

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF**

**AT**

**HILL COTTAGE, SCHOOL LANE**

**WARMINGTON,**

**WARWICKSHIRE**

**NGR SP 4110 4777**

*On behalf of*

*Mr and Mrs Michael Jones*

**FEBRUARY 2011**

**REPORT FOR** Mr and Mrs Michael Jones  
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School Lane  
Warmington  
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**FIELD WORK** 6<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> January 2011

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## **Summary**

*John Moore Heritage Services conducted a watching brief during the ground work for an extension to the rear of Hill Cottage, School Lane, Warmington, Warwickshire (SP 4110 4777). The features identified included two cut features, one certainly of medieval date, the other probably of a similar date; a stone structure of a probable later medieval to early post-medieval date was also found. The medieval cut feature may well be the remains of a monastic fishpond, the building may be associated with this activity (a fish house) or may be a columbarium, but no evidence was found to confirm this either way.*

## **1 INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)**

The development site, Hill Cottage, is located in School Lane, Warmington (SP 4110 4777) a village near the southern boundary of Warwickshire on the northern edge of the Cotswold scarp slope. The underlying geology is Lower Lias clay, but the house is located near the interface with the Middle Lias silt and clay (BGS 1982, sheet 201). The site lies between 130 and 135m OD.

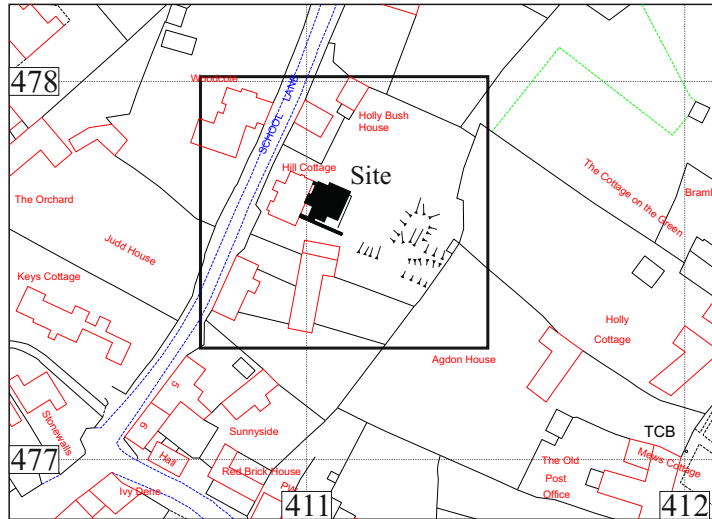
### **1.2 Planning Background**

Stratford on Avon District Council granted planning permission for the construction of a two-storey extension to the rear of Hill Cottage in School Lane, Warmington (ref. S10/01129/FUL). Warwickshire Museum's planning archaeologist advised that there was the potential for archaeology as the present village of Warmington was the known location of a medieval settlement and a post-medieval successor. Accordingly a condition was set for an archaeological programme of investigation during the groundwork for the extension set out in a written scheme of investigation.

### **1.3 Archaeological Background**

#### **1.3.1 Previous Archaeological Activity and Research (Prehistoric-Roman)**

The village of Warmington nestles on the northeastern side of Edge Hill on the northern tip of the Cotswolds. The parish boundary runs along the brow of Edge Hill and above the hamlet of Arlescote where it follows the rampart of a prehistoric camp of the Iron Age called Nadbury (HER 755). The camp has seen the recovery of Mesolithic flints (HER 6217), Neolithic and Bronze Age finds including a sword and palstave (HER 6157, 6158, 6159), Late Iron Age and Roman pottery (HER 6160), and undated quern stones (HER 12220). Though the site of Nadbury lies some 2km from Hill Cottage the structure and finds indicate that the passage between the Burton Hills and Edge Hill along the Cotswold Escarpment had been a focus for activity over a long time; as it provides access from the headwaters of the Cherwell Valley, and the Thames valley, into the Warwickshire Avon valley.



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Figure 1. Site location

Two undated cropmark enclosure groups can be detected some 500m and 800m to the north of the village (HER 4737, 6427). They are undated but it should be noted that an area to the north of the furthest enclosure is called Sinder Spill (see below) probably associated with an Iron Age or Roman iron-working site. Roman material has been recovered some 400m to the south of the village (SMR 3492), while excavations in 2008 to the south of the church have identified Roman buildings and earlier prehistoric finds (HER 10321). The recovery of these finds is suggestive that the church at Warmington was located on an earlier Roman site of unknown function. This is in keeping with locations of known mother church sites.

### **1.3.2 Historical Accounts and later Archaeology**

The village is first recorded historically in 1086 (VCH 1949, 182-7). The name takes the form *Warmintone*, in later variations in the spelling it is *Warmington* in 1416 and as *Wirminton* in 1206. The suggested etymology of the name is *Wærma's* farm or settlement. *Wærma* is interpreted as a pet-form of the Old English personal name *Wærmund* (Gover, Mawer *et al.* 1936, 274).

There are two entries in the Warwickshire section of the Domesday Book of 1086 for Warmington (Morris 1976, 16.6, 55, 56), both of which were catalogued under the large Warwickshire holdings of the Count of Meulan. The chief manor covered an area of 13 hides and states that Azor had held it in 1066. The estate had 36 villagers, 8 smallholders and 12 slaves. Some 14 ploughs are accounted on the estate along with 69 acres of meadowland. The combined value of the estate was £8, but in 1066 it had been valued at £10. The reduction in value may point to some of the estate becoming waste or the division of the estate by the Norman lord. The second account in 1086 would suggest that the later scenario occurred as it recorded that a man at arms held 2 ½ hides from the count of Meulan. Azor also held this estate in 1086. The exact breakdown of the manor is not recorded. The 15 ½ hides at this time are considered to have included Shotteswell, which along with Arlescote originated as berwicks or sub-manors of Warmington manor. The last reference to this estate is to the manor of Arlescote at 5 hides. Saint Peter's of Préaux already held this land from the count. That village contained 4 villagers, 3 smallholders along with 12 acres of meadow and 5 ploughs. Bovi had held the manor in 1066. Henry de Newburgh, earl of Warwick and brother to the Count of Meulan, later inherited the estate (VCH 1949, 182-7). For a while the manor and estate were retained by the earls of Warwick.

Roger, earl of Warwick (1123-53), confirmed the church of Warmington to the Abbey of Préaux in Normandy (Department Eure), who established a priory cell on the site of the church in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. This saw the formation of an estate attached to the church that consisted of 1 hide and 1 virgate at Warmington, but also contained the tithes of the hamlet of Arlescote and also the village of Shotteswell. This is indicative of the church of Shotteswell being a chapel a factor that was recognised in 1316 with reference to that village being a hamlet of Warmington and in 1221 when it was recognised that 10s should be paid annually to the church of Warmington by the chapel (VCH 1949, 148-53). The interest of the Abbey of Préaux is considered to have lapsed in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, a period of the hundred years war between France and England, when the king suppressed alien priories. The main cell of Préaux Abbey was a priory at Toft Monks, Norfolk, and it would seem that Warmington was under the control of this priory by 1380 (VCH 1949, 182-7).

The nave of the church of Warmington has features that date to the 12<sup>th</sup> century (VCH 1949, 182-7; SMR 609), although other parts of the building date to the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. The church is perched on the southwest side of the village on the steep slope of Edge Hill or Deddington Hill as it has become known at this point. The church was dedicated to Saint Michael in 1291 (Dugdale and Thomas 1730, 536), a factor coupled to its location that may indicate an earlier cult presence. Chapels dedicated to the saint perched on hilltops have been associated with a cult of this saint that developed in Italy in the fifth to seventh century when a vision of the warrior saint was seen on a mountain summit. The monks of Préaux are claimed to have built a priory cell, tradition derived from the Warwickshire antiquarian Dugdale is that the cell was located about the centre of the town (Dugdale and Thomas 1730, 535-6). Part of the priory site has been located some 100m to the northeast of the church (HER 610). These excavations showed that the establishment was never very large and that the monks probably used the village church. The walls uncovered were of local limestone with tile and stone slate roofs. The floors were of cobbles and rammed earth. These walls were dated to the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries, a period when the priory was under the control of the priory of Toft Monks in Norfolk, also a cell of the abbey of Préaux founded by Robert count of Meulan (Turner 1787, refs. LXVI, XXX).

Some textual sources survive in tax returns for manors and religious establishments that may indicate certain activity associated with the manor. The surviving national accounts generally start from the 13<sup>th</sup> century of which the first two are known as the *rotuli hundredorum* (the hundred rolls, when the hundred was a territorial division of a shire). Warmington in 1086 lay in the hundred of Hunsbury, but by the 13<sup>th</sup> century the hundreds of Warwickshire had been reorganised and in the tax returns of that century it lay in Kineton Hundred. These returns were recorded in the reign of Henry III and Edward I (AD 1279-80), unfortunately the returns for Warmington are so illegible that they can not be reproduced (John 1992, 21; Caley and Illingworth 1818)

The most complete account of the 13<sup>th</sup> century is from the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291 a document concerning the revenue of religious houses for Pope Nicholas IV. The account for Warmington Priory is as followed (Topham 1802, 256):

	<i>l</i>	<i>s</i>	<i>d</i>
<i>Prior de Warminton let in eadem in dec' p'dc̃o</i>			
<i>duas caruc' terr' &amp; val' caruc' p annu</i>	2	0	0
<i>Et het ibm de redd' alsis' p annu</i>	8	0	0
<i>Et het ibm unu' columbar' quod val' p annu</i>	0	4	0
<i>Et het ibm de plit &amp; pquis' p, annu</i>	1	0	0
<i>Et het ibm unu' molend' quod val'</i>	0	6	8
<i>Et het ibm pfic stauri p annu</i>	0	7	0

In these accounts there are indications of a two carucates (hides) of land. There are also accounts of two buildings on the estate held by the priory, a mill (*molend'*) and a dovecote (*columbarium*). A further account of the estate is recorded in the *Nonarium Inquisitiones* of Edward III dated AD 1341 (Second and Topham 1807, 443) and also the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII dated AD 1535 (Caley and Aylscrough 1817). The later was produced prior to the dissolution of the monasteries and refers to a rector and the glebe land (see Appendix 1).

In 1390 Lewis Clifford obtained the alien priory at Warmington and in 1403 his son, also called Lewis, had transferred the priory to the Carthusian Priory of Witham in Somerset (VCH 1949, 182-7). The Valor Ecclesiasticus records a pension paid from Warmington rectory to Witham priory.

Satellite images on the west side of the B4100, as shown on Google Earth (<http://maps.google.co.uk/maps?hl=en&tab=wl&q=HillCottage%2CWarmington>), have the remains of earthworks including enclosures and ridge and furrow (SP 485 478; HER 612, 8989). Further signs of medieval settlement have been detected 100m south of the church (HER 613). The morphology of the village is difficult to completely ascertain from the data recovered but existing features have been identified near the present church and to the south and west perhaps suggesting that the location of the village has shifted to the north and east, thus leaving the site of the church more isolated.

The descent of the main manor of Warmington with Arlescote altered at the time of the dissolution of the monasteries in 1542 (VCH 1949, 148-52). Edward Leach obtained the manor in 1548, after it had already changed hands a number of times. John Croker took over the manor in 1551. The Cooper family held the manor from 1605-37, while the Davis family held the manor from 1637, and from them to the Knight family by marriage in 1736. The Bampstead family held the manor from 1743-58, and subsequently by the Kemp, and Child families before the Earl of Jersey held the house in 1806-59, and the Bennett family from 1859.

Some of the stone cottages in the villages show signs of antiquity having mullioned windows (Pevsner and Wedgewood 1966, 442), suggestive of a 16<sup>th</sup> or 17<sup>th</sup> century date. The English Heritage listed buildings database and Warwickshire HER currently lists some 28 listed building in the village that suggest that the shape of the village had fossilised by the 17<sup>th</sup> century at the latest. Buildings dated to or before the 17<sup>th</sup> century include the Rectory dated to the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century with an additional 18<sup>th</sup> front range (EH.LB.no. 306354), Springfield House (EH.LB.no. 306337), the grade II\* Manor House of c. 1603 (EH.LB.no. 306352), the Carpenter's Cottage of 1651 (EH.LB.no. 306362), Holly Cottage of 1675 (EH.LB.no. 306359), and Grove Farmhouse (EH.LB.no. 306346), besides this there are others simply given a broad date in the 17<sup>th</sup> century: The Plough Inn (EH.LB.no. 306294), Braggins House (EH.LB.no. 306329), Clefs (EH.LB.no. 306335), the Cottage (EH.LB.no. 306339), Westering (EH.LB.no. 306342), Harbages Farm (EH.LB.no. 306343), Yew Tree House (EH.LB.no. 306347), and Sunny Cottage (EH.LB.no. 306361). The majority of remaining listed buildings are 18<sup>th</sup> century including: 3-5 Church Hill (EH.LB.no. 306295), Underedge 1 (EH.LB.no. 306296), Woodbine Cottage (EH.LB.no. 306330), Homestead (EH.LB.no. 306332), 5 School Lane (EH.LB.no. 306333), Thimble Cottage (EH.LB.no. 306334), Greenways Green (EH.LB.no. 306340), Cambray House (EH.LB.no. 306341), Fir Tree House (EH.LB.no. 806348), The Court House (EH.LB.no. 306349), Gourdon (EH.LB.no.306350), and Agdon House (EH.LB.no. 306360). The remaining listed building 2-3 The Green (EH.LB.no. 306358) is 19<sup>th</sup> century in date. The 15<sup>th</sup> century date for the back range of the Rectory is of interest and will be returned to later. A post-medieval windmill was built some 300m to the west of the village (HER 611), and a Wesleyan Chapel in 1811 (HER 2465).

It is difficult to establish an exact morphology for the development of the village except through the identification of building structures, as many of the key maps for



the village are missing, lost or un-located. The inclosure award (WRO Qs75/122) dates to 1770 and although descriptions of land holdings survive the accompanying map to contextualize these holdings and village morphology has not.

The earliest estate maps (WRO Z 532 (sm/1-3)) dated 1795 to 1798 show plans of the church land in the village, of which the parsonage lies in the village some 200-300m northeast of the site. This shows a row of structures on the north side of the property and the parsonage on the east of the property. A large pond is shown on the west of the property abutting School Lane. No buildings are shown on the west side of School Lane, but this presumably lies outside the estate. Archaeological excavations carried out along School Lane have recovered late material of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries (HER 7971).

The tithe award of Warmington (WRO CR569/251) of 1841 shows only the hamlet of Arlescote, this means that the tithe award was either drawn up in two sections, with the other section being held by another county or public record office, or that the fields around the village were exempt from tithes. If exempt from tithes we have no records of how and why this would occur, but only realise that this was the case because no map survives to show the taxation. Though the tithe award does not show the village the field system around Arlescote is perhaps suggestive of early-enclosed fields or assarts in the vicinity of the hamlet. The plan of Warmington when it is first known to survive on the editions of the Ordnance Survey has a group of roads for which it is difficult to determine the development on present available evidence; perhaps two parallel roads with house plots or a series of assarted enclosures.

There are a number of smaller estate maps for the village that survive, but they only show fragmentary parts of the outer lying fields and parts of the village. The estate map of 1818 (WRO Z 86(u)) shows land along the Mollington to Farnborough roads, and has one field called Two Pits, thus indicating quarrying. A small oval piece of land is shown, which is possibly the land between Soot Lane and Mollington Lane, this shows a couple of buildings and describes an orchard. A further estate map of 1827 shows an estate running south from the Banbury to Warwick Turnpike and the Ratley and Edge Hill Road (WRO CR 1253/36). This confirms the line of the Turnpike Road and alterations to the line of the B4100 through the village but also shows that the course of the Edge Hill Road had been altered (HER 4774). Two fields (SP 440 469) are called Turpits on this map and are indicative again of quarrying to the south of the village on the north slopes of the Sor Brook Valley. An estate map of 1864 (WRO 1253/37/1-3) has these same two fields described as Tower Pits Hill and Tower Pits Meadow, but show a further field called Sinder Spill (SP 421 485). This field name is indicative of iron working debris being described where the Farnborough Road crosses the parish boundary.

The village survives in its earliest planned form on the Ordnance Survey Map first series of 1886-7; this shows one structure in the central part of School Lane, which has outbuildings. This has pasture to the north and an orchard to the south. To the south of the orchard there is a narrow lane or footpath with further buildings along its course. To the south of this footpath is the Methodist Chapel. On the east side of School Lane some six structures are shown. A similar sequence of structures occurs on the Ordnance Survey second series of 1905. The Ordnance Survey Map of 1922 shows some additional buildings on the plot containing Hill Cottage, but still with

orchards to the south and pasture to the north. The 1977 Ordnance Survey map shows a number of houses built to the north of Hill Cottage fronting onto School Lane.

## **2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION**

The aims of the investigation as laid out in the Written Scheme of Investigation were as follows:

- To record any archaeological remains.

In particular:

- To record any archaeology relating to the medieval or early post-medieval settlement of the village

## **3 STRATEGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with *Warwickshire Museum Field Services* (WMFS) the archaeological advisors to Stratford-on-Avon District Council. Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and section drawings compiled where appropriate and possible.

The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994).

### **3.2 Methodology**

An archaeologist monitored the course of the groundwork, which involved the excavation of foundations trenches and service trenches for an extension to Hill Cottage.

## **4 RESULTS**

A watching brief was carried out over the excavation of the footings for the extension and the insertion of the new service trench (see figures 2-3). The major features identified including cut features and a substantial structure.

### **4.1 Natural Geology**

The lowest layers were geological and comprised a layer (122) a mid to dark grey-blue clay layer with lumps of stone. Deposit (119) was a natural mid brown-orange clay silt, with a few stone inclusions and lighter blue-grey clay within it. It was noted that there was probably some periglacial stripping of this deposit; presumably it is a

lens of natural deposits above the Lias Clay (122). Layer (119) was sealed by a deposit (116) a firm mid-brown orange clay with a high percentage of weathered and degraded stones.

#### **4.2 Phase 1: Medieval**

Layer (116) was cut by 120 a large shallow cut of an undefined shape that was over 3.1m wide and 0.8m deep. The fill (121) was a firm mid brown-grey silty clay that contained occasional stone fragments. The material had the appearance of an alluvial clay deposit and was, therefore, interpreted as a pond with fill. The material recovered from fill (121) was pottery dated from the 11<sup>th</sup> century to the mid-13<sup>th</sup> century. The feature is, therefore, interpreted as a probable medieval fishpond. Fill (127) a firm grey-orange silt clay lay over the top of (121), it could have been in a further cut, or simply disturbance in the top of the lower deposit, this was not clarified. The deposition of this material in this pond is likely to have occurred over a long period of time. The St Neots ware of the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> century would coincide with the granting of the church and village to the abbey of Préaux. The pond would silt up over time and deposition of the other material could happen over a few centuries if not cleared out. Final silting may have occurred in the middle 13<sup>th</sup> century or later.

A further cut 114 can be identified as truncating layer (116), which was a linear feature with a steep side on the north side and a more moderate side on the south. The width was 0.8m and the depth 0.4m. The base of the cut was rounded. The fill (115) was a firm dark brown-grey silt clay. This is probably the remains of a leat.

In the garden (see figure 1) it is evident that there are a series of earthworks across the lawn to the rear of Hill Cottage, these tend to have a rectangular form. It is feasible but not provable that these may represent further ponds, though without excavation it is difficult to say and it may also be the case that this is later dumping or even another building. An estate map of 1795-8 (WRO Z532 (sm/1-3)) shows a large pond on the west of the rectory property butting School Lane. It may not be this pond per say, but may be indicative of ponds being established in the School Lane area.

#### **4.3 Phase 2: Medieval to Post-Medieval**

Over these deposits a building was constructed. Cut 113 was in places 1.2m wide with straight sides and a flat base, it was filled with wall 106, a wide wall at its base 1.2m wide, but narrowing in its upper layers to 0.8m wide. The construction had large shaped facing blocks of oolitic limestone and the interior was packed with rubble. This is typical of a medieval build. The wall was bonded by yellow-brown clay. The remains of a wall running roughly parallel to 106 was catalogued as 123, within cut 128, which is approximately 1.5m wide in places, but was narrower higher up in its courses being some 0.8m wide. The wall was constructed of squared of limestone blocks on the exterior and rubble build on the inside. No evidence of a wall was found across the end of the building but this had already been disturbed by the construction of a modern sewer manhole and service trenches from and to it. Deposit (125) represented the remains of an internal cobbled surface of rough limestone fragments, which was also sealed by light brown clay.

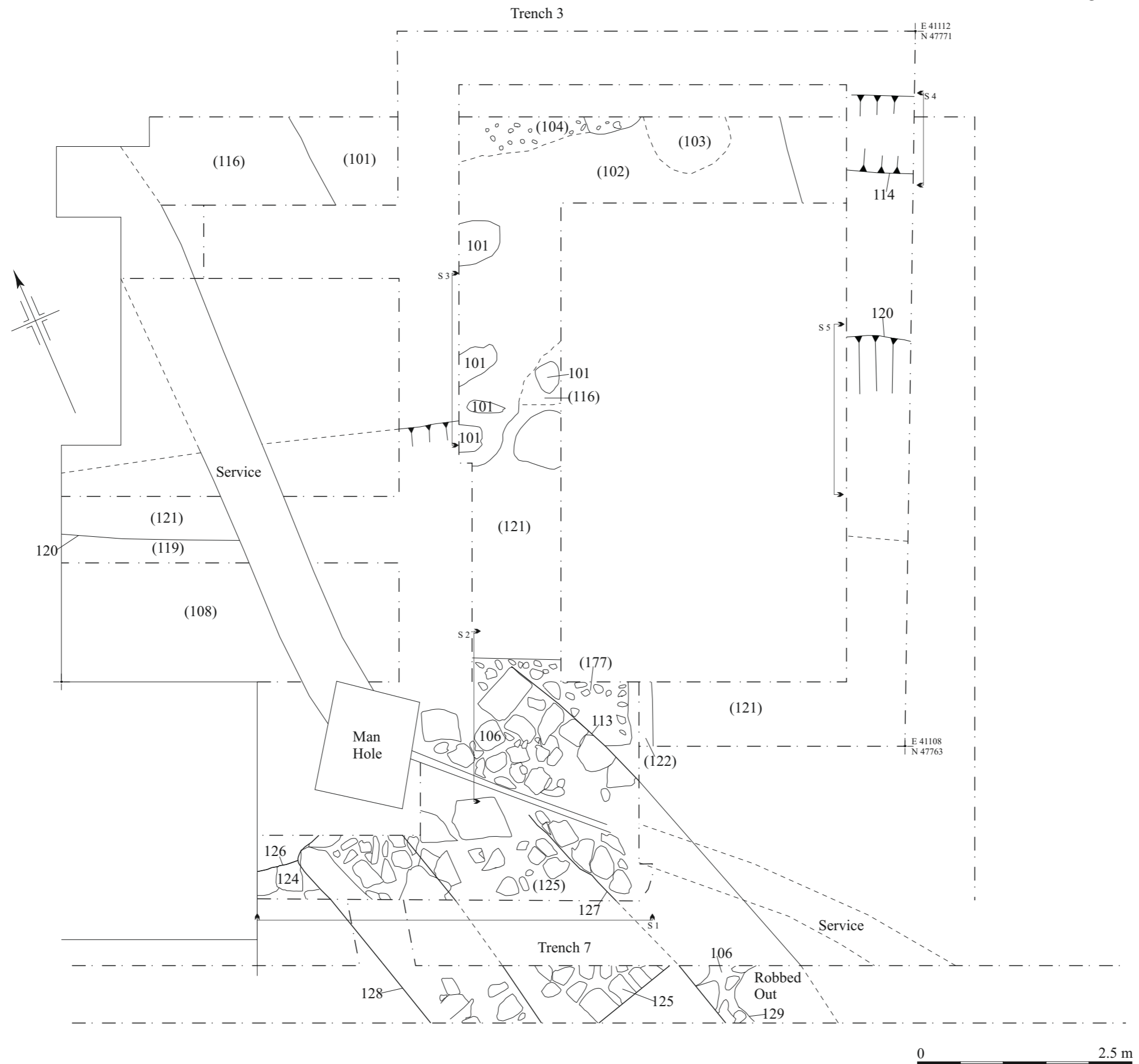
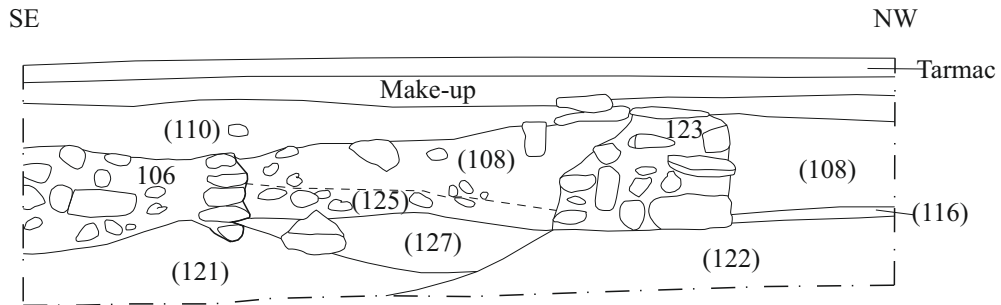
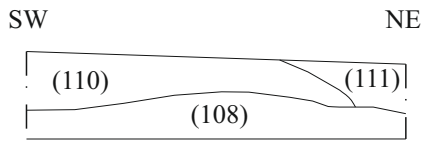


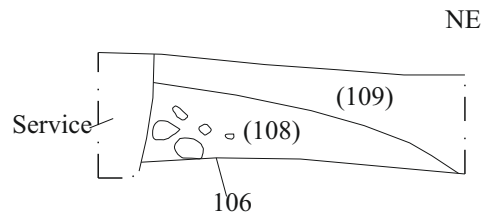
Figure 2. Plan



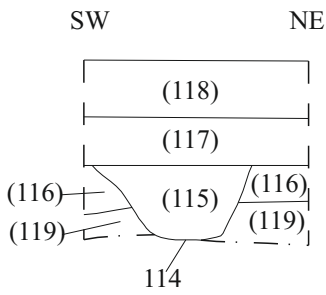
Section 1



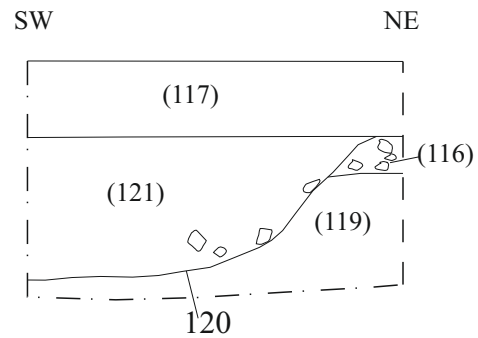
Section 2



Section 3



Section 4



Section 5



Figure 3. Sections

Butting up to wall 123 was wall 124 in cut 126. The cut was a linear feature running from the northwest angle of the building. The wall it contained stood to 0.6m in height, with the width not verified. Wall 124 was constructed of roughly squared oolitic limestone blocks bonded with brown silt clay. This is possibly a boundary wall.

A further cobbled surface 107 could be identified externally butting up to wall 106. This was a highly compact area with oolitic cobblestones in a yellow-brown clay matrix.

This building was some 3.3m wide externally and probably 7m long. There was no actual dating material from the walls, although material was recovered from (121) below the wall and (108) that lay around the walls and over them. The date for the construction of this building has to be between the 13<sup>th</sup> century and the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The nature of the construction of the wall is of a recognised medieval tradition, over a metre wide with facing stones and rubble core. The excavations at the priory site identified similarly built walls and rammed earth and cobbled floors dated to the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century. The back range of the rectory has also been dated to the 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> century. There is, therefore, evidence for expansion of the priory in the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> century. The walls are possibly later medieval in date of the 14<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries. The building does not align with the road system or with any of the surrounding buildings, and there is also Dugdale's claim that the priory buildings lay across the centre of the village.

The building is located between School Lane and the Rectory, this ground (or much of it) can be recognised as rectory or church land associated with the priory (WRO Z532 (sm/1-3)). It is highly likely that the 13<sup>th</sup> century medieval activity in the form of fishponds and this later building was associated with the priory church.

#### **4.4 Phase 3: Post-Medieval**

Overlying the cobbled surfaces 107 (external) and 125 (internal) and the tops of the walls was deposit (108), which was a compact grey-yellow clay with a few stone inclusions. Cut 129 could be seen following a hollow in the wall where stones had been removed in the new service trench. This is a circular hollow some 0.8m across and was probably formed by stone robbing. The yellow-brown clay matrix was probably formed from the bonding material in the stonewalls, this with the robbing of the walls (apparent in cut 129) would create a perpetually disturbed layer. This process would explain the variety of pottery in the deposits with Brill/Boarstall Ware dating from 1200-1600 AD, Midland Purple ware from the 15<sup>th</sup>-17<sup>th</sup> century, Late Midland Black ware from 1600-1900 AD and Modern Earthenware from the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Presumably most stone robbing occurred from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century.

#### **4.5 Phase 4: Late 18<sup>th</sup>-20<sup>th</sup> centuries**

The top of natural layer (116), also called (102) contained evidence of disturbance (extending over (121) and (115)) that included an area of burning (104) a friable black silty clay 0.02m deep and 0.7m by 0.25m across. There were also a series of mortar spreads or patching (101), these were hard and with a mixture of white and pink colouring, some of which could be more recent, but other deposits could be older. Colouring of mortar is no guarantee of date as most medieval mortar in Bristol is of a

pink date due to local natural resources. There was also a spread deposit (103) of compact blue-yellow clay. These features (101) and (103) were all covered by deposit (117).

The layer (117) was given a broad number that in effect covered a wide group of layer and/or dumped deposits. In this sequence layer (105) could be identified at the base lying over part of (108) and natural layer (116). Layer (105) was a hard grey-blue clay that contained ceramic building material and pottery with stone inclusions. The pottery dated from the 16<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> century.

Layer (105) probably extended underneath (109), although this was not physically confirmed. Layer (109) was a compact dark grey-yellow clay with ceramic building material inclusions and was the main lens in deposits (117), hence the subsoil. Covering deposit (109) was layer (110) a compact dark grey clay with modern ceramic building material and pottery dated to the 20<sup>th</sup> century. This was probably a modern dump of material, levelling for the construction of Hill Cottage. Overlying this dump layer were two deposits, the first (111) was a moderately compact grey-brown silt clay 0.25m deep, which was interpreted as the topsoil. The second layer (112) was a moderately compact grey-brown silt clay with some ceramic building material. These deposits are all probably of the 19<sup>th</sup> or 20<sup>th</sup> century although some of the pottery recovered from them may be considerably older.

These deposits were in turn cut by the construction cut for the patio and tarmac area that contained their modern makeup deposits.

## 5 FINDS

### 5.1 Pottery (by Paul Blinkhorn)

The pottery assemblage comprised 21 sherds with a total weight of 556g. It was recorded using the codes and chronology of the Warwickshire Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery Type-Series (Ratkai and Soden, in archive), as follows:

**CS01: St Neots type Ware**, 11<sup>th</sup> – mid 12<sup>th</sup> C. 1 sherd, 3g,  
**WW1: Chilvers Coton 'A' ware**, 1250 -1300. 2 sherds, 79g.  
**Sg20: Brill/Boarstall Ware**, 1200 – 1600. 3 sherds, 28g.  
**MP: Midland Purple ware**, 15<sup>th</sup> – mid 17<sup>th</sup> century. 1 sherd, 32g.  
**MB02: Late Midland Blackware**, 1600-1900. 6 sherds, 160g.  
**MGW: Modern earthenwares**, late 18<sup>th</sup> century +. 7 sherds, 137g.

The following, not included in the Warwickshire type-series, was also noted:

**GRE: Red Earthenware**, 16<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> century. A fine sandy earthenware, usually with a brown or green glaze, occurring in a range of utilitarian forms. Such 'country pottery' was first made in the 16th century, and in some areas continued in use until the 19th century. 13 sherds, 303g. 1 sherd, 117g.

The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 1. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of fabric types is fairly typical of sites in the region. Most of the assemblage was post-medieval in date, but a single context, (121), produced an entirely medieval

assemblage which was probably deposited in the second half of the 13<sup>th</sup> century, although one of the sherds, the fragment of St Neots ware, is earlier, and probably of 11<sup>th</sup> – mid 12<sup>th</sup> century date. The sherd of Brill/Boarstall Ware from context (108) is a late medieval or early post-medieval type. Overall the range of pottery types present indicates that there was activity at the site during the 13<sup>th</sup> century, and then again from around the mid-16<sup>th</sup> century until the present.

*Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type*

Cntxt	SN		Sg20		WW1		GRE		MP		MB02		MGW		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
105							1	117			1	52	1	84	19thC
108			1	7					1	32	3	75	1	2	19thC
110													4	26	20thC
111											1	28	1	25	19thC
117											1	5			L17thC
121	1	3	2	21	2	79									M13thC
Total	1	3	3	28	2	79	1	117	1	32	6	160	7	137	

## 6 DISCUSSION

The fieldwork by John Moore Heritage Services determined that there was medieval archaeology on the site of the extension of Hill Cottage. The earliest find was a piece of St Neots ware pottery dated broadly to the 11<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> centuries in date, and therefore, associated with the later Anglo-Saxon period and the Norman transition. The later pottery associated with the mid 13<sup>th</sup> century also came from the same fill. The large cut feature would seem to be a pond of medieval date, such features associated with locations of abbeys and priories are invariably millponds or fishponds. The *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* of 1291 refers to the revenue of a mill and an annual payment from it, but topographically the site would seem unsuitable as a millpond due to the required flow of water to power a wheel. It is highly likely, therefore, that this is one of a number of fishponds, the others perhaps surviving as earthworks (see figure 1). An estate map of 1795-8 shows a pond on the rectory land abutting School Lane (WRO Z532 (sm/1-3)) thus implying a larger group of water features. The ponds are located just below a break in the geology, while in School Lane water flows along the road even when not raining suggesting that there may be a spring in the area, which would be required to fill the ponds. These possible fisheries are not mentioned in the *Domesday Book*, so they presumably post-date 1086. No reference has been found to them as yet but the *Taxatio Ecclesiastica* is late 13<sup>th</sup> century a date after which this feature is believed to have silted up. The silting process of the pond, if uncleaned, would be relatively fast. However, if the pond was regularly cleaned out then this would take longer to occur and a pottery assemblage covering a longer period (11<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup> century) would occur.

The nature of the building partially overlying the pond has not been determined, however, the building was constructed at sometime between the date of the silting of the main pond and the layer that overlay the walls (108). This gives a date range between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries. The width of one of the walls, 1.2m, would



indicate that the building may well be of a medieval date rather than post-medieval. The building style of the structure matches that found in excavations on the priory building (HER 610), thick limestone walls and rammed cobbled floors. The date attributed to these monastic developments is the 14<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> centuries, while the development of the rectory is placed 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> centuries (the Valor Ecclesiasticus refers to a rector and glebeland in 1535). Though there seems to be a hiatus of pottery for this date, apart from the Brill/Boarstall ware, in the wider historical context this would seem to be the most plausible date for the structure. The other pottery from context (108) is post-dissolution of the monasteries when such structures were sold off by the state and in many cases systematically robbed.

The exact use of the building has not been ascertained, but was almost certainly a building associated with the priory. From the present plan it would not seem to be part of the principal structures around a church or cloister. The only possibility is that it represents an isolated structure, however, the small size of the building would also have to be taken into account. There are two possibilities considered here, although another structure may be possible.

Stone structures associated with medieval fishponds are known in Britain. The only extant example is the Abbot of Glastonbury's Fish House or the Meare Fish House (EH Pastscape no. 194144, 1059645). Here a group of fishponds were created measuring some 30 to 20m in length and 5m across, which were interconnected by drains and gullies. Some of these monastic fishponds are considered to pre-date the creation of the fish house as they are possibly mentioned in the Domesday Book, where references to fisheries are found. The fish house at Meare, possibly constructed 1322-35, was the chief house of Glastonbury's chief fisherman, but was also the location where fish would be gutted and salted. The Meare building is the only complete fish house surviving in the country and has dimensions of 12.4m by 6.6m and was divided into three rooms. The fish industry at Glastonbury was one of the main industries of the abbey and hence the size of the associated industrial buildings may be larger than most structures located at any other monastic fishery.

Dovecotes are also features regularly found at abbeys and priories, but also on manorial sites. They are usually circular structures but not invariably and some rectangular structures are known from England. The construction of hollows in the walls to operate as nesting boxes for the doves or pigeons would mean that thick walls would be required. The dovecote may be an isolated building constructed next to ponds from which the birds may drink. The revenue or tax of 4s a year, as mentioned in the Taxatio Ecclesiastica of 1291, is a substantial amount at that time and indicates an important industry for the priory. The keeping of doves in the Cotswolds is now suspected as having some antiquity as the base of a tower survives at Chedworth Roman villa, which has a pigeon portrayed in the underlying mosaic, and thus is suspected to be a *columbarium*. Here it has been associated with cult activity focused on the goddess Cuda, the presiding spirit of the Cotswolds (Yeates 2008).

The building at Warmington cannot categorically be proven to be a fish house or a dovecote, though the latter has to exist somewhere on the priory site as it is mentioned in 1291. The overlying deposit (108) is residue from the robbing of the building, while the layers above this are post-medieval and modern dump and construction layers.

## 7 ARCHIVE

### Archive Contents

The archive consists of the following:

#### Paper record

The project brief  
Written scheme of investigation  
The project report  
The primary site record

#### Physical record

Finds

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to Warwickshire Museum.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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#### Warwickshire County Record Office (WRO)

WRO Qs75/122 1770 Inclosure Award

WRO Z 532 (sm/1-3) 1795-8 Church Land Estate Map

WRO Z 86(u) 1819 Estate Map

WRO CR 1253/36 1827 Estate Map

WRO CR 569/251 1841 Tithe Award

WRO CR 1253/37/1-3 1864 Estate Map

#### **APPENDIX 1**

Nonarium Inquisitiones extract 1341 (Second and Topham 1807, 443)

*Ilm dicut quid ecclia de Warmynton tax' & c ad xij mir' & dim' & c & quod nonagab' vell & agn' val hoc annu vj marc iijs iiijd & non plus qin dicut quod gleba ejufdm cun decimis feni & c val' p ann vj marc iij iij*

Valor Ecclesiasticus extract 1535 (Caley and Aylesclough 1817)

*Eccl'ia Parochialis de Warmington  
d'n's Philippus Mesurer Rector ib'm &  
valet in terr' voc' Glebeland' in decime ganoz et  
feni in alijs decim oblaconibz  
& emoliment spualibz ultra xiij iij eidm  
allo p pencoe annuatime flout p'ori & convent'  
Wittam ordinis cartuc & ultra ix vj eid aliocant'p  
pcurac & finodal an folut' archno p annu xvj iij x*