University of Leicester

Archaeological Services

An Archaeological Evaluation at 17 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 370 965)

Jennifer Browning

ULAS Report No 2014-032

An Archaeological Evaluation at
17 Mill Lane,
Kislingbury, Northamptonshire
(NGR SP 69543 59435)

Jennifer Browning

For: Mr. L. Woodward

Approved by:

Signed: 

Date: 14/02/2014

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ULAS Report Number **2014-032**

Site code NH_MLK 2014

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An Archaeological Evaluation at

17 Mill Lane,

Kislingbury, Northamptonshire

(NGR SP 69543 59435)

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Summary

An archaeological trial trench evaluation was undertaken in January 2014 within the grounds of 17 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire, by University of Leicester Archaeological Services and on behalf of Mr. L. Woodward. The fieldwork was required by the Development Control Archaeologist in response to an application for three new dwellings on the site, in order to assess the impact of the development on any potential archaeological remains. The site is located within the settlement core of the medieval village.

The archaeological evaluation comprised the excavation of four trenches (varying between 8m and 15m in length) targeting the footprints of the proposed new dwellings. Trenches 1, 2 and 3 revealed a series of features comprising ditches, gullies and beamslots, representing occupation and possible plot boundaries. The pottery suggests that the activity was late Saxon/earlier medieval and continued into the 13th or 14th centuries. Animal bones and charred plant remains also survived, although in small quantities.

As Northamptonshire County Council is currently unable to receive archives, the site archive will be held by ULAS under the site code NH_MLK 2014 until such facilities become available.

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken within the grounds of 17 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northamptonshire (NGR SP 69543 59435). The Assistant Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire Council recommended the need for a phase of archaeological investigation, as the site lies within the historic village core of the village and nearby sites have revealed evidence for archaeological activity.

The investigation was required in order to provide an adequate sample of the development area and to assess the likely archaeological impact of the development proposals. The agreed scheme was set out in a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI; ULAS 2013). Fieldwork was carried out in January 2014 and involved the machine excavation of four trial trenches in order to provide a 5% sample of the development area as requested by the Northamptonshire County Council Assistant Archaeological Advisor as advisor to the planning authority.

The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework Section 12: Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment (DCLG March 2012). All archaeological work followed the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) Code of Conduct (2010) and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2008).

Site Location, Geology, Topography, and Description

The proposed development area is currently occupied by the residential property of 17 Mill Road and its associated garden (approximately 1539 sq m of which will be affected by the development) and lies on the northern edge of Kislingbury, south of Mill Road. It is bordered by other residential properties.

Topographically the site is at an approximate height of *c.*69m aOD, although there is a slight slope down towards the north. The site was observed to be higher than the road. Geological maps indicate that the site contains Dyrham Formation siltstone and mudstone overlain by mid-Pleistocene glaciofluvial sand and gravel.

Archaeological and Historical Background

The site lies in the western part of the village, which is thought to be earlier than the eastern half. The western half grew up around a north-south road, now Church Lane, with the church at its northern end, and Mill Road which runs eastwards from the mill to join Church Lane about halfway along its length.

The site lies within the historic core of Kislingbury,and to the south-west of the church. It is thought that settlement in this area of the village is earlier than the settlement to the east around the High Street, based on the much more regular street pattern to the east, suggesting a partly planned settlement.

Settlement remains in the form of damaged scarps and disturbed ground were formerly visible along the western side of Church Lane but have now been built over.

Recent archaeological evaluation on the western side of Mill Lane, south-west of the development site, identified features associated with plot boundaries and backyard activity (NA 2012).

The 1886 OS map (Scale 1:2500) indicates that the site was adjacent to a Baptist chapel and burial ground, which existed to the west of the site. In the 1920s the area is referred to ‘allotments’.

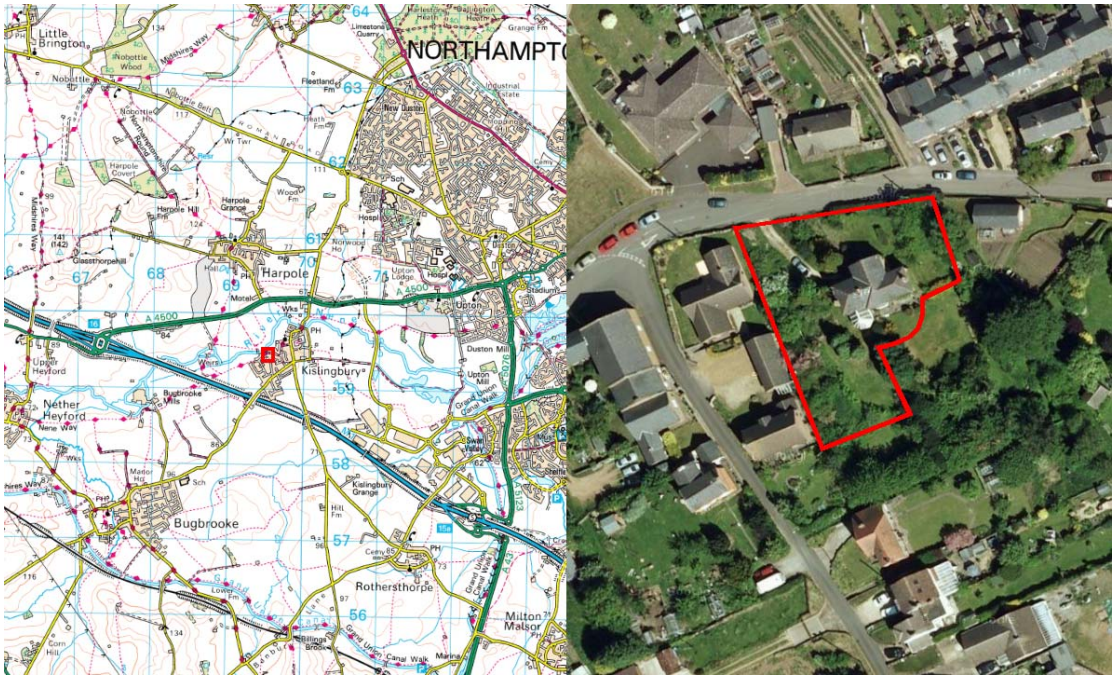

Figure 1: Site Location (Scale 1:50 000)

Figure 2: Location of the site within the village

Aims and Objectives

The archaeological evaluation had the potential to contribute to the following research aims. The purpose of the archaeological work was:

- To identify the presence/absence of any archaeological or environmental deposits.

- To establish the character, extent and date range for any archaeological or environmental deposits to be affected by the proposed ground works.
- To record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.

In general the purpose of an archaeological investigation is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of an archaeological site in its cultural and environmental setting.

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation is to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, significance and state of preservation of archaeological deposits on the site in order to determine the potential impact upon them from the proposed development.

Trial trenching is an intrusive form of evaluation that will demonstrate the existence of earth-fast archaeological features that may exist within the area. The evaluation was undertaken in order to enable reasoned and informed recommendations to be made to the local planning authority and, if appropriate, a suitable mitigation strategy for the proposed development to be formulated.

Research aims

This work has the potential to contribute to research objectives for the Iron-Age/Roman period and Anglo-Saxon – medieval period (Cooper, 2006 and Knight, Vyner & Allen, 2012).

Methodology

Archaeological Trial Trenches

Following recommendations from the Planning Authority, a programme of evaluation trenching was undertaken. A 5% sample of each proposed area was required in the form of a series of trial trenches. It was agreed that trenches, totalling 50m, would be positioned on the plot to target the footprints of all three proposed new dwellings. Two trenches (1 and 4) were excavated to target the two proposed dwellings on the western side of the plot. Due to ground constraints, Trench 4 on the north-west corner of the plot had to be shortened, in order to maintain access to the property.

Two further trenches (2 and 3) were excavated close to the existing house to sample the area to be affected by the third proposed new dwelling.

A CAT scanning device was used prior to machining in order to monitor for the presence of live cables and other services. Topsoil and overburden was removed under archaeological supervision by a mechanical excavator using a toothless ditching bucket (*c*.1.4m wide). The spoil generated during the evaluation was mounded away from the edges of each trench. Topsoil and subsoil was stored separately. Mechanical excavation ceased at undisturbed natural deposits or the top of archaeology.

The trenches were recorded at an appropriate scale by measured drawing and photography. A photographic record utilising high resolution digital images was

maintained during the course of the fieldwork. Black and white photographs are also normally taken; unfortunately an equipment failure has resulted in the loss of these images for this site.

Results

The four trenches are summarised in Table 1 and detailed descriptions follow in the text below. Each archaeological feature has been given context numbers to identify it and any associated artefacts. Round brackets (*) refer to the fill of the feature, while square brackets [*] denote the cut number. No archaeological features were noted in Trench 4.

Table 1: Summary of the trenches

Trench No.	Orientation	Length/Width (m)	Min. Depth (m)	Max Depth (m)	Archaeology	Notes
1	NNW-SSE	16 x 1.4	0.43	0.55	Y. (1) [2]; (3) [4]; (5) [6]; (7) [8]	Two beam slots and two intercutting features.
2	E-W	10 x 1.4	0.70	0.95	Y. (13) [14]; (15) [16]; (17) [18];	A large ditch, a post hole and a gully.
3	N-S	10 x 1.4	0.85	0.95	Y (9) [10]; (11) [12]	Two ditches and a tree hole.
4	N-S	8 x 1.4	0.65	0.70	N	None

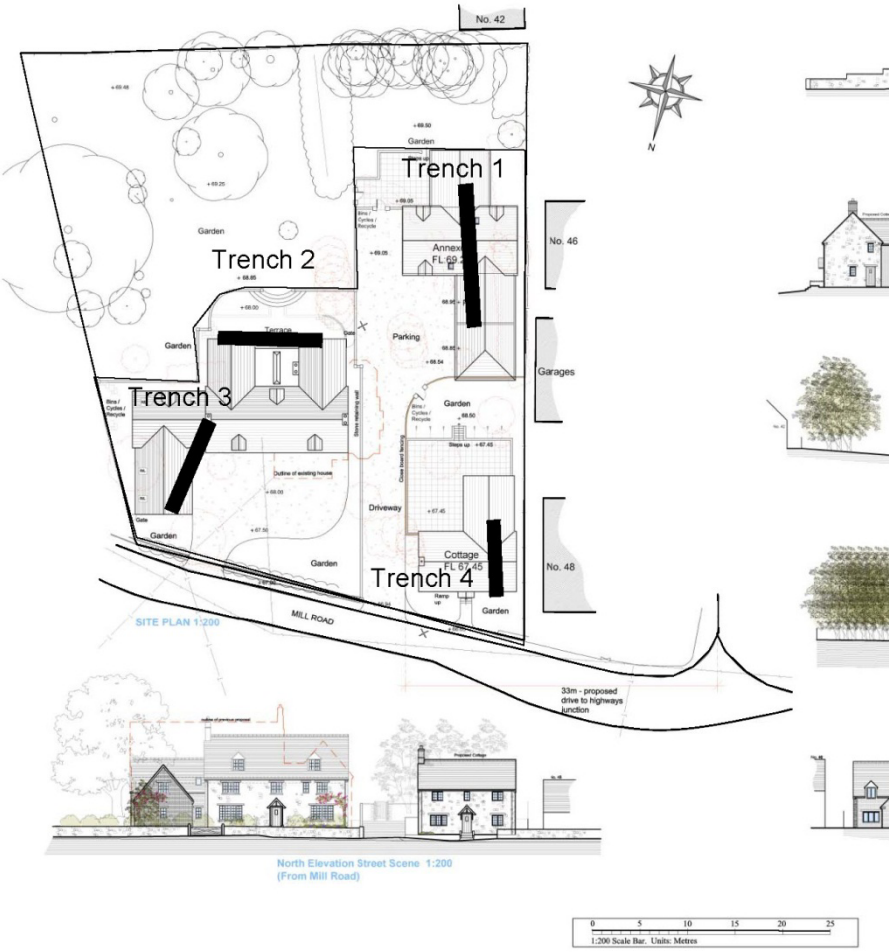

Figure 3: Trench location plan in relation to proposed new dwellings (plan supplied by client)

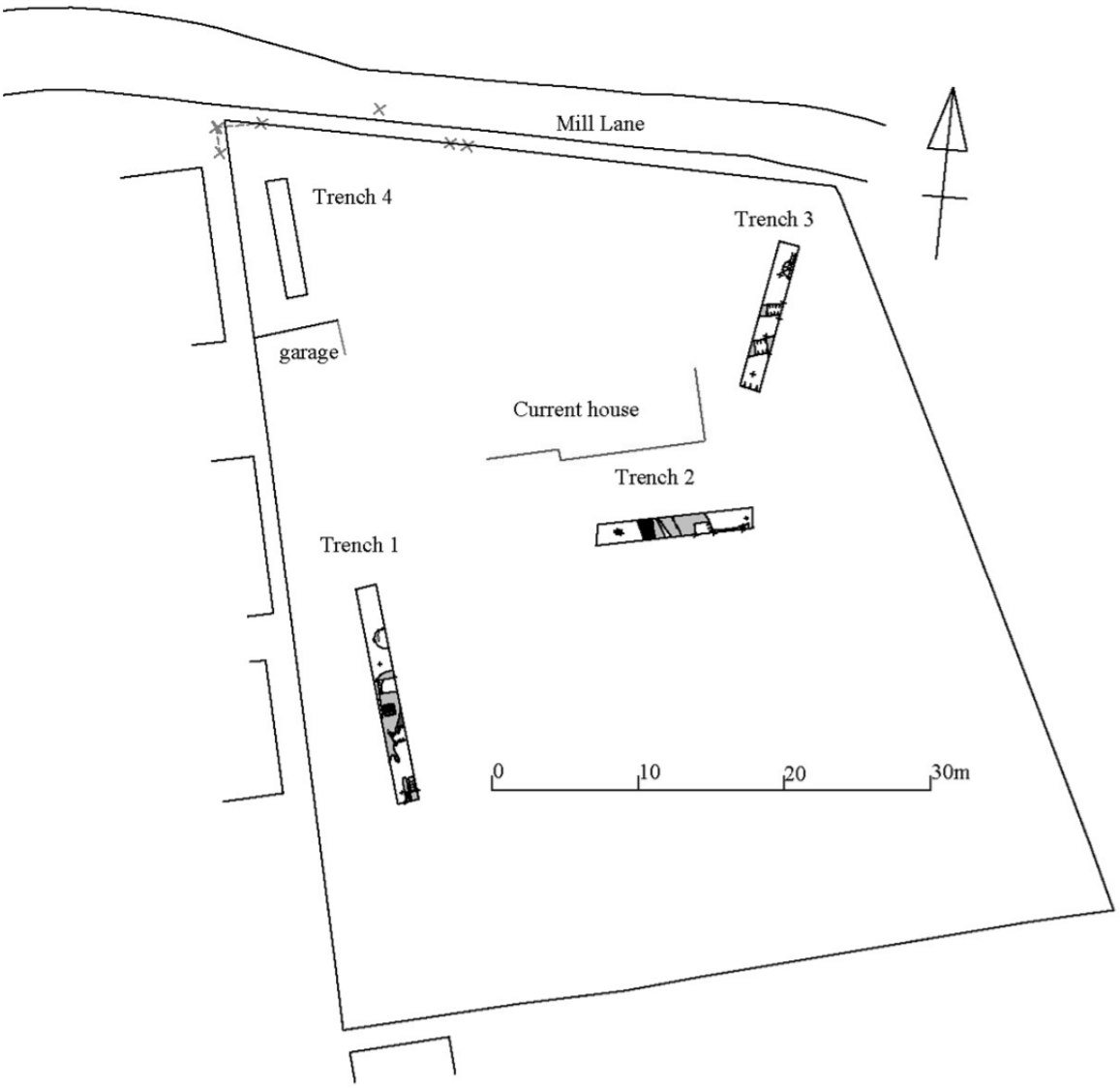

Figure 4: Trench locations on current plot, showing distribution of archaeological features

Trench 1

Trench 1 was excavated on the western side of the plot, within an area of garden, currently covered in brambles. Several square pits, measuring approximately 1x1m had been excavated in this area, one of which was filled with apples while another had been used for a bonfire. The trench was excavated through dark brownish-grey topsoil, clay-based but containing a high quantity of organic matter, with abundant roots, frequent charcoal flacks and occasional small stones and pebbles. The depth of the topsoil varied between 0.30 and 0.45m. Below this layer was subsoil consisting of yellowish-brown sandy clay with occasional pebbles. Natural subsoil was reached below this layer at a depth of between 0.40 and 0.50m deep and consisted predominantly of mottled orange/yellow clay. A change was noted at the north end of the trench, where the natural subsoil consisted of gravels.

Beam slots (1) [2] and (3) [4]

Two similar parallel features were noted at the south end Trench 1; the south end of both continued under the baulk. Approximately 2m of each feature was visible in the trench. Both were shallow, rectangular in shape and had flat bases. Feature [4] was the narrower and slightly more shallow feature, measuring *c* 0.27m wide and 0.08m deep. Feature (1) [2] was 0.38m wide and 0.10m deep. The fills of both features were similar consisting of beige/grey silty clay.

Small fragments of St. Neots ware, a pottery fabric dating to *c* AD 900- 1100 were recovered from (3) [4] (Sawday, Appendix 1). A soil sample from context (3) produced evidence for carbonised and uncarbonised seeds and grains and grasses (Small, Appendix 3).

Figure 5: Beam slots [2] and [4]

Features (5) [6] and (7) [8]

In the centre of the trench a gully (5) [6] was observed measuring 0.60m wide and 0.25m deep and orientated east/west. The fill consisted of mid brown sandy silt with occasional charcoal flecks and occasional fragments of limestone. This feature appeared to be cut on its western side by a larger feature, (7) [8]. The full extent of the feature was not exposed in plan. The part that was visible was possibly a curving ditch, orientated north-east to south-west, and with a small projection on the southern side. It was *c*. 1.0m wide and 0.20m deep with a flat base. The fill was beige/grey silty clay with common charcoal flecks and occasional limestone fragments. The evaluation therefore indicates that feature [8] is later than feature [6]. The feature was cut by the base of a modern bonfire.

The finds from (5) [6] included eight sherds of pottery, representing several different vessels (Sawday, Appendix 1). Pottery dating from *c* AD900-1100 was recovered as well as later sherds dating from *c* AD 1100-1400, which indicate potential residuality. In addition, the distal humerus of a horse was recovered, which had been gnawed by carnivores in antiquity (Browning, Appendix 2). A soil sample from context (5) produced evidence for rye and bread wheat grains, as well as a hazelnut shell (Small, Appendix 3).

Context (7) [8] produced two sherds of pottery, a coarse shelly ware dating from the *c* 1150-1400 and a sherd of Stanion Lyveden dating from *c*. AD900-1200 (Sawday, Appendix 1). Two prehistoric flints, evidently residual, were also recovered (Cooper, Appendix 1).

Figure 6: Gully [6]

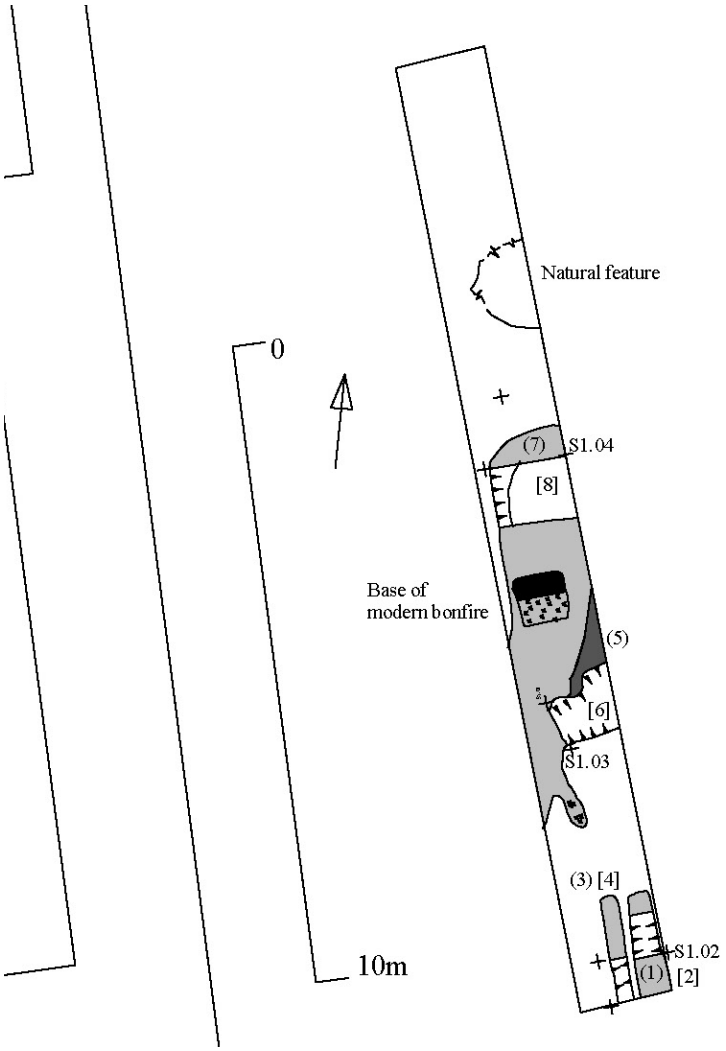

Figure 7: Trench 1 plan

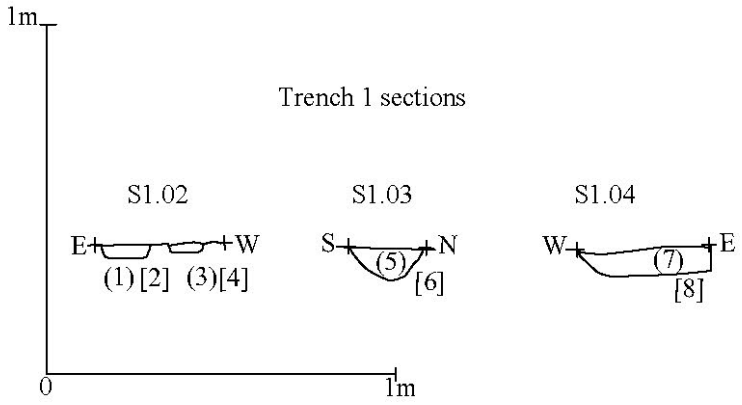

Figure 8: Trench 1 sections

Trench 2

Trench 2 was located at the rear of the current dwelling, in an area currently under lawn. The topsoil was as described for trench 1 but had a slightly greater depth varying between 0.30m on the east side of the trench and 0.55m towards the west side. There was a very diffuse boundary to the subsoil, which consisted of mid brownish grey clayey silt with occasional pebbles and stone fragments. The natural subsoil was encountered at *c* 0.60-0.70m below ground level and consisted of orange sandy gravel on the western side of the trench and orange yellow sandy clay on the east side of the trench.

Post hole (13) [14]

At the west end of the trench a small circular feature was noted, measuring 0.40m in diameter. It was 0.25m deep and had steeply sides sloping down to a narrow flat base. The fill consisted of grey clay with greater quantities of gravel in the lower part of the fill. There were no finds.

Ditch (15) [16] and possible ditch (19) [20]

The central portion of the trench was occupied by a large band of fill, which was investigated to see if it represented a single or several features. The depth of the trench meant that it was not possible to excavate a slot through the entire feature, therefore the area was trowelled by hand and a section excavated down to a maximum depth of 1.2m below ground level. The feature was thought to represent a large ditch, (orientated NNW-SSE), 3.5m in width containing a brown clayey sand. Hand-excavation on the eastern edge indicated a steep profile, which suggests that the feature may be deeply cut. Gravel noted to the west of the feature, was thought to be natural subsoil. A second band of fill (19) on the western side of the trench therefore appears to represent a second ditch, parallel with the first. This was truncated on its western side by a feature which may represent a service trench. This was filled with re-deposited grey clay and gravel and was visible in the side of the trench at a higher level than the other features. No finds were recovered.

Figure 9: Feature [16]

Gully (17) [18]

A gully was observed running along the southern edge of the trench on the east side. It was not fully exposed, however the visible part measured a minimum of 3m long by 0.25m wide and was 0.15m deep. The fill consisted of brownish grey sand. There were no finds.

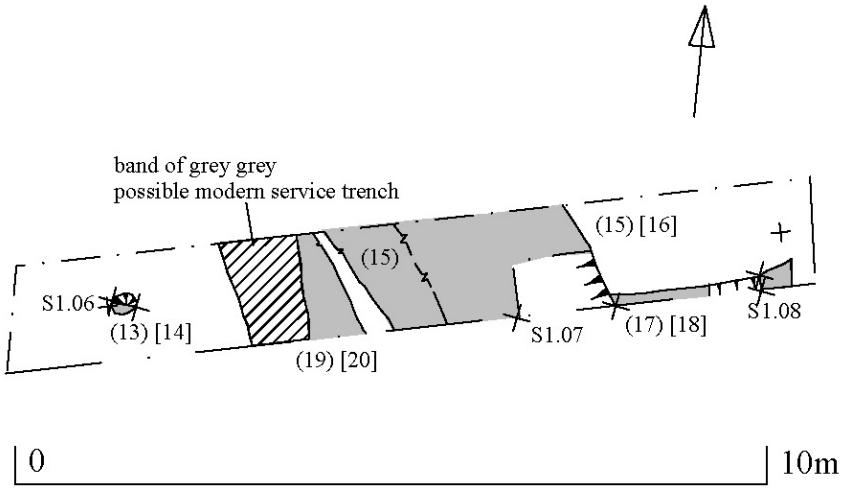

Figure 10: Trench 2 plan

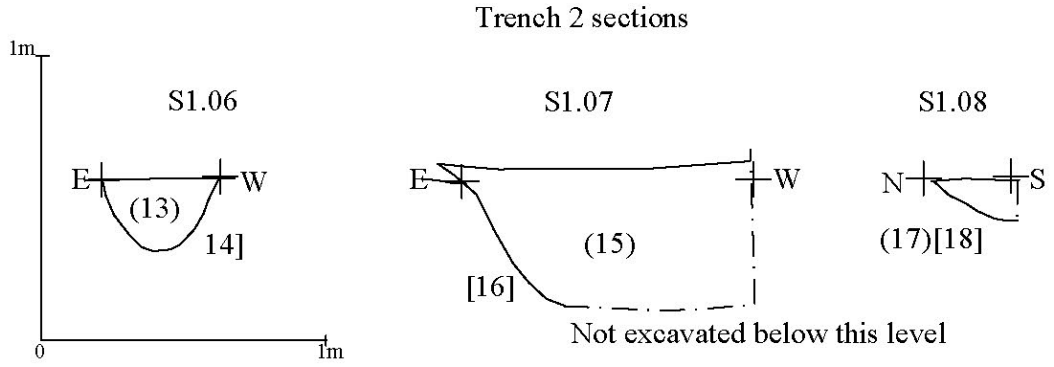

Figure 11: Trench 2 sections

Trench 3

Trench 3 was positioned towards the front of the plot, on the east side of the current dwelling. The topsoil was similar to that described for trench 1 and varied in depth between 0.25 and 0.40m. The interface between the topsoil and the subsoil below was diffuse and gradual, rather than a clear boundary. The topsoil lay above a thick layer of subsoil consisting of mid grey brown sandy clay with small stones and pebbles becoming lighter in colour towards the base of the deposit. The natural subsoil was reached at depths of between 0.70 and 0.80m below current ground level and consisted of mottled grey and reddish-brown clayey sand.

Towards the south end of the trench two linear features were exposed; ditch (9) [10] and ditch (11) [12]. In addition, a sub-rectangular feature with a projection on one side was noted during machining, close to the north-eastern corner of the trench. On excavation this was thought to be a natural 'tree throw' feature, as indicated by its irregular profile, numerous root holes, decayed roots and a concentration of stones on the deeper side of the feature (see Figure 12).

Ditch (9) [10]

This linear feature was located close to the centre of the trench and was aligned broadly east-west. It was c.0.90m wide with sloping sides and a flattish base. The top of the feature was encountered at 0.80m below current ground level and it had a maximum surviving depth of 0.30m. The feature was filled with mid greyish brown sandy clay with occasional charcoal flecks, natural flints and small rounded pebbles.

Finds included a sherd of St. Neots ware and fragments of animal bone, one of which had fine knife cuts, suggesting that that it was domestic waste.

Figure 12: Ditch [10]

Ditch (11) [12]

Located towards the southern end of the trench was a second linear feature, which crossed the trench on a northeast/southwest alignment. It was 1.0m wide at the top and had steeply sloping sides and a pointed base. The top of the feature was encountered at 0.90m below ground level and it had a surviving depth of 0.38m to the base. The fill (11) was very similar to (9) consisting of mid greyish brown sandy clay with occasional sandy mottle, natural flints and small rounded pebbles.

There was no pottery however an animal bone (fragment of pig femur) was recovered.

Figure 13: Ditch [12]

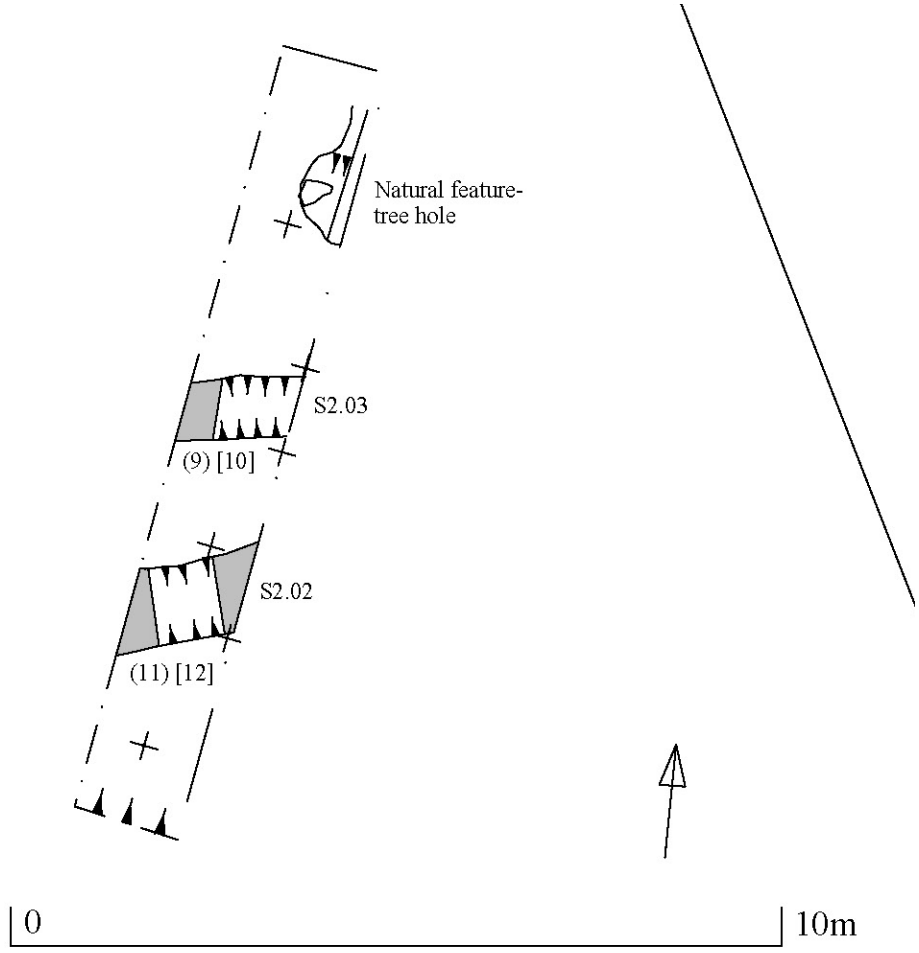

Figure 14: Plan of Trench 3

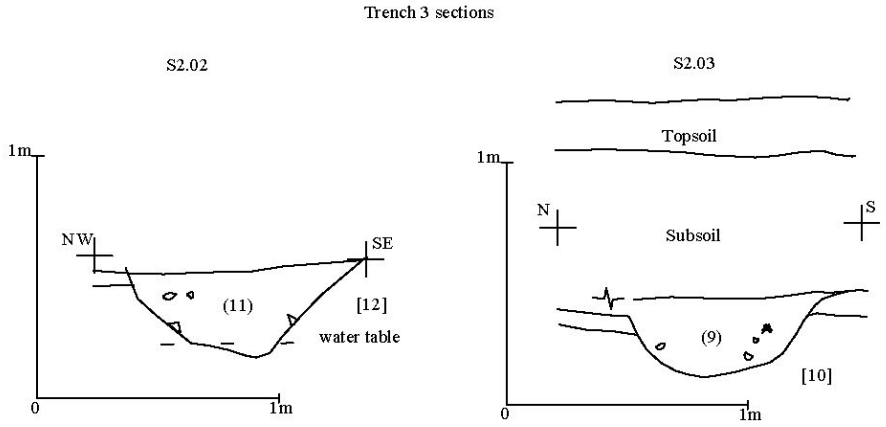

Figure 15: Trench 3 sections

Trench 4

Trench was excavated at the front of the plot fronting onto Mill Lane. This area was currently used for parking and was at a noticeably lower level to the rest of the site, indicating that that it may have been previously landscaped for this purpose. In order to maintain access up the drive to the dwelling, the trench was excavated on a north/south alignment, parallel with the western boundary. It was therefore necessary to terminate the trench after 8.0m. The trench was excavated through a loose hardcore surface, approximately 0.15m thick and a 0.20-0.25m thick make-up layer, consisting of compact dark brown sandy clay, with frequent gravel, charcoal and coal flecks and occasional irregular fragments of sand and ironstone. Below this was a layer comprising mid brown sandy clay with occasional gravel, charcoal flecks, rounded pebbles and lumps of clay. There was a diffuse horizon to the natural subsoil, which consisted of orange-brown sands and gravel with bands of clay.

During machining a putative feature was noted in the south-west corner of the trench. However, investigation concluded that this was a subsoil intrusion into the gravel rather than an archaeological feature. It was shallow, very irregular in shape and could be seen diving beneath the gravel on one side.

Discussion

An archaeological evaluation at Mill Lane, Kislingbury has produced evidence for archaeological activity in three out of four trenches. This is especially significant as the sites lies in what is thought to be the earliest part of the village. A particular concentration of features in Trench 1 included two parallel beam slots and a large ditch feature which, (although it was not fully revealed in plan) appeared to cut a smaller ditch. A small gully was also observed. Pottery indicated that activity took place from the late Saxon period through to the 14th century. Fragments of animal bone and charred plant remains were also recovered in small quantities, suggesting domestic rather than processing activities. A series of large linear features in Trench 2 may represent successive boundary features.

Two ditches were exposed in Trench 3. One was undated but the other was tentatively dated by a fragment of medieval pottery. Both features contained fragments of animal bone. The distribution of archaeology across the site, as indicated by the evaluation trenches, currently suggests that the focus of occupation is located towards the east of the area, with boundary and croft activity taking place further west. The depth of the subsoil, particularly on the centre and west sides of the plot, might be explained by previous use of the land as allotments, as indicated by early to mid-20th century OS maps of the area.

Previous work in the vicinity has also revealed evidence for archaeological activity. Trial trenching carried out in 2013 (Speed 2013), approximately 100m to the south-east of the current site, also revealed ditches and gullies dating to the medieval period, probably representing property or field boundaries. The features contained 12th-13th century pottery and some animal bone but showed little potential for palaeo-environmental data, possibly suggesting that they were some distance away from

centres of occupation. A further seven archaeological features did not produce dating evidence (such as pottery) but were considered to be broadly contemporary.

Recent work carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology to the south of the current site also produced evidence for archaeological activity (Liz Mordue pers. comm).

Archive and Publications

The site archive (Site code: NH_MLK.2014), consisting of paper and photographic records, will be held by ULAS until such time as suitable storage facilities are available at Northamptonshire County Council.

The archive consists of:

- 4 trench recording sheets
- Photographic record indices
- 20 context sheets & context summary sheet
- Drawing index
- Sample index
- Permatrace site plans (2 x A3)
- Digital photographs

Publication

A version of the summary (see above) will appear in due course in an appropriate publication

Acknowledgements

Jennifer Browning and Jon Coward of ULAS undertook the archaeological evaluation on behalf of Mr. L. Woodward. The project was managed by Richard Buckley. Deborah Sawday identified the pottery, Rachel Small processed the samples and identified the charred plant remains and the animal bones were identified by Jennifer Browning.

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Oasis Information

Project Name	17 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Nhants.
Project Type	Archaeological evaluation
Project Manager	Richard Buckley
Project Supervisor	Jennifer Browning
Previous/Future work	Development
Current Land Use	Landscaped & grassed
Development Type	Residential development
Reason for Investigation	NPPF
Position in the Planning Process	
Site Co ordinates	NGR SP 69543 59435
Start/end dates of field work	January 2014
Archive Recipient	TBC
Study Area	sq. m. (total area)

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Appendix 1: The Flint and Post Roman Pottery

Deborah Sawday

The Finds

The finds were recorded by context ().

The Flint

Lynden Cooper

Two flints were recovered from context 7 [8] in trench 1. Both were prehistoric in date and comprised a tertiary flake and a retouched flake.

The Pottery

Deborah Sawday

The pottery, sixteen sherds, weighing 66 grams was catalogued with reference to the guidelines set out by the Medieval Pottery Research Group, (MPRG 1998), (MPRG, 2001) and the Northamptonshire Anglo-Saxon and Medieval County Ceramic Type-Series. The results are shown below (table 2).

Fortunately, in spite of adverse weather conditions, leading to a very muddy site, a small number of ceramic finds were recovered from over half of the cut features. Nevertheless the paucity of the finds and their relatively low weight means that the dating evidence (Table 2) must be treated with some caution.

The pottery suggests that there was a late Saxon/earlier medieval presence in the vicinity; the site is located within the historic core of the medieval village (J. Browning pers. comm.). That activity continued into the 13th or 14th centuries. There was some evidence of residuality in the backfill of the gully and ditch, contexts 5 [6] and 7 [8]. The former also contained a fragment of fired clay in a fabric similar to Lyveden Stanion A ware.

Although the assemblage is limited in size, the range of late Saxon and earlier medieval fabrics is similar to that found in Northampton, for instance at Derngate, (Blinkhorn 2002), which lies less than 5km to the north east of the village. In both instances St Neots, Stamford, Lyveden Stanion A ware, Shelly Coarse ware and Sandy Coarse wares were present.

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Northamptonshire Anglo-Saxon and Medieval County Ceramic Type-Series

Table 2: The Saxon and later pottery by fabric, sherd numbers, and weight (grams) in approximate chronological order by context.

Fabric	Common Name	No.	Weight (g)	Av. weig ht	Contexts	Date Range
Late Saxon/Earlier Medieval						
F100	Saint Neots	6	5	0.833	3 [4] beam slot 9 [10] gully	AD900-1100
Total		6	5	0.833		AD900-1100
Earlier Medieval						
F100	Saint Neots	1	6	6.00	5 [6] gully	AD900-1100
F205	Stamford ware	1	6	6.00	7 [8] ditch	AD900-1200
F301-F303	Sandy/Calcareous coarse ware	2	10	5.00	5 [6] gully, 7 [8] ditch	AD1100-1400
F330	Shelly Coarse ware	5	22	4.40	5 [6] gully, 7 [8] ditch	AD1100-1400
F319	Lyveden/Stanion A ware	1	17	17.00	7 [8] ditch	?AD1150-?1400
Total		10	61	6.10		
Site Total		16	66	4.125		

Table 3: The medieval and later pottery and miscellaneous finds by fabric/material, number and weight (grams) by context.

Context	Fabric/Ware	No	Weight (g)	Comments
POTTERY				
3 [4] beam slot	F100 – St Neots ware	2	2	Join, two tiny fragments, reduced black, dense crushed fossil shell, AD900-1100 – or possibly slightly earlier.
5 [6] gully	F302/303 – Sandy Coarse ware	1	3	Grey black body, misc., calcite, quartz and ?chert/flint inclusions up to 20mm. Early medieval, ?AD110-?1400.
5	F301/302 Reduced/Calcareous Sandy Coarse ware	1	7	Convex base, reduced black externally, pale buff internally. Hand-made. AD1100-1400.
5	F100 – St Neots ware	1	6	Base, buff interior, sooted exterior, AD900-1100.
5	F330– Shelly Coarse ware	4	15	Misc. hand-made body sherds, three with traces of external sooting, AD1100-1400.

5	F319 – Lyveden/Stanion A ware	1	17	Hard fired body sherds, grey fabric, buff surfaces. ?AD1150-1400.
7 [8] ?ditch	F330 – Shelly Coarse ware	1	7	Body, externally sooted AD1100-1400.
7	F205 – Stamford ware	1	6	Grey wheel thrown body, fine dense quartz temper, ?Stamford fabrics A/G (Kilmurry 1980). AD900-1200.
9 [10] ditch	F100 – St Neots ware	4	3	Possibly all one pot, fine thin walled.
MISC				
5 [6]	Fired clay	1	17	Calcareous and ironstone inclusions – similar to Lyveden/Stanion A ware..
FLINT				
7 [8]		1		Tertiary Flake
7		1		Re-touched flake.

Site/ Parish: 17 Mill Lane, Kislingbury, Northants. Accession No.: NH_MLK 2014 Document Ref: kislingbury2.docx Material: pottery & flint Site Type: village core	Submitter: J. Browning Identifier: D. Sawday – pottery *L. Cooper - flint* Date of Identification: 04.02.2014 Method of Recovery: evaluation Job Number: 14-030

Appendix 2: The Animal Bones

Jennifer Browning

Introduction and Methods

Animal bones recovered by hand during the evaluation were rapidly scanned to assess preservation and variety and therefore provide an indication of the faunal potential, should the site progress to excavation.. Three different contexts dating from the medieval period produced faunal material, which included a ditch fill (6) in Trench 1and two ditch fills in Trench 3 (9) and (11). All the bones were hand-recovered and none were recovered through environmental sampling. The bones were examined macroscopically and their preservation was assessed using criteria defined by Harland et al (2003).

The Assemblage

Eight animal bone fragments were recovered during the evaluation and the taxa included horse and pig. No large concentrations of bones were present. Both fresh and old breaks were evident, resulting in an assemblage with few complete bones, however fragmentation was not extensive. The surface condition of the fragments was

good or fair and the well-preserved surfaces permitted identification of fine knife marks and gnawing. Fused and unfused bones were present within the sample, indicating the presence of both adults and juveniles at the site.

Discussion

The condition of the bones recovered during this work suggests that there is good bone preservation at the site. This brief examination confirms the presence of domestic mammals, including horse and pig. The survival of articular ends allowed the assessment of the state of fusion, which can provide information on age and in a larger sample may allow some biometrical data to be collected. Examples of butchery marks and gnawing have survived, which suggests potential to recover useful information concerning the exploitation and disposal of animal resources at the site.

However, should any further excavation take place, it would be important to recover a larger sample of bones, if present, to maximise the available information. Assemblage size is frequently a limiting factor in the analysis of faunal remains. Sites in medieval village cores often produce poorly-preserved faunal assemblages (Thomas, forthcoming) and further evidence is needed to increase understanding of the economic relationship between the town and the countryside (Monckton 2006, 283). Material from any future work could be compared with assemblages from rural settlements in the wider area, such as West Cotton (Albarella and Davis 2010) and Burystead and Langham Road (Davis 2009).

Trench	Feature	Cut	Context	Preservation	No.	Taxa	Bone	Comments
1	ditch	6	5	2	1	horse	humerus	6 fragments, distal fused. Gnawed.
3	ditch	10	9	2	6	large mammal	shaft fragments	1 fragment has fine cut marks.
3	ditch	12	11	3	1	pig	femur	Distal shaft. Distal unfused

Table 1: Basic catalogue of material

References

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Appendix 3: The Charred Plant Remains

Rachel Small

Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Kislingbury, Northants. Soil samples were taken from two contexts, a possible ditch and a beam slot, which date to the medieval period (pers. comm. Browning 2014). The samples were taken to assess the potential for them to contain charred plant remains, a useful indictor of activities on the site associated with agriculture and/or human occupation on site and nearby.

Methods

The two bulk samples, primarily clay based, were wet sieved in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm mesh sieve. The flotation fractions (flots) were transferred into plastic boxes and air dried. The residues were also air dried and the fraction over 4mm sorted for all finds which are included in the relevant sections of this report. The flots were sorted for plant remains using a x10-40 stereo microscope. The plant remains were identified by comparison with modern reference material available at ULAS and were counted and tabulated below (table 1). The plant names follow Stace (1991).

Results

Both of the samples contained charred plant remains in low numbers. The specimens were abraded and broken which led to a difficulty in identification, and may suggest some soil disturbance. Charcoal was found in low quantities and consisted of small flecks below 2mm in size and larger pieces approximately 4mm in length.

Cereal grains which could be identified were free-threshing wheats, rye (*Secale cereal)* and bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum/durum)*, which is typical of the medieval period. Another food plant identified was a fragment of hazel nut shell (*Corylus avellana* L.*)* recovered from the flot and a larger piece from the coarse fraction of sample one. Hazel nuts are edible and the wood has many uses, such as fuel and basketry.

Weed seeds were recovered and included goosefoots (*Chenopodium* spp.) cabbage family (cf. *Brassica* spp.), stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula* L.), very common in the medieval period, and grasses (*Poacea*e). A straw node of a *grass plant* was also present in Sample 1. These weeds are associated with arable or disturbed land (Stace 1991). Uncharred seeds and modern rootlets were present suggesting the samples had been subjected to a level of soil disturbance.

Even though low numbers were present the ratios are consistent with the accidental/deliberate burning of food preparation debris – weed seeds similar in size to grains picked out – and the burning of food spillage (Van der Veen 2007),

commonly found in domestic fires. The hearth would have been swept clean, during which the debris entered the beam slot and ditch intentionally/accidently.

Sample	Context	Litres	Carbonised grains	Carbonised chaff	Carbonised seeds	Carbonised nut shell	Uncarbonised seeds	Charcoal flecks (2mm and under)	Charcoal 4mm+	Notes
1	5	8	++ (20)	-	+ (9)	+ (1)	+ (10)	+	+	Rootlets common. 2 x rye and 2 x bread wheat grains. 2 x *Chenopodium esp* ., 1 x *Brassica esp* ., and 1 x *Anthemis cotula* seeds. Hazel nut shell present.
2	3	3	+ (12)	-	+ (3)	-	+ (8)	+	+	Rootlets common. 1 x *Poaceae esp.* seed and node.

Table 1: Charred plant remains. Key: + present, ++ moderate amount, +++ abundant.

Conclusion

Due to the low concentration of remains, these were counted during assessment and no further work is necessary on these samples. This assemblage was 'poor' in comparison to other medieval samples but has provided evidence for crop processing, food preparation and consumption near to/on site. Sampling of soil is recommended if any future excavation takes place on site and nearby.

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Stace, C. 1991. *New Flora of the British Isles*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Van der Veen, M. 2007. Formation processes of desiccated and carbonized plant remains the identification of routine practice. *Journal of Archaeological Science* 34: 968 - 990.

Appendix 4: List of contexts

Context	Cut	Below	Description	Trench No:
1	2		Beam slot fill	1
2		1	Beam slot cut	1
3	4		Beam slot fill	1
4		3	Beam slot cut	1
5	6		Gully fill	1
6		5	Gully cut	1
7	8		Feature fill	1
8		7	Feature cut	1
9	10		Ditch fill	3
10		9	Ditch cut	3
11	12		Ditch fill	3
12		11	Ditch cut	3
13	14		Post hole fill	2
14		13	Post hole cut	2
15	16		Large ditch fill	2

16		15	Large ditch cut	2
17	18		Fill of gully	2
18		17	Cut of gully	2
19	20		Fill of ditch	2
20		19	Cut of ditch	2

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