



CCC AFU Report Number 877

## **Multi-period remains at Sawston Hall, Sawston, Cambridgeshire**

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### **An Archaeological Evaluation**

Richard Mortimer

June 2006

## Cover Images

Machine stripping, Soham	On-site surveying
Roman corn dryer, Duxford	Guided walk along Devil's Dyke
Bronze Age shaft, Fordham Bypass	Medieval well, Soham
Human burial, Barrington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery	Timbers from a medieval well, Soham
Blue enamelled bead, Barrington	Bed burial reconstruction, Barrington Anglo-Saxon Cemetery
Aethusa cynapium 'Fool's parsley'	Medieval tanning pits, Huntingdon Town Centre
Digging in the snow, Huntingdon Town Centre	Boaker vessel
Face painting at Hinchingbrooke Iron Age Farm	Environmental analysis
Research and publication	Monument Management, Bartlow Hills

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Cambridgeshire**

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**An Archaeological Evaluation**

Richard Mortimer

With contributions by Katie Anderson MA, Barry  
John Bishop MA, Chris Faine MA, Carole Fletcher  
BA and Rachel Fosberry

Site Code: SAW SHA 06  
CHER Event Number: ECB 2291  
Date of works: 4th-7th May 2006  
Grid Ref: TL 4884 4912

Editor: Elizabeth Shepherd Popescu BA PhD MIFA  
Illustrator: Carlos Silva MAAIS

## Summary

This archaeological evaluation took place on land to be affected by development to refurbish Sawston Hall as a Hotel, an alteration also requiring development within the Hall grounds. Four trenches were excavated in the area to the west and south of the Hall. The archaeological remains found within the trenches represent four main periods: Neolithic/Bronze Age, Late Iron Age/Early Roman, earlier medieval and late medieval/ post-medieval. Upstanding remains from the 1940's wartime occupation of the Hall were also recorded.

The prehistoric archaeology is finds-related, comprising a relatively large worked and burnt flint assemblage recovered residually within later features, mostly in Trench 4. The very Late Iron Age and Early Roman material, also found in Trench 4, dates that occupation to a very limited period in the middle of the 1st century AD, perhaps no more than a generation after the conquest.

In this area the principal prehistoric and Early Roman feature recorded was a wide channel, possibly draining from a well or spring. There was a cut at the base of the channel, presumably 'canalising' a natural feature. The channel would appear to have been open throughout the Neolithic and Bronze Age, perhaps being re-cut in the Early Roman period. In the area of this channel were two contemporary wells or shafts, a ditch and a posthole.

The earlier medieval archaeology consists of ditches recorded in all four trenches. These could represent field ditches, although this close to the known location of a medieval manor house, they are more likely to be part of the manor grounds. Their alignments are of interest, suggesting a different alignment for the earlier Hall building and its attendant moats and grounds. The principal medieval feature recorded was a large moat ditch aligned north-northwest to south-southeast within the walled garden immediately behind the Hall. This may be part of the original 12th/13th century manor, backfilled in the late medieval period.

Little later or post-medieval archaeology was recorded, other than the upper infilling of the moat and of a ditch in Trench 3.

## Contents

1	Introduction	2
2	Geology and Topography	2
3	Archaeological and Historical Background	3
	3.1 Prehistoric	3
	3.2 Romano-British	3
	3.3 Medieval and Post-Medieval	4
	3.4 Modern	5
	3.5 Previous Archaeological Work	6
4	Methodology	6
	4.1 General	6
	4.2 Evaluation Areas	7
5	Results	8
	5.1 Trench 1	8
	5.2 Trench 2	11
	5.3 Trench 3	15
	5.4 Trench 4	16
	5.5 Standing Building Recording	18
6	Discussion	19
	6.1 The Prehistoric and Romano-British Channel, Trench 4	19
	6.1.1 The Channel	19
	6.1.2 Other Roman Features	21
	6.1.3 Prehistoric Finds	22
	6.2 The Roman and Earlier Medieval Ditches, Trenches 1, 3 & 4	22
	6.3 The Moat, Trench 2	24
	6.3.1 The Moat Ditch	25
	6.3.2 The Earlier Ditch	26
7	Conclusions	26
	Acknowledgements	29

<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>29</b>
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### **List of Figures**

<b>Figure 1:</b> Site Location showing position of trenches, development areas and extent of tree cover	<b>1</b>
<b>Figure 2:</b> Plan of Trenches 1 and 2	<b>10</b>
<b>Figure 3:</b> Plan of Trenches 3 and 4	<b>13</b>
<b>Figure 4:</b> Section drawings	<b>14</b>
<b>Figure 5:</b> Plan of WW2 building	<b>18</b>
<b>Figure 6:</b> Map showing Sawston in proximity to Borough Hill and suggested Roman roads	<b>23</b>
<b>Figure 7:</b> 1st Edition OS showing Sawston Hall Estate	<b>28</b>

### **List of Tables**

<b>Table 1:</b> Quantification of lithic material by context	<b>32</b>
<b>Table 2:</b> Post-Roman pottery assemblage	<b>38</b>
<b>Table 3:</b> Ceramic building material	<b>39</b>
<b>Table 4:</b> Species distribution for faunal assemblage	<b>42</b>
<b>Table 5:</b> Body part distribution by species	<b>42</b>
<b>Table 6:</b> Environmental samples	<b>43</b>

### **List of Graphs**

<b>Graph 1:</b> Total datable pottery assemblage from channel 87	<b>20</b>
<b>Graph 2:</b> Square 73 - spits 80 (lowest) to 74 (uppermost). Showing number of sherds per 5cm spit from the three date ranges.	<b>21</b>
<b>Graph 3:</b> Square 62 - spits 68 (lowest) to 63 (uppermost). Showing number of sherds per 5cm spit from the three date ranges.	<b>21</b>

### **List of Plates**

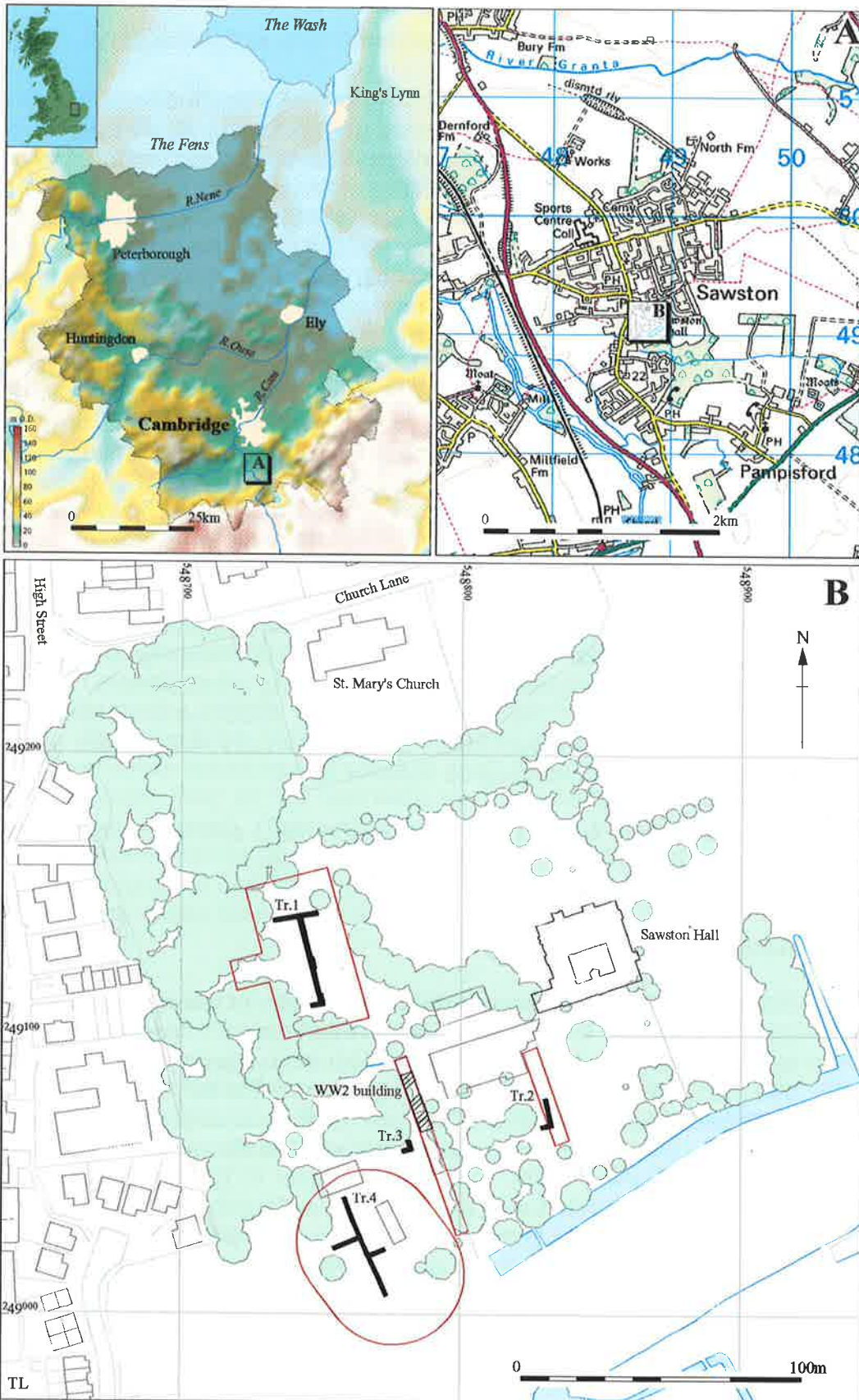
<b>Plate 1:</b> WW2 building, looking north	<b>45</b>
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### **List of Appendices**

<b>Appendix 1:</b> Lithic Assessment by Barry John Bishop	<b>31</b>
<b>Appendix 2:</b> Romano-British Pottery by Kate Anderson	<b>35</b>
<b>Appendix 3:</b> Post-Roman Pottery by Carole Fletcher	<b>38</b>
<b>Appendix 4:</b> Ceramic Building Material	<b>39</b>
<b>Appendix 5:</b> The Faunal Remains by Chris Faine	<b>40</b>
<b>Appendix 6:</b> The Environmental Remains by Rachel Fosberry	<b>43</b>

# 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	Not-illustrated Section
Top Surface	Excavated Slot
Break in Section	Archaeological Deposit
Cut Number	Natural Feature
Deposit Number 117	Modern Deposit
Ordnance Datum $\frac{18.45m}{\wedge}$ ODN	Cut Number <b>118</b>
Stone	



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Figure 1: Site location showing position of trenches (black), development areas (red) and extent of tree cover (green)



## 1 Introduction

This archaeological evaluation at Sawston Hall, South Cambridgeshire was undertaken in accordance with a Brief issued by Kasia Gdaniec of the Cambridgeshire Archaeology, Planning and Countryside Advice team (CAPCA; Planning Application S/1800/04/F), supplemented by a Specification prepared by Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU). The evaluation took place over four days in early May 2006.

The works comprised evaluation of the land to be affected by development to refurbish the Hall as a Hotel, an alteration also requiring development within the Hall grounds. This archaeological evaluation applies solely to the potential for archaeological remains within the grounds of the Hall and not to any refurbishment of the building itself. This phase of work follows on from an initial desk-based assessment commissioned as part of a pre-planning assessment (Howe and Mortimer 2004).

The work was designed to assist in defining the character and extent of any archaeological remains within the proposed redevelopment area, in accordance with the guidelines set out in *Planning and Policy Guidance 16 - Archaeology and Planning* (Department of the Environment 1990). The results will enable decisions to be made by CAPCA, on behalf of the Local Planning Authority, with regard to the treatment of any archaeological remains found.

The site archive is currently held by CCC AFU and will be deposited with the appropriate county stores in due course.

## 2 Geology and Topography

Sawston village lies eleven kilometres south of Cambridge on the eastern side of the valley of the River Cam. The Hall lies at approximately 25m OD, on a narrow spur of land projecting westwards into the Cam valley. The underlying geology of the hall and its grounds is Middle Chalk with 1st/2nd Terrace Gravels and possibly alluvium along the western fringes, marking the edge of the river valley (British Geological Survey 1985). The grounds cover c. 22 hectares and are bounded by Church Lane and St Mary's Churchyard to the north, housing development to the west, housing and open fields to the east and by West Green Plantation and the Pampisford Parish boundary to the south. Immediately to the south of the Hall, taking up nearly two thirds of the grounds, are extensive low-lying damp woodlands and a SSSI (Site of Special Scientific Interest) fen/meadow.

### **3 Archaeological and Historical Background**

Sawston Parish is bordered by the Rivers Cam (to the west) and Granta (to the north) with the village in the south-west of the parish on the east bank of the Cam. The parish occupies a central position on the broad chalk belt between the Fens and the high claylands of Essex traversed by Southern England's principal west-east routeways from prehistoric times – the Icknield Way and Ashwell Street. There would also have been a north-south prehistoric and Romano-British route, passing through Sawston from London to Cambridge along the eastern side of the Cam valley (see Fig. 6).

#### **3.1 Prehistoric**

Several prehistoric finds have been made within the parish, few however, within the vicinity of the Hall itself. A collection of Neolithic flint tools were found near the vicarage (HER 04113) with further finds to the south at The Spike. A Late Bronze Age hoard (HER 04110) consisting of a winged axe, two socketed spearheads, two socketed axes and other pieces were found 'within the parish'.

Recent excavations to the north of the village, around the junction of Cambridge Road and Babraham Road, have revealed parts of an extensive Middle Bronze Age ditched field system (Cessford and Mortimer 2004; Mortimer 2006). Other parts of this system, including a posthole structure and a well or shaft, have recently been excavated at Lynton Way to the northeast by Archaeological Solutions (Gdaniec pers. comm.). There is evidence for the continuation of this field system across the north of the parish in the form of a group of rectangular or D-shaped enclosures which can be seen as a series of crop marks from Borough Hill in the west across to Lynton Way in the east.

Borough Hill, an Iron Age Hillfort (or more appropriately a contour fort) is one of the largest in Cambridgeshire and occupies a spur of land overlooking the Cam 1500m to the west of the village at the site of Spicer's paper factory (see Fig 6). Although little is now evident above ground, the sub-surface remains are extensive and in a good state of preservation (Mortimer 2001).

#### **3.2 Romano-British**

Two possible Roman roads have recently been recorded in Sawston (ECB1464), on excavations prior to the construction of the new Police Station at the north end of the village (Cessford and Mortimer 2004), and a scatter of Roman pottery was found to the southeast (HER 04115).

### 3.3 Medieval and Post-Medieval

The village of Sawston is almost certainly Anglo-Saxon in origin and is first mentioned in the 10th century as *Salsingetune*, either 'farm of *Salse*' or 'of *Salses* people', and later in Domesday (1086) as *Salsiton(e)* (Reaney 1943). An Early Anglo-Saxon burial was found on Huckeridge Hill, on the Cambridge road to the north of the village (HER 04537). The richly furnished burial was uncovered during road widening early in the 19th century and it is likely that others are, or were present. It is unclear whether it relates to settlement at Sawston itself, to an Anglo-Saxon settlement at Dernford Farm to the north-west, where there are a series of earthworks and cropmarks (HER 10958) or to Early Saxon occupation of the Iron Age Hillfort. An Anglo-Saxon brooch (HER 04112) and Saxon/Viking key (HER 04111) were found in the parish although their locations are not certain.

The main estate in Sawston at Domesday was known as Pyratts or Sawston Manor. It was held by the Pirot family until the late 14th century. According to Teversham (1942 – 1947) in '*A History of the Village of Sawston*' the manor, built by 1279, stood near the church on a moated site close to the present hall. Sutherland (1995) interpreted a flooded earthwork to the south of the site as representing part of the earlier moat (HER 01267). However a survey commissioned by the hall in the 15th century makes no mention of a moat associated with the building, suggesting that Pirot's Manor, the precursor to Sawston Hall, was unmoated (Gdaniec 1991).

In the mid 15th century the manor consisted of a hall, two cross chambers, 30 other chambers, numerous outhouses, a gatehouse, two barns, two stables and a dovecote. The 'moat' may have been constructed during this period, however the date is unclear (Gdaniec 1991). The Huddleston family were lords of the manor during this period and occupied the hall until 1982. Sawston Hall is the only Elizabethan mansion in the country to be built of clunch rather than brick. Throughout the history of the hall there have been a number of different building phases. The first phase of building was of a traditional plan for the mid 16th century. It was a U-shape with the hall set centrally and to the north, with the parlours and kitchen to the east and west respectively. The hall chamber and further chambers were situated on the first floor. By c.1600 the wings had been extended southwards to create two more chambers. Beyond these a long gallery range extended along the front of the first floor. By c. 1890 a little gallery had been built across the back of the hall range to improve circulation and remove the need for room to room access. Its restoration in 1850 consolidated much of the earlier work (Wright 1978). It is currently a Grade 1 listed building.

The Hall is located with c. 22 hectares of formal and informal gardens. Evidence from the OS map 1885 (Fig. 7) suggests that the gardens were mainly laid out during the 19th century but were simplified in the

20th century. The pleasure grounds consist of ornamental and functional watercourses that feed the 'moat' ditch. There are plantations, fishponds (HER 01267) and woodlands with interlinking pathways. The extent to which these areas are historic walks is unclear as they are not shown on any of the OS maps. There are remnants of a kitchen garden on the north end of the western boundary in the woodland (English Heritage 2001).

The park at Sawston is composed of woodland blocks and open meadows, one of which, lying c. 200m south-east of the Hall, is a SSSI. It was referred to as Hill Moor or the Lord's Close in the Sawston Court Rolls of 1398. By the early 19th century the area was being treated as parkland. The 1811 Enclosure map shows linear and curvilinear plantations, as well as the fact that the land to the north of the hall was still divided in 1811. Some of these boundaries were removed by 1885 when the park was extended (English Heritage 2001).

Another important manor known as Huntingdons or Somerys Manor recorded in 1279 was located to the west of the village (HER 01268) and stood on a moated site just west of the present farmhouse, Huntingdon's farm. The moat is rectangular and surrounds the garden of Huntingdon's Farm with the west side of the moat fairly complete.

There is further evidence of medieval activity in the immediate vicinity with St Mary's church, dated from the 11th or 12th century (HER 04123); the Queen's Head Inn, a 15th century timber framed building (HER 04140) and the medieval or post medieval cross that stands at the junction of High Street and Church Lane.

### **3.4 Modern**

Sawston was enclosed by an act of parliament in 1802, its general extent indicated later on the Inclosure map of 1811.

The village experienced considerable industrial growth in the 19th century with the presence of the leather and parchment works and also the paper-mill. This led to a great expansion of the working population which in turn led to the building of considerable numbers of workmen's cottages, some on land bought by the leather works owner in South Terrace and along the main road to the west of the Hall (Wright 1978).

The Hall was requisitioned by the military during the Second World War and used as headquarters of the 66th Fighter Wing of the 3rd Air Division of the American Eighth Air force. There is clear evidence for this occupation in the grounds with an air-raid shelter, brick outbuildings and concrete roadways and platforms, there are also relics of the period – graffiti drawings - in the Hall itself.

### **3.5 Previous Archaeological Work**

Cambridge Archaeological Unit (CAU) carried out an evaluation at Sawston Hall in 1991 prior to the development of a tennis court in the orchard to the north-east of the Hall. Two trenches were excavated. Trench I measured 36m and its southern end was 8m from the existing yew hedge that separated the 'sunken garden' from the orchard. Trench II measured 16.4m and was located 12.5m from Trench I.

It had been thought that the area may have contained the putative northern side of the moat, although no archaeological remains were found. The trenches would have located the moat ditch had it been in the vicinity. The evaluation concluded that there is unlikely to have been a moat ditch to the north of the Hall rather that the northern and eastern banks are probably garden features providing landscaping for the sunken garden. This has been the only archaeological intervention within 500m of the study area.

Within the parish of Sawston further work has been carried out at Borough Hill Iron Age hillfort in 1993 and 2001 by the CCC AFU (Bray 1994) and the CAU (Mortimer 2001) (respectively HER ECB1086 and ECB1378). Further large-scale trenching was carried out in 2001 by John Samuels Archaeological Consultants (Samuels 2001). An evaluation and watching brief was conducted by the CAU at Sawston Police Station (HER ECB1464). This revealed the remains of two ditched enclosures originally thought to be possible Roman military camps but now, following subsequent excavation to the north, seen as part of an extensive Middle Bronze Age ditched field system. The Bronze Age ditches appear to have been used as a focus for a subsequent Roman road junction, probably dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD (Cessford and Mortimer 2004). The location of suggested Roman road routes can be seen in Figure 6. An evaluation at The Spike (HER 11720) revealed a series of undated ditches (Sutherland 1995).

Further recent work at an extension to the Police Station site (Mortimer 2006) revealed additional elements of the Bronze Age field system, along with what appear to be extensive 'closing' deposits of later Bronze Age worked flint.

## **4 Methodology**

### **4.1 General**

The objective of the 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.

The Brief required that at least 5% of the area affected by the development be subject to trial trenching. There was a further requirement that the WW2 buildings that are to be demolished should be recorded as part of this stage of evaluation works (see 5.5 Standing Building Recording).

Access to some parts of the site was restricted by narrow entrances and machine excavation had to be carried out with a tracked mini-digger-type excavator. All machining was undertaken under archaeological supervision using a 1.20m wide toothless ditching bucket.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned by eye for artefactual material and all hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were obviously modern.

All archaeological features and deposits were recorded using CCC AFU's *pro-forma* sheets. Trench locations, plans and sections were recorded at appropriate scales and digital photographs were taken of all relevant features, deposits and trench locations.

Environmental samples were taken from a variety of contexts: two wells, two ditches, a posthole and a large waterworn channel.

## 4.2 Evaluation Areas

Four areas within the grounds were evaluated, all of which lay to the west of the Hall building itself (see Fig. 1). Trench 1 was excavated in Area 1, Trench 2 in Area 2 etc.:

Area 1 -	The Car Park
Area 2 -	The Restaurant
Area 3 -	The Garden Rooms
Area 4 -	The Pool

The approximate size of the areas affected by development are:

Area 1 -	1700 sq m
Area 2 -	262 sq m
Area 3 -	350 sq m
Area 4 -	1350 sq m
Total	3812 sq m

Due to the necessity of using a mini digger instead of a JCB (to gain access to certain areas) the trenches were reduced to 1.20m wide, and the total area evaluated was therefore also reduced. In some areas this was compensated for by excavating longer or extra trenches, in some areas this was not possible. The areas, and percentages, excavated were as follows:

Area 1 –	Trench 1	70 sq m	4.1%
Area 2 –	Trench 2	16.5 sq m	6.3%
Area 3 –	Trench 3	8 sq m	2.3%
Area 4 –	Trench 4	66.5 sq m	4.9%
Total –		161 sq m	4.22%

Despite this lowered evaluation percentage, all areas, with the exception of Area 3 where standing buildings and compost heaps prevented trenching, were adequately evaluated. It was agreed that further trenching would be required in Area 3 at a later date.

## 5 Results

The Areas (and Trenches) all lay to the west of the Hall with Trench 1 to the north and Trenches 2 to 4 to the south (Fig. 1). The ground level drops significantly across the evaluation area from approximately 25.40m OD at Trench 1 to 21.40m at the south of Trench 4.

The archaeological features are set out below by Trench, and within these Trench groups they are presented in approximate date order. A table follows the entry for each feature detailing the number of contexts assigned to that feature and the numbers or weights of the different finds assemblages recovered from within them. Quantities of pottery (Pot.), struck flint (Str.FI) and burnt flint (Bt.FI) are given by number, all other categories by weight in grams (g).

### 5.1 Trench 1 (Fig 2)

Area 1 had lain for many years under a concrete raft foundation for a series of temporary buildings. These, and the concrete, had been removed prior to the evaluation, and the topsoil/subsoil overburden proved to have been heavily truncated. Trench 1 was therefore very shallow for most of its length with remnant subsoil and weathered natural chalk removed to a depth of approximately 0.20m. At the very south of the trench a slight hollow (95) survived in the natural subsurface, filled with subsoil, which increased the trench depth to a maximum of 0.50m.

The trench was T-shaped with an extension to the west at its foot, and was widened to 1.80m in two small areas.

In addition to the hollow at the south of the trench, three Romano-British and medieval ditches and two undated but earlier tree throws were recorded.

### **Tree throws 2 and 94**

Two amorphous, shallow tree throws, both approximately 2.00m across and up to 0.25m deep, though heavily truncated. Their fills were similar, very pale orange loam with chalk fragments, paler and cleaner than the subsoil that survived at the south of the trench. No finds material was recovered from either feature and this, alongside the paleness of their fills, suggests that they are of an early, prehistoric, date.

3 contexts, no finds material.

### **Ditch 4**

Aligned approximately north-northwest to south-southeast, 1.25m wide and 0.50m deep, though heavily truncated, with a rounded profile. The fill (10) was a mid reddish-brown clay silt with flint and chalk inclusions throughout, darker and siltier towards the base (3). Four sherds of pottery were recovered from the lower fill – three Romano-British and one probable earlier medieval sherd (12th or 13th century).

Contexts	Pot.	Str.Fl.	Bone (g)	Slag (g)
3	4	1	60	5

### **Ditch 6 (Fig 4; Section 1)**

Aligned northeast to southwest and of similar form to ditch 4 – c. 1.30m wide and 0.40m deep with a slightly angular rounded profile. The fill was similar to that of ditch 4, though paler, slightly greyer, and more homogenous. The ditch was truncated along its the southern edge by ditch 9. Two sherds of pottery were recovered from the fill – both dating to the 1st century AD.

Contexts	Pot.	Bone (g)
2	2	29

### **Ditch 9 (Fig 4; Section 1)**

Aligned northeast to southwest and truncating the southern edge of ditch 6. A steep V-shaped profile, approximately 1.30m wide and 0.85m deep. The lower fill (8) was a mid reddish grey-brown clay silt with abundant chalk flecks and moderate flint and chalk fragments, the upper fill (7) was slightly darker with fewer inclusions. One sherd of medieval pottery (13<sup>th</sup> or 14th century) was recovered from the lower fill.

Contexts	Pot.	Bone (g)
3	1	394



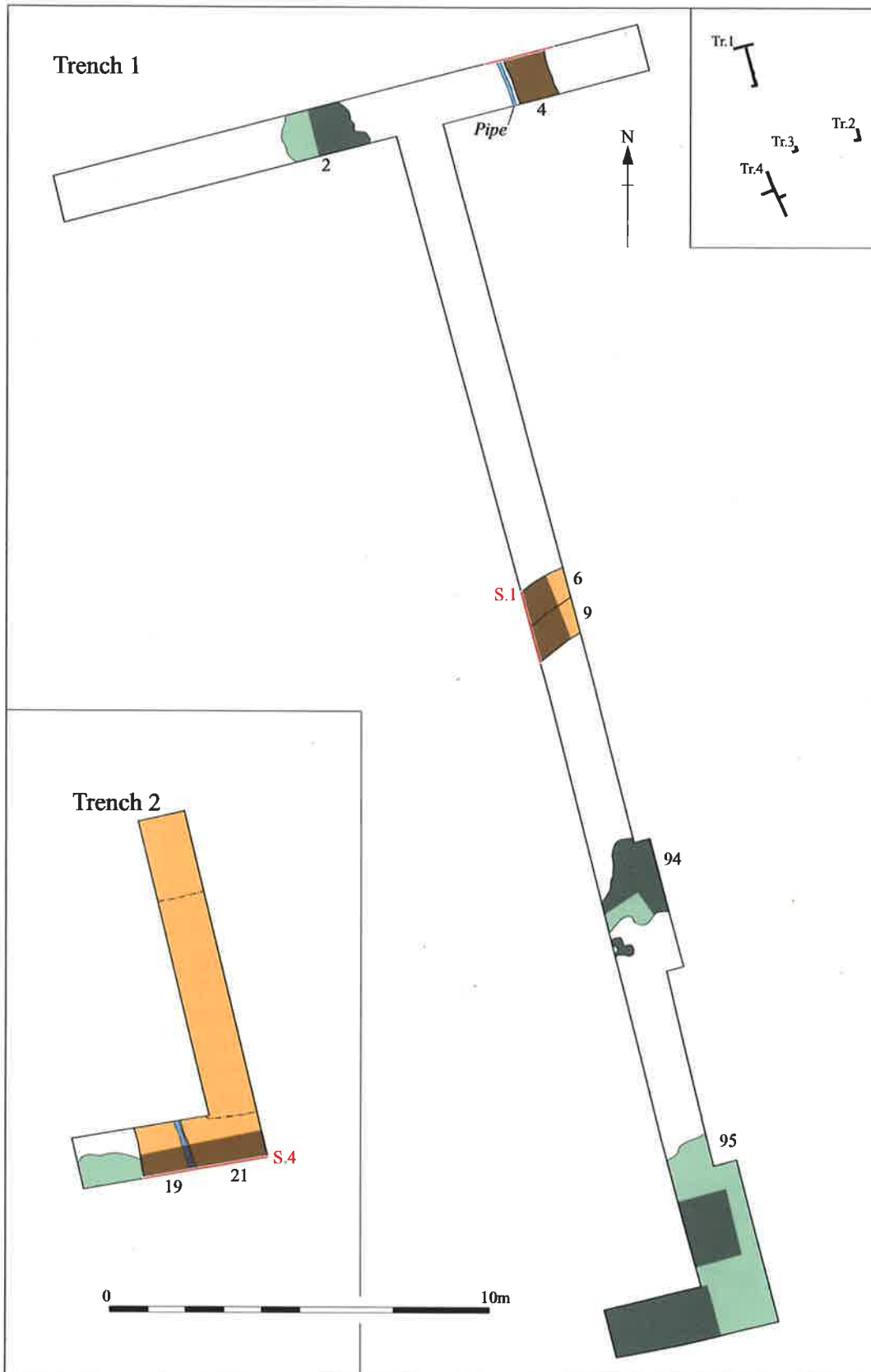


Figure 2: Plan of trenches 1 and 2

## 5.2 Trench 2 (Fig 2)

Trench 2 was designed to run approximately north to south down the line of the proposed new restaurant. However, machine excavation at the northern end of the trench, having reached 1.40m deep (in a 1.20m wide trench) did not locate the natural chalk - the excavation clearly being within a deep and wide archaeological feature. The trench was then continued southwards at a higher level (1.00m deep) to establish whether an 'edge' of the feature, and the natural chalk, lay in this direction. After a further 6m, and with the feature clearly continuing as a north to south linear ditch, the trench was taken out square to the west in order to locate its western edge. This was located 1m beyond the western side of the trench and there was a second, far smaller ditch running parallel to the west of this. An area of disturbance, possibly a grubbed-out tree, lay to the west and natural chalk subsoil was recorded at approximately 0.46m deep.

### *Ditch 19 (Fig 4; Section 4)*

A narrow, wide V-shaped ditch aligned approximately north-northwest to south-southeast, apparently parallel to the much larger moat ditch to the east. About 1.60m wide (truncated at east) with a sharp break-of-slope to steep lower edges and a narrow flat base. The ditch was 1.20m deep from current ground height, 0.70m from the level of the natural chalk. Three fills were recorded. The main fill (29) was a dense mid grey chalky clay with frequent chalk fragments, paler with more clay and chalk fragments towards the base (30). The upper fill (28) was a fine, clean, pale-mid brown clay-loam. Two sherds of 13th or 14th century pottery were recovered from the main fill.

The infilling sequence, with fills tipping or washing in from the west, suggests that any bank would have lain to the west. The relationship with the larger moat ditch to the east (21) had been completely removed by a modern water pipe trench. However, there was a suggestion that the moat ditch cut continued beyond the pipe trench and into the fills of ditch 19, and the general appearance of the fills either side of the pipe also gives the impression that the moat ditch, at least in its latest form, truncated ditch 19.

Contexts	Pot.	Bone (g)	CBM (g)
4	2	47	191

### *Moat 21 (Fig 4; Section 4)*

Aligned approximately north-northwest to south-southeast, broadly parallel to the smaller, earlier ditch 19 to the west. The feature was not fully excavated and neither its depth nor width are known. At the south of the trench the feature was excavated as far as was possible and was here 2.30m wide and 1.90m deep from current ground level (1.50m from natural chalk level). However, the ditch was clearly still getting deeper towards the east and it is estimated to be at least 10 to 12m wide and between 3 and 4m deep.

None of the recorded fill sequence is 'natural' silting, all fills seen having been dumped into the upper part of the open moat as deliberate infill on abandonment of the feature. The main fill (26) was a dense pale-mid grey chalky clay with common

chalk and building rubble inclusions, the lower part (27) was darker, denser, with more rubble. The upper fill (25) was a fine, dense, khaki-brown silty loam with a lens of chalk fragments at its centre, and above this was Footing 23 (see below).

Apart from the building rubble (chiefly roof tile), datable finds were recovered from fill 26 – six sherds of 13th to 14th century pottery.

Contexts	Pot.	Str.Fl.	Bone (g)	CBM (g)
6	6	1	964	5090

**Hollow 20** (Fig 4; Section 4)

To the west of ditch 19, and partly truncating it, was a shallow area of disturbed ground, possibly a grubbed-out tree or erosion hollow, at least 1.40m across and 0.10m deep. The fill (31) was a chalky grey clay with frequent chalk inclusions. One sherd of 12th or 13th century pottery was recovered from its fill.

Contexts	Pot.	Str.Fl.	CBM (g)
2	1	1	56

**Footing 23**

Running parallel with the brick wall to the east of the trench was a rubble foundation or footing, at least 0.80m wide and 0.50m deep. The footing was mainly of gravel and building rubble but included bone, broken bottles, pottery and other domestic refuse. The pottery dates to the late 18th or 19th century but the bottles date the rubble more clearly to the very end of the 19th.

Contexts	Pot.	Glass (g)	Bone (g)	CBM (g)
2	5	898	676	580

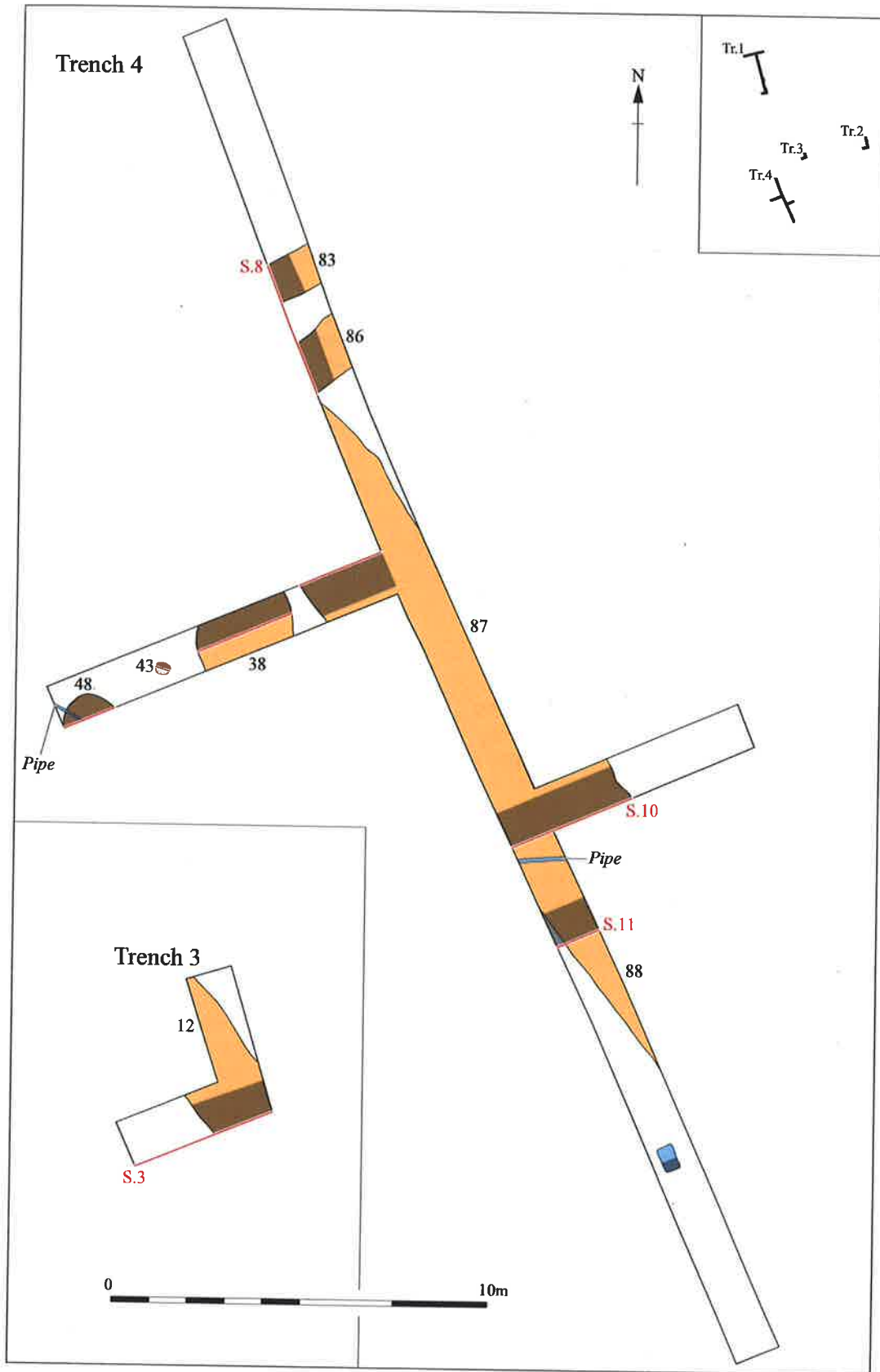


Figure 3: Plan of Trenches 3 and 4

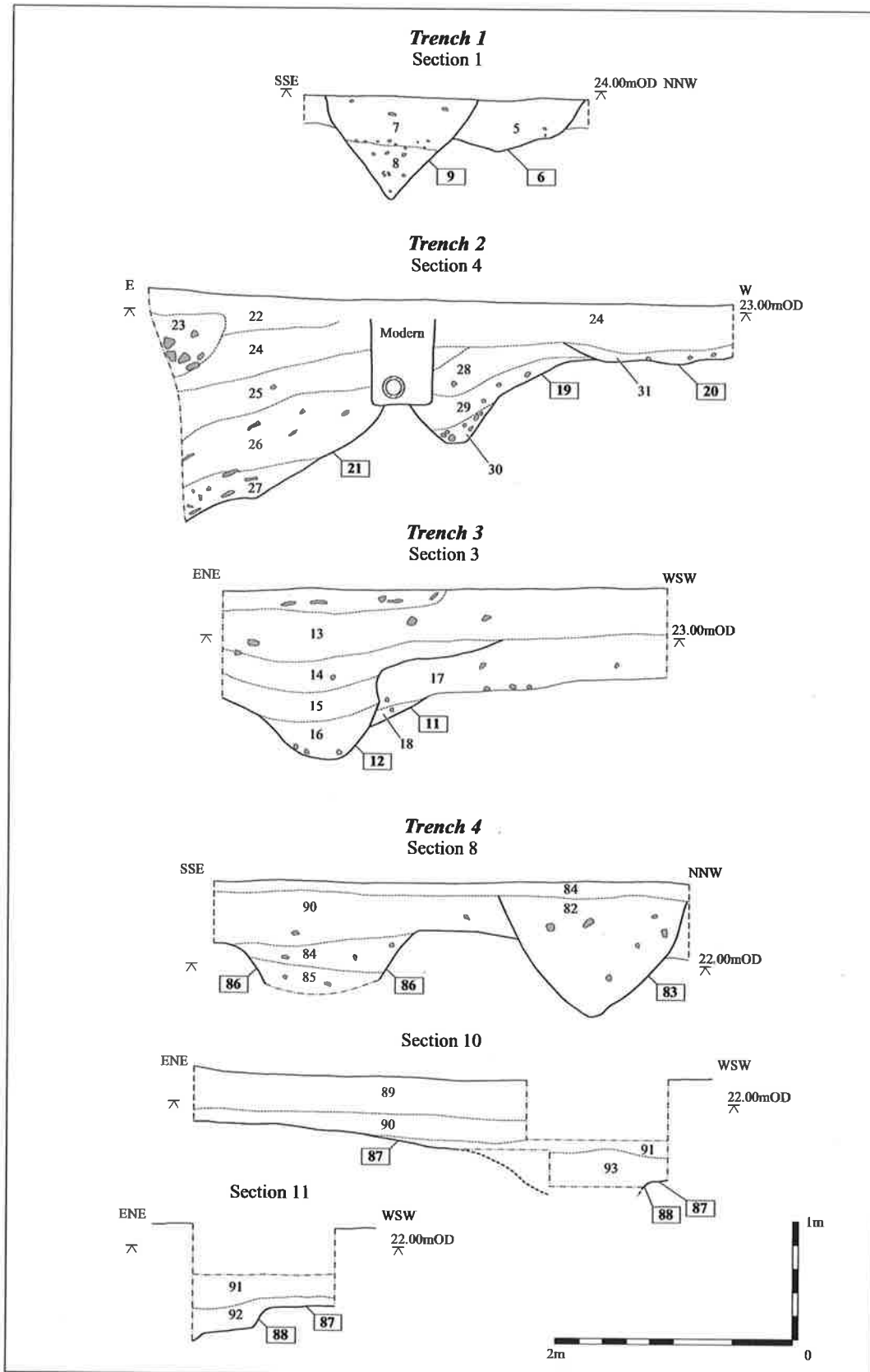


Figure 4: Section drawings

### 5.3 Trench 3 (Fig 3)

The location of Trench 3, placed to investigate the area beneath the new Garden rooms, was influenced by a number of factors. A WW2 brick building still occupied the northern part of the area and had to be recorded prior to demolition (see below – Standing Building Recording) and the southern part lay beneath wooden sheds and a very large compost heap. Immediately to the west of these was a thick wartime concrete roadway, still used for access, and the area to the west of this, in the northern part, was under protected tree cover. The closest area available for evaluation was the area immediately west of the concrete roadway in the southern part of the area.

An approximately north to south aligned trench was started here but was evidently running down the length of a wide northwest to southeast aligned ditch and was therefore stopped and taken out square to the west in order to locate the feature's western edge. This was found a further 1m out and beyond this natural chalk subsoil lay at a depth of approximately 0.80m.

#### *Ditch 12 (11) (Fig 4; Section 3)*

Aligned northwest to southeast, a large ditch in two phases. The earlier phase was represented by cut 11 and fill 18, with probable slumping from soil layer 17 infilling most of the western side of the feature. This had been re-cut by ditch 12, with a very steep cut at the west, shallower to the east (probably evidence of further slumping). Overall the ditch was approximately 2.40m wide, 1.45m deep from current ground level, 1.10m from the probable level of the original cut.

Part of the lower fill of the original ditch survived (18), a dense grey-brown clay with frequent chalk inclusions, and above this was the slumped topsoil layer 17, a pale-mid grey-brown clay silt with common small chalk inclusions. No finds material was recovered from either of these contexts.

The basal silt fill of the re-cut ditch (16) was a dense grey clay silt with common chalk inclusions, the central fill (15) a mid grey-brown clay loam with common small chalk inclusions, and the upper fill (14) a fine, dense, mid brown clay loam with few small chalk inclusions. Above this was topsoil layer 13. All the ditch fills appeared to be natural accumulations, though with rubble and domestic waste added to the upper fill.

Datable finds were recovered from all three fills. Basal fill 16 contained two sherds of pottery, one abraded Roman and one small Middle Saxon Ipswich ware sherd. Central fill 15 contained one Early Medieval sherd and two pieces of 'flowerpot', and upper fill 14 a mixed assemblage of Roman, medieval, post-medieval and 'flowerpot' sherds (11 sherds in total). The flowerpot sherds are not clearly datable, and indeed, it is unclear as to how early these sherds could be. However, it is probably safe to date them to no earlier than the 17th century and both the upper fills to the 17th or 18th centuries. While the pottery dating for the basal fill is no later than the 9th century, the fill itself is clearly considerably later, and the ditch, in its earliest form may date to the 16th or 17th century.

Contexts	Pot.	Str.Fl.	Bone (g)	CBM (g)
6	16	1	431	215

#### 5.4 Trench 4 (Fig 3)

Area 4 lay on a relatively steep northwest to southeast slope with the main length of Trench 4 running down the slope. Two further trench lengths were taken out square to the west and east. The natural chalk subsoil lay at a depth of 0.53m in the northern and central parts of the trench, increasing slightly to 0.57m at the southern end.

The main feature in the trench was a broad waterworn channel aligned northwest to southeast and containing a large finds assemblage, principally prehistoric struck flint and Late Iron Age and Romano-British pottery. To the west of the channel were two possible Roman wells and a small posthole, to the north were two ditches aligned approximately west to east.

##### *Channel 87 (Fig 4; Sections 10 & 11)*

A channel aligned northwest to southeast, approximately 4 – 5.00m wide and at least 25.00m long, running down a slope from north to south. It is unclear whether the trial excavations reached the base of the feature, but it was at least 0.95m deep from ground level, 0.60m deep from natural chalk level. The general profile was a wide U-shape though with a deeper, possibly hand-cut slot at its base (88) with near-vertical edges and a flat sloping base. A second, deeper slot cut may have lain within this.

The fills of the feature were compact pale to mid grey chalky clays, friable and with frequent chalk fragments and flecks. The fill had the appearance of having been water-born, or at least water-washed, and the condition of the pottery assemblage, with smooth and abraded edges and surfaces supports this.

The feature was excavated in three places, in 1.00m wide slots 1.00m, 2.00m and 3.00m long. Within each slot only one 1.00m square was excavated to any great depth, respectively 0.50, 0.55 and 0.45m deep from machine level. In total 1.60 cubic metres of the fill was excavated, equating to approximately two full 1.00m slots across the feature. If the feature runs the length of the proposed development area (c. 50m) this represents a 4% sample.

Considering the small size of the sample the finds assemblage is relatively large (see below), and consists of mixed (but chiefly Neolithic) worked flint, burnt flint, Late Iron Age and Romano-British pottery, some fired clay and ceramic building material, and animal bone (undatable and possibly mixed prehistoric and Roman).

The entire pottery assemblage dates to within the 1st century AD. A small but significant part of the assemblage (twenty sherds) dates to the Late Iron Age or LIA/Early Roman (approximately AD 0 – 50) with the majority of the other clearly datable sherds being Pre-Flavian, i.e. dating to AD 43 – 68.

Contexts	Pot.	Str.Fl.	Bt.Fl	Bone (g)	CBM (g)	Fired Clay (g)
19	127	98	54	1523	33	85

##### *Wellshaft 38*

A possibly circular or oval cut, 2.50m across. The feature could not be fully excavated within the confines of the trench but was taken down to 0.70m below the

level at the base of the trench and three fills were recorded. These were grey-brown clay silts with variable quantities of small and medium chalk inclusions. Two sherds of pottery dating to the mid-late 1st century and half a kilo of bone was recovered from the feature.

Contexts	Pot.	Str.Fl.	Bone (g)	Fired Clay (g)
7	2	3	534	26

#### **Wellshaft 48**

A smaller, circular cut, c. 1.50m across, again could not be fully excavated and was taken down to 0.45m below the base of the trench. A similar sequence of upper fills was recorded as in well 38, with one sherd of mid-late 1st century pottery recovered.

Contexts	Pot.	Str.Fl.	Bone (g)	CBM (g)
5	1	3	28	119

#### **Posthole 43**

Small, oval posthole, maximum 0.45m across and 0.10m deep, fill a mid grey-brown clay silt with occasional chalk inclusions.

2 contexts, no finds material

#### **Ditch 86 (Fig 4; Section 8)**

Ditch aligned west to east at the top of the slope. Not fully excavated but 1.50m wide and taken down to 0.55m below level of the natural chalk. Appears to cut from chalk level and to be sealed by subsoil. Two fills recorded, upper (84) a mid grey-brown clay silt, lower (85) a mottled orange, light grey-brown silt clay, both with very common chalk flecks and fragments. Pottery dating to the mid-late 1st century and the pre-Flavian period (AD 43 – 68) was recovered from both fills.

Contexts	Pot.	Str.Fl.	Bt.Fl	Bone (g)
3	8	6	1	152

#### **Ditch 83 (Fig 4; Section 8)**

Ditch aligned west to east just to the north of ditch 86. 1.60m wide and 1.00m deep with a fairly steep U-shaped profile. Fill a homogenous dark grey-brown clay silt with common chalk flecks and fragments. No datable finds material was recovered from the feature but it was seen to cut through the subsoil and is therefore considerably later in the sequence than ditch 86, possibly medieval or post-medieval.

Contexts	Bone (g)
2	289



## 5.5 Standing Building Recording

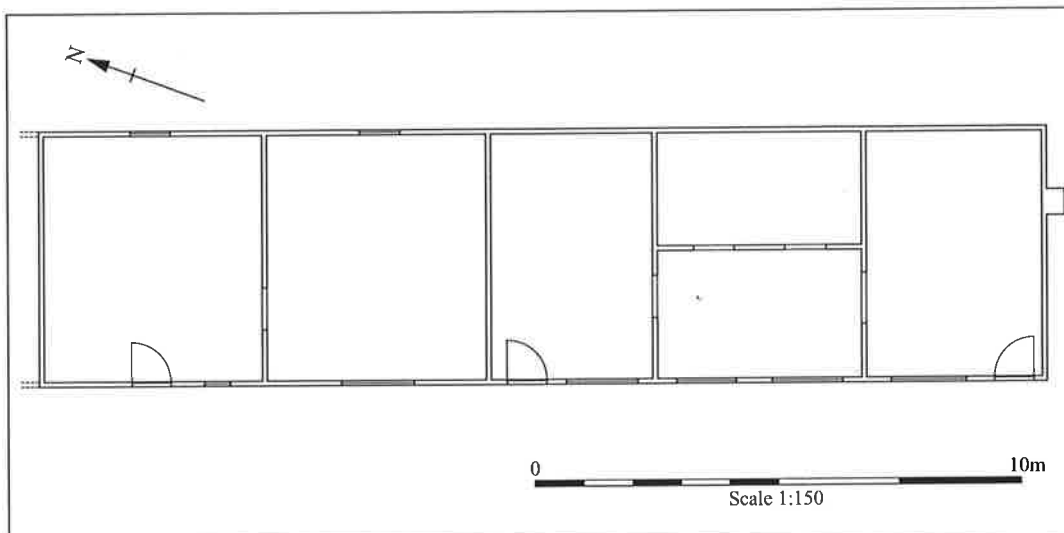


Figure 5: Plan of WW2 building

A range of brick-built Second World War buildings survives along the outside of the wall that bounds the west of the formal gardens. A contemporary concrete roadway runs parallel immediately west of these. These buildings are due for demolition as part of the refurbishment and have been recorded prior to this. A plan has been produced and a range of overall and detailed photographs are kept within the archive. Much of the building is in a poor state of repair, parts of the roof have collapsed, as have some of the partition walls. Internal access to all but the southernmost section was not possible. A brief description of the buildings follows (see Fig. 5 and Plate 1).

The building is brick-built – the bricks are pinkish and of a standard size, 225mm x 65mm. The range is single story, 20.70m in length and 5m wide and fronts on to the concrete roadway at the west. There are five main rooms, four east-west partitions, and access is by three doors, all on the western side. The two northern partitions are of (collapsed) wood and corrugated iron, the two southern are of brick. The two remaining exterior doors are of wood and open inwards.

The remaining windows are iron-framed, painted green, and in either single, double or triple panel. Each panel is 0.50m wide and has eight glass panes. Most of these are now broken.

## 6 Discussion

### 6.1 The Prehistoric and Romano-British Channel, Trench 4

#### 6.1.1 The Channel

The slope that the channel follows was steep, with a fall of 1.00m over the 40 metres of trench 4 and to the north lies a small plateau at 25m OD – the western tip of a spit of land that projects into the wider Cam valley. A channel running down a slope in this location must be spring-fed, and from close by. To the south the ground falls away into the wide shallow depression that separates Sawston from Pampisford. This low, fenny area is fed by springs and water flows out via a small stream (The Brook) that runs through Sawston Tannery and into the Cam at Swans' Corner, Whittlesford. The Icknield Way, and the Romanised Ashwell Street traverse this area from west to east and may well run along the southern and northern sides of this depression (Fox 1923; Malim 2000a and b). The apex of the depression, to the east, is the starting point of the Brent Ditch, a post-Roman barrier on the Icknield way.

There is a putative Prehistoric and Romano-British Cam Valley route from London to the Fens. The Roman version of this road would link the fort and town at Chesterford, 6km to the south, to that at Cambridge 9km to the north, via Sawston, Shelford and Trumpington/Addenbrookes. This route and the Ashwell Street/Icknield Way route would form a major crossroad at Sawston Hall (Fig 6).

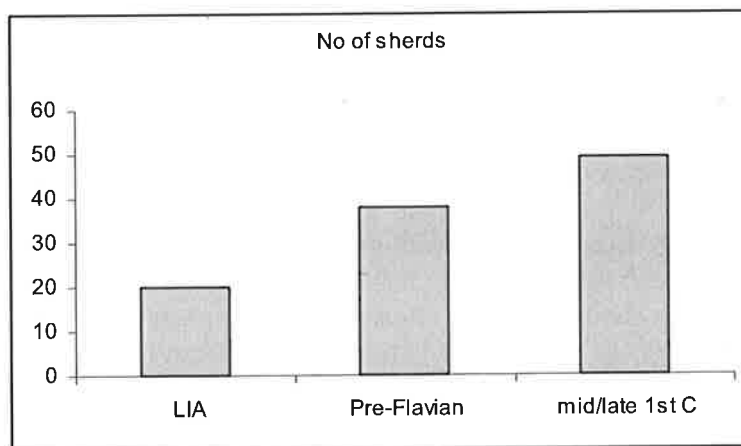
Springs and wells close to principal roadways would have been much frequented and frequently reworked and managed. The channel in Area 4, clearly a natural feature, appears to have had a slot cut into its base, to channel water more effectively. The line of the channel can be traced, as a narrow depression, to the southeast, where it runs into an open pond. A stream that exits this pond continues this line south and east and the stream then feeds into The Brook.

The pottery from the infill of the channel is a homogenous group dating to the 1<sup>st</sup> century AD. Some 127 sherds were recovered. Of these 20 are Late Iron Age (or LIA/Early Roman), dating to AD 0 – 50, with the rest of the assemblage either pre-Flavian in date (AD 43 – 68) or dated to the mid-late 1st century. This suggests a very short time span for the Iron Age and Roman occupation of the site. At the very most the assemblage represents perhaps 80 years (AD 0 – 80), however, the small number of Late Iron Age sherds do not suggest continual occupation through the first half of the century and it is perhaps more likely that these are either contemporary with the pre-Flavian sherds, i.e. towards the very end of their date-range, or slightly pre-date them in a continuous sequence.

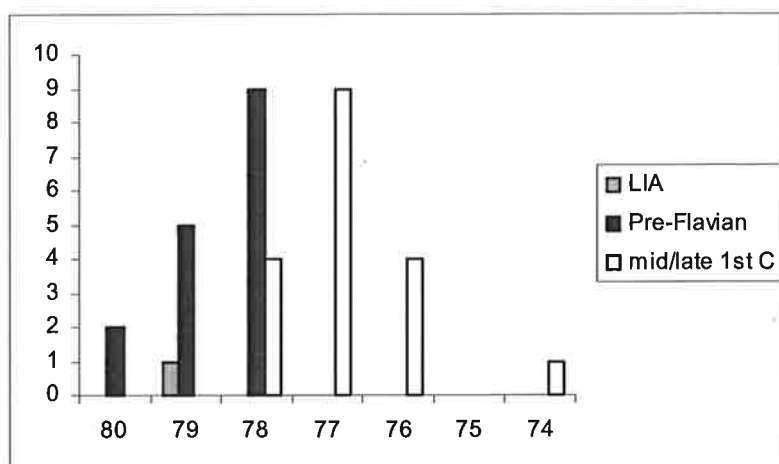
Graphs 2 and 3 below detail the assemblages from the two deepest excavated squares and show the numbers of sherds recovered from each 5cm spit separated into three dated divisions: Late Iron Age (AD 0-50), pre-Flavian (AD 43-68) and mid-late 1st century (AD 50-100).

Both of these squares show a well-stratified pottery sequence – square 73 clearly separates into a pre-Flavian lower fill (spits 80-78) and a mid-late 1st century upper fill (spits 78-74). Square 62 also splits into well-dated lower and upper fills but with a distinctly earlier date range – lower spits 68-67 being Late Iron Age, upper spits 66-64 pre-Flavian with the top spit containing a mixed assemblage.

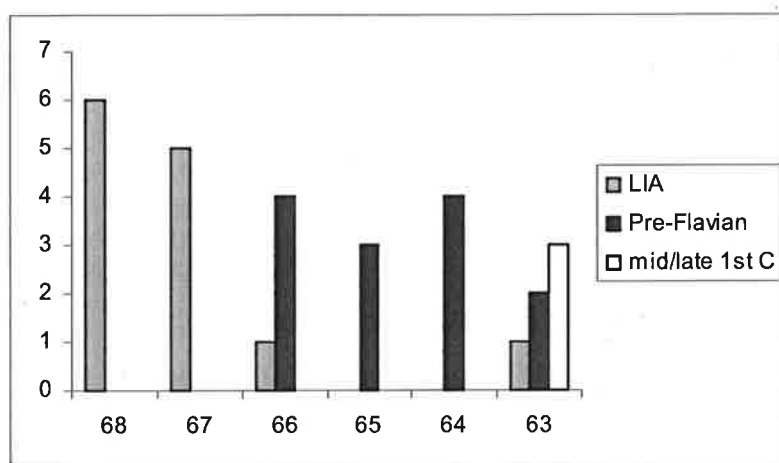
This not only suggests that the feature contains a well-stratified vertical pottery sequence but also that there may be some form of two-dimensional stratification from north to south through the feature. If this sequence does exist, and the evaluation suggests that it does, it is all the more remarkable in that the dating is so very tight. Graph 1 below shows the numbers of sherds dated to the LIA, pre-Flavian and mid-late 1st century, respectively 20, 38 and 49 sherds. If the LIA sherds are taken to come at the end of their date range but to pre-date the pre-Flavian pottery (see Graph 3) then a starting date for the sequence could be immediately pre-conquest, perhaps AD 35-40. The end date is at present less clear, but must lie somewhere in the mid to late 1st century. It is possible that the entire occupation sequence may last little longer than 20 to 40 years.



Graph 1: Total datable pottery assemblage from channel 87



Graph 2: Square 73 - spits 80 (lowest) to 74 (uppermost). Showing number of sherds per 5cm spit from the three date ranges.



Graph 3: Square 62 - spits 68 (lowest) to 63 (uppermost). Showing number of sherds per 5cm spit from the three date ranges.

### 6.1.2 Other Roman Features

Immediately to the west of the channel were two wells or shafts (and a small posthole). These could not be fully excavated and thus cannot be positively identified but their size, their fills and their location suggest wells or perhaps shafts rather than pits or large postholes. It is possible that they may have been dug when the natural spring failed, perhaps seasonally or at times of drought. Dating for these features rests on just three pottery sherds from their upper fills, which derive from the mid to late 1st century. To the north of the Trench is a ditch (86), aligned broadly west to east that contained a finds assemblage (and a fill) very similar to that of the channel and included 8 sherds of Romano-British pottery. The ditch cuts from low in the sequence,

apparently sealed by the subsoil, and would appear to be Roman in date. How it interacts with the channel is not known. It could either be a later feature (later Roman or post-Roman) that cuts across the infilled channel or a contemporary feature that in some way bounds or controls access to the channel or its spring-head. The pottery assemblage, seven sherds dated mid-late 1st century and one sherd pre-Flavian (AD 43-68), could suggest that the ditch fill belongs towards the end of the occupation sequence seen in the channel (c. AD 40 – 80).

The finds assemblage within the channel (and from the wells and ditch) though mixed, shows that the channel is 1st century in its final phase, and it is almost certainly during this period that any principal efforts at water-management were made. The earlier prehistoric material, however, remains of great interest and shows that the channel, and the spring that feeds it, were a focus of activity throughout prehistory.

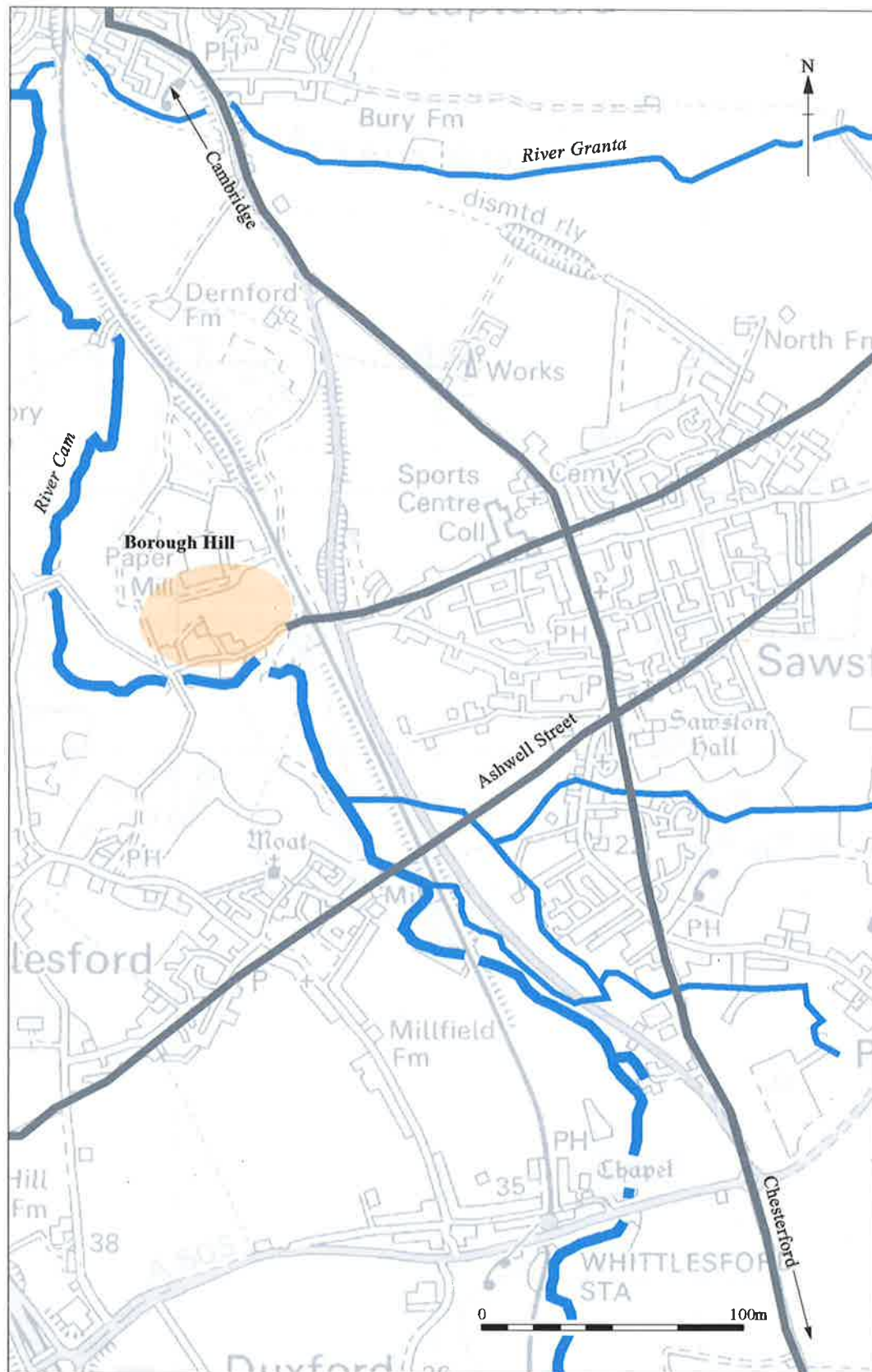
### **6.1.3 Prehistoric Finds**

The channel produced a relatively high quantity of both struck and burnt flint, considering the size of the areas excavated (Appendix 1). The burnt flint indicates the use of hearths in the area and, although the quantities recovered in this part of the area were not sufficiently high to be definitive, it is possible that other, larger-scale activities - involving the deliberate heating of large amounts of stone and frequently recorded along the edges of low-lying fenny or riverine areas - may also be represented.

The worked flint assemblage suggests it was produced over a long period of time, perhaps from the Mesolithic to the end of the Bronze Age, although the bulk of it probably dates to the Neolithic. The assemblage is dominated by knapping waste; there are no retouched pieces and it is possible that the better produced flakes were taken from the site for use elsewhere. While no definite evidence of *in situ* flintworking was identified the general condition of the material suggests fairly intensive reduction was occurring in the vicinity.

## **6.2 The Roman and Earlier Medieval Ditches, Trenches 1, 3 & 4**

Medieval ditches were recorded in all four trenches (that in Trench 2 is discussed under The Moat below) and the chief interest lies in their alignment and their dating. With one major exception, all the buildings, roads and boundaries in the grounds are aligned on the Hall building itself. The principal alignment, presumably laid out when the Hall was re-built in the late 16th century, is approximately 13 degrees west of grid north.



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Figure 6: Map showing Sawston in proximity to Borough Hill and suggested Roman Roads.

None of the medieval ditches however are on this alignment, they lie at approximately 28 degrees west of grid north (in narrow trenches it can be very difficult to ascertain an exact alignment). The one major landscape feature that also lies on this alignment is the open moat to the south of the Hall. The formal garden at the south of the Hall is divided into three main blocks - west, central and east - and the open moat forms the southern boundary to all three. However, while the section at the south of the eastern block follows the same alignment as the current Hall, the section that borders the central and western blocks lies on the same alignment as the medieval ditches.

The dating of the ditches is a little difficult. Those in Trench 1 all produced datable pottery assemblages, though small ones, and dating rests on a single sherd of probable medieval pottery for two of the features, and two Early Roman sherds for the third. If these pottery sherds broadly date the ditches (and they could clearly be residual, and in some cases possibly intrusive) then ditch 6 would date to the first century, ditch 4 to the 12th or 13th century and the re-cut ditch 9 to the 13th or 14th. The probable medieval ditch in Trench 4 is undated and the larger ditch in Trench 3, though containing an early pottery assemblage in its lowest fill, may date to later in the medieval period or later.

Taken together, and even with limited dating, these ditches suggest that the earlier version of the Hall, the 12th or 13th century house, was laid out on a different alignment to the current, post-medieval building (it is further possible that this layout itself may have followed a much earlier Romano-British alignment). If this was the case then the moat of the earlier building (if indeed it had one) would also need to be on this alignment. The western section of the current open moat may be a remnant of this earlier moat.

### **6.3 The Moat, Trench 2**

#### **6.3.1 The Moat Ditch**

In Trench 2 an earlier, backfilled moat, aligned approximately north-northwest to south-southeast, was recorded. The exact alignment of this feature, whether it follows the earlier medieval alignment or that of the current building, could not be ascertained in such a narrow trench. However, the date of its infilling suggests that it is an early feature, possibly part of the original medieval moat system.

There are two main, broadly datable, finds assemblages from the moat; pottery and ceramic building material. The two assemblages do not appear to be of the same date. The pottery assemblage is small, comprising six sherds of micaceous Essex Red wares dating to the 13th and 14th centuries (see Appendix 3). Most of these sherds are in

good condition. The much larger brick and tile assemblage (mainly pegged roof tiles) is more difficult to date but contains two bricks of different sizes, both of which may be Tudor in origin (Appendix 4). One of these is very heavily burnt, as are some of the peg tiles. The building material assemblage could easily fit with the date of the burning and demolition of the earlier building in the late 16th century. The pottery assemblage however, is clearly earlier and may represent residual material from earlier layers within the area of the old building, perhaps scraped up and redeposited foundation layers.

Another possible interpretation must be considered. A survey commissioned by the Hall in the 15th century makes no mention of a moat associated with the then building, suggesting that Pirot's Manor (as it then was) may have been unmoated (Gdaniec 1991). It is possible that the pottery dates from the infilling of the moat are in fact broadly correct, and that the surviving remnants are the result of an even earlier, 15th century remodelling of the Hall and its grounds, with the moat being completely or partially infilled. The southern arm of the moat may have been left open as a pond, or may have also been backfilled, only to be opened up and extended later as a garden feature, perhaps when the Hall was rebuilt in the 16th century.

### 6.3.2 The Earlier Ditch

Running along the western edge of the moat ditch is another, earlier and far smaller ditch, slightly truncated by the moat. The two sherds of pottery recovered from this feature again date to the 13th or 14th century and are in good, fresh condition. The fill sequence suggests that any bank would have lain on the western side, away from the moat. It seems unlikely that this ditch could have been open at the same time as the moat ditch and must therefore predate it, either as part of the layout of the manor grounds prior to the construction of the moat or in some way connected to that construction.

There is nothing either from the archaeological or documentary record, apart from the single sherd of Ipswich ware (see above), to suggest any medieval occupation of the site prior to the 12th or 13th century. This is not to say that an earlier version of the manor did not occupy the area, just that there is as yet no evidence for it. Manors became moated principally in the later 12th and 13th centuries, as more of a fashion statement than through any necessity, and would often had to have moved to new locations to do so. Such movements were frequently downhill, or towards areas that could be fed by springs, where moats would become feasible. It is possible that this has happened at Sawston and that the earlier (Late Saxon) manor lay slightly further to the north and that this explains the lack of any features or finds earlier than the 12th or 13th century. If this were the case the earlier ditch could either represent an outlying ditch



connected to the earlier manor, or some form of marker ditch, part of the setting out of the new moated site.

A large and complex moated manor site would have taken a considerable amount of time and resources to construct, and may have taken years, possibly decades to complete. It is possible that the basic layout of the site, the moats and principal boundaries, would have been set out as ditch-lines at the outset of the construction, with work proceeding on construction as and when possible. It may be coincidence but at the only other Cambridgeshire moated site excavated by the author, at Scarlett's Farm, West Wrating (Mortimer 2004), there was also a narrow earlier ditch running parallel to the moat ditch.

## 7 Conclusions

The archaeological remains found within the evaluation trenches represent four main periods: Neolithic/Bronze Age, Late Iron Age/Early Roman, earlier medieval and late or post-medieval.

The prehistoric archaeology is finds- rather than feature-related in that all the flint recovered, both worked and burnt, was residual within later features. However, the material from the channel – 90% of the whole assemblage – is almost certainly reworked *in situ* rather than residual 'background' material. The channel would appear to have been open throughout the Neolithic and into the Bronze Age but perhaps no later. No late Bronze Age or Iron Age material earlier than the 1st century AD was recovered. It is possible that the channel was re-opened, and canalised, in the Early Roman period.

As far as the flint is concerned, there does not appear to be any stratification within the excavated sections – the flintwork is mixed with Iron Age and Roman pottery throughout the feature. However, there does appear to be good stratification within the Iron Age and Roman pottery assemblage.

The Early Roman remains are perhaps the most significant, and least understood, aspect of the archaeology, for a variety of reasons. Firstly the lack of Iron Age finds is notable, given the amount of earlier Neolithic and Bronze Age material present and the apparent intensity of activity during the very Late Iron Age/Early Roman. The channel appears to have been a focus of activity in the Neolithic and Bronze Age but that activity ceased by the end of the Bronze Age – perhaps much of the activity being linked to the procurement of flint. There is no evidence for any kind of activity in the area, after the Bronze Age, until around the middle of the 1st century AD. One possibility is that the channel had become completely infilled by the later Bronze Age and was opened up in the Late Iron Age/Early Roman period. Another is that the entire prehistoric assemblage is residually deposited from

the surrounding subsoil and that the 'channel' is a purely Early Roman feature.

What this Early Roman activity represents is itself intriguing. It is very short-lived, perhaps as little as 30 years, beginning at or just before the Conquest and ending by the middle to end of the 1st century. The pottery assemblage appears to be a standard domestic one - there is nothing to suggest any military presence - although with some evidence of trade or contact with London (see Appendix 2).

The earlier medieval archaeology consists of ditches. These may represent field ditches, or ditches around and within the back-plots of domestic houses or farms on the High Street frontage to the west. However, very little 'domestic' material was recovered from within them and, this close to the known location of a medieval manor house, it is far more likely that they are part of the manor grounds. Their alignments are of interest, suggesting a different alignment for the earlier Hall building and its attendant moats and grounds.

Little later or post-medieval archaeology was recorded, consisting only of the infilling of the moat and the upper filling of the ditch in Trench 3.

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



Figure 7: 1st edition OS showing Sawston Hall Estate

## Acknowledgements

The author would like to thank Adrian Critchlow who commissioned and funded the archaeological work. The project has been managed by the author and James Drummond-Murray. The site staff on the evaluation were David Brown and Kathy Grant of the CCC AFU and volunteer Cyril Pritchett. Helen Fowler organised the finds assemblage and report illustrations are by Carlos Silva.

The brief for archaeological works was written by Kasia Gdaniec, who visited the site and monitored the evaluation.

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## Appendix 1: Lithic Assessment

By Barry John Bishop

### 1 Introduction

This archaeological evaluation recovered a total of 115 pieces of struck flint and just under 1.3kg of burnt flint fragments, recovered from 35 different contexts.

This report quantifies the material by context according to a basic technological/typological scheme (see Table 1), offers some comments on its significance and recommends any further work required. In Table 1 all contexts, unless followed by a Cut No. in brackets, are within channel 87.

As the material was only cursorily examined and no statistically based technological, typological or metrical analyses attempted, a more detailed examination may alter or amend any of the interpretations offered here.

### 2 Quantification

Context (Cut)	Preparation/ Decortication Flake	Chip/Trimming Flake	Rejuvenation Flake	Flake	Blade	Narrow / blade-like Flake	Flake Fragment	Flake core	Minimal Core	Blade Core	Conchoidal Chunk	Context total	Burnt (no.)	Burnt (Wt: g)
3 (4)	1											1		
14 (12)				1								1		
26 (21)							1					1		
31 (20)				1								1		
36 (38)				1			1					2		
40 (38)						1						1		
45 (48)				3								3		
49				1								1	1	22
50	2			3			1	1		1		8		
51	1							1	1		1	4		
52	1										1	2	3	121
53	3	3		5	1	1	3	2			6	24	29	525
54	4		1			1		1	1			8	3	80
55												0	2	18
57	2											2		
58	1						1					2		
60							1		1			2		
61				2		2						4	1	5
63				1								1	2	45
64				1							1	2	2	13
65		1			3							4	2	82
66				1							1	2		
67	1	1		3		1					2	8	2	23
68	2		1				1				1	5		

Context (Cut)	Preparation/ Decorative Flake	Chip/Trimming Flake	Rejuvenation Flake	Flake	Blade	Narrow / blade-like Flake	Flake Fragment	Flake core	Minimal Core	Blade Core	Conchoidal Chunk	Context total	Burnt (no.)	Burnt (Wt. g)
70						1						1	3	17
71	1											1		
74	1			2							1	4	1	8
75									1			1		
76						1						1		
77				4								4		
78	2			1		1						4		
79	1							1			1	3	1	5
80				1								1	2	106
84 (86)	1	1				1		1			1	5		220
85 (86)				1								1		
Total	24	6	2	32	4	10	9	7	4	1	16	115	54	1290
% Struck	20.9	5.2	1.7	27.8	3.5	8.7	7.8	6.1	3.5	0.9	13.9	100		

Table 1: Quantification of lithic material by context

### 3 Burnt Flint

Just under 1.3kg of burnt flint fragments were recovered from 15 contexts. It was variably burnt but all to the degree that it had changed colour and become 'fire-crazed', consistent with burning in a hearth. It was mostly recovered in small quantities, suggestive of residual 'background' waste although some of the higher quantities, such as from contexts 52, 53, 80 (channel 87) and 84 (ditch 86), may have resulted from specific acts, such as representing disturbed hearths or from the disposal of waste from hearths.

### 4 Struck Flint

#### 4.1 Raw Materials

The struck flint principally consisted of translucent grey, brown or black flint of good knapping quality but prone to thermal flaking. Some angular chunks of opaque mottled brown/yellow slightly coarser flint were also used and two flakes struck from bullhead bed flint were identified. The raw materials used comprised smallish angular and nodular shaped cobbles retaining a hard weathered cortex. This was probably obtained from derived deposits such as coarse alluvium, glacial till or mass weathered chalk deposits.

#### 4.2 Condition

The condition of the material as a whole was very good although some pieces did show some evidence of post-deposition edge chipping or abrasion, consistent with trampling, redeposition or movement within its burial matrix. It is likely, however, that the assemblage as a whole

was recovered from close to where it was originally deposited. Recortication varied from completely absent to heavy. This may partially reflect localised variations in the soil chemistry although it appeared that recortication was generally absent on the more-crudely produced and potentially later pieces, suggesting a chronological factor in the degree of recortication.

#### **4.3 Technology, Typology and Dating**

The assemblage was dominated by knapping waste, including high proportions of decortication flakes, cores, flake fragments and conchoidally fractured fragments. Notably, no retouched implements were present, although a few flakes did display possible evidence of heavy usewear or light retouching. Confident identification of this was hampered, however, due to the masking effects of post-depositional abrasion.

No chronologically diagnostic implements were present although consideration of the technological attributes of the material suggests that it was the product of more than one industry.

The larger part of the assemblage, and that generally displaying the heaviest recortication, was characterised by competently produced flakes, many of which were thin and narrow, occasionally of blade-like proportions, exhibiting narrow, edge trimmed striking platforms. Many of these suggested the use of soft-hammer percussion. These were complemented by the majority of cores, which had produced narrow flakes and, although simply reduced, displayed careful platform edge trimming and occasional rejuvenation. Although production of these pieces was competent, there were few truly systematically produced blades or blade cores present. These traits would suggest that this component was most characteristic of Mid- to Late Neolithic industries. A possible exception was the presence of three systematically produced blades from context 65 (channel 87) that may be more typical of Mesolithic or Early Neolithic traditions.

The smaller but still significant component of the assemblage consisted of a number of relatively squat and thick flakes with wide, unmodified striking platforms which were probably produced by hard-hammer percussion. Associated with these may be a few opportunistically reduced flake cores and cores that had been only minimally worked. These suggest an expedient but much less considered approach to flintworking, which is more typical of the industries dating to the latter parts of the Bronze Age. Much of this material remained unrecorticated.



## 5 Discussion

The investigations produced a relatively high quantity of both struck flint and burnt flint, considering the size of the areas investigated. The burnt flint indicates the persistent use of hearths in the area and, although the quantities involved were not sufficiently high to be definitive, it is possible that activities involving the deliberate heating of stone, such as frequently recorded along the edges of low-lying or riverine areas, may also be represented.

The technological traits of the struck assemblage suggests it may have been produced over a long period of time, perhaps from the Mesolithic to the end of the Bronze Age, although the bulk of it probably dates to the Neolithic. It was dominated by knapping waste; no retouched pieces were present and it is possible that many of the better produced flakes were taken from the site for use elsewhere. No definite evidence of *in situ* flintworking was identified although the general good condition of the material suggests fairly intensive reduction was occurring in the vicinity, perhaps in association with other activities undertaken along the edge of the channel that ran along the southern edge of the site.

## 6 Conclusions

The main significance of the assemblage is that it demonstrates fairly intensive activities, principally involving flint reduction and hearth use, focussing along the margins of a low-lying area or channel located to the south of the site. Similar activity has been recorded within the wider region although the paucity of previous archaeological work around Sawston has resulted in a poor definition of the prehistoric exploitation of this area. In addition, the assemblage was probably manufactured over a long period, perhaps from the Mesolithic to the end of the Bronze Age and, given sufficient stratigraphical resolution, has the ability to inform on changes in the technological strategies employed during this period.

It is suggested that any further work should focus on obtaining as large and as closely contextually defined lithic assemblage as resources allow, in order to facilitate an understanding of the nature, extent and chronology of any prehistoric lithic-based activities. Should sufficient quantities of lithic artefacts be procured from any future work, full metrical, typological and technological analysis may be warranted and, through consideration of other recovered artefact groups and environmental based evidence, this information should be incorporated into establishing as detailed and complete an understanding as possible of the prehistoric exploitation of the area.

## Appendix 2: Romano-British Pottery

By Kate Anderson

The evaluation yielded a total of 141 sherds of Roman pottery, weighing c.1.72kg. All of the pottery was examined and details of fabric, form and date (where possible) were recorded, along with any other information considered important.

### 1 Assemblage Composition

The assemblage consisted primarily of small, abraded sherds, with few diagnostic sherds present. Although the pottery is not residual, there is a possibility that the sherds were redeposited, which would partly explain their size and condition.

The channel (feature **87**) contained the largest quantity of pottery, consisting of 127 sherds, weighing 1.58kg, from 20 different contexts. Context 53 contained 27 sherds in total, including one Late Iron Age flint-tempered sherd dating AD 0-50. Four different rim sherds were identified, three of which were from jars and one from a jar or bowl. One of the sherds, a Romanizing greyware beaded rim jar, had some sooting on the exterior of the sherd suggesting domestic cooking. The remaining sherds were non-diagnostic coarsewares, which included a whiteware sherd, which was possibly from a flagon.

Two relatively large sherds of Central Gaulish Samian (Lezoux micaceous) were recovered from context 52, as surface finds. The vessel form was identified as a Dragendorff 29 bowl, with leaf decoration around the body. Although the sherds did not refit they were clearly from the same vessel and both had resin residue on the sides, which would have been used as a glue to repair the vessel after breakage. This form is pre-Flavian in date, although it might be possible to trace the potter through the decoration, thus giving a more precise date. A further Samian sherd, consisting of a southern Gaulish Dragendorff 15/17 was recovered from context 54, again dating c. AD 43-68.

One body sherd from a possible butt-beaker was found in context 70 (upper fill), which had combed decoration and dates mid 1st century AD. A single body sherd from a carinated bowl came from 65 (central fill). Within this context there were also Romanizing greyware body sherds, thus this context is dated pre-Flavian. A further sherd from a carinated bowl was found in context 64 in the spit above, although these sherds do not appear to be from the same vessel.

In all, 20 sherds found in feature **87** were dated Late Iron Age or LIA/ER. Contexts 67 and 68 (lower fills) contained pottery only of these dates, suggesting that these sherds at least, were not residual.

This group included one body sherd with a post-firing perforation and heavy interior pitting from 68, while 69 contained three decorated sherds and one shoulder from a medium sized jar.

The pottery from the 20 different contexts displays very little difference in date between the fills, suggesting that deposition had taken place within a relatively short period of time. This feature also appears to be contemporary with the other features in the area.

Eight sherds of pottery were recovered from ditch **86**. These consisted primarily of coarse sandy greywares, including one sherd from a beaded-rim jar, which is heavily burnished, dating mid-late 1st century AD. There were also three decorated body sherds, one with rilling dating to the pre-Flavian period (AD 43-68) and two with grooved lines, dating mid-late 1st century AD.

Well **38** contained two sherds of pottery, weighing 40g, consisting of one Romanizing greyware body sherd and one rim sherd from an angular, beaded jar in an oxidised sandy fabric. Both of these sherds date mid-late 1st century AD.

Well **48** contained just one sherd of pottery, a Romanizing sandy greyware with rilled decoration, which dates mid-late 1st century AD.

Two sherds were recovered from ditch **6** in Trench 1, comprising one beaded rim jar sherd and one Romanizing greyware body sherd, both of which date mid-late 1<sup>st</sup> century AD.

## **2 Discussion**

Due to the general condition of the pottery, more specific dating was problematic, since so few vessels forms were identifiable. Even those that were, consisted of forms which were common throughout the Romano-British period, specifically beaded rim jars. Dating was aided by the fabrics however, which show all of the sherds are 1st century AD in date, including the Late Iron Age sherds. The Iron Age sherds could all be dated AD 0-50, with many of the Roman sherds dating to the pre-Flavian period (AD 43-68), which implies that the Iron Age material may not be residual, but is potentially contemporary (or just slightly earlier) than the Roman pottery.

With the exception of the three Samian sherds, all of the pottery is likely to have been produced locally, dominated by sandy wares, often with common mica and occasional flint, which is common in the Cambridgeshire region. The shell-tempered wares are also likely to have been produced relatively locally. None of the sherds could be sourced to specific kilns, although several are comparable to the wares produced at Greenhouse Farm (Gibson & Lucas 2002). Many were

'Romanizing' sherds, which were defined as those with a fabric and/or form that has origins in the Late Iron Age period.

The Lezoux micaceous Dr29 was perhaps the most interesting pottery from the assemblage. This is partly because this fabric and form is rarely found in the area, generally being restricted to London (Monteil pers comm.), which in itself is good evidence for direct trade with London. The vessel is also interesting because of the resin remains which show that it was regarded as being important enough to warrant repair.

Overall the pottery is typical of a Late Iron Age/Early Roman domestic assemblage comprising mostly of locally made coarseware vessels, with jars being the most common, alongside a small number of finewares. Several of the coarseware sherds had useware evidence, including exterior sooting and limescale residue on the interior of a small number of vessels.

The site has the potential to yield a significant Late Iron Age/Early Roman assemblage, which would help to answer questions about how long the site was in use and provide information about the nature and status of the site, as well as answering broader questions about the nature of the Late Iron Age/Early Roman transition.

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### Appendix 3: Post-Roman Pottery

By Carole Fletcher

Cont	Tr	Feat	Type	No	Weight (g)	Description	Date
3	1	4	ditch	4	7	3 Roman, 1 EMEMS	12th/13th
5	1	6	ditch	2	7	1 Roman, 1 EMEMS	12th/13th
8	1	9	ditch	1	12	MEMS	13th/14th
29	2	19	ditch	2	12	Colchester , MEMS	13th/14th
31	2	20	tree	1	3	EMEMS	12/13th
26	2	21	moat	5	78	Colchester , MEMS	13th/14th
34	2	21	moat	1	4	MEMS	13th/14th
32	2	23	foot	5	488	PM Redware, White Earthenware, English stoneware	19th
32	2	23	foot	3	172	White Earthenware, English stoneware, Marmalade Jar	19th
14	3	12	ditch	11	142	Roman, PM Redware bichrome, Essex PMR, Flowerpot, MEMS	17th/18th
15	3	12	ditch	3	8	2 Flowerpot, 1 EMEMS	17th +
16	3	12	ditch	2	38	Ips & Rom	9th +

Table 2: Post-Roman pottery assemblage

## Appendix 4: Ceramic Building Material

Cont	Tr	Feat	Type	Object Name	Material	Weight (g)
10	1	4	ditch	tile	Small fragment of probable red peg tile.	3
29	2	19	ditch	tile	6 fragments red peg tile 15mm thick. 1 fragment yellow peg tile.	191
31	2	20	tree	tile	1 red peg tile fragment at 12mm thick, 1 fragment yellow-white tile.	56
26	2	21	moat	tile & daub	14 red peg tile fragments 15mm thick. 2 fragments of different, paler, smoother fabrics at 12mm thick. 3 fragments yellow peg tile 10mm thick. 1 fragment fired daub.	1587
26	2	21	moat	brick & tile	1 brick fragment, 100mm wide, 45mm deep, handmade, very rough, pinky-white. 17 red peg tile fragments 10-15mm thick, some heavily burned. 3 fragments of different, paler, smoother fabrics, 2 at 12mm and 1 at 18mm thick. 1 fragment yellow peg tile 10mm thick.	1899
26	2	21	moat	tile	4 fragments tile.	25
33	2	21	moat	tile	3 fragments red peg tile 12-15mm thick, 1 fragment paler, denser, 17mm thick, possibly Roman.	303
34	2	21	moat	brick & tile	1 brick (burned) 110mm wide, 50mm deep, 8 pieces red peg tile c. 15mm thick, 2 yellow 10mm	1276
32	2	23	foot	brick	Burnt brick fragment, no measurable size.	127
32	2	23	foot	brick & tile	5 fragments red peg tile at 15mm thick, 1 red brick fragment no measurable size.	453
14	3	12	ditch	tile	1 red peg tile fragment at 14mm thick.	22
14	3	12	ditch	tile	4 red peg tile fragments at 15mm thick.	168
15	3	12	ditch	tile	1 frag red peg tile, 1 frag yellow 10mm thick.	25
46	4	48	well	tile	1 fragment Roman tile, 30mm thick.	119
49	4	87	channel	tile	1 fragment Roman tile, no measurable size.	33

Table 3: Ceramic building material

## **Appendix 5: The Faunal Remains**

By Chris Faine

### **1 Introduction**

A total of 60 "countable" bones were recovered from the Sawston Hall site with a further 30 fragments being unidentifiable to species (33% of the total sample). Fragments were obtained from a variety of features including a large channel, wells, ditches and occupation layers. The condition of the assemblage is extremely good, with the majority of fragmentation being attributed to butchery rather than any taphonomic processes.

### **2 Methodology**

All data was initially recorded using a specially written MS Access database. All elements identifiable to species and over 25% complete were included in the database. Loose teeth, caudal vertebra and ribs without proximal epiphyses were noted but not included in any quantification. Elements not identifiable to species were classed as "large/medium/small mammal" but again not included in any quantification. Initially all elements were assessed in terms of siding (where appropriate), completeness, tooth wear stages (also where applicable) and epiphyseal fusion tooth wear was assessed using Grant (1982). Completeness was assessed in terms of percentage and zones present (after Dobney & Reilly, 1988). Initially the whole identifiable assemblage was quantified in terms of number of individual fragments (NISP) and minimum numbers of individuals MNI (see Table 4).

Any instances of butchery were noted and recorded using a separate table from the main database. The type of lesion, its position, severity and direction were all noted. The presence of any further taphonomy, i.e. burning, gnawing etc was also noted. A separate table for any pathology, giving the position and type of lesion was also used.

### **3 The Assemblage**

The largest number of bones was recovered from series of contexts associated with a possible wellspring; feature **87**. It is, however, not possible to securely date these, though other finds suggest contexts ranging in date from the Late Mesolithic to the Early Romano-British period. As a whole the assemblage from this feature consists almost

entirely of butchered sheep/goat and cattle remains. All fragments are from adult animals, with 45% showing evidence of butchery.

Adjacent to feature **87** are a series of possible wells dating to the Romano-British period represented by features **41** and **38**. These contain a variety of partially butchered cattle elements, including horn cores and scapulae, in addition to a single butchered horse metapodial. At the north of feature **87**, and are ditches **83** and **86** contained a butchered cattle femur and tibia respectively. The fill of another ditch (**8**) probably earlier medieval, again contains a variety of sheep/goat and cattle remains.

Context **14**, the latest fill of a large boundary ditch (**12**), contains a single sheep rib and butchered cattle astragalus along with a number of dog remains. Three elements appear to have come from a single adult as with two 5<sup>th</sup> metatarsi from juvenile/neonatal individuals. No butchery marks were found on the dog remains.

A large moat associated with the manor house suggests two main phases of infilling, with 16th or 17th century infills (**34** & **26**) and later fills dating from the Victorian period (**32** & **33**). Fill **34** contains a femur, sacrum, lumbar vertebra and inominate of an adult pig. The first three elements show extensive new bone growth on their articular surfaces along with narrowing of the acetabulum on the inominate. They do not appear to be the result of a particular disease, and the lack of any osteitis or cloacae rule out infection of any kind. The exostoses on the joint surfaces could be indicative of many forms of arthritis, although this is also unlikely given the lack of eburnation on these surfaces. These remains are most likely those of an extremely old individual, although the exact purpose of keeping such an animal remain unclear. The later Victorian fills (**32** & **33**); contain a variety of sheep/goat, cattle and horse remains. Aside from a single horse tibia no elements from these contexts show signs of butchery.

#### **4 Discussion**

As seen in Table 4 cattle make up the largest proportion of the assemblage (47%), with sheep/goat being the next most prevalent species (23% of the identifiable assemblage). Unfortunately due to the small size of the assemblage few conclusions can be drawn. What is clear is that the majority of domestic animal remains from all areas and periods of the site largely represent butchery waste, with the exception of the later Victorian fills of the moat (**32** & **33**). The remains from these later contexts (including the 18th century ditch fill **14**), probably represent intermittent small-scale deposition; hence the presence of unbutchered horse and dog remains. It is not clear at this point whether the remains associated with the channel (feature **87**) were deposited directly (specifically) into the feature or whether they are the result of scattering from settlement further afield.



Species	NISP	NISP%	MNI	MNI%
Cattle ( <i>Bos</i> )	28	47	4	37
Sheep/Goat ( <i>Ovis/Capra</i> )	14	23	2	18
Horse ( <i>Equus caballus</i> )	7	12	2	18
Pig ( <i>Sus scrofa</i> )	6	10	1	9
Dog ( <i>Canis familiaris</i> )	5	8	2	18
<b>Total</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4: Species distribution for faunal assemblage

Species	Cranial	Axial	Ribs	Front limbs	Hind limbs
Cattle ( <i>Bos</i> )	10	1	0	7	9
Sheep/Goat ( <i>Ovis/Capra</i> )	1	5	1	2	5
Horse ( <i>Equus caballus</i> )	0	0	0	1	4
Pig ( <i>Sus scrofa</i> )	0	3	0	0	2
Dog ( <i>Canis familiaris</i> )	0	2	0	1	4
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>24</b>

Table 5: Body part distribution by species.

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## Appendix 6: The Environmental Remains

By Rachel Fosberry

### 1 Introduction and Methods

Seven bulk samples were taken from features within the evaluated areas of the site in order to assess the quality of preservation of plant remains and their potential to provide useful data as part of further archaeological investigations.

Ten litres of each sample were processed by tank 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 or other artefacts is noted in Table 6

### 2 Results

Sample Number	Context Number	Feature Type	Cereals	Weed seeds (uncharred)	Residue
1	39	Well	+	++	Bone, coal, mussel
2	42	Post hole	-	++	Glass
3	44	Well	++	++	No finds
4	82	Ditch	-	++	Bone, coal, mussel
5	53	Channel	-	++	No finds
6	63	Channel	-	+	Bone
7	85	Ditch	-	-	Bone

Table 6: Environmental Samples

#### 2.1 Plant macrofossils

Preservation is by both charring and waterlogging and is generally poor to moderate. Organic matter in the form of leaf fragments, woody plant remains and common seeds such as *Rubus* sp. (bramble), *Sambucus nigra* (elder) and *Chenopodium* sp. (goosefoot) are present in all of the samples. The presence of charcoal is rare.

## 2.2 Cereals

Cereal grains are present in small quantities in two of the samples both of which were from well deposits. Preservation is poor making identification tentative but it would seem that all the main cereal varieties are represented.

## 3 Conclusions and Recommendations

This assemblage is unusual in that it is extremely uniform in content of organic matter despite originating from a variety of different features. The samples were taken from closely spaced deposits of similar depth that would probably have remained waterlogged until fairly recently so a bias towards the survival of woody material and more robust seeds would be expected. This could account for the similarity between samples and the fact that the organic matter is poorly preserved. Bramble and elder are both plants that produce extremely durable seeds due to their tough outer coat (testa).

The plant remains recovered from the well samples are dominated by the grains of crop plants, namely cereals (wheat, barley, and oats/rye). Although they are present in small quantities, they do indicate that cereals were being locally utilised, although possibly not to any great extent. These grains, along with other dietary remains namely animal bone and mussels, are probably derived from low-density deposits of domestic refuse and/or hearth waste.

The low density of plant remains from the site is essentially uninformative, and is not considered to merit full analysis. Further analysis of the present samples is not recommended.

### Key to Table

+ = 1 – 10 specimens    ++ = 10 – 100 specimens    +++ = 100+ specimens



*Plate 1: WW2 building, looking north*



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