



Archaeological Field Unit

# **Late Saxon to Post-Medieval Quarrying at Offord Cluny, Cambridgeshire**

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**Cambridgeshire County Council**

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**Late Saxon to Post-Medieval Quarrying at  
Offord Cluny, Cambridgeshire**  
(TL 2200 6720)

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2003

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## **SUMMARY**

*During the second half of October 2001 the Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) of Cambridge County Council conducted an archaeological excavation of 0.33ha of land at 177 High Street, Offord Cluny, Cambridgeshire (TL 2200 6720). This work was carried out in advance of a proposed housing development.*

*The excavations indicated the presence of prehistoric activity on the site in the form of a group of residual but relatively un-abraded flint tools largely dating from the Neolithic, along with a scraper of probable Palaeolithic date.*

*Roman finds were also residual but, as with the prehistoric material, are the only finds of this date yet recorded from the parish. The small assemblage included a sherd of pottery and two pieces of tile (one from a hypocaust system), as well as a hearth bottom and ferrous slags of possible Roman date.*

*The Late Saxon/Saxo-Norman period was represented by gravel extraction, and a quantity of pottery from this period was recovered from other features. The early medieval period was largely represented by ditches, one particular boundary to the east of the site being re-cut numerous times. This boundary remained in use into the later medieval period. A pit of this date was also recorded. Gravel extraction continued and an enclosure was formed by three ditches.*

*In the post-medieval period gravel quarrying continued on a larger scale than previously and a farmyard outbuilding was built, with an associated well/watering hole. From the post-medieval period onwards the site was used for agriculture or horticulture, when it was levelled and divided by modern fence lines.*

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**Late Saxon to Post-Medieval Quarrying at  
Offord Cluny, Cambridgeshire  
(TL 2200 6720)**

**1 INTRODUCTION**

Between the 14th October 2002 and the 28th October 2002 the Archaeological Field Unit (AFU) of Cambridgeshire County Council undertook the excavation of 0.33ha of land at 177 High Street, Offord Cluny, Cambridgeshire (TL2200 6720). The work was commissioned by Bewick Homes Ltd, before the construction of five new houses with access and services, in response to a Brief set by Andy Thomas of the County Archaeological Office (CAO). The excavation was carried out by staff members of the AFU in accordance with a specification prepared by Judith Roberts (AFU).

Excavation was based on initial archaeological evaluation of the site (Kenney 2002) in which four trenches revealed at least three separate phases of activity. Features were interpreted as representing possible Bronze Age ditches, Saxo-Norman postholes and pits and a possible well structure of post-medieval (probably 18th century) date.

**2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY**

The site lies on Pleistocene First/Second Terrace River Gravels. In this area the river gravels overlie Boulder Clay which overlies Upper Jurassic Oxford Clay (BGS 1975).

The development area lies between 13.6m OD and 14.5m OD, the lowest ground being near the High Street to the west of the excavation.

**3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

**3.1 Prehistoric and Roman**

An unidentified tool of Palaeolithic date was found just to the north of the village (SMR 02539) while numerous flint flakes and tools attributable to the Mesolithic were found in the Buckden gravel pits to the north-west of the village (SMR 02531). No remains of Neolithic date have yet been found in the parish.



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**Figure 1** Location of Excavation Area showing Archaeological Features.

Both Bronze Age pottery and flints have been found close to All Saints church (SMRs 2025 and 2540) and slightly further to the south (SMR 2486). West of the village across the River Great Ouse, the remains of a barrow cemetery have been seen in aerial photographs (SMR 8158).

Although no Iron Age or Roman finds have yet been discovered in the parish of Offord Cluny, Iron Age pottery was recovered from the Buckden gravel quarries to the north-west of the village (SMRs 859, 1790, 2060, 2508a and 2508b).

### **3.2 Anglo-Saxon and Medieval**

No Anglo-Saxon remains have been identified in the parish. The churches of St Peter (Offord D'Arcy) and All Saints (Offord Cluny) date from the 13th century; although the latter is mentioned in the Domesday survey, nothing now stands from that period. A medieval moat survives at Grove Farm in Offord D'Arcy.

### **3.3 Post-Medieval**

The Manor House and Manor Farm within the village date from the 18th and 16th centuries respectively (SMRs 2444 and 2446).

### **3.4 Previous Archaeological Work**

The only previous archaeological investigation carried out within the village of Offord Cluny was the evaluation that formed the basis for this excavation (Kenney 2002). This work revealed possible prehistoric and Saxo-Norman features and associated artefacts. The study of land at 177 High Street, Offord Cluny therefore represents the first opportunity to examine the historic core of the settlement.

### **3.5 Historical Background**

Lying some 6km north of St Neots and 5km south of Huntingdon, the villages of Offord Cluny and Offord D'Arcy, which form one continuous settlement, lie on the east bank of the River Great Ouse (Fig. 1). The name Offord is first recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086 as Opeforde, meaning 'Upper Ford', perhaps referring to the village as the first point above Huntingdon that the River Great Ouse can be crossed (Mawer and Stenton 1943). Cluny is appended to the name before 1257 to indicate the ownership by the monks of Cluny in Burgundy. At Domesday, the manor of Offord Cluny had a church, a priest and two mills (Page *et al* 1932).

The early editions of Ordnance Survey maps reveal that the area of excavation was an open field divided by lines of trees and fences.

## **4 METHODOLOGY**

The area of investigation, approximately 3250m<sup>2</sup>, was stripped of topsoil and subsoil by a mechanical excavator, with a 2m wide toothless ditching bucket, under archaeological supervision.

The archaeological features were identified, cleaned and planned on a 10m grid, as they were exposed, at a scale of 1:50. This plan forms the basis of Fig. 2, with the archaeological features being located in relation to the fixed boundaries of the site. Also included are the locations of the evaluation trenches which had previously been related to the Ordnance Survey grid. Once excavated the features were recorded using the AFU's standard recording system.

## **5 RESULTS**

Archaeological deposits were sealed beneath 0.20-0.70m of brown silty sand and gravel subsoil, which in turn was buried beneath 0.10-0.30m of rich dark topsoil comprised of silty sands. These deposits were deepest in the northern and eastern parts of the site, largely as a result of variations in the depth of the gravelly subsoil as the topsoil was fairly uniform in depth across the site.

Many of the archaeological features excavated (Figs. 2 and 3) had been heavily truncated, probably by ploughing or other smaller scale agricultural practices. It seems likely that from the end of the medieval period, at least, the area has had an agricultural focus.

### **5.1 Natural features**

Several features were deemed to be natural in origin (**146, 163, 170, 172, 174, 188, 296/298, and 346**), having been formed by falling trees creating natural hollows.

### **5.2 Prehistoric and Roman**

Although no features of prehistoric date were recorded, an interesting selection of residual Neolithic flint flakes and tools were found together with a scraper (from posthole **108**) which may be older (Appendix 4). The tools

include a borer, a saw, blades and scrapers. The majority of the assemblage is fashioned from a brown river gravel flint and most pieces are made on secondary flakes.

Again, no *in situ* Roman features were recorded although a small assemblage of residual finds of the period was recovered, consisting of pottery, a plano-convex hearth bottom of possible Roman date (W. Wall, pers. comm.) and ceramic building materials (including flue tile).

### **5.3 Phase 1: Late Saxon to Early Medieval (900-1200)**

#### *5.3.1 Phase 1a: Late Saxon/Saxo-Norman (900-1150)*

Two pits (**208** and **223**) contained Late Saxon or Saxo-Norman pottery. The largest (**223**) was 4.50m x 2.50m and 1.20m deep, was sub-circular in shape and was in the centre of the site (Figs 2 and 3). It had irregular, steep, concave sides and a small rounded base. It contained four fills. The basal fill (231) consisted of dark greyish brown silty sand with frequent small stones and flint gravels with occasional sandstone and ragstone boulders (50–300mm in diameter). A few pieces of animal bone were recovered from this fill which covered the lower 0.30m of the pit. Environmental samples from this deposit provided little evidence to suggest its use (see Appendix 5). The next fill, 226, was a 0.20m thick light grey concretion of silt sand and fine flint gravels. Fill 225 was a 0.20m thick layer of dark brown silty clay which was moderately compact with occasional flint gravels. The upper fill (224) was a 0.60m deep light olive brown silty clay with occasional rounded and sub-angular flint gravels. From this upper fill a Neolithic side-end scraper made on a secondary flake and a struck flint flake also of Neolithic date were recovered, along with Thetford ware and St Neots ware dating from 900-1150.

Pit **223** therefore appears to date to the Late Saxon or Saxo-Norman period, although given that the diagnostic finds came from its uppermost fill it could be earlier in origin. Its function remains uncertain, although the lack of finds indicates that it was not a refuse pit. It may have been opened for gravel extraction, which might explain the large boulders left at its base.

Further to the north-west, pit **208** was a small, shallow bowl-shaped pit with a diameter of 0.78m and a depth of 0.16m. It contained a single fill (207) of loose dark greyish-brown silty clay with moderate flint gravels containing one piece of animal bone and a sherd of St Neots ware (900-1150). The shallowness of this pit suggests it is the base of a heavily truncated, and originally much larger and deeper, quarry or rubbish pit. Its date remains uncertain.

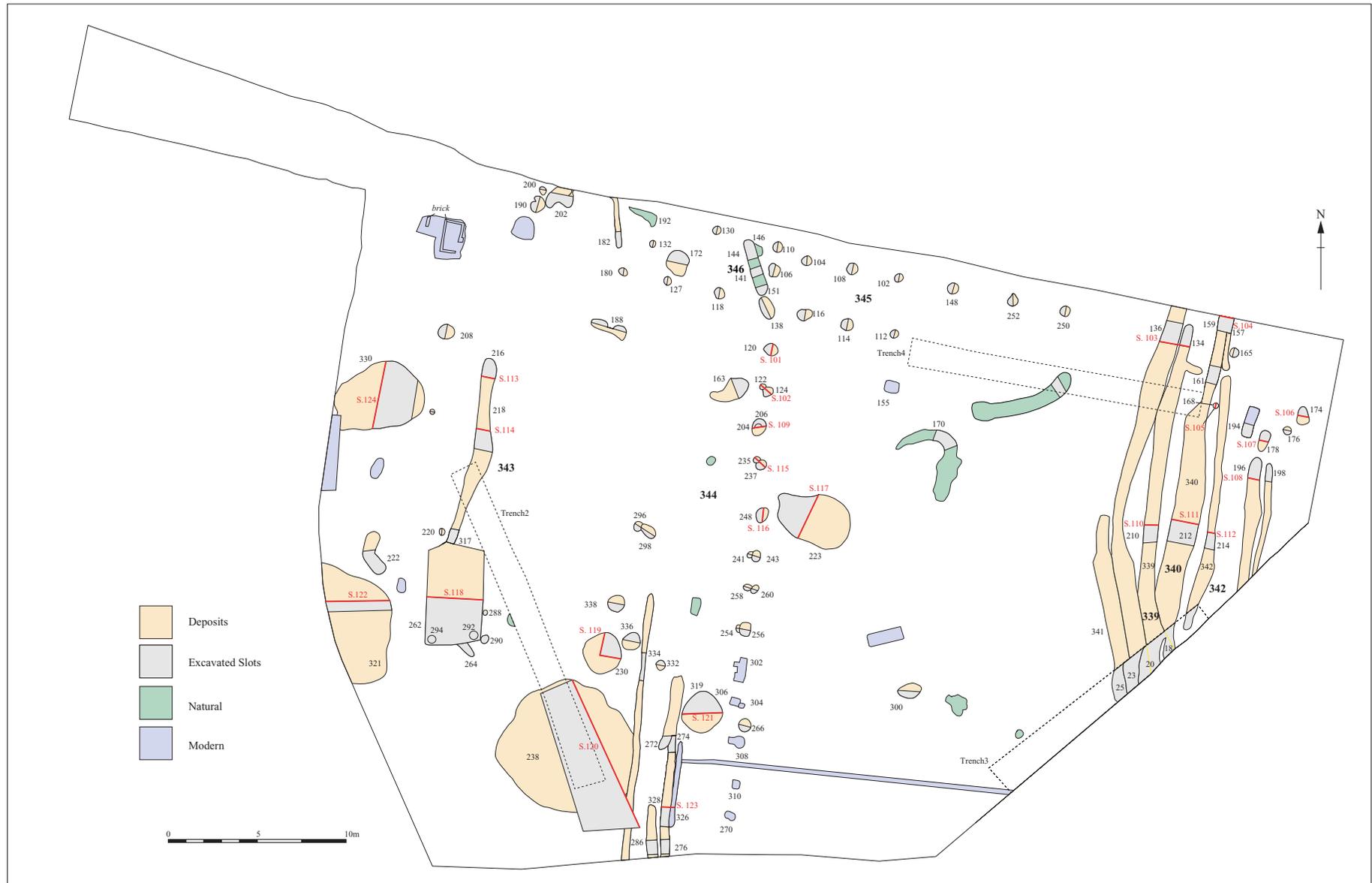


Figure 2 Site Plan

### 5.3.2 Phase 1b: Saxo-Norman/Early Medieval (1050-1200)

#### Ditches

A series of parallel ditches running south-to-north were closely grouped on the eastern side of the site (**136, 339, 340, 341** and **342**). They were all deeper and wider to the south where less erosion or truncation had occurred.

Ditch **341** was excavated during the evaluation phase (**25**; see Kenney 2002) and was described as having a shallow U-shaped base with straight sides. It ran south-to-north for 10m before being lost through truncation or erosion. The ditch was 0.90m wide with a maximum recorded depth of 0.22m. Even at its deepest little more than the base survived. Its fill (24) consisted of clay silt with frequent flint gravels, from which no finds were recovered.

Ditch **136** was also sectioned in the evaluation phase (**23**; see Kenney 2002). The evaluation investigated a larger slot through it to the south, the ditch having steep sides and a U-shaped base. During excavation the ditch was recorded as varying between 0.90m and 1.30m wide and 0.20m and 0.40m deep. One fill (135) was a mid-brown silt sand with moderate amounts of sub-angular flint gravels and contained one piece of animal bone. Another (22) was a dark greyish-brown clay silt with frequent sub angular flint gravels and contained no artefacts.

Ditch **339** was also sectioned during the evaluation phase (**20**; see Kenney 2002) and in two places during the excavation (slots **134** and **210**). This ditch ran for a distance of 20m before terminating a metre from the northern edge of the site. Once again the depth and width of the sections through this ditch varied, the depth being between 0.08m and 0.32m and the width being between 0.50m and 0.95m. The base of the ditch was flat, but too little of the sides remained, due to truncation, to make any reasonable comment on their shape. Each of the recorded fills contained moderate amounts of sub-angular flint gravels in a mid brown clay silt matrix. Fill 19 contained one piece of animal bone, fill 209 contained a flint flake of Neolithic origin and fill 133 contained a Neolithic notched flint borer or engraving tool.

Ditch **342** ran almost continuously south-to-north across the eastern part of the site. It was sectioned twice (**214** and **157**) and was between 0.60m and 0.70m wide and between 0.06m and 0.30m deep. The base was flattish and the sides were steep and slightly concave. Both of its fills were dark brown silty sand with occasional sub angular flint gravels. Fill 213 contained no artefacts while 156 contained two sherds of Early Medieval ware dating from between 1050 and 1200.

Ditch **340** ran for 20m and was sectioned four times (**18, 212, 161** and **159**). It had suffered from various degrees of truncation and its width varied between 0.50m and 1.50m. It was flat-based and its depth varied between 0.10m and 0.40m. The fills of each of the slots (17, 211, 160 and 158) were a uniform

sandy silt of a yellowish light brown colour which contained occasional small rounded flint gravels. Fill 211 yielded a single piece of Roman tile, a single piece of Roman flue tile probably from a hypocaust system, a plano-convex hearth bottom of possible Roman date (Will Wall, pers. comm.) and one sherd piece of indeterminable pottery which was either Roman or medieval. Fill 158 contained a single piece of animal bone. Fill 160 also produced one piece of animal bone and two sherds of early medieval ware of mid 11th to 12th century date.

### Pit

The full extent of a pit (**202**) is unknown since it extended beyond the northern baulk of the western part of the site. It was recorded to a maximum extent in plan of 0.76m wide east-to-west and approximately 0.50m north-to-south, the depth being a maximum of 0.25m. It was steep and slightly concave sided and the base was flat. Its fill (201) consisted of a greyish dark-brown silty clay with abundant coarse sand and moderate sub-angular flint gravels. The fill became more compact with depth and contained a piece of animal bone and a sherd of medieval Ely-type ware dating from the mid 12th century and one sherd of early medieval ware dating from the mid 11th to 12th century.

## **5.4 Phase 2: Medieval (1200-1500)**

### *5.4.1 Ditches*

In the central part of the west of the site was a ditch or gully (**343**; slots **216**, **218**, **317** and **264**) which ran north-to-south for at least 11m before being cut by the post-medieval farm building (see below). It probably included a slot (**264**) which extended to the south of the building. This ditch was somewhat irregular, again probably due to truncation, being between 0.35m and 1.20m wide and between 0.10 and 0.30m deep with a flat or very gently rounded base in all sections and steep slightly concave sides. It became progressively narrower and shallower towards the south, especially in the vicinity of the building where most disturbance had occurred.

A sequence of fills was recorded. Fill 215 was a greyish dark-brown silty clay with some sand and moderate-frequent sub-angular flint gravels, loosely compacted and from which one piece of animal bone was recovered. Fill 217 was a greyish dark-brown silty clay with some sand and moderate-frequent sub-angular flint gravels, loosely compacted. It contained half a 12th century silver coin along with seven medieval pottery sherds. Two Thetford ware sherds and five St Neots sherds were also recovered from this fill. Fill 316 was a greyish dark-brown silty clay with some sand and frequent flint gravels of moderately loose compaction and contained an intrusive sherd of post-medieval bichrome red ware (see discussion). Fill 263 was a brown silty clay with some sand component and contained frequent flints gravels, small stones and pea-grit gravels, was moderately loose and contained no artefacts.

To the extreme west of the site, on the eastern side of the earlier sequence of ditches were two other ditches. Ditch **196** ran south-to-north and butt-ended midway towards the northern limit of excavation after 6m. It was 0.70m wide and 0.30m deep, the sides were straight and steep and the base was flat. The ditch contained a single fill (195) which consisted of a dark grey sandy silt with occasional small rounded flint pebbles. A sherd of pottery dating to 1150-1350 was recovered.

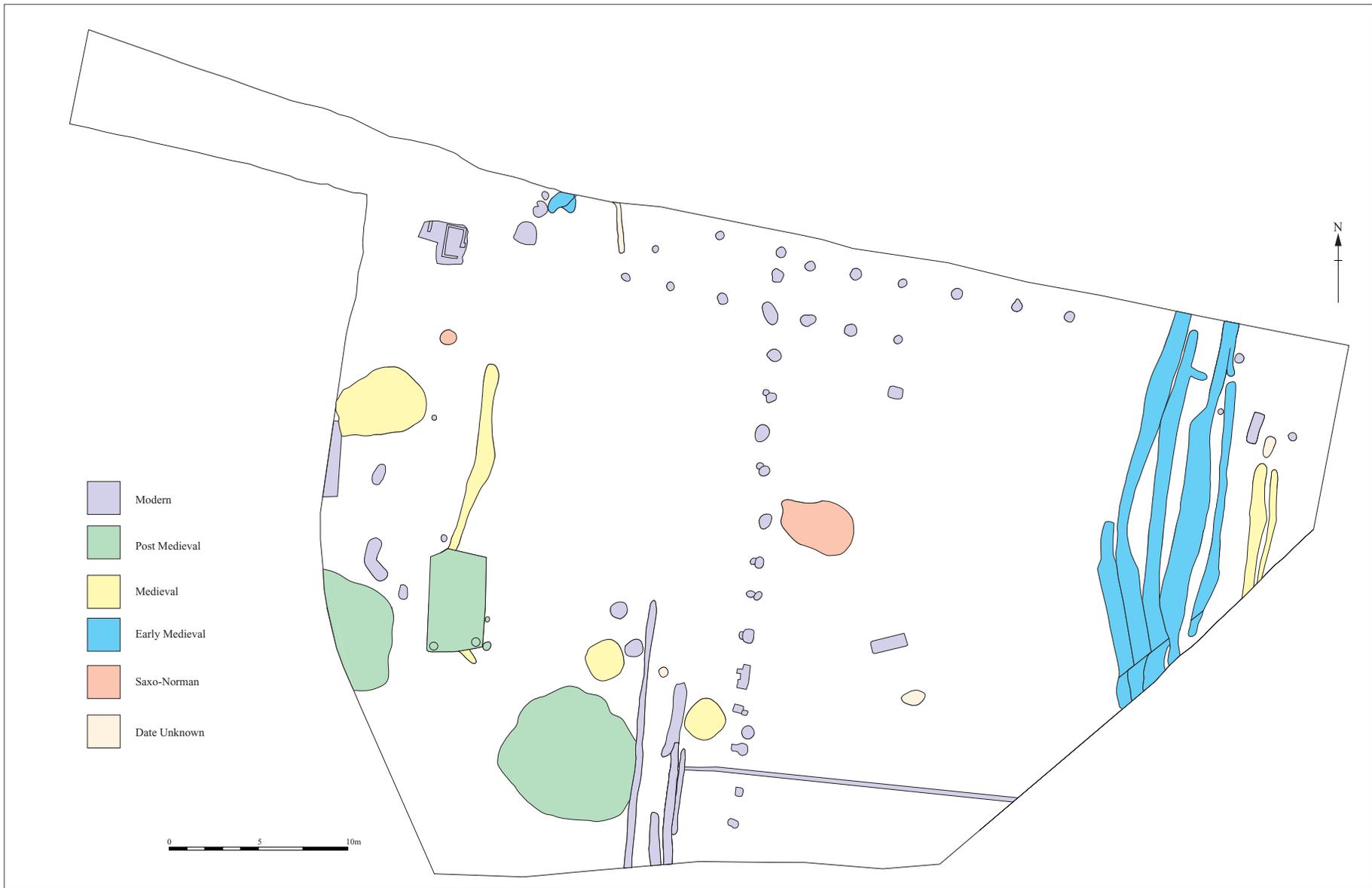
Ditch **198** was parallel to **196** and terminated at a similar point, although it was smaller being 0.35m wide, 0.08m deep with a flattish base. Its fill (197) was a dark grey sandy silt with occasional small rounded flint pebbles, from which a piece of animal bone was recovered.

#### 5.4.2 *Pits*

Pit **230** was located towards the south-west of the excavated area and was circular with a diameter of 2.60m and a depth of 1.00m. It had steep sides, which became vertical about half way down before rounding into a flat base. The pit contained three fills. The basal fill (229) consisted of a 0.40m thick layer of greenish mid-dark brown silty sand which was moderately compacted. It contained animal bone and a sherd of Grimston glazed fine ware pottery with incised decoration dating from between 1250 and 1400. Fill 228 was a 0.50m thick layer of loosely compacted greyish-brown slightly sandy silt with frequent rounded flint pebbles and sub-rounded and sub-angular flint gravels. From this fill the proximal end of a Neolithic flint blade was recovered along with a piece of lava quern. Fill 227 was a 0.50m thick deposit of greyish mid-brown sandy silt with occasional sub-angular flint gravels. Finds included animal bone and 16 sherds of medieval pottery including sandy wares and shelly wares dating from between 1150 and 1350.

Pit **319** was in the south-west of the site, was 2.60m in diameter and 0.95m deep. Its base was rounded and the sides were slightly concave. This pit contained four fills. Its lowest fill (324) was a 0.30m thick layer of greyish-brown sandy silt loosely bound with well sorted sub-angular flint gravels and pebbles. Fill 323 was 0.25m thick and consisted of mid-dark brown sandy silt with some clay and occasional flint gravels and pebbles. Fill 322, a 0.20m thick layer of greyish pale-mid brown silty sand with frequent sub-rounded and sub-angular flint gravels and pebbles. This fill was moderately loose. Fill 318 was a 0.40m thick layer of greyish mid-brown sandy silt with a small clay component and moderate rounded flint gravels and pebbles. This fill contained animal bone and one sherd of medieval pottery.

Pit **330** was located near the western baulk towards the north of the site and was oval. It was 5m wide east-to-west, 3.50m north-to-south and was approximately 1.00m deep. Its sides became steeper with depth giving them a convex profile and the base was flat. This feature suffered from severe waterlogging and became unstable. Its fill 329 was 1.00m thick and consisted of dark brown silty clay with occasional flint gravels and pebbles of mixed



**Figure 3** Phase Plan

stone. Pottery recovered from this fill dated from between 1250 and 1400.

## 5.5 Phase 3: Post-medieval

### 5.5.1 Pits

Pit **238** was the largest feature excavated on the site - approximately 7m in diameter and a maximum of 1.50m deep. It lay in the south-western corner of the site. A machine bucket was put through the feature in the same position as the evaluation trench, producing a deeper and wider section than had previously been recorded. Site conditions during recording were difficult, largely due to heavy rain and the fact that the base was below the water table.

The profile of the large sub-circular pit was characterised by irregular gently sloping sides which broke to form a fairly steep-sided bowl-shaped depression in the centre which had been lined with wooden planking on at least 3 sides (Fig. 4). Above the wooden planking five fills were excavated.



**Figure 4 Planks in the base of pit 238**

A series of wooden planks (311, 312, 313, 314 and 315) represent the first fill. These were well preserved, set on their edges in a square and held in place by wooden pegs driven into the natural gravels. The planks were set into the natural clays that were exposed at this level, the tops of the planking being level with the top of the natural gravels overlying the clay. A hand auger was employed to check that the clay was not the upper fill of a deeper well shaft.

The planked area was 1.25m in length, the planks surviving *in situ* on the north and west sides having collapsed on the eastern and southern sides, where they lay horizontal. Several large unmodified quartz and sandstone glacial erratics were also recovered from the planked area which may have been used in combination with the wooden pegs to hold the planks in place. It seems more than likely, however, that the stone was dumped into the pit at a later date.

The lowest fill above the planks (239) consisted of a 0.35m thick deposit of dark brown sandy silt and appears to be derived from rotting waterlogged organic matter that has collected at the base of the pit and decomposed under anaerobic conditions. Presumably this layer represents the initial phase of disuse before the slumping of the gravel from the sides of the pit, and can be dated by the presence of a post-medieval bichrome red ware pipkin handle which probably came from Ely and dates to 1600-1750.

Fills 282, 283 and 284 were layers of slumped gravel indicative of a period of disuse. The sides of the feature were cut into natural gravels which had eroded and slumped into the pit along with sub-soils to form layers of light brown silty sand with frequent sub-angular flint gravels. Fill 281 was a homogenous sandy silt of a dark brown colour which filled the upper 1.10m of the feature. Both its thickness and homogeneity are characteristic of rapid infilling.

A large pit (**321**) was just to the west of a building (see below) and ran into the western limit of excavation. The pit was 5.00m north-to-south, 3.50m east-to-west and 0.60m deep. Its full extent remains unknown, although approximately half of it was recorded. This feature contained a single fill (320) which was a dark grey silty sand with occasional sub-rounded gravels and pebbles and seems to have been used for dumping rubbish. Finds recovered from an east-to-west slot through this feature included clay pipe stems, post-medieval brick and tile and glazed post-medieval red ware pottery types along with some cream wares and bone china sherds dating from the mid to late 18th century.

### 5.5.2 *Outbuilding and Associated Postholes*

Feature **262** was towards the south-western corner of the site between pits **238** and **321** (see above), cutting into a medieval ditch (**343**). The construction cut was 5m long north-to-south, 3m wide east-to-west and 0.30m deep. Its sides were vertical and the feature contained a single fill (261) which consisted of a dark brown silty-sand with occasional gravels and pebbles as well as a large quantity of pottery. Most of the pottery was post-medieval red ware, probably coming from Ely and dating from 1600–1800. The group included several fragments of pancheons, which in a rural context may have been used to separate and skim milk. In addition four sherds of Lyveden-Stanion type ware (1200-1350) were recovered.

Two postholes were sealed by fill 261. One post (**292**) had been placed in the south-eastern corner of the feature and was 0.50m in diameter, 0.10m deep with a flattish base. It contained an undated fill (291) of dark-brown silty sand. The other posthole (**294**) was in the south-west corner of the building and was 0.50m in diameter, 0.20m deep, with vertical sides and a flattish base. It contained an undated single fill (293) of dark-brown silty sand.

Two further postholes (**288** and **290**) were found in close proximity to the building. Posthole **288** was just on the outside of the eastern edge of the construction cut. It was 0.35m in diameter and 0.18m deep with vertical sides and a base that sloped from east-to-west. This posthole contained a single fill (287) of dark-brown silty-sand which contained moderate quantities of pea grit gravels. The second posthole (**290**) was just outside the south-east corner of the building. It was 0.50m in diameter and 0.16m deep, with vertical sides, a concave base and a single fill (289) of dark brown silty-sand containing moderate quantities of gravel and one sherd of late Grimston glazed ware, dating from between 1350 and 1500.

## **5.6 Phase 4: Modern**

### *5.6.1 Postholes*

Two very distinct axes of postholes were revealed during the excavation. A set running north-east to south-west (annotated as Group **345** on Fig. 2) was identified as a Saxo-Norman structure in the evaluation (Kenney 2002). They ran parallel to the northern site boundary (see Fig. 2) and formed a double row approximately 2.5m apart and 30m long. Perpendicular to the double row of postholes was a single row (shown as Group **344** on Fig. 2), approximately 30m long, running north-south.

The double east-west row of postholes consisted of postholes **200, 192, 130, 176, 168, 110, 104, 108, 102, 148, 252, 250, 165, 112, 114, 116, 118, 127** and **180**. All of the postholes in this alignment were of a similar shape, size and had the same fill which consisted of a mid-brown silt-sand which generally contained small quantities of clay and occasional natural flint gravels. Finds were recovered from the fills of **250, 180, 114** and **116**. Posthole **250** contained a heavily abraded and almost certainly residual sherd of North Norfolk local grey ware pottery dating from 1200-1400. Posthole **180** contained a single sherd of early medieval ware dating from between 1050 and 1200. Posthole **114** contained one heavily abraded grey ware sherd of probable Roman date. Posthole **116** contained a modern nail.

The north-to-south single row of postholes consisted of **106, 138, 120, 122, 124, 204, 206, 235, 237, 248, 241, 243, 258, 260, 254, 256, 302, 304, 306, 266, 308, 310** and **270**. The more angular postholes at the southern end of this row were clearly modern since they contained modern brick (postholes **310, 308, 304, and 302**). Other postholes contained residual finds. Posthole **106** contained a metal buckle dating from the 17th century. Posthole **138**

contained one sherd of hard sandy ware of probable late medieval date, 1350-1500. Posthole **120** contained a fragment of 18th-century clay pipe. Posthole **241** contained a single sherd of late medieval pottery of an unknown type. Posthole **243** contained one sherd of medieval Pottisbrew pottery. Posthole **254** contained a single sherd medieval Ely type ware pottery dating to c.1150-1350. Saxo-Norman pottery was also recovered from one posthole excavated in the evaluation phase (see Kenney 2002) and appears to have been residual.

All the postholes in this alignment were of a similar size, between 0.30-0.40m in diameter and 0.15-0.25m deep, and had the same fill which consisted of a mid-brown silt-sand which generally contained small quantities of clay and occasional natural flint gravels. Some of the postholes had been cut twice side-by-side indicating the maintenance of the same fence.

### 5.6.2 *Ditches*

A number of short gullies or ditches on the southern boundary of the site, all aligned north-to-south, were modern (**286=272**, **276=274**, **326** and **334**, Fig. 2). Perpendicular to these gullies was a narrow field drain that crossed to the south-eastern site boundary.

A number of isolated features also contained modern finds (**220**, **222** and **190**). Many of the fills were similar to the topsoil.

## 5.7 **Undated features**

A number of isolated features were excavated and remain undated. Pit **300** in the south-eastern part of the site was oval in shape and was orientated east-west. The east-west axis measured 1.09m, the north-south axis was 0.32m and the depth was 0.08m. The feature had steep irregular sides with an uneven irregular base possibly indicating a natural origin, it contained a single fill (299) of dark greyish-brown silt containing moderate flint gravels and occasional small fragments of charcoal.

Pit **178** was to the north of ditch **196** and was sub-rectangular. It was orientated north-to-south, 1.00m long, 0.45m wide and 0.20m deep. The sides were moderately steep, flat and led to a narrow rounded base. Its fill (177) was of dark grey silty sand with some clay containing occasional flint gravels.

Posthole **332** was in the area of the modern ditches/gullies in the central southern part of the site. It was circular with steep slightly concave sides and a gently rounded base. This posthole was 0.38m wide and 0.12m deep. Its fill (331) consisted of a mid to dark brown silty-sand which was moderately loose with no inclusions and was rather similar to the topsoil on the site presumably indicating that the post cut the subsoil and was modern in origin.

A linear feature (**182**) extended southwards from the northern baulk of the site for approximately 3m before terminating. It had a similar profile to the

modern gullies in the southern part of the site, being 0.16m deep, 0.42m wide with steep slightly concave sides and a narrow rounded base. Its fill (181) was a dark greyish brown silty sand with some clay, frequent flint gravels and moderate quantities of iron rich stone. While the cut was similar to that of the modern gullies to the south of the site, the fill contained far larger quantities of stone.

## 6 DISCUSSION

There was limited evidence for both Neolithic and Roman activity in the vicinity of the site in the form of residual finds.

### 6.1 Phase 1: Saxo-Norman/Early Medieval

Limited evidence for Late Saxon or Saxo-Norman activity took the form of two pits, one a quarry and the other a refuse pit, although the dating evidence is insubstantial. Five parallel ditches of probable early medieval date (**341**, **136**, **339**, **340** and **342**) represent a boundary and/or drain that was repeatedly re-cut. The same boundary is likely to be in use slightly later in the medieval period when further ditches on a similar alignment were cut.

### 6.2 Phase 2: Medieval

#### *Ditches*

Each of the three medieval ditches had been heavily truncated and were presumably somewhat deeper originally. They were on the same alignment as the modern road which runs approximately 30m to the west of the westernmost ditch (**343**). The three ditches attributable to this period (**196**, **198** and **343**) terminate along a common axis and may represent the eastern and western boundaries of a piece of land or field, the eastern boundary of which appears to have originated in the early medieval period. Ditches **196** and **198** may indicate the recutting of the same boundary, which notably did not extend as far to the north as its forerunners.

Post-medieval pottery was recovered from ditch **343** (fill 316) and may have been introduced during the construction of a later building (**262**) whose fill contained similar pottery types. These dating difficulties are again evident in the varied dates of the finds (including a 12th-century coin) recovered from the shallow single fills of the sections of the same ditch recorded to the north of building. It seems probable, however, that the ditch is of medieval origin.

#### *Pits*

It is suggested that, given the paucity of finds within pits **230** and **319**, especially from the lower fills, these features indicate small-scale gravel extraction. The same function can be postulated for pit **330**. It would also appear that given the period of abandonment indicated by the erosional fills containing gravel in pits **230** and **319** that this land was not in high demand at the time of quarrying, although at some later time the land was levelled, probably for agricultural use.

Pit **230** showed four distinct phases of activity. In the initial phase, the pit was presumably dug for the extraction of gravel, which over the site as a whole were very well sorted. The second phase relates to abandonment when the pit was left open to silt and become waterlogged. During the present excavation the base of the pit was below the current water table. The medieval pottery sherd recovered from one of the lower fills may indicate the original date of the feature. After initial silting, the gravel sides of the pit eroded and slumped into the feature, while the pit sides stabilised. Finally, the pit was deliberately backfilled with a homogenous deposit half a metre deep. This fill was very similar to the topsoil and was presumably a result of land levelling some time after the abandonment of the pit. The pottery contained within this fill was heavily abraded, possibly as a result of plough damage and was probably in a secondary context.

Pit **319** was almost identical to pit **230**. It lay only 4m away from the other pit and again may have served as a quarry. The fills from pit **319** indicate a broadly similar sequence to those from pit **230**.

Pit **330** was waterlogged. Its base reached the water table, although its sides were too steep to indicate a function as a waterhole for cattle and there was no structural evidence to indicate that it functioned as a well. It therefore appears likely that this feature too was a result of gravel extraction.

### **6.3 Phase 3: Post-Medieval**

The majority of the pits of all periods appear to relate to gravel extraction. During the post-medieval period, there were three main phases of activity associated with pit **238**. The pit was initially excavated for gravel extraction, secondly planking was added in the base to stabilise a sump from eroding gravels thereby acting as a well/watering hole and thirdly, after a period of abandonment, deliberate backfilling to prepare the land for agricultural purposes.

After abandonment as a quarry it is feasible that the pit was used as a water hole or well, with the planking introduced in the base to keep this area clean of eroding gravels enabling water to be easily be collected from the base of the pit. The shallow sides of the pit would have permitted foot access directly to the water. Within the planked area, silting had occurred. Environmental samples of this deposit were somewhat inconclusive but suggested waterlogging in its base and that the feature was situated in or close to a damp

meadow (Appendix 5). A period of disuse resulting in gravel slumping and erosion of the pit sides was probably followed by deliberate backfilling. Similar upper fills were recorded in pits **230**, **319**, **321** and **330**.

The probability that this feature was at any time a pond seems unlikely as it was cut into gravels, which were not lined with clay and little organic residue was present. It would also seem unlikely that a pond cut into loose, freely draining gravels would be capable of retaining water especially during the dry summer months when the water table would have probably been below the base of the pit.

In close proximity to, and probably contemporary with, pit **238** was a shallow rectangular feature with associated postholes that appears to be the footprint for an outbuilding of simple construction (**262**). This may have been contemporary with a series of similar open-sided barns and sheds that still exist just to the south of the site. This feature was later filled in with demolition debris mixed with accumulated rubbish. The pottery indicates that this occurred between 1600 and 1800 and the inclusion of pancheons in the assemblage suggests a farmyard nearby. Two posts placed immediately outside the building (**288** and **290**) were spaced 1.15m apart and may have held a door frame.

Immediately to the west of the building, another pit (**321**) had been used as a rubbish dump, presumably as part of a land levelling exercise that may relate to the destruction of the building and the infilling of adjacent pits. This may indicate the transition from what appears to represent a farmstead and numerous relict gravel pits to ground levelled for the horticultural activity that appears to have occurred in the early 20th century.

#### **6.4 Phase 4: Modern**

It would appear the axes of regularly spaced postholes were broadly contemporary and may represent the land divisions termed as f-braces on the 1926 Ordnance Survey map, therefore dating from between 1901 and 1926. This land may have been divided by paths and fenced off, possibly to grow fruit and vegetables. The greenhouses evident on the Ordnance Survey map of 1926 were still standing at the time the site was being stripped of topsoil before excavation and it seems likely that they formed part of the same horticultural complex.

## **7 CONCLUSION**

Excavations at 177a High Street, Offord Cluny, have revealed the first Palaeolithic, Neolithic and Roman artefacts yet recorded in the parish. While no contemporary features were recorded, the varied assemblage of relatively

un-abraded Neolithic flint tools and flakes suggests prehistoric activity in the vicinity of the site. The Roman finds include roof and flue tile and possible slags, suggesting nearby occupation, although such finds are common and their significance should not be over-stated.

The earliest features on the site were Saxo-Norman (10th to mid 12th century) and show the beginnings of gravel quarrying in this part of the village. Gravel extraction continued on a small scale in the western part of the site and near to the modern day road until the post-medieval period.

During the early medieval period the first indications of land ownership appeared with the boundary to the east of the site which was re-cut many times during the medieval period. Pitting still occurred to the west of this boundary. It is possible that this represents the western edge of a field system, which lies to the east of largely disused land. Whether the course of the modern day road was in place during the early medieval period is not known but the boundary to the east of the site is on the same alignment.

A medieval enclosure may be represented by two parallel ditch alignments which demonstrate very similar northern extents. The land, however, would have had limited use for agriculture due to the quarrying that was still occurring during this period.

During the post-medieval period the first structure appeared on the site. This was an outbuilding which was possibly associated with a relict gravel pit that may have become a watering hole or well in this period. With pancheon fragments recovered from the backfilling of the outbuilding, it seems likely that this structure may have been a farm building within a farmyard complex. The environmental evidence from the base of the well suggests the close proximity of damp meadowland also hinting at dairy farming in the vicinity of the site, a suggestion supported by the dominance of cattle bones in all periods (see Appendix 6). The outbuilding later went out of use and the surrounding ground and pits were levelled.

The modern period is characterised by greenhouses and fence lines suggesting the land levelling may have been for horticulture.

The excavations at 177a High Street Offord Cluny revealed low intensity land use from the Saxo-Norman period onwards with residual finds from the Neolithic and Roman periods. Being the first excavation to take place within the parish, the excavation contributes a great deal to our understanding of the development and growth of rural settlements in of this part of Cambridgeshire.

## 8 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Ordnance Survey map (1926)

Ordnance Survey digital map TL 2267 (2001)

## APPENDIX 1 Context List

Context	Cut	Type	Description	Finds
101	<b>102</b>	deposit	posthole	
102		cut	posthole	
103	<b>104</b>	deposit	posthole	
104		cut	posthole	
105	<b>106</b>	deposit	posthole	charcoal and clinker
106		cut	posthole	
107	<b>108</b>	deposit	posthole	pottery, flint and charcoal
108		cut	posthole	
109	<b>110</b>	deposit	posthole	
110		cut	posthole	
111	<b>112</b>	deposit	posthole	
112		cut	posthole	
113	<b>114</b>	deposit	posthole	pottery
114		cut	posthole	
115	<b>116</b>	deposit	posthole	
116		cut	posthole	
117	<b>118</b>	deposit	posthole	
118		cut	posthole	
119	<b>120</b>	deposit	posthole	clay pipe, charcoal, clinker
120		cut	posthole	
121	<b>122</b>	deposit	posthole	
122		cut	posthole	
123	<b>124</b>	deposit	posthole	
124		cut	posthole	
125	<b>127</b>	deposit	posthole	
126	<b>127</b>	deposit	posthole	
127		cut	posthole	
128	<b>124</b>	deposit	posthole	
129	<b>130</b>	deposit	tree throw	
130		natural	tree throw	
131	<b>132</b>	deposit	posthole	
132		cut	posthole	
133	<b>134</b>	deposit	ditch	pottery, flint
134		cut	ditch	
135	<b>136</b>	deposit	ditch	animal bone
136		cut	ditch	
137	<b>138</b>	deposit	shallow pit	charcoal, clinker, coal, daub
138		cut	shallow pit	
139	<b>141</b>	deposit	short ditch	
140	<b>141</b>	deposit	short ditch	
141		cut	short ditch	
142	<b>144</b>	deposit	short ditch	
143	<b>144</b>	deposit	short ditch	
144		cut	short ditch	
145	<b>146</b>	deposit	tree throw	
146		cut	tree throw	
147	<b>148</b>	deposit	posthole	
148		cut	posthole	
149	<b>151</b>	deposit	short ditch	
150	<b>151</b>	deposit	short ditch	
151		cut	short ditch	
152	<b>148</b>	deposit	posthole	

153	<b>155</b>	deposit	pit	
154	<b>155</b>	deposit	pt	animal bone
155		cut	pit	
156	<b>157</b>	deposit	ditch	pottery
157			ditch	
158	<b>159</b>	deposit	ditch	animal bone
159			ditch	
160	<b>161</b>	deposit	ditch	pottery, animal bone, slag
161			ditch	
162	<b>163</b>	deposit	pit	pottery
163			pit	
164	<b>165</b>	deposit	posthole	
165			posthole	
166	<b>168</b>	deposit	posthole	
167	<b>168</b>	deposit	posthole	
168			posthole	
169	<b>170</b>	deposit	tree throw	flint
170			tree throw	
171	<b>172</b>	deposit	pit	
172			pit	
173	<b>174</b>	deposit	tree throw	
174			tree throw	
175	<b>176</b>	deposit	posthole	
176			posthole	
177	<b>178</b>	deposit	pit	
178			pit	
179	<b>180</b>	deposit	posthole	pottery
180			posthole	
181	<b>182</b>	deposit	ditch	
182			ditch	
183				
184				
185	<b>186</b>	deposit	pit	
186			pit	
187	<b>188</b>	deposit	pit	stone
188			pit	
189	<b>190</b>	deposit	modern pit	animal bone, charcoal, pottery
190			modern pit	
191	<b>192</b>	deposit	posthole	
192			posthole	
193	<b>194</b>	deposit	modern intrusion	pottery
194			modern intrusion	
195	<b>196</b>	deposit	ditch	pottery
196			ditch	
197	<b>198</b>	deposit	ditch	animal bone
198			ditch	
199	<b>200</b>	deposit	posthole	
200			posthole	
201	<b>202</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone, pottery
202			201	
203	<b>204</b>	deposit	posthole	
204			posthole	
205	<b>206</b>	deposit	pit	
206			pit	
207	<b>208</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone, pottery
208			pit	

209	<b>210</b>	deposit	ditch	flint
210			ditch	
211	<b>212</b>	deposit	ditch	animal bone, cbm, charcoal
212			ditch	
213	<b>214</b>	deposit	ditch	shell
214			ditch	
215	<b>216</b>	deposit	ditch	animal bone, stone
216			ditch	
217	<b>218</b>	deposit	ditch	pottery, slag
218			ditch	
219	<b>220</b>	deposit	posthole	cbm
220			posthole	
221	<b>222</b>	deposit	modern disturbance	animal bone, cbm, charcoal, clay pipe
222			modern disturbance	
223			pit	
224	<b>223</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone, flint, pottery, stone
225	<b>223</b>	deposit	pit	
226	<b>223</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone
227	<b>230</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone, pottery, stone
228	<b>230</b>	deposit	pit	flint, stone
229	<b>230</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone, pottery
230			pit	
231	<b>223</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone, stone
232	<b>233</b>	deposit	pit	
233			pit	
234	<b>235</b>	deposit	posthole	
235			posthole	
236	<b>237</b>	deposit	posthole	
237			posthole	
238			pond	
239	<b>238</b>	deposit	pond	animal bone, cbm, charcoal, pottery
240	<b>241</b>	deposit	posthole	pottery, slag
241			posthole	
242	<b>243</b>	deposit	posthole	cbm, pottery
243			posthole	
244	<b>246</b>	deposit	posthole	animal bone
245	<b>246</b>	deposit	posthole	
246			posthole	
247	<b>248</b>	deposit	posthole	
248			posthole	
249	<b>250</b>	deposit	posthole	pottery
250			posthole	
251	<b>252</b>	deposit	posthole	
252			posthole	
253	<b>254</b>	deposit	posthole	pottery
254			posthole	
255	<b>256</b>	deposit	posthole	animal bone, pottery, slag
256			posthole	
257	<b>258</b>	deposit	posthole	slag
258			posthole	
259	<b>260</b>	deposit	posthole	
260			posthole	
261	<b>262</b>	deposit	small building	animal bone, cbm, charcoal, pottery
262			small building	
263	<b>264</b>	deposit	slot	
264			slot	

265	<b>266</b>	deposit	posthole	
266			posthole	
267	<b>268</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone, cbm, charcoal, clay pipe
268			pit	
269	<b>270</b>	deposit	posthole	cbm, flint, mortar
270			posthole	
271	<b>272</b>	deposit	ditch	
272			ditch	
273	<b>274</b>	deposit	ditch	pottery
274			ditch	
275	<b>276</b>	deposit	ditch	cbm, charcoal, clay pipe, clinker, coal
276			ditch	
277			not used	
278			not used	
279			not used	
280			not used	
281	<b>238</b>	deposit	pond	
282	<b>238</b>	deposit	pond	
283	<b>238</b>	deposit	pond	
284	<b>238</b>	deposit	pond	
285	<b>286</b>	deposit	ditch	animal bone, charcoal, pottery, slag
286			ditch	
287	<b>288</b>	deposit	posthole	
288			posthole	
289	<b>290</b>	deposit	posthole	animal bone, pottery, stone
290			posthole	
291	<b>292</b>	deposit	posthole	
292			posthole	
293	<b>294</b>	deposit	posthole	
294			posthole	
295	<b>296</b>	deposit	posthole	
296			posthole	
297	<b>298</b>	deposit	pit	
298			pit	
299	<b>300</b>	deposit	modern posthole	
300			modern posthole	
301	<b>302</b>	deposit	modern posthole	
302			modern posthole	
303	<b>304</b>	deposit	modern posthole	
304			modern posthole	
305	<b>306</b>	deposit	modern posthole	
306			modern posthole	
307	<b>308</b>	deposit	modern posthole	
308			modern posthole	
309	<b>310</b>	deposit	modern posthole	
310			modern posthole	
311	<b>238</b>	deposit	wood from pond <b>238</b>	
312	<b>238</b>	deposit	wood from pond <b>238</b>	
313	<b>238</b>	deposit	wood from pond <b>238</b>	
314	<b>238</b>	deposit	wood from pond <b>238</b>	
315	<b>238</b>	deposit	wood from pond <b>238</b>	
316	<b>317</b>	deposit	ditch	cbm, pottery
317			ditch	
318	<b>319</b>	deposit	pit	animal bone, cbm
319			pit	

320	<b>321</b>	deposit	modern pit	cbm, clay pipe, coal, pottery
321			modern pit	
322	<b>319</b>	deposit	pit	
323	<b>319</b>	deposit	pit	
324	<b>319</b>	deposit	pit	
325	<b>326</b>	deposit	slot	cbm, flint, pottery
326			slot	
327	<b>328</b>	deposit	ditch	
328			ditch	
329	<b>330</b>	deposit	ditch	animal bone, flint, pottery, stone
330			pit	
331	<b>332</b>	deposit	posthole	
332			posthole	
333	<b>334</b>	deposit	gully	cbm, charcoal
334			gully	
335	<b>336</b>	deposit	pit	
336			pit	
337	<b>338</b>	deposit	pit	
338			pit	pottery
339		ditch	Master number	
340		ditch	Master number	
341		ditch	Master number	
342		ditch	Master number	
343		ditch	Master number	
344		postholes	Master number	
345		postholes	Master number	
346		ditch	Master number	

## APPENDIX 2 Finds Summary

Context number	Animal bone	Brick or tile	Charcoal	Clay pipe	Clinker	Coal	Daub	Flint	Mortar or plaster	Pottery	Shell	Slag	Stone
11							8			11			
17	24												
20			1										
44										3			
53	108									4	5		
105			2		1								
107			2					18		2			
113										2			
119			1	2	3								
133								18		4			
135	117												
137			1		2	8	2						
154	695												
156										5			
158	295												
160	24									22		6	
162										7			
169								2					
179										11			
187													15
189	39		2							5			
193										2			
195										15			
197	8												
201	90									12			
207	132									40			
209								2					
211	24	217	613										
213											18		
215	23												16
217										61		54	
219		68											
221	8	6	18	1									
224	120							16		109			90
226	324												
227	71									80			33
228								6					605
229	18									6			
231	3												997
239	1127	256	240	11204									
240										1		10	
242		27								16			

Context number	Animal bone	Brick or tile	Charcoal	Clay pipe	Clinker	Coal	Daub	Flint	Mortar or plaster	Pottery	Shell	Slag	Stone
244	22												
249										1			
253										1			
255	2									2		1	
257												14	
261	41	365	6							1096			
267	1	129	5	8									
269		307						6	428				
273										1			
275		2	2	2	1	1							
285	7		16							1		22	
289	2									3			4762
316		5								25			
318	45	25											
320		654		2		7				476			
325		38						7		1			
329	13							869		64			343
333		42	8										
338										35			
Unstrat.		222								95			
<b>Total</b>	<b>3383</b>	<b>2363</b>	<b>917</b>	<b>12315</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>944</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>1123</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>107</b>	<b>6861</b>

Bulk finds by context and weight (g)

### Small Finds

Small find no.	Context no.	Material	Description
300	105	Copper alloy	Buckle
301	217	Silver	Coin
302	255	Iron	Nail/hook

## APPENDIX 3 Pottery by Paul Spoerry

### Recovery

All the sherds forming the basis of this assemblage were collected by hand during the excavation stage of investigation on this site. Pottery from the evaluation was discussed previously (Kenney 2002).

### Quantity

An assemblage consisting of 132 sherds was recovered from excavated pits, ditches and postholes. This is a small assemblage which suggests that the site is on the edge of the rural settlement of Offord Cluny during the medieval period and confirms the high level of modern disturbance related to the nearby farm and houses. This assemblage is important in understanding the chronology of the site and some of the activities carried out on, or close to, the site but adds little or nothing to regional or national research aims and therefore no further work is recommended.

Context	Quantity	Description	Date	Context Date
113	1 sherd	grey ware	Roman	
119	1 sherd	St. Neots type ware (heavily leached)	875-1150	
133	2 sherds	Stamford ware Unknown red (near) stoneware cup rim (early modern)	850-1150 1770-1900	1770-1900
137	1 sherd	hard sandy ware	1350-1500	
156	1 sherd	early medieval ware (Ely type)	1050-1200	
160	2 sherds	early medieval ware - one jar base	1050-1200	
162	1 sherd	coarse, quartz tempered grey ware, probably Ely ware variant	1200-1400	
179	1 sherd	early medieval ware (Ely type) rim	1050-1200	
189	3 sherds	1 bone china (sponged blue) 1 post-med red ware/stoneware 1 bone china cup rim	1850-1900 1770-1900 1700-1900	1850-1900
193	1 sherd	1 bone china	1770-1900	
195	2 sherds	1 sandy shelly ware 1 shelly ware 1	1150-1350	
201	2 sherds	1 sherd medieval (Ely type) ware 1 sherd early medieval ware	1150+ 1050-1200	
207	4 sherds	St. Neots type ware jar	875-1150	
217	7 sherds	2 St. Neots type ware jar rim 1 St. Neots type ware bowl rim 1 St. Neots type ware base 1 St. Neots type ware body sherd 1 Thetford ware bowl rim 1 Thetford ware body sherd	875-1050 875-1150 875-1150 875-1150 900-1150 900-1150	900-1050
221	4 sherds	2 bone china 2 Roman grey ware	1770-1900 Roman	
224	11 sherds	7 St. Neots type ware 3 Thetford ware 1 Thetford ware thumb strip storage vessel	875-1150 900-1150 900-1150	900-1150
227	16 sherds	1 sherd Lyveden-Stanion 2 sherds Northants shelly ware 2 sherds orange sandy ware 9 sherds medieval (Ely type) sandy wares 2 sherds buff sandy ware, possibly Lyvden	1150-1350 1150-1350 1350-1500 1150-1350 1150-1350	
229	1 sherd	Grimston glazed fine ware with incised decoration	1250-1400	
239	5 sherds	early post-medieval hollow pipkin handle late medieval reduced ware bowl rim post medieval red ware base	1500-1600 1350-1500 1600-1800	1600-1700

		Colchester type ware jug handle (late) medieval Ely type bowl rim (not Ely but similar)	1400-1550 1300-1500	
240	1 sherd	medieval (Ely type) ware	1150-1350	
242	2 sherds	1 English stoneware 1 late Lyveden	1700-1900 1350-1500	1700- 1900
249	1 sherd	Norfolk local grey ware	1200-1400	
253	1 sherd	post-medieval red ware	1500-1800	
255	2 sherds	1 medieval (Ely type) ware 1 sherd bone china	1150-1350 1780-1900	
261	18 sherds	2 Thetford ware 2 St. Neots type ware 1 Lyveden Stanion ware 13 sherds from two post-medieval redware pancheons (large bowls)	900-1150 875-1150 1150-1350 1600-1800	1600- 1800
267	1 sherd	1 St. Neots type ware bowl	875-1150	
273	1 sherd	grey ware	late Iron Age/ Roman	
275	2 sherds	2 bone china	1770-1900	
285	1 sherd	1 bone china	1770-1900	
289	1 sherd	Grimston glazed ware bowl	1350-1500	
316	2 sherds	1 bichrome ware rim 1 post-medieval redware base (mug)	1550-1750 1600-1800	1600- 1750
318	2 sherds	late Lyveden	1350-1500	
320	11 sherds	4 late post-medieval redware with under glaze iron- rich slip 3 assorted post-medieval red ware - one with a slip band 1 bone china transfer print 1 cream ware type 2 lage fine earthenwares	1700-1900 1600-1800 1770-1900 1750-1900	1770- 1900
325	1 sherd	1 bone china	1770-1900	
329	8 sherds	1 late medieval/transitional (Norfolk) 1 coarse sandy ware 2 medieval (Ely type) ware 1 orange sandy ware 1 shelly ware 2 red sandy ware (medieval Ely type?)	1450-1600 1150-1350 1350-1500 1150-1350	
338	1 sherd	1 possible Herts grey ware flashed and stabbed jug handle (strap) in grey and re-brown sandy fabric with black surfaces	1250-1400	

#### APPENDIX 4: LITHICS by Stephen Kemp

The majority of artefacts were made of brown river gravel flints, with the tools commonly made on secondary flakes.

The excavated assemblage is small and shows an interesting selection of Neolithic tools including scrapers and saws.

A residual Palaeolithic notched scraper (from deposit 107) was recovered. The limited evidence shows Neolithic occupation in the vicinity but no definite Neolithic or Bronze Age cut features were identified. The material is residual, found mainly in Saxo-Norman pits.

A robust piece of vesicular Niedermendig lava quern (worked on one face) was recovered from deposit 228.

The limited evidence shows Neolithic occupation in the vicinity although no Neolithic/Bronze Age features were found during the excavation. No further work is recommended on this assemblage.

<b>Context</b>	<b>Description</b>
107	Notched scraper
133	Borer with notch, made on rough flake
169	Irregular bladelet
209	Flake
224	1 Side-end scraper made on a secondary flake 1 Flake
228	Proximal end of a blade
261	Flake
267	Flake
325	1 Secondary blade - serrated knife 1 Coarsely serrated blade

## **APPENDIX: 5**

### **Plant macrofossils and other remains from Offord Cluny, Cambridgeshire (OFCHS02)**

by Val Fryer

#### **1 INTRODUCTION**

Excavations at Offord Cluny, undertaken by the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit, revealed features of Saxo-Norman, medieval and post-medieval date. Several pits were excavated, at least one of which (containing waterlogged deposits) may have acted as a well or sump.

Four samples were taken for the extraction of the plant macrofossil assemblages, three (1, 8 and 9) from waterlogged deposits within pit **238**, and one from a dry fill of pit **223**.

#### **2 METHODS**

The samples were floated by a member of the Field Unit team. As waterlogged macrofossils were anticipated, the flots were collected in a 250 micron mesh sieve and stored in water before sorting. The wet retents (or sub-samples thereof) were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x16, and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Table App. 1.1. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (1997). Unless otherwise stated, all tabulated plant remains were preserved in a waterlogged state.

As no further analysis was expected after this assessment, the sorted flots were air dried to facilitate long term storage.

#### **3 RESULTS**

##### **3.1 Plant macrofossils**

Waterlogged seeds and wetland/aquatic and tree/shrub plant macrofossils were noted at varying densities in samples 1, 8 and 9. Rare charred remains were also present within these samples. The plant macrofossil assemblage from sample 7 was preserved solely by charring. These charred remains were frequently puffed and distorted (probably due to high temperatures during combustion) and most were fragmented. The waterlogged macrofossils were generally well preserved, although some less robust specimens were crushed and distorted.

##### **3.2 Cereals**

Charred oat (*Avena* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains were recorded from sample 7. Fragmentary barley (*Hordeum* sp.) rachis nodes were also recovered, along with rare examples of both bread wheat (*T. aestivum/compactum*) and rivet wheat (*T. turgidum*) type rachis nodes. The charred spikelet bases (also found in sample 7) appear to be from glumed wheats. Although relicts of these cereals may still have been found locally during the Saxo-Norman period, these particular chaff elements were severely abraded and may have been residual from earlier activity in the area.

### 3.3 Wild flora

Taxa from a range of habitats were noted within the assemblages. Grassland plants were predominant and included musk thistle (*Carduus nutans*), hogweed (*Hieracium* sp.), sainfoin (*Onobrychis viciifolia*), greater plantain (*Plantago major*), indeterminate grasses (Poaceae), cinquefoil (*Potentilla* sp.), buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.) and vervain (*Verbena officinalis*). Segetal taxa were also recorded and included stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula* – indicative of cultivation on damp heavy clay soils), fat-hen (*Chenopodium album*), knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*) and dock (*Rumex* sp.). Ruderal taxa included stinging and annual nettles (*Urtica dioica* and *U. urens*) and henbane (*Hyoscyamus niger*), the latter commonly found on nutrient rich soils or manure heaps.

Wetland/aquatic plant macrofossils were present in samples 8 and 9 and abundant in sample 1. Species noted included bur-marigold (*Bidens tripartita*), sedge (*Carex* sp.), spike-rush (*Eleocharis* sp.), rush (*Juncus* sp.), gipsy-wort (*Lycopus europaeus*), small-flowered buttercup (*Ranunculus parviflorus*) and celery-leaved crowfoot (*R. sceleratus*).

Tree/shrub macrofossils were extremely rare, only occurring as single specimens. A birch (*Betula* sp.) fruit was noted in sample 8 and sample 9 produced a sloe (*Prunus spinosa*) fruit stone and a fragmentary bramble (*Rubus* sp.) type ‘pip’.

### 3.4 Other plant macrofossils

Charcoal fragments were present at varying densities in all four samples. Waterlogged root, rhizome or stem fragments were abundant in samples 1, 8 and 9 and a charred culm node was recorded from sample 7. Other plant macrofossils included indeterminate leaf fragments, thorns and twigs.

### 3.5 Animal macrofossils

Animal macrofossils were generally rare, but did include bone, fish bone and small mammal bone fragments and waterlogged arthropods.

### 3.6 Other materials

Other material types were largely confined to sample 7. The fragments of black porous ‘cokey’ material may be derived from the combustion of organic materials, including cereal grains, at very high temperatures.

## 4 DISCUSSION

Sample 1 is from the lowest waterlogged fill of pit **238**. The range of taxa is extremely limited, with only gipsy-wort and celery-leaved crowfoot being recorded. However, seeds of both species are abundant, probably indicating that the base of the feature was relatively muddy and permanently water filled.

Samples 8 and 9 are from material located beneath waterlogged planks near the base of the same pit (**238**). The range of taxa is more comprehensive, including grassland herbs, common weeds and wetland plants, and it would appear most likely that the pit was situated in a damp grassland or meadow area, probably with some disturbed or cultivated ground in the near vicinity. The small quantity of tree/shrub macrofossils recorded may indicate that the area was carefully managed and not overgrown.

Sample 7 is from the fill of pit **223**. The plant macrofossil assemblage is entirely composed of cereal grains, chaff and segetal weed seeds and may be derived from a low density deposit of cereal processing debris.

## 5 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORK

In summary, pit **238** may have functioned as a sump, well or similar feature for the collection of ground water. The limited aquatic flora noted at the base of the feature possibly indicates that it was muddy and permanently wet. The macrofossils from samples 8 and 9 almost certainly indicate that the feature was situated in, or close to, an area of damp meadow.

Although samples 8 and 9 do contain quantifiably viable assemblages (i.e 200+ specimens), further analysis of these samples in isolation would probably add little or nothing to the overall interpretation of the site or its component features. Therefore, no further work is recommended.

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Sample No.	1	7	8	9
Context No.	239	231	313	311
<b>Cereals</b>				
<i>Avena</i> sp. (grains)		xcfc		
Cereal indet. (grains)		xxc		
(rachis frag.)		xc		
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (rachis nodes)		xc		xc
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains)		xc		
(spikelet bases)		xc		
<i>T. aestivum/compactum</i> type(rachis nodes)		xc		
<i>T. turgidum</i> type (rachis node)		xc		
<b>Herbs</b>				
<i>Aethusa cynapium</i> L.				xcf
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.		xc		x
Apiaceae indet.				x
<i>Atriplex</i> sp.			x	x
<i>Brassica</i> sp.				xcffg
<i>Carduus nutans</i> L.				x
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.		xc	x	x
<i>C. ficifolium</i> Sm.				xcf
<i>C. rubrum/glaucum</i>				x
Chenopodiaceae indet.			x	
<i>Cirsium</i> sp.				x
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.)A.Love		xc		
<i>Hieracium</i> sp.				x
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i> L.			xcf	x
<i>Onobrychis viciifolia</i> Scop.			xcffg	x
<i>Plantago major</i> L.				xx

Small Poaceae indet.	xcf	xc	xcf	x
Large Poaceae indet.				xc
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L.				xx
<i>Potentilla</i> sp.			xcf	xcf
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i> L.			xcf	
<i>Ranunculus</i> sp.			x	
<i>Ranunculus acris/repens/bulbosus</i>				x
<i>Rumex</i> sp.			x	x
<i>Silene</i> sp.				xcf
<i>Sinapis</i> sp.				x
<i>Sonchus asper</i> (L.)Hill.				x
<i>Stellaria</i> sp.			x	
<i>S. media</i> (L.)Vill.			x	x
<i>Urtica dioica</i> L.			xx	xx
<i>U. urens</i> L.				x
<i>Verbena officinalis</i> L.			x	x
<i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i> sp.		xc		
<b>Wetland/aquatic plants</b>				
<i>Bidens tripartita</i> L.				x
<i>Carex</i> sp.			x	
<i>Eleocharis</i> sp.				x
<i>Juncus</i> sp.			x	x
<i>Lycopus europaeus</i> L.	xxx			
<i>Polygonum minor</i> (Hudson)Opiz				xcf
<i>Ranunculus</i> subg. <i>Batrachium</i> (DC)A.Gray			xcf	
<i>R. parviflorus</i> L.				x
<i>R. sceleratus</i> L.	xxx			x
<b>Trees/shrubs</b>				
<i>Betula</i> sp. (fruit)			x	
<i>Prunus spinosa</i> L.				x
<i>Rubus</i> sp.				x
<b>Other plant macrofossils</b>				
Charcoal <2mm	x	xxx	x	xx
Charcoal >2mm		x		
Waterlogged root/rhizome/stem	xxx		xxx	xxx
Indet.culm node			xc	
Indet.fruit stone frag.				x
Indet.leaf frags.			x	x
Indet.seeds		xc		x
Indet.thorns (Prunus type)			x	
(Rosa type)				x
Indet.twig/wood frags.			xx	xx
<b>Animal macrofossils</b>				
Bone		x	x	
Caddis larval case				x
Cladoceran ehippia	x		x	xx
Fish bone			x	
Small mammal/amphibian bones		x		
Waterlogged arthropods	xx		x	xx
<b>Other materials</b>				
Black porous 'cokey' material		xx	x	

Burnt/fired clay		x		
Mineralised concretions		xxcf		
Mortar/plaster		xxx		
<b>Sample volume (litres)</b>				
<b>Volume of flot (litres)</b>	<b>0.5</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>% flot sorted</b>	<b>&lt;12.5%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table App.\*.1: Plant macrofossils and other remains by context

**Key to table:**

x = 1 – 10 specimens    xx = 10 – 100 specimens    xxx = 100+ specimens  
c = charred    fg = fragment

## **APPENDIX 6: FAUNAL REMAINS**

Jeni Keen BSc, MSC

### **1 INTRODUCTION**

A small assemblage of 204 animal bones were recovered and analysed from the site, 178 of which were identified to species. These were from twenty-eight contexts and included material from the evaluation stages of the project. A basic report including information on species representation, ageing and butchery was compiled and is presented below. No bones were complete enough to carry out metrical analysis, nor were there any pathological anomalies recorded. The material was, for the most part, in a poor state of preservation and included porous, burnt, weathered and stained bone material.

### **2 METHODOLOGY**

Species representations were recorded using both the NISP (Reitz and Wing 1999) and MNI techniques (O'Connor 2000). Ageing analysis was carried out using Silver's (1969) epiphyseal fusion tables and where possible Grant's (1982) tooth wear analysis. The use of such techniques is always fraught with inconsistencies, biases and methodological problems. For a review of these arguments you are directed to Davis (1997), Lyman (1994) and Watson (1978).

### **3 RESULTS**

The results will now be discussed, however it should be noted that small sample sizes could lead to unreliable interpretation and this has to be borne in mind through this analysis. Also due to the problem associated with the identification of sheep and goat bones they will now be referred collectively as sheep/goat.

#### **3.1 Species Represented**

NISP counts for the site showed that by far cattle were predominant through most contexts with 160 (78.4%) of the 204 bones belonging to this species. It should be noted that context 154 a pit, contained the remains of a calf and this will account for the high percentage of this species. However this aside, cattle would still account for 39 bones (19.1%) with the remaining species only accounting for 44 (21.5%) of the remaining bones. Cattle was also well represented in context 239 a pond area. After cattle the most abundant species represented was sheep/goat with 11 (5.3%) bones in the assemblage. The species were scattered among a few contexts but were found in higher quantities in context 239. The remaining identified species (horse, dog and pig) were accounted for in very small numbers having only two or three bones per species within the assemblage and across contexts, however it is interesting that both pig and dog were recovered from context 239 which is the most abundant context for the recovery of animal bone overall. Twenty-six bones were assigned to the unidentified category. These were further sub-divided into small/medium and medium/large unidentified mammals. These bones were of either a very fragmented state of were in a poor state of preservation. The most abundant category was that of the unidentified medium and large mammals.

MNI analyses was also calculated on the assemblage and largely corresponded with the NISP counts. As stated before many of the cattle bones were from one individual, a calf. However, the MNI calculation showed there to be a minimum number of four cattle present within the assemblage, which the mortality profiles for the site also demonstrated. Unlike the NISP analysis, which show some variation in species representation, the MNI counts showed the remaining species each to be represented by one individual only.

In conclusion the analyses, although on a very small and poorly preserved sample, showed that cattle were by far the most abundant animals. However, the other main domesticates were represented as well as dog within two contexts.

### **3.2 Mortality Profile**

The mortality profile was constructed by using epiphyseal fusion data. Only two mandibles were available for tooth wear study, however because of the small nature of the sample the results have been omitted.

The cattle sample was sufficient enough in size (22 bones) to make some conclusions, although interpretations from this data should be viewed with caution. Twelve of the bones were un-fused and all belonged to the calf burial from context 154. Analysis on the remaining bones showed there to be at least two other ages represented. One specimen was represented by a just fused tibia and would represent an animal between two-three years old, which is a prime culling age. The remaining bones were represented in the latest fusing group, which fuse between three and four years of age. Cattle of this age may have been used as dairy, breeding or traction animals. The presence of a young calf under the age of seven months may also account for dairying/breeding, but may equally represent a natural mortality.

Only three bones could be analysed using fusion data for sheep/goat. The bones were both un-fused and showed that they had to come from sheep/goat no older than two-three years of age. Again like cattle, sheep/goat of this age could be culled for meat or used for milking and/or wool production.

Fusion analysis could not be carried out for the remaining species.

### **3.3 Butchery Analysis**

Butchery was well represented in the relatively small assemblage with ten of the bones showing signs of butchery. Most were from cattle and unidentified medium/large mammals. The butchery types observed consisted largely of chop and cut marks often on the anterior proximal portions of the bones. Many of the butchery marks reflect muscle dismemberment points or heavy carcass dismemberment of a domestic nature. Few firm conclusions can be drawn from such a small sample.

## **4 CONCLUSION**

The sample from Offord Cluny High Street (OFCLHS02) was very small and has limited analysis and interpretations given. In summary cattle were by far the most dominant species. The calf burial from context 154, however, accounts for much of the data. The mortality profiles for the site show that cattle were represented through most of the age groupings. The other main domesticates were also represented in far fewer numbers and due to the assemblage size little interpretations for these species can be given. Butchery was also recorded.

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