

Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION:
GRASS SIDE
CHURCH ROAD
PENN
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE**

on behalf of Penridge Homes Ltd



**By
Lizzie Gill BSc PgDip**

March 2006

ASC: 770/PGS/2

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Site Data

<i>ASC project code:</i>	PGS	<i>ASC Project No:</i>	770
<i>Event No:</i>	-	<i>Accession No:</i>	Pending
<i>County:</i>	Buckinghamshire		
<i>Village/Town:</i>	Penn		
<i>Civil Parish:</i>	Penn		
<i>NGR (to 8 figs):</i>	SU 9085 9338		
<i>Present use:</i>	Garden		
<i>Planning proposal:</i>	Two storey and single storey side and rear extensions to the existing structure and demolition of detached garage		
<i>Planning application ref/date:</i>	05/2436		
<i>Local Planning Authority:</i>	Chiltern District Council		
<i>Date of fieldwork:</i>	9 th March 2006		
<i>Client:</i>	Pennridge Homes c/o Stratton Associates 7A Burkes Court Burkes Road Beaconsfield Buckinghamshire HP9 1NZ		
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Internal Quality Check

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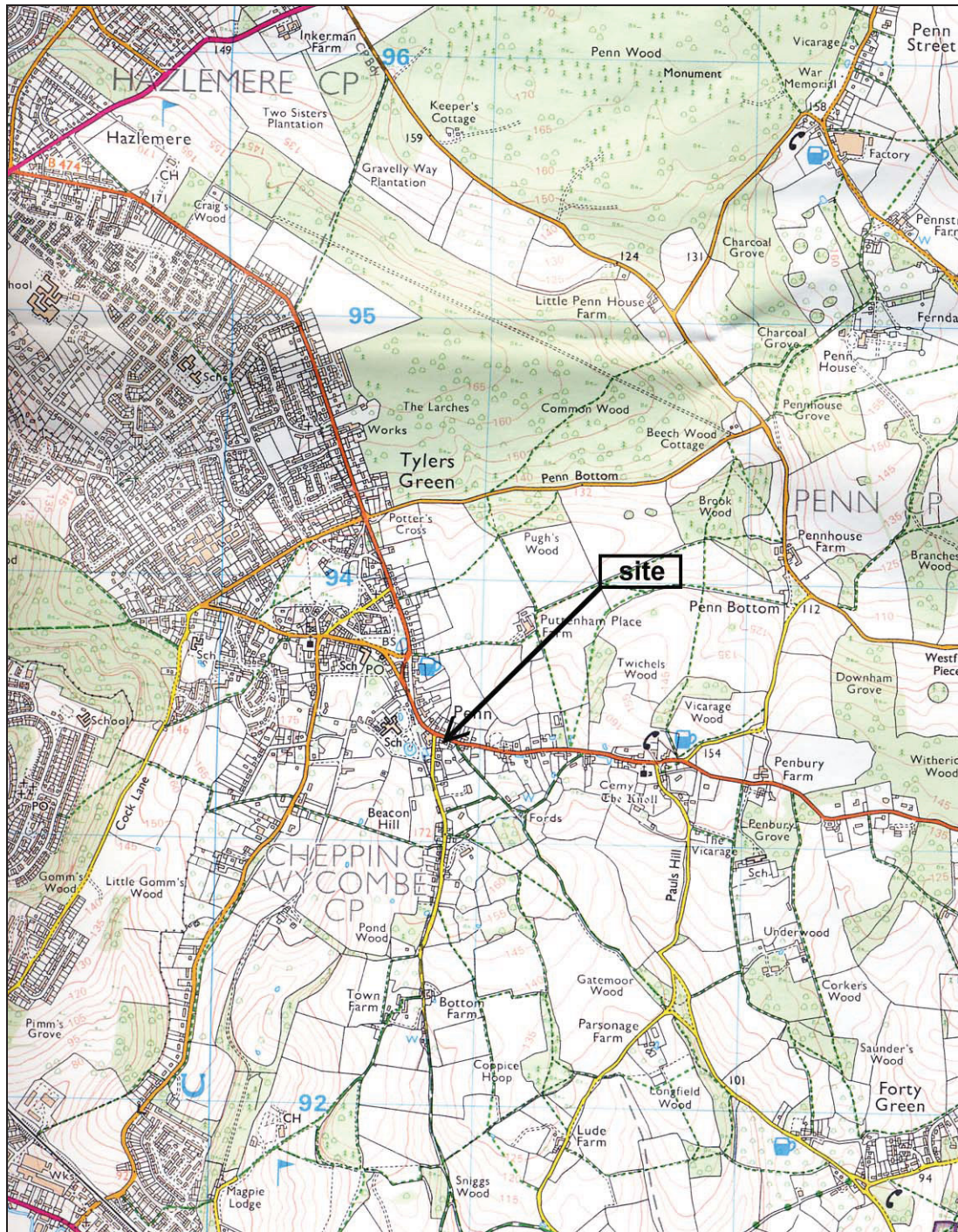


Figure 1: General location (scale 1:25,000)

Summary

In March 2006, Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd. (ASC) undertook an archaeological evaluation at Grass Side, Church Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire. Penn had a thriving medieval tile making industry and the site is located in close proximity to previous finds of tile kilns and wasters. Two trenches were excavated in the footprints of proposed extensions to the current property. A narrow undated ditch and a small pit of modern date were present. Fragments of brick and tile found in the modern feature are likely to have been redeposited from a layer of ceramic building material observed in the topsoil.

1 Introduction

1.1 In March 2006 *Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd* (ASC) carried out an evaluation at Grass Side, Church Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire (NGR SU 9085 9338: Fig. 1). The project was commissioned by Penridge Homes Ltd., and was carried out according to a project design prepared by ASC (770/PGS/1), and a brief (Radford, 2006) prepared on behalf of the local planning authority (LPA), *Chiltern District Council*, by their archaeological advisor (AA), *Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service*. The relevant planning application reference is 05/2436.

1.2 *Planning Background*

This evaluation was required under the terms of *Planning Policy Guidance Note 16* (PPG16), in response to proposals for the construction of a two storey and a single storey side and rear extensions to the existing structure and demolition of a detached garage (Fig. 3).

1.3 *Location and Description*

The site is located in Church Road, Penn and is centred on Ordnance Survey grid reference SU 9085 93388 (Fig. 2). It comprises a subrectangular area of land occupied by the buildings and grounds of a residential property known as Grass Side (Fig. 2).

1.4 *Geology & Topography*

The soils of the site have not been mapped but are likely to comprise the Combe 1 Association, namely well drained fine silty soils over chalk (Soil Survey 1983, 511f). The site is essentially flat and lies at an elevation of *c.* 165m OD.

1.5 *Historical & Archaeological Background*

SMR= Sites and Monuments Record

1.5.1 There is no archaeological evidence for activity in the area prior to the medieval period, when Penn developed into an important centre for the production of decorated tiles and is recorded in the 1332 Subsidy Roll.

1.5.2 The medieval tile industry at Penn has been the subject of a number of studies (Hohler 1941; Hunt 1994; Cauvain 1995; Green). Little detailed historical information is available about the industry, although account books show that Penn tiles were used in the construction of the royal manors of Sheen and the Tower of London in the 1380s (Eames 1980, 222).

- 1.5.3 The presence of kilns in the area is suggested by finds of tile wasters. Fragments have been found in the centre of Penn, in the immediate vicinity of the proposed development (SMR nos. 4245, 4246 and 4761) and work in Penn churchyard revealed a grave with a lining of both tile and vessel wasters (SMR 4471). Further wasters have been found at April Cottage *c.*20m east of the site (Broadbent 1981) and opposite Slade's Garage (SMR 4244; Rouse and Broadbent 1952). Wasters have also been found at Puttenham Place *c.*25m north of the site (Cauvain 1987, SMR 5411).
- 1.5.4 Puttenham Place Farm (SMR 0164) was probably built by the Puttenham family during the 15th century (RCHM 1912, 267; Page 1969, 236). It comprised a timber hall with an open timber roof (Page 1969, 236) and was extensively rebuilt *c.*1600, when it was divided into two storeys (*ibid*).
- 1.5.5 The tile industry continued into the post-medieval period and a kiln was found during excavations in the garden of Rose Cottage (Hunn & Fell 2002), which dated to the late 17th or early 18th century.

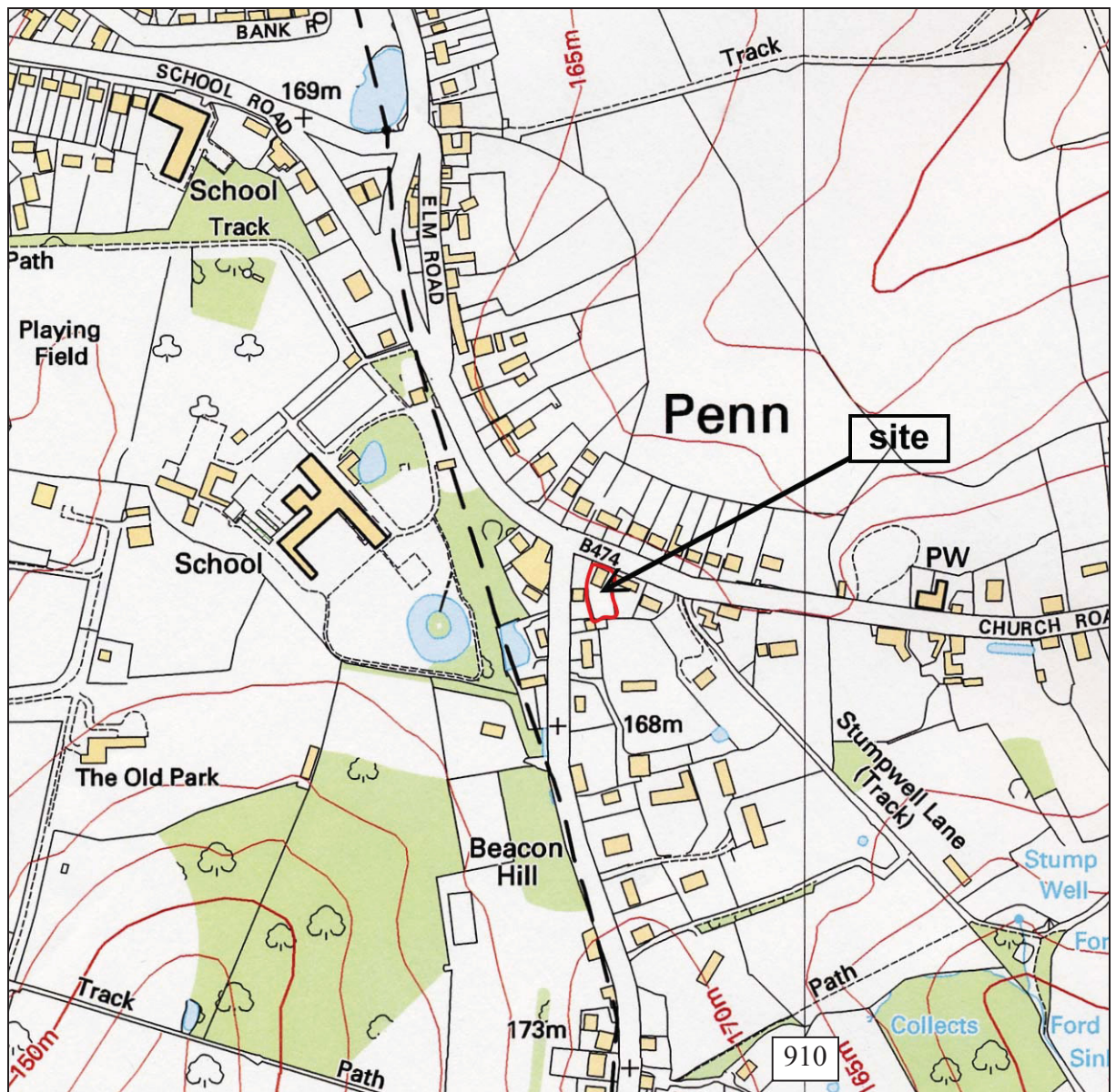


Figure 2: Site plan (scale 1:5000)

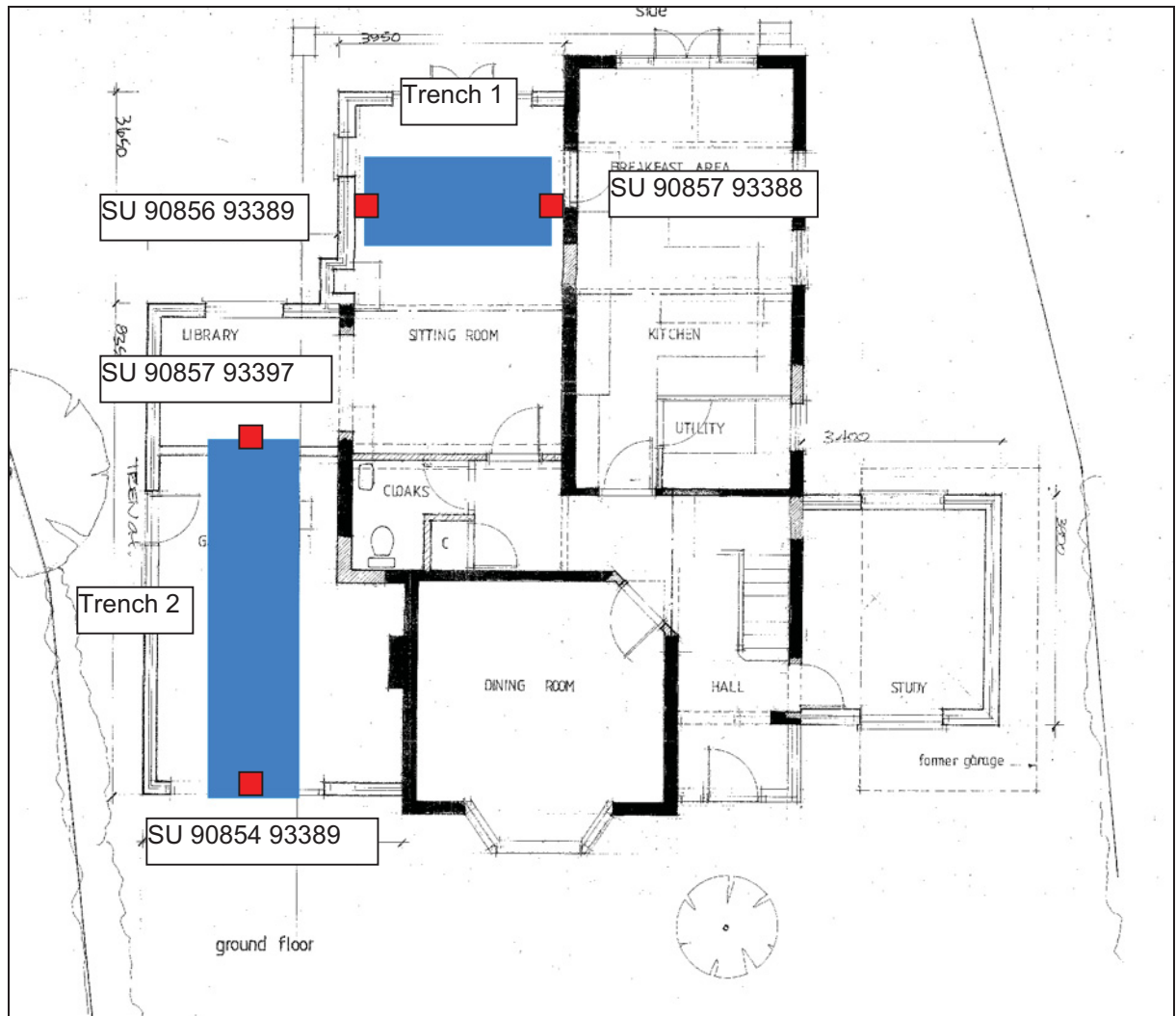


Figure 3: Trench location plan (not to scale)

2 Aims & Methods

2.1 Aims

As described in the brief (Section 6), the aims of the evaluation were:

- To gather evidence and generate a reliable predictive model of the extent, character, date, state of preservation and depth of archaeological remains within the study area.
- Establish whether medieval or post-medieval industrial or settlement remains are present.

2.2 Standards

The work conformed to the project design, to the relevant sections of the Institute of Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct* (IFA 2000) and *Standard & Guidance Notes* (IFA 2001), and to the relevant sections of ASC's own *Operations Manual*.

2.3 Methods

The work was carried out according to the brief (Section 8), which required:

- The excavation by machine of one 8m trench in the footprint of the proposed library and garage and a 3m trench in the footprint of the proposed sitting room extension.

3 Results

3.1 The following section of this report provides a summary of results from the trial trenches (figs. 2 and 3). A full, illustrated description of the trenches can be found in Appendix 1.

3.2 Trench 1

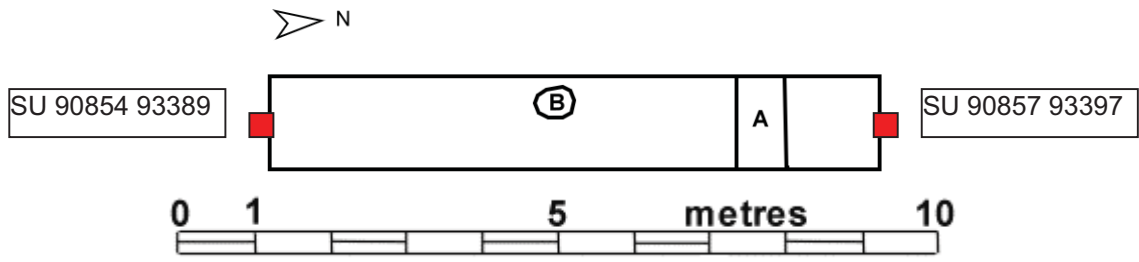
The trench was machine excavated on a northeast-southwest alignment to a maximum depth of *c.*0.4m. The natural strata comprised mid grey silty clay with occasional inclusions of subrounded gravels and flint (102), overlain by *c.*0.32m of brick rubble and patio tiles (101). The trench measured *c.* 3.10m in length and *c.*1.2m in width. No archaeological deposits or finds were observed in this trench.

3.3 Trench 2 (Figure 4)

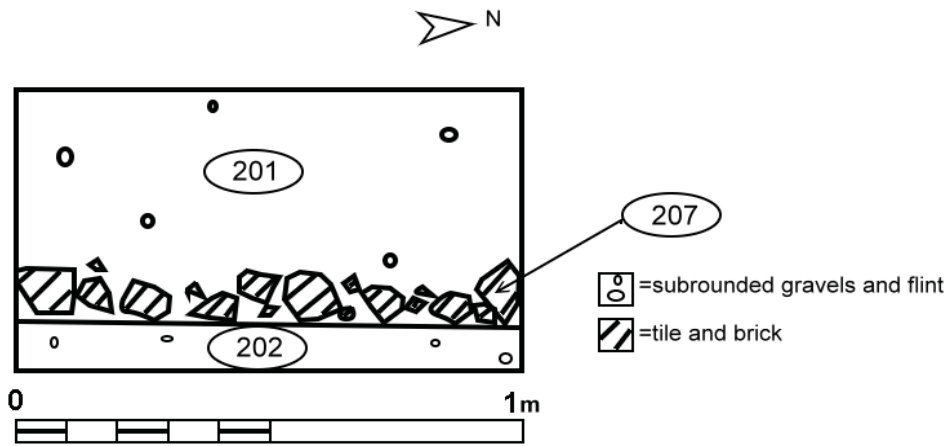
3.3.1 This north south aligned trench was machine excavated to a maximum depth of *c.*0.65m into mid greyish yellow silty clay natural strata (202), overlain by *c.*0.18m of brick and tile rubble (207) and *c.*0.38m of dark greyish brown silty loam topsoil (201), containing frequent inclusions of brick and tile fragments.

3.3.2 The northern end of the trench contained an east to west aligned ditch [203] *c.*0.7m wide (Plate 5). A slot dug through this revealed a gradual 'v' shaped profile and concave bottom, filled with mid greyish brown silty clay containing frequent subrounded gravels and flints (204). The maximum depth of the ditch was *c.*0.22m. The ditch was subsequently 100% excavated, but no finds were retrieved from this feature. The ditch was overlain by layer (207), which comprised a redeposited brick and tile fragments.

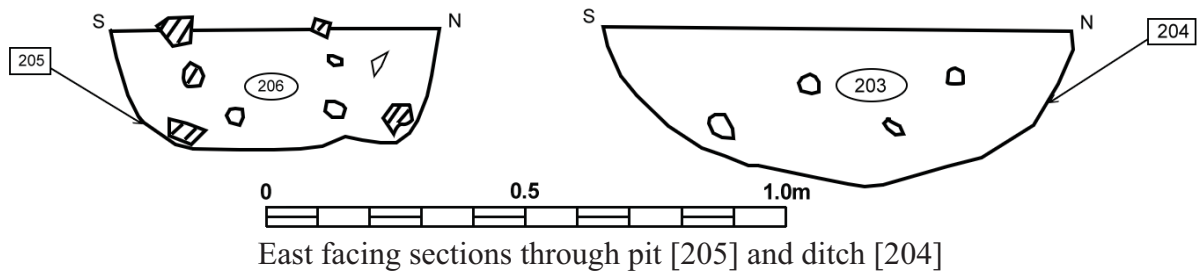
3.3.3 A small pit [205], *c.*0.47m in diameter, was observed 4.1m from the north side of the trench, *c.*0.41m away from the western section (Plate 6). It was half sectioned revealing that a 'u' shaped profile, with a flat base and a maximum depth of *c.*0.17m. It contained a dark greyish brown silty loam deposit (206), very similar to the topsoil observed in this trench and contained quantities of brick and tile fragments. It had been subject to a high level of root action (Plate 4) and contained a single small fragment of un-diagnostic pottery (Appendix 2).



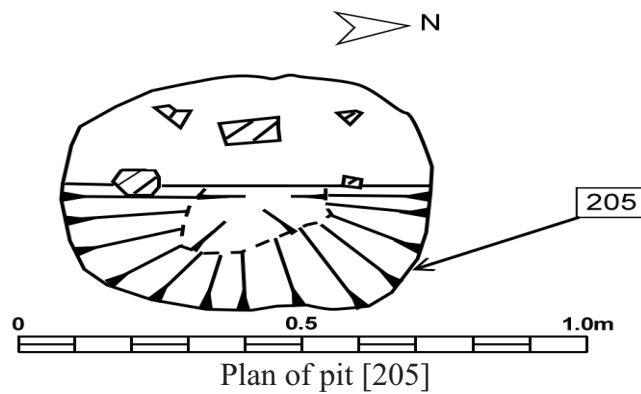
Plan of trench 2 showing ditch [204](A) and pit [205] (B)



East facing section of trench 2, showing layer of brick and tile (207)



East facing sections through pit [205] and ditch [204]



Plan of pit [205]

Figure 4: Site drawings



Plate 1: View of trench 1 during excavation



Plate 2: View of trench 2 during excavation



Plate 3: Removing topsoil in trench 2



Plate 4: Trench 2 showing of root action



Plate 5: East facing section of ditch [203]



Plate 6: East facing section of pit [205]

4. Conclusions

4.1 Confidence Rating

The confidence rating for the recognition of archaeological deposits on this site was good. The weather remained overcast but dry during the fieldwork and the stratigraphy was simple and well defined.

- 4.3 A layer of brick and tile rubble in Trench 2 (207) was surrounded by a matrix of topsoil (201) and is unlikely to be directly related to the brick and tile producing industry in Penn. It was probably associated with use of the site during the more recent past and is not archaeologically significant.
- 4.4 The similarity between deposit (206) in Pit [205] and the topsoil (201) was so apparent that it is likely the pit is of modern date. The brick and tile from its fill are likely to be redeposited from layer (207) when the feature was originally excavated through the topsoil.
- 4.5 No artefacts were retrieved from Ditch [203] and it could not be dated. The absence of topsoil in its fill (204) and the fact that it was overlain by the brick and tile layer (207) suggest that both features are likely to be late post-medieval or modern in date.
- 4.6 No significant archaeological remains were observed and it is unlikely that large numbers of significant archaeological features are present on the site. The presence of occasional isolated archaeological features, away from the trial trenches, cannot be specifically excluded.

5. Acknowledgements

The writer is grateful to David Russell of *Stratton Associates* for commissioning the project on behalf of Penridge Homes Ltd.

The input of David Radford, Archaeological Officer of *Buckinghamshire County Council* is also gratefully acknowledged. The fieldwork was undertaken for *ASC Ltd* by Jonathan Hunn BA PHD MIFA, Lizzie Gill BSc PgDip and Martin Cuthbert BA and was managed by Bob Zeepvat BA MIFA.

The report was prepared by Lizzie Gill and Edited by David Fell BA MA MIFA

6. Archive

6.1 The project archive will comprise:

1. Brief
2. Project Design
3. Initial Report
4. Clients site plans
5. Site records
6. Finds records
7. Finds
8. Site record drawings
9. List of photographs/slides
10. Colour slides
11. B/W prints & negatives
12. CDROM with copies of all digital files.

6.2 The archive will be deposited with Buckinghamshire County Museum

7. References


Standards & Specifications


- EH 1991 *The Management of Archaeological Projects*, 2nd edition. English Heritage (London).
- IFA 2000a Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Code of Conduct*.
- IFA 2001 Institute of Field Archaeologists' *Standard & Guidance documents (Desk-Based Assessments, Watching Briefs, Evaluations, Excavations, Investigation and Recording of Standing Buildings, Finds)*.

Secondary Sources

- Broadbent J D 1981 'A second Penn tile kiln site' *Records of Buckinghamshire* **23** (1981), 128-9. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society.
- Cauvain S P 1995 'Chemical analysis of medieval ceramics from south Buckinghamshire' in Holgate R (ed) 1995 *Chiltern Archaeology Recent Work A Handbook for the Next Decade*, 145-152.
- Eames E S 1980 *Catalogue of medieval lead-glazed earthenware tiles in the department of medieval and later antiquities*. British Museum
- Gill, L 2006 *Project Design for an Archaeological Evaluation at Grass Side, Church Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire* ASC (770/PGS/1)
- Green M 2005 'Medieval Tile Industry at Penn' in *Records of Buckinghamshire* **45**, 115-160. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society
- Hohler C 1941 'Medieval Paving tiles in Buckinghamshire' in *Records of Buckinghamshire* **14, 1**, 1-49.
- Hunn J & Fell D, 2002 'Penn, Rose Cottage, Tylers Green' *South Midlands Archaeology* **32**, 11. Council for British Archaeology
- Hunt J 1994 *Penn tile industry*. Unpublished BA Dissertation. University of Exeter.
- Page W (ed) 1969 *The Victoria History of the County of Buckingham*. **III**.
- RCHM 1912, *Royal Commission on Historical Monuments (England. Buckinghamshire (South))*. HMSO
- Rouse E C & Broadbent J D 1952 'Further discoveries of the fragments and wasters in connexion with fourteenth century paving-tile and roof-tile kilns at Penn' *Records of Buckinghamshire* **15** (1952), 314-317. Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society.
- Soil Survey 1983 *1:250,000 Soil Map of England and Wales, and accompanying legend* (Harpندن).

Appendix 1: Trench Summary Tables

Trench 1						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	3.10	Width	1.2	Depth	0.40
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	NE	SU 90857 93388		SW	SU 90856 93389	
	Orientation			Northeast-southwest		
	Reason for Trench			General evaluation		
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)	
101	Layer	Patio slabs and made up ground consisting of brick and tile rubble and tarmac. Modern	-	320	0-320	
102	Layer	Mid greyish yellow silty clay with occasional inclusions of subrounded gravels and flint. Natural strata	-	-	320-	

Trench 2						
	Max Dimensions (m)					
	Length	8.50	Width	1.2	Depth	0.65
	NGR Co-ordinates					
	North	SU 90857 93397		South	SU 90854 93389	
	Orientation			North-south		
Reason for Trench			General evaluation			
Context	Type	Description and Interpretation	Max Width (mm)	Max Thckn (mm)	Depth BGL (mm)	
201	Layer	Dark greyish brown silty loam topsoil with frequent inclusions of brick and tile fragments	-	380	0	
207	Layer	Concentration of brick and tile fragments surrounded by deposit (201). Post-med/modern debris	-	180	380	
206	Deposit	Fill of [205], dark greyish brown silty loam containing frequent inclusions of tile and brick fragments and occasional sub-rounded gravels and flint. High level of root activity observed in this deposit.	470	170	560	
205	Cut	Cut of subcircular pit with steep sides and a flat bottom.	470	-	840	
204	Deposit	Fill of [203], mid greyish brown silty clay with frequent inclusions of subrounded gravels.	700	220	630	
203	Cut	Cut of gradual 'v' shaped ditch	700	200	630	
202	Layer	Mid greyish yellow silty clay natural with occasional inclusions of subrounded gravels and flint. Natural strata	-	-	560-	

Appendix 2: Finds Concordance

Context	Pottery		Bone		Flint (no)	Shell (g)	Stone (no)	Other Finds	
	(no)	(g)	(no)	(g)				Type	(no)
206	1 sherd	2						CBM	332g

Appendix 3: List of Photographs

SITE NAME:Grass Side, Church Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire				SITE NO/CODE:770/PGS
Shot	B&W	Slide	Digital	Subject
1			x	General working shots of trench excavation
2	x		x	East facing section through ditch [203]
3	x		x	East facing section through ditch [203]
4	x		x	East facing section through pit [205]
5	x		x	East facing section through pit [205]
6			x	General working shots of trench excavation
7			x	General working shots of trench excavation
8			x	General working shots of trench excavation
9			x	General working shots of trench excavation
10			x	Trench 1 looking southwest
11			x	Trench 2 looking south
12				
13				
14				
15				
16				
17				
18				
19				
20				
21				
22				
23		x		Trench 1 general view
24		x		Trench 1 general view
25		x		Trench 2 general view
26		x		Trench 2 general view
27		x		Trench 1 east facing section of ditch [203]
28		x		Trench 1 east facing section of ditch [203]
29		x		Trench 1 east facing section of pit [205]
30		x		Trench 1 east facing section of pit [205]
31				
32				
33		x		Trench 1 general view
34		x		Trench 1 general view
35		x		Trench 2 general view
36		x		Trench 2 general view

Appendix 4: ASC OASIS Form

PROJECT DETAILS						
Project Name:	Grass Side, Church Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire					
Short Description:	<i>In March 2006, Archaeological Services and Consultancy Ltd. (ASC) undertook an archaeological evaluation at Grass Side, Church Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire. Penn had a thriving medieval tile making industry and the site is located in close proximity to previous finds of tile kilns and wasters. Two trenches were excavated in the footprints of proposed extensions to the current property. A narrow undated ditch and a small pit of modern date were present. Fragments of brick and tile found in the modern feature are likely to have been redeposited from a layer of ceramic building material observed in the topsoil.</i>					
Project Type: (indicate all that apply)	DBA	FW	Geophys	Survey	Bldg Rec	Post-Exc
	WB	Strip&Rec	Trenching	Test pits	Exc	Other
Site status: (eg. none, SAM, Listed)	none		Previous work: (eg. SMR refs)		-	
Current land use:	Residential		Future work: (yes / no / unknown)		unknown	
Monument type:	-		Monument period:		-	
Significant finds: (artefact type & period)	-					
PROJECT LOCATION						
County:	Buckinghamshire		OS reference: (to at least 8 figures)		SU 9085 9338	
Site address: (with postcode if known)	Grass Side, Church Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire					
Study area: (sq. m. or ha)	c.150 sq m		Height OD: (metres)		-	
PROJECT CREATORS						
Organisation:	Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd					
Project brief originator:	David Radford		Project design originator:		Lizzie Gill	
Project Manager:	Bob Zeepvat		Director/Supervisor:		Lizzie Gill	
Sponsor / funding body:	Penridge Homes Ltd.					
PROJECT DATE						
Start date:	9 th March 2006		End date:		9 th March 2006	
PROJECT ARCHIVES						
	Location (Accession no.)		Content (eg. pottery, animal bone, files/sheets)			
Physical:	Buckinghamshire County Museum		Ceramic			
Paper:	Buckinghamshire County Museum		Brief, Project Design and report, site records, photographs			
Digital:	Buckinghamshire County Museum		Project Design and report, photographs			
BIBLIOGRAPHY (Journal/monograph, published or forthcoming, or unpublished client report)						

Title:	Archaeological Evaluation at Grass Side, Church Road, Penn, Buckinghamshire		
Serial title & volume:	Archaeological Services and consultancy Report 770/PGS		
Author(s):	Lizzie Gill BSc PgDip		
Page nos		Date:	