Medieval Activity at Tower Close, Ramsey Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation Report

oxfordarchaeology east east east

September 2015

Client: Rose Homes

OA East Report No: 1823
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Archaeological Evaluation Report

Medieval Activity at Tower Close, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire

Archaeological Evaluation

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Summary

Between the 10th and 11th of August 2015, Oxford Archaeology East undertook a trenched archaeological evaluation on land opposite 11-17 Tower Close, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire (centred TL 2909 8527). The site was located in the northern half of Ramsey Abbey precinct, with the two trenches revealing a mixture of features relating to domestic activity in the late medieval period. These features consisted of a medieval watering hole, later re-used for the deposition of midden material, a large pit containing general late medieval waste, and a series of ditches that represent phases of plot boundaries running across the site. These plot boundaries are likely to represent the use of the land after the dissolution of the abbey in 1539, with the properties probably fronting onto Church Green to the south.

The site yielded a relatively large assemblage of domestic pottery and animal bones, with the potential to contribute to the understanding of the landscape and economy of the area in the late medieval and early post-medieval periods.

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Location and scope of work

1.1.1 A trial trenched archaeological evaluation was conducted by Oxford Archaeology East (OA East) on land opposite 11-17 Tower Close, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire, at grid reference TL 2909 8527 (Fig. 1). The work was undertaken ahead of residential development on a vacant plot of land *c*. 0.16ha in area.

1.1.2 The archaeological evaluation was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of Cambridgeshire County Council Historic Environment Team (CCC HET; Planning Application 15/00375/FUL; Gdaniec 2015), supplemented by a Specification prepared by Matt Brudenell and Nick Cox of OA East (Brudenell and Cox 2015).

1.1.3 The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed development 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 CCC HET, 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

1.2.1 The site is located in the historic fenland town of Ramsey, within the projected area of the precinct of Ramsey Abbey (Fig. 2), and close to the centre of medieval Ramsey. The town of Ramsey sits on an island surrounded by Bury Fen to the south and Stocking Fen to the north, with the abbey located at the highest point (Page 1974b, 188).

1.2.2 The development area lies *c*.100m north of the church of St Thomas of Canterbury (Historic Environment Record (HER) MCB 3541) and Ramsey Green, and *c*.150m north-west of the buildings of Ramsey Abbey (HER 02781). The site, centred on TL 2909 8527, is situated on the south side of Tower Close, on a vacant plot of land that lies between 5.31 and 6.30mOD, with the ground sloping down from the south-east to the north-west.

1.2.3 The geology of the area is Oxford Clay Formation mudstones of the Jurassic period overlain by superficial deposits of Quaternary March Gravels of sand and gravel (BGS 1995).

1.3 Archaeological and historical background

1.3.1 The archaeological background draws on information held by the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (HER) and the article written by Spoerry *et al* (2008). It is supplemented with additions from the WSI (Brudenell and Cox 2015) and the report of an evaluation that took place on Ramsey High Street, also within the abbey precinct (Webster 2015).

Cartographic background

1.3.2 The settlement at Ramsey was first depicted on a small scale county map of Huntingdonshire in 1646 by Blaeu, although the form and layout is not depcited in any detail. Jonas Moore's map of 1684, however, illustrates the general shape of Ramsey,

with settlement extending along two main roads that are linked to Ramsey Mere by lodes, or artificial watercourses. Ramsey Abbey was first depicted in more detail by Silius Titus with his estate survey of 1704-9, which shows the surviving parish church within the former abbey precinct, along with other buildings, probable ponds and several small fields, of which some may have been orchards. The lines of the streets of Ramsey have changed little since they were first laid out.

1.3.3 The historic maps that cover the development area, including the Ramsey Estate Map of 1873 and Ordnance Survey series dating back to 1887, show that the site was once part of an open plot of land that was subdivided at the end of the nineteenth century (Brudenell and Cox 2015). The pattern of plot boundaries and property divisions in this area has since changed very little.

Archaeological background

1.3.4 While evidence from the immediate vicinity includes a background of Prehistoric finds and features (e.g. CHER 02873; ECB4136), and notably, the identification of a possible Roman villa c. 240m to the south (ECB2221), the archaeological and historic significance of the area is dominated by the nationally important site of Ramsey Abbey (Scheduled Monument 141), with the development area lying within the precinct of the abbey, and the abbey itself located *c.*150m to the south.

1.3.5 Ramsey Abbey was a Benedictine Monastery founded by Aylwin in c.969, and remained in use until 1539. The settlement of Ramsey grew from the presence of the abbey, with the area an island amongst the low-lying fenland (Gilmour 2012, 7). The abbey became one of the richest in the fens through a series of substantial endowments, and it became known as 'Ramsey the Golden' – it held an extensive library that included books on all approved branches of learning and science (Page 1974a 382), supported almost 80 monks throughout the 13th century as well as daughter houses, and had a reputation for learning that continued until its dissolution in 1538. The abbey precinct was used as a fortress against King Stephen by Geoffrey de Mandeville in 1143 (Page 1974a, 379). This was followed by a succession of wealthy and worldly abbots during the 13th and 14th centuries, and saw the abbey become financially and morally decayed, before stability was re-established by 1431. In 1538 the monks of the abbey surrendered the abbey without complaint, and received high pensions as a reward. The abbey was dissolved in 1539, and the land was bought by the Cromwell family, who saw to its destruction, with much of the stone being reused at Cambridge colleges (Kings, Trinity, Gonville and Caius) and at Hinchingbrooke House (Gilmour 2012, 8).

1.3.6 Despite the history of the abbey being known, the extent of the destruction of the abbey following its dissolution has meant that the exact location of the abbey buildings is uncertain, including that of the abbey church (Gilmour 2012, 8). It is known that Ramsey Abbey produced decorated and undecorated tile, and a tile kiln was discovered in the grounds of Ailwyn School in 1966, located close to the small copse along Hollow Lane to the south-east of the school buildings (MCB 16875). This tile kiln was well established by the 15th century, and made and sold roof and wall tiles and brick (DeWindt and DeWindt 2006, 188).

1.3.7 The abbey precinct still remains as earthworks – which may have been raised to help as flood defences – with surviving property boundaries preserving the original precinct line. This has resulted in a peculiar curving shape to properties north of Little Whyte (RCHME 1926, 210 in Gilmour 2012, 10-11). The abbey precinct lies on a slight rise above the level of the town, with the abbey sitting at between 5 and 6mOD, and the

town at between 4 and 5mOD (Hall 1992, 41). The town of Ramsey grew up to meet the needs of the abbey and the traffic that it brought (Page 1974b, 188), with the town having a primarily agricultural economic base and a more fluid population than a village would have had (DeWindt 1990 cited in Nicholson 2006, 177).

1.3.8 Previous archaeological work has shown a range of activity related to the abbey, with Late Saxon iron working (ECB 735), as well as later medieval buildings, ponds, a midden (CHER 10886), pottery or tile kilns (MCB 16875) and quarry pits (MCB 16933).

1.3.9 The development area lies about 100m to the north of the High Street, which was the principal route to the abbey, and the parish church of St Thomas of Canterbury (HER 02832; MCB 3541). The church was built between 1180 and 1190 as a Benedictine hospital that was converted into the church for the new parish of Ramsey c.1222 (Haigh 1988 cited in Gilmour 2012, 9). The churchyard contains a medieval cross and a 13th century Barnack stone grave slab that was reused as a stile (MCB 17092).

1.3.10 Other occupation in the area has also been seen with the remains of structures overlying levelling layers that were used as part of the reclamation of low lying wet ground in areas around the High Street (such as ECB 1861 (Atkins 2004)). This reclamation was also seen during the 13th century with the canalisation of the Great Whyte watercourse in order to consolidate the land to the west of the abbey (Page *et al* 1926, 189 cited in Nicholson 2006, 175).

1.3.11 There are a number of historic buildings, mainly dating to the 19th century, in the vicinity of the development area (such as DCB 2563 and 3633). More recent activity can also be seen with the remains of World War II structures that include a pillbox (CB 15187), searchlight battery (CB 15171) and spigot mortar base (MCB 16456).

1.4 Acknowledgements

1.4.1 The work was commissioned by Rose Homes Ltd, who also carried out the machine excavation. Hand excavation was carried out by John Diffy and Robin Webb. The site was managed by Matt Brudenell, and advice and monitoring was provided by Gemma Stewart of CCC HET.

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 two trenches were excavated, totalling an area of 64m² across the proposed building footprints. The trenches were 20m long and 1.6m wide.

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 Dave Brown using a Leica survey-grade GPS fitted with “smartnet” technology and an accuracy of 5mm horizontal and 10mm vertical.

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 A total of five environmental samples were taken showing deposits from within a watering hole, a pit, a ditch and a ditch terminus.

2.2.7 Site conditions were dry, with hot and muggy air conditions.

3 Results

3.1 Introduction

3.1.1 The evaluation recorded medieval and post-medieval activity within the development area, with a series of features identified in both trenches (Fig. 3). There was a distinction between the types of features present in each trench, with Trench 1 revealing a series of linear ditches and a small pit, whilst Trench 2 contained a watering hole, a large pit, and a single ditch.

3.1.2 The results have been presented by trench.

3.1.3 The natural (3) across the site was a plastic mid orange-brown sandy clay with rare patches of gravel. This was overlain by a thick subsoil (2), comprising a plastic mid yellow-brown silty clay measuring 0.39-0.44m deep. The topsoil (1) that was a friable dark brown clayey silt 0.29-0.31m thick.

3.2 Trench 1

3.2.1 Trench 1 (Plate 1) lay towards the north-eastern corner of the development area, close to a standing barn. The trench had a deep subsoil, 0.39m thick, with the tranche base sloping down from 5.8mOD in the north-east corner, to 5.1mOD in the south-west. The natural and subsoil deposits were disturbed in the western half of the trench with modern rubble and hardcore recorded in the trench section, and a backfilled geotech pit.

3.2.2 The trench contained five shallow linear ditches and a pit. The ditches ran along a broadly similar alignment from north-east to south-west. These were spread across the trench. Ditch **5** (Fig. 4 and Plate 2) was 0.43m wide and 0.18m deep and had a 'u'-shaped profile, with gentle sides and a concave base. It was filled by a friable dark grey-brown clayey silt (4) that contained 12th-17th century pottery, a roof tile fragment and animal bone. This ditch also cut the western edge of the ditch terminus (**7**). The ditch terminus was 0.69m wide and 0.22m deep and was again 'u'-shaped in profile with gentle sides leading to a concave base. This was filled by a plastic light green-brown silty clay (6) but yielded no finds.

3.2.3 To the west of these features was ditch **9**, measuring 0.87m wide and 0.15m deep. The ditch had a bowl-shaped profile with gentle sides and a flat base. The ditch was filled by a plastic mid grey-brown silty clay (8) that contained 12th-17th century pottery, roof tile fragments and animal bone. Further to the west, near the western end of the trench, was ditch **11**; 1.4m wide and 0.08m deep. This displayed a bowl-shaped profile with gentle sides and a flat base, and that was filled by a plastic mid yellow-brown silty clay (10) that contained animal bone.

3.2.4 In contrast to the ditches described above, and at the eastern end of the trench, was ditch **14** (Fig. 4). This ditch followed a similar alignment to the others, but was slightly deeper, and contained two fills (12 and 13). The ditch measured 1.0m wide and 0.3m deep and was bowl shaped with gentle sides and a concave base. The upper fill was a friable mid brown-grey clayey silt (12) that contained a roof tile fragment and animal bone. The primary fill comprised a friable mid green-grey clayey silt (13) that contained 19th century pottery.

3.2.5 The only other feature in Trench 1 was a small pit **16** on the northern edge of the trench, just to the west of ditch **9**. This pit was cup-shaped, measuring 0.60m wide and 0.08m deep, with steep but shallow sides and a slightly irregular base. It was filled by a plastic mid grey-brown silty clay (15), and contained no finds.

3.3 Trench 2

3.3.1 Trench 2 (Plate 3) was located towards the western side of the development area, on ground that sloped up from 5.0mOD at the northern end to 5.8mOD at the southern end. The area around the trench had modern hardcore in the topsoil (0.29m thick), but retained an intact, undisturbed subsoil (0.44m thick). The topsoil (1) and subsoil (2) were similar inn character to those observed in Trench 1.

3.3.2 Trench 2 contained a single shallow linear ditch (**27**), a large watering hole (**17**) and a large pit (**25**). The ditch was broadly perpendicular to those in Trench 1, and was aligned east to west. It measured 0.1m wide and 0.13m deep, and displayed a tray-shaped profile with gentle sides and a flat base. The ditch was filled by a plastic mid grey-brown silty clay (26) that contained roof tile fragments and animal bone.

3.3.3 The largest feature on the site was a watering hole **17** (Fig. 4, Plate 4) located at the northern end of Trench 2, and measuring at least 5.1m wide and 0.9m deep. The feature had an irregular profile, with a steep, flat south-western side and shallower, stepped north-eastern side, and a concave base. It contained three fills (18, 19 and 20). The basal fill (18) was a firm mid grey-yellow sandy clay that contained a handful of roof tile fragments, 12th-14th century pottery and animal bone. This was asymmetrical in its profile, with its concentration on the shallower, stepped north-eastern side, and may have been a formed through animals trampling in and out of the watering hole. This was overlain by a firm dark green-grey sandy clay (19) that contained 13 fragments of roof tile, two pieces of brick, 12th-17th century pottery, a shard of window glass that was probably medieval, three fragments of later prehistoric worked flint, animal bone and oyster, mussel and cockle shell. This fill was similar to the domestic waste fill above (20), but with less in the way of artefacts, ecofacts and charcoal. The upper fill of the watering hole (20) was a firm dark grey sandy clay that contained 46 fragments of roof tile, two pieces of brick, 12th-17th century pottery, fired clay and vitrified clay that may have been part of a hearth lining, animal bone and oyster, mussel, cockle, winkle and whelk shell, as well as a copper alloy cast spacer plate (Small find 1), iron nails (Small find 2), and an iron strap (Small find 3).

3.3.4 Just to the south of the watering hole was a large pit (**25**, Fig. 4, Plate 5), measuring at least 3.75m wide and 0.8m deep. This displayed was bowl-shaped in profile, with steep sides and a concave base, and that was filled by a series of four deposits (21, 22, 23 and 24). The uppermost of these was a friable mid green-brown clayey silt (21) that contained a single roof tile fragment, 11th-13th century pottery, animal bone and oyster shell. This overlay: a plastic mid yellow-brown clay (22) that contained a single roof tile fragment, animal bone and oyster shell; a friable dark grey-brown clayey silt (23) that contained frequent 9th-15th century pottery, animal bone and oyster shell; and a plastic dark green-brown clayey silt (24) that contained 12-15th century pottery.

3.4 Finds Summary

3.4.1 The evaluation produced a finds assemblage that incorporated metalwork, slag, flint, glass, pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), and fired and vitrified clay.

3.4.2 The slag comprised a single undiagnostic fragment that weighed 0.024kg, and was recovered from watering hole **17**. The work flint assemblage comprised three fragments, weighing 0.069kg. The material was of later prehistoric origin and was residual within the post-medieval fill (19) of the watering hole (**17**). The single shard of opaque window glass weighed less than 0.001kg and was possibly medieval, from fill 19 of the watering hole (**17**). A single fragment of fired clay was recovered from the upper fill of the watering hole (**17**), weighing 0.001kg, and its roughly finished outer

surface suggests it may have been structural in origin. A single fragment of vitrified clay or hearth lining was also recovered from the same deposit, weighing 0.01kg.

3.4.3 Pottery was the main component of the artefacts repertoire, with a total of 190 sherds weighing 4.821kg recovered. The assemblage ranged in date from the mid 11th century to the end of the 19th century, and was in an unabraded to moderately abraded condition.

3.4.4 A total of 76 fragments of CBM were recovered from the site, weighing 5.360kg. This assemblage comprised of four fragments of post-medieval brick (0.377kg) from the upper fills of watering hole **17**, and 72 fragments of abraded late medieval/early post-medieval roof tile (4.983kg) from ditches **5**, **9**, **14**, and **27**, watering hole **17**, and pit **25**.

3.4.5 Metalwork from the site comprised five iron nails, two iron artefacts, possibly nails, a narrow iron strip or strap, and one medieval copper alloy cast spacer plate with an acorn-shaped terminal from a composite strap end.

3.5 Environmental Summary

3.5.1 The evaluation produced faunal remains, molluscs, and charred seeds.

3.5.2 A total of 288 animal bone fragments were recovered, with a total weight of 3.146kg. The species represented were cattle, sheep/goat, pig, dog, cat, roe deer, domestic fowl, goose, duck, cod and ling. Forty five of the bones had traces of gnawing by carnivores, and a single bone was burnt. Butchery marks were evident on six cattle bones, three sheep/goat bones, six large mammal and nine medium sized mammals, demonstrating the skinning and filleting.

3.5.3 A total of 0.86kg of mollusc shell was recovered during the evaluation, and consisted of edible species from estuarine, shallow coastal waters and intertidal zones. The shell does not appear to have been deliberately broken or crushed, though some of the oyster shells show evidence of shucking prior to consumption. Oyster was the most commonly recovered shell (from all contexts in watering hole **17** and pit **25**), but with the single largest concentration (0.611kg) being mussel from the watering hole (**17**). The shell represents food waste, with oyster and mussel being commonly commusumed in the medieval and post-medieval period.

3.5.4 A total of five bulk samples were taken during the evaluation, each of 20 litres and from late medieval features. These showed small quantities of charred cereal grains from free-threshing wheat, charred seeds of stinking mayweed, chess and docks, along with untransformed seeds of bramble and elderberry, and fragments of peas and beans. These suggest the consumption of wheat and legumes.

4 Discussion and Conclusion

4.1.1 The evaluation at Tower Close, Ramsey has revealed evidence of medieval and early post-medieval activity, with a series of linear ditches, pits and a watering hole identified.

4.1.2 Aside from the recovery of three residual pieces of worked flint, which attested to little more than a background prehistoric presence in the area, the earliest activity at the site related to the construction and primary use of the two large pits at the northern end of Trench 2 (**15** and **17**), which are likely to date between the 12th to 15th century (i.e. pre-dissolution, or broadly equivalent to phase 4, 13th century to c.1539, as defined in Spoerry *et al* 2008). Of these, pit **17** is interpreted as a watering hole, based on size, shape and presence of freshwater crustaceans in the basal fill. The shallow irregular profile on the northern side of the waterhole probably resulted from livestock trampling, suggesting the area may initially have been used for grazing.

4.1.3 It is likely that both pits in Trench 2 were open for a considerable period of time, gradually silting before being used as dumps for later domestic waste. Indeed, the vast majority of the site finds were retrieved from the upper fills of these two features, particularly watering hole **17**, which yielded 84% of the pottery, the latest material probably dating to the 16th or 17th century (i.e. post-dissolution, or broadly equivalent to phase 5 as defined in Spoerry *et al* 2008). This material derived from the preparation and serving of food and drink, and included large unabraded sherds from jars, jugs and bowls; vessels typical of a late medieval domestic repertoire. Mixed culinary waste also characterised the faunal remains from these midden fills. They included butchered bones from cattle, sheep and goats, which would have been kept for a variety of products (such as dairy, wool and traction), but also fish, avian egg shell, and marine molluscs, primarily mussels and oysters. In additional, charred wheat, peas and beans were also recovered, creating the picture of varied consumption.

4.1.4 The quantity, condition and domestic character of the finds from the midden fills in watering hole **17** and pit **15** indicate a settlement focus in close proximity to the these features. Whilst no structural remains such as potholes, beam slots or floors were recorded in the evaluation, the presence of brick and roof tile within a range of contexts, together with a fragment of possible window glass from waterhole **17**, are suggestive of structures in the immediate vicinity.

4.1.5 The most likely location of any such buildings was either along the road frontage of Tower Close, and therefore within the northern half of the development area, or the frontage along Church Green, and the line of the lode Little Whyte to the south. Given the absence of structural features and the quantity of midden material recovered, it is arguably more likely that the site is a back yard setting, with waste being removed from dwellings along Church Green and dumped at the rear of the properties in partially sited pits and waterholes. The existence of property boundaries/plot division running between Tower Close and Church Green is certainly suggested by the north-east to south-west aligned ditches in Trench 1, which share a similar orientation to the present day ones – boundaries that have changed little since the 19th century and are depicted on the 1891 Ordnance Survey map of Ramsey (see Figure 2). Ditches **5** and **9** yielded ceramics contemporary with those from the upper fills of pit **25**, and it is possible that ditch **27** in Trench 2 formed the return of ditch **11** in Trench 1, creating a rectangular parcel of land within the north-west corner of the site matching that currently to the west.

4.2 Significance

4.2.1 To date there have been few opportunities to investigate parcels of land within the northern half of the abbey precinct in Ramsey. The evaluation at Tower Close is significant in having identified activity centred upon the period between the 12th to 16th century, demonstrating domestic occupation in this area of the precinct immediately after the dissolution of the abbey in c. 1539. The site has the potential to provide further insight into the landscape, economy and settlement of the precinct area outside its life as a religious centre.

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**	NE-SW
Trench contained four ditches aligned north-east to south-west spread relatively evenly across its length, and one ditch terminus cut along the edge by one of the ditches. The trench also contained a small pit and modern disturbance. The trench layers consisted of soil and topsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay.					**Avg. depth (m)**	0.71
					Width (m)	1.6
					Length (m)	20
Contexts						
Context no	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Finds**	**Date**
1	Layer	-	0.31	Topsoil	Pottery	-
2	Layer	-	0.39	Subsoil	Pottery	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
4	Fill	0.43	0.18	Fill of ditch **5**	Animal bone, pottery, roof tile	Late medieval
5	Cut	0.43	0.18	Cut of linear ditch	-	Late medieval
6	Fill	0.68	0.22	Fill of ditch terminus **7**	-	-
7	Cut	0.68	0.22	Cut of ditch terminus	-	-
8	Fill	0.87	0.15	Fill of ditch **9**	Animal bone, pottery, roof tile	Late medieval
9	Cut	0.87	0.15	Cut of linear ditch	-	Late medieval
10	Fill	1.4	0.08	Fill of ditch **11**	Animal bone	-
11	Cut	1.4	0.08	Cut of linear ditch	-	-
12	Fill	1	0.12	Upper fill of ditch **14**	Animal bone, pottery, roof tile	19th century
13	Fill	0.8	0.17	Lower fill of ditch **14**	-	19th century
14	Cut	1	0.3	Cut of linear ditch	-	19th century
15	Fill	0.6	0.08	Fill of pit **16**	-	-
16	Cut	0.6	0.08	Cut of small pit	-	-

Trench 2						
General description					**Orientation**	NNE-SSW
Trench contained a ditch aligned east to west, a large sub-circular pit and a watering hole. The trench layers consisted of soil and topsoil overlying a natural of sandy clay.					**Avg. depth (m)**	0.74
					Width (m)	1.6
					Length (m)	20
Contexts						
Context no	**Type**	**Width (m)**	**Depth (m)**	**Comment**	**Finds**	**Date**
1	Layer	-	0.29	Topsoil	-	-

2	Layer	-	0.44	Subsoil	-	-
3	Layer	-	-	Natural	-	-
17	Cut	>1.6	0.9	Cut of watering hole	-	Medieval
18	Fill	>1	0.25	Basal fill of watering hole **17**	Animal bone, pottery, roof tile	Medieval
19	Fill	>1.6	0.45	Fill of watering hole **17**	Animal bone, brick, pottery, roof tile, shell	Late medieval
20	Fill	>1.6	0.5	Fill of watering hole **17**	Animal bone, brick, pottery, roof tile, shell	Early post-medieval
21	Fill	>0.9	0.24	Upper fill of pit **25**	Animal bone, pottery, roof tile, shell	Late medieval
22	Fill	>0.9	0.24	Fill of pit **25**	Animal bone, roof tile, shell	Late medieval
23	Fill	>0.9	0.24	Fill of pit **25**	Animal bone, pottery, shell	Late medieval
24	Fill	>0.8	0.08	Basal fill of pit **25**	Pottery	Medieval
25	Cut	>0.9	0.8	Cut of large pit	-	Late medieval
26	Fill	1	0.13	Fill of ditch **27**	Animal bone, roof tile	Late medieval
27	Cut	1	0.13	Cut of linear ditch	-	Late medieval

Appendix B. Finds Reports

B.1 Metalwork

by Carole Fletcher

Assemblage

B.1.1 A small assemblage of artefacts was recovered, comprising five iron nails, two iron artefacts, possibly nails, a narrow iron strip or strap, and one copper alloy cast spacer plate with an acorn-shaped terminal from a composite strap end.

B.1.2 The cast spacer plate, the iron strip, the nails and nail-like objects were all recovered from the fill of watering hole **17**, which produced both medieval and post-medieval pottery and is dated tentatively to the 17th century.

B.1.3 The copper alloy cast spacer plate is in good condition and shows no obvious evidence of bronze disease, while the iron objects are corroded to varying degrees. The metalwork is stored in plastic bags and crystal boxes within a Stewart box containing silica gel and humidity levels are monitored using a humidity indicator strip.

Discussion

B.1.4 Nails are a common metallic find on later medieval sites, most being associated with construction, suggesting some structure in the vicinity of the area evaluated. The cast spacer plate falls within the category of dress and personal possession, strap ends are a relatively common find, and the example recovered from watering hole **17** has close parallels published in Norwich Households (Margeson 1993, 35-36, figure 20, no. 236) and on the Portable Antiquities Scheme website (https://finds.org.uk/). The Portable Antiquities Scheme example suggests a 13th-14th century date, while the Norwich Households example came from a late 15th century context (Margeson 1993, 36), so the cast spacer plate is contemporary with some of the pottery recovered from watering hole **17**.

Catalogue

B.1.5 SF 1. (20), fill of watering hole **17**. Complete, copper alloy cast spacer plate, a c-shaped forked spacer, with curved pointed ends and an acorn shaped (acorn within its cup) terminal or knop. The section of the spacer plate is flat and the acorn appears rather pointy. Part of a composite strap end. Length 37mm, width 29.6mm, Thickness of plate; maximum 2mm, at points 1.1mm. Terminal thickness maximum 6.2mm, width maximum 8.7mm. Weight 5.9g. Parallels: (Margeson 1993, pp.35-36 figure 20, no. 236), https://finds.org.uk/database/artefacts/record/id/653460,

SF 2. (20), fill of watering hole **17**. Group of five iron nails and two iron artefacts (most probably nails).

Near compete iron, nail with round flat head (part of which has been lost) and a tapering, rectangular sectioned shank complete with pointed tip. Length 60mm.

Near compete iron, nail with sub-rounded flat or lightly domed head (corroded and somewhat misshapen) with a square sectioned shank, which is bent close to the surviving end. This may indicate the depth of the wood the nail was driven through (36mm). Length 52mm.

Incomplete iron nail with sub-rectangular slightly domed head, hammered and bent on one side with missing corner (recent loss) tapering, rectangular section shank which is missing lower part and tip, Length 42mm.

Incomplete iron nail with sub-square head (one corner missing) tapering, rectangular sectioned shank which is missing lower end/tip. Length 38mm.

Incomplete iron nail with flat sub-rectangular head on one side of shank, square sectioned shank tapering slightly to what may be the surviving tip. Length 42mm.

Iron object, possibly an incomplete tapering iron nail with a rectangular sectioned shank, the head of the object and part of the tip, which is split, is also absent. Surviving length 33mm.

Iron object, possibly a nail, thin, square sectioned shaft, with a recent break, with fresh bright metal showing below where the head may have been. The shaft tapers towards the tip. Length 40mm.

SF 3. (20), fill of watering hole **17.** Sub-rectangular iron strap, appears to be complete. The outer is corroded and mud encrusted but an approximately 10mm strip of corrosion and mud has been lost from the ?upper surface during excavation. Approximately 15mm from one end of the strip is a small round ?nail hole, almost 2mm in diameter, a similar hole is likely located at the other end of the strip, however this is masked by the presence of what appears to be a nail through the trap and bent over at right angles along the back of the strip. The ?nail is in excess of 22mm long. The strap may be a door or window fitting. Length 85mm, width maximum 21mm tapering to 19mm at end, thickness approximately 3-4mm. Nail hole centrally placed 15mm from end of strap.

B.2 **Slag**

by Carole Fletcher

B.2.1 A single fragment of undiagnostic slag weighing 0.024kg was recovered from pit **17**.

B.3 **Flint**

by Carole Fletcher and Anthony Haskins

B.3.1 Watering hole **17** produced three fragments of later prehistoric worked flint, all residual within the post-medieval watering hole fill.

Context	Cut	Form	Weight (kg)	Date
19	**17**	Core	0.048	?Bronze Age
		Primary flake	0.014	
		Secondary flake	0.007	
Total			0.069	

Table B1: Flint

B.4 **Glass**

by Carole Fletcher

B.4.1 The evaluation produced a small shard of window glass from watering hole **17**. The glass is fragile and in poor condition, being completely opaque. The condition indicates that the glass is forest or potash glass and of some age, possibly medieval.

Context	Cut	Weight (kg)	Description	Date
19	**17**	<0.001	One fragment of opaque window glass, the broken edges appear granular and the glass is in poor condition.	?Medieval

Table B2: Glass

B.5 **Pottery**

by Carole Fletcher

Introduction

B.5.1 The evaluation produced a pottery assemblage of 190 sherds, weighing 4.821kg. The assemblage spans the mid 11th to the end of the 19th century. The condition of the overall assemblage is unabraded to moderately abraded and the mean sherd weight is moderate at approximately 0.025 kg

Methodology

B.5.2 The Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG) 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 for the post-Roman pottery.

B.5.3 Recording was carried out using Oxford Archaeology 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 Roman, medieval and post-medieval types. All sherds have been counted, classified and weighed on a context-by-context basis. The assemblage is recorded in the summary catalogue. The pottery and archive are curated by OA East until formal deposition.

Assemblage

B.5.4 The bulk of the assemblage was recovered from watering hole **17**, which produced 160 sherds weighing 4.515kg. This included the complete profile from what appears to be a barrel-shaped vessel with an inturned rounded rim and a single surviving side handle (sub rounded in profile), of rod handle type with a near square section. The position and small nature of the handle suggests the vessel may have had two handles and that they may have been used for suspension rather than holding or pouring. The fabric of this vessel is a yellow-buff, low iron, refractory-type clay and is similar to the material used for tile and brick manufacture (Burwell brick) in Cambridgeshire. The colour can also be seen as yellow-buff swirls within the more pink-red matrix of some of the relief-decorated tiles made at Ramsey Abbey. A fragment of a relief-decorated tile in this yellow-buff fabric was observed in the collection of relief-decorated tiles recovered from the area around the Ailwyn School (currently held by OA East). The Abbey's tile works was well established by the 15th century, making and selling roof and wall tiles and, in the 15th century, brick (DeWindt and DeWindt 2006, 188). Also present are large sherds from a Bourne 'D' ware jug or pitcher; this and the refractory clay vessel form the majority of the pit assemblage by weight and suggest a 16th-17th century date.

B.5.5 Watering hole **17** also produced sherds from a Late Medieval Ely ware jug, a Late Medieval Reduced ware bowl and a Huntingdon Late Medieval Calcareous ware vessel. Also recovered were sherds from Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware jars and jugs, Grimston glazed ware jugs, Medieval Ely ware jars and jugs and sherds from two curfews, one an Ely ware vessel the other an East Anglian Redware. The presence of curfew sherds indicate the management of hearths overnight, the curfew being used to cover the embers; holes in the vessel allowed the embers to stay alight while preventing sparks.

B.5.6 Pit **25** produced 15 sherds, including two sherds from curfews in what has tentatively been identified as (South Cambridgeshire) Smooth Sandy ware (1050-1225) and a rim sherd from a sooted, collared, Stamford ware jar (1075-1200). These are the earliest sherds of pottery recovered from the evaluation and may relate to early occupation of the Abbey precinct, although they are residual here within a mid 12th-end 15th century assemblage.

B.5.7 Ditches **5** and **9**, suggested by the excavator to be part of a field-property boundary system, each produced six sherds of similar pottery fabrics. Both contained Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware, Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares of Blackborough End type and Bourne 'D' ware vessels, suggesting a mid 15th-mid 17th date. Ditch **14** produced a single sherd of transfer-printed Refined White Earthenware weighing less than 1g that is likely to be intrusive.

Conclusion

B.5.8 The assemblage is mainly domestic in nature, with sooted sherds indicating use in the preparation and serving of food. Jugs for serving liquids are also present as are sherds from four curfews, suggesting control of domestic hearths. The medieval sherds recovered are moderately abraded, indicating some reworking of the medieval material. However, the later Bourne 'D' sherds and those of the ?specialist vessel are all sharp and unabraded, indicting primary deposition at least within watering hole **17**. At present the purpose of the ?specialist vessel from watering hole **17** is uncertain, however it appears to have been repeatedly heated, and may have contained water as a limescale-like deposit covers the lower part of the internal surface. This vessel has been tentatively dated to the 16th-17th century and thus dates the upper fill of watering hole **17** to the same period.

B.5.9 The levels of pottery recovered from other features is relatively modest by comparison with watering hole **17** and possibly represent reworked medieval rubbish deposits with deliberate deposition of pottery, most likely in the 16th century or later.

B.5.10 Jugs are the most common vessel form present in the medieval assemblage, followed by jars, then bowls. The presence of curfews along the other vessels suggests the medieval assemblage relate to domestic functions, the maintenance of hearths, the preparation of food but most importantly the serving of liquids. The Bourne 'D' ware vessels are also most likely jugs or pitchers.

B.5.11 The fabrics present are similar to those recovered from various excavations in Ramsay and its environs, including those from the Ramsay Abbey School 1998-2002 (Fletcher and Spoerry 2008). The assemblage contains pottery from the Cambridgeshire Fenland including Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware and Ely ware, alongside fabrics from Norfolk, both Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares of Blackborough End type jars, and glazed Grimston jugs. Also present were a small number of sherds from Northamptonshire, including a single sherd from a Lyveden/Stanion Glazed ware jug. The medieval wares from Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Northamptonshire decline from the mid 15th century onwards in the face of increasing supply of Bourne 'D' ware from south Lincolnshire (Spoerry *et al* 2008, 203).

B.5.12 The assemblage relates therefore to phase 4, 13th century to *c*.1539 and phase 5, post-dissolution as identified by Spoerry *et al* (2008) with the 13th-*c*.1539 material in all features, representing perhaps longevity of pottery types rather than intensity of occupation.

B.5.13 ***Pottery Catalogue***

Context	Cut	Full Name	Basic Form	Sherd Count	Weight (kg)	Fabric Date
2		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware	Curfew	1	0.044	1175-1300
4	**5**	Bourne 'D' ware		1	0.01	1430-1650
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware		1	0.003	1175-1300
		Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End type	Jar	3	0.012	1150-1300
		Unidentified	Jug	1	0.068	1150-1500
8	**9**	Bourne 'D' ware	Jug	2	0.008	1430-1650
		Grimston Glazed ware		1	0.004	1200-1500
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware	Jar	2	0.017	1175-1300
		Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End type	Jar	1	0.007	1150-1300
13	**14**	Refined White Earthenware (transfer-printed)		1	0.001	1805-1900
18	**17**	Lyveden A-type Shelly ware	Jug/jar	1	0.024	1150-1400
		Medieval Ely ware		1	0.008	1150-1350
		Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End type	Jug	1	0.007	1150-1300
19	**17**	Bourne 'D' ware	Jug	7	0.031	1430-1650
		Grimston Glazed ware	Jug	14	0.106	1200-1500
		Huntingdon Late Medieval Calcareous ware		1	0.016	1300-1450
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware		1	0.002	1175-1300
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware	Jar	2	0.03	1175-1300
		Late Medieval Ely ware		2	0.006	1350-1500
		Late Medieval Ely ware	Jug	2	0.006	1350-1500
		Late Medieval Reduced ware		2	0.014	1350-1500
		Lyveden A-type Shelly ware		1	0.012	1150-1400
		Lyveden/Stanion Glazed ware	Jug	1	0.01	1225-1500
		Medieval Coarseware		4	0.034	1175-1400
		Shelly ware		2	0.014	1150-1500
20	**17**	Bourne 'D' ware	Jug	41	1.399	1430-1650
		Brill/Boarstall ware		1	0.01	1200-1500
		East Anglian Redwares	Jug	20	0.287	1200-1400
		East Anglian Redwares	Curfew	1	0.047	1200-1400
		Grimston Glazed ware	Jug	3	0.163	1200-1500
		Grimston Glazed ware (late)		1	0.01	1350-1500
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware		8	0.03	1175-1300
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware	Jar	2	0.014	1175-1300
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware	Jug	2	0.01	1175-1300
		Late Medieval Reduced ware		5	0.018	1350-1500
		Late Medieval Reduced ware	Bowl	4	0.1	1350-1500
		Lyveden/Stanion Glazed ware	Jug	1	0.033	1225-1500
		Medieval Coarseware	Jar	2	0.014	1175-1400
		Medieval Ely ware		6	0.023	1150-1350
		Medieval Ely ware	Jar	1	0.007	1150-1350
		Medieval Ely ware	Jug	1	0.018	1150-1350

Context	Cut	Full Name	Basic Form	Sherd Count	Weight (kg)	Fabric Date
		Medieval Ely ware	Curfew	2	0.032	1150-1350
		Shelly Ware		3	0.006	1150-1500
		Unglazed Reduced Sandy wares, of Blackborough End type	Jar	5	0.021	1150-1300
		Unidentified	Jug	1	0.014	1150-1500
		Unidentified Glazed ware	Jug	1	0.03	1200-1500
		Unidentified Low iron content refractory-type tile fabric	Jar/jug	7	1.909	1550-1700
21	**25**	(South Cambridgeshire) Smooth Sandy ware	Curfew	2	0.036	1050-1225
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware	Jar	7	0.04	1175-1300
23	**25**	Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware		1	0.006	1175-1300
		Huntingdonshire Fen Sandy ware	Jar	1	0.01	1175-1300
		Potterspury ware	Jug	1	0.009	1250-1500
		Shelly ware	Jar	1	0.008	1150-1500
		Stamford ware	Jar	1	0.017	875-1200
24	**25**	Grimston Glazed ware	Jug	2	0.006	1200-1500

Table B3: Summary pottery Catalogue

B.6 Brick and roof tile

By Rob Atkins BSocSc Diparch MCIfA

Introduction and methodology

B.6.1 A small assemblage of CBM was found comprising 76 fragments (5360g) (Table B4). The CBM was visibly sorted into fabric types.

Material	No. of contexts	No. fragments	Weight (g)
Brick	2	4	377
Roof tile	9	72	4983

Table B4: CBM by type, number and weight

Brick

B.6.2 Four brick fragments were recovered from just two contexts. All are in a mixed yellow and orange clay, although yellow clay predominated in three fragments. All date to the post-medieval period with a 17th century date likely for at least two of the fragments.

Context	Cut	No.	Weight (g)	
19	**17**	2	237	In two fabrics: 1) Predominantly yellow (220g). Has some orange clay. Poorly made. Uneven faces. Post-medieval? 17th century 2) Yellow exterior with mixed yellow/orange interior (17g). Post-medieval
20	**17**	2	140	In two fabrics: 1) Yellow (126g). Poorly made. Uneven faces. Many

				internal cracks and holes. 58mm (2½") thick. Probably 17th century 2) Yellow/orange mixed (14g). Post-medieval
		4	**377**	

Table B5: Brick

Ceramic roof tile

B.6.3 A small quantity of roof tile was recovered from nine contexts (Table B6). The tiles are in a mixture of fabrics but fully oxidised yellow and orange tiles predominated. It is noticeable that only 19 of the 72 tile fragments had a reduced grey core. This suggests that most of the collection dates to at least the late medieval/early post-medieval period. Kiln technology had improved by the late medieval/early post-medieval period which meant that fully oxidised wares was largely produced.

B.6.4 The fragments were relatively abraded with none having complete widths. Sub-rounded peg holes were seen on five fragments but in each case the tile fragment was not large enough to definitely state they were of one or two peg hole type. The average size of the fragments at 69.2g per sherd is relatively small for a medieval/early post-medieval town site and suggests that the fragments may have been left some time before final deposition (such as in middens). Average size elsewhere is often at over 80g per fragment, such as at Huntingdon Town centre where 485 pieces of ceramic roof tile were recovered weighing 40.259kg (83g per sherd; Atkins and Fletcher 2009) or Coldhams Lane, Cambridge with 499 fragments (42.73kg) with an average tile fragment weight of 85.63g (Atkins 2015).

Context	Cut	No.	Weight (g)	Description
4	**5**	1	41	Orange with grey core
8	**9**	2	151	In two fabrics: 1) Fully oxidised orange with slight grey core (108g) 2) Fully oxidised orange with a few small yellow clay lumps inclusions (43g)
12	**14**	1	19	Yellow exterior with grey core
18	**17**	4	626	In two fabrics: 1) Fully oxidised orange with small quantity of yellow clay included (130g) 2) Three yellow exterior with grey core (495g)
19	**17**	13	570	In three fabrics: 1) Five fully oxidised yellow (157g) 2) Seven orange exterior with grey core (367g) 3) Orange exterior with yellow/orange mixed core (46g)
20	**17**	46	3182	In five fabrics: 1) Seven fully oxidised yellow (523g). One was slightly sooted (on one surface) 2) One orange exterior with slightly purple core (37g) 3) Eight yellow exterior with orange core (439g). One has sub-rounded hole ? type 4) Six orange surface with grey core (466g). One has sub-rounded hole ?type 5) 24 fully oxidised orange with a few small yellow clay

				lumps inclusions (1712g). Peg hole 65mm from side ? single peg hole type. Another fragment had a sub-rounded peg hole of unknown type
21	**25**	1	116	Fully oxidised orange. Well made. Late medieval/early post-medieval
22	**25**	1	75	Orange exterior with grey core
26	**27**	3	203	In two fabrics: 1) Fully oxidised orange with a few small yellow clay lumps inclusions (11g) 2) Two yellow (surface) and yellow/orange interior (192g). One sub-rounded peg hole 58mm from side ?type
		72	**4983**	

Table B6: Ceramic roof tile

B.7 **Fired and Vitrified Clay**

by Carole Fletcher

B.7.1 A fragment of fired clay was recovered from watering hole **17**. Although no withy grooves are present, the solidity of the fired clay and its roughly finished outer surface suggest it is structural in origin, however it is not closely datable. The feature also produced a fragment of vitrified clay or hearth lining.

Context	Cut	Form	Number of fragments	Weight (kg)
20	**17**	Fired clay	1	0.001
20	**17**	Vitrified clay/hearth lining	1	0.010

Table B7: Fired and vitrified clay

Appendix C. Environmental Reports

C.1 Faunal Remains

By Lena Strid (fish identification by Rebecca Nicholson)

Introduction

C.1.1 A total of 288 hand-collected animal bone fragments were recovered from this site. The majority of the assemblage came from ditches and pits preliminarily dated to the Middle Ages (Table C1).

C.1.2 The bone condition was generally good. A total of 45 bones (15.6%) had traces of gnawing by carnivores, probably dogs. A single bone was burnt (Table C2).

C.1.3 The assemblage contains bones from cattle, sheep/goat, pig, dog, cat, roe deer, domestic fowl, goose, duck, cod and ling. One bone could be identified as sheep. As it is very difficult to distinguish between greylag goose, mallard and their domestic forms, it is unclear whether the goose and duck bones come from wild or domestic animals. Domestic goose and duck keeping were however common in the Middle Ages. Due to the small sample size it is not possible to extrapolate on the frequency of cattle, sheep/goat and pig and their contribution to the economy and diet. The lack of sieved remains suggest that the fish bones represent an absolute minimum of the proportion of fish in the diet.

C.1.4 A small number of bones could be attributed to minimum age at death (Table C3-4), suggesting that cattle and sheep/goat were killed as sub-adults or adults whereas pigs were killed as juveniles or sub-adults. This is a common pattern in non-specialised animal husbandry, where cattle and sheep/goat were kept for a variety of products, such as dairy, wool and traction. Surplus animals were killed for meat when young and the rest of the herd were slaughtered when they were past their prime as breeding animals, draught oxen, milk and wool producers. Pigs were raised for meat and due to their high fecundity and growth rate they were mostly killed as sub-adults after reaching maximum size.

C.1.5 Butchery marks were noted on six cattle bones and three sheep/goat bones, as well as six and nine bones from large and medium mammals. A sheep skull had several cut marks around the horn core, which itself had been chopped off. The cut marks may derive from skinning. Evidence of axial splitting of the carcass was found on one cattle pelvis, one sheep/goat skull, one large mammal sternum and two medium mammal vertebrae. The carcasses were then further disarticulated. Three cattle pelves had been chopped through at the hip socket, another cattle pelvis had been chopped through at the ilium, one cattle femur had been chopped off mid-shaft and a sheep/goat femur had been chopped off above the *trochanter minor*. Filleting of meat is indicated by a cut mark on a cattle pelvis. Five ribs from large mammals and six from medium mammals had been portioned in two or more parts.

C.1.6 Pathologies were only observed on two bones from domestic fowl. They comprised one tarsometatarsus with exostoses at the distal condyles and one tibiotarsus with a large entheosphyte on the lateral side at the trochlea.

C.1.7 No further information can be gained from such a small sample of bones. However, if further excavations take place on the site, the bones should be included in the full excavation report.

	Number of fragments	Minimum number of individuals
Cattle	22	2
Sheep/goat	29	3
Sheep	1	
Pig	18	3
Dog	1	1
Cat	1	1
Roe deer	1	1
Domestic fowl	6	2
Goose	2	1
Duck	2	1
Indet. bird	15	
Cod	1	1
Ling	1	1
Indet. fish	5	
Medium mammal	68	
Large mammal	47	
Indeterminate	68	
TOTAL	288	
Weight (g)	3146	

Table C1: Bone assemblage from the Tower Close, Ramsey, evaluation

N	0	1	2	3	4	5	Burnt	Gnawed
288	6.6%	69.1%	22.6%	1.7%			1	45

Table C2: Bone preservation and number of bones with traces of burning and gnawing

Species	dp4	P4	M1	M2	M3	MWS	Estimated age
Sheep/goat			g	g	b	31	2-3 years
Pig		a	e	c	V-E	21	Sub-adult
				f	a	31-34	Sub-adult
					a	26-35	Sub-adult

Table C3. Tooth wear and estimated age of cattle and sheep/goat, following Grant (1982), O'Connor (1988) and Payne (1973)

Species		Unfused	Fusing	Fused
Cattle	Early fusion			4
	Mid fusion			2
	Late fusion			

Sheep/goat	Early fusion	2		6
	Mid fusion			2
	Late fusion	3		
Pig	Early fusion	2		
	Mid fusion			
	Late fusion	2		

Table C4: Epiphyseal fusion of cattle, sheep/goat and pig, following Habermehl (1975) and Serjeantson (1996).

C.2 **Mollusca**

By Carole Fletcher

Introduction and methodology

C.2.1 A total of 0.860 kg of mollusc shells were collected by hand during excavation. A small amount of shell was also recovered during environmental processing. The shells recovered are all edible examples from estuarine, shallow coastal waters and intertidal zones. The shell is relatively well preserved and does not appear to have been deliberately broken or crushed. The shells were weighed and recorded by species, the minimum number of individuals has not been recorded at this stage. A number of the oyster shells show evidence of damage in the form of small 'V' or 'U' shaped holes on the outer edge, on both left and right valved shells. This damage is likely to have been caused during the opening or shucking of the oyster prior to its consumption.

Assemblage

C.2.2 Oysters are the most commonly recovered shell, present in all contexts from both watering hole **17** and pit **25**, yet the single largest weight of shells was the mussel shells recovered from watering hole**17**. The weight of oyster and mussel shells recovered from watering hole **17** (0.611kg) suggest they are the remains of food waste, possibly representing the deliberate deposition of the remains of a single meal, the single examples of cockle, whelk and winkle being accidental inclusions. The smaller number of shells included in pit **25** suggest more general discarding of food waste.

Species	Common Name	Habitat	No of shucked shells	Total Weight (kg)
Ostrea edulis	Oyster	Estuarine and shallow coastal water.	10	0.469
Mytilus edulis	Mussel	Intertidal, salt water.		0.336
Cerastoderma edule	Common cockle	Intertidal, salt water.		0.005
Littorina littorea	Winkle	Estuarine, intertidal		0.001
Buccinum undatum	Common whelk	Shallow coastal water.		0.004

Table C5: Mollusca types present

Conclusion

The assemblage represents food waste, mollusca were a common food in the medieval and post-medieval period and can be found in pre- and post-dissolution contexts on

many religious sites. The excavated pits lie within the medieval abbey precinct and the pottery recovered is a mix of medieval, early post-medieval and some 16th-17th century material. The shell does not show evidence of having been reworked after deposition and may therefore be contemporary with the 16th-17th century pottery.

Context	Cut	Species	Common Name	Habitat	No of shucked shells	Total Weight (kg)
19	**17**	*Ostrea edulis*	Oyster	Estuarine and shallow coastal water.	1	0.104
		Mytilus edulis	Mussel	Intertidal, salt water.		0.050
		Cerastoderma edule	Common cockle	Intertidal, salt water.		0.003
20	**17**	*Ostrea edulis*	Oyster	Estuarine and shallow coastal water.	1	0.126
		Mytilus edulis	Mussel	Intertidal, salt water.		0.331
		Cerastoderma edule	Common cockle	Intertidal, salt water.		0.002
		Littorina littorea	Winkle	Estuarine, intertidal		0.001
		Buccinum undatum	Common whelk	Shallow coastal water.		0.004
21	**25**	*Ostrea edulis*	Oyster	Estuarine and shallow coastal water.	2	0.043
22	**25**	*Ostrea edulis*	Oyster	Estuarine and shallow coastal water.	3 or 4	0.042
23	**25**	*Ostrea edulis*	Oyster	Estuarine and shallow coastal water.	3	0.154
Total						**0.860**

Table C6: Mollusca by context

C.3 Environmental samples

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction

C.3.1 Five bulk samples were taken during excavations at Tower Close, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire from late-medieval features. 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.3.1 The total volume (twenty litres) of each of the samples was processed by tank flotation using modified Siraff-type equipment. The floating component (flot) of the samples was collected in a 0.25mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through 10mm, 5mm, 2mm and a 0.5mm sieve. A magnet was dragged through each residue fraction for the

recovery of magnetic residues prior to sorting for artefacts. Any artefacts present were noted and reintegrated with the hand-excavated finds. The dried flots were subsequently sorted using a binocular microscope at magnifications up to x 60 and an abbreviated list of the recorded remains are presented in Table C7. 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). Carbonized seeds and grains, by the process of burning and burial, become blackened and often distort and fragment leading to difficulty in identification. Plant remains have been identified to species where possible. The identification of cereals has been based on the characteristic morphology of the grains and chaff as described by Jacomet (2006).

Quantification

C.3.1 For the purpose of this initial assessment, items such as seeds, cereal grains and legumes 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 has been scored for abundance

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

Results

C.3.1 Preservation of plant remains is by carbonisation with no evidence of waterlogging in any of the features including watering hole **17**. Charred cereal grains were recovered in small quantities (maximum 20 grains) from all of the features sampled and can mostly be identified as free-threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum sensu-lato*) although preservation of the grains is generally poor. Fills 13 (Sample 1) of ditch **14** and fill 6 (Sample 2) of ditch **7,** located in Trench 1, contain the greatest quantity of grains in addition to numerous untransformed seeds of bramble (*Rubus* sp.) and elderberry (*Sambucus nigra*); both are plant species that produce seeds with a tough outer coat (testa) that are resistant to decay and are likely to be contemporary with the deposits. Charred seeds of stinking mayweed (*Anthemis cotula*), chess (*Bromus* sp.) and docks (*Rumex* sp.) are also present in ditch 7.

C.3.2 Two samples were taking from watering hole **17**; lower fill 18 (Sample 3) contains numerous shells of large ostracods (freshwater crustaceans) as evidence of its primary use containing water. The upper fill 20 appears to be comprised of midden material in the form of numerous bones of large and small mammals, fish and amphibians. Other dietary evidence includes avian egg shell and marine molluscs; primarily mussels (*Mytillus edulis*) with occasional fragments of oyster (*Ostrea edulis*) and cockle (*Cerastoderma edule*). Charred plant remains are rare with only three wheat grains and a single seed of stinking mayweed recovered. An iron nail and a fragment of lead (possibly from a window came) were also recovered from the sample residue.

C.3.3 Sample 5 was taken from the uppermost fill 24 of pit **25** and contains occasional charred wheat grains. Fragments of peas and beans (Fabaceae) and several stinking mayweed seeds.

Sample	Context	Cut No.	Feature Type	Trench	Flot	Cereals	Legumes	Charred	Untransf ored	Charcoal	Small	Large	Fishbone	Marine	Pottery	Slag	Metal

No.	No.			No.	Volume (ml)			Seeds	seeds		animal bones	animal bones		molluscs			
1	13	**14**	Ditch	1	60	##	#	0	###	+	#	#	0	0	#	0	0
2	6	**7**	Ditch	1	20	##	0	#	##	++	#	0	0	#	0	0	0
3	18	**17**	Watering hole	2	5	0	0	0	0	0	#	#	0	#	0	#	0
4	20	**17**	Watering hole	2	20	#	0	#	0	+	###	#	#	##	#	#	#
5	24	**25**	Pit	2	15	#	#	#	0	+	##	#	0	#	#	0	0

Table C7: Environmental samples from RASTWR15

Discussion

C.3.1 The charred plant remains recovered from the environmental samples are quite limited in both diversity and density although there is evidence of the consumption of wheat and legumes. The presence of seeds of the habitat-specific stinking mayweed suggests that the wheat was being grown on heavy clay soils. The inclusion of mixed culinary waste indicates that some of the features had subsequent use for the disposal of midden material; further recovery of which has the potential to provide a wealth of information on diet and economy of the site.

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APPENDIX E. OASIS REPORT FORM

Project Details

OASIS Number	oxfordar3-2204ST		
Project Name	Medieval Activity at Tower Close, Ramsey, Cambridgeshire		
Project Dates (fieldwork) Start	10-08-2015	Finish	11-08-2015
Previous Work (by OA East)	No	Future Work	Unknown

Project Reference Codes

Site Code	RASTWR15	Planning App. No.	15/00375/FUL
HER No.	ECB 4524	Related HER/OASIS No.	

Type of Project/Techniques Used

Prompt	Planning condition
Development Type	Rural Residential

Please select all techniques used:

☐ Aerial Photography - interpretation	☐ Grab-Sampling	☐ Remote Operated Vehicle Survey
☐ Aerial Photography - new	☐ Gravity-Core	☒ Sample Trenches
☐ Annotated Sketch	☐ Laser Scanning	☐ Survey/Recording Of Fabric/Structure
☐ Augering	☐ Measured Survey	☐ Targeted Trenches
☐ Dendrochronological Survey	☐ Metal Detectors	☐ Test Pits
☐ Documentary Search	☐ Phosphate Survey	☐ Topographic Survey
☐ Environmental Sampling	☐ Photogrammetric Survey	☐ Vibro-core
☐ Fieldwalking	☐ Photographic Survey	☐ Visual Inspection (Initial Site Visit)
☐ Geophysical Survey	☐ 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
Watering hole	Post Medieval 1540 to 1901	Pottery	Medieval 1066 to 1540
Pit	Medieval 1066 to 1540	Animal bone	Medieval 1066 to 1540
Ditches	Medieval 1066 to 1540	Cast spacer plate	Medieval 1066 to 1540

Project Location

County	Cambridgeshire	Site Address (including postcode if possible)	
District	Huntingdonshire	Land opposite 11-17 Tower Close, Ramsey, Huntingdon,	
Parish	Ramsey		
HER	Cambridge County Council		
Study Area	64 sq m	National Grid Reference	TL 2909 8527

Project Originators

Organisation	OA EAST
Project Brief Originator	Kasia Gdaniec (CCC HET)
Project Design Originator	Matt Brudenell (OA East)
Project Manager	Matt Brudenell (OA East)
Supervisor	Robin Webb (OA East)

Project Archives

Physical Archive	Digital Archive	Paper Archive
CCC Stores, Landbeach	OA East	CCC Stores, Landbeach
RASTWR15	RASTWR15	RASTWR15

Archive Contents/Media

	Physical Contents	Digital Contents	Paper Contents
Animal Bones	☒	☒	☒
Ceramics	☒	☒	☒
Environmental	☒	☒	☒
Glass	☐	☐	☐
Human Bones	☐	☐	☐
Industrial	☐	☐	☐
Leather	☐	☐	☐
Metal	☒	☒	☒
Stratigraphic		☒	☒
Survey		☒	☒
Textiles	☐	☐	☐
Wood	☐	☐	☐
Worked Bone	☐	☐	☐
Worked Stone/Lithic	☐	☐	☐
None	☐	☐	☐
Other	☐	☐	☐

Digital Media	Paper Media
☒ Database	☐ Aerial Photos
☒ GIS	☒ Context Sheet
☐ Geophysics	☐ Correspondence
☒ Images	☐ Diary
☒ Illustrations	☒ Drawing
☐ Moving Image	☒ Manuscript
☐ Spreadsheets	☒ Map
☒ Survey	☒ Matrices
☒ Text	☐ Microfilm
☐ Virtual Reality	☐ Misc.
	☐ Research/Notes
	☐ Photos
	☒ Plans
	☒ Report
	☒ Sections
	☐ Survey

Notes:

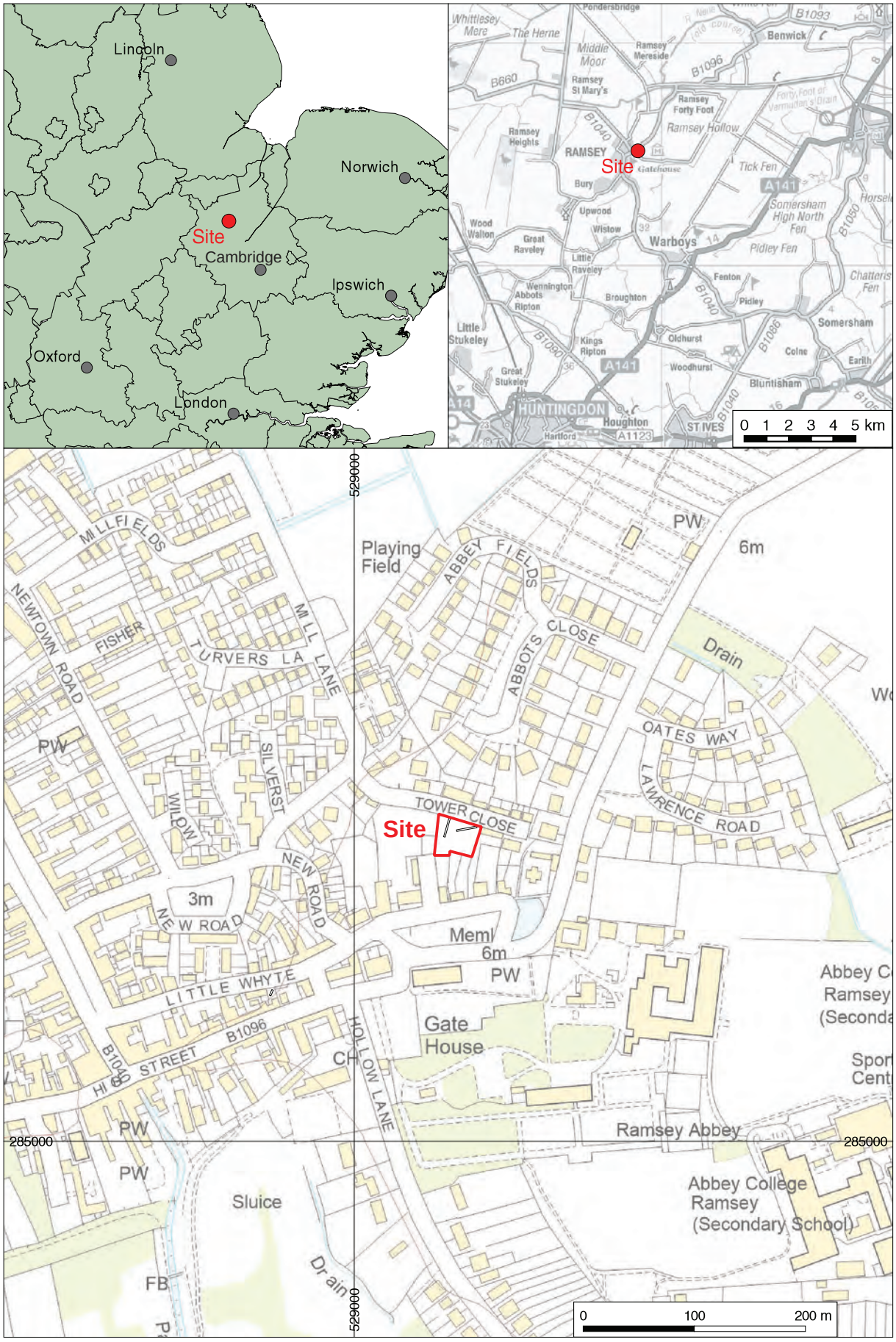

Figure 1: Site location showing archaeological trench (black) and development area (red)

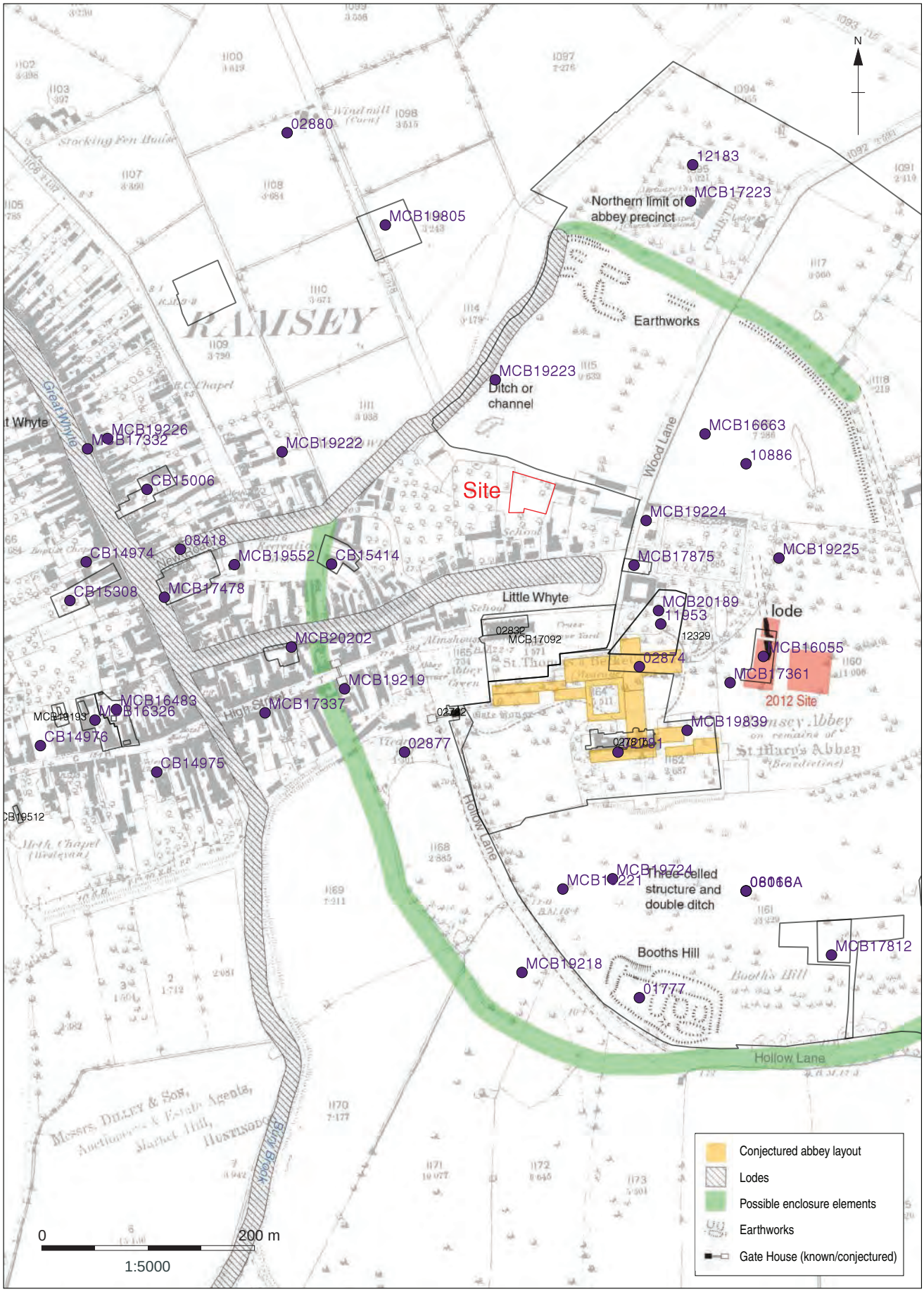

Figure 2: Ramsey Abbey Precinct overlaid on 1891 OS map (after Spoerry *et al.* 2008, fig.3) with HER plot

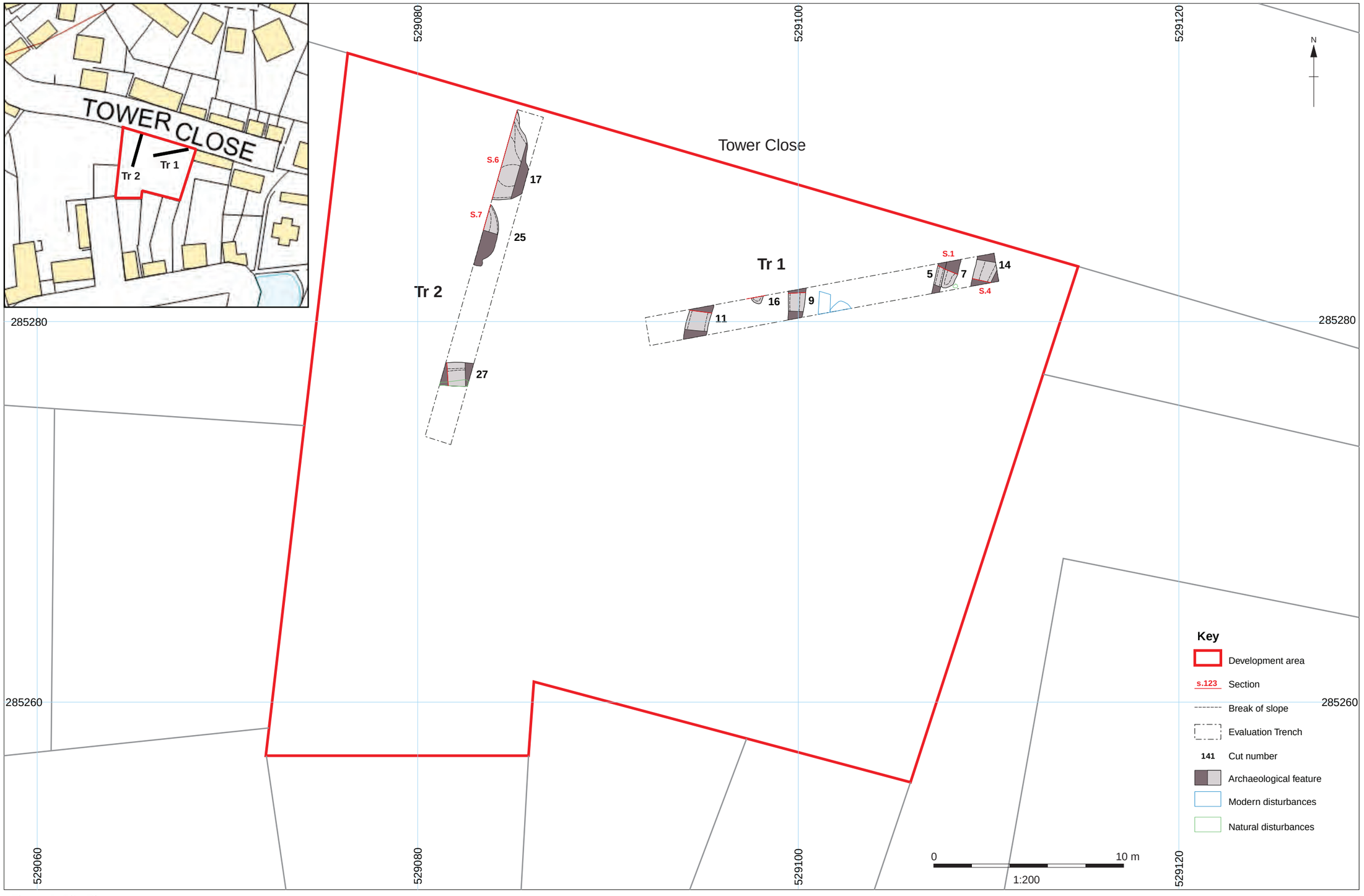

Figure 3: Site Plan

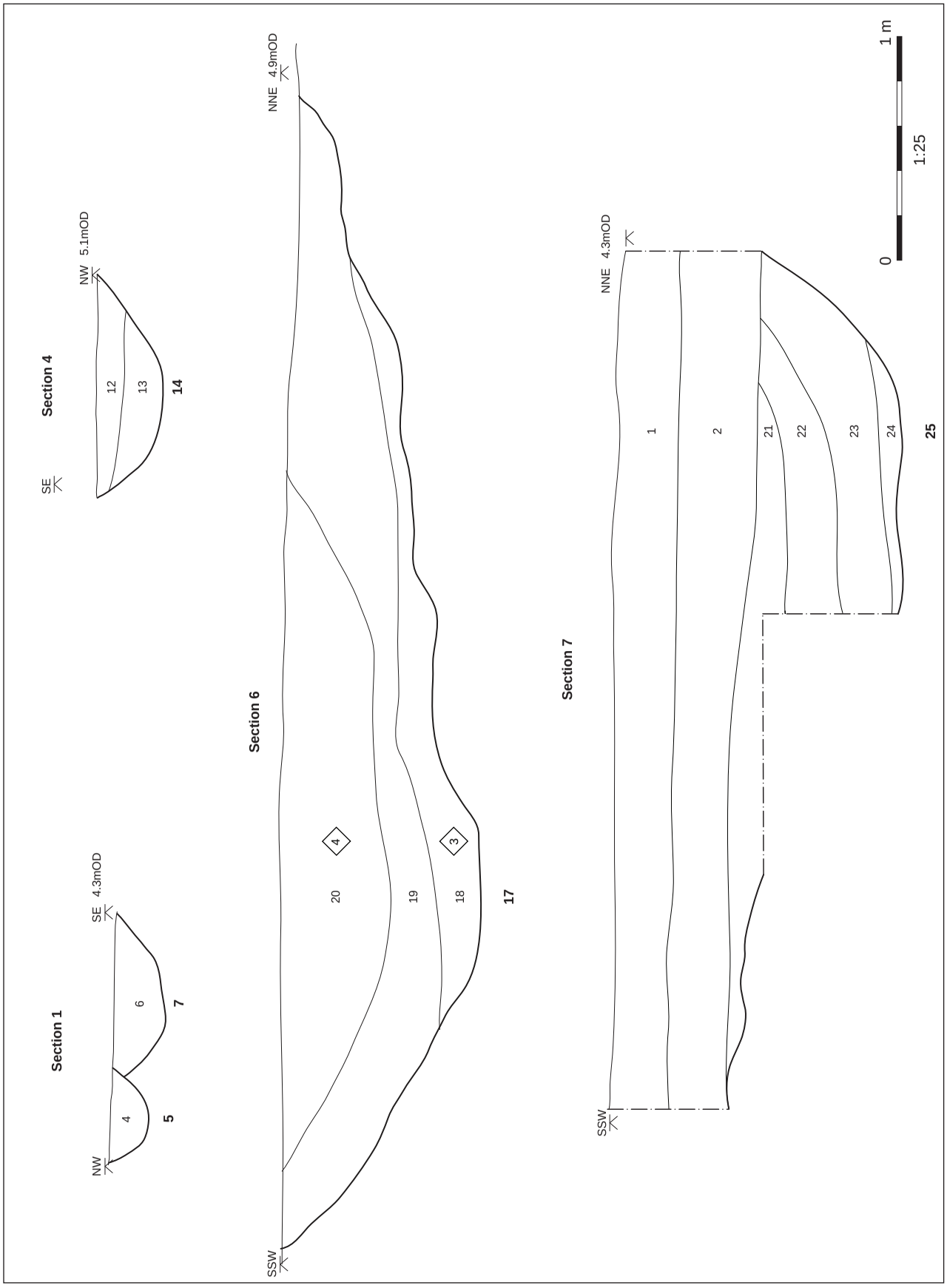

Figure 4: Selected sections. Scale 1:25

Plate 1: Trench 1 from south-west

Plate 3: Trench 2 from north-east

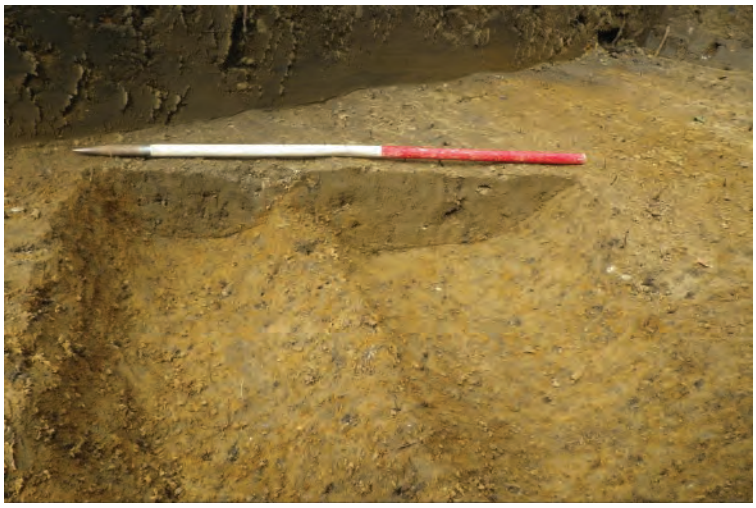

Plate 2: Ditch **5** cutting ditch terminus **7** from south-south-west

Plate 4: Watering hole **17** from south-east

Plate 5: Pit **25** from south-east

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