



Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological trial trench evaluation at
Harrow Inn, Woodside Road, Luton, Bedfordshire
August 2012



Northamptonshire Archaeology

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		OASIS NO. 133149	
Project title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Harrow Inn, Woodside Road, Luton, Bedfordshire		
Short description	A archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology ahead of extensions to Harrow Inn, Woodside Road, Luton, Bedfordshire. The evaluation consisted of a T-shaped trench in the car park. A probable brick-lined well was uncovered, no other archaeological deposits or finds were identified.		
Project type	Trial trench evaluation		
Site Status	None		
Previous work	None		
Current land use	Car park		
Future work	Unknown		
Monument type and period	–		
Significant finds	None		
PROJECT LOCATION			
County	Bedfordshire		
Site address	Harrow Inn, 80 Woodside Road, Lower Woodside, Luton		
Post code	LU1 4DQ		
OS co-ordinates	TL 0725 1857		
Area (sq m/ha)	125 m ²		
Height aOD	c 158m		
PROJECT CREATORS			
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology		
Project brief originator	Martin Oake, County Archaeologist Central Bedfordshire Council		
Project Design originator	Michael Dawson CgMs Consulting		
Director/Supervisor	Christopher Jones (NA)		
Project Manager	Steve Parry NA, Michael Dawson CgMs Consulting		
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting		
PROJECT DATE			
Start date	20/8/2012		
End date	20/8/2012		
ARCHIVES	Location (Accession no.)	Contents	
Physical	NA store LUTNM:2012/36	Site records (1 small archive box) Client report PDF	
Paper			
Digital			
BIBLIOGRAPHY			
Client report (NA report)			
Title	Archaeological trial trench evaluation at Harrow Inn, Woodside Road, Luton, Bedfordshire, August 2012		
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Contents

1	INTRODUCTION
2	BACKGROUND
2.1	Topography and geology
2.2	Historical and archaeological background
3	OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY
3.1	Objectives
3.2	Methodology
4	THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE
5	DISCUSSION
	BIBLIOGRAPHY
	APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Figures

Front cover: Harrow Inn, trial trench machining in progress, looking north-east

Fig 1: Site location

Fig 2: Trench location

Fig 3: Excavated trenches and section

Fig 4: Trench 1 with possible brick-lined well in foreground, looking south-east

Fig 5: Trench 1, section showing brick rubble, looking south-east

Fig 6: Trench 2 and slope down to Woodside Road, looking north-east

Fig 7: Backfilled trenches, looking east

Back cover: Harrow Inn, trenches backfilled, looking east

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL TRIAL TRENCH EVALUATION AT
HARROW INN, WOODSIDE ROAD, LUTON
BEDFORDSHIRE
AUGUST 2012**

Abstract

A archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology ahead of extensions to Harrow Inn, Woodside Road, Luton, Bedfordshire. The evaluation consisted of a T-shaped trench in the car park. No archaeological deposits or finds were identified.

1 INTRODUCTION

In August 2012 an archaeological trial trench evaluation was carried out by Northamptonshire Archaeology (NA) in the car park of Harrow Inn, Woodside Road, Luton, Bedfordshire (NGR: TL 072 185; Fig 1). A planning consent (CB/12/02743/FULL) has been granted for the construction of extensions to the public house in an area of car parking, with a condition attached for a programme of archaeological evaluation.

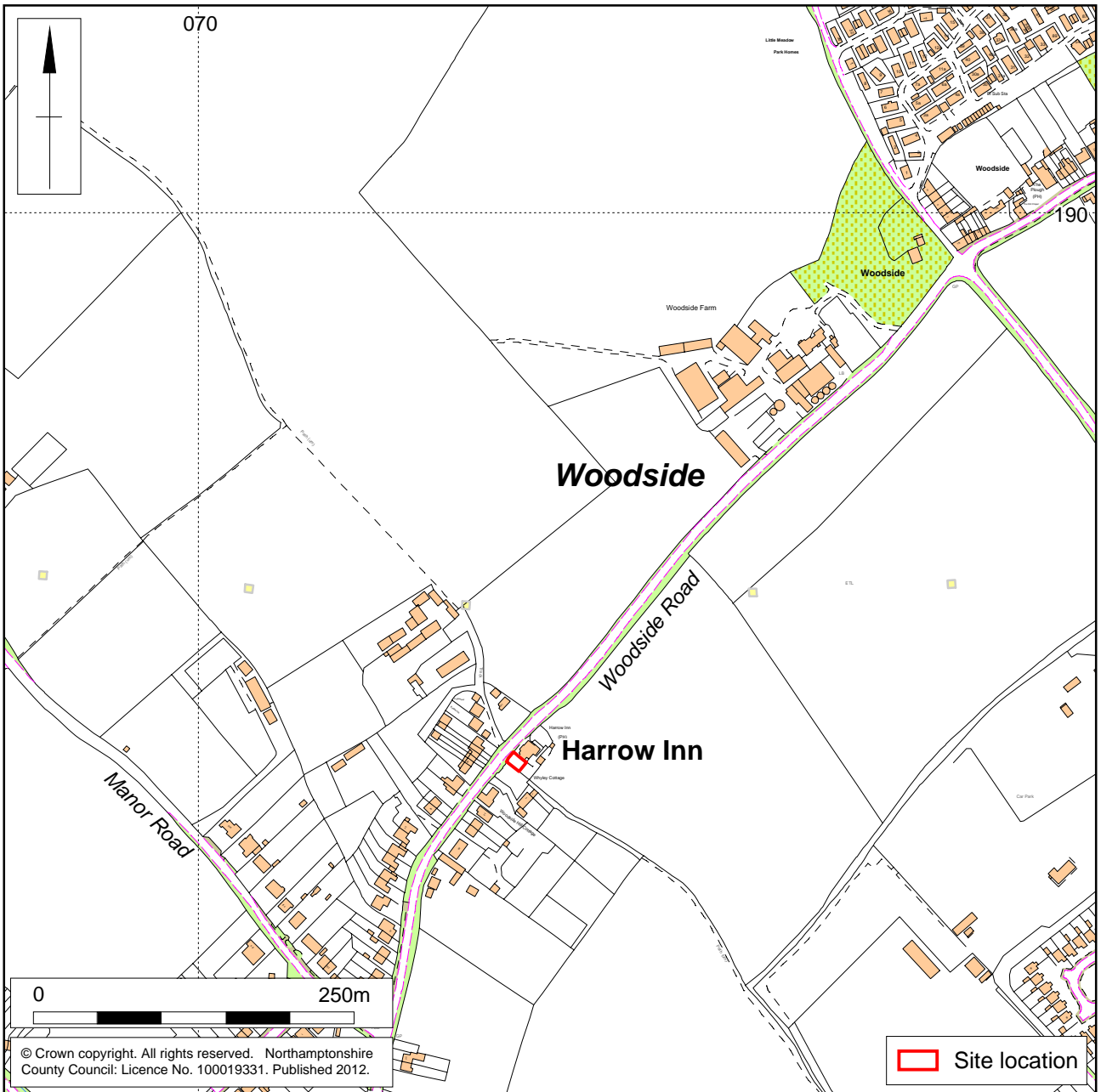
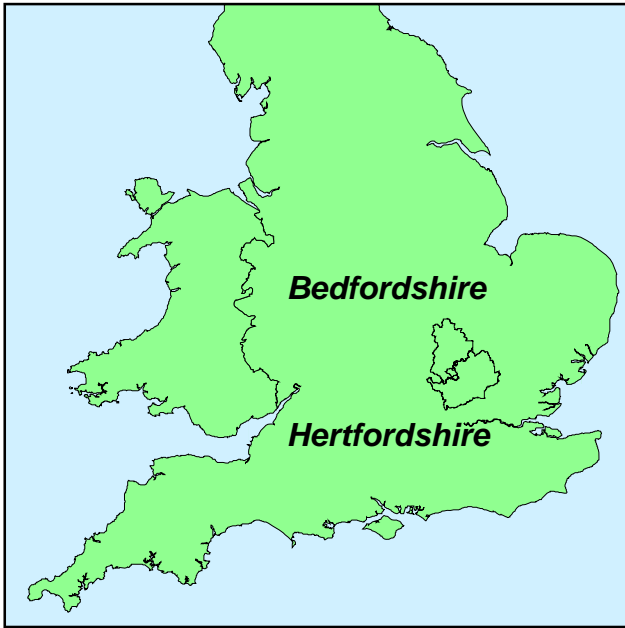
Northamptonshire Archaeology is an Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) registered organisation. The scope of works was outlined and detailed by Martin Oake, County Archaeologist to the Central Bedfordshire Council, and the specification was prepared by Michael Dawson, CgMs Consulting (Dawson 2012).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Topography and geology

Harrow Inn is on the south-east side of Woodside Road, in Lower Woodside, now part of Luton but south-west of the M1. Beyond the inn from the north-west to the south-east are arable fields. The car park is bounded on the north-west by Woodside Road, to the north-east by Harrow Inn and to the south-west and south-east by housing. The car park lies on a slope down to the road.

The British Geological Survey indicates that the solid geology comprises White Chalk. The drift geology seen in excavation comprises clay with flint nodules.



Scale 1:5000

Site Location Fig 1

2.2 Historical and archaeological background

The development lies within an area of archaeological interest and the historic core of the settlement of Woodside (HER 16968). Woodside is medieval in origin and may have developed after the 12th century as one of a number of dispersed settlements in the area, including Caddington, Chaul End and Markyate. Whilst the original focus of Woodside developed on higher ground, the later development extended to create the larger present day settlement (Dawson 2012, 4).

Harrow Inn began as a cottage on the south-eastern side of Woodside and was first mentioned in 1787 when it was sold to John Pope, and has remained a public house ever since (www.bedfordshire.gov.uk).

There are several prehistoric and Roman discoveries in the vicinity (HER 86, 87, 88, 2040), suggesting the possibility of early archaeology as well as the medieval and post-medieval potential of the site (Dawson 2012, 4).

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

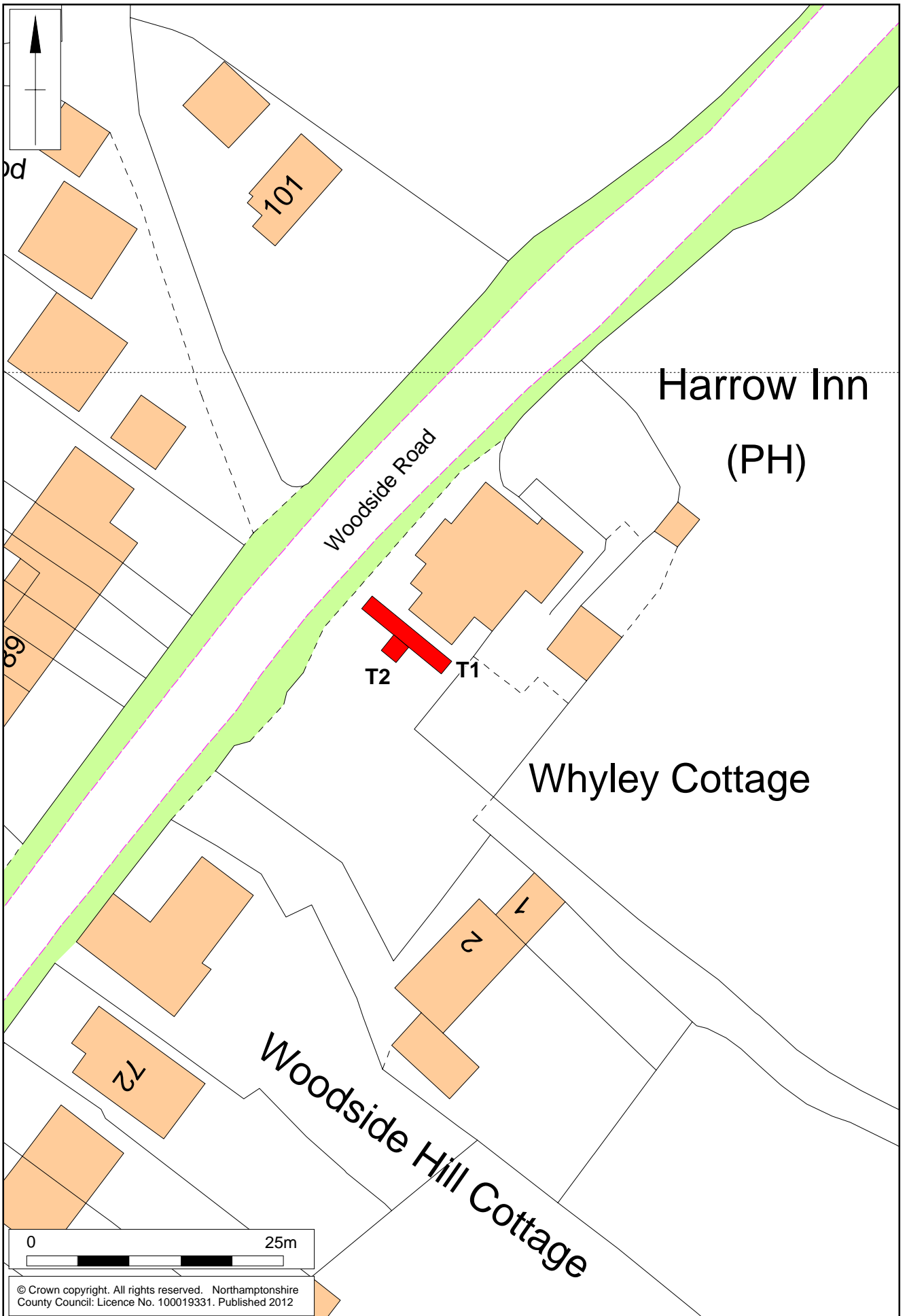
3.1 Objectives

The aim of the archaeological fieldwork was to determine and understand the nature, function and character of any archaeological remains within their cultural and environmental setting. The objectives were established in pursuit of national and regional research agendas (EH 1991 1997, 2007; Oake *et al* 2007; Medlycott 2008, 2011).

The objective of the archaeological fieldwork was to:

- Determine the presence, date, character, integrity, state of preservation and depth of burial of any archaeological deposits,
- Examine the potential of the site in its relationship to its environment, economy, land use and development from the prehistoric to the post-medieval periods. In particular to reflect the medieval origins of the historic village or post-medieval development,
- Examine evidence from the site for palaeo-environmental data and/or economic development

All works were conducted in accordance with the Institute for Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IfA 2010) and *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluation* (IfA 1994, revised 2008).



Scale 1:500 (A3)

Trench location Fig 2

3.2 Methodology

The archaeological trial excavation comprised the excavation of two adjoining trial trenches forming a T-shape within the footprint of the proposed extensions. Excavation was carried out by a JCB-type machine, initially breaking up the tarmac before proceeding with a toothless ditching bucket, operating under constant archaeological supervision. Trench 1, 10.0m long and 2.00m wide was aligned north-west to south-west. Trench 2, 2.0m by 2.0m was aligned north-east to south-west, joining Trench 1 centrally on its south-western side (Fig 2).

The trenches were planned at a scale of 1:50. The trench section was drawn at a scale of 1:10. All deposits encountered during the evaluation were fully recorded following standard Northamptonshire procedures (NA 2011). All deposits were given individual context numbers and described on *pro-forma* context sheets, to include details of the context and its relationships. The photographic record comprised 35mm monochrome negatives and colour transparencies supplemented with digital photographs.

The evaluation was monitored by Martin Oake, County Archaeologist to the Central Bedfordshire Council, who visited the site and agreed to the backfilling the trenches.

The excavated area and spoil heaps were scanned with a metal detector to ensure maximum finds retrieval.

The site code is HWRL12. The Accession Number is LUTNM:2012/36, and the archive will be deposited with Luton Museum.

A summary of the evaluation will be published in CBA South Midlands 2013 and the report will be published on ADS through OASIS.

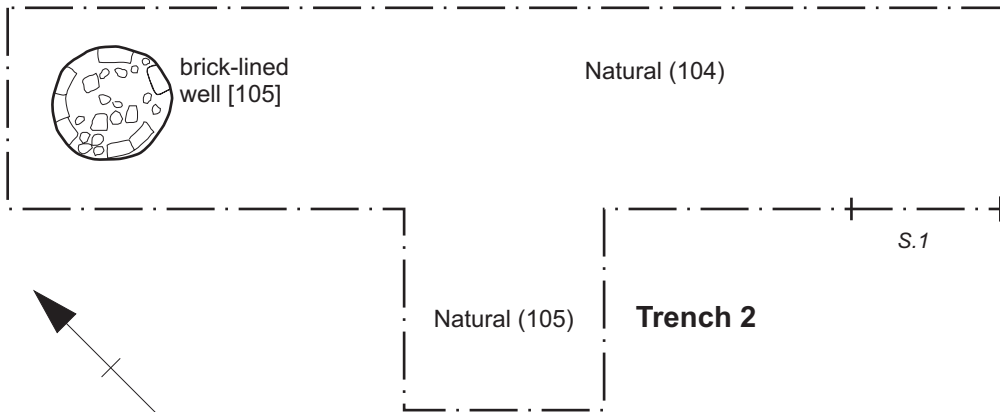
4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The solid geology of chalk was not reached, the natural within the trenches comprised light brown-yellow clay with large flint nodules (104) and (105). The trenches were excavated to a depth of c 65m below modern ground level and cut into the natural by 0.24m to 0.45m (Fig 3).

The natural in Trench 2 was overlain by grey-black clay with mixed rubble (204), built-up from 0.12m by Trench 1 to 0.34m at the south-west end. Overlying this layer and the natural in Trench 1 was made ground comprising hardcore and rubble consisting of old bricks and mortar (103) and (203). A thin layer of sharp sand (102) and (202) had been laid prior to the tarmac surface (101) and (201) (Fig 3, and Figs 4-7).

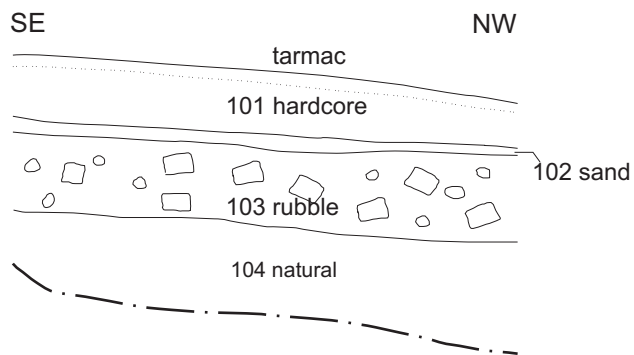
In the north-west corner of Trench 1 was the remains of a probable brick-lined well [105], c 1.20m in diameter, which had been filled in with modern brick. An old drain fed into it from the direction of the building. No other features or artefacts were seen.

Trench 1



0 5m

Trench 1, S.1



0 1m



Trench 1 with possible brick-lined well in foreground, looking south-east Fig 4



Trench 1, section showing brick rubble, looking south-east Fig 5



Trench 2 and slope down to Woodside Road, looking north-east Fig 6



Backfilled trenches, looking east Fig 7

5 DISCUSSION

No features or artefacts relating to the earlier history of the settlement of Woodside were found. The probably brick-lined well might be associated with the inn.

The development area had been built-up with made ground before being overlain by tarmac for the pub car park. It is possible that earlier remains may have been truncated if terracing had taken place before the laying of make-up layers prior to the construction of the car park. However, no features or artefacts were found, suggesting that the area fronting onto the inn had originally been fields.

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APPENDIX: CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
1	10mx2m NW - SE	TL 072 185		0.44m NW – 0.16m SE
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
101	Tarmac surface	Thick layer of tarmac with rolled surface	0.12 NW to 0.24m SE	-
102	Sand	Sharp sand for levelling tarmac	0.04m	-
103	Rubble	Made ground of hardcore/rubble, bricks, mortar	0.0m NW to 0.25m SE	-
104	Natural	Light brown-yellow clay with large flint nodules	0.45m NW – 0.24m SE	-
105	Probable well	Circular, 1.20m in diameter, brick-lined and filled in with brick rubble		-

Trench No	Length, width & alignment	NGR	Surface height	Depth & height of natural
2	2m x 2m SW-NE	TL 072 185		0.34m NE – 0.65m SW
Context	Context type	Description	Dimensions	Artefacts/Samples
201	Tarmac surface	Thick layer of tarmac with rolled surface	0.16m	-
202	Sand	Sharp sand for levelling tarmac	0.03m	-
203	Rubble	Made ground of hardcore/rubble, bricks, mortar	0.12m	-
204	Clay layer	Grey-black clay with mixed rubble	0.15m NE – 0.34m SW	-
205	Natural	Light brown-yellow clay with large flint nodules	0.34m SW - 0.65m NE	-



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