

52 WEEKLEY WOOD LANE,
WEEKLEY,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL STRIP
MAP AND RECORD

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SUMMARY

A programme of staged archaeological works comprising an archaeological observation on geotechnical Test Pitting, a 'strip map and record' and a archaeological observation on development groundworks was undertaken as a condition of planning consent in advance of, and during, development at 52 Weekley Wood Lane, Weekley, Northampton. The developer, Polpark Ltd., commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology (Midlands) to undertake the mitigation works.

The mitigation works uncovered a feature containing the cremated remains of an animal (possibly sheep or pig) of possible Romano-British date which may signify an offering at the boundary of a human cemetery.

Further, extended machine stripping of the site revealed the footings of the walls of a mid-12th-early 13th century building which contained evidence of intensive burning activity, possibly from ovens or hearths, open at one end for access to a dry-walled stone-lined corn-dryer. A second, possibly contemporary, corn-dryer was located nearby but no evidence of an associated building was found with it. A large pit which may have originated as a stone quarry pit and later served as a refuse pit was located on the site in addition to a number of small posthole features which are attributed to a later phase of medieval activity.

The site appears to have been abandoned at some time in the early –mid-15th century (possibly as a result of the Black Death) after which the site was levelled and given over to agriculture.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 1.1.1 Mr M Farrow of Polpark Ltd submitted a planning application (KET/2012/0674) to develop land at 52 Weekley Wood Lane, Weekley, Northamptonshire (**Figure 1**).
- 1.1.2 The Assistant Archaeological Advisor (AAA) for Northamptonshire County Council recommended the development be subject to a programme of archaeological observations. Mr M. Farrow (hereafter the client) appointed Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd. (PCA Midlands, hereafter PCA) to undertake the programme of archaeological observations.
- 1.1.3 A Brief for *A Programme of Archaeological Observations* was issued by the Assistant Archaeological Advisor (AAA) for Northamptonshire County Council on behalf of the client, to which PCA submitted a *Written Scheme of Investigation* in response, which was approved by the AAA.
- 1.1.4 The initial development groundworks comprised the excavation of nine geotechnical test pits (**Figure 2**) which were supervised by an archaeologist. The discovery of an un-urned cremation burial of potential Prehistoric or Romano-British date and the footings of a medieval wall from two of the test pits prompted the County Planning Archaeologist to implement a 'map, strip and record' on the area of the footprint of the development and a archaeological observation on any subsequent service trenches attendant to the groundworks. The archaeological observations were carried out between 04/12/2013 to 12/08/2014.

1.2 SITE LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

- 1.2.1 The study site, centred on NGR SP 88544 8090, is located on the western edge of the Village of Weekley. The proposed development lies within grounds of a semi - detached house (**Figures 1 & 2**). The western and eastern site boundaries are flanked by domestic dwellings. To the North the site is bounded by open fields and to the south by Weekley Wood Lane.

1.3 TOPOGRAPHY AND GEOLOGY

- 1.3.1 The site is broadly flat within in a landscape that gradually slopes north to south towards Kettering. The site is within an area of formal garden. A spot height on the centre of the site is recorded at 89m aOD.
- 1.3.2 The solid geology of the site is of Grantham Formation, characterised by Mudstone, Siltstone and Sandstone formed in the Jurassic period according to the British Geological Society mapping (Geology of Britain Viewer).

1.4 HISTORICAL AND ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

1.4.1 The Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (NHER) revealed that the application site lies within an area of significant archaeological potential. Reference numbers in the text are given in bold.

1.4.2 Prehistoric 10,000BC– AD43

1.4.2.1 A Palaeolithic implement (**MR 346033**) find spot has been recorded within 500m of the site.

1.4.3 Romano-British AD43 – AD400

1.4.3.1 Several unprovenanced Roman Coins (**MR 346048**, **346056** and **346057**) have also been discovered. A group of undated inhumation burials were discovered during excavations during the construction of the A43 just to the west of the development site in 1992, although they were buried beneath medieval ridge and furrow features so are likely to be of Romano British or Anglo-Saxon in date.

1.4.4 Post-Medieval AD1500 – AD1850

1.4.4.1 The village of Weekley is recorded as a historic settlement, with the earthwork remains of hollow ways and ridge and furrow prevalent throughout the area.

2. AIMS & OBJECTIVES

The aims and objectives of the investigation were:

- to establish the location, nature, extent, date and state of preservation of any archaeological or geoarchaeological deposits or features within the site, to recover any associated objects and to record the surviving evidence.
- to analyse and interpret the site archive and to disseminate the results to promote local and national research objectives: *The Archaeology of the East Midlands, An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda*, Leicester Archaeology Monograph **13**, ed. N Cooper (2006), along with the *East Midlands Heritage: An Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands*, ed. D. Knight, B. Vyner & C. Allen (2012) were used as references for specific site criteria.

In particular, the archaeological mitigation works sought to address the following research objectives:

- To set the site in its potential archaeological potential into the context of the wider landscape.
- confirm the presence or absence of any Prehistoric to Saxon remains that may be associated with earlier settlement in the area.
- confirm the presence or absence of any Roman or post-Roman remains that may be associated with inhumation burials to the west of the site.
- to confirm the presence or absence of medieval and Post-Medieval activity relating to the wider settlement of Weekley.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

- 3.1.1 The area of the strip, map and record was mechanically stripped by a 360 degree mini-digger with a toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision. Modern surfaces, overburden, garden and subsoil deposits were removed in successive shallow spits down to the level of the first archaeological horizon or the natural deposits, whichever was encountered first. The spoil from machine excavation was scanned for unstratified artefacts.
- 3.1.2 Archaeological and potential archaeological deposits were cleaned using hand tools and recorded as set out in the PCA fieldwork manual (Taylor and Brown 2009). Contexts were recorded according to PCAs fieldwork manual approved for use in Northamptonshire, including written, photographic and drawn records.
- 3.1.3 Deposits or the removal of deposits judged by the excavating archaeologist to constitute individual events were each assigned a unique record number (often referred to within British archaeology as 'context numbers') and recorded utilising PCAs printed proforma.
- 3.1.4 Trench plans were drawn at a scale of 1:50 and representative sections at a scale of 1:20. The locations of the trenches and the heights of deposits compared to Ordnance Survey benchmarks were surveyed using a Global Positioning System (GPS) rover unit and Total Station Theodolite (TST). A full photographic record was made, including digital, black and white prints and 35mm colour transparencies.

3.2 POST FIELDWORK METHODOLOGY

- 3.2.1 English Heritage's Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment (EH 2006) was used as the framework for post-excavation work.
- 3.2.2 The archive from the mitigation works is currently held by PCA Midlands at their office in Market Harborough, Leicestershire. Subject to the agreement of the legal landowner, the site archive will be deposited under an appropriate Accession Number.

4. THE CONTEXTS

4.1 A unique context number was assigned to each distinguishable depositional event. In the text below context numbers are given in **bold**.

4.2 Forty-four context numbers were allocated to structures, cuts, fills and layers. They are presented in table form in the APPENDIX (APPENDIX 1).

4.3 Cultural periods encountered on site were as follows:

Undated (Romano-British?)	43BC-AD410
Medieval	AD1066-1500
Post-mediaeval	AD1500-1850
Modern	AD1850-Present

5. THE RESULTS

5.1 UNDATED (ROMANO-BRITISH?)

5.1.1 Potentially, the earliest archaeological evidence encountered on the site, although undated, were the remnants of a truncated un-urned animal cremation burial (feature **148**) located in Test pit 1 (**Figure 1; Plate 1**). The feature was sub-circular in plan and measured 0.27m in diameter and was 0.25m deep. It cut natural yellowish brown sandy clay (**102**) and was sealed by subsoil (**101**). The fill of the feature (**103**) consisted of a mid-brown clayey silt containing approximately 150 highly fragmented pieces of calcined bone identified as limb and skull fragments from either a sheep or a pig, twelve fragments of fired clay and a low quantity of charcoal. No dating evidence was retrieved from the feature, however the calcined nature of the bone from its fill suggests intensive burning from a cremation pyre as opposed to the effects of burning from, for example, a hearth or fire pit. The practice of burying cremated animal remains in small, posthole-sized depressions is an activity associated with the Late Iron Age/Romano British period recorded elsewhere in the archaeological record in the East Midlands, although its significance is less understood. In consideration of the proximity of a Roman inhumation cemetery to the west of the site, Reilly (**6.3 ANIMAL BONE**, this report) suggests the possibility that the feature may represent offerings placed within the boundary of a cemetery.

5.2 MEDIEVAL

5.2.1 (Mid-12th – Early 13th Century)

5.2.1.1 Building **104/118**

5.2.1.2 A section of limestone wall (**104**) was initially encountered in Test Pit 7. Further excavation in that area revealed further walls forming part of a partially exposed structure (**118**) comprising a N-S aligned wall and two adjoining E-W aligned walls (**Figures 3 & 4; Plate 7**). The walls were of dry-stone construction comprising small densely packed irregular-shaped limestones and measured broadly 0.8m in width and up to 0.3m in height. The walls appeared to form the south-west corner of a building, although the southern end of the N-S aligned wall terminated a short distance beyond the southernmost E-W aligned wall and may originally, prior to truncation, have extended further to the south, or alternatively, may represent a corner buttress. If this was a buttress then the walls above footing height must have been constructed in stone up to roof height. As there was no overlying *in-situ* demolition evidence to suggest that the walls of the building were constructed in stone above the height of the footings and is quite feasible that the stone footings represent sleeper walls upon which timber-frame constructed walls were placed. Similarly, the absence of roof tiles within demolition deposits overlying the footprint of the building raises questions as to the materials of its construction (unless it had all been taken off site) however the

preponderance for straw thatch as a roofing material on the roofs of the extant buildings within the modern village of Weekley suggests historically this was a favoured roofing material (K. Trott. *pers.comm.*).

- 5.2.1.3 An internal E-W aligned 'stub' wall which extended 1.3m from the western wall was situated in the southwest corner of the building forming a narrow space between it and the southernmost E-W aligned wall (**Figure 4; Plate 7**). The presence of charcoal and heat-scorched marks on the floor of the building in this area (contexts **128** and **129**) may indicate the presence of a hearth or oven. Environmental sampling of **129** records the presence, albeit in a low quantity, of indeterminate grain.
- 5.2.1.4 No evidence of an E-W wall was apparent at the northern end of the building although this can be accounted for by the presence of a corn-dryer (see paragraph **5.2.1.6** below) to the immediate north of its opening. Corn-dryers, though predominantly a Romano-British phenomenon, continued in use through the medieval and post-medieval periods until mechanisation rendered them obsolete. Most corn-dryers were placed within, or partially within purpose-built structures (Morris 1979, 9) such as barns or adaptations of houses.
- 5.2.1.5 Elsewhere within the structure patches of a greyish brown clay rammed floor (**127**) were overlain by heat-scorched patches of reddish and black silty clays containing ash and charcoal inclusions (contexts **124**, **125**, **126** and **128**) indicative of *in-situ* burning (**Figure 2, Plate 2**). Low quantities of ceramics recovered from these deposits indicate a period of usage spanning the mid-12th – early 13th century to the mid-14th – early 15th century. Associated finds consisted of low quantities of animal bone from these deposits which merely indicate the presence of a number of domestic species as a possible indicator of animal husbandry on the site. The environmental samples taken from these contexts recorded the presence of cereal grains (**Table 2**) with Barley and Wheat the most frequent species with occasional Oat and Rye, herbs and weeds seeds.
- 5.2.1.6 **Corn-dryers 112 and 116**
A partially stone lined corn-dryer (**116**) was situated at the northern un-walled end of building **118** (**Figures 3 & 5; Plates 6 & 7**). The structure comprised a stone-lined drying chamber and an adjoining un-lined stoking pit; very little of the arched masonry inlet chamber linking the two elements had survived. The drying chamber was fan-shaped in plan, with a slightly wider and rounded southern end. It measured 1.1m by 1m by 0.43m deep and its sides were lined with a single skin of dry-stone walling comprising small, roughly worked limestone blocks that sloped down to a greyish brown silty clay at the base of the feature.

- 5.2.1.6 The area of the inlet chamber adjoining the drying chamber consisted of vertical stone-lined sides down to a stone slab. The stone slab measured 1m x 0.9m and formed the base of the flue between the stoking pit and the drying chamber. No evidence of the masonry arch survived, nor was there any evidence of its demolition present in the infilling of the feature which suggests it may have been removed prior to infilling. Beneath the stone slab and the base of the feature was a thin gap where a thin fire-reddened silty clay containing ash and charcoal inclusions resided (**144**). An environmental sample taken from **144** revealed the presence of low quantities of oat and wheat grains although the sample was too small to allow reliable interpretation, but the presence of weed seeds may represent the use of fine-sieving residues as fuel.
- 5.2.1.7 The stoking pit was oval in plan and measured 1.4m by 1.2m and was up to 0.4m in depth. A possible foothold or step was cut into the western edge of the pit. Its sides sloped down steeply on to the natural clay at the base of the feature and were unlined. Surprisingly there were no burning deposits or evidence of intensive heating at the bottom of the pit in the area of the inlet chamber. The pit was infilled with a single homogenous greyish-brown silty clay (**117**) with very few inclusions or coarse components. The date of construction is not firmly established as pottery was only recovered from the infilling of the feature, however its contemporaneity with building **118** suggests a similar date of mid12th – early 13th century.
- 5.2.1.8 A second corn-dryer (**112**) was aligned E-W and situated approximately 9m to the northeast of structure **118** (**Figures 3 & 6; Plates 3, 4 & 5**). Its construction was notably different to that of corn-dryer **116**. The drying chamber of **112** was at the western end of the feature and was rectangular in plan, measuring 1.7m in length x 1.3m in width and 0.4m in depth. The sides of the chamber cut into natural **102** and were lined with six irregularly laid courses of small, roughly rectangular-shaped dry-limestones (**143**), which were laid with a slight top to bottom batter down to the base of the feature. The base of the feature was roughly level, with a thin layer of lime (**115**) covering the floor of the chamber. No evidence of any masonry built flue channels were encountered at the base of the chamber. At the eastern end of the chamber the northern side was inset slightly by 0.2m whereas the southern edge was broadly on the same alignment as the southern edge of the main chamber. This deviation formed the inlet chamber adjoining the main chamber to the stoking pit and a long, thin stone in the northern edge of the structure alluded to the pre-existing masonry arch. The base of the main chamber here contained vivid scarlet-coloured scorch marks (**115**) caused by repeated firings of the stoking-pit (**Plates 3, 4 & 5**).
- 5.2.1.9 The stoking pit was broadly oval in plan measuring 1.6m x 0.9m and 0.25m in depth. Its sides were lined with small irregular limestones in a similar fashion to the main

chamber and sloped in at an angle of approximately 30°. The basal fill of the stoking pit was a thin mid-greyish brown clayey silt (**119**). The environmental evidence from the corn-dryer was sparse, comprising scorched wheat and barley grains, but very little charcoal which suggests the oven was regularly cleaned (V. Fryer, this report). As with corn-dryer **116**, date of construction is uncertain. The feature was backfilled with a 0.4m thick homogenous silty clay (**111**) from which a small assemblage of 13th – mid-14th century pottery and a silver penny of Edward I (AD1294-1300) was recovered (see **Plate 8**). There were no dateable features associated with the corn-dryer but it is feasible to assume it was broadly contemporary with building **118** and corn-dryer **116**.

5.2.1.10 Other Features

5.2.1.11 A large pit (**105**) measuring 3.8m in diameter and excavated to a depth of 2.8m (the pit was not bottomed) was located within the north-west corner of the site (**Figures 3 & 7; Plate 7**). The earliest fill of the pit was a slumping deposit at its eastern edge. This was overlain stratigraphically by fill **110** from which a small quantity of pottery provided a mid-12th – early 13th century date. A further four fills were recorded in the pit all of which yielded small quantities of pottery. The pottery from fills **108**, **109** and **107** provided a date of mid-late 15th century whilst the pottery from fill **106** is assigned a date from the late 15th – mid 16th centuries - although the stratigraphic evidence suggests that the pottery from this context is residual. Moderate quantities of domestic rubbish including animal bone, shell, iron and copper objects recovered from the pit fills attest to settlement waste disposal activity, although the substantial attained depth of pit **105** suggests its original purpose may have been to quarry stone, whilst later serving as a convenient refuse pit. The dating evidence suggests the pit was contemporary with the construction of the building on the site and open for some time before infilling occurred in the later 15th century.

5.2.1.12 A further feature assigned to this period was a sub-circular discrete feature (**113**) situated approximately 1.3m to the west of corn-dryer **112** (**Figures 3 & 7; Plate 5**) measured 0.6m x 0.5m in plan and 0.17m in depth. It had gradual sloping sides and a sub-rounded base. Its fill (**114**) was a friable, mid-brown silty clay from which a single sherd of mid-12th – early 13th century pottery was recovered. The function of the feature is uncertain; possibly a posthole.

5.2.2 (13th – mid-14th Century)

5.2.2.1 A later phase of activity appears to be represented by less significant activity comprising two postholes (**133** and **135** and **139**). Postholes **133** and **135** were located inside structure **118** (**Figures 3 & 4, Plate 7**). Posthole **133** appeared to butt the internal stub wall forming part of structure **118**. It extended approximately 0.16m south from the wall and was 0.2m deep. Its fill (**134**) contained a solitary sherd of 13th – mid-

14th century pottery. A similar sized feature (**135**) was located approximately 1.2m to the east of **133** although it was partly under the baulk section. No dating evidence was recovered from this feature however its stratigraphic position relative to **133** suggests it may be contemporary. These features may represent structural alterations or repairs within building **118**. Posthole **139** was located close to the south-east edge of the drying chamber of corn-dryer **116**. The feature does not appear to have been excavated however it was 0.18m in diameter and a sherd of 13th – mid-14th century pottery together with associated finds of fired clay and an iron nail were recovered from it. It is feasible to suggest feature **139** may have been associated with corn-dryer **116** given its close proximity, but other than that cannot be further characterised.

5.2.2.2 The remnants of structure **118**, its internal floor (**127**) and overlying burning deposits (layers **124**, **125**, **126**, **128**, **129** and **138**) were overlain by a 0.42m thick layer of limestone rubble in a light yellowish brown sandy clay loam matrix (**130/137/140/145**) which represents the debris from the demolition of building **118**. Eighteen sherds of 13th – Mid-14th century pottery were recovered from this layer.

5.2.3 Mid – Late 15th Century

5.2.3.1 Following the demolition of building **118** there is no evidence of any activity on the site until the mid-late 15th century, when the site was abandoned and pit (**105**) infilled. A sequence of pit fills (contexts **108**, **109**, **107** and **106**) contained a significant quantity of artefacts including pottery, animal bone, marine shell, building plaster, a honestone of Scandinavian origin and metalworking objects typifying re-distribution of domestic refuse and building material. The pottery from the uppermost fill of the pit (**106**) was mostly residual and its presence is indicative of the re-deposition created during infilling.

5.2.3.2 The infilling of pit **105** and the absence of any further activity on the site from the late 15th century suggests site clearance and levelling followed by a period of abandonment and the giving over of the site to agriculture.

5.3 POST-MEDIEVAL/MODERN

5.3.1 Two undated features (**141** and **147**) were recorded in the west-facing section of the excavation but stratigraphically the features belong to the post-medieval and Modern periods. Feature **147**, a possible posthole measuring 0.4m in width and 0.4m deep, cut subsoil (**101**). Feature **141**, visible to a width of 1.98m and a depth of 0.68m in section cut modern topsoil (**100**) and appeared to be a modern pit.

6. THE FINDS

6.1 OVERVIEW

6.1.1 Five hundred and fifty finds were recovered from twenty two contexts. The finds were processed according to PCAs systems approved for use in Northamptonshire and are discussed in the text below.

6.2 POTTERY and FIRED CLAY *by Paul Blinkhorn*

6.2.1 Introduction

The pottery assemblage comprised 203 sherds with a total weight of 4,652g. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE), by summation of surviving rimsherd circumference was 1.06. It was quantified using the chronology and coding system of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (CTS), as follows:

- F205:** Stamford ware, AD850-1250. 1 sherd, 6g, EVE = 0.
- F209:** Oolitic ware, AD975-1350. 1 sherd, 4g, EVE = 0.
- F319:** Lyveden/Stansion 'A' ware, AD1150-1400. 79 sherds, 1,516g, EVE= 0.40.
- F331:** Developed Stamford ware, L 12th –E 13th C. 4 sherds, 27g, EVE = 0.
- F320:** Lyveden/Stansion 'B' ware, AD1225-1400. 55 sherds, 1,1507g, EVE = 0.
- F322:** Lyveden/Stansion 'D' ware, AD1350-1500. 10 sherds, 141g, EVE = 0.10.
- F324:** Brill/Boarstall ware, 13th -16th C. 4 sherds, 37g, EVE = 0.
- F329:** Potterspury Ware, AD1250 – 1600. 1 sherd, 5g, EVE = 0.
- F346:** Bourne 'A' Ware, 13th – 14th century. 3 sherds, 97g, EVE = 0
- F365:** Late Medieval Reduced ware, AD1400-1500. 16 sherds, 580g, EVE = 0.05
- F401:** Late Medieval Oxidized Ware, AD1450 – 1550. 17 sherds, 622g, EVE = 0.51.
- F403:** Midland Purple ware, AD1400-1600. 3 sherds, 21g, EVE = 0.
- F404:** Cistercian Ware, AD1470–1600. 2 sherds, 13g, EVE = 0.
- F413:** Manganese Glazed Ware, AD1680-1750. 2 sherds, 21g, EVE = 0.
- F1000:** Misc. 19th and 20th century wares. 5 sherds, 55g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region, with most of the pottery of local manufacture, along with a few sherds from more northerly manufactories, Stamford and Bourne, and others from Brill in Oxfordshire.

6.2.2 Chronology and Pottery Occurrence

Each stratified, context-specific pottery assemblage has been given a ceramic phase ('CP') date based on the range of ware and vessel types present. The chronology, defining wares and the amount of pottery per phase is shown in Table 1. The pottery occurrence data was adjusted with reference to the stratigraphic record.

Phase	Defining wares	Date	No Sherds	Wt. Sherds	Mean Sherd Wt
CP1	F319, F331	M12 th – E 13 th C	13	225	17.3g
CP2	F320, F324, F346	13 th – M14 th C	56	1219	21.8g
CP3	F322	M14 th – 15 th C	49	993	20.3g
CP4	F365, F403	15 th – M15 th C	0	0	-
CP5	F401	M – L15 th C	41	736	18.0g
CP6	F404	L15 th – M16 th C	35	1392	39.8g
MOD	F1000	19 th C +	9	87	9.7g
		Total	203	4652	

Table 1. Ceramic Phase Chronology, Occurrence and Defining Wares

The data in Table 1 suggests that there was activity at the site from the mid-12th to the late-15th – 16th centuries, although there are no assemblages which can be dated to CP4 (early-mid 15th century), suggesting a break in activity at that time.

The start date for pottery deposition is evidenced by the dearth of several common Saxo-Norman and early medieval fabrics, St Neots Ware (CTS fabrics F100 and F200), Stamford Ware (F205) and Shelly Coarseware (F330). The first two are well-attested at late Saxon and Saxo-Norman sites in this area of the county from the 10th – mid 12th century, such as Raunds (Pearson 2009, 158; Blinkhorn 2009, 184) and West Cotton (Blinkhorn 2010, 263-6).

Shelly Coarsewares usually dominates 12th century assemblages in the central areas of the county, including the county town itself (e.g. McCarthy 1979), and are normally well-represented at rural sites such as West Cotton (Blinkhorn 2010, 271). In this area of Northamptonshire, they were generally replaced by the products of the industries at nearby Lyveden and Stanion from the mid-12th century onwards. The lack of the Shelly Wares at this site can only be chronological, and thus activity began in the second half of the 12th century at the earliest.

The mean sherd weights are generally high, the modern pottery aside, and shows that the medieval material is both reliably stratified and almost certainly largely the product of primary deposition.

The data in Table 2 shows that residuality is generally fairly low, other than in the late medieval period, phases CP5 and CP6. In the case of the former, over 60% of the pottery is residual, suggesting there was considerable disturbance of earlier strata at that time. Most of the CP5 pottery and all the CP6 material comes from the fills of pit **105**, and seems likely to have been deposited during site clearance and levelling in the later 15th century, before the site was given over to agriculture.

Phase	F319	F331	F320	F324	F346	F322	F365	F403	F401	F404	Total
CP1	97.8%	2.2%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	225g
CP2	76.0%	0.9%	18.1%	1.2%	3.4%	-	-	-	-	-	1219g
CP3	21.2%	0	48.0%	1.2%	4.5%	6.6%	-	-	-	-	993g
CP5	14.9%	0	46.6%	0	0	8.3%	5.6%	2.9%	14.3%	-	736g
CP6	0.1%	0.8%	19.5%	0	0	0	38.7%	0	37.1%	0.6%	1392g

Shaded cells = residual

Table 2

6.2.3 The Assemblages

The bulk of the earlier medieval material (CP1 – CP3) consists of coarseware jars and glazed jugs, which is typical of the period, although only four rimsherds, two jars and two jugs, were noted.

Given the lack of pottery of early-mid 15th century date, it seems entirely likely that the site was abandoned in the aftermath of the Black Death; certainly, the small quantity

of fabric 322 present suggests abandonment not long after the pottery type came into existence in the mid-14th century. It also seems likely that the CP5 and CP6 assemblages represent an episode of site-clearance rather than occupation. The various fills from pit **105** were examined for cross-fits, but none were made, indicating that each group of material came from a different source, with the CP3-dated group in the primary fill (context **109**) suggesting the feature had been open for some time before back-filling. The only other late medieval assemblage, a group of material from a rubble layer (context **140**) is entirely residual other than a single sherd of F401, a rimsherd from a jar. This joined to a bodysherd from context **106**, part of the fill of pit **105**, showing that the backfill of the pit and the rubble layer are contemporary.

The late medieval assemblage (CP5 – CP6), the residual material aside, is very typical of sites in the region, comprising mainly Late Medieval Oxidized and Reduced Wares, probably from the manufactories at Glapthorn (Johnston 1997) and Higham Ferrers (Blinkhorn 2007). Nearly all the CP5 pottery and the all of the CP6 material, 40% of the entire site assemblage (by weight) in total, came from deposits within pit **105**, and appears to be a primary deposit. It is a typical assemblage of the period, comprising large fragments of jars, bowls and jugs/cisterns, and a single fragment of a Cistercian Ware tyg or cup. The single sherd of Potterspury Ware from the site came from this group, and is a typical late medieval type, with a distinctive copper-speckled glaze. This, combined with the large amount of residual material from the pit, suggests domestic refuse from a nearby settlement was used to backfill the feature, along with separate dumps of material from site clearance.

Fired clay

Two small groups of burnt daub were noted:

Context **103**: 15 fragments weighing 20g, largely red in colour. The fabric is slightly sandy, with sparse to moderate sub-rounded dark red ironstone up to 2mm, and sparse organic voids up to 3mm.

Context **139**: 20 fragments weighing 34g, all grey, some with a buff surface. The fabric is the same as that from context **103**.

None of the fired clay has any obvious withy impressions or the like. That from context **103** appears to have sustained exposure to heat for a fairly prolonged period in an oxygen-rich environment, and is probably from a hearth or similar, whereas that from **139** does not, and may be from the dome of an oven or similar.

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6.3 ANIMAL BONE by Kevin Rielly

6.3.1 Introduction

6.3.1.1 Animal bones were essentially taken from the medieval levels although a notable proportion of the site assemblage was derived from the potential cremation deposit. The latter bones were highly fragmented, contrasting with the minimal damage incurred to the medieval collections, all of which were also remarkably well preserved. Most of this assemblage was recovered by hand with the exception of those from a sample taken from the medieval quarry pit. This provided a few fish bones, which were identified by Philip Armitage.

6.3.2 Methodology

6.3.2.1 The bone was recorded to species/taxonomic category where possible and to size class in the case of unidentifiable bones such as ribs, fragments of longbone shaft and the majority of vertebra fragments. Recording follows the established techniques whereby details of the element, species, bone portion, state of fusion, wear of the dentition, anatomical measurements and taphonomic including natural and anthropogenic modifications to the bone were registered. The sample collection was washed through a modified Siraf tank using a 1mm mesh and the subsequent residue was air dried and sorted.

6.3.3 Description of faunal assemblage by phase

6.3.3.1 The site provided a grand total of 294 hand collected animal bones alongside 15 bones (all fish) from the sample. These have been divided by phase/date accommodating the potentially Romano-British cremation and the deposits associated with the medieval building (see Table 1).

6.3.3.2 Late Iron Age/Romano-British?

The cremated bones consist of about 150 calcined and highly fragmented pieces weighing just 22 grams. They are mainly limb bone fragments although there are a few recognisable skull pieces. Identification was not possible but they do not appear to be human (Langthorne pers comm.). The most likely candidate is either sheep or pig, this collection perhaps representing the remains of a single animal.

6.3.3.3 Medieval

This phase provided most of the site assemblage, the bones divided between deposits dating between the 12th and 13th and possibly 13th to 15th centuries. The former include a floor level **127** within the medieval building and a directly overlying burnt layer **128**, as well as the earliest fill **110** of the associated large quarry pit **105**. The same feature provided most of the later assemblage (fills **106**, **107**, **108** and **109**), the remainder taken from an early post-medieval subsoil **101**. The earlier collection features a mixture of major domesticated parts as well as a complete equid radius and a dog tooth

from the floor level and the basal part of a fallow deer antler from pit fill **110**. The equid bone was clearly from a pony-sized animal with a shoulder height of 139.8cm or about 14 hands, following the distinction that all ponies are less than 14.2 hands at the shoulder (after Clark 1995, 23). Of particular interest is the recovery of fallow deer, this antler representing a dropped or shed example, including most of the brow tine alongside the base. Small knife cuts were noticed at the broken end of the brow tine.

Date:	LIA-RB	M12-E13			M-L15	
Feature:	cremation	Floor	Layer	QP	QP	soil
Species						
Cattle		1		2	24	
Equid		1			4	
Cattle-size		3			31	
Sheep/Goat		3		3	24	
Pig			1		6	2
Sheep-size	150	1			11	1
Fallow deer				1	1	
Dog		1			1	
Small mammal					17	
Chicken					3	
Chicken-size					2	
Pike					(1)	
Eel					(1)	
Uniden fish					(13)	
Grand Total	150	10	1	6	124(15)	3

Table 1. Counts of animal bones sorted by phase and date (centuries AD) with E early, M mid and L late; as well as by feature where crem is cremation and QP is quarry pit.

6.3.3.4 The later quarry pit assemblage features a notable quantity of food waste, mainly cattle and sheep/goat with smaller proportions of pig, chicken and fish, here including a rather small pike cleithrum and a vertebra of a freshwater eel. It is of course of interest that the fish should be freshwater types particularly concerning the distance of this site from the sea. At least one of the equid bones could be included as food waste, a radius/ulna shaft piece with extensive butchery comprising a series of oblique chops along the ulna and the adjacent lateral part of the radius shaft. In addition there were proximal chops to the anterior shaft signifying the oblique method used to remove the distal end of the radius. The equid bones also included the scapula of a very young foal, probably neonate, maybe representing an infant mortality and therefore providing evidence for the keeping/breeding of horses in this locality. This pit also provided another fallow deer antler, also shed, but in this case complete and without any obvious cut marks. Judging by the number of points it can be suggested that this antler was from an animal at least 6 years old (Lawrence and Brown 1974, 141). It should be mentioned that this antler is somewhat smaller than the earlier example thus precluding the possibility that they may represent a dropped pair.

- 6.3.3.5 Finally, the uppermost deposit, from the subsoil **101**, provided two pig bones (a skull fragment and a mandibular tooth) and a sheep-size fragment.
- 6.3.4 Conclusion and recommendations for further work**
- 6.3.4.1 The earliest part of this assemblage, the calcined bones, was tentatively identified as either sheep or pig. It can be suggested, from the proximity of the Roman inhumation burials, that this deposit may represent the remains of an offering placed within the cemetery boundary. There are parallels concerning the calcined remains of sheep/goat carcasses in London, but these tend not to be associated with burial grounds, as for example in a rural setting at Summerton Way, Thamesmead (Rielly 1998) and in an urban setting within the Roman city at Tokenhouse Yard (Leary and Butler 2012, 85). Little more can be done with this calcined collection, especially considering the identification difficulties but it would be of interest to establish whether similar animal 'offerings' have been found in this general area.
- 6.3.4.2 The medieval collections are notably well preserved and well dated. However, the major part of this assemblage, the food waste, is rather too small to provide sufficient data to allow a thorough review of domesticated exploitation in this locality. There is certainly a mix of skeletal parts signifying the presence of processing and food waste, which would be expected in a rural situation. In addition the cattle and sheep are almost entirely from adult individuals suggesting that they were initially used for one or more secondary products as milk and wool. The keeping of animals can perhaps be assumed, though definitive evidence is solely limited to equid as shown by the presence of a probably infant mortality. It was also shown that there was some use made of equid post-mortem products, as demonstrated by the butchered radius. However, the meat from this animal may have been intended for the farm dogs rather than its human occupants. Of particular interest was the recovery of two fallow deer antlers, one complete and both shed. The presence of deer, particularly dating to the medieval period (the earlier pit fill possibly dating no more than a century after this species had been introduced to the British Isles, see Yalden 1999, 156 and Sykes 2010, 57) would generally suggest a degree of affluence. However, this does not apply to antlers, either offering evidence for a local workshop or perhaps items picked up (if shed) as a keepsake for decorative purposes. If indeed this was a wealthy household, then various post cranial elements should be present, not just the antlers.
- 6.3.4.3 This collection offers some interesting points concerning the use of animals in this locality, in particular concerning the occupants of the medieval building. Further work should be limited to providing a clearer understanding of these issues, seeking parallels for the possible Roman animal cremation as well as finding comparative medieval collections of a rural nature within this general area.

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6.4 THE HONESTONES by *Kevin Trott*

Two hone stones were recovered from the excavations at 52 Weekley Wood Lane, Weekley, Northamptonshire. The first honestone was recovered from the fill (108) of Pit 105 and was a Norwegian 'Hardstein' distinguished by its schistose character described below. The second stone, recovered from a burnt floor layer (127) within the building 118, was a second Norwegian 'Hardstein'. Hones of this material, often perforated, are well known in Late Saxon contexts and are generally equated with Viking trade from the 10th century (Dunning 1937, 683-695) was the first to comment on their distribution.

Context	Description
108	Fragment of a greyish-blue mica-schist honestone, roughly wedge-shaped in section, 90mm long, both ends broken. Altogether there are three narrow-medium shallow longitudinal grooves on two of the sides, presumably the result of knife sharpening. This stone is made from Norwegian Ragstone, in particular the grey-blue variety known as 'Hardstein', an almost certainly originates from Eidsborge, Telemark, in central southern Norway (Ellis 1969, Type 1A. Hone stones made of Norwegian Ragstone are commonly found on late Saxon and medieval sites in England (Moore, 1978; 1983)
108	Fragment from blue-grey sandstone whetstone.
127	Fragment of a greyish-blue mica-schist honestone, roughly rectangular in section, 78mm long, both ends and both opposing sides broken. Altogether there are numerous narrow-medium shallow longitudinal grooves on two of the opposing sides, presumably the result of knife and needle-point sharpening. This stone is made from Norwegian Ragstone, in particular the grey-blue variety known as 'Hardstein', an almost certainly originates from Eidsborge, Telemark, in central southern Norway (Ellis 1969, Type 1A. Hone stones made of Norwegian Ragstone are commonly found on late Saxon and medieval sites in England (Moore, 1978; 1983)

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6.5 METALWORK by Malcolm Lyne

6.5.1 A total of 19 meatal objects were recovered from ten contexts.

6.5.2 The coin

VF silver penny of Edward I. North's Group VIII (1275, AD.1294-1300)

OBV.EDWRE XANGLDNSHYB

Crowned bust facing

REV.CIVI TAS LON DON

Long cross with three pellets in each quarter

Context 111. Fill of Oven 112

6.5.3 Buckles

Rectangular brass buckle with central pin bar. Paralleled in London (Egan and Pritchard 1991, Fig.62-449, c.AD.1400-1450). C.AD.1400-1600. *Context 100. Topsoil. SF 7.*

6.5.4 Nails

Small-headed nail 0.062 m. long. *Context 100. Topsoil. SF 5.*

Broken T-headed nail. Clenched. *Context 100. Topsoil. SF 6.*

Corroded nail fragment with small head. *Context 106. Fill of Pit 105. SF 14.*

Clenched T-headed nail 0.047 m. long. *Context 107. Fill of Pit 105. SF 13.*

Flaring rectangular-headed nail 0.033 m. long. *Context 109. Primary fill of Pit 105. SF 17.*

Clenched nail with circular flat head 0.075 m. long. *Context 109. Primary fill of Pit 105. SF 18*

Corroded nail fragment 0.035 m. long. *Context 117. Silty fill within Corn dryer 143. SF 19.*

Nail with circular flat head 0.045m.long with point bent over 90 degrees where used in timber 0.03 m. thick and left in situ. *Context 127. Burnt layer within Building 118. SF 20*

Faceted rectangular-headed nail 0.045 m. long and clenched. *Context 139. Area of burning south of Corn dryer 143. SF 21*

6.5.5 Miscellaneous

Quatrefoil copper alloy? Box or book fitting. Probably Post Medieval. *Context 100. Topsoil. SF 9.*

Fragmentary iron hinge. *Context 108. Fill of Pit 105. SF 15*

Iron casting of uncertain use. Probably Post Medieval. *Context 100. Topsoil. SF 3.*

Iron split pin. *Context 107. Fill of Pit 105. SF 12.*

Curved iron rod fragment. Possibly part of large buckle. *Context 100. Topsoil. SF 4.*

Fragment of copper-alloy strip 0.04 m. long by 0.016 wide. *Context 108. Fill of Pit 105. SF 14.*

Square sectioned iron bar 0.07 m. long and 0.008 square in section. *Context 100. Topsoil. SF 2.*

Two fragments of curved copper-alloy foil embossed with the letters THE NEW H--- and -LIMITED respectively. Very clean and lacking any corrosion products. Probably a manufacturer's label attached to a piece of machinery. Late 19th-20th c. *Context 100. Topsoil. SF 8*

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6.6 ENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS by Val Fryer

6.6.1 Introduction and method statement

Excavations at Weekley Wood Lane, undertaken by Pre-Construct Archaeology (PCA), recorded corn driers, a building and other discrete features of medieval (twelfth to fifteenth century) and earlier date. Samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken from across the excavated area and seventeen were submitted for assessment.

The samples were bulk floated by PCA and the flots were collected in a 300 micron mesh sieve. The dried flots were scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed in Tables 1 – 3. Nomenclature within the tables follows Stace (2010). Most plant remains were charred, but occasional mineral replaced macrofossils were also present, with the latter being denoted within the tables by a lower case 'm' suffix. Modern roots, seeds and arthropod remains were also recorded.

6.6.2 Results

Cereal grains and seeds of common weeds are present at a low to moderate density within all but three of the assemblages studied. Preservation is generally good, although some grains are severely puffed and distorted, probably as a result of combustion at extremely high temperatures.

Oat (*Avena* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.), rye (*Secale cereale*) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains are recorded, with wheat occurring marginally more frequently than barley. Chaff is exceedingly scarce, with only two individual rachis nodes/internodes being recorded. However, detached sprouts from germinated grains are noted with three assemblages from the corn driers. Other potential food/crop plant remains are scarce. However, possible pea (*Pisum sativum*) and bean (*Vicia faba*) seeds are present within the fills of pit **105** (samples 1 and 2) and fragments of indeterminate large pulse (Fabaceae) cotyledons are also recorded.

Seeds of common segetal weeds, grassland herbs and wetland plants are recorded at a low density within nine assemblages. Segetal weeds are predominant, with taxa noted including stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), orache (*Atriplex* sp.), small legumes (Fabaceae), goose grass (*Galium aparine*), nipplewort (*Lapsana communis*), knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*) and dock (*Rumex* sp.). Grasses (Poaceae) are also recorded along with seeds of medick/clover/trefoil (*Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus* sp.) and charlock (*Sinapis* sp.) type, and wetland plant remains include sedge (*Carex* sp.) and spike-rush (*Eleocharis* sp.) nutlets. Tree/shrub macrofossils are scarce, but sample 1 (context **106** includes a large fragment of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nutshell and sample 2 (context **107** contains a single mineral replaced elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*) seed.

Charcoal/charred wood fragments are present within all but sample 7 (posthole **113**), but other plant macrofossils occur infrequently.

Fragments of black porous and tarry material are present within all but two assemblages. Whilst most are possible residues of the combustion of organic remains (including cereal grains) at very high temperatures, others are distinctly hard and brittle, possibly indicating that they are bi-products of the combustion of coal. Other remains occur less frequently but do include fragments of bone, eggshell, fish bone and marine mollusc shell, mineralised arthropod remains and small mammal or amphibian bones.

Although specific sieving for molluscan remains was not undertaken, shells of common terrestrial snails are present within ten assemblages. Most specimens are fragmentary and somewhat abraded, but at the time of writing, it is unclear whether these are contemporary with the features from which the samples were taken, or later contaminants.

6.6.3 Discussion

The corn dryers (Table 1)

Two corn dryers (features **112** and **116**) were identified, with seven samples being taken from their basal fills, post-usage back fills and other discrete parts of the structures. The recovered assemblages are small (<0.1 litres in volume) and limited in composition, although cereals and some seeds are recorded within all but sample 16 (drier **116**). Given that charcoal fragments are also scarce, it would appear most likely that the structures were cleaned well after each period of usage, presumably as a means of preventing accidental fires. The presence of cereal sprouts within three of the assemblages may indicate that some cereals had germinated prior to drying, although it should be noted that these may also be derived from spoiled grains which were subsequently used as kindling or fuel. The weed seeds may also be derived from processing 'dross' or dried herbage which were used as tinder/fuel, although some may be contaminants of the grain which persisted after processing. Assuming that the main crops which were being dried were barley and wheat, it is also thought most likely that the oats, rye and large pulses are present as contaminants, with most probably being relicts of earlier cropping regimes.

Sample No.	4	5	6	9	8	16	17
Context No.	119	115	111	123	117	117	144
Feature No.	112	112	112		116	116	116
Date	C13-14th	C13-14th	C13-14th	C13-14th	C14-15th	C14-15th	C14-15th
Cereals and other potential crop plant remains							
Avena sp. (grains)			x	x	x		
Hordeum sp. (grains)			x	x	xx		xcf
(rachis node)					x		
Secale cereale L. (grains)			x				
Triticum sp. (grains)		x	xx	x	xx		x
Cereal indet. (grains)	x	x	xx		xx		x
(detached sprouts)			x		x		x
Large Fabaceae indet.					xfg		
Herbs							
Anthemis cotula L.			xx		x		x
Asteraceae indet.					x		
Brassicaceae indet.			x		x		x
Bromus sp.							x
Fabaceae indet.					x		
Galium sp.					x		
Lapsana communis L.			x		x		
Medicago/Trifolium/Loyus sp.			x	x	x		
Small Poaceae indet.							x
Large Poaceae indet.							x
Rumex sp.					x		
Rumex/Carex sp.			xm				
Sinapis sp.			xcf		xx		
Wetland plants							
Carex sp.							x
Other plant macrofossils							
Charcoal <2mm	x	x	xx	x	xx	x	x
Charcoal >2mm			x		xx	x	x
Charcoal >5mm					x	x	
Charcoal >10mm					x	x	
Indet. buds					x		
Indet. seeds			x	xm	xm		x
Other remains							
Black porous 'cokey' material		x		x	xxx	x	xx
Black tarry material	x		x	x	x		x
Bone			x		x		
Eggshell						x	
Mineralised arthropod remains			x				
Mollusc shells							
Woodland/shade loving species							
Vitrea sp.					x		x
Zonitidae indet.					x		x
Open country species							
Vallonia sp.			x	x	x		x
V. costata					x		
Vertigo pygmaea			x				x
Catholic species							
Cochlicopa sp.			x				
Trichia hispida group	x		x	x	x		
Sample volume (litres)							
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 1

6.6.4 Deposits within building 118 (Table 2)

Five samples were taken from layers of *in-situ* burning recorded above and including the floor level (127) of building 118. The assemblages are again very small and limited, with most being similar in composition to the remains from the driers. Whether these deposits may represent rake-out waste from the driers, dumped within the footprint of an earlier structure whilst still hot, is unknown. However, such a means of disposal would be an effective way of containing a potentially severe fire hazard.

Sample No.	11	12	13	14	15
Context No.	127	124	125	126	129
Date	C12-13th	C12-13th	C12-13th	C12-13th	C12-13th
<i>Cereals</i> and other potential crop plant remains					
<i>Avena</i> sp. (grains)	x				
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grains)	x	x			
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains)	x	x			xcf
Cereal indet. (grains)	x	x		x	x
Herbs					
Brassicaceae indet.	x				
<i>Fabaceae</i> indet.	x				
<i>Medicago</i> /Trifolium/Lotus sp.	x				
Rumex sp.	x				
Wetland plants					
Carex sp.	x	x			
Other plant macrofossils					
Charcoal <2mm	x	xx	x	x	x
Charcoal >2mm	x				
Charcoal >5mm	x				xx
Charcoal >10mm	x				x
Other remains					
Black porous 'cokey' material	x	xx		x	
Black tarry material		x			
Mollusc shells					
Woodland/shade loving species					
Vitrea sp.	x			x	x
Open country species					
<i>Vallonia</i> sp.					x
<i>V. costata</i>		x			
Vertigo pygmaea	x	x			
<i>Catholic</i> species					
<i>Cochlicopa</i> sp.	x	x			
Trichia hispida group	x			x	x
Sample volume (litres)					
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 2

6.6.5 Other features (Table 3)

Samples were taken from a possible Romano-British cremation deposit (sample 10 context (103)), from the fill of medieval post-hole 113 (sample 7) and from fills within pit 105 (samples 1, 2 and 3), all of which are of medieval date. The cremation assemblage is extremely limited, containing only occasional small pieces of charcoal/charred wood, black porous and tarry residues and a single fragment of bone.

It is assumed that most of this material may be contemporary with the cremation, although the tarry residues could be later contaminants, introduced to the feature via the bioturbation of the deposit.

The fill of posthole **113** is similarly sparse, with (somewhat unusually) charcoal being entirely absent. It is assumed that the few remains which are recorded are all derived from scattered refuse which was accidentally incorporated within the feature fill. The uppermost fills of pit **105** (samples 1 and 2) contain the highest densities of material of any of the assemblages studied, with cereals, seeds and charcoal all being moderately abundant. However, the source of the material remains unclear. It is entirely likely that some macrofossils are derived from waste from the corn driers, but the presence of mineral replaced seeds may also suggest that sewage or dung were present within the original deposits. In addition, the assemblage from sample 1 includes possible dietary refuse and/or kitchen waste. It would, therefore, appear most likely that these assemblages are derived from deposits of mixed refuse including hearth detritus, sewage waste and refuse from nearby activities, all of which were disposed of within the pit. The assemblage from sample 3 (also from pit **105**) may also be derived from a similar source, although the density of material recorded is exceptionally low in comparison.

Sample No.	10	7	1	2	3
Context No.	103	114	106	107	109
Feature No.		113	105	105	105
Feature type	Crem.	ph	Pit	Pit	Pit
Date	LIA/RB	C12-13th	C15th	C15th	C15th
Cereals and other potential crop plant remains					
<i>Avena</i> sp. (grains)			xx	x	xcf
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grains)		x	xxx	xx	x
<i>Secale cereale</i> L. (grains)				x	
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains)		x	xxx	xx	
Cereal indet. (grains)		x	xx	xx	x
(<i>rachis</i> internode frag.)				x	
<i>Vicia faba</i> L.			xcf		
<i>Pisum sativum</i> L.			xcf	xcf	
Large Fabaceae indet.			xxfg		
Herbs					
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.			x	x	
<i>Atriplex</i> sp.			x xm	x	
<i>Brassicaceae</i> indet.			x xm	xxcfm	
<i>Bromus</i> sp.			x		
<i>Centaurea</i> sp.			x		
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.			x		
<i>Chenopodiaceae</i> indet.			xm	xm	
<i>Fabaceae</i> indet.			xx	xm	
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.)A.Love			x		
<i>Galium aparine</i> L.			x	x	
<i>Hyoscyamus niger</i> L.				x	
<i>Lapsana communis</i> L.			x		
<i>Lithospermum arvense</i> L.			x		
<i>Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus</i> sp.			x	xx	
<i>Medicago lupulina</i> L.				x	
Small Poaceae indet.				x	

<i>Large Poaceae</i> indet.			x	x	
<i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L.			xm	xm	
<i>Ranunculus arvensis</i> L.			xcf		
<i>Rumex</i> sp.			x	xx xm	
<i>Rumex/Carex</i> sp.					
<i>Silene</i> sp.				xm	
<i>Stellaria media</i> (L.)Vill			x		
Viola sp.				xcfm	
<i>Wetland</i> plants					
<i>Carex</i> sp.			xcf	x xm	
Eleocharis sp.		x			
<i>Tree/shrub</i> macrofossils					
<i>Corylus avellana</i> L.			x		
Sambucus nigra L.				xm	
Other plant macrofossils					
Charcoal <2mm	x		xxxx	xxxx	x
Charcoal >2mm	x		xxxx	xx	x
Charcoal >5mm	x		xxx	xx	
Charcoal >10mm			xx	xx	
Charred root/stem			xx	x	
Indet. buds			x		
Indet. culm node				x	
Indet. fruit stone frag.				x	
Indet. seeds			x xm	xxm	
Other remains					
Black porous 'cokey' material	x	x	xx	x	x
Black tarry material	x	x	x	x	x
Bone	x		x		
Eggshell			x		
Fish bone			x		
Marine mollusc shell frags.			x		
Mineralised arthropod remains			x	x	
Siliceous globules			x		
Small mammal/amphibian bone			x	x	
Mollusc shells					
<i>Woodland/shade loving</i> species					
Vitrea sp.					x
<i>Open country</i> species					
<i>Vallonia</i> sp.					x
Vertigo pygmaea					x
Sample volume (litres)					
Volume of flot (litres)	<0.1	<0.1	0.1	<0.1	<0.1
% flot sorted	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

Table 3

6.6.6 Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In summary, the results from these samples are somewhat inconclusive. The corn drier assemblages are sparse, but do appear to indicate that barley and wheat were the principal crops being dealt with at the site, with much of the wheat production occurring within areas of heavy clay soil. The lack of chaff within the samples may indicate that most of the grain was arriving in a semi-cleaned or prime state, containing only the larger contaminants which would have been removed by hand immediately prior to use. The significance (if any) of the assemblages from building 118 is not yet fully understood, although it would appear most likely that the remains post-date the

principal phase of building usage. The assemblages from pit **105** are of interest, but are probably largely derived from refuse generated by a number of non-specific on-site activities.

Although the assemblages from samples 1 and 2 do contain a sufficient density of material for quantification (i.e. 100+ specimens), analysis of mixed refuse deposits from such poorly defined sources would probably add little to the data already contained within this assessment. Therefore, no further work is recommended. However, a summary of this report should be included within any publication of data from the site.

Reference

Stace, C., 2010 *New Flora of the British Isles*. 3rd edition. Cambridge University Press

Key to Tables

x = 1 – 10 specimens; xx = 11 – 50 specimens; xxx = 51 – 100 specimens; xxxx = 100+ specimens

cf = compare; fg = fragment; m = mineral replaced; C = century; Crem = cremation;

ph = post-hole

7. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

- 7.1 The excavations revealed that the natural deposits on the site comprised a yellowish brown sandy clay containing frequent angular limestone fragments with orange-brown sandy clay patches representing an outcrop of the bedrock geology.
- 7.2 Slight, and relatively uncommon, evidence of potential late prehistoric/Romano-British activity was revealed in the form of a single animal cremation burial. Animal cremation burials are recorded in the East Midlands and elsewhere in the archaeological record. In the absence of any associated activity on the site, characterisation is speculative although given the proximity of a Roman cemetery to the west of the site it is tentatively suggested that the cremation represents a votive deposit demarcating the edge of the cemetery.
- 7.3 The main focus of activity on the site dates to the mid-12th – early 13th century in the form of the surviving walls of a building and associated corn-dryer, a second, possibly contemporary, corn-dryer with associated posthole, a sizeable quarry pit and a later phase of activity in the form of postholes possibly representing alterations or repairs. The evidence suggests settlement activity related specifically to the processing of cereal grain with an associated building (perhaps a barn) or a bay arranged at the end of the building to provide access to storage or further processing activity – as evidenced by the fire-reddened deposits within the building. As corn-dryers tend to be constructed within or at the edges of associated buildings, the presence of a second corn-dryer nearby may indicate the pre-existence of a similar arrangement of building and corn-dryer either underneath the neighbouring property to the east, or the pre-existence of an attendant building to the west, within the study site, but not surviving, or visible.
- 7.4 The sparse environmental evidence recovered from the corn-dryers suggests little as to their precise function. The function of corn-dryers is best determined by the assemblage of charred plant remains found as primary deposits within the flues and drying floors of the features. The samples from the two corn-dryers at Weekley were too small to bear any useful statistical analysis other than to record barley and wheat as the most frequent crops processed, although the lack of chaff from the samples indicates that the corn-dryers were used to dry pre-processed grain as opposed to the raw material. Studies of medieval corn-dryers (Monk in Van Der Veen, 1981) record all as having been associated with free-threshing cereals i.e. Common wheat and Durum wheat as opposed to domesticated varieties (Einkorn, Emmer and Spelt) which retain their tough hulls. Medieval corn-dryers do not appear to be associated with the production of malt; there was some evidence of germinated grain from the corn-dryers at Weekley although this may be interpreted as spoilt grain subsequently used as fuel.

7.5 It has been suggested that the absence of pottery from the early – mid 15th century indicates a period of abandonment, possibly as a result of an outbreak of the Black Death. This may be the case at Weekley, or alternatively, a purely localised change of usage of the site. Given the small and piecemeal nature of the excavations on the site this interpretation is difficult to prove.

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9. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Archaeological Monitoring: Liz Mordue
Project Manager: Kevin Trott
Fieldwork Staff: Steve Jones, Kevin Trott, Kathryn Brook
CAD: Jennifer Simonson
Post Excavation & Report: Tony Molloy

PLATES



Plate 1. Un-urned cremation burial **148** in Test Pit 1. Scale 1 x 0.5m

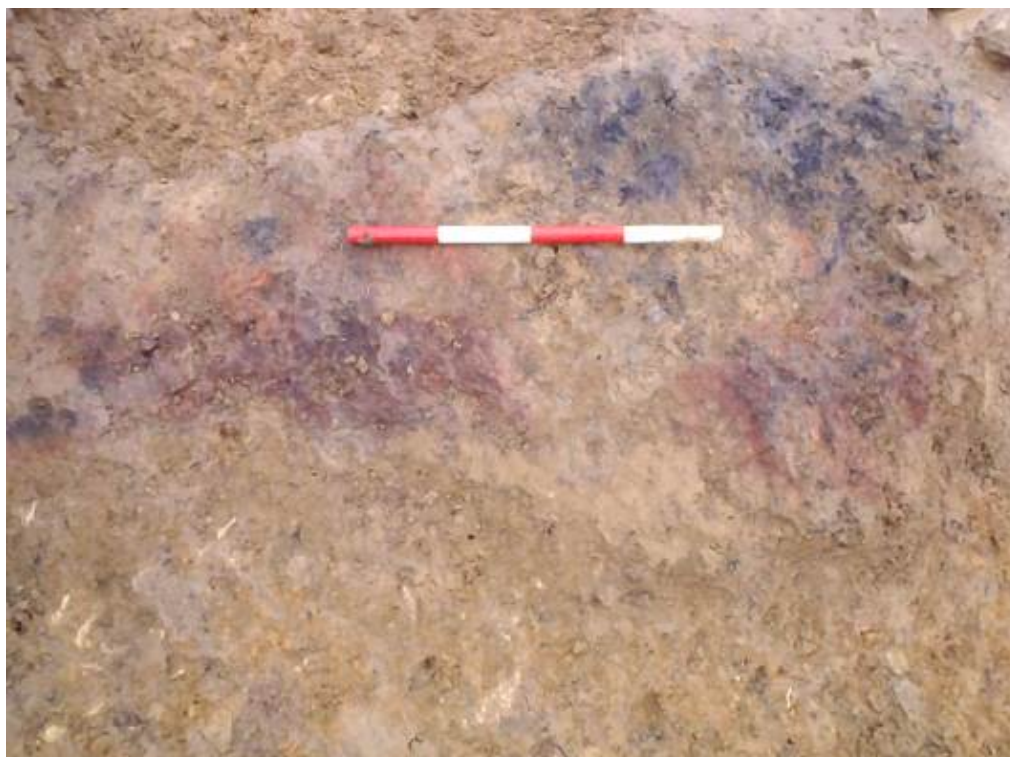


Plate 2. Area of burning on internal floor of building **118**. Scale 1 x 0.4m



Plate 3. Medieval corn-dryer **112**, half-sectioned, looking north.



Plate 4. Medieval corn-dryer **112**, looking east. Scales 1 x 2m; 1 x 0.5m



Plate 5. Medieval corn-dryer **112** fully excavated, looking east. Scales 1 x 2m; 1 x 1m; 1 x 0.5m



Plate 6. Medieval corn-dryer **116** and low walls of medieval building **118** looking south. Scales 1 x 2m; 1 x 1m; 2 x 0.2m



Plate 7. Walls of medieval building **118** and Medieval corn-dryer **116** in the background, looking north. Scales 1 x 2m; 1 x 1m; 1 x 0.4m



Plate 8. West-facing section of pit **105**. Scales 1 x 2m; 1 x 1m

APPENDIX 1. CONTEXT INDEX

In the table the abbreviations used mean the following: UE means 'unexcavated'; N/A means 'not applicable'; > means 'greater than'; < means 'up to'; ? means 'uncertain'; TP means 'Test Pit'. Context numbers are followed by a brief description and interpretation; their dimensions (Length x Width x Depth/Thickness) or (Diameter x Depth/Thickness) in metres; the finds retrieved from them and their cultural phase.

Context					Dimensions (m)	Finds	Cultural Phase
	Area	Category	Key Description	Interpretation			
100	Excavation	Layer	Dark greyish brown silty clay with occasional brick and charcoal inclusions	Topsoil	Site Layer x < 0.44	Pot, Iron, Copper and Lead objects	19C+
101	Excavation	Layer	Mid orangey brown silty clay with small limestone fragment inclusions	Subsoil	Site Layer x 0.3	Pottery, bone	M-L15C
102	Excavation	Layer	Firm, yellowish brown sandy clay with occasional patches of orangey silty clay and frequent limestone fragment inclusions	Natural	Site Layer x UE	-	Natural
103	TP1	Deposit	Soft, mid-brown silty clay with fired clay fragments, burnt bone and charcoal inclusions	Fill of an un-urned animal cremation burial	0.27 x < 0.25	Cremated animal bone, Fired clay	LIA/RB?
104	TP7	Structure	Section of mortar-bonded limestone wall	Wall of medieval building	>1.3 x >0.8 x 0.27	Pot	M12-E13C
105	Excavation	Cut	Sub-circular with steep sloping sides down to flat base	Large pit; possibly a quarry pit	3.8 x 2.8	-	M12-E13C
106	Excavation	Fill	Dark greyish brown clayey silt containing occasional medium limestone fragments Some root disturbance	Upper fill of pit 105	2.2 x 0.5	Pot, Animal bone, Shell, Plaster, Iron objects	M-L15C

Context					Dimensions (m)	Finds	Cultural Phase
	Area	Category	Key Description	Interpretation			
107	Excavation	Fill	Light greyish brown clayey silt, containing occasional limestone fragments, with a thin layer of charcoal visible at the base of the fill	Fill of pit 105	2.2 x 0.4	Pot, Animal bone, Shell, Iron and Copper objects	M-L15C
108	Excavation	Fill	Mixed yellow/orange/ light brown silty clay containing frequent large limestone fragments and charcoal flecks	Fill of pit 105	1.9 x 1.8	Pot, Animal bone, Shell, Stone, Iron and Copper objects	M-L15C
109	Excavation	Fill	Loose orange /yellow clay and rubble	Fill of pit 105	1.1 x 1.5	Pot, Animal bone, Shell, and Iron objects	M-L15C
110	Excavation	Fill	Loose orange /yellow clay and rubble	Primary fill of pit 105	0.7 x 1.4	Pot and Animal bone	M12-E13C
111	Excavation	Fill	Friable light medium brown clayey silt; quite sandy containing very occasional limestone fragments	Backfill of corndryer 112	2.7 x 1.1 x 0.4	Pot, Shell and Copper object	13-M14C
112	Excavation	Structure	Rectangular cut in plan with steep battered sides down to flat base	Construction cut for corndryer	2.7 x <1.1 x 0.4	-	M12-E13C
113	Excavation	Cut	Sub-circular; gradual sloping sides onto sub-rounded base	Posthole	0.6 x 0.5 x 0.17	-	M12-E13C
114	Excavation	Fill	Soft medium brown clayey slit	Fill of posthole 113	0.6 x 0.5 x 0.17	Pot	M12-E13C

Context					Dimensions (m)	Finds	Cultural Phase
	Area	Category	Key Description	Interpretation			
115	Excavation	Interface	Dark red staining with charcoal inclusions at base of feature	Heat scorched area at base of corndryer 112	1.1 x 0.8 x <0.05	-	M12-E13C
116	Excavation	Cut	Steep-sided, irregular base	Construction cut for corndryer	1.7 x 1.35 x 0.28	-	M12-E13C
117	Excavation	Fill	Greyish brown silt loam	Infill of corndryer 116	1.7 x 1.35 x 0.28	Pot and Iron object	M12-E13C
118	Excavation	Structure	Limestone walls	Remnants of pre-existing Medieval building	<9 x <2 x 0.3	-	M12-E13C
119	Excavation	Fill	Mid-greyish brown clayey silt at base of corndryer 112	Fill of corndryer 112	0.5 x <0.01	-	M12-E13C
120	Excavation	CANCELLED					
121	Excavation	CANCELLED					
122	Excavation	CANCELLED					
123	Excavation	Layer	Friable yellowish brown sandy silt loam with common limestone fragments	Lime deposited at base of corndryer 112	0.9 x 0.9 x 0.08	-	13-M14C
124	Excavation	Layer	Circular area of very dark brown clay with red staining and charcoal patches	<i>In-situ</i> burning above floor level within pre-existing medieval building 118	0.4 x 0.1	-	M12-E13C
125	Excavation	Layer	Irregular area of very dark brown clay with red staining, charcoal and ash	<i>In-situ</i> burning above floor level within pre-	0.6 x 0.5 x 0.1	Pot	M12-E13C

Context					Dimensions (m)	Finds	Cultural Phase	
	Area	Category	Key Description	Interpretation				
				existing medieval building 118				
126	Excavation	Layer	Irregular area of very dark brown clay with red staining , charcoal and ash	<i>In-situ</i> burning above floor level within pre-existing medieval building 118	0.5 x 0.2 x UE	-	M12-E13C	
127	Excavation	Layer	Pale grey silty clay containing ash	Clay rammed floor of building 118	<1 x <0.5 x 0.15	Pot, Animal bone, Stone and Iron object	M12-E13C	
128	Excavation	Layer	Soft, pale grey brown silty clay	<i>In-situ</i> burning above floor level within pre-existing medieval building 118	0.7 x 0.6 x 0.25	Pot and Animal Bone	M12-E13C	
129	Excavation	Layer	Pale grey silty clay containing ash and charcoal inclusions	<i>In-situ</i> burning above floor level within pre-existing medieval building 118	1 x 0.5 x 0.15	Pot	M12-E13C	
130	Excavation	Layer	Abundant limestone in a yellowish brown silty clay loam	Demolition layer	<8.6 x ? x 0.4	Pot	13-M14C	
131	Excavation	CANCELLED						
132	Excavation	CANCELLED						

Context					Dimensions (m)	Finds	Cultural Phase
	Area	Category	Key Description	Interpretation			
133	Excavation	Cut	Small, sub-circular feature with steep, near-vertical sloping sides down to flattish base	Post-hole associated with building 118 ?	0.16 x ? x 0.2	-	13-M14C
134	Excavation	Fill	Mid-pale greyish brown sandy clay with very occasional charcoal fragments	Fill of 133	0.16 x ? x 0.2	Pot	13-M14C
135	Excavation	Cut	Small, sub-circular feature with steep, near-vertical sloping sides down to flattish base	Post-hole associated with building 118 ?	0.16 x ? x 0.2	-	13-M14C
136	Excavation	Fill	Mid-pale greyish brown sandy clay with very occasional charcoal fragments	Fill of 135	0.16 x ? x 0.2	-	13-M14C
137	Excavation	Layer	Abundant limestone in a yellowish brown silty clay loam	Rubble demolition later. Same as layer 130	<8.6 x ? x 0.4	Pot	13-M14C
138	Excavation	Layer	Firm yellowish grey sandy loam	Post-medieval levelling	? x 1 x 0.2	Pot	16C
139	Excavation	Layer	Small, circular, patch of very dark brown sandy clay loam	Activity associated with corn-dryer 116	0.18 x UE	Pot, Fired clay and Iron object	13-M14C
140	Excavation	Layer	Abundant limestone in a yellowish brown silty clay loam	Rubble demolition layer. Same as layer 130	<8.6 x ? x 0.4	Pot	13-M14C
141	Excavation	Cut	Steep-sided cut. Visible only in section.	Modern pit	1.8 x ? x 0.64	-	19C+
142	Excavation	Fill	Dark brown sandy clay loam	Fill of 141	1.8 x ? x 0.64	-	19C+

Context					Dimensions (m)	Finds	Cultural Phase
	Area	Category	Key Description	Interpretation			
143	Excavation	Structure	Single skin of irregular, un-bonded limestones lining cut for corndryer 112	Lining of corndryer 112	2.7 x <0.16 x 0.4	-	M12-E13C
144	Excavation	Layer	Admixture of pinkish red and light brown clayey silt with charcoal inclusions	Burning deposit beneath stone platform in feature 116	1.05 x 0.6 x 0.03	-	M12-E13C
145	Excavation	Layer	Abundant limestone in a yellowish brown silty clay loam	Rubble demolition layer. Same as layer 130	<8.6 x ? x 0.4	-	13-M14C
146	Excavation	Fill	Dark yellowish brown silty clay loam	Fill of 147	0.4 x 0.3	-	19C+
147	Excavation	Cut	Cut visible in NE-facing section	Discreet feature visible in section	0.4 x 0.3	-	19C+
148	TP1	Cut	Nominal cut number for indistinct cremation burial.	Cut for cremation burial	0.6 x 0.52 x 0.25	-	LIA-RB?

APPENDIX 2. OASIS DATA COLLECTION FORM

OASIS ID: preconst1-201918

Project details

Project name	52 Weekley Wood Lane, Weekley, Northampton
Short description of the project	<i>A programme of staged archaeological works comprising an archaeological observation on geotechnical Test Pitting, a 'strip map and record' and an archaeological observation on development groundworks was undertaken as a condition of planning consent in advance of, and during, development at 52 Weekley Wood Lane, Weekley, Northampton. The developer, Polpark Ltd., commissioned Pre-Construct Archaeology (Midlands) to undertake the mitigation works. The mitigation works uncovered a feature containing the cremated remains of an animal (possibly sheep or pig) of possible Romano-British date which may signify an offering at the boundary of a human cemetery. Further, extended machine stripping of the site revealed the footings of the walls of a mid-12th-early 13th century building which contained evidence of intensive burning activity, possibly from ovens or hearths, open at one end for access to a dry-walled stone-lined corn-dryer. A second, possibly contemporary, corn-dryer was located nearby but no evidence of an associated building was found with it. A large pit which may have originated as a stone quarry pit and later served as a refuse pit was located on the site in addition to a number of small posthole features which are attributed to a later phase of medieval activity. The site appears to have been abandoned at some time in the early -mid-15th century (possibly as a result of the Black Death) after which the site was levelled and given over to agriculture.</i>
Project dates	Start: 04-12-2013 End: 12-08-2014
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	WWWN13 - Site code
Type of project	Excavation/Watching Brief
Site status	None
Current Land use	General Residential
Monument type	Romano-British/Medieval

Significant Finds	Pottery, Bone, Metalwork
Investigation type	See Above
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	52 Weekley Wood Lane, Weekley, Northamptonshire
Postcode	NN16 9TD
Study area	313 m ²
Site coordinates	SP 488431 281085
Height OD / Depth	89m

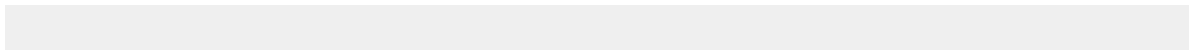
Project creators

Name of Organisation	PCA Midlands
Project brief originator	Landowner
Project design originator	Kevin Trott
Project director/manager	Kevin Trott
Project supervisor	Steve Jones
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	52 Weekley Wood Lane, Weekley, Northamptonshire.
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Tony Molloy
Other bibliographic details	Report Number R11967

Date	2015
Issuer or publisher	Pre-Construct Archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Market Harborough
Description	Client Report



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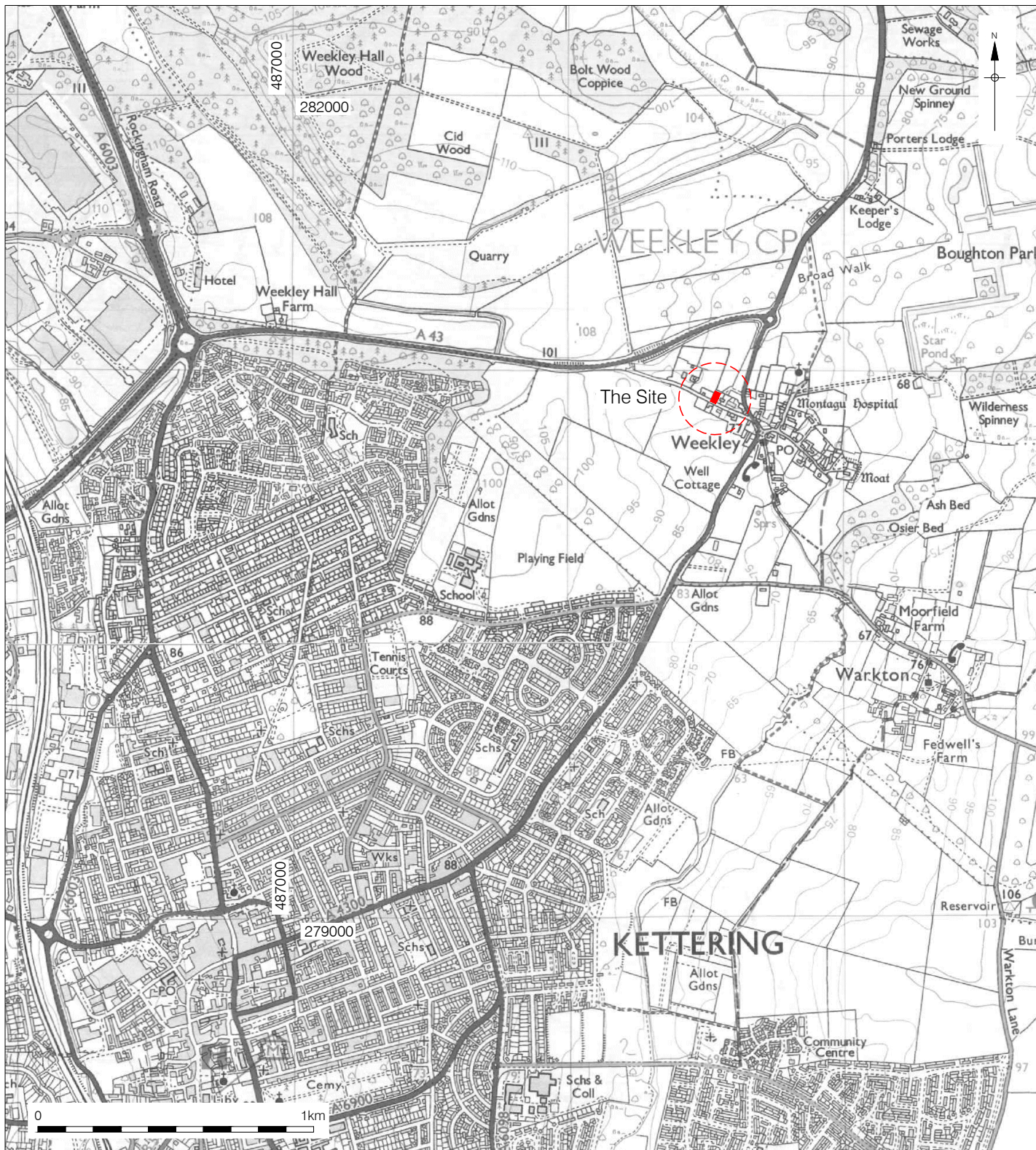


Figure 1
 Site Location
 1:20,000 and 1:2,000,000 at A4

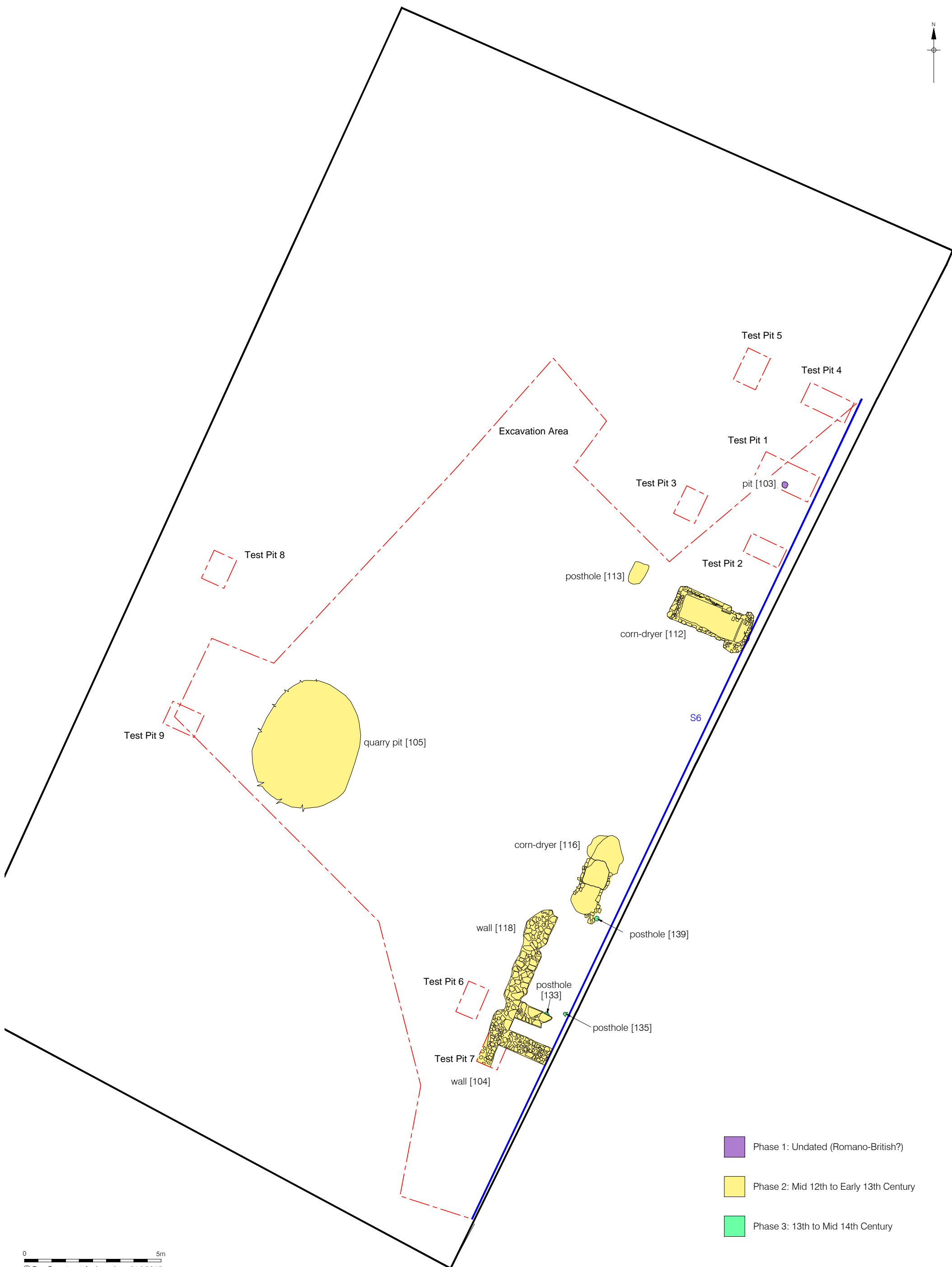
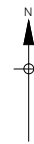


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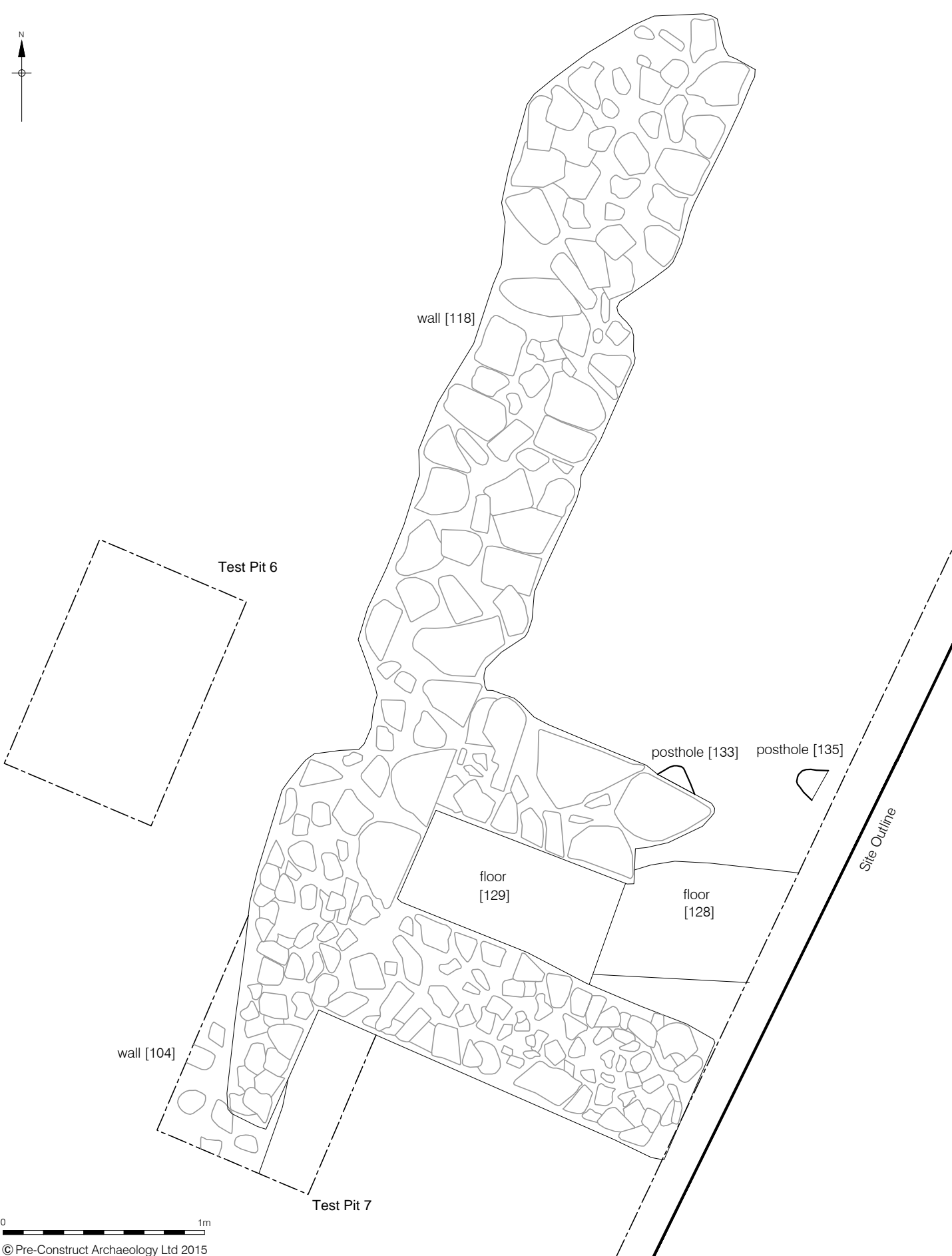
27/01/15 JS

Figure 2
Trench Location
1:250 at A4



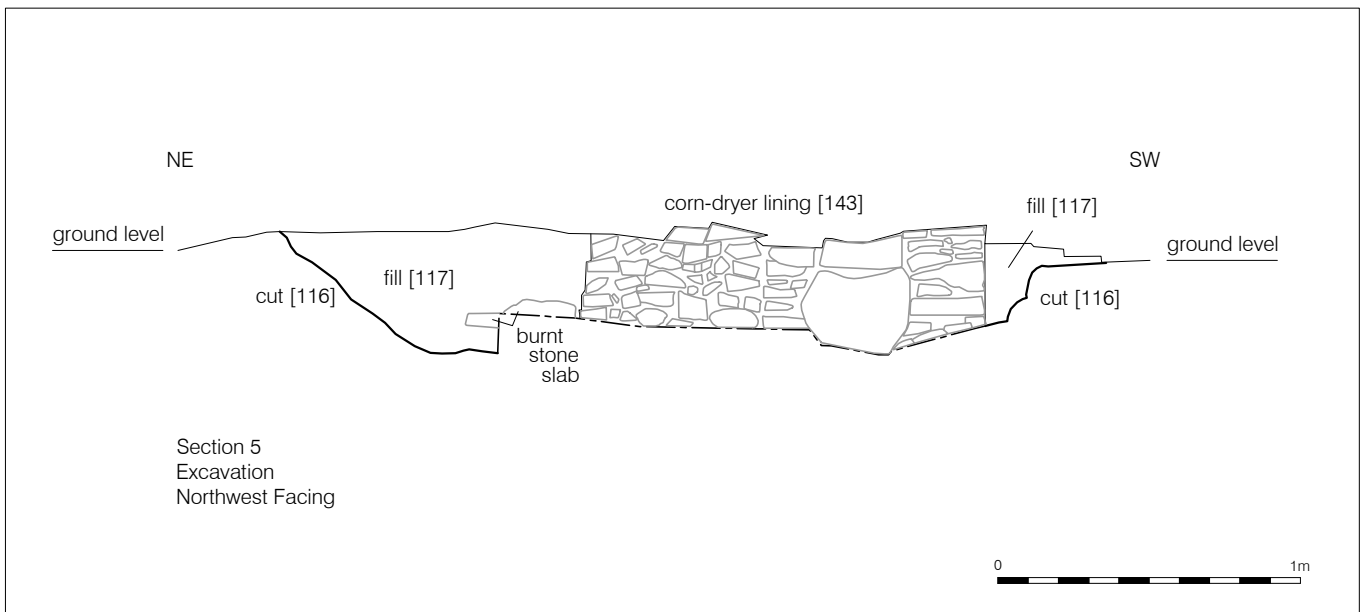
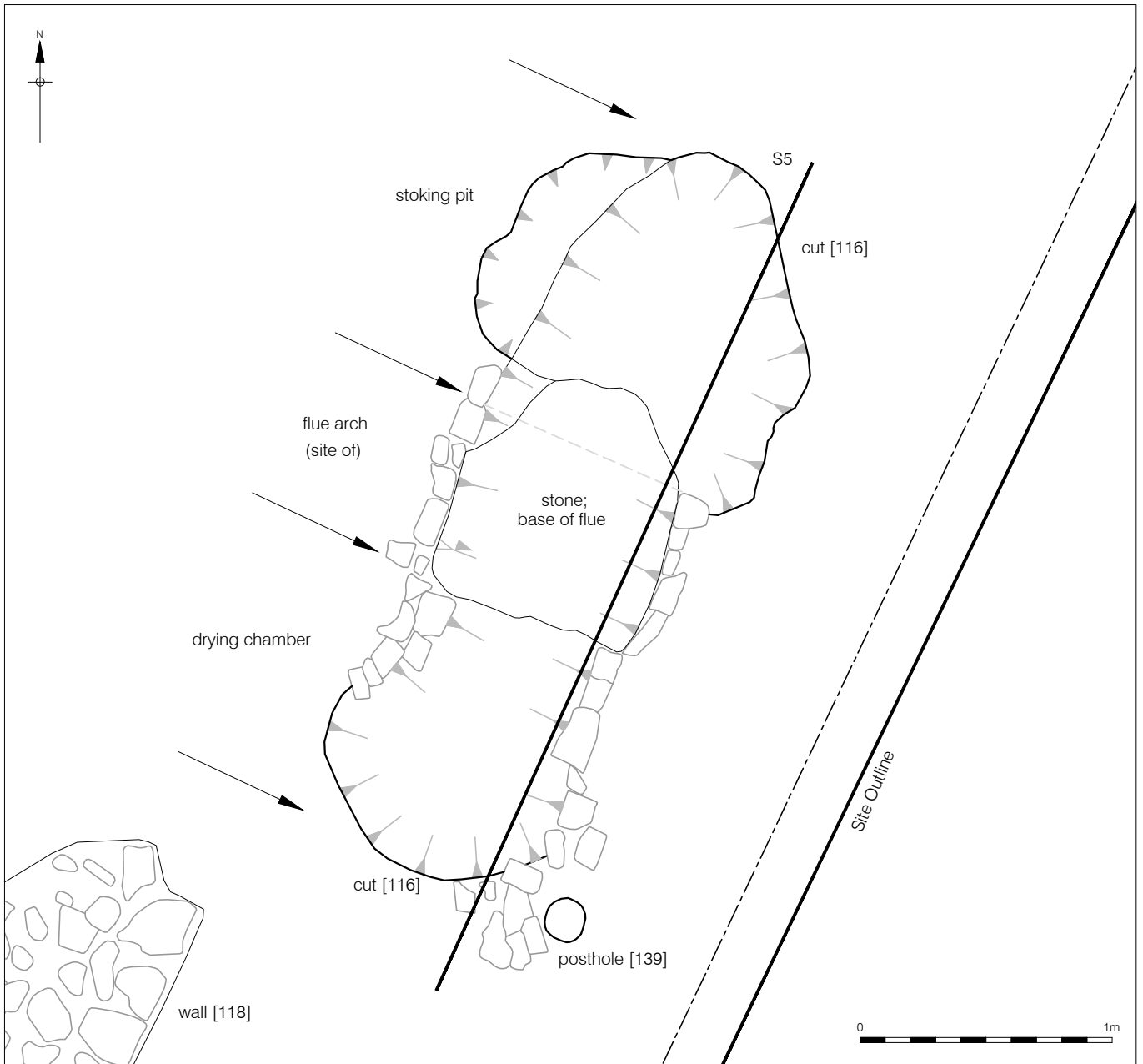
- Phase 1: Undated (Romano-British?)
- Phase 2: Mid 12th to Early 13th Century
- Phase 3: 13th to Mid 14th Century

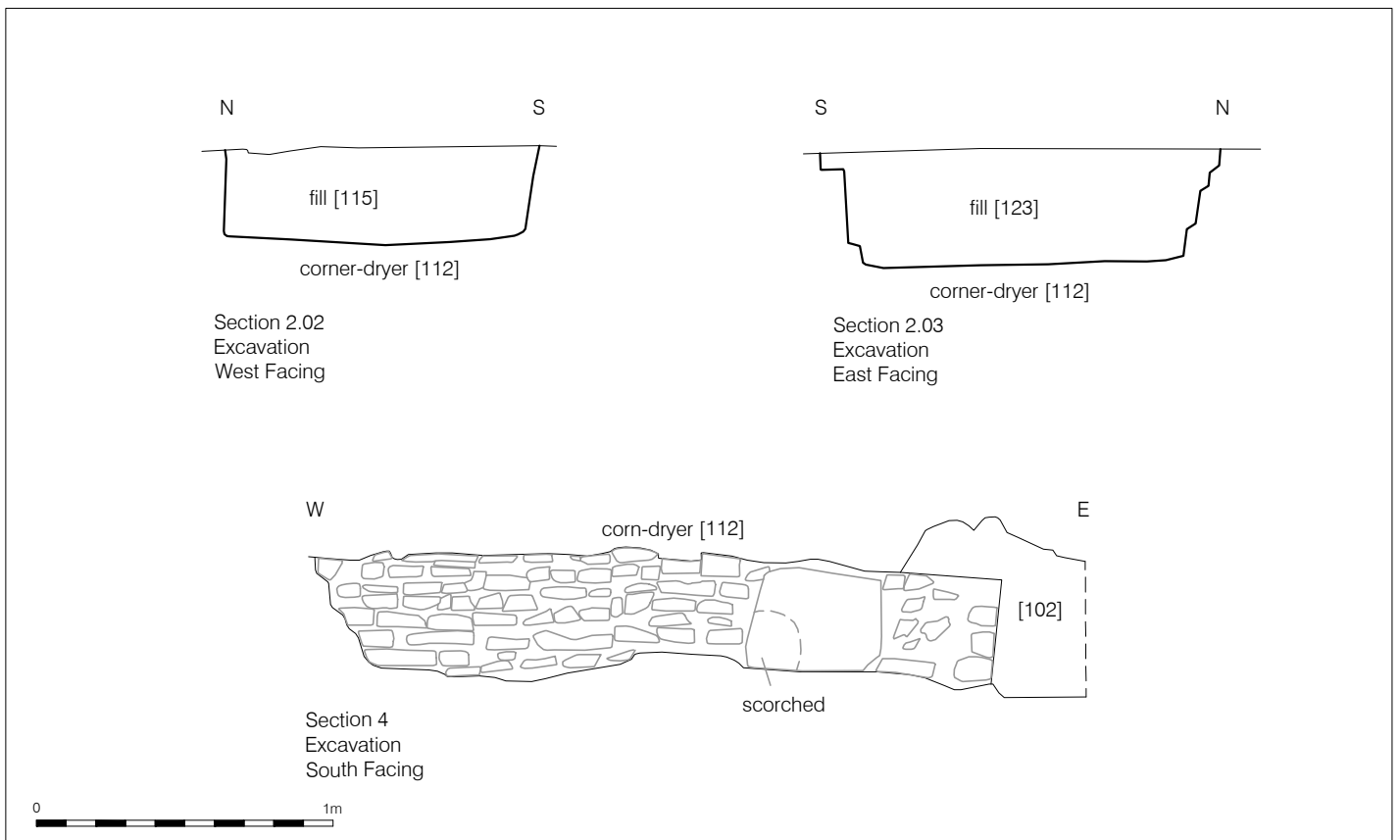
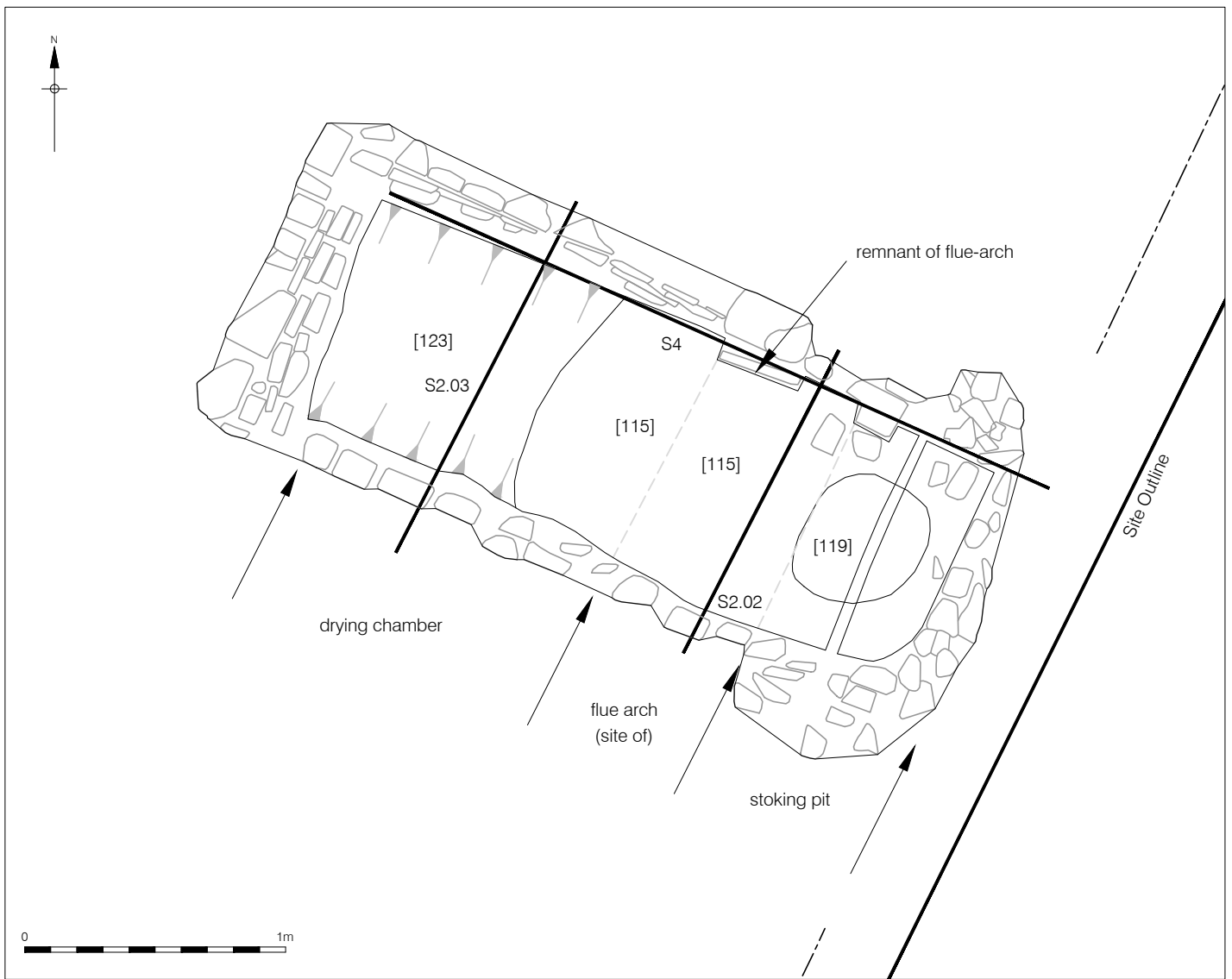
Figure 3
Phased Plan
1:125 at A3



0 1m
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Figure 4
 Wall [118]; Plan
 1:125 at A3





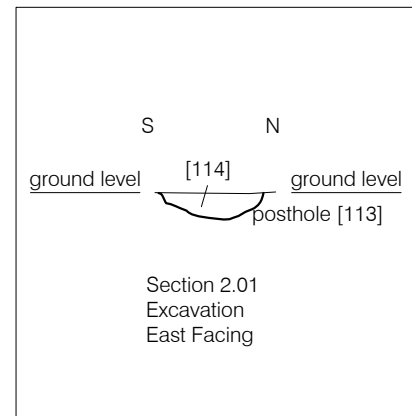
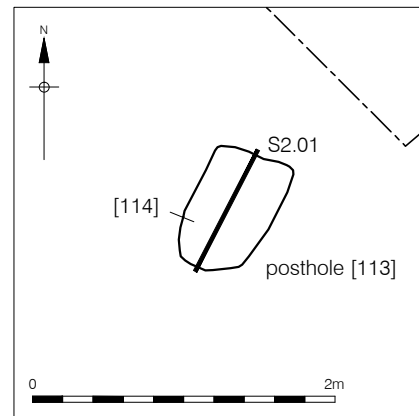
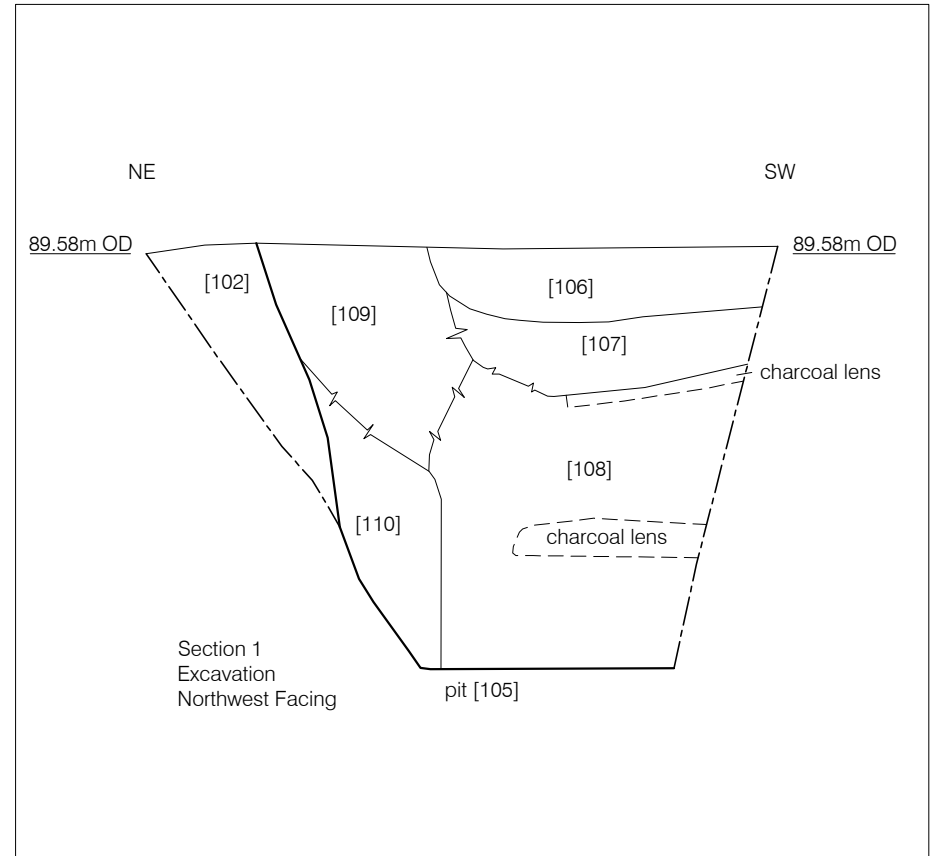
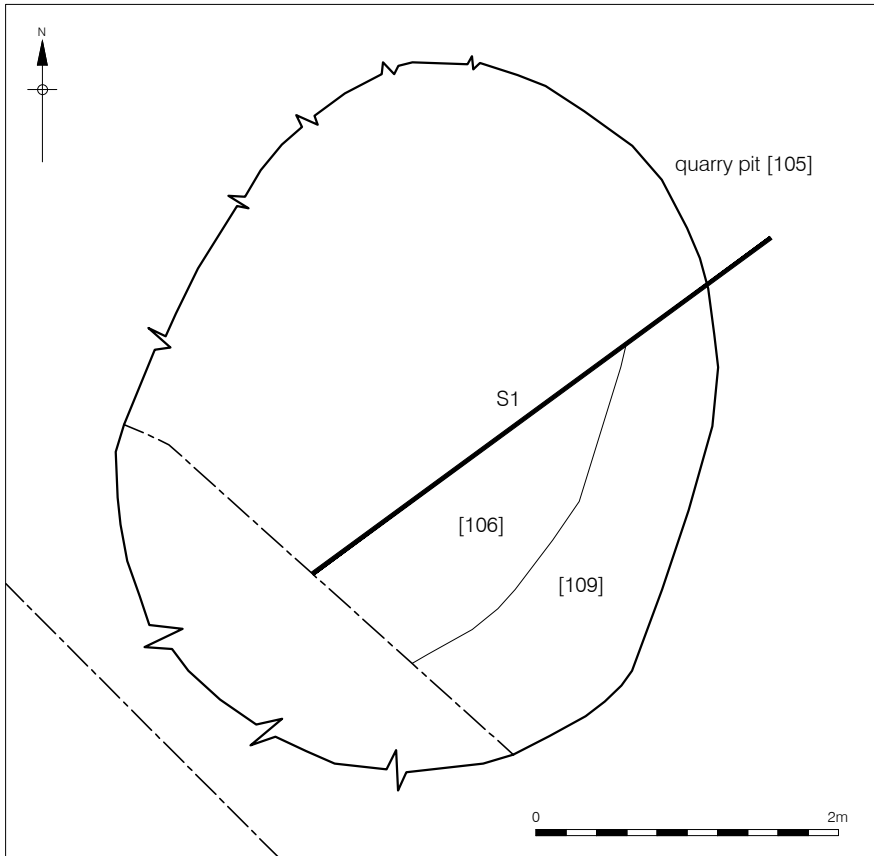
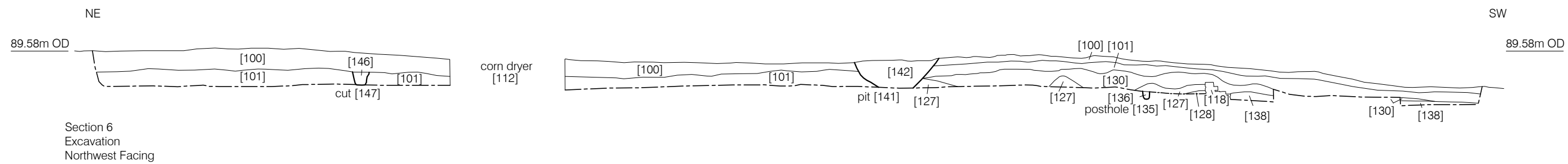


Figure 7
Pit [105] & Posthole [113]; Plan & Section
1:50 at A4



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Figure 8
Section 6
1:100 at A3

PCA

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