



Archaeological Field Unit

Medieval and Post-Medieval Remains at 11-12 High Street, Huntingdon

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July 2005

Cambridgeshire County Council

Report No. 815

ECB2001

Commissioned by Exchange Developments Ltd

Medieval and Post-Medieval Remains at 11-12 High Street, Huntingdon

(TL 2413 7155)

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July 2005

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Report No. 815

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SUMMARY

In July 2005, the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC AFU) conducted an archaeological evaluation, comprising a single trench, on a small parcel of land to the rear of 11-12 High Street, Huntingdon. The site is in a potentially significant location within the historic town, to the north of the castle, and was thought to lie on the projected course of the pre-1322 High Street.

Deep, well-preserved archaeological deposits were identified to a depth of approximately 3m (including 0.7m of modern overburden) below the current ground surface. The earliest deposits identified probably date to the Norman/post-Conquest period. These appear to be the fills of a large, possibly linear, feature, which may have been levelled off or deliberately infilled in the 12th or early 13th century.

A thick layer containing 13th-century pottery, animal bone and other occupation debris was recorded across the trench, sealed by remnants of a cobbled surface and truncated by ?early post-medieval post-holes. The latter may be the remains of outbuildings or fences to the rear of the High Street frontage properties; the current buildings, including Nos 11-12, are group-listed (Grade 2) and are thought to date to the 18th century, although earlier elements are present.

The route of the pre-1322 High Street was not identified, but this could conceivably lie to the north or south of the evaluation trench.

Various post-medieval levelling/layers and dumps were recorded overlying the medieval deposits; the latest feature was a square-cut pit containing 19th- and 20th-century rubbish. Wall foundations and floors associated with the ?Victorian laundry, outside toilets and associated outbuildings that were demolished prior to the evaluation were also present, although these did not impact on the medieval deposits.

A moderate finds assemblage, comprising medieval and later pottery, animal bone, glass, tile and clay-pipe was recovered, reflecting the small scale of the investigation. Evidence of reworking/residuality was present within the assemblage as Roman tile and Saxo-Norman pottery was identified in later deposits, although this is not unexpected in an urban environment. This assemblage, combined with the data recovered from the environmental samples, is characteristic of domestic rubbish disposal, and includes evidence for small scale (secondary) butchery, cooking and crop-processing.

The results from this evaluation can be added to the growing body of archaeological data for Huntingdon, in particular the recent excavations by the CCC AFU at Hartford Road and Walden House, and will hopefully help to inform future strategies and research priorities for this historic town.

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Drawing Conventions

Sections		Plans	
Limit of Excavation		Limit of Excavation	
Cut		Deposit - Conjectured	
Cut-Conjectured		Natural Features	
Soil Horizon		Intrusion/Truncation	
Soil Horizon - Conjectured		Sondages/Machine Strip	
Intrusion/Truncation		Illustrated Section	
Top of Natural		Archaeological Deposit	
Top Surface		Excavated Slot	
Break in Section		Modern Deposit	
Cut Number		Cut Number	118
Deposit Number	117	Small Finds	
Ordnance Datum	18.45m ODN	Auger Holes	
Stone			
Brick			
Bone			

**Medieval and Post-Medieval Remains at 11-12 High Street, Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire
(TL2413 7155)**

1 INTRODUCTION

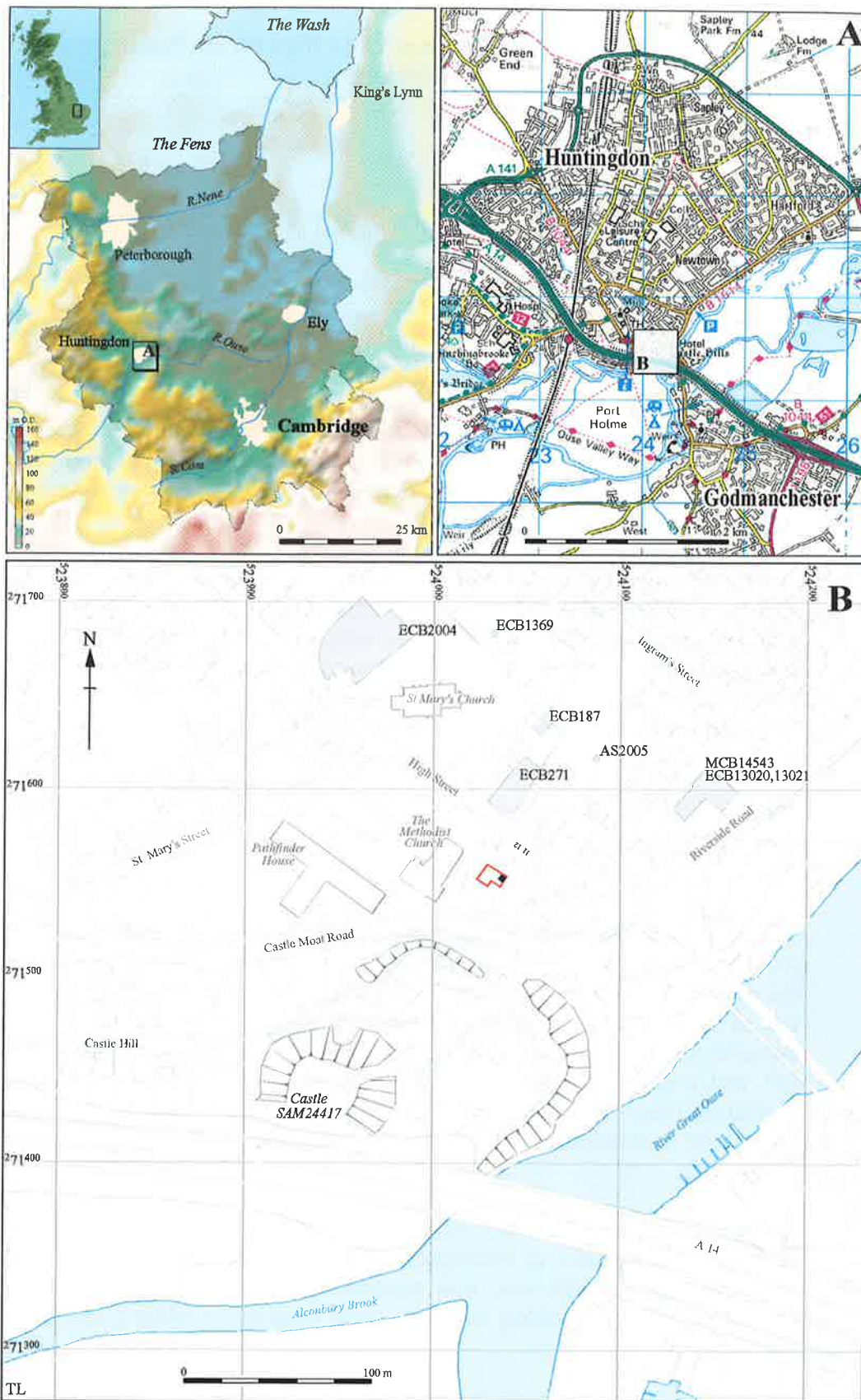
In July 2005, the Archaeological Field Unit of Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC AFU) conducted an archaeological evaluation on a small parcel of land (0.01ha) to the rear of 11-12 High Street, Huntingdon. This was in response to an Archaeological Brief issued by Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA) to evaluate the site of a proposed single dwelling with associated landscaping and services (Planning Application No.: H/04/03289/FUL).

The investigation comprised a single small trench consisting initially of a 3m x 3m area stepped to 2.5m x 2m, representing 5% of the proposed development area. The development is located well within the historic town core and is surrounded by buildings on three sides; a narrow road (Castle Hill Court) provides access from the High Street. The evaluation was commissioned by Exchange Developments Ltd, Huntingdon.

2 GEOLOGY AND TOPOGRAPHY

The geology of the development area is First and Second Pleistocene River gravels, overlying Oxford Clay (BGS 1975, Sheet 187). The site is located to the rear of 18th-century buildings that front on to the High Street to the north-east of the development, in an area formerly occupied by gardens and brick outbuildings (Fig. 1). The current ground surface level is approximately 15m OD, with a slight slope from south to north. An auger hole in the base of the evaluation trench identified natural sandy gravels, discoloured to grey, with clear petrol contamination. The water table was also reached at this level (c. 12.2m OD).

Topographically the site is in a significant location within the historic core of the town. The remains of Huntingdon castle (SAM 24417) and bailey ditch are located to the south-west, now curtailed by the ring road, and the 14th-century stone bridge crossing the River Great Ouse lies c. 150m to the south-east.



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Figure 1 Location of trench (black) and development area (red)

3 ARCHAEOLOGICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

3.1 Prehistoric

The development site is located within the Ouse Valley, an area rich in prehistoric remains. Prehistoric artefacts, largely of Neolithic and Bronze Age date, have been found within Huntingdon, reflecting the preference of early prehistoric populations for low-lying gravels.

3.2 Roman

Evidence for Roman occupation in Huntingdon largely derives from chance finds in addition to a small number of unpublished excavations, and probably represents sporadic activity, occupation and burial (*e.g.* CHER ECB 388, MCB1102, MCB3300). The line of Ermine Street is believed to traverse north-west to south-east around 40m south-west of the site, and it is likely that there was ribbon development extending along the route from the main settlement at Godmanchester to the south.

3.3 Late Saxon

Recent research seems to suggest that the Late Saxon settlement of Huntingdon is located in the southern and western part of the area later enclosed by the medieval town ditch in the north-east and the *bar dyke* in the south-west (Spoerry 2000). It is suggested that the development site might lie in the core of this area and may be located within the defended burh.

A Late Saxon church is known from Whitehills on Mill Common (Spoerry *op. cit.*) and Late Saxon features were identified at Orchard Lane (MCB 13020/13021) 70m to the north-east. Others were allegedly found but not recorded during excavations 50m to the west at Pathfinder House in 1974 (Cozens pers. comm.). Late Saxon features have been also been found recently at Hartford Road corner (Mortimer pers. comm.), suggesting that this part of Huntingdon, and possibly the current evaluation site, was settled in the Late Saxon period.

3.4 Medieval

The major elements in the post-Conquest medieval townscape are the Castle (probably built on the site of an earlier fortification in 1068 and at least partially destroyed in 1174), the High Street, Market Hill and up to sixteen churches arranged along this axis and on the secondary streets around it. Many of these topographical features survive, although only four of the medieval churches were still functioning by the 16th century.

Recent theories, based on medieval documents and topographic analysis, suggest that the early post-Conquest High Street may have run directly through the development site (Ladds unpub; Spoerry 2000). This alignment of the High Street is believed to date to the period from 1068, when it was laid out following the positioning of the Castle across Ermine Street, until 1332 when the current stone bridge was completed and the lower High Street re-aligned to meet it.

Medieval remains have been uncovered in the vicinity by excavations at Hartford Road (CHER ECB935 and ECB2004), Wood Street (CHER ECB1369), St Clements Passage (CHER ECB187), the Orchard Lane medieval cemetery (MCB14543), and at a recent evaluation by Archaeological Solutions (AS) to the rear of 151 High Street (Fig. 1).

3.5 Late medieval

Economic decline seems to have taken hold in Huntingdon from perhaps the mid-13th century, owing partly to competition from the market at St Ives and elsewhere, and further compounded by the devastating effects of the Black Death, which struck in 1348.

It was anticipated that the area of the development could include late medieval craft processing and refuse disposal to the rear of the current (post-1332) position of the High Street frontage.

3.6 Post-medieval

The town suffered in the 15th century War of the Roses and in the Civil War in the 17th century. Throughout this time documents still speak of 'the poor decayed town'. It was only with the rise of the coaching trade in the 18th century that the town found another role and prosperity returned.

The general picture is very much of a town that is much less densely populated than in the preceding centuries. It has been estimated that in 1086 there were 256 burgesses in Huntingdon; this fell to just 54 by 1522 (Akeroyd and Clifford 2004, 16).

The 1572 Survey of the town lists all properties present at that time (Dickinson 1972). Although association between some entries and modern properties is difficult, it seems likely that Item 13 'next to that 4 other tenements late Randall Halls now in tenure Tho: Wiseman. Higable land' describes 11-14 High Street.

Although a map does not accompany the 1572 survey, it is sometimes possible for entries to be transcribed onto Jeffery's 1768 map of Huntingdon, or the 1752 plan of the Hospital Lands. It seems that on both these maps this group of properties includes secondary structures to the rear of the built up frontage.

This suggests that there were buildings here from at least the 17th century; the row of High Street frontage buildings is group-listed (Grade II, listed Building No. 5140, Nos 4-13) as being of 18th-century date, although some have earlier (17th-century) elements.

Post-medieval remains have been uncovered nearby at Hartford Road (CHER ECB2004), to the rear of the Samuel Pepys public house (CHER ECB271) and at a recent evaluation by Archaeological Solutions (AS) to the rear of No. 151, High Street (Fig. 1).

4 METHODOLOGY (Plates 1-2)

By necessity the trench was located at the north-eastern edge of the proposed development site, to allow adequate clearance from surrounding party walls as well as leaving space for spoil storage, stepping of the trench and maintenance of a safety berm around the excavation. The location of the trench was also affected by problems of machine access and manoeuvrability, influenced by the size of the fenced area and the presence of houses and cars in Castle Court, adjacent to the site. Prior to the evaluation, the developer had demolished the outbuildings and fenced off the area to be trenched; this area was checked visually for services and with the aid of a CAT scanner prior to excavation.

An area measuring 3m x 3m was initially cleared by mechanical excavator (JCB), under archaeological supervision, to remove modern overburden and the below-ground remains of buildings (formerly a laundry and outside toilets) that until recently stood on the site. The trench was located at least 3m from surrounding party walls, and was stepped after *c.* 0.6m to allow safe excavation of the earlier deposits. An area measuring 2.5m x 2m was further machined through later post-medieval deposits to the top of layers 9, 10 and 11, from which point hand-excavation was employed. Due to the presence of more complex deposits and features in the eastern half of the trench, a smaller (1m x 1m) trench was hand-excavated in the south-west corner to investigate the deeper deposits. Excavation ceased at *c.* 2.2m below the current ground level; an auger hole revealed that the total depth of deposits in this corner was *c.* 3m, where a discoloured and contaminated ?natural sandy gravel was reached.

The exposed surfaces were cleaned in order to clarify any features or deposits. A sample of all exposed features and deposits was excavated and recorded according to CCC AFU standards and practices. Sections and plans were drawn at a scale of 1:20.

5 RESULTS (Figs 2-4, Plates 1-4)

Full context data is presented in Appendix 1.

5.1 Medieval (Fig. 2)

The earliest identified deposits (29 and 27), located *c.* 2.2m below ground level in the deeper 1m x 1m trench, were not fully investigated for health and safety reasons. Deposit 27 was particularly interesting as it had a distinct slope from north-east to south-west (Fig. 2; Plate 4) and was notable for its relatively dark colour (compared with 26 above) and frequent charcoal flecks. No hand excavation was undertaken, other than cleaning, although an environmental sample (Sample 2) taken from this deposit produced a moderate assemblage of charred crop plants, namely cereals, legumes and flax, in addition to remains of arable seeds, grass seeds, and crop processing waste (see Appendix 7). A small quantity (three sherds) of pottery datable to the late 12th or early 13th century was also recovered from layer 27; no other finds were retrieved although the residue from the sample also contained small fragments of animal bone and fishbone.

The relationship between deposits 27 and 29 (a thick yellowish brown sandy clay, not illustrated) could not be established within the limits of the trench. A single sherd of Thetford ware, datable to the 11th to end of the 12th century, was recovered from layer 29 whilst augering to establish its thickness (*c.* 0.8m). Pottery of a similar date was also found in later deposits in the sequence, suggesting a degree of residuality. These deposits may represent fills within a large cut, perhaps a ditch or massive pit. The feature evidently cut into natural deposits of sand and gravel which were identified in the auger holes.

A layer (26) of silty gravelly sand over 0.7m thick sealed deposits 27 and 29. A moderate assemblage of animal bone, including pig, sheep/goat, chicken and goose, and a small quantity of pottery, daub and flint was recovered from it. The pottery indicates a probable early 13th-century date for this deposit, which is likely to have been a levelling layer, possibly infilling/levelling off the feature filled by the earlier layers. Two auger holes on the eastern side of the trench established that this deposit probably continued across the trench but at a reduced thickness of approximately 0.3m where it overlay natural sand. A thin lens of sandy gravel (25) overlay deposit 26, and may just be an isolated dump/lens. No finds were retrieved.

Overlying 25, and evident across the trench, was a 0.45m thick layer (12) of dark greyish brown sandy silt with occupation debris including shell (too disintegrated to retrieve), charcoal, animal bone, daub and pottery. The pottery suggests a 13th-century date for this layer, although a single small piece of post-medieval tile was also present, and a post-medieval dress pin (SF 1) was recovered from the interface between cobbles (10) and layer 12. This layer is

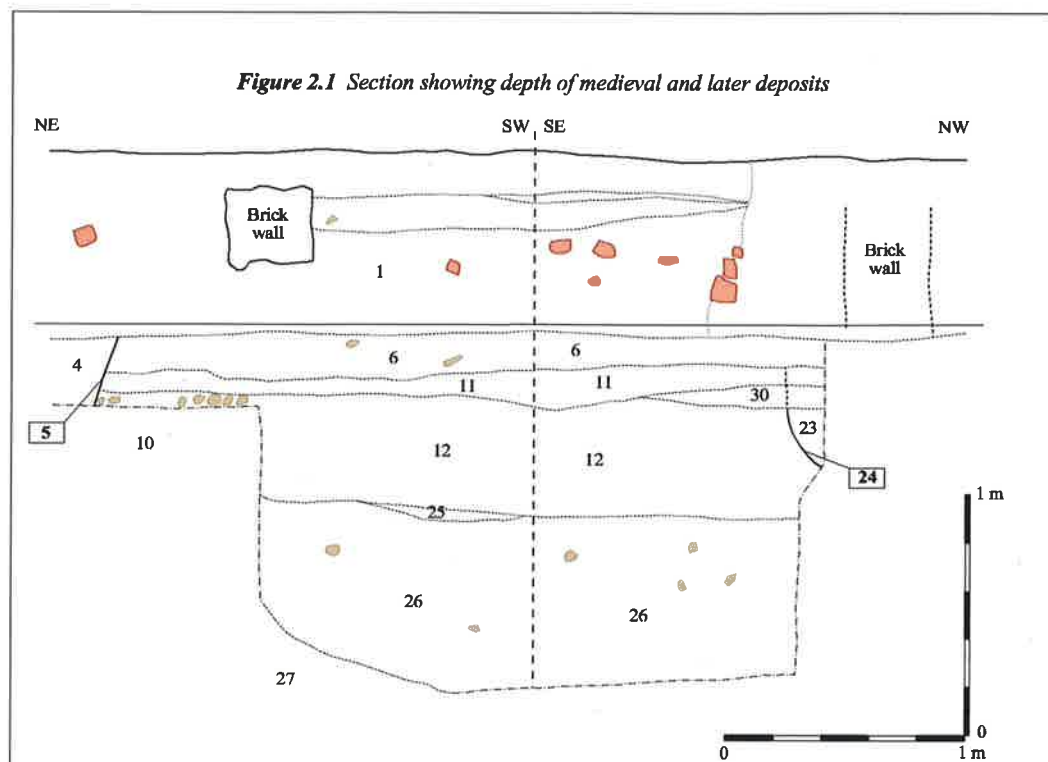


Figure 2.2 Plan showing deeper 1 x 1m sondage through medieval deposits

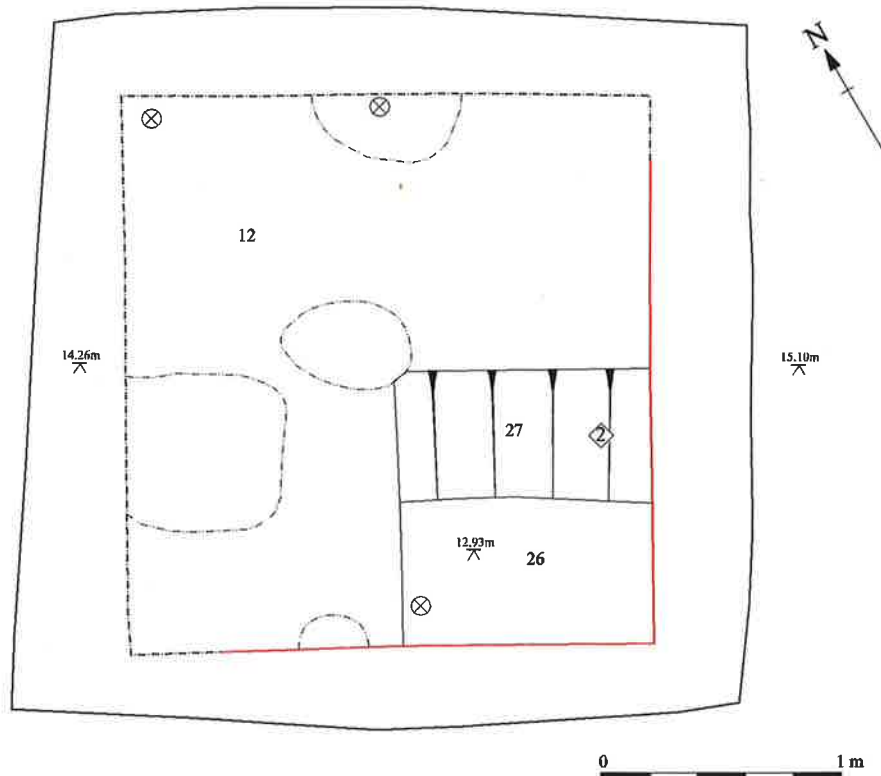


Figure 2 Plan and section of sondage

likely to have been a levelling/make-up deposit, or perhaps a cultivation layer, and may have contained reworked material from earlier periods. An environmental sample (Sample 1) from this deposit contained further evidence of nearby domestic activity, including a few grains of wheat and barley as well as weed seeds, most of which were preserved by charring (Appendix 7). The residues from this sample also contained fragments of animal bone, pottery and fishbone.

5.2 Late medieval to earlier post-medieval (Figs 2.1, 3 and 4)

A patch of cobbles (10) appeared to have been limited to the north-eastern corner of the trench and comprised a single layer of stones of various sizes that were deliberately laid directly on top of layer 12 (Figs 3.1 and 4; Plate 3). No associated finds were recovered, although a post-medieval dress pin (SF 1) assigned to the surface of underlying deposit 12 could actually be related to this layer. A number of large stones located to the south-west of the cobbles may be associated with this surface (Fig. 3.1). Dating of this surface is problematic; stratigraphically it post-dated layer 12, which is 13th century (at the earliest), and was overlain by layer 11 (undated), which in turn was sealed beneath deposits (3/6) containing 13th- to mid-16th-century pottery. This suggests that the cobbles might be medieval, although it is likely that much of the pottery in the later deposits is residual. A thin layer of sandy gravel (30) was recorded in the section below layer 11; no dating evidence was recovered from this layer, which was removed by machine.

Sandy clay layer 11 was *c.* 0.14m thick and overlay the cobbles in the southern half of the trench. Post-hole 24 may have cut this layer, but an animal burrow obscured the relationship at this point. Layer 11, which contained several large stones but no dating material, could represent consolidation or perhaps a floor/surface associated with the cobbles.

A row of three post-holes (20, 22, 24) was recorded aligned north-east to south-west across the centre of the trench (Fig. 3.1; Plate 3). One of the post-holes (22) appeared to cut surface 10, and at least two were sealed below a gravel layer (9). All three post-holes had distinctive (predominantly clay) fills; the central post-hole (20) also contained a number of large packing stones (Plate 3), whilst 22 produced a moderate assemblage of animal bone, tile and pottery. Dating of these features, which are likely to be contemporary, is also problematic; the pottery indicates a medieval date (9th to mid 12th century for 20, 13th to 14th century for 22), although the presence of small fragments of brick and post-medieval tile found in association with the pottery indicates a later date. The post-holes are likely to have been the remains of an earlier post-medieval structure, possibly a fence or a building; they reflect the alignment of the current boundary between 11 and 12 High Street. It is also possible that they were associated with the cobble patch/surface (10). A shallow, square pit (18) was also investigated against the north-western edge of the trench, truncating layer 12; no finds or dating evidence was recovered.

Figure 3.1 Late-medieval and post-medieval surfaces and post-holes

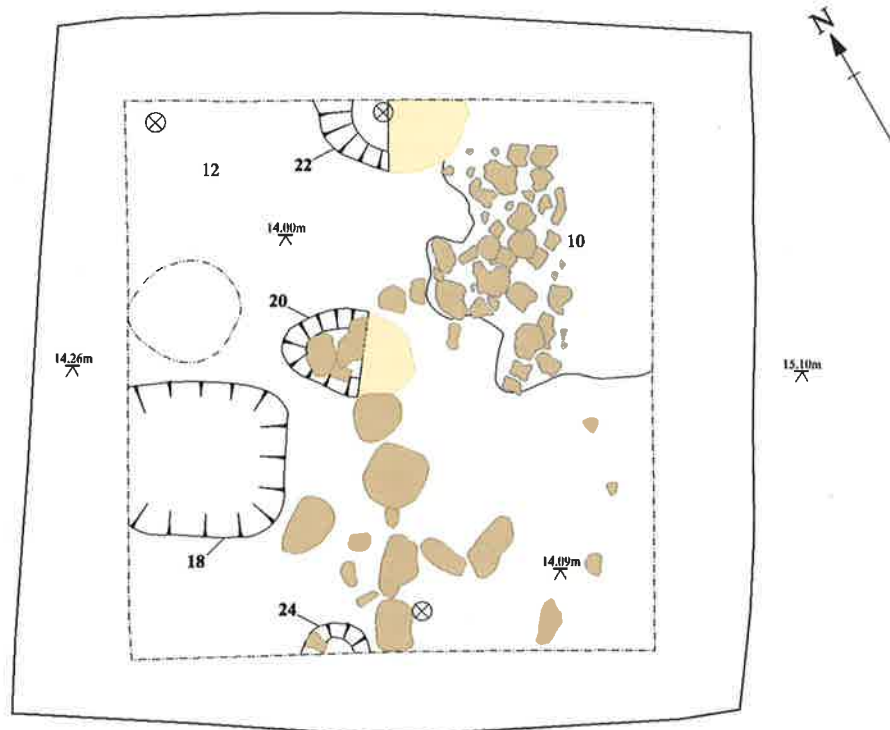


Figure 3.2 Post-holes cutting gravel layer 9

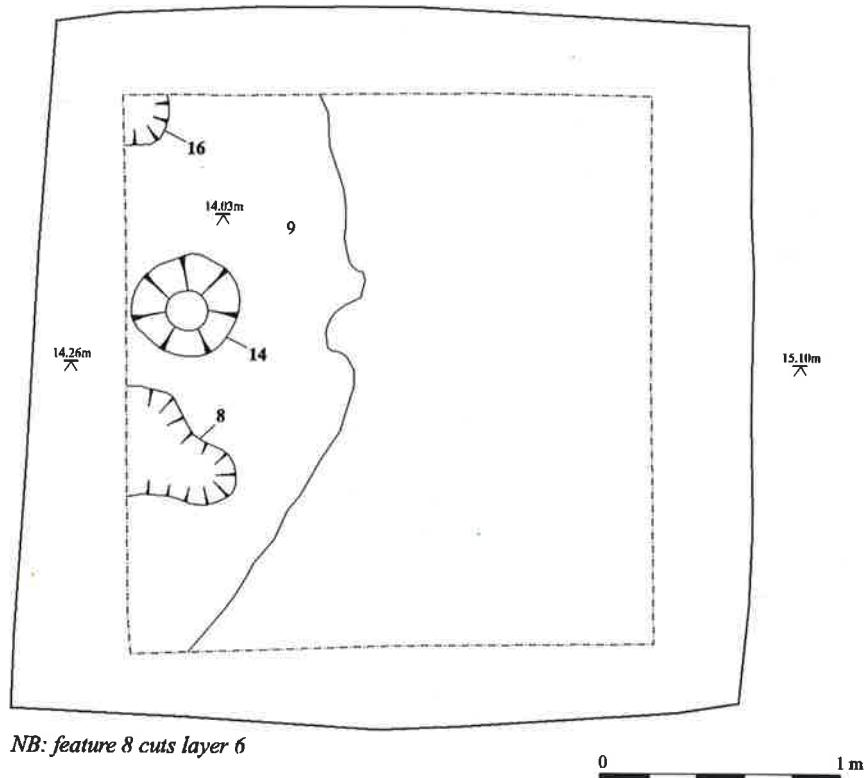


Figure 3 Late-medieval and earlier post-medieval features and deposits

The layer of orange gravel (9) appeared to extend across the north-western half of the trench, slightly overlapping layer 11. The gravel was probably dumped to level this area up, as it thickened towards the north (from 3mm to c. 150mm, where it filled pit/depression 18), compensating for the natural south-east to north-west slope of the land at this point. Similar episodes of levelling utilising gravel in post-medieval contexts have been observed elsewhere in Huntingdon; a later layer of gravel levelling/surface was also observed during machining the overburden of this trench. No reliable dating evidence was recovered from the gravel, which was largely removed by hand. A single sherd of abraded medieval (mid-12th to mid-14th century pottery) was found, which is likely to be residual. On stratigraphic grounds this layer is likely to have been post-medieval as it predated the 19th-century outbuildings and overlay the three post-holes.

The gravel was cut by two further post-holes (14 and 16) close to the north-western edge of the trench, one of which (14) also contained large packing stones and was quite substantial (0.4m deep). As with the earlier post-holes, medieval pottery was recovered that is likely to have been disturbed from underlying deposits. These post-holes may also represent the remains of fences or structures predating the 19th-century outbuildings that have recently been demolished.

5.3 Later post-medieval to modern (Figs 2.1, 3.2 and Fig. 4)

A small, irregular pit or depression (8) was recorded against the north-western edge of the trench, cutting gravel layer 9 (Fig. 3.2). No finds were retrieved from this feature; its date and function remain uncertain.

A c. 0.35m thick layer of mixed dirty yellow silty clay (6) sealed the post-holes and surfaces and is likely to have been a post-medieval make-up/levelling layer or perhaps a cultivation deposit. Large sherds of a 13th to 14th century cooking pot were found at the interface of layer 6 and underlying late medieval/early post-medieval deposits. This layer was initially cleaned and planned, although it was not possible to discern any cut features (other than 4, see below) within it. The layer was largely removed by machine, although a berm was left around the base of the trench area to allow deeper hand-excavation of the earlier deposits.

Layer 6 was very mixed in appearance and contained dumps and spreads within it (such as 2 and 3); the former is probably disturbance from a 19th-century brick wall that was removed during machining. The pottery from one spread/dump (3) is datable to the mid-14th to mid-16th century, although post-medieval tile was also present; that from linear spread/deposit 2 dates to the 16th century but may be redeposited as a clay pipe bowl of a type datable to 1660-1680 was also found. The latter also produced a fragment of medieval (probably ecclesiastical) blue glass, which is clearly residual, further indicating the reworking of deposits on the site.

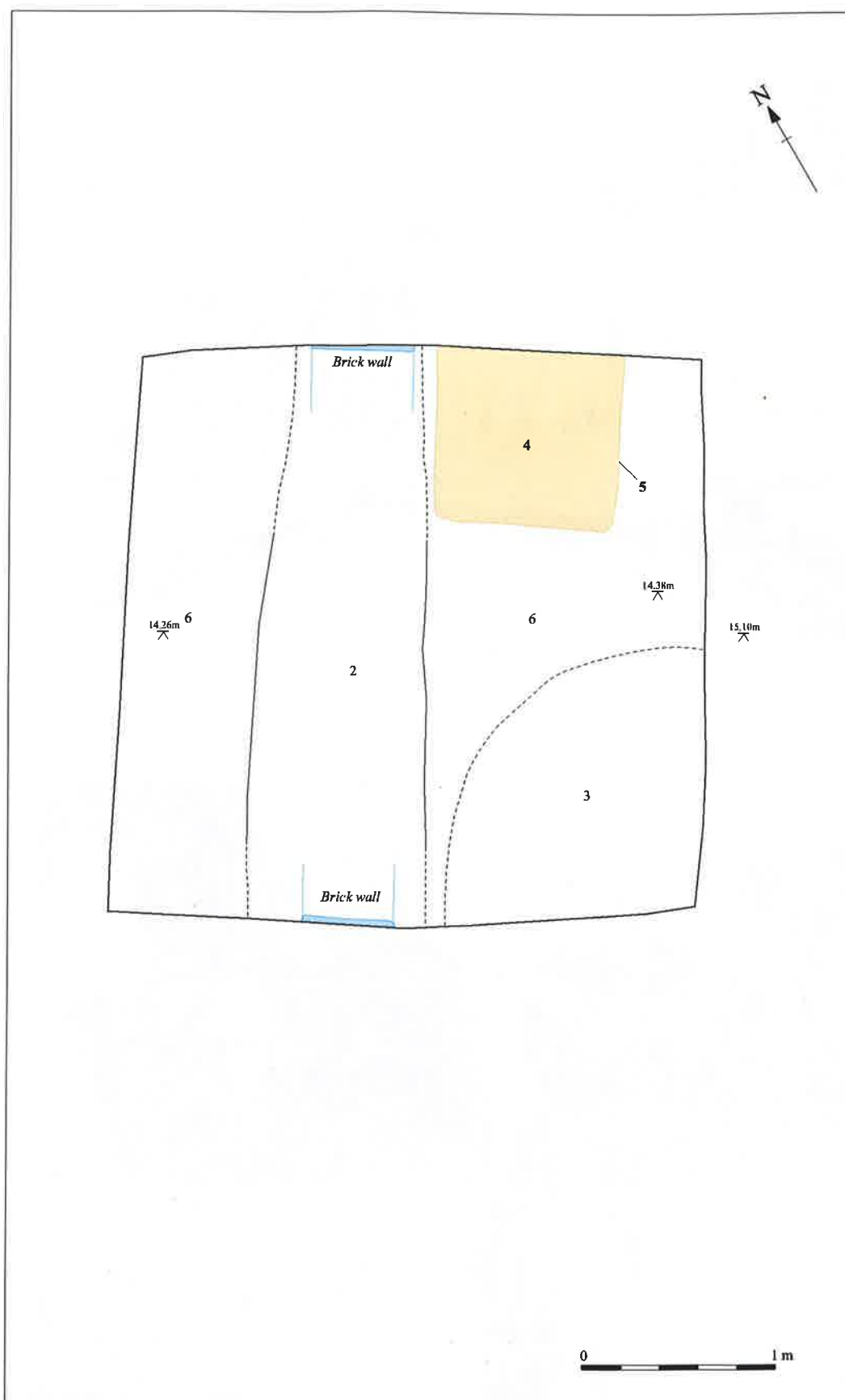


Figure 4 *Post-medieval and modern features and deposits*



Plate 1 *View of cleared area prior to machining, with 11-12 High Street in the background*



Plate 2 *View over site from attic of 11-12 High Street*



Plate 3 Working shot: sampling medieval deposits in deeper 1m x 1m sondage



Plate 4 Detail of 1m x 1m sondage showing excavated early 13th century deposits. Note the slope of 27 (unexcavated)

Approximately 0.7m of overburden (1) was removed by machine and included the remains of brick walls, garden deposits and make-up layers. A selection of pottery was retained, most of which dates to the early 17th century, however a clay pipe bowl of a similar type and date to that from deposit 2 was also present.

The latest cut feature identified was a late 19th/early 20th-century rubbish pit (4), located in the south-east corner of the trench (Fig. 4, Plate 3). This contained a variety of domestic rubbish, including glass bottles, earthenware vessels, modern china, leather boots and decayed linoleum. A sherd of probably 19th-century decorated vessel glass was also recovered from an unstratified context during excavation.

6 DISCUSSION (Fig. 5)

Although a relatively small trench was investigated, the evaluation has clearly established the presence of deep, well-preserved archaeological deposits to a depth of approximately 3m (including 0.7m of modern overburden) below the current ground surface. The potentially most significant results relate to the earliest deposits identified, which could date to the Norman/post-Conquest period. These appear to be the fills of a large, possibly linear, feature, which may have been levelled off or deliberately infilled in the 12th or early 13th century. This feature may have been located close to the outer edge of the castle moat ditch (Fig. 5), and could have been an associated feature. Too little was exposed to substantiate this, and it is also possible that the feature was a large pit, well or quarry. The cut was not exposed in the evaluation, but the combination of the clearly-defined slope of deposit 27 and the evidence from the bore holes, which suggest that the feature was at least 1.2m deep and becoming shallower/sloping up to the north-east, suggests that it might be linear.

Evidence for later medieval levelling/cultivation (layer 12) was also present, which may correspond with similar deposits identified elsewhere in recent excavations by the CCC AFU around Huntingdon (*e.g.* Walden House, Hartford Road). The presence of domestic waste in this deposit could represent manuring.

Post-holes, probably the remains of fences or outbuildings, laid surfaces and levelling and/or cultivation deposits (*e.g.* layer 6) were also revealed, providing evidence for ?post-medieval 'back-yard' activity that predated the Victorian outbuildings that once stood on the site.

Although Saxo-Norman pottery is a significant component within the pottery assemblage (Appendix 2), it is likely to be redeposited from earlier contexts in the vicinity. This has made the secure dating of deposits on the site difficult, particularly when combined with the small size of the investigation.



The finds assemblage and environmental data from the evaluation are characteristic of domestic rubbish disposal, and include evidence for small scale (secondary) butchery, cooking (Appendix 6) and crop-processing (Appendix 7). The plant remains indicate a significant potential for preservation of this type of evidence on the site.

7 CONCLUSIONS

It is difficult to draw any meaningful interpretations or conclusions based on such a small sample area. The evaluation has, however, demonstrated that medieval and later deposits survive to some depth in this area of the town, and are preserved beneath c. 0.7m of overburden at this point. The results also show that there is excellent potential for the recovery of both artefactual and ecofactual remains that could potentially provide important information about diet and the types of activities being undertaken in the vicinity. This evidence can be added to the growing body of archaeological data for Huntingdon, in particular the recent excavations by the CCC AFU at Hartford Road (Mortimer pers. comm.), and will hopefully help to inform future strategies and research priorities for this historic town.

The route of the pre-1322 High Street was not identified, but this could conceivably lie to the north or south of the evaluation trench.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author would like to thank Exchange Developments Ltd who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project was managed by Aileen Connor and Paul Spoerry; Elizabeth Popescu edited the report. Thanks are due to Robert Wardill, who assisted with the fieldwork. The illustrations are by Carlos Silva, Carole Fletcher reported on the ceramics, building material and glass, Rachel Fosberry assessed the environmental samples, Steve Hickling identified the clay pipes and Chris Faine assessed the animal bone.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec, Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA), who also visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

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Appendix 1: Context Data

Context No.	Type	Cut No	Dimensions (L x W x D)	Description	Spot Date
1	Layer			Number assigned to modern/late post-medieval overburden removed by machine, containing bricks, tile, rubble etc within a soil matrix.	19thC +
2	Spread			Vaguely linear thin spread of mixed dirty yellowish brown silty clay with brick fragments – disturbance from 19thC brick wall	19thC +
3	Spread/fill			Dumped deposit of mid brownish grey/yellow mottled silty clay within layer 6.	Post-medieval (pre-19thC?)
4	Fill	5		Black humic silt with lots of domestic rubbish including china, clay pipes, glass, bottles, old leather shoes and linoleum	19thC +
5	Cut (Pit)		0.9m x 1m x 1m	Square pit located in SE corner of trench, cuts down to cobbles 10 (c. 1m deep). Latrine base?/Victorian/20thC rubbish pit? Removed by machine	19thC +
6	Layer			General post-medieval make-up/levelling layer c. 0.35m thick comprising a mixed dirty yellow clay with occasional charcoal flecks, with rare animal bone and tile, also large sherds of a late medieval pottery vessel were recovered towards base, redeposited. Recorded then removed by machine	Post-medieval (13th to 14thC pot)
7	Fill	8		Mid yellowish brown silt fill in small irregular pit 08, revealed below layer 6. No finds	Post-medieval
8	Cut (Pit)		0.44m x 0.37m x 0.14m	Irregular small pit revealed against N edge of trench, cuts into the top of pit 18	Post-medieval
9	Layer/surface			Layer of orange gravel, up to 0.15m thick - partly machined off (over cobbles), left in situ in northern half of trench, where cut by 2 post-holes. Some occasional large stones. Remnant of surface or deliberate levelling layer	Post-medieval
10	Layer/surface			Spread of densely laid stones of various sizes in SE corner of trench, c. 0.10m thick. Cut by post-medieval post-hole 22, overlies medieval (?13thC) layer 12.	13thC +?
11	Layer/spread			Layer of dirty yellow silty sand with occasional large stones, overlying cobbles (10).	13thC +?
12	Layer			Thick (0.45m) layer of dark greyish brown sandy silt with shell and chalk flecks, frequent charcoal, occasional bone, occasional pottery. Levelling/cultivation layer. Sampled <1>	Early 13thC? + ?post-medieval tile
13	fill	14		Dark greyish brown stoney silty clay fill of post-hole, large packing stones, some pottery (redeposited?) and bone.	13th-14thC?
14	Cut (post-hole)		0.48m x 0.4m x 0.4m	Oval cut with steep sides, truncated gravel layer 9,	13th-14thC?
15	fill	16		Mid brownish grey stoney silty clay fill of dubious post-hole, some pot and bone, possibly deriving from underlying layer 12.	11th-12thC
16	Cut (post-hole)		0.25m x 0.25m x 0.16m	Unknown shape (circular?), possible shallow post-hole with similar fill to adjacent feature 14. Dubious.	11th-12thC
17	fill	18		Orange gravel as 9. No finds	Post-medieval
18	Cut (pit)		0.62m x 0.6m x 0.17m	Sub-rectangular shallow pit filled with gravel at N edge of trench.	Post-medieval
19	fill	20		Mid yellowish brown sandy silt clay fill of post-hole, contained large angular packing stones, some pottery (residual), also fired clay.	mid 9thC-mid 12thC
20	Cut (post-hole)		0.55m x 0.26m x 0.2m	Oval post-hole located against N edge of cobbles (10), part of old boundary/fence? Pottery is residual	mid 9thC-mid 12thC
21	fill	22		Mid yellowish brown sandy silt clay fill of post-hole, frequent stones, some pottery, tile, bone.	13th-14thC pot, 17th-18thC brick and tile
22	Cut (post-hole)		0.6m x 0.3m x 0.33m	Fairly substantial post-hole with similar fills to 20 and 24, located against E edge of trench. Part of old boundary/fence?	13th-14thC pot, 17th-18thC brick & tile
23	fill	24		Mid yellowish brown sandy silt clay fill of post-hole, some stones, disturbed by animal burrow, no finds. Part of old boundary/fence?	Post-medieval

Context No.	Type	Cut No	Dimensions (L x W x D)	Description	Spot Date
24	Cut (post-hole)		0.28m x 0.18m x 0.12m	Smallish post-hole located against W edge of trench. Part of old boundary/fence?	Post-medieval
25	Layer/fill			Mid yellowish brown sandy gravel, probably dump within 26, no finds.	13thC??
26	Layer/fill			Mid to light brown silty gravely sand with occasional charcoal, rare oyster/mussel shell, occasional pottery and animal bone, rare daub. Very thick (0.7m+) sandy layer, possibly levelling off a large infilled feature such as a ditch/moat??? Only investigated in small 1m x 1m sondage – depth prevented full excavation. Below 12 and above 27 and ?29.	Early 13thC
27	Layer/fill			Dark charcoally sandy silt fill/layer below 26. Revealed in 1m x 1m sondage, tipping from NE-NW. Sampled <2>	Late 12th/early 13thC
28	Finds			Number assigned to unstratified piece of decorated vessel glass	19thC?
29	Layer/fill			Mid yellowish brown sandy silty clay, c 0.7m thick. Augered only, due to depth, 1 sherd of ?early Thetford ware recovered, below 27 and above (contaminated) natural.	11th to end 12thC
30	Layer			Gravelly layer in section appears to be below 11. Similar to 9, but more yellow and sandier.	Post-medieval?

Appendix 2: Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery

By Carole Fletcher

Introduction

The fieldwork generated 106 sherds of pottery, weighing in total 1.461kg including unstratified material.

The majority of the small assemblage, including unstratified material, is early medieval and medieval, with 39 sherds of pottery (weighing 0.610kg) dating to the 11th to mid-12th century and 53 sherds in the mid-12th to mid-15th century date range. In addition some late medieval and post-medieval material has been identified.

Ceramic fabric abbreviations used in the following text are:

Cistercian Type ware	CSTN
Colne Type ware	COLN/COLNT
Grimston ware	GRIM
Lyveden-Stanion ware	LYST
Medieval Ely ware	MEL
Stamford ware	STAM
Thetford Ware	THET

Methodology

The basic guidance in the Management of Archaeological Projects (MAP2) has been adhered to (English Heritage 1991). In addition the following documents act as a standard: Medieval Pottery Research Group (MPRG) documents *Guidance for the processing and publication of medieval pottery from excavations* (Blake and Davey 1983), *A guide to the classification of medieval ceramic forms* (MPRG 1998) and *Minimum Standards for the Processing, Recording, Analysis and Publication of Post-Roman Ceramics* (MPRG 2001).

Spot dating was carried out using the Archaeological Field Unit's (CCC AFU) in-house system based on that used at the Museum of London. Fabric classification has been carried out for all previously described types. New types have been given descriptive identifiers. All sherds have been counted, classified and weighed.

All the pottery has been spot dated on a context-by-context basis (see Table 2 below); this information was entered directly onto a full quantification database (Access 2000), which allows for the appending of quantification data.

The pottery and archive are curated by the Archaeological Field Unit until formal deposition.

Ceramic Phases and Character of the Assemblage

The following ceramic phase dates have been identified:

Ceramic Phase 4	AD 1000 to 1150
Ceramic Phase 5	AD 1150/1200 to 1350 (Medieval/High Medieval)
Ceramic Phase 6	AD 1350 to 1450/1500 (Late Medieval)
Ceramic Phase 7	AD 1450/1500 to 1650/1700 (Post-medieval)

Ceramic Phase	Number of Sherds	Weight in kg
4	39	0.610
5	53	0.447
5/6	3	0.135
6/7	2	0.038
7	9	0.231

Table 1: Pottery by ceramic phase

The normal range of vessel types is present within the assemblage; the medieval and late medieval assemblage produced a number of jug and jar sherds and a fragment of a handle from a skillet or pipkin. In the early post-medieval assemblage new vessel types appear, including a drinking vessel in CSTN type ware.

The character of the assemblage suggests it derives from domestic contexts, however its small size offers little potential for further study if looked at in isolation and will only add to our knowledge of Saxo-Norman, medieval and post-medieval Huntingdon if seen as part of a wider study.

Provenance and Contamination

The assemblage contains the normal range of medieval fabrics from producers in and around Cambridgeshire for an urban site including sherds of COLN, and MEL (Cambs), GRIM from Norfolk and from LYST from Northamptonshire. A number NEOT, THET and STAM sherds represent normal fabrics present in Late Saxon/early post-Conquest assemblages, though here the sherds are mainly residual within the medieval sequence.

Thirteen excavated contexts produced pottery and of these contexts 1 and 2 are described by the excavator as layers or spreads assigned to modern or late post-medieval overburden, this is supported by the spot dating of these contexts. Of the eleven remaining contexts that produced pottery there is a degree of residuality with contexts 13, and 21 (post-holes) all containing a small number of Saxo-Norman sherds (STAM, THET and NEOT) alongside medieval fabrics such as COLNT suggesting a 13th-14th century date. Context 12 (a layer), also contains both medieval and Saxo-Norman sherds; here the sherds suggest a 13th century date.

The fills of post-holes 16 and 20 contained single sherds of Saxo-Norman fabrics, although the remaining post-holes (14 and 22) appear to be medieval in date. It seems likely that all of the post-holes are 13th-14th century and the fills of 16 and 20 contain residual material from earlier occupation, evidence of which has been disturbed by

later activity. Context 6 is described as a general post-medieval make up levelling layer, the three sherds of pottery recovered from this context are medieval in date.

Sampling bias

The excavation was carried out by hand and selection made through standard sampling procedures on a feature-by-feature basis. There are not expected to be any inherent biases. Where bulk samples have been processed for environmental remains, there has also been some recovery of pottery. These are however only very small amounts and serious bias is not expected to result.

Condition

This assemblage is small; the average sherd size is moderate at approximately 13g. The sherds are relatively small, due to reworking of some deposits during the occupation of the site. No preservation bias has been recognised and no long-term storage problems are likely. This assemblage has no complete or near complete profiles for illustration.

Research Potential

Definition and dating of all settlement phases on the site is difficult to achieve given the small size of the assemblage. The assemblage is broadly medieval and little information can be retrieved on settlement function. On its own, the assemblage offers little potential to aid local, regional and national priorities.

Stratified pottery from all phases of the evaluation has been quantified to a basic level, and it is not proposed that any further work be undertaken on this assemblage.

Context	Total Number of Sherds	Total Weight in kg	Ceramic Phase	Spot dating Date Range
1	5	0.172	7	Early 17th Century
2	4	0.059	7	16th Century
3	2	0.038	6/7	Mid 14th to mid 16th Century
6	3	0.135	5/6	13th to 14th Century
9	1	0.003	5	Mid 12th to mid 14th Century
12	35	0.315	5	13th Century
13	9	0.066	5	13th-14th Century
15	2	0.007	4	11th-12th Century
19	1	0.001	4	Mid 9th to mid 12th Century
21	5	0.040	5	13th to 14th Century
26	35	0.588	5	Early 13th Century
27	3	0.023	5	Late 12th or Early 13th Century
29	1	14	4	11th to end of 12th Century

Table 2: Spot Dating

Appendix 3: Window and Vessel Glass

By Carole Fletcher

The excavation produced a single fragment of window glass from context 2, a mixed spread containing brick fragments. The small fragment of window glass is in poor condition due to the burial environment, having become opaque and granular. Surface corrosion and a modern break across the fragment show some survival of the original colour, revealing the fragment to be a piece of blue pot metal glass. The colour and condition of the fragment suggest a medieval date and it may be imported glass as pot-metal colours were not manufactured in England until after the 14th century. The glass is likely to have originated in an ecclesiastical building rather than a domestic dwelling.

A single sherd of vessel glass found unstratified (28) is curved and appears to have been decorated. Traces of two parallel lines running horizontally around the glass survive; these could be from gilt ornamentation. The fragment may be from a 19th century-drinking vessel.

Appendix 4: Ceramic Building Material

By Carole Fletcher

The fieldwork generated a very small assemblage of 12 fragments, 0.209kg of ceramic building material (CBM) from six contexts, including unstratified material. The main period represented is post-medieval and consists mainly of fragments of roof tile. In addition one fragment of tile from context 21 may be Roman in origin.

The assemblage was small and, on average, the fragment size is also very small (17g). There are no near complete tiles. It is likely that most of the CBM on the site was manufactured locally. A single fragment of fired clay from context 21 has tentatively been identified as brick (17-18th century) and context 12 contains a fragment of daub.

The form types represented in the assemblage are summarised below.

Form	Brick/ Tile	Tile	Roma n tile	Daub	Unclassified
Weight in kg	0.013	0.098	0.036	0.012	0.050
Count	1	7	1	1	2

Table 3: Form Types

Those fragments with no surviving surface features have been recorded as unclassified. No effort has been made to identify specific types of tile other than the obvious forms at this stage, as further measurements would be required.

Conclusion

The CBM assemblage is too small to provide information pertaining to local and regional trade, or evidence for settlement function. Stratified CBM from the evaluation described has been quantified to at least a basic level, and it is not proposed that any further work be undertaken on this assemblage.

Appendix 5: Clay Pipes

By Steve Hickling

Three fragments of clay-pipe, datable to the late 17th century, were recovered from two post-medieval contexts. No clay pipe makers are known from Huntingdon until the early 19th century (Flood 1976). During the 17th century clay pipe smoking was especially popular in large urban centres and ports. Clay pipes of this period in Huntingdon should therefore be relatively rare compared to places like Cambridge and Wisbech.

Context	Description	Date
1	One bowl, with foot and slight rouletting, DUA type 18, Oswald (1975) type 7.	1660-80
2	One stem fragment, one bowl with foot and a hint of rouletting, a little more bulbous than that from context 1, but still DUA type 18, Oswald (1975) type 7. Bowl shows signs of burning, perhaps to clean it for reuse.	1660-80

Table 4: Clay Pipe Catalogue

Appendix 6: Animal Bone

By Chris Faine

A small assemblage of animal bone weighing a total of 0.425 was recovered from six contexts. Most of the bone derives from medieval layers, although two probably post-medieval post-holes also produced a small quantity of bone. The assemblage largely comprises elements from sheep/goat and pig, with smaller quantities of cow, bird (chicken and goose) and small mammal.

Context	Cut	MNI
2		1
12		2
13	14	4
21	22	2
26		4
		Total: 13

Table 5: Minimum Number of Individuals (MNI) by context

Context	Cut	Description/Comments	Wt (kg)
2		Pig/SG rib	0.002
12		S/G mandible (left) Aged 18 months/2yrs – Complete (Butchery) Pig mandible fragment + 1 molar (left) S/G vertebra Pig vertebra (split vertically) Pig rib (right) 3 unid large mammal (1 piece burnt/calcined) S/G Inominate (Ischium) right	0.111
13	14	S/G Metapodial (distal half; 50% complete) gnawing and pathology on distal epiphysis + butchery Cattle rib Pig incisor 4 x unid large mammal S/G vertebra- burnt Unid small mammal rib	0.068
15	16	3 x unid medium mammal fragments	0.023
21	22	3 unid large mammal S/G Mandibular Ramis	0.006
26		Pig Atlas (shattered vertically) Bird femur (chicken) left Pig metapodial (right) S/G Metapodial (left) proximal half, 50% complete (butchery) Bird femur (chicken) left 2 x chicken humerus 1 x Goose (?) humerus S/G Tibia (left) 90% complete minus distal epiphysis (butchery) Pig Inominate (Ischium) right 20% complete S/G 1st molar 20 x unid large mammal fragments small fragments pig/SG ribs Pig skull – left occipital, shattered vertically Goose (?) 2nd digit	0.215

S/G = sheep/goat Unid = unidentified

Table 6: Catalogue of animal bone by context

Note: Small fragments of animal and fishbone were also present in the residues from two environmental samples taken from contexts 12 and 29

Discussion

The range of species and elements represented is characteristic of small-scale domestic butchery waste, with little evidence of other uses *i.e.* tanning etc. All elements are from adult animals and, along with the dental ageing data from the mandible and cut marks on the bones, again suggest animals killed for meat. The lack of larger elements may show that primary butchery was performed elsewhere. There is also evidence of scavenging by dogs (?) or other such animals on site.

Appendix 7: Environmental Appraisal

By Rachel Fosberry

Introduction and Methods

Two samples were taken from two medieval contexts (Sample 1, context 12-a 13th-century layer, and Sample 2, context 27-a fill identified in a 1m sondage probably dating to the 11th to 12th century) and submitted for an initial appraisal. Ten litres of each sample were processed by bucket flotation for the recovery of charred plant remains, dating evidence and any other artefactual evidence that might be present. The flot was collected in a 0.5mm nylon mesh and the residue was washed through a 1mm sieve. Both flot and residue were allowed to air dry. The dried residue was passed through 5mm and 2mm sieves and a magnet was dragged through each resulting 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 at x16 magnification and the presence of any plant remains is noted below.

Results

Preservation is mainly by charring and is generally good. Sample 1 contains an uncharred seed of *Sambucus nigra* (elder) and Sample 2 shows evidence of mineralization although preservation was poor and no seeds were identified.

Both samples contained charred cereal grains and weed seeds. Sample one contains only a few grains of wheat and barley and weed seeds including *Rumex* sp, *Vicia* sp. *Cladium mariscus* and *Medicago* sp.. Sample 2 consists of a moderate assemblage of crop plants, namely cereals, legumes and flax. Crop processing waste in the form of rachis fragments and culm nodes is also present in Sample 2 along with several species of arable seeds (*Anthemis cotula*, *Agrostemma githago*, *Centaurea nigra*, *Torilis arvensis*, *Bromus* sp., *Chrysanthemum segetum*) and seeds of grassland plants (*Ranunculus* sp., *Galium aparine*, *Medicago* sp., *Chenopodium* sp., *Brassica* sp., *Poacea* sp. and *Lolium* sp.).

Charcoal fragments are present in both samples in varying quantities. The residues of both samples contained fragments of animal bone, pottery and fishbone.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The low density of charred plant remains in Sample 1 (12) limits the identification of any specific activity that may be associated with the feature other than to surmise the disposal of domestic waste. Sample 2 (27), however, produced a substantial flot containing a moderate quantity of oats and wheat (including rivet wheat), together with a few grains of barley and rye. Given its urban character, it is generally expected that semi cleaned cereals would have been brought into the site. The presence of cereal grains along with rachis fragments and arable weed seeds suggest fine cleaning of cereals prior to cooking; indicating that crop processing on a domestic level was

being carried out in the vicinity. The grass seeds present in Sample 2 may represent the general use of grasses as fuel or could also be crop contaminants.

Elder is one of the more robust seeds and can often be found where all other plant material has decayed.

The other dietary remains of fragments of animal bone and mussel shells along with the charred grain are probably derived from the deposition of burnt domestic refuse.

The evidence recovered from Sample 2 is significant as the context from which it was taken (27) was only partially excavated due to its depth. The results show that there is excellent potential for the recovery of ecofactual remains that could potentially provide important information on this feature. Any further work in this area should include an extensive sampling programme.



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