



**Cambridge Archaeology Field
Group**

An archaeological evaluation at

Abbey Farm

Ickleton

South Cambridgeshire

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CAFG code IAF2019

2019 to 2021

Summary

Little previous archaeological investigation has been done on the site of the Benedictine priory at Ickleton – this is also true for most of the small rural nunneries in England. Previous excavation, prior to conversion of the barns at Abbey Farm to business activities, had shown the possible robbed out footings of a perimeter wall and a more recent geophysical survey has indicated the possibility of an area with substantial buried footings. A single 10x2m trench was excavated in 2019/20/21 by CAFG members to a depth of c1.0m. No substantial structures were uncovered although mortar indicating the possible line of the perimeter wall was found. The eastern end of the trench had a large amount of flint nodules associated with pottery of the 17/18th centuries. Sealed beneath this were linear features and mortar spreads containing 12th century medieval pottery belonging to an early phase of the priory. These features probably represent the remains of slight timber buildings. Sealed below these features by a layer of brown sandy clay soil and cut into the underlying natural gravel were four holes, possibly for posts, and a shallow ditch also with 12th century pottery. An iron pin with decorated head of 9th century date from the 17/18th century deposit hints at earlier settlement nearby.

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Acknowledgments

The committee and members of Cambridge Archaeology Field Group (CAFG) are very grateful for the invitation by Mr Lewis Duke, owner of Abbey Farm, to undertake this excavation. The support and encouragement of The Ickleton Society through Rachel Radford is very much appreciated. The results of the geophysical survey by RheeSearch were invaluable in identifying where to place the trench. We thank Paul Blinkhorn for identification of the pottery finds.

1. Introduction – Archaeological and Historical background

1.1 Abbey farm Ickleton stands on the site of the Benedictine Priory, a nunnery dedicated to St Mary Magdalene, created in the later 12th century and dissolved in 1538. There is little evidence apparent for the nature of the buildings belonging to the Priory other than a barn, now converted to offices, and Abbey farmhouse which contains some architectural carved stone. The owner Mr L Duke, had commissioned a geophysical survey in the field to the north of the farmhouse and CAFG was asked to examine this area by excavation with a suitable trench.

1.2 This archaeological evaluation was undertaken to establish if the geophysical results represented surviving structures and if so the date and nature of these features.

1.3 There is not much archaeological evidence from small rural nunneries in Cambridgeshire or indeed from elsewhere in the country. The Benedictine nunnery at Swaffham Bulbeck had a small excavation in 1997¹ which exposed the top of a 1m wide wall of clunch, yellow mortar and stone paving slabs thought to date to 12th to 14thc. The current house at Swaffham has an undercroft which belonged to the buildings of the nunnery. In the same year a small excavation took place at Abbey Farm Ickleton² prior to re-development of the 13th century Great Barn. Of the five trenches excavated around the Great Barn none produced clear evidence of medieval activity – truncation and gravel quarrying may have removed shallow features and rammed chalk floors would seem to date to the 17th century at the earliest. Three trenches were excavated across the line of the new roadway to the Great Barn, trench H the

¹ Roberts, Judith Medieval building remains adjacent to The Abbey, Swaffham Bulbeck, 1997, Cambs CCc Report No. 137

² Reagan, Roderick M An archaeological evaluation at Abbey Farm, Ickleton, Cambridgeshire, 1997, Cambridge Archaeological Unit, Report No, 217

most westerly, nearest the public road appears to have evidence of a sunken structure but also a preceding east west aligned wall, mainly robbed out, but consisting of 'a bed of chalk and grey clunch rubble this in part sealed and bonded by a light yellow mortar' – presumably the outer perimeter wall of the nunnery³.

1.4 There is little in the way of recent publications on rural nunneries and very few plans of sites similar to that at Ickleton. A study of the abbey site at Burnham, Buckinghamshire⁴, presents a plan of an Augustinian Canonesses's church and accommodation which are separated from the secular area. The secular area to the east is enclosed by wall and ditch and it might be expected that at Ickleton there is a similar separation and segregation of the nuns within the religious area.

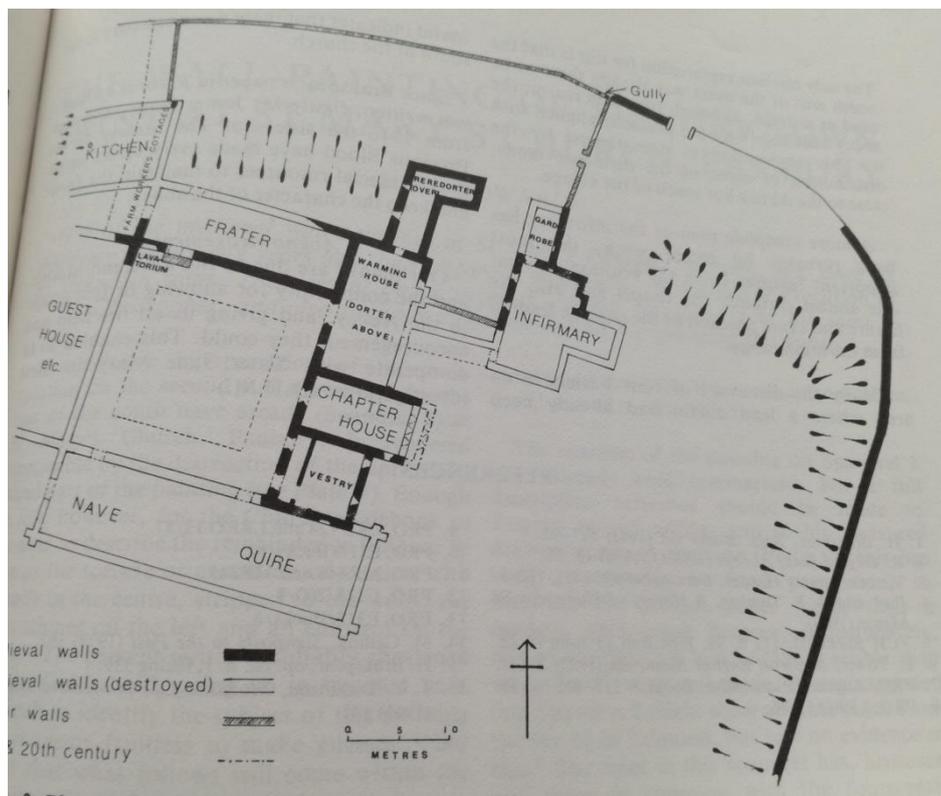


Figure 1 Burnham Abbey, Buckinghamshire

Of the five nunneries in Cambridgeshire only that at Chatteris was established before the Norman conquest of 1066. The priory of St Radegund, Cambridge,

³ Ibid. p8

⁴ Sister Jane Mary SPD and DD and DM Miller The Manor and Abbey of Burnham, 1985, Records of Buckinghamshire Vol. 27

established in 1133 for Benedictine nuns was dissolved by the bishop of Ely in 1496 to become the site of Jesus College. Denny Abbey was established as a Benedictine nunnery in 1159, between 1170 and 1305 it was occupied by the Knight's Templars and thereafter by the Franciscan nuns, the Poor Clares, and dissolved in 1539. The dedication of the priory at Swaffham Bulbeck is unknown but it was established by Isobel de Bolebec in 1199.

It is not clear who established the priory at Ickleton or exactly when. The first reference to a priory at Ickleton concerns a pension from the church at Fowlmere that the nuns claim was assigned to them in 1163 by St Thomas of Canterbury.⁵ By 1185 the Honour of Boulogne was in the hands of Henry II when he gave them 30s 5d in alms from the farm of the city of Winchester and by 1279 it is stated that the manor of Ickleton held by the prioress was held of the that Honour. In the Victoria County History it is suggested that the priory was founded by a member of the Valoignes family towards the end of the reign of King Stephen (1135-1154) but more recent work has identified a number of charters belonging to Stephen which suggest he was perhaps the prime mover in the establishment.⁶

House	Dedication	Order	County	Diocese	Founder and Date
Cambridge	St Radegund	B.Pr	Cam	Ely	C1133-8 temp. Nigel Bishop of Ely
Chatteris	St Mary	B.Ab	Cam	Ely	Eadnoth, abbot of Ramsey, c 1010
Denny	St James and St Leonard	Fr.Ab	Cam	Ely	Mary de Valence, Countess of Pembroke, 1342
Eltisley	?	?	Cam	Ely	Unknown possibly 10 th c.
Ickleton	St Mary Magd.	B.Pr	Cam	Ely	Uncertain c1190
Swaffham Bulbeck	?	B.pr.	Cam	Ely	Isobel de Bolebec probably 1199
Waterbeach	St Mary of Pity and St Clare	Fr.Pr	Cam	Ely	Denise de Montchesney, 1294 Removed to Denny, 1348

Table 1. Nunneries of Cambridgeshire

⁵ 'Houses of Benedictine nuns: Priory of Ickleton', in *A History of the County of Cambridge and the Isle of Ely: Volume 2*, ed. L F Salzman (London, 1948), pp. 223-226

⁶ Vincent N 1999 New charters of King Stephen with some reflections upon the Royal Forests during the Anarchy. *English Historical Review* vol 144 issues 458 p 899-928

1.5 The Cambridge Historic Environment Records (CHER) has a number of records of monuments and finds in the parish of Ickleton. These range from Mesolithic to modern. In view of the current, May 2020, difficulties with the Coronavirus (Covid-19) pandemic this report does not contain a summary.

2. Aims and objectives

The excavation was intended to examine the anomalies seen on the geophysics (see below) to establish if they represented datable building structures relating to the priory. It was hoped that significant finds of structures, building material, pottery and other items would be recovered to provide evidence of the nature of the features.

3. Topography and Geology

3.1 The underlying geology consists of river gravel overlying middle chalk as reported in excavations adjacent to the barns approximately 200m to the east. The site excavated lies approximately 50m north of Abbey Farm house on a flat grass field, there is no local knowledge or evidence that this field has been ploughed. To the west, approximately 50m away, is a ditch running south to north which turns east along the north edge of the field and barns. This ditch is fed from the west by a ditch which has significant right angle turns suggesting it has been altered in the distant past.

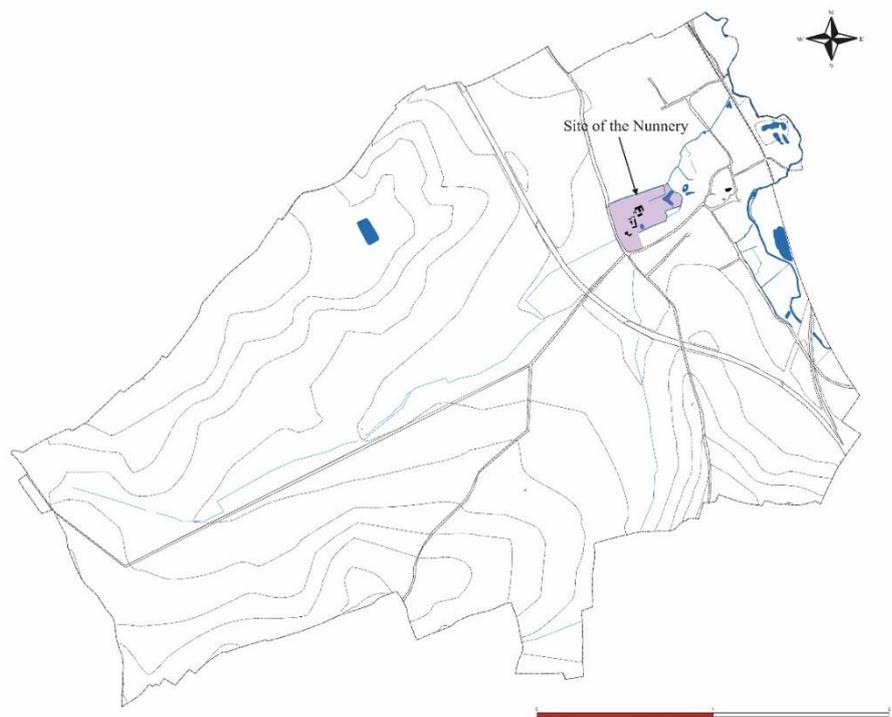


Figure 2 Plan of the site of the nunnery showing water courses from west and south west

3.2 Geophysics

At the request of the site owner in 2016 Archaeology RheeSearch Group carried out a resistivity and magnetometry survey. In their area 6 they identified what they believed to be a building possibly the gate house on the western side of the priory enclosure. Additionally there appeared to be a north south wall in area 6 extending south into their area 5 – this would seem to be an outer perimeter wall of the priory enclosure.

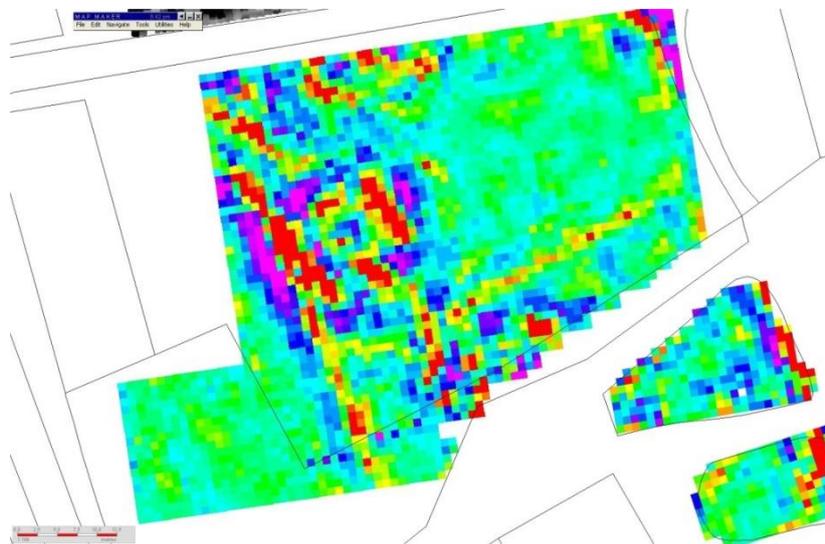


Figure 3 Magnetometry results by RheeSearch

4. Methods and constraints

Excavation took place between the 1st and 9th of June 2019. The turf and top soil were removed mechanically [1901] from a trench 10x2m. This surface was then trowelled down to approximately 0.2m depth, below this level all contexts were removed by hand – trowel or occasionally mattock and spade – down c1.0m to the natural gravel and clay. It was expected to complete this trench in the following year but due to restriction imposed during the COVID-19 pandemic only a short excavation could be done in 2020 and excavation took two more weeks in July and September 2021. The trench was covered between visits but it was difficult to ensure continuity of excavation and recording. In 2019 only half the width of the trench was excavated - 1m on the southern side along the 10m length of the trench. The 1x10m strip was divided into nominal

lengths of c1m to give each excavator a defined area – thereafter in 2020 and 2021 each context was excavated separately.

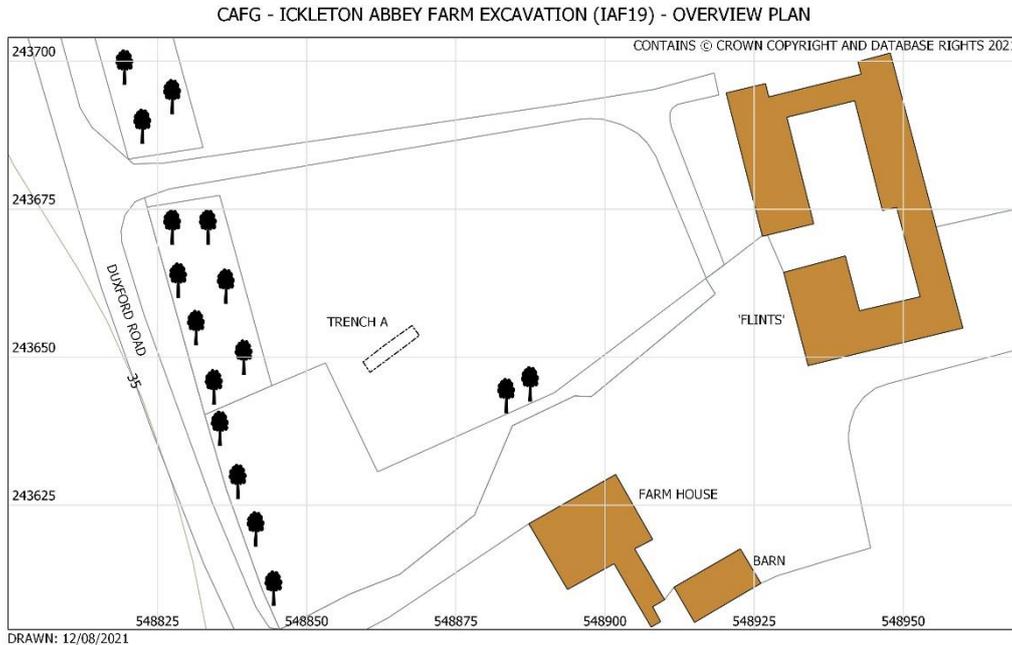


Figure 4 Plan of site

5. Results

The results of each of the four weeks of excavation in 2019, 2020 and 2021 will be presented below separately and a final interpretation will be attempted after these sections.

Excavation 2019

5.1 Contexts [1902] [1904] [1906] [1907] [1908] [1909] [1910] were immediately below the turf and top soil [1901] all consisting of fine silty soil with varying amount of small flint. Context [1905] had a high percentage of large flints. Further contexts of silty soil with small flints [1911 to 1913], [1920] to [1921] and [1928] to [1929] all overlay areas of heavy large flint – [1914] [1915]. Most of these contexts contained 17/18th century pottery, with small numbers of medieval pot, along with a large quantity of red ceramic roof tile. Where these roof tiles had peg holes the holes were all round and tapering. In addition there were 12 pieces of ceramic floor tile, some glazed, varying in thickness from 24 to 55mm. An unusual find was an iron pin

with a decorated head (small find 17/1907) later identified as dating to the 9th century.

5.2 Towards the western end of the trench there was an area of soil, gravel and yellow mortar [1930]; this seemed to align with a linear feature seen in the resistivity survey, thought to be the western perimeter boundary of the priory enclosure.

5.3 At the western end of the trench contexts [1903] [1906] [1913] [1917] [1924] [1926] [1927] had clear differences compared to those east of the mortar [1930], the probable boundary – they were largely soil with some smaller flint and as far as excavated in this session there was no large flint below them. In addition only 12th century pottery was recovered in [1924] and [1926] unlike the 17th/18th pottery found east of the mortar feature.

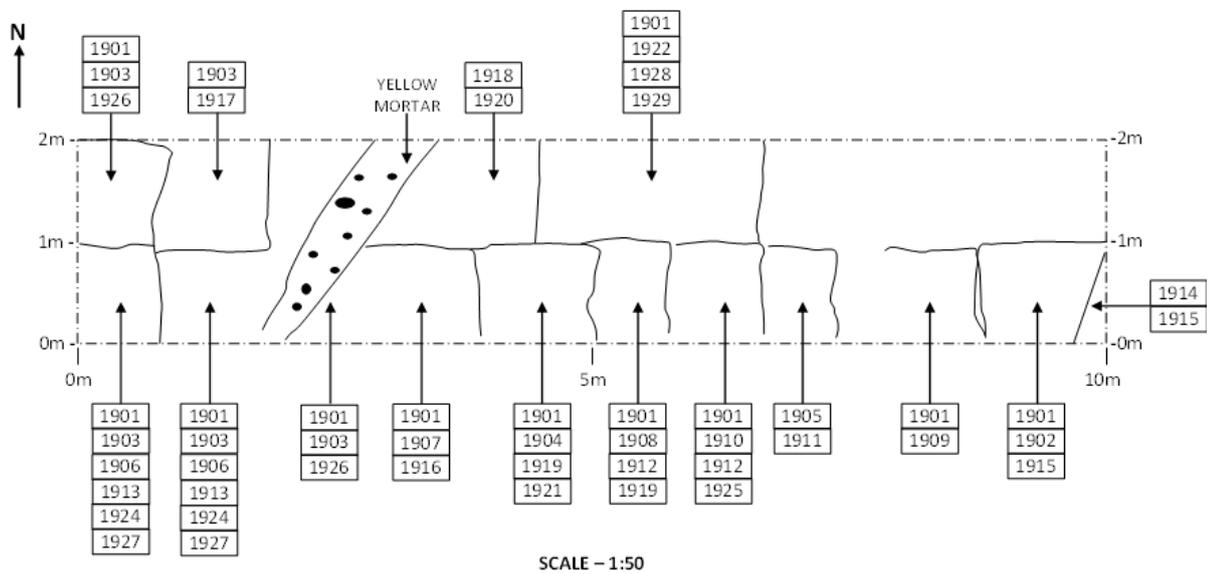


Fig.5 Schematic drawing of excavated trench with indication of contexts phase 5



Fig.6 Looking west along trench showing heavy flint and clunch with, at the far end, an area of mortar of a possible wall.

Excavation 2020

- 5.4 In 2020 a further week of excavation was undertaken but due to COVID-19 restrictions the number of excavators was limited and, in the time available, it was not possible to complete the excavation of the trench.
- 5.5 All the contexts [2002] to [2013] together with [2017] and [2018] consisted of brown soil with varying amounts of flint, some large some small, with brick and tile. Interspersed with these contexts were contexts [2014], [2015] and [2016] which were brown soil mixed with a greater amount of mortar. Although some contexts contained 17/18th century pottery [2003] most had small numbers of sherds of 15/16th century pottery – chiefly Late Medieval Transitional ware (LMTw) dated c1400 to 1550. This suggests there was activity on this part of the site, or nearby, in the final years of the priory before its dissolution in 1536.
- 5.6 All the above contexts seemed to seal contexts of different nature – most with evidence of mortar, possibly relating to underlying structures or robbed out structures. When excavated in the following year these lower contexts only contained 12th century pottery (see plan below).
- 5.7 At this depth of excavation, a feature with a fill of dark brown soil [2020] was seen cut into the underlying contexts – this later proved to be a large probable post hole. The one sherd of LMTW pot suggests this was feature of the 15/16th century.
- 5.8 Context [2023], a yellowish mortar, and [2024], a whitish mortar, may be floors inside a building. To the west of these beyond the gravel of [2025] is what appears to be a north-south wall of clunch and flint [2026] and to its west a deposit of flints, mortar [2028].

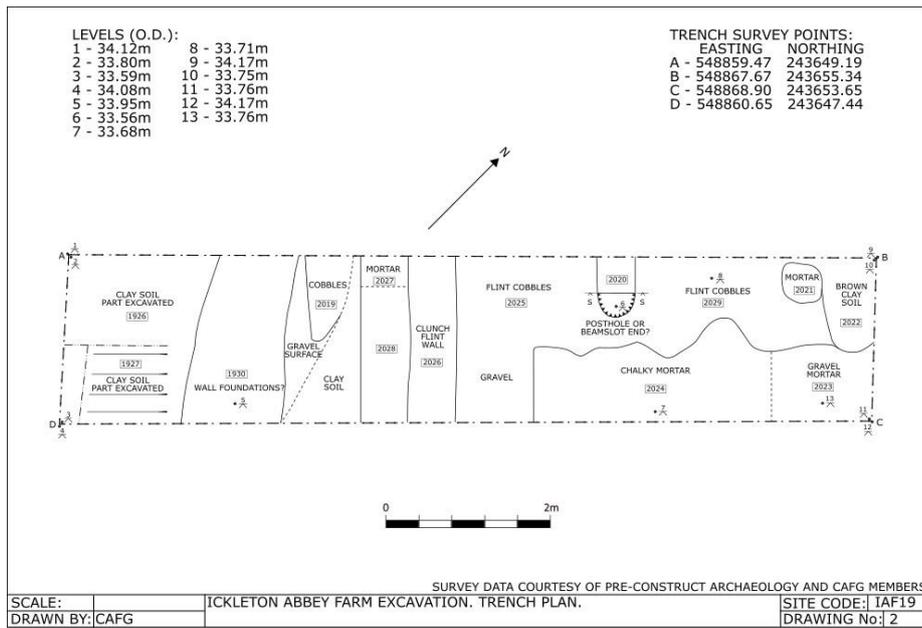


Fig. 7 Plan of trench at end of the 2020 excavation, phase 4.



Fig. 8 Looking west at end of 2020 excavation week.

6.0 Excavation 2021

Excavation in the two weeks in 2021 were solely within what appeared to be contexts dating to the medieval period – the early period of the occupation of the Priory.

6.1 First week

6.1 The supposed perimeter wall of the priory precinct was expected to be uncovered at the western end of the trench – at the excavated depth of 0.4m the only feature on this alignment was a gravel layer c0.1m thick [2134=1930]. Medieval pottery was recovered from the soil abutting and perhaps overlapping the gravel. Below the gravel is an orange brown soil [2140] [2145] [2183] part of the natural underlying geology.

6.2 The western end of the trench – west of the supposed perimeter feature was further excavated with a light brown mixture of orange and yellow soil [2135] down to a darker brown soil [2151] which seemed to extend east below the supposed perimeter feature. Below [2151] was c 0.04m of brown soil with occasional large flints [2160]. To try to resolve the relationship of contexts which might relate to the linear perimeter feature a 0.5x2.8m section was excavated from the north west corner of the trench along the north side of the trench [2163] – no significant feature was seen below the thin gravel context but the underlying clayey soil was the top of the natural geology. Pottery from these contexts included Hertfordshire-type grey ware (19 sherds) plus one sherd each of Shelly coarse ware and Developed Stamford ware suggesting a mid-12th century date. One of two pieces of red roof tile was partly glazed.

6.3 At 3.7m along the trench from the west there was a distinct change to contexts starting with [2028] of brown soil with flints and mortar and beyond this, to the east, a complex of contexts perhaps representing floors or surfaces in a building. The area between the supposed perimeter feature and west of [2028] contained a mixture of soil, flints and gravel [2141] overlying in part brown soil with occasional chalk fleck [2164]. These contexts contained 12th century pottery and [2141] contained broken parts of a lava quern stone.

6.4 Removal of the thin layers of gravelly mortar [2023=2137] chalky mortar [2024] and the flint cobbles of [2025= 2131/32/33] at the eastern end of the trench exposed a platform of chalk with flint [2142]. This seemed to be parallel sides but tending northwest to south east – therefore not parallel to possible wall line [2138] or the supposed perimeter of the precinct. The solid nature of this feature suggest that it was floor or under floor of a building. Dug through this chalk floor was a round hole c1.0m diameter and 0.75m deep [2139=2020], this was first seen in the previous year so is a later feature – possible for a large post. The hole contained one small piece of clay pipe in the upper fill suggesting an 18thc date for its infill or this may be an intrusion from the context above. There was also one sherd of LMTw pot in [2139], so perhaps 15/16th century activity.

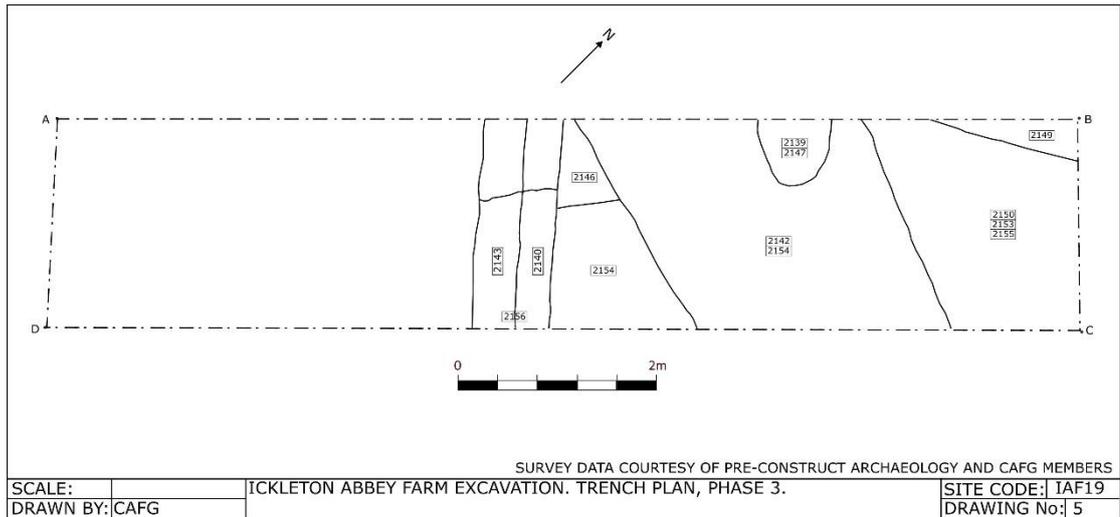


Fig 10 View looking west with chalk platform

6.5 Removal of the chalk floor [2142] exposed a complex of contexts extending from the east end of the trench to the mid-point of the length of the trench at 5.0m. The chalk floor [2142] contained pottery dated to the 12th century – Ely

ware, Shelly Coarseware and Hertfordshire-type Grey ware. All the pottery found in contexts below the chalk was dated to the 12th century - in addition to those wares in the chalk there were sherds of Brill/Boarstall ware, Hedingham ware, Developed Stamford ware and Miscellaneous Medieval Sandy wares – all sherd typical of this area at this date.

6.6 This division of the east from the west end at c5.0m, the mid point of the trench, was first seen in 2020 after the removal of the overlying 18thc deposit of flints – there appeared to be remnants of a wall of clunch and flint [2026] [2027] [2028]. The north end of this feature was not clear [2027] and the removal of the flint and clunch [2026, 2027, 2028] exposed an underlying, north south, linear feature of dark soil and yellowish clay [2138]. Below [2138] was a further linear feature [2143] filled with dark soil [2144] – this may have been an earlier beam slot for a timber building, an iron horse shoe was set upright in this context (small find 1/2143). Abutting [2143] to the east was a linear fill of yellow clay and soil [2148], perhaps also part of a timber wall. The flint and mortar deposit [2027] was shallow and probably was the result of wall demolition and flint recovery.

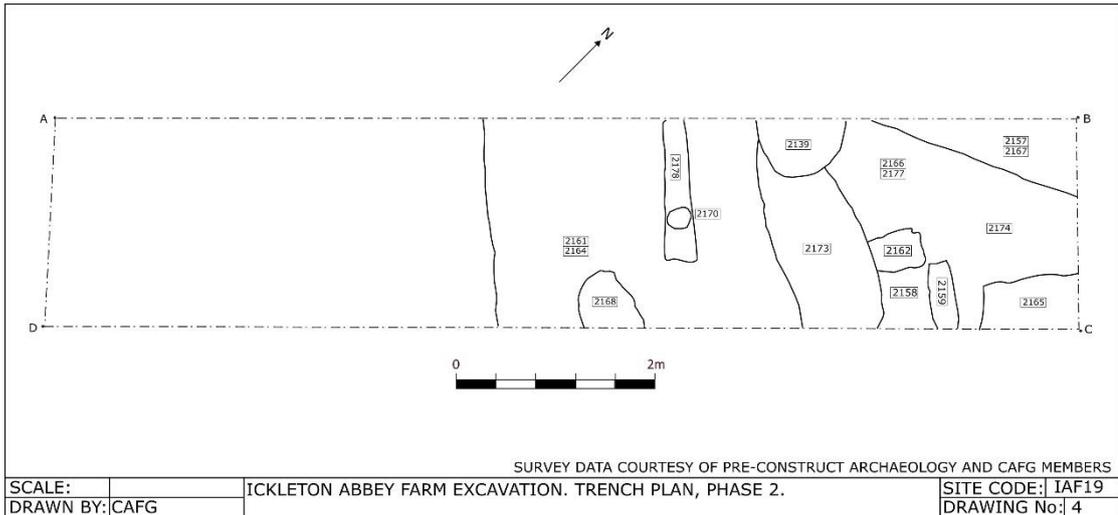
6.7 Beneath the chalk platform [2142] was a layer of soil with large flints [2154] with a similar layer [2150], with perhaps less flint, between [2142] and the east end of the trench. Below [2150] were further layers of soil with some flint [2153] and [2155].

6.8 Removal of the linear features in [2143, 2148] exposed immediately below two areas of flint and mortar, perhaps areas where flint had been recovered from a demolished wall, and below these was a layer of brown soil with charcoal [2161] which extended below [2154]. The same pattern of sherds of 12th century pot with some red roof tile and fragments of bone were recovered from many of the above contexts.

Second week

6.9 Further excavation in the western end of the trench (west of the supposed perimeter barrier) removed a brown silty clay soil with chalk flecks [2163], [2164] and [2181] exposing the compacted gravelly clay of the natural soil below. These contexts contained occasional sherds of 12th century pot.

6.10 Removal of the linear features [2143, 2148] had exposed a layer of brown soil with charcoal which extended eastwards. At 6.20m along the trench from the west a further linear feature [2178] running north south across the trench was exposed. Associated with this was a post hole [2179] and to the east areas of brown soil with charcoal and brown soil with larger flints [2173, 2176, 2157, 2184]. Many of these containing 12th century pot, occasional red roof tile and bone fragments.



6.11 Below the contexts described in 5.18 above was a layer of brown soil with occasional flints [2183, 2185, 2186]. These sealed a gully [2187] and the probable post holes [2188] [2189] [2190] and [2191]. Sherds of 12th century pot and bone fragments were recovered from the post holes.

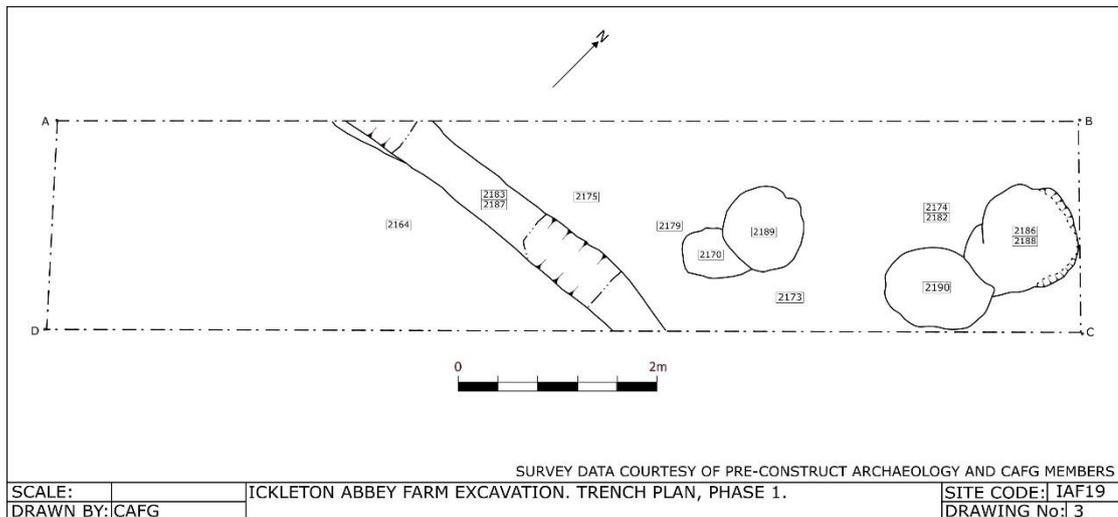




Fig. 13 view looking east

7.0 Conclusion

- 7.1 The geophysics and aerial photographs in section 3.2 above suggest that there is a feature, probably a boundary structure, running approximately north south. There is considerable disturbance to the east of this, possibly evidence of buildings. The single 10x2m trench excavated in 2019/20/21 was placed to explore the boundary and buildings.
- 7.2 The north south feature was not, on excavation, a substantial structure but seems to be at best a thin layer of gravel/mortar placed on the natural gravelly clay. This may have been the footing of a low wall but no evidence was found to prove this. To the west of the supposed boundary, in the 1m of trench excavated, the soils dipped down to the west and below the turf and top soil contained exclusively 12th century pottery. This suggests that there are further features to the west or possible the ground drops into a ditch on the west side of the possible boundary.
- 7.3 Six phases were identified in the eastern half of the trench.
- 7.4 Phase 1 was dug into the hard natural clayey gravel consisted of four probable post holes and a gully. These were sealed below a layer of brown soil with varying amount of flint nodule containing one 12th century sherd of Hertfordshire-type grey ware. These post holes were grouped into two pairs suggesting that they could represent replacement of a post into a new hole. The gully may have been man made, perhaps for drainage as the area would have been a wet enclave to the west of the river Cam, (see fig.2) The gully did not contain any pottery but the post holes 12th century sherds, one sherd of Hedingham ware and three of Hertfordshire-type grey ware and five fragments of animal bone. These features may represent a very early stage of the occupation of the site by the nuns or workers at the priory during construction of more permanent buildings.

- 7.5 Phase 2 had a north south linear feature (6.2m east along the north edge of the trench) to the east of which was a complex of contexts some brown soil with charcoal and some with larger flints, these may represent floors or floor bases patched or modified over time. Pottery finds from these contexts are predominantly Hertfordshire -type Grey ware dating to the 12th century with fragments of red roof tile, some of the latter being glazed.
- 7.6 Phase 3 like phase 2 had a linear north south feature but at this time further west (4.3m east along the north edge of the trench). This seems to be associated with the area of chalk, possibly a floor and with brown soils with much charcoal. The finds of 12th century pot and tile were similar to 7.5
- 7.7 Phase 4 again the trench is divided at c5.0m with areas of mortar, possibly floor bases to the east. It was at this level that the post hole [2020] was first observed. Contexts associated over these possible mortar floors contained 15/16th century pottery along with larger quantities of red roof tile and floor tile, the latter usually glazed. These finds suggest that there was activity here or nearby at the time of the dissolution of the priory and when the buildings were used for other purposes.
- 7.8 Phase 5 sealing all below is a mixture of brown soil with many large flints and containing 17/18th century pottery along with large quantities of red roof tile. Presumably a levelling up layer or resulting from wall or building demolition. It would seem that this was the last activity to take place at this site as it was sealed with a substantial top soil and turf. The pottery associated with this context of heavy flint and roof tile is dated to the mid-18th century or earlier suggesting that buildings, including some from the late medieval priory period were demolished at this date.
- 7.9 Phase 6 is a depth of top soil with turf on top which had not been disturbed for a very long time.

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6. Finds

6.1 The 9th c iron pin and the pottery have been submitted to experts but not the ceramic building material or metal.

6.2 Pottery

6.3 Of 361 sherds of pottery 300 were considered to be 17th or 18th c. these all occurred in the upper contexts associated with the flint nodules. The remaining 61 sherds were considered to be medieval – dated from 12th to the 15th century. Contexts [1913/17/25/26] did not contain any post medieval pottery and are therefore likely to be contemporary with the activity of the nunnery. See below for report by Paul Blinkhorn on the pottery identification.

6.4 Brick/tile

6.5 Seventy-four kilos of tile were examined; of these 12 were floor tiles and the rest were red or buff coloured roof tiles [17 were indeterminate]. Roof tile was selected for measurement if it had an outer edge, glaze or a hole for a securing peg – those pieces without these characteristics were not further examined. The red roof tile came largely from the contexts to the east of the supposed line of the perimeter wall and were associated with the deposits of large flint nodules. But earlier contexts [2140, 2142, 2150, 2151 and 2174] all contained one piece of glazed roof tile.

6.6 Eleven pieces of red tile were considered to be floor tiles based on their thickness of between 30mm and 60mm but with a few somewhat thinner. Four of these have a heavy green/brown glaze and what might be designs but none are impressed with images. Two were found in [1926] exclusively with medieval pottery but the other nine were in contexts with 17/18th tile and pottery.

6.7 Small finds/metal

6.8 Of the 28 small finds listed the most interesting find is the iron pin with decorated head dated to the 9th c. Although a casual find, in that it was within a context [1907] which contained roof tile and 17/18th c. pottery, it is unusual being iron and clearly pre-dates the supposed foundation of the nunnery by 300 years. The pin has now been conserved.



Iron pin – 9th century –before conservation.

Small Finds IAF2019						
Number	Context	Date	Found by	Description	Metal	Phase
1	1901	01/06/2019	JK	Musket ball	Pb	6
2	1901	01/06/2019	SM	1866 Farthing	Cu/Al	6
3	1901	01/06/2019	JK	Gun flint	flint	6
4	1901	01/06/2019	SM	Buckle	Fe	6
5	1901	01/06/2019	JK	Lead	Pb	6
6	1901	01/06/2019	JN	Button	Cu/Al	6
7	1901	01/06/2019	JN	Musket ball	Pb	6
8	1902	02/06/2019	JC	Metal buckle ?	Fe	6
9	1902	02/06/2019	JC	Metal strip	Fe	6
10	1904	02/06/2019	JN	Metal ring	Fe	5
11	1902	02/06/2019	JC	metal strip with rivets	Fe	6
12	1904	02/06/2019	JN	Fragment of fine glass	Fe	5
13	1902	02/06/2019	JC	Fe metal strip	Fe	6
14	1902	02/06/2019	JC	Large hand made nail	Fe	6
15	1902	02/06/2019	JC	Metal strip	Fe	6
16	1902	02/06/2019	JC	Musket ball	Pb	6
17	1907	03/06/2019	JW	Pin decorated Head	Fe	5
18	1902	03/06/2019	JK	Rt angle plate	Fe	6
19	1909	03/06/2019	JC	?latch	Fe	5
20	1915	04/06/2019	JC	Fragment	Pb	5
21	1912	04/06/2019	JN	Plate 2 holes	Fe	5
22	1913	04/06/2019	SM	Décor pot	Ceramic	5
23	1912	04/06/2019	Howard	GRE	Ceramic	5
24	1913	05/06/2019	SM	Grey med pot	Ceramic	5
25	1914	05/06/2019	JC	Key	Fe	5
26	1914	05/06/2019	JC	? Half calliper	Fe	5
27	1919	06/06/2019	BF	Pin	Cu/Al	5
28	1922	06/06/2019	JN	Plate with nails	FE	5

Table 2 Small finds

Number	Context	Date	Found by	Description	Metal	Phase
1	2001	28/09/2020		3 small struck flints	flint	5
2	2002	28/09/2020		? Stud	Pb	5
3	2002	28/09/2020	James	Small wheel ? Clock	Cu/Al	
4	2002	28/09/2020	Jane	? Window came	Pb	
5	2005	28/09/2020		wire ? Pin	Cu/Al	
6	2005	28/09/2020	Jane	thread end	Cu/Al	
7	2005	28/09/2020	MATC	Microlith	flint	
8	2005	28/09/2020	James	triangular ? Harness fitting	Fe	
9	2010	29/09/2020	Jane	Pin	Cu/Al	
10	2009	29/09/2020	James	Lead sheet	Pb	
11	2004	29/09/2020	James	? Microlith	flint	
12	2004	29/09/2020	Jane	thread end	Cu/Al	
13	2010	29/09/2020	Jane	Needle	Cu/Al	
14	2010	29/09/2020	Jane	Pin	Cu/Al	
15	2009	29/09/2020	James	Window came	Pb	
16	2011	29/09/2020	Nicky	Pin	Cu/Al	
17	2012	29/09/2020	Jayne	Pin	Cu/Al	
18	2009	29/09/2020	Susanna	Pin?	Cu/Al	
19	2010	29/09/2020	Jane	? Microlith	flint	
1	2143	20/07/2021	cc	Horseshoe 4.5x08x0.7	Fe	
2	2151	23/07/2021	jw	Pin 0.5x1.35x0.6	Cu/Al	
3	2171	24/08/2021	jc	Iron lump & frags cu/al	Fe	
4	2173	24/08/2021	sm/jk	Iron ? Nail	Fe	
5	2175	25/08/2021	jn	Rim vessel Drop from above	Glass	

Table XX Small finds 2020/21

Pottery from Ickleton Priory, Cambridgeshire

Paul Blinkhorn

The pottery assemblage comprised 759 sherds with a total weight of 5790g. The pottery occurrence by number and weight of sherds per context by fabric type is shown in Tables 1 and 2. Each date should be regarded as a *terminus post quem*.

The following fabric types were noted:

F1001: All Romano-British. 2 sherds, 13g.

F301: Ely Ware, mid 12th -15th century (Spoerry 2008). 17 sherds, 117g.

F324: Brill/Boarstall Ware, AD1200-1600 (Mellor 1994). 6 sherds, 27g.

F327: Hedingham Ware, late 12th – 14th century (Walker 2012). 19 sherds, 100g.

F330: Shelly Coarseware, AD1100-1400 (McCarthy 1979). 19 sherds, 102g.

F331: Developed Stamford Ware, AD1150-1250 (Kilmurry 1980). 3 sherds, 5g.

F333: Hertfordshire-type Grey Ware, mid 12th – 14th century (Turner-Rugg 1993). 184 sherds, 1390g.

F360: Miscellaneous Medieval Sandy Wares, 11th – 14th century. 35 sherds, 314g.

F365: Late Medieval Reduced Ware, late 14th – 16th century (Blinkhorn 2007). 6 sherds, 188g.

- F401:** Late Medieval Transitional Ware, AD1400-1550 (eg. Johnston 1997). 97 sherds, 401g.
- F405:** Frechen Stoneware, AD1550-1750 (Gaimster 1997). 13 sherds, 122g.
- F406:** Raeren Stoneware, 1480 – 1610 (Gaimster 1997). 1 sherd, 45g.
- F410:** Tin-glazed Earthenware, 1600-1800 (Orton 1988). 2 sherds, 3g.
- F411:** Metropolitan-type Slipware, 17th – 18th century (Davey and Walker 2009). 34 sherds, 451g.
- F412:** Midland Blackware, AD 1580-1700 (Brears 1969). 16 sherds, 59g.
- F413:** Westerwald Stoneware, 1600-1900 (Gaimster 1997). 2 sherds, 3g.
- F414:** Staffordshire Manganese Mottled Ware, 1680-1750 (Barker 2021). 8 sherds, 30g.
- F418:** Creamware, 1740-1880 (Towner 1978). 18 sherds, 23g.
- F425:** Glazed Red Earthenware, 16th – 19th century (Brears 1969). 226 sherds, 2204g.
- F428:** Staffordshire Slipware, AD1640-1750 (Barker 2021). 19 sherds, 68g.
- F433:** Staffordshire White Salt-glazed Stoneware, AD1720-80 (Mountford 1971). 10 sherds, 14g.
- F438:** English Stoneware, AD 1680-1800 (*ibid.*). 12 sherds, 81g.
- F1000:** Miscellaneous 19th and 20th century wares. 10 sherds, 30g.

The range of fabric types is typical of sites in the region. Sherds from a single highly-decorated Frechen mug occurred in contexts 1901, 1906 and 2001. Some of the sherds cross-fit. Fragments of vessels with very similar decoration are known from the Town Ditch at Newcastle-Upon-Tyne, and were dated to AD1550/60 (Gaimster 1997, 91).

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Table 1: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type, medieval contexts

Cntxt	RB		F301		F324		F327		F330		F331		F333		F360		F365		F401		F406		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
1913					3	18							4	11	1	8			2	29			15thC
1917																	2	150	12	33			15thC
1920																			17	68	1	45	L15thC
1924									1	7			11	133									M12thC
1926	2	13					2	9					6	51									L12thC
2009																			1	2			15thC
2011																			2	28			15thC
2015																			1	2			15thC
2017																			3	8			15thC
2018																			2	7			15thC
2019			3	19			1	5					2	5									L12thC
2020																			1	1			15thC
2132																			1	6			15thC
2134																			13	46			15thC
2135					2	4							18	49									13thC
2136																			9	65			15thC
2137													1	4									M12thC
2138																			1	2			15thC
2140			2	15									53	390	4	48							M12thC
2141							3	12	1	2													L12thC
2142			4	23					3	44			8	136									M12thC
2145													15	117	3	12							M12thC
2148							1	6							2	37							L12thC
2149													1	3									M12thC
2150							1	4	3	3			3	12									L12thC
2151									1	8	1	1	16	103	3	14							M12thC
2152			6	50			1	6			2	4	6	17	14	93							L12thC
2154													1	5									M12thC

Cntxt	RB		F301		F324		F327		F330		F331		F333		F360		F365		F401		F406		Date	
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt		
2156													1	20										M12thC
2157									1	1														12thC
2158							1	13							1	2								L12thC
2161									1	6			2	25	1	5								M12thC
2162															1	1								12thC
2163													3	37										M12thC
2164															3	76								12thC
2167			2	10					2	5														M12thC
2169													1	8										M12thC
2170									2	8			10	49										M12thC
2171													2	11										M12thC
2173													1	83										M12thC
2174							2	8	3	10			4	39										L12thC
2177							1	2																L12thC
2181															1	11								12thC
2182							2	6					7	43	1	7								L12thC
2188							1	21																L12thC
2189													3	16										M12thC
Total	2	13	17	117	5	22	16	92	18	94	3	5	179	1367	35	314	2	150	65	297	1	45		

Table 2: Pottery occurrence by number and weight (in g) of sherds per context by fabric type, post-medieval contexts

Cntxt	Residual Med		F405		F410		F411		F412		F413		F414		F418		F425		F428		F433		F438		F1000		Date
	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	No	Wt	
1901			4	71											2	2	8	53			1	1	1	7	8	24	MOD
1902							1	6	2	11			1	8	6	7	38	289	6	20	2	6	6	54			M18thC
1903	11	46													1	1	1	31									M18thC
1904			1	8													8	73			1	1	1	9	1	1	MOD
1905	1	3					1	6	2	4							18	172	1	2	1	1			1	5	MOD
1906	5	51	2	16					1	1																	M16thC
1907	1	3	1	4	1	2	1	11	2	8					3	4	10	149	1	2							M18thC
1908							1	15									5	81									17thC
1909							3	62	2	11					1	2	12	214	1	2							M18thC
1910																	1	2									M16thC
1911									2	7							6	34									M16thC
1912	1	5					2	33							2	3	6	152			1	1	1	3			M18thC
1914											1	2					3	30									17thC
1915	8	23															5	8									M16thC
1916			1	2																							M16thC
1918	7	20					1	4													1	1					E18thC
1919																	5	32	2	18							M17thC
1921							1	4									4	28									17thC
1922							1	7									16	138			1	1					E18thC
1923	1	2																	1	2							M17thC
1928	4	13															5	30									M16thC
2001	1	2	2	11					1	2							3	10									M16thC
2003					1	1	20	263			1	1	5	13	3	4	40	484	5	18	2	2	3	8			M18thC
2004			1	6			2	40	4	15			2	9			29	146	2	4							L17thC
2005	1	6															1	8									M16thC
2008	1	2															1	6									M16thC
2013	3	12															1	34									M16thC
2165	1	8	1	4																							M16thC
Total	46	196	13	122	2	3	34	451	16	59	2	3	8	30	18	23	226	2204	19	68	10	14	12	81	10	30	

Context List

Site	Trench	Context No.	Description	Category	Below	Comment 0 = north/West corner	Pot Date
IAF2019	A	1901	Turf/top soil	Deposit	0	Turf cutter and digger then trowelled down	MOD
IAF2019	A	1902	Silty sandy soil	Deposit	1901	1m N-S 0.89m E-W in S E corner	M18thC
IAF2019	A	1903	Dark sandy soil	Deposit	1901	W end trench 2m	M18thC
IAF2019	A	1904	Dark soil some flint	Deposit	1901	From SW 4m to 5m 1m across trench	MOD
IAF2019	A	1905	Large flints soil	Deposit	1901	From SW 6.80m to 7.68m 1m across trench	MOD
IAF2019	A	1906	Light brown soil some flint	Deposit	1903	From SW 0.8m to 1.5m 1m across trench	M16thC
IAF2019	A	1907	Flint soil pea gravel	Deposit	1901	From SW 2.8m to 4.0m 1m across trench	M18thC
IAF2019	A	1908	Flints silty soil	Deposit	1901	From SW 5.0m to 5.50m 1m across trench	17thC
IAF2019	A	1909	Silty soil	Deposit	1901	From SW 7.68m to 8.9m 1m across trench	M18thC
IAF2019	A	1910	Silty soil	Deposit	1901	From SW 5.50m to 6.80m 1m across trench	M16thC
IAF2019	A	1911	Fine flint soil	Deposit	1905	From SW 6.80m to 7.68m 1m across trench	M16thC
IAF2019	A	1912	Flint soil	Deposit	1908 1910	From SW 4.80m to 6.70m 1 m across trench	M18thC
IAF2019	A	1913	Light brown soil some flint	Deposit	1906	From SW 2.8m to 4.0m 1m across trench	15thC
IAF2019	A	1914	Heavy flint	Deposit	1902	From SW 9.20 m to 10.0m 1m across trench	17thC
IAF2019	A	1915	Heavy flint	Deposit	1914	From SW 9.30 m to 10.0m 1m across trench	M16thC
IAF2019	A	1916	Flint soil	Deposit	1903		M16thC
IAF2019	A	1917	Light flint soil	Deposit	1903	From NW 1m to 2m 1 m across trench	15thC
IAF2019	A	1918	Light brown soil & flint	Deposit	1903	From NW 2m to ?3m 1 m across trench	E18thC
IAF2019	A	1919	Dark brown soil large flits	Deposit	1904	From SW 4m to 5m 1m across trench & to 6m	M17thC
IAF2019	A	1920	Flint gravel light grey soil	Deposit	1918	From NW 2.5m to 4.4m 1m across trench	L15thC
IAF2019	A	1921	Dark silt few flints	Deposit	1919	From SW 4.0m to ??6m 1m across trench	17thC
IAF2019	A	1922	Dark brown soil large flints	Deposit	1901	From NW ??5m to 6.8m 1 m across trench	E18thC
IAF2019	A	1923	Cobbles mortar dark soil	Deposit	1903	From SW 1.7m to 2.4m 1m across trench	M17thC
IAF2019	A	1924	Light brown soil some flint	Deposit	1906	From SW 0.0m to 1.70m 1m across trench	M12thC
IAF2019	A	1925	Flint & small gravel	Deposit	1911 1912	From SW 6.0m to 7.0m 1 m across trench	

IAF2019	A	1926	?	Deposit	1901 1903	From NW 0.0m to 2.20m 1 m across trench	L12thC
IAF2019	A	1927	Medium brown soil occ flint	Deposit	1924	From SW 0.0m to 1.70m 1m across trench	
IAF2019	A	1928	No Context sheet			From NW 4.5m to 6.8m	M16thC
IAF2019	a	1929	No Context sheet				
IAF2020	A	2001	Finds made during trench prep.	N/A			M16thC
IAF2020	A	2002	Dark brown soil	Deposit	1901	7.7m east to 10.3m	
IAF2020	A	2003	Brown soil/flint/B&T	Deposit	1909	7.7m east to 9.0m	M18thC
IAF2020	A	2004	Brown soil/B&T/flint	Deposit	2002	7.7m east to 10.3m	L17thC
IAF2020	A	2005	Brown soil occ. Flint	Deposit	2003	7.7m east to 9.0m	M16thC
IAF2020	A	2006	Brown soil moderate flint	Deposit	2005	7.5m east to 9.0m	
IAF2020	A	2007	Brown soil large flints	Deposit	1901	6.0m east to 7.5m	
IAF2020	A	2008	Dark soil some flints	Deposit	2014	9.0m east to 10.2m	M16thC
IAF2020	A	2009	Brown soil 50% flint	Deposit	2014	8.3m east to 10.2m	15thC
IAF2020	A	2010	Brown soil 10% flint	Deposit	2007- 2009	7.20m east to 8.30m	
IAF2020	A	2011	Brown soil 30% flint	Deposit	2010	7.20m east to 8.30m	
IAF2020	A	2012	Brown soil 20% flint	Deposit	1901	5.0m east to 6.0m	
IAF2020	A	2013	Dark brown soil 30%flint	Deposit	1901	3.5m east to 5.0m	M16thC
IAF2020	A	2014	Brown soil 50% mortar	Deposit	1901- 1902	8.8m east to 10.2m	
IAF2020	A	2015	Brown soil 50% mortar	Deposit	2010	7.3m east to 8.8m	15thC
IAF2020	A	2016	Brown soil 50% mortar	Deposit	2007	6m east to 7.30m	
IAF2020	A	2017	Light brown soil	Deposit	2012	4.6m east to 6.0m	15thC
IAF2020	A	2018	Light brown soil	Deposit	2013	3.0m east to 4.6m	15thC
IAF2020	A	2019	Light brown soil	Deposit	1903	west of yellow mortar	15thC
IAF2020	A	2020	Dark brown soil	Fill	2016	7.0m to 7.7m	15thC
IAF2020	A	2021	White ? mortar	Deposit	2009	9.1m east to ?	
IAF2020	A	2022	Brown soil	Deposit	2009	?m east to 10.3m	
IAF2020	A	2023	Yellow mortar	Deposit	2008	9.1m east to 10.2m	
IAF2020	A	2024	White mortar, chalk	Deposit	2013	6.0m east to 9.1m	

IAF2020	A	2025	Flint and mortar	Deposit	2012	5.2m east to 7.0m	
IAF2020	A	2026	Chalk/flint	structure	2017	5.0m east to 5.2m	L12thC
IAF2020	A	2027	chalk, soil	Deposit	2013	3.7m east to 4.5m	
IAF2020	A	2028	Flint, mortar, soil	Deposit	2013	3.7m east to 4.5m	
IAF2020	A	2029	Flint, soil	Deposit	2015	7.0m east to ?9.5m	
IAF2021	A	2131	Brown soil with large flints	Deposit	2029	7.90m east to 10m	
IAF2021	A	2132	Brown soil with large flints	Deposit	2025, 2029	?m east to 7.90m	15thC
IAF2021	A	2133	Brown soil with large flints	Deposit	2029	?m est to ?m	
IAF2021	A	2134	Brown soil/ yellow mortar	?structure	1918	1.3m east to 3m	15thC
IAF2021	A	2135	Light brown orange/yellow soil	Deposit	1926	0m east to 1.3m	13thC
IAF2021	A	2136	Irregular gravel and pebbles	Deposit	2134	1.3m east to 3m	15thC
IAF2021	A	2137	White mortar	Deposit	2023	SE corner	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2138	Brown soil flint cobbles gravel	? Structure	2026		15thC
IAF2021	A	2139	Brown soil occasional flint	Fill	2020		
IAF2021	A	2140	Orange soil/gravel	Deposit	2136	1.30m east to 3.40	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2141	Soil flint gravel	Deposit	2138	3.40m east to ?m	L12thC
IAF2021	A	2142	White chalk/clay with large flints	Deposit	2024	5.20m east to 8.0m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2143	Dark brown soil	Fill	2138	4.30m east to 4.70m	
IAF2021	A	2144	Linear feature	cut	2138	4.30m east to 5.0m	
IAF2021	A	2145	Gravel/brown soil	Deposit	2140	1.3m east to 3.4m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2146	Large flint/mortar little soil	Deposit	2141	4.8m east to 5.7m	
IAF2021	A	2147	Brown/orange soil	Fill	2139		
IAF2021	A	2148	Yellow clay/brown soil	Fill	2138		L12thC
IAF2021	A	2149	Light brown pebble soil	Deposit	20..	9.60m east to 10.10	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2150	Brown soil much charcoal	Deposit	2131	8.0m east to 9.6m	L12thC
IAF2021	A	2151	Dark brown soil	Deposit	2140		M12thC
IAF2021	A	2152	Brown soil with large flint	Deposit	2141		L12thC
IAF2021	A	2153	Dark brown soil large flints	Deposit	2150		
IAF2021	A	2154	Brown soil large flints	Deposit	2142		M12thC

IAF2021	A	2155	Dark brown soil occasional flint	Deposit	2153		
IAF2021	A	2156	flint and ? Mortar charcoal	Deposit	2025	4.50m east to 5.20m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2157	Flint small amount soil	Deposit	2022	8.50m east to 10.1m	12thC
IAF2021	A	2158	Brown soil	Deposit	2154	8.20m east to 9.20	L12thC
IAF2021	A	2159	Clunch	Structure	2153	9.20m east to 9.35m	
IAF2021	A	2160	Brown soil occasional large flint	Deposit	2151		
IAF2021	A	2161	Brown soil, flint, charcoal occ. Mortar	Deposit	2156	4.70m east to ?	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2162	Brown soil small pebbles	Deposit	2154	8.20m east to 9.20m	12thC
IAF2021	A	2163	Brown sandy/clay soil	Deposit	2160	0m east to 2.8m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2164	Brown clay/silt occ. Chalk fleck	Deposit	2157	2.8m east to 5.8m	12thC
IAF2021	A	2165	Brown soil with large flints	Deposit	2153	9.9m east to 10	M16thC
IAF2021	A	2166	Brown soil with charcoal	Deposit	2155	7.7m east to 9.3m	
IAF2021	A	2167	Brown soil	Deposit	2133	9.3m east to 10.1m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2168	Chalky brown soil	Deposit	2025	5.4m east to 6.0m	
IAF2021	A	2169	Gravel ? Mortar some brown soil	Deposit	2025	5.8m east to 6.1m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2170	Dark brown soil some charcoal	Deposit	2146	6.1m east to 6.3m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2171	Dark soil/ gravel	Deposit	2146	6.1m east to 7.70m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2172	Chalky soil	Deposit	2155		
IAF2021	A	2173	Large flints brown soil some gravel	Deposit		7.0m east to 7.7m	M12thC
IAF2021	A	2174	Brown soil occasional flint	Deposit		8.0m east to 9.0m	L12thC
IAF2021	A	2175	Brown soil	Deposit	2168	4.8m east to 6.1m	
IAF2021	A	2176	Brown soil large flints	Deposit	2167	9.0m east to 10.1m	
IAF2021	A	2177	large flints firmly set	Deposit	2167	7.6m east 7.2m	L12thC
IAF2021	A	2178	Dark soil with charcoal	Fill		6.2m east to 6.5m	
IAF2021	A	2179	Post hole	cut		6.2m east	
IAF2021	A	2180	Fine gravel some flint	Fill		of 2179	
IAF2021	A	2181	Clay/orange / brown soil occ. Stones	Deposit	2151	S side 0m east to 3m	12thC
IAF2021	A	2182	Brown soil some medium flit	Deposit	2174	7.7m east to 10.1	L12thC
IAF2021	A	2183	Brown orange soil occ. Flint	Deposit		3.3m east to ?	
IAF2021	A	2184	Dark soil with charcoal	Deposit		7.5 east to 7.8	

IAF2021	A	2185	Orange brown soil flints	Deposit	2153	3.3m east to ?	
IAF2021	A	2186	Brown soil	Deposit		9.0m east to 10.1m	
IAF2021	A	2187	Brown soil	Deposit	2183	2.9m east to 4.4m	
IAF2021	A	2188	Dark brown soil	Fill	2186	9m east to 10.1m	L12thC
IAF2021	A	2189	Brown soil	Deposit	2173		M12thC