

# **Cambridge Archaeology Field Group**

An archaeological evaluation at

Abbey Farm

Ickleton

South Cambridgeshire

NGR TL 4892 4357

ECB 5896

CAFG code IAF2020

2<sup>nd</sup> Interim report

September 2020

## Summary

*In September 2020 members of CAFG excavated further contexts in the trench started in 2019 at the site of the priory at Ickleton. Because of COVID-19 only limited work could be done but what seem to be deposits dating to post-priory activity have been removed and it is hoped that in 2021 excavation of this trench will be completed. This 2<sup>nd</sup> interim report records the results of the limited work done in 2020.*

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## **1.0 Introduction**

In 2019, at the invitation of the owner of Abbey Farm, Lewis Duke, members of Cambridge Archaeology Field Group (CAFG) began the excavation of a 10X2m trench on the site of the Benedictine priory. The objective was to establish the nature of features seen on a geophysical survey that had been carried out by the RheeSearch group. Because of the presence of a heavy flint deposit across the trench only a depth of 0.3m was excavated<sup>1</sup>. This, 2020, report will give the results of a further week of excavation, but due to COVID-19 restrictions the number of excavators was limited and, in the time available, it was not possible to complete the excavation of this trench. It is expected that restrictions will have been relaxed by July 2021 when the work will be continued.

## **2.0 Method**

The eastern half of the trench was further excavated by hand to approximately 0.5m. Each context was excavated and recorded on standard context sheets. The western half contains a mortar spread which seems to represent the line of the outer perimeter wall of the priory – this was not further investigated on this occasion but will be in the next session.

## **3.0 Results**

**3.1** All the contexts [2002] to [2012] together with [2017] and [2018] consisted of brown soil with varying amounts of flint, some large some small, with brick and tile. Interspersed with these contexts numbers were contexts [2014], [2015] and [2016] which were brown soil with a greater amount of mortar mixed in.

**3.2** All the above contexts seemed to seal contexts of different nature – most with evidence of mortar, possibly relating to underlying structures or robbed out structures. (see plan below)

**3.3** Context [2023], a yellowish mortar, and [2024], a whitish mortar, may be floors inside a building. To the west of these beyond the gravel of [2025] is what appears to be a north-south wall of clunch and flint [2026]. On the north side of the trench is what may be a structural feature [2020], possibly a beam slot or posthole.

**3.4** The interpretation (we hope) of these contexts awaits excavation in 2021.

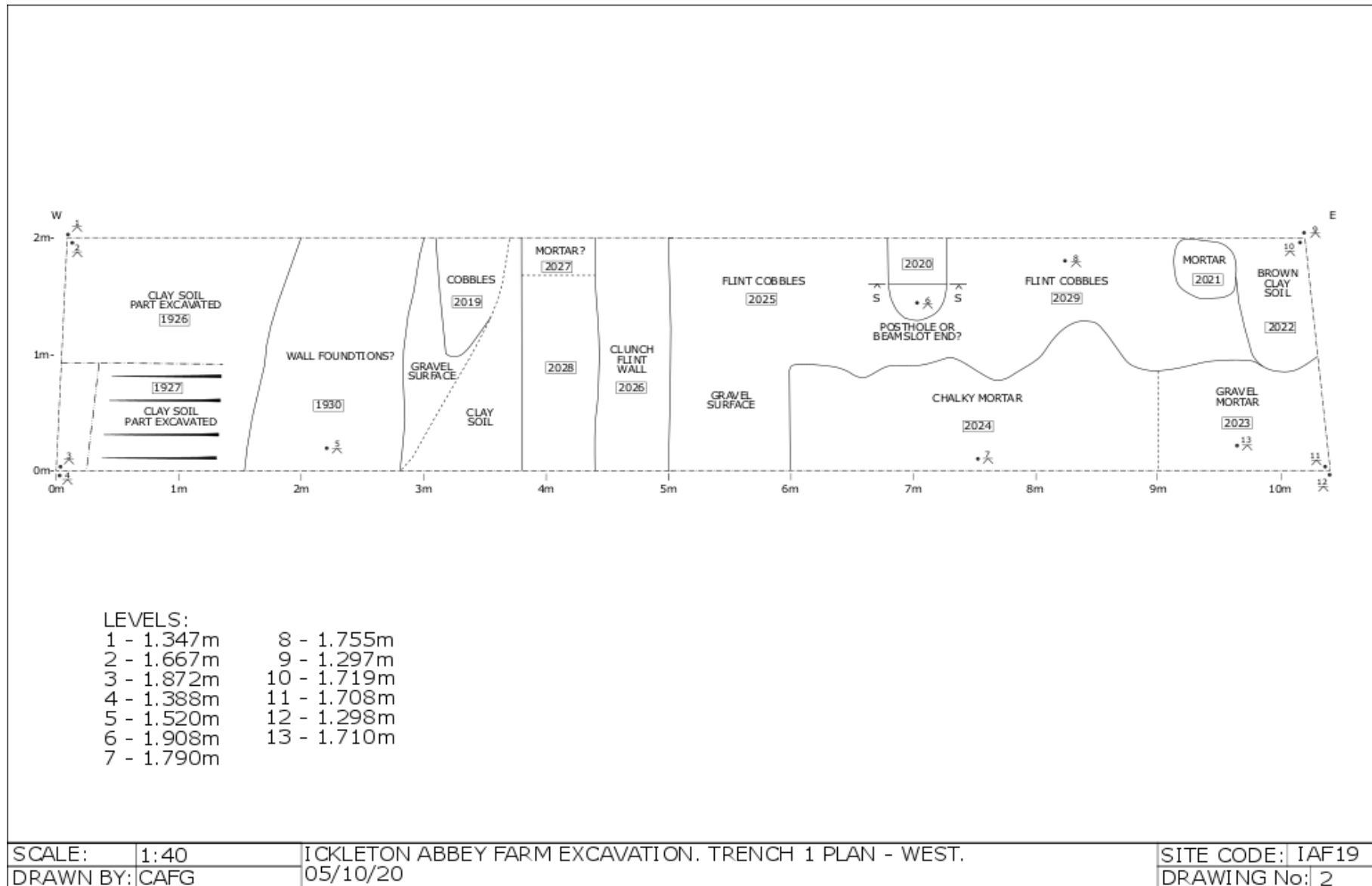
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<sup>1</sup> See CAFG in 1<sup>st</sup> Interim report 2019

#### 4.0 Context List

Site	Trench	Context No.	Description	Category	Date	Below	Comment 0 = West end
IAF2020	A	2001	Finds made during trench prep.	N/A	28/09/2020		
IAF2020	A	2002	Dark brown soil	Deposit	28/09/2020	1901	7.7m east to 10.3m
IAF2020	A	2003	Brown soil/flint/B&T	Deposit	28/09/2020	1909	7.7m east to 9.0m
IAF2020	A	2004	Brown soil/B&T/flint	Deposit	28/09/2020	2002	7.7m east to 10.3m
IAF2020	A	2005	Brown soil occ. Flint	Deposit	28/09/2020	2003	7.7m east to 9.0m
IAF2020	A	2006	Brown soil moderate flint	Deposit	29/09/2020	2005	7.5m east to 9.0m
IAF2020	A	2007	Brown soil large flints	Deposit	29/09/2020	1901	6.0m east to 7.5m
IAF2020	A	2008	Dark soil some flints	Deposit	29/09/2020	2014	9.0m east to 10.2m
IAF2020	A	2009	Brown soil 50% flint	Deposit	29/09/2020	2014	8.3m east to 10.2m
IAF2020	A	2010	Brown soil 10% flint	Deposit	29/09/2020	2007-2009	7.20m east to 8.30m
IAF2020	A	2011	Brown soil 30% flint	Deposit	29/09/2020	2010	7.20m east to 8.30m
IAF2020	A	2012	Brown soil 20% flint	Deposit	29/09/2020	1901	5.0m east to 6.0m
IAF2020	A	2013	Dark brown soil 30%flint	Deposit	29/09/2020	1901	3.5m east to 5.0m
IAF2020	A	2014	Brown soil 50% mortar	Deposit	30/09/2020	1901-1902	8.8m east to 10.2m
IAF2020	A	2015	Brown soil 50% mortar	Deposit	30/09/2020	2010	7.3m east to 8.8m
IAF2020	A	2016	Brown soil 50% mortar	Deposit	30/09/2020	2007	6m east to 7.30m
IAF2020	A	2017	Light brown soil	Deposit	30/09/2020	2012	4.6m east to 6.0m
IAF2020	A	2018	Light brown soil	Deposit	30/09/2020	2013	3.0m east to 4.6m
IAF2020	A	2019	Light brown soil	Deposit	30/09/2020	1903	3.0m east to 3.4m
IAF2020	A	2020	Dark brown soil	Fill	01/10/2020	2016	7.0m to 7.7m
IAF2020	A	2021	White ? mortar	Deposit	01/10/2020	2009	9.1m east to c9.8m
IAF2020	A	2022	Brown soil	Deposit	01/10/2020	2009	C9.8m east to 10.3m
IAF2020	A	2023	Yellow mortar	Deposit	01/10/2020	2008	9.1m east to 10.2m
IAF2020	A	2024	White mortar, chalk	Deposit	01/10/2020	2013	6.0m east to 9.1m
IAF2020	A	2025	Flint and mortar	Deposit	01/10/2020	2012	5.2m east to 7.0m
IAF2020	A	2026	Chalk/flint	structure	01/10/2020	2017	5.0m east to 5.2m
IAF2020	A	2027	chalk, soil	Deposit	01/10/2020	2013	3.7m east to 4.5m
IAF2020	A	2028	Flint, mortar, soil	Deposit	01/10/2020	2013	3.7m east to 4.5m
IAF2020	A	2029	Flint, soil	Deposit	01/10/2020	2015	7.0m east to ?9.5m
IAF2020	A	2030	Gravel	Deposit	01/10/2020	1907	2.8m east to 3.4m

## 5.0 Plan



## 6.0 Finds List

### 6.1 Finds by context

Context 2001 Bagged finds			
Type	No. of pieces	Weight (grms)	Comments
Animal bones	3 pieces	280.55	
Oyster shells	2 pieces	13.23	
Clay pipe stems	2 pieces	3.74	
Pottery	7 pieces	26.1	
Brick	2 pieces	74.23	
Stone tile	1 piece	132.92	
Glazed tile	1 piece	81.81	
Tile	62 pieces	1305.78	

Context 2002 Bagged finds			
Type	No. of pieces	Weight (grms)	Comments
			NO FINDS - WAS THIS COMBINED WITH c.2003 ??

Context 2003 Bagged finds			
Type	No. of pieces	Weight (grms)	Comments
Coal	4 pieces	21.28	
Flint	3 pieces	10.21	Unlikely to be worked
Glass (vessel)	9 pieces	24.65	
Clay pipe	35 pieces	87.85	
Oyster shell	4 pieces	18.01	
Bone	47 pieces	345.5	
Metal - bar & shaped	13 pieces	189.22	
- nails	134 pieces	672.09	
- wire	27 pieces	271.92	
Pottery - general	67 pieces	558.7	
- Harlow slip	13 pieces	242.07	
- Stafford			
combed	27 pieces, joined	227.84	2019 and 2020 combined
- Stafford			
combed	6 pieces, joined	47.77	Different comb design
Tile	86 pieces	1530.63	
Brick	7 pieces	2639.15	Large bits with one dimension
Coal	3 pieces	7.88	

<b>Context 2004 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Flint	3 pieces	2.97	2 worked ??  1 part early bowl, undecorated
Glass	2 pieces	6.08	
Clay pipe	7 pieces	21.72	
Oyster shell	3 pieces	22.56	
Bone	52 pieces	412.15	
Teeth	2 pieces	34.55	
Metal - sheet & unknown	4 pieces	14.62	
- nails	62 pieces	360.75	
- wire	3 pieces	6.53	
Pottery	40 pieces	220.34	
Tile	12 pieces	184.96	
Mortar/concrete?	2 pieces	116.29	

<b>Context 2005 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	9 pieces	39.59	
Metal - nails	10 pieces	50.34	
Pottery	2 pieces	14.66	
Tile	12 pieces	407.69	

<b>Context 2006 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone/teeth	3 pieces	22.52	
Nails	1 piece	8.83	
Tile	15 pieces	232.08	

<b>Context 2007 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Tile	15 pieces	208.62	
- unknown	3 pieces	11.33	
Nails	1 piece	9.25	
Metal blade?	1 piece	10.2	

<b>Context 2008 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bones	12 pieces	116.15	
Oyster shells	2 pieces	9.66	
Metal - nails	3 pieces	12.05	
- metal strip	1 piece	29.72	
- thick wire	1 piece	8.16	
- modern screw	1 piece	4.49	
- unknown	1 piece	7.6	
Stone tile	2 pieces	46.42	
Tile	38 pieces	548.5	
- unknown	3 pieces	16.78	
Glazed tile	1 piece	15.83	
Pottery	2 pieces	7.99	

<b>Context 2009 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	2 pieces	10.16	
Oyster shells	3 pieces	10.25	
Metal - nails	15 pieces	79.44	
- sheet	1 piece	19.04	
- bar	1 piece	11.74	
- unknown	2 pieces	1.58	
Stone tile	2 pieces	149.35	
Tile	5 pieces	75.27	
Pottery	1 piece	2.7	
Flint	3 pieces	7.52	

<b>Context 2010 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone/teeth	2 pieces	13.73	
Nails	2 pieces	5.83	
Tile	10 pieces	71.99	
Flint	11 pieces	18.12	



<b>Context 2011 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	6 pieces	13.38	
Nails	5 pieces	36.19	
Stone tile	1 piece	12.26	
Tile	25 pieces	287.78	
- unknown	4 pieces	14.27	
Pottery	3 pieces	28.54	

<b>Context 2012 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	1 piece	1.58	
Nails	2 pieces	15.45	
Lead sheet	1 piece	13.3	
Tile	20 pieces	263.95	
- unknown	3 pieces	15.68	

<b>Context 2013 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	12 pieces	372.63	
Oyster shell	1 piece	5.04	
Nails	3 pieces	16.89	
Tile	30 pieces	559.78	
Brick	2 pieces	79.47	
Pottery	4 pieces	46.6	

<b>Context 2014 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	8 pieces	30.94	
Oyster shell	6 pieces	23.63	
Nails	3 pieces	19.24	
- wire	1 piece	2.88	
- sheet	2 pieces	15.08	
Tile	9 pieces	129.92	

<b>Context 2015 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	8 pieces	7.57	One possible glazed
Oyster shell	1 piece	3.24	
Nails	2 pieces	7.12	
Tile	10 pieces	87.17	
- unknown	5 pieces	18.48	
Pottery	1 piece	1.94	

<b>Context 2016 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	4 pieces	14.7	One worked?
Nails	3 pieces	15.95	
Stone tiles?	3 pieces	579.95	
Tile	7 pieces	51.36	
Glazed tile or pot?	1 piece	9.13	
Brick	2 pieces	15.43	
Flint	6 pieces	3.61	

<b>Context 2017 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	7 pieces	43.57	
Oyster shell	2 pieces	7.94	
Nails	7 pieces	32.83	
Stone	2 pieces	90.91	
Tile	30 pieces	527.72	
Brick	2 pieces	73.26	
Pottery	4 pieces	13.98	

<b>Context 2018 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	13 pieces	139.38	One with peg hole
Oyster shell	6 pieces	33.8	
Nails	6 pieces	34.28	
Lead waste	1 piece	7.69	
Stone	1 piece	252.34	
Tile	58 pieces	1122.26	
Brick	4 pieces	120.61	
Pottery	2 pieces	6.82	
Glass	1 piece	4.2	
Coal	1 piece	8.8	

<b>Context 2019 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Bone	1 piece	2.42	
Oyster shell	1 piece	1.94	
Nails	2 pieces	7.72	
Stone tile	1 piece	171.15	
Tiles	2 pieces	184.43	
- glazed	1 piece	19.34	
Pottery	6 pieces	29.81	
Coal	1 piece	1.81	

<b>Context 2020 Bagged finds</b>			
<b>Type</b>	<b>No. of pieces</b>	<b>Weight (grms)</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Nails	2 pieces	5.88	
Tiles	3 pieces	20.24	
Pottery?	1 piece	1.38	
Flint	3 pieces	10.37	

## 6.2 Small finds

Number	Context	Date	Description	Metal
1	2001	28/09/2020	3 small struck flints	flint
2	2002	28/09/2020	? Stud	Pb
3	2002	28/09/2020	Small wheel ? Clock	Cu/Al
4	2002	28/09/2020	? Window came	Pb
5	2005	28/09/2020	Wire ? Pin	Cu/Al
6	2005	28/09/2020	Thread end	Cu/Al
7	2005	28/09/2020	Microlith	flint
8	2005	28/09/2020	Triangular ? Harness fitting	Fe
9	2010	29/09/2020	Pin	Cu/Al
10	2009	29/09/2020	Lead sheet	Pb
11	2004	29/09/2020	? Microlith	flint
12	2004	29/09/2020	Thread end	Cu/Al
13	2010	29/09/2020	Needle	Cu/Al
14	2010	29/09/2020	Pin	Cu/Al
15	2009	29/09/2020	Window came	Pb
16	2011	29/09/2020	Pin	Cu/Al
17	2012	29/09/2020	Pin	Cu/Al
18	2009	29/09/2020	Pin?	Cu/Al
19	2010	29/09/2020	? Microlith	flint

## 7.0 Illustrations

### 7.1 Site as completed in 2020



7.2 Composite near vertical whole trench looking north.



7.3 Small find – Copper alloy needle context [2013]



7.4 Pottery find – Staffordshire Combed ware (parts from 2019 and 2020)





7.5 Pottery find – Metropolitan ware

