PAST PARTICIPATE

Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme
Village Test Pitting Programme Report

Prepared by

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Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme

Quantock Hills National Landscape

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Document Information Sheet

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Summary

Past Participate CIC led a Village Test Pitting Programme for the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme. Bicknoller, Crowcombe, Nether Stowey, and Stogumber were investigated, with the fieldwork taking place over four weekends between October 2021 and April 2024.

Overall, the project directly engaged 286 people in the digging of 39 archaeological test pits. Volunteers also took part in two finds washing sessions, which helped to process the substantial artefact assemblage recovered from the test pits. Altogether, this collection comprised 4651 sherds of pottery (19367g), five flint/quartzite flakes (36g), 509 fragments of ceramic building material (25395g), 107 pieces of stone rubble (35655g), 1074 lumps of mortar and plaster (9445g), 30 chunks of concrete (1316g), 489 fragments of roof slate (12149g), seven pieces of flint gravel (16g), seven sherds of porcelain tile (91g), 440 shards of glass bottles or jars (246 clear (1522g), 146 green (1180g), seven brown (43g), 41 blue (68g)), 228 pieces of clear window glass (875g), four lumps of putty (7g), 38 bits of flat green glass (170g), fifteen slivers of flat white glass (4g), five fragments from aluminium or tin cans (39g), four bottle tops (49g), 129 handmade nails (1653g), 94 modern nails (622g), 36 modern screws (63g), two iron bolts (51g), an iron door catch (7g), five metal washers (16g), a horseshoe (57g), a metal light fitting (69g), 86 chunks of iron (2382g), four lumps of lead (48g), eleven small fragments of copper (1g), a bullet casing (3g), a brass shotgun ferrel (the base of the cartridge) (5g), 47 lumps of slag (993g), one piece of vitrified material (20g), 394 pieces of coal (1208g), 92 fragments of oil shale (457g), 469 animal bones (1947g), 70 mollusc shells (153g), six slate pencils (12g), three buckles (85g), five buttons (20g), a thimble (4g), 20 fragments of clay pipe bowl (67g) and 228 sections of clay pipe stem (388g), six pieces of plastic (16g), two batteries (24g), two beads (3g), a ceramic bust (15g), a lead toy figure (3g), three marbles (15g), and a piece from a plastic K'nex toy (1g).

This report presents the results of the investigations in each of the villages and provides an assessment of the finds made in each test pit. The discoveries made by the Village Test Pitting Programme are then interpreted, discussed and put into context. This provides the first evidence for specific episodes of human activity in some of the villages and highlights several themes apparent in the data:

- A small quantity struck flint, and stone was recovered from test pits in Bicknoller, Crowcombe, and Nether Stowey. It represents the first direct evidence for late Mesolithic to early Bronze Age prehistoric activity within the areas of landscape that are now overlain by each of these villages.

- Medieval pottery was discovered in all four villages and provided evidence for the occupation of these settlements between the 11th and the early 14th centuries. At least six types of pottery fabric were found in Nether Stowey indicating that it was fully integrated into regional trade networks during this period.

- No later 14th or 15th century artefactual material was identified in any of the villages. It is possible that this absence is a direct consequence of climatic deterioration and plagues, which substantially reduced the population and had significant economic impacts.

- The test pits recovered evidence relating to the pottery industry that operated in Nether Stowey from around 1550-80 until at least the mid-18th century; 879 sherds of this West Somerset red earthenware were recovered, including decorated fragments and discarded waste products, such as kiln furniture. There were also possible indications that this industry may have been in production for longer than was previously believed, with forms attributed to the 18th century continuing to be made well into the following century.

- The different types and proportions of red earthenware found in each of the villages suggest that there were highly localised trade patterns along the western margin of the Quantock Hills. Other types of pottery are indicative of wider trading networks, which may have been centred upon Bristol.

Acknowledgements

Past Participate would like to offer thanks to everyone who took part in or contributed to the Village Test Pitting Programme. We couldn't have carried out the work without the assistance and enthusiasm of the staff of the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme and the many volunteers and landowners who took part over the four years that the investigations took place.

We are indebted to Dan Broadbent, the Historic Heritage Officer for the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme, for his contribution throughout the project. Dan spent many hours visiting properties in Bicknoller, Crowcombe, Nether Stowey, and Stogumber to find people willing to host test pits, recruit volunteers, and secure a base of operations in each village. He helped with the logistics, ensured warm drinks were available in the village halls, and even managed to find time to help excavate or record the test pits. Thank you, Dan.

Our thanks are also extended to Jon Barrett, the Community Engagement & Volunteering Officer for the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme, who provided additional support over the four weekends that the fieldwork took place, and to Bob Croft, Head of Historic Environment and Estates for the South West Heritage Trust, who provided valuable insights into the development of this landscape and helped identify artefacts during his visits.

We also gratefully acknowledge the considerable assistance and endeavour of our professional volunteers, Heidi Archer and Ant Haskins who were a constant presence in all four villages. They provided help, encouragement and information to our participants, many of whom had never dug before, and assisted with the recording and backfilling.

We are also indebted to Antony Jones of The Local Film Company, who generously offered his time and expertise to produce a series of short films that outlined the processes involved in the excavation and recording of a test pit.

Ultimately, the Village Test Pitting Programme could not have taken place without the interest, encouragement, and assistance of the landowners who generously gave us access to their gardens and the hard work and enthusiasm of the many volunteers who assisted with the excavation, regardless of the vagaries of the British weather. Consequently, Anne, Hayley, and Jim would like to express our gratitude to everyone who made the project such a success: Lynne Abbot, Avril and Eddie Allen, Beccy, Matt Beedle, Diane Blake, Caroline Bosley, Mary ter Braak, Jess Rogers-Brown, Lucie Tuck-Brown, Mike Bryant, The Carew Arms, Jean Challender, Philip Comer, Ruth Conley, Lisa Cornish, Jonny Davey, Dee Davies, Kathryn Davies, Emma Ellis, Siobhan and William Elson, Victoria Farmer and family, Carole and Mike Fawcett, Sandie Fenech, Heather Fulford, Deirdre Gascoign, Richard Gibbs, Judith Greig and family, Judy and Rob Hayes, Emily Hecscher, Michele Higgs, Samantha Hobbs, Hazel and Martin Hole, Chloe Holt, Leslie Bowditch and the staff of Nether Stowey Primary School, Sally Holland, William Husband, Jenny Jenkins, Martin Kitchen, Ian, Nina and Jack Lewis, Anita Maney, Trudi Mansfield, Denise Moyse, Siobhan Nelson, Nigel Phillips, Sara Pilcher, Roberto and Lu Potter, Sue and Bobby Powley, Louisa Rastrick, Ali Rickets, Richard Rolls, Jacob Rose, Ralph Sandoe, Caroline Saunders, Claire Tacey and Ben, Pat Thompson, Vanessa and Alan, Nicolette Williams, Brenda Willcock, Veronica Willcocks, Becca and Ben Wooton.

Finally, we would also like to express our appreciation to the places that provided us with a temporary base during each of the weekends: Bicknoller Village Hall; Church House, Crowcombe; St Mary's Church Centre, Nether Stowey; and Stogumber Village Hall.

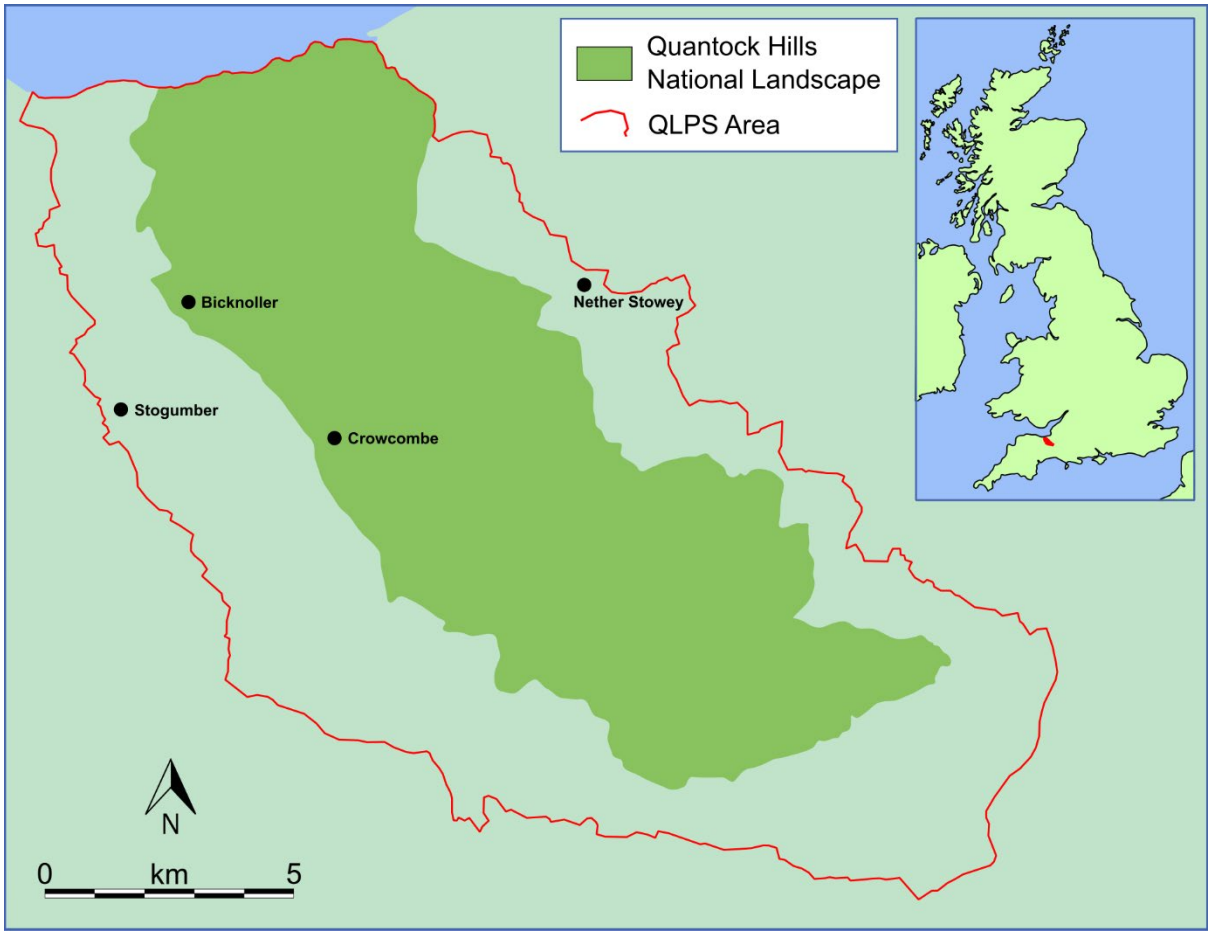

Figure 1: Location of the villages investigated during the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme Village Test Pitting Programme.

1 Introduction

Past Participate CIC led a four-year Village Test Pitting Programme, which gathered archaeological information from four villages surrounding the Quantock Hills: Bicknoller (2021), Crowcombe (2022), Nether Stowey (2023), and Stogumber (2024). The investigations were conducted on behalf of the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS), a five-year programme of activities managed by the Quantock Hills National Landscape (formerly the Quantock Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty), which was funded by a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant (NLHF) and other partners.

The QLPS included a diverse range of projects to increase health and wellbeing, knowledge, and skills. The Village Test Pitting Programme was a component of Project 3.5 “Understanding the Landscape”, which aimed to involve the local community in enhancing our understanding of the landscape history of the Quantock Hills and provide participants with experience of archaeological fieldwork.

This report presents the results of the investigations that took place in each of the villages and provides an assessment of the finds made in each test pit. The discoveries made by the test pitting programme are then interpreted, discussed and put into context.

2 Volunteer Engagement

Between 2021 and 2024 Past Participate and the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme (QLPS) worked together to directly engage 286 people in the digging of 39 archaeological test pits in four villages surrounding the Quantock Hills. This was achieved over four weekends of excavation, one school day, and two finds washing sessions.

2.1 Aims and Objectives

The Village Test Pitting Scheme was designed to provide a high quality and accessible experience in archaeological test pitting. It formed part of project 3.5 of the QLPS, "Understanding the Landscape". This aimed to involve the community in improving our understanding of the landscape history of the Quantock Hills through archaeological fieldwork.

Test pitting is a proven technique for engaging communities in archaeological research. Its effectiveness at 'introducing new people to archaeology and their local heritage' has been demonstrated by Lewis (2014). Test pits are also an appropriate technique for conducting archaeological research in settlements that are currently occupied. When conducted systematically, they enable sampling in areas where other methods cannot be implemented.

By excavating test pits in villages around the margins of the Quantock Hills, the project expected to engage at least 180 people in practical fieldwork, with the result that local people would learn about the archaeology and history of the landscape. It was also hoped that their involvement might have a positive wellbeing impact, would stimulate greater engagement with archaeology, and potentially encourage further volunteering in the Quantock landscape and with the organisations who help to manage it.

2.2 Method

Past Participate follow an approach to community archaeology devised by Roberts (Roberts, Gale and Welham 2020). This focuses attention upon four areas: *Who* the participants are, *Why* they are involved, the *Archaeology*, and *How* they intend to conduct community archaeology - i.e., the interactions between participants.

The project taught local people, and those from further afield, how to dig a $1m^2$ archaeological test pit. Some also had the opportunity to take part in finds washing and in test pit recording. They were able to learn about what their individual test pits could tell us about the past and how their results contribute towards wider archaeological research goals.

In advance of each weekend, the QLPS recruited landowners and volunteers through social media, parish newsletters, and door knocking. Each test pit host or participant was given a 'what to expect' letter in advance of the event. This outlined the archaeological method and rationale, basic health and safety, and logistics. Five short videos that complement this guide were also produced in conjunction with The Local Film Company and are available to watch at https://www.pastparticipate.co.uk/things-to-watch.

Each test pitting weekend comprised:

- an initial group briefing to discuss the archaeological background, test pit locations, and methodology including a reminder of health and safety information.
- test pit excavation in locations throughout each village.
- an end of day briefing providing a summary of results and a chance for participants to provide feedback, along with a feedback questionnaire.
- a finds washing station set up at the base of operations.

An additional day was spent in Nether Stowey digging test pits in the grounds of the primary school. Each class spent half an hour excavating and half an hour looking at artefacts in the classroom. The children were encouraged to think about the materials and the purpose of each object and were provided with an activity sheet to complete.

Extra finds washing sessions took place to clean artefacts from Crowcombe and Nether Stowey and all participants were invited to join in.

As part of the evaluation process participants were asked to return a feedback questionnaire. Thirty responses were received and the data from these, along with informal qualitative information gathered during the fieldwork, were used to write a summary and evaluation report for each weekend. These reports were distributed to the QLPS so that reflexive evaluation could take place, and any recommended improvements could be implemented.

2.3 Participants

Three Past Participate staff were involved in delivering the project, and they were assisted by two professional volunteers and Dan Broadbent, the Historic Heritage Officer for the QLPS. This meant that project participants were supported by six highly experienced field and community archaeologists.

Village	Test Pits	Total People Engaged
Bicknoller	10	50
Crowcombe	8	50
Nether Stowey	14	168
Stogumber	7	18
Total	**39**	**286**

Table 1: The number of people that participated in each village.

In total the project engaged 286 people (Table 1). This was over 100 more than the initial project aim (see 2.1, above).

The age of participants who completed the evaluation questionnaire is shown in Table 2. This data only relates to 25 respondents, so does not provide a complete picture of the age range of volunteers. For example, at least a dozen children were involved in each of the villages and the investigations within the grounds of Nether Stowey Primary School resulted in 144 additional school children participating in the project. When asked about ethnicity, 27 out of 30 people responded that they were White British/English, one said that they were 'rather mixed', and two did not answer.

Age range	Number
34 and under	0
35-44	3
45-54	6
55-64	4
65-74	9
75+	3

Table 2: Participant ages (collated from all the villages).

Overall, the project struggled to engage landowners willing to host test pits in their gardens. In Bicknoller we had significant interest from homeowners happy to host test pits, but the majority were not able to excavate due to age or physical limitation. In Crowcombe, Nether Stowey, and Stogumber there was a lack of uptake from people willing to host investigations in their gardens, which resulted in test pits being excavated in public locations, such as Church House, The Carew Arms, and recreational areas to boost numbers and distribution. This provided an unexpected benefit, as passersby were much more likely to be engaged in these test pits than those tucked away in back gardens. Consequently, this methodology resulted in engagement with a wider audience than would otherwise have happened.

The QLPS recruited additional volunteers, with a specific archaeological interest, to help dig the test pits and many also took part in the larger organised excavations undertaken as part of the wider QLPS activities. This resulted in 43 additional people becoming engaged in this research process. Many of these volunteers

returned throughout the Village Test Pitting Programme and the development of their archaeological skills and experience was readily apparent.

We had expected that many participants would have limited prior experience of archaeological fieldwork but that they would be partaking for their own interest. This was especially the case for the garden owners, but the additional QLPS volunteers came with increasing levels of experience and were keen to learn more about archaeology and the research process. Nine people who responded to the evaluation questionnaires had not been involved in archaeological research before.

"No previous experience. Always wanted to. Thank you for the opportunity."

There were three main additional outcomes beyond the archaeological research. These were:

1. People were able to learn about the history of the villages.

In response to the evaluation questionnaire, 22 out of 25 people identified that they had learnt something about the history of the Quantock Hills landscape. Five mentioned that they were looking forward to reading the report and expected that they would learn something:

"It was interesting to know a bit more about the industry that went on here such as the glove making and textile industry and that I could possibly relate the thimble found in my test pit to that. I will be interested to read the report when it is ready".

2. People were able to learn about the archaeological process.

Of the 30 respondents, 25 responded positively when asked if they had learnt anything about the archaeological process and methods:

"Yes [I learnt lots], was interesting to be introduced to the whole process and reasons for doing so".

"Yes – a better appreciation of how specific expertise helps build up the bigger picture".

3. People were able to socialise:

"I think we should be thanking you for taking so much trouble over us! You provided a fascinating insight into the development of this village. You were also delightful company and introduced me to some neighbours I had never met".

Improved wellbeing was also identified although not formally recorded. People enjoyed their time taking part in the project. Across all villages the average response to the evaluation question "On a scale of 1-5 how much did you enjoy the weekend?" was **4.8/5**.

"I enjoyed this much more than I expected to!"

3 Archaeological Aims and Objectives

The broader outcomes of this project sought to enhance current understandings of village development in the Quantock Hills National Landscape and its environs. The project also had the potential to identify features that might indicate foci of activity, which had not previously been identified.

Distinct research aims and objectives were identified for each of the villages:

3.1 Bicknoller

Test pitting had the potential to identify evidence of prehistoric activity within the area now occupied by the village of Bicknoller. This was most likely to take the form of artefacts, but sub-surface features or deposits could also have been encountered. Prehistoric material was most likely to be encountered along the margins of the small streams that pass through the village.

The test pitting programme also could also provide insights into the foundation and development of the village, as it is unclear when the initial settlement took place. The chronology and disposition of ceramic material could provide insights that would help to establish whether the village was an Anglo-Saxon or post-Conquest foundation. Artefact recovery could also provide insights into the character of the local economy and the changing patterns of regional and national trade.

3.2 Crowcombe

Test pits had the potential to identify evidence of prehistoric activity within Crowcombe. This was most likely to take the form of artefacts, but sub-surface features or deposits could also have been encountered. Prehistoric material was most likely to be encountered along the margins of the small streams that pass through the village between Crowcombe Court and Crowcombe Bridge.

The chronology and disposition of ceramic material could provide insights that would help to establish whether there was Roman or sub-Roman activity and whether this formed part of a continuum of occupation that extended into the early medieval period. Mid-9th century and early 10th century documents suggest that there were at least two late Anglo-Saxon estates in the parish (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985b). Gathercole produced maps identifying areas within Crowcombe with the potential for archaeological evidence of early medieval settlement (Gathercole 2002). Gathercole also noted that 'the exact limit and character of medieval development will only be ascertained by archaeological investigation. It is possible that the borough was quite intensively developed over a short period, in which case there may still be significant surviving archaeological deposits in the grounds of subsequent houses'. Consequently, the test pit survey sought to determine whether there was evidence for a rapid expansion of the settlement and whether this was confined to the area of the medieval borough.

Artefact recovery could also provide insights into the character of the local economy and the changing patterns of regional and national trade.

3.3 Nether Stowey

Test pitting had the potential to identify evidence of prehistoric activity within the area now occupied by Nether Stowey. This was most likely to take the form of artefacts, but sub-surface features or deposits could also have been encountered.

The test pit survey aimed to provide significant insights into the character and chronology of the medieval development of the settlement, which would help to establish whether it developed as a continuum of the pre-existing Anglo-Saxon settlement, or if it developed from separate foci surrounding the castle, at the south-west, and the Church of St Mary, at the east. Investigations within the burgage plots offered the potential to track the changing character of Nether Stowey through the medieval and post-medieval periods.

It was also possible that the test pits would identify materials associated with the putative medieval pottery industry, as well as products of the post-medieval kilns previously identified in the village (Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1970). Such discoveries had the potential to enhance knowledge of the chronology of this industry and the range and form of its products. Artefact recovery could also provide insights into other aspects of the local economy and the changing patterns of regional and national trade during the medieval and post-medieval periods.

3.4 Stogumber

Test pits had the potential to identify further evidence of prehistoric activity within Stogumber, a late Bronze Age socketed axe and an Iron Age loom weight having already been found within the village (Gathercole 2003b, 4; Wessex Archaeology 2003). Such discoveries were most likely to take the form of artefacts, but sub-surface features or deposits could also have been encountered.

Cropmark enclosures located to the west and north-west of the village are likely to date to the later prehistoric or Romano-British periods. This raised the possibility that evidence of Roman or sub-Roman settlement or activity could be identified within Stogumber, with the chronology and disposition of ceramic material potentially providing insights that would help to establish whether this formed a continuum of occupation that extended into the early medieval period.

There is strong evidence that there was a pre-Conquest settlement, with the pattern of land holding described in the Domesday Survey suggesting that Stogumber, then known as *Warverdinstoch*, was the centre of an extensive Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical estate that supported the minster church of St Mary (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985d). At some point after the Conquest the settlement was renamed and the minster estate was divided into two manors, Stogumber and Stogumber Rectory, the latter passing to the chapter of Wells Cathedral during the last quarter of the 13th century (ibid.). Despite its importance in the Anglo-Saxon period, Stogumber does not appear to have become a medieval borough, although it seems to have functioned as a local centre for the thriving wool trade. It may also have had a market at this time, but the earliest surviving charter dates to the 17th century. Investigations within the village core offered the potential to track the changing character of Stogumber throughout the later Anglo-Saxon and medieval periods.

Trade and industry diminished during the 19th century, but the town's fortunes were partially restored by the opening of Stogumber Brewery in 1840 and the West Somerset Railway in 1862. Artefact recovery could, therefore, provide insights into the character of the local economy and the changing patterns of regional and national trade.

4 Methodology

The test pitting programmes in Bicknoller, Crowcombe, and Stogumber each took place over a two-day weekend, with investigations carried out over 16th-17th October 2021, 8th-9th October 2022, and 27th-28th April 2024, respectively. The event in Nether Stowey was conducted over three days, from 20th-22nd October 2023, with the initial day focussing on test pits located in the grounds of Nether Stowey Church of England Primary School.

The location and number of 1m^2 test pits that were opened in each village was determined by the availability of landowners who were willing to participate in the investigations, together with the number of additional volunteers who were able to assist with the excavations. Consequently, the test pits were not systematically sited in any of the settlements. Nevertheless, comparable programs of 'randomly' located test pits have

demonstrated that they can provide valuable insights into the origins and development of currently occupied rural settlements (Lewis 2014).

Archaeological work, monitoring and recording was carried out in accordance with the Somerset Archaeological Handbook (South West Heritage Trust 2017) and with Past Participate procedures as set out below.

4.1 Test pit excavation

The procedure for excavating test pits was as follows:

- The location of each 1m square test pit was marked out and the turf (if present) was cut into squares and removed.
- Turf was stacked along the further edge of a square of plastic sheeting located adjacent to the test pit. Spoil was then deposited on the remainder of the plastic sheet. This process facilitated rapid and orderly backfilling of the test pit at the end of the excavation.
- Test pits were excavated in 10cm spits until any soil changes or distinct archaeological deposits were identified. Participants were asked to contact one of the supervisory staff if they noticed any changes in the colour or consistency of the deposit they were excavating.
- Deposits within the test-pits were hand-excavated in sequence.
- Artefacts identified during excavation were bagged as bulk finds, unless the attributes of an item warranted recording and recovery as a small find, in which case such items were bagged individually.
- The attributes of each test pit were recorded in accordance with the methodology in 4.2 below.

4.2 Recording

Each test pit was given a unique identification number.

- The profile and deposits revealed in each test pit were recorded using pro-forma test pit recording sheets.
- At least one section was drawn for each test pit.
- The location of archaeological deposits and features were recorded by means of measured plans and sections. Plans and sections used appropriate scales and recorded the OSGB datum height of all principal strata.
- Photographic records incorporated an identification board, scales, and a directional arrow, as appropriate.

4.3 Bulk and registered finds

All stratified and unstratified finds with the potential to elucidate the nature of on-site activity and site-formation processes were collected, washed on site, where possible, and bagged.

All bags were labelled with the project code, test pit number and context number. Initial handling and packaging conformed to best practice (Watkinson & Neale 1998).

5 Archaeological Overview of the Project Area

An outline synthesis of the known archaeology within the project area is provided below. More detailed historical descriptions of each settlement are presented in the relevant sections (see 6.2, 7.2, 8.2, and 9.2, below).

	Period	Date Range
Prehistoric	Palaeolithic	c. 800,000 BCE – c.10,500 BCE
	Mesolithic	c.10,500 BCE – c. 4,000 BCE
	Neolithic	c. 4.000 BCE – c. 2,400 BCE
	Bronze Age	c. 2,400 BCE – c. 800 BCE
	Iron Age	c. 800 BCE – c. AD 43
Historic	Romano-British	c. AD 43 – c. AD 410
	Early medieval (Anglo-Saxon & Viking)	AD 410 – AD 1066
	Medieval	AD 1066 – AD 1485
	Post-medieval	AD 1485 – AD 1900
	Modern	AD 1901 – present

Table 3: Date ranges for the archaeological periods described in the text.

5.1 Prehistoric and Roman

There is evidence for prehistoric and Roman activity within the Quantock Hills National Landscape and its surrounding area but relatively little archaeology from these periods has been identified within the modern village cores. Bicknoller and Crowcombe are located close to the foot of the Quantock Hills, with prehistoric burials and enclosures on the high ground close by. It is possible that there would have been a close relationship between the placement of the deceased and the valleys below where associated settlements may have been located close to water sources and from which the places of burial would have been visible (Bond 2006).

All the villages investigated during the test pitting programme are surrounded by cropmarks that are morphologically comparable to prehistoric and Roman sites in the wider region. However, to date, none of the cropmark features surrounding these four settlements have been investigated by excavation. It is also possible that the built-up nature of the modern settlements obscures the remains of prehistoric activity in one or more of the villages (Gathercole 2003b).

5.2 Early Medieval and Medieval

The development of the English village is a research subject successfully investigated by several community excavations. In Somerset, the most notable project is Mick Aston's research of Shapwick (Gerrard and Aston 2007; Aston and Gerrard 2012) and Stephen Rippon (2006) has also produced interesting research into the settlements of the Somerset Levels. Currently, there is relatively little archaeological evidence for early medieval activity within the study area, but it is likely that three of the four settlements - Crowcombe, Nether Stowey, and Stogumber - have their origins in this period. Both Nether Stowey and Stogumber may have been the sites of Anglo-Saxon minsters and, as such, are likely to have been important religious and administrative centres (Gathercole 2003a, 2003b).

All four villages saw significant development during the later medieval period. Crowcombe and Nether Stowey became large enough to be considered towns, but Stogumber does not appear to have become a medieval borough despite its earlier importance. Towns and villages in medieval Somerset, including the Quantock region, developed in a variety of ways. Some were planned; Shapwick is a good example of a planned Somerset village that has been researched using community archaeology (Gerrard and Aston 2007), and

Bicknoller, Crowcombe, and Nether Stowey potentially fit into this category, with both Crowcombe and Nether Stowey containing intact medieval burgage plots. Other villages developed organically in response to the needs of local communities (Rippon 2006).

As is to be expected, each village contains a church with Anglo-Saxon or medieval origins, and there are several other surviving listed later medieval buildings. Nether Stowey had a castle, the remains of which is a scheduled monument (No 1019421). The settlement is also associated with pottery production, but there is some uncertain as to whether this industry originated during the medieval period or was only in operation during the 17th and 18th centuries.

5.3 Early Post-Medieval

By the end of the Middle Ages, the basic layout of each settlement had been established, and early post-medieval development initially took place within these pre-existing plots, which now constitute the core of each modern village.

There would have been relatively few significant changes to the character of village life during the early post-medieval period, but the economic fortunes of specific settlements would have fluctuated. In Nether Stowey, the creation or expansion of the pottery industry helped to sustain the settlement's economic importance during this period (Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1970), while Stogumber is the only settlement in the Quantock Hills National Landscape that developed from a village into a small market town during the post-medieval period (Gathercole 2003b).

5.4 Later Post-Medieval and Modern

Each of the four villages contain architecturally significant later post-medieval and early modern listed buildings, but their frequency in Nether Stowey indicates this settlement continued to expand and develop as a regional centre throughout this period.

Turnpike roads connected all four villages to the wider region, and Bicknoller, Crowcombe, and Stogumber also had access to the West Somerset Railway, which improved communication and facilitated interaction with new markets that increased the importance of the broader economy. Industrial remains, such as mills and mines, are also evident in the historic record.

At some point during the later post-medieval and modern period the villages of Bicknoller and Crowcombe appear to have declined in relative importance. This could be related to historical processes such as Enclosure and its consequent population displacement.

THE VILLAGES

6 Bicknoller

Site Code: BICK 21

Museum Accession Number: TTNCM 76/2024

HER Number: 49076

6.1 Location, Topography and Geology

Bicknoller lies at the western edge of the Quantock Hills, 4km to the south of Bridgwater Bay, which forms part of the Bristol Channel. The centre of the village is located at 75m aOD and is overlooked by the steeply sloping flanks of Bicknoller Hill to the east and north-east, and by slightly higher ridges to the north-west and south. The Doniford Stream is situated to the west of the settlement and is fed by several smaller tributaries that pass through the village. The predominant soil type is identified as 'slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage' (Cranfield University 2024). These soils are derived from the mudstones and halite-stones of the Mercia Mudstone Group, which forms the underlying solid geology (British Geological Survey 1984).

Central OSGB National Grid Reference: ST 11070 39420.

6.2 Summary of Known Heritage Assets

Description	HER No.	NGR	Date
Thorncombe Barrow, Thorncombe Hill	33205	ST 12734 39420	Bronze Age
Trendle Ring hillfort, Bicknoller Hill	33201	ST 11821 39364	Iron Age
Curdon Wood Camp, Stogumber	34023	ST 10214 38516	Iron Age?
Earthwork enclosure, Bicknoller Hill	35331	ST 12140 39624	Prehistoric?
Turk's Castle, Newton (possible hillfort/prehistoric enclosure)	33214	ST 10558 38582	Prehistoric?
Church of St George and churchyard (Grade I listed building)	33200	ST 11114 39441	C12th-C16th
Cross, St George's churchyard	34615	ST 11105 39428	Late C14th
Ridge and furrow cultivation, E of Bicknoller	26780	ST 11342 39470	Medieval
Field system, E of Bicknoller	42344	ST 12932 39225	Medieval/post medieval
Pooles, Gatchells Lane (House)	42771	ST 11037 39432	C16th
Wayvile Farmhouse, 9 Trendle Lane (Grade II listed building)	30453	ST 11178 39515	Possibly C15th-Late C16th/early C17th
Combe Cottage, 6 Dashwoods Lane (Grade II listed building)	30448	ST 11049 39560	C17th
Ford Farm (Grade II listed building)	30454	ST 10735 39095	C17th-mid C19th
Ford Cottage (Grade II listed building)	30455	ST 10795 39125	C17th- early C20th
The Cottage, 8 Church Lane (Grade II listed building)	30447	ST 11062 39459	C17th-mid C19th
Jenkins, 4 Church Lane (Grade II listed building)	30446	ST 11088 39480	C17th-C19th
Dorcas Cottage, 5 Trendle Lane (Grade II listed building)	30452	ST 11123 39563	Late C17th/early C18th
Harcombe, 3 Trendle Lane (Grade II listed building)	30451	ST 11121 39585	C18th
Turnpike road, Williton to Bishop's Lydeard	26210	ST 11192 38316	C18th
Dashwoods House (previously listed at Dashwoods Farmhouse), 8 Dashwoods Lane (Grade II listed building)	30449	ST 10997 39534	C18th
Village stocks, St George's churchyard	34131	ST 11094 39410	C19th
Mounting block, one metre South-West of 8 Church Lane, Gatchell's Lane	30450	ST 11050 39440	C19th
Bicknoller Inn	36993	ST 10983 39272	Uncertain

T*able 4: Known heritage assets located in Bicknoller and within its immediate environs.*

6.2.1 Prehistoric and Roman

Although prehistoric earthworks are located within the surrounding area, no evidence of prehistoric or Roman activity has been identified within the immediate environs of the village. The earliest identifiable monuments are Bronze Age barrows, which are located on the hilltops to the east of the village. These include Thorncombe Barrow, a bowl barrow on Thorncombe Hill (HER No. 33205 - Grinsell 1969), 1.5km to the east of the village, and a group of cairns located toward the north-western edge of Weacombe Hill, 1km to the north-east (HER Nos. 33328-30). The village is overlooked by Trendle Ring, an Iron Age hillslope enclosure (HER No. 33201) (Newman 2002). There is a cross-ridge dyke 350m to the north-east of Trendle Ring and another Iron Age enclosure (HER No. 35331) close by. Two other possible Iron Age enclosures may have faced each other across the Doniford Stream roughly 700m to the south-west of the modern village (HER Nos. 33214 and 34023).

6.2.2 Early Medieval and Medieval

The Domesday Book indicates that the area now forming the parish of Bicknoller was divided into two estates, Woolston and Newton, at the time of the Conquest (Williams and Martin 2002, 264). The hamlets of Woolston and Newton are located 1.5km to the west-north-west and 850m to the south-south-west of Bicknoller church, respectively, suggesting that Bicknoller was founded after the Conquest.

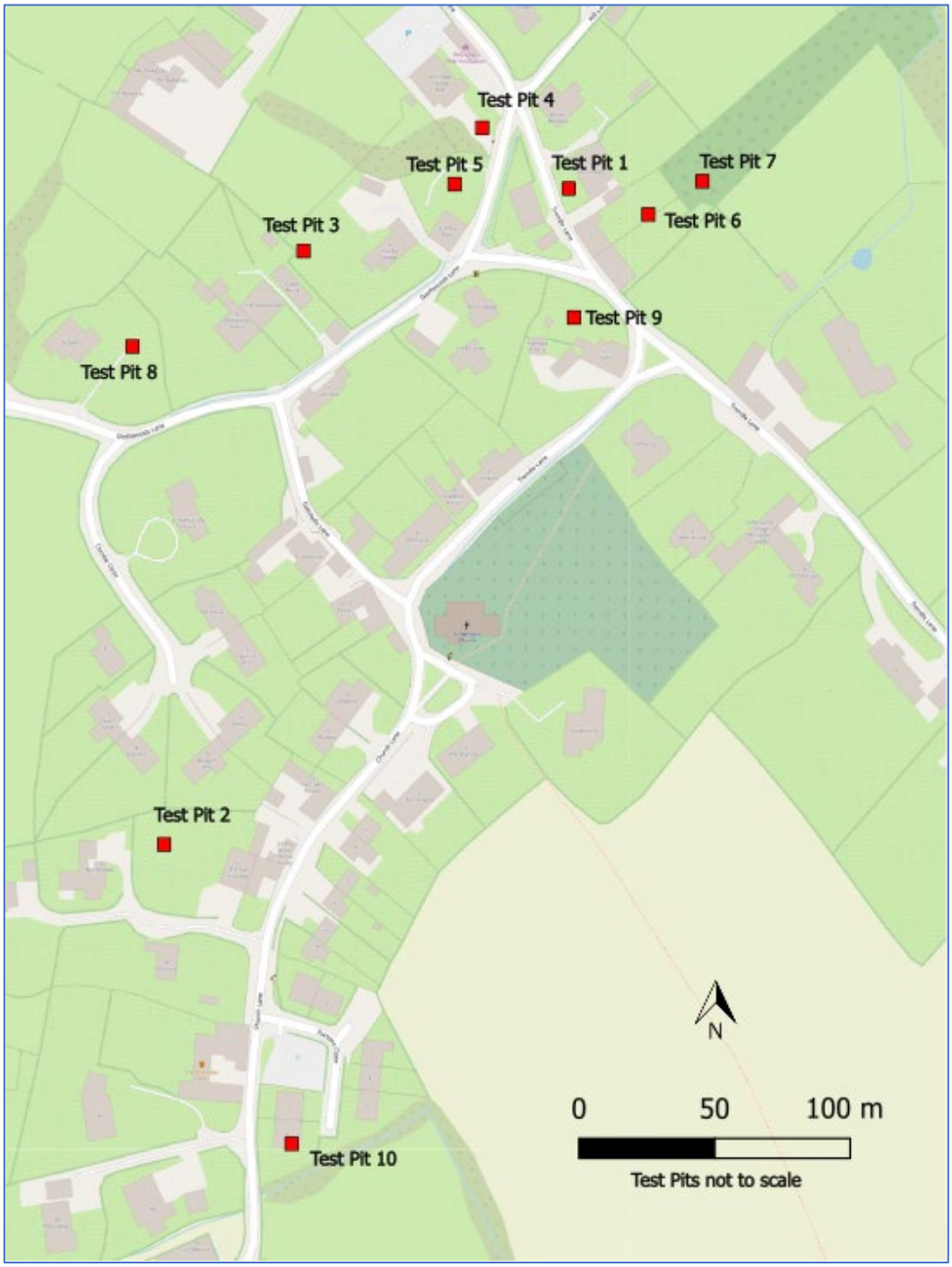

Figure 2: Location of the test pits that were opened in Bicknoller.
Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

The church is the earliest surviving building within the village (HER No. 33200). The current building incorporates some 12th century fabric but was largely rebuilt during the 15th and 16th centuries. The churchyard contains a late 14th century cross (HER No. 34615) together with an ancient yew tree. The compact and regular street pattern of Bicknoller suggest that it may have been a planned village (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985a). Aerial survey has identified medieval or post-medieval field systems to the east of the village (HER Nos. 26780 and 42344).

6.2.3 Early Post-Medieval

The HER contains records of two 16th century buildings within the village, although one, Wayvile Farmhouse, 9 Trendle Lane (HER No. 30453), may have originated as a 15th century open hall house. The other is Pooles, Gatchells Lane (HER No. 42771). There are five 17th century listed buildings: Combe Cottage, 6 Dashwoods Lane; Jenkins, 4 Church Lane; and The Cottage, 8 Church Lane (HER Nos. 30452, 30454 30446-8); and Ford farmhouse and Ford Cottage, to the west of Taunton Road.

A significant number of people appear to have worked in the cloth and clothing industries from the early 17th century onwards (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985a). Weavers, dyers, tanners, fellmongers, glovers, clothiers, and shuttle manufacturers are all recorded in the parish.

6.2.4 Later Post-Medieval and Modern

There are three listed buildings from the 18th and 19th centuries: Harcombe, 3 Trendle Lane; Dorcas Cottage, 5 Trendle Lane; and Dashwoods House, 8 Dashwoods Lane (HER Nos 30449 and 30451).

6.3 Results

6.3.1 Test Pit 01: Harcombes Cottage, 3 Trendle Lane

The edge of the lawn, to the north of path leading to the front of the cottage

The topsoil, (101), had a relatively homogenous matrix of friable dark greyish-brown clayey silt. It was a substantial deposit of well-tilled garden soil, which had accumulated to a depth of more than 0.50m and was excavated in a sequence of five 0.1m deep spits.

Artefact recovery

The large artefact assemblage within this deposit was indicative of the prolonged deposition of household waste into an active garden soil. It contained 781 sherds of pottery (1,897g), all of which were manufactured between the 18th to 20th centuries (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1). The date range provided by the pottery accords with the official listed building entry for Harcombe (Grade II), which records the house as a pair of cottages constructed in the 18th century

Figure 3: Location of Test Pit 01. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

and restored as a single dwelling in the 20th century (https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1174123?section=official-list-entry).

The topsoil also contained 73 fragments of glass bottles or jars (26 clear (237g), 38 green (148g), eight blue (17g), and one purple (1g)), together with 60 pieces of flat glass (29 clear (41g), and 31 green (157g). Construction debris comprised eight fragments of ceramic building material (56g), 36 pieces of mortar (352g), 40 lumps of plaster (189g), and 14 pieces of roof slate (121g). There were 38 pieces of coal (125g) and four flakes of oil shale (14g), together with 108 animal bone fragments (374g) and 10 shells (limpet and winkle). Other discarded material included 13 handmade nails (143g), three modern nails (6g), a metal washer (2g), a bottle top, two buttons, a thimble, three fragments of clay pipe bowl and 15 pieces of clay pipe stem.

6.3.2 Test Pit 02: The Old Vicarage, 22 Church Lane

The northern edge of the lawn to the west of The Old Vicarage

Figure 4: Location of Test Pit 02. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

The topsoil, (201), was a dark brownish-grey clayey silt, up to 0.14m deep. It covered the surface of a very compact deposit of angular, reddish-brown sandstone pebbles, (202), which was aligned east-west and was more than 0.91m wide and up to 0.14m deep. The location and orientation of this stony deposit broadly corresponds to a path, which was depicted on later 19th Century Ordnance Survey maps (Ordnance Survey 1888a), running from the rear of the Vicarage to a 'Tennis Ground' on the western side of the property. The removal of (202) exposed an east-south-east to west-north-west aligned deposit of moderately compact angular sandstone rubble, (205), which was 0.53m wide and up to 0.21m deep. The stones ranged in size from small pebbles up to pieces 0.15m across and were held within a matrix of mid-brown clayey silt comparable to (203) (see below). It is possible that this rubble represented the remnants of a wall foundation, but its relationship to underlying ditch fills suggests that it was a dump deposit placed to consolidate the ground prior to the construction of the path.

The upper fill of the ditch was a mid-brown clayey silt, (203), up to 0.13m deep, which contained occasional charcoal flecks throughout. It sealed a more substantial deposit of loose brownish-grey clayey silt, (204), which was more than 0.53m deep and contained occasional to moderate pebbles throughout. The ditch, [206], was an east-south-east to west-north-west aligned feature with a 'U'-shaped profile slightly more than 1.05m wide and over 0.60m deep. This feature has the same alignment to the south-eastern boundary of the Old Vicarage and the paddock to the rear of New Inn to its south (Ordnance Survey 1888a), suggesting that it represented an element of a medieval or post-medieval field system located to the south of the village core. The ditch was cut into a geological deposit of relatively plastic mid pinkish-brown silty-clay, (207), containing occasional angular pebbles and cobbles.

Artefact recovery

The make-up of the garden path, (202), was the only context that contained artefacts. There were 49 sherds of pottery (268g), which included a single fragment of Bristol stoneware, which indicated the path was created after 1835 (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1). In addition, there was a single piece of ceramic building material (20g) and one small piece of coal.

6.3.3 Test Pit 03: Combe Cottage, 6 Dashwoods Lane

At the rear of the property, near the north-western corner of the garden

Topsoil (301) was a dark reddish-brown loam, 0.28m deep. It covered a deposit of angular red sandstone and micaceous cobbles, (302), the interstices of which were infilled with pebbles and a mid-reddish-brown clayey silt matrix. This deposit was only partially exposed in the test pit, so it was not possible to determine whether it formed the north-western edge of a metalled surface or a path, but the relatively rough and irregular nature of the exposed surface suggested that it had not been heavily used, possibly indicating that it was a spread of demolition debris. It was deposited onto the surface of subsoil (303), a mid-reddish brown clayey silt.

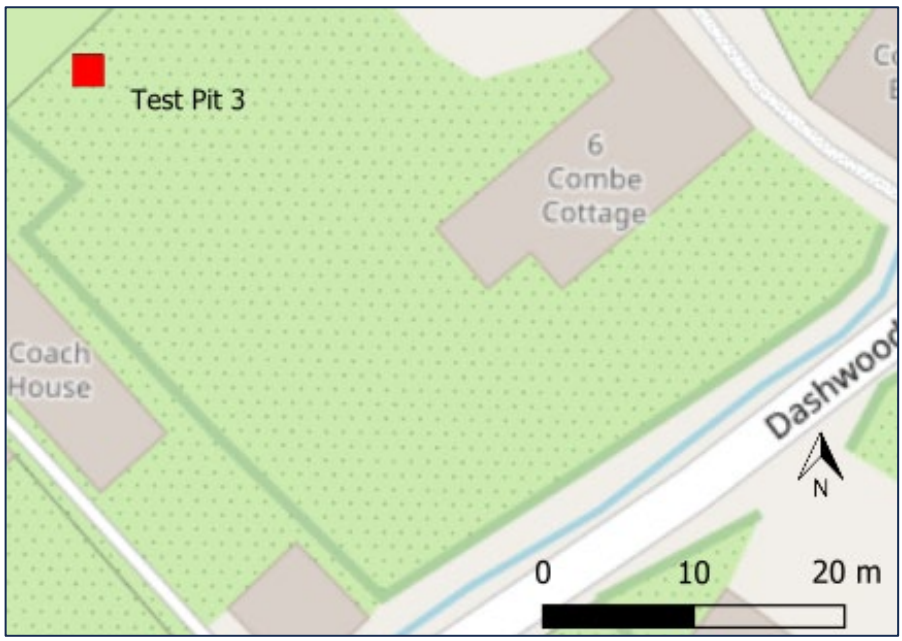

Figure 5: Location of Test Pit 03. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (301) contained a single sherd of West Somerset red earthenware, which was probably manufactured during the 17th or first half of the 18th century (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1), together with two fragments of slate and a small piece of coal. The recovery of 17th or early 18th century pottery corresponds to the 17th

century date assigned to the construction of Combe Cottage in the official listed building entry (Grade II) (https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1057469?section=official-list-entry).

The metalled surface, (302), incorporated a single sherd of 18th century Bridgwater/Somerset coast type red earthenware, together with a fragment of red tile (12g), another miscellaneous piece of ceramic building material (8g), two pieces of glass, a bit of slate, and another small piece of coal. Subsoil (303) contained two sherds of red earthenware, one of Bridgwater/Somerset coast type and the other unclassified, a small fragment of clay pipe stem, and a handmade nail. There were also two pieces of worked stone (1465g), one of which had an angled face with possible pecking, raising the possibility that it may have been a small fragment from a quern stone.

6.3.4 Test Pit 04: Bicknoller Village Hall

In the grass flanking the entrance to the village hall

The topsoil, (401), was a 0.20m deep layer of mid-reddish-brown loam. It was imported to cover the area at the front of the village hall, which was constructed in 1954. It overlay the upper surface of a layer of tarmac, (402), a compact mid grey deposit of small angular pebbles coated in bitumen, part of a yard associated with a garage/workshop that formerly occupied the site.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (401) contained nine fragments of ceramic building material (114g), a piece of tile (4g), a chunk of mortar (51g), two pieces of glass (4g), a handmade nail (4g), a small lump of slag (2g), and five pieces of coal (32g).

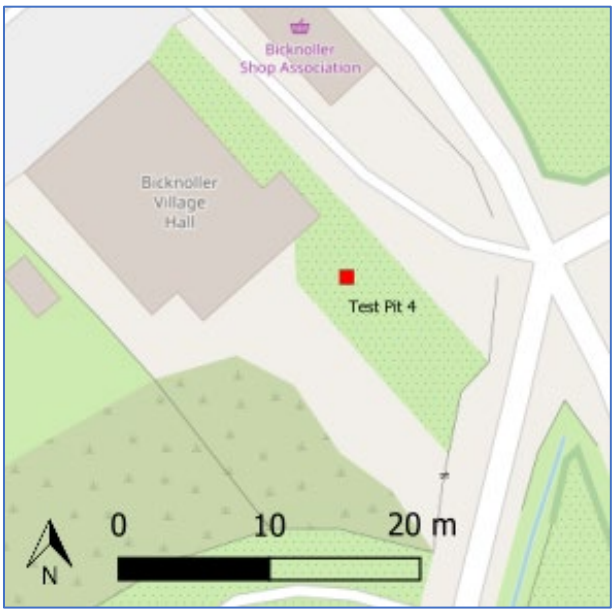

Figure 6: Location of Test Pit 04. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

6.3.5 Test Pit 05: Combe Barn, Dashwoods Lane

A vegetable plot to the north of the driveway

The topsoil, (501), was a loose dark brownish-grey clayey silt, which contained frequent rounded pebbles. This 0.10m deep layer had recently been turned for cultivation as part of a vegetable plot. It sealed another two layers of pebbly garden soil, (502), a 0.09m deep layer of dark reddish-brown slightly sandy silty clay, and (503), a 0.13m deep mid reddish-brown silty clay.

The removal of (503) exposed the upper surface of a dark greyish-brown clayey-silt, (504), which filled a shallow, flat-bottomed gully, [506]. The exposed edge of this feature was aligned east-west and it was more than 0.40m wide and 0.08m deep. It had been cut into a natural deposit of pinkish-grey clay, (505), a component of the Mercia Mudstone Group that contained frequent angular sandstone fragments.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil, (501), contained six small sherds of pottery (16g), comprising two pieces of transfer printed ware, two fragments of whiteware, and two sherds of red earthenware, together with twelve fragments of ceramic

building material (46g), and a fragment of red tile (27g). Other material recovered from (501) included three fragments of slate (9g), 18 chunks of mortar (63g), a small piece of window putty (1g), five nails (12g) and two screws (7g), five pieces of glass (12g), a piece of burnt coal (1g), a clay pipe bowl (2g), and a plastic plant label.

The upper layer of buried garden soil, (502), incorporated five sherds of whiteware (17g) and three pieces of transfer printed ware (10g), together with twelve chunks of ceramic building material (29g), a piece of slate (9g), ten lumps of mortar (47g), two small pieces of plaster (5g), a fragment of worked stone (99g), two pieces of glass (4g), and a piece of burnt oil shale (1g). The lower buried garden soil, (503), contained a piece of glazed tile (3g) and a sherd of transfer printed ware (<1g), as well as two chunks of ceramic building material (63g) and a fragment of a clay pipe bowl (1g).

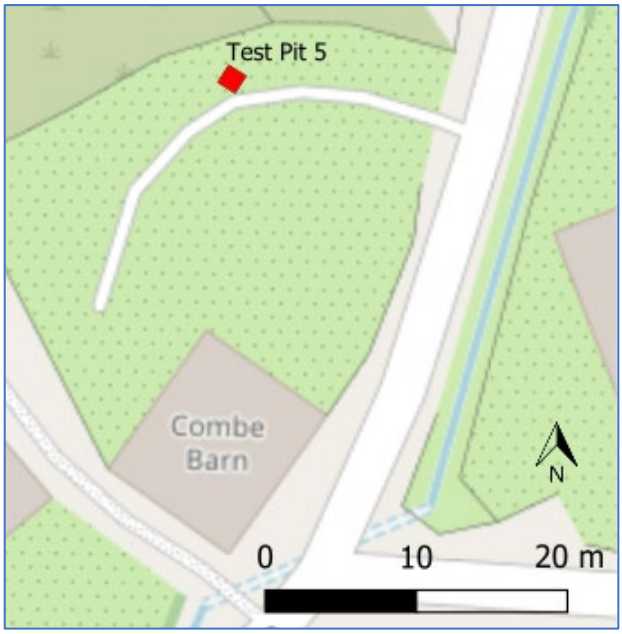

Figure 7: Location of Test Pit 05. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

The fill of the gully, (504), contained two small chips of transfer printed ware (1g), two fragments of whiteware (1g), and a sherd of medieval coarse ware (12g). The latter formed part of the everted bead rim of a hand-built open jar, the fabric of which suggested an 11th to 13th century date of manufacture (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1). This deposit also contained to chunks of mortar (96g), a fragment of a blue glass bottle (5g), and a piece of clay pipe stem (3g).

6.3.6 Test Pit 06: 7 Trendle Lane

At the rear of the property, near the western boundary of a paddock adjoining the garden

The topsoil, (601), was a 0.35m deep layer of dark brownish-grey clayey silt. It incorporated a localised deposit composed of up to three courses of tabular, angular sandstone fragments that extended up to 0.3m along the northern and western sides of the test pit.

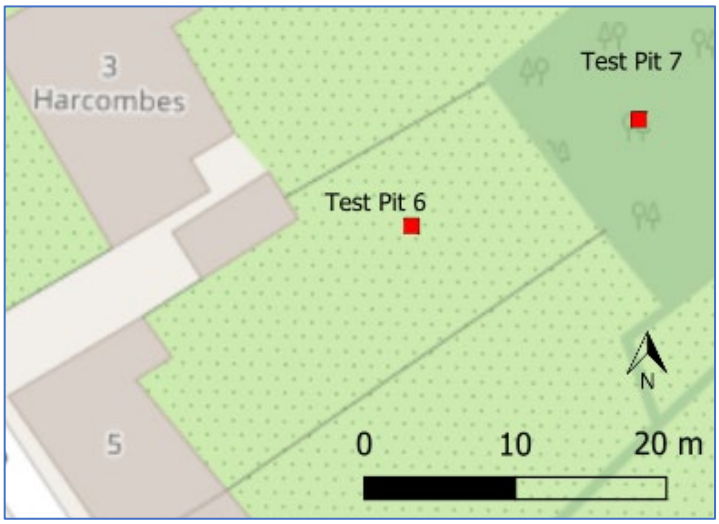

Figure 8: Location of Test Pit 06 and Test Pit 07. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil incorporated significant quantities of artefactual material. This included 90 sherds of pottery (243g) spanning the period between 1700 and the present. A few sherds provided indications of trade patterns beyond the south-west of England, such as a piece of 18th century Westerwald salt-glazed stoneware from the Rhineland, a tiny chip of a fine early 18th century Staffordshire plate, and two sherds of

glossy Nottingham stoneware (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1). Other material recovered from (601) included 60 fragments of ceramic building material (1166g), 20 pieces of slate (243g), five chunks of mortar (145g), 39 fragments of plaster (46g), three chunks of concrete (175g), a piece of worked stone (450g), six lumps of slag (64g), eleven handmade nails (88g), an iron bolt (38g), a lump of lead (22g), a metal electric light fitting (69g), 55 pieces of glass (165g), nine bits of coal (31g), 25 fragments of oil shale (149g), 36 animal bones (191g) and two limpet shells (3g), and a section of clay pipe stem (3g). The deposit also contained two buttons, one of which came from a 19th or early 20th century Merchant Navy or Shipping Line uniform (Rylatt 2024, Appendix 13.5.1).

6.3.7 Test Pit 07: Dorcas Cottage, 5 Trendle Lane

At the rear of the property, near the northern edge of the lawn

Topsoil (701) was a 0.14m deep layer of dark reddish-brown clayey silt. It may have been deliberately deposited as part of a redesign of the garden, as it covered the surface of path (704). The latter was an east-west aligned deposit of moderately compacted angular reddish-orange sandstone pebbles, which was 0.35m wide and up to 0.07m deep.

This path had been laid over a dark reddish-brown silty loam, (705), a buried topsoil or subsoil that was up to 0.26m deep. It was excavated in a sequence of three spits: (702), (703) and (705).

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (701) contained ten small sherds of whiteware (18g) and one piece of red earthenware (92g). In addition, there were four fragments of ceramic building material (22g), four bits of slate (6g), one piece of mortar (4g) and two fragments of plaster (18g), four chunks of concrete (280g), a lump of slag (4g), four pieces of glass (7g), two bits of coal (4g), one animal bone (5g), and a small fragment of clay pipe stem (<1g).

The upper spit of the buried topsoil or subsoil, (702), incorporated eight sherds of whiteware (11g), and two sherds of red earthenware (6g), one of South Somerset type and the other of West Somerset type. The sixteen sherds of pottery recovered from the next spit, (703), suggested that this was a relatively undisturbed 18th century horizon. They included four sherds from the base of a Bristol mottled ware tankard, dating to c. 1720-50, two crimped rim sherds from Bristol yellow slipware plates, dating to c. 1700-80, and two adjoining sherds from an 18th century South Somerset type bowl with slip-trailed decoration (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1). Spit (703) also contained seven pieces of slate (24g), a small lump of mortar (4g), three bits of plaster (6g), two pieces of bottle glass (3g), and seven animal bones (51g). No artefacts were found within the basal spit, (705). Just like the neighbouring cottage Harcombes (TP 01, above), the identification of an 18th century horizon closely corresponds to the late 17th to early 18th century construction date attributed to Dorcas Cottage in the official listed building entry (Grade II) (https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1057471?section=official-list-entry).

6.3.8 Test Pit 08: Dashwoods Coach House, Dashwoods Lane

At the rear of the property, near the western boundary of an orchard adjoining the garden

The topsoil was a 0.15m deep layer of mid-reddish brown silty clay, (801). It sealed a mid-reddish brown silty clay subsoil, (802), which was up to 0.25m deep and had a redder hue than (801). The latter was removed in three spits that were numbered (802), (803) and (804).

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (801) contained 34 sherds of pottery (133g), and three pieces of Bridgwater/Somerset coast type flowerpot. The deposit also contained seven fragments of white glazed tile and 24 chunks of brick (126g), 18

lumps of mortar (73g), five pieces of plaster (11g), and two chunks of concrete (52g), which potentially represent the residues of 20th century construction waste dumped toward the rear of the property. Other material found within the topsoil included two lumps of slate (16g), a piece of clear window glass (4g), 24 bits of coal (122g), one fragment of oil shale (1g), and fourteen animal bone fragments (12g).

Figure 9: Location of Test Pit 08. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

The upper spit of the subsoil, (802), contained a single sherd of Bridgwater/Somerset coast type red earthenware flowerpot, 42 fragments of red ceramic building material (297g), 40 lumps of mortar (680g), thirteen fragments of plaster (8g), three chunks of concrete (168g), ten pieces of glass (23g), 20 bits of coal (72g), five pieces of oil shale (12g), a handmade nail (2g), and an animal bone (3g). The next spit, (803), incorporated a single sherd of South Somerset type red earthenware (6g), five crumbs of red ceramic building material (6g), 28 lumps of mortar (358g), five pieces of plaster (6g), and four pieces of white glazed tile (19g), which were comparable to the tile fragments recovered from (801), indicating that the soil has been turned over and the deposits were mixed. Spit (803) also contained a splinter of slate (<1g), a lump of slag (7g), a handmade nail (1g), one sliver of clear window glass (<1g), eleven bits of coal (29g), and nine fragments of oil shale (57g). Similar material was recovered from the basal spit, (804), including one crumb of ceramic building material (1g), a piece of white ceramic tile (12g), four lumps of mortar (4g), two bits of plaster (2g), two pieces of slate (18g), and six bits of coal (30g).

6.3.9 Test Pit 09: Locks, 2 Church Lane

At the rear of the property, near the northern edge of the lawn

Topsoil (901) was a layer of dark brown slightly sandy silt, that was up to 0.24m deep. It sealed a 0.13m deep pinkish brown sandy silt subsoil, (902), which incorporated frequent angular pebbles. The removal of (902) exposed a layer of angular sandstone cobbles and pebbles, (903), which was more than 0.07m deep. Although the upper surface of this deposit was slightly irregular, it was very compact, suggesting that it formed part of a rough metalled surface.

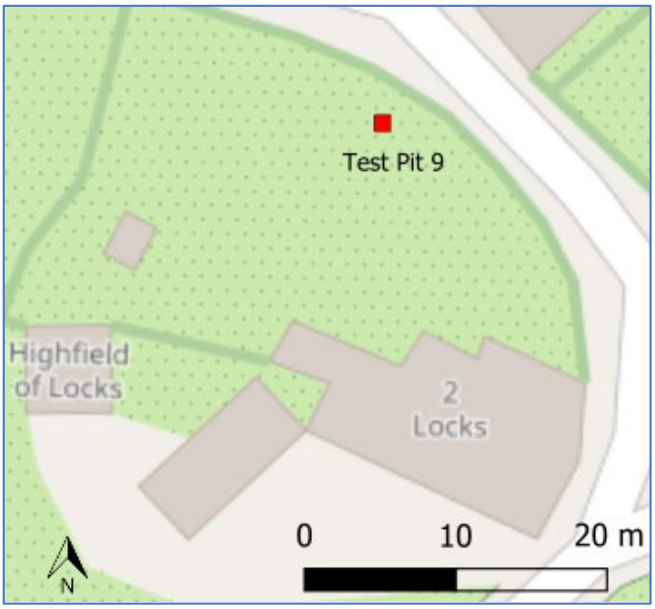

Figure 10: Location of Test Pit 09. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil (901) contained 73 sherds of pottery (309g), which primarily consisted of whitewares,

red earthenwares, salt glazed stonewares, and transfer printed wares produced in the 19th and 20th centuries (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1). However, there was also a small quantity of 18th century yellow slipware and a sherd of Bristol mottled ware. This layer also contained a single piece of struck flint or chert (7g), which may have been used as an expedient end scraper during the late Mesolithic or early Neolithic (c. 6500-3400 BCE) (Rylatt 2024, Appendix 13.4.1). Other artefacts included eight fragments of bottle glass (two clear (4g), five green (17g), one blue (5g)), together with seven pieces of flat glass (six clear (7g), and one green (<1g)), one handmade nail (12g), four fragments of clay pipe bowl (6g) and ten pieces of clay pipe stem (14g), nine animal bone fragments (12g), 35 pieces of coal (68g), and nine bits of oil shale (34g). Construction debris comprised 20 fragments of ceramic building material (59g), 28 pieces of mortar (104g), 50 lumps of plaster (85g), two worked stones (33g), and two slivers of roof slate (1g).

Subsoil (902) contained 27 sherds of 19th and 20th century pottery (121g), including white wares, transfer printed wares, and red earthenwares. Other material recovered from the deposit included six pieces of ceramic building material (22g), eleven lumps of mortar (25g), 52 bits of plaster (57g), two worked stones (87g), two pieces of flat glass (2g), one fragment of clay pipe bowl (1g), three pieces of clay pipe stem (6g), and twelve pieces of coal (21g).

6.3.10 Test Pit 10: 6 Parsons Close

To the south of the house, at the southern edge of the lawn

Topsoil (1001) was a 0.10m deep layer of mid reddish brown silty clay, which contained occasional angular sandstone cobbles and pebbles. It sealed a dump deposit of mid reddish brown to mid greyish brown silty clay, (1002), more than 0.09m deep, which contained occasional angular sandstone cobbles and pebbles, and chalk fragments. It was probably composed of material displaced during the construction of the adjacent house and had been used to level the ground surface adjacent to the small stream running along the southern edge of the property.

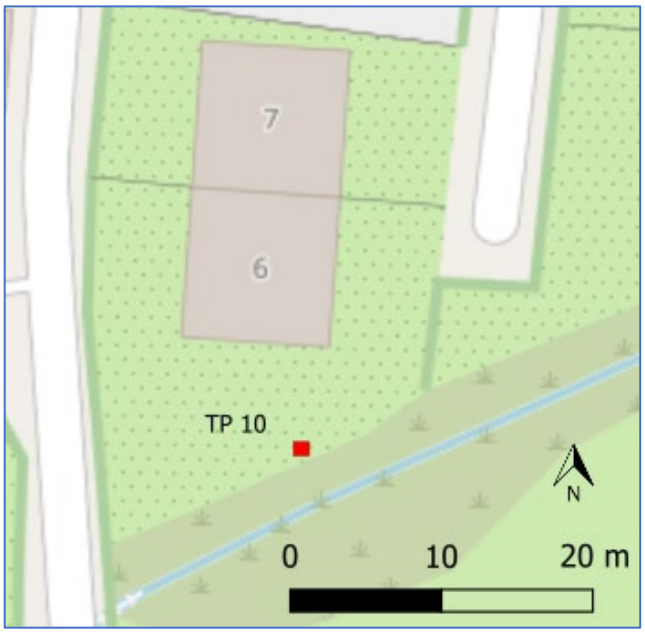

Figure 11: Location of Test Pit 10. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

The 22 sherds of pottery (137g) recovered from topsoil (1001) primarily dated to the 19th and 20th centuries, but there was also an abraded body sherd from a medieval green glazed hand-built jug decorated with inscribed bands, which dated to the late 12th to 13th century (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1). The deposit also contained a struck flint flake (4g), probably dating to the late Neolithic or early Bronze Age (c. 3000-1500 BCE) (Rylatt 2024, Appendix 13.4.1), one shard from a green glass bottle (9g) and four pieces of clear flat glass (6g), a section of clay pipe stem (2g), and four bits of coal (3g). Building debris included three chunks of ceramic building material (72g), two lumps of concrete (25g), two pieces of worked stone (87g), and a sliver of roof slate (1g).

6.4 Discussion

The recovery of two pieces of struck flint, one from Locks, 2 Church Lane (TP 09) and the other from 6 Parsons Close (TP10), provides the first recorded evidence for prehistoric activity within the village core. The flake from Test Pit 09 may have been used as an expedient scraper and has traits indicative of late Mesolithic or early Neolithic core reduction strategies (c. 6500 - 3400 BCE), while the flake from Test Pit 10 is likely to be somewhat later (late Neolithic to early Bronze Age, c. 3000-1500 BCE) (Rylatt 2024, Appendix 13.4.1). The flake from Parsons Close was recovered from a dump of redeposited soil that was probably derived from the groundworks for the adjacent house, which is located a little over 10m to the north of a canalised stream. Similarly, the flake from Locks, was located roughly 20m from another stream that runs along the south-eastern edge of Church Lane. This provides a tentative indication that further evidence for Mesolithic, Neolithic or Bronze Age activity, no matter how brief or sporadic, is likely to be found within the immediate environs of the springs and water courses that run though the village.

A heavily abraded fragment of pottery from Test Pit 05 at Combe Barn, Dashwoods Lane, provided the only potential indication of Romano-British activity, as it conceivably came from a black burnished-ware jar dating to the 2nd to 4th centuries AD (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.1). However, the fabric is far more likely to be medieval in date and form part of the rim of a hand-built open jar manufactured between the 11th and the 13th centuries AD. Another sherd, recovered from 6 Parsons Close, formed part of a green glazed hand-built jug that was decorated with inscribed bands and dates from the late 12th to 13th centuries.

The date range of these two sherds of pottery broadly corresponds to the earliest surviving fabric within the Church of St George. The cushion capital of a pillar piscina, in combination with compact nature of the nave and the thickness of its southern wall, suggests that the building may have originated as a manorial chapel that was constructed in the 12th century at the core of a newly founded village (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985a). This settlement probably occupied the immediate surroundings of the compact rectilinear arrangement of roads to the north-west of the church: Church Lane, Gatchells Lane, Dashwoods Lane, and Trendle Lane.

Although there is documentary evidence for activity in the village during the 14th to 17th centuries (ibid.), none of the test pits contained any later medieval or early post-medieval material. The significance of this absence is unclear. It could indicate that the settlement went into decline and contracted, a process identified elsewhere in the area, as “the period 1300-1500 was a time of population decrease when poor weather (and thus poor harvests) combined with recurrent outbreaks of plague, which peaked with the infamous Black Death of 1348-9” (Riley 2006, 89). Conversely, the extremely limited evidence that was recovered relating to activity in the preceding centuries could indicate that the scarcity of medieval and early post-medieval material is partly a consequence of the small number of pits that were excavated. However, this does not explain why there is a marked increase in the quantity and distribution of later 17th and 18th century pottery, identifiable fragments of which were recovered from more than half of the test pits.

One possibility is that social and economic developments resulted in a relatively rapid expansion of the population, evidence for which is also provided by the number of 17th and 18th century buildings that are located within the village (Table 4). They include Jenkins and The Cottage, No. 4 and No. 8 Church Lane, respectively, Combe Cottage and Dashwoods House, both on Dashwoods Lane, and Harcombes Cottage and Dorcas Cottage, both on Trendle Lane. The latter two properties both hosted test pits, which contained a range of late 17th and 18th century pottery, including fabrics manufactured in Bristol between 1700 and 1780. This material provides an indication of regional trading patterns prior to the opening of the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal (in 1827), or the West Somerset Railway (in 1862). Material imported from outside the region included a fragment of 18th century salt-glazed stoneware from Westerwald in the Rhineland, a fragment of an early 18th century Staffordshire plate, and two sherds of glossy Nottingham stoneware. Most of the 18th century pottery was produced in Bristol and the Donyatt potteries of South Somerset, suggesting that it was sourced from the market at Taunton.

7 Crowcombe

Site Code: CROW 22

Museum Accession Number: TTNCM 77/2024

HER Number: 49077

7.1 Location, Topography and Geology

Crowcombe is situated 4km to the south-east of Bicknoller and occupies the lower slopes at the western periphery of the Quantock Hills. The settlement is a ribbon development lining two roads that extend north-westward and southward from the church, which is located at 140m aOD. Immediately to the north-east of the village the land rises steeply toward the Crowcombe Park, while to the east it rises to the summit of Great Hill (339m aOD). Toward the south and south-west, the land falls to the valley of Doniford Stream. The soils and solid geology are broadly comparable to Bicknoller - 'slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage' (Cranfield University 2024) overlying the mudstones and halite-stones of the Mercia Mudstone Group – but beds of the Helsby Sandstone Formation occupy the north-western periphery of the village (British Geological Survey 1984).

Central OSGB National Grid Reference: ST 14030 36690.

7.2 Summary of Known Heritage Assets

Description	HER No.	NGR	Date
Barrow, Fire Beacon Hill	33225	ST 14915 36969	Prehistoric
Hurley Beacon cairn, Crowcombe	33226	ST 14215 38078	Prehistoric
Delmore - watching brief (2007)	26104	ST 13888 36794	C13th pottery, early C18th structures
Church of the Holy Ghost and churchyard (Grade I listed building)	33222	ST 14086 36717	C14th-C19th
Churchyard cross, 2m south of porch, Church of the Holy Ghost	34616	ST 14070 36695	C14th
Village cross, 30m E of Carew Arms (Grade II* listed)	34617	ST 13907 36764	C14th
The Old Rectory and The Glebe House (Grade II listed building)	30481	ST 14103 36676	C15th-C19th
Manor house site	33223	ST 14077 36763	Medieval
Medieval borough of Crowcombe and later village, Crowcombe	32632	ST 13821 36762	Medieval
Park (Grade II registered park and garden)	34602	ST 14388 37351	Medieval-C18th
Forge Cottage and The Old Forge (Grade II listed building)	30482	ST 13518 36,43	C15th-C20th
Church House (Grade II listed building)	34801	ST 14040 36673	c. 1515
Timewell and Timewell Cottage (Grade II listed buildings)	30493	ST 14042 36587	Late C16th/Early C17th-C20th
1-3 Carew Cottages (Grade II listed building)	30483	ST 13586 36927	Late C16th/Early C17th
Lawford Farmhouse, Lawford (Grade II listed building)		ST 13431 36378	Late C16th-C18th
Water wheel site, Lawford Farm, Lawford	33236	ST 134 363	Post-medieval
Pound, The Church House (Grade II listed building)	34811	ST 14029 36680	Post-medieval
Water meadow, W of Crowcombe Court	26787	ST 13846 36930	Post-medieval
Water meadow system, W of Crowcombe	26769	ST 13700 36500	Post-medieval
Sunny Bank (Grade II listed building)	30474	ST 13646 36923	C17th
1 & 2 Rose Cottages (Grade II listed buildings)	30489	ST 13820 36790	Late C17th-early C18th
Crowcombe Court and attached stables to west (Grade I listed building)	30494	ST 13983 36918	1724-39
Borough Cottage (Grade II listed building)	30488	ST 13799 36810	C18th
Dairy Cottage (Grade II listed building)	30484	ST 13611 36914	C18th
Garden earthworks, Crowcombe Court	34705	ST 14066 36900	C18th
Park Cottage, Crowcombe Park	29485	ST 14180 37005	C18th
Pillow Mound	22553	ST 14660 37450	C18th

Description	HER No.	NGR	Date
Ornamental arch	29484	ST 14048 37250	C18th
Grime's Farm - evaluation (2006)	28431	ST 13484 37008	C18th-modern
The Carew Arms and attached outbuilding (Grade II listed buildings)	30490	ST 13846 36775	Mid C18th-mid C19th
Ice House, approximately 150 metres North of Crowcombe Court	30495	ST 13933 37115	Late C18th
Sunnymede	41888	ST 13993 36629	Late C18th
Turnpike road, Williton to Bishop's Lydeard	26210	ST 11192 38316	1807
The Cottage (Grade II listed building)	30475	ST 13721 36991	1840
Crowcombe House (Grade II listed building)	30485	ST 13659 36829	Early C19th
Gate piers and gates fronting road at Crowcombe House (Grade II listed)	30487	ST 13701 36877	Early C19th
Stables, 10 metres South East of Crowcombe House (Grade II listed building)	30486	ST 13639 36818	Early-mid C19th
Milestone, Main Street	18593	ST 13658 36909	C19th

Table 5: Known heritage assets located in Crowcombe and within its immediate environs.

7.2.1 Prehistoric and Roman

There is little or no evidence for prehistoric or Roman activity within the area now occupied by the village. However, several prehistoric barrows and cairns have been identified on the hilltops to the east of the village. The closest are those on Fire Beacon Hill (HER No. 33225), 900m to the east of the church, on Hurley Beacon (HER No. 33226-9), 1.2km to the north, which form the western end of a linear barrow cemetery (Grinsell 1969), and on Great Hill, 1.5km to the east-south-east.

7.2.2 Early Medieval and Medieval

An estate belonging to Glastonbury Abbey at '*Cerawicombe*' (probably Crowcombe) was mentioned in the mid-9th century, and further land held by the Bishop of Winchester was cited in the early 10th century, suggesting that there were at least two late Anglo-Saxon estates in the parish (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985b). By the early 13th century, the area of the village to the north-west of the church, between the market cross and Townsend, was described as a borough and had been granted the right to hold a weekly market and an annual fair (ibid.). The village contains several buildings that have origins in the medieval period, and many of the burgage plots are still visible. The tower of the Church of the Holy Ghost (HER No. 33222) was built in the 14th century, but most of the fabric dates to the early 16th century. A reference to a rector of Crowcombe dating to 1226, together with a valuation of the church in 1291, indicates that there were earlier structures on the site (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985b). A churchyard cross (HER No. 34616) and a village cross (HER No. 34617) also date to the 14th century. The Old Rectory and The Glebe House (HER No. 30481) and Forge Cottage and The Old Forge (HER No. 30482) both appear to have originally been constructed in the 15th century. There are references that indicate the Church House (HER No. 34801) may also have had medieval origins. There was a medieval manor house (HER No. 33223), first mentioned at the end of the 13th century, and a deer park (Riley 2006; Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985b). The house was demolished in the 18th century and was superseded by Crowcombe Park.

7.2.3 Early Post-Medieval

Crowcombe did not develop significantly during this period, although some earlier buildings were replaced. Surviving early post-medieval buildings include the 16th century Church House (HER No. 34801); the late 16th century Lawford Farmhouse; Timewell and Timewell Cottage (HER No. 30493) and 1-3 Carew Cottages (HER No. 30483) all of which were constructed in the late 16th/early 17th centuries; Sunny Bank erected in the 17th century (HER No. 30474); and 1 and 2 Rose Cottages, which are of late 17th or early 18th century date (HER No. 30489).

Crowcombe Court (HER No. 30494), a fashionable Neo-Palladian country house, was constructed between 1724 and 1739 as a replacement for the medieval manor house (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985b; McConnell 2023).

As at Bicknoller, the cloth and clothing industries appear to have employed many of the people who were not engaged in agricultural activities. Records indicate there were weavers, fullers, a woolcomber, and a dyer working in the parish during the 17th century (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985b).

7.2.4 Later Post-Medieval and Modern

There was little further development within Crowcombe during the later post-medieval and early modern period. The most significant changes resulted from significant enhancements to local and regional transportation, with the creation of turnpike roads in the late 18th and early 19th centuries and the opening of the West Somerset Railway in 1862, which was accessed at Crowcombe Heathfield Station, 2.3km to the south of the village core. In the 20th century a bypass was built to the west of the village to divert traffic using the A358.

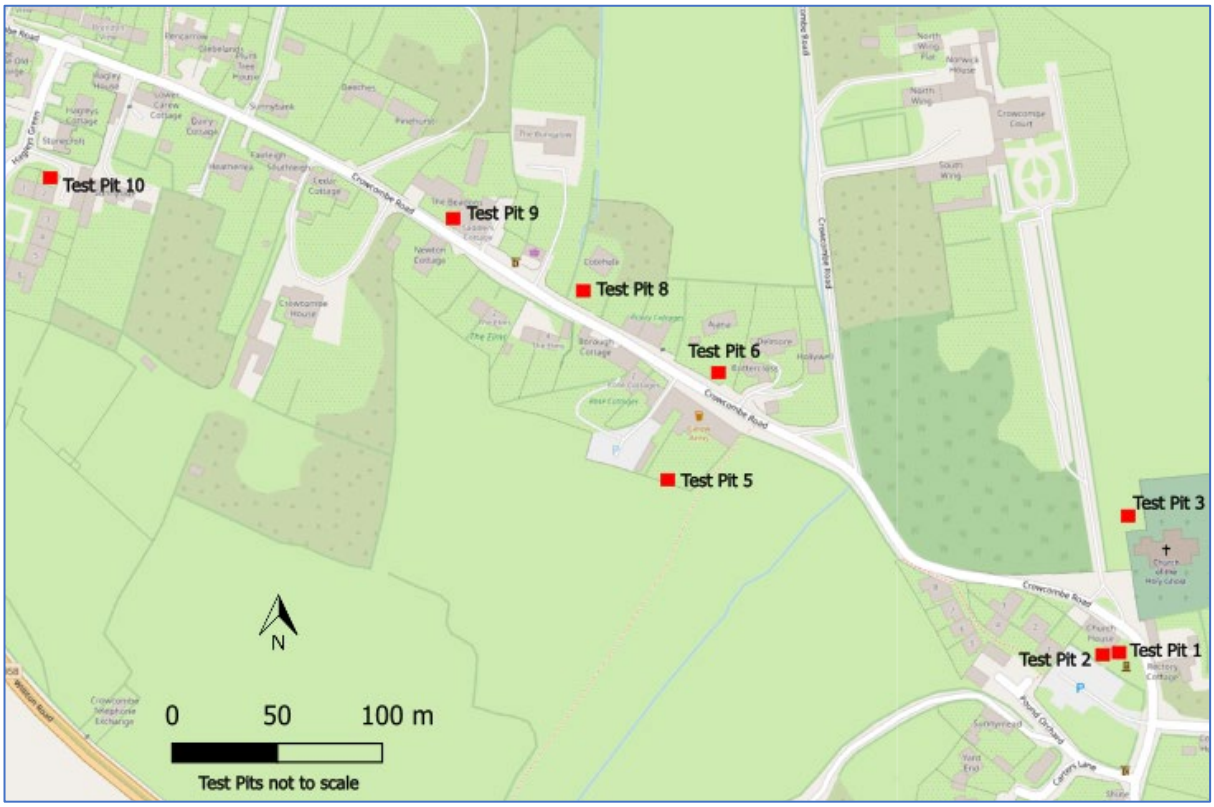

Figure 12: Location of the test pits that were opened in Crowcombe.
Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

7.3 Results

7.3.1 Test Pit 01: Church House, Crowcombe Road

To the south-east of the rear wall of Church House

The topsoil, (100), was a 0.17m deep layer of moderately compact mid to dark greyish-brown slightly clayey silt. It incorporated moderate to frequent sandstone rubble and ceramic building material, together with

mortar, and plaster, which represented debris from the 'poor house' cottages that were demolished in 1963 (Meneer and Brew 2016). Beneath (100) lay a 0.03m deep layer of pale grey concrete, (101), which was riven by numerous cracks. It would have formed part of the floor of the cottage that abutted onto Church House at the north-western end of the row (Ordnance Survey 1888b). Concrete (101) had been laid upon a 0.06m deep bedding layer of friable gritty creamy-yellow lime mortar.

The removal of the sub-base of the concrete floor exposed a ground make-up layer of mottled reddish to orangey-brown silty clay, (103), 0.12m deep, which incorporated lumps of mid grey clayey silt, frequent charcoal flecks, and angular stone fragments up to 0.05m across. It sealed another ground make-up deposit, (104), a mixed layer of mid greyish-brown silty clay, incorporating frequent flecks of orangey-brown silty clay, more than 0.06m deep.

Figure 13: Location of Test Pit 01 and Test Pit 02. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Deposit (104) abutted the south-western face of wall foundation (105), which was constructed from sandstone rubble bonded with red clay. Although only five stones from the horizontal upper course of the wall were exposed in the test pit, the exposed south-western face of (105) shared the same alignment as the rear elevation of Church House, which raises the possibility that both were constructed at around the same time in the second decade of the 16th century.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (100) contained 70 sherds of pottery (805g), which primarily consisted of whitewares and transfer printed wares (44 sherds), and red earthenwares (24 sherds) that were manufactured in the 19th and 20th centuries (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.2). The assemblage also included part of a moulded ceramic finial (34g) and a sherd from a 20th century salt-glazed drainage pipe. Associated demolition debris comprised 66 fragments of brick and other ceramic building material (17707g), 78 pieces of stone rubble (31028g), 125 lumps of plaster, some with painted surfaces (981g), and 30 fragments of roof slate (1853g). This layer also contained two pieces of glass bottles or jars (one clear (1g) and one brown (1g)), together with two bits of flat glass (one clear (1g), and one green (2g)), five handmade nails (17g), and 12 pieces of coal (68g). This material clearly represents the remains of the 'poor house' cottages.

Ground make-up layer (103) yielded six sherds of pottery (43g), comprising five fragments of West Somerset and Bridgwater/Somerset coast type red earthenware and a single piece of transfer printed ware, possibly from a bowl. This material suggests that floor (101)/ (102) was laid during the 19th or early 20th centuries. Context (103) also contained six chunks of mortar (23g) and five fragments of animal bone (8g).

7.3.2 Test Pit 02: Church House, Crowcombe Road

Adjacent to the rear wall at the south-eastern corner of Church House

Topsoil, (200), was a layer of mid orangey-brown silty loam, 0.37m deep, which incorporated abundant fragments of roof slate and some ceramic building material, mortar and plaster.

Artefact recovery

This deposit contained 543 sherds of pottery, the largest collection from any of the test pits in the village. Most of the assemblage consisted of fragments of 19th and 20th century white wares (497 sherds - 1,199g), but some earlier material was also recovered (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.2). The latter included a single sherd from an early 18th century Staffordshire manganese mottled ware tankard, five sherds from Bristol yellow slipware handled cups (c. 1700-1780), a single sherd from an 18th century tin-glazed earthenware bowl, and one sherd from a West Somerset red earthenware tankard decorated with white slip.

The assemblage also included seven fragments of brick (1327g) and eleven fragments of roof tile (641g), the latter representing different forms and periods of roof covering. One piece had formed part of a late glazed crested roof tile, which could have been made as early as the 16th century, in which case, it could conceivably have formed part of the original roof when Church House was built in 1515. However, Dawson (ibid.) notes that there is evidence that these tiles were often reused and could relate to later buildings or phases of activity. In addition to the tiles, 129 fragments of roof slate (6391g) were also recovered. Photographs of Church House taken in 1907 indicate that the building had a slate roof, but also show that the south facing slates had collapsed because the building had stood empty since 1872 (Meneer and Brew 2016, 18). This suggests that the large deposit of roof slate in Test Pit 02 represents the residue of this event. Other associated debris included 63 chunks of mortar (1319g), and five lumps of plaster (10g).

This layer also contained 41 fragments of bottle glass (24 clear (44g), 17 green (258g)), together with 23 pieces of clear window glass (445g), nine handmade nails (93g), a piece of lead sheet (33g), one bit of coal (2g), seven animal bone fragments (39g), three limpet shells (4g), and three pieces of clay pipe stem (12g).

7.3.3 Test Pit 03: Crowcombe Court driveway, North-West of the Church

The eastern edge of an area of grass to the north-west of the church

The topsoil, (300), was a 0.32m deep layer of mid-greyish-brown clayey silt, which incorporated a lens of gravel. It sealed a mixed demolition deposit, (301), more than 0.16m deep, consisting of frequent fragments of sandstone rubble, ceramic building material, flecks and lumps of lime mortar and plaster, slate, lumps of red clay, and fine gravel, which were contained within a matrix of mid orangey-brown clayey silt.

Figure 14: Location of Test Pit 03. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

A single sherd from an 18th century slip-decorated red earthenware dish (5g) was recovered from (300), together with a flint flake, likely to be a piece of Neolithic or early Bronze Age debitage (c. 4000 – 1500 BC) (Rylatt 2024, Appendix 13.4.2). Associated demolition debris included three pieces of ceramic building material (173g), five pieces of squared building rubble (253g), eight chunks of mortar (126g), and 31 fragments of roof slate (501g).

7.3.4 Test Pit 05: The Carew Arms, Crowcombe Road

The southern edge of the beer garden to the rear of the Carew Arms

The mid greyish-brown sandy silt topsoil, (500), was 0.24m deep and had sub-rounded pebbles dispersed throughout. It sealed a subsoil, (501), of dark greyish-brown sandy silt, which was more than 0.21m deep and incorporated further pebbles.

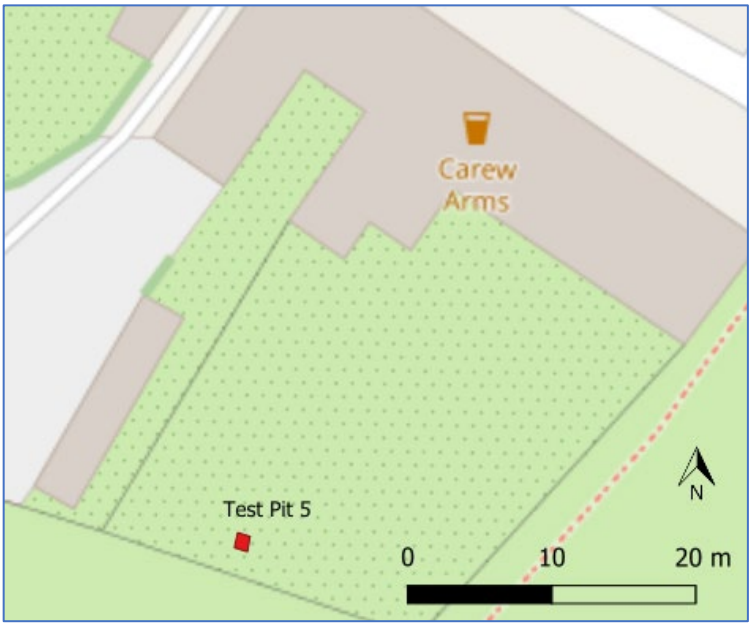

Figure 15: Location of Test Pit 05. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (500) contained four sherds of banded whiteware, a type commonly associated with public houses. It was also notable for the presence of five sherds of flowerpot, which contrasted with a general absence of white wares and transfer printed wares (one sherd of each). This suggested that this deposit had always been a garden soil (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.2), but the quantity and range of other artefacts within (500) appears to contradict this interpretation. Principal among these were various forms of construction debris, including seven pieces of stone rubble (643g), four chunks of mortar and cement (735g), two lumps of plaster (22g), two fragments of red roof tile (70g), three bits of slate (153g), 15 pieces of clear window glass (80g), and some putty (4g).

This topsoil also contained fourteen fragments of bottle glass (thirteen clear (90g), one brown (8g)), which included the base of a pot for a skin salve, painted 'REME SEBORREO/ EXCELLENCE/ aux plantes et aux essences nature[lles]' that probably dates to the early 20th century. There were four lumps of slag (279g), three handmade nails (36g), twelve modern nails (122g) and four screws (25g), together with a metal washer (4g), some wire (3g), a metal bottle top (9g), four fragments of tin can (37g), a plastic lid (4g), two pieces of coal (63g), six fragments of oil shale (10g), six animal bones (8g), a fragment of clay pipe bowl (1g), and fourteen pieces of clay pipe stem (18g).

The ceramic material found within subsoil (501) dated to the 18th century to early 19th centuries. It included four sherds from Bristol mottled ware tankards produced in the first half of the 18th century (12g), two yellow slipware sherds from c. 1780 (2g), and seven sherds of 18th century stoneware (11g), which included the rim of a Staffordshire white stoneware tankard. In addition, there were 28 sherds of white earthenware (21g) and eleven sherds of red earthenware (43g). The recovery of fragments from tankards provides corroborative evidence for the use of the property as an inn in the 18th century and accords with the construction date attributed to The Carew Arms in the official listed building entry (Grade II), where it is described as mid-18th century - when it was known as The Lions, or 3 Lions (1747) - with early and mid-19th century extensions (https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1295786?section=official-list-entry).

The subsoil also contained the central portion of a broken late Mesolithic microlith (c. 6500 – 4000 BC), a straight-backed bladelet with evidence for use-wear along its lateral edge. The other artefacts recovered from (501) were broadly comparable to the types of material found in the topsoil. They included 41 pieces of ceramic

building material (470g), 21 bits of slate (111g), 29 chunks of mortar (278g), 49 lumps of plaster (137g), two small pieces of clear window glass (2g), six fragments of bottle glass (three clear (20g), three green (9g)), six lumps of slag (128g), two handmade nails (10g), a metal washer (3g), 30 bits of coal (46g), 30 animal bone fragments (38g), a mollusc shell (1g), three fragments of clay pipe bowl (4g), 38 sections of clay pipe stem (45g), and a stone marble (7g).

7.3.5 Test Pit 06: Ajana, Crowcombe Road

The south-eastern corner of the lawn at the front of the property

Topsoil (600) was a mixed mid to dark brownish-grey sandy silt. When the test pit reached a depth of 0.25m it became clear that the deposit represented the fill of a modern pipe trench, which was 0.65m wide and ran from north-west to south-east between Ajana and a manhole cover located in the pavement to the south of the property boundary.

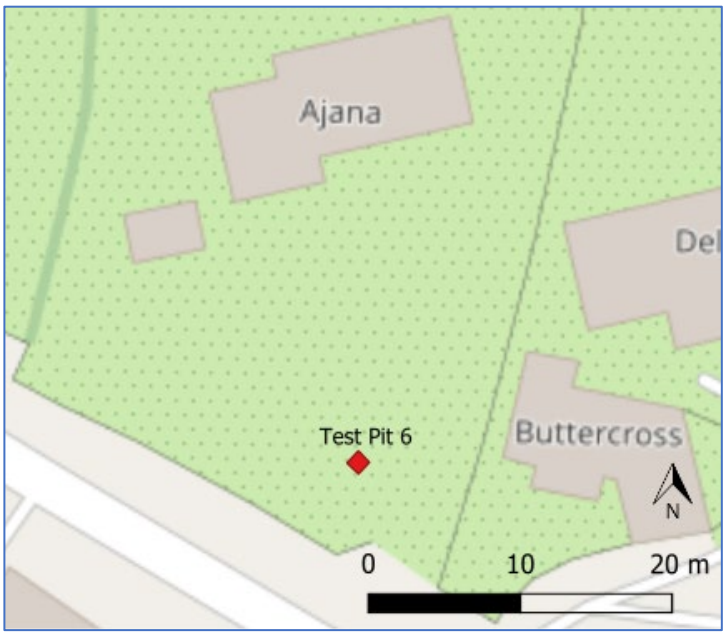

Figure 16: Location of Test Pit 06. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

The backfill of the pipe trench contained 21 sherds of pottery (117g). They included a body sherd from an early 18th century Bristol mottled ware tankard, a sherd from a highly decorated Westerwald stoneware vessel, imported from the Rhineland and probably dating to the 18th century, and the rim of a Bridgwater/Somerset coast slipware dish of 18th to early 19th century date (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.2). Additionally, one tiny sherd may have formed part of a medieval vessel but was too small to identify with any certainty.

Other material incorporated into the backfill included two chunks of red brick (2758g) and three smaller lumps of ceramic building material (8g), a fragment of worked stone (6g), eleven bits of slate (33g), four pieces of clear window glass (11g), four shards of bottle glass (three clear (4g), one green (10g)), one lump of slag (57g), three handmade nails (11g), nine bits of coal (19g), a piece of oil shale (21g), two animal bones (34g), and a metal button (1g).

7.3.6 Test Pit 08: Cotehele, Crowcombe Road

The western side of the lawn at the front of the property

The topsoil, (800), was a 0.16m deep layer of dark brown to brownish-grey sandy silt, containing moderate quantities of sub-rounded pebbles. It sealed a moderately compact pale to mid orangey-brown sandy silt subsoil, (801), which was 0.21m deep and incorporated further pebbles, flecks of charcoal, and fragments of ceramic building material. The base of the test pit exposed a possible dump deposit of compact yellowish-brown silty clay, (802), which was more than 0.02m deep and contained flecks of ceramic building material and lime mortar.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (800) contained 73 sherds of pottery (248g). The assemblage was dominated by 19th and 20th century white wares (62% of the sherds) but also included five pieces of 18th century fabric: two sherds of Bristol mottled ware (5g), two fragments of yellow slipware (11g), and a piece of Staffordshire white stoneware (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.2). There was also a sherd from the basal angle of a red earthenware Verwood pan. It was produced in east Dorset, probably during the 18th or 19th centuries, and is an unusual discovery in this area of Somerset.

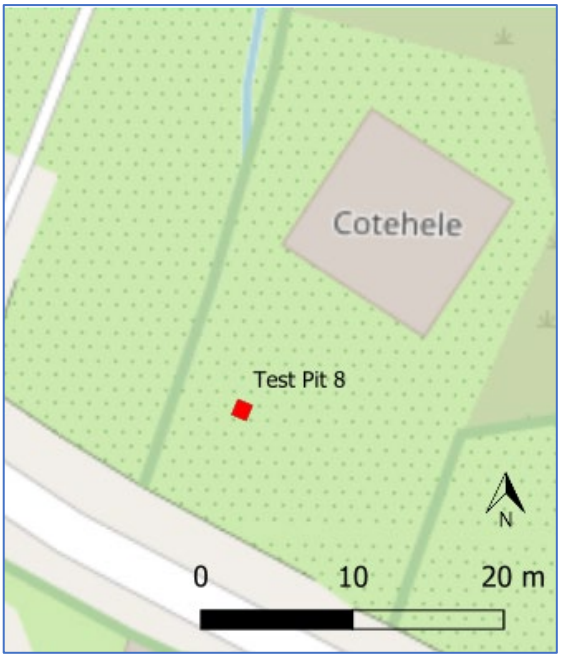

Figure 17: Location of Test Pit 08. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

This topsoil also contained ten pieces of ceramic building material (86g), ten chunks of mortar (123g), two bits of plaster (4g), six fragments of slate (89g), a lump of worked stone (13g), five shards of clear window glass (13g), two pieces of flat green glass (4g), eleven fragments of bottle glass (four clear (10g), seven green (42g)), one lump of slag (36g), three handmade nails (44g), two modern nails (18g), five pieces of coal (17g), six fragments of oil shale (24g), one animal bone (17g), a fragment of clay pipe bowl (1g), three sections of clay pipe stem (10g), and a brass 0.22 inch bullet casing (3g).

Only 16 sherds of pottery from subsoil (801). This collection comprised five sherds of transfer printed ware and six fragments of other white wares (15g), three pieces of Bridgwater/Somerset coast red earthenware (29g), a miscellaneous fragment of red earthenware (5g), and one sherd from a yellow slipware dish (4g). Associated construction debris included two bits of ceramic building material (8g), 34 chunks of mortar (560g), eight pieces of plaster (13g), six fragments of slate (170g), and two shards of clear window glass (4g). The deposit also contained one lump of slag (4g), one handmade nail (3g), three pieces of coal (21g), four animal bones (7g), an oyster shell (3g), and two pieces of clay pipe stem (5g).

The possible dump deposit, (802), contained two small fragments of ceramic building material (2g), two chunks of mortar (16g), and one piece of clear bottle glass (10g).

7.3.7 Test Pit 09: The Beadons, Crowcombe Road

The eastern edge of the lawn at the front of the property

The topsoil, (900), was a 0.17m deep layer of moderately compact dark greyish-brown sandy silt. It sealed a subsoil, (901), of slightly greyish mid-brown sandy silt, which was up to 0.15m deep and incorporated frequent flecks and fragments of coal and charcoal, small fragments of ceramic building material, and occasional pieces of slate.

The subsoil overlay a dump deposit of moderately compact to well compacted mixed reddish-brown clay and mid-brown silt, (902), which was up to 0.29m deep, with the basal 0.07m incorporating moderate quantities of angular pebbles and cobbles. The removal of (902) exposed another ground make-up layer, (903), composed of moderately compact mid-brown clayey silt that was up to 0.27m deep and contained occasional small stones. The surface of a layer of moderately compact to firm brownish-red clay, (904), was exposed at the base of the test pit. It was more than 0.03m deep and incorporated frequent flecks of charcoal and lime mortar.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (900) contained 30 sherds of pottery (175g), including 16 pieces of whiteware and one sherd of yellow slipware, which were all manufactured between the 18th and the 20th centuries (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.2). Other material recovered from the deposit included three fragments of ceramic building material (63g), two bits of slate (4g), two chunks of mortar (13g), two small shards of clear window glass (4g), three pieces of bottle glass (two clear (8g), one green (4g)), two modern nails (8g), the metal cap of a lightbulb (9g), one bit of coal (3g), three animal bone fragments (10g), a section of clay pipe stem (3g), and a lead toy figure (3g).

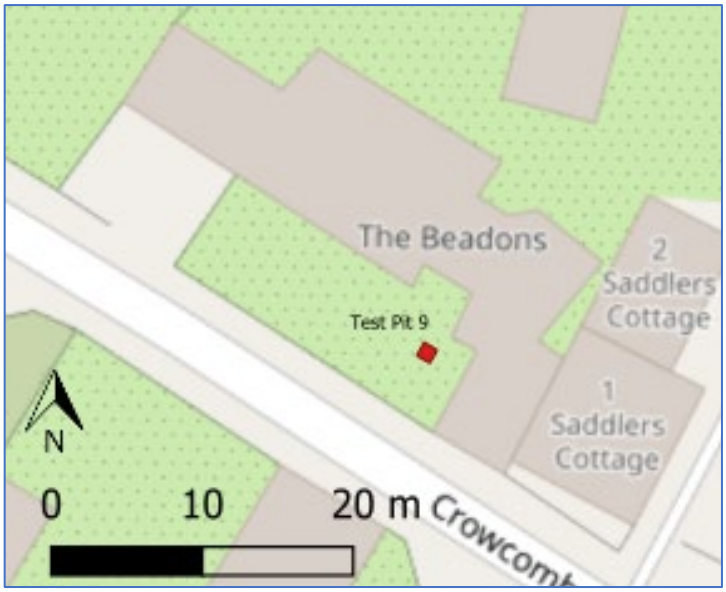

Figure 18: Location of Test Pit 09. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

The excavation of subsoil (901) recovered fifteen sherds of pottery (67g), nine of which were fragments of white ware, together with 21 chunks of mortar (792g), some with a plaster surface, a small lump of plaster (2g), a piece of clear window glass (2g), a fragment of green bottle glass (6g), four animal bones (50g), and two sections of clay pipe stem (4g).

Ground make-up layer, (903), contained ten sherds of pottery (174g), nine of which were Bridgwater/Somerset coast type red earthenware. One of these sherds represented the unglazed rim and shoulder of a bowl, which was probably manufactured in the early 18th century, but may have been as early as the 17th century. The deposit also contained twelve chunks of mortar (166g), many with a plaster coating attached, seven pieces of slate (33g), six animal bones (29g), two fragments of clay pipe bowl (13g), and two sections of clay pipe stem (8g).

7.3.8 Test Pit 10: 2 Hagleys Green

A vegetable plot near the south-eastern corner of the garden located at the rear of the house

Garden soil (1000) was a loose dark greyish-brown sandy silt, up to 0.20m deep, which contained frequent small fragments and flecks of white and creamy lime mortar. It sealed a mid orangey-brown sandy silt subsoil, (1001), which was more than 0.15m deep, and incorporated moderate quantities of angular pebbles and cobbles that were up to 0.15m across.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil, (1000), contained seven sherds of pottery (80g) produced between the 18th and 20th centuries. The deposit also contained fourteen pieces of ceramic building material (35g), three slivers of slate (3g), two lumps of mortar (5g), one small piece of mirror glass (1g), three fragments of bottle glass (two clear (5g), one green (5g)), a piece of Perspex (1g), three modern nails (14g), nine bits of coal (11g), and ten animal bone fragments (5g).

The subsoil, (1001), contained the most diverse and interesting range of pottery encountered in the Crowcombe test pits. The thirteen sherds (31g) included a very abraded piece of greyware (<1g), which was potentially Romano-British in date (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.2). Another ten sherds came from hand-built

and relatively low fired vessels, but they were too heavily abraded to identify their forms. There were three different fabrics, some or all of which could have been prehistoric, but they were probably medieval products that would have been manufactured prior to the 13th century. Additionally, there was a single sherd of Bridgwater/Somerset coast red earthenware with the iron-enriched all over glaze, which was probably manufactured in the 16th to 17th centuries.

Other material recovered from (1001) included four fragments of ceramic building material (18g), three pieces of slate (26g), three slivers of clear window glass (1g), a shard of clear bottle glass (1g), nine lumps of slag (76g), and five bits of coal (6g).

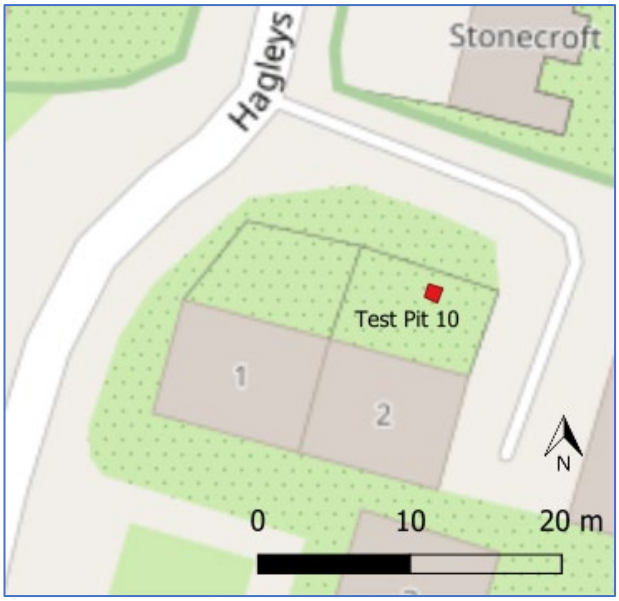

Figure 19: Location of Test Pit 10. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

7.4 Discussion

With the discovery of two pieces of struck flint, the project has uncovered the first recorded evidence for prehistoric activity within the village core. The piece found in the beer garden of The Carew Arms (TP 05) was a fragment of a late Mesolithic microlith that was manufactured and used between c. 6500 and 4000 BCE, while the flake from Test Pit 03, beside the driveway to Crowcombe Court, is likely to be somewhat later (Neolithic to early Bronze Age - c. 4000-1500 BCE) (Rylatt 2024, Appendix 13.4.2).

Test Pit 10, at 2 Hagleys Green, contained the most diverse and interesting collection of pottery recovered from the village. This material included a small, heavily abraded sherd of greyware, which may have been Roman in date and provided the only potential indication of human activity during this period (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.2). It also contained ten fragments from low fired, hand-built pots. While it is possible that some of these fabrics were prehistoric, they were more likely to be derived from medieval vessels manufactured prior to the 13th century. Hagley's Green appears to occupy the south-western quadrant of the medieval borough (Gathercole 2002, Map A), an area which had been divided into burgage plots in the 12th or early 13th centuries (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985b). This suggests that the sherds recovered from Test Pit 10 were derived from refuse pits located to the rear of properties fronting onto Crowcombe Road.

A small sherd recovered from Test Pit 06, close to the street frontage of Ajana, Crowcombe Road, could also be medieval in date. This property is located on another burgage plot near the eastern edge of the borough and adjacent to the probable site of the medieval marketplace (Gathercole 2002). In 2007, sherds of 13th century pottery were recovered from a similar location near the frontage of Delmore, the property situated immediately to the east of Ajana (HER No. 26104). Notably, no medieval artefacts were recovered from any of the test pits located at the south-eastern end of the village, in the area surrounding the church.

Records from the 14th century indicate that the people of Crowcombe suffered greatly from the effects of climatic deterioration and the Black Death, with the rental income of the manor in 1349 being significantly reduced because 'the tenants were dead from the plague' (Dunning 185, cited in Riley 2006, 89). This provides a strong indication that the village must have contracted, and plots would have become vacant, a factor that potentially explains the absence of 14th or 15th century ceramic material in any of the test pits. Evidence for the

recovery of the community toward the end of this period is provided surviving 15th century dwellings: The Old Rectory and The Glebe House (HER No. 30481) and Forge Cottage and The Old Forge (HER No. 30482).

The following century saw the construction of Church House in 1515 (HER No. 34801). A piece of glazed crested roof tile recovered from Test Pit 02, located adjacent to the rear wall of the building, could have formed part of the original 16th century roof. Additionally, a clay bonded sandstone rubble wall exposed at the base of Test Pit 01 shared the same alignment as the rear elevation of Church House and may have formed part of a boundary or ancillary structure constructed at around the same time.

The village contains several late 16th and early 17th century properties, including Timewell and Timewell Cottage (HER No. 30493), and 1-3 Carew Cottages (HER No. 30483). Minimal evidence for contemporaneous activity was provided by a sherd of Bridgwater/Somerset coast red earthenware with iron-enriched all over glaze found at 2 Hagleys Green; Test Pit 10 was located 50m to the south-south-west of Carew Cottages.

Sunny Bank (HER No. 30474) and Rose Cottages (HER No. 30489) demonstrate that the replacement of medieval buildings and infilling of plots in the old borough continued during the 17th and early 18th century. This period is characterised by an increase in the quantity of red earthenware that was bought and used by the villagers. It appears that the Bridgwater/coast type, which may have been manufactured in the Chandos glass cone, constituted the largest proportion of these vessels (55 sherds - 44% of the earthenwares). Dawson (2022, Appendix 13.3.2) suggests that this material may have been traded via the harbour at Watchet. This potentially provides insights into highly localised patterns of trade along the western margin of the Quantock Hills, as the merchants would have passed Bicknoller, where much of red earthenware came from the Donyatt potteries of South Somerset and was probably traded via Taunton (see 6.4, above), or Stogumber, where local West Somerset earthenware, probably from Nether Stowey, were the dominant types (see 9.4, below).

The most significant change to the character of the village in the 18th century resulted from the construction of Crowcombe Court between 1724 and 1739 (HER No. 30494) and the demolition of the medieval manor house (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985b). In 2022, an archaeological excavation was undertaken as part of the QLPS project to try and identify the site of the original manor house (McConnell 2023). The trenches exposed elements of a 17th century formal garden that was, in all probability, associated with the house, but the site of the manor itself remained elusive. Late 19th century Ordnance Survey maps, surveyed over 160 years after the demolition of the building, depict the 'site of manor house' immediately to the north of a sloping woodland plantation abutting the northern side of the churchyard (Ordnance Survey 1888b). Test Pit 03, which was located at the south-western corner of this woodland, exposed a mixed demolition deposit containing fragments of sandstone rubble, ceramic building material, flecks and lumps of lime mortar and plaster, roof slate, and a sherd from an 18th century slip-decorated red earthenware dish. The composition of this deposit, combined with the limited dating evidence, potentially indicates that it represents debris from the demolition of the manor house and possibly indicates the building was located somewhere close to the test pit site.

Overall, there was a marked increase in the quantity and distribution of later 18th, 19th and 20th century pottery, fragments of which were recovered from all the test pits. Plain and transfer printed white wares were the most abundant types. The 653 sherds recovered from the village demonstrate changes to trading patterns resulting from access to markets and manufactories throughout the UK following the opening of the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal, in 1827, and the West Somerset Railway, in 1862.

Test Pit 02 also provided evidence of the gradual deterioration of Church House during the late 19th century, as it contained a large deposit of roof slate which is likely to have slipped from the roof at some point between 1872 and 1907 (Meneer and Brew 2016). The adjacent Test Pit 01 contained an assortment of debris derived from the demolition of the 'poor house' cottages in 1963. It also exposed part of the concrete floor of the cottage that abutted the gable end of Church House.

8 Nether Stowey

Site Code: NEST 23

Museum Accession Number: TTNCM 78/2024

HER Number: 49078

8.1 Location, Topography and Geology

This large village occupies the eastern foothills of the Quantock Hills and lies roughly 6km to the south of the Bristol Channel. Stowey Castle, a motte and bailey earthwork located toward the south-western edge of the settlement, was constructed on and around a knoll reaching 123m aOD. The centre of the village is located 400m to the east-north-east and occupies relatively flat ground at 75m aOD. Most of the settlement overlies slightly acid loamy and clayey soils with impeded drainage (Cranfield University 2024), which are derived from the mudstones and halite-stones of the Mercia Mudstone Group (British Geological Survey 1984). Freely draining slightly acid loamy soils predominate toward the south-western edge of the village. This latter area, which includes the knoll occupied by the castle, overlies the Leighland Slates Member. A narrow band of the Helsby Sandstone Formation runs along the northern and eastern edges of the castle and alluvium lines the base of a narrow valley to the west of the castle (ibid.).

Central OSGB National Grid Reference: ST 19200 39720.

8.2 Summary of Known Heritage Assets

Description	HER No.	NGR	Date
Cropmark enclosure, west of Nether Stowey	12386	ST 20016 39514	Possibly Prehistoric/Roman
Cropmark enclosure, NE of Inwood Farm, Nether Stowey	11867	ST 20452 39678	Possibly Prehistoric/Roman
Butchers Lane - evaluation (2019)	39420	ST 18799 39605	C10th or C11th pottery in a pit
Remains of Keep, Stowey Castle (Grade I listed building, and scheduled monument No 1019421)	-	ST 18687 39574	C11th/C12th
Stowey Castle	11402	ST 18700 39580	C12th-C16th
Medieval & post-medieval pottery (kilns and waster pits)	10591	ST 19260 39890	C13th-C17th
Deer park	41948	ST 19811 40116	C13th-C17th
Cross base in churchyard (Grade II listed)	10040	ST 19678 39614	Late C14th
34 Castle Street (Grade II listed building)	13434	ST 19064 39673	C15th-C19th
Rose and Crown (formerly listed as The Rose and Crown Hotel), 5 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13444	ST 19234 39712	C15th-C19th
Church of St Mary and churchyard	10595	ST 19674 39636	C15th-mid C19th; possibly site of late Saxon minster
Court House and garden (Grade II* & II listed buildings)	11017	ST 19602 39640	Late C15th-C18th
Medieval town	10588	ST 19268 39667	Medieval
Church of St Michael site	10589	ST 18806 39570	Medieval
Nether Stowey Castle - earthwork survey (2004)	17900	ST 18717 39567	Medieval
Medieval park and warren, Nether Stowey	17901	ST 18100 39083	Medieval
Medieval pottery kilns SW of Nether Stowey Castle Scheduled as part of 1019421 (above)	11126	ST 18700 39565	Medieval
30 Castle Street (Grade II listed building)	13433	ST 19078 39682	Medieval-C17th
Castle Hill - Watching brief (1996)	12708	ST 18850 39580	Medieval and post medieval pottery
18 Castle Street (Grade II listed building)	13430	ST 19134 39695	C16th

Description	HER No.	NGR	Date
Forecourt walls and garden room, Stowey Court (Grade II listed building)	-	ST 19610 39643	C16th-C17th
Ancient Mariner public house, 42 Lime Street - evaluation (2010)	28538	ST 19160 39900	C16th-C18th pits & postholes
20, 22 and 24 Castle Street (Grade II listed building)	13431	ST 19114 39696	C16th-C19th
Stowey Farm House, St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13454	ST 19333 39626	C16th-C20th
Stowey Cottages, Stowey House (Grade II listed buildings)	-	ST 19332 39631	C16th-C20th
Post-medieval pottery	15482	ST 19222 39940	c. 1650-1750
Post-medieval pottery, 36 Lime Street	15483	ST 19204 39873	c. 1650-1750
Post medieval pottery site - excavation (1968)	28563	ST 19260 39890	c. 1650-1750
Coleridge Cottage - evaluation (2010)	30311	ST 19100 39850	Early C17th-C20th pottery
Globe House, 23 Castle Street	38987	ST 19098 39721	C17th?
Castle Hill House (formerly listed under Castle Street), Castle Hill (Grade II listed building)	13426	ST 18874 39634	C17th-C18th
Cross Farmhouse (Grade II listed building)	-	ST 18602 38766	C17th-C18th
35 (Coleridge's Cottage) and 37, Lime Street (Grade II* listed building)	13436	ST 19107 39857	C17th-C19th
Stakes Cottage (Grade II listed building)	-	ST 18542 39367	C17th-C20th
Post-medieval trade token, found at the George Hotel	27000	ST 19240 39757	Later C17th
53 Castle Street (Grade II listed building)	13428	ST 18971 39667	Late C17th/early C18th-C19th
Pound site, S of St Mary's church	10213	ST 19595 39527	Post-medieval
Fishponds and gardens, Court Farm	10593	ST 19715 39699	Post-medieval
Smithy, Castle Street	18021	ST 19077 39740	Post-medieval
Water meadow system, N of Nether Stowey Castle	26760	ST 18696 39761	Post-medieval
Market cross and stocks sites, Castle Street and Lime Street	10590	ST 19203 39728	c. 1757-c. 1862
Poole House (formerly listed as Thomas Poole's House), 21 Castle Street (Grade II listed building)	13427	ST 19116 39729	Early C18th
Gazebo and attached walling, grounds of Stowey Court (Grade II* listed building)	-	ST 19545 39607	Early C18th
Railings, walling and gazebo, garden of Cross Farmhouse (Grade II listed building)	-	ST 18544 38747	C18th
The Old Bakery, 9 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13446	ST 19259 39692	C18th
Post-medieval tannery, Castle Street	22503	ST 19037 39780	C18th
Turnpike road, Nether Stowey to Ashcott	24588	ST 317 382	C18th
Turnpike road, Minehead to Nether Stowey	26181	ST 081 434	C18th
23 Lime Street (Grade II listed building)	13435	ST 19145 39797	C18th-C19th
The Clock House including flats 1 to 6 (formerly listed as The Clock House), 2 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13450	ST 19217 39689	C18th-early C19th
Scotts (formerly listed as Scott's House), 21 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13449	ST 19313 39669	Mid C18th
Toll House and gate piers to left, 15 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13448	ST 19287 39673	Late C18th
The Old House, 11 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13447	ST 19269 39682	Late C18th
Brook House, 18 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13453	ST 19278 39654	Late C18th
10 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13452	ST 19248 39665	c. 1800
Congregational chapel site	10214	ST 19147 39859	c. 1808
Clock Tower, St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13429	ST 19199 39713	1862
28 Castle Street (Grade II listed building)	13432	ST 19086 39686	Early C19th
35 Mill Lane (Grade II listed building)	13437	ST 18794 39883	Early C19th
Xanadu, 1 St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13443	ST 19211 39739	Early C19th
7 St Mary Street and attached office to left (Grade II listed building)	13445	ST 19245 39706	Early C19th
Nos 6 and 8 (Oakford House) and attached wall to left (formerly listed as Oakford House No 5 St Mary Street), St Mary Street (Grade II listed building)	13451	ST 19231 39679	Early C19th
Nether Stowey church - watching brief (2019)	41645	ST 19678 39625	Early C19th pits and building remains
Turnpike road, Kilve to Nether Stowey	26218	ST 17340 41308	C19th
The Cross - watching brief (2009)	29533	ST 19190 39710	C19th
Congregational Church - watching brief (1979)	16182	ST 19147 39859	Mid C19th burial
Nether Stowey Castle - watching brief (2010)	29806	ST 18809 39542	Late C19th/early C20th pit
Golf course site, used as a base for Second World War military, N of Nether Stowey	29818	ST 19035,40247	C20th

Table 6: Known heritage assets located in Nether Stowey and within its immediate environs.

Nether Stowey is a significant historic town, which has its own designation with the Somerset Historic Environment Record (10588) and was the subject of an archaeological assessment in 2003 (Gathercole 2003a). This provides a detailed archaeological record for the town, and therefore only a summary, and updates are provided here.

8.2.1 Prehistoric and Roman

There is limited evidence of prehistoric or Roman settlement within the boundary of the village, although there was activity in the surrounding area. Cropmarks, which may be related to prehistoric activity, have been identified close to the town (e.g., HER Nos. 11867 and 12386). There have been suggestions that Nether Stowey castle (11402) was constructed upon a pre-existing prehistoric earthwork, but this remains unproven. It is possible that a Roman road may have passed through the town but, again, this has not been verified.

8.2.2 Early Medieval and Medieval

Little is known about early medieval activity in Nether Stowey, but the Domesday Book suggests a relatively complex pattern of landholding in the late Anglo-Saxon period (Williams and Martin 2002, 269). The land was held by Earl Harold and Alwig Banneson and was apportioned to the thegns Osweard and Aethelweard as undertenants. This suggests that there were at least two estate centres within the parish. Gathercole (2003a) discusses the limited archaeological evidence, which suggest that there may have been several foci of activity during the early development of the settlement, including a possible minster where St Marys Church now stands.

The expansion of the town in the medieval period was probably related to the construction and development of the castle (HER No. 11402), one of two visible medieval structures in the town today. The other is the tower of St Marys Church (HER No. 10595). The castle and associated landscape, medieval road layout, burgage plots, buildings, and industrial sites are discussed in detail in Gathercole (2003a).

The other possible location of note from the medieval period is the potential medieval pottery production site (HER No. 11126), the sole evidence for which is a document of 1271 that records that “a Richard de Porta, and others, were fined, or taxed, for making pots, as they had done according to ancient custom” (Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1970, 6). Determining whether this industry existed would be highly significant, as it would demonstrate that Nether Stowey was an early competitor to the Donyatt potteries.

8.2.3 Early Post-Medieval

Nether Stowey continued to be an important regional centre in the post-medieval period, but new development primarily occurred within existing burgage plots. Pottery production was a primary industry, and products were exported to the wider region, including Bristol (Good 1987; Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1988). Elements of a large pottery production site have been identified (HER 10519) although kilns have yet to be found (Gathercole 2003a).

Many of the buildings constructed along Castle Street, St Mary Street, and Lime Street were erected during this period, including the Ancient Mariner public house (HER 28538), Coleridge Cottage (HER 13436), Stowey Farm House (HER 13454), Poole House (HER 13427), and Castle Hill House (HER 13426).

8.2.4 Later Post-Medieval and Modern

The village contains several early 19th century listed buildings, many of which are located on St Mary Street: Xanadu, 1 St Mary Street; Oakford House, 6 and 8 St Mary Street; 7 St Mary Street; and 10 St Mary Street. This suggests that there was some infilling and expansion of the settlement between Castle Street and Stowey

Figure 20: Location of the test pits that were opened in Nether Stowey.
Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Court Farm. Other 19th century developments included the construction of a Congregational chapel on Lime Street, c. 1808, and the erection of a clock tower at the junction of St Mary Street and Castle Street in 1862.

Housing development during the second half of the 20th century and into the 21st Century has roughly doubled the size of Nether Stowey, expanding the village to the north-west, along Mount Road and Mill Lane, and to the south-east, off South Lane and along Banneson Road.

8.3 Results

8.3.1 Test Pit 01: 36 Lime Street

At the rear of the property, in lawn near the southern boundary of the garden

The topsoil, (100), was a 0.20m deep layer of loose to moderately compact dark greyish-brown sandy silt, which incorporated occasional pebbles. It sealed a subsoil, (101), consisting of moderately compact slightly pinkish mid-brown clayey silt, which was more than 0.19m deep and contained frequent flecks of charcoal.

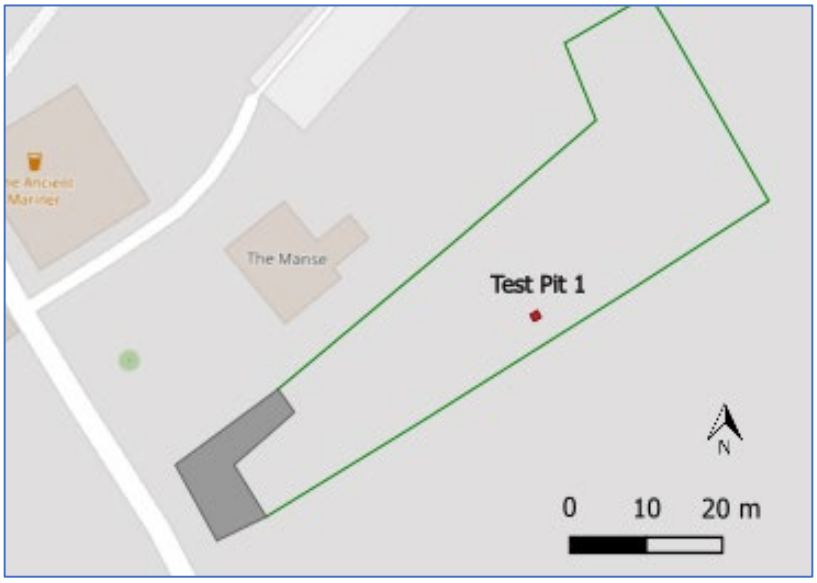

Figure 21: Location of Test Pit 01. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (100) contained 274 sherds of pottery (840g) representing vessels produced over an extended period spanning the 11th to 12th centuries to the 19th to 20th centuries (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.3). There were eleven medieval sherds that were produced in two distinct hard-fired fabrics, all of which were likely to be derived from open jars with a sagging base. The remainder of the pottery was post-medieval to early modern in date. The principal elements of this collection consisted of 104 sherds of the local West Somerset red earthenware, most of which were small and could only be broadly dated to the 16th to 19th centuries, together with 55 pieces of 19th to 20th century whiteware and transfer-printed ware. The deposit also contained 29 fragments of red ceramic building material (233g), 24 lumps of mortar (34g), eight chunks of plaster (23g), three pieces of concrete (34g), eleven bits of slate (33g), 30 pieces of clear window glass (41g), fifteen slivers of flat white glass (4g), three shards of clear bottle glass (3g), six lumps of slag (155g), a modern nail (1g), a section of lead pipe (8g), 20 pieces of coal (45g), three fragments of oil shale (12g), fourteen animal bones (36g), a button (1g), four fragments of clay pipe bowl (2g), and eight pieces of clay pipe stem (17g).

Subsoil (101) contained 49 sherds of medieval pottery, which spanned the period from the 11th to 14th centuries (ibid.). Most of these were abraded fragments of coarse wares and included 31 sherds from open jars, two of which were carinations (the junction between the belly and the sagging base). There were also three rim sherds. Two were flat topped, one having thumb impressed decoration, and the other formed part of the rim, short neck, and shoulder of a vessel; all three dated the 13th to 14th centuries. A tiny, glazed sherd, probably from a Bristol Redcliff ware jug is also likely to date to the late 13th to early 14th century. The recovery of a significant quantity of medieval pottery from the garden of 36 Lime Street is notable, as the property

occupies one of the burgage plots located toward the north-eastern edge of the planned medieval settlement (Gathercole 2003a). As such, the pottery provides dating evidence that will help to establish when the plots were laid out, occupied, and possibly vacated.

The subsoil also contained 49 sherds of later ceramic material, which included the neck of a Bristol stoneware bottle produced after 1835, together with four pieces of ceramic building material (54g), a lump of squared stone rubble (24g), three bits of mortar (6g), three fragments of slate (20g), eight shards of clear window glass (8g), one fragment of green bottle glass (3g), one lump of slag (29g), seven pieces of coal (45g), three limpet shells (3g), and three sections of clay pipe stem (5g).

8.3.2 Test Pit 02: The Old Cider House, 25 Castle Street

At the rear of the house, in a terraced garden at the north-eastern corner of the property

The topsoil, (200), was a relatively loose, dark greyish-brown sandy-silt. It was up to 0.40m deep and incorporated discrete lumps of pinkish-brown clay and frequent small angular and sub-angular stones that were up to 0.03m across. It sealed a mid to dark greyish-brown sandy-silt subsoil, (201), which was more than 0.09m deep and contained discrete lumps of pinkish-brown clay.

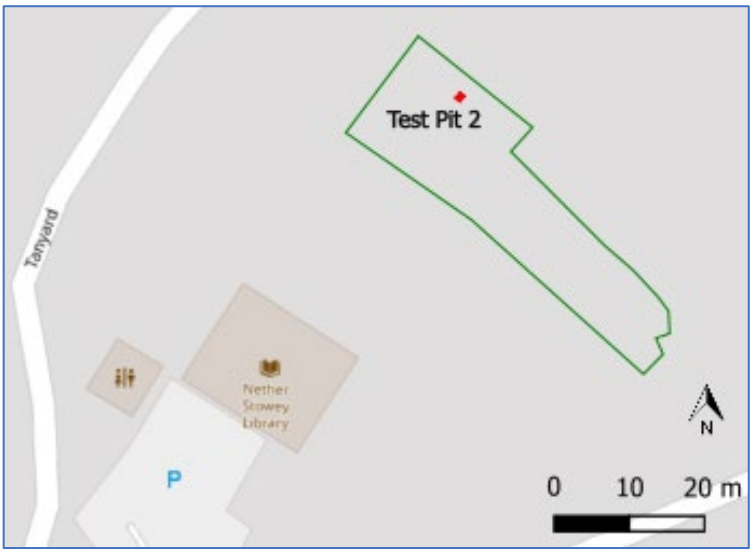

Figure 22: Location of Test Pit 02. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

Garden soil (200) contained 266 sherds of pottery, which had all been broken into small fragments by the repeated reworking of the deposit. This assemblage included six very abraded and unclassifiable medieval sherds, but the largest element comprised 109 sherds of the local West Somerset red earthenware (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.3). This material primarily consisted of body sherds, which included a fragment of a cucurbit, but there were also pieces from the rims of jars and dishes, including one fragment with a thumbed band beneath the rim of a jar, and the rim of a sgraffito decorated dish. The most interesting components were fragments of seconds that were waste products of the local pottery industry in Nether Stowey. Of these, nine sherds were distinctly overfired and two were underfired. The deposit also contained a range of 18th and 19th century material, including 61 sherds of whiteware.

Topsoil (200) also contained seven fragments of red ceramic building material (127g), two lumps of mortar (8g), 19 chunks of plaster (63g), two pieces of concrete (254g), 17 bits of slate (113g), seven slivers of clear window glass (6g), 18 shards of bottle glass (eight clear (39g), four green (60g), three blue (6g)), eight handmade nails (174g), a modern nail (3g), thirteen pieces of coal (40g), three fragments of oil shale (18g), fourteen animal bones (19g), thirteen shells (13g), three slate pencils (8g), one fragment of clay pipe bowl (1g), and ten sections of clay pipe stem (11g).

The excavation recovered 110 sherds of pottery from subsoil (201). They included three sherds from medieval open jars, one of which was a hammerhead rim in a coarse fabric. The recovery of medieval pottery from the garden of 25 Castle Street is significant because the property occupies another of the burgage plots forming part of the planned medieval settlement (Gathercole 2003a). The 41 sherds of local West Somerset red

earthenware formed the largest component of the ceramic material recovered from (201). One sherd came from the base of a sgraffito decorated dish, probably dating to the 18th century, and two crimped rims, one with an applied band inside, were probably from chafing dishes. The collection also included 35 sherds of 18th to 19th century whiteware. Other artefacts included six fragments of ceramic building material (39g), seven bits of slate (37g), six chunks of mortar (47g), fourteen lumps of plaster (30g), three small shards of clear window glass (2g), eight pieces of clear bottle glass (47g), two handmade nails (76g), a modern nail (3g), six bits of coal (22g), three pieces of oil shale (3g), seven animal bones (23g), four limpet shells (8g), and six sections of clay pipe stem (5g).

8.3.3 Test Pit 03: 30-32 Castle Street

At the rear of the house, in lawn toward the centre of the garden

Topsoil (300) was a friable to moderately compact dark grey slightly sandy silt, which contained frequent large sandstone pebbles and was more than 0.25m deep.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil contained 188 sherds of pottery, of which one was part of a medieval vessel. The remainder were produced between the 16th and 20th centuries and included 75 sherds of the local West Somerset red earthenware and 75 sherds of whiteware. A range of other artefacts were recovered, including seven fragments of red ceramic building material (66g), three lumps of mortar (5g), eleven chunks of plaster (29g), one piece of concrete (21g), eight bits of slate (43g), 20 fragments of clear window glass (28g), 46 shards of bottle glass (22 clear (110g), three green (6g), one brown (4g), 20 blue (20g)), three handmade nails (18g), seven modern nails (33g), an iron bolt (13g), a horseshoe (57g), seven pieces of coal (21g), one fragment of oil shale (1g), nine animal bones (11g), five limpet shells (17g), a battery (22g), a metal bottle top (25g), a milk bottle top (1g), and three pieces of clay pipe stem (10g).

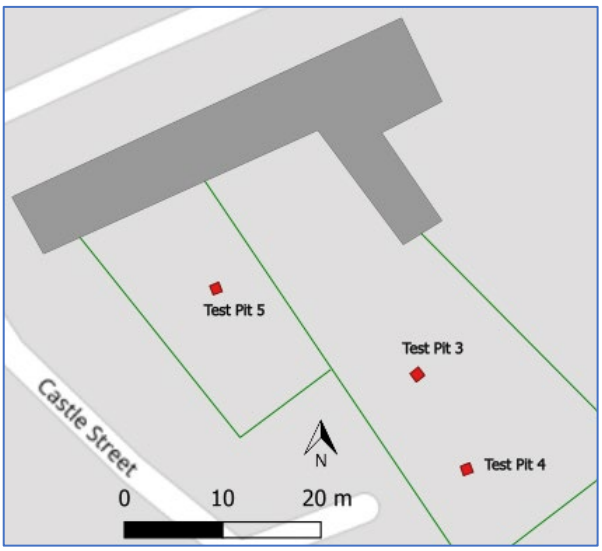

Figure 23: Location of Test Pit 03, Test Pit 04, and Test Pit 05. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

8.3.4 Test Pit 04: 30-32 Castle Street

At the rear of the house, toward the south-western corner of the garden

Topsoil (400) was a 0.29m deep layer of friable to moderately compact dark grey slightly clayey silt, which incorporated frequent sandstone pebbles (approximately 10% of the deposit by volume). It sealed a moderately compact slightly heterogenous greyish-brown clayey silt subsoil, (401), which was up to 0.25m deep and contained moderate quantities of pebbles and small cobbles (roughly 5-10% by volume).

The subsoil overlay a demolition deposit, (402), consisting of very frequent angular sandstone cobbles and pebbles, ranging from 0.03 x 0.04 x 0.02m up to 0.12 x 0.11 x 0.07m, mixed with occasional fragments of shale or slate. This rubble was contained within a matrix of mid reddish-brown silty clay and was more than 0.25m deep.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil, (400), contained 106 sherds of post-medieval pottery (754g). This assemblage included 48 fragments of local West Somerset red earthenware, at least one of which formed part of a late 17th to early 18th century dish with a sgraffito decorated rim, and 34 sherds of 18th to 20th century whiteware. Associated artefactual material included five fragments of red ceramic building material (156g), six lumps of mortar (62g), one chunk of concrete (15g), five bits of slate (52g), one sliver of clear window glass (3g), a piece of flat brown glass (15g), nine shards of bottle glass (five clear (249g), four green (43g)), two handmade nails (13g), seven pieces of coal (59g), a bit of oil shale (9g), four animal bones (9g), six limpet shells (14g), and two small pieces of clay pipe stem (2g).

Subsoil (401) was notable for the abundance of pottery that it contained, the 238 sherds (4,469g) recovered spanning the 17th to 19th centuries. Local West Somerset red earthenwares formed 83% of the assemblage (196 sherds) and included a large part of the base of a dish from the first half of the 18th century, which had skilfully executed combed white and brown wet-slip decoration (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.3). More utilitarian forms included fragments of two storage jars with a heavy applied reinforcing band under their rims. Other forms included pans and bottles, together with a fragment of possible kiln furniture and the remnants of several overfired wasters or near wasters. Evidence of wider 18th century mercantile trade was provided by three sherds from Bristol mottled ware tankards, two pieces of a Bristol yellow slipware cup, and a fragment of a Nottingham stoneware tankard. The deposit also contained 43 sherds of later whitewares.

The subsoil also contained one fragment from a late medieval crested roof-ridge tile (18g), a block of squared stone rubble (864g), three bits of mortar (15g), three lumps of plaster (19g), five fragments of slate (86g), four pieces of clear window glass (11g), 27 shards of bottle glass (one clear (2g), 26 green (354g)), one bit of coal (2g) and piece of oil shale (6g), 45 animal bones (479g), three oyster shells (50g), a fragment of clay pipe bowl (1g), and four sections of clay pipe stem (19g).

8.3.5 Test Pit 05: 34 Castle Street

At the rear of the house, toward the centre of the garden

The topsoil, (500), a moderately compact dark brownish-grey sandy silt, was 0.36m deep and incorporated moderate to frequent flecks of white to creamy mortar. It sealed a mid to darkish pinkish-brown clayey silt subsoil, (501), which was more than 0.28m deep. Frequent small stones and moderate flecks of charcoal and mortar were present throughout the deposit. In addition, a pile of sandstone rubble and pottery partially exposed at the north-east corner of the pit may have represented structural remains but too little was uncovered to determine its form or function.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (500) contained 100 pottery sherds, which were generally fragmented due to prolonged cultivation. This material included a sherd from an 18th century Bristol yellow slipware dish with sgraffito decoration, together with 54 pieces of the local West Somerset red earthenware (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.3). Whitewares were also well represented, forming 32% of the ceramics in the topsoil. A broad range of other artefacts were also recovered, including five pieces of ceramic building material (15g), twelve chunks of mortar (49g), five lumps of plaster (16g), some with painted surfaces, seven pieces of slate (19g), twelve fragments of clear window glass (26g), nine shards of bottle glass (eight clear (36g), one green (4g)), one handmade nail (43g), four modern nails (116g), one bit of coal (3g), eight animal bones (8g), a mollusc shell (1g), three sections of clay pipe stem (4g), a metal button (3g), a small buckle (1g), and the carbon rod (positive electrode) from a battery (2g).

The excavation of the subsoil, (501), recovered 97 sherds of pottery, 93 of which were fragments of local West Somerset red earthenware that dated from the 16th to the 20th centuries. Unusually, the deposit only contained two sherds of whiteware. The subsoil also contained a chunk of mortar (9g), six pieces of slate (47g), and five animal bones (83g).

8.3.6 Test Pit 06: 37 Castle Street

At the rear of the property, near the southern edge of a separate garden plot to the rear of Nether Stowey library

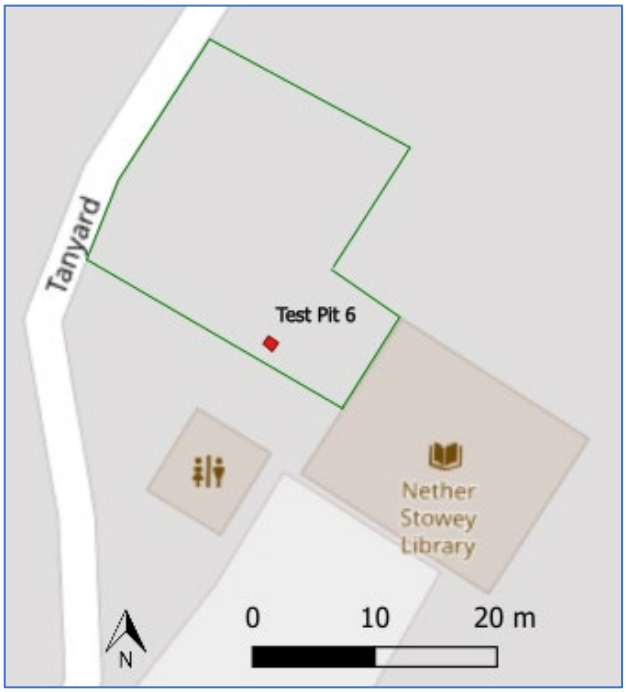

Figure 23: Location of Test Pit 06. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Topsoil (600) was a 0.40m deep layer of moderately compact very dark grey to black sandy silt containing frequent charcoal flecks. It covered a subsoil composed of moderate to firm pale to mid pinkish-brown clayey silt, (601), which was 0.11m deep and incorporated occasional pebbles and small cobbles.

The removal of the subsoil exposed a relatively compact pale yellowish-brown fine silt, (602), that was up to 0.12m deep. The homogenous composition of this silty material suggested that it was an alluvial deposit derived from a former mill leat located only a few metres to the south-west of the test pit. Silt (602) covered a probable metalled surface, (603), formed by a 0.10m deep layer of rounded cobbles and sub-angular stones, which were between 0.05m and 0.25m across. This had been deposited upon an earlier surface of compacted crushed orange to red ceramic building material, (604), which incorporated discrete patches of yellowish granular material that probably consisted of degraded lime mortar.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil, (600), contained a secondary hard hammer flake that was detached during the controlled reduction of a quartzite pebble (24g). The morphological attributes of the flake suggested that it was created during the Neolithic or early Bronze Age (c. 4000 – 1500 BCE) (Rylatt 2024, Appendix 13.4.3). The topsoil also contained 89 sherds of pottery, 61 of which were fragments of whiteware. All this material dated to the 19th and 20th centuries, except for a single sherd from an 18th century Bristol yellow slipware cup.

Other artefactual material included eight fragments of red ceramic building material (113g), two chunks of mortar (309g), one lump of plaster (4g), a piece of slate (17g), a chunk of concrete (12g), two slivers of clear window glass (6g), thirteen shards of bottle glass (nine clear (94g), three green (8g), one brown (4g)), four handmade nails (65g), one modern nail (6g), a lump of slag (22g), a piece of coal (7g), two bits of oil shale (16g), ten animal bones (29g), seven limpet shells (15g), a winkle shell (1g), a mother of pearl button (1g), a ceramic bead (2g), a clay marble (3g), two slate pencil fragments (3g), two small pieces of clay pipe stem (3g), a brass shotgun ferrel (the base of the cartridge) (5g), and a piece of plastic (8g).

Metalled surface (603) incorporated one fragment of red ceramic tile.

8.3.7 Test Pit 07: Blindwell House, South Lane

At the rear of the house, toward the centre of the garden

The topsoil, (700), was a moderately compact layer of mid to dark brown slightly sandy silt, 0.26m deep, which incorporated moderate to frequent pebbles and small cobbles, and occasional flecks and fragments of ceramic building material. It overlay a moderate to firmly compacted mid brownish-pink slightly sandy clay silt subsoil, (701), that was more than 0.12m deep and contained frequent flecks of charcoal and lime mortar.

Figure 24: Location of Test Pit 07. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

A total of 167 sherds of pottery were retrieved from topsoil (700), many of which had been heavily fragmented by repeated cultivation. The assemblage contained 55 pieces of local West Somerset red earthenware, some of which had slip-trailed decoration that suggested they were 16th century in date (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.3). A body sherd from a 'tiger-skin' stoneware bottle could have been manufactured in the 17th century, and fragments of tin-glazed earthenware, Bristol mottled ware, a Bristol yellow slipware cup, and a Nottinghamshire stoneware tankard were all produced in the 18th century. The collection also included 75 sherds of whiteware spanning the late 18th to 20th centuries.

Topsoil (700) also contained seven fragments of red ceramic building material (68g), a piece of squared building rubble (371g), twelve lumps of mortar (12g), seven chunks of plaster (18g), a piece of concrete (24g), a bit of slate (13g), a sliver of clear window glass (1g), eleven shards of bottle glass (nine clear (55g), one green (2g), one brown (6g)), a handmade nail (10g), two modern nails (6g), a modern screw (7g), 19 pieces of coal (30g), 26 animal bones (58g), five fragments of oyster shell (5g), a mollusc shell (3g), a marble (5g), one fragment of clay pipe bowl (1g), and thirteen sections of clay pipe stem (22g).

Only 26 sherds of pottery were recovered from the subsoil, (701). There were two small fragments of yellow slipware and one piece of mottled ware dating from the 18th century, together with ten sherds of local West Somerset red earthenware and nine pieces of whiteware. Other artefacts recovered from the deposit included five lumps of mortar (6g), a chunk of concrete (180g), three pieces of slate (48g), three slivers of clear window glass (2g), three shards of bottle glass (two clear (4g), one green (25g)), seven handmade nails (132g), a piece of lead (7g), six bits of coal (8g), a fragment of animal bone (1g), and four mollusc shells (1g),.

8.3.8 Test Pit 10: 5 Channel Close

At the rear of the house, on the highest terrace at the north-western corner of the garden

Topsoil (1000) was a 0.07m deep layer of dark greyish-brown sandy silt, which contained occasional pebbles and small cobbles, and frequent flecks of ash that were the residue of a series of garden bonfires. It overlay a mid greyish-brown silty clay garden soil, (1001), which was 0.20m deep and incorporated frequent pebbles and small cobbles. The garden soil covered a compact metalled surface, (1002), which was made from angular slate and sandstone pebbles and cobbles that were up to 0.10m across and were contained within a matrix of mid-greyish-red sandy clay. This deposit was more than 0.07m deep and had a horizontal upper surface, which incorporated some fragments of pottery.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil, (1000), contained seven sherds of pottery, five of the local West Somerset red earthenware and two pieces of whiteware, together with two pieces of ceramic building material. Other finds included a shard of green bottle glass (1g), an animal bone (19g), a section of clay pipe stem (3g), a handmade copper nail (6g), 23 modern nails (162g), and 27 modern screws (194g). The high incidence of modern screws and nails probably results from the use of this area as a location for garden bonfires.

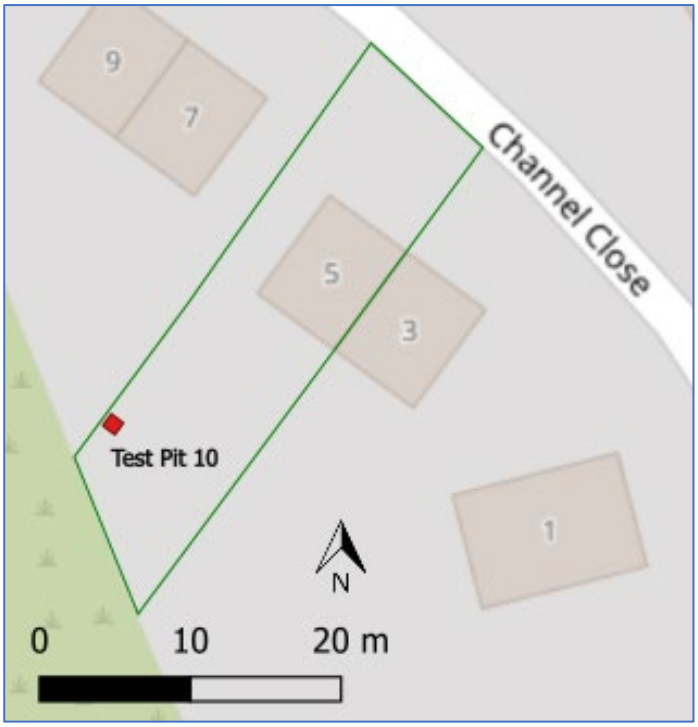

Figure 24: Location of Test Pit 07. Base *map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.*

Buried garden soil (1001) contained 40 sherds of pottery. They included four small sherds of 18th century fabric, three from a yellow slipware cup and one piece of tin-glazed earthenware. The principal element of the collection consisted of 27 fragments of local West Somerset red earthenware (68% of the material). Associated artefacts included another fourteen modern nails (74g) and a screw (4g), together with three handmade nails (54g), a metal door catch (7g), a piece of copper (1g), a lump of putty (1g), two chunks of slate (9g), six shards of bottle glass (one clear (23g), five green (5g), three animal bones (11g), a shell (1g), three sections of clay pipe stem (10g), and a piece of plastic (1g).

Metalled surface (1002) incorporated a piece of clay pipe stem (1g) and another 16 sherds of local West Somerset red earthenware (600g). The latter included three pierced tile fragments that probably formed part of the structure of a pottery kiln, together with two over-fired sherds from a flask and a bottle (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.3). It is probable that this was kiln waste from the Nether Stowey potteries, which was recycled as hard core.

8.3.9 Test Pit 20: Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

A narrow grass terrace located at the north-eastern corner of the schoolgrounds

The topsoil, (2000), was a loose to moderately compact greyish-brown clayey silt, more than 0.14m deep. It incorporated occasional to moderate pebbles.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil contained a fragment of red tile (24g), a piece of slate (16g), four chunks of concrete (46g), a shard of clear bottle glass (2g), a piece of coal (8g), a handmade nail (36g), and three pieces of flint gravel (3g).

8.3.10 Test Pit 21: Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

A narrow grass terrace located at the north-eastern corner of the schoolgrounds

Topsoil (2000) was a 0.10m deep layer of loose to moderately compact greyish-brown clayey silt, incorporating occasional to moderate pebbles. The topsoil directly overlay the surface of the natural, (2001), a deposit of

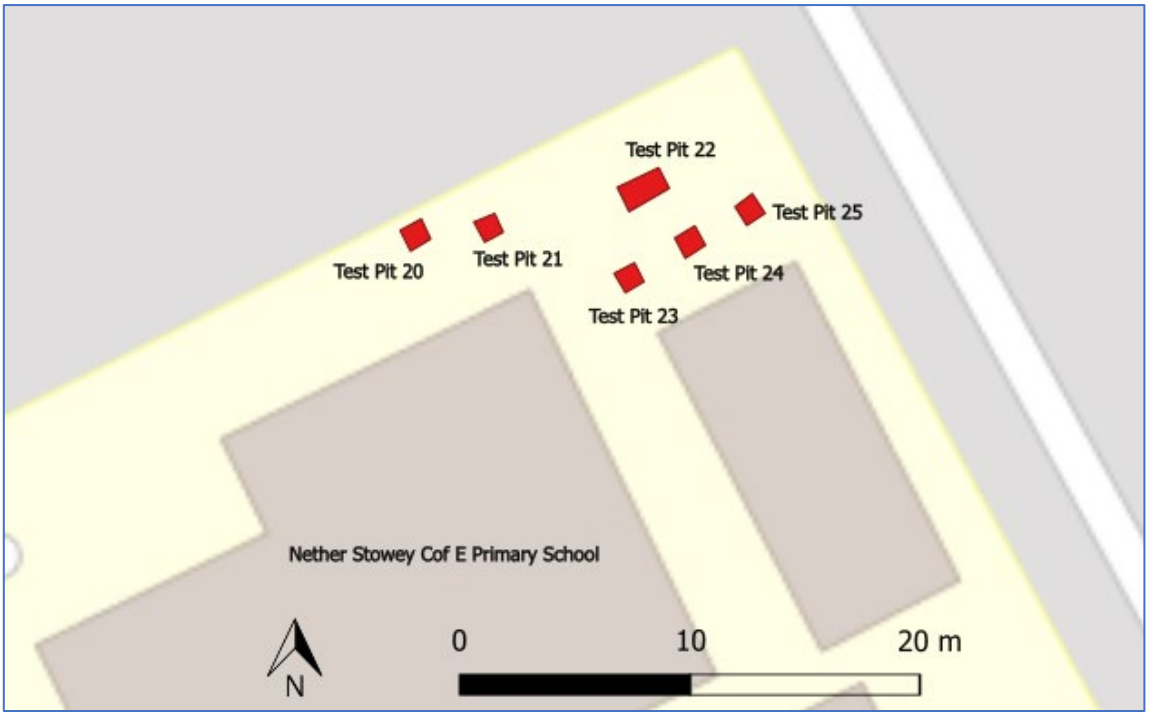

Figure 25: Location of the test pits at Nether Stowey Church of England Primary School: Test Pit 20, Test Pit 21, Test Pit 22, Test Pit 23, Test Pit 24, and Test Pit 25. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

reddish-brown clay. It is likely that this test pit was situated in an area that was truncated when the school was constructed in the second half of the 20th century.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (2000) contained one small unclassifiable sherd of pottery (2g), a brick fragment (23g), a chunk of mortar (9g), and a shard of clear bottle glass (5g).

8.3.11 Test Pit 22: Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

A narrow grass terrace located at the north-eastern corner of the schoolgrounds

The topsoil, (2000), was a loose to moderately compact greyish-brown clayey silt, more than 0.15m deep, which incorporated occasional to moderate pebbles.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil contained twelve sherds of pottery (62g), which dated from the 18th to the 20th centuries, and included seven pieces of local West Somerset red earthenware. Associated artefacts included two pieces of ceramic building material (113g), four shards of bottle glass (three clear (5g), one green (2g)), a handmade nail (25g), and a clay pipe bowl (7g).

8.3.12 Test Pit 23: Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

A narrow grass terrace located at the north-eastern corner of the schoolgrounds

Topsoil (2000) was a 0.30m deep layer of loose to moderately compact greyish-brown clayey silt, incorporating occasional to moderate pebbles. The topsoil directly overlay the surface of the natural, (2001), a deposit of reddish-brown clay.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil contained five sherds of pottery (41g), comprising three pieces of local West Somerset red earthenware and two fragments of whiteware. The other artefacts recovered consisted of a chip of ceramic building material (1g), a bit of plaster (1g), a shard of clear bottle glass (1g), a lump of coal (1g), a piece of flint gravel (5g), and an iron buckle (82g).

8.3.13 Test Pit 24: Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

A narrow grass terrace located at the north-eastern corner of the schoolgrounds

The topsoil, (2000), was a thin layer of loose to moderately compacted greyish-brown clayey silt, which incorporated occasional to moderate small stones. As the deposit was only 0.06m deep, it is likely that this test pit was situated in an area that was truncated when the school was constructed in the second half of the 20th century. The topsoil sealed the surface of the reddish-brown clay natural, (2001).

Artefact recovery

The only find from Test Pit 24 was a piece from a K'Nex plastic construction toy (1g).

8.3.14 Test Pit 25: Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

A narrow grass terrace located at the north-eastern corner of the schoolgrounds

Topsoil, (2000), was another thin layer of loose to moderately compacted greyish-brown clayey silt, which incorporated occasional to moderate small stones. The deposit was only 0.05m deep suggesting that this test pit was situated in an area that was truncated when the school was constructed in the second half of the 20th century. The topsoil sealed the surface of the reddish-brown clay natural, (2001).

Artefact recovery

The topsoil contained two pieces of stone rubble (38g), a lump of mortar (1g), a piece of coal (1g), and two pieces of flint gravel (2g).

8.4 Discussion

The recovery of a struck quartzite flake from Test Pit 06, located at the rear of 37 Castle Street, provides the first recorded evidence for a prehistoric presence from within the historic village core. It is likely to have been created during the Neolithic or early Bronze Age (c. 4000 – 1500 BCE), but it was a residual artefact found in association with more recent objects. Consequently, it is not possible to determine the character or longevity of this early activity, although intact prehistoric horizons could be preserved below the deposits exposed at the base of the test pit.

A total of 70 sherds of medieval pottery and a fragment from a late medieval crested roof-ridge tile were recovered during the fieldwork in Nether Stowey (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.3). Most of this pottery was found at 36 Lime Street (TP 01), with eleven sherds coming from the topsoil and another 49 from the subsoil. They were primarily fragments of coarse ware open jars, which were manufactured between the 11th and the 14th centuries. Most sherds were too small or too abraded to provide a more precise date, but two flat-topped rim sherds and a fragment from the rim, short neck, and shoulder of another vessel were typical of the 13th to early 14th centuries. A comparable late 13th to early 14th century date was attributed to a tiny, glazed sherd, that probably came from a Bristol Redcliff ware jug. Another nine medieval sherds were found at The Old Cider

House, 25 Castle Street (TP 02). Six very abraded pieces were found in the topsoil and the other three were fragments of open jars, which were retrieved from the subsoil. A single medieval sherd was recovered from each of the test pits opened in the garden of 30-32 Castle Street. Test Pit 03 contained a sherd from a medieval vessel and the fragment of crested roof tile came from Test Pit 04. It is possible that some of this pottery was made locally, as there is a reference from 1271 indicating that Richard De Porta, and others, were fined, or taxed, for 'making pots as they had done according to ancient custom' (Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1970), while another record from 1275 indicates potters paid 20s for the right to work in Nether Stowey (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985c).

The four pits containing medieval ceramic material were all located within the area that had been divided into burgage plots at some point prior to 1306 (ibid.; Gathercole 2003a, Map B). This was a form of tenure that applied to property within the boundaries of boroughs, so it is likely that the plots were laid out around the same time that the borough at Nether Stowey was established. This may have occurred as early as 1157–8, but surviving records indicate that it was certainly in existence by 1225 (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985c). This 12th to 13th century date range broadly corresponds with the chronology of the pottery recovered from the test pits. Moreover, the discovery of at least six different types of pottery fabric indicates Nether Stowey was a thriving and prosperous community connected to regional trade networks during this stage of the medieval period.

There are indications that this changed in the later 14th and 15th centuries, as the test pits failed to uncover any pottery or other artefacts of this date, an absence also observed in the other villages examined during the Village Test Pitting Programme. The precise reasons for this lack of evidence are unclear, but it coincides with a period of "poor weather (and thus poor harvests) combined with recurrent outbreaks of plague, which peaked with the infamous Black Death of 1348-9" (Riley 2006, 89). As a result, it is probable that the population experienced a significant decline, resulting in the abandonment of some burgage plots, the contraction of the borough, and a decline in trade. The survival of several later 15th or early 16th century buildings indicates the community was on the path to recovery by the end of this period. They include the tower of the Church of St Mary (HER No. 10595), No. 30 and 32 Castle Street (HER No. 13433) and its neighbour 34 Castle Street (HER No. 13434) (both of which hosted test pits), the foundations of Court House (HER No. 11017), and the Rose and Crown, 5 St Mary Street (HER No. 13444).

The mid to late 16th century saw further development with the construction of 18 Castle Street (HER No. 13430), 20, 22 and 24 Castle Street (HER No. 13431), and Stowey Farm House on St Mary Street (HER No. 13454). This period also saw the establishment of a pottery industry in Nether Stowey, evidence for which was initially identified in 1968 when the construction of the bypass exposed large quantities of pottery wasters, ash, and kiln debris (HER No. 10591) (Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1970). It is thought to have been in operation from c. 1550-80 until the mid-18th century and produced large quantities of utilitarian red earthenware vessels in a variety of forms, including jars, dishes, pans, bottles, chafing dishes, and cisterns. Fragments of this local West Somerset red earthenware were found in one of the test pits at the primary school and in all the pits opened within the village (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.3). Most of the 879 sherds that were recovered were plain, but some of the 18th century fragments had trailed, sgraffito, or wet-slip decoration. Nice examples of sgraffito decorated sherds were recovered from Test Pit 05 and Test Pit 10, and the base of a dish from Test Pit 04 had a skilfully applied combed brown and white wet-slip design. All the material incorporated into the metalled surface in Test Pit 10, (1002), consisted of 'seconds' and kiln furniture, and other under-fired or over-fired wasters were recovered from Test Pit 02 and Test Pit 04.

The village contains numerous 17th and 18th century properties, including Castle Hill House, Castle Hill (HER No. 13426), Globe House, 23 Castle Street (HER No. 38987), 53 Castle Street (HER No. 13428), Coleridge's Cottage and 37 Lime Street (HER No. 13436), Poole House, 21 Castle Street (HER No. 13427), 23 Lime Street (HER No. 13435), The Clock House, 2 St Mary Street (HER No. 13450), The Old Bakery, 9 St Mary Street (HER No. 13446), The Old House, 11 St Mary Street (HER No. 13447), Toll House, 15 St Mary Street (HER No. 13448), Brook

House, 18 St Mary Street (HER No. 13453), and Scotts, 21 St Mary Street (HER No. 13449). The test pits provided evidence for the development of wider trade networks during this period that introduced goods from other parts of England. Much of the imported pottery could be dated to the 18th century and included 17 sherds of red earthenware from the potteries around Donyatt in South Somerset. The importation of these vessels potentially indicates that there was a gradual decline in the output of the local potteries, which was offset by supplies from other sources. The pottery assemblage also incorporated 17 sherds of 18th century salt-glazed stoneware, including a sherd of Staffordshire stoneware from Test Pit 02 and a body sherd from a 'tiger-skin' stoneware bottle retrieved from Test Pit 07. There were also 26 sherds of hollow yellow slipware and seven fragments of mottled ware tankards, which were all made in Bristol.

The test pits indicated that there was a significant increase in the quantity and variety of pottery available during the late 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries, which resulted from the enhanced access to markets and factories following the opening of the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal in 1827 and the West Somerset Railway in 1862. The 525 fragments of plain and transfer printed white wares were found throughout the village and six of the test pits also contained sherds of porcelain or Bone China.

The early 20th century Ordnance Survey map indicates that Nether Stowey Church of England Primary School was constructed on a green field site located to the south-east of the site of Stowey flour mill (Ordnance Survey 1904). The test pits opened at the school demonstrated that its construction involved extensive ground works to terrace the sloping ground. This resulted in the truncation of the topsoil and subsoil in the area where the test pits were opened, which removed any associated archaeological horizons and artefacts. The ground surface immediately to the north of the school boundary is up to 0.35m higher than the area where the test pits were opened, providing an indication of the volume of material that was removed. After the building work was completed, this area was covered by a layer of redeposited topsoil, which was between 0.05 and 0.30m deep.

9 Stogumber

Site Code: STOG 24

Museum Accession Number: TTNCM 79/2024

HER Number: 49079

9.1 Location, Topography and Geology

Stogumber is located 2.5km to the west of the Quantock Hills and 6.5km to the south of the Bristol Channel. The centre of the village is located at 90m aOD and is surrounded by sloping ground that flanks the confluence of three brooks, which then flow northwards to join the Doniford Stream at Vellow. The soil type encountered throughout the settlement is characterised as 'freely draining slightly acid loamy soil' (Cranfield University 2024). No superficial geology has been identified in the immediate area, but the village lies at the interface between three different types of solid geology (British Geological Survey 1984). The Wiveliscombe Sandstones occupy the area to the east of the junction between High Street, Vellow Road, and Hill Street, while Vexford Breccias are exposed to the south and south-west and the Morte Slates Formation extends around the north-western margin of the village.

Central OSGB National Grid Reference: ST 09810 37300.

9.2 Summary of Known Heritage Assets

Description	HER No.	NGR	Date
Socketed axe	34530	-	Late Bronze Age
Cropmark enclosures, NW of Stogumber	35409	ST 09536 37529	Possibly Prehistoric/Roman
Evaluation (2003), Zinch House, Station Road	16564	ST 09996 37183	Iron Age & C11th/C14th
Church of St Mary and churchyard (Grade I listed building)	34027	ST 09819 37261	Early C14th-C15th; possibly site of late Saxon minster
Church house (Grade II listed building)	30859	ST 09784 37282	Early C14th-C15th
Churchyard Cross, church of St Mary, High Street (Grade II listed building)	30855	ST 09795 37314	C14th
The Old Vicarage, High Street (Grade II* listed building)	30858	ST 09777 37302	Medieval-C19th
James Barton, Vellow Road (Grade II listed building)	30894	ST 09766 37412	Medieval-early C17th
Manor Mill, N of Stogumber	34019	ST 309679 37449	Medieval - post-medieval
Quarry and lime kiln, The Knoll, N of Stogumber	34035	ST 09892 37756	Post-medieval
Quarry and lime kiln	34036	ST 09919 37118	Post-medieval
Catchwater meadow, W of Stogumber	42545	ST 09354 37279	Post-medieval
Field boundaries, N of Stogumber	42546	ST 09568 37740	Post-medieval
Togford and barn, Vellow Road (Grade II listed building)	30893	ST 09744 37640	C16th
Zinch House (Grade II listed building)	30891	ST 10040 37155	C16th-C17th
Zinch Cottage (Grade II listed building)	30890	ST 10018 37132	C16th-C17th
Swan House and mounting block on West elevation, High Street (Grade II listed building)	30865	ST 09746 37317	C16th-C17th
James Cottage	47368	ST 09746 37360	C16th-C18th
The Almonry (alms houses), Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	34850	ST 09727 37260	Early C17th
No 2 (Mill House) and No 4, Hill Street (Grade II listed building)	30868	ST 09842 37346	Early C17th
Wynes, 1 Hill Street (Grade II listed building)	30870	ST 09850 37388	Early C17th-C18th
Old Way House, Old Way (Grade II listed building)	30883	ST 09488 37063	Mid C17th (1635)
Nos 7 and 9 (Clouters Cottage), Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	30838	ST 09710 37275	C17th-C20th
Hazeldene, Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	30839	ST 09726 37316	C17th-C18th
No 12 including wall box, High Street (Grade II listed building)	30864	ST 09758 37322	C17th-C18th
Nos 1 and 3 (The Post Office), Old Way (Grade II listed building)	30881	ST 09592 37149	C17th-C18th
Barn, Church of St Mary (Grade II* listed building)	30887	ST 09841 37189	Later C17th
The White Horse Inn, High Street (Grade II listed building)	30860	ST 09815 37348	C18th
No 10 (Chandler House), High Street (Grade II listed building)	30863	ST 09768 37327	C18th
No 5 (Kingsway), Hill Street (Grade II listed building)	30871	ST 09918 37375	C18th
Chest tomb, church of St Mary, High Street (Grade II listed building)	30856	ST 09816 37278	Mid C18th
No 6, Hill Street (Grade II listed building)	30869	ST 09863 37366	Late C18th-early C19th
Haddon House, Old Way (Grade II listed building)	30882	ST 09560 37128	Late C18th-early C19th
Barn, 40 metres SE of Hill Farmhouse (Grade II listed building)	30889	ST 09700 37077	Late C18th-early C19th
Wick House, Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	30837	ST 09689 37220	C18th-early C19th
Cloud Cottage, Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	30840	ST 09721 37323	Early C19th
The Manse, Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	30834	ST 09698 37233	Early C19th
No 6, High Street (Grade II listed building)	30862	ST 09792 37342	Early C19th
The Manor House, Hill Street (Grade II listed building)	30867	ST 09845 37329	Early C19th
Derby House (Grade II listed building)	30886	ST 09725 37211	Early C19th
Hill Farmhouse (Grade II listed building)	30888	ST 09654 37108	Early C19th
Baptist Church, railings fronting church and handrails flanking steps, Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	30835	ST 09702 37225	Early C19th
Piers, gate and railings, Baptist Church, Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	30836	ST 09691 37232	Early C19th
No 4, High Street (Grade II listed building)	30861	ST 09800 37334	Early-mid C19th
Vellow Cottage and Shasta Cottage, Brook Street (Grade II listed building)	30841	ST 09724 37329	Early-mid C19th
Taunton to Minehead railway	33462	ST 09781 37396	Mid 19th
Lime kiln, Springfield Maltings	34043	ST 09641 36846	Mid C19th
Stogumber Brewery, Springfield Maltings	34020	ST 09613 36868	c. 1840

Table 7: Known heritage assets located in Stogumber and within its immediate environs.

9.2.1 Prehistoric and Roman

The earliest evidence for human activity is provided by a late Bronze Age socketed axe (HER No. 34530), reportedly found in the village itself (Gathercole 2003b), and a flint flake and fragmentary Iron Age loom weight found at Zinch House, Station Road (Harding and Best 2003).

At present, there is no evidence for any Roman activity within the confines of the village, but the morphological characteristics of cropmark enclosures located to the west of the village suggest that they are likely to date to the later prehistoric or Romano-British periods (Gathercole 2003b).

9.2.2 Early Medieval and Medieval

The pattern of land holding described in the Domesday Survey suggests that Stogumber, then known as *Warverdinstoch*, formed the centre of an extensive Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastical estate that supported a minster church (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985d). The latter was probably situated on or adjacent to the site of the present church of St Mary (HER No. 34027), the earliest surviving fabric of which dates to the late 13th to early 14th centuries, with most of the building having been rebuilt in the 15th century (Gathercole 2003b).

By the 13th century, the settlement was known by its present name and the former minster estate had been divided into the manors of Stogumber and Stogumber Rectory; the manor of Stogumber Rectory was located at Hall Farm, to the east of the church. Despite its importance in the Anglo-Saxon period, Stogumber does not appear to have become a medieval borough, but it does seem to have functioned as a local centre for the thriving wool trade and it is also possible that it had a market during the Middle Ages, although the earliest charter dates to the 17th century.

In addition to the church, the village contains several buildings that contain surviving medieval fabric, including The Old Vicarage (30858) and Church House (30859) both on High Street, and James Barton on Vellow Road (30894)

9.2.3 Early Post-Medieval

Like the other villages located within the QLPS study area, post medieval development was primarily focussed within the area of medieval occupation, but several large farms also developed in the wider environs of the village. Significant early post-medieval listed buildings within Stogumber include Zinch House (HER No. 30891), Zinch Cottage (30890), Togford (30893), and Swan House (30865), which all date to the 16th to 17th centuries; and the Almonry (34850), on High Street, Wynes (30870), on Hill Street, Clouters Cottage (30838) and Hazeldene (30839), on Brook Street, and Old Way House (30883), which all date to the 17th century. The present tithe barn at Hall Farm (30887) was also constructed in the later 17th century.

9.2.4 Later Post-Medieval and Modern

There was small-scale development during first half of the 19th century, but there are suggestions that trade and industry diminished during this period. A market hall and assembly room were built around 1800, but the market was abandoned in the 1860s and the building was subsequently incorporated into the White Horse Inn (HER No. 30860) (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985d).

The village's fortunes were partially restored by the opening of the Stogumber Brewery (34020), prior to 1840. 'Stogumber Ale', which was purported to have medicinal properties, was marketed throughout the country, in part thanks to the opening of the West Somerset Railway in 1862 (33462).

Figure 26: Location of the test pits that were opened in Stogumber.
Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

9.3 Results

9.3.1 Test Pit 01: The Old Rectory, Vellow Road

This test pit was not excavated, but a sherd of pottery was found by the landowner while clearing the site prior to marking out the pit.

Artefact recovery

A single sherd of local West Somerset red earthenware (20g) was recovered from the site selected for the test pit.

9.3.2 Test Pit 02: 4 Hill Street

At the rear of the house, in a vegetable plot located toward the eastern end of the garden

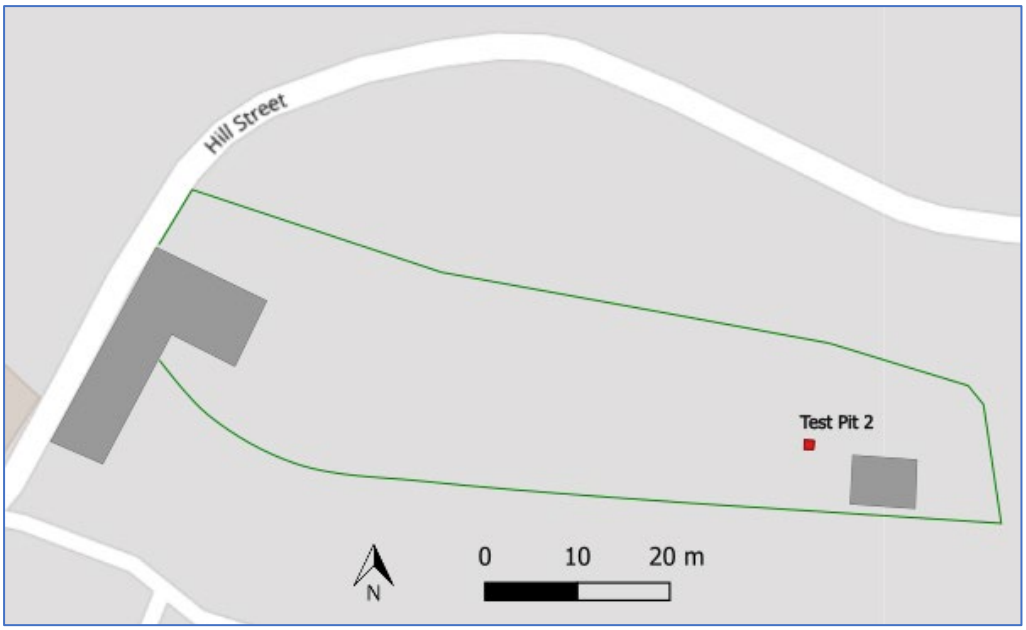

Figure 27: Location of Test Pit 02. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Topsoil (200) was a 0.22m deep layer of friable mid to dark brownish-grey fine sandy silt. It sealed the subsoil, (201), a mid-greyish-brown fine sandy silt, 0.20m deep, which incorporated some grit and small stones that were up to 0.10m across. The removal of the subsoil exposed a mid-reddish-brown fine sandy silt, (202), more than 0.09m deep. This deposit contained occasional small sandstone pebbles, and flecks of lime plaster and charcoal.

Artefact recovery

Test Pit 02 contained 198 sherds of pottery, which had all been heavily fragmented and mixed by continual cultivation making it very difficult to establish the form and date of vessels. The principal constituents of this collection were 75 sherds of whiteware, 21 fragments of the local West Somerset red earthenware, and a range of other 18th and 19th century fabrics.

The pottery recovered from topsoil (200) included a body sherd from an 18th century salt-glazed stoneware vessel that was imported from the Rhineland, one piece of North Devon red earthenware, and a fragment from a flat yellow slipware moulded dish with combed decoration (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.4). The topsoil also contained three fragments of red ceramic building material (23g), a piece of stone rubble (231g), six chunks of mortar (74g), 23 lumps of plaster (30g), thirteen pieces of slate (36g), two slivers of clear window glass (7g), seven shards of bottle glass (six clear (24g), one green (1g)), a piece of flat green glass (3g), eight handmade nails, five modern nails (15g), a modern screw (16g), five pieces of coal (17g), five bits of oil shale (26g), 20 animal bones (37g), a limpet shell (1g), a fragment of oyster shell (1g), a slate pencil (1g), 39 fragments of clay pipe stem (51g), and a clay pipe bowl (10g).

Subsoil (201) contained two residual body sherds from 11th to 13th century coarse ware open jars, together with a range of post-medieval fabrics. The latter included a sherd from a Bristol mottled ware tankard, dating to c. 1720-1750, and other 18th century vessels, such as a fragment from a Bristol hollow yellow slipware cup, another sherd from a flat yellow slipware moulded dish with combed decoration, and a piece of South

Somerset red earthenware from the Donyatt potteries. Associated artefacts included four chunks of mortar (73g), seven lumps of plaster (19g), four pieces of slate (9g), two slivers of clear window glass (8g), four shards of bottle glass (one clear (1g), three green (34g)), three nails (55g), two bits of coal (10g), one piece of oil shale (10g), nine animal bones (58g), a slate pencil (1g), and 16 fragments of clay pipe stem (27g).

9.3.3 Test Pit 03: Sunnydene, 14 Hill Street

To the east of the house, in the lawn at the north-eastern corner of the garden

The topsoil, (300), was a friable mid brownish-grey fine sandy silt, 0.30m deep. It sealed a substantial deposit of subsoil, (301), a slightly greyish mid reddish-brown fine sandy silt, which was more than 0.45m deep and incorporated occasional small, rounded pebbles and angular red sandstone fragments.

Figure 28: Location of Test Pit 03. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

Artefact recovery

A total of 108 fragments of pottery were recovered from the two deposits excavated in Test Pit 03, with most of this material dating from the 16th to the 20th centuries. White wares formed the largest element of the collection (61 sherds), but local West Somerset red earthenware was also well represented, with 23 sherds. Topsoil (300) contained a body sherd from an imported Rhenish salt-glazed stoneware vessel, which probably dated to the 18th century, another piece of 18th century salt-glazed stoneware, and the stub of a handle from a North Devon gravel-tempered red earthenware jug. The deposit was unusual because it did not contain any construction or demolition debris, but other finds included ten pieces of clear window glass (12g), eight shards of clear bottle glass (11g), seven handmade nails (161g), five modern nails (7g), a lump of oil shale (3g), four animal bones (7g), two sections of clay pipe stem (2g), and a tooth from a plastic comb (1g).

The subsoil, (301), contained a single sherd of medieval pottery that could date to as early as the 11th century. It was a very coarse quartz-rich fabric, which appeared to be from the shoulder of a jar and was comparable to other examples from West Somerset. A fragment of South Somerset red earthenware was also recovered from (301). Associated artefacts included seven chunks of mortar (118g), four lumps of plaster (4g), seven pieces of clear window glass (10g), five shards of bottle glass (four clear (19g), one green (4g)), nine handmade nails (113g), a modern nail (1g), eight bits of coal (21g), a piece of oil shale (2g), five animal bones (4g), and four sections of clay pipe stem (10g).

9.3.4 Test Pit 04: Hall Farm, 5 Station Road

At the front of the house, near the western edge of the lawn and close to the churchyard wall

Topsoil (400) was a 0.39m deep layer of friable to moderately compact dark grey to dark brownish-grey fine sandy silt. It contained occasional fragments of angular red sandstone and become grittier toward the base of the deposit. Its removal exposed subsoil (401), a slightly greyish orangey-brown sandy silt, 0.37m deep, which

incorporated occasional red sandstone rubble and charcoal flecks. This deposit was cut by a pit containing an articulated dog burial, which was left in situ.

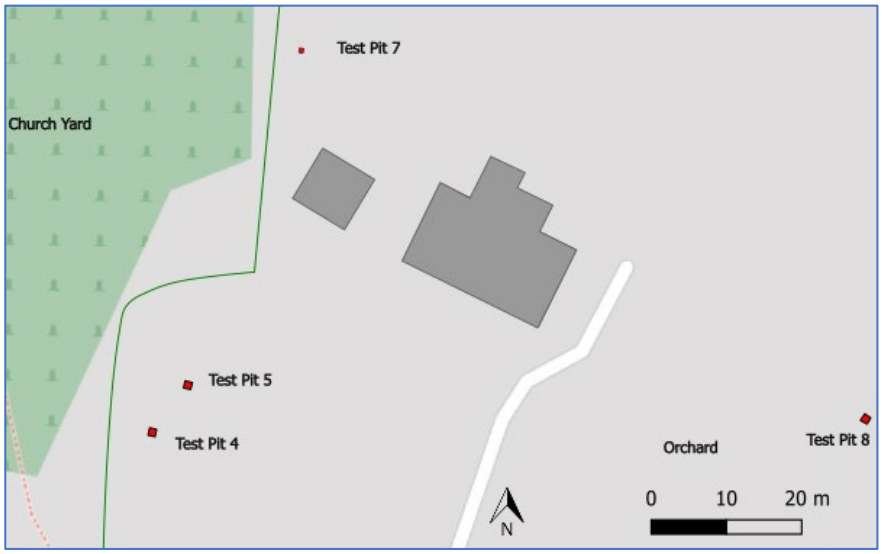

Figure 29: Location of Test Pit 04, Test Pit 05, Test Pit 07, and Test Pit 08. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

The subsoil sealed a wall foundation, (402), consisting of three unbonded courses of sub-rounded to sub-angular sandstone rubble, forming a structure 0.31 to 0.46m wide and up to 0.22m high, which extended across the test pit from north-east to south-west. Although the exact relationship was unclear within the limited area exposed, the northern edge of (402) appeared to overlie a deposit of sandstone rubble forming a horizontal metalled surface, (403). This surface extended more than 0.62m from east to west and over 0.42m from north to south. The largest stone that was exposed had worn and rounded upper surface.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (400) contained 69 sherds of pottery, 47 of which were fragments of various types of whiteware. The remainder of the collection consisted of fragments of West Somerset red earthenware and unclassified red earthenware, together with a sherd of Bristol stoneware, which was produced after 1835. The topsoil also contained three fragments of ceramic building material (182g), three chunks of mortar (28g), seventeen lumps of plaster (86g), seven pieces of slate (79g), a lump of concrete (3g), five shards of clear window glass (18g), twelve pieces of clear bottle glass (181g), four handmade nails (58g), a bit of coal (9g), five animal bone fragments (9g), one of which had been worked, a plastic button (1g), and four fragments of clay pipe stem (7g).

Only eight sherds of pottery were recovered from subsoil (401). Apart from one residual body sherd from a 17th century German salt-glazed stoneware bottle, this material dated from 18th to the 20th centuries and consisted of whitewares, West Somerset red earthenware, a sherd of North Devon red earthenware, and unclassified red earthenware. A small quantity of demolition debris was also retrieved comprising three chunks of mortar (48g), a lump of plaster (17g), and three pieces of slate (43g).

The interstices of wall foundation (402) incorporated 14 sherds of pottery (124g), the most interesting of which were three body sherds from medieval open jars that dated from the 11th to 13th centuries. They were associated with sherds of 19th to 20th century red earthenware, three bits of plaster (7g), a shard of clear bottle glass (1g), nine animal bones (50g), and a fragment of clay pipe bowl (1g).

9.3.5 Test Pit 05: Hall Farm, 5 Station Road

At the front of the house, near the western edge of the lawn and to the north-east of TP04

The topsoil, (500) was a 0.36 to 0.39m deep layer of poorly sorted friable to moderately compact mid to dark grey slightly clayey fine sandy silt, which contained some angular red sandstone fragments. It sealed a 0.48m deep subsoil horizon, which was excavated in three spits: (501), (502), and (503). The subsoil was a slightly

greyish orangey-brown fine sandy silt, its depth and composition raising the possibility that it was a ground make-up layer. It incorporated moderate quantities of angular red sandstone fragments and roof slate in the upper 0.20m, these materials becoming sparser but larger toward base, while the basal 0.10m of the deposit also incorporated pale grey and creamy mottles.

Artefact recovery

Six sherds of West Somerset red earthenware and unclassified red earthenware (65g) were recovered from (500). Other material within the topsoil included three chunks of mortar (124g), one bit of plaster (1g), one piece of slate (33g), a lump of slag (33g), a shard of clear bottle glass (33g), two handmade nails (17g), a small piece of aluminium (2g), a bit of coal (2g), and a fragment of animal bone (1g). Part of a red earthenware bust was also recovered (27g). This represented the shoulders of a someone wearing a late 18th to 19th century military uniform, with medals and aiguillette. The heavily fringed epaulettes suggest that it was a naval uniform, potentially indicating that the bust could have commemorated Admiral Horatio Nelson.

The upper spit of the subsoil, (501), contained fourteen sherds of West Somerset red earthenware (67g), four pieces of mortar (22g), six lumps of plaster (23g), four chunks of slate (583g), a shard of clear window glass (2g), a piece of green bottle glass (13g), six handmade nails (127g), a chunk of slag (17g), eight lumps of coal (16g), three bits of oil shale (28g), four animal bones (50g), a fragment of oyster shell (1g), a small buckle (2g), and the mouth pieces from two clay pipe stems (5g).

The next spit, (502), contained thirteen sherds (54g), comprising a piece of 18th century salt-glazed stoneware, local West Somerset red earthenware, other earthenware, and whiteware. This pottery was found in association with four chunks of mortar (54g), two lumps of plaster (6g), seven pieces of slate (54g), two handmade nails (19g), two fragment of animal bone (2g), and three sections of clay pipe stem (3g). The basal spit, (503), contained a single sherd of West Somerset red earthenware, four chunks of slate (164g), six pieces of coal (6g), and an animal bone (27g).

9.3.6 Test Pit 06: Beacon Field, Station Road

Near the north-eastern field boundary

Topsoil (600) was a mid-brown to pinkish-brown slightly sandy clayey silt, more than 0.36m deep. The upper 0.11m was relatively sterile, but the lower component contained lenses of grit and small pebbles that were up to 0.01m across.

Artefact recovery

The topsoil, (600), contained five sherds of 19th to 20th century whiteware and red earthenware, together with a chunk of ceramic building material (4g) and four pieces of slate (12g). These artefacts were probably incidental components of midden material that was spread to enhance the fertility of the field.

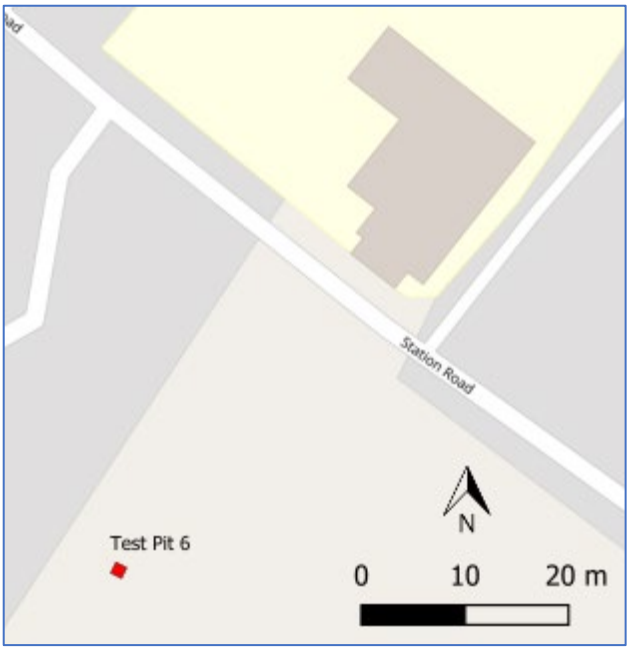

Figure 30: Location of Test Pit 06. Base map and data OpenStreetMap and OpenStreetMap Foundation (CC-BY-SA). © https://www.openstreetmap.org and contributors.

9.3.7 Test Pit 07: Hall Farm, 5 Station Road

At the rear of the house, behind a greenhouse and close to the churchyard wall

The topsoil, (700), was a 0.24m deep layer of friable to moderately compact slightly reddish grey-brown fine sandy silt, which contained occasional red sandstone fragments and cobbles. It sealed (701), a friable to moderately compact reddish-brown fine sandy silt, which was more than 0.16m deep. This subsoil incorporated moderate quantities of red sandstone rubble, pieces of which were up to 0.15m across. This rubble became more frequent toward the north-west quadrant of the test pit, suggesting that it represented tumble or a localised collapse of the adjacent churchyard wall.

Artefact recovery

Topsoil (700) contained 53 sherds of pottery, over half of which were sherds of 19th to 20th century whiteware. There were also fragments of the local West Somerset red earthenware, including the top of a handle from a slip-decorated jug. The earliest piece recovered was a sherd of 18th century Bristol hollow yellow slipware. Associated artefacts included five chunks of mortar (84g), four lumps of plaster (6g), nine pieces of slate (55g), seven slivers of clear window glass (6g), sixteen shards of bottle glass (eleven clear (67g), four green (24g), one brown (5g)), three modern nails (16g), a piece of wire and a metal handle (7g), a metal bottle top (2g), four chunks of slag (71g), eight bits of coal (25g), seven animal bone fragments (20g), and a piece of clay pipe stem (4g).

9.3.8 Test Pit 08: Hall Farm, 5 Station Road

In an orchard to the east-south-east of the house

Topsoil (800) was a 0.13m deep deposit of homogenous reddish-grey clayey-sand without any course inclusions. It sealed a substantial subsoil horizon, (801), which was more than 0.72m deep and consisted of reddish-grey to greyish-red clayey-sand that contained occasional pebbles and cobbles up to 0.2m across.

Artefact recovery

Subsoil (801) contained 37 sherds of pottery, which spanned an extended period between the 11th and the 20th centuries. Nine medieval fragments dated from the 11th to the 13th centuries and comprised several different fabrics, including fine silty sherds, some with black burnished external surfaces, and reoxidised red corky pieces (Dawson 2022, Appendix 13.3.4). The assemblage also included a sherd from a Bristol mottled ware tankard, datable to c. 1720-1750, a fragment of a Bristol hollow yellow slipware cup, and a rim sherd from a West Somerset red earthenware dish that was similar to fragments of late 16th century pottery waste that were found in Crowcombe. The remainder of the collection consisted of additional pieces of red earthenware and fragments of whiteware.

Other artefacts retrieved from the subsoil included two pieces of flint gravel (6g), thirteen chunks of slate (135g), a lump of slag (7g), five bits of coal (3g), a shard of green bottle glass (12g), two fragments of clay pipe bowl (4g), and four section of clay pipe stem (11g).

9.4 Discussion

None of the test pits yielded any Romano-British artefacts, so there is still no evidence for any human activity during this period from within the village core. The investigations also failed to recover any Anglo-Saxon material, even from the test pits that were adjacent to the churchyard, which is believed to contain the site of a pre-Conquest minster church (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985d; Gathercole 2003b).

Medieval pottery was recovered from four of the test pits. Two body sherds found in Test Pit 02, at 4 Hill Street, came from 11th to 13th century coarse ware open jars, while further along Hill Street, Test Pit 03 at Sunnydene contained a sherd of very coarse pottery from the shoulder of a jar that could have been produced as early as the 11th century. The other two pits containing medieval pottery were located at Hall Farm, 5 Station Road. Nine fragments were found in Test Pit 08 and a wall foundation exposed in Test Pit 04 incorporated three residual body sherds from open jars; all these vessels were manufactured between the 11th and the 13th centuries.

Test Pit 04 was located close to a building known as the Tithe Barn (HER No. 30887), which was probably constructed in the second half of the 17th century as either the replacement for, or an adaptation of an older structure erected in 1506 (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985d). This barn was one of the outbuildings associated with a high-status residence that served as the administrative centre of the medieval manor of Stogumber Rectory. These buildings occupied the grounds of Hall Farm and are depicted near the barn on a map created in 1788 (Gathercole 2003b). It is possible that the wall foundation exposed in the test pit represented the remains of one of these buildings or could even have formed part of the manor house itself. The associated sherds of red earthenware, plaster, and bottle glass could have been deposited during the demolition of the buildings in the late 18th or 19th centuries.

Most of the fabric of the Church of St Mary (HER No. 34027) dates to the first half of the 14th century, with later additions made in the 15th century. Surviving elements of the medieval vicarage are incorporated into a house located to the west of the church and include part of a 15th century three-bayed open hall (HER No. 30858). Additionally, The Brewhouse, situated 10m to the south of the old vicarage, may have been built as the church house in the 14th century (HER No. 30859). Despite this evidence for significant construction activity within Stogumber, none of the test pits contained any 14th or 15th century artefactual material, an absence that has also been observed in the nearby villages of Bicknoller and Crowcombe (see 6.4 and 7.4, above). The implications of this lack of evidence are uncertain, but it could indicate that the population declined significantly due to “poor weather (and thus poor harvests) combined with recurrent outbreaks of plague, which peaked with the infamous Black Death of 1348-9” (Riley 2006, 89).

The number of 16th and early 17th century properties that survive in the village appears to suggest that the early post-medieval period was a time of consolidation and growth. They include Zinch House (HER No. 30891) and Zinch Cottage (HER No. 30890), both on Station Road, Swan House on High Street (HER No. 30865), Togford (HER No. 30893) and James Cottage (HER No. 47368) on Vellow Road, Wynes (HER No. 30870) and Nos. 2 and 4 Hill Street (HER No. 30868), and The Almonry on Brook Street (HER No. 34850). The 16th century also saw the introduction of local red earthenware to the village, fragments of which were recovered from Test Pit 03 at 14 Hill Street and Test Pit 08 at Hall Farm. The latter consisted of a rim sherd from a plain dish that was comparable to late 16th century pottery waste found in Crowcombe.

Further growth occurred during the mid to late 17th century and into the 18th century. This resulted in the construction of Old Way House (HER No. 30883) and Nos. 1 and 3 Old Way (HER No. 30881), The White Horse Inn (HER No. 30860), Chandler House (HER No. 30863) and No. 12 (HER No. 30864) all on High Street, Clouters Cottage (HER No. 30838) and Hazeldene (HER No. 30839) on Brook Street, and Kingsway on Hill Street (HER No. 30871), together with the reconstruction of the Tithe Barn at Hall Farm (see above). During this period, there was an increase in the amount of red earthenware utilised in the settlement. Most of this material was sourced from the local West Somerset potteries and was potentially brought over the Quantock Hills from Nether Stowey (Dawson (2022, Appendix 13.3.4). As noted in the other villages investigated as part of the Test Pitting Programme, this appears to provide insights into very specific patterns of trade along the western margin of the Quantock Hills. Pack horses coming to Stogumber from Nether Stowey would have passed through Crowcombe where the predominant red earthenware was the Bridgwater/coast type that may have been traded via the harbour at Watchet (see 7.4, above). Evidence for wider trade networks was provided by a

few fragments of pottery that were imported from outside the region. They included a body sherd from a 17th century German stoneware bottle found in Test Pit 04, and two sherds from Bristol mottled ware tankards, manufactured c. 1720-1750, which were found in Test Pit 02 and Test Pit 08.

Later 18th, 19th and 20th century pottery was recovered from all the test pits. This represented a significant increase in both the quantity and distribution of pottery that resulted from improved access to markets and manufactories across the UK after the opening of the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal in 1827 and the West Somerset Railway in 1862. The 254 fragments of plain and transfer printed white wares found in the test pits constituted almost half of the entire assemblage recovered from the village.

10 Synthesis of Results

The collation and analysis of the results from the investigations in each of the four villages highlights evidence for episodes of human activity, which had not been identified prior to the project, as well as several overarching themes apparent in the data.

Firstly, the small quantity of struck flint and stone that was recovered from test pits in Bicknoller, Crowcombe, and Nether Stowey provide the first physical evidence for prehistoric activity within the historic core of each of these villages. The fragment of a microlith found at The Carew Arms, Crowcombe, provides definitive evidence for a late Mesolithic presence in this landscape (c. 6500 - 4000 BCE). Similarly, the flake found at Locks, 2 Church Lane, Bicknoller, may have been used as an expedient scraper and dates to either the late Mesolithic or the early Neolithic (c. 6500 - 3400 BCE). Each of these villages also contained indications of activity during the Neolithic or early Bronze Age (c. 4000-1500 BCE); single flakes were discovered at 6 Parsons Close, Bicknoller, in Test Pit 03, beside the driveway to Crowcombe Court, and at 37 Castle Street, Nether Stowey.

The only potential evidence for Romano-British activity found in any of the test pits consisted of one sherd of pottery from Combe Barn, Dashwoods Lane, Bicknoller, and a small piece of greyware found at 2 Hagleys Green, Crowcombe. Both sherds were heavily abraded, so the exact forms and dates of the vessels was unclear, and David Dawson (Appendix 13.3.1) felt that the fragment from Bicknoller probably came from a medieval vessel. The absence of any definitive evidence for Romano-British settlement within the four villages potentially indicates that Roman influence was relatively limited and/or dispersed in this area of West Somerset.

There was also a lack of evidence for Anglo-Saxon settlement in any of the four villages investigated during the project. This was despite indications that Crowcombe, Nether Stowey, and Stogumber all had their origins in this period. Pre-Conquest minsters are likely to have been located at Nether Stowey and at Stogumber, suggesting that both would have been the foci of extensive ecclesiastical estates (Gathercole 2003a, 2003b). There could be several reasons for the absence of any early medieval artefactual material. For example, there is evidence to suggest that the possible Saxon minster church at Nether Stowey would have been located on the same site as its medieval successor and that the associated settlement was located further to the east between Budley Farm and Whitnell (Baggs, Bush and Siraut 1985c; Gathercole 2003a). St Mary's Church is located on the opposite side of the Nether Stowey bypass to the village and lay outside the area investigated during the test pit project. In contrast, half of the test pits at Stogumber were situated in the grounds of Hall Farm, which shares a boundary with the churchyard containing the probable site of the Saxon minster church. Test Pit 04, located closest to the graveyard, was excavated to a depth 0.76m, but the structural remains exposed at its base were associated with pottery that suggested they were part of a structure that had been demolished in the late 18th or 19th century. Accordingly, it is probable that any archaeological horizons containing early medieval artefacts were sealed beneath a significant depth of later material and were not exposed or investigated.

A total of 98 sherds of medieval pottery were recovered, which provided evidence for the occupation of all four villages between the 11th and the early 14th centuries. Single sherds were recovered from two of the pits opened in Bicknoller, and two pits at Crowcombe also contained medieval ceramics, the test pit at 2 Hagleys Green containing ten fragments of low fired, hand-built pots. Medieval pottery was also found in four of the pits in Stogumber, two at Hall Farm and two on Hill Street, the pit at Sunnydene yielding a very coarse fragment that could date back to the 11th century. Over 70% of the medieval ceramics were recovered from four of the test pits located in Nether Stowey. The majority of this pottery was found at 36 Lime Street, where most of the 60 sherds were derived from open jars. Another nine medieval sherds were found at The Old Cider House, 25 Castle Street and one piece was found in both of the test pits opened in the garden of 30-32 Castle Street. The cumulative assemblage from Nether Stowey comprised at least six distinct types of pottery fabric, which demonstrated that it was a prosperous borough that was fully integrated into regional trade networks during the 12th to early 14th centuries. The test pits only provided a glimpse of life in each of the villages, but the quantity and range of medieval material recovered from Nether Stowey suggests that it was the preeminent settlement within the QLPS study area at this time.

There was a uniform absence of any later 14th and 15th century artefactual material in all four villages. Records from the 14th century demonstrate the effects of climatic deterioration and the plague, which would have substantially reduced the population. It is probable that each of the settlements shrank, plots became vacant, areas of open field systems were no longer tilled, and this resulted in significant economic consequences for all strata of society.

Some of the villages contain surviving late 15th and early 16th century buildings, which provide indications that these communities had stabilised and that there was renewed growth. The test pits produced little or no material culture relating to this period of revival, except for a piece of glazed crested roof tile that conceivably formed part of the original roof covering when Church House was constructed in Crowcombe in 1515. The test pits yielded a greater abundance of artefactual evidence relating to activity from the mid-16th to the early 17th centuries. This period saw the establishment of a pottery industry in Nether Stowey that operated from around 1550-80 until at least the mid-18th century and produced substantial quantities of red earthenware vessels. Unsurprisingly, 879 sherds of this West Somerset red earthenware were found in the test pits opened in Nether Stowey. This material included decorated fragments and discarded waste products, such as kiln furniture. The manufacture of pottery was clearly a key element of the post-medieval economy of Nether Stowey, but the results of this fieldwork potentially exaggerate its overall significance, as it is unlikely that explicit evidence for other documented industries, such as tanning and textile manufacture, would be identified or retrieved from test pits.

Red earthenware pottery was also utilised in the villages on the western wide of the Quantock Hills. Although fragments of 16th century vessels were discovered at 2 Hagleys Green, Crowcombe and at 14 Hill Street and Hall Farm in Stogumber, the pottery assemblage indicates that there was a significant increase in quantity of vessels traded into these settlements during the later 17th and 18th centuries. The varying types and proportions of red earthenware fabrics in each village suggest that there were highly localised trade patterns along the western margin of the Quantock Hills. Much of red earthenware In Bicknoller originated from the Donyatt potteries of South Somerset and was probably traded via Taunton. This is likely to have involved traders passing through the neighbouring village of Crowcombe where the earthenware was predominantly of the Bridgwater/coast type, which may have travelled in the opposite direction, passing through Bicknoller from the harbour at Watchet. Similarly complex processes were evident in Stogumber, where West Somerset red earthenware was prevalent, suggesting that the pack horses carrying these vessels from Nether Stowey would have passed through Crowcombe.

The test pits also provided evidence of wider trading networks, which may have been centred upon Bristol. Fragments of 17th and 18th century German salt-glazed stoneware from the Rhineland were found in

Bicknoller, Crowcombe, and Stogumber. Bicknoller also produced two sherds of glossy Nottingham stoneware and a fragment from an early 18th century Staffordshire plate. In Nether Stowey, the test pits produced 17 sherds of 18th century salt-glazed stoneware, including a fragment of a 'tiger-skin' stoneware bottle, a sherd from Nottingham stoneware tankard, together with another fragment of a vessel from Staffordshire. Products of the Bristol potteries were found in all the villages. Sherds of Bristol mottled ware, primarily from tankards dating to c. 1720-50, were found in Test Pit 07 and 09 at Bicknoller, Test Pit 05, 06, and 08 at Crowcombe, Test Pit 04 and 07 at Nether Stowey, and in Test Pit 02 and 08 at Stogumber. Similarly, fragments of Bristol yellow slipware were recovered from Test Pit 07 and 09 at Bicknoller, Test Pit 02, 05, and 08 at Crowcombe, Test Pit 04, 05, 06, and 07 at Nether Stowey, and in Test Pit 02, 07, and 08 at Stogumber.

The test pits also demonstrated that the quantity and variety of pottery increased during the late 18th, 19th, and 20th centuries. These changes probably resulted from the reduced costs and increased speed of transporting bulk goods, which enhanced access to markets and manufactories across the UK following the opening of the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal in 1827 and escalated after the construction of the West Somerset Railway in 1862. The most obvious indicator of these changes was abundance of plain and transfer printed white wares found during the Village Test Pitting Programme: 695 pieces were found in Bicknoller (44.8% of the assemblage); 653 sherds in Crowcombe (77.6%); 575 fragments in Nether Stowey (33.2%); and sherds 232 in Stogumber (44.4%).

Finally, the complete absence of any 19th and 20th century Bridgwater/coast type red earthenware from the test pits in Nether Stowey raises the possibility that some local West Somerset red earthenware may have been produced for a longer period than was previously believed, with forms attributed to the 18th century continuing to be made well into the following century. Production may have continued in some form within Nether Stowey or its environs, or elsewhere in the wider landscape, such as at Langford Budville or at a site yet to be identified.

11 Conclusion

Despite facing unexpected challenges, particularly the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Village Test Pitting Programme was successful. Some flexibility in the delivery method was necessary to achieve this, but it ensured that a high-quality and accessible project was delivered.

New archaeological research was conducted, which has achieved the objective of involving the community in improving our understanding of the landscape history of the Quantock Hills. Overall, 286 people were engaged with the archaeology of the four villages that were investigated, and they have gained practical experience of the archaeological process. As a result, over 100 more people participated in the project than were originally specified in the project design. Participants were highly satisfied with their experience. Some volunteers went on to volunteer on other archaeological projects within the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme and continue to be involved in local archaeology.

After careful consideration, it was determined that producing a comprehensive final report at the end of the project would be more beneficial than creating interim reports for each village. This decision stemmed from several factors, including the episodic delivery of each village test pitting program, which was restricted to the spring or early autumn due to other archaeological activities being undertaken in the summer months by the QLPS, and the turnaround time for specialist reports. Additionally, the sheer volume of materials retrieved in some of the villages prolonged the time taken to complete post-excavation finds processing and assessment beyond initial expectations.

A fuller report such as this not only presents the findings of each test pit and the overall archaeological narrative but also synthesizes the program in a way that will be more accessible to future researchers. The principal remaining task is to ensure that this report is distributed to everyone involved in the project, the responsibility for which rests with Past Participate and the Quantock Landscape Partnership Scheme.

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Appendix 13.1: Illustrations and Images

Appendix 13.1.1: Bicknoller

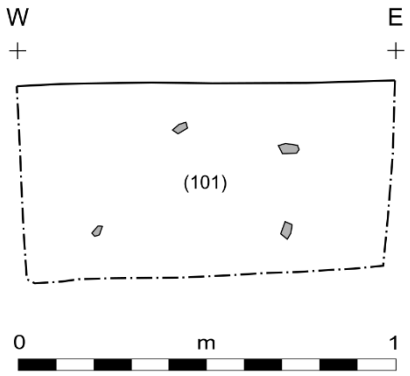


Figure 31: Bicknoller Test Pit 01. South facing section; post excavation photograph; Test Pit 01 under excavation; machine-made copper alloy thimble from Test Pit 01; pottery recovered from Test Pit 01.

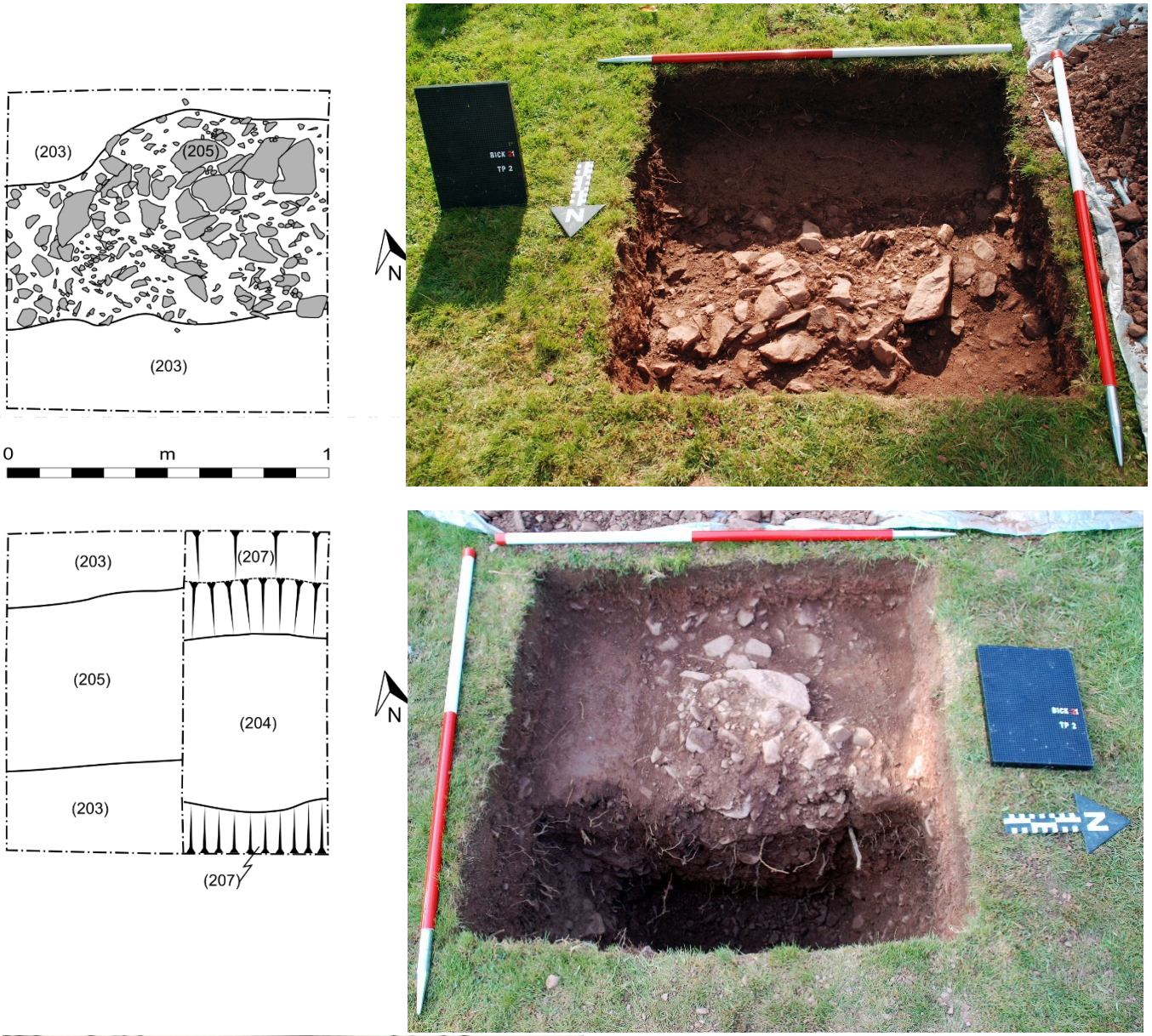


Figure 32: Bicknoller Test Pit 02. Top – mid-excavation plan and photograph; middle – post-excavation plan and photograph; bottom – the location of Test Pit 02 overlaid on the 1 to 25' Ordnance Survey map published in 1888 (Ordnance Survey 1888a), and the west facing section.

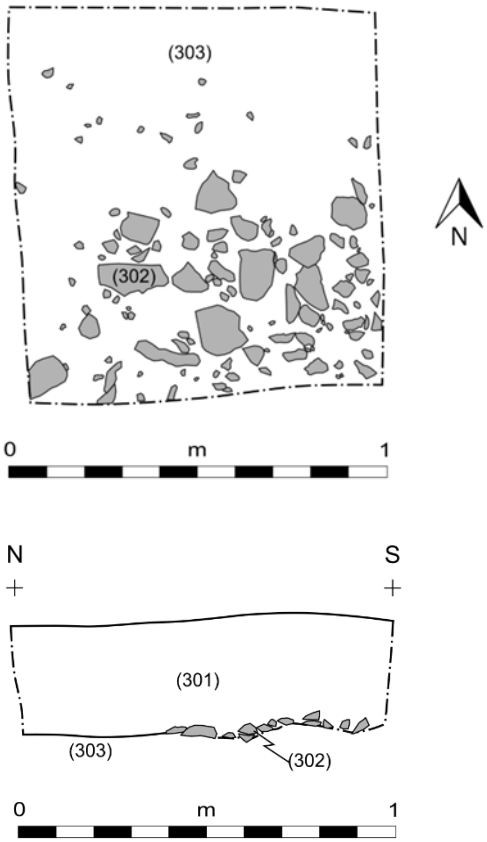


Figure 33: Bicknoller Test Pit 03. Top - post-excavation plan and photograph; bottom - west facing section.

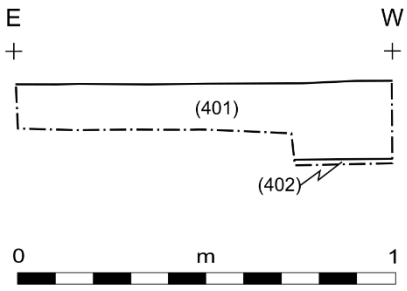


Figure 34: Bicknoller Test Pit 04. Top - post-excavation photograph and north facing section; bottom – Test Pit 04 under excavation.

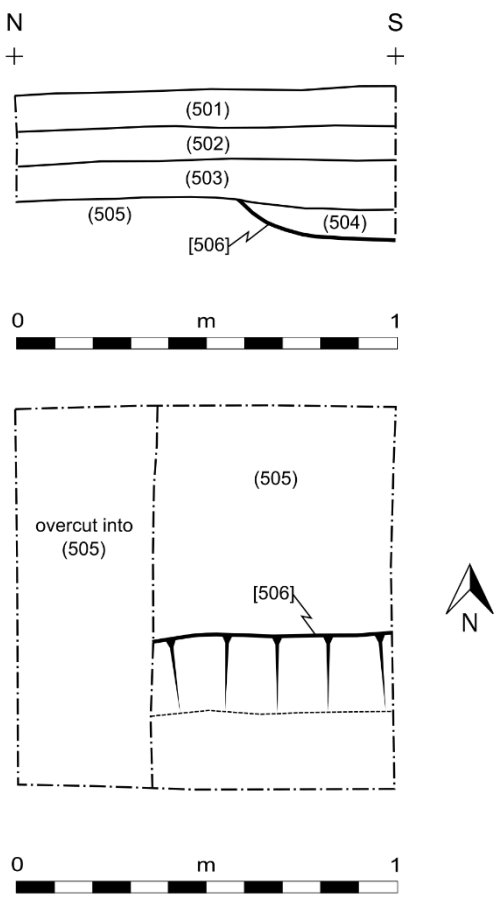


Figure 35: Bicknoller Test Pit 05. Top – west facing section and post-excavation photograph; bottom – post-excavation plan.

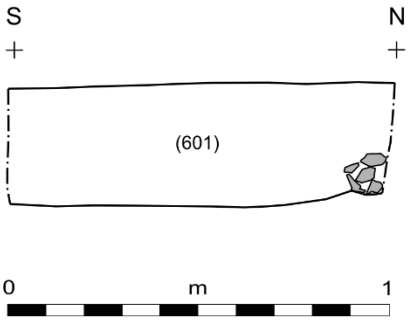


Figure 36: Bicknoller Test Pit 06. Top – post-excavation photograph and east facing section; bottom – 19th or early 20th century Merchant Navy or Shipping Line uniform button found in Test Pit 06.

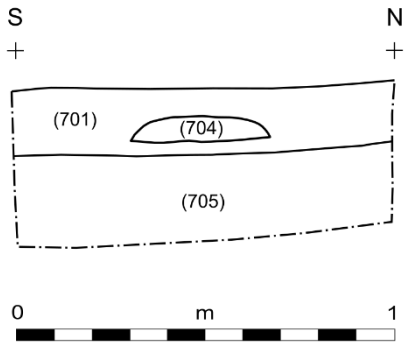


Figure 37: Bicknoller Test Pit 07. Top – east facing section and post-excavation photograph; middle – Test Pit 07 under excavation; bottom – pottery recovered from subsoil (703), which included four sherds forming the base of a Bristol mottled ware tankard (mug) (c.1720-50), two adjoining sherds of a South Somerset type bowl with slip-trailed decoration and two crimped rim sherds of Bristol yellow slipware plates c.1700-80.

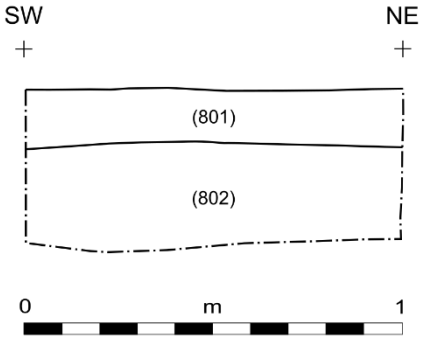
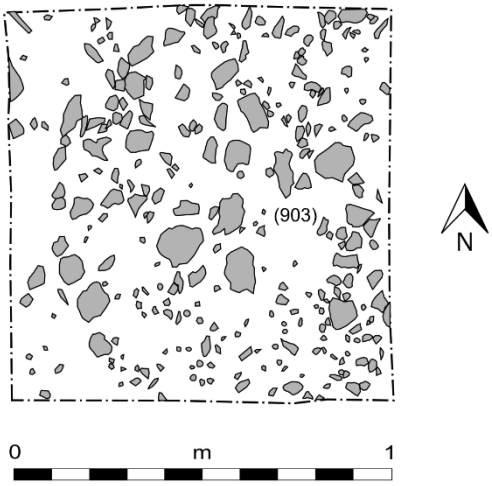


Figure 38: Bicknoller Test Pit 08. South-east facing section.



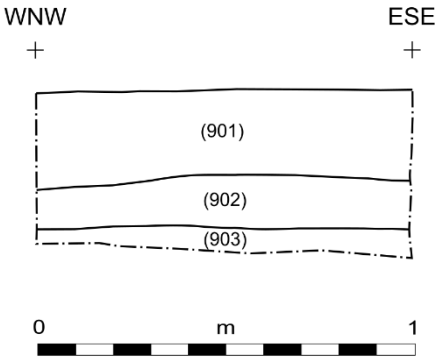


Figure 39: Bicknoller Test Pit 09. Top – post-excavation photograph and plan; bottom – south-south-west facing section and Test Pit 09 under excavation.

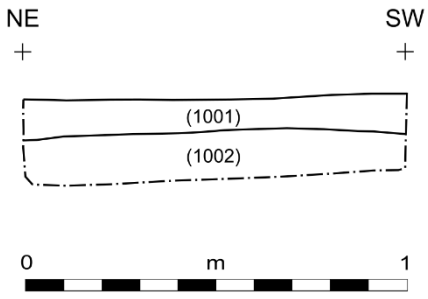
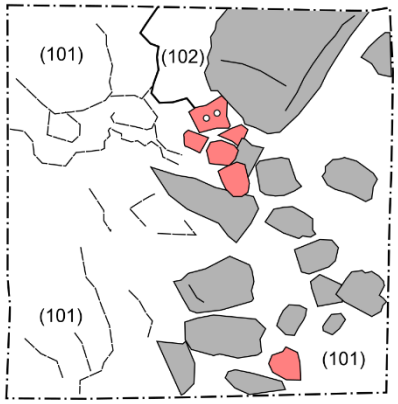
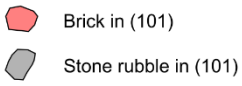
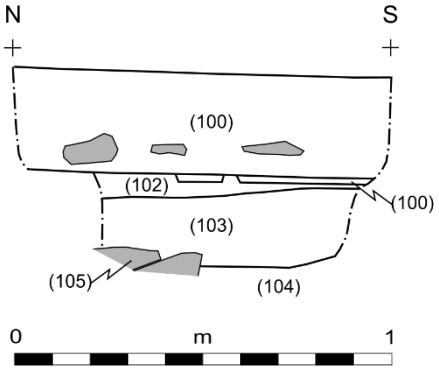


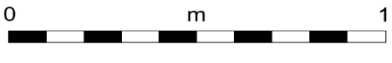
Figure 40: Bicknoller Test Pit 10. Top – post-excavation photograph; bottom – north-west facing section and a struck flint flake recovered from topsoil (1001).

Appendix 13.1.2: Crowcombe









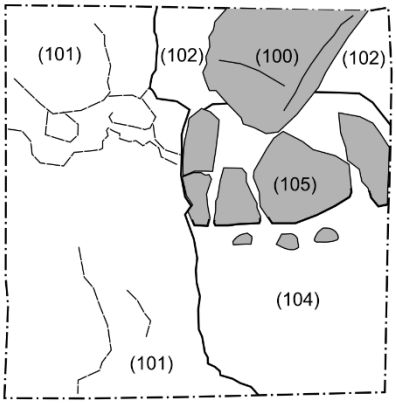


Figure 41: Crowcombe Test Pit 01. Top – mid-excavation plan and west facing section; middle – post-excavation plan and mid-excavation photograph; bottom – post-excavation photograph and Test Pit 01 under excavation.

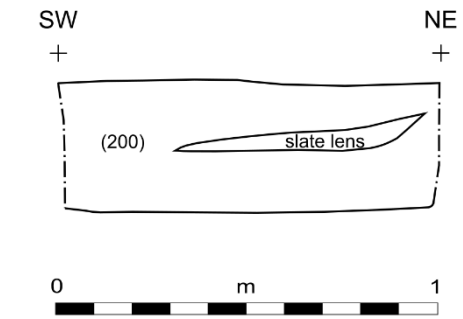


Figure 42: Crowcombe Test Pit 02. Top – south-east facing section and post-excavation photograph; bottom – Test Pit 02 under excavation.

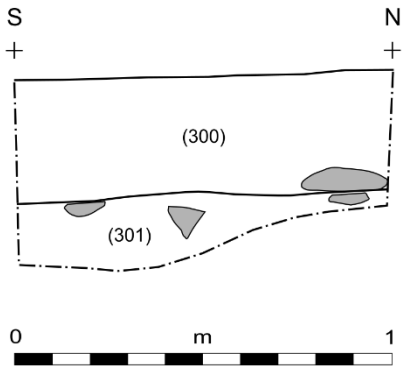
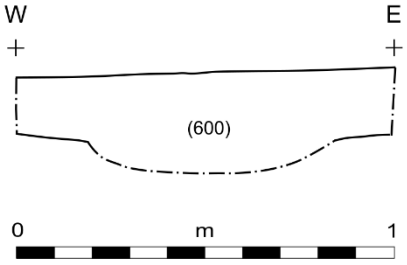


Figure 43: Crowcombe Test Pit 03. Top – post-excavation photograph and east facing section; bottom – the location of Test Pit 03 adjacent to the churchyard retaining wall.

Figure 44: Crowcombe Test Pit 05. East facing section and post-excavation photograph.

Figure 45: Crowcombe Test Pit 06. South facing section.



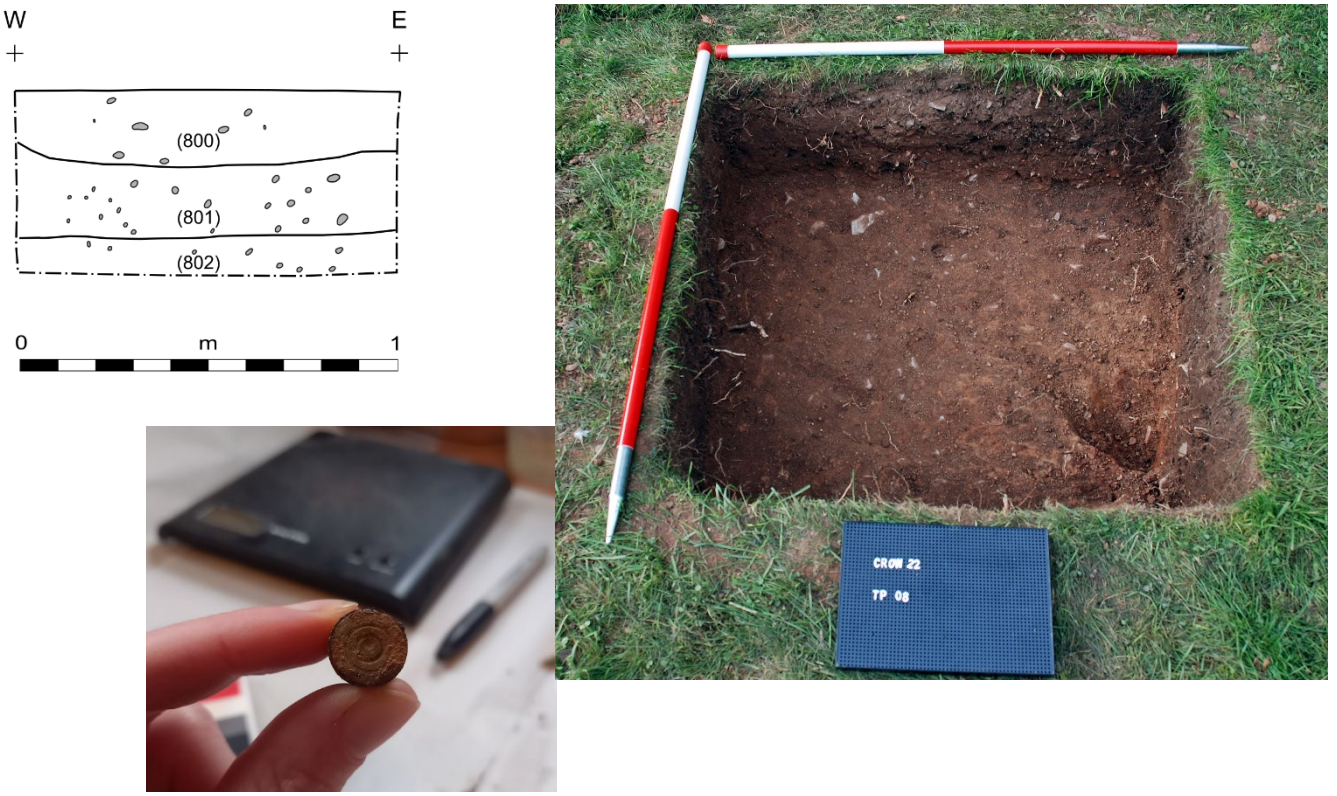


Figure 46: Crowcombe Test Pit 08. Top – south facing section and post-excavation photograph; bottom – a brass 0.22-inch bullet casing recovered from topsoil (800).

Figure 47: Crowcombe Test Pit 09. Top – east facing section, a lead toy soldier, probably manufactured by Barclay, recovered from topsoil (900) and post-excavation photograph; bottom – Test Pit 09 under excavation.

Figure 48: Crowcombe Test Pit 10. Top – Test Pit 10 under excavation, medieval pottery recovered from subsoil (1001), and west facing section; bottom – post-excavation photograph.

Appendix 13.1.3: Nether Stowey

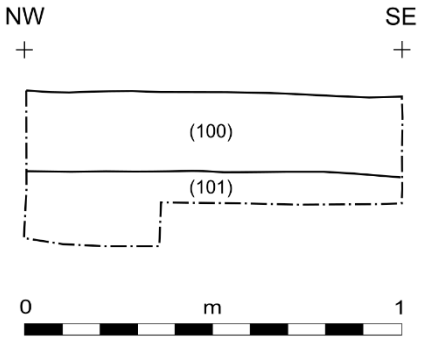


Figure 49: Nether Stowey Test Pit 01. Top – south-west facing section and Test Pit 01 under excavation; bottom – fragment of button recovered from topsoil (100), and post-excavation drone photograph.

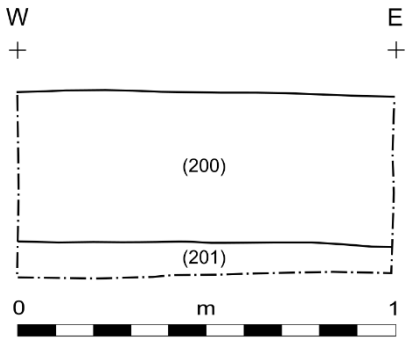


Figure 50: Nether Stowey Test Pit 02. Fragments of three slate pencils recovered from topsoil (200), and south facing section.

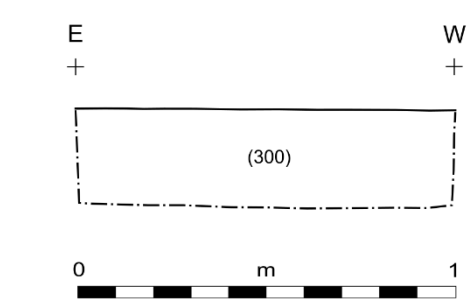


Figure 51: Nether Stowey Test Pit 03. Top - north facing section and post-excavation photograph; bottom – shards from blue glass bottles recovered from topsoil (300).

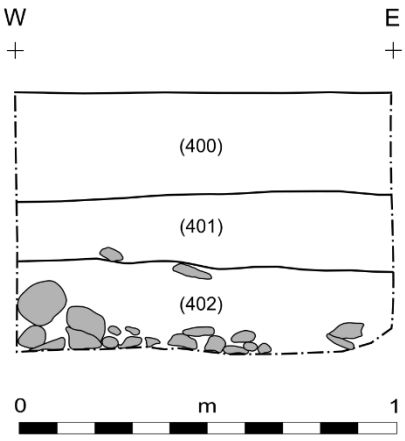
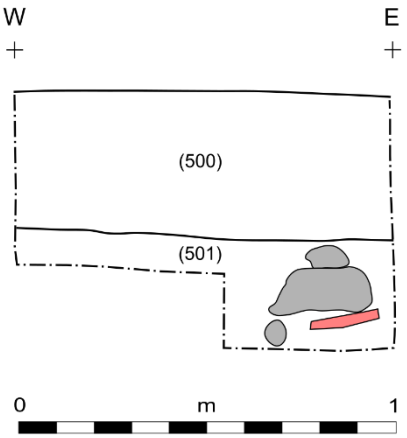


Figure 52: Nether Stowey Test Pit 04. Top – post-excavation photograph and Test Pit 04 under excavation; bottom – south facing section and pottery recovered from subsoil (401).



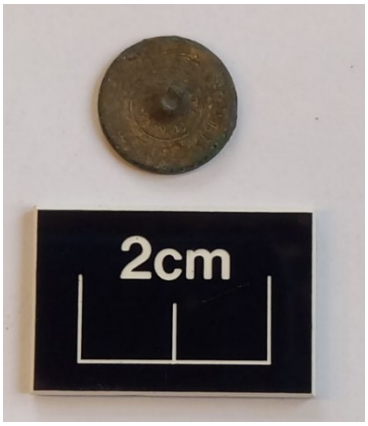
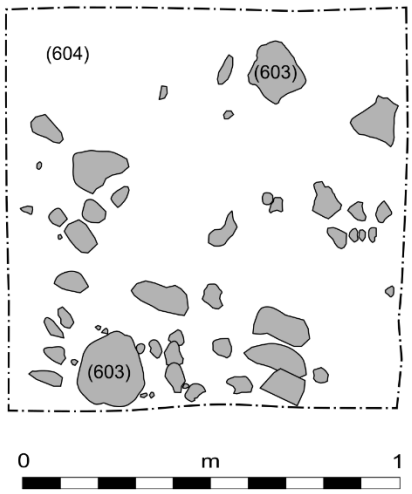


Figure 53: Nether Stowey Test Pit 05. South facing section and metal button recovered from topsoil (500).



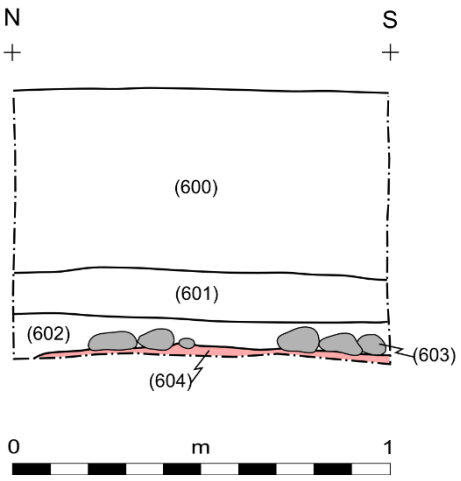


Figure 54: Nether Stowey Test Pit 06. Top – post-excavation plan and photograph; bottom – west facing section, ceramic bead and struck quartzite flake, both recovered from topsoil (600).

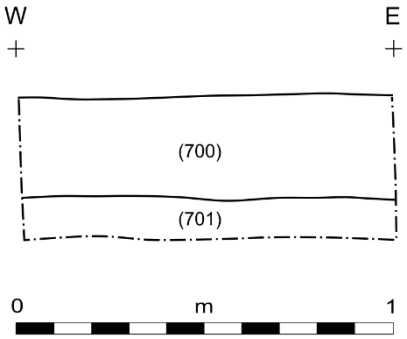
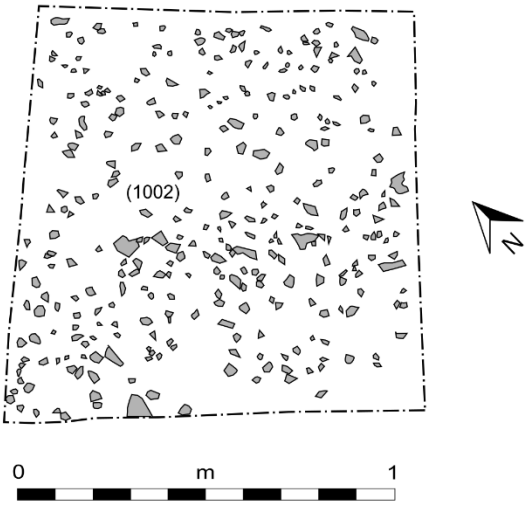


Figure 55: Nether Stowey Test Pit 07. South facing section.



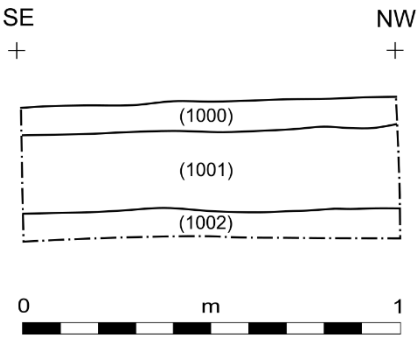
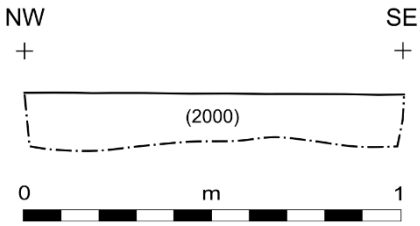
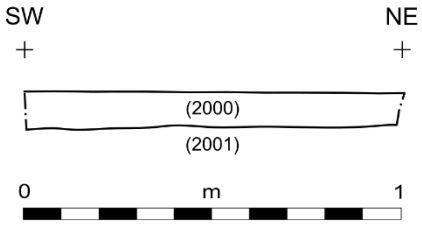


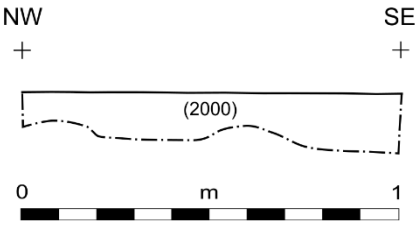
Figure 56: Nether Stowey Test Pit 10. Top – mid-excavation photograph and post-excavation plan; middle – south-west facing section; bottom – post-excavation drone photograph, and kiln waste and pottery recovered from metalled surface (1002).



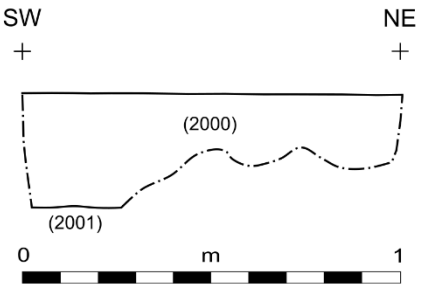
Test Pit 20



Test Pit 21

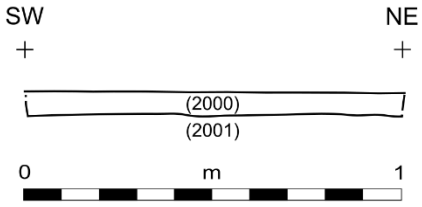


Test Pit 22

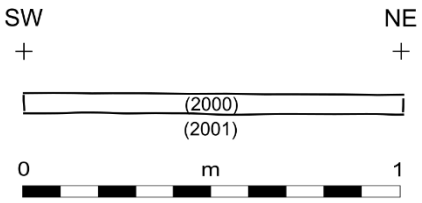


Test Pit 23

Figure 57: Nether Stowey Primary School. Top row – Test Pit 20 post-excavation photograph and south-west facing section; second row – Test Pit 21 south-east facing section and post-excavation photograph; third row – Test Pit 22 post-excavation photograph and south-west facing section; bottom row – Test Pit 23 south-east facing section and post-excavation photograph.



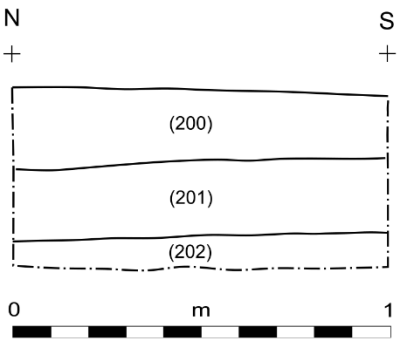
Test Pit 24



Test Pit 25

Figure 58: Nether Stowey Primary School. Top row – Test Pit 24 south-east facing section, post-excavation photograph, and K'nex piece found in topsoil (2000); bottom row – Test Pit 25 post-excavation photograph and south-east facing section.

Appendix 13.1.4: Stogumber



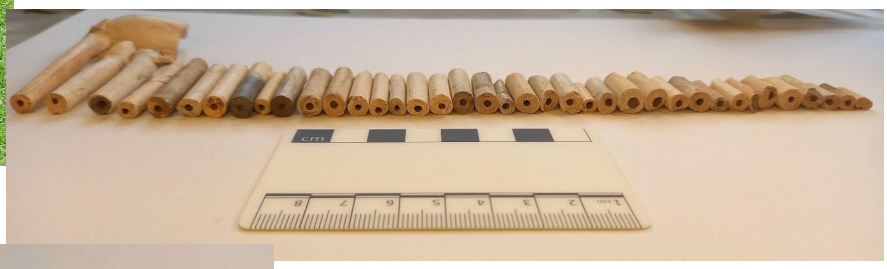


Figure 59: Stogumber Test Pit 02. Top – west facing section and post-excavation photograph; middle – Test Pit 02 under excavation, and fragments of clay pipe stem and a bowl recovered from topsoil (200); bottom – clay pipe bowl from topsoil (200) and Test Pit 02 under excavation.

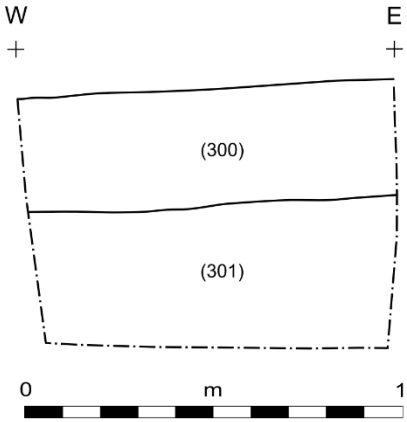
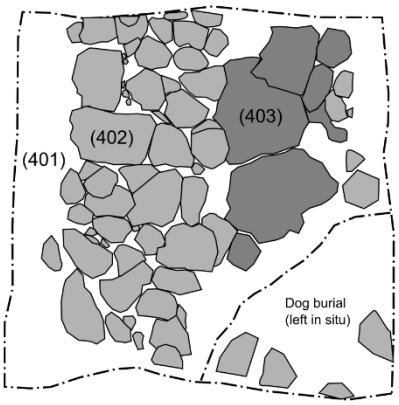
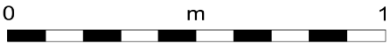


Figure 60: Stogumber Test Pit 03. Top – Test Pit 03 under excavation and south facing section; middle – post-excavation photograph; bottom – Test Pit 03 under excavation.





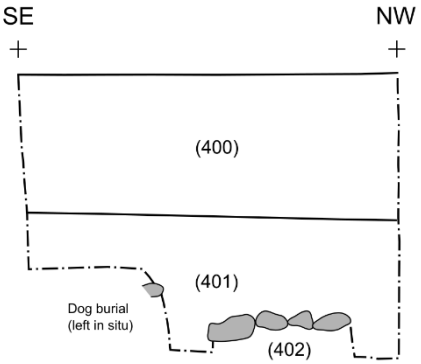


Figure 61: Stogumber Test Pit 04. Top – post-excavation plan and photograph; second row – north-east facing section and post-excavation drone photograph; third row – vertical drone photograph and six detached dog phalanges from a burial exposed in the corner of the test pit; bottom – Test Pit 04 under excavation.

Figure 62: Stogumber Test Pit 05. Top – north-west facing section and post-excavation photograph; bottom – Test Pit 05 under excavation and a fragmentary ceramic bust recovered from topsoil (500).

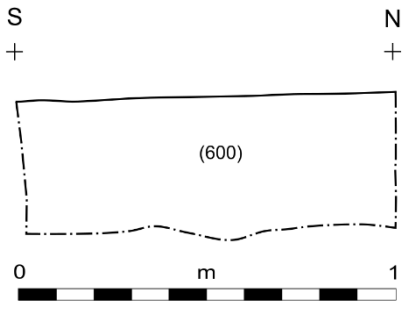


Figure 63: Stogumber Test Pit 06. East facing section.

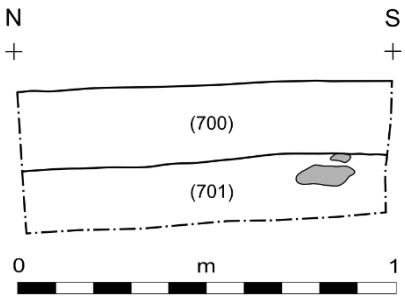


Figure 64: Stogumber Test Pit 07. Top – post-excavation photograph and west facing section; bottom – Test Pit 07 under excavation.

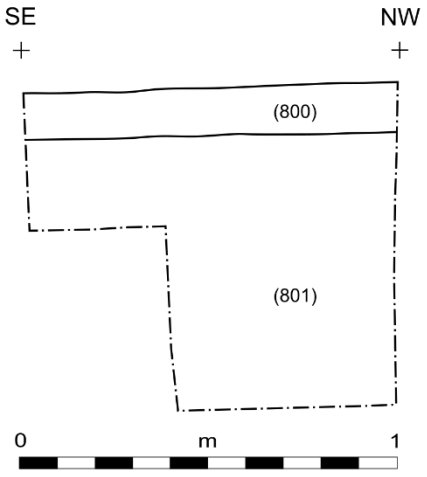


Figure 65: Stogumber Test Pit 08. Top – Test Pit 08 under excavation and post-excavation photograph; bottom – north-east facing section.

Appendix 13.2: List of Archaeological Contexts

Test Pit No.	Context No.	Type	Description
BICKNOLLER (BICK 21)			
TP01	101	Layer	Topsoil – friable dark greyish-brown clayey silt, 0.50m deep, incorporating significant quantities of coarse components: pottery, CBM, clay pipe, roofing slate, lime plaster and mortar, glass, iron, charcoal, coal, buttons, animal bone, teeth, and shells.
TP02	201	Layer	Topsoil – dark brownish-grey clayey silt, up to 0.14m deep. Seals (202).
	202	Deposit	Garden path – east-west aligned deposit of very compact reddish-brown angular pebbles, >0.91m wide and up to 0.14m deep, containing a fragment of CBM and some flecks of coal. Sealed by (201), seals (205).
	203	Fill	Secondary fill of [206] – mid brown clayey silt, up to 0.13m deep, containing occasional charcoal flecks throughout. Sealed by (205), seals (204).
	204	Fill	Primary fill of [206] – loose brownish-grey clayey silt, > 0.53m deep, containing occasional to moderate pebbles throughout. Sealed by (203).
	205	Fill	Possible wall foundation, path, or dump deposit – moderately compact east-west aligned deposit of sandstone rubble, with angular fragments up to 0.15m across, 0.53m wide and up to 0.21m deep. Sealed by (202), seals (203).
	206	Cut	Ditch (or stone robber trench) – east-west aligned linear feature, >1.05m wide and > 0.43m deep. Contains (203), (204), and (205).
	207	Layer	Natural – relatively plastic mid pinkish-brown silty-clay, containing occasional angular pebbles and cobbles. Cut by [206].
TP03	301	Layer	Topsoil – dark reddish-brown loam, containing a sherd of pottery, roofing slate, and coal. Seals (302).
	302	Layer	Surface or path – deposit of angular red sandstone and micaceous cobbles, with occasional stones up to 0.15m across, but predominantly 0.10m in diameter, infilled with pebbles and a mid reddish-brown clayey silt matrix. Contained pottery, CBM, glass, slate, and coal. Sealed by (301), seals (302).
	303	Fill	Subsoil – mid reddish brown clayey silt, containing pottery, CBM, an iron nail, and worked stone. Sealed by (302).
TP04	401	Layer	Topsoil (imported) – mid reddish-brown loam, 0.20m deep, containing occasional angular stones up to 0.04m across, CBM, mortar, glass, iron, slag, and coal fragments. Seals (402).
	402	Deposit	Tarmac – compact mid grey layer of small angular pebbles with bitumen coating. Sealed by (401).
TP05	501	Layer	Topsoil – dark brownish-grey clayey silt, 0.10m deep, containing frequent rounded pebbles, pottery, CBM, mortar, clay pipe, iron nails and screws, glass, coal, window putty, and a plastic plant label. Seals (502).

Test Pit No.	Context No.	Type	Description
	502	Layer	Garden soil – dark reddish-brown slightly sandy silty clay, 0.09m deep, containing frequent rounded pebbles, pottery, CBM, mortar, plaster, iron, glass, slate, and oil shale. Sealed by (501), seals (503).
	503	Layer	Garden soil – mid reddish-brown silty clay, 0.13m deep, containing frequent rounded pebbles, pottery, CBM, and clay pipe. Sealed by (502), seals (504).
	504	Fill	Fill of [506] – dark greyish-brown clayey-silt, 0.08m deep, containing pottery, clay pipe, mortar, and glass. Sealed by (503).
	505	Layer	Natural – pinkish-grey clay, incorporating frequent angular sandstone fragments and clay pipe. Cut by (506).
	506	Cut	Gulley – east-west aligned linear feature >0.40m wide and 0.08m deep. Cuts (505), contains (504).
TP06	601	Layer	Topsoil – dark brownish-grey clayey silt, 0.35m deep, containing angular stones, pottery, CBM, clay pipe, animal bone, shell, iron nails, wire, washers, a light fitting, lead, glass, slate, coal, oil shale, charcoal, worked stone, and buttons.
TP07	701	Layer	Topsoil – dark reddish-brown clayey silt loam, up to 0.14m deep, containing, pottery, CBM, animal bone, concrete, mortar, plaster, glass, slag, slate, and coal. Turf and soil layer used to cover path (704).
	704	Deposit	Path – east-west aligned deposit of moderately compact small angular reddish-orange sandstone pebbles, 0.35m wide and up to 0.07m deep. Sealed by (701), seals (705).
	705	Layer	Buried topsoil/subsoil – dark reddish-brown silty loam, 0.26m deep; finds recorded under three spit numbers - (702), (703) and (705): pottery, clay pipe, animal bone, iron, glass, slate, oil shale, concrete, mortar, and plaster.
TP08	801	Layer	Topsoil – mid reddish brown silty clay, 0.15m deep, containing pottery, CBM, glazed tile, animal bone, glass, slate, coal, oil shale, concrete, mortar, and plaster. Seals (802)
	802	Layer	Subsoil - mid reddish brown silty clay, with a redder hue than (801), 0.25m deep; finds recorded under spit numbers (802), (803) and (804): pottery, CBM, glazed tile, animal bone, glass, iron, slag, slate, coal, oil shale, concrete, mortar, and plaster. Sealed by (801).
TP09	901	Layer	Topsoil – dark brown, slightly sandy silt, 0.24m deep, containing pottery, struck flint, CBM, clay pipe, iron, glass, coal, oil shale, worked stone, mortar, and plaster. Seals (902).
	902	Layer	Subsoil – pinkish brown sandy silt, 0.13m deep, containing frequent angular pebbles, pottery, CBM, clay pipe, glass, coal, and worked stone. Sealed by (901), seals (903).
	903	Layer	Surface – compact deposit of angular sandstone cobbles and pebbles, >0.07m deep, Sealed by (902).

Test Pit No.	Context No.	Type	Description
TP10	1001	Layer	Topsoil – mid reddish brown silty clay, 0.10m deep, containing occasional angular cobbles and pebbles, pottery, struck flint, CBM, clay pipe, iron, glass, slate, coal, worked stone, and concrete. Seals (1002).
	1002	Layer	Dump deposit (made ground) – mid reddish brown to mid greyish brown silty clay, >0.09m deep, containing occasional angular cobbles and pebbles, and chalk fragments. Sealed by (1001).
CROWCOMBE (CROW 22)			
TP01	100	Layer	Topsoil, incorporating 1963 demolition deposit – moderately compact mid to dark greyish-brown slightly clayey silt, 0.17m deep, containing moderate to frequent sandstone rubble, CBM, pottery, iron, glass, slate, coal, mortar, and plaster. Seals (101).
	101	Layer	Concrete floor – pale grey concrete, 0.03m deep, with horizontal upper surface and multiple fractures. Sealed by (100), seals (102).
	102	Layer	Bedding layer for (101) – friable gritty creamy yellow lime mortar, 0.06m deep, containing pottery and animal bone. Sealed by (101), seals (103).
	103	Layer	Ground make-up – mottled reddish to orangey-brown silty clay, 0.12m deep, incorporating lumps of mid grey clayey silt, frequent charcoal flecks, angular stone fragments up to 0.05m across. Sealed by (102), seals (104).
	104	Layer	Ground make-up – mixed deposit of mid greyish-brown silty clay, >0.06m deep, incorporating frequent flecks of orangey-brown silty clay. Sealed by (103), north-eastern edge abuts (105).
	105	Structure	Wall foundation – stone rubble bonded with red clay, >0.35m E-W by >0.20m N-S, five stones of the horizontal upper course exposed in pit. Abutted by (104).
TP02	200	Layer	Topsoil – mid orangey-brown silty loam, 0.37m deep, containing abundant pottery and slate, plus CBM, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, iron, lead, and coal.
TP03	300	Layer	Topsoil – mid greyish-brown clayey silt, 0.32m deep, incorporating a lens of gravel and containing pottery, CBM, stone rubble, slate, mortar, and flint. Seals (301).
	301	Deposit	Demolition deposit – mixed deposit with a mid orangey-brown clayey silt matrix, >0.16m deep, containing frequent large stone rubble, flecks and lumps of lime mortar and plaster, lumps of red clay, fine gravel, CBM, and slate. Sealed by (300).
TP05	500	Layer	Topsoil – mid greyish-brown sandy silt, 0.24m deep, incorporating poorly sorted pebbles throughout and containing pottery, CBM, stone rubble, slate, mortar and plaster, putty, cement, animal bone, glass, iron, screws and nails, a washer, wire, slag, a bottle top, a tin can, clay pipe, and plastic. Seals (501).
	501	Layer	Subsoil – dark greyish-brown sandy silt, >0.21m deep, incorporating moderate pebbles and containing pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, iron nails, a washer, slag, a ceramic marble, clay pipe, and coal. Sealed by (500).

Test Pit No.	Context No.	Type	Description
TP06	600	Fill	Topsoil/fill of pipe trench – mixed mid to dark brownish-grey sandy silt, >0.25m deep, contained within a 0.65m wide modern pipe trench running NW-SE. It contained pottery, CBM, slate, animal bone, iron, slag, a metal button, coal, and oil shale.
TP08	800	Layer	Topsoil – dark brown to brownish-grey sandy silt, 0.16m deep, incorporating pebbles throughout and containing pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, iron screws and nails, a cartridge case, slag, coal, oil shale, and clay pipe. Seals (801).
	801	Layer	Subsoil – moderately compact pale to mid orangey-brown sandy silt, 0.21m deep, incorporating pebbles and flecks of charcoal and CBM throughout. Contained pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, iron nails, slag, clay pipe, and coal. Sealed by (800), seals (802).
	802	Deposit	Possible dump deposit – compact yellowish-brown silty-clay, >0.02m deep containing CBM, lime mortar, and glass. Sealed by (801).
TP09	900	Layer	Topsoil – moderately compact dark greyish-brown sandy silt, up to 0.17m deep, containing pottery, CBM, slate, mortar, animal bone, glass, iron, a lead toy figure, a light bulb base, coal, and clay pipe. Seals (901).
	901	Layer	Subsoil – slightly greyish mid-brown sandy silt, up to 0.15m deep, incorporating frequent flecks and fragments of coal and charcoal, small fragments of CBM and occasional flakes of slate throughout. Contained pottery, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, and clay pipe. Sealed by (900), seals (902).
	902	Deposit	Dump deposit (ground levelling) – mixed deposit of moderately compact to well compacted reddish-brown clay and mid-brown silt, up to 0.29m deep, with basal 0.07m incorporating moderate quantities of angular stones (pebbles and cobbles). Sealed by (901), seals (903).
	903	Layer	Moderately compact mid-brown clayey silt, up to 0.27m deep, incorporating occasional small stones. Contained pottery, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, and clay pipe. Sealed by (902), seals (904).
	904	Layer	Moderate to firm brownish-red clay, > 0.03m deep, incorporating frequent flecks of charcoal and mortar. Sealed by (903).
TP10	1000	Layer	Garden soil – loose dark greyish-brown sandy silt, up to 0.20m deep, containing frequent fragments of white/cream lime mortar, pottery, CBM, slate, animal bone, glass, iron nails, coal, and Perspex. Seals (1001).
	1001	Layer	Subsoil – mid orangey-brown sandy silt, >0.15m deep, incorporating moderate angular pebbles and cobbles up to 0.15m across, and containing pottery, CBM, slate, glass, slag, and coal. Sealed by (1000).
NETHER STOWEY (NEST 23)			
TP01	100	Layer	Topsoil – loose to moderately compact dark greyish-brown sandy silt, 0.20m deep, incorporating occasional small stones. Contained pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, concrete, animal bone, glass, iron nails, lead, slag, coal, oil shale, clay pipe, and a button. Seals (101).

Test Pit No.	Context No.	Type	Description
	101	Layer	Subsoil – moderately compact slightly pinkish mid-brown clayey silt, >0.19m deep, with frequent flecks of charcoal, CBM and mortar. Contained pottery, CBM, slate, lime mortar, limpet shells, glass, iron, slag, coal, and clay pipe.
TP02	200	Layer	Topsoil – relatively loose, friable dark grey-brown sandy-silt, up to 0.40m deep, incorporating discrete lumps of pinkish-brown clay and frequent small angular and sub-angular stones <0.03m across. Contained pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, concrete, animal bone, shells, glass, iron nails, coal, oil shale, clay pipe, a slate pencil, and worked wood. Seals (201).
	201	Layer	Subsoil – mid to dark grey-brown sandy-silt, >0.09m deep, incorporating discrete lumps of pinkish-brown clay. Contained CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, limpet shells, glass, iron nails, coal, oil shale, and clay pipe. Sealed by (200).
TP03	300	Layer	Topsoil – friable to moderately compact dark grey slightly sandy silt, >0.25m deep, incorporating frequent large sandstone pebbles and containing pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, concrete, animal bone, oyster and limpet shells, glass, iron nails, a horseshoe, metal bottle tops, coal, oil shale, clay pipe, and a battery.
TP04	400	Layer	Topsoil – friable to moderately compact dark grey slightly clayey silt, 0.29m deep, incorporating frequent poorly sorted sandstone pebbles (roughly 10% by volume) and containing pottery, CBM, slate, mortar, concrete, animal bone, limpet shells, glass, iron nails, coal, oil shale, and clay pipe. Seals (401).
	401	Layer	Subsoil – moderately compact deposit with a slightly heterogenous greyish-brown clayey silt matrix, up to 0.25m deep, incorporating moderate pebbles and small cobbles (roughly 5-10% by volume) and containing pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, concrete, animal bone, oyster shells, glass, iron, slag, coal, oil shale, and clay pipe. Sealed by (400), seals (402).
	402	Deposit	Demolition deposit – mid reddish brown silty clay, >0.25m deep, incorporating very frequent sandstone cobbles and pebbles, from 0.03 x 0.04 x 0.02m to 0.12 x 0.11 x 0.07m, and some shale or slate. Sealed by (401).
TP05	500	Layer	Topsoil – moderately compact dark brownish-grey sandy silt, 0.36m deep, incorporating moderate to frequent white/cream mortar flecking and containing pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, shells, glass, iron nails, coal, clay pipe, a battery, a buckle, and a button. Seals (501).
	501	Layer	Subsoil – mid to darkish pinkish-brown clayey silt, >0.28m deep, incorporating frequent small stones and moderate charcoal and mortar flecks. A pile of sandstone rubble and pottery exposed at the NE corner of the pit was possibly structural but unclear. Contained pottery, slate, mortar, animal bone, glass, iron, and slag. Sealed by (500).
TP06	600	Layer	Topsoil – moderately compact very dark grey-black sandy silt, 0.40m deep, containing charcoal flecks and pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, concrete, animal bone, limpet and winkle shells, glass, iron nails, a shotgun cartridge cap, slag, coal, oil shale, clay pipe, slate pencils, a bead, a button, a marble, and plastic. Seals (601).
	601	Layer	Subsoil – moderate to firm pale to mid pinkish-brown clayey silt, 0.11m deep, incorporating occasional stones. Sealed by (600), seals (602).

Test Pit No.	Context No.	Type	Description
	602	Layer	Possible alluvial deposit – relatively compact pale yellowish-brown fine silt, up to 0.12m deep. Sealed by (601), seals (603).
	603	Deposit	Possible surface – layer of rounded cobbles and sub-angular stones, from 0.05 to 0.25m across, up to 0.10m deep, incorporates one fragment of ceramic tile. Sealed by (602), seals (604).
	604	Deposit	Possible surface - compact layer of crushed orange to red CBM, incorporating discrete patches of yellowish granular material (degraded lime mortar?). Sealed by (603).
TP07	700	Layer	Topsoil – moderately compact mid to dark brown slightly sandy silt, 0.26m deep, incorporating moderate to frequent pebbles and small cobbles and occasional fragments of CBM. Containing pottery, slate, mortar and plaster, concrete, animal bone, limpet and oyster shells, glass, iron nails and screws, coal, and clay pipe. Seals (701).
	701	Deposit	Subsoil – moderate to firmly compacted mid brownish-pink slightly sandy clayey silt, >0.12m deep, with frequent charcoal and mortar flecks, containing pottery, slate, mortar, concrete, animal bone, limpet shells, glass, iron nails, lead, and coal. Sealed by (700).
TP10	1000	Layer	Topsoil – dark greyish-brown sandy silt, 0.07m deep, incorporating ash and occasional pebbles and small cobbles and containing pottery, CBM, animal bone, glass, iron nails and screws, copper nails, and clay pipe. Seals (1001).
	1001	Layer	Garden soil – mid greyish-brown silty clay, 0.20m deep, incorporating frequent pebbles and small cobbles and containing pottery, slate, putty, animal bone, limpet shell, glass, iron nails and screws, an iron door catch, copper, clay pipe, and plastic. Sealed by (1000), seals (1002).
	1002	Deposit	Surface – compact deposit of angular slate and sandstone pebbles and cobbles, up to 0.10m across, with a matrix of mid greyish-red sandy clay, >0.07m deep, forming a horizontal upper surface; contained pottery and clay pipe. Sealed by (1001).
TP20	2000	Layer	Topsoil – loose to moderately compacted greyish-brown clayey silt, >0.14m deep, incorporating occasional to moderate small stones and containing CBM, slate, concrete, glass, an iron nail, flint gravel, and coal.
TP21	2000	Layer	Topsoil – loose to moderately compacted greyish-brown clayey silt, 0.10m deep, incorporating occasional to moderate small stones and containing pottery, CBM, mortar, and glass. Seals (2001).
	2001	Layer	Natural – reddish-brown clay. Sealed by (2000)
TP22	2000	Layer	Topsoil – loose to moderately compacted mid greyish-brown clayey silt, >0.15m deep, incorporating occasional to moderate small stones and containing pottery, CBM, glass, an iron nail, and clay pipe.
TP23	2000	Layer	Topsoil – loose to moderately compacted mid greyish-brown clayey silt, 0.30m deep, incorporating occasional to moderate small stones and containing pottery, CBM, plaster, glass, an iron buckle, flint gravel, and coal.

Test Pit No.	Context No.	Type	Description
	2001	Layer	Natural – reddish-brown clay. Sealed by (2000)
TP24	2000	Layer	Topsoil – loose to moderately compacted greyish-brown clayey silt, 0.06m deep, incorporating occasional to moderate small stones and containing a K'Nex plastic toy. Test pit was in an area that was probably truncated during the construction of school.
	2001	Layer	Natural – reddish-brown clay. Sealed by (2000)
TP25	2000	Layer	Topsoil – loose to moderately compacted greyish-brown clayey silt, 0.05m deep, incorporating occasional to moderate small stones and containing stone rubble, mortar, flint gravel, and coal. Test pit was in an area that was probably truncated during the construction of school.
	2001	Layer	Natural – reddish-brown clay. Sealed by (2000)
STOGUMBER (STOG 24)			
TP02	200	Layer	Topsoil – friable mid to dark brownish-grey fine sandy silt, 0.22m deep. Contained pottery, CBM, red sandstone rubble, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, shells, glass, iron nails and screws, charcoal, coal, oil shale, clay pipe, and a slate pencil. Seals (201).
	201	Layer	Subsoil – mid greyish-brown fine sandy silt, 0.20m deep, incorporating some grit and small stones up to 0.10m across. Contained pottery, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, coal, oil shale, clay pipe, and a slate pencil. Sealed by (200), seals (202).
	202	Layer	Mid reddish-brown fine sandy silt, >0.09m deep, incorporating occasional small sandstone pebbles, some flecks of lime plaster, and charcoal flecks. Sealed by (201).
TP03	300	Layer	Topsoil – friable mid brownish-grey fine sandy silt, 0.30m deep. Contained pottery, animal bone, glass, iron nails, slag, oil shale, clay pipe, and plastic. Seals (301).
	301	Layer	Subsoil – slightly greyish mid reddish-brown fine sandy silt, >0.45m deep, incorporating some small rounded pebbles and occasional red sandstone fragments. Contained pottery, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, iron nails, coal, oil shale, and clay pipe. Sealed by (300).
TP04	400	Layer	Topsoil – friable to moderately compact dark grey to dark brownish-grey fine sandy silt, 0.39m deep, incorporating occasional red sandstone fragments and becoming grittier toward base of deposit. Contained pottery, CBM, slate, mortar and plaster, concrete, vitrified material, worked bone, animal bone, glass, iron nails, coal, clay pipe, and a plastic button. Seals (401).
	401	Layer	Subsoil – slightly greyish orangey-brown sandy silt, 0.37m deep, incorporating occasional red sandstone rubble and charcoal flecks. It was cut into by an articulated dog burial (left in situ, with 6x detached phalanges reburied) and contained pottery, slate, mortar and plaster, iron, and two fragments of human bone (possibly juvenile femur, also reburied). Sealed by (400), seals (402).
	402	Structure	Wall foundation – north-east to south-west aligned deposit of sub-rounded to sub-angular sandstone rubble, >1.00m long and 0.31 to 0.46m, with three unbonded

Test Pit No.	Context No.	Type	Description
			courses surviving to a depth of up to 0.22m. Interstices contained pottery, plaster, animal bone, glass, and clay pipe. Sealed by (401), possibly seals (403).
	403	Structure	Surface – horizontal deposit of sandstone, >0.62m east-west by >0.42m north-south. Largest stone had worn and rounded upper surface, which extended beyond the limit of excavation. Upper surface was level with the base of (402), but exact relationship was unclear within the restricted area exposed. Possibly sealed by (402).
TP05	500	Layer	Topsoil – poorly sorted friable to moderately compact mid to dark grey slightly clayey fine sandy silt, 0.36 to 0.39m deep, incorporating occasional red sandstone fragments. Contained pottery, a ceramic figurine, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, iron nails, aluminium, and coal. Seals (501).
	501	Layer	Subsoil – slightly greyish orangey-brown fine sandy silt, 0.48m deep, finds recorded under three spit numbers – (501), (502), and (503). A probable ground make-up layer incorporating moderate densities of red sandstone fragments and roof slate in the upper 0.2m, these materials becoming sparser but larger toward base. Basal 0.1m of deposit also incorporated some creamy and pale grey mottles. Contained pottery, CBM, slate, human bone, animal bone, oyster shell, iron nails, glass, coal, oil shale, slag, mortar, plaster, clay pipe, a buckle. Sealed by (500).
TP06	600	Layer	Topsoil – mid brown to pinkish-brown slightly sandy clayey silt, > 0.36m deep. The upper 0.11m is relatively sterile, but the lower element contains lenses of grit and small pebbles up to 0.01m across. Contained pottery, CBM, slate, and flecks of coal.
TP07	700	Layer	Topsoil – friable to moderately compact slightly reddish greyish-brown fine sandy silt, 0.24m deep, incorporating occasional red sandstone fragments and cobbles. Contained pottery, slate, mortar and plaster, animal bone, glass, iron nails, slag, coal, and clay pipe. Seals by (701).
	701	Layer	Subsoil – friable to moderately compact reddish-brown fine sandy silt, >0.16m deep, incorporating moderate red sandstone rubble, up to 0.15m across, which was densest in the north-west quadrant. Sealed by (700).
TP08	800	Layer	Topsoil – homogenous reddish-grey clayey-sand, 0.13m deep, without any course inclusions. Seals (801).
	801	Layer	Subsoil – reddish-grey to greyish-red clayey-sand, > 0.72m deep, incorporating occasional pebbles and small cobbles up to 0.2m across. Contained pottery, struck flint, slate, glass, slag, coal, and clay pipe. Sealed by (800).

Appendix 13.3: Pottery Reports

13.3.1: Bicknoller

REPORT ON THE POTTERY
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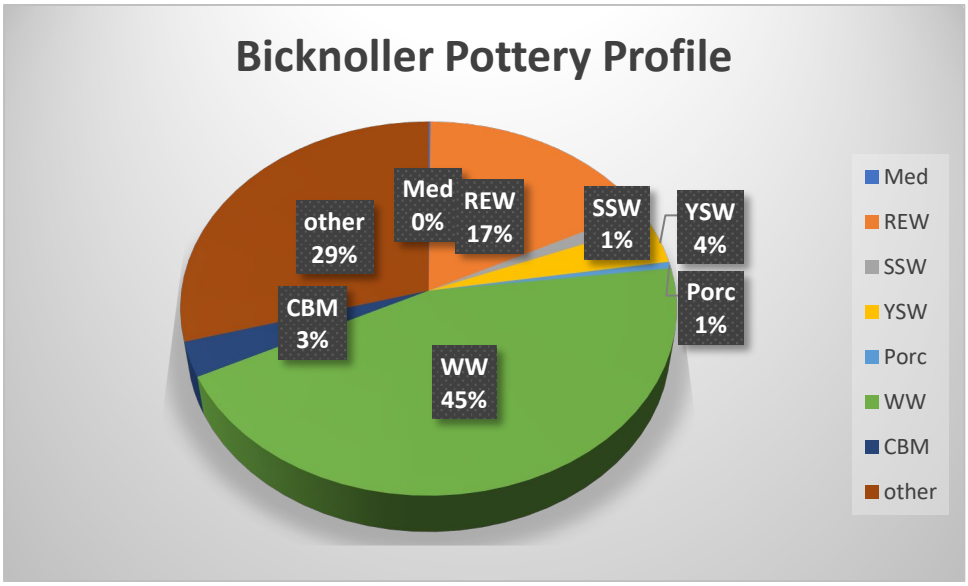
9 FEBRUARY 2022

1. Summary

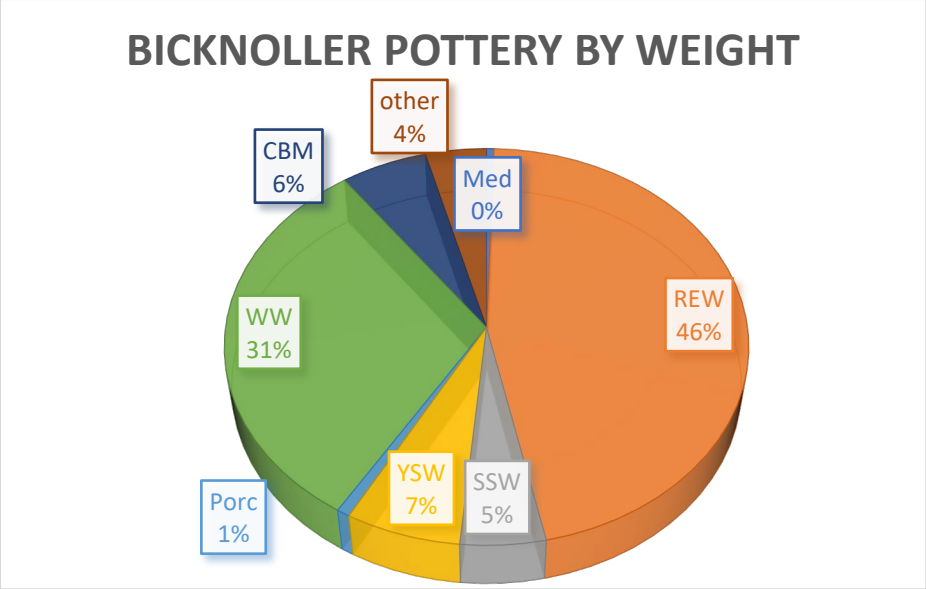
This report is prepared in accordance with the *A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology*, Historic England 2016 available at https://romanpotterystudy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Standard_for_Pottery_Studies_in_Archaeology.pdf
The Medieval Pottery Research Group *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms* 1998 is used to describe the shapes of individual vessels see https://medievalceramics.files.wordpress.com/2019/12/a_guide_to_the_classification_of_medieval_ceramic_forms.pdf

A total of 1,553 sherds from ten test pits was submitted for identification.



That is 4,019gms of pottery sherds by weight. The low average weight per sherd, 2.6g, is an indication of how comminuted are most of the sherds indicating the soil they are in has been turned many times. One impact on the pottery report is that there is inevitably a high proportion of sherds that are too small to identify with any degree of confidence or detail. There is only one vessel of which a substantial portion survives: four adjoining sherds of the base of an early 18th-century Bristol mottled ware pint tankard from context 703.

With two exceptions, all the pottery dates from about 1700 through to the present day. The first exception is a rim of a coarse ware open jar from context 504 of an anomalous form, probably medieval of 11th- to13th-century date. It is described in section 3.1 below. The second is the body sherd of a medieval jug of 12th- to 13th-century date from context 1001, also described in section 3.2 below. The predominant types are various kinds of white earthenware which date from the 1750s on and various types of red earthenware. There is nothing to suggest that any of these date from earlier than about 1700. Industrial-scale manufacturing had ceased except for horticultural wares by about 1960.



2. Detailed commentary by context (spreadsheet of distribution attached)

2.1 Test pit 1, Trendle Lane - lawn

The record of the test pit shows one context – 101. *[HR please note - it also shows five spits all with pottery but pottery from only four contexts 101, 102, 103 and 104 has been submitted. As there is no real differentiation between the material from the spits, I have treated the material as from one context.]* It contained 781 sherds of pottery (1,897g) and 8 of ceramic building materials (56g). The various types of whitewares account for 67% of the assemblage, red earthenwares just under 18%. The sole sherd of tin-glazed earthenware was recovered but it is far too small to identify further but probably dates from the 18th century. Of similar date are the 12 sherds of yellow slipwares and 11 salt-glazed stoneware including 1 impress-marked WITH…. The one sherd of Bristol stoneware dates from 1835 to 1950 (Dawson 2017). There is little differentiation in the nature of the pottery between the spits. Indeed the whole of 101 seems to be a homogenous deposit of well-tilled soil containing domestic waste accumulated over the past three hundred years.

2.2 Test pit 2, Old Vicarage, 22 Church Lane - lawn

Five distinct contexts are recorded in descending order 201, 202, 203 with 205 a unit within 203 and 204. 206 is the cut in the natural which defines a pit-like feature containing 204.
Context 201 (topsoil) no pottery
Context 202 (garden path) 49 sherds, 268g. Mainly red earthenware sherds (35sherds, 202g) but single sherd of Bristol stoneware (BSW) indicates the path must have been laid after 1835.
Context 203 (secondary fill) no pottery
Context 204 (primary fill) no pottery
Context 205 (?path/wall) no pottery

2.3 Test pit 3, 6 Dashwoods Lane - uncultivated end of garden

Three contexts (spits?) containing little pottery probably reflecting the distance from any dwelling.
Context 301 a single sherd of West Somerset red earthenware (REWWS).
Context 302 a single sherd of Bridgwater/Somerset coast type red earthenware (REWBC).
Context 303 two sherds of red earthenware, one Bridgwater/coast type (REWBC), the other unclassified (REWU).

2.4 Test pit 4, Dashwoods Lane, Village Hall – forecourt

No pottery submitted.

2.5 Test pit 5, Dashwoods Lane

Upper four contexts contained a small amount of pottery.
Context 501 (topsoil) six tiny sherds (16g) including two transfer printed, two whitewares and two unclassified red earthenwares.
Context 502 (garden soil) 5 whiteware (WW) (17g) and 3 transfer printed ware (TPW) (10g),
Context 503 (garden soil) 1 CBM glazed tile (3g) and 1 TPW (<1g),
Context 504 (clayey silt) 2 WW (1g), 1 TPW (1g) and 1 sherd of unclassified medieval coarse ware (see 3.1) below.
Contexts 505 and 506 no pottery

2.6 Test pit 6, land behind Trendle Lane – lawn

Single context 601 (clayey silt) containing 90 sherds (243g). They include two sherds of double-Roman roof-tiles (CBM). The salt-glazed stoneware (SSW) includes 1 sherd of probably 18th-century Westerwald from the Rhineland, 1 tiny chip of a fine early 18th-century Staffordshire plate and two sherds of glossy Nottingham stoneware. The whole assemblage dates from about 1700 to the present.

2.7 Test pit 7, garden behind Trendle Lane – lawn

Context 701 (topsoil) 11 small sherds, 10 WW (18g), I unclassified red earthenware (REWU) 92g)
Context 702 (topsoil) 8 sherds of various white wares (11g), 2 sherds of red earthenwares (6g), I South Somerset type, 1 West Somerset type.
Context 703 (subsoil) relatively undisturbed – 16 sherds including 4 sherds which comprise the base of a Bristol mottled ware tankard (mug) (c.1720-50), two adjoining sherds of a South Somerset type bowl with slip-trailed decoration and two crimped rim sherds of Bristol yellow slipware plates c.1700-80.
Context 704 (?path) no pottery
Context 705 (loam) no pottery

2.8 Test pit 8, Dashwood Coach House, Dashwood Lane – formerly cultivated ground

Context 801 (topsoil) 34 sherds (133g), 7 sherds of white glazed tile and 24 of brick (CBM) (126g) and 3 sherds of Bridgwater/coast type flower pots (REWBC).
Context 802 (subsoil) a single sherd of REWBC,
Context 803 (subsoil) 4 sherds of white glazed tile (CBM) (19g) and 1 of South Somerset type red earthenware (REWSS) (6g)
Context 804 (subsoil) no pottery

2.9 Test pit 9, 2 Church Lane – lawn near roadside

A mix of pottery c.1700 to the present.
Context 901 (topsoil) 73 sherds (309g) probably mostly 19/20th century except for the 18th century yellow slipwares and 1 sherd of Bristol mottled ware.
Context 902 possibly same as 901, 27 sherds (121g).

2.10 Test pit 10, 6 Parsons Close – garden, former orchard

Context 1001 (topsoil) 22 sherds (137g) nothing earlier than 1800 except for 1 sherd of medieval glazed jug, somewhat abraded (see 3.2 below).
Context 1002 (subsoil) no pottery

3. Pottery types (spreadsheet of distribution attached)

3.1 MedCWU Medieval coarse ware unclassified (1 sherd, 12g).
Context 504.
Form: everted bead rim of a hand-built open jar. The rim form is not a type common in this area of Somerset. There is a possibility that the sherd is a heavily abraded example of a Roman black-burnished jar of the 2nd/4th century but the fabric suggests otherwise.
Fabric: reduced black core with brown to black outer margin and black outer surface and light grey inner margin and inner surface. Hard-fired sandy feel. Inclusions: occasional irregular white and coloured quartz mostly <1mm some <2mm.
Date range: 11th-13th centuries.

3.2 MedGWU Medieval glazed ware unclassified (1 sherd, 8g).
Context 1001.
Form: body sherd of a glazed hand-built jug decorated with inscribed bands.
Fabric: reduced light grey core with orange inner margin and surface and glazed outer surface. Occasional quartz and other inclusions too small to identify without a microscope. Reduced green plain lead glaze mottled brown from iron-rich inclusions.
Similarities with Ham Green B ware (Ponsford 1991).
Date range: late 12th to 13th centuries.

3.3 SSW Salt-glazed stonewares (22 sherds, 193g)
Contexts 101, 601, 803, 901, 1001.
This type covers a wide variety of wares from heavy duty containers and utilitarian bottles (1001) to fine wares such as the fragment of decorated Westerwald vessel (601) and the chip of the rim of a fine Staffordshire plate (601).

3.4 REW Red earthenwares (279 sherds, 1,856g)
Red earthenwares are a major component of the pottery. These utilitarian wares for storage, cooking, horticulture and some table ware were made from the 15th century. Though most of the fragments from Bicknoller are too small to identify, one can be confident that most will date from 1700 on. An exception is the trailed slip rim of a South Somerset type bowl which dates from the 18th century (703). Analysis of waste sherds from different making centres has enabled some differentiation possible (Dawson *et al* 2018) though it should be pointed out that not all making centres have been identified yet alone analysed. It is striking that the majority of red earthenwares seems to be of the South Somerset type perhaps obtained from the market at Taunton rather than the West Somerset types from Nether Stowey (probably defunct by about 1750) or Bridgwater.
3.4.1 REWBC Red earthenwares of the Bridgwater and the coast type (31 sherds, 318g)
Contexts 103, 202, 302, 303, 601, 801, 901, 1001
Pottery from the Chandos glass cone has been analysed. It in common with other wares produced by the brickworks in the area are characterised by the fragments of soft limestone that occurs in the clay (Boore and Pearson 2010).
3.4.2 REWWS Red earthenwares of the West Somerset type (8 sherds, 27g)
Contexts 103, 702, 703, 901
Waste pottery has been identified at Nether Stowey, Wrangway, Langford Budville and nearby Quantock Cottage Farm, Crowcombe. Odd that more is not found at Bicknoller but this may be an indicator that most of the Bicknoller material is late 18th century and later.
3.4.3 REWSS Red earthenwares of the South Somerset type (99 sherds, 891g)
Contexts 101, 103, 104, 202, 601, 702, 703, 901, 902, 1001
The predominant type. This kind of ware was first defined by Coleman-Smith and Pearson (1988) in their study of the Donyatt potteries.
3.4.4 REWND Red earthenwares of the North Devon type (5 sherds, 528g)
Contexts 103, 601, 901
This type of earthenware with its characteristic use of crushed quartz as a temper was widely traded in the area of the Severn and far beyond.
3.4.5 REWU Unclassified red earthenwares (133 sherds, 92g)
Contexts 103, 202, 601, 701, 703, 901, 902, 1001
Sherds that are too small or of a kind that cannot be assigned to any of the above categories.

3.5 TGE Tin-glazed earthenware (1 sherd, 1g)
Context 104
The absence of TGE is another indicator that the Bicknoller material is mostly later. TGE commonly occurs up to about 1780 when it was superseded by whitewares.

3.6 YSW Yellow slipware
The common tableware of the early 18th century. It was produced in Staffordshire but all the Bicknoller sherds have the creamier appearance of Bristol manufacture. Along with TGE it was extinguished in the flood of white wares towards the end of the 18th century (Dawson 1979a; Dawson and Ponsford 2016-7).
3.6.1 YSWF Flat yellow slipware (7 sherds, 79g)
Contexts 101, 103, 104, 901
Trailed and combed slip decorated dishes formed over a hump mould and with crimped rims these attractive wares were a substitute for more expensive products of TGE.
3.6.2 YSWH Hollow yellow slipware (48 sherds, 183g)
These distinctive cups were first identified to Bristol by Ken Barton (1961).

3.7 MW Mottled ware (5 sherds, 92g)
Contexts 703, 804
Ware usually tankards with a distinctive iron-rich glaze (often confused with the similar manganese rich glazed ware of Staffordshire). It has a range limited to about 1720 to 1750 (Dawson 1979b; Dawson and Ponsford 2016-7, 73). The complete base of a tankard was recovered from 703.

3.8 Porcelains, bone china, Parian and similar wares (9 sherds, 30g)
Contexts 102, 103, 194, 601, 901, 1001

3.9 White wares (695 sherds, 1,256g)
In number the predominant class of pottery recovered at Bicknoller. Once put into mass production by Josiah Wedgwood and others from the 1780s on white wares of various kinds become almost synonymous with the term pottery and although they were made in many places like Bristol and Poole, the Potteries in Staffordshire remained the dominant centre of production until the end of the 20th century. The average size of sherd, just under 2g, is an indication of how much these have been turned over in the soil. At that scale plain sherds may have belonged to decorated vessels. No marks were found.
3.9.1 WW Plain white wares (368 sherds, 606g)
Contexts 101, 102, 103, 104, 501, 502, 504, 601, 701, 702, 703, 901, 902, 1001
3.9.2 TSF Transfer printed wares (227 sherds, 370g)
Contexts 101, 102, 103, 104, 501, 502, 503, 504, 601, 702, 703, 901, 902, 1001
A technique of decorating which found its soulmate in white wares. Most commonly used were cobalt blue patterns but other colours such as browns and greens were also employed.
3.9.3 BWW Banded white wares (22 sherds, 84g)
Contexts 101, 102, 103, 104, 202, 601
White wares which are lathe-turned vessels decorated with coloured slip bands and sometimes with the distinctive 'mocha' dendritic pattern. They were made in Bristol and elsewhere. They were popular in the 19th century.
3.9.4 OWW Other white wares (78 sherds, 196g)
Contexts 101, 102, 103, 104, 202, 601, 901, 902, 1001
A portmanteau category used here to cover all the other types of coloured white wares.

3.10 EBW Egyptian Black Wares (4 sherds, 10g)
Contexts 101, 202
A particular type of glossy black ware commonly used for tea pots in the mid 19th century. J & J White of Bristol were a manufacturer (Pountney 192, 268).

3.11 BSW Bristol stoneware (5 sherds, 63g)
Contexts 101, 202, 601
A distinctive stoneware invented in 1835 by William Powell and Anthony Amatt in Bristol to be acid proof and widely used for containers throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries (Pountney 1920, 257: Dawson 2917)

3.12 CBM Ceramic building materials (47 sherds, 236g)
Contexts 101, 503, 801, 803, 901
Another portmanteau term covering glazed wall-tiles, roof tiles and bricks.

4. Conclusion

The chance of finding evidence of the early occupation in a village is always slight, especially as Bicknoller seems to have been a scattered settlement. The two residual sherds are an indication that there was some form of occupation here. Perhaps not surprisingly there is plentiful evidence of occupation in the past two to three hundred years accompanied by in more recent times intense cultivation.

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13.3.2: Crowcombe

REPORT ON THE POTTERY
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8 JULY 2023

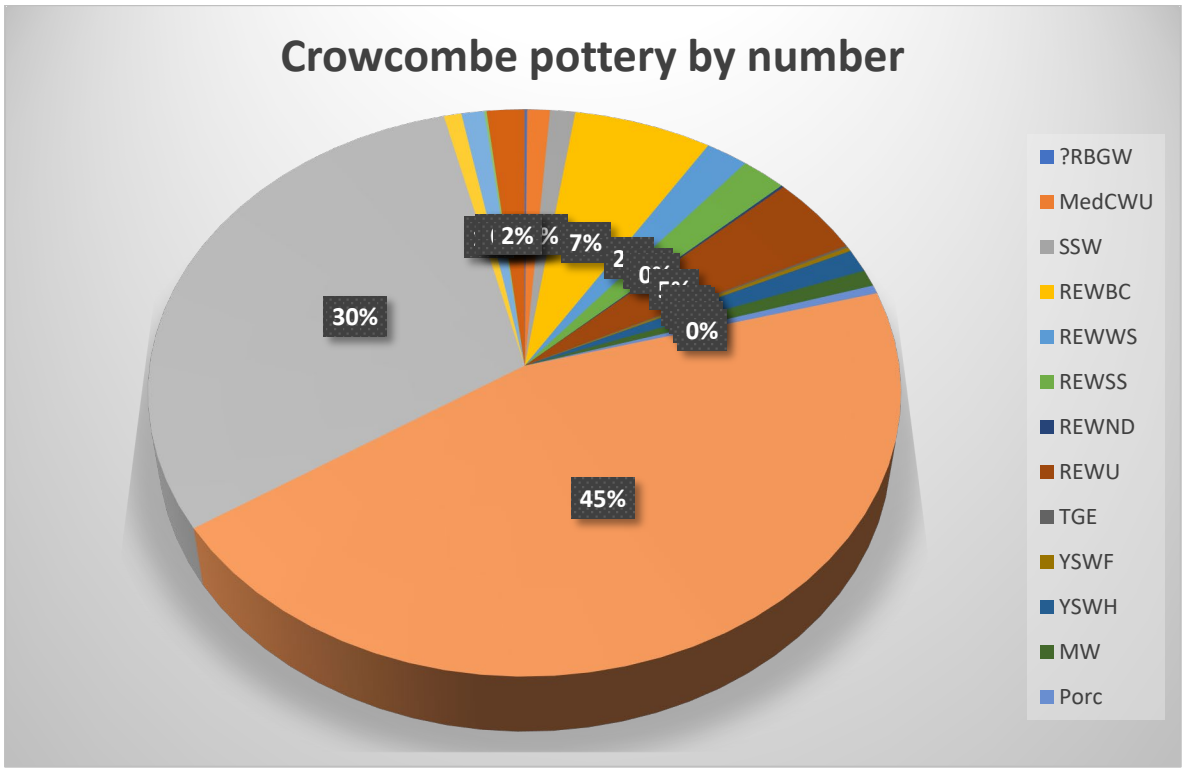
1. Summary

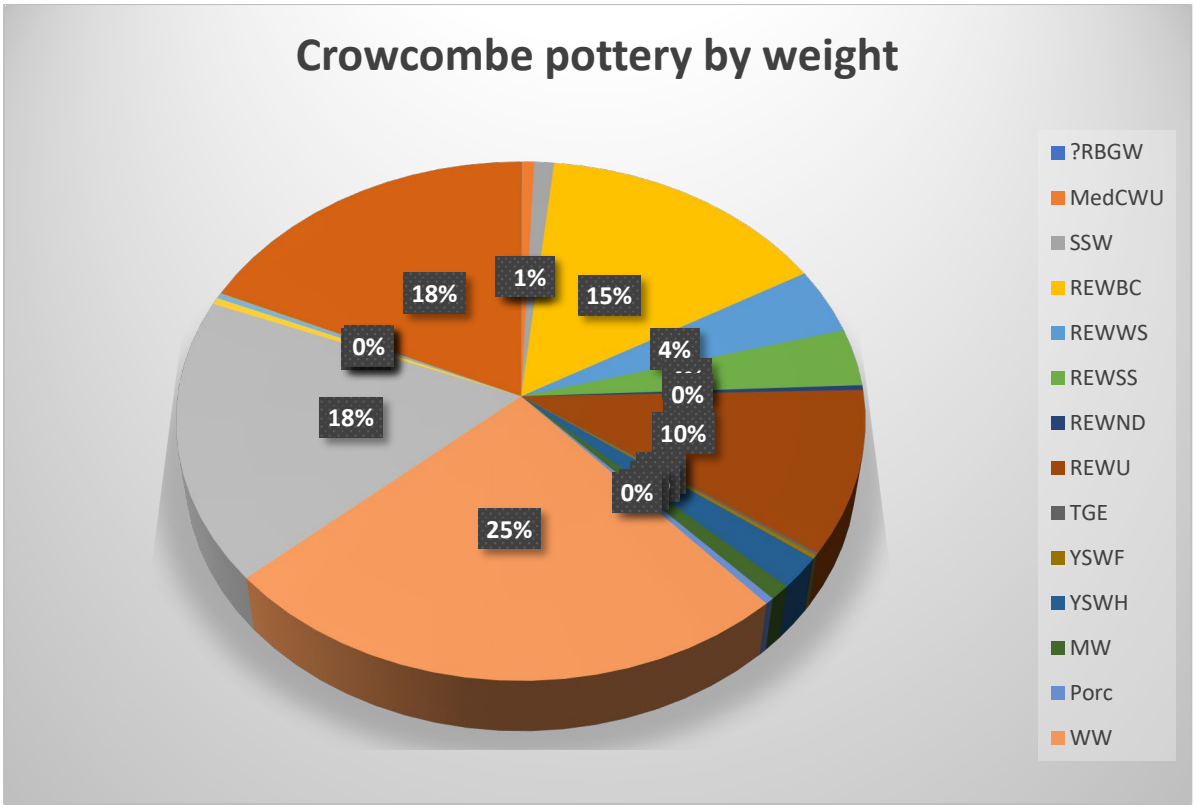
This report is prepared in accordance with the *A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology*, Historic England 2016 available at https://romanpotterystudy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Standard_for_Pottery_Studies_in_Archaeology.pdf
The Medieval Pottery Research Group *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms* 1998 is used to describe the shapes of individual vessels see https://medievalceramics.files.wordpress.com/2019/12/a_guide_to_the_classification_of_medieval_ceramic_forms.pdf
The Somerset Pottery Fabric Type Series being developed by Naomi Page in the Somerset Heritage Centre and in partnership with Historic England was not yet available at the time of writing this report.

A total of 842 sherds weighing 3,322g from eight test pits was submitted for identification. Many sherds, especially the white wares, individually weigh less than 1g, an indication of how disturbed many of these context are. All the contexts save two contain a range of pottery from the 18th to the 20th century marked by the ubiquitous white earthenwares. Both these exceptions are small assemblages: 903 and 1001. The latter contains what are undoubtedly the earliest sherds of all (see below).

The predominance of white wares (WW, TPF and BWW) 75% by sherd count, 43% by weight compared to red earthenwares (REW) approximately 15 % by sherd count 33% by weight can be seen in the pie diagrams. It is an indicator of how in much of the village later occupation has built up and masked any earlier evidence that might survive. The churn in these deposits includes 18th-century residual material.

For abbreviations used see section 3 below.





2. Detailed commentary by context

2.1 Test pit 1, Church House – 1936 demolition debris

The test pits had six contexts only two of which contained pottery to provide evidence of the demolition and the date of the underlying paving. No pottery was submitted for identification from contexts 101, 102, 104 or 105.
Context 100, the demolition debris contained 70 sherds (805g), all relatively small, except for one sherd of 20th-century salt-glazed drainage pipe. Whitewares of various kinds, including transfer printed wares, all dating from the 19th/20th century, amounted to 44 sherds (63% by number) (WW), whilst local redwares, with the exception of a single sherd from North Devon (REWND), amounted to 24 (34%), all of roughly the same date range. The single sherds of ceramic building material is of a moulded finial (34g). All is consistent with a demolition date of 1963.
Context 103 which might be hoped to provide an indication of the date of the paving yielded 6 sherds (43g) one of which was of a transfer printed possibly of a bowl, the rest of pans of West Somerset and Bridgwater/coast types of red earthenware (REW).

2.2 Test pit 2, Church House – demolition rubbish

A single context (200) representing mixed demolition rubbish from behind Church House. The pottery is the largest assemblage from the test pitting exercise. 543 sherds () in all, many highly fragmented. The majority are of white wares (19th/20th-century date) 497 sherds (92% by number) weighing 1,199g (WW/TPF). It also contains earlier residual pieces notably 5 sherds (41g) of two probably four from Bristol yellow slipware handled cups (*c*. 1700-1780) (YSWH), a single sherd of early 18th-century Staffordshire manganese mottled ware tankard (MW), a single sherd of tin-glazed earthenware bowl of the 18th century (TGE) and one sherd of West Somerset red earthenware tankard decorated with white slip (REWWS). One sherd of Bridgwater coast ware (REWBC) has remnants of glaze surviving in incised letters in the base – apparently J P + illegible. The four porcelain sherds seem to date to the 19th century.
The assemblage of 10 fragments of different styles of roof tile (10 sherds, 602g) including double-Roman also includes an earlier crested ridge tile which may date back to the 16th-century (but see 3.11 below).

2.3 Test pit 3, driveway to Crowcombe Court – levelling/landscaping

Context 300 – landscaping. A single sherd (5g) of an 18th-century slip-decorated red earthenware dish (REWBC).

2.4 Test pit 4, not dug

2.5 Test pit 5, the Carew Arms, Crowcombe Road – accumulation of soil

Context 500 – topsoil. The general absence of white wares (1 sherd) and transfer printed wares (1 sherd) and presence of horticultural ware (5 sherds) suggests this is garden soil. The four sherds of banded white wares commonly associated with public houses is interesting to note but not significant in such a small and, apart from 1 flower pot rim, comminuted assemblage. Base of a glass pot for a skin salve, painted REME SEBORREO/ EXCELLENCE/ aux plantes et aux essences nature[lles] probably early 20th-century.

Context 501 – mixed loam and debris includes a stone marble. The contents are consistently 18th-century to early 19th-century date, though again all the sherds are highly fragmented. The Bristol mottled ware tankard (4 sherds; 12g) is no later than 1750 (MW); the yellow slipware sherds (2 sherds; 2g) 1780 (YSWH); the stoneware is all 18th-century (7 sherds; 11g) including the rim of a Staffordshire white stoneware tankard (SS). The white earthenwares account for 52% by count of the sherds (28; 21g) and the red earthenwares 21% by count (11 sherds; 43g) but these are not easy to date.

2.6 Test pit 6, Ajana, Crowcombe Road – modern pipe trench

Context 600 – backfill. Mostly tiny sherds including 43% by count white wares (WW) (9 sherds; 8g). Rim of a Bridgwater/coast slipware dish (REWBC) probably 18th/early 19th-century; distinctive body sherd of a Westerwald stoneware vessel (SS); a body sherd of a Bristol mottled ware tankard (MW) early 18th-century. There is a possibility that 1 minute sherd may be medieval but it is too small to identify with any certainty.

2.7 Test pit 7, not dug

2.8 Test pit 8, Cote Hele, Crowcombe Road – garden and levelling

Context 800 – top soil. The assemblage includes a sherd of clay pipe bowl and the basal angle of a Verwood pan. By count the majority (62%) of sherds are of white wares but again includes 18th-century Bristol mottled ware (2 sherds; 5g) and yellow slipware (2 sherds; 11g) and Staffs white stoneware (1 sherd).

Context 801 – demolition debris. A similar mix containing 16 sherds: 11 white wares including 5 transfer printed, (13g) 1 sherd of yellow slipware dish (4g), 3 sherds of Bridgwater/coast red earthenwares (29g) and 1 unclassifiable red earthenware (5g).

Context 802 – clay – no pottery.

2.9 Test pit 9, Bedons, Crowcombe Road – garden

Context 900 – build up. A mix of 18th/20th century wares: 30 sherds in all (53% by number white wares). 1 sherd of yellow slipware (8g).

Context 901 – build up. A similar mix 15 sherds in all, with white wares predominating (60% by count).

Context 902 – build up – no pottery

Context 903 - build up – no white wares, of 10 sherds, 9 were definitely Bridgwater/coast red earthenware including the unglazed rim and shoulder of a bowl. Slight trace of glaze in the bowl. Probably early 18th-century but could be as early as 17th. Clay pipe 18th-century or later.

Context 904 – build up – no pottery

Test pit 10, 2 Hagleys Green – garden

Context 1000 – garden soil, presumably equates to spits 0-20cm. 7 sherds spanning the 18th-20th Centuries.

Context 1001 – subsoil, presumably equates to spit 20-25/30cm. Interesting - the Bridgwater/coast sherd of red earthenware with the iron-enriched all over glaze is probably 16th/17th century. The very abraded sherd of greyware could well be Roman. The 10 other abraded sherds are difficult to identify. 3 fabrics are represented, probably medieval (pre 13th century), but possibly prehistoric (see 3.2 below),

3. Pottery types (spreadsheet of distribution attached)

3.1 Heavily abraded sherd of greyware, possibly Roman (1 sherd, <1g)
Context 1001.
Form: Unidentifiable

3.2 MedCWU Medieval (?) coarse wares unclassified. (10 sherds, 21g)
Context 1001. There is the possibility that some of these may be prehistoric. All appear to be hand built, all are badly abraded, too badly to attempt to identify forms.
Type 1 fabric. (3 sherds, all <3mm, 11g). Soft-fired reduced grey one partly reoxidised red. Mixed occasional rounded quartz <1mm, irregular quartz <2mm, flint <6mm.
Type 2 fabric. (3 sherds, all <3mm, 5g), Soft fired reoxidised red quartz <1mm.
Type 3 fabric, (4 sherds, all <2mm, 5g). Reduced black, appear to have a slightly burnished external surface. Too soft-fired to be Roman black burnished ware.

3.3 SSW Salt-glazed stonewares (10 sherds, 34g)
Contexts 501, 600, 800.
This type covers a wide variety of wares from heavy duty containers and utilitarian bottles (none of these found) to fine wares such as the fragment of highly decorated Westerwald vessel, a German import from the Rhineland (600) and sherds of fine Staffordshire white stoneware (500, 800). The latter were made in the 18th century, the former more difficult to date probably at a similar time.

3.4 REW Red earthenwares (124 sherds, 1,114g)
Red earthenwares are a major component of the pottery. These utilitarian wares primarily for storage but also cooking, horticulture and some table ware were made from the 15th century on. Though many of the fragments from Crowcombe are too small to identify, one can be confident that most will date from 1700 on. Analysis of waste sherds from different making centres has enabled some differentiation possible (Dawson *et al* 2018) though it should be pointed out that not all making centres have been identified yet alone analysed. It is striking that the majority of red earthenwares seems to be of the Bridgwater/coast type perhaps traded via Watchet. The West Somerset types from Nether Stowey (probably defunct by about 1750). Trailed white slip decoration was common in the late 17th and 18th centuries.
3.4.1 REWBC Red earthenwares of the Bridgwater and the coast type (55 sherds, 499g)
Contexts 100, 103, 200, 300, 500, 501, 600, 800, 900, 903, 1000, 1001
Pottery from the Chandos glass cone has been analysed. It in common with other wares produced by the brickworks in the area are characterised by the fragments of soft limestone that occurs in the clay (Boore and Pearson 2010).
3.4.2 REWWS Red earthenwares of the West Somerset type (17 sherds, 137g)
Contexts 100, 103, 200, 501, 600, 800, 900, 901
Waste pottery has been identified at Nether Stowey, Wrangway, Langford Budville and nearby Quantock Cottage Farm, Crowcombe. It is odd that more is not found at Crowcombe but this may be an indicator that most of the Crowcombe material is late 18th century and later.
3.4.3 REWSS Red earthenwares of the South Somerset type (18 sherds, 118g)
Contexts 100, 103, 200, 501, 600, 800, 901, 1000

The predominant type. This kind of ware was first defined by Coleman-Smith and Pearson (1988) in their study of the Donyatt potteries. Production ceased following the Second World War. This would probably have been sourced from the market in Taunton.

3.4.4 REWND Red earthenwares of the North Devon type (1 sherds, 10g)

Context 100

This type of earthenware with its characteristic use of crushed quartz as a temper was widely traded in the area of the Severn and far beyond from the 17th to early 20th century.

3.4.5 REWU Unclassified red earthenwares (38 sherds, 339g)

Contexts 100, 200, 300, 500, 501, 600, 800, 801, 900, 903, 1000

Sherds that are too small or of a kind that cannot be assigned to any of the above categories. One sherd of a Verwood pan from context 800 has been included here. The Verwood potteries of east Dorset were a prolific production centre especially in the 18th and 19th centuries. Their occurrence this far north and west is unusual (Draper 2002).

3.5 TGE Tin-glazed earthenware (1 sherd, 1g)

Context 104

The general absence of TGE is another indicator that the Crowcombe material is mostly later. TGE commonly occurs up to about 1780 when it was superseded by whitewares.

3.6 YSW Yellow slipware

The common tableware of the early 18th century. It was produced in Staffordshire but all the Crowcombe sherds have the creamier appearance of Bristol manufacture. Along with TGE it was extinguished by the flood of cheap white wares towards the end of the 18th century (Dawson 1979a; Dawson and Ponsford 2016-7).

3.6.1 YSWF Flat yellow slipware (2 sherds, 7g)

Contexts 800, 801

Trailed and combed slip decorated dishes formed over a hump mould and with crimped rims - these attractive wares were a substitute for more expensive products of TGE.

3.6.2 YSWH Hollow yellow slipware (11 sherds, 66g)

Contexts 200, 501, 800, 900, 1000

These distinctive cups were first identified to Bristol by Ken Barton (1961).

3.7 MW Mottled ware (8 sherds, 31g)

Contexts 200, 501, 800

Ware usually tankards with a distinctive iron-rich glaze (often confused with the similar manganese rich glazed ware of Staffordshire though there is 1 sherd of Staffs type from context 200). The Staffs pottery has a date range of *c*.1700-35 (Kelly 1973, 1), that from Bristol has a range limited to about 1720 to 1750 (Dawson 1979b; Dawson and Ponsford 2016-7, 73).

3.8 Porcelains, bone china, Parian and similar wares (4 sherds, 13g)

Context 200

3.9 White wares (653 sherds, 1,444g)

In number the predominant class of pottery recovered at Crowcombe. Once put into mass production by Josiah Wedgwood and others from the 1780s on, white wares of various kinds become almost synonymous with the term pottery and although they were made in many places like Bristol and Poole, the Potteries in Staffordshire remained the dominant centre of production until the end of the 20th century. The average size of sherd, just under 2g, is an indication of how much these have been turned over in the soil. At that size plain sherds may have belonged to decorated vessels. No makers' marks were found.

3.9.1 WW Plain white wares (380 sherds, 834g)

Contexts 100. 200, 500, 501, 600, 800, 801, 900, 901, 1000

3.9.2 TSF Transfer printed wares (227 sherds, 586g)

Contexts 100, 299, 500, 501, 600, 800, 801, 900, 901

A technique of decorating which found its soulmate in white wares. Most commonly used were cobalt blue patterns but other colours such as browns and greens were also employed.

3.9.3 BWW Banded white wares (7 sherds, 14g)

Contexts 100, 200, 501, 800

White wares which are lathe-turned vessels decorated with coloured slip bands and sometimes with the distinctive 'mocha' dendritic pattern. They were made in Bristol and elsewhere. They were popular in the 19th century.

3.9.4 OWW Other white wares (9 sherds, 10g)
Contexts 100, 501, 600
A portmanteau category used here to cover all the other types of coloured white wares.

3.10 BSW Bristol stoneware (0 sherds, 0g)
Contexts: none
A distinctive stoneware invented in 1835 by William Powell and Anthony Amatt in Bristol to be acid proof and widely used for containers throughout the 19th and early 20th centuries (Pountney 1920, 257: Dawson 2917). It is surprising that not a single sherd was found of this ubiquitous type of pottery, not even by the Carew Arms.

3.11 CBM Ceramic building materials (47 sherds, 236g)
Contexts 100, 200, 900
Another portmanteau term covering drainage pipes, roof tiles and bricks. Surprisingly little was found. Context 200 contains a late glazed crested roof tile sherd possibly made as early as the 16th century but it should be noted that there is plenty of evidence from elsewhere to suggest that these were often reused and can even be found intact on roofs to this day.

4. Conclusion

Test pit 10 in Hagleys Green, at a high point towards the south west end of Crowcombe Road is the only place which demonstrates early occupation and this in the subsoil (1001). It is unclear which of the other test pits reached the subsoil proper but it is possible that lower down the hill slope later deposits mask any earlier occupation. All these later deposits have been highly disturbed hence the small size of the sherds found, some less than 5mm and less than 1g. Further test pitting might elucidate a picture of the true archaeology of the village.

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13.3.3: Nether Stowey

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The Somerset Pottery Fabric Type Series being developed by Naomi Page in the Somerset Heritage Centre and in partnership with Historic England has been consulted and where appropriate correlated.

A total of 1,733 sherds weighing 10.316kg have been examined. Residual finds of 54 sherds (3.1%) from medieval occupation were recovered from test pits 1, 2, 3 and 4 that is at 36 Lime Street, 25 and 32 Castle Street. As all except one, a possible 13th/14th-century sherd of a Bristol Redcliff jug, are of open jars. They are difficult to date – 11th to 13th century. One definite 12th/13th century jar rim is identifiable.
There then seems to be a gap until the 16th century when the local red earthenwares start appearing - 740 sherds accounting for 43% of the assemblage. Perhaps this is unsurprising as Nether Stowey is at the heart of a pottery-making district that seems to have kept producing all through the 18th century and into the 19th (see discussion in 3.xx below).
Nearly all the test pits produced some 18th-century pottery amongst the ubiquitous Staffordshire white and other 19th/20th-century wares though much of it was reduced to very small sherds.

The test-pitting exercise has succeeded in demonstrating in its range of at least six different pottery fabric types that Nether Stowey was a prosperous place in the medieval period. Further study of the local red earthenwares (REWWS) would extend our knowledge of the diversity of types of pottery produced here.

2. Detailed commentary by context

2.1 Test pit 1. 36 Lime Street – garden

An interesting excavation on account of the quantity of medieval pottery recovered.
Two contexts were recorded – (100) topsoil and (101) subsoil. Context (101) contained an appreciable quantity of medieval sherds (11th to 13th century) with a smaller number in (100).

The pottery in context (100) ranged from the 11th/12th century to the 19th/20th. There are 11 medieval sherds but none of them of recognisable form. All are probably open jars with a sagging base (MPRG form 4.1). There are two distinct hard-fired fabrics:
1) with frequent quartz and limestone inclusions <0.5mm, both angular and rounded quartz from white to grey – 9 sherds (36g);
2) with flat slate, angular rose quartz and occasional angular conglomerate inclusions <1mm – 2 sherds(13g).
All the rest are post-medieval, the majority 104 sherds out of a total of 263 (40%) are of local red earthenwares (REWWS) though it should be emphasised that most of these were small and incapable of being any more closely dated than to the 16th to 19th century. Whitewares (WW) including transfer-printed wares of the 19th/20th century account for 21% of the assemblage. See spreadsheet for detailed breakdown of types of pottery found.

The pottery from context (101) consisted of 49 (57%) of Medieval sherds, most abraded. One tiny sherd may be from a glazed Bristol Redcliff ware jug (13th/14th century) but is too small to positively identify. Among the 31 sherds of type (1) coarse ware open jars (MPRG form 4.1) are two carinations (the junction between the belly and the sagging base) and three rim sherds. One includes the rim, short neck and shoulder typical of the 13th/14th century. Two others, flat topped rims, one decorated with thumb impressions, are also typical of this period. However the deposit also contains much later material including the neck of a Bristol stoneware bottle and therefore must date later than 1835 (Dawson 2017, 319).

2.2 Test pit 2. Old Cider House, 25 Castle Street – garden topsoil

A single context (200) of garden topsoil. All the sherds are broken into small fragments. Here we have 6 much abraded unclassified medieval sherds, 2.25% of an assemblage of 266 sherds. The local red earthenwares (REWWS) make up 109 (41%) with rims of jars and dishes among the many body sherds. There is one example of a thumbed band beneath the rim of a jar, the rim of a sgraffito decorated dish and a body sherd of a cucurbit (MPRG 9.3) but most interesting are sherds of what appear to at best seconds from the local potteries. 9 sherds are distinctly overfired and two underfired so the glaze has not matured. The usual white wares (WW), 61 sherds (23%) and other 18th/19th century wares indicate how mixed this well-cultivated soil has become.

There is no record sheet for context (201) but the two bags are clearly marked TP2. The sherds are on the whole larger than those of (200) suggesting they have escaped intensive tilling. There are three medieval sherds of open jars, one of which is a hammerhead rim of a coarse fabric rich in quartz <3mm. Local red earthenware (REWWS)makes up the bulk of the pottery, 41 sherds (37%) out of 110. One sherd is from the base of a sgraffito decorated dish (probably 18th century) but two crimped rims, one with an applied band inside probably belong to chafing dishes (MPRG form 8.6). Whitewares (WW) from the 18th/19th century make up the second largest group, 35 sherds (32%).

2.3 Test pit 3. 30-32 Castle Street – "a rich garden soil"

A single context (300). There is one Medieval sherd. The rest seem to range through 16th to 20th century. The local red earthenware (REWWS) 75 sherds (40%) of 188 sherds equal in number the sherds of white ware (WW).

2.4 Test pit 4. 30-32 Castle Street

Context (400) – topsoil – mixed assemblage of 106 sherds of post-medieval pottery mostly local earthenwares (REWWS) 48 sherds (45%), at least one of which from a dish with sgraffito decorated rim dates from the late 17th/early 18th century. Also whitewares (WW) 34 sherds (32%).

Context (401) is rich in pottery- 238 sherds (4,469g). The local red earthenwares (REWWS) predominate with 196 sherds (83%) and include a number of recognisable forms other than plain jars. The large part of a base of a dish decorated with combed white and brown slip is a fine example of carefully executed decoration dating from the 18th century. At the other end of the scale are rims of two storage jars with a heavy applied reinforcing band under the rim. Other forms include pans and bottles. There is one fragment of what appears to be kiln debris and a number of the other sherds seem to be wasters or near wasters from being overfired.

Evidence of later whitewares (WW) are limited to 43 sherds (18%). Some 18th century wares are present: 3 sherds of Bristol mottled ware (BMW) tankard, 2 of Bristol yellow slipware cup BYSW) and 1 of Nottingham stoneware (NSW) tankard but a tiny proportion (2.5%).

Context (402) – no pottery.

2.5 Test pits 5. 37 Castle Street

Context (500) – topsoil contains 100 sherds with signs of being fragmented and fairly well turned over. Local red earthenwares (REWWS) predominate 54 sherds (54%) with whitewares (WW) again coming second most

prolific with 32 sherds (32%). Date range certainly from 18th century (Bristol YSW, sgraffito decorated dish) to the 20th.

Context (501) The majority of the total of 97 pottery sherds are of local red earthenwares dating from the 16th to 20th century (REWWS) – 93 (96%). There are only 2 sherds of whitewares (WW) (2%).

2.6 Test pit 6. 34 Castle Street

Context (600) Apart from 1 sherds of Bristol yellow slipware cup there is nothing recognisable as earlier than 1800. Whitewares (WW) account for 61 sherds out of 89 (69%).

Contexts (602 to 604) no pottery submitted.

2.7 Test pit 7. Blindwell House, South Lane

Context (700) – topsoil. Enthusiastic tilling has reduced many of the sherds of whitewares (WW) to tiny fragments. They (75 sherds) constitute 45% of the assemblage by number. Local red earthenwares – 55 sherds make up 33%. Some of these are slip-trailed which may indicate a 16th-century date. The single body sherd of 'tiger-skin' stoneware bottle may be 17th century and the tin-glazed earthenware (TGE), Bristol mottled ware, Bristol yellow slipware cup and Nottinghamshire stoneware tankard are all of the 18th century (11%).

Context (701) only 26 sherds recovered – including 10 local red earthenware (REWWS) (38%) and 9 whitewares (WW) (35%). Three tiny sherds are of the 18th century: 2 of yellow slipware and 1 mottled ware.

2.8 Test pit 8. The George Hotel, 7 St Mary's Street

No pottery submitted

2.9 Test pit 9. St Mary's Church Centre, 27 St Mary Street

No pottery submitted

2.10 Test pit 10. 5 Channel Close

Context (1000) just 8 sherds recovered:- 5 local red earthenware (REWWS), 2 whiteware (WW) and 1 ceramic building material (CBM).
Context (1001) 40 sherds of which local red earthenwares predominate with 27 sherds (68%). 4 tiny sherds represent the 18th century: 3 yellow slipware cup and 1 tin-glazed earthenware (10%).

Context (1002) Although a small assemblage of 16 local red earthenware sherds it is intriguing for containing three pierced tile fragments which appear to be part of the structure of a pottery kiln There are also two over-fired sherds: one of a flask, another of a bottle.

2.11 Test pit 20. Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

No pottery submitted

2.12 Test pit 21. Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

Context (2000) contains just one small sherd unfortunately unclassifiable.

2.13 Test pit 22. Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

Context (2000) contains 12 sherds all dating from the 18th to 20th century. Of these 7 are of the local red earthenware.

2.14 Test pit 23. Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

Context (2000) contains 5 sherds, 3 of local red earthenware, 2 of white ware (WW).

2.15 Test pit 24. Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

No pottery submitted

2.16 Test pit 25. Nether Stowey Primary School, Mill Close

No pottery submitted

3 Pottery types (see spreadsheets)

3.1 Medieval types (54 sherds, 380g)

From context (101) there is but one tiny glazed sherd, probably of Bristol Redcliff ware dating from the late 13th/early 14th century (Dawson and Ponsford 2016-7) and from context (401) one sherd of the crest of a late medieval crested roof-ridge tile. The rest are 11th to 13th-century coarse wares and have been compared with the Somerset Pottery Fabric Type Series compiled by Naomi Payne in the museum collections at Somerset Heritage Centre. Test pit 1 at 36 Lime Street produced 60 of the medieval sherds, whilst test pit 2 at 25 Castle Street, 9, and test pit 3 at 30-32 Castle Street 3.

The Victoria County History notes that in 1275 potters paid 20s for the right to work in Nether Stowey (Baggs *et al* 1985). There is also a reference in 1271 to Richard De Porta and others being fined or taxed for making pots as they had done according to ancient custom (Colemen=Sith and Pearson 1970, 6). As aside it should also be mentioned it is often repeated that a medieval pottery kiln was reported as excavated in Porter Meadow in 1971 (Somerset Historic Environment Record PRN 11126) but Mike Ponsford is adamant that, 'The so-called oval kiln at Nether Stowey had not been fired (nor excavated by me as published)' (Ponsford 1987). Although quantities of pottery have been recovered from either side of the parish boundary with Over Stowey there seems to be a deal of doubt whether this really was a pottery-making site. Unlike the quantities of local red earthenwares found in the test-pitting which seem to be consistently of the same fabric type, the finds of medieval pottery from the test pitting are diverse, perhaps an indication that there was no local medieval industry represented, just wishful thinking derived from the reference to Portery Meadow in the Tithe Map and the find of an oval structure. In any event further fieldwork and analysis will be required before any of the pottery recovered in 2023 can be related to any of these earlier reports.

3.2 SSW Salt-glazed stonewares

3.3 Red earthenwares

In the last ten years, petrological analysis has enabled us to confirm four main centres of red earthenware production centres in Somerset – types A, B, C and D (Dawson *et al* 2016).

3.3.1 West Somerset red earthenwares (REWWS) – local red earthenwares – petrological type A (879 sherds, 8.722kg)
Contexts (100, 101, 200, 201, 300, 400, 401, 500, 501, 601, 700, 701, 1001, 1002, 2000)

A remarkable assemblage, second only in number to the 19th/20th century whitewares but of primary interest for being locally made. It represents a wide variety of utilitarian forms, jars and dishes but including chafing dishes and cisterns spanning the period from the late 16th century to the 18th/possibly early 19th centuries, mostly plain, but also some specific examples of 18th century decorated sherds – trailed, sgraffito (500, 1001) and wet-slip. The dish from context (401) is a particularly fine example of the last.

Elaborate skilfully executed wet-slip decoration , c.1700-1750 (401)

Some sherds seem to be underfired and others over-fired (1002), in other words 'seconds'. The whole group from context (1002) seems to consist of kiln waste including three pieces of kiln debris. It is not uncommon to find kiln waste recycled from the potteries for use as hard core, drainage sump, etc.

The evidence of pottery-making here in Nether Stowey is firmly based on the report of quantities of pottery and kiln debris found in the construction of the by-pass in 1968 and on a sample of sherds recovered and preserved in the collections of the county museum in Somerset Heritage Centre (TTNCM xxxx; Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1970, 6-8). From this sample it has been possible to show that similar pottery has been excavated at Cleeve Abbey (mid 16th century), Narrow Quay, Bristol (late 16th-century), Taunton (Pearson's Taunton type 16 - late 16th/17th century), Penhow Castle, Gwent (late 16th/17th century), and St Nicholas's Almshouses, Bristol (mid 17th-century) (Allan 1999; Good 1987; Pearson 1984 microfiche 47; Dawson 2016; Barton 1964: Dawson *et al* 2018, 39-40). Many of the forms recovered from the test-pitting are similar to those recovered on these sites. Notable is a sherd of the neck of a cucurbit (201), a particular form of distilling apparatus designed for use with an alembic– see Good 1987, 73-4, vessel 276; Moorhouse 1972.

We can further surmise that pottery being made by Martin Renger, an 'alien', and living in Over Stowey in 1571 and leasing a shop and chamber above the Flesh Shambles in Bridgwater was similar (Dawson 2018).

Samples have been subjected to petrological study by SEMS-EDS (scanning electron microscopy using energy dispersive X-ray analysis – Anderson *et al* 2016). A group of samples of waste pottery from West Somerset – Wrangway, Langford Budville, Crowcombe and Nether Stowey all share the similar characteristics of Group A (Andersen *et al* 2016, 109; Pearson 2014). These are the predominance (55-70 volume % of the bulk) of Fe-Al-K silicates while 10-20 is quartz. Alkali feldspar and muscovite/illite make up the remaining with minor Fe-Al silicates and only traces of plagioclase and kaolin. To the naked eye this translates into a rather fine sandy feel to the fabric and inclusions of quartz mostly but not entirely too small to see. This raises the possibility that some of the later 18th-century sherds from the test-pitting might derive from Langford Budville and indeed West Somerset production sites yet to be identified.

3.3.2 Red earthenwares of the Bridgwater and the coast (REWBC) – petrological Type C.

Surprisingly no sherds of this pottery fabric type were identified given the proximity to Bridgwater and the known trade to that port (Boore and Pearson 2010).

3.3.3 Red earthenwares of the South Somerset district potteries (REWSS) – petrological type D. (17 sherds, 132g)
Contexts (100, 101, 200, 201, 400, 500, 601)
An unremarkable sprinkling of sherds from the well-known potteries around Donyatt. – mostly 18th century (Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1988).

3.3.4 Red earthenware of the North Devon district (REWND) (1 sherd, 10g)
Context (100)
A single glazed sherd of a dish in the distinctive quartz tempered smooth Fremington clay.

3.3.6 Red earthenware of the Verwood (Dorset) district (REWV) (2 sherds, 9g)
Context (100)
Two stray sherds of the distinctive glaze and fabric. Products of the Verwood potteries are not uncommonly found in Somerset in the early 19th century.

3.3.7 Red earthenware unclassified (REWU) (183 sherds, 488g)
Contexts (100, 101, 200, 201, 300, 400, 500, 601, 700, 701)
Just too small or mangled by cultivation to identify with any confidence.

3.4 Tin-glazed earthenware (TGE) (7 sherds, 11g)
Contexts (100, 200, 700, 1001)
Small sherds of the distinctive opalescent blue-and-white painted pottery of the late 16th century and 18th century up to about 1780 when it was superseded by whitewares.

3.5 18th-century salt-glazed stonewares (18SW) (17 sherds, 49g)
Contexts (100. 200, 201, 300, 400, 401, 500)
A variety of stonewares including a sherd of Staffordshire fine moulded stoneware context (200), the predecessor to creamware.

3.6 Yellow slipware (YSW)

The common tableware of the early 18th century superseded by whitewares in the 1780s. It was produced in Staffordshire but the examples from Nether Stowey all seem to be the creamier appearance of Bristol manufacture.

3.6.1 Flat yellow slipwares (YSWF) (1 sherd, 2g)
Context (200)
A single sherd of combed slip decorated moulded dish.

3.6.2 Hollow yellow slipwares (YSWH) (26 sherds, 71g)
Contexts (100, 200, 201, 300, 400, 401, 500, 700, 23-2000)
All are sherds of cups of the kind identified to Bristol by Ken Barton (1961).

3.7 Mottled wares (MW) (7 sherds, 27g)
Contexts (300, 401, 700, 701)
Tankards with a baric similar to the yellow slipwares but with an iron-rich glaze . Made in Bristol *c*.1720-1750 (Dawson 1979b; Dawson and Ponsford 2016-17, 73)

3.8 Porcelains, bone chain and similar ware (POR) (12 sherds, 38g)
Contexts (100, 200, 201, 300, 500, 601, 700)
Small fragments, too small to ascribe further characteristics. Probably 18th to 20th centuries.

3.9 Whitewares

The second most predominant category of pottery at Nether Stowey by number but not by weight. Most of the sherds were fragments to be 1g or less in weight. From the time that this kind of ware was introduced in Stoke-on-Trent notably by Josiah Wedgwood its began to drive out many of the traditional types of pottery for ordinary domestic use leaving the red earthenwares for the larder, garden and small-holding. Much is easily picked out by the lavish use of blue transfer-printing and is still commonly used to this day. No maker's marks were found.

3.9.1 Plain or transfer-printed whitewares (WW) (501 sherds, 964g)
Contexts (100, 101, 200, 201, 300, 400, 401, 500, 501, 601, 700, 701, 1000,1001, 2000)
Contexts (300, 700) contain the largest collections at 75 sherds each but the rest appears though most of the other contexts.

3.9.2 Banded or 'Mocha' wares (BWW) (4 sherds, 4g)
Contexts (100, 200, 300)
Lathed turned whitewares popular in the 19th century and made in Bristol and elsewhere.

3.9.3 Other whitewares (OWW) (13 sherds, 97g)
Contexts (100, 200, 201, 300, 400, 401, 500, 601, 700)
A mixed bag of 19th-century types from pudding basin to black basalt ware.

3.10 Bristol stoneware (BSW) (7 sherds, 81g)
Contexts (101, 200, 300, 501, 601)
An indicator for post 1835 deposits this being the date when this highly durable ware was first invent by William Powell and Anthony Amatt of Bristol (Dawson 2017).

3.11 Ceramic building materials (CBM) (73 sherds, 1.219kg)
Contexts (100, 101, 200, 201, 300, 400, 500, 601, 700, 1000, 1001, 2000)
All relatively small fragments of brick and roof tile. There is one sherd of medieval crested ridge=tile, the rest all post-medieval.

3.12 Pottery kiln debris (kiln) (3 sherds, 226g)
Context (1002)
These are the types of pierced tiles that have been found on many other pottery kiln sites covered with glaze and other debris (Pearson 2014, 102). They are accompanied by three over-fired sherds, probably also waste. Reusing debris from pottery production is a well attested phenomenon and the presence of this material merely confirms the nearby presence of pottery production (i.e. the by-pass site).

4. Conclusion

The residual finds of medieval pottery seems to confirm that the medieval settlement was centred on the main Bridgwater-Williton highway and the lower end of the market street leading up to the Castle.
The local red earthenwares imply that making in Nether Stowey may have continued longer then previously thought and indeed 18th-century forms may have persisted longer. It is strange that no products of the prolific 19th/20th-century factories at Bridgwater seem to appear here.

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13.3.4: Stogumber

REPORT ON THE POTTERY
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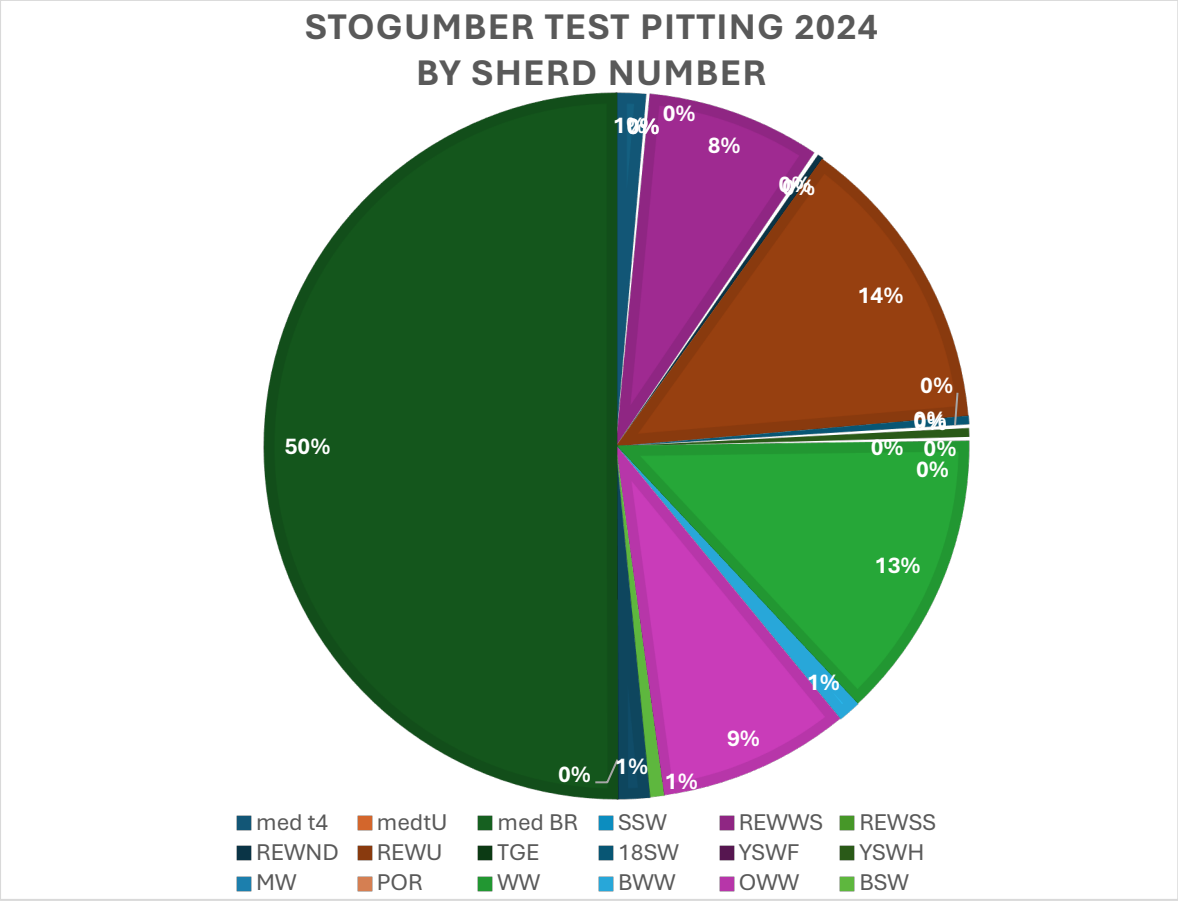
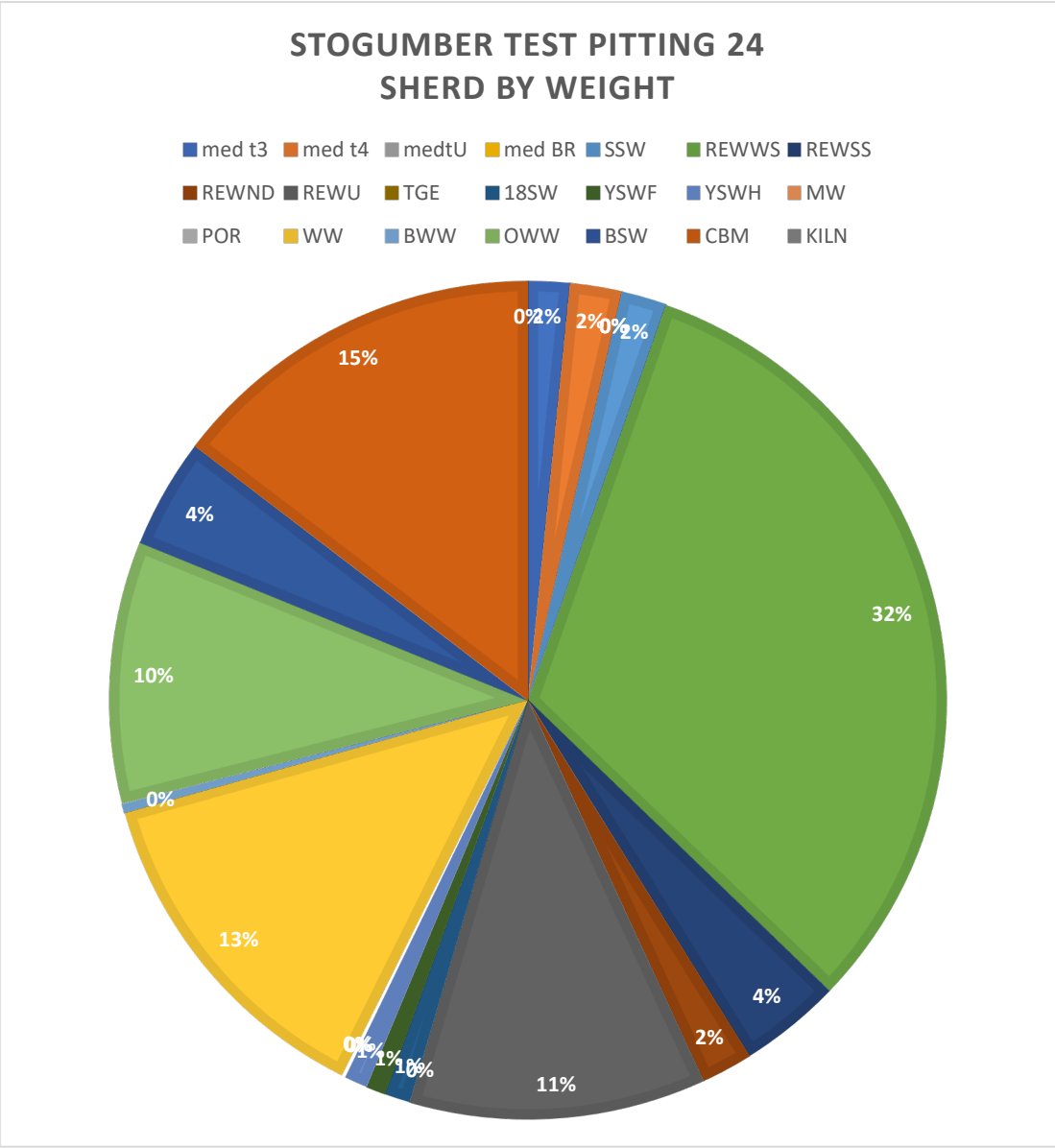
18 NOVEMBER 2024

1. Summary

This report is prepared in accordance with the *A Standard for Pottery Studies in Archaeology*, Historic England 2016 available at https://romanpotterystudy.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/06/Standard_for_Pottery_Studies_in_Archaeology.pdf
The Medieval Pottery Research Group *A Guide to the Classification of Medieval Ceramic Forms* 1998 is used to describe the shapes of individual vessels see https://medievalceramics.files.wordpress.com/2019/12/a_guide_to_the_classification_of_medieval_ceramic_forms.pdf
The Somerset Pottery Fabric Type Series being developed by Naomi Page in the Somerset Heritage Centre and in partnership with Historic England has been consulted and referenced SPT.

A total of 523 sherds weighing 1,710g from seven test pits have been examined. Residual finds of 15 sherds (2.9%) from medieval occupation were recovered from test pits 2, 3, 4 and 8 that is at 4, Hill Street, 24 Hill Street and two at Hall Farm. All are of open jars. They are body sherds and hence difficult to date – 11th to 13th century. One sherd of a low fired extremely coarse quartz-rich fabric from context 301 might be early.
There then seems to be a gap until the 16th century when the local red earthenwares start appearing – 83 sherds accounting for 15.8% of the assemblage - but most probably 18th/19th century. Nearly all the test pits produced some 18th-century pottery amongst the ubiquitous Staffordshire white and other 19th/20th-century wares though much of it was reduced to very small sherds.





2. Detailed commentary by context

2.1 Test pit 1. The Old Rectory, Vellow Road – garden

Planned but not proceeded with. A single sherd of local red earthenware (REWWS) was recovered from the site.

2.2 Test pit 2. 4 Hill Street – garden topsoil

Three contexts (200, 201 and 202) of garden topsoil and subsoil. All the sherds are broken into small fragments. Here we have 2 medieval sherds, 1.2% of an assemblage of 198 sherds. The local red earthenwares (REWWS) make up 21 (10.6%) with many body sherds. The usual white wares (WW), 75 sherds (37.9%) and other 18th/19th century wares indicate how mixed this well-cultivated soil has become.

2.3 Test pit 3. Sunnydene, 14 Hill Street – lawn

Two contexts (300 and 301). There is one Medieval sherd of very coarse ware. The rest seem to range through 16th to 20th century and include the stub of a handle of a North Devon gravel-tempered ware jug. The local red

earthenware (REWWS) 23 sherds (21.3%) of 108 sherds are outnumbered by the 61 sherds (56%) of white ware (WW).

2.4 Test pit 4. Hall Farm B&B – wall and paved surface

Context (400) – the topsoil – contains most of the pottery – 69 sherds. White wares (47 sherds) form the largest component (68%).

Context (401) has only 8 sherds but includes one residual body sherd of a 17th-century German stoneware bottle.

Context (402) includes three medieval sherds, bodysherds of open jars among other fragments spanning the two recent centuries.

There was no pottery associated with the wall structure (403).

2.5 Test pits 5. Hall Farm B&B – lawn possible made-up ground

A scatter of fairly recent pottery (19 sherds – another 15 in 502/3) including local red earthenwares. **(There is no documentation for (502) and (503)**

2.6 Test pit 6. Beacon Field – topsoil on meadow grazing

Context (600) contained only five sherds, all fairly recent.

2.7 Test pit 7. Hall Farm B&B – garden soil

Context (700) contained 53 sherds, the largest being the top of a handle of slip-decorated local red earthenware jug. A sherd of Bristol yellow slipware is earliest at 18th century. The rest, over half are later whitewares.

Context (701) no pottery submitted.

2.8 Test pit 8. Hall Farm B&B – top and subsoil

Context (800) – no finds

Context (801) – 37 sherds ranging from Medieval to 20th century. See below for a discussion of the 9 medieval sherds. The rest are unremarkable except for a rim sherd of a plain dish of the local red earthenware which is similar to late 16th-century pottery waste from Crowcombe.

3 Pottery types (see spreadsheets)

3.1 Medieval types (15 sherds, 31g)
Contexts (201, 301, 402, 801)
The examples are 11th to 13th-century coarse wares and have been compared without match with the Somerset Pottery Fabric Type Series compiled by Naomi Payne in the museum collections at Somerset Heritage Centre. All are residual body sherds of open jars. None have distinctive hints of form. The extremely coarse quartz rich sherd from (301) is similar to examples found from West Somerset and appears to be a shoulder of such a jar and may be as early as the 11th century. The nine sherds from context (801) display a range from fine silty, sometimes with black burnished external surfaces to reoxidised red corky body.

3.2 SSW Salt-glazed stonewares (2 sherds, 30g)
Contexts (200, 300).
Two body sherds of imported Rhenish pottery probably 18th century.

3.3 Red earthenwares

In the last ten years, petrological analysis has enabled us to confirm four main centres of red earthenware production centres in Somerset – types A, B, C and D (Dawson *et al* 2018).

3.3.1 West Somerset red earthenwares (REWWS) – local red earthenwares – petrological type A, SPT 105 (83 sherds, 542g)
Contexts (100, 200, 201, 300, 301, 400, 401, 402, 500, 501, 502, 503, 601, 700, 801)
Given the close proximity to Nether Stowey, one of the identified manufacturing centres of this distinctive red earthenware, perhaps it is not surprising that this type of pottery is so well represented (Dawson *et al* 2018). It is a pity that the sherds are so fragmented that little more can be said about their forms or their possible date.

3.3.2 Red earthenwares of the Bridgwater and the coast (REWBC) – petrological Type C.
Surprisingly no sherds of this pottery fabric type were identified given the proximity to Bridgwater and the known trade to that port (Boore and Pearson 2010).

3.3.3 Red earthenwares of the South Somerset district potteries (REWSS) – petrological type D, SPT 101. (2 sherds, 67g)
Contexts (201, 301)
A small number of sherds from the well-known potteries around Donyatt. – mostly 18th century (Coleman-Smith and Pearson 1988).

3.3.4 Red earthenware of the North Devon district (REWND) (3 sherds, 34g)
Context (200, 300, 401)
A single glazed sherd of a dish in the distinctive quartz tempered smooth Fremington clay.

3.3.6 Red earthenware of the Verwood (Dorset) district (REWV)
Not represented. Products of the Verwood potteries are not uncommonly found in Somerset in the early 19th century (Draper 2002).

3.3.7 Red earthenware unclassified (REWU) (144 sherds, 194g)
Contexts (200, 201, 300, 400, 401, 402, 500, 502, 600, 700, 801)
Just too small or mangled by cultivation to identify with any confidence.

3.4 Tin-glazed earthenware (TGE)
Surprising to find this type of pottery is not represented at all at Stogumber.

3.5 18th-century salt-glazed stonewares (18SW) (4 sherds, 17g)
Contexts (300, 401, 502)
Small fragments.

3.6 Yellow slipware (YSW)

The common tableware of the early 18th century superseded by whitewares in the 1780s. It was produced in Staffordshire but the examples from Stogumber all seem to have the creamier appearance of Bristol manufacture.

3.6.1 Flat yellow slipwares (YSWF) (2 sherds, 17g)
Context (200, 201)
Two sherds of combed slip decorated moulded dish.

3.6.2 Hollow yellow slipwares (YSWH) (4 sherds, 15g)
Contexts (201, 700, 801)
All are sherds of cups of the kind identified to Bristol by Ken Barton (1961).

3.7 Mottled wares (MW) (2 sherds, 3g)

Contexts (201, 801)
Tankards with a fabric similar to the yellow slipwares but with an iron-rich glaze. Made in Bristol *c*.1720-1750 (Dawson 1979b; Dawson and Ponsford 2016-17, 73)

3.8 Porcelains, bone chain and similar ware (POR)
None recovered.

3.9 Whitewares

The predominant category of pottery at Stogumber by number but not by weight. Most of the sherds were fragments to be 1g or less in weight. From the time that this kind of ware was introduced in Stoke-on-Trent notably by Josiah Wedgwood it began to drive out many of the traditional types of pottery for ordinary domestic use leaving the red earthenwares for the larder, garden and small-holding. Much is easily picked out by the lavish use of blue transfer-printing and is still commonly used to this day. No maker's marks were found.

3.9.1 Plain or transfer-printed whitewares (WW) (221 sherds, 299g)
Contexts (200, 201, 300, 301, 400, 401, 502, 600, 700, 801)
All sherds are very small.

3.9.2 Banded or 'Mocha' wares (BWW) (11 sherds, 6g)
Contexts (201, 301)
Lathed turned whitewares popular in the 19th century and made in Bristol and elsewhere.

3.9.3 Other whitewares (OWW)

3.10 Bristol stoneware (BSW) (7 sherds, 72g)
Contexts (200, 201, 400)
An indicator for post 1835 deposits this being the date when this highly durable ware was first invented by William Powell and Anthony Amatt of Bristol (Dawson 2017). Marmalade jars make up the major part of this assemblage.

3.11 Ceramic building materials (CBM) (15 sherds, 249g)
Contexts (200, 300, 400, 402, 500, 700)
All relatively small fragments of post-medieval brick and roof tile.

4. Conclusion

The residual finds of medieval pottery confirm there is a 11th-13th century settlement here. The test-pitting has produced much of interest. It is notable that the proportion of pottery found is very different to Crowcombe and Bicknoller.

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Appendix 13.4: Struck Flint and Modified Stone Reports

13.4.1 Bicknoller (BICK 21)

Struck Lithic Material

Jim Rylatt

1 Introduction

Two struck lithic artefacts were recovered during the Village Test Pitting Programme conducted in Bicknoller, Somerset, in 2021.

2 Methodology

The artefacts were examined, and attributes were recorded to determine characteristics of the reduction technologies, together with an assessment of the functional potential of the different elements of the assemblage. The presence of surface patination, surviving cortex, and evidence for burning or heat treatment was also noted, and each piece was weighed. Selected artefacts were examined with x6 and x20 hand-lenses to determine whether there was any evidence for localised modifications that are indicative of use.

3 The Assemblage

3.1 Test Pit 09: Locks, 2 Church Lane

A single flake was recovered from topsoil (901).

Raw material: mid-grey opaque coarse cherty flint or chert.

Description: a flake with butt (and bulb?) detached by a Janus flake. The dorsal surface has scars of three parallel-sided removals from the same platform; possibly narrow bladelets. One lateral edge preserves the scar of the termination of a broad flake removed from a perpendicular platform. The distal end has been truncated by the removal of two small abrupt flakes adjacent to an area of chipping/crushing indicative of platform edge recession.

Size: 30 x 22 x 10mm Weight: 6.6g

Interpretation: possible end scraper

The removal of the abrupt flakes from the distal end potentially indicates that the flake was utilised as an expedient end scraper, but this is not certain, as there is no clear evidence of use wear along the ventral margin. The absence of a butt means that the flake is lacking some diagnostic morphological features, but the presence of narrow parallel-sided flake scars provides a tentative indication that the piece dates to the late Mesolithic (c. 6500 – 4000 BCE) or early Neolithic (c. 4000 – 3400 BCE).

3.2 Test Pit 10: 6 Parsons Close

A single flake was recovered from topsoil (1001).

Raw material: mid-brown translucent flint with a large pale brownish-grey opaque inclusion. A small area of thin cortical surface survives at the distal end, indicating that this is pebble flint obtained from a secondary source.

Description: a small flake with a flat platform and small bulb of percussion. Scars of 5+ similar removals from the same platform, with the character of the working suggesting a desire to continue the reduction of a relatively rare resource. The small flakes and chips detached from both surfaces at the distal end of the flake are indicative of post-depositional damage, which could have occurred if the flake were rolled in an active ploughsoil.

Size: 28 x 17 x 5mm Weight: 3.3g

Interpretation: debitage

The dating of small pieces of debitage is difficult when recovered in isolation, but the morphological features of the piece broadly suggest that it is the product of a late Neolithic to early Bronze Age industry (c. 3000 – 1500 BCE).

13.4.2 Crowcombe (CROW 22)

Struck Lithic Material

Jim Rylatt

1 Introduction

Two lithic artefacts were recovered during the Village Test Pitting Programme conducted in Crowcombe, Somerset, in 2022.

2 Methodology

The artefacts were examined, and attributes were recorded to determine characteristics of the reduction technologies, together with an assessment of the functional potential of the different elements of the assemblage. The presence of surface patination, surviving cortex, and evidence for burning or heat treatment was also noted, and each piece was weighed. Selected artefacts were examined with x6 and x20 hand-lenses to determine whether there was any evidence for localised modifications that are indicative of use.

3 The Assemblage

3.1 Test Pit 03: Crowcombe Court driveway, NW of the Church of the Holy Ghost

A single flake was recovered from topsoil (300).

Raw material: mottled pale to mid-grey opaque flint.

Description: proximal fragment of a tertiary flake. Narrow butt, with scars of previous removals from a perpendicular platform and diffuse bulb of percussion.

Size: 20 x 15 x 3mm Weight: 0.9g

Interpretation: debitage

The ventral surface has a convex curvature, without any scars of previous removals and, as such, it is possible that this is an unintentional removal resulting from the incidental impact of a flint pebble and another stone. However, its recovery from an area without naturally occurring flint, combined with the presence of small facets on the butt, suggests that is more likely to be a piece of debitage, such as a Janus flake, with morphological traits broadly consistent with Neolithic or early Bronze Age lithic technologies (c. 4000 – 1500 BCE).

3.2 Test Pit 05: The Carew Arms, Crowcombe Road

One piece of struck flint was recovered from subsoil (501).

Raw material: mottled brownish-grey opaque flint.

Description: medial fragment of tertiary bladelet, with scars of two similar removals from the same platform. The thicker lateral edge has been retouched by the removal of overlapping abrupt chips. Slight post-depositional damage to the unmodified lateral margin, but the unaffected area along the ventral side of the margin preserves a band of diffuse polish.

Size: 11 x 7 x 3mm Weight: 0.3g

Interpretation: broken microlith - straight-backed bladelet (Jacobi type 5a)

This bladelet is product of late Mesolithic technologies (c. 6500 – 4000 BCE). It is not possible to determine whether it was broken during use and discarded when the composite tool was repaired, or if it was truncated by post-depositional processes.

13.4.3 Nether Stowey (NEST 23)

Struck Lithic Material

Jim Rylatt

1 Introduction

Six lithic artefacts were recovered during the Village Test Pitting Programme conducted in Nether Stowey, Somerset, in 2023.

2 Methodology

The artefacts were examined, and attributes were recorded to determine characteristics of the reduction technologies, together with an assessment of the functional potential of the different elements of the assemblage. The presence of surface patination, surviving cortex, and evidence for burning or heat treatment was also noted, and each piece was weighed. Selected artefacts were examined with x6 and x20 hand-lenses to determine whether there was any evidence for localised modifications that are indicative of use.

3 The Assemblage

3.1 Test Pit 06: 37 Castle Street

A single flake was recovered from topsoil (600).

Raw material: a relatively coarse pale whitish-grey stone, probably a quartzite, which was speckled with white sub-angular quartz inclusions that were up to 4 x 3mm across.

Description: secondary flake, a hard hammer removal with a pronounced bulb of percussion. It has a cortical platform and a broad butt 9mm deep; the surface of the platform is flat, with some small pits, but without any curvature along its width and depth and no evident abrasion (i.e., it has not been detached from a polished stone tool). A feathered termination, but the tip of the distal end has been detached. Scars of three similar hard hammer removals from the same platform.

Size: 51 x 53 x 13mm Weight: 24.3g

Interpretation: debitage

The dating of debitage can be difficult, particularly as the piece is produced on a relatively unusual raw material, but it is likely to be the product of Neolithic or early Bronze Age technologies (c. 4000 – 1500 BCE).

3.2 Test Pit 20: Nether Stowey Primary School

Three chunks of flint were recovered from topsoil (2000).

Raw material: mottled brownish-grey opaque flint. Two pieces have areas of abraded buff cortex (up to 1mm thick) and one preserves a small area of a recorticated thermal fracture, which indicates they are fragments of pebble flint from a secondary source

Description: all three pieces have multiple unpatinated flake surfaces, which are unstructured and have no evident points of impact.

Size: 21 x 16 x 11mm Weight: 3.2g
Size: 18 x 11 x 8mm Weight: 1.2g
Size: 16 x 9 x 6mm Weight: 0.7g

Interpretation: crushed flint gravel

3.3 Test Pit 23: Nether Stowey Primary School

One chunk of flint was recovered from topsoil (2000).

Raw material: mottled mid to dark grey opaque flint, with an area of abraded buff cortex (up to 1mm thick) which indicates it is a fragment of pebble flint from a secondary source

Description: it has multiple unpatinated flake surfaces, which are unstructured and have no evident points of impact.

Size: 24 x 18 x 10mm Weight: 4.1g

Interpretation: crushed flint gravel.

3.4 Test Pit 25: Nether Stowey Primary School

One chip of flint was recovered from topsoil (2000).

Raw material: grey-brown opaque flint, with an area of abraded buff cortex (up to 1mm thick) which indicates it is a fragment of pebble flint from a secondary source

Description: it has unpatinated flake surfaces, with no evident points of impact.

Size: 11 x 6 x 2mm Weight: 0.2g

Interpretation: crushed flint gravel.

13.4.4 Stogumber (STOG 24)

Struck Lithic Material

Jim Rylatt

1 Introduction

Two lithic artefacts were recovered during the village test pitting programme conducted in Stogumber, Somerset, in 2024.

2 Methodology

The artefacts were examined, and attributes were recorded to determine characteristics of the reduction technologies, together with an assessment of the functional potential of the different elements of the assemblage. The presence of surface patination, surviving cortex, and evidence for burning or heat treatment was also noted, and each piece was weighed. Selected artefacts were examined with x6 and x20 hand-lenses to determine whether there was any evidence for localised modifications that are indicative of use.

3 The Assemblage

3.1 Test Pit 08, Hall Farm, Station Road

Two chunks of flint were recovered subsoil (801).

Raw material: mottled mid to dark grey opaque flint. Both pieces preserve areas of thin, rounded, and abraded buff cortex (up to 1mm thick) which indicates they are fragments of pebble flint from a secondary source

Description: both pieces are irregular, with multiple unstructured and unpatinated flake surfaces. Margins are chipped, crushed, and abraded.

Size: 24 x 18 x 10mm Weight: 4.1g
Size: 23 x 13 x 9mm Weight: 2.3g

Interpretation: crushed flint gravel

Appendix 13.5: Buttons Reports

13.5.1 Bicknoller (BICK 21)

Jim Rylatt

1 Introduction

Two Buttons were recovered from the topsoil of Test Pit 06, (601), which was located at 7 Trendle Lane, Bicknoller.

2 The Assemblage

Button 1: Merchant Navy or Shipping Line uniform button, 19th or early 20th century. A 19mm diameter brass button; flattened and slightly distorted, with some corrosion.

Obverse: raised anchor on horizontal lined background encircled by 2mm wide roped rim extending to the margin of the button. Remnants of gilt finish adhering to lined background.

Reverse: Lug attached but bent upwards and flattened obscuring part of embossed inscription. Visible part of inscription reads 'STANDARD * RICH'.

Button 2: Rear element of brass button, probably 19th or early 20th century. A 16mm diameter disc, with a convex surface rising to a 3mm diameter circle aperture at the centre (for the lug). Outer edge is 1mm wide, flat and milled.