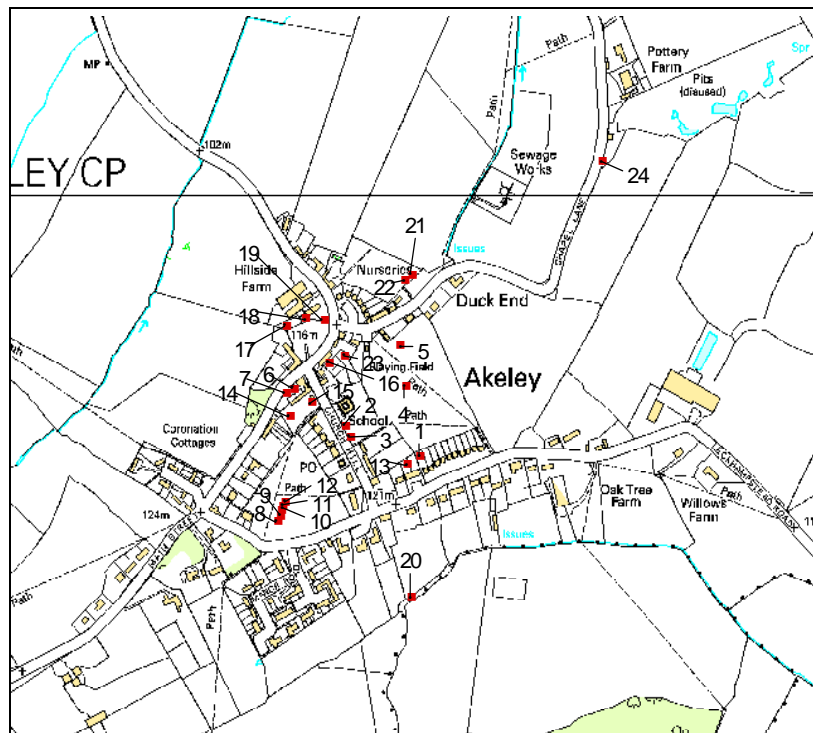


# whittlewood<sub>project</sub>

## Report on Shovel Test Pits in and around Akeley village: July-August 2001



RLCJ  
23.x.01.

## Akeley Shovel Test Pits

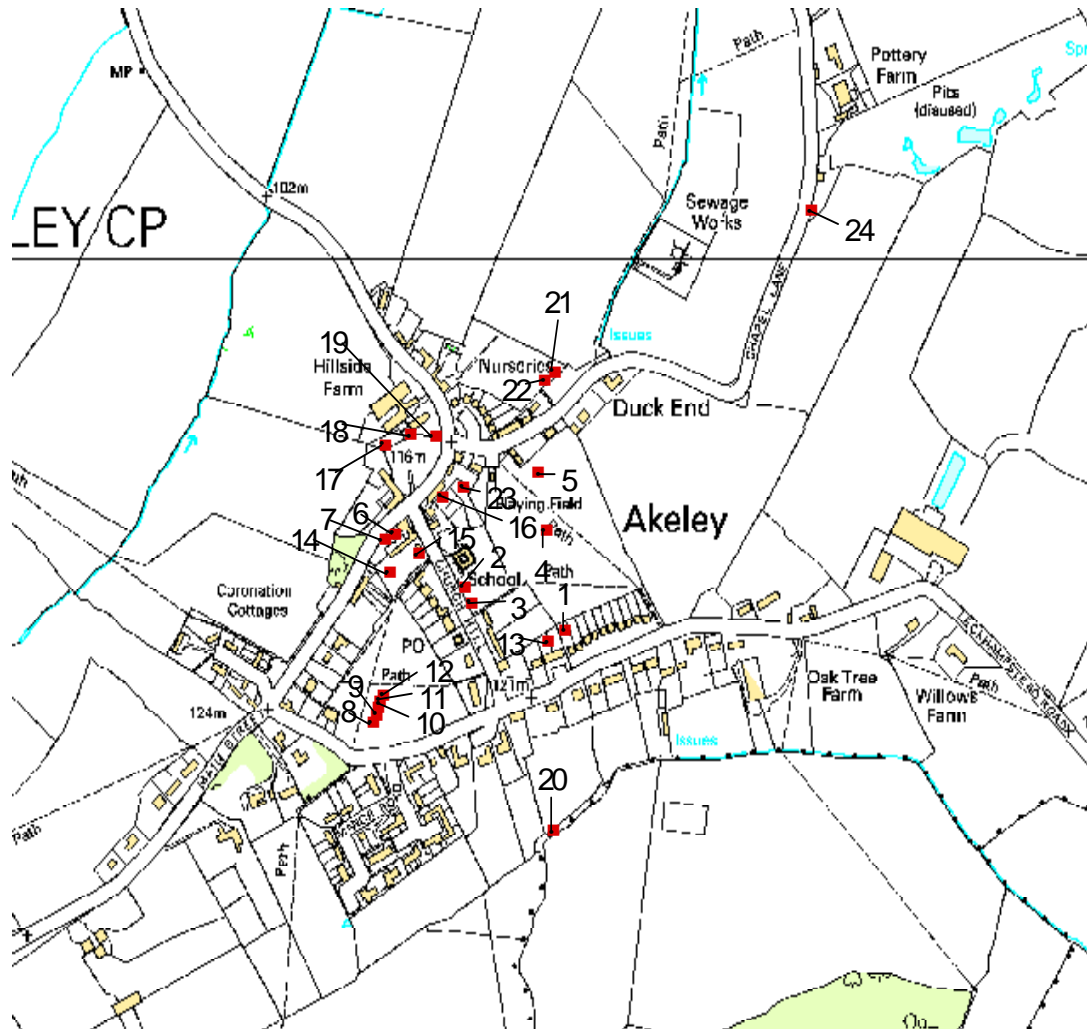
Report on the twenty-four Shovel Test Pits sunk in and around Akeley, Bucks in July and August 2001.

### ***Pottery Concordance and dating***

The different pottery types (fabrics) encountered are represented in the table below, together with their Northamptonshire County type-series and Milton Keynes type-series codes where they exist. A date range for the production of this pottery is also included. In the body of the text, fabrics are referred to by the Northamptonshire code only.

| Description  | Fabric (N) | Fabric (MK) | Date Range                                     |
|--|------------|-------------|--|
| Early-middle Saxon Handmade Wares                              | F2         |             | 450-800  |
| Ipswich Ware   | F95        |             | c. 725-850                                     |
| T1 (1) types St Neots Ware                                     | F100       | SNC1        | 850-1100                                       |
| T1 (2) type St Neots Ware                                      | F200       | SNC1        | 1000-1200                                      |
| Cotswold-type Oolitic Ware                                     | F207       | MSC1        | 975-1150                                       |
| Shelly Coarseware  | F330       | MC1         | 1100-1400                                      |
| Early Medieval Oxford Ware                                     | F345       |             | late 11 <sup>th</sup> -14 <sup>th</sup>        |
| Miscellaneous Sandy Coarsewares                                | F360       | MS3         | 1100-1400                                      |
| Brill/Boarstall Ware   | F324       | MC9         | 1200-1600                                      |
| Potterspury Ware   | F329       | MC6         | 1250-1600                                      |
| East Wiltshire Ware  | F364       | MS29        | early 11 <sup>th</sup> -early 15 <sup>th</sup> |
| Late Medieval Reduced Ware                                     | F365       | TLMS3       | 1400-?1500                                     |
| Late Medieval Oxidized Ware                                    | F401       | TLMS18      | ?1450-?1500                                    |
| Midland Purple Ware  | F403       |             | 1450-1600                                      |
| Cistercian Ware  | F404       | PM15        | 1470-1550                                      |
| Midland Yellow Wares   | F406       | PM38        | 1550-1700                                      |
| Red Earthenwares   | F407       | TLMS12      | 1500+  |
| Rhenish Stonewares   | F408       | PM29        | 1450+  |
| Midland Blackware  | F411       | PM16        | c. 1550-1700                                   |
| Miscellaneous 18 <sup>th</sup> -19 <sup>th</sup> century Wares | F1000      |             | 1700-1900                                      |

### Location of Shovel Test Pits



### Gazetteer of Shovel Test Pits

#### AK STP 1:

1 The Crescent, Leckhampstead Road (Millers Close, 1794 Enclosure Map):

Back garden in close proximity to surviving ridge and furrow. Designed to test whether the medieval village stretched into this area.

Spit 1-3: 0-250mm; Garden topsoil and subsoil containing modern, medieval and ?Roman material.

Spit 4: 250mm +; yellow/brown clay – interpreted as natural.

| Spit/Feature | Fabric | No. of Sherds |
|--------------|--------|---------------|
| 1            | 360    | 4             |
| 1            | 1001   | 1             |

|   |     |   |
|---|-----|---|
| 2 | 360 | 5 |
| 3 | 360 | 3 |

*Medieval ploughsoil, clearly disturbed by modern gardening. No features. Subsequent to our work, more building has taken place at the back of the house. This has necessitated the removal of material. Much of this was looked at and artefacts recovered. These were shown to the author who identified them as Saxo-Norman and developed medieval wares. Their unabraded state and their quantity suggest that the Leckhampstead Road frontage might indeed have been occupied in the middle ages. It is possible that Millers Close defines the original extent of the house plots backing onto the open fields of Akeley. If so, this strengthens the argument that there was a settlement node focused upon the Manor House.*

#### **AK STP 2:**

Akeley Primary School, Church Hill (New Close, 1794 Enclosure Map):

Located close to the front of the plot next to Church Hill, , designed to investigate the possibilities of occupation along this axis which links the church with Manor Farm.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; Silty dark brown turfline and topsoil, containing modern CBM, nails, glass etc.  
 Spit 2-3: 100-350mm; orange/brown clay with grey lenses and humic lenses throughout. Modern inclusions, with single sherd of early medieval pottery. Heavily disturbed.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 1000          | 2                    |
| 2                   | 200           | 1                    |
| 2                   | 1000          | 6                    |
| 3                   | 1000          | 7                    |

*Modern disturbed ground possibly associated with the landscaping of the school grounds after the construction of the building. The presence of a single sherd of medieval pottery might suggest that this was formally part of the Akeley field system. No evidence for occupation on Church Hill in the medieval period. The exposed but unexcavated deposits contained chalk, so it is unlikely that this STP was completely excavated to natural, and it remains possible that medieval and earlier deposits remained unexplored.*

#### **AK STP 3**

Akeley Primary School, Church Hill (New Close, 1794 Enclosure Map):

Located close to the front of the plot next to Church Hill, designed to investigate the possibilities of occupation along this axis which links the church with Manor Farm.

- Spit 1: 0-170mm; turfline and topsoil, containing modern CBM etc.  
 Spit 2-3: 170-370mm; orange clay with brick, chalk, limestone and flint.  
 Spit 4: 370-400mm; orange clay with flints and chalk.

*Modern disturbed ground comparable to AK STP 2. Similarly this STP is likely to have been abandoned before natural was exposed so the possibilities of earlier unseen deposits remains high.*

#### **AK STP 4**

Akeley Nature Reserve (New Close, 1794 Enclosure Map):

Located at top of slope below what appears to be a medieval headland, designed to test whether this area had been ploughed in the middle ages.

- Spit 1: 0- c. 100mm; turfline and topsoil.  
 Spit 2: 100-150mm; clean light brown clay, with inclusions of flint – natural.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 329           | 1                    |
| 1                   | 407           | 1                    |

*Modern turfline overlay natural undisturbed deposits indicative of the area never having been occupied on tilled. It is possible that this indicates an area of pasture/meadow in the heart of the medieval village.*

## **AK STP 5**

Akeley Nature Reserve (New Close, 1794 Enclosure Map):

Located at the bottom of the slope towards Duck End, designed to test whether this area had been ploughed or occupied during the middle ages.

- Spit 1: 0-200mm; turfline and well-sorted topsoil containing modern material.  
 Spit 2: 200-300mm; yellow/brown clay loam with very infrequent modern material overlying heavy clay with flint inclusions interpreted as natural.

*This STP comparable with STP 4 although topsoil deposits were thicker here. This may be the result of soil creep or solifluction downslope. Little evidence, once again for the site ever being occupied or farmed and should perhaps be interpreted once again as medieval pasture or meadow. Both STP 4 and STP 5 were located below what appears to be a medieval headland behind which there is levelled but visible ridge and furrow. This may represent the extent of the medieval field.*

## **AK STP 6**

Bull and Butcher, The Square:

Located in beer garden at rear of public house, close to the Buckingham road, designed to assess whether this road frontage had been occupied in the medieval period.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and topsoil containing much C19 material  
 Spit 2-4: 100- c. 450mm; brown- yellow/brown clay loam with much charcoal, appearing as lenses in some places, and flecked throughout. Containing much C19 material including CBM, slag, metalwork, bone, glass and slate. Also clay pipe throughout.  
 Spit 5: 450-500mm; sandy clay loam with charcoal and occasional C19 glass, ceramic and bone.  
 Spit 6: 500-620mm; quarter section in SW corner, into natural.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 324           | 1                    |
| 1                   | 1000          | 25                   |
| 2                   | 324           | 1                    |
| 2                   | 329           | 1                    |
| 2                   | 407           | 2                    |
| 2                   | 1000          | 39                   |
| 3                   | 1000          | 36                   |
| 4                   | 1000          | 50                   |
| 5                   | 1000          | 22                   |
| 6                   | 1000          | 5                    |

*No medieval or earlier material. Quantity of artefacts, presence of charcoal throughout, and depth of deposits suggests that this was a C19 domestic dump, probably associated with the public house or one of the neighbouring buildings.*

## AK STP 7

Bull and Butcher, The Square:

Located in beer garden at rear of public house, close to the Buckingham road, designed to assess whether this road frontage had been occupied in the medieval period.

- Spit 1-2: 0-200mm; turfline and topsoil with some charcoal throughout. Artefacts predominantly post-medieval. Overlying a deposit of orange/brown clay with very few inclusions, possibly natural.
- F1: Rectangular cut visible in NW corner as an area of humic material cut into the orange/brown subsoil. Modern material found within the fill. Possible cut visible in section in spits 1-2.
- F2: Small depression in SE corner, very shallow, containing dark humic material but no artefacts.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 1000          | 16                   |
| 2                   | 1000          | 8                    |

*F1 is certainly a modern cut, possible associated with the burial of dogs in the backgarden of the pub (pers. comm. visitor to excavations). No evidence for intense medieval occupation or agriculture.*

## AK STP 8

The Leys (Webbs Leys, 1794 Enclosure Map):

One of a sequence of five STPs laid out at 5m intervals running from 20m back from the Leckhampstead Road towards the centre of the field. Designed to test whether this area had been ploughed in the middle ages, and whether there was evidence for a Roman road in the vicinity, as suggested by *The Viatores*.

- Spit 1: 0-110mm; turfline with mixture of medieval and post-medieval artefacts.
- Spit 2-3: 110-310mm; brown clay loam with unsorted flints and other stones. Similar mixture of finds to spit 1.
- Spit 4: 310-410mm; Yellow/brown clay loam. Exclusively medieval pottery in greater quantities than from the overlying deposits. Overlying sterile layer interpreted as natural.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 2                   | 329           | 4                    |
| 2                   | 407           | 1                    |
| 3                   | 329           | 3                    |
| 3                   | 330           | 2                    |
| 3                   | 360           | 2                    |
| 4                   | 329           | 14                   |
| 4                   | 360           | 8                    |

*The first three spits can be interpreted as modern ploughsoil, explaining the mix of artefacts from different period. This ploughing clearly has disturbed medieval plough deposits. The field was last ploughed about fifteen years ago (pers. comm. John Taylor (Farmer)). The fourth spit is more difficult to interpret: the first explanation may be in-situ medieval ploughsoil,*

however, the quantity of medieval pottery is suggestive either of occupation, along the Leckhampstead Road, or proximity to occupation. Further work will need to be undertaken to establish which of these interpretations is correct.

## AK STP 9

The Leys (Webbs Leys, 1794 Enclosure Map):

One of a sequence of five STPs laid out at 5m intervals running from 20m back from the Leckhampstead Road towards the centre of the field. Designed to test whether this area had been ploughed in the middle ages, and whether there was evidence for a Roman road in the vicinity, as suggested by *The Viatores*.

Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and topsoil.  
 Spit 2-3: 100-300mm; dark brown clay loam.  
 Spit 4: 300-350mm; grey/yellow clay with medieval pottery inclusions.

F1: 320mm-460mm; dark humic material similar to that which overlay it lying in a shallow hollow overlying the grey-yellow clay.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 1                   | 407           | 1                    |
| 2                   | 329           | 2                    |
| 3                   | 360           | 1                    |

STP 9 was situated 5m from STP 8. The stratigraphic sequence is comparable. Again more medieval pottery was recovered from the lowest spit, but not in such significant quantities. Interpretation as STP 8. No explanation can be given for the depression F1 but may relate to primitive draining of the field.

## AK STP 10

The Leys (Webbs Leys, 1794 Enclosure Map):

One of a sequence of five STPs laid out at 5m intervals running from 20m back from the Leckhampstead Road towards the centre of the field. Designed to test whether this area had been ploughed in the middle ages, and whether there was evidence for a Roman road in the vicinity, as suggested by *The Viatores*.

Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and topsoil with modern artefacts.  
 Spit 2-3: 100-300mm; dark brown humic clay loam with mixture of artefacts from different periods. Spit 3 spans the stratigraphic boundary between the clay loam and a more sandy orange clay loam.  
 Spit 4: 300-400mm; yellow sandy clay with medieval pottery. Fewer inclusions noted below 350mm.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 2                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 2                   | 407           | 1                    |
| 3                   | 329           | 3                    |
| 3                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 4                   | 324           | 1                    |
| 4                   | 329           | 5                    |

Interpretation as STPs 8 and 9.

## AK STP 11

The Leys (Webbs Leys, 1794 Enclosure Map):

One of a sequence of five STPs laid out at 5m intervals running from 20m back from the Leckhampstead Road towards the centre of the field. Designed to test whether this area had been ploughed in the middle ages, and whether there was evidence for a Roman road in the vicinity, as suggested by *The Viatores*.

- Spit 1: 0-120mm; turfline and topsoil with modern, medieval and prehistoric artefacts.
- Spit 2-3: 120-320mm; dark brown humic clay loam with mixture of artefacts from different periods. Spit 3 spans the stratigraphic boundary between the clay loam and a more sandy orange clay loam.
- Spit 4: 320-420mm; orange sandy clay with medieval pottery. Fewer inclusions noted below 350mm.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 329           | 3                    |
| 2                   | 329           | 4                    |
| 3                   | 329           | 7                    |
| 4                   | 329           | 4                    |

*Interpretation as STPs 8, 9 and 10.*

#### **AK STP 12**

The Leys (Webbs Leys, 1794 Enclosure Map):

One of a sequence of five STPs laid out at 5m intervals running from 20m back from the Leckhampstead Road towards the centre of the field. Designed to test whether this area had been ploughed in the middle ages, and whether there was evidence for a Roman road in the vicinity, as suggested by *The Viatores*.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and topsoil with modern artefacts
- Spit 2-3: 100-210mm; dark brown humic clay loam with modern material within. Overlying deposit of orange/yellow clay with flint inclusions.
- F1: Cut into the orange clay was a shallow slot, E-W in orientation, approximately 150mm deep. This was filled with dark humic material with medium-sized flints and other post-medieval CBM. The artefacts included medieval pottery.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 329           | 3                    |
| 1                   | 407           | 1                    |
| 1                   | 1001          | 1                    |
| 2                   | 329           | 1                    |

*Spits 1-3 can be interpreted as STPs 8, 9, 10, and 11. F1 appears to be a shallow gully of post-medieval date. Its orientation is not the same as the field drains which are known in the field, nor does it align with the ridge and furrow evidence visible on aerial photographs. The function of the gully remains unknown but it may be associated with earlier drainage of the field. STP 12 lies furthest from the Leckhampstead Road. It is noticeable in this sequence of STPs that the quantity of medieval pottery declines with distance from this artery.*

#### **AK STP 13**

Artwood, Leckhampstead Road (Millers Close, 1794 Enclosure Map):



Back garden in close proximity to surviving ridge and furrow. Designed to test whether the medieval village stretched into this area.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and topsoil, with occasional modern CBM and pottery.
- Spit 2-4: 100- c. 400mm; loamy dark humic clay with very few inclusions, becoming more heavy below 350mm. Becoming more stony through the spits.
- Spit 5: c. 400mm-500mm; dirty yellow clay with stones. Few sherds of medieval pottery in the top of the deposit, becoming sterile very quickly. Interpreted as natural.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 2                   | 1000          | 1                    |
| 4                   | 330           | 1                    |

*The sequence of deposits here is reminiscent of STP 1, only two houses away. Again the deposits suggest medieval ploughsoil rather than occupation.*

#### **AK STP 14**

Verandale, The Square:

Back of plot, designed to assess the nature of occupation in the current village centre.

- Spit 1-3: 0-370mm; Dark brown organic loam with modern CBM, ceramic and other artefacts. Contains much charcoal throughout. Few sherds of medieval pottery.
- Spit 4-6: 370- c. 700mm; orange/brown sticky clay with flecks of CBM, sandstone, mortar and other post-medieval artefacts. More medieval pottery than in overlying spits. Lying on top of natural at 700mm
- F1: Regular cut with cat burial. No other artefacts.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 324           | 1                    |
| 3                   | 329           | 1                    |
| 3                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 3                   | 407           | 1                    |
| 4                   | 1000          | 5                    |
| 5                   | 329           | 1                    |
| 6                   | 404           | 1                    |
| 6                   | 407           | 2                    |
| 6                   | 1000          | 1                    |

*This STP lies back from the Square. Whilst several sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from the excavation, it is difficult to understand the processes by which they might have arrived there. More medieval sherds were recovered from Spit 6 than from all the other spits, where the artefactual evidence was mixed. This might indicate that Spit 6 has been less disturbed than other deposits, particularly those at the top of the sequence since the area had been used recently as a vegetable patch. The quantity of medieval sherds might suggest proximity to occupation.*

#### **AK STP 15**

Verandale, The Square:

Front of plot, designed to assess the nature of occupation in the current village centre.

- Spit 1-4: 0-400mm; dark humic loam with charcoal, and post-medieval material in large quantities.
- Spit 5: 400-500mm; lighter orange/brown clay with mortar, CBM and charcoal together with other artefacts. This overlay sterile layer identified as natural.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 2                   | 407           | 4                    |
| 2                   | 1000          | 4                    |
| 3                   | 329           | 1                    |
| 4                   | 407           | 7                    |
| 5                   | 407           | 2                    |
| 6                   | 411           | 1                    |

*This STP was located much closer to The Square, in an area of possible medieval occupation. The artefactual evidence did not point to immediate settlement in the Middle Ages. Once again a single spit included some medieval material, but this was mixed with modern artefacts throughout. The quantity of finds was not indicative of settlement. Together with STP 15, the impression gained from these twin pits is of an area that was not intensively occupied. This is perhaps surprising given the proximity to the church, and what is now the village centre. This negative evidence, associated with STPs 2-12, strengthens the argument that there were two settlement foci, with open fields between. It also suggests that the focus of the village around the church has shifted, initially to the north of the church and in Duck End, later to move to The Square.*

#### **AK STP 16**

4 Main Street

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and topsoil
- Spit 2-3: 100-245mm; mixture of humic garden soil with builders' sand etc.
- Spit 4: 245-300mm; yellow/brown clay with no inclusions thought to be natural.
- F1: Visible from 245mm, an area of dirty yellow clay with modern CBM. The cut was clearly defined and a sewerage pipe was found at the bottom of the cut.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 330           | 1                    |
| 1                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 1                   | 407           | 6                    |
| 1                   | 1000          | 2                    |
| 2                   | 329           | 2                    |
| 2                   | 330           | 3                    |
| 2                   | 1000          | 6                    |
| 3                   | 407           | 13                   |

*Medieval pottery was found in low frequencies in all the deposits. Clearly the cutting of the trench had disturbed medieval layers and introduced more recent material. The garden soil, too, appears to have been much disturbed offering no opportunities to excavate in situ medieval deposits. Once again, in an area where medieval occupation might be anticipated, the quantity of medieval pottery did not match expectation, leading to the conclusion that this area was not intensively occupied. The STP lies back from The Square, on the opposite side of the main road from the church. This is a further indication of the restricted area of occupation during the middle ages, and suggests significant post-medieval expansion as shown on the 1794 Enclosure Map.*

#### **AK STP 17**

Hillberry, Lillingstone Road:

Back of plot, located as close to churchyard boundary as possible. Aimed at assessing the churchyard boundary and the potential for occupation around the church.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and garden topsoil. At bottom of spit a bonfire site could be identified. Modern material .
- Spit 2: 100- c. 250mm; dark brown clay loam with many and varied inclusions, all post-medieval in date.
- Spit 3: 200-300mm; grey clay sloping down east to west, with mixture of early and modern material.
- Spit 4: 300-400mm; grey clay with medieval and modern inclusions overlying natural.

| Spit/Feature | Fabric | No. of Sherds |
|--------------|--------|---------------|
| 2            | 329    | 1             |
| 3            | 329    | 1             |
| 3            | 360    | 1             |
| 3            | 364    | 1             |
| 4            | 360    | 5             |

*This STP does not help elucidate the major research questions posed. The mixture of medieval and modern artefacts suggests that no undisturbed deposits were recovered. The slight dipping of the strata from the churchyard bound were initially thought to represent the foot of the bank, however, this depression was shown to be too shallow to allow such an interpretation and the presence of modern material precludes it from being an early feature. It cannot be established whether this was a man-made cut or whether this undulating surface had formed naturally.*

#### AK STP 18

Hillberry, Lillingstone Road:

Back garden towards the house. Located very close to the churchyard boundary to assess the establishment of the boundary and the potential for occupation around the church.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; dry mid-brown sandy soil with some pebbles. Evidence of in situ burning.
- Spit 2: 100-200mm; layer of small pebbles and limestone, possibly a garden path since its make-up was very similar to other visible paths.
- Spit 3-4: 200-350mm; yellow clay loam with some chalk and charcoal. Much modern ceramic and metalwork.
- Spit 5-6: 350-430mm; yellow clay with medieval pottery and earlier pottery. This overlay natural.

- F1: A layer of mortar was exposed over the majority of the excavated surface at the bottom of Spit 4 (350-400mm). Since post-medieval pottery was found both above and below this layer, this must have been laid out at this period.

| Spit/Feature | Fabric | No. of Sherds |
|--------------|--------|---------------|
| 2            | 407    | 3             |
| 3            | 329    | 1             |
| 4            | 200    | 1             |
| 4            | 207    | 1             |
| 5            | 330    | 2             |
| 5            | 360    | 1             |
| 5            | 1001   | 1             |

|   |     |   |
|---|-----|---|
| 6 | 360 | 2 |
|---|-----|---|

*Once again, this STP does not help answer the central research questions. However, it does reveal a sequence of garden features, including a path and the mortar layer whose function remains unknown. The mix of artefacts suggests high levels of disturbance in the post-medieval period probably associated with garden landscaping (the STP lay close to a garden terrace). Perhaps the most significant discovery, however, was early medieval pottery which might suggest activity in this area well before the conquest. Whilst it is impossible to say how this material arrived in this area, proximity to the churchyard boundary may be significant.*

#### **AK STP 19**

Hillberry, Lillingstone Road:

Front of plot, located on the existing churchyard boundary. Designed to understand the construction of the churchyard, to recover dating evidence to help establish the foundation date of the churchyard, and also to look for occupation information not only immediately north of the churchyard, but along the Lillingstone Road western frontage.

- Spit 1-2: 0-250mm; dark brown humic layer with extensive tree root action.  
 Spit 3: 250-300mm; dark brown clay loam with many large stones. This overlay a hard surface of stone excavated as F1.
- F1: 300-450mm; yellow/brown clay with large limestone inclusions. Contained large quantities of bone, CBM and medieval pottery.  
 F2: Dark brown soil in SW corner of STP cut through F1. This contained as single sherd of grogged grey ware.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 2                   | 207           | 1                    |
| 2                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 2                   | 407           | 1                    |
| 3                   | 329           | 2                    |
| F1                  | 329           | 14                   |
| F1                  | 407           | 2                    |
| F1                  | 1001          | 4                    |
| F2                  | 1001          | 1                    |

*This is one of the most interesting of the STPs dug during the season. Located on the foot of the current churchyard bank, it has helped understand the construction and date for this important village element. Clearly the churchyard was delimited by a stone bank. This may have been timber revetted since the depression F2 can only be interpreted as a posthole. This bank appears to have eroded forming its current profile, possible aided by the removal or collapse of any retaining timbers. The discovery of grogged pottery at the base of this posthole argues for a pre-medieval establishment date. So too does the suggested construction technique. We might begin to see an oval enclosure, marked by a stone bank and revetment, constructed either in the Roman or early medieval period. Its prominent position with outstanding views to west, north and east might suggest a defensive location. Is it the case, therefore, that a pre-Christian site was later Christianized by the establishment of a church within its bounds? Does the presence of this early enclosure act as the focus for the later village?*

#### **AK STP 20**

Priory Mill, Leckhampstead Road:

Located on the edge of a now abandoned back lane which runs along the parish boundary towards Manor Farm. Designed to provide dating evidence for the establishment of the thoroughfare.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; humic layer with lots of root action, dark brown.  
 Spit 2: 100-300mm; large pebbles and cobbles forming a coherent surface. Very difficult to excavate. Appear to overlie a rougher surface of larger stones.  
 Spit 3: 300-400mm; dirty intractable clay with occasional flint and pebbles. Modern CBM, nails etc.  
 Spit 4: 400-700mm; mixed clay with stone, chalk and peagrit. At the bottom of this was found a non-mortared horseshoe field drain.

*The discovery of a field drain explains the presence of post-medieval material throughout the deposits. In fact no medieval artefacts were recovered from this excavation. It is clear from the stratigraphy that the field drain had been lain before the construction of the cobbled surface. The back lane appears on the 1794 Enclosure Map. Unfortunately, the STP provided no further evidence for the origins of this routeway.*

## AK STP 21

The Nursery, Lillingstone Road:

Located towards the back of the large plot, as close to Chapel Hill at Duck End as possible. The two STPs 21 and 22, spaced 10m apart from each other were designed to investigate the possible medieval origins of Duck End itself.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and dry clay loam  
 Spit 2-7: 100-700mm; dry intractable clay, very clean with few natural inclusions but containing medieval pottery throughout. Possible Roman and early medieval sherds also recovered. The excavation had to be abandoned due to the hardness of the soil and natural was never met.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 3                   | 360           | 2                    |
| 3                   | 1001          | 2                    |
| 4                   | 329           | 3                    |
| 4                   | 1001          | 1                    |
| 5                   | 329           | 2                    |
| 5                   | 1001          | 6                    |
| 6                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 6                   | 1001          | 2                    |
| 7                   | 329           | 1                    |
| 7                   | 360           | 2                    |
| 7                   | 1001          | 1                    |

*The hardness of the deposits in this STP was surprising. So too the well-sorted nature of the clay loam which contained very few inclusions with the exception of artefacts. Almost no intrusive modern material was recovered suggesting that the deposits were indeed in situ. The STP was located at the bottom of a slight slope which still preserved remnants of ridge and furrow. It is likely that STP 21 and 22 were located on the medieval headland, hence the type of deposit and its depth. This is interesting, since Chapel Hill and the back road to Lillingstone Lovell lie only 50m from the STP locations. Why was the headland here and not on the road line? One possible explanation is that there was occupation along the Lillingstone Road at the time the field was established. Planning applications have been made for this area between the road and headland. It must be hoped that archaeological work in advance of building will reveal how this area was used at this period. The discovery of earlier material might also indicate that the field was laid out at an early date, although the possibility that this material is residual cannot be discounted.*

## AK STP 22

The Nursery, Lillingstone Road:

Located towards the back of the large plot, as close to Chapel Hill at Duck End as possible. The two STPs 21 and 22 were designed to investigate the possible medieval origins of Duck End itself.

Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and dry clay loam  
 Spit 2-7: 100-700mm; dry intractable clay, very clean with few natural inclusions but containing medieval pottery throughout. The excavation had to be abandoned due to the hardness of the soil and natural was never met.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 3                   | 329           | 2                    |
| 4                   | 329           | 13                   |
| 4                   | 1001          | 6                    |
| 5                   | 329           | 1                    |
| 5                   | 1001          | 9                    |
| 6                   | 1001          | 1                    |

*The conclusions to be drawn from STP 22 must be the same as STP 21 due to the similarity of deposit and its component assemblage.*

### **AK STP 23**

The Roses, Chapel Hill:

Located to investigate the back of plots running back from the Lillingstone Road opposite the church.

Spit 1: 0-120mm; dark humic garden soil with modern and medieval artefacts.  
 Spit 2-8: 120-820mm; dark brown clay loam with high percentage of humic material, containing a mix of artefacts of post-medieval and medieval date. More yellow clay deposits towards the bottom of this deposit, although it was impossible to discern true stratigraphy. At the bottom of these deposits, a sewerage pipe was identified. No cut was visible, suggesting that all strata had been disturbed during its laying.

| <i>Spit/Feature</i> | <i>Fabric</i> | <i>No. of Sherds</i> |
|---------------------|---------------|----------------------|
| 1                   | 329           | 1                    |
| 1                   | 360           | 1                    |
| 3                   | 329           | 4                    |
| 3                   | 330           | 2                    |
| 3                   | 360           | 2                    |
| 3                   | 404           | 1                    |
| 3                   | 407           | 5                    |
| 3                   | 425           | 1                    |
| 4                   | 329           | 3                    |
| 4                   | 330           | 6                    |
| 4                   | 345           | 1                    |
| 4                   | 360           | 11                   |
| 4                   | 407           | 4                    |
| 5                   | 329           | 2                    |
| 5                   | 330           | 8                    |
| 5                   | 345           | 3                    |
| 5                   | 360           | 2                    |
| 6                   | 329           | 2                    |
| 6                   | 330           | 4                    |

|   |     |    |
|---|-----|----|
| 6 | 360 | 1  |
| 6 | 407 | 2  |
| 7 | 205 | 1  |
| 7 | 330 | 7  |
| 7 | 345 | 1  |
| 7 | 360 | 10 |
| 7 | 407 | 1  |
| 8 | 345 | 1  |

*This STP produced more medieval pottery than any other STP in Akeley. It would appear that the back of plots running back from the Lillingstone Road is still preserved within the orchard at the back of The Roses. The STP was located within the plot. The quantity of pottery is witness to old and intensive occupation during the middle ages, and might result from the deposition of domestic refuse in the plot itself. A second STP outside earthwork on what might be field or meadow would be useful. However, it is clear that there was settlement on the opposite side of the road from the church in this area, possibly focused around the T junction with Chapel Hill. This might be thought of as an early settlement focus, rather than the area around The Square where STPs failed to reveal such quantities of medieval pottery.*

#### **AK STP 24:**

Potterscote, Lovell Road:

Located outside the modern village, close to a pottery production centre of the nineteenth century. This STP was designed to be a control, against which STPs located within the village could be contrasted.

- Spit 1: 0-100mm; turfline and topsoil with quantities of C19 CBM and charcoal.
- Spit 2-4: 100-325mm; light brown clay loam with quantities of C19 CBM and charcoal.
- Spit 5: 325-400mm; yellow clay loam shown via small sondage to be natural, although bioturbation may have introduced some post-medieval finds into the very top of this deposit.

*The discovery of material related to tile and brick production at Pottery Farm could be predicted. It is likely that these deposits were general spreads of waste from this small industrial site. The farm does not appear on the 1794 Enclosure Map which can therefore be taken as the terminus post quem for production here. Interestingly, despite the proximity to surviving ridge and furrow, no medieval artefacts were recovered. The STP was located very close to the Lovell Road, and it is quite possible that it always lay outside the ploughed zone, possibly on the verge bordering the road.*