

Land between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston, Cheshire A Post-Excavation Assessment Report

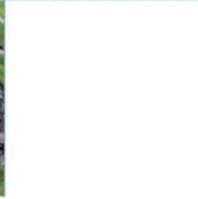
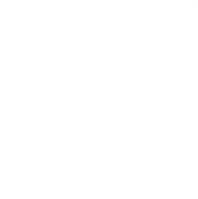
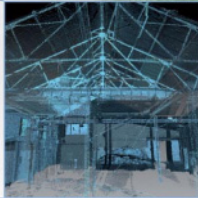
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ARCHAEOLOGY

HERITAGE

CONSERVATION

Land between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston, Cheshire

A Post-Excavation Assessment Report

On Behalf of: Ellesmere Port & Neston Borough Council,
County Offices,
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Ellesmere Port,
Cheshire,
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National Grid Reference (NGR): SJ 2920 7755

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This document has been prepared in accordance with AOC standard operating procedures.

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Non-Technical Summary

An Archaeological excavation was undertaken between the 6th of March and 9th April 2009 on land between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston, Cheshire. The work was undertaken by AOC Archaeology Group on behalf of Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council, as part of a mitigation process following a four trench evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology in May 2008. The aims of the excavation were to establish the extent of stone built, early post-medieval foundations revealed during the previous work and fully record all archaeological remains within the development area.

The excavation comprised the machine stripping of an area measuring 1600m² on land previously used as a car park, bounded by Raby Road to the north, Brook Street to the south, an existing car park and adjacent railway line to the east, and by the Town Hall and commercial properties to the west.

The excavation revealed evidence of consistent site activity from the early 17th century until the present day. Structural remains of a 17th–early 18th century modestly-sized farmhouse with an associated cobble drive or road, were overlaid by a substantially larger Victorian farmhouse and later cobble and stone surfaces. An enclosed cobbled yard which may represent a stable or workshop dating to the 18th century was found to be heavily truncated by a stone built 20th century public toilet block. A later Victorian stable associated with the farmhouse may have replaced the earlier yard. Evidence of quarrying was also found, with a large pit dating to the 17th century found truncated by the Victorian stables. During the later phases of site use this activity moved to the north of the site, where a substantial Victorian pit was revealed.

The remains uncovered during both the initial evaluation and subsequent excavation illustrate the sites domestic use from the 17th century until its 20th century adaptation for civic functions. However, there is evidence throughout the post-medieval and Victorian period of a cottage industry of sand and sandstone quarrying having taken place, which is not surprising within a settlement built upon a natural sandstone outcrop, and may have been the source for much of the materials used within the structural remains.

1 Introduction

- 1.1.1 This document aims to summarise the results of the archaeological excavation, conducted by AOC Archaeology, at land between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston, Cheshire, on behalf of the Cheshire West and Chester County Council and Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council.
- 1.1.2 The original research aims are discussed with reference to the results, to define revised research aims and enable full interpretation and publication. The resources needed to fulfil this work have been quantified in the light of the revised research objectives.

1.2 The Site

- 1.2.1 The development site was centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SJ 2920 7755 (Figure 1), and is within land bounded by Raby Road to the north, Brook Street to the south, an existing car park and adjacent railway line to the east, and by the Town Hall and commercial properties to the west (Figure 2). The area of archaeological interest to be affected by the proposed development is largely located within a public car park and covers an area of approximately 1600m².
- 1.2.2 The site lies at approximately 30m AOD and slopes to the south and east. The site was previously occupied by car parking facilities with a number of buildings in the north-western corner including a sub-station, public toilet block and offices. The proposed development will consist of a supermarket, flats, parking, community facility and market square.

1.3 Planning Background

- 1.3.1 The Local Planning Authority was Cheshire West and Chester County Council. Archaeological advice to the council was provided by the Planning Archaeologist (PA) for Cheshire West and Chester County Council (Mark Leah).
- 1.3.2 The proposed development will consist of a supermarket, flats, parking, community facility and market square.
- 1.3.3 The initial stage of archaeological investigation comprised the production of a desk-based assessment (White Young Green 2008). This was followed by an archaeological evaluation, carried out in accordance with *Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning* (PPG 16) issued by the Department of the Environment in 1990 (DoE, 1990) and the recommendations of the PA as part of a predetermination investigation in support of planning application P/2008/101/NE/118. The four trench archaeological evaluation (Figure 2) of the development area was carried out by AOC Archaeology in 2008 (AOC 2008a). The evaluation revealed sandstone remains of an early post - medieval structure. Pottery recovered from associated contexts were subsequently dated to the 17th century and showed imports from throughout the UK and mainland Europe.
- 1.3.4 Due to the significant structural and artefactual remains identified during the evaluation, it was decided that the full area of the development site would need to be investigated archaeologically prior to the initiation of a construction programme.

- 1.3.5 A project design detailing the methodology to be used during the excavation was produced at the request of Ellesmere Port and Neston Borough Council in consultation with the Cheshire West and Chester County Council planning Archaeologist, Mark Leah (AOC 2008b).
- 1.3.6 This Assessment Report conforms to the requirements of Planning Policy Guidance: Archaeology and Planning (DoE 1990) (PPG16). It has been designed in accordance with the archaeological brief prepared by the Senior Regeneration Officer (Archaeology) of Cheshire County Council (Cheshire County Council, 2008), current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:
- English Heritage – Management of Archaeological Projects (EH 1991).
 - Institute of Field Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Excavations (IFA 1994).
 - Institute of Field Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IFA 1997).

2 Geology and Topography

- 2.1 The desk-based assessment (White Young Green 2008) indicates that the site is underlain by Triassic pebble beds now termed Sherwood Sandstone. Whilst glacial deposits of boulder clay, sands and gravels have been recorded in the wider area.
- 2.2 Geotechnical investigations were conducted across the site by Crossfield Consulting Ltd (2006). These indicated that the natural deposits were situated between 0.25m and 0.9m below the current surface, which was confirmed by the findings of the evaluation work.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

The archaeological and historical site background is taken from the desk-based assessment produced for the site in 2008 (White Young Green 2008).

3.1 Prehistoric (before AD 43)

- 3.1.1 Little archaeological evidence predating the Iron Age has been found in the vicinity of the site.
- 3.1.2 A partially surviving earthwork identified at Burton Point is thought to represent the remains of a Late Iron Age promontory fort (Crawford-Coupe 2008) and as such is the closest known evidence for late prehistoric activity in the Neston area.

3.2 Roman (c. AD43-450)

- 3.2.1 Evidence for Roman activity in the area is limited. The recorded sites of Roman date within the study area are restricted to isolated find spots of material (Devine and Clark 2003; Ordnance Survey 1994). There is no evidence for settlement within the area and therefore these finds are likely to represent accidental losses from people travelling through the area. The find spots include several coins and some pottery. A Roman road has been postulated to run from Chester to Meols through Neston; however this has not been substantiated and therefore remains supposition (Devine and Clark 2003).

3.3 Anglo-Saxon (c. AD 451-1065)

- 3.3.1 Neston is well-known for its collection of pre-Conquest sculpture, which was discovered during the demolition of the medieval parish church and its replacement with the current building in the 19th century. The fragments show mounted figures and other pieces indicating Scandinavian influence. This influence is thought to be related to historically-attested Viking settlement in the Wirral during the 10th century and the pieces from Neston may represent memorials to the secular lords of Neston in the pre-Conquest period. It is likely that settlement at this time would have been focussed on the area around the church but its precise extent is unknown and it may have extended into the application area.
- 3.3.2 The Domesday Book (1086) records that there was a priest at Neston and that the parish was relatively large with eight townships. This has been used to suggest that Neston may have been an ecclesiastical centre in the early medieval period. In addition to this the limited areas of taxable land which are recorded may also indicate ecclesiastical exemption (Devine and Clark, 2003).
- 3.3.3 The place-name Neston is also derived from Old English indicating early medieval origins for the town. 'Nes' is derived from the Anglo-Saxon word for headland which was *nesse* or *naze*, 'ton' is a typical ending for a township (Peerson 1985). The historic town assessment for Neston has estimated the potential extent of early medieval settlement within the town (Devine and Clark 2003). This extent is focused around the church of St Helen and St Mary and is bounded by the High Street to the east and Church Lane to the west.

3.4 Medieval (c. AD 1066-1485)

- 3.4.1 St Helen and St Mary's Church was founded in 1140 and was recorded in the chronicles of St Werburgh's Abbey. It is unclear if this church was built on the site of the anticipated early medieval church. Although the present church dates largely from the 19th century, the 15th century tower, which also contains Norman masonry fragments, has been retained. These are the only physical medieval remains in the town.
- 3.4.2 The morphology and layout of the town indicates that there was medieval settlement within the centre of the town, within the western part of the development area. However none of the buildings survive. Post-medieval mapping shows a layout which indicates medieval burbage plots were present along the line of the modern High Street extending eastwards into the proposed development site. It is also probable given the predicted size of the town that there was a market place, although Neston was not given a charter to hold a market until 1727 (Devine and Clark 2003).
- 3.4.3 Documentary evidence records ships anchoring off Neston during the war between Wales and England in the 1180s. Chester customs accounts also document cargo ships anchoring off Neston in the 14th and 15th centuries. The wharf is likely to have been to the south-west of the town. This is where the later post-medieval port developed (Devine and Clarke 2003). The coastline at this time would have looked substantially different and ships would have been able to sail and anchor in this area of the estuary which has now silted up.
- 3.4.4 The primary industry in the area is likely to have been agriculture and the historic landscape characterisation for the area indicates isolated evidence of pre-enclosure field systems to the east of the study area. Most medieval agricultural remains are likely to have been removed by later post-medieval and modern agriculture or development.

3.5 Post-Medieval (c. AD 1486-modern)

Local Background

- 3.5.1 The parish remained largely manorial until 1849. The Mostyn family had acquired the estate in 1672 until it was split and sold in 1849. Neston's development as a port and town meant that it went through numerous phases of rebuilding to demonstrate its prosperity. The earliest remaining structures in the town are dated to the mid 18th century. Neston established itself in the mid 16th century as a port when due to the silting of the River Dee larger ships could no longer reach Chester. Construction on the quay started in the 1540s, however it was not until the turn of the century that it was completed.
- 3.5.2 By the mid 17th century Neston became the main departure point for Ireland and developed coaching links to the rest of the country. Much of the cargo landed here was then loaded onto smaller boats to be taken to Chester. Gradual silting up of the Dee led to port activities transferring to Parkgate from the mid 18th century. Parkgate was also developed as a fashionable tourism resort during this period. Both tourism and shipping went into decline from the early 19th century due to the continued silting of the river, accelerated by canalisation works in the south of the estuary (Devine and Clark 2003).
- 3.5.3 The industrial industries in Neston were also important to its growth. Industries included brickworks, tileworks, metal smelting, limeworks and collieries. The first mine opened in 1759 and a subsequent one in 1819. These mines thrived until the mid 19th century when they closed due to the most accessible coal having been worked out. A further colliery opened in 1870 and continued in use until the 1920's when it closed due to competition from larger mines in the region.
- 3.5.4 The proximity to the coast made transportation for industry easy and hence aided development until the silting up of the River Dee forced industries to turn to rail transport as an alternative. Several railways were built although only the mainline through Neston remains and the branch railways have been dismantled.
- 3.5.5 The growth of Neston continued in the modern period. The urban area of the town expanded and subsumed the outlying areas of Parkgate, Ness, Little Neston and Denhall. The expansion has included residential development, associated amenities and industrial complexes. There are few sites of historical interest recorded within the area with the exception of defence remains such as pillboxes from the Second World War homeland defences.
- 3.5.6 Morris and Kelly's Directory entries from 1874 to 1939 recorded a number of different trades and professions practiced by people resident in Brook Street and Raby Road. These included farmer, coal merchants, builders, a motor garage, a nurse, an Inland Revenue inspector and a piano teacher.

Site Specific Background

- 3.5.7 The earliest map examined for the Neston area is Saxton's Map of the County of Cheshire dated 1577. The map shows the headland, named *The Newkeye*, which was the site of the port of Neston. The map does not show the town of development site in detail, however a church is depicted. Speed's map of 1662 also shows the headland and a church, but again does not depict the site in detail.
- 3.5.8 The first mapping that clearly depicts the site in detail is an estate map from the Mostyn estate dated 1732 (Figure 3). There were buildings fronting the High Street and along Brook Street. Raby Road

appears to have been a very minor road at this time, however there are buildings fronting the alignment. Several boundaries bisected the western half of the site, particularly in the southwestern corner. There were also at least two buildings set back from the street frontages within where the proposed development site boundary is anticipated to be. The eastern half of the site was not shown; however it appeared that boundaries from the western half extended into the eastern portion of the site in an east-west orientation. A map dated 1772 to depict land belonging to the River Dee Company between Chester and Parkgate does not show the town in detail. It is considered that the church surrounded by houses is representational rather than accurate.

- 3.5.9 The Great Neston Tithe Map (1847) is the first mapping of the site which appears to have been based upon measured survey (Figure 4). The High Street, Brook Street and Raby Road have buildings along their frontages to the west. The western half of site contains little detail and it is possible that this area was exempt from tithes and therefore not mapped. The eastern half of the site was sub-divided into four fields aligned east-west. Neston remained in this period centred around the High Street and Park Street and the surrounding area was mainly agricultural fields.
- 3.5.10 A map was produced to accompany the sales particulars for the sale of the Mostyn estate in 1849. The majority of buildings within the proposed development site were in the same location as those depicted on the tithe map, although there were a small number of additional buildings in the south of the site. The sales particulars indicate that the buildings are mainly houses with associated gardens, however they also record a public house, bakehouse, druggists shop, stables and barns.
- 3.5.11 The first edition Ordnance Survey mapping (1881) demonstrates an increase in buildings both within the development site and the town as a whole. The buildings to the south of the site appear to be in the same locations as those depicted on the tithe map, although a greater degree of detail and subdivision was recorded. The High Street frontage and buildings to the rear of these are largely located just to the west of the proposed development site boundary. The buildings include a Drill Hall, hotel, post office and pubic house. The central area of the site is largely given over to gardens and the east of the site remained in agricultural use.
- 3.5.12 The 1909 Ordnance Survey (Figure 5) map depicts numerous changes to the site and its surrounding area. Many of the buildings around the site on Brook Street, Raby Road and the High Street had been rebuilt and their extent increased by this period. The Drill Hall had been replaced by the Town Hall and the hotel had also been replaced. The railway bounding the east of the development site had also been built by this period.
- 3.5.13 There were few changes to the site by the time of the 1912 Ordnance Survey map. The town itself had continued to grow, however it had not expanded significantly by this period. The site had been converted to car parking by the time the 1979 Ordnance Survey mapping was published, which was in use until the beginning of the excavation.

4 Original Research Aims

4.1 The aims for the excavation were:

- To establish the presence of further archaeological remains within the site.
- To establish the extent and nature of the stone founded post-medieval buildings.

- To define the phasing and date of the medieval and post-medieval remains upon the site. Particularly, to characterise the nature of any medieval or earlier occupation on the site.
- To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.
- To recover a representative sample of the artefactual, ecofactual and environmental assemblages present in any archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits, establishing the presence / absence of archaeological remains pre dating the prison site.

4.2 The final aim was to make public the results of the investigation, subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

5 Methodology

5.1 It was agreed with the Grosvenor Museum, Chester, in advance of commencing the fieldwork, that site code **BKN 08**, used for the previous evaluation undertaken on the site, would be assigned to the investigation.

5.2 The fieldwork comprised the excavation of an open area approximately 20m x 80m (1600m²). The methodology of the investigation followed that set out within the project design (AOC 2008b)

5.3 All machining was carried out under the constant supervision of an archaeological project supervisor. A 1.8m wide toothless ditching bucket was used, except where impractical. The area was CAT scanned and checked for live services prior to the commencement of the excavation. Existing hard surfaces and demonstrably modern structures and overburden were removed in successive level spits down to the first significant archaeological horizon, or the natural geology, whichever was encountered first.

5.4 In the north of the site, where the excavated area was greater than 1.2m in depth the trench was stepped to achieve the required depth and to ensure safe access.

5.5 Excavated material was examined by the project supervisor at time of excavation and later scanned by metal detector operators in order to retrieve artefacts to assist in the analysis of their spatial distribution.

5.6 On completion of the initial machine excavation, all the areas of the trench that require examination or recording were cleaned using appropriate hand tools. A 5 metre grid was set out by hand across the excavation area and a pre excavation plan of the entire site was then constructed at a scale of 1:20. The plan was accurately located to the national grid using a total station survey tool.

5.7 The excavation and recording of the identified features and structures within the limits of the excavation followed the construction of the site plan. Pits were half-sectioned to achieve a 50% sample and structural postholes were fully excavated. Linear features were sectioned at optimal positions along their length to achieve a minimum of a 20% sample. All excavation, whether by machine or by hand, was undertaken with a view to avoiding damage to any archaeological features or deposits which appeared to be demonstrably worthy of preservation *in situ*.

- 5.8 All recording was undertaken in accordance with the standards and requirements of the Archaeological Field Manual (Museum of London 1994). A continuous unique numbering system was employed that continued from that used during the evaluation. Context, section, plan and photographic registers were kept on standardised forms. Written descriptions, comprising both factual data and interpretative elements, were recorded on standardized sheets. Where stratified deposits were encountered a 'Harris'-type matrix was compiled during the course of the excavation.
- 5.9 Plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or an appropriate scale. Sections of features or short sample stratigraphic trench sections were drawn at 1:10. All sections were accurately related to Ordnance Datum. Single context planning was used as the standard recording method.
- 5.10 A temporary benchmark was established on the site, transferred from an Ordnance Datum point on the nearby church of St Helen and St Mary to the southwest of the site. The level was transferred as part of a closed loop to ensure accuracy.
- 5.11 A full black and white and digital (35mm transparency) photographic record was maintained. That illustrated the principal features and finds both in detail and in a general context. The photographic record also included working shots to represent more generally the nature of the fieldwork.
- 5.12 All identified finds and artefacts were collected and retained. Certain classes of material, such as post-medieval building material, were discarded after recording, with a representative sample kept for further assessment. Finds were scanned to assess the date range of the assemblage, with particular reference to pottery.
- 5.13 Bulk samples of a minimum 40 litres (where possible) were taken from appropriate contexts for the recovery and assessment of environmental data. Sampling methods followed English Heritage guidelines (English Heritage 2002).
- 5.14 All finds and samples were treated in a proper manner and to standards agreed in advance with Grosvenor Museum, Chester. Finds were exposed, lifted, cleaned, conserved, marked, bagged and boxed in accordance with the guidelines set out in United Kingdom Institute for Conservation's Conservation Guidelines No. 2.
- 5.15 On completion of the work arrangements will be made for the long-term storage of the whole archive at the Grosvenor Museum, Chester.
- 5.16 The excavation was undertaken over a period of 6 weeks between the 2nd March and 9th April 2008 by Paul Harris, Project Supervisor and a team of archaeological assistants that varied in size throughout, between three and eight members.
- 5.17 It was not possible to excavate an area measuring seven metres square in the west of the investigation during the initial excavation described within this report. The area has the potential to contain high quantities of structural remains and accordingly will be excavated at a later time and included within this report in the form of an addendum.

6 Results

6.1 Introduction

6.1.1 Extensive remains were recorded across the southern half of the investigation area and to a lesser extent within the north of the excavation. The archaeology revealed during the investigation dated from the 17th century to the present day. The earliest remains, dating between the 17th and early 18th century, comprised a complex of enclosure ditches, a small stone built structure with an associated cobbled floor and at least one large quarry pit. However, the existence of a large Victorian farm house and associated stables and yards, and modern civic facilities truncated much of the earlier remains leaving the functional identification of the site vague, without further documentary investigation.

6.2 Period 1 – Natural Deposits

6.2.1 The natural sediments (509) uncovered within the investigation area varied between clayey sand and an overlying clay drift material, which covered the majority of the southern half of the site and some of the northern half of the site. The colour of the deposits varied from a mid–dark reddish orange to a mid–light brownish, orangey yellow. Moderate levels of naturally occurring red sandstone inclusions were found within the natural deposits. The sandstone was similar to the material used within much of the structures found on site, suggesting that the stone was extracted close to, or actually from the site.

6.2.2 The average height of the sands and clay drift material was 32.63m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD). The site sloped to the south, towards its frontage onto Brook Street. The highest area of natural deposits was in the north east, which stood at 33.74m AOD, whilst within the south of the site the natural deposits were uncovered at the lowest point, 31.40m AOD.

6.3 Period 2 – Medieval

6.3.1 Although no features can positively be identified as medieval a small number of residual medieval pottery sherds were recovered from later, post-medieval features (Appendix G). Additionally, an unstratified pit [655] and post hole [653] located close to early post-medieval, east–west orientated ditches [651] and [635] could represent medieval activity within the north of the site (Figures 6 and 8). This activity may be related to the isolated evidence of pre-enclosure field systems to the east the site revealed during the sites landscape characterisation (White Young Green 2008).

6.3.2 Ditches [635] and [651] contained identical fills of homogenous mid greyish brown silt, with occasional charcoal fleck and sub angular pebble inclusions (636) and (652) (Figures 6 and 8). The two fragments of early post-medieval glass recovered from (652) and fragment of clay pipe from (636), coupled with the homogenous, silt rich fills, suggest that the features may have been used during the medieval period and left to naturally backfill during the early post-medieval period. The location of the two ditch terminuses and associated post holes implies that they formed an enclosure ditch. It is notable that no organic material was recovered from the deposits.

6.4 Period 3 – Post-Medieval. Phase 1 – 17th to early 18th century (Figures 6, 7 and 8)

6.4.1 The earliest identifiable archaeological remains from the site dated to the 17th century and early 18th century. The remains were focussed within the centre of the site, but were heavily truncated by the extensive later structures to the south. Features dating to this initial post-medieval phase of site activity comprised an extensive cobbled path or street, a large enclosure ditch running north-south through the centre of the site, several smaller inter-cutting ditches within the east of the site, two east

-west orientated ditches in the north of the site, the partial remains of three large pits and the remnants of a building (Building 1), which was most likely a dwelling that pre dated an extensive Victorian farmhouse (Building 2) situated within the west of the site.

- 6.4.2 Within the north of the site ditches [651] and [635] formed what appears to be an entrance to an enclosure located further to the north (Figure 6 and 8). As discussed within the previous section, it is possible that the features originally functioned during the medieval period and became naturally silted during the early post-medieval period. However, fragments of glass and clay pipe recovered from the fills, suggests that they were at least partially open during the 17th and early 18th century. Ditch [651] extended 12.25m to the east of the western limit of excavation before being truncated by a modern drain at its terminus. The ditch was 0.61m wide and 0.29m deep, with curving, moderate to steep sloping sides that broke sharply from horizontal and sharply to its rounded base. Its base was found at between 32.87m and 33.03m AOD. Ditch [635] extended 13.37m from the eastern extent of the excavation on a northwest – southeast orientation. It was roughly linear in plan, measuring between 1.70m and 2.80m in width and up to 0.55m in depth, at a height of 32.44m AOD at base. It had gently rounded, moderately sloping sides that broke moderately from horizontal and to base. The base of the cut varied between “V - shaped” in the east, becoming rounded towards its terminal in the west. Both ditches contained a homogenous mid greyish brown silt fill, with occasional charcoal flecks and sub-angular pebble inclusions (636) and (652).
- 6.4.3 A similar enclosure ditch was revealed within the east of the site [677], which was linear in plan, orientated north – south, with straight, steep sloping sides that broke sharply from horizontal and to its flat base (Figure 7 and 8). The ditch was 1.50m long, measured up to 0.80m wide and 0.30m deep, with the base of the cut located at 32.15m AOD. The ditch contained a single fill (676) of mid brownish grey, firm, clayey silt, with occasional stone, flint and charcoal inclusions. A base and body sherd of an iron-rich glazed cup, dated to the 16th-17th century was recovered from (676) (Appendix G). It is notable that the ditch ran into a large cut feature [696] to the south and that a smaller, contemporary gully was found running for a short distance from [677] to the northwest before becoming truncated by later walls [511]. The ditch most probably functioned as an enclosure ditch that separated the site with Building 1 to the west from another plot of land to the east of the site.
- 6.4.4 Within the southeast of the site three inter-cutting ditches and an associated highly truncated pit or ditch were revealed cut into natural sand and clay deposits. The easternmost ditch [663] curved from a northeast - southwest orientation to a southeast – northwest, extending 9.80m along the eastern extent of the excavation (Figures 7 and 8). The cut was over 0.45m wide and 0.33m deep (base at 31.30m AOD). It had steep sloping, rounded sides that broke sharply from horizontal and gently to its rounded base. The feature contained a single fill of light brown, firm, silty clay (575) from which 28 sherds of early post-medieval pottery were recovered, including tin glazed, salt glazed and iron rich glazed wares, an earlier piece of Cistercian ware dated 16th to 17th century and a significant piece of imported Sgraffito slipware (Appendix G). In addition two base fragments of contemporary wine bottles were also recovered.
- 6.4.5 Ditch [663] was truncated by similarly orientated ditch [664] to the west, which was over 12.20m long, 1.10m wide and 0.48m deep (base at 31.15m AOD). The ditch was truncated by later Building 3 to the south. It had steep sloping, rounded sides that broke sharply from horizontal and moderately to its rounded base. The ditch contained a single fill of mid brown, firm, silty clay, with occasional pebble inclusions (576). A total of 32 sherds of 17th to 18th century pottery were recovered from the

deposit, including Salt, Olive coloured, iron rich and clear glazed wares, with pie crust decorations, trailed white slip and stamped medallion features present within the assemblage. Two base fragments of contemporary wine bottles, a fragment of cattle pelvic bone and cattle vertebrae were also recovered. Ditch [664] truncated ditch [665] to the west, which extended 8.27m on a northwest – southeast orientation, terminating to the northwest. The feature was 1.60m wide and up to 1.00m deep (base at 30.63m AOD). It had moderately sloping straight sides that broke moderately from horizontal and to its flat base. Like the other ditches to the east [665] contained a single fill comprised of mid greyish brown, firm, silty clay (666) from which a single sherd of iron rich glazed pottery was recovered.

- 6.4.6 The three inter-cutting ditches [663], [664] and [665] all contained significant quantities of domestic pottery in the form of jugs, tankards, storage jars, chamber pots, bowls, dripping dishes, cups and plates (Appendix G). Additionally, the fill of ditch [664] contained fragments of animal bone, although not enough to identify it as a refuse pit. This suggests that the features were within a domestic setting, which would relate them to the nearby farmhouse; Building 1. It also suggests that they were open for a significant amount of time. Ditch [664] may represent the extension of an original double ditch comprising [663] and [665], as the contemporary nature of the fills would suggest that all three were in use at the same time. The silt rich fills further suggest that the ditches may have functioned as drainage for the area surrounding the cobbled path [660] to the west or for a feature beyond the eastern extent of the excavation. The finds within them appear to have been discarded during the occupation of farmhouse, Building 1.
- 6.4.7 To the west of [665], a portion of an irregular shaped pit [708] was found below cobbled floor [560], highly truncated by wall [558]. It was not fully excavated, but was found to be superficially filled with a mid greyish brown, firm, silty clay (709) similar to that of (666) to the east. Interpretation of the feature's function is problematic as it was not fully excavated, but its close association with ditches [663], [664] and [665] and its similar fill would suggest that it may have functioned as a refuse pit.
- 6.4.8 Fragments of what appears to be a large ditch or pit were also found within the southwest of the site, heavily truncated by Victorian Building 2 and modern soak-away [644]. The feature was formed from two fragmentary remains of a cut feature, the largest of which [692] was a quarter circle in plan, measuring 4.70m north to south, 1.90m east to west and up to 0.80m in depth (base at 32.33m AOD) (Figures 7 and 8). The cut had moderately sloping, gently rounded sides that broke moderately from horizontal and to its flat base. It contained a single fill of mid brownish grey, compact silty clay (693), with frequent sandstone, cobble and charcoal inclusions.
- 6.4.9 A fragment of a similar silt deposit (620) heavily truncated by modern soak-away [644] was revealed to the south, suggesting that the feature extended beyond 6.40m in length. Nine fragments of 17th - 18th century pottery were recovered from deposit (620), of which seven had internal and/or external iron rich glazes, one an olive green glaze and one a clear glaze, representative of Chinese porcelain imports of the period (Appendix G). Seven fragments of animal bone were also recovered, incorporating cattle and horse metacarpals, metatarsals and sheep and cattle teeth, in which evidence of butchery were found. Similarly, a fragment of cattle metacarpal and two sherds of 17th - 18th century pottery, one with a clear internal glaze and the other with an iron rich internal glaze were recovered from (693). This would suggest that the features were contemporary with dwelling Building 1 to the north and that the feature functioned domestically. However, the large amount of sandstone within fills (693) and (620) may indicate that the pit was originally used for quarrying the easily

accessible natural sand and sandstone, similar to within pit [101] revealed in the east of the site during the previous evaluation.

- 6.4.10 Within the centre of the site a less truncated, substantial ditch [696] was revealed, extending 23.56m on a north – south orientation. It measured 3.40m in width and 0.66m in depth (base at 32.31m AOD) cutting into the natural sand and clay drift material (509). It was linear in plan, with rounded corners. The sides of the cut were steep sloping and gently rounded, breaking sharply from horizontal and moderately to the ditches flat base. The feature contained two distinct fills. The primary fill (695) was 0.20m deep, comprising pale reddish orange, silty sand, with occasional stone and charcoal inclusions. No finds were recovered from the deposit. The secondary fill (694) / (670) consisted of 0.50m of dark grey, soft, clayey silt, with frequent cobble and sandstone inclusions, at a height of 31.01m AOD. The Trilobate terminal of a 'trifid' spoon, broken at the stem and containing decoration recovered (670) represents the only find from the fills of ditch [696]. The spoon is a pewter copy of a 'lace-back' spoon of the sort that probably came into fashion in the 1670's (Appendix C) affirming the early date of the feature. However the lack of substantial dating evidence suggests that the feature was deliberately backfilled over a short period of time within the late 17th century, implying that it may have functioned prior to the post-medieval period. The size of the structure and lack of domestic waste within its fills may suggest that it functioned as a fish pond, yet the lack of organic deposits within the feature and the basal layer of red sandstone (695) may adversely indicate that it represents early quarrying activity of the natural sandstone deposits, which is more likely.
- 6.4.11 The southern terminus of ditch [696] was found adjacent to an extensive cobbled surface [660] which appeared to respect the ditch, suggesting that the features were contemporary and may have functioned co dependently (Figure7, Plate 1). A limited extent of the surface was found during the previous evaluation, recorded as [208]. In total, cobbled surface [660] / [208] measured 17.43m north to south and up to 4.67m east to west. The surface extended on a northwest – southeast orientation at a height of between 30.99m AOD and 31.59m AOD, across the centre of the site towards Brook Street to the south. The surface was 0.12m thick, comprised of a single layer of tightly-packed, water worn cobbles, pebbles and sandstone fragments of varying size that were generally smaller to the north and larger to the south. Within the eastern extent of the surface a single row of larger cobbles were arranged to form a curb, suggesting that the surface functioned as a drive rather than a yard.



Plate 1. Cobbled Path [660]

6.4.12 The components of the surface were held within a mid greyish clayey silt packing material. A sherd of iron rich glazed 17th-18th century pottery was recovered from the packing surrounding the cobbles asserting the early date of the surface. However, this was further emphasised by a 0.10m deep layer of dark brown, firm, silty clay (668) that overlaid both the upper fill (694) / (670) of ditch [696] and cobble floor [660]. The silting deposit contained 193 sherds of pottery, most of which contained an iron rich glaze, although olive green, mottled, clear, salt and tin glazed sherds were also recovered. Examples of German imports were found within the assemblage and fragments of medieval Ewloe and Brown glazed pottery were also recovered. This deposit was overlain by a 0.13m thick spread of reddish brown sand (583) at a height of 31.24m, which in turn was overlaid by a 0.07m thick deposit of dark grey, silty clay (667) at a height of 31.11m AOD. Both of the overlying deposits similarly contained substantial amounts of 17th-18th century pottery.

6.4.13 The northern end of cobbled surface [660] curved westwards suggesting that it terminated at a truncated threshold for a contemporary building represented by Building 1.

Building 1 – 17th – early 18th Century Farmhouse (Figure 7)

6.4.14 The remnants of this structure were heavily truncated by the later Victorian house; Building 2. The remains comprised three northwest – southeast orientated stone built walls, two sandstone post pads and an associated and similarly aligned drain.

6.4.15 The most southerly of the walls [225] was revealed during the previous evaluation, but was truncated by Victorian wall [621] and modern soak-away [645] and accordingly did not continue into the investigation area. It was constructed of two courses of sandstone blocks bonded with a pale brown

lime mortar and the southern end was demarcated by a large sandstone block that may have indicated the corner of a building; the wall was 6.00m long and 0.40m wide.

- 6.4.16 Walls [549] (32.43m AOD) and [597/202] (31.61m AOD) ran parallel to each other to the north of [225], forming what appears to be a room within Building 1. Both were constructed from the local red sandstone, irregularly coursed in a mixture of mid brown, silty sand and yellowish white sandy mortar. The walls were both two stones wide, but [597/202] notably had a large stone at the southern end of the wall [657], which may have formed the corner of a perpendicular wall truncated by later Victorian wall [517]. The insubstantial remnants of a similar internal dividing wall protruded to the northeast from [549], but were heavily truncated by Victorian wall [520]. Between the two walls two large sandstone blocks [710] and [711] were found beneath later Victorian floor [513]. They were roughly square in shape, each measuring 0.45m square, but did not show any signs of having been worked. They may have formed supports for internal columns or posts within Building 1, suggesting that the structure was more than one storey tall.
- 6.4.17 To the north of stone wall [549], on a similar alignment, but set to the east of the wall was brick lined drainage gully [538] (Plate 2). It was 3.60m long and comprised two short parallel walls [539] constructed from a single course of hand made, soft fired red bricks (240mm x 110mm x 80mm) held in header coursing by a mid brown sandy mortar. The wall reached 32.49m AOD. The brick walls lined a cut that was 0.60m wide and 0.36m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base [538]. The feature contained a silting deposit of mid dark brown, silty sand, with occasional mortar, CBM and stone fragments (540), which did not contain any datable evidence. To the south of the gully it appears that the drainage system would have continued against wall [549], perhaps ceasing at the aforementioned protruding stones of the wall, but like to the north, gully [538] was truncated by later Victorian drainage measures.



Plate 2. Early stone wall [549] and contemporary brick lined drainage gully [538] truncated by later Victorian wall [520]

- 6.4.18 Building 1 can clearly be identified as a structure that had multiple rooms, but was sizably smaller than the later Victorian rebuild, Building 2. It had basic drainage features and an external cobbled path [660] that led from the structure to Brook Street to the south, suggesting that it was of reasonably high status for the time. The alignment of the structure is significantly different to that of later structures suggesting that the course of Brook Street may have changed between the 17th and 19th century.
- 6.4.19 The identification of the structures function is problematic, as although cobbled drive [660] abutted the most easterly of the walls [597] it also respected quarry pit [696]. Accordingly the building cannot be clearly assigned a purely domestic function, but may represent the remains of a house within a farm where quarrying was taking place. The Mostyn estate map of 1732 (Figure 3) clearly depicts the farmhouse structure, but does not show the adjacent quarrying activity. Through further research of the maps key it is hoped that the ownership and function of the structure and the site will be established.

6.5 Period 3 – Post-Medieval. Phase 2 – Mid 18th to early 19th century deposits (Figure 9)

- 6.5.1 Few archaeological remains could be securely dated between the mid 18th and early 19th century. The most significant of the features was an enclosed cobbled yard in the south east of the site, which was heavily truncated to the south by a 20th century stone built toilet block (Building 4). In addition to this, a narrow gully [674] was found within the north of the site, a shallow, naturally formed depression [573] and layers of made ground (705) and (706) underlying later Victorian wall [553] were revealed in the west of the site and a truncated rectilinear pit was found beneath the Victorian floors [516] and [518] of Building 2 in the centre of the site.
- 6.5.2 Gully [674] was orientated northwest–southeast. It extended from its south-eastern terminus 12.02m to the northwest before being truncated by later Victorian quarry pit [635]. The feature measured up to 0.41m wide and 0.14m deep. The cut had steep sloping sides that broke sharply to a concave base. It contained a single fill (675) of mid brownish grey, loose, sandy silt, with occasional charcoal fleck inclusions. From its insubstantial depth gully [674] is likely to have functioned as a drainage ditch, although its isolated location does not allow for associations with other features to be made.
- 6.5.3 In the west of the site a 0.20m+ layer of made ground was revealed within a sondage excavated against wall [553]. The deposit comprised mid greenish, greyish brown, moderately compacted, sandy silt, with moderate large sub angular stone, mortar and occasional CBM flecks and fragment, charcoal flecks and slate fragment inclusions. The layer was found beneath Victorian wall [553] and made ground (705), which comprised 0.20m of reddish brown, friable, sand, with frequent sub angular sandstone and lime mortar inclusions. A naturally formed depression [573] was found within the surface of (705), truncated by wall [553]. It measured 1.50m east to west, 0.55m north to south and 0.10m deep. In accordance with its erosional formation it had gently sloping sides and a gently rounded base. It was filled with a silting deposit (574) of dark blackish brown, moderately compacted, silty sand, which contained occasional angular sandstone, clinker, charcoal flecks and CBM inclusions.
- 6.5.4 Within the centre of the site, a truncated circular pit [627] was revealed within the northeast corner of the most northerly room within Victorian House Building 2. It was heavily truncated by Victorian walls and drains to the north and east, but survived in part beneath Victorian floors [516] and [518]. The

remains of the pit measured 1.53m north to south, 1.34m east to west and 0.25m deep (Figures 9 and 12). It had rounded corners and gently rounded sides that broke sharply from horizontal and gently to the pits flat base. The pit contained three distinct fills. The basal fill (629) was 0.07m deep and comprised a mid greyish brown, moderately compacted silty sand, with occasional sub-angular stone and charcoal inclusions. Above this, secondary fill (628) consisted of a 0.11m deep layer of mid orange, moderately compacted, silty sand, with occasional sub angular stone and charcoal fleck inclusions. The tertiary fill (606) comprised a 0.14m deep deposit of mid brown, compacted, sandy clay, with occasional CBM flecks, mortar and charcoal fleck inclusions. It was found at a level of 31.60m AOD at its surface. Four fragments of poorly preserved, hand made CBM fragments were recovered from (606) represented the only finds recovered from pit [627]. The interpretation of the pit's function is problematic. Its fills do not suggest that it was used as a refuse pit and the high level of truncation inhibits the true shape of the feature. However, its location and the inclusion of CBM within its fills may suggest that it was a truncation related to the destruction of the earlier farmhouse (Building 1) and the robbing or grubbing out of the earlier structures walls.

- 6.5.5 An undated oval pit [703] was revealed to the north of the house, which may have been associated with [627]. The cut was 1.00m long, 0.82m wide and 0.32m deep, with gently rounded, moderately sloping sides that broke moderately from horizontal and to its undulating base. The pit contained a single fill of mid – dark greyish brown, moderately, silty clay with moderate sandstone inclusions (704).
- 6.5.6 An enclosed yard was found within the southeast of the site. It comprised a tightly packed cobbled surface [559], measuring 3.51m by 2.76m and at a height of 31.42m AOD, was found set around a central brick pad [560], measuring 1.17m by 1.00m at a height of 31.41m AOD, constructed from hand made, soft fired bricks, each measuring 235mm x 110mm x 80mm. Similar bricks have been found from 17th and 18th century sites within the area (Appendix G), but the truncation of earlier, 17th century curvilinear ditches [663], [664] and [665] by the enclosed cobbled yard accordingly dates it to the later end of the dating range.
- 6.5.7 Cobbled surface [559] was set within the confines of an enclosing stone built wall [558], which bound the floor to the north, east and west. The wall was constructed from red sandstone sub rectangular blocks that varied in size between 180mm x 170mm x 90mm and 620mm x 300mm x 170mm. The wall was bonded by a reddish yellow, friable sandy mortar, in irregular coursing two blocks wide and up to four blocks high (31.81m AOD) (Figure 12, Plate 3). Both wall [558] and cobbles [559] were truncated by a modern toilet to the south.
- 6.5.8 Surfaces [559] and [560] were additionally truncated by a Victorian wall foundation [561] and pit [580], and a later wall [562] was crudely bonded to the eastern leg of wall [558].



Plate 3. Enclosed cobbled yard within the southeast of the site

- 6.5.9 The function of the enclosed yard is not obvious from its form. It certainly formed an enclosed yard, but it is unknown if it was an external or internal feature. The brick pad set within the centre of the cobbles could have functioned as a the base for machinery, suggesting that it was a workshop, but no metal pins or supports were found within the pad, so it is more likely that it functioned as an external yard. Its perpendicular location with nearby Brook Street further suggests that it would have been a yard situated to the rear of a building fronting onto the road. The extensive truncation caused by the 20th century toilet block to the south has destroyed the remains of any such building associated with the yard and accordingly made the identification of the structure difficult.
- 6.5.10 Cartographic evidence suggests that an east-west orientated structure was found fronting onto Brook Street close to the yard in the Mostyn Estate map of 1732 (Figure 3). In the 1847 Tithe map of the site (Figure 4) the east-west orientated building is depicted adjoined to the yard, to form an “L – shaped” building, but by the early 20th century only the yard remained within the 1909 OS map of the site (Figure 5).

6.6 Period 3 – Post Medieval. Phase 3 – Victorian (1839 – 1901) (Figures 10, 11 and 12)

- 6.6.1 The most extensive remains revealed during the excavation date to the Victorian period. During this phase of activity the small 17th century building (Building 1) within the west of the site was demolished and a significantly larger structure erected in its place (Building 2). To the east of the structure a sandstone, brick and cobble floor extended eastwards to a single roomed stable block (Building 3), which was adjoined to an enclosing garden wall. The 18th century enclosed yard was modified during this time, with an internal divisional wall being inserted and external stone walls being constructed. To the west of the enclosed yard a new cobbled yard surface was constructed leading from Building 1 to Brook Street and the earlier quarrying activity moved to the north of the site, beyond the enclosure walls associated with both the house and the stable.
- 6.6.2 Within the south of the site cobbled surface [533/615], heavily truncated by later 20th century drains and soak-away [645], was found overlying 17th-18th century clayey made ground deposits (667) and (668) (Figure 12). The surface was constructed from rounded, water worn cobbles that varied in size

between 90mm x 80mm x 30mm and 320mm x 230mm x 80mm. It extended 9.07m southwest to northeast and at least 6.56m southeast to northwest, situated at a height of between 31.52m and 31.67mAOD. The cobbles were tightly packed above a bedding layer of greyish yellow, soft sand (534), which was 0.12m deep (Figure 12).

- 6.6.3 Cobbled floor [533] respected two large sandstone blocks [531] laid length ways east to west at a height of 31.49m AOD, next to each other within a shallow rectangular construction cut [532] at the southern end of the surface. The cut truncated the natural drift material (509). It was long and shallow, measuring 1.10m east to west, 0.30m north to south and 0.13m in depth. No packing material was found between the cut and stones. The stones were made from the local red sandstone and each measured 0.55m in length and 0.30m in width. Their uniformity and relationship with surface [533] to the north would suggest that they functioned as a threshold from nearby Brook Street into the Victorian structural complex, in turn suggesting that cobbled surface [533] was a yard rather than a path or drive such as the earlier 17th century cobbled surface [660].
- 6.6.4 During the Victorian period the quarrying activity within the site moved from the centre of the investigation area where it was active during the 17th century, to the north of the site where a large circular pit was found within the northern extent of the excavation [637]. The pit measured 9.00m north to south, 8.20m east to west and at least 0.77m in depth, excavated to a depth of 32.18m AOD. The feature was cut into the natural sand (509), with steep sloping curving sides, which broke sharply from horizontal and moderately to a narrow plateau, on which large flat stones had been placed, from which it broke moderately with rounded sides (Figure 12). The base of the feature was not reached through hand excavation.
- 6.6.5 The quarry pit contained a single fill (638) of mid greyish brown, moderately compacted, sandy clayey silt, which contained frequent charcoal fleck, CBM fleck and large uncut sandstone inclusions. The significant quantities of sandstone within the fill and the steep cut of the pit, with its stone lined plateau strongly suggest that the feature functioned as a quarrying pit. The cut of the feature truncated earlier medieval/post-medieval ditch [635] and was overlain by modern car park wall [510] securely dating it to the Victorian period. Finds recovered from (638) affirmed this, comprising residual 17th–18th century pottery mixed with a waste lump of Victorian lead, two fragments of 19th century wine bottles and four fragments of animal bone from sheep and goat, all with significant butchery marks evident upon them.
- 6.6.6 The location of quarry pit [637] may suggest that the quarrying activity taking place during the Victorian period was not associated with the house and stable structure to the south as it was revealed beyond enclosing wall brick [511], implying that at this time the site was separated into two plots functioning domestically and industrially.
- 6.6.7 Enclosure wall [512] was constructed from soft fired, red stock bricks (230mm x 115mm x 70mm) within a dark grey concreted mortar. Only three courses of the brickwork survived (up to 33.07m AOD) in the form of two stepped lower courses in header bond below an upper course of stretcher bonded bricks, which suggests that the wall was originally held within stretcher or English bond coursing. The wall was curvilinear in plan, stretching 34.24m on a generally northwest, southeast orientation within the eastern side of the site. At 25.04m from its north-western extent the wall abutted Building 3. To the southeast of the stable the wall continued into the eastern extent of the excavation as [604].

- 6.6.8 Wall [511]/[604] was constructed directly onto the natural clay drift material with no foundation, as was the stable block. It was truncated by a modern stone built wall [510] to the north and was re-used in conjunction with it as the car park wall during the 20th century.
- 6.6.9 To the east of wall [511] a linear gully [679] and three associated post holes [683] were recorded extending on a north south orientation. Gully [679] was narrow and shallow, extending 5.20m in length, 0.40m in width and 0.16m in depth (base at 32.30m AOD). It had rounded, moderate sloping sides that broke steeply from horizontal and moderately to the cuts concave base. The gully cut into natural (509) and truncated early post-medieval ditch [677] to the west. A single fill (678) of dark brownish grey, firm clayey silt, with occasional stone and charcoal inclusions, was revealed within [679].
- 6.6.10 From the north-western terminus of gully [679] three post holes, spaced 1.60m apart from each other continued on the gully northwest - southeast alignment. Only the southern most post hole [683] was sample excavated. It was sub rectangular in plan, with rounded corners, measuring 0.30m by 0.16m. the cut had vertical sides that broke sharply from horizontal, extending 0.41m in depth before breaking sharply to its rounded base. The post hole was filled with a single deposit of dark brownish grey, soft, silt, with occasional charcoal and sandstone inclusions (682).
- 6.6.11 Together gully [679] and post holes [683] represent the fence line of an enclosure that may be associated with the Victorian farmhouse to the west.

Building 2 – Victorian Farmhouse (Figure 11)

- 6.6.12 Within the west of the site the 17th-18th century building, Building 1, was overlaid and heavily truncated by a much larger Victorian stone and brick built building, Building 2. The building was set on a northwest–southeast alignment. It comprised three rooms composed from an extensive exterior stone wall that ran from the southern extent of the site, forming the western and northern external walls of the structure, and three stone built internal dividing walls that ran on an northeast – southwest orientation. The two most northerly rooms contained brick and tile floors, and within the northern corner of the central room a brick built threshold led to an external sandstone, cobble and brick yard that adjoined the structure to an adjacent Victorian stable or workshop (Building 3).
- 6.6.13 Situated within the southwest of the site, wall [520] was constructed from irregularly shaped sandstone blocks, with occasional brick inclusions. It was irregularly coursed, bonded by a friable, light yellowish white lime mortar and mid – dark brown silty sand. The wall was 0.42m wide, survived up to 0.64m high, reaching 32.78m AOD, and extended 24.50m from the southern limit of the excavation, before turning to the northeast for 6.25m and then turning back to the southeast for 2.97m. It defined the most northerly rooms south-western, north-western and part of its north-eastern extent. Within the eastern corner of the room, wall [520] was bonded to a concrete threshold for the room, which was 1.07m long and 0.37m wide. To the southeast, the threshold was bonded to a northeast–southwest orientated wall [514] that internally divided the room from the central chamber of the building. The wall was found at a height of 31.99m AOD, measuring 0.35m wide and constructed from red sandstone within a white lime mortar and was bonded to the western wall of the room [520]. A doorway in the form of a 0.93m gap in wall [514] was located 1.16 from the north-eastern end of the wall.
- 6.6.14 A tiled floor within the most northerly room [516] found at 31.93m AOD and a brick floor within the central room [513] of the house were both found abutting contemporary wall [514], and in the

doorway constructed within wall [514] appeared to respect one another suggesting that they were laid contemporarily. Surface [516] extended 5.47m by 3.40m, covering the entire northern room of Building 2. It was truncated by a later drain and [522] and covered by a later brick and cement floor [518], which was found at 32.12m AOD. The surface comprised five courses of red stock bricks (230mm x 110mm x 70mm) tightly laid parallel to the north-easterly wall. The bricks were held within an irregular stretcher coursing by a mid brown silty sand bonding material, except for the course closest to the concrete threshold to the room, which was constructed in header coursing. The rest of the floor was formed from regularly laid, machine made tiles (230mm x 230mm x 70mm) held within a similar sand bonding material.

- 6.6.15 Floor [513] measured 7.36m northwest to southeast and 3.80m northeast to southwest, covering the entire central chamber of Building 2, at a level of 31.93mAOD. It was formed from two distinct arrangements of differing materials, suggesting that wooden or special internal divisions were originally used within the room. The south-western half of the room was constructed from high density "cobble effects" bricks (200mm x 100mm x 60mm), the same as those used within floor [584] of Building 3, and common red stock bricks (220mm x 120mm x 80mm). The bricks were laid to form three rectangular areas measuring 1.65m wide and 2.85m long, and two smaller areas measuring half the width. In between each rectangle of cobbled bricks three courses of stretcher bonded red bricks extended northeast to southwest. Within the north-eastern half of the room the same red stock bricks were laid within a northwest - southeast aligned stretcher coursing. The difference within floor [513] may suggest that the room functioned as a store of even a stable, with the stock bricks forming divisions between the bays. However, no structural components relating to associated divisions were observed during the excavation, suggesting that the differentiation in floor may have simply been decorative.
- 6.6.16 The central room of Building 2 was formed from wall [520] to the southwest, wall [514] to the northwest, wall [517]/[203] to the southeast and walls [599] and [600] to the northeast. Wall [517] / [203] was constructed from sandstone and a white lime mortar. It was 0.48m wide and extended northeast to southwest 3.18m, bonded to external wall [520] to the southwest. It was revealed at 31.79m AOD.
- 6.6.17 Within the northern corner of the central room a 1.16m long stretch of red stock bricks, laid in header coursing, bonded by a light pinkish brown sandy mortar [599] represented a threshold constructed for entry into the room. It was found at 31.85m AOD and was abutted by sandstone wall [600] to the southeast, which extended 1.77m at between 31.74m and 31.84m AOD, forming the fragmentary remains of the north-easterly external wall for Building 2. Wall [600] was formed from red sandstone blocks within a light pinkish brown sandy mortar. It was 0.38m wide and survived up to 0.35m high. The wall was heavily truncated by modern drainage features revealed within the centre of the site, but it clearly would have continued to adjoin with both wall [517], represented by wall fragment [658], and wall [621], which formed the southern limit of the most southerly room of Building 3, represented by wall [622], which may have continued further south.
- 6.6.18 Wall [621] (31.41m AOD) was constructed from red sandstone blocks within a mid brown, friable, sandy mortar. It abutted wall [520] to the southwest and [622] (31.37m AOD) to the northeast. It was 0.40m wide and survived up to 0.26m high.
- 6.6.19 The southernmost room of Building 3 did not contain any evidence of flooring, but within the northwest corner of the room a small brick soak away associated with drain [515] had been bonded

to walls [517] and [520]. It was constructed from red stock bricks and measured 0.50m square. This suggests that the room may have been external, forming a walled enclosure adjoining the farmhouse, although there is no evidence of a doorway into the house from the room.

- 6.6.20 Directly against the western, north-western and north-eastern extents of the farmhouse, drainage and service ditches [535], [601], [610], [611] and [607] were uncovered, servicing the northernmost room of the farmhouse and extending away to the north and west. Drainage ditch [535] was found to utilise an earlier drainage gully [538] constructed for the earliest 17th century house. The ditches that ran along the north-western wall of the structure contained ceramic Victorian drainpipes, as did those that ran beside the north-eastern wall, although these had been later used for the installation of electric services.
- 6.6.21 A contemporary cobbled yard [533/615] to the south of the site appeared to respect the external walls of Building 2, suggesting that this formed a surfaced entrance to the farmhouse from nearby Brook Street.
- 6.6.22 It is clear from investigation of the structure that most of the Victorian farmhouse was constructed contemporaneously, with the same building materials and mortar used throughout most of the building. However, it is notable that the eastern walls used a sandy mortar, rather than the white lime mortar used throughout the rest of the structures walls. This may represent a later rebuild or extension of the structure, or may simply show an adaptation with the building materials that were at hand during its construction. The size and form of the structure almost certainly identifies it as a farmhouse. The most northern room of the structure had a significant amount of contemporary services leading to and from it, suggesting that it functioned as a kitchen or room with a utilitarian nature. Cartographic evidence is not conclusive in depicting the structure within the site. The 1847 Tithe Map (Figure 4) of the area depicts a building in the same location, but insufficient detail within the source does not allow the differentiation between Building 2 and the earlier building, Building 1. However, the 1909 OS map of the site (Figure 5) depicts Building 1 within greater detail, illustrating two adjoined buildings, suggesting that the two most northerly rooms formed one structure and the southerly room another.
- 6.6.6 Within the southeast of the site an earlier 18th century enclosed yard contained a number of Victorian truncations and additions. The 18th century surfaces [559] and [560] were truncated by a short section of a north – south orientated concrete wall foundation [561], which was 0.45m wide and extended 1.86m before being truncated by modern toilet block wall [526]. A small, very shallow pit [580] measuring 0.80m x 0.35m x 0.002m, containing a compacted yellow sand fill (581) was also in this area. Both may represent a change in the function of the structure prior to its demolition, which is suggested by the later addition to the structure in the form of wall [562] that was crudely constructed as a skin against the eastern leg of earlier wall [558]. Wall [562] was constructed from the same sandstone as [558], but the blocks were larger in size and bonded by a better consolidated yellow sandy mortar. Like concrete wall foundations [561] and the earlier cobbled surface [559], wall [562] was truncated by the modern toilet block to the south.
- 6.6.7 Within the toilet block the remnants of two Victorian drains [569] and [571] were revealed. They were both highly truncated by the modern structure, but indicate that Victorian drainage may have been installed for the yard and any associated contemporary building to the south.

6.6.8 The truncations and additions during the Victorian period to the backyard structure may denote that the structure was internally partitioned by wall [561] and externally reinforced by wall [562]. This would suggest that the function of the structure changed during this period. Shallow pit [580] represents a Victorian truncation of the earlier yard floor, which may relate to this change in functionality, as may drains [569] and [571]. The cartographic evidence studied during this investigation is not detailed enough to depict the Victorian alterations to the enclosed yard, but it is hoped that subsequent cartographic and documentary research will allow the interpretation of the function and extent of additions, which may have been truncated by the modern toilet block to the south.

Building 3 – Victorian Stable / Workshop (Figure 11, Plate 4)

6.6.9 A single roomed structure measuring 5.62m northwest to southeast and 3.98m northeast to southwest, was revealed within the east of the site. It was comprised from exterior brick walls [585] and [586] and a contemporary stone threshold [587], enclosing a red brick and high density cobbled brick floor [584].

6.6.10 Walls [585] and [586] formed the exterior walls of Building 3, which incorporated threshold stone [587].to the southwest.They were constructed from soft fired, red stock bricks (230mm x 115mm x 65mm) held within English coursing by a brown sandy mortar. The walls survived up to 32.24m AOD. All the exterior walls were constructed directly onto the natural clay drift (509) and were a single brick length wide. In the northern and eastern corners of the room the exterior walls were abutted by Victorian enclosure walls [511] and [604].

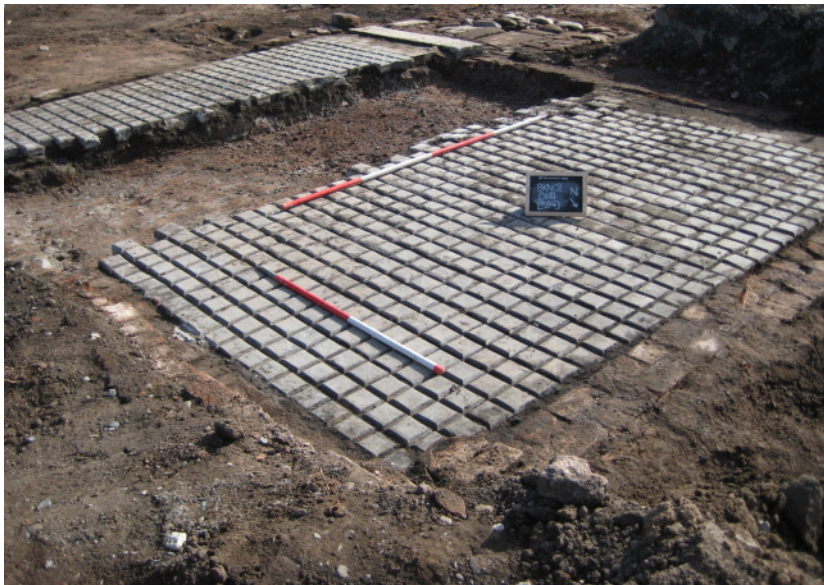


Plate 4. Victorian Stable, Building 3, looking southwest

6.6.11 Brick floor [584] was set within exterior walls [585] and [586], measuring 3.79m southwest to northeast and 5.07m southeast to northwest, at a height of 32.09m AOD. The floor comprised three courses of soft fired, red stock bricks (230mm x 110mm x 80mm) in stretcher bond tightly packed against the southern corner of the room adjacent to threshold [587]. The rest of the surface was formed from high density, “cobbled bricks” similar to those found with floor [513] of Building 2. The bricks were set flat against each other to form a cobbled style floor. On the base of the bricks a machine stamp read 'W.HANCOCK & Co (H'DEN) L; BUCKLEY', which through further investigation

may be able to precisely date the structure. Floor [584] was set upon a mid-light grey concrete foundation (707) that was 0.12m thick.

- 6.6.12 Large stone block [587] was located within the south-western facing wall, at a height of 31.97m AOD in the southern corner of the room. It was clearly inserted in between the exterior walls at the time of their construction to form a threshold for the structure. It comprised a single stone that was 1.47m long and 0.30m wide. To the southwest of the stone a sandstone, cobble and brick surface [588] ran from the building towards contemporary farmhouse, Building 2, where a heavily truncated fragment of it was revealed [602] close to the eastern extent of the building. Surface [588]/[602] was constructed directly on top of the natural clay drift material (509) and 17th century cobbled floor [660], at a surface height of between 31.70m and 31.89m AOD.



Plate 5. Floor [588] to the southwest of Building 3

- 6.6.13 Building 3 is clearly contemporary with Victorian farmhouse; Building 2. The same specific high density bricks were used within the floors of both structures and the same brick, cobble and sandstone surface [588]/[602] was revealed running from the threshold of the largest room within the farmhouse to the threshold of Building 3. Identification of the structures functionality is problematic. The size and close association with the farmhouse would suggest that it was an ancillary building such as a stable or workshop. The structure is not visible within the 1847 Tithe Map of the site (Figure 4), but is clearly depicted within the 1909 OS map (Figure 5), with an adjoining wall and adjoining significantly smaller structure against the external northwest corner of Building 3.

6.8 Period 4 - Modern (Figure 13)

- 6.8.1 The modern remains comprised a number of services that ran across the entire site, a 20th century public toilet in the southeast of the site, a compacted yard or factory floor in the centre of the site, a modern car park wall in the north of the site, a number of internal additions to the Victorian

farmhouse (Building 2) and numerous layers of overburden material associated with modern levelling processes and the car park that previously occupied the site.

Building 2 – 20th century alterations to the Victorian farmhouse

- 6.8.2 The Victorian farmhouse had a number of alterations and additions made to it during the 20th century. This included the construction of internal plumbing down the western side of the two most northerly rooms [522] and a brick lining [519] (32.78m AOD) and brick and concrete floor [518] within the northern room of the structure. Constructed on top of [518] two brick plinths [524] and [526] were found abutting brick wall lining [519] in the room's northern wall. The function of these structures was not clear from what remained of them.

Building 4 – 20th Century Public Toilets (Figure 13, Plate 6)

- 6.8.3 The most significant 20th century remains were found in the form of Building 4; a stone built toilet block, fronting onto Brook Street within the southeast corner of the site. The structure measured 7.60m north to south and 6.60m east to west, externally composed of an outer stone built wall [526] and [568], which incorporated red sandstone blocks varying in size from 180mm x 180mm x 80mm to 500mm x 200mm x 120mm, held in place by a pale white limey mortar. The walls were found between a height of 31.34m and 31.67m AOD. The structure was internally divided into three rooms by east-west orientated brick wall [564] and north-south orientated brick wall [556]. Both walls were constructed from hard fired red bricks (230 x 110 x 80mm) within a grey concrete rich mortar, at a height of 31.36m AOD. The two smaller southern rooms contained a concrete floor [566] overlying a layer of re-deposited natural (567) and the larger northern room a ceramic tile floor [568] at a level of 31.32mAOD constructed onto the natural clay drift (509).



Plate 6. Building 4 truncating an earlier enclosed yard to the north

- 6.8.4 The toilet block heavily truncated an earlier building to the north (Building 4) and earlier field drains [569] and [571]. The exterior stone walls appeared to be joined to the existing car park stone wall, which was knocked down at the time of construction. The cartographic evidence used for this

preliminary assessment does not illustrate the public convenience, with the 1909 OS map (Figure 5) still depicting what appears to be the enclosed yard, confidently dating the structure to the 20th century.

- 6.8.5 In the southwest of the site an almost circular pit measuring 2.90m by 2.79m [617], which was partially exposed during the previous evaluation [220], contained a superficial deposit of loose red sand (618/218). A slot excavated through the deposit during the evaluation revealed the corner of a brick structure [219]. Through further machine and hand excavation during this investigation a square, brick built soak away measuring 1.15m east to west, 1.20m north to south and 1.60m in depth was revealed. The structure was located within a cut 1.25m square and 1.60m deep [644]. It had vertical sides that sprayed out at the surface to form cut [617] and a flat base. Between brick lining [643] and cut [644] was found an infilling deposit of mid – dark brown, compact, sandy silt (645). The soak-away brick lining [643] was a single course of bricks wide, constructed from hard fired, machine made, red bricks (230mm x 100mm x 80mm), held within English coursing by a dark grey concrete like mortar. It was found at 31.25m AOD at the surface. A concrete support [642] was bonded to the western and south-western exterior of the wall, which was 0.05m thick. A concreted drain was found extending from the southern extent of the soak away in northwest – southeast orientation.
- 6.8.6 The 20th century services extended across much of the south of the site, truncating earlier deposits, most notably 17th–18th century cobbled floor [660] and Victorian floors [533] and [588]. A modern concreted manhole was located within the centre of the site, from which large drains extended to the northwest and south. From the southern drain smaller ancillary drains emanated to the northeast and northwest. Three other modern, concreted drains were found within the centre of the site on a northwest – southeast orientation and a further manhole, with associated drain was found within the east of the site. Within the north of the site a ceramic 20th century drain was found beneath wall [510].
- 6.8.7 An area measuring 23.98m by 19.73m within the centre of the site, enclosed by Victorian walls [510] to the north, [511] to the east, [512] to the west and structural Victorian walls [520] and [586] to the south, was covered by three compacted layers representing a modern yard surface and associated levelling layers. The primary levelling deposit (508), overlaying the natural sands (509), comprised a 0.24m thick layer of mid red and light orangey yellow, highly compacted, crushed sandstone, brick and pinkish mortar. Its surface was revealed at 32.73m AOD. The secondary deposit (507) was 0.05m thick, found at 32.77m AOD, comprising dark blackish brown, high compacted gritty silt, which may have formed a surface to the yard. The tertiary deposit (506), overlying yard surface (507), was formed from a mid yellowish grey, compacted, sandy, gravely, clay silt, with frequent sub rounded and sub angular pebble inclusions. The surface was at 33.07m AOD. The layer may represent made ground overlying surface (507), or it may have formed part of the series of levelling deposits below a surface that was completely truncated prior to the excavation.
- 6.8.8 The site was covered (except within the northwest corner, beyond walls [510]) by the 0.05m thick modern tarmac car park surface (501), found above a 0.35m crushed concrete hardcore bedding layer (502), which was in turn found above a 0.07m thick mid – dark blackish brown, loose silt, gravel and crushed tarmac primary bedding layer (503).
- 6.8.9 A mid yellowish brown, soft, clayey silt made ground (504), with moderate sandstone and coal inclusions, was found overlying the natural sands and clay drift material (509), beneath the car park

levelling layers, except within the northwest corner where it was overlaid by a 0.30m thick surface deposit of dark blackish brown, soft, sandy clay made ground (505), containing moderate charcoal fleck, coal, CBM fleck and organic inclusions.

- 6.8.10 The car park surface deposits and made ground layer (505) were separated by modern car park walls [510], [623] and [624]. The earliest of the walls [510] was constructed from red sandstone blocks held within irregular coursing by a friable sandy mortar. It extended 18.63m east from the western extent of the excavation, before turning north and extending a further 11.23m into the northern extent. The wall was heavily truncated throughout and only survived up to three courses high (up to 33.75m AOD). It was two stones wide, measuring up to 0.75m. Within the western and northern extents of the excavation a red brick wall [623] was found bonded by a pale white concrete mortar to the surface and partially to the southern extent of wall [510]. It was constructed from red stock bricks (230mm x 110mm x 75mm) in footer bond, existing up to four courses high and two courses wide. Above it was a later wall [624] bonded its surface. Wall [624] was constructed from hard fired, machine made, red bricks, held within a footer bond by mid grey concrete. The wall was two bricks wide and survived up to five courses high. Both wall [623] and [624] were constructed after the deposition of made ground deposits (504) and (505), suggesting that they acted as retaining walls, whilst wall [510] was found to be constructed above a contemporary 20th century drain running east–west across the north of the site, indicating its modern categorisation.

7 Archive

7.1 Post-excavation Review

7.1.1 The following tasks have been carried out to date on the stratigraphic archive:

- Site records were checked.
- A stratigraphic matrix was compiled.
- All the contexts were grouped into stratigraphic phases.
- Subgroups within particular phases were established.
- Plans were digitised and digital images were created.
- Finds were assessed by specialists.

7.2 The Stratigraphic Archive

7.2.1 The stratigraphic archive consists of the following:

Records	Quantity
Context Sheets	202
Context Register Sheets	8
Plans	10
Plan Register Sheets	1
Sections	42
Section Register Sheets	2
Level Sheets	7
Environmental Sample Register	1
Environmental Sampling Sheets	8
Photographic Register Sheets	20
Photographs, Black and White	342
Digital Photographs	376
Small Finds List	1

8 Finds and Environmental Samples

8.1 The Pottery (Appendix G)

- 8.1.1 A total of 829 sherds of pottery, weighing 29.48 kg were recovered from the site. Eight of the sherds were of a medieval date, with a combined weight of 81 grams, which represents less than 1% by count and weight of the total pottery assemblage. None of the medieval pottery sherds were considered likely to be derived from an undisturbed medieval context, having been recovered from post-medieval contexts (403), (407), (550) and (668).
- 8.1.2 The largest group of medieval pottery came from context (550) which probably dates to the 19th century. This group included three relatively unabraded sherds of pottery in a local iron-rich sandy fabric which might have been derived from a single vessel; the rim sherd had a fairly small diameter and the vessel was probably a jug. This iron-rich sandy fabric could have been produced at several possible known Cheshire kiln sites of which the closest is the Chester Eastgate kiln (Chester Fabric

178) that was in production during the 13th century. The fourth sherd in the group was a body sherd in a grey/white fabric likely to be derived from a Staffordshire kiln site.

- 8.1.3 The remainder of the medieval assemblage (four sherds) consisted of red/grey and pink/white gritty wares. These wares are thought to be products of the Ewloe kilns in North Wales and as such date to between the late 14th and 16th century. One handle sherd was identified which was probably derived from a jug and one of the sherds was actually a tiny fragment of line-impressed and glazed medieval floor-tile (context (668)).
- 8.1.4 The medieval pottery assemblage represents the first such material to be recovered from archaeological investigations in Neston; and even though it is a meagre group, it does provide some indication of medieval occupation in the vicinity of the excavation. The closest comparable material was recovered from small scale excavations on the medieval moated manor house site at Little Stanney (Earthworks, 1997); but otherwise medieval deposits from excavations at the nearby City of Chester provide the best comparable ceramic material.
- 8.1.5 The remaining 821 sherds of pottery with a combined weight of 28.678 kilograms were identified as being post-medieval. The bulk of this material formed two distinct chronological groups which may have come from associated layers/fills which are detailed below.
- 8.1.6 From this material Victorian/modern pottery was only recovered from context (598) dated after c. AD 1790. There was a succession of contexts (550), (552), (685), (686), (687) and (688) which produced a good group of 19th century material with several cross-context sherd joins noted. Context (554) produced pottery dated after c. AD 1790 and context (706) produced a fragment of salt-glazed sewer pipe that is of 19th/20th century date. Contexts (559) and (574) produced pottery broadly dated to the 18th/19th century whilst context (699) produced pottery dated after c. AD 1760.
- 8.1.7 This 19th century group from contexts (550), (552), (685), (686), (687) and (688) was dominated by utilitarian earthenware vessels in black and brown glazed ware and slipware fabrics. The group also contained a number of machine-made stoneware jars of the type often used for selling marmalade or jam. Fine tablewares were not common and were predominantly represented by transfer-printed vessels and 'Mocha' or 'industrial slip' wares. No exotic imports were noted in this group.
- 8.1.8 Pottery from contexts (201), (207), (402), (575), (576), (660), (666), (668) and (693) produced a second good pottery group that could be broadly dated to the 17th/18th century. Contexts (201), (207), (402), (575), (576) and (668) all produced mottled ware pottery dated c. AD 1680+ as well as North Devon Gravel Tempered ware; the presence of which is considered to be exclusively a late 17th century phenomenon at nearby Chester. Context (668) produced a fragment of salt-glazed sewer pipe which is likely to be intrusive whilst contexts (575) and (576) contained single examples of mid 18th century fine wares which might also be considered to be intrusive. In general, this second group appears to contain a good assemblage of pottery that is likely to date to the closing decades of the 17th century (c.AD 1680-1700).
- 8.1.9 This late 17th century group is also notable for the range of imported wares present and certainly highlights Neston's growing status as a port during the period. The imports are dominated by products derived from Barnstaple in North Devon which include both coarse gravel-tempered jars and bowls as well as finer gravel-free slip ware products including a dish with a stylised sgraffito rendered fish design. These products occur further down the Dee Estuary at Chester where it has been noted that they only appear in contexts dated to the late 17th century; perhaps indicating a short-lived Irish Sea trading link with Devon. Imports from elsewhere include German stonewares, Anglo-Dutch delftwares as well as single examples of a Spanish Olive Jar, a Surrey Borders fabric

and a French white ware fabric that is possibly from Saintonge. The rare Chinese porcelain bowl from context (620) should probably also be included within this group even if it does occur residually in a Victorian/modern context.

- 8.1.10 The late 17th century group is also notable for the number of large utilitarian vessels produced in local black and brown glazed earthenware fabrics. These vessels are dominated by storage jars and large bowls that are often referred to as 'butter dishes' and there is also one example of a large dripping dish from context (576). Several of these vessels have multiple sherd joins indicating that the group is likely to be of primary deposition.
- 8.1.11 Context (676) produced a single base sherd from a 'cistercian ware' cup which might suggest a 16th or early 17th century date; however, the object could be residual and there is no other ceramic dating evidence from the context to support this date.

8.2 The Clay Tobacco Pipe (Appendix G)

- 8.2.1 A total of 41 fragments of clay tobacco pipe were recovered from the site. Layer (404) produced two stem fragments with border stamps: the first stem had broad zoned decoration with two bands of geometric designs very similar to Chester border stamps 107 & 108 (Rutter & Davey, 1980, Fig. 62, p 185-7) dated in the Chester type series to c.AD 1760-1790; the second stem had a band of geometric floral decoration very similar to Chester border stamp 97 (Rutter & Davey, 1980, Fig. 61, p 181-4) dated in the Chester type series to c.AD 1740-1760. An additional stem fragment with a similar partial border stamp was recovered from context (620).
- 8.2.2 A stem fragment recovered from context (226) bore the partial makers mark '...(G)ERALD.(C)...' (likely to have originally read FITZGERALD.CHESTER) this is very similar to a makers mark recorded from Chester that is attributed to Joseph Fitzgerald who manufactured between AD 1792-1840 (Rutter & Davey, 1980, Fig. 68, p 198-99 & 236-37).
- 8.2.3 The clay pipe assemblage mainly serves to provide additional dating material for the site narrative. In general, none of the contexts which produced tightly dateable tobacco pipe fragments have anything of note in other material categories. This is with the exception of the stamped stem fragment from context (620) which may provide useful dating for the deposition of the imported Chinese porcelain vessel noted from this context.

8.3 The Ceramic Building Material (Appendix G)

- 8.3.1 A total of 50 CBM fragments, collectively weighing 36.78kg were recovered from the site. Seven of the fragments (weighing 1.244 kg) were of medieval date. Five were recovered from a 19th century context (105) in evaluation Trench 1, comprising glazed medieval ridge tiles, a ridge tile in a Ewloe fabric and a previously unidentified iron-rich fabric that may have been produced in the environs of Neston itself. The excavation produced two additional fragments of medieval ceramic building material, comprising a tiny fragment of line-impressed and glazed medieval floor-tile weighing 1 gram from context (668) and a larger undecorated fragment weighing 66 grams which was recovered from context (575). The recovery of these ridge tile and floor tile fragments indicates the presence of a yet to be identified late medieval building in the vicinity of the site.
- 8.3.2 A total of 43 fragments of post-medieval ceramic building material were identified weighing 35.548 kilograms. Amongst the group were 8 complete bricks which had been collected as samples from contexts (513), (518), (560) and (575); and 3 complete floor tiles from contexts (105) and (516).

Three of the brick samples from context (513) were back-stamped with 'W.HANCOCK & Co (H'DEN) L; BUCKLEY'. The history of the 19th century William Hancock brick works at Buckley has been described in several issues of The Buckley Society magazine (Issue 6 pp26-27, Issue 21 pp3-10 and Issue 28 pp2, 52-54) and reference to these articles may help to provide a date for the surface from which these brick samples were collected.

- 8.3.3 Handmade brick fragments were recovered from contexts (560), (575), (606), (638), (656), (661) and (668). Some of the larger fragments exhibited evidence of a wiped upper surface which is indicative of the production process. Three complete handmade bricks were recovered from contexts (560) and (575) all of which were of similar length and width although the thickness did vary between 65 and 80 mm. Incomplete fragments from contexts (575), (638) and (661) all had a thickness of 70 mm. Early bricks of comparable dimensions have been recovered from 17th/18th century contexts on sites in Chester.
- 8.3.4 The complete floor tile from contexts (105) and (516) are of two different types: the example from (516) is a dense highly fired tile that is likely to have formed part of a mosaic floor design; whilst the two larger tiles from (516) are of a quarry tile type in common domestic use in Cheshire during the later 19th/early 20th century.

8.4 The Glass (Appendix E)

- 8.4.1 A small assemblage of 98 glass fragments (wt 4676g) was recovered from 23 individually numbered contexts. Pieces mainly dated to the 19th to early 20th century, although the mid 17th to mid 18th century is also well represented.
- 8.4.2 Globular-bodied wine bottles, dating between the mid 17th and mid 18th century, were represented by a total of 24 pieces (minimum of ten individuals). Sherds were recovered from five different contexts ([402], [575], [576], [668] and [699]). A blue-green base sherd with kick from a cylindrical vessel was located in feature [576]. The fragment (di. ca 62mm) is from a globular vessel with slight internal ribbing and dates to the 17th to mid 18th century. In addition, two pale green, undiagnostic vessel fragments were recovered from ditch [651] (fill [652] sample <14>). Two different vessels are represented, both of early post-medieval date.
- 8.4.3 Only three wine bottle fragments of 18th to mid 19th century date were recovered from three different contexts (i.e. pit [116] (fill [105]), layer [201]). A further 25 green glass wine bottle fragments from seven individual contexts dated between the 19th and early 20th century. A minimum of eight individual vessels were represented.
- 8.4.4 Other glass objects recovered from the site included a panelled medicine bottle fragment with spoon measurements ([552]), a kobold-blue hexagonal poison bottle fragment ([550]), a number of clear thin-walled vessel fragments and two small fragments of window glass channel ([684], fill [687]; layer [688]). All dated between the mid 19th to early 20th century.
- 8.4.5 The glass assemblage was small and represents typical domestic deposits. Accordingly no further work is recommended.

8.5 The Metalwork (Appendix C)

- 8.5.1 Thirty-three metal finds, or collection of finds, were recovered from post-medieval or later contexts within the site. Although only a small number can be closely dated the majority sit comfortably within a post-medieval or later context. The majority of the finds are of domestic origin typically found within most post medieval sites. Accordingly, no further work is recommended, although it is suggested that further cleaning is needed to identify an iron object recovered from context (668).

Pewter

- 8.5.2 A spoon with a Trilobate terminal was retrieved during the excavation of (668). Known as a 'trifid' spoon, comprising a pewter copy of a 'lace-back' spoon the find represents the only identifiable pewter object recovered from the excavation. This type of spoon came into fashion in the late 1670s and continued to be made until c.1700.

Copper Alloy

- 8.5.3 The copper alloy assemblage comprised; Two buttons (504 & 598), a complete spoon (504), eleven links of a chain (670), fragment of a sub-rectangular-sectioned buckle like object (201), a complete annular frame with central bar, buckle, brooch or mount (511) and a fragment of possibly tinned copper alloy sheeting, with linear decoration (638).

Iron

- 8.5.4 The majority of the ironwork was corroded and could only be identified with the aid of X-radiographs. The assemblage consisted of a single rectangular-framed buckle with attached pin (610), five nails, three tacks and another possible nail (201, 303, 550, 668, 687 & 688) associated with wooden items, either structural components or portable wooden objects such as boxes, and three rectangular-sectioned fragmentary pieces of iron sheet.
- 8.5.5 The most significant of the finds was a key, which comprised of the shoulder and shank sections, but was missing the bow (668). The key had a symmetrical cleft, shaped as an upside down 'T'. Without the bow, the object is difficult to date closely although similar keys were used during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

Lead

- 8.5.6 The lead assemblage retrieved from the site comprised a fragment of lead waste material (638), a rolled lead sheet (404) and a musket shot (404). Similar shot are generally dated to *circa* the 17th and 19th centuries, although muskets were in use earlier.

8.6 Molluscs (Appendix E)

- 8.6.1 A small assemblage of 34 marine mollusc shells (wt 89g) was recovered from five individual contexts. Only the pieces from pit fill [638] were hand-collected. All other fragments were recovered from environmental residues. Two oyster shell valves (wt 82g) were located in pit fill [638], mussel fragments, including three individual mussel valves were recovered from floor [660] and the layer immediately above ([668]), two marine gastropod fragments from [660] and a minimum of two individual cockle fragments were recovered from [687] and [688]. The assemblage is too small to contribute any valuable information to the site and no further work is required.

8.7 Objects within Organic Material (Appendix E)

8.7.1 A total of 12 objects were recovered from organic material revealed during the excavations. Of these, six pieces are waterlogged. All of the objects indicate a domestic origin, but most are fragmentary and late in date. The finds are summarised within Table 1 below:

Context	Object	Material	Period	Wt (G)	Date	Comments
668	Butt	Wood	Pmed	<2	MC17thMC18th	Convex front
504	Toot	Bone	Pmed	22	C19th-EC20th	
687	Brus	Wood	Pmed	<2	LC19th-C20th	Bristles
552	Shoe	Leather	Pmed	14	MC19thEC20th	sole frag- ?left shoe
687	Shoe	Leather	Pmed	88	MC19thEC20th	right shoe
687	Shoe	Leather	Pmed	150	MC19thEC20th	lady's boot frag- sole + upper frag
687	Shoe	Leather	Pmed	92	MC19thEC20th	outer sole frag - right shoe; men's
687	Shoe	Leather	Pmed	18	MC19thEC20th	upper - probably part of RF <11>
687	Shoe	Leather/Iron	Pmed	116	MC19thEC20th	heel with iron heel plate; men's
688	Shoe	Leather	Pmed	364	MC19thEC20th	complete outer sole- right shoe; men's
688	Shoe	Leather	Pmed	254	MC19thEC20th	Outer sole frags - lady's boot; heavy iron concretions obscuring heel
688	Shoe	Leather	Pmed	34	MC19thEC20th	sole + upper frags; boot

Table 1. Objects recovered from organic material

8.8 Industrial Residues (Appendix E)

8.8.1 The archaeological work recovered a 24 pieces of industrial residue, weighing 42g, from four different contexts. All of the material was recovered from environmental residues taken from post-medieval deposits of pre-Victorian date. The majority of the assemblage consisted of small pieces of clinker, but unburnt coal and fuel ash slag/concretion were also recovered, which denotes a number of different high temperature processes including domestic hearth use. Accordingly the assemblage could easily derive from normal domestic occupation of the site.

8.9 Stone (Appendix F)

8.9.1 The stone assemblage for the site comprised fragments of slate, sandstone and coal suggestive of low scale, late post medieval domestic occupation of the site.

8.9.2 The Slates are assumed to be roofing tiles. They were collected from five contexts and most probably dated to the later post medieval period. Stone was collected from one bulk context and from five environmental sample residues. The stone collected as a bulk find from context (552) was a smooth, rounded, stretched oval-shape. It appears to have natural or drop-damage at one end whilst the other end may have evidence of damage from use as a hammer. The other stone types were collected from environmental samples as not being recognised as natural sandstones from the site, and are all rather small and fragmentary.

- 8.9.3 Coal was retrieved from five contexts (of which four were from environmental sample sorting). The small amount of this assemblage suggests these are derived from dwelling fires rather than any apparent industrial activity.

8.10 Environmental Samples (Appendix H)

- 8.10.1 Environmental samples were taken from 10 separate contexts in accordance with the aforementioned methodology. The assemblage was dominated by uncharred macro plant remains including seeds of elder (*Sambucus nigra*), bramble (*Rubus* sp.), wild cherry/sloe (*Prunus* sp.), buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.), sedge (*Carex* sp.), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), goosefoot/oraches (*Chenopodium/Atriplex* sp.), stichwort (*Stellaria* sp.), and knotweeds (*Persicaria* sp.). Charred macroplant remains were uncommon although cereal grains including wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and barley (*Hordeum* sp.) as well as non cereal crops such as pea (*Pisum sativum*) were recorded in some of the samples, which also contained some vetch/tare that may represent fodder plants although given the range of uncharred taxa that are present it is perhaps more likely that these are naturally occurring weeds that became charred.
- 8.10.2 A small charcoal assemblage was also recovered from the bulk sample. Deciduous oak wood (*Quercus* sp.) was noted in each sample while Maloideae (hawthorn/whitebeam/apple/pear) taxa and possible alder (cf. *Alnus*) were also identified. Coal/coke fragments were also noted in the majority of samples.
- 8.10.3 The assemblage provided evidence for a cross section of vegetation habitats including trees, shrubs and hedgerow taxa as well as crops and their associated arable weeds. The majority of the samples were taken from Victorian/modern contexts and the value of undertaking such work is considered minimal as it would not significantly contribute to our interpretation of the site or understanding of the past vegetation.

9 Significance And Potential Of The Data

9.1 Potential of the Data

- 9.1.1 During the course of the fieldwork archaeological features were recorded in high density throughout the southern half of the investigation area and within a lower density to the north and east of the site. The centre of the investigation area had been heavily truncated by a modern floor.
- 9.1.2 The earliest remains on site appeared to form a late medieval or early post-medieval field or enclosure system constructed from linear ditches running across the north and the east of the site. The features contained 16th and 17th century artefacts, but may represent the medieval field system suggested within the previous landscape survey undertaken as part of the sites initial desk based assessment (White Young Green 2008). The small assemblage of medieval pottery recovered from the site was wholly residual, comprising sherds from Cheshire and Welsh kilns. The finds are significant as they represent the only evidence of medieval activity revealed from archaeological excavations within the Neston area.
- 9.1.3 The post-medieval remains revealed during the excavation showed two main phases of activity on the site. Within the 17th and early 18th century a small farmhouse structure was built within the west of the site, which had an associated cobbled drive that ran from the northern extent of the house to Brook Street adjacent to the southern extent of the excavation. The cobbled surface respected a large quarry pit to the east suggesting that a cottage industry of sand and sandstone extraction was active during this time. Within the east of the site a number of inter-cutting curvilinear ditches may represent land division with an adjacent plot.
- 9.1.4 Significant quantities of post-medieval pottery were recovered from the site dating between the 16th and early 18th century. The assemblage was composed of a great amount of utilitarian iron rich glazed 17th century pottery, but also contained high status pieces, including a 16th century Cistercian ware cup, domestically imported North Devon gravel tempered and gravel free slip wares, a sgraffito rendered fish dish and a sherd of Surrey Borders fabric, and internationally imported German stonewares, Anglo-Dutch delftwares as well a single examples of a Spanish Olive Jar, Chinese porcelain bowl and a French white ware fabric that is possibly from Saintonge.
- 9.1.5 The early post-medieval pottery assemblage is highly significant in illustrating the period when Neston became a major ferry port, with the earlier regional wares becoming accompanied by domestic and internationally imported pottery during the 17th century.
- 9.1.6 Following the 17th–early 18th century phase of activity little in the form of construction took place prior to the Victorian period. The only significant feature from this period comprised a cobbled, enclosed yard within the southeast of the site, which was heavily truncated by a modern toilet block to the south. This feature may have been associated with the earlier farmhouse, or alternately may represent the divisional ownership of the site during this time. The OS map of the site produced in 1909 shows that the structure originally extended to front onto Brook Street, suggesting that it was a stables or back yard to a dwelling that existed until the 20th century.
- 9.1.7 The Victorian remains revealed during the excavation covered most of the site. During this period the earlier farmhouse was replaced by a far more substantial structure and two distinct yards, associated with the building were found to link the farmhouse to a contemporary stable erected

within the east of the site. Divisional walls and supports were also constructed in and around the earlier enclosed yard to the southwest, suggesting a continued use. The quarrying activity moved to the north of the site during this time, beyond an enclosing garden wall, which may suggest that the site was divided between domestic and industrial use.

- 9.1.8 The Victorian evidence truncated much of the more significant early post medieval remains found across the site and was only of local significance itself, representing typical domestic remains. Accordingly the pottery assemblage was far smaller for the Victorian period than the previous phases of site occupation, representing the decline in trade associated with the closure of the ferry port.
- 9.1.9 A significant level of modern truncation from services and additions to the Victorian farmhouse were evident throughout the site, obscuring the identification and analysis of much of the earlier deposits. However, from the earlier remains a site narrative can be constructed that reflects upon the development of Neston as a whole. The suggestion of medieval activity implies that during this period Neston was mostly comprised of agricultural land with a small settlement that most probably centred around the church to the southeast of the site. By the early 17th century the town had transformed into a prosperous port, with imported high status goods being transported and most probably sold within the settlement and new buildings being constructed. The town declined during the 18th century, with the silting of the estuary and decline of the port, when little evidence of activity was found on the site, but went through a revival during the Victorian period, represented by the extensive construction found during the investigation and most probably influenced by the construction of the railway to the east of the site.

9.2 Significance of the Data

- 9.2.1 The data recovered from archaeological investigations at Land between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston, Cheshire are of local and regional significance.
- 9.2.2 The pottery remains recovered from the site represent the first medieval finds found during an archaeological investigation in the town and the plentiful and varied 17th century pottery sherds clearly identify imported wares that may illustrate trade links and routes through the region during Neston's ascendancy as a port town.
- 9.2.3 The structural remains recovered from the site go some way in illustrating the changing fortunes of Neston from a small medieval farming village, to a prosperous port and a subsequent industrial Victorian railway town. The 17th century stone built walls are significant as the lack of foundations for similar structures within the area means that few survive.

10 Realisation of the Original Research Aims

- 10.1 This section examines the extent to which preliminary assessment of the results of the excavation can contribute to the original research aims outlined in the written scheme of investigation (AOC, 2008), which are answered below;
- *To establish the presence of further archaeological remains within the site.*
 - *To record and sample excavate any archaeological remains encountered.*

- 10.2 The excavation revealed a high density of structural remains dating between the 17th and 20th centuries within the south and west of the site, comprising a number of construction phases of a large farmhouse with associated cobbled, stone and brick interior and exterior surfaces, a stable, an enclosed yard that may represent a workshop, a 20th century public toilet and numerous external enclosing walls. A number of sizable ditches were found cut by later structures within this area of the site.
- 10.3 Within the north of the site a number of undated narrow ditches and associated pits and post holes were found that may represent a medieval field system. They were truncated by a large irregular quarry pit and later walls.
- 10.4 A site plan was created and located within the national grid. All features were excavated in accordance with the WSI and a full set of records were created as specified within the methodology (see section 5), to create a detailed set of information noting each features size, location, height and contextual relationship with it's surrounding features.
- *To establish the extent and nature of the stone founded post-medieval buildings.*
- 10.5 The stone built structures revealed during the excavation were located within the southeast, west and southwest of the site. The date of the structures varied greatly between the 17th and 20th century, with the 20th century public toilet within the southeast of the site clearly illustrating the continued use of the local red sandstone, found outcropping within the town to the northwest of the site. This is further emphasised by the use of similar red sandstone within the modern car park walls revealed in the northwest of the site.
- 10.6 The toilet structure truncated an earlier yard formed from a cobbled floor enclosed by sandstone walls. No datable finds were retrieved from the structure, but its form and location to Brook St suggest it functioned as a back yard for a dwelling or shop that was completely truncated by the later structure or that it was used as part of a workshop or stable complex.
- 10.7 The earliest stone built foundations are arguably those of the initial phase of construction for the farmhouse within the west of the site. Cartographic sources from the 18th century depict a structure within the site that may relate to the farmhouse. The building formed the most significant structure within the investigation area and showed numerous phases of construction, beginning in the 17th century with a small, single roomed rectangular structure, which was later extended to form a two roomed structure, the western wall of which extended to the south to form an external enclosing wall.
- 10.8 The stone built structures revealed on the site lacked significant foundations, being crudely built onto the firm natural clays found within the south of the site. This is a common building technique within this region of the country, which has limited the amount of post medieval structures found during archaeological investigations, increasing the significance of the remains revealed during the investigation.
- *To define the phasing and date of the medieval and post-medieval remains upon the site. Particularly, to characterise the nature of any medieval or earlier occupation on the site.*

- 10.4 The archaeological remains revealed during the excavation were identified as being of post medieval, Victorian and modern date. The post-medieval activity comprised two distinct phases of construction; 17th – early 18th century and the mid 18th century – early 19th century.
- 10.5 The discovery of residual medieval pottery signified that localised activity was taking place during this period. Ditches within the north and east of the site may represent a late medieval enclosure system that was suggested to exist to the east of the site by the previously undertaken landscape characterisation survey (White Young Green 2008). However, firm evidence was revealed of quarrying activity and the construction of a modest farmhouse with an associated cobbled path during the 17th century. This was confirmed by the existence of a small structure in the same location within the 1732 map of the Neston (Fig 3).
- 10.6 An 18th century enclosed yard represented an interim phase of construction between the 17th century and the Victorian remains, which comprised the erection of a larger farmhouse, stable or workshop, two distinct cobbled yards and a movement of the previous quarrying activity to the north of the site.
- *To recover a representative sample of the artefactual, ecofactual and environmental assemblages present in any archaeological features and deposits.*
- 10.7 Ten environmental samples were recovered from significant archaeological features during the excavation. Analysis of the samples revealed extensive quantities of charred seeds, plant remains and charcoal, which provided evidence for a cross section of vegetation habitats including trees, shrubs and hedgerow, as well as crops and their associated arable weeds.
- *To determine the extent of previous truncations of the archaeological deposits, establishing the presence / absence of archaeological remains pre dating the prison site.*
- 10.8 The extent of truncation varied greatly across the site. Little visible truncation was evident within the north of the site. However, within the centre of the site a considerable extent of concreted floor and associated crushed stone and brick levelling material was found bounded by garden walls to the east and west, a car park wall to the north and structures to the south. No archaeological features were revealed underlying the surface implying a high level of truncation.
- 10.9 The ditch features within the south and south-eastern extent of the site were clearly truncated by later structures. The high density of structural remains within the southern half of the site caused a significant level of truncation. Notably, the modern toilet block within the southeast corner of the site heavily truncated an earlier enclosed yard, a modern brick lined pit in the southwest of the site may have truncated part of the farmhouse and a brick built stable in the east of the site truncated a stone, cobble and brick surface.
- 10.10 The extensive structures found within the south clearly truncated any possible remains that pre dated the post medieval period, within an area of the site located close to the centre of the town where earlier remains are likely to have been.

11. Revised Research Aims

- 11.1 Following the completion of the fieldwork and the initial post-excavation assessment of the site, a number of additional research questions and aims can be identified. These will be addressed as part of the work that will be undertaken in preparation for the publication of the site.

Period 2 Medieval

- 11.2 No features revealed during the excavation could securely be dated to the medieval period, yet a number of ditches may relate to a previously asserted medieval field system (White Young Green 2008). Additionally seven residual fragments of medieval pottery suggested activity within the surrounding area.

- Do the medieval pottery types found during the investigation help denote the course of a localised trade distribution route within the surrounding area?

Period 3 - Post-Medieval. Phase 1 - 17th – early 18th century

- 11.3 The earliest post-medieval remains revealed within the site depicted a small farmstead comprising a stone built farmhouse within the west of the site, an associated cobbled path and evidence of small scale quarrying activity, all of which was surrounded by curvilinear enclosure ditches to the east and north.

- Is there evidence of sand and sandstone extraction taking place within the surrounding area and can it be associated with the construction of nearby structures or any of those within the site?
- Can the finds assemblage from this period, in conjunction with contemporary features uncovered within the surrounding area help identify specific domestic and international trade routes?
- Can the structures and associated finds accurately dictate the rise and fall of the port within Neston?
- Can the residents and /or owner of the farmstead be identified through further research?
- Through further research can the precise function and original extent of the building be discerned?

Period 3 - Post-Medieval. Phase 2 - mid 18th – early 19th century

- 11.4 The only significant remains uncovered within this interim period between the early post medieval and Victorian phases of activity was an enclosed cobbled yard , situated within the southeast of the site, heavily truncated by a 20th century public toilet. This may represent the expansion of the farmstead identifying it as a stable or workshop, or alternately may represent the division of the site to create a property fronting onto Brook Street, with an adjacent cobbled back yard.

- Can the enclosed yard and any associated structure in the southeast of the site be functionally identified from Cartographic sources?
- Is there evidence that the earlier 17th century structures were still occupied during this period?

- Does the limited expansion of the site and lack of finds during this phase relate to the demise of the port at Neston?

Period 3 - Post Meieval. Phase 3 - Victorian

11.5 Significant Victorian remains extended across the site comprising a new, larger farmhouse structure within the west of the site and stable or workshop in the east. Two new yard surfaces spanned between the structures and additional construction was evident within the earlier enclosed yard to the southeast, suggesting a continuation of use. There was also evidence of a continuation of quarrying activity, which moved to the north of the site.

- Do the significant Victorian remains within the site relate to the industrialisation of the surrounding area, most notably the construction of the adjacent railway line?
- Do the structural remains within the site illustrate an increase in construction within Neston during this time?
- Is the farmhouse typical of other structures built within Neston at this time?
- Through further research can the ownership and precise function of the farmhouse be identified?

12 Summary Of Further Work

Task	Description	Resource	Days
General			
1	Documentary research	PH	2
2	Further editing of matrix	PH	1
Analysis			
3	Further finds analysis	DG	7
4	Conservation - packing and archiving	AOC	6
Report, Publication and Archiving			
5	Liaison with specialists	MM	0.5
6	Completion of drawings for publication	JM	4
7	Liaison with illustrator	PH	1
8	Finds Illustration	LC	3
9	Finds photography	MM	0.5
10	Preparation of publication text	PH	6

11	Editing and review of publication text	MM	1
12	Amendments resulting from external editor's comments to publication text and figures	PH	1
13	Archive preparation	PF	5
14	Archive microfilming	PF	2
15	Liaison with publication editor	MM	0.5
16	Project management	MM	2

13 Catalogue Of Further Work

13.1 Documentary Research

- Research of primary sources and documents concerning the site, including cartographic evidence that was unavailable at the time of this report.
- Further research into the route of pottery importation into the area and the significance of the varying forms of pottery types revealed during the excavation.
- Research into comparison with other domestic structures and sites within the Wirral and surrounding areas of Cheshire.

13.2 Specialist Reports

13.2.1 Pottery

- Further Integrate existing text into final report.
- Preparation for deposition in archive

13.2.2 Ceramic Building Materials

- Final analysis and production of publication text.
- AOC will prepare and carry out a discard policy for the CBM material.
- Preparation for deposition in the archive.

13.2.3 Glass

- Preparation for deposition in the archive.

13.2.4 Geo-archaeological Environmental Samples

- Preparation for deposition in the archive.

13.2.5 Animal Bone

- Deposition within the archive.

13.2.6 Clay Pipe

- Integrate text into final archive
- Preparation for deposition in the archive.

- 13.2.7 Metal work
 - Preparation for deposition in the archive
- 13.2.8 Marine Molluscs
 - Preparation for deposition in the archive
- 13.2.9 Objects recovered from Organic Material
 - Preparation for deposition in the archive
- 13.2.10 Industrial Residues
 - Preparation for deposition in the archive
- 13.2.11 Conservation
 - Repackaging materials for archive
 - Preparation for deposition in the archive

14 Illustrations

14.1 Plans and Sections

- 14.1.1 The digitised plans produced for the publication will require checking and correcting to ensure they are linked correctly with the contextual database. In the course of the analysis extra drawings may be needed, so time has been given to allow for extra work to aid the structural analysis.
- 14.1.2 The digitised site plans will be used to produce publication illustrations. These will accompany the site narrative, being annotated to identify the features discussed in the text, at an appropriate scale.

14.2 Overall Publication, Archiving and Project Management

- 14.2.1 The specialist reports will be integrated into the publication and the report will be read and edited. Time has been allocated for consultation and amendments to be made during this phase of work, involving both the editor and specialists.
- 14.2.2 Time has been allocated for liaison with the publication editor with regard to, submission of material and a summary of content.
- 14.2.3 Upon completion of the report, the written and material archives will be prepared, including microfiching, for accessioning with the Grosvenor Museum, Chester and Cheshire County Council.
- 14.2.4 The management of the project includes monitoring task budgets, programming tasks, editing draft productions of the final report and publication for submission, and liaison with all members of the project team.

14.3 Potential for Publication

- 14.3.1 It is anticipated that an article of 15 - 20 pages will be produced, including site drawings, site location, plan of excavation area showing the main features with additional illustrations where needed. The publication will be submitted to the 'Cheshire Archaeological Journal'. Publication of

the site data will also be made through the CBA North West Bulletin and Archaeological Data Service OASIS form (Appendix I).

15 Bibliography

Documentary

AOC Archaeology Group Ltd (2008)a *Land Between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston, Cheshire; An Archaeological Evaluation Report.*

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Historic Mapping

Saxton (1577) Map of Cheshire CRO PM 12/10

Speed (1662) Map of Cheshire CRO PM 1/11

Mostyn Estate Map (1732)

Boydell (1772) Lands and premises belonging to River Dee Company between Chester and Parkgate CRO PM 11/7

Great Neston Tithe Map (1847) EDT 176/2 and Apportionment (1847) EDT 176/1

Sales Particulars and Plans of Neston Estate (1849) D5232/7

Ordnance Survey Mapping 25" to 1mile 1881, 1899, 1912 and 1979

Figure 1

Figure 2

Figure 3.

Figure 4.

Figure 5.

Figure 6

Figure 7

Figure 8

Figure 9

Figure 10

Figure 11

Figure 12

Figure 13



Appendices

Appendix A – Context Register

Context No.	Context Description	Length	Width	Depth	Phasing												
501	Tarmac surface	62.65m	29.81m	0.05m	6												
502	Crushed concret levelling layer	62.65m	29.81m	0.35m	6												
503	Gravel levelling layer	62.65m	29.81m	0.07m	6	Key to context phasing											
504	Mid brown silt made ground	62.65m	29.81m	0.75m	6												
505	Dark brown clayey silt made ground	18.09m	11.11m	0.30m	6	6	=	Modern (20th Century)									
506	Mid yellow gravelly clay made ground	23.98m	19.73m	0.45m	6	5	=	Victorian (1839 - 1901)									
507	Charcoal rich bedding layer	23.98m	19.73m	0.05m	6	4	=	Mid 18th - early 19th century									
508	Compacted brick and stone hardcore layer	23.98m	19.73m	0.24m	6	3	=	17th - early 18th century									
509	Natural Deposit	62.65m	29.28m	-	1	2	=	Unstratified (Medieval?)									
510	Sandstone wall	18.70m	12.85m	0.48m	5	1	=	Natural									
511	Brick wall	20.36m	0.48m	-	5												
512	Brick wall	32.24m	0.24m		5												
513	Brick and stone floor	7.20m	5.58m	0.08m	5												
514	Brick wall in west of site	3.25m	0.35m	-	5												
515	Drain	8.40m	0.50m	-	5												
516	Brick and stone floor in west of site	5.80m	3.54m	0.07m	5												
517	Brick wall	3.18m	0.48m	0.10m+	5												
518	Brick and concrete floor	5.80m	3.54m	0.15m	5												
519	Brick wall	3.70m	0.11m	0.64m	5												
520	Sandstone wall in west of site	24.50m	0.42m	0.64m	5												

521	Construction cut for wall [514]	3.50m	0.90m	0.10m	5												
522	Construction cut for drain [515]	11.10m	0.34m	-	5												
523	Concrete backfill of cut [522]	3.15m	0.32m	0.07m	5												
524	Brick structure	0.44m	0.23m	0.11m	5												
525	Brick structure	0.48m	0.47m	-	5												
526	Redstone wall in south of site	7.70m	0.45m	0.40m	5												
527	Redstone wall in south of site	3.80m	0.45m	0.26m	5												
528	Drain in south of site	1.36m	0.12m	0.20m	5												
529	Cut for drain 528	1.60m	0.12m	0.09m	5												
530	Fill of cut 529	1.60m	0.12m	0.09m	5												
531	Redstone doorstep	1.10m	0.30m	0.13m	5												
532	Construction cut for stone 531	1.10m	0.30m	0.13m	5												
533	Cobbled surface in south of site	6.45m	3.85m	0.08m	5												
534	Sandy bedding layer for floor 533	6.45m	3.85m	0.12m	5												
535	Cut for ceramic drain 536	3.40m	0.30m	-	5												
536	Ceramic drain	3.40m	0.30m	0.10m	5												
537	Backfill	2.60m+	0.30m	-	5												
538	Cut for brick drain 539	3.50m	0.60m	0.36m	3												
539	Brick drain	3.50m	0.44m	0.30m	3												
540	Backfill	3.50m	0.60m	0.67m	3												
541	Backfill	3.50m	0.90m	0.10m+	5												
542	Drain truncating floor 533	4.46m	0.12m	0.20m	5												
543	Cut for drain 542	4.46m	0.30m	0.40m	5												
544	Fill of cut 543	4.46m	0.30m	0.40m	5												
545	Drain truncating floor 533	3.20m	0.40m	0.20m	5												
546	Cut for drain 545	3.20m	0.40m	0.50m	5												
547	Fill of cut 546	3.20m	0.40m	0.50m	5												
548	Circular feature cut into 533	0.52m	0.52m	0.10m	5												

549	Sandstone wall in far west of site	4.26m	0.47m	1.70m	3													
550	Infill material between walls 520 and 549	6.30m	0.50m	0.32m	5													
551	Brick wall	0.85m	0.23m	0.70m	5													
552	Infill material	1.55m	0.68m	0.20m	5													
553	Sandstone wall in the far west of the site	1.45m	0.41m	0.27m	5													
554	Infill of brick drain 539 (same as 550)	6.30m	0.50m	0.32m	5													
555	VOID	-	-	-														
556	Cut through wall 520	1.30m	0.75m	-	5													
557	Fill of cut 556	1.30m	0.75m	-	5													
558	Redstone wall in south of site	4.06m	0.40m	0.43m	4													
559	Cobbled surface within structure #5 in south of site	3.68m	2.70m	0.20m	4													
560	Brick floor in centre of cobbled surface 559	1.09m	1.14m	0.09m	4													
561	Concrete cut into 559	1.86m	0.45m	-	4													
562	Sandstone wall in southeast of site	3.70m	0.40m	0.40m	5													
563	Sandstone wall in south of site	2.30m	0.40m	0.28m	5													
564	Brick wall in south of site	5.50m	0.11m	0.16m	5													
565	Brick wall in south of site	2.76m	0.11m	0.16m	5													
566	Concrete floor of toilet blocks	2.76m	2.22m	0.08m	5													
567	Brick fill under toilet floor	2.76m	2.22m	0.08m	5													
568	Tiled floor within walls 526 - structure # 4	5.50m	0.97m	0.45m	5													
569	Drain adjacent to wall 526	4.00m	0.16m	0.08m	5													
570	Cut for drain 569	4.00m	0.16m	0.08m	5													
571	Drain adjacent to wall 526	4.00m	0.08m	0.08m	5													
572	Cut for drain 571	4.00m	0.08m	0.08m	5													
573	Construction cut for wall 553	1.50m	0.55m	0.16m	4													
574	Fill of cut 573	1.50m	0.55m	0.16m	4													
575	Dark feature in southeast corner		0.88m	0.33m	3													
576	Dark feature in southeast corner	-	0.77m	0.33m	3													

577	Redeposited natural in circular feature 548	0.50m	0.50m	0.10m	5													
578	Concreted CBM cluster on top of cobbles 533	0.57m	0.30m	0.12m	5													
579	Sanstone and CBM layer in south of site	4.35m	1.30m	0.23m	6													
580	Sand filled feature cut into floor 559	0.80m	0.35m	0.02m	5													
581	Sandy fill of 580	0.80m	0.35m	0.02m	5													
582	VOID	-	-	-														
583	Red sandstone and CBM lyer in southeast corner	10.00m	4.00m	0.13m	5													
584	Cobbled brick floor ebnclosed by walls 585 and 586	5.17m	3.78m	0.08m	5													
585	Brick wall enclosing floor 584	4.40m	0.24m	-	5													
586	Brick wall enclosing floor 584	4.26m	0.24m	0.14m	5													
587	Stone doorstep	1.47m	0.30m	0.05m+	5													
588	Red sandstone, brick and cobbled sutrface	2.32m	1.68m	0.07m	5													
589	Drain cut in sandstone fill 583	2.80m	0.16m	0.20m+	5													
590	Cut for drain 589	2.80m	0.38m	0.20m+	5													
591	Fill of cut 590	2.80m	0.38m	0.20m+	5													
592	Drain cut in sandstone fill 583	0.60m+	0.12m	0.12m	5													
593	Cut of drain 592	0.60m+	0.27m	0.05m+	5													
594	Fill of cut 593	0.60m+	0.27m	0.05m+	5													
595	Concrete foundation below floor 513	7.20m	5.58m	0.08m	5													
596	Compacted clay layer below 595	7.25m	3.70m	0.06m	5													
597	N-S Aligned wall parallel to 520	7.15m	0.38m	0.35m	5													
598	Deposit between wall 597 and bricks 599	3.10m	0.60m	0.15m	5													
599	Brick structure	1.45m	0.23m	0.08m+	5													
600	Sandstone surface / wall	1.50m	0.30m	0.21m	5													
601	Deposit between 599 and 602	8.15m	0.60m	0.30m	5													
602	Sandstone surface	4.65m	0.80m	0.20m	5													
603	Compacted brick rubble below floor 584	5.17m	3.78m	0.12m	5													

604	Brick wall	3.44m	0.44m	0.21m+	5												
605	Deposit underlying floor 516	-	-	-	5												
606	Fill of 627	1.53m	1.34m	0.14m	5												
607	Cut for sequence of drains	8.15m	1.20m	0.30m	5												
608	Ceramic drain	3.80m	0.13m	0.13m	5												
609	Metal water pipe	6.70m	0.03m	0.03m	5												
610	Backfill	8.15m	0.60m	0.30m	5												
611	Drain cut	3.20m	0.30m	-	5												
612	Fill of cut 611	3.20m	0.30m	-	5												
613	VOID	-	-	-													
614	VOID	-	-	-													
615	Cobbled floor in southwest corner of site	2.50m	1.45m	0.10m	5												
616	Sandy fill below cobbled floor 615	2.50m	1.45m	0.50m	5												
617	Red sandstone filled pit in sothwest of site	2.90m	2.76m	0.20m	6												
618	Fill of pit 618	2.90m	2.76m	0.20m	6												
619	Dark pit north of 617	1.32m	0.70m	0.06m	5												
620	Fill of 619	1.32m	0.70m	0.06m	3												
621	Sandstone wall in southwest of site	4.60m	0.56m	0.20m	5												
622	Sandstone wall truncated by a drain in south of site	1.20m	0.40m	0.08m	5												
623	Redbrick wall above wall 510	2.40m	0.40m	0.23m	5												
624	Redbrick facing of wall 510 and 623	3.00m	0.11m	0.11m	5												
625	Red brick wall with grey mortar	1.30m	0.24m	0.58m	5												
626	Red sandstone fill below wall 622	2.50m	0.68m	0.01m	5												
627	Pit filled with 606	1.53m	1.34m	0.25m	5												
628	Fill of 627	1.53m	1.34m	0.18m	5												
629	Fill of 627	1.53m	1.34m	0.07m	5												
630	Bedding material for floor 516	-	-	0.06m	5												
631	Concrete bedding for floor 516	-	-	0.07m	5												

632	Drain Cut	5.10m	0.30m	-	5													
633	Ceramic drain and backfill of 632	5.10m	0.30m	-	5													
634	Brick drain	0.64m	0.59m	-	5													
635	Linear ditch in NE of site	16.50m	2.80m	0.55m	5													
636	Fill of ditch 635	16.50m	2.80m	0.55m	5													
637	Large Square pit	9.00m	8.20m	0.77m	5													
638	Fill of pit 636	9.00m	8.20m	0.78m	5													
639	Cut of drainage ditch	4.93m	0.30m	0.35m	5													
640	Fill of ditch 639	4.93m	0.30m	0.35m	5													
641	Ceramic drain	0.50m	0.15m	0.15m	5													
642	Concrete beneath pit 617	0.19m	0.18m	0.11m	6													
643	Brick wall below pit 617	0.34m	0.29m	0.24m	6													
644	Cut for wall	0.34m	0.29m	0.24m	6													
645	Fill of cut644	0.29m	0.06m	-	6													
646	Brick drain	0.90m+	0.42m	0.27m	5													
647	Capping stones for brick drain 646	4.60m	0.22m	0.09m	5													
648	Fill of Brick drain 646	0.90m+	0.11m	0.16m	5													
649	Drain Cut	1.90m+	0.34m	-	5													
650	Fill of 649	1.90m+	0.34m	-	5													
651	Ditch in NW of site filled by 652	12.60m	0.61m	0.29m	3													
652	Fill of ditch 651	12.60m	0.61m	0.29m	3													
653	Post hole filled by 654	0.31m	0.31m	0.07m	2													
654	Fill of post hole 653	0.31m	0.31m	0.07m	2													
655	Pit cut by 639 filled by 656	0.56m	0.56m	0.18m	2													
656	Fill of 655	0.56m	0.56m	0.18m	2													
657	Cut for drain 646	0.90m+	0.60m	0.07m	5													
658	Sandstone wall	0.70m	0.58m	0.13m	5													
659	Sandstone wall	-	-	-	5													

660	Cobbled floor to the east of structures 1 and 2	19.00m	5.00m	0.37m	3														
661	Brick surface / drain	1.50m+	0.60m+	0.07m+	5														
662	Construction cut for wall 597	-	-	0.32m	5														
663	Linear ditch in SE corner of site	3.00m	0.45m	0.33m	3														
664	Linear ditch in SE corner of site	13.00m	1.10m	0.48m	3														
665	Pit in SE corner of site	-	1.60m	1.00m	3														
666	Fill of pit 665	-	1.60m	1.00m	3														
667	Spread	5.00m	2.00m	0.07m	5														
668	Dark clay material over cobbles 660	9.00m	3.00m	0.10m	3														
669	Backfill of 662	7.15m	0.10m	0.32m	5														
670	Grey clay over 668	15.00m	2.50m	0.50m	5														
671	Cut for brick surface 661	0.60m+	0.60m+	0.10m	5														
672	Robber trench through wall 597	1.10m	0.25m	0.20m	5														
673	Fill of 672	1.10m	0.25m	0.20m	5														
674	Cut of shallow gulley	-	0.80m	0.14m	5														
675	Fill of shallow gulley 674	-	0.80m	0.14m	5														
676	Ditch fill	15.00m	0.80m	0.31m	3														
677	Fill of ditch 676	15.00m	0.80m	0.31m	3														
678	Fill of gulley 679	5.20m	0.40m	0.16m	5														
679	Gulley	5.20m	0.40m	0.16m	5														
680	Fill of gulley 681	3.00m	0.38m	0.10m	3														
681	Gulley	3.00m	0.38m	0.10m	3														
682	Fill of posthole 682	0.30m	0.16m	0.41m	5														
683	Post hole	0.30m	0.16m	0.41m	5														
684	Cess channel cut	6.30m	0.85m	0.80m	3														
685	Fill of 684	6.30m	0.85m	0.20m	5														
686	Fill of 684	6.30m	0.85m	0.26m	5														
687	Fill of 684	6.30m	0.85m	-	5														

688	Layer below 552	-	-	0.18m	5													
689	Foundation layer for wall 553	-	-	0.23m	5													
690	Cut for wall 520	-	-	0.18m	5													
691	Demolition Rubble	10.40m	1.90m	0.78m	5													
692	Cess / Rubbish pit	4.70m	1.90m	0.80m	3													
693	Fill of 693	4.70m	1.90m	0.80m	3													
694	Fill of Ditch 696	15.00m	2.50m	0.50m	5													
695	Lower fill of ditch 696	15.00m	2.50m	0.20m	5													
696	Ditch	15.00m	2.50m	0.66m	5													
697	Construction cut for wall549	4.26m	0.47m	0.35m	3													
698	Backfill of 697	-	-	0.24m	3													
699	Layer below 550	-	-	0.18m	4													
700	Layer below 554	-	-	0.14m	5													
701	Limestone Hardcore made ground	20.00m	-	0.30m	6													
702	VOID	-	-	-														
703	Oval pit to the north of house structures	1.00m	0.82m	0.32m	4													
704	Fill of pit 703	1.00m	0.82m	0.32m	4													
705	Layer below 574	6.80m	1.90m	0.20m+	4													
706	Layer below 705	6.80m	1.90m	0.20m+	4													
707	Crushed brick and concrete foundations for floor 584	5.17m	3.78m	0.12m	5													
708	Pit found below cobbled floor 559	-	-	-	3													
709	Fill of Pit 708	-	-	-	3													

Appendix B – Matrix

Appendix C - Metal Assessment

Neston Metal Assessment

Andy Heald

June 2009

Overview

Thirty-three metal finds, or collection of finds, were recovered from Neston: 2 pewter; 7 copper alloy; 21 iron; and 3 lead. All were recovered from post-medieval or later contexts. Although only a small number can be closely dated the majority sit comfortably within a post-medieval or later context. All finds were individually examined and, where discernible, contextualised. A summary of finds, by context, is detailed in Appendix A. What follows is an overview, by material, with specific comments only on the more diagnostic types.

PEWTER

Domestic accessories

Spoon

Trilobate terminal of 'trifid' spoon. Pewter copy of a 'lace-back' spoon of the sort that probably came into fashion in the late 1670s and continued to be made until c.1700. Small Find 3. Context 668.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous rectangular-sectioned sheet, unknown function. Context 402.

COPPER ALLOY

Domestic accessories

Buttons

Two buttons. One is of four-holed type; the other is oval with a projecting loop. Contexts 504 & 598.

Spoon

1 complete spoon. Context 504.

Chain

Part of a chain; eleven of the links survive. Small Find 24. Context 670.

?Buckle

Fragment of sub-rectangular-sectioned object, curved at the corner and broken at both ends. May be part of an oval buckle. Context 201.

Circular frame; possibly a buckle or a brooch

A complete annular frame with central bar may either be a buckle, a brooch or a mount. Although the object is corroded there appears to be a wire hoop on the external frame at 90 degrees from the central bar with a projection at the corresponding position on the other side of the frame. Context 511.

Sheet

A fragment, possibly tinned, with linear decoration. Unknown function. Context 638.

IRON

The majority of the ironwork was corroded and could only be identified with the aid of X-radiographs. Some material is unrecognisable without full cleaning.

Domestic accessories

Buckle

Rectangular-framed buckle with attached pin. The frame has rounded corners. It may have either been part of personal dress or worn as part of a harness. Small Find 4. Context 610.

Key

Shoulder, shank and bit of key; missing the bow. Solid; possibly had a narrowed pin; the shank projects further than the cleft. Symmetrical cleft, shaped as an upside down 'T'. Without the bow, the object is difficult to date closely although similar keys were used during the medieval and post-medieval periods. Small Find 1. Context 668.

Structural ironwork and miscellaneous fittings

Nail and tacks

Five nails, three tacks and another possible nail were recovered. Contexts 201, 303, 550, 668, 687 & 688.

Bindings / sheets

Three rectangular-sectioned fragmentary pieces of sheet. All with evidence of perforation with one having a nail still attached. Context 668.

The nails, tacks and sheet would have been associated with wooden items, either structural components or portable wooden objects such as boxes.

Miscellaneous

A miscellaneous piece of sheet and wire/rod were found, as well as numerous iron concretions and lumps of indeterminate nature.

LEAD

Musket shot

One musket shot was recovered. Similar objects are generally dated to *circa* the 17th and 19th centuries, although muskets were in use earlier. Context 404.

Sheet

Fragment of rolled sheet. Context 404.

Miscellaneous

Miscellaneous lump, probably waste. Context 638.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DATA

The majority of the objects from Neston are associated with the domestic sphere and the majority are common finds on post-medieval sites.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE WORK

Further cleaning to aid identification

One badly corroded and agglomerated object from context 668 is impossible to identify. In its current state the object appears to be a sheet which tapers at one end and then is bent back on itself. The iron object is badly corroded and adhering to stone etc. For full identification it will need to be cleaned.

No further work is recommended.

Appendix D - Animal Bone Assessment

Land between Brook Street and Raby Road,

Neston, Cheshire

Animal Bone Assessment Report

Jennifer Thoms

Abstract

A small assemblage of bone was submitted for analysis. Fifty identifiable fragments were identified to element and species and 55 unidentifiable fragments were also present.

The bone fragments have been catalogued, with notes on their general state of preservation and completeness.

Due to the small size of the assemblage it is not recommended that further analysis be undertaken. However, it is suggested that the material be retained.

Factual data

A total of one hundred and five bone fragments retrieved from excavations in Neston were submitted for assessment. Of these fragments, 50 were identifiable. This is a small sample of animal bone which limits its potential archaeological value. The results are catalogued in Appendix 1.

The material is believed to mainly date from the 17th century and later. Residual medieval material may be present, as indicated by occasional stray finds of pot and ceramic building material.

The bone fragments varied in size and condition, with most being in fair to moderate condition and only four fragments classified as being poorly preserved. The assemblage therefore does not appear to have been affected by preservation bias such as differences in soil matrix acidity or particle size. The range of sizes and the fact that some bones were highly fragmented while others were complete suggests the assemblage has not been biased by the collecting and sampling strategies used during excavation. The bones have been washed, dried and labelled and thus are ready and suitable for long-term storage.

Methodology

The assemblage was examined briefly and identified to species, element and side of body with the aid of a skeletal atlas (Schmid 1972). The results were tabulated onto Excel spreadsheets. For each identifiable fragment the following criteria were recorded: context, element, species, side, fusion state, fragmentation, state of preservation and any staining on the bone. The staining on a bone was assessed according to how much of the surface area of the bone was affected by any staining present. If no staining was present the bone was rated "0"; if some staining was present but it affected less than 25% of the bone surface then it was rated "1"; 25 – 50 % surface staining rated a "2"; while 50 – 75% rated "3" and more than 75% rated a "4". A similar method was used for assessing preservation state where the degree of completeness of the bone surface was assessed by visual comparison to a reference set of bones demonstrating each preservation state. A fresh, shiny surface on the bone rated "a"; a duller, yet unabraded surface would rate

“b”; while an abraded surface would rate either “c” or “d” depending on whether less or more than 50% of the inner fabric of the bone was exposed at the surface. Each identifiable fragment was examined briefly for obvious taphonomic markers, such as large chop marks, carnivore gnawing and areas of charring.

Statement of potential

The small assemblage of identifiable animal bone from the site contains mainly the common domesticated food animals – cattle, sheep and pigs. Three horse bones were also recovered. Horses were not generally consumed as food in Britain from the medieval period onwards. Their bones are commonly found as remnants of industrial processes such as glue-making and tanning however, so these three horse bones may hint at industrial activities of this sort on or around the site. Alternatively they may be redeposited bones from a horse burial. The small number of bones present limits further interpretation.

The assemblage has a high proportion (40%) of butchered bones. This, together with the predominance of common domesticated food animals, suggests the assemblage represents the remains of a rubbish tip or midden. While the assemblage is too small to warrant a detailed analysis of body-part representation it can be seen that a wide range of body parts are present, including low meat yielding elements such as those of the skull and feet. Higher meat-yielding elements of the upper limbs and shoulders are also present. Thus the assemblage does not represent the dumping of material from carcass preparation (where low meat-yielding elements might predominate) nor does it represent solely waste from the domestic kitchen (which would be dominated by higher meat-yielding bones). The assemblage is likely to have derived from the dumping of material from several different sources and activities. More detailed analysis is required before it is possible to speculate further.

The assumption has been made, in the absence of detailed contextual information being available at this assessment stage, that the material derives from post-medieval contexts. Evidence the artefact assemblage suggests a 17th century date for several of the contexts (A. Heald pers com). Due to the small size of the assemblage and its relatively late date, it is not recommended that further analysis is undertaken.

However, particularly since animal remains are rare from this part of the country, the bones should be retained as they may have value in the future as comparative material for work done elsewhere, or for further work carried out on this site.

The assemblage does not raise any new research questions as it is not strikingly unusual and most probably represents waste from a number of domestic sources.

The animal bone may be of further interest if other zooarchaeological or archaeobotanical work is undertaken as part of the post-excavation programme for this site, and raises any specific palaeo-economic or palaeo-environmental research questions.

Storage and curation

The bones are clean and dry and have been labeled and packed for archiving. All the material should be retained. At the moment the museum nominated for deposition of future archive is Grosvenor Museum in Chester. This may change nearer the time of deposition so no accession has been issued.

con	S	element	side	species	fusion/ age	frag	pres	stn	butchery	Other taph
504		incisor		pig		complete	b	0	none	none
504		femur	l	sheep/goat	less than 30 - 36 months	distal end missing	b	2	7 very small knife marks - filleting	
548		metatarsal	l	sheep/goat		small fragment	b	0	none	none
548		proximal phalanx		sheep/goat	over 18 months	fragment	c	0	none	none
548		middle phalanx		sheep/goat	over 13 - 16 months	complete	c	0	none	none
552		pelvis		medium mammal		non-diagnostic	c	0	none	
552		rib		medium mammal		almost complete	b	1	1 small knife mark	
576		astragalus	l	cattle		7/8 complete	d	0	none	none
576		pelvis	r	cattle	over 7 - 10 months	ischium	c	2	none	none
620		metacarpal	l	cattle		proximal half	b	1	7 knife marks, filleting	
620		maxillary tooth		sheep/goat		complete	b	0	none	none
620		maxillary tooth		sheep/goat		complete	b	0	none	none
620		metatarsal	l	cattle	over 30 - 36 months	complete	c	4	1 definite thick knife / cleaver mark; lots of small marks that could be butchery.	
620		metacarpal	r	horse	over 15 - 18 months	complete	b	4	none	
620		maxillary tooth	r	cattle		complete	b	0		
620		maxillary tooth	r	cattle		complete	b	0	none	
636		maxillary tooth		cattle		complete	c	0	none	
636		maxillary tooth		cattle		complete	c	0	none	
638		femur		cattle	over 42 months	prox end	c	0	none	none
638		pelvis		large mammal		non-diagnostic fragment	c	0	3 knife marks	
638		metacarpal		sheep/goat	over 18 - 24 months	distal end	b	0	three sets of lines scored across plantar face, lowest forms deep score	
638		rib		medium sized		fragment	b	0	4 knife marks	
638		tibia	l	sheep/goat		prox end, artic missing	b	0	3 knife marks	none
660		mandible	both	pig		front of the jaw only	b	4	none	none
660		mandible		large mammal		small fragment	b	4	none	none
660		maxillary tooth	l	cattle		almost complete	b	4	none	none

con	S	element	side	species	fusion/ age	frag	pres	stn	butchery	Other taph
660		pelvis	l	cattle		ischium	c	4	none	none
660		vertebra		large mammal		unfused	b	4	chopped vertically, 1 knife mark	none
660	25	vertebra		large mammal		fragment	c	4	none	none
668		maxillary molar		cattle		root missing	b	0	none	none
668		radius	r	cattle		proximal 2/3 of bone	c	4	15 - 20 thin knife marks - filleting	none
668		metatarsal	r	sheep		distal end missing	b	4	none	none
668		proximal phalanx		cattle	over 18 months	complete	b	4	1 knife mark	dark blue staining
668		proximal phalanx		horse	over 13 - 15 months	complete	b	2	none	dark blue staining
668	23	maxillary tooth		cattle		fragment	c	0		
668		humerus	r	cattle		fragment	b	0	9 cut marks	none
668		mandible		large mammal		fragment	c	4	5 - 10 possible cut marks	
668		femur	l	pig		fragment of distal end	c	4	3 thin knife marks	
668		rib		large mammal		almost complete	c	4	10 small marks	none
668		rib		large mammal		fragment	c	4	1 knife mark	none
668		vertebra		large mammal		fragment	b	0	none	none
668		mandible		large mammal		fragment	b	4	none	none
668		scapula	l	cattle	over 7 - 10 months	almost complete	b	2	none	none
668		radius and ulna	r	cattle	over 12 - 18 months	fragment of proximal end	c	4	4 small knife marks, prox end of both chopped off with axe / cleaver	lots of tiny scratches
668		radius	r	horse	over 42 months	proximal end missing	c	4	3 knife marks, lots of scratches	dark blue spots
668		pelvis	l	cattle	over 7 - 10 months	ischium and ilium parts of the acetabulum	c	1	pubis section cut off	the cut edge where the pubis has been removed has been smoothed down
668		metatarsal	l	cattle	neonatal	complete apart from epiphyses	c	0	none	none
670		humerus		sheep	over 6 - 10 months	distal half	b	4	7 small knife marks - filleting	
670	24	vertebra		rodent		complete	b	0	none	none
693		metacarpal	r	cattle	over 24 - 30 months	complete	b	0	none	none

Table 2: The indeterminate bone fragments

context	sample	element	spec	preservation	stain	butchery	taph	other
576		indet long bone	indet	c	4	none	calcined - all white	
576		indet long bone	indet	c	4	none	calcined - all white	
576		indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
670		indet	indet	b				
638		indet	indet	c	0	none	none	
638		indet long bone	indet	c	0	5 small knife marks		
638		indet	indet	c	0	none	none	
638		indet	indet	c	0	2 small knife marks		
638		indet	indet	d	0	none	none	
638		indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
550		indet	indet	d	0	none	none	
620		indet	indet	b	1	none	none	
636		indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
636		indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
660		indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
660		indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
660		indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
668		indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
668		indet	indet	b	0	3 knife marks / scratches		
668	23	indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
668	23	indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
668	23	indet	indet	b	0	none	none	
668	23	indet	indet	b	4	none	calcined - all white	
668	23	indet	indet	b	4	none	calcined - all white	
668	23	indet	indet	b	4	none	calcined - all white	
694	21	indet	indet	c	0	none	none	
693	19	indet	indet	b	4	none	none	

context	sample	element	spec	preservation	stain	butchery	taph	other
693	19	indet	indet	b	4	none	none	
693	19	indet	indet	b	4	none	none	
670	24	indet	indet	b	4	none	none	
670	24	indet	indet	b	4	none	none	
670	24	indet	indet	b	4	none	none	
670	24	indet	indet	b	4	none	none	
670	24	indet	indet	b	4	none	calcined - all white	
575		indet	indet	c	0	none	none	
575		indet	indet	c	0	none	none	
548		indet	indet	c	0	none	none	
660	25	indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
660	25	indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	d	1	none	none	blue staining
668		indet	indet	b	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	b	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	none	none	
668		indet	indet	c	4	10 - 15 thin knife marks	none	blue staining
668		indet	indet	c	3	none	none	

Appendix E – Specialist Finds Reports (Glass, Marine Molluscs, Organic Materials and Industrials Residues)

Specialist finds assessments by Archaeology South-East on behalf of AOC Archaeology Group

June 2009

The Glass by Elke Raemen

Introduction

A small assemblage of 98 glass fragments (wt 4676g) was recovered from 23 individually numbered contexts. Most pieces were hand collected, although 16 pieces were recovered from environmental samples. All sherds have been recorded in full on pro forma sheets for archive. Pieces mainly date to the 19th to early 20th century, although the mid 17th to mid 18th century is also well represented.

Overview

Mid 17th to Mid 18th Century

Globular-bodied wine bottles, dating between the mid 17th and mid 18th century, were represented by a total of 24 pieces (minimum of ten individuals). Sherds were recovered from five different contexts ([402], [575], [576], [668] and [699]).

A blue-green base sherd with kick from a cylindrical vessel was located in feature [576]. The fragment (di. ca 62mm) is from a globular vessel with slight internal ribbing and dates to the 17th to mid 18th century. In addition, two pale green, undiagnostic vessel fragments were recovered from ditch [651] (fill [652] sample <14>). Two different vessels are represented, both of early post-medieval date.

18th to mid 20th century

Fragments of 18th to mid 19th century date are few. Only three wine bottle fragments were recovered from three different contexts (i.e. pit [116] (fill [105]), layer [201]). A further 25 green glass wine bottle fragments from seven individual contexts date between the 19th and early 20th century. A minimum of eight individuals is represented.

Also included are green glass bottle fragments which represent either wine or beer bottle fragments of late 19th- to mid 20th-century date ([610], layer [403]) and a green possible liquor bottle fragment of late 18th- to 19th-century date. A total of 12 aqua mineral water bottle fragments was recovered from seven different contexts. A minimum of 13 individual bottles are represented, including two “Hamilton” bottle fragments (cess channel [684], fills [685] and [687]). Both exhibit partial embossed maker’s names: “(...)ERED” and “(...)STER”.

Other bottles include a panelled medicine bottle fragment with spoon measurements ([552]), a kobold-blue hexagonal poison bottle fragment ([550]) and a few clear thin-walled vessel fragments, including a jar from layer [688]. All date between the mid 19th to early 20th century. In addition, a clear cut glass dessert bowl fragment of 19th- to early 20th- century date was recovered from layer [688].

Only two small fragments of clear window glass were recovered (channel cut [684], fill [687]; layer [688]). Both date to the 19th to mid 20th century.

Significance and Potential

The assemblage is relatively small and of little significance other than confirming or refining other dating evidence. It is therefore not considered to merit further analysis. As all pieces have been recorded in detail on pro forma sheets for archive, no further work is required.

The Marine Molluscs by Elke Raemen

Overview

A small assemblage consisting of 34 pieces (wt 89g) was recovered from five individual contexts. Only the pieces from pit fill [638] were hand-collected. All other fragments were recovered from environmental residues. The only two oyster shell valves (wt 82g) were located in pit fill [638]. Both represent upper valves, one of which is from an immature specimen. Mussel fragments were recovered from floor [660] (<25>) and the layer immediately above ([668], sample <23>). Although 24 pieces were recovered, only a minimum of three individual mussel valves were represented. Also from [660] are two marine gastropod fragments, representing a minimum of one individual. A minimum of two individual cockle fragments was recovered from [687] (<17>) and [688] (<18>).

Significance and Potential

The assemblage is too small to contribute any valuable information to the site. All shell has been recorded on pro forma sheets for archive and no further research is deemed necessary. No further work is required.

Objects in Organic Material by Elke Raemen

Introduction

A total of 12 objects in organic material was recovered during the excavations (Table 1). Of these, six pieces are waterlogged. Each object was assigned a unique Registered Finds number (RF <00>) and was recorded on an individual Registered Finds sheet.

RF No.	CONTEXT	OBJECT	MATERIAL	PERIOD	WT (g)	DATE	COMMENTS
5	668	BUTT	WOOD	PMED	<2	MC17th- MC18th	Convex front
6	504	TOOT	BONE	PMED	22	C19th-EC20th	
7	687	BRUS	WOOD	PMED	<2	LC19th-C20th	Bristles
8	552	SHOE	LEAT	PMED	14	MC19th- EC20th	sole frag- ?left shoe
9	687	SHOE	LEAT	PMED	88	MC19th- EC20th	right shoe
10	687	SHOE	LEAT	PMED	150	MC19th- EC20th	lady's boot frag - sole + upper frag
11	687	SHOE	LEAT	PMED	92	MC19th-	outer sole frag - right shoe; men's

						EC20th	
12	687	SHOE	LEAT	PMED	18	MC19th- EC20th	upper - probably part of RF <11>
13	687	SHOE	LEAT/IRON	PMED	116	MC19th- EC20th	heel with iron heel plate; men's
14	688	SHOE	LEAT	PMED	364	MC19th- EC20th	complete outer sole - right shoe; men's
15	688	SHOE	LEAT	PMED	254	MC19th- EC20th	Outer sole frags - lady's boot; heavy iron concretions obscuring heel
16	688	SHOE	LEAT	PMED	34	MC19th- EC20th	sole + upper frags; boot

Table 1. Summary of the organic Registered Finds from the excavations at Land between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston.

Overview

The earliest piece is a wooden button fragment with convex front (RF <5>). The piece is damaged, exposing the aperture through which the attachment would have been fixed. The fragment was recovered from a context containing mid 17th- to mid 18th-century material. Although the button may be intrusive, the type conforms with the period. A bone toothbrush of 19th- to early 20th-century date was recovered from made ground [504]. Four grooves at the back of the head would have held copper alloy wire retaining the tufts. The latter have partially survived. In addition, 20 bristle fragments from a hand brush or broom were recovered from cess channel [684] (fill [687]).

Nine leather pieces were recovered, representing a minimum number of eight individual shoes (Table 1). All are of mid 19th- to 20th-century date and no complete shoe was recovered. Included are at least three men's shoes as well as a lady's boot and shoe.

Significance and Potential

Objects all indicate a domestic origin. Most are however fragmentary and are late in date. Given also the small size of the assemblage, it is not deemed to require further analysis. All pieces have been recorded in full on pro forma sheets for archive. No further work is required.

Industrial Residues by Luke Barber

The archaeological work recovered a very small quantity of industrial residues: 24 pieces, weighing 42g, from four different contexts. All of the material was recovered from environmental residues taken from post-medieval deposits of pre-Victorian date. The majority of the assemblage consists of small pieces of clinker, most notably from layer [668] which produced 12 pieces weighing 19g. The same deposit contained small pieces (2/6g) of unburnt coal as did pit [637] (5/19g). Pit [703], fill [704] produced five further pieces of clinker (3g) and channel [684], fill [687] a single piece (1g). The same channel fill produced three small pieces (18g) of fuel ash slag/concretion, which may have originated from a number of different high temperature processes including domestic hearths.

The assemblage of industrial residues could easily derive from normal domestic occupation. Even if this is the only source the assemblage is notably small. Certainly the material does not warrant any further analysis. The assemblage has been fully listed on pro forma for archive and no further work is proposed.

Appendix F – Stone Material Assessment

An assessment of stone materials from land at Brook Street-Raby Road, Neston (BKN08)

Paul Fitz
AOC Archaeology

June 1st 2009

The Slate

Summary

Slate was collected from five contexts, two of these context were from environmental samples; <17> and <23>.

(See bkn08_slate.tab)

It can be safe to assume that the majority of the fragments are roofing tiles. A few have ferrous concretion on them which may hint at re-use, or that peg nails were used in securing them onto roofing .

Significance and potential

Fragments of slate from a late post-medieval site are expected. Roofing slate not salvageable from property demolition will usually end up in general demolition deposits. No slate was stated as being used as lining in drains etc. The assemblage has no national or regional significance. It is recommended that the excel quantification table is retained for archive but the slate itself discarded.

Stone types

Summary

Stone was collected from one bulk context and from five environmental sample residues.
(See bkn08_stone.tab)

The stone collected as a bulk find from context (552) is a smooth, rounded, stretched oval-shape. It appears to have natural or drop-damage at one end whilst the other end may have evidence of damage from use as a hammer.

The other stone types were collected from environmental samples as not being recognised as natural sandstones from the site, and are all rather small and fragmentary.

Significance and potential

It is assumed that the stone from the samples all derives from building or foundation rubble (some may even be natural stone types). The stone from context (552) is assumed to have derived from a beach or river. It fits in an adult hand quite well and may have been used as a tool. There is no evidence of polishing from knife sharpening on the body.

The assemblage is too small for any significant analysis, especially as they all appear to originate from post-medieval deposits. It is recommended that the stone from context (552) is retained in the first instance and that the rest of the stone is discarded.

Coal

Summary

Coal was retrieved from five contexts (of which four were from environmental sample sorting). The small amount of this assemblage suggests these are derived from dwelling fires rather than any apparent industrial activity.

Table 1. The Coal

context	Sample number	amount	Weight(grams)
652	14	Numerous small	<1
660	-	2	2
660	25	1	1
668	23	31	77
687	17	5	7
688	18	14	10

**Signifi
cance
and
potent
ial**

No further work is recommended for this small assemblage and it can be discarded as it is quite common to find coal on post-medieval sites.

Appendix G – Ceramic Artefact Assessment

AN ASSESSMENT OF THE CERAMIC ARTEFACTS RECOVERED FROM EXCAVATIONS ON LAND
BETWEEN BROOK STREET AND RABY ROAD, NESTON, CHESHIRE

BY DAN GARNER
15/06/09

CLIENT AOC ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

1. Introduction and Methodology

- 1.1 This report details the assessment of the ceramic archive for an excavation on land between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston, Cheshire (NGR SJ 2920 7755) that was undertaken during early 2009 by AOC Archaeology Group (Site Code: BKN'08). In all 829 sherds of pottery were found on the site (28.759kg), ranging in date from medieval to post-medieval; each period is discussed separately below.
- 1.2 The pottery has been fully catalogued to a level and standard that is in keeping with recommendations made by The Medieval Pottery Research Group (Slowikowski, Nenck & Pearce, 2001); and assessed in accordance with recommendations by English Heritage (1991).
- 1.3 All the pottery was examined macroscopically and where necessary using a binocular microscope (x20) and was also separated by fabric type within each context and quantified by the percentage of rim diameter present (EVE). Sherds from each different vessel were then recorded individually by sherd count and minimum vessel count (ENV) and weight on an Excel spreadsheet. The finds were briefly considered in relation to the stratigraphy, as understood from the site matrices, and with reference to other sites in the general area.
- 1.4 Where possible the post-medieval pottery has been identified to ware. In some cases such as the black glazed earthen wares and slip wares a site specific fabric series was generated in order to discern any chronological or spatial trends; however, this has proved uninformative in this case.
- 1.5 The ceramic building material has been catalogued on an Excel spreadsheet as per guidelines provided by the Chester Archaeology Service.

2. Post-Roman Pottery

2.1 A full catalogue of the post-Roman pottery is presented in Appendix B. Bar charts indicating the range of fabrics by both sherd count and weight and the forms present by minimum vessel count (ENV) along with a key to the fabric type series are presented in Appendix A.

2.2 The Medieval Pottery (11th to 16th century)

2.2.1 A total of 8 sherds of medieval pottery with a combined weight of 81 grams were identified in the ceramic assemblage and details of this are summarised below in Table 1; this represents less than 1% by count and weight of the total pottery assemblage. None of the medieval pottery sherds were considered likely to be derived from an undisturbed medieval context, having been recovered from post-medieval contexts (403), (407), (550) and (668).

Context Fabric		403	407	550	668	Total
EWLPW	No.	1	1		1	3
	Weight (g)	8	8		12	28
EWLRG	No.				1	1
	Weight (g)				1	1
IRSWT	No.			3		3
	Weight (g)			48		48
MWWT	No.			1		1
	Weight (g)			4		4
	Total No.	1	1	4	2	8
	Total Weight (g)	8	8	52	13	81

Table 1: Medieval Pottery by context, sherd count and weight

2.2.3 The largest group of medieval pottery came from context (550) which probably dates to the 19th century. This group included 3 relatively unabraded sherds of pottery in a local iron-rich sandy fabric which might have been derived from a single vessel; the rim sherd had a fairly small diameter and the vessel was probably a jug. This iron-rich sandy fabric could have been produced at several possible known Cheshire kiln sites of which the closest is the Chester Eastgate kiln (Chester Fabric 178) that was in production during the 13th century. The fourth sherd in the group was a body sherd in a grey/white fabric likely to be derived from a Staffordshire kiln site.

2.2.4 The remainder of the medieval assemblage (4 sherds) consisted of red/grey and pink/white gritty wares. These wares are thought to be products of the Ewloe kilns in North Wales and as such date to between the late 14th and 16th century. One handle sherd was identified which was probably derived from a jug and one of the sherds was actually a tiny fragment of line-impressed and glazed medieval floor-tile (context (668)).

2.2.6 The medieval pottery assemblage represents the first such material to be recovered from archaeological investigations in Neston; and even though it is a meagre group, it does provide some indication of medieval occupation in the vicinity of the excavation. The closest comparable material was recovered from small scale excavations on the medieval moated manor house site

at Little Stanney (Earthworks, 1997); but otherwise medieval deposits from excavations at the nearby City of Chester provide the best comparable ceramic material.

The medieval pottery should be retained as part of the permanent site archive. The jug rim sherd should be illustrated as part of the site report

2.3 The Post-Medieval Pottery (17th to 19th century)

- 2.3.1 A total of 821 sherds of post-medieval pottery with a combined weight of 28.678 kilograms were identified in the ceramic assemblage and details of this are summarised in tables 2 to 4 (Appendix A); this represents over 99% by count and by weight of the total pottery assemblage. The bulk of this material formed two distinct chronological groups which may have come from associated layers/fills which are detailed below.
- 2.3.2 From this material three contexts (598), (620) and (638) were phased on the site matrix as Victorian/modern but only context (598) produced pottery consistent with a date after c.AD 1790. Context (620) was broadly dated to the 17th/18th century and produced two sherds from an imported Chinese porcelain bowl. Whilst the latest dateable ceramic from context (638) was a white salt-glazed stoneware bowl with scratch-blue decoration indicating a date after c.AD 1720.
- 2.3.3 Amongst the contexts phased on the site matrix as 'Post-medieval' there was a succession of contexts (550), (552), (685), (686), (687) and (688) which produced a good group of 19th century material with several cross-context sherd joins noted. Context (554) produced pottery dated after c.AD 1790 and context (706) produced a fragment of salt-glazed sewer pipe that is of 19th/20th century date. Contexts (559) and (574) produced pottery broadly dated to the 18th/19th century whilst context (699) produced pottery dated after c.AD 1760.
- 2.3.4 This 19th century group from contexts (550), (552), (685), (686), (687) and (688) was dominated by utilitarian earthenware vessels in black and brown glazed ware and slipware fabrics. The group also contained a number of machine-made stoneware jars of the type often used for selling marmalade or jam. Fine tablewares were not common and were predominately represented by transfer-printed vessels and 'Mocha' or 'industrial slip' wares. No exotic imports were noted in this group.
- 2.3.5 Pottery from contexts (201), (207), (402), (575), (576), (660), (666), (668) and (693) produced a second good pottery group that could be broadly dated to the 17th/18th century. Contexts (201), (207), (402), (575), (576) and (668) all produced mottled ware pottery dated c.AD 1680+ as well as North Devon Gravel Tempered ware; the presence of which is considered to be exclusively a late 17th century phenomenon at nearby Chester. Context (668) produced a fragment of salt-glazed sewer pipe which is likely to be intrusive whilst contexts (575) and (576) contained single examples of mid 18th century fine wares which might also be considered to be intrusive. In general, this second group appears to contain a good assemblage of pottery that is likely to date to the closing decades of the 17th century (c.AD 1680-1700).
- 2.3.6 This late 17th century group is also notable for the range of imported wares present and certainly highlights Neston's growing status as a port during the period. The imports are dominated by products derived from Barnstaple in North Devon which include both coarse gravel-tempered jars and bowls as well as finer gravel-free slip ware products including a dish

with a stylised sgraffito rendered fish design. These products occur further down the Dee Estuary at Chester where it has been noted that they only appear in contexts dated to the late 17th century; perhaps indicating a short-lived Irish Sea trading link with Devon. Imports from elsewhere include German stonewares, Anglo-Dutch delftwares as well as single examples of a Spanish Olive Jar, a Surrey Borders fabric and a French white ware fabric that is possibly from Saintonge. The rare Chinese porcelain bowl from context (620) should probably also be included within this group even if it does occur residually in a Victorian/modern context.

- 2.3.7 The late 17th century group is also notable for the number of large utilitarian vessels produced in local black and brown glazed earthenware fabrics. These vessels are dominated by storage jars and large bowls that are often referred to as 'butter dishes' and there is also one example of a large dripping dish from context (576). Several of these vessels have multiple sherd joins indicating that the group is likely to be of primary deposition.
- 2.3.8 Context (676) produced a single base sherd from a 'cistercian ware' cup which might suggest a 16th or early 17th century date; however, the object could be residual and there is no other ceramic dating evidence from the context to support this date.

Ceramic Building Material

- 3.1 A full catalogue of the ceramic building material is presented in Appendix C.

3.2 Medieval ceramic building material

- 3.2.1 A total of 5 fragments (weighing 1.244 kg) of medieval ceramic building material were recovered from a 19th century context (105) in evaluation Trench 1. Five of these fragments were derived from glazed medieval ridge tiles: three fragments were derived from a single ridge tile in a Ewloe fabric; whilst the other two fragments were in a previously unidentified iron-rich fabric and may have been produced in the environs of Neston itself. The recovery of these ridge tile fragments indicates the presence of a yet to be identified late medieval building in the vicinity of the site.
- 3.2.1 The excavation only produced two additional fragments of medieval ceramic building material. One was actually a tiny fragment of line-impressed and glazed medieval floor-tile weighing 1 gram from context (668), which was recovered from the heavy residue of an environmental sample; the second was a larger undecorated fragment weighing 66 grams which was recovered from context (575). As with the roof-tile fragments the floor-tile indicates the presence of a yet to be identified late medieval building in the vicinity of the site.

3.3 Post-medieval ceramic building material

- 3.3.1 A total of 43 fragments of post-medieval ceramic building material were identified weighing 35.548 kilograms. Amongst the group were 8 complete bricks which had been collected as samples from contexts (513), (518), (560) and (575); and 3 complete floor tiles from contexts (105) and (516). Three of the brick samples from context (513) were back-stamped with 'W.HANCOCK & Co (H'DEN) L; BUCKLEY'. The history of the 19th century William Hancock brick works at Buckley has been described in several issues of The Buckley Society magazine (Issue 6 pp26-27, Issue 21 pp3-10 and Issue 28 pp2, 52-54) and reference to these articles may help to provide a date for the surface from which these brick samples were collected.

- 3.3.2 Handmade brick fragments were recovered from contexts (560), (575), (606), (638), (656), (661) and (668). Some of the larger fragments exhibited evidence of a wiped upper surface which is indicative of the production process. Three complete handmade bricks were recovered from contexts (560) and (575) all of which were of similar length and width although the thickness did vary between 65 and 80 mm. Incomplete fragments from contexts (575), (638) and (661) all had a thickness of 70 mm. Early bricks of comparable dimensions have been recovered from 17th/18th century contexts on sites in Chester such as Bridge Street in 2001 (Edwards, 2009) and Chester Amphitheatre in 2005.
- 3.3.3 The complete floor tile from contexts (105) and (516) are of two different types: the example from (516) is a dense highly fired tile that is likely to have formed part of a mosaic floor design; whilst the two larger tiles from (516) are of a quarry tile type in common domestic use in Cheshire during the later 19th/early 20th century.
- 3.3.4 Two fragments of 19th century/20th century moulded firebrick were recovered from context (552), which are likely to be derived from a domestic fireplace.
- 3.3.5 Eight small fragments of unfired clay were recovered from the heavy residue of context (656) sample <15>; these objects are likely to represent the remains of a daub render.

4. Clay Tobacco Pipe

- 4.1 A total of 41 fragments of clay tobacco pipe were recovered from the site and are summarised in table 5 (below):-

Context	Stem	Bowl	Mouthpiece	Stamp	Comments
105	2	-	-	-	Spur present
207	1	-	-	-	
226	1	-	-	1	'(G)ERALD.(C)'
301	1	-	-	-	
401	5	-	-	-	
402	2	-	-	-	
403	3	-	-	-	
404	6	-	-	2	c.AD 1760-90
504	1	-	-	-	
575	3	-	-	-	
576	2	-	-	-	Spur present
598	2	-	-	-	Spur present
620	1	-	-	1	c.AD 1760-90
636	1	1	-	-	
638	4	-	-	-	
668	5	-	-	-	
Totals	21	-	-	3	

Table 5: Clay tobacco pipe by context

- 4.2 Layer (404) produced two stem fragments with border stamps: the first stem had broad zoned decoration with two bands of geometric designs very similar to Chester border stamps 107 & 108 (Rutter & Davey, 1980, Fig. 62, p 185-7) dated in the Chester type series to c.AD 1760-1790; the second stem had a band of geometric floral decoration very similar to Chester border stamp 97 (Rutter & Davey, 1980, Fig. 61, p 181-4) dated in the Chester type series to c.AD 1740-1760. An additional stem fragment with a similar partial border stamp was recovered from context (620).
- 4.3 A stem fragment recovered from context (226) bore the partial makers mark ‘...(G)ERALD.(C)...’ (likely to have originally read FITZGERALD.CHESTER) this is very similar to a makers mark recorded from Chester that is attributed to Joseph Fitzgerald who manufactured between AD 1792-1840 (Rutter & Davey, 1980, Fig. 68, p 198-99 & 236-37).
- 4.4 The clay pipe assemblage mainly serves to provide additional dating material for the site narrative. In general, none of the contexts which produced tightly dateable tobacco pipe fragments have anything of note in other material categories. This is with the exception of the stamped stem fragment from context (620) which may provide useful dating for the deposition of the imported Chinese porcelain vessel noted from this context.

5. Analysis of Potential

- 5.1 In general the medieval ceramic assemblage has very little potential for further analysis. However, the assemblage is of some interest, as it represents the only medieval ceramic recovered from the town of Neston to date. A note should be prepared on the material with a couple of illustrations where appropriate.
- 5.2 The post-medieval pottery assemblage is important because it represents the first group of such material to be recovered from the town of Neston through archaeological intervention. Two main groups were identified during the assessment of which the earlier group (dated to c.AD1680-1700) has the greater significance. The assemblage should be retained as part of the permanent site archive.
- 5.3 The post-medieval building material assemblage is generally too small and fragmentary to be considered to have potential for further analysis. However, further research in to the W. Hancock Buckley brickworks may provide tighter dating on the stamped brick samples.
- 5.4 A selection of the pottery forms and decorated sherds form the merit illustration, and it is recommended that all the diagnostic forms are illustrated; these are listed in the Excel spreadsheet. This would mean c 40 rims/vessels, plus 2 decorated pieces, plus four stamped clay tobacco pipe stems and two medieval ridge tile fragments. A total of c 50 items in all could therefore be drawn or photographed.
- 5.5 Photography with drawn profiles is recommended for the Chinese porcelain and the sgraffito slip ware dish.

6. Significance of the data

6.1 Medieval

- 6.1.1 The eight sherds of medieval pottery and seven fragments of CBM from the Neston excavation are of local significance and can be seen as typical of material recovered from medieval deposits in the region. The significance is raised by the fact that it represents the first such material to be recovered from the town of Neston. However, it is a small and fragmentary group with all of the material occurring residually in post-medieval contexts and it indicates low level occupation in the area during the medieval period.

6.2 Post-medieval

- 6.2.1 The post-medieval assemblage is mainly of local significance, but it comprises the only collection from the area and the 17th century group may have significance to regional trends; particularly, some of the imported forms are of intrinsic interest (notably the sgraffito slip ware dish and the Chinese porcelain). Aspects of the assemblage merit publication and principally the earlier group of material dated c.AD 1680-1700 could be compared favourably with recently published assemblages of similar date from Chester (Edwards, 2009).
- 6.2.2 Further work on finding parallels for the North Devon gravel-tempered/gravel-free ware forms and the Chinese porcelain vessel may help to confirm the date of the earliest structural features on the site. The North Devon gravel-tempered/gravel-free ware in particular may help with understanding the trade and economy of late 17th century Neston.

7. Revised Research Aims

7.1 **Medieval:** None.

7.2 **Post-medieval:** Research parallels for the North Devon gravel-tempered/gravel-free wares and the Chinese porcelain with a view to publishing the late 17th century group of ceramics from the excavation.

7.3 **Method Statements**

Further work should be concentrated on the earlier post-medieval material dated c.AD 1680-1700, especially on the North Devon gravel-tempered/gravel-free wares and related early deposits in order to establish the date of the first phase of activity on the site. Further research is required to finalise the fabric codes of some imported wares and the association of different types may help to refine the dating of some features.

1. Write note on the medieval sherds: **0.25 day**
2. Study the pottery in relation to the stratigraphic text/phasing and check for sherd links that might have been overlooked: **1 day**
3. Research parallels for the North Devon gravel-tempered/gravel-free wares and the Chinese porcelain **1 day**
4. Finalise coding of the imported wares in the light of analytical work: **0.5 day**
5. Analyse assemblage by form type: **0.5 day**
6. Write up assemblage by ware type and function, with discussion: **2 days**
7. Make final selection of pottery sherds, clay tobacco pipe and building material for illustration and prepare instructions for illustrator: **1 day**

General

8. Research the W. Hancock brickworks to provide tighter dating on the stamped brick samples: **0.5 days**

Total time: **6.75 days**

8. Bibliography

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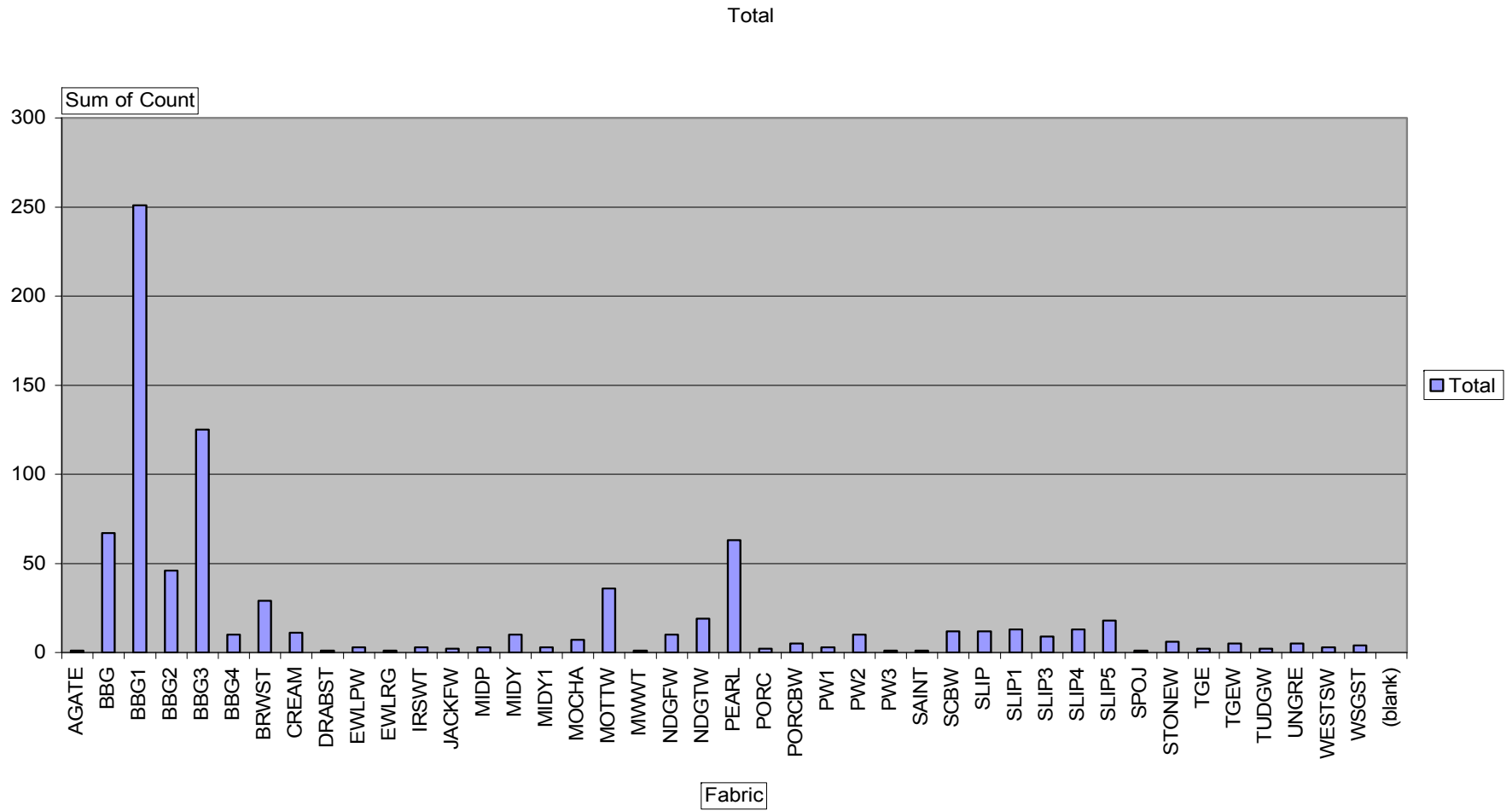
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Key to Pottery Fabric codes

Fabric Code	Fabric	Date
AGATE	Agate ware	c.AD 1740+
BBG 1-5	Black & brown glazed ware	16 th to 19 th century
BRWST	Brown stoneware	18 th to 19 th century
CREAM	Cream ware	c.AD 1760+
DRABST	Drab Stoneware	Early 18 th century
EWLPW	Ewloe pink/white ware	Late 14 th /16 th century
EWLRG	Ewloe red/grey ware	Late 14 th /16 th century
IRSWT	Iron-rich sandy ware	13 th to 14 th century
JACKFW	Jackfield ware	c.AD 1740-80
MIDP	Midlands Purple	16 th to 18 th century
MIDY1	Midlands Yellow	17 th to 18 th century
MOCHA	Mocha ware	Late 18 th to 20 th century
MOTTW	Mottled ware	c.AD 1680+
MWWT	Medieval white ware	
NDGFW	North Devon Gravel Free ware	17 th to 18 th century
NDGTW	North Devon Gravel tempered ware	17 th to 18 th century
PEARL	Pearl ware	c.AD 1780+
PORC	Chinese porcelain	17 th to 18 th century
PORCBW	Porcelaineous bodied ware	18 th to 19 th century
PW 1-3	Pink/white ware	17 th to 18 th century
SAINT	French Saintonge white ware	
SCBW	Slip-coated buff ware	c.AD 1740+
SLIP 1-5	Slip ware	17 th to 19 th century
SLIPEW	Slip decorated red earthenware	19 th century
SPOJ	Spanish Olive Jar	
STONEW	Stoneware	19 th to 20 th century
TGEW	Tin-glazed earthenware	17 th to 18 th century
TUDGW	Tudor Green ware	15 th to 17 th century
UNGRE	Unglazed red earthenware	18 th to 19 th century
WESTSW	Westerwald stoneware	
WSGST	White salt-glazed stoneware	c.AD 1720+



2: Post-Roman pottery fabrics by sherd count

Table

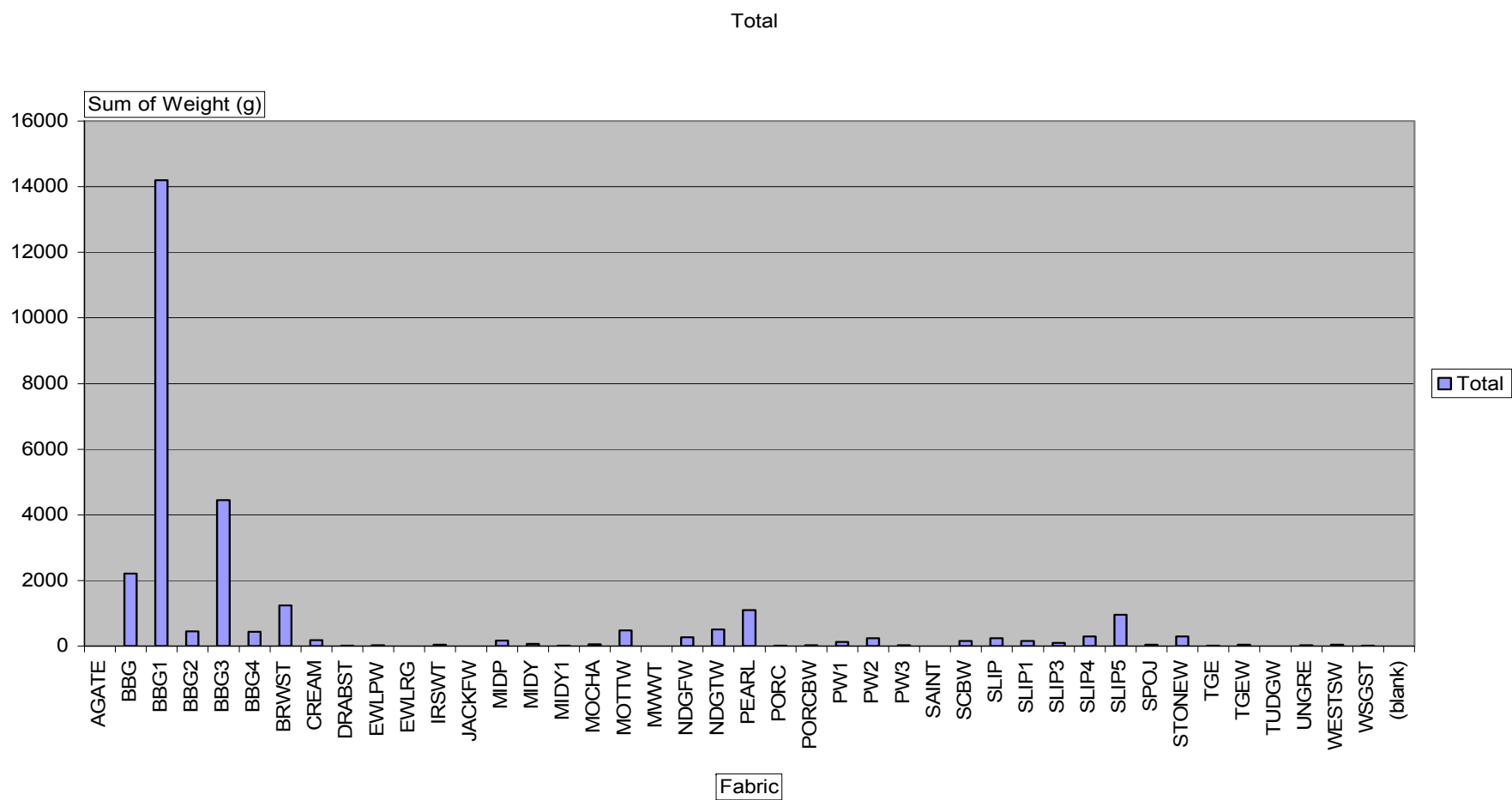


Table 3: Post-Roman pottery fabrics by weight

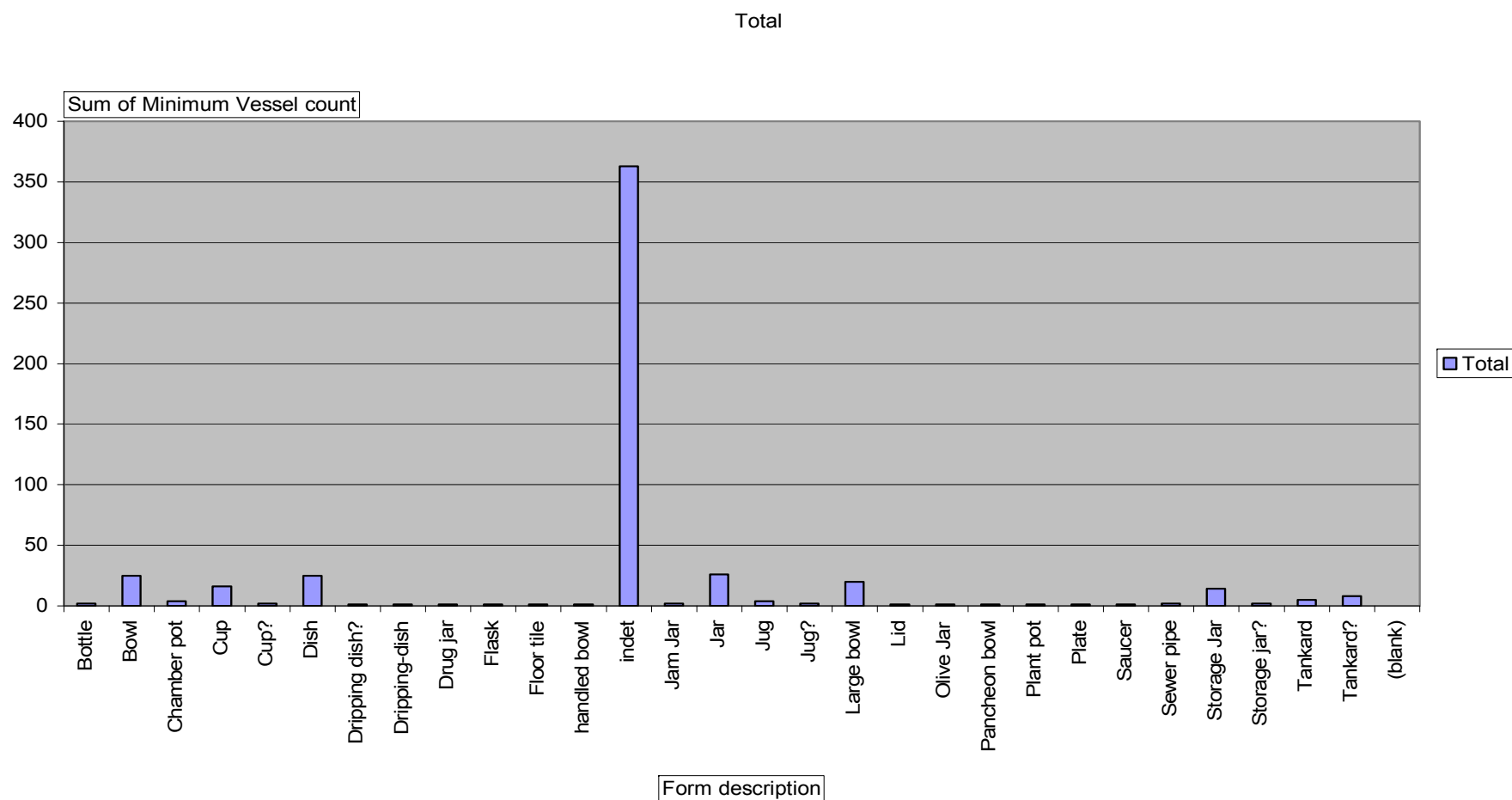


Table 4: Post-Roman pottery forms by minimum vessel count

Appendix H – Environmental Assessment

BKN08 / AOC Project – Environmental Samples

Lucy Allott

Methodology

Samples were processed by AOC and the flots and charcoal samples were submitted for assessment. Flots were scanned under a stereozoom microscope at x7-45 magnifications and an overview of their contents recorded in Table A. Identifications were made through reference to comparative material at University College London and literature (Cappers *et al.* 2006, Anderberg 1994, Berggren 1969, Berggren 1981) and nomenclature used follows Stace (2005).

Ten charcoal fragments (where available) from each of these samples were fractured manually, following standardised procedures (Gale and Cutler 2000) and their anatomical features viewed under an incident light microscope at magnifications of 50, 100, 200 and 400x in the transverse, tangential longitudinal and radial longitudinal sections. Identifications were made using modern comparative material and reference atlases (Hather 2000, Schweingruber 1990, Schoch *et al.* 2004) and are recorded in Table A. Identifications have been given to species, wherever possible, however genera, family or group names are given when inherent anatomical differences between taxa are too small for satisfactory identification.

Results

The assemblages are dominated by uncharred macro plant remains including seeds of elder (*Sambucus nigra*), bramble (*Rubus* sp.), wild cherry/sloe (*Prunus* sp.), buttercup (*Ranunculus* sp.), sedge (*Carex* sp.), nettle (*Urtica dioica*), goosefoot/oraches (*Chenopodium/Atriplex* sp.), stichwort (*Stellaria* sp.), and knotweeds (*Persicaria* sp.). Charred macroplant remains were uncommon although cereal grains including wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and barley (*Hordeum* sp.) as well as non cereal crops such as pea (*Pisum sativum*) were recorded in samples <14>, <18>, <21> and <24>. Samples <14> and <24> also contained some vetch/tare that may represent fodder plants although given the range of unharred taxa that are present it is perhaps more likely that these are naturally occurring weeds that became charred.

A small charcoal assemblage was recovered from the bulk samples. Charcoal fragments from four of the ten samples were identified to establish potential for dating, however none of the samples contain sufficient fragments for full analysis. Deciduous oak wood (*Quercus* sp.) was noted in each sample while Maloideae (hawthorn/whitebeam/apple/pear) taxa and possible alder (cf. *Alnus*) were also identified. Coal/coke fragments were also noted in the majority of samples.

Significance and Potential

This assemblage provides evidence for a cross section of vegetation habitats including trees, shrubs and hedgerow taxa as well as crops and their associated arable weeds. There is some potential to obtain identifications for the vetches / tares and the abundant uncharred seeds however the majority of the samples are taken from Victorian/modern contexts and the value of undertaking such work is considered minimal as it would not significantly contribute to our interpretation of the site or understanding of the past vegetation.

Recommendations for Further Work

No further work is recommended for these samples.

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Sample Number	Context	weight g	Flot volume ml	Uncharred %	sediment %	Uncharred seeds	Charcoal >4mm	Charcoal <4mm	Charcoal <2mm	Crop seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	Weed seeds charred	Identifications	Preservation	Charcoal Identifications	Ind debris hammerscale	Potential	
14	652		300	90	5		*	**	***	**	cerealia, <i>Triticum</i> sp., <i>Hordeum</i> sp.	++	*	Graminae, <i>Vicia</i> / <i>Lathyrus</i> sp. (some may be identifiable)	++	-	*	B/C, further CPR identifiable	
15	656		120	20	75	<i>Rubus</i> sp.	*	**	***	*	Cerealia indet., <i>Triticum</i> sp (1)	+				-	*	D	
17	687		40	90	<5	<i>Rubus</i> sp., <i>Ranunculus</i> sp., <i>Polygonum</i> / <i>Rumex</i> sp. & more to id			*							-	**	D	
18	688		10	20	60	lots of frags		*	**	*(1)	cerealia indet. Puffed	+	*(1)	cf. <i>Chenopodium</i> / <i>Atriplex</i> sp.	+	-	** incl hs sph.	D	
19	693		5	98		<i>Rubus</i> sp., <i>Sambucus nigra</i> , <i>Polygonum</i> / <i>Rumex</i> sp., Amaranthaceae, Asteraceae		*	*							-		C	
21	694	<2	<2	<5	50	<i>Sambucus nigra</i>		*	***	*(1)	cerealia, cf. <i>Triticum</i> sp.	+					Quercus sp. (1), indet, distorted (1)	D	
22	704	<2	<5	<5	5	<i>Sambucus nigra</i> , <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.	*	**	**				*	1 indet. Graminae, 1 Asteraceae	+/++	-		C/D	
23	668		200	90		<i>Chenopodium</i> / <i>Atriplex</i> sp., <i>Persicaria</i> sp., <i>Prunus</i> sp., Asteraceae,	**	**	**								Maloideae (1), Quercus sp. (1), indet. (1)	**	C further plant remains identifiable

					Amaranthaceae, <i>Urtica dioica</i> , insects and twigs											
24	670		150	65	cf. <i>Stellaria</i> sp., <i>Sambucus nigra</i> , <i>Ranunculus</i> sp., <i>Carex</i> sp.	**	****	***	*	cf. <i>Pisum sativum</i> , Cerealia	+	*	Graminae, cf. <i>Vicia</i> / <i>Lathyrus</i> sp.	+	<i>Quercus</i> sp. (6), cf. <i>Alnus</i> sp.	C further plant remains identifiable
25	660		250	90	<i>Rubus</i> sp., <i>Carex</i> sp., various Amaranthaceae, <i>Ranunculus</i> sp., <i>Urtica dioica</i> & lots to id	**	**	***	*						<i>Quercus</i> sp. (6, including 1 roundwood), Maloideae (3), cf. <i>Alnus</i> sp. (1)	C further plant remains identifiable

Appendix I - Oasis Form

Section 1.01 OASIS ID: aocarcha1-61283

Project details

Project name	LAND BETWEEN RABY ROAD AND BROOK STREET, NESTON, CHESHIRE
Short description of the project	An Archaeological excavation was undertaken on land between Brook Street and Raby Road, Neston, Cheshire. Following a 4 trench evaluation undertaken by AOC Archaeology in May 2008. The aims of the excavation were to establish the extent of stone built, early post medieval foundations revealed during the previous work. The excavation revealed evidence of consistent site activity from the early 17th century till the present. Structural remains of a 17th - early 18th century modestly sized farmhouse with an associated cobble drive or road, were overlaid by a substantially larger Victorian farmhouse and later cobble and stone surfaces. An enclosed cobbled yard which may represent a stable or workshop dating to the 18th century was found to be heavily truncated by a stone built 20th century public toilet block. A later Victorian stable associated with the farmhouse may have replaced the earlier yard. Evidence of quarrying was also found, with a large pit dating to the 17th century found truncated by the Victorian stables. During the later phases of site use this activity moved to the north of the site, where a substantial Victorian pit was revealed.
Project dates	Start: 06-03-2009 End: 09-04-2009
Previous/future work	Yes / Not known
Any associated project reference codes	BKN08 - Sitecode
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Current Land use	Community Service 1 - Community Buildings
Monument type	TOWN Post Medieval

Monument type TOWN Medieval

Significant Finds PEWTER SPOON Post Medieval

Significant Finds IMPORTED POTTERY Post Medieval

Significant Finds POTTERY Medieval

Investigation type 'Full excavation'

Prompt Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country England

Site location CHESHIRE ELLESMERE PORT AND NESTON NESTON Land between Raby Road and Brook Street, Neston, Cheshire

Postcode CH64 9XJ

Study area 1600.00 Square metres

Site coordinates SJ 2920 7755 53.2899034292 -3.062226204540 53 17 23 N 003 03 44 W Point

Height OD / Depth Min: 31.40m Max: 33.74m

Project creators

Name of AOC Archaeology Group
Organisation

Project brief Cheshire County Council
originator

Project design AOC Archaeology Group
originator

Project director/manager Andy Leonard

Project supervisor Paul Harris

Type of District Council
sponsor/funding
body

Name of Ellesmere Port and Neston District Council
sponsor/funding
body

Project archives

Physical Archive Cheshire Museums Service
recipient

Physical Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Industrial','Metal'

Digital Archive Cheshire Museums Service
recipient

Digital Contents 'Animal
Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Industrial','Metal','Stratigraphic','Survey'

Paper Archive Chelmsford Museum Service
recipient

Paper Contents 'Animal Bones','Ceramics','Environmental','Glass','Industrial','Metal'

Paper Media 'Context sheet','Matrices','Photograph','Plan','Report','Section','Survey'
available

**Project
bibliography 1**

A forthcoming report

Publication type

Title Land Between Raby Road and Brook Street, Neston Cheshire; A Post Excavation Assessment Report

Author(s)/Editor(s) Harris, P, Melkian, M

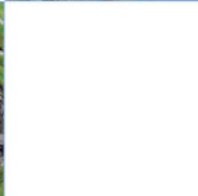
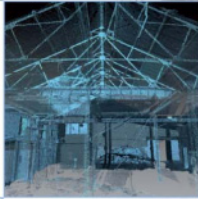
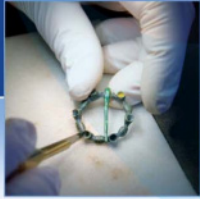
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