



UNIVERSITY OF
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Archaeological Services

Archaeological observation,
investigation, recording, analysis
and publication on Land Adjacent
to No.7, Captain's Court, Horton.
NN7 2AY

NGR: SP 819 313

Claire Brown



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**Archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and
publication during Groundworks on Land Adjacent to No. 7
Captain's Court, Horton, Northamptonshire NN7 2AY**

NGR: SP 819 313

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Archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication on land adjacent to No. 7, Captain's Court, Horton, NN7 2AY

Claire Brown

Summary

Archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication was undertaken for groundworks undertaken on the 7th-9th August, 2018 by University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) on land adjacent to No. 7, Captain's Court, Horton. The fieldwork was a post-determination requirement on a proposed planning application (Planning reference: S/2017/1088/FUL) for a residential development in accordance with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16.

The Northamptonshire Historic Environment Record (HER) shows that the application site is located just to the east of the village church, which dates from the 13th and 14th centuries, and notes that the boundaries of medieval churchyards are often poorly defined so that burials can be found outside modern boundaries. Furthermore groundworks for No. 7 Captain's Court identified medieval and post medieval activities. The site therefore had potential for archaeological remains to survive below the overburden.

The archaeological investigation confirmed that there were at least two phases of medieval activity on the site, including ditches, a pit, stone walls and areas of cobble surfaces. This is suggestive of probable occupation, possibly a dwelling associated with the church. The largely domestic pottery types confirmed the site to be early medieval in date, 10th -11th century, with a terminal date in the 12th or early 13th century. The scarcity of later pottery suggests the focus of activity in the village had moved elsewhere.

The archive will be deposited with Northamptonshire County Council under the Accession Number ENN109177

Introduction

In accordance with National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) Section 16 *Conserving and Enhancing the Historic Environment* this document forms the report for archaeological attendance and recording during groundworks on land adjacent to No.7 Captain's Court, Horton, Northamptonshire, NN7 2AY.

The archaeological work was required as a condition of the planning consent (Planning reference: S/2017/1088/FUL) for the construction of a large dwelling with attached double garage and ancillary landscaping.

The Archaeological Advisor for Northamptonshire County Council, as advisor to the planning authority, specified the need for a scheme of work comprising archaeological observation, investigation, recording, analysis and publication during any groundworks in order to mitigate the potential impact of the development on any such archaeological remains as might be present.

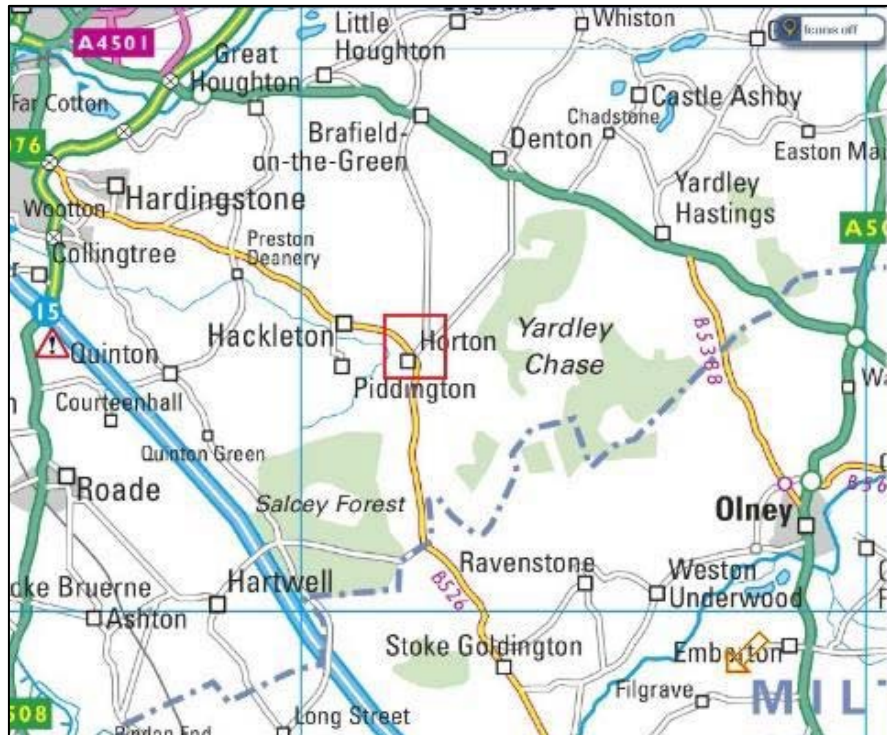


Figure 1: Site location. Map contains OS data. 1: 100000

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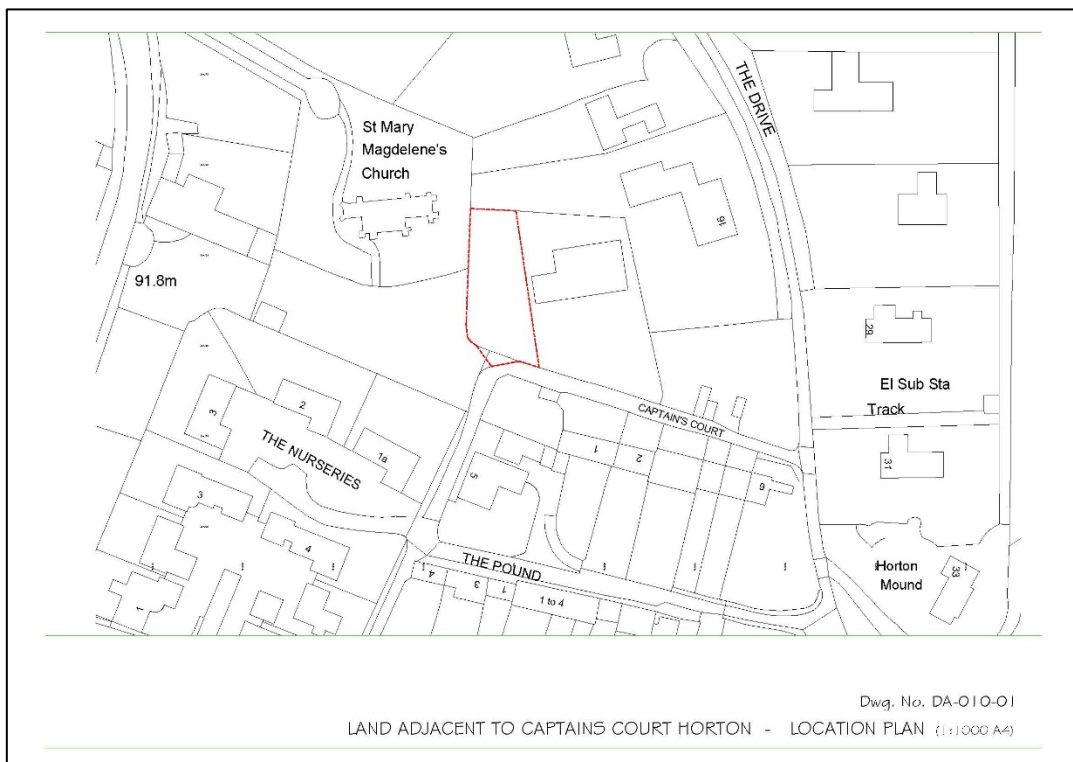


Figure 2: Location of proposed development site, outlined in red (Provided by developer).

The Site is located on the adjoining plot of land directly to the east of St. Mary Magdalene church, and directly to the west of No.7, Captain's Court and is approximately 0.07ha. It lies at approximately 91m OD. The land is currently unused grassland/scrub that had previous been a tennis court. The work was done in two phases with the overburden removed first and the site recorded before foundation groundworks were undertaken (Figs 1-3).



Figure 3: Development area looking north



Figure 4: Development area looking south

Historical and Archaeological Background.

The site lies on the adjoining plot of directly to the east of St. Mary Magdalene Church, a grade II*early medieval listed building (**MNN110556, MNN13944**). It is located to the north of Captains Court, which is the former stable block belonging to Horton Hall, now converted into six terraced dwellings; the hall itself was demolished in 1936.

Several Listed buildings are also situated close to the proposed development area: South-east of the proposed development site is Nos. 1-6 Captains Court – a former stable block to Horton Hall which is now a row of terrace housing (Grade II listed, **MNN110562**). The French Partridge Restaurant - a Grade II listed building formally a farmhouse and coaching Inn c.1650 onwards (**MNN110559, MNN143814**), Vane House, former Coach House, mid C18, Grade II listed (**MNN1105601**) are also close by.

On the land directly to the west of the proposed area for development, a series of gullies and ditches dating from the late Saxon to the post-medieval periods possibly defining a series of plot boundaries were discovered (**MNN170512**).

The HER data also shows the proposed area for development lies within the area for Horton shifted village (**MNN3472**) dated post 1066.

Consequently, there is good potential for the presence of below-ground archaeological remains within the application area, which are likely to be affected by the proposed development.

Archaeological Objectives

The main objective of the archaeological work is to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any significant archaeology on the site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The aims 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 record any archaeological deposits to be affected by the ground-works.
- To produce an archive and report of any results.
-

While the nature extent and quality of archaeological remains within the area of investigation for the project remain unknown until archaeological work is undertaken, some initial objectives were identified, derived from East Midlands heritage: an Updated Research Agenda and Strategy for the Historic Environment of the East Midlands (Knight et al 2012) and The Archaeology of the East Midlands: An Archaeological Resource Assessment and Research Agenda (Cooper 2006)

The villages of the English Central Midlands, appear to have evolved alongside their open field systems, during the later 1st millennium AD. Buried archaeological evidence spanning the period from the earliest evolution of the village to its more recent past might be present within the development area. The archaeological work may contribute towards research into the

origins and development of medieval settlement, landscape and society. Environmental evidence could provide information on local environmental conditions as well as settlement activity, craft, industry and land use. Artefacts can assist in the development of a type series within the region and provide evidence for evidence for craft, industry and exchange across broad landscape areas. The evaluation has the potential to contribute to Research Agenda topics 6.7.1, 7.2.1-7.2.4, 7.6.1, 7.7.1-7.7.5

6C Review the evidence for developing settlement hierarchies

7C Investigate provisioning of the medieval town

7E Investigate the morphology of rural settlements

7I Investigate the development of the open-field system and woodland management.

Within the stated project aims, the principal objective was to establish the nature, extent, date, depth, and significance of the heritage assets within their local and regional context.

Method

A Written Scheme of Investigation for Archaeological Work was produced by ULAS prior to the archaeological work being undertaken (ULAS 2016).

The project involved the supervision of overburden removal and other groundworks by an experienced professional archaeologist during the works. The supervision was undertaken by Claire Brown with assistance from Steve Jones and took place between 7th -9th August, 2018.

The work was carried out by a 360 tracked mechanical excavator with a with a 0.6m toothless ditching bucket and consisted of the excavation of foundation trenches prior to the construction of a large domestic dwelling and single storey garage.

A photographic record of the investigation was prepared as per WSI. This included photographs illustrating in both detail and general context the nature of the archaeological operation mounted.

All work was undertaken in accordance with the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) *Code of Conduct* (2014), and adhered to their *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (2014) and *Archaeological Excavations* (2014).

Results

The programme of archaeological observation, investigation and recording consisted of the observation of the stripped area followed by the excavation of foundation trenches prior to the construction of a domestic dwelling and garage (Figs 5-7).

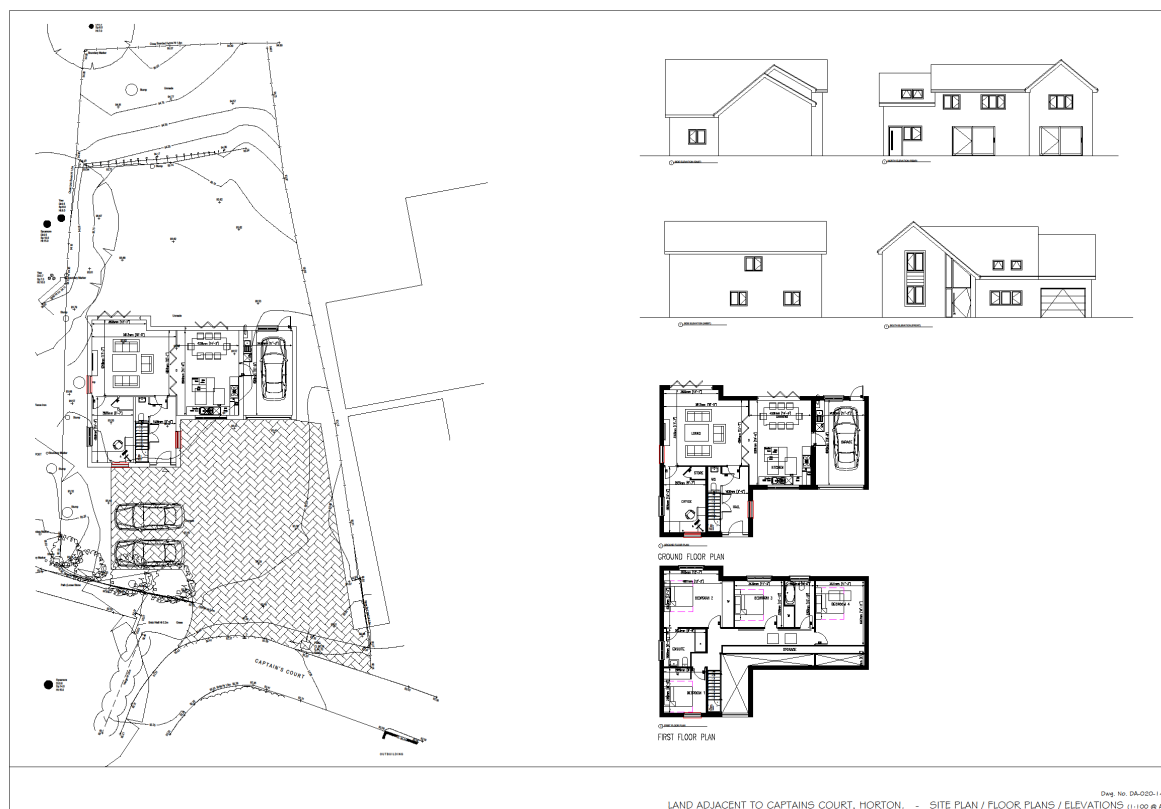


Figure 5: Proposed building plan and elevations (provided by client).

The superficial geology of the site was orange/brown sandy clay with chalk inclusions and the underlying geology consisted of Great Oolite Group -Sandstone, Limestone and Argillaceous Rocks (Geology of Britain Viewer). The overburden varied in depth but was approximately 1m above natural. The area was initially stripped to a depth of 0.5-0.6m across the area revealing overburden of made ground across the entire areas. The foundation trenches were then excavated into the made ground (Fig.8).

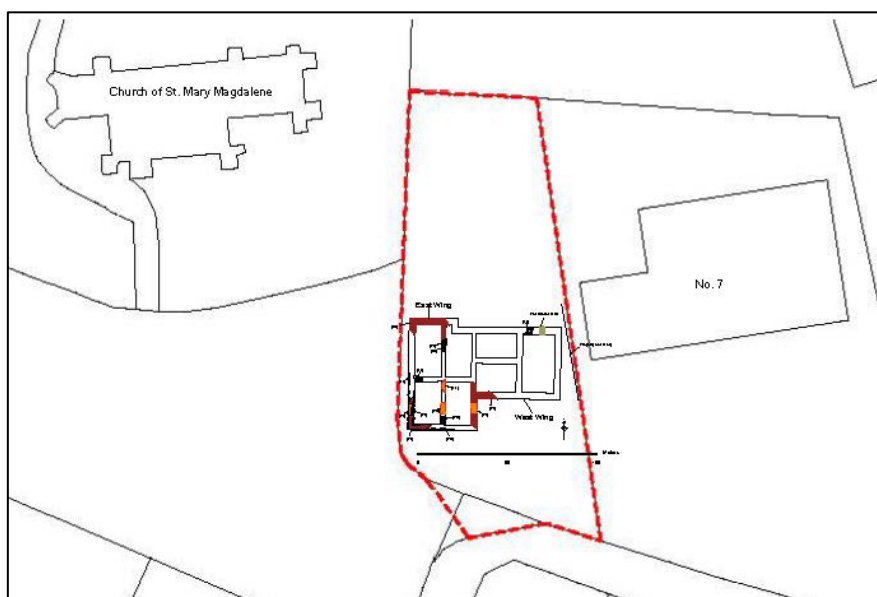


Figure 6: Site plan in its location, close to church.

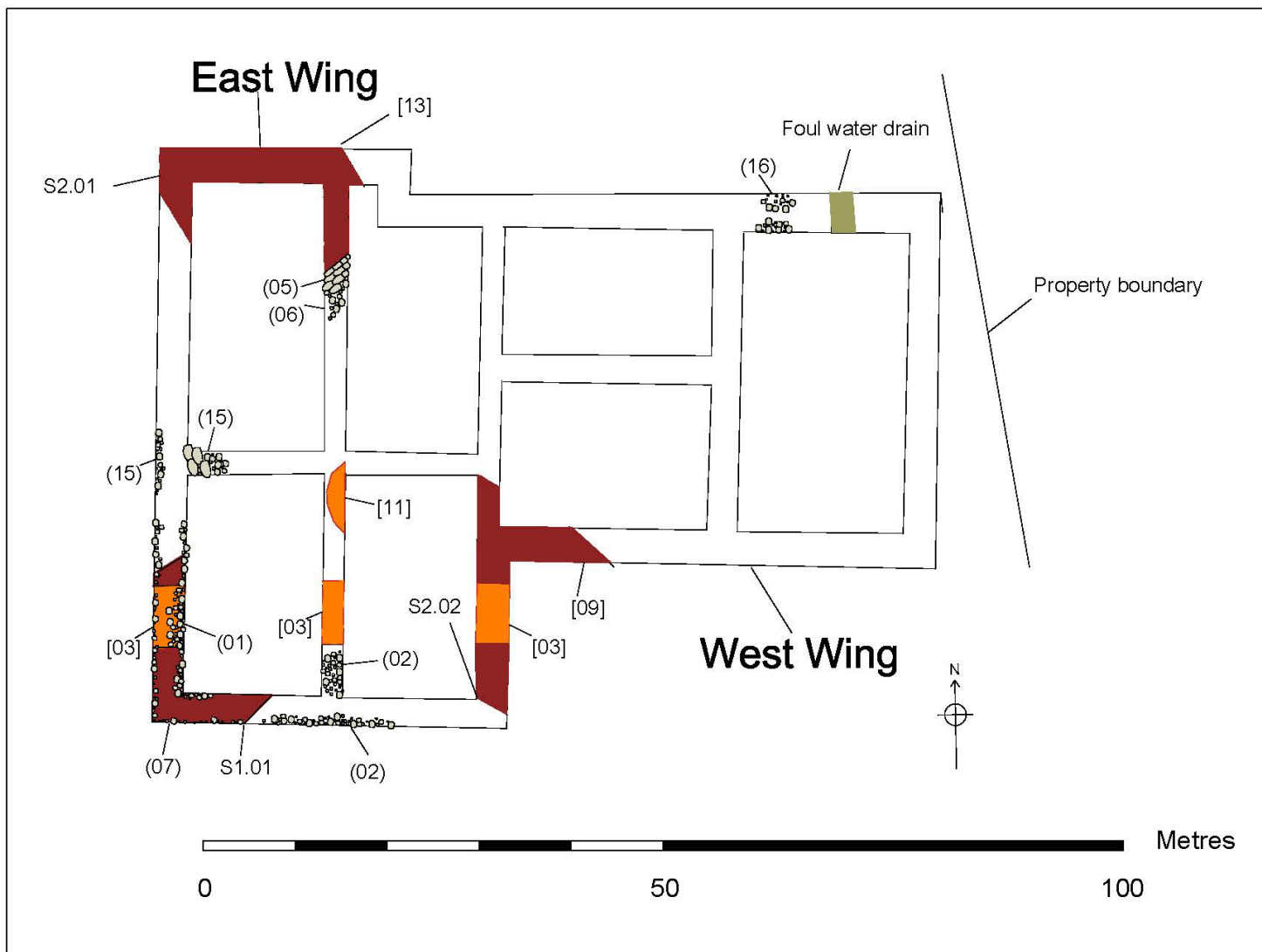


Figure 7: Site plan showing features.



Figure 8: Excavated foundation trenches, looking west towards the church.

Cobbled Surfaces

These trenches were initially excavated to a depth of approximately 0.5m and in each case a rough surface consisting of large river cobbles was revealed. The fragmentary surfaces were mostly uneven and patchy but could represent the remnants of a yard or trackway surface (Fig. 9). The main areas of cobbles were found in the south and south-west corner of the east wing of the building footprint (02).

The cobbles were large, rounded and grey in colour within an orange-brown sandy matrix and probably extended further south and west, as they appear in the section of the southern-most foundation trench (Fig. 10). One sherd of Shelly coarse ware pottery was found amongst the cobbles dating to 1100-1150.

A further area of cobbles ([16]) was uncovered in the northern-most trench of the West Wing but this was very fragmentary in nature (Fig. 11).



Figure 9: Rough surface (02) in the southern end of the middle trench of the East Wing, looking west.



Figure 10: Probable continuation of cobbled surface (02) in the section wall of the southernmost trench of the East Wing



Figure 11: Fragmentary cobbled surface [16] truncated by foul water drain and ground works

Masonry walls

At the north end of the middle north-south trench in the East Wing a section of wall (05) orientated north-east was uncovered under the surface of the overburden (Figs 12 and 13). It consisted of 4-5 courses of squared, faced limestone blocks (05), of varying sizes on one side (north-east facing) and large river cobbles (06) on the other (south-west facing) side. The latter were in a more haphazard arrangement, possibly reflecting a displaced cobble core. The stones were bonded with sand and lime mortar with chalk inclusions. A single sherd of coarse shelly ware pottery (1100-1150) was found on the face of the wall under the top course of stone.



Figure 12: Wall section (05) and cobbles (06).



Figure 13: North-east facing wall face (05)

The second wall section (15) was revealed in the middle foundation trench in the East Wing, at the west end. This was less well preserved than (05), with only 2-3 courses visible (Figs 14 and 15). The wall was orientated approximately north-south, and bonded with sand-lime mortar with chalk inclusions. Ten sherds of pottery all dating between AD 1000-1200 in date were recovered from the fill around the wall.



Figure 14: Wall section (15) in the east-west aligned trench in the East Wing, looking south-west.



Figure 15: Wall (15), looking west.

Earlier Ditches [07], [09] and [13],

Ditch [07] ran across the south-west corner of the East Wing and was orientated approximately north-east to south-west and was more than 3m wide and more than 1m deep. It contained demolition material and cobbles in the upper layer possibly representing infilling from the demolition of the (presumably later) structure and surface once it had fallen out of use and become partially backfilled (Fig 16).

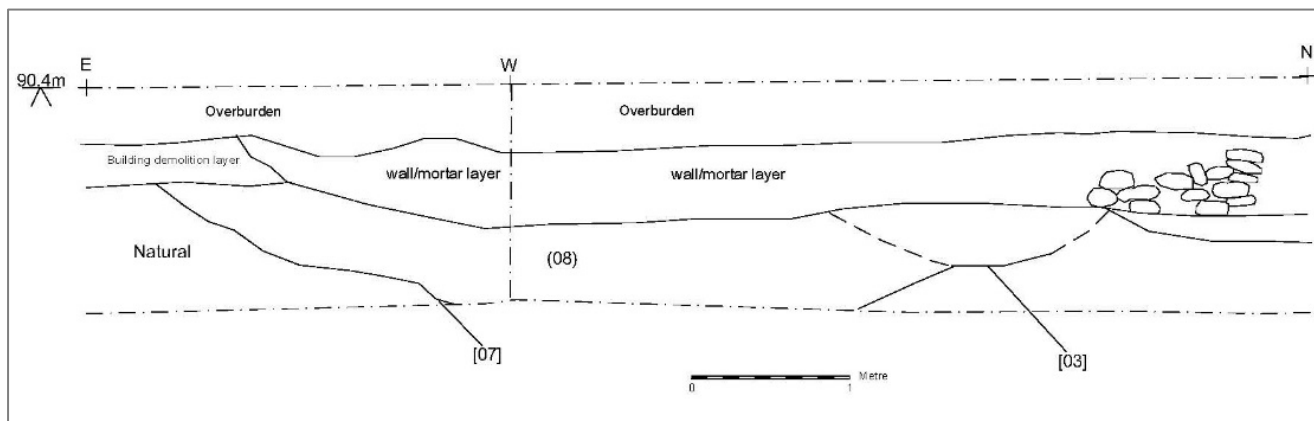


Figure 16: North-facing and east-facing sections S2.02 of Ditch [07]

A slot was taken across the corner of the ditch to extract dating evidence and confirm the concave nature of the ditch's profile, but the depth of the feature made excavating to the base of the ditch within the foundation trench unsafe (Fig. 17).



Figure 17: Slot taken across Ditch [07], running north-west to south-east.

Ditch [09] was over 3m wide appearing across the junction between the two wings (Figs 18-20). Its orientation was north-west to south-east suggesting it perhaps continues to form Ditch [13] in the north-west corner of the East Wing which has similar dimensions and orientation and may also have formed a junction with ditch [07] (Fig. 7), although truncation by several field drains, which also obscured Ditch [03] made the actual line of both ditches difficult to determine within the confines of the foundation trenches.



Figure 18: East-facing Ditch section [09] in the south-eastern corner of the East Wing's foundations.

The steep and narrow nature of the foundation trench made a full section photograph difficult, but in the section drawing below (Figure 20) the truncated remains of the later Ditch [03] are indicated, cutting Ditch [09], as well as the possible remains of a demolished/truncated masonry wall with fragments of stone and areas of crushed stone and sandy lime mortar.



Figure 19: North-facing Ditch section [09] at the junction between the two wings.

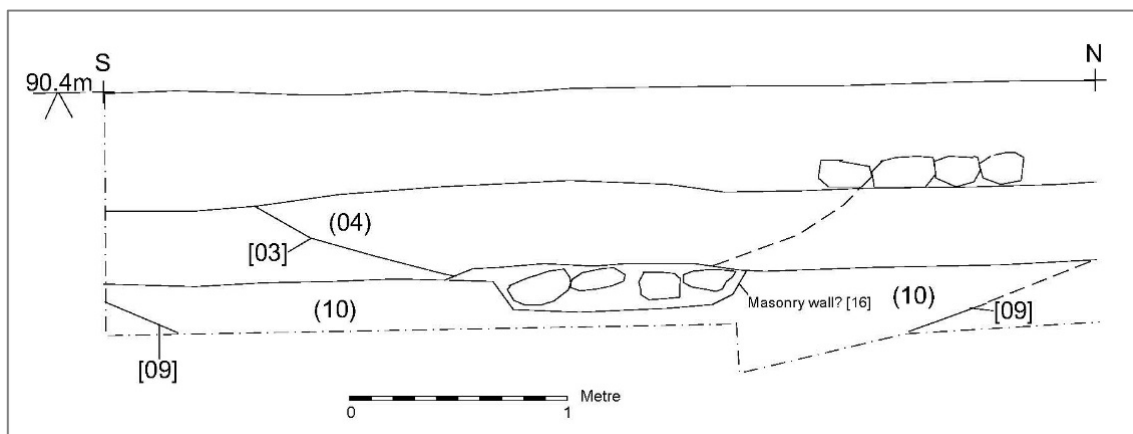


Figure 20: Section drawing S1.01 of east facing Ditch Section [09] in the south-east corner of the East Wing, showing truncated remains of Ditch [03] and suggestions of masonry wall demolition rubble.

Ditch [13] in the north-west probably represents a continuation of Ditch [09]. It was not visible in the middle trenches of the East Wing, however, but this may be due to later disturbance. The steepness of the trench sides made an informative photo difficult but the section drawing (Fig. 21) shows the layer of building rubble including stone and mortar suggesting later construction and demolition activity.

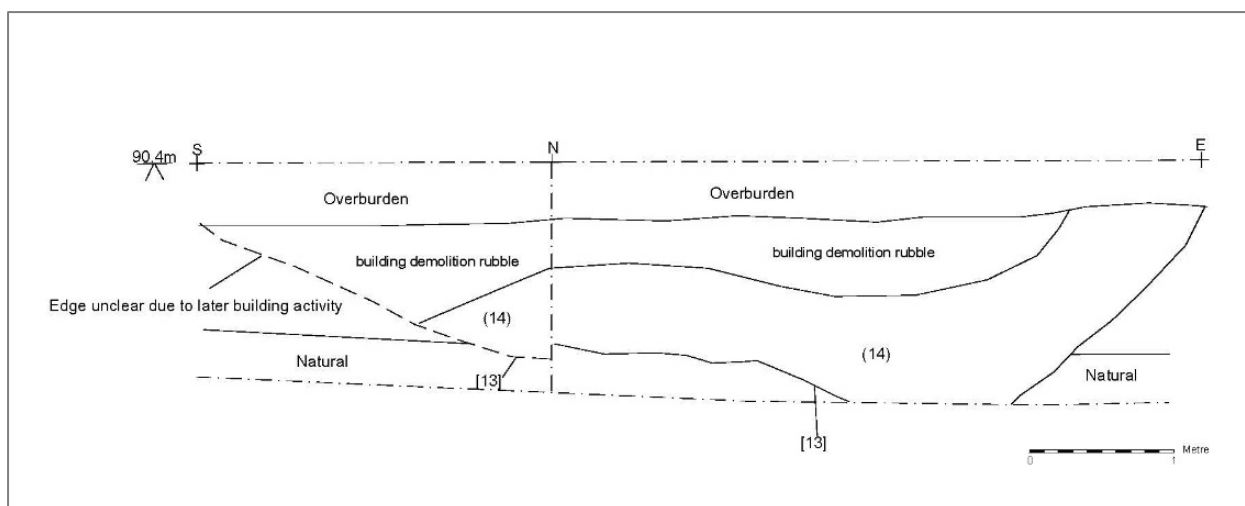


Figure 21: East-facing and south-facing sections S2.01 of Ditch [13] showing later disturbance by building activity.

There was no pottery recovered from this section of the ditch, however, pottery recovered from ditches [07] and [09] was largely early medieval, 10th-12th centuries in date but with a few sherds of later 13th century pot. Environmental samples taken from the ditches contained very few diagnostic plant remains.

Within the southern end of the middle foundation trench of the East Wing, directly adjacent to and north of the cobbled surface (02) was a later east-west ditch feature [03]. The ditch was approximately 1.25m wide and 0.45m deep (Fig. 16) and cut through both ditches [07] and [09] seen in section (Fig. 21). It contained dark grey charcoal-rich fill and produced pottery of 1100-1150 in date. However, as the ditch appears to cut earlier ditches [09] and [07] and therefore represents a later phase of activity, the pottery could be residual.



Figure 22: East-facing Ditch section (03)

Pit [11]

Approximately 1m to the north of Ditch (03) in the centre foundation trench was a pit [11] whose eastern edge extended across the trench (Figs 23-24). The dimensions of the pit were uncertain as only a small area was exposed within the foundation trench. A small section was excavated through the exposed area of the pit. In profile it appeared to be concave with moderately steep sides containing dark grey-brown fill with charcoal flecks, flint and chalk inclusions. One sherd of Shelley Coarse ware dating from 1100-1150 was recovered from the pit.



Figure 23: Pit (11) west-facing section



Figure 24: South-facing partially excavated $\frac{1}{4}$ section of Pit [11].

The Pottery - Deborah Sawday

The assemblage was made up of 83 sherds, weighing 622 grams representing 61 vessels and a vessel rim equivalent of 0.4425 (calculated by adding together the circumference of the surviving rim sherds, where one vessel equals 1.00).

Condition

The pottery was fragmentary and abraded with an average sherd weight of just under 7.5 grams.

Methodology

The material, 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. Co-joining sherds are noted, whilst single sherds are generally counted as one vessel.

The fabric codes and totals are shown in Table 1. Table 2 catalogues the pottery by context.

Table 1: The pottery by fabric, approximate date range, sherd number, weight (grams), EVEs, vessel number and ASW (average sherd weight).

Fabric	Common Name	Date Range	No.	Gr.	EVEs	V. No	ASW
Late Saxon- Medieval							
F100	St Neots type ware	AD1000-1200	4	12		4	3.0
F102	Thetford type ware	AD900-1100	7	39		6	
Sub Total			11	51		10	4.6
Medieval							
F302	Reduced Sandy coarse ware	?AD1100-?AD1400	1	15		1	
F303/304	Sandy Coarse ware	?AD1100-?AD1400	2	8		2	
F330	Shelly Coarse ware	AD1100-1400	57	305	0.25	39	
F319	Lyveden/Stansion A ware	AD1150-1400	8	176	0.1925	7	
Sub Total			68	504	0.4425	49	7.4
Later Medieval							
F322	Lyveden/Stansion D ware	AD1350-1500	4	67		2	
Sub Total			4	67		2	16.7
Total			83	622	0.4425	61	7.4

The Ceramic Record

A small assemblage of late Saxon or early medieval pottery was present. Six body sherds and a rim in Thetford type ware, weighing 39 grams and representing six vessels, were recovered from the backfills of the ditches [3] and [9], contexts (4) and (10). Two sherds of Saint Neots type ware were also recovered from context [3] and two more from the backfill context (16) of the wall [15]; all were fragmentary and abraded, with an average sherd weight of only 3 grams

Four of the five sherds of Thetford type ware, which weighed 29 grams, from ditch [3] were wheel thrown light grey body or base sherds, generally lightly sooted on the exterior, the fifth was a wheel thrown everted rim from a small jar, (Rogerson and Dallas 1984, fig153.1-36). An undiagnostic sherd of Reduced Sandy coarse ware with rare limestone fragments, possibly dating from c.1100 was also recorded. The assemblage also comprised twenty five sherds of Shelly Coarse ware and three fragments of Lyveden Stanion A ware, dating from c.1100 and c.1150.

The two sherds of wheel thrown Thetford type ware in ditch [9] were found together with four body or base sherds in Shelly Coarse ware, and two sherds in Lyveden Stanion A ware, including the rim of a flared bowl. A similar vessel was noted at West Coton (Blinkhorn 2010, fig.10.22.152), where the bowl forms appeared to differ little throughout the medieval period, with the undecorated examples (as here) becoming more common over time (*ibid.* 2010, 289-90), but generally dating from c.1150 as noted above.

The fill (8) of ditch [7] produced a fragment of Sandy Coarse ware possibly dating from c.1100 as well as a nineteen sherds of Shelly Coarse ware including part of a finely made, but abraded, carinated jug rim, with part of a pulled lip and the stub of a strap handle luted on to the top of the rim. Very similar vessels with decorated strap handles were recorded at West Coton (*ibid.* 2010, fig.10.16.101, 103 and 105), but unfortunately, whilst the decoration did provide some dating evidence at West Coton, where the decorated vessels were identified as later, there is no evidence for or against any decoration here. Jugs or pitchers were seen as the rarest of the major vessel forms in this fabric at West Coton, and with a rim diameter of 140mm the vessel from Horton may lie within the phase 1 to phase 2/2 range at West Coton, dating from c.1150-1300, but with only one example here, this is largely conjectural (*ibid.* 2010, 294). Part of an externally thickened bowl rim, in Lyveden/Stanion A ware could also be paralleled with a jar at West Coton (Blinkhorn 2010, fig.10.20.139), where it was thought to be typologically early. However the latest material in this context, four sherds of Lyveden Stanion D ware, are dated from c.1350. The two slipped and glazed vessels (an uncommon decoration in this ware (Northants CTS), are probably jugs.

The ten sherds from the fill (16) around the masonry wall [15] included two fragments of Saint Neots type ware a fragment of Sandy Coarse ware, and another, a jar, weighing 72 grams, with an externally thickened rim in Lyveden/Stanion A ware, with thumbing on the interior of the rim. The jar lacks the well-developed shoulders, commonly found in vessels of this type, the 'baggy' shape and the decoration suggested that, at West Coton where a similar vessel was found that it may be relatively early in the sequence (*ibid.* 2010, fig.10.20.132 and 139) the 'brick red' fabric of the latter illustrated example which was thought to date from phase 1, c.1150 to c.1225), being very similar to the vessel here, (*ibid.* 2010, 286-288). The same context also produced five sherds of Coarse Shelly ware; mostly miscellaneous base and body sherds, save for a jar rim in a top-hat form (Chapman 2009, fig.6.12.31), commonly found in St Neots type ware and Coarse Shelly ware Raunds and elsewhere and once again relatively early in the Shelly Coarse ware sequence of vessel forms (*ibid.* 2009, 183, Blinkhorn 2010, fig.10.15).

One sherd, 5 grams, of Shelly Coarse ware was found in the cobbles context (2), another, weighing 4 grams, in the same fabric, in context (6) and a third, weighing 9 grams, was the only find in the backfill of the pit [11].

Discussion

The pottery fabrics, Thetford and St Neots type wares and the Shelly Coarse wares, are typical of the region whilst Lyveden/Stanion was a major centre of pottery production at this time. The pottery is also essentially domestic in nature, many of the sherds were externally smoked blackened, and jars, bowls, which were commonly used for cooking, and jugs were all present.

The eleven sherds of late Saxon-medieval pottery in Thetford and St Neots type wares were found in the fill of the ditches [3]. Shelly Coarse wares made up the largest part of the assemblage, and occurred in all the contexts in which pottery was found. However, in terms

of the dating evidence, the difficulty of distinguishing between this type ware and the late Saxon early medieval St. Neots type ware by fabric alone is well attested, as they can be seen as a continuation of the same tradition (Blinkhorn 2010, 271). Nevertheless the bulk of the pottery appears to date from the 12th century

Conclusion

The range of datable finds and the fragmentary nature of the pottery suggested several phases of activity in the vicinity from as early as the 10th or 11th centuries. A terminal date in the 12th if not the early 13th century is suggested for many of these features by the ubiquitous presence of Shelly Coarse ware and the noticeable absence of Potterspury ware, which is dated from *c.*1250 to *c.*1600, the kiln site lying only approximately 14km to the south-west of the present village. The evidence also suggest that the most likely date for the construction of the wall most lies between *c.*1150 to *c.*1225. The excavation also revealed that ditch [3] was shallower than the other ditches and was possibly associated with the cobbled surface (2). This ditch apparently cut ditches [9] and [7] (C. Brown, pers. comm.), suggesting that the pottery from [3] was residual, as the latest material, the four sherds in Lyveden/Stanion D ware, which dated from *c.*1350, only occurred in the fill of ditch [7], perhaps indicating that the focus of activity in the village had moved elsewhere.

Table 2: The pottery by context, fabric/ware, sherd and vessel number, weight (grams), and EVES.

Context	Fabric/ware	No	Gr	EVES	Vessel No	Comments
2	F330	1	5		1	Abraded body.
4 [3] ditch	F100	2	5		2	Sooted flat base, externally trimmed, and body, both reduced black.
4	F102	4	26		3	Body/base sherds, light grey fabric. ? Wheel thrown, some external sooting.
4	F102	1	3		1	Wheel thrown simple everted rim from a small jar, (Rogerson and Dallas 1984, fig153.1-36) coarse sandy fabric with a red interior margin. Diameter not measurable.
4	F302	1	15		1	Concave base fragment, reduced black sandy fabric, rare white limestone.
4	F330	25	124		16	Body/base fragments, many sooted externally.
4	F319	2	34		1	Convex trimmed base, light sooting on exterior.
4	F319	1	28		1	Abraded body
6	F330	1	4		1	Body, externally sooted
8 [7] ditch	F330	2	9		2	Sooted/burnt
8	F330	9	44	0.175	1	Abraded jug with pulled lip and handle stub at rim, which

						is carinated, estimated diameter c.140mm, similar at West Coton (Blinkhorn 2010, fig.10.16.101, 103 and 105).
8	F330	8	34		8	Misc. body/base, possible links with context (10).
8	F319	1	7	0.025	1	Externally thickened bowl rim, no diameter, estimated EVE. Similar to jar at West Coton (Blinkhorn 2010, fig.10.20.139)
8	F319	1	7		1	Body
8	F322	3	61		1	Concave wheel thrown and trimmed base. ?Jug, traces of slip and glaze on exterior surfaces.
8	F322	1	6		1	Body, possibly from a jug with a strip of white clay, the exterior glaze firing yellow and olive green over the body and applied decoration.
8	F303/4	1	1		1	body
10 [9] ditch	F102	2	10		2	body
10	F330	4	23		3	Misc. body/base
10	F319	1	24	0.0475	1	Externally thickened bowl rim, traces of light sooting on exterior. Estimated diameter c.330mm. Hard fired. Similar to bowl at West Coton (Blinkhorn 2010, fig.10.22.152)
10	F319	1	4		1	Sooted ext., hard fired
12 [11] pit	F330	1	9		1	Body
16 [15] wall	F100	2	7		2	Body, one externally sooted
16	F330	5	44		5	Misc. body, one flat base, 4externally sooted
16	F330	1	9	0.075	1	Moulded late Saxon/early medieval top hat form similar at Raunds in St Neots–type ware (Blinkhorn 2009, fig.6.13.38, fig.6.12.29), estimated diameter 120mm.,
16	F303/4	1	7		1	body
16	F319	1	72	0.12	1	Sloping shouldered jar with externally thickened rim, thumbled on the interior rim,

						externally sooted. Brick red surfaces. Rim, diameter 220mm. (Blinkhorn 2010, fig.1020.132 and 139)
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Site/ Parish: Captains Court, Horton, Northants Accession No.: ENN109177 Document Ref: horton2.docx Material: pottery Site Type: Shifted medieval village	Submitter: C. Brown Identifier: D. Sawday Date of Identification: 23/08/2018. Method of Recovery: wb Job Number: 17-690
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The Environmental Remains - *Adam Santer*

Introduction

Three samples (numbered 1-3) were taken for the analysis of charred plant remains. The samples were taken from the fills (14), (10), and (8) of Medieval ditches [13], [9], and [7]. The analysis of the environmental remains are presented here, together with a discussion of what this can potentially tell us about past diet, crop husbandry strategies and environment at the site.

Methodology

The samples consisted of a dark greyish brown heavy silty clay and were processed in a York tank using a 0.5mm mesh with flotation into a 0.3mm sieve. The flotation fractions (flots) were sorted for plant remains and other artefacts under an x10-40 stereo microscope. The residues were air dried and the fractions over 4mm were sorted in their entirety whilst the fraction under 4mm was only scanned for remains. Plant remains were identified by comparison to modern reference material available at ULAS and their names follow Stace (1991).

Results

All of the samples contained low densities of charred plant remains (less than five items per litre), with the highest density of plant remains being found in sample 3 (1.77 items per litre). Most of the specimens were very fragmentary and poorly preserved. Because of this it was not possible to identify any of the specimens to species. All of the samples contained free threshing wheat (*Triticum* sp.). Indeterminate cereal grains were also found in samples 2 and 3. No chaff was found in any of the samples. Large grass seeds (Poaceae) were found in samples 2 and 3. Sample 3 also contained two probable vetch seeds (*Vicia* sp.). Two possible legumes were found in sample 2. One of the specimens appeared to be a vetchling or pea (*Lathyrus/Pisum*) due to its rounded shape. The other specimen was very fragmentary and too small to identify beyond a bean of pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum*).

Table 3: *The charred plant remains found in samples 1-3.*

Sample	1	2	3	
Context	14	10	10	
Cut	13	9	7	
Grain				
<i>Triticum</i> sp. (free threshing)	2	5	2	Free threshing wheat
Cereal		7	9	Indeterminate cereal
Wild seeds				
Poaceae (large)		4	3	Large grass
Cf. <i>Vicia</i> sp.			2	Cf. Vetch
Cf. Legumes				
Cf. <i>Lathyrus/Pisum</i>		1		Cf. Vetchling/Pea
Cf. <i>Vicia/Lathyrus/Pisum</i>		1		Cf. Bean/Pea
Total	2	17	16	
Soil volume (L)	10	10	9	
% Analysed	100%	100%	100%	
Items per litre	0.2	1.8	1.77	

A note on charcoal

Very small quantities of charcoal were found in the samples; the majority of which measured under 4mm in diameter (and therefore are not likely suitable for radiocarbon dating). Only sample 3 contained any charcoal (two pieces) which measured over 4mm in diameter.

Conclusion and statement of potential

The few specimens that were present likely represent residual scatter from food waste spillage or cereal preparation waste which had become burnt on a hearth. The lack of chaff however, limits this interpretation. The ashes from the hearth would have formed a general scatter on the site and collected in open features (such as the pits). Due to the small sample size and lack of plant remains found in the samples it was not possible to learn anything about diet, crop husbandry strategies or environment at the site.

Discussion

Although only a fragmentary picture of surviving archaeological remains was visible, there was enough evidence of substantial features, including ditches, wall fragments and areas of cobbled surfacing to suggest possible occupation activity on or close to the site dating from the 10th to 12th century. Archaeological features were uncovered at two distinct levels - 1-2m below the stripped surface and at 0.5m and the stratigraphy and dating suggests perhaps two phases of medieval activity. The two large ditches running appear to represent the earliest phase of activity and may be boundary ditches perhaps around the early medieval village core. The church is dedicated to St Mary Magdalene and was rebuilt in the 18th - 19th century although it probably dates at least to the 13th – 14th century. It is possible that the ditches could demarcate the edges of ecclesiastical land around the early medieval church.

The later cobbled surfaces wall fragments, shallow ditches and pits seen at more shallow depths and in the trench sections may be the remains of buildings, yards and/or trackways. The pottery is typical of the regions and appear to suggest domestic activity with smoking and blackening on several sherds suggesting they were used for cooking. The lack of later medieval pottery evidence suggests a terminal date for activity in the 12th if not the early 13th century, after which time settlement activity appears to have shifted elsewhere. Similarly the environmental evidence hints at scatter from food waste or cereal preparation which had become burnt on a hearth that had become swept into open features such as the ditches.

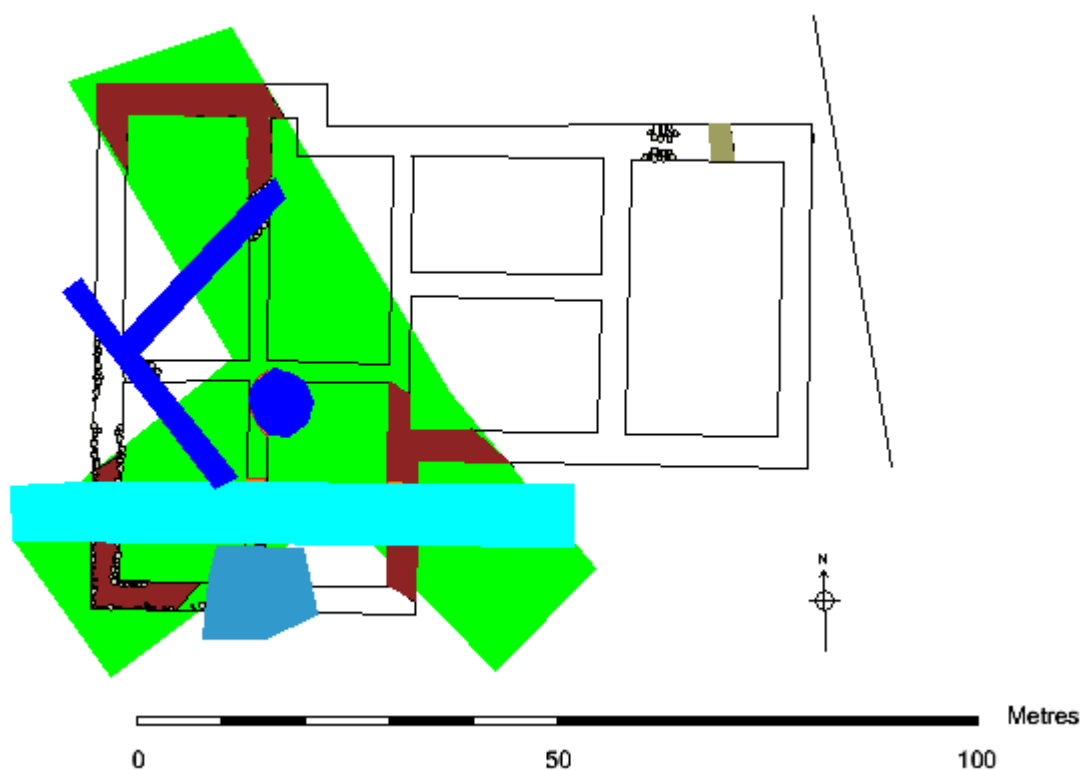


Figure 25: Plan using projected lines to show possible phases of archaeology.
From earliest to latest:

Green = 10th – 12th century ditches

Cyan and grey blue = later ditch and trackway possibly associated.

Blue = walls of possible structure – demolished by late 12th – 13th century and pit.

Research Objectives

6C Developing settlement hierarchies: The dressed stone walls found in fragmentary wall lines suggests a building with stone foundations built close to the church probably around the 12th century. The large ditches may represent boundary ditches marking out the territory of buildings at an earlier phase of the village development before the stone building, since they lie beneath the walls.

7C Investigating provisioning of the medieval town: This watching brief was unable to establish information about agriculture or food production/consumption as the samples contained very little food residue.

7E Investigate the morphology of rural settlements: The pottery range suggests that the settlement on this site was established in the 10th or 11th centuries, and continued until approximately the mid 14th century, when the village either shrank in size due to famine or disease, or the focus of the village moved elsewhere at this time.

7I Investigate the development of the open-field system and woodland management: No information regarding the development of the open-field system and woodland management was obtained from this watching brief.

Conclusion

The watching brief at Captain's Court revealed hitherto unknown medieval activity on the site directly east of the parish church of St. Mary Magdalene. It is likely to be the remains of part of the medieval village settlement and represents at least two phases of activity on the site.

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OASIS data entry

PROJECT DETAILS	Oasis No	Universil-377589		
	Project Name	Archaeological Attendance during Groundworks on land adjacent to 7 Captain's Court, Horton, Northants		
	Start/end dates of field work	7 th August to 9 th August 2018		
	Previous/Future Work	No/no		
	Project Type	Watching Brief		
	Site Status	None		
	Current Land Use	None – previously tennis court		
	Monument Type/Period	none		
	Significant Finds/Period	Pottery – early medieval, medieval		
	Development Type	Residential		
	Reason for Investigation	NPPF		
	Position in the Planning Process	Planning condition		
	Planning Ref.	S/2017/1088/FUL		
PROJECT LOCATION	Site Address/Postcode	Land adjacent to 7 Captain's Court, Horton, Northamptonshire NN7 2AY		
	Study Area	0.07ha		
	Site Coordinates	SP 819 313		
	Height OD	91m OD		
PROJECT CREATORS	Organisation	ULAS		
	Project Brief Originator	Local Planning Authority (NCC)		
	Project Design Originator	ULAS		
	Project Manager	Vicki Score		
	Project Director/Supervisor	Claire Brown		
Sponsor/Funding Body	Mr D. Noble			
PROJECT ARCHIVE		Physical	Digital	Paper
	Recipient	ULAS/Northamptonshire County Council	ULAS/Northamptonshire County Council	ULAS/Northamptonshire County Council
	ID (Acc. No.)	ENN109177	ENN109177	ENN109177
	Contents	Pottery Enviro samples	Photos	Watching brief records Photo records Context sheets
PROJECT BIBLIOGRAPHY	Type	Grey Literature (unpublished)		
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