



# Red Lion Hotel, Milford Street Salisbury, Wiltshire

Archaeological Watching Brief

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**RED LION HOTEL, MILFORD STREET, SALISBURY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

Prepared on behalf of:

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**Figure 1:** Site and test-pit location plan

## **RED LION HOTEL, MILFORD STREET, SALISBURY ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

### **Summary**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Mr M Maidment of the Red Lion Hotel to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two geotechnic test-pits. The test-pits were excavated in advance of the proposed construction of a new dining room extension located to the rear of the Red Lion Hotel, Salisbury, Wiltshire (centred on SU 14573 29895).

The two test-pits were excavated by machine in the area of the proposed new dining room, to the rear (i.e. to the south) of the current dining facilities. Although no archaeological features were identified, the stratigraphic sequence in the two test-pits suggests a series of levelling/terracing layers and demolition layers of probable Medieval and Post-medieval date.

The stratigraphic sequence encountered in both test-pits generally comprised topsoil overlying building debris layers and a possible buried garden soil. Fragments of animal bone, an oyster shell and a flint flake were recovered from Test-pit 1, whilst Test-pit 2 produced a small quantity of animal bone, fragments of Medieval peg tile, clay pipe, flint and Post-medieval pottery sherds from the Verwood Kilns.

In addition, Test-pit 1 contained a Greensand flagstone floor, possibly representing a yard surface. A primary layer of building debris recorded in both test-pits contained a quantity of broken Medieval roof tiles, which may represent either the construction phase for the late 13<sup>th</sup> century hotel, or a later renovation phase when the original roof tiles may have been replaced. Both test-pits encountered the *in situ* River Avon gravel at their base.

**RED LION HOTEL, MILFORD STREET, SALISBURY  
ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF TEST-PITS**

**Acknowledgements**

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Mr. M Maidment of the Red Lion Hotel, through his appointed architects, Damen Associates, to undertake the archaeological watching brief. The assistance shown by Mr Maidment, and in particular Mr Colin Burrows of Damen Associates is gratefully acknowledged. The collaborative role of Helena Cave-Penney (Wiltshire County Council Assistant County Archaeologist) who monitored the fieldwork is also gratefully acknowledged.

The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Andrew Crockett, with the fieldwork carried out by Rachel Every. This report was compiled by Rachel Every, with finds analysis provided by Lorraine Mepham. The illustrations were produced by Rob Goller.

# RED LION HOTEL, MILFORD STREET, SALISBURY

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL MONITORING OF TEST-PITS

### 1 INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Damen Associates, on behalf of their client, Mr M Maidment of the Red Lion Hotel to undertake an archaeological watching brief during the excavation of two geotechnic test-pits. The test-pits were located to the rear of the Red Lion Hotel, in the proposed area for the construction of a new dining room (centred on SU 14573 29895: **Figure 1**).

1.1.2 The work was carried out on 19<sup>th</sup> February 1999.

1.1.3 The objectives of the monitoring was to determine, as far as was reasonably possible, the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits in the development area.

#### 1.2 Topography, Geology, and Hydrography

1.2.1 Topographically, the site is flat. The ground surface in the area is at an average height of *c.* 9.5m above Ordnance Datum (aOD). The site is situated within the River Avon floodplain, comprising drift deposits of alluvial gravels and silts. The underlying solid geology is Cretaceous Upper Chalk.

#### 1.3 Archaeological Background

1.3.1 The site lies within Antelope Chequer, the development of which is described in detail elsewhere (i.e. RCHM 1980) and which will not be repeated here. In summary, the Red Lion Hotel probably originates in the late 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> century and was formerly named the *White Bear* (also the name for the chequer at this time).

1.3.2 During the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> centuries the tenement was known as *Duynescorner*, after Agnes la Duynes who owned the property in *c.* 1327, and was passed to Henry Burry (1338-1350 and Mayor of Salisbury in 1323) and then the Buterleghs by 1361. It passed with other properties to John Camel, the grocer in 1395, who left it to this daughter Agnes in 1399.

1.3.3 In 1483, the tenement at the north-west corner of the chequer was called *Berecorner* which was included as part of the inn. This tenement was later extended eastwards to include the present inn yard and throughway. The inn has been known as the Red Lion from at least 1756.

1.3.4 At the time of the evaluation the site was a land-locked yard space, enclosed by the rear of properties forming the outer edge of Antelope Chequer and the north edge of Brown Street car park. Access to this area was obtained through Brown Street car park, after demolition of a modern garden wall.

## 1.4 Methodology

1.4.1 A tracked mechanical excavator fitted with a toothless bucket was used to excavate the test-pits under constant archaeological supervision, to the surface of *in situ* floodplain gravels (i.e. to a depth of c. 2.4m below current ground surface). Both test-pits were manually cleaned and recorded up to a depth of c.1.2 m.

1.4.2 All recording was carried out using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* record sheets, and included a full graphic and photographic record of the investigations. Due to the nature and depth of the test-pits, it was not possible to clean and record sections by hand below 1.2m, hence the identification and description of the lower strata demonstrates the general sequence and thickness, rather than detailed analysis of the deposits.

## 2 RESULTS

### 2.1 Test-pit 1

2.1.1 Test-pit 1 (NGR SU 14565 29899: **Figure 1**) measured 2 m by 1.20 m (aligned east/west) and was c. 2.4m deep. The stratigraphic sequence encountered comprised the following:

- 0.13m of dark-brown, silty loam topsoil (layer 101; equivalent to 201), overlying
- 0.8m of mixed building debris, pale yellow-brown with common chalk fragments (layer 102; equivalent to 202), overlying
- 0.28m of mid-brown, silty clay buried ?garden soil (layer 103; equivalent to 203) containing chalk fragments and occasional charcoal flecking and small amounts of CBM, animal bone and oyster shell, overlying
- 0.16m of building debris in a buff clay with occasional flint fragments (layer 104; equivalent to 204), overlying
- 0.16m of large, angular Greensand flagstones (layer 105), overlying
- 0.29m of a loose mortar and building debris layer with Medieval roof tiles (layer 106; equivalent to 206), overlying
- 1m of a fine, grey silty clay (layer 107), overlying
- 0.30m + of natural *in situ* gravels (layer 108; equivalent to 207)

### 2.2 Test-pit 2

2.2.1 Test-pit 2 (NGR SU 14577 29894: **Figure 1**) measured 1.8m by 1.10m (aligned east/west) and was c. 2.4m deep. The stratigraphic sequence encountered comprised the following:

- 0.46m of dark-brown, silty topsoil with rare chalk fragments (layer 201; equivalent to 101), overlying
- 0.13m of pale brown building debris layer containing brick and chalk rubble (layer 202; equivalent to 201), overlying
- 0.38m of mid-brown, silty clay buried ?garden soil layer, containing a small amount of Medieval roof tile, animal bone, Post-medieval pottery and small amounts of clay pipe and worked flint (layer 203; equivalent to 103), overlying
- 0.38m of a loose rubble and build up layer in a mortar matrix with buff clay lenses (layer 204; equivalent to 104), also containing occasional chalk, overlying
- 0.37m of a fine grey silty clay (layer 205), overlying
- 0.50m of a pale yellow loose clayey mortar layer with Medieval roof tiles which were not retrieved due to the depth of the test-pit (layer 206; equivalent to 106), overlying
- 0.30m+ of natural *in situ* gravels (layer 207; equivalent to 108).

### **2.3 Other observations**

- 2.3.1 A probable pit was noted by contractors during the excavation of the foundation trenches for the proposed development, following the completion of the archaeological watching brief. This was situated immediately to the west of Test-pit 2.
- 2.3.2 The feature comprised a discrete area of soft anaerobic bluish grey clay, located on the surface of the *in situ* floodplain gravel at the base of the foundation trench. It was not possible to determine if the feature that this deposit presumably occupied had also cut through any layers sealing the gravel. The base of a Medieval jug was recovered from this deposit.

## **3 THE FINDS**

### **3.1 Introduction**

- 3.1.1 A small quantity of artefacts was recovered from the two test-pits, in a restricted range of material types. The finds comprise a small assemblage of ceramic building material consisting of Medieval roof tiles, animal bone, two sherds of Post-medieval pottery (from the Verwood Kilns) flint flakes, clay pipe and an oyster shell. In addition, the base of a Medieval jug was also recovered during construction work.
- 3.1.2 Finds have been quantified by material type within each context (**Table 1**). This information is summarised by material type below.

**Table 1: All finds by context**

| Test-pit     | Context | Clay Pipe | Animal Bone | Shell    | CBM      | Worked Flint | Pottery  |
|--------------|---------|-----------|-------------|----------|----------|--------------|----------|
| 1            | 103     |           | 1           | 1        | 1        |              |          |
| 1            | 104     |           |             |          |          | 1            |          |
| 1            | 106     |           |             |          | 6        |              |          |
| 2            | 203     | 1         | 6           |          | 1        | 1            | 2        |
| <b>Total</b> |         | <b>1</b>  | <b>7</b>    | <b>1</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>2</b>     | <b>2</b> |

### 3.2 Medieval Jug

- 3.2.1 The vessel found at the Red Lion comprises the lower third of a Medieval jug. The jug has been handmade (coil-built) in a pale salmon-pink/buff clay fabric which can be identified as a Laverstock type, i.e. comparable to products of the Medieval kilns at Laverstock just outside the city. Coil-building (as opposed to wheel-throwing) has resulted in a slightly irregular shape which can be seen if the jug is viewed from above. The fragment is well preserved, with sharp, unabraded breaks, probably due to deposition within a pit or other cut feature.
- 3.2.2 The ‘waisted’ form of the surviving fragment indicates that this is a jug of ‘baluster’ form, i.e. with an overall sinuous profile comparable to a decorative stair-rail. The jug has a thin, patchy glaze, mottled apple green in colour. No decoration is present, but this is likely in any case to have been confined to the upper two-thirds of the vessel. The base has been continuously thumbled all round.
- 3.2.3 Comparable examples of jugs can be seen amongst the collection from the Laverstock kilns (Musty, Algar and Ewence 1969). These kilns have been archaeomagnetically dated to the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century (c.1230-75), and the Red Lion vessel is likely to fall within this date range or possibly slightly later, in the later 13<sup>th</sup> or early 14<sup>th</sup> century.

## 4 CONCLUSIONS

- 4.1.1 The results of the test-pits located to the rear of the Red Lion Hotel indicate a broadly consistent stratigraphic sequence present across the site limits. The Greensand flagged floor within Test-pit 1 remains undated, although its position within the stratigraphic sequence would suggest a late Medieval or early Post-medieval date. At this period it is unlikely that the flagging represents an internal floor surface, as the interior of chequers were generally occupied by gardens and ancillary features such as refuse pits, latrines and drainage ditches.
- 4.1.2 From the test-pits examined it would appear that there were no significant archaeological deposits at risk from the proposed development. The presence of dumps of Medieval roof tiles (within both test-pits) may not necessarily indicate a Medieval deposit, but possibly Post-medieval re-roofing of properties in the immediate vicinity.

- 4.1.3 The Medieval jug recovered during construction was almost certainly formerly located within a contemporaneous pit, as a fragment of the size recovered would almost certainly not survive beyond the relatively secure environment provided by such a feature. Pits are a common find within the hinterland of the Medieval chequers of Salisbury, and would have been used primarily for refuse disposal.

## **5 ARCHIVE**

- 5.1.1 The archive is currently held at the offices of Wessex Archaeology, Old Sarum Park, Salisbury, Wiltshire (project code 46267). The archive will be deposited in due course at Salisbury District Museum, Kings House, The Close, Salisbury.

## **6 BIBLIOGRAPHY**

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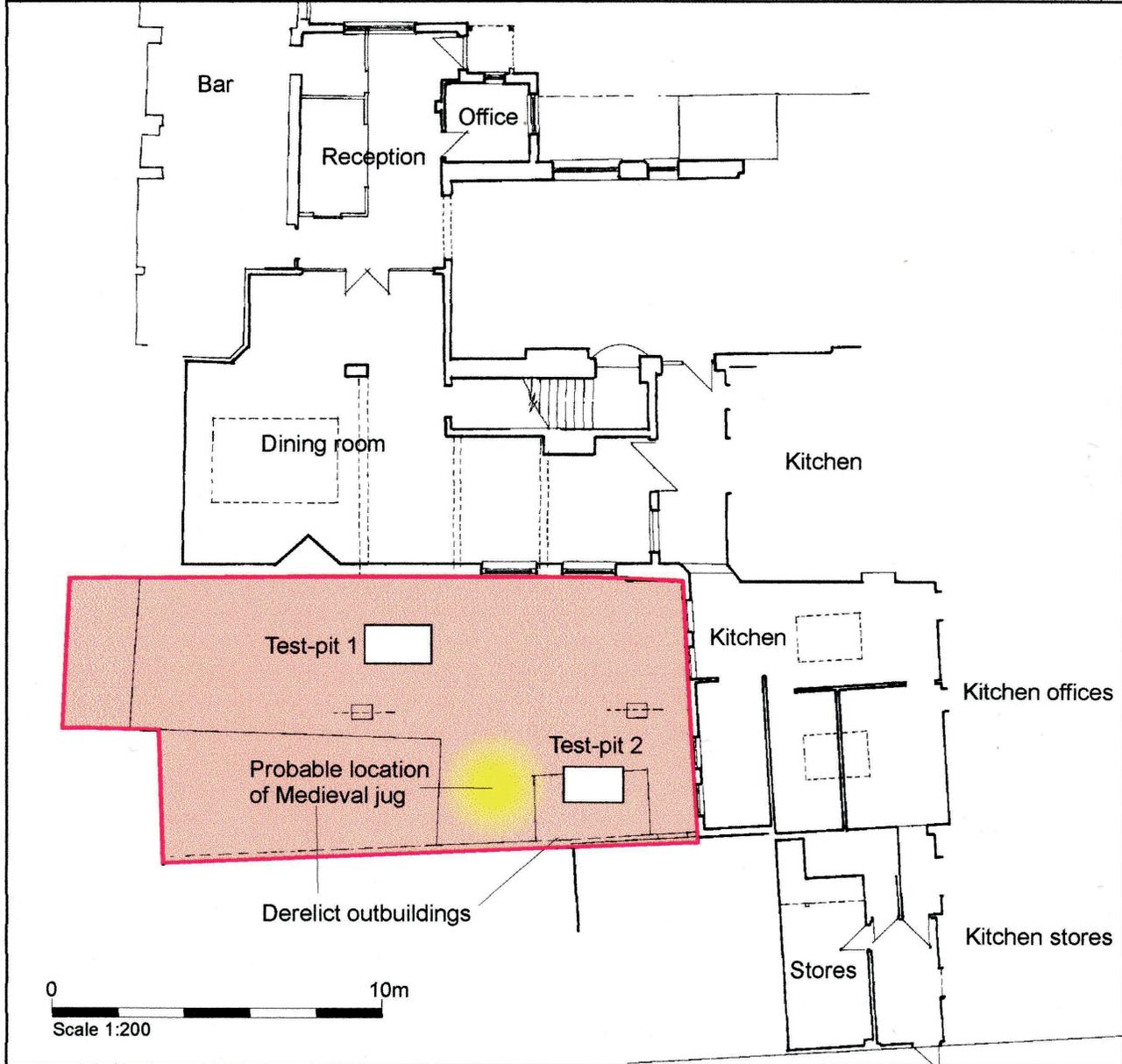
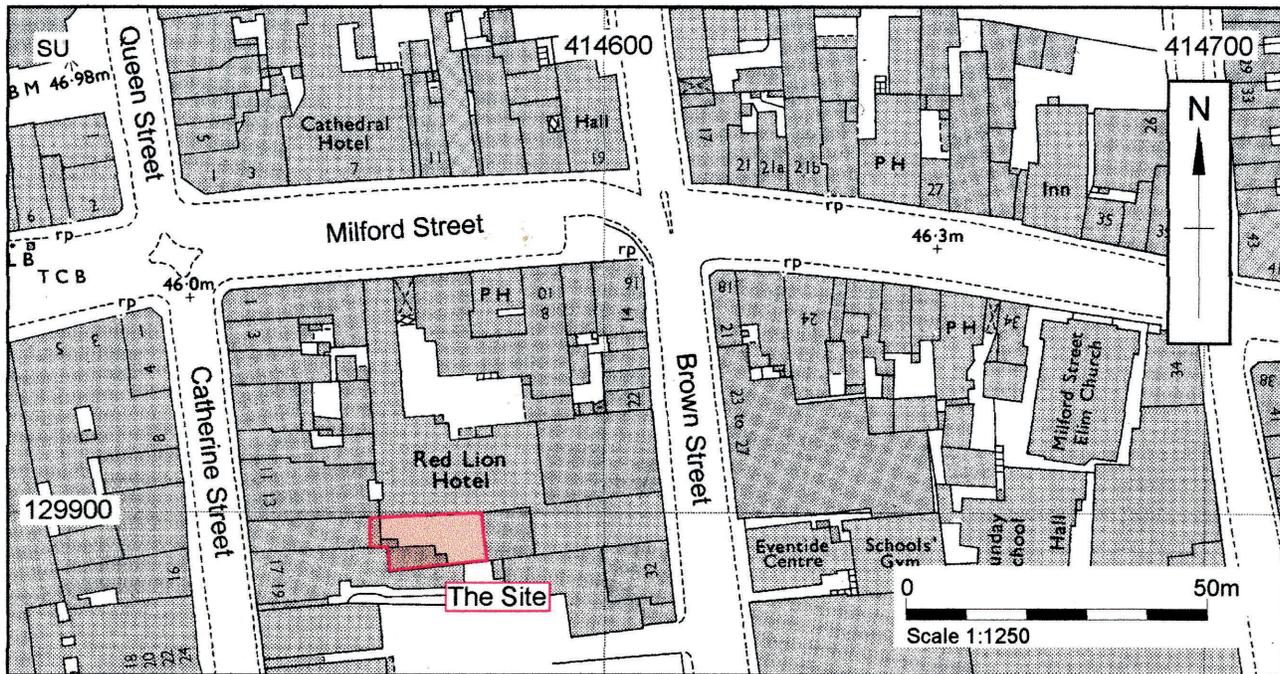


Figure 1: Site and test-pit location plan



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