

Site name: St Peter's Street

Site ref: IAS 5203 HER ref: IPS 215 CIMS Accession No: IPSMG:R.2009.64

NGR TM16284415 Extent: 916 sq m

Circumstances of excavation

Planning permission was granted to Heriot Hotels, on behalf of the Novotel chain, for the construction of a hotel subject to an agreement providing for the prior archaeological excavation of the site (I/717/86) and the ownership of all finds by Ipswich Borough Council.

This site, and the Greyfriars Road (island) site (IAS 5204) to the south, were part of the same land parcel prior to the construction of the new stretch of Greyfriars Road through it as part of the 'Stoke Bridge and Approaches' road scheme in 1982. The whole of this land parcel was scheduled as an Ancient Monument (Suffolk County No 193). Scheduled Monument Consent for the development was granted by the Secretary of State for the Environment to Heriot Hotels on 30th June 1986.

The site was excavated by the Suffolk Archaeological Unit, over a six month period, from September 1986 to February 1987.

Site Constraints

The hotel buildings were to be located on the east and south road frontages with the area behind left as surface car parking. Excavation was, therefore, restricted to this area fronting St Peter's Street, with later extensions in the south and north-west, and a separate trench to the west of the main area.

The requirement to retain public car parking on the west of the site up until a development start meant that it was not possible to excavate the whole footprint of the proposed hotel.

Funding bodies

Suffolk County Council, MSC Community Programme, Ipswich Borough Council and English Heritage.

Stratigraphic sequence (by period)

Early Middle Saxon: c.600-700/720 (EMS)

Two sunken featured buildings and nine pits belonged to this period, defined by handmade wares and/or 7th-early 8th century imported wares.

As a whole, the site produced 1500 handmade sherds but only 131 of these were in the EMS features.

The pottery assemblage from 0125 is unreliable as it is clearly contaminated from one or more of the thirteen pits which cut it (2 MS, 1 ELS, 4 MLS, 4 EMED, 2 LMT). Most of the later pottery is also recorded as coming from layer 0654 which is the upper layer of fill which may have accumulated well after the abandonment of the building.

Context		RB	HM	IMP	Total	
0125	sfb	2	18	9	29	+12 IPS, 14 THET, 5 EMW
0437	sfb	1	2		3	
0066	pit	2	63	1	66	
0361	pit		2	1	3	
0364	pit		7	4	11	
0430	pit		1	1	2	
0471	pit		8		8	
0544	pit		1	3	4	
0593	pit	1	12	3	16	
0595	pit		16	2	18	

0687	pit		1		1	
		6	131	24	161	

Building 0125 (see scanned plan IAS5203_0125.tif)

The north side of this sunken featured building was found at the southern edge of the site and the excavation was extended to expose the whole of the structure. Although later pits had extensively damaged the south and east sides of the building, enough survived to reveal its dimensions. The sunken feature was rectangular, flat-bottomed, 5.2m long, 4.2m wide and 60cm deep. An extension, in the north-west corner, is most likely a stepped entrance (0818).

There was a line of nine post holes (0135-0139, 0156, 0157, 0806, 0807) along the base of the north side of the sunken feature, but only single post holes were recorded on the other sides (0828 on the west edge, 0683 on the east edge, and 0805 on the south edge). There were also five stake holes (0186, 0851-0854) cutting the floor of the pit in the north-east corner. The lack of post holes along the west wall appears to be genuine as posthole 0828 was the only posthole in the 1.8m length of the surviving west side.

The fill of the sunken feature comprised two layers of identical brown sandy loam (0653, 0654), separated by a 10cm thick layer of yellow sand. Below this was a second layer of sand changing to clay (0158) towards the north edge, which may represent a floor surface or accumulation after its abandonment. A number of loom weights (0799), found together in one location, within the lower layer of loam (0653), and the probable stepped entrance in the north-west corner suggests occupation on the floor of the pit but a suspended floor over an under-floor space cannot be ruled out.

Building 0437 (see scanned plan IAS5203_0437.tif)

This rectangular sunken featured building, 11m north-west of building 0125, comprised a pit cut to a depth of some 40cm below the surface of the natural. The south side was cut away by MS slot 0253, part of the north side by pit 0500, and the east and west sides by pits 0381 and 0373.

It was 4.1m long, measured between the two surviving corner posts (0528, 0570), 40cm deep, with a width unlikely to exceed 3.5m. Between the two corner postholes (0528, 0570), there was a row of stake holes along the north side (0531-0534), and part of a further row along the west side (0535-0538). The latter may indicate a wicker lined retaining wall to the sunken feature.

The Pits

Eight of the nine pits were located at the south end of the site, in a line from west to east, to the north of building 0437.

Discussion

Sunken featured buildings are the common building type in the Early Anglo-Saxon period in East Anglia and no examples are known from MS settlements, as defined by the use of Ipswich ware.

Building 0125 is not the common two post or six post type commonly found on Early Anglo-Saxon settlements. However, one building, SFB 3, at the West Stow settlement did display similar characteristics i.e. post holes along the long sides of the pit (West 1985, Fig.35). West phased it to the 7th century and described it as 'unique at West Stow' and 'markedly different to other SFBs on the site'. He described it as 'close to Ahrens' Wall-post house' type, which has posts down the long sides' and for which Ahrens suggested an 8th-11th century date and a Saxon origin. It is of interest that SFB3 was one of only two sunken featured buildings at West Stow to include Ipswich ware in their fills (3 sherds from SFB3 and 1 from SFB2).

The proposed later start date of Ipswich ware in the 8th century allows for this building type to continue into the later 7th century and buildings *0125* and *0437* are presumably of this date.

The nature of the pottery assemblage is critical for the interpretation of the EMS occupation. The large quantity and dominance of grass tempered pottery is unusual in Suffolk. Similarly, the large quantity of imported wares is rare and highly significant. The percentage of imported pottery is high (15%) and higher than in the MS period when 5% is imported. The same two imports occurred in both EMS and MS groups (North French Blackwares and gritty/early Badorf wares). The early Badorf wares are thought to be contemporary with the Mayen industry (7th/early 8th century). One sherd of Mayen ware was found of a type usually dated 7th century after well-dated finds from the late Merovingian cemeteries (Ament 1974, quoted in Coutts 1991, 131).

Middle Saxon: c.700-850 (MS)

The Middle Saxon features, defined by the presence of Ipswich ware in their fills, were concentrated at the south end of the site, as in the EMS period. No definite buildings were recorded but there were 30 pits, two wells, one ditch and evidence of two fenced enclosures. Two main phases of occupation can be defined on stratigraphic evidence.

Phase 1 (c.750-825)

The features in this phase comprise seven pits (*0051, 0063, 0067, 0214, 0209, 0522, 0069*), a well (*0328*) and five boundaries (*0253, 0659, 0858, 0859, 0860*). Boundaries *0858, 0859, and 0860* are an interpretation of 37 post holes, mostly undated, in the south east corner of the site. They form irregular lines which seem to represent two fenced enclosures with a north-south route-way between them. The latest pottery associated with their components was Ipswich ware and the few stratigraphic relationships recorded support a likely MS date. As boundaries *0858* and *0859* are both cut by ditch *0044*, they are also phase 1.

Boundary 0253

0253 was 6.5m long but its west end had been truncated by EMED pit *0357* and LMED pit *0475*. It could not be traced any further west on the other side of these pits. Its east end was either a butt end or more likely a corner with its north-south section being removed by MS/ELS ditch *0044* to the south. It was 'U'-shaped in profile, 90cm wide and 55cm deep. Seventeen stake holes were recorded in its base or immediately adjacent (*0440-0442, 0444, 0550-0557, 0559-0563*). It truncated a line, *0862*, of eleven postholes (*0439, 0455, 0438, 0388, 0443, 0474, 0564, 0391, 0387, 0565, 0566*) on the same alignment as the ditch.

Boundary 0659

0659 was 13.5m long, 50-80cm wide, and 10-20cm deep with nine post holes recorded along its length. Three were within it (*0676* and two not numbered), three along its south edge (*0727*, cutting earlier post hole *0675*, and *0660*) and three along its north edge (*0678-0680*). In section, it appears to have at least two phases, with a later fill apparently sealing earlier, deeper interventions. It was roughly parallel to and 5m north of linear feature *0253*. Its east end had been truncated by at least three phases of intercutting MS pits. These two facts imply that it is early in the MS sequence and probably contemporary with linear feature *0253*. A single sceat (*0008/5203N*) from the fill was deposited c.740-60 and provides the *terminus post quem* for the phase dating.

Boundary 0858

This comprised 14 postholes (0144, 0145, 0147, 0162, 0224, 0228, 0265, 0266, 0412, 0343, 0423, 0429, 0573, 0574). The southern section has paired posts indicating either the replacement of this stretch during its life or that the posts were placed either side of horizontal planking. They are spaced at roughly 2m intervals.

0162 is cut by ELS pit 0161 and 0343 cuts EMS pit 0361 and is cut by ELS pit 0320.

Boundary 0859

This comprised 17 postholes (0142, 0146, 0148, 0126, 0222, 0229, 0403, 0404, 0402, 0435, 0413, 0414, 0470, 0467, 0027, 0028, 0029). For most of its length it has paired posts, spaced at 2m intervals, like boundary 0858, and indicating either replacement during its life or that the posts were placed either side of horizontal planking.

0146 cut EMS building 0125. 0467 was cut by MS pit 0450. 0222 was cut by MS/ELS ditch 0044. 0470 had one Ipswich ware sherd.

Boundary 0860

1.2m to the north of boundary 0859, and parallel to it, was a boundary comprising six postholes (0418, 0436, 0449, 0058, 0059, 0060). 0418 had one sherd of Ipswich ware and 0436 had three sherds of Ipswich ware.

Structure 0861

A north-south row of post holes (0074, 0084, 0085, 0105, 0220) in the south-east corner of the site is most likely a section of a post hole building fronting St Peter's Street. Post hole 0220, at the north end of the row, was cut by phase 2 ditch 0044, and MLS pit 0008 would have removed any southern continuation of the row. The most southerly post hole (0085) is slightly west of the alignment of the other four post holes with the appearance of the typical weak corner of an MS building or an inset entrance. If so, the building would have been west of 0861 in an area heavily pitted with EMED/LMED pits (0020, 0121, 0167, 0857).

Well 0328

This well was cut by the phase 2 ditch (0044), close to the southern edge of the excavated area. It was not possible to hand excavate the well lower than 1.80m below the top of the ditch but augering of the central shaft (0619) established a base at 0.38m O.D., 2.85m below the surface of the natural.

The well pit had a diameter of c.2.7m at the top and tapered towards the base, although it was not possible to establish the measurement at the bottom. Evidence of the central shaft was visible directly below the base of the overlying ditch.

Excavation was completed with the aid of a mechanical digger, which dredged up over half of a hollowed out tree-trunk (0630) used to line the central shaft. This was pulled out in five separate pieces from the east side of the feature, and reassembled away from the site. The remainder of the timber lining could not be reached by the excavator and was therefore left *in situ*.

All but one of the pieces of the lining was flat along the base. Peg holes occurred in pairs in two places around the base of the wood, with each pair at approximately 90 degrees to each other around the circumference of the wood. It seems likely that this pattern would have been repeated in two further places on the unexcavated portion of the trunk. The significance of these holes is unclear, but they may have acted as points for securing ropes, allowing the trunk to be lowered into position.

Dendro dating of the well timbers indicates that the tree trunk, from which the lining was hollowed, was felled after AD 688 (Hillam 1989).

Pits

A west-east line of pits (0067, 0214, 0209, 0522, 0069) with Ipswich ware belong to this phase with all but 0069 being cut by the phase 2 ditch 0044. In addition two small pits (0051, 0063) were also cut by ditch 0044 but had no pottery.

Discussion (phase1)

The north-west end of boundary 0858 terminates at the east end of boundary 0659 suggesting that is part of the same boundary in spite of its apparently dissimilar form. The post holes either side of the trench in 0659 might indicate the same boundary construction as with 0858 and 0859 i.e. paired posts at 2m intervals with planking in between, but in the case of 0659, the slot holding the bottom horizontal plank has been set deeper into the ground. The two boundaries (0659 and 0858) form the north and east sides of an enclosure within which was well 0328. Boundary 0253 appears to be an enclosure within it and around well 0328.

To the east of this enclosure was a second enclosure delineated by boundary 0859 and separated from it by a north south pathway, 1.2m wide, which turned northeast along the north side of the eastern enclosure. Along this stretch, the northern side of the path is formed by boundary 0860.

A possible building (0861) lay in the south-east corner of the western enclosure adjacent to St Peter's Street.

Phase 2 (c.825-850)

A ditch (0044) and ten pits belong to this period.

Ditch 0044

This east-west ditch had a 'V'-shaped section and was 2.1-2.4m wide and 1-1.2m deep from the surface of the natural.

The western 5.5m had a shallow linear feature cutting it (0507) which looks like a recut of 0044 but its fill is dated EMED which must rule out such an interpretation as there is overwhelming stratigraphic evidence that ditch 0044 was clearly out of use at least 200 years earlier. The extension trench excavated 13m to the west, seeking any continuation of the ditch, failed to prove the point conclusively. Traces of a ditch (0710) filled in the ELS period were found, but this did not seem to be well aligned and was a much shallower.

The stratigraphic and pottery evidence indicates that the ditch was cut late in the MS period and not finally filled until the ELS period. It cut a series of MS features (0067, 0209, 0214, 0253, 0328, 0522) and is in turn cut by five ELS pits (0024, 0141, 0207, 0259, 0302). Pit 0259 was associated with a penny (0003/5203N) of Charles the Bald, probably lost c.905-10 or a few years earlier or later.

The pottery assemblage from the ditch, excluding the dubious recut (0507) at its west end, broadly supports this dating. The ditch was excavated in arbitrary sections, each of which contained quite different assemblages.

The presence of St. Neots' ware and later wares (3.6% in total) is most likely to be contamination from the later pits cutting the ditch and/or later features not observed during excavation or by the filling of later subsidence in the in-filled ditch.

Ditch section	RB	HM	Ips	Imp	Thet	STN	Pings	EMW	LMED	
0022		6	47			8	11	3		
0044	1	9	60	4	30	1				
0053		7	40	2	11					
0054		13	39	2	36					
0068		11	27	5	57					
0213		4	40	3						
0231		4	25	2	20					
0296		4	22		14	1				
0304		4	15	5	18					
0312			11		4					
0313			14							
0327	2	5	72	10						
0354		16	44	3	31	1		3	2	
Total	3	83	456	36	221	11	11	6	2	829

The lower layers of 0044 were predominantly silts or sand, indicating an initial natural filling, whereas the upper layers contained occupation waste, including 167kg of animal bone, many antler offcuts, 191 bone objects or object fragments, 91 iron objects and 32kg of metal slag indicating the likelihood of an iron smithing industry in the vicinity.

The ditch was clearly a major boundary and its location and silty lower fill suggests that it could have acted as a flood defence.

Pits

The group of intercutting pits (0273, 0275, 0352, 0370, 0463, 0515, 0588, 0589, 0610, and 0641), some of which cut the phase 1 boundary (0659), is likely to be contemporary with ditch 0044. They form part of a larger line of Middle Saxon pits from west to east, parallel to ditch 0044 and including 0389, 0232, 0250, 0450, 0219, 0031, 0021 and 0052.

Unphased

Pits

The remaining eight pits with Ipswich ware cannot be allocated a phase (0046, 0075, 0333, 0372, 0382, 0681, 0820, 0831).

A flotation column was taken from pit 0046 (Murphy *et al* 2003).

Well 0252

The well pit was 2.5m in diameter, at the top, and 2.8m deep, tapering in width towards the bottom. A central shaft (0332), 70cm in diameter, survived below 1.2m from the surface and was 1.6m deep. The water table was reached at 2.3m down and the lower 50cm was lined with a barrel, comprising 19 individual wooden staves (0697). A horizontal indentation in each of the staves, some 4cm from their base, indicated the position of the base of the barrel, which had been removed prior to reuse in the well. Although all of the staves were removed, excavation of the base of the well was not possible due to the continued collapse of the shaft fill below the water table.

Precise dating of the well is unclear. Dendro dating of the barrel staves indicated that the latest stave analysed was from a tree felled after 754, and allowing for the possibilities of missing heartwood and sapwood and for its length of service as a wine barrel "it is unlikely that the well would have been lined until the late 8th-early 9th century" (Hillam 1989). It also showed a high correlation with German chronologies i.e. it was a Rhenish barrel.

The top 1.2m of the well fill (layers 0252, 0255, 0308) was clearly fill of a subsidence hole above the shaft and included pottery as late as the 11th century. Only the finds from the central shaft (0332 and 0696) are a reliable indicator of its abandonment period (20 sherds of Ipswich ware). The well pit was cut by ELS pit 0324 which confirms the likely MS date of the well.

Discussion: Middle Saxon

The site produced eighteen sceattas, only four of which were found in MS contexts. Fifteen were late in the series, probably deposited c.740-60, with the other three, probably deposited c.720-740, and found residual in later contexts.

One of the four sceattas found in MS contexts, was the one (0008/5203N) associated with the phase 1 boundary (0659) and it implies that the MS occupation doesn't start on the site before c.750. The other three were in phase 2 contexts (pits 0352

(0024/5203N and 0025/5203N) and 0610 (0007/5203N), which cuts 0659 and the ditch 0044), where they are assumed to be residual.

If occupation was continuous from the EMS period, this would suggest an EMS dating of c.720-750, but continuity is difficult to establish. The fact that there are MS features with high percentages of handmade wares in relation to their Ipswich ware content could suggest continuity during the changeover period from handmade wares to Ipswich ware. The fact that the occupation in both periods was concentrated at the south end of the site might also support continuity but it also increases the likelihood of residual handmade EMS pottery in MS features i.e. the high proportion of handmade pottery in the MS features is nothing to do with a 'changeover period' and more to do with large quantities of handmade pottery across the site which gets incorporated into the backfill of MS features. If the conclusion drawn about the dating of the large quantity of imported pottery is still sound (Coutts 1991), the EMS occupation is likely to be 7th century and there must have been a break in occupation on the site in the early 8th century.

Such a break in occupation, from c.690-720, would explain the lack of primary sceattas in Ipswich and relate the EMS occupation at Greyfriars Road with the cemetery excavated at the Buttermarket, to the north (Scull 2009). The alternative would leave the 7th century cemetery without any associated settlement and the emporium starting after 690, with a small settlement north of the Stoke Bridge crossing point of the River Orwell for some thirty years prior to a major expansion c.720.

Although no certain MS buildings were recorded on the site, the pits and ditch 0044 are filled with occupation rubbish. A small section of one possible building belonging to phase 1 was found in the south-east corner of the site and if other buildings did exist they might well have been destroyed by the heavy later pitting across the site and the post medieval cellars fronting St Peter's Street. Alternatively, rubbish may have been imported to the site from other parts of the town.

The combination of wells and fenced enclosures on the site in phase 1 could indicate stock keeping on pasture liable to flooding from the nearby river.

In phase 2, ditch 0044 was clearly a major boundary and its location, east-west orientation and silty lower fill suggests that it could have acted as a flood defence. The 3m wide strip of land devoid of pits between the ditch and the pit line to the north suggests that it was covered by a bank on the north side of the ditch.

The environmental evidence (from pit 0046) indicates a maritime grassland environment with scrub and bracken present (Murphy *et al* 2003).

Early Late Saxon: c.850-900(ELS)

49 pits, a ditch, a small cemetery and one linear feature belong to this period.

At least three phases are evident on the basis of their pottery content and relationship to the small cemetery.

Phase 1 (c.850-860)

This phase is a continuation of the MS phase 2 and is characterised by Ipswich ware with very small quantities of Thetford ware i.e. it just runs into the period when Thetford ware was available.

Ditch 0044

This ditch was probably still open during most of this phase but is filled prior to being cut by the phase 2 cemetery.

Pits

Pits 0500 and 0594, both of which are cut by phase 2 burials, belong to this phase.

A flotation column was taken from pit 0594 (Murphy *et al* 2003).

Phase 2: The cemetery

A small cemetery of ten inhumation burials lay in a north-south row in the south-west corner of the site.

Grave	Inhum	Hm	Ips	Imp	Thet	StN	Notes
0294	0295			1	1		
0322	0314			1	1		Flexed legs/head to east
0338	0339		22	1	1		child
0374	0375		5		37	3	Feet only
0392	0408		2	2			Flexed legs
0393	0400	4	1	1	2		
0409	0415	2	1	1			
0419	0425	2					
0577	0578		1				
0633	0634	2		2			Flexed legs/Skull in pit 0589-grave not seen

Four of the graves had ELS pottery assemblage associated. Grave 0374 had a suspicious amount of pottery recorded for a very small portion of grave containing feet only and contamination from pit 0373 is likely. On the basis of the stratigraphic evidence, they appear to have been interred in a narrow time frame during the ELS period. Grave 0633 cuts MS pits 0588 and 0589, grave 0577 cuts ELS pit 0594 and graves 0322 and 0338 cut the ELS ditch 0044. They are cut by EMED pits 0357 and 0373, but most significantly 0322 is cut by ELS pit 0207.

Only the feet and flexed lower leg bones of inhumation 0314 survived, as the east half of grave 0322 had been removed by ELS pit 0207. It differed from the other nine burials, in that it had been interred with the head to the east. The other nine burials were east-west with heads to the west. Inhumations 0408 and 0634 also had flexed legs. Four of the burials (0425, 0408, 0400, 0415) were laid out side by side, with a further grave (0295) on the same line but detached by some 5.00m from this main group. It is evident however that 0408 must have been interred slightly later than the others, in that it disturbed the left side of 0425. The residual traces of 0375 indicate that this body had been interred directly to the west of this row. The remaining bodies all cut the surface of ditch 0044, to the south-east of the main line of graves. Of the ten burials, two were adult males, four adult females, three un-sexable adults and one female adolescent. Three of the five for which observations were possible displayed evidence of *spina biffida* and *spondylolysis* and were probably related (Mays 1989).

Phase 3

Pits

Two pits, both of which cut the phase 1 ditch (0044) can be allocated to phase 3 with certainty. Pit 0259 was associated with a penny of Charles the Bald, probably lost c.905-10 or a few years earlier or later (Archibald) and pit 0207 cuts phase 2 grave 0322.

Unphased

Pits

Only 4 of the 49 pits were allocated a phase on the basis of the stratigraphy and coin evidence but a rough guide to the phase of a further 37 of the 49 pits can be cautiously suggested on the basis of the percentage of Thetford ware in the ceramic assemblages.

Ditch 0044 and 16 pits contain 33.3% or less Thetford ware relative to the EMS/MS pottery (0015, 0163, 0257, 0320, 0323, 0324, 0341, 0500, 0515, 0545, 0594, 0596, 0626, 0648, 0731 and 0797) and it is a reasonable assumption that they date close to the changeover to Thetford ware after the mid-9th century. They are distributed across the whole site but none of them cut the in-filled ditch 0044. Of these, 0500 and 0594 are phase 1 on stratigraphic evidence. Four of these pits (0545, 0596, 0626, 0797) have a very small Thetford ware content (3-6%) and must be the earliest.

Comment [j1]: Also in MS

A flotation column was taken from pit 0596 (Murphy *et al* 2003).

The 19 pits with over 66.6% Thetford ware can be suggested as phase 3 (0024, 0141, 0161, 0197, 0207, 0258, 0259, 0279, 0302, 0381, 0395, 0481, 0579, 0607, 0666, 0708, 0768, 0772, 0798). Two of these pits have independent evidence of belonging to phase 3 (0259 has coin evidence and 0207 cuts phase 2 grave 0322).

The remaining 14 pits with 33.3-66.6% Thetford ware could be any phase. Eight of them were only partially excavated (0106, 0133, 0134, 0512, 0541, 0772, 0785, 0827). Of these 0827 can be suggested as phase 1 as it is cut by 0731 which was allocated to phase 1. Of the other six, which were fully excavated (0279, 0362 (not on plans), 0465, 0480, 0823, 0842), pit 0279 is likely phase 1 as it is cut by 0257, which was allocated to phase 1, but no clues as to the phase of the others is possible.

Comment [j2]: Ph1 and 3....

Discussion ELS

The major east-west ditch 0044 was finally filled at the end of phase 1. No structures of this period were recorded but such structures could have been destroyed by the post medieval cellar on the St Peter's Street frontage. However, most of the site appears to have been used as an open area where rubbish pits were dug and for a short period in the middle of this phase for a small cemetery.

The environmental evidence (from pit 0596) indicates a maritime grassland environment with scrub and bracken present (Murphy *et al* 2003).

Middle Late Saxon: c.900-1000(MLS)

Three buildings (0064, 0487, 0707) and seven pits (0008, 0082, 0171, 0300, 0523, 0692, 0699) belong to this period defined by Thetford ware and St Neot's ware.

The fills of the three buildings contained a large quantity of pottery.

	HM	Ips	Imp	Thet	LSCalc	STN	RHEN	EMW	Total	%EMED
0064	1	36	6	400	9	16	2	1	471	0.6
0487	20	73	5	725		7	4	1	835	0.6
0707	14	119	11	383	8	4	2	3	544	0.9

The small percentage of EMED wares is undoubtedly contamination from cutting pits. 0064 was cut by EMED pits 0056 and 0072. The assemblage from 0487 was clearly contaminated as one sherd of LMED Scarborough ware and one LMT sherd is also recorded from it. It was cut by LMED pits 0047, 0236, 0261. 0707 was cut by EMED pit 0783. It is, of course, possible that some of the EMED sherds are not contamination in which case the final filling of the buildings was early in the EMED period. The lack of any coins of this period and the small number of associated pits suggests a restricted period of occupation, maybe not starting until the late 10th century.

Building 0064 (see scanned plan IAS5203_0064.tif)

Only the west end of this sunken featured building could be excavated. It lay on the east edge of the excavation adjacent to St. Peter's Street which had been widened on its west side in the early years of the 20th century. Consequently, only the width (3.8m) and depth (1.1m) of the sunken feature could be recorded. There was no evidence of an external entrance to the sunken feature in the area excavated.

Removal of the top loamy layers of fill revealed an extensive quantity of burnt timber lying below, comprising carbonised vertical posts, along the west side of the sunken feature and the remnants of up to three layers of horizontal planking behind them. Within the sunken feature, carbonised planks and posts lay strewn around within a layer of ash and charcoal, reflecting the position where they had collapsed into the

open pit. The timbers dipped markedly from south to north. No effort had been made to clear the cellar out after the fire and the hole had been filled with rubbish directly on top of the burnt timbers. No evidence of any flooring material survived between the burnt layers and the natural at the base of the cellar.

Although some fired clay was retrieved from amongst the burnt timbers (269g), the majority was found in the filling above (2.5kg), and some layers of daub can be seen in the higher levels of the section. This would tend to indicate that little daub was actually used in the cellar with most deriving from a floor level above.

Along the west end, the tops of the carbonised posts (0150, 0172, 0182, 0183) were found *in situ* above the line of post holes (0199-0204), although these had rotted out below the base of the cellar, where they had not been touched by the fire. A shallow slot connected the post holes in the north half of the west wall and this turned eastward, following the northern edge of the sunken feature. Behind the carbonised posts there were carbonised horizontal planks (0127, 0187, 0188, 0189, 0191). Only one post (0185), above post hole 0205 and planking (0104, 0193), was recorded of the north wall. This short length of wall was at a 97 degree angle with the west wall. Post holes 0239 and 0240, along the southern edge of the cellar, were much better aligned, although an extra post (0241) was revealed outside this line. A flotation column was taken from the building fill (Murphy *et al* 2003).

Building 0487 (see scanned plan IAS5203_0487.tif)

This sunken featured building lay parallel to and 6m back from the present St. Peter's Street frontage. Because of its close proximity to standing buildings to the north of the excavated site, only the south half was fully excavated, although it was possible to calculate its full length from the limited amount of fill removed from the north end. The south end of the building was heavily truncated by later pits (0036, 0047, 0236, 0261).

The building measured some 6.7m north-south by 4.7m and had been cut to a depth of 1.6m below the surface of the natural. Excavation of cutting pit, to a depth below the floor level, revealed the water table only some 20cm below the base of the cellar (at 1.55mOD). No evidence of any flooring materials was found.

Three post holes (0286, 0457, 0459) of the west wall were recorded but the east wall had been completely cut away by later features. The south wall showed two phases of construction. A gravel-filled slot (0478) with one post hole (0476), at the east end, was cut by postholes 0477 and 0460 with a larger posthole (0461) to the west.

Building 0707 (see scanned plan IAS5203_0707.tif)

Only the south half of this sunken featured building could be excavated on the north edge of the extension trench, to the north-west of the main site. It was 6.8m long, over 2.4m wide and 1.4m deep below the surface of natural. Access to the cellar from the outside was by a sloping entrance (0792), slightly west of centre, on the south side of the building. This was long enough to afford a gentle gradient down to the floor of the cellar, although, in section, the natural was cut very steeply at the far south end. No traces of any flooring materials were found on the base of the sunken feature.

The south wall comprised six postholes (0754, 0755, 0756, 0803, 0825, 0836) with a gap between 0754 and 0825, marking the entrance. Only two postholes (0837, 0838) were recorded in the west wall as it was not fully excavated.

The filling of the cellar was unusual with a high percentage of silt. The bottom 40cm, in particular, showed a build-up of thin silt bands, interspersed with bands of sand and gravel band, possibly derived from the partial collapse of the cellar walls. Unlike other buildings on the site, this structure showed definite signs of abandonment, in comparison to the cellars of other buildings, which appear to have been filled deliberately with domestic rubbish.

Pits

Two pits (0300 and 0523) lay at the north end of the site west of buildings 0064 and 0487 and south of building 0707. The other five pits (0008, 0082, 0171, 0692, 0699) lay at the far south-east of the site with no other MLS features in between the two groups. Only pits 0300, 0523 and 0699 were substantial with depths of about 1.8m but the rest were generally shallow. Pit 0523, was unusual in that the bottom 20cm of fill was laminated horizontal bands of brown sand and grey silt which must have been water-lain.

Discussion of MLS

The lack of rubbish pits associated with the three buildings suggests a relatively brief occupation, probably starting in the late 10th century.

The crowding of the three buildings at the higher north end of the site, the lack of MLS features south of them and the alluvial fill in 0523 and nearby building 0707 could indicate flooding, which could explain the sparse occupation at this period. The filling of all the buildings, including 0064 which was destroyed by fire, probably occurred very early in the 11th century.

Early Medieval: c.1000-1200(EMED)

Three sunken featured buildings (0600, 0695, 0830) and 61 pits belonged to this period. The buildings produced a large amount of pottery from their backfill with relatively low amounts of Early Medieval ware.

	Pre	RB	Hm	Ips	Imp	Thet	STN	LSCalc	RHEN	EMW	Tot	%EMED
0600	18	1	15	136	84	3452	47		23	33	6201	1.9
0695			10	47	4	307	15		1	14	398	3.8
0830			5	45	3	358	6	19	12	22	470	7.2

The dating of 0695 could well be insecure as it was difficult to isolate it from a complex of pits, including three EMED pits which cut it. The records also show pit 0692 cutting it which has a typical MLS pottery assemblage.

Building 0600 (see scanned plan IAS5203_0600.tif)

This sunken featured building lay at least 15m back from the medieval St. Peter's Street frontage at the north end of the site. It cut pit 0462 which was EMED or MLS (as it was dated by one EMED sherd which could be derived from 0600) and was cut by pit 0434 which had a LS assemblage. Although 0600 only has 1.9% EMED pottery, the actual number of sherds (56) is highly unlikely to be contamination.

The south-east corner had been cut away by a post medieval cellar (0004).

Orientated north-south, the building was roughly parallel to the road line, with a stepped entrance (0454) into the sunken feature at the north end of the east side. The building was 5m long, 3.7m wide, on the basis of the post hole evidence, and 1.7m deep below the surface of natural.

The building walls were marked by postholes set in a continuous foundation trench only on the north side and the northern half of the west side. The post holes in the west half of the north wall and north half of the west wall could not be traced over an earlier pit (0395). The 5.5m length of surviving south wall comprised four postholes (0601-0604). A foundation trench and four postholes (0421, 0502-0504) were recorded in the north wall and one posthole (0605) and a short length of foundation trench (0606) was recorded in the west wall. Only the entrance section of the east wall was excavated. Three post holes (0505, 0622, 0623) were inset from the main wall line and appear to block the entrance.

The floor of the building was unusual having a large depression (0571), which reached its deepest towards the north end. At a later phase, this depression and entrance was filled with yellow sand, forming a higher floor level and the entrance steps were

rebuilt. Post holes (*0494-0496* and *0497*) at the east end of the entrance indicate that it was probably covered.

The deep erosion of the floor and entrance steps would most likely have been caused by animals being kept in the cellar.

A marked distinction between the filling behind the posts and the filling of the cellar could be traced around the building except in the area of the steps, indicating that the wall of posts and planks had not collapsed before being filled on abandonment

Building 0695 (see scanned plan IAS5203_0695.tif)

Only the north end of this sunken featured building was excavated at the far south end of the excavation. It was cut by EMED pits *0671* and *0729*. Its north-east corner had been further truncated by LMT pits *0658* and *0685*.

It was mainly recognisable from the existence of a very uneven clay floor (*0791*), which survived in three areas between the later pits. It had subsided, presumably into an unexcavated earlier feature, along the southern section line. A well-defined, but slightly curved edge survived along its north side, but the north-west corner had been removed by pit *0671*. No accurate length or width can be measured but it was 80cm deep below the surface of the natural.

Three post holes (*0775*, *0790*, *0794*), not in a straight line, were recorded on the north side. The largest (*0790*) cut the remnants of a slot (*0800*) that underlay the clay floor to the south. Only one other post hole (*0795*) appeared to be associated with the structure at the south end of slot *0800*.

Structure 0830

Only the north-east corner of this sunken featured building was excavated on the west side at the north of the site. There were no useful stratigraphic relationships to other features to confirm its date as it was only cut by three LMT pits (*0702*, *0736*, *0829*). Although only a small part of the structure was exposed, post holes were recorded around the outer edge of the base of the sunken feature indicating a building despite the unevenness of the base. No length or width measurements are possible but the pit was cut to a depth of up to 1.5m below the surface of the natural. Only two post holes of the east wall were recorded: a linear north-east corner post (*0849*) and a post hole 1.6m to the south (*0850*). Three post holes in the north wall were recorded, but they were not in a straight line. Post hole *0848* was set back further than the other two (*0847*, *0849*), which lay parallel with the north edge of the building.

Pits

The 61 pits belonging to this period are not evenly distributed across the site. The majority of pits are concentrated either in the north-west corner of the site, close to building *0830*, or the south-east corner, close to *0695*. A smaller group is close to building *0600* in the north-east corner. The areas of dense pitting include intercutting pits and indicate at least three phases.

Late Medieval: c.1200-1450 (LMED)

No buildings were found of this period, but the 25 rubbish pits imply their existence. The widening of St. Peter's Street in the early 20th century and the damage from the cellars of building *0004* may explain the lack of any buildings fronting the street. The distribution of pits tends to support this conclusion. They are grouped in an east-west line just north of the PMED building *0004* and a second east-west line south of it, probably marking tenement boundaries.

Only one pit (*0716*) was unusual. It was sub-rectangular in shape, and vertical on the east and west sides. A long slope ran into the pit from the northern end, presumably for access. The floor and ramp of the pit were covered with a layer of orange sand and gravel, up to 40cm deep at the south end. The fill above the gravel was predominantly a sandy loam containing patches of burnt clay, which contained a tip line of charcoal.

The evidence of burning may, however, be related to the final filling of the pit rather than its original use.

Late Medieval Transitional: c.1450-1600 (LMT)

Thirty pits belong to this period, spread across the whole site, apart from the south-west corner, and with a concentration in an east-west line across the centre. As with the LMED period, any structures on the St Peter's Street frontage could have been removed by PMED building 0004 or lie under the 5m strip of early 20th century road widening.

Post Medieval: c.1600-1900 (PMED)

A large cellared building fronting St Peter's Street, 3 outbuildings, a well and 11 pits belonged to this period. Six of the pits were intercutting in the north-west corner of the site, overlaid by one of the outbuildings (0720). They probably all date to the 18th or 19th century.

The east side of St Peter's Street has a high survival of timber framed buildings, mainly dating to the 17th century. Those on the west side were removed, early in the 20th century, to widen the street.

Outbuilding 0501

This outbuilding, 2.2m by 1.8m, on the west edge of the site, had brick walls and a cobbled floor surface. Nothing had survived from above the floor to indicate its function.

Outbuilding 0640

This brick outbuilding, 4m by 1.8m, lay at the far south of the site 13m to the rear of St Peter's Street. A partition wall divided it into two rooms.

Outbuilding 0720

This rectangular outbuilding, 2.6m by 0.9m, in the far north-west corner of the site, comprised three walls of un-mortared bricks and a brick floor. It was filled with demolition rubble.

Well 0297

This well, at the northern end of the site, had a shaft 1.15m in diameter, lined partly in brick and partly in flint and mortar. Only the top fill was excavated.

Building 0004

This brick built cellar, 7m wide, ran 13m back from the St Peter's Street frontage. The building appears on the First Edition Ordnance Survey map (1882) and was presumably demolished when the west side of St. Peter's Street was widened by some 5 metres early in the early 20th century. No excavation was carried out within the cellars, as these were likely to have removed most of the earlier deposits.

Research Potential

- The small ELS cemetery merits further research being a tightly dated in the later 9th century (Danish occupation of the town). Further analysis for potential family connections, pathology and dating would be useful in understanding why such a group was buried within an occupation area especially when other examples are known from the town.
- More precise dating of the EMS occupation is critical to an understanding of the settlement at this period and its relationship to the Buttermarket cemetery and the MS occupation.

Ipswich Archive Site Summaries

- A re-examination of the imported pottery from this site (and others) is also critical especially as much of it remains unattributed and knowledge of the kilns and products of this period in NW Europe has advanced since the original study by Coutts.

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