



Iain Soden Heritage Services Ltd

Modern living in an historic environment

Archaeological monitoring of Geotechnical Test Pits at Buckwell End, Wellingborough

27 February 2014

Buckwell End Geotechnical Pits

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A series of six geotechnical test pits were machine-dug on 27 February 2014 in the presence of an archaeologist at Buckwell Place Buckwell End, Wellingborough (NGR: SP 8867 6795; Fig 1) ahead of development by Seagrave Developments (WP/2010/0545/FM). Monitoring was carried out by Iain Soden Heritage Services Ltd in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation dated 18 February 2014.

The locations of the Test Pits which were dug at about 74m aOD, are shown in the accompanying Figure 1.

The stratification encountered in the Test Pits was as follows:

Test Pit	Depth	Layer	Identification and dating
1	0-50mm	Concrete	Modern garage base
	50-400mm	Brick rubble	Modern sub-floor
	400mm-1.2m	Rubble-brick and ironstone	White earthenware pottery and land drain; soakaway
	1.2m-	Re-deposited natural clay	Land drain (soakaway pit). Massive water ingress caused pit to be curtailed
2	0-50mm	Concrete	Modern garage base
	50-400mm	Brick rubble	Modern sub-floor
	400mm-1.6m	Medium brown sandy clay	White earthenware, transfer-printed pottery; cast iron main sewer/water at c1.3m
	1.6m	Stiff ochre clay	Natural geology
3	0-200mm	Concrete on brick floor, thin ash base	Modern garage base
	200mm-1.5m	Stiff ochre clay	Natural geology
	1.5m	Rock	Natural geology
4	0-300mm	Brick rubble and ironstone in a black soil matrix	Modern rubble make-up
	300mm-1.2m	Medium brown sandy clay with brick and coal inclusions	Dump including white earthenware and brick
	1.2m	Stiff ochre clay	Natural geology
5	0-50mm	Concrete	Modern garage base
	50-700mm	Brick rubble and roots in black soil matrix	Modern sub-floor and make-up; modern glass bottle
	700mm	Stiff ochre clay	Natural geology
6	0-100mm	Concrete	Modern garage base
	100mm	Stiff ochre clay	Natural geology

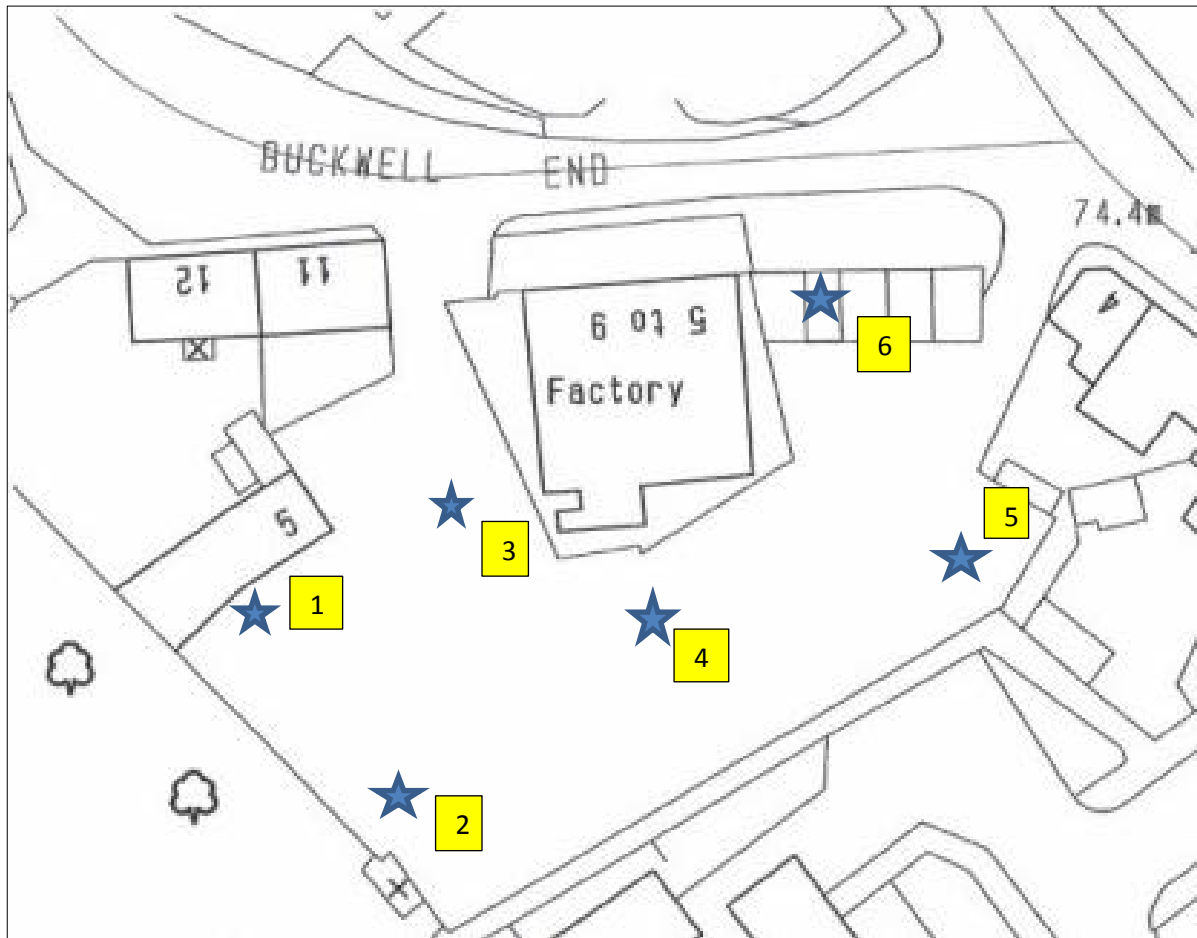


Fig 1: Test pit locations 1-6 (Map base after Seagrave developments issue)

Dating and further site potential

No layers or features were present in any of the test pits which pre-date the 19th-century at the earliest. The brick rubble encountered comprised numerous types from un-frogged Victorian to frogged and impressed LBC 'Phorpres' types (a trade-mark for Four-times-pressed clay), and so must have been dumped from the 1960s onwards. The pottery encountered dates no earlier than the 19th century and indeed is still found in many modern houses so may be no older than 20th century. None of the finds were retained.

At the north and east of the site (TP 3 and 6), the test pits show that no pre-modern anthropogenic layers survive as the site has been truncated directly onto the natural geology over a wide area.

Across the centre of the site and the south and west (TP 2, 4 and 5), following removal of old soils, the site has been made up in the modern period with recent builder's waste. This is soil and rubble fill to build up and flatten the site in what is otherwise a general slope down towards the south (as observed in the surrounding plots). The variety of thicknesses of this material encountered suggests that the natural surface with which the ground-works began was highly uneven, probably a result of the stripping and muck-away it probably entailed. Test pit 1 hit a modern soak-away which was over 1.2m deep and almost certainly was dug well into the natural geology.

Buckwell End Geotechnical Pits

No buried topsoils or other old agricultural/horticultural soils were present anywhere on the site. There are a number of live services on the site and pipes (both cast iron and salt-glazed) were noted in the sections or ends of Test pits 1, 2 and 3, of which those in 1 and 2 were at a depth in excess of 1m. Some test pits also contained brick garage foundations in their sections, extending down to natural geology).

The site appears to have little or no archaeological potential for retention of any pre-modern layers, features or artefacts due to the previous modern ground preparation there.



Fig 2: Digging Test Pit 1, looking west



I S Heritage, 27 February 2014