



Chesham Bois House, 85 Bois Lane,
Chesham Bois, Bucks. HP6 6DF

Archaeological Evaluation and Assessment of Results



**Chesham Bois House, 85 Bois Lane,
Chesham Bois, Buckinghamshire**

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SUMMARY

Wessex Archaeology was commissioned by Videotext Communications Ltd to carry out archaeological recording and post-excavation analysis on an archaeological evaluation by Channel 4's 'Time Team' at Chesham Bois House in Buckinghamshire, centred on NGR 49680 19970. The evaluation area comprised the garden of Chesham Bois House and the Church Field, the field adjacent to St. Leonard's Church, which contains several earthworks, some 80m to the north-east.

The manor of Chesham Bois can be traced back to the Saxon period, transferring into the ownership of Odo of Bayeaux after the Norman Conquest. The manor later passed through several owners including the du Bois, the Cheynes and in the 18th century, the Duke of Bedford. An estate map made for the Duke of Bedford in 1735 shows an extensive house, outbuildings, a bowling green and formal ornamental grounds. After a period of tenancy the house appears to have been allowed to fall into decay and was finally demolished in the late 18th or early 19th century. The present Chesham Bois House was probably built in around 1820.

The objective of the evaluation was to investigate the occupation and development of the site, particularly the structural evolution of medieval and post medieval buildings, and evidence of any early domestic and craft activities. This continues the work of the Chess Valley Archaeological and Historical Society Field Group, who carried out limited geophysical and topographic surveys at Chesham Bois House and the Church Field and excavated a number of hand-dug trenches in the garden of Chesham Bois House in 2004.

Medieval features and deposits were encountered in one trench to the south of the present Chesham Bois House and in two trenches in the Church Field, along with post-medieval and modern remains, which were recorded in almost all trenches. A series of hearths and associated structures and deposits excavated to the south of Chesham Bois House appear to be of later medieval and early post-medieval date and probably represent a kitchen or bakehouse either within the manor house, or in a separate, auxiliary building. The large boundary ditch, examined in the Church Field, which appears to surround the present house and garden, and presumably the earlier manorial complex, was probably constructed some time in the medieval period and eventually backfilled in the early post-medieval period.

The structural remains recorded in trenches to the west and north-west of Chesham Bois House are of post-medieval date, and may represent parts of the buildings depicted on the 1735 Bedford estate map.

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The geophysical survey was undertaken by John Gater, Jimmy Adcock and Emma Wood of GSB Prospection. The field survey was undertaken by Henry Chapman of the University of Birmingham, and landscape survey and map regression by Stewart Ainsworth of English Heritage. The excavation strategy was devised by Mick Aston of Bristol University. The on-site recording was co-ordinated by Vaughan Birbeck with on-site finds processing by Naomi Hall, both of Wessex Archaeology.

The excavation was undertaken by Phil Harding (Wessex Archaeology), Kerry Ely, Matt Williams, Naomi Sewpaul, Brigid Gallagher and Ian Powlesland of Time Team and Yvonne Edwards, Marion Wells, John Glover, Mervyn Jupe, Paul Wright, Rob Barker, Jo Mansi, Phil Nixon, Val Seagrave, Georgina Lomnitz, Don Hyde and Sue Barton of the Chess Valley Archaeology and Historical Society, who were assisted by local metal detectorist Gary Blackwell. The progress of work in the field benefited from the advice and discussion with various specialists, including Jonathan Foyle (architectural historian), Debbie Klemperer (small finds and pottery) and John Guy (Historian).

The archive was collated and all post-excavation assessment and analysis undertaken by Wessex Archaeology, including management (Lorraine Mephram), finds analysis (Lorraine Mephram, Naomi Hall and Jessica Grimm), environmental processing (Hayley Clark) and environmental analysis (Dr Chris Stevens and Dr Michael Allen) report (Vaughan Birbeck), and illustrations (Will Foster).

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1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Project Background

- 1.1.1 Time Team were invited to Chesham Bois House in Buckinghamshire by the owner Julia Plaistowe and Chess Valley Archaeology and Historical Society (CVAHS). Chesham Bois House is a Grade II* listed building. The site, centred on NGR 49680 19970, Chesham Bois House (**Figure 1**), is a 19th-century house and garden on the site of an earlier manor house. The present property is thought to be much smaller than the original and is surrounded by 0.3 hectares of land. The current house lies off Bois Lane adjacent to the Church of St. Leonard's in Chesham Bois, Buckinghamshire. Chesham Bois was a small village that is now part of the town of Amersham. It is situated on the South of Chesham Bois Common, on the large ridge that divides the valley of the Chess from the Misbourne Valley.

1.2 Topography and Geology

- 1.2.1 The site lies close to the crest of the ridge between the Chess and Misbourne Valleys, on a fairly gentle east facing slope falling from approximately 155m OD in the west of the garden to 146m OD in the east of the Church Field. Within the garden the natural slope appeared to have been at least partly terraced. A number of possible rectilinear earthworks in the Church Field may also indicate terracing of some form. The underlying geology comprises Cretaceous upper Chalk, covered by a variable, unknown, thickness of clay with flints (BGS 1990). This consists of a mass of brown loamy clay with common angular flint inclusions.

1.3 Archaeological and Historical Background

- 1.3.1 The Buckinghamshire County Sites and Monuments Record (BCSMR) contains 35 entries for the parish of Chesham Bois, and these comprise details of 18 listed buildings, including Chesham Bois House, St. Leonard's Church and the Warren, which lies immediately to the west of the Church Field; four formal gardens shown on 19th- and early 20th-century maps; details of documentary records of five former buildings and parks, including Chesham Bois Manor and St. Leonard's Church; records of seven chalk or gravel extraction pits shown on 19th- and early 20th-century maps; and one find spot for a Mesolithic or later flint axe found in the grounds of Chestnut Lane school, approximately 700m to the south-east of the site. Although the BCSMR contains many records for the

surrounding area, the majority of records relating to the prehistoric and the Romano-British periods appear to be largely confined to the bases and lower slopes of the Chess and Misbourne Valleys.

Chesham Bois House

- 1.3.2 The manor of Chesham Bois can be traced back to the reign of Edward the Confessor (1042-66), when it was held by a Saxon Lord called Leofwine (www.cheshambois.com/uk/history.asp). Following the Norman conquest of 1066, ownership of the manor passed to Odo of Bayeux, the half brother of William I. The manor later passed through several owners including the du Bois, the Cheynes and, in the 18th century, the Duke of Bedford. An estate map made for the Duke of Bedford in 1735 (**Figure 2**) shows an extensive house, outbuildings and formal ornamental grounds. After a period of tenancy the house appears to have been allowed to fall into decay and was finally demolished, probably in the late 18th or early 19th century. The present Chesham Bois House was probably built in around 1820.
- 1.3.3 Apart from the 1735 map there is little documentary evidence relating to the development of the house and grounds. In the reign of King John the ownership of the manor was acquired by the du Bois family. William du Bois occupied a manor house which he had either built, or rebuilt, around 1213 (Elgar Pike 1976, 4-5). In 1281 the manor passed to Sir Bartholomew Briangon, who was granted free warren five years later (*ibid*). In *c.* 1445 the manor was purchased by Thomas Cheyne and stayed in this family until finally being sold to the Duke of Bedford in the early 18th century (Page 1925, 270-1).
- 1.3.4 From the 1735 map the house has the appearance of being added to through time and not designed in one unit. The ornamental gardens are extensive and may be of 17th/18th century appearance. One notable feature is the presence of a bowling green to the west of the main house. The bowling green was partially used as an allotment in World War II (CVAHS 2004) and is visible as a raised, flat, area in the western side of the garden. An 1802 Estate Survey of Dairy House Farm, immediately to the north of the site, catalogues the bowling green and several buildings as part of the farm and goes on to state that “*the buildings on this farm appear to have been formerly an ancient Mansion House and there are many good Brick Wall.....which might be taken down and turned to a good account*”, suggesting that parts of the manor still stood at this time, albeit in a derelict state.

Church Field

- 1.3.5 The field adjacent to St. Leonard’s Church (**Figures 1 and 2**) is owned by The Chiltern Christian Trust. The development of the above house is linked with that of the church, which was established well before 1203 and became the private chapel of the lord of the manor in 1213 (Page 1925). The field contains several earthworks and has a large possible boundary ditch passing across it. Historic

maps suggest this field has not been ploughed or developed for at least several centuries. It is possible that these earthworks are the remains of a deserted medieval village (M. Aston pers. comm.) However, there is no historical record of such a village on this site and it may be significant that neither the BCSMR nor the National Monuments Record contains any reference to such a site, or the visible earthworks. The earthworks have never been formally investigated, apart from resistivity and topographic surveys carried out by CVAS in 2004 (see below).

The 'boundary' ditch

- 1.3.6 A low bank and ditch, visible as a slight earthwork, runs along the northern edge of the Bowling Green, reappears to the south of the present house and continues to the north, running approximately south-south-east to north-north-west across the Church Field.

1.4 Previous archaeological work

- 1.4.1 The Chess Valley Archaeology and Historical Society (CVAHS) carried out a limited survey and excavation in 2004 at Chesham Bois House and the Church Field. This included resistivity and topographic surveys in the Church Field and resistivity survey followed by a number of hand-dug evaluation trenches in the garden of Chesham Bois House.

Chesham Bois House

- 1.4.2 A trench was put in to the west of the house and uncovered a room with a pitch tile hearth in a beaten chalk floor and beneath this level a pit full of smithing slag and charcoal. These features are currently being dated by scientific methods, although a silver coin dated 1422-27 and medieval pottery was associated with the later hearth. The resistivity data indicates a number of additional features, some of which are likely to be ornamental garden structures, which were not explored.

Church Field

- 1.4.3 Resistivity and topographic surveys undertaken by CVAHS suggest that there may be archaeological features here, which could represent small enclosures and/or structures. Some of these features appear to continue under the present field boundary into the churchyard, which suggests they may predate the churchyard. One possibility is that these features represent a very early, church-centred occupation. No excavations have taken place on this site.

2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1.1 The aim of this project was to investigate the archaeology, history and chronology of Chesham Bois House. This project offered the opportunity to examine the site within its historical, geographical and archaeological context.
- 2.1.2 The development of the site was studied, with a view to understanding how the fortunes of the house and the possible settlement adjacent to the church, have changed over time.
- 2.1.3 The project aimed to address the following specific research questions:
- When was the manor house built? How long has the site been occupied?
 - What was the extent and nature of the house, from its construction sometime before 1351 to its destruction sometime between 1735 and 1809?
 - What are the earthworks in the church field? Do they represent the remains of a deserted medieval village? If they do, can they tell us the extent and nature of settlement, and when the settlement was deserted?
 - When was the 'boundary' ditch created, and what was its function?

3 METHODS

3.1 Survey

- 3.1.1 The site was investigated using a combination of resistance survey (Geoscan RM15 resistance meter), Ground Penetrating Radar (Pulse EKKO 1000 GPR unit with a 225MHz frequency antenna) and magnetic survey (Bartington Grad 601-2 fluxgate gradiometer). The results were analysed using a mixture of GSB and commercial software. All survey work on the site was carried out using a Trimble Real Time Differential GPS survey system. All Time Team surveys, earthwork and geophysics, are compatible with each other. Surveys are related to the National Grid/Ordnance Datum by local control using the 25" digital map. Digital copies of the survey data will be lodged with the county Sites and Monuments Record.

3.2 Geophysical survey

- 3.2.1 The site was investigated using a combination of resistance survey (Geoscan RM15 resistance meter), Ground Penetrating Radar (Pulse EKKO 1000 GPR unit with a 225MHz frequency antenna) and magnetic survey (Bartington Grad 601-2 fluxgate gradiometer). The results were analysed using a mixture of GSB and commercial software.

- 3.2.2 Conditions for survey were good as most of the areas were on short grass, however, two of the areas had been recently mown and grass cuttings on the surface made it difficult for GPR survey. Geophysical survey was undertaken initially in the area to the south-east of the church, the location of the possible DMV. Geophysical survey was also undertaken in the gardens to the north, south and west of the present house.

3.3 Excavation and Recording

- 3.3.1 A mechanical excavator (Case Hew Holland Excavator) fitted with a toothless bucket, was used to remove the overburden from the trenches. All machine work was undertaken under constant archaeological supervision and ceased at the identification of significant archaeological deposits. All trenches were then cleaned by hand and archaeological deposits were excavated. All spoil arising from the excavations was scanned with a metal-detector by an experienced metal detectorist.
- 3.3.2 The standard Wessex Archaeology recording systems were used and all contexts and features were recorded using standard *pro-forma* record sheets. A record of the full extent in plan of all archaeological deposits encountered was made, usually at a scale of 1:20; sections were drawn as appropriate. The OD height of all principal strata and features was indicated on appropriate plans and sections. A photographic record of the investigations and individual features was also prepared. All trenches were related to the National Grid/Ordnance Datum by local control using the 25" digital map.

4 RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

- 4.1.1 The earliest traces of activity on the site comprised a single flint waste flake, of probably prehistoric date, recovered from a shallow subsoil deposit in trench 1. Whilst this was clearly residual, it hints at activity of this period in the area, however, the BCSMR records only one other find spot of prehistoric flintwork within the parish, a Mesolithic or later flint axe, so it seems likely that such activity was uncommon. Medieval features and deposits were encountered in trenches 1, 4 and 5, along with post-medieval remains, which were recorded in all trenches. A series of hearths and associated structures and deposits excavated in trench 1 appear to be of later medieval and early post-medieval date and probably represents a kitchen or bakehouse either within the manor house, or in a separate, auxiliary building. The large boundary ditch, examined in trench 5, that appears to surround the present house, and presumably the earlier manorial complex, was probably constructed some time in the medieval period and eventually backfilled in the early post-medieval period. The dating of the possible medieval ditches in trench 4 is problematic; although possible medieval peg tiles were recovered from the fill of the stratigraphically later ditch, the

single, overfired, sherd of pottery recovered from the same ditch is of uncertain date (although most probably post-medieval).

- 4.1.2 The structural remains recorded in trenches 2, 3 and 6 are of post-medieval date, and may represent parts of the buildings depicted on the 1735 Bedford estate map. The remains in trench 2 appear to be part of a long, narrow wing of a building, possibly a stable block or similar structure, while those recorded in trench 3 seem to represent a garden wall and associated surfaces and garden features. The remains encountered in trench 6 appear to represent the remains of a former cellar, backfilled with demolition rubble, presumably derived from the demolition of the manor house in the late 18th or early 19th century. A post-medieval trackway was recorded in trench 7 and possible terracing deposits in the Church Field were recorded in trench 4.

4.2 Geophysical Survey (Figure 3)

- 4.2.1 Evidence for the medieval manor house was present within the area, to the south and west of Chesham Bois House, in both the resistance and GPR surveys. The resistance results show evidence for wall foundations, and while the GPR results were not as clear, there were anomalies present in the area around trench 1. To the west of the current house a strong high resistance and high amplitude response, was confirmed by excavation (trench 6) to be an in-filled cellar.
- 4.2.2 Magnetic survey was conducted over earthworks in the Church Field and a ditch type response running approximately east-west was seen within the data. This turns through a sharp angle and heads southwards but only registers as a weak negative / positive magnetic response in the data. No features that coincided with the location of the response were recorded in trench 4; however, it is likely that the north-south response may be a continuation of the former boundary ditch, which was excavated in trench 5.
- 4.2.3 Little other archaeological response was noted within the remaining areas, this is mainly due to the topography of the site which will have masked any features that were present.

4.3 Chesham Bois House

- 4.3.1 Three machine trenches and a hand-dug test pit (**Figure 4**) were excavated in the gardens of Chesham Bois House. Only trench 1 located medieval remains; post-medieval walls and terracing were recorded in trenches 2 and 3, along with later garden features and trench 6 located a substantial rubble deposit, probably representing a backfilled cellar. Trench 1 (**Figure 5, Plate 1**) partially re-excavated the 2004 CVAHS trench that located a hearth, chalk floor and earlier remains and extended into a previously unexcavated area to the west that earlier results suggested would contain a further structure. Apart from cleaning and recording the hearth and floor located in 2004 were not disturbed as excavation

was concentrated on the remains of a further hearth and associated chimney foundations.

- 4.3.2 The earliest deposits recorded in trench 1 during this phase of evaluation comprised a thin occupation deposit (112/114) which directly overlay heat affected clay and flints natural. This appeared to be associated with the large pitch tile hearth (119) that was exposed during the 2004 excavations. An environmental sample taken from this deposit produced no charred plant remains and only fragments of wood charcoal including many that could be seen to be ring-porous, most probably oak. This deposit was sealed below the remains of a very calcareous mortar floor (111, 116, 118 and 120), which also partially overlay the hearth, and produced a single sherd of medieval sandy ware pottery. The laying of this floor was broadly contemporary with the construction of a mortar and tile footing (110). This was well-built, utilising peg tiles and peg tile fragments, and probable represents the foundations of a chimney breast. Aligned approximately north-south with a *c.* 45° returns to the east at its northern end, this probably formed an angular, crescent shaped structure. This structure probably overlay earlier structures and deposit, however, as it was preserved *in situ* no further excavation was undertaken. Although dated on the basis of a single sherd of pottery, this appears to represent the floor and chimney breast of part of a late medieval structure.
- 4.3.3 Only two small deposits associated with the original use of chimney breast (110) were encountered during the excavation; these comprised a thin silty clay loam occupation deposit (109), from which a copper alloy pin with wire-wound head, of late medieval or early post-medieval in date, was recovered, and an accumulation of ashy material and animal bones (113) that partially overlay the north end of (110). The bones recovered from this deposit included goose and passerine, along with cattle, sheep/goat and pig.
- 4.3.4 Deposit (109) was overlain by a sand bedding layer (108) which formed the base of a pitch tile hearth (106) constructed within chimney breast (110). A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from bedding layer (108), along with small quantities of animal bone, tile fragments and oyster shell. Hearth (106) was constructed of re-used tile and tile fragments, set at a *c.* 45° angle and bonded with sandy lime mortar, which also formed the surface of the hearth.
- 4.3.5 Following the construction of hearth (106), the chimney breast was re-built; the upper part of chimney breast (110) was removed (construction cut 105) and a new chimney breast (103) constructed of re-used brick and tile, bonded with pale grey calcareous lime mortar, above a layer of brick fragments and mortar (107) which was laid over the remains of (110) and abutted hearth (106). Chimney breast (103) was constructed partially above hearth (106) and narrow dividing walls, just one brick wide, appear to split the hearth into at least four small bays. A single sherd of post-medieval pottery was recovered from within mortar deposit (107).

- 4.3.6 The deposit overlying chimney breast (103), a mid brown silty clay loam subsoil (102) produced modern bone china, along with post-medieval pottery, peg tile fragments and animal bone, a concentration of animal bone (104) was noted within this deposit, to the west of (103).
- 4.3.7 Immediately to the west of the present Chesham Bois House geophysical survey located an approximately rectangular strong high resistance and high amplitude response and a single 1m x 1m hand dug test pit, trench 6, was excavated to examine this. Immediately below the present topsoil (601) and subsoil (602) trench 6 located a deposit of modern and post-medieval building rubble (603), comprising loose brick and flint rubble with frequent voids. This was excavated to a depth of 1m, but was not bottomed. Ground Penetrating Radar survey in this area suggests this deposit is approximately 2m deep. It is likely that this deposit represents a former cellar, backfilled with demolition rubble that may be associated with the demolition of the manorial buildings in the late 18th or early 19th century.
- 4.3.8 The earliest datable deposit recorded in trench 2 (**Figure 6**) comprised a 0.35m thick deposit of mid greyish brown silty clay (212), which was confined to the area between brick walls (215) and (207). The small assemblage of pottery recovered from this deposit included post-medieval white salt glaze, tinglazed earthenware and redwares, along with clay tobacco pipe fragments and green wine bottles in either globular ‘onion’ or more cylindrical ‘mallet’ forms of later 17th or 18th century date, and diamond shaped quarries from leaded windows in pale greenish glass. A very similar deposit was the earliest deposit recorded in trench 3 (312) from which a small assemblage of animal bone and a single sherd of tin glazed earthenware pottery, probably of late 17th or early 18th century date was recovered. Both of these deposits appear broadly contemporary with the earliest walls in these trenches (215 and 313) both of which were brick-built retaining walls. Deposit (212) was cut by the construction cut for wall (215) and appears to have accumulated against wall (207) and is probably later; deposit (312) was cut by the construction cut for wall (313).
- 4.3.9 The level of the clay and flint natural substrata to the west of wall (207) was approximately 1m higher than the level to the east, indicating that this was built as a retaining wall, probably at the same time as the ground level was reduced to form a terrace. The level of the natural substrata to the north of wall (313) was approximately 0.50m higher than the level to the south, again indicating its function as a retaining wall, although the construction cut was cut through deposit (312). All other features and deposits in trenches 2 and 3 post-date walls (207) and (313), which appear to form parts of the northern and western sides of a large negative terrace, probably constructed in the late 17th or early 18th century. Such terracing is likely to have completely removed, or at least severely truncated, any earlier remains in the area to the west of the present Chesham Bois House (**Plate 2**). Two re-used moulded bricks, possibly from window mullions, were recovered from wall (313) and their presence here suggests a level of architectural sophistication consistent with a high status manorial

building of the early post-medieval period (16th/17th century). Although the function of the terrace, represented by walls (207) and (313), is uncertain, the re-use of such materials suggests that this may be associated with re-building or major alterations to the earlier manor house.

- 4.3.10 The construction cut of wall (215) was cut through deposit (212) and was therefore constructed at a later date. The remains of wall (215) were partly overlain by a well-laid brick floor (217) which was in turn cut by the construction cut for wall (219). The truncated footings of a fourth wall (314), on a similar approximately north-south alignment, was located in Trench 3. The function of these north-south aligned walls is uncertain. They could represent a building which was progressively widened, or walls (215) and (219) could represent internal walls within a structure represented by walls (207) and (314). An episode of rebuilding (307) was noted above wall (313), following the accumulation of a *c.* 0.20m thick deposit of greyish brown silty clay (310), however, no rebuilds were discerned within the structures of the other walls in trenches 1 and 2.
- 4.3.11 The function and date of the substantial ditch (228), which ran parallel to wall (207), close to the upper edge of the terrace, is uncertain, although it was probably to intercept and divert ground water that may otherwise have accumulated on the negative terrace. The basal fill (227) appeared to represent gradual silting caused by the gentle erosion of the sides of the feature. This was overlain by a thick deposit of clay with common flint inclusions (211), probably the result of deliberate backfilling. Following this a thin capping of chalk rubble (203 and 210) was laid above the backfilled ditch, possibly representing a roughly metallised surface. The only finds recovered from this feature comprised a small assemblage of tile fragments from an upper fill (211). However, the final filling and capping appears to have occurred following the demolition of wall (207), suggesting that the functions of the two features may be related. All later features and deposit recorded in trenches 2 and 3 appear to be of 19th or 20th century date and probably relate to the landscaping and use of the gardens of the present Chesham Bois House.

4.4 Church Field

- 4.4.1 Three machine-dug trenches were excavated in the Church Field (**Figure 7**); a single, substantial ditch, probably representing a boundary around the manorial complex was excavated in trench 5; two ditches of possible medieval or post-medieval date and a few root disturbances were recorded in trench 4, below later terracing deposits; and a possible hollow way, dated to the post-medieval period was excavated in trench 7.
- 4.4.2 The large ditch recorded in trench 5 (504) was aligned approximately north-south across the Church Field, where it was visible as a slight linear depression to the south of the trench, and probably represents a substantial property boundary around the manorial complex. This feature was also located during

geophysical survey (see 4.2 above) as a weak magnetic response; the same survey suggested that this feature turned to the west and should have been located by trench 4, however, no features were found that coincided with this response and it is likely that the ditch continues to the north. Ditch (504) was over 8.2m wide and 2.20m deep with a steeply sloping, convex western side and a more gently sloping, irregular eastern side and a concave base. The basal fills (507 and 505) appeared to be the result of gradual silting, caused by the gentle erosion of the sides of the feature. This was overlain by a thick deposit of clay with common flint inclusions (503), probably the result of deliberate backfilling. The only dating evidence recovered from this feature comprised a single sherd of post-medieval redware and a small assemblage of tile fragments recovered from the uppermost fill (503). Although this ditch was deliberately backfilled in the post-medieval period, it would have taken many years for the lower, silting fills, which were up to 0.80m thick, to form and a medieval date for the construction of this ditch is likely.

- 4.4.3 The dating of the two intercutting ditches excavated in trench 4 is problematic; no finds were recovered from the earlier ditch (414), a broad, shallow feature aligned approximately north-west to south-east that was approximately 2.10m wide and up to 0.40m deep with moderately steep, concave sides and a concave base. The only finds recovered from the later feature (404), an east-west aligned ditch 1.50m wide and 0.95m deep with steep, straight sides and a concave base, comprised a few fragments of peg tile and a single sherd of pottery. This sherd had been heavily overfired and could not be identified; whilst it would not appear out of place in a Romano-British assemblage (R. Seager Smith pers. comm.), it is clearly not medieval and could be an overfired example of post-medieval coarse redware; however, this remains uncertain. The peg tile fragments recovered from the fill of ditch (404) could be of medieval or post-medieval date and the dating of this feature is therefore similarly broad. Both ditches were sealed below deposits of subsoil (402) that comprise re-deposited clay and flint natural substrata, which appear to have been deposited to form a series of roughly rectangular terraces on the prevailing gentle north-east facing slope. Although a small assemblage of medieval pottery was recovered from the subsoil and overlying topsoil deposits, the dating of the earlier ditches, albeit tentative, suggests a later date.
- 4.4.4 The only other features encountered in trench 4 comprised a shallow, irregular gully (406) aligned approximately east-west and two small irregular features (408 and 410) of uncertain origin. Although a single fragment of peg tile was recovered from the only fill of feature 410 (409), the irregular form of these features suggests a natural origin, possibly tree root disturbance.
- 4.4.5 Apart from a modern service trench, the only feature recorded in trench 7 comprised a broad, shallow linear feature (704), aligned approximately east-west; this was 3.90m wide and 0.13m deep with gently sloping sides and a concave base. The basal fill of this feature (703) comprised a 0.03m thick layer of small (>30mm), angular flint gravel, rammed or trampled into the natural clay

and flints in the base of cut. This probably represents a metalled surface within a small sunken track or hollow way. The possible hollow way was completely filled with a greyish brown silty clay loam (702), from which a large key of post-medieval type was recovered, along with a small assemblage of post-medieval brick and tile fragments. A single sherd of medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil in trench 7 (701) together with a few sherds of post-medieval redware.

5 FINDS

5.1 Introduction

5.1.1 Finds were recovered from all seven of the trenches excavated. The assemblage is largely post-medieval in date, with a small amount of medieval material and a single residual prehistoric worked flint.

5.1.2 All finds have been quantified by material type within each context, and totals by material type and by trench are presented in **Table 1**. Subsequent to quantification, all finds have been at least visually scanned in order to gain an overall idea of the range of types present, their condition, and their potential date range. Spot dates have been recorded for selected material types as appropriate (pottery, ceramic building material, glass). All finds data are currently held on an Access database.

5.1.3 This section presents an overview of the finds assemblage, on which is based an assessment of the potential of this assemblage to contribute to an understanding of the site in its local and regional context, with particular reference to the medieval history of the manor.

5.2 Pottery

5.2.1 The pottery assemblage includes sherds of medieval and post-medieval date. Condition overall is good, with sherds relatively unabraded.

5.2.2 The whole assemblage has been quantified by ware type within each context, and the presence of diagnostic sherds noted. Pottery totals by ware type are given in **Table 2**.

Medieval

5.2.3 Medieval sherds are all in sandy fabrics, the coarser variants (including one with slip decoration) with a probable date range of 12th/13th century while finer, oxidised sherds probably date to the 14th or 15th centuries. All are likely to be of at least fairly local manufacture – the closest known source is at Great Missenden, less than 5 miles to the west, with another about 6 miles to the east at Chandlers Cross.

- 5.2.4 Some sherds occurred residually in later contexts, but one sherd from floor (116) may be *in situ*, while four sherds from subsoil (402) are less reliably so. Eleven of the 16 medieval sherds recovered came from trench 4.

Post-Medieval

- 5.2.5 The majority of the assemblage is of post-medieval date and includes the standard range of coarse redwares, stonewares, tinglazed earthenware, feathered slipware, white salt glaze and modern industrial wares (most of which came from trench 6 topsoil). Of interest amongst the modern wares is a ceramic egg (used to encourage hens to lay), found in trench 2 topsoil. There is nothing amongst the post-medieval assemblage which is necessarily earlier than the 17th century, although the coarse redwares are not closely datable within the post-medieval period.

5.3 Ceramic Building Material

- 5.3.1 Ceramic building material (CBM) was recovered in some quantity from the site. This category includes brick, roof tile, floor tile and drainpipe.

Brick

- 5.3.2 Some bricks were retained as samples of *in situ* structural elements, while other fragments were recovered as redeposited material in other contexts. There are six complete standard bricks, deriving from four contexts: wall/chimney footing (103) (three examples), wall (215), brick surface (217) and subsoil (602). These are fairly consistent in size, lengths ranging from 210mm to 220mm, widths from 100mm to 105mm, and thicknesses from 50mm to 60mm. All are handmade and unfrogged, and fragments of other standard bricks indicate that they were of similar manufacture. Several fragments derive from bricks vitrified on ends and/or faces. Bricks are notoriously difficult to date (and are in any case frequently reused), but the dimensions of the complete examples suggest a date no later than the 18th century.
- 5.3.3 Of particular interest amongst the bricks are a small number of cut or moulded ‘specials’ – nine examples from three contexts, all either redeposited or reused (rubble deposit 202, wall 313, subsoil 602). These comprise one ovolo moulded window mullion, two half-round mouldings and one complex moulding, possibly from further window mullions, one roll (edge) moulding, and three chamfered bricks. Apart from the window mullions, such ‘specials’ could have been used in string courses, window cills or cornices, and their presence here suggests a level of architectural sophistication consistent with a high status manorial building of the early post-medieval period (16th/17th century). Similar decorative brickwork is known, for example, from the late 16th century remodelling of Hill Hall, Essex by the Tudor courtier Sir Thomas Smith (Drury forthcoming).

Roof tile

- 5.3.4 Apart from three fragments of chimney pot from trench 3, all roof tile comprises fragments of flat (peg) tiles. Three fragments from wall (215) join to form an almost complete tile (265 x 175mm), but no other complete tiles were recovered. A significant proportion of the tile fragments are in fairly coarse, sandy fabrics, less well fired, and are potentially medieval in date, the remainder being post-medieval, more evenly fired and in finer fabrics. Like bricks, tiles can often be reused, and in this instance tile fragments were recovered from various walls and other structures. Other tiles had been used in hearth structures in trench 1 (none excavated).

Other CBM

- 5.3.5 One plain, glazed floor tile (late medieval or early post-medieval) and one piece of modern drainpipe both came from trench 3.

5.4 Glass

- 5.4.1 All the glass is post-medieval, and includes both window and vessel glass. There is a small amount of obviously modern material amongst this, again both window and vessel, but the majority (particularly the large group from trench 2) appears to fall within a date range of 17th to 18th century, although some of the window glass could be earlier. This group includes green wine bottles in either globular 'onion' or more cylindrical 'mallet' forms of later 17th or 18th century date, and diamond shaped quarries from leaded windows in pale greenish glass, generally oxidised and actively laminating.

5.5 Metalwork

- 5.5.1 The metalwork includes items of iron, copper alloy and lead.
- 5.5.2 The ironwork consists almost entirely of nails and other structural items such as staples. A few of the nails, all from trench 4 topsoil, have the 'fiddle key' or expanded heads typical of horseshoe nails of medieval type, but otherwise these objects are not chronologically distinctive. A large key of post-medieval type, the head missing, came from hollow way 704.
- 5.5.3 The single copper alloy object is a pin with wire-wound head, late medieval or early post-medieval in date (trench 1 occupation deposit 109).
- 5.5.4 The lead comprises a short length of heavy pipe or tube (trench 2 topsoil), a small, flattened tube (trench 6 topsoil), a weight (layer 212), a window came fragment (trench 3 topsoil), and several miscellaneous fragments of waste. None of this is datable.

5.6 Other Finds

- 5.6.1 Other finds comprise a few post-medieval clay tobacco pipe stems, part of a medieval stone mortar, possibly in Purbeck Marble from south Dorset (trench 1

subsoil), two small pieces of limestone, probably building material (trench 2 subsoil), and a prehistoric worked flint flake (trench 1 subsoil).

5.7 Animal Bone

Introduction

5.7.1 Hand collected animal bone material was present for the following trenches: 1, 3 and 6. Most of the material is assumed to be post-medieval in date, and is therefore discussed here as a single assemblage.

5.7.2 Conjoining fragments that were demonstrably from the same bone were counted as one bone in order to minimise distortion, and therefore specimen counts (NISP: see **Table 3**) given here may differ from the absolute raw fragment counts in **Table 1**. There may also be some discrepancies when bone is fragile and may fragment further after initial quantification. No fragments were recorded as ‘medium mammal’ or ‘large mammal’; these were instead consigned to the unidentified category.

5.7.3 The extent of mechanical or chemical attrition to the bone surface was recorded, with 1 indicating very poor condition, 2 poor, 3 fair, 4 good and 5 excellent. The numbers of gnawed bone were also noted. Marks from chopping, sawing, knife cuts and fractures made when the bone was fresh were recorded as butchery marks.

Condition and preservation

5.7.4 The overall condition of the bone is fair. As 12% of the bones were gnawed, canid and rodent savaging might be a significant biasing factor. Rodent gnawing marks were observed on bones from trench 1 (subsoil (102), including animal bone deposit (104), and wall footing (103)). Prior to deposition, the bone must have been reachable by rodents and dogs. Burnt bones are absent.

5.7.5 The low number of loose teeth (n=1) corresponds with the low number of mandibles and the almost absence of maxilla found. The absence of loose but matching epiphyses or articulating bones indicates that the assemblage is probably extensively reworked (probably during demolition of the manor in the late 19th/early 20th century).

Species proportions

5.7.6 The assemblage is dominated by cattle and sheep/goat and supplemented by small proportions of pig and horse (**Table 3**).

5.7.7 Besides the remains of the usual domesticates, the post-medieval assemblage contained the remains of hare (subsoil (102)), rabbit (subsoil (102), mortar bedding (107)), chicken (animal bone deposit (104) in subsoil (102)), a medium-sized duck (also (104)), goose and passerine (both from bone deposit (113)). The bones identified as ‘medium-sized duck’ might derive from domestic duck as well as from wild ducks of the genera *Anas*.

- 5.7.8 The presence of rabbit and hare bones underlines the fact that one of the owners of the house, Sir Bartholomew Brianzon, received grant of free warren in 1286.

Population characteristics

- 5.7.9 From the bones identified to species (n=133), 14% can inform on the age at death of the animal and 13% can inform on the phenotype of the animals. The material contained bones from juvenile cattle and sheep/goat, indicating that the inhabitants of the manor ate lamb and veal steak.
- 5.7.10 The presence of chicken and goose indicates that they were possibly kept on site to provide eggs and a ready source of meat. So far, the presence of hare, rabbit, duck and goose indicate the high status of the inhabitants of the house. The young age of most of the animals slaughtered underlines this further.

Butchery

- 5.7.11 6% of the fragments showed signs of butchery and most of the material was very fragmented. The material was not characterised by any particular type of waste (such as heads and feet, indicating primary butchery waste).
- 5.7.12 Seven pieces of worked bone were identified, from contexts in trenches 3 and 6. Trench 3 topsoil produced two worked pieces of bone. The more recognisable one is a cattle rib sawn both vertically and horizontally, exposing the cancellous bone. The second piece is possibly a polished piece of red deer antler transformed into a thin plate. At one end the piece has broken across a rivet hole, and there is a small semicircular indentation on one edge. It might be the side plate of a composite comb.
- 5.7.13 Metalled surface (302) yielded the horizontal sawn-off segment of a cattle tibia, while trench 6 topsoil contained a scapula sawn in the same way. Other pieces with sawn marks were a cattle ulna from made ground deposit (304) (chopped through the articular surface and distal tip sawn-off), a smaller possible scapula piece in trench 6 topsoil and a horizontally sawn and snapped-off proximal cattle rib from subsoil in the same trench. The tibia, ulna and scapula bones seem to represent relatively modern butchery practices using a saw to portion the bones (the tibia in particular resembles a soup bone). However, the proximal rib fragment is reminiscent of the waste produced when sawing out a rib plate as a raw material for combs, or panels/strips for caskets, etc.

5.8 Marine Shell

- 5.8.1 The marine shell, which was restricted to trenches 1-3, comprises oyster and mussel. The oyster shell includes both left and right valves, in other words both preparation and consumption waste.

6 PALAEO-ENVIRONMENTAL EVIDENCE

6.1 Introduction

- 6.1.1 Two bulk samples were taken, from layers (114) and (312) respectively, and were processed for the recovery and assessment of charred plant remains and charcoals. The sample from (312) contained charred remains indicative of domestic hearths and the processing of cereals. The sample from context (114) contained only wood charcoal and so while indicative of hearth or fire waste did not produce evidence for the same kinds of activities seen in (312).
- 6.1.2 The two sampled horizons, both of late medieval or early post-medieval date, contained general debris and were not related to any features or specific activity and thus the palaeo-environmental remains are of very limited value.

6.2 Methods

- 6.2.1 Bulk samples were processed by standard flotation methods; the flot retained on a 0.5 mm mesh, residues fractionated into 5.6 mm, 2mm and 1mm fractions and dried. The coarse fractions (>5.6 mm) were sorted, weighed and discarded. Flots were scanned under a x10 – x40 stereo-binocular microscope and the presence of charred remains quantified (**Table 4**) in order to present data to record the preservation and nature of the charred plant and charcoal remains and assess their potential to address the project and subsidiary aims. Preliminary identifications of dominant or important taxa are noted below, following the nomenclature of Stace (1997).
- 6.2.2 The flots were generally small. There were high numbers of roots, modern seeds, and twigs and fruits of hawthorn in the sample from context (312). These are indicative of stratigraphic movement, reworking or the degree of contamination by later intrusive elements.

6.3 Charred Plant Remains

- 6.3.1 The charred plant remains from layer (312) were poorly preserved, comprising of several grains of free-threshing wheat (*Triticum aestivum* s.l.) and possibly a single grain of barley (*Hordeum vulgare* s.l.). There were also a number of seeds of vetches/wild pea (*Vicia/ Lathyrus* sp.) and occasional seeds of other species including probable cornflower (*Centaurea cyanus*). These species are characteristic of Saxon, medieval and post-medieval settlements (Greig 1991). Such remains are to be associated with the charring of cereals either during their processing or the cleaning of spillage as they are taken from storage. The absence of smaller weed seeds and rachis fragments indicate that they probably came onto the site and were stored as cleaned grain.

- 6.3.2 The sample from layer (114) while containing more wood charcoal contained no charred plant remains. As such it is possible that the sample is derived from fires that are not associated with domestic activities, such as the processing of cereals.

6.4 Charcoal

- 6.4.1 Charcoal was noted from the flots of the bulk samples and is recorded in **Table 4**. The sample from layer (114) contained only fragments of wood charcoal including many that could be seen to be ring-porous, most probably of oak.

6.5 Land Molluscs

- 6.5.1 Shells were recovered only from context (312), and comprised mainly *Helicella itala* and *Cochlicopa* sp. The shells were quite fresh in appearance and given the number of roots in the sample indicate they may be modern or more recent intrusions. More significantly shells from late medieval/early post medieval context are rarely of any palaeo-environmental significance unless very specific information is required or addressed of the sampled contexts.

6.6 Potential

Charred plant remains

- 6.6.1 Charred plant remains have the potential to reveal the crop species utilised by the inhabitants of the site, as well as providing information the husbandry of such crops. However, given the small number of charred plant remains such potential is limited. Further analysis would not provide any additional identifications and it is felt that the data as assessed is sufficient

Charcoal

- 6.6.2 The charcoal has the potential to reveal information regarding the utilisation of woodland resources for fuel. However, given that only one sample contained charcoal and that it is not associated with a specific activity such potential is limited.

Land snails and fresh/brackish water molluscs

- 6.6.3 Given the degree of disturbance within context the potential for the molluscan remains is limited.

7 DISCUSSION

- 7.1.1 The aim of this project was to investigate the archaeology; history and chronology of Chesham Bois House within its historical, geographical and archaeological context and to address four more specific research objectives (see 2.1.3 above). Although later truncations and disturbances may have removed the majority of the medieval remains to the west of the present Chesham Bois House, evidence for medieval and later occupation of the site was recovered in several trenches. The lack of close dating evidence, however, and the absence of

any features and deposits earlier than the 15th century, precludes any comprehensive interpretation, but the research objectives can at least be addressed in part.

7.2 The Manor House

- 7.2.1 When was the manor house was built and how long has the site in general been occupied? While evidence for medieval and later occupation of the site was recovered in several trenches, no features or deposits were recorded that could be dated any earlier than the 15th century, more than 100 years later than the earliest documentary references to the occupation of the manor house. Earlier excavation by CVAHS located a pit below the calcareous mortar floor in trench 1. This feature, which produced large quantities of smithing slag and charcoal, is currently being dated scientifically. The presence of a pit associated with smithing below the earliest internal floor level suggests that this feature predated the construction of the probable 15th century hearth and is likely to have been an external feature, or within an auxiliary building rather than within the manor house. Although residual in later contexts, a small assemblage of medieval pottery, of 12th or 13th century and 14th or 15th century date indicate probable activity on the site during these periods. No direct evidence was recovered for the construction of the original manor house, but the evidence of the residual finds and from documentary sources suggests that there was probably a manor house here in 1213 when William du Bois held the manor, and possibly earlier. The site appears to have been occupied since at least this date, with few or no breaks, until the present.
- 7.2.2 The second research objective was to attempt to define the extent and nature of the manor house from its construction to its destruction. Although slight traces of the medieval building and several parts of the post-medieval buildings were encountered, the frequent re-use of building materials hampered any close dating of these structures and the limited extent of the excavations prevented the recovery of any more than a very partial ground plan. The late medieval and early post-medieval remains recorded in trench 1 appear to represent part of a kitchen or bakehouse, possibly within the southern range of a contemporary manor house, although it is possible that it could represent part of an auxiliary structure within the manorial complex. The assemblage of animal bones recovered from these deposits probably represents food or kitchen waste associated with the use of the hearths. The presence of chicken, duck and goose in this assemblage may suggest that they were kept on site to provide eggs and a ready source of meat and these along with the remains of hare and rabbit indicate the high status of the inhabitants of the house. The young age of most of the animals slaughtered underlines this further.
- 7.2.3 Although not closely dated, the wall foundations recorded in trenches 2 and 3 appear to be broadly contemporary with the buildings depicted on the 1735 Bedford Estate map. The possible structures represented by these walls, which appear to have been built sequentially, appear too narrow to be these buildings,

although this may be due to the vagaries of 18th-century surveying. The 1883 1st edition Ordnance Survey map of the area depicts a small group of ancillary buildings to the west of Chesham Bois House and it is possible that some parts of the earlier building were retained, or that the ancillary buildings were constructed reusing parts of the original buildings and materials salvaged from the earlier buildings, and that the remains in trenches 2 and 3 also relate to these later buildings. The possible backfilled cellar encountered in trench 6 was located to the west of the present Chesham Bois House, and is likely to represent a part of the post-medieval, or earlier, manor house. This may also imply that the main domestic accommodation may have been in the area now occupied by Chesham Bois House.

- 7.2.4 The only floor remnant located in trenches 2 and 3 comprised a brick floor, which suggests a more utilitarian structure than part of the domestic quarters. The only surfaces encountered in trench 3 comprised roughly gravelled surfaces, probably related to the use of the gardens in the 19th and 20th centuries. Although it is possible that wall (313) represents the northern wall of a building, no other walls were found connected to it and it is possible that this represents a property boundary, or a retaining wall around a sunken garden. Both wall (313) and wall (207) were retaining walls defining the northern and western sides of a negative terrace, possibly constructed in the late 17th or early 18th century. This terrace appears to have truncated the level of the natural clay and flint substrata by at least 0.5m, and up to 1m, which would probably have removed the majority of any earlier remains in the area to the west of the present Chesham Bois House.

7.3 The earthworks in the Church Field

- 7.3.1 The nature of the earthworks in the Church Field remains uncertain, although they appear to have been constructed in the post-medieval period, following the backfilling of the possible medieval features encountered in trenches 4 and 5. No settlement remains, either medieval or post-medieval were recorded in this area. Although a relatively large assemblage of medieval pottery was recovered from the topsoil and subsoil in trench 4, this material is residual and whilst it suggests medieval activity in the area, no structural remains were recorded that could suggest a settlement of this date in the Church Field.
- 7.3.2 Research objective 4 related to the date and function of the possible ditch and bank earthwork, visible as a slight earthwork along the northern edge of the Bowling Green, reappearing to the south of the present house and continuing to the north, running approximately south-south-east to north-north-west across the Church Field. The ditch was excavated in trench 5 and, although no dating evidence for its establishment was recovered, it is clear that the lower fills probably formed over an extended period of time before the feature was eventually deliberately backfilled in the post-medieval period. This substantial ditch does not appear on the 1735 Bedford Estate map, although a possible continuation to the south may be shown as part of the property boundary,

suggesting that it had already been backfilled within the Church Field by this time. Its probable function was as a substantial property boundary around the manorial complex.

8 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 8.1.1 The results of this evaluation augment the results of earlier surveys and excavations carried out by the Chess Valley Archaeology and Historical Society. A report for inclusion in the *Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society Journal* is currently being prepared by members of CVAHS and it is proposed that this assessment of the results of the Time Team excavations, along with specialist reports are made available for inclusion within a report detailing all work at Chesham Bois House and the Church Field.
- 8.1.2 A copy of this report will be lodged with the county Sites and Monuments Record.

9 THE ARCHIVE

- 9.1.1 The archive, which includes all artefacts, written, drawn and photographic records relating directly to the investigation undertaken, is currently held at the offices of Wessex archaeology under the site code CBH 06 and Wessex Archaeology project no. 62503. The paper archive is contained in one lever arch file. In due course, the archive will be transferred to the County Museum Service, under the accession number 2006.141.

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Table 1: Finds totals by material type and by trench (number / weight in grammes)

Material	Tr 1	Tr 2	Tr 3	Tr 4	Tr 5	Tr 6	Tr 7	TOTAL
Pottery	19/329	28/702	18/606	12/315	1/57	107/1039	7/118	192/3166
<i>Medieval</i>	2/21	-	2/10	11/271	-	-	1/4	16/306
<i>Post-medieval</i>	17/308	28/702	16/596	1/44	1/57	107/1039	6/114	176/2860
Ceramic Building Mat.	38/11556	56/36,080	21/11,921	33/3352	26/1643	19/11,262	33/2289	226/78,103
<i>Brick</i>	9/8048	18/22,663	8/8706	1/34	-	6/7797	1/329	43/47,577
<i>Roof tile</i>	31/3508	38/13,417	11/2811	32/3318	26/143	13/3465	32/1960	181/30,122
<i>Other</i>	-	-	2/404	-	-	-	-	2/404
Clay Pipe	-	2/8	1/5	-	-	-	-	3/13
Stone	-	3/448	-	-	-	-	-	3/448
Worked Flint	1/8	-	-	-	-	-	-	1/8
Glass	3/41	41/1076	26/1098	-	-	12/97	-	82/2312
Metalwork (no. objects)	36	19	26	15	-	3	4	103
<i>Copper alloy</i>	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
<i>Iron</i>	34	16	23	15	-	2	4	94
<i>Lead</i>	1	3	3	-	-	1	-	8
Animal Bone	201/581	-	53/1532	-	-	10/163	-	264/2276
Shell	19/142	1/1	26/158	-	-	-	-	46/301

Table 2: Chronological breakdown of pottery assemblage by ware type

Date Range	Ware Type	No. sherds	Weight (g)
MEDIEVAL	Medieval sandy ware	12	125
	Late medieval sandy ware	4	181
	<i>sub-total medieval</i>	<i>16</i>	<i>306</i>
POST-MEDIEVAL	Redware	54	2008
	Tinglazed earthenware	10	79
	English stoneware	6	148
	Staffordshire-type slipware	5	67
	White salt glaze	3	20
	Bone china	4	40
	Refined whiteware	85	544
	Yellow ware	9	54
	<i>sub-total post-medieval</i>	<i>176</i>	<i>2860</i>
	OVERALL TOTAL	192	3166

Table 3: Animal bone species list and percentages (NISP)

Species	NISP	%
Horse	1	0
Cattle	45	19
Sheep/goat	43	18
Pig	13	5
Other	9	4
Bird	22	9
Unidentified	106	44
TOTAL	239	99

Table 4: Assessment of the charred plant remains and charcoal

				Flot								Residue
Feature type/no	Context	Sample	size litres	flot size ml	Grain	Chaff	Weed seeds uncharred	Weed seeds charred	Charcoal >4/2mm	Other	Charcoal >5.6mm	
Trench 1				Late medieval/Early Post-medieval								
Layer	114	2	5	60	90%	-	-	-	-	10/10ml	-	
Trench 3				Post-medieval								
Layer	312	1	13	100	1%	A	-	c	B	-	moll-t(C)	

KEY: A** = exceptional, A* = 30+ items, A = ≥10 items, B = 9 - 5 items, C = < 5 items, Moll-t = terrestrial molluscs

NOTE: ¹flot is total, but flot in superscript = % of rooty material

APPENDIX 1: Catalogue of trench descriptions

TRENCH 1		NGR: 496829 199719
Dimensions – 4m x 3m		Ground Level – 153.96m OD
Context No.	Description	Depth
101	Mid greyish-brown silty clay loam topsoil and modern overburden (backfill of 2005 trench).	0-0.30m (0-0.50m in 2005 trench)
102	Mid brown silty clay subsoil with common mortar and sparse CBM inclusions. Overlies structure 103.	0.30-0.50m
103	Fairly crudely built tile and brick wall/chimney footing with several small brick structures forming open compartments on the east (internal) side. Built within shallow construction cut 105, above earlier structure 110.	0.40-0.50m
104	Animal bone deposit within 102, confined to north-west area of trench.	0.30-0.50m
105	Construction cut for structure 103, cuts 117.	0.40-0.50m
106	Very degraded and heat shattered tiles forming the base of the hearth with/above the eastern side of 103. Overlies 108.	0.45-0.50m
107	Pale grey chalk and mortar deposit, directly below 103 and above 110. Probable bedding for 103, within construction cut 105.	0.50-0.55m
108	Clean, yellow sand deposit, bedding for hearth 106. Overlies 109	0.50-0.55m
109	Mid greyish-brown silty clay loam, possible occupation deposit above hearth/floor 111, abuts structure 110.	0.55-0.62m
110	Well built tile footings, utilising peg tiles, for probable hearth/chimney stack. Aligned north-south with a c. 45° return to the east, forming an angular, crescent shaped structure. Not excavated.	0.55m+
111	Very pale grey calcareous lime mortar floor below deposit 109. Abuts structure 110. Probably the same as 116, 118 and 120. Overlies 112.	0.62-0.66m
112	Dark grey sandy clay loam with common charcoal inclusions, possible levelling or bedding layer for floor 111. Sealed below later floor 111	0.66-0.68m
113	Animal bone deposit, possibly associated with the final use of structure 110.	0.55m-0.57m
114	Very dark greyish brown-black silty clay loam with abundant charcoal inclusions. Possible occupation/burnt fuel deposit, sealed below 113 and overlying heat effected natural clay and flints 115. Could represent the earliest use of structure 110.	0.68-0.72m
115	Reddish brown silty clay with common large flint inclusions. Heat effected/reddened natural clay with flints substrata.	0.72m+
116	Very pale grey calcareous lime mortar floor seen in north facing section. Probably the same as 111, 118 and 120 – number issued to record finds recovered from section.	0.0.64-0.66m
117	Mid greyish brown silty clay loam with sparse small flint and chalk and rare charcoal inclusions. Possible buried topsoil, cut by 106, and probably by the construction cut for 110, which was not clearly defined.	0.40-0.50m
118	Very pale grey calcareous lime mortar floor to the north of hearth 119, in the east of the trench. Overlies 119, relationships with deposits in the western side removed by later intrusions (2005 excavations), but this is likely to represent a continuation of floor 111/116/120.	0.65-0.69m

119	Large pitch-tile hearth in east of trench, originally exposed during 2005 excavations.	0.66m+
120	Several patches of very pale grey calcareous lime mortar floor to the south of hearth 119. Likely to represent a continuation of floor 111/116/118.	0.64-0.68m

TRENCH 2		NGR: 496800 199737
Dimensions – 12m x 1.6m		Ground Level – 153.65m-154.90m OD
Context No.	Description	Depth
201	Mid greyish-brown silty clay loam topsoil and modern overburden.	0-0.40m
202	Loose brick, tile and mortar rubble deposit between walls 207 and 219.	0.40-1.0m
203	Very pale grey chalk deposit, probably the remains of a surface or capping above backfilled ditch 228. Same as 210.	0.40-0.45
204	Large (<150mm) flint nodules set in dark greyish brown silty clay along the eastern edge of backfilled ditch 228, abutted by 203 and may represent an eastern edge of this possible surface.	0.40-0.60m
205	Thin layer of small, rounded flint gravel within a dark greyish brown silty clay. Partly overlies demolished remains of wall 207 and flint setting 204.	0.40-0.45m
206	Single, unmortared course of bricks, above the line of wall 119. Could represent an insubstantial structure on the same line as 119, but as this was founded on loose demolition rubble 218 and was only bonded by dark greyish brown silty clay, it is unlikely to have been more than one or two courses high.	0.40-0.50m
207	Short length of brick wall in English Garden Bond, bonded with pale grey calcareous lime mortar. Aligned north-south, remains stand up to 0.75m high and 0.54m wide. Built within construction cut 224. Cut into prevailing east-facing slope, possibly as a retaining wall.	0.50-1.30m+
208	Mid yellowish brown silty clay with common large (<150mm) flint inclusions. Natural clay and flints substrata.	0.40-1.80m+
209	Thin lens of mid-light greyish brown silty clay loam subsoil with common small flint inclusions above chalk deposit 203.	0.35-0.40m
210	Very pale grey chalk deposit, probably the remains of a surface or capping above backfilled ditch 228. Same as 203.	0.40-0.45
211	Mid-dark greyish brown silty clay with common flint and rare CBM inclusions. Upper fill of large ditch 228. Possibly the result of deliberate dumping/backfilling.	0.45-1.10m
212	Mid greyish brown silty clay with sparse small (>20mm) chalk and flint inclusions confined to area between walls 207 and 215, sealed below 202 and cut by 214, the construction cut for wall 215.	1.0-1.35m
213	Mid greyish brown silty clay loam with abundant brick, mortar and flint inclusions. Loose, rubble backfill of construction cut 214, to the west of 215.	1.0-1.40m
214	North-south aligned construction cut for wall 215, 0.75m wide and 0.40m deep with moderately steep, straight sides and a flat base. Cuts 212.	1.0-1.40m
215	Short length of brick wall in English Garden Bond, bonded with pale yellowish brown sandy lime mortar above a peg tile footing. Aligned north-south, remains stand up to 0.41m high and 0.30m wide. Built within construction cut 214.	0.99-1.40m

216	Thin bedding layer for brick surface 217 comprising mid-light brown silty clay with rare small chalk inclusions. Below 217 and above 222.	1.05-1.09m
217	Carefully laid brick surface, comprising a single layer of bricks and half bricks above clay bedding 216. Overlies wall 215 and cut by construction cut 220.	0.95-1.05m
218	Loose deposit of brick, tile and mortar fragments overlying the remains of wall 219. Probably the same as 202. Overlain by insubstantial brick structure 206.	0.50-0.75m
219	Short length of brick wall in Header Bond, bonded with pale grey calcareous lime mortar. Aligned north-south, remains stand up to 0.35m high and 0.45m wide. Built within construction cut 220.	0.75-1.10m
220	North-south aligned construction cut for wall 219, 0.70m wide and up to 0.35m deep with moderately steep, straight sides and a flat base. Cuts brick surface 217 to the west and natural substrata to the east.	0.75-1.10m
221	Small deposit of mid greyish brown silty clay above remains of wall 207. Sealed below 205. No obvious function or purpose.	0.45-0.50m
222	Very pale grey-white calcareous lime mortar, possibly a remnant of a mortar surface abuts wall 215 and overlain by bedding deposit 216.	1.09-1.12m
223	Mid greyish brown silty clay with sparse chalk and common flint inclusions. Backfill of construction cut 214, to the east of wall 215.	1.0-1.40m
224	North-south aligned construction cut for wall 207, 1.0m wide and 0.80m deep with steep, straight sides, base not seen. Cuts 208 to the west and 212 to the east.	0.50-1.30m+
225	Mid greyish brown silty clay backfill of construction cut 224.	0.50-1.30m+
226	Mid greyish brown silty clay with common CBM inclusions, backfill of construction cut 220.	0.75-1.10m
227	Mid orange brown silty clay with common large (<150mm) flint inclusions. Basal fill of large north-south ditch 228. Mostly comprises re-deposited natural clay and flints.	1.10-1.80m
228	Large north-south aligned ditch, approximately 4m wide and 1.35m deep with moderately steep, straight sides and a concave base.	0.45-1.80m

TRENCH 3		NGR: 496807 199753
Dimensions – 9m x 7.5m		Ground Level –153.65m-154.34m OD
Context No.	Description	Depth
301	Mid greyish-brown silty clay loam topsoil and modern overburden.	0-0.30m
302	Small fragments of CBM, chalk and flint bonded by dark greyish-brown silty clay. Metalled surface, confined to the area to the north of wall 307.	0.30-0.34m
303	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay with common large (<150mm) flint inclusions. Natural clay and flints substrata. Natural south facing slope has been terrace, greatly reducing the level of the substrata in the south of the trench.	0.50m+ (north of 307) 0.80-1.0m+ (south of 307)
304	Mid to dark yellowish-brown silty clay with common large (<150mm) flint inclusions. Made ground deposit of re-deposited natural clay and flints to the south of wall 307. Overlies 305.	0.30-0.60m
305	Mid greyish-brown silty clay loam with sparse small chalk and flint inclusions. Possible soil accumulation or re-deposited topsoil. Sealed below surface 302 and deposit 304 and overlying the	0.34-0.50m (north of 307) 0.60-0.70m (south

	remains of wall 307.	of 307)
306	Construction cut for wall 307, 1.30m wide and 0.30m deep with steep, concave sides. Base not seen.	0.50-0.80m (north of 307) 0.60-0.90m (south of 307)
307	East-west aligned brick wall in English Cross Bond, bonded with Pale grey-white calcareous lime mortar. Survives to a maximum height of 0.28m and 0.49m wide. Built using the remains of earlier brick wall 313 as a foundation.	0.50-0.78m
308	Pale yellowish-brown silty clay with sparse small chalk and flint inclusions. Backfill of construction cut 306, to the south of wall 307.	0.60-0.90m
309	Very pale grey silty clay with abundant small chalk, flint, mortar and CBM inclusions possible surface abutting wall 307, or a thin rubble deposit representing the demolition of the wall. Confined to the south of wall 307, sealed below 305 and overlies 308.	0.70-0.75m
310	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with sparse small chalk and flint inclusions. Possibly a buried soil deposit. Confined to the area south of wall 313. Abuts wall 313 and overlies the backfill of its construction cut.	0.75-0.93m
311	Pale greyish-brown silty clay with common small chalk and flint inclusions. Backfill of construction cut 317. Only seen to the south of wall 313.	0.93-1.05m
312	Mid-light greyish-brown silty clay with common small chalk and flint and abundant charcoal inclusions. Lies directly above the natural substrata and sealed below 310, cut by construction cut 317. The nature of this deposit is uncertain, it could represent some sort of occupation deposit, or alternatively a buried soil. Predates the construction of wall 313, but is not present to the north of this, therefore post-dating the terracing cut that wall 313 represents the northern side of.	0.93-1.08m
313	East-west aligned brick wall in Flemish Bond, bonded with Pale yellowish brown sandy lime mortar. Survives to a maximum height of 0.32m and 0.56m wide. South face is well built with a regular bond and thin (>4mm) jointing while the north face is very irregular and poorly finished. Probable retaining wall marking the northern side of a terrace.	0.78-1.10m
314	Deposit of pale yellowish-brown sandy lime mortar with re-used peg tiles set into surface. 2.10m+ long and 0.50m wide, aligned north-south. Sealed below 309 and overlying 310, this is probably broadly contemporary with wall 307. Probably represents a crude wall footing, although this does not extend as far north as wall 307. Possible garden feature. Unexcavated.	0.93m+
315	Circular or sub-circular arrangement of bricks bonded with very dark grey silty clay. Continues beyond southern limit of excavation. Sealed below 309 and overlying 310, this is probably broadly contemporary with wall 307 and feature 314. Possible garden feature. Unexcavated.	0.93m+
316	Pale greyish-brown silty clay with common small angular flint gravel inclusions and rare charcoal flecks. Backfill of construction cut 306, to the north of wall 307.	0.50-0.80m
317	Construction cut for east-west wall 313, only seen to the southern (terraced) side of the wall. Up to 0.50m wide and 0.12m deep with moderately steep, straight sides and a flat base.	

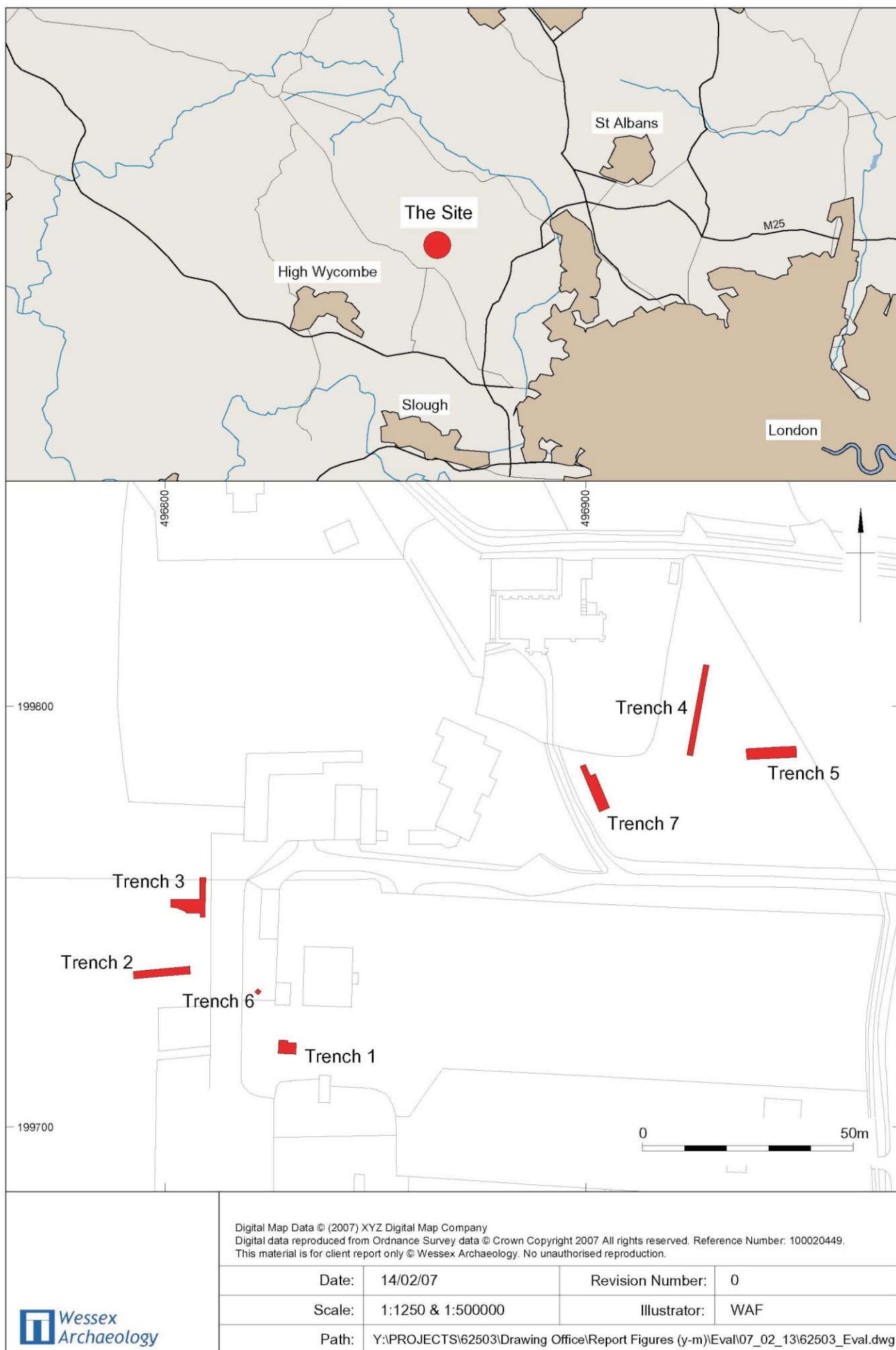
TRENCH 4		NGR: 496926 199797
Dimensions – 22m x 1.3m		Ground Level – 146.56m-147.66m OD
Context No.	Description	Depth
401	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with sparse small flint inclusions.	0-0.25m
402	Mid greyish-brown silty clay subsoil with common large (<100mm) flint inclusions.	0.25-0.45
403	Pale grey silty clay with very abundant flint inclusions. Basal fill of ditch 404.	0.70-1.30m
404	East-west aligned ditch in south end of trench, 1.50m wide and 0.95m deep with steep, straight sides and a concave base.	0.45-1.30m
405	Mid greenish-grey silty clay loam with moderate small flint inclusions. Fill of small east—west gully 406.	0.65-0.85m
406	Small, irregular, east-west gully, varies between 0.35 and 0.55m in width and between 0.15 and 0.25m in depth with steep, straight sides and an irregular base. Possible root disturbance.	0.65-0.85m
407	Mid greyish-brown silty clay fill of small, irregular, unexcavated feature 408.	0.65m+
408	Small, irregular feature that continues beyond the western limit of excavation. This was 0.70m+ long and up to 0.50m wide. Not excavated.	0.65m+
409	Mid greyish-brown silty clay with sparse small flint inclusions and rare charcoal flecks. Fill of pit/hollow 410.	0.65-0.70m
410	Very shallow, or heavily truncated sub-circular pit or hollow, approximately 1m in diameter and 0.05m deep with near vertical sides and a flat base. Possible root disturbance.	0.65-0.70m
411	Large (3.3m long) dump of dark yellowish-brown silty clay (re-deposited natural) above subsoil 402. Coincides with a break of slope/terrace edge. Probably represents a made ground deposit used to form a relatively flat terrace on the natural north-north-east facing slope.	0.25-0.55m
412	Dark yellowish-brown silty clay with common large (<100mm) flint inclusions. Top fill of ditch 404.	0.45-0.70m
413	Mid greyish-brown silty clay loam with abundant flint and rare charcoal inclusions. Fill of possible ditch/large feature 414. Cut by ditch 404.	0.45-0.85m
414	Probable broad, shallow linear feature aligned approximately south-east to north-west, 2.1m wide and up to 0.40m deep with moderately steep, concave sides and a concave base. It is probable that this represents a land or property division of some sort..	0.45-0.85m
415	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay with common large (<150mm) flint inclusions. Natural clay and flints substrata.	0.45m+

TRENCH 5		NGR: 496943 199798
Dimensions – 12m x 2.6m		Ground Level – 145.94m-146.90m OD
Context No.	Description	Depth
501	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with sparse small flint inclusions.	0-0.30m
502	Mid-light brown silty clay subsoil with common large (<100mm) flint inclusions.	0.30-0.60m
503	Mid-light greyish brown silty clay with common small-moderate (25-100mm) flint inclusions. Upper fill of ditch 504, mostly comprises re-deposited natural clay and flints. Probably deliberate backfilling or levelling.	0.60-1.65m

504	Very large ditch, aligned approximately north-north-east to south-south-west, 8.2m+ wide and 2.20m deep with a steeply sloping, convex western side (east side not seen) and a concave base. Although the eastern side was not seen within the trench, the eastern side appears to be quite gently sloping, suggesting a very asymmetric profile. Probably a substantial property boundary, perhaps enclosing the suspected medieval and later manorial buildings.	0.60-2.80m
505	Mid reddish-brown silty clay with moderate small flint and rare CBM inclusions. Fill of ditch 504, possibly representing a period of stabilisation and vegetation growth following the initial silting, represented by 507.	1.65-2.00m
506	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay with common large (<150mm) flint inclusions. Natural clay and flints substrata.	0.60-2.80m+
507	Pale yellowish-grey silty clay with common small flint inclusions. Basal fill of ditch 504. Probably represents the initial silting of the feature caused by the weathering of the sides.	2.00-2.80m

TRENCH 6		NGR: 496822 199732
Dimensions – 1m x 1m		Ground Level –153.70m OD
Context No.	Description	Depth
601	Dark greyish-brown silty loam topsoil with abundant small flint inclusions.	0-0.10m
602	Dark yellowish-brown silty clay loam subsoil with common small angular flints and abundant charcoal inclusions.	0.10-0.40m
603	Loose brick and flint rubble deposit with frequent voids. This deposit was almost certainly the cause of the geophysics anomaly that the trench was positioned to investigate. GPR suggests that this is up to 2m deep. Deposit not bottomed. Probably represents rubble filled cellar.	0.40-1.0m+

TRENCH 7		NGR: 496902 199780
Dimensions – 11.7m x 2.6m		Ground Level – 148.78m-149.06m OD
Context No.	Description	Depth
701	Mid brown silty clay loam topsoil with moderate small flint inclusions.	0-0.25m
702	Mid-light greyish-brown silty clay loam, relatively stone free. Upper fill of probable hollow way 704.	0.25-0.35m
703	Layer of small (>30mm), angular flint gravel, trampled/rammed into the natural clay and flints in the base of cut 704. Metalled surface within hollow way.	0.35-0.38m
704	Probable remains of hollow way, aligned approximately south-east to north-west, possibly leading to the nearby church and/or early manor house. This was 3.90m wide and 0.13m deep with very gently sloping concave sides and a concave base.	0.35-0.38m
705	Mid yellowish-brown silty clay with common large (<150mm) flint inclusions. Natural clay and flints substrata.	0.25-0.38m+



Site and trench location plan

Figure 1

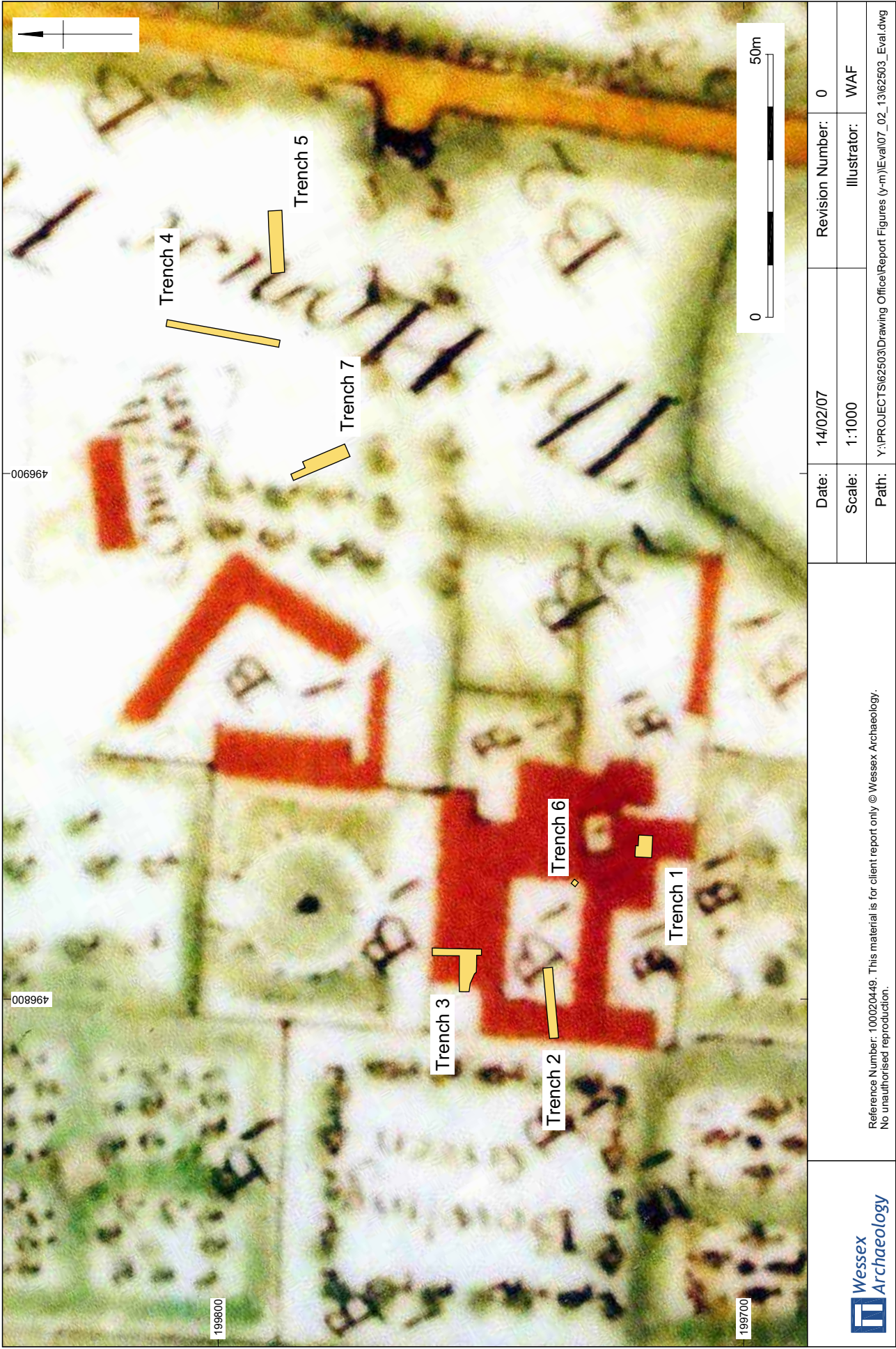
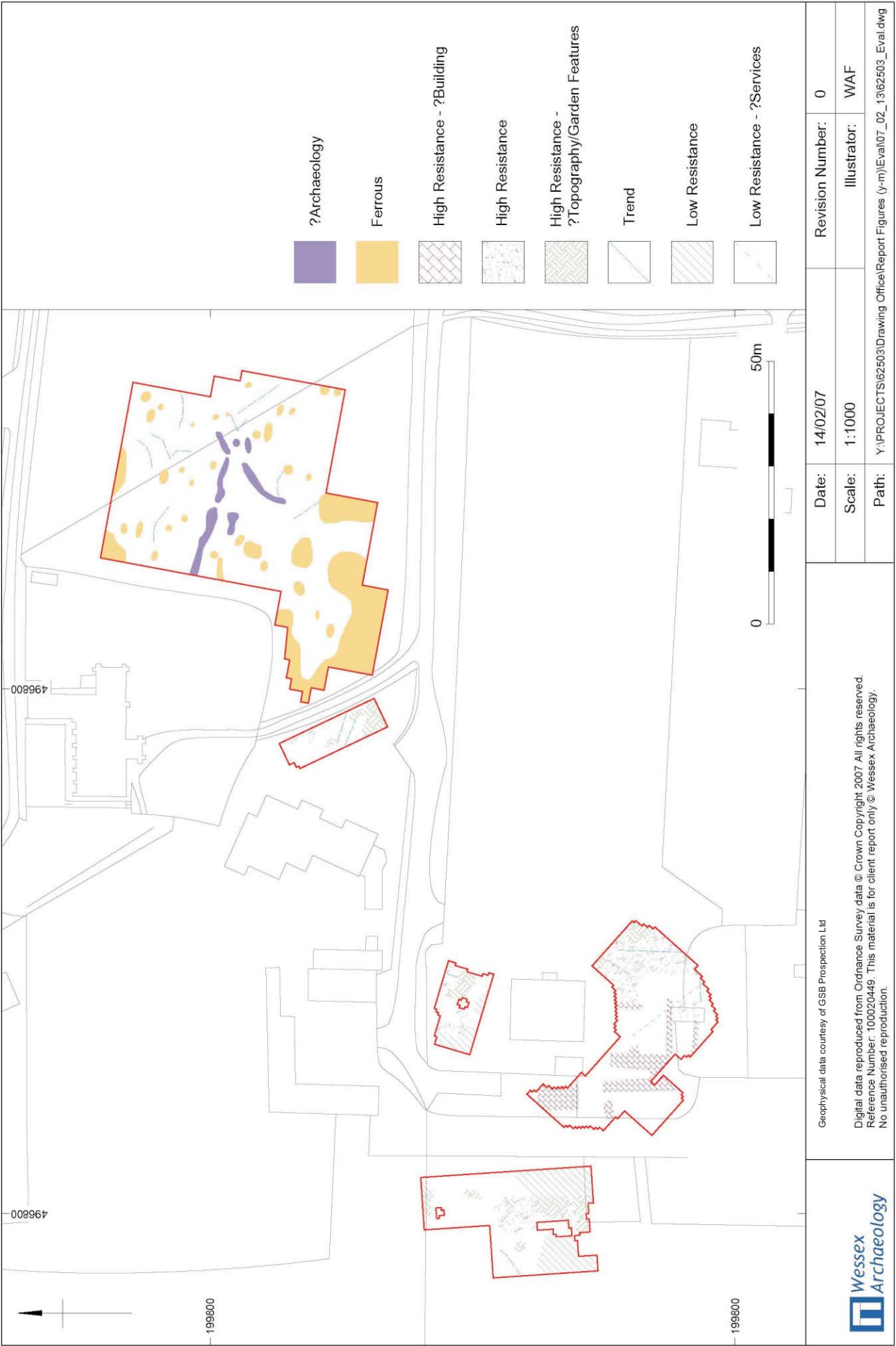


Figure 2

1735 Bedford Estate map with trench positions



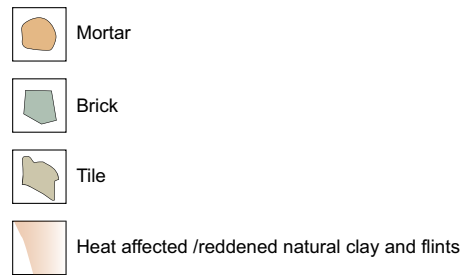
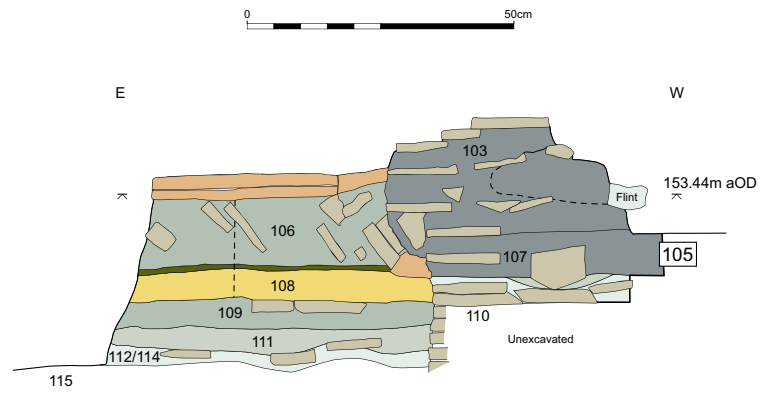
Geophysics survey areas and summary results

Figure 3



Plan of Chesham Bois House's Garden; trenches 1, 2, 3 and 6

Figure 4



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Plan of Church Field


Figure 7



Plate 1: Trench 1 from the west



Plate 2: Terracing to the west of Chesham Bois House

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