

Proposed new dwelling on land adjacent to Hardston, Church Lane, Urchfont, Wiltshire

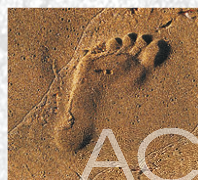
NGR SU04045734

Results of archaeological evaluation

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archaeology

PROPOSED NEW DWELLING ON LAND ADJACENT TO HARDSTON, CHURCH LANE, URCHFONT, WILTSHIRE (NGR: SU04045734)

Results of Archaeological Evaluation

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation, consisting of two machine-excavated trenches, was undertaken by AC archaeology on land adjacent to Hardston, Church Lane, Urchfont, Wiltshire, in January 2012. The work was undertaken in support of a planning application for the erection of a new residential dwelling and garage. A single deposit (context 102), of 19th century, or later, origin was partly revealed at the east extent of Trench 1, along with a further deposit of mid 20th century material at the west extent of the trench. A small quantity of post-medieval ceramic building material and a single sherd of 19th century pottery were retained from context (102).

1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1** This document sets out the results of an archaeological trench evaluation on land adjacent to Hardston, Church Lane, Urchfont, Wiltshire (SU04045734). The evaluation was commissioned by Mr and Mrs Yates, the site owners.
- 1.2** It was undertaken in order to provide supporting information for a planning application for the proposed erection of a new dwelling and associated garage. It was requested by Wiltshire Council Archaeological Officer (WCAO), advisor to the Wiltshire Council Planning Officer, in order to identify the nature of potential heritage assets on the site prior to the determination of a planning application (Ref. E/2011/1434/FUL). The location of the site is shown on Fig. 1.
- 1.3** The proposed application area covers approximately an area of 300m² and comprises an area of garden, formerly part of an orchard and adjacent to the existing property named Hardston (Plate 1). The topography comprises ground sloping down gently to the east and lies at around 116m OD. The underlying solid geology comprises Upper Greensand.

2. ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1** The site lies within the historic core of Urchfont, which has medieval origins, including St Michaels & All Angels Church, established in the early 13th century and situated immediately south-east of the site. Other known areas of archaeological interest include Manor Farm, situated outside the village, east of the proposed development, and where archaeological investigations undertaken in 2003 discovered evidence for late Neolithic / early Bronze Age and later activity. Finds of both this period and later have been recovered from other areas within the village.

3. OBJECTIVES

- 3.1** The evaluation was undertaken to determine, as far as reasonably possible, the location, extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains present on the site, as dictated by current best practice.

4. METHODOLOGY

- 4.1** The investigations was undertaken in response to a brief provided by the Wiltshire Council Archaeological Officer and in accordance with a project design prepared by AC archaeology (Robinson 2011) and approved prior to commencement on site.
- 4.2** The investigations comprised the excavation of two trenches; one measuring 10 x 1.2m in plan, and situated in an area within the footprint of the proposed new dwelling, and the second trench 5 x 1.2m in plan situated within the area of the proposed new garage. All site levels relate to a ordnance survey datum located on St Michaels & All Angels Church with a value of 120.27m OD.
- 4.3** All soil removal was undertaken under the control and direction of the Site Archaeologist. Topsoil and overburden were removed by mechanical excavator, using a wide toothless bucket. The use of mechanical plant ceased at the level at which archaeological deposits or natural subsoil were exposed.

4.4 The trenches were recorded using the full range of the standard AC archaeology *pro forma* recording system.

4.5 The archive has been prepared using the site code ACW420.

5. RESULTS

Summary

5.1 Trench 1 was positioned on an east-west axis, within the footprint of the proposed new dwelling in the northern portion of the site. Trench 2 was positioned on a north-south axis within the footprint of the proposed new garage in the south portion of the site (Fig. 1). A subsoil horizon of post-medieval origin was present in both trenches. Evidence for post-medieval and modern deposits was encountered in Trench 1, with Trench 2 proving entirely negative.



Plate 1: View of site from the north

Trench 1 (Plate 2, Fig. 2)

5.2 The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 400mm through topsoil and subsoil overlying natural Upper Greensand. Part of a post-medieval deposit, undetermined in nature, was revealed at the east end of the trench. A deposit of buried material of 20th century origin was revealed at the far west extent of the trench. Both these deposits are described below with the recorded layer sequence summarised in Table 1.

Table 1: Layer sequence

Context	Depth b.g.s.	Description	Interpretation
100	0 – 200mm max	Black silty clay loam	Turflin / topsoil.
101	200 – 400mm max	Dark greyish brown sandy clay containing small chalk / sandstone pieces, cinder / charcoal and fragments of brick and tile.	Subsoil – post-medieval in origin.
104	400mm+	Greensand	Natural – Upper Greensand

Deposit 102

5.3 This deposit was present below subsoil (101) and overlying natural greensand (104). It was only partly revealed in plan and situated at the east extent of the trench, continuing beyond the trench limits both to the north-west and south-east. Where exposed, it had plan dimensions of 2.2 x 1.2m, with a maximum thickness of 200mm. It comprised a rubble layer of predominantly chalk pieces up to 200mm in size, with occasional greensand pieces and flint nodules, within a dark, greenish brown, sandy clay. A small quantity of ceramic building material and a single sherd of 19th century pottery were recovered from this deposit.



Plate 2: Trench 1. View from the east

Deposit 103

- 5.4** This deposit was present below topsoil (100). It was only partly revealed in plan and situated at the west extent of the trench, continuing beyond the trench limits to the west. It comprised a dump of relatively modern debris, consisting of numerous metal containers, including cans and a quantity of glass bottles, all of mid 20th century origin.

Trench 2 (Plate 3)

- 5.5** The trench was excavated to a maximum depth of 400mm through topsoil and a subsoil horizon before natural Upper Greensand was revealed. No archaeological deposits were present. The recorded layer sequence is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Layer sequence

Context	Depth b.g.s.	Description	Interpretation
200	0 – 200mm max	Black silty clay loam	Turfline / topsoil.
201	200 – 400mm max	Dark greyish brown sandy clay containing small chalk / sandstone pieces, cinder / charcoal and fragments of brick and tile.	Subsoil – post-medieval in origin.
202	400mm+	Greensand	Natural – Upper Greensand



Plate 3: Trench 2. View from the north

6. FINDS

Introduction and Methodology

6.1 All finds recovered on site have been retained, cleaned and marked where appropriate. Finds were then quantified according to material type within each context. The assemblage was then scanned by context to extract information regarding the range, nature and date of artefacts represented. This information is briefly discussed below. The finds are discussed by material type, summarising the nature, date range and condition of the artefacts.

6.2 A small quantity of post-medieval finds was recovered, for identification and confirmation of dating. They include six fragments of ceramic building material (493g) which comprise three brick fragments and three plain roof tile fragments. A single sherd (14g) of earthenware Verwood post medieval pottery (19th century) was also recovered. The sherd is thin walled and has a clear internal glaze and probably derives from a small jar. All these objects can, with the approval of the owner and recipient museum, be discarded.

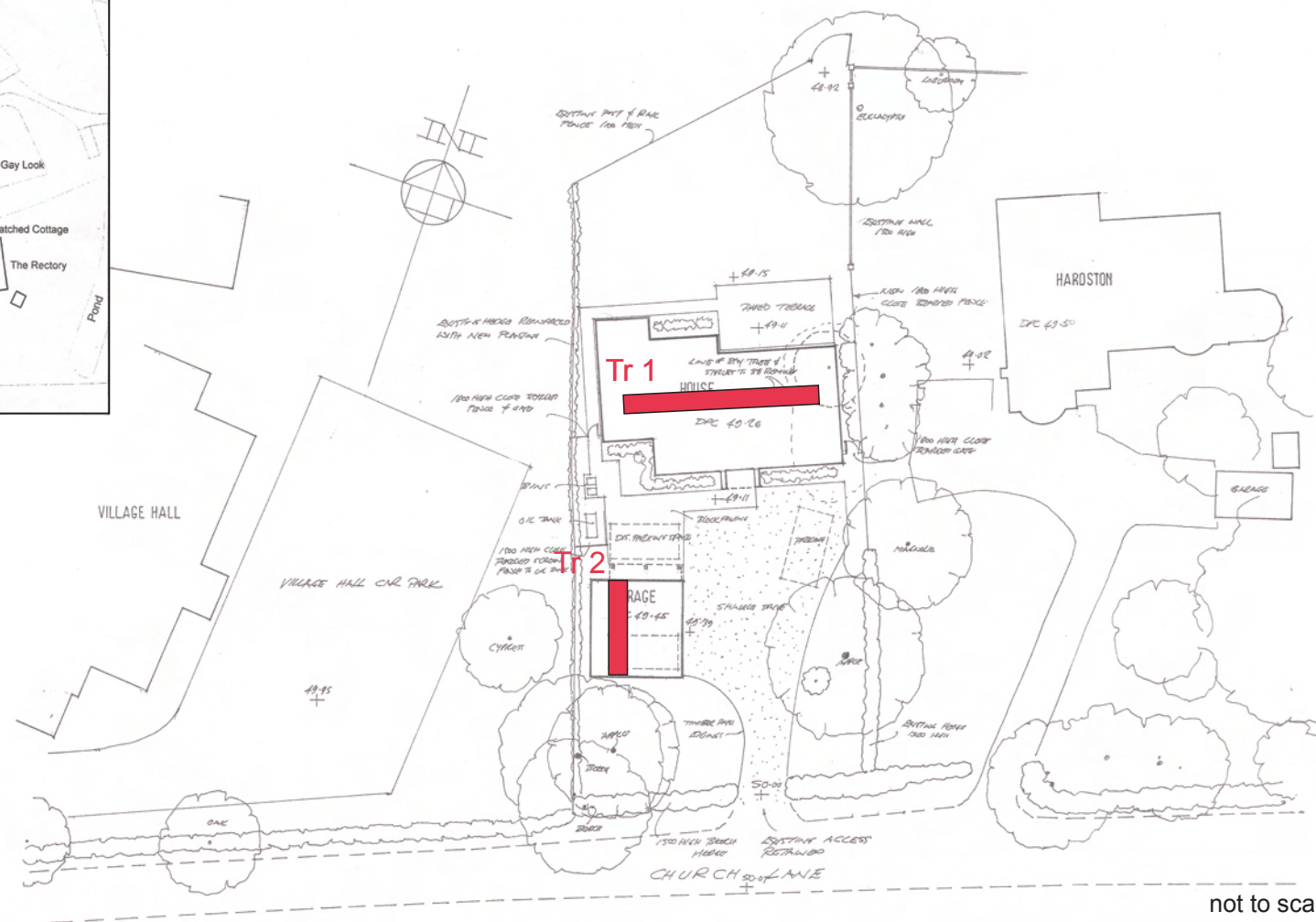
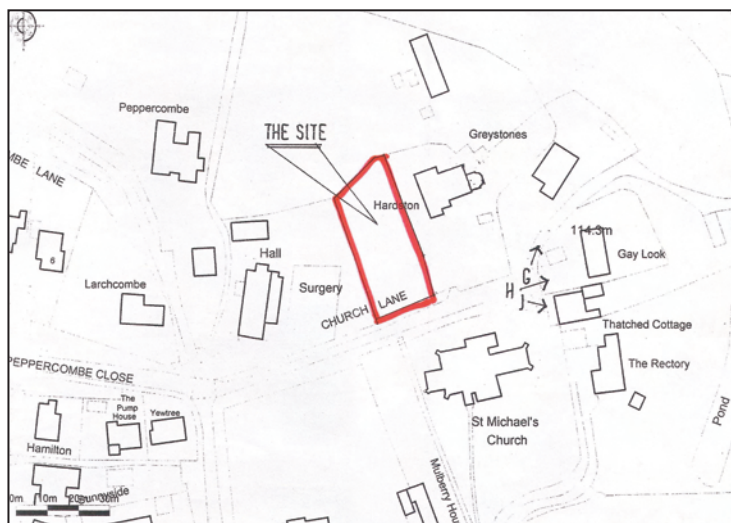
7. COMMENT

7.1 The trench evaluation has demonstrated evidence for a limited amount of post-medieval and later activity on the site. The stone deposit (context 102), revealed in Trench 1, appears to be 19th century, or later, in origin. Although uncertain in nature, partly due to the limited exposure within the trench, it appears to be a spread of material, possibly associated with a former pond, rather than associated with a structure. The 20th century disturbance represents a dump of domestic debris.

7.2 There is no evidence for significant heritage assets on the site.

8. REFERENCES

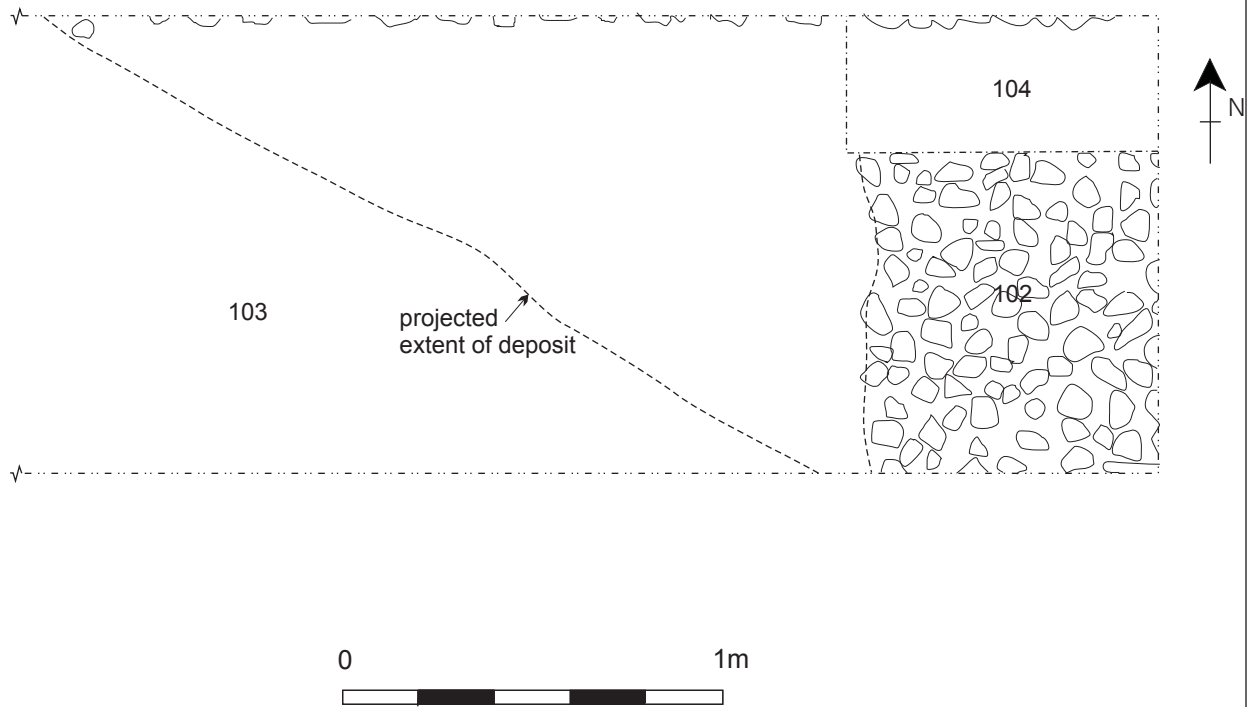
Robinson, S., 2011 *'Proposed new dwelling on land adjacent to Hardston, Church Lane, Urchfont, Devizes, Wiltshire (NGR SU04045734): Project Design for archaeological evaluation'*. Unpublished AC archaeology document, ref ACW420/1/0



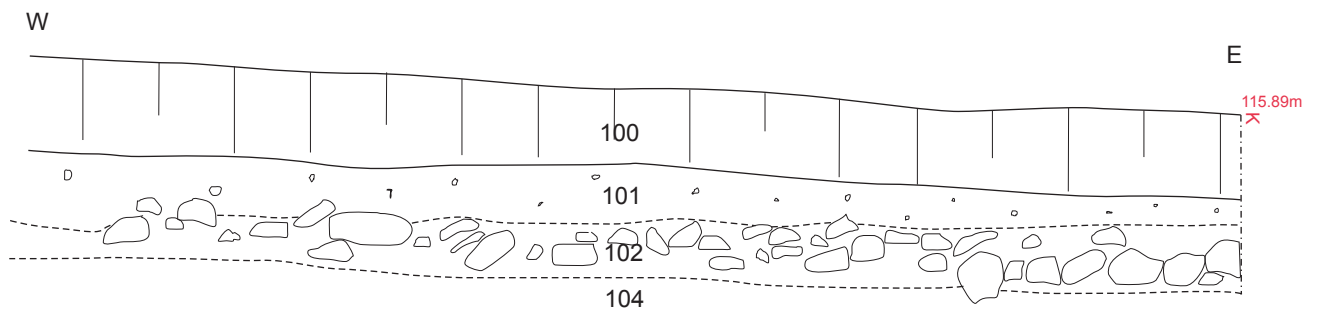
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Fig. 1: Location of site and trenches

a) Plan



b) Section



PROJECT

Hardston, Church Lane, Urchfont

TITLE

Fig. 2:
Detailed plan and section, Trench 1

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