

Medieval pits and a probable late medieval/early post-medieval structure on land at The Beechams, rear of 9 and 11 Main St, Mursley, Buckinghamshire



**Archaeological
Evaluation Report**



April 2013

Client: Mr and Mrs H Cole

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NGR: SP 8160 2850

**Medieval pits and a probable late medieval/early post-medieval structure on
land at The Beechams, rear of 9 and 11 Main St, Mursley, Buckinghamshire**

Archaeological Evaluation

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Table of Contents

Summary.....	5
1 Introduction.....	7
1.1 Location and scope of work.....	7
1.2 Geology and topography.....	7
1.3 Archaeological and historical background.....	7
1.4 Acknowledgements.....	9
2 Aims and Methodology.....	10
2.1 Aims.....	10
2.2 Methodology.....	10
3 Results.....	11
3.1 Introduction	11
3.2 Trench 1.....	11
3.3 Trench 2.....	12
3.4 Trench 3.....	12
4 Discussion and Conclusions.....	13
4.1 Overview.....	13
4.2 Significance.....	13
4.3 Recommendations.....	14
Appendix A. Context Inventory.....	15
Appendix B. Finds Reports.....	16
B.1 Pottery.....	16
Appendix C. Environmental Reports.....	18
C.1 Environmental samples.....	18
Appendix D. Bibliography	21
Appendix E. OASIS Report Form	22

List of Figures

- Fig. 1 Site location showing development area outlined red and HER entries
Fig. 2 Proposed development with trial trenches overlaid
Fig. 3 Trench 1 (plan, sections and plates)
Fig. 4 Trench 2 (plan and plate)
Fig. 5 Trench 3 (plan, section and plate)
Fig. 6 Brill cooking pot

List of Plates

- Plate 1 Trench 1 looking west
Plate 2 Pits **4** and **6** (Trench 1) looking north
Plate 3 Trench 2 looking west
Plate 4 Trench 3 looking south

List of Tables

- Table 1 Context list
Table 2 Pottery Fabrics
Table 3 Pottery Dating
Table 4 Environmental samples

Summary

Over the 18th and 19th March 2013 Oxford Archaeology East conducted an archaeological evaluation on land behind 9 and 11 Main Street, Mursley, Buckinghamshire in advance of two proposed new houses (SP 8160 2850). Three evaluation trenches totalling 31.3m in length was excavated across the site. This revealed that medieval deposits survived within the higher ground in the eastern part of the site (Trench 1) whereas the western area was on land which was formerly part of a pond or stream and no remains pre-dating modern build-up was found here (Trenches 2 and 3).

There were probably two phases of medieval and early post-medieval archaeology within Trench 1 but only one was dated. Two medieval pits of uncertain type contained moderate assemblages of 13th to early 15th century pottery with one pit having a substantial part of a Brill cooking pot suggesting the pottery had not travelled far. A soil sample from this pit also produced a significant charred seed assemblage especially cereals which may have had in part a culinary origin as well as burnt hay possibly for flooring/bedding.

Three undated post holes lay adjacent to the pits and may have been the remains of frontage structure(s) onto The Beechams. A late medieval/early post-medieval date for them is possible. This road seems to have been shown on the very small scale 1599 Salden Estate map and had houses along it. If the structure is of this period, it is likely to have gone out of use before the modern era as all surviving later maps of Mursley, the 1825 Bryant Map onwards, show no buildings fronting onto this street. The post-medieval decline and shrinkage of Mursley has been well documented and this has been confirmed here in the archaeological record for the first time. Later, in possibly the 19th but certainly during the 20th century, there was significant landscaping resulting in deposits between 0.6m and 1m deep covering the entire site.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

- 1.1.1 An archaeological evaluation was conducted at The Beechams, rear of 9 and 11 Main St, Mursley, Buckinghamshire (Figs. 1 and 2).
- 1.1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a generic Brief issued by Buckinghamshire County Council (BCC; pre-Planning Application 12/02266/PREAPP), supplemented by a Specification prepared by OA East (Drummond-Murray 2013).
- 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 *National Planning Policy Framework* (Department for Communities and Local Government March 2012). The results will enable decisions to be made by BCC, 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 the paper archive will be deposited with Aylesbury Museum. After a request from Mrs Cole, the landowner, it was agreed with the county archaeologist, Mr Sandy Kidd, that the artefacts could be deposited with Mr and Mrs Cole (21st March 2013, *pers. comm.*). Mr Kidd stipulated that, "the finds belong to the landowner so if they do choose to retain we would want a drawn and photographic record as well as fabric type I'd".

1.2 Geology and topography

- 1.2.1 The local geology is boulder clay and morainic drift over Oxford Clay and Kellaways Beds (www.bgs.ac.uk/geoindex/index.html).
- 1.2.2 In Trenches 1 and 3 and the far eastern part of Trench 2 the natural geology comprised sandy silts and gravels. The natural fell from east to west across the site and within the lowest evaluated area - the majority of Trench 2 - the natural consisted of pale grey silts. Water immediately flowed through the silts in a few areas suggesting they were springs. The water level with the trench rose to the height of the gravel natural on the eastern side of the trench (Fig. 4).
- 1.2.3 The ground level gently fell from 146.31m OD directly to the east of Trench 1, to 145.92mOD directly to the east of Trench 3 and 145.39mOD at the western extent of Trench 2.

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

Prehistoric and Roman

- 1.3.1 There are only a single prehistoric and a single Roman record within the HER for the present Mursley village. These consist respectively of a Neolithic polished grey flint axe (MBC 13269) found 500m to the south of the site and a coin of the Emperor Constantine II (MBC 13874), c.200m to the north-east (Fig. 1).

Saxon

- 1.3.2 The name Mursley is likely to derive from the Old English, being a person's name added to *leah*, and means "woodland clearing of a man called Myrsa" (Mawer and Stenton 1925).

- 1.3.3 Evidence of Saxon occupation within the present village is uncertain. A single pit of Late Saxon or early medieval date was found in an evaluation at 18 Main Street c.150m to the north-east (EBC 16540; Mason 2005). This was a sub-circular pit (103) of unknown function located near Main Street frontage and was partly within trench 1. It measured up to 0.56m deep and backfilled with two deposits, but contained only a few unidentified animal bone, some burned clay, two sherds of St Neots ware and a single Cotswolds-type ware pottery (collectively the pottery weighed 85g).
- 1.3.4 The Domesday survey (1086) recorded that Mursley parish had two main landholders in Edward The Confessor's time (Morris 1978).

Medieval to modern

- 1.3.5 By 1086 there were three main landholders (including two manors - Mursley and Salden) mentioned by the Domesday Survey. Collectively the survey recorded six villagers, seven smallholders and two slaves and that the combined annual value of Mursley was £5.
- 1.3.6 The site itself lies within the historic core of the village of Mursley. It lies opposite the medieval church of St Mary (MBC 398821), which has 14th and 15th century architecture surviving. Part of an ancient cross was noted in the churchyard in 1862 and presumed to be of medieval date (MBC 10770). The advowson for Mursley church is recorded before the year 1166 as being given to the Prioress of Nuneaton implying there had been an earlier church presumably in this location (Page 1925). A moated site, c.40m by 45m in size is recorded c.250m to the south-east and may have been the location of Mursley manor (SM 32107). The manorial farm is c.100m to the east and it was archaeologically evaluated in 2002/3 (EBC 16441).
- 1.3.7 Mursley lay on the main road between Buckingham and Dunstable which continued on to London. It was wealthier enough to have a market - the earliest mention of a market and fair is a grant of 1229 with the last record of a market being 1449 (Bailey 2005). Horn suggests that the rise of Mursley was due to the fact that it was well situated as it (and Leighton) divided the distance between Buckingham and Dunstable (Horn 1854, 71). It is thought that Mursley aspired towards the status of a small town or borough although it is doubtful if this was ever achieved, and it was certainly not sustained. The application site lies just off Main Street and close to the Manor farm which might be on the site of the medieval manor with which the market was associated (Bailey 2005).
- 1.3.8 The earliest map of Mursley (1599) is at a very small scale with the buildings stylised (Salden Estate Map; not illustrated but shown in Fell and Zeepvat 2002, fig. 5)). This 1599 map demonstrates that Mursley was located on an east-west access route linking it with Salden. The map seems to show that Mursley settlement itself had three east to west streets with houses fronting onto them as well as a north to south street. The present site is perhaps the northernmost of the three east to west streets. The map therefore shows the village still as a medieval nucleated settlement in this date.
- 1.3.9 The decline in size of Mursley seems to have dated to the post-medieval period and Horn gives the reason as the knock on affect of Aylesbury beginning to flourish whilst Buckingham and Dunstable decayed and the road through Mursley became neglected (1854, 71). Mursley shrunk in size and became a linear village along a north-south axis (Main Street). Most of the listed buildings in Mursley were located along Main Street itself and (not counting the church) date to the 16th to 19th centuries (HER lists; not illustrated). A single 17th century listed building lies down Cooks Lane to the north of the site (not illustrated).

- 1.3.10 Bryant's 1825 map of Buckinghamshire shows decline had taken place to Mursley compared with the 1599 map with the village now a relatively small linear north to south settlement (not illustrated, but shown in Fell and Zeepvat 2002, fig. 10). This map has the present day road now called The Beechams, although no buildings were shown along it. A stream was also recorded on the map in the rough location of the site and running roughly east to west.
- 1.3.11 The 1880 and 1925 1st and 2nd Ordnance Survey maps (1:2500) are much larger scale to the 1599 and 1825 maps (not illustrated). They both show the site fronting onto a lane (still not named on the maps) and there are trees within the site.
- 1.3.12 The village itself has only had two archaeological evaluations c.100m and 150m to the north (respectively ECB 16441 and 16540). The former had only a single Late Saxon/medieval pit, but other contemporary or medieval features may have been removed by post-medieval landscaping (Mason 2005). An evaluation at the Manor Farm site found no significant archaeology, although the vast majority of the trenches within the site demonstrated significant modern disturbance (EBC 16441; Wilson 2003).

1.4 Acknowledgements

- 1.4.1 The author would like to thank Mr and Mrs H Cole who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. Mrs Cole kindly helped in the excavation of pit 6 and supplied hospitality etc. Sandy Kidd monitored the work on behalf of Buckinghamshire County Council and gave useful local information. Julia Wise provided the HER details including the 2002 Manor Farm desk-based assessment report. James Drummond-Murray managed the project and edited the report. Specialist reports and comments were given by Chris Faine, Carole Fletcher, Rachel Fosberry and Richard Mortimer. Stuart Ladd surveyed the site and produced the site illustrations whilst Lucy Offord drew the Brill cooking pot. The fieldwork was carried out by Rob Atkins and Julian Newman.

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.
- 2.1.2 The Specification stated that a particular aim was to find evidence for the development of Mursley including Saxon and medieval settlement remains (Drummond-Murray 2013).
- 2.1.3 The purpose of the evaluation is to inform a planning decision by establishing the significance of the site's archaeological interest, the weight which should be accorded to its conservation and options for mitigation.

2.2 Methodology

- 2.2.1 Buckinghamshire produced a generic Brief it has written for small sites in the county. This required that trial trenching should be undertaken in accordance with the "Standard and Guidance for archaeological field evaluations" published by the Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA 1999).
- 2.2.2 The proposed development area had 16 trees within and adjacent to it. Before work started Ian Hopcraft, Trees Officer, Green Spaces Team, Aylesbury District Council surveyed the area and provided a rough map showing the general location of the trees which had been categorised by importance. In the site there were four trees each of amenity value A and B as well as others deemed of lesser importance (report dated 05/12/2012).
- 2.2.3 The proposed archaeological trial trench positions were located to avoid all the main A and B category trees within the development area. The trench layout was approved by Sandy Kidd at Buckinghamshire County Council. Subsequently the location of the trenches were partly altered during the evaluation in order to maintain the site access onto The Beechams and avoid some of the trees.
- 2.2.4 Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision with a wheeled JCB-type excavator using a toothless 1.5m wide ditching bucket. Topsoil and modern made-up ground were removed to expose the surface of the underlying geology. Trenches 1 and 3 were manually cleaned using hoes but not in Trench 2 due to it being under water.
- 2.2.5 The site survey was carried out by Stuart Ladd using Leica GPS system with SmartNet.
- 2.2.6 All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using OA East's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at 1:10, 1:20 or 1:50. Digital and monochrome photographs were taken of all relevant features and deposits.
- 2.2.7 Two bulk environmental samples, each of 20 litres were taken from the medieval pits within the evaluation.
- 2.2.8 All artefacts were retained except 19th or 20th century types which were noted but left.
- 2.2.9 The evaluation took place in dry, overcast conditions.

3 RESULTS

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The site context list is included as Appendix 1 (Table 1). The trenches are described by numerical order below:

3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 Trench 1 was 11m long and aligned roughly east to west, a few metres to the north of The Beechams (Figs. 2 and 3). There were five probable pre-modern archaeological features within the centre of the trench (**4** and **6**, **10**, **12** and **14**) cutting a natural orange silty gravel. None of these features were intercutting, but they are likely to represent at least two phases of archaeological remains.

Pits 4 and 6

3.2.2 Two medieval pits (**4** and **6**) were partly within the north baulk of the trench. Pit **4** was probably round or sub-rounded in shape, with about half in the trench. It was 1.88m long and 0.28m deep with moderate to steep sides and a flat base (Fig. 3, S. 2). It contained a single dark brown sandy silt with some charcoal flecks. A moderate quantity of pottery (11 sherds weighing 0.558kg) including most of a profile of a Brill cooking pot (see Fletcher Appendix, B.1; Fig. 6). A 20 litre baulk soil sample (1) produced a significant assemblage of charred grain (see Fosberry Appendix, C.1). Most of the charred grain comprised cereal seeds (wheat, barley, oats and rye) but also some pea/vetch, as well as a varied collection of herbs. Three animal bone fragments were also recovered from the soil sample and comprised a small fragment of burnt skull bone of a medium sized mammal (possibly a sheep/goat) and two bones from possibly a mouse or vole (Chris Faine *pers. comm.*).

3.2.3 Pit **6** was directly to the east of pit **4** and was sub-rectangular or oval in shape at more than 0.9m long, 0.78m wide and 0.44m deep (Fig. 3, S. 2; Plate 2). It had steep to near vertical sides and a flatish base. its single backfill deposit comprised a mid grey brown sandy silt with rare small pebbles. There was a moderate quantity of relatively abraded pottery (26 sherds weighing 0.201kg), a single undiagnostic bone fragment and a large worked flint flake dating to the Late Neolithic/Bronze Age (Richard Mortimer, *pers. comm.*). A 20 litre baulk soil sample (2) produced only a few charred seeds including some cereals and herbs (see Fosberry Appendix, C.1).

Post holes (10, 12 and 14)

3.2.4 Three undated post holes (**10**, **12** and **14**) were found adjacent to medieval pits (**4** and **6**). Post hole **10** was convincing, it was directly to the south of pit **6**, sub-circular in shape 0.42m by 0.38m and 0.42m deep. It had a slightly irregular profile with its western side initially being very steep then vertical whilst its eastern side was initially vertical sided for the first 0.15m, stepped and then vertical again with a flatish base (Fig. 3, S.3). It was filled with a light brownish grey silt with occasional gravel, a few charcoal flecks and rare burnt clay fragments. Probable post holes **12** and **14** were both fairly shallow and were only partly within the trench with the former directly to the east of pit **4** and the latter to the south of it (Fig. 3, S. 2). Both post holes were of a similar size, 0.3m and 0.26m long respectively and both 0.12m deep with steep sides and flatish bases. Post hole **12** was filled with a mid grey brown sandy silt whilst post hole **14** had a mid to dark brown sandy silt with some charcoal flecks in its backfill.

Subsoil 2, modern features and topsoil 1

- 3.2.5 There was a 0.6m modern overburden (subsoil 2 and topsoil 1) which sealed the medieval pits and undated post holes. Subsoil 2 comprised a mid brown sandy silt, 0.2m thick and it is likely this layer was the former post-medieval to modern topsoil layer (Fig. 3, S.2). This subsoil was cut by a series of modern 20th century features including small pit 8 which contained 20th century glass (Fig. 3, S.2), as well as two pit like features in the eastern side of the trench (not numbered), one containing batteries and modern glass whilst the other had late 19th/20th century brick and a fragment of sewer pipe. All modern features were sealed by the present topsoil layer (1), between 0.4m and 0.46m thick.

3.3 Trench 2

- 3.3.1 Trench 2 was 9.3m long, located 5m to the west of Trench 1, and was aligned north-east to south-west (Fig. 4). The eastern 2.3m of the trench encountered natural gravels and these were at 144.8m OD, for the remainder of the trench the natural subsoil consisted of pale grey silts which sloped downwards to the west to 144.31mOD. Water bubbled up to the surface in the silts and was up to 0.3m deep at the western extent (Fig. 4, Plate 3).
- 3.3.2 Overlying the natural subsoil was a large made-ground deposit (15) which was 0.65m thick on the north-eastern side of the trench deepening to 0.85m on the south-western side. It was a mid-brown grey sandy silt with occasional small gravel inclusions and some c.19th century yellow brick fragments. Sealing the made-ground layer (15) was a 0.25m thick topsoil deposit (1).

3.4 Trench 3

- 3.4.1 Trench 3 was 11m long, aligned roughly east to west and located in the north-western part of the proposed development (Fig. 5). Natural gravels were encountered at 144.35mOD. The gravels were slightly uneven which resulted in a 0.16m thick hollow in part of the northern and a small area of the southern part of the trench (Fig. 5, S. 1; Plate 4). Overlying the natural subsoil was the same large made-ground deposit (15) found in Trench 2 above and was between 0.7m and 0.75m deep. It was cut by a large 20th century pit (Fig. 5). The backfill of the pit was sealed by topsoil (1) which was 0.2m deep.

4 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

4.1 Overview

- 4.1.1 Archaeological remains were only recovered within the easternmost trench (Trench 1) with Trenches 2 and 3 on lower ground which was too wet for habitation. There is likely to have been a stream on this lower land (a water course is shown roughly in this location on the 1825 Bryant map). During machining water quickly seeped from the natural grey silts in Trench 2 and these are likely to have kept this area permanently wet.
- 4.1.2 A single Late Neolithic/Bronze Age worked flint flake was recovered. This now means that only two prehistoric artefacts have been recovered in the area of the present village (the other is an Neolithic axe 500m to the south of the site). No evidence for Roman, Saxon or early medieval occupation or activity was found within the evaluation. The site is adjacent to the medieval church and so the reason for the lack of Saxon or medieval evidence is uncertain.
- 4.1.3 The evaluation found two medieval pits and in this period, from c.13th century onwards, Mursley seems to have grown as an important large village/small town with its own market and fair. The pits had a moderate quantity of domestic waste with the pottery dating to the 13th to early 15th century and included a substantial part of a cooking pot suggesting that occupation was nearby. A significant charred seed assemblage came from one pits and included a substantial cereal content which may have had both a culinary origin whilst burnt hay may have been used as flooring/bedding.
- 4.1.4 The evaluation also found three undated probable post holes within the trench which are likely to be from the late medieval or early post-medieval period. The post holes are especially significant as the cartographic evidence suggest that the site fronted onto a former medieval road now called The Beechams (see Section 1.3.8 above). It is probably the northernmost street shown on the 1599 Salden Estate map and at this time there seems to have been houses fronting onto the road. It is likely the postulated house(s) were demolished/abandoned in the post-medieval period, at a time documentary evidence demonstrated that Mursley declined in both importance and size (see Section 1.3.9 above). In the later maps of Mursley (1825, 1880 and 1925) the site is shown as empty of development and in case of the latter two, only having trees within it. There was been landscaping across the site in the 19th and 20th centuries with all three evaluation trenches encountered a considerable modern overburden.
- 4.1.5 The westernmost proposed house and garage are situated over a former probable stream where there are no archaeological deposits. The footings of the proposed easternmost house and garage are likely to be in an area where there are potential medieval remains. The large modern build up across the site mean that unless the proposed access road is at least c.0.6m deep, it will not affect archaeological remains here.

4.2 Significance

- 4.2.1 The evaluation found significant archaeological remains on the eastern side of the proposed development which has added to our knowledge of medieval and probably early post-medieval Mursley.

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. CONTEXT INVENTORY

Context	Cut	Trench	Category	Feature Type	Function	Length	Breadth	Depth	Date Range
1		All	layer	Topsoil				0.2-0.46m	Modern
2		1	layer	Subsoil				0.2m	Post-medieval to modern
3	4	1	fill	pit					13th-early 15th
4	4	1	cut	pit		1.88m	0.8m+	0.28m	13th-early 15th
5	6	1	fill	pit					13th-early 15th
6	6	1	cut	pit		0.9m+	0.78m	0.44m	13th-early 15th
7	8	1	fill	pit					20th century
8	8	1	cut	pit		0.38m	?	0.19m	20th century
9	10	1	fill	post hole	?structure				?late medieval or early post-medieval
10	10	1	cut	post hole	?structure	0.42m	0.38m	0.42m	?late medieval or early post-medieval
11	12	1	fill	?post hole	?structure				?late medieval or early post-medieval
12	12	1	cut	?post hole	?structure	0.3m	0.15m+	0.12m	?late medieval or early post-medieval
13	14	1	fill	?post hole	?structure				?late medieval or early post-medieval
14	14	1	cut	?post hole	?structure	0.26m	0.15m+	0.12m	?late medieval or early post-medieval
15		2 and 3	layer	made ground				0.75-0.85m	Modern

Table 1: *Context list*

APPENDIX B. FINDS REPORTS

B.1 Pottery

By Carole Fletcher

Introduction and methodology

- B.1.1 The excavation produced a small pottery assemblage of 37 sherds, weighing 0.761kg, recovered from contexts 3 and 5. The condition of the overall assemblage is moderately abraded. The average sherd weight from individual contexts is moderate at 21g.

Methodology

- B.1.2 The Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG) documents *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.1.3 Dating was carried out using OA East's in-house system based on that previously used at the Museum of London. Recording has been carried out for all sherds using in part the coding system established by the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit, however much of the pottery has been grouped in the broad category of medieval sandy ware as a full identification has not been possible at this time (Table 2). All sherds have been counted and weighed. All the pottery has been recorded and dated on a context-by-context basis (Table 3). The pottery and archive are curated by Oxford Archaeology East until formal deposition.

Code	Fabric Name
MC1	Medieval Shelly ware
MS	Medieval Sandy ware
MS2	Medieval Coarse Sandy ware
MS3	Medieval Grey Sandy ware
MS9	Brill/Boarstall
SGW	Sandy Grey Ware

Table 2: *Pottery Fabrics*

Assemblage

- B.1.1 Context 3 produced 11 moderately abraded and unabraded coarseware sherds. Present in the assemblage is a large sherd from a Brill/Boarstall jar, the sherd giving an almost complete profile of the vessel. The outer surface of the jar is sooted as is the base internally - this sooting continues across the breaks in the base and it is possible that the pot broke when the contents burnt. From context 5 were recovered two moderately abraded base sherds from what has tentatively been identified as an MS2 jar, alongside other coarseware sherds. No glazed wares were identified in the assemblage.
- B.1.2 The presence of several large sherds and the unabraded to moderately abraded nature of the majority of the assemblage suggests that these sherds may have been recovered in or close to their place of primary deposition. Domestic in origin, these sherds represent medieval occupation or rubbish disposal on or close to the site.

B.1.3 An assemblage of this size provides only basic dating information for a site, however the unabraded nature of some sherds suggests that this material may be a primary deposit while other material has been reworked.

B.1.4 The assemblage should be reassessed if further work is undertaken.

Context	Fabric	Basic Form	Sherd Count	Weight (kg)	Context Date Range
3	MS9	Jar	3	0.483	Mid 13th-early 15th century
	MS3	Bowl	1	0.033	
	MS3	Jar	1	0.007	
	MS		5	0.024	
	SGW		1	0.011	
5	MS2	Jar	2	0.055	Late 13th-early 15th
	MS		13	0.080	
	MC1		3	0.014	
	MSC1		1	0.010	
	SGW		6	0.036	
	SGW	Jar	1	0.006	

Table 3: Pottery Dating

APPENDIX C. ENVIRONMENTAL REPORTS

C.1 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction

- C.1.1 Two bulk samples were taken during the evaluation phase of the site at 9-11 Main Street, Mursley, Bucks. Both samples were from medieval pit deposits.

The purpose of this assessment is to determine whether plant remains are present, their mode of preservation and whether they are of interpretable value with regard to domestic, agricultural and industrial activities, diet, economy and rubbish disposal.

Methodology

- C.1.2 The total volume of each standard bulk sample (up to twenty litres) was processed by tank flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present.
- C.1.3 The floating component (flot) of the samples was collected in a 0.3mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve. Both flot and residues were allowed to air dry. A magnet was dragged through each residue fraction prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The flot was examined under a binocular microscope and the presence of any plant remains or other artefacts are noted on Table 4. Identification of plant remains is with reference to the Digital Seed Atlas of the Netherlands and the authors' own reference collection. Nomenclature is according to Stace (1997).

Quantification

- C.1.4 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and small animal bones have been scanned and recorded qualitatively according to the following categories

= 1-10, ## = 11-50, ### = 51+ specimens ##### = 100+ specimens

Items that cannot be easily quantified such as charcoal, magnetic residues and fragmented bone have been scored for abundance

+ = rare, ++ = moderate, +++ = abundant

- C.1.5 Key to table x: f = fragment, u = untransformed (not charred), g = germinated grain

Results

Sample No.		1	2
Context No.		3	5
Cut No.		4	6
Feature Type		Pit	Pit
Cereals			
Avena sp. caryopsis	Oats [wild or cultivated]	##	
Hordeum vulgare L. caryopsis	domesticated Barley grain	##/#g	
Secale cereale L. caryopsis	Rye grain	##	#

free-threshing Triticum sp. Caryopsis	free-threshing Wheat grain	####	##
cereal indet. caryopsis		##	#
cf. cereal indet. culm node	Cereal stem-joint [indicates straw]	#	
cereal indet. germinated embryo		#	
Other food plants			
Lugumes 2-4mm	vetch/pea	#	
Dry land herbs			
Anthemis cotula L. seed	Stinking Chamomile	##	
Centaurea sp. achene	Knapweeds	#	#
Chenopodiaceae indet. seed	Goosefoot Family	#	#
Epilobium sp. seed	Willowherbs	#	
Galium aparine L. nutlet	Cleavers	#	
small Poaceae indet. [< 2mm] caryopsis	small-seeded Grass Family	##	
medium Poaceae indet. [3-4mm]	medium-seeded Grass Family	##	#
Polygonaceae indet. achene	Dock Family		#
Ranunculus cf. acris L./repens L./bulbosus L. achene	cf. Meadow/Creeping/Bulbous Buttercup	#	#
Raphanus raphanistrum ssp. raphanistrum L. sequila	Wild Radish seed-case segment	#	
Rumex sp. achene	small-seeded Docks	#	
small Trifolium spp. [<1mm] seed	small-seeded Clovers	#	
Wetland/aquatic plants			
Carex spp. nut	medium triangular-seeded Sedges	#	
Tree/shrub macrofossils			
Corylus avellana L. nutshell	hazelnut	#f	
Rubus sp. Seed	Bramble		#u
Sambucus nigra L. seed	Elderberry	#u	
Other plant macrofossils			
Charcoal <2mm		+++	++
Charcoal >2mm		++	+
Charcoal >10mm			+
Charred root/stem		+	
Indet.culm nodes		+	
unid tree bud		+	
Volume of flot (litres)		150	75
% flot sorted		20	50

Table 4: Environmental samples

Preservation

- C.1.6 Plant remains are preserved by carbonization caused by incomplete combustion within a reducing atmosphere such as in the base of a hearth/oven. The carbonized material is comprised of cereal grains and weed seeds in addition to charcoal. Sample 1, fill 3 of pit 4 contains a large assemblage of charred plant remains, predominantly cereal grains

along with charred weed seeds. Sample 2, fill 5 of pit 6 contains only a few charred plant remains. Numerous modern roots contaminated this sample and may have caused movement of charred material across deposits.

- C.1.7 Sample 1 produced a 150ml flot that is almost entirely comprised of cereal grain. Only 20% of the flot was examined for this assessment due to the high density of charred plant remains. Bread/club wheat (*Triticum aestivum/compactum*) predominates and along with significant quantities of rye (*Secale cereale*), barley (*Hordeum vulgare*) and oats (*Avena* sp.). Chaff elements are comparatively rare and only occasional cereal culm nodes (indicating straw) were observed. Sample 2 contains wheat and rye grains.
- C.1.8 Charred weed seeds are fairly common within the assemblage in Sample 2 with moderate species diversity. The most frequent charred seeds are those of stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*) which may have been burnt as seed heads that have subsequently dispersed into individual seeds. This species has a specific habitat requirement preferring heavy clay soils and was most probably growing amongst a cereal crop. Charred remains of other plants that commonly are found in cultivated soils include knapweeds (*Centaurea* sp.) and wild radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum*).
- C.1.9 Seeds of a number of grassland plants such as clover (*Trifolium* sp.) and grasses (Poaceae) were also noted in Sample 1. Plants that have a broader habitat include docks (*Rumex* sp.), cleavers (*Galium* sp.) and buttercup (*Ranunculus* cf. *acris/repens/bulbosus*). Sedges (*Carex* sp.) are wetland plants that may be found growing in the wetter areas of arable fields or could represent a collected resource for thatching/fuel. Charred legumes were noted in Sample 1 and are of a size that could be a small cultivated pea (*Pisum sativum*) or may be a wild variant.

Discussion

- C.1.10 Sample, fill 3 of pit 4 has produced a significant charred plant assemblage of burnt cereal grain. Bread wheat is most abundant and would most likely have been used to grind into flour. Rye could also be used for bread. Barley and oats would also have been used for human consumption and also animal fodder. The grain may have been accidentally burnt or may represent spillage of grain which has been subsequently discarded onto the fire. The lack of chaff suggests that fully processed grain has been brought into the site with only a few weed seeds remaining as contaminants. The mixture of cereals and the inclusion of seeds of grassland/pasture plants suggests a mixed deposit of burnt waste material that may have had a domestic, culinary origin together with burnt hay that could have been used for flooring/bedding material.

Statement of potential

- C.1.11 It would appear that pit 4 is a rubbish pit used to dispose of accidentally-burnt food products and other domestic refuse. A range of crops are represented including the full range of cereals; wheat, barley, rye and oats along with occasional pulses. These findings are typical of medieval towns in the East of England as described in a review of excavated sites in this area (De Moulins and Murphy 2001). The lack of chaff suggests that crop plants were imported into this site and the full significance of this is yet to be fully ascertained. The plant remains are well preserved and have excellent archaeobotanical potential to yield valuable data about diet and urban food supplies during the medieval period.

APPENDIX D. BIBLIOGRAPHY

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APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

All fields are required unless they are not applicable.

Project Details

OASIS Number	<input type="text"/>
Project Name	<input type="text"/>
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	<input type="text"/>
Finish	<input type="text"/>
Previous Work (by OA East)	<input type="text"/>
Future Work	<input type="text"/>

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	<input type="text"/>	Planning App. No.	<input type="text"/>
HER No.	<input type="text"/>	Related HER/OASIS No.	<input type="text"/>

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt

Development Type

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 type="checkbox"/> Annotated Sketch	<input type="checkbox"/> Laser Scanning	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
<input type="checkbox"/> Augering	<input type="checkbox"/> Measured Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Targeted Trenches
<input type="checkbox"/> Dendrochronological Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Metal Detectors	<input type="checkbox"/> Test Pits
<input type="checkbox"/> Documentary Search	<input type="checkbox"/> Phosphate Survey	<input type="checkbox"/> Topographic Survey
<input 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
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Project Location

County	<input type="text"/>	Site Address (including postcode if possible)
District	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Parish	<input type="text"/>	
HER	<input type="text"/>	
Study Area	<input type="text"/>	National Grid Reference <input type="text"/>

Project Originators

Organisation	<input type="text"/>
Project Brief Originator	<input type="text"/>
Project Design Originator	<input type="text"/>
Project Manager	<input type="text"/>
Supervisor	<input type="text"/>

Project Archives

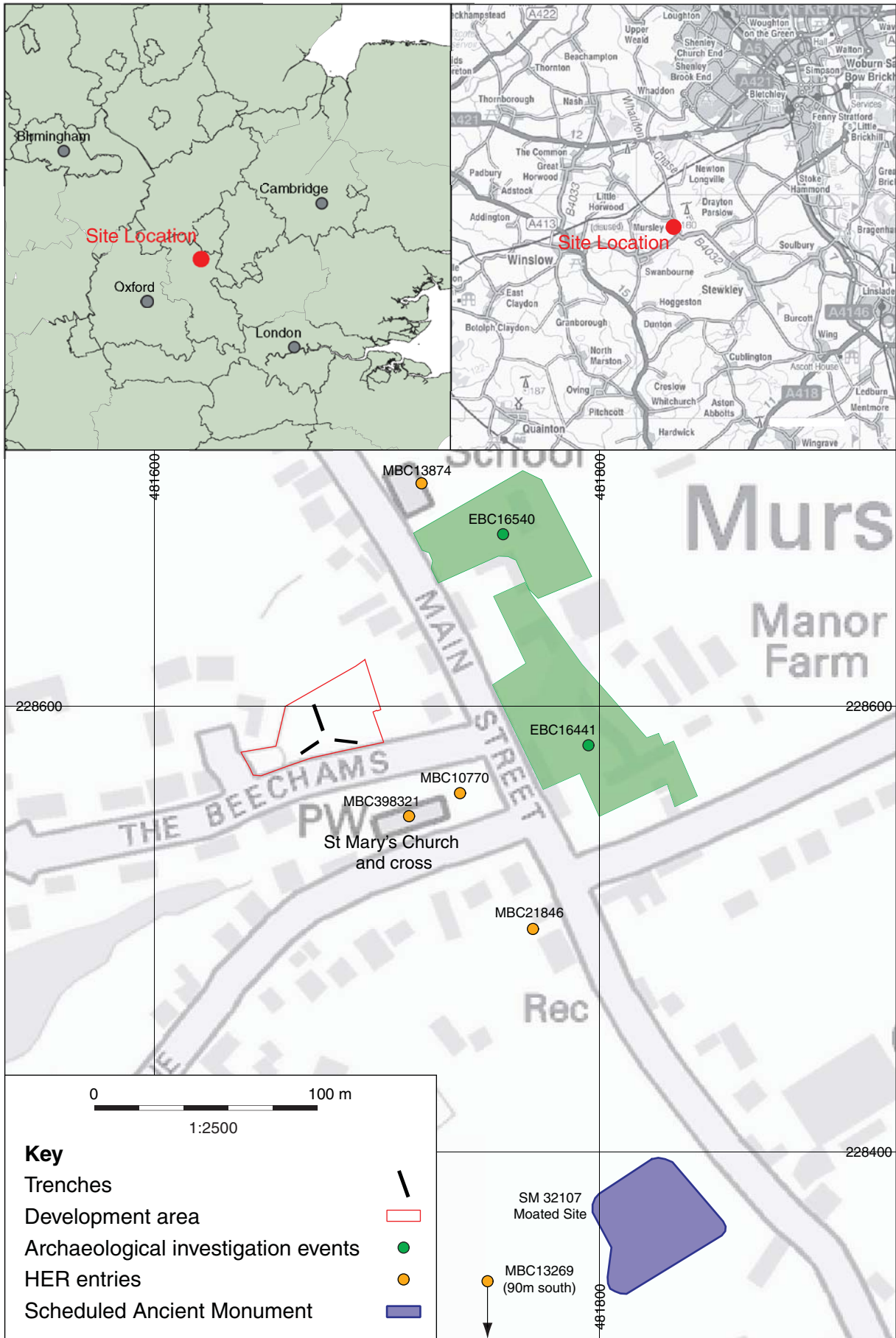
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Archive Contents/Media

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Digital Media	Paper Media
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Research/Notes
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	<input type="checkbox"/> Plans
	<input type="checkbox"/> Report
	<input type="checkbox"/> Sections
	<input type="checkbox"/> Survey

Notes:



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Figure 1: Site location



Figure 2: Proposed development (© Project Design Studio Ltd.) with trial trenches overlaid (green)

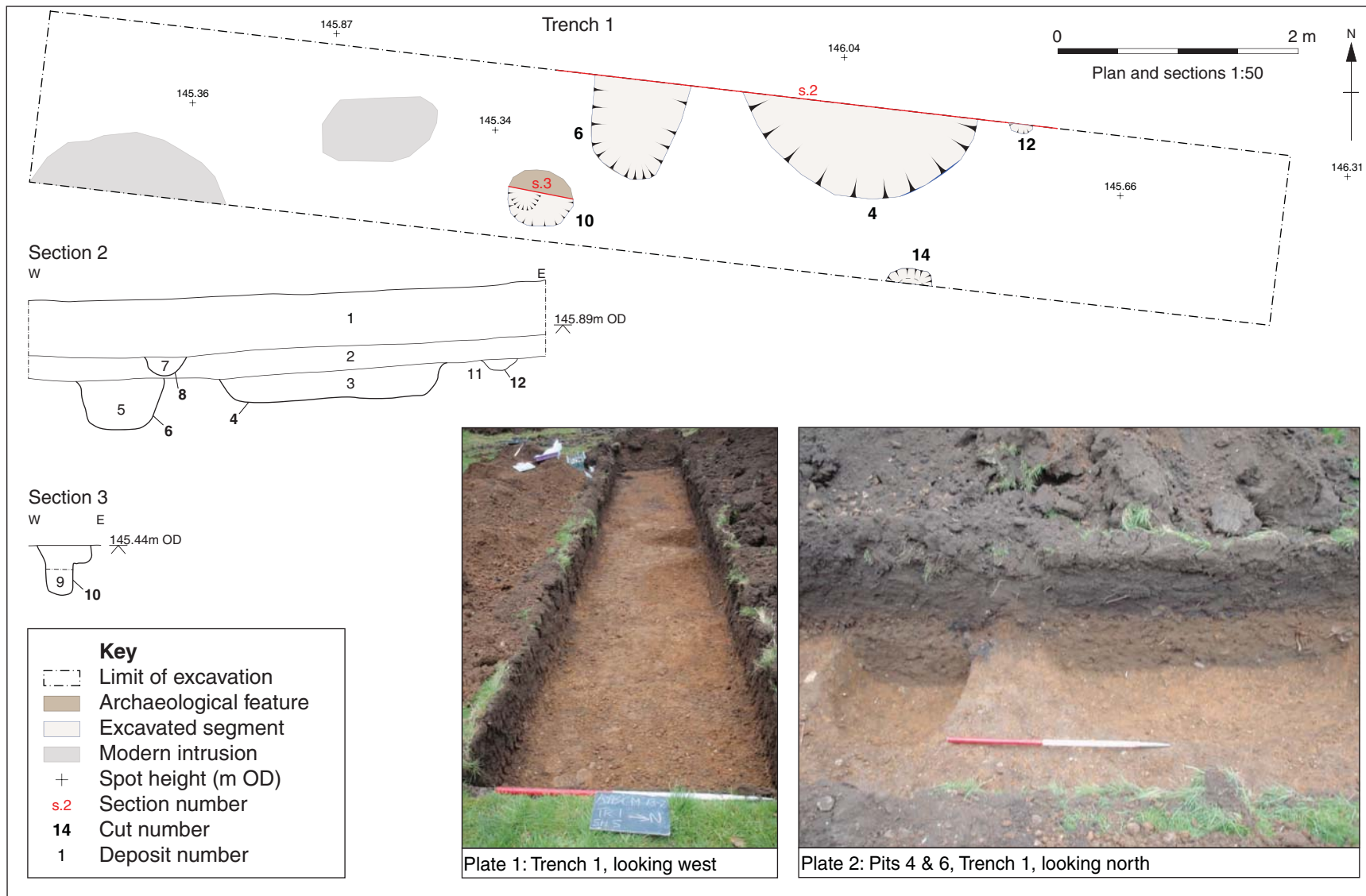


Figure 3: Trench 1 (Plan, Sections and Plates 1 & 2)

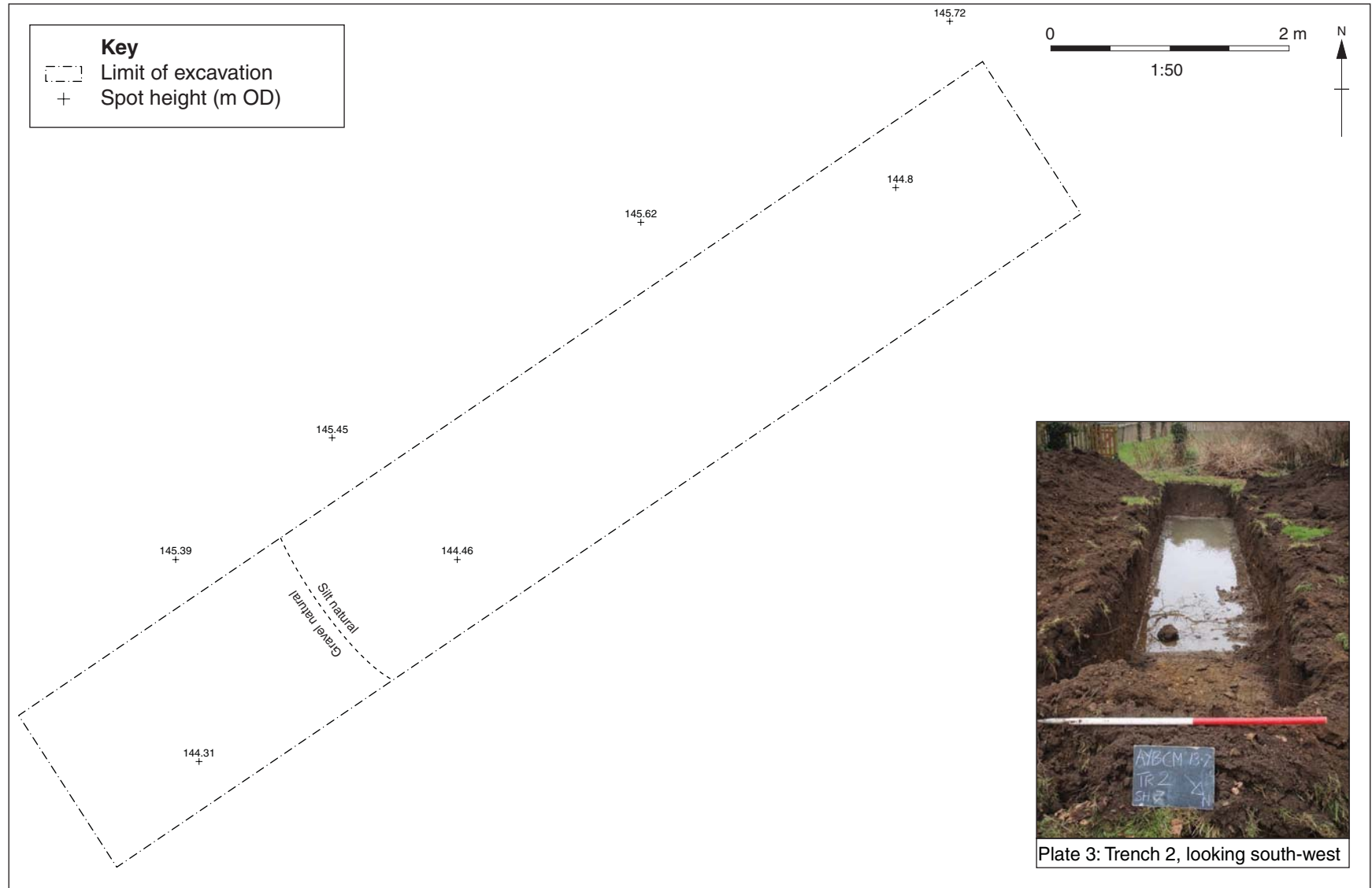


Figure 4: Trench 2 (Plan & Plate 3)



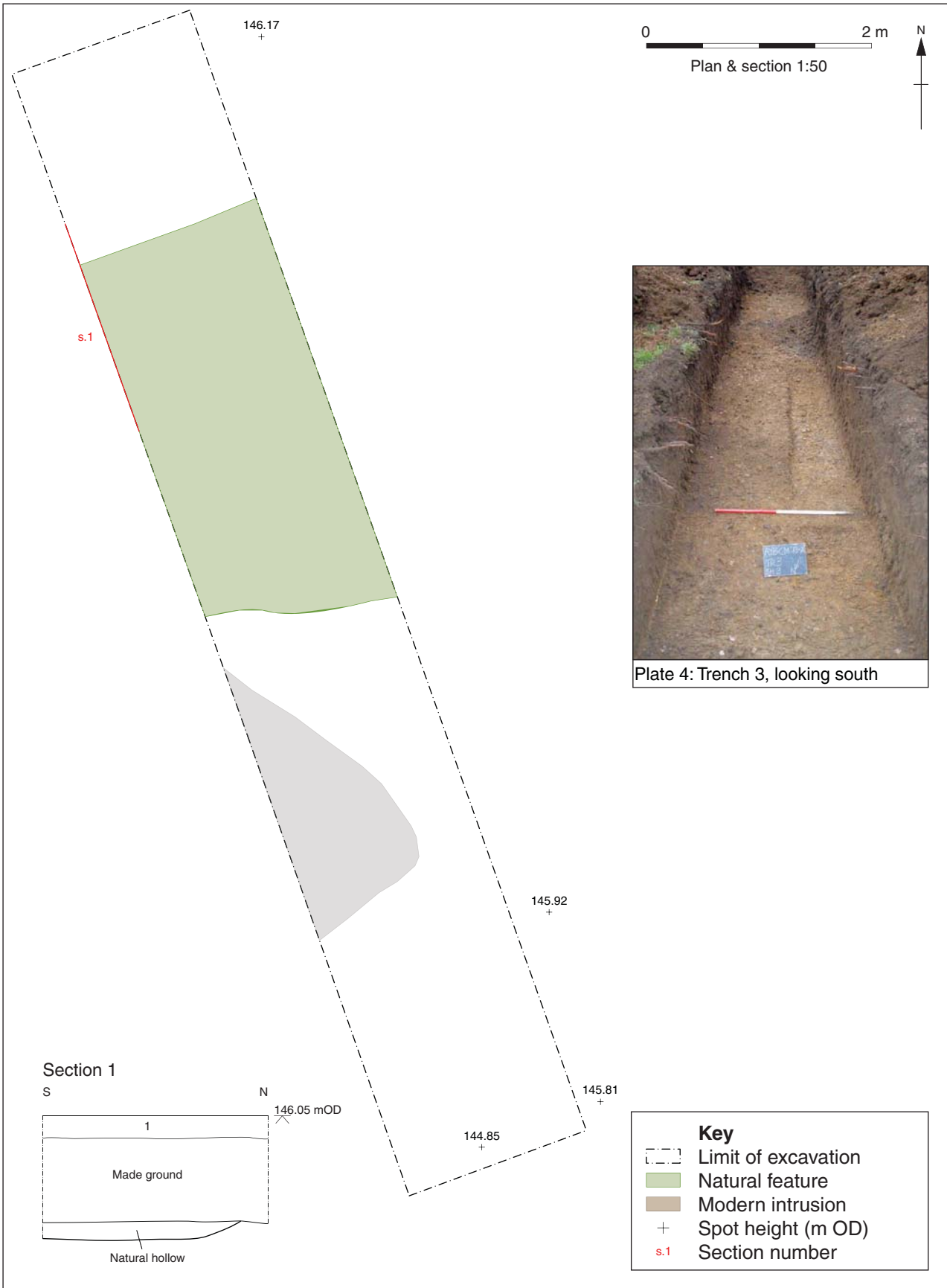


Figure 5: Trench 3 (Plan, section and plate 4)

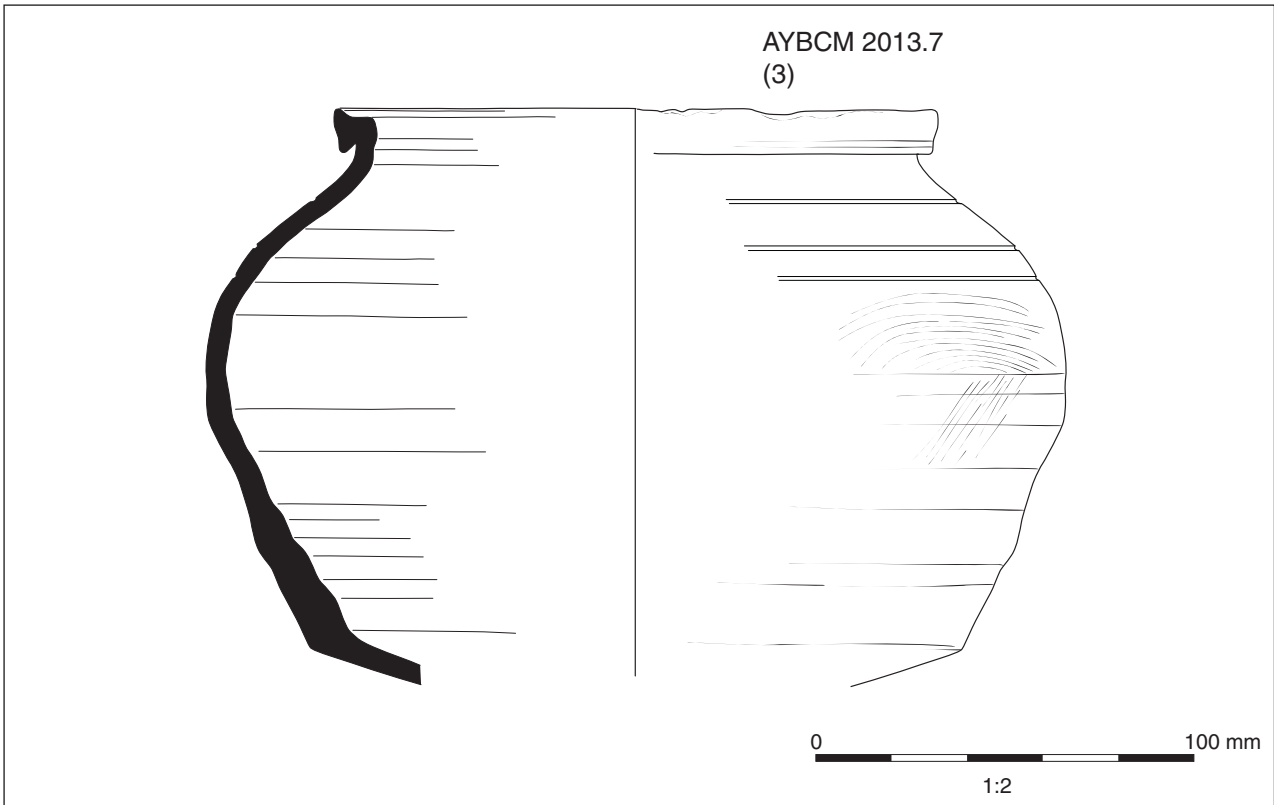


Figure 6: Brill cooking pot



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