BANCROFT HERITAGE SERVICES

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SAXO-NORMAN AND LATER REMAINS
AT 'THE SWAN' HIGH STREET, CLAPHAM

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on behalf of High Street Homes

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SAXO-NORMAN AND LATER REMAINS AT 'THE SWAN' HIGH STREET, CLAPHAM

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Following an initial trial trench evaluation, excavations were undertaken on land associated with 'The Swan', a former public house in the High Street, Clapham, in advance of residential redevelopment. The site is located on the south-eastern edge of the medieval village, adjacent to a ford crossing the river Ouse. Evidence for Saxo-Norman, medieval and post-medieval activity was revealed towards the north-west end of the site, in the form of ditches, pits and postholes. Two possible post-built structures were identified, in use during the Saxo-Norman and medieval periods. Finds from these periods were relatively sparse, suggesting that this was not an established occupation site. During the later medieval and post-medieval period activity on the site declined and was characterised by a few boundary ditches, and an area of intercutting pits, possibly for clay extraction, at the south-east end of the site. Activity on the site remained at a low level until the public house was built, probably in the mid-19th century.

INTRODUCTION

In 2012 Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd (ASC) completed the excavation of a site at *The Swan*, a former public house in the High Street, Clapham. The investigation was commissioned and funded by High Street Homes Ltd, and was required as a condition of planning permission for their residential re-development of the site, now known as 'Tranquada Close'. The work was undertaken in accordance with a written scheme of investigation (Zeepvat 2012) approved by Bedford Borough's Archaeological Advisor. The results of the excavation were described initially in a summary report (Muldowney 2012) and a proposal for publication of the results (Muldowney 2013) was approved by the Archaeological Advisor.

Following the closure of ASC in March 2014, completion of the publication report was undertaken by Bancroft Heritage Services. The project archive has been lodged with Bedford Museum. Copies of the project reports can be accessed at the Bedford Historic Environment Record (HER), and online through the Archaeology Data Service (ADS).

LOCATION & DESCRIPTION

Clapham is located *c*.2m north-west of Bedford, on the north bank of the river Ouse. The older part of the village follows the High Street, formerly the A6 Bedford-Rushden road, with a cluster of modern developments off Milton Road at the north-west end of the settlement. The excavation site is located at near the south end of the village on the south-west side of the High Street, 200m south of the Saxo-Norman church of St Thomas à Beckett, centred at NGR TL 0340 5229 (Fig. 1). The land at this point forms the north bank of the Ouse adjacent to a fording point, and lies at a mean elevation of 30m OD. The geology of the site and surrounding area comprises limestone and argillaceous rocks overlain by soils of the Efford 1 Association, namely well-drained fine loamy soils over alluvium and gravel (Soil Survey 1983, 571s; BGS Sheet 203). Prior to the excavation, the site comprised the gardens and car park of the former *Swan* public house, which stood in the centre of the High Street frontage of the plot.

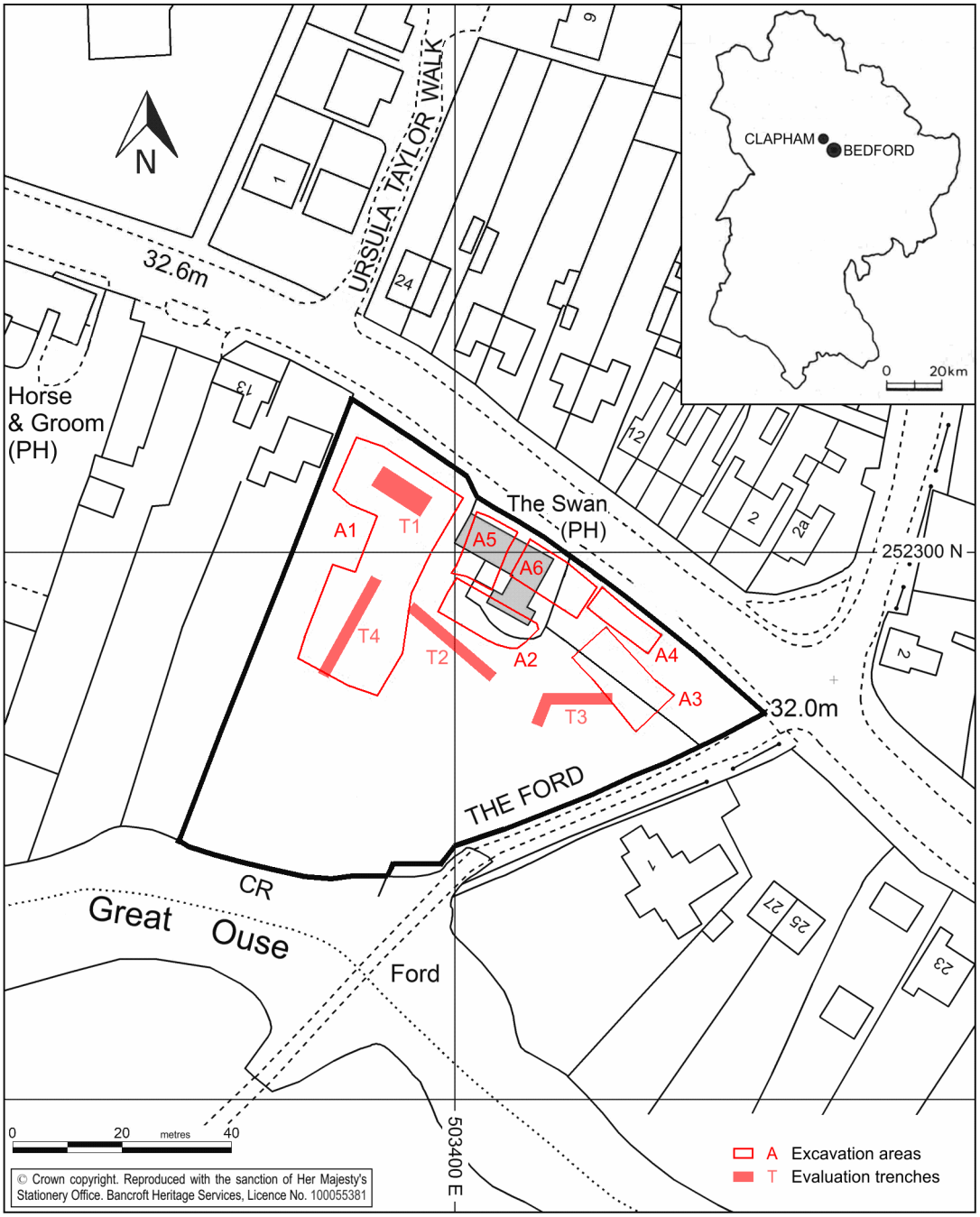

Figure 1: Site location and excavated areas

ARCHAEOLOGICAL BACKGROUND

Known prehistoric activity in the environs of the site comprises a Mesolithic site at Ursula Taylor Lower School (Dawson 1988), to the north of the development, a number of cropmarks in the river valley, notably a possible henge monument (HER16587) to the south-west of the site, and a linear feature to the north-east (HER4483). An assemblage of flints has been recorded north-west of the site at Church Farm (HER16153).

Excavations in advance of the construction of the A6 Clapham bypass produced an extensive Iron Age and Roman site to the north of the development site at Oakley Road (HER EBB660) and Iron Age occupation has also been recorded at the Church Farm site (HER16471). Further settlement of this period has been identified south of the river (HER MBD975) where a corn dryer and kilns were

revealed during quarrying, and a circular cropmark, interpreted as an Iron Age hut, has been recorded further to the south, adjacent to the railway line (HER565). Artefacts of this period have also been recovered at several locations in the village, notably two Gallo-Belgic gold coins (HER15968) found to the east of the development site.

Relatively little is known of the area during the Roman period and Clapham was probably some distance from the main communication routes and areas of Roman settlement (Simco 1984). The aforementioned Iron Age site on the route of the bypass continued into the Roman period, and Roman remains were revealed south of the river during the laying of a pipeline (HER644). Other evidence for the Roman period comprises chance finds of artefacts, notably a gold ring discovered to the south of the development site (HER15864) and a coin of Constantine (HER3218) and pottery recovered from a site on the High Street (HER9855).

The early history of Clapham is not well understood: the village may have originated during the Saxon period. Two silted inlets on the south bank of the river (HER14761) *c.*1km west of the development site have been interpreted as the remains of a Saxon harbour, suggesting that the Ouse may have been of significance for transport and communications during this period.

Clapham appears in the Domesday survey (1086), as *Clopeham* (Williams & Martin 2003, 569). The development site is situated on the edge of the medieval core of the village (HER17067) 200m south of the parish church (HER851). The church tower dates to the Saxon period but the remainder of the building is of medieval date, with later alterations (Pevsner 1968, 69).

The medieval settlement developed around the church and manor house (HER3879). The latter was located on the site of Ursula Taylor Lower School, where excavations have revealed the remains of a range of stone buildings dating from the 12th century. The remains of a watermill (HER1199), possibly that cited in the Domesday survey, have been recorded 0.2km west of the development site. An assemblage of 13th-century pottery was found to the east (HER10531). Several medieval artefacts have also been found in Clapham, notably a pilgrim's *ampulla* (HER15247) and a lead and bronze shovel (HER14966) from allotments west of the development site.

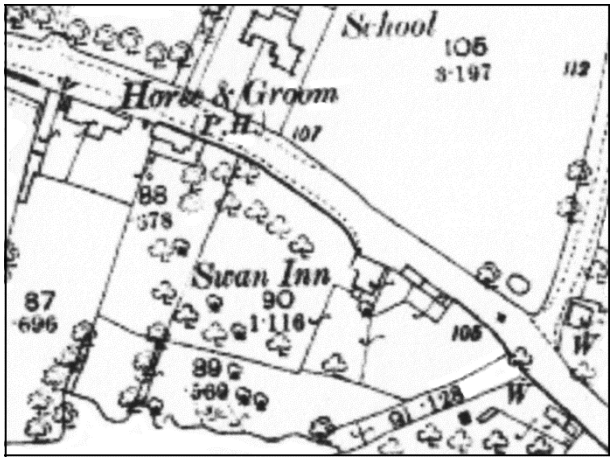

Figure 2: Extract from Ordnance Survey First Edition 25" sheet, 1884

The Swan public house was probably constructed during the 19th century, and appears on the Ordnance Survey First Edition 25" sheet, published in 1884 (Fig. 2). At this time the development site was divided into three land parcels. The public house itself was a two-storey brick building, the main range facing the road (Fig. 3), with a smaller two-storey range to the rear. Buildings, possibly a row of cottages, occupied the street frontage south-east of the public house, on the site of the later car park. Later editions show that by 1901 the site had become a single plot, centred on the *The*

Swan. Single-storey extensions were subsequently added to the west and south. The public house ceased trading in 2006.

Figure 3: *The Swan* from the south, during demolition

METHODS

Following an initial trial-trench evaluation (Muldowney 2012) it was agreed with the Archaeological Advisor that a programme of excavation should be undertaken on the north part of the site, adjacent to the High Street. The south side of the site, close to the river, is subject to flooding, and has been retained as open space in the development. As the excavation was undertaken immediately prior to development, four separate areas (A1-A4) were opened in succession, in order to release land for building according to the developer's schedule. The public house was not fully demolished until after those excavations had been completed, so the area it had occupied was dealt with by a watching brief (A5, A6). Two of the evaluation trenches (T3, T4) were in areas not subject to further excavation. Excavating plant provided by the developer was used to remove topsoil, overburden and modern surfaces under close archaeological supervision: subsequent investigation was carried out by hand.

THE EXCAVATED EVIDENCE

The evaluation and excavation (Fig. 4) revealed two distinct zones of activity on the site. The principal zone comprised excavation area A1, to the west of the former public house, and contained a large number of small pits or postholes, along with some gullies and ditches. The second zone comprised excavation areas A2-A4 and trenches T2 and T3, to the east and south of the public house, and contained mostly large, intercutting pits. Within the footprint of the public house, watching brief area A5 contained significant modern disturbance, and in A6 truncation connected with the building was so severe that no recognisable archaeological deposits remained.

Activity on the site appears to have commenced in the late Saxon or early post-Conquest period, peaking during the 12th-14th century, then falling away from the 15th century until the construction of the public house in the 19th century. As most of the excavated features were discrete and a significant number (*c*.25%) contained no dating evidence, it has proved problematic to determine a meaningful sequence of activity and development for the site. Furthermore, there was little continuity of features between any of the excavation areas so providing a coherent picture covering the whole site has been difficult. Accordingly, the zones of activity are described separately below.

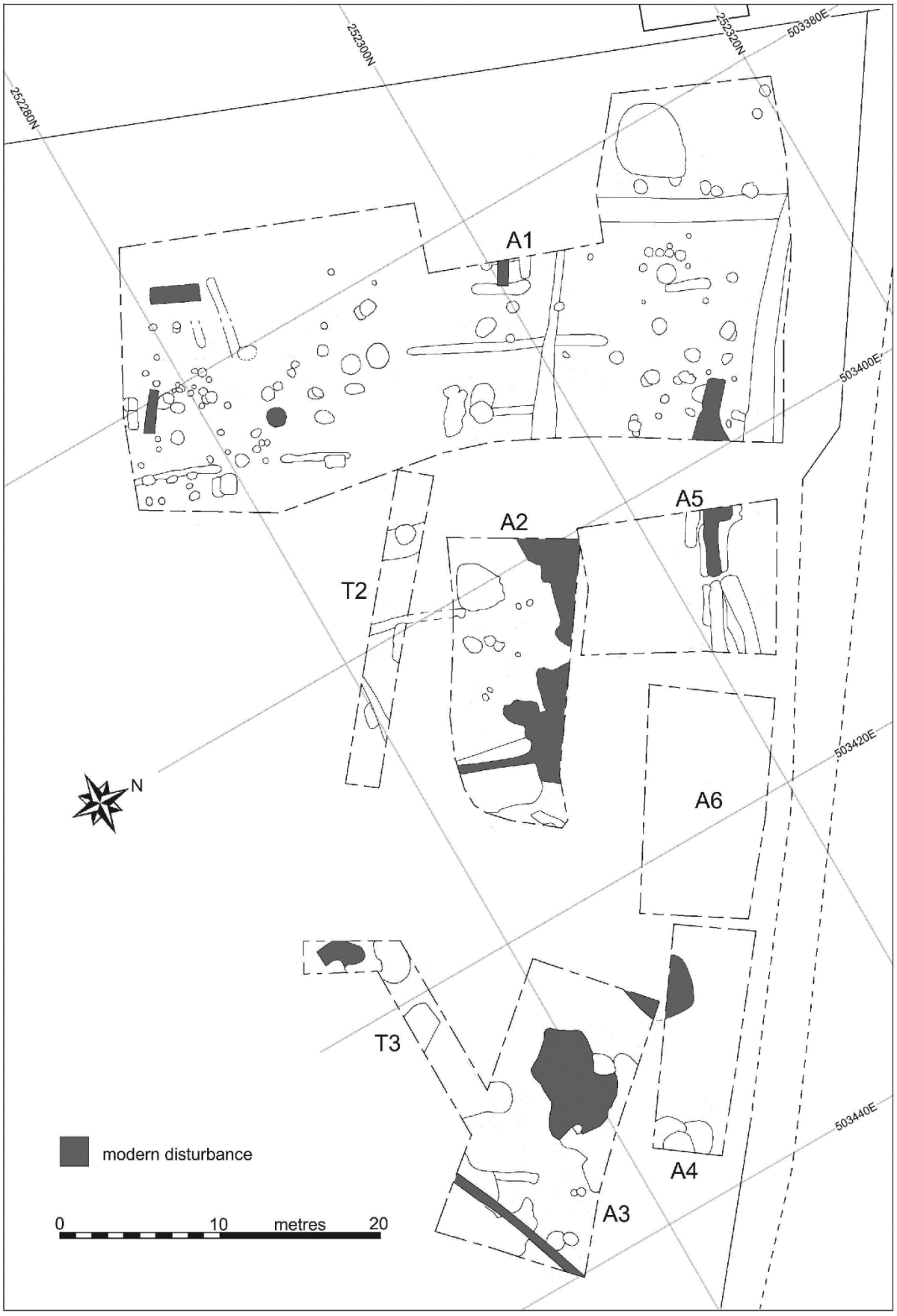

Figure 4: Overall site plan

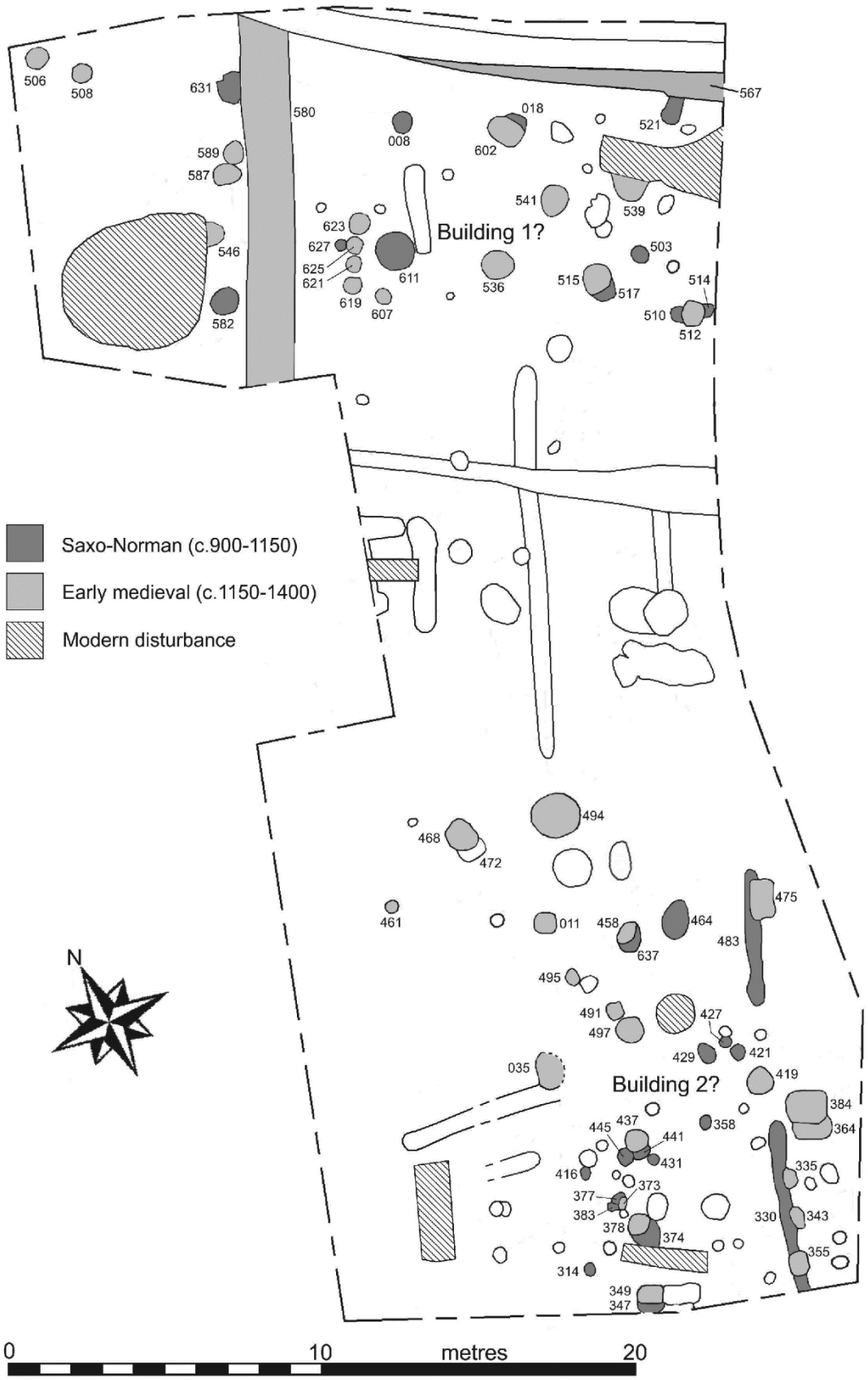

Figure 5: Area A1: Saxo-Norman and early medieval features

Area A1

Saxo-Norman (c.900-1150) (Fig. 5)

Evidence for Saxo-Norman activity is confined to A1, and appears to relate to two possible structures, Buildings 1 and 2, located at the north and south ends of the excavated area respectively. Features assigned to this period comprise mostly postholes and small pits.

Building 1 was aligned north-west to south-east, roughly parallel to the adjoining High Street. It appears to have measured possibly 14m in length and 4.5m wide, and to have been post-built. At least three postholes (008, 018, 631) mark its possible north side, while 503 or 517 along with 611 could indicate its south side. Other postholes in this general area (582, 627) may have been related to this structure. Within the footprint of the building, no features were noted that might have indicated its function.

A number of otherwise undated features at the north end of A1 may belong to this period. Sub-rectangular pit 521 may was truncated by medieval ditch 523, and pit 510 and posthole 514 were cut by medieval posthole 512.

Building 2 was aligned roughly north-south, and was approximately 5m wide by at least 14m long. Its west side was represented by an alignment of four postholes (347, 374, 441 and 637), of which 441 had a central post-pipe (443). The east side was marked by two gullies, 330 (Fig. 6) and 483. As with Building 1, no features were noted within the footprint of Building 2 that might have indicated its function.

Figure 6: Gully 330 (right), cut by posthole 335 (left), facing south-west

In the general area of Building 2, eleven other features (037, 314, 358, 369/371, 416, 421, 427, 429, 431, 445 and 464), all pits or postholes, were assigned a Saxon-Norman date. No specific functions were determined for these features, and their relationship to the building is unknown.

Early Medieval (c.1150-1400) (Fig. 5)

This represents the principal period of activity across the whole site. In A1, the two structures appear to have continued in use, with significant repair or rebuilding, though there are indications that Building 1 at least went out of use during this period.

On the north side of the site, a ditch appears to have been dug at this time, separating the site from the High Street. Of this feature (567) only a small part of its south side remained, as the ditch had been recut on several subsequent occasions (Fig. 7). From the small surviving section, the ditch

appears to have been about 0.6m deep and possibly 1.5-2.0m wide. Its single silty fill contained medieval pottery, animal bone, slag and a horseshoe (SF6), dated to the 11th and 12th centuries.

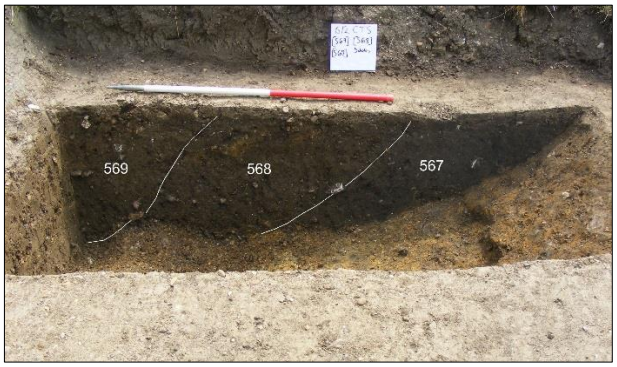

Figure 7: Roadside ditch 567, recut by ditches 563 and 569, facing south-east

During this period, two of the postholes assigned to Building 1 were recut (517 by 515: 018 by 602), indicating replacement of the posts. Similarly, 512 appears to have been a replacement of 510/514, though the latter contained no dating evidence. Other postholes that might belong to this structure 536, 546) date only to this period, and could have entirely destroyed evidence for an earlier feature. The replacement of some posts indicates maintenance rather than rebuilding, and demonstrates that the structure may have remained in use for some considerable time. A fragment of a 13th to 14th-century horseshoe (SF5) was recovered from posthole 536, indicating that the building had ceased to exist by that date.

Figure 8: Postholes 619, 621, 625 and 623, from south

A number of features support the suggestion that Building 1 went out of use during the medieval period. Ditch 580, a north-south feature with sloping sides and a rounded base, 1.4m wide and 0.4m deep, cut across the west end of the structure, truncating Saxo-Norman posthole 631. This ditch was at right angles to the High Street, and could have been a property boundary, a drainage feature or both. Its fill contained only small amounts of pottery, animal bone and slag, suggesting that it was not open during occupation of the immediate area, or that it was kept clean. To the east of the ditch and parallel to it, a row of four closely-spaced postholes (619, 621, 623, 625) cut across the line of the south wall of Building 1 (Fig. 8). All were c.0.45m in diameter and c.0.35m deep. The row measured *c*.2.5m in length: its function remains uncertain.

In addition to the above, a number of features dated to this period are present in the vicinity of Building 1, but with no indication of how or if they relate to that structure. Within the footprint of the building, midway between the north and south walls, was pit 541. This measured 0.7m in diameter and 0.2m deep, with curving sides. At its base was a large flat limestone slab. Its fill contained eleven sherds of medieval pottery, a bone fragment, a nail and a piece of sheet lead (SF1). At the western end of the building were two closely-spaced pits, 587 and 589, close to the west side of ditch 580. These features measured 0.9m and 0.6m in diameter respectively, and were both 0.5m deep. Their single fills each contained only a single medieval sherd, and small quantities of slag. About 7m distant, in the north-west corner of A1, were two shallow pits/postholes, 506 and 508. Their fills also contained few finds.

Use of Building 2 appeared to continue into the medieval period, undergoing repairs. The gullies marking the west side of the building appear to have been replaced by a row of five postholes. Of these, three (335, 343 and 355) were cut into the east side of gully 330. Posthole 419 was inserted in the gap between the two gullies, and a large rectangular posthole (475) was cut into the north end of gully 483. On the east side, several of the original postholes had been recut in a manner similar to Building 1. The line of the west wall now comprised postholes 458 (replacing 637), 497, 437 (replacing 441), 378 (replacing 374) and 349 replacing 347). It is possible that 497 had entirely removed any trace of an earlier posthole. Postholes 419 and 437 (Fig. 10) each contained a stack of packing stones to support a post.

Figure 9: Posthole 437 with packing stones *in situ*, facing south-east

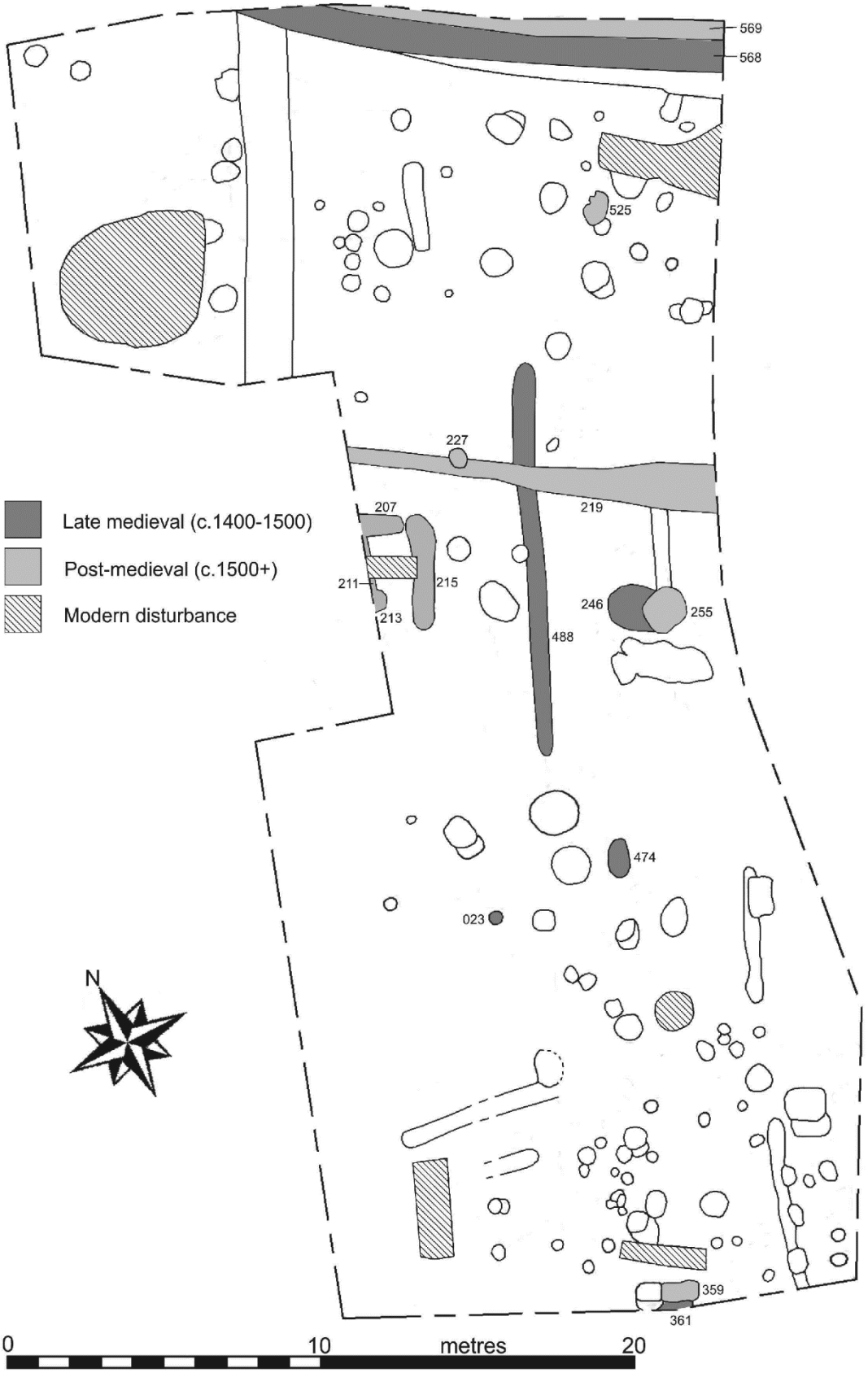

Figure 10: Area A1: late medieval and post-medieval features

As with Building 1, the area around Building 2 contained a number of pits and postholes, the functions of which remain uncertain. To the east of the building, pit 384 cut into pit 364. Pit 384 had steep sides, a flat base, and was almost one metre across and 0.4m deep: 364 was slightly smaller. Each contained small quantities of medieval pottery, and the partial skeleton of a very young piglet. To the north of the building, pit 468 cut an earlier, undated pit. To the east of 468 was a large circular pit (494), with steep sides and a flat base, 1.15m across and 0.5m deep. Its single fill contained a fragment (SF2) from a large Millstone Grit hand quern.

Late Medieval (1400-1500) (Fig. 10)

By the 15th century, Buildings 1 and 2 appear to have gone out of use, and the level of activity on this part of the site had significantly reduced. On the north side of A1, the roadside ditch bordering the High Street silted up and was recut (568), destroying most of the earlier medieval ditch (567). The recut appeared to be a similar width and depth to the earlier ditch. It also cut medieval ditch 580, suggesting that the latter was related to the original roadside ditch, but had by this time fallen out of use.

Elsewhere on A1, only a few features attest to sporadic activity. In the centre of the area, a shallow north-south gully (488) was dug. It was 0.4m wide, 0.16m deep, with steeply sloping sides and a rounded base, and extended for *c*.13m. Its single fill contained small amounts of pottery, animal bone and slag, and a residual, highly abraded sand-tempered sherd of probable late Iron Age date. Two metres east of the gully was pit 246, a near-circular pit 0.7m across and 0.72m deep, with steep sides and a flat base. Its two fills contained small amounts of pottery and animal bone. About 8m to the south of pit 246 was a smaller oval pit (474). This measured 1.0 × 0.6m across and 0.16m deep, with steep sides and a flat base. Its single fill contained 86 animal bone fragments, including the partial skeleton of a sub-adult sheep. An isolated posthole (023), 4.5m to the south-west, contained 30 late medieval sherds in an oxidised sand-tempered fabric.

Post-Medieval (1500-1900) (Fig. 10)

Activity in A1 appears to continue at a very low level in the post-medieval period until the construction of the public house, sometime in the 19th century. At the north end of the area, the roadside ditch was again recut during this period: this time, the recut (569) was closer to the road, and therefore largely beyond the boundary of the site (Plate 11). South of the roadside ditch, irregular pit 525 contained a single post-medieval sherd, along with some iron nails and slag. Moving southwards, late medieval pit 246 was cut by a slightly smaller pit (255). This has been assigned a post-medieval date, but contained no dateable finds and could equally be modern. Towards the centre of A1, a ditch (219) ran east-west across the excavated area, parallel to the roadside ditch, cutting through late medieval gully 488. It alignment coincides with a line of trees shown on the Ordnance Survey sheet of 1884 (Fig. 2), so it was probably a boundary. Just to the south of 488, on the west edge of the excavated area, were parts of two shallow gullies (207, 215), at right-angles to each other. These were originally assigned to the medieval period and interpreted as beam slots for a small building, but their rounded profiles and the presence of post-medieval clay pipe fragments in their fills suggests otherwise.

Areas A2-A5; Trenches T2 & T3 (Fig. 11)

As noted previously, the character of this part of the site, where the public house and its car park had been located, were completely different in character to A1. For the most part, the features in these areas comprised complex series of intercutting pits of medieval and later date, truncated by a significant degree of modern disturbance. Only in those areas nearest A1 (T2, A2, A5) were encountered ditches, pits and postholes similar to those described above.

Medieval (c.1150-1500)

The roadside ditch identified in A1 was not present in A5, as might be expected. Instead, a complex of east-west aligned ditches and gullies (638, 640, 642, 646, 652, 660) was located, following a course parallel to and just south of the projected alignment of the roadside ditch. All these features had similar profiles and single fills: all had been partly truncated by the construction of the public house. Only three (638, 640, 652) contained any dateable ceramics. The function of these features, and their relationship to the roadside ditch, remains undetermined.

In A2, Pit 612 was a large discrete sub-circular feature, 2.0 × 3.4m across and 0.95m deep, with steep sides and uneven base. Its single fill contained the single largest pottery assemblage from the excavation (91 sherds), animal bone, and a very high concentration of charred grain, suggesting domestic occupation in the vicinity. It also contained a quantity of smelting/smithing slag as well as a *tuyère*.

At the east end of A2 was a complex of three, possibly four pits (583, 595, 598 and 605), all about 0.4-0.5m deep, covering an area *c*.4 × 5m. The fills of these pits were similar, so it was not possible to determine relationships. Taken together, 583, 595 and 598 contained one of the largest assemblages of medieval pottery (76 sherds, 0.53kg) recovered on the site. Pit 583 also contained a small quantity of animal bone, and a fragment from a hand quern of Mayen lava (SF9).

Three medieval pit complexes were located in A3. On the north-east side, pits 275, 277, 287, 300 and 305 had been heavily truncated by modern disturbance. The complex covered an area of 9 by at least 3m, and the pits were typically *c*.0.5m deep. Again, similar fills prevented determination of relationships. However, of these pits 275 was the only one containing pottery: the rest were devoid of finds. In the east corner of A3 was a circular pit (271), 0.9m across and 0.4m deep, cut by an undated pit (269) and containing three sherds of medieval pottery.

On the south side of A3, partly obscured by post-medieval spread 051 (below), was a small sub-circular pit complex comprised of three pits (280, 282, 290). Together, they covered an area about 2m across and were *c*.0.3m deep. Pits 280 and 282 contained small quantities of medieval pottery: 282 also contained an incomplete unglazed floor tile. 290 contained no finds.

At the east end of A3 a pit complex comprising pits 286, 296, 404 and 406, covered an area at least 5 × 6m. The pits were generally shallower than those described above: again, fills were too similar to permit relationships to be determined. Only Pit 286 contained pottery, comprising 31 sherds of late medieval wares, suggesting that this complex was later than others in the vicinity. On the north side of the complex, a contemporary north-south gully (273) was traced for 2.5m before disappearing into the complex. A sample taken from pit 286 contained particularly rich charred cereal assemblages, indicating the discard of processed food waste and suggesting domestic activity in the vicinity.

In A4, a complex of three intercutting sub-circular pits (661, 663, 668) was located at the east end of the area. In this instance it was possible to determine relationships: 668 was the earliest feature, c.0.45m deep and containing three medieval sherds, followed by 661 and then 663. The latter features were shallower (*c*.0.25m deep), and contained no diagnostic finds.

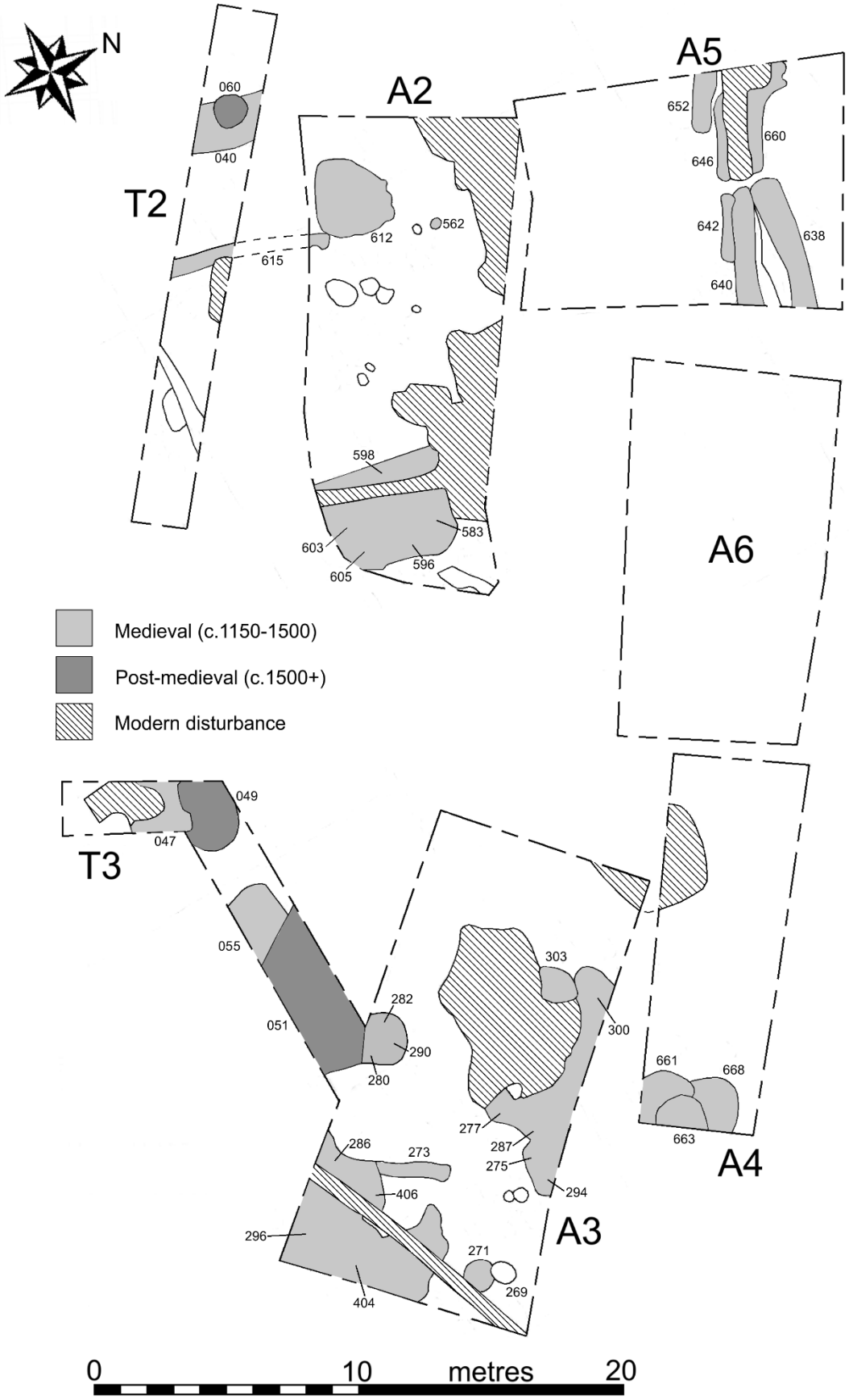

Figure 11: Areas A2-A5; Trenches T2 & T3, medieval and post-medieval features

Two ditches of medieval date, both aligned north-south, were present in T2. Ditch 040 was 1.1m wide and 0.5m deep, with a steep-sided, flat-bottomed profile. Its single fill contained a significant quantity of medieval sherds, along with animal bone, slag and ceramic building material. It was cut by undated pit 060. It did not appear in the adjoining area A2, though it could have continued northwards between A1 and A2 as far as the roadside ditch. Four metres to the east, ditch 615 was of far smaller proportions. Its single fill contained two small medieval sherds, and it extended into A2, terminating next to pit 512.

In T3 two possible medieval pits were identified, much disturbed by more recent features. Pit 055 contained nearly 23 sherds (nearly 0.7kg) of medieval pottery, including six sherds from an elaborately decorated jug. Pit 047 contained a much smaller pottery assemblage of the same date.

Post-Medieval (1500-1900) (Fig. 11)

Evidence for post-medieval activity in this part of the site, prior to the construction of the public house, probably in the mid-19th century, is slight, comprising 049 and 051, the remains of a series of post-medieval layers partly obscuring pits 047 and 055 in T3, and pit complex 280/282/290 in A3. Context 049 produced a single post-medieval sherd, three pieces of dense, almost vitrified post-medieval tile, several fragments of glass and an iron nail: 051 was not excavated.

WORKED FLINT

Alastair Hancock

Introduction

Twelve pieces of struck flint were recovered from the fills of features dated to the medieval or later periods, and the assemblage is entirely residual. Three flints have morphological attributes broadly indicative of the Late Mesolithic and Early Neolithic periods, though most of the pieces suggest human activity of the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age.

Methodology

All the flints were physically examined and the attributes of each piece were recorded and compiled to form a digital archive. Macroscopic analysis determined position in the reduction sequence and any observable characteristics of the reduction technology, together with an assessment of the functional potential of the different elements of the assemblage. The catalogue also records the presence of patination, cortex, and whether any piece has been burnt. Metrical data was recorded for complete flakes, and each piece was weighed. Selected artefacts were examined with a x6 hand-lens to determine whether there was any evidence for localised modifications, indicative of use.

Description of the Assemblage

Raw Material

The quality and colour of the flint varies somewhat across the assemblage, but the most common raw materials are a light brown opaque flint (5 pieces) and a dark brown opaque flint (3 pieces). Six pieces of struck flint have surviving areas of cortical surface which vary slightly in thickness and in colour between white, cream and reddish-brown. The variation in the colour of the flint and the morphology of the cortex suggests that the raw materials were obtained from more than one source. Four of the six pieces, for example, have thin, pitted and abraded cortical surfaces, some also having recorticated, thermally-fractured surfaces. These characteristics are broadly indicative of raw materials obtained from deposits created by high-energy fluvial environments, such as fluvio-glacial sheet deposits or river gravels. In contrast, two pieces have thin cortex with a smooth and

unabraded surface. These are attributes of the irregular nodules that erode from surface exposures of chalk and can also be obtained from Clay-with-Flints deposits and Head deposits derived from chalk strata.

Condition

On the whole the flints are in an unrolled, fresh condition. Three exhibit slight damage to the margins, but it is unclear whether this is incidental or results from use. Three pieces are patinated: one blade-like flake is entirely white; a squat flake and a core exhibit areas of slight milky discolouration. The patinated pieces all have morphological characteristics, suggesting later Neolithic and early Bronze Age reduction strategies.

None of the struck flint was burnt.

Composition

A bladelet (context 618) and two small flakes (contexts 205, 592) preserve the scars of narrow blade-like removals, together with smaller removals that probably result from core maintenance. These attributes suggest Mesolithic and Early Neolithic core reduction strategies.

The remainder of the small collection of worked flint has morphological characteristics indicative of Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age industries. A number of the pieces are products of carefully controlled reduction, but it is also apparent that they were produced by freehand hard hammer percussion. As such, there is little evidence of deliberate platform edge preparation, a degree of variation in the depth of the platform remnant and some crushing caused by the impact of the hammer-stone. While the prominence of the bulbs of percussion varies greatly, it is notable that there is a low incidence of irregular terminations (only one stepped distal end).

Discussion

The assemblage includes three pieces discarded during the Late Mesolithic or Early Neolithic periods. Characterisation of the types of activity is constrained by the small size of the lithic assemblage but the Ouse valley will have contained abundant wild resources exploited by hunter-gatherers or transient farmers of the periods.

The remainder of this small collection of struck flint is broadly characteristic of lithic technologies employed during the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age (early third millennium cal BC to mid-second millennium cal BC). The only complete pieces with secondary retouch are an end scraper (context 205) and two side scrapers (contexts 242, 594). These utilitarian implements are only broadly chronologically diagnostic, as they are generally the most common tool-type found in Neolithic and Bronze Age assemblages. Characterisation of the later prehistoric activity is constrained by the small size of the lithic assemblage, but the recovery of part of a core, three pieces of irregular waste and two flakes indicates that there was at least one episode of core reduction at the site.

THE POTTERY

Jackie Wells

Methodology

For each context, pottery was recorded by fabric type and vessel form, and quantified by minimum sherd count and weight. This information was entered onto an *Access* table. Individual fabric

and/or form types, the date of the latest sherd in each context, and assessment of sherd size, abrasion and fragmentation have been used to arrive at overall context spot dates.

Quantification & Date Range

The excavation recovered a small assemblage comprising 729 sherds (6.2kg), spanning the Roman period to the present day (Table 1). Most of the pottery is datable to the early medieval period.

Pottery Date	Sherd No	% Sherd	Wt (g)	% Wt
Roman	1	0.1	53	0.8
Saxo-Norman (900-1150)	252	34.6	1,596	25.4
Early and high medieval (1150-1400)	384	52.7	3,786	60.1
Late medieval (1400-1500)	63	8.7	540	8.6
Late medieval/early post-medieval transition	6	0.8	131	2.1
Post-medieval (1500-1750)	14	1.9	105	1.7
Modern (post-1750)	7	0.9	62	1.2
Unid	2	0.3	7	0.1
	729	**100**	**6,280**	**100**

Table 1: Pottery quantification

Type Series

Pottery fabrics present on the site are listed in Table 2 in chronological order, using common names and type codes in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series.

Provenance

Pottery was collected from 107 features across the site. Over 70% of the assemblage derives from pits, 19% from ditches/gullies, and the remainder from other feature types (Table 3). Only three features (pits 055, 399, 612) contained assemblages weighing in excess of 500g, and 28 features yielded only single sherds. The pottery is generally fragmented, with an average sherd weight of 9g, though it survives in fair to good condition. Few vessels are represented by more than one sherd.

Description of the Assemblage

Roman

The earliest diagnostic pottery comprises an abraded, square rim, white-ware sherd from a jar or cooking pot, a probable product of the Nene Valley industry. A small quantity of Roman pottery was recovered during excavations nearby at Ursula Taylor Lower School (Dawson 1988), and casual finds of Roman date are known from the vicinity (Clarke 2011).

Saxo-Norman

The Saxo-Norman assemblage comprises 252 sherds (1.5kg) of shell-tempered St Neots-type ware (fabric B01 and variants). The fabric characteristics indicate a late date in the St Neots ware sequence, *i.e.* late 11th to early 12th century. Vessel forms are mainly jars with plain everted rims, some with sooted exterior surfaces, indicating their use as cooking pots. A range of bowls with inturned, hammerhead and simple upright rims, and a single 'top hat' jar also occur. Vessel wall thickness ranges from 3–14mm. Decoration is sparse, and comprises finger-tip impressions, either in the form of applied strips, or directly impressed into jar rims and the carination of bowls. A single glazed sherd (2g) of 10th to 12th-century Stamford ware (C12) represents a regional import from Lincolnshire. Twenty-five features located in A1 are datable to the Saxo-Norman period, and St Neots-type sherds also occur as residual finds in early medieval features.

Fabric type	Common name	Sherd No.	Wt (g)
Roman			
R03	White ware	1	53
Saxo-Norman			
B01	St Neots-type	101	693
B01A	St Neots-type (orange)	91	510
B01B	St Neots-type (fine)	21	216
B01C	St Neots-type (mixed)	27	138
B04	St Neots-type (coarse)	11	37
C12	Stamford ware	1	2
Early and high medieval			
B07	Shell	194	1,875
B09	Lyveden ware	7	49
C01	Sand	29	287
C02	Sand (red quartz)	1	13
C03	Fine sand	55	730
C03A	Fine sand and flint	2	13
C04	Coarse sand	22	137
C05	Sand (red margins)	29	245
C09	Brill/Boarstall ware (fine)	7	37
C59A	Coarse sand (pasty)	10	66
C60	Hertfordshire-type grey ware	1	14
C61	Sand (calcareous inclusions)	4	116
C67	Sand (mixed inclusions)	3	38
C71	Sand (buff-grey cored)	6	36
C75	Sand (micaceous)	13	129
C	Non-specific medieval ware	1	2
Late medieval			
E01	Reduced sandy ware	29	191
E01D	Reduced sandy ware (buff-red margins)	4	41
E02	Oxidised sandy ware	30	308
Late medieval/early post-medieval			
C66	Late transitional Brill/Boarstall ware	4	85
E03	Oxidised smooth sandy ware	1	35
P23	Raaren	1	11
Post-medieval			
P01	Glazed red earthenware (fine)	3	33
P03	Black-glazed earthenware	6	56
P14	Blackware	2	4
P26	Martincamp	1	3
P36A	Brown salt-glazed stoneware	1	8
P57	Midland Yellow	1	1
Modern (post-1750)			
P35	English porcelain	1	2
P39	Mocha ware	3	8
P45	Transfer-printed ware	1	1
P50	White stoneware	1	34
P100	Miscellaneous mass-produced ware	1	17
UNID	Unidentified / undatable	2	7

Table 2: Pottery type series and assemblage

Feature Type	Sherd No.	% Sherd	Wt (g)	% Wt
Pit	531	72.8	4,431	70.5
Ditch / Gully	138	19.0	1,249	19.8
Post hole	38	5.2	338	5.4
Hollow	18	2.5	186	3.0
Topsoil	3	0.4	54	0.9
Post pipe	1	0.1	22	0.4
	729	**100**	**6,280**	**100**

Table 3: Pottery quantification by feature type

Early & High Medieval

Pottery of early and high medieval date totals 384 sherds, weighing 3.7kg. The assemblage comprises principally wheel-thrown shell-tempered vessels of 12th to 13th-century date (B07), and sherds of unglazed Lyveden/Stanion ware (B09), types known to derive from production centres on the Beds/Bucks/Northants borders. Vessel forms are jars of varying diameter, with simple or square rims, bowls with upright, rounded or inturned rims, and jugs, some of the latter with thumbed decoration. The rest of the assemblage comprises locally manufactured sand-tempered wares (C01–C05; C59A; C60; C61; C67; C71; C75), occurring in a similar range of forms to the shelly vessels. Sooting marks on both shell- and sand-tempered sherds confirm that a proportion of these types represent kitchen wares.

Decoration comprises thumbing/pinching and incised linear motifs. The upper fill of pit 055 yielded six sherds (487g) from a jug with a rim diameter of 110mm. The vessel is elaborately decorated with horizontal grooves at the neck, a finger nail impressed shoulder, combed body, and a stabbed and thumbed strap handle. A partial rim and rod handle (102g) from a pipkin with a diameter of 140mm was recovered from ditch 640. The sherd has incised zig-zag decoration along the rim, a combed body, and a stabbed and incised lattice motif on the handle.

Ten high medieval sherds represent regional fine ware imports from Northamptonshire (Lyveden/Stanion ware) and Buckinghamshire (Brill-Boarstall ware). Diagnostic forms are glazed jugs with applied decoration.

Fifty-three features are datable to the early/high medieval periods. The largest assemblages derived from the fills of pit 612 and 055, which respectively contained 753g and 668g of pottery.

Late Medieval

Wheel-thrown pottery in the south-east Midlands late medieval reduced-ware tradition (E01; E01D) totals 33 sherds (232g), representing ten separate vessels. Vessel forms are a rectangular rim bowl; a strap-handle from a jug; and a fine-walled jar, the latter with horizontal grooves and applied vertical strip decoration. Thirty contemporary sherds (308g) in an oxidised sand-tempered fabric (E02) occurred in posthole 023. Forms are straight-sided bowls with rectangular or simple everted rims, jars and jugs with angular rims. Jugs are decorated with splashed exterior glazes.

Eleven features are datable to the late medieval period, the largest assemblage deriving from ditch terminal 273 (488).

Late Medieval/Early Post-Medieval

Pottery of transitional late medieval/early post-medieval date comprises four sherds of Brill/Boarstall ware (C66), and single sherds of oxidised smooth sandy ware (E03) and Raaren stoneware (P23), the latter a German import. Three features (pits 255, 399 and ditch 219) are datable to this period.

Post-Medieval & Modern

Pottery datable to the post-medieval period totals fourteen sherds (105g). Glazed red earthenwares of 17th-century date constitute the bulk of the assemblage, with two sherds of Blackware, and single sherds of brown salt-glazed stoneware, Midland Yellow, and a body sherd from a Martincamp flask, the latter an import from northern France. Mass-produced wares of 18th to 19th-century date comprise three sherds of Mocha ware, and single sherds of English porcelain, white stoneware, transfer-printed ware, and modern red earthenware (total weight 62g).

Most of the modern pottery derived from pits 044 and 449: most of the disparate post-medieval assemblage, given its size and condition, may be considered intrusive finds in earlier features.

Unidentified

Two highly abraded sand-tempered sherds (total weight 7g) of probable late Iron Age date occurred as residual finds in medieval ditch 488 and pit 595. The small size and poor condition of the sherds make positive identification problematic, although they clearly pre-date the Saxo-Norman period. Evidence for Iron Age domestic occupation is known from the vicinity (Dawson 1988; Clarke 2011).

Discussion

The pottery assemblage comprised sherds from the Roman to modern period, most of the sherds being dateable to AD1150 to 1400. Two sherds of probable Iron Age origin were also identified as residual finds. The Roman period was represented by a single residual sherd of white ware. The Saxo-Norman assemblage was characterised by shell-tempered St Neots-type ware of late 11th to early 12th-century date. Over 250 sherds of Saxo-Norman pottery were recovered.

The medieval assemblage comprises principally wheel-thrown shell-tempered vessels of 12th–13th-century date, and sherds of unglazed Lyveden/Stanion ware. Forms represented include jars, jugs and bowls, some of which retained sooting, indicating kitchen wares. Regional imports of fine ware were limited to ten sherds from Northamptonshire and Buckinghamshire. Ten separate vessels of wheel-thrown late medieval reduced ware were recovered and also comprised jars, jugs and bowls. Most of the fourteen sherds of post-medieval pottery were recovered from pits 044 and 449, and include regional wares as well as a body sherd from a Martincamp flask, an import from northern France.

The presence of residual pre-medieval sherds was not unexpected as other examples have been recovered from interventions in the vicinity, particularly from the Iron Age, during excavations at the Ursula Taylor Lower School (Dawson 1988), within a few hundred metres of the excavation at *The Swan*. The range of fabric types and vessel forms compares well with pottery recovered from earlier excavations in the Clapham area (e.g. HER MBD 975; Dawson 1988) and from various sites in Bedford (Baker *et al*. 1979).

CERAMIC BUILDING MATERIAL

Jackie Wells

Methodology

For each context, brick and tile were recorded by fabric type and form in accordance with the Bedfordshire Ceramic Type Series, and quantified by minimum fragment count and weight. This information was entered onto an *Access* table. Where possible, the building material was also spot dated.

Quantification, Variety & Provenance

Forty-three brick and tile fragments, weighing 1.5kg, and three pieces of fired clay (12g) were collected from eighteen features. Although fairly fragmented, with an average sherd weight of 35g, the brick and tile survives in good condition. Four fabric types occur, with oxidised sand-tempered examples predominating (Table 4).

Fabric type	Common name	Frag. No.	Wt (g)
SDY	Sand	27	1,063
CAL	Calcareous	7	268
SHL	Shell	7	172
GLT	Gault	2	33
		43	**1,536**

Table 4: CBM quantification by fabric type

The earliest diagnostic building material, datable to the Roman period, comprises seven shell-tempered pieces of roof tile (172g), which occurred as a residual find in ditch 032. They have a thickness of *c*.17mm and are likely to derive from an *imbrex*.

Most of the assemblage comprises flat roof tile fragments datable from the late 14th–15th centuries onwards. They are 12–17mm thick; one retains two circular peg holes (diameter 12mm), and one a partial square nail hole. Several pieces have mortared edges, indicating use. An intrusive fragment of sand-tempered post-medieval flat roof tile (6g) was recovered from pit 035, and three pieces of dense, almost vitrified post-medieval tile came from pit 049. The latter also contained two pieces (32g) of modern land drain.

Floor tiles comprise an incomplete unglazed floor tile, recovered from medieval pit 282, and two abraded, glazed rectilinear 'two-colour' tile fragments from modern hollow 544. The floor tile has straight moulded and sanded edges, a worn upper surface, and measures 35mm deep and 105mm wide, consistent with the dimensions of brick floor tile recovered from excavations in Bedford (Baker *et al*. 1979, 255). The glazed tiles have bevelled, knife-trimmed edges and measure 25–27mm in depth. Both have a basic lead glaze applied over a white slip, producing variable yellow/brown surfaces. One tile is decorated with a simple geometric motif, and the second with a vegetal design, similar to an example recovered from excavations in the vicinity of Clapham Manor House (Dawson 1988, fig. 13.1). The tiles are likely to be of late 14th–15th-century date. In the absence of any other evidence for a substantial building on the site at this date, these fragments must represent stray finds, brought onto the site as hardcore, or possibly in manure.

Fired clay comprises an amorphous sandy fragment (9g) recovered from undated pit 025 and two pieces of degraded brick or tile (3g), from late medieval ditch 041.

REGISTERED FINDS

Nina Crummy & Bob Zeepvat

Eleven objects were recovered by hand excavation, from Areas 1 and 2. Six are iron; two are non-ferrous, comprising a fragment of lead and a modern copper-alloy keyhole escutcheon plate; two are fragments of millstone or quernstone; one is a fragment of smelting slag. They range in date from medieval to modern. Three are of interest: a large fragment of a Millstone Grit quernstone (SF2) and two horseshoes (SF5, SF6).

Quernstone

Fragment, possibly of the lower stone, from a large Millstone Grit hand quern (Fig. 12). The rim is bevelled; the section tapers slightly to the rim. Diameter approximately 720mm, maximum thickness 77mm.
SF2. Area 1, Context 493, fill of pit 494.

The size of this quern may suggest commercial use. Its source is the Peak District: Millstone Grit querns were in common use generally from the Iron Age to the medieval period. Biddle (1990, 883)

comments that hand querns largely went out of use in Winchester in the 13th century, a time when the use of hand querns may have been prohibited by landlords who also owned watermills. It is possible that they may have continued in use for longer in rural areas such as Clapham, where control by landlords may not have been as firm (King 1987, 95).

Figure 12: Quernstone fragment SF2 (*scale 10cm*)

Horseshoes

Iron horseshoe branch, with wide web and right-angled calkin at the heel. Length 86mm.
SF5. Area 1, Context 537, fill of pit 536.

Complete iron horseshoe with blunt heels. Length 107mm, width 95mm.
SF6. Area 1, Context 572, fill of ditch 567.

Both horseshoes were X-rayed to determine their precise form and date (Fig. 13). SF5 is a fragment of a Clarke Type 4 horseshoe, dated in London to the 13th to 14th centuries (Clark 1995, 88-89). It was found in pit 536, towards the north end of A1. The complete horseshoe, SF6, is Clarke Type 2A, which dates to the 11th and 12th centuries (*ibid*, 88-91, 96-7). It was recovered, perhaps unsurprisingly, from the medieval roadside ditch at the north end of A1.

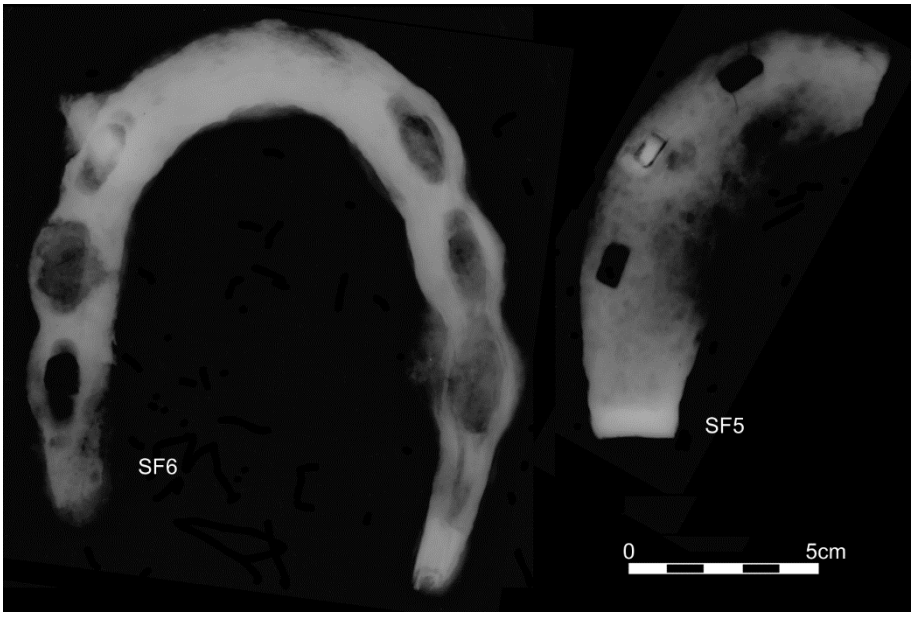

Figure 13: Horseshoes SF5 and SF6, X-rays *(scale 5cm)*

The absence of copper-alloy and bone Saxo-Norman artefacts, particularly dress and toilet accessories, recreational items, domestic equipment such as spinning and weaving tools, and specialist craft tools, points to an agricultural or industrial character for the site. The lack of nails and other structural fittings also suggests that there were no substantial buildings in the immediate area. The two quern fragments could be an indication that the site was principally used for crop-processing.

ANIMAL BONE

James Rackham

A small collection of 129 animal bone fragments and four partial skeletons were hand-recovered. These have been identified and catalogued (Table 5). Bones of horse, cattle, sheep, pig, dog, fallow deer, roe deer and chicken have been identified. Cattle bones predominate, followed by sheep and then pig. Several of the bones had been broken during excavation. Most of the material was in very good condition, only a few bones showing evidence for surface erosion. A number of fragments showed evidence for dog gnawing or tooth marks, while a number were butchered by chops or knife cuts. One bone, from a probable post-medieval context, was butchered by sawing.

Interestingly, sheep bones occur with the greatest frequency in the bone fragments sorted from environmental sampling, which raises the possibility that the hand-collected material is biased against this smaller species.

The four partial skeletons include two very young piglets from contexts 363 (Pit 361) and 365 (Pit 364), a third similar piglet from 385 (Pit 384), and a sub-adult sheep from 473 (Pit 474), some of whose skeleton was recovered in the environmental sample from that context. The presence of an innominate of roe deer and a femur of a fallow deer indicates consumption of venison. Chicken identified from only two bones seems under-represented, again possibly a factor of recovery. Bone, mostly from smaller animals, birds and fish was recovered during processing of environmental samples: this is discussed below.

	No. frags	Skeletons
Horse	8	
Cattle	43	
Cattle size	26	
Sheep/goat	21	
Sheep		1
Sheep size	11	
Pig	11	3
Dog	1	
Chicken	2	
Roe deer	1	
Fallow deer	1	
Unidentified	3	

Table 5: Frequency of identified fragments of bone and partial skeletons in the hand-collected sample

ENVIRONMENTAL

James Rackham

Introduction

Thirty-seven bulk samples were taken from the evaluation and excavation from as wide a range of features as possible, the majority coming from Area 1, where most of the features were located. These were submitted to the Environmental Archaeology Consultancy for assessment (Rackham 2012). Further analysis of a selection of these samples was recommended in the post-excavation assessment: unfortunately, the flots were lost during clearance of ASC's premises, so this additional work was not possible: the following report is therefore based on the initial assessment.

Methods

Sample volume and weight was measured prior to processing. The samples were washed in a 'Siraf' tank (Williams 1973) using a flotation sieve with a 0.5mm mesh and an internal wet sieve of 1mm mesh for the residue. Both residue and flot were dried and the residues subsequently re-floated to ensure the efficient recovery of charred material. The dry volume of the flots was measured and the volume and weight of the residues recorded. The residue was sorted by eye, and environmental and archaeological finds picked out, noted on the assessment sheet and bagged independently. A magnet was run through each residue in order to recover magnetised material. The residue was then discarded. The flot of each sample was studied using up to x30 magnification: the presence of environmental finds (*i.e*. snails, charcoal, carbonised seeds, bones, etc) was noted and their abundance and species diversity recorded on the assessment sheet.

Results

Six of the samples have been assigned to the Saxo-Norman period (c.900-1150), thirteen to early medieval (1150-1400), six to late medieval (1400-1500), one to the post-medieval period (1500+), nine remain undated and two have been interpreted as modern (Table 6).

Most of the samples washed down to a coarse residue of sub-rounded flint and pebble gravel, with occasional ironstone, sandstone and quartz, with concreted sediment in the finer fractions and occasional small fragments of coal, fired earth, bone, charcoal and other archaeological material. There is a clear indication of iron smelting among the metalworking debris on the site: this is reported on separately. Much of the other archaeological debris extracted from the samples reflects domestic occupation, with pottery sherds occurring in most samples, a little bone, a little marine shell, a little fired earth, coal and cinder. Occasional ferrous items, wire, copper-alloy pins, and small glass sherds occur. The latter include several small chips (3-4mm) likely to be of recent origin that have moved down through the soil. Similarly a few small chips of blue-glazed pottery, such as willow pattern, suggest some small intrusive fragments.

Bone is relatively infrequent in the samples (see above) with rarely more than 2-3g being recovered, although context 473 (sample 24) included a sheep burial, part of which was retrieved in the sample. A few fragments of bone were recovered from most samples with cattle, pig, sheep/goat, house mouse, *c.f.* harvest mouse, rat, field vole, rabbit, a small carnivore, common shrew, mole, jackdaw?, small bird, snake, newt and frog/toad present. Preliminarily identified fish include eel, herring and cyprinid, but other taxa are present and although never abundant, fish bones or scales occur in fifteen of the samples. The relatively small bone assemblage from the samples may be due to the small sample size, context selection or the density of occupation on the site. Saxo-Norman and medieval rubbish deposits might be expected to produce more fish bones, and more bones

generally. A few fragments of oyster and mussel shell indicate the import of other coastal resources to the village.

Sample no.	Context no.	Sample vol. (l)	Sample weight (kg)	Feature	Spot Date
1 (eval)	013	5	7	Fill of posthole	Early medieval?
2 (eval)	015	4	4	Fill of posthole	Early medieval?
2	208	23	27.75	Ditch 209	Late medieval
4	216	8	10	Post hole 217	Saxo-Norman
5	238	17	22.5	Fill of ditch 239	Post-med
6	245	11	18	Fill of pit 246	Late medieval
8	264	5	8	Fill of posthole 265	und
9	283	25	27	Pit 286	Late medieval
10	299	23	31	Pit 399	Late medieval
11	322	1.5	nr	Fill of posthole 323	und
13	357	3.2	3.5	Pit 358	Saxo-Norman
14	350	26	30.5	Pit 349	Saxo-Norman
15	292	11	15.25	Pit 275	und
16	400	10	nr	Fill of pit 398	und
17	432	2	5	Posthole 431	Saxo-Norman
18	435	2	nr	Fill of posthole 436	und
19	446	13	16.25	Pit 445	und
20	385	18	22	Fill of pit 384	Early medieval
21	462	5	6	Posthole 461	Early medieval
22	465	20	31	Pit 468	Early medieval
24	473	24	31	Pit 474	Late medieval
25	487	5	nr	Fill of ditch 488	Late medieval
26	448	10	nr	Fill of pit 449	Modern
27	493	25	31	Fill of pit 494	Early medieval
28	504	17	18	Pit 503	Saxo-Norman
29	535	25	29.25	Pit 536	und
31	542	26	31	Posthole	Early medieval
33	561	2	nr	Fill of posthole 562	Early medieval
35	608	20	29	Fill of posthole 611	Saxo-Norman
36	614	26.5	36	Pit 612	Early medieval
37	618	26	36	Posthole 619	Early medieval
38	620	10	12	Fill of posthole 621	und
39	543	27	31.25	Fill of hollow 544	Modern
40	622	30	36.75	Posthole 623	Early medieval
41	624	30	41.4	Posthole 625	Early medieval
42	626	5	7.75	Posthole 627	und
43	586	10	nr	Fill of pit 587	Early medieval

KEY: nr = no record: und = undated

Table 6: Samples submitted for environmental assessment

A few snail shells are present in a number of the samples. Although since the bulk of these are shells of the blind burrowing snails *Cecilioides acicula*, which can burrow over a metre deep, they make little contribution to the study. Other shells present included *Vallonia excentrica, Vallonia costata, Vallonia pulchella, Oxychilus cellarius, Oxychilus alliarus, Carychium sp., Cochlicopa sp., Helicella sp., Pupilla muscorum* and *Trichia hispida*. This is a somewhat restricted assemblage, and shells other than *C. acicula* occur in low numbers, although in most samples this limited assemblage is consistent with an open grassland environment.

The presence of a little coal and cinder in most of the flots, as well as charcoal, indicates either that coal was being used as a fuel as well as charcoal, or that these small fragments have passed down through the soil as a result of soil processes. The charcoal assemblages from the samples were limited, and none warranted further study.

Charred plant remains were present in all the samples, in variable quantities. Much of the botanical material was poorly preserved and could not be identified to species, but free-threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum*), hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare*), and oats (*Avena* sp.) were present and typical of medieval sites in Britain (Greig 1991). Charred cereal chaff was found in only three samples and consisted of a single rachis internode in samples 2 (posthole fill 015) and 35 (fill of posthole 611), and two fragments in sample 1 (posthole fill 013). Pulses, including cf. *Lens culinaris* (lentil), cf. *Pisum sativum* (pea) and notable numbers of other small, medium and large legumes were present. Weed seeds were infrequent and consisted of grasses (Poaceae), Fabiaceae, *Rumex* sp., *Carex* sp., Polygonaceae, Cyperaceae, *Centaurea* type, Lolium sp., *Malva* sp., cf. *Mercurialis* sp., Chenopodium sp., Brassicaceae, *Veronica* sp., Rosaceae, *Plantago* sp., *Gallium* sp., and Asteraceae. The absence of chaff and the low frequency of weed seeds suggest that these assemblages probably derived from cleaned grain, charred during preparation for food. A few charred fragments of hazelnut shell and unidentified fruit stones were the only indication of the collection of non-cultivated plant foods.

Conclusions

The absence of chaff and low frequency of weed seeds indicates that the site was used for food preparation, and is supported by a number of botanically-rich samples which contained discarded food processing waste, such as sample 36 (pit 612). At least ten samples were rich in cereals which are typical in medieval sites in Britain, and occasional weed seeds. Other surviving categories of material included charcoal, snails, domestic animal bone, fishes, small terrestrial vertebrates and uncharred plant remains, the latter being viewed as intrusive. The occurrence of domestic animal bone fragments in the samples suggested that sheep may be under-represented in the hand collected assemblage. Fish bones, although not abundant, suggest both freshwater and marine resources. The rather low concentrations of animal bone in the samples and the small hand-collected assemblage perhaps suggest the site lies in a peripheral area of the village, which might also be consistent with the evidence for iron smelting and smithing nearby.

The charred plant remains contrast somewhat with the animal bone data, several samples producing rich assemblages indicative of processed grain ready for consumption. A concentration of rich samples in the northern part of Area A1, in pit 612 (Area 2) and in two pits in A3 suggests domestic occupation close by. It is possible that the hammerscale and charred cereal concentrations in A1 reflect a division of activity across the site, with industrial activity to the south and domestic to the north. The limited snail evidence suggests a generally open grassland landscape.

METALWORKING DEBRIS

Jane Cowgill

Twenty-five fragments of slag and related materials were recovered by hand (Table 7). In addition, scanning of environmental processing debris recovered hammerscale from most samples, glassy cinder (Sample 16, context 400), tap slag and smelting/smithing slags (sample 39, context 543).

There is a clear indication of iron smelting among the metalworking debris on the site. This is not in great abundance, but indicates a smelting industry in the vicinity. The relative abundance of spheroidal scale with the flake hammerscale suggests that bloom (primary) smithing may have been taking place on site. Concentrations of hammerscale, where this has been calculable, show higher densities of hammerscale at the southern end of Area A1 and in A3 (samples 8, 9 and 10), suggesting two foci for the smithing. The hand-collected slags were recovered in small quantities across the whole site and give no indication of a focus. The presence of four *tuyères* in the assemblage also points to on-site metalworking, probably in the Saxo-Norman and/or early medieval period.

Context	Type	No	wt g.	Comments
264	tap	1	89	large flows; fresh
284	slag	1	2	cinder; glassy clinker?
348	Slag	1	9	Prob FE slag; mag; abraded?
350	Tap	1	9	Flow
350	Tap	2	82	Charcoal; fresh; voids; no top surface
350	Slag	1	18	Charcoal; smelt/smithing
350	Slag	1	9	Encrusted; abraded?
375	Vitrified clay	1	5	Tuyere? Vitrified face, back black reduced
406	Tuyere	1	5	Oxidized back; rim fragment
462	Coal	1	2	-
487	Tap	1	20	No top surface
572	Vitrified clay	1	65	4 frags; vitrified+crazed brick
578	Vitrified clay	1	26	Most MS; reduced clay back, 15mm thick; slagged face; tuyere?
581	Tap	3	25	Flows; fresh
581	Ironstone	1	4	Discarded
586	Tap	1	3	Thin flow fragment; fresh
588	Tap	1	10	Frequent voids; fresh; smashed fragment?
614	Tuyere	1	24	Purple/reduced back; rim?
614	Slag	1	8	Charcoal; smelt/smithing fragment
614	Stone	1	245	Black; water rolled
618	Tap	1	14	Flow; void on top of flow

Table 7: Catalogue of hand-recovered metalworking debris

Although the iron smelting may not have been undertaken within the excavated areas, it is probable that smithing, and possibly the primary smithing of the blooms, was carried out within the excavated areas or adjacent parts of the site.

DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS

Apart from a few residual finds of prehistoric and Roman date, the earliest evidence of activity at *The Swan* dates to the Saxo-Norman period (*c.*AD 900-1150), and comprises two possible structures, both post-built, located on the west side of the site. Regarding the nature of the activity on site at this time, and the function of the buildings, the excavation provides few clues. It seems unlikely that the site was under domestic occupation: the pottery and animal bone assemblages are far smaller than would be expected. Furthermore, the absence of copper-alloy and bone Saxo-Norman artefacts, particularly dress and toilet accessories, recreational items, domestic equipment such as spinning and weaving tools, and specialist craft tools, points rather to an agricultural or industrial character for the site. A possible clue is provided by the presence of iron smelting/smithing slag, including fragments of four *tuyéres,* in Saxo-Norman and early medieval contexts, though no remains of in-situ hearths, furnaces or any other of the trappings of iron working or smithing were found on the site. However, the location of the site, at or beyond the edge of the medieval village, would make it a desirable location for such an activity.

During the early/high medieval period (*c.*1150-1400) the site appears to have continued in use without any discernible change. Both buildings were apparently maintained, with the replacement of earth-fast posts as their bases rotted, and the west end of the site seems to have remained in primarily industrial use. Although the quantity of pottery recovered from features of this date is significantly greater than from Saxo-Norman contexts, the overall finds assemblage still lacks the personal and domestic items and the domestic refuse that would indicate occupation.

Towards the east end of the site, the picture presented by the results of the excavation is wholly different in character. Although activity becomes apparent in the archaeological record here in the early medieval period, there are no structures, post-built or otherwise. Instead, this part of the site is pock-marked by several pit complexes, each comprising three or more intercutting pits, with similar fills that make determination of the sequence of excavation difficult, if not impossible. The

function of the pits was not determined. While a few contained pottery and/or small amounts of animal bone, and sampling of one pit fill indicated the discard of processed food waste and suggested domestic activity, insufficient material was present to suggest that the pits were used, primarily or secondarily, for disposal of domestic refuse. One possibility is that they represent clay extraction, though for what reason is uncertain.

By the end of the high medieval period both buildings on the site appear to have fallen out of use, and activity on the site seems to have decreased significantly. There is no physical evidence to suggest exactly when and why this happened: an obvious explanation would be that it was occasioned by the Black Death, *c*.1350. Whatever the cause, there is only slight evidence for activity on the site during the 15th century, and for the next 300 years or so, until the public house was built, probably in the mid-19th century.

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