



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION

AT

HARROELL END, HARROELL

LONG CRENDON, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

SP 4697 0869

On behalf of

Mr Gibson

MAY 2006

REPORT FOR

Mr L Gibson
C/o Jeffrey Charles Emmett.
Stable Court Studio
12A Bell Lane
Tame
Oxfordshire
OX9 3AL

PREPARED BY

John Moore

FIELDWORK

20 April 2006

REPORT ISSUED

2 May 2006

ENQUIRES TO

John Moore Heritage Services
Hill View
Woodperry Road
Beckley
Oxfordshire OX3 9UZ

Telephone/Fax 01865 358300
Email: info@jmheritageservices.co.uk

Site Code:

LCHE 06

JMHS Project No:

1587

Buckinghamshire Museum Accession No: Applied for

CONTENTS

	Page
<i>SUMMARY</i>	1
1 INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Origins of the Report	
1.2 The Site	
1.3 Archaeological Background	
2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION	3
3 STRATEGY	3
3.1 Research Design	
3.2 Methodology	
4 RESULTS	5
4.1 Geological deposits and topography	
4.2 Trench 1	
4.3 Trench 2a	
4.3 Trench 2b	7
5 FINDS	7
5.1 The Pottery	
5.2 Other finds	
6 DISCUSSION	8
7 THE ARCHIVE	8
8 BIBLIOGRAPHY	8
APPENDIX 1 Archaeological Context Inventory	10
Figure 1 Site and trench location	2
Figure 2 Trench 1, Plan and Sections	4
Figure 3 Trenches 2a and 2b, Plans and Sections	6

SUMMARY

An archaeological evaluation was carried out as part of a consideration of a planning application for the construction of a detached dwelling. Three ditches, several postholes and stakeholes, and a pit were located. A small fragment of prehistoric pot was found in one of the ditches. The remains were heavily truncated.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Origins of the Project

A planning application has been submitted to Aylesbury Vale District Council for the erection of a detached dwelling. Due to the presence of potential remains of archaeological interest in the proposal area, Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS) advised that an archaeological evaluation and assessment of the application site should be undertaken prior to the determination of the planning application. BCAS prepared a *Brief* for such archaeological work. John Moore Heritage Services undertook a desk-based assessment and prepared a Written Scheme of Investigation. The latter document set out the methods to be employed for demonstrating whether or not any archaeological remains survive on the site, and for establishing their significance in relation to the development proposal.

1.2 The Site (Figure 1)

The proposed site is located within the garden of Harroells End, Harroell, Long Crendon (NGR SP 4697 0869). The underlying geology is considered to be the Portland Formation, comprising Portland stone and sands. The land falls relatively steeply from the road eastwards.

1.3 Archaeological Background

A desk based assessment of the site was carried out. This involved consulting sources at the County Sites and Monuments Record (SMR).

The site lies within the historic core of Long Crendon. Long Crendon was held by Aelfeva before the conquest and at the time of the Domesday survey was already a substantial village with 52 villagers, 10 small holders and 10 slaves. It later became the principal estate of the Earl of Buckingham and was granted a market in 1218. The settlement is also notable for the survival of a large number of medieval and post-medieval buildings, a notable example of which is the Courthouse – a timber-framed building of probable 15th century date (CAS 0158). Three listed 17th-18th century buildings are located nearby (CAS 10860, CAS 10861, CAS 10867).

Long Crendon is notable for the presence of a long lived needle making industry, located close to this site. According to Donald (1971) “the village of Long Crendon is unique in having had a well developed needle industry” perhaps dating back to the 16th century. Traces of medieval iron smelting have also been noted close to the Church where in 1975 an iron bloomery cinder was recovered during work at “Game Keep”, probably indicating medieval ironworking in the vicinity (CAS 209).

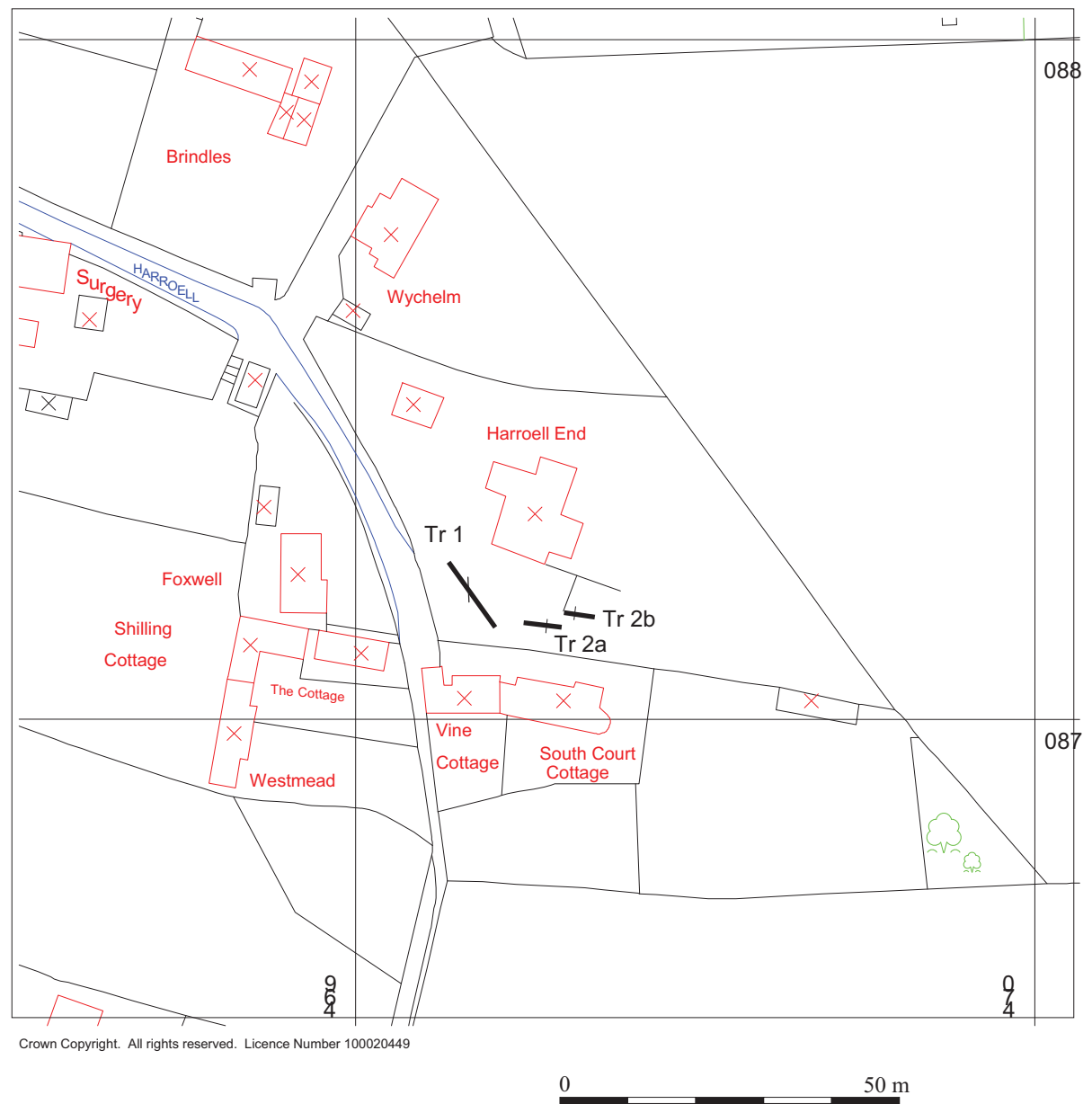


Figure 1. Site and trench location

Recent archaeological evaluation to the rear of 25 High Street (JMHS 2005) recorded undated and medieval pits. Similar work undertaken at 106 High Street (ASC Ltd 2004) located no significant deposits.

At this stage historic maps cannot be examined as the County Record office is currently closed to the public. The parish map of 1827 and the 1st edition OS map of 1885 consulted at the County SMR showed the site to be in an arable field, originally part an area of land known as “Thompson’s Close” (CAS 02716).

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To establish the presence/absence of archaeological remains within the site.
- To determine the extent, condition, nature, character, quality and date of any archaeological remains encountered. Specifically to establish whether late Saxon, medieval or post-medieval occupation or boundary features were present, and to assess their relationship to the village plan. Also to establish any evidence for industrial activity in the area, especially needle-making.
- To assess the ecofactual and environmental potential of the archaeological features and deposits.
- To make available to interested parties the results of the investigation subject to any confidentiality restrictions.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

A scheme of investigation was designed by JMHS and subsequently agreed with BCAS and the applicant. The work was carried out by JMHS and involved the excavation of two trenches.

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 of Field Archaeologists (1994).

3.2 Methodology

The field evaluation comprised the excavation of two trenches; one of which was split into two (Figure 1). The trenches were excavated using a 3 tonne mini-excavator equipped with a 1200mm wide toothless bucket. Trenches were excavated down to the natural geology under direct archaeological control. Archaeological features present were sampled by hand excavation.

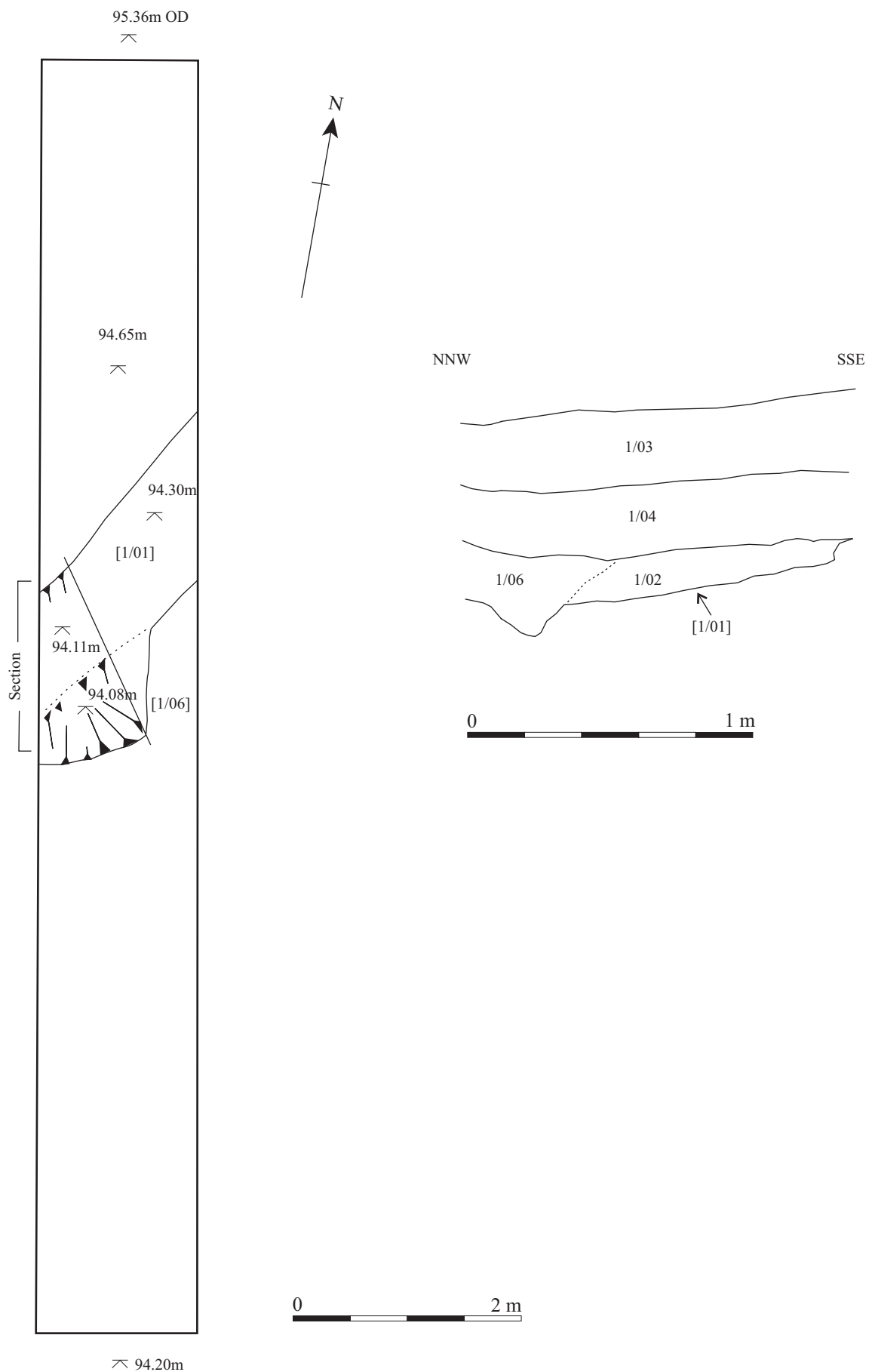


Figure 2. Trench 1

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.

The levels taken were related to a point 0.80m above the present level of the entrance to the south porch of St. Mary's Church which was given the value 103.97m OD of the bench mark that no longer exists.

Mr David Radford of BCAS monitored the works.

4 RESULTS

Deposits and fills are referred to in the text and figures in brackets: (02); cut features: [03]. Trench numbers precede deposit and cut numbers i.e. (1/02) is deposit 02 in Trench 1.

4.1 Geological deposits and topography

Natural geological deposits were found in each trench. They varied from dark orange and white sand in Trench 1 (1/05) to green-grey, with orange patches, sandy clay in Trench 2a (2a/03) and yellow, mottled grey, clay in Trench 2b (2b/03).

The ground sloped down from 95.36m at the north end of Trench 1 to 91.55m at the east end of Trench 2b.

4.2 Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

Overlying the natural (1/05) was a deposit of light brown slightly clayey sand (1/04) that was 240mm thick, which in turn was overlaid by topsoil of medium black slightly clayey sand (1/03) that was 300mm thick.

Cut into the natural was a heavily truncated ditch [1/01]. The ditch also had been heavily disturbed by root action (1/06). The northern side was at 30° while the southern side was at 10°. The base was slightly rounded. The ditch was 800-950mm wide and survived 160mm deep. It was filled with medium grey-brown silty sand with occasional charcoal flecks (1/02). The ditch was orientated north-east/south-west.

4.3 Trench 2a (Fig. 3)

The natural (2a/03) was overlaid by 350mm of mid orange-brown (80:20) clay loam (2a/02). In turn this was covered by black loamy topsoil that was 300mm thick (2a/01).

Cut into the natural was a pit [2a/06]. This was only partly within the trench and appeared sub-circular in plan. It was 190mm long and at least 650mm wide and had a depth of 300mm. The base was generally flat although slightly undulating and it had gradual sides. The pit was filled by dark grey-brown (80:20) clay with occasional charcoal flecks and occasional small stones (2a/07). The pit was cut by a ditch [2a/04], which was aligned approximately east-north-east/west-south-west. The ditch

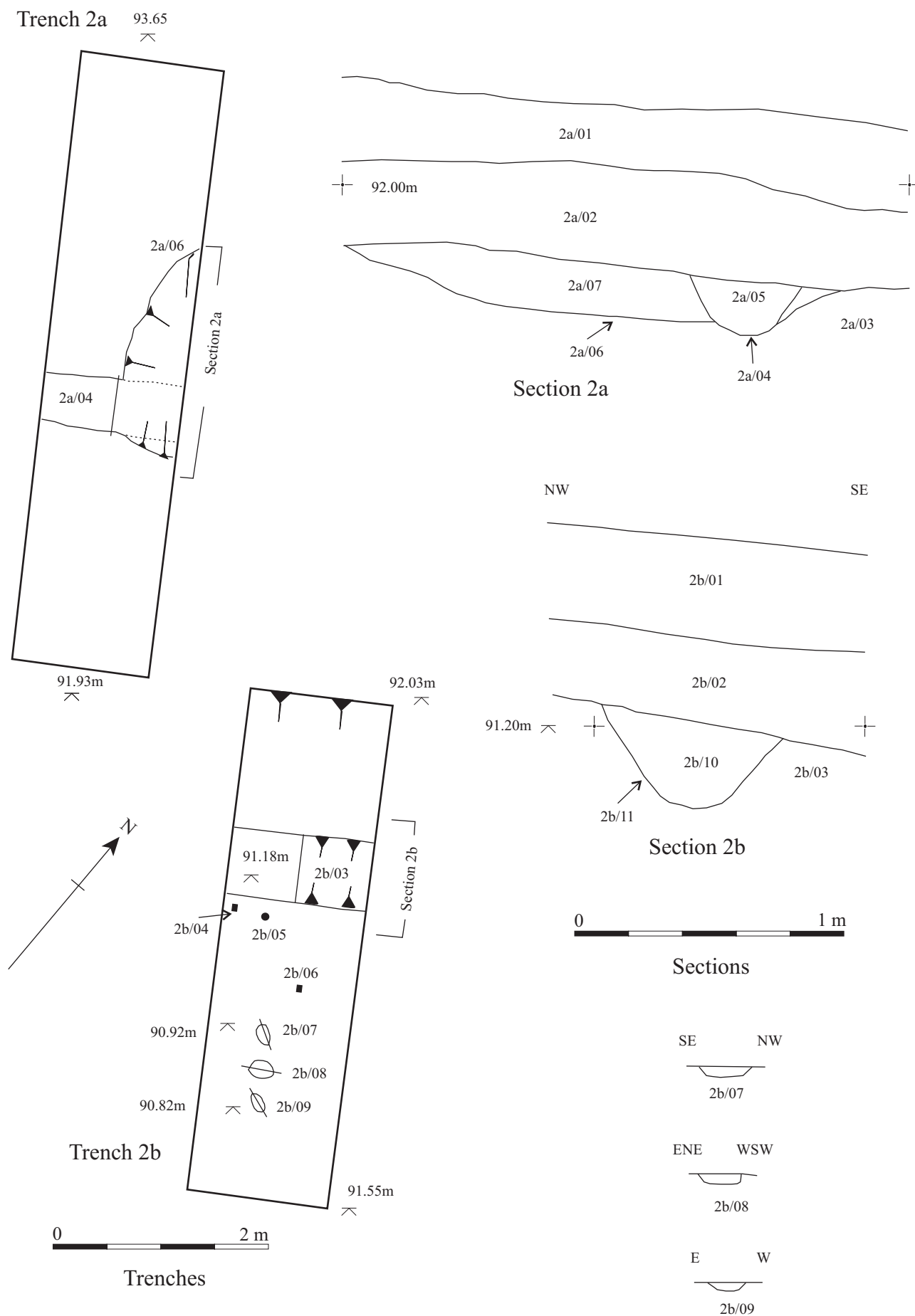


Figure 3. Trenches 2a and 2b

was 440mm wide and 250mm deep. The sides were *c.* 60° from the horizontal and the base was rounded. It was filled by dark grey-brown (70:30) clay loam with a few charcoal inclusions and a few small stones (2a/05).

4.4 Trench 2b (Fig. 3)

The natural (2b/03) was overlaid by 450mm of pale brown grey slightly silty clay with the occasional medium-sized stone (2b/02). The uppermost deposit in the trench was topsoil comprising dark grey-brown clayey silt that was very humic (2b/01). This was 380mm thick.

Several features were found cut into the top of the natural. A rectangular stakehole [2b/04] 60mm by 55mm with straight sides and a slightly tapering rectangular tip was found just east of a ditch. This stakehole was 95mm deep and filled with dark grey silty clay. To the north was a circular stakehole [2b/05] 40mm in diameter. Further east was a square stakehole 50mm wide [2b/06]. The last two were not excavated but were filled by mid-dark grey silty clay.

To the east of the stakeholes was a row of three postholes. Posthole [2b/07] was an irregular oval shape 200mm north-west/south-east by 130mm. It survived 30mm deep filled with pale-mid grey very silty clay. It had sides at 45° and a flat base. Posthole [2b/08] was sub-circular in plan 170mm east-north-east/west-south-west and 50mm deep. It had near vertical sides and a slightly rounded base with a similar fill to [2b/07]. The third posthole [2b/09] was a pointed oval, 140mm north-west/south-east by 90mm wide and only 20mm deep. The surviving sides were at 30° from the horizontal with a V-shaped base across the width. The fill was the same as the other two postholes.

A ditch orientated east-north-east/west-south-west was parallel to the ditch in Trench 2a. Ditch [2b/11] was 630mm wide and 350mm deep with sides at 60° and a slightly rounded base. The fill was a mid grey clay with very occasional small stone and occasional charcoal flecks (2b/10)

5 FINDS

5.1 The Pottery by Frances Raymond

A single heavily abraded sherd of prehistoric pottery (weighing two grams), tempered with moderate quantities of medium sized crushed burnt flint (up to 3.0 mm.), came from the ditch fill in Trench 1 (1/02). Fabrics of this type are not restricted to a single phase of prehistory and can only be dated with confidence when they are part of a larger assemblage or display stylistically diagnostic traits, which is not the case with this particular example. However, a tentative date either during the Neolithic or late Bronze Age, when wares of this type were in common use, seems most probable.

5.2 Other finds

A piece of roof tile came from the subsoil within Trench 2b. Six fragments of animal bone were recovered from the same deposit (2b/02) along with a sherd of late post-medieval/ modern glass.

Within Trench 2a one fragment of animal bone was found within the ditch fill (2a/05) while a tooth and butchered bone core were recovered from the pit fill (2a/07). A further two pieces of animal bone came from the ditch fill in Trench 2b (2b/10) while a small fragment of bone was found within one of the postholes (2b/07).

Modern finds were noted within topsoil contexts but were not retained.

6 DISCUSSION

The subsoil (1/04, 2a/02, 2b/02) is considered to be a cultivation soil. However this contains elements of colluvium within Trenches 2a and 2b indicated by the increasing thickness of this deposit down the slope.

The ditches coupled with the pit and small discrete features indicate settlement activity. The ditch cutting through the infilled pit within Trench 2a shows that the activity was of some longevity.

While a small sherd of prehistoric pottery was recovered from the ditch in Trench 1 this could be residual. However, the lack of finds from other periods lends weight to the probability that the occupation activity is of prehistoric date, possibly Neolithic or late Bronze Age.

The location of such activity is surprising given the relatively fall of the land. It may be that the site lies on the edge of the activity with the main location being further to the west on the flatter ground. Subsequent cultivation and erosion has left the features heavily truncated.

7 THE ARCHIVE

The archive consists of the following:

- The project brief
- Written scheme of investigation
- The project report
- The primary site records
- The photographic and drawn records

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services. The archive will be transferred to:

Buckinghamshire County Museum, Technical Centre, Tring Road, Halton, Aylesbury HP22 5PJ.

8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

ASC Ltd, 2004 An archaeological evaluation: 106 High Street, Long Crendon.

Donald, J, 1971 *The Crendon Needlemakers* Records of Bucks, Vol. XIX part1, 8-16.

Institute of Field Archaeologists, 1994 *Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Field Evaluations*

JMHS 2005 An archaeological evaluation on land to the rear of 25 High Street, Long Crendon.

APPENDIX 1 ARCHAEOLOGICAL CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Type	Description	Depth (mm)	Width (mm)	Length (mm)	Finds	Date
Trench 1: 11m x 1.4m							
01	Cut	Ditch	160	800-950	2m+	-	?Prehistoric
02	Fill	Fill of 01	160	800-950	2m+	Pot	
03	Deposit	Topsoil	300	Trench	Trench	-	Modern
04	Deposit	Subsoil	240	Trench	Trench	-	-
05	Deposit	Natural	-	Trench	Trench	-	-
06	Disturbance	Tree rooting	300	1000	1000+	-	-
Trench 2a: 5.6m x 1.3m							
01	Deposit	Topsoil	300	Trench	Trench	-	Modern
02	Deposit	Subsoil	350	Trench	Trench	-	-
03	Deposit	Natural	-	Trench	Trench	-	-
04	Cut	Ditch	250	440	1300+	-	-
05	Fill	Fill of 04	250	440	1300+	Bone	-
06	Cut	Pit	300	650+	1900	-	-
07	Fill	Fill of 06	300	650+	1300	Bone	-
Trench2b: 4.6m x 1.3m							
01	Deposit	Topsoil	380	Trench	Trench	-	Modern
02	Deposit	Subsoil	450	Trench	Trench	Cbm, bone, glass	Late post-med/modern
03	Deposit	Natural	-	Trench	Trench	-	-
04	Cut	Stakehole	95	55	60	-	-
05	Cut	Stakehole	-	40	40	-	-
06	Cut	Stakehole	-	50	50	-	-
07	Cut	Posthole	30	130	200	Bone	-
08	Cut	Posthole	50	140	170	-	-
09	Cut	Posthole	20	90	140	-	-
10	Fill	Fill of 11	350	630	1300+	Bone	-
11	Cut	Ditch	350	630	1300+	-	-

Cbm – ceramic building material