



New dwelling west of

Owlet End

The Close, Clifford Chambers, Warwickshire

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The Close, Clifford Chambers, Warwickshire,
CV37 8HS

Archaeological Evaluation & Recording

NGR: SP 1966552444

Site code: CC18b

OASIS ID: 110archa1-352408

Sean Cook BA (Hons) MCIfA

Illustration by Jill Atherton MCIfA

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Contents

<i>SUMMARY</i>	4
<i>INTRODUCTION</i>	6
<i>Location and scope of work (Figs. 1 & 2)</i>	6
<i>Geology and topography</i>	6
<i>Archaeological and historical background</i>	7
<i>RESULTS (Figs. 3-7)</i>	8
<i>Fieldwork aims, methods and recording</i>	8
<i>Description of deposits</i>	10
<i>FINDS</i>	14
<i>DISCUSSION</i>	18
<i>Archive Location</i>	18
<i>BIBLIOGRAPHY</i>	19
<i>APPENDIX 1; OASIS</i>	25

Front cover; Owlet End, view to the north-east

SUMMARY

A programme of archaeological work comprising an evaluation and subsequent recording during construction of a detached dwelling and associated drainage was carried out in September 2018 and again during July and August 2019 at land west of Owlet End, The Close, Clifford Chambers, Warwickshire. The OS 1886 map shows Owlet End situated at the north-west end of the village on the floodplain between the main road and the River Stour. The historic core of the medieval village lies further to the south-east. Analysis of the fabric of the building suggests that it was constructed during the late C17 and subsequently divided into three cottages by 1886.

The combined results of the excavations showed the remains of a large north-east to south-west aligned linear ditch feature dated by a few sherds of pottery and a fragment of roof tile to the Romano-British period. Within the fill deposit was a large assemblage of animal bone associated with domestic food waste, cattle being the most abundant species. The evidence suggests contemporary occupation in the vicinity. The ditch itself appears aligned reasonably perpendicular to the river frontage, acting perhaps as a boundary/drainage ditch within a wider settlement pattern. An earlier evaluation to the south of Owlets End, albeit small in scope, was negative suggesting little occupation extending immediately south of Owlet End.



Fig.1; site location (circled in red)

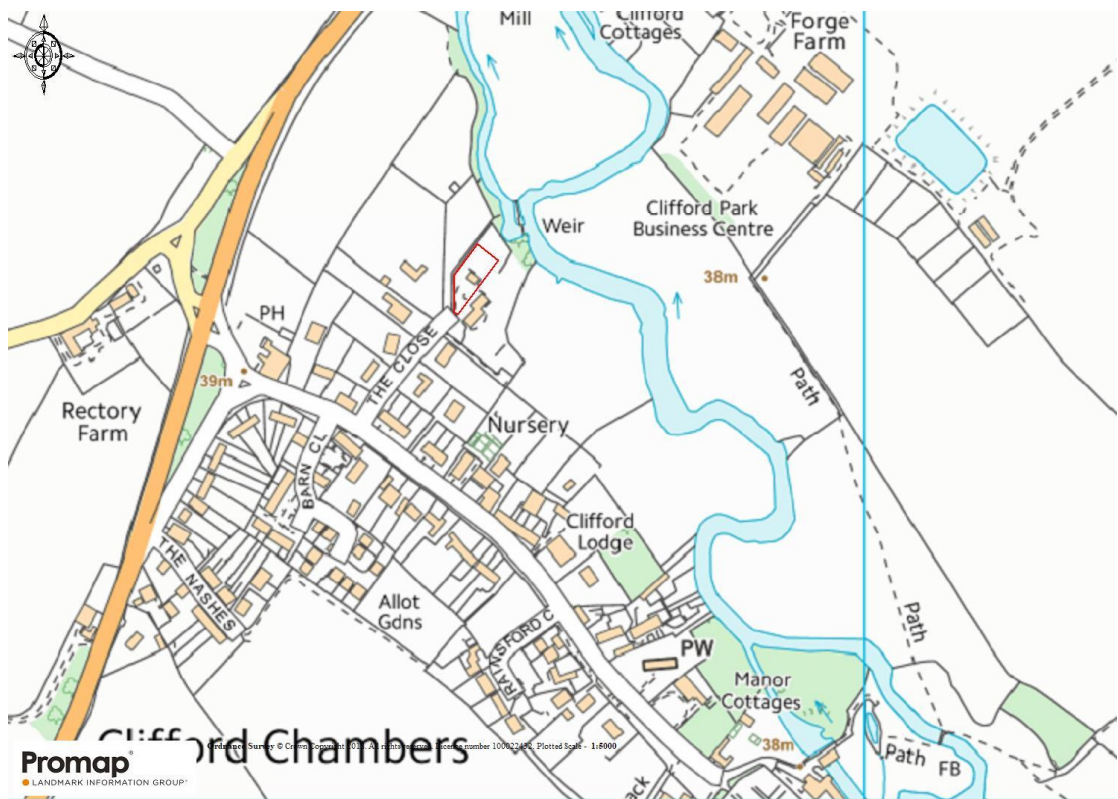


Fig. 2; study site (outlined in red)

INTRODUCTION

Location and scope of work (Figs. 1 & 2)

This document details the results of a programme of archaeological work during 6th, 14th, 17-19th September 2018 and 10th June and 15th July 2019 at land west of Owlet End, The Close, Clifford Chambers, Warwickshire, CV37 8HS at the request of AP Francis Builders Ltd. Planning permission had been granted (planning Ref: 17/03165/OUT) for the erection of a detached two-storey dwelling with access to the west of the existing building conditional on an archaeological evaluation in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Owlet End lies is located within an area where a series of medieval monuments are recorded. There was therefore potential for medieval remains to survive within the site including those pre-dating this period, that may be adversely affected by the development.

The evaluation recorded the remains of a Romano-British ditch aligned north-east to south-west across the footprint of the proposed plot and a subsequent watching brief was carried out during excavation of the strip foundation and drainage trenches for the new dwelling to further record the ditch feature any other deposits of this period that may have been impacted on.

Geology and topography

The parish of Clifford Chambers lies a mile and a half south of Stratford-upon-Avon, mainly to the south-west of the River Stour which forms part of its boundary. The parish was on the extreme north edge of the county; it was surrounded by Warwickshire on three sides, and in 1931 was transferred to Warwickshire. It is very irregular in shape, is 1,725 a. The narrow part of the parish projecting east across the river for about two miles along the north side of Atherstone parish presumably represents the part of Ailstone in Clifford parish. In the southern corner of the parish the hamlet of Wincot lies partly in Clifford, the parish boundary running through the buildings at Wincot. Neither of the hamlets has ever included more than a few houses, and the hamlet of Willicote (in Quinton parish) which extends into the south part of Clifford probably did not include any houses in Clifford parish until the C18 (VCH, 1965).

The parish lies on flat and gently rolling ground reaching 85m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) at the highest point, on the south-east. The short north

boundary is formed by the River Avon, and the River Stour runs along the east boundary for a short distance and then crosses the parish and forms part of the west boundary. The river has been diverted to form a moat near the manor house. The southern part of the parish is crossed by a stream, the Marchfont brook, that runs into the Avon at Weston-on-Avon. The parish lies mainly on the Lower Lias, with gravel and sand beside the River Stour.

Owlet End is situated at the north end of the village, between the main road and the River Stour which marks the northern boundary of the property. The proposed development site which lies to the south of Owlet End comprises approx. 600m² and is at approximately 39m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD) and currently consists of garden. Geology maps indicate an underlying geology comprising gravels of the Second Terrace of the River Avon (BGS, 1974).

Archaeological and historical background

Clifford village, on the gravel beside the River Stour, was probably formed by the C10. Wells sunk into the gravel and sand on which the village is built provided an adequate water supply for Clifford. The earliest settlement was perhaps concentrated at what was later the south-east end of the village around the church and manor-house, where the wide village street suggests that the houses were grouped around a green. The Manor House was built in the C15, beside a moated site. It was a simple house of four bays built of close timbers filled with brick. Several houses in that part of the village were built in the C16 and C17.

In 1086 the parish was called simply Clifford, from the ford where the road to Stratford crosses the River Stour; the name Chambers was added by the C14 after the manor had become attached to the office of chamberlain of Gloucester Abbey. The hamlet of Ailstone, which formed part of Clifford manor, was from the C16 usually described as partly in Clifford and partly in Atherstone (Warks.).

The mill in Clifford in 1086 was probably the one east of the village on the Stour standing close to the manor-house. From the C13 the demesne included two mills, perhaps both on the same site.

An archaeological assessment of the site and the surrounding area (Hillman, 2017) showed that the proposed development lies within an area of archaeological potential. The earliest recorded evidence of human activity is suggested by the discovery of a Roman coin in a garden on the Crunden Road (MWA1617). The village is mentioned in Domesday (1086) as Clifford indicating a Saxon settlement had been established before the Conquest. An Anglo-Saxon trackway (MWA8635) is located to the north of the site. The deserted medieval

settlement of Clifford Chambers (MWA9043) lies to the south-west of the development site whilst similar remains are also located approx. 350m west of Clifford Chambers Bridge (MWA1330 & MWA5638).

RESULTS (Figs. 3-7)

Fieldwork aims, methods and recording

The objective of the evaluation was to determine the date, character, quality, survival and extent of the archaeological deposits within the application area likely to be threatened by the proposed development in order that an informed decision on their importance in a local, regional and national context could be made. The information used to inform the basis of a mitigation strategy. The evaluation comprised a single T-shaped trench totalling approx. 15m long and at 1.50m wide focusing within the footprint of the proposed new dwelling.

The subsequent watching brief was carried out during excavation of the foundations for the new dwelling. Archaeological recording was undertaken to obtain an appropriate record of any remains or finds disturbed or exposed during excavation associated with the groundworks. Machine excavation was only used for the removal of non-archaeologically significant material (modern deposits) and was used to excavate these layers stratigraphically. All deposits were excavated removing the overburden under close archaeological supervision using a toothless bucket and investigated for archaeological features. Plans and sample sections of the trenches were made and recorded during excavation.

The archaeological field work and post-excavation was carried out in accordance with standards and guidance for archaeological field evaluations and watching briefs produced by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA, 2014).

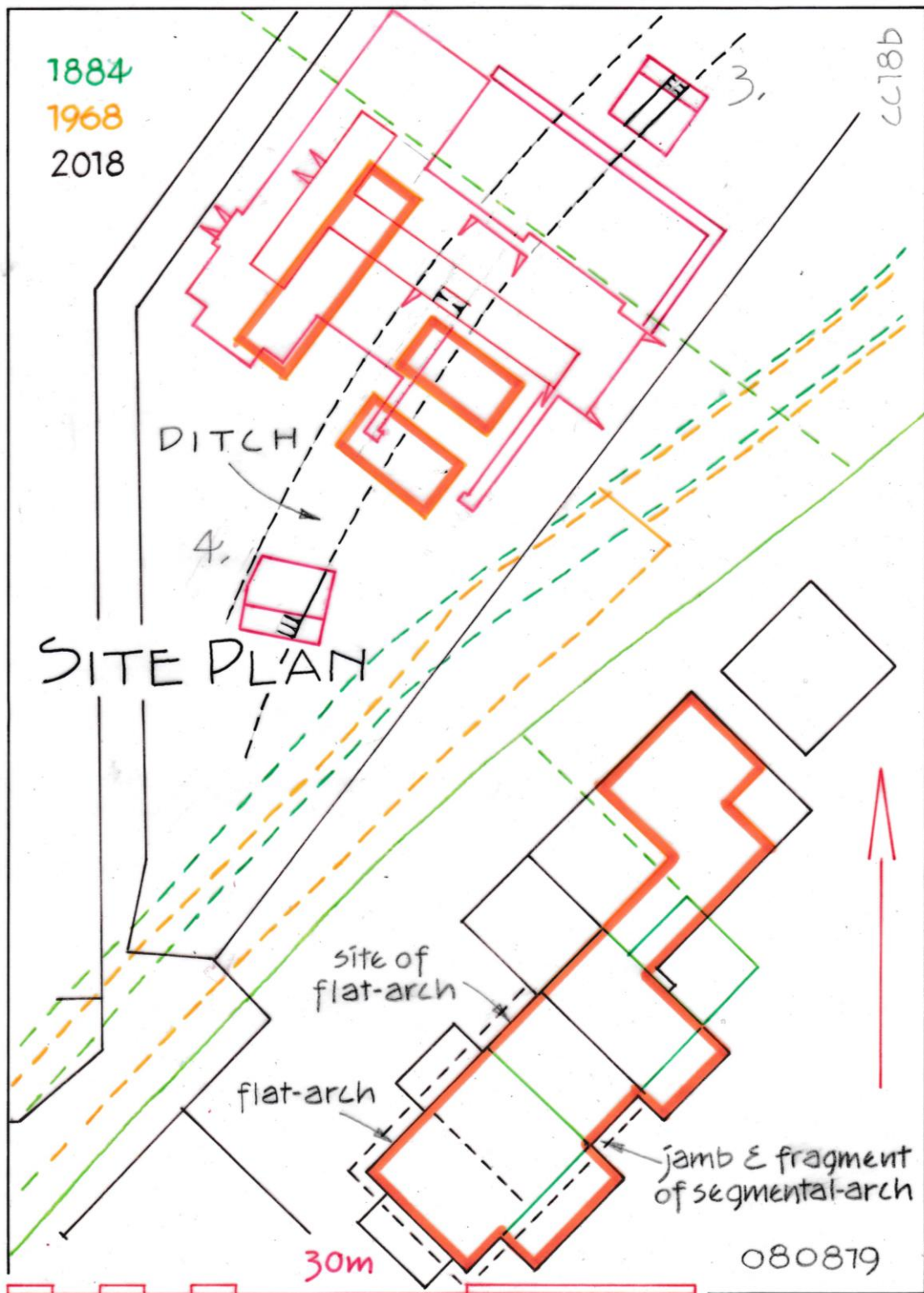


Fig. 3; site plan showing Owlet End and the location of the evaluation (trench 1), the strip foundations for the new dwelling (trench 2) and drainage (trenches 3 & 4)

Description of deposits

TRENCHES 1 & 2

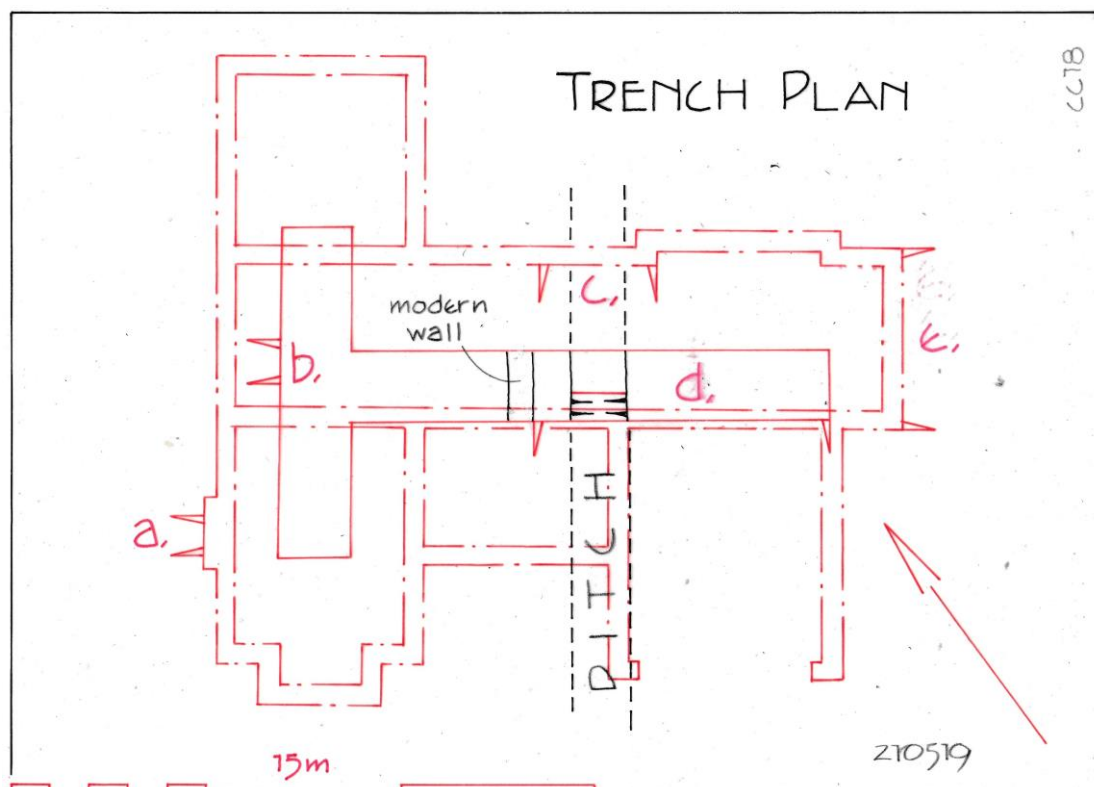


Fig. 4; trench plan showing location of evaluation trench 1 and the subsequent strip foundation trench 2 for the new dwelling (also with section locations)

The surface of the natural substrate (context 102), comprising a light yellowish-brown gravel, was encountered throughout the trench evaluation trench and again during the subsequent watching brief at a depth varying between 0.40m-1.20m below the existing ground level. The results indicated a gradual slope within the natural topography from a height of 37.95m AOD at the south-east end to 37.65 at the north-east end. A single linear ditch feature (104) was recorded during the evaluation within the central area of the proposed plot aligned north-east to south-west and again, continuing along the same orientation within the foundation trenches for the new dwelling during the subsequent watching brief. The ditch, which appears to have been subjected to later truncation, had gently sloping sides and a flat base, surviving to a width of 1.90m wide and a depth of 0.10m and was filled by a single deposit (103) which consisted of a mid-yellowish-brown, sandy-silt with a component of small to medium rounded pebbles. Two sherds of Romano-British pottery including a large assemblage of animal bone were recovered from the fill deposit. This feature and the natural

gravel were sealed throughout the trench by a relict subsoil layer (101) varying between 0.30m-0.60m in thickness. This was in turn overlain by the modern topsoil (100).

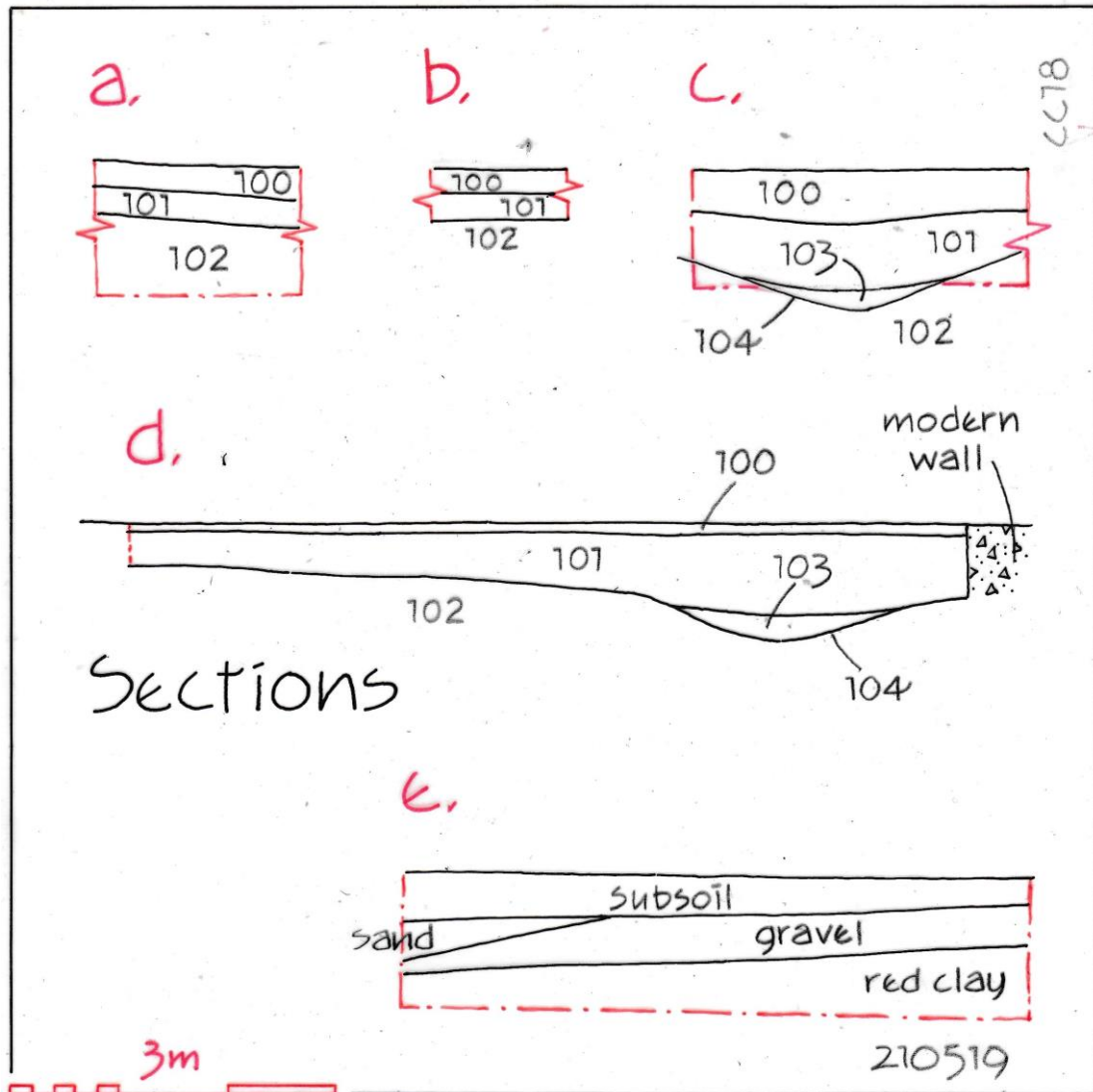


Fig.5; trench sections

TRENCH 3

One of two drainage trenches, the excavation comprised a trench approx. 2.0m square excavated on the north side of the new dwelling. This partially revealed the eastern half of ditch 104 recorded at about 1.40m wide and 0.30m deep, truncating the natural gravel deposit (102), the remainder of the feature continuing beyond the edge of trench. It was filled by a single deposit (107) consisting of a greyish-brown, sandy-silt with a large component of small to

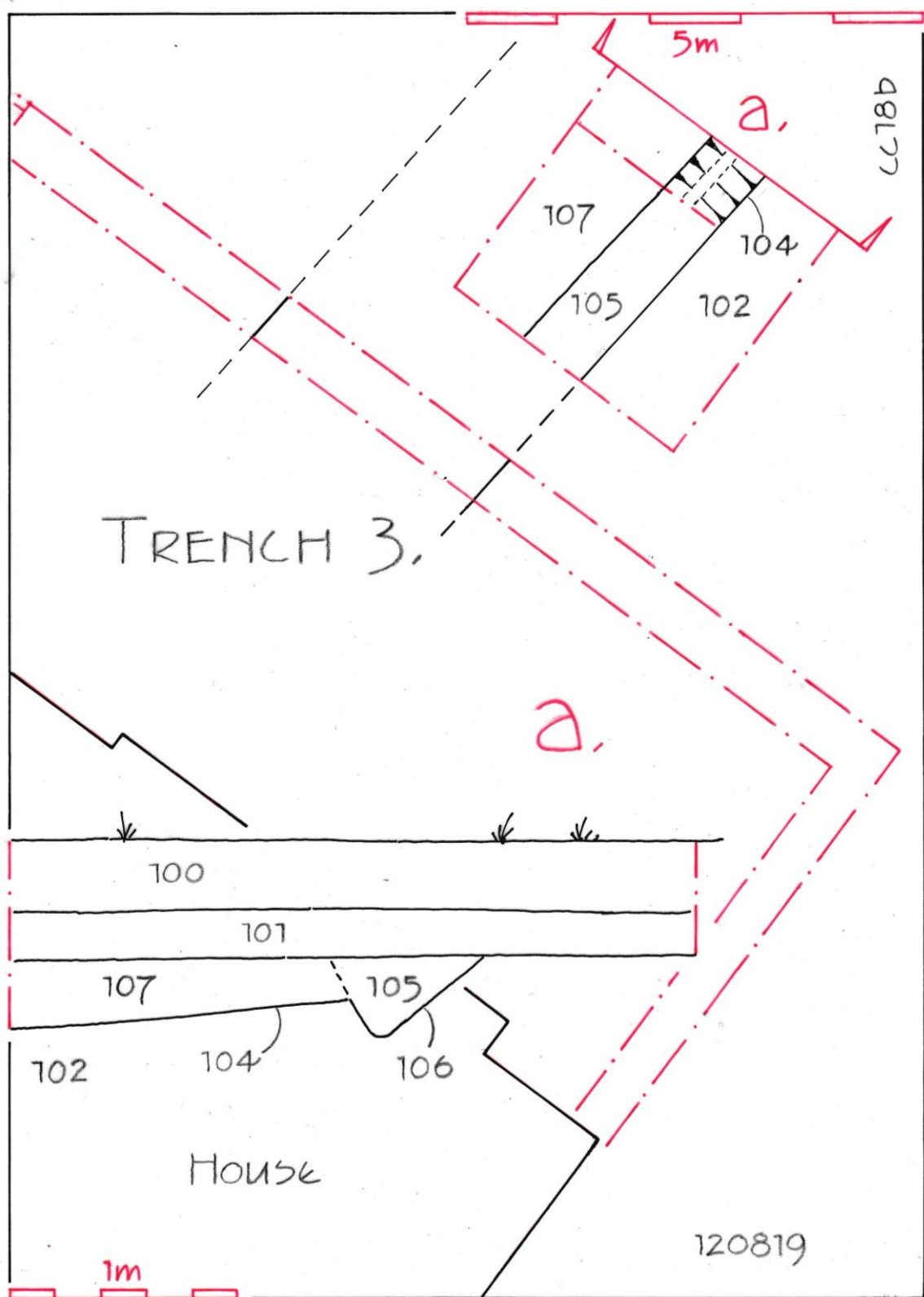


Fig. 6; trench 3, plan and section

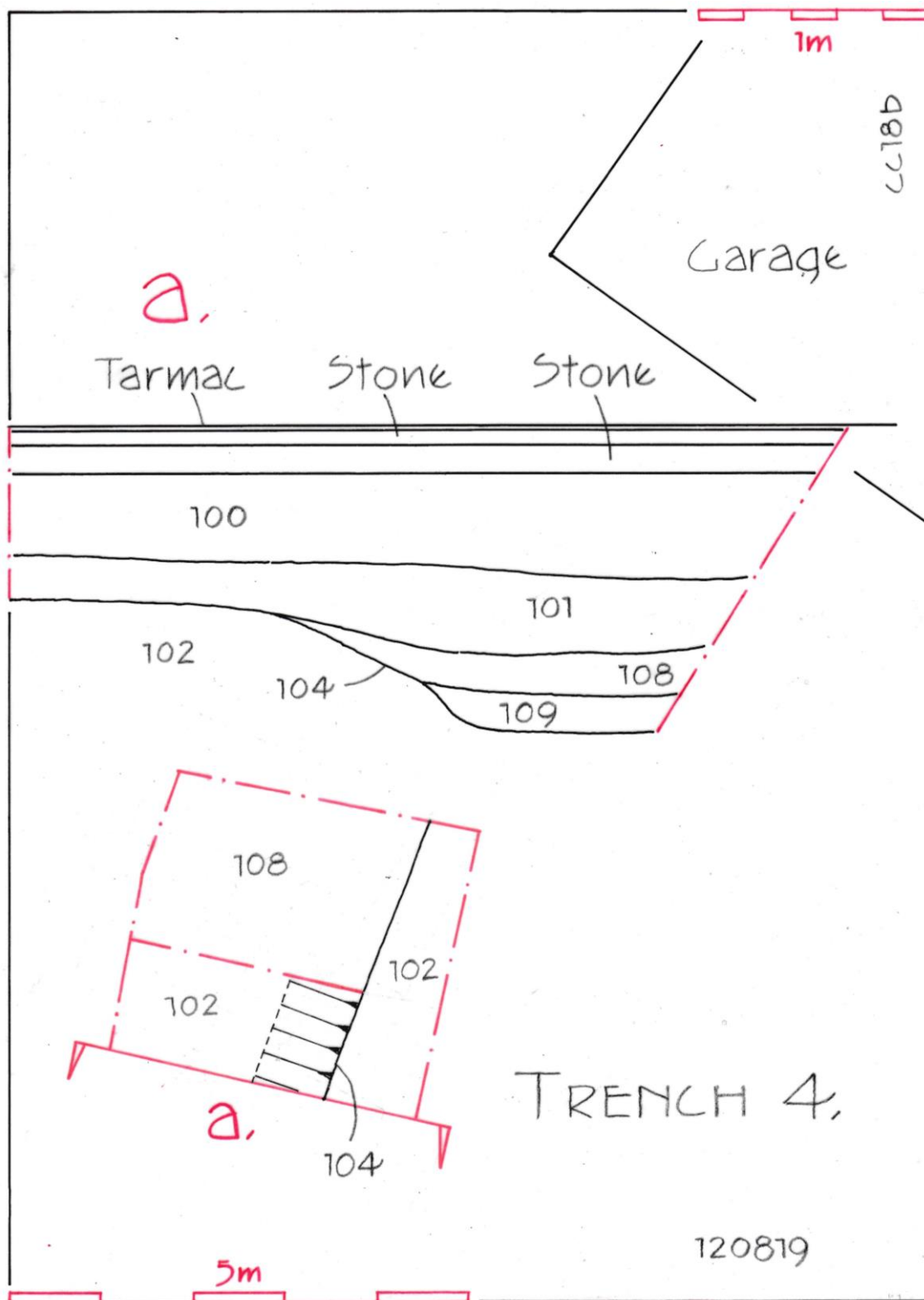


Fig. 7; trench 4, plan and section

medium sized rounded pebbles and equivalent with the fill deposit (103) in trenches 1 & 2. This produced a single fragment of Romano-British roof tile. The east edge of the ditch was truncated by the construction of a later V-shaped linear ditch feature [106], similarly aligned, about 0.60m wide and 0.35m deep which was filled by a single undated deposit (105) comprising a dark-greyish-brown, sandy-silt. The west edge of the ditch feature was also observed in the adjacent linear retaining trench to the south for the new patio which shows that the ditch was about 3.0m wide in total.

TRENCH 4

The second of two drainage trenches, the excavation comprised a trench also approx. 2.0m square located on the south side of the new dwelling. This partially revealed the eastern half of ditch [104] exposed for a width of about 2.50m and recorded at 0.50m deep, the remaining half of the feature continuing beyond the west edge of trench. The ditch feature, aligned roughly north-south, is steep-sided with a flat base and is filled by two undated deposits, the earliest of these (109) consists of a reddish-brown, sandy-silt with a large component of small to medium sized rounded pebbles. This is overlain by an upper fill deposit (108) comprising a greyish-brown, sandy-silt with a slightly lesser component of small pebbles. Animal bone was retrieved mostly from this upper fill. The in-filled ditch is sealed by a relict subsoil layer (101) to a depth of 0.40m which was in turn overlain by more recent topsoil layer to a depth of 0.50m. This is then capped by the existing gravel and tarmac layer.

FINDS

The pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

Two sherds of pottery with a total weight of 10g occurred in context 103 (Trench 1). They are both Romano-British, and were recorded using the conventions of the National Roman Fabric Reference Collection (Tomber and Dore 1994), as follows:

MAL RE A: Malvernian Reduced Ware. 1 sherd, 4g.

SVW OX 1: Severn Valley Oxidised ware. 1 sherd, 6g

Both wares are common finds in the region. The sherds are in reasonably good condition and appear reliably stratified.

The Animal Bone by Jen Wood

Introduction

A total of 49 (1155g) refitted fragments of animal bone were recovered by hand during the scheme of archaeological works. All of the remains were recovered from a single ditch deposit (103) attributed to the Roman period of occupation.

Methodology

For the purposes of this assessment the entire assemblage has been fully recorded into an archive. Identification of the bone was undertaken with access to a reference collection and published guides. All animal remains were counted and weighed, and where possible identified to species, element, side. Also fusion data, butchery marks (Binford 1981), gnawing, burning and pathological changes were noted when present. Ribs and vertebrae were only recorded to species when they were substantially complete and could accurately be identified. Undiagnostic bones were recorded as micro (rodent size), small (rabbit size), medium (sheep size) or large (cattle size). The separation of sheep and goat bones was done using the criteria of Boessneck (1969) and Prummel and Frisch (1986) in addition to the use of the reference material. Where distinctions could not be made the bone was recorded as sheep/goat (S/G).

The condition of the bone was graded using the criteria stipulated by Lyman (1996). Grade 0 being the best preserved bone and grade 5 indicating that the bone had suffered such structural and attritional damage as to make it unrecognisable.

The quantification of species was carried out using the total fragment count, in which the total number of fragments of bone and teeth was calculated for each taxon. Where fresh breaks were noted, fragments were refitted and counted as one.

Tooth eruption and wear stages were measured using a combination of Halstead (1985), Grant (1982) and Levine (1982), and fusion data was analysed according to Silver (1969). Measurements of adult, that is, fully fused bones were taken according to the methods of von den Driesch (1976), with asterisked (*)

measurements indicating bones that were reconstructed or had slight abrasion of the surface.

Results

The remains were generally of a good overall condition, averaging between grades 2 and 3 on the Lyman criteria (1996). Three fragments of bone displayed evidence of cut marks. The butchery mark evidence appears consistent with disarticulation of the carcass. Carnivore gnawing was noted on a single Sheep/Goat tibia. No evidence of canids was noted in the assemblage, however the presence of carnivore gnawing in the assemblage would suggest a possible presence of dogs on site. No evidence of pathology, working or burning was noted on any of the remains.

Table 1, Summary of Identified Bone

Context	Cut	Taxon	Element	Side	Number	Weight	Comments
103		Cattle	Metacarpal	L	1	39	Proximal shaft, Bd=48mm
		Cattle	Tibia	R	1	193	Proximal shaft, unfused
		Cattle	Tibia	L	1	101	Distal shaft, Bd=58mm
		Cattle	Astragals	R	1	33	Complete. GLI=57mm, GLm=51mm, DI=34mm, Dm=32mm, Bd=28mm
		Cattle	Radius	R	1	94	Proximal Shaft, Bp=70mm, Bfp=65mm
		Cattle	Radius	R	1	19	Proximal shaft, juv?
		Cattle	Radius	L	1	25	Proximal shaft, unfused
		Cattle	Atlas	L	1	29	Chopped through the saggital plane, Knife cut along the ventral surface.
		Cattle	Skull-zygomatic	L	1	10	Two chopmarks on the internal surface
		Cattle	Skull-zygomatic	R	1	11	
		Cattle	Radius	L	1	45	Distal shaft
		Cattle	Scapula	R	1	34	Coracoid process
		Cattle	Scapula	L	1	68	Proximal end. Glenoid. SLC=48mm, GLP=61mm, LG=50mm
		Cattle	Scapula	R	1	12	Glenoid. Juv?
		Cattle	Mandible	L	1	73	Fragmentary, PM4 only in occlusion.
		Cattle	Atlas	R	1	11	Cranial Fragment
		Cattle	Innominate	R	1	19	Pubic ramus
		Cattle	Innominate	R	1	5	Unfused acetabulum, pubis fragment
	Cattle	Horncore	X	2	16	Fragments	

	Cattle	Radius	L	1	26	Distal shaft, unfused
	Sheep/Goat	Tibia	R	1	20	Proximal shaft. Possible carnivore gnawing on proximal end.
	Pig	Humerus	L	1	17	Midshaft fragment
	Pig	Metapodial	X	1	4	Distal articulation
	Pig	Metatarsal II	R	1	3	Complete. GL=54mm, Bd=10mm
	Pig	Innominate	R	1	38	Ilium/Ishium
	Medium Mammal Size	Lumbar	B	1	10	Complete
	Large Mammal Size	Innominate	B	1	60	Pubis
	Large Mammal Size	Thoracic	B	1	20	Centrum, Unfused
	Large Mammal Size	Rib	X	12	65	Blade fragments
	Large Mammal Size	Atlas	L	1	10	Caudal fragment
	Large Mammal Size	Thoracic	B	1	8	Spinous process
	Large Mammal Size	Long Bone	X	1	19	Knife cuts across top of shaft fragment
	Unidentified	Unidentified	X	5	18	

As can be seen from Table 1, cattle are the most abundant species identified within the assemblage followed by pig, a single fragment of sheep/goat was also identified. The remaining assemblage was not identifiable beyond size category.

The entire assemblage was recovered from a single deposit. The remains mostly represent cattle remains from a minimum of 3 individuals, represented by both adult and juvenile remains. The pig remains represent a minimum of a single individual. There is limited aging data within the assemblage. The majority of skeletal elements represented appear to be associated with butchery discard. The assemblage is probably domestic in nature, representing butchery discard and food waste.

Due to the limited size and single deposit nature of the assemblage, little further information can be gained, beyond the presence of the remains on site. No further work is required on this assemblage.

DISCUSSION

Documentary sources indicate that a settlement was established at Clifford before the Norman Conquest, probably centred around the south-east end of the existing village where significant monuments are located including the medieval church and the former moated manor house. The maximum extent of the medieval settlement is mostly based on the physical evidence of these monuments and the outlying ridge and furrow supplemented by the cartographic sources (OS 1886). Agriculture appears to have been mainly based around arable with some sheep and cattle.

Owlet End is currently a dwelling situated at the north-west end of the village on the floodplain between the main road and the River Stour. Analysis of the fabric of the building suggests that it was constructed during the late C17 and subsequently divided into three cottages by 1886. The absence of a fireplace related to the construction of the late C17 building seems to indicate that it was not a dwelling when originally erected although the presence of a centrally placed doorway flanked by flat brick arch openings suggests a building of some status. Its original function may have been more rudimentary, perhaps a stable.

The combined results of the evaluation and subsequent watching brief recorded the remains of a wide, but shallow north-east to south-west aligned linear ditch feature with a slight curve dated by a few sherds of pottery and a fragment of roof tile to the Romano-British period. Sample excavation of the fill deposit also produced a large assemblage of animal bone, cattle are the most abundant species, but sheep and goat are also included in the remains. The assemblage is associated with butchery discard and is probably domestic in nature, representing food waste associated with local contemporary occupation in the vicinity of the site. The ditch itself would not have been necessarily very deep, but quite wide in nature and appears aligned reasonably perpendicular to the river frontage, acting perhaps as a boundary/drainage ditch and as an enclosure for livestock. An earlier evaluation to the south of Owlets End (Cook, 2018a), albeit small in scope, was negative suggesting that occupation does not extend immediately south of the house.

Archive Location

The physical archive will be deposited with the City Museum Services in consultation with the Collections Officer. The digital archive arising from the work

will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) through the on-line portal (OASIS).

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Plate 1; overall view to the west of the east-west arm of the evaluation trench



Plate 2; east-west arm of the evaluation trench



Plate 3; ditch feature and trench section view to the south



Plate 4; trench 3 and ditch fill deposit 103, view to the north



Plate 5; trench 3 and ditch features 104 & 106, view to the north-west



Plate 6; trench 3, south facing section across ditches 104 & 106



Plate 7; trench 4 showing ditch 104, view to the south



Plate 8; trench 3, ditch 104, view to the south-west

APPENDIX 1; OASIS

Project name	New dwelling west of Owlet End The Close, Clifford Chambers, Warwickshire, Archaeological Evaluation and Recording
Project dates	Start: 06-09-2018 End: 19-09-2019
Previous/future work	No / No
Any associated project reference codes	cc18a - Sitecode
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 5 - Garden
Monument type	DITCH Roman
Significant Finds	POTTERY Roman
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Roman
Methods & techniques	"Targeted Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	National Planning Policy Framework - NPPF
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)
Country	England
Site location	WARWICKSHIRE STRATFORD ON AVON CLIFFORD CHAMBERS New dwelling west of Owlet End, The Close
Postcode	CV37 8HS
Study area	600 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 19665 52444 52.16950346574 -1.712434030136 52 10 10 N 001 42 44 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 37.65m Max: 37.95m
Name of Organisation	one ten archaeology
Project brief originator	Local Planning Authority (with/without advice from County/District Archaeologist)
Project design originator	one ten archaeology
Project director/manager	sean cook
Project supervisor	sean cook
Type of sponsor/funding body	Landowner

Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS
Paper Archive recipient	county museum
Paper Media available	"Photograph","Plan","Section","Unpublished Text"
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	New dwelling west of Owlet End The Close, Clifford Chambers, Warwickshire, CV37 8HS; Archaeological Evaluation and Recording
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Date	2019
Issuer or publisher	one ten archaeology
Place of issue or publication	Warwickshire
URL	http://www.oasis.ac.uk
Entered by	sean cook (sean@onetenarchaeology.co.uk)
Entered on	22 May 2019