

'The Cottages' Winterbourne Monkton Wiltshire



Archaeological Watching Brief Report



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The Cottages, Winterbourne Monkton, Wiltshire

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF REPORT

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Cover Plate: View of cottages from the south.

SUMMARY

In November 2002 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 'The Cottages', Winterbourne Monkton, Wiltshire, (NGR SU 0970 7190). The work was commissioned by Bybrook Developments in advance of a barn conversion and renovation to cottages. The watching brief revealed two undated features pre-dating the cottages. The barn dates to the post-medieval period.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 In November 2002 Oxford Archaeology (OA) carried out an archaeological watching brief at 'The Cottages', Winterbourne Monkton, Wiltshire (Fig. 1). The work was commissioned by Bybrook Developments in respect of a planning application for a barn conversion and renovation and new extension to the church cottages.

1.1.2 Kennet District Council recommended an archaeological watching brief be carried out during the initial ground works. No brief or Written Scheme of Investigation was prepared for the site.

1.2 Geology and topography

1.2.1 The site lies to the north west of the church at 155 m above OD. The site is situated on the edge of Lower Chalk.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The Church of St Mary Magdalene was rebuilt in 1878 by Butterfield, but still retaining parts of the earlier 13th and 14th century features in the form of south porch, north doorway and part of south door, and 13th century chancel arch (Pevsner, 1963).

1.3.2 The village is situated approximately 450 m to the north of Avebury, which is part of a prehistoric landscape that includes Stonehenge, Windmill Hill, West Kennet Long Barrow and Silbury Hill. World Heritage status was accorded in 1987 under the UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage.

2 PROJECT AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

2.1.1 To identify and record the presence/absence, extent, condition, quality and date of archaeological remains in the areas affected by the development.

2.1.2 To make available the results of the archaeological investigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The work involved a number of phases of recording (Fig. 2). The first was the excavation of twelve holes for concrete pads to support a steel frame within the barn. This was carried by a mini excavator after removal of doors, roof and modern brickwork.
- 2.2.2 The second phase was the excavation of the foundation trenches for the new extension at the east end of the cottages. This was carried out by a mini excavator after the old extension was demolished and the site was cleared and levelled.
- 2.2.3 All archaeological features were planned at a scale of 1:100 and where excavated their sections drawn at scales of 1:20. All excavated features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film. A general photographic record of the work was made. Recording followed procedures detailed in the *OAU Fieldwork Manual* (ed D Wilkinson, 1992).

3 RESULTS

3.1 Description of deposits

Barn Conversion

- 3.1.1 This consisted in the excavation of twelve pad holes measuring 1.5 m x 1.5 m x 0.6 – 0.8 m. Six were dug along the east and west walls of the barn (Fig. 4). These cut through the barns concrete floor and hardcore base (1), which measured 0.5 m thick. The holes depth varied with the depth of natural chalk (3), which was sealed below a layer of disturbed soil of mid grey silty clay (2). In this layer in pad hole 3 was a fragment of a medieval carved limestone basin. Along the east side of the barn in holes 10, 11 and 12 the remains of the sarson stone footings (10) of the barn were observed. These had been replaced in the 20th century by a brick wall with garage doors. The footings were of compacted sarson stone fragments with a silty clay bond and were trench built measuring 0.4 – 0.5 m in depth and 0.65 m wide.

Foundations for extension

- 3.1.2 Once the site was levelled and marked out, a mini excavator excavated the trenches to a depth of 0.8 m from the surface into the chalk. The trenches varied in width from 1 m to 0.6 m on the external walls, with the internals being 0.3 m. The chalk (3) was 0.3 m from the surface. This had been cut by a number of features and root holes from plants in the garden. The two features consisted of the remains of a pond (4), which was sub circular in shape with steep sloping sides rounding to a concave base, measuring 5.6 m x 4.4 m x 0.7 m. It was filled by a dark brown silty clay loam (5). The second was a large pit (6) partly seen in section with very steep sloping sides and base below level of impact. It measured 4.2 m x 0.9 m x 1 m. It was filled by a mid brown silty clay loam (7). These were all overlain by a 0.3 – 0.45 m thick

cultivated soil of dark grey brown silty clay loam (8), which underlay 0.2 m thick dark grey brown silty clay topsoil (9) (Fig. 3).

3.2 Finds

- 3.2.1 A fragments of medieval carved limestone basin was recovered from the disturbed soil (2) under the barn floor in pad hole 3.

3.3 Palaeo-environmental remains

- 3.3.1 No deposits suitable for environmental sampling were identified during the watching brief.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The watching brief revealed no archaeological features under the site of the barn and that the barn was built on an area of made up ground possibly late to post medieval in date by its construction. The barn had been altered and rebuilt in the late 20th century with new garage doors and brick wall along its east face. Where the new extension to the cottages was to be built, two undated features were exposed. These were an undated pit and a large pond feature, which had been back filled prior to the construction of the cottages. A number of root holes were observed relating to garden plants around the cottages.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

| <i>Context</i> | <i>Type</i> | <i>Depth</i> | <i>Width</i> | <i>Length</i> | <i>Comments</i> | <i> Finds</i> |
|----------------|-------------|--------------|--------------|---------------|------------------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Layer | 0.5 m | | | Barn floor | |
| 2 | Layer | | | | Ground make up | None |
| 3 | Natural | | | | Chalk | |
| 4 | Cut | 0.7 m | 4.4 m | 5.6 m | Old Pond | |
| 5 | Fill | | | | Fill of pond | None |
| 6 | Cut | 1 m | 0.9 m | 4.2 m | Large pit | |
| 7 | Fill | | | | Fill of pit | None |
| 8 | Layer | 0.45 m | | | Cultivated subsoil | None |
| 9 | Layer | 0.2 m | | | Topsoil | None |
| 10 | Structure | 0.5 m | 0.65 m | | Old east side stone footings | |

APPENDIX 2 BIBLIOGRAPHY AND REFERENCES

Nickolaus Pevsner, 1963, *The Buildings of England: Wiltshire*.

D Wilkinson, 1992, *OAU Fieldwork Manual*

OA, 2002 *United Reform Church, Avebury, Wiltshire* Archaeological Watching Brief

APPENDIX 3 SUMMARY OF SITE DETAILS

Site name: 'The Cottages', Winterbourne Monkton, Wiltshire

Site code: WIMOCO 02

Grid reference: NGR SU 0970 7190

Type of watching brief: Barn conversion and renovation to cottages.

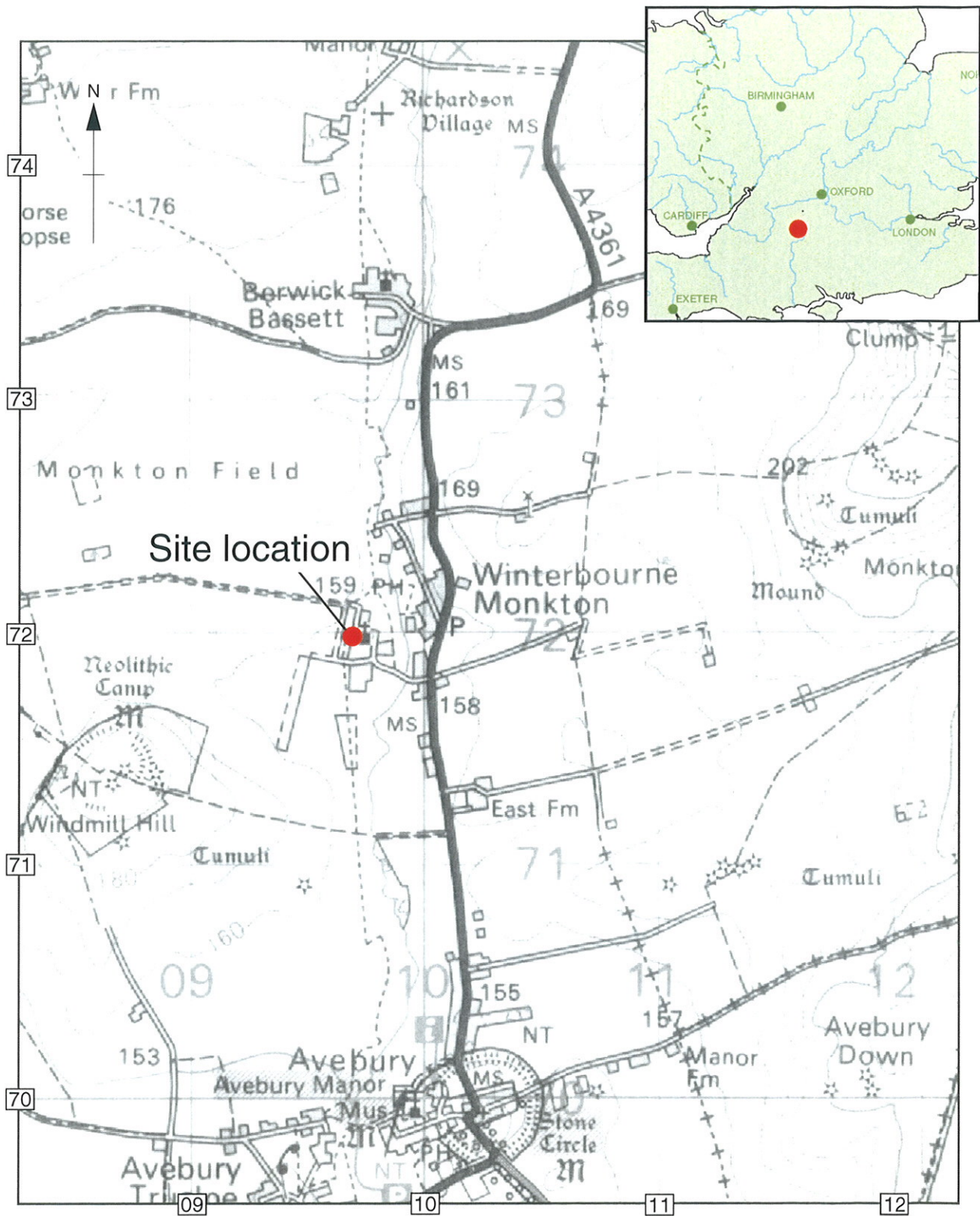
Date and duration of project: Three site visits were made from the 5/11/2002 to the 6/1/2003.

Area of site: 16 m x 6 m and 9.5 m x 9.5 m

Summary of results: The watching brief revealed two undated features pre dating the cottages. The barn was also dated to post-medieval period.

Location of archive: The archive is currently held at OA, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford, OX2 0ES, and will be deposited with Devizes Museum in due course.

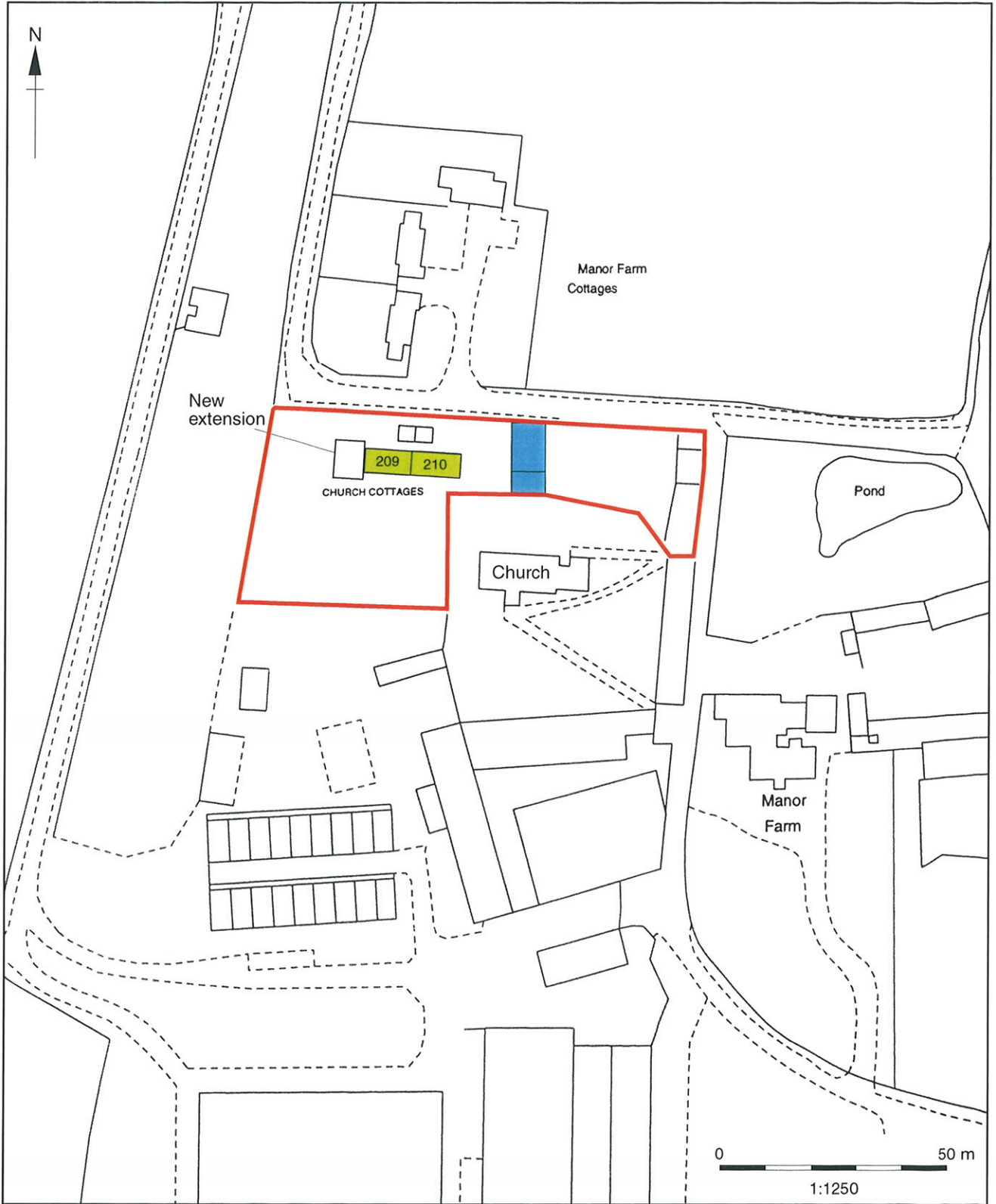




Scale 1:25,000

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Figure 1: Site location



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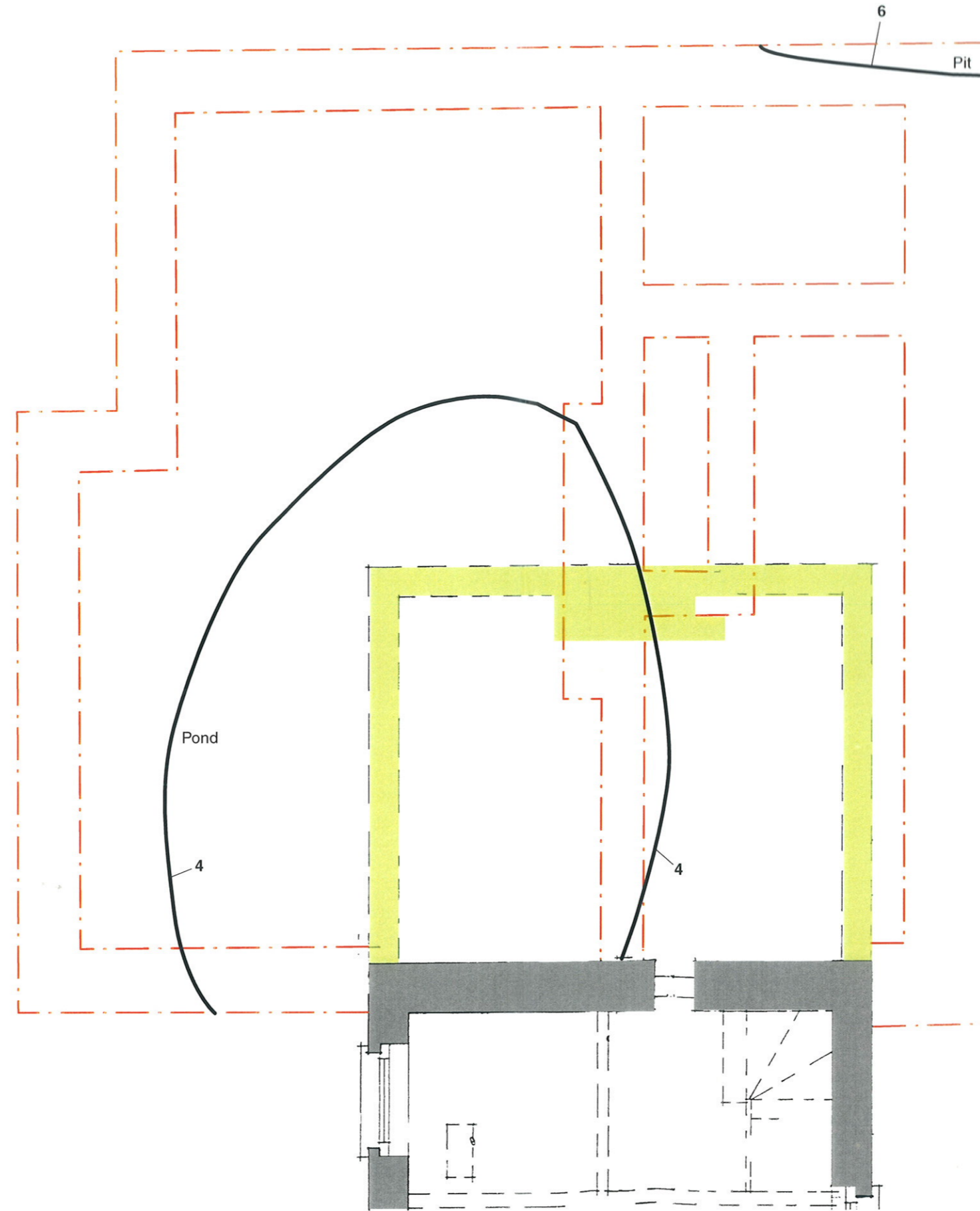
-  Cottages
-  Barn
-  Area of development

Figure 2: Site location of cottages and barn







| Key | |
|---|-----------------------------|
|  | Edge of foundation trenches |
|  | Old extension |
|  | House |
|  | Features |



Figure 3: Site plan of cottage foundations and archaeological features

Plan 1

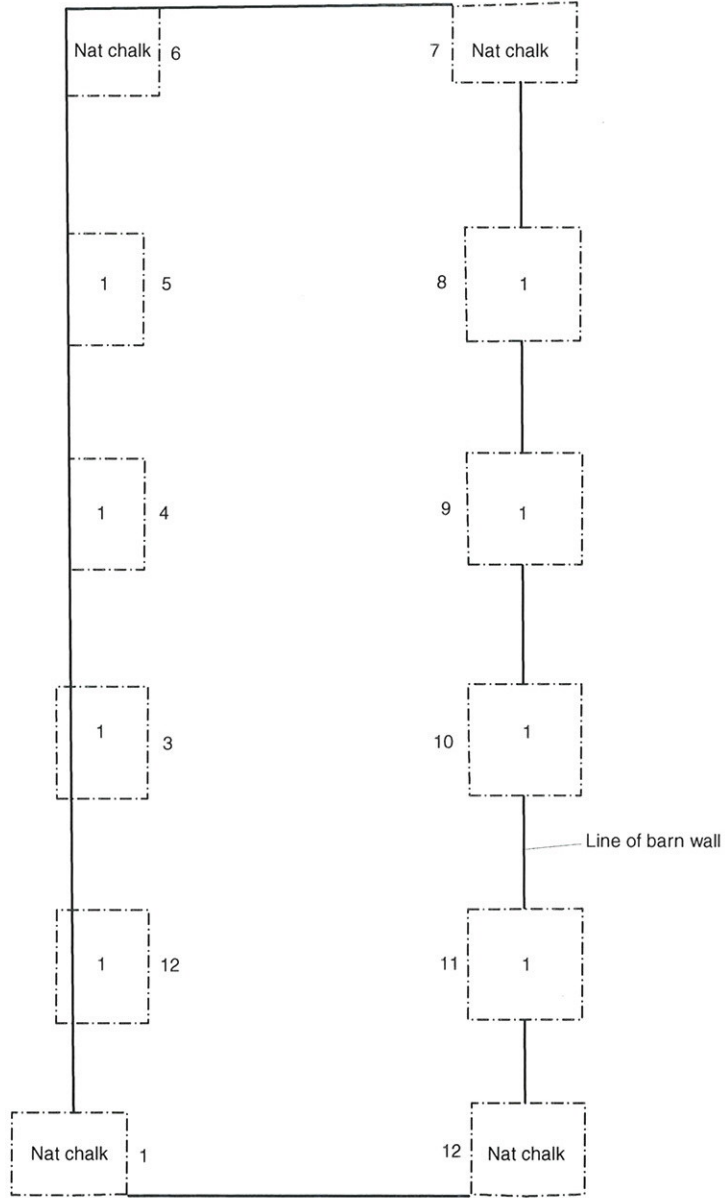














Figure 4: Plan of pad holes in barn

| | |
|---|---|
|  | Section line and number |
|  | Interior section line and number |
|  | Limit of excavation |
|  | Sondage / Interior limit of excavation |
|  | Fill line and number |
|  | Cut line and number |
|  | Structure number |
|  | Unclear boundary |
|  | Stones |
|  | Hachures indicate inclination of slope inside excavated feature |
|  | Levels |
|  | Grid point |



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