

**LAND AT 13-21 OLNEY ROAD, LAVENDON,
MILTON KEYNES**

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL
MITIGATION**

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Preface

Every effort has been made in the preparation of this document to provide as complete a summary as possible within the terms of the specification. All statements and opinions in this document are offered in good faith. Albion Archaeology cannot accept responsibility for errors of fact or opinion resulting from data supplied by a third party, or for any loss or other consequence arising from decisions or actions made upon the basis of facts or opinions expressed in this document.

This report, which combines the results of the evaluation and mitigation works, has been prepared by Caroline Clarke, Gary Edmondson and Jackie Wells. The archaeological evaluation was undertaken by Martin Campbell assisted by Martin Sperry. Archaeological mitigation works were undertaken by Gary Edmondson, Mick Garside and David Ingham. The finds were analysed by Jackie Wells. Cecily Marshall produced the figures in this report. All Albion projects are under the overall management of Drew Shotliff (Operations Manager).

Albion Archaeology would like to thank Elspeth Tinns and Phillip Grace of Shenley Park Homes Ltd and the Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer Mr Brian Giggins for their assistance. The old photograph of Lavendon is reproduced with kind permission of the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies.

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Structure of the Report

After the introductory Section 1, the results of the archaeological investigation are presented in Section 2 and summarised in Section 3. Sections 4 and 5 contain a bibliography and a summary report on the artefacts from the site.

Key Terms

Throughout this report the following terms or abbreviations are used:

<i>MKAO</i>	Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer
<i>Client</i>	Shenley Park Homes Ltd
<i>SMR</i>	Milton Keynes Sites and Monuments Record
<i>IFA</i>	Institute of Field Archaeologists
<i>Procedures Manual</i>	<i>Procedures Manual Volume 1 Fieldwork</i> , 2 nd edn, 2001 Albion Archaeology
<i>The site</i>	<i>Area of archaeological investigation</i>



Non-Technical Summary

Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Shenley Park Homes Ltd to undertake the archaeological evaluation of a site within the core of the medieval settlement of Lavendon. Three trenches were opened and investigated between 15th and 23rd November 2004. They revealed a sequence of stratified remains that had been sealed below deposits associated with a former Highways depot. Planning permission had been granted (01/00803/MKCOD3) for the erection of two dwellings, garage and associated parking, with a condition for archaeological mitigation. In consultation with the Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer, the results of the evaluation were used in conjunction with the development plan to formulate a mitigation strategy. This focused on the investigation of those areas which would be disturbed by construction associated with the new buildings. The initial stage, comprising pre-emptive excavation of the footing trenches was undertaken in mid June 2005. It was not possible to investigate the southern part of the site at this time, due to the close proximity of the standing building. These footings were monitored during construction in late June.

The village of Lavendon is located near the northern edge of the Borough of Milton Keynes, within a valley of a tributary of the River Great Ouse. The site is roughly rectangular in plan measuring approximately 25m by 21m, fronting the eastern side of Olney Road, centred on National Grid Reference SP (4/2) 9164 5351.

Late 19th-century maps show that the site had been occupied by a block of cottages until the 1950s, after which it was used as a council depot for the Highways Department. The maps depict the cottages fronting the street, with associated outbuildings to the north and open space and another outbuilding to the east.

The mitigation work revealed a complex sequence of development and change in the core of this historic north Buckinghamshire village. The earliest features were undated, comprising a sequence of ditches orientated roughly north-south in the centre of the site. At least four recuts were identified, progressing from west to east, with the form of the ditch changing over time. The earliest ditch in the west was the smallest. The recut was considerably larger and deeper with evidence for a bank to the west. Subsequently a clay lining was added, allowing the ditch to retain water. Several undated pits were located in the west of the site.

Dug into the infilled ditches were the pitched limestone footings of the south-west corner of a building. This building had a contrasting alignment to the later cottages, and so is unlikely to be an associated outbuilding. Systematic demolition of this building had removed all above ground traces of the walls. Demolition material from this building was used to level this area, possibly to create an external yard. A stone-lined drain and a possibly associated soakaway were dug through this surface. The terracing of the site and the creation of a limestone raft may have been contemporary with the building. As the substantial limestone footings of the earliest street front building truncated the limestone raft, it is considered unlikely that these features were associated.

Partial survival of sequential features makes understanding of the next phase in the use of the site difficult to comprehend. Traces of a worn limestone surface indicate the presence of an external yard, possibly dating to the 17th-18th century on the basis



of associated pottery. This was truncated by a well constructed limestone drain, which originally would have been capped. This drained downwards towards the street frontage. The small quantity of late medieval pottery from this feature is likely to be residual.

A series of substantial footings were dug parallel to the street frontage, defining a roughly rectangular building, with possibly three rooms. One of the internal walls had a distinctive curve, suggesting that it was originally the southern gable end wall of a building. No dating evidence from construction trenches or walls was recovered. The walls were up to 0.86m wide and survived to a maximum depth of 0.74m. They were well faced with horizontally coursed, limestone slabs, with traces of yellow clay bonding and a rubble core. The nature of the construction contrasts with the later cottages. No associated internal floor levels survived to indicate the function of the building. The building's extent and date are unknown. Generally, these walls were subsequently robbed to at least ground level.

Subsequently, a row of cottages occupied the site, originally three, later merging to two. They survived until demolition in the 1950s. The cottages utilised some of the earlier footings, although the walls contrasted in form; they were no more than 0.5m wide and lacked a rubble core. They were associated with a series of internal tiled floors and a drain. Over the lifetime of the cottages the floors were raised. Damp was clearly a problem, as indicated by soft calcium precipitate on the terracotta tiles of the lower floor. The internal layout of the cottages underwent change — a partition separating the northern and middle cottages was removed and the larger floor space was reorganised.

The land to the rear of the cottages underwent change with the addition and removal of outbuildings and changes to the external surfaces, probably associated with changes in use. Garden soil was brought in to the northern part of this area, while rubbish pits were dug to the rear of the southern cottage. The pits contained a variety of domestic debris, including pottery, bone and rakings from fires. To the west, the soil was well mixed, indicating that it had been cultivated.

When the cottages were demolished, the peripheral buildings were generally retained and modified for use in the Highways depot. The effects of demolition were variable; in places, traces of the insubstantial cottage wall footings were well preserved. Demolition material up to 0.22m thick was used to level the site, with tarmac covering the majority of the area. Several drains were also inserted.

The site archive for the project (Project number LOR 1044) is currently stored at the offices of Albion Archaeology and will be transferred to Buckinghamshire County Museum on completion of the project - Accession Number 2004.129.

It is essential that the above summary is read in conjunction with the main body of the report.



1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

In late 2001, planning permission was granted for the residential development of the former Highways depot in Lavendon (Application 01/00803/MKCOD3), with a condition attached for a programme of archaeological investigation. As there was insufficient information available to determine the impact of the development, or to allow an appropriate mitigation strategy to be devised, the initial stage involved an archaeological evaluation of the site. The Milton Keynes Archaeological Officer (MKAO) issued a Brief for this work¹. Albion Archaeology was commissioned by Shenley Park Homes Ltd to undertake the evaluation in November 2004. The three trial trenches indicated that significant archaeological remains survived in this part of the historic core of the village. Subsequently Albion was commissioned to design and implement a programme of archaeological works to mitigate the impact of the development. Following approval of the mitigation strategy, the investigation was undertaken in June 2005.

1.2 Site Location and Description

Situated near the northern edge of the Borough of Milton Keynes, Lavendon is located 3.5 km from the market town of Olney. The village is within a valley of a tributary of the River Great Ouse. Located near the junction of High Street (A428) and Olney Road, near the heart of the village, the roughly rectangular site is centred on National Grid Reference SP (4/2) 9164 5351 (Figure 1). In plan the site measures 25m north-south by 21m, with the western long side fronting Olney Road, bounded by blocks of cottages to the north and south. To the east a tall boundary wall defines a distinct terrace with higher ground beyond. The terrace extends beyond the current site to the north and south.

The site is roughly flat at approximately 64m OD. This area is recorded as being on the margin of an area of cornbrash limestone, with later alluvial deposits associated with the stream identified in the area to the west. Boulder clay is identified further to the north and east.

Immediately prior to the archaeological works the site was vacant, having previously served as a Highways depot, with a variety of structures located at the margins of the area and a central tarmac 'yard'. The northern sheds were constructed of various materials. Traces of insubstantial footings of two buildings were identified. A small concrete hard-standing was located in the north-eastern corner of the site, adjacent to the eastern shed. The roughly square area measured 2.4m north-south by 1.8m. The second structure had been keyed into the boundary walls in the south-east corner of the site. Measuring approximately 14m north-south by 3.8m wide, only patches of the unbonded brick floor of this probable outbuilding survived. The north-eastern corner of the site contained traces of wooden open sheds.

¹ Milton Keynes Borough Council 2003 13-21 Olney Road Lavendon Brief for Archaeological Evaluation

1.3 Historical and Archaeological Background

Historical maps indicate that this area, which is within the presumed medieval core of the village, underwent considerable change, unlike the adjacent areas. The earliest detailed map, dating to 1882, shows a row of buildings fronting the road with a small passage at the northern edge, which provided access to an open area behind the cottages (Figure 2). An old photograph (Figure 3) indicates that the roadside buildings were of similar form and construction to the adjacent surviving buildings.

In the post-war period the cottages were condemned, being demolished in the 1950s. The area was subsequently utilised for a council Highways depot, with creation of a central tarmac yard and erection or modification of associated structures.

Immediately prior to the start of the evaluation and in accordance with guidance supplied by Albion and approved by the MKAO, Shenley Park Homes Ltd arranged for a contractor to secure and clear the site of vegetation and extensive dumps of material which had accumulated in recent years.

1.4 Standing Buildings

The northern margin of the site was occupied by two ‘sheds’ associated with the Highways depot. However, inspection indicated that the fabric of the sheds incorporated earlier limestone structures which had been enlarged and heightened with modern building materials for their new role in the depot. The original limestone structures were 5.2m wide extending from the northern limit of the site. The elevations indicated sloping roofs 2.5m high in the north, dropping to 2.1m in the south (Photograph 1). These structures correspond to outbuildings depicted on the 1882 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 2). The original southern extent would have defined a roughly 6 foot wide passageway, allowing access to the rear to the area.



Photograph 1: Eastern elevation of northern outbuilding, showing incorporation of earlier limestone building.



2. RESULTS OF ARCHAEOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION

2.1 Introduction

The results of the evaluation were used in conjunction with the development plans to formulate a mitigation strategy (Albion 2005b). This document was approved by the MKAO prior to the commencement of groundworks. The objectives of this investigation were:

- To determine the nature, form and development of the cottages on the street frontage;
- To investigate and record those features in the central and eastern parts of the site affected by the development.

The results of the evaluation and the subsequent mitigation works have been combined to provide a chronological discussion of the development of the site, from earliest to latest. Where it has not been possible to determine the precise sequence, this is indicated in the text; for instance, the sequence of the site's early development is unclear.

2.2 Methodology

The objective was to investigate those areas of the site that would be affected by the development, whilst preserving those areas beyond the development. The mitigation strategy consisted of two components:

- Pre-emptive excavation of the footings for the buildings;
- Monitoring of any other ground disturbance likely to have an impact on the archaeological remains.

Prior to the commencement of construction activity on the site, the majority of the 0.6m wide footings for the buildings were excavated under archaeological control. However, segments of footing trench in the south of the site were too close to standing structures, which were known to have insubstantial foundations, to be safely investigated in advance of the development. These footings were opened and investigated shortly before the concrete foundations were poured.

2.2.1 Investigation Strategy

- 1 The 0.6m wide footing trenches were excavated to the level of the upper building using a combination of hand and machine excavation.
- 2 All excavated features and deposits were fully recorded in accordance with Albion's *Procedures Manual*.
- 3 Blocks of records were assigned to this phase of the investigation, to assist in rapid integration of the trial excavation results.
- 4 Spoil was scanned for artefacts by both eye and metal detector.
- 5 Artefacts, including those recovered from spoil heaps, were assigned to the relevant context number.
- 6 Artefact processing was undertaken concurrently with the investigation.
- 7 Significant features were photographed using a digital camera..
- 8 A programme of environmental sampling was carried out in accordance with the guidelines issued by English Heritage's Centre for Archaeology Guidelines (2002) *Environmental Archaeology*. Samples were taken from deposits, which



visually appear to contain charred remains, snails or small bones. “Background” samples were taken, as appropriate.

- 9 The client and MKAO were kept informed of the results, having the opportunity to inspect the ongoing investigation.

All archaeological and geological deposits (contexts) were assigned an individual number commencing at (100). Numbers in brackets within the text refer to the context number issued on site. Within this report context numbers for cut features are depicted as [**]; layers or deposits within cut features are depicted as (**).

2.3 Early Development of the Site

2.3.1 Ditch sequence

A sequence of at least four ditches [225], [227], [231] and [233] was identified within Trench 2. Only the upper fills were exposed in Trench 3 to the north (314) and (325) and in the footings for the new building [618] and associated fill (619) (Figure 4). The ditches represent the recutting of a roughly north-south boundary, which moved gradually eastwards over time (Photograph 2). None of the ditch profiles were fully exposed; most were truncated by the next ditch in the sequence, so that the full width of any of the features could not be defined. However, the visible or surviving widths of the ditches ranged from 0.56m to 1.90m wide, with surviving depths beneath a later limestone raft of 0.65m to at least 0.8m (Figure 4: Section 1). The profiles of the ditches were generally V-shaped, showing signs of heavy erosion on their upper, western sides. No direct dating evidence was recovered from the ditches, which is unsurprising as they were frequently maintained and recut, and clearly not used to dispose of waste materials.

The earliest ditch [225]

Situated in the west, only the basal part of the ditch survived; it was at least 0.5m wide and at least 0.65m deep. Most of the surviving part of the ditch was cut into horizontally bedded cornbrash limestone, the angled stones within the mixed reddish brown silty clay fill (226) assisting in defining the feature.

Intermediate ditch [227]

Only part of the western edge of the ditch was exposed, indicating that it was considerably more substantial than the earliest ditch. It was at least 1.1m wide and 0.8m deep, continuing below the limit of investigation. The excavated segment contained three fills, which were generally yellowish brown in colour, containing variable amounts of limestone inclusions (228) and (229). Fill (230) consisted of a band of tightly packed slabby limestone fragments, which sloped down the western side of the feature. This appears to be brashy limestone, originally excavated from the lower part of the ditch, and subsequently eroding in from an adjacent bank to the west.

Clay-lined ditch [231]

This ditch had a steep profile which truncated the stony fill of the previous ditch. This recut appears to have significantly altered the form of the ditch; it was at least 1.6m wide and 0.83m deep. The clay lining (232) was 0.2m thick on its western side. It would have stabilised the stony fill of the previous ditch,

whilst providing a water-retaining lining. The clay lining of features is frequently used from the medieval period onwards.

Latest ditch [233]

Several cleaning out or recutting events are suggested by the distinctive, faceted form of this ditch. It was at least 1.8m wide and 0.76m deep, truncating the upper horizon of the yellow clay lining of the previous form of the ditch. The main fill (234) was reddish brown silty clay, which became greyer with depth, with evidence for horizontal lamination of the deposit in the lower part of the cut. This suggests that the material, particularly the lower part, accumulated gradually in a water-filled feature. Sample <1> from this deposit contained a very small, intrusive fragment of glass (less than 4mm across) and two flecks of ceramic building material of similar size. The other two fills (235) and (236) were relatively shallow with a maximum combined thickness of 0.3m. The profile of these deposits suggests that they were situated towards the middle of the ditch.



Photograph 2: Western extent of ditch sequence revealed in Trench 2, sealed below the limestone raft (223).

These ditches would originally have been very large features. They were cut into the hillside and appeared to follow the high ground. They pre-date the terracing of the area. It is unclear what the ditches were defining, although, at least initially, the presence of a bank to the west would suggest that the main focus was on the higher ground to the east.

2.4 Early and Undated Pits

Four pits (Figure 4) in the western part of the site cannot be easily linked to any subsequent phase of activity and so are discussed here.

2.4.1 Pit [550]

Situated to the west of the ditch sequence, this sub-rectangular pit was 0.89m long east-west, 0.34m wide and at least 0.12m deep, with investigation stopping at the formation level (Figure 4). The fill of the pit was composed of very dark grey brown silty clay, with frequent amounts of charcoal and occasional amounts of degraded limestone flecking (Photograph 3). This deposit was the result of deliberate backfilling of charred material. Sample <2> from this deposit contained abundant flecks and very small fragments of charcoal, though no artefacts or charred seeds were present.



Photograph 3: Pit [550] below limestone raft and wall (552).

2.4.2 Pit [567]

This oval pit was at least 0.87m by 0.5m and 0.16m deep, with a concave profile (Figure 4: Section 2). The yellowish mid brown slightly silty clay (568) contained frequent small limestone fragments. No artefacts were recovered from the fill of the pit. Its function remains uncertain but it is thought to predate the street front buildings.

2.4.3 Pit [535]

This shallow, concave pit was at least 0.65m across and 0.18m deep (Figure 4: Section 3). It was filled with grey brown silty clay (536), which became lighter with depth. The pit's function is uncertain; the nature of its fill suggests that it accumulated as a result of prolonged weathering, which would suggest that the pit was not associated with the street front buildings.

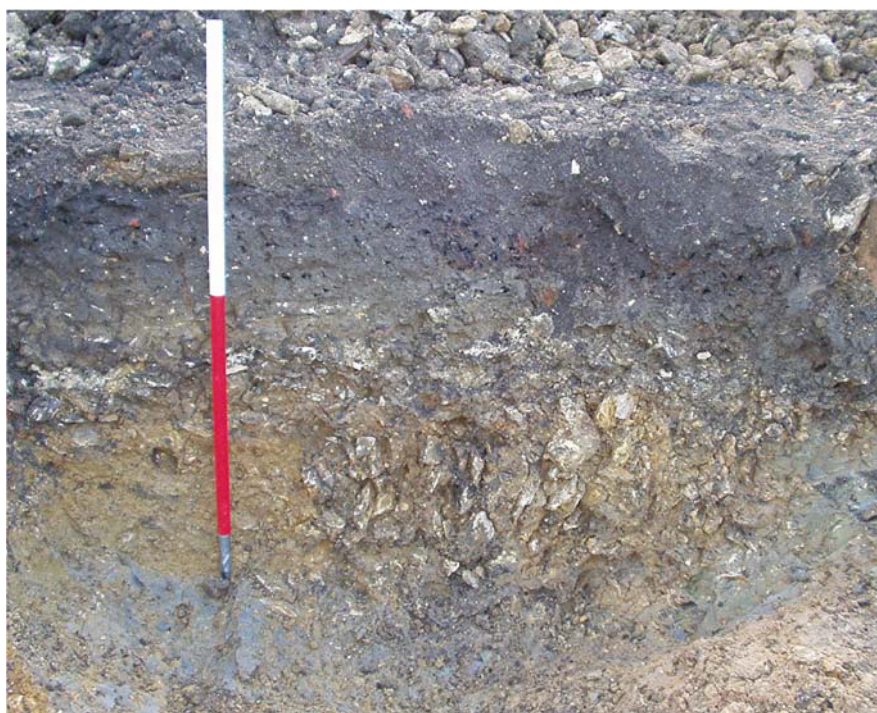
2.4.4 Pit [595]

This large pit was at least 5.4m long north-south, and >0.65m wide, with a base up to 0.9m below the ground surface. Its stepped, concave profile became shallower to the north. The sequential ditches were not seen in this area, suggesting, that the pit was later. Traces of a primary fill of yellow brown clay (596) were identified on the base of the cut, indicating that it remained open for a period of time. The main fill comprised a grey brown silty clay, containing a variety of stones including limestone and rounded cobbles as well as shell,

charcoal, and traces of coal. The pit was situated to the rear of the street front buildings, although its form and relative lack of artefacts contrast with the pits associated with the later cottages. It is possible that it was related to the earlier street front building.

2.5 Building [312] / [315]

This building was identified during the evaluation in Trench 3 to the north-east of the footings for the new building (Figure 4). The pitched limestone was in a distinctive cut with two perpendicular components forming an L-shape in plan.



Photograph 4: Pitched limestone footings of [312] sealed by demolition spread. Scale 1m in 0.5m divisions.

In section the cut was up to 0.75m wide and 0.42m deep (Figure 4: Section 4). The limestone fragments and slabs were set in mid red brown sandy clay bonding (313)/(316). This defined the south-west corner of a substantial building of distinctive footings and alignment, which contrasted with the alignment of the sequential and presumably later, street front buildings. These footings overlay the upper fills of the sequential ditches, which may account for their substantial and distinctive nature.

The building would have been set well back from, and at an angle to, the present-day road. There is no record of this building on the 1882 Ordnance Survey map, and so it is certainly earlier than this date.

2.5.1 Demolition of Building [312] / [315]

Three spreads of demolition material relating to the building were identified within Trench 3. Layers (309), (310) and (311) consisted of light yellow orange sandy silt with moderate amounts of small to medium sized limestone fragments. The deposit was at least 9.5m long and between 0.11m to 0.28m thick, with a compact upper boundary (Figure 4: Section 4). Originally this material was mistaken for the brashy limestone geological strata due to its



compact and consistent nature. This contrasted with the material forming the later limestone raft (see 2.7.1 below). No artefacts were recovered from these deposits to date the building.

2.6 Stone-lined Drain

Orientated north-east to south-west, stone-lined drain [306] was located in the northern part of Trench 3 (Figure 4). It was visible in plan for 1.50m, fading out to the north-east and merging into pit [323] to the south-west. The cut for the drain was 0.35m wide and 0.14m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base (Figure 4: Section 5). Limestone slabs and fragments (307) lined the sides of the cut and probably originally supported a limestone capping. The disuse fill of the drain was composed of mid green brown silty clay.

At the southern limits of the drain was a sub-oval pit or soakaway [323], measuring 1m long north-south, 0.8m wide and 0.18m deep with a concave profile. It was filled with (324) a firm mid yellow brown silty clay, with moderate amounts of small sized stones and a number of limestone slabs, especially towards the edges of the feature. Both these features truncated the demolition debris (310) from the building, suggesting another phase of construction on the site, predating the street front buildings.

2.7 Terracing

Prior to being built on, the site would have sloped down to the small stream, now confined to a man-made channel, on the opposite side of Olney Road. In order to utilise the area for buildings, this slope was terraced [547] and [224]. The terrace covered the whole of the site, extending both to the north and south, truncating all previous features, including as the ditches. At least part of the area of the terracing was sealed by the limestone raft (Figure 5). This appears to have been done quite quickly after the construction of the terrace, as no buried topsoil or deposits had time to accumulate.

2.7.1 The limestone raft.

A layer of limestone fragments and slabs survived in the southern part of the terraced site (Figure 5). It was compacted, probably deliberately, to create a form of hard standing, which sealed the earlier ditch sequence (Figure 4: Section 1, Photograph 2). The layer was identified largely in the south and continued beyond the eastern and western limits of the footing trenches for the new building. It was at least 9.5m wide east-west and extended to the north for a maximum of 11m. In section, it was generally 0.2m to 0.25m thick, though increasing to 0.5m in the east (Figure 5: Section 1). The limestone slabs and fragments (546)/(223), were set in yellow brown silty clay and comprised at least 50% of the total volume of the deposit. The purpose of the raft is unclear — it was probably used to provide a solid working surface, probably associated with the buildings. It is possible that the external surface (see 2.8.1 below) was a continuation of the raft, although it was much thinner.

It would appear that this raft was associated with an extensive mid yellow brown, slightly sandy silty clay deposit (545), which was up to 0.28m thick and was confined to the southern part of the site.



2.8 Sequential Structural Activity

The footings for the new buildings revealed a series of features representing sequential development of the site. Detailed interpretation is difficult because only parts of the deposits were exposed.

2.8.1 External surface

Intermittent fragments of a compact, well worn limestone surface survived (557), (560) and (606) (Figure 5, Photograph 5). It comprised medium to large limestone fragments set in a brown to yellow brown clay matrix. The deposit was a maximum 80mm thick. Two sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from (557). The surface was truncated by both the drain [607] and the foundations of the substantial early building, which indicates that the external surface belonged to an earlier phase of use. It is possible that it is part of the limestone raft, although it is much thinner. It is possible that the pottery is intrusive due to the degree of truncation by later features.

2.8.2 Stone-lined drain

A well constructed, stone-lined drain [607], orientated north-south, was traceable for at least 3m. It curved to the south-west at its southern end, possibly continuing as drain [569] further to the west (Figure 5, Photograph 5).

The drain was 0.68m wide, 0.13m deep with vertical sides and a flat base (Figure 5: Section 2). Its sides were lined with limestone slabs (608), which supported a partially surviving limestone capping. The capping would have been above the level of the external surface (see above), which the drain must, therefore, post-date. Although the best preserved section of drain is beyond the early street front building (Photograph 6), it may have continued to the west as [569], which appears to define the robbed out remains of the a drain. It lacks evidence for a limestone lining, although it is possible that this section was an open drain (Figure 5: Section 3). Two sherds from an unglazed Lyveden ware vessel were recovered from between stones lining the drain.

The disuse fill of the drain (609) was composed of mid brown clay with occasional amounts of small stones and limestone fragments. No artefacts were recovered from the deposit.



Photograph 5: Looking south along drain [607] with external surface beyond. Scale 1m in 0.5m divisions.



Photograph 6: Curving southern extent of drain [607], truncated by substantial wall footing (559)/[558]. Scale 0.2m in 10cm divisions.

2.9 Early Street Front Building

A series of well constructed limestone footings defined the early form of a roughly rectilinear street front building, at least 12.2m long north-south, by 5.1m wide, continuing to the west under the modern pavement (Figure 5). At least three rooms were defined by internal partition walls; the northern partition had a distinctive curve (Figure 5, Photograph 7, Photograph 9). No dating evidence was recovered from construction trenches or walls. The walls were up to 0.86m wide and survived to a maximum depth of 0.74m (Photograph 8, Figure 5: Section 4). They were faced with horizontally coursed, limestone slabs, with a rubble core in a yellow clay bonding matrix (Photograph 10, Figure 5: Section 5). The nature of the construction contrasts with the later cottages. No associated internal floor levels survived to indicate the function of the building. Its constituent parts are described below.



Photograph 7: Rear wall of building (559)/[558]. With curving partition wall beyond. In the near section the tiled floor of the later cottages seals the robber trench fill of the substantial wall. Scale 1m in 0.5m divisions.

2.9.1 Rear wall

Orientated north-south (559)/[558] and (553)/[552] defined the rear wall. It was traced for at least 12.2m, continuing beyond the southern limit of the site. Its northern extent was less clear due to a combination of later activity and the diverging alignment of the footing for the new building. The wall was substantial — up to 0.86m wide, faced with large horizontally laid limestone slabs and containing a central rubble core (Photograph 8). It became significantly deeper to the south reaching a maximum depth of 0.74m at the edge of the site. The reason for the increase in depth is uncertain. In this area the footing trench truncated the earlier limestone raft (Photograph 8).



Photograph 8: The most substantial section of the rear wall at the southern margin of the site (553)/[552] clearly truncated the limestone raft. Scale 1 m in 0.5m divisions.

2.9.2 Internal partitions

Two internal east-west partition walls subdivided the interior of the building (Figure 5). The northern partition wall (533) was a substantial footing with a distinctive curve to the west (Photograph 9).



Photograph 9: Curving internal wall (533), showing substantial construction of eastern corner. Scale 0.2m in 10cm divisions.

Although composed of large limestone blocks in the east, the main component of (533) was the more typical well-faced wall with rubble core (Photograph 10). This defined a *northern room* at least 4.2m (14 feet) long and a *Central room* c.4.8m (16 feet) north-south. Beyond the southern partition wall (543), at least 1.7m (5 feet 6") of the *southern room* survived within the site.



Photograph 10: Typical construction of early wall (533), an internal partition between the *northern* and *central* rooms. Tiles of the later cottage seal the robbed wall. Compare with later cottage wall in Photograph 17. Scale 0 2m in 10cm divisions.

2.9.3 Possible subdivision of northern room

The insubstantial remains of a wall footing comprising a single course of limestone (574), set on a thin make-up layer of yellow brown silty clay (575) were revealed in the northern face of a footing trench for the new building (Figure 5: Section 6). The footing was 0.75m wide defining a north-south internal partition. Whilst the insubstantial nature contrasts with the other footings associated with the early building. It is difficult to link this wall to either phase of the later cottages.

2.9.4 Pitched limestone footing

Traces of a distinctive footing (549)/[548], comprising a series of large pitched limestone blocks, were revealed in the south-western corner of the site (Figure 5). Only a small area was exposed extending 0.5m north-south by 0.4m east-west and 0.3m deep (Figure 5: Section 7). The upper part of the feature had been systematically robbed (611), prior to establishment of the later cottage floor. A single small sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from (611). The function of this feature is uncertain. Whilst it may relate to this building, it could also be associated with another, otherwise unidentified building.

2.9.5 Summary of early building

These features have being separated from the later cottages, as although the buildings have a similar location and alignment, the walls were built using

different techniques. As the photographs and sections indicate, tile floors of the cottages in places overlay these walls, which had been partially robbed out. No floors associated with these early footings survived to indicate a function for the building. However, the size of the rooms would suggest domestic rather than a storage or agricultural function, such as a barn. No artefacts were recovered from the deposits associated with the footings to date this phase of activity.

2.10 Demolition and Robbing of the Early Building

Generally, there was a suggestion of an episode of robbing, indicated by a thin band of material separating the early walls from deposits associated with the cottages (Photograph 11).



Photograph 11: Section showing rear wall of early street front building, sealed below tiles (562) of cottage. Scale 0.2m in 10cm divisions.

2.11 Raising of Ground

Confined to the south of the site (Figure 6: Section 1) were a series of deposits (213-218) and (556) that varied in colour but were mostly yellow brown clay silts with variable amounts of limestone fragments. The combined thickness of the deposits increased to a maximum 0.35m in the south. Post-medieval to modern brick and tile was present in several deposits; post-medieval pottery was recovered from (556) and a fragment of bottle glass from (216). The nature and extent of these deposits suggest that they represent a distinct episode of ground raising, subsequent to the creation of the limestone raft (see 2.7.1 above). This activity was also associated with the importation of a garden soil to the rear of the cottages (see 2.13.1 below).

2.12 Cottages

Elements of three separate dwellings were identified within the site. All were on the same alignment, creating a continuous frontage, parallel with Olney Road to the west. These dwellings were built pre-1882 as they appear on the first edition Ordnance Survey Map (Figure 2, Figure 6). The 1900 map shows a gap where the northern two buildings were, indicating that they were demolished several years before the *southern cottage*. The *southern cottage* (2) was the



largest of the three dwellings. The other two cottages were of a slightly different form. The *middle cottage* (1A) was the smallest, eventually being amalgamated with the larger *northern cottage* (1).

The investigation revealed a sequence of modification within the *northern* and *middle cottages*. Initially, the components of each separate cottage are described, followed by the later modifications. Survival was intermittent due to the insubstantial nature of deposits such as the walls (Photographs 12 and 17), and the variable impact of the demolition process. The cottages occasionally utilised the footing of the early street front building, but the construction of the walls was very different.

2.12.1 The northern cottage (1): early form

The footings of the *northern cottage* (1 on Figure 6) were rectangular in plan, 7.75m long north-south, and 5.7m wide east-west (measurements based on external wall to external wall). These overall dimensions are derived from the 1882 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 2), correlated with the results of the investigation. The northern or gable end wall (118), the eastern or back wall (108) and its robber trench continuation (508)/ [507] were identified. The southern end of the cottage, an east-west partition wall, was defined by robber trench [563], which correlated with the location of a wall shown on the 1882 Ordnance Survey map. At this stage, at least the northern part of the cottage comprised an uninterrupted tiled floor (Figure 6). Only 1m of the 0.5m wide northern wall was seen in Trench 1. The back wall survived intermittently in Trench 1 (Photograph 12); it was a maximum 0.6m wide, comprising horizontally laid limestone of varying size, generally two stones wide. This contrasted with the earlier building footings. The walls survived to a maximum depth of 0.12m.

Early floors of northern cottage (1)

Above an intermittent make up layer (116)/(505) and (524), which ranged from mid to yellow brown silty clay and off white mortar, was a terracotta tiled floor. The tiles forming the early floor (105), (503) and (523) were a mixture of rectangular tiles 210mm by 105mm and 40mm thick ($8\frac{1}{4}''$ by $4\frac{1}{4}''$ by $1\frac{5}{8}''$) and square tiles c.105mm ($4\frac{1}{4}''$) across, made from crudely cut down rectangular tiles. The tiles were bonded with a thin skim of white mortar, set in east-west oriented rows and were undisturbed by the later internal partition wall (514). At least one east-west band of limestone slabs (504) was associated with this surface. Plans indicate that the tiles would have covered the whole of the ground floor of the dwelling. The flooring sealed and slightly slumped into an underlying internal drain [112] (Photograph 13). The tiles had been laid, forming a 'border', with the long axis of the tiles parallel to the wall, particularly in the section exposed in the Trench 1 (see Photographs 13 and 14) to provide easy access to the drain. The tiles had soft, white deposits on the upper surface, which appears to be calcium carbonate – indicative of rising damp.



Photograph 12: Traces of rear wall of *Northern cottage* with investigation exposing elements of the two tiled floors. Scales 1m and 2m in 0.5m divisions.



Photograph 13: Lower tiled floor in *Northern cottage*, showing a change in orientation of tiles in vicinity of drain, the location of which is indicated by the slumping tiles, at top of image. Scale 1m in 0.5m divisions.

Internal stone-capped drain in northern cottage (1)

A stone-capped drain was identified under the early floor of *northern cottage (1)*. It was located in the north-eastern part of the building, parallel with the back wall, of the cottages. The drain cut [112] / [518] was small, 0.17m wide, 90mm deep with a "V"-shaped profile (Figure 6: Section 2), which drained



down to the north. The capping consisted of limestone slabs (113)/(519). Sealing the capping stones was an intermittent levelling layer (115) 70mm thick, composed of brown silty clay on to which the tiles (105) were laid. The disuse fill of the drain (114)/(520) was composed of brown silty clay, probably derived from gradual silting.

Activity adjacent to the northern cottage

North-south path/yard

Situated in the northern part of the area to the east of *northern cottage (1)* was cobbled surface (599) and (109) (Figure 6). The surface, probably an external yard, was seen in the footings for the new houses and Trench 1. It comprised limestone fragments set in yellow brown silty clay. It was heavily disturbed both to the north and south, and was visible for at least 1.2m north-south.

Ditch

The surface was bisected by a shallow ditch [110], aligned parallel with and 0.7m east of the rear wall. In section the ditch was 0.32m wide and 0.1m deep with an asymmetric profile (Figure 6: Section 3). The grey brown silty clay fill (111) contained a mixture of domestic debris including pottery, roof tile, animal bone and window glass. This feature is thought to be short-lived, defining a narrow path to the rear of the cottages, from the area beyond. No attempt was made to recut the shallow ditch.

East-west paths

Located to the north and contemporary with the surface were limestone slab surfaces (600) and (119). The limestone slabs were probably more substantial pathways associated with the yard. The passageway path (119) was situated to the north of the *northern cottage*. This path is shown on the 1882 map (Figure 2) continuing to the rear wall as well as turning south to bisect the area. Further to the south, a second path (600) was traced for 2.25m and abutted the eastern wall of the *northern cottage*. The continuation was disturbed by activity associated with the Highways depot.

It is possible that the large undated pit [595], discussed in Section 2.4.4, was associated with this phase of activity. However, the lack of dating material and distinctive form of the pit suggests it pre-dates the cottages.

2.12.2 Middle cottage (1A)

The footings of this cottage (*1A* on Figure 6) were rectangular in plan, 4.5m north-south and 6m east-west, corresponding to the dimensions on the 1882 Ordnance Survey map. This area had been greatly affected by modern intrusions, particularly a sewer pipe (Figure 6). The location of the northern, east-west partition wall was indicated by a robber trench [563], whilst tiles defined the approximate location of the back wall. It is likely that at least part of the footing for the earlier street front building provided the base for the back wall. Tiling survived towards the eastern margin of the cottage (562), sealing the majority of the earlier wall (Photograph 7 and Figure 6: Section 4) and towards the street frontage (538). Limestone rubble above the curving partition wall of the earlier building may have defined the remains of the southern wall, being slight offset to the south of the earlier wall.



Photograph 14: Lower tiled floor of *Northern cottage* and the underlying limestone capped drain. Scale 1m in 0.5m divisions.

Only one surface was identified, compared to the two sequential surfaces in the *northern cottage* (1). As this sealed the robber trench for the internal partition wall, it would indicate that this surface relates to the amalgamation of the two cottages. Only one set of tiles were seen in the south-western corner of the cottage, possibly indicating that originally this small cottage lacked tiled floors, though as already noted, this area was very disturbed.

Activity adjacent to the middle cottage

Evidence of sequential activity, associated with the cottage was identified adjacent to the back wall.

Pitting

Initially a small pit of uncertain function [582] was dug (Figure 6). It was sub-circular in plan at least 0.52m across and 0.17m deep (Figure 6: Section 5) and filled with light grey brown silty clay (583), containing occasional limestone fragments. There was no evidence of an external surface associated with this cottage, though evidence of this may have been removed by the subsequent use of the area.

Brick outbuilding.

Located at the south-eastern corner of the *middle cottage* (1A) was a small brick built extension, indicating a later addition.

The southern wall (612)/[576] and part of the eastern wall (579)/[578] were revealed (Figure 6, Photograph 15), though a modern sewer trench destroyed the northern part of the building. This indicates that the building was 2.2m wide and at least 2m long — the 1882 Ordnance Survey map (Figure 2) indicates a length of 2.5m north-south by 2.25m wide (measurements taken to the external sides of the walls). The walls were 0.24m thick, composed of unfrogged bricks, bonded by white mortar arranged in a mixture of head and stretcher bond. The bricks measured 210mm by 120mm by 70mm ($8\frac{1}{4}''$ by $4\frac{3}{4}''$), which are very similar to the bricks used for the outbuilding in the south-east corner of the site.

The southern wall of the outbuilding was slightly off-set from the southern wall



Photograph 15: looking along rear wall of outbuilding with limestone flag floor to the right. Scales 1m in 0.5m divisions.

of the cottage (1A), with no obvious attempt to key the extension into the existing structure, the wall of which is assumed to be south of the curving early wall. The outbuilding utilised the rear wall of the cottage. The interior had a limestone flagged floor (580), with individual flags up to 0.76m long. There was evidence of cracking and slumping of flags, particularly in the south-eastern corner (see pitting [582] above). This was due to settling of underlying pit fill.

2.12.3 Amalgamation of the northern and middle cottages (1) and (1A)

The two cottages were amalgamated into one larger structure, just over 12m long north-south. This was achieved by demolishing the east-west partition wall that divided the two properties. All that remained of that wall was the robber trench [563], which was dug in order to extract all the stone from the wall (Figure 6). It is possible that the stone from this wall was used to rearrange the layout of the larger space, with the creation of a new north-south internal partition wall (102)/(514), the shallow footings of which were not associated with the early floor level. These walls cannot have been load-bearing. The robbed out trench was then backfilled (564), (565) and (566) with brown silty clay to fill the trench up to the new tiled floor level (Figure 6: Section 4). The "robbed out" partition wall trench, as identified in the modern footing trenches, correlates with the location shown on the 1882 Ordnance Survey map.

Later flooring

The extended structure, comprising the *northern* and *middle cottage* 1/1A was re-floored, after the level was raised. The best preserved area of tiling was in the northern part of the building. Above the original tiled surface was a levelling or bedding layer (502) and (104), 70mm to 120mm thick, composed of yellow brown silty clay, with patches of mortar and pea gravel. In the front room towards the street, a thin deposit of off-white mortar (515) was laid. Intermittent deposits of a similar nature were identified immediately below the tiles (521) and (522). The new tiles and the internal north-south oriented partition wall (514) were set onto this deposit. The new surface was a mixture of square and rectangular terracotta tiles, laid in staggered east-west rows (Photograph 16). The square tiles were 160mm across ($6\frac{1}{2}$ ") and 38mm thick; the rectangular tiles were 210mm by 105mm ($8\frac{1}{4}$ " by $4\frac{1}{4}$ " by $1\frac{5}{8}$ ") and were also used on the lower floor. Most of the surviving tiles in surfaces (501) and (103) were the rectangular type seen also on the earlier floors. However, in what became the front room of the cottage, west of the inserted partition wall, were the disturbed remains of a mixture of tiles which were comprised of predominantly larger square tiles (527), (517) and (101).

A doorway appears to have been knocked through the back of the building, at the eastern limit of where the old wall [563] divided the two properties. The doorway is defined in section only by the later retiled floor surface (562) continuing across the projected line of the cottage wall, above the robbed out earlier wall (Figure 6, Photograph 11), further north the tiles respect the wall having been laid up to its interior face.



Photograph 16: Upper tiled floor with back room (103) to left, internal partition wall (102) and traces of front room (101), in bottom right. Roughly central to image is later pipe trench, running to a grid. Scales 1m in 0.5m divisions.

Internal partition

The internal north-south partition wall (102)/(514)/[513], which was a later addition to the cottage, related to the revised floor plan during the amalgamation of the two buildings. It was traced for 4m in Trench 1 and was present in the footing trench for the new building. It was 0.46m wide, composed of limestone slabs, up to two stones wide, bonded with traces of yellow brown clay. The wall footing was one course (0.12m) thick. As with the other cottage walls, it did not have a rubble core.

2.12.4 Southern cottage (2)

This cottage lay partially beyond the site limits. Its footings were sub-square in plan, 8.3m long north-south, and 8m wide east-west (measurements based on external wall to external wall). These overall dimensions are derived from the 1882 Ordnance Survey map, and correlate with the segment of wall identified within the trial trench (219) (Figure 6). Generally the wall was approximately 0.3m thick, composed of two rows of limestone slabs. The footings were insubstantial and lacked a rubble core. The wall thickens at the southern margin of Trench 2, reaching a thickness of c.0.5m, with large limestone slabs on the angular internal face (Figure 6, Photograph 17). This probably defined the threshold for an external door. An east-west wall (543)/[542] was identified in the vicinity, but the contrasting form and stratigraphic position suggests that it belongs to an earlier building, rather than earlier, subdivided form of this cottage.



Photograph 17: Back wall of the *southern cottage* with evidence for threshold nearest camera, indicated by thickening of wall. Scale 1m in 0.5m divisions.



Flooring within the southern cottage

The floors of the building were tiled using similar tiles to those in the cottages to the north. However, unlike the floors in the *northern cottage* there was no evidence for sequential floor replacement, though there was evidence of localised repair. There were three different arrangements of tiles, identified by orientation and type, with small areas of repairs done in limestone flags. In the southern part of the cottage the tiles (544) were a rectangular shape, oriented east-west. To the north-west was a disturbed floor composed of square tiles (538), along with a localised area of limestone flags (541). The tiles (220) in the north-east were of the same rectangular type as those in the south, though these tiles were oriented north-south. It is possible that the contrasting tile types and orientations could indicate the original locations of rooms within the cottage, although no associated partition walls were identified.

Outbuilding

The 1882 Ordnance Survey map indicates the presence of an outbuilding extending the full 8.3m length of the cottage (Figures 2 and 6). It was c.2.5m wide, slightly wider than the outbuilding for the *middle cottage*. The location of the north-south rear wall of this building generally coincides with the location of a modern sewer trench (Figure 6). However Trench 2 recorded a feature [206] partly truncated by and immediately north of the sewer trench (Figure 6: Section 1). The linear feature was at least 1.7m long north-south by at least 0.7m wide and 0.4m deep, with a steep eastern edge, becoming convex to the surface. Its flat base lay at the same depth as the later service trench. It was predominantly filled with dark greyish brown silty clay, with brick rubble and limestone fragments, concentrated particularly in the upper part of the fill. It also contained frequent charcoal.

This feature is interpreted as the robber trench for the rear wall of the outbuilding. The systematic robbing of the footing may suggest that this took place when the cottage was still standing. The softer fill of the infilled trench may subsequently have been used for the insertion of the sewer pipe.

External surfaces adjacent to the southern cottage

Only the *southern cottage* had a thin, undulating tarmac surface, perhaps indicating that it stood for longer than the other cottages.

A sequential series of external surfaces lay adjacent to the eastern wall of the *southern cottage*. To the north of the area was a layer of cobbles (555) traceable for 2m (Figure 6: Section 6). They consisted of limestone fragments, set in a bed of yellow brown silty clay. This surface is similar to the cobbled surface associated with cottages (1) and (1A) to the north.

Located further to the south was a surface formed from limestone slabs (212) seen only in the sections of Trench 2. It is possible that this defined a pathway, similar to that associated with the *northern cottage*. This east-west path would have extended from the centrally located rear door of the cottage, with associated yard surface (555). Located directly above the limestone slabs was an uneven and thin layer of tarmac (211), 30mm to 70mm thick and extending at least 1.45m east-west (Figure 6: Section 1). This was not identified elsewhere, suggesting that it was a crude resurfacing confined to the path. The



nature of the path, particularly its later tarmac surface, suggests that it post-dates the outbuilding.

2.13 Area to the Rear of the Cottages

Excavation of the footings for the new garage on the eastern side of the site revealed a distinctive sequence of activity. By combining this evidence with historical maps and traces of features visible both on the ground and as scars in the rear terrace wall, an understanding of the utilisation of this area can be obtained.

Apart from the terracing, which creates a height difference of approximately 1.8m with the higher ground to the east of the site's retaining wall, the identified activity associated with this area is post-medieval, relating to the cottages. The garage footing trenches exposed fractured limestone bedrock in the east, with a series of superficial deposits beyond. It would appear that the rear of the site was subdivided, possibly relating to individual street frontage occupation, as a distinctive contrast can be observed between the *southern cottage* and the area to the north, although no evidence for physical boundaries in this area was detected.

2.13.1 Creation of the garden soil

Located directly above the terracing was a layer of imported topsoil (221)/(301)/(415)/(421). The mid to dark grey brown silty clay was up to 0.28m thick. It is possible that the grey brown ashy deposit (594) up to 0.42m thick, situated east of the junction between the *middle* and *southern cottages* was a continuation of this deposit. This material was truncated by pits associated with the cottages. To the south-west in Trench 2, the make-up deposits (see Section 2.11 above) stopped abruptly and garden soil was dumped (Figure 6: Section 1), indicating planned activity associated with construction of the cottages. In this area the soil could be differentiated into a lighter coloured subsoil component (222)/(302), up to 0.3m thick below the topsoil (221). The form of these deposits indicated that they could not have developed naturally. Fragments of ceramic land drain and modern pottery were recovered from (221).

To the north, the homogeneous nature of the soil would suggest that it had been cultivated. Its separation into two components further south suggests less disturbance had allowed soil formation processes to create the differentiation.

2.13.2 Pitting in Southern Area

Evidence of pitting was confined to the southern part of the site, corresponding roughly to the northern limit of the *southern cottage* with which it is assumed to be associated (Figure 6). Two apparent clusters could be discerned: a cluster of four was identified in the south-west corner of the new garage footing, with occasional examples further south towards the street frontage. All were within the curtilage of the *southern cottage*.

South-western pit cluster

Earliest pit.

The earliest pit [410] was cut into the topsoil. It was truncated by the wall of the *southern outbuilding* to the east and by the later pits to the west (Figure 6: Section 7). The pit survived up to 1.4m long and 0.18m deep. Its fill (411)



comprised mid brown silty clay, which contained frequent limestone fragments.

This is the only pit which definitely pre-dated the *southern outbuilding* (see 2.13.3 below). It is possible that the later pits, situated further to the west, were contemporary with the outbuilding.

Intermediate pit

Sub-circular pit [407] was at least 4.58m long by 4m wide and 0.42m deep, with two contrasting fills. The lower rubbly fill (408) contained frequent limestone fragments in a mixed yellow brown clay silt matrix (Figure 6: Section 7). This material was dumped soon after the pit was dug, as there was no evidence of erosion and silting in the base of the cut. It probably derived from demolition of a wall or building. This was sealed by a very dark brown/black silty clay.

Later pits

The larger of the two pits [417] was at least 2.3m long, 0.65m wide and 0.59m deep, with concave sides and a flat base. Its lower fill (418) was composed of mid brown silty clay 0.38m thick, with occasional limestone fragments concentrated towards the base of the feature. Its upper fill (419) was black silty clay 0.18m thick, which contained occasional small limestone fragments. This fill may be at least partially derived from material eroded from the upper fill of pit [407].

The smaller pit [422] was oval in plan, 0.9m long, 0.68m wide and 0.38m deep with a concave profile. Its sole fill (423) was loose, black, sandy silt. It was very ashy in nature and contained frequent fragments of coal, as well as pottery and part of a clay tobacco pipe stem.

Western pit cluster

Rubbish pit

Identified in the trial trench, rubbish pit [209] was 1.5m east-west, by at least 0.45m wide and 0.5m deep, continuing to the south. In section, the pit had concave sides and a flat base. It contained two mixed, contrasting fills (Figure 6: Section 1). The lower fill (208) was a mixture of grey, yellow and red brown silty clay, containing fragments of modern window glass. Above this was a reddish brown deposit (207) containing rakings from a fire and modern window glass.

Pit [303]

Identified in the evaluation, though not seen further west, this feature appears to be a pit of elongated form, 0.8m across and 0.49m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base. The mixed yellow brown sandy clay fill contained frequent limestone inclusions.

Pit [589]

The sub-circular pit was 1.33m across and 0.68m deep, with vertical sides and a stepped base. Its two fills ranged in colour from mid to dark grey brown for the lower fill (590) to lighter grey brown for the upper fill (591). The pit contained brick fragments and rakings from a fire.

Rubbish pit [616]

This well defined sub-circular feature was situated in the south-east corner of



the house footing. It was at least 1.5m across and 0.47m deep, with vertical sides and a flat base. The mixed ashy grey to mid brown silty clay fill contained rakings from a coal fire.

The pits are the latest features on site which were related to the cottages, prior to their demolition. They were probably used to dispose of bulk household waste such as ash and other fuel debris. The pits appear to have been restricted to the southern part of the area of investigation. This may indicate a division in land use or possibly a contrast in its use between cottages (1)/(1A) and cottage (2). The largely undisturbed imported topsoil in the northern part of the area of investigation suggests that this land was always used as a garden, prior to the demolition of the cottages.

2.13.3 Southern outbuilding

Located beyond the cottages, against the eastern boundary of the site was an outbuilding. Traces of other open outbuildings were identified, though these were probably later additions, associated with the Highways depot.

The brick building was approximately 14m (c.46') long north-south and extending some 3.6m (12') from the eastern boundary wall. The available archaeological evidence for this building consists of two segments of the western wall footing and associated surfaces, identified in the footings for the new garage. The construction trench for the western wall [401]/[426] was 0.32m to 0.38m wide and up to 0.35m deep (Figure 6: Section 7). The wall footing consisted of three courses of unfrosted bricks still *in situ* (402)/(427), bonded with degraded white mortar. The bricks measured 210mm by 120mm by 70mm ($8\frac{1}{4}"$ by $4\frac{3}{4}"$), very similar to the bricks used for the outbuilding to the rear of the *middle cottage*. The rest of the construction trench was backfilled with mid brown sandy silty clay (403)/(428), which contained occasional small mortar fragments, brick and coal flecks. The doorway into the outbuilding was not identified.

Whilst the outbuilding is shown on the 1882 Ordnance Survey map, the fact that it is built of brick, and keyed into the limestone rear/terrace wall of the site suggests that it was a later addition. The 1882 map also indicates that the outbuilding was subdivided into two main components, with a third further to the west. The location of the divisions would suggest that the northern component of the outbuilding was associated with the *middle cottage* (1A), whilst the other two components were within the curtilage of the *southern cottage*. The maps also indicate that these buildings were demolished after 1900.

External and internal surfaces

Two surfaces were identified in association with the outbuilding. An internal floor surface (413) could be traced across the whole of the eastern part of the new garage footing. It was composed of a yellow brown sandy mortar 70mm thick, with occasional small stones. The deposit covered an area of at least 5.7m north-south by 2.9m east-west.

The external surface (412) was composed of 70% limestone fragments and cobbles within mid brown silty clay 70mm thick. It was identified within the



southern garage footing, extending 1.25m east-west and at least 0.65m north-south. It may represent a pathway giving access to the outbuilding.

Demolition of the western wall of the outbuilding

The historical map evidence suggests that the outbuilding was probably demolished before 1900. The walls were systematically reduced to ground level. The robber trench [404]/[424] was the exact same width as the construction cut; it was filled with mid grey brown sandy silty clay (405)/(425), containing fragments of mortar and brick inclusions. The rubble from the demolition of the outbuilding appears to have been cleared away from the site.

Possible wall [429]

A very short section of a possible wall [429] was exposed in the north-eastern corner of the new garage footings. No continuations of this feature were seen elsewhere. The construction cut was at least 0.22m wide and 0.34m deep. The wall or foundation material (430) comprised large limestone fragments in a mid brown silty clay. It was cut into the imported topsoil (421) and cannot, therefore, be part of the footing for the eastern terrace wall.

2.14 Modern Disturbance

Demolition of the cottages in the 1950s and subsequent conversion of the site to a Highways depot resulted in limited subsurface disturbance to the site (grey features on Figure 6). This activity will be briefly summarised.

2.14.1 Creation of the Highways depot

The northern part of the site was sealed by a layer of demolition debris from the cottages (100), (210), (300), (400), (414) (500), (530), (554), (561) and (603). It comprised yellow brown silty clay with ceramic building material and limestone fragments. The location of the demolition debris in the northern half of the site suggests that it may all have derived from one building, probably the *southern cottage*, with the material being spread northwards.

In the vicinity of the northern outbuildings, extended for use within the depot, a machine truncation horizon was identified [604]. On this horizon a consolidation layer (603) comprising large stones, was laid. This was subsequently tarmaced (117), (200) and (516). In places this tarmac directly sealed archaeological deposits. A low wall, topped by iron railings, defined the western street frontage of the depot. The construction trench for this wall [539] damaged the street frontage buildings. A variety of artefacts were recovered from these deposits, including pottery which ranged in date from the late medieval to modern periods.

2.14.2 Superficial general disturbance

Across the whole of the site were localised patches of disturbance associated with either the construction or usage of the Highways depot. These small patches of disturbance appear to have been concentrated in the northern and western parts of the site, possibly indicating areas of heavy traffic.

2.14.3 Service trenches

A series of service trenches cut across the site. These included two north-south drains — [204]/[531] and, further west, [106]/[509] — east-west sewer



[320]/[584]/[601] and a water pipe trench [317].



3. CONCLUSION

The mitigation work revealed a complex sequence of development and change in the core of a historic north Buckinghamshire village. These changes resulted in considerable truncation, although, perhaps surprisingly, tantalising glimpses of the earlier stages of development did survive.

Initially the site was in a peripheral location, with a series of boundary ditches defining a focus of activity on the higher ground to the east. Subsequently, a sequence of buildings were constructed on the site. This change may have been due to the growth in the significance of the adjacent road, as well as terracing of the formerly steep slope, which provided an expanse of flat land.

Unfortunately, it is not possible to determine when this terracing occurred.

Whilst it may appear that it was connected with the present row of cottages, the available information suggest that it occurred earlier, possibly when the building with pitched limestone footings was constructed.

The terracing would appear to have been done for two reasons. Initially, it provided building stone — bedded limestone is exposed in the terrace face to the rear to the tannery workshop, situated a short distance to the south of the site. This location would have provided a convenient source of stone, with easy access to the adjacent road. The by-product of the quarrying was the creation of a terrace, adjacent to a road of presumably growing significance. The later buildings indicate the importance of the street frontage, with two sequential phases of construction.

The structural history of the site is poorly dated; only the cottages produced securely associated artefactual remains. None of the early buildings had associated floors or occupation horizons, whilst the limited sample of the site, provided by the three trenches and the new footings did not reveal any artefact-rich features associated with the early buildings.



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- Milton Keynes Borough Council 2003 13-21 Olney Road Lavendon Brief for
Archaeological Evaluation
- Mynard, DC., 1992, 'The Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery' in DC Mynard
and RJ Zeepvat, *Excavations at Great Linford, 1974-80*, Bucks. Arch.
Soc. Monograph Series No.3.



5. APPENDIX 1: ARTEFACT SUMMARY

5.1 Introduction

The investigations produced a finds assemblage comprising pottery, ceramic building material and fragments of clay tobacco pipe, vessel and window glass. The material was scanned to ascertain its nature, condition and, where possible, date range (Table 1).

Feature	Type	Context	Spot date*	Pottery	Other finds
110	Ditch	111	Modern	2:10	Animal bone (3g), ceramic roof tile (19g), window glass (1g)
210	Dump material	210	Post-medieval	1:17	
216	Make-up layer	216	Modern		Vessel glass (24g)
221	Imported topsoil	221	Modern	5:44	Land drain (107g)
414	Demolition debris	414	Modern	9:144	
422	Rubbish pit	423	Post-medieval	5:204	Clay pipe stem (4g)
500	Demolition debris	500	Modern	5:31	
501	Internal surface (cottage 1/1A)	501	Modern		Ceramic floor tile (1834g)
503	Internal surface (cottage 1)	503	Modern		Ceramic floor tile x 2 (3584g)
556	Make-up layer	556	Post-medieval	3:56	
557	External surface	557	Post-medieval	2:43	
561	Demolition debris	561	Modern	1:9	
592	Trial trench 3	593	Post-medieval		Pantile (40g)
608	Drain lining	608	Medieval	2:14	
611	Robbed wall	611	Post-medieval	1:29	

* - spot date based on date of latest artefact in context
pottery sherd count : weight in g

Table 1: Finds summary by feature type

5.2 Pottery

Thirty-six pottery sherds (601g) of predominantly post-medieval and modern date were recovered. These were examined by context and quantified using minimum sherd count and weight. Sherds are small (average weight 16g), although not particularly abraded. Twelve fabric types were identified using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, currently maintained by Albion Archaeology on behalf of Bedfordshire County Council. Where possible, fabrics have been correlated with the medieval/post-medieval pottery type series for Milton Keynes (Mynard 1992). Fabrics are listed below (Table 2) in chronological order.

The earliest pottery recovered comprises two unglazed sherds (14g) from a 13th century Lyveden ware vessel, a regional import from Northamptonshire, recovered from between limestone slabs (608) lining drain [607]. Deposit (210) yielded a sherd of locally manufactured late medieval / early post-medieval oxidised ware (17g).

Pottery of 17th-18th century date includes lead and iron glazed earthenwares, slipped wares of both local and more distant origin (Staffordshire), and single sherds of salt-glazed stoneware and Blackware.

Seventeen sherds datable to the 18th-20th centuries derive mainly from demolition debris (414) and comprise mocha ware, English stoneware, and transfer-printed ware. Forms are mainly plates, saucers and cups.



Fabric type	Common name	Sherd No.	Context/sherd no.
<i>Medieval</i>			
Type B09 (MSC4)	Lyveden ware	2	(608):2
Type E03	Late medieval oxidised	1	(210):1
<i>Post-medieval</i>			
Type P01 (PM8)	Fine glazed red earthenware	6	(221):1, (556):3, (557):2
Type P03 (PM16)	Black-glazed earthenware	4	(500):4
Type P07	Coarse slip-decorated earthenware	2	(423):2
Type P14	Blackware	1	(611):1
Type P30 (PM2)	Staffordshire slipware	2	(423):2
Type P36A (PM28)	Brown salt-glazed stoneware	1	(221):1
<i>Modern</i>			
Type P39	Mocha ware	1	(414):1
Type P45	Transfer-printed ware	7	(221):1, (414):5, (500):1
Type P48	English stoneware	1	(423):1
MOD	Miscellaneous modern	8	(111):2, (221):2, (414):3, (561):1

Table 2: Pottery Type Series

5.3 Ceramic Building Material

Three complete square ceramic floor tiles and a single rectangular example were collected from internal surfaces (501) and (503), associated with the *northern* and *middle cottages 1/1A* (see Sections 2.12.1 and 2.12.3). Two post-medieval flat roof tile fragments (19g) and a section of pantile (40g) derived respectively from ditch [110] and the backfill of trial trench 3 [592]. Topsoil deposit (221) yielded a piece of modern land drain (107g).

5.4 Other Finds

The fill of rubbish pit [422] contained two sections of post-medieval clay tobacco pipe stem. Two fragments of a modern glass bottle and an abraded piece of modern window glass were recovered from make-up layer (216) and ditch [110]. The latter also yielded a miscellaneous animal long bone fragment (3g).



FIGURES

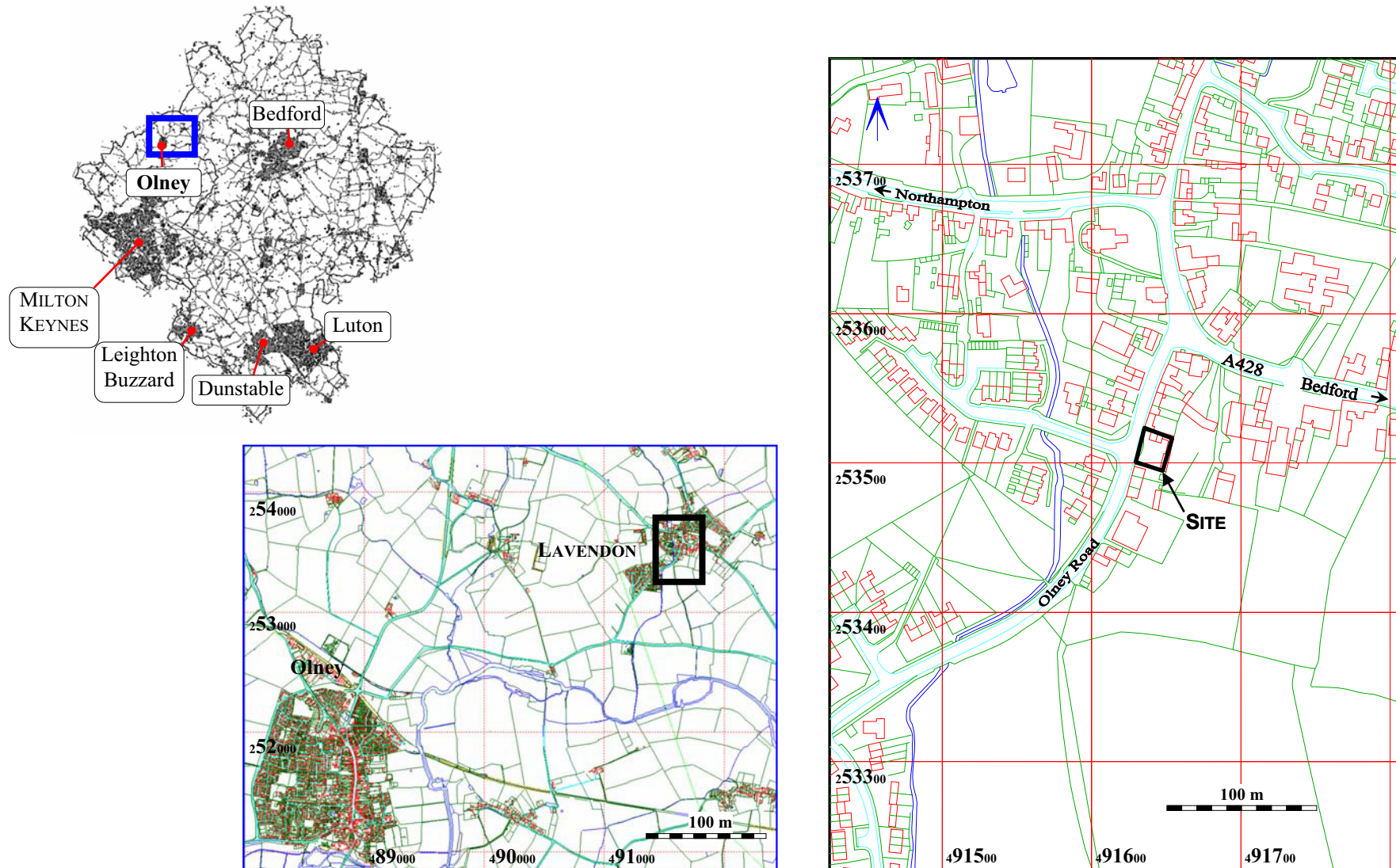


Figure 1: Site location map

Base map reproduced from the Ordnance Survey Map with the permission of the Controller of Her Majesty's Stationery Office, by Bedfordshire County Council, County Hall, Bedford. OS Licence No. 076465(LA). © Crown Copyright.



Figure 2: Detail of site from 1882 Ordnance Survey Map



The complete row of cottages looking towards the center of the village. The taller gable to the center of the image defines the northern limit of current site. Reproduced with kind permission of the Centre for Buckinghamshire Studies (Image Lav 033)



General view of remaining cottages immediately prior to site clearance in 2004. The gable end of the building at the left side of the image corresponds to the taller gable in the upper image.

Figure 3: Photographic comparison of old and recent views of the street frontage



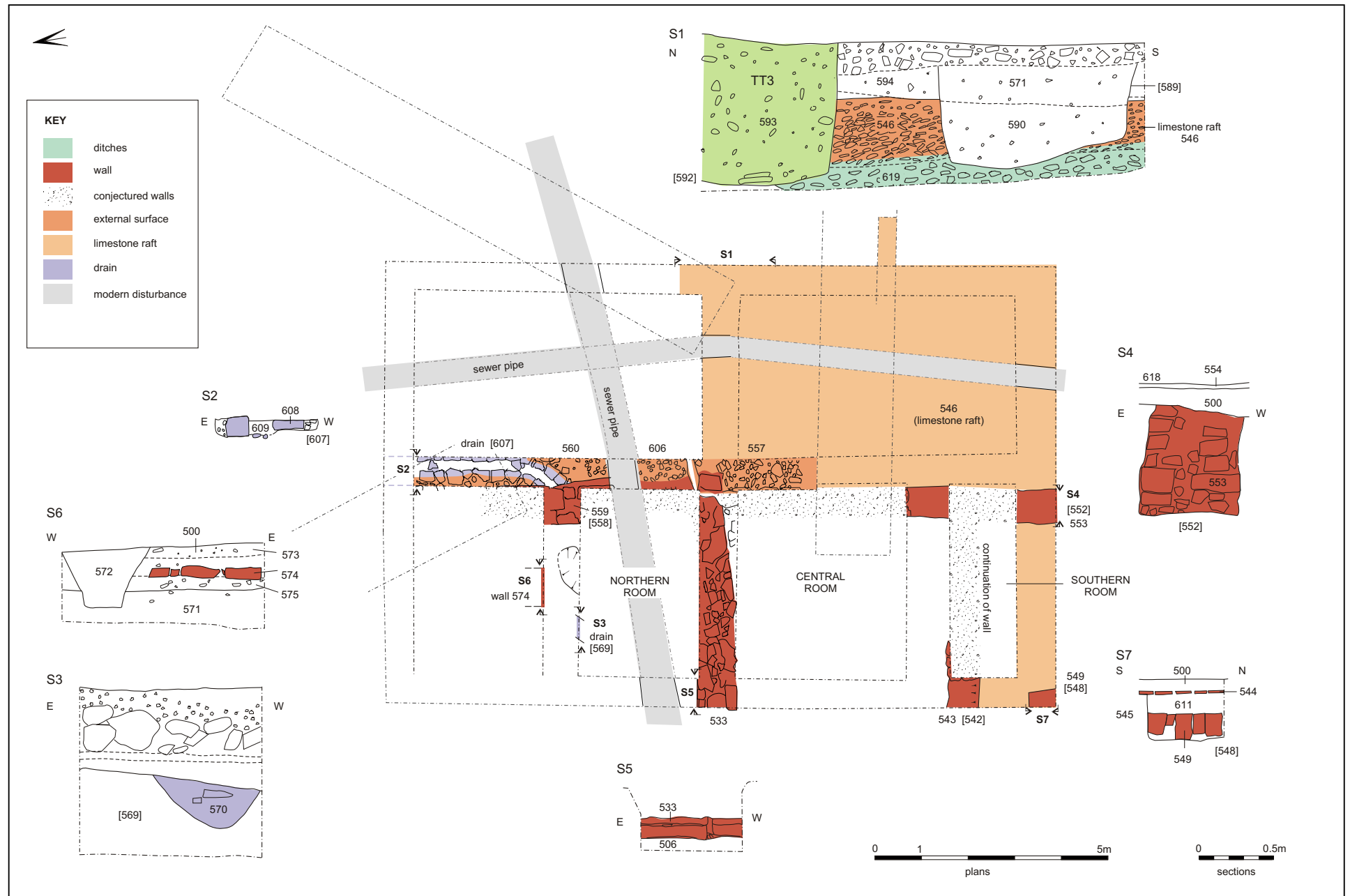


Figure 5: Sequential activity and early street front building

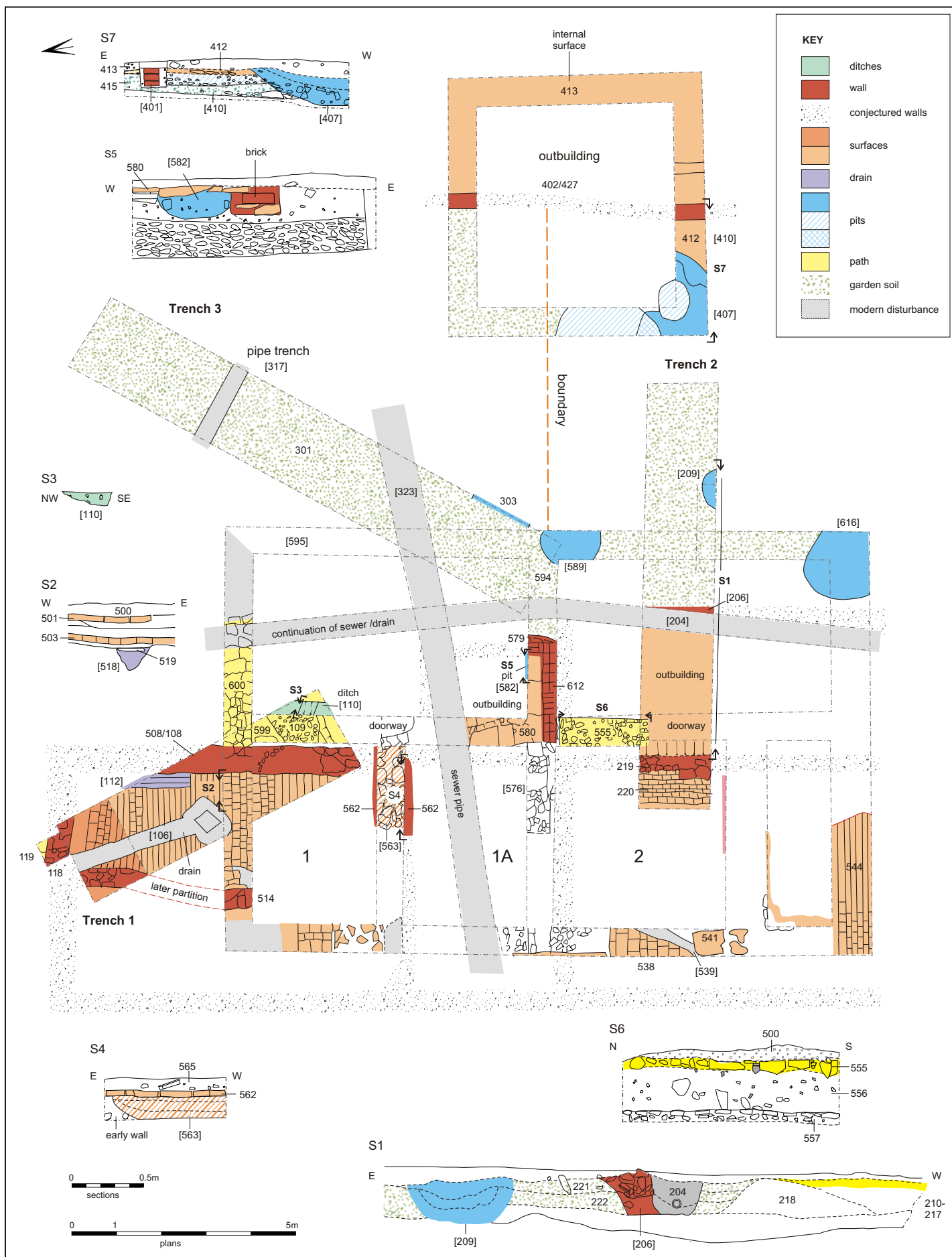


Figure 6: Cottages and associated activity