

Alderbury Hill House, Alderbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire:

Results of an archeological watching brief

NGR 417527 128165

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On behalf of:
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archaeology

ALDERBURY HILL HOUSE, ALDERBURY, SALISBURY, WILTSHIRE:

Results of an archaeological watching brief

NGR: 417527 128165

Summary

An archaeological watching brief was undertaken during groundworks associated with a planning consent for Alderbury Hill House, Alderbury, together with additional work undertaken as permitted development. No archaeological features or finds were recovered during the fieldwork. A single natural feature, representing a probable tree-throw was recorded in close proximity to the main house.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 This document sets out the results of an archaeological watching brief undertaken during groundworks associated with redevelopment on land at Alderbury Hill, Alderbury near Salisbury, Wiltshire (NGR 417527 128165). The site location and development details are shown in Fig.1.

1.2 The monitoring was undertaken by AC archaeology Ltd during June and July 2016 and was commissioned by C Anderson Esq. It was undertaken in compliance with the requirements of a planning consent granted by Wiltshire Council (16/04913/FUL). Condition 5 states:

No development shall commence within the site until:

- a) A written programme of archaeological investigation, which should include on-site work and off-site such as the analysis, publishing and archiving of the results, has been submitted to and approved by the Local Planning Authority; and
- b) The approved programme of archaeological work has been carried out in accordance with the approved details.

REASON: The application contained insufficient information to enable this matter to be considered prior to granting planning permission and the matter is required to be agreed with the Local Planning Authority before development commences in order that the development is undertaken in an acceptable manner, to enable the recording of archaeological interest.

1.3 The groundworks monitored included the construction of a new driveway to the west and north of the existing house, improvements to the parking and turning area to the south of the house and the replacement of a garage with a single-storey building to the north of the house. Additional works comprised the construction of a new summerhouse and stable block. Further work was undertaken as permitted development (16/03470/PNEX) in relation to the construction of a single-storey extension to the north of the main house.

1.4 The site is located to the north of Southampton Road, some 1.7km northwest of Alderbury and 3.5km southeast of the centre of Salisbury. Alderbury Hill House stands on the western flank of a low knoll overlooking the floodplain and water meadows of the Avon valley. The site slopes

gently downwards from c. 80m OD at its northern extent to c. 70m OD at the southern extent of the application area and is predominantly under lawn or pasture.

- 1.5 The underlying geology varies from Palaeogene sand and clay of the Reading Formation towards the west of the site and London Clay to the east of the site. (BGS online).

2. HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

- 2.1 There are no designated heritage assets within the application area itself. The National Heritage List for England shows that there are eight designated heritage assets within 500m of the application area, including the Grade I Listed Building St. Marie's Grange some 200m to the west, which has five associated Grade II listed structures. Two further Grade II listed buildings, Belmont House and Kennel Farm, are situated some 500m to the northwest of the site.
- 2.2 Historic England's PastScape records a findspot consisting of Iron Age pottery and a glass bead, found in Belmont some 500m to the northwest of the application area. The Wiltshire Historic Environment Record documents a further findspot, comprising a Bronze Age chisel and part of a sickle (MWI9710) found in a field to the north of Alderbury Hill House. No heritage assets are recorded within the site itself.

3. METHODOLOGY

- 3.1 The principal aims of the archaeological watching brief were:
- To record any archaeological features and finds which may be revealed or disturbed by the groundworks, and;
 - To provide an archive and interpretive report on the results of the monitoring.
- 3.2 The site works were undertaken in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by Wiltshire Council (AC archaeology 2016). All relevant groundworks were monitored by the site archaeologists.
- 3.4 Site observations were recorded using the standard AC archaeology *pro-forma* recording system, comprising written, graphic and photographic records in accordance with AC archaeology's *General Site Recording Manual, Version 2*.
- 3.5 The archive has been prepared using the unique site code ACW918.

4. RESULTS

- 4.1 The existing house stands on levelled ground with the existing tennis court area also standing on land which was reduced and levelled prior to its construction. This activity is likely to have removed or disturbed any archaeological deposits that may have been present in these areas.
- 4.2 Limited topsoil stripping, in terms of depth, was undertaken across the site, reducing the potential for any archaeological deposits present to be revealed. Furthermore, it was evident

that large areas had previously been disturbed by earlier groundworks. Foundation trenches excavated for the new buildings revealed no evidence for any archaeological activity.

- 4.2** A shallow circular feature measuring c. 2.2m in diameter and 1.1m in depth was recorded approximately 10m to the south of the main house. It was composed of a dark grey brown silty loam, containing numerous fragments of charcoal. This feature appeared likely to represent a tree hollow.



Plate 1: General view of groundworks



Plate 2: General view showing possible tree-throw feature

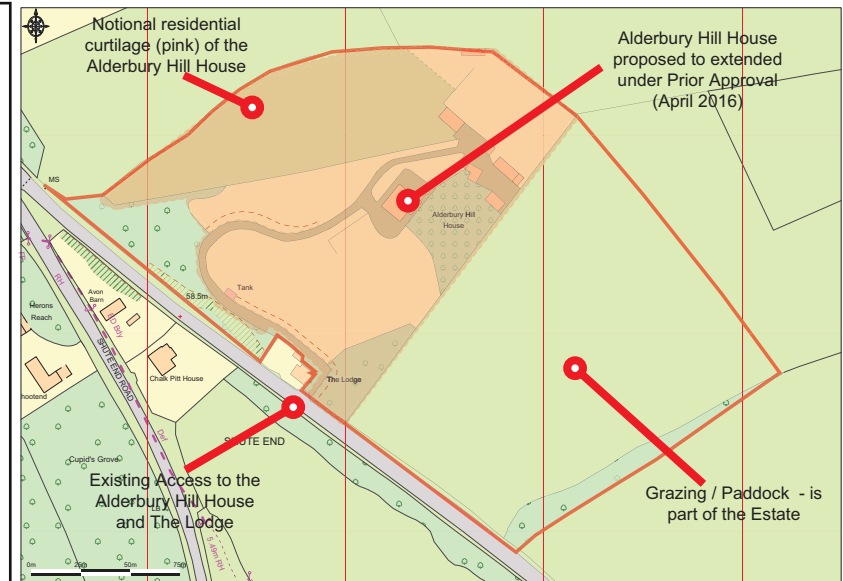
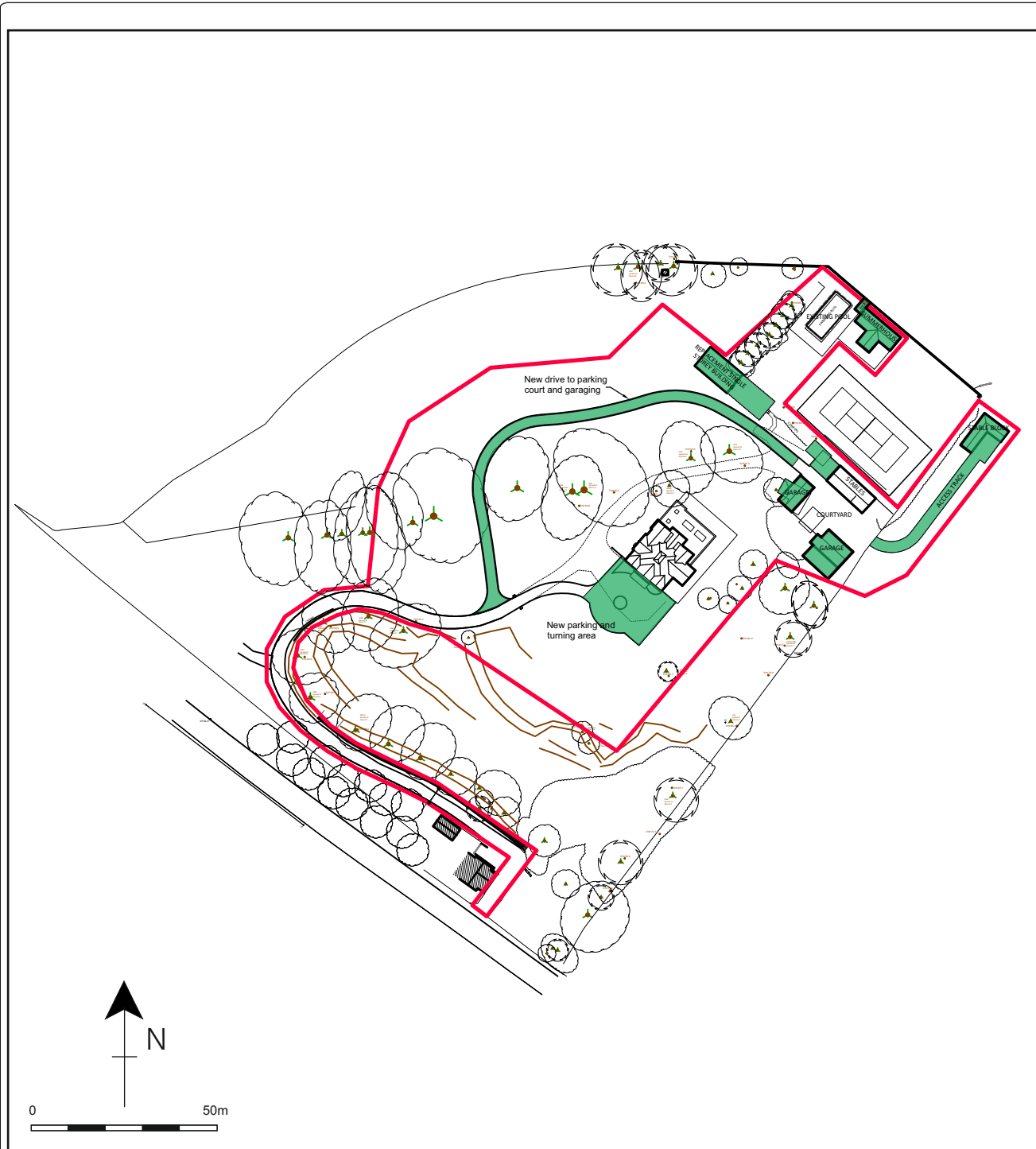
5. COMMENT

- 5.1 The watching brief has provided wholly negative results, with no evidence for any archaeological activity or the presence of artefacts in any of the areas or foundation trenches observed. A single feature recorded in close proximity to the main house is considered likely to represent the remains of a tree hollow.

6. REFERENCES



AC archaeology 2016, Alderbury Hill House, *Alderbury, Salisbury, Wiltshire: Written Scheme of Investigation for an archaeological watching brief*. AC archaeology Document no. ACW918/1/0


British Geological Survey Geology of Britain Viewer (<http://mapapps.bgs.ac.uk/geologyofbritain/home.html>). Accessed June 2016.



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Key:

-  areas watched
-  development area

PROJECT 

Alderbury Hill House, Salisbury

TITLE

Fig. 1: Site location and area of archaeological monitoring

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