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Motcombe Dovecote 2013

Ruins, Rats and Regeneration by Jo Seaman

A Community Excavation took place during the summer of 2013 to endeavour to establish the date of the Dovecote that stands within Motcombe Gardens in the heart of Old Town Eastbourne. Although the excavation could not provide any definitive dating evidence, a chronological sequence of historic repair was established and together with subsequent post excavation research a more accurate story of the building has been revealed. The bringing together of archaeology and historic research indicates that the fabric of the Dovecote is largely a rare survivor of the Fourteenth Century with later additions and repairs.

Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Summary

A Community Excavation took place during the summer of 2013 to endeavour to establish the date of the Dovecote that stands within Motcombe Gardens in the heart of Old Town Eastbourne. Although the excavation could not provide any definitive dating evidence, a chronological sequence of historic repair was established and together with subsequent post excavation research a more accurate story of the building has been revealed. The bringing together of archaeology and historic research indicates that the fabric of the Dovecote is largely a rare survivor of the Fourteenth Century with later additions and repairs.

INTRODUCTION

Background

Between 29th July and 4th August 2013 the Eastbourne Heritage Service undertook a Community Archaeological Excavation at Motcombe Gardens, Eastbourne.

The Heritage Service had been asked to try to determine the date of the Dovecote that stands at the western end of the Garden in order that it could be better understood and interpreted in the future.

In order to do this two trenches were excavated; one that would look at the foundations of the building in the south east quadrant and also try to get some chronological phasing of a brick buttress that appears in images of the building from at least 1909. The other was positioned a few metres south of the Dovecote to see if any associated surfaces or buildings may have survived beneath the ground in order to better understand its setting within the original landscape.

The excavation was supervised by Jo Seaman, Heritage Service Manager with additional help from Steve Patton and supported by a volunteer team of around 30 people over the 7 days that the project took place.

The post excavation analysis was carried out in the Heritage Service Offices at the Town Hall by the author and Maisie Foster, a long term volunteer with the Service and at that point a second year Archaeology undergraduate at Reading University.

During this process, further research was carried out involving an interior inspection of the building and an extensive archive search in order that the story of the building could be better understood.

The results of this process together with the evidence already uncovered by the excavation form the bulk of this report.

Site Location

The Dovecote now lies in the north-western quadrant of Motcombe Gardens in the heart of Old Town, Eastbourne at NGR TV 59731 99609. It stands just on the 20m contour line on land that slopes up quite steeply to the south east.

The Dovecote now stands some way from the pond in the gardens, but once this was presumably much closer.

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The geology of the site is described in the British Geological Survey Map 319/334 Lewes and Eastbourne as:

Head: variable deposits of sandy, silty clay, locally gravelly; chalky and flinty in dry chalk valleys. Includes sandstone fragments in the Weald area.

The Dovecote is surrounded by an earth bank or terrace, around 2m deep on the west and north, this area was once bounded by walls and formed a part of the farmyard, though the walls were removed by 1909. Therefore we have a raised terrace ‘behind’ the building that has become part of the layout of the Gardens but may be a much earlier feature. It is not clear whether the Dovecote is actually cut into an existing terrace to give stability to its more vulnerable (to the elements) sides or whether the terrace has formed in the farmyard over centuries having been bounded by the walls once attached to it. Future fieldwork should be able to answer this question.

Description of the Dovecote

The Dovecote in Motcombe Gardens is a Grade II listed building but the original listing is rather vague:

“Round tower dovecote of knapped flint. Red conical tile roof. Buttress, 3 steps and plain wooden door to barn.”

Pevsner does not even merit the Dovecote with his description of notable buildings in Eastbourne.¹¹

Figure 1: Motcombe Gardens Dovecote, Location Map



¹¹ Pevsner N & Nairn I *The Buildings of England – Sussex 2003 (reprint edition)* Penguin

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Exterior

The building is of the flint rubble, circular tower construction which is fairly common for Dovecotes in Sussex. It has an external diameter of 4.75m (just over fifteen and a half feet), an internal diameter of 4.11m (around thirteen and a half feet) and its walls are approximately 5.6m high to the eaves. The western side of the building has a considerable bulge to its vertical walls.

On top sits a conical wood framed roof which is covered by red clay tiles.

There is a massive stone block buttress right up against the west side of the doorway and a smaller brick built one approximately 0.5m to the east of the same door.

The door itself faces south east, is of a fairly modern wooden type, with a yellow brick surround and now stands over 1.9m high (though this is not the original size).

Three modern concrete steps lead up to the door, a fourth partly beneath the ground at the bottom is made of sandstone and shows wear consistent with years of use.

It is a true vernacular building, constructed of a chalk rubble wall lined with chalk block nestboxes and faced with flint embedded in lime mortar.

Interior

The nest boxes form an integral part of the wall and are not 'L' shaped but do have a rough terminal expansion to the right of each hole and are around 0.39m deep leaving just 0.23m of chalk rubble and flint facing in places, but an overall wall thickness of around 0.62cm (0.85m towards the base as there is a slight thickening here). This form of nesting box usually indicates a building of an earlier date. The entrance to each nest box is fairly regular at around 0.17cm square (just seven inches) and this is comparable to other early examples of Dovecote, notably Garwood in Herefordshire that dates at least to 1326.²

There were originally around 544 nesting holes within the building but only just over 440 survive today with the bottom three tiers blocked.

The nest boxes are arranged in a linear fashion, apart from the fourth and fifth rows (originally seventh and eighth from the bottom) which are staggered and an area above the door which is also staggered.

Every other row from the top has a chalk ledge or lip protruding to around 0.07m that would have enabled birds to perch.

Approximately 0.3m of flint rubble wall is exposed beneath the chalk lined walls

The internal walls of the Dovecote have been repaired on numerous occasions, sometimes using sympathetic materials such as flint and chalk, but also with modern brick, stone and even breeze block in places.

Site History

Dovecotes have been used in Britain since the Roman period, but the earliest free standing remains date from the Thirteenth or early Fourteenth Century. As the name suggests they were for the nesting of doves or pigeons, where the young birds or squabs were used for food by the elites of society who could afford such extravagances. Squabs were highly prized for the table and would be collected from the Dovecotes throughout the year except in the winter months when breeding was very rare. They were made secure to protect the

² The date 1326 is inscribed on the building but it could well be earlier
Hansell P & J *Doves & Dovecotes* 1988 Bath, Millstream Books

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birds from the attention of natural predators and human thieves and secular examples were generally positioned near to the main domestic dwellings among other farm buildings but away from trees (where predatory birds may be concealed). The Motcombe example is now isolated within the Gardens, but as we shall see were once part of a much larger complex of buildings.

The history of the Manor of Eastbourne is a complex one and still the best summary of it appears in the Reverend Budgen's 1912 book "Old Eastbourne, Its Church, Its Clergy, Its History". In this wonderfully researched tome Budgen makes the case for the original medieval manorial complex of Eastbourne being based around the site of the present Motcombe Farmhouse and the western part of what is now the Gardens.

The Manor of Eastbourne was divided into three around 1574 and before that many of the Lords of the Manor do not appear to have been resident for any substantial period of time. We do not know where the undivided manor had its main house or Capital Messuage and it is likely that there may have been at least two sites. One has been identified as being on the site of the present Compton Place approximately 1300 metres away from the Dovecote.

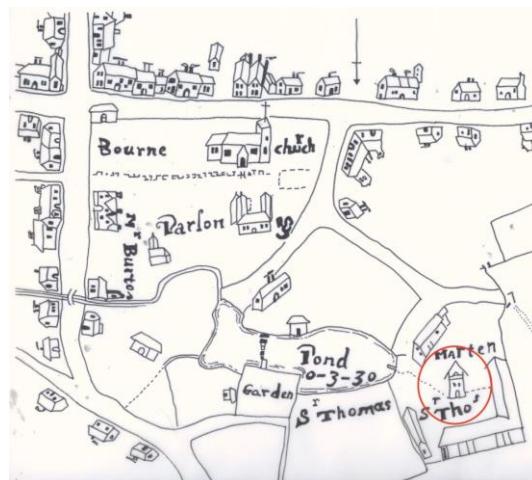
The other as referenced above was in the heart of Motcombe.

In 1339 on the death of the title holder of the Manor, Giles Badlesmere, the Capital Messuage is given no monetary value and is "worth nothing beyond outgoings" indicating that it was poorly maintained or even ruinous by this time. This document does however state that there is a "Pigeonry" valued at 6 Shillings and 8 Pence. 83 years later in 1422 on the death of John Baron De Roos this same complex is described as "Site of the Manor on which are two chambers, a pantry and a kitchen and a Dovecote worth nothing beyond outgoings." This would indicate that the buildings were in an even more perilous state than the previous entry. Budgen goes on to say that in 1544 there was no mention of a manor house at all.

If Budgen is correct, and at present there is no reason to doubt him, then the references above are connected "...with the old Motcombe House, which no doubt, stood nearer the old barns than the present house and on the South side of the roadway. This we may well believe was the Home Farm house....if not the Manor House."

Another indication that this site was of importance was the historic staging of a Michaelmas Fair always being held on this farm and more tangibly, its position being so close to the medieval Parish Church of St Mary's.

Figure 2: The Map of Bourne 1636 after Edward Gier, the Dovecote is circled in red at the bottom right



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In the late Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries the Selwyn/Parker Family, holders of a third of the Manor, seem to have lived at Motcombe House and made it their main residence. Certainly in the map of 1637 (see Figure 2 above) the farm is labelled as Sr Thomas, relating to Thomas Parker, the then owner. Most excitingly this map shows a building that we can identify from its appearance and position to be the manorial Dovecote. It is placed in the middle of the farm yard, away from other buildings or trees to encourage roosting, as was standard practice for these buildings.

The actual house though, still seems to be modest. In the Hearth Tax records of 1665, where all working fireplaces and chimneys were recorded, Sir Thomas Parker's house shows just one. Interestingly, Thomas actually died two years before this tax, so it could be that his was the "old house" unmodified and perhaps rented to a tenant by this time.

In a drawing by Grimm of 1785 (part of which reproduced here in Plate I) the Motcombe barns and Dovecote can be seen on the extreme right. If this is an accurate representation, and it seems to be, the Dovecote appears to be of a very similar form to the present building. It also does not seem to show the terrace that now surrounds at least half of the building. This would indicate that it developed after alterations to the farmyard in the Nineteenth Century. However, there is a definite rise to the ground behind the building so this evidence is not conclusive. Archaeological testing would certainly clear this issue up fairly easily.

Plate I: Detail from *Eastbourne from the Rectory Mill*, 1785, from a drawing by Grimm. The Dovecote is circled, bottom right (British Museum)



The farm passed through the Parker family for just under two hundred years until it is sold, eventually becoming the property of Lord George Cavendish, one of the major Eastbourne landowners around 1830, who had held the Eastbourne-Parker Manor for some time.

From 1821 until around 1842 the farm was occupied by Benjamin Waters and his son, John, transformed the nearby pond (and source of the Bourne Stream, after which Eastbourne is named) into a reservoir and the land around it into a garden. The Waters family were in residence until the last few decades of the Nineteenth Century.

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The 1817 Figg map (see Figure 3 below) shows the farm buildings and, presumably the Dovecote, though it is erroneously recorded as a square building before it disappears from the Tithe Map of the early 1840's, only to be recorded again, as a circular structure in the 1870 Ordnance Survey map where it remains until the most recent map of 1910 (see Figures 6 & 7).

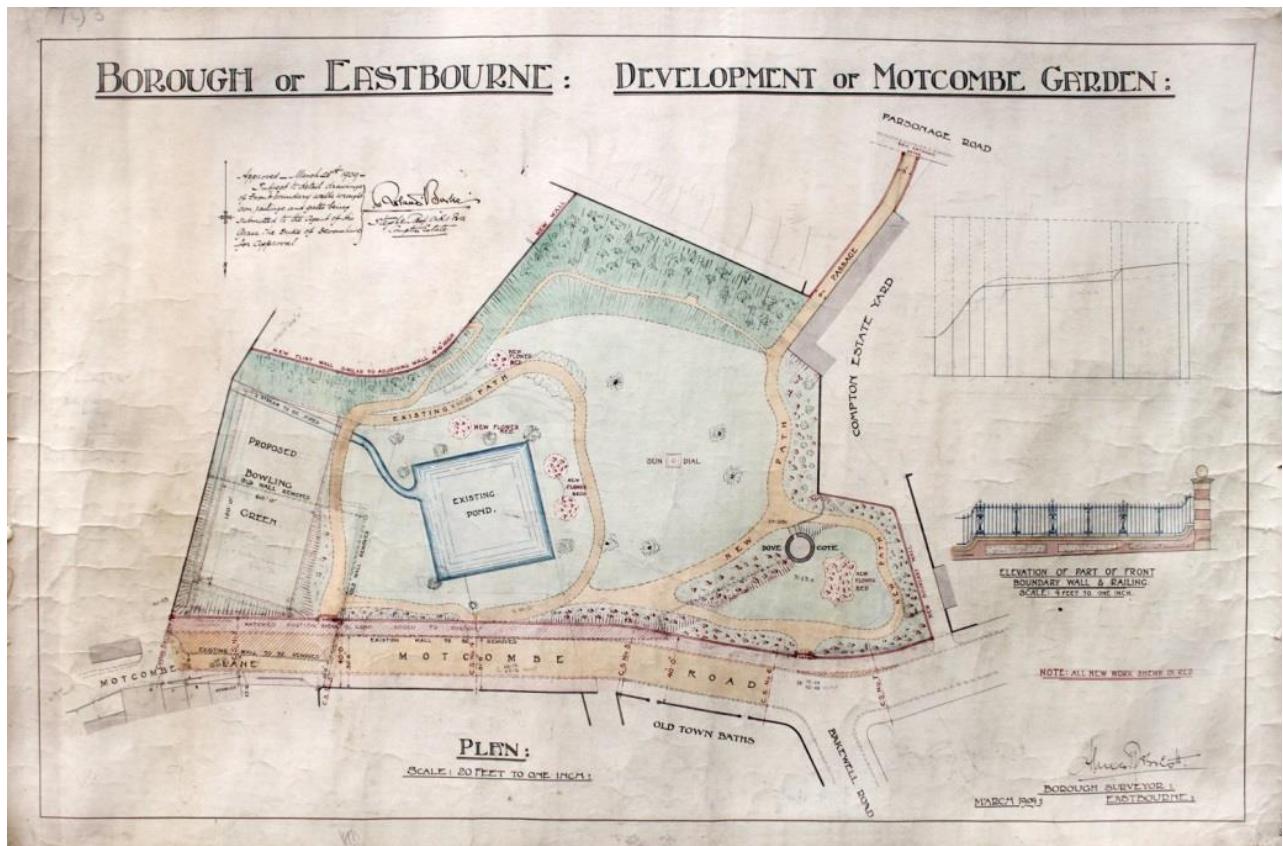
Figure 3: A Copy of the Figg Map of 1817, with Motcombe Farm Circled and detail of the Yard (inset)



In the early Twentieth Century, Victor Cavendish, 9th Duke of Devonshire, the then owner of the land, wrote a letter to the Corporation of Eastbourne offering the "...old garden and Dovecote at Motcombe..." for free as a "pleasure ground" as is carefully recorded in the Council minutes of January 4th 1909. This proposal was readily accepted and work soon began, to develop the land to plans drawn up by the Borough Surveyors (see Plate 2). By the summer of 1910 the garden was open to the public and presumably the Dovecote was used as the Gardeners bothy (as no other structures appear on the plans that could serve this purpose).

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Plate 2: The Borough Council Plans for Motcombe Gardens in 1909



This act of donation almost certainly saved the Dovecote from being destroyed by adding a clause that the building had to be preserved but would certainly have cost the Council in upkeep and repairs.

Plate 4 shows the building as painted by a local student F. Andrews in 1909 (it is almost exactly the same view as appears in Budgen 1912, also reproduced here as Plate 3.), before renovations that would strip it of the original Dormer or entrance for the pigeons. When comparing this view (and the Budgen photograph) with an undated view of around 30 years later, we can see some changes to the building. Firstly all invasive ivy has been removed and the roof has been ‘renovated’ (a date of 1931 is suggested for these works from graffiti on one of the main cross beams, but no record could be found in the Council Minutes and the large buttress to the left of the door has been increased in height (almost doubled) and repointed. The stone steps also seem to have been replaced with concrete at this time and repairs were carried out. The lower, brick buttress (the primary target of this excavation) to the right of the door as we look at it is shown exposed in the painting from the early Twentieth Century (see Plate 4) but in recent years has been all but buried.

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Plate 3: Photograph of the Dovecote, published 1912 (Budgen)



Inside the building, the post 1909 period has not been kind. There are a number of repairs to the fabric carried out with modern brick, concrete and breeze block that have obliterated some of the original nest boxes and are anything but sympathetic. It is believed that for most of the period post 1909 the Dovecote was used as a store, indeed it was not unknown for the Gardener in charge to use it as an impromptu cell for children misbehaving within the park in the 1930's.

Plate 4: Motcombe Dovecote painted by F. Andrews 1909



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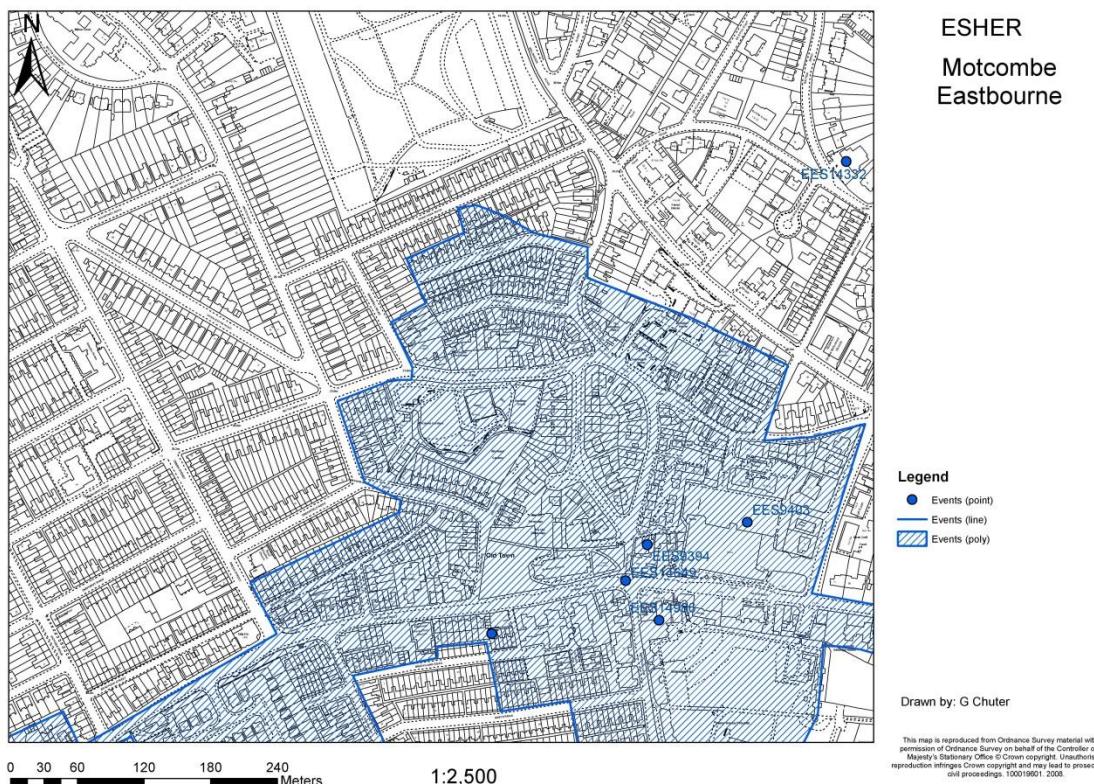
A search of the HER (Historic Environment Record) was undertaken within a 1000m radius of the Dovecote and six events were recorded. The furthest was an evaluation on the ridge to the north-east of Motcombe and did not record any significant archaeology.

Two further events were records, were basic interpretative surveys, of the Eighteenth Century Gilbert Manor House (now known, incorrectly as Gildredge Manor) and the other an urban survey from 2008.

Two excavations were carried out by Eastbourne Natural History and Archaeological Society between 1977 and 1984 as part of the Eastbourne Urban Medieval Project, which sought to shed light on the medieval origins of Bourne. This project is yet to be published but should prove a fascinating insight to the comparative fortunes of Bourne and Motcombe. The last event which falls within our search area was an excavation of three lime burning pits, archaeomagnetically dated to circa 1175 and likely to be the source of mortar for the rebuilding of the parish church of St Mary's at this time.³ This was also done in association with the Eastbourne Urban Medieval Project.

The same event listing also records the excavation of a section across the course of the Bourne Stream, the source of which is Motcombe Gardens, in 1980.⁴

Figure 4: HER Monument/Event Map 1000km Radius of Motcombe Dovecote



³ Stevens L *Three Lime Burning Pits, Church Street, Eastbourne* 1990 Sussex Archaeological Society, Lewes, Vol 128, Pgs 73-87

⁴ Allen M *Prehistoric and Medieval Environment of Old Town, Eastbourne* 2007 Sussex Archaeological Society, Lewes, Vol 145 Pgs 33-66

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Fieldwork Objectives

- To try to establish archaeological dating evidence for the Dovecote
- To assess the condition of surviving foundations of the building
- To understand the previous use of the flat grassy area in front of the Dovecote
- To promote public interest in archaeological fieldwork and the heritage of Eastbourne
- To encourage public participation in local archaeology, history and heritage projects

METHODOLOGY

Prior to the excavation starting DBA research was carried out largely to establish the Dovecote within its' immediate environment. Since the excavation, numerous site visits have been made and extensive research undertaken into the building itself and the historical sources in which it may have been mentioned.

A full building survey has not been undertaken but it would be recommended that this be done in the near future.

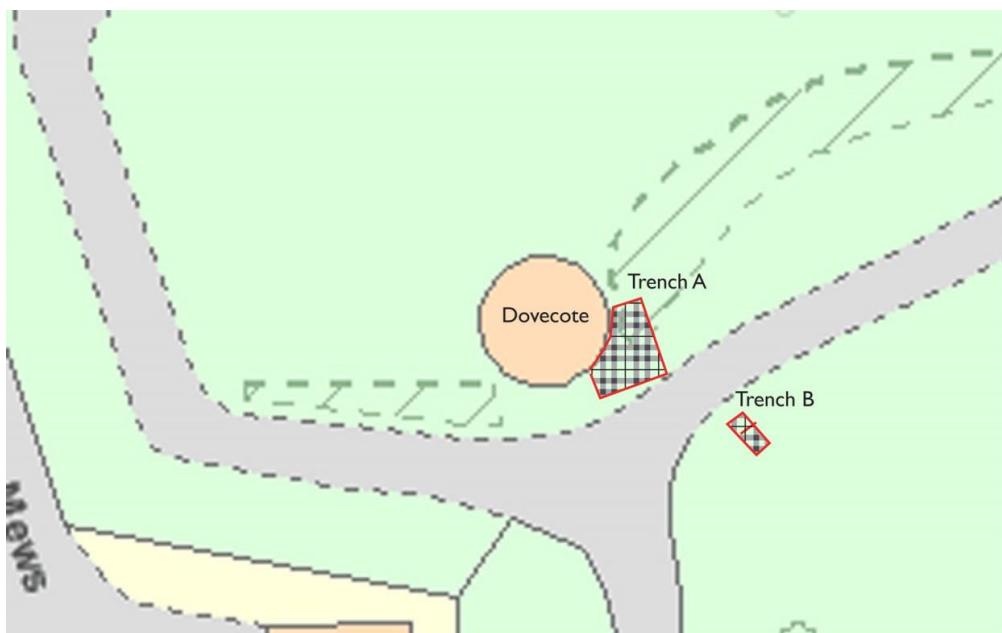
Two trenches were dug as this is the maximum that time would permit.

Both trenches were dug by hand by the author and a team of Heritage Service Volunteers over 7 days.

Trench A was placed to the east of the existing doorway and was 3m by 3.5m by 1.4m. The aim of this trench was to try to recover dating material from the buildings' foundations and to investigate a brick buttress.

Trench B was placed across the path to the south east of the Dovecote and was 2.4m by 1m. The aim of this trench was to establish whether the pond had once formally extended to this point and to see if any other farm yard features would be present opposite the entrance to the Dovecote.

Figure 5: Motcombe Gardens Dovecote – Trench Locations



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All finds were recorded stratigraphically and around 50% washed on site. Further post excavation processes and analysis were carried out at the Heritage Service Offices within the Town Hall, Grove Road, Eastbourne. Due to limited funds all specialist reports were carried out in house by the author and Maisie Foster. Where appropriate specialist examination of finds could be carried out in the future.

RESULTS

FIELDWORK

The excavation took place between the 29th July and the 4th August 2013 as a Community Archaeology Project led by the Eastbourne Heritage Service.

The results for the two trenches were, as expected, contrasting, with Trench B containing considerably more in-situ archaeology than A. The distinct lack of early in-situ features that could lead to reliable dating for the Dovecote in Trench A was still a surprise though. Despite this, a relative chronology of repairs and alterations to the surviving foundations of the Dovecote was possible.

Table I: Trench A – Contexts

Context	Description
001	Dark to mid brown thin topsoil layer
002	Light grey/brown chalky loam with clay
003	Pale cream to white tip of material used to fill a gap between the building and bank
004	Cut of trial trench opened and abandoned in March 2013
005	A friable mix of mid brown clay, grey loam and chalk fragments, creating a linear fill following the line of the Dovecote wall
006	Flint foundations for steps
007	Flint walling mortared with a high proportion of charcoal
008	A hard mid red/brown fired brick addition forming the top seven courses of brick work on the ‘buttress’ in a stretcher bond. Lime mortar is notably degraded.
009	A hard mid red/brown brick support (in a partial stretcher bond) cut into the ‘original’ foundations of the Dovecote. Three dressed greensand blocks are also present at the bottom of the course to add extra support

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010	A hard sub-rectangular poorly constructed fill or repair of the ‘original’ foundations of the Dovecote. The fill is mostly irregular flint and greensand blocks
011	A hard grey/green sub-rectangular structure made of dressed local greensand. Appears to have been repointed and may represent the original medieval/post medieval foundations or coursing
012	A hard grey to brown structure made up of a combination of knapped and cobbled flints. Context 12 represents the main exterior body of the Dovecote including all later repairs
013	A fairly firm (with loose patches) dark soil/clay mix which runs alongside the Dovecote wall
014	A flint wall which butts onto the Western edge of (009)
015	The foundation for the stairs which lies in front of (014) and above (013)
016	The concrete stairs which lie above (015)
017	Cut of wall trench
018	A degraded silt/clay relatively compact, mid brown-grey fill of cut.
019	Black cinder type layer, decayed lime mortar with a large proportion of charcoal.

Discussion

The friable dark to mid brown loamy clay topsoil (001) was a consistent 10cm deep which covered the entire slope and lower levels of Trench A. Although loamy in texture it was notably different to the Context 001 found in Trench B. It was also more artefact rich and had a mix of cultural material including, CBM, glass, metal, slate, and bone. These dated from the 11th-20th Century, a not uncommon range when excavating in a public garden with a long history of activity. The majority of finds were later in date and very little stratigraphic dating was possible. It is likely that this context has been widely disturbed through repairs to the building and landscaping of the gardens.

Directly underneath (001) was an artefact rich, loose friable light grey-brown chalky loam deposit (002). It was presumably deposited in c1909-20 when the area around the Dovecote was remodelled following the demolition of the farm buildings and adjoining walls to the North and East of the building. The soil had large quantities of charcoal, CBM, pottery and flint inclusions dispersed throughout which showed evidence of disturbance during the Twentieth Century with the recovery of modern creamware and brown and green bottle glass.

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To the north of the trench along the line of the Dovecote wall was a pale cream to white tip of material used to fill a gap between the building and bank (**003**). There was only one find recovered from this context; a complete stoneware ‘Shelvey & Co Ltd, Albert Works’ mineral water bottle which dates to c.1880-1920 and is of local origin (Brighton). This could relate this deposit to the same period as (**002**).

Cutting through (**003**) is cut (**004**) and linear fill (**005**), which are the remains of a trial trench opened and abandoned in March 2013. The cut is 1.50m x 0.40m and runs along the Eastern edge of the Dovecote. Even though (**005**) is back fill, it contained a selection of cultural material including CBM, glass, mortar, iron metalwork, shell, clay pipe and 1 sherd of pottery. The dates from these items give a huge date range of 1200-1900A.D as was to be expected for this fill.

(**006**) is used to represent the flint foundations for the steps leading up and into the Dovecote placed at the front or South of the Dovecote.

Cut by (**009**) and butted onto by (**008**) is the flint walling of the Dovecote’s foundations (**007**). Although some of the foundations observed may be original, and therefore predates (**008**, **009**) there appears to have been some repairs done to this section in the early 18th Century, perhaps to reinforce the Dovecote’s foundations to prevent, or protect the building from the undermining of rats. The lime mortar used in the suggested repairs and ‘original’ foundations contained a large proportion of charcoal (around 30-40%) and could be as a result of the burning process to produce fast setting quick-lime. A sensible precaution in these damp soil conditions.

Butting onto this is a hard mid-red brown fired brick feature (**008**), which combined with (**009**), makes up the buttress using a rough stretcher bond on the South-Eastern wall of the Dovecote. They are both made of a similar brick, which suggests that they are of a contemporary date, no later than Late 18th Century. However, the lime mortar which holds the bricks in (**008**) is a lot more degraded. A cause of this could be (**008**)’s higher exposure to the elements, and its undergoing of various phases of weathering. In the painting of 1909 this brick buttress is shown exposed for the top courses lending credence to this interpretation.

(**009**) which sits underneath (**008**) is the bottom half of the buttress which is positioned on the South-Eastern wall of the Dovecote. It too, has been constructed of a hard mid-red brown fired brick but features some notable differences. The first is that it is actually cut into the ‘original’ foundations of the building, and the other is in the supports appearance. On the bottom row is three large pieces of reused dressed greenstone, which provide real strength in the lowest course. Next to them are two yellow bricks which indicate a late Eighteenth Century date at earliest for (**009**)’s construction, even though some of the material used appeared to be older and hence reused.

Sitting on top of (**007**) there was a hard sub-rectangular poorly constructed fill or repair (**010**) found in a level where the foundations of the Dovecote were expected. The material used to fill or repair this area of the Dovecote is mostly irregular flints and greensand blocks. This post-dates the buttress (**008 & 009**) so is likely to be nineteenth or early twentieth century.

To the right of this was a sub-rectangular structure (**011**) made of two exposed dressed local greensand blocks. The blocks have been repointed but may still represent the original Medieval/Post Medieval foundations or more likely, a decorative course.

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A hard grey to brown structure made up of a combination of knapped and cobbled flints (**012**). Context 12 represents the main exterior body of the Dovecote including all later repairs as represented by the section excavated. A more detailed survey of this structure is recommended.

Underneath (002 & 003) is a dark soil/clay mix which runs alongside the Dovecote wall (**013**). It is fairly firm with a scattering of loose patches and contained a small variety of cultural material including, CBM, greenstone, glass, iron metalwork and bone. Much like the previous contexts where cultural material was recovered, the date range for the items is very wide, dating the deposit from 1200-1940A.D. This would appear to be the fill from one or likely more phases of repairs to the buildings' foundations.

Butting onto the most Western edge of (009) is a 19th-Early 20th Century flint reinforcement (**014**) constructed to strengthen the front of the building. It continues behind the foundation for the stairs of the Dovecote (**015**).

The foundation for the stairs (**015**) put in at some point during the mid 20th Century lies in front of (014) and above (013).

Lying on top of (015) are the three concrete steps (**016**) also added during the mid 20th Century.

(**017**) is the cut of a trench put in during a period of repair work on the Dovecote. It lies in front of and may be contemporary with the buttress (008) and (009).

The deposit (**018**) filling cut (017) was mid brown-grey in colour and relatively compact with a few chalk inclusions. The fill contained a small range of finds including pottery, CBM, bone, glass, and iron metal working. The dates associated with the finds, a like to the other contexts had a very broad range from 1200-1900A.D.

Directly underneath (011) was a black decayed lime mortar layer (**019**), with a large quantity of charcoal. If (011) is part of the original foundations then this thick layer could show the preparation of the land before the Dovecote was built. This could represent the earliest revealed phase of Dovecote and would not be out of place within a medieval building. But as with the rest of the story thus revealed, there is every chance that it could be the result of later repair.

Interpretation

This Trench was originally opened to give us firm dating evidence for the foundation of the Dovecote. Unfortunately this was not to be the case as instead a history of repair and rebuilding was revealed. This was in itself fascinating, showing that this Dovecote was considered important enough to maintain, even though many of these repairs were carried out after its original use had presumably gone out of fashion. It could be said that some of these repairs at least, show an early interest in preserving at least part of our built heritage, although most of the presumably contemporary and later structures around the Dovecote were demolished. This may single the Dovecote out as being deemed 'special' even at a time when modernisation was all the rage.

The phasing of repairs has largely been set out above, with the earlier building seemingly at least partly underpinned and later buttressed to repair and strengthen areas of weakness. The brick buttress would appear to be of one phase and judging by the brick used (particularly the two yellow bricks at the base of the buttress) cannot be much earlier than the late Eighteenth Century, though earlier re-used materials also appear within its structure.

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It now seems likely though, that the lowest levels of degraded lime mortar do represent the earliest phase of this building although it is very hard to be certain when vernacular materials are used as these would have been common for hundreds of years.

It would seem that the outward appearance of the Dovecote has remained consistent for at least 500 years and perhaps as much as 700 apart from the additions of the buttress supports. The lack of original wall trenches is an indication of the extent of the repairs undertaken for the last 250 or so years. It is possible that other parts of the building may have been less disturbed and that original foundation levels may be dateable. This could be established by further excavation, though these areas are now within the terrace and would be at least 2m below the current land surface.

It has been left to further investigation of the standing evidence in the building itself to help establish the earlier history of the building and this is examined in the *Discussion of Architectural Features*.

Table 2: Trench B – Contexts

Context	Description
001	Dark grey/Brown 'loamy' garden type topsoil
002	Dark 'loamy' garden soil with high percentages of chalk and shingle inclusions
003	Mid-dark grey/brown clay/silt layer with very few inclusions. Covers a high proportion of the trench
004	Pale cream to white, compact and worn chalk block surface, up to 0.10m in height
005	Orange tinted mid-dark grey/brown silty clay deposit
006	Thick mid grey/brown clay deposit
007	Light grey to cream/white loose chalky clay layer with frequent round flint pebble inclusions. No Finds
008	Two linear features constructed of large flints cobbles and greensand. No Finds

Discussion

The loamy garden type topsoil (**001**) was a consistent 10cm deep and had a sparse collection of finds dating from the 11th Century to 1917, an expected range when excavating in an ever changing public gardens with a long history of occupation.

Below this was an artefact rich layer of compact loamy garden soil (**002**) which had a high percentage of chalk and shingle inclusions. Although covering the whole area of Trench B (1m x 2.20m), it ran at a gradual decline of 5 degrees towards the south end of the baulk. From this

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deposit there was a large mix of cultural material recovered including pottery, ceramic building material (CBM), bone, clay pipe, iron metalwork, molluscs, and glass. Again much the same as (001) there was a wide date range associated with the finds recovered (11thC-20thC) suggesting frequent disturbance or use of the top 25cm of soil.

Below this was a plastic clay/silt layer (003) which reached up to 10cm thick in some areas. Unlike 001 & 002 this deposit did not cover the full extent of the trench, most notably at the southern end. Here (002) lies above (004) for 12cm before carrying on into the baulk. This deposit again produced a mix of cultural material but on a much smaller scale than (002). The finds recovered included iron metalwork, CBM, bone, shell and 1 sherd of pottery dating 1175-1350.

Underneath (003) is (004), a hard, compacted chalk block surface 1.80m in length and up to 10cm thick. Its overall makeup suggests that (004) is the remains of a surface perhaps associated with the early farm buildings once situated in what is now Motcombe Gardens. This deposit contained a mix of cultural material including pottery, CBM, bone, iron metalwork and glass, but unlike previous contexts, the dates for (004) seem to be more unified with the majority of the finds dating from 1500-1840.

Immediately below and to the North of (004) is a plastic mid-dark grey/brown clay deposit (005) up to 20cm thick. The deposit produced only CBM and slate, which has lead to a very wide dating range, 1200-1800 A.D.

Below this is another mid grey/brown plastic layer (006) which is the thickest of the 8 contexts, being nearly 25cm thick throughout. Despite its size it did not contain a huge quantity of datable finds, and those recovered including pottery, CBM, and glass give us a wide date range of 1200-1900 suggesting that this and the other 5 deposits above it have been recently aggravated, either by cultural or natural formation processes.

On the northern end of the trench directly underneath (006), was a small deposit being only 0.50m x 0.12m (007). It was light grey to cream/white in colour and was relatively loose suggesting a possible fill. It contained no finds but did have multiple rounded flint pebble inclusions.

In the South-Eastern end of the trench part of a linear structure was excavated (008). It consisted of two lines of large flint cobbles and greensand which appeared to represent the very base of a wall. However not enough of it was revealed to be certain of this interpretation, and a re-examination of the site would be needed to confirm this theory. Again like (007) no finds were discovered in or on the structure to give an accurate date. However its' stratigraphic context would point to a structure dating no later than the early post medieval period. It is conjectured that this could represent a building on the site pre-dating the late Sixteenth Century redevelopment of the farm.

Interpretation

This trench has given an indication of the use for the low lying areas of the Gardens that once formed part of a farmyard complex. It would seem that there were a series of surfaces, repaired over time using local materials.

The presence of fairly thick silty clay layers can be taken as evidence of prolonged flooding and actually corroborates the evidence from maps that show the pre-1870 pond to be much larger. During the very wet winter of 2012-13 this area was flooded once again and the park took on an essence of how it may have appeared in the distant past.

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The presence of a well-built stone rubble structure in this trench below the clays would suggest that an attempt was made to utilise this area more fully. Only a small area was revealed and the high water table prevented further investigation so little more can be said, except that it represents a hitherto unknown earlier phase of building in the Gardens.

THE FINDS

A fairly good assemblage of finds was recorded from both Trenches, with the majority coming from Trench A.

In total over 35kg of finds were removed from the site for further analysis.

All pottery, bone, clay pipe, glass and metalwork were retained as further study may be beneficial. A sample of each CBM fabric type was retained.

Pottery

In total 19 separate fabrics were identified using the Eastbourne Heritage archive material and former reports as points of reference for terminology (after Barber).

Table 3: Pottery Fabric by Type

Fabric Number	Description	Date
F1	Abundant flint and coarse grit	C11th-C13th
F2	Moderate flint sand tempered (mainly cooking pots)	1175-1350
F3	Moderate sand and rare flint/shell tempered	1250-1375
F4	Glazed Redware (earthenware), varying quality of glaze, few inclusions in fabric	1500-1750
F5	Fine red earthenware with black slip to body. (Mostly internal and external)	1500-1630
F6	'Cisterian' type earthenware, red body (with rare inclusions) and dark brown/black metallic glaze	1550-1650
F7	Westerwald stoneware – fine, white-firing clay, ranging in colour from a light to mid-grey. The surface usually treated with a salt glaze, giving the characteristic 'orange-peel' effect	1550-1850
F8	Tin glazed earthenware of Delft or Lambeth type, buff body and white glaze sometimes painted	1650-1750

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F9	Chinese Porcelain	1680-1850
F10	English Stoneware (mainly bottles)	1750-1900
F11	Transfer printed (and plain) creamware	1780-1840
F12	Pearlware (transfer printed and plain)	1800-1850
F13	Buff glazed creamware (with some blue and white decoration) sometimes known as 'servants ware'	1820-1900
F14	Decorated Whiteware	1880-1940
F15	English Porcelain	1800-1950
F16	Plant Pot	C20th
F17	Red hared fired Earthenware, yellow external glaze	C19th-C20th
F18	Continental Stoneware	C16th-C18th
F19	Modern Creamware	1930+

Trench A

In total **2558.9g** of pottery was recovered from Trench A. This has been broken down into Fabric Groups by Context as set out in Table 5 below.

Table 4: Trench A Pottery by Context

Context	Fabric Type	Weight (g)	Notes
001	F1	7.7g	1 sherd
	F4	39.3g	9 sherds. They are all unglazed aside from 1. 1 sherd (unglazed) is burnt
	F11	5.5g	4 sherds
	F12	12.8g	2 sherds
	F13	7.1g	1 sherd
	F18	8.3g	1 sherd
	F19	8.1g	2 sherds

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002	F3	0.4g	1 sherd
	F4	120.0g	16 sherds. Only 1 sherd is glazed
	F5	3.6g	1 sherd. Does not have a black slip or glaze. But dark brown in colour on internal and external surfaces
	F9	6.1g	1 sherd
	F10	349.7g	9 sherds
	F11	237.0g	23 sherds. 1 sherd has a green transfer pattern. 1 sherd has a brown transfer pattern. 1 sherd is grey in colour. 6 sherds are blue transfer printed. 2 sherds make up the front of a Keiller and Sons Dundee marmalade pot. 12 sherds all rims or bottoms of vessels are all plain aside from engraved lines which sit just under their rims.
	F12	108.0g	9 sherds
	F14	1468.0g	28 sherds. 2 sherds have a blue pattern. One looks to be the rim of a toilet. 5 sherds are plain white, possible parts of commode
	F15	5.1g	1 sherd

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	F19	12.0g	1 sherd
003	F10	619.0g	I 'Shelvey & Co Ltd Albert Works' Brighton; mineral water bottle. c.1880- 1930
005	F10	10.2g	2 sherds. 1 sherd, very burnt which has given the sherd a shiny glazed look
013	F4	12.4g	1 sherd. Unglazed
	F12	4.8g	1 sherd
	F14	168g	1 sherd. Possible part of a commode
018	F4	46g	2 sherds
	F7	25.1g	1 sherd
	F12	13.4g	5 sherds

Trench B

In total **595.7g** of pottery was recovered from Trench B. This has been broken down into Fabric Groups by Context as set out in Table 4 below.

Table 5: Trench B: Pottery by Context

Context	Fabric Type	Weight (g)	Notes
001	F4	1.5g	Possible slip coating but not glazed. 1 sherd
002	F1	9.7g	1 sherd
	F2	8.4g	2 sherds

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	F4	161.6g	13 sherds. 11 of these are unglazed and another is part of a broken rim
	F7	218.2g	4 sherds. Only 2 of 4 featured the characteristic 'orange-peel' effect, one of these is the bottom of a bottle. 1 of the 2 which are without the effect was very thick at 17.34mm
	F8	2.8g	2 sherds
	F11	43.2g	10 sherds. 4 of these are transfer printed one of which appears earlier in date than the others. There is also 1 sherd with a brown coat
	F12	8.7g	3 sherds. Flow blue design dating to 1830-40
	F13	3.1g	1 rim sherd
	F15	1.2g	1 sherd
	F16	17.6g	1 rim sherd
	F17	9.0g	1 sherd
003	F2	5.3g	1 sherd
004	F4	48.7g	1 sherd. Patterned but unglazed
	F6	23.4g	1 sherd. Possible base of pot, glazed internally and externally. 20.75mm in height
	F11	26.7g	4 sherds. 2 of the 4 sherds are blue transfer printed. 1 of the 4 (plain) is possible bottom of cup as beginning of handle is visible
006	F4	5.8g	1 sherd. Unglazed
	F12	0.8g	1 sherd

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Discussion

The pottery from Trench A is dominated by assemblages of post medieval date. This largely fits in with the story of repairs that dominate the history revealed by excavation. What little medieval pottery was discovered was residual but interestingly is rather low compared to the number of sherds of this date casually collected from the Gardens by the author. This really does give us compelling evidence of the extent of the later repairs to the building and also the landscaping around it in the early Twentieth Century.

Trench B tells a slightly different story but again with an assemblage of very mixed dates and dominated by the post medieval. The finds corroborate the evidence in the stratigraphy of a series of surfaces and flood events. Though the absence of any pottery finds with the linear structures is frustrating, it does point to this being archaeologically undisturbed by later events.

Glass

In total 20 separate glass types were identified using the Eastbourne Heritage archive material and former reports as points of reference for terminology.

Table 6: Glass by Type

Glass Type	Description
G1	Very dark green bottle glass, usually matt surface. c.6mm thick. Some have degraded and discoloured surfaces. C19th-C20th
G2	Clear vessel glass, mostly glasses, c. 4mm thick. Some with bubbles in matrix
G3	Clear, thin c.3.20mm window glass (commonly fractured)
G4	Thick, clear, patterned modern window glass, c.4.70mm. With a slight blue/green hue
G5	Thin, dark green bottle glass c.2mm thick
G6	Thin, clear glass. No thicker than 5mm. Variation in colour, ranges from a blue to green hue. Some appear with both internal and external matt surfaces
G7	Thick, clear bottle glass with a slight green or blue hue. c.5.50mm
G8	Very thick c.10.50mm, very dark green bottle glass. Both surfaces are usually degraded and discoloured. Commonly bulb shaped
G9	Thin, shades of green, bottle glass. No more than 3mm. C19th-C20th
G10	Window/picture/sheet glass, clear, no more than 3mm thick

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G11	Thin (no more than 4mm) pink or rose glass. C19th-C20th
G12	Brown bottle/vessel glass. C.3-4mm. Late C19th-C20th
G13	Thin, clear window glass c.3.15mm with grey/brown hue
G14	Thick, clear window glass c.6mm. Slight green hue
G15	Thick, clear, patterned bottle glass. No thicker than 8.50mm
G16	Thick, dark brown bottle glass c.9mm
G17	Thick, dark blue bottle glass c.5mm
G18	White opaque think glass, c.2.60mm. Commonly form a bulb shaped vessel
G19	Thin, clear, patterned bottle glass. c.3mm
G20	Clear ink pot, octagonal in shape, with green/blue hue. A common eight sided sheared lip aqua. 2.3" in height

Trench A

A total of **1930.9g** of glass of 19 identified varieties was recorded. This has been broken down into Glass Types by Context as set out in Table 8 below.

Table 7: Trench A Glass Type by Context

Context	Glass Type	Description	Weight (g)
001	G1	5 Pieces	46.0g
	G4	4 Pieces	35.5g
	G6	55 Pieces	157.6g
	G9	28 Pieces	53.0g
	G10	1 Piece	1.3g
	G11	1 Piece	2.2g
	G12	11 Pieces	34.0g
	G13	3 Pieces	11.2g
	G14	3 Pieces	152.0g
	G15	11 Pieces	53.6g

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002	G1	6 Pieces	87.0g
	G3	5 Pieces	43.0g
	G4	6 Pieces	32.0g
	G5	2 Pieces	10.0g
	G6	39 Pieces	339.0g
	G8	1 Piece	5.0g
	G9	15 Pieces	36.0g
	G12	10 Pieces	40.0g
	G13	6 Pieces	18.0g
	G15	4 Pieces	288.0g
	G16	3 Pieces	106.0g
	G17	5 Pieces	28.0g
	G18	9 Pieces	95.0g
	G19	2 Pieces	8.0g
	G20	2 Pieces	114.0g
005	G6	2 Pieces	6.6g
	G7	1 Piece	26.3g
	G9	2 Pieces	2.1g
	G13	1 Piece	5.2g
	G19	1 Piece	4.3g
013	G18	1 Piece	1.3g
018	G1	2 Pieces	41.0g
	G4	1 Piece	2.5g

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	G8	2 Pieces	42.6g
	G9	2 Pieces	3.6g

Trench B

A total of 8 different varieties of glass were identified in Trench B, coming to a total of **377.1g** as can be seen in Table 7 – Glass Type by Context below. These variations (seen in both Table 7 and 8) can be identified by the Glass Types Described from Motcombe Gardens as set out in Table 6 above.

Table 8: Trench B Glass Type by Context

Context	Glass Type	Description	Weight (g)
002	G1	12 Pieces	47.0g
	G2	6 Pieces	30.0g
	G3	3 Pieces	4.2g
	G4	1 Piece	30.0g
	G5	1 Piece	3.1g
	G6	23 Pieces	73.0g
	G7	8 Pieces	41.0g
	G8	2 Pieces	75.0g
004	G1	1 Piece	31.0g
	G6	1 Piece	6.8g
006	G1	2 Pieces	36.0g

Discussion

The glass finds from the trenches are fairly typical of those from a post medieval and modern site. As we have already discussed there was no in-situ early archaeology from Trench A and Trench B was revealing a series of surfaces of post medieval date, apart from the linear structure from which no finds were recovered.

The typology of glass recovered ranges from window glass to broken vessels and can be compared to other sites in the Eastbourne area.

Ceramic Building Material

Ceramic Building Materials (CBM) was fairly abundant throughout the site with clay roof tile being the most frequent type.

Around 98% of the CBM from the site was recovered and recorded using the *Museum of London Medieval & Post Medieval Roof Tile Fabrics* and locally archived material as means of identification. 14 different fabrics were identified.

Table 9: CBM Fabrics by Type

Fabric Number	Brief Description	Earliest Date (Approx.)	Latest Date (Approx.)
1000	Light brown, creamy-white, yellow. Fine texture with scatter of quartz. Yellow or red clay bands in some tiles	1200	1480
1001	Pink and light brown. Scatter of red clay inclusions up to 5mm and small quartz	1630	1850
1002	Red, orange. Numerous very small black iron oxide grains (up to 0.05mm). Numerous small quartz (up to 0.5mm) occasional larger red iron oxide and clay inclusions	1200	1800
1003	Brownish-orange. Fairly frequent quartz and prominent iron oxide and silty clay inclusions.	1200	1800
1004	Orange. Fine sandy fabric with common quartz (up to 0.3mm). Scatter of white calcium carbonate and red iron oxide, occasional very small black iron oxide in the clay matrix	1200	1800
1005	Orange. Silty fabric with common thin cream and red clay bands, plus common rounded cream inclusions (up to 1mm). Fairly frequent quartz (up to 0.4mm)	1200	1800
1006	Red/Brown. A silty/sandy texture with a dark grey/black core with a few clay streaks. Abundant small	?	?

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	round clay inclusions/marks		
1007	White, yellow, pinkish red, light brown. Common very small quartz. Scatter of rounded yellow or brown silty pellets in some bricks. Fairly soft friable fabric with an even sandy texture	1350	1450
1008	Dark red, Reddish purple. Parts of the surface are often discoloured by fire yellow speckling. Common burnt black ash and flint inclusions with varying amounts of quartz. Clay pipe stems in brick	1666	1900
1009	Generally yellow, examples can show greyish or pinkish-orange tinges. Occasionally pale brown. Common burnt black ash and chalk inclusions. Scatter of quartz. The fabric is hard and riddled with tiny air pockets where organic matter has burned out during firing	1770	1940
1010	Orange. Very sandy fabric with frequent quartz, occasional dark red iron oxide and white flint/shell inclusions.	1450	1700
1011	Orange. Sandy fabric with common quartz. Common cream silty bands and occasional darker reddish-orange rounded inclusions and clay bands. Some flint pebbles	1400	1700
1012	Orange. Fairly frequent quartz with scatter of black and dark red iron oxide, Occasional paler coloured clay pellets and flint pebbles	1400	1900
1013	Brownish red. Very sandy fabric with abundant small quartz with scatter of white calcium carbonate	1850	1950
1014	Firebrick	1880	Present

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Trench A

In total **9052.2g** of CBM was recovered from Trench A. This was distributed amongst the 18 contexts as shown below in Table 10:

Table 10: Distribution of CBM in Trench A

Context	Fabric Number	Quantity (g)
001	1002	1064.0g
	1003	13.0g
	1004	31.0g
	1005	49.0g
	1008	487.0g
	1012	252.0g
002	1000	50.1g
	1002	933.0g
	1003	118.0g
	1004	109.0g
	1005	302.0g
	1006	21.0g
	1007	213.0g
	1008	424.0g
	1012	2978.0g
	1014	1030.0g
005	1002	144.0g
	1003	60.0g
	1004	30.0g
013	1002	68.0g

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	1012	15.4g
018	1002	75.0g
	1003	536.0g
	1011	49.7g

Trench B

In total **14302g** of CBM was recovered from Trench B. This was distributed amongst the 8 contexts as shown below in Table 10:

Table 11: Distribution of CBM in Trench B

Context	Fabric Number	Quantity (g)
001	1002	77.0g
	1005	23.0g
002	1002	2984.0g
	1003	608.0g
	1004	270.0g
	1008	985.0g
	1009	102.0g
	1012	1494.0g
	1013	239.0g
003	1002	632.0g
	1003	384.0g
	1004	135.0g
	1012	332.0g
004	1002	690.0g

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	1003	651.0g
	1004	465.0g
	1005	29.0g
	1008	1255.0g
	1009	198.0g
	1010	200.0g
	1012	93.0g
005	1002	200.0g
	1008	90.0g
006	1001	83.0g
	1002	1120.0g
	1003	611.0g
	1004	113.0g
	1007	60.0g
	1012	22.0g
	1013	157.0g

Discussion

Very little firmly dateable CBM was recovered apart from a small amount of Fabric 1007 which is medieval. This fabric has been recently recovered from at least two other sites in Eastbourne, Grange Gardens⁵ about 1km away to the south east and Pococks Cottages⁶ about the same distance to the north, so it would not appear uncommon in the area. It could be that this represents the original roofing material of the surrounding farm buildings (or even Capital Messuage) or the Dovecote itself. Most of the material recovered almost certainly originated in the walls and on the roofs of the farm buildings that stood nearby until their demolition in the early Twentieth Century.

⁵ Seaman J Grange Gardens Community Excavation – Beneath the Garden Path 2014, Eastbourne Borough Council

⁶ Pococks

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Stone

Just 6 different types of stone (other than chalk and flint) were recorded from the site and of these only 3 should be described as being of *foreign* origin,

Table 12: The Distribution of stone in Trench A

Context	Type & Description	Weight (g)
001	Calcite – 4 pieces	40.3g
002	Greensand – 2 pieces	39.6g
	Calcite – 6 pieces	63.0g
	Granite – 1 piece	28.3g
018	Greensand – 1 piece	444.0g
	Cut white marble slab – 1 piece, 21.50mm thick	134.0g

Table 13: The Distribution of Stone in Trench B

Context	Type & Description	Weight (g)
002	Very hard sandstone – 1 piece	37.7g
	Calcite – 2 pieces	14.6g
004	Shelly Limestone – 1 piece (L) 124.59mm (W) 89.51mm	300.0g
	Greensand – 3 pieces	171.0g
006	Greensand – 9 pieces	648.0g

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Discussion

The majority of stone recovered from the site is of local origin and is of a type commonly used in vernacular buildings of a medieval and post medieval date, though none of which appeared to have been dressed or altered in any way.

The two examples of foreign stone, a single piece of marble and a fragment of shelly limestone are also likely to have come from demolished buildings contemporary with the farm that once stood on the site.

Slate

1086.6g of slate was recovered from across both Trench A and B. There is a mix of both Welsh and West Country Slate as can be seen in Table 14 below.

Table 14: Distribution of Roofing Slate from Motcombe Gardens

Trench	Context	Description	Weight (g)
A	001	Welsh Slate 16 fragments	57.0g
		West Country (WC) 3 fragments	6.0g
	002	Welsh Slate 37 fragments	546.0g
		West Country (WC) 4 fragments	134.0g
	003	Welsh Slate 1 fragment	3.4g
	013	Welsh Slate 3 fragments	133.0g
	018	West Country (WC) 1 fragment	1.6g
B	001	Welsh Slate 1 fragment	2.4g

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	002	Welsh Slate 11 fragments	101.5g
		West Country (WC) 3 fragments	12.9g
	004	Welsh Slate 3 fragments	85.0g
	005	West Country (WC) 1 fragment	3.8g

Discussion

Welsh roofing slate was used commonly in the Eastbourne area from the early Nineteenth Century and again, this small quantity recovered here is likely to have been deposited when surrounding buildings were repaired or demolished.

The presence of West Country slate is often indicative of the presence of earlier post medieval buildings of some status and in this context may have come from the farmhouse or messuage that stood nearby until at least the late Eighteenth Century.

Metalwork – Iron

Trench A

A total of 1194.5g of Fe objects were recovered from Trench A. Its distribution through the contexts is shown below in Table 15.

Table 15: Distribution of Fe Objects from Trench A by Context

Context	Description	Weight (g)
001	Misc. Fe fragments (unidentifiable)	66.0g
	Half a hinge	4.8g
	Nails (1x handmade)	41.0g
	Modern Screw	27.6g
002	Springs	201.0g
	1x Horse Shoe	27.0g

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	Selection of nails (some handmade)	342.0g
	Misc. Fe fragments (unidentifiable)	363.0g
005	Nails	40.0g
	Misc. Fe fragments (unidentifiable)	75.0g
018	Nails	3.3g
	Misc. Fe fragments (unidentifiable)	3.8g

Trench B

A total of **360g** of Fe objects were recovered from Trench B. Its distribution through the contexts is shown below in Table 14.

Table 16: Distribution of Fe Objects from Trench B by Context

Context	Description	Weight (g)
002	1x U-shaped metal peg	106.0g
	5x Misc. Fe fragments (unidentifiable)	34.0g
	14x Handmade Nails (ranging from 62.40mm to 24.15mm in length)	86.0g
003	11x Misc. Fe fragments (unidentifiable)	23.0g
	4x Handmade Nails (ranging from 69.60mm to 25.52mm in length)	33.0g

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	1x L-shaped piece of iron (36.54mm in length)	4.4g
004	2x Misc. Fe fragments (unidentifiable)	34.4g
	4x Handmade Nails (ranging from 70mm to 33.52mm in length)	18.8g
006	2x Misc. Fe fragments (unidentifiable) Rectangular in shape	20.0g
	1x Handmade Nail (18.45mm in length)	0.4g

Discussion

The metal finds were unremarkable but frequent and represent an assemblage associated with a working farm and the demolishing or repair of buildings. Some almost certainly relate to the use of the area as public garden for over 100 years.

Mollusca

Trench A

A total of **32.5g** of mollusc shell was recovered from Trench A, the distribution and variation of mollusc shell is shown below in Table 17

Table 17: Distribution of Molluscs from Trench A by Context

Species	Context 002	Context 005
<i>Ostrea Edulis</i> (Oyster)	18.9g	8.5g
<i>Pectinidae</i>	4.1g	-

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(Scallop Family)		
<i>Patella Vulgata</i> (Limpet)	1.0g	-

Trench B

A total of **186.4g** of mollusc shell was recovered from Trench B, the distribution and variation of mollusc shell is shown below in Table 16

Table 18: Distribution of Molluscs from Trench B by Context

Species	Context 002	Context 003	Context 004	Context 006
<i>Ostrea Edulis</i> (Oyster)	27.1g	-	-	134.0g
<i>Patella Vulgata</i> (Limpet)	15.4g	2.0g	-	-
<i>Pectinidae</i> (Scallop Family)	3.6g	-	-	-
<i>Mytilus Edulis</i> (Common Mussel)	0.7g	-	-	-
<i>Buccinum Undatum</i> (Common Whelk)	-	-	3.6g	-

Discussion

The bulk of the Mollusca recovered from the site were from Trench B and all of the species represented would have been commonly consumed in the past. There is always a debate about whether limpets formed the diet of later (for example medieval and early post medieval) populations or whether they were used for feeding livestock such as pigs. In the Author's opinion there is no reason that these could not have been consumed by people though it is unlikely they would form part of a high status diet.

It is also possible that some of the shells were dropped by seabirds, a frequent occurrence even today in coastal environments.

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The scarcity of mollusc shells from Trench A is largely due to the late nature of the archaeological deposits when eating such shellfish as an everyday food was in decline. Conversely the presence of such evidence in Trench B would indicate earlier, more intact deposits.

CRUSTACEA

The tip of crab claw was recovered from Trench A, Context 005.

MORTAR

Throughout the site a reasonable quantity of mortar fragments were recovered, representing about 75% of that encountered and made up of 7 distinct fabrics.

Table 19: Mortar Fabric Types

Fabric Number	Brief Description
M1	Grey, sandy and soft with a scatter of small stone inclusions.
M2	White, sandy and soft with limited to no inclusions
M3	Grey/Buff, with many shell and stone inclusions
M4	Lime Mortar – White/buff, soft and crumbly with many stone inclusions ranging in sizes up to 10.42mm
M5	White, hard mortar with large amounts of stone, flint and sand inclusions. (Stone and flint pieces range drastically in size)
M6	Grey-Dark Grey, crumbly mortar with a mix of ceramic and charcoal inclusions
M7	Dark Grey/Black, sandy, many small white calcium carbonate inclusions

Trench A

A total of **172.3g** of mortar was recovered from Trench A; its distribution is shown below in Table 20

Table 20: Mortar Fabric Types from Trench A by Context

Context	Type	Weight (g)
001	M1	30.3g

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002	M2	18.0g
	M5	96.0g
005	M2	18.0g
	M7	10.0g

Trench B

A total of **1295.8g** of mortar was recovered from Trench B; its distribution is shown below in Table 19

Table 19: Mortar Fabric Types as Recorded from Trench B by Context

Context	Type	Weight (g)
002	M1	48.0g
	M2	11.0g
	M3	227.0g
	M4	493.0g
	M6	12.8g
003	M4	483.0g
004	M5	21.0g

Discussion

Most of the mortars recovered from the site appear to have been of types used within the Dovecote itself and represent early lime mortars with a high percentage of charcoal to late concrete type, silica based mortars. If not from the standing building it is likely that they are the remains of repairs to or demolition of earlier farm buildings.

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Burnt Material

A variety of burnt material was recovered from the site, in the main coal, coke, glass slag and charcoal.

Trench A

In total **95.8g** of burnt material was recovered from Trench A, this material has been divided into miscellaneous burnt material, slag and coal. Table 22 below, shows the types and distribution of the material recorded from Trench A

Table 22: Distribution of Burnt Material from Trench A by Context

Type	Context 001	Context 002	Context 013
Burnt Material	10.5g	40.5g	-
Slag	-	37.5g	-
Coal	-	-	7.3g

Trench B

In total **131.3g** of burnt material was recovered from Trench B, this material has been divided into miscellaneous burnt material and slag. Table 21 below shows the types and distribution of the material recorded from Trench B

Table 23: Burnt Material from Trench B by Context

Type	Context 002
Burnt Material	88.3g
Slag	43.0g

Discussion

This small assemblage represents material from domestic use and perhaps gives an indication of some industrial processes from the later post-medieval period taking place in the vicinity.

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Bone

Table 24: Total Number of Individual Specimen Fragments from Trench A and B

Trench	Context	No. of Fragments
A	001	4 fragments
	002	27 fragments
	018	20 fragments
B	002	51 fragments
	003	1 fragment
	004	8 fragments
	006	12 fragments
Total number of fragments:		123 fragments

Trench A

A total of **143.7g** of animal bone was recovered from Trench A; its distribution by context is shown below in Table 25

Table 25: Distribution of Individual Species from Trench A by Context

Taxa	Context 001	Context 002	Context 018
Cattle	-	53.0g	9.8g
Pig	3.4g	-	-
Lamb/Goat	-	-	-
Bird	0.6g	0.2g	0.9g
Unidentified Bone/Species	5.4g	49.9g	16.0g
Worked Bone	-	4.5g	-

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Trench B

A total of **232.4g** of animal bone was recovered from Trench B; its distribution by context is shown below in Table 24

Table 26: Distribution of Individual Species from Trench B by Context

Taxa	Context 002	Context 003	Context 004	Context 006
Cattle	112.5g	-	-	-
Pig	16.8g	-	-	-
Lamb/Goat	15.3g	-	-	25.0g
Bird	4.7g	-	0.9g	-
Unidentified Bone/Species	14.0g	3.0g	9.9g	29.7g
Worked Bone	0.6g	-	-	-

Discussion

A small assemblage of animal bone was recovered and while most has been identified, this would benefit from further study by an Osteoarchaeologist when funds allow. The species identified seem to represent animals commonly exploited for food and as such would not be unexpected. The lack of bird bone, particularly of pigeon may seem surprising but these buildings would be kept clean and dead birds removed either for the table or disposal.

Clay Pipe

A small sample of clay pipe fragments were found throughout the site with the majority coming from Trench B. From this data, mostly consisting of stem pieces, the author has used two comparative methods of dating by bore size using J.C. Harrington's method (JC hereafter) and L.R. Binford's linear equation method (LRB hereafter).

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Trench A

Table 27: Distribution of Clay Pipe from Trench A

Context	Stem Pieces/Weight (g)	Bowls (g)	Group 1 Stem Bore Size 1.92- 2.38mm JC 1720-1750	Group 2 Stem Bore Size 1.58- 1.92mm JC 1750-1800	Group 3 Stem Bore Size Less than 1.58mm JC 1800+
002	8 pieces/13.3g	1 bowl/4.0g	5 stems LRB c.1735	3 stems LRB c.1735	1 Bowl c.1840- 1870 *Ayto
018	1 Piece/1.2g	-	-	-	1 Stem LRB c.1807

Trench B

Table 28: Distribution of Clay Pipe from Trench B

Context	Stem Pieces/Weight (g)	Bowls (g)	Group 1 Stem Bore Size 3.05- 3.2mm JC 1620-1650	Group 2 Stem Bore Size 2.39- 2.76mm JC 1680-1720	Group 3 Stem Bore Size 1.92- 2.38mm JC 1720-1750	Group 4 Stem Bore Size 1.58- 1.92mm JC 1750-1800
002	7 pieces/13.0g	-	1 stem LRB c.1628	1 stem LRB c.1691	3 stems LRB c.1729	2 stems LRB c.1763

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It is important to note that after 1800, the Binford method becomes a lot more unreliable. This should be taken into account when dealing with the clay stem from Trench A; Context 018 because although it equates to 1807, the stem itself seems to indicate a much later date of 1850 onwards. This stem is marked “C.Crop” and is from the Charles Crop & Sons factory that was in production from 1856-1924.

Discussion

This is a small assemblage of clay pipe and as such the dating of stems from their bores using the Binford method is not always very accurate. However as is often the case, the dates from both Binford and JC Harrington correlate well (with one notable exception, see above).

The earliest stems are found in Trench B, which once again points to the greater undisturbed archaeological integrity of the deposits in this Trench. However the majority of the clay pipe is from the mid Eighteenth Century onwards and would not be unusual in any context of this date from Eastbourne. All the Nineteenth Century pipe was from Trench A and this would indicate more activity around the building itself at this time, most notably from the repairs and insertion of buttresses.

DISCUSSION OF ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Although the excavation on the foundations of the Dovecote has given us some clues to its' origins, it is an inspection of the interior that can give us further information about its development.

The following is not the result of a full architectural survey (although one would be very valuable) but of observations undertaken during numerous visits to the building during and since the excavation.

One of the first things that strikes the visitor to the interior of the Dovecote is the sheer quantity of nest boxes that remain within its walls. The second is that they seem to stop roughly 0.9m from the floor of the building. Closer inspection of this 'box-free' area shows that the nesting holes actually once went all the way down to the exposed flint wall (roughly 0.3m from the floor) giving a further three rows, or roughly 100 more boxes. They have each been carefully filled by two inserted bricks (that would appear to be of Eighteenth or early Nineteenth Century), end on, that have been mortared in place. We should also note that the original bottom line of nesting boxes does not line up with those above it, a feature that is seen elsewhere in the building and noted earlier.

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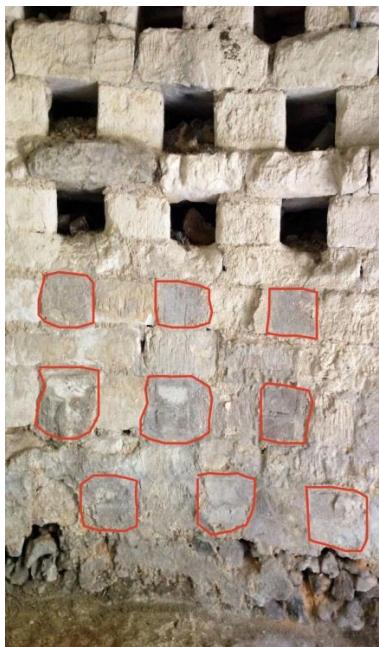


Plate 5: The lower tiers of nesting boxes with blocked in holes outlined red

The roosting ledge that once ran above the lower two rows has also been removed by roughly chopping it off flush to the wall. All of this has then been carefully plastered over with a lime mortar and been given a smooth finish. The question must now be answered as to why this was carried out, and the answer is rats or more specifically to protect the young birds from the attention of ravenous brown rats (*rattus norvegicus*). When Dovecotes were first introduced the main predators of the young squabs were birds of prey and members of the stoat or polecat family. These were combated by external measures such as having small openings or *louvres* high on the walls or roofs of the buildings and by their placement away from trees that could offer predators cover.

The native black rat (*rattus rattus*) was a seed and fruit eater and definitely not a danger to livestock of any sort, however the brown rat most certainly was. This species was introduced to Britain via trading ships from the continent, initially to London around 1730. For an animal of a semi aquatic nature, the rivers and streams of Britain allowed them to spread rapidly and they soon out competed and displaced the native black rats (which are now virtually extinct in Britain apart from a few isolated island colonies). The brown rats soon proved themselves a great danger to livestock and in particular to pigeons in there previously safe Dovecotes. Once the rats gained access to the buildings they would soon devastate the colony and wipe out a valuable resource. Landowners soon began to combat this problem and took measures to defend their pigeons by sometimes building deeper foundations (the rats could easily undermine shallow foundations) and more commonly blocking up the lower vulnerable nesting boxes. They found that the rats could not scale a smooth wall over 0.9m (or three feet) hence the lower boxes were blocked and the walls plastered over. Dovecotes that were built after the middle of the Eighteenth Century therefore had nesting boxes built only above this exclusion zone. Back to the Motcombe Dovecote, this blocking up of existing nest boxes means that this Dovecote was in existence long before the brown rat problem appeared in 1730. There is also some evidence that the foundations were also strengthened at this point. The rats were a real problem, but one

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that helps us start to establish a method of dating the building or at least ruling out a later date. It is also possible that a wooden floor was replaced by a rubble and mortar filled one during this period.

As well as these regularly blocked nest boxes, one can also see a number of areas within the interior of the building that have been 'repaired' over an extended period of time. Many of these would appear fairly recent and clumsily executed, with an attempt to copy the pattern of nest boxes using inappropriate materials, the use of modern brick and breezeblock and consistent use of grey concrete mortars.

However there are three areas that stand out as different. These are found above the door and towards the west and north east of the building and have been carried out in a far more comprehensive manner. Chalk blocks similar to those used in the rest of the building have been placed and carefully mortared blocking as few nest boxes as possible whilst strengthening areas of weakness (see Plates 5 &6). The use of chalk blocking for repairs may well indicate an earlier phase of repairs, but if so, why? We know from the manorial records already mentioned in the *Site History* (pages 3-9). That the Motcombe manor and Dovecote seem to have been in a dilapidated state by 1422 and that its fortunes do not seem to have improved until the Sixteenth Century. At this time Dovecotes were still extremely popular amongst the landowning elite and with the division of the manor of Eastbourne the 'new' manor of Eastbourne Parker based at Motcombe would have befitted such a building.

This is just conjecture but there is tantalising evidence left that could just verify this theory and the chalk block repairs give us this.

Plate 6: Chalk blocking repairs, weathering on 'original' chalk fabric and unsympathetic mid Twentieth Century breeze block repairs



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It is quite usual to find scratch marks on the chalk block roosting ledges and at the entrance to the nesting holes created by thousands of clawed pigeon feet and these are indeed evident at Motcombe. On closer inspection nearly all the chalk blocks of the 'original' structure have vertical striations and not only would these be virtually inaccessible to roosting birds but also they are far more regular than the scratches (see plate 6). In contrast the chalk block repairs have none. Inspection of the marks have revealed that these original blocks appear to have suffered from weathering from the elements, and as these striations overlay the pigeon scratches, we can assume that at some stage the Dovecote roof was in a poor state and possibly missing altogether. Taking account of the historic documents and the evidence from the building it is believed that we can tie the two together quite satisfactorily. It would seem that the building could well be that mentioned in 1339 and largely ruinous by 1422. We can imagine it roofless and in disrepair, leading to the elements marking the nesting boxes and chalk of the now exposed interior. Then in the Later Fifteenth Century the Farm and manor has a change in fortunes and is brought into a habitable and useable state. The Dovecote was made water tight and essential repairs carried out whilst still keeping a large number of nest boxes available for the pigeons to breed and rear the squabs for the plate of the new Lords of the Manor.

We have seen from the archaeological investigation that a buttress built largely of brick was added in the Nineteenth Century to support the southern side of the building. There is also a larger buttress to the east of this one that is constructed of limestone blocks and appears to be of at least two phases. Initially this construction seems a modern one given the unusual stone and cement type mortar. However when the painting and photograph of 1909 are reviewed, this same buttress, or at least the lower part of it is present (see plate 4) as is the brick one. This strengthening of the southern side is explained by the fact that the pond or reservoir once extended to within a few meters of the Dovecote. The ground here would naturally be wetter and thus more unstable and susceptible to subsidence, thus the need to strengthen it with these additions.

Dovecotes were often built near to a source of water as this would provide a relatively safe place for the birds to drink, sometimes these ponds were actually 'stews' or fish ponds of a manorial complex. It is plausible that the pond at the source of the Bourne stream was also used in such a way.

The pond was contained, more or less as we see it today, by the works carried out by the Waters family around 1842 and thus we can assume that both of these buttresses date from or before this time. However, the evidence from the excavation in Trench 2 would seem to show that this area to the south of the building was used as a yard and had buildings on it before the 1842 improvements.

Since becoming a formal reservoir the ground near the Dovecote still floods, but the subsoils themselves are far drier than ever before. Evidence of pond silts within Trench 2, would therefore likely to predate this formal restriction of the pond.

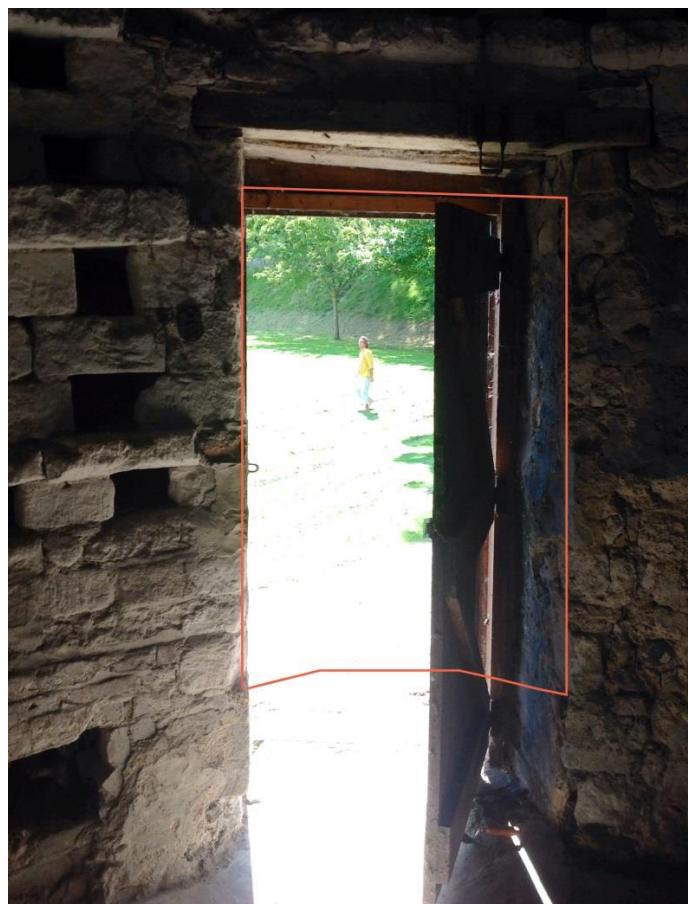
The door of the Dovecote also merits some further comment. Early entrances to these buildings were low, around four feet⁷, probably to minimise the silhouette caused by

⁷Hansell P & J *Doves and Dovecotes* 1988

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someone entering the building (which was said to scare the pigeons) and also to improve security but later post medieval Dovecotes, particularly those from the Eighteenth Century tend to have a more usual sized entrance that is often quite decorative. The present door on the Motcombe Dovecote is the pretty standard 6 feet 5 inches (or 2 meters) and a quick look at the exterior surround (being yellow ‘London’ type brick of no earlier than the late Eighteenth Century) shows that it is not contemporary with the rest of the building. Indeed if the door aperture is examined, the interior face betrays the fact that it has been lengthened at the bottom by as much as 0.5m. This interior face shows wear (see Plate 7) from a tight fitting door opening against a stone jamb at a level currently 0.53m above the floor level. The block below this jamb appears to be contemporary with the original door and shows none of the same wear, indicating that it was never subject to such abrasion because it was below door level. If the floor level as it is now was part of the original design, this would mean a considerable step down which is not particularly unusual. But there is some evidence, by way of a block of sandstone just under 0.5m tall and 0.2m wide that stands to the west of the door and a removed corresponding block on the east, that there may have supported a wooden platform or even complete floor at this level.

Plate 7: The door of the Dovecote with the original size marked in red. The wear to the chalk jamb can be seen to the bottom left, ‘original’ masonry of the step just below it and damage caused by replacing the door lintels top centre.



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The present door lintel looks to have been replaced on a number of occasions and the chalk masonry on either side has been blocked and repaired. This would indicate that although the height of the door (as opposed to the bottom length) has not been altered the construction of it has been. More recent brickwork has been used to front the doorway, presumably as a result of the alterations, but like the rest of the building, this appears to be phased and some early post medieval tile and brickwork seems to be surmounted by much later Nineteenth Century ceramic building material.

Flooring of Dovecotes can vary but usually they have been made of the same materials as the rest of the building. Also a wooden floor may have been vulnerable to ‘rat-attack’ and therefore replaced post 1730. The present floor is not much help in dating the building as it is an amalgam of repairs in a variety of mortars and concretes. A carefully excavated section cut through this may present further information on phasing.

The sandstone block is itself sitting on three clay floor tiles that would appear to be of a post medieval date and this throws up another potential use for this and its opposite, now missing, partner. In order to collect the young birds from the nests, ladders had to be used (or a dangerous scramble up the walls) but this was time consuming so a system was devised where a central pivoting post was fitted with a horizontal wooden arm (or two) which then held a ladder. This device is known as a *Potence* was particularly efficient when used in round Dovecotes such as the one in Motcombe.⁸ Although many sources believe that this was a system used from the time of the earliest Dovecotes, the evidence from Britain would suggest that there were none operating before the mid Sixteenth Century. Although the present floor and roof structure (which is fairly new) shows no evidence of a Potence, these two supports may just be all that remains of this structure.

Overall we have evidence that the original door was no more than 1.30m (just over four feet) tall, an indicator that we are dealing with an older style of Dovecote, an enlarged door was present by at least 1850 and a possible Potence was being used in the post medieval period (1600+?).

As we have already surmised, it is very likely that the roof of the Motcombe Dovecote has been repaired and probably entirely replaced in the past as would be expected if the building is as old as we believe. The weathering of the chalk would point to it being at least partly roofless but there is other evidence that points to replacements being made.

Firstly, by looking at surviving images of the Motcombe Dovecote, we can see that a dormer or projecting window was in place in 1909 and intriguingly that the map of 1636 also seems to show a dormer window (see Figure 2 below) on the building. Dormer's were fairly common from the post medieval period and were used to light the otherwise dingy interior of the Dovecote and make gathering the young birds easier. Dormer's may also have acted as the entrance for the pigeons and fitted with slats or shutters that could be closed with ropes from inside the building.

In the photo of 1909, but interestingly not visible in the painting of the same date or Budgen's image published in 1912, there is even some indication that a *cupola* (a roof top

⁸Hansell P & J *Doves and Dovecotes* 1988 Millstream Books, Bath

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turret with entrance holes for the birds) may have been present. However this may just be an optical illusion and actually be a mass of ivy! The 1636 image, though by no means an exact representation of the building, does not show a cupola and it would seem more likely that a dormer or even eaves level entrance was provided for the birds.

Just below the eaves of the building are around four courses of brickwork that sit directly on top of the chalk and flint structure of the building. This too appears to represent a number of phases of construction; the earliest is likely to date from the Eighteenth Century and the latest from the middle of the Twentieth. Further inspection would undoubtedly add detail to this part of the Dovecotes history and should be carried out prior to any building works.

The entire roof seems to have been replaced at some point post 1909 with the sad demise of the dormer and a date of 1931 is tantalisingly chalked on one of the cross beams. No record of a replacement roof being ordered has been found in the Council Minutes for 1931 or for that matter a few years either side of this date. One explanation is that the roof was replaced (minus the dormer) shortly after 1909 but that further minor repairs were carried out in 1931 but again, at present, this is conjecture.

Although the present roof is deteriorating due to the loss of some tiles, Capital Money has been allocated by Eastbourne Borough Council for its' further repair this year (2014). The author will certainly be taking a more detailed look at the structure once scaffolding has been erected for this purpose.

CONCLUSIONS

A Conjectural Timeline of the development of Motcombe Dovecote

Early 1300's – A chalk and flint dovecote is built as part of an early Eastbourne Manor, centred on Motcombe.

1339 - Death of Lord of the Manor, Giles Badlesmere, "Pigeonry" valued at 6 Shillings and 8 Pence but manor in disrepair.

1422 - Death of John Baron De Roos "Site of the Manor on which are two chambers, a pantry and a kitchen and a Dovecote worth nothing beyond outgoings." The Dovecote is ruinous and roofless at this point.

1550's – Selwyn-Parker Family take over the manor and the Dovecote is reroofed and internally repaired with chalk blocks. A Potence added as part of the renovation of the building.

1636 – Dovecote appears on the map of Eastbourne, showing a dormer for the pigeons to enter, a door and also two windows, for which there is no evidence.

1730's – Following the spread of the Brown Rat, the bottom three rows of nest boxes are blocked, perching ledge removed and walls plastered smooth. A possible wooden floor was removed and replaced with rubble and clunch. Some reinforcing of the foundations externally.

1785 – A drawing by Grimm records the Dovecote looking much as it does today but without the surrounding terrace (probably!)

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Early 1800's - Brick buttress added to strengthen the southern side of the building.

1817 – The Dovecote is shown on the Figg map as a square building with a boundary running up to and beyond it. It is not known whether these were actually walls at this time.

1821 – Motcombe is leased to the Waters family for the next 70 or so years who carry out landscaping of the area and turn the area around the spring and pond into a garden around 1842. Motcombe Farm is also altered around this time, with the main Farmhouse being rebuilt after 1817 away from the complex to the north east.

1870 – 1899 OS Maps record the Dovecote within the farm yard with building ranges on the west and north. Walls join the building to the south west and east forming a boundary to the farmyard but leaving the actual doorway outside this complex. (See Figure 6, below)

1909 – The majority of the farm buildings have been cleared, leaving the Dovecote standing alone. The resulting area is gifted to the Eastbourne Corporation for use as a public pleasure garden. Dovecote used as a gardener's bothy and folly.

1910 – The OS Map records the changes, including the layout of the roads to the north of the Dovecote. Walls are still recorded adjoining the Dovecote to the south west and east. (See Figure 7 below)

1920 – The OS Map shows the walls mentioned above to have been removed. The general Park layout is very similar to today.

1930 – Dovecote used as a bothy and occasional 'lock-up' for unruly children. Sometime before 1940, the roof is replaced and internal repairs carried out. Stone steps are replaced with the present concrete ones.

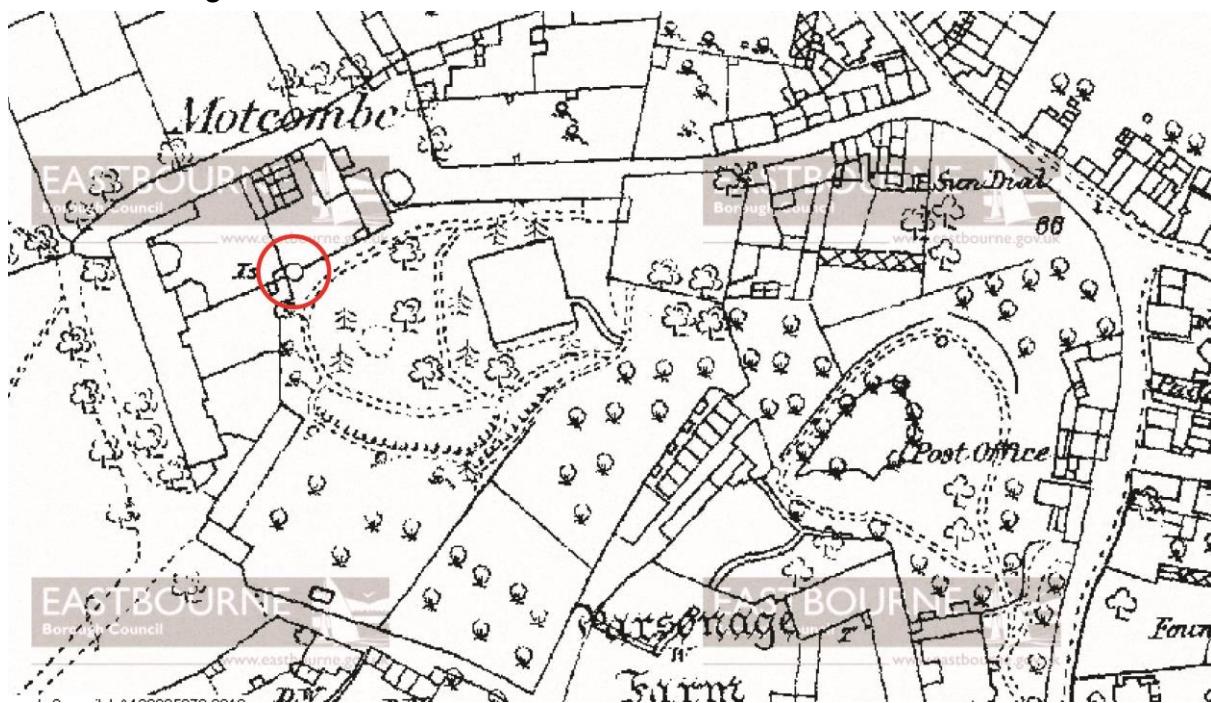
1950-2000 – Unsympathetic internal repairs carried out sporadically.

2013 – Eastbourne Heritage Service carries out investigative excavation.

2014-15 – Roof repairs carried out by Eastbourne Borough Council

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Figure 6: Motcombe Farm in 1870, the Dovecote is circled in Red



The Timeline above is based on the evidence from the written histories, archaeological investigations and architectural evaluations carried out as part of this project. It is there to be questioned and prompt further examination of this building and its environs.

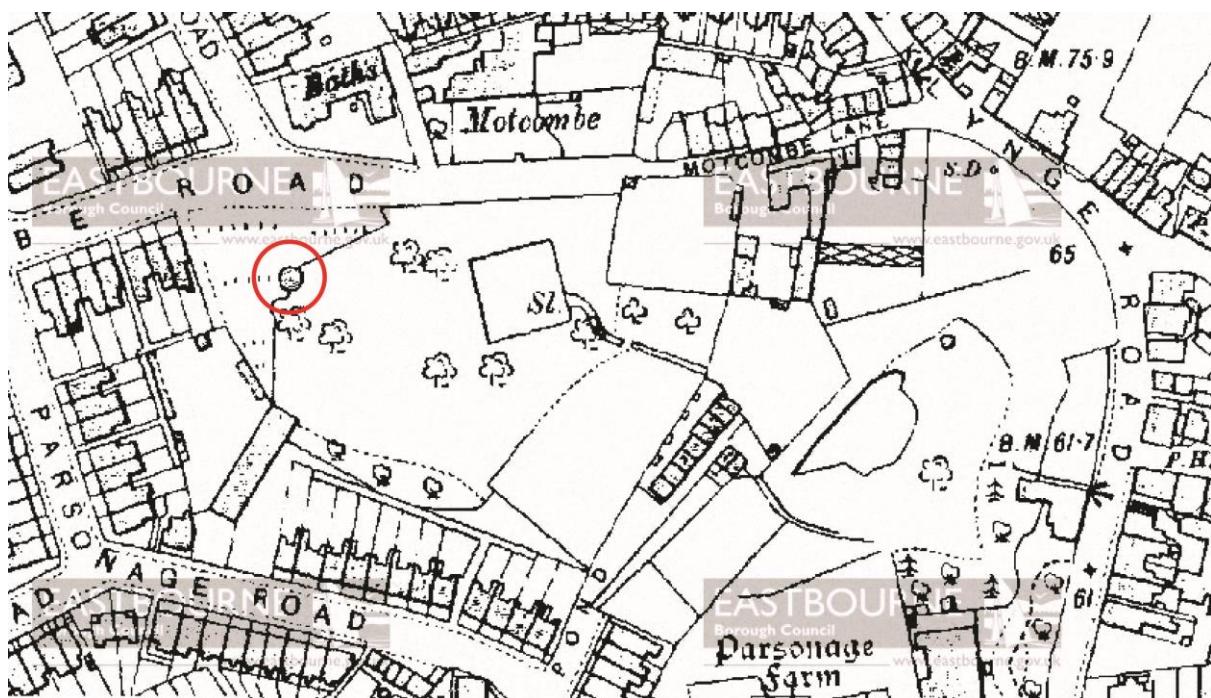
Some of the conclusions suggested in this report are open to speculation. For example, that repairs were carried out to the interior of the structure at a fairly early date is fairly certain, but when exactly they were begun is open to question.

By reading the histories slightly differently one may decide that the structure was completely rebuilt in the period when the three manors of Eastbourne were established in the last quarter of the Sixteenth Century and this is certainly possible.

The results of the excavations of 2013 give us a tantalising glimpse of how the immediate area surrounding the Dovecote may have been used including an unexpected structure that seems to be contemporary with an earlier phase of possibly medieval development. It has also told us the story of how this building was regarded as important in the last two centuries where frequent repairs have ensured it is still standing today. It has also been noted that further investigation may yet reveal evidence of foundation levels untouched by the subsequent interventions noted in Trench A.

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Figure 7: Motcombe Gardens in 1910, the Dovecote is circled in red



The dating of vernacular structures such as Dovecotes is notoriously difficult but what can be said with certainty is that this building is substantially older than the mid-Eighteenth Century, when the lower tiers of nesting boxes were blocked as a result of the spread of the Brown Rat and that the map evidence shows a standing building of at least 1636. Then by looking at all the rest of the evidence, including the simple internal arrangement and shape of the nest boxes together with the historical records and other features noted in the *Discussion of Architectural Features* this author is happy to suggest that the Dovecote that stands today is a Fourteenth Century structure, redeveloped substantially in the Sixteenth Century with repairs in later periods. If this is the case, then the Dovecote represents the only surviving part of what may have once been the original manorial complex of Eastbourne, or more correctly for the period Bourne or Burne, giving even more historical significance to this building.

That this building continues to be appreciated as an important Heritage Asset is evidenced by the works funded by Eastbourne Borough Council to commence soon on the roof repairs.

Following this it would be advantageous to carry out a full archaeological survey of the building and undertake some more limited archaeological interventions to corroborate the evidence provided in this report. Further research should also be undertaken to put the Dovecote in its historic context within the original farm complex as its present situation, though picturesque, tells us little of its place within the social history of the Town.

THANKS

Thanks must be given to all the volunteers who took part in both the excavation and subsequent post excavation processes as part of this project. This team continues to be integral in the investigation of the archaeology of Eastbourne and in giving the Heritage Service such stalwart help bringing the past to life for the local community.

Thanks also to the then Parks and Gardens team within Eastbourne Borough Council and in particular to Gareth Williams in allowing this excavation to take place and to Old Town Councillor, Carolyn Heaps for her support and encouragement.

We are also grateful to the Friends of Motcombe Gardens and the local community who continue to ensure that this lovely part of Eastbourne is cared for, appreciated and above all protected as an important green resource within the town.

Thanks to Lawrence Stevens for his drawing of the 1636 Map of Bourne, redrawn here by the author.

Special thanks go to Maisie Foster who, as part of her University studies, has helped put this report together and compiled the data that form the bulk of the finds reports. May her new found interest in post medieval CBM long continue!

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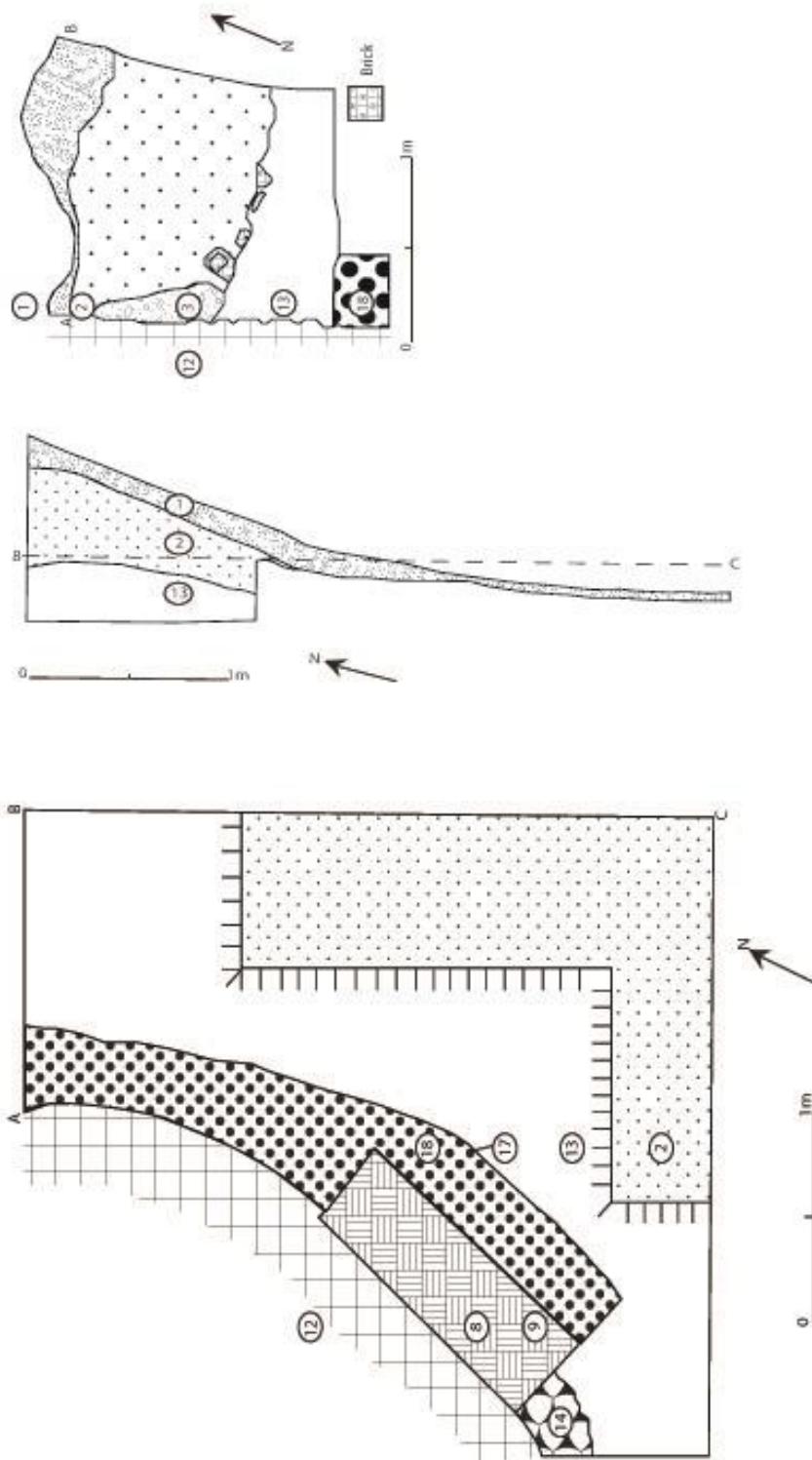
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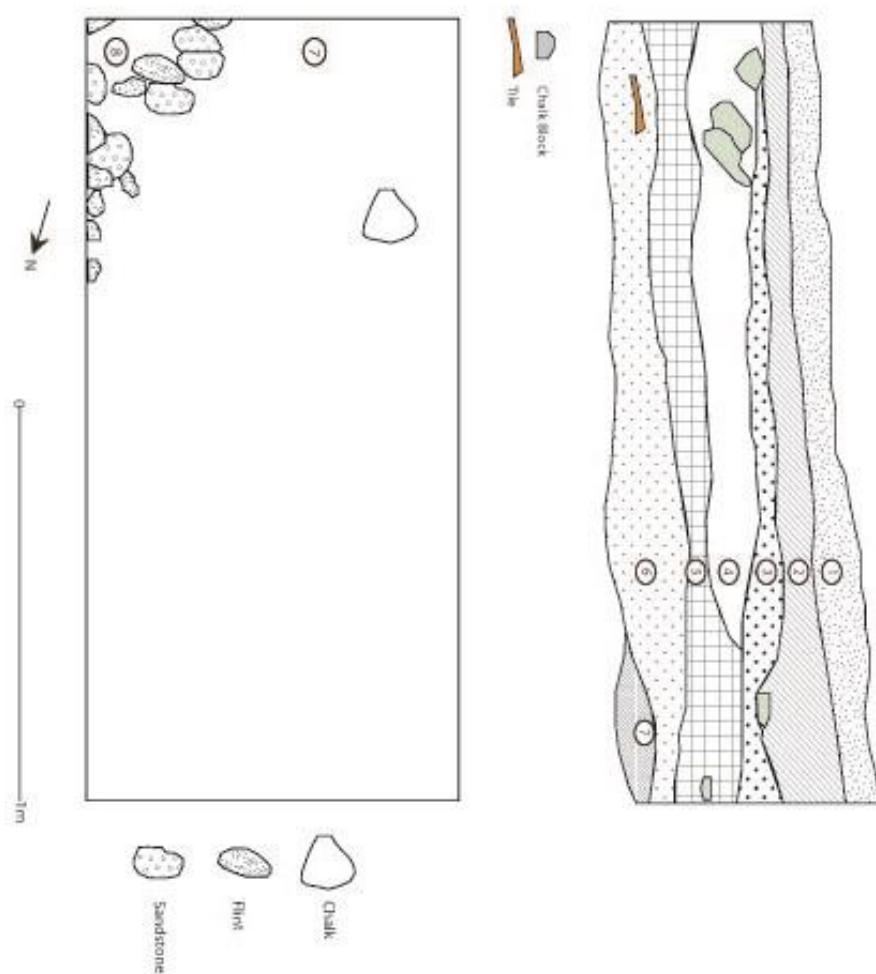
Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Figure 8 – Plan and Sections of Trench A



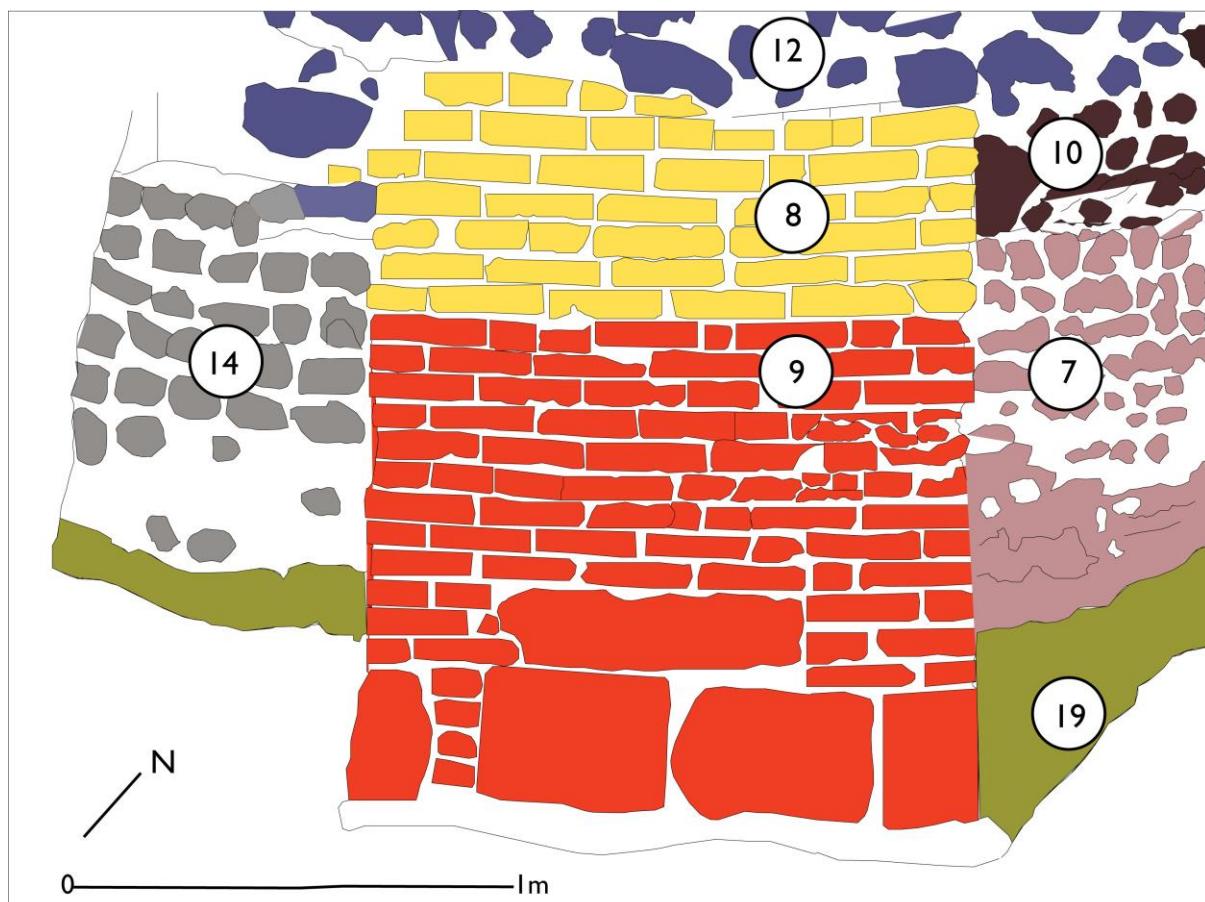
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Figure 9: Plan and Section of Trench B



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Figure 10: Drawing of the Brick Buttress, Trench A

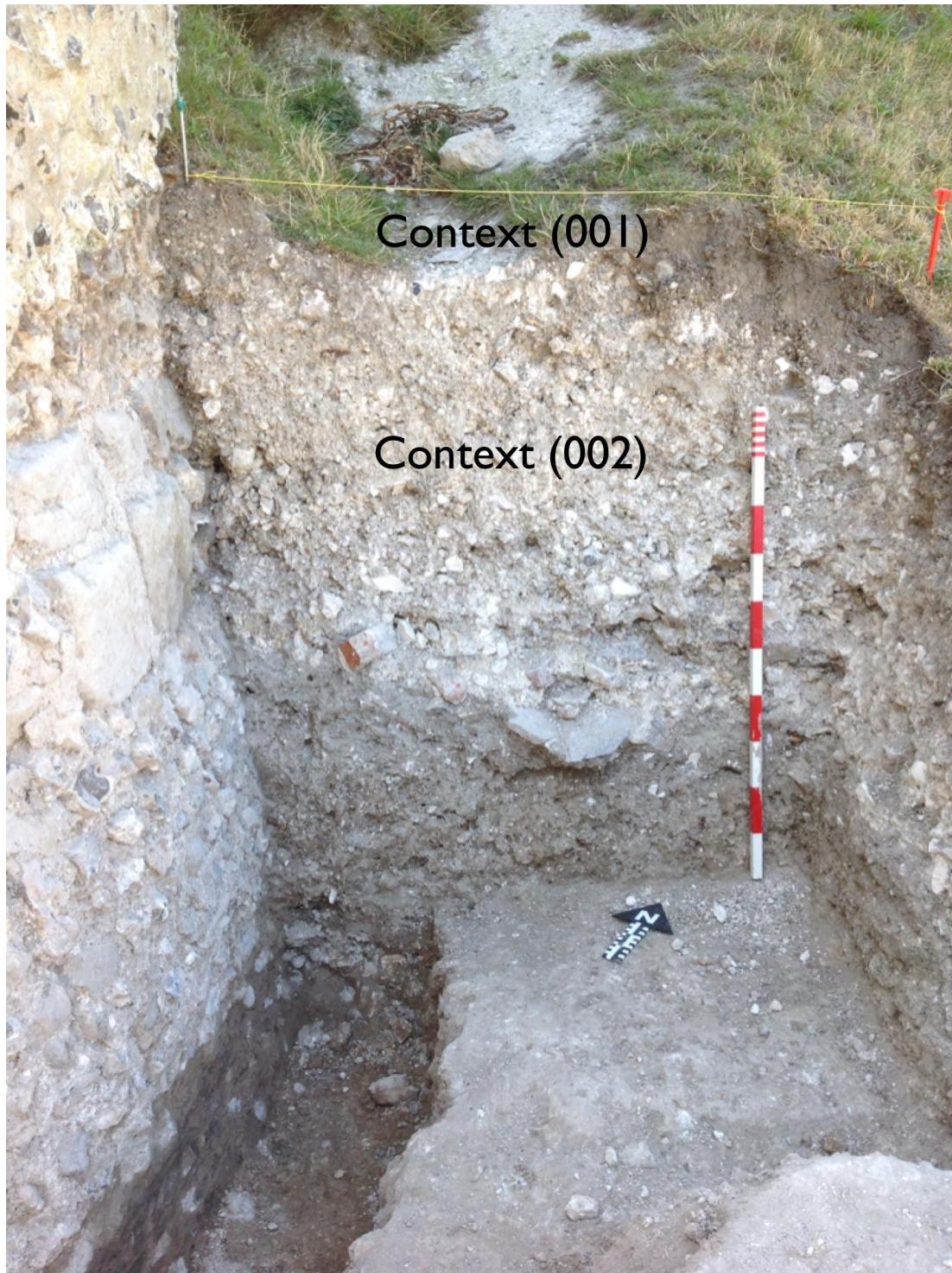


Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 8: Motcombe Dovecote today from the south east

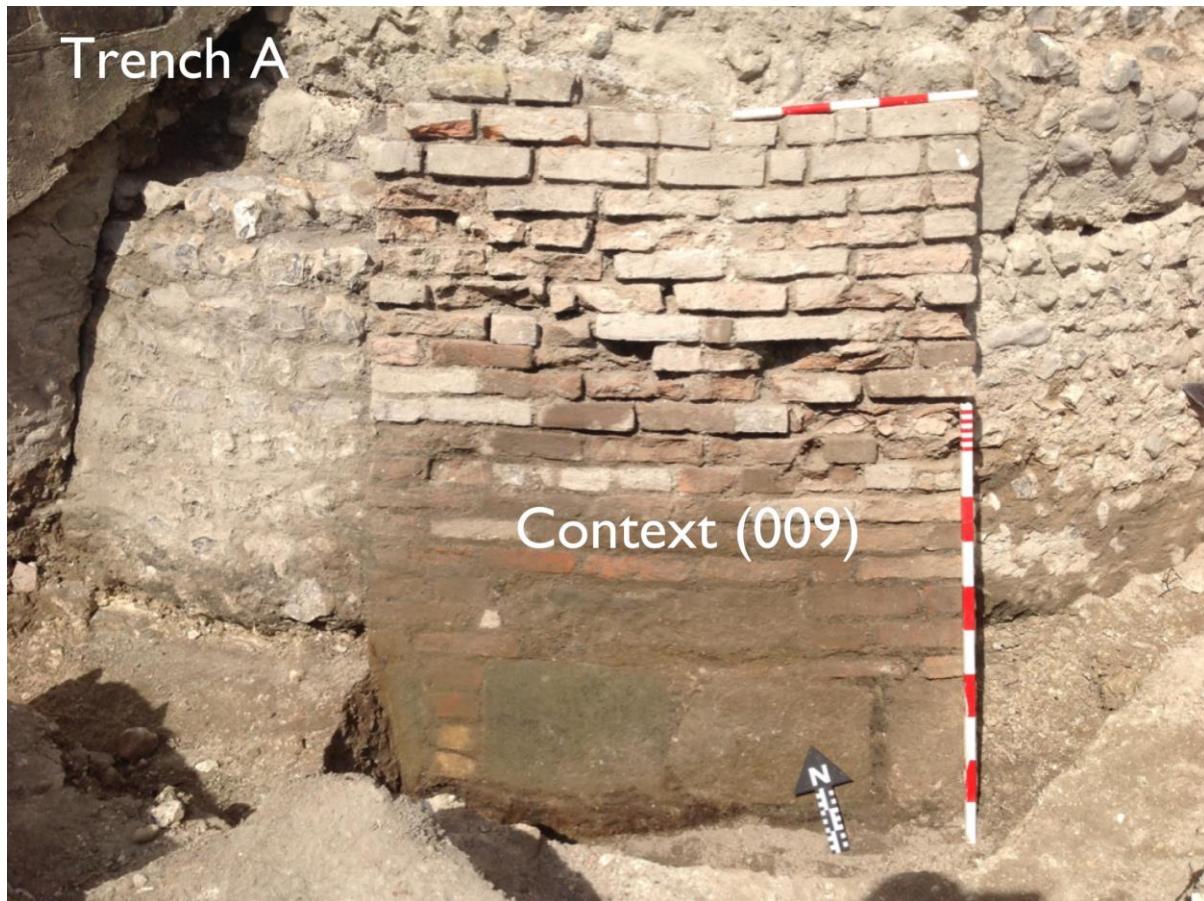


Plate 9 : Trench A Contexts 1 & 2



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 10: Trench A Context 9, the brick buttress



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 11 – Trench A Context 11, the dressed sandstone blocks



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 12: Trench A Context 18



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 13 – Trench B Context 4



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 14 : Trench B Context 8 in the far left hand corner



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 15 : Trench A, phases of repair and reconstruction around the stairs



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 16 : Phases of repair around the stairs and to the west of the brick buttress



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 17: Trench A the base of the buttress showing re-used greensand blocks and yellow brick fill (bottom left)



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 18 : The brick buttress showing how it has been cut into the body of the Dovecote



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 19 : Interior of the Dovecote, two of the nesting holes



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 20 : Interior of the Dovecote, possible floor or platform support



Motcombe Dovecote – Ruins, Rats and Regeneration

Plate 21 : Photograph of the Dovecote from Motcombe Lane 1909

