Northamptonshire County Council

Northamptonshire Archaeology

Archaeological Excavations at
24-26 Langton Road, Great Bowden
Leicestershire

December 2005

Jim Brown

May 2008

Report 08/80

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QUALITY CONTROL

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OASIS REPORT FORM

PROJECT DETAILS		
Project name	Archaeological Excavations at 24-26 Langton Road, Great Bowden, Leicestershire, December 2005	
Short description (250 words maximum)	Excavations were located at the core of the modern village, c170m north of the present village green. The site lay between Sutton Road, one of the late medieval streets in the village, and Langton Road, a more recent byway that cuts between the village green and Manor Road. Two arrangements of medieval ditches formed the rear boundaries of properties that had once fronted onto Sutton Road. These indicated a fundamental change in the organisation of the Norman manor towards the end of the 12th century when the ditches were realigned to form thin backage plots extending west from Sutton Road. A large pit and a medieval fishpond were both backfilled with midden waste at that time. From the mid- 15th century there was a rough cobbled yard at the back of the Sutton Road plots. The post-medieval ditches showed a rearrangement of boundaries supplanting the late medieval plots and subdividing the area with a small access track between the two. Late post-medieval and modern activity was limited to minor disturbances, dumps of material filling some of the later ditches, two animal burials and a substantial ditch parallel to Langton Road that truncated the medieval fishpond.	
Project type	Strip, map and sample	
Site status	n/a	
Previous work	NA Trial trench evaluation (Jones 2005)	
Current Land use	Residential development	
Future work	No	
Monument type/ period	Medieval and post-medieval	
Significant finds	Pottery and animal bone	
PROJECT LOCATION		
County	Leicestershire	
Site address (including postcode)	24-26 Langton Road, Great Bowden, Leics, LE16 7EZ	
Study area (sq.m or ha)	*c*1600 sq. m	
OS Easting and Northing	47448 28896	
Height OD	80m above OD	
PROJECT CREATORS		
Organisation	Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project brief originator	Richard Clarke, Leicestershire County Council	
Project Design originator	Michael Dawson, CgMs Consulting Ltd	
Director/Supervisor	Simon Carlyle, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Project Manager	Adam Yates, Northamptonshire Archaeology	
Sponsor or funding body	CgMs Consulting Ltd	
PROJECT DATE		
Start date	December 2005	
End date	January 2006	
ARCHIVES	**Location (Accession no.)**	**Content (eg pottery, animal bone etc)**
Physical	X.A228.2005	Pottery, tile, animal bone, metal finds, flint, sample residues and fired clay
Paper	X.A228.2005	Site context record, plans, section drawings, photographic record and harris matrices
Digital	X.A228.2005	Mapinfo digital plans and client report PDF
BIBLIOGRAPHY	Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report (NA report)	
Title	Archaeological Excavations at 24-26 Langton Road, Great Bowden, Leicestershire, December 2005	
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ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATIONS AT 24-26 LANGTON ROAD GREAT BOWDEN, LEICESTERSHIRE DECEMBER 2005

Abstract

Excavations were located at the core of the modern village, c170m north of the present village green. The site lay between Sutton Road, one of the late medieval streets in the village, and Langton Road, a more recent byway that cuts between the village green and Manor Road.

Two arrangements of medieval ditches formed the rear boundaries of properties that had once fronted onto Sutton Road. These indicated a fundamental change in the organisation of the Norman manor towards the end of the 12th century when the ditches were realigned to form thin backage plots extending west from Sutton Road. A large pit and a medieval fishpond were both backfilled with midden waste at that time.

From the mid- 15th century there was a rough cobbled yard at the back of the Sutton Road plots. The post-medieval ditches showed a rearrangement of boundaries supplanting the late medieval plots and subdividing the area with a small access track between the two.

Late post-medieval and modern activity was limited to minor disturbances, dumps of material filling some of the later ditches, two animal burials and a substantial ditch parallel to Langton Road that truncated the medieval fishpond.

1 INTRODUCTION

Northamptonshire Archaeology was commissioned in December 2005, by CgMs Consulting Ltd, to conduct strip, map and sample excavation and a watching brief on 0.42ha of land at 24-26 Langton Road, Great Bowden, Leicestershire (Fig 1; NGR 47448 28896). This was a condition of the planning permission for the new development. CgMs Consulting Ltd produced a Project Design (Dawson 2005), that was approved and monitored by the Leicestershire County Council (LCC) Senior Planning Archaeologist.

The archaeological works comprised excavations in the three principal building footprints of the modern development; Plot 1, Plots 2-4 and Plot 5. Plot 1 was a 340 sq m area located adjacent to Langton Road containing a medieval fish pond, a post-medieval wall and post-medieval dumping. Plots 2-4 formed the largest area of archaeological investigation, 946 sq m in total, and contained ditches, pits and surfaces relating to former medieval and post-medieval yard spaces and backages. Plot 5 was 225 sq m in area, foundation trenches were cut directly through the topsoil and subsoil layers whilst under an archaeological watching brief. This report is a synthesis of results for the combined archaeological programme.

The archive will be prepared according to the *Guidelines for the preparation of excavation archives for long term storage* (Walker 1990) and *The transfer of archaeological archives to Leicestershire Museums, Arts and Records* (LMARS 2001), where it will be deposited at the conclusion of the project (Accession no. X.A228.2005).

2 BACKGROUND

2.1 Historical and archaeological background

Great Bowden is mentioned in the Domesday surveys of 1086 as the centre of a large soke, which included lands in twelve other Leicestershire villages (VCH 1964, 308). The origin of the soke is unknown, but it seems to have existed under Edward the Confessor and is mentioned in the 1173 *Pipe Rolls*. The lands outside Great Bowden parish ceased to have any connexion with the manor by 1200, but Great Bowden was still said to be ancient Royal Demesne in 1247, according to the 1393 *Book of Fees*. The manor benefited from good communication links tied with its neighbour, Market Harborough, a centre of trade that was officiated by Royal Charter in 1203. In 1605 James I confirmed the manorial tenants' immunity from subscribing to the maintenance of the knights of the shire whilst Parliament was sitting (Bodleian Library MS Carte 78, folio 98). Agriculture was at the heart of the manor economy and Great Bowden, like most medieval manors, possessed an extensive open field system for arable cultivation. Ridge and furrow from the ploughing regime remains evident in the fields surrounding the village today.

The medieval layout is visible in the morphology of the road layout and indicated by names such as "Knights End", presumably land set aside for a vassal knight. The Church of St. Peter and St. Paul, dating from the second part of the 13th century, is located close to the central green. The Green is a large irregularly-shaped open space, intersected by roads which divide it into several subsidiary greens. One of these is still known as "Stocks Green". The village is linked with Northamptonshire by a bridge, probably already existing in 1523 (Market Harborough Parish Records, 222). There are a number of old houses between the Green and the west end of the village. The earliest is probably Tudor House in Manor Road, at one time divided into two cottages but restored in 1955 to form a single house. Most of the buildings in Great Bowden that predate the 17th century are located either by The Green or along Manor Road and Main Street.

Parliament passed the Act for inclosure of Great Bowden in 1776. The agrarian lifestyle remained dominant throughout the 18th to 19th centuries in what had become a village known for horse breeding. The era also brought new transportation links. The Grand Union Canal served a local brickyard operating in 1809 which was superseded by the railway in 1850, which bisects the village.

The ancient parish formerly contained, besides Great Bowden, two dependent chapelries, St. Mary in Arden and Market Harborough. St. Mary's included dispersed houses and their attached lands in Little Bowden, which was originally in Northamptonshire; the remainder lay in the parish of St. Nicholas, Little Bowden. For civil purposes Little Bowden seems always to have formed a single unit, and for such matters it had no connexion with Great Bowden. Harborough was a separate township within Great Bowden parish as early as 1254 and was always independent for civil purposes (Farnham 1929-33, 221). St. Mary's chapelry never formed a separate civil unit, the part that lay outside Little Bowden was included in Great Bowden. Great Bowden comprises the whole ancient parish except Harborough and the lands in Northamptonshire attached to St. Mary's. This rather unusual arrangement of parochial administration emphasises the importance of an early secular estate as the dominant entity. By 1881 Harborough was considered to be a separate civil parish (VCH 1964, 188).

The Ordnance Survey of 1891 shows the area of the site to have been an undeveloped area of enclosed ground populated with trees. This explains a certain degree of the vegetative disturbance on the site. The land was divided into three enclosures, much as

it was prior to development (Fig 1, cover plate). On the map it lies immediately to the south-east of a building marked as a "smithy", which lay in the present plot of 28 Langton Road. No buildings are mapped within the area of development.

2.2 Topography and geology

The site lies in the northern part of the village of Great Bowden, in the historic core of the settlement. It lies at a height of 81m above Ordnance Datum and occupies about 0.42ha behind the properties of 24-26 Langton Road and 7-9 Sutton Road. Prior to development the land comprised two separate areas. The northern area was pasture whilst the southern area was a garden, both had been neglected (cover plate).

Great Bowden is situated in the upper reaches of the Welland valley. The underlying geology consists of Jurassic and Cretaceous middle and lower lias clays upon which the poorly drained Denchworth soils have developed (SSEW 1983; British Geological Survey 1969).

3 OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Objectives

The objectives of the archaeological works as set out in the project design were:

- To determine and understand the nature, function and character of any significant archaeology on the site in its cultural and environmental setting.

The manner in which the strip, map and sample process achieved this was:

- By determining the presence, date, character, integrity, state of preservation and depth of burial for archaeological deposits.
- By examining the potential of the site in relation to its environment, economy, land use and development from the prehistoric to the post-medieval periods with particular attention to the medieval origins of the historic village.
- By examining evidence from the site for palaeo-environmental and/or economic development.

3.2 Methodology

A total area of 1286 sq m was stripped under archaeological supervision in two parts comprising modern building Plot 1 and building Plots 2-4 (Fig 1). Plot 1 was in the south-west of the site and Plots 2-4 located in the north. A third area to the south-east, Building Plot 5, was observed under watching brief conditions during preparation of the building foundations that cut both topsoil and subsoil layers. The records and information of the watching brief are incorporated into this report. No further excavation could be undertaken within Plot 5 as the footings were flooded in excess of 1.2m deep by 0.8m wide making hand excavation impossible without a full area strip of the footprint which lay outside the scope of works.

Ground clearance was conducted using a 360º excavator fitted with a toothless ditching bucket. Modern surfaces and underlying non-structural post-medieval and modern layers were removed by machine, under archaeological supervision. Deep homogeneous garden soils were also removed in this way after preliminary examination. The area was monitored to identify archaeological deposits and undisturbed natural horizons as they were exposed. Mechanical excavation stopped at the surface of the archaeological

horizon where it was encountered and a process of hand excavation was employed for the remainder of the works.

Potential archaeological features were hand-cleaned, partially excavated and a site record was maintained. Recording followed standard Northamptonshire Archaeology guidelines. The area was cleaned, planned and features sampled sufficiently to determine their character and date, and to reveal the underlying stratum. All archaeological features and deposits were given separate context numbers. Deposits were described on Northamptonshire Archaeology *pro-forma* context sheets to include details of the deposit or feature, its relationships, an interpretation and a check-list of associated finds. This field data was compiled into a site archive with appropriate cross-referencing.

A photographic record was maintained, comprising 35mm black and white negatives, related contact prints and colour slides. In addition to basic section shots and features, overall site photographs, feature groups and working shots were also taken.

Significant archaeological features and layers were planned at 1:100 scale. Sections and profiles of features were drawn at scales of 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate and related to Ordnance Datum. The excavated area was surveyed and related to the Ordnance Survey Grid.

Finds were collected from the individual deposits and stored by context. All identifiable artefacts recovered from secure contexts were retained. Finds with particular importance for dating or of an intrinsic interest were given a small find reference number, recorded by grid reference and height, and related to Ordnance Datum within the context.

The Project Manager reviewed the palaeo-environmental potential on site in liaison with the LCC Senior Planning Archaeologist and in the presence of the appointed representative of CgMs Consulting Ltd. Samples were retrieved in 40 litre quantities from significant excavated deposits at depth and processed for environmental and industrial residues.

4 THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

4.1 Summary of site development

The sequence of deposits that were examined at the site comprised four principal chronological developments within three distinct periods (Figs 2-3):

Table 1: Chronology

Norman manorial organisation (12th century)	Medieval property boundaries were established parallel with Sutton Road with low level activity to the rear. A large fish pond lay in the west of the site.
High medieval reorganisation (13th to 14th centuries)	The property boundaries were rearranged to form thin strip plots extending west from Sutton Road. Small scale disturbances were indicative of vegetation. The fish pond was filled in and a revetment wall was constructed above it to retain a terrace built from layers of midden waste.
Early post-medieval redevelopment (15th to 17th centuries)	The land was cleared, new boundaries were established and a small yard was created with a cobbled entranceway. A minor trackway separated it from the rear of plots on Sutton Road. A cob wall stood upon the terrace in the west of the site, although the presence of a building was uncertain.

Late post-medieval to modern disturbances (18th century to present)	A boundary ditch lay parallel to Langton Road and two animal burials lay in the west of the site. Minor disturbances were present across the site.

There is a distinction in the text between the numbered building plots referring to the modern development and medieval or post-medieval land plots represented by letters.

4.2 Norman manorial organisation (12th century)

Property boundaries along Sutton Road

The earliest boundary ditches on the site were located in building Plots 2-4 at the east end (Fig 2). These ditches defined the back of land fronting onto Sutton Road. Two adjoining plots were not laid out in a uniform pattern, the northernmost of the two being slightly shorter (Plots A and B). The full extent of both lay beyond the excavated area. Fragments of a third were situated to the west of these (Plot C). Plot C does not appear to have been in direct association with Plots A or B and little can be said about its function or relationship.

Plot A was bounded on the western side by ditch [211] which measured 1.2m wide by 0.6m deep. The ditch was aligned north to south and had a second ditch [215] extending from it, orientated slightly to the south-east, to channel water into a large pit [236]. Ditch [215] was 2.1m wide by 0.5m deep. Both were cut by ditch [213] which redefined the west side of Plot A. Samples taken from this ditch highlighted the presence of large quantities of charcoal and a higher than average presence of cereal grains and associated weeds (Sample 4). They were also associated with pit [209] which lay on the western side of ditch [213] and could well have been a disturbance in the side of the ditch caused by the removal of a tree stump. The fill material for all of these features was broadly similar comprising varying shades of firm greyish-brown silty clay containing charcoal flecks, assorted natural stones of varying sizes and a large dump of pottery. All of the ditches and the pit were contemporary as the cross-fits from the pottery amongst their backfill demonstrated. This also dated their disuse to the early part of the 12th century, assuming that the material had not lain in a midden for more than a decade or so.

Within Plot A lay a large pit [236] which acted as a collection point for the ditches and may have been a small pond acting as a sump. The pit was sub-circular, measuring 4.3m wide by 1.6m deep. The sides were steep and sloped sharply at a 50-60° angle that bottomed out rapidly to a broad flattish base. The pit contained firm dark greyish-blue gravely clay (235) which was heavily truncated by a secondary cut [234], showing that the pit had been cleaned out on at least one occasion. The recut was shallower, only 1.3m deep, and the sides were less steeply inclined. It was filled with a homogeneous sedimentary deposit of firm mid- bluish-grey clay (233) containing occasional lumps of ironstone. The deposit was sampled and found to contain some charcoal and a single cereal grain but very few elements of environmental interest (Sample 8). There was no evidence to support its suggested function as a cess pit.

Plot A was partitioned from Plot B by a shallow ditch [207] which was aligned east to west and measured 0.7m wide by 0.35m deep. The depth of the partition suggests a minor boundary, one that might be expected between neighbouring properties rather than fields.

Plot B, south of Plot A, was bounded on the north side by ditch [207], which extended 9m beyond its junction with ditch [213] before reaching the north-west corner where it met with the north to south aligned ditch on the western side of its area. At the point

where ditches [207] and [213] converged it was clear that ditch [207] had already been in existence at the time ditch [213] was excavated and redefined the western extent of both plots. This redefinition of two non-uniform boundaries indicates the rear of the land fronting onto Sutton Road.

Within Plot B lay a number of root disturbances and features of later date. No features were of contemporary date to the perimeter ditch and none possessed a stratigraphic relationship with it that lay within the excavated area.

The fragments of the ditches making up Plot C were located to the west, behind those adjoining Sutton Road, and distinctly set apart. The ditches were less regularly laid out and appeared to form part of a group of features extending into the excavated area from the south. Ditch [177] was the most substantial fragment, it measured 0.94m wide and 0.2m deep and was filled with firm light greyish-brown clayey silt, occasional burnt stone and had a few charcoal flecks. The pottery retrieved from the ditch was of contemporary date to the rest of the site but little remained to inform the excavators upon the plot's function.

A large portion of the area to the north-east end of the site was sealed by abandonment spread (232) comprising firm bluish-grey silty clay. It is likely that this sediment accumulated as a result of standing water gathering over the pit as it gradually silted up. The spread covered the top of ditch [213] and ditch [207], both principal cuts for the medieval plots. A period of disuse followed the backfill of the ditches in the early 12th century and the land may have been incorporated into a larger area of open ground. This is supported by the low level of pottery from the interim years prior to the 13th century.

The fish pond

A large spread of medieval deposits was encountered at the eastern extent of building Plot 1 (Fig 2). Initial cleaning suggested that the material comprised an episode of deposition comprising a substantial amount of waste in a single event and that the material was not the result of multiple subsurface interventions. The area covered was 8m wide and over 15m long, extending beyond the excavated area. It was positioned at the lowest point of the natural slope, at the base of a hollow. A hand excavated trench was positioned across the spread to a maximum depth of 2m which did not reach the natural substrate. The profile showed the spread to be the top fill of a substantial feature, believed to be a fish pond. The cut began at the top with a gentle 30° angled slope which gradually became steeper until at 0.3m depth, and approximately 1m from the edge, it dropped off sharply at a 70° angle that continued beyond the 2m working depth [45].

The lowest deposit identified within the cut comprised soft dark greyish-black organic silty clay (48) over 150mm thick. This was covered by a layer of large rounded stones (47), comprising a small dump of material near the base of the working area up to 100mm thick. Firm dark bluish-grey silty clay (44), containing orange mottles and rotted tree branches, sealed the stones with a 0.6m layer that seemed to be a gradual accumulation of sedimentary origin. Above this was mottled soft mid-grey and orange silty clay (43) that was 240mm thick that comprised the base layer of deliberate infill. This was succeeded by a second layer of dumped material (41) that comprised soft mottled greyish brown clayey silt over 350mm thick and brought the level of the deposits to the top of the excavated cut at 79.78m above Ordnance Datum. The final fill material was disturbed by modern activity at the point of intervention, whilst earlier undisturbed deposits did not produce datable pottery sherds. The fish pond predates the 13th century and it is likely to have been in use during the 12th century.

4.3 High medieval reorganisation (13th to 14th centuries)

The later medieval property boundaries

Fresh development took place on the site at the turn of the 13th century reflecting a general pattern of economic growth for the period. A series of boundaries were set across the open ground aligned east to west and set approximately 7m apart (Fig 2). The boundaries extended into the excavated area from the east and terminated *c*87m from Sutton Road. Four boundaries were visible, forming three medieval land plots within the excavated area, all of which were open at the rear.

Where secure late medieval contexts could be defined the sections showed only small variations in the size of the ditches. Most were extremely shallow and it seems likely that these boundary ditches did not intrude much below the subsoil at the time they were created. Ditch [82] was poorly preserved, measuring 0.34m wide by 0.2m deep, badly disturbed at several points. Ditch [150] was much better preserved, measuring 1.1m wide by 0.2m deep, but still very shallow. Ditch [224] was 0.3m wide by 0.10m deep and ditch [244] was 0.56m wide by 0.18m deep. These latter two ditches seem to have defined plots which were subsequently combined since a drainage channel, [229], that was also of late medieval date, was stratigraphically later and replaced the course of ditch [224]. Subdivisions of the narrow medieval plots were not present.

It is possible that two of these medieval plots had a small number of shrubs or fruit trees within them defined by areas of pit disturbances forming irregular shapes (Fig 2). These were confined within the individual medieval backages but were generally poorly defined. All had seemingly random hollows, diffuse dark patches in the sides of the natural, occasional small voids, assorted natural stones and contained occasional datable pottery sherds. The most plausible interpretation of the pits is that they represent deliberate planting within the plots for shrubs or trees, the produce of which would supplement the diet of the inhabitants.

An artificial terrace behind a revetment wall

On top of the backfilled fish pond was a dry stone rubble wall [38] that comprised eight courses built from sandstone (Fig 2). The revetment wall was situated *c*100m west of Sutton Road. The west face of the wall was dressed neatly, whilst the east face of the wall was an untidy, rough affair. The wall measured 0.6m wide by 0.8m high. It was aligned from north to south, roughly central to the top of the former fish pond and probably extended over 15m in length. Light brown silty clay had filtered between the stones of the wall over time creating a post-depositional bonding material. On the east side of the wall a sequence of medieval levelling layers had been dumped to raise the ground level to the top of the wall and create a surface contiguous with the ground level to the east at 80.38m above Ordnance Datum. Pottery from layers (30) and (32) dates the creation of this new ground level to the 13th century and it is very likely that the level was created at the same time as the rearrangement of the land plots fronting onto Sutton Road.

Ridge and furrow

In the area of ground to the west of wall [38] were three furrows within the area of modern building Plot 1. The furrows were aligned north to south and comprised shallow spreads of orange-brown silty clay, the remnant of a medieval cultivation soil.

4.4 Early post-medieval redevelopment (15th to late 17th centuries)

Yard area and cobbled surface

Around the mid- 15th century a new arrangement of ditches replaced the narrow medieval plots established in the 13th century. Three ditches were created which changed the overall pattern of the features (Fig 3). A trackway was aligned north to south to the east of the plot, defined at either side by ditches [102] and [85], both of which were recut on two occasions. The most prominent of these was ditch [102], aligned north to south. It measured 0.86m wide by 0.28m deep. The sides were steep, almost vertical, and it had a broad flat base. It was recut once by ditch [144], which widened it considerably to 2m wide by 0.43m deep. The sides were relatively gentle on the recut at a 45° angle, bottoming out rapidly to a broad flat base. Ditch [85] was orientated north to south and lay directly across the back of the plot. The ditch measured 0.5m wide by 0.45m deep and was aligned with the existing field boundary to the north of the site, a field that contains ridge and furrow. It was also roughly parallel with the rear boundaries of the present properties at 1-3 Sutton Road, south of the site (Fig 1).The trackway divided the area between east and west, as it had been in the Norman period, with the boundary set further to the west.

Two other ditches appear to have been contemporary to ditch [102], they did not join with the boundary within the excavated area, but appear to be part of the larger network. Ditch [155] entered the excavated area from the north, orientated north-east to south-west. It terminated at the south-west end and measured 1.45m wide by 0.39m deep. The sides were angled at roughly 45° and it had a flat base. There was a gap between the terminus of this ditch and the terminus of a second ditch, [249]. Ditch [249] was 1.6m wide by 0.29m deep with a similar profile to its counterpart, [155]. It was orientated roughly north to south, with the terminus at the northern end. The break between the two butt ends was 8.5m wide and contained a group of six postholes [245], four set in a line and two apparent later recuts. Each posthole was square, approximately 300mm by 300mm, and the most substantial was 60mm deep. Together these features indicated an entrance to a land plot, partially exposed within the excavated area (Plot D). The entrance was set in the north-west corner and was partly closed by a small fence line.

Inside the entrance to Plot D was an oval pit [247] that measured 1.6m across and was 0.28m deep. The sides of the pit were generally shallow and poorly defined. Its contents had clearly been burned. Firm greyish-brown silty clay (246) was mixed with frequent charcoal material. In addition to charcoal samples also produced a small number of cereal grains and wild seed grains (Sample 5). Pottery was also retrieved of mid-15th to 17th-century date, with the glaze upon the Midland Purple heavily vitrified. It is very likely to have been a pit to dispose of the remains of a small fire.

Subsequent to Plot D being established, and overlying pit [247], a rudimentary cobbled surface [104] was laid within the entrance way. Densely packed stones formed the surface. The stones ranged in size, being 80-100mm in diameter, they were generally rounded and compressed into the top of the natural clay horizon with the gaps between the stones filled by the natural accumulation of silty clay. Pottery from between the cobbles was of mid-15th to late 17th century in date. Overlying the cobbles was a broad spread comprising firm mid-brownish grey mottled clayey silt (105) that was examined at several points. In each case the spread was up to 110mm thick and probably the result of deposits accumulating over the cobbles in the entrance being trampled and mixed during use. This would certainly be the case where agricultural by-products such as soiled bedding, dung, food waste and compost were being moved around.

A cob wall

Within modern building Plot 1 the revetment wall, and deposits which made up the late medieval levelling layers behind the wall, were sealed by post-medieval levelling deposits. These were cut by a stone wall foundation [28], the top of which appeared to have been built up using a cob mix (Fig 3). The dry stone was roughly dressed on both sides and measured 0.4m wide, how many courses survived is uncertain as it was not excavated at depth. It was aligned from north to south, roughly across the centre of the medieval made-ground and was set a distance of 5m to the east of the late medieval revetment [38]. No bonding material was evident. The stones comprised poorly shaped flat sandstone fragments varying from 100-400mm in length and usually no more than 80mm thick. A high proportion of cob material lay amongst the upper stones of the wall and distributed throughout the surrounding layers. Cob material also lay upon the top of the medieval revetment wall [38], but it was not clear if this was spread material or whether the medieval wall had been reused as the foundation for a post-medieval cob building.

Cob was a mixture of clay, dung and straw, often sealed with lime wash to kill insect vermin and to provide it with a protective surface. It was generally used as a cheap alternative or supplement to stone and timber in the construction of poor dwellings, outhouses and agricultural buildings. Its period of use was evident throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods, even so far as the 19th century and was a practise little different to that of daubing, used centuries earlier. Cob was seldom used to construct non-structural walls, owing to the need to protect the top from the erosive effects of weathering that would break the cob mix apart.

4.5 Late post-medieval and modern disturbances (18th century to present)

The ditch parallel to Langton Road

Ditch [40] was aligned north to south, on a course that lay 18m east of Langton Road and was parallel to it. It is mapped on the 1891 Ordnance Survey as the rear boundary of a small enclosure on the east side of Langton Road. The ditch measured 1.5m wide by 0.61m deep. It had sharp, near vertical sides, which changed rapidly to produce a broad concave base. The ditch contained late post-medieval earthenwares. It was sealed with a 300mm layer of soft mid-brownish grey clayey silt (34). This was sealed by 270mm of similar mid-brownish grey clayey silt material (33), but mixed with high proportions of fragmented brick and roof tile. This latter deposit was spread across the area and could easily have been imported to firm up the ground as no former structures were indicated by the 1891 Ordnance Survey evidence. The material and episode of deposition corresponds with the large amount of modern overburden noted during the watching brief on building Plot 5, in the south-east of the site (Fig 1). The spread of material was confined to an area within the south of the development, corresponding to the area of 19th to 20th-century enclosures fronting Langton Road.

The animal burials

Two pits were encountered cutting the subsoil in the area of modern building Plot 1. Pit [13] was roughly oval, measuring 1.2m wide by 0.6m deep, and contained the remains of a dog. Pit [24] was also oval, measuring 0.85m wide by 0.46m deep, and contained the remains of a pig. Both animals were of early 20th-century origin.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 The worked flint by Yvonne Wolframm-Murray

There are four pieces of flint, all residual from medieval contexts. There are two unutilised flakes of which one is a proximal flake and the other is a whole flake. There is one large end scraper, which has been manufactured on a natural flake. The raw material is a vitreous translucent flint with a light greyish-brown cortex. The other piece has been roughly retouched down one edge and is an opaque granular flint of a grey colour with a mid-brown cortex. None of the items are closely diagnostic of date.

5.2 The pottery by Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 347 sherds with a total weight of 7,031g. The estimated vessel equivalent (EVE), by summation of surviving rimsherd circumference was 3.90. The pottery indicates that there was fairly low-level activity at the site from around the time of the Norman Conquest through to the present day, although nearly half the site assemblage came from two 12th century features which were backfilled with a dump of pottery from a single source. The otherwise low levels of pottery deposition are likely to indicate that the post-medieval yard area was periodically cleaned.

Analytical Methodology

The pottery was initially bulk-sorted and recorded on a computer using DBase IV software. The material from each context was recorded by number and weight of sherds per fabric type, with featureless body sherds of the same fabric counted, weighed and recorded as one database entry. Feature sherds such as rims, bases and lugs were individually recorded, with individual codes used for the various types. Decorated sherds were similarly treated. In the case of the rimsherds, the form, diameter in mm and the percentage remaining of the original complete circumference was all recorded. This figure was summed for each fabric type to obtain the EVE.

The terminology used is that defined by the *Medieval Pottery Research Group's Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms* (MPRG 1998). It follows the *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of post-Roman Ceramics* (MPRG 2001). All the statistical analyses were carried out using a DBase package written by the author, which interrogated the original or subsidiary databases, with some of the final calculations made with an electronic calculator. All statistical analyses were carried out to the minimum standards suggested by Orton (1998-9, 135-7).

Fabric

Where appropriate, the pottery was recorded using the conventions of the Leicestershire County Type Series (Sawday 1994):

F205: ST	Stamford ware, 900-1150. 46 sherds, 625g, EVE = 0.66.
F301: PM	Potter's Marston ware, 1100-1300. 22 sherds, 363g, EVE = 0.28.
F303: CC2	Chilvers Coton 'C' ware, 1200-1475. 4 sherds, 80g, EVE = 0.11.
F331: ST2	Developed Stamford ware, 1150-1250. 3 sherds, 25g, EVE = 0.
F320: LY3	Lyveden/Stanion 'B' ware, 1200-1400. 40 sherds, 450g, EVE = 0.23.
F330: LY4	Shelly wares, 1100-1400. 62 sherds, 2063g, EVE = 1.29.
F403: MP1	Midland Purple ware, 1375-1550. 36 sherds, 949g, EVE = 0.11.
F404: CW2	Cistercian ware, 1475-1550. 8 sherds, 56g, EVE = 0.
F426: EA6	Post-medieval blackwares, late 17th century onwards. 8 sherds, 217g.

The following, not in the published Leicestershire Type Series, were also noted. Comparison of the St. Neots ware types T1(1) and T1(2) were made with the work of Denham (1985) and those examples of Lyveden/Stanion 'A' ware, with McCarthy (1979).

F100:	SN1	St Neots ware type T1(1), *c*900-1100. 3 sherds, 25g, EVE = 0.09.
F200:	SN2	St. Neots ware type T1(2), 1000-1200. 3 sherds, 23g, EVE = 0.07.
F207:	OOL	South Lincs Oolitic ware, late 10th - early 13th century. 64 sherds, 1080g, EVE = 0.89.
F319:	LA	Lyveden/Stanion 'A' ware, 1150-1400. 9 sherds, 123g, EVE = 0.10.
F322:	LD	Lyveden/Stanion 'A' ware, 1350-1500. 2 sherds, 21g, EVE = 0.03.
F401:	LMO	Late medieval oxidized ware, *c*1450-1550. 14 sherds, 327g, EVE = 0.04.
F436:	SS	Staffordshire slip-trailed earthenware, 1650-1750. 1 sherd, 10g.
F1000:	WE	Mass-produced late 18th, 19th and 20th century earthenwares. 22 sherds, 594g.

The South Lincs Oolitic ware, F207, is slow-wheel made. It is a fairly hard, dark blue-grey fabric with moderate sub-rounded white pink and grey quartzite up to 1mm. It has moderate to dense calcareous material, including ooliths, up to 2mm and rare occurrences of haematite up to 1mm. The source is unknown, but the distribution and fabric suggests south Lincolnshire or north-east Northamptonshire is the most likely. It was first identified at West Cotton, Northamptonshire (Blinkhorn, in press).

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is recorded in the archive. The medieval pottery assemblage is typical of those from sites in the Welland Valley and its hinterland. For example, a medieval tenement at Deene End, Weldon produced a large assemblage of early medieval pottery, comprising largely Oolitic Ware and Lyveden/Stanion products, along with Stamford and Shelly wares (Blinkhorn 2003). That site was slightly later than this, with the bulk of the pottery dating to the 13th century or later, and this one is also further from Lyveden and Stanion, which would account for the higher occurrence of Stamford Ware and Shelly Coarseware here. Similar arguments apply to the Potter's Marston ware, which was not noted at Weldon. The presence of a large assemblage of Oolitic ware here is unusual. It was the third most common medieval type at Weldon, and is the second most common here, adding credence to a source on the Oolitic Limestone geology of south Lincolnshire or north-east Northamptonshire.

Chronology

Each stratified pottery assemblage was given a seriated date based on the range of wares and forms present, as shown in Table 1. The data has been adjusted with reference to the stratigraphic matrix. It shows that there was a very low level of late Saxon and Saxo-Norman activity at the site, followed by deposition throughout the medieval and post-medieval periods. The largest period-specific assemblage was CP3, with most of the pottery coming from two features, pit [209] and ditch [213]. These produced a total of 3,458g of pottery (117 sherds, EVE = 2.61), which is nearly half of the pottery from the entire site, and 97.8% of the pottery from CP3. A number of cross-fits from several vessels were made between the two features, indicating that they were probably back-filled using material from the same source, most likely a domestic midden. A number of vessels from the two features were reconstructed to a full profile (Fig 4).

A similar picture was seen at West Cotton in Northamptonshire, where a Saxo-Norman ditch was backfilled in the 12th century with a large dump of domestic material that included a number of near-complete pots. In the case of Great Bowden, this may represent back plots for properties on Sutton Road being established or extended in the 12th century, or possibly even a temporary disuse of that area of land. Only nine sherds

of pottery (47g) were dateable to the 50 years following this period. Pottery deposition was at generally low levels for the rest of the medieval period, 171 sherds occurred in the next two ceramic phases, a period of nearly four centuries, and residuality was quite high in the late medieval and early post-medieval assemblages (Table 2). This is due to a major area of the site being taken up by a yard with a cobbled entrance. Evidence from West Cotton indicates that, in the medieval period, such areas contained middens of domestic refuse that were periodically carted away and used as material for back-filling and levelling of the ground.

Table 2: Ceramic Phase dating scheme and pottery occurrence per phase

Phase	Chronology (centuries)	Defining Wares	No.	Weight (g)	EVE	Mean Wt (g)
CP1	10th	ST, SN1	2	40	0.08	20.0
CP2	11th	SN2, OOL	4	54	0	13.5
CP3	12th - mid 12th	PM, LY4	129	3536	2.78	27.4
CP4	mid 12th - 13th	LA, ST2	9	47	0.03	5.2
CP5	13th - late 14th	LY3, CC2	58	569	0.60	9.8
CP6	late 14th - mid 15th	MP1, LD	29	340	0.17	11.7
CP7	mid 15th - late17th	LMO, CW2	84	1606	0.24	19.1
CP8	late 17th - late 18th	EA6	5	143	0	28.6
CP9	late 18th +	WE	27	696	0	25.8
		Total	**347**	**7031**	**3.90**	

Table 2 shows the pottery occurrence per phase by fabric type. The pattern is generally what would be expected, although the data for CP4 is unreliable due to the small assemblage size. Residuality is generally low throughout the medieval period, until CP6, where around 30% of the pottery is residual earlier medieval wares, as is around 25% of the material from CP7. There is no residual pottery from the latest two phases.

Table 3: Pottery occurrence per ceramic phase by fabric type for major wares, expressed as a percentage of the phase assemblage, by weight in g

Phase	SN1	ST	SN2	OOL	PM	LY4	LA	LY3	MP1	LMO	EA6	WE	Total Wt (g)
CP1	0	100%	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	40
CP2	0	87.0	13.0		-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	54
CP3	0.7	0	14.6	29.2	7.6	47.9	-	-	-	-	-	-	3536
CP4	0	4.3	0	23.4	4.3	12.8	55.3	-	-	-	-		47
CP5	0	1.2	2.8	4.6	5.3	33.6	8.8	40.8	-	-	-	-	569
CP6	0	1.8	0	0	14.4	10.9	2.6	39.1	31.2	-	-	-	340
CP7	0	0.4	0	0.7	0.9	8.4	2.4	5.3	52.5	20.4	-	-	1606
CP8	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	87.4	-	143
CP9	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13.2	85.3	696

The Assemblages

CP1 (10th century)

Both the sherds from this phase were Stamford ware, with the fabrics and glazes suggesting that they are late Saxon types. It seems likely therefore that the village has its origins in the late Saxon period.

CP2 (11th century)

This small group of sherds is typical of the 11th-century pottery of the region, with three of the sherds being Stamford ware and the other the Saxon Norman T1(2) St. Neots ware. The sherds all appear to be from secure contexts, as confirmed by the stratigraphic matrix.

CP3 (12th to mid- 12th century)

As noted above, around half the pottery from the site came from this phase, with the most occurring in two features, pit [209] and ditch [213]. A number of cross-fits were made between the two, indicating that they came from a common source, most likely a domestic midden.

The assemblage is dominated by three vessels which were reconstructable to full profiles; a jar and bowl, both shelly ware, and a Stamford ware bowl (Fig 5). All three vessels showed clear signs of heating, and were sooted on the outer surface, with the jar also lime-scaled on the inner surface. Eight fairly large rimsherds from Oolitic ware jars were also noted, along with a single fairly large rimsherd from a Potters Marston jar (Fig 5, GT3). An Oolitic ware bodysherd with combed decoration was also present.

Two small, probably residual rimsherds were noted, one from a shelly ware jar and another from a bowl in the same fabric, and a fragment of a Stamford ware pitcher handle was also present. It is an assemblage that is very typical of the pottery of the region in the 12th century, and appears wholly domestic in nature. The range of wares is worthy of note, with the village being supplied with pottery from the north (Potters Marston), south (Shelly Ware) and east (Stamford ware, Oolitic ware). This is indicative that the villagers had access to a major market centre.

CP4 (Mid- 12th to 13th century)

The paucity of pottery from this phase is in marked contrast to the preceding one. The small assemblage comprises entirely bodysherds except for a single small Oolitic ware jar rimsherd.

CP5 (13th to late 14th century)

This assemblage is somewhat larger and in better condition than that from CP4, but only 58 sherds were deposited in nearly two centuries. It is dominated by the products of the Lyveden and Stanion kilns, which comprise nearly half the pottery, and Shelly Wares, which make up a third of the group. The rest consists of small amounts of Oolitic, Stamford, Potters Marston and St. Neots ware, most of which are likely to be residual. A rimsherd from a Chilvers Coton jug was noted, along with two rims from Lyveden/Stanion jugs. There were four jar rims, three from Shelly ware vessels and one from a Lyveden/Stanion 'A' ware example, along with two small and residual T1(2) St. Neots ware bowls. The rest of the assemblage consisted of plain bodysherds, including a single piece of glazed Developed Stamford Ware jug. All the sherds were in reasonably good condition and residuality is again quite low.

CP6 (Late 14th to mid- 15th century)

This assemblage is quite small when the length of the phase is considered. The introduction of Midland Purple wares, probably from the Nuneaton area, sees the start of what can be regarded as the late medieval tradition, with pottery of this type making up a third of the assemblage. Lyveden/Stanion wares were still quite important, comprising over 40% of the phase group, but shelly wares and Potters Marston ware represent around a quarter of the assemblage, with most, if not all this material residual.

Three rimsherds were noted, all from jars. They were one each of Shelly ware, Lyveden/Stanion 'a' ware and Potters Marston ware.

CP7 (Mid- 15th to late 17th century)

This phase represents over 200 years of activity at the site and comprises a small group of large, well-preserved sherds. The contemporary pottery is largely Midland Purple ware (52.5%) along with Late Medieval Oxidized (LMO) ware (20.4%), three sherds of Late Chilvers Coton ware, three sherds of Cistercian ware and two sherds of Lyveden 'D' ware, although the last-named is quite possibly residual. As is typical of the period in rural settlements, all the pottery appears largely utilitarian, with display pottery such as Tin-glazed Earthenware and Slipwares entirely absent.

Four rimsherds were noted; one from Chilvers Coton and one in Midland Purple, both are from jars or cisterns, and two from jugs, One Lyveden 'D' and the other LMO.

CP8 and CP9, late 17th to 20th century

These two phases produced a total of 32 sherds of pottery with a total weight of 839g. They were made up mainly of utilitarian earthenwares, with no display or table pottery noted.

Summary

This assemblage is typical of rural sites in the region, although a fairly wide range of local and regional sources are represented. Throughout the life of the site pottery deposition was at fairly low levels, or the area periodically cleaned, and the range of vessel types present was always basic, with only the most utilitarian vessel forms in use. The more substantial quantity of material from 12th century deposition appears to represent a single, anomalous, episode relating to the backfill of pits and ditches in the north-east of the site prior to new property boundaries being established.

The Illustrated Pottery *(Fig 4)*

1 Fabric SHL. Full profile of jar. Grey fabric with brown surfaces. Outer surface thickly and evenly sooted, inner surface lime-scaled, inner base-pad burnt. Pit [209] and ditch [213].

2 Fabric SHL. Full profile of bowl. Grey fabric with dark brown surfaces. Outer surface evenly sooted. Pit [209] and ditch [213].

3 Fabric OOL. Rimsherd from a jar. Grey fabric with brown surfaces. Outer surface sooted. Ditch [213].

4 Fabric ST. Full profile of bowl. Pale grey fabric with light pinkish-orange surfaces. Outer surface of base and lower body very evenly sooted. Pit [209] and ditch [213].

5.3 The building materials by Pat Chapman

Brick

There is one complete brick, with a join in one corner, from layer (21), overlying wall [28]. It measures 215mm long, 100mm wide and 50mm thick (8½ by 4 by 2 inches). The sides and bottom of the brick have lost quite a bit of the surfaces, but the top has been worn to a smooth, almost polished surface. The fabric is fine clay, not uniformly well-mixed, with some grog and occasional ironstone and gravel inclusions. It is pale

pinkish brown in colour with cream coloured streaks mixed with slightly darker grog, giving an attractive appearance on the worn surface, which may have been desirable in its original or even secondary use, perhaps as part of a floor. This is a handmade brick in a fabric typical of the 13th to 14th centuries.

Roof tile

A fragment of ceramic roof tile 13mm thick and weighing 133g, from layer (105) overlying cobbled surface [104], has both a nib and a peghole, which is 8mm square narrowing in to 4mm on the rough side of the tile. The nib is a separate piece of clay that has been attached to the top of the tile. The fabric is uniform hard fine clay with fine crushed shell and occasional larger fragments as inclusions and is a slightly mauve brown colour. The under surface is sandy either from a mould or the drying area.

Fired clay

This is a small assemblage of 42 fragments, weighing 1080g, from four contexts. They are all in fine clay with occasional inclusions of grog, and in an orange brown colour with a few cream streaks, similar to the brick. They have rough surfaces and are irregular in shape. The only fragments with any features come from ditch [153]; where six pieces have worn wattle impressions with diameters of *c*15mm. A few have smoothed surfaces, and there are some stem impressions. These tend to indicate some structural associations. A few fragments from ditch [213] were blackened.

Table 4: The fired clay

Context/feature	Number	Weight (g)	Comment
(152) fill of medieval ditch [153]	18	674	Wattle, stem impressions smooth surfaces
(166) fill of gully [167]	2	35	
(212) fill of medieval ditch [213]	11	152	
(248) fill of ditch [249]	11	224	
Totals	**42**	**1080**	

5.4 The metalworking debris by Andy Chapman

A single context (180), the fill of a gully [181] of medieval date, contained a small quantity of metalworking debris, weighing 79g. It comprises eight irregular small pieces of undiagnostic ferrous slag as a residue from metalworking, perhaps secondary smithing.

5.5 The other finds by Tora Hylton

The excavation produced a small group of medieval and post-medieval finds. It is not possible to date any of the objects on stylistic grounds to the medieval period, because the items represented were in use throughout both the medieval and post-medieval periods. There are 34 finds in total comprising 30 iron objects, 2 copper alloy objects, 1 glass and 1 ceramic object, together with a small quantity of clay tobacco-pipe fragments. The majority of the finds, comprising 27 out of the 34, were recovered from cobbled yard surface [104] and the overlying spread layers (60 & 131), which pottery has dated to between the late 14th and the 17th centuries. The remaining 7 finds, which date from the mid- 12th to 17th centuries, were recovered from ditches [213 & 249], pits [227 & 247] and gullies [85 & 89].

The assemblage includes a range of iron fittings, which may have formed part of, or been attached to, a permanent structure. They include structural fittings, lock furniture

and 15 nails, and are likely to have come from a building close by. The structural fittings include a hinge pivot, an eyed spike and a hinge or bracket fitting. All of these were recovered from the cobbled surface [104]. The hinge pivot comprises a circular sectioned pivot (guide arm) 48mm high and a tapered rectangular sectioned shank, 85mm long. The shank would have been driven into the wood leaving the pivot free to retain the hanging eye of a strap hinge attached to a door, shutter or gate. The eyed spike comprises a tapered rectangular/square-sectioned spike measuring 133mm long. There is a vestige of a loop at one end and it would originally have been driven into mortar between masonry and used for securing door or window hooks. Although incomplete, there is a right-angled corner fragment from a hinge or bracket fitting; one side appears to be tapered and it is pierced by a nail.

Items associated with the use of locks include a key, a lock plate and a hasp. The key was recovered from the cobble surface [104] and would have been for use with a mounted lock. It comprises a kidney-shaped bow with tapered solid shank which protrudes beyond the end of the bit. Stylistically it is post-medieval in date. The lock plate and hasp were both recovered from layer (60) overlying the cobbled surface [104]. The lock plate is part of a rotary mechanism of a fixed 'stock lock' (mounted lock). It measures 73mm by 20mm and is obliquely angled with a U-shaped key hole, like examples from Norwich (Goodall 1993, fig 116, 1249-1250). Stock locks may have been mounted in a wooden housing or attached to an iron flanged iron lock plate. The complete hasp forms the shape of a 'figure of eight', it has been forged with a slight curvature and measures 109mm in length. Hasps would have been fixed at one end by a staple, the free end fitting over another staple, and a padlock would have been passed through the aperture to secured the fitting (Ibid 1993, 163). Hasps would have been used to secure gates, doors and the lids of chests.

There are 15 nails, 14 from the cobbled surface and overlying deposits and one from gully [85]. Of the assemblage 9 are complete measuring from 50-73mm in length. Four head types are represented, five are square heads, two are flat sub-circular heads, one is L-shaped head and one has no distinct head. All types would have been used in carpentry.

Other objects worthy of note include a post-medieval thimble with machine knurled indentations from gully [89] and a clay tobacco-pipe bowl, Oswald Type G17, dated *c*1640-70 from the same feature (Oswald 1975, 37-41). An undiagnostic fragment of pale blue vessel glass from ditch [249] and an undiagnostic fragment of sheet lead from ditch [213] were also recovered.

6 FAUNAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 The animal bone by Karen Deighton

A total of 18.5kg of animal bone was recovered by hand from a range of contexts. This material was analysed using standard zooarchaeological methods. Dating follows the basis of the pottery report.

Preservation

Fragmentation is high with only three long bones still complete, bone cylinders were the most common form of fragment comprising 17.8% of the assemblage. Only two fresh breaks are present, which, along with the lack of butchery evidence, could possibly imply that fragmentation was the result of trampling or compaction in the soil. Surface abrasion is low, although two instances of flaking were noted. Nineteen instances of canid gnawing are present, fairly high, comprising 22.6% of the identified bone and could suggest it was midden waste prior to burial. Evidence of burning is restricted to

two calcined bone fragments which suggest this was not a preferred method of disposal. Three examples of butchery are present; two of chopping and one of filleting.

Table 5: Species by period (relative percentages in brackets)

Species	Common name	Mid- 12th to late 14th centuries	Late 14th to late 17th centuries	Late 17th century to present
Bos	Cattle	14 (35%)	8 (28.6%)	2 (12.5%)
Ovicaprid	Sheep/goat	10 (25%)	13 (46.4%)	7 (43.75%)
Sus	Pig	3 (7.5%)		5 (31.25%)
Equus	Horse	6 (15%)	3 (10.7%)	2 (12.5%)
Canid	Dog	1 (2.5%)		
Orictolagus	Rabbit	4 (10%)	2 (7.1%)	
Gallus	Chicken		2 (7.1%)	
Anser	Goose	2 (5%)		
Totals		**40**	**28**	**16**

Skeleton

A partial calf skeleton was recovered from ditch [224]. The morphology, unfused epiphyses and surface condition of the bones suggest a neonate. The remains consist of skull fragments, some ribs, vertebra and front legs.

Ageing

Based on tooth eruption and wear and follows; Payne (1973) for sheep/goat teeth and Grant (1982) for pig teeth. All of the teeth are from contexts bridging the mid- 12th to late 14th centuries but unfortunately the data set was too small to draw any reliable conclusions.

Table 6: Analysis of tooth eruption and wear in pigs, goats and sheep

Feature	Layer (32)	Pit [209]	Pit [209]	Pit [209]	Ditch [215]
Species	*Ovicaprid*	*Ovicaprid*	*Ovicaprid*	*Ovicaprid*	*Sus*
Side	Right	Right	Right	Right	Left
Wear stage	I	I	D	I	C
Approx age	8-10years	8-10years	1-2years	8-10years	6-13months

Pathologies

Mid- 12th to late 14th centuries

Pit [209], abscess on buccal side of *ovicaprid* mandible beneath first permanent molar

Discussion

The assemblage consists of the common domesticates for all periods. Bodypart analysis cannot be undertaken so the nature of the assemblage is unclear as to whether it comprises primary butchery or consumption waste. Fluctuations can be seen in the presence or absence of minor species and the predominance of species, but contemporary comparisons are not viable due to the small amount of material recovered.

6.2 The environmental evidence by Karen Deighton

Eight samples were collected from medieval and post-medieval features during the course of excavation. Each sample comprised 40 litres of bulk soil from secure contexts. Six samples were processed using a siraf tank fitted with 500 micron mesh and flot sieve. The resulting flots were dried and examined using a microscope at 10x

magnification. One litre sub-samples were taken from waterlogged samples and teo were washed though a series of stacked sieves with 500micron, 1mm and 3.5 mm apertures. The retents were examined under a microscope. Identifications were made where possible with the aid of the author's small reference collection, a seed atlas and the Ohio university seed workshop website (Schoch et al 1988; www.scri.ac.uk; www.oardc.ohio.state.edu).

Preservation by charring and waterlogging

Table 7: Ecofacts present in each sample

Sample	Fill	Feature	Site period	Charcoal fragments	Cereal grains	Wild seed grains	Chaff
1	(45)	Waterlogged Pit	1	present		3	
2	(48)	Layer	1	present			
3	(152)	Ditch [153]	1	1000+	*c*410	3	
4	(212)	Ditch [213]	1	1000+	31	8	
5	(246)	Pit [247]	2	20-30	3	3	
6	(179)	Ditch [181]	3	20-30	*c*970	*c*64	
7	(248)	Ditch [249]	2	100-200	210	2	1
8	(233)	Pit [234]	2	present	1		

Cereals present included breadwheat (*Triticum aestivum*), hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), naked barley (*H.vulgare* var nudum) and possible spelt (*Triticum spelta*). The status of oat (Avena sp) is problematic as it is unknown if the grains represent the wild or the cultivated variety and consequently whether it was a minor crop or a contaminant. The presence of pea (*Pisum sativa*) in the late 14th to late 17th century period could suggest maslins, mixed crops of cereal and edible pulses grown together. Wild plant or weed taxon included fat hen (*Chenopodium album*) and sheep sorrel (*Rumex acetosella*), both of which are common crop weeds.

Discussion

The plant material recovered exhibits the range of crops utilised at the site and their associated weeds. The lack of chaff and low proportions of wild plant or weed seeds suggests a late stage in crop processing for all periods. An increase in breadwheat and naked barley was matched with a decrease in hulled barley over time. However this is little use in predicting site status due to the low numbers of samples and finds in some samples.

Samples 4, 5 and 8 could represent the general background of plant material associated with the site, but not with any specific activity. Samples 3, 6 and 7 from the ditch contexts could result from rubbish disposal and may be cumulative with midden activity nearby. Inter-site comparisons have not been attempted because of the small number of samples per period.

7 DISCUSSION

Evidence from the site was mainly of the period from the mid-12th to the 14th centuries with some evidence for activity during the early post-medieval period and occasional late post-medieval or modern disturbances. There were no features or finds in primary contexts that provided evidence for occupation prior to this date and no firm evidence on the site for the presence of buildings throughout its occupation. The site appears to have always formed an area of small plots, generally extending westward from Sutton Road and continued to form larger plots in subsequent periods.

During the mid-12th century a large fish pond dominated the larger part of the south-west of the site. Areas for horticultural or yard activities lay between this and those adjacent to Sutton Road. There is nothing to suggest that these plots enclosed dwellings along Sutton Road and are primarily indications of the economic subsistence of the medieval manor. It appears that this portion of the village during the mid-12th century was undeveloped land within the settlement and would probably have been used for high maintenance agriculture such as garden horticulture or stock rearing. They were, however, not part of the larger open field system of ridge and furrow. These plots lay close to the core of the main manor of Great Bowden, a short distance from the church and the central green. Other parts of the village at Knight's End, Nether Green and Upper Green form outlying groups of habitation that indicate a dispersed pattern of medieval growth as satellites to the main manor. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that in the earlier part of its habitation, the manor and its satellites were separated by substantial areas of open ground and that the number of dwellings was widely distributed between them. They may have been scattered or confined to nucleated groups, the site cannot elucidate on either count. The pattern of growth was presumably the result of differences in manorial tenure, a situation that gave rise to the unusual arrangement of civil administration in more recent times.

A rearrangement of boundaries within the site area indicated a fundamental change in the organisation of the medieval manor in the early 13th century. This later medieval period coincides with a national trend towards economic expansion, particularly in areas that benefited from Royal or ecclesiastical management. The division of the site area into narrow strips of land forming backage plots running west from Sutton Road, indicate the probable establishment of dwellings along the frontage at this time. This coincides with the redundancy of the fish ponds and other subsistence features in such a way as to suggest manorial reorganisation to make better use of the settlement core by moving these activities elsewhere. The ground was levelled up behind a revetment wall which formed a boundary between the backage plots to the east and agricultural land to the west, indicated by the presence of ridge and furrow in that area. The difference in ground level was also considerable behind the revetment wall and may have been a deliberate way to create a barrier for herd animals to prevent their finding their way into the backage plots. It defined the boundary of the manorial core and suggests that the backages were used for important domestic functions, possibly the growing of vegetables or fruit trees and marks the division between domestic and agricultural space.

In the mid- 15th to late 17th centuries the north-west of the site was occupied by a yard with a rough cobbled surface that formed part of an arrangement relating to the day to day business of the manorial core, rather than of individual dwellings. A cob wall lay in the south-west which may have been a post-medieval boundary or the fragment of a small building such as a cottage or ancillary barn. The ditches rearranged the boundaries, supplanting the late medieval plots, and subdivided the area between east and west with a small access track between the two. To the east the domestic space was reduced but was made accessible by the track. To the west a yard space had been created serving other purposes and may have included the storage of midden waste.

Late post-medieval and modern activity was limited to minor disturbances, dumps of material filling some of the later ditches, two animal burials and a fairly substantial ditch parallel to Langton Road that truncated the medieval fishpond. In more recent years the area was used for low impact activities such as grazing and was occupied by mature trees shown on the 1891 Ordnance Survey.

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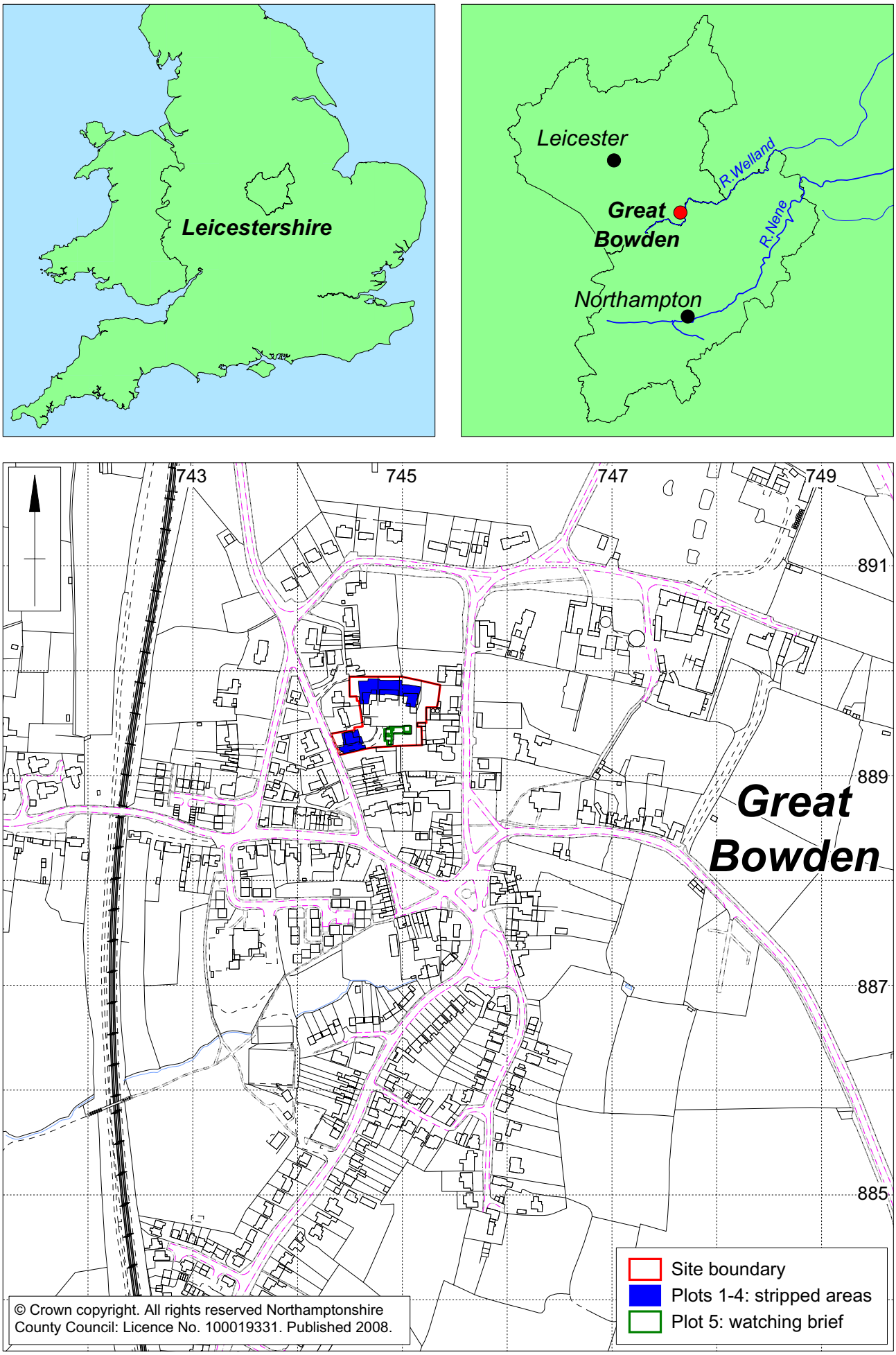
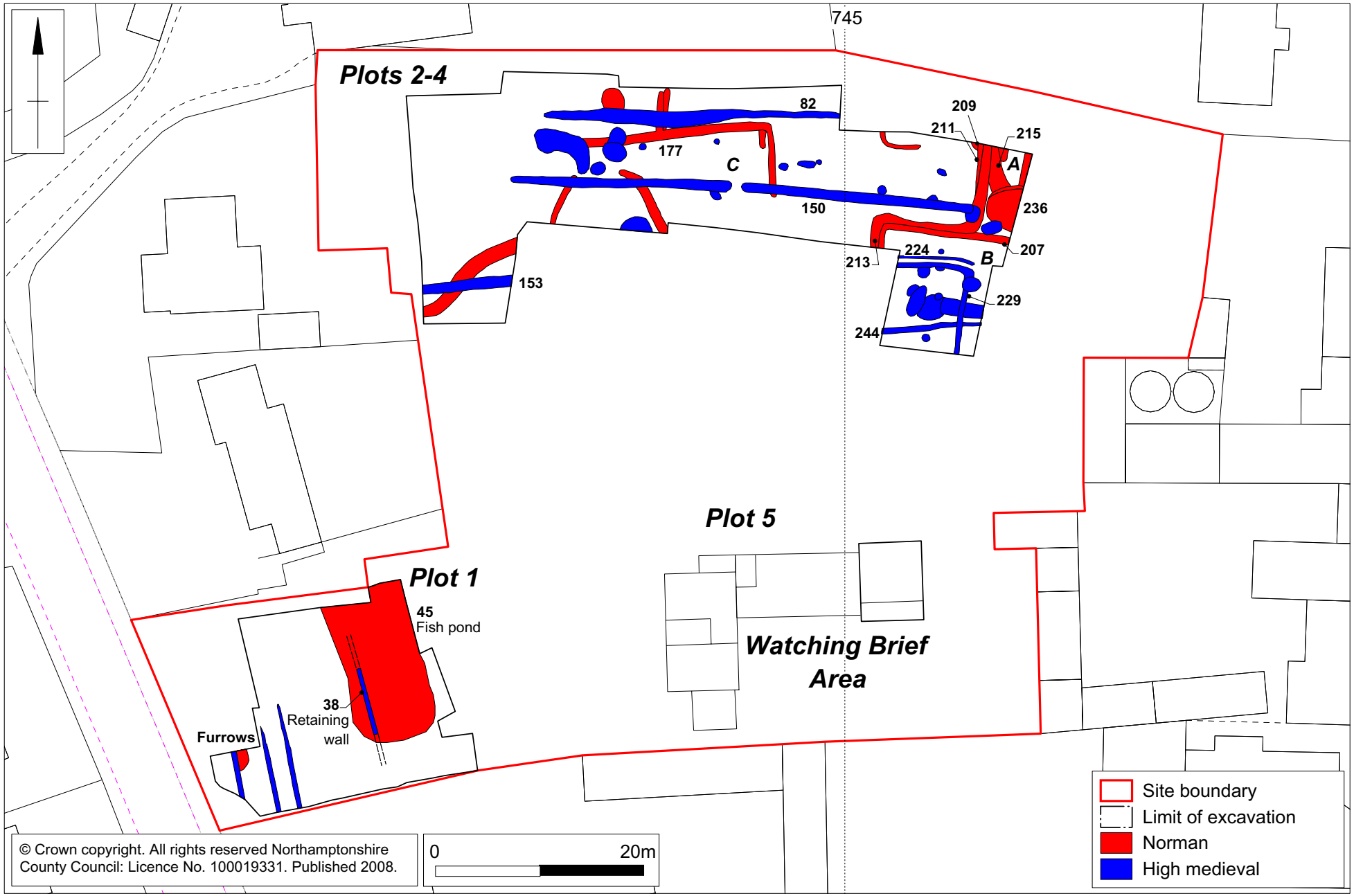
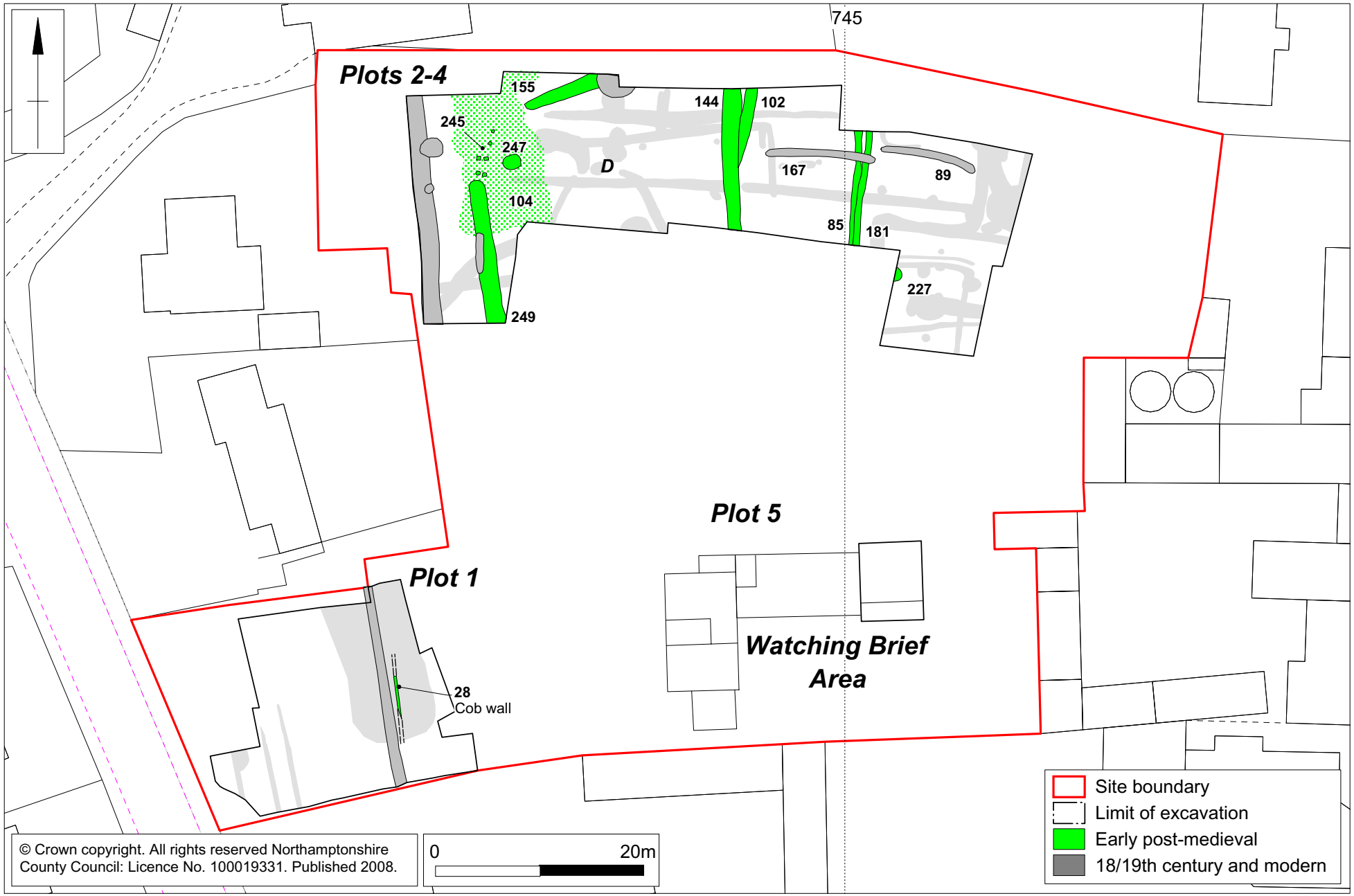


Scale 1:5000

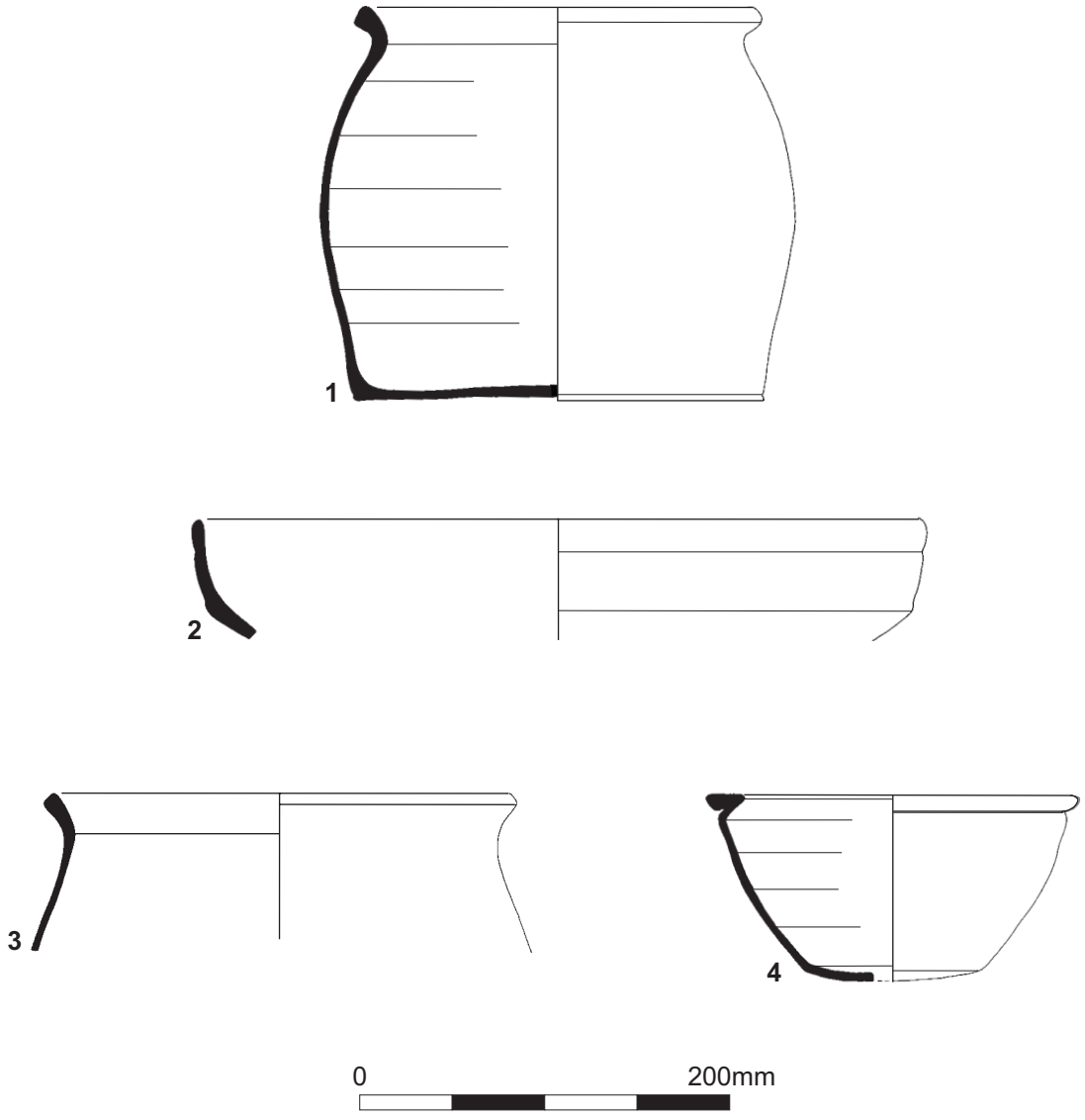
Site location Fig 1



Norman and High medieval features Fig 2



Post-medieval and modern features Fig 3



The pottery Fig 4

Plate 1: Plots 2-4, area excavation after rainfall.

Plate 2: Plots 2-4, cobbled surface [104].