



**University of
Leicester**

Archaeological Services

**An Archaeological Evaluation
on Land at Great Lane, Hackleton, Northamptonshire**

NGR: SP 81086 55174



Stephen Baker

ULAS Report No 2014-094


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**An Archaeological Evaluation on
Land at Great Lane, Hackleton, Northamptonshire**

(SP 81086 55174)

Stephen Baker

For: Penland Estates

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An Archaeological Evaluation on Land at Great Lane, Hackleton, Northamptonshire

Stephen Baker

Summary

University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) carried out an archaeological evaluation by trial trenching on land at Great Lane, Hackleton, Northamptonshire (SP 81086 55174) The work was undertaken as part of an archaeological impact assessment in advance of a proposed residential development.

The evaluation revealed archaeological deposits consisting of ditches, gullies, postholes representing property/land boundaries or structures and dating from the late Saxon through to the medieval period and further features and surviving wall foundations dating to the Post-Medieval/Modern period. Other undated archaeological deposits were uncovered which, together with residually recovered worked flint may hint at prehistoric activity at or in the vicinity of the site.

The site archive will be held by ULAS, accession no. NH_GCH.2014, until a recipient organization for Northamptonshire has been established.

1. Introduction

An archaeological evaluation was carried out by ULAS for Penland Estates in March 2014 on land at Great Lane, Hackleton, Northamptonshire (SP 81086 55174). This was undertaken in advance of an application for proposed residential development.

The Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site lies within an area of archaeological interest. Therefore, the Assistant Archaeological Advisor of Northamptonshire County Council (NCC) as archaeological advisor to the planning authority, require that an evaluation by trial trenching is undertaken as detailed in their brief. University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) has been commissioned to undertake the work on behalf of the client.

The work was required in order to assess the nature, extent, date and significance of any archaeological deposits which might be present in order to determine the potential impact upon them from future development proposals.

This document presents the results of the archaeological field evaluation (AFE) at the above site, in accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF): Section 12 Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment, and follows a Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Work (Clay 2013), as agreed with NCC. The fieldwork specified below is intended to provide preliminary indications of character and extent of any heritage assets in order that the potential impact of the development on such remains may be assessed by the Planning Authority.

2. Site Description, Topography and Geology

The application comprises pasture fields covering c. 1.1 ha. east of Great Lane and north of modern housing on Elm Way and Lyne Walk in north-east Hackleton. The area is centred at National Grid Reference SK 81086 55174 and it lies within Piddington with Hackleton parish at c.100m OD.

The British Geological Survey indicates that the underlying geology is Bilsworth Limestone formation - Limestone (British Geological Survey website). The drift geology is Till, Mid Pleistocene - Diamicton (British Geological Survey website). The overlying soils are known as Ashley, typical Stagnogleyic argillic brown earth soils. These consist of fine loamy over clayey soils, some calcareous and non-calcareous clayey soils (Soil Survey of England and Wales, Sheet 3 Midland and Western England).



Figure 1 Location plan.

3. Archaeological and Historical Background

A Cultural Heritage Technical Development Appraisal has been prepared by Gifford Ltd (2009). This indicated that the proposed development area was close to the historic core of Hackleton and Iron Age and Roman remains were known from within a 1km radius. The HER indicates that earthwork and cropmark evidence of the shrunken medieval/post-medieval village lie within and immediately to the south of the application area.

Geophysical survey by Stratascan (Richardson 2013) has identified an area of ridge and furrow cultivation and an earthwork bank aligned north-south.

Northamptonshire County Council, as archaeological advisors to the planning authority require that an evaluation by trial trenching is undertaken to clarify the information from the HER and geophysical survey and provide greater understanding of the potential impact of the development.

4. Aims and Objectives

The evaluation was considered in light of the East Midlands Research Framework (Cooper ed. 2006) and strategy (Knight et al 2012), along with targeting national research aims, highlighted as English Heritage's critical research priorities for the Roman period (EH 2010, EH 2012). Potential research objectives that this scheme might contribute towards include the following:

Late Iron Age (Willis 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2010)

There are Iron Age settlements in the vicinity of the area. Information on the sequence and chronology of settlements may be recovered and palaeoenvironmental evidence could provide information on agricultural practices and land use. Artefacts can provide evidence for evidence for craft industry and exchange across broad landscape areas.

The Roman Period (Taylor 2006; Knight et al 2012; English Heritage 2012)

There are several Roman sites close to the area including enclosures and a Roman road. The evaluations may contribute to knowledge on Iron Age – Roman transitions in rural settlement, landscape and society. Artefacts may identify trade links and economy.

Medieval (Lewis 2006; Knight et al 2012)

The area lies close to the medieval village core and may contribute to the study of rural medieval settlement and East Midlands Research Strategy 6.7.7.2 (Knight et al 2012, 94; Lewis 2006).

These research aims have been identified based on the current state of knowledge within the area of the scheme. The research aims will be re-assessed and updated during the course of the fieldwork.

The main objectives of the evaluation were:

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

Within the stated project objectives, the principal aim of the evaluation was 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.

5. Methodology

A *c.* 6% sample by trial trenching of the area was proposed, comprising *c.* 384m², the equivalent of eight 30m by 1.6m trenches.

Topsoil and overburden was removed carefully in level spits, under continuous archaeological supervision using a mechanical excavator using a toothless bucket. Trenches were excavated down to the top of archaeological deposits or natural undisturbed ground, whichever is reached first. All excavation by machine and hand was undertaken with a view to avoid damage to archaeological deposits or features which appear worthy of preservation in situ or more detailed investigation than for the purposes of evaluation. Where structures, features or finds appear to merit preservation in situ, they were to be adequately protected from deterioration

Trenches were examined by hand cleaning and any archaeological deposits located were planned at an appropriate scale. Archaeological deposits were sample-excavated by hand as appropriate to establish the stratigraphic and chronological sequence, recognising and excavating structural evidence and recovering economic, artefactual and environmental evidence. Particular attention was paid to the potential for buried palaeosols and waterlogged deposits in consultation with ULAS's environmental officer.

Measured drawings of all archaeological features were prepared at a scale of 1:20 and tied into an overall site plan. All plans were tied into the Ordnance Survey National Grid. Relative spot heights were taken as appropriate. Sections of any excavated archaeological features were drawn at an appropriate scale and all sections were levelled and tied to the Ordnance Survey Datum, or a permanent fixed benchmark. Trench locations were tied in to the Ordnance Survey National Grid. The trenches were backfilled and levelled at the end of the evaluation. The contexts for cuts are shown in square brackets, e.g. [60], while fills are in round brackets e.g. (34).

The work followed the approved design specification (Clay 2012) and adhered to the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) *Code of Conduct* and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations* (2008).

6. Results

Archaeological deposits were uncovered and recorded in six of the eight trenches excavated. Trenches 1 and 3 contained no archaeological finds or deposits, the former containing significant colluvium deposits and the latter heavily disturbed by land drainage systems.

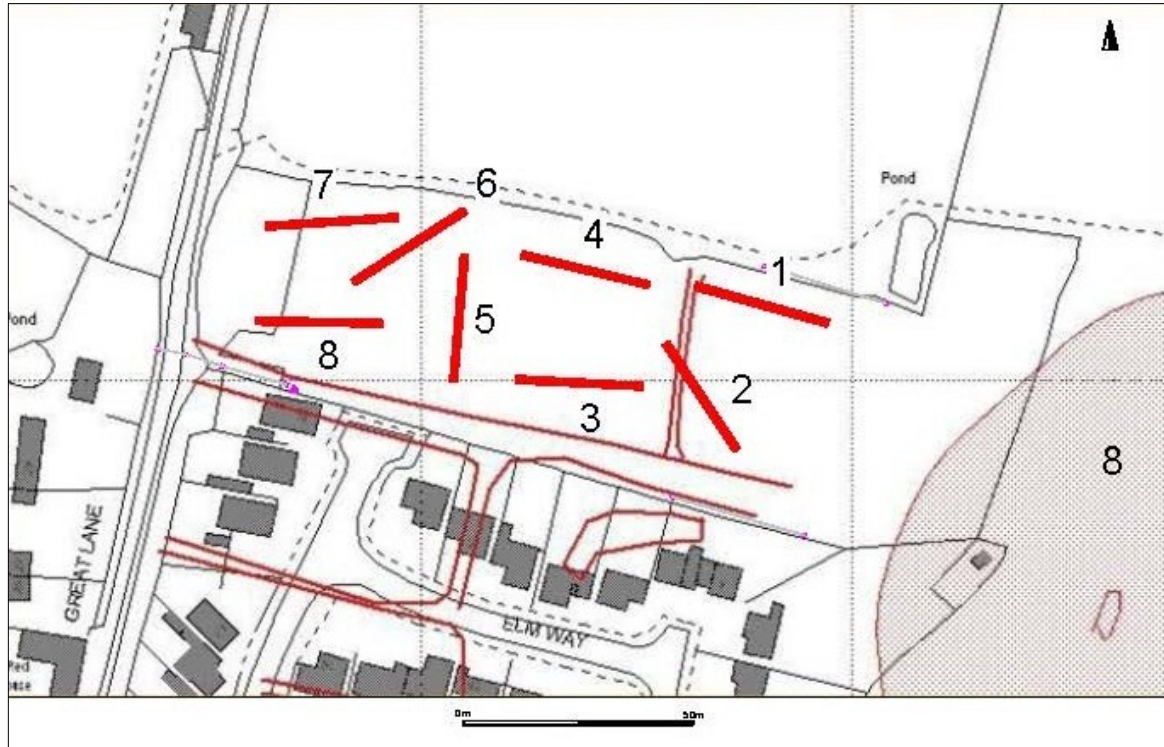


Figure 2: Trench plan

The topsoil (**01**) was consistent across the site and was composed of a mid-dark brown sandy-clay loam with occasional/frequent small rounded pebbles. It ranged in thickness from 0.14-0.30m. Below this was a mid-grey-brown silt-clay subsoil, ranging in thickness from 0.10-0.50m (**04**). Natural substratum was reached in all trenches and consisted of gravels and clay, and was reached at 0.29-0.77m (see Table 1 below for full details).

Table 1 Trench and context details

TRENCH	ORIENTATION	LENGTH AND WIDTH (metres)	TOPSOIL THICKNESS (metres)	SUBSOIL THICKNESS (metres)	DESCRIPTION	TRENCH DEPTH (MIN-MAX metres)
1	NW-SE	30 x 1.60	0.24-0.30	0.23-0.50	No archaeological deposits	0.57-0.86
2	NNW-SSE	28 x 1.60	0.13-0.24	0.13-0.24	Gully [07], (05), (06); Gully [10] (08); (09).	0.58-0.69
3	E-W	28 x 1.60	0.14-0.23	0.16-0.20	No archaeological deposits, substantial disturbance by field drains	0.39-0.52
4	NW-SE	28 x 1.60	90mm-0.20m	0.10-0.17	Gullies [12], (11); [24] (22) (23); post-hole [14] (13); pit [35], (34); undefined feature [21]	0.50-0.88
5	N-S	28 x 1.60	0.21-0.26	0.24-0.33	Gullies [30] (29); [60] (59); ditches [32] (31); post-holes [28] (27); [37], (36); [39] (38); pit [61], (62).	0.50-0.64
6	E-W	30 x 1.60	0.18-0.24	0.10-0.31	Wall (19), gullies [18] [26] (25), post-hole [51], disturbance from field drains	0.30-0.58
7	E-W	29 x 1.60	0.14-0.21	0.20-0.34	Wall (19), gullies [43], (42) [58], (57); pit [56], (55); ditch [54], (52).	0.33-0.56
8	E-W	28 x 1.60	0.17-0.23	0.10-0.30	Gullies [47] [49], modern features	0.38-0.58

6.1 Archaeological Features

Trench 1

No archaeological deposits were recorded in this trench which was located downslope towards the eastern limit of the proposed development area and an existing watercourse. Colluvium deposits were observed in this trench above a mid-light yellow brown silty-sand natural geology.

Trench 2

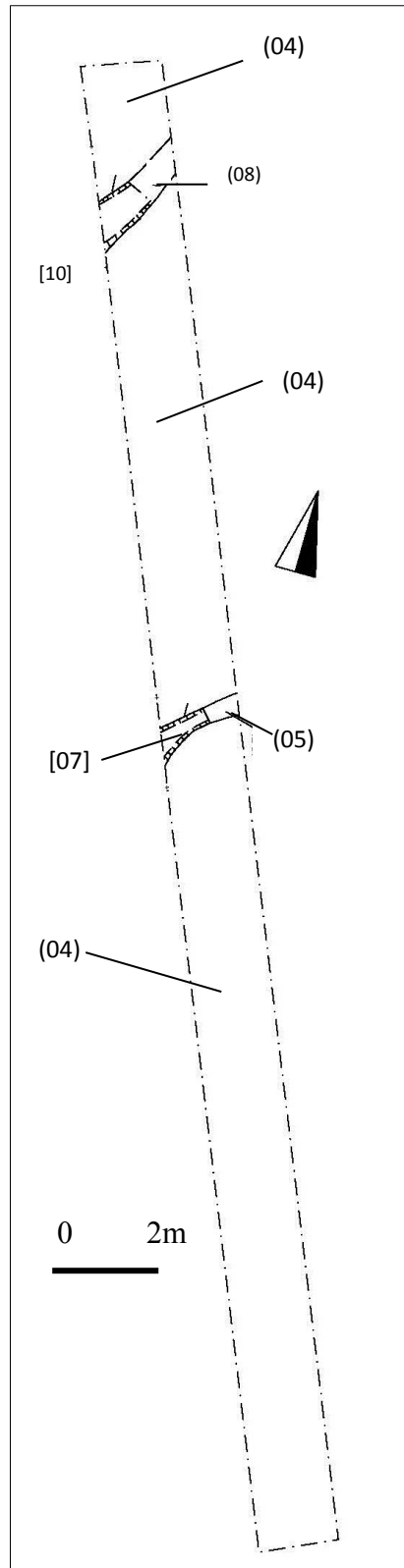


Figure 3 Plan of Trench 2

Trench 2 contained two gullies [07] and [10], both on a north-east to south-west alignment. These cut a mid-grey-brown silt-clay subsoil (04).



Figure 4 Trench 2, looking south-east

Fifteen metres from the south-west end of the trench was a gully [07]. It was aligned north-east to south-west. This was 1.6m long, continuing into the trench sections and 1.20m in wide and 0.60m deep. It had fairly steep sides, a narrow concave base and contained two fills; a firm backfilled mid-brown-grey orange mottled silty-clay (05), 0.3m deep, with infrequent small/medium stones, and a firm light-brown/yellow silty-clay deposit (06), 0.1m deep, possibly accumulating from erosion to the north-west side. No finds were recovered.

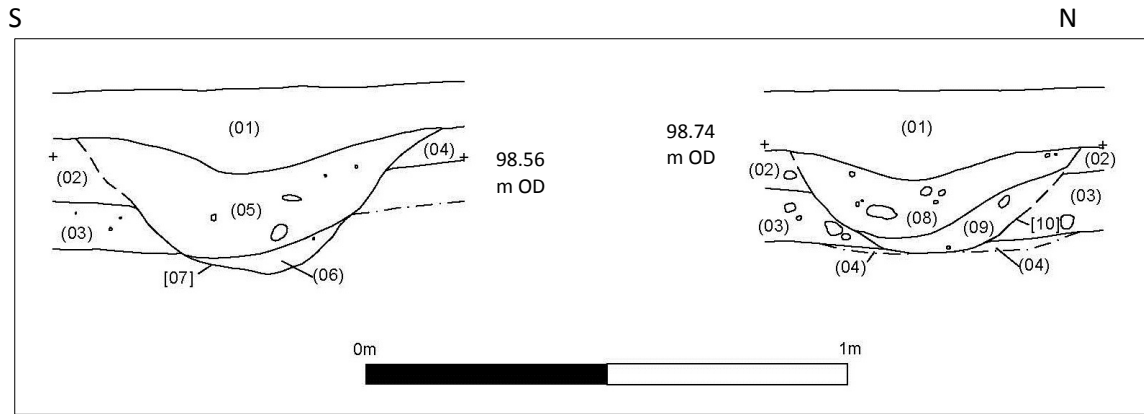


Figure 5 Sections across gullies [7] (left and [10] in Trench 2



Figure 6 Ditch [07] in trench 2, looking west

Gully [10] lay 3m from the north-east end of trench 2 and was aligned north-east to south-west. It was 1.6m long, continuing into the trench sections, 0.8m wide and 0.3m deep. It had concave sides and a flat base. It had steep curving sides and a wide concave base and appeared to cut through the subsoil. It contained two fills; a firm mid-brown silty-clay (08) backfill, 0.28 deep, with semi-frequent angular stones and flint fragments, and a light-brown/orange sandy-clay (09) silting up, 0.35m deep, with infrequent flint/chalk flecks. No finds were recovered.



Figure 7: Ditch [10] in Trench 2, looking south-west

Trench 3

No archaeological deposits were recorded in trench 3, the potential for the survival subject to extensive disturbance from modern field drainage systems. The trench was excavated down to the mid-light yellow-brown clay, with crushed chalk fragments, natural geology.

Trench 4

Trench 4 contained two gullies [12] and [24], both running on a north-south alignment, a pit [35], a post-hole [14] and an undefined feature [21]. It was excavated down to the light brown/yellow clay natural substratum.

Gully [12] was located 3.5m from the east end of the trench. It had moderately sloping sides and a wide flattish base. It contained firm orange mottled light-brown sandy clay (11), 0.17m deep and 1.1m wide, probably a result of natural silting-up, with infrequent small stones and flint fragments. No archaeological finds were recovered.

Gully [24] was located 21m from the east end of the trench on the same alignment and was 1.1m wide with a maximum surviving depth of 0.41m. The sides were fairly steep sides and the base flattish. It contained two fills. Fill (22), 0.29m deep, was a firm mixed brown-yellow silty-clay with infrequent small stones representing the main disuse backfill of the feature. Animal bone was recovered from this deposit. Fill (23), 0.12m deep, composed of firm light-brown/yellow clay, with frequent limestone, chalk and flint fragments, represents a silting up of the feature and was devoid of finds. This feature appears to pre-date undefined feature [21].

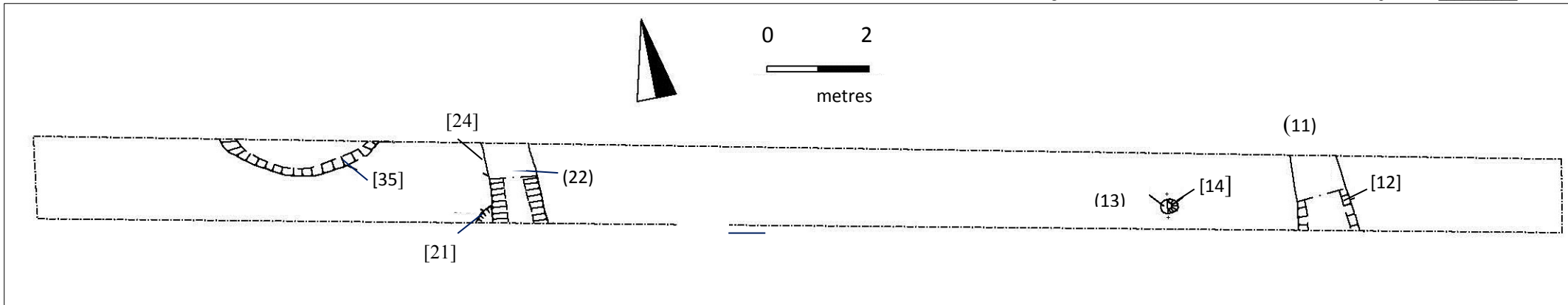


Figure 8 Plan of trench 4

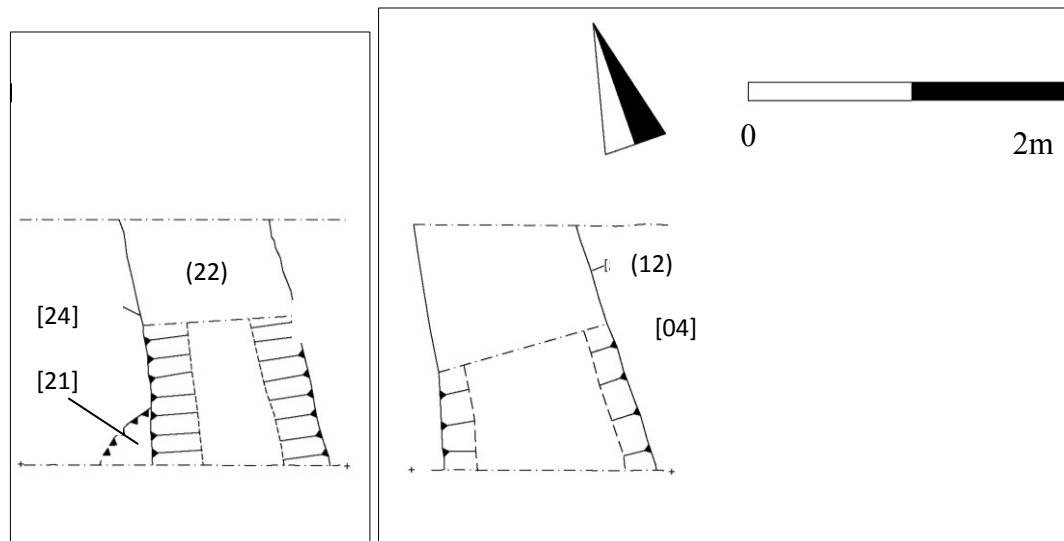


Figure 9 Plan of Gullies [24] and [12] and feature [21] in trench 4



Figure 10: Trench 4, looking west

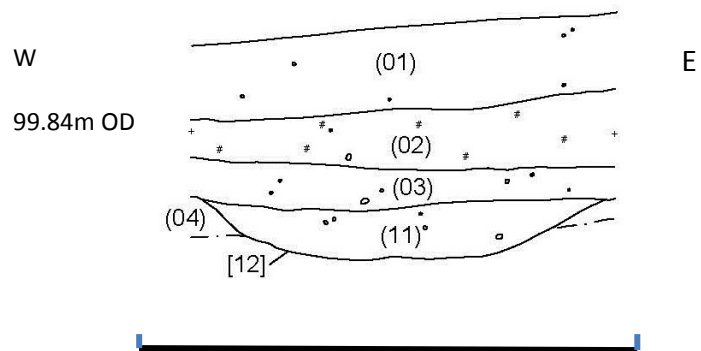


Figure 11 W-E Section across Gully 12 in Trench 4. Scale bar 1m.

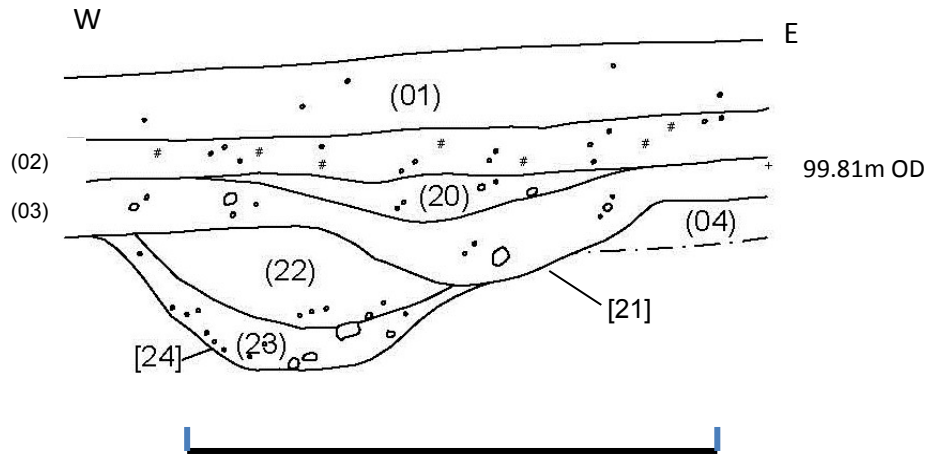


Figure 12 W-E Section across Gully [24] and feature [21] in Trench 4. Scale bar 1m.

Feature [21] was partially revealed and excavated and may be the remains of a furrow (20). It did not contain any archaeological finds.

Pit [35], 3.3m in diameter, was located 3m from the north-west end of the trench, 2m north of gully [24] and was sealed by the colluvium layer (03) observed in the bulk section. It was sub-circular in plan, running beneath the edge of the trench, with steep, irregular sides and a flattish base. Fill (34), 0.23 deep, a firm light-brown/yellow silty-clay, with frequent charcoal flecks and limestone fragments probably represents a natural silting/erosion of the feature. Animal bone was recovered from this deposit.

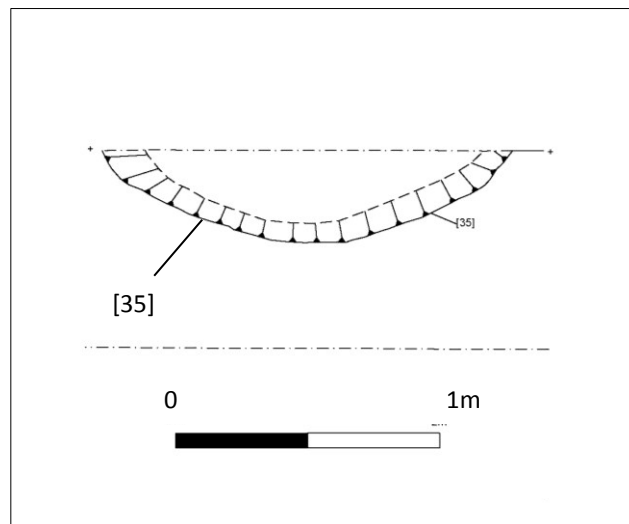


Figure 13 Plan of pit [35] in Trench 4

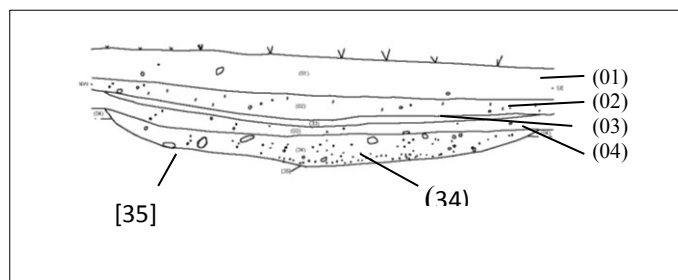


Figure 14 W-E section of pit [35] in Trench 4

Post-hole [14] was 0.3m diameter and 0.23m deep. It was located 7.2m from the south-east end of the trench and 2.2m north of gully [12], was circular in plan with steep sides and a narrow concave base and its single backfill (13), of firm orange mottled grey-brown silty-clay with infrequent small stones, contained late Saxon/early Medieval Saint Neots pottery (see Sawday, below).

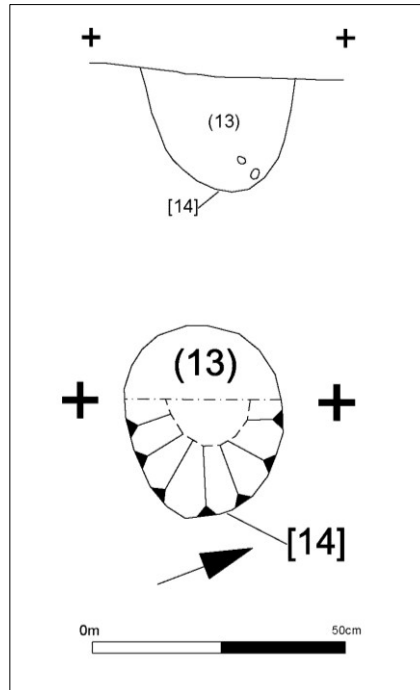


Figure 15 Plan and S-N section of post-hole [14] in Trench 4



Figure 16: Post-hole [14], looking north-west

Trench 5

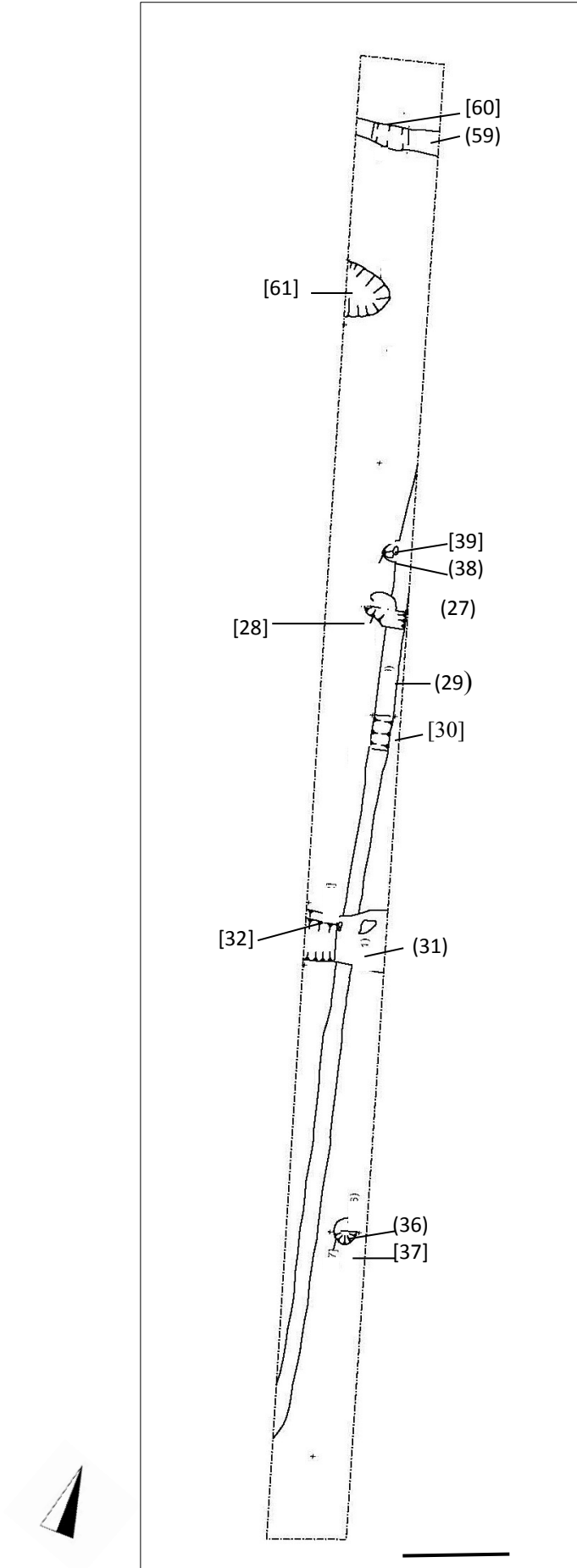


Figure 17 Plan of Trench 5. Scale bar 2m

Trench 5 contained two gullies [30] and [60], post-holes [28] and [37], a ditch [32] and pit [62]. It was excavated down to the level of the light brown/yellow clay, with frequent crushed chalk, natural substratum.

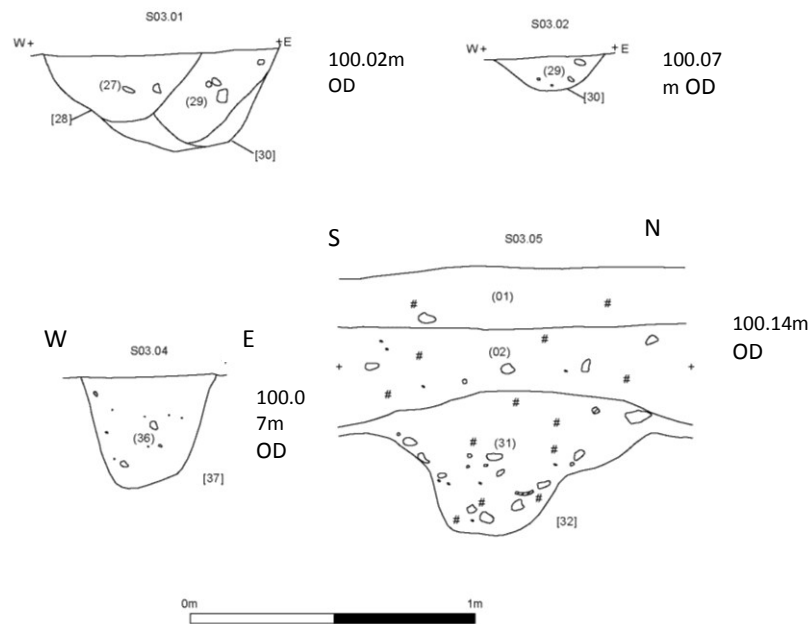


Fig.18 Sections across [30], [37] and [32]

Gully [30] runs along trench 5 in a north-south alignment for 18m+ from the south-west to the north-east bulk. It has a typical width of 0.49m, a maximum depth of 0.13m and is cut by both postholes [28] and ditch [32]. The sides are slightly concave and the break with the central and concave base gradual. It contains a single fill (29) of a friable mid-dark brown-grey clayey-silt, with occasional small-large sub-rounded stones and sub-angular sandstone fragments. No finds were associated with this feature.

Ditch [32] runs in a south-west/north-east alignment for 1.6m across trench 5, 10.70m from its south-east end, cutting earlier gully [30]. It has a depth of 1m and a maximum depth of 0.49m. The south side is straight at approximately 45° and the north side is more gradual before breaking to a steeper gradient to the central and concave base. The single backfill (31), a mid-dark brown grey clayey-silt, with sub-angular sandstone fragments and occasional unworked flint fragments, contains late Saxon/early medieval Saint Neots and medieval Shelley coarse ware medieval pottery (see Sawday, below) and animal bone.



Figure 19: Ditch [32], looking west

Post-hole [37], isolated to the east of gully [30] and 5.2m from the south-east end of the trench, is 0.48 in diameter, 0.40m deep and sub-circular in plan. The sides are steep and straight and the base central and concave. The single backfill (36), a mid-dark brown grey clayey-silt, with occasional small sub-rounded stones, is devoid of archaeological finds.

Post-hole [28], cutting gully [30], is located 17.5m from the south east end of the trench. It was sub-circular with a depth of 0.23m and a width of 0.55m. The sides were steep and the base central and concave. The single backfill, a friable mid-dark brownish grey clayey-silt with occasional small/large sub-angular stones, contained Shelley coarse ware medieval pottery, as did ditch [32].



Figure 20: Post-hole [28] and gully [30], looking north

An isolated possible pit feature or linear terminus **[61]** was located approximately 4m from the northwest end of trench 5 extending beneath the western bulk. It was a 1.0m wide with a maximum depth of 0.22. The single fill (**62**), a firm orange-brown sandy-clay, with infrequent small stones and flints, was devoid of finds.

Gully **[60]**, ran across trench 5 on a east/west alignment 0.70m from the northern end. The sides were steeply sloping but the feature shallow at 50mm depth and 0.45m wide. The single fill (**59**), was a firm orange-brown silty-clay with infrequent small stones and flints. No finds were recovered from this deposit.

Trench 6

Trench 6 contained several features, including a wall structure (**19**), two gullies **[18]** and **[26]**, and modern field drainage systems running in east/west direction. The trench was excavated down to the light yellow brown clay natural.

Structure (**19**) was a silty-clay matrix-bonded wall/foundation structure of 90% sandstone running approximately north/south across the trench, 21.60m from the north-west end, with a return running east/west and extending beneath the north-west bulk. The structure was 2.10m on the north/south recorded remains and 0.86m wide. The individual blocks used ranged from 580x400x80mm to 150x110x40mm. The bonding material was a mid-light yellow brown silty-clay with some crushed sandstone and chalk fragments and there was some evidence for the presence of a rubble core. This wall is also observed continuing in trench 7 (see below). No datable finds were associated with this structure.

Gullies **[18]**, 3m from the north-east end, and **[26]** (**25**), 2m from the south-west end were partially excavated and contained post-medieval pottery.

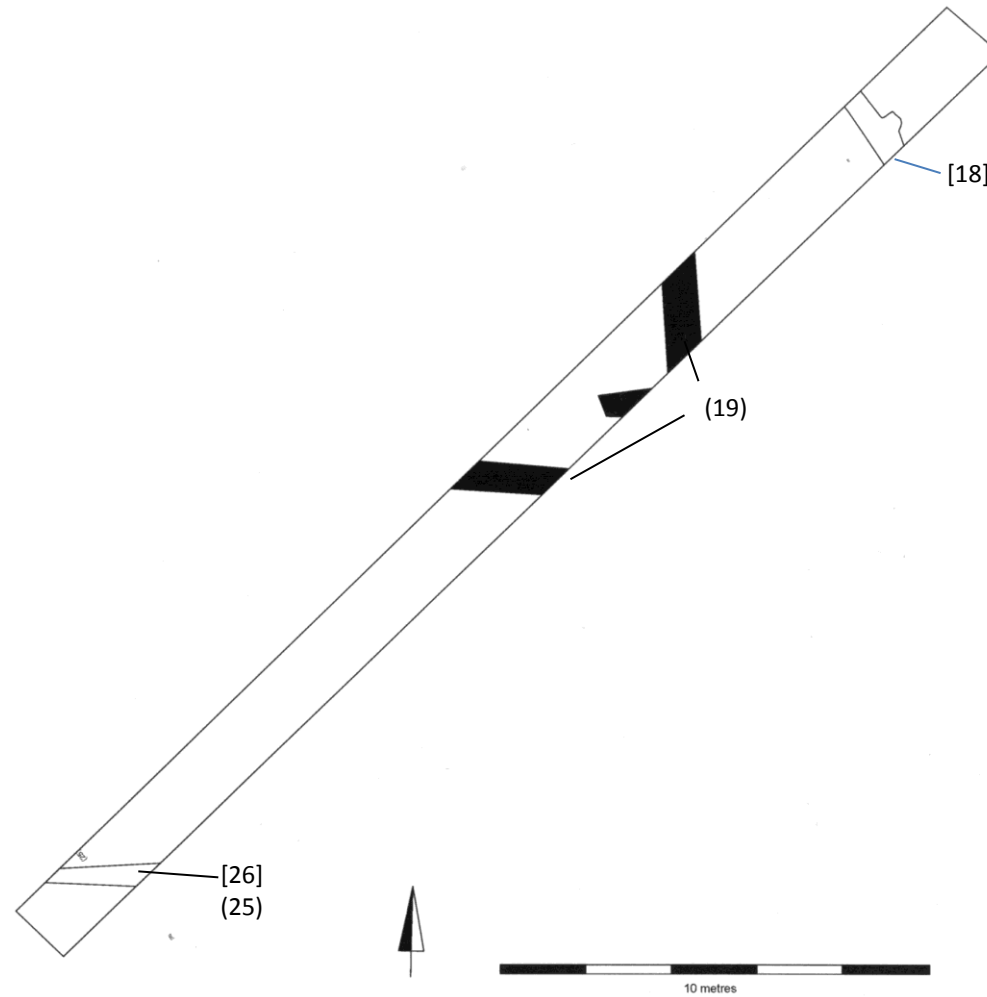


Figure 21 Plan of Trench 6



Figure 22: Trench 06, looking south-west



Figure 23: Wall (19), looking south, trench 06



Figure 24: Wall (19), looking west, trench 06

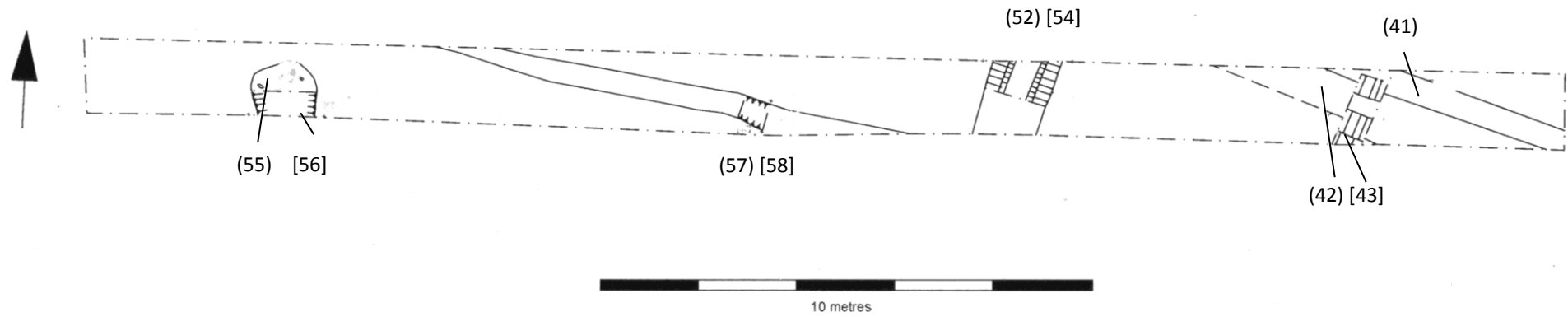


Figure 25 Plan of Trench 7

Trench 7

Trench 7 contained wall structure (41/42) [43], possible ditch [54], gully [58] and pit [56]. The trench was excavated to the level of natural light yellow-brown clay geology.

Structure (41/42) [43], appear to be a continuation of east-west wall structure (19), again devoid of associated finds was observed emerging from the south-east bulk 1m from the eastern end.

Ditch [54] was located 19m from the western end of trench 7 running on a north-east/south-west alignment. It was 1.6m long, 0.44 deep and 1.5m wide. The sides were slightly wavy, gradual at first then breaking to a steeper slope to the central and concave base. The final fill (52) was a grey-brown sandy-clay with orange mottling and infrequent small stones overlying a slumped primary fill consisting of yellow brown sandy-clay with frequent crushed chalk and flint fragments. Both deposits were devoid of finds.



Figure 26: Ditch [54], looking north

Gully [58] ran across trench 7 on a north-west alignment, emerging from the southern bulk at 12.2m and disappearing under the northern at 7.3m from the western trench end. The sides were moderately steep but the feature was shallow with a width of 0.62m and depth of 90mm. Its single fill (57), a mid-brown friable clayey-silt contained occasional small/large sub-rounded/sub-angular stones, and was devoid of finds.

Pit [56] was located approximately 2.3m from the western end of trench 7. It was sub-circular in plan with straight sides where to the limit of excavation, approximately 0.34m

in depth. It had a width of 1.28. The single fill (55) was a friable mid-dark brownish grey clayey-silt with occasional small/medium sub-rounded stones. No finds were recovered from this deposit.

Trench 8

Trench 8 contained two excavated gullies [47] and [49] and some field drainage and other features with a top soil fill and of modern date.

Gully [47], 16.80m from the western end and on a north-south alignment runs across the trench at a length of 1.60m extending beneath both bulks. It was 0.93m wide and 0.40m deep at the excavated section. Curvilinear in plan, the sides were slightly wavy and generally concave with a gradual break with the central and concave base. The single fill (46), a friable mid-grey brown silty-clay, with occasional small/large sub-angular/sub-rounded stones and rare charcoal flecks, was devoid of finds.

Gully [49] also runs across trench on a north-south alignment 9.20m from the western end. It is 1.60m long, 0.76m wide and 0.37m deep where excavated. It is also slightly curvilinear in plan, with slightly wavy sides and central concave base. Single fill (48), a friable mid-grey brown silty-clay, with occasional small/medium sub-rounded/sub-angular stones, was devoid of finds.



Figure 27 Gully [49], looking north

7. The Post Roman Pottery

Deborah Sawday

Methodology

The pottery, 41 sherds, weighing 704 grams, and a vessel rim equivalent of 0.715, (calculated by adding together the circumference of the surviving rim sherds, where one vessel equals 1.00) 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

The results are shown below (Table 2).

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

Fabric	Common Name	No.	Gr.	Av. weight	Contexts	Date Range
Late Saxon/Earlier Medieval						
F100	Saint Neots	3	2		Tr 4 (11) ditch, Tr 4 (13) post hole	AD900-1100
Total		3	2	0.66		AD900-1100
Earlier Medieval						
F100	Saint Neots	3	12	4.0	Tr 5 (3) layer, Tr 5 (31) ditch	
F130	Northampton ware	1	29	29.0	Tr 5 (31) ditch	AD900-75, ?11 th C
F302-F304	Reduced/Sandy coarse ware	1	6	6.0	Tr 5 (31) ditch	?AD1100-1400
F330	Shelly Coarse ware	26	526	20.231	Tr 5 (3) layer, Tr 5 (31) ditch, Tr 5 (27) [28] post-hole	AD1100-1400
Total		31	573	18.48		
Medieval						
F346	Bourne ware	1	16		Tr 6 above post-hole [51] (50)	AD1200-1400
Total		1	16	16.0		
Post Medieval/Modern						
F330	Shelly Coarse ware	2	14	7.0	Tr 6 (25) [26] gully	
F426/7	Iron Glazed/Local; Coarse ware	1	53	53.0	Tr 6 (25) [26] gully	Post Medieval
F427	Local Coarse ware	2	45	22.5	Tr 6 (1) topsoil, (2) sub-soil	Post Medieval
F429	White Salt Glazed Stoneware	1	1	1.0	Tr 4 (13) [14] post hole	AD 1720-1780
Total		6	113	18.8		
Site Total		41	704	17.17		

Discussion

A late Saxon presence in the area is indicated by a small number, of sherds in St Neots, and Northampton wares, the former associated with a ditch or gully and post hole, contexts 11 and 13; perhaps part of a timber structure. Activity appears to have continued during the earlier medieval and medieval periods, with residual later Saxon and an assemblage of 26 sherds, 526 grams of earlier medieval Shelly Coarse wares occurring in the back-fill of the ditch 31, the layer 3, and the post hole [28]. A sherd of 13th or 14th century Bourne ware was the only find in context 50, above the post-hole [51].

Conclusion

Whilst the pottery assemblage was small, the range of fabrics and vessel forms present is evidence of activity within the historic core of the medieval village during the late Saxon and medieval and post medieval periods. The earlier medieval Shelly Coarse ware, in particular, included the joining fragments of several identifiable vessels, had an EVEs of 0.066 and an average sherd weight of 19.28 grams, (when the residual material is also taken into account), suggesting the survival of archaeological levels in the vicinity.

8. The charred plant remains

Rachel Small

Introduction

Excavations were carried out at Hackleton, Northamptonshire, and were directed by Steve Baker. Post-holes, ditches and gullies were found and dated to the Anglo-Saxon/medieval period. It is assumed they represent the remains of a village core which included property boundaries (S. Baker pers. comm.). During the excavations soil samples were taken from features to assess the potential for them to contain charred plant remains, a useful indicator of activities on the site associated with agriculture and/or human occupation on site and nearby.

Method

Four bulk samples, dated to the medieval period, were sieved, and these were primarily of clay. They 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. 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 3). The plant names follow Stace (1991).

Results

Charred plant remains were found in every sample but not in abundance. The specimens were very abraded and fragmented leading to difficulty in identification. Rootlets and snail shells were common in each sample, and worm egg shells were found in sample 1 suggesting soil disturbance.

Table 3 Charred plant remains. Key: + present, ++ moderate amount, +++ abundant.

Sample	Context	Cut	Description	Litres	Charred grains	Charred chaff	Charred seeds	Fruit stone/nut shell	Uncharred seeds	Charcoal flecks (less than 2mm)	Charcoal (2mm and larger)	Notes
1 (1/2)	31	32	Ditch	8	++	-	+	-	+	+	+	Rootlets common. Snail shells common. Worm egg shells rare. 1 x <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.; 1 x Poaceae. 12 grains - 3 x barley, 7 x bread wheat and 2 x <i>Cerealia</i> .
2 (1/2)	27	28	Posthole	6	++	-	+	+	-	+	+	Rootlets common. Snail shells common. 1 x <i>Chenopodium</i> sp.; 1 x Poaceae; 2 x unidentified charred seed. 1 x charred hazelnut shell. 26 grains - 1 x barley, 24 x bread wheat, 1 x <i>Cerealia</i> .
3 (2/2)	29	30	Gully	6	++	-	+	-	+	+	+	Rootlets common. Snail shells common. 3 x 3 sided Cyperaceae; 1 x <i>Vica/Pisum</i> . 23 grains - 2 bread wheat, 21 x <i>Cerealia</i> .
4 (1/2)	36	37	Posthole	8	++	-	-	+	+	+	+	Rootlets common. Snail shells common. 1 x charred hazel nut shell. 15 grains - 1 x barley, 4 x bread wheat, 10 x <i>Cerealia</i> .

Grains and chaff

Grains were common in each sample. Bread wheat (*Triticum aestivum/durum*) was the dominant crop. Barley (*Hordeum vulgare* L.) grains were also present but in lower numbers. Both of these crops are characteristic of the medieval period; they could have possibly been grown together. No chaff was identified in the samples.

Other food plants

Two fragments of hazel nut shell (*Corylus avellana* L.) were identified, one piece from sample 2 and the other from sample 4. Hazel nuts are edible and the wood has many uses, such as for fuel and basketry.

Charred (weed) seeds

Very few charred seeds were present. These included weeds of arable and waste land: small grasses (Poaceae) and beans (*Vica/Pisum*). Also, plants associated with wet, damp soils such as sedges (Cyperaceae) and goosefoots (*Chenopodium* spp). Beans are edible as well as the leaves of goosefoots, and so they may have been collected (Jones *et al.* 2004).

Discussion

Van der Veen (1992) believes that a minimum of 50 items in a sample is needed for a reliable interpretation of crop processing activities to be drawn, by considering the ratios of cereal grains, chaff and weed seeds, for example. These numbers were not present in the Hackleton samples. Generally, a sample with a high proportion of grain, and low numbers of chaff and weed seeds is suggestive of accidental/deliberate burning of food spillage (Jones 1984). The ashes of fires would have been swept and entered features associated with dwellings such as ditches, post-holes and gullies.

Conclusion

The samples from Hackleton contained charred plant remains in every sample but not in abundance. Food items were identified, such as bread wheat, barley and hazelnut. Very few weed seeds were identified but did provide evidence for the immediate/surrounding environment at the time – cultivated land. Not enough items were present to reliably interpret the meaning of each sample but the accidental/deliberate burning of food spillage seems likely. If further excavations are carried out on site or nearby, sampling of soil is recommended.

9. Conclusion

From the eight trenches excavated, six revealed archaeological evidence (trenches 2, and 4-8), the remaining trenches 1 and the heavily disturbed trench 3 contained no archaeological finds or deposits.

The archaeological evidence consisted of ditches/gullies pits and postholes dating from the late Saxon through to the post-medieval period. Those of the late Saxon and early medieval period probably represent field or property boundaries on the periphery of the village core. The masonry remains, observed in trenches 6 and 7, although undated are probably post-medieval and represent a late building of agricultural function on the site. The site overall was subject to disturbance by post-medieval and modern field drainage systems.

Plant remains were recovered from samples taken from the late Saxon and medieval contexts but these were not in abundance.

Overall the site revealed regionally significant evidence of the medieval settlement in this part Hackleton dating from the 11th-15th centuries

10. Archive

The site archive will be held by ULAS, accession number NH_GCH.2014, until an appropriate recipient organization is established for Northamptonshire.

The archive contains:

- 8 trench recording sheets
- Context summary records
- 40 context sheets
- 1 photographic recording sheet
- CD containing digital photographs and report
- Survey data
- Unbound copy of this report
- Thumbnail print of digital photographs
- 33mm black and white contact sheet and negatives

The report is listed on the Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) held by the Archaeological Data Service at the University of York, under ID: universi1-199738. Available at: <http://oasis.ac.uk/>

ID	OASIS entry summary
Project Name	
Summary	The evaluation revealed archaeological finds and deposits consisting of ditches/gullies, three dating to the medieval period; these may represent property or field boundaries. A further seven archaeological features were undated, but were of a similar composition and orientation and so may be contemporary. Four worked flint fragments of probable Neolithic / Bronze Age and Mesolithic or Upper Palaeolithic date were all found residually within the medieval ditches. These hint at prehistoric activity within the area.
Project Type	Evaluation
Project Manager	Patrick Clay
Project Supervisor	Stephen Baker
Previous/Future work	Previous: none / Future: unknown
Current Land Use	Pasture
Development Type	Residential
Reason for Investigation	NPPF, Section 12
Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition
Site Co ordinates	SP 69640 59370
Height OD	
Start/end dates of field work	March 2014
Archive Recipient	TBC
Study Area	1.1 ha
Associated project reference codes	Museum accession ID: NH_GCH.2014 OASIS form ID: universi1-199738

11. Publication

A summary of the work will be submitted for publication in the local archaeological journal *Northamptonshire Archaeology* in due course. The report has been added to the Archaeology Data Service's (ADS) Online Access to the Index of Archaeological Investigations (OASIS) database held by the University of York.

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