

9. Recommendations For The Future

Dig loads of holes and find some stuff.

The enclosure

One of the primary concerns should be to firmly establish the limits of the enclosure. The geophysical survey undertaken by Dr Gregory and Dr Openshaw have given indications of the ditch to the east. However, excavation must be conducted to clarify these suggestions.

Using the suspected alignment of the ditch, the enclosure encompasses 2.2 hectares (5.5 acres). At least 50 percent of this area unavailable for excavation as it is occupied by either the churchyard, dwellings, roads and paths.

The Internal Features

Of the land within the enclosure available for excavation, about 80m² has been excavated to date, less than 1 percent. It is clear from this that more work must be done within the enclosure to identify the nature of the internal features.

It is possible that if there are more postholes relating to a structure formed with that found in 2001, [035], that these may show on geophysical area surveys. Such a survey on the lawn areas in the locale may indicate their positions. However, as the areas involved are small, it may be difficult to identify them.

The presence of crucible fragments and metalworking slag, likely to be Iron Age in date, indicate that industrial processes were being performed on site. Kilns and furnaces can be picked up well using magnetometry and should be employed within the Old Vicarage gardens to try and locate these.

The Clay Deposits

The excavations within the Old Vicarage Gardens during 2000 showed that the archaeology on the site is preserved more favourably within the clay deposits. In those areas where the upper soils lie directly on the bedrock the only features surviving are negative, ie cuts. There are no floor surfaces or structures present. Finding the extents of these deposits will enable a better strategy to be formulated in targeting specific questions and maximising the outcome of future excavations

The Artefacts

The information gathered from the thin section analysis will enable greater understanding of the distribution of wares and also give an insight into the economic system of the inhabitants at

Mellor during this period. If the pottery is produced from local clays and such wares are not represented in the region, then this suggests an isolated community. Should the clay source be from further afield, then this would support a system of trade between settlement groups. Further such work should be conducted on the diagnostic sherds found over the previous seasons. When more is known about the make up or the assemblage, it should be encouraged to publicise the material as a type series.

Trench 1

Following a minor collapse of the edges of Trench 1, it is strongly recommended that some reinforcement work is undertaken to prevent subsequent occurrences. This should be done primarily to ensure the safety of visitors, but also as finds recovered from the fallen material cannot be assigned to a particular context, results in less information regarding the site being to be gathered from them. The southeastern edge of excavation has been reinforced by Professor Hearle with a dry-stone wall and a similar function could be employed to the northwestern edge. The edges through the ditch are more problematical as it is hoped that the sections will remain visible.

The Peripheries

Outside of the enclosure, an extensive geophysical survey should be conducted. There are a number of areas which have, as of yet, not been investigated but may contain archaeological features. These include;

areas beyond the ditch on all sides, where additional defences may be positioned

the plateau to the west, north of Knowle Farm

the high point of the hill to the east

the lawns of the dwellings on site

the southern part of the field to the northeast