

Houghton Primary School Houghton Cambridgeshire



Archaeological
Evaluation Report



November 2008

Client: Mouchel Parkman

OA East Report No: 1075

OASIS No: 51765

NGR: TL 2807 7215

**Archaeological Evaluation
At Houghton Primary School**

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Summary

This Report represents a statement on the archaeological evaluation carried out at Houghton primary school Cambridgeshire TL 2807 7215 in October 2008. The archaeological work undertaken by Oxford Archaeology East was in advance of the construction of four new classrooms on what is currently a playground. The archaeological evaluation produced features in the form of pits and ditches and finds both ceramic and metallic dating from the medieval period.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at Houghton Primary School Cambridgeshire, TL 2807 7215
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Andy Thomas of Cambridgeshire County Council, supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (formerly Cambridgeshire County Council's CAM ARC).
- 1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CCC, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.
- 1.1.4 The site archive is currently held by OA East and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

1.2 Geology and topography

Houghton is situated between Huntingdon and St Ives on the north bank of the River Ouse. The geology consists of sands and gravels of the First to Second River Terrace (BGS 1993). The evaluation area lies approximately 250m north of the River Ouse. The rectangular street pattern of the roads in the village may suggest that Houghton is not a village which has evolved from Saxon times but is more likely to have been planned and laid out at one particular time and has evolved since then. Clues may lie in the rectangular pattern of the roads. Two parallel roads exist running North-South one from White Bridge to the mill (St Ives road and Mill street) the other formed by Chapel Lane (running parallel to the evaluation site) and Laughton's lane. At right angles to these are huntington road and Thicket road and lanes.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

- 1.3.1 The site lies in the historic core of the village of Houghton close to the medieval church of St Mary and immediately north of the post-medieval Houghton Chapel.
- 1.3.2 Various previous archaeological works have taken place in the village.
- 1.3.3 Six articulated skeletons were uncovered adjacent to the north wall of St Marys during evaluation for a new meeting room (ECB2718 – Davies et al 2007).
- 1.3.4 Two watching briefs have taken place at St Margarets church to the west revealing disarticulated human remains in the topsoil (ECB565 – Taylor 1995; ECB389 Roberts 1998).
- 1.3.5 Various works have taken place at Houghton Mill south-west (ECB 212 – Way 1998; ECB 1058 – Wainwright 1997; ECB2445 – Timberlake and Dickens 2006).

- 1.3.6 An evaluation at The Elms, Thickett Road, at the eastern edge of the village, produced only natural features (ECB2539 – Cooper and Muldowney 2007)
- 1.3.7 An early Saxon hut was revealed by excavations by the River Ouse in 1902 (ECB2651).
- 1.3.8 Work at the waterworks, to the south-east of the village, in 1936 and 1940 finds from the Iron Age, Roman and Saxon periods (ECB 696 – Garrod 1947).
- 1.3.9 Close to the waterworks at Rabbit Hill, flints and a Roman coin were found in a trench through a rabbit warren in 1929 (ECB695 – Coote 1937).
- 1.3.10 19 test pits were excavated in the village in 2005-6 as part of Cambridge University's 'Currently Occupied Rural Settlement' Project.
- 1.3.11 Finds from Mesolithic, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, Medieval and post-medieval periods were found though there was a notable absence of 15th-16th century material.
- 1.3.12 Prehistoric flints are common in the HER in and around Houghton eg HER 01672, 01673, 01674, 01703.
- 1.3.13 Roman pottery and other finds have also been found (eg HER 01913, 01941e, 02671).
- 1.3.14 A Saxon inhumation was found at The Elms in c 1873 (HER 02654) and a Saxon bronze saucer brooch has also been found (HER 02695).
- 1.3.15 Thus extensive remains from all periods have been found in and around Houghton meaning the potential for this evaluation is high, though the proximity to a medieval church suggests this period has the highest potential.

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank the client, Mouchel Parkman. The project was managed by James Drummond Murray. James Fairbairn carried out the evaluation with the assistance of Dawn Mooney and Hazel Butler.
- 1.4.2 The brief for the archaeological works was written by Andy Thomas, who monitored the evaluation.

2 AIMS AND METHODOLOGY

2.1 Aims

- 2.1.1 The objective of this evaluation was to determine as far as reasonably possible the presence/absence, location, nature, extent, date, quality, condition and significance of any surviving archaeological deposits within the development area.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 The Brief required that a single 20m x 2.0m trial trench, located within the bounds of the playground, be excavated.
- 2.2.2 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless ditching bucket.
- 2.2.3 The site survey was carried out by Taleyna Fletcher using a Leica Total Station Theodolite and then tied into the Ordnance Survey grid. Individual trench plans showing feature locations were then incorporated with the surveying data.
- 2.2.4 Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned with a metal detector. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.
- 2.2.5 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and colour and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 2.2.6 The volume of bulk soil samples collected was between 10 – 20L
- The total volume of each sample were processed by water flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flots were collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residues were washed through a 1mm mesh. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residues were passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for ecofacts (e.g. animal bone, fish bone, charcoal, shell, etc..) and artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification. Identifications were made by the author without comparison to the OA East reference collection and should be seen as provisional. Nomenclature for the plant classification follows Stace (1997).
- 2.2.7 Conditions on site were sunny and dry. A small amount of water was visible at the base of the deeper ditches. Access to the deeper ditch sections was restricted due to the depth of the features and the unstable trench walls. The width of the eastern third of the evaluation trench was truncated by a modern service pipe running east- west. A smaller bucket width was used in this part of the evaluation trench.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 One evaluation trench was dug in the confines of the school playground and is discussed below.

3.2 Trench 1 (See fig 2)

3.2.1 A total of thirteen archaeological features were found in trench 1. These features consisted mainly of pits, contexts **101,103,107,109,111,113,114,115,121,125** and **127**. Also found were two large ditches features **117** and **119** a small gully **105** and a possible post hole **123**.

3.2.2 Context **101** consisted of a small shallow ovular pit 0.72m wide x 0.21m deep containing a single dark greyish brown silty clay fill (100). A single sherd of medieval pottery from the mid 9th to mid 12th century was found within the fill.

3.2.3 Context **103** consisted of a small sub circular shallow pit 0.62m wide x 0.17m deep. The single fill (102) consisted of dark brown silty clay fill containing four sherds of pottery dating from the mid 13th to mid 14th centuries.

3.2.4 Context **107** consisted of a small circular pit 0.64m wide x 0.17m deep. The single orangey brown silty clay fill (106) contained 3 sherds of pottery dating to the mid 11th to mid 12th centuries.

3.2.5 Context **109** consisted of a small shallow ovular pit 0.89m wide x 0.20m deep. The single dark orange silty clay fill (108) contained a single piece of pottery dated to the mid 12th to mid 14th century.

3.2.6 Context **111** consisted of a small sub oval pit 0.60m wide x 0.13m deep. The dark orangey brown silty clay fill (110) contained no finds.

3.2.7 Context **113** consisted of a circular pit with a diameter of 0.80m and a depth of 0.30m. The pit contained a single dark orangey brown silty clay fill (112) this fill contained no finds. This pit was truncated by pit .

3.2.8 Context **115** consisted of pit larger than those in the immediate area, it had a diameter of 1.70m and a depth of 0.70m. This pit had a single dark brown silty clay fill (114) which contained 29 sherds of pottery dating to the 14th century and a single sherd of possible Saxon pottery.

3.2.9 Context **121** consisted of a shallow sub circular pit with a diameter of 1.0m and a depth of 0.32m. The pit contained a single mid to light brown sandy silt clay fill (120). The fill contained 4 sherds of pottery dating to the mid 13th to mid 14th century.

3.2.10 Context **125** consisted of a circular pit with a diameter of 1.30m and a depth of 0.40m. The single mid brown sandy silty clay fill (124) contained 32 sherds of pottery dating to the 14th century.

3.2.11 Context **127** consisted of a small shallow pit with a diameter of 0.30m and a depth of 0.06m. The single fill (126) consisted of a mid brown sandy silty clay. No finds were found within the pit.

3.2.12 A small shallow NE-SW running gully **105** was excavated in trench one, this was linear in plan with steep sides and a flat base. This feature was found to be truncated by pit **103** and ditch **117**. This feature contained a single dark greyish brown silty clay

material(104). Two pieces were found within its fill. Pottery, one sherd was dated to the late 12th to early 15th century. The second small abraded pot sherd was dated to the 6th century and was thought to be from a funerary vessel. The funerary vessels ornamentation appears to be horizontal lines with chevrons and stamps. Although the sherd is too small to be sure of the complete design, the surviving fragment shows three horizontal grooves below which is a group of stamps within a chevron which is bounded by two incised lines, only a very small portion of the second line survives. Myres when discussing chevron decoration with stamped schemes attributes the pottery to the 6th century (Myres 1977 p51). A recommendation has been made that the sherd from a possible funerary vessel be examined by a specialist, this will be done in conjunction with any pottery finds from future work. If no future work is undertaken then this piece will be sent to a specialist in due course.

- 3.2.13 Also found in trench one were two large parallel ditches **117** and **119**. These were both linear in plan with steep sides with a N-S orientation. Ditch **117** had an estimated width of 1.40m and an augured depth of approximately 2.10m. Feature **119** had an estimated width of 1.32m and an augured depth of approximately 2.10m. Concerns about trench stability made any more accurate dimensions difficult to ascertain. Both features had similar dark brown silty clay fills (116) and (118). Only fill 116 produced finds. These consisted of pottery dating from the mid 13th to 14th centuries and two small finds a medieval chest key (small find 1 see plate 2) and a clunch spindle whorl of the medieval period (small find 2 see plate 3). Environmental sample no. 3 taken from the fill of **117** contained wheat, barley and charred grass/hay and the faunal finds from this fill consist of scapulae and tibiae of the common frog some of which were burned suggesting separate depositions. A small fragmented bird femur was also recovered likely belonging to the family *rallidae*, which includes coots, moor hens and rails. These faunal deposits may suggest that when in use this ditch may have contained at least some water (See appendix E). Both fills were heavily truncated by the construction of the modern playground, (see section No.8).
- 3.2.14 A possible post hole **123** was found in the base of pit **121**. This post hole had a diameter of 0.08m and a depth of 0.10m, the sides were vertical and it had a flat bottom. Its single mid to light brown sandy silty clay fill (122) contained no finds. It is uncertain whether the post hole has any relationship to pit **121**.
- 3.2.15 All archaeological features were sealed by modern disturbance relating to the present school playground and to earlier phases of the school buildings. Local knowledge suggests that brick foundations (131) relate to a toilet block that existed in the school playground in the early part of the twentieth century and the chalky deposit (135) is a foundation layer of the present school play ground. The modern playground consists of asphalt.

3.3 Finds Summary

- 3.3.1 Artefactual evidence suggests that there is a strong possibility that the pottery recovered could be from domestic assemblages from the early to late middle ages. The two small finds of a medieval chest key and a clunch spindle whorl also add to the evidence of local domestic activity. A single decorated pottery sherd from a 6th century funerary vessel may suggest a Saxon cremation or burial could also be located close to the site. A Saxon inhumation was recorded at the Elms, Houghton (CHER

Number:02654) in the early 1870s, this was located approximately 500m from the excavation area.

3.3.2 Environmental Summary

3.3.3 Environmental evidence also suggest probable local domestic activity. The plant remains were dominated by cereal grains which may have been accidentally burnt whilst being dried for storage or cooking. The small amount of animal bone, mussel shell and fish scale present are also probably derived from small quantities of domestic refuse. Also found were remains of saw-sedge a material which was used in some instances for thatching, although the serrated edge of the reeds inhibited this if a better material was available, the charred nature of this deposit could suggest that saw-sedge was being used as fuel.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1.1 Although the evaluation at Houghton Primary School was restricted to a single 20m trench, it did provide a valuable insight into the locality during the medieval period. The numerous small pits discovered, both intercutting and discreet may suggest quarrying of the local gravels possibly for the construction of house platforms or yard activity associated with existing buildings. During the medieval period less favourable areas of land were being settled and farmed and the small pits discovered here maybe indicative of the associated quarrying practice. Quarrying is usually carried out on the on the edge of the proposed occupation area and as in the case at Houghton would probably become backfilled with a mixture of plough and sub soils with occasional pottery, the deliberate deposition of large amounts of domestic waste on rural sites is unlikely, more likely being reserved for a medieval urban context. The two parallel ditches discovered in the evaluation trench could possibly be enclosure ditches relating to a phase of medieval Houghton although this is hard to state with any surety due to the relatively small evaluation area the ditches do run parallel to Church Lane and the Saxon church of St Mary's which lies approximately 180mtrs to the east. These ditches may run south to the River Ouse which is a natural southern boundary to Early Houghton. Any future archaeological evaluation or excavation work would be helpful in determining a more definate use of these ditches. Just inside these ditches test pitting in 2005-6 by Cambridge university as part of their Currently Occupied Rural Settlement Project produced pottery dating to the medieval period.

4.2 Significance

4.2.1 This small evaluation has provided a valuable insight to medieval Houghton. The discovery of two possible parallel enclosure ditches may give a western extent to the village in the medieval period. This along with the discovery of small quarry pits may be an indication of the expansion of the village. Any further archaeological investigation could add significantly that already known about Medieval Houghton.

4.3 Recommendations

4.3.1 Recommendations for any future work based upon this report will be made by the County Archaeology Office.

APPENDIX A. TRENCH DESCRIPTIONS AND CONTEXT INVENTORY

Trench 1						
General description				Orientation		E-W
Trench one contained numerous shallow pits dating to the medieval period. Two large parallel ditches were also found, all features were sealed by a silty clay subsoil and darker silty clay ploughsoil, which in turn was sealed by a modern asphalt playground.				Avg. depth (m)		0.60
				Width (m)		2.00
				Length (m)		20.00
Contexts						
context no	type	Width (m)	Depth (m)	comment	finds	date
136	Layer	-	0.09	Modern asphalt playground	-	-
137	Layer	-	0.18	Modern playground foundation	-	-
138	Layer	-	0.22	Dark silty clay plough soil	-	-
139	layer		0.15	Mid to dark brown silty clay subsoil		
120	Fill	1.0	0.32	Mid to light brown sandy silty clay of 121	Medieval pottery	Mid 13th-14 th Century
121	Cut	1.0	0.32	Shallow sub circular pit		
122	Fill	0.08	0.10	Mid to dark brown sandy silty clay fill of 123		
123	Cut	0.08	0.10	Possible post hole		
124	Fill	1.30	0.40	Mid brown sandy silty clay fill of 125	Medieval pottery and animal bone	Mid to late 14 th Century
125	Cut	1.30	0.40	Sub circular pit		
126	Fill	0.30	0.06	Mid brown sandy silty clay fill of 127		
127	Cut	0.30	0.06	Small shallow ovular pit		
100	Fill	0.72	0.21	Dark greyish brown silty clay fill of 101	Medieval pottery	Mid 9 th to mid 12 th century
101	Cut	0.72	0.21	Small shallow ovular pit		
102	Fill	0.62	0.17	Very dark brown clay, silt fill of 103	Medieval pottery	Mid 13th-14 th Century
103	Cut	0.62	0.17	Small shallow sub circular pit		
104	Fill	0.43	0.14	Dark greyish brown silty clay fill of 105	Early to late Medieval pottery	6 th Century and Mid 12 th to late 15 th century
105	Cut	0.43	0.14	Small linear gully running NE-SW truncated by pit 103		
106	Fill	0.64	0.17	Dark orangey brown silty	Medieval	Mid 11 th to mid 12 th

				clay fill of 107	pottery	century
107	Cut	0.64	0.17	Circular pit		
108	Fill	0.89	0.20	Dark orangey brown silty clay fill of 109	Medieval pottery and animal bone	Mid 12 th to mid 14 th century
109	Cut	0.89	0.20	Shallow oval pit		
110	Fill	0.60	0.13	Dark orangey brown silty fill of 111		
111	Cut	0.60	0.13	Sub oval pit		
112	Fill	0.80	0.30	Dark orangey brown silty clay fill of 113		
113	Cut	0.80	0.30	Circular pit truncated by 115		
114	Fill	1.70	0.70	Dark brown silty clay fill of 115	Medieval pottery	14 th century
115	Cut	1.70	0.70	Cut of large pit, truncating 113		
136	Layer		0.08	Modern asphalt surface		
130	Layer		0.26	Modern playground foundation		
128	Fill		0.50	Brick foundations relating to the earlier phase of school building		
129	Cut		0.50	Cut of brick foundation trench relating to an earlier phase of school building		
116	Fill	3.80	1.40	Dark brown silty clay layer of 117	Medieval pottery, animal and amphibian bone, a clunch spindlewh orl and a medieval bronze key	Mid 13 th to 14 th century
117	Cut	3.80	1.40	Cut of a possible large enclosure ditch		
140	Lens	1.40	0.08	Light brown sandy lens. Possible slippage of edge of ditch 117		
131	Fill	0.92	0.68	Brick foundations relating to an earlier phase of school building.		
132	Cut	0.92	0.68	Cut of brick foundation trench relating to an earlier phase of school building		
133	Layer		0.26	Modern playground		

				foundation		
134	Layer	0.92	0.25	Chalky deposit probably relating to the foundations of the modern school playground		
135	Layer	0.64	0.14	Chalky deposit probably relating to the foundations of the modern school playground		
118	Fill	3.40	1.32	Dark brown silty clay fill of 119		
119	Cut	3.40	1.32	Cut of a possible large enclosure ditch		

APPENDIX B. POTTERY ASSESSMENT BY CAROLE FLETCHER BAAIFA

Summary

The archaeological evaluation on land at Houghton Primary School, Houghton, Cambridgeshire produced a small pottery assemblage of 126 sherds, weighing 1.630kg, including unstratified material and 39 sherds (0.163kg) recovered from samples. The material recovered is mainly medieval, mid 12th to mid 14th century and late medieval. In addition small sherds of Early Saxon pottery were recovered including a single decorated sherd from a 6th century funerary vessel. The condition of the overall assemblage is moderate abraded and the average sherd weight (excluding sample material) is moderate at approximately 16g.

B.1 Introduction

- B.1.1 The archaeological evaluation on land at Houghton Primary School, Houghton, Cambridgeshire produced a small pottery assemblage of 126 sherds, weighing 1.630kg, including unstratified material and 39 sherds (0.163kg) recovered from samples. The material recovered is mainly medieval, mid 12th to mid 14th century with some larger late medieval sherds. No pottery dating to later than the end of the 15th century was recovered. In addition a number of sherds of Early Saxon pottery were identified including a single decorated sherd from a 6th century funerary vessel, suggesting a Saxon cremation or burial may be located close to the site. A Saxon inhumation was recorded at The Elms, Houghton (CHER Number:02654) in the early 1870s, the location of which is approximately 500m from the area of excavation.
- B.1.2 The condition of the overall assemblage is moderate abraded and the average sherd weight (excluding sample material) is moderate at approximately 16g.
- B.1.3 Ceramic fabric abbreviations used in the following text are:

BRILL	Brill-Boarstall ware
DNEOT	Developed St Neots
GRIM	Grimston Ware
HUNFSW	Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware
LYST	Lyveden-Stanion B ware
MEL/MELT	Medieval Ely/Medieval Ely Type ware
NEOT	St Neots ware
POTT	Potterspury ware
SAX	Saxon pottery
SHW	Shelly ware
STAM	Stamford ware
THET	Thetford ware
UGBB	Unglazed Grimston-Blackborough End Type
UNK	Unknown

B.2 Methodology

- B.2.1 The basic guidance in the Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2) has been adhered to (English Heritage 1991). In addition the Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG) documents Guidance for the processing and publication of medieval pottery

from excavations (Blake and Davey, 1983), A guide to the classification of medieval ceramic forms (MPRG, 1998) and Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics (MPRG, 2001) act as a standard.

- B.2.2 Dating was carried out using OA East’s in-house system based on that previously used at the Museum of London. Fabric classification has been carried out for all previously described types. All sherds have been counted, classified and weighed. All the pottery has been spot dated on a context-by-context basis.
- B.2.3 The pottery and archive are curated by OA East until formal deposition.

B.3 Assemblage

Fabrics

- B.3.1 The assemblage includes five Early Saxon sherds including a moderately abraded sherd from a 6th century decorated funerary vessel. The remaining Early Saxon sherds are quartz temperd and abraded, all the Early Saxon material is residual within medieval contexts.
- B.3.2 NEOT sherds and THET are present in the assemblage, many of the NEOT sherds are small and abraded having been recovered from samples. STAM sherds are also present including a jar with a collared rim, a rim form which Killmurry suggests does not appear until the third quarter of the 11th century (Killmurry 1980 p130). This may indicate that some if not all of the NEOT, STAM and THET sherds are post conquest and therefore early medieval in date.
- B.3.3 Medieval fabrics include unglazed HUNFSW, MEL/MELT, SHW and UGBB, glazed vessels in a variety of fabrics are also present including BRILL, GRIM, LYST and POTT which appears in the 14th century and continues into the late medieval period when LMEL makes its first appearance. No 16th century or later fabrics were recovered from the excavation.

Forms

- B.3.4 Jars are the most common form within the assemblage as figure 1 illustrates with are found most frequently in SHW and UGBB fabrics. Jugs are present in both glazed and unglazed fabrics of all periods, including STAM and THET, medieval BRILL, GRIM, LYST, MELL and 14th century POTT. Bowls are present in only medieval MEL/MELT fabrics

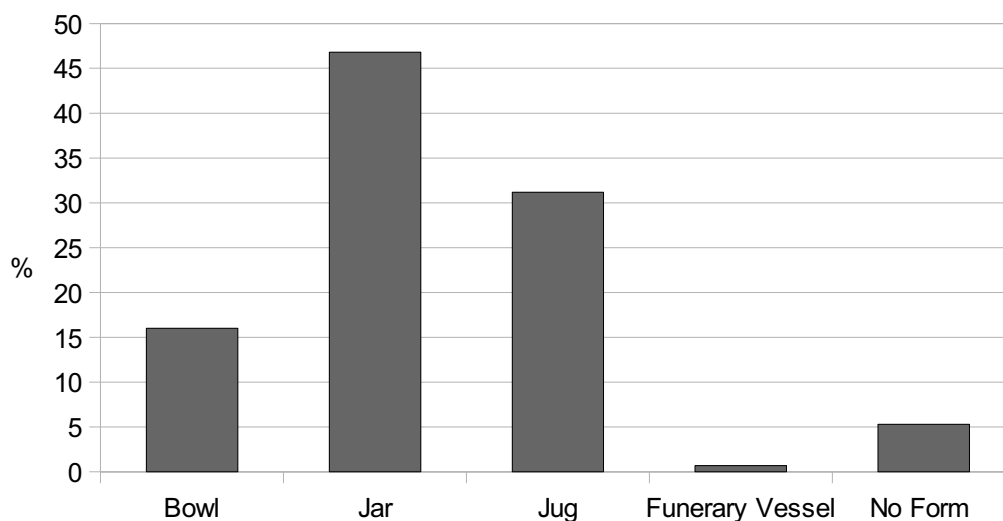


Figure 1: Vessel Type as Percentage of Stratified Assemblage (by weight kg)

- B.3.5 The funerary vessels ornamentation appears to be horizontal lines with chevrons and stamps. Although the sherd is too small to be sure of the complete design, the surviving fragment shows three horizontal grooves below which is a group of stamps within a chevron which is bounded by two incised lines, only a very small portion of the second line survives. Myres when discussing chevron decoration with stamped schemes attributes the pottery to the 6th century (Myres 1977 p51).

Provenance

- B.3.6 The Early Saxon pottery is likely to be a local product, however it requires specialist examination. The Late Saxon or early medieval STAM is produced in Lincolnshire and THET from Norfolk and NEOT from Bedfordshire-Huntingdonshire area. The medieval and late medieval fabrics are local, HUMFSW from Huntingdonshire and MEL/MELT from Ely and from the surrounding counties of Buckinghamshire (BRILL), Norfolk (GRIM), and LYST and POTT from Northamptonshire.

B.4 Sampling Bias

- B.4.1 Where samples have been taken the pottery recovered has been assessed and included in this report. No preservation bias has been recognised and no long-term storage problems are likely.

B.5 Conclusion

- B.5.1 This is a small domestic assemblage and almost all the material is moderately abraded, suggesting some reworking after initial deposition. There are no complete vessels, The small sherd from the 6th century funerary vessel is the only sherd worthy of illustration and full statistical analysis is not viable. Despite this there is a strong indication of medieval domestic activity although the assemblage is too small to be certain if this is a true reflection of pottery usage.

B.6 Statement of Research Potential

- B.6.1 An assemblage of this size can provide only basic dating information for a site, however the presence of a moderately abraded sherd from an Early Anglo-Saxon (6th century) funerary vessel alongside moderately abraded medieval sherds and unabraded late medieval sherds suggests that area evaluated has potential to produce a significant assemblage that will offer insight into the occupation of Houghton from the 6th century to the end of the 15th. Further work will need to be undertaken if additional excavation is carried out.

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DATING TABLE

Context	Fabric	Basic Form	Sherd Count	Sherd Weight (Kg)	Spot dating Date Range for contexts
100	NEOT		1	0.005	Mid 9th-mid 12th century
102	MEL	Jug	2	0.065	13th-mid 14th century
	STAM	Jar	1	0.006	
	UNK		1	0.001	
104	Saxon	Jar (funerary urn)	1	0.011	Mid 12th- end of 15th century
	UGBB	Jar	1	0.003	
106	NEOT	Jar	1	0.004	Mid 11th-mid 12th century
	STAM	Jar	1	0.010	
	THET	Jug	1	0.028	
108	DNEOT	Jug	1	0.015	Mid 12th-mid 14th century
112	DNEOT	Jar	1	0.004	Mid 12th-mid 14th century
	MEL	Jar	2	0.007	
	MELT		2	0.006	
	UGBB	Jar	1	0.012	
114	BRILL	Jug	2	0.009	14th century
	GRIM	Jug	2	0.006	
	HUNFSW		1	0.003	
	LYST		1	0.002	
	LYST	Jug	1	0.019	
	MELT		6	0.005	
	MELT	Bowl	14	0.111	
	POTT		1	0.013	
	POTT	Jug	1	0.002	
	Saxon		1	0.003	
116	DNEOT		1	0.009	13th-mid 14th century
	GRIM	Jug	1	0.003	
	HUNFSW		1	0.001	
	MEL	Jar	1	0.010	

<i>Context</i>	<i>Fabric</i>	<i>Basic Form</i>	<i>Sherd Count</i>	<i>Sherd Weight (Kg)</i>	<i>Spot dating Date Range for contexts</i>
	MEL	Jug	9	0.284	
	NEOT		3	0.003	
	Saxon		1	0.001	
	SHW	Jar	16	0.411	
	UGBB	Jar	10	0.184	
120	MEL		1	0.005	13th-mid 14th century
	MEL	Jug	1	0.006	
	UGBB		2	0.010	
124	DNEOT		1	0.003	Mid 14th-later 14th century
	GRIM	Jug	1	0.003	
	HUNFSW		1	0.001	
	LMEL	Bowl	1	0.057	
	LMEL	Jar	1	0.049	
	LYST	Jug	4	0.056	
	MEL	Bowl	1	0.092	
	MELT	Jar	3	0.009	
	NEOT		9	0.007	
	Saxon		2	0.002	
	SHW	Jar	2	0.037	
	STAM	Jug	1	0.012	
	UGBB		2	0.008	
	UGBB	Jar	3	0.017	

APPENDIX C. FAUNAL REPORT BY CHRIS FAINE

Only one identifiable fragment was recovered from the hand collected bone assemblage in the form of a cattle sternal rib (proximal end). Identifiable material from environmental samples were recovered from sample <3> , context 116. These consisted of scapulae and tibiae from an anuran amphibian; most likely common frog (*Rana temporaria*). Interestingly some of the frog remains show signs of burning whilst some are intact, suggesting separate periods of deposition. In addition a single fragmented bird femur was recovered also from context 116. Whilst an identification to exact species was not possible, the element most likely belongs to the family *rallidae*, which includes coots, moorhens and rails. However, on size grounds alone coot or moorhen is by far the most likely identification. It is uncertain whether this represents food remains as there would be little need to butcher what is a relatively small bird, thus leaving few traces on the bone itself.

References

Albarella, U. and Davis, S.J.M. 1994. *The Saxon and Medieval animal bones excavated from West Cotton, Northamptonshire*. London: English Heritage AML Report 17/94. Davis, S.J.M. 1992. *A rapid method for recording information about mammal bones from archaeological sites*, London: English Heritage AML Report 19/92.

APPENDIX D. ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT BY RACHEL FOSBERRY

Summary

Four bulk samples were taken from a variety of features within the confines of the evaluated area. The results of the flotation of these samples suggest that there is good preservation of plant remains.

D.1 Introduction

- D.1.1 Four bulk samples were taken from features within the evaluated areas of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains, bones and artefacts and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.
- D.1.2 Features sampled include secure archaeological contexts within three pits and a possible ditch.

D.2 Methodology

- D.2.1 The volume of bulk soil samples collected was between 10 – 20L
- D.2.2 The total volume of each sample were processed by water flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flots were collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residues were washed through a 1mm mesh. Both flots and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residues were passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting fraction prior to sorting for ecofacts (e.g. animal bone, fish bone, charcoal, shell, etc..) and artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flots were examined under a binocular microscope at x16 magnification. Identifications were made by the author without comparison to the OA East reference collection and should be seen as provisional. Nomenclature for the plant classification follows Stace (1997).

D.3 Results and Quantification

Table 1 summarises the results obtained

Sample Number	Context Number	Cut Number	Feature Type	Flot contents	Residue Contents
1	114	115	Pit	wheat and barley, fish scale, small vertebra	Animal bone, small bone, mussel shell, pottery
2	102	103	Pit	charred grass/hay, saw sedge, docks, silaceous globules	Animal bone, small bone, fired clay, pottery
3	116	117	Ditch	wheat and barley charred grass/hay	Animal bone, small bone, mussel shell, pottery, fired clay, burnt stone
4	124	125	Pit	wheat, fish scale, saw-sedge nutlet, un-id seed case, charred bramble, clover	Animal bone, small bone, mussel shell, pottery, fired clay

D.4 Preservation

D.4.1 The plant remains were preserved by carbonisation.

D.5 Plant Remains

Cereals

D.5.1 Charred cereal grains are present in all of the samples in quantities of between 9 and 27 grains. The cereals were mixed with both wheat (*Triticum* sp.) and barley (*Hordeum* sp.) occurring in each sample. No chaff elements were present.

Weed seeds

D.5.2 Several small seeds were noted in the samples including docks (*Rumex* sp.), clover/medick (*Trifolium/Medicago* sp.), grass (*Poaceae* sp.) seeds, brambles (*Rubus* sp.) and Saw-sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) nutlets.

Other plants

D.5.3 Charcoal was present in all of the samples in small densities. Saw sedge (*C.mariscus*) leaf fragments were noted in Samples 2 and 4.

D.6 Ecofacts and Artefacts

D.6.1 The majority of the samples contained fragments of animal bone and occasional sherds of pottery. Fragments of mussel shell occur in Samples 1, 3 and 4. Amphibian bones and fish scales was noted.

D.7 Contamination

D.7.1 Modern roots were present in most of the samples

D.8 Discussion

D.8.1 The plant remains in this assemblage are dominated by cereal grains. The grains may have been accidentally burnt while being dried prior to storage or during cooking over open fires prior to being deliberately deposited or accumulating in features as general scatters of burnt refuse.

D.8.2 The other remains of fragments of animal bone, mussel shell and fish scale along with the charred grain are probably derived from the deposition of small quantities of burnt domestic refuse

D.8.3 Saw-sedge is an important fenland resource that is traditionally used for thatching. The leaf blades have serrated edges that make it unsuitable for flooring etc. and also difficult to harvest. The presence of charred remains of leaf fragments and also nutlets (type of seed) in this assemblage may have arisen from the use of old thatch as fuel.

D.9 Conclusions and recommendations

D.9.1 The preliminary appraisal of a selection of samples from this site have shown that there is excellent potential for the recovery of plant remains.

D.9.2 If further excavation is planned, sampling should be undertaken as investigation on the nature of cereal waste and possible weed assemblages is likely to provide an insight into to utilisation of local plant resources, agricultural activity and economic evidence from this period.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Stace, C., 1997 *New Flora of the British Isles*. Second edition. Cambridge University Press

APPENDIX E. SMALL FINDS AND CLAY PIPE REPORT

By Carole Fletcher BA AIFA

With Contributions by Alasdair Brooks BA MA DPhil

Summary

The archaeological evaluation on land at Houghton Primary School, Houghton, Cambridgeshire produced two objects recorded as small finds, a stone spindle whorl and a copper alloy key both medieval in date. In addition a single fragment of clay pipe c.1780-c.1820 was also recovered.

E.1 Condition

E.1.1 The non-ferrous key is in a reasonable condition being only moderately corroded, however the item is partially covered in what may be reeds or straw, possibly from its burial environment or floor covering where it was originally lost. The spindle whorl has some surface cracking although it appears to be stable, and the clay pipe is in good condition.

E.2 The Assemblage

E.2.1 The artefacts in this assemblage fall into three distinct functional categories as defined by Crummy 1988, these are: 3. the manufacture or working of textiles, 5. recreational purposes and 11. fastenings and fittings.

E.2.2 Unfortunately all artefacts were recovered from undated contexts, both the spindle whorl and the key were recovered from context 116 and the clay pipe from 104. While the clay pipe is quite closely datable, the other objects are less so and at time of writing no phasing information for the site was available.

E.3 Category 3 (the manufacture or working of textiles)

4.3.1 SF2 Context 116: A complete biconvex spindle whorl of pale grey calcareous siltstone/mudstone (Clunch) d 35mm; h 25mm, weight 38.5g. Faint turning lines are visible and the stone is cracked around the circumference for approximately half of its diameter. Egan catalogues various calcareous siltstone/mudstone whorls from London excavations and suggests that the purpose made stone whorls displaced earlier bone and ceramic whorls (Egan 1998 p256) and that lead whorls were increasingly used in the late medieval period (Egan 1998 p261). This suggests that the Clunch whorl may be 13th or early to mid 14th century.

E.4 Category 5 (recreational purposes) identified by Alasdair Brooks

E.4.1 A single fragment of clay pipe including both the stem and part of the base of a moulded bowl, was recovered from context 104. While the object is too fragmentary for specific identification, it appears to be a rib-moulded bowl with spur (rather than heel), as is typical of the period c.1780-c.1820. Part of a maker's mark survives on the spur, but is too damaged for further identification.

E.5 Category 11 (fastenings and fittings)

E.5.1 SF1 Context 116: A near complete copper-alloy rotary chest key with a lozenge shaped bow, hollow square sectioned stem and an ornate bit. The lozenge shaped bow has suffered some damage having lost one of the terminal ends or knobs from one side the lozenge. Length 88mm. Possibly 14th or 15th century.

E.6 Recommendations

E.6.1 Conservation for the copper-alloy key (SF1)

E.6.2 A detailed catalogue and discussion of the objects (SF1 and SF2) with references to comparable pieces where appropriate.

E.6.3 The copper-alloy key (SF1) should be drawn to illustrate the report.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Crummy, N. 1988 The post-Roman small finds from excavations in Colchester 1971-85, Colchester Archaeological Report 5
- Egan, C. 1998 The Medieval Household Daily Living c.1150-c.1450 Medieval Finds From Excavations In London:6

APPENDIX F. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-51765		
Project Name	Evaluation at Houghton Primary School, Cambridgeshire.		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	27-10-2008	Finish	31-10-2008
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	No

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	HOUHOP08	Planning App. No.	N/A
HER No.	ECB 3049	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Planning condition
Development Type	Public Building

Please select all techniques used:

<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - interpretation	<input type="checkbox"/> Grab-Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
<input type="checkbox"/> Aerial Photography - new	<input type="checkbox"/> Gravity-Core	<input type="checkbox"/> Sample Trenches
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Environmental Sampling	<input type="checkbox"/> Photogrammetric Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Vibro-core
<input type="checkbox"/> Fieldwalking	<input type="checkbox"/> Photographic Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysical Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Rectified Photography	

Monument Types/Significant Finds & Their Periods

List feature types using the [NMR Monument Type Thesaurus](#) and significant finds using the [MDA Object type Thesaurus](#) together with their respective periods. If no features/finds were found, please state "none".

Monument	Period	Object	Period
Pits	Medieval 1066 to 1540	Key	Medieval 1066 to 1540
Ditches	Medieval 1066 to 1540	Spindle whorl	Uncertain
	Select period...		Select period...

Project Location

County	Cambs	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	Huntingdon	Houghton Primary School Chapel Lane, Houghton, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE28 2AY
Parish	Houghton	
HER	Cambs	
Study Area	20sqm	National Grid Reference TL 2807 7215

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	CACPA
Project Design Originator	James Drummond Murray
Project Manager	James Drummond Murray
Supervisor	James Fairbairn

eastProject Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
Location ...OA east	Location ...OA east	Location ...OA east
Accession ID ...HOU	Accession ID ...HOUHOP08	Accession ID ...HOUHOP08




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Ceramics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Environmental	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Glass	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Human Bones	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Industrial	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Leather	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Digital Media	Paper Media
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<input type="checkbox"/> GIS	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Context Sheet
<input type="checkbox"/> Geophysics	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Correspondence
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Images	<input type="checkbox"/> Diary
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Illustrations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Drawing
<input type="checkbox"/> Moving Image	<input type="checkbox"/> Manuscript
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<input type="checkbox"/> Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Matrices
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
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	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Drawing Conventions

Plans

Evaluation Trench	—————
Deposit - Conjectured	-----
Natural Features	—————
Limit of Excavation	- - - - -
Intrusion/Truncation
Illustrated Section	————— S.14
Archaeological Deposit	
Excavated Slot	
Archaeological Feature	
Cut Number	118

Sections

Limit of Excavation	- - - - -
Cut	—————
Cut-Conjectured	-----
Deposit Horizon	—————
Deposit Horizon - Conjectured	-----
Intrusion/Truncation
Top Surface/Top of Natural	—————
Break in Section/ Limit of Section Drawing	- - - - -
Cut Number	118
Deposit Number	117
Ordnance Datum	18.45m OD ^
Stone	
Brick	

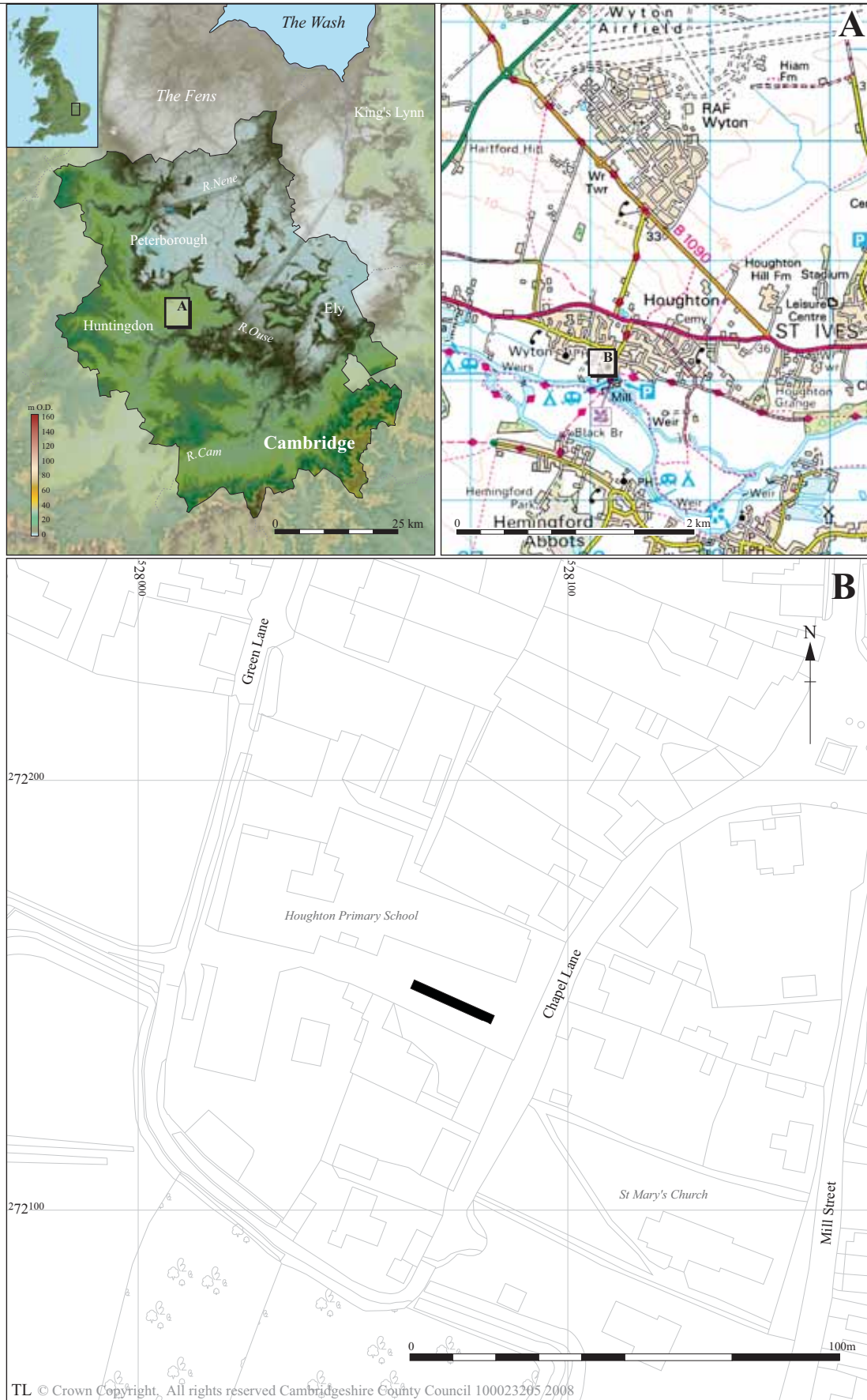


Figure 1: Location of trench (black)

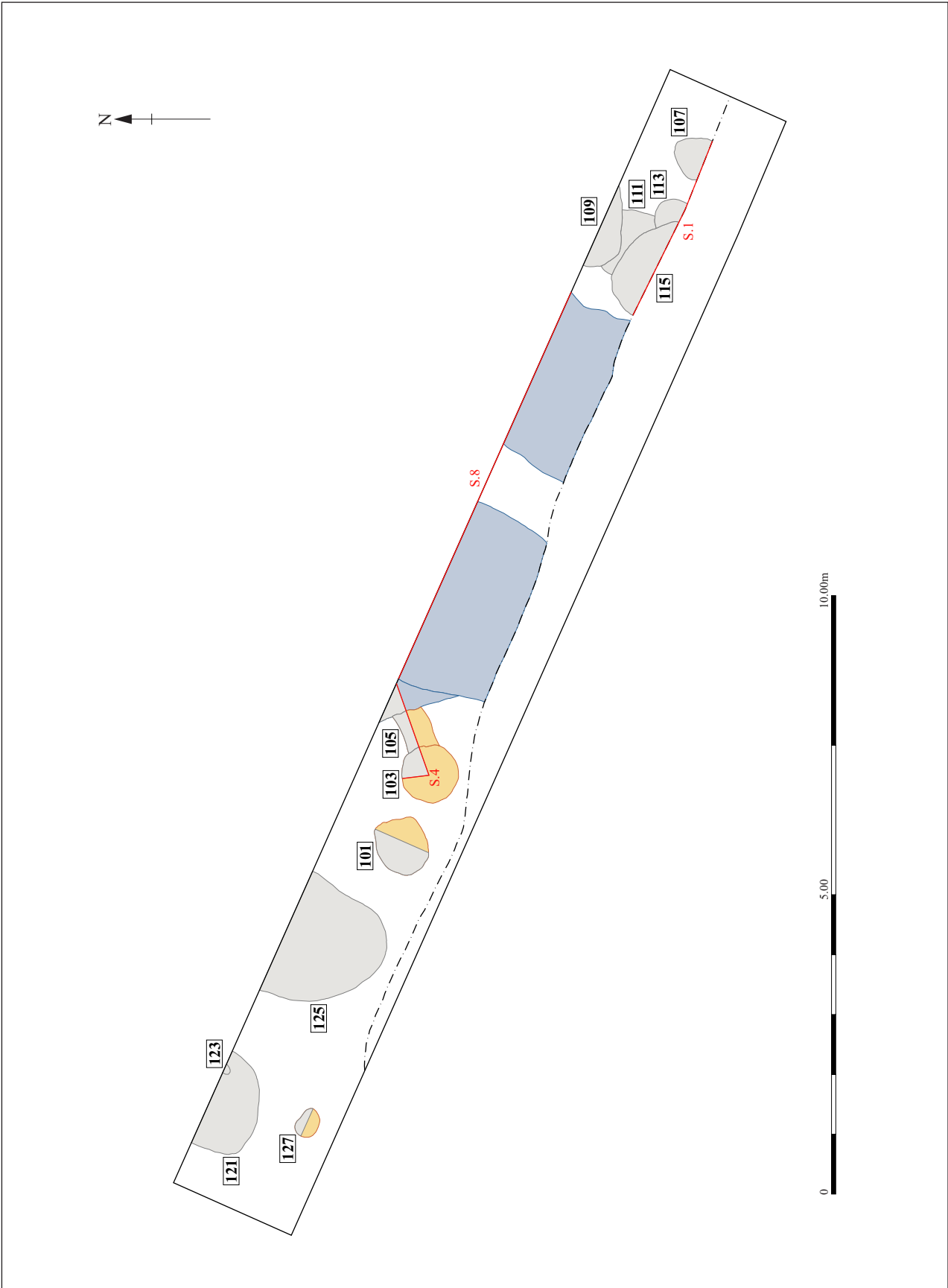


Figure 2: Trench plan

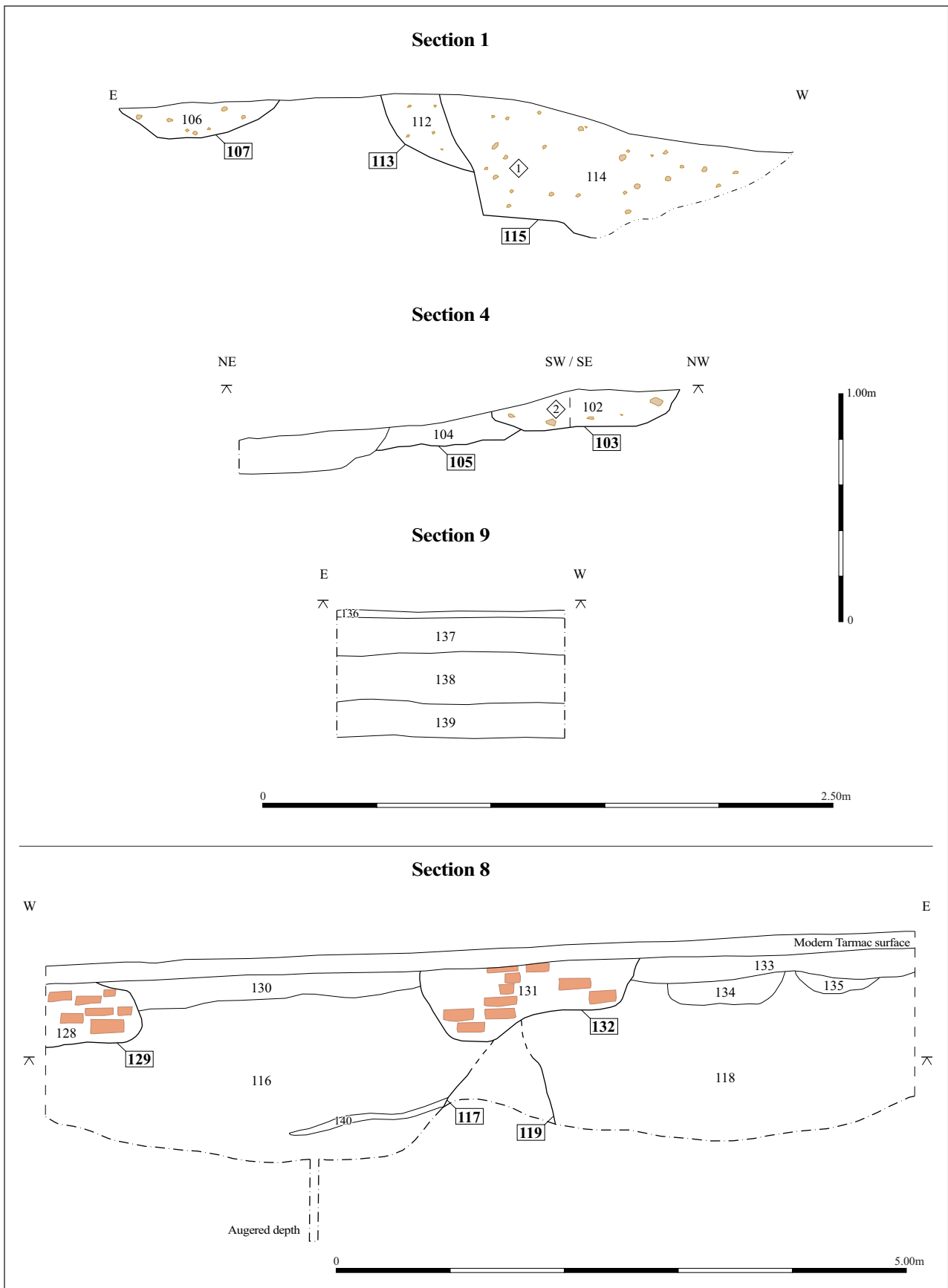


Figure 3: Section drawings



Plate 1: Trench 1



Plate 2: Key



Plate 3: Spindle whorl



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