















ST MARYS CHURCH, EVERTON

Evaluation

for Everton Parish Council

August 2011





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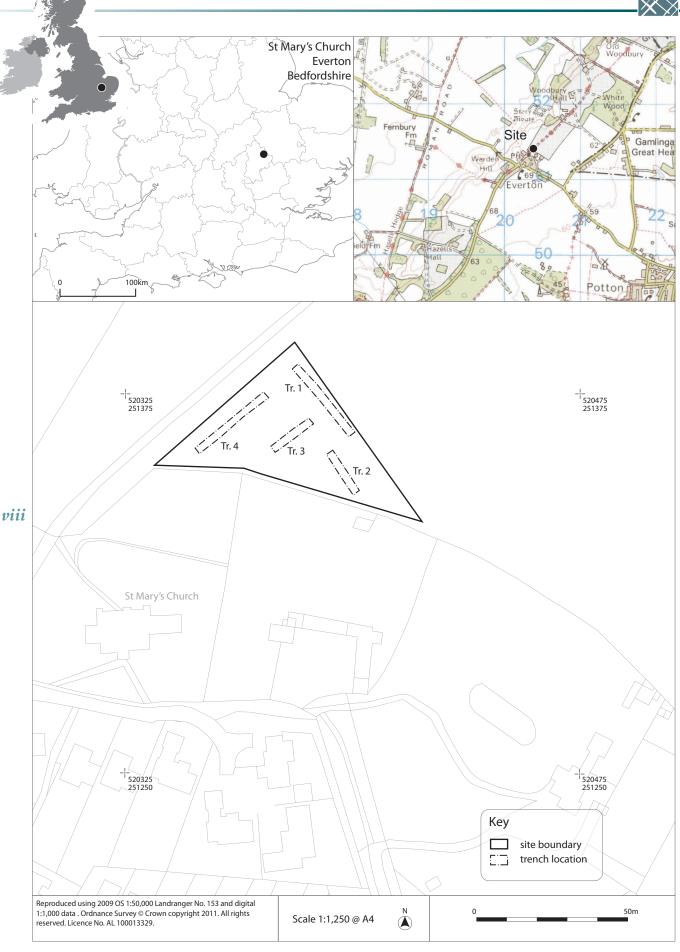
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Illus 1Site location

ST MARYS CHURCH, EVERTON

Evaluation

Headland Archaeology Ltd conducted an evaluation at a proposed development area (PDA) at St Mary's Church, Everton, in order to provide further information on its archaeological potential. The work was commissioned by Everton Parish Council. Four trenches were excavated within the PDA. This resulted in the uncovering of a ditch as well as sand quarry pits. Together these remains comprise evidence of postmedieval activity on the outskirts of the village.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Planning background

Everton Parish Council (client) have developed proposals for a change of use from agricultural land to burial ground on the north side of the present churchyard at St Mary's Church Everton (proposed development area - PDA).

The local planning authority (LPA) is advised, on archaeological matters, by the Central Bedfordshire Council Archaeological Officer (AO). The AO advised that the PDA lay in an archaeologically sensitive area and, therefore, the applicant must commission an archaeological evaluation (CBC 2010) in order to obtain information on sub-surface archaeological potential, and to include a description of the significance of any heritage assets affected by the proposed change of use. An assessment of the impact of the proposed development on that significance was required to be submitted as part of the planning application for the site which is in keeping with HE6.1 and HE6.2 of PPS5: Planning for Historic Environment.

The client commissioned Headland Archaeology to undertake the evaluation (the fieldwork took place between 11th and 13th May 2011) and this report outlines the results.

1.2 Site location and geology

The PDA lies on the northern edge of the village of Everton in north east Bedfordshire (site centre TL 2037 5136). The PDA lies on the Greensand Ridge, at a height of ϵ . 68m AOD, just behind the crest of the northwest facing scarp. The west of the PDA is bounded by a private road and to the south, by churchyard and garden boundary walls.

1

The geology of the area comprises Woburn Sands Formation which is part of the Lower Greensands Group. This is characterised by various sands directly below the topsoil (British Geological Survey Website). The PDA is flat while the surrounding landscape slopes gently uphill to the north.

1.3 Archaeological background

The PDA lies within the medieval village of Everton (HER 17153) and is directly north of St Mary's Church (HER 1041). The village of Everton was a centre for medieval pottery production and evidence of this has been previously recorded with investigations discovering medieval pottery and kiln sites (HER 6715, HER 15671) as well as various finds of pottery found within the village (HER 807). A previous evaluation south of the development area (HER 16126) produced evidence of medieval occupation including potential boundaries and pits.



The Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) of Storey Moats (HER 805 / SAM 11545) is situated *c.* 300m north of the PDA. The close proximity of the SAM, along with a cropmark complex (HER 1627) visible directly north of the church, may indicate the presence of sub-surface remains relating to medieval activity within the PDA. Other landscape features include an extant private road which runs between the village and the manor house (HER 805). This may represent an ancient route between the medieval church and Manor.

From this evidence, the PDA occupied an area with high potential to contain remains relating to the medieval settlement of Everton. Archaeological evidence from the site and surrounding area suggests that the PDA has the potential to contain archaeological deposits from the Saxon, medieval and post-medieval periods, in particular remains of Saxon and medieval settlements and the medieval pottery industry (CBC 2011).

The above findings were noted prior to trial trenching being undertaken and have been considered in the production of this report.

METHODOLOGY

2 2.1 Objectives

The objectives of the evaluation were:

- To identify and assess the particular significance of any element of the historic environment that may be affected by the relevant proposal (as well as the affect on setting of a heritage asset);
- to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any remains on the site, in their cultural and environmental setting;
- to analyse any evidence retrieved in light of objectives contained within the frameworks of local and regional research. In this case they are provided by Oake et al. (2007), Glazebrook (1997), Brown & Glazebrook (200) and Medlycott & Brown (2008); and
- to establish the integrity and state of preservation of any archaeological features or deposits;

2.2 Methodology

A total of four trenches were excavated amounting to 80 linear meters, 2m wide, and the trenches were laid out in order to sample land which fell within zones of proposed development impact.

A 360 degree tracked mechanical excavator equipped with a flat-bladed bucket was used to remove topsoil under direct archaeological control. Excavation continued until clean geological sediments or significant archaeological deposits were encountered. A similarity between the fill of features and the surrounding geological deposit was noted. This made trenching within the PDA more challenging than in some other geological conditions (e.g. clay). As a result, all four trenches were machined harder than would normally have been the case. This was done in order to ensure features were clear within the base of the trenches, something which illus 7–10 show was achieved. Clearly, this resulted in the loss of part of these features. This upper part was recorded in the trench sections

Further excavation required to satisfy the objectives of the evaluation was continued by hand. A representative sample, sufficient to meet the objectives of the evaluation, of identified features was investigated by hand and all features were recorded. The stratigraphy of each trench was recorded in full.

2.3 Recording

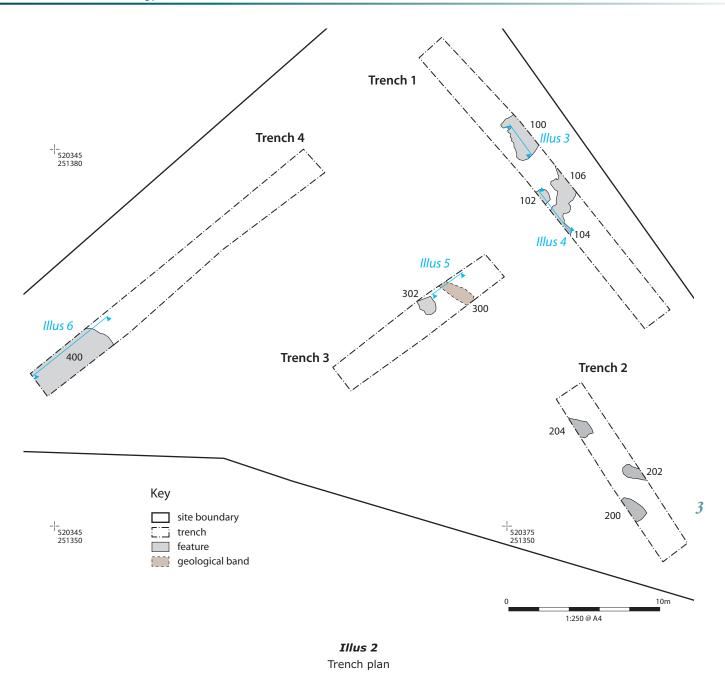
All recording was in accordance with the code of practice of the Institute for Archaeologists. All trenches and contexts were given unique numbers and all recording was undertaken on pro forma record cards that conform to accepted archaeological standards. All stratigraphic relationships were recorded.

An overall site plan at an appropriate scale and relative to the National Grid was recorded by digital survey using a differential GPS. A full photographic record including colour slide and black and white print photographs was taken, supplemented with digital photography. A metric scale was clearly visible in record photographs.

3. RESULTS

Trenches 1 and 2 were orientated NW-SE and Trenches 3 and 4 were orientated NE-SW. This orientation was used to sample the PDA as well as to target a cropmark thought to be within the area of Trench 1. Full trench descriptions, including orientation, length and soil profile, can be found in Appendix 1.1.

In general, the soil profile comprised 0.3m of mid grey brown loose sand topsoil over various geological sand deposits. Within Trench 3, a band of pink red (natural) sand was encountered at the NE end of the trench. This was initially thought to be a feature and was tested; after investigation, this was revealed to be a natural band of sand within the yellow geological sand (300). Further, similar lenses were not investigated.



The findings of the evaluation can generally be divided into two categories: evidence of medieval to postmedieval activity, and undated remains. These remains are described in more detail below.

3.1 Medieval to post-medieval period

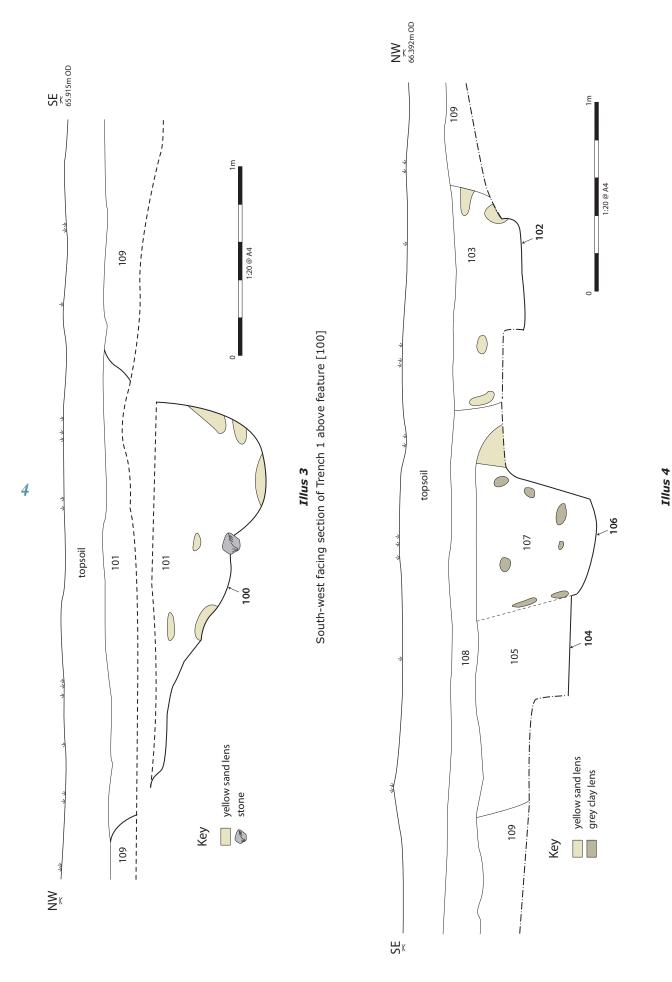
Trench 1 contained a ditch feature [106] orientated N-S. The ditch seemed to contain possible 'branches' off the linear shape giving the ditch an irregular overall shape in plan. It measured 0.7m in width (with a length only exposed within the trench) and had a depth of 0.35m. The ditch had sharp sloping sides down to a concave base and was filled by brown yellow sand which contained lenses of grey blue clay (107). Fragments of ceramic tile were recovered from the fill (Section 4). A 'branch' of

the ditch was investigated and was discovered to be a separate feature [104] which was sub rectangular in shape with vertical sides down to a flat base. This was filled by yellow brown sand (105) to a minimum depth of 0.25m but contained no datable evidence. The interface between the deposits (105) and (107) was undefined but demonstrated that ditch [106] truncated [104] (Illus 4)

Both features looked to be cut below a deposit of pink sand subsoil (108), although the soil profile above these features was not entirely clear and this could have been a mixture of ploughed topsoil with natural geological sands.

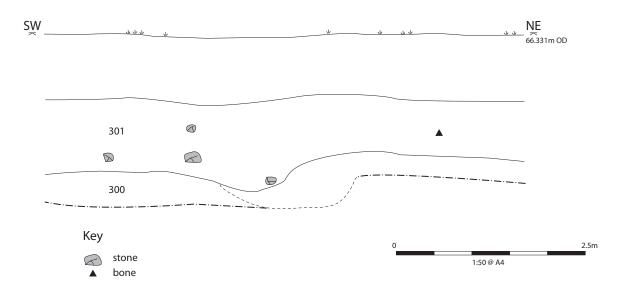
A square pit [302] was excavated within Trench 3 and measured $1.0 \times 1.0 \times 0.15$ m. The fill of this pit consisted of a mid brown grey loose sand which produced a fragment of clay pipe and fragments of ceramic tile.





North-east facing section of Trench 1 above features [102], [104] and [106]





Illus 5South-east facing section of Trench 3 showing bands of natural with a post-med spread deposit (301) above

The pieces of ceramic tile date to between the medieval and early post-medieval period, while the fragments of clay pipe are datable to the later post-medieval period (Section 4). On balance, it is suggested that ditch [106] and pit [302] became infilled during the post-medieval period.

3.2 Undated evidence

Other features produced a less clear interpretation. These included feature [100] (Trench 1). This was sub oval shaped in plan with sloping sides (more sharply on the SE side) down to irregular concave base. The fill (101) consisted of mid grey sand with lenses of yellow sand mainly on the edges of the cut. The feature was interpreted as a pit measuring 2.2m in length and 0.62m deep. A single flint scraper was found within the fill. This has been dated to the prehistoric (pre Iron Age) period (Section 4, Illus 3 & 7).

Also in Trench 1, located to the SE of ditch [106], was the base of a pit feature, sub-circular in plan. It measured 0.85m in length with a width of 0.55m exposed in the trench. The pit was filled by a mixture of brown, grey and yellow sand and was a depth of 0.1m. This depth within the trench was not representative of the full extent of the pit and the actual depth in section measured 0.45m.

Trench 2 contained three features, all of a similar nature. [200], [202] and [204] were sub-rectangular in shape and orientated on a NW-SE direction. On average, they had a depth of 0.35m, most of which was visible in the trench section. The edges of these pit features were not entirely clear as the interface between the natural geological sands and the fill deposit was not distinct. This may have been an indication that the pits were backfilled shortly after

being cut. The pits contained no datable evidence to reveal a function but were interpreted as sand extraction pits.

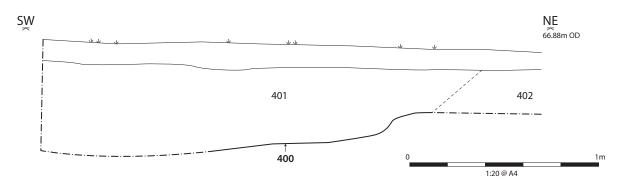
A large feature was exposed directly below the topsoil, in the SW end of Trench 4 with a length of 6m exposed in the trench and a depth of 1.25m. This large pit was filled by a homogenous deposit of brown red sand and contained some poorly preserved animal bone (Section 5).

A paucity of ecofactual/artefactual material meant that no function or firm date could be assigned to these features. However, the close proximity to evidence of early postmedieval activity, and the lack of any other datable material, could suggest these features as contemporary.

3.3 Description of the significance of the heritage assets

The local and regional research contexts are provided by Oake et al. (2007), Glazebrook (1997), Brown & Glazebrook (2000) and Medlycott & Brown (2008), outline various gaps in knowledge in the Bedfordshire area. In particular, for the medieval period, more information is required on different types of sites in the medieval rural settlement hierarchy (including 'Ends') as opposed to the bias towards cemetery sites (Oake, 2007, 14). These gaps in knowledge could have been considered, and added to, by any discoveries in the PDA. Although this evaluation could not provide any information to enlighten these specific research contexts about the medieval period, results could be analysed in light of subjects such as quarrying in the post-medieval period (Edgeworth, 2007, 134). However, as evidence is limited in the PDA, no new information can be added to what is already known.





Illus 6South-east facing section of Trench 4 over feature [400]



 ${\it Illus~7} \\ {\it Pit~[100]~within~Trench~1~showing~south-east~facing~section} \\$



Illus 8Features [102], [104] and [106] within Trench 1



Illus 9 (above)

Pit [200] in Trench 2 showing north-west facing section of trench

Illus 10 (right)

Trench 4 showing bands of geological sands

Description of Heritage Asset	Trench no.	Feature nos	Significance of heritage asset (Low, Medium, High) and of local, regional, national, international interest
Heritage Asset 1 (HA1) - Sand extraction (undated) pits including large quarry pit	1, 2, 3 & 4	[102] [200] [202] [204] [302] [400]	Low significance of local interest.
HA2 - Ditch	1	[104] [106]	Low significance of local interest.

4. FINDS ASSESSMENT

Julie Franklin & Julie Lochrie

The assemblage comprises 15 sherds of roof tile, a clay pipe stem and a flint scraper. The flint scraper [(101)] is prehistoric (pre Iron Age) in date; it cannot be dated anymore tightly than this. The roof tiles [(105), (303)] are difficult to date precisely. However, the sherds clearly represent flat peg tiles, of the type used in the medieval and early post-medieval periods, before the introduction of pan tiles. They date to between the 12th and 17th centuries. The clay pipe stem [(303)] is post-medieval and its narrow bore indicates a date of 18th century or later.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

7

Cecilia Collins

Hand-collected faunal remains from context (401) included 10.7g of bone, 2 unidentifiable long bone fragments, part of a cattle metapodial, and large fragments of 2 bovine tarsals. These were in very poor condition, therefore limiting the information that could be gained from the assemblage, meaning age and other data could not be determined. Even the more complete fragments of cattle metapodial and tarsals (approximately 75% preserved), usually quite diagnostic skeletal elements, were too poorly preserved for specific identification. However, these remains are indicative of occupation and the use of domesticated animals. The bone displayed no evidence of having been worked or fashioned and is thus likely to represent food waste debris.

6. DISCUSSION

The ditch in Trench 1 [106] and the pit seen in Trench 3 [302], both contained artefactual evidence dating to the post-medieval period. The uniform nature of the pit [302] and its indistinct fill (which is similar to the surrounding geological sands) suggest a function of mineral extraction; in this case, a sand extraction pit. The ditch was only encountered within



Trench 1; if the ditch continued on the same alignment, it would not be visible in any other trench. It is probable that the ditch is connected with a land boundary. Many cropmarks (HER 1627) are visible in this area and are suggestive of past land boundaries, so the presence of this ditch in the PDA is supportive of this evidence.

The truncation of feature [104] by the ditch indicates repeated use of this spot to mark boundaries. It is possible that a post-built boundary was replaced by a ditch leaving these intercutting remains.

The residual flint scraper discovered in pit [100] does not provide a date for this feature. The paucity of similar material within the fill and surrounding features suggests the presence here is purely coincidental.

The remaining features in the PDA (for example [400] and [200]) are undated. Whilst a lack of datable artefactual material makes assigning a firm date, impossible; the two dated features in the PDA have been reasonably securely dated (post-medieval period) and it is likely these undated features share that general period of use/infilling as they are directly below the topsoil These features, are interpreted as possible sand extraction pits, as for pit [302].

Both the undated and dated pits are located close to the current private road which leads from the village to where, once stood, a manor house (Storeys Moat, HER 805). The likelihood of this extant road having also been in use in the post-medieval period is high. That being the case,

regular repairs would have been needed and would have been made from locally available mineral. Therefore, the pits within the PDA may have served this purpose. Such activity, alongside roads, especially on common-land is well documented (Rackham, 1986: 369).

The PDA was thought to have high potential for producing Saxon, medieval and post-medieval periods in particular; it was thought to have potential for producing evidence of medieval settlement and medieval pottery production. Instead, the evaluation resulted in the investigation of a small quantity of post-medieval remains. These can be described as typical of agricultural/quarrying activity on the outskirts of a village. Although only a small amount of evidence has been produced at the PDA, this investigation and such remains, add to the limited amount known about this area and aid our greater understanding of the surrounding landscape.

6.1 Assessment of the impact of development on the significance of heritage assets

The change of use in the PDA is from agricultural land into a burial ground. Sub-surface heritage assets at the PDA are located at 0.30m below the existing ground surface. The groundworks for the change of use to burial ground will involve exceeding this depth and therefore the impact of the development upon any underlying remains is considered high.

Description of Heritage Asset	Trench no.	Description of development affecting	Significance of heritage asset (Low, Medium, High) and of Local, Regional, National, International interest	Impact of development on heritage asset (None, Low, Medium, High)
Heritage Asset 1 (HA1) - Sand extraction (undated and post-med) pits including large quarry pit	1, 2, 3 & 4	For use as a burial ground	Low Local	High
HA2 - Ditch	1	For use as a burial ground	Low Local	High

8

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7.2 Websites

Open Geoscience – British Geological Survey Website >www. bgs.ac.uk < Accessed: 25 May 2011



8. APPENDICES

8.1 Appendix 1 – Site registers

Trench register

Trench no.	Orientation	Description	Length (m)	Max Depth (m)
1	NW - SE	Topsoil of mid grey brown sand with root activity overlaying natural geological deposit of yellow and pink sands both in layers and bands.	25	0.70
2	NW - SE	Topsoil of mid grey brown sand with root activity overlaying natural geological deposit of yellow and pink sands both in layers and bands.	15	0.80
3	NE - SW	Topsoil of mid grey brown sand with root activity overlaying natural geological deposit of yellow and pink sands both in layers and bands.	15	0.70
4	NE - SW	Topsoil of mid grey brown sand with root activity overlaying natural geological deposit of yellow and pink sands both in layers and bands.	25	0.90

Context register

10 Context no. Area Description

Context no.	Area	Description
100	T1	Cut of pit feature
101	T1	Fill of [100]
102	T1	Cut of pit feature
103	T1	Fill of [102]
104	T1	Cut of linear ditch
105	T1	Fill of [104]
106	T1	Cut of linear ditch
107	T1	Fill of [106]
108	T1	Pink sand subsoil
109	T1	Yellow sand natural
200	T2	Cut of pit feature
201	T2	Fill of [200]
202	T2	Cut of pit feature
203	T2	Fill of [202]
204	T2	Cut of pit
205	T2	Fill of [205]
300	T3	Natural yellow/pink sand
301	T3	Brown sand subsoil
302	Т3	Cut of square pit
303	T3	Fill of [302]

Context no.	Area	Description
400	T4	Cut of large pit feature
401	T4	Fill of [400]
402	T4	Yellow sand natural

Photographic register

Photo no.	Direction	Description
001	NE	Pre-Condition working shot
002	NNE	Pre-Condition working shot
003	NE	Pre-Condition working shot
004	NE	SW facing section through pit feature [100]
005	NE	SW facing section of Trench 1 over feature [100]
006	SE	Mid ex shot of fill in edge of [105]
007	SE	NW facing section through [102]
800	SW	NE facing section of Trench 1 over feature [102]
009	S	Feature [104] in Trench 1 and feature [106]
010	S	Feature [104] in Trench 1 and feature [106]
011	SW	NE facing section of Trench 1 over features [104 + 106]
012	SE	NW facing section of feature [106] cut by [104]
013	SE	Post ex shot of Trench 1
014	SW	NE facing section of Trench 2 over feature [200]
015	NW	NE facing section of Trench 2 over feature [200]
016	NW	SE facing section through [200]
017	NE	SW facing section of Trench 2 over feature [202]
018	NW	NE facing section through [202]
019	NW	NE facing section of Trench 2 over [204]
020	SE	NW facing section through [204]
021	SE	Post ex shot of Trench 2
022	S	Feature [300] mid ex
023	NW	SE facing section of trench 3 over feature [300]
024	NW	Feature [300]
025	NE	SW facing section through [302]
026	NW	Feature [302]
027	SW	Post ex shot of trench 3
028	NW	SE facing section of Trench 4 showing pink/red sand subsoil
029	NW	SE facing section of [400] (not cleaned due to depth)
030	SW	Post ex shot of Trench 4
031	/	Backfilled trenches
032	/	Backfilled trenches
033	/	Backfilled trenches
034	/	Backfilled trenches



8.2 Appendix 2 – Finds catalogue

Trench	Context	Material	Qty	Weight (g)	Object	Description	Spot Date	Period	Box No
1	101	Lithics	1	-	Flint	Scraper. Overshot, inner, short and wide hard hammer flake. Distal edge and corners have irregular abrupt retouch	-	PH	1
1	105	СВМ	5	345	Roof Tile	large sherds of flat roof tile, red fabric with stone inclusions	-	Medi/PM	1
3	303	Clay Pipe	1	-	Stem	narrow bore stem	18th/ e.20th	Mod	1
3	303	СВМ	10	382	Roof Tile	large sherds of flat roof tile, red fabric, some large stone inclusions, three corner sherds, two with round peg holes	-	Medi/PM	1



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