



JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EVALUATION AT
44 TEMPLE STREET, BRILL, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

SP 65600 14095

On behalf of

Mr M Birmingham

JUNE 2013

REPORT FOR	Mr M Birmingham 44 Temple Street Brill Buckinghamshire HP18 9SX
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Summary

John Moore Heritage Services conducted an archaeological evaluation in advance of the proposed demolition of existing dwelling and erection of two new dwellings with access and parking provision (Planning Application: 13/00016/APP) at 44 Temple Street, Brill, Buckinghamshire (SP 65600 14095). One 5.5m long trench was excavated down to the surface of the archaeology or natural geology. A ditch orientated on a north-west south-east direction was discovered at the north-western end of the trench. It contained pottery which dated the fill of the ditch to the 16th century. Other discrete features, interpreted as two postholes and pit, were adjacent to the ditch. Features 106 and 108 contained pottery dating to the 13th century. The earliest find was a residual early Neolithic flint blade from pit 108. The features represent medieval and post-medieval activity on the proposal site, which may be related to industrial functions such as a kiln, although only one fragment from manufacturing waste was recovered. A confidence rating is high that the best possible results were achieved.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location and Geology (Fig. 1)

The site lies at 44 Temple Street, Brill, on the southeast side of the street at NGR SP 65600 14095. The geology is Whitchurch Sand. The evaluation trench was to the rear of the current dwelling in the garden.

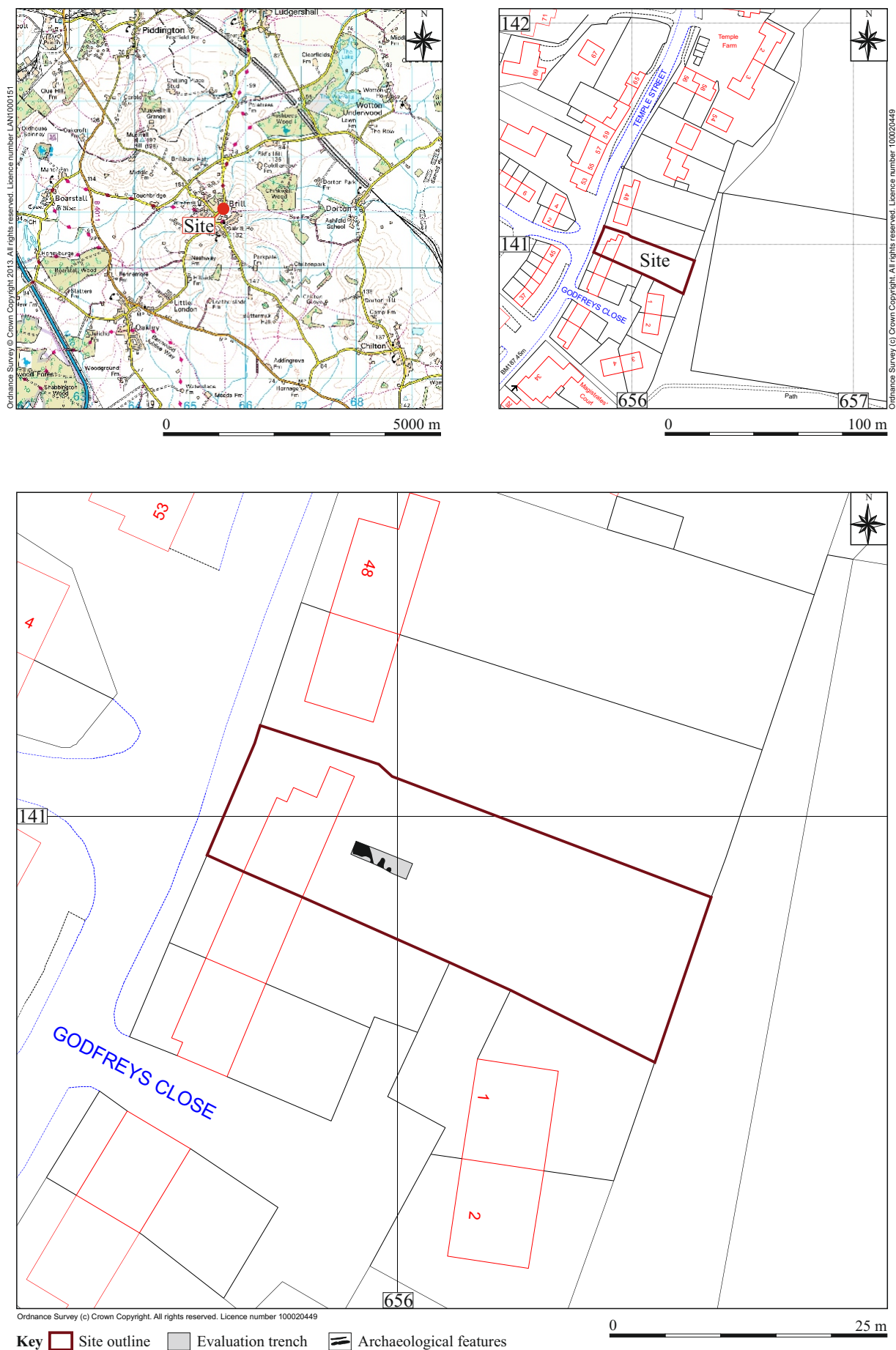
1.2 Planning Background

A planning application for permission to demolish the existing dwelling and erect two new dwellings with new access and parking provision (13/00016/APP) has been made to Aylesbury Vale District Council. This was refused in part due to an absence of an assessment of the archaeological potential of the site.

Due to the potential for archaeological remains to be present on the site, an archaeological evaluation was required to be carried out prior to a planning determination. A new application will be submitted with this archaeological report. An archaeological *Written Scheme of Investigation* (JMHS 2013) was approved by Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service before site work commenced.

1.3 Archaeological Background

Brill is of considerable archaeological interest with evidence for Iron Age occupation adjacent to the church associated with an earthwork (CAS0106), which may be the remains of a hillfort rampart (Farley 1979), located 200m due south of the proposal area. Few early prehistoric remains have been found in Brill, although a possible Mesolithic blade (CAS2053) is an exception. Similarly only limited Roman finds are known from Brill and include a coin (CAS5216) west of the proposed development site and a 1st century coin from the parish (CAS0582). The name Brill is a contraction of the British ‘bre’, and Anglo-Saxon ‘hyll’ both meaning ‘hill’.



In the late Saxon period, Brill was a royal manor and the centre of an estate, which may have had its origins in a pre-Saxon 'multiple estate' (Baines 1995).

Brill was the most important settlement within the medieval forest of Bernwood, which was legally established following the Norman Conquest based upon the pre-existing woodland and a hunting lodge built by Edward the Confessor.

Brill was the administrative centre for the forest and hundred with a royal house, fishponds, mills, church, prison-house, market and fair, claypits and kilns. In the 13th and early 14th centuries Brill was described as a borough but thereafter it went into decline and lost its status as a town. Brill was the centre of an important regional pottery and tile industry, which is believed to have originated in the 12th century and continued to be active into the post-medieval period when it also produced bricks (Harvey 1997). During the Civil War Brill was briefly garrisoned by Parliament during the winter of 1644.

Several sites of medieval and post-medieval pottery, tile and brick kilns are known adjacent to Tram Hill and Temple Street. The most notable are designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument (SAM) – Buckinghamshire 144 Brill Pottery Kilns. This site includes CAS 0576 centred at SP65661428 where four medieval pottery kilns were originally excavated. Three dated to the 13-14th centuries while the fourth was thought to be from the mid 14th century although magnetic dating by the Oxford Research Laboratory dated it to the first half of the 14th century. Magnetometer survey of the rest of this field (Side Field, Temple Farm) indicated the presence of other kilns and waste dumps. The site includes CAS 4394 (SP65651431) a further excavated pottery kiln.

At the bottom of Tram Hill on the west side were post-medieval brickworks (CAS 4192, SP65551489). On the opposite side of the road further brickworks were opened in 1922 only lasting one season (CAS 4653, SP65621487). At SP65431436 was a brick and tile works (CAS 2498) known from the Tithe Map of 1839 and owned by Robert Hubbocks. A brickyard, sheds and brick-kiln are mentioned. The 1st edition OS map indicates two kilns, known as Norcotts Kiln. Again, on the west side of Tram Hill at SP65591423 post-medieval pottery kilns were recorded by Michael Farley (CAS 2235), former County Archaeologist.

Opposite the current proposal site on Temple Street a watching brief and small excavation revealed parts of two medieval and post-medieval kilns. While a lot of pottery wasters were present indicating a pottery kiln works, one of the kilns appeared to be designed for roof tiles (CAS 5293, SP65521413; Yeoman 1988). A further kiln has been found but not excavated on the west side of Tram Hill immediately opposite the entrance to the field containing the SAM. This pottery kiln is of post-medieval date (CAS 6760, SP65551425). A watching brief carried out by JMHS at 48 Temple Street revealed no evidence for intensive activity, although post-medieval pottery was recovered (Gilbert, 2007). Excavations carried out by ASC Ltd at the last operational kiln in Brill revealed little evidence at 75 Temple Street (AS&C, 2007) of the kiln, although wasters found confirm that pottery was produced here from the 18th/19th centuries and that the earlier kiln site lies "under, or south and west of the extant house" (AS&C, 2007: 19).

Possible pottery kilns are thought to exist south of Temple Farm on the east side of Tram Hill where an extensive scatter of medieval sherds, including a possible waster, have been found in molehills (CAS 5681, SP 6558 1427). Fieldwork found a medieval pottery kiln, a tile kiln and 18th century hacha during an evaluation ahead of building works (CAS 5712, SP 65596

14066; Farley 1991). Building work in Temple Farm Yard found further probable kiln remains of medieval (14th century) and later medieval (?15th and late 15th/early 16th) date, including wasters and saggars (CAS 5678, SP6564414170 and SP6562614164). East of Temple Farm a sand pit is recorded on the 1st edition 6'' map (CAS 9052, SP6577214257). On the same map at North Lodge is a clay pit at SP655514866 (CAS 9056).

During building works in 1977 located to the southwest of the present site on the west side of Temple St, parts of two kilns were found at Prosser's Yard (CAS 2153, SP65481405, Cocroft 1985), believed to be early post-medieval in date. Immediately adjacent to the site recent excavations by John Moore Heritage Services (Williams 2010) revealed a number of pits used for clay-preparation which had been back-filled with kiln debris, including kiln furniture such as saggars and structural elements of the kiln including bricks from the floor as well as tile from the flues.

Chris Welch, of English Heritage, has noted that there may be around twelve excavated kilns from the village, which is barely one kilometre long. Whether the village had an 'industrial quarter' to the north and the settlement to the south has been advanced due to the concentration of kiln-sites in the northern part of the village. This may in turn permit a model for the development of industrialisation in other places where subsequent land-development has removed all or most earlier traces (Green, Giggins and Welch, 2007).

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

The aims were to gather sufficient information to generate a reliable predictive model of the extent, character, date, state of preservation and depth of burial of important archaeological remains and any possible associated palaeo-environmental deposits within the area of study.

Particular objectives were:

- to establish whether medieval and post-medieval settlement, tile, brick or ceramic manufacturing remains are present, with particular reference to the possibility of there having been an industrial quarter at Brill.
- to establish whether any pre-medieval remains are present, their date and significance

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

The Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Record has been consulted for recent archaeological work carried out at Brill. Maps of the area held by the County Record Office have been examined. Site procedures for the investigation and recording of potential archaeological deposits and features were defined in the *Written Scheme of Investigation* (WSI) agreed with Buckinghamshire County Archaeological Service (BCAS). Standard John Moore Heritage Services techniques were employed throughout, involving the completion of a written record for each deposit encountered, with scale plans and sections drawings compiled where appropriate. A photographic record was produced. The trench was backfilled after recording.

3.2 Methodology

The evaluation trench was 5.5m in length (1.5m wide) in accordance with the specifics set out in the *WSI* (JMHS 2013). The length of the trench was dictated by the available space behind the existing building within the proposed new footprint.

Excavation was undertaken using a mini-excavator fitted with a ditching bucket. Mechanical excavation was taken down to the top of “natural” deposits or any higher archaeological horizon.

All site procedures carried out followed IFA guidelines

The work was carried out by Paul Riccoboni MIFA in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute for Archaeologists (1999) and the procedures laid down in MAP2 (English Heritage 1991).

The Planning Archaeologist for BCAS Bill Boismier monitored the work on Friday 31st May 2013.

4 RESULTS

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.

4.1 Excavation Results; Trench 1 (Fig. 2)

The lowest deposit noted within the trench consisted of natural sands and gravels, which was reached at varying heights of between 186.00m AOD and 186.16mAOD. The trench was 5.5m long and (1.5m wide).

The stratigraphy within the trench consisted of the following layers (earliest to latest) (Fig 2; S: 2). The natural light to mid brownish orange silty sand with dense stone outcrops (102) was seen at the base of the trench. Overlying the natural was 0.25m thick mid greyish brown silty clay subsoil (101). The latest deposit was dark greyish black silty clay topsoil (100).

Ditch; cut into natural (102)

Ditch 104 (Fig. 2; S. 1) was orientated on a north-south direction 1.60m wide and 0.50m deep with sharp concave sides and a rounded base. It was filled by mid-dark brownish grey silty sand with frequent stone inclusions (103) especially noticeable on the eastern side of the ditch. Pottery sherds recovered provide a 16th century *terminus post quem*. The ditch was sealed by subsoil (101).

Discrete Features; cut into natural (102)

Pit 108 (Fig. 2; S.2) was stratigraphically the earliest discrete feature. It was sub oval in shape 0.60m wide and 0.40m deep with sharp concave sides forming an almost flat base. The pit was filled by firm dark greyish brown silty sand (107) with 4 sherds of medieval pottery dated to the 13th century and one residual early Neolithic flint blade.

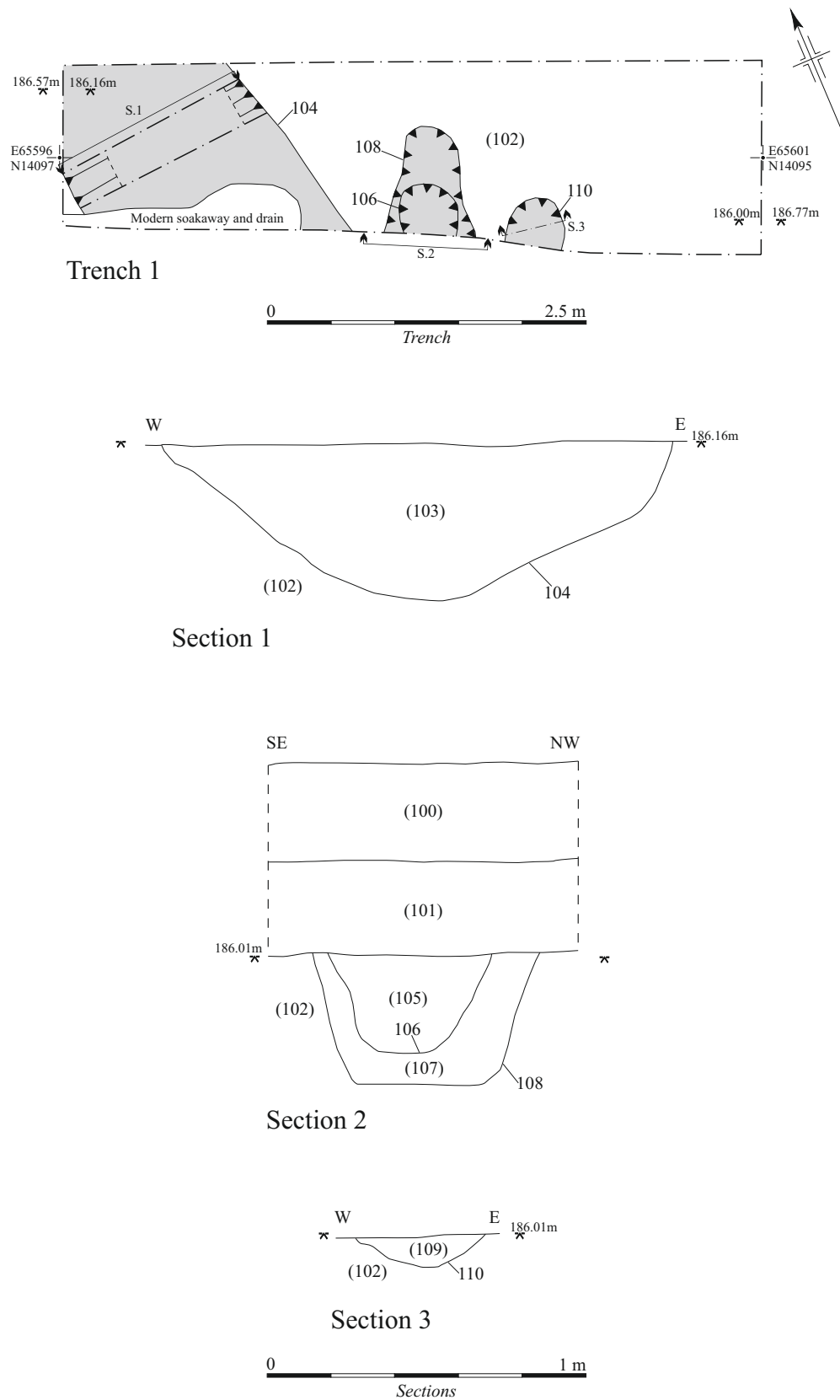


Figure 2. Trench 1 - plan and sections

Cut through pit 108 was posthole 106 (Fig. 2; S. 2), 0.50m wide and 0.25m deep of sub oval shape with steep concave sides and gently rounded base. It was filled by soft/loose dark greyish black silty clay with a tile fragment dated to the post-medieval period (105) and pottery sherds dated to 13th century.

Posthole 110 (Fig. 2; S. 3) was sub oval in shape 0.40m wide and 0.05m deep with shallow concave sides and a gently rounded base. It was filled by dark greyish black silty clay with no finds (109).

4.2 Reliability of Results

The archaeological evaluation was carried out in dry conditions. The developer was on site and was extremely helpful in aiding us in our work.

The methodology employed fully complied with the WSI and a high level of recording was achieved in line with all IfA standards and guidance. Overall, the reliability of the results can be considered to be very good and the nature of the work to evaluate the site has been successful. A significant amount of information has been recovered but due to the limitations of the excavations (at this stage) interpretations are limited.

5 THE FINDS

5.1 The Flint *by Paul Riccoboni*

One struck flint was recovered during the evaluation. It was a blade from context (107), the fill of pit 108, that was in fresh condition and probably dated to the early Neolithic period. It displayed a pale grey-blue patina with some surviving spot of cortex. It measured 48mm by 22mm by 7mm thick.

5.2 Animal Bone *by Paul Riccoboni*

Four fragments of animal bone were recovered from the evaluation. Three fragments came from fill (107) of pit 108, weighing 38g in total. One fragment came from fill (103) of ditch 104, weighing 21g in total.

5.3 The Medieval and Post-medieval Pottery *by Paul Blinkhorn*

The pottery assemblage comprised 22 sherds with a total weight of 201g. Where possible, the assemblage 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. 9 sherds, 53g.

PM5: Trailed slip-ware. 17th century. 1 sherd, 19g

PM8: Red Earthenware. 16th – 19th century. 6 sherds, 87g.

In addition, the following wares, not included in the Milton Keynes type-series, were noted:

OXAW: Early Brill Coarseware, late 12th – 13th century (Mellor 1994). 6 sherds, 42g.

Most of the pottery, including the slip-ware and the Red Earthenware, is of Brill type. 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*.

Only a single sherd showed any signs of being manufacturing waste, a fragment of a jug with a partially unvitified glaze from context 107.

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

	OXAW		MS9		PM8		PM5		
Cntxt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
100			2	6	1	26	1	19	17thC
101					1	23			16thC
103	2	7	5	33	4	38			16thC
105			2	14					13thC
107	4	35							13thC
	6	42	9	53	6	87	1	19	

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological evaluation at 44 Temple Street, Brill was a useful exercise as new archaeological features in this part of Brill have now been discovered. The results have enabled an assessment of the type of heritage assets at the site; their surviving depths and their significance. This information will help allow a planning determination.

Stratigraphically the earliest discrete feature was pit 108. It was cut by posthole 1 06. There was one residual flint blade recovered from pit 108 (fill 107) of probable early Neolithic date, within the backfill of an early medieval pit. The find adds to the limited prehistoric material recovered from the village. Two early Neolithic blades were discovered at 7-9 Temple Street (Williams 2009) and there has previously been one Mesolithic blade (CAS2053) discovered in Brill. Although the prehistoric finds in Brill are limited it would still indicate that the hill was being used during the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods by hunters utilising the dense forest, which would have covered this entire area, presumably for hunting wild game.

The ditch orientated on an approximate north-south direction does not fit in with the alignment any of the surrounding modern property boundaries on Temple Street. The pottery sherds recovered from the fill of the ditch would indicate the ditch silted up and went out of use during the early post-medieval period. The ditch possibly marks an extinct boundary which perhaps enclosed a building or even a kiln site.

The two discrete features, interpreted as postholes, on the south-eastern side of the ditch may have once formed a structure, but with such limited evidence it may be more prudent to suggest that the postholes probably once formed a fence line along the edge of the ditch. One posthole probably represents the replacement of the other, indicating the fence line was in use for a reasonable period of time.

Conclusions

There does not seem to be any evidence of pre-medieval features at the site. The only pre-medieval find was an early Neolithic flint which was residual. A specific research aim of the archaeological evaluation was to establish whether medieval and post-medieval settlement, tile, brick or ceramic manufacturing remains are present, with particular reference to the possibility of an industrial quarter at Brill.

It is difficult to suggest, from the recovered evidence at this site, that this area of Brill was within an 'industrial quarter' during the medieval and post-medieval period. No information was uncovered to suggest the presence of an actual pottery or tile kiln close to the site and the small amount of pottery waste does little to contradict this supposition, except the one sherd thought to be manufacturing waste from context (107). Evidence of over-fired and slightly distorted pottery is almost inevitable in such a location as Brill because extensive remains of kilns and their products have been found throughout the village.

The site has some similarity to 7-9 Temple Street, Brill (Williams 2009) where there were intercutting features containing a mix of medieval and post-medieval pottery sherds. Having said that, although there are similarities between the two sites, there was no evidence of clay preparation pits at 44 Temple Street. The pits at 7-9 Temple Street had been back-filled with kiln debris or kiln furniture such as saggars and structural elements from the kilns. This was not the case at this site.

The results of the archaeological evaluation are sufficient to allow a planning determination. The depth of any new footing trenches needed for the new development will be in excess of c. 1m deep. This will have an impact on any additional archaeological resources at the site.

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Appendix 1; Context Inventory

Context	Type	Description	Length	Width	Depth	Finds	Date
100	Deposit	Topsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.40	Pottery	Post-medieval
101	Deposit	Subsoil	Tr.	Tr.	0.25	Pottery	Post-medieval
102	Deposit	Natural	Tr.	Tr.	/		
103	Deposit	Fill of 1/04	Tr.	1.60	0.50	Pottery	Post-medieval
104	Cut	Ditch	Tr.	1.60	0.50		
105	Deposit	Fill of 1/06	0.50	0.50	0.25	Pottery	medieval
106	Cut	Posthole	0.50	0.50	0.25		
107	Deposit	Fill of 1/08	0.90	0.70	0.40	Pottery	medieval
108	Cut	Pit	0.90	0.70	0.40		
109	Deposit	Fill of 1/10	0.40	0.40	0.10		
110	Cut	Posthole	0.40	0.40	0.10		



Plate1; General view of trench looking south



Plate 2; Section Pit 106 & Pit 108