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TP 8 Summary of primary findings

The following document states the current findings from the test pit dug in the rear garden of Wick Cottage, over the weekend of the 27th to 28th July 2019. Each spit/feature or group of spits/features will be described in turn, including the finds material, provisional date and provisional interpretation.

Spit 1 to 2

The first layer uncovered was formed of spits 1 to 2, and was comprised of a friable, mid greyish brown, sandy silt, with limestone inclusions. This layer was 0.20 m in depth. The finds material recovered from this layer included: animal bone (22 grams), including cattle, sheep and bird; building material including, brick (88 grams), roofing tile (100 grams), roofing slate (14 grams) and plaster (15 grams); metal including, Fe nails (43 grams), Fe objects (325 grams) and Cu alloy objects (69 grams); charcoal (59 grams); glass including, vessel (32 grams) and window (14 grams); clay pipe stem (7 grams), dating to the 18th C; iron slag (4 grams); slate pencil (1 gram); and flint including, burnt (1 gram), debitage (24 grams) and worked (13 grams) including two scrapers and one blade, all Neolithic in date. The pottery recovered dated to medieval (4 grams), post medieval (56 grams) and modern (32 grams) periods. This layer is interpreted as being formed of the modern turf and topsoil.

Spit 3 to 7

The second layer was formed of spits 2 to 7, and was comprised of a friable, mid greyish brown, sandy silt, with limestone and charcoal inclusions. This layer was 0.50 m in depth. The finds material recovered from this layer included: animal bone (67 grams), including rodent, bird, pig and sheep; building material including, brick (170 grams), roof tile (34 grams), roofing slate (21 grams), plaster (20 grams) and mortar (14 grams); charcoal (69 grams); metal including, Fe nails (77 grams), Fe object (86 grams), lead objects (1 gram) and Cu alloy objects (8 grams); clay pipe including, stem (14 grams) and bowl (3 grams), dating to the 18th to 19th C, including one with a makers mark; glass including, window (9 grams) and vessel (20 grams); iron slag (19 grams); flint including, burnt (1 gram), debitage (241 grams) and worked (109 grams) including 13 blades, 16 scrapers and seven microliths dating to the Neolithic to Mesolithic periods; and oyster shell (18 grams). The pottery recovered dated to the Roman (33 grams), Saxon (1 gram), medieval (53 grams), post medieval (93 grams) and modern (50 grams) periods. This layer is interpreted as a garden soil deposit dating to the post medieval period.

Spit 8 to 9

The third layer was formed of spits 8 to 9, and was comprised of a compact, mid orangish brown, sandy clay, with limestone and flint inclusions. This layer was 0.20 m in

depth. The finds material recovered from this layer included: charcoal (1 gram); and flint including, debitage (233 grams) and worked (113 grams) including 15 microliths, 10 blades, 25 scrapers and a number of possible cores, all dating to the Neolithic to Mesolithic periods. This layer is interpreted as an alluvial deposit dating to the Neolithic to Mesolithic periods.

Spit 10 – Natural

Spit 10 was the natural underlying geology. The natural geology was found to be a compact, mid orangish brown, sandy clay, with limestone inclusions. This level was reached at a depth of 0.90 m from the top of the test pit. No finds material was recovered from this spit and because of this it is thought to be formed of the natural alluvial geology.

Conclusion

In conclusion, from the evidence presented above, it is shown that the underlying archaeology within the area of test pit 8 comprised the modern topsoil overlying a post medieval garden soil. This soil deposit is thought to relate to an adjacent post medieval property which is known to have been located on the site, prior to its demolition (as indicated by historic mapping). This soil deposit, apart from containing post medieval finds material such as pottery, bone and CBM, also contains Roman pottery as well as a large quantity of both worked flint material and debitage, dated to the Mesolithic to Neolithic periods. This prehistoric worked flint material is thought to have originated from the underlying deposit, and therefore been mixed in during later activity on the site. Below the post medieval garden soil, an alluvial deposit was found. This layer contains large quantities of Mesolithic to Neolithic worked flint material and debitage, including blades and scrapers. Due to the high volume of material it is interpreted that this layer may possibly indicate a flint working area within the vicinity of this test pit. It is important to note that this test pit was excavated adjacent to the River Ock; comparable sites indicate that these types of areas are important during the early prehistoric periods, as it is common to find flint working areas adjacent to rivers and streams (Hay et al., 2011, 209, Fig. 10.12). It is likely that the alluvial material has therefore arisen from flooding episodes related (Stebbing, 1977) to the adjacent River Ock.

Below this deposit the natural alluvial subsurface geology was found. It is significant to note that the solid limestone geology was not found in this test pit, unlike the adjacent one (TP 9). Therefore, this natural alluvial deposit may indicate an early river channel in this area, possibly a small tributary to the adjacent River Ock, which may have formed during the late Pleistocene to early Holocene period at the end of the last glaciation.