

# ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATIONS AT CHANDLERS HILL, IVER HEATH

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*Archaeological investigations at Chandlers Hill revealed limited evidence for a possible Later Prehistoric or Roman field system, which was probably succeeded by Early – Middle Saxon settlement, including at least one sunken featured building. Two substantial and potentially long-lived ditched boundaries were also present. These could not be precisely dated; however, they were probably related to the partition, or enclosure, of this part of Chandlers Hill, possibly prior to the 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> century AD. The latest datable features within the site comprised areas of kiln waste pits. These were probably part of a 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> century medieval pottery production centre, which was related to the manufacture of South Hertfordshire-type greyware.*

## INTRODUCTION

During 2013 Foundations Archaeology undertook a programme of archaeological mitigation during the construction of a new cable route between Iver and Slough (NGR: TQ 0287 8347 – TQ 0418 8355). The project was commissioned by Southern Electric Contracting (SEC) Ltd. The archaeological works consisted of a strip, map and sample in an area of previously identified archaeological remains, as well as a watching brief in four other locations, along the line of the new cable route.

The study area was situated immediately to the east of Iver Heath, to the north of Slough Road (A4007) and east of Bangors Road North. The part of the cable route forming the site was located within agricultural fields, on top of Chandlers Hill, overlooking fields and the M25 to the east, with downward slopes to the east and west. The underlying geology in the area of the site is recorded as *London Clay Formation* overlaid by *Boyn Hill Gravel Member* – sand and gravel (BGS Online Viewer).

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

The area along the Colne Valley, to the east of the site, is known to contain significant Upper Palaeolithic and Mesolithic remains and is registered as an Archaeological Notification Area. An archaeological assessment, carried out by Archaeological & Planning Solutions (2009), included aerial photographic and geophysical surveys. The assessment

concluded that aerial photographic evidence indicated settlement and agricultural activity dating to the prehistoric and Roman periods, some distance to the north of the proposed cable route. The geophysical survey recorded a number of anomalies within the study area, which possibly represented archaeological features. The HER records a World War II anti-aircraft battery at Chandlers Hill (HER 0935600000), which was constructed at some time during the war and survived until the 1950s.

A series of trial trenches were excavated by Foundations Archaeology (2012), prior to the commencement of the cable laying works. These revealed archaeological remains of uncertain date, including some substantial ditches, possibly representing parts of an enclosure. Tentatively dated pottery fragments suggested that these remains represented Iron Age or Saxon activity. In light of the archaeological potential, the Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service required a scheme of strip, map and sample, along with a watching brief.

## METHODOLOGY

For the majority of the cable route over Chandlers Hill (approximately 1km from the M25 to Bangors Road North), the scheme involved stripping a 10-15m wide easement onto the top of the underlying natural gravel, with the subsequent excavation of two cable trenches, each up to 2m wide and 2m in depth. In some areas the cables were inserted

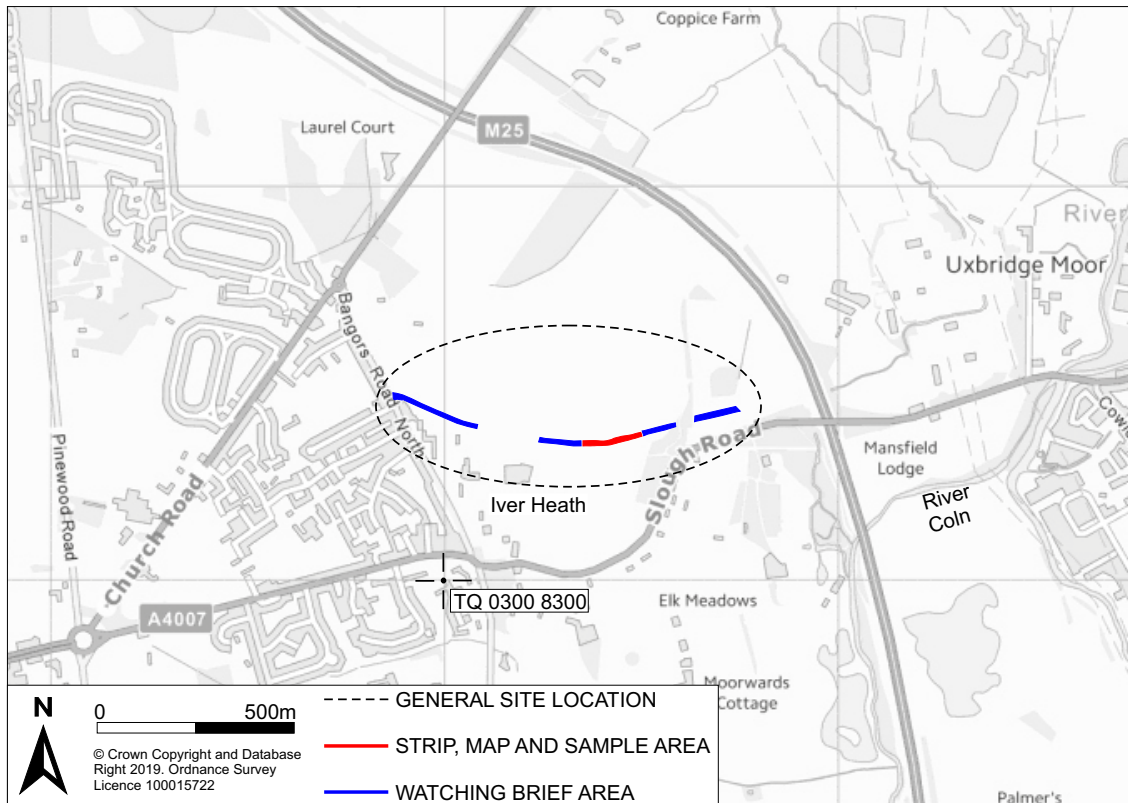


FIGURE 1 Site location

via directional drilling, with minimal potential archaeological impact.

The strip, map and sample area was stripped down to the top of the underlying natural gravel under the direction of an archaeologist, and was subsequently planned, excavated and recorded. The watching brief areas were subject to appropriate archaeological monitoring, observation and recording. All archaeological works were undertaken in accordance with an approved Written Scheme of Investigation (Foundations Archaeology 2013).

#### THE STRATIGRAPHIC EVIDENCE

The following section comprises a summary of the stratigraphic evidence. Full and detailed descriptions of the recovered data are presented in the post-excavation assessment report (Foundations Archaeology 2018). The natural gravel substrates were present at an average depth of 0.45m (55.56m

AOD) below the modern ground surface. These were overlaid by a brown clay sand gravel subsoil, which was in turn sealed by a dark brown sand silt topsoil. Archaeological features, where present, were cut into the top of the natural substrates.

#### Sunken Featured Building

Sub-rectangular pit [2007] was 3.9m long, 2.5m wide and up to 0.22m in depth. It had a relatively shallow, flat profile and contained a vertically sided posthole [2012]/[2018] at the centre of each short-sided end. It contained a soil fill which yielded a total of 269 sherds of Early to Middle Saxon pottery, two sherds of Roman pottery, a fragment of possible Roman CBM, 17 fragments of fired or heated clay and a small piece of industrial waste (slag). The pit fill also contained a mixed assemblage of charred plant remains, which included bread/club wheat and hulled barley cereal grains, along with fragments of hazel nutshell, goosefoot seeds and a small number of seeds of other wild or

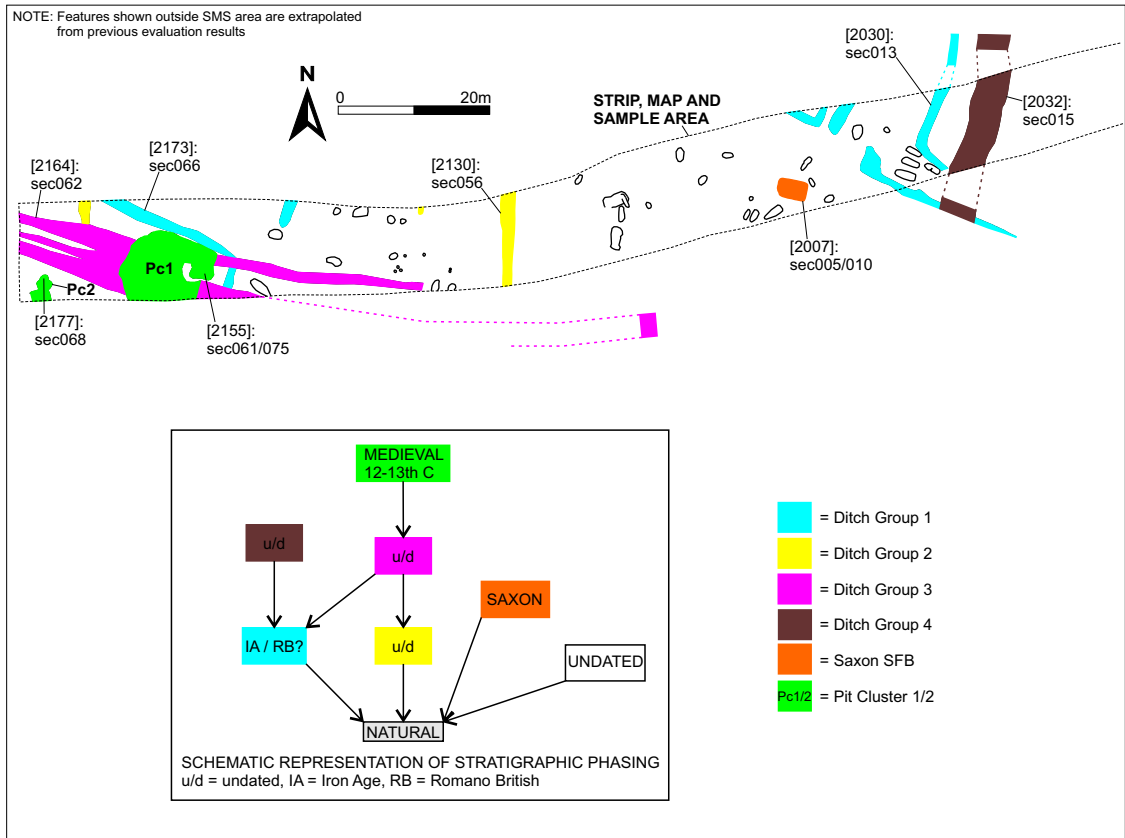


FIGURE 2 Features within SMS area

weed plants. Wood charcoal was also present, in the form of probable oak fragments.

In terms of its form and dating, pit [2007] was entirely consistent with a Saxon sunken-featured building – SFB (Tipper 2004; Farwell *et al* 1999). However, beyond this basic identification, interpretation was limited as there was no evidence related to its function and no other features were demonstrably associated with it. A sample of charred plant material from the SFB fill was sent for radiocarbon dating. However, it failed to yield a radiocarbon determination, due to insufficient carbon.

### Multiple Ditches

The strip, map and sample area contained numerous ditches on multiple alignments. On the basis of the apparent stratigraphic relationships and limited artefactual evidence, along with the general ditch morphologies and orientations, it was possible to

discern four ditch groups, which probably represented at least three phases of activity.

**Ditch Group 1** comprised six ditches, which appeared to represent part of a northeast-southwest – northwest-southeast aligned co-axial field system. A possible droveway entrance or junction was present at the east, whilst a further possible entrance was situated at the west. A paucity of artefacts within the ditches included some presumably residual possible Bronze Age pottery, as well as Iron Age or Saxon pottery. The field system was stratigraphically earlier than Ditch Group 4 and Ditch Group 3, the latter of which pre-dated an extensive cluster of 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century medieval pits.

**Ditch Group 2** consisted of at least two, or possibly three, north – south aligned ditches, which were not associated with any artefacts. One of the ditches was recorded as earlier than Ditch Group 3.

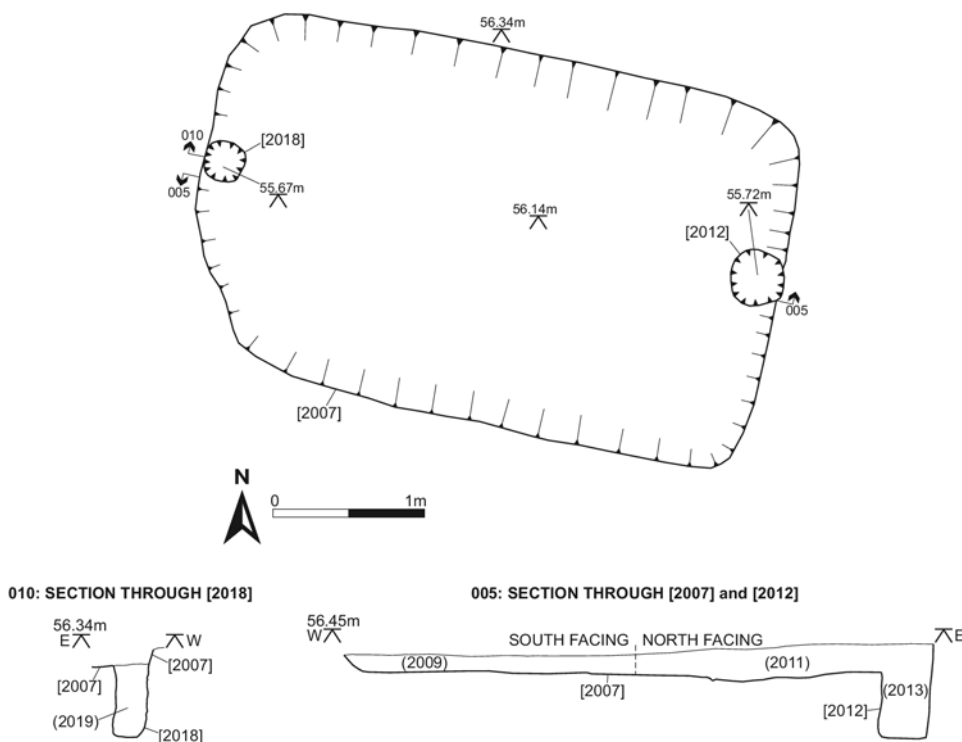


FIGURE 3 SFB plan and sections

However, it was very shallow, so this stratigraphic relationship should be treated as highly uncertain.

**Ditch Group 3** formed part of a fairly substantial northwest – southeast aligned, slightly curvilinear boundary. The individual ditches were generally adjacent and parallel, suggesting that they represented multiple ditch re-cutting events, which had, over time, resulted in a boundary drift of approximately 4 to 5m. The boundary was stratigraphically later than Ditch Group 1 and was earlier than the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century medieval pits. In general, there was a very limited amount of datable material within the ditch fills; however, a relatively substantial assemblage of 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century medieval pottery, along with some fragments of fired/heated clay were recovered from the upper fills of some of the ditches, which suggested that they may have been at least partially extant in the medieval period, though this remained highly tentative.

**Ditch Group 4** comprised a substantial northeast – southwest aligned boundary ditch with a fairly

distinctive stepped profile, which was up to 4.75m wide and 1.5m deep. The boundary was not associated with any datable material. However, it was stratigraphically later than Ditch Group 1.

### Medieval Pits

A total of thirteen pits (Pit Clusters 1 and 2) were present at the west of the strip, map and sample area. The pits had generally rounded profiles, were up to 0.80m in depth and had been cut into the fills of earlier ditches, as well as the natural gravel. The pitting was only partially contained within the site, though the larger pit cluster extended over an area of at least 13m by 9m and the inter-cutting nature of the individual pits indicated that they possibly represented fairly intensive activity. The pits yielded over 1,500 sherds of 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century medieval pottery, as well as burnt stone and fragments of fired/heated clay. Nearly all of the recovered pottery appeared to be manufacturing waste, with evidence for ceramic warping and/or spalling, along with over-fired and vitrified sherds and one of the pits contained



FIGURE 4 Photograph of SFB looking west

two fragments from a probable kiln-spacer. The pits were not demonstrably associated with any other features and there was no evidence for a kiln or other related structure within the site area. The pits therefore probably represented kiln waste dumps, which were associated with a 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century medieval pottery production site, the centre or focus of which was probably situated nearby.

#### Other Features

There was a general scatter of pits and possible postholes across the strip, map and sample area. The majority of these were entirely devoid of artefactual material and were thus difficult to interpret: indeed, some may have represented natural features such as tree-throw pits or burrows. The watching brief identified a relatively low number of features, mainly comprising boundary ditches and dispersed pit-like features. However, this was probably due to the generally shallow depth of the topsoil strip, which only occasionally penetrated below the subsoil.

#### THE POTTERY by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 1,836 sherds, with a total weight of 39,452g. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE), by summation of surviving rim sherd circumference, was 11.44. The bulk of the material comprised medieval kiln waste of the South Hertford-type Greyware tradition (SHER), probably of late 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup>-century date, along with a fairly large assemblage of Early to Middle Saxon hand-built wares, and a few sherds of Roman and prehistoric material.

#### Prehistoric

The following fabric types were noted:

**F1002: Coarse Flint.** Moderate to dense angular calcined flint up to 4mm, most 2mm or less. Late Bronze Age – Early Iron Age? 1 sherd, 372g, EVE = 0.

**F1003: Fine Flint.** Sparse to moderate angular

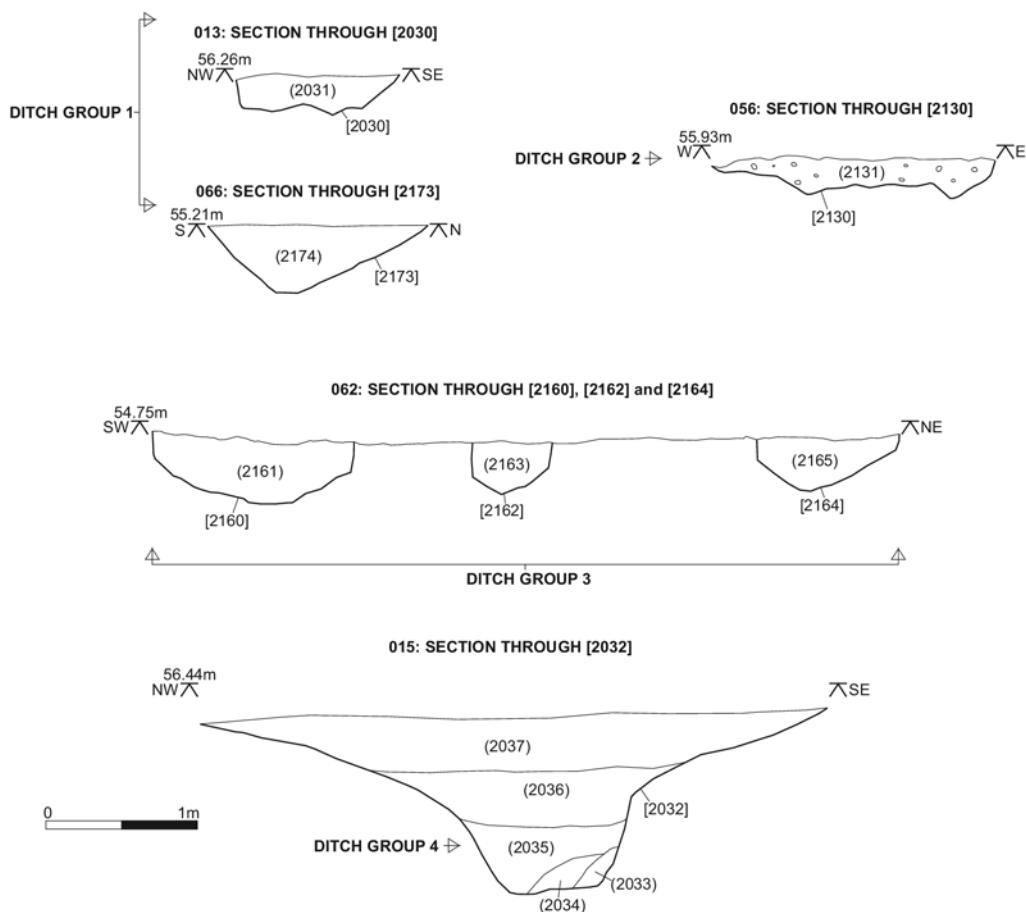


FIGURE 5 Selected ditch sections

calcined flint up to 1mm. Late Bronze Age – Early Iron Age? 2 sherds, 8g, EVE = 0.

### Anglo-Saxon

The Early – Middle Anglo-Saxon hand-built assemblage comprised 269 sherds, with a total weight of 3,212g (EVE = 1.65). The following fabric types were noted:

**F1: Organic-tempered.** Moderate to dense organic voids up to 10mm. Rare to sparse sub-rounded quartz up to 2mm, most less than 0.5mm. A few sherds have rare fragments of shell/calcareous material of the same size. Light scattering of flecks of silver mica (Fig. 8). 253 sherds, 2,998g, EVE = 1.13.

**F2: Fine Sandy.** Moderate to dense sub-angular quartz up to 0.1mm. 6 sherds, 86g, EVE = 0.09.

**F3: Fine Sandy and Organic.** As F2, with sparse organic voids up to 5mm. 10 sherds, 128g, EVE = 0.43.

In addition, two residual sherds (84g) of Romano-British pottery were also noted.

The range of fabric types is typical of sites of the Saxon period in the region (Blinkhorn 2002). All the pottery came from SFB [2007]. None of the sherds were decorated in any way, other than a few with burnished surfaces, and no dateable middle Anglo-Saxon material, such as Ipswich or Maxey Wares were present. This suggests that the assemblage is most likely of 7<sup>th</sup> century date, although

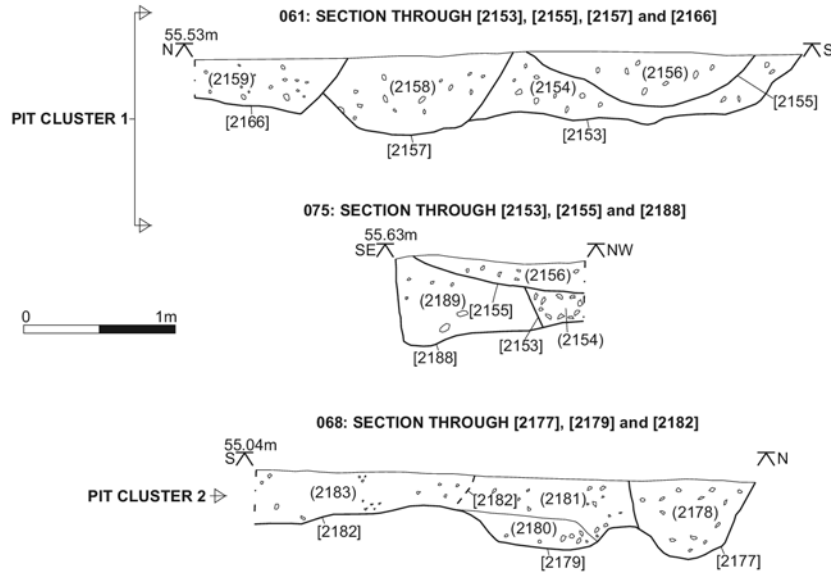


FIGURE 6 Selected pit sections

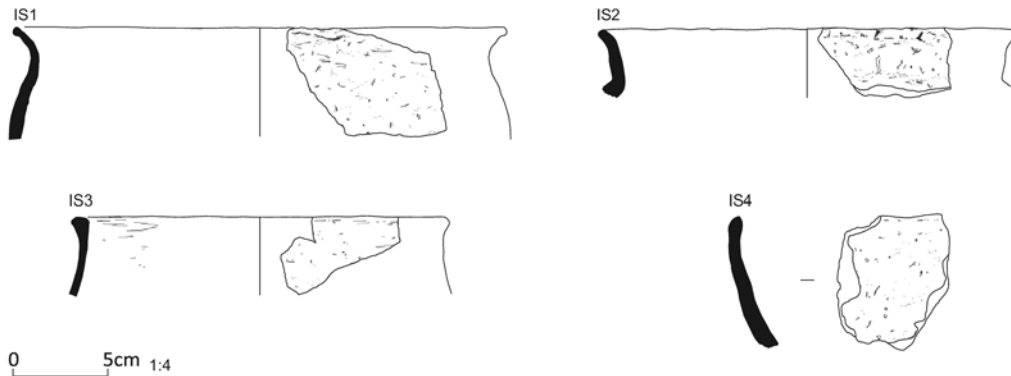


FIGURE 7 Saxon ceramics illustrations IS1 to IS4

this must be regarded as tentative. The dating of Early Saxon hand-built pottery is almost entirely reliant on the presence of decorated sherds. It seems that the Anglo-Saxons generally stopped decorating hand-built pottery in the 7<sup>th</sup> century (Myres 1977, 1), but it cannot be said with certainty that an assemblage which produces only plain sherds is of 7<sup>th</sup>-century date. Usually, decorated hand-built pottery only comprises around 3 – 4% of domestic assemblages, as was the case at sites such as West Stow, Suffolk (West 1985) and Mucking, Essex (Hamerow 1993). Thus, fairly small assemblages

of plain pottery are generally given a broad period date of the 5<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> century.

This assemblage appears to be entirely the product of secondary deposition; rim-sherds were examined for cross-fits, and none were made. This is not unusual, as it appears that SFB hollows were often filled with refuse from other sources (such as domestic middens) upon abandonment. Much of the organic-tempered pottery is soft and low-fired, and of a very similar texture and colour, suggesting that a number of the body sherds are from the same vessel, but very few re-fits were made, reflecting



FIGURE 8 Photograph of fabric F1

the picture suggested by the rim sherds. The rim sherds (24 in total) themselves were mainly from jars (EVE = 1.42; Fig. 7; IS1-3), with the rest (four examples) from bowls (EVE = 0.23; Fig. 7; IS4). A wide variety of sizes of jar were noted, from 120mm rim diameter to 280mm, with the bowls ranging from 160mm – 220mm.

Pottery such as this is fairly well-known in the Lower and Upper Thames Valley, particularly in the Middle Anglo-Saxon period, although much less so in this area of Buckinghamshire and the Middle Thames Valley generally, with many of the known sites being cemeteries or lone burials (Booth *et al.* 2007, 98). Similar wares were noted at the site at Lake End Road, Maidenhead, although organic-tempered ware forms a much higher proportion of the assemblage here, with sandy wares a lot more common at Lake End Road (Blinkhorn 2002). The presence of Middle Saxon regional and continental imports at Lake End Road indicated that the assemblage was largely of 7<sup>th</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup>-century date. Similar comments apply to the pottery from *Lundenwic* (Blackmore 2003), where both hand-built fabrics are common and imported wares, and also Ipswich Ware, are known in relatively large quantities. At Old Windsor, which is still largely unpublished, ‘...in the Middle-Saxon period, most of the pottery is grass-tempered and hand-made; there are only a few pots in gritty ware’ (Dunning *et al.* 1959, 21). Ipswich Ware and continental imports were also noted at Old Windsor (*ibid.*, 52) and it seems likely that most, if not all the pottery from that site was Middle Anglo-Saxon. The relatively small assem-

blage of Anglo-Saxon pottery from St Mary’s Butts in Reading (Blinkhorn, in archive) also produced a similar range of hand-built fabrics, imports and Ipswich Ware.

The lack of Ipswich Ware and imports from this site would perhaps suggest that the SFB is not of Middle Anglo-Saxon date, but this may not be the case. It appears that most, if not all the sites in the region which produce Ipswich Ware and continental imports alongside hand-built wares are of greater than normal status. For example, Old Windsor is thought to be a royal place, *Lundenwic* is an emporium and St Mary’s Butts is almost certainly the site of a royal minster church. However, a large assemblage of pottery from the excavations of the Early to Middle Anglo-Saxon settlement at Walton, near Aylesbury suggested that organic-tempered pottery became a lot more common in the later features which did not produce any decorated pottery and is associated with other artefacts of late 6<sup>th</sup> to 7<sup>th</sup>-century date (Farley 1976, 168). Given the dominance of such fabrics here, this assemblage is tentatively given the same date as the Walton material.

### Medieval

All the medieval pottery, other than a single abraded sherd of Surrey Whiteware from watching brief ditch fill (1007), appears to be manufacturing waste. Most of the larger context-specific groups included sherds with evidence of warping and/or spalling, as well as some over-fired and vitrified sherds. In addition, pit fill (2212) included two large fragments of kiln-spacers. The following fabrics were noted:

**F10: Sandy Ware.** Moderate to dense sub-angular white and grey quartz up to 1mm, rare fragments of black ironstone up to 0.5mm (Fig. 11). Some vessels have rare to sparse angular flint, up to 2mm. Mostly reduced grey, although a small proportion of orange oxidized sherds were also noted. ‘Slow-wheel’ made, some vessels have a dull green lead glaze. 1,482 sherds, 35,108g, EVE = 9.15.

**F11: Sandy and Shelly Ware.** Sparse to moderate sub-rounded quartz up to 2mm, rare to sparse sub-angular red ironstone up to 2mm, rare to sparse shell fragments up to 4mm, most 2mm or less. See Fig. 12. 79 sherds, 655g, EVE = 0.59.



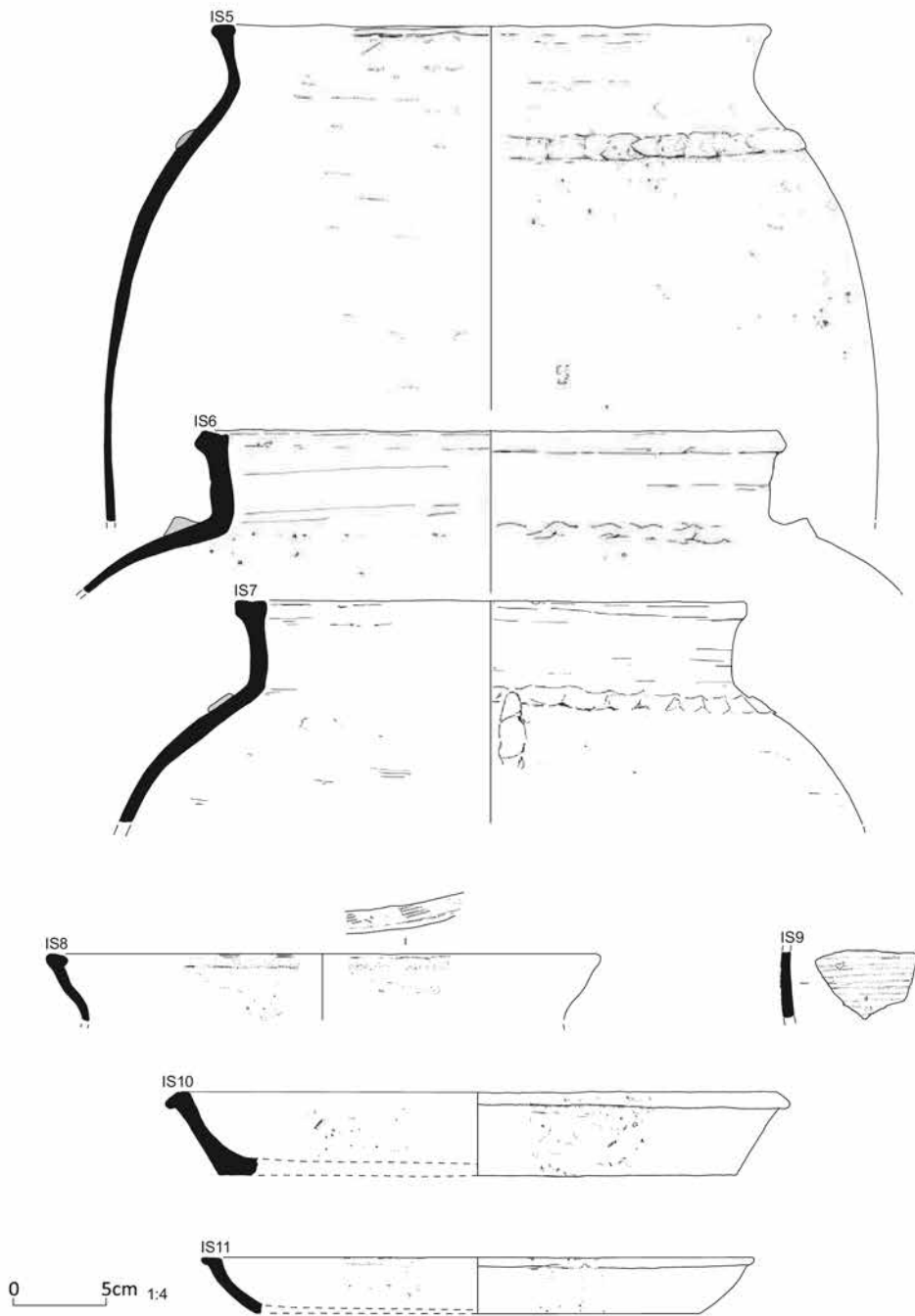


FIGURE 9 Medieval ceramics illustrations IS5 to IS11

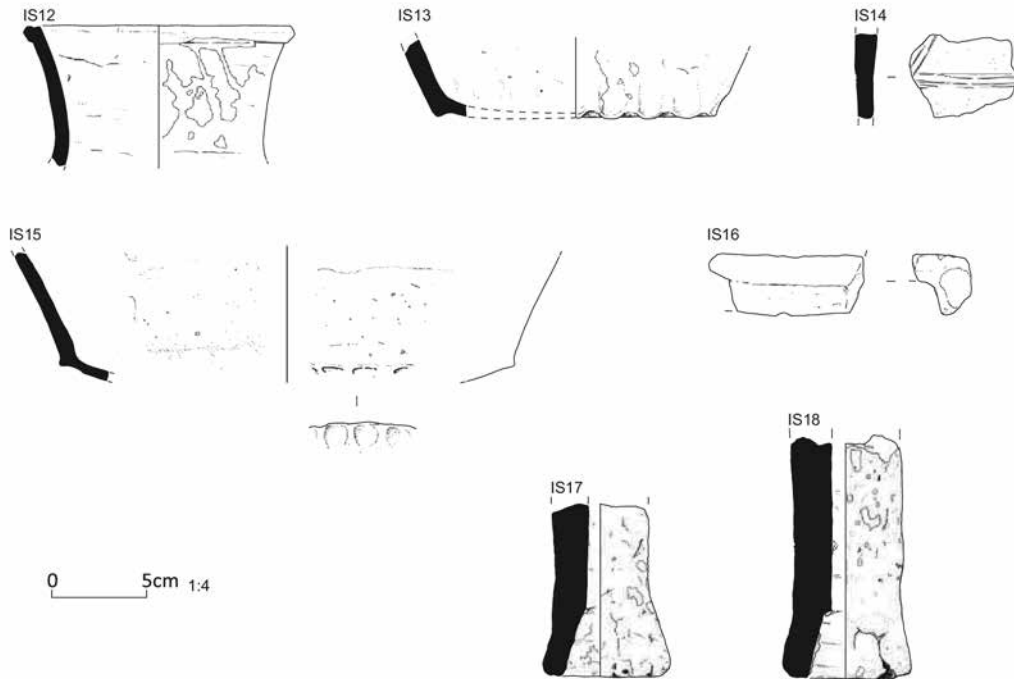


FIGURE 10 Medieval ceramics illustrations IS12 to IS18



FIGURE 11 Photograph of fabric F10



FIGURE 12 Photograph of fabric F11

**F12: Surrey Whiteware**, mid-13<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup> century (Pearce & Vince 1988). 1 sherd, 13g, EVE = 0.05.

The F10 rim sherd assemblage largely comprised jars (EVE = 8.80), along with three bowl rims (EVE = 0.14) and two more from jugs (EVE = 0.21; Fig. 10; IS12). Two of the bowls were very shallow

and survived to a full profile (Fig. 9; IS10 and IS11). Some of the jar rims were very large and heavy, and appear to be from storage vessels (Fig. 9; IS5-7). A single decorated jar rim was noted (Fig. 9; IS8). Three base-sherds with thumb-frilling, most likely from jugs, were noted (Fig. 10; IS13), with the rest (44 examples) being plain and sagging. Just two

fragments of handles were noted, one a plain strap and the other a stabbed rod, supporting the picture that jugs were scarce. A single fragment from the edge of an unglazed ridge-tile occurred in pit fill (2191).

Many of the jar bases had drips and splashes of glaze present on their outer surface, indicating that they were fired-upside down and there were glazed vessels present. Completely glazed sherds were rare, with just forty-six noted, of which seven had painted slip designs. A few sherds were noted with lightly combed scoring. Some rather unusual body sherds with an applied horizontal flange were noted (Fig. 10; IS16). These may be fragments of a curfew.

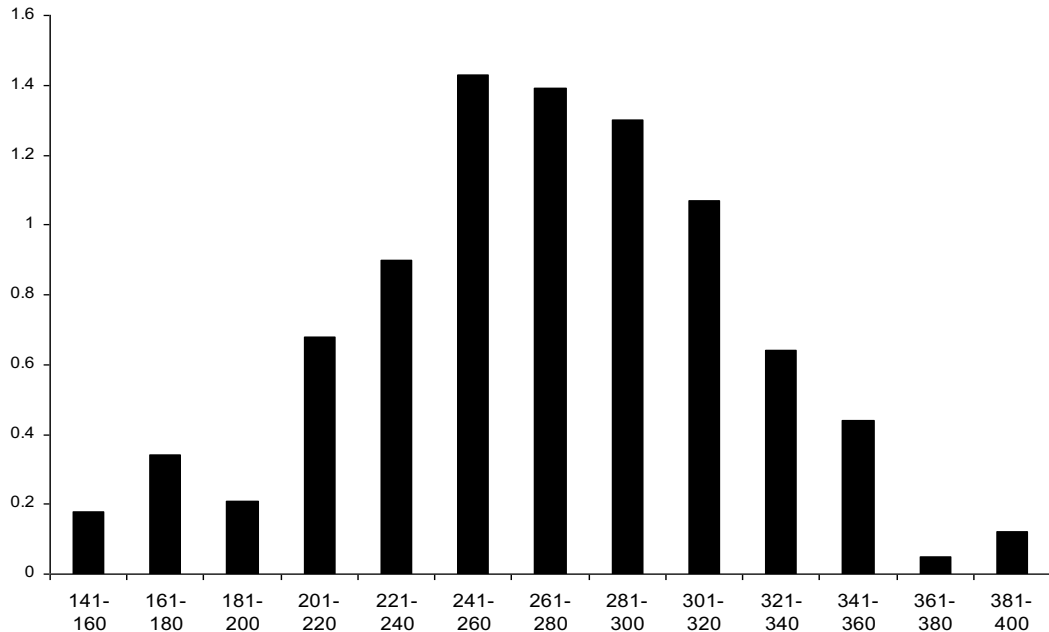
The rim sherd evidence indicates that the output

of the kiln was entirely limited to jars, bowls, and jugs, with jars making up the vast majority (96.2% of fabric F10 rim sherds; 135 examples; Table 1). This is a pattern typical of earlier medieval pottery assemblages, which tend to be dominated by jars, with jugs usually only becoming common in the 13<sup>th</sup> – 14<sup>th</sup> century. The fabric F11 assemblage produced just five rims, all from jars, mostly (three examples) in form 115, with the other two being forms 111 and 113. The fragments of the form 115 rims are almost certainly from the same vessel, but do not join. Specialist vessels for the storage, preparation, transportation or consumption of food and drink, a speciality of the late medieval period, are entirely absent, reinforcing the suggestion that the assemblage dates to the earlier part of the medieval period.

The jars in fabric F10 have a mean rim diameter of 291.9mm, and range in size from 140 – 420mm. Their occurrence by rim diameter in EVE is shown in Graph 1, which shows that the rim diameters have a unimodal distribution, indicating that the vessels probably had a wide range of functions. The three bowl rims had rim diameters of 460mm,

TABLE 1 Rim sherd occurrence by vessel type, all medieval fabrics, by percentage of fabric group

<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Jars</i>	<i>Bowls</i>	<i>Jugs</i>	<i>Total EVE</i>
F10	96.2%	1.5%	2.3%	9.15
F11	100%	0	0	0.59



GRAPH 1 Rim sherd occurrence in EVE by diameter (in mm), fabric F10 jars

TABLE 2: Rim-form occurrence by form, expressed as a percentage of the jar assemblage (in EVE), fabric F10

<i>Rim form</i>	<i>% of jar rims</i>	<i>Rim form</i>	<i>% of jar rims</i>
101	6.1%	110	0.8%
102	1.6%	111	23.0%
103	1.8%	112	4.4%
104	5.0%	113	11.8%
105	19.5%	114	4.8%
106	3.4%	115*	0
107	1.4%	116	6.0%
108	4.9%	117	1.3%
109	4.3%	Total EVE	8.80

\*Three rims of this type were noted, all in fabric F11

440mm, and 300mm, while the two jug rims both have diameters of 160mm.

A total of seventeen different jar rim-forms were noted, with their occurrence as a percentage of the assemblage in EVE shown in Table 2. Over half of them were either type 105, 111 or 113.

Decoration was limited to thumbled applied strips and incised lines. Of the former, thirty-five examples were noted, with six being horizontal and occurring on the shoulders of jars (Fig. 9; IS5 and IS6). All the vessels with such decoration were fairly large, with their rim diameters ranging from 240mm – 360mm, suggesting they were storage jars. Certainly, one of the largest rims with decoration such as this also had vertical strips running down from the horizontal collar (Fig. 9; IS7). Incised decoration was rare, being limited to horizontal cordons (six sherds), wavy lines/zig-zags (one example; Fig. 10; IS14) and scoring/combing (five sherds).

### The Assemblage in its Regional Context

This group of kiln waste, geographically and typologically, can be regarded as evidence for a further production centre for South Hertfordshire-type Greyware and is the most westerly find of such material, along with the nearby Rush Green kilns (Farley & Leach 1988). Around a dozen other manufactories of such pottery are known, with two being fairly close to this site at Uxbridge and Rush Green, Denham (Blackmore & Pearce 2010,

fig. 48). Overall, the forms and fabrics from here are very similar to those of the Rush Green and Uxbridge kilns, although none of the jars or jugs from here were reconstructable to a full profile. The pottery from this site is quite different in terms of fabric to that from the manufactory at Camley Gardens, Maidenhead (Pike 1965), which is not regarded as part of the Hertfordshire Greyware industry, but is seen as part of the 'M40 Ware' tradition (Hinton 1973).

The pottery from here has some similarities with material from further to the north in Buckinghamshire, at Potters Row, Great Missenden (Ashworth 1983). The level of publication of that material makes direct comparison with the pottery from here quite difficult, but in the 13<sup>th</sup> century it was producing mainly unglazed jars, bowls and jugs in a hard grey sandy fabric. Other kilns producing pottery in a similar fabric and range of forms are known from that area of the county (Blinkhorn in press).

At Rush Green, two groups of kilns occurred, with one of them producing an archaeomagnetic date of AD1240 +/- 20 (Farley & Leach 1988; Blackmore & Pearce 2010). The pottery from there showed some differences to the material from this site, mainly in the proportion of vessel types. For example, jugs and bowls were far more common at Rush Green, with fragments of jars making up just over half of the identifiable sherds. Consequently, thumbled bases, which are typically found on jugs,

were a lot more common than at this site. A slightly wider range of vessels was also made there, with a few fragments of bunghole cisterns, skillets and lids noted, along with objects interpreted as lamp-bases but which are more likely to be kiln-spacers (Farley & Leach 1988, Fig. 27). It is possible, given the scarcity of these vessels at Rush Green, that some of the large jars and shallow bowls from here may be from such vessels, but the defining features, bungholes or horizontal handles, are not present. The evidence from London, where SHER is very common, showed that both bunghole cisterns and pipkins/skillets in South Hertfordshire-type Greyware first occurred in late 12<sup>th</sup> to early 13<sup>th</sup>-century deposits (Blackmore & Pearce 2010, 154, 156). However, the assemblage from Rush Green was far bigger than the one from here (nearly 100,000 sherds, of which over 15,000 were rim sherds), as was that from Uxbridge (approx. 7,500 sherds), suggesting the vagaries of archaeological sampling rather than chronological considerations may be the reason for the apparent differences in vessel occurrence.

The range of jar rim forms from Rush Green (Farley & Leach 1988, figs 18 – 21) has many parallels with those from here and large jars with horizontal and/or vertical applied strips were also noted there (*ibid.*). A number of sherds also occurred with wiping/combing on the body (*ibid.*, 73). Like here, glazing was very rare, even on the jugs (*ibid.*, 73), and when it was present, it was dark green. A small number of slipped sherds were also present. Fragments of up to seven curfews were noted at Rush Green, but none appear to have the horizontal flange noted on the possible example from here (*ibid.*, fig. 26; this report, Fig. 10; IS16), although a sherd with a thumb-frilled shoulder, similar to the Rush Green curfews, was noted in pit fill (2140) (Fig. 10; IS15).

The two large fragments of kiln-spacers both occurred in pit fill (2212) (Fig. 10; IS17 and IS18). They are probably both part of the same object. Both have areas of somewhat vitrified glaze on one side. They are different to the objects classified as 'kiln furniture' at Rush Green (Farley & Leach 1988, fig. 28), but are similar to others which were described as the bases of 'pedestal lamps' (*ibid.*, fig. 27); although, it is mentioned in the text that they may actually be kiln furniture (*ibid.*, 75).

At Uxbridge, where a single kiln was excavated, the pottery was very similar to that from

Rush Green, to the point that it is very difficult to tell the two apart (Blackmore & Pearce 2010, 114). It probably dates to the early/mid-13<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*, 115). The range of vessel types is similar to that from this site, comprising jars, bowls, jugs and curfews, albeit with jugs again much more common at Uxbridge. The range of jar rim-forms being very similar to that from here (*ibid.*, fig. 61), as is the range and types of decoration (*ibid.*). Fragments of at least four similar kiln-spacers also occurred (Blackmore & Pearce 2010, fig. 61; 525 and 526).

The general dating for the South Hertford-type Greyware tradition suggests that the products of the industry first occurred in London around the middle of the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Blackmore and Pearce 2010, fig. 135), with the earliest products being hand-made flint and quartz-tempered wares with wiped surfaces (*ibid.*, 201) similar to the earliest products at Rush Green and Uxbridge. 'True' South Hertfordshire-type Greyware products were common in London by the early 13<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*, 203). Some of the pottery from here does have flint in the fabric and a few sherds were noticed with surface wiping (Fig. 9; IS9), so it is entirely possible that there were two stages of production here, with perhaps fabric F11 representing the earlier material.

The vast majority of the pottery from here appears to be hand-built and wheel-finished, with the evidence from the London waterfront sites showing that there was a phase of wheel-finished greywares before fully wheel-thrown South Herts types started to arrive in quantity in the late 12<sup>th</sup> century (*ibid.*, 204). This early phase of Greyware from London is considered to be two different fabric types, LOGR and coarse London-type Ware, LCOAR. The pottery from here is, in terms of form, certainly very different to both of these (*cf.* Vince & Jenner 1991, 76–9; 83–4) and does not seem to be related to them. It would appear, therefore, that this group of material probably represents a period just prior to the potters of the tradition turning to fully wheel-thrown production. The archaeomagnetic date from Rush Green (AD1240 ±20) appears to correspond with a phase of production where all the pottery was wheel-thrown, so this, coupled with the very limited range of vessel forms, suggests that a date of the late 12<sup>th</sup> – early 13<sup>th</sup> century is the most appropriate for the material from this site.

*Ceramics Illustrations*

- IS1: Context (2011), fabric F1. Jar rim. Black fabric with orange patches on the outer surface.
- IS2: Context (2011), fabric F1. Jar rim. Uniform black fabric.
- IS3: Context (2010), fabric F3. Jar rim. Black fabric with lightly burnished outer surface with orange patches.
- IS4: Context (2009), fabric F1. Bowl rim. Black fabric with orange patches on the outer surface.
- IS5: Context (2212), fabric F10. Large fragment of jar with horizontal thumbled strip on shoulder. Grey fabric with browner surfaces.
- IS6: Context (2212), fabric F10. Large fragment of jar with horizontal thumbled strip on shoulder. Grey fabric with orange-red core.
- IS7: Context (2212), fabric F10. Large fragment of jar with horizontal and vertical thumbled strips on shoulder. Vertical wiping on the body. Grey fabric with orange-red margins.
- IS8: Context (2140), fabric F10. Jar rim with lightly-combed rim-top. Uniform grey fabric.
- IS9: Context (2140), fabric F10. Combed/wiped body sherd.
- IS10: Context (2156), fabric F10. Full profile of shallow bowl. Dark grey fabric with browner inner surface.
- IS11: Context (2196), fabric F10. Full profile of shallow bowl. Dark grey fabric with browner inner surface.
- IS12: Context (2212), fabric F10. Jug rim. Uniform dark grey fabric, patchy dark green glaze on the outer surface.
- IS13: Context (2156), fabric F10. Thumbled jug-base. Dark grey fabric with browner inner surface. Thin, patchy dark green glaze on the outer surface.
- IS14: Context (2156), fabric F10. Body sherd from storage jar with incised zig-zag, brown fabric with grey outer surface.
- IS15: Context (2140), fabric F10. Sherd from the shoulder of a curfew. Grey fabric with orange-brown inner surface. Line of thin white slip with spots of green glaze on the outside of the vessel wall.
- IS16: Context (2195), fabric F10. Flange from the body of a curfew? Uniform grey fabric.
- IS17: Context (2212), fabric F10. Kiln-spacer. Uniform grey fabric, splashes and runs of partially vitrified green glaze on one side.
- IS18: Context (2212), fabric F10. Kiln-spacer.

Uniform grey fabric, splashes and runs of partially vitrified green glaze on one side.

## DISCUSSION

by Andrew Hood

Apart from a handful of possible Bronze Age pottery sherds, there was no evidence for significant earlier prehistoric activity within the site. The earliest possible datable activity was represented by Ditch Group 1, which, although poorly dated, was stratigraphically early and could conceivably have been part of a later prehistoric or Roman field system, with associated entrances and drove/ trackways. The general lack of associated finds would suggest that the site was located away from any focus of contemporary settlement and it is possible that the ditches were related to the possible prehistoric and Roman settlement and agricultural cropmarks to the north of the site, which were identified during the previous aerial photographic survey (Archaeological & Planning Solutions 2009).

The Saxon sunken-featured building [2007] was associated with Early to Middle Saxon pottery and represented the earliest securely dated activity within the site. No other features could be confidently related to it and the general lack of Saxon artefacts across the rest of the strip, map and sample area would suggest that it was not located near to any particular focus of settlement activity. It is, therefore, a distinct possibility that elements of the artefactually-rich SFB fill were brought to the site from elsewhere. This would be consistent with the occurrence of Roman artefacts within the SFB fill, which is a well-known phenomenon and is widely regarded as being representative of formalised or symbolic deposition of potentially curated artefacts (Spoerry 2007). Roman artefacts found within the fills of multiple SFBs at Prospect Park, Harmondsworth, approximately 5km to the south of the site, may be further evidence of this practice (Farwell *et al* 1999, 19–27). Fragments of fired or heated clay and a small piece of slag from the SFB fill hinted that the settlement may have been associated with a degree of industrial activity, although the potentially redeposited nature of the material curtailed further interpretation.

Due to the limited nature of the investigation it was difficult to determine the extent and nature of the Saxon settlement. Area excavations at Wraysbury (Pine 2003), approximately 9km to the south

and Heathrow Airport (Framework Archaeology 2005), approximately 7km to the south, revealed isolated SFBs with a small number of associated features, which suggests a generally dispersed, low-density Early Saxon settlement pattern in this part of the Colne Valley (Booth *et al* 2007, 98). The evidence from the current site would fit well with this: however, the potential for areas of settlement nucleation or clustering is attested by the occurrence of 11 SFBs, with possible timber halls and other features, within a moderately-sized investigation area at Prospect Park (Farwell *et al* 1999, fig. 12). This picture may also be complicated by the potential for settlement drift.

Ditch Groups 3 and 4 presumably represented fairly significant and potentially long-lived boundaries. They were both stratigraphically later than the possible later prehistoric/Roman field system, whilst Ditch Group 3 contained 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century medieval pottery in some of its upper fills. However, caution should be applied here, as these artefacts may have been intrusive material from the later pit digging. Ditch Group 3 may have been related to a linear double-ditch crop-mark (Archaeological & Planning Solutions 2009), which extended to the northwest of the strip, map and sample area for approximately 180m and to the southeast for approximately 100m. No crop-mark could be confidently related to Ditch Group 4. With such limited data, it is difficult to elucidate the wider nature and function of these boundaries, as well as their relationship to each other and the other features on site. Given that the majority of Early Saxon settlement in the locale is 'open' and not associated with ditched boundaries, it seems likely that Ditch Groups 3 and 4 were not related to the SFB. Although little further can currently be said, it is apparent that these ditches represented significant evidence for the partition, or enclosure, of this part of Chandlers Hill at some point in the past, possibly prior to the 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> century. Analysis of available historic maps has indicated that the site area has remained essentially unchanged, at least as far back as the later 19<sup>th</sup> century, and that no boundaries corresponding to the on-site ditches are depicted. In terms of moving forward, the relationship between these boundaries, the Saxon settlement and later medieval activity should form a focus of research in this area.

The medieval pits contained a significant quantity of ceramic manufacturing waste, along with

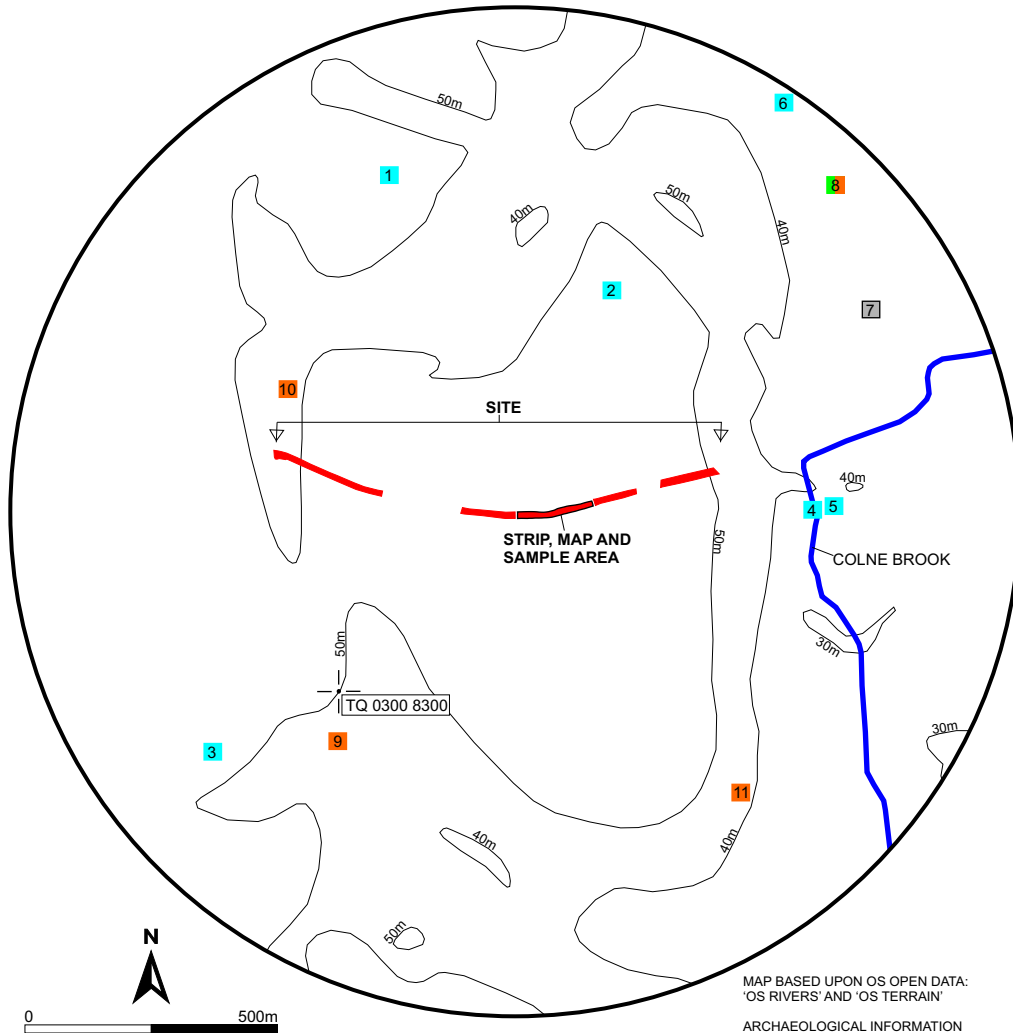
fragments of burnt stone and fired/heated clay and were probably kiln waste dumps. As such, they represent good evidence for pottery production near to the site, which, on the basis of the associated ceramics, can be dated to the 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> century and related to the manufacture of South Hertfordshire-type Greyware. However, due to the absence of kilns or other related features within the site, the extent and precise nature of the pottery production remained uncertain.

Such pottery production sites are known elsewhere in the county, usually in the form of excavated kilns, assemblages of pottery 'wasters' recovered during surface collection surveys and/or documentary evidence. Two nearby kiln sites, Rush Green, Denham and Uxbridge (Blackmore & Pearce 2010, fig. 48), are broadly contemporary with the current site. At Rush Green a number of kilns were associated with pits, one of which contained '*plentiful pottery, a piece of kiln bar and burnt clay fragments*' (Farley & Hurman 2015, 207; Farley & Leach 1988), which would appear to be broadly comparable with the pits from the current site. Pottery production sites tend to be situated at, or near to, deposits of suitable clay and this site is no exception, as deposits of easily accessible *London Clay* have been demonstrated to exist approximately half-a-kilometre to the east of the strip, map and sample area (BGS Online Viewer; Foundations Archaeology 2012, Test Pits 1-3).

It is thought likely that some early pottery production sites in the county may be indicated by later documentary sources and/or place name evidence (Farley & Hurman 2015). The 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup>-century evidence from Chandlers Hill seems to fit well with this, as the 1379 Poll Tax refers to a '*John Pottere*' (Bailey 2009, 179), whilst Rocque's Map of *circa* 1760 shows '*Potters Cross*' on the edge of Iver Heath, approximately 500m to the southwest of the site (Fig. 13; Data Point 9).

## CONCLUSION

The current investigations, albeit of a fairly limited nature, have nonetheless revealed an interesting group of features on Chandlers Hill. Analysis of the recovered site evidence suggests that a later prehistoric or Roman field system was probably succeeded by Early to Middle Saxon settlement, which included at least one SFB. Two substantial and potentially long-lived ditched boundaries were



- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1 = Small assemblage of Neolithic to Bronze Age flints                 | 7 = Undated human remains                             |
| 2 = Possible (Prehistoric?) penannular ditch                           | 8 = Medieval, or later, quarry pit                    |
| 3 = Lower to Middle Palaeolithic flint handaxe                         | 9 = Place name: 'Potters Cross'                       |
| 4 = Possible Mesolithic watercourse, with wooden stake and flint flake | 10 = 18th C records refer to brickworks on Iver Heath |
| 5 = Mesolithic lithic scatter and occupation layer                     | 11 = Former quarry? pit shown on C 20th maps          |
| 6 = Large assemblage of Mesolithic and Neolithic struck flints         |   |

FIGURE 13 Site in relation to HER data



also present. Though these could not be precisely dated, they represented significant evidence for the partition, or enclosure, of this part of Chandlers Hill at some point in the past, possibly prior to the 12<sup>th</sup> to 13<sup>th</sup> century AD. The latest datable phase of activity within the site comprised areas of intercut pits, which contained dumped pottery kiln waste. It is likely that these were related to a nearby medieval pottery production centre, which dated to the 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> century and was related to the manufacture of South Hertfordshire-type Greyware.

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