

Channel Tunnel Rail Link  
Union Railways (South) Ltd

**West of Sittingbourne Road, Maidstone, Kent**

ARC WEA 99

Archaeological Evaluation Report

Environmental Statement Route Window No. 21

Contract No. S/400/SP/0009 P482

Oxford Archaeological Unit

April 1999

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***ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION***

**Environmental Statement Route Window No. 21**

**OS GRID TQ 7840 5780**

**Contract No. S/400/SP/0009 P482**

**FINAL REPORT**

**Volume 1 of 1**

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April 1999

## WEST OF SITTINGBOURNE ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT

### ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

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## **WEST OF SITTINGBOURNE ROAD, MAIDSTONE, KENT**

### **ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION**

#### **SUMMARY**

*The Oxford Archaeological Unit was commissioned by Union Railways Ltd to conduct a field evaluation of land situated to the west of the Sittingbourne Road, in the parish of Detling near Maidstone, Kent (NGR TQ 7840 5780). The work was conducted between 5<sup>th</sup> - 19<sup>th</sup> March 1999.*

*A total of nineteen evaluation trenches were excavated in an area of 9.25 hectares. The evaluation located a sub-circular medieval ditched enclosure situated on a north-west facing slope. The enclosure had an internal diameter of 3m and the ditch was c. 3 m wide and up to 1.4 m deep. A small pottery assemblage indicates an early medieval date very probably in the 11th to early 12th century. A sequence of medieval features were recorded which included ditches, recuts and pits. The majority of the pottery (80% by weight) was recovered from two later features cut into the top of the enclosure ditch. The artefactual evidence, along with well preserved environmental remains and a deposit of stone rubble, indicate domestic occupation on the site. A small number of pits were located 70m north of the ditched enclosure and appear to be contemporary with the enclosure, although they produced few finds. Considering the isolated topographic situation on a slope, the function of the enclosure is unclear and a number of interpretations can be suggested: A stock enclosure; a 'pillow mound' to accommodate rabbits, although this is more likely if the feature was later in date in the mid 13th century; or an enclosure associated with woodland management.*

*Other features on the site are likely to be post-medieval in date and include two ditches and a large quarry/marl pit. A single undated ditch is situated on the line of the parish boundary between Detling and Boxley.*

*Residual finds include a small amount of struck and burnt flint and two fragments of Roman roof tile (tegula).*

## **SECTION 1: FACTUAL STATEMENT**

### **1 BACKGROUND**

#### **1.1 Introduction**

- 1.1.1 The Oxford Archaeological Unit (OAU) carried out a field evaluation on land to the west of the A249 Sittingbourne Road, in the parish of Detling, Kent (NGR TQ 7840 5780) (URL GRID 58500 37900) (Fig. 1). The work was conducted on behalf of Union Railways Ltd (URL) between 5th and 19th March 1999 as part of a programme of archaeological investigation along the line of the Channel Tunnel Rail Link. The purpose of the investigation was to assess the impact of the rail link on the cultural heritage of the site. An environmental assessment has been prepared (URL 1994). The evaluation area (Fig. 2) falls within URL Environmental Route Window 21.
- 1.1.2 The evaluation was conducted in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation prepared by URL and agreed with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage.

#### **1.2 Geology, topography and land-use**

- 1.2.1 The site lies on Gault Clay with Lower Chalk to the north at the foot of the Downs escarpment (Geological Survey of Great Britain, Maidstone Sheet 288).
- 1.2.2 The site is 9.25 hectares in area and slopes away steeply to the north-west into the Boxley Valley. Trench 3647TT in the south lies at 82 m above Ordnance Datum (OD). Trench 3650TT lies at 70 m above OD. Trenches 3639TT – 3642TT were situated in the parish of Boxley and the remaining trenches are in the parish of Detling.
- 1.2.3 Immediately prior to the evaluation, the site was under arable cultivation.

#### **1.3 Archaeological and historical background**

- 1.3.1 No archaeological sites are recorded within the site boundaries. Iron Age/Romano – British pits and ditches (OAU No. 1060) were located immediately to the east of the site, between the A249 and Detling. A findspot of a Romano-British brooch is located immediately south of the present site (OAU No. 1059).
- 1.3.2 The area evaluated site is situated 1.5 km west of the Roman villa at Thurnham (OAU No.1061) and 2.5 km south-east of the Cistercian Abbey at Boxley (founded in 1146) (OAU No.1055).
- 1.3.3 Boxley Park (OAU No. 2023) is situated to the west of the site, although both the extent of the park and the date of its establishment are unclear. The park is mentioned in 1596 while the earliest estate maps show the park may have extended as far as the eastern boundary of Beulah Wood (URL 1994).

## **2 AIMS**

- 2.1 The aims of the evaluation, as set out in the Written Scheme of Investigation, are as follows:
- 2.1.1 To determine the presence/ absence, extent, condition, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains within the area of the evaluation.
- 2.1.2 To determine the presence and potential of environmental and economic indicators preserved in any archaeological features or deposits.
- 2.1.3 To establish the local, regional, national and international importance of such remains, and the potential for further archaeological fieldwork to fulfil local, regional and national research objectives.

## **3 METHOD**

### **3.1 General**

- 3.1.1 A detailed Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) for the evaluation was prepared by URL and agreed with the County Archaeologist and English Heritage. The following summarises the archaeological aspects of the methodology and notes any deviations from the originally agreed specification.

### **3.2 Survey**

- 3.2.1 The trench locations were surveyed by P.H.Matts, Building and Civil Engineering Land Survey (Reading). Trenches 3652TT, 3654TT and 3653TT were repositioned to avoid a gas main and Trenches 3649TT, 3646TT and 3651TT were repositioned to avoid overhead electricity cables. The trenches have been plotted (Fig. 2) from digital information provided by RLE using the AutoCAD graphics programme.
- 3.2.2 All co-ordinates used in this report relate to the URL local project grid unless otherwise stated. A full list of Ordnance Survey National Grid trench coordinates, together with the conversion formula used to calculate them, is included in the site archive. Individual trenches were planned manually in the field at scales of 1:50 or 1:100.

### **3.3 Excavation**

- 3.3.1 Sixteen trenches were initially excavated to sample the evaluation area. Following site meetings between OAU, Kent County Council Archaeologist and RLE three additional trenches were excavated to define a medieval enclosure ditch (Trenches 3710TT, 3711TT and 3712TT). Trench 3650TT was also extended and the total length of additional trenching amounted to 93 m.
- 3.3.2 The evaluation trenches were 30 m long and 1.90 m wide, except where noted below. They were excavated using a 360° mechanical excavator with a toothless ditching bucket,

under close archaeological supervision. In general, machine excavation was stopped at the top of the natural clay-with-flints.

- 3.3.3 The trenches were hand-cleaned except where archaeological deposits were clearly absent. Sample sections were excavated through all archaeological features and possible features. Artefacts from archaeological features and deposits were collected by context and submitted for specialist examination.
- 3.3.4 Bulk samples were recovered from selected archaeological deposits (those containing artefacts or charred plant remains).

### **3.4 Recording**

- 3.4.1 Recording followed the standard OAU single context recording system (Wilkinson ed. 1992). All site records were prefaced by the site code ARC WEA 99.
- 3.4.2 All trenches and archaeological features were photographed using colour slide and black and white print film.
- 3.2.3 Sections were drawn at 1:20, unless circumstances dictated otherwise.

## **4 RESULTS: GENERAL**

### **4.1 Presentation of Results**

- 4.1.1 Detailed trench descriptions are presented in Section 5. A summary of all contexts and finds is presented in the archaeological context inventory (Section 6). Detailed reports on the struck flint, pottery, environmental remains, animal bone, ceramic building material and iron objects are contained in Appendices 1 - 6.

### **4.2 General stratigraphy**

- 4.2.1 The underlying solid geology was Gault clay which was overlain by a deposit of clay-with-flints which was up to 0.36 m deep. Deposits of reworked chalk occurred at the north-east boundary of the site. An earlier ploughsoil was located in Trenches 3648TT, 3652TT, 3653TT, 3654TT. In the remaining trenches the natural clay-with-flints was overlain directly by the modern ploughsoil, typically 0.26 m in depth.

### **4.3 Summary of archaeology**

- 4.3.1 The evaluation identified a sub-circular, early medieval ditched enclosure, centred on Trenches 3649TT and 3650TT. The topographic location of the enclosure on a moderately steep slope, near the valley bottom, suggests that the feature is perhaps unlikely to be a settlement site. Pottery from the enclosure ditch and associated features probably dates from the 11th or early 12th century. Pits of a similar date were located in Trench 3652TT, but they produced fewer finds.
- 4.3.2 Two ditches, in Trenches 3646TT and 3640TT, contained post-medieval finds.



- 4.3.3 An undated ditch in Trench 3642TT, which is probably a former field boundary, coincides exactly with the Boxley-Detling parish boundary.
- 4.3.4 A quarry pit, cut into the chalk in Trench 3654TT, contained tile which is probably post-medieval in date.

#### **4.4 Site archive**

- 4.4.1 The site archive has been compiled in accordance with the specification prepared by URL and agreed with English Heritage and the County Archaeologist. It includes six electronic datasets for the Fieldwork Event, Contexts, Bulk Finds, Finds, Environmental Samples and Graphical Output.

### **5 TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS**

#### **5.1 Early Medieval Features (Trenches 3649TT, 3650TT, 3652TT, 3710TT, 3711TT, 3712TT)**

- 5.1.1 Excavation of Trenches 3649TT and 3650TT revealed part of a sub-circular medieval ditched enclosure, situated on the north-west facing slope of Boxley Valley. The full extent of the enclosure was defined by excavating additional trenches (3710TT, 3711TT, and 3712TT) and extending Trench 3650TT.
- 5.1.2 The enclosure had an internal diameter of 33m and was situated on a comparatively steep slope (The highest and lowest points on the enclosure ditch were separated by a vertical distance of *c* 5 m). The surrounding ditch was 3.0 m wide and up to 1.40m deep, and showed signs of recutting. A possible entrance was identified on the northern side. The associated pottery assemblage (173 sherds), indicates an early medieval date, probably in the 11th to early 12th century. Other medieval features associated with the enclosure included pits cut into the filled enclosure ditch. The majority of the pottery (80% by weight) was recovered from two later features cut into the top of the enclosure ditch.

#### **5.2 Trench 3649TT (Figs. 3, 4)**

- 5.2.1 This trench was excavated to a depth of 0.4m. A curving ditch (39), which forms part of the medieval enclosure, crossed the trench from north to south. Ditch 39 was 2.60 m wide and 1.40 m deep, with a steep-sided, U-shaped profile at the base and a broader U-shaped profile at the top. The fills were mid brown clays. Indications of human activity included charcoal, oyster shells and pottery, which occurred in the earlier fills (84, 85, 86). The secondary fills (82, 83) were composed of relatively 'clean' fills of clay. There is some indication that Fill 83 may have derived from the levelling of an internal bank. Fill 38 was a mid grey silty clay, which produced a single sherd of medieval pottery. The darker humic appearance of this fill would be consistent with stable conditions and the formation of a soil in the top of the ditch. The latest fill consists of redeposited natural clay (88), which represents the final levelling of the earthwork. The redeposited clay was directly overlain by the present topsoil (55).

### **5.3 Trench 3650TT (Fig. 3, 4)**

- 5.3.1 This trench was excavated to a depth of 0.36 m and exposed the northern side of the enclosure. This trench was extended to the north to further define the extent of the medieval ditches. The hand excavated sections revealed a sequence of intercutting medieval features.
- 5.3.2 In the eastern half of the trench the medieval ditch was aligned from south-west to north-east (47, 81, 50). A section through Ditch 50 was 3.00 m wide and 0.86 m deep, with a steep-sided, U-shaped profile at the base, and a broad U-shaped profile at the top. The sequence of fills was similar to Ditch 39 in Trench 3649TT. Charcoal occurred in the earlier fills (95, 96) and a 'clean' fill (94) appeared to derive from inside the enclosure, partly infilling the ditch. The broader upper profile contrasts with the steep-sided bottom, and may indicate some recutting or ditch cleaning. A stable buried soil horizon (51) was again identified at the top of the ditch profile, sealed by a layer of redeposited clay (49) and the present topsoil (75). A shallow feature (93) on the outside of Ditch 50 was undated and it was unclear whether this feature was medieval.
- 5.3.3 The northern side of the enclosure ditch is defined by Ditches 65 and 69. The stratigraphic sequence demonstrates that Ditch 65 is the earliest feature. It was up to 0.84 m deep and filled with orangey brown clays (66 and 68), although the latest fill was a light grey clay (72). Ditch 65 produced eight sherds of 11th – early 12th century pottery. Ditch 69, which was 4.00m wide and 0.90m deep, may be a recut of Ditch 65. Ditch 69 produced three sherds of 11th –12th century medieval pottery and was filled by a mixed light grey silty clay fill (70). The fill (70) was markedly different from the other enclosure ditch sections (39, 50 and 57) and suggests that Ditch 69 may have been deliberately backfilled.
- 5.3.4 Three features (79, 54, 101) were cut into the top of the filled enclosure ditch. All contained similar fills of dark grey brown silty clay. Two of these features (Pit 54 and Feature 101) account for 80% of the 11th – 12th century pottery from the site.
- 5.3.5 Feature 79 was unexcavated, although eight sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from the upper fill. It was up to 3.00m wide and aligned from north to south, cutting Ditches 81 and 69. It was not traced in other parts of Trench 3650TT and it is likely that this feature is a pit.
- 5.3.6 Pit 54 was 0.95m in diameter and 0.20 m deep with a slightly rounded base. It was cut into the top of Ditch 69, and may be part of Feature 79. It produced 34 sherds (423 g) of medieval pottery as well as oyster shells and an iron nail. An environmental sample from fill 53 produced a rich and unusual assemblage, dominated by wood charcoal but including numerous charred weed seeds, a smaller number of cereals and occasional nut shells. Also present were many fish bones and scales, and oyster shells. Small mammal and bird bones were recovered, as were a small number of poorly preserved sheep, cattle and pig bones.

- 5.3.7 A probable pit (101) was cut into the top of Ditch 69. It measured 3.90m across and at least 0.40m deep. The base was filled with a layer of stone rubble (Kentish Ragstone) (52). Finds from this fill included 122 (1302g) sherds of 11th – early 12th century pottery, an iron nail, burnt flint and a fragment of residual Roman tile (tegula). An environmental sample from fill 52 produced a similar assemblage to that from fill 53, but including a larger number of oyster shells.
- 5.3.8 A large linear feature at the in the northern extension (113) may be the northern side of the medieval enclosure. It measured 5.7 m across but was not excavated.
- 5.3.9 A layer of mid grey brown clay-with-flint (44), which was 0.20 m deep, was located within the ditched enclosure. It was cut by Ditches 47 and 69 and may be the remains of a platform or terrace in the northern half of the enclosure. It is likely that this layer is the same as Layer 64 in Trench 3710TT and Layer 105 in Trench 3711TT.

#### **5.4 Trench 3652TT (Fig. 6)**

- 5.4.1 This trench was excavated to a depth of 0.52 m. Four features (12, 17, 20, 22), were cut into the natural clay, all of which were overlain by a buried ploughsoil (10). Pit 12 was up to 3.10 m wide and 0.48 m deep, and extended beyond the limits of the trench. Three mid brown silty clay fills (13, 14, 15) were identified, the latest of which (15) produced a flint scraper.
- 5.4.2 Pit 17 was 1.80 m wide and 0.34 m deep with a slightly rounded base. It had two mid brown silty clay fills (18 and 19). The latest fill (19) produced a piece of struck flint and a single sherd of 11th – early 12th century pottery.
- 5.4.3 Pit 20 was 1.04 m wide and 0.25 m deep with a rounded base. The single fill (21) a mid grey brown silty clay produced no finds.
- 5.4.4 Feature 22 was a shallow, ill-defined irregular linear feature, aligned from north to south. It was not fully exposed in the trench but could be traced for a length of 6.0 m.

#### **5.5 Trench 3710TT (Fig. 3, 5)**

- 5.5.1 This additional trench was excavated to locate the medieval enclosure ditch (57), and was excavated to a depth of 0.47m. Ditch 57 was 2.28m wide and 0.86m deep with a broad, U-shaped profile. The sequence of fills was similar to Ditch 39 in Trench 3649TT, and there was a clear indication that fill 56 derived from inside the enclosure, possibly from an internal bank.
- 5.5.2 Three linear features were located within the ditched enclosure. All were aligned from east to west and were filled with grey brown clay with natural flint inclusions. The southern-most feature (59) was a linear ditch, 0.80m wide and 0.48m deep, with a steep V-shaped profile. A shallow linear feature (61) was situated along the northern side of Ditch 59. Feature 61 was 0.70 m wide and 0.25 m deep with a broad, almost flat-bottomed profile.

5.5.3 Linear feature 63 was situated at the north end of the trench, separated by a 4.90 m gap from feature 61. It was 1.0 m wide and 0.17 m deep, with a shallow U-shaped profile. The fill produced six sherds of 11th-12th century pottery.

5.5.4 The function of the three linear features (59, 61 and 63) is unclear but the similarity between them suggests that they are likely to be contemporary. They may define a rectangular structure within the enclosure.

## **5.6 Trench 3711TT (Fig. 3)**

5.6.1 This additional trench, 18 m long and 1.8 m wide, was excavated to define the extents of the medieval enclosure ditch (104). A layer of mid brown clay with flint (105), to the east of the ditch, is probably a continuation of layer 64 in Trench 3710TT and layer 44 in Trench 3650TT.

## **5.7 Trench 3712TT (Fig. 3)**

5.7.1 This additional trench, 10 m long and 1.8 m wide, was excavated to define the extent of the medieval enclosure ditch (108) between Trenches 3710TT and 3711TT. A second ditch (110) appeared to be aligned alongside Ditch 108, on the inside of the enclosure.

## 6 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Table 1:

| Abbreviations: |         |  |   |                  |        |       |
|----------------|---------|--|---|------------------|--------|-------|
| EMed           |         | Early medieval (11 <sup>th</sup> - early 12 <sup>th</sup> century) |   |                  |        |       |
| CBM            |         | Ceramic building material (brick and tile)                         |   |                  |        |       |
| Trench         | Context | Description  | Association                             | Finds            | Number | Date  |
| 3653TT         | 1       | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 2                              |                  |        |       |
| 3653TT         | 2       | earlier ploughsoil   | overlain by 1, overlies 4               |                  |        |       |
| 3653TT         | 3       | natural  | overlain by 2, overlies 8               |                  |        |       |
| 3653TT         | 4       | natural  | overlies 8                              |                  |        |       |
| 3653TT         | 5       | posthole/animal burrow   | cuts 2, filled by 6, 7                  |                  |        |       |
| 3653TT         | 6       | fill   | fill of 5                               |                  |        |       |
| 3653TT         | 7       | fill   | fill of 5                               |                  |        |       |
| 3653TT         | 8       | natural  | overlain by 4                           |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 9       | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 10                             |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 10      | earlier ploughsoil   | overlain by 9, overlies 15, 21, 19, 16  |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 11      | natural  | cut by 12, overlies 16                  |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 12      | pit  | cuts 10, filled by 13, 14, 15           |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 13      | fill   | fill of 12 overlain by 14               |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 14      | fill   | fill of 12 overlain by 12, overlies 13  |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 15      | fill   | overlain by 10, overlies 14             | flint scraper    | 1      |       |
| 3652TT         | 16      | natural  | cut by 12, 17, 20, 22                   | pot              | 1      | Roman |
| 3652TT         | 17      | pit  | cuts 16, filled by 18, 19               |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 18      | fill   | fill of 17, overlain by 19              |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 19      | fill   | fill of 17, overlain by 10, overlies 18 | pot struck flint | 1<br>1 | EMed  |
| 3652TT         | 20      | pit  | cuts 16, filled by 21                   |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 21      | fill   | fill of 20, overlain by 10              |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 22      | linear feature   | cuts 16 filled by 23                    |                  |        |       |
| 3652TT         | 23      | fill   | fill of 22, overlain by 10              | Pot struck flint | 1<br>1 | EMed  |
| 3654TT         | 24      | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 25                             |                  |        |       |
| 3654TT         | 25      | earlier ploughsoil   | fill of 27, overlain by 24, overlies 26 |                  |        |       |
| 3654TT         | 26      | fill   | fill of 27, overlain by 25              | CBM              | 8      |       |
| 3654TT         | 27      | quarry pit   | cuts 28, filled by 25, 26               |                  |        |       |
| 3654TT         | 28      | natural reworked chalk   | cut by 27                               |                  |        |       |
| 3651TT         | 29      | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 30                             |                  |        |       |
| 3651TT         | 30      | earlier ploughsoil   | overlain by 29, overlies 31             |                  |        |       |
| 3651TT         | 31      | natural clay with flints   | overlain by 30, overlies 32             |                  |        |       |
| 3651TT         | 32      | natural reworked chalk   | overlain by 31                          |                  |        |       |
| 3640TT         | 33      | ditch  | filled by 34, 35, 67, cuts 119          |                  |        |       |

| Trench | Context | Description       | Association                                   | Find   | Number                             | Date                  |
|--------|---------|-------------------|---|--|------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 3640TT | 34      | fill              | fill of 33, overlies 35, overlain by 118      | clay tobacco pipe  | 1                                  |                       |
| 3640TT | 35      | fill              | fill of 33, overlies 67, overlain by 34       |  |                                    |                       |
| 3649TT | 36      | modern ploughsoil | overlies 37                                   |  |                                    |                       |
| 3649TT | 37      | fill              | fill of 39, overlain by 36, overlies 38       |  |                                    |                       |
| 3649TT | 38      | fill              | fill of 39, overlain by 37, overlies 82       | pot  | 1                                  | EMed                  |
| 3649TT | 39      | ditch             | filled by 37, 38, 82, 83, 84, 85, 86, 87      |  |                                    |                       |
| 3649TT | 40      | natural           | cut by 39                                     |  |                                    |                       |
| 3643TT | 41      | ditch             | filled by 42, cuts 120                        |  |                                    |                       |
| 3643TT | 42      | fill              | fill of 42                                    | CBM  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 43      | layer             | overlain by 75, overlies 44                   |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 44      | layer             | overlain by 43, cut by 47, 69                 |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 45      | fill              | fill of 47, overlies 45                       | animal bone<br>oyster shell  | 10<br>1                            |                       |
| 3650TT | 46      | fill              | fill if 47, overlain by 45                    |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 47      | ditch             | cuts 44, filled by 45, 46                     |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 48      | natural           |   |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 49      | fill              | fill of 50, overlies 51, overlain by 75       |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 50      | ditch             | filled by 49, 51, 94, 95, 96, 97, cuts 48, 98 |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 51      | fill              | fill of 50, overlain by 49                    |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 52      | fill              | fill of 101, overlain by 102                  | pot<br>animal bone<br>oyster shell<br>fish bones<br>tile<br>fe object<br>burnt flint | 165<br>33<br>27<br><br>1<br>2<br>1 | Emed<br><br><br>Roman |
| 3650TT | 53      | fill              | fill of 54, overlain by 75,                   | pot<br>animal bone<br>oyster shells<br>fe nail<br>tile                               | 70<br>29<br>7<br>1<br>1            | EMed<br><br><br>Roman |
| 3650TT | 54      | pit               | cuts 70, filled by 53                         |  |                                    |                       |
| 3710TT | 55      | modern ploughsoil | overlies 76                                   |  |                                    |                       |
| 3710TT | 56      | fill              | fill of 57, overlain by 89, overlies 90       |  |                                    |                       |
| 3710TT | 57      | ditch             | filled by 56, 88, 89, 90, cuts 77             |  |                                    |                       |
| 3710TT | 58      | fill              | fill of 59, overlain by 76                    | pot  | 3                                  | EMed                  |
| 3650TT | 59      | ditch             | filled by 58, cuts 77, ?cuts 60               |  |                                    |                       |
| 3710TT | 60      | fill              | fill of 61, ?cut by 59                        |  |                                    |                       |
| 3710TT | 61      | linear feature    | filled by 60, cuts 77                         |  |                                    |                       |
| 3710TT | 62      | fill              | fill of 63, overlain by 76                    | Pot<br>fe nail   | 6<br>1                             | EMed                  |
| 3710TT | 63      | linear feature    | filled by 62, ? Cuts 64                       |  |                                    |                       |
| 3710TT | 64      | layer             | overlain by 76, ?cut by 63                    |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 65      | ditch             | filled by 66, 67, 68, 72, 73,                 |  |                                    |                       |
| 3650TT | 66      | fill              | fill of 65, overlain by 68                    | pot  | 2                                  | EMed                  |

| Trench | Context | Description       | Association                               | Finds  | Number            | Date |
|--------|---------|-------------------|---|--|-------------------|------|
| 3640TT | 67      | fill              | fill of 33, overlain by 35                |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 68      | fill              | fill of 69, overlain by 72                | pot  | 1                 | EMed |
| 3650TT | 69      | ditch             | filled by 70, cuts 72, 44                 |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 70      | fill              | fill of 69, cut by 54, 79, 101            | Pot<br>oyster shell                            | 3<br>1            | EMed |
| 3650TT | 71      | fill              | fill of 69, overlain by 52, overlies 70   |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 72      | fill              | fill of 65, overlain by 73, overlies 68   | pot  | 5                 | EMed |
| 3650TT | 73      | fill              | fill of 101, overlies 102, overlain by 74 |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 74      | fill              | fill of 101, overlain by 75, overlies 73  |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 75      | modern ploughsoil | overlies 45, 49, 53, 73, 74, 80, 92, 112  |  |                   |      |
| 3710TT | 76      | layer             | overlain by 55, overlies 58, 60, 62, 64   |  |                   |      |
| 3710TT | 77      | natural           | cut by 57, 59, 61, 63                     |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 78      | fill              | fill of 79, overlain by 75                | pot  | 8                 | EMed |
| 3650TT | 79      | linear feature    | filled by 78, cuts 70, 80                 |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 80      | fill              | fill of 81, overlain by 91                |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 81      | ditch             | filled by 80, 91                          |  |                   |      |
| 3649TT | 82      | fill              | fill of 39, overlies 83, overlain by 38   |  |                   |      |
| 3649TT | 83      | fill              | fill of 39, overlies 84, overlain by 82   |  |                   |      |
| 3649TT | 84      | fill              | fill of 39, overlies 85, overlain by 83   |  |                   |      |
| 3649TT | 85      | fill              | fill of 39, overlies 86, overlain by 84   | Pot<br>animal bone<br>fe nail<br>oyster shells | 6<br>5<br>1<br>23 | EMed |
| 3649TT | 86      | fill              | fill of 39, overlies 87, overlain by 85   |  |                   |      |
| 3649TT | 87      | fill              | fill of 39, overlain by 86                |  |                   |      |
| 3710TT | 88      | fill              | fill of 57, overlies 89, overlain by 55   |  |                   |      |
| 3710TT | 89      | fill              | fill of 57, overlies 56, overlain by 88   |  |                   |      |
| 3710TT | 90      | fill              | fill of 57, overlain by 56                |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 91      | fill              | fill of 81, overlies 80, overlain by 75   |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 92      | fill              | fill of 93, overlain by 75                |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 93      | ?ditch            | filled by 92, cuts 51                     |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 94      | fill              | fill of 50, overlies 95, overlain by 97   |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 95      | fill              | fill of 50, overlies 96, overlain by 94   |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 96      | fill              | fill of 50, overlain by 95                |  |                   |      |
| 3650TT | 97      | fill              | fill of 50, overlies 94, overlain by 51   |  |                   |      |

|               |                |                    |  |              |               |             |
|---------------|----------------|--------------------|--|--------------|---------------|-------------|
| 3650TT        | 98             | layer              | cut by 50, overlies 99, overlain by 75     |              |               |             |
| <b>Trench</b> | <b>Context</b> | <b>Description</b> | <b>Association</b>                         | <b>Finds</b> | <b>Number</b> | <b>Date</b> |
| 3650TT        | 99             | layer              | overlies 100, overlain by 98               |              |               |             |
| 3650TT        | 100            | layer              | overlies 48, overlain by 99                |              |               |             |
| 3650TT        | 101            | ?pit               | cuts 71, filled by 52, 73, 74, 102         |              |               |             |
| 3650TT        | 102            | fill               | fill of 101, overlies 53, overlain by 73   |              |               |             |
| 3711TT        | 103            | fill               | fill of 104                                |              |               |             |
| 3711TT        | 104            | ditch              | filled by 103                              |              |               |             |
| 3711TT        | 105            | layer              | cut by 104                                 |              |               |             |
| 3711TT        | 106            | layer              | cut by 104                                 |              |               |             |
| 3712TT        | 107            | fill               | fill of 108                                |              |               |             |
| 3712TT        | 108            | ditch              | filled by 107                              |              |               |             |
| 3712TT        | 109            | fill               | fill of 110                                |              |               |             |
| 3712TT        | 110            | ?ditch             | filled by 109                              |              |               |             |
| 3712TT        | 111            | natural            | cut by 108                                 |              |               |             |
| 3650TT        | 112            | fill               | fill of 113                                |              |               |             |
| 3650TT        | 113            | ?ditch             | filled by 112                              |              |               |             |
| 3650TT        | 114            | ditch              | filled by 115                              |              |               |             |
| 3650TT        | 115            | fill               | fill of 114                                |              |               |             |
| 3711TT        | 116            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 103                               |              |               |             |
| 3712TT        | 117            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 107, 109                          |              |               |             |
| 3640TT        | 118            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 34                                |              |               |             |
| 3640TT        | 119            | natural            | cut by 33                                  |              |               |             |
| 3643TT        | 120            | natural            | cut by 41                                  |              |               |             |
| 3643TT        | 121            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 42                                |              |               |             |
| 3642TT        | 122            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 122                               |              |               |             |
| 3642TT        | 123            | natural            | overlain by 122                            |              |               |             |
| 3644TT        | 124            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 125                               |              |               |             |
| 3644TT        | 125            | natural            | overlain by 124                            |              |               |             |
| 3645TT        | 126            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 127                               |              |               |             |
| 3645TT        | 127            | natural            | overlain by 126                            |              |               |             |
| 3646TT        | 128            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 129                               |              |               |             |
| 3646TT        | 129            | natural            | overlain by 128                            |              |               |             |
| 3647TT        | 130            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 131                               |              |               |             |
| 3647TT        | 131            | natural            | overlain by 130                            |              |               |             |
| 3648TT        | 132            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 133                               |              |               |             |
| 3648TT        | 133            | earlier ploughsoil | overlain by 13, overlies 134               |              |               |             |
| 3648TT        | 134            | natural            | overlain by 133                            |              |               |             |
| 3642TT        | 135            | fill               | fill of 137, overlain by 122, overlies 136 |              |               |             |
| 3642TT        | 136            | fill               | fill of 137, overlain by 135               |              |               |             |
| 3642TT        | 137            | ditch              | filled by 135, 136                         |              |               |             |
| 3642TT        | 138            | fill               | fill of 139, overlain by 122               |              |               |             |
| 3642TT        | 139            | ?furrow            | filled by 138                              |              |               |             |
| 3639TT        | 140            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 141                               |              |               |             |
| 3639TT        | 141            | natural            | overlain by 140                            |              |               |             |
| 3641TT        | 142            | modern ploughsoil  | overlies 143                               |              |               |             |
| 3641TT        | 143            | natural            | overlain by 142                            |              |               |             |



## SECTION 2: STATEMENT OF IMPORTANCE

### 7 CONCLUSIONS

#### 7.1 Extent of archaeological deposits (Figs. 3, 7)

- 7.1.1 A sub-circular medieval enclosure, with associated features and occupation debris was located in Trenches 3649TT, 3650TT, 3710TT, 3711TT and 3712TT.
- 7.1.2 Trench 3652TT contained a group of pits which produced two sherds of medieval (11th – early 12th century) pottery. The distribution of early medieval features on the site appears to be restricted to the lower edge of the north-west facing slope of Boxley Valley, at approximately the 72 m contour.
- 7.1.3 Trench 3654TT located a large post-medieval pit, probably a quarry.
- 7.1.4 Ditches in Trenches 3640TT and 3643TT probably represent post-medieval boundary ditches.
- 7.1.5 An undated ditch recorded in Trench 3642TT coincided exactly with the line of the Boxley-Detling parish boundary.

#### 7.2 Date and character of archaeological deposits

- 7.2.1 The only significant archaeology discovered were features of early medieval date, most notably a sub-circular medieval enclosure surrounded by a substantial ditch, *c* 33 m in diameter. Interpretation of the enclosure is problematic as no clear parallels have been identified as yet. It is unclear whether it represents an occupation site, as suggested by the finds and environmental assemblages, or served an agricultural or woodland management function, as suggested by the topographic location.
- 7.2.2 The dating of the enclosure relies primarily on the pottery recovered, which is likely to date from the early medieval period (11th to early 12th century). However, the comparatively small size of the assemblage and limited range of forms present mean that a later date cannot be ruled out. The suggested date range is largely based on the lack of any glazed wares.
- 7.2.3 The largest group of early medieval pottery (122 hand-retrieved sherds) was recovered from a spread of stone rubble and occupation material filling feature 101 (Trench 3650TT). Pit 54 in Trench 3650TT also produced 34 sherds of similar date. The majority of the pottery from the site (*c*.80% of the hand-retrieved material) was recovered from these two features, which are late in the stratigraphic sequence. However, similar material was also found in the primary fills of the enclosure ditch.
- 7.2.4 Residual Roman tile was recovered from the medieval features in Trench 3650TT and a single residual sherd of Roman pottery occurred in a buried ploughsoil in Trench 3652TT.

- 7.2.5 The pits in Trench 3652TT produced only three sherds of 11th – early 12th century pottery as well as two pieces of residual struck flint and a flint scraper. Although the quantity of pottery is small, they suggest that these pits are contemporary with the medieval features identified in Trenches 3649TT, 3650TT.
- 7.2.6 Although the comparatively rich finds and environmental assemblages are suggestive of human occupation, the topographic location on a slope, in an area thought to have been occupied by ancient woodland (URL 1994), suggest that this is not a permanent settlement site. The evidence for structures within the enclosure is inconclusive. The ditch may enclose a rectangular structure, suggested by the features in Trench 3710T, and the stone rubble in Feature 101 could potentially be debris from a building. However, the steepness of the slope argues against the presence of buildings.
- 7.2.7 The location on a slope may relate to the function of the enclosure, as relatively level ground is available a short distance away upslope to the north-east. The isolated location of the enclosure, on the edge of woodland, close to Detling parish boundary, is also likely to be significant, suggesting that this was marginal land. A woodland location is supported by the provisional identification of woodland molluscs in the environmental samples.
- 7.2.8 A number of interpretations can be suggested on this currently available evidence. The ditched enclosure may be the remains of a ‘pillow mound’ (an artificial rabbit warren). Later medieval and post-medieval examples usually comprise an oblong mound surrounded by a shallow ditch, although other forms do occur. They were often situated on marginal land on a slope to aid drainage, although a southerly aspect was more common. However, as the evidence for raising rabbits on the mainland before the end of the 12th century remains slender, this interpretation must remain doubtful unless the pottery dating evidence is revised. Documentary references to rabbits become more frequent from the mid 13th century (Bond 1995).
- 7.2.9 The enclosure could be related to woodland management. The period between 1086 and 1350 has been noted as a period of intense exploitation of woodland which is not well documented (Rackham 1986). In this context a stock enclosure is perhaps the most likely interpretation. In a woodland environment this would be most likely to be associated with pigs. In this case the occurrence of human occupation debris might be accounted for by seasonal occupation of the site by herdsmen, or by the use of domestic refuse as animal feed.

### **7.3 Environmental evidence**

- 7.3.1 Environmental samples from the early medieval pit (54) and Feature 101 in Trench 3650TT were rich in well preserved charred remains, dominated by wood charcoal and weed seeds but with a small cereal component, as well as terrestrial molluscs suggestive of a woodland environment, and marine mollusc shells (oysters) (see Appendix 3).
- 7.3.2 A small quantity of animal bone (26 pieces) was recovered by hand excavation from the medieval features in Trench 3650TT, including cattle, sheep and pig. The environmental samples produced well-preserved small mammal bones, bird and fish bones and even fish scales (see Appendix 4).

## **8 IMPORTANCE OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL DEPOSITS**

### **8.1 Survival/condition**

- 8.1.1 A redeposited clay backfill deposit in the top of the medieval enclosure ditch suggests that the enclosure may have survived as an earthwork, perhaps within woodland, until a comparatively late date. Beulah Wood is located 40 m to the west of Trench 3650TT and the 1797 Ordnance Survey drawing shows it extending over this part of the site.
- 8.1.2 Ploughing had truncated the medieval features in Trenches 3649TT and 3650TT and there were no signs of any surfaces surviving within the medieval enclosure. However, a layer in the northern half of the enclosure may be the remnant of upcast forming a bank, mound or platform within the enclosure.

### **8.2 Period**

- 8.2.1 The quantity of pottery from the features in Trenches 3649TT, 3650TT, 3652TT and 3710TT indicates a period of early medieval occupation activity, probably falling within the 11th to early 12th century, although a later date cannot be ruled out.
- 8.2.2 The ditches in Trenches 3639TT and 3643TT produced post-medieval material and probably represent former field boundaries.

### **8.3 Rarity**

- 8.3.1 The medieval enclosure is an unusual and unexpected find in an area thought to have dominated by ancient woodland. At present, no clear parallels have been identified and its function remains uncertain. Early medieval sites are not well represented in the archaeological records of Kent (Rigold 1982). Although the local medieval settlement pattern can be deduced in general terms from topographical studies, few archaeological sites of medieval date have been investigated in this area.
- 8.3.2 The environmental assemblage associated with the enclosure is particularly rich and unusual in composition.

### **8.4 Fragility/vulnerability**

- 8.4.1 The archaeological features have been truncated by ploughing and continue to be vulnerable to plough damage.

### **8.5 Diversity**

- 8.5.1 The features recorded in the evaluation comprise an enclosure ditch, linear features and pits. All of the dated features belonged to the early medieval period.

## **8.6 Documentation**

- 8.6.1 A previous surface collection survey carried out along the CTRL route as part of the Assessment of Historic and Cultural Effects (URL 1994) did not identify any significant concentrations of artefacts on this site. Archaeological evaluation reports have been prepared for sections of the route on either side of the site, to the east of Boxley Road (Boxley) and east of Hockers Lane (Detling) (URS 1999a, URS 1999b).

## **8.7 Group value**

- 8.7.1 The early medieval enclosure adds to the archaeological evidence of early medieval rural settlement along the foot of the North Downs escarpment, near to the springline occurring at *c.* 60 m OD. The local medieval settlement pattern is reasonably well understood in topographical terms, but supporting archaeological evidence is at present rare.

## **8.8 Potential**

- 8.8.1 The evaluation suggests that there is potential to identify and interpret an unusual, isolated early medieval ditched enclosure. The suggested interpretations emphasise the marginal location of the site in an area dominated by ancient woodland. The particular interest of the site is therefore likely to lie in the light it could shed on the exploitation of woodland resources in the early medieval period.
- 8.8.2 The samples recovered during the evaluation have produced a rich and diverse assemblage of plant and animal remains. It is essential that further work should emphasise the recovery of environmental evidence, which has the potential to determine the function of the enclosure.
- 8.8.3 At present the early medieval date suggested for the enclosure is based on the absence of glazed wares from the pottery assemblage and the small range of forms and fabrics present. Further excavation is needed to confirm this conclusion.

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## APPENDIX 1

### Worked Flint

by Kayt Brown, Oxford Archaeological Unit

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 A small amount of flint was recovered from four contexts, comprising a scraper, two flakes and a single piece of burnt flint. None of this material can be assigned to a specific period and all were residual in early medieval features.

Table 2: Quantification of the flint

| Context      | Trench | Material | Type    | Number | Wt (g) |
|--------------|--------|----------|---------|--------|--------|
| 15           | 3652TT | Flint    | Scraper | 1      | 51     |
| 19           | 3652TT | Flint    | Flake   | 1      | 1      |
| 23           | 3652TT | Flint    | Flake   | 1      | 3      |
| 52           | 3650TT | Flint    | Burnt   | 1      | 1      |
| <b>Total</b> |        |          |         | 4      | 56     |

## APPENDIX 2

### Pottery

by Paul Blinkhorn

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 The pottery assemblage comprised 194 sherds with a total weight of 2169 g. The minimum number of vessels, by summation of rimsherd length, was 1.05. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 3. All of the pottery recovered is very probably 11<sup>th</sup> or early 12<sup>th</sup> century in date, apart from a single sherd (16 g) of Romano-British or Iron Age shelly ware from context 16.

#### 2 Methodology

- 2.1 The pottery was recorded by context in terms of broad fabric categories for the purposes of assigning dates, with quantification by sherd count and weight.

#### 3 Fabrics

- 3.1 The majority of the assemblage comprised two shelly-limestone tempered wares, both of which appear typical of the early medieval pottery traditions of Kent, and also appear very similar to contemporary pottery found in the City of London, as follows:
  - 3.2 *Shelly Ware*. Moderate to dense shell platelets up to 3mm, very rare rounded red and black ironstone up to 0.5 mm. 95 sherds, 1147 g. MNV = 0.13.
  - 3.3 *Early Medieval Sandy-Shelly Ware*. Moderate to dense shell platelets up to 2 mm. Sparse to moderate rounded red and black ironstone up to 1 mm. Rare pink grog up to 3 mm, sparse to moderate subrounded red and clear quartz up to 1 mm. Glazed and unglazed. 90 sherds, 954 g. MNV = 0.92.
  - 3.4 A third, minor ware, possibly of local manufacture, was also noted.
  - 3.5 *Sandy unglazed ware*. Moderate to dense subrounded quartz up to 0.5 mm, majority c 0.1mm. Rare sub-rounded black ironstone up to 0.5 mm, very rare angular white calcareous material up to 0.5 mm. Oxidized and reduced examples noted. 8 sherds, 52 g, MNV = 0.

Table 3: Pottery by context, number, weight (g) and fabric

| Cxt          | Trench | Feature     | Shelly (EMSS) |              | Sandy-Shelly(EMSS) |             | Sandy    |            | Date         |
|--------------|--------|-------------|---------------|--------------|--------------------|-------------|----------|------------|--------------|
|              |        |             | No            | Wt (g)       | No                 | Wt (g)      | No       | Wt         |              |
| 19           | 3652TT | Pit 17      |               |              | 1                  | 2           |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 23           | 3652TT | Feature 22  |               |              | 1                  | 1           |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 38           | 3649TT | Ditch 39    |               |              | 1                  | 6           |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 52           | 3650TT | Feature 101 | 65            | 748          | 51                 | 525         | 6        | 29         | 11thC-E12thC |
| 53           | 3650TT | Pit 54      | 18            | 200          | 16                 | 223         |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 58           | 3710TT | Ditch 59    | 3             | 13           |                    |             |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 62           | 3710TT | Feature 63  | 1             | 73           | 3                  | 19          | 2        | 23         | 11thC-E12thC |
| 66           | 3650TT | Ditch 65    | 1             | 1            | 1                  | 7           |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 68           | 3650TT | Ditch 69    |               |              | 1                  | 3           |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 70           | 3650TT | Ditch 69    | 1             | 24           | 2                  | 21          |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 72           | 3650TT | Ditch 65    |               |              | 5                  | 72          |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 78           | 3650TT | Feature 79  | 1             | 32           | 7                  | 59          |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| 85           | 3649TT | Ditch 39    | 5             | 56           | 1                  | 16          |          |            | 11thC-E12thC |
| <b>Total</b> |        |             | <b>95</b>     | <b>1147g</b> | <b>90</b>          | <b>954g</b> | <b>8</b> | <b>52g</b> |              |

\*A further 79 highly fragmented sherds (281 g), in a similar range of fabrics, were recovered from the processing of environmental samples from contexts 52 and 53. This assessment considers only the hand-retrieved material.

#### 4 Character and date of assemblage

4.1 As noted above, shell-tempered wares such as these are common finds on medieval sites in Kent and the City of London. Sandy and sandy-shelly wares occur in small quantities in Canterbury from the 11<sup>th</sup> century onwards, and appear to have the same limited range of forms (small jars and large jars with applied strips) as the pottery at this site (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 183). The picture is similar at both Rochester and Eynsford Castle (ibid. 184). In the case of the former, shelly wares were noted beneath pre-1087/9 levels, and at the latter, similar material dominated the pottery assemblage from the late 11<sup>th</sup> century.

4.2 In the case of London, it is entirely possible that the pottery found in the City is from the same sources as that from at least some of the sites in Kent. Early Medieval Sand and Shell ware (EMSS) dominated pottery assemblages in the City during the 11<sup>th</sup> century, particularly during the period 1050-1100, as is attested by the excavations at Billingsgate and St. Nicholas Acon Church (Vince 1985, fig. 7 b and c). Early Medieval Shelly Ware (EMSH) was very much a minor ware, however, but



nevertheless is represented in assemblages from London throughout the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries. It would appear therefore that all the features at this site are of 11<sup>th</sup> or early 12<sup>th</sup> century date, particularly as there is a complete absence of glazed wares. By the early 12<sup>th</sup> century, glazed London wares (LOND and LCOAR) were in use in London, but have also been noted in Kent, including sites which are more distant from the City, such as Canterbury and Pivington Manor, Pluckley (Pearce et al. 1985, figs 1 and 2). Their absence would thus appear to be chronological.

4.3 Glazed wares from Canterbury and Surrey also appear on many Kentish sites during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, such as Ospringe and Leigh (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 318-20). Their absence here again offers support for the proposed dating of the site.

4.4 Thus, the complete absence of glazed ware from this assemblage, coupled with the limited range of fabric types present, suggests that most of the dateable features at this site are contemporary, and were current during the 11<sup>th</sup> or possibly the earlier 12<sup>th</sup> century. However, further work would be useful to confirm this, as the limited size of the assemblages may be giving a false chronological picture, and a later 12<sup>th</sup> or even 13<sup>th</sup> century date cannot be ruled out at this stage.

#### 4.5 *Cross-fits*

Only one cross-fit was achieved, between contexts 70 and 72, but it should be noted that contexts 52 and 53 contained many sherds which appear to have originally been part of the same vessels, but do not refit.

#### 4.6 *Vessel Fragmentation*

The mean sherd weights for the two main fabric (EMSH = 10.1 g, EMSS = 10.6 g) are not particularly large, but this may be due to the friable nature of the wares in question, as it appears that several large sherds disintegrated during excavation, and thus distorted the values. Overall, the mean rimsherd size was unexceptional, being 7.5% complete, but the standard deviation of 6.1% shows that there was considerable variation in size, and that the friability of the pottery rather than the level of deposition was again to blame. Certainly, from a purely subjective point of view, the bulk of the assemblage, particularly contexts 52 and 53, appears to comprise non-joining sherds from a small number of vessels, suggesting that the pottery was deposited very close to its use-area, perhaps either directly or during midden-clearance.

## 5 **Context and discussion**

5.1 As noted above, the bulk of the evidence suggest that all of the pottery assemblages from this site are 11<sup>th</sup> or early 12<sup>th</sup> century in date, with the caveat that the small assemblage size may be distorting the chronology.

5.2 At this stage, no further work is required. The assemblage is a useful addition to the small corpus of early medieval sites from rural Kent. Further excavation work may, however, produce a larger assemblage which would require analysis to confirm these current findings, or revise them as necessary. Certainly, the size and condition of many of the sherds indicate that they were deposited very close to their use-area, and further excavation is very likely to produce more of the material.

## APPENDIX 3

### Environmental Indicators

by Greg Campbell, Oxford Archaeological Unit

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 In order to assess the state of preservation of the environmental indicators at the site, two soil samples of 40 litres were collected and processed by mechanical flotation to extract the charred plant remains, which were collected on 0.25 mm mesh. The mineral residue from each sample was then wet-sieved through 10, 4 and 2 mm meshes. The two coarser residue fractions were sorted for artefacts and animal bones, and the finer fraction air-dried and scanned for artefacts and animal bones.
- 1.2 The extracted flot containing the charred remains was scanned under a binocular microscope at x10 magnification and its contents characterised.

#### 2 Results

- 2.1 While the samples were from two different deposits (from a medieval pit fill 53, and from a rubble dump 52), the flots from the two samples were similar in size and content. Both flots are of medium size and contain about 20% modern material, including uncharred herbaceous plant roots and insect fragments. The charred portion is dominated by wood charcoal, of which 10 to 20 items are large enough to be identified. The rich and well-preserved charred seeds (about 200 items in each) are principally fine weed seeds, but with some cereal grains (about 50, with about 20 well preserved enough from the burning process to be identified). Chaff and edible legumes are at best very rare, as none were seen during the scan. The pit fill contained rare nut shells, probably hazel nuts.
- 2.2 The sediments are rich in land-snails, a surprise considering the solid geology. Chalk inclusions in the gravel show that the soil conditions are lime-rich. Tentative identifications of some of these (*Discus rotundatus*, *Pomatias elegans*, large Clausiliidae) indicate woodland conditions.
- 2.3 Also well-preserved are the remains of small animals, especially fish. Scales and bones of fish are present in the flot and mineral residue of both samples. The bones of larger animals are present but not abundant in the samples. The results of these are noted in the animal bone section.
- 2.4 The marine shell was abundant and well preserved compared to similar evaluations. Fifty-nine marine shells, all of them oysters (*Ostrea edulis*), were recovered from five deposits: final slighting of the Ditch 47 (fill 45), the rubble dump layer 52, the pit fill 53, a late fill of the enclosure Ditch 70, and one of the base fills of the enclosure Ditch 39 (fill 85). Most came from base ditch fill 85 and from rubble dump layer 52, where the bases greatly outnumbered the tops. A quantification by context is presented below.

- 2.5 Overall the oyster was adequately preserved and exhibit little fragmentation. The reasonably uniform size and shape and the lack of surface colonisation by barnacles and marine worms implies the oysters are from managed beds.
- 2.6 Clearly marine shell is preserved at the site. This is a surprisingly large number to recover during an evaluation for any period or site, especially a rural one, and may indicate an unusually heavy reliance on marine resources. The shells are in discrete dumps of high concentrations, which facilitate reconstruction of use. The exclusive use of oyster would be unusual, and requires confirmation. While the present assemblage is too small to merit further analysis, appropriate sampling strategies must be employed during any further work.

Table 4: Marine shell (oysters) by context

| Context      | Trench | Fill of          | No.Tops   | No. Bases |
|--------------|--------|------------------|-----------|-----------|
| 45           | 3650TT | Fill of Ditch 47 | 1         |           |
| 52           | 3650TT | Fill of ?Pit101  | 15        | 12        |
| 53           | 3650TT | Fill of Pit 54   | 4         | 3         |
| 70           | 3650TT | Fill of Ditch 69 | 1         |           |
| 85           | 3650TT | Fill of Ditch 39 | 5         | 18        |
| <b>Total</b> |        |                  | <b>26</b> | <b>33</b> |

### 3 Conclusions

- 3.1 The soil conditions at the site are lime-rich, in contrast to the conditions predicted solely on the basis of the solid geology. Recent intrusion is not so great that reconstruction is unreliable. Land snails, a major resource in reconstructing past land-use and hydrology, are well preserved. Woodland conditions might be indicated, although this requires confirmation.
- 3.2 The indicators of past subsistence that have been demonstrated to be well-preserved at the site are charred plant remains, the bones of small animals, fish bones and scales, and marine shells. The charred remains merit consideration for publication, an exceptional circumstance in evaluations. The samples confirm the rarity of large animal bones and the abundance of fish and marine shell observed in the hand-recovered material. This seems to indicate a surprisingly heavy reliance on marine resources for subsistence, which may reflect the site's exchange connections, function or relative status.

## APPENDIX 4

### Animal Bone

by Bethan Charles, Oxford Archaeological Unit

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 A total of 26 fragments of bone were retrieved by hand from the site. From this total only 5 bones were identified to species. In addition 138 fragments of bone were retrieved from the sieved material. The material was sieved through a mesh of 10 – 4mm. The material collected through finer meshes has not been counted.
- 1.2 The bones were very badly preserved with a great deal of root damage and chemical etching. The poor condition of the bone will have adversely affected the recording of any of the minor pathological changes that may have occurred along with evidence of butchery and gnaw damage. Only two of the bones had signs of fresh breaks

#### 2 Methodology

- 2.1 A rapid assessment of the bones was conducted through the use of a simple record sheet. This enables a quick calculation of the totals to be made along with a rough estimation of the number of individuals in each context and in total.
- 2.2 Ageing and sexing was not possible due to the absence of diagnostic bones. No butchery marks were recorded on the bones. This is probably due the small number recovered and the condition of the bone.

#### 3 Results

- 3.1 It can be seen from Table 5 that cattle, sheep and pig are the only species represented amongst the assemblage. All of the fragments identified to species were teeth, ribs and vertebrae fragments. The unidentified fragments tended to be small pieces of large long bones.

Table 5. Number of animal bones by context

| Context      | Cattle   | Sheep    | Pig      | Unidentified |
|--------------|----------|----------|----------|--------------|
| 45           | 0        | 0        | 0        | 7            |
| 52           | 1        | 2        | 0        | 9            |
| 53           | 0        | 0        | 0        | 2            |
| 85           | 0        | 0        | 2        | 3            |
| <b>Total</b> | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>21</b>    |

#### 4 Sieved bone

- 4.1 Contexts 52 and 53 were sampled and sieved for finds. In addition to four small fragments of bone from cattle, sheep and pig, many fish, bird and minor mammal bones were retrieved from the samples. Most of these smaller bones were in good condition with little or no signs of attritional damage.

## **5 Discussion/Recommendations**

- 5.1 Very little information can be gleaned from the hand collected assemblage other than the presence of cattle, sheep and pig on the site. However, the sieved material indicates a greater variety of species found on the site.
- 5.2 Due to presence of fish and bird bones at the site it is recommended that work be done on creating a sampling strategy that will enable the retrieval of a good proportion of the smaller fragments of bone from the site.

## APPENDIX 5

### Ceramic Building Material

by Kayt Brown, Oxford Archaeological Unit

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Eleven fragments of ceramic building material weighing 704 g were recovered from four contexts. Of this material a single cut-away tegula and another possible tegula were identified dating from the Roman period. Two further fragments could be assigned to the medieval period, and the remaining material comprised unidentifiable fragments.

Table 6: Quantification of the CBM

| Context      | Trench | Fill of            | Material | Type         | Wt (g)     | Date         |
|--------------|--------|--------------------|----------|--------------|------------|--------------|
| 26           | 3654TT | quarry/marl pit 27 | CBM      | Unidentified | 97         | Unidentified |
| 42           | 3643TT | Ditch 41           | CBM      | Unidentified | 78         | Unidentified |
| 42           | 3643TT | Ditch 41           | CBM      | Tile         | 133        | Medieval     |
| 52           | 3650TT | ?Pit 101           | CBM      | Tegula       | 202        | Roman        |
| 53           | 3650TT | Pit 54             | CBM      | ?Tegula      | 194        | Roman        |
| <b>Total</b> |        |                    |          |              | <b>704</b> |              |

## APPENDIX 6

### Iron Objects

by Kayt Brown, Oxford Archaeological Unit

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 Two iron nails and two unidentifiable pieces of iron were recovered from early medieval contexts.

Table 7: Quantification of the iron objects

| Context      | Trench | Fill of   | Material | Type   | Number | Wt (g) |
|--------------|--------|-----------|----------|--------|--------|--------|
| 85           | 3649TT | Ditch 39  | Iron     | Nail   | 1      | 5      |
| 53           | 3650TT | Pit 54    | Iron     | Nail   | 1      | 4      |
| 52           | 3650TT | ?Pit 101  | Iron     | Object | 1      | 9      |
| 62           | 3710TT | ?Ditch 63 | Iron     | Object | 1      | 2      |
| <b>Total</b> |        |           |          |        | 4      | 20g    |

## APPENDIX 7

### Other Finds

by Kayt Brown Oxford Archaeological Unit

#### 1 Introduction

- 1.1 A single fragment of a clay pipe stem was recovered from the latest fill of Ditch 33 in Trench 3640TT.

Table 8: Quantification of the finds

| Context      | Trench | Fill of  | Material  | Type | Wt (g)   |
|--------------|--------|----------|-----------|------|----------|
| 34           | 3640TT | Ditch 33 | Clay pipe | Stem | 3        |
| <b>Total</b> |        |          |           |      | <b>3</b> |