

The Old Fire Station, Huntingdon Street, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire

An Archaeological Excavation



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Non-Technical Summary

Excavations were undertaken by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit between the 30th of April and the 19th of June 2012 on the site of the former Old Fire Station and former Household Waste Disposal Site, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire. This work has revealed evidence for medieval and later occupation. A roadside ditch along Huntingdon Street was established around the 11th century and by the 12th century the area was divided into a series of long narrow rectangular plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street. These represent a suburban expansion of the town of St. Neots; this development thrived throughout the 13th–mid 14th centuries, before going into a period of prolonged decline with identifiable activity ending in the late 16th–early 17th century. Occupation began again in the mid 18th century, again with its focus on Huntingdon Street. This has continued until the present, with particular evidence for a phase of activity in the early 20th century, which involved the deposition of two substantial groups of material.

Introduction

Following on from an earlier phase of archaeological evaluation (Cessford 2011) an archaeological excavation was conducted by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) between the 30th of April and the 19th of June 2012, on the site of the former Old Fire Station and former Household Waste Disposal Site, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire (centred on TL 1868 6039) (Figures 1–2). The excavation was conducted for Januarys on behalf of Turnstone Estates, in response to a planning application relating to new buildings including a cinema, housing, car parking, roadways and associated services.

Topography and Geology

The current topography of the site varies between 16.04 and 16.55m OD. The solid geology comprises Kellaways Formations and Oxford Clay, overlain by superficial drift deposits of sand and gravel (British Geological Survey 1975).

Methodology

The excavation was conducted following a brief for archaeological evaluation produced by Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (Gdaniec 2012) and a specification produced by the CAU (Dickens 2012). Where necessary, tarmac and concrete were sawn and then broken by machine. A 7.5 tonne tracked machine with a 2.0m wide toothless bucket under constant archaeological supervision was then utilised to remove the overburden (19th–20th century layers, topsoil and subsoil), until archaeological features and/or natural were encountered.

The excavation of all archaeological features was carried out by hand. Plans of each area were drawn at a scale of 1:20 or 1:50 and sections were recorded at a scale of 1:10. The recording followed the CAU modified MoLAS system (Spence 1994), whereby numbers were assigned to individual contexts (e.g. **[1000]**) and stratigraphic events (e.g. **F.100**). Photographic recording consisted principally of digital images. All work was carried out in strict accordance with statutory health and safety legislation and the recommendations of the Federation of Archaeological Managers & Employers (Allen and Holt 2010). The site code is **OFS 12** and the HER event number is **ECB 3731**.

Archaeological, Historical and Cartographic Background

The archaeological, historical and cartographic background of the Proposed Development Area (PDA) is fully considered in a CAU desktop assessment (Appleby 2010). This material will not be re-iterated in this document, but will be discussed where relevant. Although a considerable quantity of small-scale developer-funded archaeological investigation has taken place in St. Neots in recent years (e.g. Newton 2011), the most useful synthesis and overview of its archaeology and development remains Spoerry's work (Spoerry 2000). At the present site, the preceding evaluation phase consisted of twenty trenches covering 277.8m² (Cessford 2011). The earliest features encountered were Saxo-Norman, with some form of activity probably beginning in the 12th century and continuing until around the 14th century. There was possibly a roadside ditch along Huntingdon Street, and in close proximity to this were

postholes, a pit or well and various other features. These remains appear to represent a short-lived expansion of St. Neots, with domestic occupation fronting onto Huntingdon Street. Further to the east there was also evidence of contemporary sand/gravel quarrying and strip-agriculture. Activity apart from strip-agriculture appears to have ceased during the 14th–15th centuries, and activity only resumed in the 18th–19th centuries.

Results

During the excavation phase, two separate areas were investigated. These corresponded to the areas of greatest density of archaeological features identified during the evaluation phase. Area A, located on the site of the former Old Fire Station (centred on 518565/260384), was irregularly shaped but broadly rectangular and c. 28m west-east by c. 19m north-south covering 340m² (Figure 3 and 5a–b). The footprint of Area A incorporated Trenches 1–3 from the evaluation phase. Area B, located on the site of the former Household Waste Disposal site (centred on 518627/260400), was irregularly shaped and measured up to c. 36m west-east by c. 26m north-south covering 631m² (Figure 4 and 5c–d). The footprint of Area B incorporated Trenches 6–8 and 20 from the evaluation phase. The total excavated area was 971m²; including the evaluation phase, the overall investigated area was 1122m² or 10.9% of the PDA. The results will be discussed by phase on a site wide basis, including the results from the evaluation where appropriate. The archaeological features fall into five principal phases:

- Phase 1: 11th–12th century origins
- Phase 2: 13th–mid 14th century floruit
- Phase 3: Mid 14th–mid 18th century ebb
- Phase 4: Mid 18th–late 19th century reoccupation
- Phase 5: Early 20th century gardening

In addition there was some residual earlier material and some features that can not be assigned to a specific phase. Features numbers were also assigned to several mid 20th–early 21st century entities, but these numbers functioned purely as an aid to on-site recording and they are not discussed in this report.

Earlier Material

No features earlier than the 10th–12th century were identified; however, a number of items of earlier date were recovered from later contexts. These consist of four pieces of Prehistoric struck flint and single sherds of Roman and Early/Middle Saxon pottery.

Four pieces of struck flint weighing 56g were recovered; in addition, a single piece of probably Neolithic struck flint weighing 8g was recovered during the evaluation phase. All this material was examined by Lawrence Billington. This material is of mixed Prehistoric dates; it occurred residually in medieval features and was in a poor condition.

<051> [1097] F.143: The distal point of a plunging blade, Mesolithic or Early Neolithic in date. Found in a 15th century pit.

<061> [1106] F.143: A hard hammer flake and a chip that cannot be closely dated. Found in a 15th century pit.

<244> [2146] **F.253**: An end scraper produced on an already patinated blank, probably Bronze Age but could be Iron Age. Found in a 13th century pit.

<151> [2052] **F.222**: A single sherd of Roman grey coarseware weighing 1g. Found in a 13th century pit.

<132> [2022] **F.204**: A single sherd of Early/Middle Saxon handmade pottery with mica inclusions weighing 10g. Found in a 13th century pit.

Phase 1: 11th–12th Century Origins

It appears that activity began during the 11th–12th centuries, although relatively few features can be confidently assigned to this phase (Figure 6). The most convincing features are some roadside ditches running along Huntingdon Street. These were a pair of curving relatively wide and shallow ditches, whose full extent could not be revealed as it lay beyond the limit of excavation (**F.16**, **F.18** and **F.210/221**). Both ditches curved to the east where they met and joined a putative boundary gully (**F.247**), suggesting that they were dug and maintained by individual plot holders rather than being a communal entity. These ditches therefore appear to relate to separate properties. Based upon the Phase II evidence, the site has been divided into five plots (Plot I–V) that probably originated in Phase 1 (see below). The northern ditch (**F.210/221**; Figure 8a) relates to Plot III and the southern (**F.18**) to Plot II. Both ditches contained very little cultural material compared to later features; this combined with the pale colour of their fills indicates that they occurred early within the occupational sequence. The only dateable material consisted of St. Neots-type ware, whose form indicates a 10th–11th century date. Given the general paucity of material of this period an origin in the 10th century is inherently unlikely, suggesting that the ditches were dug during the 11th century. These ditches had gone out of use by the 13th century, as they were cut by features of this date (pit **F.222** and gully **F.247**). The roadside ditches also appear to have continued further north to the site of No.14 Huntingdon Street, now occupied by Cedar House Surgery, as an excavation here revealed that ‘at the edge of the present pavement, the medieval street side ditch contained pottery of the 12th century’ (Tebbutt 1978, 281).

To the east of these ditches there are no features that can be unambiguously assigned to the 11th–12th centuries. Based upon the longevity of similar features elsewhere, however, a clay-lined well (**F.232**) backfilled in the 13th–14th centuries may well have been created in the 11th–12th centuries. There are two timber structures (Buildings A and B) that are dated to the 13th century. As these structures contained some 10th–12th century pottery, and as the finds relate principally to the abandonment/demolition of these buildings rather than their construction and use, it is possible that these were constructed in the 12th century. This is more likely in the case of Building A, whilst Building B was more probably constructed in the 13th century. There were also two features that only contained 10th–12th century pottery (**F.251** and **F.256**), although in both cases the quantities of material precludes certainty. There are also a number of features that contain no dateable material, but whose fills indicate that they are broadly medieval in date. On the balance of probability these have been assigned to the 13th–14th centuries, but some may have been earlier.

Overall the evidence suggests that some form of roadside ditch was established along Huntingdon Street in the 11th century, but the limited quantity of evidence indicates

that occupation did not begin until the 12th century. This occupation probably took the form of long rectangular plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street, although this interpretation is essentially based upon the interpretation of the more substantial 13th–mid 14th century evidence (see below). This occupation fits within a much more widespread British, and indeed north-west European, pattern of urban expansion at this time. In a more local context the parish of St. Neots originally formed part of Eynesbury; a major shift in the focus of occupation appears to have occurred in 1113, when the Priory of St. Neots was granted the whole manor in which it was situated. The establishment of urban occupation along Huntingdon Street in the 12th century is therefore both a reflection of broad national trends and specific local circumstances.

Feature Descriptions

Ditch **F.210/221** (fills [2031]–[2034], [2047]–[2050], cut [2035]/[2051]) is a wide, flat-bottomed curving linear that was over 2.3m wide and traced for over 7.0m, with a surviving depth of 0.58m. The ditch was filled with a mixture of mid brownish orange sandy gravels and dark greyish brown clayey silts containing very little cultural material. The earliest two fills of ditch **F.210/221** contained no dateable material; the third fill [2032] produced three sherds of St. Neots-type ware, at least two of which come from a small jar(s) of the 10th–11th centuries.

Posthole **F.251** (fill [1073], cut [1074]) is an oval feature 0.54m by 0.29m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.10m. The only pottery from posthole **F.251** dates to the 10th–12th century, it is unclear if this material is contemporary or residual and the feature could be 13th century.

Pit or posthole **F.256** (fill [2155], cut [2156]) is a circular feature, with a diameter of 1.10m and a surviving depth of 0.40m. The only pottery from pit or posthole **F.256** dates to the 10th–12th century, it is unclear if this material is contemporary or residual and the feature could be 13th century.

Finds and Environmental Evidence

Pottery, David Hall and Craig Cessford

A relatively small assemblage of pottery that can be dated to the 10th–12th century was recovered, largely from residual contexts. In total the evaluation and excavation phases produced 107 sherds weighing 1084g. This material was dominated by St. Neots-type ware (86 sherds, 748g); with some Thetford-type ware (17 sherds, 213g) and Stamford ware (4 sherds, 123g) (see Table 2).

Animal Bone, Vida Rajkovača

Only one feature produced animal bone; **F.210** contained a fragmented sheep/goat mandible and loose teeth, as well as a cow thoracic vertebra.

Phase 2: 13th–mid 14th Century Floruit

There is considerable evidence for 13th–mid 14th century occupation at the site (Figure 6). The bulk of this activity dates to the 13th century, but the quantity of dating evidence for individual features and limitations in the precision of dating much of the pottery precludes certainty as to which features continued into the 14th century. There is, however, a clear decline and lack of later ceramic forms and fabrics, which suggests that the majority of the occupation had ceased by the mid 14th century. The archaeological evidence strongly indicates that the general area was divided into long, narrow rectangular property plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street and running back from it for a distance of c. 65m. The investigations revealed elements of what can tentatively be identified as five separate plots, labelled Plots I–V (Figure 6). Based

upon several strands of evidence it appears that in Area A the medieval ground surface was at *c.* 15.25–15.45 OD. This means that the machined surface was *c.* 0.2–0.5m lower than the medieval ground surface, with a consequent loss of horizontal deposits and shallow features. This factor also needs to be taken into account when interpreting the surviving features. It appears that the depth of the perched water table in the medieval period was broadly similar to the present day, lying at *c.* 14.0–14.2m OD. Based upon the archaeological evidence, and the experience of physically excavating the site, it would have been reasonably straightforward to excavate features to a depth of *c.* 13.8m OD. Anything deeper than this rapidly becomes highly problematic due to the quantity of water that must be controlled and the ingress of water quickly caused severe collapsing of the surrounding natural gravels. It should be noted that all the large features at the site, regardless of phase, would have acted as *de facto* sand/gravel quarries and it is likely that the material extracted was utilised. In several instances, however, the care taken to create the features in terms of their shape, sides, etc. combined with the fact that some of them were cut substantially below the top of the water table indicates that they were not dug primarily to obtain sand and gravel. It is notable that several of the gravel quarry pits appear to have functioned in pairs (e.g. **F.203/204** and **F.253/254**). In each instance the pair of pits consists of one shallower pit whose base lies at the height of the water table and a larger pit dug *c.* 0.2–0.5m deeper. The fills of these pairs of pits run across both pits, indicating that they were backfilled as a single event. This suggests that the shallower pit formed a relatively ‘dry’ access route into the deeper pit, which was then dug as deep as was practical into the water. These pairs of pits are therefore effectively single entities, although this is usually only apparent in retrospect.

In Area A the archaeological evidence indicates that the investigated area was divided into two, or conceivably three, long and narrow rectangular property plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street (Plots I–III). Running from west to east the boundary between Plots II and III began at the junction of the roadside ditches (**F.210/221** and **F.16/18**). It was then demarcated by a short length of gully (**F.247**), a gap with a posthole in it (**F.248**) and a longer length of gully (**F.225**; Figure 7), before terminating at an elongated pit (**F.200**) having run for *c.* 22m from the frontage.

The northernmost of the plots (Plot III) was the better preserved and will be discussed first. It appears that the earlier roadside ditch (**F.210/221**) went out of use in the 12th or 13th centuries. The front boundary of Plot III may thereafter have been demarcated by a relatively insubstantial fence or similar feature that left no trace, or alternatively may have shifted slightly to the west beyond the limit of excavation.

Immediately to the east of where the ditch had previously been located a *c.* 2.4m wide zone appeared to have been levelled/scalped removing the topsoil and the upper portion of the subsoil. A *c.* 0.05m thick gravel surface (**F.276**; Figure 8a) was then laid. This zone appears to have been the western portion of a rather larger *c.* 4.6m wide that was occupied by timber building(s) (Building A; Figure 8b), which were unfortunately too poorly preserved to ascertain a coherent plan. The evidence for this consisted of ten definite or probable postholes (**F.206–209**, **F.216**, **F.217**, **F.226**, **F.238**, **F.244** and **F.245**), parts of two beamslots or gullies (**F.239** and **F.252**) and an amorphous hollow (**F.237**), which may indicate an area of intense use. As Building A was located on the frontage this structure was presumably the primary building of the plot. The lack of earth-fast sill beams (see below) suggests that Building A may have

been constructed in the 12th century, although this can not be conclusively demonstrated.

In the general area of Building A there was a single pit or posthole (F.218) that stratigraphically predates the surface (F.276), and by association Building A, and two isolated features; a posthole (F.219) and a pit or posthole (F.222).

To the east of Building A there was a *c.* 2.0m wide gap indicating an open area. There was then evidence for another timber building (Building B; Figure 9). In the better preserved eastern half of Building B there were some floors (F.271) and an associated oven (F.265). Although this structure's western end was poorly preserved there were two postholes, defining its north-western (F.220) and south-western (F.227) corners. Running between these postholes there was a discernible change in the natural, presumably indicating where there had been overlying deposits similar to the floors to the east. The western side of the building was delimited by a clay filled sill beam foundation (F.266), with postholes at its northern (F.267) and southern ends (F.272) and an associated eaves-drip gully (F.269). Running along part of the southern side of the building was beamslot/foundation (F.270) and a final posthole (F.255), which probably relates to some form of internal structure. Building B appears to have been a square structure measuring *c.* 4.6m by 4.6m in extent. Its size, combined with its location and the presence of an internal oven strongly indicates that this was an ancillary kitchen. Buildings with earth-fast sill beams began to be constructed in the late 12th century (Walker 1999), stimulated by the re-adoption of sawing as a technique *c.* 1180 which improved the squaring of timber and allowed better built timber frames (Schofield and Vince 2003, 109). Building B was therefore probably constructed in the 13th century

Behind Building B there were scattered pits and postholes (F.201, F.224, F.258, F.259, F.260, F.261–264 and F.268), including one which may have been earlier (F.256). These suggest a yard-like area, which was not heavily utilised. None of these features form a coherent pattern and none of them produced evidence to indicate a particular function, although some of the pits may be gravel quarries. In this area there were also two features that encroached upon the gully that formed the boundary between Plots II and III, these were a pit (F.223) and an oven (F.231). Whilst certainty is impossible, the character of these features and their orientation suggests that they are most likely to be associated with Plot III.

The area occupied by Plot II had been more heavily disturbed than that of Plot III, particularly by the Old Fire Station and its subsequent removal towards the frontage, plus some substantial later features and several large trees and bushes with substantial root networks further back. It can be estimated that due to these factors *c.* 50% of the medieval features that were identified in Plot III would have left no surviving traces in Plot II.

It appears that in Plot II the roadside ditch was re-cut in the 13th century (F.18). This phase of ditch was not long-lived and the feature is likely to have been filled in during the 13th century. In the area to the east of this ditch, corresponding to Building A in Plot II, there were a pit (F.229) and several postholes (F.11–14 and F.228, which align with gully F.15). These postholes and gully could conceivably be part of a building, although the evidence is inconclusive. Beginning just over 6m from the edge

of the ditch there was what appears to be a yard area, the eastern edge of which may have been demarcated by a fence line (postholes **F.10** and **F.233**). Located in this yard area were a probable wattle-lined well (**F.232**; Figure 10) and several large pits (**F.203**, **F.204**, **F.250/275**, **F.253**, **F.254** and **F.274**; Figure 11) all of which appear to have been gravel quarries. There were also some smaller pits of unknown function (**F.235** and **F.243**) and a few isolated postholes (**F.205** and **F.273**).

The status of a well (**F.240/249**) located on the southern edge of the excavation area is ambiguous. Whilst it could be part of Plot II, it is equally likely to be located on the northern limit of a property located to the south and lying mainly outside the area of excavation (Plot I). This well was located *c.* 21m from the street frontage; it was created in the 13th century and was probably wattle-lined. There is no evidence for any contemporary features, in part because this area of the site was the most heavily disturbed.

The archaeology in Area B appears to relate to the rear portions of two long and narrow rectangular plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street (Plots IV–V). The rear boundary of the northernmost plot (Plot V) appears to be demarcated by a relatively shallow north-south aligned gully (**F.123**, plus possibly associated posthole **F.122**; Figure 12a), located *c.* 65m from Huntingdon Street. There was no evidence that this gully was ever re-cut and it contained tile indicating a 14th–15th century date. Lying just to the west, and therefore located in the very rear of the plot were a series of large sub-square or rectangular vertically-sided and flat-bottomed pits. Although these pits would have formed *de facto* gravel quarries they probably also fulfilled some unidentified light industrial function linked to the fact that the lower *c.* 0.7m of them lay below the water table (**F.32**, **F.34**, **F.136** and **F.142**; Figure 12). Two postholes (**F.140** and **F.148**) may form part of a fence line, potentially representing the southern boundary of Plot V. No medieval features of any kind were identified to the east of the gully (**F.123**). To the south of the terminal of the gully there was a *c.* 1.7m wide gap with no medieval features of any kind. This zone may represent some form of access point between the plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street and the open area behind, which was presumably utilised for a range of agricultural purposes.

To the south of this gap were a number of features that presumably relate to a separate property (Plot IV). The most significant feature was a substantial north-south aligned ditch (**F.139**; Figure 13a), which appears to have been created in the 14th century. This ditch had a V-shaped profile and was 2.2–3.2m wide by 1.05m deep and over 12.7m long. The ditch appears to have demarcated the rear of Plot IV, although its substantial nature suggests that it may have fulfilled other additional unidentified function(s) as well. One possibility is that the rear of the property was initially demarcated by a less substantial gully, similar to that of the Plot V (**F.123**), and this was entirely removed by the creation of the ditch. It appears that there was some form of structure(s) around the ditch, particularly at its northern end. On its eastern side there were a number of postholes and/or trenches with posts set in them (**F.141** and **F.145–147**), whilst to the west there was a similar feature(s) (**F.149**). The function of these posts and/or trenches with posts set in them is unclear; one possibility is that there was some form of structure over the northern end of the ditch. Alternatively, it is possible that this end of the ditch was subject to erosion/collapse and the posts represent an attempt to stabilise it. There was also an ambiguous feature (**F.144**), which may be either an earlier pit or simply the end of the ditch. To the east of the

ditch, presumably lying outside the property proper, two pits of uncertain function were dug (**F.131** and **F.135**).

This phase of activity dominates the archaeological records at the site. Excluding un-phased and mid 20th–early 21st century features, over 60% of the features at the site belong to the 13th–mid 14th floruit (62.6%). The plots that had been established fronting onto Huntingdon Street in the 12th century clearly flourished during the 13th–mid 14th centuries and can broadly be identified as urban or suburban in character. There is good evidence for a series of long narrow rectangular property plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street. These plots were c. 65m long and there is evidence for the presence of timber buildings beside the street frontage, with yard areas behind where wells and other features were located. The area in the rear of the plots was probably given over to horticulture and other activities that have left little archaeological trace, apart from sporadic gravel quarrying. Levels of activity declined markedly during the 14th century; it is possible that some plots were abandoned at this time although it is clear that some activity continued in the vicinity. This pattern of 13th – early 14th century urban expansion and prosperity followed by decline in the rest of the 14th century is one that is evinced on many, but by no means all, British urban sites. This corresponds to the 14th century ‘Crisis of the Late Middle Ages’. By the late 13th century Europe may have become overpopulated and the ending of the Medieval Warm Period brought on the period known as the Little Ice Age, with harsher winters and reduced harvests. Food shortages and rapidly inflating prices resulted in malnutrition and increased susceptibility to infections. Several years of cold and wet winters beginning in 1314 led to catastrophic famine, which may have killed over 10% of the population of northwest Europe. There had been little if any demographic recovery by the time the Great Mortality, or Black Death, pandemic struck in 1348–50, killing 30–60% of Europe's population. There were then further outbreaks of plague in England in 1361–62, 1369, 1379–83 and 1389–93.

Feature Descriptions

The vast majority of the fills consist of either mid brownish orange sandy gravel, representing the local natural which has been re-deposited through erosion and slumping, and dark greyish brown clayey silts that represent a mixture of the local soil and decayed refuse. Individual fills will only be described if significant.

Postholes **F.10–12** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 2 and no further investigation took place.

Postholes **F.13–14** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 1 and no further investigation took place.

Gully **F.15** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 2 and no further investigation took place.

Ditch **F.16** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 1 and no further investigation took place.

Pit **F.17** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 1 and no further investigation took place.

Ditch **F.18** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 1 and no further investigation took place.

It transpired that pit **F.19** from evaluation Trench 2 was simply an area of disturbance/collapse on the edge of **F.09** and not a genuine feature.

No further investigation of pit **F.32** in evaluation Trench 20 was undertaken due to health and safety considerations.

Posthole **F.33** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 20 and no further investigation took place.

Posthole **F.122** (fill [1030], cut [1031]) is a circular feature 0.26m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.11m. Posthole **F.122** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Gully **F.123** (**F.30** in evaluation Trench 20, fill [1032]/[1034]/[1046], cut [1033]/[1035]/[1047]) is a north-south aligned linear that is 0.49–0.89m wide, with a surviving depth of up to 0.30m, which was traced for a length of 8.9m. The gully widens and deepens appreciably towards its southern terminal. It was filled with a relatively sterile mid brown clayey sandy silt. Gully **F.123** contained some fragments of medieval roof tile that indicate that it is no earlier than the 14th–15th century.

Pit **F.131** (fill [1050], cut [1051]) is rectangular with rounded ends, steep sides and a flat base and is 3.2m long by 0.97m deep, with a surviving depth of 0.39m. It was filled with mid greyish brown silty sandy clay. This was a well-defined feature that presumably fulfilled a specific but unidentified function. Pit **F.131** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit **F.135** (fill [1060], cut [1061]) was an oval feature 1.50m by 1.05m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.12m that was filled with greyish brown sandy silt. Pit **F.135** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit **F.136** (**F.36** in evaluation Trench 20, fills [1063]/[1077], [1064], [1065], [1078], [1079]/[1099], [1080], [1081], [1098], [1100], [1101], cut [1102]) was a vertically-sided, flat-bottomed rectangular feature 5.40m by 4.30m in extent, with a surviving depth of 1.42m and filled with a series of mid to dark greyish brown sandy silty clays. Pit **F.136** contained pottery that indicates a 13th–14th century date. There were also some fragments of medieval roof tile; this may indicate that a 14th century date is more likely.

Ditch **F.139** (fills [1070], [1071], skeleton [1062], cut [1072]) was traced for a distance of 12.7m and was 2.2–3.2m wide, with a maximum surviving depth of 1.05m and a relatively steep V-shaped profile and a rounded base. The lower c. 0.5m of the ditch was filled with pale orangeish brown gravel [1071], which represents natural slumping and collapse until the ditch profile stabilised. Fill [1071] contained tile fragments that suggest it is no earlier than the 14th–15th centuries. This feature continued to exist beyond this phase (see below).

Posthole **F.140** (fill [1073], cut [1074]) is a circular feature 0.30m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.13m. Posthole **F.140** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit **F.141** (fill [1075], cut [1076]) was a rectangular feature 2.15m by 0.65m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.18m and filled with amid reddish brown sandy silty clay. Pit **F.141** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit **F.142** (**F.34** in evaluation Trench 20) (fill [1082]–[1086], cut [1087]) was a steep-sided rectangular feature over 4.0m by 2.0m in extent, with a surviving depth of 2.4m and filled with a series of mid to dark greyish brown sandy silty clays and a peat-like deposit at the base. The proximity to the limit of exaction severely restricted the degree of investigation of this feature that was possible. It is conceivable that **F.142** was a well although this seems unlikely. Pit **F.142** contained pottery that indicates a 13th or less probably 14th century date.

Pit **F.144** (fills [1089], [1090], cut [1091]) was a rounded, possibly oval feature at least 1.2m long by 1.30m wide and 0.780m deep filled with light yellowish brown sandy gravel and light orangeish brown sandy silt. It appears to be cut by ditch **F.139**; it is however likely that rather than being a separate earlier pit it is simply an earlier set of fills in the end of **F.139**. Pit **F.144** contained pottery that indicates a 14th century date.

Posthole **F.145** (fills [1092], [1093], cut [1094]) is a circular feature 0.55m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.65m. Posthole **F.146** (fill [1095], cut [1096]) is an oval feature 2.00m by 0.70m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.40m. Posthole **F.145** contained pottery that indicates a 13th–14th century date; there was also some tile suggesting that a 14th century date is more probable. One of the fills ([1092]) contained a cluster of bones that were deposited as a single group; these were identified as a partial chicken skeleton.

Posthole **F.147** (fill [1103], cut [1104]) is a circular feature 0.25m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.56m. Posthole **F.147** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Posthole **F.148** (fill [1108], cut [1109]) is a circular feature 0.25m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.08m. Posthole **F.148** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Trench **F.149** (fills [1112], [1113], cut [1114]) is a rectangular feature with rounded ends *c.* 4.0m long by 1.30m wide, with a maximum surviving depth of 0.75m. Trench **F.149** appears to have been dug in the 14th century, but contained Frechen stoneware that indicates a 17th–18th century date for its final infilling.

Pit **F.200** (fill [2001], cut [2002]) is a sub-oval feature 2.65m by 1.20m in extent, with a maximum surviving depth of 0.34m. The only pottery from **F.200** dates to the 10th–12th century, but on stratigraphic grounds **F.200** appears to date to the 13th century.

Pit **F.201** (fills [2003], [2004], cut [2005]) is a circular feature 1.58m in diameter, with a maximum surviving depth of 0.54m. Pit **F.201** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit **F.203** (fill [2010]–[2013], cut [2014]) is a sub-square or rectangular feature 1.46m by at least 1.1m in extent, with a maximum surviving depth of 1.00m. It appears to be a gravel quarry and the fills suggest that it was open at the same time as the adjacent pit **F.204**. The two features effectively form a single entity and it is possible that **F.203** formed a relatively ‘dry’ access route into **F.204**. Pit **F.203** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date; there was also a fragment of medieval tile suggesting that the feature might be slightly later.

Pit **F.204** (fill [2022]–[2025], cut [2026]) is an oval or rectangular feature at least 1.45m by at least 1.35m in extent, with a maximum surviving depth of 1.20m. It appears to be a gravel quarry and may have functioned in conjunction with **F.203** (see above). Pit **F.204** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.205** (fill [2016], cut [2017]) is a circular feature 0.38m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.10m. Posthole **F.205** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Posthole **F.206** (fill [2018], cut [2019]) is a circular feature 0.84m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.10m. Posthole **F.206** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.207** (fill [2020], cut [2021]) is an oval feature 0.66m by 0.57m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.15m. Posthole **F.207** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.208** (fill [2027], cut [2028]) is a circular feature 0.84m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.14m. The posthole contained a substantial quantity of pottery, which appears to represent deliberate packing around the post. This includes a substantial portion of a Brill jug of the 13th or less probably the 14th century.

Posthole **F.209** (fill [2029], cut [2030]) is an oval feature 0.60m by 0.46m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.22m. The posthole contained some building stone; this appears to represent deliberate packing around the post. Posthole **F.209** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.216** (fill [2037], cut [2038]) is a circular feature 0.32m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.17m. Posthole **F.216** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Posthole **F.217** (fill [2039], cut [2040]) is a circular feature 0.37m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.12m. Posthole **F.217** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit or gully terminus **F.218** (fill [2041], cut [2042]) is an elongated oval feature 1.35m by over 0.84m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.40m. It was filled with a mid to dark reddish brown silty sand, suggesting a relatively early dater in the sequence, and was sealed by surface **F.276**. **F.218** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.219** (fill [2043], cut [2044]) is a circular feature 0.41m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.19m. Posthole **F.219** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Posthole **F.220** (fill [2045], cut [2046]) is an oval feature 0.78m by 0.68m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.55m. Posthole **F.220** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit or posthole **F.222** (fill [2052], cut [2053]) is a sub-circular 1.05m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.86m. Posthole **F.222** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit **F.223** (fill [2054], cut [2055]) is an oval feature over 0.9m by 0.85m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.21m. Pit **F.223** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit or posthole **F.224** (fill [2056], cut [2057]) is a sub-circular feature 1.04m by 0.98m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.54m. Pit or posthole **F.224** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Gully **F.225** (fill [2058]/[2060], cut [2059]/[2060]) is a west-east aligned linear feature with a U-shaped profile that is at least 9.2m long and 0.36–0.58m wide, with a surviving depth of 0.11–0.19m. It was filled with pale brown silty sand containing very little cultural material, indicating that it is early in the occupational sequence. Gully **F.225** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.226** (fill [2065], cut [2066]) is an oval feature 0.35m by 0.30m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.14m. Posthole **F.226** contained pottery that indicates a 13th or less probably 14th century date.

Posthole **F.227** (fills [2067], [2071], [2072], cut [1019]) is a circular feature 1.01m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.38m. Posthole **F.227** contained pottery that indicates a 13th–14th century date.

Postholes **F.228** (fill [2069], cut [2070]), which align with gully **F.15** investigated during the evaluation, appear to be a group of at least three poorly defined postholes in a north-south aligned row that are 1.20m long by 0.60m wide, with a surviving depth of up to 0.25m. Postholes **F.228** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of their fills indicates a medieval date.

Pit **F.229** (fill [2073], cut [2074]) is a sub-circular feature 1.50m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.55m. Pit **F.229** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Oven **F.231** (fill [2077], cut [2078]) is a heavily truncated deposit of firm mid grey clay with a partially scorched upper surface lying in a shallow scoop that was over 0.6m by over 0.4m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.08m. The form of oven **F.231** indicates a Late Medieval date and it contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Clay-lined well **F.232** (fills [2079]–[2084], cut [2085]) is a steep almost vertically-sided sub-square feature with a dished base 1.75m by 1.3m in extent, with a surviving depth of 1.7m. There was a small amount of slumping/collapse [2084] around the sides of the cut and the shaft was then lined with a firm 0.35m wide doughnut-shaped ring of mid bluish grey clay. This effectively created a 0.85–1.0m circular shaft in the centre of the feature. This shaft was probably lined with wattle, although none survived. Eventually the shaft was filled with a series of mid greyish brown clayey sandy silts. Part way during the backfilling a layer of large flint nodules and field stones were effectively laid in the shaft, possibly to stabilise what must have been a very wet and sloppy deposit. The pottery from well **F.232** indicates that it was backfilled during the 13th or 14th centuries; its construction date is less clear, but based on regional parallels an 11th–12th century date is likely.

Posthole **F.233** (fill [2086], cut [2087]) is a circular feature 0.40m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.06m. Posthole **F.233** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit **F.235** (fill [2096], cut [2097]) is an oval feature 1.05m by 0.78, with a surviving depth of 0.17m. Pit **F.235** contained pottery that could only be broadly dated as 13th–15th century.

Hollow **F.237** (fill [2100], cut [2101]) is an irregularly shaped area with diffuse edges covering c. 4.1m by 2.04m, with a surviving depth of 0.04–0.12m. This was filled with a mixture of areas

of pale bluish grey clay and dark orangey brown silty clay. **F.237** represents some form of erosion hollow created through repeated wear rather than a deliberate cut. Hollow **F.237** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit or posthole **F.238** (fill [2102], cut [2103]) is an oval feature 1.05m by 0.98m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.24m. Pit or posthole **F.238** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Gully **F.239** (fill [2104], cut [2105]) is a slightly curving broadly north-south aligned linear feature with a U-shaped profile that is over 1.0m long by c. 0.5m wide, with a surviving depth of 0.14m. Gully **F.239** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date and on stratigraphic grounds it is likely to be 13th century or earlier.

Although **F.240** and **F.249** are potentially separate features it appears that they are in fact both elements of a single well, with **F.249** representing the construction pit and **F.240** the shaft. **F.249** (fills [2129]–[2132], cut [2147]) is an oval feature with vertical sides over 2.0m by over 1.65m in extent, with a surviving depth of c. 1.4m which could not be fully excavated for health and safety reasons. The cut was backfilled with a mixture of predominantly silty sands. **F.249**, but not **F.240**, is truncated by **F.241**. **F.240** (fills [2106] and [2107], cut [2146]) is a vertically-sided oval feature over 1.7m by 1.45m in extent with a surviving depth of at least 1.4m. It was backfilled with mid greyish brown sandy silts. If **F.240** was indeed a well shaft then it is likely that the well originally possessed a wattle lining. The construction cut (**F.249**) contained pottery indicating a 13th century date for the initial construction of the well, although the presence of some fragments of medieval roof tile might imply a rather later date. The shaft (**F.240**) was not backfilled until the late 16th–early 17th century (see below).

Pit **F.243** (fill [2116], cut [2117]) is a sub-rectangular feature 1.92m by 1.06m, with a surviving depth of 0.38m. Pit **F.243** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit or posthole **F.244** (fills [2118]–[2120], cut [2121]) is an oval feature c. 0.9m by 0.65m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.22m. Pit or posthole **F.244** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit or posthole **F.245** (fill [2122], cut [2123]) is an oval feature 1.17m by 0.70m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.22m. Pit or posthole **F.245** contained pottery that indicates a 13th–14th century date.

Gully **F.247** (fill [2125], cut [2126]) is a west-east aligned linear feature with a U-shaped profile that is 3.05m long and 0.45–0.72m wide, with a surviving depth of 0.27m. It was filled with pale brown silty sand containing very little cultural material, indicating that it is early in the occupational sequence. There was a cow skull at the eastern terminal that may have been deliberately placed. Gully **F.247** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Posthole **F.248** (fill [2127], cut [2128]) is a circular feature 0.57m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.07m. Posthole **F.248** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Pit **F.250/275** (fills [2133], [2134], [2198]–[2202], [2203]–[2207], cut [2150]/[2207]) is a large rectangular steep almost vertically-sided flat-bottomed feature that is at least 5.85m by 3.3m in extent, with a surviving depth of 1.07m. **F.250/275** appears to be a substantial gravel quarry. Pit **F.250/275** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date, although it appears that there may have been a remnant hollow that was not entirely backfilled until the 15th century.

For posthole **F.251** see 11th–12th centuries.

Gully or beamslot **F.252** (fill [2138], cut [2139]) is a north-northwest to south-southeast aligned steep-sided, flat-bottomed linear feature over 0.9m long by 0.33m wide, with a surviving depth of 0.13m. Gully or beamslot **F.252** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit **F.253** (fills [2140], [2193], metal detected finds [2000], [2152], cut [2141]) is a rectangular feature with rounded corners, vertical sides and a flat base that is over 34.2m by 3.1m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.95m. It appears to be a gravel quarry and the fills suggest that it was open at the same time as the adjacent pit **F.254**. The two features effectively form a single entity and it is possible that **F.253** formed a relatively 'dry' access route into **F.254**. **F.253** contained a

silver short cross penny probably deposited c. 1244–50 and the pottery recovered supports a 13th century date

Pit **F.254** (F.09 in evaluation Trench 2; fill [2142], cut [2143]) is a rectangular feature with rounded corners, vertical sides and a flat base that is 4.2m by 3.3m in extent, with a surviving depth of 1.30m. It appears to be a gravel quarry and may have functioned in conjunction with **F.253** (see above). Pit **F.254** contained pottery that indicates a 15th century date, this potentially relates to a remnant hollow and the digging and initial backfilling of the pit itself dates to the 13th century.

Posthole **F.255** (fill [2144], cut [2145]) is a circular feature 0.40m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.11m. Posthole **F.255** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

For pit or posthole **F.256** see 11th–12th centuries.

Posthole **F.258** (fill [2159], cut [2160]) is an oval feature 0.84m by 0.55m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.09m. Posthole **F.258** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit or posthole **F.259** (fill [2161], cut [2162]) is an oval feature 0.90m by 0.79m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.21m. Pit or posthole **F.259** contained pottery that indicates a 13th–14th century date.

Pit **F.260** (fill [2163], cut [2164]) is a sub-circular feature 1.32m by 1.20m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.40m. Pit **F.260** contained pottery that indicates a 14th century date and there was also a fragment of tile of broadly similar date.

Pit **F.261** (fill [2165], cut [2166]) is a sub-circular feature 0.95m by over 0.4m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.75m. Posthole **F.261** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit **F.262** (fill [2167], cut [2168]) is an elongated oval feature 0.95m by 0.47m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.10m. Pit **F.262** contained pottery that indicates a 14th century date.

Pit **F.263** (fill [2169], cut [2170]) is a sub-circular feature 1.43m by 1.37m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.24m. Pit **F.263** contained pottery that indicates a 14th century date.

Pit **F.264** (fill [2171], cut [2172]) is an elongated oval feature 1.75m by 0.65m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.08m. Pit **F.260** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Oven **F.265** (fill [2173], cut [2174]) is an oval north-south aligned feature 1.65m by 0.80m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.15m. It is filled with pale brownish grey clay with some reddish scorching. **F.265** appears not to be the actual oven itself but a foundation for it that has been slightly heat affected with the actual oven surface lying perhaps some 0.1–0.2m above the surviving deposits. Oven **F.265** contained no dateable finds; however, the nature of the feature suggests a medieval date and associated feature **F.271** indicates a 13th century date.

Sill beam foundation **F.266** (fill [2175], cut [2176]) is a rather irregular north-south aligned linear 3.05m long by 0.19–0.40m wide, with a surviving depth of 0.10–0.17m. It is filled with a firm mid grey clay that is devoid of any cultural inclusions, but associated feature **F.269** indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.267** (fill [2177], cut [2178]) is a circular feature 0.45m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.56m. Posthole **F.267** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Posthole **F.268** (fill [2179], cut [2180]) is a circular feature 0.33m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.05m. Pit or posthole **F.268** contained pottery that indicates a 13th–14th century date.

Eaves-drip gully **F.269** (fill [2181]/[2182], cut [2183]) is a rather irregular north-south aligned linear c. 2.1m long by 0.55m wide, with a surviving depth of 0.11m. It was filled with mid greyish brown clayey silt. Eaves-drip gully **F.269** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Beamslot/foundation **F.270** (fills [2184]/[2186], [2185]/[2187], cut [2188]) is a west-east aligned linear 2.35m long by 0.72m wide, with a surviving depth of 0.25m and a 0.02–0.05m

thick lining of clay in the base. Beamslot/foundation **F.270** contained pottery that indicates a 13th or less probably 14th century date.

Floor/hollow **F.271** (fill [2189], cut [2190]) is a roughly rectangular area 4.6m by over 2.0m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.15m. The western boundary of **F.271** is an arbitrary edge created through later disturbance and a change in the nature of the natural indicates that it was originally around 4.6m by 4.6m in extent. **F.271** was filled with a mixture of areas of pale to mid brownish orange clay, brownish grey clayey silt and grey clay. It is uncertain whether **F.271** represents a deliberate cut to create a firm foundation for a floor, or if it is some form of erosion hollow created through repeated wear. Floor/hollow **F.271** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.272** (fill [2191], cut [2192]) is a sub-square feature 0.65m by 0.55m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.12m. Posthole **F.272** contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Posthole **F.273** (fill [2194], cut [2195]) is a circular feature 0.26m in diameter, with a surviving depth of 0.11m. Posthole **F.273** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a medieval date.

Pit **F.274** (fill [2196], cut [2197]) is an oval feature 1.26m by over 0.55m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.27m. Pit **F.274** contained pottery that indicates a 13th–14th century date, the presence of a fragment of medieval tile tends to support a 14th century date.

Gravel surface **F.276** (layers [2062], [2063]) was only observed in section but consisted of a 0.05m thick layer of firm gravel [2062] overlying a pale to mid brown silty subsoil [2063] that is 0.06m thick. The subsoil [2063] contained pottery that indicates a 13th century date.

Finds and Environmental Evidence

Coins, Martin Allen

Two medieval silver coins were recovered.

<303> [2000] **F.253** is a Henry III (1216–72), silver penny, Short Cross class 8b3 (Mass class 8c) (minted c. 1244–47), London mint, moneyer Nichole. Weight 1.51g. This coin was found in a contemporary feature dated by pottery to the 13th century. This penny was probably deposited between the earliest date for its issue, c. 1244, and the end of the re-coinage of 1247–50.

<282> [2008] **F.202** is an Edward I (1272–1307) to Henry VII (1485–1509), silver halfpenny, ?London mint, minted c. 1285–1488. Weight 0.66g. The initial deposition of the halfpenny was probably no later than the debasements of the English coinage in 1544–51, which effectively eliminated nearly all pre-1544 silver coins (Allen 2005, 51–5). This coin occurred residually in a mid 18th century feature.

Pottery, David Hall and Craig Cessford

All the 13th–15th century pottery will be treated as a single group, although some transitional late 15th–early 16th century material has been grouped with the Post-Medieval pottery (see below). A moderately sized assemblage was recovered. In total the evaluation and excavation phases produced 735 sherds weighing 9761g (Table 2). The bulk of the assemblage consists of coarsewares in a variety of fabrics that have been broadly classified as brown, buff, grey, pink and red (516 sherds, 6811g). A small proportion of this is glazed and one piece had been shaped into a disc and subsequently broken (<125> [2011] **F.203**). In addition there are some 13th century shelly coarsewares in pink and grey fabrics (147 sherds, 1572g). All this material falls within the range of various types of local coarseware that are currently in the process of being defined (Spoerry 2005; Spoerry in prep.). Of rather better quality was a thin bodied greyware with horizontal rilling and in one instance a vertical thumb impressed stripe (14 sherds, 159g). This material dates to the 13th century and the only recognisable form was a globular jar.

There were also a range of finewares, the most common of which is Brill/Boarstall (35 sherds, 1016g), this appears to be exclusively decorated jugs and a substantial proportion of the material is represented by refitting sherds re-used as packing in a posthole (11 sherds 536g; <141> [2027] **F.208**). Brill/Boarstall ware (Farley 1982; Ivens 1981; Ivens 1982; Jope 1954; Jope and

Ivens 1981) was produced in Buckinghamshire and several kilns have been identified archaeologically. The precise dates of the industry are unclear, but there are Potter surnames mentioned in *c.* 1210–20, references to furnaces in 1254 and a kiln at Brill has been archaeomagnetically dated to 1300–35. Overall the industry appears to have a 13th century *floruit*, terminating in the early 14th century. There was also a small quantity of material that appears to be Developed Stamford ware but may be Brill/Boarstall (3 sherds, 12g). The next most common identifiable material was Lyveden/Stanton ware, all apparently from jugs with applied strips (13 sherds, 127g). Lyveden/Stanton ware was produced in Northamptonshire and has a pink fabric, which is often rather ‘soapy’ in texture, with frequent shell inclusions (Bellamy 1983; Bryant and Steane 1969; Chapman *et al.* 2008; Steane 1967). Production of the earliest form of Lyveden/Stanton ware (Type A) began *c.* 1150–75 and continued until *c.* 1400. A slightly more developed form (Type B) began to be produced *c.* 1225. Lyveden/Stanton ware had its main *floruit* during the 13th century, with place-name evidence for potters recorded in 1285 and 1312 and a coin of *c.* 1250 associated with the kilns. There was also a small quantity of material from Potterspury (4 sherds, 29g), dated to the mid 13th–mid 16th century. Unidentified finewares include a fine buff fabric (2 sherds, 30g) and an off-white fabric (1 sherd, 5g).

Overall the evidence indicates that the finewares in St. Neots are generally derived from sources located in an arc to the west. The site falls within West Huntingdonshire in terms of medieval ceramic supply and broadly conforms to the pattern of the area (Spoerry 2005). Although more restricted in its range, the pottery is relatively similar to the assemblage from Wintringham (Beresford 1977) and parallels material from recent investigations in St. Neots (Newton *et al.* 2009). The pottery from **F.253** was found in conjunction with a coin that is likely to have been deposited *c.* 1244–50, although this feature only produced a small ceramic assemblage (58 sherds, 425g) the material is significant because of its associated dating. This pottery includes Brill/Boarstall ware and Lyveden/Stanton ware, indicating that these were present at the site by the mid 13th century.

Metalwork, Craig Cessford

There was a small assemblage of nondescript ironwork and a two copper-alloy items, the most impressive of which is a decorated buckle plate. The ironwork consisted of a rectangular strip 75mm long by 23mm wide (**F.244**), three nails (**F.136**, **F.237**, **F.253**), seven unidentified heavily corroded lumps (**F.136**, **F.144**, **F.149**x3, **F.240**x2). There was a simple circular copper alloy ring/hoop weighing 2g, with a diameter of 22mm (<**285**> [**2203**] **F.275**). A copper-alloy riveted buckle plate (<**284**> [**2152**] **F.253**) would have attached a buckle to a strap. This was made by folding a plate over one side of the buckle-frame and riveting the sides together. In common with many archaeological discoveries this has lost its buckle frame. This plate is a tapering rectangle attached by three rivets and decorated with an eight pronged starburst motif. It is 32mm long by 10–20mm wide.

Tile, Craig Cessford

A small quantity of roof tile fragments was recovered from 13th–mid 14th century contexts (79 pieces, 2087g). There were no notable concentrations of material and the volume of material is not sufficient to demonstrate that any structures in the immediate vicinity had tiled roofs. A range of fabrics are present.

Building Stone, Craig Cessford

Posthole **F.209** contained several fragments of shelly Oolitic limestone, probably from Barnack. One fragment weighing 1160g had clearly been shaped into an ashlar block with two flat faces.

Fired Clay, Craig Cessford

Small quantities of un-diagnostic fired clay were recovered from **F.208** and **F.244** (4 pieces, 92g).

Worked Stone, Craig Cessford

A c. 20mm thick fragment of Niedermendig lava quernstone weighing 166g was recovered from **F.250**.

Wood, Craig Cessford

[2082] the lowest fill of well **F.232** contained some poorly preserved waterlogged wood. As far as can be determined the material all appears to be plank fragments, although it is possible that one piece was entirely unshaped.

Animal Bone, Vida Rajkovača

The largest amount of animal bone from the site by phase came from features dated to the 13th–mid 14th centuries. Ovicapra are only slightly more prevalent than cattle, with pigs being under-represented at just over 10% of NISP. The sub-set is almost entirely defined by domestic species, with a few possible wild bird species.

Two deposits (**F.136** and **F.240**) are of note, producing a combined total which corresponds to almost half of the sub-set (146 specimens/ 44.2%). A foetal or neonate near complete pig skeleton came from **F.240**, indicating pigs were raised on site. Another fact in support of this is the skeletal element count for the three ‘food species’ showing all parts of carcass were processed. As for the remainder of the bone, the majority of epiphyses were recorded as fused and mandibular tooth wear for cattle showed animals were maintained into adulthood, with pigs being slaughtered as juveniles. Finally, a bone group from **F.145** ([1092]) recorded in the field as a being deposited as a single group was identified as a partial chicken skeleton (counted as one specimen).

Plant Remains, Anne de Varielles

Seven of the bulk soil samples date to the 13th–mid 14th century (Table 6). Five of these contained very low densities of charred plant remains, which were not examined. The only two samples which contained significant densities of charred plant remains were from features **F.227** (13th–14th centuries) and **F.244** (13th century). These were scanned under a low power binocular microscope (6x-40x magnification) and a brief description of their contents is given. The charred plant remains in **F.227** and **F.244** are well preserved and could mostly be confidently identified to species.

Both **F.227** and **F.244** had rich cereal assemblages dominated by grains of free-threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum sensu lato.*). Hulled barley (*Hordeum vulgare sl.*) and oat (*Avena* sp.) were also present, and in larger concentrations in **F.244** than in **F.227**. Cereal chaff was only seen in **F.227**, which contained relatively small quantities of wheat rachis nodes as well as some straw nodes. Wild plant seeds were prevalent in **F.244** and dominated by vetches and/or wild pea. Other arable weed types included field gromwell (*Lithospermum arvense*), knapweed (*Centaurea* sp.) and grain-sized grass seeds. Few small seeds were noted. **F.227** had no wild pulses and far fewer other wild plant seeds.

Although well preserved and plentiful, **F.227** and **F.244** contained assemblages of crops commonly found in medieval settlement sites. Exotic and unusual specimens were not found. Further analyses would not contribute significantly towards the understanding of this site, though samples could be looked at in more detail for broader, landscape-scaled trends.

Phase 3: Mid 14th–mid 18th Century Ebb

There is relatively little evidence for activity during this period (Figure 14). A probable well (**F.240/249**; Figure 15) located on the southern edge of Area A in Plot I continued in use throughout the 15th century. There is also evidence that some of the large 13th–mid 14th century gravel quarry pits that had been dug earlier existed as remnant hollows, which gradually filled up during the 15th century (**F.250/275** and **F.254**). In Area B the large ditch (**F.139**) at the rear of Plot IV had largely filled with

erosion/collapse related deposits, but was still over 0.6m deep with a U-shaped profile. Immediately to the east of the ditch, presumably lying outside the property proper, a substantial gravel quarry was dug (**F.143**; Figure 13b).

In the late 15th–early 16th century a series of pits (**F.234**, **F.236** and **F.241**; Figure 15a) were dug along the southern side of Area A. Although certainty about their dating is impossible an early 16th century date is more likely due to the presence of stoneware from Raeren. Although some of these features impinged slightly upon the construction cut for the well, none affected the well shaft proper. The proximity of these pits to the limit of excavation hindered investigation and interpretation, but they probably functioned as both gravel quarries and refuse disposal pits. The location of these pits is ambiguous; while they probably relate to the northern boundary of a property located to the south (Plot I), they could also conceivably represent the southern boundary of the property to the north (Plot II)

In the late 16th–early 17th century the well shaft (**F.240**) was backfilled. During the 16th–mid 17th century the surviving upper portion of the ditch in Area B (**F.139**) filled up and disappeared, and it is likely that it was only in the 17th century that some of its associated features also completely filled up (**F.149**).

Compared to the 13th–early 14th occupation at the site it is clear that levels of activity declined markedly during the 14th century. It is possible that some plots were abandoned entirely, although it is clear that some activity continued in the vicinity. Over time it is likely that an increasing proportion of the area was given over to agricultural purposes. This transition may well have been complete by the late 16th–early 17th century when the well was backfilled, effectively removing the last archaeological evidence for any continuity with the 13th–early 14th occupation.

Feature Descriptions

The upper fill of earlier ditch **F.139** (see above) was distinctive pale olive green friable silt [**1070**], which was different from any of the other fills on site and appears to represent deliberate disposal of cess, plus refuse including the body of a pig [**1062**] plus animal bone, tile fragments and pottery. The pottery from [**1070**] indicates a 16th–mid 17th century date and this is supported by the tile that is present.

Pit **F.143** (fills [**1097**], [**1105**]–[**1107**], skeleton [**1088**], cut [**1108**]) was a large oval pit 5.90m by 2.90m in extent, with a surviving depth of 1.15m. It was backfilled with a mixture of mid orange gravel deposits, relating to slumping/collapse of the edges of the cut, and mid to dark brownish grey clayey silts. The body of a dog [**1088**] was disposed of in the upper part of the pit. Pit **F.143** contained pottery that indicates a 15th century date and there was also some tile of broadly similar date.

Pit **F.234** (fills [**2088**]–[**2094**], cut [**2095**]) was roughly rectangular in shape and 1.3m by over 0.7m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.57m. The pit can not have been a gravel quarry and the series of alternating ashy and clayey banded fills suggests that it was used to dispose of domestic refuse. The pottery assemblage from **F.234** indicates a late 15th–early 16th century date, with the presence of Frechen stoneware supporting a 16th century date.

Gravel quarry pit **F.236** (fills [**2110**]–[**2114**], [**2151**], finds [**2098**], [**2153**], [**2154**], cut [**2149**]) is a large oval feature over 2.6m by over 1.25m in extent, with a surviving depth of 1.1m. The fills comprised a sequence of dirty silty gravel collapse/slumping deposits and dark silts. Although the majority of the fills contained relatively low amounts of material, in roughly the centre of the pit at the base there were fragments of a bung-hole cistern ([**2153**]) that may well originally have been complete when deposited. Lying almost directly over this was a horse skull ([**2098**]), which was located at the point to which water filled the pit. Given the relative paucity of other material in the pit it seems probable that the horse skull was deliberately placed over the cistern

in the base of the pit. Pit **F.236** is cut by pit **F.241**. The pottery assemblage from **F.236** indicates a late 15th–early 16th century date, with the presence of stoneware from Raeren suggesting that an early 16th century date is more likely.

Well **F.240/249** which was created in the 13th century has already been discussed (see above). The uppermost backfilling of the shaft (**F.240 [2106]**) contained a copper-alloy jetton produced by Hans Krauwinkel II (fl. 1586–1635); whilst much of the pottery from this fill was residual there was some late 16th century stoneware from Frechen and some iron glazed pottery of broadly the same date.

Pit **F.241** (fills **[2108]**, **[2109]**, **[2135]**, cut **[2148]**) was a relatively shallow rectangular pit 1.80m by over 0.65 in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.70m. The pit was filled with banded silts and gravels. Its function is uncertain, but as it cuts earlier features **F.236** and **F.249** it can not have been a gravel quarry. The pottery from **F.241** is no later than the 15th century; on stratigraphic grounds this material must be residual, as the pit dates to the 16th century.

Finds and Environmental Evidence

Jetton, Martin Allen

A single jetton (<**283**> **[2106] F.240**) was recovered. It is a copper-alloy Nuremburg jetton produced by Hans Krauwinkel II (fl. 1586–1635) of Rose/Orb type with the inscription *Das Wort Gotes Bleibt Ewick* on the obverse (cf. Mitchiner 1988, 435–36, no's. 1494–1503). Weight 2.01g.

Pottery, David Hall and Craig Cessford

The relatively small Post-Medieval pottery assemblage (147 sherds, 4422g) consisted of a typical range of coarsewares, glazed red earthenware, iron glazed ware and stoneware from Frechen (Germany) and Raeren (Belgium). The only significant pieces were a plain greyware bunghole cistern (27 sherds, 2014g; <**192**> **[2513] F.236**) and a cup with two eccentric handles on one side; this vessel has a fine pink fabric and a dense green glaze (1 sherd, 113g; <**181**> **[2110] F.236**). The bunghole cistern may be Higham Ferrers Reduced Ware, this ware is part of the regional Late Medieval Reduced Ware tradition and is dated to c. 1400–1500, with a kiln mentioned in a document of 1436 (Hall 1973).

Brick and Tile, Craig Cessford

Small quantities of brick and tile were present in most features dating to the 15th–18th centuries. A range of medieval and Post-Medieval fabrics were present, but no substantial concentrations were identified.

Metalwork, Craig Cessford

A small metalwork assemblage was recovered; none of the items are particularly significant. The ironwork consisted of two nails (**F.236x2**) and three unidentified heavily corroded lumps (**F.234**, **F.236x2**). There was a single piece of lead; an off-cut weighing 20g from a 3mm wide strip or plate (<**286**> **[1097] F.143**). There was also a copper alloy pin, an aiglet or lace fastener and unidentified lump (<**283**> **[2106] F.240**) and a thin slightly curving rectangular plate, with a single perforation (<**281**> **[1097] F.143**).

Worked Bone, Craig Cessford

The only worked bone from this phase was an iron knife with a bone scale tang handle fastened by two iron pins (<**063**> **[1106] F.143**). The bone handle appears undecorated and is quite long and narrow; c. 80mm long with a maximum width of 12mm. The blade is incomplete.

Window Glass, Craig Cessford

A single sherd of medieval window glass weighing 2g was recovered from a late 16th–early 17th century context (<203> [2106] F.240).

Vessel Glass, Craig Cessford

A single sherd of vessel glass weighing <1g was recovered from a late 16th–early 17th century context (<203> [2106] F.240). This is the folded over rim of a vessel whose overall form can not be determined.

Worked Stone, Craig Cessford

A 95mm long fragment of a 19mm by 19mm square sectioned whetstone, weighing 75g, was recovered from F.236 (<186> [2111]).

Slag, Craig Cessford

A small amount of slag was recovered from F.240 (2 pieces, 32g).

Animal Bone, Vida Rajkovača

The Phase 3 material has been divided into three sub-sets based upon date. The entire mid 14th–15th sub-set was collected from five different contexts excavated within a single feature F.143. This remarkable quantity of bone (232 specimens, 7289g) corresponds to just over 20% of the assemblage by count and c. 15% by weight. Judging by the lack of gnawing marks and minimal or non-existent surface erosion, the majority of material appears to have been deposited as a single event, or within a relatively short period of time. Butchery was recorded on seven specimens only, although a few sheep skulls had their horn cores removed. With the exception of dog and cat, the ratio of domestic species is almost identical to that in Phase 2, indicating a degree of continuation of earlier husbandry practices.

A partial dog skeleton, with the head and mandibles missing, (F.143 [1088]) was aged 9–11 months at death. In addition to this high dog and cat count are most likely parts of more or less complete carcasses being thrown into the deposit and not noted as articulated during the process of hand-excavation. A single cod specimen (premaxilla) is the only evidence of fish consumption from the site. Poultry also appeared to have been part of their diet and it is most likely that birds identified as *Galliformes* are all chicken, being used as supplementary sources of meat.

With ten complete specimens, biometrical data was available for the main species. Horses stood 144–146cm high, cattle elements gave the shoulder height of 113cm and sheep/goats measured just over 60cm. A few dog specimens were recorded as juvenile (<6 months and <13 months) and one cat specimen gave the age at death of 8 months. Osteochondritis dissecans noted on proximal articulate surface of several cow metacarpi in the form of lesions is associated with the herniation of small portions of joint cartilage through the articular surface of the bone, and is considered to result from a physical stress or trauma to the joint (Dobney *et al.* 1996, 38). In addition to this, a case of periostitis was also recorded on a dog radius, indicating the inflammation it was still active at death.

In the late 15th–early 16th century cattle became the prevalent species, over sheep/goat and pig. Three features generated 144 specimens, 105 (5785g) of which came from F.236. Two cattle and one pig mandible were available to assess mandibular tooth wear: the age at death recorded was 1–5 months (cattle) and 0–2 months (pig) suggestive of on-site animal breeding. This sub-set also produced an interesting deposit of a well-preserved complete horse skull (F.236, [2098]) which appeared to have been deliberately placed. The animal was aged 9–11 years at death. Butchery was common, recorded on 12.5% of the sub-set.

Recovered from two features, the small 16th–17th sub-set is quantitatively insufficient for comments on animal use on site; however, of note is a juvenile pig skeleton (F.139 [1062]). The animal was deposited almost complete and the skull is missing, making it impossible to assess tooth wear and age the animal more accurately than <1 year old (based on unfused epiphyses).

Cattle continue to be the dominant species in this phase and this appears to extend into the next phase and into the 18th century.

Plant Remains, Anne de Varielles

Two samples of this period were examined (Table 6); both contained very low densities of plant remains. Given the dates of the features from which the samples derive, identification of such sparse remains is not warranted since it will not make a significant contribution to our understanding of the site.

Phase 4: Mid 18th–late 19th Century Reoccupation

After a prolonged hiatus there is evidence for activity, probably linked to occupation, beginning again in the mid/late 18th century (Figure 16). This is presumably linked to the buildings depicted on the 1770 draft inclosure plan that are not present on the 1755 plan of St. Neots meadows (Appleby 2010, figure 2). This was probably a ‘farmhouse-type’ timber framed building with a central hall and cross wings at each end (Tebbutt 1978, 122–24). The current Cressner House (No. 12 Huntingdon Street) is a Grade II listed brick structure (list entry number 1162036) with two storeys plus attic. This was built in the early 19th century, but elements of its 18th century timber-framed predecessor may be preserved within it. The property was occupied by the Leightonstone family (1770–1814), who sold to Lt. Col. Humbley in 1814 at which time it had a close of pasture behind with one acre, 2 roods (c. 6070m²), plus a toft and barn covering 2 acres, 1 rood and 24 perches (c. 9122m²). To the east its boundary was another area of pasture, which Humbley also purchase (Tebbutt 1978, 279–81).

The excavated evidence consisted principally of a large gravel quarry pit in Area A (F.202) and a series of distinctive postholes with clay packing in Area B (F.27, F.110–112 and F.126–129; Figure 17b). These postholes form two broadly west-east aligned, but significantly diverging, rows of postholes (one row consisting of F.110–112 and the other of F.126–129) indicating the presence of quite substantial fence lines dividing the area. The dating evidence suggests that both the gravel quarry and the rows of postholes may relate to the initial re-occupation of the area in c. 1753–70.

Feature Descriptions

Posthole F.27 had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 8 and no further investigation took place.

Posthole F.110 (fill [1010], cut [1011]) is an oval feature 0.46m by 0.34m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.18m. The posthole had a distinct clay-lining. Posthole F.110 contained no dateable finds; however, its clay-lining indicates an 18th century date.

Posthole F.111 (fill [1012], cut [1013]) is an oval feature 0.68m by 0.52m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.18m. The posthole had a distinct clay-lining. Posthole F.111 contained no dateable finds; however, its clay-lining indicates an 18th century date.

Posthole F.112 (fill [1014], cut [1015]) is an oval feature 0.72m by 0.48m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.11m. The posthole had a distinct clay-lining. Posthole F.112 contained no dateable finds; however, its clay-lining indicates an 18th century date.

Posthole F.126 (fill [1038], cut [1039]) is a sub-circular feature 0.50m by 0.45m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.31m. The posthole had a distinct clay-lining. Posthole F.126 contained no dateable finds; however, its clay-lining indicates an 18th century date.

Posthole F.127 (fill [1040], cut [1041]) is an oval feature 0.67m by 0.53m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.37m. The posthole had a distinct clay-lining. The clay-lining contained a

clay tobacco pipe bowl of type 7 *c.* 1660–80, which is potentially residual as it may have already been present in the clay; its clay-lining indicates an 18th century date.

Posthole **F.128** (fill [1042], cut [1043]) is an oval feature 0.56m by 0.48m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.29m. The posthole had a distinct clay-lining. Posthole **F.128** contained no dateable finds; however, its clay-lining indicates an 18th century date.

Posthole **F.129** (fill [1044], cut [1045]) is a sub-circular feature 0.58m by 0.50m in extent, with a surviving depth of 0.21m. The posthole had a distinct clay-lining. Posthole **F.129** contained no dateable finds; however, its clay-lining indicates an 18th century date.

Gravel quarry **F.202** (fills [2006] and [2008], skeleton [2007], cut [2009]) is a large broadly rectangular, vertically-sided and flat-bottomed feature that was 4.5–5.2m by 3.1–3.6m extent, with a surviving depth of over 1.1m. This pit was dug as a gravel quarry and respected well **F.232**, not because this feature was still visible on the surface but because the distinctive clay fill was easily recognisable and indicated that no gravel was present in that area. The main fill ([2008]) consisted of a relatively homogenous dark greyish brown sandy silty that gradually became clayier towards the base. This fill contained a range of pottery; much of this is dated to the 17th–18th century and the presence of Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire-type stoneware indicates an 18th century date whilst one clay tobacco pipe bowl dates to *c.* 1710–47. Lying at the interface of [2006] and [2008] was a silver halfpenny originally deposited *c.* 1285–1551. This is obviously a residual item that was several centuries old, but it did appear plausible that it was recovered by someone in the mid 18th century, presumably from an earlier feature disturbed during the digging of **F.202**, and then either accidentally or deliberately dropped during an interlude in the backfilling. In the uppermost surviving part of the fill there was a dump of roof tiles ([2006]); these were a relatively homogenous group in a red fabric and at least 151 tiles (MNI based upon corners) were represented. There were also some tiles in a yellow fabric (MNI 16), bricks (MNI 9), a ridge tile (MNI 1) and a floor tile (MNI 1). Lying within the deposit of tiles was a disturbed but still partially articulated dog skeleton ([2007]).

It is possible that soakaway **F.211** was already in existence by this time (see below).

Finds and Environmental Evidence

Pottery, Craig Cessford

Only a small quantity of pottery of this period was recovered (Table 2). All of the material is of typical fabrics and forms.

Brick and Tile, Craig Cessford

A considerable quantity of brick and tile was present in pit **F.202** dated to the mid 18th century (see above). A representative sample of this material was retained (36 pieces, 4578g).

Clay Tobacco Pipe, Craig Cessford

Only a small assemblage of clay tobacco pipe was recovered, and bowls were categorised using the Oswald general typology (Oswald 1975, 37–41). [1040] **F.127** produced a type 7 bowl dated *c.* 1660–80. [2008] **F.202** contained 26 stem fragments, one mouthpiece and two bowls. One of the bowls is a type 7 of *c.* 1660–80 with a depiction of a mulberry tree on both sides of the bowl. This was a common form of decoration locally and other examples are known from St. Neots (Addyman and Marjoram 1972, 189). The second bowl was an unusual form, with an upright bowl and splayed heel, with the initials RL on the upper side of the stem near the bowl. There is no evidence for clay tobacco pipe manufacturing in St. Neots prior to the mid 19th century and the nearest 18th century production centre was St. Ives, where manufacturing began in the 1720s (Cessford 2001). The most likely candidate for producing the bowl marked RL is Richard Lewis of St. Ives. The *Northampton Mercury* of the 10th of August 1747 has an advert offering a dwelling house and pipe office in St. Ives now in the occupation of Richard Lewis for let, as well as ‘All sorts of Utensils in the Pipe making way are to be sold, at a reasonable Price; being determined to leave off Trade’ (Moore 1987, 27). Although it is unknown when Richard Lewis began working as a pipe maker a date prior to *c.* 1710 is unlikely.

Vessel Glass, Craig Cessford

A small assemblage of vessel glass was recovered from a pit dating to the mid 18th century (F.202); the material includes fragments from at least two utility bottles and two phials.

Animal Bone, Vida Rajkovača

Two contexts in one feature (F.202) produced a small cattle-dominated sub-set of animal bone. This pit also contained an articulated adult dog skeleton ([2007], counted as one specimen) measuring some 35cm in shoulder height, at the lower end of the size range. A slight pathological change was recorded on one of the dog radii, in form of cloacae, indicating a possible trauma or infection.

Phase 5: Early 20th Century Gardening

As far as can be determined from the Ordnance Survey maps, all the early 20th century features (Figure 16) investigated are associated with Cressner House (Figure 18). This is supported by the evidence for the extent of its associated land in 1814 (see above), which was in fact substantially bigger than the later area, suggesting that some land had been sold for development in the intervening period. Whilst a range of features were encountered the most significant are several interpreted as planting beds and a number of large rubble filled features interpreted as soakways. In both cases the features would have acted as *de facto* gravel quarries, but this does not appear to have been their primary purpose.

The interpretation of several features (F.107, F.108, F.130, and F.132–134; Figure 17) as planting beds is based on the fact that morphologically they closely resemble other known planting beds of the period, they are located in an area where cartographic evidence indicates that no other activities took place in the appropriate timeframe and crucially their vertical or near-vertical sides and lack of evidence for either any form of lining or slumping/collapse of the sides demonstrates that they were rapidly backfilled, probably within hours and certainly within days. It must be admitted that the features were rather deeper than is usual for planting beds of this period and that some, but not all, acted as *de facto* refuse disposal pits. Nonetheless planting beds appears to be the most credible explanation, with the refuse disposal representing a deliberate attempt to create a ‘percolation fill’ to improve drainage (*cf.* Cotter *et al.* 1992, 161, 307–09, 450). The large, vertically-sided rectangular soakaways (F.101, F.104, F.124 and F.212) all appear to be of similar form and extent and were probably created at about the same time. They suggest a substantial demolition episode, as cumulatively they must have contained thousands of bricks and tiles. The presence of at least four similar features suggest that some unidentified activity involving the disposal of large quantities of liquid was taking place at the site. The lack of any collapse or evidence for a lining indicates that these features were dug and backfilled in rapid succession. Other contemporary features included a brick-lined soakaway (F.211) that probably relates to a small structure, a pit dug to dispose of a dog (F.109) and a number of postholes (F.113, F.114 and F.117).

These features present some evidence of the activities that were taking place in the gardens of Cressner House in the early 20th century. The most important discovery is that two of the planting beds (F.107 and F.130) contained substantial assemblages of material culture (Table 1; Figure 19) interpreted as ‘feature groups’, closed assemblages of domestic artefacts discarded as a single deposit (Cessford 2009, 307–09). The rest of the features contained only a few small fragments of material, best

interpreted as incidental inclusions, although it is possible that the soakaways contained more substantial groups at their bases, which could not be investigated. Several aspects of the artefact assemblages indicate that they represent the disposal of material from an individual household, rather than a more communal form of disposal. Specific similarities between several features (**F.104/130** Eiffel tower juice bottles; **F.107/130** three different ceramic patterns, excluding those common to many assemblages of the period, particularly multiple vessels in the Adriatic pattern; Figure 19e) indicate that these were all generated by a single household. There are, however, also marked differences in assemblage composition, making it likely that they were generated at slightly different points in time. In broad terms the ceramics and glass appear stylistically to date to *c.* 1910–30. For **F.130** a glass bottle with the name S. Maw, Son & Sons Ltd provides a *terminus post quem*, as the firm was incorporated under this name in 1901. Two glass bottles from **F.130** can not have been produced later than 1913, whilst the presence of a military uniform fitting (Figure 19b) makes a date during or after the First World War more probable.

The larger assemblage from **F.130** contains more complete or substantially complete items and in many respects the more distinctive assemblage. In totality the group has a distinctively female impression, with a strong emphasis on middle class value such as refined tea drinking with at least six different services represented. A male element is provided by the presence of a uniform fitting of the Civil Service Rifle Volunteers (Figure 19b), which it may be possible to link through documentary research to a specific individual. There is also a strong element of bric-a-brac and even kitsch, particularly with regard to a large figurine of a cat wearing a jacket and top hat and holding a cane with a container on its back, possibly for flowers (Figure 19a). There is also evidence for the disposal of an ‘Adriatic’ pattern dining service (Figure 19e) and a set of cutlery. A case could be made for several elements representing treasured personal mementoes, likely to be only disposed of after death. There is strong evidence for children, in the form of elements of a porcelain doll (Figure 19d), a matching toy cup and saucer and a rubber ball (Figure 19e). Food is strongly represented; with a substantial animal bone assemblage plus 13 bottles of Eiffel Tower fruit juices, which held concentrated lemon juice for use in cooking. After *c.* 1850 animal bone becomes extremely rare as a component in ‘feature groups’ (Jeffries 2006, 286; see also Cessford and Dickens in prep). This may relate to changing attitudes of what represented ‘dry and proper rubbish’, plus possibly an increased use of animal bone mainly as agricultural fertiliser. The recovery of a substantial early 20th century assemblage of animal bone is therefore important.

In the late 19th century Cressner House was occupied by the McNish family until *c.* 1900. The property was then occupied by Dr Gardner Hill, Thomas West Thornton (1909–16), John Franks (1916–20) and Hannah Harvey (1928–37). There are indications that the material may have been deposited during the occupation by Hannah Harvey, who could have been living at the premises as early as 1920.

Material	F.107 Count	F.107 weight	F.107 MNI	F.130 Count	F.130 weight	F.130 MNI
Pottery	250	8492	52	279	9043	45
Glass	25	776	12	187	5466	39
Animal bone	1	8	1	504	6579	237 (NISP)
Metal	30	350	3	5	296	4
Worked bone	0	0	0	4	127	4
Leather	0	0	0	2	120	1
Total	306	9626	68	981	21631	93

Table 1: Summary of material from the two main early 20th century assemblages

Feature Descriptions

Features **F.05–08** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 2 and no further investigation took place.

Cellar **F.26** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 20 and no further investigation took place.

Pit **F.35** had been fully dealt with in evaluation Trench 20 and no further investigation took place.

Soakaway **F.101** (**F.22** in evaluation Trench 8) is a rectangular feature with vertical sides 3.5m by 3.2m in extent and over 1.0m deep. The fill consisted primarily of unshaped fieldstone. Soakaway **F.101** contained whiteware pottery indicating a date of 1830+.

Soakaway **F.104** (**F.21** in evaluation Trench 6) is a rectangular feature with vertical sides over 8.5m long by 3.1m wide and over 1.0m deep. The fill consisted primarily of fragments of brick and tile. Soakaway **F.104** contained Eiffel Tower Fruit Juices bottles indicating a date of 1891+.

Planting bed **F.107** (fills **[1000]**, **[1001]**, cut **[1002]**) is a rectangular feature with near vertical sides and a flattish base 1.77m by 1.38m in extent with a surviving depth of 0.78m. The basal fill **[1001]** was a mid to dark grey banded silt containing a large amount of material culture including pottery and glass fragments, pieces of brick and tile, window glass and corroded ironwork. The upper fill **[1000]** was a banded mid to dark greyish brown sandy clay which contained very little material culture. Planting bed **F.107** contained ceramics and glass indicating a late 19th or more probably early 20th century date.

Planting bed **F.108** (fills **[1003]–[1005]**, cut **[1006]**) is a rectangular feature with near vertical sides and a flattish base over 1.68m by over 1.65m in extent with a surviving depth of 0.1.02m. The fills consisted primarily of sandy gravels (**[1003]** and **[1005]**) separated by an ashy deposit (**[1004]**), which contained 19th century pottery including English utilitarian stoneware, bone china and whiteware indicating a date of 1830+.

Animal disposal pit **F.109** (fill **[1007]**, skeleton **[1008]**, cut **[1009]**) was an oval scoop 0.82m by 0.48m in extent with a surviving depth of 0.14m that appears to have been deliberately dug to dispose of a dog. The complete skeleton was present and a series of arthritic changes were recorded on a number of vertebrae, sacrum and pelvis. Animal disposal pit **F.109** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a late 19th–20th century date.

Posthole **F.113** (fill **[1016]**, cut **[1017]**) is a circular feature 0.48m in diameter with a surviving depth of 0.30m. Posthole **F.113** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a 19th–20th century date.

Posthole **F.114** (fill **[1018]**, cut **[1019]**) is a circular feature 0.90m in diameter with a surviving depth of 0.40m. Posthole **F.114** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a 19th–20th century date.

Posthole **F.117** (fill [1024], cut [1025]) is a circular feature 0.32m in diameter with a surviving depth of 0.16m. Posthole **F.117** contained no dateable finds; however, the appearance of the fill indicates a 19th–20th century date.

Soakaway **F.124** is a rectangular feature with vertical sides over 5.2m long by over 1.2m wide and over 1.0m deep. The fill consisted primarily of fragments of brick and tile, indicating a 19th–20th century date.

Planting bed **F.130** (fill [1048], cut [1049]) is a near vertically-sided, flat-bottomed rectangular feature 2.2m long by 0.95m wide with a surviving depth of 0.92m. The banded fill was a mixture of mid greyish brown silt and very dark greyish brown silt with large quantities of pottery and vessel glass fragments and pieces of animal bone plus small amounts of brick and tile and corroded lumps of iron. The material from **F.130** indicates an early 20th century date.

Planting bed **F.132** (fill [1052], cut [1053]) is a near vertically-sided, flat-bottomed rectangular feature 1.5m long by 0.85m wide with a surviving depth of 0.90m. The feature contained 19th century pottery including yellowware and whiteware indicating a date of 1830+.

Planting bed **F.133** (fills [1054] and [1055], cut [1049]) is a near vertically-sided, flat-bottomed rectangular feature 0.90m long by 0.58m wide with a surviving depth of 0.75m. The feature contained 19th century pottery including fragments of flowerpot.

Planting bed **F.134** (fills [1057] and [1058], cut [1059]) is a rather irregular but probably near vertically-sided, flat-bottomed rectangular feature 1.67m long by 1.30m wide with a surviving depth of 0.67m. The feature contained 19th century pottery, including whiteware indicating a date of 1830+.

Soakaway **F.211** is a square feature 0.79m by 0.77m in extent with a surviving depth of 0.4m that was lined with un-mortared un-frogged handmade late 18th–early 19th century bricks. The fill contained no dateable material; however, it probably went out of use in the 20th century.

Soakaway **F.212** is a rectangular feature with vertical sides over 4.0m long by 2.3m wide and over 1.0m deep. The fill consisted primarily of fragments of brick and tile. Soakaway **F.212** contained whiteware pottery indicating a date of 1830+, one piece with a purple transfer printed design has a crowned garter and wreath on the rear with the pattern name WATFORD and the initials W.B.

Finds and Environmental Evidence

The vast majority of the finds of this period relate to two assemblages (**F.107** and **F.130**), with negligible amounts from all other features.

Pottery, Craig Cessford

735 sherds of 18th–20th century pottery weighing 17.kg were recovered (Table 2). The material all represents typical fabrics and forms of this period. There was also a ceramic bird with the number 28 on base, which is probably a child's toy (<016> [1052] **F.132**).

Vessel Glass, Craig Cessford

The vessel glass all comes from common vessel forms of the period. One notable presence were 13 near identical bottles marked with embossed lettering: EIFFEL TOWER FRUIT JUICES / FOSTER CLARK & CO MAIDSTONE in **F.130**, plus at least another three noted from **F.104**, which was not excavated. This company was founded in 1891 and the design of their bottles changed very little until the 1930s. The 'fruit juice' in the bottles was probably concentrated lemon juice, used principally for cooking rather than drinking

Metalwork, Craig Cessford

The bulk of the metalwork of the period consists of heavily corroded pieces of ironwork that can not be identified. The most significant item is a uniform fitting of the Civil Service Rifle Volunteers (<280> [1048] F.130). The Prince of Wales' Own Civil Service Rifles were a regiment in the Volunteer Force and Territorial Force of the British Army from 1798–1921 and saw active service in the Boer War and World War I (Anon 1921; Knight 2004). There was also a complete set of iron shears in the same feature (<287> [1048] F.130).

Worked Bone, Craig Cessford

There are four near identical plain slightly tapering scale tanged worked bone handles connected with two iron pins (<11> [1048] F.130). They are 72–74mm long, max width 18mm. These are probably cutlery handles and a three pronged iron fork head in the same feature (<287> [1048] F.130) may well be associated with one of the handles. The discard of this number of handles in one group is unusual; it may possibly relate to such items beginning to be manufactured in artificial materials.

Rubber, Craig Cessford

A single multicoloured rubber ball was found (<13> [1048] F.130).

Leather, Craig Cessford

A pair of ladies leather shoes with wooden heels and metal fittings was recovered (<13> [1048] F.130).

Brick and Tile, Craig Cessford

Most of the early 20th century features contained brick and tile and several contained substantial assemblages (see above). None of this material was retained.

Animal Bone, Vida Rajkovača

Feature F.130 produced the majority of the studied sub-set assigned to Phase 5. Sheep are again the most dominant species, significantly outnumbering cattle, especially within the MNI count. Of particular interest is a remarkably large bone deposit from [1048], accounting for 222 specimens corresponding to c. 94% of the sub-set and c. 20% of the entire site assemblage. This feature has produced the largest and probably the most varied assemblage, in terms of species range. Of 222 specimens ([1048] only) 104 were recorded as butchered, a figure which corresponds to c. 47% of the sub-set. This is quite a large percentage, clearly indicating a level of specialisation. This becomes even more apparent if we look at the skeletal element count. Cattle were identified based on ribs and vertebra. As for the pigs, only lower limb elements like tibiae, femorae and fibulae were recorded. The most abundant sheep/goat cohort was represented by meat-bearing elements only: radii, ulnae, pelves, scapulae, femorae and a large number of tibiae. This particular choice of ‘cuts’ of meat implies that the deposit derived from a specialised form of activity. The high degree of sawing through limb shafts and carcass splitting down the sagittal plane into left and right portions, as well as other aspects of the butchery pattern recorded across the assemblage all indicates it was carried out by a professional butcher, probably a single individual. In addition there was a complete dog skeleton (F.109 ([1008]) with a series of arthritic changes on a number of vertebrae and the sacrum and pelvis.

Plant Remains, Anne de Varielles

One sample of this period was examined (Table 6), which contained very low densities of plant remains. Given the date of the feature from which the sample derives, identification of such sparse remains is not warranted since it will not make a significant contribution to our understanding of the site.

Mid 20th – early 21st century

More recent features were assigned numbers to facilitate recording during excavation, but will not be discussed in detail.

In Area A several features (**F.214**, **F.215** and **F.246**) relate to the removal of the wall footings of the Old Fire Station in 2007. There are also some features that appear to represent associated contemporary disturbance (**F.213** and **F.230**). In Area B there were a number of recent services linked to the former Household Waste Disposal site (**F.100**, **F.105**, **F.106**, **F.120** and **F.121**) and two soakaways (**F.102** and **F.103**).

Unphased

The unphased features consist primarily of seven isolated postholes that contained no dateable artefacts. There was also one rather ephemeral pit (**F.125**).

Feature Descriptions

Posthole **F.115** (fill [1020] cut [1021]), oval 0.46m by 0.37m in extent and a surviving depth of 0.08m. No dating evidence.

Posthole **F.116** (fill [1022] cut [1023]), circular 0.45m diameter and a surviving depth of 0.29m. No dating evidence.

Posthole **F.118** (fill [1026] cut [1027]), probably circular 0.31m diameter and a surviving depth of 0.07m. No dating evidence.

Posthole **F.119** (fill [1028] cut [1029]), circular 0.34m diameter and a surviving depth of 0.19m. No dating evidence.

Pit **F.125** (fill [1036] cut [1037]), probably circular 1.6m diameter and a surviving depth of 0.45m. Contains Late Medieval brick and tile but could be significantly later.

Posthole **F.137** (fill [1066] cut [1067]), circular 0.35m diameter and a surviving depth of 0.60m. No dating evidence.

Posthole **F.138** (fill [1068] cut [1069]), oval 0.40m by 0.20m in extent and a surviving depth of 0.09m. No dating evidence.

Posthole **F.257** (fill [2157] cut [2158]), circular 0.40m diameter and a surviving depth of 0.40m. No dating evidence.

Finds and environmental evidence

Although the finds have been dealt with on a phase by phase basis, where appropriate brief summaries are provided below.

Pottery, David Hall and Craig Cessford

In total 1729 sherds of pottery weighing 32.7kg were recovered during the excavation and evaluation phases. Whilst the assemblage spans the Roman period to the 20th century the bulk of the material is medieval (42.5% by count) and Modern (42.5% by count) (Table 2).

	Count	Weight (g)	MSW (g)
<i>Roman</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>1.0</i>
<i>Early/Middle Saxon</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>10</i>	<i>10.0</i>
Thetford-type	17	213	<i>12.5</i>
St. Neots-type	86	748	<i>8.7</i>
Stamford	4	123	<i>30.8</i>
<i>Saxo-Norman</i>	<i>107</i>	<i>1084</i>	<i>10.1</i>
Miscellaneous coarsewares	516	6811	<i>13.2</i>
Shelly coarsewares	147	1572	<i>10.7</i>
Thin bodied rilled greyware	14	159	<i>11.4</i>
Brill/Boarstall	35	1016	<i>29.0</i>
Developed Stamford?	3	12	<i>4.0</i>
Lyveden/Stanian	13	127	<i>9.8</i>
Potterspury	4	29	<i>7.3</i>
Miscellaneous finewares	3	35	<i>11.7</i>
<i>Medieval</i>	<i>735</i>	<i>9761</i>	<i>13.3</i>
Plain greyware	79	2801	<i>35.5</i>
Plain redware	22	284	<i>12.9</i>
Glazed red earthenware	16	279	<i>17.4</i>
Iron glazed ware	12	180	<i>15.0</i>
Frechen	3	125	<i>41.7</i>
Raeren	4	114	<i>28.5</i>
Staffordshire-type slipware	3	38	<i>12.7</i>
Miscellaneous	11	639	<i>58.1</i>
<i>Post-Medieval</i>	<i>150</i>	<i>4460</i>	<i>221.7</i>
Staffordshire white salt glazed stoneware	1	1	<i>1.0</i>
Late glazed red earthenware	48	71	<i>1.5</i>
Tin glazed earthenware	7	79	<i>11.3</i>
Late unglazed earthenware	94	2427	<i>25.8</i>
Lead glazed earthenware	3	73	<i>24.3</i>
Sunderland-type earthenware	3	118	<i>39.3</i>
18th century English stoneware	5	41	<i>8.2</i>
Mocha	1	13	<i>13.0</i>
Nottinghamshire/Derbyshire-type stoneware	2	9	<i>4.5</i>
Red bodied stoneware	1	8	<i>8.0</i>
Utilitarian English stoneware	13	1808	<i>139.1</i>
Whiteware	414	9311	<i>22.5</i>
Bone china	142	3399	<i>23.9</i>
Yellowware	1	11	<i>11.0</i>
<i>Modern</i>	<i>735</i>	<i>17369</i>	<i>23.6</i>
Total	1729	32685	<i>18.9</i>

Table 2: All pottery from both the excavation and evaluation phases

Coins and Jettons, Martin Allen

Two medieval silver coins, one closely dated to the mid 13th century, and a single late 16th–early 17th century copper-alloy jetton were recovered from the site.

Animal Bone, Vida Rajkovača

A relatively large faunal assemblage, consisting of some 1105 assessable fragments with a total weight of 49856g, was recovered from the evaluation and excavation phases (Table 3). The assessment aims to integrate faunal material excavated from features during the evaluation and excavation stages, quantify and characterise the assemblage in terms of species ratio and patterns of animal use. In addition, the report will also offer the outline of the results and the assemblage's interpretative potential.

Sub-set	Contexts	Fragments (NISP)	% of assemblage by count	Date
Evaluation	7	38	3.4	
Phase 1	1	8	0.8	11 th –12 th
Phase 2	48	330	29.9	13 th –mid 14 th
Phase 3	5	232	21	mid 14 th –15 th
Phase 3	10	144	13	late 15 th –early 16 th
Phase 3	6	53	4.8	16 th –17 th
Phase 4	2	63	5.7	18 th –19 th
Phase 5	2	237	21.4	early 20 th

Table 3: Breakdown of quantities of animal bone by phase

Recovered from a range of features spanning ten centuries (Tables 4–5), the assemblage is dominated by domestic species showing a fairly low level of species ratio variability between different phases. Given the temporal span covered by Phase 3, this material has been further sub-divided.

Judging by the abundant bone waste, the most substantial phase of occupation must have been during the 13th–mid 14th centuries (Phase 2), accounting for nearly 30% of the total assemblage. Although sub-sets assigned to Phases 3 and 5 have also generated significant quantities of bone, the material came from a small number of contexts suggestive of single episodes of bone deposition, rather than intensive site occupation.

The zooarchaeological investigation followed the system implemented by Bournemouth University with all identifiable elements recorded (NISP: Number of Identifiable Specimens) and diagnostic zoning (amended from Dobney and Reilly 1988) used to calculate MNE (Minimum Number of Elements) from which MNI (Minimum Number of Individuals) was derived. Identification of the assemblage was undertaken with the aid of Schmid (1972), and reference material from the CAU and Grahame Clark Zooarchaeology Laboratory, University of Cambridge. Most, but not all, caprine bones are difficult to identify to species; however, it was possible to identify a selective set of elements as sheep from the assemblage, using the criteria of Boessneck (1969) and Halstead (Halstead *et al.* 2002). Ageing of the assemblage employed both mandibular tooth wear (Grant 1982, Payne 1973) and fusion of proximal and distal epiphyses (Silver 1969). Where possible, the measurements have been taken (Von den Driesch 1976). Sexing was only undertaken for pig canines, based on the basis of their size, shape and root morphology (Schmid 1972, 80). Withers height calculations follow the conversion factors published by Von den Driesch and Boessneck (1974). Taphonomic criteria including indications of butchery, pathology, gnawing activity and surface modifications as a result of weathering were also recorded when evident.

Phase 1–2 produced bone which could be described as moderately preserved, with some surface erosion and exfoliation, gnawing and burning. The majority of the material from Phases 3–7 has quite good preservation with minimal erosion and surface exfoliation. Fragmentation was high throughout, although material from Phase 2 had the largest number of complete and thus measurable specimens. The highest instance of gnawing was observed in Phase 2 and this implies that the material was within reach of scavengers with features remaining open for some time. Butchery marks were relatively common, recorded on 83 specimens (12% of the

assemblage). Material recovered from Phase 2 accounted for almost half of all the butchered material, suggesting that this material represented the most intense phase of domestic activity.

Taxon	Evaluation			Phase 1 (11 th –12 th)			Phase 2 (13 th –mid 14 th)			Phase 3 (mid 14 th –15 th)			Total NISP	%NISP
	NISP	%NISP	MNI	NISP	%NISP	MNI	NISP	%NISP	MNI	NISP	%NISP	MNI		
Cattle	14	48.3	4	1	20	1	67	34.2	3	28	15.3	1	110	26.7
Ovicapra	12	41.4	1	4	80	1	65	33.2	4	24	13.1	3	105	25.5
Sheep	2	6.9	1	.	.	.	15	7.7	1	9	5	1	26	6.3
Goat	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	3	1.6	1	4	1
Pig	1	3.4	1	.	.	.	21	10.7	1	10	5.5	2	32	7.7
Horse	.	.	.	.	.	.	7	3.6	1	15	8.2	1	22	5.3
Dog	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	2	1	50	27.3	3	54	13.1
Dog/ fox	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	.	.	.	1	0.22
Cat	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	37	20.2	2	38	9.2
Chicken	.	.	.	.	.	.	7	3.6	1	2	1.1	1	9	2.2
<i>Galliformes</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	4	2.2	1	5	1.2
Pheasant	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	.	.	.	1	0.22
Goose	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	.	.	.	1	0.22
<i>Corvidae</i>	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	.	.	.	1	0.22
Frog/ toad	.	.	.	.	.	.	3	1.5	1	.	.	.	3	0.7
Cod	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	1	0.22
Sub-total to order, family or species	29	100	.	5	100	.	196	100	.	183	100	.	413	100
Cattle-sized	.	.	.	3	.	.	66	.	.	26	.	.	95	.
Sheep-sized	9	.	.	.	.	.	62	.	.	19	.	.	90	.
Rodent-sized	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	2	.
Bird n.f.i.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	.	.	4	.	.	8	.
Total	38	.	.	8	.	.	330	.	.	232	.	.	608	.

Table 4: Number of Identified Specimens and Minimum Number of Individuals from evaluation and Phases 1–3. A number of bird specimens were only identified to family or order level at this stage. The abbreviation n.f.i. denotes that the specimen could not be further identified

Taxon	Phase 3 (late 15 th –early 16 th)			Phase 3 (16 th –17 th)			Phase 4 (18 th –19 th)			Phase 5 (early 20 th)			Total NISP	%NISP
	NISP	%NISP P	MNI	NISP	%NISP P	MNI	NISP	%NISP P	MNI	NISP	%NISP P	MNI		
Cattle	36	44.4	4	17	51.5	1	16	47	2	44	22.8	1	113	33.1
Ovicapra	27	33.3	2	8	24.3	1	9	26.5	1	68	35.2	10	112	32.8
Sheep	6	7.4	1	3	9.1	1	3	8.8	1	22	11.4	2	34	9.9
Pig	8	9.9	1	4	12.1	1	3	8.8	1	4	2.1	1	19	5.6
Horse	1	1.25	1	1	3	1	2	5.9	1	.	.	.	4	1.2
Dog	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	3	1	.	.	.	1	0.3
Cat	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.5	1	1	0.3
Chicken	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	10	5.2	2	10	2.9
<i>Galliformes</i>	1	1.25	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	2	1	1	3	0.9
Pheasant	1	1.25	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	0.3
Goose	1	1.25	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	5	2.6	1	6	1.8
Duck	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	4	2.1	1	4	1.2
Rabbit	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	33	17.1	2	33	9.7
Sub-total to order, family or species	81	100	.	33	100	.	34	100	.	193	100	.	341	100
Cattle-sized	32	.	.	8	.	.	24	.	.	2	.	.	66	.
Sheep-sized	28	.	.	10	.	.	4	.	.	32	.	.	74	.
Mammal n.f.i.	.	.	.	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	.
Bird n.f.i.	3	.	.	1	.	.	1	.	.	10	.	.	15	.
Total	144	.	.	53	.	.	63	.	.	237	.	.	497	.

Table 5: Number of Identified Specimens and Minimum Number of Individuals from evaluation and Phases 3–5. A number of bird specimens were only identified to family or order level at this stage. The abbreviation n.f.i. denotes that the specimen could not be further identified

The relatively large medieval, Post-Medieval and Modern faunal assemblage from the site fits well with known period observed locally with its heavy reliance upon domestic sources of food (e.g. Albarella and Davis 1994). With the exception of a possible pheasant and a few probably duck specimens, which could be wild or domestic, the assemblage showed no evidence for the use of wild faunal resources. Animals were an important economic asset, being used for food and secondary products (hide, wool, traction etc.) and undoubtedly live animals and excess products were part of the local trade and exchange network. The overall prevalence of sheep is probably associated with the increasing importance of wool. Moreover, the high sheep count combined with low numbers for pigs is typical for a rural medieval settlement. The absence of wild remains is another indication of a rural character.

It is uncertain to what extent it would be possible to study site status and its economic transformations through time, with the faunal record being quantitatively ‘thin’ in

some phases of occupation. When viewed in its regional context in combination with other contemporaneous records, the site assemblage can offer a better opportunity to trace changes or study the economic continuity in husbandry regimes through medieval and Post-Medieval times in this part of the country.

***Plant Remains*, Anne de Varielles**

Nine bulk soil samples, ranging from the 13th–early 20th century in date, were processed using an Ankara-type flotation machine, seven of which date to the 13th–mid 14th century (Table 6). The flots were collected in 300µm aperture meshes and the remaining heavy residues washed over a 1mm mesh. The flots and heavy residues were dried indoors prior to analysis. J. Hutton sorted the >4mm fractions of the heavy residues by eye. The flots were analysed by the author. Initial inspection of the flots affirmed that all but two contained very low densities of plant remains. Given the dates of the features from which the samples derive, identification of such sparse remains is not warranted since it will not make a significant contribution to our understanding of the site. Flots from **F.227** (13th–14th century) and **F.244** (13th century) were scanned under a low power binocular microscope (6x-40x magnification) and a brief description of their contents is given (see Phase 3). The charred plant remains in **F.227** and **F.244** are well preserved and could mostly be confidently identified to species.

Although a significant number of features penetrated below the current height of the water-table for a considerable depth, often up to *c.* 0.4-0.6m, this represents a perched water-table within the river terrace gravels and none of the excavated features reached the underlying natural clays. All plant remains were charred, although some wood, albeit in poor condition, was recovered on site. These findings reflect a previously lower or fluctuating water-table.

Sample	Context	Feature	Feature type	Phase	Scanned
100	1071	139	Ditch	3	No
101	1107	143	Pit	3	No
102	1048	130	Pit	5	No
103	1101	136	Pit	2	No
200	2071	227	Posthole	2	Yes
201	2142	254	Pit	2	No
202	2082	232	Well	2	No
203	2119	244	Pit or posthole	2	Yes
204	2200	250	Pit	2	No

Table 6: Processed bulk soil samples

Discussion

The archaeological excavations of the two areas on the site of the former Old Fire Station and former Household Waste Disposal Site in St. Neots have served to broadly confirm and expand the pattern of activity observed in the evaluation (Cessford 2011). A roadside ditch along Huntingdon Street was probably established in the 11th century and by the 12th century it is likely that the area was divided into a series of long narrow rectangular plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street (Phase 1). These represent a suburban expansion of the town of St. Neots; this development thrived throughout the 13th–early 14th centuries (Phase 2), before going into a period of prolonged decline ending in the late 16th–early 17th century (Phase 3). Occupation began again in the mid 18th century (Phase 4), again with its focus on Huntingdon Street and this has continued until the present, with particular evidence for a phase of

activity in the early 20th century which involved the deposition of several substantial assemblages of material culture (Phase 5).

Although in many senses peripheral to the main development and narrative of the town of St. Neots, the expansion and contraction of occupation in this area provides a useful barometer of the fluctuating fortunes of the town (*cf.* Keene 1976; Schofield and Vince 2003, 66–68). It also provides a valuable contrast to the sequence revealed by investigations located within the urban core of St. Neots (e.g. Newton 2011). In this sense the archaeological evidence fits with a classic British narrative of 12th–13th century urban growth, followed by a long period of contraction and decline following the 14th century ‘Crisis of the Late Middle Ages’, which was only fully reversed in the 18th century. This reoccupation of the area would traditionally be viewed as less archaeologically significant; however, the recovery of substantial assemblages of early 20th century material culture contributes to our understanding of the ‘contemporary past’, a previously neglected but now vibrant field in British archaeology (*cf.* Schofield and Harrison 2010).

Acknowledgments

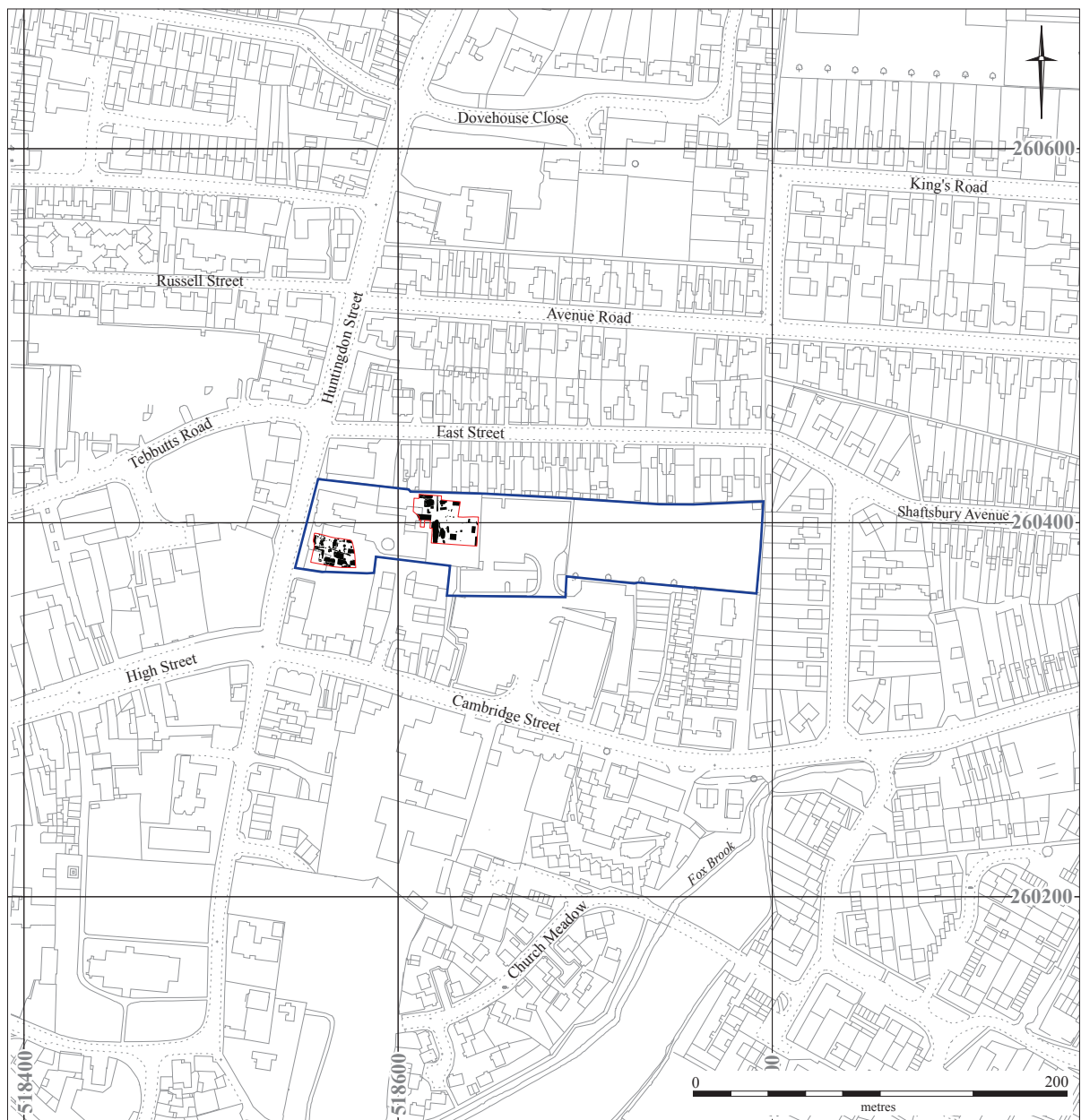
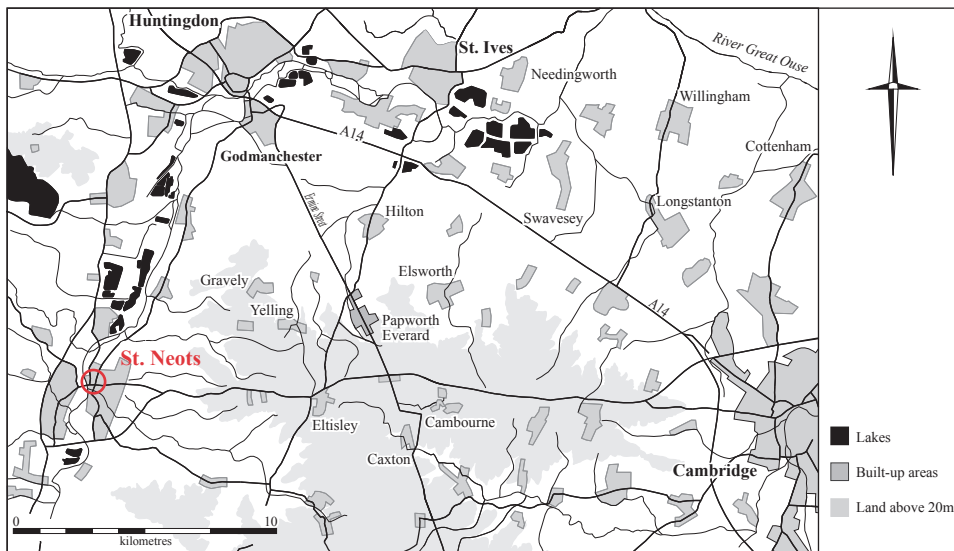
The excavation was undertaken by Craig Cessford, with the assistance of Tony Baker, Emma Rees, Toby Knight, Lawrence Morgan-Shelbourne and Alasdair Wright. The project manager for the CAU was Alison Dickens and the site was surveyed by Donald Horne. The plans were digitised and the graphics produced by Bryan Crossan. The pottery was spot-dated by David Hall, Martin Allen identified the coins and jettons and Lawrence Billington commented upon the flint. Jacqui Hutton processed the environmental samples, which were assessed by Anne de Varielles. The animal bone was studied by Vida Rajkovača. Richard Newman kindly commented upon a draft of the report. The site was monitored by Kasia Gdaniec, Senior Archaeologist of the Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (formerly CAPCA). Thanks are due to Paul Belton of Januarys for his assistance.

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PDA
 Excavation areas
 Archaeological features

Based on the Ordnance Survey 1:2500 map
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Figure 1. Site location

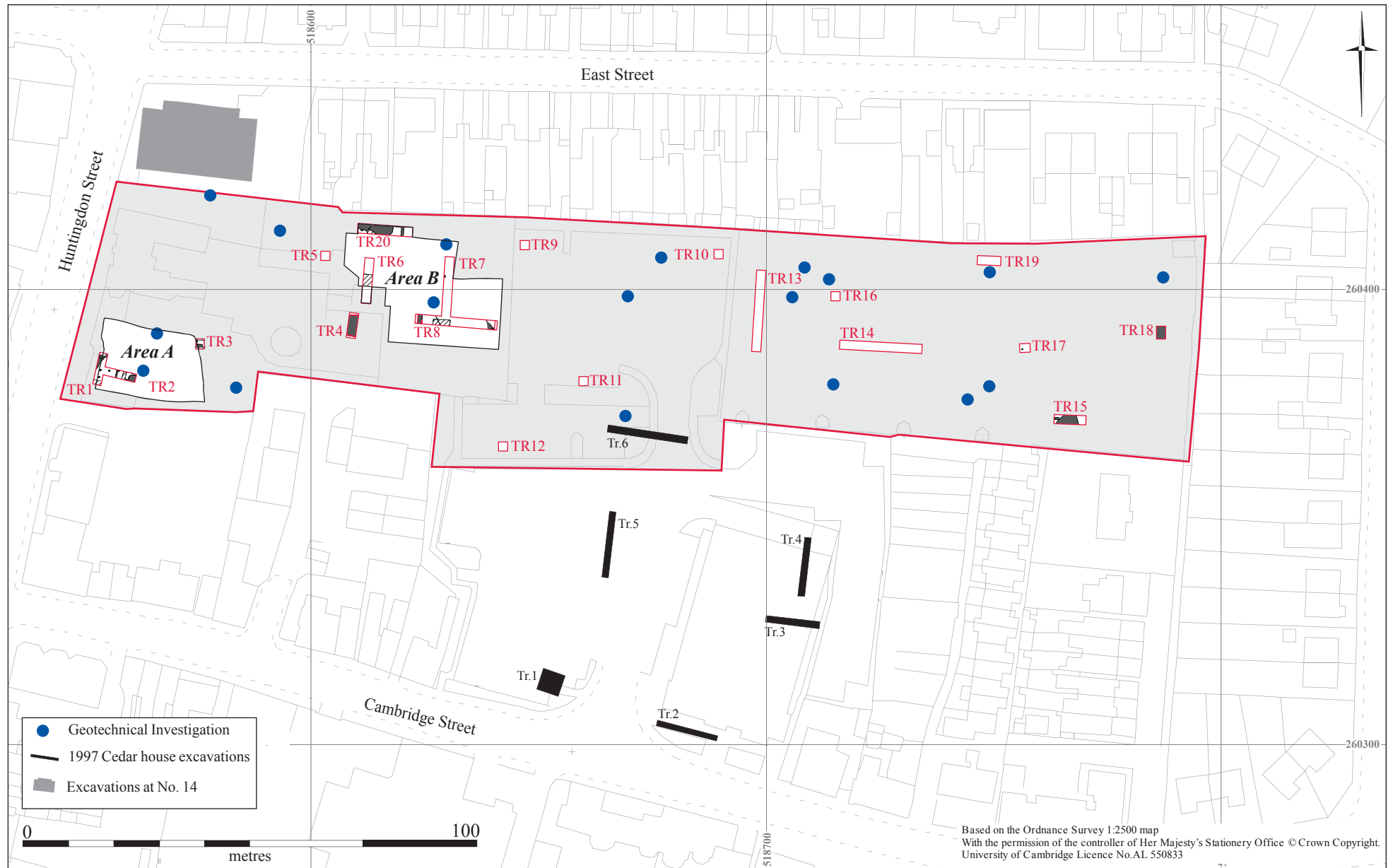


Figure 2. Excavation location plan showing evaluation trenches, geotechnical investigations and the 1997 Cedar House excavations





a)



b)



c)



d)



Figure 5. General views of the excavations a) Area A after initial cleaning, facing northeast b) Area A during excavation, facing northeast c) Area B during excavation, facing east d) Area B during excavation, facing southwest

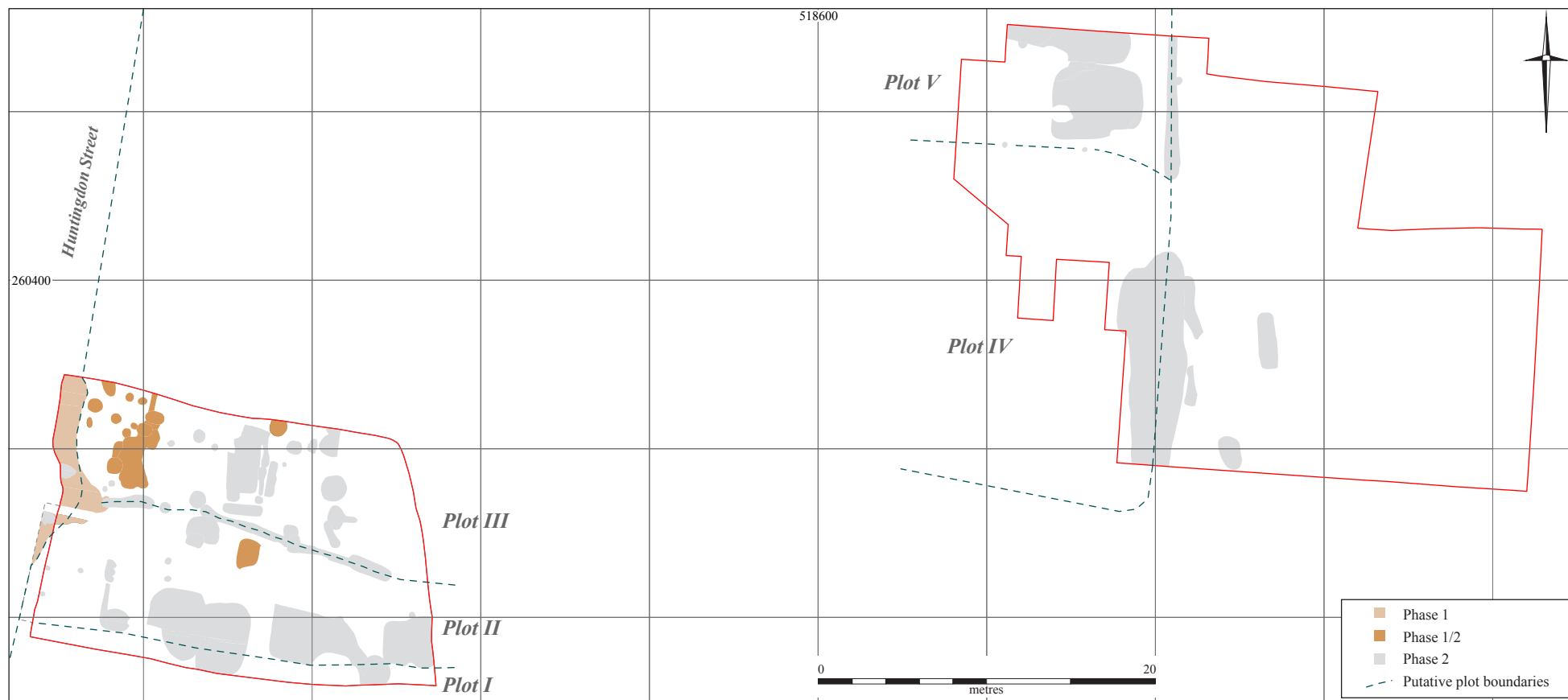


Figure 6. Plan of Phases 1 and 2, 11th - mid 14th century, with putative plot boundaries

a)



b)



Figure 7. Photographs of Medieval boundary features between Plot II–III Area A a) General view of gully F.225, facing east b) Detail of gully F.225, facing east

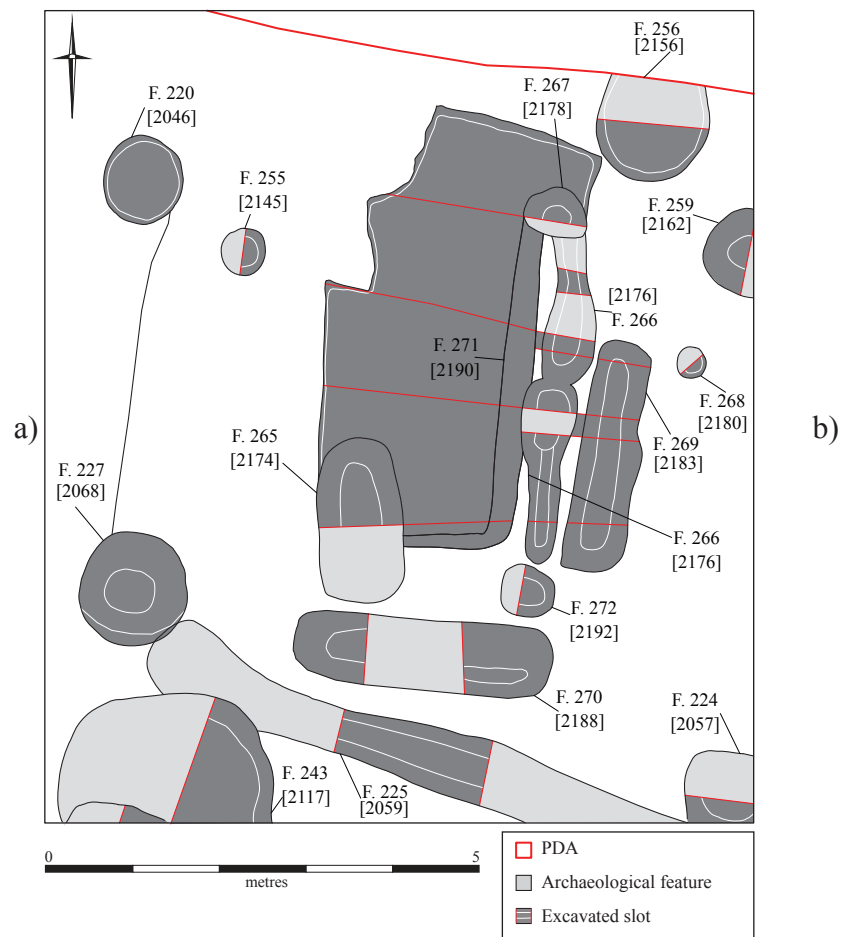


Figure 9. Building B a) Plan of Building B b) Photograph of Building B, facing north

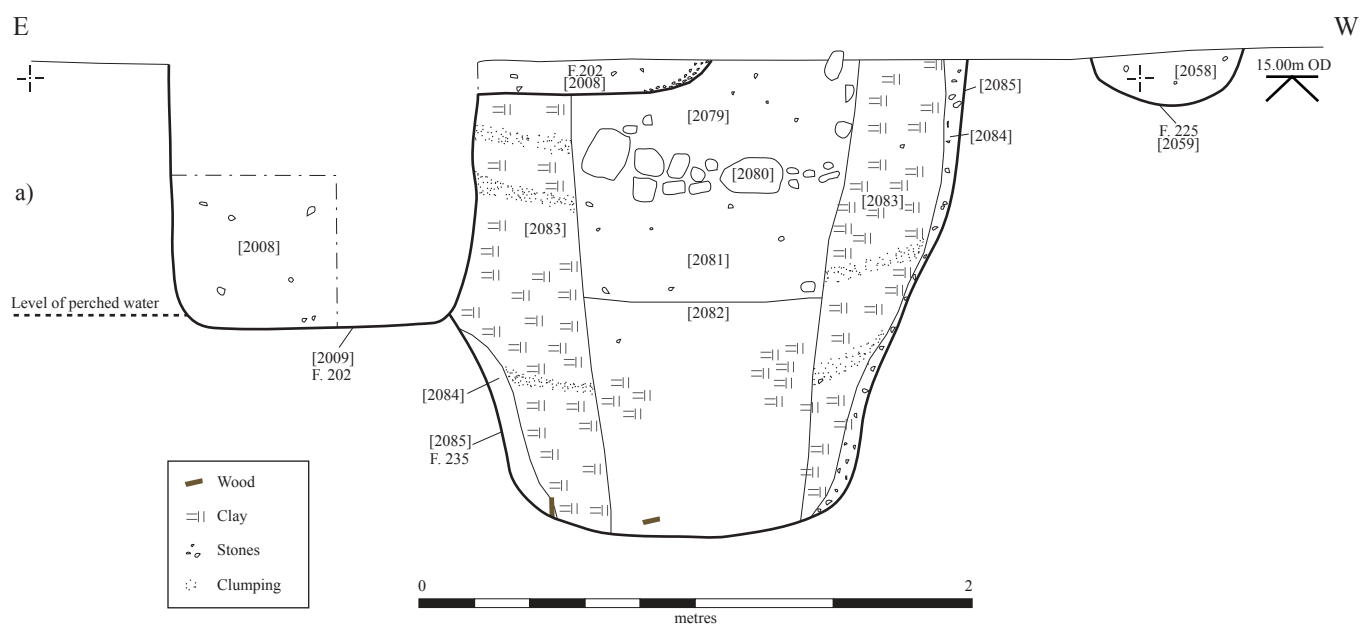


Figure 10. Well F.232 a) Section of well, also showing gully F.225 and pit F.202 b) Photograph of well, facing west



b)



Figure 11. Related quarry pits F.203 and F.204 a) Section of quarry pits b) Photograph of quarry pits, facing south

a)



b)



Figure 12. Photographs of Medieval features in Plot V, Area B a) General view of gully F.123 and pits F.136 and F.142, facing north b) Pits F.136 and F.142, facing east

a)



b)



Figure 13. Photographs of Medieval features in Plot IV, Area B a) Ditch F.139, facing north
b) Pit F.143, facing north

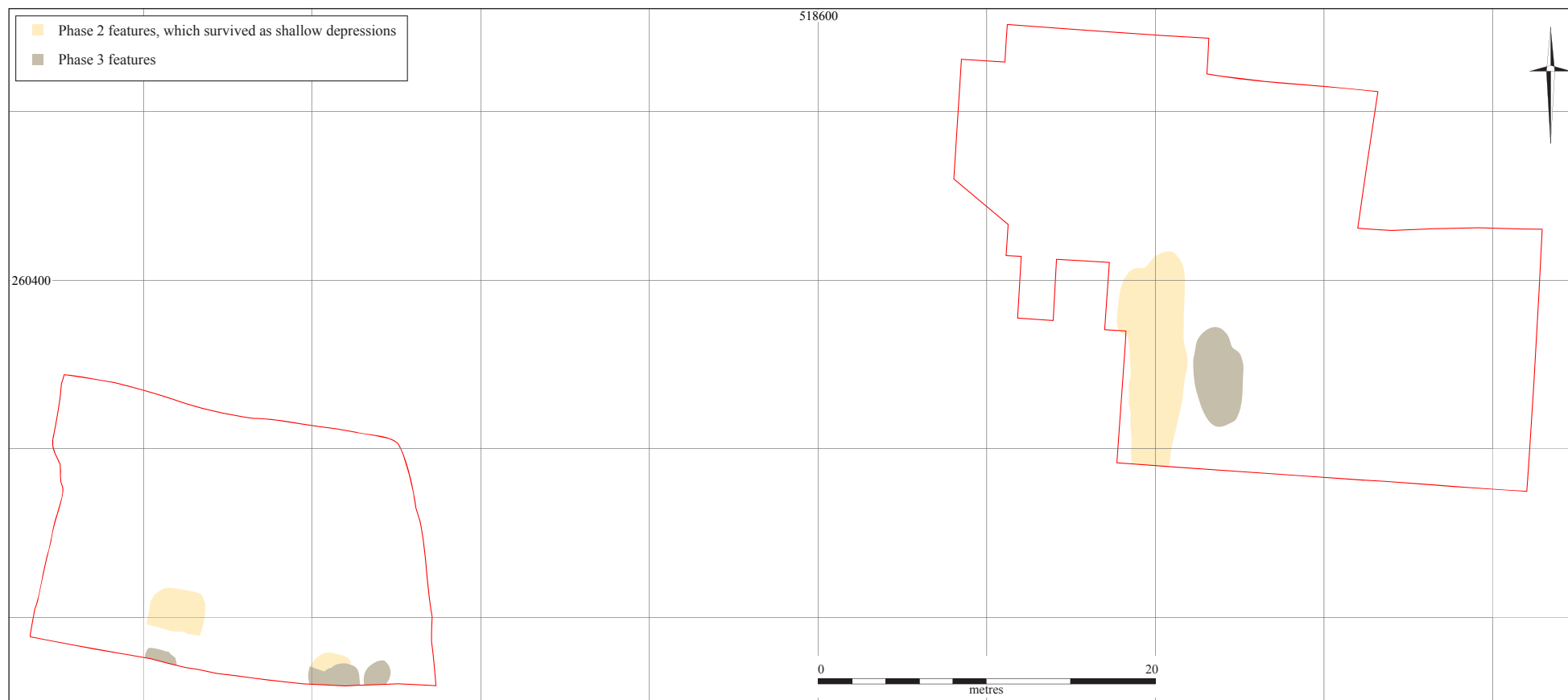


Figure 14. Plan of Phase 3, late 15th-17th century features

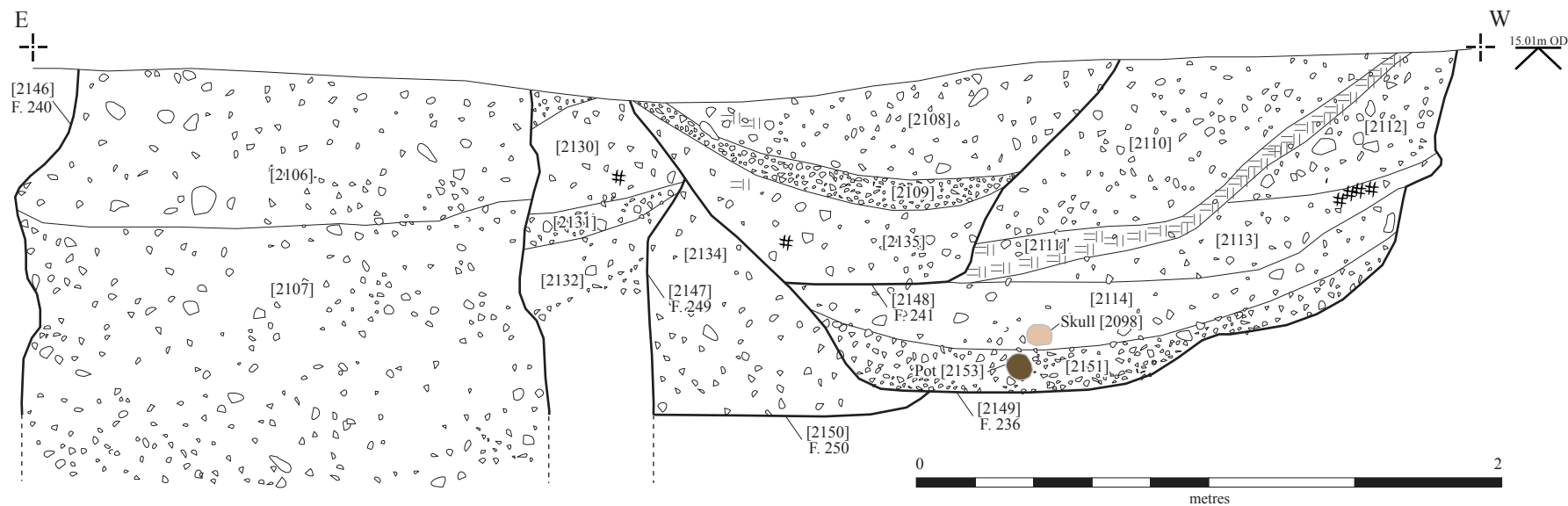


Figure 15. Well F.240/249 and adjacent pits a) Section of well F.240/249 and pits F.236, F.241 and F.250 b) Photograph of well F.240/249, facing south c) Horse skull [2098] towards base of pit F.236

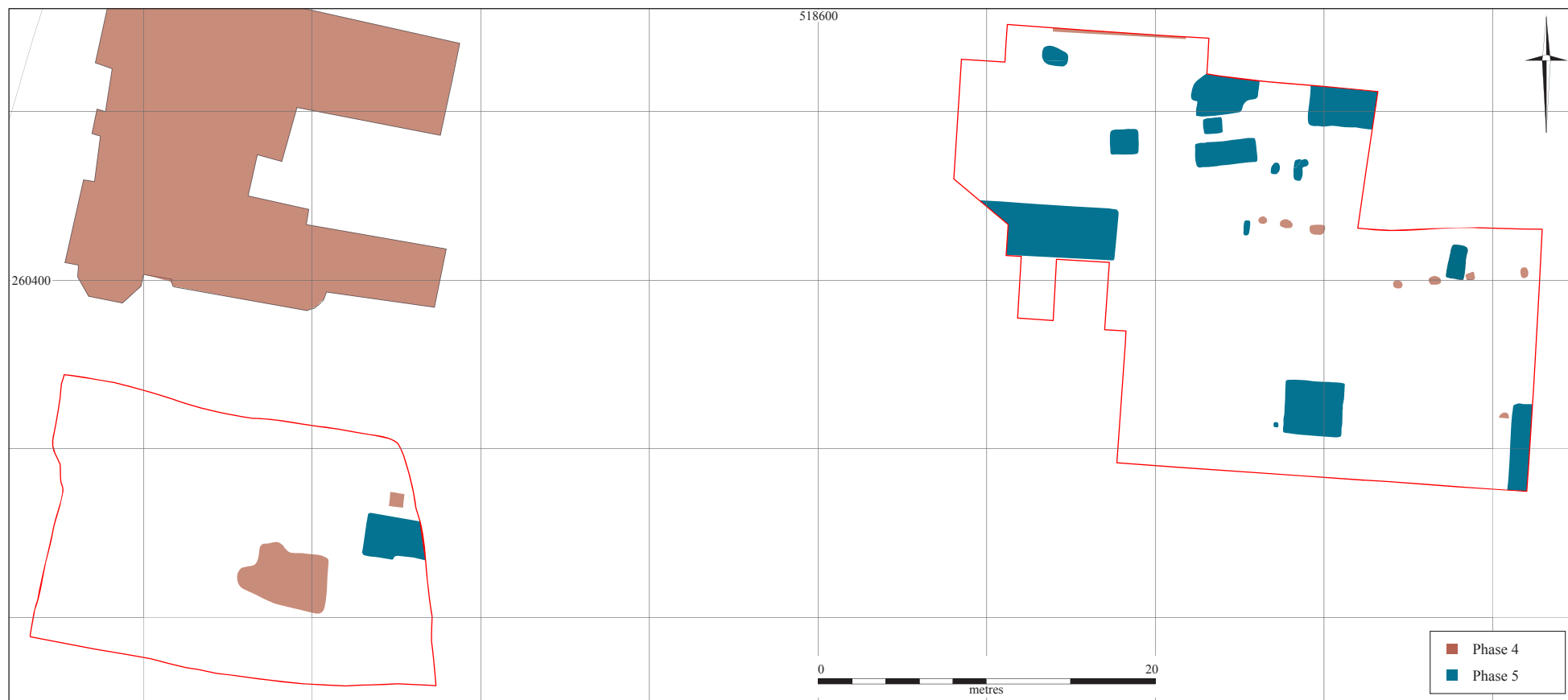


Figure 16. Plan of Phase 4 and 5, 18th-early 20th century features

a)



b)



Figure 17. Photographs of early 20th century gardens features a) Planting bed F.107, facing south b) Planting bed F.130 and postholes F.127- F.128, facing south

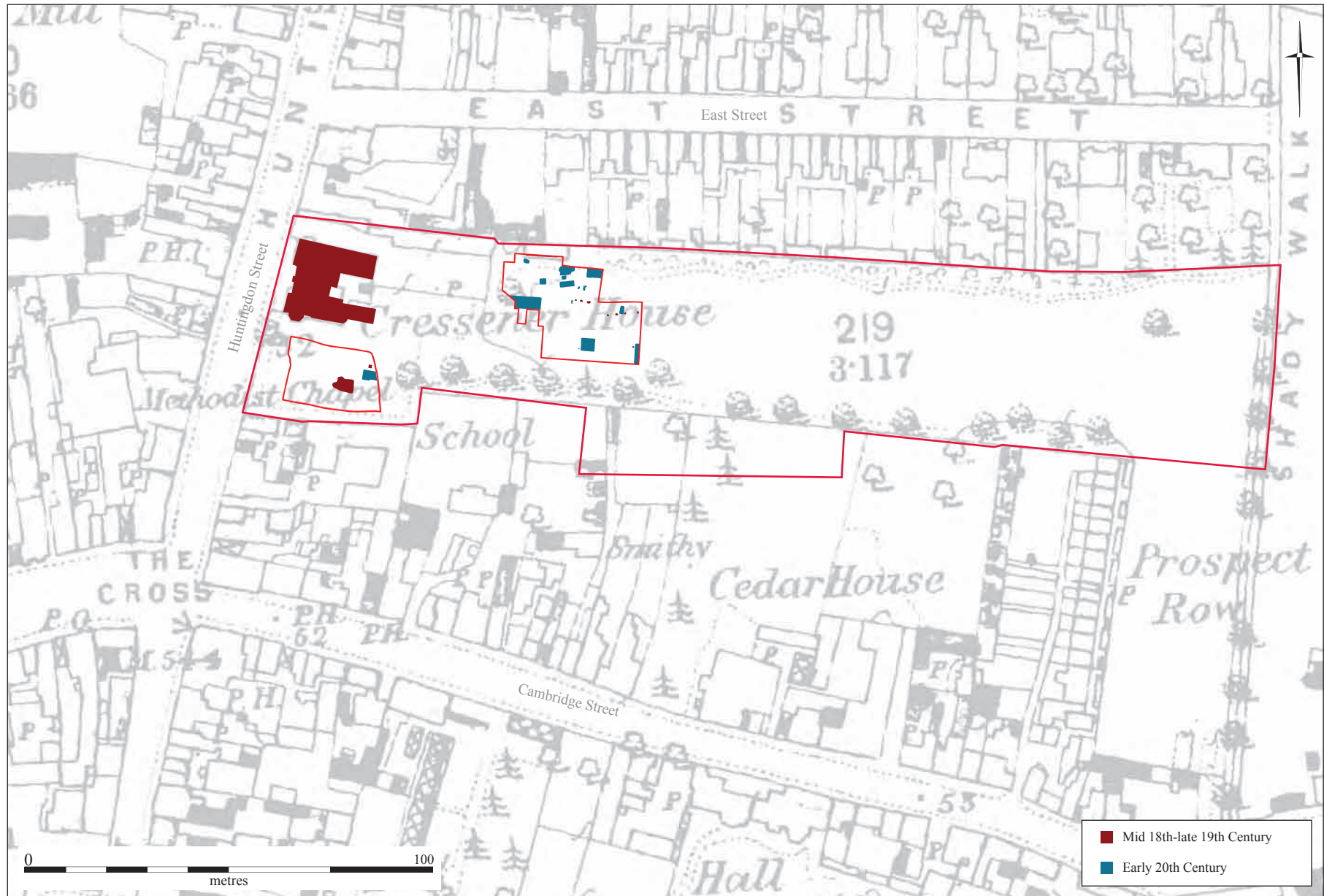


Figure 18. Late 19th-early 20th century features compared to OS map

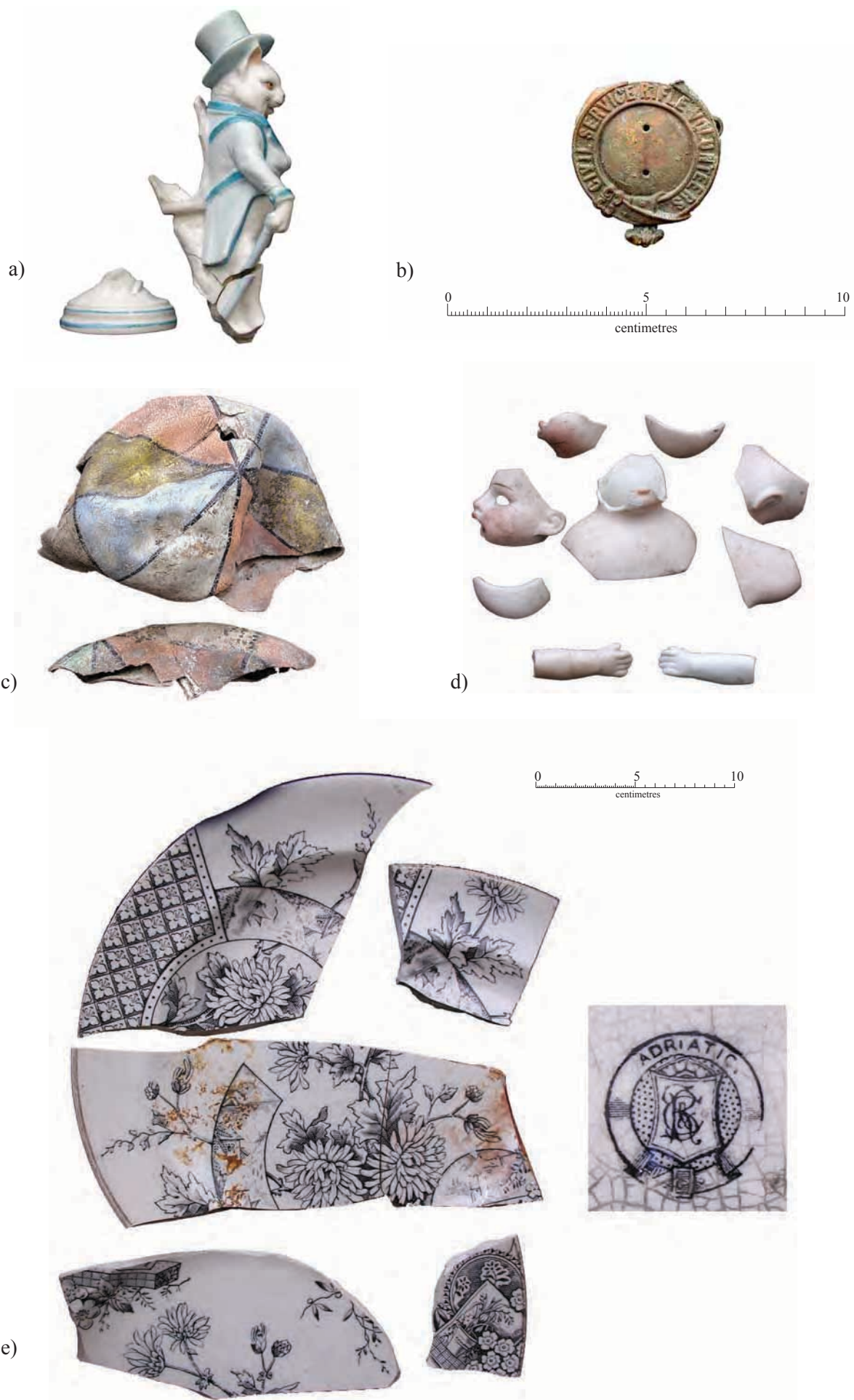


Figure 19. Early 20th century artefacts from F.130 a) Cat figurine b) Uniform fitting of the Civil Service Rifle Volunteers c) Rubber ball d) Fragments of a porcelain doll e) Fragments of black transfer printed Adriatic pattern dining vessels with monogram that is a combination of C, R, S and &

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OASIS ID: cambridg3-133587

Project details

Project name	Old Fire Station, Huntingdon Street, St Neots
Short description of the project	Excavations were undertaken by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit between the 30th of April and the 19th of June 2012 on the site of the former Old Fire Station and former Household Waste Disposal Site, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire. This work has revealed evidence for medieval and later occupation. A roadside ditch along Huntingdon Street was established around the 11th century and by the 12th century the area was divided into a series of long narrow rectangular plots fronting onto Huntingdon Street. These represent a suburban expansion of the town of St. Neots; this development thrived throughout the 13th-mid 14th centuries, before going into a period of prolonged decline with identifiable activity ending in the late 16th-early 17th century. Occupation began again in the mid 18th century, again with its focus on Huntingdon Street. This has continued until the present, with particular evidence for a phase of activity in the early 20th century, which involved the deposition of two substantial groups of material.
Project dates	Start: 30-04-2012 End: 19-06-2012
Previous/future work	Yes / No
Any associated project reference codes	OFS12 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	ECB1122 - HER event no.
Type of project	Recording project
Site status	None
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Monument type	PIT Medieval
Monument type	PIT Post Medieval
Monument type	WELL Medieval
Monument type	POSTHOLES Medieval
Monument type	POSTHOLES Post Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Medieval
Significant Finds	ANIMAL BONE Post Medieval
Significant Finds	COINS Medieval
Significant Finds	JETTON Post Medieval
Investigation type	"Full excavation"
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE HUNTINGDONSHIRE ST NEOTS Old Fire Station, Huntingdon Street
Postcode	PE19 1BG
Study area	971.00 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 1868 6039 52 0 52 13 42 N 000 15 43 W Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 14.88m Max: 15.45m

Project creators

Name of Organisation	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Project brief originator	Local Authority Archaeologist and/or Planning Authority/advisory body
Project design originator	Alison Dickens
Project director/manager	Alison Dickens
Project supervisor	Craig Cessford
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	Turnstone Estates

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Physical Archive ID	OFS12
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Metal","Wood","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Digital Archive ID	OFS12
Digital Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Metal","Stratigraphic","Survey","Wood"
Digital Media available	"Images raster / digital photography","Images vector","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Paper Archive ID	OFS12
Paper Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Glass","Metal","Stratigraphic","Survey","Wood","Worked stone/lithics"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Drawing","Matrices","Photograph","Plan","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
Title	The Old Fire Station, Huntingdon Street, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire: An Archaeological Excavation
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