

169-173 High Street, Chesterton Cambridge

An Archaeological Evaluation Assessment.



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Introduction

Between 20th-25th May 2013 the Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) undertook an archaeological trench evaluation at nos. 169-173 High Street, Chesterton following the demolition of the public house/restaurant and a number of associated buildings. The work was commissioned by Januarys on behalf of the developers. The evaluation consisted of 57.5m of trenching dug across the western half (no.169) and north-eastern corner (no.173) of the 1700 m square proposed development area (PDA) centred upon TL 4645 5999.

Site location and topography

The NW-SE aligned building plot which fronts the north side of Chesterton High Street just to the east of its junction with Church Street lies within a hedge and tree-bordered rectangle of land which includes the foundations of the former restaurant and pub at no. 169 within its 40m long and 15m wide garden/ backyard area, and to the east of the boundary wall a further 22m long by 10m wide area which is now used as a car park behind the still-standing properties at no.171 (currently a hairdressers) and no.173 Chesterton High Street (the offices of COEL Ltd.). The PDA lies within the historic centre of the former village of Chesterton some 200m – 250m distant from the nearest previous archaeologically investigated (medieval) sites. The nearest point of the River Cam is 200m to the southeast, whilst the centre of Cambridge is 1.6 km to the west. The site lies at about 7m AOD, and slopes very slightly southwards towards the river.

Geology

The site overlies the silts, sands and gravels of the 2nd Terrace of the River Cam, the solid geology beneath this (as proved by borehole) being the Chalk Marl (Lower Chalk), whilst the Gault Clay lies a short distance to the south. The latter also outcrops to the southeast along the banked edge of the Cam floodplain close to the former Simoco site. This outcrops again a short distance to the northeast, close to King's Hedges as well as to the village of Milton (BGS 1974 Cambridge Sheet 188).

Archaeological background

A detailed archaeological background for the site is provided by a desktop assessment undertaken in 2011 and subsequently revised in 2012 (Cessford & Appleby 2012). Whilst no prior archaeological work has taken place within the site itself, investigations have been carried out in the wider vicinity, and the surrounding area is rich in archaeological remains.

Excavations by the CAU at several sites in the village of Chesterton between 1988 and 2002 have shed new light on the origins and development of the medieval settlement (see Alexander 1998 and Hall 1999 (*Sargeant's Garage, High Street, Chesterton*); Armour 2000; Berger & Dickens 2000; Mackay 2000a (*former Chesterton Hospital*); Mackay 2000b (*'Meadowcroft' Church Street*); Masser 2000 (*junction of Union Lane and High Street*); Armour 2001a (*former Chesterton Workhouse, Chesterton Hospital*); Armour 2001b (*Wheatsheaf Public House*); Hatherley 2001 (*former Chesterton Hospital*); Mackay 2001a and Mackay 2001b

(former Yorkshire Grey Public House, High Street); Armour 2002 (former Simoco Works); and Patten 2003 (Scotland Road)). These revealed some slight evidence of prehistoric, Roman and Saxon activity, but much more extensive remains of medieval and post-medieval activity, notably the extraction of clay and gravels.

The majority of archaeological records from the area within a 250m radius of the site date from the post-Norman Conquest period onwards. Excluding upstanding historic and listed buildings, excavations at the sites noted above revealed late Saxon linear features that may be deemed to represent ditched land or property divisions, suggesting that a planned settlement was established in the later 11th and 12th centuries. These excavations also revealed a complex pattern of development throughout the late Saxon and medieval periods, with evidence for multiple late Saxon foci of activity. The main early focus may have been a settlement around St. Andrew's Church (founded in the 8th century) when a royal *vill* (which originally incorporated Cambridge) was divided by the formation of the *burh*, although this remains speculative.

The earliest documentary reference to Chesterton is as *Cestreton* in the Domesday Book of 1086 when it was a royal *vill* with 24 peasant families. This remained in royal hands until 1194 when part of it was assigned to Saher de Quincy. It was then passed to Barnwell Priory in 1200 when they gained the entire manor. This they retained until the Dissolution in the 1540s, at which time it passed into the hands of the Brakyn family. The king gave the rectory estate to the papal legate Cardinal Gualo in 1218 and this was subsequently appropriated by the abbey of St. Andrew in Vericelli (Italy). Although occasionally leased to or otherwise controlled by Barnwell Priory the estate remained in the hands of King's Hall, later Trinity College. A Carmelite monastery also briefly occupied a site in Chesterton in the mid-13th century. During this time records suggest that the population fluctuated from around 100 individuals at the time of the Domesday Survey to around 190 taxpayers in 1225 and 73 in 1524, following a significant fall in population during the 14th century (at the time of the Black Death) (RCHM 1959).

During the post-medieval period the scale of development already witnessed in Chesterton up to the 16th century changed, with properties demolished and new property boundaries established. Coinciding with this was an increase in the number of pits and quarries dug, in addition to the backfilling of redundant cellars, such as that at the former Yorkshire Grey Public House. The digging of pits at this time led to a number of archaeological finds, amongst which was the Bronze Age hoard from Green End.

A record of archaeological remains of different periods found within the vicinity of nos.169-173 High Street (i.e. within a c.250m radius of the site) is summarised below. The more detailed account and full gazetteer of these is available in Cessford & Appleby 2012

Prehistoric

Prehistoric (Neolithic?) worked flint was recovered during excavations at the former Sargeant's Garage on Union Lane, whilst an Early Bronze Age spearhead was dredged from the River Cam about 500m to the east of the PDA, and a hoard of 21

Bronze Age axes (palstaves?), a spear, gauge and smelted metal came from a pit dug at Green End Road, some distance beyond this to the north-east. Closer to a small pit containing Middle Bronze Age pottery was excavated at the former Yorkshire Grey Public House, whilst a later Iron Age pit with pottery was found during excavations carried out at the Ashwell site on Union Lane.

Romano-British

Evidence for archaeology of this period is sparse although residual sherds of Romano-British pottery have been found at several locations within and around the village, including at the former Ashwell site, whilst a possible Romano-British buried plough soil was uncovered during excavations at the former Chesterton Hospital.

Medieval

Medieval archaeology was uncovered during recent archaeological excavations at Scotland Road (gravel extraction) as well as at the former Yorkshire Grey Public House located at the eastern end of the High Street. Here late Saxon activity is indicated by a pair of ditches forming part of a square/ rectangular enclosure, with other potential pre-13th century early medieval activity in the form of a domestic midden and pits on the edge of an enclosure. By the 13th century many of these boundaries appear to have fallen out of use, the evidence for occupation being replaced by pits, with the High Street frontage becoming the main focus of activity. Settlement here appears to have declined over the 14th century, although the remains of 15th and 16th century wells, structures and industrial activities suggest a steady recovery later on. Medieval pottery was also found at the west end of the High Street close to the PDA during the early 19th century. Further west, on Union Lane, a series of excavations revealed a number of late Saxon linear features representing possible ditched land or property divisions, several of which could have formed part of a long-lived late Saxon boundary running parallel to Union Street, one which may then have been modified during the early medieval period. It would appear that in late Saxon times (11th-12th century AD) the landscape of Chesterton was dominated by a number of large enclosed areas demarcated by ditches. 'medieval' pottery was found on the south side of the High Street in 1904, the find spot for this located immediately opposite nos. 169-173 at TL 4649 5990, suggesting further evidence of settlement in this immediate area.

Some 200m to the south-west of the PDA is to be found the still-surviving Chesterton Tower (a Scheduled Ancient Monument) which was built in the 13th – 14th century to house Lombardian proctors managing the manor of Chesterton for the Abbey of Vercelli. This is also thought to be the location of a short-lived Carmelite Priory, founded around 1249, and later the grange of Barnwell Abbey. Immediately to the west of this lies the medieval church of St. Andrews and the site of the former 'Manor House' (Cessford 2004). The latter was demolished in 1971, but was not archaeologically investigated.

Post-medieval

Evidence from recent excavations and standing buildings indicates a dramatic increase in activity between the 17th and 20th centuries, when Chesterton expanded

and eventually became a suburb of Cambridge. Substantial buildings including almshouses and public houses were constructed along street frontages (such as the High Street) during this period, although to the rear of these much of the land remained open until early in the 20th century, providing a focus for the digging of pits and wells and the disposal of animal carcasses and domestic rubbish, and sometimes gravel extraction. Many of the post-medieval buildings were demolished over the latter part of the 20th century; just a few surviving on the High Street frontage including Hill House some 200m to the west of the PDA.

Cartographic evidence (19th -20th century)

A study of the map evidence shows the extent to which the plan of Chesterton has changed over the last 170 years. Back Street was renamed the High Street sometime between 1903 and 1926, but some time before that no.169 is shown on Baker's 1830 Cambridge map. Even at this time a similar-sized plot of land is shown to the rear of the house. This plot later housed a Smithy which is recorded as such on the 1886 1:2500 scale OS map, with a small stand of trees or an orchard present along the western boundary, and a further building at the southwest corner. Two waterpumps are also recorded. The 1926 revision of the OS map shows the smithy as no longer present, but by then a building has been added along the eastern boundary.

Aims and Objectives

The current archaeological investigation was undertaken with the aims of determining the location, extent, date, character, condition, significance and quality of any surviving archaeological remains liable to be threatened by the proposed development.

The objective of this evaluation was to identify 'sites' within the development area and to determine the relationship of these with the broader archaeological landscape. The importance of any archaeology recovered (most likely to be late Saxon, medieval or post-medieval in date) would be assessed in a regional context, highlighting issues which could be relevant within the regional research framework (Glazebrook 1997, Brown & Glazebrook 2000, Medlycott 2011).

Methodology

Given the area available the trench plan was designed to examine the land plot of no. 169 lengthwise, principally to search for evidence of medieval or earlier settlement and to establish the location of the first street frontage dwellings. A further trench location was chosen to the rear of no. 173. At the time the available space for this trench within the car park area for COEL Ltd was somewhat limited prior to the vacation and demolition of these buildings (i.e. nos. 171 and the rear of no. 173 High Street), thus the 10m of trenching was dug primarily to establish the whereabouts and date of the property boundary. At the front of no. 169 within the area of the demolished public house/restaurant a trench was placed to locate the original cellar and thus establish the extent of truncation of any sub-surface archaeology present. This encountered thick concrete/ masonry foundations, thus the trenches were positioned around this (Trenches 3-5), increasing the total length of trenching to 57m.

Following CAT scanning for services, trenches were cut using a 7-ton 360° excavator fitted with a 1.5m wide ditching bucket; in the course of this the soil layers were removed to a maximum depth of about 1.2m. Topsoil and sub-soil layers were deposited on either side of the trench and were examined visually for the presence of finds, and finally monitored using a metal detector. An overall plan of the trench positions and depth of excavation was produced using a GPS total station, with each trenches (and any archaeological features it contained) being planned by hand and drawn at a scale of 1:50. Trench sections above the base of the natural were recorded for each trench, but not as continuous sections; with each archaeological feature being dug manually, cutting (wherever possible) a 1m-wide slot and drawing representative sections at a scale of 1:10.

The recording followed a CAU modified MoLAS system (Spence 1994) whereby feature numbers, F. were assigned to stratigraphic events and numbers [fill] or [cut] to individual contexts. A scaled photographic (digital colour) record was also undertaken following the cleaning of the trench base and section. Finds were bagged and labelled, then washed and re-bagged within the CAU Finds Department, before being examined by in-house specialists. Two bulk environmental samples were taken.

Results (figure 2)

The masonry/concrete foundation, rubble/ gravel make-up layers, topsoil, subsoil and natural (geology) was recorded for each of the six trenches. This showed evidence for significant modern (ferrous/ domestic organic) rubbish deposition and also raising of the ground surface (backfill) towards the rear of the plots (in places to a depth of 1.2m in Trenches 1 and 6), with several stages of shallow rubble deposition as demolition levels and backfill over topsoil in the middle (to a depth of 0.8m – 1m in Trench 2), and between foundations at the front (0.8m-0.6m within Trenches 3-5). The surprisingly shallow level of truncation beneath the building footings which front the High Street here has permitted the preservation of archaeological levels in between later foundations.

Following the digging of the trenches and cleaning some 25 archaeological features were sampled, at least 14 of which appear to be post-medieval, with 9 of them most likely 19th-20th century in date. The remaining features were either medieval (5) or undated, although some of the other medieval contexts (layers sampled) may yet be fills of features which could not at the time be determined, given the size of the trenches open and the configuration of later foundations.

Trench 1

Generalised 'soil' sequence above the natural:

0 – 0.12/0.15m	hardcore consisting of frequent small and medium angular stones and yellow coarse sand (051)
0.12 – 0.2/0.5m	topsoil consisting of a firm dark grey-black sandy, silty clay with frequent small angular gravel, occasional concrete/brick/mortar (CBM) and charcoal/coal flecks (052)
0.2 - 0.75m	individual dumps of modern rubbish including much decayed timber, glass, brick and ferrous material (NB not continuous along section). Underlain by redeposited gravel.

0.4 - 0.5/0.6m	mid to dark grey or brown sandy silt with frequent angular gravel, frequent pea grit, and occasional – frequent flecks of charcoal/coal (053)
0.5/0.75- 0.85m	firm mid-brown sandy silt/clay with frequent angular gravel, occasional CBM and charcoal flecks (054) + (066)? (054) cut by F.22.
0.85 – 0.95m	similar to above, but moderately paler in colour, and with pottery etc. (north end trench (067)). Cut by F.23.
0.95 – 1.1m	mid-grey sandy, silty clay with frequent pea grit and small angular stones (068). Cut by F.23.
0.8/0.9 – 1.0m	bright orange sand with occasional brown mottles and frequent stones/ pea grit (redeposited gravel (055)). (055) cut by F.22
1.0m	loose gravel (natural)

Features:

F.22 A 1.5m+, <2m wide and 1.1m deep rectangular E-W aligned ditch with near vertical stepped sides ([063]) and fills consisting of an upper one (057) which was similar to (054) (i.e. a mid-brown sandy silty clay) with some patches of pale brown mottled sand, occasional to frequent CBM and charcoal inclusions, much tile and brick, and also bone and shell debris (oyster + mussel etc.). Up to 31 sherds of pottery were recovered from this context, all of them (apart from a few redeposited medieval/early post-medieval sherds) seemingly mid-late 18th century in date. The layer beneath this (058) was similar, though without the brown mottles, and with rare- occasional small angular stone/ pea grit, as was (059), with the three basal layers consisting of: (060) a pale to mid-brown sandy clay containing frequent pea grit, small angular stones, and rare blue-grey mottled patches; (061) composed of a firm mid-dark orange brown sandy clay with frequent pea grit, angular stones and rare charcoal, and finds of tile, brick and 18th-century pot; whilst the lowest excavated context (062) consisted of slumped/ redeposited natural (gravel) with an occasional lens of silty clay. Although this deep feature was unbottomed, its excavation suggests the presence of a deep 18th/ early 19th century trenched ditch connected with building demolition and the burial of rubbish.

F.23 Part of a large pit? Cut by the trench section. This would appear to be at least 1.5m long, 0.7m+ wide and 0.6m+ deep, with moderately steep sloping straight sides, except on its southern edge where this starts off concave ([074]). This contains a number of fills, including (069) a pale yellowish-brown sandy clay with frequent small angular stones; (070) a firm pale grey silty clay; (071) an off-white clay lens in between (070); (072) a black silt with occasional to rare CBM and small stones; and (073) a mid to dark grey firm sandy/ silty clay with occasional pea grit and stones. F.23 cuts a smaller pit (F.24) on its west side, and is probably 18th century in date.

F.24 A small (0.8m long by 0.3m wide and 0.2m deep) NW-SE oriented oval-shaped pit with concave but moderately steep sides and a rounded bottom ([076]). This contained a single fill consisting of a moderately loose mid-grey sandy silt with frequent sandy grit. This cuts the larger pit F.23, and is probably 18th-19th century in date.

F.25 An oval-round shallow cut for an animal (pig) burial. This is aligned NNE-SSW and is truncated, with shallow sloping concave sides and a roundish-flat bottom (0.8m long, 0.4m wide and 0.15m deep) ([079]); the two fills being (077) a mid-grey sandy silty clay with frequent pea grit and small angular stones (similar to 068) and (078) the pig skeleton, which is laid out on its side. Most probably 18th-19th century in date.

Non-feature archaeological layers:

- (051)** A yellow coarse sand with frequent small-medium sized angular stones (trench edge section)
 - (052)** A firm dark grey/black sandy, silty clay with frequent small angular gravels and occasional CBM and charcoal flecks
 - (053)** A mid-dark grey sandy clay with frequent pea grit and occasional to frequent charcoal flecks
 - (054)** A firm mid-brown sandy silt with frequent angular gravels and occasional CBM and charcoal flecks
 - (055)** Bright orange sand with occasional brown mottles and frequent small stones and pea grit.
 - (056)** Fairly similar to (055) but with more pea grit-size gravel
- Most likely these are modern (19th century) make-up (backfill) layers dumped to the rear of this plot (169 High Street). This includes the deposition of rubble, redeposited gravel from excavations, and

some domestic-small industrial type rubbish. NB this dumping lies close to the site of the late 19th-century 'smithy'.

(064) A mid-dark brown grey silty clay with frequent angular stones and pea grit. Includes some 'modern' finds and also occasional charcoal flecks.

(065) A mid grey sandy silt with rare finds and charcoal (0.5m depth total (064 + 065))

The above layers were recorded within a test pit dug into the centre of 'fill' of dark earth spread present within middle/ base of this trench. Possibly reflects an area of pitting, or else a lensed backfill, and is most probably 19th century (this includes 19th-century stoneware) with inclusions of earlier 15th-century pottery. No earlier features were detected underneath.

(066) A moderately firm mid greyish-brown silty clay with occasional small angular stones. This layer seals pit F.23

(067) A similar layer to the above, but slightly paler in colour. This forms a spread of material.

(068) A mid-grey sandy silty clay with frequent pea grit and small angular stone inclusions.

All of the above probably represent redeposited material. However, the only pottery was recovered from context (067), which included 15th century and 17th century wares, suggesting that this horizon may (at the latest) be post-medieval in date.

Trench 2

Generalised 'soil' sequence above the natural:

0 – 0.15/0.2m topsoil

0.15 – 0.3/0.35m broken-up concrete and mortar rubble (backfill)

0.3 – 0.45/0.55m dark grey-black sandy topsoil with brick and pottery fragments

0.45-0.55/0.65m dark grey and fairly compact gravelly/ loamy silt

0.55 – 0.75m a loose redeposited gravel mixed with topsoil, and in places fragments of CBM. Cut by F.7 at E end of trench

0.75-0.8/0.9m light grey clay-rich subsoil. Cut by F.7 + F.6 at E end of trench.

0.9m loose orange-yellow-white sand and gravel (natural)

Features:

F.4 A 1.5m+ long, 1.2m+ wide and 1.05m deep oval-irregular shaped asymmetric pit with steep, near vertical and occasionally undercut sides and an irregular-flat base ([012]). The uppermost fill (008) consisted of a light grey-brown sandy organic silt with moderate amounts of a sandy yellow rounded flint gravel (10-20mm) in lenses, along with evenly distributed flecks of chalk and pockets of finer pea grit size gravel. Evenly distributed throughout this also is some angular black (fresh) flint and rare charcoal. From the top of this fill came the stamped strap handle of a 14th-century jug, the other coarseware sherds being mostly of 12th-century date. Moderate amounts of animal bone were also recovered. Below this was a rather similar fill (009) which contained slightly increased amounts of sand and gravel, but no cultural finds. Underneath this fill (010) was once again similar to 008, but this time was much less sandy, containing some, but proportionately less animal bone. The basal fill of the pit (011) was quite a bit different; this consisted of a dark grey-black fine humic (organic) silt containing rarer gravel inclusions, occasional-moderate amounts of charcoal as flecks and lumps, plus finds including at least 15 small sherds of 12th/13th-century pot, animal bone and teeth, and burnt material, some of it as wispy laminae of hearth ash. The base of the pit was not excavated, but was augered for a further 0.15m. Most likely this was a deep 'back-yard' medieval rubbish pit into which was dumped food and hearth waste, alongside butchered animal bone. An environmental sample (<1>) was taken from the base of fill (011).

F.5 A 0.5m diameter and 0.2m deep oval-irregular shaped pit or tree throw with gently sloping uneven sides and an uneven base ([14]). This was filled with a chalky-gravelly silty 'soil' (13) containing moderately abundant amounts of CBM, but with lenses of pea grit size gravel, especially towards the base. The fill was fairly loose, but became a slightly more compact grey silt towards the base. Finds included fragments of hand-made red brick and tile and some post-medieval (17th-18th century pottery). The edge of this feature cuts the medieval pit (F.4). The likely interpretation is as a tree throw which has accumulated building debris from the demolition of nearby buildings (perhaps during the 18th century).

F.6 A 2.5m long, 1.5m+ wide and 0.7m deep uneven-shaped 'roundish' pit with steep to shallow sides and a sloping concave to partly flat base ([16]). This contained a single fill consisting of both thin laminae and lenses of stony and burnt material, which also includes coal and ash layers intermixed with a soil-rich redeposited gravel and burnt carbonaceous horizons. Finds include 17th/18th century pottery, bone, brick, iron and glass. The feature cuts the edge of the medieval pit F.8 and is cut through by a still later rubble-filled trench (F.7). F.6 has been interpreted as an 18th or 19th century/ rubbish pit, which includes hearth material.

F.7 A 1.5m+ long, 1m wide and 1.2m deep near vertically sided stepped trench with a flat to slightly sloping concave base ([18]), which bisects the rubbish pit F.6. This contains a single heterogenous fill consisting of very loose broken-up brick mortar and brick + tile fragment-rich soil and gravel layer with much modern rubbish in it including iron, glass, brick and ceramic. Some of the pottery found within it was of late 18th/ early 19th century date. The feature contains more iron towards its base, but less in the way of ceramic. It has been interpreted as a modern (19th-20th century) re-cut through a slightly earlier rubbish pit, this time dug as a (possibly?) machined trench. This may include material dumped here from the demolition of the smithy. The N-S alignment of this trench may reflect in some way its position.

F.8 A 0.7m+ long, 1m+ wide and 0.65m deep sub-round shaped pit with steep to near vertical but unevenly sloping sides merging into a flat base, with a further hollow in the centre ([20]). This possessed a single fill (19) consisting of a light grey-green sandy silt, which is fairly firm and compact, with occasional – moderately abundant inclusions of well-rounded yellow-patinated small flint gravel pebbles (<20mm diameter), rare charcoal inclusions, plus occasional pottery and bone. The pottery is a mixture of 12th/13th and 14th-century material, suggesting a slightly later date than pit F.4 which lies to the west of this. Once again, this has been interpreted as a shallow medieval back-yard rubbish pit which is generically similar to but considerably smaller than F.4.

Trench 3

Generalised 'soil' sequence above the natural:

0 – 0.25m	crushed CBM (backfill)
0.25 – 0.35m	CBM and soil with loose bricks
0.35 – 0.5m	mixture of soil with fine mortar inclusions and fragments of older type bricks
0.5 – 0.6m	coarse brick rubble (earlier 19thC bricks)
0.6 – 0.75m	old garden soil
0.75m	compact orange-red silty sand with gravel (natural). Cut by well pit (F.15) dug for 19 th /20thC well/water pump brick-lined shaft

Features:

F.1 A 0.8m+ long, 1.32m wide and 0.41m deep NE-SW trending ditch with moderately steep, slightly concave, almost symmetrical sides and a flat to slightly rounded (concave) base ([003]). This contained two fills; an upper one (001) consisting of a dark grey-black loose and soft slightly sandy silt with a high charcoal content, but with occasional paler patches in which ashy material was present. Contained rare small stones and some occasional white chalky material. Finds included a very small amount of pottery, animal bone and CBM/ tile. The lower fill (002) consisted of a mid-yellowish grey-brown moderately compacted sandy silt, with fine sand and frequent small-medium stones (mostly flint nodules). Finds included a small amount of bone. The four sherds of pottery recovered from the upper fill of this ditch were medieval and 12th century in date.

F.2 An at least 0.5m wide pit (or part of a ditch) with gentle to moderately steep sides and a slightly concave base ([005]). This may be the more northerly part of ditch F.11; it is cut by ditch F.1, and has an uncertain relationship with F.3 (it may just be a lobe of the latter). This feature contains a single fill (004) consisting of a mid yellow-grey sandy silt with small stones (chalky pieces and flint gravel) throughout. Rare charcoal flecks are present, but no finds were recovered from this. The stratigraphically earlier date for this suggests that it is likewise medieval.

F.3 A 1.5m long and 0.55m+ wide, 0.38m deep sub-circular pit with steep sides and a flat bottom ([007]). This contained a fill (006) which was more or less indistinguishable from that of F.2 (004).

Because of this no clear-cut relationship could be established between the two features. It remains possible that F.2 is in fact just a lobe of pit F.3.

F.11 A 2m+ long, 0.33 - 0.83m wide and 0.24-0.27m deep SE-NW aligned linear with a slightly asymmetric x-section consisting of a stepped north-eastern edge, which was gently sloping on its upper reach and moderately steeply sloping lower down, a slightly concave base, and a moderately steeply sloping south-western edge ([028]). This feature contained a single fill (027) consisting of a mid-yellow grey sandy silt with occasional small gravel and rare small, mostly flat stones, as well as rare charcoal. Finds consisted of occasional pieces of bone (only). A further relationship slot was cut along the SW edge of this linear, revealing another moderately steep cut ([030]), as well as a fill (029) which was the same/similar to (027). The feature is cut to the south-east by F.12 and by F.13, and to the north-west by F.1, and thus is presumably medieval (12th century) or still earlier.

F.12 A 0.84m+ long by 0.34m wide and 0.17m deep WSE-ENE narrow linear with steep sides and a rounded base ([032]). This ditch terminated within the 1m wide excavation slot, the fill consisting of a dark, slightly brownish-grey sandy silt with quite frequent small stones throughout and occasional charcoal flecks (031). No finds. The ditch truncates F.11, but then appears to terminate within the trench. Undated, but feasibly medieval.

F.13 A 1.8+m long, 0.86m wide and 0.22m deep WSW-ENE aligned linear, with a classic 'U-shaped' profile with moderately steep sloping sides and a flat base (034) which contains a single fill consisting of a dark grey sandy silt with quite frequent gravel/ small stones and rare charcoal flecks (035); the few finds including a single piece of 15th-century pottery (Hedingham ware) and some bone. This ditch cuts linear F.11 and is probably medieval.

F.14 A 1m+ long, 0.5m+ wide and 0.23m+ deep large pit?, sampled by means of a small (0.6m) relationship slot. This slot proved the edge of a circular feature (in plan) which appears to have been dug as a hole for a well shaft containing a brick-lined well; the exact shape of this cut ([036]) being uncertain. The single fill (backfill) consisted of a dark grey and slightly stony clay-sandy silt, containing frequent stones, fragments of CBM, small pieces of chalk (clunch), ceramics and bone (035). The two identified pottery sherds from this are 16th century in date, and include one rim of a Tygg cup. The edge of this well cut clips the investigative test pit into F.15.

F.15 A possible pit, only the edge of which was examined by a 0.6m+ long slot, at least 0.5m+ wide and 0.34m (max.) deep, with a flat base ([038]). Although the sides and overall extent of this was poorly defined, the test pit established the presence of a single fill (037) consisting of a slightly yellowish grey-brown sandy silt with occasional small gravel and rare small-medium stones, rare charcoal flecks and oyster shell, but with some animal bone and one or two pieces of (redeposited) worked flint. This pit (?) feature appears to be cut by F.13 to the north and F.14 to the south. Although a little unclear, it seems likely that F.15 also cuts ditch F.11. This would appear to be a flat-bottomed medieval pit, most likely 15th century or earlier in date.

Trench 4

Generalised 'soil' sequence above the natural:

0 – 0.25m	crushed CBM (backfill)
0.25 – 0.35m	CBM and soil with loose bricks
0.35 – 0.5m	mixture of soil with fine mortar inclusions and fragments of older type bricks
0.5 – 0.6m	coarse brick rubble (earlier 19thC bricks)
0.6 – 0.75m	old garden soil
0.6m (Tr 4)	quarry-tiled floor of old (19thC) cellar

Not excavated beneath this level.

Trench 5

Generalised 'soil' sequence above the natural:

0 – 0.25m	crushed CBM (backfill)
0.25 – 0.35m	CBM and soil with loose bricks
0.35 – 0.5m	mixture of soil with fine mortar inclusions and fragments of older type bricks
0.5 – 0.6m	coarse brick rubble (earlier 19thC bricks)
0.6-0.73m	compressed laminae of garden soil (dark grey silt) with thin spreads of chalk, darker humic soil and more chalk, with a soil at the base. This reflects a more complex post-medieval history of disturbance and deposition.
0.73m	compact orange-red silty sand with gravel (natural)

Features:

F.16 Uncertain dimensions (as cut by later wall on two sides), but at least 0.5m+ wide, and c.0.2m+ deep, this appears to be a steep near vertically-sided medieval pit ([041]) which is straight to concave in profile, and which has remained un-bottomed in excavation. This feature contained at least one major fill (040) consisting of a mixture of the overlying context (039) (a mid-brown to dark grey sandy silt with occasional charcoal, shell, and occasional to moderately rare bone and pot) with a layer containing more frequent charcoal and lumps of orange-coloured redeposited natural (sand and gravel). This 'fill' does not appear to relate to the overlying and intercutting post-medieval wall foundations, but instead to the pre-existing late medieval occupation horizon beneath.

F.17 A 4m+ long wall foundation or footing ({042}) which is c.0.5m+ wide and 0.2m+ deep, and which is 'L-shaped' in plan (i.e. the c.90° corner of a building with walls running SSE-NNW and approx. E-W), composed of 2-3 courses of crudely shaped/ broken-up rectangular/square blocks of (a sometimes) re-used chalk clunch (range 70 – 200mm), with brick + chalk rubble on top, the lower courses cemented with a coarse lime mortar (049). The sides of the cut ([090]) for these wall footings within the surrounding soil extends little beyond the sides of the actual wall foundation; these are more or less vertical with a flat to uneven base, which is usually quite compressed. The fill packing between the wall and sides of the trench consists of a fill (043) composed of a dark brown-black and shelly sandy silt with frequent broken white mortar fragments in it and charcoal, and a more compact soil (044) composed of a mid grey-brown clayey sandy silt with mortar fragments. Within the latter was found the base of a thumbed 15th-century Essex ware pot (SF <2>), just beneath the wall and lying on the floor of the wall cut, therefore associated perhaps with the buried soil rather than the building. This wall has been interpreted as the foundation for a demolished early post-medieval dwelling(s) which would have been located on the frontage of the High Street.

F.18 A 0.75m+ long and 0.4-0.5m wide (and 0.15m deep) ENE-WSW wall foundation made of crudely cut/broken clunch blocks ({046}) which either cuts or abuts wall footing F.17 towards the northern end of Trench 5. This relationship was not tested by an excavation (slot), though it seems likely that wall F.18 is slightly later in date, and therefore cuts F.17. As with the former, a mortar bonding (050) has been recognized within the lower foundation course, whilst a narrow vertically-sided wall foundation trench ([095]) filled with an upper wall trench fill (047) (which is identical to (043)), and a lower wall trench fill (048) (equivalent to (044)) from which a small Cu-alloy pin (weight 1g) was recovered. A sherd of 14th-century pot and a thin Cu-alloy rod (weight 4g) were also found associated with the mortar bonding (050); the pot in this context presumably redeposited. Most likely this feature was a clunch foundation for the (back end) wall of a demolished post-medieval (16th-18th century?) dwelling.

F.19 A 1m+ long and 0.5m wide, 0.35m deep wall footing made up by and large of 2-3 courses of only partly bonded crudely cut/ broken blocks of clunch with some brick in the top ({086}). This slightly curvilinear NE-SW aligned wall appears to butt onto the square corner of F.17, thus it would appear to be a later extension. The lower courses do contain some mortar bonding (087), whilst the vertical-undercut trench for the wall footing ([089]) is similarly narrow and contains a fill (088) consisting of compacted silt similar to (044) with some mortar.

F.20 A 1.0m long by 0.9m wide and 0.15m deep square mass of seemingly compressed/crushed clunch ({091}), perhaps originally placed here as rough cut blocks, but since weathered and compacted

(fragmented). This is now cream-coloured and soft in consistency, with faint lines nevertheless denoting joins in between some of the blocks. The square cut for this ([092]?) fits the outlines of the chalk exactly, the sides being vertical and the base flat. This feature is cut by the wall trench ([090]) for wall footing F.17 almost exactly through its middle (but more survives on the east side of this than the west), the cut face of this on the east side of the trench being slightly pinkish in colour, perhaps the result of burning or heat. Some small pieces of iron smithing slag are associated with this feature on its NW corner (small find <3>). Possibly this feature was part of a wall foundation, but most likely a clunch compacted base for something like a hearth or a chimney? This is cut into the medieval dark earth layer (039). medieval or post-medieval in date.

F.21 The corner of a small oval-shaped pit, at least 0.5m+ long, 0.25m wide and c.0.2m deep, with gentle to steeper concave sloping sides and a flat-uneven and shallow base ([084]). This contained a single fill (083) consisting of a dark grey silt similar to (082), but with a slightly increased charcoal content, and more stony inclusions across its base. Some pottery was encountered, but it was difficult to differentiate this from that collected from the overlying dark layer (082). This would appear to be a small pit within the ground surface underlying a medieval soil accumulation, one associated perhaps with medieval occupation deposits/ floor levels.

Non-feature archaeological layers:

(039) A 0.1 – 0.4m thick mid-brown to dark grey sandy silt ‘soil’ layer containing occasional charcoal pieces, other organic material, shell, occasional small stones, and occasional to moderately abundant bone with rarer sherds of late medieval (15th century) pottery. This has been truncated in places, and is to be found at the top of the dark earth (medieval) sequence into which the wall foundation trenches for F.17 and F.18 have been cut. Possibly a late medieval occupation layer which overlies still earlier medieval features within the deeper stratigraphy of floor levels preserved within the now-demolished early post-medieval dwellings.

(045) A <3m long, 0.5m wide and 0.1-0.25m deep clay layer covering the wall trench and wall footings (F.17 and F.18 etc.). This consists of a pale to mid-brown to grey clayey silt with a spread of mortar dust, sand and burnt clay fragments. This has been interpreted as a possible destruction layer associated with the early post-medieval dwellings – perhaps even reflecting 19th century truncation.

(080) A layer of loose and clean white-yellow patinated flint gravel with only minor sand-silt matrix. This would seem to represent a post-medieval? spread of redeposited material which overlies a sequence of medieval dark earth deposit(s) at the southern end of the trench, outside of the foundations for the early post-medieval dwellings.

(081) A mid-dark grey silty ‘soil’ with a mottled mid-brown silty clay present in patches, alongside rounded flint gravel small pebble inclusions and minor lumps/ flecks of charcoal, alongside shell and bone. The uppermost surviving layer within a sequence of medieval dark earth deposits preserved in between the wall foundations for early post-medieval? dwellings (F.17)

(082) A dark grey humic and loose silty soil with moderate to occasional amounts of charcoal flecks, occasional flint pebbles (10-20mm), animal bone, shell and rare 15th century coarseware pot (including a greyware jar rim). An abraded sherd of 16th-century pot was also recovered, but this may possibly have been intrusive from the later wall footings. This layer forms the lower ‘soil’ horizon within the above sequence.

(085) A compact buff-light coloured brown sub-soil. This survives as small patches beneath the above layer. Contains no culturally identifiable material.

(090) A dark grey silty ‘soil’ with alternating laminae/ lenses of reddish-brown clayey silt which include some visible traces of organic inclusions (straw/grass/vegetable matter) alongside some burnt grain and traces of broken egg shell and shell (oyster + mussel). Perhaps also pottery and bone (none however was collected – this was sampled only in the trench section: environmental sample <2>). This forms the uppermost late medieval? soil horizon preserved by the foundations for this early post-medieval building (F.17). However, most of this thin layer was removed during the machined cleaning of the floor of the trench. This deposit may represent domestic kitchen waste, thus clearly has potential for environmental analysis.

(093) A 2.75m long and 0.25-0.5m wide spread of dark silt cut by the 19th century cellar foundations and quarry-tiled floor located at the junction of Trenches 4 and 5 (not excavated).

(094) A 2.5m long and 0.5-0.7m wide spread of brown silt cut by the western edge of the post-medieval wall foundations (F.17). This layer was most probably cut by F.17 as well as F.20, and perhaps also by F.18. It was not excavated. The recovery of a single sherd of 13th-century pot from the

top of this layer (SF <1>) suggests that the medieval occupation deposits present on this side of the wall may be earlier.

Trench 6

Generalised 'soil' sequence above the natural:

0 – 0.16m	hard core (concrete and ballast)
0.16 – 0.36	dark grey/black 'make-up' deposit consisting of a firm layer of compressed soil, frequent CBM and stones
0.36 – 0.66	patches of dumped modern rubbish which includes rotted wood and ferrous material (similar to Trench 1)
0.36 – 0.66m	a mid- dark brown clayey silt (garden soil) with occasional to frequent stone inclusions
0.66m	compact orange-red silty sand with gravel (natural)

Features:

F.9 A 1m+ long, 0.8m wide and c.0.25m deep curvilinear NW-SE aligned shallow ditch, slightly asymmetric in x-section, with gently sloping concave sides and a rounded base ([24]). This contains three fills consisting of an upper mid-brown sandy clay with occasional pale brown mottled sandy patches with occasional to frequent small angular stones (21), another mottled mid-brown sandy clay with brown-orange sand (redeposited or slumped natural) with occasional small angular stones (22), and a basal layer (23), which is also similar to the above. There were no pottery finds. This has been interpreted as the partial section (its eastern edge has been cut off by the trench edge) of a NW-SE curvilinear plot boundary ditch – perhaps originally a ditch between plots for nos. 169 and 171 Chesterton Road. This may be medieval, though is most likely post-medieval in date.

F.10 A 0.5m by 0.4m+ wide and 0.35m deep pit (?) which has an irregular, though slightly uncertain shape in plan (this disappears into the limits of excavation), with steep sloping sides and a relatively flat base ([26]). This contained a fill which was similar to (21) (the upper fill of F.9) but slightly darker in colour. Some animal bone was recovered from this, but no other finds. Potentially this feature truncates ditch F.9, although the exact relationship of these was unclear. post-medieval?

Discussion

The results of this evaluation have proved interesting in that excavation suggests the survival of medieval occupation layers rich in environmental evidence (including a relatively high incidence of burnt cereal grain, egg shell etc.), as well as animal bone (mostly sheep (mutton) but including a single example of red deer) and coarseware pottery below the 19th century and still earlier post-medieval foundations dug for houses fronting the High Street. This above situation is quite different therefore from that encountered further east along Chesterton High Street at the Yorkshire Grey, and in the opposite direction towards its junction with Union Lane. At the latter two sites the construction of cellars during the post-medieval period seems to have been responsible for the truncation of the medieval and possibly earlier street front deposits. Here at no. 169 High Street a late post-medieval (19th century?) cellar was present, but was unusually shallow. Because of this we find truncation of the medieval deposits only within the vicinity of a deeper well shaft located just in one corner of the basement.

Given the shortness of time available to investigate these sub-cellar deposits, the base of the medieval occupation horizon fronting the road could not be established with any certainty, nor could the extent of the underlying features be confirmed. However, it seems likely that up to 0.5 – 0.6m of deposit has survived here, the probable street

front of the medieval (and post-medieval) dwellings being set back some 6-7m from the edge of the present road. In fact the level of truncation of these deposits by the wall footings for the early post-medieval houses seems to be minimal, the foundations for these walls being both narrow and characteristically constructed using re-used and broken-up clunch blocks, the latter merging into brick and clunch rubble within their upper courses. The most likely date for this phase of building would seem to be the 16th-17th century (R. Newman *pers.com.*). In this respect it is interesting that the pottery dates from the floor levels underlying this are late medieval (most of the being 15th century but with some 14th and 13th century inclusions); this implying some sort of continuity with the subsequent phase of post-medieval re-building. Such evidence contrasts with the probable 12th century date for the SW-NE boundary? ditch F.1 located to the rear and slightly west of this in Trench 3, and perhaps a still earlier date for the NW-SE ditch (F.11) which it cuts. Meanwhile some 15m behind this to the north (in Trench 2) were a couple of backyard medieval rubbish pits, both of which seem to have been infilled by the 14th century – for the most part with 12th-century pottery. This discrepancy in pottery dates between the 12th century and later 15th century dominated assemblage recovered from the street front seems rather intriguing, yet this may be something that will be answered following renewed investigations at the site. Interestingly the animal bone deposition within these backyard pits is also dominated by sheep, whilst the environmental evidence from here is much the same as that encountered within the dark earth horizon along the street front.

Just as interesting to the overall picture of this site is the absence of middle or late Saxon pottery, given what we know of the *vill* of Chesterton having Saxon origins. The evidence for Saxon occupation was located just 200m to the west of here at the junction of the High Street with Union Lane, and to the east at the Yorkshire Grey (late Saxon – early medieval). The non-recovery of cultural material here may simply reflect the very small area of archaeological deposits exposed and examined. For example, the orientation of this potentially earlier linear (F.11) is not dissimilar to the NW-SE late Saxon ditch alignment seen on Union Lane (Scotland Road and the Wheatsheaf excavations). Likewise there is a certain similarity with the Saxon enclosure dug on the Yorkshire Grey. Such uncertainties as this over the dating might be resolved by future excavation.

Of minor interest here was the recovery of five worked flints of Neolithic-Iron Age date which were found redeposited within later features. This suggests some sort of background prehistoric activity within this area of the gravel terrace, but perhaps little more than that. In view of the area available for future investigation the likelihood of finding actual archaeology of this period seems slight.

In other respects we are fortunate here in that the main post-medieval – Modern rubbish pitting on this plot has taken place to the rear of the site, and this appears to have avoided most of the medieval archaeology. In itself this has turned out to be more interesting than first expected, given that a good proportion of the pottery recovered from these deep rubbish-filled pit and trench features was 18th or even 17th century (and earlier) in date, even though the actual burial of this material probably took place much later (i.e. during the late 18th - 19th or even the 20th century). Despite the overall level of post-medieval-Modern disturbance and diggings within this backyard area there seems to be little evidence for the sort of gravel extraction that we find elsewhere in Chesterton. The continued incidence of redeposited 15th-17th

century pottery within some of these later features does though imply the presence of still earlier occupation within parts of this backyard area. If not here, then we might expect to find such features within the plots located either side of this. However, this was not the case perhaps with the plot which lies just to the east (i.e. behind nos. 170-173 High Street); here a single undated pit and ditch was uncovered, yet the shape and exact orientation of it does not suggest a parallel with the 'early' ditch (F.11) alignment present within Trench 3, but rather with the boundary of the post-medieval plot itself.

Conclusion

The evidence from this trench evaluation suggests good survival of medieval – post-medieval archaeology at this site, which despite the extent of the later building, shows relatively little evidence of truncation. The earliest identifiable archaeology here consists of a SW-NE aligned ditch dating to the 12th century which cuts a potentially earlier NW-SE ditch, and to the rear of this a series of c. 12th century rubbish pits which appear to have been infilled by the 14th century. At the front of this plot, set back some 6-7m from the edge of the present High Street, were a number of clunch wall footings associated with one or more early post-medieval (16th-17th century?) dwellings. The base of these walls cut a late medieval (15th century?) dark occupation horizon with good preservation of environmental evidence. These dark earth deposits probably reflect the position of the medieval street frontage. They were not investigated in detail, although the presence of archaeological features beneath them was established. During the later post-medieval period (18th-19th century) a considerable amount of pitting and rubbish deposition took place to the rear of this plot, some of this contemporary with the levelling of the dwellings along the High Street, and subsequent to that the construction of the public house and a shallow cellar. This continued to use the pumped water supply from a pre-existing well. Further rubbish pitting which took place at the end of the 19th century – first half of the 20th century may be associated with the operation of a smithy, and later with its destruction. A possible early boundary ditch to no. 169/ 170 High Street was identified within the adjacent garden/ car park to the rear of no. 173 High Street.

Further excavation here may elucidate the nature of the medieval street frontage, the extent and nature of the earliest medieval (12th century activity), and the existence or not of an earlier Saxon settlement phase.

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Specialist reports

Pottery *David Hall [DH] & Andrew Hall [AH]* Compiled by S.Timberlake

A total of 122 sherds (1.85 kg) of medieval – post-medieval pot was recovered during this evaluation, the majority of it being post-medieval (16th century – 18th/ early 19th century). However, amongst this assemblage were some 69 sherds (0.71 kg) of medieval pot dating from the 12th – 15th century AD, most of this coming from four features and a total of eight medieval contexts. The remaining medieval pot was found redeposited within later features. The pottery was spot-dated by DH and AH.

Medieval pottery [DH]

12th century

St. Neots ware F.1 (01) (3 sherds); F.4 (08) (1 sherd); (011) (2 sherds); F.8 (019) (2 sherds); F.22 ((057) (1 sherd)

Greyware F.1 (01) (1 sherd); F.4 (011) (8 sherds); F.8 (019) (4 sherds)

Thetford F.4 (08) (2 sherds)

13th century

Buff F.4 (011) (5 sherds)

Brill? (094) SF<1> (1 sherd)

Pink shelly F.8 (019) (1 sherd)

14th century

Pink F.4 (08) (1 sherd)

Grimstone F.8 (019) (1 sherd)

Buff ware F.8 (019) (1 sherd)

Buff Ely ware F.18 (050) (1 sherd)

15th century

Brown Sandyware (039) (5 sherds)

Greyware (039) (14 sherds); (067) (1 sherd); (082) (11 sherds)

Essexware (044) (3 sherds)

Essex Red (064) (1 sherd)

Hedingham Ware (F.13 (033) (1 sherd)

Post-medieval pottery [DH] + [AH]

16th century

Coarse Redware (082) (1 sherd)

Coarse Greyware F.14 (035) (1 sherd)

Tygg F.14 (035) (1 sherd)

Red Jug (067) (1 sherd)

17th – 18th century

Red ware polychrome glazed F.5 (013) (1 sherd)

GRE (067) (3 sherds); F.5 (013); F.6 ((015)

18th century

Staffordshire F.22 (057) (1 sherd)

Tin glaze F.22 (057) (3 sherds)

Babylon ware F.22 (057) (4 sherds)

Iron glaze F.22 (057) (7 sherds)

GRE F.22 (057) (11 sherds)

19th century

Creamware F.7 (017) (1 sherd)

Stoneware (065) (1 sherd)

The Flint *Lawrence Billington*

Five worked flints were recovered during the excavation (Table 1). All of the flints are unretouched flake removals made on good quality fine grained flint. Cortical surfaces survive on three pieces and are all thin, hard and smooth and appear to derive from small gravel cobbles. The flints are all in a similar condition with edge damage in the form of chipping and edge rounding suggesting they have seen some post-depositional disturbance.

Trench	Feature	Context	secondary flake	tertiary flake	total
3	12	31	1		1
2	8	19	1		1
3	3	6		1	1
3	11	27	1		1
3	15	37	1		1
		total	4	1	5

Table 1: Basic quantification of the worked flint assemblage.

None of the flints are strongly chronologically diagnostic. A tertiary flake fragment from F.3 is blade-like in morphology and is likely to be of Neolithic date. The remainder of the flakes are hard hammer struck secondary removals and could conceivably date to any period from the late Neolithic to the Iron Age.

Faunal remains

Vida Rajkovača

The evaluation at Chesterton resulted in the recovery of a small faunal assemblage with a total count of 142 assessable specimens and a total weight of 2320g. The assessment aims to quantify and characterise the assemblage in terms of species representation and patterns of animal use. Four phases of occupation were identified and the assemblage was split into sub-sets accordingly. The assemblage is dominated by domestic species showing a fairly low level of species ratio variability between different phases.

Methods:

Identification, quantification and ageing

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 & 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 Cambridge Archaeological Unit 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 bases of their size, shape and root morphology (Schmid 1972: 80). Taphonomic criteria including indications of butchery, pathology, gnawing activity and surface modifications as a result of weathering were also recorded when evident.

Preservation, fragmentation and taphonomy

The preservation was quite varied between different phases*. Overall, it ranged from moderate to good, with a single context having mixed preservation. The majority of the material suffered from surface erosion. The numbers corresponding to each of the preservation categories are given in Table 2. Categories such as quite poor or poor were not recorded in this assemblage.

* **Phase I** = 12th – 14th century (medieval); **Phase II** = 14th-15th century (late medieval); **Phase III** = 16th-17th century (early post-medieval); **Phase IV** = 18th-19th century (late post-medieval)

	Phase I		Phase II		Phase III		Phase IV	
	Contexts	Fragments	Contexts	Fragments	Contexts	Fragments	Contexts	Fragments
Preservation								
good	.	.	1	2	.	.	1	1
quite good	1	5	.	.	3	17	.	.
moderate	8	47	3	14	4	15	4	35
mixed	1	6	.	.	.	.	.	.
Total	10	58	4	16	7	32	5	36

Table 2. Preservation categories: number of contexts and fragments by phase.

A more in-depth look into taphonomy showed only a small number of specimens were eroded and that there were no elements affected by fire. Gnawing was rare and suggested that bone waste was deposited relatively quickly. Butchery marks were particularly common in the late post-medieval phase (Table 3), with one third of the sub-set being affected. Marks corresponding to disarticulation, meat and marrow removal were recorded, and ribs were often cut to pot sizes.

	Phase I		Phase II		Phase III		Phase IV	
	fragments	% of sub-set	fragments	% of sub-set	fragments	% of sub-set	fragments	% of sub-set
Taphonomy								
eroded	2	3.5	1	6.2	.	.	1	2.8
burnt	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
butchered	2	3.5	2	12.5	2	6.2	12	33.3
gnawed	3	5.2	.	.	1	3.1	1	2.8

Table 3. Taphonomy: fragment count by phase.

Frequency of species

The early medieval bone was sheep-dominated and characterised by the very restricted range of species. The three main 'food species' were the only identified species, with the exception of a single frog specimen, which is not likely to be anthropogenic in character. The high sheep count was also reflected in high numbers of sheep-sized unidentifiable specimens. Of four phases, the late medieval sub-set generated the smallest amount of bone, both by count and by weight. Two specimens were recorded as butchered: a cow mandible displayed cut marks consistent with meat removal ([39]) and a sheep vertebral process appeared to have been chopped axially ([64]). The only evidence for the use of wild faunal resources from the site, the red deer distal metacarpus, came from [82] (Trench 5).

The early post-medieval material accounted for c.20% of the assemblage both by weight and by count. The prevalence of sheep/ goat was much greater here compared to the other phases, and the other two main domesticates were recorded. A deep chop through the shaft recorded on cow tibia from F.5 is only one indication of more crude butchery practices. In addition to the butchery, a fragment of highly polished bone point was recorded from [67], probably fashioned from a sheep-sized limb bone fragment.

Finally, only five post-medieval contexts generated the largest of four sub-sets (by weight). In addition to the three 'food species', horse was also recorded. Unidentified bird specimens were splinters from limb bones, impossible to further identify to species level. In keeping with the period, butchery marks were characterised by the heavy use of saw, as a multi-purpose tool. A number of cattle-sized vertebrae were chopped down the sagittal plane; implying carcasses were hung and split into left and right portions. That said, fine knife marks consistent with meat removal were not rare.

The point of interest from this sub-set was the well preserved and complete pig skeleton recovered from F.25 ([78]). The animal was a female, aged between 2 and 7 months of age at death. An abnormal and irregular in shape bone growth was recorded on the lingual side of one of the mandibles, similar to swelling recorded in abscesses. Perhaps surprisingly, it was not possible to observe any butchery marks and this may be taken to suggest the animal was not eaten. Some authors argue, however, that a skilled butcher does not have to leave a mark, and this is especially the case with juvenile individuals such as the one we have here (Krish Seetah *pers.comm.*).

On the whole, the Chesterton assemblage is quantitatively small yet rather typical for both main periods. It was not possible to note many changes in the range of exploited species between the periods. With the exception of a red deer, the medieval assemblage showed no evidence for the use of wild faunal resources. Animals must have been 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.

Taxon	Phase I - Early Medieval			Phase II – Late Medieval			Phase III - Early Post-medieval			Phase IV - Late Post-medieval			Total NISP
	NISP	%NISP	MNI	NISP	%NISP	MNI	NISP	%NISP	MNI	NISP	%NISP	MNI	
Cow	9	41	1	1	16.7	1	2	16.7	1	2	18.2	1	14
Sheep/ goat	11	50	1	2	33.3	1	7	58.3	1	4	36.4	1	24
Pig	1	4.5	1	.	.	.	2	16.7	1	4	36.4	1	7
Horse	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1	9	1	1
Red deer	.	.	.	1	16.7	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Chicken	.	.	.	2	33.3	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Frog/ toad	1	4.5	1	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	1
Sub- total to species / order	22	100	.	6	100	.	11	100	.	11	100	.	50
Cattle- sized	8	.	.	2	.	.	7	.	.	13	.	.	30
Sheep- sized	25	.	.	11	.	.	8	.	.	9	.	.	53
Mammal n.f.i.	.	.	.	2	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	2
Bird n.f.i.	3	.	.	.	.	.	1	.	.	3	.	.	7
Total	58 (702g)	.	.	21 (144g)	.	.	27 (406g)	.	.	36 (1068g)	.	.	142 (2320g)

Table 4. Number of Identified Specimens and the Minimum Number of Individuals for all species – breakdown by phase; the abbreviation n.f.i. denotes that the specimen could not be further identified.

Assessment of Bulk Environmental Samples *Anne de Vareilles*

Methodology

The two medieval bulk soil samples taken to assess the preservation potential were processed using an Ankara-type flotation machine. The flots were collected in 300µm aperture meshes and the remaining heavy residues washed over a 1mm mesh. The flots were dried indoors prior to analysis. J. Hutton sorted the >4mm fractions of the heavy residues by eye. Dry flots were separated through a stack of sieves; fractions were sorted and macro remains identified under a low power binocular microscope (6x-40x magnification) by the author. Nomenclature follows Zohary and Hopf (2000) for cereals and Stace (1997) for all other flora. All environmental remains are listed in Table 5.

Preservation

The archaeobotanical remains were all carbonised. Grain caryopses are quite heavily puffed, pitted, and fragmented having evidently suffered adverse conditions during and after carbonisation. Interestingly, the smaller the seed the better preserved it was,

so that most wild plant seeds were found whole with descriptive details still present. Modern intrusive rootlets were in both samples, indicative of a low level of bioturbation.

Results

Trench 2 pit F.4 [11]

The sample from this feature had the most archaeobotanical elements of the two, despite its lower grain per soil density of around 9 grains/Litre of soil. A mixed range of cereals was recovered: hulled barley, free-threshing wheat, oat and rye. Chaff was almost absent and wild plant seeds were less common than cereal grains. The wild species point to damp, heavy soils.

Trench 5 layer [090]

Hulled barley, oat and possibly rye were found in this context. Chaff was absent whilst only three wild plant seeds were noted, suggestive of the same damp soils. The bulk soil sample was only c.1L in volume, giving us a very high minimum grain density of 17grains/Litre of soil.

Conclusion

At present, the plant remains are not numerous enough to provide location-specific archaeobotanical data of interest. However, the potential for rich carbonised plant assemblages is high as the grain per soil densities suggest. The range of finds, including fragments derived from other activities (such as egg shell, fish bone, animal bone and iron nails) demonstrate that both pits were used for general waste. Indeed, the range of cereals represented were most probably grown and processed separately. It is not unusual to find mineral-replaced and waterlogged plant remains in medieval urban contexts and these should be sought for during further excavations. The latter provide valuable additional information to that gained from carbonised remains, which can only tell us about activities involving fire.

Table 5: Plant Macro-Remains from the Bulk Soil Samples

Sample number		1	2
Context		(11)	(90)
Feature		F.4	
Feature description		deep pit	layer cut by post-med foundations
Date		medieval	medieval
Sample volume - litres		7 L.	<1 L.
Flot fraction examined -%		100%	100%
large charcoal (>4mm)		+	-
med. charcoal (2-4mm)		++	-
small charcoal (<2mm)		+++	++
estimated charcoal volume - millilitres		2 ml.	<1 ml.
Cereal remains			
<i>Hordeum vulgare sensu lato</i>	hulled barley grains	9	11
<i>Triticum eastivum sensu lato</i>	free-threshing wheat	19	
<i>Triticum</i> sp.	Indeterminate wheat	7	
<i>Hordeum/ Triticum</i> sp.	Barley or wheat	12	1
<i>Secale cereale</i> L.		1 cf.	1 cf.
<i>Avena</i> sp.	Oat	4, 11cf.	2, 2cf.
Indeterminate cereal grain fragment		18	9
<i>T.aestivum</i> sl. Rachis node	Free-threshing chaff	1	
<i>S.cereale</i> L. rachis node	Rye chaff	1	
Wild Plant Seeds			
<i>R. conglomeratus/obtusifolius/sanguineus</i> - Dock		2	
<i>Rumex</i> sp.	Dock		1
<i>Medicago / Trifolium</i> sp.	Medics or Clover	1	1
<i>Anthemis cotula</i> L.	Stinking mayweed	3	
<i>Cladium mariscus</i> (L.) Pohl	Great Fen Sedge	1	
large lenticular <i>Carex</i> sp.	flat Sedge seed	1	1
Large Poaceae	>4mm long wild grass	5	
Indet. Poaceae fragments	wild/cultivated grass	++	
Indeterminate seed		1	
Other Biological Items (incl. from the >4mm heavy residues)			
Fish scale		+	
Bone		++	
?Fish bone?			-
Egg shell		(+)	++
Non-Biological Items			
Pottery		+	
Iron / iron slag		- (-)	

Key: '-' 1 or 2 items, '+' <10 items, '++' 10-50 items, '+++' >50 items. Note: both the cereal grain + indet. grass frags. categories could include oat.

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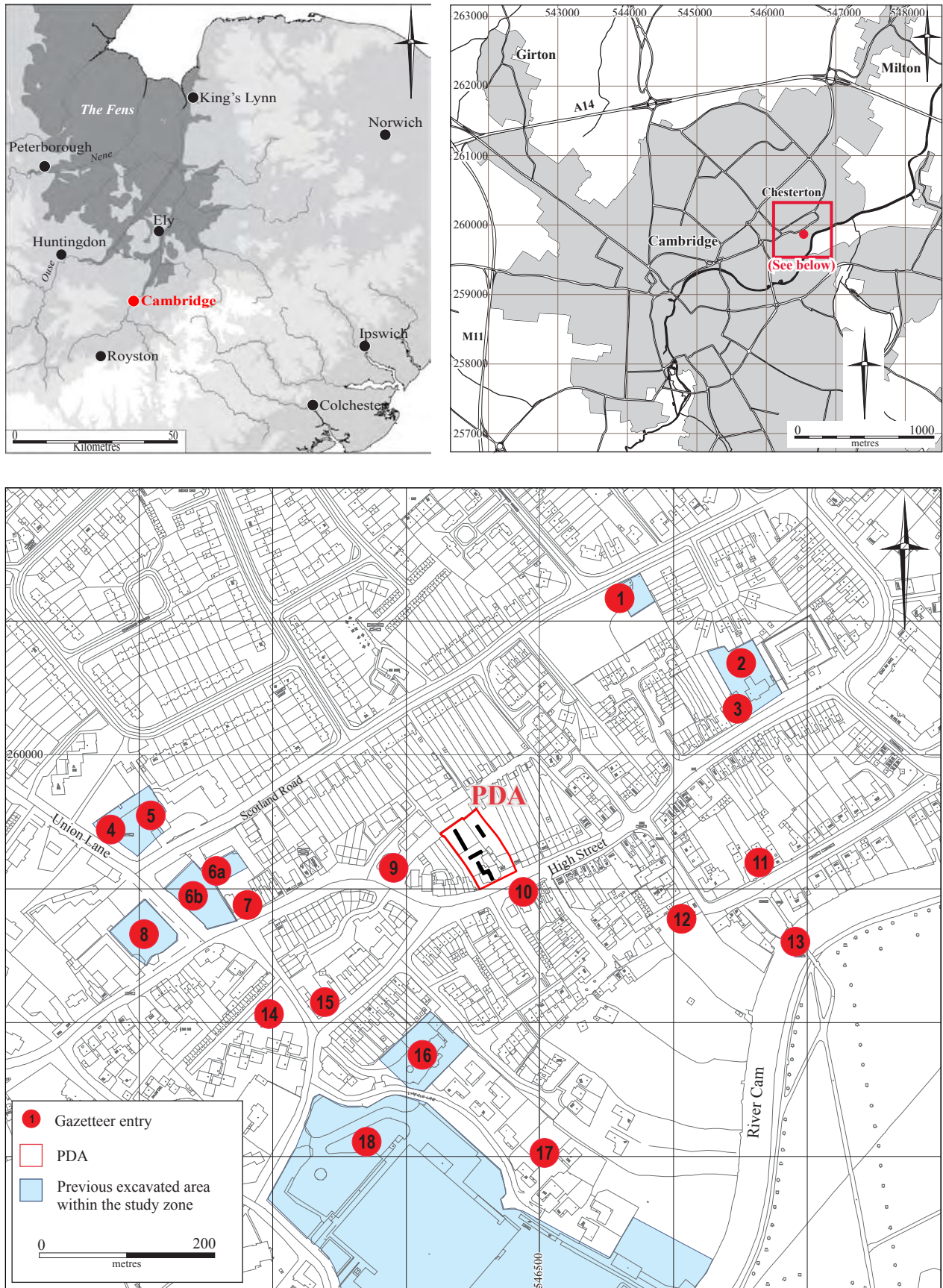


Figure 1. Location Plan.

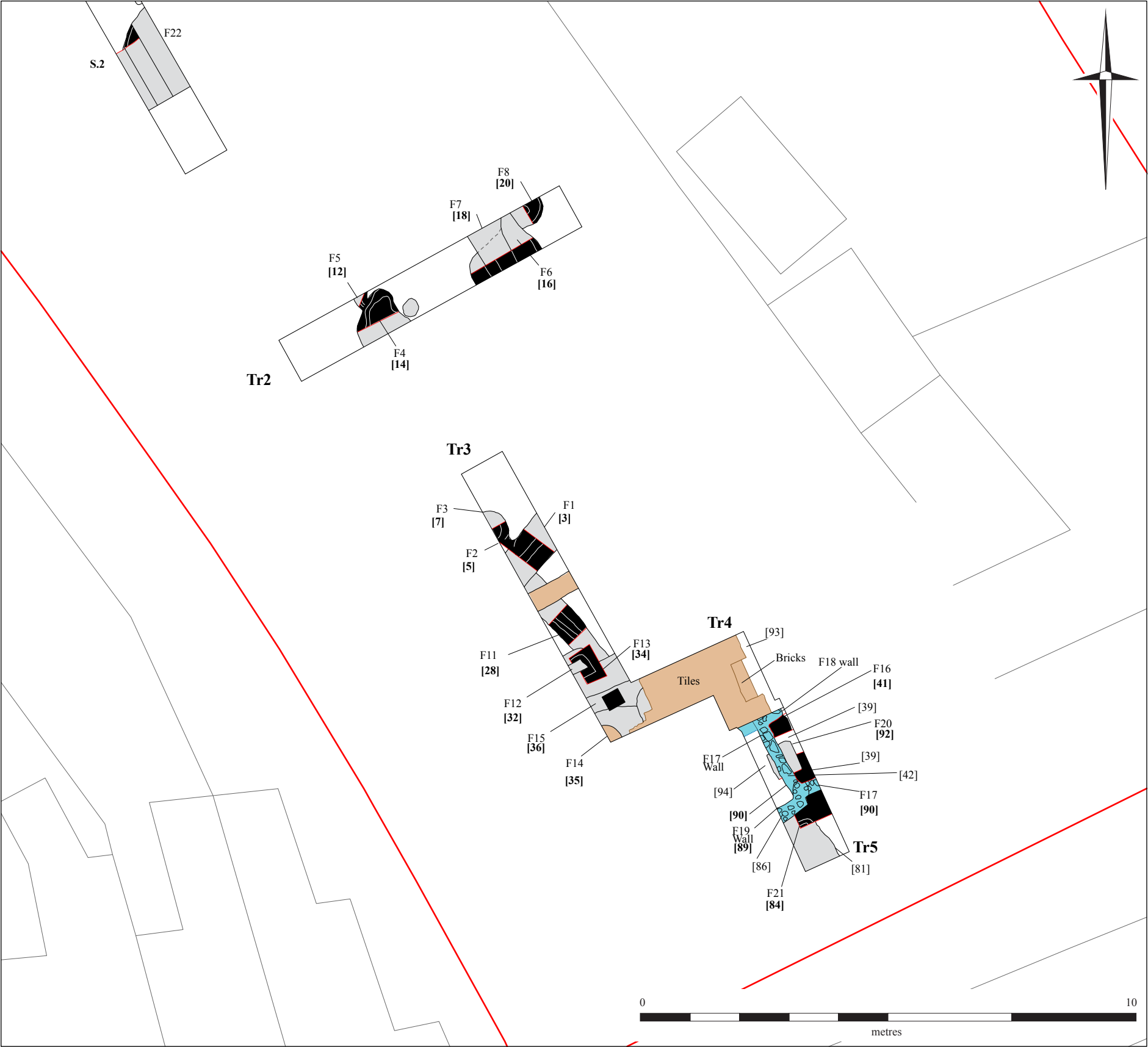


Figure 2. Trench Plan.

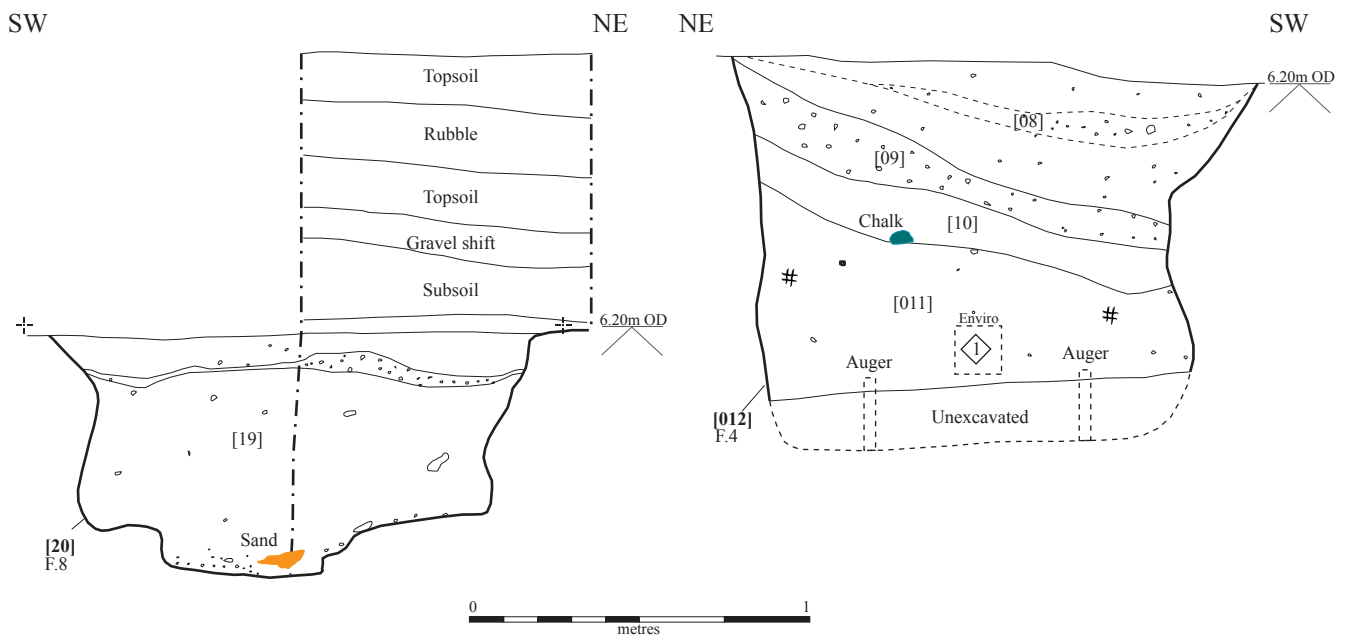


Figure 3. Photographs and sections of Medieval rubbish pits F.8 (Left) and F.4 (right), in Trench 2.

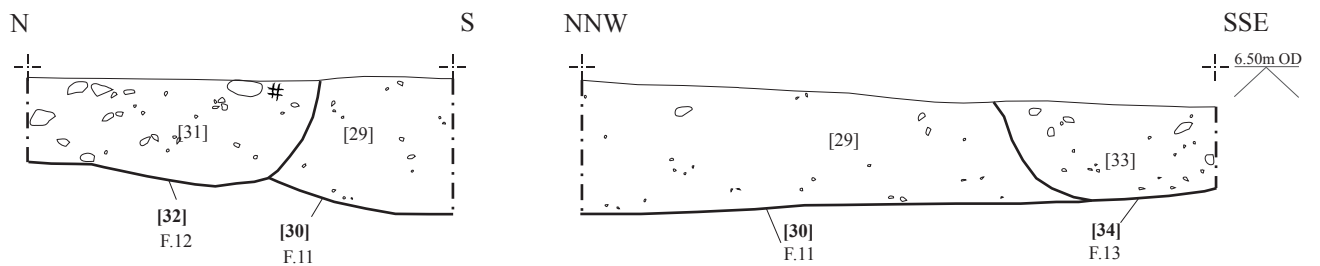
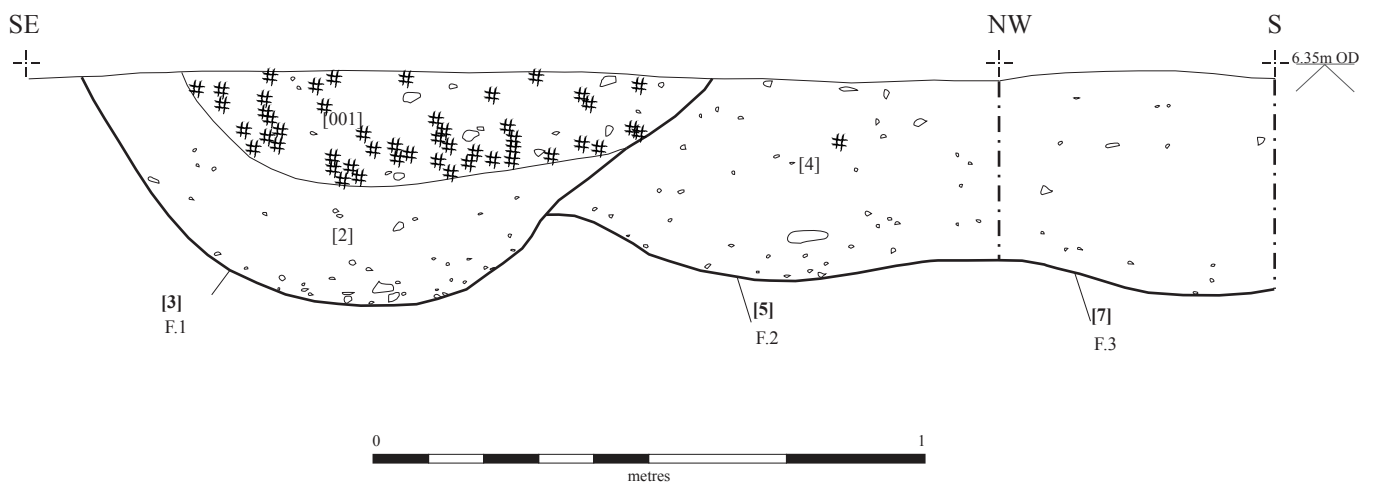


Figure 4. Photograph of well (top left) and photograph (top right) and sections of Medieval ditch (F.1) and pits (F.2 and F.3) and ditches (F.11, F.12 and F.13) within Trench 3.



Figure 5. Photographs of Postmedieval building foundations in Trench 5 before excavation (above) and after excavation (below).

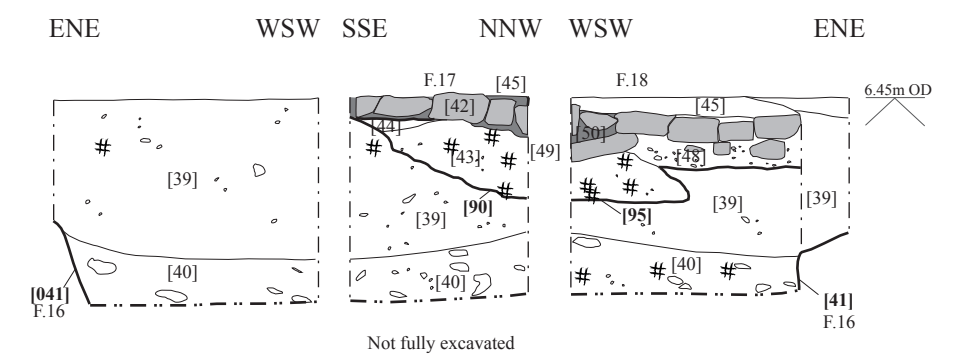
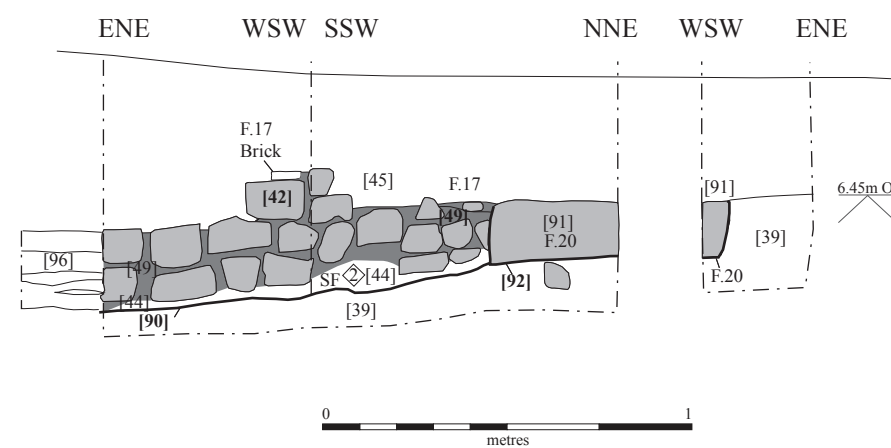
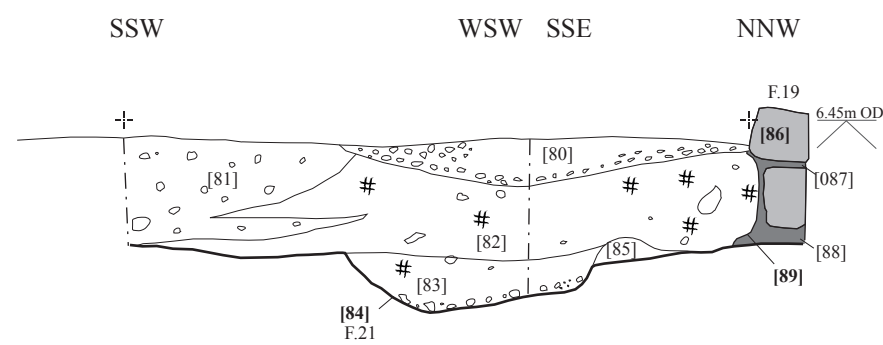


Figure 6. Photographs and sections showing Early Postmedieval wall footings (F.17, F.18 and F.19) for dwellings and Medieval occupation horizons.



Figure 7. Photograph of F. 22 in Trench 1.

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OASIS ID: cambridg3-152914

Project details

Project name	169-173 High Street, Chesterton, Cambridge
Short description of the project	Between 20th-25th May 2013 the CAU undertook an archaeological trench evaluation at nos. 169-173 High Street, Chesterton following the demolition of the public house and a number of associated buildings. This consisted of 57.5m of trenching dug across the proposed development area (PDA) the centre of which lay at TL 4645 5999. Medieval archaeology was encountered towards the street frontage of no. 169. Amongst the earliest features was a SW-NE aligned ditch dating to the 12th century which cut an earlier NW-SE ditch, whilst to the rear of this lay a series of c. 12th century rubbish pits which appear to have been infilled by the 14th century. In front, set back some 6-7m from the edge of the present High Street, were a number of clunch wall footings associated with one or more Postmedieval (16th-17th century?) dwellings, the base of these walls cutting a Late Medieval (15th century?) dark occupation horizon with good preservation of environmental evidence. During the later Postmedieval period (18th-19th century) a considerable amount of pitting and rubbish deposition took place to the rear of this plot. Meanwhile a possible early boundary ditch to no. 169/ 171 High Street was identified within the adjacent garden/ car park to the rear of no. 173.
Project dates	Start: 20-05-2013 End: 25-05-2013
Previous/future work	No / Yes
Any associated project reference codes	OSC13 - Sitecode
Any associated project reference codes	ECB 3968 - HER event no.
Type of project	Field evaluation
Site status	None
Current Land use	Other 13 - Waste ground
Current Land use	Other 2 - In use as a building
Monument type	DITCH Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Post Medieval
Monument type	RUBBISH PIT Medieval
Monument type	RUBBISH PIT Post Medieval

Monument type	PIT Medieval
Monument type	WALL FOUNDATIONS Post Medieval
Monument type	DITCH Uncertain
Significant Finds	POTTERY Medieval
Significant Finds	POTTERY Post Medieval
Significant Finds	IRON SLAG Medieval
Significant Finds	BRICK Post Medieval
Significant Finds	CU-ALLOY PIN Post Medieval
Methods & techniques	"Sample Trenches"
Development type	Urban residential (e.g. flats, houses, etc.)
Prompt	Direction from Local Planning Authority - PPG16
Position in the planning process	After full determination (eg. As a condition)

Project location

Country	England
Site location	CAMBRIDGESHIRE CAMBRIDGE CAMBRIDGE 169-173 High Street, Chesterton
Postcode	CB4 1NL
Study area	85.50 Square metres
Site coordinates	TL 4644 5997 52 0 52 13 05 N 000 08 38 E Point
Height OD / Depth	Min: 7.00m Max: 7.00m

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	Simon Timberlake
Type of sponsor/funding body	Developer
Name of sponsor/funding body	COEL Ltd.

Project archives

Physical Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
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Physical Archive ID	OSC13
Physical Contents	"Animal Bones","Ceramics","Environmental","Industrial","Metal","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Digital Archive ID	OSC13
Digital Contents	"Animal Bones","Environmental","Stratigraphic","Survey","Worked stone/lithics"
Digital Media available	"GIS","Images raster / digital photography","Spreadsheets","Survey","Text"
Paper Archive recipient	Cambridge Archaeological Unit
Paper Archive ID	OSC13
Paper Contents	"Ceramics","Stratigraphic","Survey"
Paper Media available	"Context sheet","Photograph","Plan","Report","Section","Survey "

Project bibliography 1

Publication type	Grey literature (unpublished document/manuscript)
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