

A medieval road and buildings at Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby

by

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with contributions by

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Summary

MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) undertook an archaeological excavation on land to the west of Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire. The site fronted onto the northern side of the postulated former Coventry to Northampton road. In the eastern half of the site occupation comprised a plot bounded by ditches enclosing two timber buildings dated to the 11th century. On the western side were a series of probable contemporary enclosed plots/fields. The timber buildings were replaced in the mid to late 13th century by two stone buildings along either side of a metalled track, which presumably joined the Northampton road. A ditched boundary on the east side of the site, which ran parallel with the road, was later replaced by a stone wall. These features had lasted for around a century when the site was abandoned in the mid/late 14th century and reverted to agricultural use until the present day.

Introduction

Leabridge Homes was granted planning permission to develop a 0.5ha block of land to the west of Harbidges Lane, Long Buckby, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 62352 67586, Fig 1) The planning consent (DA/2014/0524) required a series of archaeological works as outlined in an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) prepared by MOLA (Museum of London Archaeology) Northampton (2016) following trial trench evaluation (Chinnock 2012). This led to an archaeological excavation that was carried out between October and November 2016.

Acknowledgments

The project was sponsored by Leabridge Homes and the excavation was monitored by Northamptonshire County Council Archaeological Assistant Advisor (NCCAAA). The project was managed by Anthony Maull and the fieldwork was directed by Adam Reid with a team comprising

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The client report by Adam Reid (2017) was edited for publication by Stephen Morris with proof reading by Claire Finn and Rob Atkins. Final preparation for publication is by Andy Chapman. The illustrations are by Olly Dindol and Joanne Clawley. The authors would like to thank all the specialists for their contributions.

Location, topography and geology

The development area is bounded on all sides by residential property and lies c.140m west of Long Buckby Castle earthworks (Fig 2). The site is at 127–131m above Ordnance Datum (aOD) and the underlying geology is mapped as Whitby mudstone formation with silt, sand and gravel (BGS 2018).

Archaeological background

The development lies within an area of archaeological importance in the centre of the historic settlement of Long Buckby. It is situated within or directly adjacent to part of the village known since the 19th century as Salem, which may have been one of the earliest settled parts, pre-dating Buckby (Foard and Ballinger 2000, 9). Salem, Buckby and the hamlet of Cotton End on its eastern side may have later joined to form the medieval settlement which became known as Long Buckby (*ibid*, 9; fig 16). A further hamlet, called Surney, may have been established at the south-western corner of the township (RCHME 1981, 133) and another settlement at Greenhill Farm (Gover *et al* 1975, 66).

Salem itself is thought to have been a dispersed Saxon settlement, located on a small area of gravel adjacent to the spring line and overlooking the valley. It is thought that Salem pre-dated Buckby as it appears more irregular and curvilinear in plan suggesting Saxon, rather than medieval origins (Foard and Ballinger 2000, 9).

Two manors were recorded in the Domesday Book of 1086 and three in the early 12th century (Foard and Ballinger 2000, 17). During the medieval period Long Buckby appears to have been situated on an important route between Coventry and Northampton to Peterborough and it may have been the presence of this route that prompted the construction of a castle in the late 11th or 12th centuries. This route is thought to have lain along the southern margin of the site, now Holmfield Terrace (Fig 2). The castle had probably been abandoned by the late 13th century when it was part of the Chokes manor. Foard and Ballinger have analysed the records and state that, ‘*the growth in the number of cottages can probably be related largely if not wholly to the growth of the agricultural village in the 12th and earlier 13th centuries*’ (2000, 25). A market was granted to Long Buckby in 1280, but the settlement differs from other market villages in the county in having no other urban attributes, with no documented reference to burgages (*ibid.*, 24).

The Historic Environment Record (HER) data for the village suggests that the site lies within an area of former medieval/post-medieval tofts (MNN 130900; Fig 2). The HER shows other medieval tenement groups and tofts in the immediate vicinity (Table 1). The site itself has been highlighted as of county importance in the Extensive Urban Survey, which applies ‘where significant archaeology or historic buildings are known or where it is likely but confirmation is required’ (Foard and Ballinger 2000, 52).

Table 1: Relevant nearby Historic Environment Records

| HER Reference | Description |
|---------------|--|
| MNN130900 | Possible group of medieval / post-medieval tofts |
| MNN14165 | Coventry to Peterborough (via Northampton) road |
| MNN103179 | Possible medieval tenement group |
| MNN103181 | Newlands (possible medieval tenement group) |

The Peterborough-Northampton-Coventry road was turnpiked and re-routed in the 18th century. At this time the wool industry, particularly woolcombing, had become increasingly significant. However, this industry declined rapidly thereafter and by the early 19th century the village appears to have been one of the poorest in the county (Foard and Ballinger 2000). The boot and shoe trade was introduced in the 1830s and it is this trade that formed the core industry of the village until the 20th century.

Previous archaeological work

An archaeological evaluation in November 2012 comprised the excavation of three trial trenches (Chinnock 2012). These located wall foundations and a metalled surface near to the Holmfield Terrace frontage, and further wall foundations in the central part of the site. A ditch cut

through part of the metalled surface.

Other archaeological evaluation works in the vicinity had been undertaken by Northamptonshire Archaeology in previous years (Audouy and Parry 1988; Thompson 1996; Atkins and Soden 2002). Directly to the east of the current development area early medieval features were identified to the south and east of Long Buckby castle, including a possible road and the remains of timber structures and boundary ditches of medieval date (Fig 2).

An archaeological test-pit evaluation directly to the north of the proposed development area identified a single ditch which may be a medieval or a post-medieval plot boundary (Burke 2014). A watching brief in this area found probable backplot features which related to the present West Street (B5385) to the north and not to buildings fronting the former Coventry to Northampton road (Meadows 2018). These features were sparsely concentrated and dated from to 11th or 12th centuries.

Excavation by Oxford Archaeology East in 2014 (Fairbairn 2014) identified the presence of early Roman pits and ditches *c.*500m to the south of the development area.

Methodology

The mitigation programme comprised open area excavation within the southern part of the development area, where the greatest impact of the development would occur. This consisted of an area 45m long and either *c.*10m *c.*25m wide, total area of 0.08ha (Figs 1 and 3).

The medieval occupation

Boundary ditches and timber buildings (11th to mid-13th century)

The boundary ditches

Occupation began in the 11th century and comprised a system of rectilinear boundary ditches within the western half of the site whilst the eastern half contained further boundary ditches and two timber buildings (Fig 3).

To the west, parallel boundary ditches defined a plot 12–13m wide and more than 30m long, with the southern ditch perhaps providing a northern limit to the suggested route of the Northampton road.

The original boundary on the southern side, ditch 18, was shallow and had silted naturally, with the fill containing sherds of shelly coarseware pottery of the 12th to mid-13th centuries. A later recut was a larger V-shaped ditch, 16, 2.7m wide by 1.0m deep. Finds from the fills comprised 65 sherds of St Neots type ware pottery, including bowls (Figs 7, 1 & 2), a small quantity of residual Roman pottery, a whetstone, several undiagnostic iron fragments and two fragments of slag and animal bone, indicating the presence of occupation nearby.

The northern boundary, ditch 27, terminated to the east on the western side of a possible broad entrance at the north-eastern corner of the plot; an area obscured by later buildings and a metalled surface (Fig 3). Ditch 27 was 1.45m wide by 0.46m deep, and the fill contained a

A MEDIEVAL ROAD AND BUILDINGS AT HARBIDGES LANE, LONG BUCKBY

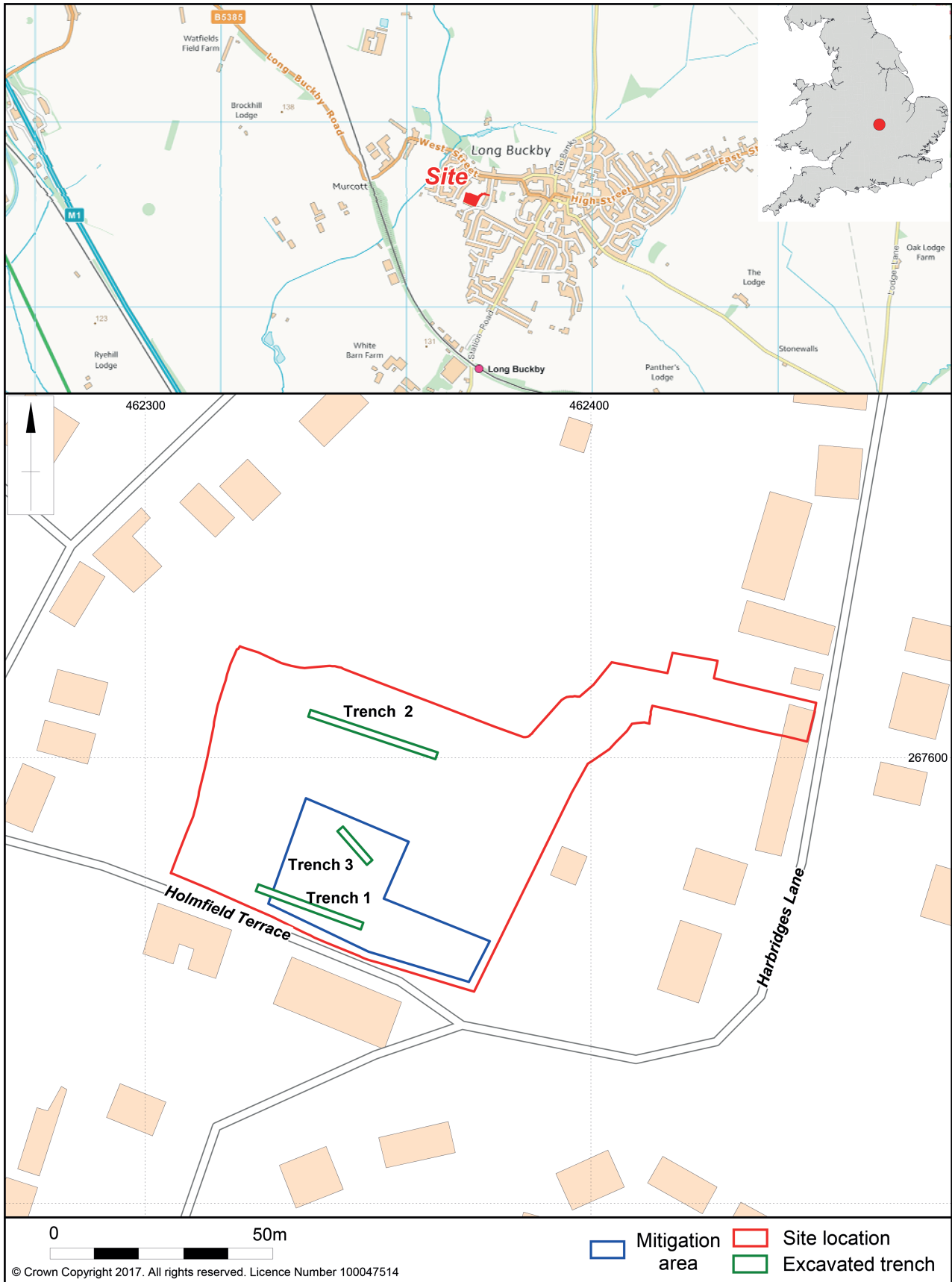


Fig 1: Site location and development area

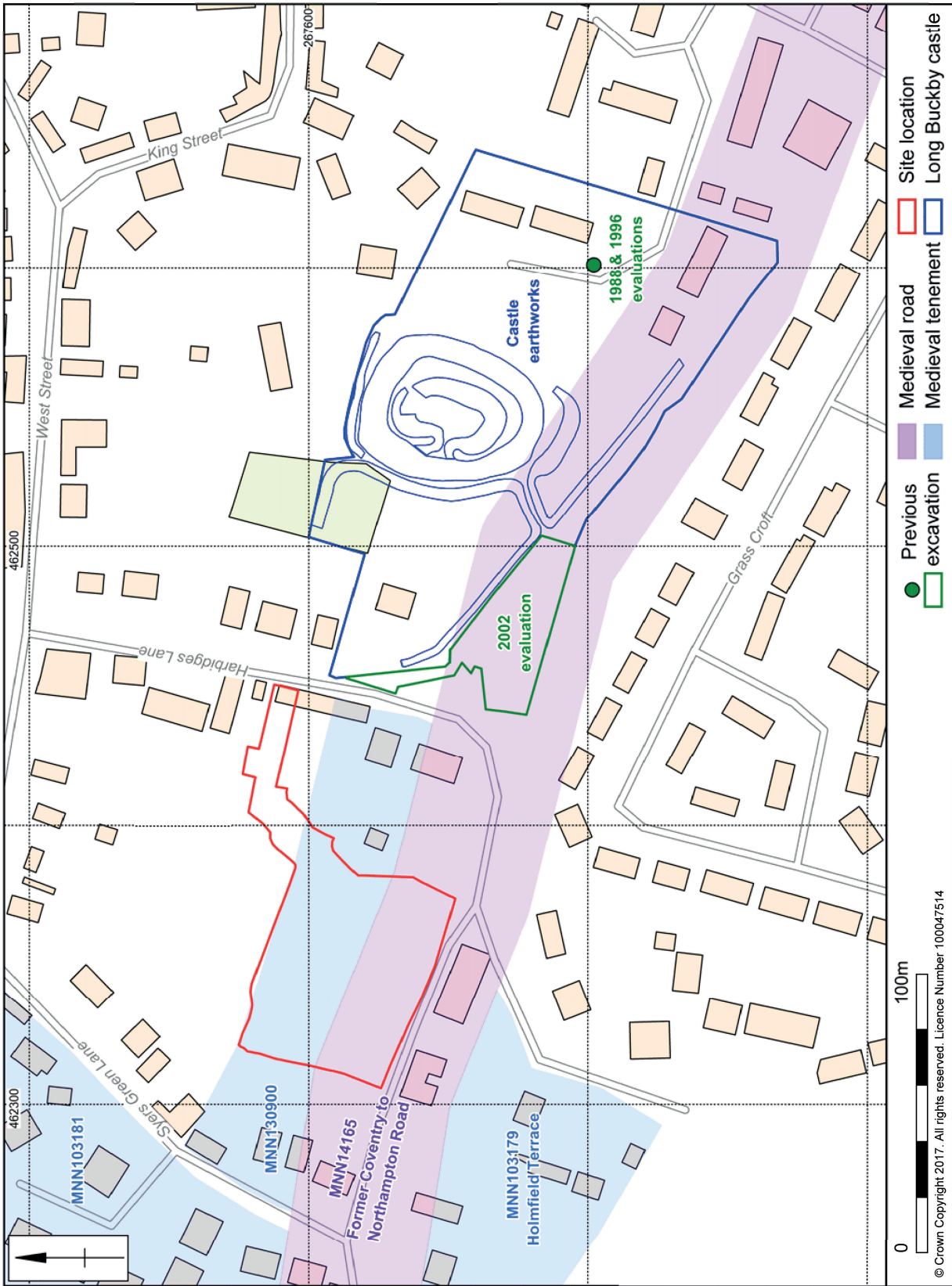


Fig 2: Sites recorded on the Historic Environment Record including Long Buckby Castle

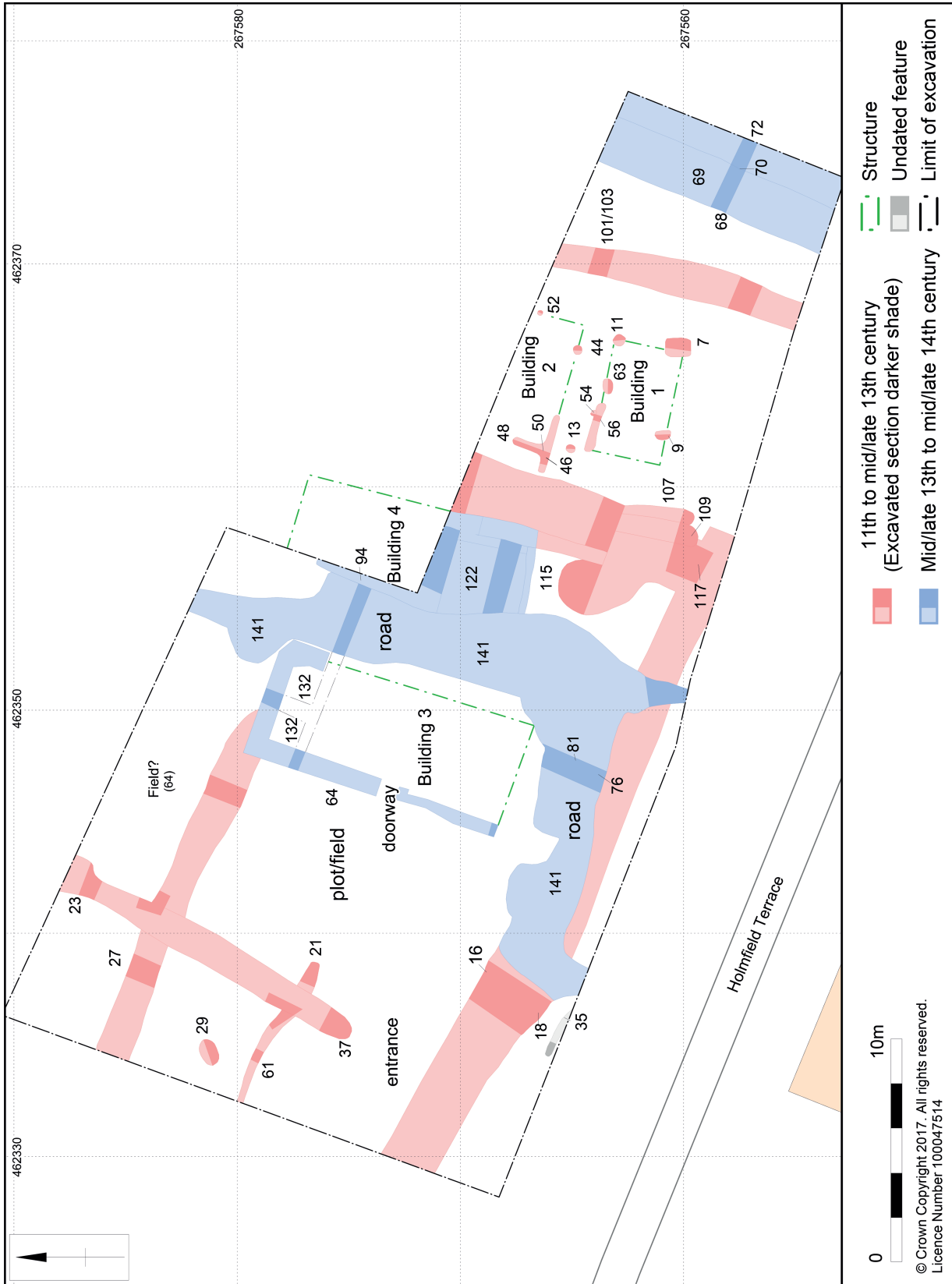


Fig. 3: General site plan

small quantity of St Neots Ware, Shelly Coarseware and Potterspurty Ware. The eastern boundary was defined by successive ditch cuts 107, 109 and 117, and also formed the western boundary of the plot containing Buildings 1 and 2.

A narrow ditch/gully, 21/61, 0.76m wide by 0.16m deep, and in excess of 8m long, formed an internal sub-division in the western plot. The fill contained sherds of St Neots Ware, Shelly Coarseware and the only sherd of Coventry 'A' Ware pottery found on the site, dating from the 12th to 14th centuries. A dense cake of ferrous slag, probably a smithing hearth base, was also recovered.

Ditch 23/37 cut across both the northern boundary and the internal gully, as part of a reorganisation of the plot layout. The broad U-shaped southern terminal was 1.20m wide by 0.35m deep, and the fill contained a moderate number of sherds of St Neots Ware, Shelly Coarseware and a single sherd of 12th to 14th-century Potters Marston Ware.

To the west, an isolated pit, 29, is undated. Adjacent to the eastern boundary, pit 115 was 2.30m in diameter but could only be excavated to a depth of 0.40m due to water ingress, as it lay in an area of low ground where water gathered naturally due to the high water table. It may have formed a watering hole. The upper fill of silty clay contained animal bone and sherds of Shelly Coarseware pottery.

The buildings

The eastern plot was *c.*10m wide and contained the remains of two post-built structures, Buildings 1 and 2, both aligned west to east, spanning most of the width of the plot.

The western boundary, ditch 107, terminated close to the southern boundary ditch, and was at least 0.46m wide

by 0.18m deep with a gently sloping U-shaped profile. The fill contained 28 sherds of Shelly ware, including a jar (Fig 7, 3), and a fragment of Norwegian ragstone whetstone. This ditch was recut at least twice on its western side, ditches 109 and 117.

The eastern boundary, ditch 103, was 1.48m wide by 0.88m deep with a steep V-shaped profile, and had been recut at least once, ditch 101, a slightly shallower U-shaped ditch, which contained a small amount of St Neots Ware pottery.

Building 1 was *c.*5.0m long by *c.*3.5m wide, defined by a sparse collection of postholes and single length of slot, with further elements presumed lost. The western end of the northern wall was defined by a beamslot, 56, 2.5m long by 0.26m wide and 0.17m deep with a U-shaped profile. Posthole 54, cut the northern edge of the slot, while posthole 63 was elliptical, 0.78m diameter and the north-eastern corner was defined by posthole 11, which was 0.48m diameter. The southern wall was sparsely represented by a large post-pit, 7, at the south-east corner, 1.10m long by 1.00m wide and 0.10m deep, and a single posthole, 9, 0.53m diameter, 3m to the west of pit 7 but short of the south-western corner. Most of the postholes and the beamslot contained a few sherds of St Neots Ware and/or Shelly Coarseware pottery. A single sherd of Potters Marston Ware, two sherds of Stamford Ware pottery as well as a fragment of Norwegian ragstone whetstone was found in posthole 11.

Building 2 was just over 1.0m north of Building 1. It was *c.*6.7m long and in excess of 2.0m wide, with the northern wall beyond the excavated area. The walls were similarly defined by postholes and beamslots with comparable shallow, flat-bottomed profiles. The south-western corner was defined by an L-shaped beamslot 48/46, up to 0.48m wide and 0.09m deep, with a circular posthole



Fig 4: Trackway 141, looking north-eas

50, 0.65m diameter and 0.10m deep at the junction of the two slots, and a westward extension continuing c.0.6m beyond the western wall. Posthole 44, to the east, was 0.60m in diameter by 0.05m deep. The only indication of the eastern wall was a small posthole, 52, with a fill containing one sherd of Shelly Coarseware and an iron nail (SF10).

Stone buildings and a trackway (mid 13th to 14th century)

The mid to late 13th century saw a complete reorganisation. The post-built structures went out of use and were replaced by two stone buildings, 3 and 4, lying a little to the west, with a metallated track between the buildings. To east there was a new boundary ditch, later replaced by a stone wall (Fig 3).

The trackway, 141, was up to 4m wide, partially metallated

with small and medium-sized rounded cobbles in a matrix of friable dark brown-grey clay (Figs 4 and 5). A length of 20m lay between Buildings 3 and 4, with a westward branch to the south of Building 3 that was c.15m long. It seems probable that to the south the trackway joined the Northampton to Coventry road.

Building 3 was c.11.0m long by c.5.6m wide with stone-built walls. The surviving walls to the north and west, 64, were up five courses high, 0.64m wide and 0.30m high, faced with roughly-hewn small to medium-sized ironstone and sandstone slabs/blocks, up to 0.20m long by 0.05m thick. The wall core comprised rounded stone, bonded with clay. An opening in the western wall less than 1.0m wide was probably a central doorway. An earthen floor of dark brown-grey silty clay (132) was up to 0.33m thick. This layer contained 39 sherds of Shelly Coarseware and Potterspury Ware pottery, mid-13th to 14th century in date. Other finds included animal bone, an iron nail and a small fragment of copper alloy strap-end.



Fig 5: Drone photograph of the site, showing Building B3 and trackway 141

Much of Building 4 lay outside the excavated area, but the elements that were excavated appeared to be of a similar form to Building 3 (Figs 3 and 5). The extent of the remains indicated that the structure was at least 10m long by c.5m wide. The walls, 94, were at least 0.40m wide, but only part of a single course survived. Within the building there may have been a floor, (122), abutting wall 94 and up to 0.15m thick, comprising firm light brown-grey sandy clay with occasional small rounded stones. It contained 40 sherds of shelly Coarseware and Potterspurry Ware as well as a single sherd of Brill/Boarstall Ware, dated mid-13th to 14th century.

The eastern boundary, ditch 72, lay 20m from the trackway, and after a succession of recuts it was later replaced by a boundary wall 69.

Ditch 72, heavily truncated by recuts, was steep-sided and V-shaped (Fig 6). Recut ditch 70 was broad and U-shaped ditch, at least 2.0m wide by 0.85m deep, with a sandy clay fill. The western edge of ditch 70 was truncated by a smaller U-shaped ditch, 68, at least 1.42m wide and 0.52m deep, with a fill of sandy clay. Ditches 68 and 70 both contained sherds of Shelly Coarseware and Potterspurry Ware.

Ironstone wall 69 was built within a construction trench, 66, cut into the fills of ditch 68. The wall had an outer face of roughly hewn ironstone slabs and a core of medium to large rounded stones. At least five courses were visible, with a total height of approximately 0.30m. The packing fill (65) of the construction cut comprised firm dark grey-brown sandy clay with sherds of Shelly Coarseware and St Neots Ware. It seems most likely that this was a boundary wall replacing the ditch rather than part of another building. This wall may be late medieval or even post-medieval in date.

Abandonment (post-mid/late 14th century)

A series of layers sealing the 14th-century occupation layers may represent robbing episodes and/or levelling or cultivation. Within Building 4, two layers, up to 0.40m thick, sealed the possible floor and wall 94. Over the former trackway a layer of overburden, up to 0.30m thick, comprised friable-firm mid grey-brown clay silt. The layer contained pottery from a range of periods, including Potterspurry Ware and Brill/Borstall Ware dating from the mid-13th to 15th centuries.

The terminal of ditch 35, at the southern edge of the site, contained a small quantity of undiagnostic slag fragments but no other finds.

The medieval pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 701 sherds with a total weight of 7.37kg. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE), by summation of surviving rimsherd circumference, was 5.08. Other than a few sherds of residual Roman material, it was all Saxo-Norman or later medieval. The assemblage was recorded using the conventions of the Northamptonshire County Ceramic Type-Series (CTS), as follows:

- F200: T1 (2) type St Neots Ware (AD1000–1200), 142 sherds, 1,497g, EVE = 1.37
- F205: Stamford Ware (AD850–1250), 3 sherds, 9g, EVE = 0
- F324: Brill/Boarstall Ware (early 13th to 16th centuries), 5 sherds, 62g, EVE = 0



Fig 6: Boundary ditch 72 and boundary wall 69, looking north

Table 2: Ceramic Phase Chronology (occurrence and defining wares)

| Ceramic Phase | Defining wares | Date | Sherds | Weight (g) | Mean sherd weight (g) |
|---------------|------------------------|--------------------------|------------|-------------|-----------------------|
| M1 | F200, F205 | 11th century | 94 | 1192 | 12.7 |
| M2 | F330, F360, F361, F371 | 12th to mid-13th century | 138 | 1812 | 13.1 |
| M3 | F329 | Mid 13th to 14th century | 469 | 4362 | 9.3 |
| Totals | | | 701 | 7366 | – |

F329: Potterspurry Ware (AD1250–1600), 180 sherds, 1925g, EVE = 0.95
 F330: Shelly Coarseware (AD1100–1400), 347 sherds, 3361g, EVE = 2.59
 F360: Miscellaneous Sandy Coarsewares (AD1100–1400), 4 sherds, 43g, EVE = 0.03
 F361: Potters Marston Ware (12th to 14th centuries), 13 sherds, 256g, EVE = 0.14
 F371: Coventry ‘A’ Ware (12th to 14th centuries), 1 sherd, 17g, EVE = 0
 RB: All Roman, 6 sherds, 196g

Chronology

The range of fabrics is fairly typical of sites in the region, other than the absence of Lyveden/Stansion ‘B’ Ware (CTS fabric F320) and the paucity of Brill/Boarstall Ware. Other than this, the range of fabric types suggests that there was more or less unbroken activity at the site through the 11th to 14th centuries.

In theory, some pottery assemblages in the region should be dateable to the early to mid-13th century, based on the occurrence of Lyveden/Stansion ‘B’ Ware (CTS fabric F320) and/or Brill/Boarstall Ware (fabric F324) and no later pottery. However, no assemblages of that date were noted here, and Lyveden/Stansion ‘B’ Ware was entirely absent. Such pottery is known from the area, and was stratified in contexts of early to mid-13th-century date at the Cluniac Priory in Daventry (Blinkhorn 2005, 124–5). However, neither ware occurred in large quantities there, with just five sherds of Lyveden/Stansion ‘B’ Ware and nine of Brill/Boarstall Ware noted amongst a medieval assemblage which was approximately the same size as the one from here, suggesting that this part of the county lies towards the edge of the wares’ distribution area.

The lack of fairly large excavated assemblages in the area makes further comparison difficult, but it is worthy of note that a recent, as yet unpublished, excavation at Kilsby, c.5km to the north-west of Long Buckby, produced just 12 sherds of Lyveden ‘B’ Ware and 22 sherds of Brill/Boarstall Ware from an assemblage of 11th to 14th-century pottery just slightly larger than the one from here, and none of them were stratified in early to mid-13th-century contexts (Blinkhorn in press), suggesting that the material may not generally have reached this region until after the middle of the 13th century. It seems likely therefore that the apparent lack of early to mid-13th-century contexts here is a due to the chronology of the pottery supply or

Table 3: Occurrence of major pottery fabrics, (percentage by weight per ceramic phase)

| Ceramic phase/ Fabric | M1 | M2 | M3 |
|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| RB | 15.9% | 0 | 0.2% |
| F200 | 83.8% | 20.7% | 2.8% |
| F205 | 0.3% | 0.3% | – |
| F330 | – | 67.1% | 49.2% |
| F360 | – | 1.0% | 0.6% |
| F361 | – | 9.9% | 1.7% |
| F371 | – | 0.9% | 0 |
| F324 | – | – | 1.4% |
| F329 | – | – | 44.1% |
| Weight (g) | 1192 | 1812 | 4362 |

Shaded cells = residual material

the vagaries of archaeological sampling, or possibly both, and as a result CP M2 is given a chronology of the 12th to mid-13th century.

Activity at the site appears to have ended before the end of the 14th century. Certainly, fairly common 15th-century fabric types in the region, such as late medieval Reduced and Oxidized Wares (CTS fabric F365 and F401), Cistercian Ware (F404) and Midland Purple Ware (F403) are all absent, as are “developed” late medieval Potterspurry vessel forms such as dripping dishes, cisterns and chafing dishes (eg McCarthy and Brooks 1988, 432), with the assemblage comprising just jars, bowls and jugs. Cistercian Ware (F404) and Midland Purple Ware (F403) were both noted at the Cluniac Priory in Daventry.

Ceramic Phase M1 (11th century), 94 sherds, 1.19kg, EVE = 0.70

The assemblage from this Ceramic Phase is dominated by T1(2) St Neots Ware, which makes up 83.8% of the group by weight. This figure is somewhat distorted by the presence of five residual sherds of Roman pottery weighing 189g. When these are removed, the St Neots Ware comprises 99.6% of the CP assemblage, with the only other contemporary pottery present being a small

(4g) sherd of Stamford Ware, in a fine white fabric typical of the 11th to 12th-century products of the industry (Kilmurry 1980).

Many of the context-specific assemblages comprise small groups of small sherds, other than a group of material from fill (14) of ditch 16, which consisted of 66 sherds weighing 605g, or just over 60% of the stratified pottery (by weight) from this phase. The group produced six rim sherds, four from inturned-rim bowls of various sizes (EVE = 0.40; eg Fig 7, 2 and 1), some of which had clearly been heated, and two from fairly large jars (EVE = 0.09). Such vessels are typical products of the Saxo-Norman phase of the tradition, and it appears to be part of a dump of household waste. The only other rim sherds from the rest of the CP assemblage are two bowl rims. Another noteworthy sherd was a large fragment from the base of a large jar from the fill of posthole 54. The inner surface of the sherd is fairly heavily lime-scaled. It also has a burnt patch in the centre of the base-pad, and the outer surface is burnt and sooted, showing that it had been used on a fire. There seems little doubt therefore that there was settlement here during the 11th century, but, unfortunately, the lack of dateable chronological development of the Saxo-Norman pottery means that it is not possible to say if it began before or after the Norman Conquest.

Ceramic Phase M2 (12th to mid-13th century), 138 sherds, 1.81kg, EVE = 0.70

This phase sees the introduction of medieval fabric types in the form of Shelly Coarseware (67.1%) and Potters Marston Ware (9.9%), along with two sherds of Sandy Coarseware, two of Stamford Ware, and a single fragment of Coventry 'A' Ware. The Stamford Ware is once again in the fine 11th/12th century fabric. This is fairly typical of sites in the region. Type T1(2) St Neots Ware makes up over 20% of the assemblage, but some of it is likely to be residual as such pottery ceased to be made at some point in the second half of the 12th century.

Most of the context-specific assemblages consist of groups of less than 30 sherds with few re-fits, indicating that they are the product of secondary deposition, other than the assemblage of Shelly Ware from context (106) in ditch 107, most of which is from the base of a large jar which weighs 716g (Fig 7, 3). This, by weight, when combined with the other sherds from the context, comprises just over 46% of the whole phase assemblage. The vessel shows no sign of heating or sooting, but all the calcareous inclusions have been leached from the inner surface, but not from the core or outer surface. Degradation patterns such as this in calcareous pottery are very typical of vessels which were used for the brewing and/or storage of ale (Perry 2011).

Six rimsherds were noted, all from jars. Two are in Shelly Coarseware, two in St Neots Ware and one each in Potters Marston and Sandy Coarseware. Other than a few base-sherds, the rest of the assemblage comprised plain body sherds.

Ceramic Phase M3 (mid 13th to 14th century), 469 sherds, 4.36kg, EVE = 3.91

This Ceramic Phase sees the introduction of Potterspurry Ware, which makes up 44.1% of the assemblage (by weight), although Shelly Coarseware is still the major pottery type, comprising 49.2%. The rest of the assemblage consists of small quantities of Brill/Boarstall Ware (1.4%), Potters Marston Ware (1.7%), and Sandy Coarsewares (0.6%), along with a small amount of residual St Neots Ware (2.8%), and a single Roman sherd. As in the previous phase, this is a very typical pattern for assemblages of this date in the region. The assemblage is fairly fragmented, but some of the context-specific groups were quite large, with many refitting sherds. For example, context (42) (trackway overburden) produced 157 sherds (1575g; 36% of the CP assemblage by weight), and context (59) (layer) included two jugs which were partly reconstructable (Fig 7, 4) with one of the vessels cross-fitting to a sherd from context 132 (Building 3). Several large but non-joining fragments of the base of the illustrated jug were also present. It is without doubt a primary deposit, and shows that there was domestic activity nearby at the time.

Forty jar rims were present (EVE = 2.95; 75.4% of the rim assemblage), along with eleven bowl rims (EVE = 0.43; 11.0%) and three jug rims (EVE = 0.53; 13.6%). This is a fairly typical pattern for assemblages of the period in the region, although jugs seem a little under-represented. Twenty-four of the jar rims (EVE = 2.02) were in Shelly Coarseware, eight were Potterspurry Ware (EVE = 0.49), two were Potters Marston (EVE = 0.09), and six (EVE = 0.35) were residual St Neots Ware. Six of the bowls (EVE = 0.29) were Shelly Coarseware, one was Potterspurry Ware (EVE = 0.02) and the other four (EVE = 0.12) residual St Neots Ware. Two of the jugs (EVE = 0.44) were Potterspurry Ware, with the other one being Shelly Coarseware (EVE = 0.09). Three fragments of handles were noted, all of Potterspurry type.

Overview and discussion

This assemblage is a useful addition to the corpus of knowledge of the pottery in an area of Northamptonshire that has seen very few large-scale excavations of Saxo-Norman and medieval pottery in recent years, with perhaps the only comparable assemblages in the area being from the Cluniac Priory in Daventry (Blinkhorn 2005), a site of a very different nature to this, and a recently excavated and as-yet unpublished group from a medieval village at Kilsby (Blinkhorn, in press).

The bulk of the pottery from this site comes from Northamptonshire in the form of Potterspurry Ware and Shelly Coarsewares, although sources in west Bedfordshire and north Buckinghamshire are also known for the latter (McCarthy and Brooks 1988, fig. 165). Other wares from Buckinghamshire, in the form of a small quantity of Brill/Boarstall Ware, were also noted. Pottery was also arriving at the site from sources to the north, in the form of Potters Marston Ware from Leicestershire, and a single sherd of Coventry 'A' Ware. This is a fairly typical pattern, and reflects the pottery occurrence at Daventry and Kilsby,

although wares from Warwickshire, from the Chilvers Coton manufactory near Nuneaton, were present in fairly large quantities at the latter in the late 13th and 14th centuries (c.25% of the assemblage by weight). The dearth of them here shows that although Nuneaton is only slightly further from the site than Potterspurty, and both are very near the line of Watling Street, the latter was favoured as the source of pottery, and most of the trade activity was focussed to the south.

The pottery consumption pattern is typical of sites of the 11th to 14th century in the region. The Saxo-Norman assemblage is dominated by St Neots Ware with inturned rim bowls common. From the 12th century jars from the Shelly Ware industry are dominant. In this period bowls and jugs were a very minor component, although jugs become more common with time, especially when the

Potterspurty industry got into its stride in the second half of the 13th century.

The assemblage appears entirely domestic in nature, with some of the pottery showing evidence of typical household activities such as the brewing of ale and cooking. It seems likely that the site was abandoned in the second half of the 14th century, as 15th-century pottery is entirely absent. The upheaval following the Black Death may have been a factor in this.

Illustrated pottery

(Fig 7)

1: St Neots Ware (Fabric F200). Rim from inturned-rim bowl. Grey fabric with brown surfaces. Some sooting

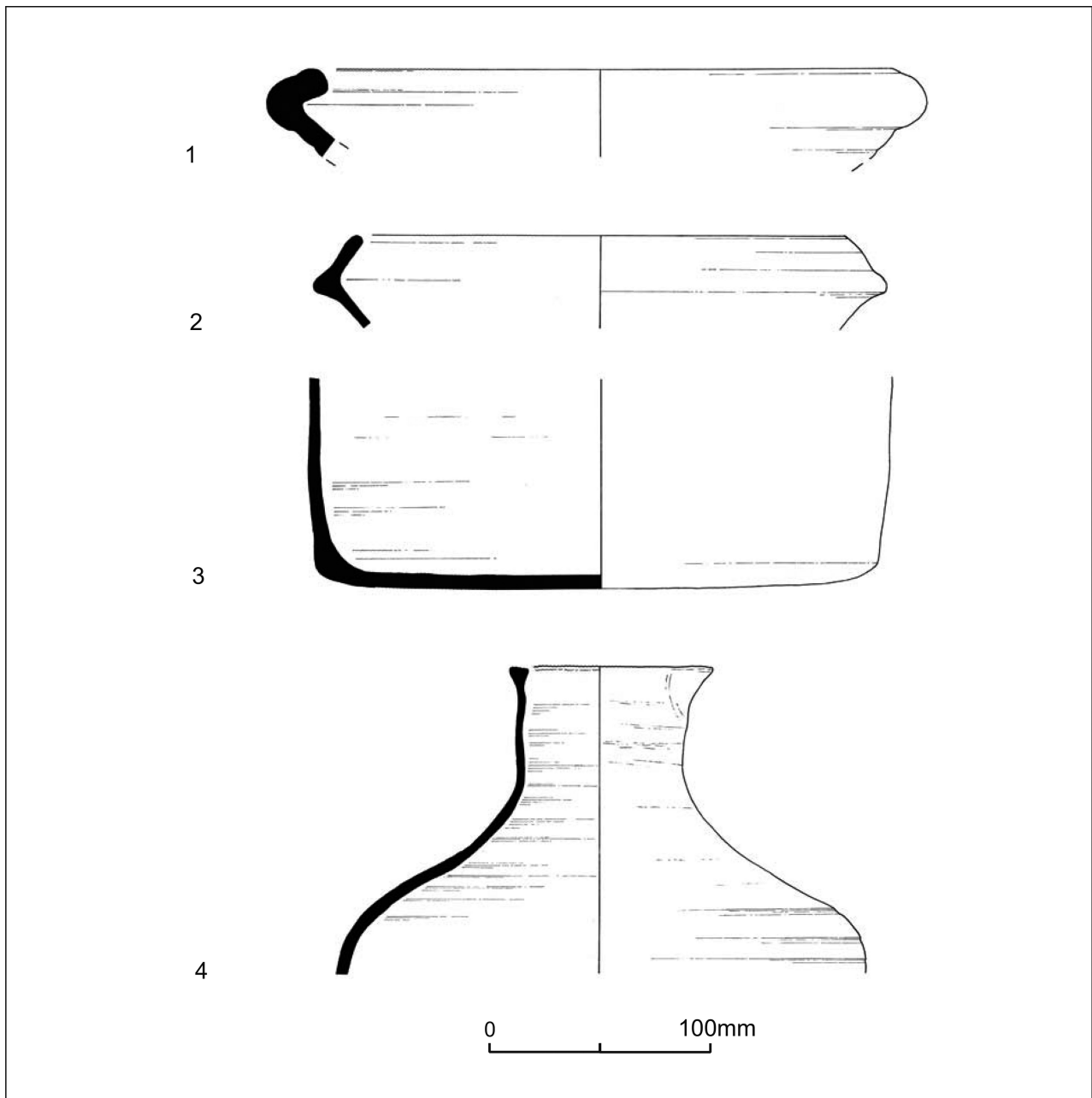


Fig 7: Illustrated pottery

- and scorching on both surfaces. Fill 14 of ditch 16
- 2: St Neots Ware (F200). Rim from inturned-rim bowl. Grey fabric with orange surfaces. Fill 14 of ditch 16
 - 3: Shelly Coarseware (F330). Base from large jar. Grey fabric with pale orange-brown surfaces. Fill 106 of ditch 107
 - 4: Potterspurry Ware (F329). Upper part of jug. Dark grey fabric with buff surfaces, pale green glaze on outer body from the neck to the waist. Layer 59

Other finds by Tora Hylton

Fifteen individual and group recorded finds were recovered from eight stratified deposits. The majority of finds were recovered from contexts relating to a medieval trackway, while single items were located within linear features and postholes. The earliest feature to produce finds was ditch 16 at the southern edge of the site, which contained pottery dated to the 11th century. The remainder were recovered from features dating from the 12th to the 14th centuries. The assemblage is dominated by nails and undiagnostic fragments, but of interest is the presence of a small group of whetstones for the sharpening of metal knives and tools.

Two copper alloy objects were recovered: a sheet fragment and a button, from layers (59) and (132) both date to the 13th to 14th centuries, although the button is post-medieval and therefore must be intrusive. The sheet fragment is difficult to identify, however, it is tongue-shaped (17x14mm) and may represent a terminal fragment from a strap-end or similar object.

The iron objects are dominated by nails (x6) and undiagnostic fragments (x2). The assemblage includes one complete nail from posthole 52, dated 12th to 13th-century, which still retains fragments of mineral-preserved wood below the head, an iron ring from the medieval trackway 42, possibly for use as a collar, and an undiagnostic object from ditch 16, dated to the 11th century.

There are three hones: two of micaceous schist and one undetermined. All are examples of unperforated hones, presumably for general use. They are longer, thicker and less well made than the small perforated hones for personal use. The hones of micaceous schist comprise elongated rods, up to 110mm long, with sub-square/rectangular cross-sections; they display signs of excessive wear and were recovered from contexts dating from the 11th to mid-13th centuries. Schist, often referred to as Norwegian ragstone, was mined at Eidsborg in southern Norway, and traded in great quantities during the medieval period.

Metalworking debris by Andy Chapman

Four deposits, three ditch fills and the overburden above the trackway produced small quantities of ironworking debris, with a total weight of 0.41kg.

From the fill (14) of ditch 16, dated to the 11th century, there are two pieces, weighing 115g, of grey vesicular slag with fired clay adhering to one face, indicating that

they have come from the lining of a furnace or smithing hearth. One piece is a dense ferrous slag while the other is light and glassy fuel ash slag.

From the fill (34) of ditch 35 there is a single piece and smaller fragments, weighing 110g, of undiagnostic ferrous slag. From the fill (38) of ditch 21, dated from the 12th to mid-13th centuries, there is part of a dense cake of ferrous slag, weighing 140g, 48mm wide and in excess of 53mm long, which may be part of a small smithing hearth bottom. From layer (42) above a trackway, there is a small fragment of undiagnostic slag weighing 4g.

The material from the ditch dated to the 11th century could derive from iron smithing or smelting, although the latter process would produce substantial quantities of slag. The material from the ditch, dated from the 12th to mid-13th centuries, is most likely to derive from small scale or short-term iron smithing.

The animal bone by Adam Reid

A total of 326 animal bone fragments were hand collected from 19 different contexts and an additional 114 fragments were recovered from seven environmental samples via wet-sieving.

Positive identification to genus level was possible for 64 of the specimens (20% of total). The majority of the material derived from domestic mammalian taxa, although a small quantity of bird bones were also identified (Table 4). No Associated Bone Groups (ABGs) were noted.

Preservation and taphonomy

The state of preservation varied from very poor to good, with the majority of the hand-collected material rated as poor. The assemblage was also highly fragmented and much of the material demonstrated evidence of weathering and surface abrasion, which would suggest that some specimens may have been exposed or partially exposed for some time prior to burial. No evidence of

Table 4: *Animal bone taxa (hand collected and wet sieved material)*

| Taxa | Hand collected | Wet sieved |
|--------------|----------------|------------|
| Cattle | 25 | – |
| Sheep/goat | 20 | 1 |
| Pig | 15 | – |
| Horse | 1 | – |
| Dog | 2 | – |
| Roe deer | 1 | – |
| Frog/toad | – | 4 |
| M bird | 2 | – |
| S mammal | 5 | 1 |
| M mammal | 29 | 4 |
| L mammal | 54 | 2 |
| Indet | 172 | 102 |
| Total | 326 | 114 |

gnawing or burning was noted on any of the fragments.

Only one instance of butchery was noted, which was recorded as a light to moderate chopmark on a medium-sized mammal rib fragment recovered from layer (59).

It was not possible to derive any metrical or aging data from the assemblage. The assemblage is small and highly fragmented making it difficult to infer any new information regarding the past economy and land use. The material appears to derive mostly from domestic mammalian taxa with no suggestions of any specialised activity, such as hunting or textile manufacture.

The charred plant macrofossils by Val Fryer

Nine samples for the retrieval of the plant macrofossil assemblages were taken. Cereal grains/chaff and seeds of common weeds and wetland plants are present at varying densities within all nine assemblages (Table 5). Preservation is moderately good, although a proportion of both cereals and seeds are puffed and distorted, probably as a result of combustion at very high temperatures.

Oat (*Avena* sp.), barley (*Hordeum* sp.), rye (*Secale cereale*) and wheat (*Triticum* sp.) grains are recorded, with wheat predominant in most instances. It is noted that a number of the wheat grains are smaller than may be expected, but the reason for this is currently unknown. Cereal chaff is generally scarce, although individual barley and rye rachis nodes are noted along with a small number of bread wheat (*T. aestivum/compactum*) type nodes with diagnostic crescentic glume inserts. Non-cereal crop plant remains are also scarce, but the assemblage from Sample 1 does include a large rounded seed of probable pea (*Pisum sativum*) type, whilst Sample 4 includes a large angular cotyledon of possible field bean (*Vicia faba*) type.

Charred seeds of common segetal weeds are common within the assemblages from Samples 1 (fill (4) of ditch 5), 3 (fill (15) of ditch 16) and 4 (fill (28) of pit 29) but scarce elsewhere. Taxa noted most frequently include stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), brome (*Bromus* sp.), small legumes (*Fabaceae*), goosegrass (*Galium aparine*), medick/clover/trefoil (*Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus* sp.), small grasses (*Poaceae*), dock (*Rumex* sp.) and scentless mayweed (*Tripleurospermum inodorum*). De-watered seeds of fat hen (*Chenopodium album*), dead-nettle (*Lamium* sp.), sow thistle (*Sonchus asper*) and chickweed (*Stellaria media*) occur within the assemblage from watering hole 115 (Sample 6), but it is unclear whether any of the specimens recorded are contemporary with the feature or whether they may all be later contaminants. Individual charred spike-rush (*Eleocharis* sp.) nutlets are noted within four assemblages. The fill (114) of the watering hole 115 also includes de-watered fruits of both maple/sycamore (*Acer* sp.) and birch (*Betula* sp.) type, although as the latter are particularly well-preserved it is thought most likely that all are intrusive.

Charcoal/charred wood fragments are present throughout, although rarely at a high density. The small assemblage from Sample 2 (ditch 81) is largely composed of charcoal, although it is noted that the material is highly comminuted, possibly suggesting that the remains had

been exposed to the elements for some considerable period. Other plant macrofossils occur infrequently, but do include small pieces of charred root/stem, possible fragments of heather (*Ericaceae*) stem and indeterminate culm nodes. The de-watered assemblage includes numerous small leaf fragments and a single small prickle.

The assemblages are all very small (ie <0.1 litre in volume) and somewhat limited in composition, with the high density of intrusive roots suggesting that these features had been subjected to a considerable degree of post-depositional bioturbation. There is little to indicate that any of the material was deliberately placed within the features, and it is thought most likely that the remains are primarily derived from scattered or wind-dispersed midden waste. Notwithstanding these issues, it would appear that waste products from the processing and/or storage of grain may be present within at least four of the assemblages studied, along with possible domestic hearth waste, but given the small size of the assemblages, it is difficult to differentiate between the two sources. The occurrence of stinking mayweed within most assemblages probably suggests that cereals (and particularly the wheat) were largely being grown on the local clay/loam soils, with some areas of marginal damp grassland possibly coming into cultivation for the first time during the early medieval period. Cereals may have been grown on a rotational basis along with larger pulses and small legumes, with the latter specifically being used to improve soils impoverished by previous over-production and poor land management.

Discussion

The excavation at Harbidges Lane is the largest yet to have taken place in Long Buckby. The majority of archaeological work in the village has occurred to the east around the castle (Audouy and Parry 1988; Thompson 1996; Atkins and Soden 2002). The origins of the Long Buckby settlement(s) have not therefore been examined archaeologically, but the present work has added new information on the founding of medieval settlement in this location, its restructuring in the 13th century, and its subsequent abandonment in the 14th century.

Ditched plots and timber buildings (11th century – mid/late 13th century)

The site at Harbidges Lane is situated on the eastern extremity of the deserted settlement at Salem which is thought to have a Saxon origin (Fig 8; see historical and archaeological background above). Buckby and later Cotton End were probably established in the late Saxon period and these three areas may have been separate focal points of a polyfocal settlement with a further probable hamlet of Surney at the south-western corner of the township, and another at Greenhill Farm (Foard and Ballinger 2000, 10–14).

The current excavation at Harbidges Lane found no evidence for middle or late Saxon occupation and no Saxon residual material was uncovered. This may be

Table 5a: Summary of charred plant macrofossils: cereals and herbs

| Sample | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|--|-------|-------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|-------|-------|
| Context | 4 | 80 | 15 | 28 | 128 | 114 | 142 | 132 | 60 |
| Feature | 5 | 81 | 16 | 29 | 129 | 115 | 144 | – | 61 |
| Feature type | Ditch | Ditch | Ditch | Pit | Drain | Well | Ditch | Layer | Ditch |
| Phase | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | – | 1 | | 2 | 1 |
| Cereals and other potential crop plants | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Avena</i> sp. (grains) | xx | x | xx | xx | – | – | – | x | x |
| <i>Hordeum</i> sp. (grains) | x | – | x | x | – | – | – | – | x |
| (rachis nodes) | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | x |
| <i>Hordeum/Secale cereale</i> type | | | | | | | | | |
| (rachis nodes) | x | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Secale cereale</i> L. | | | | | | | | | |
| (grains) | x | – | x | x | – | – | – | xcf | x |
| (rachis nodes) | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Triticum</i> sp. (grains) | xxx | x | xx | xxxx | x | – | x | x | xxx |
| (rachis internodes) | – | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>T.aestivum/compactum</i> type | | | | | | | | | |
| (rachis nodes) | x | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | x |
| Cereal indet. (grains) | xx | x | xx | xx | – | – | x | x | xx |
| (basal rachis nodes) | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Pisum satvum</i> L. | xcf | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Vicia faba</i> L. | – | – | – | xcf | – | – | – | – | – |
| Dry land herbs | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Anagallis arvensis</i> L. | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | xcf |
| <i>Anthemis cotula</i> L. | x | – | x | xx | x | – | – | x | xx |
| Asteraceae indet. | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Atriplex</i> sp. | x | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Bromus</i> sp. | x | – | – | xx | – | – | – | – | x |
| <i>Chenopodium album</i> L. | – | – | – | x | – | xw | – | – | – |
| Chenopodiaceae indet. | x | – | x | x | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Cirsium/Centaurea</i> type | x | – | – | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| Fabaceae indet. | xx | – | x | x | – | – | – | – | xcf |
| <i>Fallopia convolvulus</i> (L.)A Love | – | – | xcf | x | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Galium aparine</i> L. | x | x | x | x | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Lamium</i> sp. | – | – | – | – | – | xw | – | – | – |
| <i>Lapsana communis</i> L. | – | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Medicago/Trifolium/Lotus</i> sp. | x | – | xcf | x | x | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Mentha</i> sp. | – | – | – | xcf | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Persicaria maculosa/lapathifolia</i> | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Plantago lanceolata</i> L. | – | – | x | x | – | – | – | – | – |
| Small Poaceae indet. | x | – | x | x | – | – | – | x | x |
| <i>Polygonum aviculare</i> L. | – | – | x | x | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Ranunculus</i> sp. | – | – | xcf | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Rumex</i> sp. | – | – | x | x | x | – | – | – | x |
| <i>R. acetosella</i> L. | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Scandix pecten-veneris</i> L. | – | – | – | xcf | – | – | – | – | – |
| <i>Sonchus asper</i> (L.)Hill | – | – | – | – | – | xw | – | – | – |
| <i>Stellaria media</i> (L.)Vill | – | – | – | – | – | xw | – | – | x |
| <i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i> (L.) Schultz-Bip | – | – | – | x | – | – | – | – | x |

Key

x = 1 – 10 specimens xx = 11 – 50 specimens xxx = 51 – 100 specimens
 xxxx = 100+ specimens cf = compare w = de-watered

Table 5b: Summary of charred plant macrofossils: wetland herbs and trees/shrubs

| Sample | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
|--------------------------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|----------------|
| Context | 4 | 80 | 15 | 28 | 128 | 114 | 142 | 132 | 60 |
| Feature | 5 | 81 | 16 | 29 | 129 | 115 | 144 | - | 61 |
| Feature type | Ditch | Ditch | Ditch | Pit | Drain | Well | Ditch | Layer | Ditch |
| Phase | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | - | 1 | | 2 | 1 |
| Wetland herbs | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Carex</i> sp. | - | - | - | - | - | xw | - | - | - |
| <i>Eleocharis</i> sp. | x | - | - | xcf | x | - | - | - | xcf |
| <i>Montia fontana</i> L. | x | - | - | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Tree/shrub macrofossils | | | | | | | | | |
| <i>Acer</i> sp. (fruits) | - | - | - | - | - | xpmc | - | - | - |
| <i>Betula</i> sp. (fruits) | - | - | - | - | - | xpmc | - | - | - |
| Other remains | | | | | | | | | |
| Fish bone | - | - | x | - | - | - | - | - | - |
| Sample volume (litres) | 40 | 40 | 40 | 30 | 30 | 40 | 40 | 40 | 40 |
| Volume of flot (litres) | <0.1 | <0.1 | <0.1 | <0.1 | <0.1 | <0.1 | <0.1 | <0.1 | <0.1 |
| % flot sorted | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% | 100% |

Key

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

xxxx = 100+ specimens cf = compare w = de-watered pmc = possible modern contaminant

due to the suggested Saxon settlement at Salem being located elsewhere, possibly further south and/or west. The area between 100m and 200m to the east was similarly not built on in the Saxon period as archaeological work has found no Saxon features to the east and west of the Long Buckby Castle although there were a few residual, possibly late Saxon pottery sherds (Thompson 1996; Masters 1999; Atkins and Soden 2002). No archaeological features pre-dating the 11th century were found in work relating to a probable plot at West Street (B5385) to the north of the site (Meadows 2018).

The Harbidges Lane and the castle area fronted the postulated Coventry to Northampton road or routeway. The first phase of activity at Harbidges Lane took place in the 11th or 12th century, contemporary with the establishment of Long Buckby castle ringwork in the late 11th or the 12th century (*ibid*, 12). The castle was established possibly by the powerful Earl of Leicester, although it may have been the Chokes manor who owned the castle in the later 13th century (Foard and Ballinger 2000). The location was significant as it was positioned to control major road routes, a practice seen in similar to castles built by the Earl on significant major road routes such as Brackley and Lilbourne (*ibid*).

The initial activity at the Harbidges Lane site comprised two small timber buildings within a single plot with a further plot to the west, both of which fronted onto the former Coventry to Northampton road. New occupation of the 11th or 12th centuries has previously been recorded at nearby sites. Excavations in 1996 and 1999 to the east of the castle recorded several ditches, five possible postholes and a single pit, along with pottery dating from AD 1100–1300 (Thompson 1996; Masters 1999). An archaeological evaluation directly to the south-west of the castle identified a probable road containing late Saxon pottery and a few features dating after AD 1100, but with no later medieval remains (Atkins and Soden 2002).

This expansion in the 11th and 12th centuries in three areas, all greenfield sites, ties in with the documentary evidence for the growth of Buckby in the 12th and earlier 13th centuries (Foard and Ballinger 2000, 25). The expansion and growth of Buckby was tied into its periods of prosperity, most clearly observed with the establishment of the castle. The expansion of Long Buckby in the 11th to 12th centuries is comparable to nearby Brackley where excavations at The Elms uncovered 12th-century features on a virgin site located along the Oxford to Northampton road. This expansion was also considered to be due to population growth during a period of relative prosperity (Atkins *et al* 1999, 22).

The end of the first phase of activity at Harbidges Lane (11th century – mid/late 13th century) roughly corresponds to when Long Buckby Castle had fallen out of use and when the settlement at Buckby was granted a market charter in 1280. It is thought that the demise of the castle is associated with the fall of the Earl of Leicester in political and military upheavals of the later 12th century, as at Brackley Castle, which was abandoned by the 1230s (Foard and Ballinger 2000, 12).

The early layout at Harbidges Lane comprised a plot, 12m wide and at least 30m long, bounded by ditches, with probable internal divisions and a watering hole adjacent to the eastern boundary. To the east a narrow plot, slightly less than 10m wide, contained two small probable timber structures, Buildings 1 and 2. This plot width corresponds to two rods; a plot unit also observed at West Cotton, Raunds (Chapman 2010) and Houghton Conquest in Bedfordshire (Walker 2011). The full extent of the plots at Long Buckby is unknown but at both West Cotton, Raunds and Houghton Conquest lengths of up to 10 rods (50m) was suggested, which provides plots with an area of a quarter of an acre (0.1ha).

Buildings 1 and 2 were just over 1m apart and it may be suggested that perhaps one building was domestic while

the other was an outbuilding. The two were of relatively humble nature, comprising small sub-rectangular wooden structures evidenced by a mixture of beamslots and postholes. Building 1 measured c.5.0m by c.3.5m whilst Building 2 seems to have been c.6.7m long. Dyer (1986, 35) records that excavated buildings of the 13th century largely measured 7.6–15.2m long by 3.7–4.9m wide. Buildings 1 and 2 were therefore small in comparison to similar contemporary structures, and were presumably only of a single cell, without internal divisions. Dyer (1986, 34) also notes that peasant messuages contained not just a house but a group of buildings. The domestic nature of at least one of the buildings at Harbridges Lane may be suggested by a whetstone from one of the postholes in Building 1 and pottery sherds recovered from several features. There may also have been some small-scale iron smithing on the site at this time. The finds recovered from this phase indicate that the Harbridges Lane site was of low status, as the pottery was of locally-made types and metal artefacts were also few and fragmentary, comprising a possible part of a copper alloy sheet, a nail and two amorphous metal fragments.

Stone buildings and a trackway (mid/late 13th century to mid/late 14th century)

The second phase of occupation appears to have emerged in the middle to late 13th century and was marked by the restructuring of the site, including the replacement of the former wooden buildings with larger stone structures. It is possible the stone was acquired from the site of the former castle which was located no more than 100m to the east. The former castle was not completely robbed of its stone even by the early 18th century; as in c.1720 the county historian, John Bridges, recorded that old foundation walls had been uncovered at the castle and were between eight or ten feet thick (Bridges 1791, 544).

Long Buckby was seemingly growing in importance and wealth in the mid to late 13th century at the time these stone buildings and the trackway was constructed on the site. The village had been awarded a market in 1280 and this signifies it had to some extent become a large and important village, possibly even a proto-town in this period.

Two stone buildings fronted onto a subsidiary trackway and not onto the main road as might be expected. The layout of the medieval settlement does not seem to have been dense if this present excavation is representative of the village. As Foard and Ballinger (2000, 24) commented in the urban survey; *'the complexity of the manorial organisation of Buckby and the inadequacy of the documentation for several of those manors means that it is impossible to establish the total number of tenements in the village or their distribution about the town.'* Archaeological excavation therefore remains a key, if not the only, method of understanding the layout and dating of the various settlement elements.

Buildings 3 and 4 lay to the west and east of a cobbled trackway forming a yard between them. The complete building plans were not recovered, but Building 3 measured at least c.11m long by c.5.6m wide with a

central doorway in the western wall, and Building 4 was at least 10m long and c.5m wide. These are likely to have both been of two bays.

The plans of Buildings 3 and 4 are comparable to domestic structures found in other parts of Northamptonshire for the same period, such as Lyveden (Steane and Bryant 1975) and West Cotton, Raunds (Chapman 2010). At West Cotton there are several examples of late Saxon timber structures replaced by buildings in stone in the 12th to 13th centuries, and one of the timber structures (S20) was 9.60m long by 5.50m wide (Chapman 2010, 98). A 14th-century longhouse in Area J at Lyveden (Steane and Bryant 1975, 24–27 fig 10), was c.20m long by 6m wide. Buildings 3 and 4 were therefore probably slightly smaller than the average.

Field (1965) analysed a collection of late medieval buildings for Worcestershire and found about 2% of 113 buildings were of one bay, c.4.6m by 4.6m, while 84% were of either two bays, c.4.6m by 9.2m, or three bays, c.4.6m by 13.8m, with three bay buildings forming the majority. The remainder were four bays (11%) and five or six bays (4%). In the adjacent counties of Gloucestershire, Staffordshire and Warwickshire, Field found 80% of structures were two or three bays in size. No ceramic roof tile was recovered, suggesting that Buildings 3 and 4 were roofed with other materials. The domestic nature of the site can be suggested by the moderate quantity of pottery sherds and other artefacts, including two whetstones.

Abandonment (mid/late 14th century to present day)

Occupation appears to have ceased by the end of the 14th century, as no late medieval pottery was recovered. The decline of Long Buckby during the 14th century has been suggested by the absence of any occupation of this date being identified in other archaeological works in the village. Historical accounts also support the lack of archaeological evidence, by suggesting that the village market was struggling within several years of the Black Death and had completely failed by 1368 (Foard and Ballinger 2000, 13).

It is important to note that the whole of Salem may have been abandoned in the 14th century. The Royal Commission on Historic Monuments (RCHME) records earthworks to the south, south-west and west of the excavated area, although none are marked within the excavation area itself (Fig 8). This present excavation shows the site had gone out of use by the 14th century, and was not reoccupied. Archaeological work directly to the south-west and east of Long Buckby Castle also found no late medieval occupation or activity (Thompson 1996; Masters 1999; Atkins and Soden 2002). It is therefore likely that the old main Northampton road was abandoned within this same timeframe.

It is therefore likely that Long Buckby's present main road, West Street, became the road to Northampton during this period with the village elongated along the one road. It is also worth noting that Cotton End, at the far eastern side of Long Buckby, was probably also abandoned in

this mid/late 14th-century period, and was similarly recorded as earthworks by RCHME (Fig 8). The hamlet of Surney in the south-western corner of the township and another settlement at Greenhill Farm were probably also abandoned in this period, but this is uncertain as little is now known of these settlements and no archaeological work has taken place here (RCHME 1981, 133; Gover *et al* 1975, 66).

No archaeological evidence was recovered to suggest that there were any post-medieval settlement within the development area. Historical mapping from 1885 onwards indicates that the site remained an open field until the construction of Hillgay cottage in the early 1970s.

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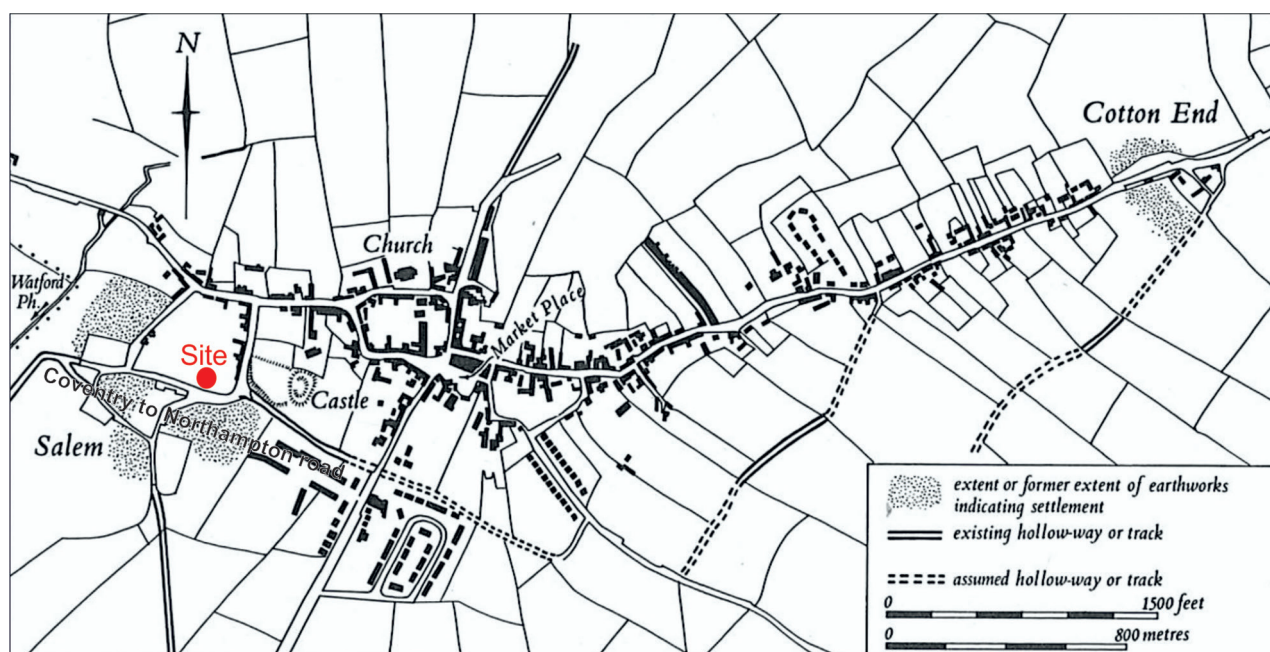


Fig 8: Earthwork survey and map of Long Buckby (after RCHME 1981, 131)

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