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The Oak Room, Tattenhall, Cheshire.
June 2014

Archaeological Evaluation Trenches
Project Code: A0010.1
Report no. 0042

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Archaeological Evaluation Trenches

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Project Code: A0010.1
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1.0 NON-TECHNICAL SUMMARY

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Blackham Reclamation to carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation of a *c.*1.02ha development area located approximately 1.2km north of the village of Tattenhall, Cheshire. The evaluation consisted of the archaeological excavation of 9 trenches, measuring on average 20.0m by 2.0m to evaluate the potential of the site to have preserved unknown buried archaeological remains

The programme of archaeological evaluation trenching at The Oak Room, Tattenhall did not discover any preserved buried archaeological remains of note. Within the nine trenches excavated a total of seven former field boundaries and one outbuilding depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps were targeted. Of these a field boundary ditch was located in both trenches 02 and 09, and the concrete footings of a modern wall were found in trench 08.

At least two of the trenches (06 and 07) are likely to have not been directly positioned over the former field boundary they were targeting, due to having to cut the trenches short for a buried sewage pipe. However, it is probable that this pipe had reused the cut of the former field boundary and would have thus removed any remains.

The absence of any remains associated with the outbuilding in trench 04 and the remaining field boundaries in trenches 02, 05 and 10 is likely due to the high level of disturbance across the site. All of the trenches had a layer of hardcore rubble which had been laid down as a hard-standing surface layer after truncation of the upper soil levels, and this is likely to have removed evidence of features within these horizons.

The finds assemblage from the evaluation reflects activity within the vicinity of the site during the post-medieval period. The pottery and glass are heavily weighted to the 19th century with only two or three sherds of pottery dating to a century or so before this date. The pottery forms recorded comprised drinking and table wares supplemented by more utilitarian vessels such as storage jars and, as such, the assemblage overall is predominantly domestic in character.

The finds assemblage from The Oak Room, Tattenhall, requires no further study. Retention of the finds is not recommended but disposal should not be carried out without due consultation of the legal owner/s of the finds.

The potential of the site to retain any archaeological remains from before the post-medieval era is considered unlikely. This is partly due to the heavy disturbance at the site but also due to the underlying glacial clay substrata, which would have meant that the area would have been waterlogged up until the excavation of land drains in the post-medieval period. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological assessment or mitigatory works are required at the site and that the archaeological condition is discharged.

2.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology was commissioned by Blackham Reclamation to carry out a programme of archaeological evaluation of a *c.*1.02ha development area located approximately 1.2km north of the village of Tattenhall, Cheshire (centred on NGR **SJ 49337 60310**). The evaluation consisted of the archaeological excavation of 9 trenches, measuring on average 20.0m by 2.0m to evaluate the potential of the site to have preserved unknown buried archaeological remains (figure 1 and 2). Ten trenches had originally been planned but trench 01 was abandoned due to the proximity of a buried electrical cable.

The application site is a relatively level, irregularly shaped piece of land fronting onto Tattenhall Road. It contains a vacant public house, known variously through its history as 'The Aldersley Arms', 'The Poacher's Pocket', and more recently as 'The Oak Room'. The original structure had been extended to the side and rear. The site included the pub car park, as well as a number of vacant commercial buildings with associated yards and areas of hard-standing. It is bounded by the road to the south, the domestic curtilage of 'Parsley Woods' to the west and open fields to the north. Some cottages and commercial development lie to the east, sandwiched between the application site and the railway.

The archaeological evaluation work was undertaken as part of a condition of full planning permission (planning app: **12/02283/FUL**). The existing permission is for the demolition of the existing buildings and the erection of a mixed development involving the erection of 31 dwellings, the refurbishment of the existing public house as a pub/restaurant including the provision of bed and breakfast rooms on the upper storeys, and the creation of a small local convenience store and outreach Post Office within the Aldersey Arms (currently known as The Oak Room), Newton-by-Tattenhall. The application also includes the construction of a new footpath to form a continuation from the existing footpath from Tattenhall village (which presently finishes outside Cedar Cottage) to the site, a distance of approximately 1.0km.

The aim of the programme of evaluation was to establish the archaeological significance of the site, to assess the impact of the development proposals on surviving monuments or remains and to help inform future decision making, design solutions and potential mitigation strategies.

There had not been any previous archaeological work or investigation at the site, and the potential to encounter buried archaeological remains was unknown.

The Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service had not prepared a mitigation brief for this phase of work, but condition 8 of the full planning permission stated:

'*No development shall take place on the site until full details of a programme of archaeological work has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved scheme. The programme shall consist of an initial stage of evaluation (trial trenching of at least 5% of the development footprint) followed by further investigation as appropriate (e.g. formal archaeological excavation, observation and recording).'*

This report conforms to the guidelines specified in the *IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994, rev. 2001 & 2008

Appreciation is given to Gary Crawford Coupe of Cornerstone Archaeology who assisted in undertaking the field work; and to Leigh Dodd of Earthworks Archaeology for providing an artefact analysis report.

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Figure 01: Location of The Oak Room, Tattenhall, Cheshire (outlined in red).
Scale 1:10,000 at A4.

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Figure 02: Location of archaeological evaluation trenches (shaded in red; trenches not excavated shaded in blue).
Scale 1:1,250 at A4.

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3.0 PROJECT AIMS

The aim of the evaluation works was to characterise the known, or potential, archaeological remains uncovered during the excavation of the archaeological evaluation trenches.

The broad aims of the archaeological evaluation trenches were:

- To determine, as far as is reasonably possible, the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of surviving archaeological remains on the site.

- To establish the nature and extent of existing disturbance and intrusion to sub-surface deposits and, where the data allows, assess the degree of archaeological survival of buried deposits of archaeological significance.

The detailed objectives of the archaeological evaluation trenches were:

- Insofar as possible within methodological constraints, to explain any temporal, spatial or functional relationships between the structures/remains identified, and any relationships between these and the archaeological and historic elements of the wider landscape.

- Where the data allows, identify the research implications of the site with reference to the regional research agenda and recent work in Cheshire.

An Archaeological Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) (appendix III) was written by Aeon Archaeology and submitted to Blackham Reclamation and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service in February 2013. This formed the basis of a method statement submitted for the work. The archaeological evaluation trenching was undertaken in accordance with this WSI.

The management of this project has followed the procedures laid out in the standard professional guidance *Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage, 1991), *Management of Research Projects in the Historic Environment Project Manager's Guide* (English Heritage 2006), and in the Institute for Archaeologists *Standard and Guidance for an archaeological watching brief* (1994 rev. 2001 and 2008). Five stages are specified:

Phase 1: project planning
Phase 2: fieldwork
Phase 3: assessment of potential for analysis and revised project design
Phase 4: analysis and report preparation
Phase 5: dissemination

The current document reports on the phase 4 analysis and states the means to be used to disseminate the results. The purpose of this phase is to carry out the analysis identified in phase 3 (the assessment of potential phase), to amalgamate the results of the specialist studies, if required, with the detailed site narrative and provide both specific and overall interpretations. The site is to be set in its landscape context so that its full character and importance can be understood. All the information is to be presented in a report that will be held by the Cheshire Historic Environment Record and the OASIS database so that it can be accessible to the public and future researchers. This phase of work also includes archiving the material and documentary records from the project.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

Before the evaluation trenching commenced an agreed programme of excavation timing, siting, duration, surface re-instatement and health and safety protection measures were agreed with the Client (Blackham Reclamation) and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service.

As there had not been any previous archaeological assessment of the site, the trial trench locations were positioned across areas where there was to be disturbance and in the approximate area of field boundaries and structures identified on the first and third edition 25" County Series Ordnance Survey maps (figures 2, 3 and 4).

4.1 Evaluation trenches

The number, size, orientation and distribution of the archaeological evaluation trenches were agreed in advance of excavation with the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service and the client. The evaluation trenching array was designed to investigate areas that may contain archaeological features. There was latitude on the location of each trench and slight repositioning to take account of buried services and other constraints was acknowledged as a distinct likelihood within the WSI.

A tracked excavator with toothless ditching bucket was used to open the trenches under constant archaeological supervision. Topsoil and overburden were removed by machine in spits down to archaeological deposits or natural sub-soils. All subsequent features were excavated by hand.
A written record of the deposits and all identified features in each test pit was completed via Aeon Archaeology pro-formas. All subsurface remains were recorded photographically, with detailed notations. The photographic record was completed using a digital SLR camera (Canon Eon 550D) set to maximum resolution.

Contingency provision was made for the following:

- Additional excavation of up to 100% of any given feature should the excavated sample prove to be insufficient to provide information on the character and date of the feature.

- Expansion of trench limits, to clarify the extent of features equivalent to an additional 20% of the core area.

The archaeological works were surveyed with respect to the nearest Ordnance Survey datum point and with reference to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The trenches and archaeological features within them were accurately located on a site plan prepared at the most appropriate and largest scale. All excavations were backfilled with the material excavated and upon departure the site was left in a safe and tidy condition.

4.2 Data Collection from Site Records

A database of the site photographs was produced to enable active long-term curation of the photographs and easy searching. The site records were checked and cross-referenced and photographs were cross-referenced to contexts. These records were used to write the site narrative and the field drawings and survey data were used to produce an outline plan of the site.

All paper field records were scanned to provide a backup digital copy. The photographs were organised and precisely cross-referenced to the digital photographic record so that the Cheshire Historic Environment Record (HER) can curate them in their active digital storage facility.

4.3 Artefact Methodology

All artefacts were to be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. Finds numbers would be attributed and they would be bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification taking place on site. After processing, all artefacts would be cleaned and examined in-house at Aeon Archaeology. If required artefacts would be sent to a relevant specialist for conservation and analysis.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds was kept under review throughout the evaluation trenching. Any changes in recovery priorities would be made under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service. There was a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

4.4 Environmental Samples Methodology

The sampling strategy and requirement for bulk soil samples was related to the perceived character, interpretational importance and chronological significance of the strata under investigation. This ensured that only significant features would be sampled. The aim of the sampling strategy was to recover carbonised macroscopic plant remains, small artefacts particularly knapping debris and evidence for metalworking.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs would be obtained from Oxford Archaeology if required.

4.5 Report and dissemination

A full archive including plans, photographs and written material resulting from the project was prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions were labelled, and cross-referenced.
Upon approval from the client copies of the report will be sent to the Cheshire HER, the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service, and the OASIS online database.

5.0 HISTORY OF THE SITE

(Reproduced from the Aeon Archaeology A0010.1 WSI 1.0)

Newton by Tattenhall is a small hamlet in the parish of Tattenhall situated north of Tattenhall and 5 miles from Tarporley. It is intersected by the Shropshire Union Canal and the Crewe and Chester railway.

By the time of the Domesday Survey (1088) the settlement of 'Tatenale' was recorded. The first part of the township's name, Newton, is derived from the old English 'niwe' and 'tun'. All of these names pre-date the Norman Conquest.

During the 15th and 16th Centuries the parish of Tattenhall was quiet and self sustained, growing its own food and weaving its own cloth. Social life was centred on the church, which was the source of official information. The only holidays celebrated were church festivals.

The building of the Chester Canal (now the Shropshire Union canal) during the 1770's affected the lives of the people in the parish. The poverty of many prior to this development was alleviated to some extent, firstly by providing work in canal construction and then, secondly, by providing an improved form of transport for cheese and other dairy products from South Cheshire to all parts of the country. With the canal development the area was no longer isolated and as a result small industries started to locate there. These developments were to result in the doubling of the population by the middle of the 19th Century.

During this time the parish sustained its prosperity, developing its economy and infrastructure, thus achieving a degree of affluence and respectability. Agricultural holdings had become larger and the first commuters journeyed to Chester and beyond via the London and North Western railway LNWR which had reached the parish by the middle of the century. The railway, like the canal before it, opened up new and more distant markets for the farming community and attracted light industries to the village and other parts of the parish. The railway line between Chester and Crewe was opened in 1840 and Newton-by Tattenhall's station became one of local importance with transport from the neighbouring village of Tattenhall sent to meet each train.

The area became an attractive place in which to both live and work, evidenced today by the number of substantial Victorian buildings both in the neighbouring villages and on the surrounding farmsteads.

It was during this period of social change that the hamlet of Newton-by-Tattenhall began to develop with the construction of the canal and railway station. Prior to their construction the area was sparsely populated and was characterised by rural cottages typified by the extant thatched cottage adjacent to the development site.

The station was constructed in 1840 on the LNWR Grand Junction Railway that linked Chester with Crewe. Prior to opening the station was known as 'Crows Nest'. It was named 'Tattenhall Road' in 1872. The station had two platforms with a substantial brick building on the Chester direction side. The Crewe to Chester line became a busy route linking Crewe and Holyhead. However Tattenhall Road was served mainly by local services. The Station name was shortened to Tattenhall in 1957 and was closed in 1966 (Design and Access Statement. 2012)

Figure 03: Location of archaeological evaluation trenches on the frist edition 25" Ordnance Survey map of c.1875 (shaded in red; trenches not excavated shaded in blue).

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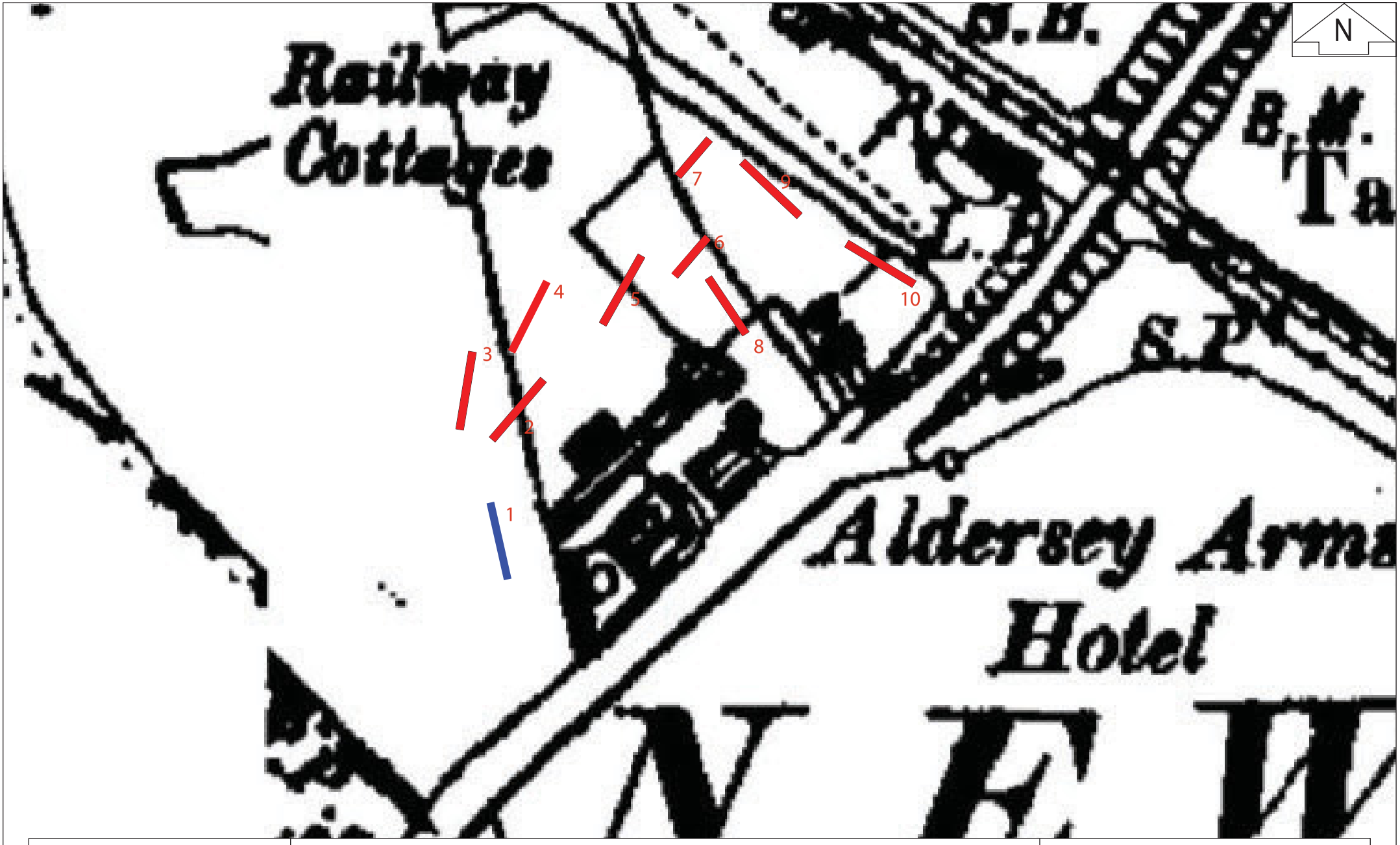

Figure 04: Location of archaeological evaluation trenches on the third edition 25" Ordnance Survey map of c.1910 (shaded in red; trenches not excavated shaded in blue).

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6.0 QUANTIFICATION OF RESULTS

6.1 The Documentary Archive

The following documentary records were created during the archaeological evaluation trenching:

Context sheets	37
Trench sheets	9
Drawings	4 on 2 sheets
Digital photographs	62

6.2 Environmental Samples

No environmental samples were taken as part of the evaluation trenching as no suitable deposits or fills were encountered.

6.3 Artefacts

Post-medieval pottery:	16
Post-medieval ceramic building material (CBM):	2
Post-medieval glass:	2
Total:	**20**

7.0 SPECIALIST ANALYSIS – ARTEFACTS

(By L. J. Dodd BSc, PGDip, MIfA)

Summary

This report summarises the pottery, ceramic building materials, and glass recovered from an archaeological evaluation undertaken at The Oak Room, Tattenhall, Cheshire. The finds were recovered from a number of trenches and stratigraphic contexts.

The pottery was quantified by sherd count, weight, and maximum number of vessels (MNV), according to ware names commonly in use by archaeological ceramic specialists across the North West and West Midlands regions.

Codes shown thus: (F1) relate to the individual finds record number contained within the site finds register.

7.1 The Post-Medieval Pottery

The watching brief produced a total of 16 sherds of post-medieval pottery with a combined weight of 880g, representing 13 individual vessels. The pottery spans the period from the mid17th century through to the late 19th century.

The pottery was in good condition overall although fragmented with most sherds representing a single vessel. The pottery is in stable condition and requires no long-term storage requirements.

Wares and Forms

Blackware
A single sherd of blackware (BLACK) weighing 12g was recovered from context (9003). The sherd (F10) was from the body of a rounded vessel, possibly a cup or jar dating, broadly, to the 18th century.

Bone China
A sherd (F2) from the base of a bone china (BONE) dish or small side plate weighing 12g was recovered from context (10003). The manufacture's name was printed in green on the underside, but too little was present to attempt to identify the maker. The vessel probably dates to the second half of the 19th century.

A second sherd (F11) of bone china, this time with blue transfer-printed decoration (BONE TR) weighing 24g was recovered from context (9003). This sherd probably dates to no earlier than the mid-19th century.

Brown Stoneware
Context (2004) produced an almost complete brown stoneware bottle (BROST), minus the neck (F16), weighing 473g. The bottle bore no manufacturers, retailers or advertising mark. The lack of an excise mark means that it is likely that the bottle did not contain a beverage but did instead contain blacking or else was produced following the abolishment of duty on stoneware bottles during August of 1934 (Askey 1998, 119).

Staffordshire-type Coarseware
A rim sherd (F9) from a Staffordshire-type coarseware (STC) bowl, weighing 36g, and coated internally with a clear brown glaze, was recovered from context (9001). This sherd was more likely to have been produced at the Buckley Potteries, Flintshire, rather than Staffordshire, and is likely to date to the mid-18th to 19th century.

Staffordshire-type Slipware (pressed)
A rim sherd (F3) from a press-moulded Staffordshire-type slipware dish (STSL P), weighing 19g, was recovered from context (10003). The fabric of the dish suggests that it was more likely to have been produced at Buckley Potteries, Flintshire, rather than Staffordshire. A date range of mid-18th century to 19th century is likely for this sherd.

Staffordshire-type Slipware (thrown)
A sherd (F13) from a wheel-thrown Staffordshire-type slipware dish (STSL T), weighing 66g, was recovered from context (7002). The profile of the dish (minus the rim flange) and the trailed cream slip decoration suggests a mid-17th to early-18th century date for this vessel; the base had been knife-trimmed. The dish could have been manufactured elsewhere other than Staffordshire (including Buckley, Flintshire).

Slip-decorated Pearlware
Two sherds (F14), weighing 25g, comprising base and body sherds (the latter with handle terminal) from a blue-banded slip-decorated pearlware mug (PEAR SL) were recovered from context (6002). The sherds are from a typical mid-19th century 'tavern' ware slip-banded mug with a foliate handle terminal.

Transfer-printed Pearlware
Three sherds from a small, blue transfer-printed pearlware side plate (PEAR TR), weighing 78g, were recovered from context (2004). Insufficient of the printed design was present on the vessel to determine the pattern but the common *Willow* pattern is highly likely, a standard pattern of which was in existence by the first decade of the 19th century and has been used ever since (Coysh & Henrywood 1982, 402).

White Stoneware
A total of four sherds, with a combined weight of 135g, of white stoneware (WHIST) were recovered. All sherds were from standard cylindrical, ribbed, clear-glazed jars of the type used to store preserves, particularly jams and marmalades. Two sherds, (F1) and (F4), were recovered from context (10003) and two (F7) and (F8) from context (9001).

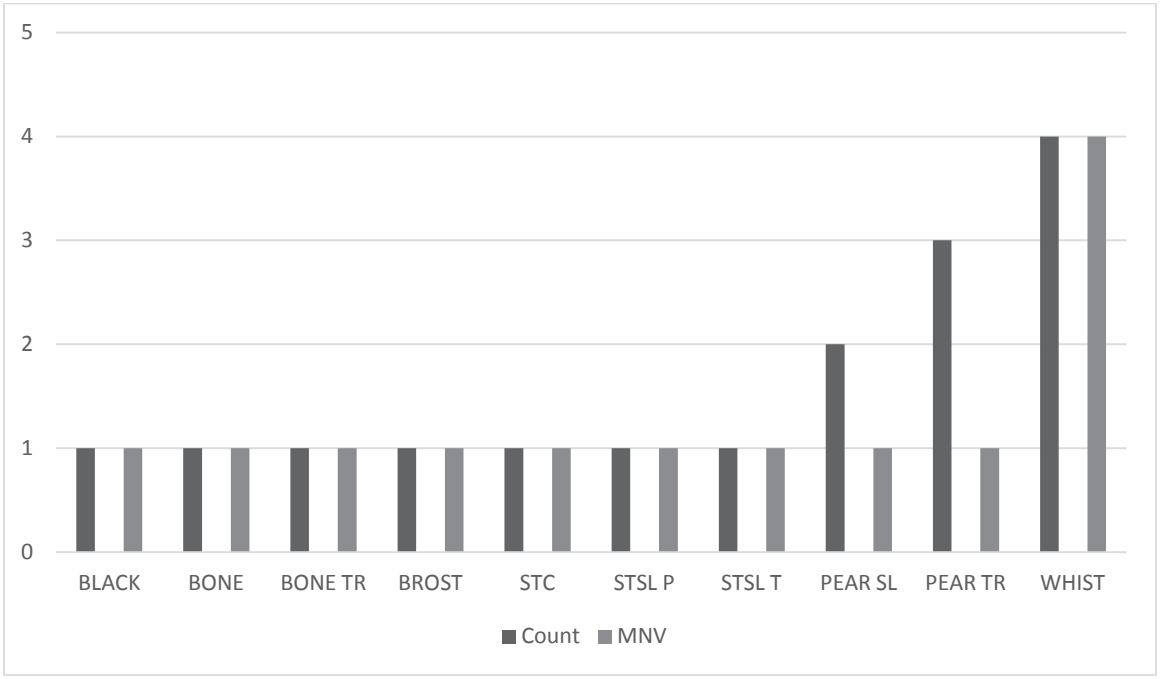


Table 1: Quantification of post-medieval pottery (MNV = Maximum Number of Vessels)

7.2 Ceramic Building Materials

Two fragments (F6) of ceramic building materials (CBM) were recovered from context (10002). These fragments comprised part of a ridge tile or pipe (256g) and a small fragment of brick (47g). Both are in red fabrics and both are of post-medieval date.

7.3 Post-Medieval Vessel Glass

A complete green glass beverage bottle (F5), embossed .JONES/ALDERSEY ARMS/TATTENHALL ROAD was recovered from context (10003). The *Aldersey Arms,* or *Aldersey Arms Hotel,* was the former name of The Oak Room public House during the 19th and 20th centuries. A small phial (F12), complete except for the neck, was recovered from context (9003). This phial was probably used as a pharmaceutical container.

8.0 RESULTS OF THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION TRENCHES

The evaluation trenches were designed to evaluate and characterise the known, or potential, archaeological remains. Each trench is described and discussed separately; details of the contexts are provided in brackets and are included in appendix I. The location of the test pits can be found on figure 2.

Trench 01

Trench 01 was not excavated due to the presence of a buried high-voltage electrical cable at this location. This utility was identified from utility maps and was pin-pointed using a cable avoidance tool. Due to the proximity of the trench 01 location to the cable and the only entrance/exit to the site it was deemed appropriate to abandon this trench on health and safety grounds.

Trench 02 (plates 1 – 3, figures 5 and 6)

Trench 02 was located in the northwest of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area, and in particular a field boundary depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps as running southwest to northeast across the development plot.

The trench measured 20.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated north to south, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.8m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (2002).

The trench was excavated through a 0.45m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (2001) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. This overlaid the natural glacial horizon which constituted a firm light brown-orange and mottled grey clay (2002). The lack of any topsoil or subsoil horizons showed that the area had been stripped prior to the deposition of the hard-standing material.

Towards the northern half of the trench a reasonably shallow ditch [2003] measuring 1.42m in width by 0.35m in depth ran across the trench from southwest to northeast and cut through the natural clay deposit (2002). This ditch had steep concaved sides, a flat base and was filled with a reasonably firm dark grey-brown silt-clay single fill (2004). This fill produced an almost complete brown stoneware bottle (F16) minus the neck. The bottle bore no manufacturers, retailers or advertising mark. The lack of an excise mark means that it is likely that the bottle did not contain a beverage but did instead contain blacking or else was produced following the abolishment of duty on stoneware bottles during August of 1934 (Askey 1998, 119).

In addition the fill produced three sherds from a small, blue transfer-printed pearlware side plate (F15). Insufficient of the printed design was present on the vessel to determine the pattern but the common Willow pattern is highly likely, a standard pattern of which was in existence by the first decade of the 19th century and has been used ever since (Coysh & Henrywood 1982, 402).

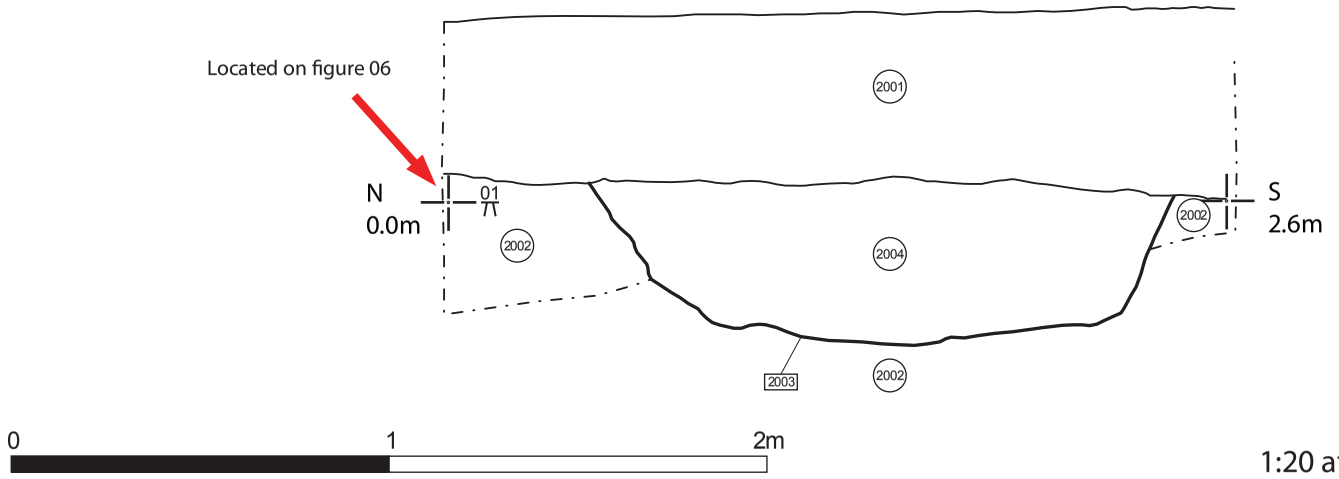
The ditch, although likely truncated by the removal of topsoil and subsoil at this part of the site, showed no evidence of silting and appeared to have been deliberately back-filled in one single event. The ditch is similarly located and orientated to the field boundary shown on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps and is almost certainly the same feature, having been filled in sometime after the production of the third edition 25" Ordnance Survey map in 1910.

Plate 01: Trench 02 from the north. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 02: West facing section of boundary ditch [2003]. Scale 0.5m.

Plate 03: Boundary ditch [2003] showing fill (2004), from the west. Scale 1.0m.

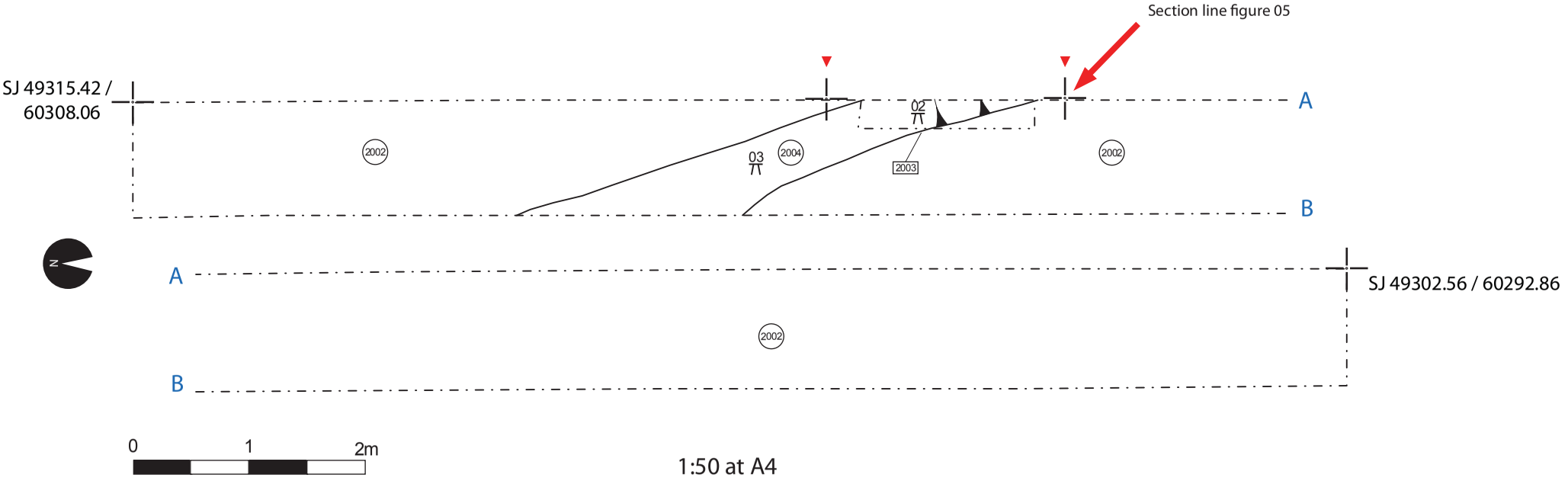
Figure 05: Section through boundary ditch [2003] in trench 02.



1:20 at A4

Spot Heights (reduced level OD)
1 = 37.44
2 = 37.15
3 = 37.06

Figure 06: Plan of boundary ditch [2003] in trench 02.



1:50 at A4

Trench 03 (plates 4 and 5)

Trench 03 was located in the northwest corner of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area.

The trench measured 17.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated north to south, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.7m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (3003). The length of the trench was reduced to 17.0m because of the proximity of a buried electrical cable at the southern end.

The trench was excavated through a 0.3m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (3001) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. This overlaid a 0.2m deep dark grey-brown silt-clay subsoil (3002) which in turn overlaid the natural glacial horizon, which constituted a firm light brown-orange and mottled grey clay (3003). The lack of any topsoil horizon showed that the area had been stripped prior to the deposition of the hard-standing material.

No archaeological features were identified within the trench limits and no artefacts of any date were recovered from the soil horizons.

Plate 04: Trench 03 from the south. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 05: West facing section of trench 03. Scale 0.5m.

Trench 04 (plates 6 and 7)

Trench 04 was located towards the northern edge of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area and in particular a rectangular outbuilding depicted on the first edition 25" Ordnance Survey map of 1875.

The trench measured 20.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated north to south, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.2m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (4004).

The trench was excavated through a 0.45 – 0.5m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (4001) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. This overlaid a 0.3m deep dark grey-black clay-silt subsoil (4002) which in turn overlaid a second subsoil layer of moderately firm light-mid brown-grey silt-clay (4003) with occasional fragments of red-brick. Beneath this deposit was the natural glacial horizon, which constituted a firm, mottled yellow, brown and grey clay (4004).

No archaeological features were identified within the trench limits and no artefacts of any date were recovered from the soil horizons.

Plate 06: Trench 04 from the south. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 07: East facing section of trench 04. Scale 1.0m.

Trench 05 (plates 8 and 9)

Trench 05 was located towards the centre of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area, and in particular a field boundary depicted on the third edition 25" Ordnance Survey map of 1910 as running southeast to northwest across the development plot.

The trench measured 20.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated northeast to southwest, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.42m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (5003).

The trench was excavated through a 0.18m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (5001) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. This overlaid a 0.15m deep mid-light grey silt-clay subsoil (5002) which in turn overlaid the natural glacial horizon, which constituted a firm light brown-orange and mottled grey clay (5003). The lack of any topsoil horizon showed that the area had been stripped prior to the deposition of the hard-standing material.

No archaeological features were identified within the trench limits and no artefacts of any date were recovered from the soil horizons.

Plate 08: Trench 05 from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 09: Southeast facing section of trench 05. Scale 0.5m.

Trench 06 (plates 10 and 11)

Trench 06 was located towards the northeast of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area, and in particular a field boundary depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps of as running southeast to northwest across the development plot.

The trench measured 14.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated northeast to southwest, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.65m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (6003). The length of the trench was reduced to 14.0m due to the close proximity of a sewage pipe to the immediate northeast.

The trench was excavated through a 0.22m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (6001) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. This overlaid a 0.1m deep dark black peaty cinder layer (6002) which appeared to represent an earlier hardcore/road layer that had been superseded by the current hardcore rubble (6001). The cinder layer produced two sherds (F14), comprising base and body sherds (the latter with handle terminal) from a blue-banded slip-decorated pearlware mug. The sherds are from a typical mid-19th century 'tavern' ware slip-banded mug with a foliate handle terminal.

The cinder layer overlaid a reasonably firm mid-light brown-grey slightly silty-clay subsoil (6004) which in turn overlaid the natural glacial horizon, which constituted a firm light orange-yellow clay (6003). The lack of any topsoil horizon showed that the area had been stripped prior to the deposition of the hard-standing material.

The field boundary depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps was not found within the trench, although it is probable that it originally lay to the northeast of the trench limit and has been reused to trench the sewage pipe within it. No archaeological features were identified within the trench limits.

Plate 10: Trench 06 from the southwest. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 11: Northwest facing section of trench 06. Scale 0.5m.

Trench 07 (plates 12 and 13)

Trench 07 was located towards the northeast of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area, and in particular a field boundary depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps of as running southeast to northwest across the development plot.

The trench measured 13.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated northeast to southwest, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.7m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (7003). The length of the trench was reduced to 13.0m due to the close proximity of a sewage pipe to the immediate southwest.

The trench was excavated through a 0.2m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (7001) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. This overlaid a 0.4m deep firm mid-brown silt-clay subsoil (7002) which produced a sherd (F13) from a wheel-thrown Staffordshire-type slipware dish. The profile of the dish (minus the rim flange) and the trailed cream slip decoration suggests a mid-17th to early-18th century date for this vessel; the base had been knife-trimmed. The dish could have been manufactured elsewhere other than Staffordshire (including Buckley, Flintshire).

The subsoil layer overlaid the natural glacial horizon, which constituted a firm light orange-yellow clay (7003). The lack of any topsoil horizon showed that the area had been stripped prior to the deposition of the hard-standing material.

The field boundary depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps was not found within the trench, although it is probable that it originally lay to the southwest of the trench limit and has been reused to trench the sewage pipe within it. No archaeological features were identified within the trench limits.

Plate 12: Trench 07 from the northeast. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 13: Southeast facing section of trench 07. Scale 0.5m.

Trench 08 (plates 14, 15 and 16)

Trench 08 was located towards the east of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area, and in particular a field boundary depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps of as running southwest to northeast across the development plot.

The trench measured 11.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated northwest to southeast, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.75m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (8003). The length of the trench was reduced to 11.0m due to the close proximity of drainage pipe to the immediate southeast.

The trench was excavated through a 0.34m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (8001) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. This overlaid a 0.29m deep firm dark-brown/grey silt-clay subsoil (8002). The subsoil layer overlaid the natural glacial horizon, which constituted a firm light orange-yellow clay (8003). The lack of any topsoil horizon showed that the area had been stripped prior to the deposition of the hard-standing material.

Towards the southeast end of the trench the concrete footings for a wall (8004) were found running from east to west across the trench. These footings were clearly modern in date but were situated at the location of the field boundary shown on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps. It appears likely therefore that the field boundary had been reinforced by the construction of a wall with concrete footings prior to it going out of use. No further archaeological features were found and no artefacts were recovered from any of the soil horizons.

Plate 14: Trench 08 from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 15: Southwest facing section of trench 08. Scale 0.5m.

Plate 16: Concrete foundations of wall (8004), from the southeast. Scale 1.0m.

Trench 09 (plates 17 – 19, figures 7 and 8)

Trench 09 was located at the northeast end of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area, and in particular a field boundary depicted on the first edition 25" Ordnance Survey map as running southwest to northeast across the development plot.

The trench measured 20.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated northwest to southeast, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 0.66m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (9004).

The trench was excavated through a 0.26m deep very dark brown-black silt-clay topsoil layer (9001) which overlaid a 0.1m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (9002) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. The topsoil layer produced two sherds of white stoneware (F7 and F8) from standard cylindrical, ribbed, clear-glazed jars of the type used to store preserves, particularly jams and marmalades; and a rim sherd (F9) from a Staffordshire-type coarseware bowl, coated internally with a clear brown glaze and more likely to have been produced at the Buckley Potteries, Flintshire, rather than Staffordshire, and is likely to date to the mid-18th to 19th century.

Beneath the hardcore deposit was a 0.27m deep mid-dark brown-grey silt-clay subsoil (9003) which produced a single sherd of blackware (F10) from the body of a rounded vessel, possibly a cup or jar dating, broadly, to the 18th century; a sherd (F11) of bone china, with blue transfer-printed decoration and no earlier than the mid-19th century; and a small phial (F12), complete except for the neck and probably used as a pharmaceutical container. This overlaid the natural glacial horizon which constituted a firm light brown-orange and mottled grey clay (9004).

Towards the southwest half of the trench a ditch [9005] measuring 1.9m in width by 0.38m in depth ran across the trench from southwest to northeast cutting into the natural clay (9004). This ditch had steep concaved sides, a slightly concaved base and was primarily filled by a fairly firm light brown-grey clay (9006) overlaid by a fairly firm light grey-orange-brown clay (9007) neither of which produced any artefacts.

To the immediate northeast a modern rubbish pit had been excavated through the ditch and its fills, truncating its north-eastern limit. Furthermore, at least three modern ceramic field drains had been trenched into the ditch fills. The secondary fill of the ditch (9007) was overlain by the subsoil layer (9003).

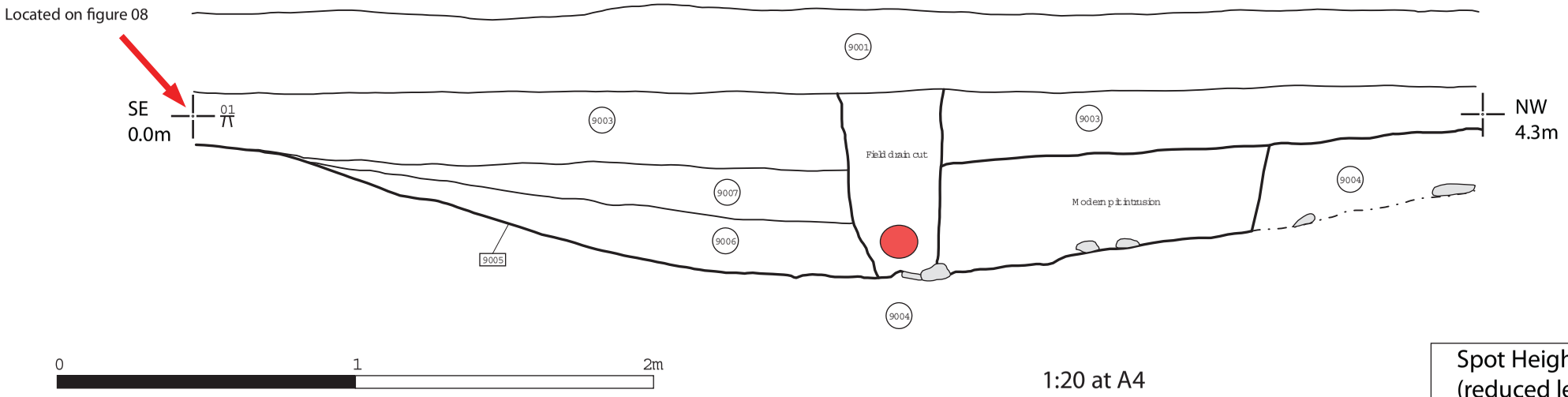
The ditch [9005] almost certainly represents the field boundary depicted on the first edition 25" Ordnance Survey map. The presence of two fills within the ditch suggests that it was allowed to silt-up over time rather than having been backfilled in one single event. However, the secondary fill appears to have not fully filled the ditch and it is likely that it was visible as a shallow depression when it was utilised to trench at least three modern ceramic land drains along its course. Further truncation of the ditch and fills occurred when a modern rectangular rubbish pit was excavated through its northeast edge to deposit building material.

Plate 17: Trench 09 from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.

Plate 18: Northeast facing section of ditch [9005]. Scale 0.5m.

Plate 19: Ditch [9005] showing fill (9007). Scale 1.0m.

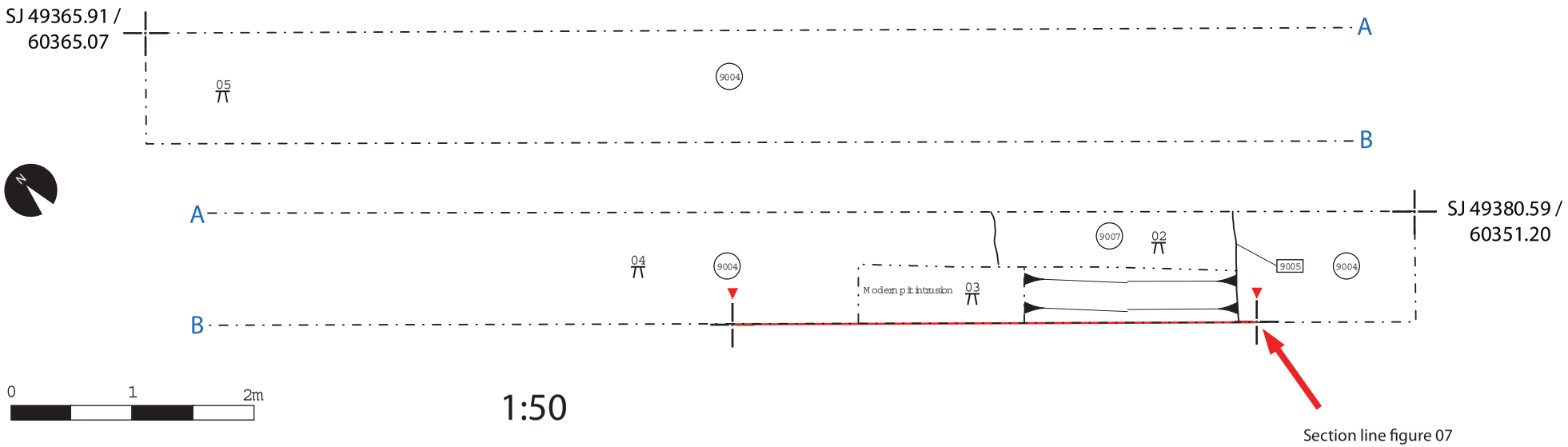
Figure 07: Section through boundary ditch [9005] in trench 09.



1:20 at A4

Spot Heights (reduced level OD)
1 = 35.54
2 = 35.09
3 = 34.75
4 = 35.40
5 = 35.34

Figure 08: Plan of boundary ditch [9005] in trench 09.



1:50

Trench 10 (plates 20 and 21)

Trench 10 was located at the northeast end of the proposed development site. The purpose of the trench location was to determine whether there was potential for the preservation of archaeological remains in this area, and in particular a field boundary depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps as running southwest to northeast across the development plot.

The trench measured 20.0m in length by 2.0m in width orientated northwest to southeast, and was excavated to a maximum depth of 1.15m. The depth of the trench was determined by reaching the natural glacial substrata horizon (10005).

The trench was excavated through a 0.1m deep very dark brown-black silt-clay topsoil layer (10001) which overlaid a 0.4m deep firm light grey-white hardcore rubble layer (10002) which had been laid down as a hardcore standing for the reclamation yard. This layer produced two fragments (F6) of ceramic building materials, part of a ridge tile or pipe and a small fragment of brick.

Beneath these layers was a 0.4m deep loose dark-grey sand-silt subsoil (10003) which produced a sherd (F2) from the base of a bone china dish or small side plate and dating to the second half of the 19th century; a rim sherd (F3) from a press-moulded Staffordshire-type slipware dish of mid-18th century to 19th century; and two sherds of white stoneware (F1 and F2).

The subsoil layer overlaid a 0.25m deep mid-dark grey clay-silt alluvial deposit (10004) which in turn overlaid the natural glacial horizon which constituted a firm light brown-orange and mottled grey clay (10005).

No archaeological features were identified within the trench limits.

Plate 20: Trench 10 from the northwest. Scale 1.0m.

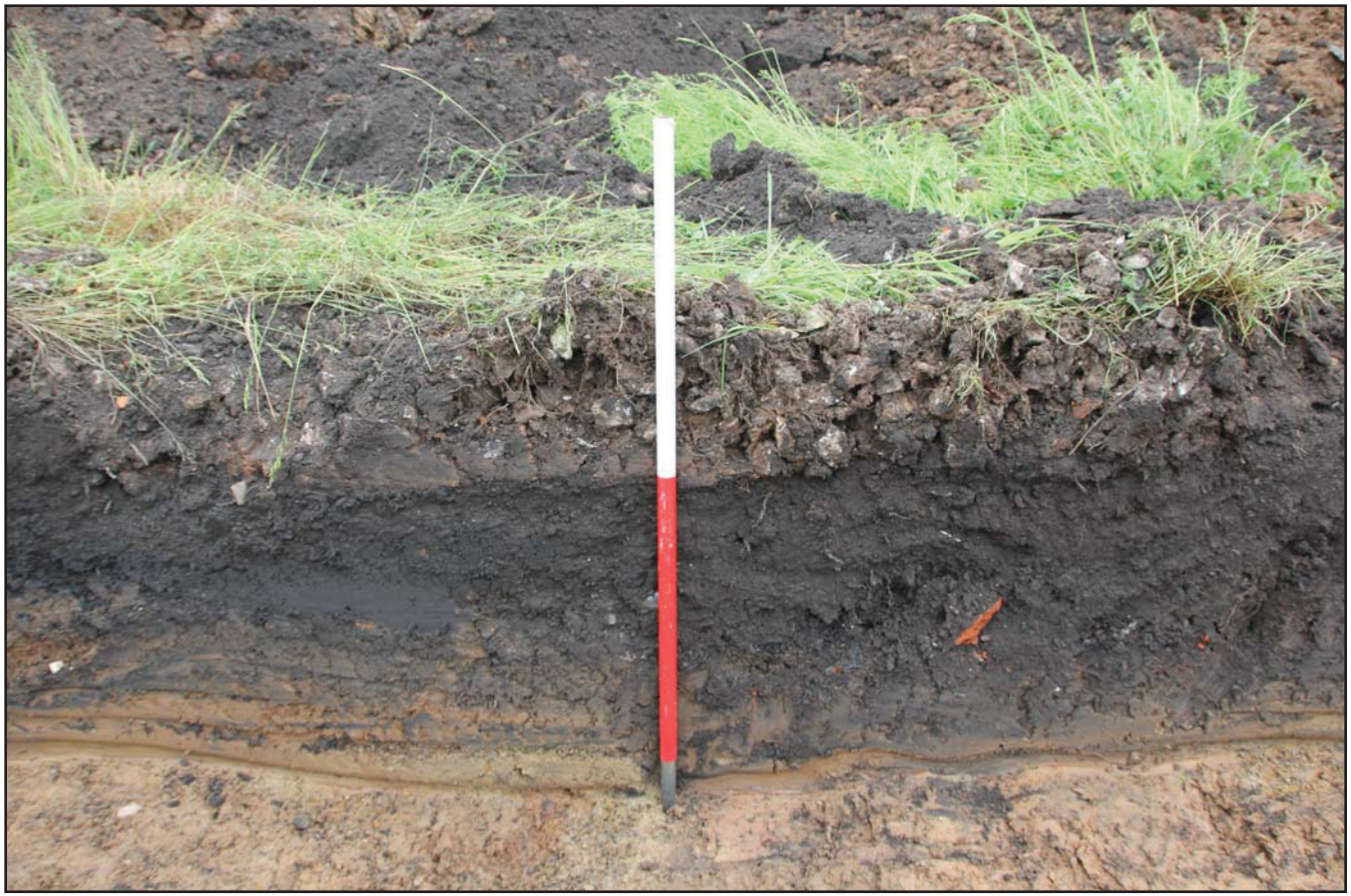


Plate 21: Northeast facing section of trench 10. Scale 1.0m.

9.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The programme of archaeological evaluation trenching at The Oak Room, Tattenhall did not discover any preserved buried archaeological remains of note. Within the nine trenches excavated a total of seven former field boundaries and one outbuilding depicted on the first and third edition 25" Ordnance Survey maps were targeted. Of these a field boundary ditch was located in both trenches 02 and 09, and the concrete footings of a modern wall were found in trench 08.

At least two of the trenches (06 and 07) are likely to have not been directly positioned over the former field boundary they were targeting, due to having to cut the trenches short for a buried sewage pipe. However, it is probable that this pipe had reused the cut of the former field boundary and would have thus removed any remains.

The absence of any remains associated with the outbuilding in trench 04 and the remaining field boundaries in trenches 02, 05 and 10 is likely due to the high level of disturbance across the site. All of the trenches had a layer of hardcore rubble which had been laid down as a hard-standing surface layer after truncation of the upper soil levels, and this is likely to have removed evidence of features within these horizons.

The finds assemblage from the evaluation reflects activity within the vicinity of the site during the post-medieval period. The pottery and glass are heavily weighted to the 19th century with only two or three sherds of pottery dating to a century or so before this date. The pottery forms recorded comprised drinking and table wares supplemented by more utilitarian vessels such as storage jars and, as such, the assemblage overall is predominantly domestic in character.

The finds assemblage from The Oak Room, Tattenhall, requires no further study. Retention of the finds is not recommended but disposal should not be carried out without due consultation of the legal owner/s of the finds.

The potential of the site to retain any archaeological remains from before the post-medieval era is considered unlikely. This is partly due to the heavy disturbance at the site but also due to the underlying glacial clay substrata, which would have meant that the area would have been waterlogged up until the excavation of land drains in the post-medieval period. It is therefore recommended that no further archaeological assessment or mitigatory works are required at the site and that the archaeological condition is discharged.

10.0 SOURCES

OS Maps

OS 1:10 000 Series sheet SH 46 NE, SH 46 SE, SH 46 SW, and SH 46 NW

Promap: Modern OS map data – 12 month licence

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APPENDIX I – DETAILS OF RECORDED CONTEXTS

Context Number	Form	Description
2001	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
2002	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.
2003	Ditch cut	Linear, steep concaved sides, flat base.
2004	Fill of ditch [2003]	Reasonably firm, dark grey-brown silt-clay.
3001	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
3002	Subsoil	Dark grey-brown silt-clay.
3003	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.
4001	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
4002	Subsoil	Dark grey-black clay-silt.
4003	Subsoil	Moderately firm, light-mid brown-grey silt-clay.
4004	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.
5001	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
5002	Subsoil	Mid/light grey silt-clay.
5003	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.
6001	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
6002	Former hard-standing	Dark black, peaty cinder layer.
6003	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.
6004	Subsoil	Reasonably firm, mid-light brown-grey silt-clay.
7001	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
7002	Subsoil	Firm, mid-brown silt-clay.
7003	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.
8001	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
8002	Subsoil	Dark brown-grey silt-clay.
8003	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.
8004	Concrete wall base	Concrete wall base
9001	Topsoil	Very dark brown-black silt-clay.
9002	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
9003	Subsoil	Mid-dark brown-grey silt-clay.
9004	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.

9005	Ditch cut	Linear, concaved sides, slightly concaved base.
9006	Primary fill of ditch [9005]	Fairly firm, light brown-grey clay.
9007	Secondary fill of ditch [9005]	Fairly firm, light grey-orange-brown clay.
10001	Topsoil	Very dark brown-black silt-clay.
10002	Hard-standing	Firm, light grey-white hardcore layer.
10003	Subsoil	Loose, dark-grey sand-silt.
10004	Alluvial	Mid dark-grey clay-silt.
10005	Natural substrata	Firm, light brown-orange and mottled grey clay.

APPENDIX II – GAZETTEER OF ARTEFACTS

Finds no.	Context	Description
1	10003	A total of four sherds, with a combined weight of 135g, of white stoneware (WHIST) were recovered. All sherds were from standard cylindrical, ribbed, clear-glazed jars of the type used to store preserves, particularly jams and marmalades. Two sherds, (F1) and (F4), were recovered from context (10003) and two (F7) and (F8) from context (9001).
2	10003	A sherd (F2) from the base of a bone china (BONE) dish or small side plate weighing 12g was recovered from context (10003). The manufacture's name was printed in green on the underside, but too little was present to attempt to identify the maker. The vessel probably dates to the second half of the 19th century.
3	10003	A rim sherd (F3) from a press-moulded Staffordshire-type slipware dish (STSL P), weighing 19g, was recovered from context (10003). The fabric of the dish suggests that it was more likely to have been produced at Buckley Potteries, Flintshire, rather than Staffordshire. A date range of mid-18th century to 19^{t}h century is likely for this sherd.
4	10003	A total of four sherds, with a combined weight of 135g, of white stoneware (WHIST) were recovered. All sherds were from standard cylindrical, ribbed, clear-glazed jars of the type used to store preserves, particularly jams and marmalades. Two sherds, (F1) and (F4), were recovered from context (10003) and two (F7) and (F8) from context (9001).
5	10003	A complete green glass beverage bottle (F5), embossed .JONES/ALDERSEY ARMS/TATTENHALL ROAD was recovered from context (10003). The *Aldersey Arms,* or *Aldersey Arms Hotel,* was the former name of The Oak Room public House during the 19th and 20th centuries.
6	10002	Two fragments (F6) of ceramic building materials (CBM) were recovered from context (10002). These fragments comprised part of a ridge tile or pipe (256g) and a small fragment of brick (47g). Both are in red fabrics and both are of post-medieval date.
7	9001	A total of four sherds, with a combined weight of 135g, of white stoneware (WHIST) were recovered. All sherds were from standard cylindrical, ribbed, clear-glazed jars of the type used to store preserves, particularly jams and marmalades. Two sherds, (F1) and (F4), were recovered from context (10003) and two (F7) and (F8) from context (9001).
8	9001	A total of four sherds, with a combined weight of 135g, of white stoneware (WHIST) were recovered. All sherds were from standard cylindrical, ribbed, clear-glazed jars of the type used to store preserves, particularly jams and marmalades. Two sherds, (F1) and (F4), were recovered from context (10003) and two (F7) and (F8) from context (9001).
9	9001	A rim sherd (F9) from a Staffordshire-type coarseware (STC) bowl, weighing 36g, and coated internally with a clear brown glaze, was recovered from context (9001). This sherd was more likely to have been produced at the Buckley Potteries, Flintshire, rather than Staffordshire, and is likely to

		date to the mid-18th to 19th century.
10	9003	A single sherd of blackware (BLACK) weighing 12g was recovered from context (9003). The sherd (F10) was from the body of a rounded vessel, possibly a cup or jar dating, broadly, to the 18th century.
11	9003	A second sherd (F11) of bone china, this time with blue transfer-printed decoration (BONE TR) weighing 24g was recovered from context (9003). This sherd probably dates to no earlier than the mid-19th century.
12	9003	A small phial (F12), complete except for the neck, was recovered from context (9003). This phial was probably used as a pharmaceutical container.
13	7002	A sherd (F13) from a wheel-thrown Staffordshire-type slipware dish (STSL T), weighing 66g, was recovered from context (7002). The profile of the dish (minus the rim flange) and the trailed cream slip decoration suggests a mid-17th to early-18th century date for this vessel; the base had been knife-trimmed. The dish could have been manufactured elsewhere other than Staffordshire (including Buckley, Flintshire).
14	6002	Two sherds (F14), weighing 25g, comprising base and body sherds (the latter with handle terminal) from a blue-banded slip-decorated pearlware mug (PEAR SL) were recovered from context (6002). The sherds are from a typical mid-19th century 'tavern' ware slip-banded mug with a foliate handle terminal.
15	2004	Three sherds from a small, blue transfer-printed pearlware side plate (PEAR TR), weighing 78g, were recovered from context (2004). Insufficient of the printed design was present on the vessel to determine the pattern but the common *Willow* pattern is highly likely, a standard pattern of which was in existence by the first decade of the 19th century and has been used ever since (Coysh & Henrywood 1982, 402).
16	2004	Context (2004) produced an almost complete brown stoneware bottle (BROST), minus the neck (F16), weighing 473g. The bottle bore no manufacturers, retailers or advertising mark. The lack of an excise mark means that it is likely that the bottle did not contain a beverage but did instead contain blacking or else was produced following the abolishment of duty on stoneware bottles during August of 1934 (Askey 1998, 119).

APPENDIX III – WRITTEN SCHEME OF INVESTIGATION

THE OAK ROOM, TATTENHALL, CHESHIRE

PROJECT DESIGN FOR
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION (T0015):

Trial Trenching

Prepared for

Blackham Reclamation

February 2013

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Aeon Archaeology has been asked by Blackham Reclamation to provide a cost and project design for carrying out a programme of archaeological evaluation of a *c.*1.02ha development area located approximately 1.2km north of the village of Tattenhall, Cheshire (centred on NGR **SJ 49337 60310**). The evaluation will consist of the archaeological excavation of 10 trenches, measuring 20m by 2m on to the natural substrata to evaluate all potential features within the trenches. The topsoil and any overburden will be removed by mechanical excavator, and any archaeological features encountered will be sample excavated by hand in order to determine their character and date. The location of the trenches is shown on Figure 1.

The application site is a relatively level, irregularly shaped piece of land fronting onto Tattenhall Road. It contains a vacant public house, known variously through its history as 'The Aldersley Arms', 'The Poacher's Pocket', and more recently as 'The Oak Room'. The original structure has been extended to the side and rear. The site includes the pub car park, as well as a number of vacant commercial buildings with associated yards and areas of hard-standing. It is bounded by the road to the south, the domestic curtilege of 'Parsley Woods' to the west and open fields to the north. Some cottages and commercial development lie to the east, sandwiched between the application site and the railway.

The archaeological evaluation work is part of a condition imposed by the planning office (planning app: **12/02283/FUL**). The application is for the demolition of existing buildings and the erection of a mixed development involving the erection of 31 dwellings, the refurbishment of the existing public house as a pub/restaurant including the provision of bed and breakfast rooms on the upper storeys, and the creation of a small local convenience store and Outreach Post Office within the Aldersey Arms (currently known as The Oak Room), Newton-by-Tattenhall. The application also includes the construction of a new footpath to form a continuation from the existing footpath from Tattenhall village (which presently finishes outside Cedar Cottage) to the site, a distance of approximately 1km.

The aim of this programme of evaluation is to establish the archaeological significance of the site, to assess the impact of the development proposals on surviving monuments or remains and to help inform future decision making, design solutions and potential mitigation strategies. The subsequent report will include an assessment of the potential for further investigative work if required, and where relevant give recommendations for an appropriate mitigation strategy.

There has not been any previous archaeological work or investigation at the site, and the potential to encounter buried archaeological remains is currently unknown.

The Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service have not prepared a mitigation brief for this phase of works, but condition 8 imposed on the planning application states:

'*No development shall take place on the site until full details of a programme of archaeological work has been submitted to and agreed in writing by the Local Planning Authority. The work shall be carried out strictly in accordance with the approved scheme. The programme shall consist of an initial stage of evaluation (trial trenching of at least 5% of the development footprint) followed by further investigation as appropriate (e.g. formal archaeological excavation, observation and recording).'*

The current design conforms to the guidelines specified in the *IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation* (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994, rev. 2001 & 2008).

2.0 BACKGROUND

Newton by Tattenhall is a small hamlet in the parish of Tattenhall situated north of Tattenhall and 5 miles from Tarporley. It is intersected by the Shropshire Union Canal and the Crewe and Chester railway.

By the time of the Domesday Survey (1088) the settlement of 'Tatenale' was recorded. The first part of the township's name, Newton, is derived from the old English 'niwe' and 'tun'. All of these names pre-date the Norman Conquest.

During the 15th and 16th Centuries the parish of Tattenhall was quiet and self sustained, growing its own food and weaving its own cloth. Social life was centred on the church, which was the source of official information. The only holidays celebrated were church festivals.

The building of the Chester Canal (now the Shropshire Union canal) during the 1770's affected the lives of the people in the parish. The poverty of many prior to this development was alleviated to some extent, firstly by providing work in canal construction and then, secondly, by providing an improved form of transport for cheese and other dairy products from South Cheshire to all parts of the country. With the canal development the area was no longer isolated and as a result small industries started to locate there. These developments were to result in the doubling of the population by the middle of the 19th Century.
During this time the parish sustained its prosperity, developing its economy and infrastructure, thus achieving a degree of affluence and respectability. Agricultural holdings had become larger and the first commuters journeyed to Chester and beyond via the London and North Western railway LNWR which had reached the parish by the middle of the century. The railway, like the canal before it, opened up new and more distant markets for the farming community and attracted light industries to the village and other parts of the parish. The railway line between Chester and Crewe was opened in 1840 and Newton-by Tattenhall's station became one of local importance with transport from the neighbouring village of Tattenhall sent to meet each train.

The area became an attractive place in which to both live and work, evidenced today by the number of substantial Victorian buildings both in the neighbouring villages and on the surrounding farmsteads.

It was during this period of social change that the hamlet of Newton-by-Tattenhall began to develop with the construction of the canal and railway station. Prior to their construction the area was sparsely populated and was characterised by rural cottages typified by the extant thatched cottage adjacent to the development site.

The station was constructed in 1840 on the LNWR Grand Junction Railway that linked Chester with Crewe. Prior to opening the station was known as 'Crows Nest'. It was named 'Tattenhall Road' in 1872. The station had two platforms with a substantial brick building on the Chester direction side. The Crewe to Chester line became a busy route linking Crewe and Holyhead. However Tattenhall Road was served mainly by local services. The Station name was shortened to Tattenhall in 1957 and was closed in 1966 (Design and Access Statement. 2012)

3.0 METHOD STATEMENT

3.1 Trial Trenching

Before trial trenching commences an agreed programme of excavation timing, siting, duration, surface re-instatement and health and safety protection measures will be agreed

with the Client (Blackham Reclamation) and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service

As there has not been any previous archaeological assessment of the site, the trial trench locations are positioned across areas where there is to be disturbance and in the approximate area of field boundaries and structures identified on the first and second edition Ordnance Survey maps.

3.1.1 Specific Methodology

If significant archaeological deposits are identified they will be manually cleaned, excavated and recorded to determine extent, function, date and relationship to adjacent features.

The site will be planned to scale and trenches located via digital survey.

A written record of the trench content and all identified features will be completed via Aeon Archaeology pro-formas.

Any subsurface remains will be recorded photographically, with detailed notations, measured drawings, and a measured survey. The photographic record will be maintained, using a digital SLR camera set to maximum resolution. Photographic identification boards will also be used.

All trenches will be opened with a JCB excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket.

Trenches and spoil heaps will be routinely investigated through the use of a metal detector and any finds/artefacts collected and processed as outlined in section 7.0.

The Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service have stated that they would want to monitor and inspect each trench in a cleaned up condition, and as such trenches will be required to be left open for several days. To prevent any potential health and safety risk to the public and staff the trenches will require cordoning with orange mesh fencing secured with road pins. The cost of these materials are provided in the cost estimate.

Aeon Archaeology will not be held responsible for delays and subsequent costs incurred through the onset of adverse weather. If such conditions occur additional costs may be incurred.

3.1.2 Evaluation Aims

The evaluation will aim to address the following:

- Establish the extent to which archaeological remains survive at the site.
- Establish the date and nature of archaeological remains at the site and assess their implications for understanding the historical development of the area.
- Establish the depth of archaeological remains and the quality, value and level of preservation of any deposits.
- Assess the level of risk any surviving remains may pose to development.

NB. No specific reinstatement instructions have been supplied by client.

NB. If significant archaeological activity is identified within any trench (e.g. extensive and/or complex features/artefacts/deposits), cf. para. 4.0.

3.2 Report

Following completion of the stages outlined above, a report will be produced that will include:

Introduction
Project Design
Methods and techniques
Archaeological Background
Results
Proposals for further mitigation
Summary and conclusions
List of sources consulted.

The report will include the following:

a) a copy of the agreed specification
b) a site location plan based on current OS mapping
c) a trench location plan indicating trench positions relative to the development site and fixed manmade or topographic features
d) all identified features plotted on an appropriately scaled plan of the development site
e) appropriately scaled trench plans and sections showing identified features and significant finds
f) full dimensional and descriptive detail of all identified features

Provision will also be made for all archaeological work on site, including the post-excavation analysis, conservation of artefacts, any supplementary scientific analysis and for the subsequent publication of results in an appropriate journal.

The project will be monitored by the Curatorial Archaeologist at The Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service.

3.3 Post-excavation Assessment

An assessment of the potential of the results of the excavation for further analysis, in accordance with the recommendations in English Heritage's Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP 2) will be required to be produced upon conclusion of the archaeological fieldwork except for where the site has been found to be sterile. The post-excavation assessment will be completed within six months of completion of work on site and may include examination and quantification leading to the identification of function, form, date, method of manufacture, material/fabric type, source, parallels, attributes and condition of artefacts; of the exploitation of wild or domesticated resources; the reconstruction of environments; and the nature of human populations.

The requirement for post-excavation assessment will be agreed with the Curatorial Archaeologist upon the conclusion of the fieldwork project and preliminary report.

3.4 Post-excavation Analysis

Following assessment, full analysis of the results of the project, including: dating and interpretation of excavated features; pottery and other finds analysis; analysis of industrial residues by an appropriate specialist or specialists; analysis of samples for environmental

data (including pollen, plant macrofossils and beetles) by an appropriate specialist or specialists; radiocarbon dating; discussion of the results in their local, regional and national context, including relating the excavated features and palaeoenvironmental data to evidence from nearby sites, and discussion of the results in their local, regional and national context may be required.

The cost quoted does not include examination of, conservation of or archiving of finds discovered during the archaeological programme, nor of any radiocarbon dates required, nor of examination of palaeoenvironmental samples. Contingency costs are provided for these at the end of the project brief.

3.3 Archive

A full archive including plans, photographs, written material and any other material resulting from the project will be prepared. All plans, photographs and descriptions will be labelled and cross-referenced, and lodged in an appropriate place (to be decided in consultation with the regional Historic Environment Record) within six months of the completion of the project.

4.0 FURTHER ARCHAEOLOGICAL WORKS

The identification of significant archaeological features during the evaluation stage may necessitate further archaeological works. This will require the submission of new cost estimates to the contractor and may be subject to a separate project design, to be agreed by the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service prior to implementation.

This design does not include a methodology or cost for examination of, conservation of, or archiving of finds discovered during the evaluation, nor of any radiocarbon dates required, nor of examination of palaeoenvironmental samples associated with any peat deposits. The need for these will be identified in the post-fieldwork programme (if required), and a new design will be issued for approval by the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service Archaeologist.

5.0 ENVIRONMENTAL SAMPLES

If necessary, relevant archaeological deposits will be sampled by taking bulk samples (a minimum of 10.0 litres and maximum of 30.0 litres) for flotation of charred plant remains. Bulk samples will be taken from waterlogged deposits for macroscopic plant remains. Other bulk samples, for example from middens, may be taken for small animal bones and small artefacts.

Bulk environmental samples will also be taken from any fills, deposits or structures which yield archaeological artefacts, charcoal flecks/ fragments, bone, or any other historic remains.

Advice and guidance regarding environmental samples and their suitability for radiocarbon dating, as well as the analysis of macrofossils (charcoal and wood), pollen, animal bones and molluscs will be obtained from Oxford Archaeology.

6.0 HUMAN REMAINS

Any finds of human remains will be left *in-situ*, covered and protected, and both the coroner and the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service Archaeologist informed. If removal is necessary it will take place under appropriate regulations and with due regard for

health and safety issues. In order to excavate human remains, a licence is required under Section *25* of the Burials Act 1857 for the removal of any body or remains of any body from any place of burial. This will be applied for should human remains need to be investigated or moved.

7.0 SMALL FINDS

The vast majority of finds recovered from archaeological excavations comprise pottery fragments, bone, environmental and charcoal samples, and non-valuable metal items such as nails. Often many of these finds become unstable (i.e. they begin to disintegrate) when removed from the ground. All finds are the property of the landowner; however, it is recommended that all finds are donated to an appropriate museum where they can receive specialist treatment and study. Access to finds must be granted to Aeon Archaeology for a reasonable period to allow for analysis and for study and publication as necessary. All finds would be treated according to advice provided within *First Aid for Finds* (Rescue 1999). Aeon Archaeology staff will undertake initial identification, but any additional advice would be sought from a wide range of consultants.

The recovery policy for archaeological finds will be kept under review throughout the fieldwork phase. Any changes in recovery priorities will be under guidance from an appropriate specialist and agreed with the Cheshire Archaeology Planning and Advisory Service Archaeologist. There will be a presumption against the disposal of archaeological finds regardless of their apparent age or condition.

All finds will be collected and processed including those found within spoil tips. Their location and height will be plotted; finds numbers attributed, bagged and labelled as well any preliminary identification taking place on site. Where specialist advice is required provision will be made to do so at the earliest possible convenience.

After processing, artefacts which are suitable will be cleaned and conserved in-house. Artefacts requiring specialist cleaning and conservation will be sent to the relevant specialist. All finds will then be sent to a specialist for analysis, the results of which will then be assessed to ascertain the potential of the finds assemblage to meet the research aims of the project. The value of the finds will also be assessed in terms of the wider educational and academic contributions.

7.1 Unexpected Discoveries: Treasure Trove

Treasure Trove law has been amended by the Treasure Act 1996. The following are Treasure under the Act:

- *Objects other than coins* any object other than a coin provided that it contains at least 10% gold or silver and is at least 300 years old when found.

- *Coins* all coins from the same find provided they are at least 300 years old when found (if the coins contain less than 10% gold or silver there must be at least 10. Any object or coin is part of the same find as another object or coin, if it is found in the same place as, or had previously been left together with, the other object. Finds may have become scattered since they were originally deposited in the ground. Single coin finds of gold or silver are not classed as treasure under the 1996 Treasure Act.

- *Associated objects* any object whatever it is made of, that is found in the same place as, or that had previously been together with, another object that is treasure.

- *Objects that would have been treasure trove* any object that would previously have been treasure trove, but does not fall within the specific categories given above. These objects have to be made substantially of gold or silver, they have to be buried with the intention of recovery and their owner or his heirs cannot be traced.

The following types of finds are not treasure:

- Objects whose owners can be traced.

- Unworked natural objects, including human and animal remains, even if they are found in association with treasure.

- Objects from the foreshore which are not wreck.

All finds of treasure must be reported to the coroner for the district within fourteen days of discovery or identification of the items. Items declared Treasure Trove become the property of the Crown.

The British Museum will decide whether they or any other museum may wish to acquire the object. If no museum wishes to acquire the object, then the Secretary of State will be able to disclaim it. When this happens, the coroner will notify the occupier and landowner that he intends to return the object to the finder after 28 days unless he receives no objection. If the coroner receives an objection, the find will be retained until the dispute has been settled.

8.0 STAFF & TIMETABLE

8.1 Staff

The work will be managed and undertaken by Richard Cooke BA MA MIfA, Archaeological Contractor and Consultant at Aeon Archaeology. Full details of personnel involved, with *curricula vitae,* can be supplied upon request.

8.2 Timetable

Tbc.

9.0 HEALTH AND SAFETY

Aeon Archaeology has a Health and Safety Policy Statement which can be supplied upon request. Furthermore, site-specific Risk Assessments and Method Statements are compiled and distributed to every member of staff involved with the project prior to the commencement of works.

10.0 INSURANCE

Liability Insurance – Towergate Insurance Policy 000467

- Employers' Liability: Limit of Indemnity £10m in any one occurrence
- Public Liability: Limit of Indemnity £2m in any one occurrence
- Legal Defence Costs (Health and Safety at Work Act): £250,000

The current period expires 30/09/13

Professional Indemnity Insurance – Towergate Insurance Policy 2011025521290

- Limit of Indemnity £250,000 any one claim

The current period expires 30/09/13

11.0 GENERAL

All project staff will adhere to the Code of Conduct of the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

The project will follow the requirements set down in the Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavation prepared by the Institute of Field Archaeologists.

A Method Statement and Risk Assessment will be prepared prior to the commencement of fieldwork and circulated to all staff concerned.

12.0 BIBLIOGRAPHY

IFA Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Evaluation (Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994, rev. 2001 & 2008).

North West Design Associates: Proposed Mixed Development The Oak Room, Tattenhall Road, Newton-by-Tattenhall; Design and Access Statement, May 2012.

COST ESTIMATE

Cost estimate is based on an hourly rate.

Welfare to be supplied by client; plant to be supplied by Aeon Archaeology.

No specific reinstatement strategy for individual trenches (e.g. re-turffing/re-seeding) has been requested of Aeon Archaeology by the client.

Please note para. 4.0

Trial Trenching/Limited Excavation: 10 trenches (400m^2)

Staff time - archaeological evaluation 7 days (2 archaeologists)

Cost of CAT scanner hire (if required) 1 day

Orange mesh fencing 5 x 50m rolls

Road pins x 50

Report & Archiving

Staff time – 5 days

Please note the following:

Aeon Archaeology will not be held responsible for any delays to the work programme resulting from the discovery of archaeological sites or finds.

The cost quoted does not include examination of, conservation of or archiving of finds discovered during the archaeological programme, nor of any radiocarbon dates required, nor of examination of palaeoenvironmental samples. Contingency costs are provided below.

CONTINGENCY COSTS

The following contingency costs will apply if relevant:

Cost of orange mesh fencing: £22.95 per roll

Cost of road pins: £2.50 each.

Cost of TERAM geotextile matting: @£39.95 roll

Shoring of pits, if required, will be charged at cost of material and acro-prop hire.

Removal of excess spoil, or temporary storage of spoil at cost of haulage and tipping. It is anticipated that the spoil will be stored on-site ready for re-instatement.

Cleaning, examination and drawing of finds £250/day

Conservation of finds £250/day

Materials and containers for storage of finds will be charged at cost

Examination and report of skeletal remains £250/day

Examination of palaeo-ecological samples £250/day

Radiocarbon dates: AMS £450 per date

Note: All figures are quoted exclusive of VAT, which will be added at the appropriate rate.

SPECIALISTS

Specilaist advice required will be sought from the following list:

- Bone: Nora Bermingham
- Glass: Hilary Cool, Barbican Research Associates.
- Metal artefacts: Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services, Cardiff.
- Slag, burnt clay, hammerscale: Dr. Tim Young, Geoarch, Cardiff.
- Stone artefacts: Oxford Archaeology
- Wood artefacts: Jane Foley, Foley Conservation, Builth Wells.
- Leather: Quita Mould, Barbican Research Associates.
- Waterlogged environmental: Dr Mike Allen, Allen Environmental Archaeology.
- Environmental samples: Oxford Archaeology
- Numismatics: Peter Guest, Barbican Research Associates.
- Pottery (all periods): Oxford Archaeology
- Clay pipe: Oxford Archaeology

Depending upon the material of the remains the following experts will be consulted regarding the conservation of waterlogged material:

- Organic material: Mr Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services (tel: +44(0)29 2087 5628)
- Non-organic material: Mr Phil Parkes, Cardiff Conservation Services (tel: +44(0)29 2087 5628)

Figure 1 –Trench Location Plan