

Archaeological Investigation  
on Land Adjacent to  
34 Church Road,  
Piddington, Northamptonshire  
(NGR 480252, 254583)

Planning App. Ref. WNS/2021/0398/FUL

HER No. ENN110384

Souterrain Project SOU21-772

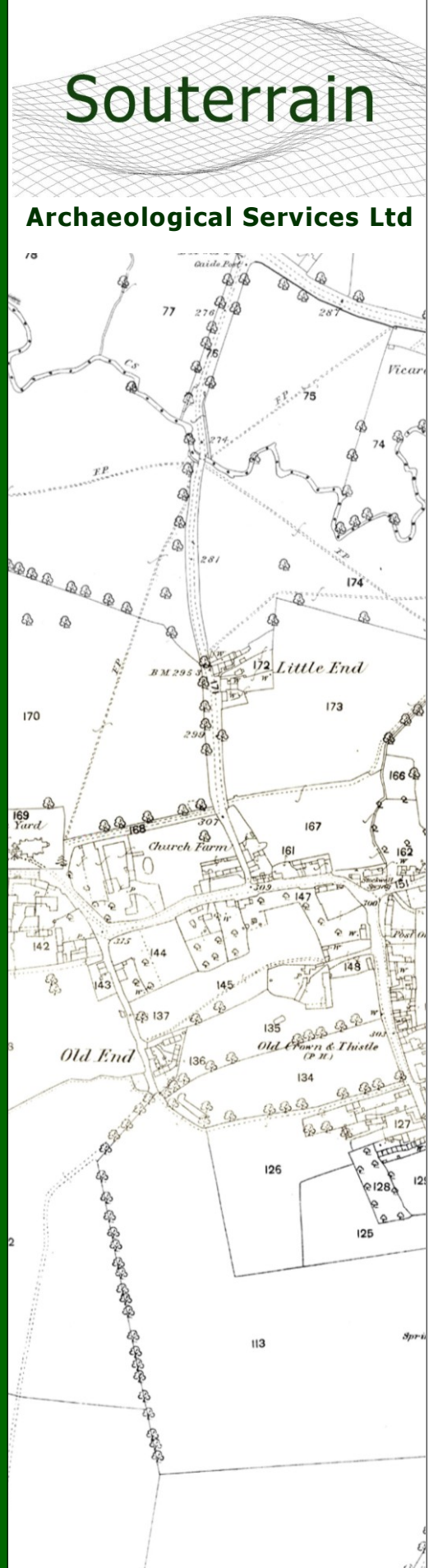


April 2022

**Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd**

for

**Mr Lloyd Glennon**  
(Piddington, Northants)



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*Produced for:*

**Mr Lloyd Glennon**  
(Piddington, Northants)

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Registered Office: 15 Grove Place, Bedford MK40 3JJ  
Registered in England and Wales No. 03394485  
e-mail: [gps@southern.biz](mailto:gps@southern.biz) [www.southern.biz](http://www.southern.biz)

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## **Summary**

*In October 2021 an archaeological investigation was carried out by Souterrain at a development plot for a new house at Church Road, Piddington village, Northamptonshire, where trial trenching in 2012 confirmed the existence of Romano-British and medieval ditches.*

*The investigation comprised survey and sample excavation of Romano-British and medieval features following a soil strip of the development footprint (c. 366 sq. m).*

### **Romano-British Period**

*The earliest features revealed in 2021 were dated approximately to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. They included possible cultivation plot divisions. Not all features contained diagnostic pottery, but several could reasonably be assigned to the Roman period based on comparable soil-fill attributes and spatial relationships with dated features. Even though the remains of a substantial Roman villa has long been known beyond the village periphery, c. 630 m to the south, the discoveries at Church Road represent the first appreciation of the Romano-British rural landscape beneath the village itself.*

### **High Medieval Period**

*The next tangible evidence of land use at the site occurred in the 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century. It includes a substantial boundary ditch, a calf burial, a large rectangular pit that may have been part of a structure, and the truncated remains of several rubbish-filled pits. Further pit-digging took place in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century or in the subsequent century. Most notably there was a substantial elongated pit of indeterminate function that had been in-filled with a rich variety of domestic and culinary waste. The combined biofactual and artefactual data provides an evocative insight to day-to-day medieval village life, economy and trade links.*

## **Preface**

*All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) cannot accept responsibility for errors of information or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of statements or opinions expressed in this document.*

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## **Interpretative Fieldwork:**

Martin Wilson BA Hons, MCIfA, MIEnvSc, FSASc  
Mercedes Planas BA Hons, MSc, MSc (Eng), MCIfA

## **Report:**

Mercedes Planas & Martin Wilson

## **Report Editor:**

Mercedes Planas

Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd  
Registered Office: 15 Grove Place, Bedford MK40 3JJ

www.souterrain.biz  
gps@souterrain.biz

## 1. INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 This document presents an illustrated record of archaeological investigations made during groundwork for a new dwelling on a plot of land adjacent to 34 Church Road, in the village of Piddington, Northamptonshire (the 'Application Site').
- 1.2 It has been prepared by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd (Souterrain) on behalf of Mr Lloyd Glennon, the Planning Applicant and Developer, in accordance with a Condition attached to a Planning Permission.
- 1.3 The report and archive are to be available as a public-accessible record.

## 2. LOCATION & ASPECT OF THE APPLICATION SITE

- 2.1 Piddington village in Northamptonshire, lies 7.6 km southeast of Northampton town centre, 0.5 km south of the village of Hackleton and 1.5 km north of Salcey Forest. The Application Site is located at the northern end of the historic core of the village, centred on national grid reference 480252, 254583 (Fig. 1).
- 2.2 The development plot is roughly rectangular, 30 m to 37.5 m wide and about 65 m long (c. 0.2 ha.). It fronts Church Road to the south, Piddington Lane to the east and Church Walk to the north, bounded on these three sides by a high stone wall. Its west side is bordered by a late 20<sup>th</sup> century detached house with enclosed garden. Prior to the commencement of works, the topography of the site was around 95.22 m to 95.65 m OD.
- 2.3 The underlying solid geology is mapped by the British Geological Survey<sup>1</sup> as the Blisworth Limestone Formation, and described as "*pale grey to off-white or yellowish limestones with thin marls and mudstones, fossiliferous, bioturbated peloidal, ooidal and shell-fragmental more-or-less argillaceous packstones and wackestones...*". This stratum is typically in the range of 6 to 7 m thick.

## 3. PLANNING BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Consent to develop the Church Road plot was first granted by the local planning authority<sup>2</sup> on the 8<sup>th</sup> of June 2000 (app. ref. /2000/0456/P). This was for the erection of a detached house with an attached double garage. The groundwork is recorded as having begun on the 6<sup>th</sup> of June 2005 and comprised a small amount of foundation trenching on the east side of the plot. But building work ceased thereafter. There was no requirement for archaeological investigation and no independent archaeological observations are known to have taken place.
- 3.2 In 2012, the landowner at that time explored the possibility of building four dwellings on the plot. This prompted an archaeological evaluation prior to the submission of an outline planning proposal (app. ref. S/2013/0233/OUT). The evaluation consisted of two 30 m trial trenches which revealed good survival of Roman and medieval remains in the northern part of the site, yet apparently poorer survival in the southern part where the ground had been reduced at some earlier date. The planning application was later withdrawn.
- 3.3 Subsequently, a new proposal for a single self-build dwelling and garage was granted planning permission with conditions in August 2021, by West Northamptonshire Council

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<sup>1</sup> British Geological Survey, <http://www.bgs.ac.uk>

<sup>2</sup> South Northamptonshire Council

(app. ref. WNS/2021/0398/FUL). The new building would occupy the same area as that proposed in 2000. Its proposed footprint was defined on drawings submitted with planning application<sup>3</sup>. One condition (No. 3) was that an appropriate programme of archaeological mitigation work must be put in place beforehand, to allow features of archaeological interest to be properly examined and recorded in line with national government policy (i.e. MHCG, 2019).

- 3.4 Based on the results of the 2013 evaluation, Liz Mordue, Archaeological Advisor for West Northamptonshire Council was able to recommend the scope of further necessary archaeological work. In this case it was to comprise “*the monitoring of development groundworks and the investigation and recording of any remains identified, followed by analysis and publication of the results*”. The archaeological work which followed (the subject of this report) conformed to a Written Scheme of Investigation approved by the Archaeological Advisor and endorsed by the local planning authority.

#### 4. ARCHAEOLOGICAL & HISTORICAL CONTEXT

*Note: The bold numbers in square brackets refer to Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER) numbers on Figures 3 and 4.*

##### ***The Roman Period***

- 4.1 The 2012 trial trenches at the Application Site uncovered the first evidence of Romano-British occupation and land-use at Piddington village. The archaeology comprised two ditches, one of which was 0.6 m deep and thought to be a property boundary. Artefacts included pottery, tile fragments and animal bone (Fig. 2). But activity of the period is unsurprising given the existence of a substantial Roman villa about 630 m southwest of the site, where excavations have been taking place over the past four decades (Fig. 3, [**HER 1673**]). The villa was occupied from the 1<sup>st</sup> century to the mid 4<sup>th</sup> century AD, and in its later phase was used for iron-working.
- 4.2 Knowledge of the villa hinterlands is gradually being acquired, in particular from the study of cropmarks on aerial photographs and by means of geophysical survey. The combined evidence indicates much wider settlement and land-use, with field systems, enclosures and possibly even kilns. There is also speculation of a first century Roman fort in the vicinity of the villa. The Application Site lies about 240 m east of the projected course of a Roman road, known to scholars as the *Viatores 172* (Fig. 3, [**HER 4826/1**]). The road is thought to have run between Woughton-on-the-Green (Bucks) and Hanslope (Bucks) with a branch off to Piddington. There has been no trace of it found so far at Piddington. But the paucity of evidence of the Roman period in the village itself is undoubtedly a reflection of few controlled archaeological investigations having taken place rather than a genuine absence of archaeology. The same is true for the medieval period.

##### **Medieval Piddington**

- 4.3 The village of Piddington most likely originated in the Anglo-Saxon era, its place-name being derived from the Old English personal name, *Pyda* (Mills 2003). It is presumed that the nucleated settlement was created during a period of widespread landscape reorganization in the latter part of the period, when dispersed small settlements and farmsteads were brought together to be centralized around church and manor house, surrounded by a planned open field system (c.f. Lewis, 2006, 191; Edgeworth 2007, 93). The purpose of this was most probably to improve social cohesion and increase productivity.

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<sup>3</sup> Ellis Architectural Design Drawings: 1362/2c & 1362/3c:



- 4.4 Prior to the Norman Conquest two freemen held *Pidentone* for Burgred, a Saxon overlord. By 1086, the tenant-in-chief was Countess Judith, King William's niece. The community consisted of eleven households (four villagers, five smallholders, a slave and a priest), possibly fifty people in total (*c.f.* Powell-Smith 2011). From 1066, its pre-Conquest value had doubled - to two pounds. The cultivable land amounted to four ploughlands, possibly between 400 and 480 acres. The other land was twenty acres of meadow and some woodland. The village men had two and half plough teams and another team belonged to the Gilbert de Blossewill, lord of the manor.
- 4.5 Today, the historic core of Piddington has a notable rectangular grid pattern of streets and paths, although the origin of this layout is uncertain. The church of St John the Baptist [3480/1/1] is located at the north end (Fig. 4), 130 m west of the Application Site. The earliest parts of the church date to the late 13<sup>th</sup> century, but given the presence of a priest in 1086 a much earlier foundation may be inferred. Also at the north end of the village is Manor Farm [3480/2/1; 3480/2/2], a 19<sup>th</sup> century complex which may overlie an antecedent manorial site, 170 m west of the Application Site.
- 4.6 The parish landscape was evidently transformed following an Act of Inclosure in 1782. But very little is known about the former open field landscape, which originated in the late Anglo-Saxon period. Relict parts of the open fields take the form of ridge and furrow earthworks, mostly beyond the village periphery, to the east, northeast and west (Fig. 4 [3477/0/4, 3477/0/1 & 3477/0/3]). The method of open field strip cultivation was still in widespread usage in the post-medieval period.
- 4.7 There is a hint on the earliest detailed map of Piddington that the present development site was originally part of the open fields. The map was made in 1778 to show Thomas Mercer's land-holdings (NA, MA 500). The layout and direction of cultivation strips are shown on all of the enclosed fields in Mercer's possession. The site was located at the east end of a partly-hedged enclosed field. No cultivation strips are shown since it was not owned by Mercer. The curvature of the field's southern boundary alongside Church Road strongly suggests that it respected the layout of a former medieval furlong field and, when created, was more or less aligned with the course of the cultivation strips (*selions*) it contained. This preserved the characteristic inverted 'S' of the medieval furlong that was formed by the wide turn of the oxen plough team. Where cultivation strips are shown elsewhere on the map several they have comparable boundaries. One of these was still extant in 1945 (visible on an aerial photograph) where ridge and furrow survived as earthworks on the north side of Church Walk<sup>4</sup>. The form is frequently a hallmark of pre-Parliamentary (i.e. pre-mid 18<sup>th</sup> century) piecemeal enclosures, and may easily date from the late medieval or Tudor period (late 15<sup>th</sup> to early 17<sup>th</sup> century) (*c.f.* Rackham 1986, 179).

#### **Manorial History**

- 4.8 The descent of the ancient manor, or lordship, has been traced by *Victoria History of the Counties*, as far as possible, down to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, although the later succession of land holdings is complicated. By the late 13<sup>th</sup> century the de Blossewill family had passed on the manor to the family of Morin. The Hospital of St John in Northampton acquired the advowson of Piddington in 1204, and by 1284 held the lordship of Morin, presumably severally, with the Prior of St. Andrew (Northampton). At some juncture prior to 1323, the lordship was acquired by John de Grey of Ruthin. In 1338, the messuage and farm lands of the de Grey family were alienated to the Hospital. The master of the hospital still held the tithes of Piddington in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century.

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<sup>4</sup> Google Historic Imagery 1/1/1945 [accessed 21.03.2022]

### Medieval Archaeology

- 4.9 To date, there have been no Anglo-Saxon settlement remains found in the village. Elements of Piddington's post-Conquest medieval settlement have been postulated here and there from aerial photography (Fig. 4). One such site is a possible enclosure beyond the village to the west [3480/0/2] (265 m southwest of the Application Site). Other elements have been lost to modern development. They include building platforms at Old End [3480/0/4], 170 m southwest of the Application Site, and building foundations seen with 13<sup>th</sup> century pottery east of Piddington Lane [3480/0/7] in 1979 (c. 70 m to the east).
- 4.10 Prior to the present investigation, archaeology has contributed very little to the picture. The most tangible medieval evidence in the village centre came from the two trial trenches at the Application Site in 2012 (*ante*, 3.2), where two ditches considered to be property boundaries were broadly dated by pottery to the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries (Fig. 2 & Fig. 4, [7982]).

### Historical context of the Application Site

- 4.11 The first edition Ordnance survey map of 1885 shows that a terraced row occupied the southern part of the site, a little back from the street frontage (Fig. 5). To the rear was a row of outhouses, probably including privies. An archive photograph (Williams 2018) shows the cottages, known as Workhouse Row was a substantial two-storied stone-built structure with a thatched roof. Historic mapping shows that the row was demolished at some time between 1958 and 1975. The rubble was subsequently removed, possibly when ground reduction for a new house took place in 2000.

## 5. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 5.1 The key research focus of the investigation would be to attempt to further clarify the nature and extent of Romano-British and medieval activity which was located by evaluation at the Application Site in 2012 (*ante*, 4.1). Wherever possible the Investigation would attempt to recover archaeological data that would contribute to the significant research areas, themes and priorities addressed by current *Regional Research Agenda* (Knight, D, Vyner, B. & Allen, C. 2012).
- 5.2 The broad objectives of the investigation were defined as follows:
- i) establish the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation in the development site;
  - ii) establish the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding contemporary landscapes;
  - iii) recover artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region;
  - iv) recover palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions, this to be an intrinsic part of the investigation; and
  - v) gain an understanding of former land-use in this part of Piddington village.

## 6. INVESTIGATION RESULTS

### Notes:

*For consistency the Munsell colour system is used throughout for soil descriptions.  
Photographs referred in the text are prefixed by 'P'.*

### General Fieldwork Procedure

- 6.1 The fieldwork was carried out over the course of nine days between the 12<sup>th</sup> October and 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2021. The area of excavation covered a total of c. 366 sq. m. The investigation was conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Written Scheme of Investigation and the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' Code of Conduct and *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Watching Brief* (rev. 2020) and *Standard and Guidance for an Archaeological Excavation* (rev. 2020).

### Ground Conditions

- 6.2 The building plot site had been cleared of dense vegetation a few months prior to the investigation and was under scrub and grass (P1). Interestingly, photographs in the planning application case file (app. ref. /2000/0456/P), taken in 2005, show the area of the proposed house under rough grass, yet already at a lower level than the surrounding ground. It is uncertain when ground reduction took place, but presumably after 2000.
- 6.3 A thin layer of topsoil was evidently spread back over the area after the aforementioned ground reduction. Thus the removal of topsoil (001) directly exposed the geological stratum and truncated archaeological features (P2). All features were 'negative' (e.g. ditches, gullies, pits and post-holes), cut into the geological stratum. In the western half of the site archaeological features were exposed between 94.62 m OD (N) and 94.87 m OD (S), while in the eastern half they were encountered between 94.60 m OD (N) and 94.50 m (S). The topsoil (001) over the area of excavation was 0.1 - 0.15 m thick. It consisted of sandy clay soil with abundant roots of the recent shrubs and frequent patches of coal-ash, the latter presumably from the 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages and outbuildings (probably wash houses and coal stores) that had once occupied the site (*ante*, 4.10).

### Notes on Feature-fill Soil Types

- 6.4 The geology varied between light yellowish brown (10YR 6/4) to yellowish brown (10YR 5/4) calcareous clay with pieces of limestone, or cornbrash limestone. Against this background, archaeological features were identifiable by difference of colour and soil type. Notably, there were two prevalent feature fill-soil types.
- 6.5 It was observed that fills of features containing solely Roman pottery were in the colour range brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR3/3). The soil types of these features, without variation, consisted of compact, sandy, gritty calcareous clay with frequent small rounded pieces of limestone. The cut edges of features were sometimes indistinct against the geological background on account of colour similarity, and remained so after surface cleaning and weather exposure throughout the two week excavation.
- 6.6 Conversely, the fills of features containing medieval pottery were clearly contrasted against the geological stratum. These fell within the colour range of dark grey (10YR 4/1) to very dark grey (10YR 3/1). They invariably consisted of fairly compact sandy clay-loam.
- 6.7 Since not all of the features excavated contained diagnostic pottery, fill soil traits together with morphological characteristics comparable with dateable features, provide a reasonable chronological indicator. In this sense it was anticipated that differential assemblages of carbonised plant macrofossils would provide corroborative evidence. However, most of the dated Roman feature-fills contained intrusive medieval material, owing to large volumes of carbonised plant remains deposited at the site in the medieval period and subsequent soil disturbance (i.e. a combination of bioturbation and anthropogenic activity, the latter including cultivation, construction, occupation and demolition) in later periods (*post*, 7.22 - 7.31).

### Romano-British features

- 6.8 A ditch or gully [006] crossed the western part of the excavation area, aligned NNW/SSE for most of its course and exposed for a distance of 14.72 m (Fig. 6; P3). Three exploratory segments were excavated (Figs. 6 & 7, Sections 3 to 5), which securely dated the feature to the Romano-British period. The feature is assumed to have been fairly truncated, its width varying between 0.68 - 0.78 m and depth between 0.12 to 0.2 m. The slope of its sides was also variable, between 35° and 65°, while the base fairly concave. Towards the north baulk, its course changed to the NW for just over 2 m.
- 6.9 The northernmost segment (Fig. 6, S3; P4 & P5) revealed a concentration of Romano-British coarse-ware pottery sherds, 66 pieces in all. All of the pieces were found lying flat in the base of feature and close to the baulk. All but one piece were derived from just two cooking pots and a storage jar. The cooking pots sherds have no abrasion, while the jar sherds are only lightly abraded. The overall assemblage suggests that their deposition took place at sometime in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD. Throughout the feature there was a single homogeneous fill (Fig. 7: Sections 3 to 5, contexts 017, 027 & 007), its attributes as previously described (*ante*, 6.5). The central excavated segment (Fig. 6, S4; P6) was devoid of finds. A single rim sherd from a c. 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD coarse-ware jar was found in the southern segment (Fig. 6, S5).
- 6.10 Very small quantities of carbonised cereal grains were present in the soil samples from the north and south segments (contexts 017 & 007 respectively), which include barley, free-threshing wheat (FTW) and wheat (*post*, 7.22 & Table 7). The presence of free-threshing type wheat raises questions, for it is not typical of Romano-British contexts; although often registered as a minor crop or arable weed contaminant. Whilst there is the possibility that this material could be in context, the abundant carbonised cereal assemblage from adjacent medieval features suggests that it is most likely to be intrusive material. The environmental specialist considers that intensive deposition of material during the medieval period would have resulted in grains being scattered far and wide. Equally, they could have been disturbed from medieval features by various kinds of later activity. Once in the active soil horizons, they would naturally sink through the profile - mainly due to earthworms, but also other biological processes (pers. comm. John Summers, 2022).
- 6.11 Five other linear features demonstrated the same soil-fill profile, comprised of brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR3/3) compact, sandy and gritty calcareous clay with frequent small rounded pieces of limestone; which were thus considered to be Roman. These were features [002], [008], [018], [033] and [035] (Fig. 6). In addition, there were four possible post-holes, ([045], [048], [041] and [039]) with the same soil-fill attributes, but no meaningful distribution.
- 6.12 Three of the linear features ([008], [018] & [033]) were narrow and gully-like, parallel (NNW/SSE) and about 5 m apart (Fig. 6). All were heavily truncated. Only short sections of each feature were extant, owing to either partial exposure or incomplete survival. Gully [008] was c. 5.6 m long and ran along the west side of the aforementioned Roman ditch/gully [006], with a poorly defined southern terminus. Its northern extent was curtailed by a large medieval ditch [010]. It was c. 0.4 - 0.5 m wide and up to 0.19 m deep (Fig. 7, Section 5; P7). The chronological relationship of features [008] and [006] could not be determined, although their proximity suggests that one may have been a re-affirmation of the other; the earliest being an extant boundary feature. Gully [018] was c. 6.95 m long and continued beyond the north baulk (P15). Its southern extent was curtailed by a late 19<sup>th</sup> century outbuilding. It was c. 0.5-0.65 m wide and 0.06-0.12 m deep (Fig. 7, S6 & S24; & P16). A sherd of rill-decorated shelly-ware was recovered, a type which falls within the broad date range of late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD to 4<sup>th</sup> century AD. The central gully [033] coincided with the location of one of the 2012 evaluation trenches. Only the extreme lower portion of it

survived: c. 0.2 m wide and to a depth of 0.03 m (Fig. 7, S18; P23). No artefacts or carbonised plant remains were found in features [018] and [033]. The bases of all three features were occasionally flattish, though largely irregular, most probably on account of the resistance of the cornbrash geology when originally dug. It is difficult to assign a definite function to the features, yet their spatial arrangement seems to suggest cultivation plot divisions.

- 6.13 Portions of two other linear features of probable Romano-British origin were present in the northeast part of the excavation area (Fig. 6, [002] and [035]). These were heavily truncated. Feature [002] was gully-like and aligned broadly east-west with a terminal at its west end (P11). It was c. 1.14 m wide by c. 0.16 m deep. About 2.9 m of the feature was exposed in the excavation area, its eastern extent continuing beyond the baulk. There were no diagnostic artefacts, although the environmental sample yielded carbonised wheat grains and non-cereal *taxa* commonly associated with fertile agricultural soils. Feature [035] was also possibly a gully (Fig. 6). It was aligned WNW/ESE and discernible for c. 7.14 m, but interrupted by the foundations of a 19<sup>th</sup> century outbuilding which denied the establishment of its relationship with gully [018]. The feature was generally 0.5 m wide while its depth above the cornbrash varied between 0.02 - 0.09 m (Fig. 7, S17 & S23; P21 & P22). Two small sherds of possible Romano-British coarse-ware were recovered from its fill (036). Carbonised plant remains comprised an indeterminate grain of cereal and a large pea or bean, material considered to be intrusive from the medieval period.

#### **Medieval Features (12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century)**

- 6.14 In the western part of the excavation area a substantial ditch [010] was uncovered (Fig. 6). This was 1.6 - 1.74 m wide and exposed for a distance of c. 13.2 m. It was broadly orientated northeast/southwest with a discernible southward curve. Its existence was revealed in the 2012 evaluation, yet at that time there were no artefacts to confirm its date and the extent of its survival beyond the evaluation trench was unknown. In 2021, two sample segments were excavated through the ditch (P8 - P10). Its sides were sloped at 30° – 35° to a relatively flat base, at a depth varying between 0.24 and 0.36 m (Fig. 7, S1 & S2). It is noted that where sampled in the evaluation trench the ditch was recorded as 1.2 m wide (although a photograph in the report shows it as c. 1.8 m) and 0.61 m deep (Carlyle 2013, fig. 6 & 2.11), which gives a good indication of the level of modern truncation.
- 6.15 There were two discernible fills within the ditch. The primary fill (012), up to 0.14 m thick, was devoid of artefacts and most probably an erosion product from the ditch sides. It comprised of dark greyish brown (10YR/4/2) compact stony and gritty sand. The upper fill (011/028), c. 0.13- 0.22 m thick, was composed of fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam with abundant modern rootlet disturbance. The ditch appears to have been in-filled with domestic refuse and soil, with no indications of it having silted up. The pottery assemblage from the upper fill consists of 31 sherds, 29 of which were shelly coarse-ware derived from 15 different vessels, which collectively provide a reasonably sound 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century date for the disuse of the ditch. A single sherd of residual Anglo-Saxon pottery (10<sup>th</sup> -11<sup>th</sup> century) was present. The soil samples from the ditch contained a range of carbonised grains and seeds indicative of local cultivation dominated by bread wheat, but also incorporating hulled six-row barley, oats, rye and pulses (*post*, 7.31, Table 7). A few cattle bones were also present.
- 6.16 Cut into the cornbrash in the south-eastern part of the excavation area was a distinctly rectangular pit [025], approximately 3.3 m by 2.5 m (Fig. 6, P24 - P27). A 19<sup>th</sup> century sectional clay land-drain was visible in the surface of the pit fill. The pit survived to a depth of 0.38 - 0.42 m and it is uncertain how much of it had been lost to modern truncation. The upper sides were inclined at 60/80°, the lower at c. 40°, while the base was fairly flat but

uneven (Fig. 8, Section 12). It was filled with a homogeneous fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam (026), interpreted as deliberate back-fill of soil and domestic refuse. Notably, there was no initial silting and no sign of erosion from its sides. The original function of the pit was not determined. There was no basal residue that might indicate a specific processing activity and no indication of a wooden framework or lining had it been a cellar.

- 6.17 Pottery recovered from the fill of the pit consists of nine fragments of shelly coarse-ware from three vessels, including two bowls, all of which date to the 12<sup>th</sup> /13<sup>th</sup> century (*post*, 7.10 Table 3, 026). Other domestic refuse included bones from sheep or goats and cattle. The soil sample revealed large numbers of carbonised cereal grains with free-threshing type as the dominant variety. Other cultivated local produce included wheat, oats, barley, and peas or beans (*post*, 7.31, Table 7).
- 6.18 A third feature, considered to be of broadly the same age, was a calf burial [023] in the north-eastern part of the excavation area (Fig. 6). Its carcass had been squeezed into a small, purpose-dug pit measuring c. 1.26 m by 0.86 m (P17). The skeleton was only partial and minus the skull, probably removed during the previous ground reduction: the pit was just c. 0.2 - 0.24 m deep. The soil around the bones (024) consisted of dark grey (10YR/4/1) sandy clay with frequent stones and pieces of weathered limestone, from which cereal grains were recovered compatible with a medieval date (*post*, 7.31, Table 7). Four worn sherds of shelly coarse-ware were recovered, including a rim sherd from of a 12<sup>th</sup> /13<sup>th</sup> century bowl or jar. Also within the fill was a single bone (tibia) of a cat.

#### **Medieval Features (13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century)**

- 6.19 In close proximity to the aforementioned deep rectangular pit (*ante*, 6.16) were two cut features of slightly later medieval date. One of these was a small truncated pit [029], irregular in plan (c. 1.4 m by 1.8 m) with a maximum depth of 0.18 m (Fig. 6, Fig. 8, Section 11). The limestone bedrock in the centre of the pit was notably reddened from heat (P20). It is possible that the feature was originally a fire-pit of some sort, although the actual function remains obscure. It contained a homogeneous fill (030) comprised of fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam, which appeared to be deliberate back-fill. Just three pieces of pottery were found: a much-abraded late Saxon sherd (9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> centuries); an abraded piece of 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century shelly-ware and a less-abraded piece of Potterspuryware (13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century). The range and abundance of carbonised plant remains is in-keeping with a medieval date.
- 6.20 The other feature was a substantial elongated pit [031], cut into the cornbrash in the southeast part of the excavation area (Fig. 6, P28 - P30). It was possibly sub-rectangular, c. 2.9 m wide and up to 8.8 m long, though continued beyond the southeast baulk. It appears to have been previously partly buried under the 19<sup>th</sup> century cottages. Approximately 14.22 sq.m of the feature was exposed, 50% of which was investigated in two segments. It survived to a depth of 0.49 m. Its upper sides were steeply cut around 80° for up to 0.2 m, thereafter sloping generally around 25° to a broad concave base (Fig. 8, Sections 13 & 14; P28). In the baulk along the south-eastern side of the pit (Section 14) was an undisturbed layer of late 19<sup>th</sup> / early 20<sup>th</sup> century soil, 0.15 – 0.25 m thick, which included a 19<sup>th</sup> land drain (Fig. 8, Section 14). This implied that little of the pit was lost on account of modern ground reduction.
- 6.21 Its fill (032) was composed of a homogeneous fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam with abundant small to medium-sized pieces of weathered limestone. Overall, the fill had the character of domestic refuse and culinary waste. The soil

samples contained an abundance of carbonised cereal remains, dominated by free-threshing type wheat, including stalks and stems (*post*, 7.31, Table 7). Other cultivated foodstuffs included barley, rye, oats, peas or beans. The bones of consumed animal bones consisted of sheep or goats, pig and cattle. Other indications of diet were two fish vertebrae, possibly herring, and two marine oyster shells. Small pieces of oak roundwood, some with leaf buds, imply loppings gathered for fuel in winter or early spring. The assemblage of pottery sherds mainly comprised unabraded pieces of Potterspury ware - which suggests that the pit was in-filled at some juncture in the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century or the 14<sup>th</sup> century. The mix of material would seem to suggest that it was transferred to the pit from a midden mound, but it is not possible to determine how long it had taken to accumulate before re-deposition.

- 6.22 At the southern end of the pit there was an upper deposit of probable ash-derived clayey loam with frequent pieces of weathered limestone (Fig. 8, Section 14, 050). But other than this, there were no discernible tip lines which might denote that the pit was in-filled over a period of time. Considering the original function of the pit, if not for rubbish disposal, there was no indication. There was no lining, which might imply a particular production process and no residue in its base, for example carbonised wood shavings had it been a saw pit. Equally, there was no sign of primary silting or side erosion, had the pit left open for a time.

#### **Probable Medieval Features**

- 6.23 Just over a metre to the southwest of the calf burial [023] was a very truncated sub-circular pit [013], roughly 1.24 m diameter and 0.19 - 0.23 m deep (Figs. 6 & 8, Sections 8 & 16), which appeared to have ephemeral remains of three post-settings within its perimeter; the suggestion that some form of tripod structure had stood above it. A medieval date was strongly inferred from its fill (014) which contained several cereal grain including free-threshing wheat and hulled barley, pea seeds and the mandible of a pig. About 3 m from pit [013], near to the northeast corner of the excavation area, was another very shallow sub-circular truncated pit (c. 1.5 m x 1.38 m x <0.08 m deep) with a flat base (Figs. 6 & 8, Section 7). Similarly, its fill-soil profile (005) comprised of very dark grey brown (10YR 3/1) sandy clay-loam. It also contained a range of carbonised cereal grains (free-threshing wheat, and oats) indicative of a medieval date. A single bone from red squirrel was present.

## **7. THE FINDS**

### **Romano-British Pottery**

*by Martin Wilson*

*(Identification of local fabric-types by Jackie Wells MA)*

- 7.1 Pottery of the Roman period was recovered from four excavated contexts: a total of 70 sherds from just 8 vessels, with an overall weight of 1353 grams. None of the material is from a residual context. The majority of the assemblage came from two excavated segments through ditch/gully [006]. In each instance the sherds lay flat in the base of the feature, in an otherwise homogenous fill. The largest concentration of sherds came from the northern end of the feature (017) close to the baulk: 66 sherds from just four vessels (1339 g.), while a single sherd of Nene Valley greyware came from a segment (007) (Fig. 10, 1) excavated c. 13 m to the south. Notably, a third segment excavated in-between was devoid of pottery.
- 7.2 The vessel types comprise cooking pots with lid-seated rims and wide-mouthed jars, which overall would fit within a 2<sup>nd</sup> century date (Fig. 10, 4 & 5). The majority of sherds from context (017) are from just three vessels, each with a number of adjoining sherds. None of

the pieces have abrasion. The concentration of such material would seem to indicate domestic activity somewhere to the northwest of the excavation area. The rest of the pottery came from features to the east of ditch/gully [006]. It is meagre, but includes a body sherd of shelly-ware with rilled decoration from linear feature/gully [018] (Fig. 10, 3, context 020). It is quite likely a product from Harrold (Beds), 14.5 km to the east, but without knowing the vessel form it is difficult to narrow down the date, since rill-decoration was a characteristic of Harrold products from the late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD though to the 4<sup>th</sup> century (Brown 1994, 105).

### 7.3 Table 1. Roman Period Pottery Types and Chronology

(Note: Fabric codes denote Northamptonshire Type Series. Where not available, the Bedford type 'RO' fabric code is used)

Context No.	Common name	Fabric Code	Sherd count	MNV	Remarks	Date	Weight (grams)
007	Nene valley greyware	RO6A	1	1	Wide mouthed jar with small beaded rim, 200mm dia	Prob. CII	11
017	Reduced black sand-tempered	RO7B	9	1	Lid-seated cooking pot, heavily sooted. Rim dia. 160mm (c. 40%). unabraded	Prob. CII	155
	Red-brown harsh sand-tempered	RO14	28	1	Body & body/base sherds. ?storage jar	?CII-CIII	719
	Oxidised calcareous sandyware	No code	28	1	Light abrasion. Lid-seated cooking pot, creamy buff, Rim dia. 200mm (c. 52%). unabraded	c. CI-II	454
	Nene valley greyware	RO6A	1	1	Wide-mouthed jar with recurved rim, c.180mm dia	c.II-CIII	11
020	Shellyware	RO13	1	1	Body sherd with rilling, abraded	c. late I - III	2
036	Oxidised sand-tempered ware	No code	1	1	v. small rim flake	Poss. Roman	<1
	Non-specific Shellyware		1	1	v. small body sherd	Poss. Roman	<1

### 7.4 Table 2. Roman Pottery Quantification

(EMNV= estimated minimum number of vessels)

Context	No. of sherds	Weight (grams)	EMNV
007	1	11	1
017	66	1339	4
020	1	2	1
036	2	1	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>1353</b>	<b>8</b>



**Medieval Pottery**      *by Martin Wilson*

- 7.5 A total of 77 sherds of medieval pottery were recovered from the investigation. These have an overall weight of 1097 grams, while the minimum number of vessels (MNV) represented is estimated to be 40.
- 7.6 The assemblage falls into two broad chronological groups: the late Saxon period (9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century) and the High Medieval period (12<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century). The late Saxon pottery is wholly residual, consisting of four sherds from different vessels. They include a body sherd decorated with applied strip and impressed circles (Fig. 11, 1). The High Medieval pottery may be sub-divided into two distinct chronological groups: 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century and the mid 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century. It was recovered from seven features, though predominantly from three of these: a large boundary ditch feature [010] (contexts 011 & 028); a large rectangular pit [025] (context 026); and a very large sub-rectangular feature [031] (context 032 & 037).
- 7.7 The majority of the 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century assemblage is composed of unglazed, shelly limestone-tempered coarse-wares (fabric 330). Surface colour varies from grey or buff to light orange and they have a light grey reduced core (Fig. 11, 3-6). There are three known local production centres for this ware: Yardley Hastings (Northants) 8.3 km<sup>5</sup> to the east-northeast of the site (Brown & Foard 1979, 33-4; Brown 1994, 165); Olney-Hyde (Bucks) 9.5 km to the west (Mynard 1984, 56-88), and Harrold (Beds) c. 17 km to the east-northeast (Hall, 1972, 23-32).
- 7.8 Twenty-nine pieces of shelly coarse-ware from 15 different vessels (436 g) came from a homogeneous fill in the large boundary ditch [010]. The assemblage includes a body sherd with roulette decoration and rim sherds from two cooking pots or jars (Fig. 11). It is considered to provide a fairly secure date for the date in which the ditch became redundant. This is also the case for the large rectangular pit [025] from which nine sherds from three separate vessels have either slight or no abrasion. They include two bowls that have rim form comparisons elsewhere (Table 3, 026). In addition, four small worn body sherds from different vessels came from the burial pit of a calf [023], (context 024). A further three much-abraded sherds were residual (contexts 032 & 037). Also of 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century date is a single residual sherd from the Lyveden / Stanion area, which was found in a shallow pit [029] (context 030), the latter which is considered to date from the 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century. This was a major centre of medieval pottery production in north-eastern Northamptonshire located c. 40 km to the northeast of Piddington.
- 7.9 Investigation of the large sub-rectangular feature [031] produced securely 2 sherds of Potterspuryware (f.329) from 6 individual vessels. This type of pottery was being produced in the 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century at the village of that name, c. 13 km by road to the south west. Typically, the vessels are fine and relatively thin-walled (Fig. 11, 7, 8 & 10). A number of the sherds are unglazed. The glazed pieces are body sherds from three jugs or pitchers. They are either wholly or partially covered in green lead, one with mottling and another with a neck sherd with incised wavy line decoration (032). A single sherd of an unglazed jug in Brill/Boarstall-type ware (Fig. 11, 9) supports a secure date of 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century for the infill /disuse of the feature.

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<sup>5</sup> Distances given by former roads

7.10 **Table 3. Medieval Pottery Types and Chronology**

(Note: Fabric codes denote Northamptonshire Type Series. Where not available, the Bedford type fabric code is used)

Context No.	Common name	Fabric Code	Sherd count	MNV	Remarks	Date range	Wt. (g)
011	shelly coarse-ware	F330	2	2	bodysherd with roulette decoration; base/sherd	C12 / C13	20
	St Neots-type ware	F100	1	1	bodysherd, v. abraded	C9-C11	3
	Fine sandy coarseware	Beds C2; F360	1	1	bodysherd	C12 / C13	33
024	shelly coarse-ware	F330	4	4	small abraded sherds inc. rim of bowl or jar	C12 / C13	27
026	shelly coarse-ware	F330	9	3	inc. 2 bowl rims: 1. <i>c.f.</i> Baker & Hassall, 1979, Fig. 95, Type 21, p.161. see also fig. 113, 381; 2. <i>c.f.</i> Baker & Hassall, 1979, Fig. 95, Type 22, p.161	C12 / C13	209
028	shelly coarse-ware	F330	27	13	inc. rim sherd of cooking pot/jar <i>c.f.</i> Mynard, 1984, Olney A form type CP1 &, Fig. 7, 24	C12 / C13	416
030	Lyveden/ Stanion ware	F319	1	1	small unglazed body sherd	C12 / C13	4
	Potterspurys ware	F329	1	1	small unglazed body sherd	C13 / C14	6
	St Neots-type ware	F100	1	1	small abraded bodysherd	C9-C11	6
032	Potterspurys ware	F329	4	1	bodysherds, jug green lead glaze with mottled	C13 / C14	33
	Potterspurys ware	F329	9	1	bodysherds, jug /pitcher partial green lead glaze , neck sherd with incised wavy line decoration	C13 / C14	143
	Potterspurys ware	F329	1	1	body/base sherd, green lead glazed interior, bowl	C13 / C14	21
	Potterspurys ware	F329	4	2	unglazed, body sherds	C13 / C14	28
	Brill/ Boarstall-type ware	F324	1	1	rim, jug prob. unglazed	C13 / C14	14
	shelly coarse-ware	F330	2	1	small abraded body sherds	C12 / C13	9
	Late medieval oxidised	F325/F378	1	1	rim. bowl? light orange oxidised surface, grey core	C14- C15	16
	St Neots-type ware	F100	1	1	rim sherd, ?bowl v. abraded	C9-C11	14
	St Neots-type ware	F100	1	1	body sherd with applied band 10-13mm wide with 3 impressed circles 8mm dia., 16mm apart	C9-C11	30
Coarse sandyware	Beds C594	1	1	v.small sherd	medieval	1	
037	Potterspurys ware	F329	4	1	jug with splashed green lead glaze, inc rim sherd	C13 / C14	52
	shelly coarse-ware	F330	1	1	v. abraded body sherd	C12 / C13	12

7.11 **Table 4. Medieval Pottery Quantification**

(EMNV= estimated minimum number of vessels)

Context	No. of sherds	Weight (grams)	EMNV
011	4	56	4
024	4	27	4
026	9	209	3
028	27	416	13
030	3	16	3
032	25	309	11
037	5	64	2
<b>Totals</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>1097</b>	<b>40</b>

**Animal Bones** by Matilda Holmes PhD

7.12 Thirty-seven fragments of animal bones and teeth (plus the remains of a calf) were recorded from seven contexts dated to either the Roman or medieval periods. The condition of bones varied from fair to poor in Roman features, and good to fair in medieval contexts. A few fragments from both periods had been gnawed, suggesting that some bones were not buried immediately following discard, but were available for dogs to chew. The assemblage is too small for detailed analysis, although the following basic findings can be summarised.

**Roman**

7.13 Animal remains were recovered from the Roman gully/ plot boundary (contexts 007 and 017), including cattle, pig and horse/ donkey (Table 5). A dog canine was also recovered from the samples (Table 6).

**Medieval (12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries)**

7.14 A larger sample was recovered from the medieval ditch [010] (contexts 011 /028) and medieval pits (contexts -026 and 032). Cattle and sheep/ goat remains were recorded in similar quantities, as well as a pig scapula (Table 5). Two sheep/ goat mandibles were complete enough to calculate wear stages, indicating the presence of a juvenile animal at wear stage D and an elderly animal at wear stage H.

7.15 A near-complete skeleton of a calf was recovered from pit [023], comprising thoracic and lumbar vertebrae, ribs and limbs (scapula to 2<sup>nd</sup> phalanx and pelvis to 2<sup>nd</sup> phalanx). Only two of the eight third phalanges were present, and no skull, mandibles or neck vertebrae, which implies that the animal may have been skinned or the head removed prior to burial, although no butchery marks were observed.

7.16 Environmental samples produced further finds of cattle and pig as well as micro-mammals, frog/ toad, red squirrel, cat, and two fish vertebrae, possible from herring (Table 6). The red squirrel find implies the presence of woodland close to the site, or the presence of an animal culled from its pelt.

7.17 **Table 5. Animal Bones: summary data**

Context	Description	Date	N	Taxon	Element
007	Gully	Roman	6	Large mammal	Longbone fragment
007	Gully	Roman	1	Pig	Femur
007	Gully	Roman	2	Medium mammal	Longbone fragment
017	Gully	Roman	1	Equid	Maxillary tooth
017	Gully	Roman	1	Cattle	Radius
011	Ditch	C12/C13	1	Large mammal	Rib
028	Ditch	C12/C13	1	Cattle	Astragalus
024	Burial	C12/C13	1	Cattle	Partial skeleton
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Medium mammal	Pelvis
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Sheep/ goat	Tibia
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Sheep/ goat	Tibia
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Goat	Horn core
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Cattle	Tibia
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Cattle	Metacarpal
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Cattle	Tibia
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Sheep/ goat	Mandible
026	Pit	C12/C13	1	Sheep/ goat	Mandible
032	Linear pit	C13/C14	4	Medium mammal	Rib
032	Linear pit	C13/C14	2	Large mammal	Rib
032	Linear pit	C13/C14	1	Medium mammal	Mandible
032	Linear pit	C13/C14	3	Large mammal	Longbone fragment
032	Linear pit	C13/C14	1	Sheep/ goat	Mandible
032	Linear pit	C13/C14	1	Pig	Scapula
032	Linear pit	C13/C14	1	Sheep/ goat	Maxillary tooth
032	Linear pit	C13/C14	1	Sheep/ goat	Scapula

7.18 **Table 6: Summary of animal remains identified from environmental samples**

Context	Description	Date	N	Taxon	Element
038	Linear	?Roman	1	Canid	Tooth
005	Pit	?medieval	1	Red squirrel	Tibia
014	Pit	?medieval	1	Pig	Mandible
011	Ditch/ field boundary	C12 /C13	1	Cattle	Mandibular tooth
024	Burial	C12 /C13	1	Cat	Tibia
026	Pit	C12 /C13	3	Frog/ toad	Long bone
026	Pit	C12 /C13	2	Frog/ toad	Vertebra
026	Pit	C12 /C13	3	Micro-mammal	Long bone
026	Pit	C12 /C13	1	Pig	Maxillary tooth
026	Pit	C12 /C13	2	Micro-mammal	Long bone
028	Ditch/ field boundary	C12 /C13	1	Cattle	Calcaneus
028	Ditch/ field boundary	C12 /C13	1	Pig	Mandibular tooth
032	Linear pit	C13 /C14	1	Micro-mammal	Vertebra
032	Linear pit	C13 /C14	2	Fish ?herring	Vertebra

## Environmental Samples

by John Summers PhD

### Introduction

- 7.19 During archaeological investigations of land at 34 Church Road, Piddington, by Souterrain Archaeological Services, nineteen bulk samples for environmental archaeological investigation were taken. The samples were submitted to Wardell Armstrong LLP (WA) for processing and analysis. The excavated remains have been spot dated to the Roman (2<sup>nd</sup>-3<sup>rd</sup> centuries AD) and medieval (12<sup>th</sup>-14<sup>th</sup> centuries AD) periods. This report presents the results from the recorded bulk sample light fractions and discusses the significance of any remains identified.

### Methods

- 7.20 Samples were processed using standard flotation methods. The light fractions were washed onto a mesh of 500µm (microns), while the heavy fractions were sieved to 1mm. The dried light fractions were sorted under a low power stereomicroscope (x10-x30 magnification). Botanical and molluscan remains were identified and recorded using reference literature (Cappers *et al.* 2006; Jacomet 2006; Kerney and Cameron 1979; Kerney 1999) and a reference collection of modern seeds was available as necessary. Potential contaminants, such as modern roots, seeds and invertebrate fauna were also recorded in order to gain an insight into possible disturbance of the deposits.

### Results

- 7.21 The data from the bulk sample light fractions are presented in Table 7. Plant macrofossils were preserved by carbonisation only, with no evidence for anaerobic waterlogging or mineralisation. Shells of terrestrial molluscs were rare, which is indicative of slightly acidic sediments on the site.

### Roman

- 7.22 Nine samples were from deposits of Roman or probable Roman date, four of which contained carbonised plant macrofossils. Cereal grains were the most frequently recorded and most numerous, with free-threshing type wheat (*Triticum aestivum/turgidum* type) and barley (*Hordeum* sp.) identified. Pea/ bean seeds (large Fabaceae) were also identified in two samples. Other non-cereal taxa included brome grass (*Bromus* sp.) and fat hen (*Chenopodium album*), which probably originated as arable weeds. The presence of free-threshing type wheat is not typical of the Roman period, although it is often recorded as a minor crop or arable weed contaminant. However, given the abundant medieval carbonised cereal assemblage (see below), it is probable that these remains are intrusive from later activity on the site. Common fragments of coal in the samples, which one would expect to be post-medieval in origin, is also an indication of intrusive remains which probably moved through the stratigraphic profile with biological activity (bioturbation) or other ground disturbance, such as cultivation. Modern rootlets were recorded as common to abundant in the bulk sample light fractions, which is an indication of biological activity extending into the archaeological horizons, which could have been responsible for the movement of some smaller carbonised items.
- 7.23 The interpretation of some of the Roman features as cultivation trenches may, in part, explain the low density or absence of carbonised plant remains of probable Roman origin, perhaps due to the site being located away from core areas of Roman occupation.

### Medieval

- 7.24 The eight samples of medieval date were different in character to those of Roman origin, containing carbonised plant remains in generally quite high concentrations. Carbonised cereal remains were dominated by free-threshing type wheat grains (*Triticum aestivum/turgidum* type), with large numbers in pit fills (026) and (032). In pit fills (032) and (037), remains of bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum*) rachis were present, which implies that this was the dominant wheat variety. This is logically based on its role as the primary bread grain of the period (e.g. Stone 2006). Other cereals commonly recorded were hulled barley, which included asymmetric grains typical of six-row barley (*Hordeum vulgare* var. *vulgare*), and oat (*Avena* sp.). occasional rye (*Secale cereale*) grains were present but these do not appear to have constituted a significant element of the diet/ economy. Seeds of pea/ bean were also common and likely to have been part of the local diet and economy. Although none were able to be precisely identified, most cotyledons were hemispherical in shape and probably from pea (*Pisum sativum*). This range of crops is a typical assemblage of a mixed medieval arable economy (e.g. Moffett 2006).
- 7.25 Non-cereal taxa were primarily those typical of waste and arable land, including vetch/ tare (*Vicia/ Lathyrus* sp.), dock (*Rumex* sp.), corn cockle (*Agrostemma githago*), fat hen (*Chenopodium album*), cleavers (*Galium aparine*), dead-nettle (*Lamium* sp.), stinking chamomile (*Anthemis cotula*), chess (*Bromus secalinus* type) and annual meadow-grass (*Poa annua*). Dock and fat hen are frequently associated with more fertile agricultural soils. Cleavers and corn cockle are likely to be associated with autumn/ winter sown crops (i.e. bread wheat). Stinking chamomile is generally associated with heavy loam and clay soils, which are typically well suited to bread wheat cultivation, although it may have been more widespread in a range of conditions during the medieval period (de Moulins 2007, 395). A single seed of hemlock (*Conium maculatum*) was recorded in pit fill (030) and could have been growing on the margins of cultivated land. A single seed of sedge (*Carex* sp.) in pit fill (032) could have grown in more marginal areas of cultivated land, such as those prone to waterlogging.
- 7.26 Present in pit fill (005) were two sloe (*Prunus spinosa*) stones. These could have been introduced with fuel wood gathered from scrub or hedgerow habitats. The charcoal remains in (037) were mostly small diameter roundwood and were accompanied by four carbonised leaf buds. This would indicate the use of small branches for fuel in this sample, gathered in the winter or early spring.
- 7.27 Several fragments of mammal bone and fish bone were recorded, which could represent culinary waste. Small mammal bones (e.g. mice) could represent pests within a medieval settlement and are probably natural accumulations, along with amphibian bones.
- 7.28 Coal fragments and extensive modern rooting were also recorded in the medieval samples, indicating some movement of small remains within the stratigraphic profile, and the possibility of biological disturbance.

### Undated

- 7.29 Two samples were from undated deposits. These contained relatively low densities of carbonised plant macrofossils, in the form of hulled six-row barley (*Hordeum vulgare* var. *vulgare*) and free-threshing type wheat (*Triticum aestivum/turgidum* type), accompanied by a small number of non-cereal taxa (medium Fabaceae and large Poaceae). These remains are consistent with those of medieval origin discussed above.

### Conclusions

- 7.30 The bulk samples from 34 Church Road have provided a large assemblage of carbonised plant macrofossils of medieval origin. The remains are indicative of a mixed arable economy dominated by bread wheat but also incorporating hulled six-row barley, oats and pulses. The predominance of clean grain in the samples indicates that early-stage crop processing activities were not routinely taking place on the site. However, chaff elements were present in (032) and, coupled with numerous seeds of non-cereal arable weed *taxa*, indicate some processing by-products. It is probable that the cereal and pulse crops identified from the bulk samples were the product of local cultivation. The frequency with which cereal remains were recovered from medieval samples and the occasional high densities shows that cereals were being frequently handled in relatively large quantities, resulting in regular carbonisation events. This would imply that the site was engaged in arable production during the medieval period, although some domestic debris was also likely deposited, as evidenced by culinary waste in the form of mammal bone and fish bone.
- 7.31 The samples from Roman features were of lower density and the character of the remains was more in keeping with a post-Roman origin. It is probable that these are intrusive, originating from the large volumes of medieval carbonised plant remains deposited at the site.

7.32 Table 7: Results from the of bulk sample light fractions

Abbreviations: HTB = hulled, twisted barley grain (*Hordeum vulgare* var. *vulgare*); HB = hulled barley (*Hordeum* sp.); Hord = barley (*Hordeum* sp.); E/S = emmer/ spelt wheat (*Triticum dicoccum/ spelta*); BW = bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum*); FTW = free-threshing type wheat (*Triticum aestivum/ turgidum*); Trit = wheat (*Triticum* sp.); Oat (*Avena* sp.); Rye (*Secale cereale*); NFI = not formally identified (indeterminate cereal grain); Tail = tail grain.

Context	Description	Spot date	Volume (litres)	Flot (g)	Carbonised cereals			Carbonised non-cereal taxa		Carbonised hazelnut shell	Charcoal		Molluscs		Contaminants					Other remains
					Cereal grains	Cereal chaff	Notes	Seeds	Notes		Charcoal > 2mm	Notes	Molluscs	Notes	Roots	Molluscs	Modern seeds	Insects	Earthworm capsules	
<b>ROMAN</b>																				
003	Fill of Gully	Roman?	15	6	X	-	FTW (2), Trit (1), NFI (2)	X	Large Fabaceae (1), <i>Chenopodium album</i> (1)	-	XX	Diffuse porous	-	-	XXX	-	X	X	-	Coal (XX)
007	Fill of Gully	C2	25	7	X	-	FTW (1), Trit (1), NFI (2)	X	<i>Bromus</i> sp. (1), Large Poaceae (1)	-	X	-	-	-	XXX	-	XX	-	-	Coal (X)
009	Fill of Gully	Roman?	10	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	XX	-	X	-	-	Coal (XX)
017	Fill of Ditch	C2-C3	15	4	XX	-	Hord (1), FTW (5), Trit (3), NFI (4)	-	-	1	X	-	-	-	XX	-	XX	X	-	Coal (XX)
020	Fill of Gully	Roman	15	6	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	XXX	-	-	-	-	Coal (XX)
027	Fill of Gully	Roman?	15	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	XX	-	X	-	-	-
034	Fill of Gully	Roman?	10	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	XX	-	-	X	-	-
036	Fill of Gully	Roman?	10	2	X	-	NFI (1)	X	Large Fabaceae (1)	-	X	-	-	-	XX	-	X	-	-	-
038	Fill of Gully	Roman?	10	<1	-	-	-	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	XX	-	-	-	-	Coal (X)
<b>MEDIEVAL</b>																				



Context	Description	Spot date	Volume (litres)	Flot (g)	Carbonised cereals			Carbonised non-cereal taxa		Carbonised hazelnut shell	Charcoal		Molluscs		Contaminants				Other remains	
					Cereal grains	Cereal chaff	Notes	Seeds	Notes		Charcoal > 2mm	Notes	Molluscs	Notes	Roots	Molluscs	Modern seeds	Insects		Earthworm capsules
005	Fill of Pit	Medieval ?	15	16	XX	-	FTW (4), Trit (3), Oat (1), NFI (6)	X	<i>Prunus spinosa</i> (2), <i>Bromus</i> sp. (1)	-	XX	<i>Quercus</i> sp., Ring porous, Diffuse porous	-	-	XXX	-	X	X	-	Bird bone (X), Fish bone (X), Mammal bone fragments (X), Coal (XX), Fuel ash slag (X)
011	Fill of Ditch	C12-C13	25	32	XX	-	HB (2), Hord (1), FTW (11), Trit (11), Oat (1), Rye (1), NFI (15)	X	Large Fabaceae (1), <i>Anthemis cotula</i> (1), Large Poaceae (3)	-	XX	<i>Quercus</i> sp., Diffuse porous incl. RW	X	<i>Trichia hispida</i> group, <i>Vallonia</i> sp.	XXX	-	XX	X	-	Small mammal bone (X), Coal (X)
024	Fill of Animal Burial	C12-C13	15	7	X	-	Hord (1), FTW (1), Trit (1), NFI (2)	-	-	-	XX	<i>Quercus</i> sp.	-	-	XX	-	X	-	-	Mammal bone fragments (X), Coal (XX)
026	Fill of Rectangular Pit	C12-C13	30	54	XX X	X	HB (23), Hord (41), Hord tail (1), FTW (60), Trit (29), Oat (31), NFI (85), Oat awn (1)	X X	Large Fabaceae (4), Medium Fabaceae (5), <i>Galium aparine</i> (1), <i>Anthemis cotula</i> (1), <i>Bromus</i> sp. (1), Large Poaceae (6)	2	XX	<i>Quercus</i> sp., Diffuse porous	-	-	XXX	-	X	-	-	Amphibian bone (X), Small mammal bone (X), Mammal bone fragments (X), Coal (XX)
028	Fill of Ditch	C13	25	21	XX	-	FTW (1), Trit (4), Hord (1), NFI (4)	X	<i>Anthemis cotula</i> (1)	-	X	-	-	-	XXX	-	XX	-	-	Coal (XX)

Context	Description	Spot date	Volume (litres)	Flot (g)	Carbonised cereals			Carbonised non-cereal taxa		Carbonised hazelnut shell	Charcoal		Molluscs		Contaminants				Other remains	
					Cereal grains	Cereal chaff	Notes	Seeds	Notes		Charcoal > 2mm	Notes	Molluscs	Notes	Roots	Molluscs	Modern seeds	Insects		Earthworm capsules
030	Fill of Pit	C13-C14	30	13	XX	-	HB (3), Hord (3), FTW (9), Trit (6), Oat (4), NFI (11)	X	Large Fabaceae (1), Medium Fabaceae (1), <i>Rumex</i> sp. (1), <i>Conium maculatum</i> (1), <i>Bromus</i> sp. (1)	-	XX	<i>Quercus</i> sp., Diffuse porous	-	-	XXX	-	X	-	-	Coal (XX)
032	Fill of Pit	C13-C14	25	47	XX X	X X	HTB (3), HB (18), Hord (16), FTW (85), Trit (64), Trit tail (1), Oat (37), Rye (1), NFI (117), Embryo (1), BW rachis (2), FTW rachis (4), Culm (1)	X X	Large Fabaceae (6), <i>Vicia/Lathyrus</i> sp. (2), Medium Fabaceae (5), <i>Agrostemma githago</i> (1), Caryophyllaceae (1), <i>Chenopodium album</i> (1), Amaranthaceae (7), <i>Galium</i> sp. (1), <i>Lamium</i> sp. (1), <i>Anthemis cotula</i> (8), Asteraceae (2), <i>Carex</i> sp. (1), <i>Bromus secalinus</i> type (2), <i>Bromus</i> sp. (2), <i>Poa annua</i> (1), Large Poaceae (7), Medium Poaceae (2)	6	XX	<i>Quercus</i> sp., Diffuse porous	-	-	XX	-	X	-	X	Fish bone (XX), Coal (X)

Context	Description	Spot date	Volume (litres)	Flot (g)	Carbonised cereals			Carbonised non-cereal taxa		Carbonised hazelnut shell	Charcoal		Molluscs		Contaminants					Other remains
					Cereal grains	Cereal chaff	Notes	Seeds	Notes		Charcoal > 2mm	Notes	Molluscs	Notes	Roots	Molluscs	Modern seeds	Insects	Earthworm capsules	
037	Fill of Pit	C13-C14	15	11	XX	X	HTB (1), HB (4), Hord (4), FTW (7), Trit (11), Oat (3), NFI (10), BW rachis (1), Culm (1)	X X	Large Fabaceae (8), <i>Galium aparine</i> (1), <i>Carex</i> sp. (1), Large Poaceae (1)	-	XX	<i>Quercus</i> sp. Incl. RW, Diffuse porous incl. RW	-	-	XX	X	X	-	-	Carbonised leaf buds (4)
Undated																				
014	Fill of Pit	-	15	13	XX	-	HTB (1), FTW (2), Trit (4), NFI (10)	X	Medium Fabaceae (2), Large Poaceae (1)	1	XX	<i>Quercus</i> sp., Diffuse porous	-	-	XXX	-	X	X	-	Coal (XX)
022	Fill of Posthole	-	10	5	X	-	FTW (1), Trit (2), NFI (1)	-	-	-	X	-	-	-	XX	-	X	X	-	Coal (XX)

## 8. ARCHAEOLOGICAL SIGNIFICANCE & REVIEW OF RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The results of the investigation at Church Road offer a rare and intriguing window into the Roman and medieval landscape at Piddington, where very few archaeological discoveries have been made to date within village itself.

### **The Romano-British period**

(Fig. 9)

- 8.2 Research of the Romano-British landscape at Piddington has for many decades been concentrated to the southwest of the village, with the excavation of a Roman villa at its focus. The evidence from Church Road appears to be the first indication of a pattern of Romano-British agrarian land-use in the villa's north-eastern hinterland. In particular, three gully-like parallel linear features, about 5 m apart, were probably the remains of cultivation plot divisions. Pottery from the base of one feature [006] shows that it was 'open' in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD, and thus perhaps still in use. The pottery sherds were notably well-preserved, comparable to an assemblage of Roman pottery recovered from an evaluation trench dug at the north end of the site in 2012. Although the majority of the latter assemblage was only broadly dateable, it included a jar form which was common in the late 1<sup>st</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries. Overall, the two concentrations of pottery indicate that a place of habitation must have been located a short distance away to the northwest.
- 8.3 It is quite likely that all surface traces (hedges, banks, ditches) of the Romano-British agricultural landscape were erased in the early medieval period during a complete re-configuration of ground to create the village and its surrounding open fields. Not all of the features contained pottery, although their fill-soil profiles corresponded to those of dated Romano-British features and were distinct from medieval fill-soil profiles. Importantly, the small archaeological window afforded by the investigation at Church Road will undoubtedly enhance identification of even the most ephemeral traces of the Romano-British landscape in other parts of Piddington village.

### **The Early Medieval period**

- 8.4 Evidence of the Anglo-Saxon village was elusive – consigned to four sherds of St Neots-type pottery (9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century) which were found in three features of later medieval date. But nonetheless it is the first archaeological evidence of an Anglo-Saxon presence.

### **The High Medieval Period**

(Fig. 9)

- 8.5 It has been noted that historic map evidence suggests that the development site was once a part of Piddington's medieval open fields. This was based on the curvature of the field's southern boundary alongside Church Road and comparable evidence in the village and elsewhere. There was however, no archaeological indication of medieval cultivation (e.g. plough scarring or furrows) in the area of excavation, bearing in mind that it was heavily truncated.

### **Landuse and Local Economy**

- 8.6 The presence of a number of pits of 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> century date shows that any cultivation will have ceased, with the ground possibly converted to grazing land, either within a tenement (a croft) or a part of the manorial demesne. Significantly, the excavation at Church Road

provides the first tangible evidence of routine existence at medieval Piddington, adding a new dimension to what is only a cursory knowledge of the medieval settlement known from historical documents.

- 8.7 One of the earliest medieval features was a substantial boundary ditch on the west side of the site, which became redundant sometime in the 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century. The ditch was traced for over 13 m in the area of excavation and undoubtedly exists beyond the present development footprint. Taking into account its former accompanying up-cast mound (of which no trace survived) this would have been a significant landscape feature. The ditch was 1.6 - 1.74 m wide and its original depth was at least 0.6 m. However, its alignment is curious, for it bears no resemblance to any of the existing streets and paths within the historic core of Piddington, and likewise to none shown on historic mapping.
- 8.8 Also in the 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century, a series of pits were dug on the east side of the site. They appear to have been deliberately in-filled with domestic waste, although most were too truncated to ascertain whether or not this was their primary function. The limestone bedrock in the centre of one of pit was heat-reddened ([029]), perhaps denoting a different purpose.
- 8.9 The most well-preserved pit was distinctly rectangular [025], 3.3 m by 2.5 m. This was up to 0.4 m deep despite having been truncated to some extent. Although it had been deliberately in-filled with domestic refuse and culinary waste it seems doubtful that it was its original purpose. There was no indication that the pit had been left open to the elements and it is thus possible that it was the below-ground element of a covered structure, such as a cellar or store. The rich mix of domestic waste within it suggests that habitation was close by. Importantly, the contents reveal an insight to local cultivated produce of the period (free-threshing wheat, oats, barley and peas) and livestock rearing (sheep or goats, pigs and cattle).
- 8.10 The mixed economy of the period was reinforced by the presence of the carcass of a calf, which had been disposed of in a purpose-dug pit [023] in the northeast part of the excavation area. Supposing that the plot was a peasant small-holding at that time, then the premature death of animal probably meant a considerable loss of anticipated household income, since younger cattle were commonly sent to market (*c.f.* Dyer, 2014, 21).
- 8.11 The presence of a cat bone (calf burial [023]) and another from a red squirrel (pit [004]) is of interest. As the evidence from the 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century manor of West Cotton (Northants.) has shown, cats (and dogs) were kept not only as pets, but also exploited for their pelts (Chapman, 2018, 165, 529 & table 13.2). The incidence of red squirrel is rare and Holmes has suggested that it may also have been used for its pelt (Holmes, *ante*, 7.16).
- 8.12 Further pit-digging took place on the east side of the site in the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century or the 14<sup>th</sup> century, again with considerable effort to penetrate the cornbrash. Most significantly, large scale rubbish disposal took place in the southeast corner of the plot where a substantial elongated pit [031] was partially exposed: at least 8.8 m by c. 3 m and surviving to a depth of 0.49 m. The fill of the pit provides a considerable insight to local medieval economy and diet. Similarly, the implication is that habitation was nearby. The environmental sample proved rich in a variety of locally-grown cereal grain and peas. The grain was predominantly bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), with hulled barley, oats and, to a lesser extent rye and peas. Imported foodstuffs were represented by the presence of two fish vertebrae and two marine oyster shells.

- 8.13 Evidently, the pit was in-filled with domestic and culinary waste, yet again it is uncertain whether it was dug solely for this purpose. There were no indications that infill took place over a period of time. The assumption is that this varied household waste came from a household dung hill or midden mound, but it is ambiguous as why it was dumped in a pit and not put to use as manure to intensify crop yields. By 1300, the practice of manuring the open fields by carting waste from individual household dung hills was already well established, although the custom declined in the two centuries after 1350 (Dyer, 2014, 22).
- 8.14 The abundance and variety of cereal grain and other grown foodstuffs from pit [031] seems to imply a good annual yield, although it is not possible to determine how many harvests are represented in the samples. Interestingly, the pottery shows that the domestic waste was probably buried within the protracted period of agrarian crises (mid 13<sup>th</sup> century to mid 14<sup>th</sup> century), which was largely brought about by severe climatic changes. In this context, a reasonable assumption is that the material evidence (and activity) belongs to one of the few short-lived episodes of good harvests that are known from the study of manorial records (e.g. Lamb, 1967, Hallam 1984). The best years occurred between 1272 and 1288, but were followed by serious decline thereafter until 1313. A period of mediocre to good yields followed in the early 1320s until the late 1340s.

#### **Site Status**

- 8.15 The question arises of site ownership throughout the 12<sup>th</sup> to 14<sup>th</sup> centuries - a peasant small-holding or a part of the manorial demesne? The aforementioned fish vertebrae from pit [031] (*ante*, 8.12) are of interest in this respect, since certain species of fish would feasibly support an argument for site status. Closer examination of the bones by Holmes (*ante*, 7.18, Table 6) revealed that they are possibly herring<sup>6</sup>. The species has sometimes been associated with the lower levels of society, but the archaeological evidence has revealed that this is not always the case. Certainly, from the early Norman period onwards certain types of fish became a commodity to which only the elites had access, freshwater fishing being strictly regulated by statutes (Maccarinelli, 2020, 27). Prized freshwater species included pike, bream, chub roach and migratory river species, such as eel and salmon (*ibid.*). It is also generally understood that the medieval peasantry rarely ate meat or fish, but subsisted on a diet comprised largely of pottage and bread (in particular, made from rye, barley and oats), pulses, grains and vegetables, supplemented by dairy products (Woolgar, 2016). However, bones of sea-herring occurred in a large numbers in an early 13<sup>th</sup> century manorial context at West Cotton (Northants), and again at later medieval tenements at the same site (Chapman, 2010, 107, 165). In comparison, there was scarcity of freshwater species from late 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> century manorial deposits, but this may have been down to poor rate of survival (*ibid.*). In concurrence, comparative research of high status secular sites (castles, palaces and manors) has also shown that cured herring and cod were the most common *taxa* in from the 11<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> centuries (Maccarinelli, 2020, 50). The proximity of the site to the postulated location of the medieval manor is already noted (*ante*, 4.5), but based on current evidence it is difficult to determine whether or not it was a part of the demesne.

#### **Trade**

- 8.16 Nevertheless, the sea-herring evidence from Piddington points to a long distance trade network in operation the latter half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century / 14<sup>th</sup> century; this is also supported by the occurrence of marine oysters. Such produce was probably acquired at market, possibly Northampton, Hanslope or Yardley Hastings (*post*, 8.17). Depending on the precise

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<sup>6</sup> Re-examination of the environmental data revealed no evidence of fish bones in the sample from probable medieval pit [004]

chronology herrings were either salted or smoked, though it is claimed that the smoking did not occur until the late 13<sup>th</sup> century (see Maccarinelli, 2020, 40).

- 8.17 The pottery evidence from Church Road illustrates that village needs were met in the 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century from three or four production centres within a 9 - 17 km radius, though very occasionally from further afield. Acquisition may have been via markets or itinerant traders, or a combination of the two. The closest weekly market and annual fair, from 1293 onwards, was at Hanslope, c. 7.5 m south of Piddington. Although Yardley Hastings (c. 8 km to the east) was the nearest production centre for the ubiquitous unglazed, shelly limestone-tempered coarse-ware found at the site, its charters for a weekly market and an annual fair were not acquired until 1314. From the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century and through the 14<sup>th</sup> century the village of Potterspury (Bucks), c. 13 km to the south west, appears to have been the regular source of Piddington's kitchen and tableware. Although no market is recorded for Potterspury, it seems likely that Hanslope market, a mid-way point, acted as a distribution medium for these wares.

#### **Appraisal of Research Objectives**

- 8.18 The key research focus of the investigation was to attempt to further clarify the nature and extent of Romano-British and medieval activity found by trial trenching in 2012, and in this respect it was successful. It also demonstrated that archaeological potential still exists outside the limits of the 2021 development footprint.
- 8.19 Wherever possible the Investigation attempted to recover archaeological data that could contribute to the research themes and priorities successfully addressed broader research objectives (*ante*, 5.2, i - v). Moreover, the significance of archaeological remains was examined to establish, as far as is reasonably possible, the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation within the area of excavation. In particular, the environmental data has provided an evocative glimpse of medieval rural diet and economy and trade and the range of pottery augments knowledge of product distribution. The pottery assemblage is however, relatively small, with no new forms, types or fabrics that may assist in the development of regional type series. Equally, there is no potential for further analysis of other artefacts, faunal remains and environmental data.

### **9. ARCHIVE & REPORT**

- 9.1 The archive is intended as a public-accessible record: the report to be housed in the Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record; the site record to be held by the Northamptonshire Archaeological Resource Centre, and the digital archive to be held by the Archaeology Data Service. Copyright is retained by Souterrain Archaeological Services Ltd from whom permission may be sought for reproduction.
- 9.2 The OASIS (Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations: [www.oasis.ac.uk](http://www.oasis.ac.uk)) identification number for this project is **souterra1-505669**. All survey and photographic data is contained in this report.

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### **Historic maps**

**1788.** Plan of Survey of Thomas Mercer's Estate at Piddington. Northamptonshire Archives Map 500

**1885.** Ordnance Survey 25" map of Northamptonshire, sheet LII.11

## **12. Figures**

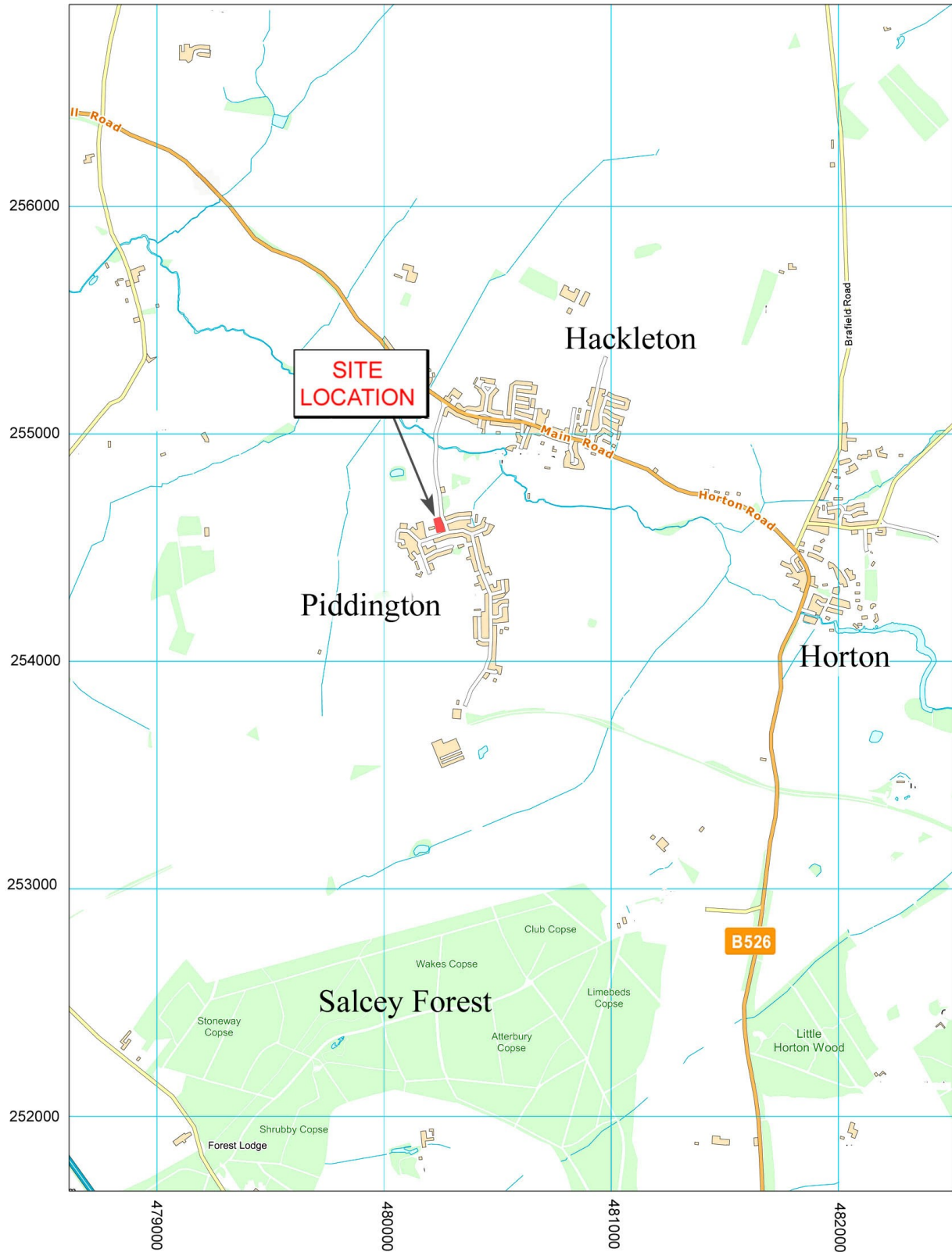
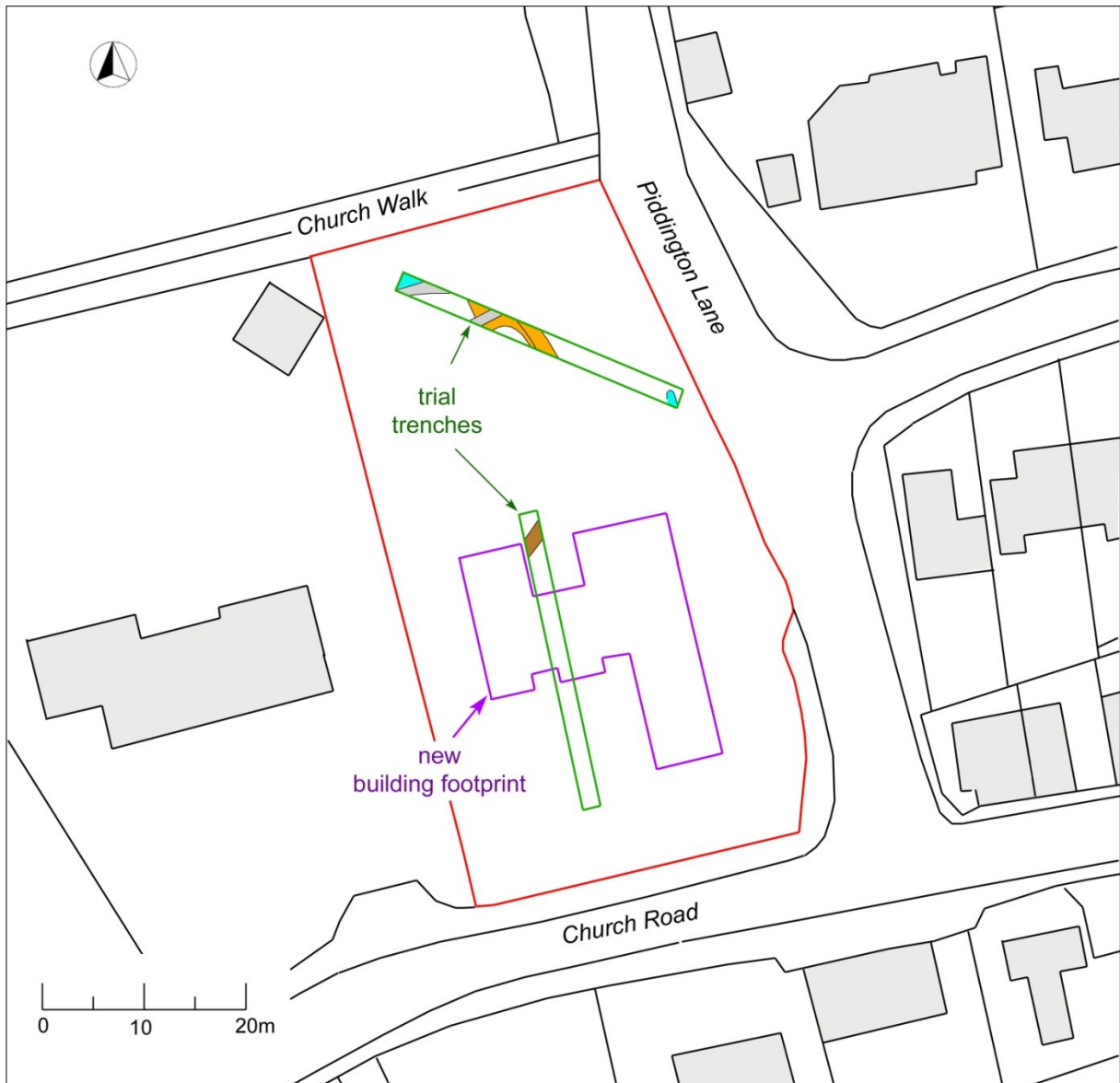


Figure 1. Location of the Application Site

(base map: Ordnance Survey, © Crown Copyright All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)



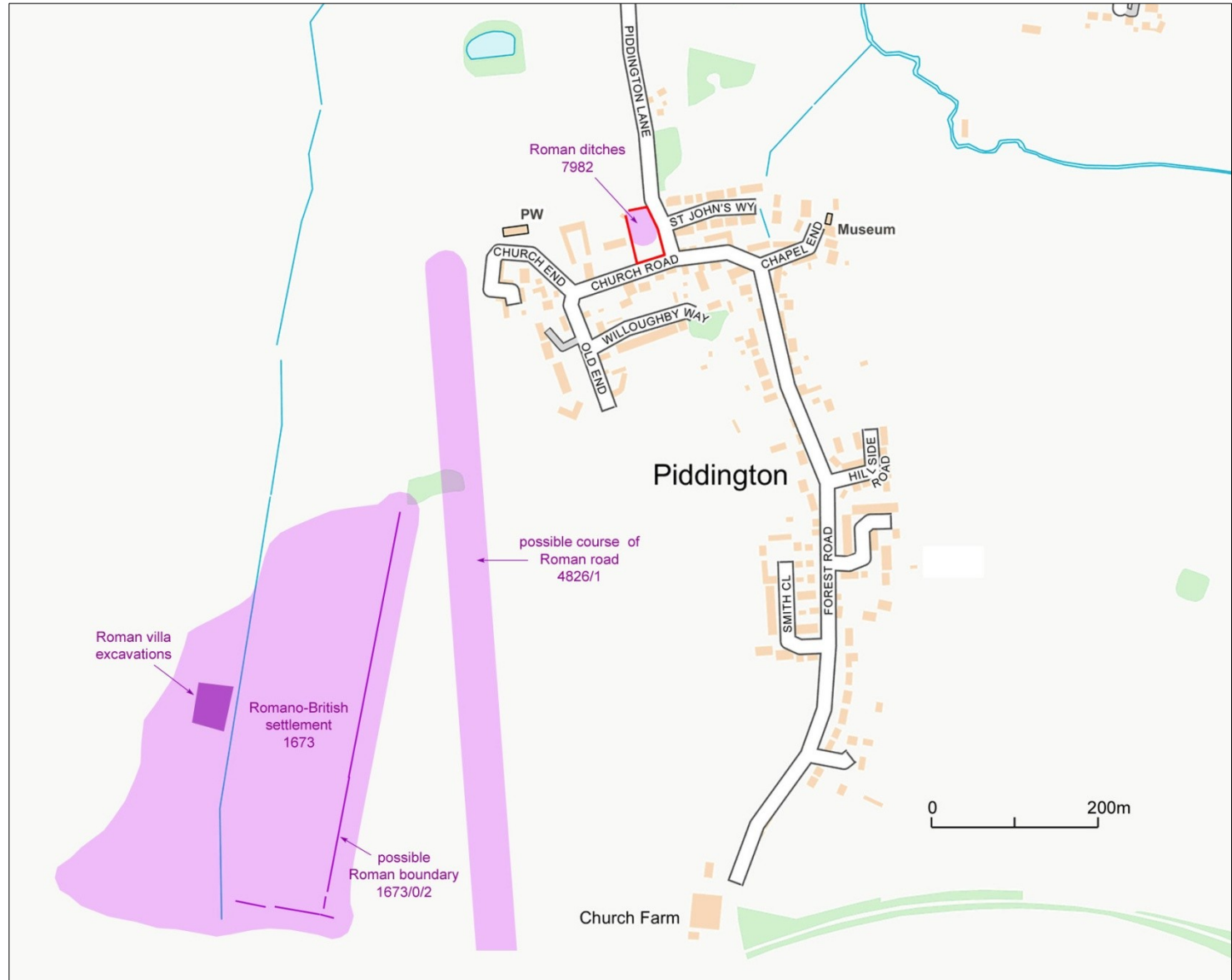
**Figure 2. Location of new building (area of 2021 investigation) and 2012 trial trenches**

- Orange = Roman ditches
- Brown = possible medieval
- Blue = medieval ditch
- Grey = post-medieval / modern

(based on Ordnance Survey mapping, © Crown Copyright All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)

Figure 3.

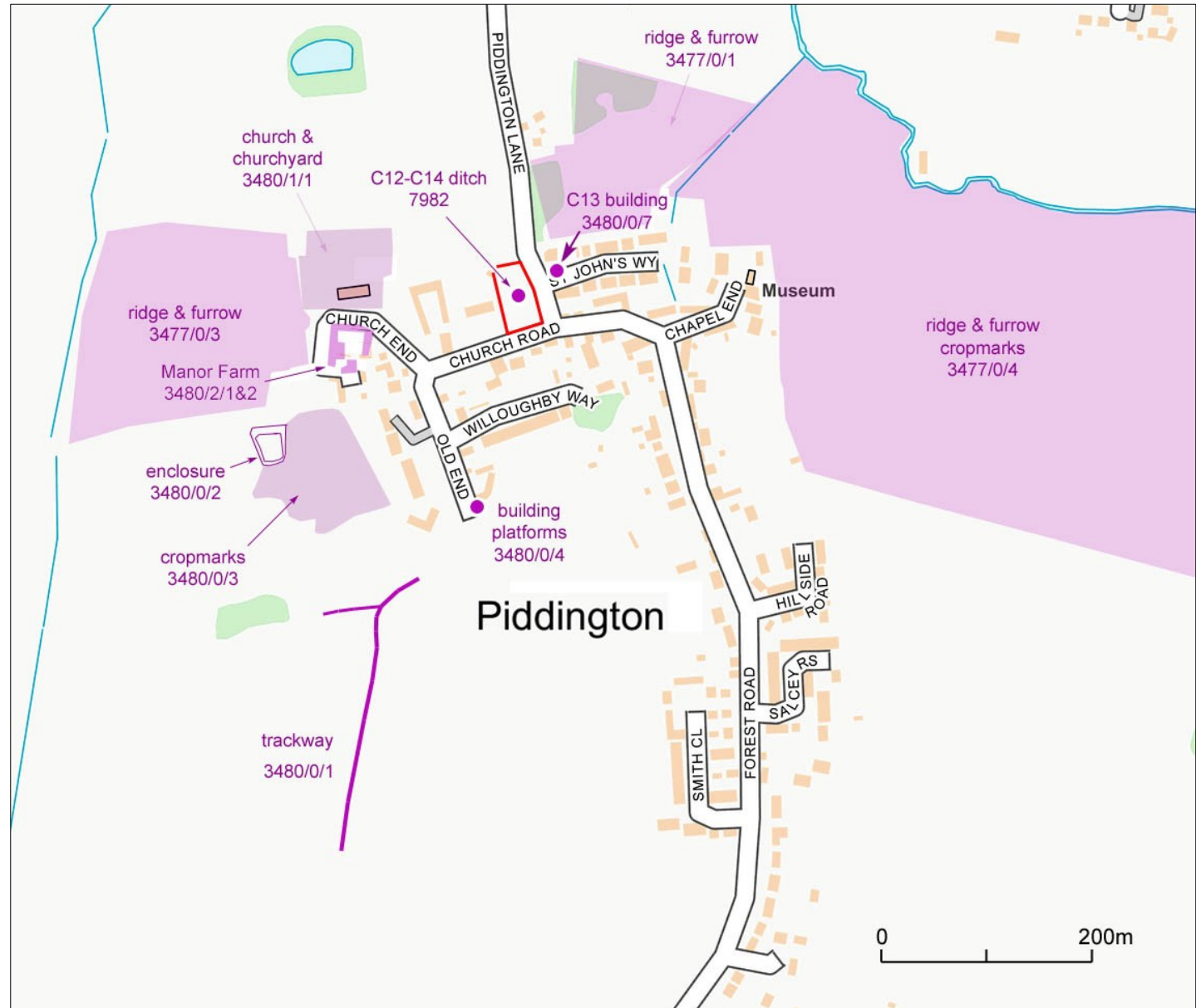
Romano-British sites and discoveries in the environs of the Application Site (red outline)



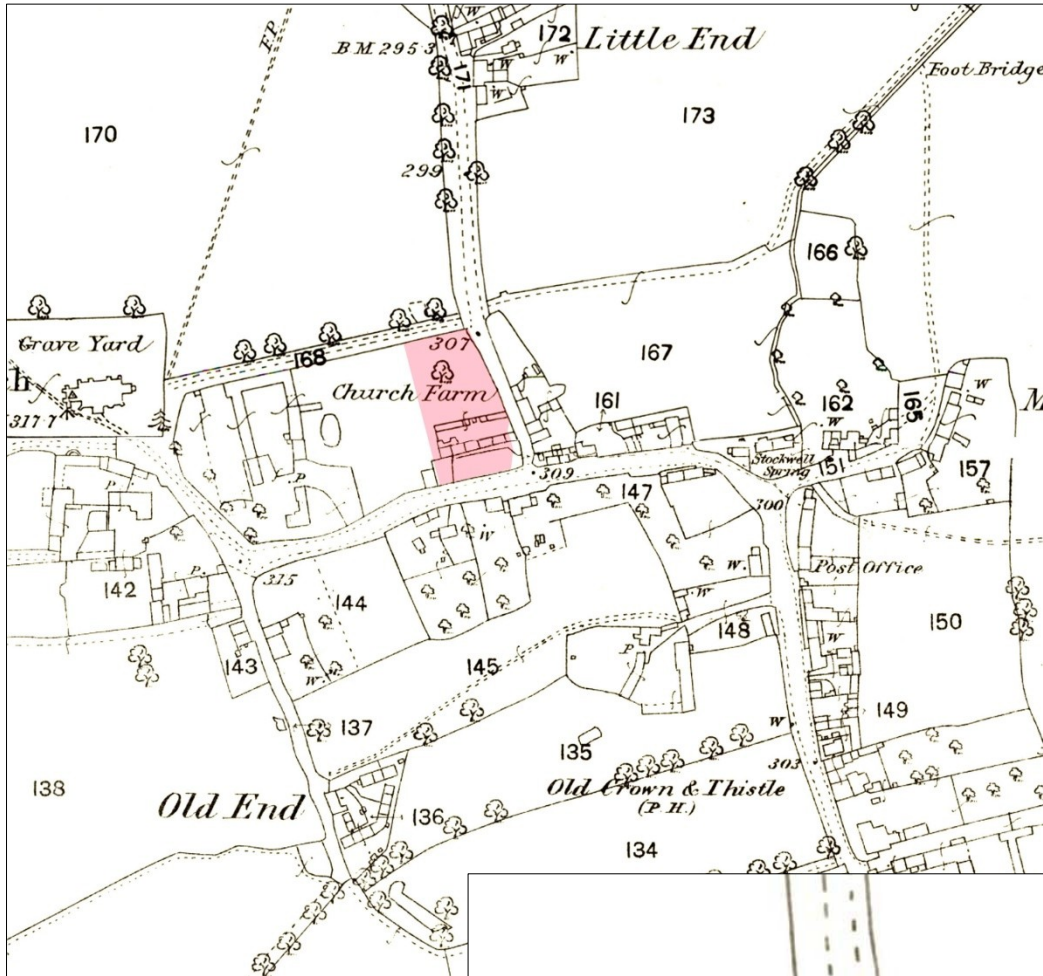
(base map: © Crown Copyright All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)

Figure 4.

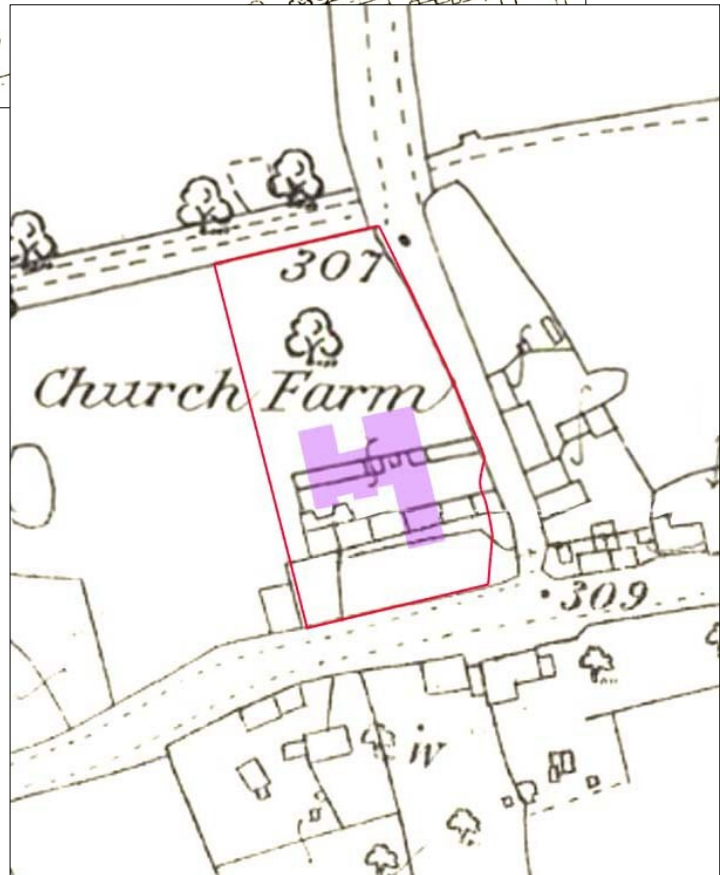
Medieval sites, discoveries and suspected sites in the environs of the Application Site (red outline)



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**Figure 5.**  
Extract of 1885 Ordnance Survey 25" map with Application Site & footprint of new house (right)



(base map: © Crown Copyright All rights reserved. Licence number AL 100015565)

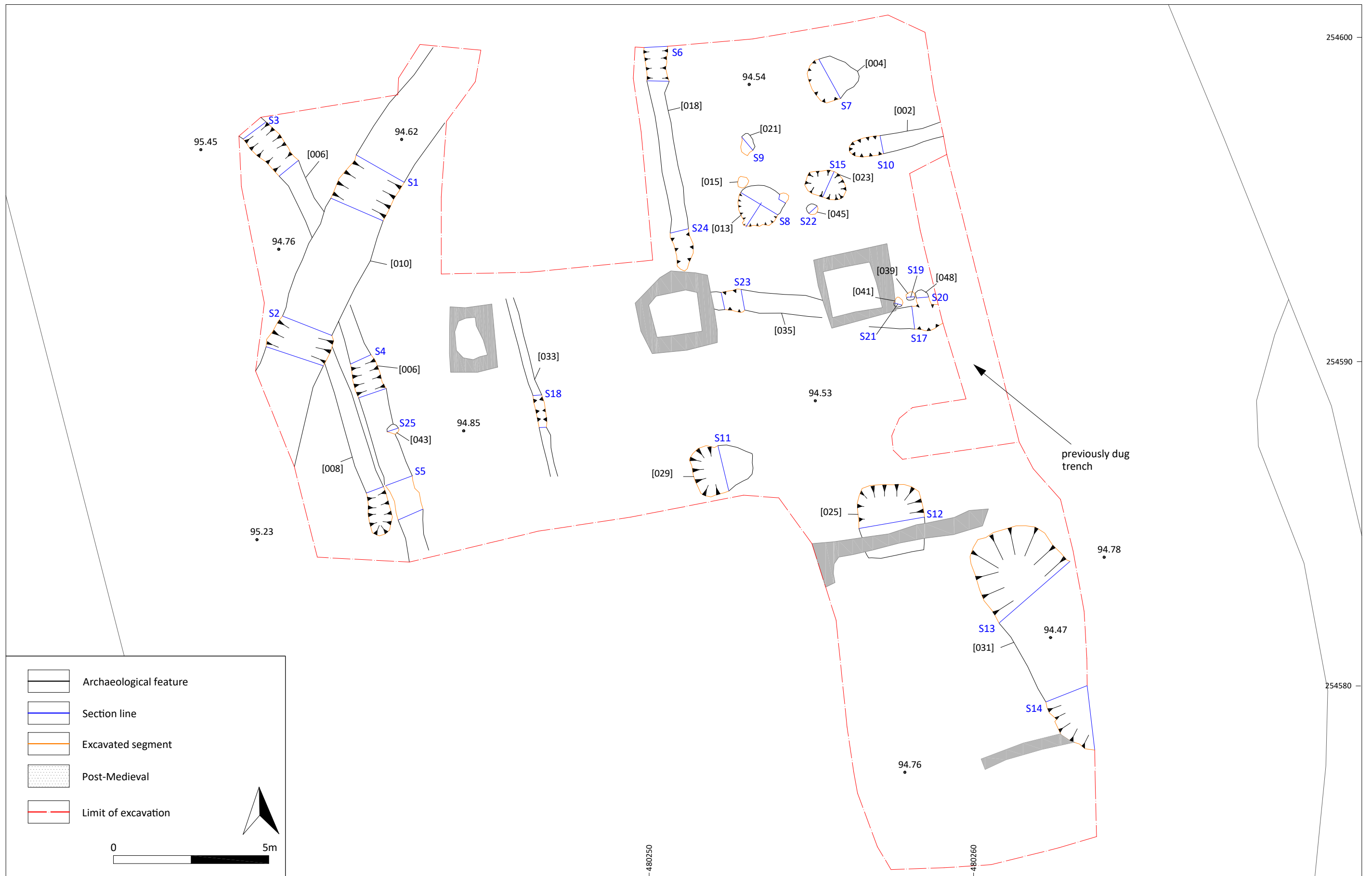


Figure 6: All features plan with location of excavated segments, section drawings and relative heights



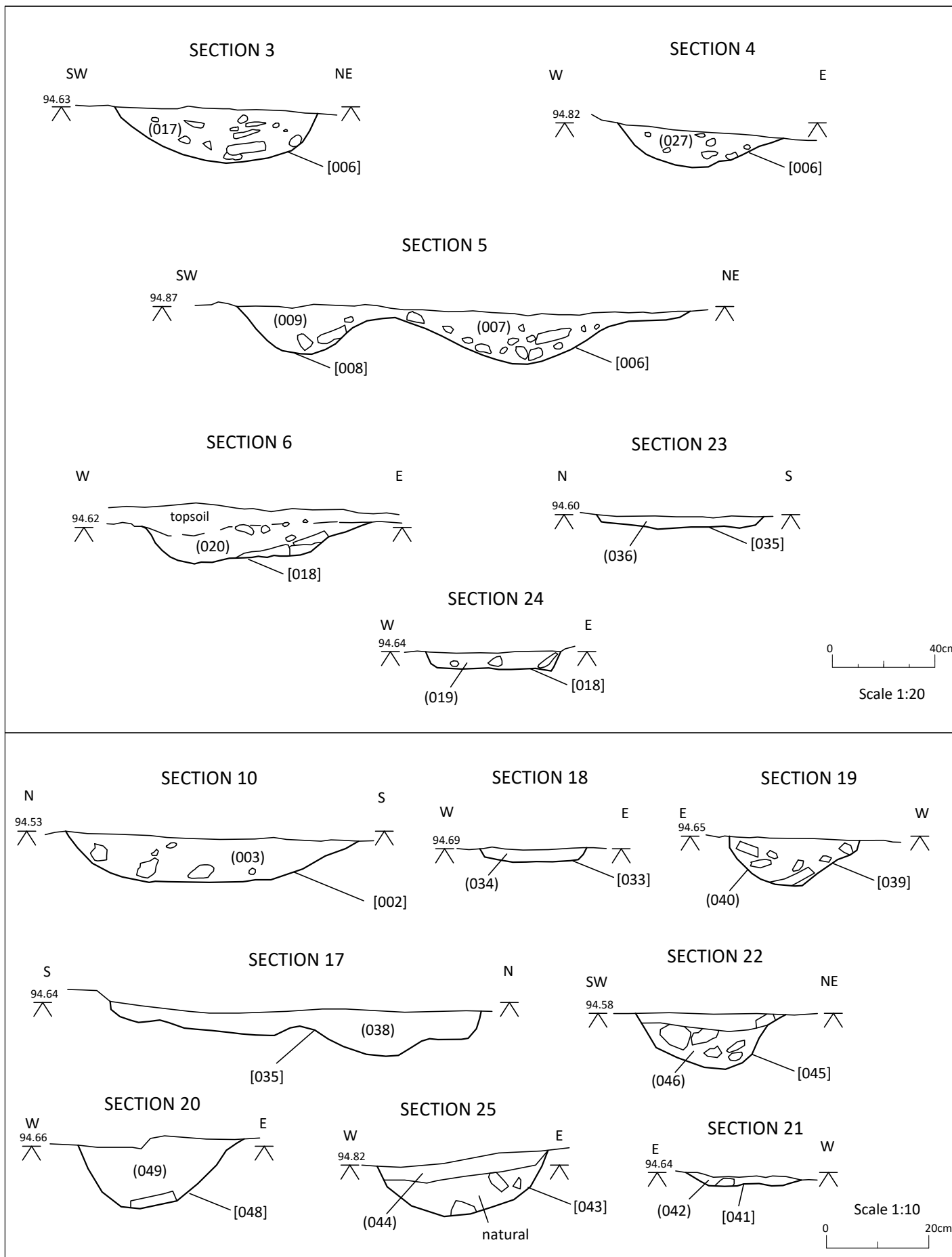


Figure 7: Sections through Roman and possible Roman features

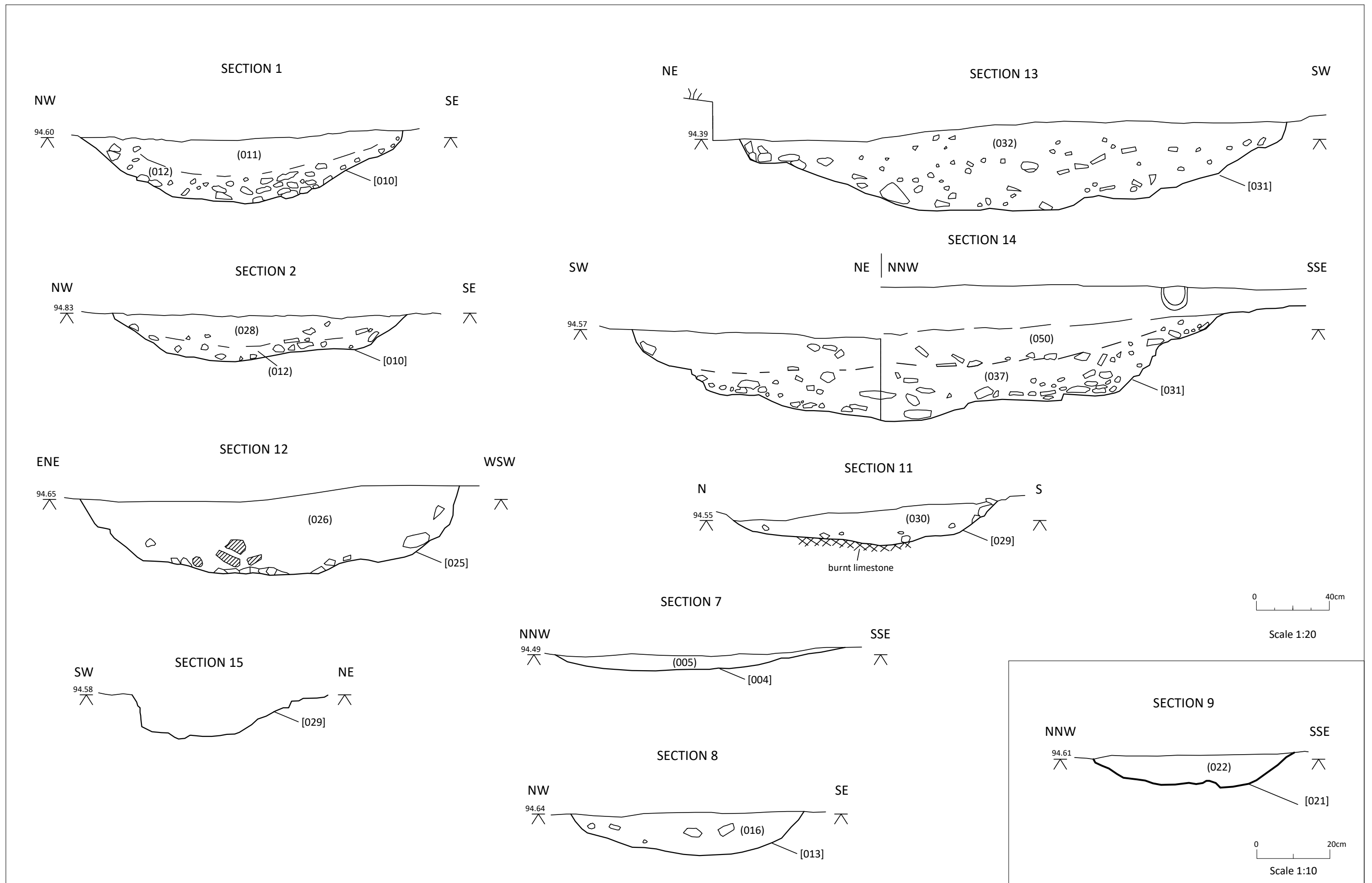


Figure 8: Sections through Medieval and possible Medieval features



Figure 9: Phase plan



**Figure 10. Romano-British pottery**

1. Nene Valley greyware. Wide-mouthed jar. Prob. 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD (context 007)
2. Nene Valley greyware. Wide-mouthed jar. 2<sup>nd</sup> -3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (context 017)
3. Shelly ware with rilled surface. Late 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (context 020)
4. Oxidised calcareous sandyware. Lid-seated cooking pot (context 017)
5. Reduced black sand-tempered ware. Lid-seated cooking pot. Prob. 2<sup>nd</sup> century (context 017)
6. Shelly ware, Late 1<sup>st</sup> - 3<sup>rd</sup> century AD (context 040)
7. Oxidised, sand tempered ware (context 036)



**Figure 11. Medieval pottery types**

1. St Neot-type ware. Body sherd with applied band impressed circles. 9<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> century (context 032)
2. St Neot-type ware. Bowl rim sherd. c. 11<sup>th</sup> century (context 032)
3. Shelly coarse-ware, bowl. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century (context 026)
4. Shelly coarse-ware. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century (context 028)
5. Shelly coarse-ware. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century (context 026)
6. Shelly coarse-ware, bowl. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century (context 026)
7. Potterspurty ware, jug with mottled green lead glaze (context 032)
8. Potterspurty ware, jug with splashed green glaze. Late 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century (context 037)
9. Brill/ Boarstall ware. Rim of unglazed jug.. 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century (context 032).
10. Potterspurty ware, unglazed body sherds. 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century (context 032)

Photographs: w side of site



P 1. Pre-commencement overview of proposed house print, facing SE



P 2. Soil strip on the W side of house footprint, showing previous levels of ground reduction. Facing S



P 3. Overview of W side of the site, facing N. Romano-British features [006] & [008] (Section 5) in foreground



P 4. Romano-British feature [006] (Section 3) Facing NW



P 5. Romano-British feature [006]. (Section 3). Facing NNW



P 6. Romano-British feature [006] (Section 4). Facing SSE



P 7. Romano-British features [008] (L) & [006](R): Section 5. Facing NNW



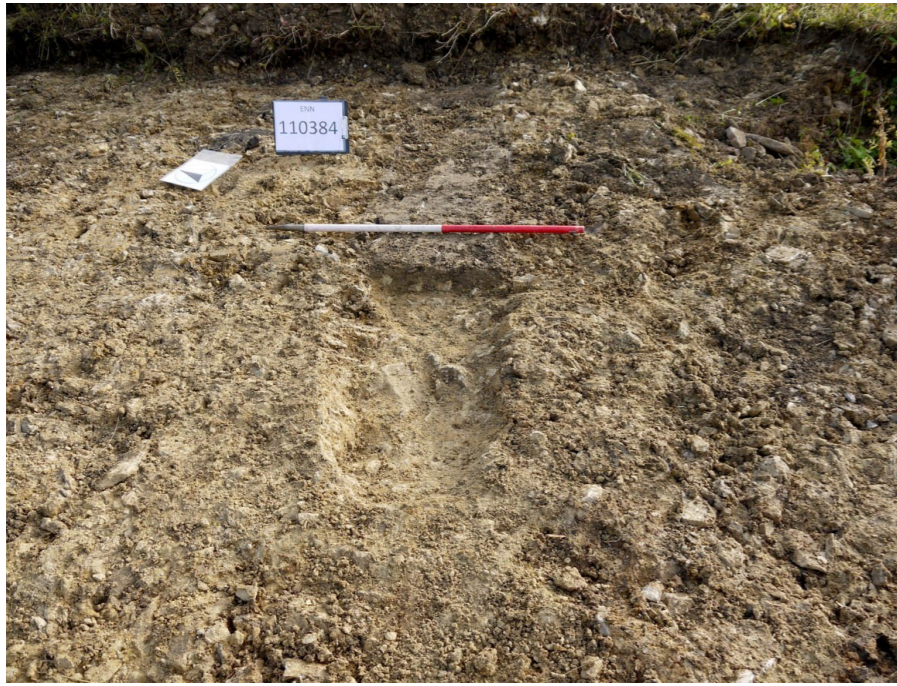
P 8. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century ditch [010], Section 1. Facing NE



P 9. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century ditch [010], Facing SW



P10. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century ditch [010], Facing SSW



P 11. Possible Roman-British linear feature [002], facing E



P 12. Probable medieval pit [004], facing NE



P 13. Probable medieval pit [013], facing E



P 14. Probable medieval pit/post-hole [021], facing NE



P 15. Romano-British linear feature [018], (Section 6), facing NNW



P 16. Romano-British linear feature [018], facing SSE



P 17. Calf burial (prob. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century). Facing SE





P 18. Overview of NE part of the excavation area. Facing E



P 19. Overview of SE part of the excavation area. Facing SE



P 20. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century pit with heat-reddened base [029], facing NE



P 21. Romano-British linear feature [035]. Facing W



P 22. East end of linear feature [035] and (L to R) post-holes [048],[039], [041]. Facing S



P 23. Probable Roman linear feature [033]. Facing NNW



P 24. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century rectangular pit [025], pre-excitation. Facing E



P 25. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century rectangular pit [025], Facing SW



P 26. 12<sup>th</sup> / 13<sup>th</sup> century rectangular pit [025], Section 12, Facing S



P 27. Overview of medieval pits [025] and [031], Section 12, Facing SE



P 28. N end of large 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century pit [031], Section 13. Facing SE



P 29. NW end of 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century pit [031]. Facing W



P 30. SE end of large 13<sup>th</sup> / 14<sup>th</sup> century pit [031]. Section 14. Facing NW

APPENDIX 1: List of Contexts

**KEY:** Relationships: **a.** above; **abt.** abuts; **adj.** adjoins; **b.** below; **c.** cuts; **cub.** cut by; **co.** contains; **wi** within  
 Dimensions: **le.** length; **wid.** width; **de.** depth; **th.** thickness

Context No.	type	Description and Interpretation	relationships	dimensions	Drawing No.	Finds	Suggested period	Sample taken	Date of record
000	natural	Geological stratum. Differential: light yellowish brown to yellowish brown (10YR 6/4 to 10YR 5/4) calcareous clay with limestone pieces or limestone (cornbrash)	-	-	-	-	-	-	13.10.2021
001	layer	Topsoil, sandy clay soil with abundant roots of recent shrubs and frequent patches of coal-ash. 20 <sup>th</sup> century or early 21 <sup>st</sup> century back-fill of reduced area	Directly above. all arch features & geological stratum	c. 0.1 – 0.2m	-	none	C20/C21	-	13.10.2021
002	Cut	Terminus, linear feature, NE corner of excavation area. Extremely truncated.	c. (000) co.(003)	Wid. c. 1.14m Le. 2.93m De.c. 0.16m	S10	-	Prob. Roman		13.10.2021
003	fill	Fill of linear feature. Compact sandy gritty calcareous clay (10YR3/1 -3/3) with frequent medium-sized pieces of weathered limestone (e.g. 0.1 x 0.06 x 0.05)	Wi.[002]	th.c. 0.16m	S10	none	Prob. Roman	✓	13.10.2021
004	Cut	Very shallow pit (heavily truncated) in NE corner of excavation area. sides at 10-15° to flat base c. 0.9 across	c.(000) Co.(005)	c. 1.5m x 1.38m De. <0.08m	S7	-	Prob. Medieval		13.10.2021
005	Fill	v. dark grey brown soil with frequent charcoal	Wi.[004]	th. <0.08m	S7	none	Prob. Medieval	✓	13.10.2021
006	Cut	Linear feature ?gully or remains of a ditch c. N/S aligned. Extremely	c. (000) Co. (007),	Wid. c.0.68 – c.0.78 m	S3, S4, S5	-	Roman		13- 15.10.2021

Context No.	type	Description and Interpretation	relationships	dimensions	Drawing No.	Finds	Suggested period	Sample taken	Date of record
		truncated – variable width. Location of segment – SW corner of site. Sides variable – 35° – 65° (S3) / 30° (S5). Fairly concave	(017), (027)	le. c. 14.72m exposed De. c. 0.12 - 0.2m					
007	Fill	Fill of linear feature [006]. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3)	Wi. [006]	th. <0.2m	S5	animal bone pottery	Roman Prob. C2 AD	v	13- 14.10.2021
008	Cut	Linear feature parallel to feature [006] in SW corner of site. Sides at c.45° to flattish base	c.(000) co.(009)	Wid. c. 0.4-0.5m Le. c.5.58m exposed De. c .0.19m	S5	-	Prob. Roman		13- 14.10.2021
009	Fill	Fill of linear feature [008]. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3)	Wi.[008]	th. c .0.19m	S5	none	Prob. Roman	v	14.10.2021
010	Cut	Large ditch, aligned NE/SW. Sides at 30° – 35° , to flattish base, irregular in places (i.e. S2)	c. (000) co. (011), (012)	Wid. c. 1.6 – 1.74 m Le. c. 13.2 m exposed De. c.0.24-0.36 m	S1, S2	-	medieval		13/18/22.10 .2021
011	Fill	Upper fill of medieval ditch. Fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam (topsoil-like) with abundant roots	Wi.[010] a. (012)	Th. up to c. 0.22m	S1, S2	pottery	C12/13	v	22.10.2021
012	Fill	Primary fill of medieval ditch. Stony, gritty firm, sand, dark greyish brown (10YR/4/2). Probably an erosion product from ditch sides	Wi.[010] b.(011)	Th. up to c. c.0.14m	S1, S2	-	medieval		22.10.2021
013	cut	Circular pit, possible structure with 3 possible post-holes above sides. Concave base, sides sloping 20 to 45°	c. (000) co.(014)	Dia. c.1.24m De.c.0.19-0.23m	S8, S16	-	Prob. medieval		13.10.2021
014	fill	Dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) clay, occasional stones, occasional charcoal	Wi. [013]	th. c. 0.18m	S16	none	Prob. medieval	v	13.10.2021
015	cut	Possible post-hole above the side of	c. (000)	Dia. 0.33m	plan	-	uncertain		13.10.2021

Context No.	type	Description and Interpretation	relationships	dimensions	Drawing No.	Finds	Suggested period	Sample taken	Date of record
		circular feature [013]	co. (016)	De. c.0.02m					
016	fill	No sample taken Compact stony clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3)	Wi.[015]	th. c.0.19-0.23m	S8	none	uncertain		13.10.2021
017	fill	Fill of linear feature [006]. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3)	Wi.[006]	De. <0.21m	S3	animal bone pottery	Roman c. C II -III	v	15.10.2021
018	cut	Linear feature with terminus. Aligned N/S. Extremely truncated. Sides 30 - 45° to flattish, irregular base	c. (000) co.(020)	De. 0.06 – 0.12m Le. 6.95m Wid. c.0.5 - 0.68	S6, S24	-	uncertain		14.10.2021
019	fill	Fill of linear feature [018], section next to baulk.	Wi.[018]	de. 0.1 – 0.12m	S24	none	uncertain		14.10.2021
020	fill	Fill of linear feature [018]. Dark brown (10YR 3/3) compact gritty clay with frequent medium-sized stones	Wi. [018]	Th. 0.1 – 0.12m	S6	pottery	Roman c. late I - III	v	14.10.2021
021	Cut	Post-hole. Sides sloping 30 - 35° to Irregular flattish base.	c.(000) co. (022)	Wid. c. 0.54m De. c. 0.14- 0.18m	S9	-	Prob. medieval		14.10.2021
022	Fill	Fill of post-hole [021]. (10YR3/1-3/2), occasional stones, occasional carbonised flecks	Wi. [021]	th. c. 0.14- 0.18m	S9	none	Prob. medieval		14.10.2021
023	Cut	Small rectangular pit. Animal burial. Truncated, variable slope of sides, 30 - 80°, flattish base.	c.(000) Co. (024)	Wid. c. 1.26m De. 0.2-0.24m	S15	-	C12/C13		20- 21.10.2021
024	Fill	Fill of pit with a calf burial, Dark grey dark grey (10YR/4/1) sandy clay with frequent stones and pieces of weathered limestone	Wi. [023]	th. c.0.2 - 0.24m	S15	animal bone pottery	C12/C13	v	20- 21.10.2021
025	Cut	Large rectangular pit. Cut into cornbrash. Sides sloping initially 70/80, the at 40° (towards the base and flattish, irregular base	c.(000) co.(026)	c.3.3m x c. 2.5m de. 0.38 -0.42m	S12	-	C12/C13		14/18.10.20 21

Context No.	type	Description and Interpretation	relationships	dimensions	Drawing No.	Finds	Suggested period	Sample taken	Date of record
026	Fill	Fill of pit [025]. Fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam. A deliberate back-fill containing domestic refuse	Wi.[025]	th. 0.38 -0.42m	S12	animal bone pottery	C12/C13	v	14/18.10.2021
027	fiil	Fill of central segment through linear feature [006]. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3)	Wi. [006]	Th.<0.07m	S4	none	Prob. Roman CII	v	15.10.2021
028	fill	Upper fill of large medieval ditch. [010] - SW segment Fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam (topsoil-like) with abundant roots.	Wi. [010] a. (012) Same as (011)	Th.c.0.13 - 0.16m	S2	animal bone pottery	C12/C13	v	15.10.2021
029	cut	Shallow, sub-circular feature in S part of excavation area. much truncated. Patch of scorched /reddened limestone l the centre, c.0.6m dia.	c.(000) co.(030)	c.1.4m x 1.8m De. c. 0.08 – 0.18m	S11	pottery	medieval		15.10.2021
030	fill	Fill of sub-circular feature [029]. Fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam.	Wi.[029]	th. c. 0.08 – 0.18m	S11	pottery	C13/C14	v	15.10.2021
031	cut	Large linear feature in the SE part of the excavation area – continues into the baulk. Two termini visible. Cut into the cornbrash.  Its W, E & N sides initially stepped down (80°) c. 0.12 - 0.2m before sloping at 25° fairly to a flat base c. 1m – 1.2m wide, whilst the S side has a sharper gradient (c. 55°) after the initial step. This feature partly survived beneath	c.(000) co.(032)	Wid. c. 2.9 m Le. c.8.8m De. up to 0.49m	S13	-	C13/C14		18.10.2021 19.10.2021

Context No.	type	Description and Interpretation	relationships	dimensions	Drawing No.	Finds	Suggested period	Sample taken	Date of record
		0.15 – 0.25 m of post-medieval topsoil on the SE side of the site.							
032	fill	Fill of large medieval linear feature. Fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/3/1) sandy clay-loam with abundant small to medium-sized pieces of weathered limestone. A deliberate back-fill containing domestic refuse	Wi.[031]	th. up to 0.49m	S13	animal bone pottery	C13/C14	v	19.10.2021
033	cut	Long, narrow linear feature aligned NNW/SSE. Very shallow – extremely truncated. Parallel to Roman ditches [006], [008] &, [018]. This feature was within the evaluation trench, though not identified at that stage.	c.(000) co.(034)	Wid. c. 0.2m Vis. le. c.5.65m De. max. 0.03m	S18	-	Prob. Roman		20.10.2021
034	fill	Fill of linear feature [033]. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3)	Wi.(033)	th. max. 0.03m	S18	none	Prob. Roman	v	20.10.2021
035	cut	Linear feature, NW/SE-aligned, on E side of excavation area Very shallow/extremely truncated. Deepens on the N side	c.(000) co. (038)	Wid. c.0.54 m Le. c.7.14m De. 0.02 - 0.09m	S17, S23	-	Poss. Roman		20.10.2021
036	fill	Fill of linear feature [035]. Western segment. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3).	Wi.[035]	th. 0.02 - 0.09m	S23	pottery	Poss. Roman	v	20.10.2021
037	fill	Ashy clayey soil (10yr 4/1) Lower fill of the S terminus of large medieval ditch [031] in SE corner of excavation area. with abundant small to medium-sized pieces of weathered limestone. A deliberate back-fill containing domestic refuse.	Wi. [031] b. (050)	th.c. 0.12- 0.25m	S14	pottery	C13/C14	v	21.10.2021
038	fill	Fill of linear feature [035]. Compact	Wi.[035]	th.0.02-0.09m	S17	none	Poss,	v	20.10.2021



Context No.	type	Description and Interpretation	relationships	dimensions	Drawing No.	Finds	Suggested period	Sample taken	Date of record
		gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3).					Roman		
039	cut	Post-hole next to linear feature [035] Flattish base, sides 30-40°. Extremely truncated	c.(000) co.(040)	Dia. c.0.25m de. c. 0.08m	S19	-	Poss, Roman		21.10.2021
040	fill	Fill of post-hole [039]. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3). No sample taken	Wi.[039]	th. c. 0.08m	S19	none	Poss, Roman		21.10.2021
041	cut	Remains of post-hole next to linear feature [035]	c.(000) co.(042)	Dia. c.0.2m De. c.0.02 m max	S21	-	Poss, Roman		20.10.2021
042	fill	Fill of possible post-hole [039]. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3). No sample taken	Wid.[041]	th. c.0.02 m max	S21	none	Poss, Roman		20.10.2021
043	cut	Possible post-hole next to Roman linear feature [006]. Flattish base, sides c. 50-60°	c.(000) co. (044)	Dia. c.0.35m De .0.11m	S25	-	Poss, Roman		22..10.2021
044	fill	Fill of post-hole (043). Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3). No sample taken	Wi.[043]	th .0.11m	S25	none	Poss, Roman		22..10.2021
045	cut	Possible post-hole next to animal burial [023]	c.(000) co. (046)	Dia. c.0.28m De.c.0.1m	S22	-	Poss, Roman		22..10.2021
046	fill	Fill of possible post-hole [045] Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3) with abundant medium-sized pieces of limestone. No sample taken	Wi.[045]	th.c.0.1m	S22	none	Poss, Roman		22..10.2021
047	fill	Upper fill of medieval pit [031]. Same description as (032)	Wi.[031]		S14		C13/C14	v	22..10.2021
048	cut	Post-hole at the end of linear feature [035]. Concave base, sides sloping c.45-60°	c.(000) co.[049]	Dia. c. 0.25-c. 0.3m De.c. 0.14m	S20	-	Poss, Roman		22..10.2021

Context No.	type	Description and Interpretation	relationships	dimensions	Drawing No.	Finds	Suggested period	Sample taken	Date of record
049	fill	Fill of post-hole [048]. Compact gritty clay, brown (10YR 4/3) to dark brown (10YR 3/3). No sample taken	Wi.[048]	th. c. 0.14m	S20	none	Poss, Roman		22..10.2021
050	fill	Upper fill of medieval ditch [031]; southern segment through ditch. Fairly firm, dark grey (10YR/4/1) to very dark grey (10YR/431) sandy clay-loam with frequent small / medium pieces of weathered limestone, particularly along its base/interface with (037). A deliberate back-fill containing domestic refuse. Similar to (026)	Wi.[031] a.(037)	Th. 0.05 – 0.2m	S13	pottery	C13/C14		21..10.2021