JOHN MOORE HERITAGE SERVICES

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF

ON

1 HWF PIPELINE, WESTON- ON- THE GREEN,

OXFORDSHIRE.

NGR SP 5349 1828

On behalf of

Thames Water Utilities Ltd.

NOVEMBER 2007

REPORT FOR

Thames Water Utilities Ltd.
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Summary

A watching brief was conducted by John Moore Heritage Services during the work for a new section of sewer to the south of the Weston Manor Hotel in Weston-on-the - Green. Within the area located south of the moated manor site, a relatively high density of pottery ranging from the 13th to 14th centuries was found as well as a ditch. Finds of early Iron Age pottery immediately south of the moated site indicates activity of that date in the immediate vicinity. Roman pottery also suggests that the site was re-occupied in this period.

Within the easement, located west of the Chequers Inn, stone surfaces with complex inter-cutting ditches, gullies and pits dating to the early Iron Age indicate a probable settlement. Pottery of late Iron Age and early Roman date again suggest that this site was also re-occupied at a later date. A medieval pit and an assemblage of pottery indicate activity of that date on the same site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Site Location (Figures 1 and 2)

The pipeline was located in Weston-on-the-Green west of Northampton Road (B430). Two areas were archaeologically recorded. The first area was located near the south-east corner of Weston Manor, running south for 26m (centred at NGR SP 5345 1833). The second area was west of the Chequers Inn (NGR SP 5361 1793). The underlying geology of both areas is Oxford Clay.

1.2 Planning Background

In 2006, Thames Water Utilities Ltd submitted plans for the replacement and extension of the existing sewer network in Weston on the Green. It was proposed that there would be a replacement of sections of the older sewer network, to the north of the village, with an additional section being added to the southern end of the village to help take the flows experienced by the existing network. Due to the presence of archaeological remains, in the form of a moated site, Oxfordshire County Archaeological Services (OCAS) suggested a watching brief be carried out adjacent to the moated site.

1.3 Archaeological Background

The Roman road of 'Akerman Street' lies two miles to the north of the village of Weston-on-the-Green, and finds of coins with a Roman date have been recovered from this area.

The village of Weston-on-the-Green is first mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086. At the end of the 11th Century, Robert d'Oilly gave the church at Weston, and two tithes of the land of the Manor toward the foundation of St George's Chapel, which was built within Oxford Castle. In 1227 Henry d'Oilly gave the Manor at Weston to the Osney Abbey in Oxford. It remained in the possession of the Abbey until 1539 when, with the dissolution of the Monasteries, Henry VIII took possession of it. A year later, Henry gave the Manor to Lord John Williams of Thame.

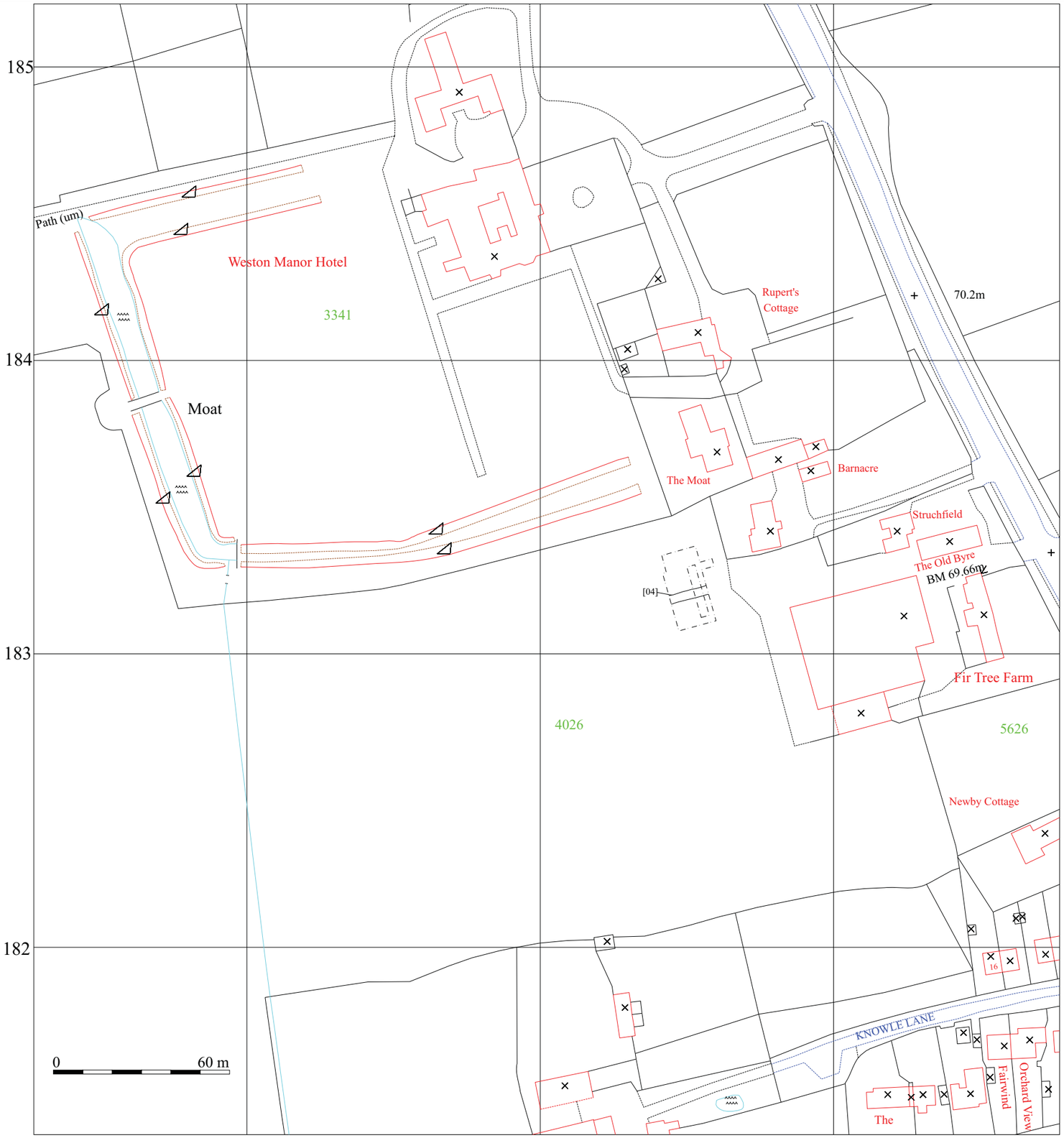


Figure 1. Site location for Area 1

Descendants of Lord Williams, the Norreys Bertie family, were owners of the Manor for 358 years until the break-up, and sale of the estate in 1918 after the heir had died in the Great War. Many fields surrounding the village display evidence for ridge and furrow cultivation in the medieval period.

The present façade of the Manor House was built in the 1820's in a Tudor style, it conceals a 16th century front which itself was a remodelling of the earlier medieval building (Sherwood & Pevsner, 1974). A medieval moat surrounding the manor survives as an earthwork on the north, west and south sides of the manor.

The 1st edition map of 1884 shows the area to the south of the manor as an open field.

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 any operations that may disturb or destroy archaeological remains.

- In particular: the complete recording of any remains associated with the medieval moat and Manor.

3 STRATEGY

3.1 Research Design

OCAS issued a Brief for the work, which John Moore Heritage Services carried out to a Written Scheme of Investigation agreed with OCAS. The recording was carried out in accordance with the standards specified by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (1994).

3.2 Methodology

An archaeologist continuously monitored the excavation of the 26m long easement south of the medieval moated area (Area 1; Fig. 1). A section across a ditch in the area was machine excavated under archaeological supervision in the position of the proposed pipe trench.

In addition open areas of easement were walked between Area 1 southwards to approximately SP 5364 1780. Surface finds in a lower ploughsoil indicated prehistoric activity at Area 2 (Fig. 2). Thames Water Utilities Ltd agreed that this area could be sampled excavated. Up to three archaeologists cleaned parts of the area where the pipe trench was to be excavated and sample excavated features over a three day period. The aim of the work in this area was to roughly date the activity and try to establish the nature of the remains. Limited time was available before the pipe trench was cut through the area. As such the time was spent cleaning two areas, retrieving finds for the top of features with limited sampling of some features.

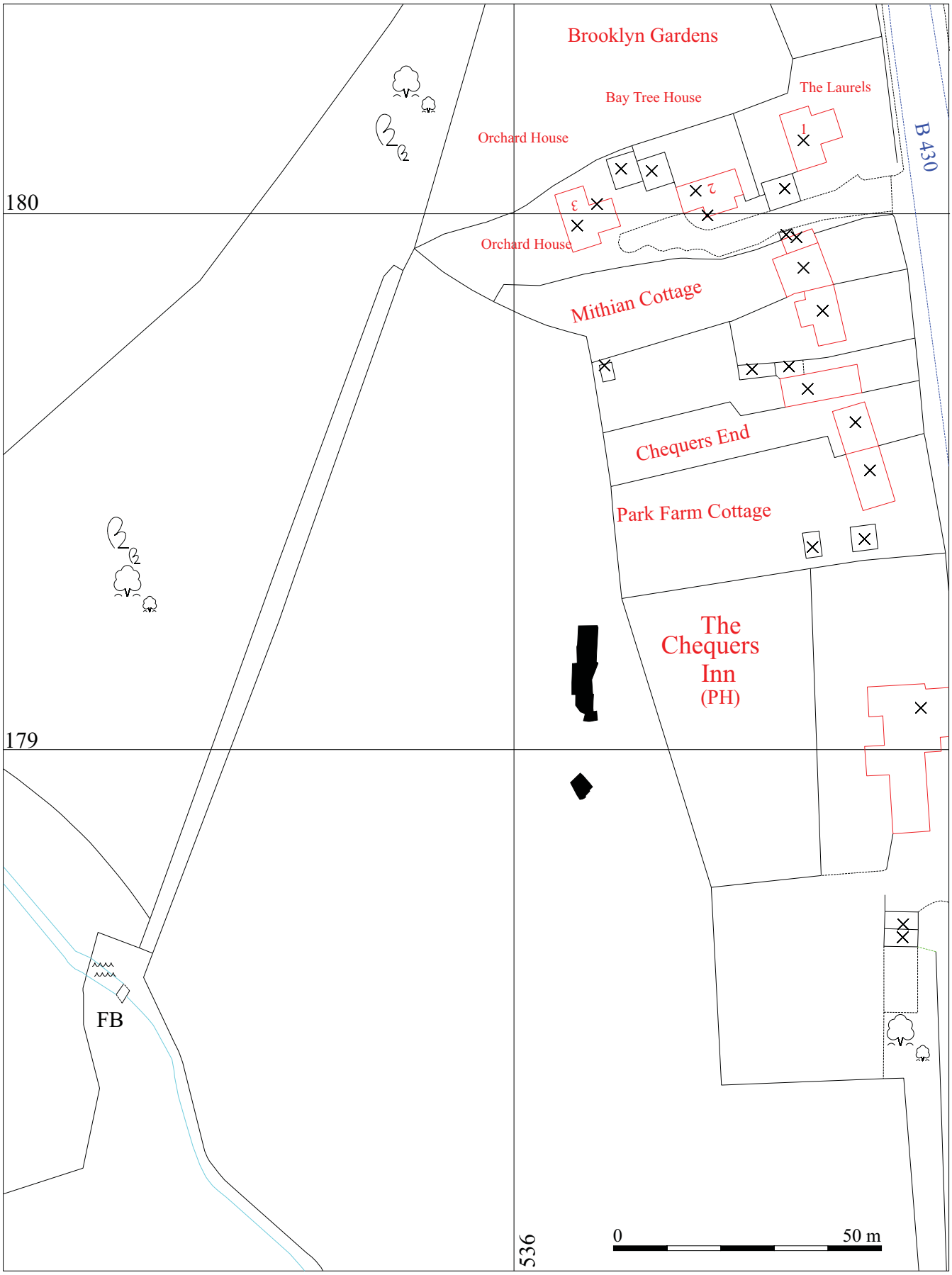


Figure 2. Site location for Area 2

Another area where topsoil stripping had taken place for an access to a work area was examined between SP 5417 1764 and SP 5365 1754. Here the topsoil spoil heaps were searched but no finds other than modern material was apparent.

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.

4 RESULTS

All deposits and features were assigned individual context numbers. Context numbers in [ ] indicate features i.e. cuts; while numbers in ( ) show feature fills or deposits of material.

4.1 Area 1: South of the Medieval Moated site (Figure 1)

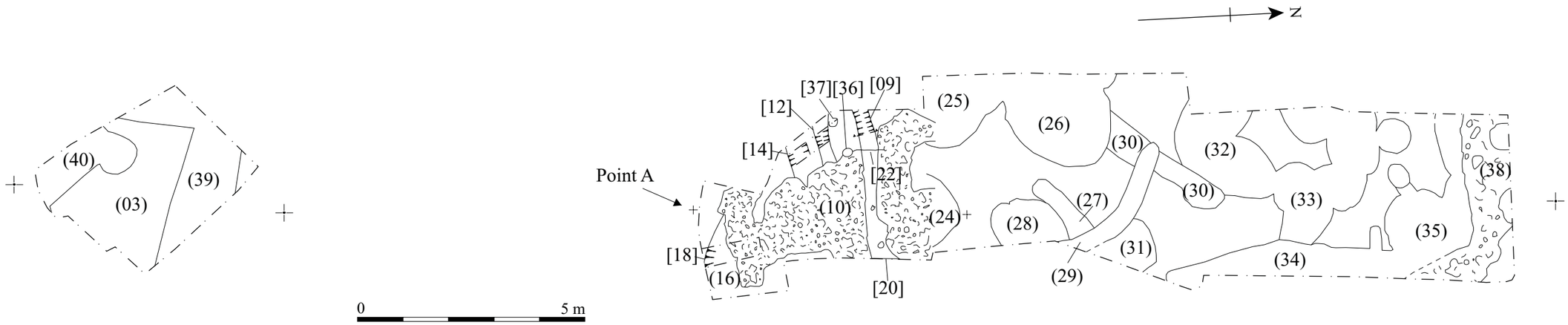
The lowest deposit seen was yellow and brown-yellow Oxford Clay with some large lenses of gravel (03). Overlying this natural deposit was an old ploughsoil, pale brown-grey friable clay (02) which contained a relatively high amount of pottery within the northern 5m of the easement. Above the old ploughsoil was the 0.03m thick modern ploughsoil, which was a mid grey-brown clay loam with 1-2% of small stone inclusions (01). The overall depth of the easement was 0.5m. Five sherds of pottery dating from the 13th to late 14th century came from old ploughsoil (02) in the northern 5m of the easement. No other medieval finds came from the rest of the easement here. Surprisingly 9 sherds of early Iron Age and 3 sherds of Roman date came from the same area of the old ploughsoil (02) as the medieval pottery, as well as a further sherd of early Iron Age date from the modern ploughsoil (01).

Within Area 1 and cutting the old ploughsoil (02) was a V-shaped profiled ditch [04] 0.60m deep and 3m wide. The lower part of the ditch appeared to have been deliberately filled with large limestone pieces and clay with the upper 0.15m of the ditch silting up with friable brown-grey, mottled orange, loamy clay. The mottling may have been caused by waterlogging of the ditch. This ditch is probably an old field boundary but must pre-date 1875 as no boundaries in this position are shown on any Ordnance Survey maps. No artefacts were seen within the part excavated.

4.2 Area 2: West of the Chequers Inn. (Figure 3)

Within this trench was a stone 'surface', which had been cut by at least one later feature and overlay earlier ditches, pits and gullies. Specifically, this surface (10) was cut by gully [9]. The surface was seen to overlie gullies [12], [14], and [22], and pits [20] and [18] and probably sealed other features. The western and northern edges were as shown on Figure 3. The surface continued beyond the limits of investigation to the east and part was excavated to expose part of pit [18].

Gully [14] was 0.7m wide and 0.35m deep with sides at 50^0 and a slightly rounded base. The north side was stepped (Fig. 4) suggesting that the later gully [12] may have been a later recut of an early cut of a gully here. The fill of [14] was a stiff yellow-brown slightly silty clay (13). The gully was cut on its north side by the later



Area 2

Figure 3. Plan of Area 2

gully [12], which was only 0.3m wide and 0.15m deep. This V-shaped gully had sides at 65^0 with the lower part of the south side at 40^0. The fill was a stiff dark brown-grey slightly silty clay with 1% charcoal (11). Gully [22] was orientated north/south and was exposed during excavation of later gully [09]. The gully was sealed by surface (10) and only the west edge was exposed during the excavation. This gully was filled by dark grey-brown sandy clay silt (23). Two sherds of early Iron Age pottery were retrieved from the fill.

A pit [20] was seen in the eastern baulk sealed by the surface (10). This was at least 0.8m in diameter and 0.4m deep. It had sides at 65^0 and a slightly rounded base and was filled by firm mid grey-brown silty clay with 5% small gravel (21). This was cut through by a later gully [09] which was not identifiable in section (Fig. 4). A further pit [18] was also seen to have been sealed by the cobbled surface. This ovoid pit was at least 1.8m in length E/W but appeared to be only 1.20m wide N/S. The south side was at 45^0 and the base appeared to be flat where excavated. The lower fill was a soft yellow-brown/dark brown-black silty clay with less than 1% charcoal (17). The upper fill was stiff yellow-brown sandy clay (16).

Early Iron Age pottery was recovered from fill (17) of pit [18] and fill (11) of gully [12].

A posthole (36) lay on the edge of the stone surface (10), while a further posthole (37) lay just to the west.

The stone surface (10) was composed of limestone rubble 50x50x15mm to 250x250x50mm in size in stiff orange-brown silty clay with 1% charcoal and 1% rounded limestone gravel. The layer was 0.2m thick at its maximum, not as a single layer of stone, and was seen to extend for *c*. 3m E/W and 5m N/S, continuing beyond the area cleaned to the east and south. The top of the 'surface' was uneven; this may have been due to later ploughing just clipping the top of the surface and raising some of the limestone. Alternatively this may not have been a surface but a demolition layer from a structure. A further spread of limestone (38) was seen at the north end of the area cleaned. Indications were that this continued further north but remnants of the old ploughsoil remained and its full extent could not be ascertained within the time limits.

About 40 fragments of animal bone came from the lower part of surface (10) during the small excavation of the material.

Cutting through the cobbled surface (10) was an east/west orientated gully [09] that was 0.3m wide and 0.2m wide. It had sides at between $50\text{-}60^0$ and a relatively flat base. The gully was filled with stiff mid brown-grey slightly silty clay with red-brown mottling and contained 1% charcoal flecks and the occasional burnt stone (08). This contained a relatively high quantity of early Iron Age pottery.

To the north were several intercutting pits and gullies that were exposed after machining off the surface (10). Only feature fills producing finds from their surfaces were numbered. At least a further three gullies [27], [29] and [30] were present. Again gully [30] produced a relatively high number of sherds from its upper fill. Pit fill (26) produced 321 sherds of early Iron Age pottery from its surface and top 1-2cms of fill

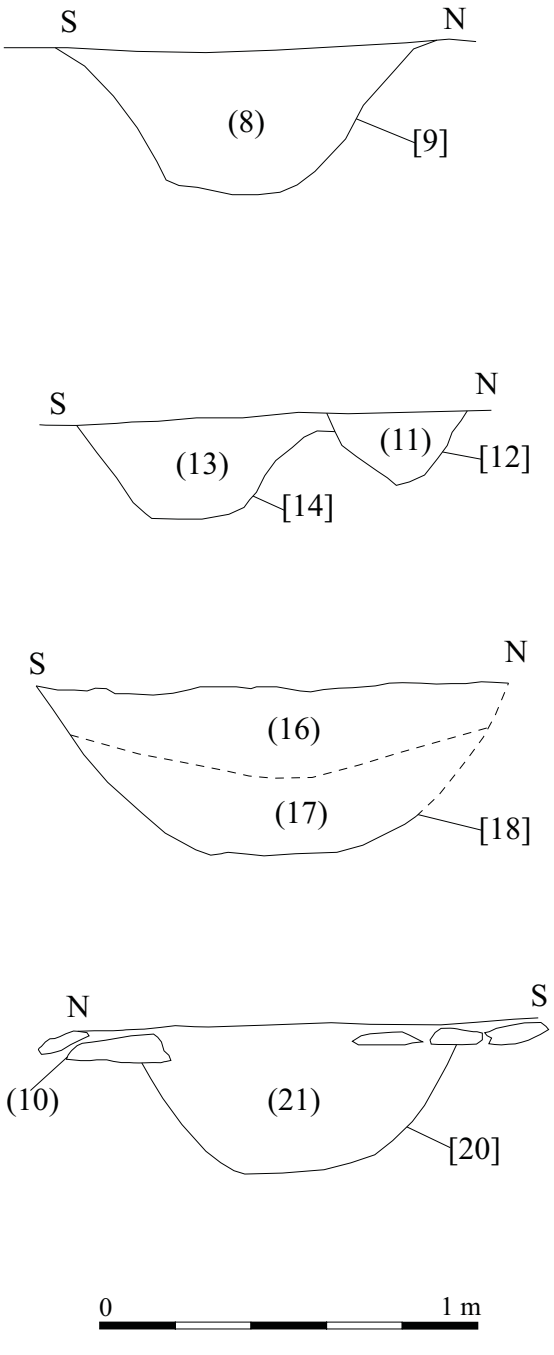


Figure 4. Area 2 Sections

along with 18 fragments of animal bone, three fragments of fired clay, and a bone tool. Part of a narrow copper alloy strap, possibly part of a bracelet, along with a possible fragment of an iron scythe was also retrieved from the pit fill (26). Given the large number of early Iron Age sherds, the sherd of late Iron Age to early Roman pottery is considered to be intrusive. 19 sherds of early Iron Age pottery came from pit fill (32).

Feature (34) a probable north/south orientated ditch produced a sherd of medieval pottery from its surface, which is considered to be intrusive through ploughing, while pit fill (35) produced seven sherds of late medieval pottery from its upper fill.

Of interest was the fill (28) of a pit that was a stiff yellow-green slightly sandy clay that contained *c*. 1% small fragments of fired clay.

Approximately 5m to the south of the main area, a small area was cleared of the lower ploughsoil. Here a right angled ditch [37] and a further possible ditch [38] intersecting with a pit were exposed. No finds were found in the surface of the feature fills.

Above the remains was a thin old ploughsoil underlying the topsoil. Finds from the lower ploughsoil were collected from the east side of the easement. The west side had been tracked over by machines and was too wet and compressed for collection. The finds were concentrated in a 20m length north of Point A (Figs. 2 & 3). Contexts (05 and (35) refers to this length with context (07) covering the rest of the easement northwards to the edge of the field and context (06) a 25m length south of Point A.

Context	Early Iron Age	Late Iron Age	Roman	Medieval	Post-medieval
05	140	8	5	26	7
06	2		1	2	
07				2	

Table 1. Number of sherds from lower ploughsoil

5 FINDS

5.1 The Iron Age and Roman Pottery *by Frances Raymond*

Introduction

The Roman and Iron Age assemblage is composed of 602 fragments, weighing 4154 grams. Apart from a small group of heavily abraded late Iron Age to Roman sherds (24 sherds, weighing 246 grams), the bulk of this material is of early Iron Age date, but displays characteristics which raise the possibility that activity may have continued into the early part of the middle Iron Age (578 sherds, weighing 3908 grams).

The pottery was analysed according to the guidelines of the Prehistoric Ceramics Research Group (PCRG 1997). The recorded traits included fabric, form, decoration,

surface treatment, colour, wall thickness, abrasion and sherd size. The material was quantified by context according to these categories and the results entered on a database, which is available as part of the project archive. This also includes detailed descriptions of the late Iron Age to early Roman wares.

The sorting by fabric was carried out with the aid of a binocular microscope set at a magnification of X20. The wares are identified by an alpha numeric code using the initial letters of the main inclusion types present followed by a number, which distinguishes between fabrics containing the same range of inclusions but in contrasting frequencies or size ranges. The letter codes relevant to this report include: C – calcareous inclusions composed of a mixture of limestone, ooliths and fossil shell; cl – clay pellets; O – ooliths; S – sand; and V – voids.

The assemblage includes a significant residual component increasing the likelihood that some of the sherds from later contexts are derived from the same vessels represented in the Iron Age horizons (joining rim sherds from a single vessel were identified in Contexts 26 and 28). The estimated vessel numbers were, therefore, not calculated for individual contexts, but for the site as a whole and the results are presented in Table 3.

The Earlier Iron Age Pottery

Eight contexts produced purely earlier Iron Age assemblages (Contexts 8, 17, 23, 29, 30, 31, 32 and 33), while two additionally yielded a few late Iron Age to Roman sherds (Contexts 27 and 28), but it is unclear whether these are derived from overlying horizons. A single rim fragment from a late Iron Age to early Roman bead-rim storage jar came from Context 26, but this is likely to have been intrusive since this horizon otherwise contained a large quantity of well preserved earlier Iron Age pottery. The rest of these ceramics are derived from medieval and later contexts and are residual (Contexts 1, 2, 5, 6, 11, 34 and 35).

At least 70% of the earlier Iron Age assemblage is in fresh condition or only lightly abraded. The pottery is, however, very fragmented with the majority of sherds being less than 5.0 centimetres across and the largest no more than 7.0 centimetres across. This has resulted in limited evidence for vessel profiles, with the majority of diagnostic sherds being derived from the rims and upper walls. The assemblages from the various contexts are very similar in character and there is no unambiguous ceramic evidence for chronological change. It is not possible to determine whether this is a product of the fragmentary character of the pottery and the small size of many of the groups, or whether it reflects activity of relatively short duration on the site.

Fabrics

Limestone is the predominant inclusion in virtually all of the earlier Iron Age fabrics. This and the other non-plastics would have been available locally and there is nothing to indicate that the pottery was being brought in from any distance. The majority of sherds (92% by number and 94% by weight) contain oolitic limestone (Table 2), which could have been derived from nearby outcrops of the Great and Inferior Oolite Groups.

All of the wares described below are hard and as is typical of clamp fired pottery are variable in colour. In spite of this there does appear to have been a preferred range of hues with many of the sherds having reddish brown to reddish grey exteriors, and a

lesser number being grey to dark grey. This may indicate that colour was being controlled as far as was possible given the technological limitations.

	FABRIC											
	CclOS/1; CclS/1		COS/1		CS/1		CS/2		V/1		Totals	
Context	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.	No.	Wt.
1	-	-	1	18	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	18
2	1	11	-	-	8	19	-	-	-	-	9	30
5	138	921	-	-	1	3	1	3	-	-	140	927
6	2	66	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	66
8	36	273	-	-	2	10	-	-	-	-	38	283
11	-	-	-	-	1	6	-	-	-	-	1	6
17	1	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	5
23	2	16	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	16
26	291	2005	-	-	30	196	-	-	-	-	321	2201
27	1	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3
28	9	57	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	57
29	9	55	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	9	55
30	18	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	18	80
31	1	33	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	33
32	19	117	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	19	117
33	1	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	4
34	2	3	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	3
35	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-	2	2	3	4
Totals	**531**	**3649**	**1**	**18**	**43**	**236**	**1**	**3**	**2**	**2**	**578**	**3908**

Table 2: The relative proportions of early Iron Age fabrics by context

CclOS/1 and CclS/1: are part of the same coarse fabric group that contains very common to abundant calcareous inclusions (0.2 to 4.0 mm.). Fragments of angular limestone are in the majority, but fossil shell and ooliths in up to moderate quantities are also present. In many of the sherds these calcareous inclusions have leached from the surfaces leaving a series of characteristically shaped voids. Sparse angular, iron-rich clay pellets (0.5 to 2.0 mm.) and moderate quantities of rounded, medium to coarse sand (0.25 to 1.0 mm.), composed of a mixture of quartz and quartzite, are additionally present.

COS/1: is a finer ware that also contains very common calcareous inclusions (0.1 to 2.0 mm.). Most of these comprise pieces of angular limestone, accompanied by fossil shell and ooliths in sparse quantities. Sparse frequencies of rounded, medium to coarse grained quartz sand (0.3 to 0.8 mm.) are also represented.

CS/1: is a medium grade fabric containing equal, common proportions of angular limestone (0.5 to 4.0 mm.) and rounded, medium to coarse sand (0.25 to 1.0 mm.) composed of a mixture of quartz and quartzite. Much of the limestone has leached from the sherds leaving a series of voids. Rare fragments of burnt flint (up to 3.0 mm.) and angular iron-rich clay pellets (up to 4.0 mm.) are also present.

CS/2: is a relatively fine fabric that contains common amounts of rounded medium to coarse sand (0.25 to 1.0 mm.) composed of a mixture of quartz and quartzite; and sparse calcareous inclusions visible as angular voids (0.5 to 2.0 mm.).

V/1: is a fine fabric that is characterised by common voids (0.5 to 2.0 mm.) with shapes that are typical of a combination of limestone and fossil shell. Rare grains of rounded, medium-sized quartz sand (0.3 to 0.5 mm.) are also represented.

Form, Decoration and Surface Treatment
The majority of sherds are featureless wall fragments (70% by count). Rims comprise 15%, bases/lower walls 14% and other featured sherds 1% of the assemblage. All of the bases/lower walls are plain and given the small sherd size provide little information about the character of the vessels from which they are derived. This is also the case with the other featured sherds that are largely from vessel necks and shoulders.

The stylistic evidence is mostly confined to the rims and upper vessel walls. The type series is illustrated in Figures 5 & 6 and the distribution of these by context is given in Table 3. Of the classifiable forms, expanded rims are in the majority (Table 3, ER1 to ER7, 56 sherds, 72%). T-shaped types are rare (Table 3, ER2) as are the internally expanded varieties (Table 3, ER7), with most being either flat topped and expanded externally (Table 3, ER1, ER3 and ER6, 31 sherds), or bevelled with an internal flange and an externally expanded or beaded outer lip (Table 3, ER4 and ER5, 23 sherds). The T-shaped and externally expanded varieties occur on open or neutral vessels, including some with well defined upright necks and a sharp angle at the top of the shoulders. Those with measurable diameters generally range between 20 and 24 centimetres, with one example of 12 centimetres (ER3). The internally expanded or bevelled forms tend to be used on closed barrel shaped vessels with high rounded or weakly angled shoulders. These have rim diameters of between 18 and 28 centimetres (ER4 and ER5), with one larger example of 34 centimetres (ER7). Decoration occurs on 16% of the expanded types and is limited to shallow fingertip rows on rim tops (Table 3, ER3 Dec.) or a pie-crust effect on the outer lip (Table 3, ER6 Dec.).

Rim Type	Residual	8	26	29	30	31	32	Total
	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.	No.
ER1	5	1	9 (3)	1	-	-	-	16 (3)
ER2	-	-	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
ER3	3 (2)	-	-	-	-	-	-	3 (2)
ER3 Dec.	3 (1)	1 (1)	3 (2)	-	-	-	1 (1)	8 (5)
ER4	5	1 (1)	13 (5)	-	1	-	-	20 (6)
ER5	2 (1)	-	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	3 (2)
ER6	1(1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
ER6 Dec.	1	2 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	3 (1)
ER7	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
R1	7 (3)	-	2 (2)	-	-	-	-	9 (5)
R2	1 (1)	-	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	2 (2)
R3	-	-	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
R4	-	-	2 (1)	-	-	-	-	2 (1)
R5	-	-	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
R6	-	1 (1)	4 (1)	-	-	-	-	5 (2)
R7	1 (1)	-	-	-	-	-	-	1 (1)
R8	-	-	-	1 (1)	-	-	-	1 (1)
Unclassifiable	4	1	1	-	-	-	-	6
Total	**34**	**7**	**38**	**2**	**1**	**1**	**1**	**84 (36)**

Table 3: Rim forms by context (estimated vessel numbers by type are in brackets)

Simple rounded or slightly beaded rims comprise 28% of the classifiable types (Table 3, R1 to R7, 22 sherds), but in contrast to the expanded rims none are decorated. A significant proportion of the simple forms (41%, 9 sherds; Table 3, R1) occur on vessels with well defined upright necks and a sharp angle at the top of the shoulders. Only one of these has a measurable diameter of 22 centimetres. Thirty-six percent of the simple rims are used on closed bipartite vessels, including some with weakly

angled shoulders (8 sherds; Table 3, R4, R6 and R8). Diameters of 20 and 22 centimetres could be measured for two of these.

Traces of surface treatment survive on 570 of the early Iron Age sherds. Virtually all have smoothed or wiped exteriors (557 sherds) with burnished fragments comprising only 2% of the assemblage (13 sherds). This finer finish was applied exclusively to the coarse ware vessels (Fabric CclS/1).

Assemblage Affinities
The ceramic repertoire echoes the range of forms occurring on sites in the Upper Thames valley with a distribution extending into north Oxfordshire, Northamptonshire and Gloucestershire. The expanded rims (Figure 5: ER1 to ER7) are particularly characteristic of the early Iron Age across this area and have a widespread distribution encompassing sites like Rainsborough Camp (Avery 1967) and Slade Farm, Bicester (Woodward, Marley and Williams 2001), to the north and north-east; Crickley Hill to the west (Elsdon 1994); Faringdon (Timby 2005), Stanton Harcourt (Hamlin 1968), Farmoor (Phase 1, Lambrick 1979) and Wytham Hill (Mytum 1987) to the south-west; Appleford (De Roche and Lambrick 1981) and Ashville (Period 1, De Roche 1978) to the south; and Chinor to the south-east (Harding 1972). Examples with decoration on rim lips most reminiscent of ER6 (Figure 5) were present at Blackbird Leys (Brown 2004, Figure 5: 2), Wytham Hill (Mytum 1987, Figure 3: 1-2), Appleford (De Roche and Lambrick 1980, Figure 4: 1-5), Chinor (Harding 1972: Plate 44, D), and on three other south Oxfordshire sites at Mount Farm, Blewburton Hill and Wittenham Clumps (Harding 1972: Plate 44, A-C and E-F). Decorated rims of this type on open vessels similar in character to the one from Weston-on-the Green occur at Appleford and Wytham Hill (eg. De Roche and Lambrick 1981, Figure 4: 4; Mytum 1987, Figure 3: 1-2). Fingertip rows along rim tops comparable to those on ER3 (Figure 5) are also characteristic of the early Iron Age and have been noted at Ashville (De Roche 1978, 41) and Stanton Harcourt (Hamlin 1968, Figure 7: 47, 51 and 52).

The forms with well-defined upright necks and a sharp angle at the top of the shoulder (Figures 5 & 6: ER3 and R1) are a component of contemporary assemblages as, for example, at Wytham Hill (Mytum 1987, Figure 4: 11, 13 and 19), Ashville (De Roche 1978, Figure 37: 61; Figure 39: 105) and Watchfield (Laidlaw 2002, Figure 13:1). These occur alongside closed barrel shaped vessels similar to ER7 (Figure 00) at Wytham Hill (Mytum 1987, Figure 3: 4) or comparable forms with bevelled rims reminiscent of ER4 and ER5 (Figure 00) at Appleford (De Roche and Lambrick 1981, Figure 4: 2). Closed barrel-shaped or ovoid vessels, some with hooked rims (Figure 6: R6) have also been noted amongst the early Iron Age vessel types from Farmoor (Lambrick 1979, Form B3, 37 and Figure 21:19), Stanton Harcourt (Hamlin1968, Figure 6: 1, 3, 4, 11, 16 and 26), Crickley Hill (Elsdon 1994, Form B3) and Slade Farm, Bicester (Woodward, Marley and Williams 2001, Figure 14: 2).

The fabrics are slightly at variance with the general preference noted in other early Iron Age assemblages for shelly wares, as for example, at Wytham Hill (Mytum 1987, 22), Ashville (De Roche 1978, Period 1, 47-50) and Farmoor (Lambrick 1979, Phase 1, 35-37). This contrast is not surprising given that most of the excavated groups are from Thames Valley locations to the south of Weston-on-the-Green. One of the few broadly contemporary assemblages from north Oxfordshire at Slade Farm, Bicester was dominated by shelly limestone (Woodward, Marley and Williams 2001, 233-

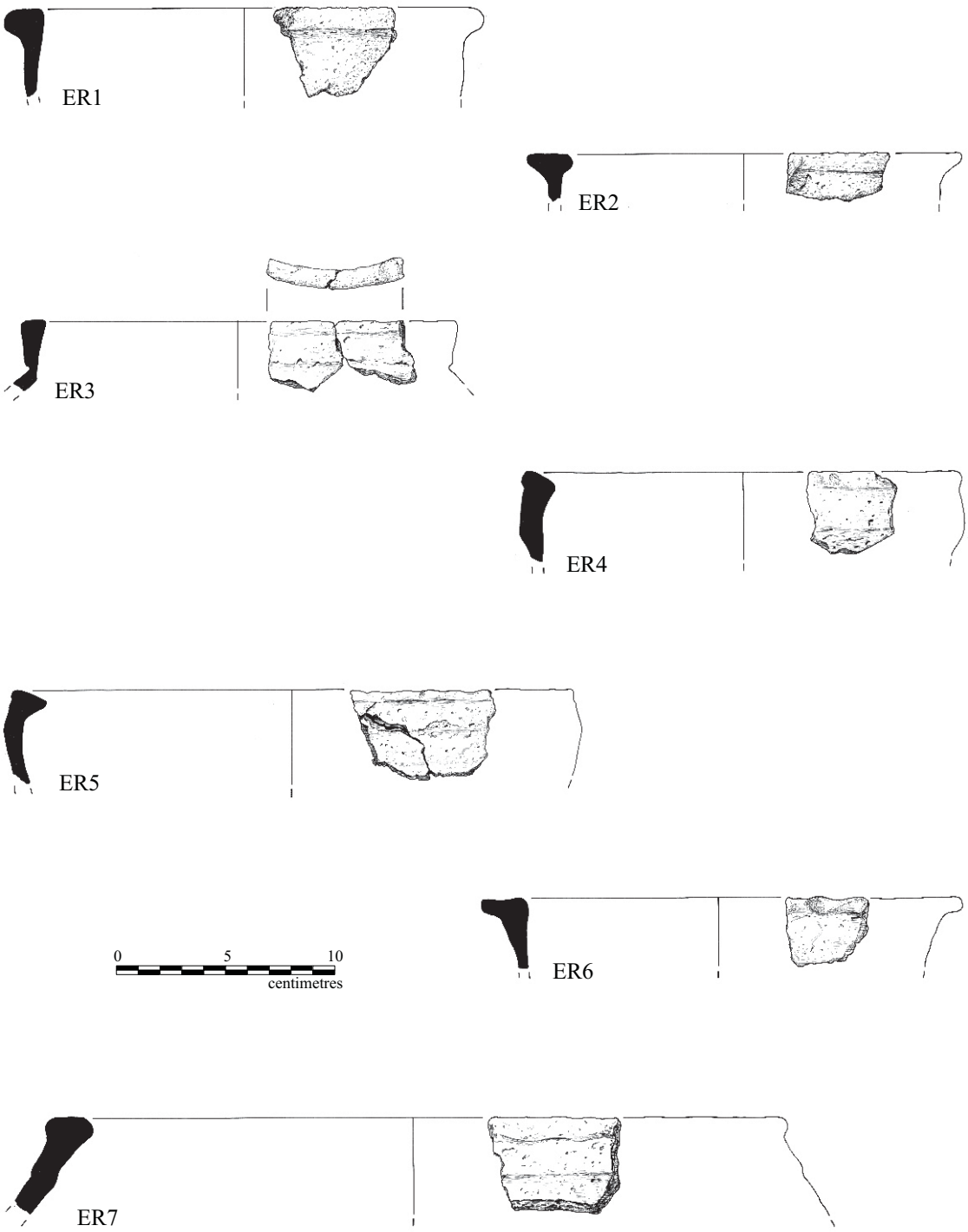


Figure 5. Early Iron Age Pottery

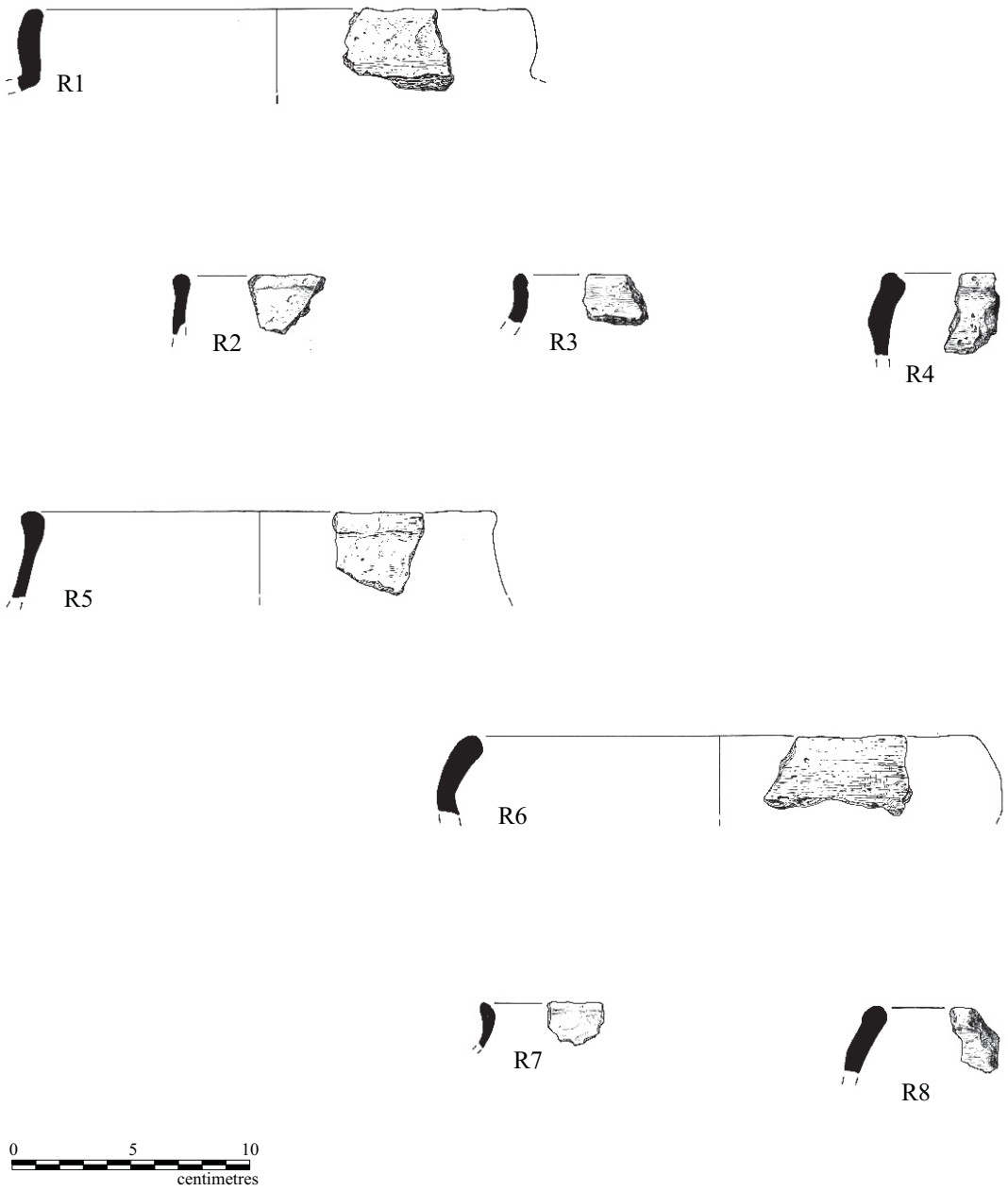


Figure 6. Early Iron Age Pottery

237). In contrast to traditions in the Thames Valley, this preference continued into the middle Iron Age (ibid.), a pattern which has been noted at Rollright (Lambrick 1988, 94-95) and Glympton Park near Woodstock (Booth 1998, 105-107).

Fossil shell is certainly present in the pottery from Weston-on-the-Green, but largely as a minor component of oolitic limestone. It seems probable that this simply reflects the use of readily available materials during a period when many communities appear to have been using ceramics that were predominantly produced locally (eg. Ashville, De Roche 1978, 69; and Farmoor, Lambrick 1979, 36), apparently continuing a tradition which extends back into the late Bronze Age in the Upper Thames valley on sites like Appleford (De Roche and Lambrick 1981, 45). Further afield in an analogous geological setting, the early Iron Age exploitation of local clay containing weathered oolitic limestone has been noted at Crickley Hill in Gloucestershire (Elsdon 1994).

The fragmented condition of the pottery, the occurrence of only one large *in situ* ceramic group from Context 26 and the limited nature of the excavations raise a number of questions over the precise chronology of the assemblage. It is unclear whether the key group from Context 26 is largely of one phase or whether it includes a residual component. This uncertainty allows for two possible interpretations. If the pottery is largely of a single period then a date towards the end of the early Iron Age for the bulk of the assemblage, when the new ceramic forms of the middle Iron Age were beginning to emerge, is likely. This is indicated by the restricted application of decoration to the vessel rims, the absence of carinated or sharply angled shoulders, the plain bases and the common occurrence of the barrel shaped vessels with expanded bevelled and flanged rims (ER4 and ER5) and weakly angled high shoulders. If, however, the assemblage is mixed (and this cannot be resolved on purely ceramic grounds) it is conceivable that some of the smaller groups, particularly that from Context 8, could signal an earlier phase of activity; and equally some of the barrel shaped forms may indicate continuity into the earlier part of the middle Iron Age.

The Late Iron Age and Roman Pottery

A small collection of late Iron Age to early Roman sherds (nine sherds, weighing 128 grams) was recovered from the lower ploughsoil (Context 5), while one isolated example (weighing 56 grams) came from Context 26 where it is likely to have been intrusive. Nine of the sherds are grog tempered and comprise five storage jar fragments (weighing 148 grams) including the bead rim from Context 26; and four sherds from smaller 'Belgic' vessels: one from a foot ring base and one wall fragment decorated with horizontal grooves. A date between AD 20/30 and the later part of the first century AD is likely for these sherds (cf. Booth 1997). The bead rimmed storage jar has a longer history of use extending to at least the mid-second century AD, while the grog tempered wall sherds from the other storage jars could be as late as the third century AD. The one remaining early Roman sherd is a small bead rim in a coarse grey ware of post-Flavian character, with a date range between the later first and mid-second centuries AD.

A further 14 sherds of Roman pottery (weighing 62 grams) came from the lower ploughsoils (three from Context 2 in Area 1, and eleven from contexts 5 and 35 in Area 2) and three other horizons (Contexts 27, 28 and 34 in Area 2). All are featureless fragments of coarse greyware which could have been produced at any time between AD 60/70 and AD 410.

5.2 Medieval and Post-medieval Pottery *by Paul Blinkhorn*

The pottery assemblage comprised 47 sherds with a total weight of 267g. It comprised a range of medieval and local wares, which indicated that there was activity at the site from around the time of the Norman Conquest to the end of the medieval period.

The pottery was recorded utilizing the coding system and chronology of the Oxfordshire County type-series (Mellor 1984; 1994), as follows:

OXAC: Cotswold-type ware, AD975-1350. 1 sherd, 2g.
OXBF: North-East Wiltshire Ware, AD1050 – 1400. 1 sherd, 22g.
OX234: Banbury ware, L 11th – L 14th century. 4 sherds, 24g.
OXBK: Medieval Shelly Coarseware, AD1100-1350. 2 sherds, 8g.
OXBB: Minety-type ware. Early 13th – 16th century. 1 sherd, 7g.
OXAM: Brill/Boarstall ware, AD1200 – 1600. 30 sherds, 158g.
OXCL: Cistercian ware, 1475-1700. 1 sherd, 3g.
OXDR: Red Earthenwares, 1550+. 2 sherds, 17g.
WHEW: Mass-produced white earthenwares, 19th - 20th C. 4 sherds, 10g.

In addition, a single sherd of residual Romano-British Greyware (16g) was noted in context 6. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Table 4. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*. The range of medieval pottery types is typical of a site in Northern Oxfordshire, comprising wares which are a staple of the Oxfordshire traditions, such as Brill Boarstall ware (fabric OXAM), material with a local source and restricted distribution (Banbury Ware) and those which are common in Northamptonshire, such as Shelly Coarseware. In addition, pottery from the Cotswolds which is common in Oxfordshire and the southern end of Northamptonshire (OXAC, OXBB) is also present. The range of pottery types present suggest that there was activity at the site throughout the medieval period, as most of the major pottery types associated with the period in the region are present.

Table 4: Medieval and post-medieval pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type

	RB		OXAC		OXBF		OX234		OXBK		OXBB		OXAM		OXCL		OXDR		WHEW		
Cntxt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	Date
2							1	7					4	49							13thC
5											1	7	20	83			2	17	4	10	19thC
6	1	16					1	9					1	7							13thC
7							2	8													L11thC
11			1	2	1	22															M11thC
34													1	3							13thC
35									2	8			4	16	1	3					L15thC
Total	1	16	1	2	1	22	4	24	2	8	1	7	30	158	1	3	2	17	4	10	

5.3 Animal Bone *by Linzi Harvey*

Introduction
A number of animal bone fragments were recovered during archaeological works at Weston-on-the-Green, Oxfordshire in 2007. In total 201 fragments were recovered by hand collection from a total of 7 contexts. The assemblage represents material recovered from an old ploughsoil (contexts 5 and 35), pit fills (contexts 26, 32 and 33), gully fills (context 8) and a deposit sealed by a cobbled surface (context 19). With the exception of deposit (5 and 35) these deposits are all Early Iron Age in date and some of the material in the lower ploughsoil (5 and 35) probably derived from Iron Age deposits being disturbed by later ploughing.

The following constitutes a brief assessment of the material and recommendations considering the assemblage's potential for future analysis.

Method
The method used to record this assemblage follows a modified version of the Davies (1992) system. Under this system specific zones of each skeletal element are included as 'countable'. In mammals, these are: upper and lower teeth; mandibles with at least one tooth *in situ*; cranium; atlas; axis; scapula (glenoid cavity); distal humerus; distal radius; proximal ulna; carpal 3, distal metacarpal; pelvis; distal femur; distal tibia; astragalus; calcaneum; distal metatarsal; phalanges 1, 2 and 3.

The assemblage was macroscopically examined using various published reference schemes where necessary. Bone fragments were identified to a broad species level and notes were made regarding the condition (preservation) of the bones within each context and other features such as evidence of bone working (butchery) or pathology. No attempt was made to separate sheep and goat during the assessment, nor was any attempt made to age or sex the assemblage.

Results
The condition of the faunal material in each context was generally poor. Much of the bone within each context was abraded with some degree of surface degradation. These characteristics suggest exposure to weathering before burial or more likely adverse burial conditions. The assemblage also contained a large amount of fragmentary unidentified material, particularly in contexts 5 and 19. There was no evidence of rodent or canid gnawing in the assemblage.

Marks from cutting were fairly uncommon in this assemblage, which may in part be due to the abraded nature of the bone fragments. Only 4 elements were seen to be deliberately cut; an *Equus* astragalus, *Equus*/*Bos* scapula, a large mammal long bone from context 5 and a cow scapula from context 35. These cut marks are appropriately placed for animal dismemberment and are probably evidence of butchery. There was no sign of pathology on any bone fragments.

36 skeletal elements were assessed as 'countable' or measurable in some way (Table 5). Most of these elements were teeth, with a few other complete or near complete bones. Over half of the countable elements were from *Equus* (horse, 17 in total) with smaller contributions from *Bos* (cattle, 7 countable elements), *Ovis/Capra* (sheep/goat, 7 elements), *Sus* (pig, 2 elements) and *Cervus* (deer, 2 elements). The most common species represented at Weston-on-the-Green is *Equus*, followed by *Bos*

and *Ovis/Capra*. There appears to be no relationship between feature type (pit, gully etc) and species represented. Although the overall predominance of *Equus* may be unusual in an Early Iron Age context, the assemblage is too small and incomplete to draw firm conclusions. On the most part, this assemblage reflects typical, probably domestic, animal use and rubbish disposal.

Table 5 – Animal bones by context. The figure in brackets represents the 'countable' elements.

Context	*Equus*	*Bos*	*Equus/ Bos*	*Ovis/ Capra*	*Sus*	*Cervus*	Bird	Misc. mammal	
5	13 (13)	5 (4)	8	15 (2)	2 (1)	1 (1)		50	
8				1 (1)				5	
19	4 (3)	1 (1)	1					43	
26				3 (3)	2 (2)		1	13	
32						1 (1)		1	
33			6					2	
35	4 (1)	3 (2)		2 (1)				14	
TOTAL	21 (17)	9 (7)	15	21 (7)	4 (3)	2 (2)	1	128	201 (36)

5.4 Other finds

Metal

Other notable finds within the collection from Weston-on-the- Green include a copper alloy strap or end of a bracelet, found lying on the upper surface of (26), one of the fills of the pits within Area 2. This was 42mm long, 5mm wide with a slightly rounded end and was slightly concave on the inside. An iron object may be part of a scythe surviving 48mm long, that was 28mm wide. It curves slightly and is thicker on the outside edge.

Bone

A bone object, possibly a fastening came from pit fill (26). This survived 107mm long with the extreme tip (estimate 1-2mm) broken off and the other end broken. The surviving top 50mm has five faces before the object becomes oval in section before tapering slightly on the broader sides and markedly on the thinner sides. The object is 15mm x 9mm across at the top, 11mm x 7mm where it becomes oval and 8mm x 4mm before it begins to taper significantly. At the last point there is a 1-2mm wide and 1mm deep notch across one of the wider faces 17mm form the surviving pointed end. On the opposite side there are two shallow worn notches 13mm and 15mm from the surviving end.

Fired clay

Small pieces of fired clay were retrieved from the old ploughsoil (05) and (35) 5 fragments; gully fill (08) 1 fragment; and pit fill (26) 3 fragments.

6 PALAEOENVIRONMENTAL REMAINS

No palaeoenvironmental remains were recovered during this watching brief.

7 DISCUSSION

Within Area 1, the density of medieval pottery, dating from the 13th to 14th century at the extreme northern end of stripped area suggests some refuse dispersal immediately outside of the moated site. From the map evidence, ditch [04] pre-dates 1875. Its location means that it formed the south side of a narrow plot of land *c*. 33m wide between the ditch and the moated manor site to the north.

The density of early Iron Age pottery (10 sherds) from the two ploughsoils within Area 1 indicates an area of activity of that date in the near vicinity. Three sherds of Roman pottery also suggest re-occupation of the site in that period as seen in Area 2 (see below). The activity/occupation site may have been the site of the moated site, which may have been on a slightly elevated piece of ground. The 70m contour coincides with the south arm of the moat. Also a small stream lies just to the west. This postulated site lies *c*. 500m north of the site of similar dates as found in Area 2 and also 2km south of Akeman Street.

All the features investigated within Area 2 belonged to the early Iron Age. It is possible that some unexcavated features may have dated to the later Iron Age or Roman periods. However it is considered that the later occupation was in the near vicinity perhaps adjacent to the earlier site where 'clean' ground was utilised. The presence of the later material may have come from rubbish dispersal not involving the digging of pits or through manuring if this area was utilised for agriculture.

Too little of the archaeological remains were exposed to understand the function of the early Iron Age activity. The activity, as indicated from the early Iron Age pottery collected from the lower ploughsoil and the features found, was probably linear in an east/west orientation concentrated in approximately a 40m wide strip. Only 2 sherds were found to the south of the main (6) and none to the north (7). Even allowing for a possible difference in conditions caused by the machine stripping, approximately 10 sherds of early Iron Age pottery should have been present both to the north and south of the main 20m strip given the numbers of the medieval sherds found in the three areas of collection in the lower ploughsoil (5, 6, 7).

Enough was seen to say that the activity was intensive with many intercutting pits and gullies. The curving gullies are unlikely to be drip gullies associated with buildings as their entrances are to the unpractical north-west or west from which the prevailing winds originate. The stone surfaces appear to be for heavy duty use and may be associated with an industrial activity of some sort although no associated artefacts or apparent residues were present.

The bone assemblage is limited and little can be read from it except that horse is as common as cattle in the assemblage excluding the lower ploughsoil (5).

The nearest known early Iron Age site in the area is a boundary found at Slade Farm, Bicester some 7.5km to the north-east (Ellis *et al* 2001). Here middle Iron Age ring gullies were also found. Two of the gullies were typical of house sites while two may have been the site of structures used for animals. There is no indication of middle Iron Age activity in the two areas examined at Weston-on-the-Green. Late Iron Age pits and a possible oven were also found at Slade Farm.

The Roman activity indicated by pottery in both areas at Weston-on-the-Green may be small farmsteads operating in the hinterland of the Roman town of Alchester approximately 4.5km to the east. Further early Roman activity in the form of a low-status rural site has been found a further 2km east of the Roman town at Oxford Road, Bicester (Mould 1997).

The amount of medieval pottery in Area 2 is of interest. At least one pit (35) must be of late medieval date given the number of 15th century sherds from its upper fill. It is possible that further features are of medieval date although it is considered highly likely that the pottery in fill (11) of gully (12) that is partly sealed by the stone surface (10), and that in probable ditch (34), is intrusive through later ploughing. The medieval activity in the vicinity of Area 2 appears to start in the 13th century and may be part of a farmstead or house plot lying on the south edge of the medieval village.

8 ARCHIVE

Archive contents
The Archive consists of the following:

Paper record

The project brief	The project report
Written Scheme of Investigation	The primary site records
Photographic record	

Artefacts

The pottery	Animal bone
Metalwork	Fired clay

The archive currently is maintained by John Moore Heritage Services and will be transferred to the County Museums' Store under accession number 2006:144.

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