LA33

ARCHAEOLOGICAL REPORT ON

BANKSIDE, 5, FISHER LANE

CONTENTS

LA33

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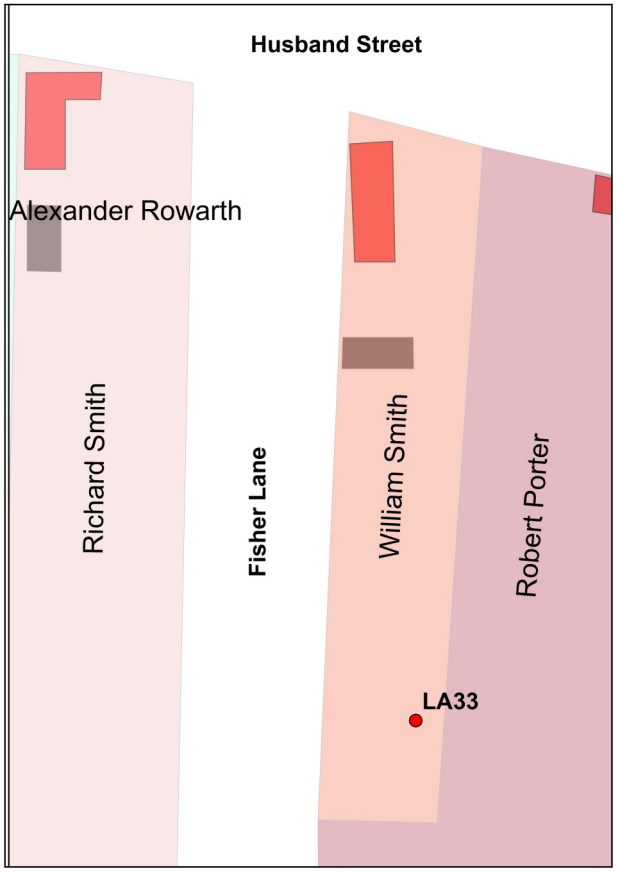
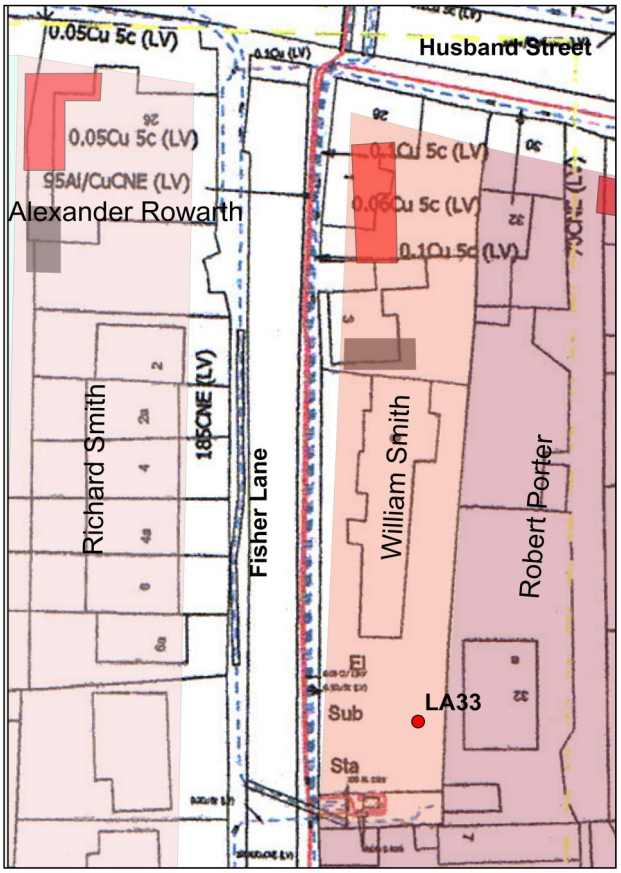
SITE HISTORY

Bankside is a modern bungalow built in the grounds of a pair of 19th century cottages, now offices.



Map of 1586



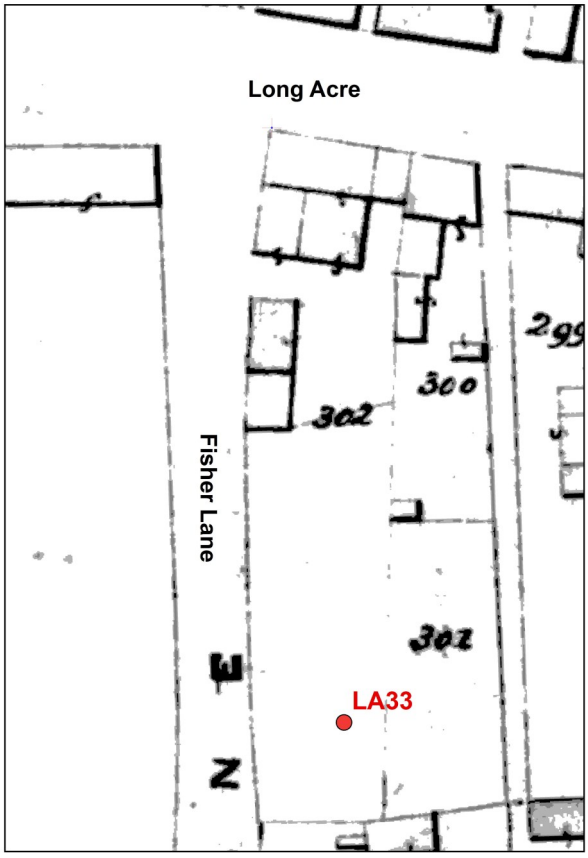
Map of 1586 overlying the modern map (by permission of Western Power)

It is immediately north of Norton Cottage (pit LA11). As far as we can tell from old maps the actual site of the bungalow and its southern garden space has never been built on before.

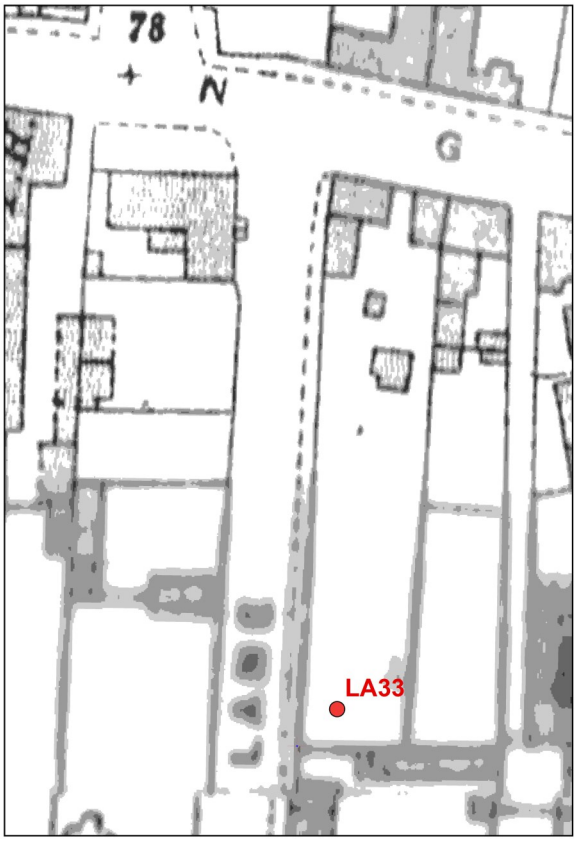
1586

The survey conducted in 1586 shows William Smith in possession of the original plot which fronted onto Long Acre, at that time called Husband Street, and extended along Fisher Lane to the southern end of the present garden. The adjoining plot was in the freehold of Bingham's other large freeholder, Robert Porter. Smith was a tenant of the lord of the manor, Bryan Stapleton. Smith's holding was described as "a tenement and 2 bovates of land, barn and yard". He was one of a number of tenant farmers whose homesteads were on Husband Street – meaning street of the farmers. He was possibly in the process of retiring as his total holding in the parish amounted to only 1.6 acres, having only six strips in the open fields. Richard Smith, maybe his son, held the homestead opposite which extended along the whole of Fisher Lane. In the1590s Stapleton's Bingham estate was sold to the Stanhope family, who later became Earls of Chesterfield.

The 1776 map



The tithe map of 1841



The OS map of 1910

1776

In 1776 a survey was made of the Earl of Chesterfield's estates in Nottinghamshire. The holding had retained its footprint and was now held by Samuel Wright. He held another 4.5 acres as grazing. He died in 1780 aged 80 and we think was succeeded by his son William, listed in the 1793 trades directory as a farmer.

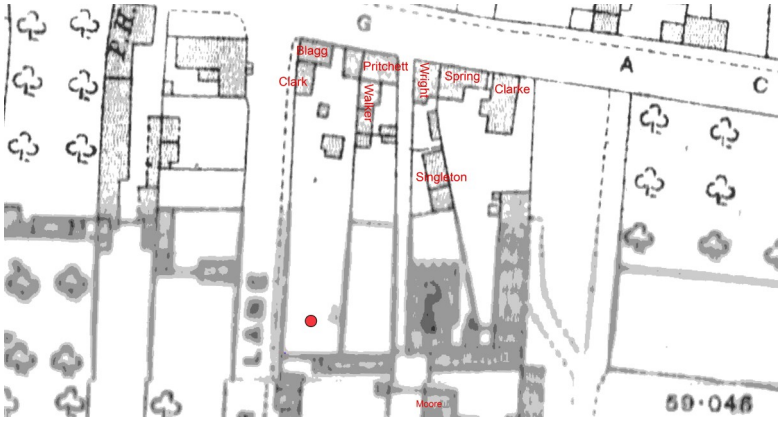
1841

The tithe map shows four properties within the curtilage of the original plot. All were well north of the present bungalow footprint. Four families can be identified from the 1841 census:

The occupant of cottage 1 on the map was Anne Geeson whose address was Long Acre. She was a widowed charwoman with 5 children.

The other three cottages were listed as being on Fisher Lane. The tenants were:

2. Robert Geeson, 55, master journeyman shoemaker, his wife and four children.
3. Lavinder Ashwell, 30, agricultural labourer, his wife and one child.
4. John Wilson, 55, stone mason, his wife and three children.



The census map for 1911

1893 and 1915
Cottage number 4 had been demolished by 1883. A new building was now shown in a more easterly position, which was maintained until at least 1915.We cannot tell from the map if this “new cottage” was a dwelling or an outhouse.

In 1910 the occupants were:

1 Mary Blagg, widow, 58, laundress, b Orston
George Blagg, 21, tinplate worker, b Bingham

2 Samuel Clarke, 78, farm labourer, b Pickworth Lincs
Mary Clarke, 79, b. Leadenham Lincs.

Bankside appears to be the first house built in this part of the plot.

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BANKSIDE, FISHER LANE

LOCATION AND PROTOCOL

NGR	470484.339765
Height OD	27m (from map)
Address	Bankside, Fisher Lane**,** Mr Martell
Dig dates	1st-2nd Aug. 2016
Pit site	Pit in lawn at the back of the house. The garden slopes to the west and south. The pit was sited on the only part of the lawn that was flat.
Pit protocol	1-metre pit, N-S orientated, 10 cm spits, everything sieved. Dug to about 60 cm where a pre-existing excavation was revealed. Downwards the progress was determined by the need to remove the fill in this old excavation and then in a sondage to test the depth of the basal clay.

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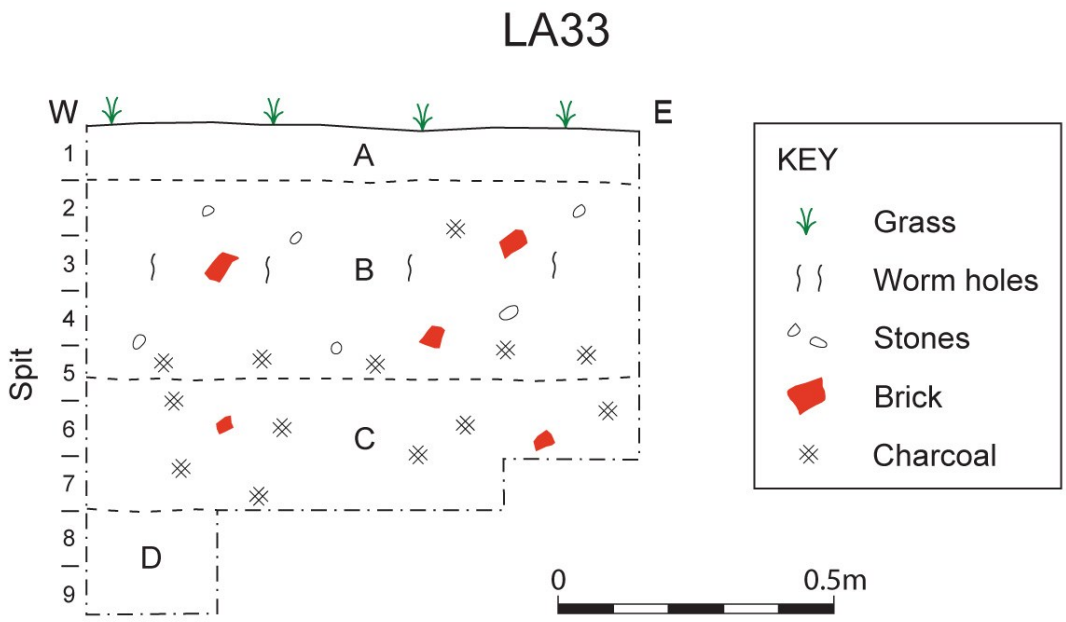
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS



A Dark brown topsoil beneath the turf.
B Dark brown-grey loamy soil with rounded pebbles, brick pieces, roots, some charcoal. Most charcoal is in the basal 5 cm. Colour varies light to dark with depth. Lower boundary is sharp.
C Brown-grey clay soil with grit, small brick pieces, abundant charcoal (10%).
D Orange-brown Mercia Mudstone clay with sparse grey mottles to 6 cm.

Description of pit

The top 46 cm appear to be a natural soil profile with dark brown topsoil under turf in the upper 10 cm passing down into a more clayey, dark soil. Small rounded pebbles, pieces of brick and charcoal are present throughout. The charcoal is particularly abundant in the lower few cm. However, at 46 cm there is a sharp boundary with underlying brown-grey gritty soil containing small brick pieces and up to 10% charcoal. The boundary is unbroken all around the pit.

At 60 cm depth an L-shaped area of orange-brown clay with sparse grey mottles was revealed on the east and south sides of the pit. The boundary between the clay and the clay soil was parallel to the sides of the test pit. On removing the clay soil from the rest of the pit it was found that the it was fill in a steep sided, perfectly flat-bottomed excavation only 10 cm deep. There was no obvious explanation for this feature. No indication was seen of vertical sides to it rising from the boundary between the basal clay and the fill upwards through the brown-grey clay soil, and definitely there was no disturbance of the boundary at 46 cm between the brown-grey clay soil and the overlying soil.

The basal orange-brown clay is Triassic Mercia Mudstone.

Finds

There are three main layers of soil in this pit:

Top soil 0-10 cm
Upper subsoil 10-46 cm
Lower subsoil 46-70 cm

The L-shaped red clay is the basal unit which appears to have been cut into to make a further pit. Remarkably the sides are parallel to the test pit. The picture on the right shows the fill removed, indicating that it was a shallow pit

The north side of the test pit. The layer of fill that occupies the shallow pit forms a distinct layer about 20 cm thick.

The finds were examined in relation to these three layers and though there were some differences in types of find and relative abundances many of the finds types crossed the boundaries and showed no significant differences between the three layers.

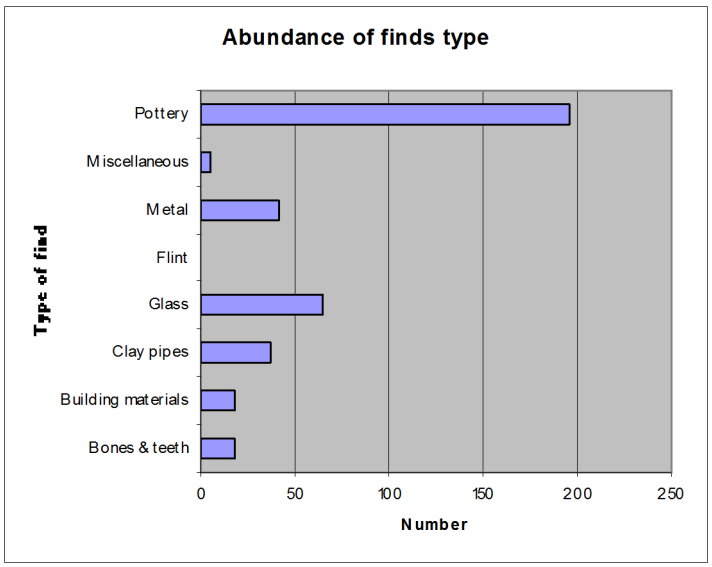
Building materials were found at all depths and distributed roughly evenly at about 2 to 5 finds per spit. There were no layers that were unusually rich in these finds. They included brick, plaster, roof tile and slate. None of the brick pieces were big enough to measure.

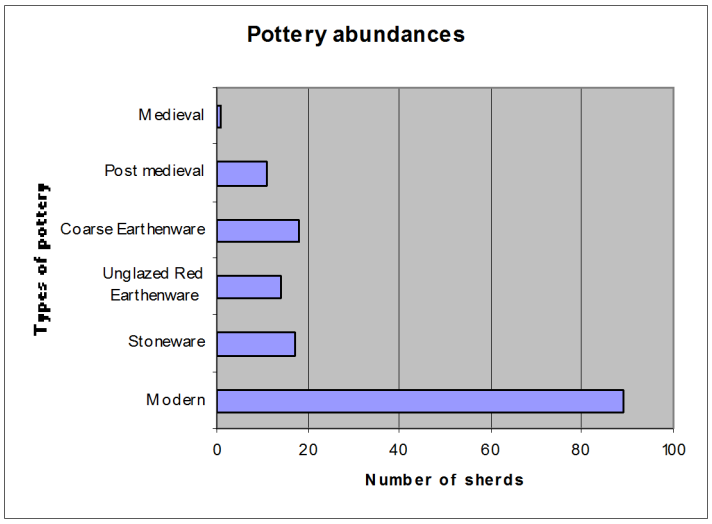
Bones and teeth were rather more abundant in the lower subsoil than the upper.

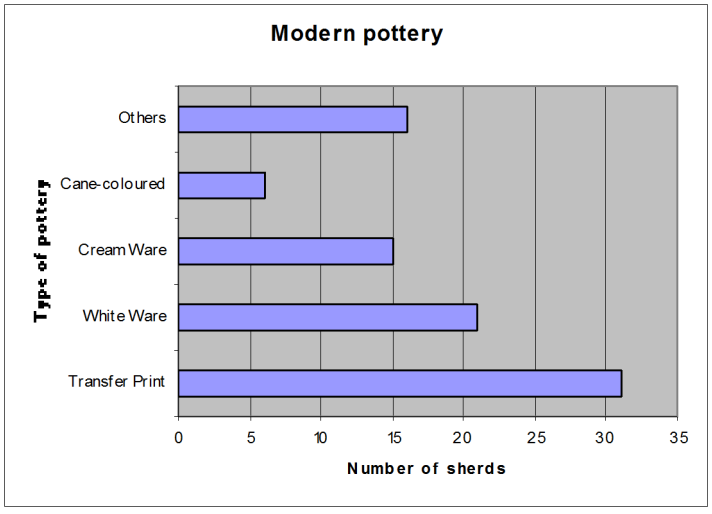
All the **clay pipes** that were recovered were dateable to late 18th to early 20th C. One length of stem was impressed with the words PLAY UP NOTTS. This was commonly done on pipes made in support of football clubs. They were usually being sold between 1880 and 1910. Two other fragments of a bowl, one with the paired leaf pattern along the seam of the bowl and the other fluted can be dated to 1820-1870. Several lengths of stem, though thin, had wide holes such as the early pipes would have had, but the clay was white. These are possibly late 18th C. The clay pipes stems were more abundant in the lower subsoil (8 finds per spit versus 4.2 finds per spit) and they were very abundant in soil removed from the fill in the inner trench.

Glass was abundant and was found evenly distributed throughout the full depth of the test pit. 70% of the fragments were from bottles. Most of the rest were window glass, with one white, opaque piece of glass maybe from a cosmetics jar or decorative vessel. A small number of clear glass pieces could have been from tumblers or wine glasses.

32% of the bottle glass was aqua and many of them could be recognised as Codd bottles, which were common in the late 19th and early 20th centuries when they were used for sparkling mineral water. There were also flat-sided, possibly medicine bottles, small cylindrical bottles and hexagonal bottles. Next in abundance, with 23%, are clear bottles including flat-sided pieces. None were







found with embossed lettering, which would date them after c1880. One piece of a bottle neck had a metal collar. Green bottles made up 17%, but there were also several pieces of black glass a type commonly used to make onion wine bottles between the 17 to late 18th centuries. In addition there was pink glass and blue poison bottle glass. A couple of pieces were frosted, while several had the reactive patina.

The window glass was clear or aqua with only two pieces pale green. Most was 1/16th inch thick, one or two pieces with straight, rounded edges. There was some 1/8th inch and one 3/32nd inch thick. The 1/8th inch glass tends to be mid to late 20th century and was found in both upper and lower subsoil. Some pieces showed the weathered patina formed by the chemical reaction between the glass and the soil.

Metal objects were the next most abundant after glass. They were more abundant in the lower subsoil than the upper. A large proportion of the finds were nails, including modern 3-inch round heads. There were some screws, bolts, a twisted strip of aluminium, part of a drawer handle, a battery, an iron plate with a hole drilled through it, wire that may have been part of a curtain fitting. All are clearly domestic in origin. The finds from the lower subsoil were usually heavily encrusted with rust and many were not identifiable.

Five **miscellaneous** items were recovered, all except one from the top 30 cm. These were a clay ball, carbon rod, slate pencil and a button. There was also a button from near the bottom of the pit.

One highly unusual find was a **flint flake**. It is a honey coloured flint and is clearly humanly worked. No date can be ascribed to it except that it is most likely to be earlier than 2000BC. Finds of flint in the test pits have been extremely uncommon. This one was found near the bottom of the pit.

Modern pottery dominates the collection accounting for 68% of the total number of finds. In terms of abundance there is twice as much per spit in the upper subsoil than the lower. All the age

ranges were represented in both upper and lower subsoil, but White Ware (1830-1950) was only found in the upper subsoil.

The most abundant type of Modern pottery is **Transfer Printed Ware.** The only forms recognised were plates and cups. All except three of the sherds were from blue and white pottery including pale blue, which came into production later that the darker blue. The three sherds that were not blue were red-brown, green and grey, all of which came into production after 1828. The blue and white was first made late in the 18th century.

Most of the **White Ware** sherds from recognisable forms were from cups with a small number from plates and jugs. Most were all white, but there were some decorated. Sherds with wide blue bands resemble the decoration commonly seen on jugs. One sherd had an embossed leaf design, another was multicoloured. White Ware came into production in around 1830 and continues to the present day.

The **Cream Ware**, which has a date range of 1740 to 1850, was mostly from cups, but with a jug and a plate recognisable. Only one was hand painted in an unusual blue design thought to be Georgian.

Several sherds of **Cane-coloured Ware** were collected, one with an internal white glaze. This type of pottery was commonly made into large bowls, including mixing bowls and remain relatively unchanged from 1800 to present day. In many test pits Mocha Ware, which has a similar coloured base glaze, was found. It was not found in this pit, though in the absence of the characteristic decoration it cannot be certain that Mocha Ware was not present.

Beside these there were several other types of pottery found in small numbers. These include Staffordshire White Salt-glaze Stoneware (1740-1780), ironstone (1815-1900), Flow Blue (1840-1915), porcelain, which can be any date from mid 18th C to present, late Brown Glaze, which was used widely for teapots in the mid to late 19th C and some hand-painted sherds that may be pearl ware or white ware.

All the **Unglazed Red Earthenware** was attributable to plant pots, some of which were hand thrown and clearly early.

The **Stoneware** was found entirely in the top 60 cm, with only four sherds in the upper spit of the lower subsoil. All the 20th century sherds were in the top 20 cm, but they were mixed with undefined 19th -20th century sherds. Between 20 and 60 cm there was a mix of 19th and 18th century sherds with one early piece (1700-1725) having the typical orange fabric for this age. There was a pieces of a spout of a three-spout puzzle jug, a piece decorated with a sprig of grapes and two with embossed lettering.

Coarse Earthenware was found at all depths down to the base of the pit. Three of the commonest varieties were recorded: Red-bodied Black Glazed Coarse Earthenware, Pink bodied and Brown Glazed. One rim of a jar was found and one body part that was from a pancheon. In general this type of pottery was used almost entirely for pancheons and large storage jars.

Post-medieval pottery was evenly distributed throughout the pit. Midland Yellow Ware (1575-1700), Midland Black Ware and Light-bodied Black Ware (1575- 1725) and slipware (1675-1750) were recorded, but there were three finds that could not be clearly identified, two because they had been burnt.

Only one older sherd was found and this was **medieval** Nottingham Light-bodied Green Glaze

(1220-1320).

Interpretation

The discovery of the outline of a shallow, right-angled pit cut into the basal clay means that all the material above the clay here is not *in situ* and this is not a natural soil profile. The boundaries to the pit are straight and the sides are vertical, though it is only 10 cm deep. The base was flat and well cut. Curiously, the two sides revealed are exactly parallel to the sides of the test pit. The content of the shallow pit continues upwards without any evident break at the lip of the pit to the boundary with the lower subsoil at 46 cm, which implies that this whole layer, some 24cm thick, was deposited in a single act. There is some evidence that give a clue to the function of shallow pit. Compared with the upper subsoil the lower subsoil contained twice the abundance of clay pipes and half the abundance of modern pottery with none of the plant pot sherds. Clay pipes were most abundant in the soil removed from the shallow pit. These differences are too little to postulate a function for the pit, but they are a pointer. The pit is at the bottom of the plot, far away from the four cottages that were in it facing Long Acre. It was at such locations that pits were dug in which to deposit the contents of the privy. We may have found only a part of a larger pit dug for this purpose to serve the four cottages. The presence of abundant clay pipe stems hints that this may be the explanation.

The archaeological content of the lower subsoil is similar in age range and type to the upper subsoil, that is the material above 46 m depth, in that most Modern ware types are present in both. This also apples to the Post-medieval pottery, Coarse Earthenware and Stoneware. The lower subsoil contains the only example of flint and the medieval sherd. This is not significant because ploughing at some earlier time would have brought older material to the surface mixing it with contemporary material.

There is, however, evidence to help date the deposition of these two units of subsoil and which may suggest that a significant time elapsed before the upper subsoil was deposited on the lower one. Key to this is that all the White Ware and all the non-blue coloured transfer printed wares were found in the upper subsoil. White Ware replaced Cream Ware sometime in the middle of the 19th century, while new colours were added to the blue in transfer printing after 1828. This might suggest that the upper subsoil was deposited in the second half of the 19th C. The abundance of charcoal in the 5 cm just above the boundary at 46 cm depth suggests that this was ground level with fires burnt on it for some time, though there is no way of calculating how long.

The preservation of the shallow pit dug into the basal clay in such good condition suggests that it was probably abandoned and filled soon after it was dug. The absence of any clay pipes older than mid 18th C is possibly significant here suggesting that abandonment was no earlier than the late 18th C. Among the Modern ware types in both the subsoil layers only the Staffordshire White Salt-glaze Stoneware is entirely 18th century in age, though it may have survived for decades before being broken and disposed of. The Cream Ware has a time span of 1740 to 1850.

If the late 18th or early 19th C date for the shallow pit is correct it would mean that the pre-Modern content of the soil, where ever it came from, would give an indication of the usage of the land before the Modern era. The fact that there is so little of this pre-Modern material would indicate that for much of the early history this land was used for pasture rather than arable cultivation. The presence of Midland Yellow Ware as the most abundant post-medieval ware type confirms the documentary evidence that there were farm buildings near this area in the late 16th century, but there are no signs of anything earlier.