

ABBAY HOUSE, BRADFORD ON AVON
ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS 1996

NGR: ST 82459 60941

POST EXCAVATION STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

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Report No: Found 4
February 1997

FOUNDATIONS INDEPENDENT ARCHAEOLOGICAL MANAGEMENT

AH96



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GLOSSARY

Archaeology

For the purposes of this project archaeology is taken to mean the study of past human societies through their material remains from prehistoric times to the modern era.

FIAM

Foundations Independent Archaeological Management

Medieval

Taken here from the Norman Conquest in AD 1066 to *c.* AD 1500

Natural

Defined in archaeological terms this refers to the undisturbed natural geology of a site.

NGR

National Grid Reference given from the Ordnance Survey Grid

Norman

Period immediately following the Norman Conquest in AD 1066.

OD

Ordnance Datum

Post-medieval

The period following the Medieval period. From *c.* AD 1500 to the 19th century

Romano-British

Term used to describe a fusion of indigenous late Iron Age traditions with invasive Roman culture. It is traditionally dated between AD 43 and *c.* AD 400

Saxon

Period following the collapse of Roman and native British administration in the 5th century. A gradual process of acculturation and conquest over several centuries absorbing the native sub-Roman traditions throughout England and parts of Wales. The period traditionally ends with the Norman Conquest in AD 1066.

1 INTRODUCTION

- 1.1 In August 1996 Foundations Archaeology was commissioned by John England Site Developments, on behalf of Derry Treanor Ltd, to excavate a 10m by 14m trench in advance of development at land behind Abbey House, Bradford on Avon. The excavation was carried out over a three week period during August and September 1996, as the site became available after the completion of initial groundworks. A total area of 140m² was excavated, comprising a c. 7.5% sample (by area) of the total development site. The site area consists of a parcel of land bounded by Rosemary Steps, the Abbey House complex, and buildings fronting onto Newtown, to the east, south and north respectively. The site is situated on a terraced hillside, with terracing walls across the natural contour. Garden walls separate the site from Rosemary Steps and the gardens immediately to the west.
- 1.2 Prior to the excavations being undertaken, the site was cleared by Gammon Plant Hire. Clearing operations consisted of the grubbing out of trees, shrubs and undergrowth, and the demolition of the derelict buildings in the eastern part of the site. This activity was in part observed by Duncan Coe of Wiltshire County Council Archaeology Section.
- 1.3 The development proposals consisted of the construction of four terraced properties with associated gardens and access, along with the refurbishment of a gazebo in the north-west corner of the site. The excavation trench was sited within the footprint of the proposed new buildings.
- 1.4 This document provides an assessment of the evidence recovered during the excavation and proposes a programme of further analysis to bring the results to publication. The final format for publication was not specified in the Project Design, although a range of possible options was suggested (FIAM 1996a). This assessment now details the proposed publication format and content of the excavation report. This document conforms to the specification set out in Appendices 4 and 5 of *The Management of Archaeological Projects* (English Heritage 1991).
- 1.5 In the following sections a summary of the results of the excavation is followed by an assessment of its local, regional and national importance in terms of the deposits and structures identified. Each major category of finds is then similarly assessed in turn, and finally an overall assessment of the importance of the site and its artefacts and ecofacts is given.

2 CIRCUMSTANCE OF THE EXCAVATIONS

- 2.1 The excavation followed an evaluation undertaken by Wessex Archaeology in October 1995, which suggested that Saxo-Norman or medieval remains might survive on the site (Wessex Archaeology 1995). The excavation was undertaken in accordance with current planning guidance (Planning Policy Guidance Note 16, DoE 1990) and in consultation with Duncan Coe of Wiltshire County Council Archaeology Section.
- 2.2 The excavation was undertaken to standards set out in the FIAM Excavation Manual and in concordance with standards set by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (Draft Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations, 1994).
- 2.3 Prehistoric and Roman remains are known from the vicinity of Bradford on Avon, predominantly from around the Iron Age hillfort, Budbury Castle. Excavations were undertaken by Wainwright in 1969 (1970) and the site now lies beneath a housing estate. Numerous Roman finds of pottery and coins have been made in the area, and a number of stone Roman coffins have also been uncovered, suggesting that occupation dating to this period was present in the vicinity of Budbury Castle.
- 2.4 The town of Bradford on Avon itself is generally considered to be a Saxon foundation. The first documentary mention believed to relate to Bradford is found in the Anglo-Saxon Chronicle, which relates to a battle fought in 652 by Ceanwealh of Wessex at Bradanforda be afne (the broad ford by the river (Avon)). Although this identifies an important and well-known ford, it does not necessarily indicate a settlement was present. In 705 St. Aldhelm is recorded as founding a monastery at Bradford. The first actual mention of a settlement dates to 955 when King Eadred bequeathed Bradford to St. Mary's monastery, Winchester. In 1001 the monastery was granted to the Abbey of Shaftesbury by Aethelred II to be used by the nuns as a place of safety from Danish raids. It is argued by Taylor (1973) that the chapel of St Laurence was built at this time. The monastery was probably destroyed in Cnut's raid up the river Frome in 1015, certainly it was long gone by the time William of Malmesbury was writing in 1125 (Haslam 1976).
- 2.5 At Domesday the town, which formed one of only ten boroughs in Wiltshire, was still in the hands of Shaftesbury Abbey, where it remained until Dissolution in 1539. Bradford on Avon was an important historic town during the Medieval and Post-medieval periods; its prosperity was based upon the rise of the cloth industry in the 14th century. Around this time the focus of settlement shifted from the south bank to the north bank of the Avon, and the town grew around Market St. and Silver St. In 1540 when Leland visited the town he described it as 'made all of stone', which indicates its importance and prosperity. Large numbers of workers' houses were built by the Methuen family in the 17th-18th centuries over the hillsides above the medieval town (Haslam 1976). The development area was part of the Methuen estates; the demolished cottages in

the eastern part of the site may have originated in this way, although the area seems to have remained predominately gardens.

- 2.6 The boundaries of the development area have not altered since the first surviving cartographic representation coverage on the 1841 Tithe map. The eastern edge of the plot, immediately outside the excavation area has been occupied by a variety of cottages and outbuildings since at least the same date. The development area consists of a terraced hillside plot cutting into the face of a steep south-east facing slope with views across the River Avon. The existing ground surface descended from 38.297 m OD at the top of the site to 36.337 m at the base, a drop of 1.96m over a distance of 10m. Church Street, immediately below the site is at c.30m OD.
- 2.7 The Ordnance Survey Geological Survey (Sheet 281, 1965) identifies the underlying solid geology as Jurassic Forest Marble Limestone, overlying Great Oolite Limestone. The boundary between these two formations is shown running through the study area on a north-east to south-west line.
- 2.8 In the FIAM Project Design the following academic objectives, based on the assessment of quality and importance of deposits encountered during the evaluation, were stated:
- i) to define and identify the nature of archaeological deposits on site, and date these where possible.
 - ii) to attempt to characterise the nature of the archaeological sequence and recover as much information as possible about the spatial patterning of occupation on the site, with particular regard to discovering as much as practicable about the Late Saxon settlement.
 - iii) to elucidate the structural history, economy and environment of all identifiable periods of settlement on the site, through the recovery of a well dated stratigraphic sequence and the recovery of coherent artefact, ecofact and environmental samples, and to relate these to wider academic issues relating to Bradford on Avon and the Late Saxon monastic site.
- 2.9 The extent to which the excavation has successfully answered these questions, and thrown up new avenues of research, will be addressed in this document.

3 STRATIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

Methodology

- 3.1 The site area was stripped of topsoil and subsoil to the top of the deposits of potential archaeological significance. Two Wessex Archaeology test-pits (2 and 3) fell within the excavation area; these were re-emptied in order to provide a window through the deposits. Excavation was thereafter undertaken in plan. A total of four narrow (0.5m) baulks were left within the excavation area; one across the slope of the hillside on the line of a wall foundation, with a further three running down the slope.

Terracing:

- 3.2 The topography of the excavated area consisted of two relatively flat terraces divided by a steep slope which became considerably shallower at the eastern end of the site. Although the upper terrace, extending 4m into the excavated area, probably represents a natural break of slope, the lower terrace had been clearly enhanced by post-medieval groundworks. Ceramics recovered from this area indicated that the area had been levelled in the 18th-19th centuries, probably as part of the works connected with the existing terracing (which must have been completed prior to 1841).
- 3.3 The lower terrace was approximately 3.5m wide, dropping steeply away along the entire southern edge of the trench. This dip was filled with a dark loamy soil containing 18th-19th century ceramics representing the infill and levelling of the existing terrace during the later 18th to early 19th century. The northern edge (upslope) of the lower terrace was defined by a sharp edge of redeposited natural clay (1047), which appeared to have been dumped against a wall or fence that was subsequently removed, and which may have formed temporary works during the construction of the post-medieval terracing.

Pits, post-holes and ditches:

- 3.4 A single probable Saxo-Norman pit [1058] was located halfway down the slope between terraces. It was cut into the underlying natural and had been heavily truncated by later terracing and a post-medieval pit [1017]. The early pit, 1.05m in diameter, survived only to a depth of 0.20m, and was filled with a reddish sandy clay fill (1059), which contained three sherds of East Wiltshire (Newbury A) ware, dating to the 10th - mid 12th century. Three animal bones were also recovered from the fill of this pit, although they all had post-medieval characteristics and may represent intrusive material.
- 3.5 A line of small c. 0.3-0.45m diameter stone packed postholes [1022, 1041, 1052, 1054, 1056], was present running east-west across the site to the south of wall (1008). Saxo-Norman pottery (East Wiltshire ware) was recovered from the bases of these features. Although there was some initial concern that these features might, in fact, represent small pits originally excavated for fruit trees during the post-medieval period; stratigraphically and artefactually they may

safely be attributed to the 10th-11th century. The post-holes all survived approximately 0.30m deep, and would have securely supported uprights between 0.15-0.25m thick.

- 3.6 A number of other pits [1017, 1039, 1043, 1045] were encountered during the course of the excavations. In all cases these were of post-medieval date; pit [1045] had previously been sampled during the Wessex Archaeology evaluation (Test-pit 3). In all cases the pits were irregular with uneven bases and were filled with a dark sandy loam fill with moderate quantities of unworked limestone debris.
- 3.7 A single shallow ditch [1007] was encountered during the excavations. The feature was 0.35m deep and ran parallel to wall (1005). Its northeast side was cut away by the foundation trench for the wall. The ditch was originally identified during the archaeological evaluation undertaken by Wessex Archaeology (Test-pit 3). Ceramics recovered from its fill dated the feature to the 18th-19th century.

Structural Evidence (Walls and Robber Trenches):

- 3.8 A substantial wall foundation (1005) ran parallel to Rosemary Steps, and may have related to the demolished cottages between it and the existing wall forming the plot boundary. The foundations consisted of well packed limestone rubble in a cut at least 1.2m wide by 0.55m deep. Soil within the cut was dark loam, with quantities of 18-19th century ceramics, iron objects, tile and animal bone. After the walling itself was robbed out, approximately 0.15m of dark loam garden soil was deposited over the foundations. A path edged with horizontal stone slabs was thereafter constructed on approximately the same line.
- 3.9 A second section of walling (1008) survived up to two courses high (0.45m) and was formed of well coursed limestone blocks on a rubble base. No trace of a foundation cut was identified for this section of walling, which appeared to sit directly upon layer (1010). At 0.72m wide, it was considerably less substantial than wall (1005), which it abutted at its eastern end. The two walls were butt jointed, and suggest a degree of general contemporaneity. Ceramics recovered from between the stones, and from immediately beneath the wall, consisted of 18th-19th century material. The walling ran NW-SE across the entire length of the excavation area, probably originally representing a garden feature rather than part of a structure; it was later utilised as a path.
- 3.10 A badly robbed out section of wall foundation (1033) was identified running parallel to wall (1008) against the northern section of the excavated area. The robber trench [1014] for this section of walling was initially identified in the Wessex Archaeology evaluation (Test Pit 2). The excavated area provided some additional detail, traces of the foundation trench surviving with some in situ rubble blocks. Pottery recovered from the remaining foundations suggested a 16-17th century date for the construction of the wall; while pottery from the backfill of the robber trench consisted of 19th century wares. Although no

other detail relating to this section of walling was identified that might allow interpretation of its original purpose, it is perhaps most likely to have formed an element of an earlier period of terracing.

Horizontal stratigraphy:

- 3.11 Undisturbed horizontal stratigraphy was restricted to a single patchy layer of orangey-brown clay loam (1012), up to 0.15m thick. The layer survived in patches on the early terrace at the top of the site and to a lesser degree along the slope immediately below it. The layer represents the old land surface (OLS). The OLS was sealed with a dump of brown soil with frequent limestone detritus (1010).
- 3.12 Layer (1010) was present across the entire site, except where removed by post-medieval terracing and pitting/trenching. It was probably originally imported as levelling material during the 16th-17th century, although it contained substantial quantities of residual medieval pottery. The quantity of medieval pottery present within the layer suggested that the deposit originated from an area of medieval occupation, which may well have been upslope from the excavation area. Layer (1010) was sealed with a number of additional make-up layers, predominantly resulting from 18th-19th century terracing activities.

4 PRELIMINARY DISCUSSION

- 4.1 Assessment of the site is now complete and it is possible to outline the results of the preliminary analysis. No archaeological features or deposits of prehistoric or Roman date were encountered during the excavations, although a single residual item of Roman personal decoration was recovered from context (1035).
- 4.2 The Saxo-Norman period was represented by a series of postholes and a single pit, as well as by artefactual evidence in the form of pottery sherds. The postholes and the bulk of the pottery were recovered from the flat terrace at the top of the excavated area, which probably constituted a natural plateau. The postholes were cut through an orange sandy layer (1012) representing the old land surface, and would have held an upright post approximately 0.15-0.25m thick. Although the postholes may have represented the position of uprights forming a fence or palisade near the edge of the terrace, which thereafter dipped away very steeply to the southeast, it is also possible that they formed structural elements delineating a post-walled building. The entire excavated area that would have fallen within such a building, however, had been removed below the level of the natural substrate by robber trench [1014], and no traces of flooring or other internal features which may have supported interpretation as a building survived.
- 4.3 The probable Saxo-Norman pit [1058] consisted of little more than an irregular scoop, 1.1m in diameter, into the hillside. It was filled with an orange sandy layer virtually identical to layer (1012). Three small sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery were recovered from the fill of the pit, along with three animal bones each of which suggested a post-medieval origin, and may have been intrusive from the post-medieval pit [1016].
- 4.4 Evidence for medieval activity was restricted to a small to moderate sized ceramic assemblage (mostly local coarsewares, with several sherds of finewares, comprising sherds of Laverstock jugs). The bulk of the medieval pottery was recovered from layer (1010) which also contained significant quantities of 16th-17th century pottery. This layer of brown soil with considerable quantities of limestone rubble would appear to have formed a levelling deposit and would probably have been transported to the site (possibly from upslope). The bulk of the medieval pottery arrived on the site through this medium, although smaller quantities of residual ceramics were present in other post-medieval deposits.
- 4.5 Post-medieval activity across the site was considerable. A 16th-17th century wall (1033) was present in the northern part of the excavated area; although this was robbed out in the 18th-19th century [1014]. The bulk of the pottery recovered consisted of ceramics datable to the 18th-19th century. By 1841 the site was already divided out into the form it held at the time of the excavations, as illustrated on the Tithe map. The levelling of the site must have taken place by this time; levelling layers consisted of (1047, 1010, 1009, 1003), sealed in turn with a thick garden soil. Internal features connected to this period

consisted of the two walls, (1005) and (1008). Although the first probably originally had some structural or boundary function, possibly connected to the demolished cottages, the latter (1008) is unlikely to have ever formed more than a garden feature. The post-medieval pits [1016, 1039, 1043 and 1045] all appear to have related to garden activities, or to the cottages, although they do not principally appear to have been utilised for refuse disposal.

- 4.6 The results of the excavation indicate that the development site was occupied by a single phase of Saxo-Norman activity, and thereafter appeared to be abandoned until the deposition of layer (1010) and the construction of wall (1033) in the 16th-17th century. In the 18th-19th century the earlier post-medieval wall was robbed out and the hillside was terraced into its modern state.
- 4.7 No archaeological evidence for specialist crafts, or high status occupation was recovered during the course of the excavations. It would appear most likely that the Saxo-Norman occupation could be categorised as being of an essentially mundane domestic type, although the lack of high status artefacts may not be inappropriate to the outlying structures of an early monastery.

5 NATURE OF THE RECORD

5.1 The stratigraphic archive for the site consists of the following elements:

- Context Sheets
- Plans
- Section drawings
- B&W photos
- Colour slides

5.2 The following contexts types were represented:

- Horizontal Layers
- Pits
- Walls
- Robber Trenches
- Ditches
- Fills

5.3 The on-site methodologies used to recover this evidence were set out in the FIAM Project Design (August 1996). In summary the following excavation methods were utilised. A mechanical excavator was used to remove overburden onto the surface of archaeological deposits, thereafter all deposits were removed by hand. All deposits were removed onto natural at the top of the site, although a number of baulks were retained to provide a stratigraphic record of horizontal deposits.

5.4 Post-medieval terrace deposits in the lower part of the site were removed over approximately 60% of their area in order to ascertain whether they masked earlier features. No features suitable for environmental sampling were encountered. All contexts were recorded on a pro-forma context sheet and principal deposits were drawn in plan and section. Photographs were taken of all features and sections.

5.5 Following the completion of the excavation an ordered, indexed, and internally consistent site archive was compiled in accordance with Appendix 3 of The Management of Archaeological Projects (English Heritage 1991).

6 ARTEFACTUAL EVIDENCE

- 6.1 All artefacts collected during the excavation have been cleaned, marked and quantified. They have been catalogued on a computerised data-base by context.
- 6.2 The finds assemblage has been appraised in order to ascertain date, nature, condition and potential. The results of this appraisal are detailed in the following sections:

6.3 Pottery (by Roy King)

General Observations

- 6.3.1 The pottery consists of a small sized assemblage with late Saxon, early-high medieval and post-medieval/modern pottery. A high degree of contamination existed between layers resulting from post-medieval terracing and garden activities. The sequence is of some note, in that it includes a very small stratified Saxo-Norman assemblage.
- 6.3.2 An assessment was undertaken and a database constructed in order to provide the relative quantities of pottery fabric types and diagnostic sherds. Fabric types are based on the most common names attributed to the ware, although all coding relates to the Oxford ceramic type series.

Late Saxon

- 6.3.3 The sequence begins with Newbury Type A ware (East Wiltshire ware, Oxford BF) dating from the late 10th to mid 12th century. Stratified assemblages of this material were recovered from a series of early post-holes and a single pit. Additional residual quantities were recovered from a number of make-up layers, predominantly from layer (1010).

Medieval

- 6.3.4 The medieval assemblage is dominated by Newbury Type B (Oxford AQ) dating from the mid-12th to the mid-14th century, and North-West Wiltshire (Minety-type) ware (Oxford BB). Several sherds of Bath A and other Chedder type wares were also recovered. All of the wares have a broad date range and consisted of coarsewares found throughout north Wiltshire, south Gloucestershire and east Oxfordshire. A few sherds of glazed jug/pitcher were recovered; these may all be attributed to the kilns at Laverstock and probably dated to the late 13th century. No stratified sherds dating to the medieval period were recovered, the assemblage being residual in its entirety.

Later medieval and early post-medieval.

6.3.5 A small quantity of 14th-15th century pottery derived from the whiteware industries of Surrey/Hampshire were also recovered. As with the medieval wares, these were also only recovered as residual sherds from post-medieval contexts. Early post-medieval wares consisted of red glazed earthenwares of a type common throughout the region. These date from the 16th-18th century, with minor fabric changes, and probably originated in either the Verwood or Ashton Keynes kilns. Later post-medieval and modern pottery included glazed and unglazed earthenwares (including tinglazed sherds), native and imported stonewares, Staffordshire slipwares, creamwares and chinawares.

Further Work

6.3.6 The handful of stratified Saxo-Norman sherds are able to provide little additional information. They all represent part of an adequately published ceramic tradition, and lack any particularly notable, diagnostic or precisely datable sherds. The residual medieval sherds, and the post-medieval assemblages, are also able to provide little additional information of value. As with the Saxo-Norman sherds they all originate from ceramic traditions which have previously been well published. No additional vessel typologies or fabric type series would emerge from further work on this assemblage.

6.4 Brick and Tile (by R. King)

6.4.1 A total of 53 fragments of ceramic brick and tile weighing 1.870 kg were recovered from the excavation trench. A total of 3 fragments of stone tile weighing 0.370 kg were also recovered. These have been catalogued and a database constructed.

6.4.2 The assemblage predominantly consists of roof tile fragments, with a smaller quantity of floor tiles, brick and ceramic pipe fragments. No fragments of ridge tile or roof furniture were recovered. The assemblage appears to be entirely post-medieval and modern in origin, with the bulk of the collection being post-medieval. No fragments were recovered that might indicate that they originated from sources that were not widely used across the region.

Further Work

6.4.3 No further analysis required.

6.5 Clay Pipe (by R.King)

- 6.5.1 A total of 23 clay pipe fragments were recovered during the course of the excavations. The condition of the assemblage was poor, comprising only plain stem fragments and two small undiagnostic bowl fragments probably of 18th century type.

Further Work

- 6.5.2 No further analysis required

6.6 Recorded Finds (by L.Viner)

- 6.6.1 A total of 23 finds were recovered from the excavation (19 of copper alloy, 1 of fired clay, 2 of worked bone and 1 of lead). In the absence of metallurgical or XRF analysis the metal finds are described as copper alloy although in hand specimen it is obvious that the metal content varies considerably.
- 6.6.2 The quality overall is good, with minimal corrosion. No cleaning or conservation has been undertaken. Such work would enhance the appearance of SFs 13 and 14, and provide a more accurate date for the coin SF 2.
- 6.6.3 As a group, assessed by function, articles of dress or personal adornment predominate. The collection includes buckles (SF 14 and 17), buttons (SF 9, 11, and 20), a possible ear-ring (SF 19), and a buckle for a spur (SF 13). With the possible exception of SF 19, all are of late medieval/post-medieval date.
- 6.6.4 The buckles are of the so-called spectacle type, and are typically late 16th-17th century in form and function. The elaborate decoration and size of SF 14 would suggest use as a shoe buckle, whilst SF 13 is possibly from a spur. The buttons are of types found in 18th-early 19th contexts. The flat-topped metal button (SF 11) is associated more with working-style clothes while the bone examples (SF 9 and 20) form the bases for composite, more decorative buttons.
- 6.6.5 SF 19 is more difficult to parallel. The form, with its fine ends twisted together and decorative motif, is reminiscent of Roman ear-rings, classified as Type 2h by Allason-Jones (1989, 5). The context is disturbed, and with no obvious medieval parallel, it could be suggested that this is a residual Roman find, derived from a nearby settlement or cemetery site.
- 6.6.6 Seven so-called 'dress-maker's pins' may be classed within this functional category of personal dress although, like the ring (SF 15), they are multi-functional and could have been used for holding material for sewing. This latter function is more apparent for SFs 5-7 and 21-23 judged according to the fine wire and the tinned surfaces which are common on 18th-19th century examples of such pins. SF 1 by contrast is more robust and probably earlier in date, and could have been used to secure clothing whilst being worn.

- 6.6.7 Small pins made of drawn wire with spiral-wound heads have been used from the medieval period onwards. Originally thought to have been introduced from the continent in the 16th century, pins from dated contexts discovered at Winchester show that they were in use from the 13th century (Biddle & Barclay 1990, 560-71). The technology to draw such fine wire was well known and developed through time. By 1712 the British pin industry was centred in the Bristol-Gloucester region. Tin-plating of the shank was common in the 18th-19th century, and as a general rule the earlier pins are longer, while the later ones are shorter and of finer wire.
- 6.6.8 The knife guard (SF 3) and finial (SF 12) are of a more domestic character. The bindings (SFs 4 and 18) are more difficult to ascribe to a specific function but probably served as bindings to wooden objects. The lead droplet (SF 10) is of irregular form, either working waste or the result of melting.
- 6.6.9 Pottery disks such as SF 8 are multifunctional and could have been used as a counter in a game, as a weight, or as a temporary cover to a bottle or vessel for example.
- 6.6.10 **Catalogue:**
1. Dressmaker's pin of fine copper alloy wire, with wound wire head. Length 38mm, diameter of shank 1mm, head of 3mm diameter.
SF 1. U/S, backfill of TWA evaluation trench.
 2. Coin. Half-penny. Diameter 28mm. Illegible in part. Obverse: young male portrait head facing left. Reverse: Britannia seated, facing left, with legend BRITAN-NIA and date (?)-5.
Possibly George II (1727-1760), with young head struck prior to 1740.
SF 2. U/S, backfill of TWA evaluation trench.
 3. Oval sheet of thin copper alloy with a small rectangular slit of 5mm length. One edge is slightly distorted. Length 20mm, width 14mm, 0.5mm thick. Similar objects have been described as knife guards and would have fitted over the end of the knife handle at the blade junction.
SF 3. (1003), subsoil.
 4. Sheet of copper alloy, irregular and pitted outline with corroded and jagged edges. Length 80mm, maximum width 52mm, 1mm thick. Irregular holes would suggest the sheet was attached with nails, as a binding to an object.
SF 4. (1005), post-medieval wall foundation.
 - 5-7. Three dressmaker's pins of fine copper alloy wire, with tinned finish to the shanks, and small wound wire heads. Complete, lengths 28, 26 and 24mm.
SF 5-7. (1003), subsoil.

8. Disc of fired clay, cut from body sherd of a pottery vessel. Fabric: ?? . Semi-oval outline, with smoothed margins. Length 30mm, width 20mm. Possibly used as a counter, weight or lid.
SF 8. (1002), subsoil.
9. Bone button back. Lathe-turned, dished back, with four central perforations. Copper alloy staining around the circumference suggests the surface was originally embellished with a sheet of metal. Diameter 30mm, 1.5mm thick.
SF 9. (1002), subsoil.
10. Lead droplet, of irregular form. Length 27mm.
SF 10. (1003), subsoil.
11. Button. Copper alloy, with flat top of 22mm diameter, and loop on reverse for fastening. (Biddle & Cook 1990, Type F, dated late 18th-19th century).
SF 11. (1002), subsoil.
12. Finial or pendant of cast copper alloy with spherical terminal. The short bifurcated shaft is pierced with a flat-topped stud still in position. Length 22mm, width 6mm with 7mm diameter head. The form would suggest use as a finial or handle from a casket or similar object, or a pendant from harness or strap end.
SF 12. (1012), medieval layer (intrusive).
13. 'Spectacle' buckle of copper alloy, cast, with remains of iron tongue and copper alloy plate pivoting around the central bar. Elaborate mouldings of leaf and pellet motifs around the border of the frame. The attachment plate on the reverse is reminiscent of those used to attach the bindings and straps on spurs. Length 35mm, width 22mm. Probably 17th century.
SF 13. U/S, from spoilheap.
14. Shoe buckle of 'spectacle' form with double-rectangle frame, tongue missing. Of copper alloy, cast, and with elaborate mouldings around the frame, masked by corrosion in part but suggestive of fleur-de-lys and petals motifs. Length 52mm, width 38mm. 17th century in form.
SF 14. (1014), fill of post-medieval robber trench.
15. Copper alloy ring, diameter 22mm, with rectangular section of 2 x 1.5mm. Such rings can be multi-functional, but a possible parallel from Southampton from a late 17th century context suggests possible use as a curtain ring (Platt & Coleman-Smith 1975, fig 245, 1884-1889).
SF 15. U/S backfill of TWA trench.
16. Two fragments of very fine copper alloy wire: one of 62mm length, bent at a right angle, 0.5mm diameter; second of 5mm length with small blob head.
SF 16. (1021), posthole.
17. Oval cast buckle frame of copper alloy with remains of iron pin attached to the central bar. Plain, simple form. Length 24mm, width 20mm.

- SF 17. (1014), fill of post-medieval robber trench.
18. Copper alloy sheet. Regular sides, two of which are formed by folding the metal over to create a flat seam. One edge folded at right angles, but with no method of fixing surviving. Length 34mm, widths of short sides 25 and 16mm, 1mm thick.
SF 18. (1014), fill of post-medieval robber trench.
19. ?Jewellery. Penannular in form, made of thin copper alloy sheet metal of triangular outline, with two ends tapering to thin 'wire' ends and twisted together. The outer face is decorated with random stamped dot-and-ring motifs. Length 25mm, width 15mm. The delicacy of the metal would suggest its possible use as a piece of jewellery: either an ear-ring, or a ring to secure a hair braid. The dot-and-ring motif is a popular motif in both the Roman and medieval periods. It occurs on a late 12th-early 13th century finger ring from Winchester (Hinton 1990, fig 176, 2079). If this is an ear-ring, the form parallels Type 2h of the Roman ear-rings studied by Lindsay Allason-Jones (Allason-Jones 1989, 5, Type 2h, see for example no. 513).
SF 19. (1035), medieval layer (disturbed).
20. Bone button back. Lathe-turned, dished back with incised lines and 4 central perforations. Small patches of gilding which originally coated the surface remain on the upper face. Diameter 24mm. An exact parallel from Winchester is recorded from a mid to late 18th century context (Biddle & Cook 1990, fig 155, 1722).
SF 20. (1010), medieval layer (disturbed).
- 21-3 Three dressmaker's pins of copper alloy wire, with wound wire heads. Tinned shanks, lengths 28, 24 and 21mm.
SF 21-3. (1010), medieval layer (disturbed).

Further Work

6.6.12 No further analysis required.

6.7 Window and Vessel Glass (by L. Viner)

6.7.1 A total of 86 sherds of glass were recovered during the course of the excavations, including both bottle and window glass. All the bottle glass derived from post-medieval green wine bottles of 17th century and later date; many sherds suffering from surface decomposition. The window glass is of similar, or later date.

Further Work

6.7.2 No further analysis required.

7 ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

7.1 Animal Bone (by M. Maltby)

Methods

- 7.2 Excavation produced a small sample of 384 animal bones from 17 of the contexts. The bones were scanned and identified to species where possible. Approximate totals of fragments from each context were recorded along with an assessment of their general state of preservation. Individual fragments were not recorded in detail but bones with articular surfaces present and mandibles with surviving teeth were noted.
- 7.3 Ageing evidence in the form of epiphysial fusion and mandibular toothwear data were recorded where applicable. The number of porous bones was also noted. Measurements were also taken wherever possible and these were listed by species. Butchery and gnawing marks and the state of fragmentation of individual bones were not recorded.

Results

- 7.4 Species represented in order of frequency were sheep/goat, cattle, pig, horse, dog, rabbit and domestic fowl. One hundred fragments were not identified to species. Not all sheep/goat fragments can be assigned to either species. On the basis of diagnostic bones, only sheep was definitely represented in this material. The high representation of sheep and the relatively low numbers of pig bones is not unusual in British post-medieval assemblages. There was no evidence for wild mammals, birds or fish, although it is possible that small fish bones may have been overlooked during the excavation.
- 7.5 The distribution of bones represented of the three main species show that sheep foot bones, particularly the metacarpals and metatarsals were well represented. The major meat-bearing bones of sheep, although present, were found less frequently. Sheep skull and mandible fragments were also poorly represented. These totals exclude shaft fragments and it is possible that destruction of the ends of the upper limb bones by canid gnawing was greater than for the metapodials. However, it was common practice in the post-medieval period for butchers to remove the feet from the upper limb bones and sometimes faunal assemblages reflect the subsequent spatial separation in the disposal of these bones. Metapodials were often removed with the skins of the animals to tanneries and dumped in large numbers after processing. There is also evidence from other sites that they were sometimes used for boneworking.
- 7.6 There was a more even representation of cattle bones. The samples of pig and other species were too small to detect any significant patterns.
- 7.7 Mandibular ageing data was very scarce as a consequence of the low numbers of jaws of all species represented. Two adult cattle and one calf were represented by mandibles in the post-medieval deposits. Several other calves

were represented by porous bones. The increase in the importance of dairying in the post-medieval period led to the slaughter of large numbers of calves and their bones are commonly represented in archaeological deposits of this date. Most of the cattle bones, however, appear to have been of adult animals.

- 7.8 All of the epiphyses of the sheep distal metapodials were fused indicating that they belonged to animals probably over two years old. A few bones of immature animals were represented but most appear to belong to older animals, suggesting that mutton rather than lamb was generally eaten. Wool production was probably an important factor in the exploitation of the sheep in the area, which would have lessened the likelihood of animals being slaughtered for meat at a young age.
- 7.9 Metrical data indicated that a wide range of sizes of domestic stock were represented. The latter part of the post-medieval period witnessed significant improvements in the quality of stock through specialised breeding and improved nutrition. The recovery of some large specimens indicated the presence of such improved stock. Several pig bones in particular are very large. The samples are not sufficiently closely dated to merit more detailed analysis.
- 7.10 Particular attention was paid to the assemblages from the possible Saxo-Norman post holes in view of the possibility that they may alternatively have been post-medieval in origin. Fills 1023 and 1059 each provided only a single fragment and provide no clues about date. Fill 1042, however, included large cattle and pig humeri. The pig bone, in particular, is thought to be too large to be of an early medieval origin.
- 7.11 The Saxo-Norman pit fill 1059 also included a large sheep femur, which has characteristics of an improved breed. Two porous cattle bones would also suggest a later origin. The samples from this pit is therefore at best mixed and probably mainly post-medieval in origin.
- 7.12 The assemblage from fill 1021 was rather different. None of the bones from here bore distinctive post-medieval characteristics (large bones; porous cattle bones; split vertebrae). Conversely, the cattle assemblage included three bones from the same ankle joint (distal tibia, calcaneus, astragalus) from a relatively small animal. Knife cuts were observed on the astragalus and calcaneus where the feet had been disarticulated. Such butchery is more typical of earlier periods, although one cannot definitely dismiss the possibility that these were of later origin.

Further Work

- 7.13 No further work on this material is recommended because of its probable mixed origins. It should be noted, however, that the surface preservation of the bones is good and it is likely that further excavations in this area of the town are likely to produce well preserved faunal samples.

8 STATEMENT OF POTENTIAL

8.1 Of the three objectives set out in the project design (see section 2) the following have been achieved:

Objective i: this has been satisfactorily achieved. The nature of the archaeological deposits on site has been characterised and these are adequately dated.

Objective ii: the limited area available for excavation and the hillside nature of the site have inhibited the characterisation of the archaeological sequence, but a general picture can be assembled from the results. Saxo-Norman activity seems, unsurprisingly, to be predominantly restricted to the flat terrace/plateau revealed at the top of the site. The nature of the occupation remains uncertain, although the postholes are relatively substantial and possibly structural in origin; they may however merely represent a fence or boundary. No features relating to medieval occupation were identified, activity from this period being restricted to a moderate assemblage of pottery sherds recovered entirely as residual material from post-medieval features and horizontal stratigraphy. It is of interest however, to note that, as with the residual Saxo-Norman assemblage, most of this material was recovered from the top part of the site, and may suggest medieval activity in the close vicinity.

Objective iii: although the stratigraphic sequence has been dated and coherent artefactual/ecofactual assemblages have been recovered these are, with the exception of the Saxo-Norman postholes, pit, and remnant OLS, of post-medieval date. The lack of a continuous stratified sequence of occupation on the site seriously limits any intersite comparison. The artefactual and ecofactual evidence is discussed in Sections 6 and 7. The excavations have added a little to our knowledge of human settlement in Bradford on Avon; through the identification of Saxo-Norman occupation on the north bank of the Avon in the 10th-11th century. This occupation may have some connection with the monastery of St. Aldhelm, although only at a relatively late stage in its existence. Medieval occupation in the near vicinity is also suggested by the quantities of pottery recovered from the top part of the site, although this material is likely to have originated higher up the hillside.

8.2 The results of the fieldwork clearly justify the implementation of the excavation programme, although the evidence recovered is not of sufficient quality to warrant full publication. The Saxo-Norman evidence is of some significance, however, and the following section presents a considered policy for dissemination of the results, achieving:

- a) the presentation of the results in a coherently synthesised format
- b) the deposition of an ordered and internally consistent archive with The Museum of the Wiltshire Arch. and Nat. Hist. Society, Devizes, Wiltshire.

9 PUBLICATION, PRESENTATION AND ARCHIVING

- 9.1 As the results of the excavation may be considered of local and regional importance it is proposed that a summary report be published in WANHM in the form of a *Note*. It is anticipated that this should not exceed three to five pages of text, with a single illustration denoting the location of the Saxo-Norman features.
- 9.2 A more detailed summary of the excavations will be posted on the Internet at the Foundations Archaeology homepage. Links will be created to the RCHME and CBA excavation indices.
- 9.3 The site archive for the project will be submitted to the Royal Commission on the Historical Monuments of England for security copying upon completion of the report, and subsequent deposition with the National Monuments Record.
- 9.4 The site archive and artefactual collection will be deposited with the Museum of the Wiltshire Archaeological and Natural History Society, Devizes.

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11 ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Foundations Archaeology would like to mention the following people who contributed to the smooth running of the excavations:

Duncan Coe
John England
Gammon Plant Hire
Clare King
John Mockridge
Adrian Powell

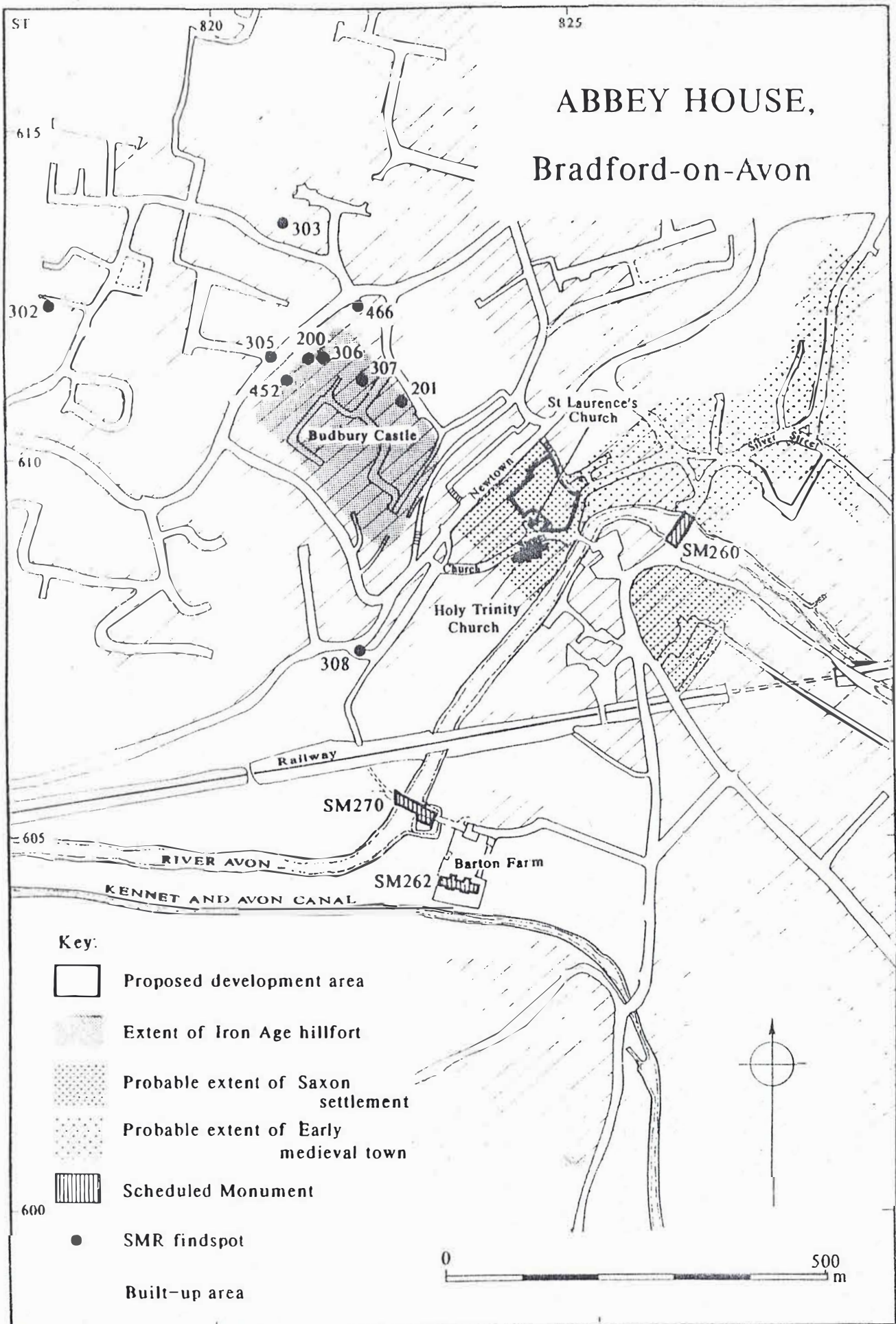


Fig. 1: Site location plan

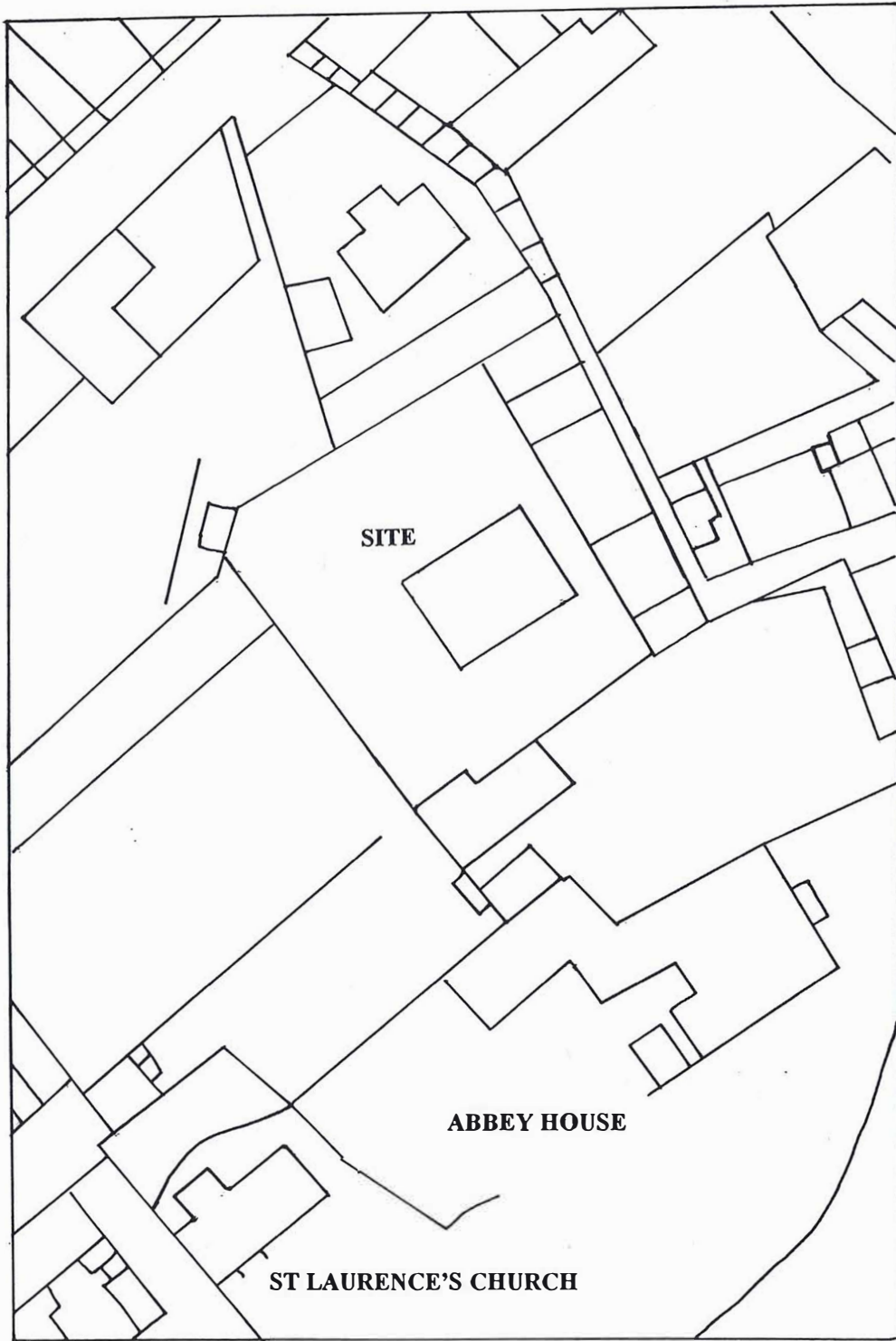


FIGURE 2

SITE LOCATION

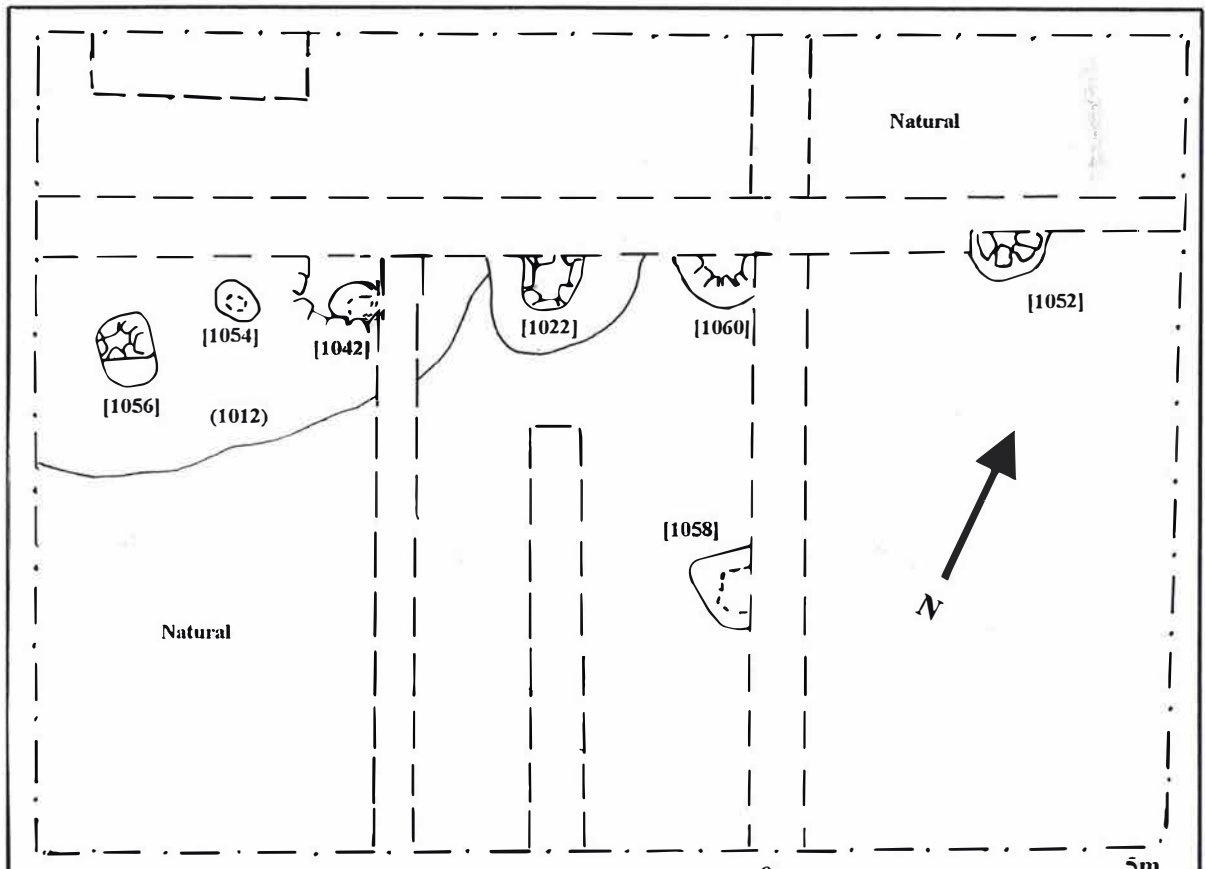


FIGURE 3 Saxo-Norman Features

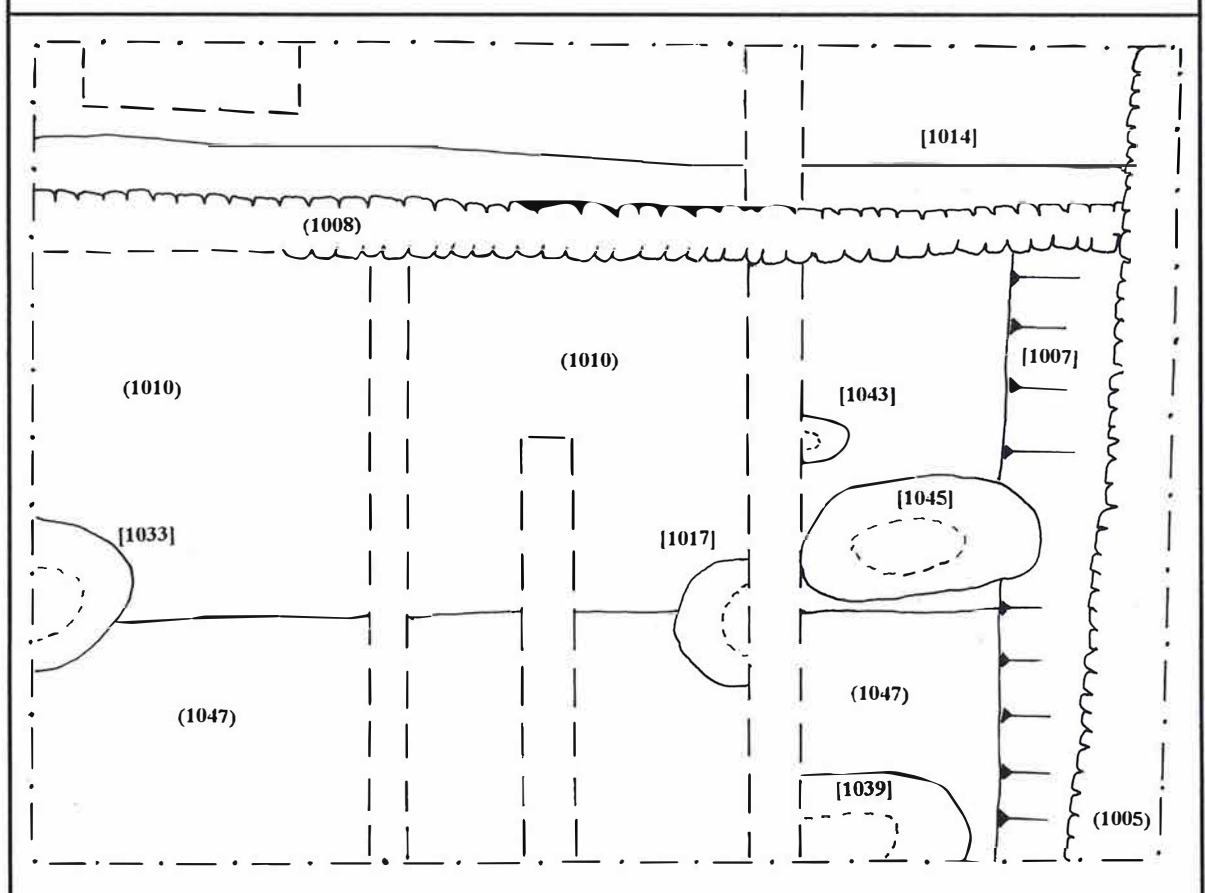


FIGURE 4 Post-Medieval Features