwest part of the building. During this period the dwelling was possibly included with an additional bay now sited at the southwestern end, but this remains uncertain. The exposed wall framing within the rear NW elevation and internally within the opposing SE elevation consisted of short straight braces with square panels, the panels being infilled by flint and c. late 18th/ early 19th century brick nogging. Originally, the panels were infilled with plaster/wattle and daub, as evidenced by the empty troughs and holes of the former staves exposed within the rudimentary roof space towards the southeast. This part of the building also revealed the simple roof structure, consisting of a latterly truncated tie beam jointed into the wall plate and jowl headed posts of the side walls with the principal rafters lapped at the apex and tied by a collar. No evidence of the original heating arrangement of the building was evident with the present fireplaces inserted during later periods.

#### Period II

- 4.5** During the early 19th century the building was marginally extended towards the NE by the addition of a half bay of square panels which effectively created the present large kitchen/service room. A new principal entrance in the southeast elevation was also included, but this was latterly partly infilled (date uncertain) and the space reset as a window. The extension also required the reconfiguration of the roof here with a hipped type being amalgamated into the original gable. The archaic nature of this new roof structure is evident in the use of bark adhered waney edged timbers forming the common rafters. Additionally, a large chimney stack was inserted here, its fire opening heating the central bay.

#### Period III

- 4.6** Developments took place in the mid-19th century when a large partly brick built chimney stack and a one and a half storey extension was built out at right angles from the rear of the house. Within the roof space the stack has been crudely constructed in an unusual conical shape largely in flint and chalk rubble. Internally, the fire opening of the stack has been included with alcoves of differing sizes. Included within the rear wall of the extension was a type of bread oven that was enclosed at an uncertain period within a rudimentary single storey outhouse, the side walling of which is shown in Fig. 2, along with the inclusion of the new stack, the majority of the buildings primary ceiling structure here is renewed; the subsidiary joisting all being replaced but the unchamfered axial bridging beam being retained.

#### Period IV

- 4.7** The building is extended further to the northeast by a tall single storey brick gabled annexe. Access from the earlier part of the house into this required the truncation of the wall fabric of

Period II with the inclusion of a single doorway. Within the openly-planned space is the exposed contemporary common rafter roof.

Period V

- 4.8** On the rear of the Period IV extension a utilitarian single storey has been added that has been partially built off the rear gable slope. It is entirely constructed in London Brick Company rustic pattern bricks of mid-1950s to early 1960s date. Again, internal access from the main part of the house has necessitated the piercing of the Period II wall fabric. Subsequent piecemeal alterations include the fire opening of the Period II chimney stack is reduced in size with the two associated alcoves being either blocked up and the other utilised as a cupboard.

Uncertain

- 4.9** The westernmost bay appears to be a later addition of an unknown period as it appears to differ in plan form when viewed against the three regular bays of the primary part of the dwelling immediately to the northeast. Additionally, the exposed birds-mouthed rafter feet of the bay, when viewed against those of the Period I, build are noticeably more recent.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

- 5.1** Holmes Cottage is a survival of an early post-medieval vernacular dwelling which, despite 19th and 20th century alterations and additions, appears to retain a percentage of its historic 17th century structural fabric and elements of its original plan form. The bread oven to the rear of the property appears to have been added sometime during the 19th century as a form of bake house addition. Such a feature would not be unusual for a property this age or form of construction in this area (HBAS 2017).
- 5.2** The groundworks immediately to the rear of the building impacted upon the existing track hollow-way revealing its profile. The feature appears to have been eroded through subsoil containing late post medieval waste derived material. The topographical nature of this feature at its furthest extent away from Holmes Cottage suggests it was originally flanked by raised banks, but the profile of the recorded section through it implies the original contour of the slope was naturally eroded away by continued use.

## **6. REFERENCES & GUIDELINES**

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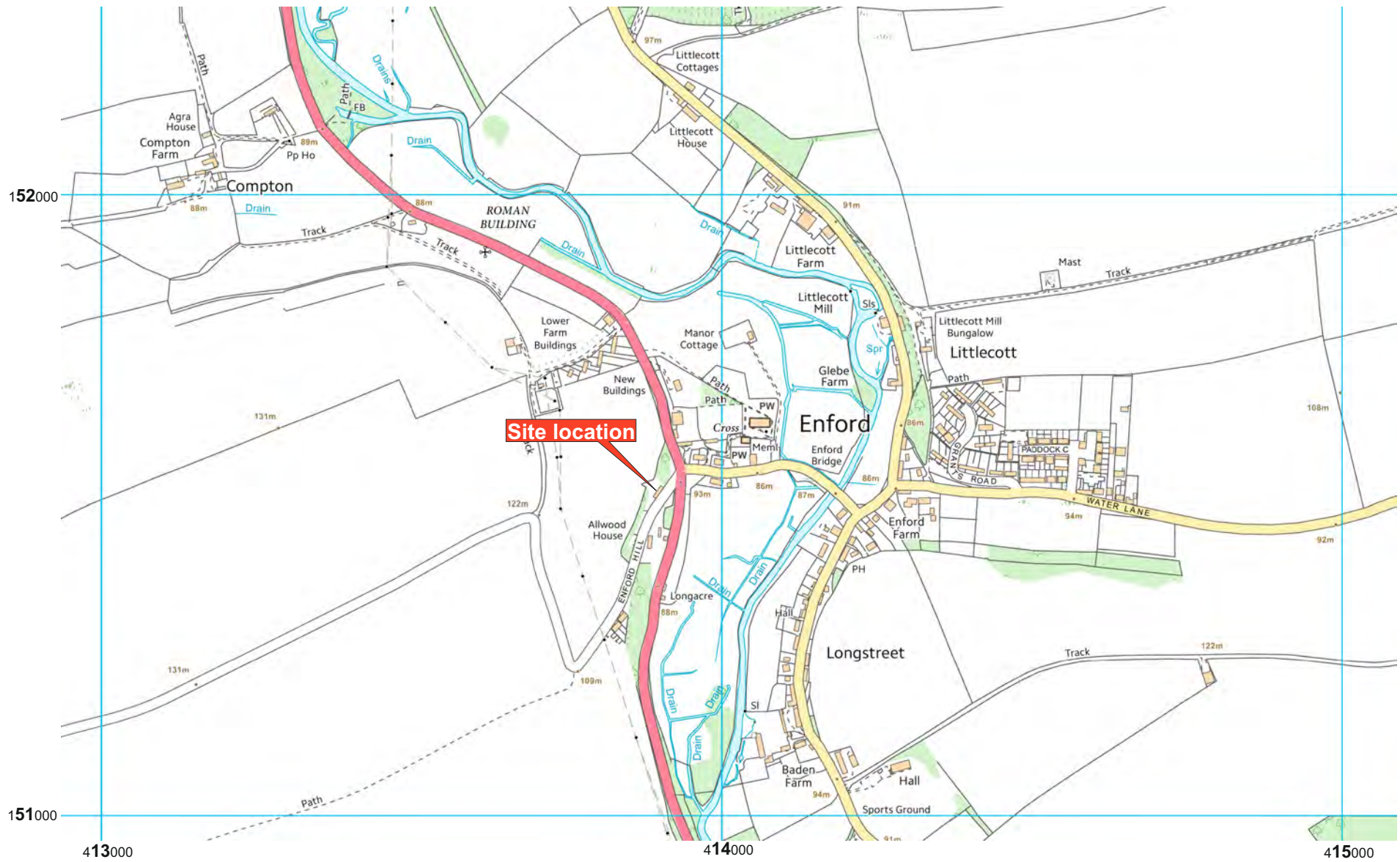
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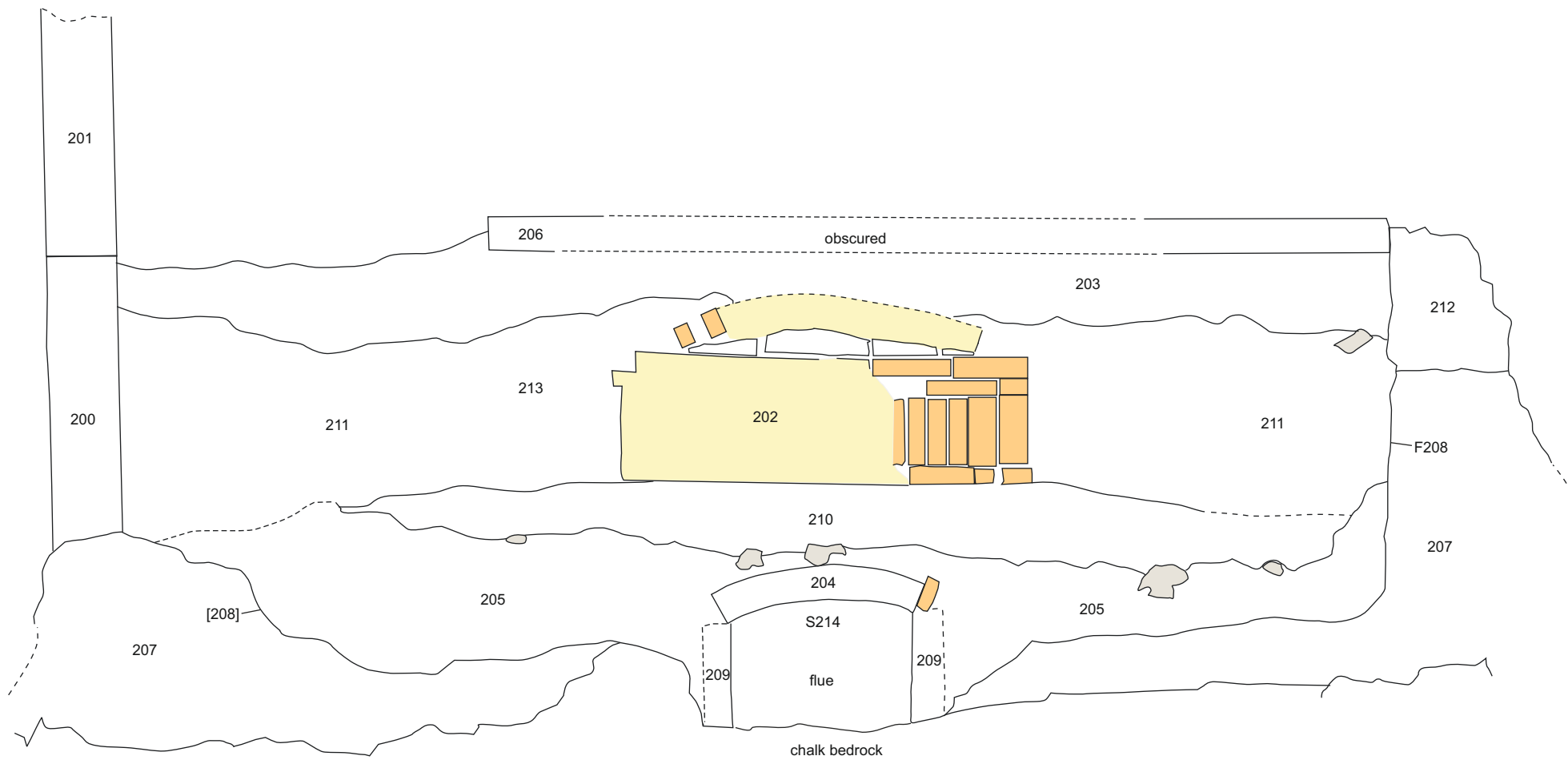
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Holmes Cottage, 56 Enford Hill, Pewsey

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Fig 1: Site location





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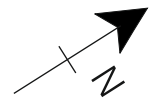
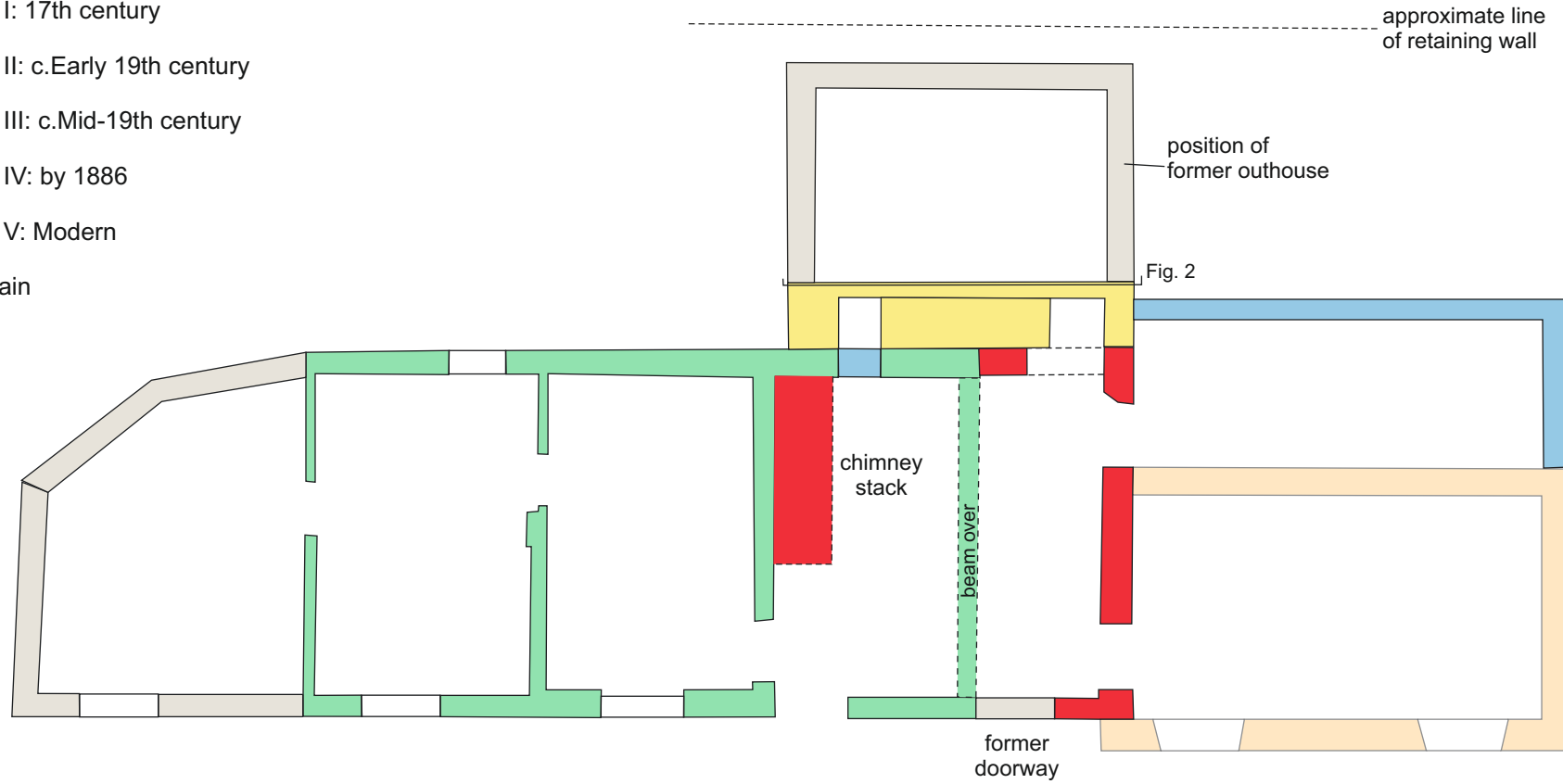
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Fig 2: Elevation of oven, S214

Key

- Period I: 17th century
- Period II: c. Early 19th century
- Period III: c. Mid-19th century
- Period IV: by 1886
- Period V: Modern
- Uncertain



PROJECT

Holmes Cottage, 56 Enford Hill, Pewsey

TITLE

Fig 3: Development of the building



Plate 1: SE facing elevation of Holmes Cottage



Plate 2:  
NW facing elevation of Oven 214  
below Period III gable  
(scale 1m)



Plate 3: Primary framing in SE elevation (scale 1m)



Plate 4: Period III inserted stack, latterly reduced in size with blocked alcove to left (scale 1m)



Plate 5: Truncated tie beam and brace of Period I building with inserted conical Phase III stack (scale 1m)

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