NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP

OLIVER'S MOUND, SHRAWLEY, WORCESTERSHIRE

ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION REPORT PHASE 2 & 3

By Chris Clarke

SITE CODE: OMS08

GRID REF: SO 6133 6547

December 2012

OLIVER'S MOUND, SHRAWLEY, WORCESTERSHIRE

AN ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION REPORT PHASE 2 & 3

BY

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National Grid Reference (NGR): **SO 6133 6547**

Site Code**: OMS 08**

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Date of Excavations**: 11th to 19th July 2009 (Phase 2)**

10th October 2009 (Phase 3)

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SUMMARY

In July and October 2009 two phases of excavation was undertaken by North Worcestershire Archaeology Group (NorthWAG), at the site of Oliver's Mound, Shrawley, National Grid Reference (NGR) SO 8133 6547. The work was carried out as part of a larger project undertaken by NorthWAG to investigate the history of the local area, with special emphasis on activity during the medieval period. The archaeological investigation consisted of ten hand dug trenches of varying size.

Archaeological features and deposits associated with the medieval activity on the mound were identified in all ten trenches. The activity encountered dated to between the 12th and 14th century and incorporated a number of phases of activity associated with the construction, occupation and abandonment of the castle. Structural remains encountered relating to the medieval castle included part of the great tower, northwest corner tower, and possible northern gatehouse.

The excavation also allowed a reappraisal of the 1930s excavations undertaken by Masterman. The results identified some of the excavation techniques applied at that time as well as re-interpretation of the publicised results. This form of analysis is essential to account for variations within the archaeological recorded which can be attributed to earlier antiquarian intervention.

1. Introduction

1.1 The Site

1.1.1 The Oliver's Mound site is situated approximately 1km to the east of the village of Shrawley, Worcestershire. The site is centred on National Grid Reference (NGR) SO 8133 6547 (Figures 1 & 2). The site is roughly oval in shape, covering an area of approximately 5000sq metres, and is bounded on all sides by woodland.

1.2 The Scope of the Project

1.2.1 This document aims to summarise the results of the archaeological Phase 2 & 3 excavations, conducted by the North Worcestershire Archaeology Group (NorthWAG), in association with Shrawley Local History and Archaeology Society, at Oliver's Mound, Shrawley, Worcestershire.

1.2.2 The archaeological investigations were allocated the site code OMS 08.

1.3 Project Background

1.3.1 The excavation was conducted as part of a larger project undertaken by NorthWAG to investigate the history of the local area, with special emphasis on activity during the medieval period. The archaeological works were supervised by the author and Dale Rouse of Archaeological Investigations.

1.3.2 The site is owned by the Forestry Commission, and has also been designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) by English Nature. Archaeological advice and assistance was supplied by Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (WHEAS).

1.3.3 This Excavation Report follows current best archaeological practice and local and national standards and guidelines:

Institute for Field Archaeologists – Standard and Guidance for Archaeological Excavations (IfA 2008).

Institute for Archaeologists – Code of Conduct (IfA 2010).

Standards and Guidance for Archaeological Projects in Worcestershire - Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service (2007).

1.3.4 The second phase of archaeological excavations at Oliver's Mound was undertaken between 11th and 19th July 2009, which focused on excavating eight new trenches located across the full area of the site. A third phase of excavations were undertaken on 10th October 2009, which consisted of two additional trenches located in the central and southern area of the site.

1.4 Geology and Topography

By Rollo Gillespie

1.4.1 The underlying geology of Shrawley Wood is the Triassic Bromsgrove Sandstone Formation, part of the Sherwood Sandstone Group. This was laid down about 260 million years ago by braided rivers flowing Northwards from Amorica/France. The Palaeoenvironment was arid flat plains with the rivers and also fluvio-lacustrine sabkha environments. The unit comprises obasal Burcot Member, the central Finstall Member (formerly the Building Stones Member) and the upper Sugarbrook Member. It is not clear which member is present in the woods without a reference to the base. However, some of the considerations are that the Burcot Member contains more clastic material. Dessication only occurs to a limited extent at the top of this and plant remains are rarely found.

1.4.2 Desiccation horizons are fairly common in the Finstall Member, as are plant remains. Both good quarry sites at NGR SO 8123 6616 and SO 8130 6537 contain desiccation horizons, the latter having evaporitic horizons and a plant horizon. Probably on balance then this is most likely to be the Finstall Member. A site across the river, NGR SO 8179 6586, also contains a similar evaporitic horizon. Dip varies through the woods but at Oliver's Mound is about 10/80S.

1.4.3 Oliver's Mound is overlain by the Holt Heath Member (Severn Terrace 3). This is about 35,000 years old and is post Devensian. The gravels are poorly sorted and up to cobble size, and are even up to about 200mm x100mm in size.

1.4.4 The site is situated on a natural spur of land running north-south; with the River Severn located approximate 50m to the east, and New Pool located an equal distance to the west. The site lies at an approximate height of 38m Above Ordnance Datum (AOD).

2 Methodology

2.1 The excavation was conducted according to the Archaeological Proposal prepared by Archaeological Investigations (2009).

2.2 The second phase of the project involved the excavation of eight hand dug trenches, varying in size between 1m by 1m to 5m by 1m. The trenches either targeted the locations of anomalies identified by geo-physical survey results (Archaeological Investigations 2009), or where features were visible on the surface. A third phase of trenching was undertaken later consisting of two hand dug 1m by 1m trenches. These two trenches targeted further geo-physical anomalies (Figure 2).

2.3 The excavation was conducted by members and volunteers from NorthWAG and supervised by the author and Dale Rouse (Archaeological Investigations). The progress of the project was monitored by Tim Yarnell (Forestry Commission), John Bingham (Natural England), and Malcolm Atkins (WHEAS).

3 Archaeological and Historical Background

By R.D. Sproat

3.1 Prehistoric and Roman

3.1.1 Archaeological finds are scarce in this part of North Worcestershire, but the area does hold a number of important prehistoric and Roman sites. The nearest of these sites are the Iron Age settlement at Grimley, and the pre-Roman hill fort at Woodbury Hill, that protected the northern frontier of the *Dobunni* and *Hwicce* peoples (Yeates 2008), against the *Cornovii*, tribes to the north, and the *Ordovices* to the west. Woodbury Hill controlled the strategically important pass through the Abberley Hills that connected present-day Wales with the West Midlands. Oliver's Mound lies in direct line with this ancient trackway at its crossing of the River Severn. Old Worcestershire antiquarians, Nash, Noakes, Habington, *et al*, state that this was an ancient fording place, and ravines leading down to the rivers edge certainly suggest this. This stretch of the west bank however, was extensively dug away in the mid 19th century for clay when there was a brickworks on the site, so no artefacts have yet come to light to prove its existence. The fording place connected the track way that would have carried on to the salt workings at Droitwich, which were known to have existed in the Iron Age (Hurst 2006). The deep ditches to the north and south of the site at Oliver's Mound may suggest that there was a fortified occupation here in pre-history.

3.1.2 Roman evidence in the parish of Shrawley exists in the form of a Claudian military marching camp, identified by aerial photography, one kilometre west of Oliver's Mound and en route meeting up with the old track way to Bays Meadow Roman Villa Complex & Dodderhill Roman Fort in Droitwich (Hurst 2006). The Roman road east of Droitwich to the Roman town of Alcester is evident and well recorded as the 'Saltway'. Major Roman roads passed from Worcester, *Vertis*, through Droitwich, *Salinae*, to Wall, *Letocetum*, east of the River Severn. On the west side, the Roman military road went from Kentchester, *Magnis*, through Leintwardine, *Bravonium*, to the regional capital at Wroxeter, *Viroconium*. Archaeological evidence from briquetage finds suggests that most traffic was north/south, but there must have been local traffic east/west. Medieval field names and straight road layouts suggest that this road was in existence in ancient times and that Oliver's Mound policed the crossing point over the River Severn.

3.2 Anglo-Saxon

3.2.1 With the withdrawal of the Roman Legions, in about the year 416 A.D., and with the depopulation that followed, much of the West Midlands became covered in forest and vegetation. Shrawley Wood formed the southern edge of the great Wyre Forest that spread well into Shropshire. Shrawley in the early Anglo-Saxon time became a no-man's-land between the *Hwicce*, descendants of the (*Dobunni*?), and the *Wocensaetna* to the north in Shropshire, and the *Westerna* in Herefordshire (Hill 1981). The princes of the Hwicca ruled the area as under kings, or vassals of the great Mercian Kings, such as Offa the Great.

3.2.2 Stenton (1943) states that: '*Before 680 Theodore had created the diocese of Worcester for the Hwicce of the Severn Valley, and that of Hereford for their western neighbours the Magonsaetan.'* This part of Worcestershire became a lawless place, 'bandit country', and the road north from Worcester to Shropshire, (present day B4196), was named '*folc herepath'*, meaning 'peoples war road'. With the coming of Christianity most of north Worcestershire was incorporated into the great Anglo-Saxon estate of Wick Episcopy, controlled from the Benedictine Monastery of St. Mary, at Worcester. Shrawley lay just outside in the Estate of Martley that was Mercian Royal estate. Eventually these two estates became the Hundreds of Oswalslow, (Wick), and Doddingtree, (Martley).

3.3 Early Norman

3.3.1 Shrawley is not named in the Domesday Book showing they probably had a destitution of population at this time. Ralph de Tosny, standard-bearer to William the Conqueror, owned Astley, (the next parish north), and several others in the area, but is not recorded as making a claim to Shrawley. Shrawley Wood would have been a valuable commodity as it was used in the brine boiling at Droitwich where many nobles including the clergy owned 'brine houses'. Ralph probably had little interest in his Worcestershire manors for he never visited here, and Shrawley came under the ownership of Urso de Abitot, Sheriff of Worcester. Upon Urso's death his daughter inherited his estates. As a wealthy heiress a poor knight called Beauchamp courted her and won her affections. They set up court at Elmley Castle, south east of Worcester. Shrawley, being part of Urso's estate, was included in the ownership and the Beauchamps set about constructing a castle to collect dues at the crossing, and enforce the King's law along their stretch of the River Severn.

3.4 Medieval

3.4.1 It would appear that by the end of the 1100s the castle had been established, for William Beauchamp of Elmley had '*built a castle to control the ancient fording place across the river Severn'.* The castle then appears to be under the stewardship of Sir William Poher, '*sometime lord of the manor*' (Habington p.354). By the time of the reign of Edward I (1272-1307) Roger le Poher held a fee of four hides in Shrawley, from his overlord baron William de Beauchamp and was dealing with land in Shrawley in 1234-5 (Feet of Fines, Worcs, case 258, file 4, no. 37). The Poers were the first recorded under-tenants of the Beauchamps in Shrawley, and would have resided at Shrawley Castle soon after it was built (VCH Vol.IV). In 1248-9 Hugh Poer granted 2 carucates of land in Shrawley to William Poer (Feet of Fines, Worcs, case 258, file 6, no. 60). William claimed free warren in the manor in 1274-5 (Assize Roll, 1026, manu. 35). The next reference is in the Lay Subsidy Rolls c.1280 when William Poer paid 20s. 0d. in tax to the King. William died without male issue and the manor was granted by his daughter Aline le Poer, one of his co-heirs, to Edmund Mortimer, of Wigmore Castle, and Margaret his wife (Chan. Inquisitions Post Mortem,32 Edw. I, no. 63b), who were jointly seised at the time of Edward's death after he was wounded in Bluith in 1304.

3.4.2 Margaret granted the manor of Shrawley in 1314, along with the manor of Eckington, to Aline

le Poer for life, with the proviso that on her death the manor would revert to John, son of Edmund Mortimer, and his issue, and that the contingent remainder of the manor to Margaret and her heirs (Feet of Fines, Worcs, Mich. 8 Edw. II, no.20). In 1316 Margaret Mortimer was holding the manor of Shrawley as lord of the manor and was assessed at 20 shillings rent to the King (Chan. Inquisitions Post Mortem, 9 Edw. II, no.71, m. 53). She probably passed the manor to her great-grandson, Roger Earl of March. Roger's eldest daughter Catherine married Thomas, Earl of Warwick in 1337. The manor passed by marriage to Thomas Beauchamp, Earl of Warwick and there must have been an arrangement, for Aline le Poer was still living at Shrawley Castle. Aline must have die soon after for she is recorded as being in dispute with the Church and was buried on site within the grounds of her castle (S&DLHS journal 2, pp.7). Aline must have been wealthy for she had bequeathed an annuity of £100 a year out of the King's Manor of Bromsgrove and King's Norton to Edmund Mortimer and his wife Margaret. Thomas Beauchamp apparently bought the manor of Shrawley in 1344 for it was settled by him on himself and his wife Catherine, and the remainder of the estate to his sons Guy, Thomas, and Reynburn, and to the male heirs of John, his brother (*Cal. Pattinton.* 1343-5, p.251; Feet of Fines, Div. Co. Trinity, 18 Edw. III, no. 55).

3.4.3 The documentary evidence suggests that by 1344 Aline had died and that the Beauchamps had lost interest in the upkeep of Shrawley castle, for they built a new castle, four kilometres downstream on the River Severn, at Holt. It is thought that at about this date the castle was abandoned. The influence of the castle must surely have diminished by the year 1389 for the Shrawley estate was administered by Hugh Belchamp's bailiff, Robert Hyllhampton (Bailiff's Account Roll dated 22nd June 1389/90, WRO Ref. 705:66. BA 4221/7. Up to the early 1600s the site was known as 'Courte Hills' on tenant's rent rolls.

3.4.4 In 1471 Richard Neville, Earl of Warwick, was killed in the Battle of Barnet, and all his estates, including the manor of Shrawley passed to the Crown. By about the 1500 king Henry VII appointed a forester to stop '*depredations going on in Shrawley Wood'* showing that the castle was derelict and of no influence.

3.5 Post-Medieval

3.5.1 The English Civil War was a brief period when the site came to prominence. The Childe family, who were staunch Royalists, owned Shrawley Wood. According to local legend they then proceeded to rearrange what was left of the stonework as defensive gun positions against Parliamentary forces. What is evident is that some remains of the castle continued into the 18th century. Dr. Nash (b.1725, d.1811), Worcestershire antiquarian, states that '*During the excavations, a few years ago, there were discovered a well, and the remains of a spiral staircase; a quantity of human bones was also dug up'*. There is another reference at Shrawley Parish Church, that '*Underneath the eastern window, on the exterior side, and fastened upright to the wall, is an ancient prism-shaped stone coffin lid, supposed to be nearly 700 years old'*. It is possible that the prism-shaped stone may be associated with activity at the castle during the early medieval period. In addition, the 'ting tang' bell that adorns the Village School in Shrawley is reputed, by legend, to have been found at the castle.

3.6 Previous Archaeological Investigation

Masterman's Excavations

3.6.1 Between 1928 and 1930 Mr. & Mrs. S.W. Masterman undertook a series of excavations at Oliver's Mound in three separate locations on the upper level of the mound. Publication of their results was limited, but the Masterman's excavation did reveal several walls, which they interpreted as a castle, square in plan, surrounded by a curtain wall with octagonal corner towers and main hall to the eastern side of the structure. Finds recovered during these excavations include numerous structural sandstone blocks (several blocks stylistically dated to the 13th and 14th century), 14th century pottery and coins, a baked clay spindle whorl, fragments of slag and nails, and a variety of domestic animal bones (Sproat 2007). Current observations indicate that these excavations were never fully backfilled.

Geophysical Survey Results

3.6.2 In the winter of 2007 a geophysical survey was undertaken across the mound producing a number of magnetic, resistivity and ground penetrating radar responses. The survey appears to indicate the presence of stone footings or rubble in four locations across the site. The first is to the northeast corner of the mound where two areas of high resistance are located close together. Other high resistance responses to the west of the mound may also indicate the presence of a curtain wall. Scattered across the site the magnetic data indicates numerous buried features, areas of burning, or iron objects buried in the site (Archaeological Investigations 2009).

Walkover Survey

3.6.3 A small quantity of isolated finds have been recovered from the surface of the mound over the past few years, including pottery and ceramic building material (CBM) fragments. Analysis of these fragments indicates a substantial number of them are roughly dated to the 13th or 14th century (Anon 2007 & Crooks 2007).

Phase 1 Excavations

3.6.4 In May 2008 the Phase 1 excavation was undertaken at the site of Oliver's Mound, Shrawley. The archaeological investigation consisted of two hand dug trenches, one measuring 3m by 3m, the other 3m by 4m.

3.6.5 Features associated with medieval activity on the mound were identified in both trenches. Trench 1 revealed a substantial set of sandstone structural remains previously identified during archaeological excavations conducted between 1928 and 1930. The stone structure was in fair condition, and could easily be attributed to a castle building as suggested by the documentary evidence. Residual pottery recovered from the overlying backfill deposits indicate it was constructed between the 11th and 14th century.

3.6.6 In Trench 2 the remains of a possible internal cobbled surface was identified, with pottery evidence dating its construction to the later 12th or 13th century. It is likely to be in use for up to a century before the structure around it fell into disuse and decay, sealing the cobbled surface with a layer of fallen stone roof tiles.

3.6.7 The evidence from the two trenches begins to support both the documentary evidence and early 20th century excavation results indicating the presence of a medieval castle structure on the mound.

4. Original Research Aims

4.1 The objectives of the excavation were defined as being:

- To excavate 7 hand dug trenches (this was later increased to 8).
- Identify the date and nature of features being investigated.
- Assess survival, quality, condition and relative significance of any archaeological features, deposits and structures within the study area.
- Produce a record of the features.
- Produce a report.
- Deposit the archive.

5. Phase 2 & 3 Results

5.1 Trench 3

5.1.1 Surface of Trench = 35.49mOD

Height (OD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
35.49-35.23m	0.00m	(3/001)	Topsoil. Soft, dark brown, silty sand.
35.49-35.13m	0.00m	(3/004)	Disturbed Deposit. Firm, dark brownish grey, silty sand.
35.13-34.93m	0.36m	(3/005)	Disturbed Deposit. Loose, mid orangey brown, sandy gravel.
35.13-35.03m NFE	0.36m	(3/007)	Natural. Compact, mid orangey brown, sandy gravel.

NFE= Not fully excavated

5.1.2 Trench 3 was located in the northwest corner of the site, orientated north-south, and measured 3m by 1m in plan. The earliest recorded deposit was a compact, mid orangey brown, sandy gravel layer (3/007), recorded at a height of 35.13mOD. The layer was interpreted as the natural. Overlying context (3/007) in the southern area of the trench was layer of loose, mid orangey brown, silty sand gravel (3/005), measuring up to 0.20m thick, and contained occasional inclusions of animal bone, medieval pottery and charcoal. The animal bone assemblage included two fragments from red deer. Deposited immediately above context (3/005) was a firm, dark brownish grey, silty sand layer (3/004), which was recorded as being 0.36m in depth. The layer contained a small assemblage of finds comprising of tile, animal bone and pottery fragments which were generally dated to between the 11th and 13th century. In addition to this two dressed sandstone blocks were recovered, one of which included part of a hood or arch moulding. Both contexts (3/005) and (3/004) were observed as having general disturbed appearance. Layer (3/004) was partially sealed by a layer of silty sand topsoil (3/001) up to 0.25m thick, containing occasional fragments of animal bone and three dressed sandstone blocks.

5.1.3 Recorded at the base in the northern end of the trench was a single block of *in-situ* worked sandstone [3/006]. The position and character of the sandstone block identified it as being part of sandstone structure [1/009] recorded in Trench 1 during Phase 1 of the on site excavations. Sandstone block [3/006] was located at the base of vertically sided cut [3/003] which occupied the full width, and up to 1m of the northern extent of the trench. The cut was filled by a soft, dark brown, clayey sand (3/003) disturbed deposited which was recognised as backfill of Trench 1.

5.2 Trench 4

5.2.1 Surface of Trench = 36.40mOD

Height (OD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
36.40-36.22m	0.00m	(4/001)	Topsoil. Soft, dark brown, silty sand.
36.22-36.08m	0.18m	(4/002)	Soil Horizon. Soft, mid brown, silty sand.
35.97-35.87m	0.43m	(4/004)	Soil Horizon. Soft, mid reddish brown, sandy clay.
36.08-35.70m	0.32m	(4/014)	Disturbed Deposit. Soft, mid brownish grey, silty.
35.70-35.60m	0.70m	(4/009)	Burning Horizon. Soft, greyish black, ashy silt.

35.60-35.34m	0.80m	(4/003)	Soil Horizon. Soft, dark reddish brown, silty sand.
35.34-35.24m NFE	1.06m	(4/005)	Soil Horizon. Soft, light orangey brown, sandy gravel.

NFE= Not fully excavated

5.2.2 Trench 4 was located in the northwest corner of the site, orientated northeast-southwest, and measured 4m by 1m in plan. The earliest deposit encountered, located at the northeast end of the trench, was a soft, light orangey brown sandy gravel (4/005). The sandy gravel contained fragments of animal bone, and was thought to be a buried soil horizon. Overlying soil horizon (4/005) was a soft, dark reddish brown, silty sand layer (4/003) measuring up to 0.25m thick. Finds recovered from this layer included fragments of 12th to 13th century pottery, incorporating rim forms types 1, 2 and 6, and animal bone indicating the possible interpretation of layer (4/003) being an occupation horizon. The animal bone assemblage from this context was the largest retrieved from Trench 4 consisting of 65 fragments, primarily deriving from cow and sheep sized animals, but also incorporating several deer and bird bones. Two residual fragments of Mesolithic worked flint, indentified as microliths, were also recovered from layer (4/003).

5.2.3 The western extent of layer (4/003) appears to be defined by the 0.15m deep, vertically sided construction [4/013] cut for wall [4/010]. Wall [4/010] was orientated north-south and constructed utilising a sandstone rubble core (4/008) in association with a sandy matrix (4/007). The rubble core was faced using dressed sandstone blocks measuring approximately 400mm by 300mm by 200mm. Wall was observed as measuring 1m thick, although its full dimensions could not be securely ascertained due to the limited size of the trench. At its highest the wall was recorded at 36.03mOD. In the west corner of the trench wall [4/010] was associated with floor surface (4/006), recorded at a height of 35.87mOD. The floor surface consisted of flush and levelled stone slabs adjacent to which ceramic tiles had also been lain to complete the floor surface. The full extent of the floor surface could not be determined due to the limited extent revealed in the trench. There appears to be an addition masonry element constructed later than wall [4/010], albeit in direct association, in the form of several large sandstone blocks [4/012]. Not enough of masonry [4/012] was uncovered to provide a full interpretation of its function.

5.2.4 Constructed so as to butt up against the eastern face of wall [4/010] and masonry [4/012] was wall [4/011], orientated east-west. Wall [4/011] is less substantial that the earlier wall it abuts, constructed using smaller semi dressed sandstone blocks, reaching a maximum width of 0.60m, and surviving to a height of 35.79mOD. Wall [4/011] continued beyond the eastern limit of excavation.

5.2.5 In the east area of Trench 4 occupation horizon (4/003) was overlain by a discrete spread of soft, greyish black, ashy silt (4/009), reaching a maximum width of 1.30m and depth of 0.10m. Spread (4/009) appeared to represent an area of isolated burning. Deposited above context (4/009), and abutting wall [4/010] was a substantial layer of soft, mid brownish grey, silty

material (4/014), recorded as having a thickness of up to 0.40m. Layer (4/014) contained frequent quantity of small to medium sized fragments of sandstone tile and rubble, which in combination with the substantial size and thickness of the deposit suggests it may have been deposited during the course of the 1930s excavations, but this interpretation is not fully conclusive.

5.2.6 Identified across the full area of the trench was a soft, silty sand, dark brown soil horizon (4/002) sealing rubble layer (4/014), masonry [2/012] and floor surface (4/006). Soil horizon (4/002) measured up to 0.25m thick and contained a small assemblage of finds consisting of a mixed group of pottery sherds potential dating to the 11th to 14th century, a single piece of worked flint, and a small assemblage of animal bone fragments incorporating a range of domestic spices in addition to fallow deer. Two dressed sandstone blocks were also recovered, one of which was designed as part of a door jam. Context (4/002) is recorded in the south area of the trench as (4/004) which was not fully excavated. A worked flint flake was recovered from context (4/004). Sealing the full sequence of deposits in Trench 4 was a dark brown, silty sand topsoil deposit (4/001) recorded up to a depth of 0.15m. A large assemblage of worked sandstone blocks were found within, or protruding from topsoil (4/001), as well as occasional residual pottery and animal bone fragments. The only item of specific interest was one architectural sandstone block in the form of a chamfered quoin.

5.3 Trench 5

5.3.1 Surface of Trench = 36.43m OD

Height (OD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
36.43-36.08m	0.00m	(5/001)	Topsoil. Soft, dark brown, sandy silt.
36.08-35.88m	0.35m	(5/002)	Stone Yard Surface.
35.88-35.74m	0.55m	(5/003)	Formation Layer. Compact, reddish brown, sandy gravel.
35.74-35.64m	0.69m	(5/005)	Soil Horizons. Soft, yellowish brown, sandy silt.
35.64-35.54m NFE	0.79m	(5/004)	Natural. Compact, reddish brown, sandy gravel.

NFE= Not fully excavated

5.3.2 Trench 5 was located in the southeast corner of the site, orientated northeast-southwest, and measured 4m by 1m in plan. The earliest recorded deposit was a compact, reddish brown,

sandy natural gravel layer (5/004), observed at the base of sondages excavated at both the northeast and southwest ends of the trench, at a height of 35.64mOD. Lying above the natural, also observed in both sondage cuts, was a soft, yellowish brown, sandy silty deposit (5/005) which measured up to 0.1m thick, and is thought to be a buried soil horizon.

5.3.3 Deposited above layer (5/005) was a loose, reddish brown, sandy gravel layer (5/003) recorded as 0.14m thick. The consistency of context (5/003) suggests the layer derives from artificially re-deposited natural, deliberately laid down to act as formation layer for the stone surface (5/002) sealing it. Stone surface (5/002) was constructed using flat angular sandstone fragments with a regular width of 0.20m, bonded together using a sandy material, and present at a height of 36.08mOD. The surface was carefully laid in regular rows, although the flowing pattern of the stones indicate it was done in an evolving pattern determined by the varying length and thickness of each stone employed, resulting in an informal style. The materials utilised, and construction technique employed, indicate the surface was part of a substantial yard surface. No signs of wear or repair of the yard surface were observed. Yard surface (5/002) had been truncated at the southwest end of the trench by a shallow cut which could not be fully defined within the limited area exposed. Unfortunately, no evidence was collected with which to date the use of the yard surface.

5.3.4 Sealing yard surface (5/002) was a sandy silt topsoil (5/001) measuring up to 0.35m thick.

5.4 Trench 6

5.4.1 Surface of Trench = 36.90mOD

Height (OD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
36.90-36.63m	0.00m	(6/001)	Topsoil. Soft, dark brown, sandy silt.
36.63-36.35m	0.27m	(6/002)	Demolition Horizon. Soft, dark brown, silty sand.
36.35-36.30m	0.55m	(6/003)	Loose Gravel Spread.
36.30-36.00m	0.60m	(6/004)	Occupation Horizon. Firm to compact, mid brown, silty clay.
36.00-35.88m	0.90m	(6/006)	Soil Horizon. Soft, dark greyish brown, silty sand.
35.88-35.78m NFE	1.02-1.12m	(6/007)	Natural. Compact, greyish brown, sandy gravel.

NFE = Not fully excavated

5.4.2 Trench 6 was located in the southeast central area of the site, orientated northeast-southwest, and measured 3m by 1m in plan. The earliest recorded deposit was a compact, greyish brown, natural sandy gravel (6/007), recorded at a height of 35.88mOD. Incorporated within the natural was a small concentration of an oily coal like substance (6/008) thought to be a naturally occurring inclusion within the undisturbed gravel (6/007).

5.4.3 Overlying the natural was a soft, dark greyish brown, silty sand deposit (6/006), observed reaching a depth of 0.10m, and thought to be a buried soil horizon. Deposited on the surface of (6/006) were randomly distributed fragments of sandstone (6/005), measuring up to 150mm by 120mm by 100mm, primarily concentrated at the northeast end of the trench.

5.4.4 Sandstone fragments (6/005) were subsequently sealed by a firm to compact, mid brown, silty clay deposit (6/004), recorded as being between 0.25m and 0.30m thick. The deposit contained moderate inclusions of charcoal and animal bone, together with the character of the deposit, suggests it may represent an occupation horizon. A thin layer of gravel (6/003) up to 0.05m thick was identified overlying occupation horizon (6/004) at a height of 36.35mOD. Gravel layer (6/003) did appear to be artificially deposited to act as some form of surfacing material, the use of which was represented by inclusions of charcoal mixed in with the gravel. Excavation of the context highlighted a limited degree of compaction associated with it. During the excavation of layer (6/003) a single flint blade fragment and numerous animal bones were collected, incorporating the main domestic species in addition to a small number of bird and deer bones.

5.4.5 Located above context (6/003) was soft, dark brown, silty sand material (6/002), which included small fragments of sandstone and 13th to 14th century pottery. The small assemblage of animal bone fragments collected was dominated by cow, but also included pig and sheep. Contained in the upper part of the context there was a consistent horizon of small to medium sized fragments of stone roof tile, causing to the layer to reach a thickness of up to 0.30m. The presence of sandstone and stone tile fragments indicates that context (6/002) could be associated with the disuse and demolition of structures on the mound.

5.4.6 Completing the sequence of deposits in Trench 6 was a dark brown, sandy silt topsoil deposit (6/001) measuring up to 0.30m thick.

5.5 Trench 7

5.5.1 Surface of Trench = 36.75mOD

Height (OD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
36.75-36.32m	0.00m	(7/001)	Topsoil. Soft, dark brown, sandy silt.

36.50-35.32m	0.25m	(7/002)	Rubble Deposit. Loose, mid brown, sandy silt.
36.32-36.18m	0.43m	(7/003)	Soil Horizon. Firm, mid to dark brown, sandy silt.
36.18-36.04m	0.57m	(7/004)	Soil Horizon. Firm, mid brown, silty.
36.25-36.15m NFE	0.50m	(7/005)	Soil Horizon. Firm, mid reddish brown, sandy silt.
36.04-35.92m	0.71m	(7/007)	Demolition Deposit. Firm, mid brown, silty sand.
35.92-35.88m	0.83m	(7/008)	Burning Horizon. Soft, dark grey, sandy silt.
35.88-35.80m	0.87m	(7/009)	Soil Horizon. Firm, mid brown, sandy silt.
35.80-35.70m NFE	0.95-1.05m	(7/010)	Natural. Compact, greyish brown, sandy gravel.

NFE = Not fully excavated

5.5.2 Trench 7 was located in the northern area of the site, orientated north-south, and measured 3m by 1m in plan. The earliest deposit recorded at the base of the sondage, was a compact, greyish brown, sandy gravel (7/010), interpreted as the natural and identified at a height of 35.80mOD.

5.5.3 Overlying the natural was a deposit of firm, mid brown, sandy silt (7/009) which measured up to 0.10m thick. No finds were collected from this context indicating it may be an early soil horizon. Immediately above soil horizon (7/009) was an insubstantial soft, dark grey, sandy silt deposit (7/008) which contained a substantial proportion of ash and soot material. The burnt deposit was observed towards the base of the sondage measuring between 20mm and 40mm thick. Layer (7/008) was, in turn, sealed by a firm, mid brown silty sand deposit (7/007) which contained frequent quantities of building debris in the form of sandstone fragments and mortar. The deposit was recorded as 0.10m thick.

5.5.4 Truncating demolition deposit (7/007) was sandstone wall [7/006] which travelled the full length of the trench on a northeast-southwest alignment. The wall had been constructed using mortared dressed sandstone blocks measuring up to 550mm by 250mm by 200mm, built over a rubble foundation. At its upper level the wall was 0.35m wide and recorded at 36.36mOD.

5.5.5 Accumulated abutting wall [7/006] on its western side was a firm, mid brown, silty deposit (7/004) measuring up to 0.15m thick. Pottery sherds recovered from this deposit suggest it was deposited during the 12th to 13th century, while a small assemblage of domestic animal bone was also collected. The finds assemblage collected from layer (7/004) suggests this deposit represents an occupation horizon. Layer (7/004) was sealed by a further firm, mid to dark brown, sandy silt soil horizon (7/003) of similar depth, and contained evidence for human activity in the form of mortar, charcoal flecks, and domestic animal bone fragments in addition to goose, plus pottery dating to a similar period to that observed within context (7/004). On the eastern side of wall [7/006] the same deposit was represented by the unexcavated context (7/005). In the northern end of the trench layer (7/004) was overlain by a deposit of masonry rubble (7/002) 0.20m thick, which contained a small assemblage of 13th century pottery and large assemblage of domestic animal bone, in addition to a single piece of worked flint. The sequence of deposits was sealed by a sandy silt topsoil layer (7/001).

5.6 Trench 8

5.6.1 Surface of Trench = 37.20mOD

Height (OD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
37.20-37.05m	0.00m	(8/001)	Topsoil. Soft, blackish brown, silty sand.
37.05-36.85m	0.15m	(8/002)	Disturbed Deposit. Soft, reddish brown, silty sand.
37.05-36.29m	0.15m	(8/003)	Disturbed Deposit. Loose, reddish brown, rubble in silty sand matrix.
36.29-36.18m NFE	0.91-0.75m	(8/006)	Natural. Compact, orangey brown, sandy gravel.

NFE= Not Fully Excavated

5.6.2 Trench 8 was located in the central area of the site, orientated north-south and measured 3m by 1m in plan. The earliest deposit encountered was a compact, orangey brown, sandy gravel (8/006) which was identified as the natural. The natural was recorded at its highest at 36.29mOD.

5.6.3 Observed truncating the natural in the north end of the trench was a substantial sandstone wall [8/004] orientated east-west. The construction method used to build wall [8/004] employed a rubble core faced by dressed, semi regularly coursed sandstone blocks which measured up to 360mm by 310mm by 280mm. The sandstone blocks were bonded together using a hard, yellowish brown, sandy mortar. The wall survived to a height of 36.84mOD, although the full width of the wall was not observed, but it was at least 0.90m wide before it continued beyond the northern limit of the trench.

5.6.4 Bonded into the southern face of wall [8/004] was an additional sandstone wall [8/005]. Wall [8/005] travelled at a right angle from wall [8/004] for a distance of 1.70m before the wall turned 90 degrees to the east. Wall [8/005] utilised a similar construction technique and bonding material to that of wall [8/004]. The sandstone blocks used in the wall were smaller measuring a maximum of 330mm by 280mm by 190mm. Due to the size of the trench the full dimensions of the wall could not be measured, but was at least 0.50m wide. Wall [8/005] survived to a maximum height of 36.35mOD.

5.6.5 Sealing both walls was a substantial deposit of moderately sized sandstone rubble in a silty sand matrix (8/003) which was present throughout the full area of the trench and measured up to 0.75m thick. A range of finds were recovered from the deposit consisting of medieval pottery, animal bone, and ceramic building material (CBM) fragments, this is in additional to several iron nails. From within the rubble deposit five dressed sandstone fragments were also collected, the largest measuring 440mm by 330m by 140mm. Among the worked stone assemblage was an angled quoin stone. As a whole context (8/003) retained a highly disturbed appearance indicating the rubble material is likely to have been deposited during the 1930s Masterman excavations. In the south of the trench another layer (8/002) with a disturbed appearance was recorded overlying rubble layer (8/003). Context (8/002) was a soft, mid reddish brown, silty sand deposit which was up to 0.20m thick and contained occasional flecks of mortar and a small quantity of animal bone. This layer is also thought to have been deposited during the Masterman excavations of the 1930s. The sequence was sealed by a blackish brown, silty sand deposit (8/001) identified as topsoil and contained a further three fragments of dressed sandstone.

5.7 Trench 9

5.7.1 Surface of Trench = 36.12mOD

Height (OD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
36.12-35.79m	0.00m	(9/001)	Topsoil. Soft, dark brown, silty sand.
35.79-35.60m	0.33m	(9/002)	Demolition Horizon. Loose, light brown, silty sand gravel.
35.60-35.35m	0.52m	(9/003)	Occupation Horizon. Loose, mid brown, sandy gravel.
35.35-35.22m	0.77m	(9/004)	Soil Horizon. Loose, mid brown, silty sand gravel.
35.22-35.12m NFE	0.90-1.00m	(9/005)	Natural. Loose, mid orangey brown, sandy gravel.

NFE= Not Fully Excavated

5.7.2 Trench 9 was located in the southwest central area of the site, orientated northwest-southeast, and measured 3m by 1m in plan. The earliest recorded deposit was a loose, mid orangey brown, natural sandy gravel (9/005), recorded at a height of 35.22mOD.

5.7.3 Located above the natural was loose, mottled mid brown, silty sand gravel (9/004), measuring up to 0.15m thick, and contained possible occasional charcoal flecks. The appearance of layer (9/004) suggested it could be a disturbed interface deposit with the natural. Overlying layer (9/004) was a loose, mid brown, sandy gravel (9/003) recorded up to a depth of 0.25m. Recovered from the deposit were a small number of animal bone and metal fragments, in association with occasional small sandstone blocks, indicating the deposit may represent an occupation horizon.

5.7.4 Context (9/003) in turn was overlain by a similar loose, light brown, silty sand gravel deposit (9/002), which was slightly less substantial at 0.20m thick. Layer (9/002) also contained iron nails, a large assemblage of domestic animal bone and pottery fragments, although the limited assemblage of sandstone blocks collected were of a larger size. The pottery fragments were represented by a range of fabric types dated to between the 13th to 14th century, consisting primarily of plain body sherds and a small number of rims. The presence of sandstone blocks of this size possible indicates the deposit is associated with a demolition horizon. The sequence of deposits was sealed by a dark brown, silty sand topsoil (9/001) up to 0.35m thick, containing a number of residual 12th to 13th century pottery sherds.

5.8 Trench 10

5.8.1 Surface of Trench = 36.10mOD

Height (OD)	Depth	Context Number	Description/Interpretation
36.10-35.85m	0.00m	(10/001)	Topsoil. Soft, dark brown, silty sand.
35.85-35.60m	0.25m	(10/002)	Demolition Horizon. Soft, dark brown, silty sand.
35.60-35.40m	0.50m	(10/003)	Soil Horizon. Soft, reddish brown, sandy silt.
35.40-35.35m NFE	0.70-0.75m	(10/004)	Natural. Loose, mid reddish brown, sandy gravel.

NFE= Not Fully Excavated

5.8.2 Trench 10 was located in the south corner of the site and measured 1m by 1m in plan. The earliest recorded deposit was a loose, mid reddish brown, sandy gravel layer (10/004),

recorded at a height of 35.40mOD.

5.8.3 Overlying natural was a soft, reddish brown, sandy silt deposit (10/003) which was recorded as being 0.20m thick. The only material recovered from the trench was a large sandstone block. Deposited above context (10/003) was a soft, dark brown, silty sand (10/002) measuring up to 0.25m thick, and contained fragments of tile, pottery generally dated to the medieval period, a small number of animal bones including domestic fowl, and moderate quantity of medium sized angular sandstone fragments suggestive of demolition activity. A silty sand topsoil deposit (10/001) 0.25m thick sealed the deposit sequence.

5.9 Trench 11

5.9.1 Trench 11 was located in the southern area of the site and measured 1m by 1m in plan. The earliest deposit identified was the surface of a layer of undiagnostic sandstone rubble (11/002) found 0.40m below ground level. This was overlain by a soft, dark brown, silty sand topsoil deposit (11/001) up to 0.40m thick.

5.10 Trench 12

5.10.1 Trench 12 was located in the centre of the site and measured 1.25m by 1.25m in plan. The earliest deposit identified was a grey natural gravel deposit (12/004) found 0.80m below ground level. This was overlain by reddish brown, sandy gravel deposit (12/003) 0.20m thick. Above gravel (12/003) was a soil deposit (12/002) 0.50m thick which contained moderate fragments of animal bone and several fragments of 12th to early 13th pottery. The animal bone assemblage incorporated a variety of species including cow and badger. Deposit (12/002) may represent the disturbance caused by a badger set. Sealing the sequence of deposits in Trench 12 was a silty sand topsoil deposit (12/001) 0.10m thick.

6 The Finds Assemblage

6.1 Quantification of Finds

The following finds were collected during the course of the excavation. All of the finds have been washed, quantified and marked where appropriate.

Find Type	Quantity
Medieval Pottery	5kg-376 sherds
Faunal Remains	464 fragments
Worked Stone	29 worked stones

Stone Roof Tile	7.51kg - 16 fragments
Metal Work	2 objects
Ceramic Building Material	Multiple small fragments
Sandstone Floor Tile	2.021Kg
Worked Flint	4 fragments

6.2 Finds (Appendix A)

6.2.1 Medieval Pottery

A total of 376 sherds of pottery (4996g) were recovered from Phase 2 & 3 of the excavations at Oliver's Mound, Shrawley. This material was recovered from 20 different contexts. The assemblage largely comprised of locally produced plain cooking pot sherds; with a further quantity of sherds manufactured from fabrics associated with glazed pitchers. The majority were not decorated. The assemblage primarily dates from the mid 12th century to the early 13th century.

6.2.2 Faunal Remains

The Phase 2 & 3 excavations recovered a moderate sized assemblage of animal bones, comprises of a total of 464 fragments, the majority deriving from 21 stratified contexts. The condition of the bone is mixed, varying from moderate to excellent. Most of the bones can be identified to broad taxon. The majority of the assemblage can be identified as cattle, sheep/goat and pig, in addition to a small quantity of deer, hare/rabbit and bird bone. Cow was the most dominant of the domestic stock species and was found in most contexts. The limited presence of deer and domestic bird bones demonstrate an addition to the medieval diet, and potentially raises the status of the assemblage.

6.2.3 Worked Stone

A total of 25 pieces of worked stone were recovered during the course of the excavation from a total of six contexts. All stone were of local red or red-grey sandstone. Of the stone collected four had architectural mould details, while a further 21 pieces had dressed faces. The moulding styles present on the stone work indicate they are associated with a large medieval stone building, dated to between the mid 12th to early 14th century.

6.2.4 Stone Roof Tile

During the course of the Phase II and III excavations at Oliver's Mound 16 fragments of stone roof tile weighing 7.51kg were found, all of which derived from context (6/002). All of the examples collected were fragmentary, with all but one example containing a full or partial nail hole.

6.2.5 **Metal Objects**

Two iron nails, totalling 14g, were recovered from context (8/003). One example was complete. Both examples were in good condition with limited evidence of corrosion.

6.2.6 **Ceramic Building Material**

The Phase II and III excavations produced a small assemblage of CBM fragments from multiple contexts. The assemblage primarily consisted of small abraded fragments of roof tile which had an average thickness of 13mm, and appeared to be contemporary with the medieval activity on site. Several of the fragments contained peg holes or attachment lugs. Full assessment of the CBM assemblage will be undertaken as part of future project post-excavation work.

6.2.7 **Sandstone Floor Tile**

Fragments of sandstone floor tile totalling 2.021kg in weight were recovered from context (4/014). The assemblage was highly fragmentary in character with no full dimensions surviving, although tile thickness could be recorded and was identified as being between 35mm to 40mm. Full assessment of the CBM assemblage will be undertaken as part of future project post-excavation work.

6.2.8 **Worked Flint**

During the course of the Phase II excavations four pieces of worked flint were recovered with a single example deriving from Trenches 6 and 7, and two examples originating from Trench 4. Only one example was identified as a tool fragment, represented by a partial borer. No decisive diagnostic dateable artefacts were identified, many characteristics of the method of manufacture of the artefacts suggest a Late Mesolithic or Neolithic date. The lithic artefacts are in relatively good condition with very little edge damage or edge wear. All examples were retrieved from medieval or modern contexts limiting the significance of the assemblage due to the residual nature of the artefacts.

7 Discussion

7.1 General

7.1.1 During the course of the Phase 2 & 3 excavations on site, ten trenches were opened and investigated across the full area of the mound. Each trench identified several different features and a comparative sequence of archaeological deposits. Natural deposits in the form

of a compact sandy gravel, were identified in all trenches, except Trench 4, and recorded at a height of between 35.13m OD and 36.29m OD.

7.2 Trench 3

7.2.1 The earliest deposit recorded in Trench 3 was the sandy gravel natural (3/007) which was at its highest to the southern end of the trench and then incorporated a shallow gradient and increasing in depth towards the centre of the trench. Overlying the natural in the southern portion of the trench was a sequence of two distinct layers of disturbed material (3/005) and (3/004) sealed by topsoil (3/001). The disturbed deposits are very similar to those deposits observed in Trench 1 during Phase I excavations, indicating these deposits are also related to the partial backfilling of the 1930s excavations. This implies that Masterman's trench extended at least a further 3m to the south of the substantial masonry features recorded in Trench 1, and may also be responsible for the gradient associated with the natural created by over zealous excavation of the deposits surrounding the masonry feature. A small assemblage of residual animal bone, dressed sandstone blocks and 11th to 13th century pottery was collected from these disturbed deposits, representing either finds missed or not retained during the original excavation of the medieval deposits on site during the 1930s. The northern end of Trench 3 was occupied by the cut [3/003] and backfill (3/002) associated with Trench 1 excavated during the previous season, including the southern edge of the masonry feature [1/009] in the form of sandstone block [3/006].

7.3 Trench 4

7.3.1 The excavation of Trench 4 produced a more complicated sequence of deposits and features, a sequence of deposits which primarily appeared to have avoided being disturbed by Masterman's 1930s excavations. The complexity of deposits identified in Trench 4 meant the deposits were not fully excavated and natural was not encountered. The earliest deposit encountered was observed in a small sondage excavated at the northeastern end of the trench and interpreted as a possible soil horizon (4/005), recorded at a high of 35.38m OD. Soil horizon (4/005) was overlain by a sandy layer (4/003) thought to be a possible occupation horizon due to the quantity of pottery and animal bone recovered from this context. The dating of the pottery suggests these two layers date to the earliest phase of medieval activity on site at some point during the 12th century, and are likely to pre-date the construction of the sandstone structures in this area of the site due to construction cut [4/013] associated with wall [4/010] truncating layer (4/003) to the southwest. The recovery of two residual Mesolithic worked flints from layer (4/003) indicates the possibility that prehistoric activity may have taken place in close proximity to the site prior to the known medieval occupation.

7.3.2 Wall [4/010] orientated north-south is clearly the eastern extent of the sandstone masonry structure identified in Trench 1. The wall has been constructed in the same way as the structure in Trench 1 using dressed sandstone blocks to the exterior of the wall, while the interior of the wall has been constructed using compacted rubble. The wall appears to be up to 1m thick, supporting the implication that the masonry structure which occupied this area of the site was substantial in character. Wall [4/010] appears to continue to both the north and south of Trench 4. Floor surface (4/006) adjacent to wall [4/010] was recorded at a height of 35.78m OD and was a solid surface composed of fitted stone slabs which incorporated

several ceramic tiles. It is unclear if these tiles were part of the original construction or a later repair. The floor is known to extend to the west as the same type of levelled slabs were encountered in the northeast corner of Trench 1 during the previous season of excavation, although the floor was not identified southwest of Trench 4 implying that context (4/006) only represents the southern element of a larger floor surface extending to the north of Trench 1 and 4.

7.3.3 Abutting wall [4/010] to the east, and therefore part of a second phase of construction was east-west aligned wall [4/011]. Only a 1m section of wall [4/011] was present in Trench 4 prior to continuation beyond the eastern limit of excavation. Wall [4/011] was less substantial than wall [4/010] reaching a maximum thickness of 0.60m and did not incorporate a rubble core, being solely constructed using semi-dressed sandstone blocks. Judging by the deposits observed to the north of wall [4/011] it is likely to represent an external wall, although whether it is a free standing wall or part of a building is unclear. Whatever the nature of the structure associated with wall [4/011] it was incorporated into the eastern face of the larger, more substantial structure constructed in this area of the site.

7.3.4 To the east of wall [4/010] a discrete layer (4/009) of dark ashy material was excavated, which may represent an episode of isolated burning. It was not possible to establish if this burning occurred *in-situ,* and nor was it possible to establish its relationship with the masonry structures in the western area of the trench and identify if it pre or post-dated their construction.

7.3.5 Overlying layer (4/009) and the masonry features in the western side of the trench was a serious of deposits recorded as layers represented by (4/014), (4/004) and (4/002), which by their character were though to be associated with the backfilling of Masterman's excavation trench in this northwest area of site. As in Trench 3, these layers also contained a mixed group of finds not collected during the 1930s excavation, with the pottery represented by sherds potentially dating to a wide period of time, from 11th to 14th century. This sequence had been sealed by modern topsoil (4/001) deposits.

7.4 Trench 5

7.4.1 Natural sandy gravel (5/004) was observed in small sondages excavated at either end of Trench 5. Overlying natural was an insubstantial soil horizon (5/005) which pre-dated all later activity in Trench 5. Unfortunately, no finds were recovered from soil horizon (5/005) in order to date its deposition. Sealing layer (5/005) was a gravel formation layer (5/003) deposited to facilitate the construction of yard surface (5/002). The yard surface was of substantial quality, utilising the same type of stones constructed using a method where the thin end is laid vertically in approximately east-west orientated rows, although there does not appear to be any consisting coursing. This lack of coursing implies aesthetics was not a prime consideration as part of its construction. The technique employed is potentially fairly time consuming, but does create a practical and durable surface, suitable for a yard area expecting to accommodate frequent movements of both people and/or animals. The stones incorporated into the surface appeared to have experienced little ware or repair suggesting the yard surface was not in frequent use, or was only utilised for a limited period of time. The full extent of the yard surface was not established, as the context (5/002) extended beyond the limit of the trench on all sides, apart from the southwest where the yard surface had been

truncated by a shallow cut which post-dated the yard surfaces disuse. None of the deposits in Trench 5 yielded finds preventing the dating of yard surface (5/002). Due to the lack of evidence for any activity on the mound post dating the 13th to 14th century, it is confidently assumed that the yard surface is contemporary to the other 12th to 14th century activity on the mound. Subsequently, yard surface (5/002) and cut had been sealed by a gradual accumulation of topsoil (5/001).

7.4.2 Trench 5 had been located in the southeast area of the site in order to target an area of low resistance identified during the geophysical survey of the site, suggestive of deep soil deposits or an area clear of rubble (AI 2009). In contrast to the low resistance response recorded, the trench revealed the high resistance stone yard surface. If this response stays constant in relation to the yard surface, it may suggest that the yard surface may extent c. 5m further to the east and occupying the area immediately to the south of the great tower.

7.5 Trench 6

7.5.1 The sequence of deposits in Trench 6 represented a significant sequence of undisturbed deposits located in the northeast area of the site. Once again natural sandy gravel (6/007) was observed at the base of the sequence, overlain by an insubstantial soil horizon (6/006) which was homogenous and did not contain any anthropogenic material. Immediately above soil horizon (6/006) was a spread of small to medium sized sandstone fragments (6/005) which represent the earliest identifiable evidence of activity occurring within the trench. Due to a lack of dating evidence deriving from adjacent contexts, it is not possible to accurately say when these sandstone blocks are deposited, but it is possible they are associated with the construction of the first structures on the mound in the late 12th or early 13th century. This spread of sandstone blocks was subsequently sealed by a possible occupation horizon (6/004), with the presence of animal bone and charcoal inclusions testifying to the presence of human activity in the vicinity of the trench. The lack of pottery associated with context (6/004) prevents specific dating of the context, but it is thought to be associated with the 12th to 14th century occupation of the mound. The depth of layer (6/004) indicates it was allowed to accumulate over a period of time prior to the deposition of insubstantial gravel surface (6/003). The deposition of gravel surface (6/003) may have offered a means of substantiating the ground surface slightly, preventing it from being easily churned up, but it is unlikely to have offered a long term or significant solution to substantiating the ground surface. The disuse of gravel surface (6/003) was signalled by the deposition of soil horizon (6/002). The presence of animal bone within the context indicates activity was still occurring within the vicinity of the trench, while the 13th to 14th century pottery recovered from this layer suggests this deposition was occurred during the latter stages of medieval activity on the mound. This is supported by the presence of a spread of stone roof tile fragments incorporated into the upper horizon of layer (6/002) implying the demolition or disuse of substantial roofed structures nearby during the latter stages of its accumulation. The gradual accumulation of topsoil deposits (6/001) overlying layer (6/002) implies no significant activity took place in this area of the site after the 14th century.

7.5.2 Trench 6 was located to target an extensive area of low resistance in the central area of the site. The depth of deposits identified in the trench would potentially be significant to produce such a geophysical response. Based on this evidence it would imply a similar depth of deposits is present in the central area to the northwest of the great tower.

7.6 Trench 7

7.6.1 Our understanding of the structural features present in the northwest corner of the site is further enlightened by the results derived from Trench 7. As observed in the previous trenches, natural (7/010) consists of a sandy gravel deposit, identified at the base of the sondage dug in the western side of the trench. Natural was overlain by a homogenous insubstantial soil horizon (7/009) which did not contain any finds. In turn, soil horizon (7/009) was overlain by a thin lens of burnt debris (7/008) consisting of ash and soot material, which represents the earliest evidence for human activity within the trench. No finds were present within layer (7/008) in order to date its deposition, while the lack of discolouration in the surrounding deposits and limited depth of the deposit, suggests the material is unlikely to have derived from burning *in-situ* and is thought to derive from burning activity within vicinity of the trench. The deposition of burnt deposit (7/008) was immediately followed by the accumulation of building debris (7/007), incorporating small fragment of sandstone and mortar, thought to be associated with the first phases of construction activity on the mound. Unfortunately, the deposit did not contain any finds with which to support this conjectured date of deposition.

7.6.2 Truncating layer (7/007) was northeast-southwest orientated wall [7/006]. The foundation to the wall was fairly substantial, consisting of compacted rubble projecting approximately 0.40m from the base of the wall. The wall itself was constructed in a similar manner to the walls observed in Trench 1 and 4, although at 0.35m wide it is the narrowest wall yet encountered to site. Due to the limited amount of wall [7/006] it is difficult to provide a full interpretation of its function. From the width of the wall it is unclear if the wall is freestanding or part of a larger structure, but the lack of any identifiable floor surfaces to the west of the wall indicates it is positioned externally. What we do know is that its location is adjacent to the extrapolated castle entrance to the north of the site, implying the wall maybe part of a possible gatehouse structure.

7.6.3 Overlying the rubble foundation and abutting wall [7/006] was occupation horizon (7/004) which contained a small assemblage of pottery sherds and animal bone fragments, representing evidence for activity on the mound immediately post dating the construction of castle in the 12th or 13th century. A similar type of deposit (7/003)/(7/005) overlays occupation horizon (7/004), which contained further evidence for activity during this period with charcoal and additional fragments of animal bone recorded as deriving from this context. Trench 7 did produce limited evidence for the disuse of structures on the mound, in the form of context (7/002) sealing occupation horizon (7/003) adjacent to the northern limit of the trench. This dense patch of sandstone masonry rubble could potential represent a phase of disuse or demolition of structures on the mound and lies at approximately the same horizon to which wall [7/006] was reduced to at the time of its demolition. Pottery from context (7/002) suggests this phase of activity occurred during the 13th century, while the animal bone collected suggests there were still people on the mound consuming meat products while demolition/disuse was occurring. The gradual accumulation of topsoil deposit (7/001) sealing this demolition/disuse deposit implies that no significant activity occurred in this area of the site after the abandonment of the castle.

7.7 Trench 8

7.7.1 Natural sandy gravel (8/006) was observed throughout Trench 8, except for where it had been truncated by two substantial sandstone walls. Wall [8/004] appeared to be the earlier of the two walls, and was orientated east-west. It was constructed in the similar fashion as seen elsewhere on site, dressed sandstone facing blocks utilising a compacted rubble core, and was in excess of 0.90m thick. This width suggests it may have once been the main load-bearing wall for a substantial structure. Incorporated into the southern face of wall [8/004] was north-south orientated wall [8/005] which was constructed using the same technique. The wall returned to the east in the southern area of the trench, suggesting that wall [8/005] once defined an internal space. The full dimensions of wall [8/005] could not be established so it is unclear if wall [8/005] was an internal or external wall.

7.7.2 The masonry features in Trench 8 were overlain by a sequence of two similar highly mixed deposits (8/003) and (8/002). Deposit (8/003) was by far the more substantial of the two, and the highly unsorted character of the inclusions within indicates it was deposited over a limited period of time. Like the deposits recorded in Trench 3, the finds recovered were a mixed collection of medieval pottery, animal bone, CBM, mortar and dressed sandstone fragments. This evidence strongly supports the interpretation that deposition of deposits (8/003) and (8/002) occurred as part of the Masterman excavations of the 1930s. The 80 year time lapse between the excavations had allowed a reasonable depth of topsoil deposits (8/001) to form over Masterman's trench backfill.

7.8 Trench 9

7.8.1 The sequence of deposits recorded in Trench 9 was much simpler in comparison to the depositional sequence observed in the excavation trenches. Undisturbed natural sandy gravel deposits (9/005) were recorded in the southeast end of Trench 9, while in the remainder of the trench occasional charcoal flecks were observed within the sandy gravel deposits (9/004). It is unclear if the charcoal flecks within context (9/004) represent natural inclusion due to burning of vegetation, or represent a disturbed interface with the natural. Both gravel deposits were sealed by a possible occupation horizon (9/003). The occupation horizon contained evidence for human activity in the immediate vicinity of the trench, represented by fragments of animal bone. The occasional small sandstone blocks and metal fittings also imply that building activity was also taking place at this time. No evidence was recovered to enable a date to be associated with the deposits' deposition. Soil horizon (9/002) was subsequently deposited above context (9/003), demonstrating the presence of further activity taking place in the 13th to 14th century due to the presence of pottery sherds and additional quantities of animal bone. The recovery of several sandstone blocks indicate that demolition or disuse of structures was now taking place. A homogenous layer of topsoil (9/001) indicates that no further activity in this location took place.

7.9 Trench 10

7.9.1 The last trench to be excavated during Phase II of the excavations was Trench 10. The trench was dug in order to test the depositional sequence in the southeast corner of site, revealing a sequence similar to that of Trench 9. At the base of the trench natural sandy gravel (10/004) was recorded, immediate overlain by silty soil horizon (10/003). The only find recovered from

soil horizon (10/003) was a large sandstone block, meaning it is difficult to relate this layer to the other phases of activity recorded in the other trenches. The sandstone block strongly suggests the layer's deposition is associated with either the construction or demolition/disuse of the early medieval structures on the site. The finds collected from layer (10/002) provide a stronger indication of medieval activity on site with the recovery of pottery and animal bone fragments. The moderate quantity of sandstone fragments provides a stronger indication demolition/disuse of structures taking place at this time. Once again the sequence was sealed by undisturbed topsoil deposits (10/001) suggesting no further activity took place in this area.

7.10 Trench 11

7.10.1 Trench 11 was excavated as part of the Phase III investigations. At the base of the trench a layer of sandstone rubble (11/002) was found which may represent the remains of *in-situ* masonry or demolition debris, but this interpretation is uncertain due to the limited area of investigation. Topsoil deposits (11/001) sealed the rubble.

7.11 Trench 12

7.11.1 During the Phase III investigations Trench 12 was also excavated. A familiar sequence of natural (12/004) and possible subsoil deposits (12/003) were present at the base of the trench. These were overlain by a soil horizon (12/002), potentially disturbed as part of a badger set and likely to post-date medieval activity on the mound, which was subsequently sealed by topsoil deposits (12/001).

7.12 Finds Assemblages

7.12.1 Pottery sherds made up the greatest proportion of the finds collected during the course of the Phase II and III excavations. In general terms the assemblage is very small and only a small proportion consisted of diagnostic sherds limiting its immediate significance. The majority of the assemblage dates from the mid 12th century to the early 13th century, although certain contexts did contain sherds associated with the late 13th to 14th century. Approximately 70% of the assemblage comprised pottery derived from sources in Worcestershire, with the remaining elements deriving from sources in the Malverns, Herefordshire and Wiltshire. No imported pottery types were identified. Comparisons with other similar sites within Worcestershire is difficult, as few such monument types within rural areas have been excavated which indicates the assemblage is regionally very important, despite its limited size and content.

7.12.2 The faunal assemblage was identified as deriving from both medieval contexts and later contexts associated with Masterman's excavation. As it can be strongly suggested that Masterman's disturbed deposits derived from disturbed medieval deposits, it has led the faunal assemblage to be currently assessed as a whole. The lack of any new born domestic stock is consistent with a consumer rather than producer assemblage, which is what would be expected at a medieval site of this type. Cattle were the main source of meat consumed at the castle, whilst the body parts within the pig assemblage are consistent with the consumption of

whole spit-roasted pigs. Sheep/goat contributes quite a small amount of meat, likely to have been brought in as joints. The assemblage includes some species which might be indicative of high status, such as fallow deer, but not in great numbers. The animal bone assemblage is broadly consistent with what would be expected from a medieval high status site, but lacks many species that would be expected at other higher status sites, particularly wild birds. Due to the lack of rural medieval sites excavated within the county the faunal assemblage is potentially of regional importance, but in terms of the site the small size of the assemblage can only provide a general indication of the consumption habits of the residents, without further indications of industrial activity or deposition patterns.

7.12.3 During the Phase II and III excavations on site a small assemblage of worked stone was collected. The assemblage primarily consisted of dressed sandstone blocks, with only 4 blocks demonstrating evidence of architectural moulding. These architectural pieces conformed with the pottery evidence indicating activity on site between the 12th and 14th century. The limited size of the assemblage, in association with the majority of blocks originating from later disturbed contexts, indicates the assemblage is of local significance only.

7.12.4 Other finds assemblages collected include stone roof tiles, metalwork, CBM, sandstone floor tiles, and worked flint. The stone roof tiles all derived from the same context (6/002) and are likely to be part of the same scatter of roof tiles identified in Trench 2, albeit of a reduced concentration. These roof tiles provide further evidence for an important building roofed with stone tiles in the northeast corner of the mound. Two iron nails were also recovered from context (8/003) but diagnostic qualities are severely limited due to the context identified as backfill spoil deposits from Masterman's 20th century excavations. They may or may not have originally derived from medieval contexts. The two fragments of worked flint are clearly residual and indicate possibly earlier activity on site. The CBM and sandstone floor tile assemblage will be fully assessed as part of future post-excavation work.

8 Conclusions

8.1 During the course of the Phase II excavations, eight trenches were opened and recorded on site. This was followed by the excavation of two further trenches during Phase III of the excavation. Analysis of the excavation results reveal that five periods of activity were identified, primarily relating to the 12th to 14th century and 1930s Masterman excavations. The recovery of residual flint work associated with the Mesolithic period provides limited archaeological evidence for activity predating the 12th century, but is ephemeral in nature and prevents any firm conclusions being drawn. Not taking into account the 1930s excavations, there is no evidence for any archaeological activity post-dating the 12th to 14th century. The evidence identified consists of both a consistent sequence of deposits observed across the site, in addition to substantial masonry features identified in Trenches 4, 7 and 8. No cut features were encountered during the course of the excavation.

8.2 The earliest period of activity, Period 1, relates to the natural deposits recorded on site consisting of a sandy gravel deposit. The natural sandy gravel was observed in all trenches except for Trench 4. There is approximately 1.1m difference in the minimum and maximum recorded height of the natural on site, which is consistent with the gradual concave

topography of the site. The highest point of natural is associated with Trench 8 in the eastern central area of the site, and descends in all directions, incorporating the other excavation trenches on the plateau of the mound, before reaching the break of slope and the surrounding steep gradient which forms the mound itself.

8.3 Period 2 is represented by a thin buried soil horizon recorded in Trenches 5, 6 and 7, represented by contexts (5/005), (6/006) and (7/009). All three layers directly overlie natural, and pre-date later medieval activity on site. No inclusions have been identified as deriving from these contexts which means no certain date can be established for its deposition, but it does indicate the presence of an *in-situ* soil horizon prior to the 12th to 14th century activity on the mound.

8.4 Period 3 is associated with the medieval occupation of the site between the 12th to 14th centuries. The sequences attributed to this period are detailed enough for the activity associated with Period 3 to be sub-divided into three phases a, b and c.

8.5 Period 3a relates to the initial occupation and the construction of structures on site. Pottery recovered from these deposits indicates this initial activity occurred during the late 12th or early 13th century. This incorporates layers (4/003), (4/005), (6/004), (6/005), (7/007), (7/008), (9/003), and possibly (10/003). These layers are either truncated by masonry features or contain evidence associated with the construction of masonry features. The masonry features identified in Trenches 4, 5, 7 and 8 are a key part of this phase, incorporating walls [4/010] and [4/011] (and all other masonry features in Trench 4), yard surface (5/002) and (5/003), wall [7/006], as well as walls [8/004] and [8/005].

8.6 Three sets of wall lines were encountered during the excavated, located in Trenches 4, 7 and 8, all of which appear to be contemporary and are part of the same overall structure on site. The walls indentified in Trench 4 are the continuation of the structure found in Trench 1 during the first season of excavation, and are a continuation of the corner tower first recognised by Masterman in the 1930s. Wall [4/010] appears to be the eastern face of the tower, aligned north-south, which indicates the tower would have been measured approximately 5m east-west. East-west aligned wall [4/011] was bonded into the tower structure and is likely to be an external wall of a further structure attached to the southeast aspect of the tower. This implies the tower in the northwest corner of the site did not stand in isolation but was part of a larger complex of buildings. It is unclear, though, if wall [4/011] formed the northern limit of the castle complex or a curtain wall existed further to the north.

8.7 The wall [7/006] found in Trench 7 did not follow the exact alignment as the walls observed in Trench 4, instead it was orientated NNE-SSW, although this small variation in alignment does not rule out it of being a possible continuation of the structure extending east from Trench 4. Due to only a limited amount of the wall being exposed it is not possible to accurately ascribe a function to the wall, although its location adjacent to the assumed entrance may suggest it was once part of a gatehouse complex. As in Trench 4, it is unclear if wall [7/006] delineated the limit of the castle complex in this area.

8.8 Walls [8/004] and [8/005] start to provide some detail to the area of great tower as defined by Masterman. Due to the small area exposed, only limited information can be gleaned, but the walls appear to confirm that the great tower was orientated north-south/east-west, and contained internal divisions to its floor plan.

8.9 Period 3b is associated with the medieval occupation of the site, indicated by pottery and stratigraphical evidence to occur during 13th century. Deposits which can be associated with confidence to this phase of activity are limited, consisting of (4/009), (6/003), (7/003) and (7/004), preventing a detailed picture of life on site during this phase being developed.

8.10 Period 3c is attributed to the demolition and/or disuse phase of the medieval structures on site. Deposits (6/002), (7/002), (9/002) and (10/002), deriving from four different locations on site, all contain evidence for demolition and/or disuse of structures in the form of either concentrations of sandstone rubble or stone roof tiles. A combination of stratigraphic and pottery evidence suggests this occurs by the late 13th or 14th century. While this demolition/disuse activity occurs, the presence of animal bone within the rubble deposits suggests there is human activity still occurring on site at this time.

8.11 Period 4 represents the disuse of the mound from the 14th century until the 20th century. Topsoil deposits (5/001), (6/001), (7/001), (9/001) and (10/001), are undisturbed horizons which have accumulated over time and only contain residual finds associated with activity from Period 3.

8.12 Period 5 activity is quite stark within the archaeological record, as it defines the excavation work undertaken by Masterman in the 1930s. Evidence for Masterman's excavations is limited to Trenches 3, 4 and 8, represented by deposits (3/001), (3/004), (3/005), (4/001), (4/002), (4/014), (8/001), (8/002) and (8/003). These deposits represent Masterman's attempts to backfill his trenches and the subsequent settling of the soil and generation of overlying organic topsoil.

8.13 In general, the periods of activity identified on Oliver's Mound are highly significant. The presence of a possible *in-situ* soil horizon associated with Period 2, and the lack of any finds pre-dating the 12th century, recognises that the site has been previously undisturbed, having avoided exploitation by earlier peoples.

8.14 The Period 3 activity associated with the 12th to 14th centuries is very significant. The survival of structures and deposits from this period is very significant, especially as their analysis has allowed three distinct phases to be identified associated with the construction of structures on site, their occupation and subsequent disuse and destruction. Even though the excavations were restricted to small scale trenching, these results and finds assemblages have enabled an initial picture to be generated of how the mound was exploited during this period.

8.15 After the early to mid-medieval exploitation of the site, the abandonment of the site represented by the soil horizons associated with Period 4 are significant to the site chronology. This represents a lack of later activity which has allowed the Period 3 activity to have been left predominantly undisturbed, allowing it to survive in good condition. This also implies that the site held no great interest or purpose for later populations.

8.16 The evidence for Materman's 1930s excavations associated with Period 5 are also highly significant to the site and its interpretation. The excavations have allowed an appraisal of Masterman's techniques as well as re-interpretation of his publicised results. This form of analysis is essential to account for variations within the archaeological recorded which can be attributed to earlier antiquarian intervention.

9 Publication and Archive

9.1 The Phase II and Phase III excavations undertaken in 2009 are the last of the current phases of excavation to take place on Oliver's Mound. The production of this report forms the last phase of the post-excavation analysis.

9.2 It is currently planned that publication will be in the form of a journal article submitted to the Worcestershire Archaeological Journal. The article will incorporate the results from all three phases of archaeological investigation, including site drawings, site location, plans of the excavation area showing the main features with additional illustrations where needed.

9.3 Discussions are already underway to prepare the excavation archive, consisting of paper and drawn records, 35mm and digital photographs, finds, and samples (Appendix D), to be deposited with Worcester Museum Service. The archive is currently in preparation and will be held by North Worcestershire Archaeology Group (NorthWAG) until it is ready to be deposited.

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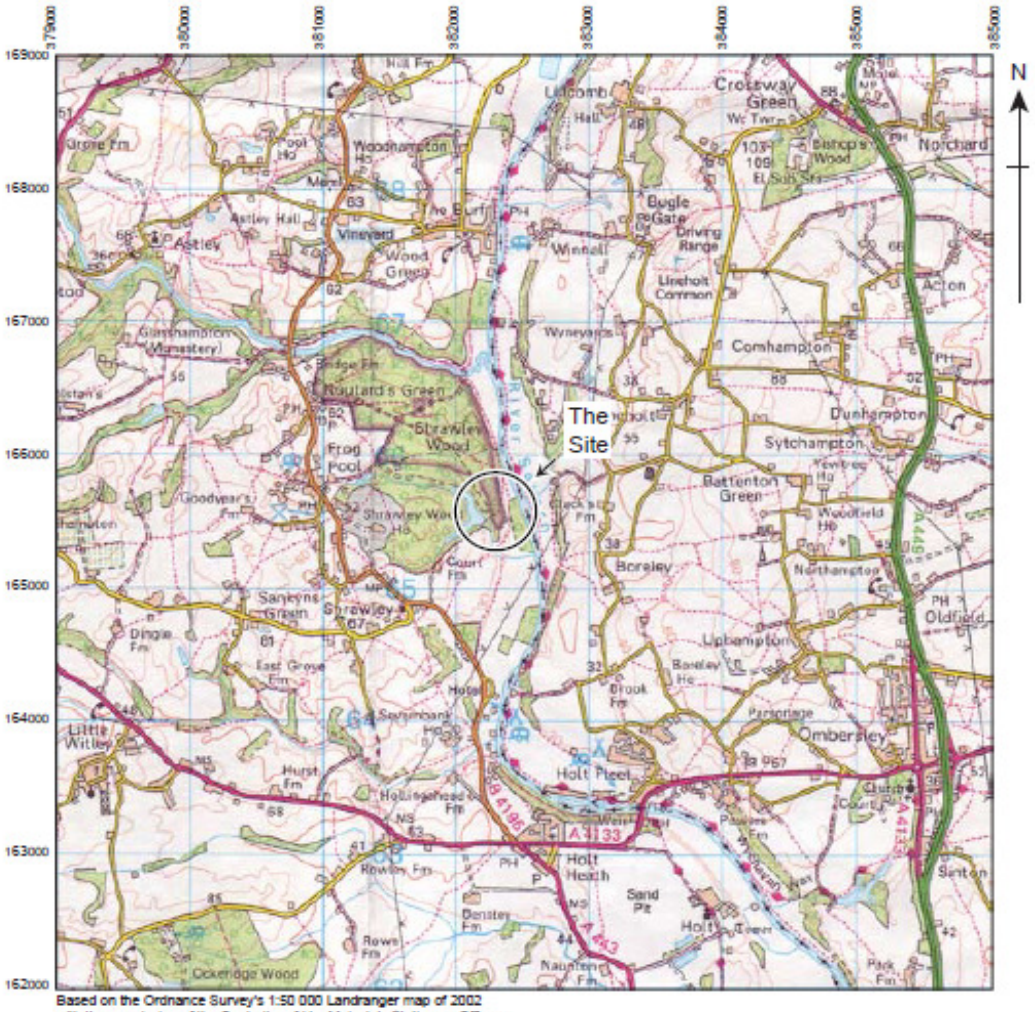

Figure 1: Site Location

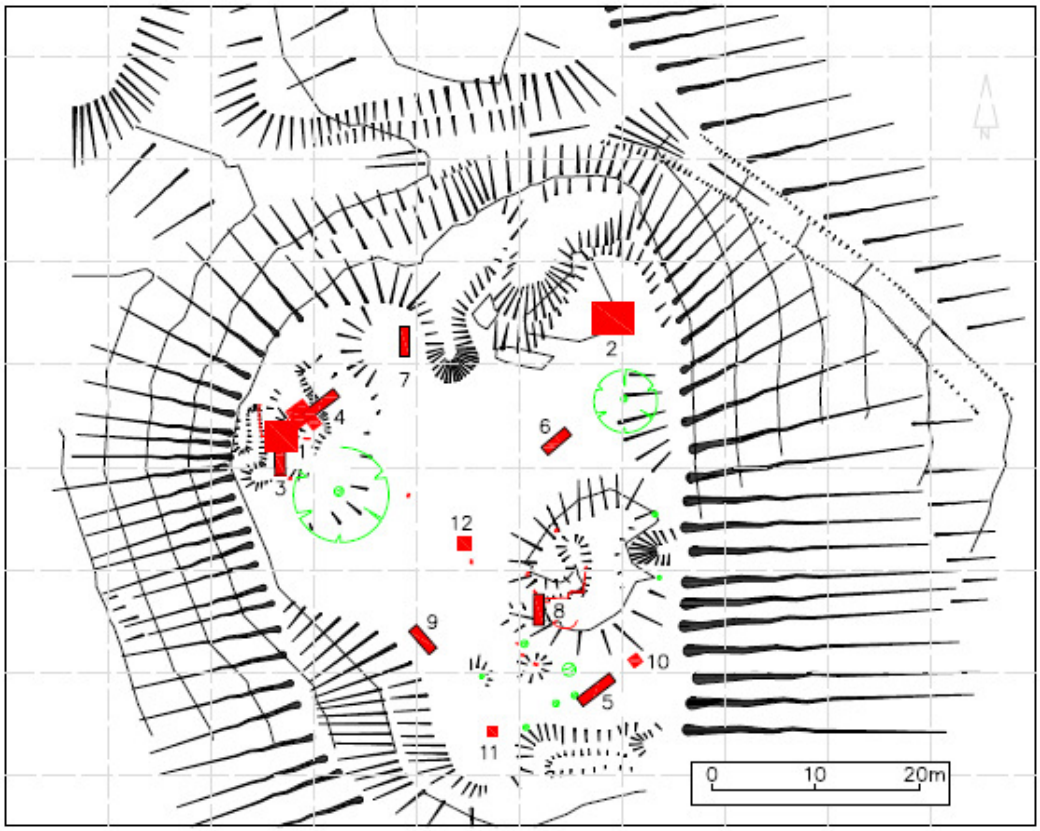

Figure 2: Trench Locations

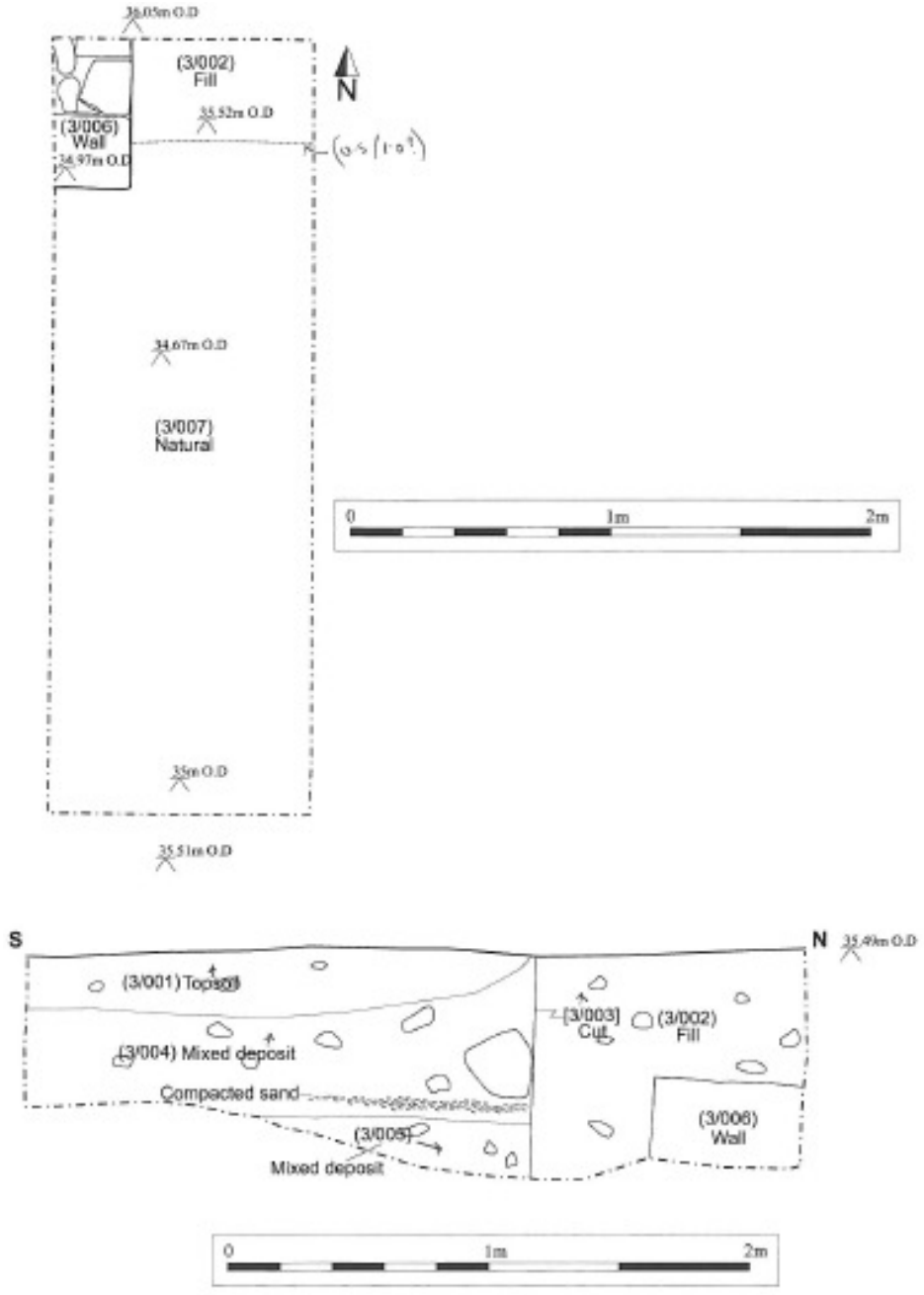

Figure 3: Trench 3 Plan and Section

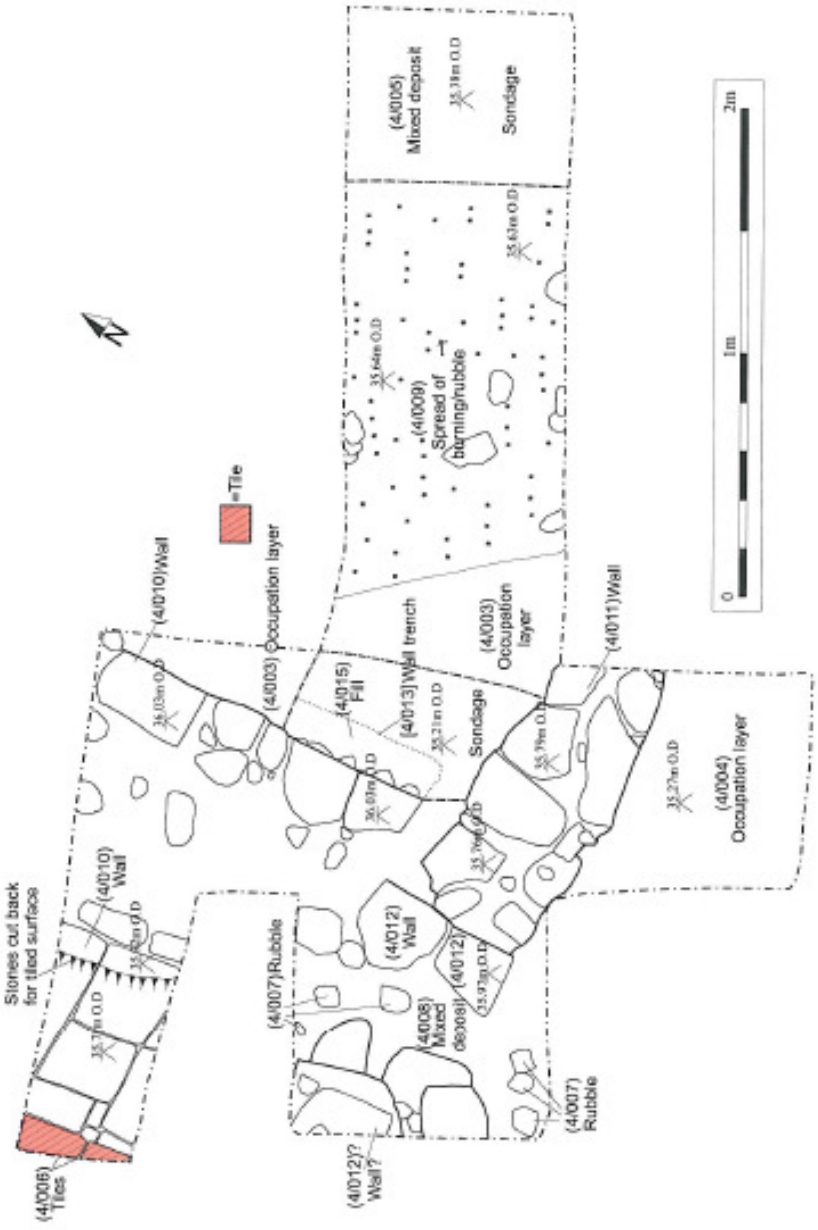

Figure 4: Trench 4 Plan

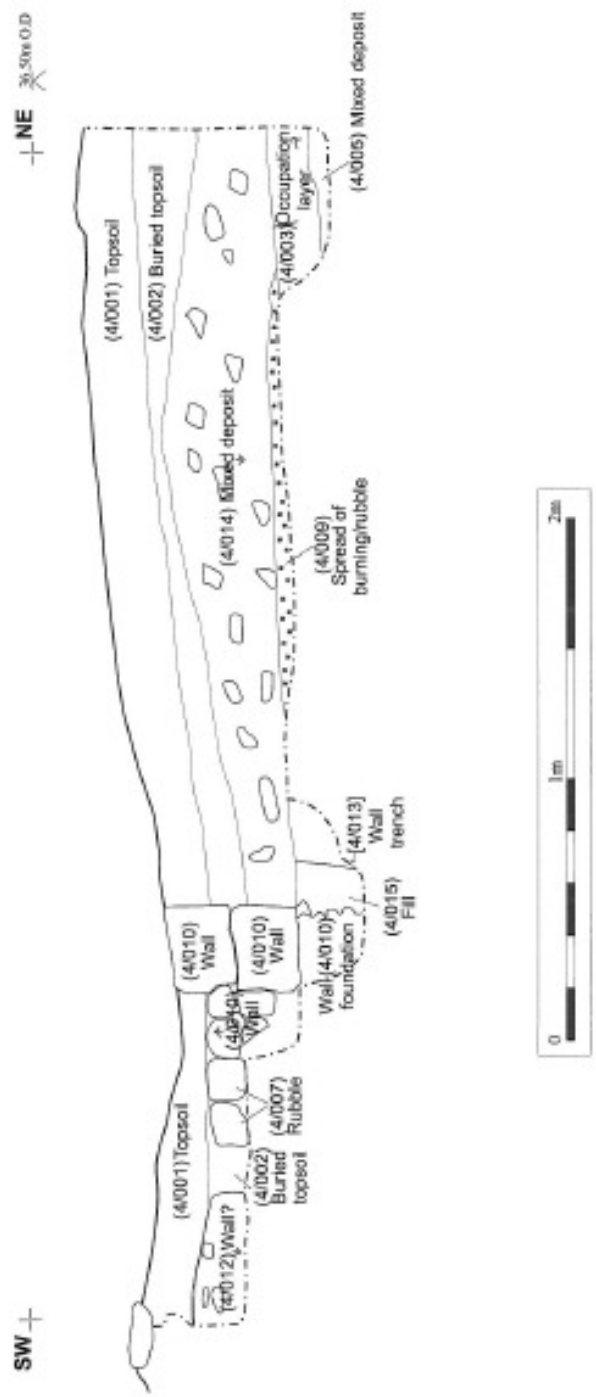

Figure 5: Trench 4 Section

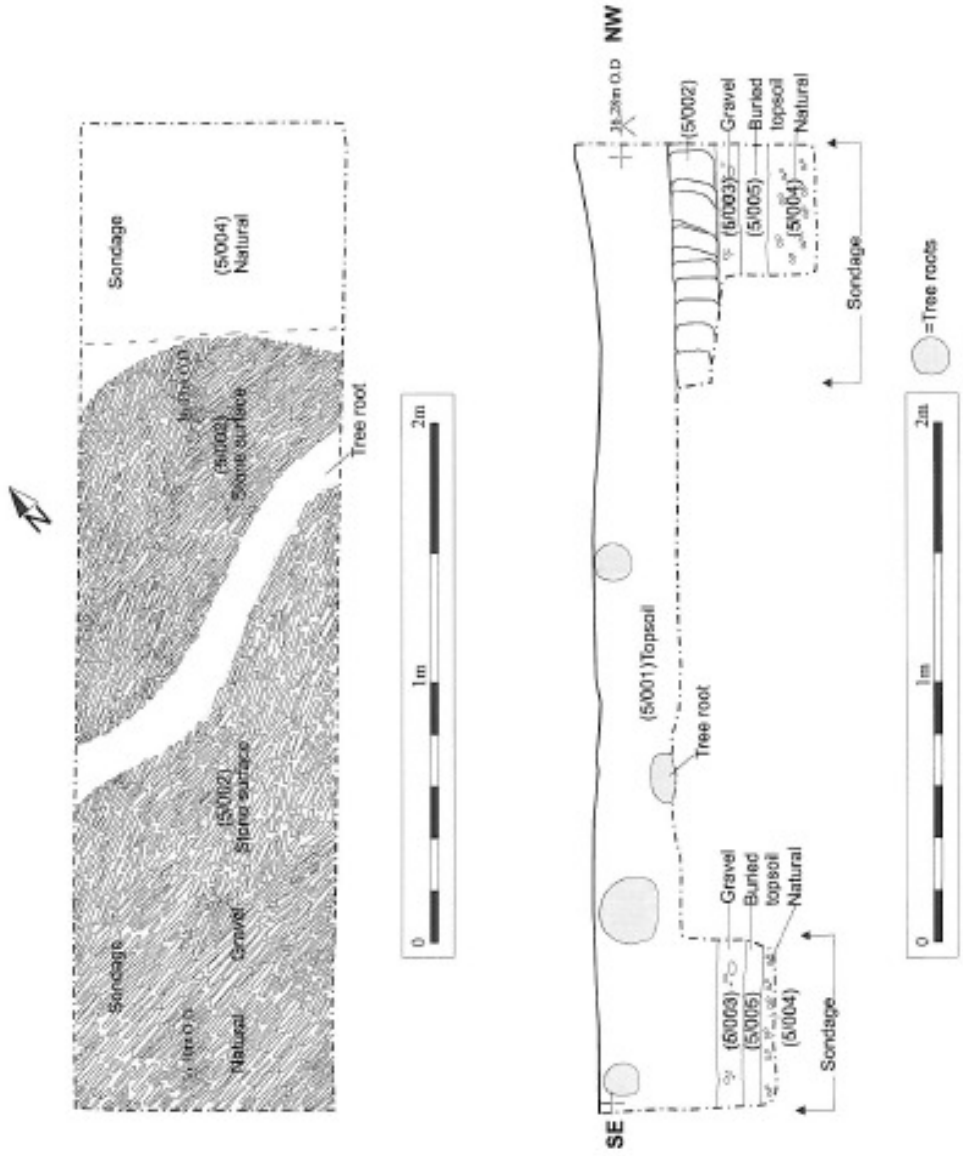

Figure 6: Trench 5 Plan and Section

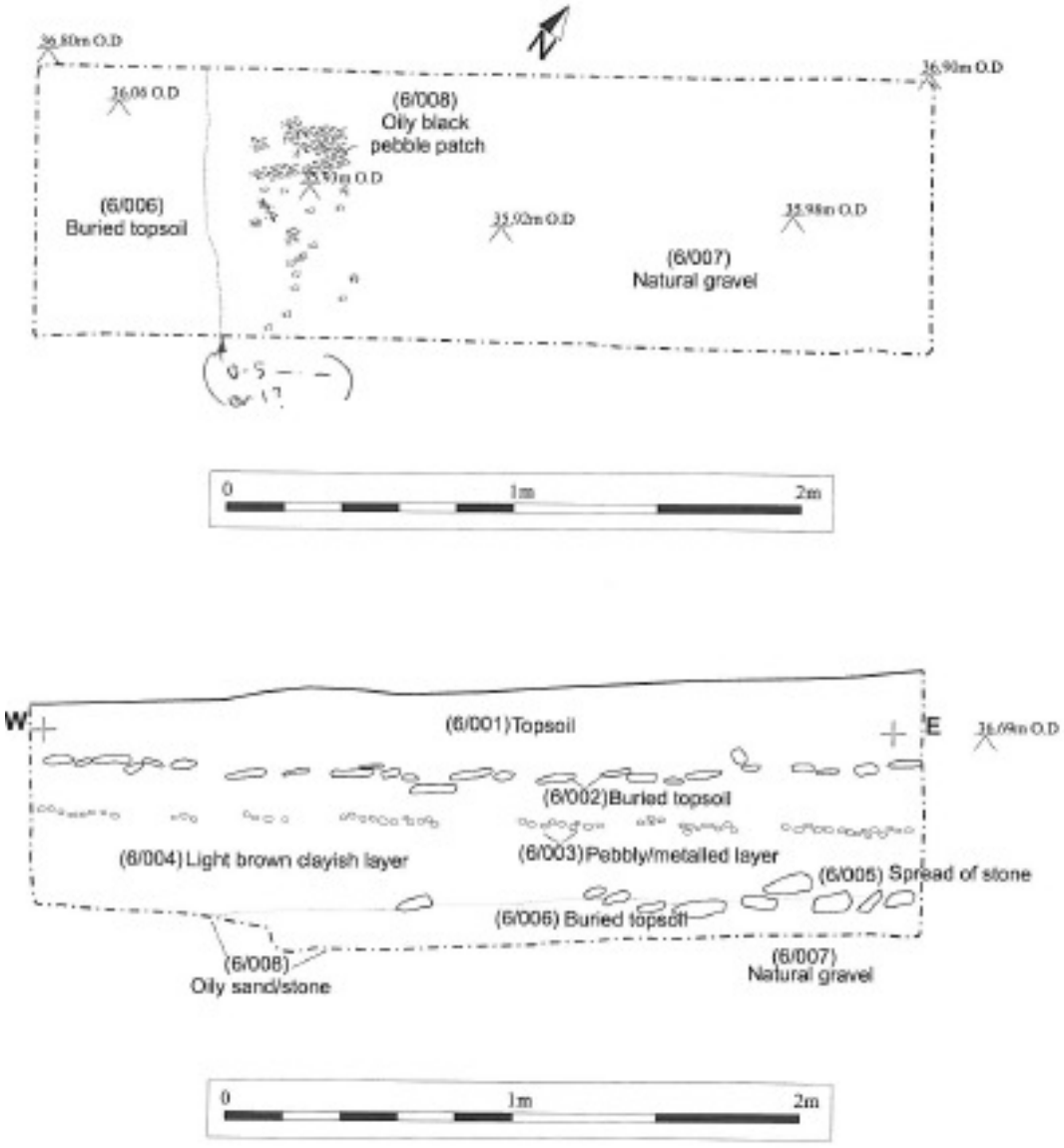

Figure 7: Trench 6 Plan and Section

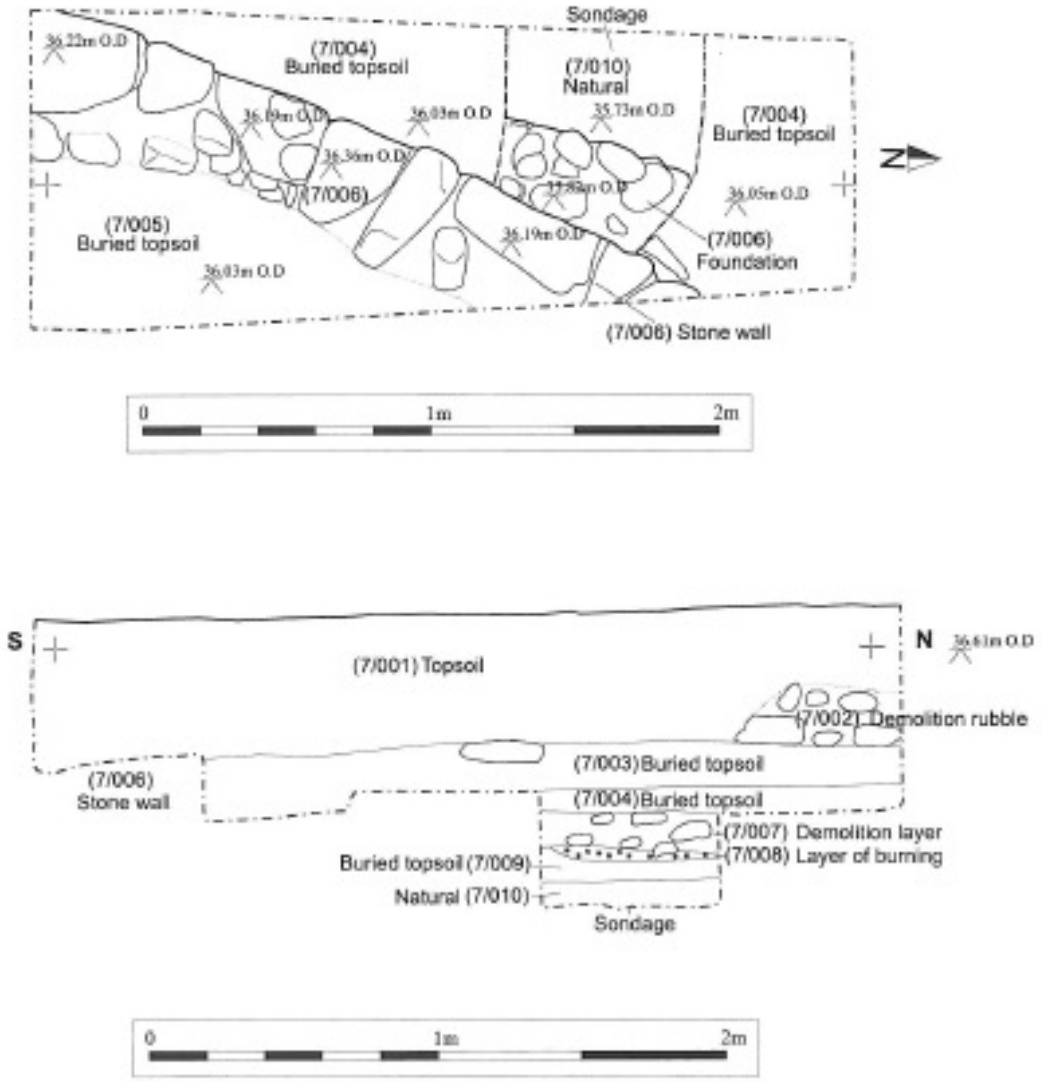

Figure 8: Trench 7 Plan and Section

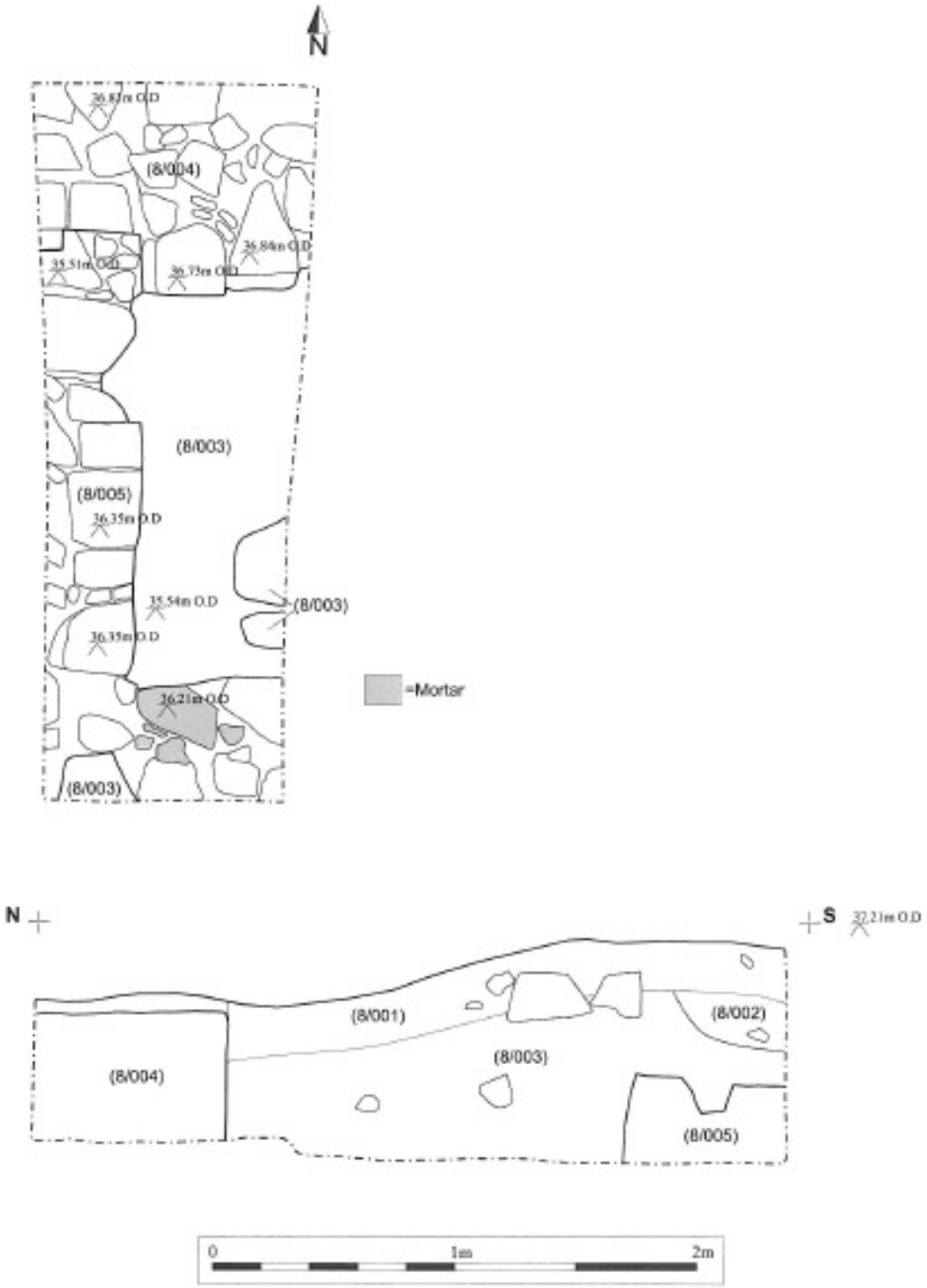

Figure 9: Trench 8 Plan and Section

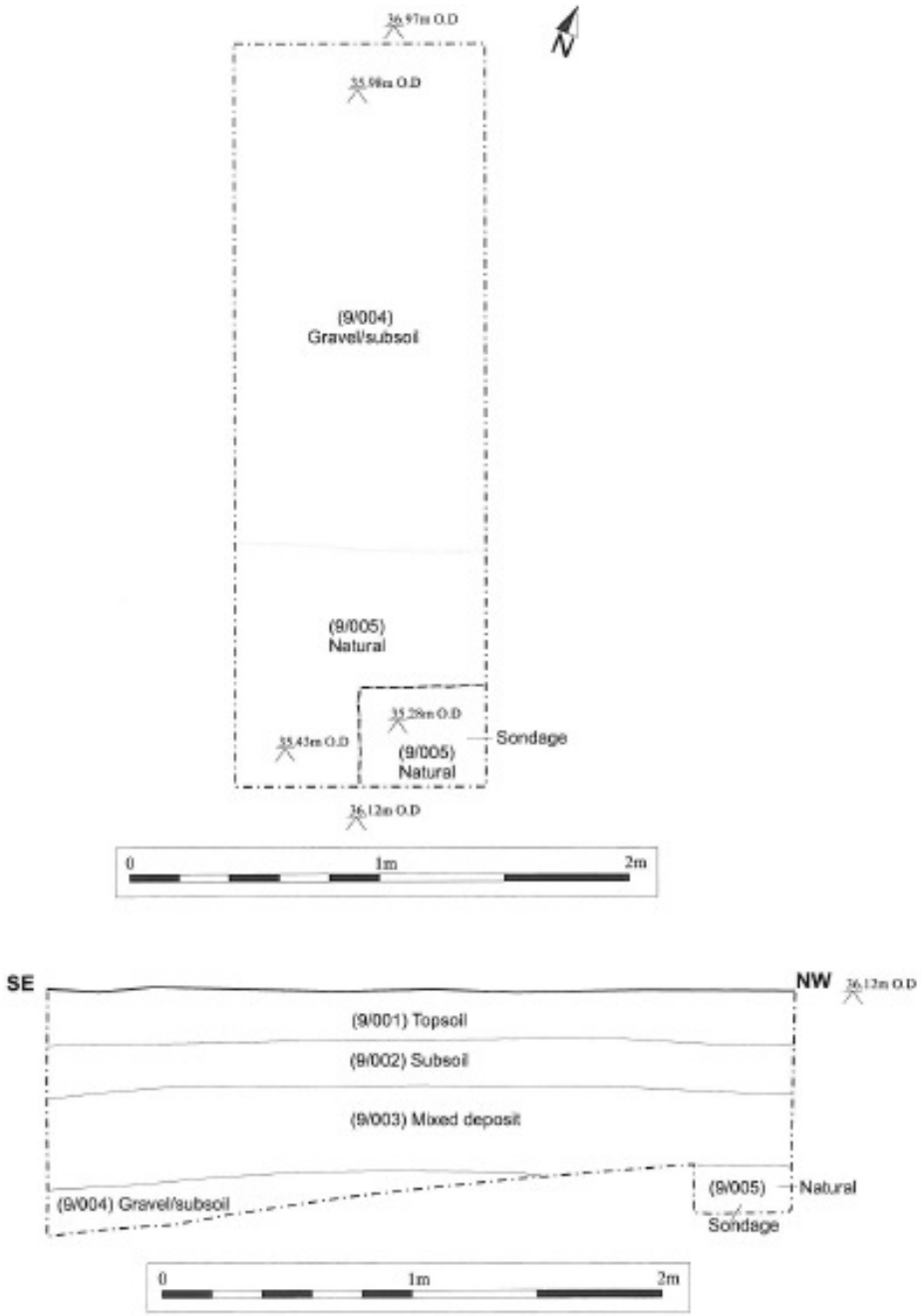

Figure 10: Trench 9 Plan and Section

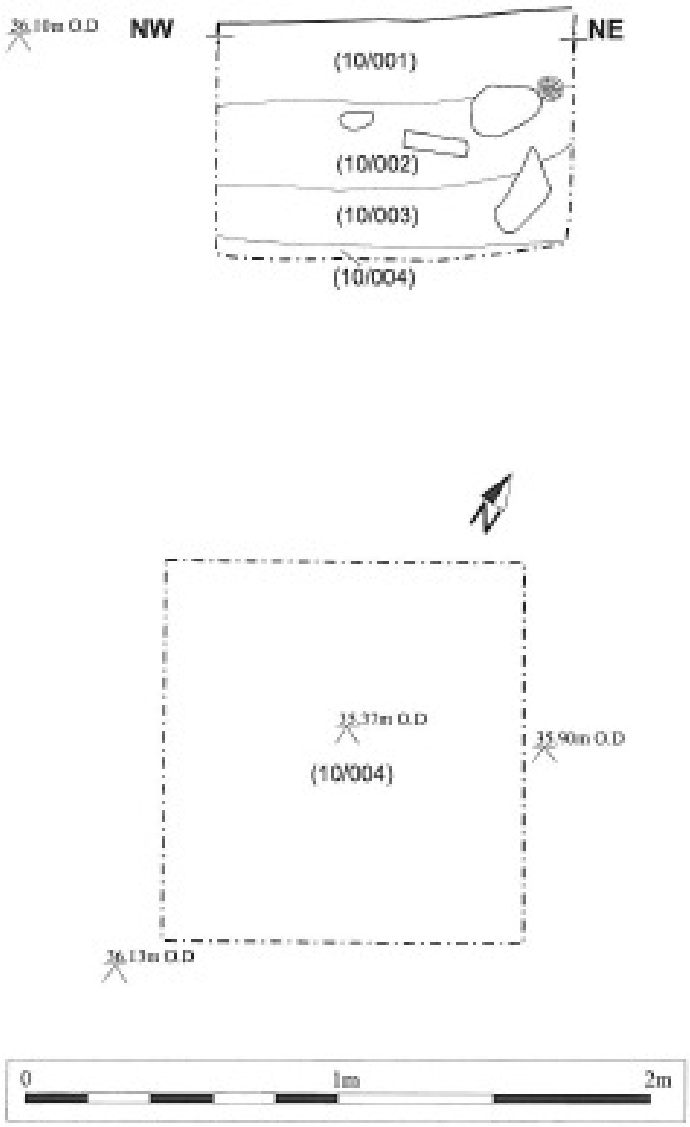

Figure 11: Trench 10 Plan and Section

APPENDICES

Appendix A – Specialist Reports

Medieval Pottery from Oliver's Mound Phase II

By

Emily Edwards

Introduction

A total of 376 sherds (4996) of pottery were recovered from 20 contexts within excavation trenches at Oliver's Mound. The table below will provide quantification by fabric, whilst breakdown by context will be provided below.

Table 1: Quantification of Assemblage by Fabric

FABRIC	PERCENTAGE OF ASSEMBLAGE	COUNT	WEIGHT	EVE	MINIMUM NUMBER OF VESSELS
55	54	205	2523	0.92	24
64.1	16	60	947	0.19	11
56	14	53	796	0.305	7
69	5	20	163	0	1
64.2	5	17	239	0	2
99	3	9	100	0.145	5
64.3	2	5	56	0	1
92	1	4	141	0.08	4
60	0.2	1	16	0	0
64.4	0	1	10	0	0
65	0	1	5	0	0
Total	100	375	4980	1.64	55

Methodology

The pottery was examined and quantified by count, weight, estimated vessel equivalent and minimum vessel number. Cross fitting was not attempted. A full analysis and quantification of the assemblage is available in archive. All the fabrics have been identified using the fabric series housed at the Worcestershire County Council Heritage Environment and Archaeology Service and the forms have been identified using the Deansway report (Dalwood 2004).

Condition and character of the Assemblage

The average sherd weight was 13.5 g and of the 50 rims identified, only 26 were large enough to measure rim diameter. The assemblage largely comprised plain cooking pot sherds; of the sherds manufactured from fabrics associated with glazed pitchers, still the majority were not decorated (under 10% of the assemblage was decorated). Over 40% of the pottery was recovered from Trench 4, from contexts 4/002 and 4/003, the latter having been interpreted as an occupation horizon sealed by an isolated area of burning.

The Assemblage

11th century to early 12th century

This early contingent to the assemblage consisted of 4 vessels; this consisted of three rims of Fabric 55, Type 1 cooking pot (4/002 and 7/003) and one simple, rounded and everted rim (context 4/003, also of Fabric 55). One body sherd from context 4/003 was identified as being manufactured from Fabric 65, an early to mid 12th century oolitic fabric originating in Wiltshire (Minety Ware), whose distribution included Worcestershire. It is a type that includes forms such as pitchers and both glazed and non-glazed, shouldered bowls.

Mid 12th to early 13th century

The majority of the pottery can be dated from the mid 12th century to the early 13th century. This consisted of 29 rims, including Type 3 Fabric 55 cooking pots, Fabric 56 Type 2 cooking pots and Fabric 64.1 Type 1, 3 pitchers. The Fabric 64.1, Type 6 'Pipkin' could also conceivably be slightly later as they are used into the later 14th century.

Mid 13th to late 13th century

A total of 6 Type 3 Fabric 56 cooking pots (4/001, 4/003, 7/002, 7/004). The pipkin sherd (Fabric 64.1) may also date to this period, although the date range for such vessels ranges from the early 13th to the late 14th century and the sherd was recovered from the demolition layer 9/002 in which other later fabrics were present.

Late 13th century to 14th century

Fabric 92 is most common (ref) during the 14th century, in Herefordshire (although it dates from the late 13th to the 16th century) and commonly includes forms such as hand made cooking pots, tripod pitchers, wheel thrown jugs, bowls, baking trays and aquamaniles; it has not so far been identified in

Worcestershire. The sherds from Shrawley (4, 141g) were both wheel-made and hand-made, are all unglazed and include one incised lattice decorated rim and body sherd. A total of 20 sherds (163 g) of Fabric 69 were identified; this is a fabric with a long currency (late 13th to 16th century). A jug sherd (Type 2) from context 9/002 can be dated from the late 13th to the 14th century. These two fabrics seem only to be associated with the demolition layers and disturbed deposits, namely 3/004, 6/002 and 9/002. One sherd of a Type 4 Fabric 56 cooking pot was also recovered from context 7/00?.

14th century

This phase consisted of one Type 4, Fabric 56 cooking pot rim (7/00).

13th to 14th century

In this section falls a group of fabrics that were only represented by body sherds, bases, handles and other non-diagnostic vessel elements (22, 89 g) and so which cannot be specifically dated by type. These included Glazed 64.2 (16, 23 g), Unglazed 64.3 (5, 56 g) and Glazed 64.4 (1, 10 g). It seems that forms in these fabrics most commonly include ranges of pitcher and jug types. These were recovered from Trenches 3/004, 4/002, 4/003, 6/002 and 9/002. One sherd of Fabric 60 (context 4/002) also falls within this group.

The Assemblage by Context

Trench 3

A total of 45 sherds (90g) were recovered from context 3/004, within trench 3. The vast majority of this group comprised handmade, unoxidised body sherds, manufactured from fabric 55; the lack of rim types associated with these sherds restricts ability to be specific about dates but the general range of Fabric 55 is from the 11th to the 13th century. Potentially later century pottery was also present; one wheel thrown, unoxidised rim, possibly a type 6 spout, was manufactured from fabric 92 (late 13th to 16th century) and one glazed sherd, manufactured from 64.2 (13th-14th century). The glaze on the latter was an exterior glaze, present only in drips.

Trench 4

A total of five contexts from this trench contained 148 sherds (2121), the majority having been evenly distributed between contexts 4/002 (47, 633 g) and 4/003 (96, 1386 g). The majority of the sherds were hand made and manufactured from fabric 55; rim forms in this fabric consisted of type 1 (2, 56 g, 0.15 EVEs), 3 (8, 38 g, 0.24 EVEs) and 6 (1, 7 g). Bryant (2004) puts Type 1 rims in the 11th to early 12th century and Type 3 rims are typical of the mid-12th to 13th century, thus making these sherds an early contingent within this group. The small quantity of sherds manufactured from Fabric 65 can also be placed within this group. The larger proportion of the group, however, can be generally attributed to the late 12th to 13th century. Fabrics within this phase included Fabric 56, of which there were two early 13th century Type 3 rims (2, 32 g, 0.06 EVEs) and one mid to late 13th century Type 2 (1, 46 g, 0.13 EVEs); 64.1, of which there were three 12th to early 13th century Highly Decorated Tripod Pitcher Type 1 rims (3, 17 g, 0.14 Eves) and one 12th to early 13th century Type 3 (1, 5 g); 92, of which there was one Type 3 rim (1, 22 g, 0.07 EVEs). Some potentially later fabrics were present, namely 64.2, 64.3 and 64.4; being represented by body sherds, this group could not be dated any more specifically than 13th to 14th century.

A total of 12 sherds were glazed (all belonging to 64.1-3 fabrics), some of which were interior glazes. Decoration was present in small quantities within the same group of glazed fabrics, including: one sherd showing bands of horizontal roller stamping; two sherds showing wavy and horizontal combing; one glazed rim (fabric 64.1) was decorated with grooving; one sherd showed the remains of a cordon and finally, one non glazed sherd appeared to show traces of paint.

Trench 6

Trench 6 contained a group of pottery of potentially 14th century date, although the character of the group restricted attempts at specific dating. A total of 42 sherds (496, 0.185, EVEs) were recovered from three contexts within Trench 6. Only 10 sherds were manufactured from fabric 55 (including one Type 3 rim, 0.10 EVEs), the remainder represented fabrics 64.1, 64.2 (13th to 14th century), 69 (late 13th to 16th century), 92 (most prevalent in 14th century, two Type 1 rims, 0.03 EVEs, one fragment of a curfew, 0.5 EVEs), 56 and 99 (including one Type 1 rim). Fabric 92 is most common during the 14th century, in Herefordshire and, in Worcester (www.worcestershireceramics.org). Fabric 69 is currently dated, at its earliest, to the late 13th century. These two fabrics seem only to be associated with the demolition layers and disturbed deposits, namely 3/004, 6/002 and 9/002. Nine sherds were glazed and five were decorated.

Trench 7

A total of 98 sherds (1697g, 0.30 EVEs) were recovered from five contexts (topsoil, rubble layer and soil horizons) within Trench 7. With the exception of one sherd of Fabric 69 (handle from soil horizon 7/002), the deposits consisted of fabrics 55 (seven Type 3 and one Type 1 rims), 56 (three Type 3 rims and one Type 4 rim) and 64.1 (one Type 3 and one Type 1). This group can be divided into sherds that date to the 11th to 12th century (Type 1 Fabric 55), mid 12 to 13th (Type 3 Fabric 55, Fabric 64.1), mid to late 13th (Fabric 56, Type 3) and 14th century (Fabric 56 Type 4, possibly Fabric 69)

The decorated element of the group consisted of six sherds manufactured from Fabric 64.1, one sherd manufactured from Fabric 69 and two sherds manufactured from Fabric 99.

Trench 9

A total of 30 sherds (371 g, 0.15 EVEs) were recovered from two contexts; the majority having been associated with the demolition layer 9/002. The two mid 12th to 13th century rim sherds within context 9/001 were manufactured from Fabrics 55 (Type 3) and 56 (Type 2) whilst those from 9/002 were manufactured from Fabrics 55 (one Type 3 rim), 56, 64.1 (one early 13th to later 14th century Type 6 rim with internal glaze), 64.3 (13th to 14th century), Fabric 69 (one Type 2 rim) and Fabric 99 (one Type 3 rim). The majority of the group comprised plain sherds, with the exception of two glazed sherds manufactured from Fabric 64.1.

Trench 10

A total of 5 sherds (74 g) were recovered from contexts 10/002 and 10/001. These being body sherds in fabric 55 and a glazed jug sherd in 64.1, no specific dates can be given for this context.

Trench 12

A total of six sherds were recovered from context 12/002, within Trench 12, comprising body sherds

manufactured from Fabrics 55 and 64.1. A 12th to early 13th century rim Type 1 rim, manufactured from Fabric 64.1, was also recovered.

Discussion

The assemblage is very small and only a small proportion consisted of diagnostic rims; certain trends can, however, be observed.

The majority of the assemblage dates from the mid 12th century to the early 13th century and consisted of cooking pots and pitchers from Worcestershire. Most contexts within the site contained groups of this general character. The occupation horizon in Trench 4 (4/003) and soil horizons (4/002) (7/004) contained three of the largest groups on the site and reflect this. The exception to this was Trench 6, wherein the contexts comprised largely of late 13th to 14th century pottery, comprising pitchers, jugs, some evidence of cooking pot fragments and one fragment of a curfew.

Approximately 70% of the assemblage comprised pottery derived from sources in Worcestershire (55 and 64.1), another 19% derived from sources in the Malverns (56 and 69). The remainder, fabrics such as 60 and 64.2-4 are of sources unknown or from Herefordshire (Fabric 92, 1 %) or Wiltshire (65, 0.2 %). What small information could be derived from analysis of forms suggests that the Fabric 56 cooking pots may have been used on site from the early 13th to the 14th century, replacing the Fabric 55 cooking pots which date largely to the mid 12th to 13th century date (see Table 2).

Table 2: Table Correlating Rim Forms and Fabric Types

FABRIC	FORM	RIM COUNT
55	Everted simple rounded	1
55	Type 1	3
55	Type 3	19
55	type 6	1
56	type 2	2
56	Type 3	6
56	type 4	1
64.1	curfew	1
64.1	type 1	5

64.1	type 3	2
64.1	type 6 int glaze	1
69	type 2	1
92	curfew	1
92	type 1	2
92	type 6 spout?	1
99	type 3	3
		50

The character of the Shrawley assemblage, including proportions of fabric and form types, was largely consistent with those discussed within the Deansway report (Bryant 2004).

The pottery was very fragmentary, with only 50 rims having been identified (14% of the assemblage), most of which were derived from contexts within Trenches 4 and 7. No pits, wells, or other discreet features were identified in any of the trenches, all of the pottery deriving from layers. The small quantities of pottery, its abraded condition and the types of contexts from which they derive have made it difficult to gather information about pottery forms or to compare forms between areas within the site. Comparisons with other similar sites within Worcestershire has been difficult, as few such monument types within rural areas have been excavated, thus also making the information gathered from this site regionally very important. It is interesting to note that, unlike other similar type sites in the region such as Weoley Castle, no imported pottery was present. It should be noted, however, that Shrawley is a much smaller example than either Weoley or Hawkesley Moat (Oswald 1962-3).

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Oliver's Mound, Worcestershire Animal Bones from 2009 excavations

S Warman

Introduction and Methodology

Animal bone was recovered during Phase 2 excavations in 2009 from Trenches 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10. Animal bone from a single Phase 3 context (012) is also included. A total of 464 fragments of animal bone were recovered and are reported on (Table 1). All fragments were identified to species and element with the following exceptions: ribs and vertebrae of the ungulates (other than axis, atlas, and sacrum) were identified only to the level of cattle/horse-sized and sheep/pig-sized. Unidentified shaft and other fragments were similarly divided. Any fragments that could not be assigned to this level have been recorded as mammalian only. Taxonomic identifications were made using the author's modern comparative collections and those at University of London Institute of Archaeology. Recently broken bones were joined where possible and have been counted as single specimens. Tooth eruption and wear stages of cattle, sheep and pig mandibles were recorded following Grant (1982). Estimation of age at death was also made using epiphyseal fusion of long bones following Silver (1969) Measurements follow von den Driesch (1976) and are in millimetres unless otherwise stated. The archive includes details of metrical and other data not presented in the text. Animal bone from the Phase 1 excavations has previously been reported on by Hamiton-Dyer (2008).

Results

The assemblage totals 464 bones of which 156 were identified to species. The majority of the bones are from 21 stratified contexts, these are thought to be mostly medieval in date (late 12th to mid 14th centuries) although a brief period of post-medieval activity associated with the English Civil War is also recorded (Sproat, in Clarke 2010).The remainder of the animal bones were from unstratified deposits. The animal bone from the unstratified deposits closely resembles the stratified material. The condition of the bone is mixed, varying from moderate to excellent. The species identified were; cattle, sheep/goat, pig, dog, deer (red, roe and fallow), badger, hare, hare/rabbit, goose, and domestic fowl. More fragmented material was classified by size as large mammal (cow-sized), large mammal (sheep/pig sized) and small mammal (dog/cat sized). Some identified bird and fish bone fragments were also present in the assemblage.

Cattle

Cattle make up over half of the identified bones (Table 1). It is the most numerous of the domestic stock species with a wide range of elements present including meat-bearing bones. Most cattle bones were from fully adult animals, with a few sub-adults and juveniles present. Butchery is evident on many of the limb bones, with the shafts chopped through. Dog gnawing is noted occasionally particularly on ankle bones. No mandibles were sufficiently well preserved to enable dental ageing methods to be used.

Pig

Pig is the second most numerous of the domestic mammals but only contributes 13% of the identified bones (Table 1). The pig remains are predominantly jaws teeth and skull fragments, although hind limb and forelimb bones are also present. The evidence from tooth eruption and wear suggests both adults and sub-adults are present. The dentition specifically the canine teeth indicate that both male and female animals are present within the assemblage. The limb bones present also enabled estimates of age-at-death based on epiphyseal fusion. The fusion data indicated that mostly individuals were juvenile or sub-adult in contrast with the dental data. Taken together the age at death information suggests pigs were killed at a range of different ages presumably for a range of different pork products. Gnawing by dogs was occasionally seen on pig limb bone fragments.

Sheep/goat

This taxon made up a surprisingly small part of the identified assemblage at just 7% (Table 1). The sheep/goat assemblage comprised meat-bearing limb bones with very little cranial material. Epiphysis fusion indicates a mixture of adult and sub-adult animals. The presence of a restricted range of body parts largely meat-bearing limbs bones is consistent with the import of joints of meat or dressed carcasses rather than live animals. Gnawing by dogs was occasionally seen on sheep/goat limb bones. Evidence of butchery was rare.

Sheep

A small number of specimens (7) were positively identified as sheep rather than sheep/goat. These comprised, a tibia, a skull fragment some metapodials and a phalange. Considered with the sheep/goat material the range of body parts increases with metapodials and toes now present; but the bulk of the material remains the meat-bearing limb bones. The sheep specimens were aged using epiphyseal fusion; with sub-adult and adult specimens present.

Dog

Just two dog specimens are present, a skull and a mandible. The advanced tooth wear seen on the teeth within the mandible is consistent with an aged individual.

Domestic Birds

Chicken bones make up just one percent of the identified assemblage. The elements present are largely meat-bearing ones as well as a single phalange. A single goose bone was identified, a humerus from deposit 7/003 a soil horizon. The unidentified bird bones total just six from the whole assemblage.

Deer

Three deer species are potentially present red, roe and fallow. The red deer specimens comprise antler, skull and a pelvis fragment. The latter is very weathered and within a post-medieval deposit thus the possibility that it has been re-deposited from an earlier layer must be considered. A single specimen, a mandible identified as Roe deer, was recovered from deposit 4/003. Fallow deer, which is generally accepted as a Norman introduction, was the most numerous of the deer species (6% of the identified assemblage) and bones were present in deposits of potentially medieval, post-medieval and modern date. This species shows a wider range of elements present but is dominated by ankle and foot bones peripheral to the carcass as well as a single tooth. One bone, a metatarsal from deposit 4/002, had been chopped vertically, consistent with the butchery practise associated with the extraction of marrow.

Leporid

A single toe bone identified as hare was recovered from deposit 7/002, a rubble deposit. In addition bones identified as leporid (rabbit/hare) were recovered from deposits of medieval and modern date. These comprised both cranial elements and meat-bearing limb bones, although no evidence of butchery was observed.

Badger

A single specimen, a humerus from deposit 6/003, a loose gravel spread.

Unidentified large mammal cattle-sized (LAR)

This category accounts for almost 40% of the assemblage and is likely to comprise cattle, horse and red deer.

Unidentified large mammal sheep/pig sized (SAR)

This category accounts from 16% of the assemblage and is likely to be composed of pig, sheep, goat, fallow and roe deer. The elements present are mostly limb shaft fragments and ribs although vertebra and skull fragments are also present.

Unidentified small mammal dog/cat sized.

Just two vertebrae were identified to this category from deposits 7/002 and 7/005.

Fish

A single unidentified fish bone was recovered from deposit 7/002. More fish bones would be expected from a medieval assemblage, but the lack of sampling may account for this.

Unidentified mammal bone

A small amount of bone was so fragmented that identification could not be taken beyond mammal. This accounted for 9 % of the assemblage (Table 1).

Discussion

The assemblage is assumed to be largely medieval in date, but the historic records of Civil War activity at the site and the early excavations by the Mastermans are at least two known periods of disturbance, with redeposition of disturbed medieval material very likely. For the purposes of this report the group of bones is treated as a single assemblage.

The assemblage is dominated by cattle which accounts for 69% of the domestic stock bones identified to species. The presence of a range of body parts including both meat-bearing and non-meat-bearing elements suggests cattle arrived as livestock rather than joints or carcasses and were butchered and consumed on site. The next most numerous livestock species is pig; which comprises both meat-bearing limb bones and skulls and mandibles with just a few peripheral elements from the lower limb and foot. Pigs, it could be argued, are most likely to have arrived as either dressed carcasses or live animals. Taking both epiphyseal fusion data and tooth eruption and wear into account; the age at death for pigs is from 2–3.5 years. This suggests that animals were not killed until they had achieved maximum meat-weight. Sheep and sheep/goat make up a small part of the assemblage less than 5% even when considered together. The restricted range of elements seen – largely meat-bearing long bones – is consistent with the import of joints of lamb/mutton as required rather than the live animals or dressed carcasses. None of the domestic stock species include very young animals so there is no evidence for the rearing or breeding of livestock at the site.

The two dog specimens are the only examples of this species in the entire assemblage. The heavily worn teeth in the mandible from deposit 4/002 suggest this was an animal of advanced age, or that the animal had an extremely abrasive diet. Dogs would be expected in a medieval assemblage such as this, having been used both as hunting dogs and companion animals. The skull and mandible are both quite large consistent with a hound rather than a terrier or lap-dog.

The fallow deer bones are largely from the head and feet with very few meat-bearing bones present. For this species bones from both the forelimb and hind limb are present with a slightly higher proportion of hind limb bones, this contrasts with the results from the Phase 1 excavations where the forelimb was more common (Hamilton-Dyer 2008). A larger assemblage of fallow deer would be expected at high status site such as this. This species was a Norman introduction and by the time of the main period of occupation at the castle, would be been extensively hunted by the nobility. Thus the remains do not reflect that expected for consumption of venison but may reflect butchery or the import of skins with peripheral elements still attached. If feasting on prime cuts of venison was taking place at the castle, the food waste must have been discarded elsewhere. The red deer assemblage is not consistent with consumption on site, the lack of foot bones suggests it is not the result of on-site butchery, or the import of skins with heads and toes attached. Little can be said about the exploitation of roe deer as it is represented by a single specimen, a mandible.

Goose and chicken are present in small numbers of largely meat-bearing bones, suggesting they made some contribution to the diet. The lack of bones from the head and feet might suggest that dressed carcasses were brought in rather than the birds having been dispatched on site. However the lack of these smaller, more fragile bones could be due to the fact the assemblage was entirely hand-collected with no bulk samples taken. It is striking that no other bird species are present in the Phase 2 assemblage. The Phase 1 assemblage included duck (Hamilton-Dyer 2008). A medieval assemblage from a castle site normally contains a range of wild fowl as well.

Summary

The animal bone assemblage is broadly consistent with what would be expected from a medieval high status site such as this. The lack of any new born domestic stock is consistent with a consumer, rather than producer, assemblage which is what would be expected at a castle. Cattle were the main source of meat consumed at the castle, whilst the body parts within the pig assemblage are consistent with the consumption of whole spit-roasted pigs. Sheep/goat contributes quite a small amount of meat, likely to have been brought in as joints. The assemblage includes some species which might be indicative of high status, such as fallow deer, but not in great numbers. Venison, it appears, was not consumed at the site although there is limited evidence for the butchery of fallow deer on-site. The Phase 2 assemblage displays many similarities with the smaller assemblage from

the Phase 1 excavations (Hamilton-Dyer 2008) as well as some differences, for example fallow deer show a greater proportion of hind limb bones in Phase 2 whilst forelimbs predominate in Phase 1. The Phase 2 assemblage lacks many other species than would be expected at higher status sites, particularly wild birds.

Further Work

Once the dating of the deposits from the Phase 2 excavations is confirmed it is recommended that this report is revisited, the report on the Phase 1 animal bone results incorporated and comparisons with other medieval assemblages from the region made. A report for publication can then be prepared. This would require **2–3 days**

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Lithic Analysis

Tom Elliot

Introduction

The following is an analysis of the lithic material recovered from the excavation. It consists of 4 pieces of worked stone from 3 trenches, two from Trench 4 and one from each of Trench 6 and 7 respectively. Although no decisive diagnostic dateable artefacts were identified, many characteristics of the method of manufacture of the artefacts suggest a Late Mesolithic or Neolithic date. The lithic artefacts are in relatively good condition with very little edge damage or edge wear, suggesting very little use or later taphonomic activity. All of the artefacts are flint, with 2 of the 4 being patinated with none of the finds showing any signs of burning. Due to this being such a small collection metrical analysis was not carried out. Each artefact is analysed and described below (*Fig 1.*). See photographs and illustrations in Appendix 1. below.

Analysis

The lithic artefacts were examined using a small x10 hand lens and a lamp for illumination.

Trench	***Context***	***Type***	***Comments***
4	2	Microblade Core (4/002)	Very thin and abraded cortex suggesting possible source from a river or coastal environment. Platform edge is lightly abraded. Patinated over all of the worked faces. Size of blade facets suggests Mesolithic date.
4	4	Flake (4/004)	Roughly 3mm thick area of cortex with little or no abrasion. Due to profile of flake at the distal end this could be a possible end scraper, however the lack of any retouch makes this interpretation open to question. Abraded platform edge suggesting core preparation was carried out before this flake was removed.
6	3	Blade fragment (6/003)	Missing proximal end. Ripples of one the flake scars on the dorsal surface suggest bipolar flaking. Patinated completely. Possible microblade fragment due to size.
7	2	Borer (7/002)	Extensive usewear on worked face. Broken along axis with usewear on this face then having occured.

Table 1. List and description of artefacts

Discussion

Date

The suggested date for all of the artefacts is put tentatively as Late Mesolithic or Early Neolithic, based on technological, morphological and typological interpretation. It is possible that these are the associated remains from Mesolithic activity in the area that have either been brought in as part of landscaping material (Rouse 2011, pers. comm.) or represent underlying in-situ remains of activity that have been disturbed.

Source

As introduced above, all of the artefacts are composed of Flint with slight variations in colour, inclusions and patination. The most likely source for the raw material comes from nodules and fragments of flint that have been found in the Severn valley as part of the river terraces which are known to have been exploited by Mesolithic people in the region *(Jackson et al. 1996)*. These probably feature in the terraces as a glacial component (*Maddy et al. 1995, 211*) with a possible source being the Oadby tills around Stratford upon Avon (Gibbard and Clark C.D 2011, 82). Further scientific study would be needed to identify the specific source locations.

Technology

Bipolar flaking is possibly seen on the dorsal surface of (6/003). This is usually interpreted as a technique to improve the quality and maximum number of usable blades from small and irregular shape raw material nodules (Andrefsky 1994). This is relevant to this area, away from primary raw material sources, suggesting maximising the use of the available resource.

Function

The interpretation of the type of site based on these artefacts is likely to be problematic due to such a small assemblage of material represented. A general interpretation can be made that the core represents knapping activity, the flake possibly representing a scraper and the borer being used for drilling or boring. Use wear analysis would be recommended if a larger sample of artefacts were present.

It is particularly stressed that these artefacts are not isolated in the landscape. Of particular interest is the highlighting by Sproat (in Clarke 2009, 2) of this stretch of the River Severn possibly being a fording location. The nearest location for other Late Mesolithic activity is at Witley Court, where the Archaeological Investigations carried out a watching brief during the erection of CCTV facilities. During this work a possible broken microlith was found (Lewis 2008). Another nearby site is that of Bevere (Mora-Ottomano 2008) which is about 6.5km south of the site and has been interpreted as a industrial site for the manufacture of tools.

Conclusion

The artefacts discussed above have been tentatively suggested as having a Mesolithic or Early Neolithic date due to technological and morphological characteristics. An assumption has been made that these are associated and contemporaneous to each other. Further investigation of the area would enable a better interpretation of the prehistoric activity that these items are associated with to be

sought.

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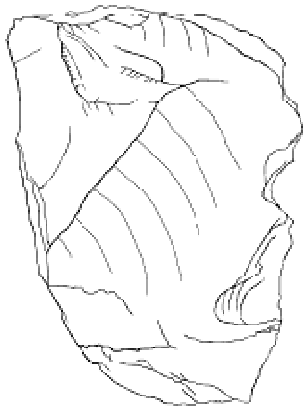
Appendix 1: Illustrations and photographs

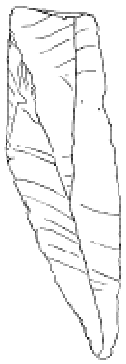
Plate 1. Microblade Core (4/002)(Author 2012)

Plate 2. Flake (4/004) (Author 2012)



Drawing 1: Drawing of Flake (4/004)(Author 2012)

Plate 3. Blade fragment (6/003)(Author 2012)



Drawing 2: Blade fragment (6/003)(Author 2012)

Plate 4. Borer (7/002)(Author 2012)

(OMS-08) Excavations at Shrawley Castle (aka-Olivers Mound)
Report on loose masonry, Season 2, 2009
by Dale Rouse.

The second stage of archaeological excavations at Shrawley Castle produced twenty-nine pieces of loose, broken masonry from six contexts. Contexts from which masonry was recovered included the following- 3/001 (4 stones), 3/004 (2 stones), 4/001 (13 stones), 4/002 (2 stones), 8/001 (3stones) and 8/003 (5 stones). All the recovered stone was of local red or red-grey sandstone, probably quarried from a nearby source, there is at least one old quarry close to the site, which could be a source for the stone used to build the castle.

Four of the stones had architectural mouldings, including parts of- an arch or hood moulding (context 3/004), a chamfered quoin (context 4/001), a door jam (context 4/002) and a 132° angled quoin (context 8/003). The arch/hood moulding and the chamfered quoin were virtually identical to stones recovered during the season one excavation carried out in 2008 *(see stone 8, context 2/003- arch/hood moulding, and stones 7, 11 and 15, context 1/003- chamfered quoin, in "Olivers Mound, Shrawley, Worcestershire An Archaeological Excavation Report"2009, for comparative descriptions).*

The majority of the remainder of the recovered masonry (twenty-five pieces) consisted of fragments of dressed blocks, with either tooled (fourteen pieces) or tooled and smoothed faces on the same stone (four pieces). Most of the tool marks cut at 45° to the faces, but two shallow rectangular stones had vertically tool marked faces.

Among these twenty-five stones, were five discoloured from heat (one of which appeared quite burned), and four stones which had no diagnostic features at all.

(*Numbers in brackets in the text below are the reference/catalogue numbers for each stone)

Descriptions of the masonry with architectural mouldings.

Context 3/004- Hood/arch moulding.

(21)-The stone measures 20cm high by 11.5cm wide across its face by 18.5cm deep. The moulded face of the stone has a 7.5cm wide, 45° chamfer running vertically along the inner edge to the soffit. A 1cm deep/wide "V" shaped groove runs parallel to the chamfer along and central to the face. The outer 4cm of the face is plain (see moulding profile). The soffit is smooth with faint traces of tool marks and appears un-weathered. The stone has a very slight curve along its vertical length that suggests it was part of an arch. Tool marks on the "bottom" of the stone were crisply cut at 45° to the face. The stone appears battered but not heavily weathered.

Context 4/002- Chamfered quoin.

(17)-The stone measures overall 18cm long by 14.5cm wide by 12cm high. There is a 7.5cm wide, 45° chamfer across the corner angle of the stone (see moulding profile). Two damaged faces meet the undamaged chamfered angle. The tool marks on the faces are crisp, at 45° to the face. The bedding faces are also finely dressed (as the vertical faces). The stone is not heavily weathered.

Context 4/002- "T" shaped door jam.

(8)-The stone measures overall 25cm wide by 24cm long 14cm deep. The stone is square on all planes. The projecting ("T" stem) part measures 14cm square and has some damage on the end. The "stem" is set in from the outer faces of the stone by 5.5cm. The undamaged faces are dressed with tool marks finely cut at 45°.

The stone is lightly weathered and has crisp angles. The bedding faces are dressed, one of which was damaged where the surface has suffered spalling. The back face of the stone is broken. The stone is most probably part of a door jam.

Context 8/003- 132 º angle quoin.

(7)-The stone measures 41cm long by 31cm high by 20cm wide. The angled faces measure 28cm and 24cm and are worn, or weathered with faint tool marks. The corner angle between the two faces is poorly defined due to wear or weathering. One bedding face survives and has finely cut, crisp tool marks at 45º. The opposite face was completely broken off. The square end face measured 15cm by 15cm, roughly dressed, as was the broken back face of the stone. This stone came from Trench 8, which was located adjacent to a buried structure believed to be the remains of the keep.

Descriptions of the dressed masonry fragments.

Context 8/001- Fragment of a dressed block

(9)-The stone measures 16cm by 16cm by 10.5cm, remains of two faces of a dressed squared block forming an angle, heavy/rough tooling, appears weathered.

Context 8/001- Fragment of a dressed block

(10)-The stone measures 21cm by 16cm by 9cm, remains of one dressed face only. Heavy/rough tooling, appears weathered.

Context 8/001- Fragment of a dressed block

(11)-The stone measures 11cm by 13cm by 10cm, two faces of a dressed squared block forming an angle, finely dressed on the two faces, crisp tool marks, appears un-weathered.

Context 4/001- Fragment of a dressed block

(12)-The stone measures 14cm by 10cm by 9cm, two dressed faces forming a corner angle of a dressed squared block, one face is smooth with virtually no tool marks evident, the other face is roughly dressed, tool marks are crisp, the stone appears only lightly weathered.

Context 4/001- Fragment of a dressed block

(13)-The stone measures 12cm by 9cm by 9cm, three dressed faces forming a corner angle and bedding plane of a dressed squared block, crisp tool marks, slightly weathered on the corner faces, bedding plane is un-weathered.

Context 4/001- Fragment of a dressed block

(14)-The stone measures 10cm by 9cm by 9cm, remains of one dressed face only of a dressed squared block, faint weathered tool marks.

Context 4/001- Fragment of a dressed block

(15)-The stone measures 16cm by 15cm by 8cm, shallow rectangular stone block with broken off end, three dressed faces (one face is smooth), two tooled faces, tooling at 45º to face. The stone appears crisp and only lightly weathered on these faces. One undamaged bedding plane, dressed, 45°/random tooling, appears weathered. Opposing bed is damaged, no tool marks.

Context 4/001- Fragment of a dressed block

(16)-The stone measures 19cm by 14cm by 10cm, one dressed face of a dressed squared block, fine tool marks, dressed bedding plane, broader, heavier tooling than on the face. Both faces are weathered.

Context 4/002- Fragment of a dressed block

(18)-The stone measures 18cm by 15cm by 15cm, no diagnostic features, no tool marks.

Context 4/002- Fragment of a dressed block

(19)-The stone measures 19cm by 13cm by 16cm, remains of one dressed face only of a dressed squared block, crisp tool marks, appears un-weathered.

Context 3/004- Fragment of a dressed block

(20)-The stone measures 24cm by 21cm by 15cm, two dressed faces and a bedding face forming a corner angle of a dressed squared block. One face is smooth with virtually no tool marks evident, weathered. The other face is finely dressed, crisp tool marks, appears un-weathered. The bed is roughly squared with rough, random tooling.

Context 3/001-Fragment of a dressed block

(22)-The stone measures 22cm by 19cm by 15cm, reasonably square, remains of one dressed face only. Heavy/rough tooling, appears weathered. No other tool marks or diagnostic features.

Context 3/001-Fragment of a dressed block

(23)-The stone measures 20cm by 19cm by 13cm, burned stone, possible traces of tool marks on one large (bed?) face, fine tool marks at 45°on one face, a few hacked marks on another face, appear to be damage not dressing.

Context 3/001-Undiagnostic stone

(24)-The stone measures 25cm by 18cm by 8cm, flat stone, no diagnostic features.

Context 4/002- Partly dressed slab

(25)-The stone measures 19cm by 29cm by 7cm, roughly dressed on two faces, no other tool marks. The stone appears slightly burned possible part of a hearth? Found overlying a burned area, may have been burned as part of the demolition of the castle.

Context 4/002- Partly dressed slab

(26)-The stone measures 10cm by 12cm by 5cm, slightly burned flat stone, roughly dressed on one end, no other tool marks, the stone appears slightly burned, possible part of a hearth? Found overlying a burned area, may have been burned as part of the demolition of the castle.

Context 4/002- Flat stone

(27)-The stone measures 22cm by 13cm by 6cm, slightly burned flat stone (as 25 and 26), no tool marks, the stone has natural ripples on one side, appears to be fossilised sea shore or river bank.

Context 4/002- Flat stone

(28)-The stone measures 21cm by 10cm by 4cm, slightly burned flat stone (as 25, 26 and 27), no tool marks, the stone has natural ripples on one side, appears to be fossilised sea shore or river bank.

Context 8/003- Smoothed/dressed block

(1)-The stone measures 0.15m x 0.15m x 21cm. The stone has four finely smoothed faces, no obvious tool marks on any face, rectangular in plan with a square face. There is mortar (slightly pinkish creamy white) on three faces, appears weathered.

Context 8/003- Large partly dressed block

(2)-The stone measures 0.32m x 0.17m x 0.25m. The stone has three dressed faces, the shortest end is finely dressed, weathered, Opposite end has a few tool marks, roughed to shape, not dressed. Two sides roughly dressed, not weathered. Possible traces of mortar on the longest side.

Context 8/003- Dressed rectangular block

(3)-The stone measures 0.26m x 0.22m x 0.09m. Shallow rectangular stone, has two dressed sides, the long side has crisp, vertical tool marks, the end of the block has tool marks at 45°, weathered. Top and bottom beds are finely dressed, mostly at 45°, but also random. Mortar traces on one bedding face.

Context 4/002- Block with dressed end face

(4)-The stone measures 0.27m x 0.11m x 0.31m. Rectangular stone, has two dressed sides. One dressed end face, tool marks are fine, almost vertical to face, weathered. Tool marks on bedding face, randomly cut, crisp and un-weathered.

Context 8/003-Corner angle of a dressed block

(5)-The stone measures 15.5m x 0.18m x 0.22m. Corner angle of dressed squared block, has two tooled faces, tool marks finely cut at 45°, crisp on the end face. Side face less well tooled, fewer tool marks, part of the face appears smooth, appears slightly weathered. Possibly also part of one bedding face, no sign of tool marks on that face.

Context 3/001-Dressed block

(6)-The stone measures 0.25m x 0.25m x 0.15m. Appears to have lost one face, the three remaining faces are dressed. One face has tool marks finely cut at 45°, fairly crisp, appears un-weathered. The other two faces are less well finished, tooling also at 45°, and either weathered or worn? One bedding face is squared/dressed, the other bedding face is broken and worn, no tool marks evident.

Context 8/001-Dressed block fragment

(29)-The stone measures 0.18m x 0.07m x 0.09m. Parts of two dressed faces survive. Both faces have weathered tool mark. There are no other diagnostic features on the stone.

Dating the stones.

The castle is believed from the historic records to have been built in the second half of the 12th century, and was in use until around 1334 AD when the last tenant died. After 1334 AD the castle went into decline as it was no longer being maintained by the Beachamp family who were building a new castle to replace it at Holt, so the dates for the occupation of the castle cover a period of almost 200 years, from around 1150 AD to 1334 AD.

As with the stones from first season of excavations carried out in 2008, the types of mouldings present on four of the twenty-nine stones examined fit comfortably within the occupation dates (1150-1334 AD) but are probably after 1200 AD.