



9 Harbidges Lane

Long Buckby, Northamptonshire

Archaeological Investigation

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HER Event number: ENN109507

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Sean Cook BA (Hons) MCIfA

Illustration by Jill Atherton MCIfA

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one ten archaeology

6 Elm Close, Pebworth, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire, CV37 8XL

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>	6
<i>EXCAVATION AIMS & METHODOLOGY</i>	8
<i>Aims of the excavation</i>	8
<i>Excavation strategy</i>	9
<i>Presentation of results</i>	9
<i>RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS (Figs. 3-6)</i>	9
<i>FINDS</i>	13
<i>Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn</i>	13
<i>Charred plant macrofossils and other remains by Val Fryer</i>	13
<i>Hammerscale By Rebecca Sillwood</i>	17
<i>DISCUSSION (Figs. 7 & 8)</i>	19
<i>Archive Location</i>	21
<i>BIBLIOGRAPHY</i>	22
<i>PLATES</i>	24
<i>APPENDIX 1; OASIS</i>	27

Front cover; View to the north-east showing excavation trench 5.

SUMMARY

Archaeological Investigation were carried out during 2018 and 2019 at 9 Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire, in advance of proposal for residential development of the site. Although limited in scope, the investigation revealed a series of features dated to the C12 and mid-C13. On the west side of the site they comprised a ditch interpreted as a former boundary enclosing a probable small timber-framed structure aligned perpendicular to Harbidges Lane and on the southern edge of the site a single right-angled feature, possibly an enclosure ditch, which produced C12 and mid-C13 pottery. The evidence, in combination with other discoveries in the area suggests that the site is part of a settlement comprising tenement plots which became established along both sides of Harbidges Lane during the period of occupation, associated with Long Buckby Castle and the castle bailey located just south of the site.

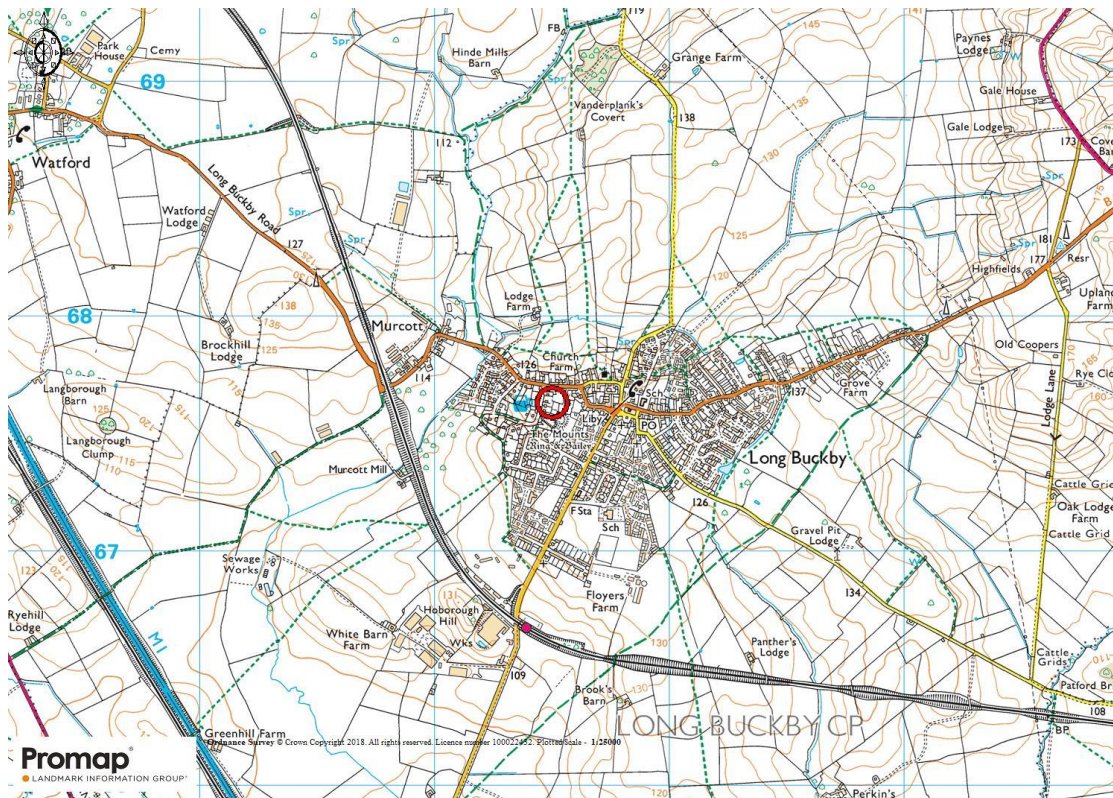


Fig. 1; site location (circled in red)



Fig. 2; study site (outlined in red)

INTRODUCTION

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

This document details the results of an archaeological Investigation during 27th May 2019 at 9 Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire, NN6 7QL at the request of Mr A. McFazdean. A planning application had been submitted for the erection of three detached dwellings with access, as the proposed development lay within an area of archaeological potential an evaluation was requested in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), targeting each of the proposed buildings and based on the results (Cook, 2018 & 2019), was followed by further excavation to record the deposits prior to development.

Geology and topography

The proposed development area lies on the western edge of the village of Long Buckby near the remains of the medieval castle (The Mounts). Topographically the development site which comprises approx. 600m² is quite level and lies at approximately 135m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The geology maps indicate that the site contains glacial boulder clay (BGS, 1985).

Archaeological and historical background

The Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER) was consulted with a search carried out over a 250m radius centred on the site. A total of 63 monument records and 27 event records are identified. The earliest evidence of occupation within the search area is a possible Romano-British ditch ([MNN142736](#)) from which a small assemblage of Romano-British pottery was recovered (Chapman, 1996-7).

The settlement at Long Buckby is likely to have been established during the Danish invasions. The village name of Long Buckby is of Nordic origin, with 'by' meaning settlement or village while 'Buck' is derived from 'Bec' (pronounced 'becker' in old Norse) for 'stream' or 'brook', still in use in England's northern counties. The village is recorded in the Domesday Book as *Buchebei*, its affix possibly coming at a later date in reference to the length of the village.

There were two manors in 1086 and this may explain the two discrete foci: one based on the castle ([MNN11597](#)) with the shrunken village of Salem and the other a new addition with church on a parallel road to the north. The seigneurial importance of the settlement at Long Buckby in the early medieval period is demonstrated by the establishment of the castle in the later C11 or early C12. This may relate to the existence of a major medieval road running through Buckby, from Northampton to Coventry ([MNN14165](#)) which is probably a significant factor in the siting of the castle. The exact alignment of the road is difficult to recover but appears to run along the wide and deep hollow way ([MNN1308](#)) along the south side of the castle site.

In 1955 a small excavation was carried out, across the north ditch of the west bailey before destruction. Conclusions drawn from this were that a shallow ditch, perhaps of an enclosure and possibly of pre-conquest or early post-conquest date, was superseded first by a wall and subsequently by a bank with a deep external ditch. Behind the wall stood a small stone building of C12 date. A curtain wall was later constructed around the bailey (Thompson, 1956).

The foundation of the market and fair at Long Buckby can be securely dated to 1280. It was a seigneurial foundation following the acquisition of the manor by the Earl of Lincoln. This was towards the end of the major phase of market creation in Northamptonshire in the C13, which rapidly slowed thereafter. It has not been possible to reconstruct the manorial structure in relation to the topography of the settlement, but this may prove to be the key to the understanding of the plan form and evolution of Long Buckby.

The maximum possible extent of the medieval settlement ([MNN3803](#)) at Long Buckby has been determined from the extent of old enclosures recorded in 1766 but the earliest map to give consistent and extensive evidence on individual tenements and buildings is the First Edition Ordnance Survey 1:2500.

For much of the medieval period the manor was held by the Earls of Winchester and Lincoln who were not resident there. As a result, Long Buckby became an 'open' village and over time families were able to move into the village. This probably explains how the road from the main village to the nearby hamlet of Coten became settled and why, during the Tudor period, the village of Buckby became Long Buckby and Coten became Coten End.

The presence of a large population in the village with little or no land created the ideal location for industrial investment in the C17 when Long Buckby became associated with Wool manufacture. A decline after 1800 eventually led to the introduction of the boot and shoe trade which had already become established in the nearby industrial centres at Northampton and Daventry. The village also

became a busy canal wharf after the Grand Junction Canal and the Leicester arm were opened during the first quarter of the C19.

EXCAVATION AIMS & METHODOLOGY

Aims of the excavation

The purpose of the excavation was to examine the archaeological resource within the proposed development area, to seek a better understanding of and compile a lasting record of that resource, to analyse and interpret the results, and disseminate them. This will be achieved through a programme of controlled, intrusive fieldwork which examines, records and interprets archaeological deposits, features and structures and, as appropriate, retrieves artefacts, ecofacts and other remains within the proposed development area.

In general, the purpose of the archaeological work is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of the archaeological remains in their cultural and environmental setting.

Research framework: The national research context is provided by English Heritage (1991 and 1997) and regionally by the continually updated by the online-wiki which includes the East Midlands.

(<http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/>)

Research Objective 7E: Investigate the morphology of rural settlements. The East Midlands preserves evidence of a complex landscape, including zones dominated by a hierarchy of nucleated villages, hamlets and farmsteads. This was previously outlined regionally by Cooper (2006), supplemented by Knight, Vyner & Allen (2012).

In particular, the aims of the investigation included:

- i) establishing the date, nature and extent of activity or occupation on the development site.
- ii) establishing the relationship of any remains found to the surrounding landscape.
- iii) recovering artefacts to assist in the development of type series within the region.

- iv) recovering palaeo-environmental remains to determine local environmental conditions.

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

Excavation strategy

A programme of controlled archaeological excavation and recording was undertaken prior to the development groundworks. The northern part of the footprint of plot 1 and the eastern half of the footprint of plot 3 were stripped by machine using a toothless bucket under archaeological supervision removing non-archaeologically significant material exposing the surface of the natural substrate. Where archaeological deposits were identified, excavation was continued by hand. Based on the initial results and following on-site discussions with the curatorial services, further monitoring for the western part of plot 1, along with services, drains, and the landscaping between plots 3 and 2 was not considered necessary.

Presentation of results

The results of the excavation (below) are described from the earliest to the latest deposits. Trenches were attributed context numbers with a numerical value equivalent to the number of the trench.

RESULTS: DESCRIPTIONS (Figs. 3-6)

TRENCH 5 (& evaluation Trench 1)

The natural substrate (502), which comprised a light yellowish-brown sandy-clay with a component of small to large rounded pebbles was exposed throughout both trenches level height of 134.76m AOD. A single linear feature [505] was recorded entering from the east side of the trench and continuing west for a length of 2.0m (perpendicular with Harbidges Lane) before ending with a rounded terminus.



Fig. 3; site plan with trench locations showing main archaeological features

The gully-like feature which is interpreted as a probable former beam-slot (timber foundation trench) forming part of a former timber-built structure, was 0.40m wide and 0.26m deep with steep sides and a flat base, a small bulge about half-way along the profile of the feature that penetrated to a slightly increased depth of about 0.30m was about 0.40m wide and appears to represent the remains of an associated vertical post. The entire feature was filled by a single deposit (504) consisting of a dark greyish-brown, sandy-silt producing fragments of C12 pottery and a few small fragments of unidentifiable animal bone. The alignment of the linear feature in trench 5 corresponds with the right angled gully-like feature [108] in trench 1 the results of this work is described and discussed fully in the earlier evaluation report (Cook, 2018) which shows that it is also parallel with the slightly wider linear feature [106]. Overlying the natural deposit (502) throughout the trench to a depth of about 0.60m was the relict subsoil layer (501) which in turn was overlain by a 0.20m thick layer of existing topsoil (500).

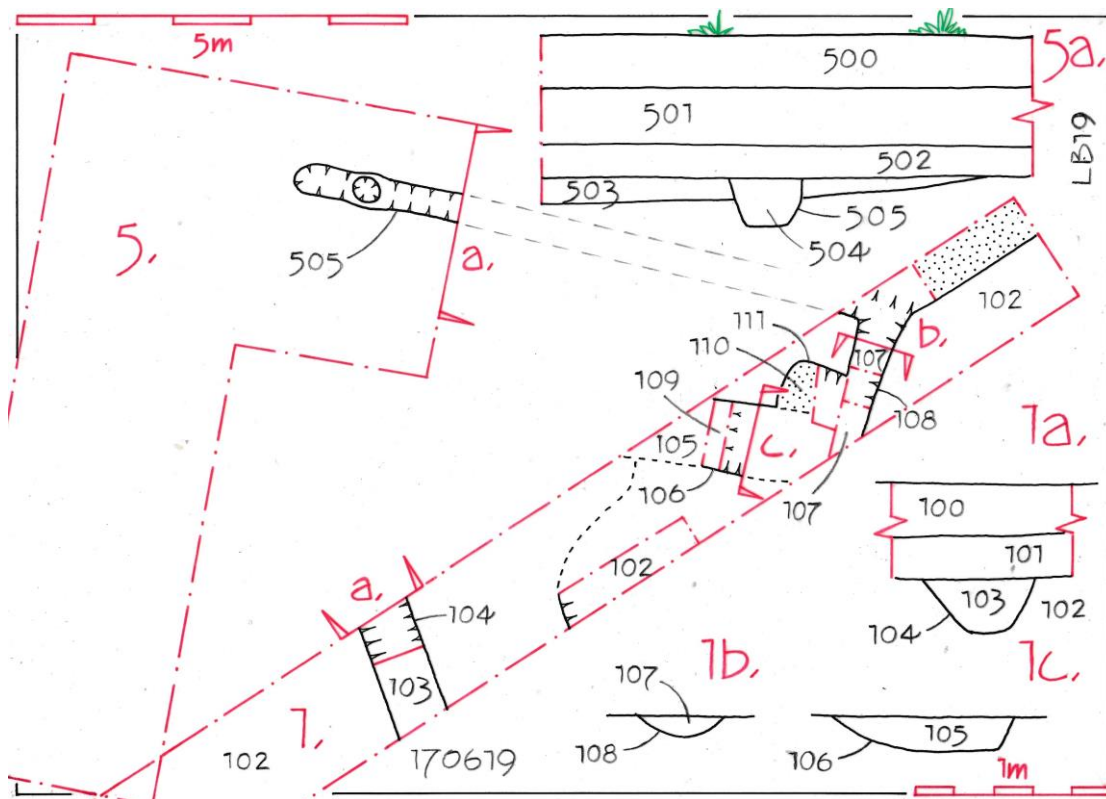


Fig. 5; trenches 1 & 5, plans & sections

TRENCH 4 (& evaluation Trench 2)

The natural sandy gravelly-clay (402) was again exposed throughout trench 4 at a height of about 135.40m AOD. There were no archaeological features cut or deposits overlying this layer. Instead it was sealed by the relict subsoil (401) to a depth of about 0.50m which was in turn overlain by the modern topsoil which was about 0.20m thick.

No features were found in this trench, located just north-east of trench 2 and the west/east ditch (204), The light yellowish-brown natural clay (402) was again exposed throughout the trench at a height of about 135.40m AOD at the south end with a very slight sloping downwards from south to north. As seen in the other trenches overlying the clay to a depth of about 0.60m was the relict subsoil layer (401). This was in turn overlain by a 0.20m thick layer of existing topsoil (400).

The features uncovered in trench 2 have been described and discussed fully in the evaluation report. These features consisted of an east west ditch (204) the fill of which contained a single sherd C12 pottery and a north south ditch (208), south of the other in a T-shaped configuration, the similar fill of which

produced three sherds of mid-C13 pottery and a small fragment of unidentifiable animal bone.

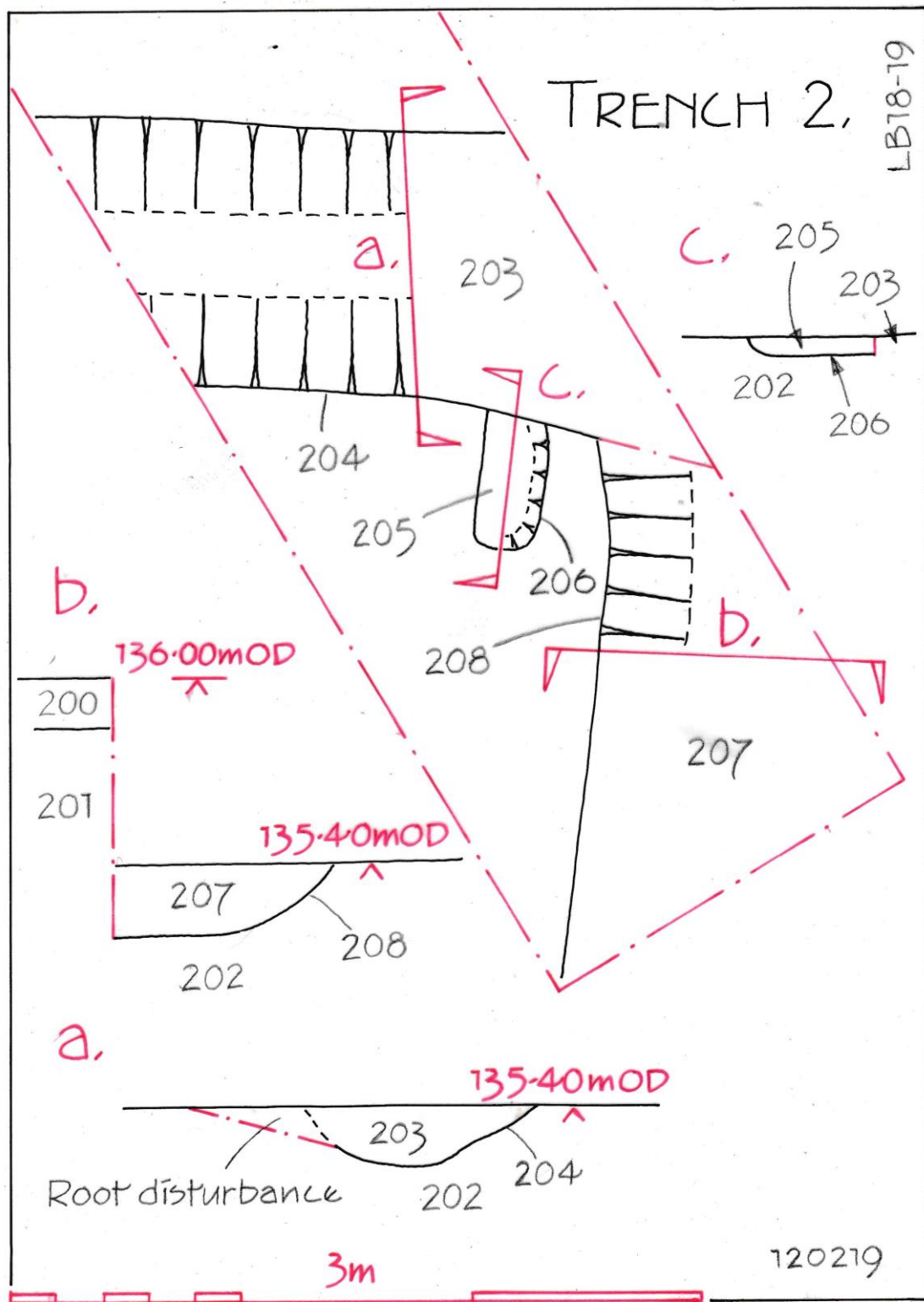


Fig. 6; trench 2, plan & sections

FINDS

Pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 18 sherds with a total weight of 336g. They all occurred in a single context, 504, and are all in the same fabric, Shelly Coarseware, fabric F330 of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series, and broadly dateable to the AD1100-1400. It is a very common find at medieval sites in the region.

All the sherds, bar one small example, are from a single vessel, a jar with a sagging base and a simple hooked and everted rim which is typical of the tradition. Many of the sherds re-fit. It is sooted on the outer surface and lime-scaled on the inner and was clearly used for heating water. It is in good condition and was the product of primary deposition.

Charred plant macrofossils and other remains by Val Fryer

Introduction and method statement

Excavations at site LB 19, undertaken by One Ten Archaeology, recorded a limited number of features. A single sample for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblage was taken from the fill of a possible beam slot of mid twelfth century date.

The sample was bulk floated by One Ten Archaeology, with the flot being collected in a 300micron mesh sieve. The dried flot was scanned under a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 16 and the plant macrofossils and other remains noted are listed below in Table 1. Nomenclature within the table follows Stace (2010). All plant remains were charred. Modern roots, seeds and arthropod remains were also abundant within the assemblage.

Results

Cereal grains and seeds of common segetal weeds are present at a low to moderate density. Preservation of the grains is mostly poor, with many being severely puffed and distorted, probably as a result of high temperature combustion. Most seeds are better preserved, although many are fragmented.

Oat (*Avena* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains are recorded, along with numerous cereals which are too poorly preserved for close identification. Wheat is predominant, with the variety of grain sizes suggesting that some immature specimens may be present. Chaff is all but absent, but a single crescentic glume-insert from a bread wheat (*T. aestivum/compactum*) type rachis node is noted. Occasional large legume (Fabaceae) seeds are also recorded, but as none include an intact hilum or testa, further identification is not possible.

Weed seeds are mostly present as single specimens within the assemblage. However, a moderate density of stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) seeds may suggest that agricultural production was largely occurring on clay rich soils. Other taxa noted include orache (*Atriplex* sp.), black bindweed (*Fallopia convolvulus*), small legumes, medick/clover/trefoil (*Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus* sp.), grasses (Poaceae) and scentless mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum*). Two nutlets of sedge (*Carex* sp.), a plant commonly found within marginal wetland habitats, are also present along with a possible fragment of hazel (*Corylus avellana*) nutshell. Charcoal/charred wood fragments are recorded at a moderate to high density.

Other remains are generally scarce, although fragments of black porous material (all of which are probably derived from the high temperature combustion of organic materials, including cereal grains) are relatively common. Small pieces of coal (coal 'dust') are abundant, but it is currently unclear whether these may be contemporary with the sampled feature, or later contaminants.

Conclusions and recommendations for further work

In summary, the assemblage is small (i.e. <0.1 litres in volume) and limited in composition. However, it would appear most likely that the recovered remains are largely derived from cereal waste (possibly processing or storage detritus) and/or midden refuse, all of which probably accidentally accumulated within the feature fill. As the assemblage does not contain enough material for quantification (i.e.

100+ specimens), and as analysis of a single sample in isolation would probably add little to the existing data included within this assessment, no further work is recommended. However, a summary of this report should be included within any synthesis of data from the site.

Context No. 504

Cereals and other potential crop plants

<i>Avena</i> sp. (grains)	x
<i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grains)	x
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains)	xxx
<i>T. aestivum/compactum</i> type (rachis node)	xfg
Cereal indet. (grains)	xxx
Large Fabaceae indet.	x

Dry land herbs

<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.	xx
Asteraceae indet.	x
<i>Atriplex</i> sp.	x
<i>Bromus</i> sp.	xfg
<i>Chenopodium album</i> L.	x
Small Fabaceae indet.	x
<i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.) A.Love	x
<i>Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus</i> sp.	x
Small Poaceae indet.	x
Large Poaceae indet.	x
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i> (L.) Schultz-Bip	x

Wetland plants

<i>Carex</i> sp.	x
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Tree/shrub macrofossils

<i>Corylus avellana</i> L.	xcf
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Other plant macrofossils

Charcoal <2mm	xxxx
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Charcoal >2mm	xxx
Charcoal >5mm	x
Charcoal >10mm	x
Charred root/stem	x
<i>Other remains</i>	
Black porous material	xxx
Bone	x xb
Burnt/fired clay	x
Siliceous globule	x
Small coal frags.	xxxx
Small mammal/amphibian bone	x
Vitreous material	x
<i>Sample volume (litres)</i>	
<i>Volume of flot (litres)</i>	<0.1
<i>% flot sorted</i>	100%

Table 1. Charred plant macrofossils and other remains from site LB 19

Key to Table:

x = 1 - 10 specimens xx = 11 - 50 specimens xxx = 51 - 100 specimens

xxxx = 100+ specimens

fg = fragment cf = compare b = burnt

Hammerscale By Rebecca Sillwood

A small amount of hammerscale was recovered from a single sample of soil recovered from a probable beam slot (504) during excavations at 9 Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby. This context was dated to the C12.

The hammerscale weighed 35.6g and consisted of both flake and spheroid hammerscale, though with a higher proportion of flakes present. The material was analysed by eye, with a microscope.

Hammerscale is produced during the smithing of iron and consists of small (a few millimetres) shiny black or brown fragments. Flake hammerscale is produced in both primary and secondary smithing, 'when a hot iron object, with an oxidised surface, was struck' (Dungworth, et al, 2006, 14). Spheroidal hammerscale or hammerslag consists of small droplets of solidified slag produced during primary smithing as slag was expelled from the bloom. Spheroidal hammerscale can also be found amongst smelting debris and in the secondary smithing process during welding. The presence of hammerscale on a site can help point to the location of a smithing hearth and/or the anvil.

The presence of a small amount of hammerscale within this context at Harbidges Lane implies that there was smithing being undertaken in the area during the early development of Long Buckby in the 12th-century. Bayley et al (2006, 4) state that during the medieval period metal industries were concentrated more in the towns 'and often in particular areas of towns', though ironworking was still undertaken in rural settlements as well.

It is possible that the timber structures present on the site represent a smithy or at least a building where some of the space was given up to smithing. However, given the small amount of hammerscale recovered, it is not possible to glean much more than the possibility of the presence of metalworking in the area.



Plate 1; Context 504 Hammerscale - larger fractions.

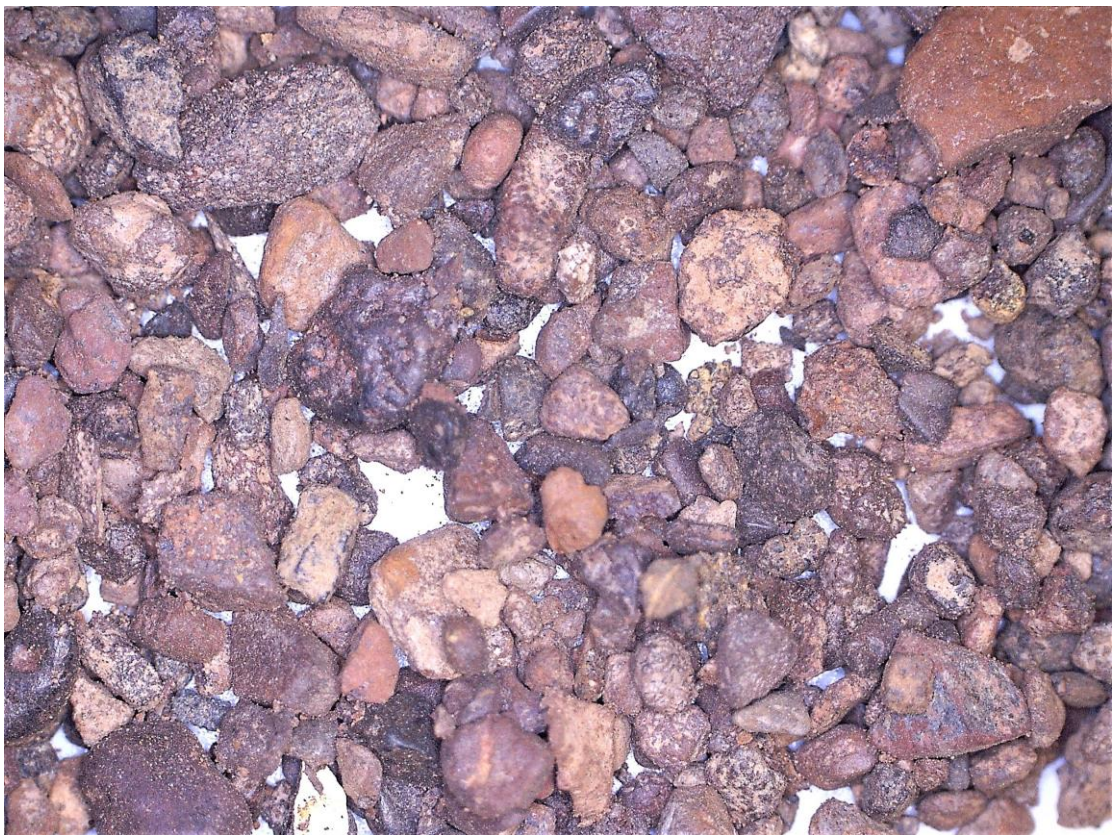


Plate 2; Context 504 Hammerscale - smaller fractions.

DISCUSSION (Figs. 7 & 8)

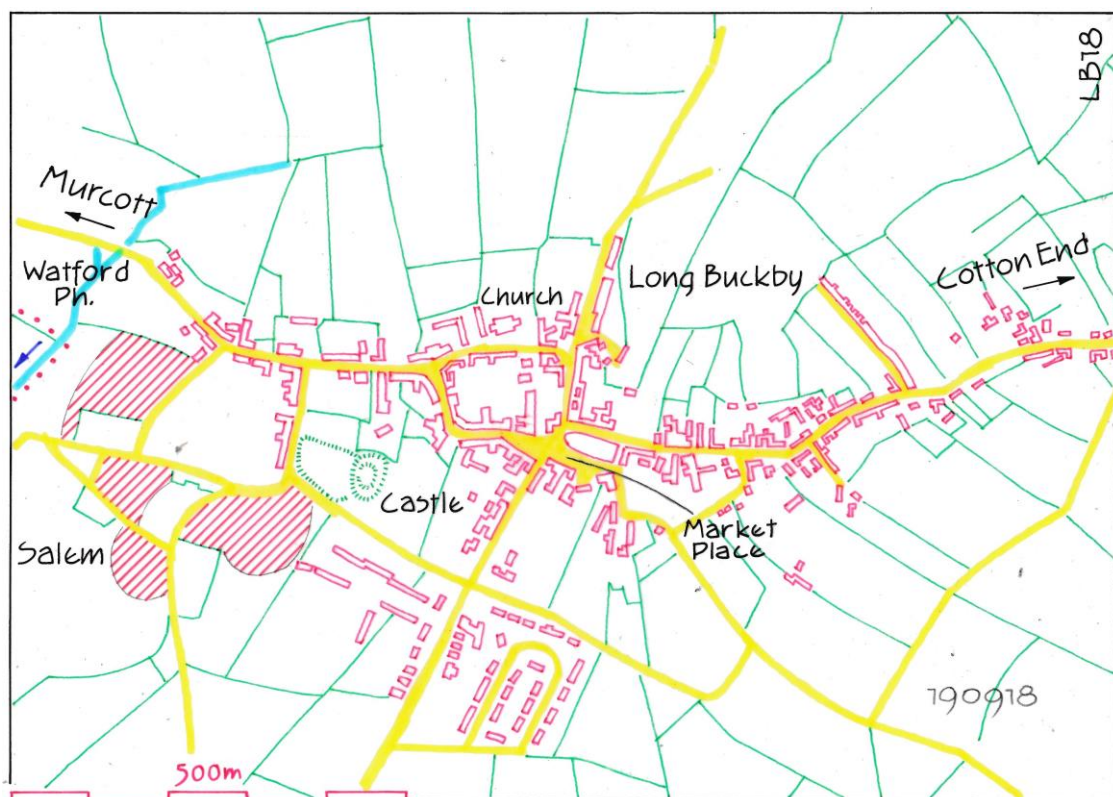


Fig. 7; Long Buckby; Historic Environment

Domesday shows two manors in existence at the time, one to the north near the church and the other to the south where the castle is strategically placed and the possible shrunken village at Salem is located. Both manors appear to be topographically focussed on the convergence of two important route-ways.

Recent studies have demonstrated the complex history of Long Buckby identifying four major phases of development (Ballinger, 1999). The siting of the castle and the settlement that grew around it can be attributed to the earliest of these phases - the origin and growth of the village up to 1280. The castle bailey extended as far as the east side of Harbidges Lane, archaeological work suggests that medieval tenements were established along the lane during this period, a development that was probably brought about due to its location near the castle and its importance in connecting on a north-south axis the two east/west route-ways at the west end of the village. Previous excavation to the south of the site across the bailey defences (Thompson, 1956) produced evidence indicating the presence of an enclosure possibly of pre-conquest or early post-conquest date which was superseded first by a wall and subsequently by a bank with a deep

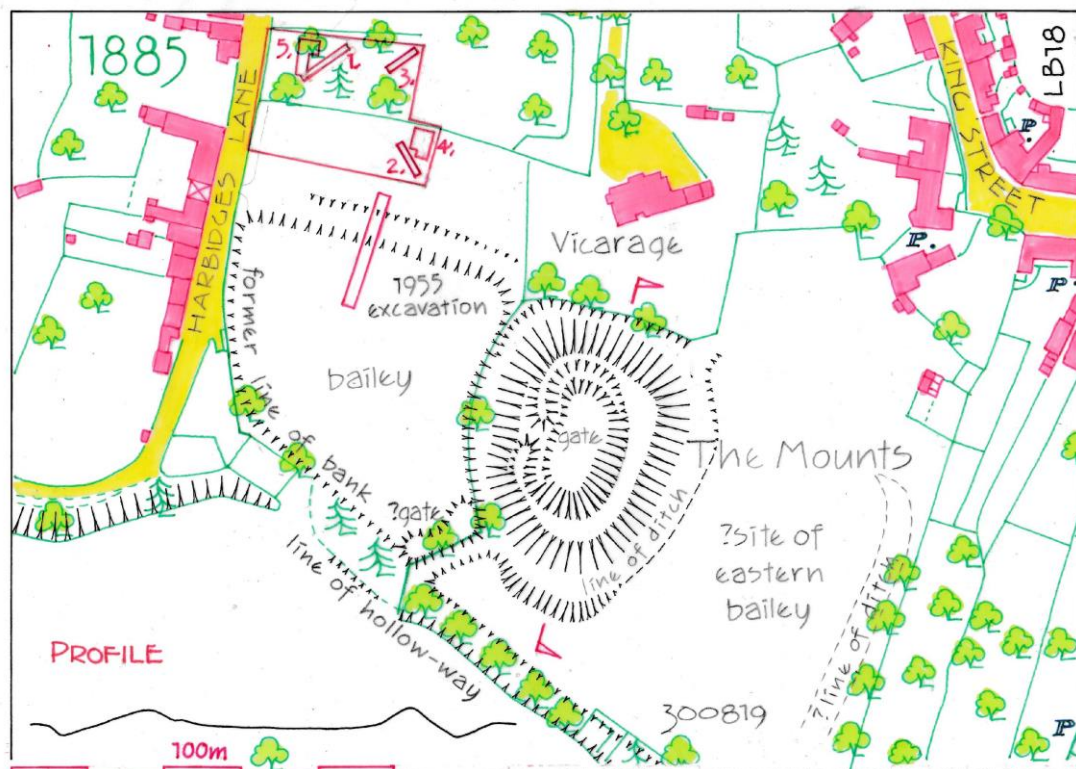


Fig. 8; Long Buckby Castle, based on OS 1885

external ditch. Behind the wall stood a small stone building of C12 date. A curtain wall was later constructed around the bailey.

Recent work at 8 Harbidges Lane identified a single east/west ditch producing medieval pottery, possibly a former property boundary (Burke, 2014) whilst excavation in 2016 at Hillgay, Harbidges Lane, confirmed that occupation was present on at least part of the area between the C11 and late C14 (Reid, 2017). Early medieval features ([MNN104248](#)) were also found during trial trenching to the rear of 33 Grasscroft (Atkins & Soden, 2002). Excavation to the south of the site across the castle bailey ditch in 1955 shows that the features identified at 9 Harbidges Lane represent medieval settlement activity immediately north of the castle bailey. Although limited in scope, the results of the excavations show that medieval remains associated with the settlement around the castle appear to be concentrated along the southern edge of the site in the area of trenches 2 and 4 (north of the bailey defences) and in the north-west area of the site in the area of trenches 1 and 5. No features were uncovered in trench 3, near the north-east corner of the site. Some of these features (in

trenches 1 & 5) indicate a probable small timber-framed structure seemingly aligned perpendicular to the lane and an associated contemporary ditch interpreted as a former boundary. Dating evidence shows that these features were constructed during the C12. On the south-eastern edge of the site (trench 2) a single right-angled feature, possibly an enclosure ditch, produced C12 and mid-C13 pottery.

The excavation has shown that there are some significant archaeological deposits surviving within the study site that can be attributed to the origin and growth of the village around the castle up to 1280. The collective archaeological evidence suggests that settlement comprising tenement plots became established along both sides of Harbidges Lane during the period of occupation associated with the castle site.

Archive Location

The digital archive arising from the work will be deposited with the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The physical archive will be held by the contractor until deposition can be arranged with the Northamptonshire Museum Service.

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PLATES



Plate 1; Trench 5, view from south-west.



Plate 2; Trench 5, detail of beam-slot 505, from south-west.



Plate 3; Trench5, detail of beam-slot 505, from north.



Plate 4; Trench5, section through beam-slot 505, from north-west.



Plate 5; View of trench 4 from south-west.

APPENDIX 1; OASIS

Project name	9 Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire
Short description of the project	An archaeological excavation was carried out during September 2018 and January 2019 at 9 Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire, in advance of proposal for residential development of the site. Although limited in scope, the investigation revealed features dated to the C12 and mid-C13. On the west side of the site they comprised a ditch interpreted as a former boundary enclosing a probable small timber-framed structure aligned perpendicular to Harbidges Lane and on the southern edge of the site a single right-angled feature, possibly an enclosure ditch, which produced C12 and mid-C13 pottery. The evidence, in combination with other discoveries in the area suggests that the site is part of a settlement comprising tenement plots which became established along both sides of Harbidges Lane during the period of occupation, associated with the castle bailey located just south of the site.
Project dates	Start: 01-09-2018 End: 31-01-2019
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	LB19 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Monument type	BUILDING Medieval
Significant Finds	HAMMERSCALE Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Investigation type	""Open-area excavation""
Prompt	Planning condition
Country	England
Site location	NORTHAMPTONSHIRE DAVENTRY LONG BUCKBY 9 Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire
Postcode	NN6 7QL
Study area	121 Square metres
Site coordinates	SP 62485 67643 52.302957495393 -1.083513487055 52 18 10 N 001 05 00 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 135.4m Max: 135.4m
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	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Mr. A. McFazdean
Physical Archive recipient	county museum
Physical Contents	"Ceramics"
Digital Archive recipient	OASIS
Paper Archive recipient	county museum
Paper Contents	"Ceramics"
Paper Media available	"Plan", "Report", "Section"
Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	9 Harbidges Lane Long Buckby, Northamptonshire; Archaeological Excavation
Author(s)/Editor(s)	Cook, S
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	28 October 2019