

Excavation at Minchery Farm Paddock, MP12: October – November 2012

Trench 2

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Topsoil and subsoil

Contexts (2000) – (2006): Plan 201

Trench 2 was opened to join John Moore Heritage Services evaluation trenches 3 and 4 (2008). JMHS Trench 3 had yielded medieval pottery and tile and possible wall foundations, while JMHS Trench 4 had revealed the corner of a hearth, a well and also contained medieval pottery and tile. The new trench was L-shaped: 13m N-S x 11m W-E at its maximum, with the longer N-S arm being 5m wide and the shorter W-E arm 4m wide. The clean-up layer (2000), divided into western, eastern and southern areas, contained medieval pottery and tile, iron objects and animal bone; the surprise find was a Bronze Age barbed-and-tanged flint arrowhead in (2000) S. Under this top-soil layer the trench could immediately be divided up into rough areas (2001) through to (2006) – see Plan 201 – with (2002) and (2006) forming a wide paler stripe running nearly N-S. Silty sand (2002) was uneven but apparently less disturbed than similar layer (2006) to the north; (2006) had a deeper area of modern disturbance in its centre, filled with pea grit. Together these two layers comprised the disturbed upper fill of a ditch over 2m wide (covered by stratigraphic grouping [2024]), running NNE-SSW through the trench.

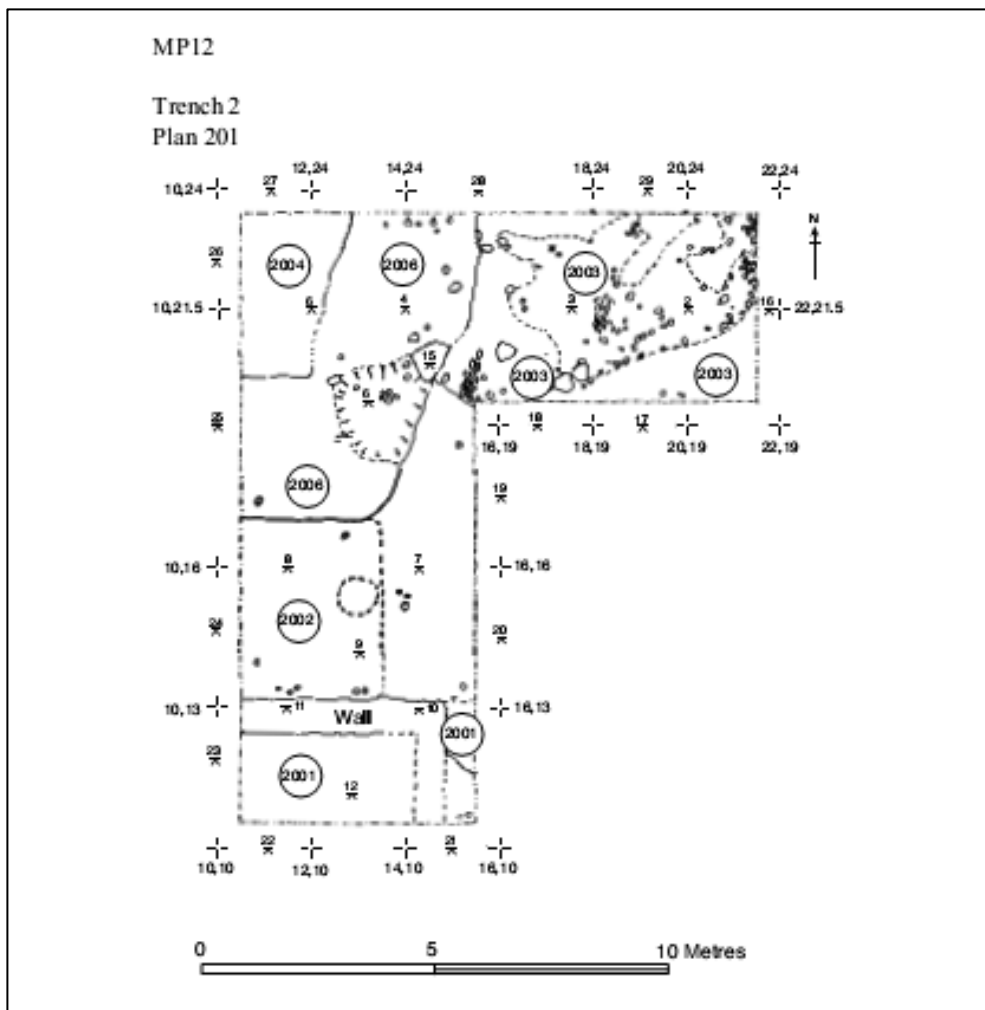


Fig 1: Trench 2, Plan 201

To the north-west of this ditch lay (2004), a more level, less stony and darker sandy silt. Layer (2005) to the east of the ditch, in the southern arm of the trench, was also very humic and relatively rubble free. The eastern arm of the trench, and east of the ditch, (2003) was very stony and rubbly – obviously lying over disturbed wall lines, surfaces and structures. A standing wall-line [2030] was also already clearly visible, running W-E across the lower end of the southern arm of the trench. This wall divided very stony dark sandy silt (2001), inside the structure, from the ditch-fill (2002) and surface (2005) to the north.

There was a relatively small amount of modern disturbance in these layers. Layers (2002) and (2006) contained some shallow pits or scrapes used to bury small car parts and debris (mirrors etc.) while the deep ruts and dips in the sandy silt of (2006), in particular around the large stone in the centre of the context, had been levelled with modern pea-grit, probably where a heavy vehicle had churned up the ground. This modern debris and ground-churning may be linked to the use of the site by Traveller families and the subsequent clearing after they had left. Otherwise the layers also all yielded animal bone, iron fragments and objects, floor and roof tile – including glazed tiles – medieval and Roman pottery, and a number of worked flints.



Fig. 2 Trench 2 looking south-west across (2000)E

The north-eastern building and the eastern arm of the trench

Topsoil and subsoil

Contexts (2000), (2000) E and (2003): Plan 201

This part of the report deals with the eastern part of the trench: from east of the moat [2024] to the eastern end of the trench and south as far as the small W-E ditch [2011] running west into the moat. The soils and finds *west* of the moat and *south* of the little ditch were different from those in the area covered here; the sequence described relates to the construction, use, alteration and demolition of the building in this area.

Under the organic topsoil (2000) in this part of the trench was layer (2000) E. This layer was rubblier than the corresponding layers in other parts of the trench and, in particular, than the layer west of the moat. The rubble seemed to be fragments of rough limestone building stone, and medieval tile and pottery as well as animal bone were also found in the slightly sandy silt. This layer was 0.1m deep at most. Layer (2003) below also covered the whole of the area being discussed and was slightly sandy silt – it was at this level that disturbed wall lines and stony surfaces began to appear. Plaster, mortar and worked stone fragments, as well as more medieval wall and floor tile pieces were found, suggesting more strongly that we were on the site of a dismantled building. Two worked flints were also found: several worked flints were found in layers in this area and to the south and in the ditch fills.



Fig. 3: looking south-east across (2003)

JMHS trench backfill and demolition layers

Contexts (2012) – (2016): Plans 202 and 214; Sections 2.03, 2.06, 2.09

Five contexts were revealed below (2003). Our trench had caught a small triangle of the NW side of the original evaluation trench: NE-SW trending strips (2014), (2015) and (2106) represented disturbance caused by the excavation of John Moore Heritage Services Trench 4 down to the undisturbed archaeology. In the SE corner of the MP12 trench was a small area of reddish clayey silt (2016) which was the backfill of the JMHS trench, so redeposited material associated with the building. To the NW of (2016) – and also to the SE of the building rubble – was a sandy silt linear deposit (2015) which, as well as the ubiquitous medieval tile and pottery fragments and occasional worked flint, contained abundant charcoal and also hammerscale. This layer (2105), only about 1m wide, with the thin strip of (2014) to the north-west of it, probably marked the edge of disturbance related to the JMHS trench to the south-east. (2014) was also dark sandy silt containing rubble, medieval pottery and tile, and animal bone,

In the west of this area, and running SW-NE along the very edge of the moat as far as the W-E ditch [2011], was a strip of reddish brown fairly homogenous and much less rubbly clayey/sandy silt (2012): 1.5m wide in the south but narrower in the north. [The northern end of (2005) also covered the southern end of (2012).] (2012) was seen in section in the north in slot [2026] and in central slot [2027] across the moat and appeared to be a plough-type soil, on average 0.3m deep, overlying the natural sandy subsoil [2021]. This plough-soil (2012) developed, across the north of the trench at least, before the structures in the east of the trench were built and the moat was dug. Only a few finds were found in this layer, mostly in the upper spit and probably intrusive.

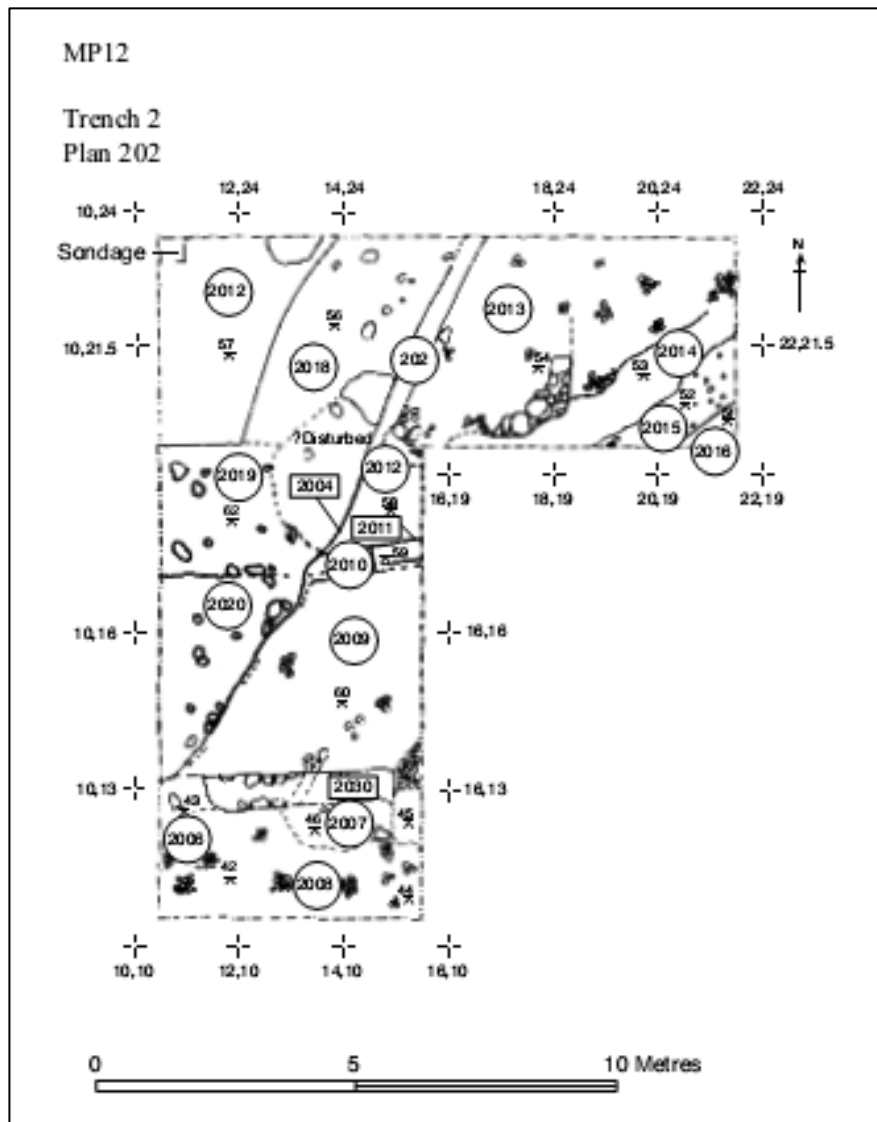


Fig. 4: Trench 2, Plan 202

To the east of the moat and covering most of the eastern arm of the trench below (2003) was layer (2013), about 7.5m W-E and up to 4m N-S and, although of variable depth, as much as 0.4m deep. Three-quarters of this spread was limestone rubble – obviously relating to the demolition and dismantling of the building in the area; the soil matrix was dark and silty. Surviving wall-lines were becoming visible within this destruction layer which also contained domestic debris: tile fragments; oyster shell; pottery sherds and animal bone, as well as another worked flint. This extensive layer was of course created earlier than (2104), (2015) and (2106) which were redeposited versions of much the same material replaced after the JMHS investigations

Hearth [2031], layers (2034), (2035), (2036), (2037), (2038), (2056) and (2062); wall [2040], post-pads [2041] and [2042], and wall foundation [2054]: Plans 209, 211, 212 and 214

Under the rubbly layer left by the process of dismantling the medieval building a more localised deposit was discovered linked to the demolition of a secondary wall [2040]. This 3m length of wall was built against the east face of earlier and wider external wall [2054], which ran N-S just east of the moat. The building of which [2054] was the western end had clearly occupied the whole of the eastern arm of the trench. The tumble (2034) from secondary wall [2040] comprised limestone rubble and tile fragments – generally smaller than those in layer (2013). The surviving wall foundations of this second phase of building [2040] were narrow and roughly-built using tile as well as small, mostly un-faced limestone blocks. They had been constructed after the hearth to the east was no longer used as there was no sooting on the internal faces, and the ashy hearth-related deposits ran *under* the wall. This suggests the use of the building had changed and perhaps that the buildings were no longer being as well maintained just prior to the dissolution in 1520.



Fig. 5: looking north along wall foundation [2054], interior to right

The original western end-wall of the building was a far better-built construction. The N-S foundations [2054] were 1.1m wide and built from vertically laid sub-angular rough-shaped limestone cobbles trending W-E with some N-S edging stones. A 3.5m length of the foundations was revealed; they appeared to finish with post-pad [2042] in the south but perhaps to continue north beyond post-pad [2041] in the north into the baulk. The foundations were mortared into the post-pads and were probably laid to support a wooden or whattle and daub super-structure linked

to ephemeral post holes found to the east – cut into (2035). The square post-pads were built of rough sub-square and sub-triangular limestone blocks mortared together. Both of the bases were c 0.7m² and two-three courses of stonework survived. The secondary wall [2040] was built against, but not mortared into, these post-pads. The original building, which sheltered the hearth, was therefore a considerable structure with wide well-built stone foundations and stone-built post-pads to support a wooden super-structure with lines of wooden posts to hold up the roof. The walls may not have been full height; with such a large and high-temperature hearth within (see Alldritt environmental report) the upper portions of the wall were perhaps open. The building may therefore have been a substantial barn used for various agricultural and industrial activities.

Layers (2035) and (2036) east of wall [2054], and running below wall [2040], were related to the life of the building when hearth [2031] was being used. (2035) was a working surface north of the hearth: sandy silt rich in charcoal with ash lenses, but with slightly less evidence for burning than just to the south around the hearth. The surface became increasingly sandy with depth and merged in to the sandy subsoil (2012) after about 0.1-0.15m. There may have been some Roman activity in this area as there were some large rim sheds of Roman pottery as well as a small amount of medieval pottery. This layer merged horizontally into the ashier and more charcoal-rich sandy silt to the south (2036). The charcoal was very abundant and the layer was clearly very much affected by the fire-area west of the vertical tiles and large flat hearth stones of which the hearth was constructed. The ash layer had thinly covered four large stones west of the hearth which created the angle for the fire itself. Within the sub-square area enclosed by the stones (slightly truncated to the south by the JMHS trench) was layer (2056), which comprised lenses of ash and burnt sand and contained large chunks of charcoal, and burnt stones and burnt tiles. This was clearly the centre of the fire; with the hearth and related working area to the east. The environmental evidence for oak charcoal suggested high temperatures were generated for some sort of industrial use; local brushwood was also used as kindling, along with the waste from processing grain.

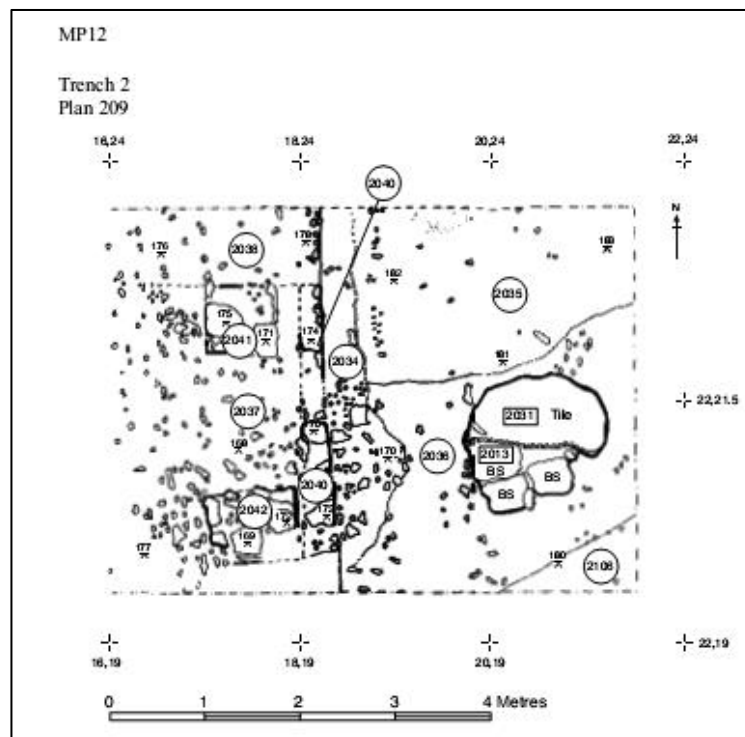


Fig. 6: Plan 209, walls and hearth



Fig. 7: Trench 2, the hearth looking west.

The hearth [2031] itself was beautifully built; constructed re-using ceramic roof and floor tiles laid on edge, flanked to the south by six large flags showing signs of heat-damage. The tiles were bedded at 70° from the horizontal; some of them were glazed. The overall shape was sub-oval, measuring 2.5m west-east and 2.4m north-south, with the fire area to the west. The four shaped flags to the west and around the fire were heavily burnt. The most southerly flags were slightly sloped to the south and bedded into clay (2062) which may have served as the bedding layer for both the hearth and the wall to the west.

The moat

Stratigraphic group [2024] comprising contexts [2026], [2027] and [2028] – slots across the ditch – and fills (2018), (2025) and (2039); (2019); (2020), (2033) and (2048)

Plans 202, 204, 205, 206 and 214; Sections 2.03, 2.06, 2.09 and 2.10

Little Marlow's Benedictine nunnery was also protected by water:

“The stream which flows eastward from Westhorpe and passes the village on the south divides further on near the Ferry Hotel and Cold Moorholm, a group of 17th-century cottages and a farm, and empties itself into the Thames near the site of the priory of Little Marlow. The remains of this nunnery are in the grounds of the 'Abbey,' a modern house, with parts, however, built of ancient

materials. The priory was a small and never wealthy house of Benedictine nuns, and occupied a site with a plan of somewhat irregular setting out on level and marshy ground by the river. It was surrounded by streams watered by the springs that rise to the east and west and gave it its name 'de fontibus de Merlawe.' The grantees at the Dissolution seem to have allowed the buildings to remain unoccupied, and though as late as 1719a great part of the conventual buildings were standing they had been used as a quarry for the neighbouring farms and had fallen into ruin. The hall, 60 ft. in length, was pulled down in 1740; part of the church tower was still standing in 1797; and in 1813 Lysons records that 'there are now no remains of the convent buildings.'

From: 'Parishes: Little Marlow', A History of the County of Buckingham: Volume 3 (1925), pp. 77-84. Found by Roelie Reed



Fig. 8: the moat looking ENE

Three slots were dug across the linear feature revealed as a clear band of ditch-fill beneath the topsoil. While this water channel may have started life as a natural feature it had clearly been re-dug, channelled and possibly lined with stones for stretches of its length. The channel was cut through bedrock and the consistently vertical or near vertical sides, remnants of stone lining, wooden features and linearity suggest a channel designed and managed by people. The stretch revealed in Trench 2 was 11m SSW-NNE, 2.5m wide and over 1.2m deep, at which depth both the water table and the lowest natural silting fill of the moat were reached. The moat may have connected to the fish-pond, which survives west of Trench 3, and thence to the fish-pond discovered south of the Paddock site in work connected to the building of the sewage farm. The channel may have continued to the NNE to join either the main channel of the Littlemore Brook or more probably the arm running SE-NW, behind the bowling/cinema complex.

The northern slot across the ditch [2026] was the only one to reveal the full profile and 1.2m depth to the natural silting layer, although the western edge had been slightly disturbed by later cut

[2023]. This cut had been made into the already filled ditch and was somehow related to a rubble spread and possible building to the west of the moat, outside the Priory precinct. The sandy clay matrix (2022) for the rubble had been very disturbed by mole runs so it was difficult to interpret what the building may have been, especially as only a small portion of the demolition layer showed in the trench. The first deliberate fill of this part of the ditch, (2039) was dark silt influenced by the rise and fall of the water-table; the deposit was marked by sand and clay lenses and iron panning, but contained medieval pottery and tile. Two possible stake holes were observed hammered down the east side of the ditch. Tip-lines were very visible in this layer and in (2025) above suggesting that the ditch had been filled in stages from the west side (see Sections 2.03 and 2.06). The layer above, (2025) also contained medieval, and some Roman, pottery as well as tile, bone and three worked flints. Again the fill was very mixed and, as well as clay and sand lenses, was much more stony than the fill below, with large 0.3m long stones as well as an assortment of slightly smaller limestone chunks. These fills both seemed to comprise demolition rubble and debris collected from medieval buildings and surfaces dumped into the ditch. The upper ditch fill (2018) contained very large limestone boulders and was disturbed by many mole runs. The pottery however was still medieval or residual Roman, and there were more tiles and bone as well as a worked flint. The ditch had near vertical sides with a slight V-shape; it was cut through archaeological deposits, the natural underlying sand, limestone bed rock and the clay beneath that at about 58.5m OD (see C. Lister: Geology).



Fig. 9: The northern slot across the moat, looking south

The central slot [2027] was excavated across the ditch, which was 2.7m wide at this point, but also from eastern to western trench-edge to obtain a profile through the layers on either side of the moat. These layers were completely different to the east and west demonstrating that the ditch had acted as a boundary throughout the medieval period between activity within the precinct and what happened outside. This slot was only excavated until undisturbed natural layers were reached on either side of the moat and so was only c 0.4m deep. The sandy silt fill (2019) had very few large stones, unlike the other ditch fills excavated to the north and south, but contained a worked flint and medieval pottery and tile. The layers to the west, outside the moat, – (2017) and (2043) – were notable for their lack of stone and rubble. (2017) was a homogenous, humic silt containing

medieval domestic debris including animal bone and pottery along with a possible copper strap-end. (2017) gradually merged into a similar but less humic and finds-rich layer (2043). (2043) in turn merged into (2046), an increasingly sandy layer containing very few finds, which gradually diffused into the natural sand below (appearing across the site at 59.12-59.17m OD). These three layers west of the ditch together were about 0.3m deep. There was obviously medieval activity west of the moat but it is difficult to characterise it otherwise than as broadly domestic/agricultural from the small area excavated.



Fig.10: looking north with the southern slot centre photo

The southern slot across the moat and gully [2011]: Plans 202 and 214; Sections 2.04, 2.05

The southern slot [2028] showed only the eastern side of the moat ditch as the west disappeared under the trench-side. The slot was excavated to a depth of 1.2m, when the water table was reached. A very large stone 0.8m long was wedged against the eastern side and 19 other large (over 0.3m) stones were removed from the fill, concentrated in the east. These stones were from a range of local geological sources and, while some were similar to stones in wall [2030] and the associated relieving arch, others were larger than seen in the structural features remaining on site. They may have been from upper courses rather than foundations. The lower fills of the ditch in this slot were (2048) and (2033). Silty (2048) was partly natural silting and affected by the water table; it contained no finds except very small flecks of ceramic building material and no large stones. (2033) above was much less homogenous and marked by tip lines, confirming that the ditch had been filled in from the west side. This fill contained many large stones and some pottery, tile and bone. The change to (2048) was very gradual. Together these two fills were over 0.7m deep. The upper fill (2020) was less silty and filled the ditch at a level where there may have been a stone lining to the eastern side. Several of the large stones removed looked as if they originally came from the lining, while others were structural stones thrown in as the ditch was filled. A small gully [2011] fed into the large ditch from the east and its profile was visible cut into the side of the moat in this slot. The narrow, shallow gully ran nearly west-east and was U-shaped, with

straight sides; the base sloped to the south-west towards the moat. 2.25m had been revealed: it was 0.5m wide, not truncated and 0.4m deep. The layers to the north and south of the gulley were different – (2012) to the north and the sequence ending in (2009) to the south. So the gulley was a boundary and may have been taken water into the moat, or supported a boundary fence – the fill (2010) suggested an ephemeral line of stake holes against the southern edge of the gulley. The fill was very mixed, with areas of silt and clay, and contained a few sherds of medieval pottery.

The external surface north of the building [2030] in the south of the trench and east of the moat-ditch; pit [2058] which runs beneath wall [2030]

Contexts (2009), (2032) and (2047), (2057) and [2058]; Plans 202, 207 and 214

Rubbly layer (2009) north of the southern building was clearly partly created during the process of demolishing Priory buildings and robbing re-usable stone. However, an external surface partially survived beneath the rubble in a damaged state, including a possible post hole lined with upright stones. This surface may have been a gritty beaten earth layer. Together the two elements of (2009), which were often indistinguishable, contained not only building rubble of the sort not worth retrieving in demolition, but also tile, pottery, animal bone and oyster shell, iron nails and roof tiles, as well as an embossed copper fragment, a silver penny (Henry II short cross – 1180 to 1189) and a worked flint. Layer (2032) below – in this sub-triangular area between the W-E wall [2030], the moat to the west and the trench side to the east – was another disturbed surface which was originally constructed of limestone cobbles c 0.2m in diameter. This earlier outside surface was of better quality and the use of cobbles suggested this earlier phase of medieval construction was linked to a greater expenditure of resources and effort on infrastructure by the Priory. 70% of the layer was made up of cobble stones, but it also contained one of the largest assemblages of medieval pottery in the trench, including some highly decorated jugs, as well as animal bone and iron objects. This suggested an external surface associated with a domestic building of some status to the south – represented by wall [2030]. The lowest surface in this area (2047) had been partly consolidated by a thin silty midden spread; it was increasingly sandy and contained fewer finds with depth, down to the natural sand below. A collection of horse mandibles were found just above the natural sand in the south-west between the wall corner and the edge of the moat. This layer also yielded a good deal of medieval pottery, especially at the junction between (2047) and (2032), animal bone and slag, copper alloy tweezers and five worked flints.



Fig. 11: wall [2030] and pit [2085] below the relieving arch

Visible in the south-east of the area beneath (2047) and cut into the natural sand beneath the relieving arch in the wall, was a pit [2058] which ran under the wall to the south. This pit, or depression, was 2m wide and over 0.3m deep with sides at 45° except in the south-east where the sides were steeper. The fill of the pit (2057) was silty and contained fresh sherds of medieval pottery and a Neolithic leaf-shaped flint arrowhead. This feature had perhaps been filled in to allow the first phase of the medieval building to be constructed. The radiocarbon date on a charred bread wheat grain from (2057) was interestingly early: 1035-1186 calAD (94.5% probability). Its presence also explained the need for the relieving arch, to spread the weight of the wall over the softer fill.

The southern building

Contexts: wall [2030], stone pit capping [2053]; (2008), (2029), (2044), (2045), (2049), (2050), (2051), (2052), (2059), (2060), pit [2061]

Plans: 202, 208, 212, 213 and 214; **Sections:** 2.07, 2.08 and 2.11

The southern building in Trench 2 was defined by its north-west corner. 4.3m of the west-east aligned wall [2030] were uncovered. This wall was 0.8m in height and 0.75m wide and constructed of roughly-faced Corallian rag limestone; the maximum size of stones was 0.4m x 0.25m, with most slightly smaller. Some tile and smaller stones were used to level courses. Seven to nine courses survived with a well-constructed relieving arch at the eastern end over pit [2058] outside and to the north and feature [2061] inside and to the south of the wall. The relieving arch was very similar in size and construction to that at Bartlemas Chapel, one discovered at Cardinal College – Christchurch – and to one seen in the remains of Godstow Abbey north-west of Oxford by the Thames. The lower seven courses were obviously one phase – a double faced wall with rubble and earth infill and encompassing the relieving arch. The upper two courses were built with smaller stones, included a butt joint and made heavy use of mortar bonding, suggesting a second, less well-constructed phase or reconstruction/repair of the building. Over the pits in the east, which had required the use of the arch, the wall had slumped; the wall returned to the south just before the moat in the west, but very little of the return survived.



Fig. 12: wall [2030] just visible looking west

Within the building the first layer below topsoil (2000), subsoil (2001) and tumble (2003) was (2008). Although this layer had been disturbed and damaged by the process of demolition and dismantling, it had clearly been the consolidation layer for a floor – perhaps tiled or wooden. The vast majority of the surface was made up of small angular limestone cobbles and the silty matrix contained medieval pottery and tile. The layer below (2029) was the hard-core consolidation for the floor above, made up almost entirely of limestone rubble but becoming increasingly sandy with depth down to a layer of orange bedding sand. Both these layers (2008) and (2029) were up to 0.2m deep. The lower layer (2029) contained more medieval pottery, tile and iron objects; it also sloped slightly towards what was later discovered to be the pit [2061] under the floors of the building. Below the rubble bedding layer for the floor was sandy silt levelling layer (2045) which merged in the south-east corner into (2044), which stony make-up layer had been laid to deal with slumping over pit [2061]. The stonier layer (2044) contained a couple of sherds of medieval pottery and a silver coin (voided long cross, probably Henry 111, 1247-1279); the silty layer (2045) was finds-rich (10% of the context) suggesting this may have been either a layer related to construction or that an element of midden had been incorporated into the spread. Along with medieval pottery, tile and bone were six iron objects, a melon bead and a copper object.

These two layers lapped over the very rubbly, sandy fill (2051) of a semi-circular structure [2053] butted against the inside of the relieving arch. This structure – in the north-east corner of the area of building interior revealed– was 1.4m west-east by 1.2m north-south as seen; it may have been a little wider west-east. It was constructed of slabs of rough-cut limestone with three large slabs visible in an outer ring – the largest being 0.6m by 0.45m – with smaller 0.2m long slabs filling the centre and sloping gently to the south and east into the centre of the feature. The slabs were bonded with a rough gravelly mortar. The slabs in the north may have been partly built under the relieving arch and although this feature was rather difficult to interpret it seems to have been part of efforts to secure the surface for construction. Otherwise it is possible that there was originally a well which was accessed from both sides of the wall and the stones of [2053] were part of the strengthening of the top, but it does seem more plausible, and the stratigraphical relationships support this, that [2053] was part of the sequence of events linked to the building of wall [2030] and the first substantial medieval building on this part of the site.



Fig. 13: Trench 2 looking north-east across the southern building

Running under the slabs of [2053] was a very variable and relatively thin layer comprising (2049) and (2050). Dark gritty silt (2049) contained orange clay lenses, pottery and bone – including fish bones – but was within (2050), a slightly sandier layer within the building, but with a very similar finds assemblage. This mixed layer sat above and merged into redeposited sand and ash layer (2052) and was part, with (2052), of the sealing and levelling required above pit [2061] and the ashy layer and fill (2059) related to that pit. Layer (2052) was interesting – built up of fine laminated spreads of dumped sand, ash and silt with a spread of roof and floor tiles over the fill of the pit. The fill (2059) of the pit in the south-east corner merged into the layer below (2052) and around and to the west of the pit within the building: charcoal-rich silty (2060). This thin layer may have been laid before the construction of the building represented by [2030] and was obviously linked to a burning. (2060) - (2059) also spread west beyond the return of [2030] to the edge of the moat. In that area west of the return layer (2060) sloped to the east and contained twig charcoal and the fragmentary remains of s charred timber – possibly from a floor. Was there an earlier – timber – building with a slightly different footprint that had burnt down? Or was all of the material redeposited as part of the preparation of the ground for building?



Fig. 14: looking north, showing pit [2061] and the stone building interior.

Within the building this layer, as (2059) contained possibly redeposited bone and pottery and merged into the humic, silty fill of the pit [2061]. Only the west side of this pit was seen and it was 0.9m wide as excavated and over 0.65m deep. While it ran under feature [2053] to the north a differently shaped and filled pit [2058] appeared north of wall [2030], with the intervening feature making the interpretation of the relationship between the two pits impossible to work out. Within the pit the dark, very humic fill contained very few fragmentary finds in its upper spit; the bottom few centimetres appeared to be natural peat above natural grey clay. The pit was therefore cut through natural sand and into the clay below. This pit is difficult to characterise and unfortunately no datable remains were retrieved in flotation. Both it and the pit [2058] to the north may be natural features back-filled when construction began in the area during the medieval period. The dating suggests that while there may well have been some pre-Priory medieval activity the most

intense period began a little while after the founding of the Priory, perhaps as the nunnery began to expand to fill its precinct. The archaeology also suggests a second phase of activity that was less well-resourced and may have been linked to the contraction and running-down of the Priory in the 14th century before the Dissolution in 1520.



Fig. 15: Plan 214