

**OLIVER'S MEADOW, GORDON'S LODGE FARM
HANSLOPE, NR GRAFTON REGIS,
NORTHAMPTONSHIRE.**

**REPORT ON AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AND
AN ASSESSMENT OF THE RESULTS**

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Prepared for:

**Videotext Communications Ltd
49 Goldhawk Road
LONDON
SW1 8QP**

By:

**Wessex Archaeology
Portway House
Old Sarum Park
SALISBURY
Wiltshire
SP4 6EB**

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Summary

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological recording and post-excavation work on an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at Oliver's Meadow, Gordon's Lodge Farm, Hanslope, nr Grafton Regis, Northamptonshire, centred on NGR 477140 248100 (Figure 1). Gordon's Lodge Farm lies approximately 3km to the west of the village of Hanslope, on the road between Hanslope and Grafton Regis.

Since 1998 the field known as Oliver's Meadow has been subject to archaeological investigation by the Gordon's Lodge Archaeological Field School (GLAFS). This work has identified two large sub circular enclosures close to the south eastern edge of the field, one of which is the subject of an ongoing excavation. The preliminary results from this indicate that the enclosure contains at least one building, with stone footings, as well as areas of industrial activity, dating from the 11th to early 13th century.

A magnetic survey undertaken by GSB Prospection Ltd succeeded in identifying the circuit of the larger enclosure, although the magnetic responses were poorly defined. A number of possible archaeological features were identified both within and outside this enclosure, some of which were investigated archaeologically. The presence of the excavation trench and spoilheaps severely restricted the survey on the smaller enclosure, and the existence of a complex of land drains further confused the results from this area. Despite these complications, a short length of enclosure ditch was identified.

The evaluation established that the two enclosures are likely to be contemporaneous, and form part of the same complex. The GLAFS excavations of the north eastern enclosure ditch (Enclosure A) have indicated that this was open during the 12th and 13th centuries. Although no medieval material was recovered from the lower fills of the ditch from the larger enclosure (Enclosure B), the quantity of medieval material recovered from the upper fills, the absence of any material of an earlier date and the evidence for medieval activity within this enclosure all suggest a medieval date.

Excavation within the enclosure B, to the south west, have identified the remains of two medieval buildings. These are less well built than that under excavation by GLAFS, one being post-built, and the second apparently having cob walls or walls resting on timber sills. Both were associated with stone lined ovens or hearths. The latter in particular appears to have been a kitchen or bakehouse, with a number of

hearths or ovens, some clearly dismantled, whilst others were almost intact. Although no pottery was derived directly from the occupation deposits within this structure, pottery from the gully respecting the western and northern sides of the building dated to the 12th to 14th centuries.

The results of the Time Team excavations, in conjunction with the ongoing excavations of GLAFS appear to indicate that the two enclosures belong to an enclosed medieval rural settlement. The presence of high status fragments of stonework indicate the presence of a substantial masonry building, but no evidence of this has yet been identified. There is little evidence for activity on the site in the later medieval or post-medieval periods. The land was incorporated within a deer park in the 16th century, and probably remained as pasture after its disemparkment.

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Acknowledgements

This programme of post-excavation and assessment work was commissioned and funded by Videotext Communications. Wessex Archaeology would like to thank the staff at Videotext, and in particular Melinda Smith (Executive Producer), Oliver Twinch (Assistant Producer) and Karen Kirk (Researcher) for their considerable help during the recording and post-excavation work.

The extensive collaboration and support during the project by Susan Ranson, the current owner of Gordon's Lodge Farm, is especially acknowledged, as is the co-operation of Jonathon Thomas and Pat Lawrence, the joint directors of the Gordon's Lodge Archaeological Field School (GLAFS). Their willingness to discuss the results of their excavations to date and share the information from their excavations contributed significantly to the interpretations advanced in this assessment.

The evaluation strategy was developed by Professor Mick Aston (Bristol University), and all fieldwork undertaken by Time Team's retained excavators with help from Sharon Clough, Leanne Whitelaw, Jennifer Jackson and Martin Tingle.

The on-site recording was undertaken and co-ordinated by Nicholas Cooke, assisted by Steve Thompson, both of Wessex Archaeology. On site spot dating of the finds assemblage was undertaken by Paul Blinkhorn and the animal bone was examined by Naomi Sykes. The finds were processed on-site by Steve Thompson.

The geophysical survey was conducted by John Gater, Chris Gaffney and Jimmy Adcock from GSB Prospection Limited. The field survey was undertaken by Dr Henry Chapman, University of Hull.

Wessex Archaeology co-ordinated the post-excavation programme. This report was compiled by Nicholas Cooke. Specialist work and reporting was undertaken by Lorraine Mephram and Steve Thompson (finds) and Stephanie Knight (animal bone). The environmental samples were processed under the supervision of Sarah Wyles and the report prepared by Chris Stevens. The environmental programme was managed by Michael J. Allen. The illustrations were prepared by Kitty Brandon. The project was managed on behalf of Wessex Archaeology by Nicholas Cooke.

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

1.1.1 Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd to undertake a programme of archaeological recording and post-excavation work on an archaeological evaluation undertaken by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at Oliver's Meadow, Gordon's Lodge Farm, Hanslope, nr Grafton Regis, Northamptonshire, centred on NGR 477140 248100 (Figure 1). Gordon's Lodge Farm lies approximately 3km to the west of the village of Hanslope, on the road between Hanslope and Grafton Regis.

1.1.2 The Site lies within a large, roughly rectangular, fields to the south west of Gordon's Lodge Farm. (Figure 1). The north western boundary of this field forms the Northamptonshire/Milton Keynes border. The southeast boundary to the field is a hollow way, now no longer used, which probably originally led to Gordon's Lodge Farm.

1.1.3 This report documents the results of archaeological survey and evaluation undertaken by Time Team, and presents an assessment of the results of these works, along with recommendations for further analysis and dissemination.

1.2 Geology, Topography and Hydrogeology

1.2.1 'Oliver's Meadow' occupies an area of sloping land, overlooking the River Tove to the south west. The land slopes from north east (at c. 85m aOD) to wards the river to the west and south west. This land is currently set aside from arable cultivation and forms the south eastern corner of a larger field belonging to Gordon's Lodge Farm.

1.2.2 Geologically, Oliver's Meadows lies on boulder clay (BGS England and Wales sheet: 202 Solid and Drift Edition: Towcester). There is ploughsoil of 200 - 600mm and the field is well drained despite the geology. Alluvial deposits lie in the extreme south of the field and orange and brown sands have been encountered during excavations for overhead electricity cable poles. These deposits are not marked on the geological survey map of the

area (Tanner 2003). The soils of the area comprise deep fine and coarse loams formed from chalky till; they are characteristic of the Burlingham 2 (572o) association.

- 1.2.3 A spring issues from the hill slope to the south east of the site, which feeds a nearby pond, as well as flowing in a south westerly direction to join the River Tove on the valley floor. The River Tove dominates the hydrology of the area.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site at Gordon's Lodge Farm lies within the parish of Hanslope. At the time of the Domesday Book (AD 1086), it was held by Winemar, a Fleming. He had been granted the land by William the Conqueror. At the time of the conquest in AD 1066 it had been held by a housecarl called Haldene, who had been granted the manor along with the manor of Castlethorpe by Edward the Confessor.

- 1.3.2 The Domesday entry for the manor reads as follows:

“Winemar holds Hanslope. It answers for 10 hides. Land for 26 ploughs; in lordship 5 hides and besides them 5 carucates of land; 2 ploughs there; a further 4 possible.

36 villagers with 11 smallholders have 18 ploughs; a further 2 ploughs possible.

8 slaves; 1 mill at 12s; meadow for 11 ploughs; woodland, 1000 pigs.

Total value £24; when acquired £20. Before 1066 £24, Haldene, one of King Edward's Guards, held this manor.”

- 1.3.3 Winemar's son, Michael of Hanslope left the manor and his only daughter Maud to Henry I. Soon afterwards, Maud married William Maudit, Chancellor to the Royal Exchequer, and the manor passed into his hands. In due course, it passed to his son Robert Maudit, who was also Chancellor. Robert drowned alongside Prince William on The White Ship in 1120. Robert was succeeded by his brother William. The manor then passed to his son, another Robert. He sided with the barons against King John. As a result of this, King John ordered Faulk de Breaute, the head of his mercenary forces, to besiege Hanslope Castle and raze it to the ground. The wooden motte and bailey castle, which lay within Castlethorpe, soon succumbed, and was never rebuilt.

- 1.3.4 The manor was granted to de Breaute, and then to Hugh de Neville, and in 1217 Henry III gave the manor to Henry de Brailhof. When Henry de Brailhof was declared a traitor, the manor reverted once more to the ownership of Robert Maudit. When he died, in 1222, the manor passed to his son, William. William married the daughter of the Earl of Warwick, and obtained a licence to embattle his house and stock his park with deer in 1222. He died in 1257, and was succeeded by his son, another William. The

Earldom of Warwick passed to him thanks to his mother, but he died with no male issue in 1268.

- 1.3.5 The manor passed to his nephew, William Beauchamp, who also inherited the Earldom of Warwick. In 1293 he was granted a licence to hold a fair in Hanslope. He died in 1298. The manor of Hanslope then descended in the Beauchamp family until 1396, when Thomas Beauchamp was arraigned for treason by Richard II and imprisoned in the tower. Richard granted the manor to Thomas Mowbray, the Duke of Norfolk, who forfeited it after a year, when it was granted to Edmund, Duke of York. On the accession of Henry IV to the throne in 1399, the manor reverted to Thomas Beauchamp once more. He died in 1401 and his son Richard inherited the manor. He was created Duke of Warwick in 1445.
- 1.3.6 On his death a year later, the Dukedom became extinct. The manor of Hanslope passed with all his other estates to his brother in law, Richard Neville, known as the Kingmaker. For a short time he was one of the most powerful men in the kingdom, a period only ended by his death at the battle of Barnet in 1471. The manor was then taken from the direct family, ignoring the rights of the countess and the manor granted to their son-in-law Richard, Duke of Gloucester, later Richard III.
- 1.3.7 After Richard's death in 1485, Henry VII restored Hanslope to the Nevilles, but it was surrendered once more to the crown by the Dowager Countess of Warwick only three years later. It remained crown property, at different times being owned by Princess Elizabeth and later Queen Anne and Charles I. In 1531, the land on which the site sits was incorporated within the grounds of Hartwell deer park.
- 1.3.8 Charles I later gave it to a Captain John Pennington, and the manor passed through various hands, including those of Basil Brent, who built Hanslope Park house in the deer park in 1692, before it was finally sold to William Watts in 1764. The manor remained in the Watts family until the early 20th century when it was sold, first to Hesketh estates, and then to the Foreign and Commonwealth Office.
- 1.3.9 The site has been subject to archaeological investigation for a number of years. The late Mr Oliver Ranson, who farmed the land, and after whom the meadow is named, identified Romano-British sherds and roofing tile, medieval sherds, a scatter of limestone and a supposed kiln structure on the site in 1967.
- 1.3.10 In 1980, Mr R A Croft, for the Wolverton and District Archaeological Society, undertook a small excavation in the area (Bucks SMR 1408). He revealed the remains of what he interpreted as a medieval pottery kiln, 12-14th century, and suggested the presence of a larger stone building. He

postulated, on the basis of field walking and a study of aerial photography, that this was the site of a previously unrecorded fragmented medieval settlement (Croft, 1980).

- 1.3.11 Aerial photographs of the site have shown two linked sub circular enclosures, initially thought to be prehistoric on morphological grounds, as well as areas of ridge and furrow ploughing likely to date to the medieval or post-medieval periods.
- 1.3.12 Since 1998 the field has been subject to archaeological investigation by the Gordon's Lodge Archaeological Field School (GLAFS), under the direction of Jonathon Thomas and Pat Lawrence. This has taken the form of aerial photographic interpretation, field walking, resistivity survey and excavation, with the latter being the focus of an annual two-week long training excavation.
- 1.3.13 This work is ongoing, and has largely been focussed on the smaller, north easterly, of the two enclosures. Because this work is ongoing, it is not intended to discuss the results of these excavations in detail here. However, the preliminary results provide important evidence for the date and function of this enclosure.
- 1.3.14 The main focus of activity has been a large trench targeted on the centre of the enclosure. This trench was subject to partial cleaning as part of the Time Team project (see below). Within this trench, a number of different zones and phases of activity have been identified.
- 1.3.15 The main focus of the excavation has been a fairly substantial building constructed with stone footings (see Figure 4). This building is aligned north west to south east and measures some 10.4m by 4.3m, and appears to have been subdivided. The best preserved of the walls is the south western, which comprised several courses of dry stone walling, probably originally clay bonded, some 0.6 to 0.7m in width. The other walls of this building were less well preserved, and were identified through the presence of degraded clay bonding associated with increased concentrations of stone. It seems likely that these walls collapsed or were levelled when the structure went out of use. These walls are not thought sufficiently substantial to have continued to full roof height, and probably supported timber sill beams.
- 1.3.16 A long central hearth was identified within the building, associated with an ashy deposit, and a circular hearth or oven appears to have been built into the south western wall of the small room at the north western end of the structure. This may have acted as a kitchen, whilst the central hearth may have served a hall. It is not clear whether this building had a second storey, although a small stone structure against the southern corner of the building (not shown in plan) may have supported a staircase accessing an upper floor.

A short stretch of clay and limestone fragments to the north west of this structure may indicate the presence of an ancillary structure at this end.

- 1.3.17 A ditch to the north east of this building was clearly open at the time that this building was dismantled, with large quantities of limestone recovered from the upper fill. Sealing the rubble of this demolition were a number of large clearly defined areas of burning associated with charcoal runs and areas of hammerscale indicating that iron smithing was taking place on the site. Elsewhere in this trench were other areas of burning, as well as the curve of the enclosure ditch, which terminated within the trench. Investigations in this ditch, both within the trench and in the smaller trenches around the main trench revealed that this ditch was some 0.90m deep, and that pottery recovered from this ditch dated to the 12th and 13th centuries.
- 1.3.18 A significant quantity of the pottery recovered from the GLAFS excavations has been examined by Paul Blinkhorn. This has a date range covering much of the 12th century, but apparently going out of use early in the 13th century. Other finds from the site include a curb bit for a pony (from within the building), copper alloy tweezers and a spoon, a decorated bone knife handle and a carved stone corbel in the form of a head, as well as occasional pieces of decorated and dressed stonework. The assemblage of animal bone from the site includes cattle, horse, pig, deer and sheep/goat.
- 1.3.19 A number of sherds of Roman pottery have been found, notably during the fieldwalking, whilst resistivity survey has shown a rectangular anomaly c. 12m x 14m to the south of the smaller enclosure, where a scatter of over 100 pieces of broken tegulae were recovered during fieldwalking.

2 METHODS

2.1 Introduction

- 2.1.1 A project design for the work was compiled and provided by Videotext Communications Ltd (Videotext Communications 2004). This contains a detailed description of the research aims of the project, as well as the methodologies to be employed in achieving these aims, and these are only reproduced in summary here. The archaeological works undertaken as part of the programme comprised geophysical survey, and archaeological trial trenching.

Geophysical Survey (by GSB Prospection Limited).

- 2.1.2 A detailed report on the Geophysics survey has been prepared by GSB Prospection Limited, and forms part of the Site archive (GSB, 2004). Its aims and objectives are included here in summary form. An area of some 2.75 hectares (Figure 2), within the field was surveyed. This survey was undertaken with a Bartington GRAD 601-2 fluxgate gradiometer. Conditions

for survey were generally good - the majority of the survey area was under pasture while the northernmost section had a young crop. The presence of the open excavation trench and the associated spoil heaps and photographic tower hampered survey on the smaller enclosure.

2.2 Aims and objectives

Excavation.

2.2.1 The stated aim of this project was to ascertain the significance of the archaeological material previously found on the Site (Videotext Communications, 2004, 4). The project offered the opportunity to use a number of archaeological techniques to examine the archaeological potential of the area. The main aims for the work were:

- to characterise the archaeological resource on the site and
- to provide a condition survey of those parts of the site investigated.

2.2.2 Within this general aim, the project offered the opportunity to establish the character, extent and nature of the features identified in the previous small scale geophysics survey. It was also suggested that the work carried out during this project would form an important resource for the landowners for the future management and interpretation of the Site. Specific research aims for the site were:

- To determine the extent of the enclosures and to measure individual features and depths of deposits.
- To determine the date range of the enclosures and to ascertain whether they were constructed as a single event, whether they developed over a period of time or whether in fact they were earlier monuments reused in the medieval period.
- To determine resultantly whether the two enclosures and supposed ditch systems are all part of one complex.
- To determine the nature and character of artefact deposition.
- To determine the nature of the iron working on the site.
- To locate areas of activity both within and immediately outside the enclosures in order to identify function.
- To test the theory that the stone structure in the small enclosure is a secular first floor hall.
- To determine the presence of entrances into and out of the enclosures.
- To determine how the monument was topographically sited in the local medieval landscape.
- To determine the character and significance of this monument in relation to other archaeological features in the vicinity.
- To identify the extent of preservation over the entire site, in particular with regard to the as yet not investigated large enclosure.

2.3 Evaluation methods

- 2.3.1 Four trenches were excavated by machine as part of the evaluation. The size of these trenches varied in length and width according to their location and purpose. The location of the trenches was determined by Mick Aston in consultation with specialists and guided by the results of the geophysical survey, in order to answer specific aims and objectives of the Project Design. A fifth trench, trench 1, already partially excavated by the GLAFS, was also cleaned in order to assess the nature of the deposits and structures exposed.
- 2.3.2 All trenches were excavated using a JCB wheeled excavator equipped with a mechanical backhoe or by a small 360 degree tracked excavator. Both were equipped with toothless ditching buckets. All machine work was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision and ceased at the identification of significant archaeological deposits, or where natural deposits were encountered. All trenches were subsequently cleaned by hand and archaeological deposits were planned, recorded and representative samples excavated by hand.
- 2.3.3 All archaeological deposits were recorded using Wessex Archaeology's *pro forma* recording sheets with a unique numbering system for individual contexts, drawings and samples. Trenches were located using a Trimble Real Time Differential GPS survey system. All archaeological features and deposits were planned at 1:20, and all sections were drawn at 1:10. All features and deposits were photographed, using both digital and manual cameras (black and white and colour slide). All principal strata and features were related to Ordnance Survey datum.
- 2.3.4 A sufficient sample of all deposits was examined to allow the resolution of the principal questions outlined in the aims and objectives above. Other deposits were recorded and preserved *in situ* but not excavated. Environmental samples were recovered from the interventions excavated as appropriate.
- 2.3.5 The work was carried out over 2nd – 8th October, 2004. All spoil was metal detected by recommended local metal detectorists. At the completion of the work trenches 2 to 5 were reinstated using the excavated spoil from the trenches in accordance with the requirements of the landowner.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Geophysical survey (by GSB Prospection Limited)

- 3.1.1 This survey successfully identified the larger of the two enclosures, but the responses are weakly defined – in places the ditches register as no more than

negative trends in the data. A number of internal and external features have been identified though the definition is also poor. The second enclosure proved more problematic because of the existence of the open excavation trenches and spoil heaps. The results have also been confused by a network of modern land drains that criss cross the site. Only one short length of this enclosure ditch has been detected (see Figure 3).

The larger enclosure (Enclosure B).

3.1.2 The ditch of the enclosure appears as weak magnetic anomalies in the north (1) but only negative trends in the data along the south eastern side (2). The western side is also difficult to discern in the results. There are a number of anomalies (3) along the line of the ditch, but no clear linear response. There is a large depression of unknown origin in the field at this point and this may be confusing matters. Within the enclosure there is one well-defined anomaly (4) that, on excavation, proved to be associated with a burnt feature.

3.1.3 Elsewhere, both inside and outside the enclosure, there are several anomalies interpreted as ‘?Archaeology’ since it is difficult to be certain whether they are associated with archaeological features or natures or natural variations in the soils. A large area of ferrous disturbance (5) is due to an electricity pole and an unusual linear anomaly (6) is thought to be a service trench.

The smaller enclosure (Enclosure A).

3.1.4 The results from this area are dominated by a series of strong linear responses forming a herringbone pattern. These clearly correspond to modern land drains that criss cross the field. It is believed that the linear responses at (7) may also be a land drain, but perhaps earlier in date than the others and constructed of different, less magnetic, materials.

3.1.5 The results are complicated by the existence of the excavation trenches, the spoilheaps and the associated debris which all result in spurious anomalies. There is only one linear magnetic anomaly which coincides with a section of the enclosure ditch (8).

3.2 Excavation

3.2.1 Four new trenches were opened during the course of the trenching, whilst some limited cleaning was undertaken in an ongoing excavation trench. The location of these was determined by the results of the geophysical survey and other trenches. The results of these trenches are described here (see Figure 1 for trench locations).

Trench 1 (Figure 4)

3.2.2 Some cleaning was undertaken within the main trench under investigation by the GLAFS in order to investigate the nature of the structure under excavation and associated deposits. Much of the material removed during

this cleaning was recently deposited silts caused by erosion of the sides and base of the trench over the winter. However, some anthropogenic material was recovered during this cleaning exercise, both from the recent silting and from the upper surface of the archaeological deposits. In order to distinguish these finds from the material from the other trenches, these were assigned context number 101.

3.2.3 The cleaning predominantly focussed on the remains of the building at the north eastern end of the trench and the associated features and deposits in order to allow the results of the GLAFS excavations to be assessed and the structure tied in to the results of the Time Team trenching.

3.2.4 The material recovered during this cleaning supports the evidence from these ongoing excavations. Over 200 sherds of pottery were recovered, including shelly wares, sandy wares, oolitic wares and greywares, all of which are broadly consistent with a date range of between the 11th and 13th centuries. Other significant finds from this cleaning include two horseshoes – one of a type dated to the 12th and 13th centuries and a second dated to the late 13th to 15th centuries, as well as a post-medieval copper alloy button. Animal bone recovered included cattle and pig bones, some showing signs of butchery and filleting and a single rabbit bone. A single whetstone was also recovered.

Trench 2 (Figure 5)

3.2.5 Trench 2 was a small square trench (some 4.8m square) targeted on part of the northern circuit of the larger, south westerly enclosure. The exact location of this trench was determined by the geophysics survey, which identified a strong signal in this area. This trench was stepped in order to allow the ditch to be excavated safely.

3.2.6 The topsoil deposit (201) was removed by machine, revealing the line of the enclosure ditch (203) cut into the natural drift geology (202). Ditch 203 was aligned north east to south west, and had steep concave sides and a concave base. It contained three fills – layers 204, 205 and 206. The earliest of these, layer 206, is a primary fill. This accumulated at the base of both sides of the cut, and derived from the initial erosion of the sides and base of the feature. It contained no anthropogenic material, and could not be closely dated. This was sealed by layer 205, a slowly accumulated secondary fill. Once again, this contained no anthropogenic material. This was sealed in turn by layer 204, which appeared to be a tertiary fill. The profile of this deposit however suggests that this may have lain within a recut of the enclosure ditch, although this could not be determined with certainty in this single intervention.

3.2.7 Large quantities of finds were recovered from layer 204, apparently indicating that this deposit incorporated material representing the use of the enclosure in the medieval period. Finds from this deposit, which appears to

have formed slowly, included numerous sherds of medieval pottery and fragments of animal bone. The pottery recovered is dominated by sherds of shelly ware, with smaller concentrations of sandy ware and only a single sherd of oolitic ware. These are found in similar proportions to the pottery sherds from trench 1, suggesting that similar activities were taking place in the two enclosures. The dates of these sherds are also similar, suggesting a date between the 11th and 13th centuries.

- 3.2.8 The animal bone from this 204 – the largest assemblage from a single deposit – largely comprises butchery waste dominated by sheep and cattle bones, but with smaller quantities of bird bones. It seems likely, given the nature of the assemblage, that some table waste is also included (see animal bone below)
- 3.2.9 It is not clear from this single intervention whether the enclosure ditch was originally cut in the medieval period or whether it was an earlier enclosure reused in the medieval period. Given the likely medieval date for the smaller enclosure to the north east, which forms part of the same system as this ditch, it is thought likely that the ditch was cut in the medieval period, but this can only be determined by further excavation.

Trench 3 (Figure 6)

- 3.2.10 Trench 3 was a large irregularly shaped trench targeted on two anomalies identified during the geophysical survey of the south western enclosure. It measured a maximum of some 21.28m by 12.21m. Removal of the modern topsoil (301) by machine revealed a layer of levelling and stone rubble (302) which sealed the remains of two structures and a number of stone lined ovens or hearths and a number of features cut into the natural drift geology (303).
- 3.2.11 The first of the structures excavated took the form of a post-built structure comprising two lines of postholes perpendicular to each other, cutting the natural drift geology. The first of these, aligned north east to south west comprised at least four postholes of which two were investigated (postholes 309 and 312). Posthole 309 was sub circular, with steep sides, and a concave base. It contained two fills – layers 310 and 311. posthole 312 was more substantial, with steep stepped sides and a concave base. It was significantly deeper, and contained three fills – layers 313, 314 and 315. Pottery recovered from the upper fill of this feature – layer 315 – included sherds of shelly and sandy pottery, similar to those found elsewhere on the site.
- 3.2.12 The second row of postholes lay perpendicular to this, aligned north west to south east, with posthole 309 at its north western end. One of the other two postholes was also excavated (316). This contained two fills, 317 and 318. pottery recovered from layer 318, which probably formed in the void left by the removal of the post, also included sherds of shelly and sandy wares, as well as fragments of animal bone and a whetstone. Pottery sherds of shelly

and sandy fabric were also recovered from the fills of two gullies associated with posthole 316 (fill 304 of gully 305 and fill 306 of gully 307)

- 3.2.13 The form taken by this structure or building is uncertain, particularly as its full extents could not be determined. It does appear to be associated with at least one stone lined oven or hearth – one was uncovered to the east of posthole 309. This oven or hearth was associated with a spread of ashy material, presumably resulting from raking out the oven or hearth. It was not possible to excavate either of these in the time available, nor was it possible to investigate a further possible posthole which lay to the south east of the oven or hearth. On form, this oven or hearth is similar to a number of similar features excavated elsewhere within the trench.
- 3.2.14 To the east of these features, a wide shallow gully was excavated, running north-south across the trench, before turning to the east, in which direction it continued for several metres before terminating. In general, this had shallow regular sides and a concave base. This gully was investigated with three interventions – 321, 323 and 325. In each case the gully only contained a single fill (layers 322, 324 and 326 respectively). Finds recovered from these interventions include sherds of pottery and fragments of animal bone. The former include both the common sandy and shelly wares, as well as occasional sherds of greywares (324 and 326) and fine oolitic tempered wares (326). The latter might indicate that the gully remained open into the 13th or 14th century. The animal bone recovered included sheep or goat.
- 3.2.15 This gully appears to have defined the western and northern edges of a small rectangular building. Although no traces of the walls survive – these appear to have been built either of cob or on timber sill-beams the internal floor surface of the building was evident in the form of surface 341. This was a compacted dark yellowish brown silty clay which formed the internal floor of the building, and was approximately rectangular, measuring some 5m by 3.5m. This floor surface was cut by a number of ovens or hearths, whilst an area of light cobbling evident in the southern third of the floor (layer 342) probably marked the doorway and route into the building.
- 3.2.16 Much of the floor area was taken up with the remains of four or five ovens or hearths, not all of which appear to have been in use contemporaneously. The best preserved of these, 333, lay within a roughly circular cut. The stones forming the lining or base of the superstructure formed an almost complete circle. Within this the remains of the last burning were evident (layer 334) sealed the burnt clay floor of the hearth (layer 335). To the west of this lay an area of charcoal rich material that probably represents an episode of rake-out from this feature.
- 3.2.17 Immediately to the north of this lay a similarly sized oven or hearth 337, which lay in a circular cut 336. Here, the stone lining only survived against

the eastern edge of the cut. Another cut, 330, to the west of this probably represents the location of another oven. The single fill of this deposit, layer 331, was a very mixed deposit containing frequent charcoal inclusions and a number of flint cobbles. These probably derived from the use and demolition of an oven or kiln.

- 3.2.18 A fourth oven or hearth lay in the north western corner of the building (338). This was a more ovoid cut, which also contained the remains of a stone lining or superstructure (339). It was filled with a mixed charcoal rich deposit which probably incorporated material burnt the use of one of these ovens or hearth and was used to backfill the feature once it had been dismantled. To the east of this lay further arrays of stones, within which two apparent arcs may define the edges of further ovens or hearths, along with another substantial charcoal rich spread. There was not time to investigate of these further.
- 3.2.19 It is clear that the primary purpose of this building was to house these ovens or hearths. Judging from the various state of completeness of these, it seems likely that no more than one or two of them were in use at any one time. the most likely explanation for this building is that it functioned as a kitchen or a bakehouse, probably serving a nearby hall or building.
- 3.2.20 The absence of any pottery or of animal bone within any of the deposits within this building makes it impossible to phase either the building or the ovens or hearths closely. Material recovered from the ditch surrounding this building, however, appears to indicate that the building was in use at some time between the 11th and 13th centuries.

Trench 4 (Figure 7).

- 3.2.21 Trench 4 lay to the east of the main trench under excavation by GLAFS. It was targeted on the line of the smaller enclosure ditch identified on the geophysics survey. The trench was 'L' shaped and measured a maximum of 11.6m by 6.08m.
- 3.2.22 The topsoil (401) was removed by machine, revealing the line of the enclosure ditch cutting the natural drift geology (402).
- 3.2.23 The line of the enclosure ditch was investigated with two separate interventions. The southerly of these, cut 403, had shallow to moderate regular sides and a sloping base. It contained a single fill – layer 404 – an undifferentiated secondary fill. Finds from this deposit included four sherds of medieval pottery – two of a sandy fabric and two of a shelly fabric. The northern intervention, cut 405, had an almost identical profile, and also contained a single undifferentiated secondary fill (layer 406). Once more medieval shelly and sandy pottery was recovered, along with a single sherd of residual Roman pottery. A small number of animal bones were also

recovered, including sheep/goat, pig and cattle. The dating evidence would seem to indicate that this enclosure is roughly contemporaneous with the building and associated features under excavation by GLAFS.

- 3.2.24 The only other features recorded in this trench were a small concentration of stones in the north western corner of the trench, which were not investigated or recorded in detail, and three modern land drains (numbered 407, 408 and 409).

Trench 5 (Figure 8).

- 3.2.25 Trench 5 lay within a marked depression within the larger of the two enclosures – to the south west of trench 3. It was aligned north east to south west and was targeted on two substantial anomalies identified by the geophysics survey. Trench 5 was ‘L’ shaped, and wider at its eastern end. It measured a maximum of 18m from north east to south west by 3m from north west to south east.

- 3.2.26 The topsoil (501) and a colluvial subsoil (502) were removed by machine, revealing a number of features cut into the underlying drift geology (503).

- 3.2.27 The first of these, at the north eastern end of the trench, corresponds closely with one of the anomalies on the geophysical survey. This was a substantial feature, measuring a maximum of 2.96m by 1.80m. the upper fill of this feature was cleaned and recorded, as layer 504, but was not excavated. This was a charcoal rich deposit. Pottery recovered during the cleaning of this deposit included sherds of shelly ware, sandy ware, oolitic ware and whitewares.

- 3.2.28 Further to the south, two features were identified and partially excavated. The northerly of these corresponded with the second anomaly identified during the geophysical survey. Unfortunately, the time constraints incumbent on the project meant that the intervention investigating this feature – cut 505 – could not be fully excavated. Only the upper fill of this feature – layer 506 – was excavated, and this was only partially excavated. A number of pottery sherds were however recovered from this feature. These included sherds of sandy ware, shelly ware and oolitic wares.

- 3.2.29 Further to the south west lay a linear feature – probably a gully. This was investigated by intervention 507 once more time constraints meant that this feature could not be fully excavated. Animal bones and sherds of pottery were recovered from the only recorded fill – layer 508. The animal bones from this deposit represented a mixed group, including cattle, pig, sheep/goat, dog and goose. The pottery from this deposit was dominated by sherds of sandy or shelly wares, with smaller quantities of greywares, whitewares and a sherd of possible oolitic ware.

3.2.30 Although it was not possible to investigate the three features within this trench fully, pottery recovered from all three indicates that they belong to the same phase of activity, dating to between the 11th and 13th century.

4 FINDS

4.1.1 Finds were recovered from all five of the trenches excavated. All finds have been cleaned and have been quantified by material type within each context. Quantified data form the primary finds archive for the site, and these data are summarised by trench in **Table 1**.

4.1.2 Subsequent to quantification, all finds have been at least visually scanned in order to gain an overall idea of the range of types present, their condition, and their potential date range. Spot dates have been recorded for selected material types as appropriate. All finds data are currently held on an Access database.

4.1.3 This section presents an overview of the finds assemblage, on which is based an assessment of the potential of this assemblage to contribute to an understanding of the site in its local and regional context. The assemblage is relatively small, and is dominated by pottery, which ranges in date from Romano-British to medieval. Other finds types are not intrinsically datable, but are assumed to be largely if not all medieval.

Table 1: Finds totals by trench (number/weight in grammes)

CBM = ceramic building material

Material	Tr 1	Tr 2	Tr 3	Tr 4	Tr 5	TOTAL
Pottery	221/2488	133/2422	355/3972	12/103	46/1002	767/9987
<i>Medieval</i>	221/2488	132/2417	353/3965	10/93	46/1002	762/9965
<i>Romano-British</i>	-	1/5	2/7	2/10	-	5/22
CBM	-	-	2/175	-	-	2/175
Fired Clay	1/8	-	6/176	-	-	7/184
Burnt Flint	1/28	-	-	-	-	1/28
Stone	1/191	-	1/396	1/284	-	3/871
Metalwork	6	1	-	1	1	9
<i>Copper alloy</i>	1	1	-	-	-	2
<i>Iron</i>	5	-	-	1	1	7
Animal Bone	16/234	308/3382	32/150	16/203	20/58	392/4027

4.2 Pottery

4.2.1 With the exception of a few sherds of Romano-British date, the pottery assemblage is entirely of medieval date. The assemblage has been quantified by ware type (based on dominant inclusion types) within each context, and the presence of diagnostic forms noted. Quantified information is summarised in Table 2.

Table 2: Pottery totals by ware type

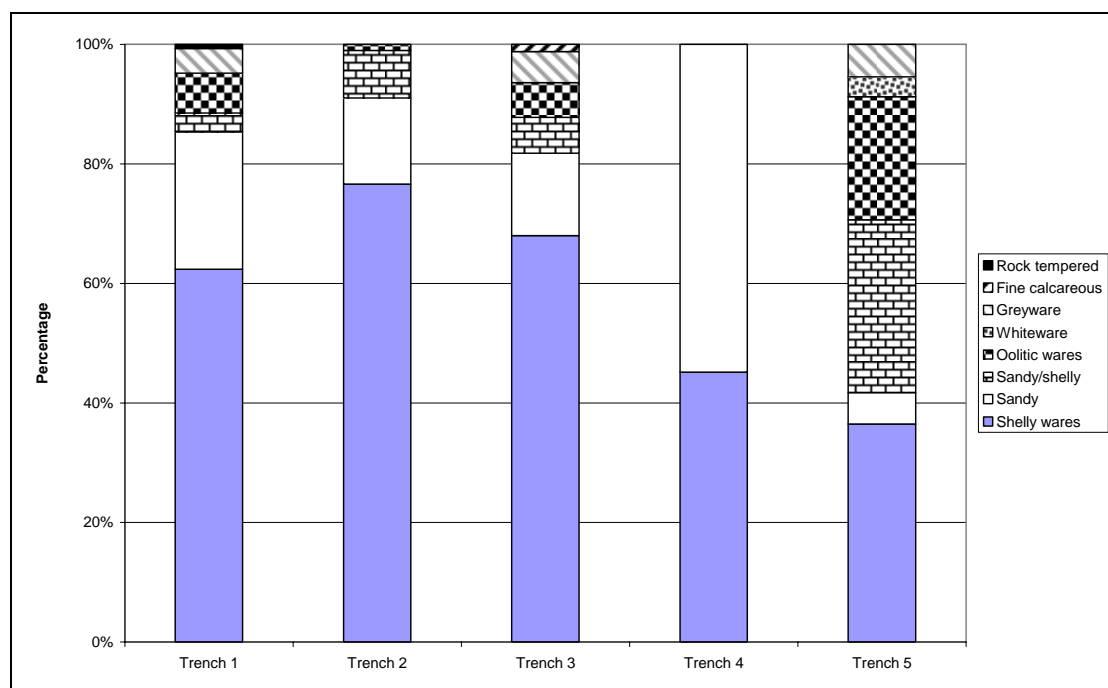
Date Range	Ware type	No. sherds	Weight (g)
ROMANO-BRITISH	Grog-tempered ware	3	15
	RB sandy ware	2	7
	<i>sub-total R-B</i>	5	22
MEDIEVAL	Shelly wares	470	6437
	Sandy/shelly ware	72	890
	Sandy wares	139	1554
	Greywares	45	358
	Oolitic wares	19	421
	Sandy/oolitic wares	5	198
	Other calcareous wares	3	47
	Rock-tempered ware	4	17
	Whitewares	5	43
	<i>Sub-total medieval</i>	762	9965
	OVERALL TOTAL	767	9987

4.2.2 Three sherds of grog-tempered ware, and two sandy sherds, represent the earliest material within this assemblage. All these are small, abraded body sherds and occur residually in later contexts, mostly from topsoil. None can be dated more closely within the Romano-British period.

4.2.3 Several different ware types were identified amongst the medieval assemblage (see **Table 2**), and it is apparent that several pottery sources are represented. The dominant coarsewares are shelly, and potential sources for these are likely to include Olney Hyde and Harrold, Bedfordshire; St Neot's types could also be present. Vessel forms seen here are mainly jars, with a range of rim profiles from simple to developed but with a complete absence of decoration, as well as bowls and dishes and at least one jug (in a finer fabric variant). The potential date range for these wares is late 11th to early 13th century.

- 4.2.4 The coarse sandy wares are more likely to occur here in jar forms with developed (squared, sometimes lid seated) rims, and the date range slightly later than the shelly wares although overlapping (later 12th to 14th century). Some of these could be Brill/Boarstall products, but there is no sign here of any of the distinctive finewares from these production centres. Finewares instead appear to have been supplied largely by the 13th/14th century Lyveden-Stanion hearths in Northamptonshire. These wares contain oolitic inclusions – jugs are glazed (sometimes over white slip) and decorated with applied white slip and stamped motifs; there is one twisted rod handle.
- 4.2.5 Grey sandy wares may fall within the greyware ceramic tradition which is widespread across southern Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Hertfordshire and Essex; they are found here exclusively in jar forms, with developed rims, and are probably of comparable date to the other sandy coarsewares. Other miscellaneous wares, found in small quantities, include sherds from one jar rim in a soft, oxidised, rock-tempered fabric, of unknown Midlands origin; other calcareous wares, and whitewares.
- 4.2.6 An examination of the distribution of these wares reveals that there are no significant concentrations of the different fabrics between the two enclosures. However there are differences between the different trenches. In particular, the proportions of fabrics recovered from trenches 2, 3 and 5, all focussed on the south western enclosure, differ (see Graph 1).
- 4.2.7 Trench 2, the trench targeted on the enclosure ditch is dominated by shelly wares, with smaller proportions of sandy and sandy/shelly wares and only small quantities of oolitic wares. Trench 3, which contained the two buildings, has similar proportions of shelly, sandy and shelly/sandy wares, but has a much higher proportion of oolitic wares, as well as quantities of greywares and fine calcareous wares. In this it is similar to the assemblage from trench 1, which had small quantities of greywares along with fine oolitic wares and fine shelly wares.
- 4.2.8 In trench 5, however, shelly fabrics are far less frequent, barely forming a third of the assemblage from the trench. Instead, sherds of sandy/oolitic fabric, whitewares and greywares make up over a third of the assemblage by weight. The proportions in which these occur may indicate that the assemblage in this trench is slightly later in date than those from the other trenches, perhaps indicating continuation into the 14th century. The assemblage recovered from the two interventions through the smaller enclosure in Trench 4 is too small to be useful in these determinations

Graph 1. Pottery fabrics by trench.



4.3 Metalwork

4.3.1 Metalwork comprises seven iron and two copper alloy objects. Iron objects include four horseshoe fragments, of which one (context 101) can be identified as a ‘wavy-edged’ early medieval type, common throughout the 12th century and into the 13th (Clark 1995, type 2), and two (one from context 101 and one from trench 4) as probable late medieval types (late 13th to 15th century and possibly later; *ibid.*, type 4). The fourth fragment, from trench 5, is from the tip (calkin) of a shoe of uncertain form. The other iron objects comprise a large, D-shaped buckle, a scale tang knife with the tip missing, and a curved strip of uncertain function, all three from trench 1 topsoil, and of medieval or later date. The copper alloy consists of a small, plain button, probably post-medieval (context 101) and a small sheet fragment, origin and date unknown (trench 2).

4.4 Other Finds

4.4.1 Other artefacts comprise a whetstone (context 101) and two other pieces of stone, apparently unutilised; two fragments of brick, one burnt (trench 3 topsoil); seven pieces of fired clay, undiagnostic and of uncertain date and origin (trenches 1 and 3), and one piece of burnt, unworked flint, similarly undated (trench 1).

4.5 Animal Bone

Introduction

- 4.5.1 Most of the bone was dated using ceramic association to the medieval period. Some earlier Romano-British material is present in trenches 2, 3 and 4, but by far the majority of the bone is from medieval context 204.

Condition and preservation

- 4.5.2 Only one context, the topsoil from trench 3, contained bones in poor condition. A further nine contexts in trenches 1, 2, 3 and 4 contained bones in fair condition, with only two contexts that contained bone in good condition (204 and 508). However these bones made up the vast majority of the assemblage. 5% of bones were gnawed, from trenches 1, 2 and 4, which has resulted in the destruction of some of the less dense parts. Loose teeth were 9% of the assemblage, or 17% of the identified bones, indicating some fragmentation of the assemblage rather than erosion of the bone.

Species identification

- 4.5.3 Of the 353 bones recovered, 52% were identified to species (Table 3), of which sheep/goats were the most common. Several sheep skulls were identified but there were no positive identifications of goat, with just one possible example in topsoil from trench 3. Cattle bones were also relatively frequently seen, but pig and horse were less common. Single dog, cat and rabbit bones were present; the rabbit bone was from a topsoil context and may be intrusive. Bird bones were relatively numerous, and included a wide range of species; goose, domestic fowl, crow and blackbird sized corvids.

Table 3: Species list and percentages (NISP)

	Horse	Cattle	Sheep /Goat	Pig	Dog	Cat	Rabbit	Bird	Unidenti- ed	Total
NISP	2	72	75	16	1	1	1	15	170	353
% of identified fragments	1	39	41	9	1	1	1	8		

- 4.5.4 Thirty-three bones could be aged, 18% of the identified assemblage. The majority of these were from context 204 which contained bones from at least one young and one mature individual. Another young cattle bone was found in trench 5. Sheep from 204 were all mature; mandibles from a minimum of five individuals all had a lower third molar at wear stage g (Grant 1982), so all were old but not senile. Skulls from 6 individuals all had unfused/fusing sutures. Pig bones were from very young, young and mature individuals, but young animals were most common. The single dog bone was from a young animal under a year of age. Immature domestic fowl, goose and corvids were present, and could indicate the consumption of immature domestic animals

and perhaps natural fatalities or deliberately killed agricultural pests respectively. Mature fowl and corvids were also observed.

- 4.5.5 Only six bones could be measured due to fragmentation through chopping and the high proportion of immature individuals. Cattle were relatively small and short horned, one skull showing a slight boss, and sheep were also small in size, the majority of skulls indicating polled individuals, although sheep with horns were also present. Pathology was limited to sheep mandibles, and included two toothrows with very uneven wear and an additional two mandibles with periodontal disease, in one case with the probable loss of the lower third molar. Male and female pig bone elements were present.
- 4.5.6 Butchery marks were recorded on 25 bones, some with multiple chops with apparently haphazard positioning. Bones showed signs of cattle having been skinned and decapitated using knives, and in one case cuts on the hyoid may have resulted from slaughter by slitting the throat or from removal of the tongue. Their long bones had been filleted to remove the meat then the bones discarded probably without extracting the marrow (although a small proportion had definitely been fractured when fresh). Context 204 contained most of the butchered sheep bone, which consisted predominantly of chopped crania, showing longitudinal splitting.
- 4.5.7 Only two bones had been burnt or heated, including a cattle humerus shaft that showed signs of having been heated, perhaps prior to splitting for marrow to weaken the bone for fracture and to make the marrow more molten.
- 4.5.8 The assemblage from context 204 contained bone that can be considered as butchery waste. It was dominated by sheep crania and mandibles from a minimum of six individuals, and large fragments of cattle long bones and skull fragments, with a small proportion of pig head and foot ('waste') bones. The absence of sheep foot bones may indicate that the feet remained with the skin for tanning (Serjeantson 1989) while the head was discarded after the removal of the brain. Bones from cattle may be discarded after filleting, cutting down on weight (for ease of transport) and on the time required to cook the meat. Waste bones from cattle included an articulating distal tibia, astragalus and navicular cuboid from the lower hind limb that were discarded as one unit. Other elements, including immature and mature fowl and corvid bones, a horse femur and cat mandible, include 'meat' as well as 'waste' bones, and may have different origin such as table waste, although bird lower leg and wing tip bones are well represented and may be removed prior to cooking. The cat mandible may have been from a skinned individual. The location of this assemblage in a ditch in the large enclosure fits with this interpretation, since butchery was often practised, and the resulting waste deposited, on the outskirts of occupation, due to its offensive nature.

- 4.5.9 Context 508, from the interior of the large enclosure, is also unusual, containing single examples of cattle, sheep, pig, ulna and goose in good condition, all but one of which was from a young individual. Bones from other contexts were a mixture of species and bone elements suggesting general domestic waste, and in the entrance and interior of the small enclosure may include consumption waste (e.g. the meat bearing parts of fowl wings).

Summary

- 4.5.10 Without any context information it is very difficult to comment on the typicality or significance of the assemblage. However it is possible to say that the remains from context 204 are probably the waste from an episode or several episodes of butchery, and that context 508 is unusual in that it contains young bones from several species, including dog as well as 'food' animals. The sheep are more numerous by fragment count than other species and are of an old age and small size typical of the medieval period, when wool production was a main reason for breeding sheep (Grant 1988).

4.6 Potential and recommendations.

- 4.6.1 This is a small assemblage in a very limited range of material types. Taken alone, this is of little archaeological potential, but these finds should be viewed in the context of material already recovered from the site, to which they provide a useful supplement. The pottery in particular is in good condition, and further analysis could, at a site-specific level, help to refine the dating of the excavated contexts. Detailed discussion of the pottery assemblage, however, would be best accommodated within a programme of analysis that encompassed the whole of the pottery assemblage recovered from fieldwork on the site.
- 4.6.2 The faunal assemblage is well preserved but of a relatively small size with a number of bones from topsoil contexts. While interesting, further work is not recommended for this assemblage since significant information regarding animal husbandry, consumption and butchery practice would not be provided. However any further excavations on this site are likely to produce more bone to which this assemblage can be usefully added during full analysis, to better understand the nature of occupation and any spatial zoning of activity areas.
- 4.6.3 Other finds occurred in insufficient quantities to warrant any further analysis.

5 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

5.1 Samples taken and palaeo-environmental evidence

- 5.1.1 Two bulk samples of eight and 20 litres were taken from the early medieval enclosure ditch and a posthole fill 312. The samples were processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoal. There were also two hand-picked charcoal samples thought to come from possible burnt posts.

5.2 Charred Plant Remains and Charcoals

By Chris Stevens

- 5.2.1 The bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh and the residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2 mm and 1 mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. The flots were scanned under a x10 - x30 stereobinocular microscope and presence of charred remains quantified (Table 4), to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and charcoal remains.
- 5.2.2 The flots were quite large and rich in wood charcoal, but contained little charred macro remains, for example remains of cereal crops or crop weeds. Both samples contained small quantities of fine roots, but no modern seeds. Occasional burrowing snails, *Cecilioides acicula* were also present while a few shells of *Vertigo* spp. type within the sample from posthole 312 had their periostricum attached and so are undoubtedly modern intrusions.

Charred plant remains

- 5.2.3 The samples contained few charred macrofossils. Occasional grains of free-threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum* *sl*) were seen in both samples, but no other cereal remains were recovered. Seeds of other species were also relatively rare and included those of vetches/wild pea (*Vicia/Lathyrus* sp.), oats (*Avena* sp.), brome grass (*Bromus* sp.), buttercup (*Ranunculus acris/repens/bulbosus*) and a seed of possible darnel (*Lolium temulentum*).
- 5.2.4 Both free-threshing wheats and many of the weed seeds have previously been recorded from Saxon and Medieval sites in Milton Keynes and Northamptonshire (Jones 1993, Keepax *et al* 1979). Given that at Oliver's Meadow they occur with quantities of charcoal then it is quite probable that they relate to the bringing in of small quantities of cereals in the 11th to 13th century.

Charcoal

- 5.2.5 Charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in Table 4. Quite large quantities and large fragments of charcoal came from

both the enclosure ditch and the postholes. In several cases this could be identified as oak from the ring-porous structure. Very little round wood was seen, however, one fragment from context 318 resembled round wood.

Land Snails

5.2.6 Small numbers of land mollusc remains were recovered. These were of species of shaded conditions, *Discus rotundatus* and *Aegopinella sp.* and occasional of open grassland, *Vallonia sp.* This type of assemblage is common in gardens and humanly disturbed habitats. There were also occasional shells of the burrowing snail *Cecilioides acicula*.

5.3 Potential and proposals for further work.

5.3.1 The charred plant remains indicate the utilisation of cereals on site, with a limited range of cereals present. However the low quantity of material provides little potential for the examination of the sites agricultural economy from these samples alone. They do however reveal the potential of survival of charred remains and the possibility of recovering of such remains in future excavations.

5.3.2 Wood charcoal analysis may reveal whether such material was collected from the forest floor or deliberately felled timber. The samples show the survival of wood charcoal and that such material has not been broken down by rooting action.

Table 4. Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

Feature type/ No	Context	Sample	size litres	Flot							Residue	
				flot ml	size	Grain	Chaff	Weed seeds uncharred charred	Charcoal >5.6mm	Other	Charcoal >5.6mm	analysis
11 th -12 th Century												
Tr 2 Enc Ditch 203	204	1	20	110		C	-	-	C	A*	moll-t (C)	-
Tr 3 Posthole 312	313	2	8			C	-	-	C	A	moll-t (C)	-
Tr 3 Posthole 312	314	3	n/a	Hand picked material charcoal resembles "wood chips" 2x grains of free-threshing wheat.								
Tr 3	318	4	n/a	Hand picked material								

KEY: A** = exceptional, A* = 30+ items, A = ≥10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items, (h) = hazelnuts, smb = small mammal bones; Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs Moll-f = freshwater molluscs; Analysis, C = charcoal, P = plant, M = molluscs

NOTE: ¹flot is total, but flot in superscript = ml of rooty material. ²Unburnt seed in lower case to distinguish from charred remains

- 5.3.3 No further work is proposed on the charred plant remains. Future excavations should continue to sample for such remains to reveal more of the nature and extent of cereal use, however, the extent of preservation of charred macro remains is still yet to be determined.
- 5.3.4 No further work is proposed on the charcoal recovered from these samples at this date or on the assemblages of land snails recovered.

6 DISCUSSION

- 6.1.1 The archaeological evaluation and geophysical work undertaken by ‘Time Team’ have been largely successful in meeting the aims set out in the project design. Although the geophysics survey was hampered by various factors, including modern disturbance caused by excavations, it did identify partial circuits for both trenches as well as providing further targets for investigation.
- 6.1.2 The magnetic survey undertaken by GSB Prospection Ltd succeeded in identifying the circuit of the larger enclosure, although the magnetic responses are poorly defined. A number of possible archaeological features were identified both within and outside this enclosure, some of which were investigated archaeologically. The presence of the excavation trench and spoilheaps severely restricted the survey on the smaller enclosure, and the existence of a complex of land drains further confused the results from this area. Despite these complications, a short length of enclosure ditch was identified
- 6.1.3 The excavations undertaken by Time Team have also established that the two enclosures are likely to be contemporaneous, and form part of the same complex, as suggested by the aerial photography. Previous excavations of the north eastern enclosure ditch have indicated that this was open during the 12th and 13th centuries, a date range broadly confirmed by the interventions in trench 4. Although no medieval material was recovered from the lower fills of the larger enclosure ditch, the quantity of medieval material recovered from the upper fills, the absence of any material of an earlier date and the evidence for medieval activity within this enclosure all suggest a medieval date.
- 6.1.4 The cleaning within the trench under excavation by GLAFS allowed a re-examination of the building under excavation, and provided further dating evidence in the form of pottery sherds. The building itself could be interpreted as a small hall house, with a hall heated by a central hearth at the south eastern end of the building, a small kitchen containing a hearth or oven at its north western end, and possibly a lean to byre for animals further to the north west. It is unclear whether this may have had a second floor, or perhaps an attic. It is thought likely that the clay bonded stone walls excavated

supported a timber framework rather than continuing to eaves height. This need not have been a very high status structure. Although some of the material recovered might suggest a high status site, notably the corbel and the other dressed stonework, the pottery suggests a domestic site and the form of the building suggests a lower status.

- 6.1.5 Excavation within the larger enclosure, to the south west, had identified the remains of other medieval buildings. These are less well built, one being post-built, and the second apparently having cob walls or walls resting on timber sills. Both were associated with stone lined ovens or hearths. The latter in particular appears to have been a kitchen or bakehouse, with a number of hearths or ovens, some clearly dismantled, whilst others were almost intact. Although no pottery was derived directly from the occupation deposits within this structure, pottery from the gully respecting the western and northern sides of the building dated to the 12th to 14th centuries.
- 6.1.6 The pottery recovered from all of the trenches appears to indicate that both enclosures were in use during the 12th and 13th centuries, and that by the 14th century they were either in decline or abandoned entirely. There are no significant differences in the pottery recovered from the two enclosures – small quantities of finewares were recovered from each, but the assemblages are dominated by coarse wares, suggesting a predominantly utilitarian use. The only assemblage which differs from the norm is the assemblage in Trench 5, where the fabrics include a greater proportion of oolitic wares as well as greater quantities of sandy/shelly wares and whitewares. This may indicate that the features investigated in this trench are slightly later in date.
- 6.1.7 Although a few sherds of Roman pottery were recovered, it seems clear that the site largely dates to the 11th to 13th centuries AD. None of the buildings excavated on the site to date is of a sufficient size to suggest that the enclosures formed part of a manorial complex, but it is possible that the main hall of such a complex lies beyond the limits of the excavated area. Certainly the presence of a separate kitchen or bakehouse in the larger enclosure might suggest the presence of a hall or similar in the vicinity.
- 6.1.8 The animal bone assemblage from the site is consistent with the use of the site as a domestic complex. There is no evidence from the proportions of species represented for the use of the site for a specialised function such as a hunting lodge. Indeed, the documentary evidence indicates that the site was only incorporated within a deer park well after the site seems to have been abandoned, although it may originally have lain within the bounds of the Royal forest of Salceyearly in the medieval period.
- 6.1.9 The results of the Time Team excavations, in conjunction with the ongoing excavations of GLAFS appear to indicate that the two enclosures belong to a medieval rural settlement. The presence of high status fragments of

stonework indicate the presence of a substantial masonry building, but no evidence of this has yet been identified. These may have been brought in to the site from a dismantled stone building, perhaps to be used as building material.

- 6.1.10 There is little evidence for activity on the site in the later medieval or post-medieval periods. The land was incorporated within a deer park in the 16th century, and probably remained as pasture after its disemparkment.
- 6.1.11 The evaluation and geophysical survey undertaken by Time Team at Oliver's Meadow, Gordon's Lodge Farm, Hanslope have significantly added to our understanding of the site. There is some evidence for Roman activity in the area, largely in the form of material found during fieldwalking or residual in later contexts, but the main density of archaeological remains belong to a substantial enclosed rural settlement dating to the 11th to the 13th century. The exact function of this settlement is unclear, although the animal bone would appear to rule out its use as a hunting lodge. It is considered unlikely that this was a manorial complex, although its size and complexity clearly indicate a fairly substantial sub manorial complex. The excavations have revealed that in general these remains are well preserved, and that in some areas colluvial subsoils have protected the archaeological features well from more recent ploughing.

7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER WORK

- 7.1.1 The Time Team excavations on the site have added significantly to the understanding of the site, and built on the work of the GLAFS. However, to publish the results of these excavations would at present be premature, given the ongoing excavations on the site. It is recommended that in due course, the site, which is clearly of regional significance, should be published in conjunction with the results of the GLAFS excavations. .

8 THE ARCHIVE

- 8.1.1 The archive, which includes all artefacts, written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigation is undertaken, is currently held at the offices of Wessex archaeology under the Site code OM 04 and Wessex archaeology project No 55763. The paper archive is contained in two lever arch files. In due course, Time Team will transfer ownership of the archive to the appropriate local museum.

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APPENDIX 1. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS.

Trench 1	Length: 10.21m max	Width: 3.66m max	Max depth: 1.37m	Ground level: 84.85m
Context	Interpretation	Description		
101	Layer	Cleaning layer. Number assigned to material recovered during cleaning of this trench, already under excavation. The trench had been left open, and had suffered from some plant growth and silting, necessitating some cleaning. A quantity of finds were recovered including sherds of pottery.		

Trench 2	Length: 4.80m max	Width: 4.80m max	Max depth: 1.45m	Ground level: 79.54m OD
Context	Interpretation	Description		
201	Layer	Topsoil. A greyish brown silt loam. Heavily disturbed by modern roots.		
202	Layer	Natural. Yellowish brown silty clay containing moderate flecks of chalk and occasional flint pebbles.		
203	Cut	Linear enclosure ditch, aligned north east – south west, with steep concave sides and a concave base Contains 3 fills – layers 204, 205 and 206. Medieval pottery recovered from the fills of the ditch.		
204	Layer	A mid brownish orange clay silt containing frequent small and medium chalk inclusions and common small chalk flecks Contains fragments of pottery and animal bone, as well as flecks of charcoal. A slowly formed tertiary fill		
205	Layer	A mid brown silty clay containing rare small and medium sub rounded flint pebbles and very rare chalk flecks. A well sorted, slowly formed, secondary fill.		
206	Layer	A mid orange brown clay silt, with brown mottling containing rare sub rounded flint inclusions. The lower, primary, fill of the medieval ditch, present on both sides of the cut, but not in the centre.		

Trench 3	Length: 21.28m	Width: 12.21m	Max depth: 0.75m	Ground level: 79.38m OD
Context	Interpretation	Description		
301	Layer	Topsoil. A greyish brown silty loam. Very friable, with occasional small and medium rounded and sub rounded flint pebbles. Root disturbed modern topsoil.		
302	Layer	Layer of levelling. A layer of rubble sealing hearths and possible buildings.		
303	Layer	Natural. A yellowish brown silty clay containing occasional medium sub rounded and sub angular flint pebbles. The natural boulder clay – formed as a glacial till. Also contains v rare large rounded and sub rounded flint cobbles.		
304	Layer	A greyish brown silty clay containing occasional angular and sub angular flint pebbles containing sherds of pottery and flecks of charcoal.		
305	Cut	A shallow gully, with moderately sloping concave sides and a flat base, aligned north west to south east This contained a single fill, layer 304.		
306	Layer	A yellowish brown silty clay containing very occasional medium and large angular or sub angular flints containing sherds of pottery. Probably a deliberate backfill. Fill of 307.		
307	Cut	Shallow gully aligned north east – south west. It had moderately steep straight sides and a sloping base, and contained a single fill – layer 306. The relationship between this feature and pit/posthole 316 could not be determined.		
308	VOID	Number not used.		
309	Cut	A sub circular posthole, containing two fills – layers 310 and 311. This has steep sides, with a sharp break in slope and a concave base. Contains 2 fills – layers 309 and 310. Probably forms part of a post built structure.		
310	Layer	A mid grey brown cay silt with orange mottling. Contains occasional small flint pebbles and occasional chalk flecks. This layer probably represents a deliberate backfill around a post. Fill of 309.		

311	Layer	A mid grey brown silty clay containing very occasional flint gravels and chalk flecks. Post pipe within posthole 309.
312	Cut	A sub circular post hole with steep stepped sides and a concave base. This contains fills – layers 313, 314 and 315. Forms part of a post built structure.
313	Layer	A mid brown grey clay silt containing occasional sub angular flint inclusions. The lower fill of post hole 312.
314	Layer	Number assigned to layer of charcoal and burnt wood within posthole 312. Sealed by layer 315.
315	Layer	A mid to dark greyish brown silty clay containing occasional large angular flints. Upper fill of posthole 312.
316	Cut	A sub circular posthole with one steep regular side (NE) and a moderately sloping regular side (SW). Contains two fills – layers 317 and 318. Forms part of post built structure.
317	Layer	A mid orange brown clay silt containing very rare angular flint inclusions and rare chalk flecks. Packing within posthole 316.
318	Layer	A mid to dark greyish brown silty clay containing rare small and medium angular flints. Probably formed in void left by the removal of the post within posthole 316.
319	Cut	Group number assigned to the ditch enclosing medieval building, incorporating interventions 321, 323 and 325.
320	VOID	Number not used.
321	Cut	Terminus of small ditch, same as 323 and 325. Shallow regular sides and a concave base. Contains a single secondary fill – layer 322.
322	Layer	A mid brownish orange clay silt containing moderate amounts of poorly sorted small and medium rounded and sub rounded flint and chalk gravels. The only fill of ditch terminus 321.
323	Cut	A ditch, aligned west east, with moderately sloping concave sides and a concave base. This is the same ditch as 321 and 325. Contains a single secondary fill – layer 324.
324	Layer	An orange brown silty clay containing occasional small and medium rounded and sub rounded flint pebbles. The only fill of ditch intervention 323.
325	Cut	A ditch, aligned north – south. This is the same ditch as 321 and 323. It had moderately steep concave sides and a concave base. Contains a single fill – layer 326.
326	Layer	A mid orange brown silty clay containing occasional small and medium rounded and sub rounded flint pebbles. The only fill of ditch intervention 325.
327	Cut	A sub circular cut, dug to contain a medieval hearth or oven. This had moderately steep regular sides and an irregular base. The remains of the superstructure survive in the form of a rough circle of fire reddened stones. There are two distinct areas of burning associated with this hearth – layers 329 and 330.
328	Layer	A mid to dark greyish blue silty clay containing occasional flecks of chalk. A layer of probable burning associated within hearth 327. Overlies layer 329.
329	Layer	A mid orange brown silty clay containing occasional chalk flecks. Some charcoal. Area of burning associated with hearth 327. Lies below layer 328.
330	Cut	An ovoid cut dug to contain a hearth. This contains a single poorly sorted fill – layer 331. This lay within a medieval building, along with a number of other similar features.
331	Layer	A dark brown silty loam containing occasional medium angular and sub angular flint nodules. This layer also contains frequent charcoal inclusions. This is a very mixed deposit, with the charcoal derived from burning within a hearth or oven, probably used to backfill the hollow formed by the dismantled hearth or oven.
332	Cut	A sub circular cut dug to contain a circular stone footing for an oven or hearth (333) and filled with a burnt deposit (334). Layer 335 represents the burnt base of the hearth or oven.
333	Layer	Roughly circular wall of hearth or oven, comprising a line of medium sized flint and limestone blocks, some showing signs of burning. Associated deposits include a burnt fill – layer 334 and the floor of the hearth or oven – 335.

334	Layer	A dark greyish brown sandy silt containing frequent charcoal inclusions and small quantities of fired clay. This is an <i>in situ</i> deposit probably representing an episode of burning within the hearth or oven 332
335	Layer	Number assigned to the compacted clay floor of hearth or oven 332.. This shows signs of both oxidation and reduction through burning. Sealed by layer 334.
336	Cut	Circular cut with steep regular sides and a flat base. This is a cut dug to contain a hearth or oven, and contains the remains of the stone lining or base for the superstructure (layer 337). This lies within a medieval building along with a number of other similar features.
337	Layer	A circular array of stones, only present on the eastern edge of the cut, probably representing the remains of the lining or superstructure of the hearth or oven 336.
338	Cut	An ovoid cut, with moderately steep regular sides and a flat base, dug to contain a hearth or oven. The superstructure of this is still partially extant (layer 339), and the cut also contains a mixed deposit, partially incorporating burnt material (layer 340)
339	Layer	A roughly semi circular array of medium sized flints and limestone blocks. Probably the remains of the superstructure or lining of the hearth or oven (cut 338)
340	Layer	A dark greyish brown silty clay containing moderate amounts of small rounded and sub rounded flint pebbles, and frequent flecks of comminuted charcoal. This mixed deposit probably represents a dump of material used to backfill the dismantled oven.
341	Layer	Clay floor defining the internal extents of a medieval building. Cut by a number of hearths or ovens. A compacted dark yellowish brown silty clay.
342	Layer	An area of light cobbling within the medieval building, perhaps leading into the building from a doorway.

Trench 4		Length: 11.60m	Width: 6.08m	Max depth: 0.93m	Ground level: 82.68m OD
Context	Interpretation	Description			
401	Layer	Topsoil. A greyish brown silty loam containing occasional small flint pebbles. Root disturbed modern topsoil and turf			
402	Layer	A yellowish brown silty clay containing moderate small and medium chalk inclusions and occasional medium rounded and sub rounded flint cobbles. A natural boulder clay, deposited as a glacial till.			
403	Cut	Cut of a medieval enclosure ditch. Aligned north south, with a moderately sloping irregular slope (W side) and a shallower regular slope (E) and a sloping base. This contains a single undifferentiated fill – layer 404. The same ditch as 405.			
404	Layer	A dark yellowish brown silty clay containing moderate small and medium chalk inclusions, and occasional small and medium sub rounded to sub angular flint inclusions. The only fill of 403. Probably a secondary fill.			
405	Cut	Cut of a medieval enclosure ditch. Aligned north south, with a moderately sloping regular slope (W side) and a shallower regular slope (E) and a concave base. This contains a single undifferentiated fill – layer 406. The same ditch as 403.			
406	Layer	A dark yellowish brown silty clay containing moderate small and medium sub rounded and rounded chalk inclusions, and occasional small and medium sub rounded to sub angular flint inclusions. The only fill of 403. Probably a secondary fill.			
407	Modern land drain	Single number assigned to the cut and fill of a modern land drain recorded during the excavation of an intervention through the medieval enclosure ditch			
408	Modern land drain	Single number assigned to the cut and fill of a modern land drain recorded during the excavation of an intervention through the medieval enclosure ditch			
409	Modern land drain	Single number assigned to the cut and fill of a modern land drain recorded during the excavation of an intervention through the medieval enclosure ditch			

Trench 5		Length: 18.00m	Width: 3.00m	Max depth: 1.00m	Ground level: 77.12m OD
Context	Interpretation	Description			
501	Layer	Topsoil. A grey brown silt loam containing occasional small rounded pebbles.			
502	Layer	Subsoil. A dark yellowish brown silt clay containing occasional small rounded pebbles.			
503	Layer	Natural. A yellowish brown silty clay containing occasional small and medium chalk inclusions. A natural boulder clay, deposited as a glacial till.			
504	Layer	Spread of charcoal rich material at the eastern end of the trench. Not excavated. A yellowish brown sandy clay containing occasional large sub rounded and subangular burnt stones and limestone blocks, along with smaller chalk fragments. Very frequent charcoal inclusions			
505	Cut	Linear cut, with very steep sides and a flattish base. The full extents of this feature could not be determined in the time available, and only a single fill was identified (layer 506)			
506	Layer	An orange brown sandy clay containing occasional sub rounded and sub angular small stones and frequent charcoal inclusions. The full extents of this deposit were not determined			
507	Cut	Sub circular cut, apparently with steep sides and a flattish base. The full extents of this feature could not be determined in the time available, and only a single fill was identified (layer 508)			
508	Layer	An orange brown sandy clay containing rare small angular flints and frequent charcoal inclusions. The full extents of this deposit were not determined			