

JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

AT

LONGLANDS HOUSE,

39 HART STREET,

HENLEY-ON-THAMES, OXFORDSHIRE

NGR SU 7624 8274

On behalf of

Clive Hemsley

OCTOBER 2013

REPORT FOR Clive Hemsley
Longlands House
39 Hart Street
Henley-on-Thames
Oxfordshire
RG9 2AR

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FIELD WORK 3rd, 6th-7th June 2013

REPORT ISSUED 29th October 2013

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JMHS Project No: 2829
Site Code HYLH 13
Accession number The archive will be deposited with the Oxfordshire
Museum Service under accession number OXCMS:
2013.121

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Summary

Heritage Services carried out an archaeological watching brief at Longlands House, Hart Street, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 76226 82673). The observations identified the remains of structures and surfaces set back from the street frontage. The flint and tile wall and clay mortar surface was stratigraphically the earliest features on the site. This was probably of a later medieval date, although the precise dating of this is poor. The later brick and flint structures appear to be associated with ash deposits. These phases were probably of an 18th or 19th century date.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figure 1)

The development site is located at the site of Longlands House, Hart Street, Henley-on-Thames, Oxfordshire (NGR SU 76226 82673). Henley is the location of a medieval borough and post-medieval market town and historic parish located in historic Oxfordshire. Historically the parish was located in the Chiltern Hundred of Binfield, but is now in the modern District of South Oxfordshire.

The site is to the rear of Longlands House, a property that fronts onto the main thoroughfare of Hart Street. To the west Longlands House is bounded by a garden of a further property fronting on to Hart Street. The land to the north has further domestic occupation in the form of a new build, while to the east are the alms houses, which were moved from their former location and may lie over the earlier cemetery.

The site is located on the west bank of the River Thames which lies between 31m and 35m OD.

The underlying geology is considered to be Holywell Nodular Chalk Formation and New Pit Chalk Formation, which comprises of chalk laid down 89-100 million years ago in the Cretaceous. This is in places covered by deposits of Head formed 3 million years ago.

1.2 Planning Background

South Oxfordshire District Council granted planning permission for the erection of an extension to the rear of Longlands House (ref. P13/S0305/HH). Due to the archaeological and historical importance of the surrounding area of Henley a condition was attached to the permission requiring a watching brief to be maintained during the course of ground works on the site. This was in line with NPPF (the planning policy current at the time) and other Local Planning policies.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The remains of a Roman building have been identified in Henley to the west of Bell Street and which has produced 2nd century AD material (VCH 2011, 31). It is not known if this is an isolated farmstead or if there was a more significant crossing.

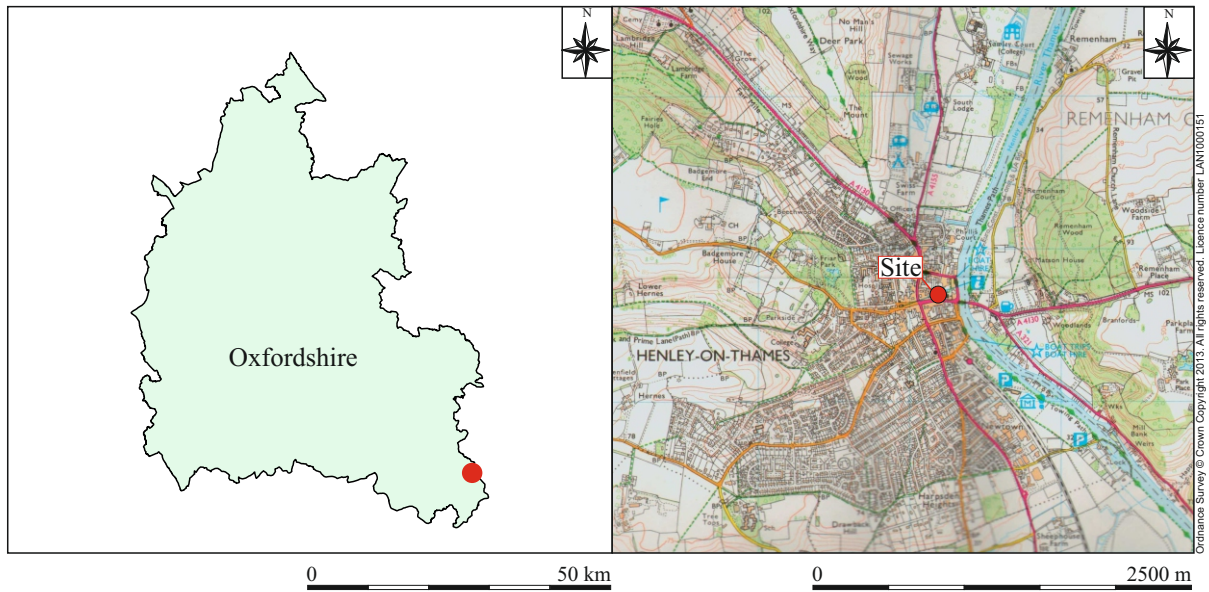


Figure 1: Site location

The remains of Roman pottery, daub and burnt flint have been recovered near Rotherfield Court in an area known as Ancastle.

In the 8th century it is generally assumed but not confirmed that Henley was part of a Royal Estate centred on Benson. Isolated pottery sherds of the 7th and 8th centuries and the 11th and 12th centuries have been recovered from near the modern town. The name Henley is first documented in 1136-45 as *Henleiam* or *Henle(g)a* for example (Gelling 1953, 74-5), which has an etymology of hēan lē(a)ge, at the high wood in a reference to the Chiltern woodland.

Phyllis Court is considered to be the location of a royal lodge or homestead (VCH 2011, 31-2). The manorial enclosure at this time is considered to incorporate Countess Garden and Phyllis Court. The manor is considered to be attached to that of Bensington from the 7th to the early 14th century (VCH 2011, 73), although the earliest date for this association is speculative. Support for this is given through the absence of Henley in the Domesday Book (Morris 1978, 1.1), where Benson has 12 hides and 32 villagers and 29 smallholders, some of which could be located at Henley-on-Thames. The name is first recorded as Filettes in 1341, and has been interpreted as having an Old English etymology filipe, hay (Gelling 1953, 75).

The manor was farmed out from 1189-96 (VCH 2011, 73), and was granted by King John to Robert de Harcourt. These events mark Henley out as a distinct manorial entity. In c. 1244 Henry III gave the manor of Benson, to which Henley formed a distinct part, to his brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, and by 1272 this had passed to Edmund, the son of Richard. By 1340 the manor of Benson had passed to the Black Prince. Henley Manor became held directly from the crown 1337 (VCH 2011, 74).

It is considered that early in the 7th century that Henley was in the parochia of Benson or Bensington Church (VCH 2011, 159), but this is considered problematic for various reasons and some evidence exists for Benson royal manor trading estates sub-estates with another important centre. There is also considered a possibility that the church at Henley may have predated the town's foundation. This is feasible and likely. The oldest surviving doorway is dated to c. 1160-80. In c. 1200 the chapel at Henley was in the king's gift; while in 1279 it was claimed with Warborough and Nettlebed as a chapelry of Benson. By the 13th century the church was effectively independent. In the 13th century Henley was located in the deanery of Chiltern or Stoke, but the area later took its name from Henley-on-Thames. The advowson was mostly tied to the manor, but not always given to the tenants. An extensive Rectory House with curtilage was established to the south of Hart Street in the 1240s. Excavations have found the remains of a hearth associated with this building in the 13th and 14th centuries. The neighbouring houses were subsequently annexed to enlarge the property.

The medieval town was laid out in the southeast corner of an ancient parish; the street plan is believed to have been established by 1260-70 (VCH 2011, 21, 31). There is circumstantial evidence that the site was laid out the same time as Woodstock. The line of High Street / Hart Street is part of the medieval settlement on the road to the crossing of the Thames. Houses in this area have been dated to the 15th century, for example 22 Hart Street to c. 1400 and the White Hart Inn to 1428-9 (VCH 2011, 32). Near the bridge a chapel was constructed and dedicated to Saint Anne, which was demolished in the Reformation (VCH 2011, 36). The older houses are of timber with

chalk lined stone cellars (VCH 2011, 49). Bricks were not used until the 15th century, where they are first dated locally in large manorial buildings at Stonor in 1416-7 and Ewelme in 1437. The first known use in Henley is from the 17th century and early 18th century. Longlands House at 39 Hart Street was built c. 1740 and the bricks were believed to be imported from Kent (VCH 2011, 56).

Malting was an important part of the trade and industry of Henley-on-Thames. The earliest recorded phase of the industry has been dated c. 1570-1700 (VCH 2011, 84-5). The trade in the 16th century was involved in the malt production for export to an expanding London. In 1630 there were at least some 7 malters in the town. Dr Plot recorded that malt kilns in Henley were heated from kitchen fires. The structures recorded which were associated with this process were house, kiln, cistern and malthouse. Brewing from c. 1700-1800 saw major changes and is considered a second phase of development (VCH 2011, 90). In the early 18th century there were several brewers. In the late 18th century this had dwindled to an industry dominated by two establishments one of which was Brakspears, the other Sarneys. By 1970 no other brewing establishments existed.

Brakspears, as we later know the business, was established in 1722 by William Brooks (d. 1744) when he owned a brewhouse on the west side of Bell Street behind Merton House (VCH 2011, 90). The business was taken over by the son James Brooks (d. 1803) and a second malthouse was established. James held pubs and inns in Henley and outside, with the development of the industry came tied public houses. In 1768 James went into partnership with his kinsman Richard Hayward, and more public houses were purchased. In 1772 Hayward bought the business with half of the shares going to a prominent draper. From 1779 Hayward was assisted by his nephew and godson Robert Brakspear of Faringdon. Brakspear took over the shares from Hayward on his retirement. Longlands House was used as a later headquarters building of Brakspear breweries.

Longlands House thus occupies an area of Henley which fronts onto Hart Street, one of the roads that form the main thoroughfare for the river crossing of the Thames. Roman buildings have been found in Henley but it is unknown if this is only a villa complex or something far larger. The street was also one of the main arterial roads of the later medieval town, while Longlands House lies adjacent to the properties associated with the Church, the church and almshouses to the east and the Rectory to the south on the other side of Hart Street.

The house takes its name from Bishop John Longland of Lincoln. The following information on the bishop was supplied by the householder. Longland was born in 1473 at Henley. He is considered to have been educated initially at Henley before going to Eton and the Magdalen College in Oxford, where he eventually became a fellow and in 1505 was made a principal of Magdalen Hall. In 1500 he became a priest and in 1504 was presented to the church of Woodham Ferrers in Essex. Longland was made a doctor in 1514 and became Dean of Salisbury and prebendary of North Kelsey in Lincolnshire in 1514. He became Henry VIII's confessor and in 1521 became the Lord Almoner and later that year the Bishop of Lincoln. Prior to Henry's first divorce he was an instigator of searching for heretical books such as those by Luther. In 1532 Longland became chancellor of the University of Oxford, which he held until his death. He died on the 7th May 1547.

Tradition has it the John Longland was born in the house next to Saint Mary's Church in Hart Street, he was son of Thomas Longland and Isabel Staveley, and his mother's will indicates that he had two brothers Lucas and Richard. The family was wealthy and did own a house next to the river. The almshouse adjacent to Longlands House and in the churchyard of Saint Mary's there are 26 almshouses, 12 of which were endowed by the will of John Longland on 23rd March 1547 with a grant of £10. The almshouses are not on their original location, they were once to the south of Hart Street, but were dismantled and rebuilt in 1830, though it is thought that this was actually done in the 1700s. The home of the Longland's was located in Hart Street. Longlands House at 39 Hart Street was built c. 1740 and the bricks were believed to be imported from Kent (VCH 2011, 56). There has been some speculation that the building is older and that it has a Georgian façade. The building is a grade II* listed structure (EHID 246193), and the designation is as followed:

'C18 facade to an older house. Yellow and red stock brick with red brick dressings and moulded work. The design is a frame with corner pilasters the whole height, moulded strings at 1st and 2nd floor levels and a modified cornice set below a solid panelled brick parapet crowned with a stone coping. Roof not visible. 3 storeys, 5 windows with segmental arches and keyblocks. All sashes with glazing bars and cambered head linings. Central door with architrave surround and fluted Doric pilasters supporting cornice and pediment, all painted wood. Interior features.'

The householder retains a number of deeds and other documents relating to the house, which show the association of the site with Brakespear and Sons Brewery. In 1855 there was a conveyance between Messers Archibald and George Edward brakspear on the one hand and Reverend William Bagnall and Oakeley and Thomas Mountjoy Fisher on the other. The property at that time is described as bounded by the property owned by Frank Strange Copeland on the one side and Bishop Longlands Almshouses on the other. The description of the property is a dwelling house, garden, outbuildings and appurtenances and the site is valued at £1,500. The conveyance of 1920 was between Harold Charles Moffatt Esquire of Hampton Lodge near Salisbury and the Reverend William Pearce Oakley of Edinburgh, now Queensland, on the one hand to Mrs Emily Jane Willis Lydart on the other. The description was of a dwelling house and premises. There is a further conveyance in 1923 between Emily Jane Willis the vendor to George Smith Esquire the purchaser and M B and C M. The lease of 1938 was between George Smith of Longlands a landlord and Norman Rupert Chamberlain Lansdell a tenant reportedly of Sydney House at Northfield End. There is a further lease in 1945 when W H Brakspear and Sons on the one hand lease to N R C Lansdell. There is a counterpart agreement in 1971 between W H Brakspear and Sons to B W G Bushell. In 2001 there is a sale between Brakespear and Sons and the present occupier.

2 AIMS OF THE INVESTIGATION

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

- To make a record of any significant remains revealed during the course of groundwork.

In particular:

- To pay particular attention to medieval and early post-medieval settlement in Henley-on-Thames.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

John Moore Heritage Services carried out the work to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with Oxford Historical and Natural Environment Team (OHaNET) the archaeological advisors to South Oxfordshire 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 for Archaeologists (1994).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist was present during the period of groundwork on the site.

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. A photographic record was also produced.

4 RESULTS (Figure 2)

The natural was not reached.

4.1 Phase 1: Medieval

Cut 15 is a large cut probably rectangular in shape and probably with vertical sides. It was not apparent what this feature was cut into as the natural was not located. Context 14 was a foundation of flint and tile with clay bonding 0.1 to 0.15m wide which appeared to be the outer edge of a platform. The width of the wall perhaps is indicative that this feature originated as a timber framed structure. Set on the top of this context was the remains of a poorly fired tile with dowel hole, probably of a later medieval date or at the very least an early 16th century date. The tile was probably all that remained from a series of these objects set along the wall to bed a timber sill-beam on. Deposit 16 was a compact light grey white clay mortar, a probable floor, which was bounded up to masonry wall 14.

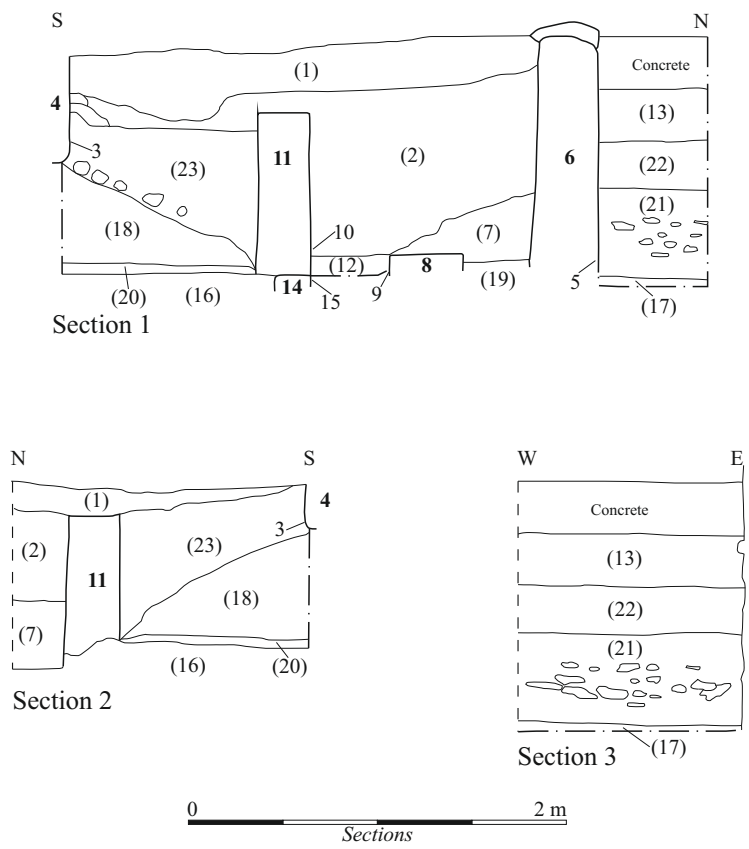
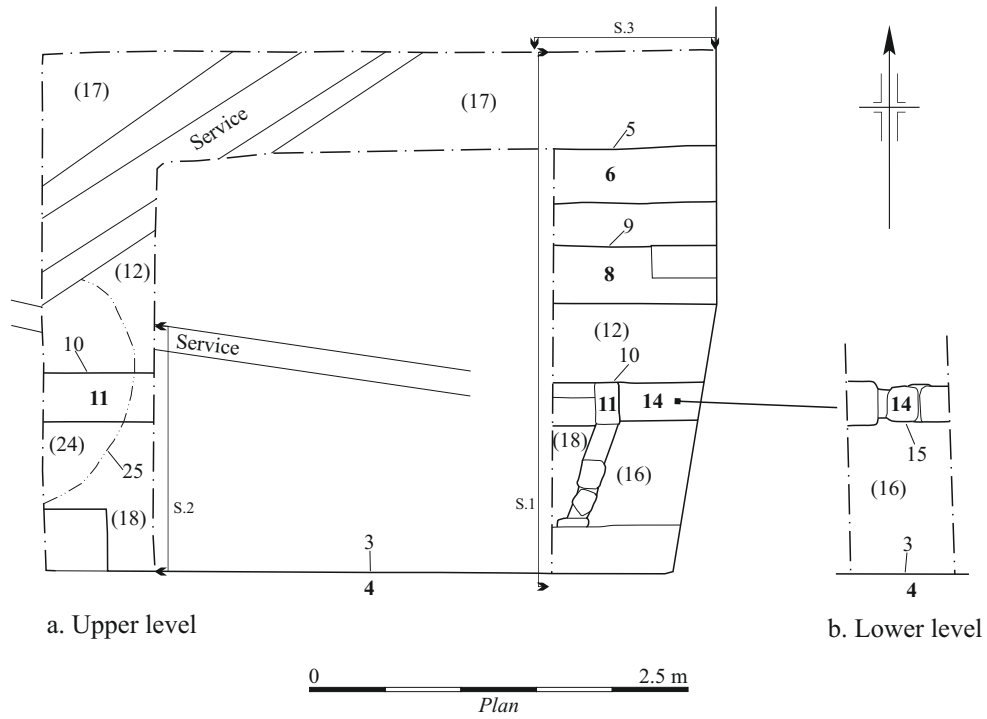


Figure 2: Plan and section

4.2 Phase 2: 18th century

Deposit 20 was a compact light yellow brown clay with flint inclusions (Fig.2, S.1 & S.2). Deposit (18) was a compact dark black grey silt clay with bone inclusions. The finds from this deposit included animal bone, and an oyster shell.

Deposit 12 was a compact dark black grey silt clay with tile and brick inclusions. This deposit may have represented a continuation of layer (18). Deposit 17 was a compact grey clay with frequent mortar inclusions.



Plate 1: Wall 11 sat on Wall 14 and clay/mortar surface (16)

4.3 Phase 3: 18th to 19th centuries

Foundation cut 5 was 0.38m wide with vertical sides, the base was not seen. Wall 6 was of brick on the one side and of flint on the other, the north side. The brick part was built in a stretcher design. It is possible that the wall may have originated as a single structure as part of it was bonded to the party wall, which is considered contemporary with this building phase. Cut 10 consisted of an L-shaped cut, which was 0.1m deep and 0.28m wide with a vertical side and a gentle side and a flat base. Wall 11 was of red brick a variety of sizes, most of which were 47mm deep, but some were 70mm deep, there were also stones with a rubble finish in the lower levels. The variation in brick sizes means either that the structure has reused bricks or has been patched. It is feasible that it reached its final form in the 18th century or 19th century. The wall lies on the same alignment as foundation 14, but there was a narrow band of deposit (12) between the two suggesting that the wall although on the same alignment was later. Tile fragments were recovered from this deposit; though one piece could be medieval the others were post-medieval or 18th to 19th century. Cut 9 was a linear

0.38m wide with vertical sides. Brick structure 8 was a surface or feature placed in cut 9 and was bonded by a white yellow mortar being 0.38m wide. Deposit 19 was a compact grey clay 0.38m wide with whole brick inclusions.

Deposit 21 was a moderately compact grey silt clay with large tile and brick fragments 0.48m deep. Deposit 22 was a moderately compact brown silt clay 0.24m deep. Deposit 13 was a loose to moderately compact black grey silt clay with tile and brick inclusions 0.27m deep.

Deposit 23 was a moderately compact grey silt clay with flint rubble inclusions 0.68m deep, with the extent visible to 1m.

4.4 Phase 4: Late 19th century

Deposit (7) was a loose grey ash silt 0.32m deep and 0.75m across. Deposit (2) was a loose black ash and rubble fill with brick and tile inclusions. This contained a mixture of pottery including Red Earthenware, Creamware, and White Earthenware, which means that the deposit is either later 19th or early 20th century in date. The tile fragments examined were of a post-medieval or 18th to 19th century date. A late 19th century scent bottle was recovered from the deposit. This deposit also contained animal bone, a wet stone, and clay pipe. The nature of these two deposits is indicative of their being some type of industrial process being carried out, which has produced significant amounts of ash. No indication of direct burning (reddened deposits) was noted between the walls 6 and 11, but it was certainly the case that the residue of burning probably elsewhere was being dumped. As one of the major industries of Henley involved malting and beer production then it is likely that the site could be associated with this industrial process.

Cut 3 was a linear feature 0.3m deep and 4m long with an unknown width, but apparently having vertical sides and a flat base. Wall 4 was constructed of roughly worked flints forming the foundation of a wall orientated north to south and bonded with a yellow mortar sand. A piece of clay pipe was recovered from the construction of the wall.

Cut 25 was an oval or circular feature 0.5m deep and 1.5m across with moderately steep sides and a rounded base, which bottomed out on the top of wall 11. Fill 24 was a moderately compact grey silt clay. This feature may be the result of robbing earlier brick and materials.

4.5 Phase 5: Modern

Layer (1) was a loose to moderately compact yellow sand and gravel, which was interpreted as a make-up layer under the brick paving. Services cut this deposit and modern brick surfaces previously overlay it.

5 FINDS

5.1 Pottery (*By David Gilbert*)

Four sherds of post-medieval pottery weighing 432g were recovered from context (2), identified and not retained. It was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994):

Red Earthenware (REW), dated 1550+ - 1 sherd, 23g

Creamware (CRM), late 18th – early 19th century – 2 sherds, 346g

Mass-produced White Earthenwares (WHEW), mid 19th – 20th century – 1 sherd, 63g

Also recovered was a single unstratified sherd of Late English Stoneware (OXST) weighing 120g.

5.2 Building material (Brick and Tile)

Brick samples were recovered from one context, and tile was recovered from five contexts.

Two bricks were taken from wall 11. These bricks were of a similar size 230mm x 107mm x 47mm and of a red orange fabric with minimal inclusions of gravel and grit. These bricks could be late 16th to early 18th century. The wall also contained larger bricks 225mm x 107mm x 70mm indicating that these early bricks had been reused. This fabric was also a red orange material. A further unusual size brick 208mm x 70mm x 60mm was recovered from the site, but it was unstratified. The fabric colour was a yellow orange, and the brick is probably of an 18th or 19th century date.

Wall 14 produced the remains of a tile, which was badly fired and broke into 7 fragments weighing 370g. The fabric was a pale red colour with minimal inclusions, and contained a dowel hole. It was probably used as a bedding for a sill-beam and is probably from a structure of a later medieval or very early post-medieval date (14th to 16th century). Context (4) produced a tile fragment of a similar material weighing 65g, which was probably residual. This deposit had a residual tile fragment similar in fabric type to that found in wall 14. Context (12) produced three fabrics of a different variety ranging from a light orange with minimal inclusions, one of which had not oxidised properly in its core and could be of a later medieval origin. The other was a darker maroon red with frequent large grainy inclusions. Context (7) produced 8 sample fragments weighing 1419g. These were mainly an orange red fabric two of which were poorly oxidised internally. All was probably of a post-medieval date. Two fragments were unstratified weighing 153g. One of these was a red orange fabric shaped tile with a rounded lip. The other was a lighter orange fabric with inclusions which was not fully oxidised.

The only tile to be retained is from wall 14 and context (4), and the unstratified brick is to be retained.

5.3 Animal bone and shell

Animal bone was recovered from two contexts. Five fragments from context (2) weighing 230g. Ten fragments were recovered from context (18) weighing 392g. Context (18) also produced a single oyster shell. None of this is to be retained.

5.4 Other finds

A wet stone was recovered from context (2) weighing 126g and measuring 114mm x 45mm x 15mm. A clear glass bottle was recovered from context (7) weighing 34g and measuring 96mm with a diameter of 27mm and a neck diameter of 18mm. This is probably a late 19th century scent bottle (Walker 1999, 15). Clay pipes were recovered from three contexts (2) weighing 5g, (4) weighing 4g, and (7) weighing 4g, these are all stems and none is diagnostic.

The wet stone will be retained, but the glass and clay pipe will be discarded.

6 DISCUSSION

The archaeological watching brief uncovered a number of earlier phases of activity in the vicinity of Longlands House. The earliest phase was of a building of the late medieval period or very early post-medieval period and appeared to represent the remains of a narrow flint wall with a tile fillet, to the south of which there was a mortar and clay surface. The structure was probably constructed from the 14th to 16th century. It could feasibly be part of the original Longlands House of the bishop. These deposits were sealed by layers which had accumulated over the building outline, Phase 2.

Phase 3 saw the construction of a structure in the 18th to 19th century, which could have been associated with industrial processes. Phase 4 saw the filling of the Phase 3 sunken floor feature between walls 5 and 11 with ash debris. This may have occurred in the 19th century. All of this was sealed by a modern surface forming paving in the garden.

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 the County Museums' Store under accession number 2013.121.

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