



CCC AFU Report Number 823

**Mill Common,
Huntingdon,
Cambridgeshire**

**Trench Evaluation and Community
Archaeology Project**

Richard Mortimer

June 2006

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With contributions by Barry John Bishop MA, Chris Faine MA, Rachel Fosberry, Scott Kenney, Pete Masters, Dennis Payne and Paul Sperry PhD
MIFA

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Summary

The Mill Common project was a community-centred excavation, forming part of the celebrations of the 800th anniversary of Huntingdon's Charter. The excavation was run over a week and two weekends in August 2005 by the Cambridgeshire County Council Archaeological Field Unit, and funded by the Godmanchester and Huntingdon Civic Society through the Local Heritage Initiative grant scheme. The excavation was designed to accommodate up to 20 volunteer excavators per day and included a daily display and information tent and guided walks for the visiting public. In all 67 volunteers took part in the excavation. Permission to excavate on the land was given by the landowners, the Huntingdon Freeman's Charity.

Mill Common is a well known and publicly used open space, with pronounced and clearly visible earthworks. One specific aim of the excavation was to investigate the earthwork bank and ditch of the scheduled monument that runs across the west end of the common (SAM CB.188) – a large linear feature known as the Bar Dyke and thought to be either medieval or Civil War in origin.

Four trenches and a single test pit were excavated. One trench (Trench 1) was positioned to investigate two of the later aspects of archaeology on the common – the dating of the ridge and furrow and the location of a WWI Royal Flying Corps training camp. Two others (Trenches 2 & 3) were placed over features identified by geophysics and a fourth (Trench 4) was excavated over the continuation of the Bar Ditch or Dyke, outside the scheduled area, where the bank had been removed in antiquity.

Archaeological features were uncovered in all trenches, including prehistoric ditches, medieval pits and ridge and furrow. The major discoveries of the dig were in Trench 4 where the Bar Dyke was shown to continue well beyond the scheduled area. The ditch, when excavated, was seen to be some 12m wide and nearly 2.5m deep. While there were few datable finds in its fills, a clay pipe bowl dated to c. 1780-1830 lay immediately beneath the upper, dumped infill of the ditch. This, and the sheer size of the ditch, suggests that this phase of it may date from the Civil War, forming part of the western defences of the town. Behind this ditch, hidden beneath its eastern edge and beneath where the bank had lain, was a smaller, earlier medieval ditch that in turn truncated another linear feature, 5m wide but only a metre deep. These features are not clearly dated but are probably medieval or earlier and may be versions of the dyke, or lane, mentioned as the Bar Dyke in medieval documents.

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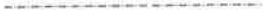










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Drawing Conventions

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 	Excavated Slot 
Top Surface 	Archaeological Deposit 
Break in Section 	Modern Deposit 
Cut Number 	Cut Number 118
Deposit Number 117	
Ordnance Datum $\overline{\times}$ 18.45m ODN	
Stone 	



1 Introduction

This project formed part of the year long celebrations of the Huntingdon Octocentenary (Huntingdon 800) which was intended to provide the local community and volunteers with an opportunity to be involved in an archaeological investigation near the historic centre of Huntingdon. Mill Common was selected partly for its location and the ease of excavation within a pasture field, but also because it provided the opportunity to answer some longstanding research questions relating to the archaeology of Huntingdon.

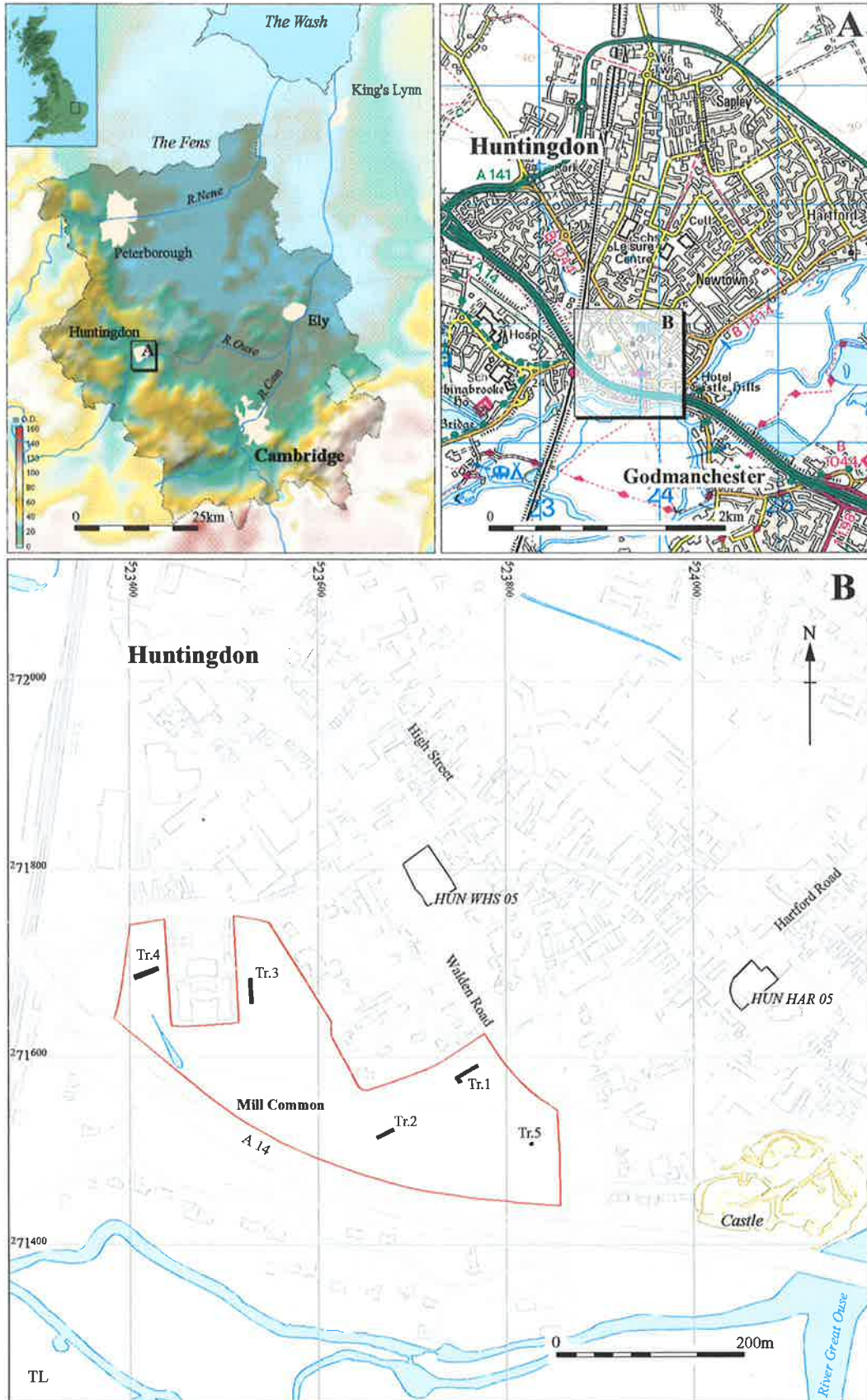
The project was run by the Godmanchester and Huntingdon Civic Society with a heritage lottery grant from the Local Heritage Initiative. Professional archaeologists from Cambridgeshire County Council's Archaeological Field Unit (CCC AFU) led the field project supported by archaeologists from Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (also Cambridgeshire County Council). Permission to excavate on the land was given by the landowners, the Huntingdon Freeman's Charity.

The project was designed primarily as an opportunity for Community Archaeology, although with serious archaeological objectives. Nine days of volunteer excavations were planned, from Saturday through to the following Sunday, with the CCC AFU staff opening the trenches the day before and backfilling them the day after.

In all, 77 people were involved in the excavation, 67 of these as volunteers. The volunteers who excavated the site were aged between 12 and 75 but those younger than 12 were also involved through finds washing. The majority of volunteers booked their place in advance and the excavation had been planned to take 15 to 20 volunteers per day over the 9 days. The project proved so popular, however, that more people arrived hoping to take part and were not turned away: numbers by the middle of the week rose to 27 volunteers. The majority were drawn from Huntingdon and surrounding towns and villages such as St Ives, Godmanchester, Hartford, Stukeley, St Neots, Earith and Somersham.

Alongside the excavation there were daily site tours and a permanent display. At these, discourse with local people was encouraged as a further means of learning about the history of the area. Talks and a finds display have recently been held in Huntingdon.

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



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Figure 1: Site location showing position of trenches (black) and research area (red)

2 Geology and Topography

The geology of the site is Oxford Clay overlying 1st Terrace river gravels, with alluvium to the south. The Common now runs broadly parallel to the Alconbury Brook which flows west to east into the River Ouse to the south, beyond the A14.

The site is located to the south and southwest of Huntingdon's Town centre, immediately adjacent to the A14 (lying to the south). It lies within the valley of the River Great Ouse outside the medieval town, as shown on John Speed's map of 1610, although the area is thought to have been within the Anglo-Saxon town defences.

Mill Common was rough open land in the 17th century, as it remains today, although there has been a history of clay and gravel extraction, much of which is highly visible: there is a large and deep quarry pit depression at the centre of the Common and further disturbance, including upcast mounds, in the southeast corner.

The Common varies in height quite dramatically. At the southeastern end, where unaffected by quarrying, the general height is around the 13.50m OD. Ground level rises up to 21.00m OD at the northwest.

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

By Scott Kenney

Although Mill Common is an area of known archaeological interest, limited investigation has occurred on the land and actual information on the archaeology of the area is patchy.

The site contains a series of earthworks of possible archaeological significance. These include ridge and furrow, headlands, other possible ridges and depressions and a large bank and ditch along the western side of the Common (SAM CB 188) known as the Bar Dyke.

This bank and ditch has been variously attributed to both the Saxon and English Civil war periods, in both cases seen as a defence. The Royal Commission on Historical Monuments map of Huntingdon (RCHME 1926, 157) and the Victoria History of the Counties of England (Page *et al* 1926, 290) both record this feature. The Ministry of Works carried out an excavation and cut a trench across this feature in the 1970s prior to its partial destruction by the construction of the A14, however no record, other than a few photographs of this investigation survives (see Plate 2).

The medieval ridge and furrow field system on Mill Common is clearly truncated in two places by later quarrying. There is historical evidence of clay quarrying on Mill Common in the 18th century (Huntingdon Common Council 1772 & 1776) and of gravel extraction on the Commons in the 19th century (order of Huntingdon Town Clerk, Dec 1840).

3.1 Prehistoric

The site is situated within the Ouse Valley, which is rich in prehistoric remains. During the Late Neolithic and Bronze Age, major ritual complexes sprang up and evolved along the course of the Ouse and, although much of the material culture does not survive, these monuments are highly visible from the air as cropmarks. These ceremonial complexes cover extensive territories and are distributed evenly across the landscape (Malim 2000).

To the west of Huntingdon lies the Late Neolithic and Early Bronze Age ceremonial complex of Brampton, where mortuary enclosures, cursus monuments and ring ditches have been identified. Brampton and its surroundings are an area rich in archaeological activity. Aerial photographic work has discovered groups of Neolithic monuments including henges, a cursus and a long mortuary enclosure, in addition to Bronze Age burial monuments and Iron Age/Romano-British field systems. Parts of this landscape have been scheduled as an ancient monument (SAM 121). In 1990 and 1991 an investigation of a portion of this monument, north of the Thrapston Road and south of Alconbury Brook, found evidence for a Neolithic mortuary enclosure situated at the end of a cursus (Malim 1990).

Excavations within the area have also recovered material relating to prehistoric ritual activity. In 1966 a Bronze Age triple ring ditch was investigated south of the Thrapston Road and a cinerary urn and 'maritime' beaker fragments were recovered from the ditches (White 1969). Subsequent work in the same area uncovered an Iron Age settlement and associated ditch systems (Malim and Mitchell 1993).

Within the Huntingdon area, an Iron Age presence has been identified. At Godmanchester a series of Early Iron Age farmsteads or hamlets have been located at intervals along the gravel terrace (Green 1977). One such farmstead has been sample excavated just east of the town (Wait 1992) whilst other evidence of Iron Age activity is known beneath modern Godmanchester in the form of roundhouses and ditched enclosures encountered below Roman occupation (Green 1977).

Investigations north of the Alconbury Brook at Huntingdon Racecourse have revealed evidence of prehistoric land clearance, settlement and ritual activity adjacent to an ancient stream channel (Macaulay 1996).

This settlement, dating to the Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age was sealed by alluvial deposits, as were the other remains discussed above.

Within Huntingdon itself, artefacts of prehistoric date have been found and reported to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER). These are largely of Neolithic and Bronze Age date. The presence of such artefacts is unsurprising given the preference of early prehistoric populations for low-lying gravels and the presence of a major Late Neolithic ceremonial complex at Rectory Farm Godmanchester, which lies about 1.5km to the south-east. This site consisted of a huge rectilinear 'horned' ditch enclosure approximately 6.3ha in area, with an internal bank and 24 posts arranged regularly along the perimeter of the enclosure. Radiocarbon dates from the site suggest a Late Neolithic date of between 5050 \pm 80BP and \pm 4850 80BP (McAvoy, in Dawson 2000). Excavations by the CCC AFU south of the enclosure indicate that the activities associated with the monument were widespread (Hinman & Kenney 1998).

Iron Age finds have been found recently within Huntingdon at Watersmeet, including Scored Ware pottery dating from the Middle to Late Iron Age (Cooper and Spoerry 2000). Bronze Age pottery and a Neolithic ditch were recorded during evaluation and excavation in 2004 and 2005 on the Walden Road/Walden house sites (Clarke 2004 and Rachel Clarke pers. comm.).

3.2 Roman

Roman Huntingdon is often seen as a suburb of Godmanchester, and/or ribbon development northwards along Ermine Street. Until very recently, evidence for Roman activity has come mostly from chance finds, and also from unpublished excavations. The results of these are detailed in Appendix 2b: in summary a Roman villa with earlier timber structures was excavated by the Ministry of Works at 'Whitehills' on a prominent rise on the south side of the Common overlooking the Alconbury Brook (Davison & Rudd unpub.), and in 1974 a Dept of the Environment excavation took place in the car park of the new District Council offices at Pathfinder House. This excavation uncovered a variety of Roman features including a gravelled road (perhaps a spur road off Ermine Street) heading in the approximate direction of the Whitehills villa.

Chance finds have indicated that roadside burial was taking place during this period alongside Ermine Street. Since this is a common Roman practice, further examples may come to light during future archaeological work in the roadside zone. In 1999 and 2003, evaluations and an excavation at Watersmeet, bordering the castle, Mill Common and Alconbury Brook, revealed a Roman presence, including a Late Roman cemetery (Nicholson. 2004).

Several authors have made attempts to locate the line of Ermine Street between Godmanchester and the northern edge of Huntingdon. The consensus is shown on Fig. 6 with Ermine Street running just to the east of Mill Common. The presence of an excavated villa to the south-west of the site, on the high riverbank, implies that further, related, remains may be present in the zone between there and the line of Ermine Street. If similar riverside occupation existed during the Roman period along the northern bank of the Great Ouse, the site would lie within this zone.

3.3 Anglo-Saxon

Although the location of the documented Danish and Late Saxon *burhs* at Huntingdon (the latter being a re-build or extension of the former) is not known, recent work has attempted to re-assess the evidence. New research indicates that the Late Saxon settlement may be located in the southern part of the area later enclosed by the medieval town ditch to the north-east and the Bar Dyke to the south-west (Spoerry 2000). There is, however, much dispute as to the location of the late 9th to early 10th century Danish *burh*.

One model, although not the most favoured, is based on the comparative situation at Stamford (Mahany 1982) and would place the burh at a defensible location some distance to the north-west of the river crossing, its western limit conforming to the boundary of the Bar Dyke (Fig. 6). The alternative and more probable model proposes that the early defended area consisted of a D-shaped enclosure around the river crossing carrying Ermine Street across the River Ouse. This interpretation suggests that the later castle may reflect the approximate location of the Danish burh with, on topographic grounds, the western burh defences perhaps coinciding with the western part of the Watersmeet site.

The process of Late Saxon urban development eventually resulted in the very substantial town documented by Domesday Book, which also refers to the twenty properties cleared to make way for the castle (Spoerry 2000). Both documentary and archaeological data suggest that the main area of immediately pre-Conquest settlement extended from the later High Street to the east, and perhaps as far as Bar Dyke at the end of Mill Common to the west. One particularly noteworthy CHER entry is that of the Late Saxon church and burial ground at Whitehills, excavated as part of the Roman villa site.

In conclusion the Common may lie within the former Danish burh, the Late Saxon town and the Edwardian burghal defences, although this is by no means certain. Late Saxon occupation has been found on Orchard Lane to the east (Oakey 1997) and Hartford Road (Mortimer forthcoming), which itself is probably earlier in date.

3.4 Norman & Medieval

By the time of Domesday survey Huntingdon contained 256 burgesses (freemen who were heads of households), two churches and a mill.

The major element in the post-Conquest medieval townscape is the castle, built in 1068 and at least partially destroyed in 1174. The imposition of the castle onto the pre-existing Saxon town necessitated the movement of the river crossing, resulting in the construction of a wooden bridge, and made it necessary to lay out a new High Street and, probably, market place. Both Ladds and Dickinson thought that the original castle curtilage was much larger than that surviving by the post-medieval period, and proposed that the area immediately west of the motte was in fact a second bailey (Ladds Archive; Dickinson 1972). The distinct rise from west to east under the houses on the street of Castle Hill, along with the substantial earthworks present on the Watersmeet site (see Appendix 2b) offer strong support for this model. The fact that the earthworks are not shown on the 1886 OS map (or the 1901 revision) but appear by 1926 may mean that this area was substantially re-modelled in the early 20th century, perhaps when the house called Watersmeet was built. If this land were not part of the castle then it may still have experienced a range of other activities in the medieval period and could have been occupied by buildings, particularly following the castle's demise as a defensive structure.

The stone-built bridge carrying Ermine Street over the River Ouse was constructed in AD 1332. It is believed that the present bridge, with six arches, replaced an earlier timber bridge (Page *et al*, 1932). The surviving structure is considered to be one of the finest of its kind in England and was constructed simultaneously at both ends by two different authorities, without much regard to direction. Fortunately, the two parts joined in the middle, but as they were not on the same axis the bridge exhibits a notable bend. Records describe a chapel on the east side that has not survived, unlike the chapel at St Ives.

St Mary's Priory was built north of the town ditch around AD 1086 and may have been located within a detached cemetery of the pre-Conquest collegiate church of St Mary (Page *et al*, 1932). The new priory was constructed shortly after 1086 by Eustace and was substantially complete by the middle of the 12th century. In 1253 the priory held the original two hides of land with the church and the priory, whose buildings included the infirmary and sacristy, both located within the monastic enclosure. These two hides of land were bounded by the King's Ditch, and the parishes of Stukeley and Hartford on the north east, by the Ouse to the south and by the High Street to the west.

The next two or three hundred years was, in general, a period of population growth and increased prosperity over much of England.

Huntingdon was a very successful town during this time. It gained prosperity by being the Shire town and by providing a bridged crossing on Ermine Street, which still formed the basis of the route later to become the Great North Road and A1. In addition Huntingdon collected tolls for all those going to St Ives fair, one of the largest gatherings in the country. By the early 14th century Huntingdon had at least thirteen churches, a priory, a friary and three hospitals; all the hallmarks of a thriving centre. The castle was partially demolished in the late 12th century and, except for the gaol, ceased to be used. It is not certain whether Huntingdon's lower political profile after this time had any economic effect on the town itself. One might expect this to be the case, although the continued growth of the town's key institutions may suggest otherwise.

The 14th century was the period during which fortunes changed for Huntingdon, an extreme example of a trend seen all over the country. Huntingdon had always gained much of its prosperity from its position as a meeting point for goods passing up the Ouse from the Fenland and the Wash and goods travelling along Ermine Street. During the late 13th and 14th centuries there are many references to disputes between the borough and landowners restricting river flow and riverine access further downstream. In addition, the construction of a bridge downstream at St Ives and the demise of St Ives' fair all weakened the local economy. These unfortunate circumstances were compounded by countrywide overpopulation and several years of failed harvests, followed by several waves of plague. It seems that there was a particularly severe visitation of the Black Death to Huntingdon itself, and the shortage of people and parlous state of local finances is regularly attested in documents in the 14th and 15th centuries. Six of the churches are not mentioned in documents after the mid-14th century and by the 16th century only four were still functioning: St Mary's, All Saints, St Benedict's and St John's. Archaeological investigations within the town suggest that occupation inside the town ditch may have been rather piecemeal after the 13th century.

Huntingdon had a small Jewry in the 12th and 13th centuries. References exist to its chest of charters and in 1279 a curious grant was made to the bailiffs and good men of Huntingdon for three years of one penny for every Jew or Jewess crossing the bridge on horseback, or a halfpenny if on foot (Page *et al* 1932). The name Temple Close may refer to the original location of such a foundation, rather than to any Templar activity in the area, for which there is no evidence. Although Temple Close or Lane has been used as a street name since at least 1572, it appears that name migrated over the centuries. It once applied to what is now St Clement's Passage, and is currently in use to the south-west of that lane.

Most of the investigations detailing the medieval finds within Huntingdon are listed in Appendix 2b.

3.5 Post-Medieval

Huntingdon suffered during the 15th-century War of the Roses and in the Civil War of the 17th century, when the castle defences were remodelled. Throughout this period 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.

It is this point in the evolution of the town that the earliest surviving maps depict. Although a map does not accompany the 1572 survey, it is possible for entries to be transcribed onto Jeffries' 1768 map of Huntingdon, or the 1752 plan of the Hospital Lands. These and John Speed's map of 1610, all show the common as a blank. Such maps would not have recorded temporary structures or quarrying for instance, and cannot therefore be taken as an indicator that the area was completely unused at this time.

3.6 Documentary Sources for the *Burh* and Town defences

By Paul Spoerry

The town defences are mentioned in several medieval documents. As Cyril Hart pointed out in his paper on the church of St Mary at Huntingdon (1966), an AD1180 entry in the cartulary of the priory of St Mary states the location of the priory and its estate of 2 hides as 'running even to the king's ditch and *Smerhill*, and all the houses within *Berneys*, and all the land which is within *Grymesdich*' (quoted in Hart 1966, 109). It is known roughly where the houses were, in the main, in the 12th century, essentially along the medieval High Street (Fig. 6). It is also known where the priory itself was and Hart states that the land referred to must lie between the High Street on its south-west side, the parish boundary on its north east side and the river to the south-east (*ibid.*). He equates *Grymesdich* with a stream to the north east of the town and by implication the king's ditch must be the town ditch.

Another record, this time a feoffment from 1400 (HRO BR Box 1-1400), describes a tenement location that abuts the king's highway which leads towards the rampart (or ditch; *fossatum*) at one end and abuts the king's highway that leads to Brampton at the other end. If the latter is George Street and the road to Hinchinbrooke and Brampton, then the only conceivable location for this *fossatum* is west of the town.

A record of 1451 (HRO BR Box 1-1451), located in St Botolph's parish, which was probably on the west side of town, identifies a close called *Paradys* lying next to land owned by Hinchinbrooke Priory and located between the King's Highway to Barredych and the road to the castle. In the survey of 1572 *Paradys* appears to be a close on the south side of Mill common, towards the west end (Dickinson 1972). These two descriptions are different, but both seem to indicate the presence of

Paradys and the Bardyche on the western side of town close to Brampton Road and part of Mill Common. In addition the 1572 survey mentions 'Bardyke' as a lane across the western part of Mill Common which is without a doubt the north north-west to south south-east earthwork still present on the Common. Latterly part of the Civil War defences but, on this evidence, before that used as a lane and even earlier it would seem it was originally the burh or borough ditch (the Bar Dyke). There is therefore the King's Ditch on the north east side of town and the Bar Dyke on the south west side. The former meets the High Street/Ermine Street at Balmshole, but where the circuit continues from there to link up with the Bar Dyke is not clear.

This may not, of course, reveal anything about the *pre-conquest* burghal defences if it is all in fact associated with defence of the medieval town during perhaps the 12th century. What it *does* indicate is that there were defences around the medieval town on the west side, and two 'ditches' were named on the eastern side of the town in the 12th century one of which, if Dr Hart is correct, is a stream at some distance to the town. In addition the name *Smerhill*, on the east side of town may be important. Hills in this location are not obvious, except for Ambury Hill which is the 19th century name for an area of slightly higher ground immediately north west of the medieval priory site. This placename may be important as it is the only 'bury' name around Huntingdon and one alternative must be that it relates to either town defences or earlier burghal fortifications, although it is perhaps more likely that it simply identifies the 'hill' element of the name. The 1572 Survey of the town and lands (Dickinson 1972) includes an entry that states a field location in this area as 'Ambry Hill or Smore Hill' (*op. cit.*, 19). Smore Hill is obviously the same as *Smerhill* in the 1180 entry (Hart, *op. cit.*) which helps to confirm Dr Hart's model for the 12th-century boundaries of the Priory lands. If Ambury Hill were a result of there being a Danish defensive work here then it is difficult to see why it should be located so far away from the river crossing and Ermine Street. This is, however, a very similar location, in relation to the river crossing, to that of the Danish burghal defences at Stamford as suggested by Mahany (1982). The difference at Stamford is, however, that the suggested burghal site continued to form part of the medieval settlement and had an effect on the street plan and town layout generally. Ambury Hill is some hundreds of metres north of the centre of medieval Huntingdon in an area that is open land in later centuries, with only the curving line of the field boundaries to suggest any earlier origin (although this is again more probably of topographic origin).

Figure 6 shows the locations of the Roman ford and road, along with the spur road running south-west that was recorded in the 1974 Pathfinder House excavations and seems to head for the corridor villa excavated at Whitehills (Davison and Rudd unpub.). A prime position for any Danish defensive work would be straddling this, presumably still used, Roman fording point on the River Ouse.

The current bridge, of late medieval date, is the second post-Conquest bridge. The earlier (timber) structure was almost certainly located about 50m further south, the evidence for this being first collected by Ladds (Page, Proby & Ladds 1932). The first bridge was presumably placed here once the castle was constructed, the location for this latter being over the pre-existing fording point. Domesday Book details the twenty urban properties demolished to make way for the castle and these most probably fronted onto the old line of Ermine street, although Ladds thought that the old High Street line may have been an creation of Edward the Elder and that these therefore fronted that road line (Ladds 1937).

4 Methodology

4.1 Aims and Objectives

The trench evaluation sought to establish the character, date, state of preservation and extent of any archaeological remains within the area. The investigation will make a full record of these finds and report to the Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER).

4.1.1 General Aims

- To provide volunteer opportunities to learn and be involved in an archaeological investigation.
- To disseminate the findings of the investigation to the public both at the event and at later opportunities.

4.1.2 Specific Archaeological Aims

- To map the majority of the site through Geophysical Survey, matching these results against earthwork surveys and to test some of these finding through physical excavation.
- To investigate selected areas of the site (based on geophysical and topographic/earthwork data) in order to increase current understanding of the archaeology of the earthworks and examine any remains sealed beneath them. This investigation was to include test pitting, trial trenches and small open areas.
- To open a trench (Trench 4) to the northwest of the scheduled area of the Bar Dyke bank and ditch in an attempt to date and record this feature accurately and ascertain its heritage.
- The northeast of the site was to be investigated to determine if any remains of the WWI Training Camp survived (Trench 1).

- Selected palaeoenvironmental sampling of buried deposits were to be carried out to provide supporting information for the site.
- To ensure all records were accurately maintained and archived, with data given to CHER office.

4.2 Documentary Study

Background research has been undertaken by Scott Kenney of the AFU and is presented above. In addition to published literature consulted, other sources consulted are:

Cambridgeshire Historic Environment Record (CHER)
Cambridgeshire & Huntingdon Record Offices (CRO; HRO)
Cambridge University Collection of Air Photographs (CUCAP)

4.3 Aerial Photographs

The Common has lain under pasture since at least the 17th century and there are, therefore, no cropmarks to be investigated. Parch marks may be present, assuming the existence of solid, immediately sub-surface features such as walls or cobbled/gravel surfaces.

4.4 Geophysical Survey

Selected geophysical investigations were undertaken on c. 3 ha of the site using a Gradiometer. This work was conducted by PC Geophysics and took place in late July 2005. Further geophysical survey work was also carried out during the fieldwork stage of the project in order to provide experience of the technique to volunteers.

English Heritage Inspector of Ancient Monuments, Philip Walker, had granted Section 42 permission to extend the geophysical survey over the SAM, and a copy of this report will be sent to them (the full geophysics report is presented in Appendix 3).

4.5 Trial Trenching & Test Pitting

Machine excavation was carried out under constant archaeological supervision.

Trial trenches were excavated to the depth of geological horizons, or to the upper interface of archaeological features or deposits, dependent on the excavation strategy. A 360 mechanical excavator using a 1.8m wide flat bladed ditching bucket was used to open all trenches (with the exception of Trench 5). A plan of the proposed trenching strategy was agreed with the Cambridgeshire Archaeology Planning and Countryside Advice (CAPCA) before trenching began.

Exposed surfaces within the trenches were cleaned by trowel and hoe as necessary in order to clarify located features and deposits.

Spoil, exposed surfaces and features were scanned both visually and with a metal detector to aid recovery of artefacts. All metal-detected and hand-collected finds were retained for inspection, other than those which were clearly modern.

4.6 Recording and Sampling

Records comprise survey, drawn, written and photographic data. The drawn record comprises an initial plan (scale 1:50) for each trench. Thereafter, single context and/or excavated feature plans were produced for exposed and excavated features where relevant. Trenches and features were tied in to the OS grid. Sections were drawn at 1:10 or 1:20 as appropriate. The written record comprises context descriptions on CCC AFU pro-forma context sheets. The photographic record comprises monochrome and colour slides supplemented by digital photographs.

All features were investigated and recorded to provide an accurate evaluation of archaeological potential whilst at the same time minimising disturbance to surrounding archaeological structures, features and deposits.

Bulk samples were taken from a variety of feature fills and layers in Trenches 2, 3 and 4 to test for the presence and potential of micro- and macro-botanical environmental indicators. The result of the analysis are incorporated in this report and appear in full in Appendix 7.2.

Access to the excavations was intentionally easy and public. The only problems with 'interference' came from over-friendly and curious cattle during the machining stage (see Plate 3). After repeated attempts to keep the herd from entering newly excavated trenches (including ring-fencing Trench 3 with barbed wire), it was decided to remove the cattle completely from the area for the duration of the excavation.

The weather conditions varied greatly from torrential and freezing rain to intense and burning sunshine (see Plates 4 & 5). Neither of these extremes lasted for sufficient time to make excavation conditions unworkable and very little time was lost to poor weather.

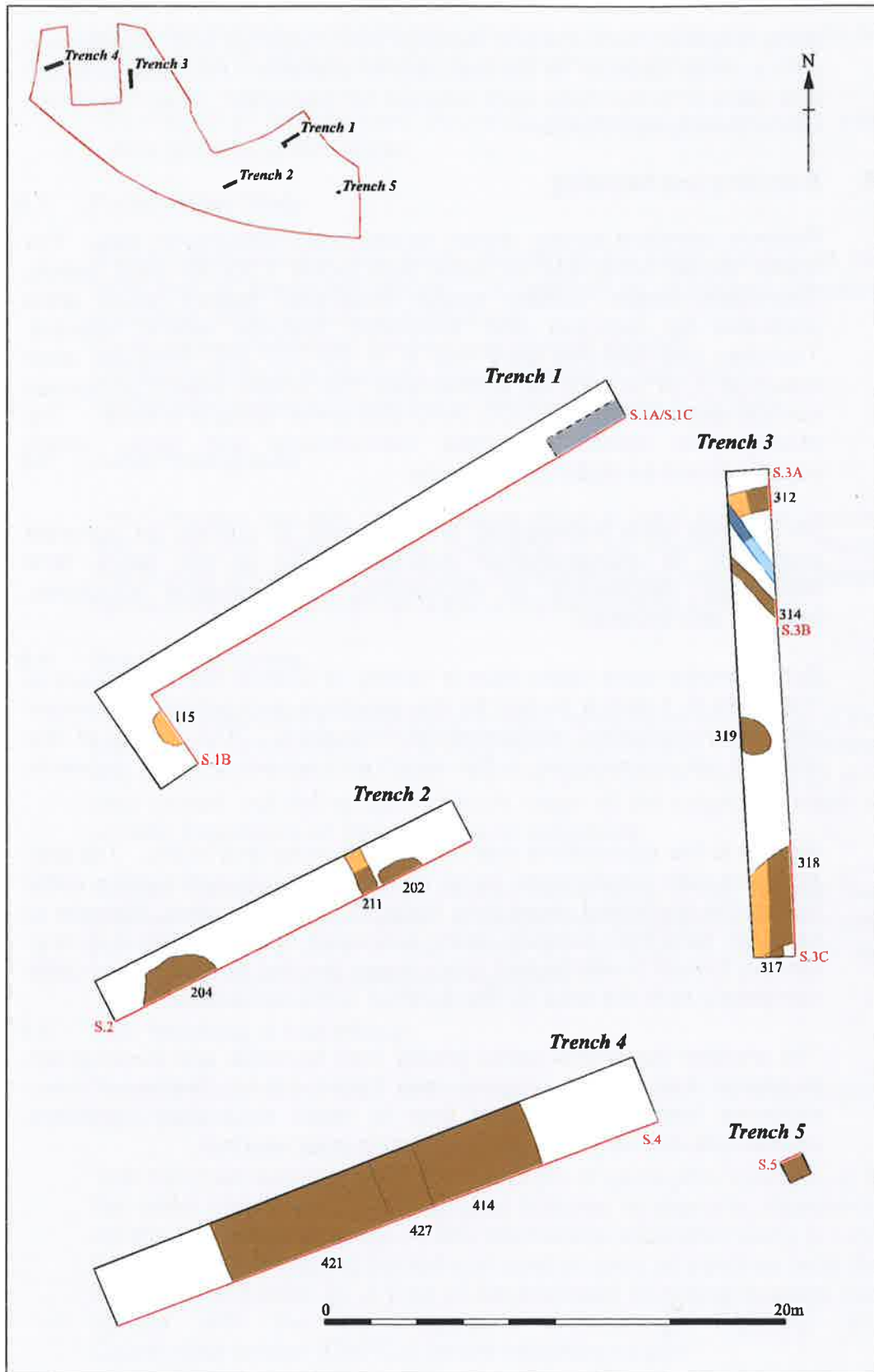


Figure 2: Trench plans

5 Results

Four trenches and a single test pit were excavated (see Figs. 1 & 2). Trench 1 was located towards the far northeastern corner of the Common, close to the Bus Station, to investigate two of the later aspects of archaeology on the common – the dating of the ridge and furrow and the location of a WWI Royal Flying Corps training camp known to have been present on the site in 1917-18. Trench 2 was set out towards the A14 at the south of the site, over an upstanding medieval headland to investigate the origins of the ridge and furrow system that covers large parts of the site. Trench 3 was placed over features identified by geophysics immediately east of the old County Hospital (see Fig. 5), and Trench 4 was excavated over the continuation of the Bar Ditch, to the north of the scheduled area, where the bank had been removed in antiquity. All these trenches were opened by mechanical excavator to the level at which significant archaeological remains were encountered. Trench 5 was hand-excavated at the east of the common into an area of quarry-related disturbance.

Trenches 1 –3 were 1.80m wide and totalled 68m in length; Trench 4 was 25m long and 3m wide; Trench 5 was 1 metre square. The total area exposed by the trenches was just under 200 square metres.

5.1 Trench 1 (Figs 2, 3 & 4)

Trench 1 was aligned east-northeast to west-southwest and was 26m long with a 4m extension to the south at the western end. Only the topsoil, which extended to a depth of between 20 and 40cm, was removed by machine. At this level the undulations of the medieval ridge and furrow strip fields became more pronounced. At the interface of the relatively loose and shallow topsoil with the denser medieval subsoil was a 'worm-sorted' layer packed with finds material. This level, the base of the topsoil, was left in place for hand-excavation and the underlying ridge and furrow was recorded in profile (see Fig 4: Section 1a).

There were two main aims of this trench; to hand excavate and record the ridge and furrow in an attempt to establish its origin and the length of time it remained under plough; and to examine the area of the WWI camp to establish whether sub-surface evidence remained.

At the western end of the trench an extension was machine-excavated to the level of the underlying natural subsoil. The principal aims of this extension were to record the depth of the medieval ploughsoil and to ascertain whether earlier features had been sealed by it (see Fig 3: Section 1b).

Topsoil: Contexts 100, 102, 104, 105, 107, 109

A dark brown sandy silt, loose, with occasional inclusions (small stones, pottery sherds, bone etc). By far the majority of the inclusions had become worm-sorted into a dense lens at the base of the topsoil, where it met the more compact medieval subsoil.

The finds assemblage from the topsoil of this trench is the largest by far of any context on site. It contains 48% by weight of the entire pottery assemblage from the excavation - 63% of the pottery assemblage by number. This is partly due to the intensity with which this context was excavated, as a direct result of the obvious richness of the context. While the bulk of the pottery assemblage dates to the period 1150-1350 it contains an element that is considerably more recent and principally 19th century. Included in this later material are clay tobacco pipes, fragments of glass bottles, and occasional 20th-century pieces such as bakelite. A small, handmade bone domino was also recovered and is possible evidence of the WWI Flying Corps training camp.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	2973	705	Mostly 12th-14th C
Bone	1708		
CBM	1197		Some discarded
Glass	6		
Slag	90		
Shell	49		
Tobacco pipe	14		
Flint	9	3	Flakes
Other		1	Bone domino

Subsoil: Contexts 101, 103, 106, 110, 111

A compact, dark orange-brown sandy clay silt with common inclusions, mostly small sub-angular and rounded stones. Very little of this context was hand-excavated, the majority of the finds were collected from cleaning the upper part of the context (where they may have been intrusive from the topsoil above) or from cleaning the sections in the trench extension (see Section 1b). The finds assemblage includes a well-preserved smithing hearth bottom (SHB) and a possible Roman tessera made of sandstone.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	216	38	12th-14th C
Bone	53		
Slag	164		Inc. SHB
Other		1	Stone tessera

Pit 115, fills 112, 108

A broad, shallow pit 2.70m wide and a maximum of 0.45m deep. Seen in section, it extended approximately 1.00m into the trench. The pit cuts into the subsoil of one of the medieval field ridges and into the natural silty gravel beneath, but only to a depth of c. 15cm. Clearly not intended as a gravel extraction pit (unlike those in Trench 2, see below), the fill contained few finds and had not been infilled with refuse. It is possible that it represents a tree throw rather than a pit, the tree standing in the period after ploughing had ceased in the area, and the few finds are residual from the topsoil and subsoil around. All of the area of the feature available was excavated.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	24	9	12th-14th C
Bone	102		Pig

During the backfilling of the trenches, on the day after the final day on site, a request was made by the Environmental Health Department of Huntingdon District Council to excavate a trench to the water table in order to ascertain if there was any petrol contamination in the area. The trench was dug at the eastern end of Trench 1, through the ridge and furrow, and reached a depth of 3m without locating the water table. The trench had cut across the width of a wide, deep ditch, cut **117**, that was sealed beneath the ridge and furrow and had therefore not been seen. This feature was then rapidly recorded (see Fig 3: Section 1c).

Ditch **117**, fills 118-124

The ditch was 2.50m deep with a broad V-shaped profile and would be approximately 4.00m wide, though only 2.70m of the width, and neither edge, was exposed in the trench. The trench was very narrow and the fill sequence could not be clearly seen, however, there appeared to be a good depth (c. 0.90m) of ditch silting and weathered infill at the base (123, 124) followed by c. 0.80m of what may have been redeposited bank material (120, 122). There was a large amount of charcoal and burnt clay at and towards the base of the fill (121) and in a layer immediately above it (119). The finds assemblage from the feature was collected from the machine spoil heap and may have included finds from the basal silting, upper backfill, medieval ploughsoil and topsoil, and as such cannot be used with any accuracy to date either the use or infilling of the ditch. However, many of the pottery sherds recovered were in a fresh, unabraded condition and can therefore be assumed to have come from the ditch itself rather than the ploughsoil. The majority of these sherds date from the mid 12th to mid 14th centuries.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	338	60	12th-14th C
Bone	159		Discarded
Shell	12		
Other	39		Lava quern

5.2 Trench 2 (Figs 2 & 4)

Trench 2 was aligned east-northeast to west-southwest and was 17m long. The trench was sited in the centre of the Common across an earthwork headland where the strip fields lay perpendicular to each other. The trench was machine-excavated to a depth of approximately 0.90m. At the base of the trench were three archaeological features. A single, shallow ditch ran up the western side of the headland; there was a deep pit immediately to the west of this, and a broad shallow pit lay on the eastern side of the headland.

Topsoil: Context 200

A dark brown sandy silt, loose, with occasional inclusions (small stones, pottery sherds, bone etc). Average depth 0.25m.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	510	9	13th C
Bone	790		

Subsoil: Context 201

A compact, dark orange-brown sandy clay silt with common inclusions, mostly small sub-angular and rounded stones. Very little of the context was hand-excavated, the finds assemblage was collected during machining, when cleaning the base of the trench and from cleaning the sections (Section 2). The medieval subsoil, forming the headland, was at its deepest in this trench at an average of 0.60m deep.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	210	49	Mostly 12th-14th C
Bone	970		
CBM	140		tile
Shell	3		
Flint	17	5	2 flakes, 1 blade, 1 chunk, 1 burnt
Other			Cu-alloy coin & key

Pit 202, fills 203, 216

A deep, almost vertical-sided, flat-bottomed pit or trench that appeared to be sealed by the subsoil. Only 0.25m of the feature extended into the trench and its full dimensions are not known. The pit was 1.45m wide and 1.15m deep from the level of the natural gravel subsoil. The fills were relatively homogenous yellow-brown clay silt with some small gravel inclusions. The purpose of the feature is unclear but it is perhaps most likely to be a strip quarry, dug alongside the headland at the edge of the strip fields. The small pottery assemblage dates to the 12th century. All of the area of the feature available was excavated. Finds included a small copper alloy ring, 23mm diameter, probably a small harness fitting.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	44	10	12th C
Bone	765		Cattle (1 bird)
Flint	20	2	Flakes
Other			Cu-alloy harness fitting

Pit 204, fills 205, 213

A large, shallow pit extending into the trench a maximum of 1.35m from the northern edge. The pit was 3.50m wide and a maximum of 0.35m deep from the level of the natural gravel subsoil. The fill was a compact mid brown clay silt with gravel inclusions. All of the area of the feature available was excavated.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	470	66	12th C
Bone	596		Cattle, sheep, pig, bird
CBM	168		Brick & tile
Flint	8	3	2 flakes, 1 chunk

Ditch 211, Fill 212

A narrow, shallow ditch aligned northwest to southeast parallel to and along one side of the headland. This area of the trench was badly affected by burrows and the level that the ditch was cut from could not be ascertained. As a result of the intensity of

the burrows some of the finds material in this feature and in the neighbouring pit (202) could be intrusive. Half of the area of the feature available was excavated.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	28	1	11th C
Bone	53		Cattle
Shell	8		

5.3 Trench 3 (Figs 2 & 3)

Trench 3 was aligned north to south and was 21m in length. It was sited over geophysical anomalies that were thought to be potential prehistoric features (Fig. 5). This part of the common lies on a high, flat plateau looking over the river valley to the south. The trench was up to 0.75m deep and four archaeological features were recorded, along with a deep, modern land drain.

Topsoil: Contexts 300, 301, 309

A dark grey-brown sandy loam with few fine and rare large gravel inclusions. Overall depth 0.35 – 0.40m.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	81	15	12th-18th C
Bone	84		
CBM			
Glass			
Slag	11		
Shell	7		
Tobacco pipe	9	1	Bowl
Flint	3	1	Retouched

Subsoil: Context 302

A mid orange-brown, stony sandy silt with frequent fine gravels and occasional larger pebbles. Depth 0.20 – 0.30m. Very little finds material was recovered from the subsoil in this trench.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	3	1	Roman
Bone	118		
Flint	10	1	Flake
Shell	4		

Ditch 312, Fill 304

Ditch aligned east-northeast to west-southwest, c. 0.65m wide and 0.35m deep with near-vertical sides and a rounded base. The fill, apparently sealed by subsoil 302, was a mid grey-brown sandy silt with clay and moderate small to medium gravel inclusions. Half of the area of the feature available was excavated. Apart from the finds listed below, two small fragments of brick and fired clay were recovered, both weighed less than a gram and both were probably intrusive.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Bone	225		Cattle
2	10		Flakes

Ditch 314, Fill 306

Ditch aligned northwest to southeast, vertical-sided, flat bottomed, 0.30-0.35m wide and up to 0.40m deep. The fill, sealed by subsoil 302, was a yellow-brown silty clay with occasional small gravel inclusions. All of the area of the feature available was excavated. No datable finds material was recovered.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Bone	108		Cattle, sheep, pig

Tree Throw 318, Fills 303, 315

A large, feature that crossed the trench from approximately southwest to northeast at the south of the trench. It was c. 4.20m wide and a maximum of 0.65m deep from the trench surface. The base of the feature undulated considerably and was clearly of natural origin. The upper fill, 303, was part of the overlying subsoil 302 which therefore both sealed and infilled the feature. The lower fill, 315, was similar but paler, more yellow-brown, and grittier. Half of the area of the feature available was excavated. Dateable, 11th to 12th century pottery was recovered from both fills.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	21	6	11th-12th C
Bone	1038		Cattle, horse, sheep, bird, rabbit
CBM	195	1	Roman
Flint	16	3	2 Flakes, 1 blade
Shell	7		
Other	33		Lava quern

Possible pit 319

At the western edge of the trench, was a shallow, sub-oval feature, 1.50m x 1.15m and a maximum of 0.23m deep. Possibly the base of a pit, or part of a tree throw, no datable material was recovered. All of the area of the feature available was excavated.

5.4 Trench 4 (Figs 2 & 4)

Trench 4 was aligned east-northeast to west-southwest and was 25m long. It was set out perpendicular to the line of the scheduled earthwork in an area where the bank had clearly been levelled but the hollow of the ditch was clearly visible. Since the ditch was clearly very broad, and of unknown depth, the trench was cut 3.00m wide to enable the excavation of the ditch to be stepped if necessary for safety reasons. The trench was initially machine-excavated to a depth of 0.30m at the west and east, beyond the ditch hollow, and to a maximum of 0.90m in the centre of the ditch itself. The upper, machine-removed, ditch fill was a dumped infilling, possibly the remains of the redeposited bank. Machine excavation ceased at the level of the upper silted ditch fill with hand excavation continuing from

there. Three features were recorded as part of the ditch and bank sequence; an early medieval ditch or hollow-way, a possible medieval ditch and a large, probably post-medieval ditch.

Topsoil: Contexts 400, 403

A blackish-brown sandy silt with very few inclusions, fairly even depth of 0.25m throughout. There was a band of worm-sorted gravel c. 0.03m deep at the base of the topsoil.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	9	4	19th C

Subsoil: Contexts 401, 402, 404

There was very little subsoil in the trench. To the eastern side of the ditch subsoil survived to between 0.16 and 0.24m in depth and was a mid orange-brown, stony sandy silt with some fine gravels and occasional larger pebbles. As this lay immediately alongside the ditch, and occupied the location of the upstanding bank further south, it is unclear whether this soil represents original subsoil or bank material. Beneath this was a second worm-sorted gravel lens c. 0.03m deep. Within this two sherds of 12th-13th century pottery were found. To the western side of the ditch there was no subsoil.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	22	3	12th-13th C
CBM	38		tile
Tobacco pipe	15		Inc part bowl

Ditch/Trackway **414**, Fills 411, 413, 417

A wide, flat-bottomed, shallow cut, the first feature in the sequence. 4.80m wide at the top (though truncated along its eastern edge), 3.00m wide at the base and c. 1.00m deep from the present level of the subsoil. The basal fill (413) was a mix of dark silt in a compact orange-brown sandy clay matrix. Along the eastern edge were slumps of weathered redeposited natural sandy clays and gravels (417) that may have come from an original bank. Infilling the bulk of the feature was a mixed, stony orange brown sandy clay that may represent mixed upcast from the excavation of ditch **427**. Two small sherds of pottery were recovered from the feature; a handmade Saxon sherd from fill 417 and an abraded, possibly intrusive 12th-13th century sherd of Grimston ware from the upper part of 411.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	6	2	Saxon & 12th-13th C

Ditch **427**, Fills 416, 423, 426

A large ditch of unknown size, heavily truncated to the west by the larger ditch **421**. The ditch would have been a minimum of 4.00m wide and survived to 1.70m deep from the subsoil level. A good depth of the basal fill survived, 416, a dense grey (stained brown) redeposited natural clay with occasional gravels. Above this was a lens of natural gravel weathering, and the uppermost surviving fill, 426, was a mixed clayey sand deposit, again probably comprised principally of bank slip and

weathering. A single fresh sherd of pottery (a Brill mug handle dating to 1300 – 1450) was recovered from the lower fill.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	47	1	14th-15th C

Ditch **421** Fills 408-410, 412, 415, 418, 419, 420, 422

A very wide ditch with a rounded base that all but completely truncated ditch **427** to the east. It was 12.50m wide at the top, roughly 2.20m at the base and 2.20m deep from natural subsoil level. The bottom 1.00m of the fill comprised a succession of ditch silts, getting progressively more waterlogged towards the base. The upper silt (415) was a compact mid-dark grey organic clay silt and overlay an extensive but thin gravel slip (422). This in turn sealed a thick band of mixed sand, clay and gravel, 418/419, above the basal silts 420, a dense, organic, grey silty clay with some gravel. The upper ditch fills 408-410 were a compact mid brown sandy silt with frequent gravel inclusions, mostly homogenous but with gravel slip at the western edge. They appeared to be the result of deliberate infilling, perhaps linked to the levelling of the bank at the east.

Very few datable finds were recovered from the feature. Silt fills 418/419 produced a number of large horse bones (see Appendix 7a) and a few fragments of roof tile were found throughout. The only clearly datable find came from the top of the upper silt fill 415, a clay tobacco pipe bowl, in good condition and dated to 1800-1830.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Bone	5459		Mostly horse, some cattle and sheep
CBM	622		Tile
Tobacco pipe	17		Inc bowl 1800-30

5.5 Trench 5 (Figs 2 & 3)

Trench 5 was a 1m x 1m square test pit hand dug through the area of modern quarrying at the southeast of the common. It reached a maximum of 1.10m deep at which point excavation ceased. The test pit was designed to garner a sufficient finds assemblage from the backfill of the quarry to date its infilling and to investigate whether more than one episode of quarrying could be identified.

Topsoil: Contexts 500, 501

A dark grey-brown sandy silt up to 0.30m deep

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	181	30	13th, 17th & 20th C
CBM	978		Brick & tile
Glass	37		
Slag	32		
Tobacco pipe	11		Inc part decorated bowl

Quarry **509**: Contexts 502, 503, 504, 505, 506, 507

The depth and area of this quarry is unknown but the total area covered by quarrying in this part of the common is very large. This series of fills represents a small sample of the many layers of infilling within the larger quarry area consisting of a mix of silty

sands, sandy clays and clay silts with varying quantities of domestic refuse intermixed. An area of quarrying such as this so close to the town would have become a general rubbish tip.

Material	Weight (g)	Qty (no.)	comments
Pottery	990	108	13th, 17th & 20th C
Bone	146		Rabbit, cattle, sheep, pig
CBM	2180		
Glass	805		Inc window glass
Tobacco pipe	27		Inc part decorated bowl
Shell	23		
Flint	3	3	2 blades, 1 retouched piece
Other	301		Stone & slate roof tiles

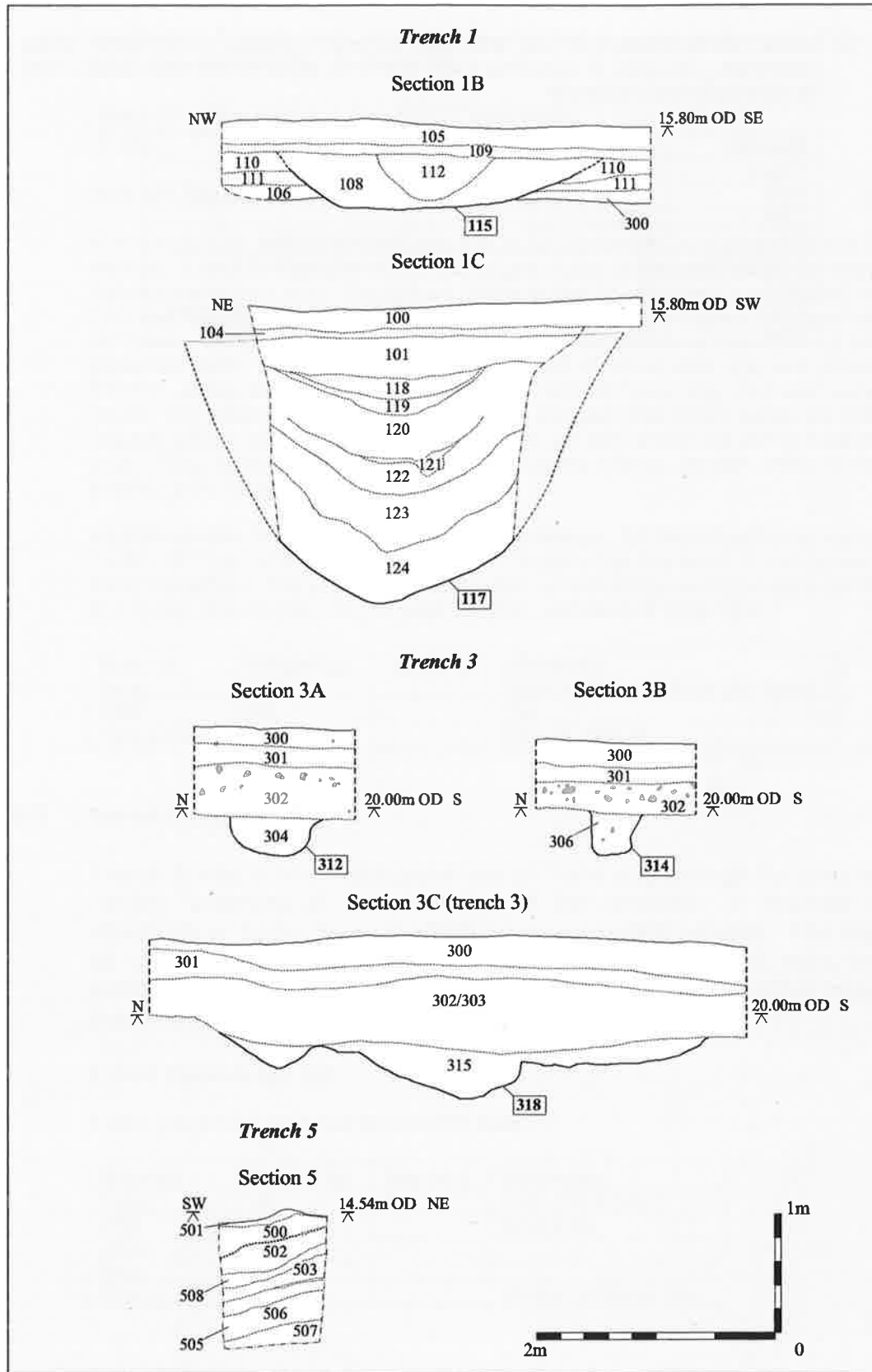


Figure 3: Sections of Trenches 1, 3 and 5.

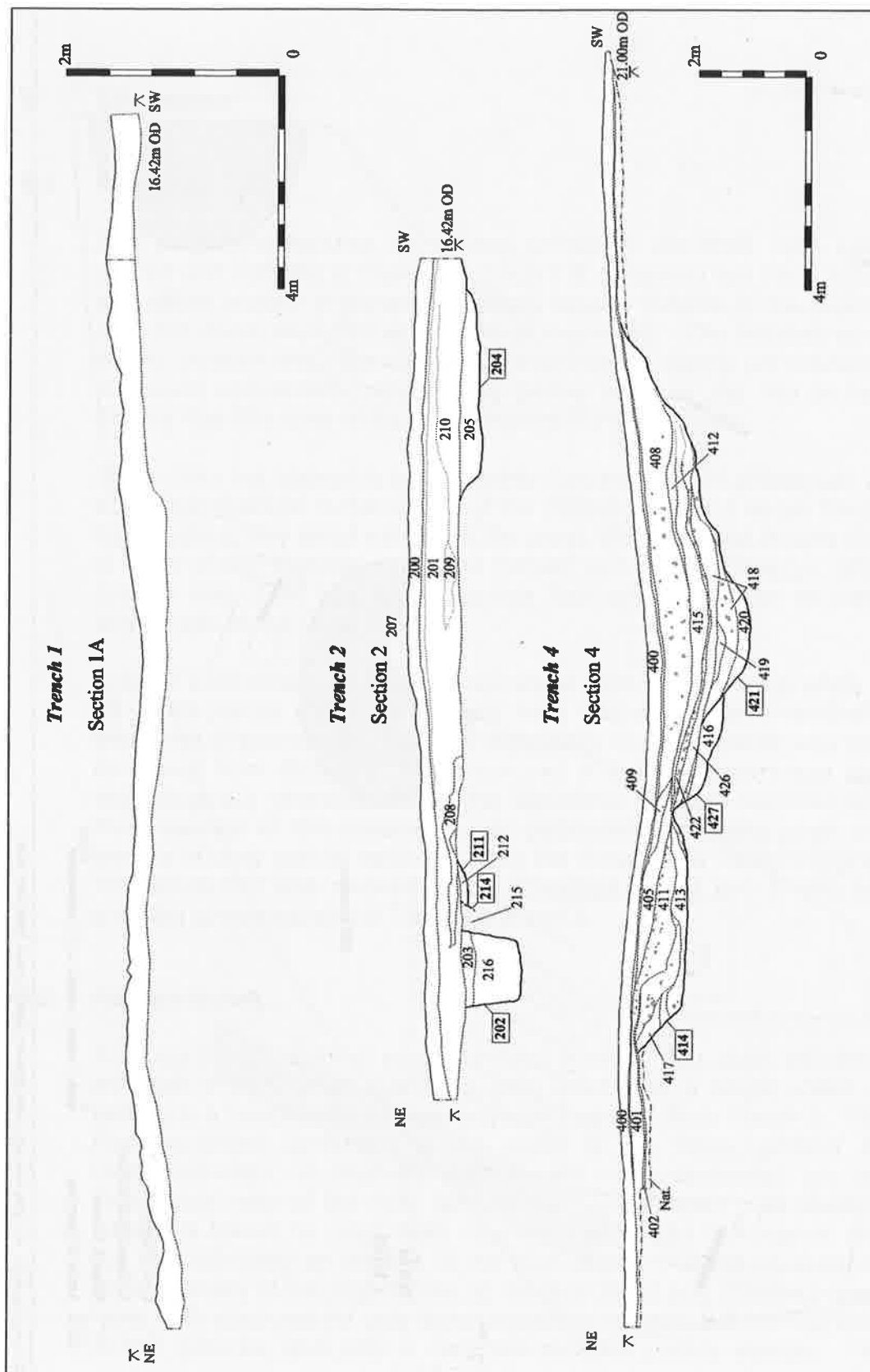
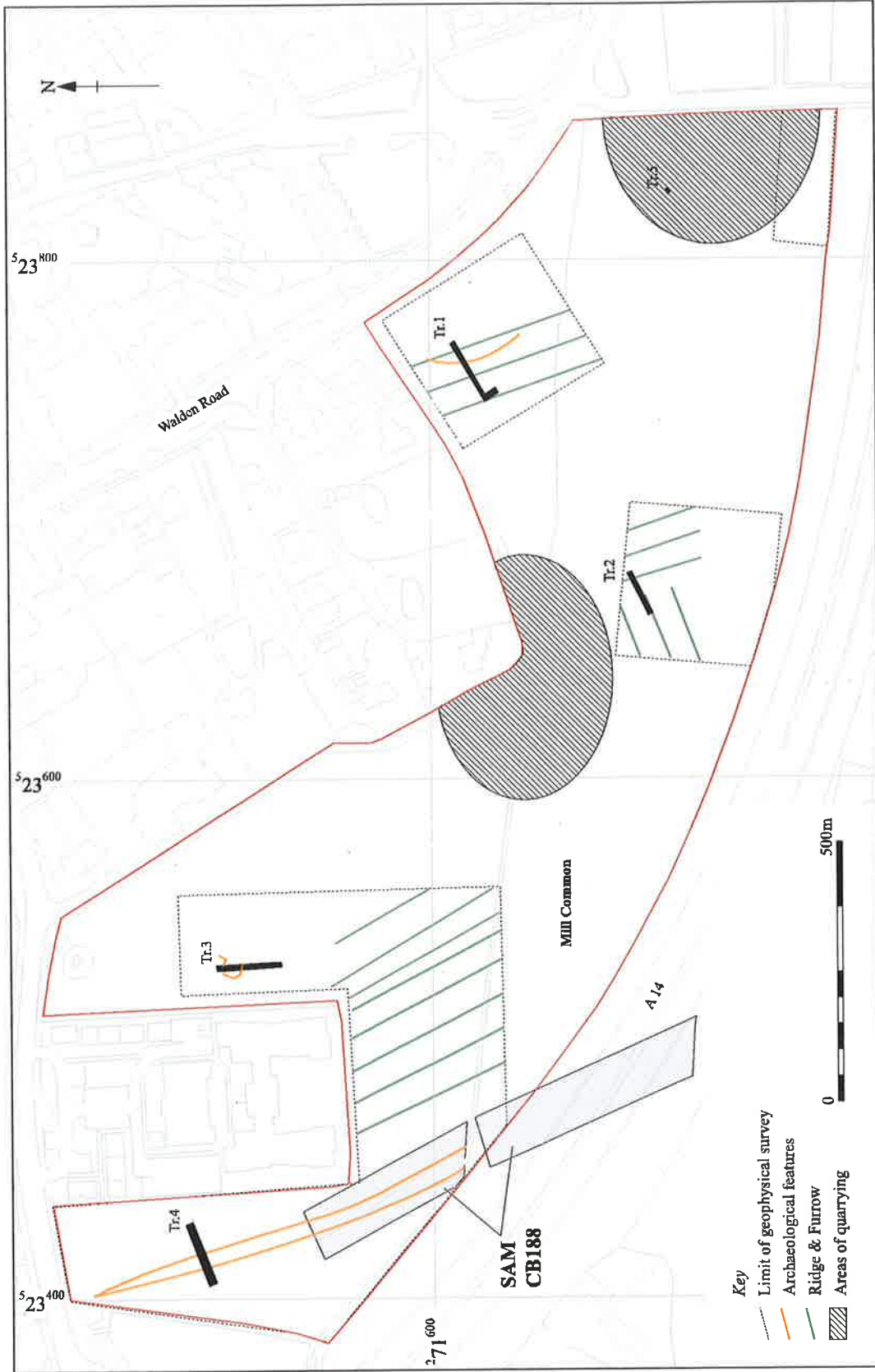


Figure 4: Sections of Trenches 1, 2 and 4.



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Figure 5: Geophysics areas, trenches and principal archaeological features

6 Discussion

6.1 Prehistoric

Two prehistoric features have been tentatively identified: both were ditches and both lay in Trench 3. Ditch 312 contained two thick, squat and rather crudely produced flint flakes broadly datable to the Bronze Age, but these were the only artefacts recovered. The features were sealed beneath the ridge and furrow and thus are clearly pre-medieval but could conceivably date to any period between the mid to late Bronze Age (the date of the flints) and the Roman period.

There does not appear to be any great concentration of artefactual, or ecofactual material in the vicinity of the ditches (though a single trench represents a very small sample of the area). If Bronze Age in date one or other of the features may have formed part of a much larger ditch system, one of the Middle Bronze Age 'field systems' known to cover large areas of the Ouse environs.

A small assemblage of flint was recovered from the site as a whole – 22 struck pieces and 1 burnt – and most had clearly been residually deposited (Appendix 5). The only potentially *in situ* material was that recovered from ditch 312. The larger part of the flint assemblage was technologically characteristic of the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic and the presence of this material is not particularly surprising given the density of early activity recorded along the Great Ouse Valley margins. The struck flint was recovered from Trenches 1, 2, 3 and 5, with the greatest concentrations in Trenches 2 and 3.

6.2 Romano-British

Romano-British material was recovered from all four main trenches, although in very small quantities, little more than a single sherd of pottery to a trench, with a single large tile fragment from Trench 3. The Romano-British landscape to the south of the Ouse, centred on Godmanchester, is relatively well known - the landscape on the Huntingdon side of the river far less so. The Roman road (Ermine Street) is known to cross from Godmanchester into Huntingdon and run approximately on the line of the High Street. Recent excavations on both sides of the High Street at Hartford Road and Walden House have both encountered very dense medieval remains but no Romano-British features, and only a very few abraded pottery sherds. The same situation is evident at Mill Common.

However, an archaeological investigation conducted at Pathfinder House in the early 1970's – in the area between Mill Common and the

Hartford Road site - identified a Roman road presumably branching off the main north to south road and heading west-southwest to the White Hills Villa on the north bank of the Ouse. An recent evaluation (in May 2006) in the car park of Pathfinder House appears to have confirmed the presence of this road and to have identified Romano-British settlement features in the area to the north of it. This settlement does not appear to be large or particularly dense and may represent a farm or small roadside development (Chris Turner pers. comm.).

6.3 Saxon/Early Medieval

The early medieval presence on the site is slight but of potentially great interest. Three features have tentatively been identified as being of Late Saxon origin; ditch **211** in Trench 2, tree throw **318** in Trench 3 and the possible sunken lane **414** in Trench 4.

The earliest feature in the sequence in Trench 4 appears to have been a sunken lane rather than a ditch. It was shallow and the base is flat and wide. The basal fill was churned and mixed and two broad cart ruts were possibly visible within it. The feature is dated partly by stratigraphy – it is truncated by medieval ditch **427** – and partly by two pottery sherds found within it. At the eastern edge a single hand-made Middle Saxon sherd was recovered, and in the upper dumped infilling of the feature was a single medieval Grimston ware sherd.

The alignment of this feature was followed by the ditch that truncated its western side, as well as by the larger post-medieval bank and ditch that forms the visible part of the scheduled monument. The medieval ridge and furrow layout inside the monument, to the east, also follows this alignment. As can now be stated with some certainty that the visible bank and ditch is post-medieval it is clear that it follows the line of the ridge and furrow, and not *vice versa*. The ridge and furrow was therefore either set out in relation to the earlier feature (the sunken lane **414**) or all three features followed the alignment of the ridge and furrow.

Dating the sunken lane is problematical. The ditch that truncated it, **427**, contained fresh 14th-century pottery towards its base perhaps indicating a 13th/14th century origin at the latest. This dating accords with the single sherd found within the upper fill of the lane, an abraded 12th- or 13th-century sherd, suggesting that the lane was infilled when the ditch was cut. The only other dating for the feature is the sherd of handmade Middle Saxon pottery in the slump along the edge. All that can be said with some certainty is that the date for the cutting of the lane would be somewhere between the 7th and the 13th centuries.

The feature and the ridge and furrow, however, are almost certainly interlinked, with one following the alignment of the other, and it is

possible at least to suggest some dating for the establishment of the latter.

Two features on the site contained purely Late Saxon pottery assemblages, although admittedly small ones, and both these features may be seen to be linked to the setting out of the ridge and furrow. In Trench 2 shallow ditch **211** contained a single, large and unabraded St Neots ware rim sherd, datable to c. 900-1050. This ditch ran parallel to and beneath the headland and may have functioned as a setting out ditch for the original strip fields, marking the point at which the strips change direction from west-east to north-south. In Trench 3, the large tree throw **318** contained five sherds of St Neots ware and one of Stamford ware, an assemblage not particularly large but consistently Late Saxon/ Saxo-Norman in date, c. 900-1150. The tree throw could be linked to clearance prior to the setting out of the strip fields. These two pieces of evidence are far from conclusive but may suggest a date for the setting out of the 'medieval' fields during the 10th or 11th centuries.

The main period of manuring of the strip fields was the 12th and 13th centuries, judging by the pottery assemblages recovered from the topsoil and subsoil contexts. There is however, a significant earlier element within these assemblages, principally of St Neots ware but including Thetford and Stamford ware.

6.4 Medieval

The strip fields and headlands are the most prominent archaeological features dating to the medieval period, the 12th and 13th centuries seeing the peak of the ploughing, or at least of manuring, activity. In two of the trenches (Trenches 1 and 2) quarry pits were recorded, cutting either into furrows (Trench 1) or down either side of a headland (Trench 2). There are possibly two episodes of quarrying or pitting here; those in Trench 2, up against the headland, are tightly datable to the 12th century (or at least the material that they have been backfilled with dates to the 12th century), while that in Trench 1, cutting through a furrow may be slightly later, datable more loosely to the 12th to 14th centuries. It is possible that those against the headland (quarrying in unploughed land along either side of what would have been a field road or track) were dug during the life of the ploughed field, while the pit that cut the furrow in Trench 1 was dug after the abandonment of the ploughed field, when the land had returned to pasture.

The abandonment of ploughland all over England is seen as a result of the plagues, droughts and diseases of the 14th century and of the desertion of marginal land in a period of rapid socio-economic change. By the end of the 14th century the population had fallen by up to a half and there were both fewer people to feed and fewer to work the land. The more marginal ploughland (in the sense of less productive rather

than 'land at the margins') was returned to pasture, and this appears to have been the fate of the fields at Mill Common. There is almost no datable material in the topsoil or subsoil between the 14th and 19th centuries, suggesting that manuring, and therefore ploughing had ceased by the 14th century.

Two large ditches dating to this period were also recorded: ditch 427 in Trench 4 and ditch 117 in Trench 1. The former is part of the sequence of large features that collectively make up the Bar Dyke Scheduled Monument. As discussed above a single large, fresh pottery sherd was recovered from towards its base, dating the feature to the 13th or 14th centuries. This ditch must be the one mentioned in a document of 1400 which describes 'a tenement location that abuts the king's highway which leads towards the rampart (or ditch; *fossatum*) at one end and abuts the king's highway that leads to Brampton at the other end'. The latter must be George Street/Brampton Road, the location of the former is less clear but it is likely to have been one of the smaller roads leading westwards from the High Street, perhaps that along the route of Malthouse Close/The Walks. A trackway continues this line as an earthwork to the west until cut off by the A14 and this route would clearly have 'led toward the *fossatum*'. While this ditch could have functioned as a defensive feature it may have been principally a boundary, perhaps marking the limits of the 'town' or of the town infield? It follows the alignment of the strip fields and therefore could have been dug while they were still under plough. However, it also follows the line of the earlier feature, the possible sunken lane, and could equally therefore have been dug after the return of the land to pasture.

The survey of 1572 mentions 'Bardyke' as a lane across the western part of the Common. It may be that the semi-defensive earlier ditch, that mentioned in 1400, having substantially filled in, had become a lane once more. The original cut of this feature excavated in Trench 4, though much earlier than this reference, also appears to have been a lane.

The second large medieval ditch, at the eastern end of Trench 1, was only seen in very narrow, deep section. The ditch was approximately 2.50m deep and 4.00m wide with a broad V-shaped profile. The main fill sequence consisted of ditch silts followed by what may have been redeposited bank material that contained large quantities of charcoal and burnt clay. Excavated by machine, the finds assemblage from the feature was collected from the spoil heap and may have included finds from the basal silting, upper backfill, medieval ploughsoil and topsoil combined. However, many of the pottery sherds recovered were large and unabraded and can therefore at least be assumed to have come from the ditch itself rather than from the ploughsoil. The majority of these sherds date to the period 1150-1350. The ditch can be seen on the geophysics plot curving to the south and east, heading in the direction of the castle mound (see Figs 5, 8 & 10). A ditch of this date,

and in this location, may represent the medieval town ditch, linked into the castle ditch and forming the western side of the town's boundary and defences. Alternatively, the ditch could be part of some smaller, earlier, defended site, only being infilled long after its abandonment.

One possibility is that it is part of the defended Viking camp of the early 10th century or of the refortification of this camp by Edward the Elder. This camp, or *burh*, has generally been presumed to lie closer to the river, although local topographical circumstances could have necessitated its construction on higher ground slightly back from the river. Its location is unknown and none of the excavations thus far conducted in the town centre have recovered any contemporary material that would suggest a location.

6.5 Post-Medieval

The history of the Bar Dyke up until 1572, using a combination of excavation and documentary evidence is now clear. It appears to have begun as a lane, being replaced by a 'defensive' ditch, before being used as a lane again. The pattern continued with a far deeper and more clearly defensive ditch being dug, almost certainly as part of the Civil War defences of the town. This re-cutting of the earlier ditch was on a much larger scale, 12.50m wide and 2.20m deep. The base of the feature would have been under water, adding to its defensive nature, and the rampart bank to the east may have stood up to 4m above the base of the ditch.

The lack of datable finds within the ditch was not unexpected – the area lies a great distance from the town – but makes accurate dating impossible. However, it is clear that in 1572 the medieval ditch had become infilled and that its line was in use as a trackway – 14th-century pottery was recovered from near its base. The only datable find from the later ditch itself came from the very top of the silt fill – a fresh clay pipe bowl dating to 1800 or shortly after. If looking for a date for the digging of this massive ditch, between the 1570s and 1800, the most likely date is the Civil War period of the 1640s, when it is known that the town was heavily fortified.

6.6 Modern

The smaller of two extensive areas of quarrying was investigated in Trench 5, its infilling seen to be late 19th and early 20th century. Judging by the scale of this quarrying, and the make-up of the spoil heaps, it was a gravel extraction pit. The far larger and deeper quarry at the centre of the common was not investigated but its size suggests that the underlying clay was also being taken from here.

The bone domino tile recovered from the topsoil in Trench 1 could date from any time after the late 18th century when the game was imported to England from France. It quickly became very popular, particularly in inns and taverns. However, there is very little other material within the topsoil from the post-medieval period and it is perhaps more likely that the tile is a relic of the WWI occupation of the site.

7 Conclusions

Considering that the evaluation at Mill Common was primarily designed as a community training excavation, and as such the *excavators* took precedence over the *excavation*, a great deal of valuable information has been recovered. The excavations have recorded the first prehistoric features within the town of Huntingdon itself, as well as adding to the general scatter of residual finds material. Though not clearly dated these features would appear to date to the Bronze Age.

Little additional information relating to the Roman presence within the area was recovered, although there was a slight scatter of Roman finds, including building material, but nothing that would suggest that settlement remains lie on the Common itself. However, the villa at Whitehills is situated only 150m south of Trench 2 (see Fig. 6) and Romano-British settlement evidence has recently been uncovered at Pathfinder House just 100m east of Trench 5 (Chris Turner pers. comm.).

Much of the information garnered on the Saxon period is negative - the putative Saxon settlement area (see Fig. 6) has been seen not to extend over the Common and the equally putative Danish Burh on the Common now seems highly unlikely. This negative evidence is, however, important in itself.

It is for the medieval period that most new information has been gained. The sequence of tracks and ditches that make up the scheduled Bar Dyke have been excavated, and broadly dated, for the first time. The monument is now largely understood, as a sequence of lanes and defensive and semi-defensive boundaries that extends perhaps from the Late Saxon period through to the 17th century. The archaeological evidence from the archaeology has been seen to corroborate the documentary sources – a rare enough occurrence.

The ridge and furrow on the Common, a remnant of the medieval strip field system, has been intensively investigated and broad dates can be suggested for the system's inception (10th or 11th century) and for its demise (late 14th century).

The discovery of the deep, defensive ditch at the east of the Common – part of the medieval town ditch – is a major discovery, and one that, if it were possible, it would be extremely informative to return to.

For the post-medieval period, the ditch and bank of the Bar Dyke, in its final phase, can be confirmed as dating to the Civil War period.

An impressive amount of valuable information has been gained relating to the archaeology and history of both the Common and Huntingdon. This was achieved in only a few days, due to the splendid efforts of everybody involved in the excavation. The success of this project has shown that not only does 'Community Archaeology' work well for the community but that it can work equally well for the archaeology.

Acknowledgements

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David Crawford-White was in charge of Outreach and Richard Meredith organised the on-site finds washing. Post-excavation finds washing, bagging and cataloguing was coordinated by Helen Fowler. Illustrations in the report are by Carlos Silva.

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Appendix 1: The Volunteers

Volunteers	Sat 13th	Sun 14th	Mon 15th	Tue 16th	Wed 17th	Thu 18th	Fri 19th	Sat 20th	Sun 21st	No. days
Jackie Gibbs	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9
John Hooper	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	9
Emma Burbidge	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*		8
Julia Mallett	*	*	*	*		*	*	*	*	8
Ryan Berridge	*	*	*	*	*	*		*	*	8
Amanda Norton	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	7
Bella Dillistone			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	7
George Norton	*	*	*	*	*			*	*	7
Jean Burbidge	*	*	*	*	*	*	*			7
Rebecca Fagan			*	*	*	*	*	*	*	7
Charlotte Beattie			*	*	*	*	*	*		6
Deran Beattie			*	*	*	*	*	*		6
Jean Billman	*	*	*	*	*	*				6
Kasia Gdaniec	*	*	*	*	*					5
Mike Robinson			*	*	*	*	*			5
Richard Halliday				*	*		*	*	*	5
Carol Webster	*	*						*	*	4
George Butler						*	*	*	*	4
Ian Taylor	*	*						*	*	4
Chris Hill			*	*	*					3
Helen Joyner						*	*	*		3
Janet Hill			*	*	*					3
Julie Alexander							*	*	*	3
Richard Meredith			*			*	*			3
Richard Skinner			*	*	*					3
Robert Shephard					*	*			*	3
Edward John						*	*			2
Emma Lloyd		*	*							2
Helen Cox		*	*							2
Jackie Parr		*					*			2
James Mathews					*	*				2
Jeannie De Rycke				*					*	2
Jenny John						*	*			2
Louis Budworth								*	*	2
Mary Andrews						*	*			2
Pam Sneath					*		*			2

Volunteers	Sat 13th	Sun 14th	Mon 15th	Tue 16th	Wed 17th	Thu 18th	Fri 19th	Sat 20th	Sun 21st	No. days
Pauline Jowett								*	*	2
Peter Hughes						*	*			2
Rachel Johnson	*							*		2
Richard Deane							*	*		2
Sarah Poppy							*	*		2
Adrian Tindall				*						1
Alex Fermor	*									1
Anthea Bell			*							1
Berta Butter							*			1
Brian Smith						*				1
Colin Mathews					*					1
Daniel Payne			*							1
Eleanor Hickling					*					1
Hannah Sewell								*		1
Hazel Kenyon			*							1
Hazel Shrubbs						*				1
Heather Fermor	*									1
Iain Taylor									*	1
James Mathews					*					1
Katie Taylor									*	1
Maddy Butter							*			1
Mark Summers					*					1
Michael Button		*								1
Neil Farrer		*								1
Neil Pitblado				*						1
Patricia Payne			*							1
Peter Weston					*					1
Roger Mould								*		1
Simon Summers					*					1
Sue Jackson			*							1
Terry Clough		*								1
Total 67 people	15	18	26	22	27	23	25	24	19	199

Table 1: Daily volunteer roster

The volunteers speak...

'I decided to go to Mill Common to help with the archaeology because my son asked to attend. He wishes to become an archaeologist when he leaves school. I went believing I would be bored, fed up, caked in mud and suicidal, and all that at the end of the first day! How wrong could I have been, we ended up doing seven of the nine days. We met some very nice people of all ages and learnt a lot about the history of Huntingdon and about archaeology. The best thing for me was to spend some time with my son doing something he enjoys and realising that it is something that I can learn from and enjoy as well.'

Amanda Norton: Trench 2

'For me it was the opportunity to 'have a go at archaeology', right on my doorstep, that I shall always remember. It is something I have never done before, mainly because I have not had that opportunity. To personally find out a bit more about our local history was an important part of that experience. I thoroughly enjoyed it – both the archaeological experience and chatting to others kneeling next to me in the Trench!'

Pauline Jowett: Trench 1

'I would like to voice my appreciation to you and the entire AFU for allowing me to participate in the excavation. The episode has re-kindled a previous interest in archaeology and history, which has lain dormant for many years. Thank you. I felt that I learned quite a lot from the experience given the time allotted to the excavation. I would have liked to have learned more, but I realise that a balance must be found between 'teaching' and 'doing'. My thoughts on the archaeology of my trench and the Common are too numerous to list in this limited space. Firstly, it is worth mentioning that the Common, being a Common, and having been used by many people, should theoretically contain a good and varied amount of archaeology from over the centuries. We probably only observed the 'tip of the iceberg' in this instance.'

Michael Robinson: Trench 2

'For me, as someone who has been studying archaeology through the courses run by University of Cambridge's Board of Continuing Education, I valued the practical aspects of surveying and recording. I should have liked to have excavated a feature, but by the time I joined the dig mid-week, the features had all been allocated to those who had started earlier. I think as far as the weather was concerned my experience was one of 'extreme archaeology'. One day I came home looking and feeling like a piece of baked pottery, having spent the day in near kiln temperatures, and the next looking as though I had been mud-wrestling after a day of non-stop rain in the bottom of a very water-logged trench!'

Pam Sneath: Trench 3

'Our trench was on a headland of the ridge and furrow and was deeper than most. At one end of the trench there was an indication of half a pit, which is where I dug until Wednesday. At that time the pit seemed to be shelving at the edges and I resumed we were coming near to the bottom. Amongst the items found were many bones including one which was burnt. There were also pieces of charcoal and another of burnt flint.

During my tour of the other trenches I discovered that Trench 3 had prehistoric finds, Trench 4 had part of the outer defences with a bank and ditch which had been reinforced at some time. Trench 1 had more recent finds including a domino probably made by troops stationed on site during WWI. It also produced clay pipe

and a Roman tessera. These finds showed that Mill Common had been in use for at least 2000 years. The burnt material was, as far as we could see, not burnt in situ but probably tossed into the pit.'

Jean Billman: Trench 2

'It was great to have the opportunity to gain more experience in the field at Mill Common, where I found that the two days I worked were extremely informative and I learnt a great deal about Archaeology. If only I had worked all week at Mill Common – there was so much to learn!'

Jeannie De Rycke: Trench 1

'We learnt about dumpy levels and why this is important. We learnt how to take proper photographs of the trench using digital cameras and black & white and colour photographs. We learnt how to make plans of the trenches; recording height, width, length, difference of soil type and colour and special features. Filling in forms about what we found and thought about different parts of the trench. I also learnt how to 'clean' the dirt in trenches to clear away excess gravel and dust and how to use a mattock. I also learnt when a stone is just a stone and when it is something significant.'

Emma Burbidge: Trench 4

Attention to fine detail

Records to prove that we were here!

Chores to keep the trench clean and indicate changes in colour and texture...

Hope to find the bottom of this little trench

Active participants achieve ambitions

Eager to learn more, will there be time?

Old pottery, is it a piece of Stamford Ware? How do we know?

Look for something that might date the trench!

Old pottery piece, can it be St Neots ware?

Great big hungry animal eaters; half jaw of bovine in close proximity to clay land drain

You have learned so much.

Bella Dillistone: Trench 3

'I learnt loads as it was my first go - but I would have liked to have got deeper than we did.'

George Norton: Trench 2

APPENDIX 2a: Historic Environment Record Gazetteer for Huntingdon (see Fig. 7)

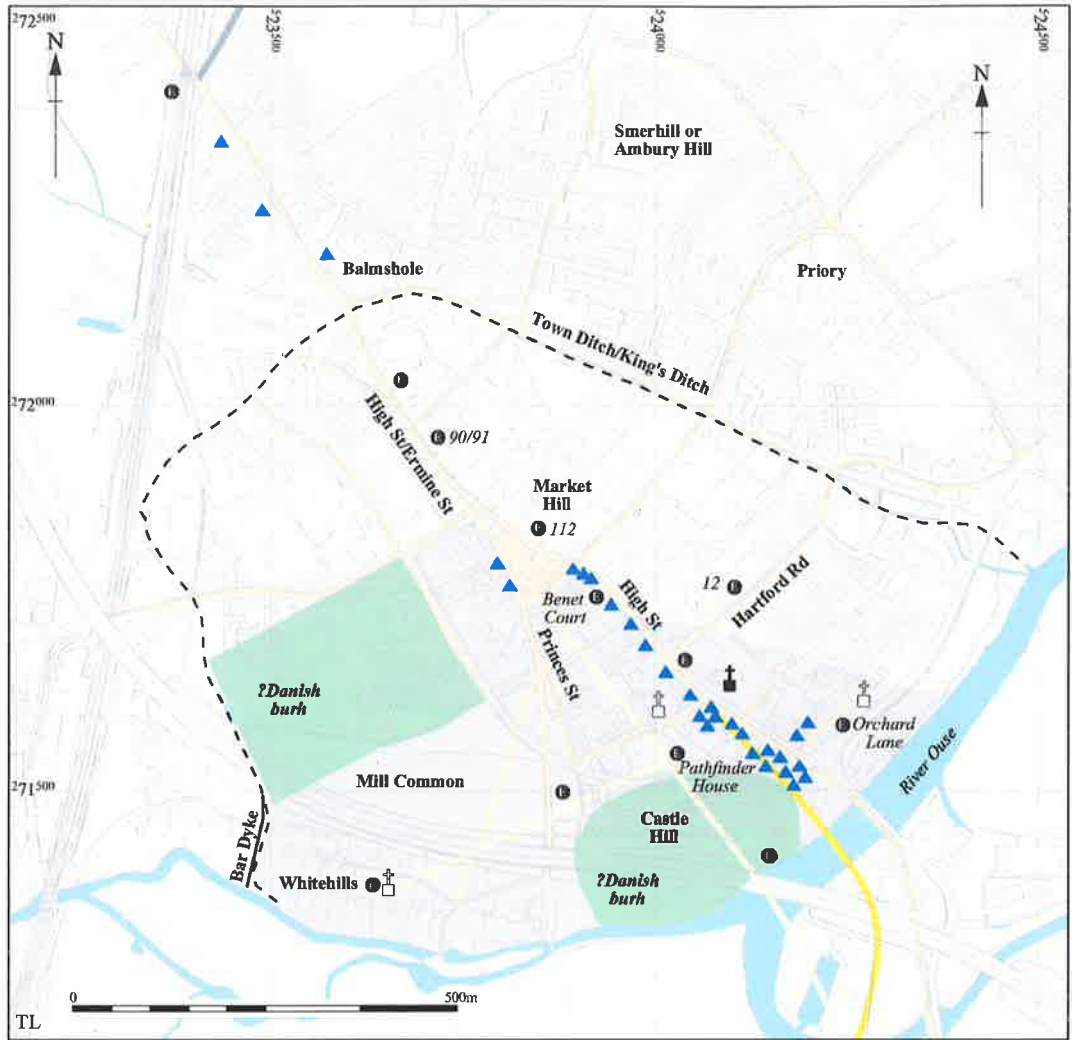
Rec. No.	Grid Ref.	Keys	Period
00268	TL/256-/726-	Inhumation, cremation, brooch, pin, pottery, knife	BA ?, AS ?
00268a	TL/256-/726-	Axe	Neo
00268b	TL/256-/726-	Quern	IA / Ro
00867	TL/2397/7156	Pottery	Ro
00869	TL/2382/7185	Pottery	Ro
00871	TL/233-/716-	Coin	Ro
00888	TL/23--/72--	Coffin, inhumation	U
01054	TL/231-/728-	Moat, building, ridge and furrow	Med
01055	TL/2443/7178	Moat	Med
01439	TL/255-/728-	Worked flint, axe	Pa
01439a	TL/255-/728-	Worked flint	Neo
01687	TL/258-/733-	Worked flint	Pa
01688	TL/248-/728-	Worked flint	Pa
01690	TL/24--/72--	Worked flint, axe	Pa
01690a	TL/24--/72--	Worked flint	Neo
01774	TL/2409/7145	Castle, well, windmill, chapel, skeleton, battery	Med, P med
01774	TL/2409/7145	Castle, well, windmill, chapel, skeleton, battery	Med, P med
01847	TL/25--/72--	Arrowhead, worked flint	Neo
01912	TL/241-/716-	Worked flint	Ne
01946	TL 256-/725-	Axe, human, bone, urn, pin, knife, quern	BA, AS
01960	TL/253-/727-	Arrowhead	BA
01962	TL/25--/72--	Axe, palstave	BA
02733	TL/2437/7177	Roof tile	Ro
02733a	TL/2437/7177	Pottery	Med
02528	TL/261-/694-	Ridge and furrow	Med
02543	TL/235-/716-	Earthwork, bank, ditch, mound, ridge and furrow	Med, P med
02545	TL/2366/7138	Excavation	Ro
02545a	TL/248-/713-	Villa, kiln, tessellated, pavement, hearth, ditch, pit, wall plaster, tessera	Ro
02545b	TL/248-/713-	Church, cemetery, inhumation, carved stone, coin	AS
02545c	TL/248-/713-	Castle, siege, works, inhumation	Med
02545d	TL/248-/713-	Church, wind mill, architectural, fragment, tile, pottery	Med
02545e	TL/248-/713-	House, wind mill, gallows, pottery	P med
02547	TL/2476/7227	Gun battery, ditch	P med
02547a	TL/247-/723-	Worked flint	Neo
02547b	TL/247-/723-	Pottery	Ro
02547c	TL/247-/723-	Pottery	Med
02560	TL/23--/71--	Church	Med
02561	TL/23--/71--	Church	Med
02562	TL/23--/71--	Church	Med
02563	TL/23--/71--	Church	Med
02564	TL/23--/71--	Church	Med
02567	TL/237-/714-	Windmill	Med - P med
02568	TL/236-/714-	Windmill	Med - P med
02569	TL/23--/71--	Church	Med
02572	TL/23--/71--	Worked flint	Neo

Rec. No.	Grid Ref.	Keys	Period
02574	TL/23--/71--	Hospital	Med
02580	TL/23--/71--	Hospital	Med
02581	TL/23--/71--	Burgh	AS
02583	TL/23--/71--	Cistern	Ro
02586	TL/228-/714-	Inhumation, coin, pottery, hanging bowl, glass vessel, cult object	Ro
02593	TL/2370/7183	Church	Med
02594	TL/2406/7158	Church	Med
02595	TL/239-/719-	Church, bone	Med
02596	TL/23--/72--	Church	Med
02597	TL/2397/7156	Pottery, coin	Ro
02597a	TL/2397/7156	Pottery	IA
02597b	TL/2397/7156	Mortar	Med
02599	TL/235-/721-	Church	Med
02601	TL/233-/718-	Bowling green	P med
02602	TL/2362/7137	Coin	Ro
02603	TL/2355/7139	Coin	Ro
02604	TL/2356/7165	Arrowhead, pottery	Med
02604a	TL/2356/7165	Pottery	Ro
02605	TL/236-/719-	Pottery	AS
02606	TL/238-/718-	Pottery	AS
02607	TL/2399/7136	Coin	Ro
02608	TL/2397/7132	Coin	Ro
02609	TL/243-/702-	Pottery	Med
02613	TL/2368/7209	Key	Ro
02614	TL/238-/713-	Watermill	Med - P med
02621	TL/248-/727-	Windmill	Med - P med
02624	TL/2425/7159	Church	Med
02625	TL/2393/7171	Pottery, stone vessel	Ro
02625a	TL/2393/7171	Pottery, shoe	Med
02629	TL/245-/748-	Forest	Med
02635	TL/2397/7144	Cremation, pottery	Ro
02636	TL/2400/7153	Arrowhead, pottery	Med
02637	TL/2406/7152	Pottery	Ro
02638	TL/2406/7152	Pottery, coffin	Ro
02639	TL/2400/7166	House	P med
02639a	TL/2400/7166	Wall painting	P med
02643	TL/245-/717-	Artefact	Med
02648	TL/2423/7216	Priory, coffin, tile	Med
02649	TL/2391/7175	Church, inhumation, pottery, tile, carved stone, architectural, feature	Med
02652	TL/23--/71--	Coin	IA
02655	TL/2366/7196	Church, churchyard, building material	Med
02656	TL/2406/7158	House	P med
02675	TL/239-/717-	House, shop	P med
02676	TL/239-/717-	House	P med
02677	TL/238-/718-	House	P med
02678	TL/238-/718-	Inn	P med
02679	TL/2375/7182	House	P med
02680	TL/237-/719-	House, shop	P med
02681	TL/2374/7187	Inn	P med

Rec. No.	Grid Ref.	Keys	Period
02682	TL/2542/7264	Coin hoard	Med
02683	TL/2499/7245	Artefact	Pa
02690	TL/25--/73--	Axe	Mes
02696	TL/2469/7203	Coin	Ro
02700	TL/254-/725-	Coin, mill stone	Ro
02701	TL/2396/7217	Token	Med
02703	TL/2366/7204	House	P med
02703a	TL/2366/7204	Friary, wall, tile, architectural, fragment, plaster, carved wood	Med
02707	TL/2273/7148	Great house	P med
02707a	TL/2273/7148	Convent, window, arch, architectural, feature	Med
02710	TL/2575/7280	House	P med
02733	TL/2437/7177	Tile	Ro
02735	TL/258-/733-	Worked flint	Mes
02736	TL/2382/7180	Town hall	P med
02747	TL/260-/726-	Pottery	Ro
02764	TL/242-/711-	Seal	P med
02764a	TL/242-/711-	Coin	Ro
02764b	TL/242-/711	Church plate	Med
02774	TL/2397/7168	Pottery	P med
02805	TL/2373/7167	Pottery, inhumation	Med
03958	TL/2285/7315	Gallows, inhumation, human skeleton, pottery	Med, P med
03958a	TL/229-/732-	Pottery	Ro ?
04248	TL/2409/7164	Church	Med
04248a	TL/2409/7164	Church	AS
05559	TL/253-/727-	Worked flint	Pa
05774	TL/2530/7273	Worked flint	Pa
06824	TL/262-/708-	Rectangular, enclosure, enclosure	U
06918	TL/230-/729-	Hospital	Med
08117	TL/2---/7---	Worked flint	Neo / BA
08118	TL/2---/7---	Worked flint, arrowhead	BA
08660	TL/2360/7166	Human bone	U
08747	TL/232-/722-	Ridge and furrow	Med
08751	TL/227-/723-	Ridge and furrow, earthwork	Med, U
09200	TL/260-/720-	Enclosure	Ro
09597	TL/25--/72--	Spike	BA ?
09781	TL/2--/7---	Lock, bottle	P med
09871	TL/2497/7244	Worked flint	Pa
10486	TL/2388/7148	Pottery, ditch, animal bone, shell	Med
10486a	TL/2388/7148	Pottery	AS
11506	TL/2371/7194	Pit, pottery	Med
11740	TL/---/----	Ditch, plant remains	Preh
11741	TL/---/----	Inhumations, pits	Med
11907	TL/2371/7194	Rubbish pits, yard surfaces, structural remains	Med
11908	TL/2417/7185	Yard surface, rubbish pits, structural remains	Med
13020	TL/2425/7160	Rubbish pits, cess pits	AS
13021	TL/2425/7160	Cemetery	Med
14595	TL/2416/7164	Quarry and rubbish pits	Med
14832	TL/2377/7184	Church	Med
14924	TL/2411/7156	Church	P med
14925	TL/2399/7149	Church	Med
15040	TL/2402/7193	Ditches, pits, industrial activity	Med
15097	TL/2406/7158	WWII Building	Modern

Rec. No.	Grid Ref.	Keys	Period
15226	TL/2429/7131	Pillboxes	Modern
15227	TL/2446/7195	Anti-tank defences	Modern
15332	TL/239/718	Pits	AS
15333	TL/239/718	Pits	Med
15334	TL/239/718	Hearths, floors	Med
15649	TL/2396/7181	Tanning pit	Med
15658	TL/2387/7212	Structural evidence, pits, quarry pits	Med
15695	TL/2413/7170	Structural evidence, ditches	Med
16321	TL/2375/7173	Pits, postholes, cultivation layers	AS – P med
16322	TL/2377/7169	Pits, postholes, cultivation layers	AS – P med
16323	TL/2380/7165	Pits, postholes, cultivation layers	AS – P med
16324	TL/2383/7167	Pits, cultivation layers	Ro – P med
16329	TL/2380/7136	Pits, gullies, ditch	Ro
16330	TL/2395/7137	Cemetery, enclosure	Ro
16331	TL/2393/7137	Ditch, pits/postholes	AS - med

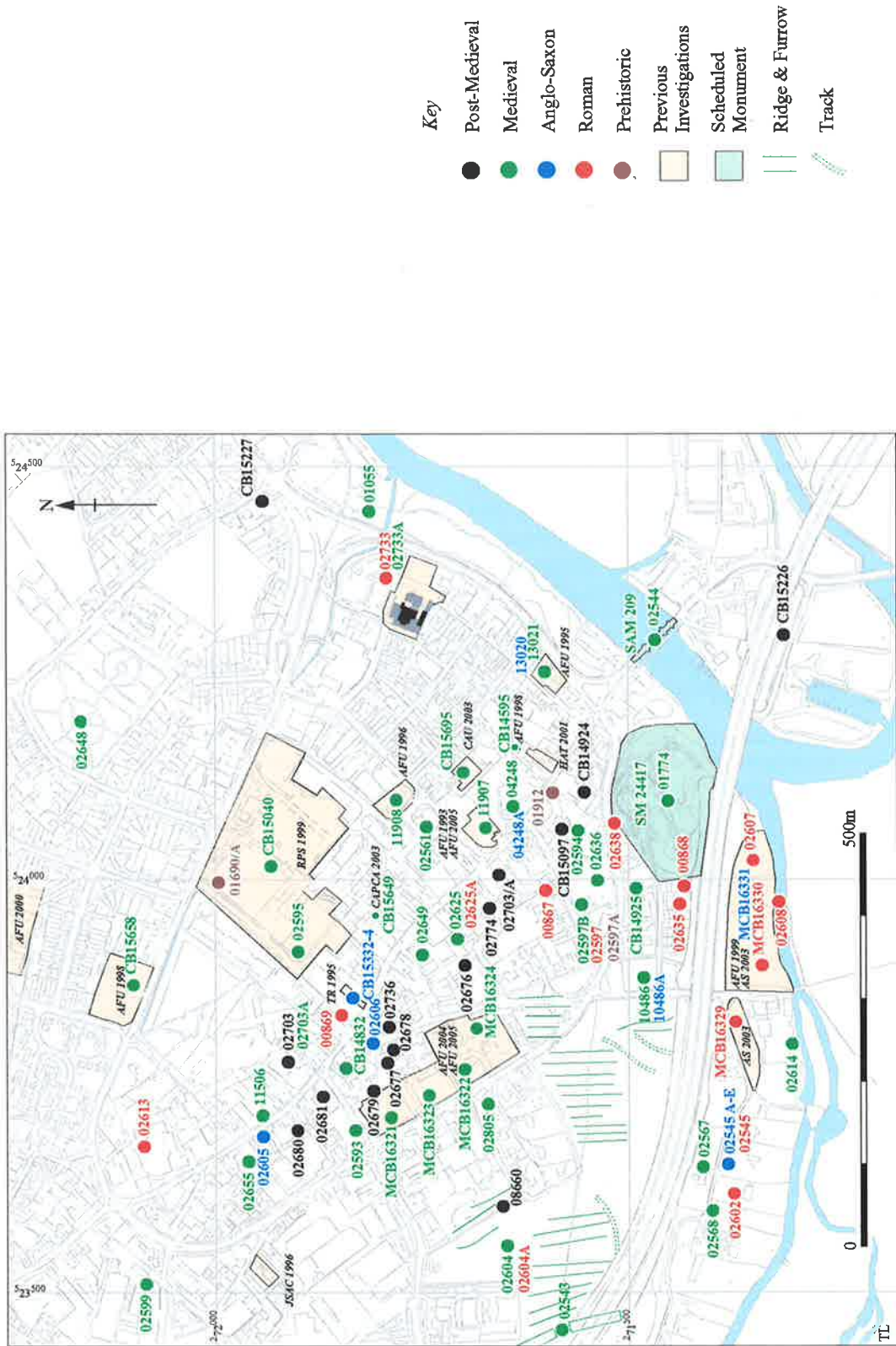
Table 2: HER Gazetteer for Huntingdon



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- Alternative models for Danish fortified area
- ?Saxon settlement
- Medieval town defences
- Roman roads
- Roads
- Course of Old Bridge Street
- Saxon and possible Saxon churches
- Properties liable for haggable tax in 1572 Survey
- Archaeological excavations

Figure 6: Models of Saxon Huntingdon



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Figure 7: Huntingdon HER entries

APPENDIX 2b: Previous Archaeological Work in Huntingdon (see Figs 6 & 7)

by Paul Spoerry and Scott Kenney

Pre-1990s

Castle Hill Early 1960s

TL 2414/7149; Generally CHER 01774

Philip Dickinson reported that during the laying of telephone lines a short distance within the modern entrance to Castle Hill, in a location close to the footpath, massive stone foundations were discovered a few feet below the ground. He believed that these represent a stone gatehouse inside the moat, probably replacing an earlier one of wooden construction, and stated that tooling on the stones indicated a date of around 1100.

Castle Hill 1963

TL 2418/7152; Generally CHER 01774

Construction of the High Street to Mill Common relief road resulted in little damage in the northern section as it ran mostly over the top of the infilled moat. In the garden and car park of the Old Bridge Hotel, however, the foundations of what Dickinson believed to be a Barbican, paired with the gatehouse, were discovered. He did not state whether it was stone-built, but this seems likely. A section through the moat revealed it to be 20' wide with sloping sides becoming near vertical at a depth of 5', at a reduced width of 15'. The full depth is not known as only 7' was revealed, however, Dickinson estimated it to have been 15' or more.

In the car park, Thetford ware and other artefacts were identified and in addition, a large area of fine wood ash about 18 inches deep (c.45cm), was seen close to the gatehouse which Dickinson linked to historic records of the castle being burnt after its capture in 1173. A well with 18th century brickwork was found close by and in the line of the new road.

High Street 1967

TL 235/719, 236/717; CHER 02605

A rather cryptic note, apparently from Philip Dickinson, published in the CBA Group 7 Bulletin briefly mentions that excavations for new buildings in the High Street produced "Saxon pottery of the 8th/9th century 'at a depth of *twelve feet*'. Also numerous carved stones 'from two of the destroyed churches of the town have also been discovered one with fine chevron moulding'. The two grid references for these findings are, unfortunately, not explained and neither is actually on the High Street.

Whitehills 1967 and 1967-9

TL 2366/7138; CHER 02545, 02567

Emergency excavation works were started in 1967 directed by Brian Davison for the Ministry of Works, as a builder had started levelling the site for construction of 2 houses (Davison, unpublished). Following Davison's work Group Captain Trudgian was able to continue excavations on the site as a private venture. The excavation report is available for study through the NMR, however summaries in County CHER and in *Medieval Archaeology* 1967-9 provide a brief statement of each phase of activity. The sequence of construction and activity on the site appears to be as follows, however, succeeding annual statements indicate changing interpretations and this list is almost certainly incorrect at least in part.

- 1 1st century Roman occupation of uncertain form, but a series of ditches are present.

- 2 2nd century timber structure with mortared floor.
- 3 A Roman corridor villa, perhaps of early 3rd century construction, made in part of Barnack stone with a possible industrial (re-)use for one room.
- 4 Re-definition of the above building with changes to partition walls.
- 5 Around 400 east-west aligned burials, associated with late Saxon pottery (St Neots and Thetford type wares). Some of these burials were aligned with part-surviving Roman walling suggesting that robbing occurred during the lifetime of the cemetery.
- 6 Some records indicate that the remains of a probable stone building, a chapel associated with the cemetery, were discovered.
- 7 Scarping of the hill that was associated with the 1174 siege, this site long being assumed to be a siege castle.
- 8 Very ruined walls of what may have been a medieval church or chapel, including one piece of re-used Saxon decorated masonry (interlace) which had a 13th century arch-moulding on the other side. All a rebuild of the earlier chapel?
- 9 A windmill (15th century).
- 10 The gallows, believed by the excavators to have been erected in the 16th century.
- 11 A second windmill (18th century).
19th century cottages.

Castle Hill 1973

TL 2415/7140; Generally CHER 01774

Dickinson observed initial works for the Huntingdon bypass, which is located on top of the 19th century railway cutting through the castle, but in construction damaged a larger area of land. He observed a section through the southern rampart that showed it to be of sandy gravel construction lying on top of a raised bank of clay and silt, some ten feet above river level. He noted that where the western end of the moat joined the river the embankment was about 36 feet high. He also observed the castle well, located just outside of the eastern rampart.

Castle Hill 1974

TL 2415/7140; Generally CHER 01774

During landscaping of the castle site following the bypass construction Alison Taylor carried out some emergency excavation and recording. Although not published, notes in the County CHER and photos held by CCC AFU indicate that the rampart above the level of the bailey was found to be post-medieval in date and probably of Civil War origin. This covered about a metre of earlier archaeological layers, which included much artefactual debris of both medieval and Roman date. Below this were a number of shallow-cut and east-west aligned graves, surrounded by coffin nails. The graves may derive from a medieval castle chapel known to have been still in existence in 1327 and presumably with a late 11th-12th century origin.

Pathfinder House Car Park 1973

TL 2403/7154

Roger Smith excavated this site for the DoE in 1973. No report or archive exists, but three slides showing plans of the excavated areas and some of the main features are in the possession of David Cozens and copies are with CCC AFU.

The site was located in the former grounds of Castle Hill House and work was allowed in areas of proposed car parks around the then new District Council HQ. A metalled surface, running approximately WSW-ENE, was interpreted as a spur road linking the 2-3rd century Roman Villa 400m to the west at Whitehills with Ermine Street. This latter, or one of Green's two proposed lines, was expected within the excavated area but it was not located and must therefore lie a little to the east of the excavation.

Personal recollections suggest that Late Saxon building remains were found but no actual record exists.

Vague references hint at another trench being located at this time on the north side of St Mary's Street that uncovered a stone church. This reference has not been verified, however, 'great quantities of bone' were known by Carruthers to have been discovered there (1824).

St Benet's Court 1975

TL 2388/7173

The large 1970s Benet's area shopping centre development included no archaeological provision beyond a 15m x 7m trial trench, with small linear extension. This represented just 5% of the area of the development and, sadly, is an awful example of a missed opportunity to investigate and/or protect a major part of the town's archaeological resource. The excavated evidence suggests that the central part of the site may have had little pre-17th century occupation and also that the most significant deposits may lie under up to 2m or more of recent make-up.

The trial excavation was carried out by Terry Betts for the DoE in November 1975, the main purpose being to find the line of Roman Ermine Street and elucidate Roman and medieval occupation. A small triangular-sectioned ditch and associated gravel make-up may have been part of Green's proposed second (eastern) line of Ermine Street. This feature was partially removed by deep medieval ditches running parallel to, and behind, the properties lining the High Street. No trace was found of Green's earlier line of Ermine Street and thus it must either have lain further west, towards Prince's Street, or it did not exist. Cultivation beds containing St Neots, Thetford, Stamford and Lyveden wares lay west of the Roman road ditch and these were in turn covered by a build-up of topsoil under 17th century floors that appear to have been for buildings similar in plan to those surviving into the 20th century. A further metre of make-up overlay these and this may be linked to documentary evidence for ground-raising known for nearby Queen's Head Passage in the late 18th century.

St Benet's Church 1980

TL 2391/7175; CHER 02649

St Benet's (Benedict's) Church is known from documents for the reign of Henry I and was still standing until the Civil War, when all but the tower was destroyed. This was pulled down in 1802 and the burial ground used until 1855; the parish was unified with St Mary's in 1668. Repairs to an outhouse revealed foundations and plinth stones, recorded by Ladds (1930); stone from the church was re-used in various constructions between its demise in the 17th century and the construction of a 'gazebo' on the site in the 1980s.

Only a small area (3m x 4m) of the church's known site was available for study, the fieldwork being carried out by A Taylor of CCC, D Cozens of HLHS and CAFG. The earliest E-W wall foundation was of flints bonded with gravel and mortar. The fabric also contained tile and one piece of Stamford ware dated to the 12th century. The wall cut two graves, which suggests that an earlier church, perhaps of wooden construction, may have previously stood here. There were later burials both inside and outside of the stone building and this may have had a porch constructed on the north side. This was followed by an aisle, foundations for the west wall of which were found, and later evidence for part-removal of the west wall of the church may have coincided with the construction of the stone tower observed by Ladds, believed to be of 15th century date. A brick and tile floor was inserted in, perhaps, the 17th century.

After demolition of buildings over the rest of the church site, the team were allowed only part of a day to record some of its dimensions; the tower was found to be 6.4m east-west by 5.8m north-south.

Cromwell House 1976

TL 2366/7204; CHER 02703

Small-scale excavations by Alison Taylor and HLHS in the kitchen garden prior to development revealed fragmentary remains of the post-dissolution house foundations, re-using stone from the Friary buildings.

Cromwell House 1984

TL 2366/7204; CHER 02703

Small-scale excavations for CCC by David Haigh in advance of redevelopment of the house known to be on the site of the Augustinian Friary, identified that substantial remains of the 13th century buildings survived and also that a major rebuilding had occurred shortly after their initial construction. The remains seemed to be part of the west range, but no function for any room could be confirmed. At dissolution, alterations occurred followed by the major rebuilding of the site to provide the house used by the Cromwell family. The excavator's suggestion that the two observed phases of medieval building date to the Friary's foundation in 1258 and to a documented rebuild after a major fire in 1286 seems reasonable.

Documentary evidence indicates that in 1363 the Friars gained permission to construct an underground conduit leading from a well on Spring Common to the monastery. Carruthers (1824) reports a description of a brick underground feature in the correct location, however, Ladds describes a stone construction in an early 20th century observation opportunity which showed the culvert to run beyond the south side of the present house in the direction of Spring Common.

1990s (Post-PPG16)

Mill Common 1992

TL 2388/7148; CHER 10486, CB12453

In 1992 the AFU dug several small test pits in land to the east of Mill Common (AFU Report No. 59). Although only a tiny area of earlier deposits was exposed the evidence suggests a (property) boundary ditch existed here from perhaps the 11th or 12th century onwards which superseded dumping, possibly within former quarries. Later deposits suggest dumping in both the medieval and modern periods. This location, close to the castle, might conceivably have provided earthen material for the defences, known to have been built in the late 11th century. The suggestion of quarrying here in that period cannot, however, be directly linked to the construction of the castle, although the two *may* be related. The partial demolition of the castle in the late twelfth century might also have provided the fill of any open quarries (before the ditch was constructed), or it may be represented by the dumping over the top of this feature.

Spittal's Link 1993

TL 229/732

In 1993 a team from the AFU excavated and recorded the mostly partial remains of 55-60 human burials during road widening at the Spittal's Link roundabout at the northern end of the historic settlement of Huntingdon (AFU Report No. A20). The Leper Hospital of St Margaret is known to have existed close to this location from its foundation by Malcolm IV of Scotland in the mid-12th century until a probable abandonment in the 15th century. Study of the skeletal material by Corinne Duhig, AFU Palaeopathologist, suggested that a large proportion of the bodies had abnormalities associated with leprosy. In addition it seems that many were buried in one very large pit, but at different depths. This may indicate mass burial of individuals after an epidemic (perhaps one of the 14th century plagues) or it might be that a large open pit was made available for regular, but periodic, burial of individuals who succumbed to secondary diseases and infections associated with leprosy.

90/91 High Street 1993

TL 2371/7194

A small recording exercise in 1993 in advance of shop construction and refurbishment revealed a considerable density of archaeological remains behind two

historic High Street frontage properties (Heawood 1994). At least twelve rubbish pits were recorded which, from pottery found within their fills, could be dated to the 11th to 12th centuries. At least one of these contained cessy material suggesting the deposition of human waste products. In addition linear features suggested, as expected, that the boundaries between the 'burgage plots' were of similar antiquity to the pits. Other smaller features included postholes which may indicate the former presence of timber structures. This one small recording exercise seems to confirm that there was a great density of occupation within the northern part of Huntingdon, at least in areas close to the High Street frontage, in the 11th to 12th centuries. Until now the historic data seems to have suggested that the main part of the town continued up to the Augustinian Friary (now Cromwell House) and beyond, but perhaps not until the later 13th century. The presence of earlier activity at 90/91 High Street is thus significant.

High Street/Hartford Road Corner 1993-4

TL 2406/7167; CHER 11907, CB14013

In 1993-4 the AFU carried out evaluation trenching and observation in advance of a planning decision, on the forecourt of Marshall's Garage at the corner of Hartford Road and the High Street (AFU Report No. 105). Three trenches were excavated which revealed a variety of archaeological deposits. The earliest deposits may date to before the Norman Conquest, but this is not certain.

The first remains of certain date come from the 13th to 14th centuries, the dating deriving from pottery sherds. A gravel surface, perhaps part of a yard, was laid and in addition rubbish pits and evidence for timber, and possibly stone, structures was identified. As the latter in some way back from the High Street frontage it suggests fairly dense occupation in the secondary areas along this main street.

Following this a period of deliberate ground raising occurred, perhaps to combat flooding. Large quantities of clay and other materials, much of it burnt, were dumped towards the end of the medieval period. Then, around 1500, a cellared building was constructed on the High Street frontage which may be one of three inns mentioned in a document dating to 1572. This structure was probably partly demolished in the 17th century and around this time further buildings were constructed on the Hartford Road frontage. These were demolished in the 19th century prior to the building of St Mary's Vicarage.

Orchard Lane 1994-5

TL 2420/7160

Evaluation in 1994 and excavation in 1995 were carried out by the AFU, funded by English Heritage, in advance of the development of the former Peacock's builders yard on Orchard Lane only 70m from the High Street and close to the riverside (Oakey 1997). Human bone had been recorded during works in adjacent locations and it seemed likely that this might indicate the location of the burial ground of the lost church of St Clement, known to have existed between St Mary's parish and the riverside in the medieval period. Evaluation confirmed the presence of human remains, plus archaeological deposits pre-dating and post-dating the burials.

Excavations revealed rubbish and cesspits dating to the period 900-1150, along with evidence for property boundaries and burials. The date that the burial ground was established is not certain; it cannot be assigned to either before or after the Norman Conquest. It certainly was in existence in the 13th century, however, and may have ceased to function before the end of the 14th century. No evidence for the church itself was found.

After the 14th century the burial ground ceased to function. The later periods of activity on the site mostly seem to suggest that it remained open ground, supporting a belief that the town contracted significantly for several hundred years. In the 16th to 17th centuries, however, a period of quarrying was followed by the partial backfilling

of one quarry pit with hot, damaged bricks and other building debris. This may be related to the demolition of structures damaged in the Civil War.

12 Hartford Road 1996

TL 241/718; CHER 11908, CB14014

In 1996 an evaluation was undertaken at 12 Hartford Road, in advance of a planning decision for a residential development (Connor 1996). A trench along the street frontage revealed three phases of medieval activity from the 12th to mid-14th centuries, including quarrying for clay and the construction of timber buildings. Towards the rear of the property more evidence for several phases of structures was revealed, and in addition a sequence of pitting, presumably for rubbish disposal, may have started as early as the 10th century, but was certainly underway by the early 12th. This was superseded by a mid-14th century dump layer. A pond may also have existed here throughout the medieval period and it was probably not filled in until the 18th century.

This site confirms the presence of dense occupation along Hartford Road, and not just on the immediate street frontage, in the 12th to 14th centuries and possibly earlier. The absence of later activity supports documentary evidence for a severe decline in activity in the town in the late medieval period, with even a secondary routeway such as this becoming peripheral to the main areas of activity/occupation.

112 High Street 1995/6

TL 2384/7183, CHER CB975, CB15332-4

Excavation was carried out by Tempus Reparatum on a key frontage plot on the north side of Market Hill on the High Street (Richmond 1996). The post-excavation assessment provides summaries by feature type and phase that can be reconstructed to gain a perception of the occupation history of the site.

There appears to have been a low level of occupation in the vicinity in the 10th/11th to mid-12th centuries, with only a number of poorly defined layers and pits being possibly representative of this time period.

In the 12th to 13th centuries layers are present which are taken to be indicative of dumping associated with nearby occupation. Pitting increases in magnitude with two very substantial ones located 20m from the frontage, but structural evidence is still slight with only two postholes and *possibly* the earliest layers associated with hearths dateable to this period.

The majority of dumping horizons, make-up and activity surfaces could confidently be dated to the 13th to 14th centuries. In addition many pits were dug, albeit generally of small size. Structural remains take the form of a little post hole evidence for flimsy timber structures, several hearths and one possible domestic fireplace. These remains probably derive from some form of industrial processing taking place on the property in this period.

Stanton Butts, Stukeley Road 1997

TL 2325/7260

Evaluation trenching by the CAU west of the old line of Ermine Street revealed dense pitting of a dispersed nature plus linear features that represent either fence-lines or timber buildings mostly dating to the 13th century or thereabouts. Ditched features in the southern part of the site and the possible building remains further north are aligned together but not with the present Stukeley Road which here is believed to preserve the line of Ermine Street. The implication is that the road may have been aligned more to the north-west to south-east at this time. The occupation remains were interpreted as being most likely to be associated with a moated site

immediately north of the site, rather than implying ribbon development continuing from the High Street this far north along Ermine Street.

Hinchingbrooke 1997-2005

Just to the west of Huntingdon, adjacent to Hinchingbrooke Country Park, development has been ongoing for several years, creating new housing estates and local amenities. Archaeological work in advance of this has revealed extensive Iron Age settlement from the Middle and Late Iron Age, and also Roman occupation, possibly persisting into the 5th century (Hinman 1997).

The first phase of evaluation, which took place in January 1997, identified a marked concentration of features datable to the late Iron Age adjacent to the northern limit of the current development area. As a result of this evaluation the AFU were commissioned to undertake the simultaneous excavation of two open areas, to the north and east of the current development area (see below).

1997 Excavation

Excavation revealed the north-eastern limit of a middle Iron Age settlement. Significant artefacts recovered included two currency bars, a ritually defaced quern base, the ritually placed upper fore-limb of a boar, a complete rotary quern top and base, knife fragments, iron working waste, loom weight fragments and large quantities of domestic pottery and animal bone.

The presence of currency bars would seem to suggest a settlement displaying a relatively high degree of wealth and status. That these and other objects had been deliberately placed at the same point on the northern settlement boundary is taken as indicative of symbolic ceremonial activity resulting from the beliefs and superstitions of the Middle Iron Age inhabitants. Enclosure ditches associated with a separate late Iron Age settlement were also revealed at the eastern limit of the previous land sale area, within 30m of the northern limit of the development. A second phase of evaluation, which took place in spring 2000, identified marked concentrations of settlement related features datable to the late Iron Age and Roman periods.

2000 Excavation

Limited excavation was undertaken by the AFU in 2000. The main features identified included a late Neolithic/early Bronze Age pit, a 1st century AD pottery kiln, three inhumations (human burials), a metalworking area/smithy with *in-situ* crucible, structural remains including an aisled barn and possible villa wall foundations, post alignments/fence lines, enclosure ditches, processing areas, hearths/ovens, cistern and rubbish pits.

Significant artefacts were recovered, which included a flint arrowhead (barbed and tanged), late Neolithic/early Bronze Age structured deposits of ceramics, lithics, animal bone and stone. Roman artefacts included high status Claudian/Neronian pottery (1st century AD) including imported Dressel 20 Amphora (Spanish) and rare central Gaulish glazed ware, in addition to painted plaster, metalworking slag, stamped Samian ware, and over 70 metal objects. Environmental sampling has produced evidence for the consumption of fresh seafood, peas, wheat and barley, large assemblages of domestic pottery, tile and animal bone of 1st century through 4th/5th? century AD date.

St Clements Passage 1998

TL 2413/7162, CHER CB14595

In 1998 the AFU undertook an excavation at St Clements Passage (Roberts 1999). Excavation revealed quarry pits, rubbish pits and deposits dating from the medieval and post-medieval periods. A clay and wood lined pit was found in a group of similar features in the northern part of the site. The considerable build up of a garden type

soil suggest this area was open land to the rear of properties along the High Street until the 19th century.

The Old Music and Drama Centre, Brookside 1998

TL 2385/7210, CHER CB186

An evaluation at Brookside revealed medieval activity perhaps representing suburban development immediately outside of the town ditch (Cooper & Sperry 1998). This activity was focussed around a crossing point where the track to Abbot's Ripton intersected the town ditch. Other features on the site indicated medieval quarrying and some possible prehistoric features.

The Views 1998

TL 236/717, CHER CB183

An evaluation at this site in 1998 revealed only a single archaeological feature containing 13th- to 14th-century pottery.

Stanton Butts, Stukeley Road 1999

TL 2325/7260

Excavations by the AFU revealed suburban ribbon development of an interrupted nature in the 12th to 14th centuries, represented by the truncated foundations of timber buildings fronting onto Stukeley Rd.

These remains have important ramifications for the history and development of medieval Huntingdon. The location of these remains is highly significant since it establishes medieval suburban ribbon development along Ermine St. The identification of suburban development is of considerable interest since it provides an opportunity to examine issues concerning the growth of the town in the 12th and 13th centuries and subsequent decline in the 14th century. The excavation identified a number of phases; the first phase of activity on the site is the Roman roadside ditch. Phase 2 sees the development of roadside buildings and associated tenement plots whilst Phase 3 is characterised by greater development of tenement plots with extensive areas of pitting and quarrying across the site. Phase 4 is characterised by the reinstatement of backplot ditches and further pitting (Cooper & Sperry, forthcoming).

Hinchingsbrooke: The New School Site 2000

(TL 223/722)

A further stage of evaluation was undertaken on land to the east and immediately adjacent to the Bob's Wood site in December 2000. The 'New School' evaluation identified a group of pits within the northernmost extent of the development area provisionally dateable to the early Bronze Age. Three pits were similar in terms of size and fill type to a series of features excavated within Area 1 of the 1997 excavations. Those pits, all of which, with one notable exception, were devoid of any artefactual material were aligned roughly north south and had subsequently been truncated by a later Iron Age ditch and have been interpreted as the first formalised phase of boundary definition within that part of the site.

The results of the New School Site were interesting in that the area evaluated was not covered by anything like the density and diversity of remains encountered either in 1997 or on the Bob's Wood site. One possible explanation for the paucity of features dateable to the late Iron Age and the surprising absence of Romano-British artefactual materials may be that the area currently under investigation had held some special significance to the earlier prehistoric peoples of the area, a significance that continued to be respected during the later Iron Age and Romano-British periods. Support for this idea may be gained by the presence of those pits dateable to the early Bronze Age within Trench 26.

Other more pragmatic explanations may include the possibility that this part of the hillside was unattractive for settlement, perhaps due to poor drainage or a relatively exposed location. Evaluation identified a similar absence of artefactual materials

combined with a lack of any surviving archaeological features within the southwestern corner of the Bob's Wood site (Hinman 2000). Here the void in the archaeological record was attributed to poor drainage and soil conditions where the underlying boulder clay lay directly below the subsoil.

9/10 George St 2000

TL 2367/7171; CHER CB182

An evaluation was carried out to the west of the development area at 9/10 George St in June 2000 by the AFU (Cooper 2000). This area lay adjacent to the evaluation at The Views undertaken in 1998. The evaluation revealed extensive 13th and 14th century quarrying, post-holes and pits, with feature density increasing towards Walden Road.

Ambury Road 2000

TL 2395/7130; CHER ECB190

Archaeological observation was undertaken on five geotechnical test pits at Ambury Road, Huntingdon by the AFU (Abrams 2000). No archaeology was encountered in any of the test pits.

Watersmeet 2000

TL 2398/7135

An evaluation by the AFU revealed significant late Iron Age/Roman and medieval remains within the development area. The first century Iron Age or Roman remains may represent roadside activity alongside Ermine Street. The riverside occupation may eventually have culminated in the nearby villa site. The medieval remains consist of several occupation features, plus a re-working of the riverside escarpment that is almost certainly defensive and probably dates to the post-Conquest period, rather than being part of the Danish or Saxon burh. It may therefore represent a 'lost' western bailey of the Norman Castle.

The Samuel Pepys, 146 High St 2001

(TL 2414/7161) CHER ECB271

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at the Samuel Pepys public house, Huntingdon by Hertfordshire Archaeological Trust. Post-medieval layers were identified by the evaluation.

Glendower, Mill Common 2003

(TL 2371/7130)

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on 440 square metres of land to the rear of Glendower, Mill Common, Huntingdon by the AFU. The evaluation identified significant Roman riverside activity that may be related to a Roman villa less than 100m to the west, at Whitehills. A large channel, or a series of channels, which contained Roman building material was identified in Trench 1.

Watersmeet 2003

(TL 2398/7135); CHER ECB1872

An archaeological excavation was undertaken at Watersmeet, Huntingdon by Archaeological Solutions. A Roman cemetery was revealed, containing at least 73 inhumations, as well as an enclosure with evidence of iron smelting

4 Mill Common 2003

(TL 2380/7136); CHER MCB16329

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken on land adjacent to 4 Mill Common, Huntingdon by Archaeological Solutions. Roman pits gullies and a ditch were revealed, dating to the 1st-2nd centuries AD.

Wood Street, Hartford Road 2003

(TL 2413/7170); CHER ECB1369

An archaeological evaluation was undertaken at Wood Street, Hartford Road, Huntingdon by the Cambridge Archaeological Unit. The evaluation identified medieval structural remains and redeposited dumped layers.

4 Chequers Court 2003

(TL 2396/7181); *CHER ECB1335*

Archaeological observation and recording was undertaken at 4, Chequers Court, Huntingdon by CAPCA. A feature containing shoe leather and horn cores was recorded, and interpreted as a tanning pit.

Parkway, Hinchingsbrooke 2004

(TL 223/722)

Archaeological evaluation and excavation were undertaken on land adjacent to Parkway, Hinchingsbrooke by the AFU. Possible Bronze Age pits were identified, along with Later Iron Age settlement features.

Hartford Road/High Street 2005

(TL 2406/7167)

An archaeological excavation was undertaken by the AFU. The excavation identified pre-Conquest activity in the form of pits, possibly dating from the 10th century. Occupation continued in this area into modern times, apparently continuously. Other features recorded included postholes, boundary ditches and wells, and the finds included significant quantities of metalworking debris.

Kingfisher Way, Hinchingsbrooke Business Park, Hinchingsbrooke 2005

(TL 2227/7267)

Archaeological evaluation of this site revealed a single post-medieval boundary ditch.

Huntingdon Town Centre (Walden Road/Prince's Street/Walden House) 2004-5

(TL 2380/7170); *CHER MCB16321-4*

Archaeological evaluation and excavation by the AFU have revealed significant evidence of medieval Huntingdon, as well as features and finds dating from the Neolithic to post-medieval periods. Feature types include pits, ditches, wells, ovens and structural remains. Some of the later walls on site incorporated re-used ecclesiastical masonry, most likely originating from one of the 'lost' churches.

Work is ongoing on this site, and the results will undoubtedly contribute much towards efforts to model the development of Huntingdon from Saxon times onwards.

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Appendix 3: The Geophysics Results

Pete Masters

1 Introduction

A fluxgate gradiometer survey was undertaken on land at Mill Common, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire. Part of the site contains a ditch and bank earthwork feature (SAM 188) and the survey has recorded magnetic traces of the related ditch.

The close proximity of strongly magnetic features in some areas, including a buried service, may have compromised the effectiveness of the survey. A number of curvilinear and linear anomalies were detected on areas of the site, and subsequent excavation has exposed medieval and prehistoric ditches.

2 Location and description

The site lies on the south-west side of Huntingdon. The common is bounded on its south side by the A14 and the ring road on its north side. The current land use is meadow (cattle), and a public right of way

traverses the common.

The geology of the area is comprised of 4th River Terrace Gravels above Boulder Clay (British Geological Survey sheet 187, Huntingdon, 1975).

3 Methodology

The survey methodology described in this report was based upon guidelines set out in the English Heritage document '*Geophysical Survey in Archaeological Field Evaluation*' (David, 1995).

Gradiometry is a non-intrusive scientific prospecting technique used to determine the presence/absence of some classes of sub-surface archaeological features (eg pits, ditches, kilns, and occasionally stone walls). By scanning the soil surface, geophysicists identify areas of varying magnetic susceptibility and can interpret such variation by presenting data in various graphical formats and identifying images that share morphological affinities with diagnostic archaeological remains.

The area survey was conducted using a Bartington Grad – 01 – 1000 dual fluxgate gradiometer with DL601 data logger set to take 4 readings per metre (a sample interval of 0.25m). The zigzag traverse method of survey was used, with 1m wide traverses across 30m x 30m grids. The sensitivity of the machine was set to detect magnetic variation in the order of 0.1 nanoTesla.

The data was processed using *Archeosurveyor v.1.3.0.7*. It was clipped to reduce the distorting effect of extremely high or low readings caused by discrete pieces of ferrous metal on the site. The results are plotted as greyscale and trace plot images (Fig. 8-10).

Instrument	Bartington Grad-601
Grid size	30m x 30m
Sample interval	0.25
Traverse interval	1.0m
Traverse method	Zigzag
Sensitivity	0.1nT
Processing software	Archeosurveyor v.1.3.0.7
Weather conditions	Sun and showers
Area surveyed	c.2.4ha
Date of survey	15/7/05
Survey personnel	Peter Masters
Central National Grid Reference	TL 2363 7154

Table 3: Summary of geophysical survey parameters

4 Results (Figs. 8 - 10)

Four areas (1-4) were surveyed within the confines of Mill Common.

4.1 Area 1 (Figs. 8 & 9)

The survey was set out in a U-shaped configuration surrounding Millfield Court (1.52ha in total). Part of it was located over the bank and ditch of the Scheduled Ancient Monument. Remains of the ditch are in some measure apparent as fragmented linear anomalies (yellow lines). In the mid and northern part of the survey, weak magnetic variation reflects the actual ditch, whereas to the south its presence is evident by strong dipolar anomalies that almost certainly reflect modern ferrous materials.

A number of curvilinear anomalies were detected to the east of Millfield Court (red lines). A trial trench, which was subsequently located over sections of these, uncovered ditches that may date from Late Neolithic or Early Bronze Age (Richard Mortimer pers. comm.).

A series of diffuse northwest to southeast-aligned parallel linear anomalies indicate the magnetic traces of the ridge and furrow cultivation (orange lines).

A series of strongly magnetic linear anomalies (green lines) resolve as land drains (confirmed by excavation, *ibid*). Probable services were also recorded (blue lines).

The survey recorded an existing tarmac footpath (brown line).

Discrete dipolar anomalies were detected within all of the survey areas (examples circled pink). Typically these indicate miscellaneous ferrous debris, such as brick/tile fragments, horseshoes, cans etc.

4.2 Area 2 (Figs. 8 & 10)

A 60m x 60m block of land was surveyed over an area of extant ridge and furrow in the mid-southern part of the site.

The ridge and furrow (including a headland) was recorded by the survey (orange lines).

A service extends across the southern edge of the survey (blue line).

This area also contains a former quarry, evidenced by earthwork remains (outlined in yellow).

4.3 Area 3 (Figs. 8 & 10)

An area measuring 60m x 60m was surveyed in the northeastern corner of Mill Common.

A number of linear and rectilinear/linear magnetic anomalies were detected in the northern half of the survey block (olive green). These could reflect traces of former Nissan huts, as depicted on a photograph taken c.1917 (Richard Mortimer pers. comm.). Trial excavation did not reveal traces of such buildings, which would only have survived in the topsoil (stripped prior to excavation). Curvilinear features were detected in this same area (red lines). A section of the longest was excavated, exposing a 12th century ditch with burnt material in its upper fill (*ibid*).

A water trough in the north-west corner of the plot was recorded by the survey, along with a possible pipe feed immediately to its south (blue circle/line).

A probable service extends along the eastern edge of the survey block (blue).

A path along the southern edge of the survey (purple line) features on the 1st edition O.S. map.

4.4 Area 4 (Figs.8 & 10)

An area 50m x 20m was surveyed in the south-east corner of the Common.

Strong magnetic variation indicates a buried service (blue line), the alignment of which is apparent on the surface as a shallow linear depression.

5 Conclusions

For the most part, the magnetic variation recorded reflects modern features such as boundaries, services, and land drains, and the relatively high readings associated with these features may be masking magnetically weaker anomalies.

In Area 1, the survey recorded slight magnetic traces associated with the scheduled earthwork ditch, and weak curvilinear and linear features on the eastern side of Area 1 were shown by excavation to be narrow ditched features, possibly of Late Neolithic/Early Bronze Age date.

A curvilinear ditch was detected in Area 3, and trial excavation of this dated it to the 12th century or earlier. It is possible that traces of Nissan huts were also recorded in this area.

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Figure 8: Location of survey areas

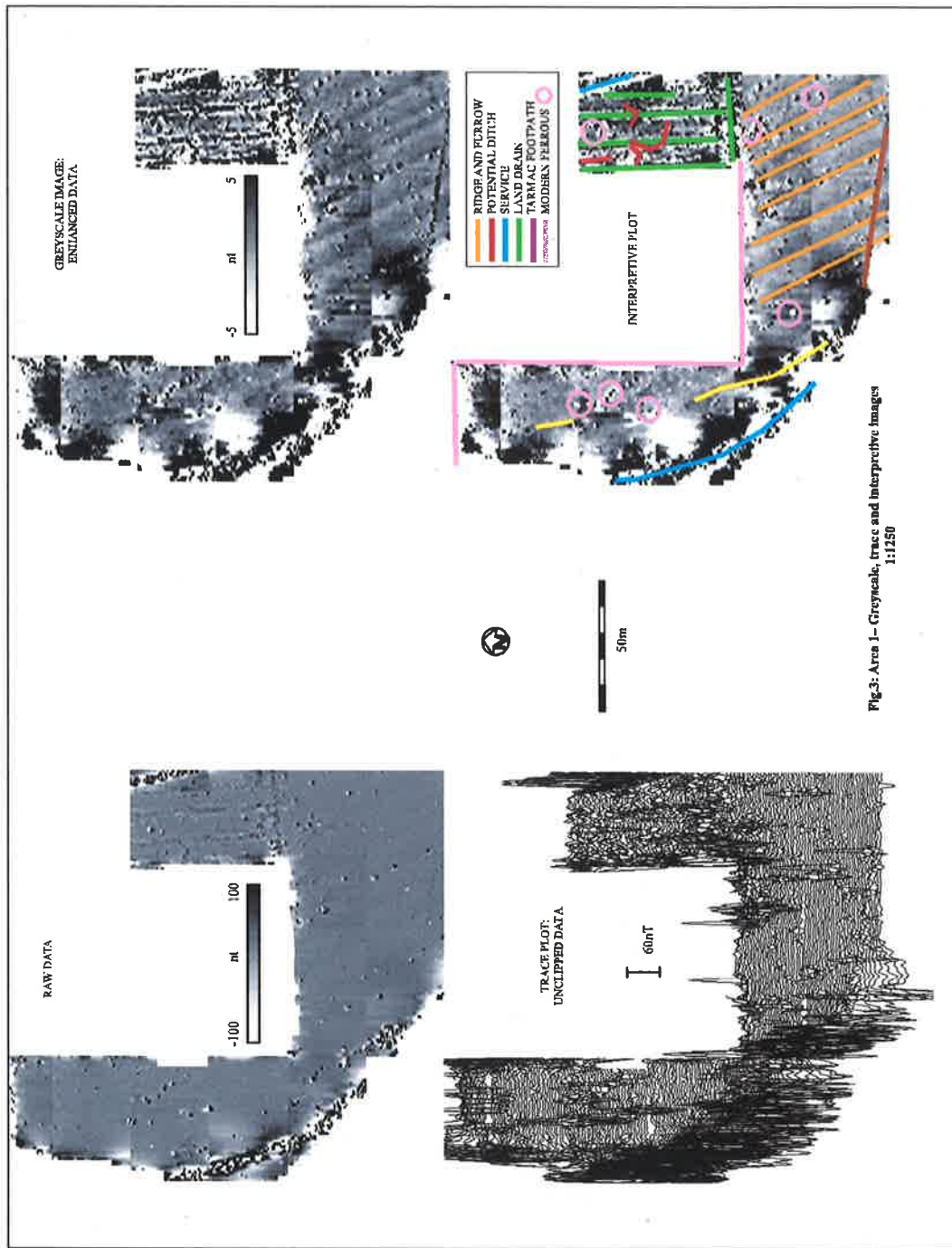


Fig.3: Area 1- Greyscale, trace and interpretive images
1:1250

Figure 9: Area 1 - greyscale, trace and interpretive images

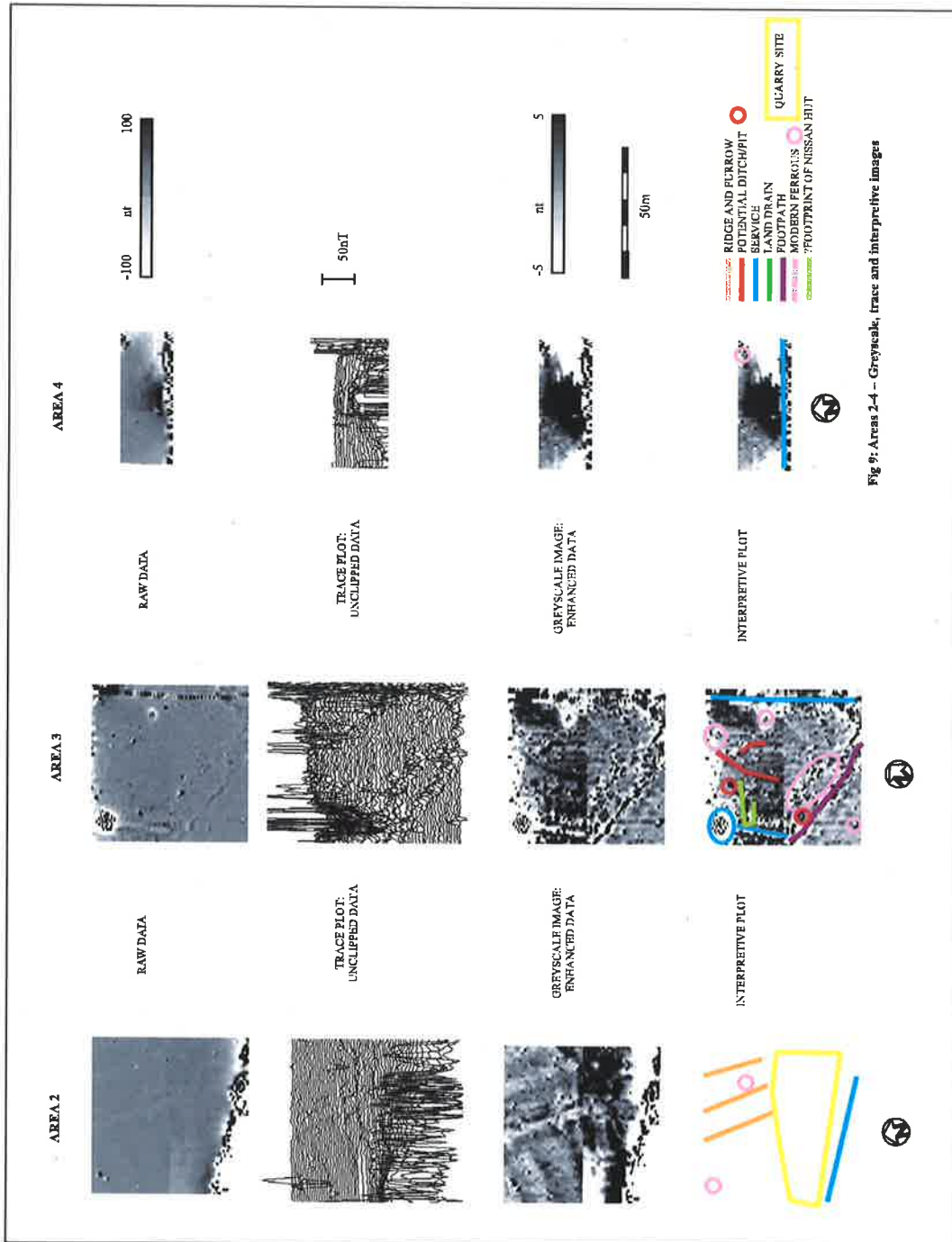


Fig 9: Areas 2-4 - Greyscale, trace and interpretive images

Figure 10: Areas 2-4 - greyscale, trace and interpretive images

Appendix 4: The Ceramic Assemblage

4a Pottery

By Paul Spoerry and Richard Mortimer

Context	Feature/ layer	Trench	Weight (g)	No.	Pottery date	Feature date
100	topsoil	1	273	27	12th-20th	19th-20th
102			24	3	13th-14th	
104			1336	340	mostly 12th-14th	
105			61	15	12th-14th	
107			1279	320	mostly 12th-14th	
101	subsoil	1	6	2	13th-14th	12th-14th
103			84	14	13th-14th	
106			72	22	12th-14th	
108	pit 115	1	20	6	12th-13th	12th-13th
112			4	3		
116	ditch 117	1	338	60	13th-14th	13th-14th
200	topsoil	2	513	9	13th	19th-20th
201	subsoil	2	210	49	mostly 12th-14th	13th-14th
215	pit 214	2	28	1	12th	12th-13th
205	pit 204	2	438	60	mostly 12th-14th. 3 roman	13th-14th
213			32	6		
203	pit 202	2	34	7	12th	12th-13th
216			10	3	12th-13th	
300	topsoil	3	20	5	12th-14th	19th-20th
301			61	10	12th-18th	
302	subsoil	3	3	1	Roman	13th-14th
303	tree throw 318	3	8	4	11th-12th	12th
315			13	2	12th	
403	topsoil	4	9	4	19th	19th-20th
402	subsoil	4	17	2	12th-13th	13th-14th
404			5	1	Roman	
416	ditch 427	4	47	1	14th-15th	14th-15th
411	ditch 414	4	3	1	12th-13th	12th-13th
417			3	1	IA/Saxon	
500	topsoil	5	90	19	13th, 17th & 20th	19th-20th
501			91	11	13th, 17th & 20th	
502	quarry 509	5	104	3	13th, 17th & 20th	19th-20th
503			34	3	17th & 20th	
504			23	3	13th, 17th & 20th	
505			47	9	13th, 17th & 20th	
506			703	82	13th, 17th & 20th	
507			79	8	mostly 13th-14th, 1 17th	
			6122	1117		

Table 4: Quantification and spot-dating of the entire pottery assemblage

The pottery assemblage from the excavations is large – 1117 sherds weighing 6.176kg with an average sherd weight of just 5.5g. However, the bulk of this material - 854 sherds weighing 4.2kg (average sherd weight 4.9g) - were recovered from topsoil and subsoil contexts. This represents 76% of the assemblage by number, 68% by weight. Of the remaining 263 sherds, 108 were recovered from modern quarry 509 and 60 were unstratified from machine excavation of ditch 117 in Trench 1. This leaves 95 sherds weighing 640g from stratified contexts (average sherd weight 6.7g).

Context	Cut	Trench	Weight (g)	No.	Comments	Feature date
108	pit 115	1	20	6	Stamford ware, Hunts Fen Sandy ware, Roman, Northamptonshire shellywares 1150-1350	12th-14th
112			4	3	Developed St Neots, Hunts Fen Sandy ware 1150-1350	
215	ditch 211	2	28	1	St Neots ware rim - pre 1050	11th
205	pit 204	2	438	60	Roman, late St Neots ware, Thetford ware, Developed St Neots, Stamford, Hunts Fen Sandy ware, possible Colne (1150-1200)	12th
213			32	6	St Neots ware, Thetford ware, Stamford ware 12th	
203	pit 202	2	34	7	St Neots ware, Hunts Fen Sandy ware, Early Medieval Ware (1050-1200)	12th
216			10	3	Roman, Thetford ware, small sherd intrusive Coarse Border Ware (1350-1500)	
303	tree 318	3	8	4	St Neots wares 900-1150	12th
315			13	2	St Neots wares, Stamford 900-1150	
416	ditch 427	4	47	1	Brill mug handle 1300-1450	14th-15th
411	ditch 414		3	1	Grimston, very worn 12th-13th	12th-
417			3	1	Handmade Middle Saxon (650-750)	13th
			640	95		

Table 5: Detailed spot-dating on pottery from stratified contexts

4b Ceramic Building Materials

Context	Feature/layer	Trench	Weight (g)	Comments	Feature date
100			441	brick	
			274	brick & tile	
102	topsoil	1	255	brick	19th-20th
104			137	30% kept, rest weighed and discarded (total 440g)	
107			90	tile	
116	ditch 117	1	44		13th-14th
201	subsoil	2	135	tile	13th-14th
205	pit 204	2	168	brick & tile	13th-14th
304	ditch 312	3	1	brick	?
315	tree throw 318	3	195	Roman	12th
401	subsoil	4	38	tile	19th-20th
410			58	tile	
415	ditch 421	4	104	tile	17th
418			276	tile	
419			184	tile	
500	topsoil	5	576	brick	19th-20th
501			402	brick & tile	
502			922	brick & tile	
503	quarry 509	5	422	brick	19th-20th
505			216	brick & tile	
506			62	Many roof tiles, 70% discarded (total 1.72kg)	
			5000		

Table 6: Quantification of ceramic building materials

4c Fired Clay, Mortar and Plaster

Context	Feature/layer	Trench	Type	Weight (g)	Feature date
104	topsoil	1	Fired clay	24	
116	ditch 117	1	Fired clay	162	13th-14th
205	pit 204	2	Fired clay	76	13th-14th
303	tree throw 318	3	Fired clay	4	12th
304	ditch 312	3	Fired clay	1	?
501	topsoil	5	Mortar	3	19th-20th
502				10	
505			Mortar	36	19th-20th
506				89	
507	quarry 509	5		7	13th-14th
502				36	
505			Plaster	3	19th-20th
506				42	

Table 7: Quantification of fired clay, mortar & plaster

Appendix 5: The Lithic Assemblage

By Barry Bishop

1 Introduction

Excavations at the above site recovered 22 struck flints and a single fragment of burnt flint. This report quantifies and describes the material according to a simplified technological/typological scheme (see Table 8), offers some comments on its significance and recommends any further work required. The material was recovered from a number of features, most of which could be dated to the Medieval period or later, although a few possible Bronze Age features may also have been present.

2 Quantification

	Decorification Flake	Flake	Trimming Flake	Blade	Retouched	Chunk	Burnt no	Burnt wt
104			1					
107	1	1						
201			2	1		1	1	8
203	1		1					
205		2				1		
301					1			
302		1						
303		1		1				
304		2						
315		1						
506				2	1			

Table 8: Quantification of Lithic Material by Context

3 Burnt Flint

A single fragment of unworked burnt flint was recovered. It had been burnt to the degree that it had changed colour and become 'fire-crazed', consistent with having been burnt in a hearth.

4 Struck Flint

4.1 Condition

The struck flint was in a variable condition with most pieces showing some degree of edge rounding and chipping, suggesting it had been redeposited/kicked around for some time and mostly consistent with residual deposition.

4.2 Raw Materials

The raw material utilized consisted of light brown to dark grey translucent flint. Cortex, where present, was thick and moderately abraded and some heavily recorticated thermal scars were also present. This suggests that the raw materials were obtained from secondary deposits, either glacial tills or alluvial gravel deposits, which would have been easily obtained in the vicinity of the site.

4.3 Technology / Typology

As a whole, the assemblage primarily represents knapping debris, no cores and only two retouched implements were present. The retouched piece consisted of a small flake fragment, possible a blade, that had small notches cut into either sides adjacent to its bulbar end, one cut from the ventral face and the other from the dorsal face. It was too fragmentary to be certain of its original form although it may plausibly have represented an atypical *mèche de forêt* (Barton 1992, 229-230). These are microlithic drill-bits and are characteristically Mesolithic in derivation. Also present was a blade with possible retouch along one of its lateral margins, resembling a backed blade. If so, this again would be most probably of Mesolithic derivation, although the retouch is light and natural damage cannot be excluded.

No further typologically diagnostic pieces were present. Technologically the assemblage appeared chronologically variable. Present were blades and flakes with blade attributes, such as parallel dorsal scars, which indicate at least part of the assemblage can be dated to the Mesolithic or Early Neolithic. However, some of the flakes were much more crudely produced and, although these are impossible to confidently date, they may indicate that as a whole the assemblage was manufactured over a much longer period, possibly continuing significantly into the Bronze Age.

5 Discussion

Most of the assemblage was residually deposited. The only potential *in situ* material consisted of two flakes recovered from the possible Bronze Age ditch (context [312], fill [304]), which were both thick, squat

and rather crudely produced and therefore typical of Bronze Age industries, although this identification must remain tentative.

Much of the assemblage was technologically characteristic of Mesolithic or Early Neolithic industries, the *mèche de forêt*, if correctly identified, would indicate a Mesolithic date, although the transition between Mesolithic and Early Neolithic lithic assemblages is very blurred and this distinction may have had little real significance, not least in this region (Reynolds and Kaner 2000). The presence of such material may not be particularly surprising given the wealth of Mesolithic /Early Neolithic activity recorded along much the Great Ouse Valley margins, and the assemblage is particularly comparable to the flintwork recently excavated at the Model Laundry site (site code HUN MOL 05).

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Appendix 6: Metalwork and Slag

6a: Metalwork

By Dennis Payne

Ctxt	Feature	Tr	SF No.	Description	Date
100	topsoil	1	10	The corroded Iron tip from a horseshoe	19th C
100	topsoil	1	9	An iron spoon or small ladle. An interesting piece as it appears Roman in style, but all Roman examples are made from copper alloy, and are known as apothecary spoons. This example, in iron, appears to be fairly modern, probably 19th century and with some industrial purpose.	19th C
100	topsoil	1	8	An Iron blade, without signs of honing, probably a <i>tine</i> from an agricultural implement such as a harrow	19th C
104	topsoil	1	14	A collection of hand-cut iron nails	Med-PM
104	topsoil	1	4	Fragment of lead strip, maybe waste from an industrial process	undatable
104	topsoil	1	12	A conical iron fitment of unknown purpose	undatable
104	topsoil	1	13	An iron blade, badly damaged and corroded, probably from a domestic knife	undatable
104	topsoil	1	15	A shank from an iron nail	undatable
107	topsoil	1	7	A small copper alloy fitting, drilled for fixing, possibly a medieval harness decoration	13th-14th century
116	ditch 117	1	16	An iron stud or nail	undatable
201	subsoil	2	3	scrap lead, probably from some kind of industrial process	undatable
201	subsoil	2	6	A copper alloy object. Looks like the wards of a medieval casket key, but made in flat section and therefore probably not from a key (most, if not all, casket keys are rounded, rather than flat-sectioned).	undatable
216	pit 202	2	5	A fragment of a copper alloy ring, 23mm diameter, not a finger ring, rather from a harness	Medieval
302	subsoil	3	none	A small iron hook	undatable
405	subsoil	4	none	a small iron stud or nail	undatable
504	quarry 509	5	none	Two fragments of iron sheeting	modern
505	quarry 509	5	21	An iron nail or stud	undatable
505	quarry 509	5	1	An iron pointed foot, appears to be from an agricultural implement	modern
505	quarry 509	5	19	A fragment of iron – unidentifiable.	modern
505	quarry 509	5	20	A fragment of iron – unidentifiable	modern
506	quarry 509	5		Two fragments of iron with glass fragments fused/attached	modern

Table 9: Metalwork

6b: Slag

Context	Layer	Trench	Weight (g)	Feature date
100			32	
102	topsoil	1	8	19th/20th
104			37	
107			13	
106	subsoil	1	164	12th-14th
300	topsoil	3	8	19th/20th
309			3	
501	topsoil	5	32	19th/20th
			297	

Table 10: Slag

Appendix 7: Zooarchaeological and Botanical Remains**7a The Faunal Remains**

By Chris Faine

1 Introduction

A total of 86 "countable" bones weighing 8.49kg were recovered from the excavations at Mill Common, Huntingdon. The assemblage derives from pits, ditches, quarries and tree throws. A further quantity of bone, unstratified and therefore undatable material from topsoil and subsoil contexts, weighing 3.72kg, has been scanned and the results presented in Table 14. The condition of the bone on the whole is good albeit extremely fragmented in many cases. Animal remains were recovered from contexts dated to the following broad periods:

- | | |
|---------------|---------------------------------|
| Prehistoric? | - possibly Bronze Age |
| Medieval | - principally 12th-14th century |
| Post-medieval | - 17th century? |
| Modern | - 19-20th century |

2 Methodology

All of the bones from Mill Common were collected by hand; hence a bias towards smaller fragments is to be expected. The bones were recorded on an MS Access database. All elements identifiable to species and over 25% complete were included in the database. Those not identifiable were classed as being from medium/large mammals but not included in any quantification. As mentioned earlier a number of contexts consisted of top/subsoil layers containing large amounts of extremely fragmented bone. These contexts were only examined briefly to ascertain a rough distribution of species and other features of note, and not included in any final quantification. Table 14 shows the species present in each of these layers. However, where certain elements are of interest they are broadly discussed below.

Initially all elements were assessed in terms of siding (where appropriate), completeness, tooth wear stages (also where applicable) and epiphyseal fusion. In addition, any taphonomy i.e. burning, gnawing etc. was recorded where necessary. Any butchery or evidence of pathology was also recorded using separate tables in the main database. Completeness was assessed by percentage and anatomical zones present (after Dobney & Reilly, 1988). Tooth wear was assessed using Grant (1982) for domestic ungulates and Levine (1982), for horses. Metrical analysis for horse remains was carried out using Von den Driesch & Boessneck (1982). The broad species distribution for the entire assemblage can be seen in table 1.

3 The Assemblage

3.1 Prehistoric

The fills of two ditches (304/306) yielded no datable finds but are believed to be of prehistoric date. Both contexts were heavily fragmented, with 304 containing three cattle molars, and 306 containing heavily fragmented pig remains.

3.2 Medieval

The medieval assemblage can be split into two, earlier and later, sub-phases:

12th century

The amount of bone from this phase is relatively large, with a pit (202) producing twenty-six fragments of heavily butchered bone identified as medium/large mammal, in addition to tree throw fills (303/315) containing heavily butchered cattle bone and horse remains. One humerus from a medium sized bird, most likely chicken or pheasant (Genus *Phasianidae*), was also recovered from 303. A cattle horn core from 303 may show evidence of bone working, represented by a series of concentric cuts and scrapes around the base of the horn.

13-14th century

A much wider range of species were recovered from 13th-14th century contexts, with sheep/goat, pig and bird remains being seen in topsoil layers (201/302) and quarry pits (507). Many remains showed evidence of butchery. A single pit (205) contained 50 heavily butchered cattle fragments. The bird remains are those of large birds, most likely goose or swan (*Anserinae/Anatidae*). The age ranges of the butchered animals are limited to young adults/mature individuals.

Post-Medieval

The largest numbers of identifiable fragments from the assemblage were recovered from contexts dating from this period. As one can see in table 2, the majority of the context comprises remains from a minimum of two adult horses, recovered from a large civil war era defensive ditch (cut 421). A variety of elements were recovered from these contexts, most notably 416/418 and 419. Despite a number of long bones being recovered there is little evidence of butchery on these remains, although a single horse tibia in 419 shows several cut marks on its medial articular facet. A mandible was aged using crown heights to around 14-17 years of age. The mandible also showed evidence of pathology in the form of osteolytic pitting around the alveolar bone, which is not unexpected given the degree of tooth wear. Only one metatarsal was intact enough to warrant metrical analysis, indicating an animal with a withers height of 1.4m (around 14 hands high). In addition to horse a lesser amount of heavily butchered cattle and sheep/goat remains were recovered.

Modern

The majority of 19/20th century contexts consisted of material from the top and subsoil layers mentioned earlier, along with several quarry pits. Topsoil layer 105 contains a wide variety of heavily butchered sheep/goat, cattle and pig remains. The later phases of the quarry pits in trench 5 (502/503/505) contained amounts of butchered sheep/goat

remains, along with rabbit. The rabbit remains (also found in layer 105) are most likely the result of modern intrusions.

4 Discussion

The assemblage is both small and widely spread and few patterns emerge. In the medieval phases cattle remains dominate whereas the post-medieval, 17th-century layers have a prevalence of horse remains. These are, however, all from the same area of a single ditch. Sheep/goat make up the third most frequent species across the assemblage as a whole, and their remains being were found in similar numbers in all main phases. The butchery marks found on most elements are severe in nature and are indicative of exploitation of animals for meat rather than other uses. Aside from the worked horn core found in medieval context 303, there is no evidence for crafts from any phase. Bird remains are few but concentrated in 12th to 14th century contexts, although in the limited numbers one might expect from a site at some distance from the main urban area at the time.

	NISP	NISP %	MNI	MNI %
Cattle (<i>Bos</i>)	31	36%	3	25%
Horse (<i>Equus</i>)	21	24.4%	2	16.7%
Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>)	16	18.6%	2	16.7%
Pig (<i>Sus scrofa</i>)	7	8.1%	1	8.3%
Rabbit (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>)	6	7%	1	8.3%
Large Bird (<i>Anserinae/Anatidae</i>)	3	3.5%	1	8.3%
Medium Bird (<i>Phasianidae</i>)	1	1.1%	1	8.3%
Small bird	1	1.1%	1	8.3%
Total	86	100%	12	100%

Table 11: Species distribution for entire assemblage (identifiable specimens)

	Prehistoric	Medieval	Post-Med	Modern
Cattle (<i>Bos</i>)	4	21	5	1
Horse (<i>Equus</i>)		2	19	0
Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>)	1	5	5	5
Rabbit (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>)		1		5
Pig (<i>Sus scrofa</i>)	2	5		
Large Bird (<i>Anserinae/Anatidae</i>)		3		
Medium Bird (<i>Phasianidae</i>)		1		
Small Bird		1		
Total	7	39	29	11

Table 12: Species distribution by site phase (identifiable specimens)

	Cranial	Axial	Ribs	Front limbs	Hind limbs
Cattle (<i>Bos</i>)	7	6	0	13	3
Horse (<i>Equus</i>)	5	4	1	2	9
Sheep/Goat (<i>Ovis/Capra</i>)	1	2	0	3	10
Rabbit (<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>)	1	0	0	2	3
Pig (<i>Sus scrofa</i>)	1	1	0	2	2
Large Bird (<i>Anserinae/Anatidae</i>)	0	0	0	2	1
Medium Bird (<i>Phasianidae</i>)	0	0	0	1	0
Small Bird	0	1	0	0	0

Table 13: Body part distribution by species

Context	Type	Phase	Identifiable Species Present	Notes
100	Topsoil	19/20th	Cattle	-
102	Topsoil	19/20th	Cattle	-
103	Subsoil	13-14th	Cattle	Butchered
104	Topsoil	19/20th	Cattle	-
105	Topsoil	19/20th	Cattle, Sheep/Goat, Pig,	Heavily butchered, some burning
106	Subsoil	12/14th	Pig	-
107	Topsoil	19/20th	Cattle, Pig	-
200	Topsoil	19/20th	Cattle, Sheep/Goat, Horse	Butchered
201	Subsoil	13/14th	Sheep/Goat	Some burning
300	Topsoil	19/20th	Cattle, Sheep/Goat	-
301	Topsoil	19/20th	None	-
302	Subsoil	13/14th	None	-

Table 14: Outline analysis of fragmented surface contexts

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- | | | |
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7b: Environmental Appraisal

by Rachel Fosberry

1 Introduction and Methods

Eight samples for environmental processing were taken from across the excavated areas and were submitted for an initial appraisal. None of the samples produced a sufficient density of material for further quantitative analysis. The samples submitted were largely from medieval features but also included prehistoric material.

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 15.

2 Results

Sample Number	Context Number	trench	Cut Number	Context type	Sample size	weight	Feature description	Volume processed	Results
1	306	3	314	ditch fill	30	kg	ne/sw ?pre ditch	10 L	No plant remains
2	304	3	312	ditch fill	30	kg	w/e pre ditch	10 L	No plant remains
3	204	2	204	pit fill	20	dp	dark med quarry fill	10 L	Charred cereal grains (wheat and oats), legume (pea/bean)
4	203	2	202	pit fill	40	spm	top fill med strip quarry	10L	Poorly preserved cereal grains (unidentifiable)
5	415	4	421	ditch fill	20	spm	top silt fill CW ditch	10 L	No plant remains
6	216	2	202	pit fill	40	spm	bott fill med strip quarry	10 L	Few cereal grains including barley
7	418	4	421	ditch fill	20	tp	main lower fill of CW ditch	10 L	No plant remains
8	419	4	421	ditch fill	20	tp	lower clay silt fill of CW ditch	10 L	Waterlogged sample. Many seeds including bramble, poppy, pondweed, insects and wetland snails

Table 15: Environmental Samples

Four of the samples, including those from prehistoric features, did not contain any preserved plant remains. Three samples contained low quantities of charred plant remains in the form of charcoal fragments and charred cereal grains. Sample 8 was preserved by waterlogging and contained several seeds.

3 Conclusions

In general the samples were poor in terms of identifiable plant material and on the basis of such limited plant remains, only tentative conclusions can be drawn.

The waterlogged plant remains give a good indication of the plants growing nearby. Brambles and poppies are common plants with the brambles offering an additional food source.

The charred plant remains are dominated by the grains of crop plants, namely cereals (wheat, oats and barley). The grains may have been accidentally burnt while being dried prior to storage or during cooking over open fires. The presence of a single bean could be significant as legumes are less likely to be burnt accidentally than grain, as they do not need to be exposed to heat as cereals do.

The range food plants present suggests that the charred plant debris derives from domestic, culinary activities rather than agricultural

processes. Large amounts of cereal grain with no chaff and very few weed seeds is a typical early medieval assemblage as described by Grieg (1991).

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Plate 2: The DOE excavation



Plate 3: Early setbacks



Plate 4: Wet



Plate 5: Hot



Plate 6: Trench 1



Plate 7: Trench 2



Plate 8: Trench 3



Plate 9: Trench 4



Plate 10: Trench 5



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