

Shootinglee Trench 6 2019-2022

Data Structure Report

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Photograph of Trench 7 from the N in 2019 showing the paved path and cobbles

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1. Introduction

An additional exploratory trench (T6) was opened in 2019 about 5m W of the peel house to examine a possible building platform. No building was found, and the main activity was a cobbled yard surface with a paved path on an NW-SE axis, diagonal to the trench, and a N-S revetment on its W marked by large boulders (Figure 1 and 2). During 2020 and 2021 little progress was made except to extend the trench at the NW corner to see if the stony bank visible in the field on the other side of the drystone dyke was evident in the trench. Some large stones suggest that it did but it was all but robbed out under the cobbles. Clay pipe under the one of the large boulders along the edge of the cobbles indicated a 17th or 18th century date for the cobbled yard. The excavations were completed in 2022.

2. The Excavations

Under a shallow covering of topsoil (C1; c.0.15m), a paved surface (C2) was found at the N end of the trench. The paved stones comprised three large stone slabs, c.0.8m from SE to NW by 0.4m in extent on a NW-SE axis, set in brown silty clay (C7), with large angular stones and no charcoal that extended across the site and formed the underlying subsoil. What was thought to be a robbed E-W wall to its S marked by a couple of upright medium sized stones (C5) could not be confirmed and were reinterpreted as part of a cobbled floor extending S from the paving which it abutted, made up of closely-packed rubble made-up of medium sized stones (C4; Figs 3 and 4). The cobbles ran up to and overlay a N-S line of large boulders (C3) that may be the robbed base of the yard wall visible as an earthwork immediately S of the trench, providing a revetted edge to the cobbled yard on its W. The cobbles also overlay the SE end of a row of three large boulders (C6) that extended as far as another wall (C8) at the NW corner of the trench, which it appears to abut, if the small and medium stones in red-brown silty clay between and adjacent to the large stones are indeed the remains of the core packing of this wall (Fig 5). The wall at the NW corner (C8) is aligned from NE to SW and edged with large stones on its SE side and packed with medium sized stones on its NW.

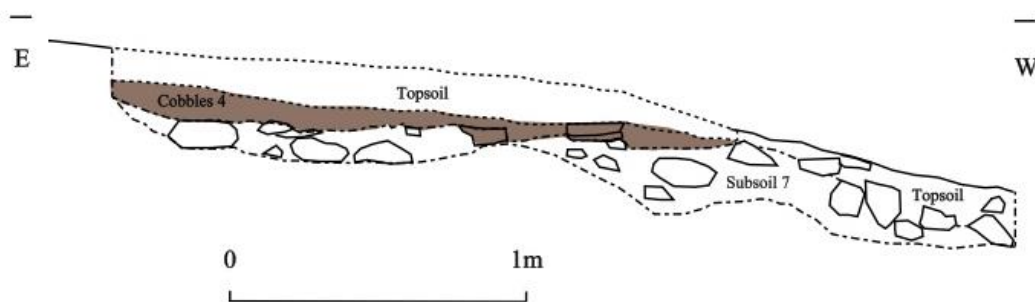


Figure 1 Section 39 E-W, across Trench 6 2m from S end showing the cobbled layer (partly excavated)

3. The Finds

Finds included 10 abraded late medieval/post-medieval potsherds, a piece of glass, 5 nail heads, part of a horseshoe (Fig 6) and 6 pieces of clay pipe. One piece of clay pipe came from under the revetment of the cobbles and places the cobbled yard no earlier than the mid-17th century.

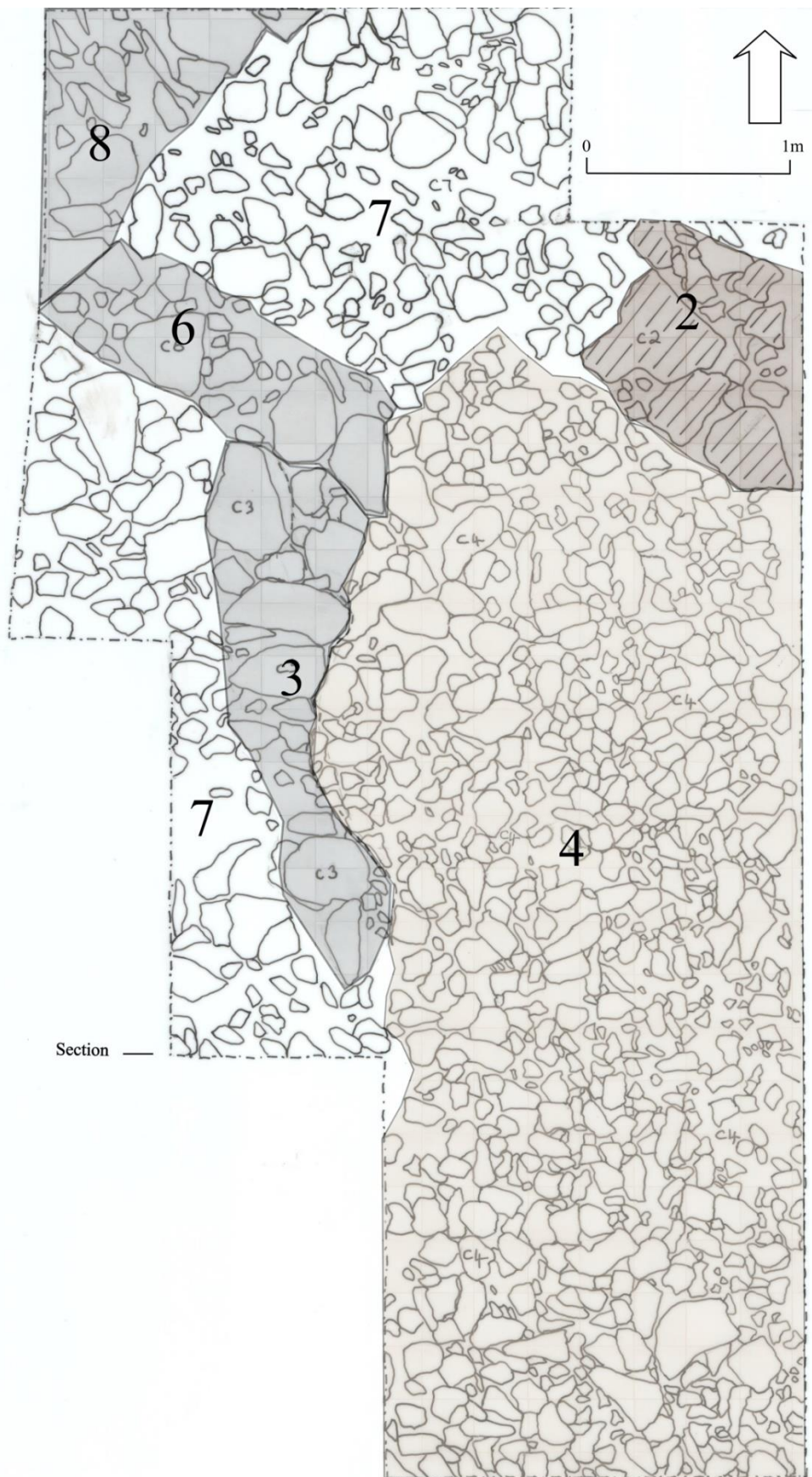


Figure 2 Trench 6 Plan after removal of topsoil showing revetment C3, cobbles C4 and paving C2.



Figure 3 Section through cobbles C4 revealing underlying stony subsoil C7 in the foreground.



Figure 3 Trench 6 after excavation of cobbles showing subsoil C7, wall C8 top right corner, boulder wall C6 at right-angles.

4. Interpretation

The possible building platform was not confirmed. Instead a cobbled yard was uncovered which was edged with a revetment of boulders on its W side. It is possible the revetment is from the base of an earlier N-S yard wall, still upstanding to the S. The three paving stones at the N end of the trench appear to form a pathway on a NW-SE axis which is robbed at its NW end. One feature predates the cobbles, a yard wall comprising a row of three large stones with some associated packing of small and medium sized stones on a NW-SE axis, c.2m in length. This wall is cut by another wall at right angles to it at the extreme NW of the trench.

The clay pipe found under the revetment puts the cobbled and paved yard no earlier than the mid-17th century and coeval with phase 2 of peel house. Sherds of Late-medieval Red Ware were also found under the cobbles. The two earlier walls cannot be closely dated. The NE-SW wall may be the final iteration of the stony bank enclosing a late medieval yard on the other side of the drystone dyke that was partly excavated in Trench 7.



Figure 4 Possible horseshoe, F11

5. Acknowledgements

I should like to thank the landowner Thistlelane Ltd for permission to excavate and Charlotte Cavey-Wilcox, the manager of Scottish Woodlands in the Borders for her patience and support over the years. I should also thank the many volunteers who have made the excavation possible: Bob Knox, Jack Boughey, David Drury, Jeff Carter, Peter Jack, Bill Glass, Andy Jepson, Gillian Brown, Maureen Erasmussen, Neil Crawford, David Paterson, Stephen Scott, Brenda Dreghorn, Sue Cotterill, Kevin Cotterill, Brian Tate, James Garry, Geoff Parkhouse and particularly Joyce Durham, co-director on the project.

6. Appendices

List of Contexts

Context	Trench	Context	Position	Description	Comments
1	6	Topsoil	Brown silt, turf and roots		
2	6	Paving	Under topsoil	Large flat slabs	NW-SE axis
3	6	Wall	Under topsoil	Large stones, along E and at N end of trench	N-S axis along edge of cobbles
4	6	Layer	Under topsoil, abuts wall C3 and paving C2	Cobbles, hard packed medium sized stones	
5	6	Layer	Under topsoil, part of C4	Upright stones on E-W axis	Part of cobbles
6	6	Wall	Under topsoil and C3 and C4	Large stones on NW-SE axis	
7	6	Layer	Under C2, C3	Red brown silt-clay, large angular stones	No charcoal, some flat stones
8	6	Wall	Under topsoil, abuts C6	NE-SW wall of large stones on SE edge, packed with medium stone to NW	

6. Appendices

List of Finds

Find	C'text	Area	No of finds	Material	Description	Date	Inl	Photo	Note
1	1	6	1	Glass	Green bottle	14.06.19	BG	1	
2	1	6	1	Metal	Nail head	21.06.19	PD	2	
3	1	6	1	Pottery	Medieval	21.06.19	JD	3	
4	1	6	1	Clay	Part pipe bowl	21.06.19	JD	4	
5	1	6	1	Metal	Nail	21.06.19	JD	5	
6	1	6	1	Metal	Nail	21.06.19	GP	6	
7	1	6	1	Pottery	Medieval	21.06.19	JD	7	
8	1	6	1	Metal	Nail head	29.06.19	BG	8	Sent for Xray
9	1	6	1	Pottery	Medieval, very small orange	29.06.19	DP	9	
10	1	6	1	Clay	Pipe stem/bowl	17.08.19	BT	10	
11	1	6	1	Metal	Curved	17.08.19	AJ	11	? Horse shoe. - Xray
12.1	1	6	3	Pottery		14.08.21	DD DP		
12.2	1	6	1	Clay	Stem	14.08.21	DD DP		
13.1	1	6	3	Clay	Stems	16.10.21	JD DP		01.07.20
13.2	1(SH)	6	1	Metal	Nail head	16.10.21	DP		
14	1	6	1	Clay	Bowl part	02.04.22	JD		
15	3	6	1	Pottery	Green glaze red ware	14.05.22	JD		
16.1	4	6	5	Pottery	Red ware	30.07.22	JD		Small sherds
16.2	4	6	1	Metal	?	30.07.22	JD		
17	3	6	1	Clay	Pipe	13.08.22	PD		

List of Drawings

SH19 22	Plan	1:20	JD/BD	26.10.19
SH22 38	Plan	1:20	PD	03.09.22
SH22 39	E-W Section	1:20	JD	03.09.22

List of photographs

Number	Description	Date
1	Paving C2 at NE end of trench and cobbles C3	07.09.19
2	Vertical pole view of trench	28.09.91
3	Extension of trench to W from E	19.07.19
4	Small added extension of trench to W from E	07.09.19
5	Vertical pole view with cobbles C3	23.04.22
6	Vertical pole view after cobbles removed	27.08.22
7	View of trench from N	28.08.22
8	View of N end showing wall C6 abutting C8	28.08.22
9	View along wall C6 with C8 in background	10.09.22
10	E-W section across trench	10.09.22