

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

**AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION
OF
LAND ADJOINING PEAR TREE FARM,
HIGH STREET, LUDGERSHALL, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE
NGR SP 6600 1733**

On behalf of

Mrs C. Burnell

SEPTEMBER 2012

REPORT FOR Mrs C. Burnell
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SUMMARY

John Moore Heritage Services carried out an evaluation on land at Pear Tree Farm, Ludgershall. Two trenches revealed a similar sequence of deposits. Three small pits were located; ones was 19th century or later and it is possible the other two were of a similar date although could date from the late 16th century onwards. A residual waster may indicate 16th-17th pottery production in the area.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site location (Figure 1)

This site is located adjacent to Pear Tree Farm, High Street, Ludgershall. The underlying geology is Upper Oxford Clay (BGS 237).

1.2 Planning Background

An application has been submitted for the erection of a two-storey dwelling with garage. Due to the presence of potential remains of archaeological interest in the proposal area the applicant was advised to secure the implementation of a phased programme of archaeological work in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation which had been submitted by the applicant and approved by the Planning Authority. This was implemented as the proposed development was within an area of archaeological potential. This is in line with NPPF. Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Services prepared a Brief for the first phase of the work, namely a field evaluation. A *Written Scheme of Investigation* agreed with the county planning archaeologist proposed a method to satisfy the requirements of the Brief.

1.3 Archaeological Background

A search of the Historic Environment Record identified a number of sites in the immediate vicinity of the development on land adjacent to Pear Tree Farm. The search revealed no immediate indication of Prehistoric or Roman material, being located as it is in the environs of Bernwood.

Ludgershall (DBC8050) is primarily a Conservation Area, as the village, unlike other settlements in the Aylesbury Vale, retains its medieval shape and form, besides greens. Aspects of this can be recognised in a number of specific buildings, some of which are listed: the church of Saint Mary (DBC 2316, 00665000: SP 65989 17203 with churchyard 0066501000, gravestone DBC 3881, and war memorial 0744000000), the moated site in Dovecote Field (MBC 129 & 130, DBC 7177: SP 6593 1710, with fishponds MBC 131 and dovecote MBC 132) traditionally of a 5th century origin, Bury Court (0213400000: SP 6610 1716, with earthworks 0213400001 and fishponds 0213401000), and Apple Tree Cottage (DBC 2298, 1171800000: SP 66024 1736). The church and moated site lie adjacent to the southwest. Indications of medieval dwellings and structures have also been noted in the area (HBC 2944: SP 6602 1753, HBC 2945: SP 6604 1737, with house platforms 0236600000, 0675500000, village 023661000, a hollow way 0236602000, and enclosures HBC 2954: SP 6577 1715, HBC 2955: SP 6579 1729). The greens at Ludgershall may date from the medieval to post-medieval period (HBC 2932: SP 6600 1762).

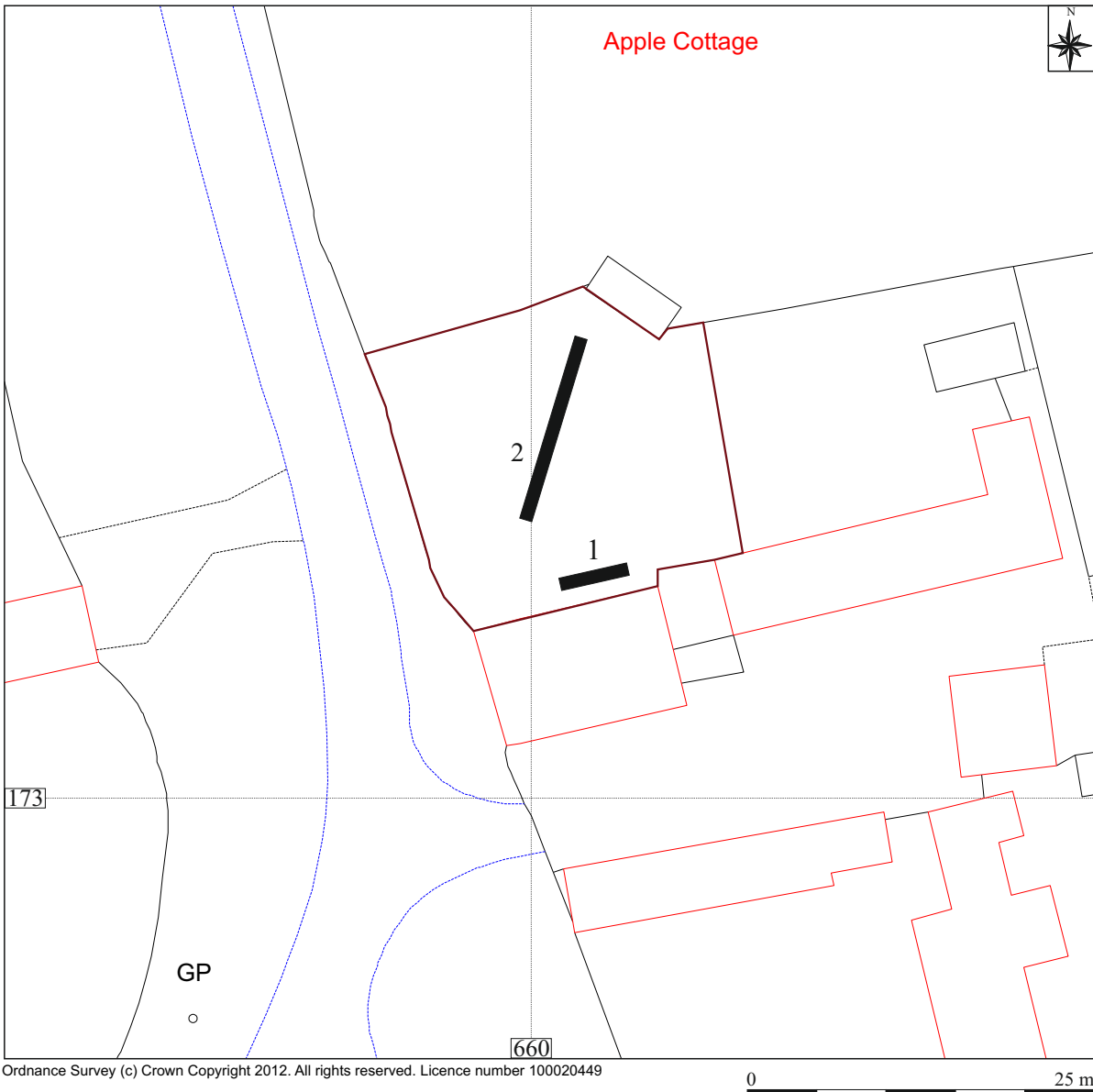
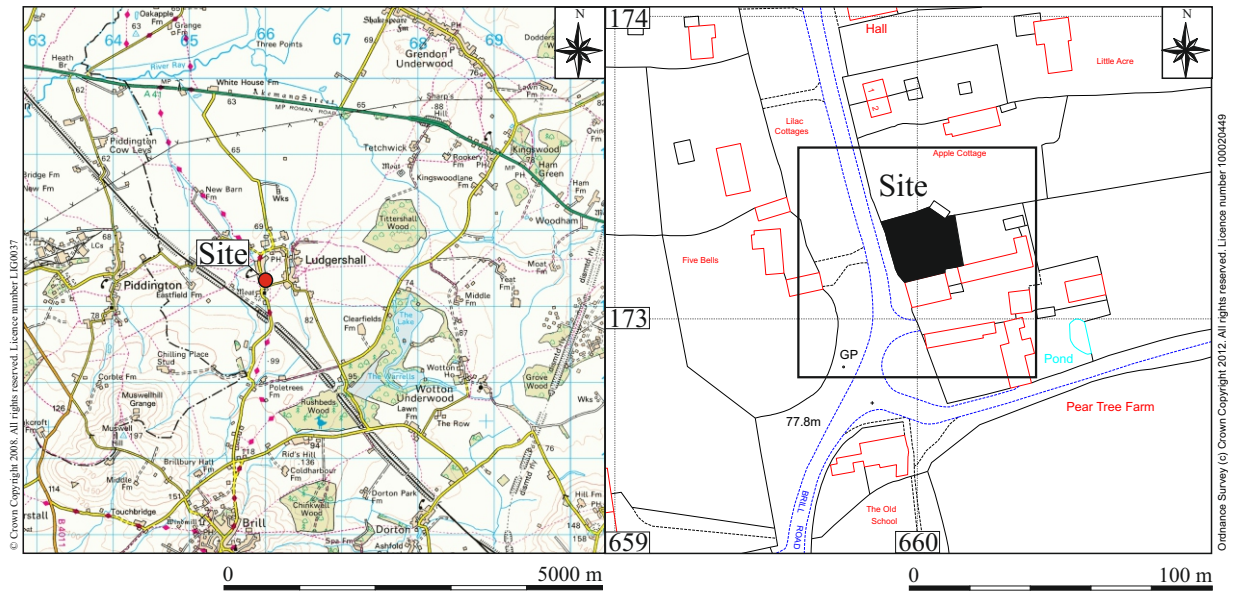


Figure 1. Site and trench locations

A number of the surviving structures are of an early post-medieval date: the barn southeast of Five Bells (DBC 3500, 1171500000: SP 65964 17311), Five Bells (DBC 3862, 1171400000: SP 65926 17350), and the Old White Hart (DBC 4247, 1171600000: SP 65966 17550).

Imperial to Victorian sites also occur within the search area. These include Pear Tree Farmhouse of the mid-18th century (DBC 3748, 1171900000: SP 66034 17286) adjacent to the site, the Rectory of the 18th century (DBC 3243, 1170700000: SP 65927 17192, with 19th century gardens 1170701000), the Grange of the 18th to 19th century (DBC 4247, 1171300000: SP 65931 117413), and the early 19th century Thatch Cottage (DBC 3272, 1171700600: SP 65968 17455). Enclosures of this date are also recognised (HBC 2957: SP 6625 1744, HBC 2963: SP 6591 1696). Archaeological investigations in the area are limited, but one near the Five Bells has identified a post-medieval refuse pit and brick scatter (EBC 16124, 1171401000: SP 6600 1740), while the other had negative evidence (EBC 17374: SP 65971 17573).

A number of antiquarian maps survive for Ludgershall, but most of these are estate maps, and there are only three in the Record Office that shows the village. The first is a map of pre-1600 (BRO Ma R/7.T) given a suggestive date of 1564-86. The map is described as being of Ludgershall and Wotton Underwood, but there are three churches on the map with three settlements, but all of these are drawn at an oblique angle and the spatial arrangement here does not help us to ascertain if there are any structures at an earlier date on the site.

The next group of antiquarian maps are drawn in plan form, from a vertical angle. The first of these is the Enclosure Map of 1780 (BRO IR/109 R). This shows a property where Pear Tree Cottage is now and a series of enclosures extending to the north. The dwelling of the farm occurs on the south side of the present farm close, running north to south. To the north there is an L-shaped outbuilding. The property is listed as being in the possession of the Reverend Bryant from the late Thomas Bones. The boundaries on the north side appear to have altered, probably being squared up at a later date, it is, therefore, not possible to ascertain if the proposed site lies fully on this ground or includes some of the property adjacent to the north. Here the property is described as a malthouse and close. The dwelling is orientated east to west and lies on the north side of the property, while there is an outbuilding (presumably the malthouse) located more centrally. There is a side road or open space extending from the road to the malthouse grounds. It is probable that these structures lie outside the proposed development area, but enclosure boundaries probably run through it. The indication on this map is that Pear Tree Farm was previously held by an ecclesiastic and it is not known how or if this was part of earlier ecclesiastical holdings, perhaps a farm attached to a rectory manor. The map dated 1821-69 (BRO IR/3b) is a copy of the Inclosure awards and shows the same group of buildings and enclosure arrangements. It calls the farm Bryant's homestead and the neighbouring property Malthouse.

The next group of maps are the Ordnance Survey editions of the 1:2500 series. The first of these was published in 1880 and shows that further buildings have been constructed in the area from the mid to late 19th century. Here there are now the remains of two partially enclosed areas, the southern one with buildings on the east and north sides are around the domestic buildings of the farm. That to the north is perhaps developing into a farmyard with structures on the north, east and south sides.

To the north of these buildings it is possible to identify the proposal plot. The second series map of 1899 shows a similar arrangement. No buildings can be seen central to the plot, but there are structures on the south side, and potentially in other peripheral areas.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To establish the presence or absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.
- To determine the impact of the proposed development on any remains present.

In particular:

- To identify and characterise any evidence for medieval and post-medieval occupation and identify the potential for deposits to contribute to our understanding of how Ludgershall developed.
- To establish whether there is any evidence for understanding the medieval and early post-medieval settlement morphology

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

In accordance with the *Written Scheme of Investigation* designed by JMHS and agreed with Buckinghamshire County Archaeology Services, JMHS carried out the work, which comprised the excavation of two trenches across the site.

Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation*. The work was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (2008).

3.2 Methodology

The investigation involved the mechanical excavation of two trenches across the site by a 3-tonne excavator equipped with a ditching bucket, supplemented by limited hand investigation of archaeological deposits. One trench was 5m long the other was 13.5m long, both were 1.6m wide (Fig. 1).

4 RESULTS

4.1 Field Results (*Figure 2*)

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers without brackets indicate features i.e. pit cuts; while numbers in () show feature fills or deposits of material.

The lowest deposit revealed in both trenches was a geological layer consisting of a mottled blue-grey clay (1/03 and 2/03) related to the Oxford Clay deposits in the area.

Trench 1

Above the natural clay (1/03) was a layer of stone and brick rubble in dark grey silt-clay matrix with rare charcoal flecks (1/02), the bricks were a range of post-medieval dates, some *frogged* others not. This deposit also contained sherds of early 20th century white-wares and roofing asbestos. The deposit increased in thickness from the north (c.0.1m) to the south (c.0.3m) as if it had been piled or pushed up against the building on the southern boundary of the development area.

Overlying this was a thin layer of dark grey-black silty clay loam (1/01) topsoil 0.05m thick.

Trench 2

Cut into the natural (2/03) were two small pits 2/04 and 2/06.

Context	Description	Dimensions	Fill
2/04	Circular cut	0.6m diameter	Mid-dark grey silt-clay (2/05) 0.25m thick
2/06	Oval cut	0.4m x 0.35m+	Mid-dark grey silt-clay (2/07) 0.25m thick

Both pits contained post-medieval pottery sherds, fragments of red brick, coal and oyster shell.

These were sealed by a layer (2/02) of mid-dark grey silt-clay between 0.15m and 0.2m thick. This layer had patches of stone within it towards the southern end of the trench, some pressed into the surface of the natural (2/03), this had no structure to it and seemed more likely to be associated with the nearby deposit (1/02) than the partial survival of a yard surface.

Cut into this layer was a small pit or posthole 2/08.

Context	Description	Dimensions	Fill
2/08	Oval cut	0.25m x 0.35m+	Dark grey silt-clay (2/09) 0.15m + thick

This pit also contained post-medieval pottery sherds and fragments of red brick.

The uppermost layer was a thin layer of dark grey-black silty clay loam (2/01) topsoil 0.05m thick.

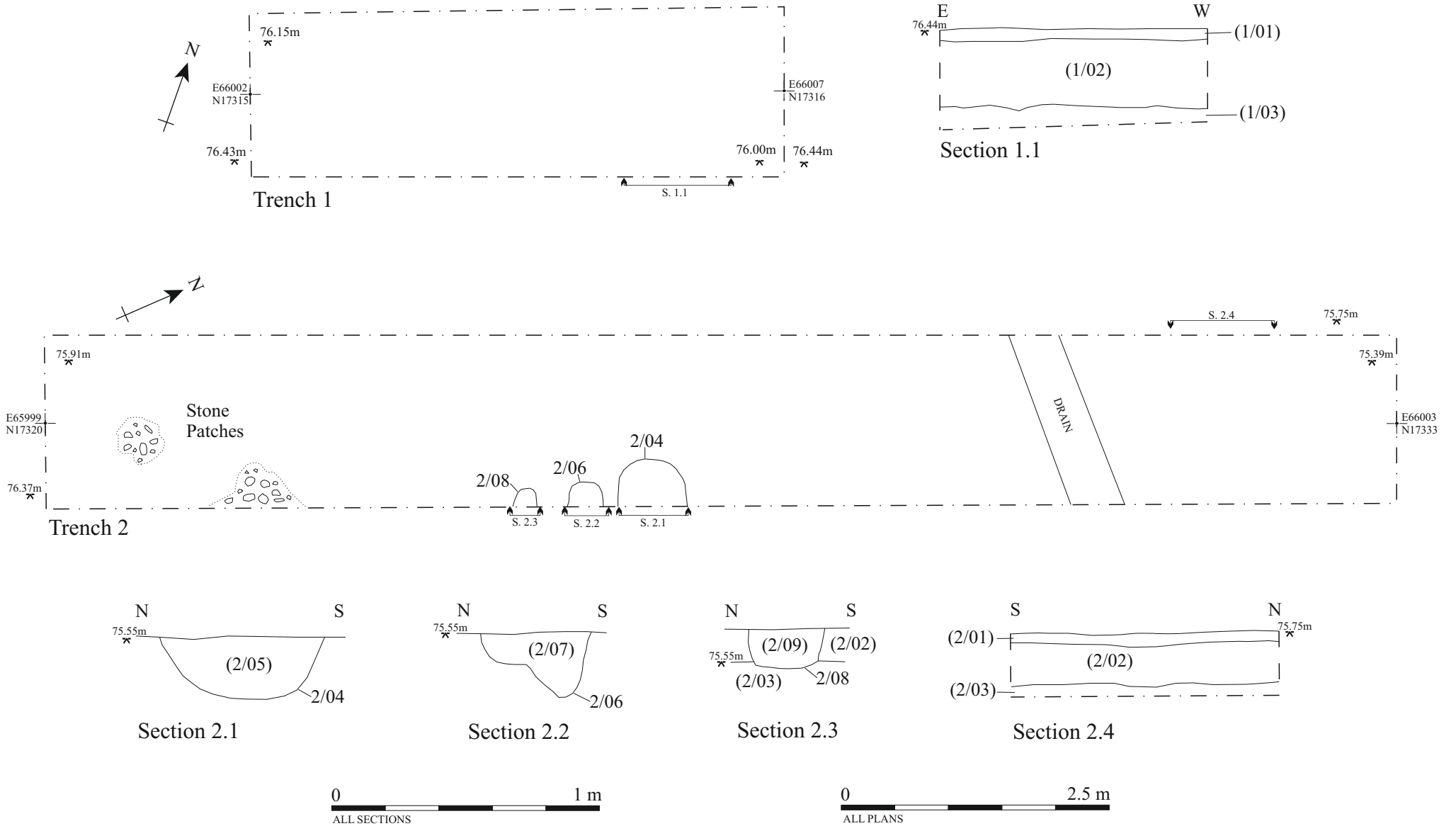


Figure 2. Plans and sections

4.2 Reliability of Techniques and Results

The reliability of results is considered to be good. The archaeological evaluation took place during good weather conditions. The percentage size of the sample was considered sufficient for the development area.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery (By Paul Blinkhorn)

The pottery assemblage comprised 15 sherds with a total weight of 261g. It was all late medieval or later. It was recorded using the coding system of the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit type-series (e.g. Mynard and Zeepvat 1992; Zeepvat et al. 1994), as follows:

MS9: *Brill/Boarstall Ware*. 1200-?1600. 10 sherds, 124g.

PM8: *Red Earthenware* 16th – 19th century. 4 sherds, 115g.

PM25: *White Earthenware*. Late 18th – 20th century. 1 sherds, 22g.

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*. All the sherds of Brill/Boarstall Ware (fabric MS9) are in fabrics which indicate a date of the 15th – mid 16th century, and appear broadly contemporary with known late medieval pottery manufacture in the village (Blinkhorn and Saunders, 2004). The assemblage includes a rim from a large bowl or pancheon which is a typical product of the industry at that time. One sherd, in fabric PM8 and from context (2/07), is unusual for pottery of this type, very under-fired and has a glaze that is barely vitrified. It appears very likely to be a fragment of a waster and suggests that there was pottery production of later 16th - 17th century date taking place in the vicinity of these excavations..

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

Tr	Cntxt	MS9		PM8		PM25		Date
		No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
2	2	1	6	1	62	1	22	19thC
2	5	7	87					15thC
2	7	1	6	2	46			M16thC
2	9	1	25	1	7			M16thC
	Total	10	124	4	115	1	22	

5.2 Environmental Remains

No environmental samples were taken as the potential of the deposits was not felt to be sufficient to warrant sampling.

6 DISCUSSION

Although situated within the historic core of the village the site would appear to have been kept as an open space.

Pit 2/08 was clearly a later feature, cutting through layer (2/02) that contained 19th century pottery. The fills of pits 2/04 and 2/06 were very similar to this 19th century layer that sealed them, and may indicate a contemporary date. This would be consistent with the red earthenware pottery recovered, the Brill/Boarstall ware thus being residual in these contexts.

Buildings were noted in the vicinity on some of the antiquarian maps. It would seem likely that some of the rubble and stone layers (1/02) and patches (2/02) located may well be the result of their demolition.

7 BIBLIOGRAPHY

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